

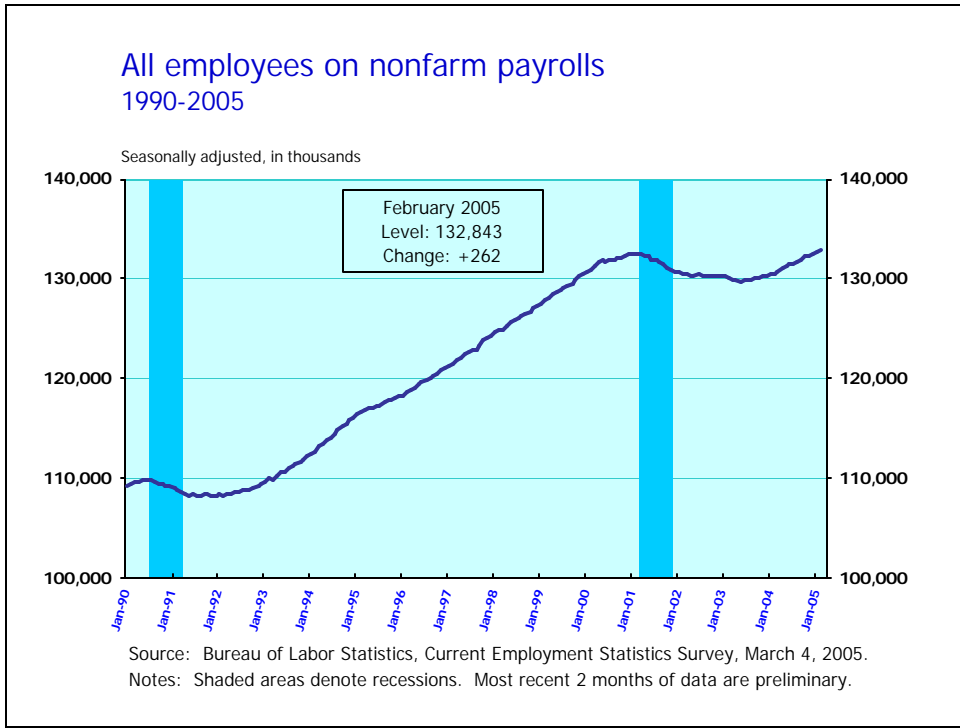


Current Employment Statistics

Highlights

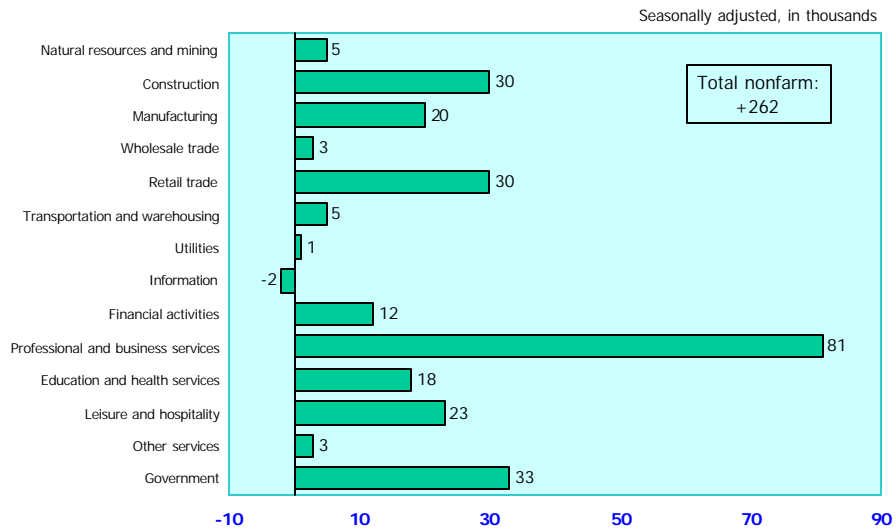
February 2005

Bureau of Labor Statistics
March 4, 2005

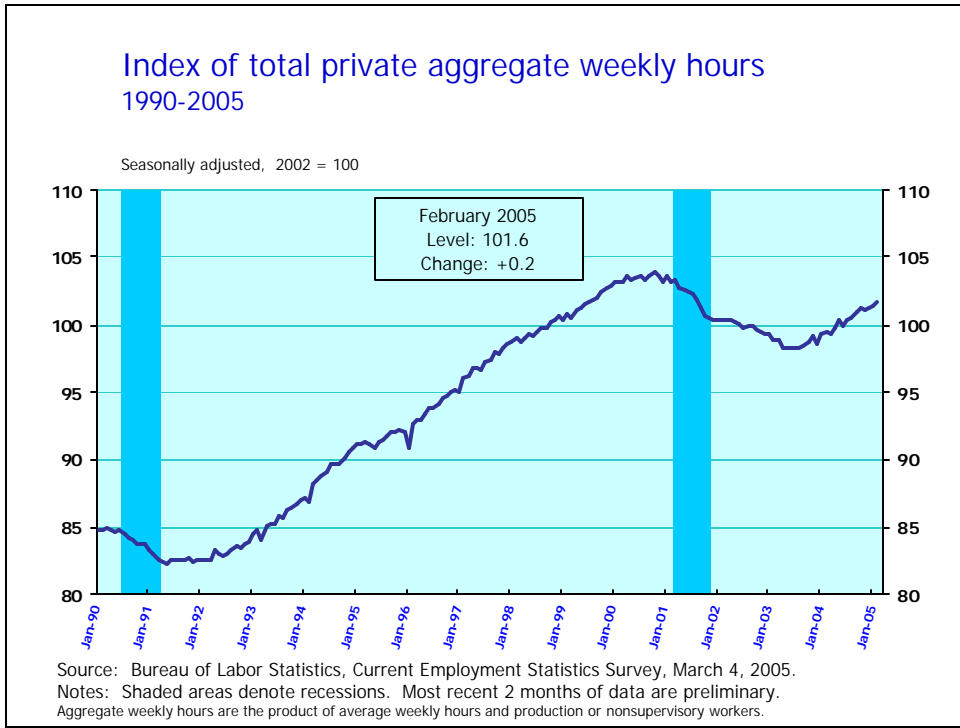


- Total nonfarm employment increased by 262,000 in February, following a gain of 132,000 in January. Job gains in February occurred across a broad range of industries.
