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# Current Employment Statistics Highlights



**March 2021**

Release Date: April 2, 2021

Prepared by Analysts of the National Estimates Branch  
Current Employment Statistics Survey  
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

202-691-6555

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### Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, March 2021

Payroll employment increased by 916,000 in March. Job gains were widespread, with large gains in leisure and hospitality, in private and public education, and in construction. Total nonfarm employment is 8.4 million lower than its peak in February 2020.

The employment change for February 2021 revised up from +379,000 to +468,000, and the change for January revised up from +166,000 to +233,000. On net, employment over these months is 156,000 higher than previously reported.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls decreased by 4 cents or 0.1 percent in March. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 4.2 percent. Average weekly hours rose by 0.3 hour after declining by 0.4 hour in February.

#### +280,000 Leisure and Hospitality

Employment in leisure and hospitality rose by 280,000 over the month. Food services and drinking places accounted for 176,000 of the gain.

Leisure and hospitality suffered a disproportionate share of jobs losses at the start of the pandemic, losing 8.2 million jobs or nearly half of its workforce over a 2-month span. As of March 2021, employment is 3.1 million lower than its pre-pandemic level.

#### +136,000 Government

In March, government employment rose by 136,000. Most of the strength came in local government education (+76,000) and state government education (+50,000) as schools have begun to open their doors for in-person learning. The Federal government added 7,000 jobs over the month.

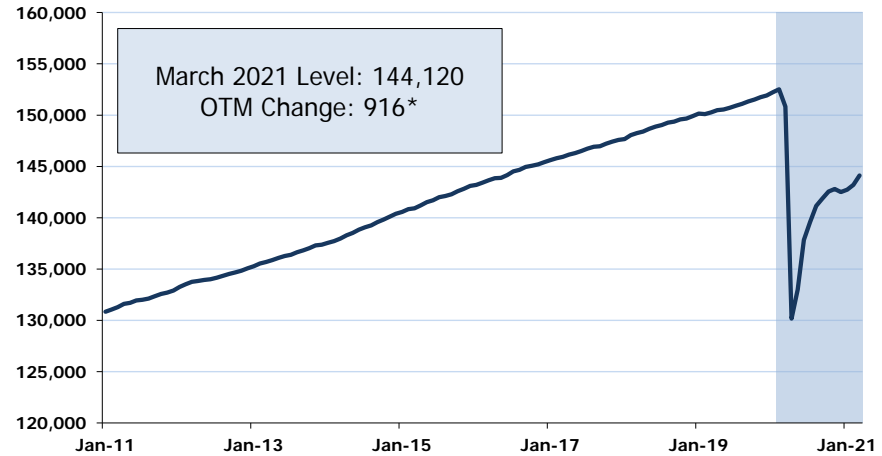
Government employment is down by 1.2 million from its level in February 2020.

#### +110,000 Construction

Construction added 110,000 jobs in March, more than offsetting a loss of 56,000 in February, when severe winter weather likely contributed to weakness. Job growth in March was distributed across most construction industries. Despite the bounce back in March,

### Employment in total nonfarm January 2011–March 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 02, 2021.  
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.  
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.  
\* denotes significance.

## Current Employment Statistics Summary, March 2021

employment in construction is 182,000 below its February 2020 peak.

### +101,000 Education and Health Services

Private educational services added 64,000 jobs in March as more institutions return to some form of in-person learning.

Social assistance added 25,000 jobs in March, mostly in individual and family services (+20,000). Employment changed little in health care (+12,000).

### +66,000 Professional and Business Services

Employment rose by 66,000 in professional and business services in March. Professional and technical services added 28,000 jobs. Employment in administrative and support services continued to trend up (+37,000). Since its pre-pandemic level in February, employment in professional and business services is down by 685,000.

### +53,000 Manufacturing

Manufacturing added 53,000 jobs in March, and gains were widespread. The 1-month diffusion index for manufacturing rose to 74.0 from 60.7, indicating that nearly three-fourths of all manufacturing industries added jobs over the month. Fabricated metal products

added 14,000 jobs, and printing and related support added 6,000.

Employment in manufacturing is 515,000 lower than in February 2020.

### +48,000 Transportation and Warehousing

In March, transportation and warehousing added 48,000 jobs. Couriers and messengers (+17,000), transit and ground passenger transportation (13,000), air transportation (+6,000), and support activities for

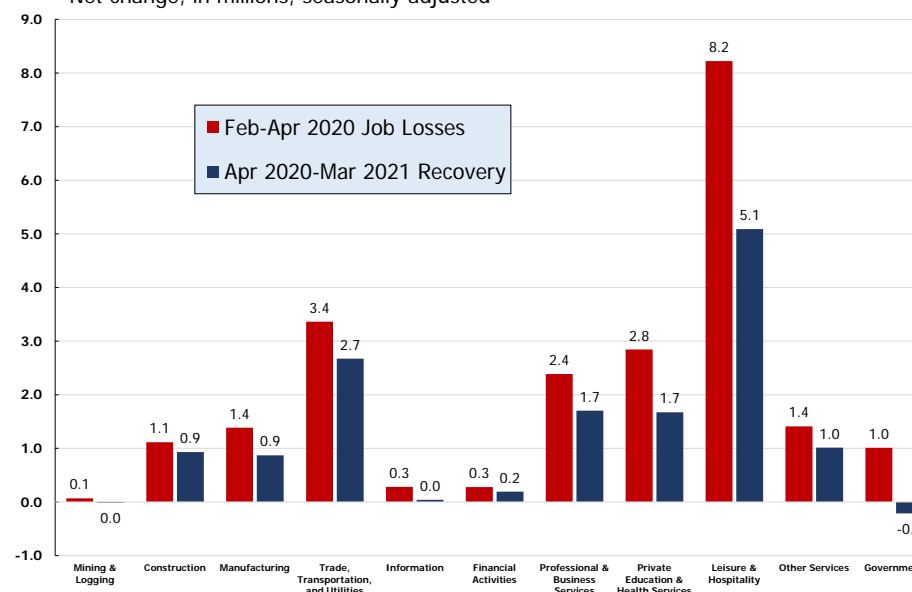
transportation (+6,000) drove job growth over the month. Employment in transportation and warehousing has been increasing since May but is still 66,000 lower than its pre-pandemic peak in February 2020.

