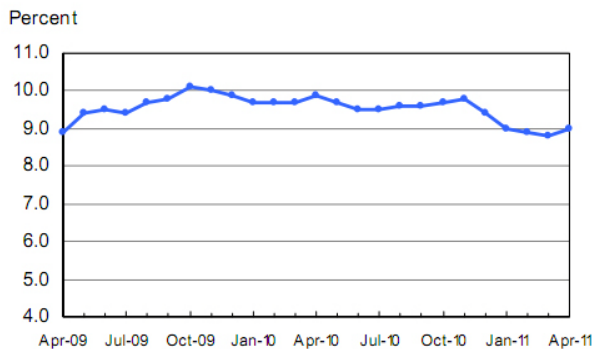


## MRINetwork Analysis of the BLS Employment Situation Report April 2011 Employment

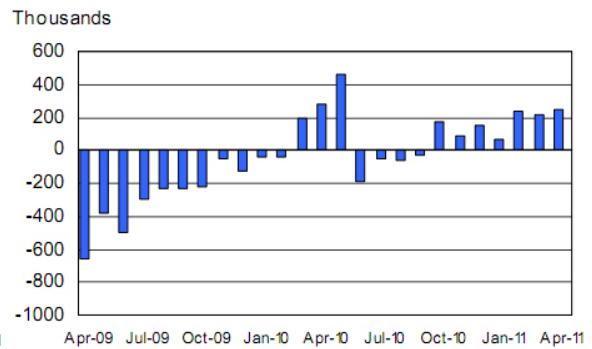
The full report can be seen here: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.htm>.

This morning, the Labor Department reported that 244,000 jobs were created in April. It was the single largest monthly gain in more than a year and the third consecutive month of job growth in excess of 200,000. The U.S. unemployment rate rose from 8.8 to 9 percent, a result of increased participation in the job market. This increase is likely a sign of improved employee confidence that is often seen on the tail end of employment downturns. While the total number of people unemployed during the month increased by 205,000, that growth came from job market reentrants and those who left jobs voluntarily. The total number of people unemployed because of job loss actually decreased by 65,000.

**Chart 1. Unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, April 2009 – April 2011**



**Chart 2. Nonfarm payroll employment over-the-month change, seasonally adjusted, April 2009 – April 2011**



Job growth in recent months has come from highly skilled positions, with employment increases occurring almost entirely among those with four-year college degrees. April, however, saw a sudden reversal in this trend as growth showed a broader base. In fact, the largest increase in employment in April was among those with nothing more than a high school diploma.

This is understandable considering the growth of positions in department stores, bars and restaurants and amusement, gambling and recreational facilities — all businesses known for having workers with less advanced education. In essence, job growth started with highly skilled and educated workers late last year. Now, the nearly 700,000 college-degreed individuals who have started jobs since January have begun to spend money at these establishments, sparking this hiring trend.

In aggregate, though, those with four-year degrees continued to experience an unemployment rate nearly half that of those without any college experience. Similarly, the management, professional, and related occupation unemployment rate fell from 4.5 percent a year ago to 4.0 percent in April. Additionally, employment at temporary staffing agencies remained mostly unchanged during the month, indicating that job growth was entirely made up of permanent positions.

The median duration of unemployment ticked down a full week to 20.7 weeks in April. If employment growth continues among industries requiring less skilled labor, those positions are more likely to be filled by people with longer durations of unemployment. While many facets of the labor market have seen gradual improvement, the length of unemployment and the size of the long-term unemployed population have only just begun to budge. Improvements in these two metrics may be the final trailing indicators of the labor market's recovery.