- Since its most recent low point in May 2003, payroll employment has increased by 3 million and is now just above the previous peak reached in February 2001.
- Seasonally adjusted average weekly hours and average hourly earnings of production or nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls were unchanged in February, remaining at 33.7 hours and \$15.90, respectively.

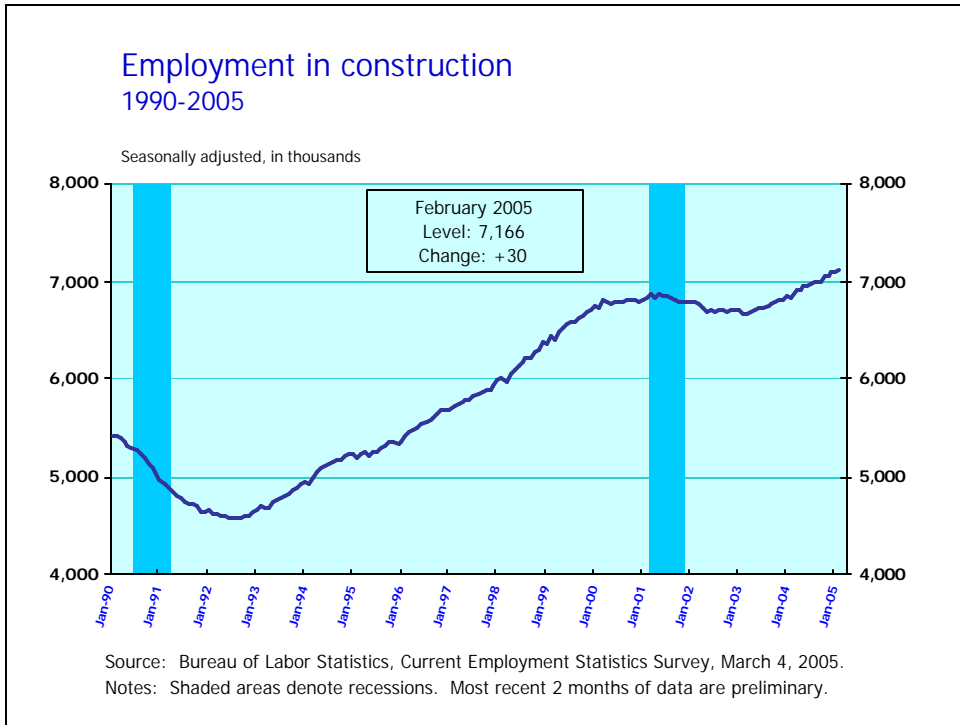
Employment in total nonfarm and supersectors Over-the-month change, February 2005



