

Labor Market Conditions

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LABOR MARKET CONDITIONS AND ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

February, 2010

- Private-sector employers hired more workers in February than in any month since April last year and the unemployment rate fell to a near two-year low of 8.9 percent.
- Last month, the private sector added 222,000 jobs and has averaged a gain of 152,000 jobs per month since November.
- February's increase was broad-based with only one private-sector industry losing jobs (Retail -8,000)
- Health Care (34,000), manufacturing (33,000), construction (33,000), employment services (29,000), transportation and warehousing (22,000) accommodation and food services (16,000), and professional and technical services (10,000) all added a significant number of jobs.
- The ADP report that came out earlier this week found that most of the job gains were in employers with fewer than 500 employees. Large employers accounted for just 6 percent of the increase.
- Most other industries were relatively unchanged, with state and local governments (-30,000), having the most notable decline. Over the past four months, state and local governments have shed 94,000 jobs.
- The unemployment rate dropped below 9.0 percent (8.9%) for the first time since May 2009, however, the average duration of unemployment rose to another record high (37.1 weeks) and the unemployment rate for teenagers and young adults remain 24 percent and 15 percent respectively.
- Labor force growth also remains virtually nonexistent.
- Nearly all of the job gains for adults over the past three months has been with those who have a college degree.
- Average weekly hours and average hourly pay remained the same as in January, however, overtime hours in manufacturing rose again in February.