### +42,000 Other Services

Employment increased by 42,000 in other services in March, with gains in personal and laundry services (+19,000) and repair and maintenance (+18,000). Employment in other

### Employment changes by industry sector

Net change, in millions, seasonally adjusted



### Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, March 2021

services is 396,000 lower than its February 2020 level.

#### +24,000 Wholesale Trade

Within wholesale trade, employment rose by 14,000 in durable goods and by 10,000 in nondurable goods in March. Although wholesale trade employment has trended up since April, it is still 240,000 below its January 2020 peak.

#### +23,000 Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade increased by 23,000 in March. Job gains in clothing and clothing accessories stores (+16,000), motor vehicles and parts dealers (+13,000), and furniture and home furnishing stores (+6,000) more than offset job losses in building material and garden supply stores (-9,000) and in general merchandise stores (-7,000).

Although retail employment has trended up since April, it is 381,000 lower than in February 2020.

#### +20,000 Mining and Logging

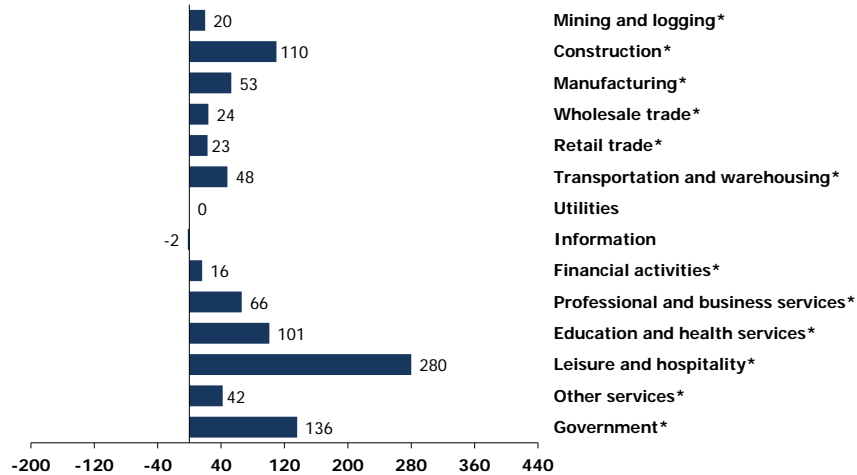
Mining employment rose by 21,000 in March, mostly in support activities for mining. Employment in mining had reached a peak in January 2019 and then declined by 151,000 or

### Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, March 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:  
916\*



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 02, 2021.  
Data are preliminary.  
\* denotes significance

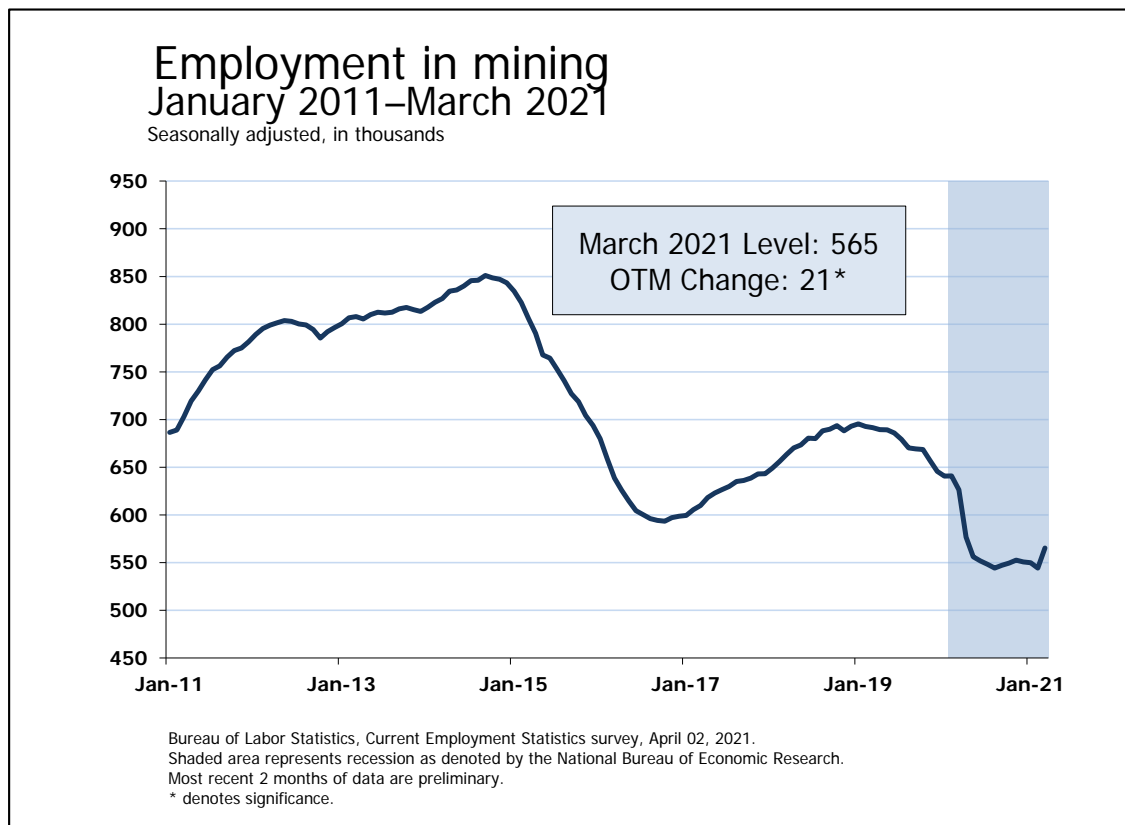
an average of 6,000 per month through February 2021.

