- Total nonfarm employment rose by 227,000 in February, compared to an average increase of 245,000 over the last 3 months.

- Over the last two years, nonfarm payrolls have added 3.5 million jobs. Of the 8.8 million net jobs lost between January 2008 and February 2010, 40 percent have been recovered.
In February, employment gains were notably strong in professional and business services, education and health services, leisure and hospitality, and manufacturing. Combined, these 4 industries accounted for essentially all of the jobs added to nonfarm payrolls over the month.

Since an employment trough in February 2010, nearly all of the goods-producing and service-providing industries have rebounded and added jobs on net over the last 2 years, with the exception of government and information.

The private service-providing industries have accounted for 84 percent of the 3.9 million jobs added to private payrolls since February 2010. Government employment has declined by nearly half a million jobs in that same timeframe.
• Average weekly hours for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls remained unchanged in February, while production and nonsupervisory employees saw average weekly hours increase by 0.1 hour.

• Similar to January, the index of aggregate weekly hours rose by 0.2 percent; the index has consistently trended up since early 2010.
• Average hourly earnings for all employees in private industry rose by 3 cents, or 0.1 percent, in February.

• Over the prior 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased by 1.9 percent. In January, the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) had an over-the-year increase of 2.9 percent; growth in prices has recently been outpacing growth in earnings.
• Employment in mining rose by 7,000 in February, with most of the gains concentrated in support activities for mining (+5,000).

• Since a low in October 2009, mining employment has expanded by 180,000. Although support activities accounts for less than half of all mining jobs, it contributed more than two-thirds of jobs gained since the trough.
After 2 consecutive months of solid job gains, construction employment changed little in February,

Nonresidential specialty trade contractors lost 14,000 jobs in February.

Despite the loss in February, employment in construction has increased by 98,000 since a trough in January 2011.
For the third month in a row, manufacturing has experienced solid job growth with 31,000 jobs added in February.

The 1-month diffusion index of manufacturing employment fell from 73.5 in January to 56.8 in February. This indicates a narrower dispersion of the job growth within manufacturing from January to February. The diffusion index measures the dispersion of employment change in manufacturing, with a value above 50 indicating that more manufacturing industries are adding jobs than losing them over the month.
Since a trough in January 2010, employment in the industry has risen by 433,000; durable goods manufacturers have added 444,000 jobs in the same period.

Growth in durable goods manufacturing accounted for all of the jobs added in February. Fabricated metal products, transportation equipment, machinery, and furniture and related products all experienced robust job growth.
• The factory workweek for both all employees and for production employees continued to increase in February, expanding by 0.1 hour each. Average weekly overtime for all employees remained unchanged.

• Combining the job gain in manufacturing with the longer workweek, the index of aggregate weekly hours of all employees rose by 0.5 percent in February.

• Transportation equipment employment continued trending upward in February. Since reaching a trough in December 2009, the industry has added 122,000 jobs.
• Employment in retail trade changed little in February.

• A large job loss in department stores (-25,000) offset a gain of similar magnitude in that industry in January.
• Transportation and warehousing employment continued to trend upward in February.

• Since a recent trough in February 2010, employment in the industry has expanded by 205,000.
Professional and business services employment rose sharply in February, growing by 82,000.

Employment in professional and business services has grown by 1.4 million since the most recent low point in September 2009.

February’s job gains were widely dispersed, with notable gains in temporary help services.
• Just over half of the jobs added to professional and business services in February are attributed to employment growth in temporary help services (+45,000).

• Since the most recent low in August 2009, temporary help services has added 723,000 jobs and accounted for more than half of the employment gain within professional and business services.
• Employment in health care rose sharply by 49,000 in February, with widespread gains throughout the industry.

• Ambulatory health care services added 28,000 jobs, with notable gains in offices of physicians and outpatient care centers.

• Hospital employment continued to trend up, with a 15,000 gain in February.
• Food services and drinking places added 41,000 jobs in February.

• Since a recent low in February 2010, food services has added 531,000 jobs, averaging 22,000 jobs per month.
• For the second consecutive month, government employment changed little in February.

• Since August 2008, employment at the state and local level has declined by 149,000 and 498,000, respectively.