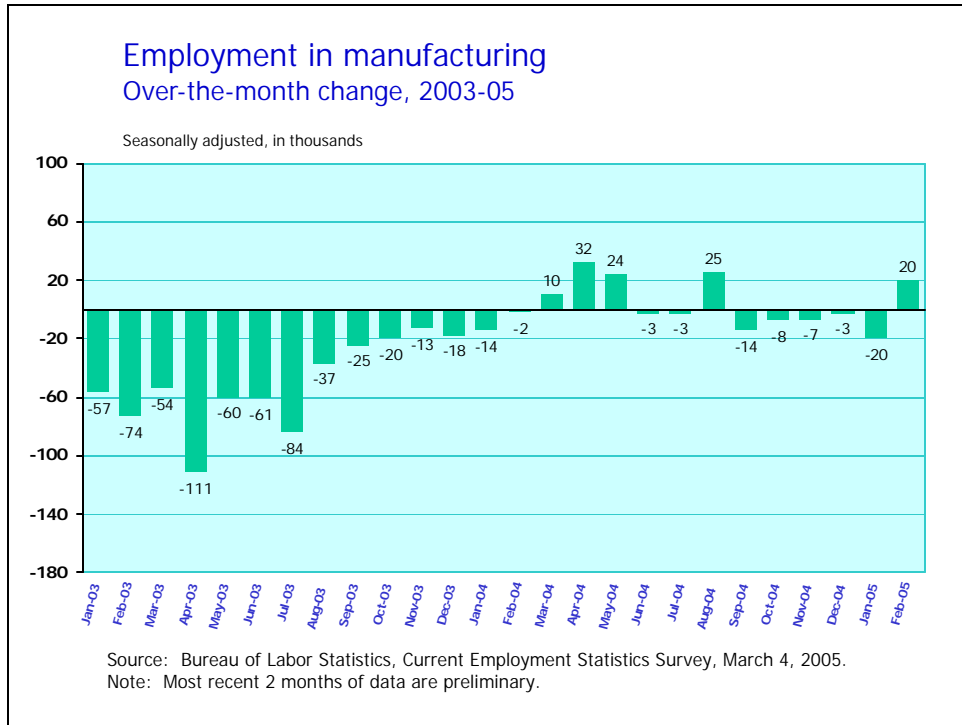
- Job growth in February was widespread, with gains in both goods-producing and service-providing industries.
- The largest employment increases in February were in professional and business services, which added 81,000 jobs.
- Several other industries, such as construction, retail trade, and government each added 30,000 jobs or more.



- Although total nonfarm employment has recovered from its most recent downturn, the index of total private aggregate weekly hours has not. This index fell 5.7 points between October 2000 and May 2003 and has to date recovered by 3.4 points.

