

# U.S. unemployment drops to 8.6% as private sector adds 140,000 jobs

Dallas Business Journal by Chris Bagley, Staff Writer

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Private-sector employers added 140,000 jobs in November, helping to drive the nation's unemployment rate downward to 8.6 percent, its lowest level since early 2009.

That puts it more in line with Texas' unemployment rate, which was 8.4 percent in October.

The gains came mainly in service industries, with retail alone accounting for 50,000 net new jobs, according to a [U.S. Department of Labor](#) survey of payroll employers. Temporary job agencies, health care and social-assistance services also accounted for much of the gains, according to the federal survey, whose results were adjusted for seasonal factors.

Manufacturing employment grew by just 2,000 positions, meanwhile, and construction lost 12,000 jobs.

Federal, state and local governments shed a net total of 20,000 jobs, partially offsetting the private sector's gains and reflecting cutbacks at the federal level.

The November U.S. jobless rate of 8.6 percent was down from 9 percent in October and 9.8 percent in November 2010, according to a separate survey of households by the department. The decline was due to an increase in the number of individuals who reported being employed, a decrease in those reporting unemployment and a decrease in those who stopped looking for work and who, therefore, are no longer counted in computing the jobless rate.

The household survey is considered less accurate because it relies on statistical sampling measures, but it also counts small-business owners, contractors and other

self-employed people who are left out of the payroll data.

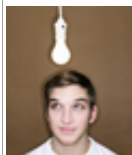
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