#### +16,000 Financial Activities

Within financial activities, insurance carriers and related activities (+11,000) and real estate (+10,000) added jobs in March to more than offset a loss in credit intermediation (-7,000).

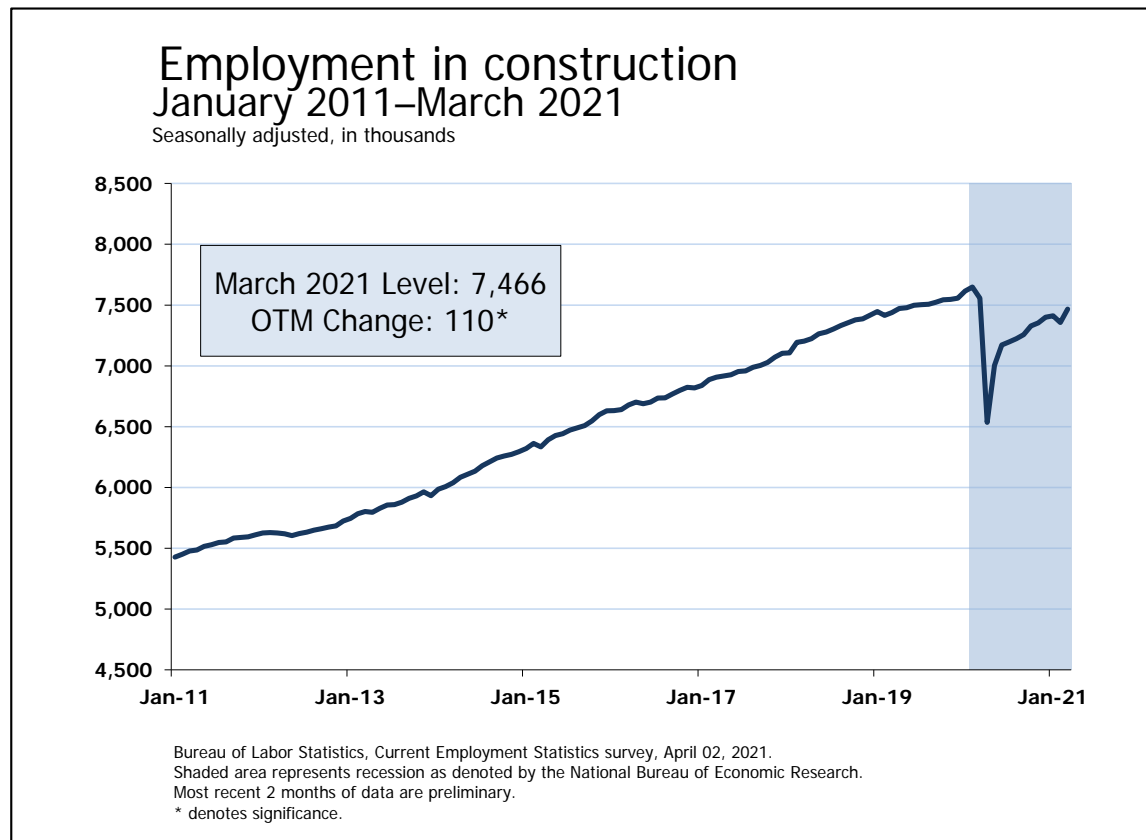
Employment in financial activities is 87,000 below its most recent peak in February 2020.

## Mining and Logging



Mining employment increased by 21,000 in March. Most of the job growth came from support activities for mining, which added 19,000 jobs. This job growth is consistent with increases in the count of active [North American rotary rigs](#) and in the price of [West Texas intermediate crude oil](#) in March.

## Construction



Construction employment increased by 110,000 over the month, after declining by 56,000 in February. In March, job gains occurred in specialty trade contractors (+65,000), heavy and civil engineering construction (+27,000), and construction of buildings (+18,000).

The construction workweek rose by 1.3 hours in March, following a decrease of 1.1 hours in February, when severe [winter weather](#) likely contributed to weakness and the subsequent rebounds in both hours and employment.

## Manufacturing

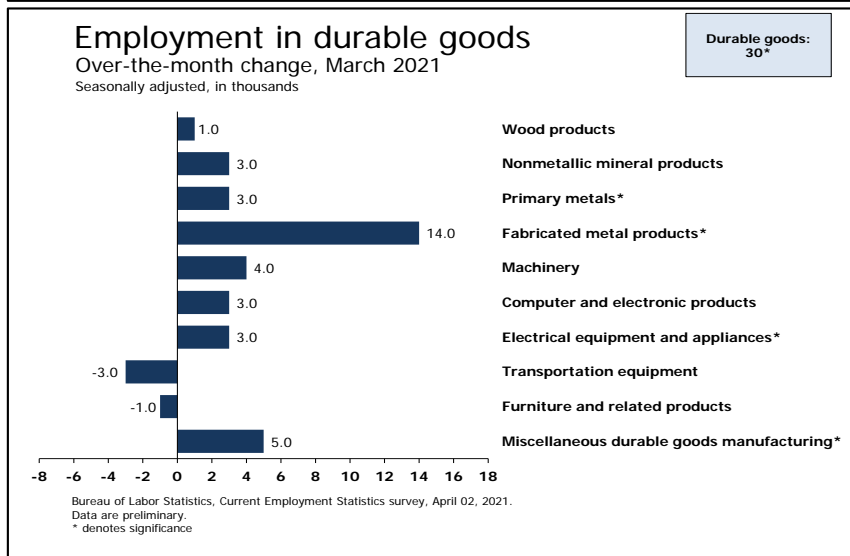
Manufacturing employment increased by 53,000 in March. Despite recent gains, industry employment is 515,000 below its February 2020 level.

