



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on September 3, 2010

Unemployment Rate Rises to 9.6 Percent

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the unemployment rate in the United States increased to 9.6 percent during the month of August. The BLS press release may have been tweaked by politicians, as it read that the “unemployment rate was about unchanged at 9.6 percent.” By “about unchanged,” the bureaucrats at the BLS should have written “increased from 9.5 to 9.6 percent.”



The September 3 [news release](#) stressed that the increased rate was also marked by some good news. “Private-sector payroll employment continued to trend up modestly,” the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported, noting a 67,000 increase in private unemployment that was more than offset by a decline in government jobs of 114,000 temporary workers whose jobs with the census ended. And several months of increases in jobs in the private sector is good economic news.

The unemployment rate increased largely because the percentage of Americans seeking work has risen slightly. In the past two years, an increasing number of people have dropped out of the workforce entirely because they did not believe they could find jobs. The federal government does not count people who haven’t looked for work in the last year as “unemployed.” The August figures registered a slight turn in the other direction, with more Americans seeking participation in the workforce.

President Obama [called](#) the August jobs report “positive news” and said “it reflects the steps we’ve already taken to break the back of this recession. But it’s not nearly good enough.” Obama then campaigned for Republicans to stop delaying enactment of legislation to increase the size of the federal government’s Small Business Administration.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics also revised upward employment levels for June and July of this year in its September 3 [press release](#). And the press release noted that state and local governments had shed about 10,000 jobs in August and have shed jobs most months of the recession as they have tightened their belts. But these state and local government jobcuts were balanced by a proportionate increase in federal government non-census hiring, which has not undergone any belt-tightening during the recession and run up record budget spending deficits.



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