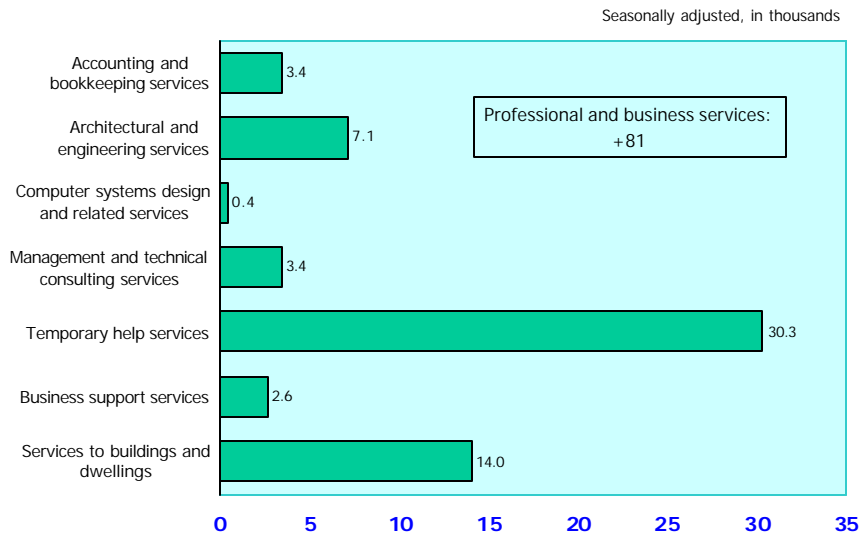


- Construction employment grew by 30,000 in February. This gain reflects ongoing strength in the construction industry, spurred by sustained low mortgage rates. However, part of February's employment increase may be explained as offsetting weakness in January, when weather conditions suppressed hiring in the West and Midwest.
- Since reaching an employment trough in March 2003, construction employment has increased by nearly one-half million. Most of this growth has been driven by a robust residential housing market. However, recent strength has also occurred in nonresidential construction.