The manufacturing 1-month diffusion index increased to 74.0, an increase of 13.3 points, indicating that more manufacturing industries are adding jobs than losing jobs.

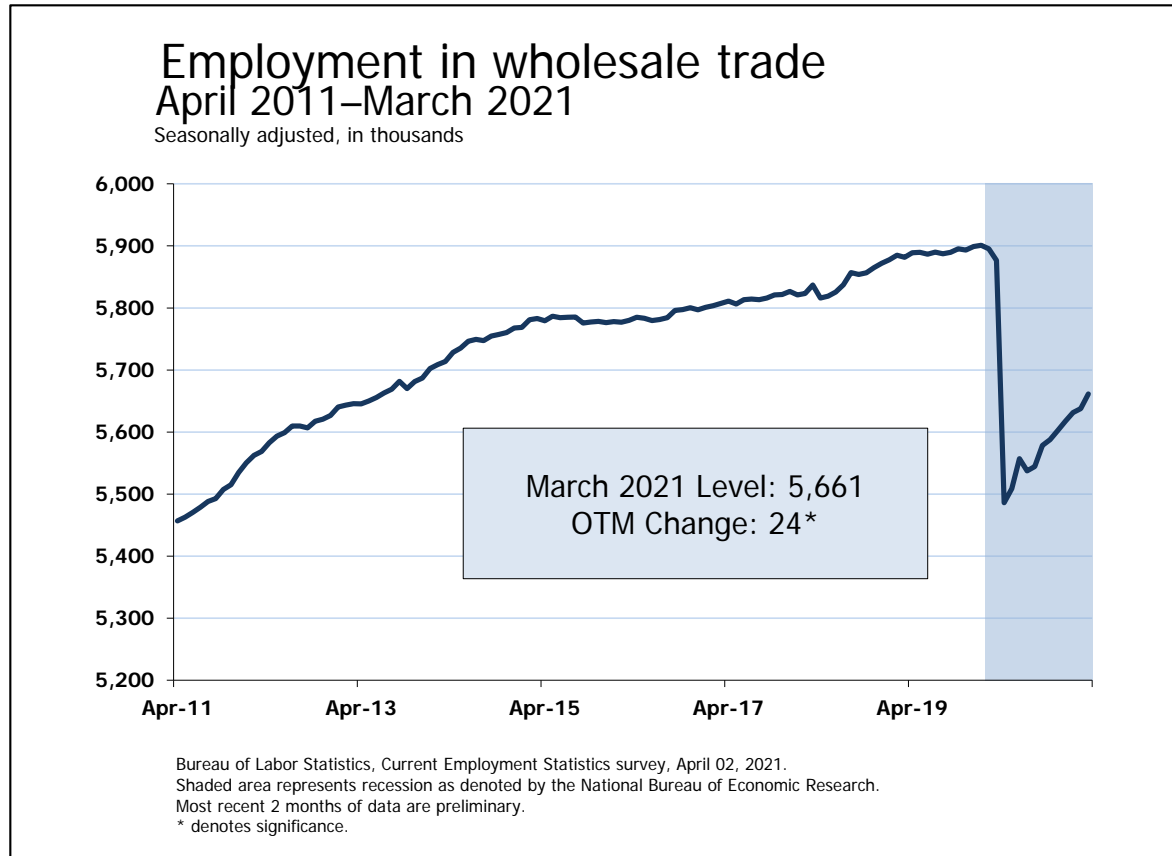
In March, durable goods added 30,000 jobs, with fabricated metal products accounting for 14,000 of the gain. Within nondurable goods, textile mills (+3,000), apparel (+1,000), printing (+6,000), and miscellaneous nondurable goods (+7,000) added jobs.

In March, average hourly earnings for all employees in manufacturing increased by 5 cents to \$29.15. Average hourly earnings of production workers increased by 3 cents to \$23.28.

Average weekly hours of all employees increased by 0.2 hour to 40.5 hours in March. The average workweek of production workers increased by 0.2 hour to 41.6 hours.



