

U.S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE HOLDS STEADY AT 9.7 PERCENT



While the U.S. shed 36,000 non-farm payroll jobs in February, the national unemployment rate managed to hold steady at 9.7 percent, according to a [report](#) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics released Friday. Last month's severe winter weather that gripped much of the country likely had some negative effect on the numbers, but BLS Commissioner Keith Hall said there are too many variables to know its exact impact. Construction employment fell by 64,000 last month, which remains consistent with the average monthly job loss in that sector over the last six months, according to the BLS. Employment also fell in the information sector (18,000). On the positive side of things, temporary help services employment increased by 48,000 last month. Since last September that industry has added 284,000 jobs. Health care employment also continued to increase. Overall employment in most other industries showed little or no change. There were 14.9 million unemployed Americans in February, 40.0 percent of which had been jobless for at least 27 weeks. That is a slight decrease from last month's all-time high of 41.2 percent.

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