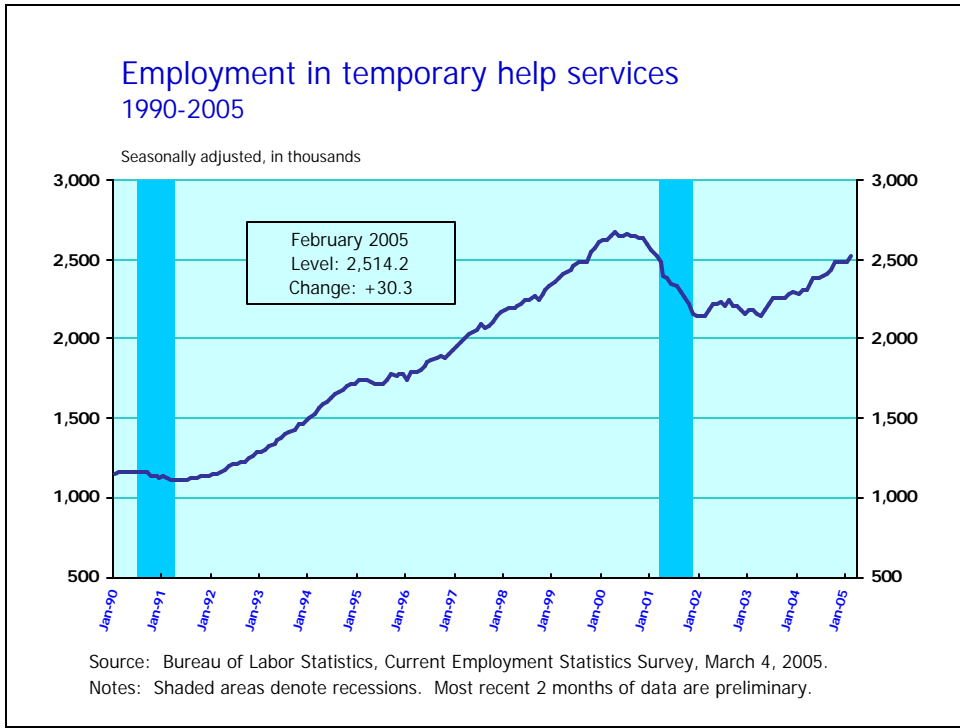


- Manufacturing employment grew by 20,000 in February. About half the job gain occurred in motor vehicle and parts manufacturing, and reflects a return of auto workers following larger-than-usual temporary layoffs.
- Since hitting an employment low in February 2004, manufacturing employment has edged up. While this is an improvement for the manufacturing sector, it represents a recovery of less than 2 percent of the net 3 million jobs lost between July 2000 and February 2004.
- The factory workweek declined by 0.2 hour in February, offsetting a similar increase in January. Much of the past year has seen monthly declines in the manufacturing workweek, and it is currently one-half hour below its February 2004 level. Manufacturing weekly overtime hours edged up by 0.1 hour in February. Over the past year, overtime has changed little, fluctuating between 4.5 and 4.6 hours.

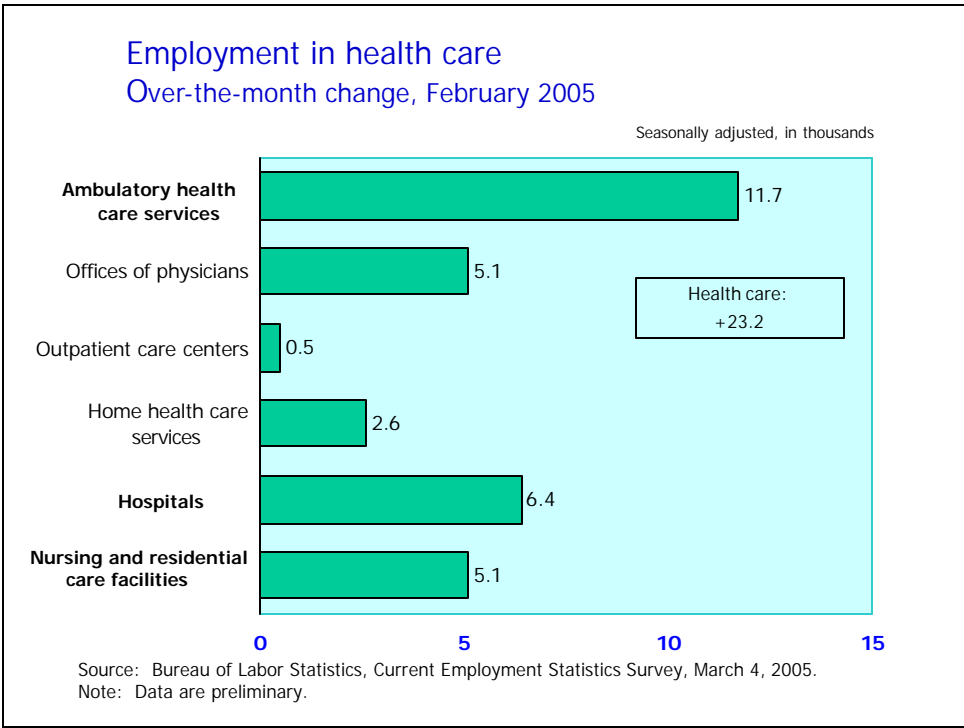
Employment in selected professional and business services Over-the-month change, February 2005



- Employment in professional and business services grew by 81,000 in February. Employment in the sector has risen by 910,000 since reaching a trough in December 2002; however, the sector's employment is still shy of the prior peak level of November 2000. The largest February job gain occurred in temporary help services, which added 30,000 workers.
- Services to buildings and dwellings employment increased by 14,000 over the month, and architectural and engineering services employment grew by 7,000, rebounding from weakness in January.



- Temporary help services added 30,000 jobs in February, following several months in which employment was little changed. Since its April 2003 employment trough, this industry has added 374,000 jobs. This represents a recovery of about 70 percent of jobs lost following the prior employment peak in April 2000.



- Employment in health care continued to expand in February, with an increase of 23,000. This industry has exhibited impressive growth over the years, seeing only one monthly job loss since 1990. Since February 2004, this industry added 262,000 jobs, accounting for 12 percent of private payroll growth.
- Over the month, ambulatory health care services added about 12,000 jobs, and hospitals added 6,000 jobs to payrolls.