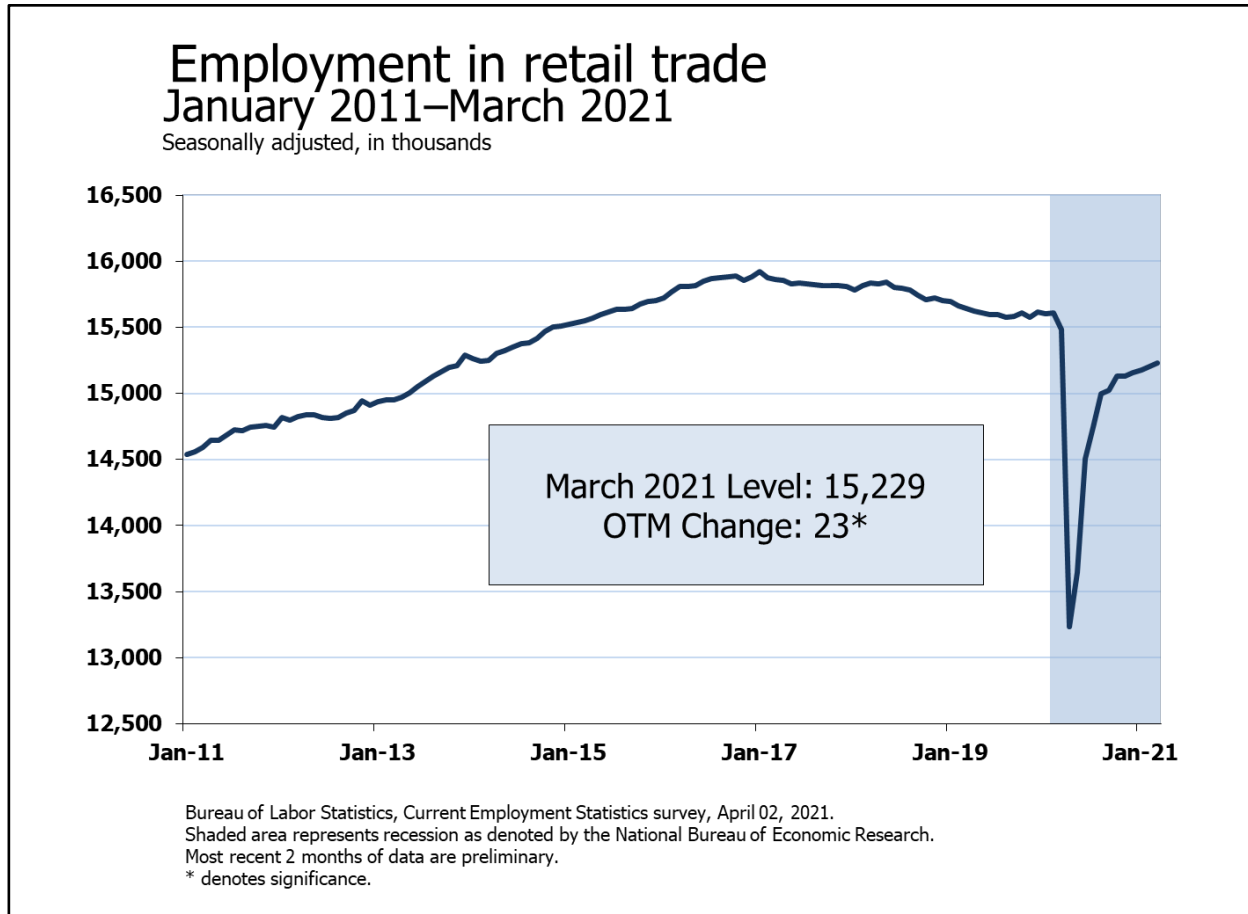
## Wholesale Trade



Wholesale trade employment increased by 24,000 in March. Over the month, durable goods added 14,000 jobs and nondurable goods gained 10,000 jobs. Since April 2020, wholesale trade employment has grown by 175,000 but remains 240,000 below its peak in January 2020.



### Retail Trade

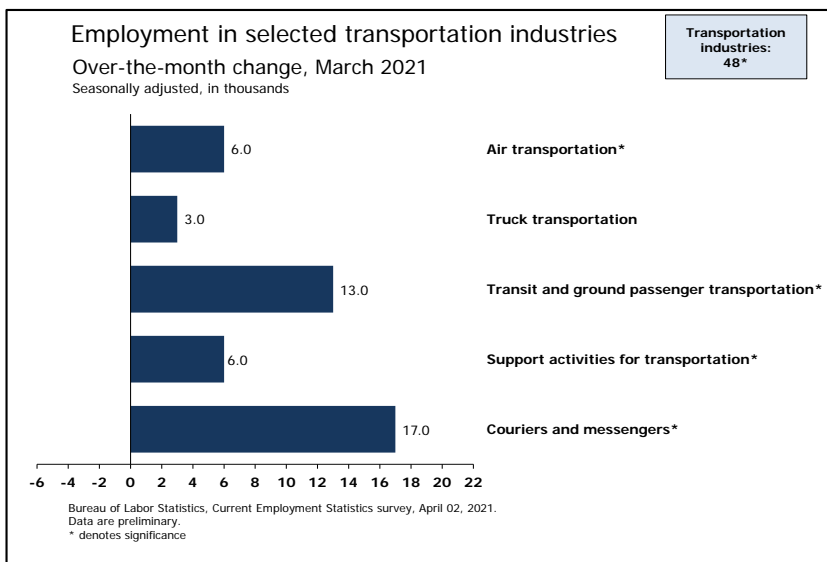


In March, employment in retail trade increased by 23,000, and the industry has recovered 2.0 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

Within the industry, job gains occurred in clothing and clothing accessories stores (+16,000), motor vehicle and parts dealers (+13,000), furniture and home furnishing stores (+6,000), and miscellaneous store retailers (+6,000). These gains were partially offset by employment declines in building materials and garden supply stores (-9,000); general merchandise stores (-7,000); and sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores (-6,000).

Retail-related economic indicators are mixed. [Retail Sales](#) declined in February, and the per gallon price of [regular gasoline](#) increased in March. Contrarily, the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) increased in March.

