

---

Advance copies of this statement are made available to the press under lock-up conditions with the explicit understanding that the data are embargoed until 8:30 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

---

Statement of

Keith Hall  
Commissioner  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

Friday, October 7, 2011

Nonfarm payroll employment edged up by 103,000 in September, in part due to the return of about 45,000 telecommunications workers following a strike in August. The unemployment rate remained at 9.1 percent.

Since April, payroll employment has increased by an average of 72,000 per month, compared with an average increase of 161,000 for the prior 7 months. As in recent months, September job gains were concentrated in a few major private-sector industries, while government employment continued to trend down.

Health care employment increased by 44,000, with job gains in both ambulatory health care services and hospitals. Over the past 12 months, the health care industry has added 336,000 jobs.

Employment in professional and business services increased by 48,000 in September. Small job gains occurred in a number of component industries, including temporary help services,

computer systems design, and management and technical consulting.

Within the information industry, telecommunications employment was up in September; however, the increase resulted from the return of about 45,000 workers to their jobs following a strike in August.

In the goods-producing sector, employment in construction increased by 26,000 over the month with nearly all the gain among the nonresidential industries, which includes heavy and civil construction. Since February, construction employment had shown little movement. Mining employment continued to trend up in September. Elsewhere in the private sector, employment was little changed.

Government employment continued to trend down. Local government employment declined by 35,000 over the month. Since September 2008, employment in local government has fallen by 535,000. The U.S. Postal Service lost 5,000 jobs over the month.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 4 cents in September, offsetting a decline of the same size in August. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have risen by 1.9 percent. From August 2010 to August 2011, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased by 3.8 percent.

Turning to measures from the survey of households, the unemployment rate was 9.1 percent in September, unchanged over the month. Since April, the jobless rate has held in a narrow range from 9.0 to 9.2 percent. Of the 14.0 million persons unemployed in September, 44.6 percent had been jobless for 27 weeks or more.

The labor force participation rate, at 64.2 percent, and the employment-population ratio, at 58.3 percent, were little changed in September. Among the employed, the number of persons working part-time for economic reasons rose by 444,000 to 9.3 million.

In summary, nonfarm payroll employment edged up by 103,000 in September, in part reflecting the return of about 45,000 telecommunications workers from a strike. The unemployment rate held at 9.1 percent and has shown little change since April.