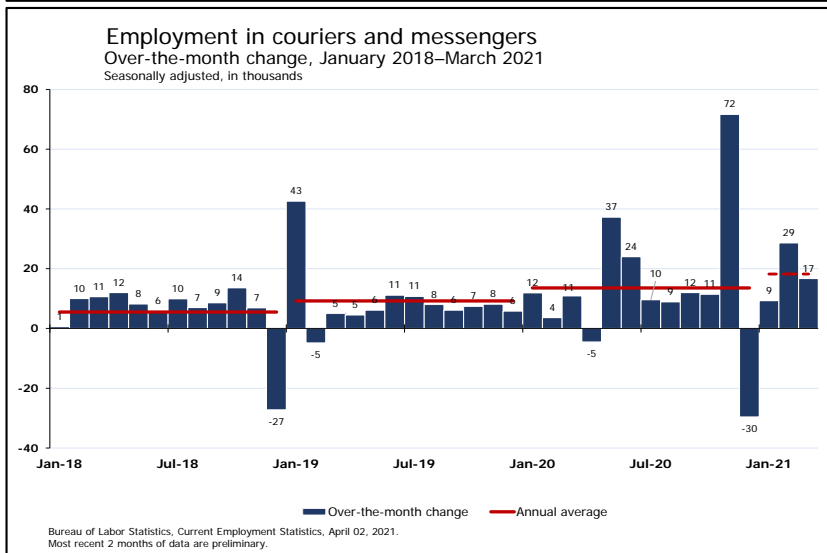
## Transportation and Warehousing



Employment in transportation and warehousing increased by 48,000 in March, after growing by 36,000 in February. Although industry employment has trended up since May, employment remains 66,000 below its February 2020 peak.

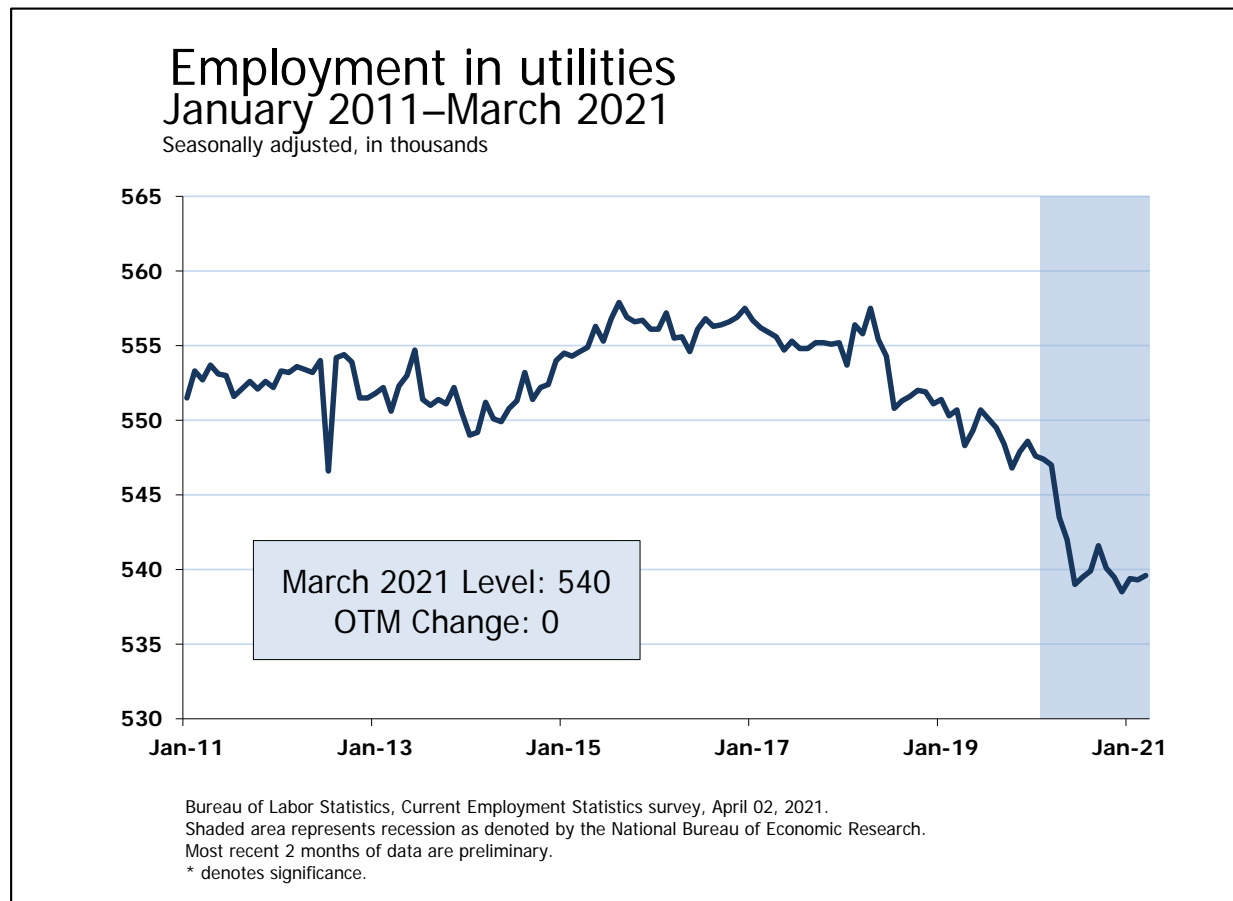
In March, couriers and messengers added 17,000 jobs as [e-commerce](#) continued to thrive during the pandemic. Since February 2020, employment in couriers and messengers has risen by 206,000.

Transit and ground passenger transportation (+13,000), air transportation (+6,000), and support activities for transportation (+6,000) also added jobs in March. Employment in transit and ground passenger transportation is 112,000 below its February 2020 level. Air transportation employment is 106,000 below its March 2020 peak, and employment in support activities for transportation is 65,000 jobs below its February 2020 peak.



## Utilities

Utilities employment was unchanged in March.



### Information

## Employment in information January 2011–March 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

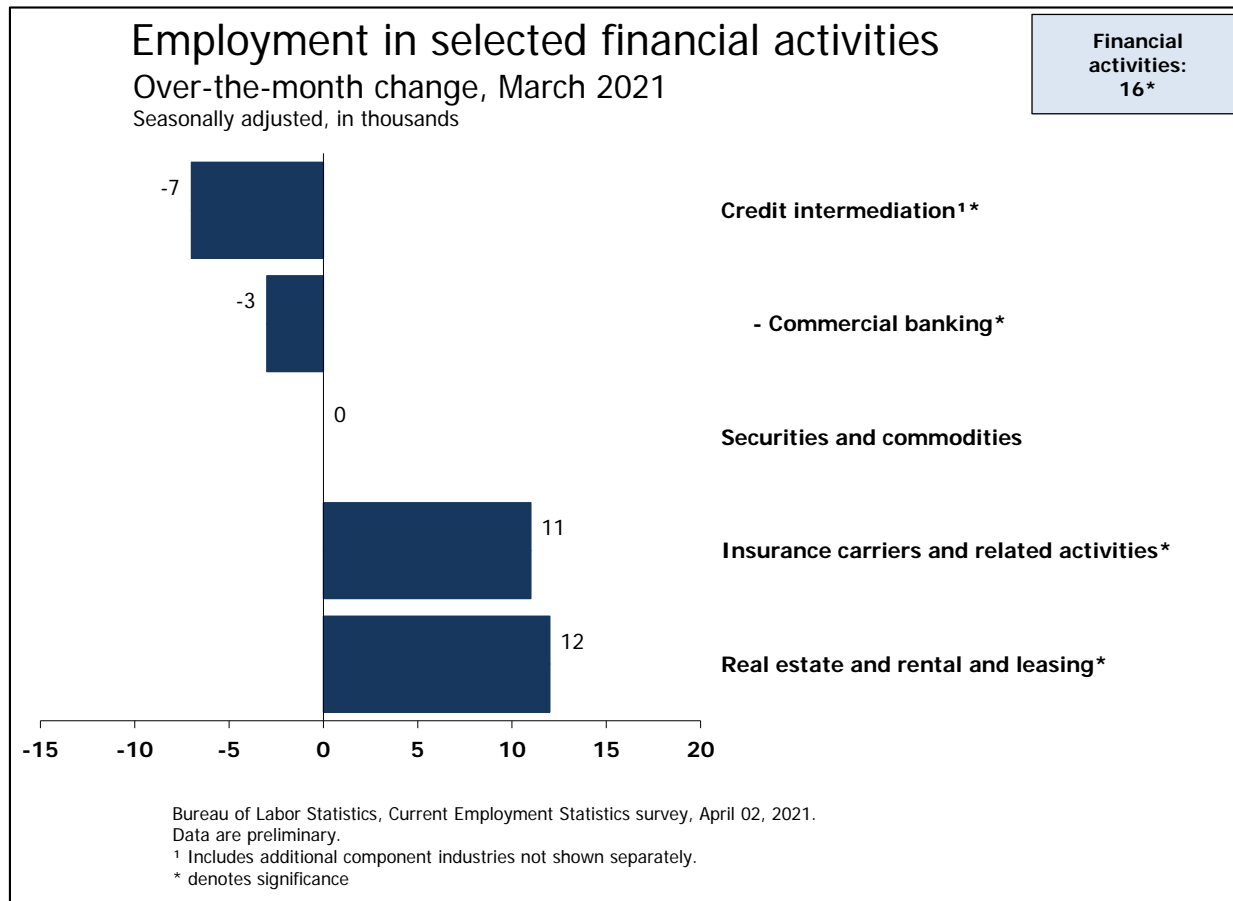


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 02, 2021.  
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Employment in information changed little in March (-2,000). Within the industry, broadcasting, except internet lost 8,000 jobs over the month.

Since February 2020, information employment has declined by 241,000, with motion picture and sound recording industries accounting for 178,000 of the loss.

## Financial Activities

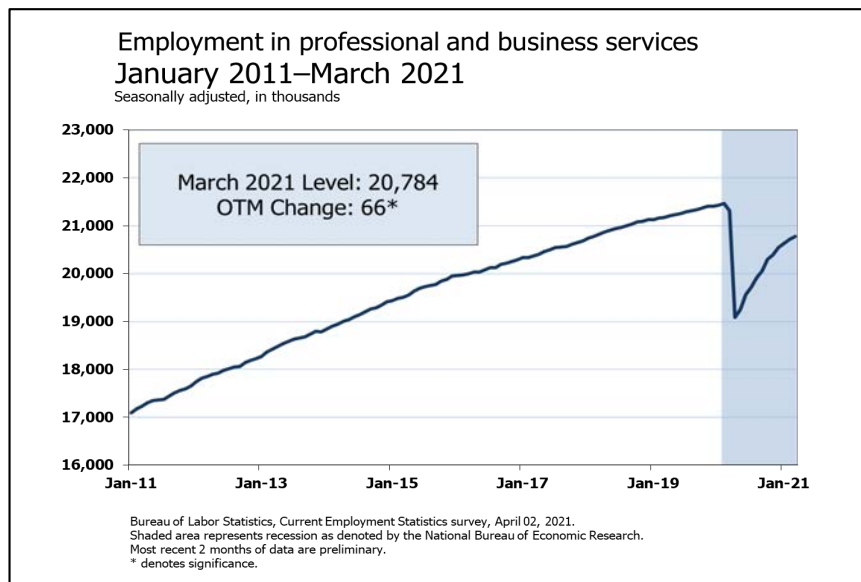


Employment in financial activities increased by 16,000 in March. Since February 2020, employment in the industry has decreased by 87,000.

In March, job gains in real estate and rental and leasing (+12,000) and insurance carriers and related activities (+11,000) were partially offset by a loss of 7,000 in credit intermediation and related activities.

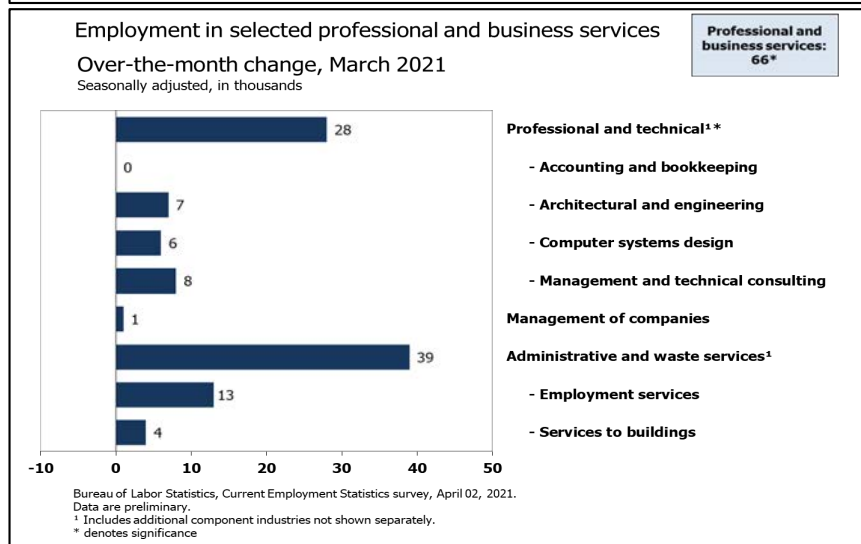
The employment increase in real estate coincided with a relatively low [average 30-year fixed mortgage rate](#) in March.

## Professional and Business Services



Professional and business services added 66,000 jobs in March. The industry has recovered 1.7 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

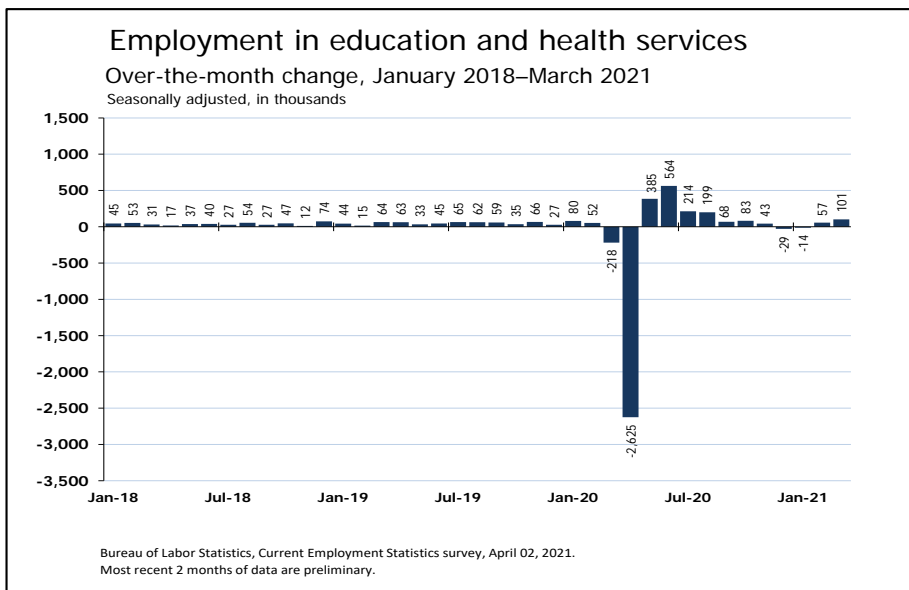
Professional and technical services added 28,000 jobs in March, but employment was 88,000 below its February 2020 level.



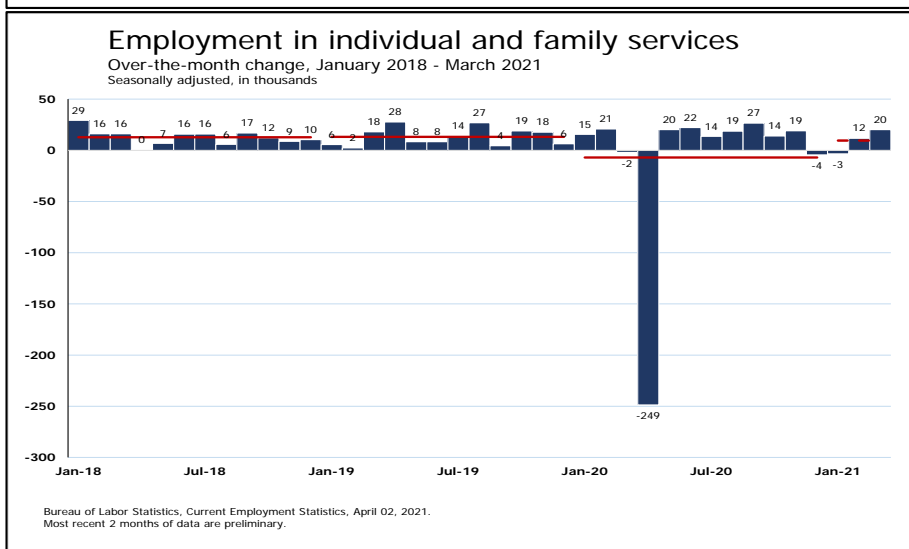
Employment in administrative and support services trended up in March (+37,000). Within this industry, employment changed little in temporary help services (-1,000) after trending up since April 2020.

## Private Education and Health Services

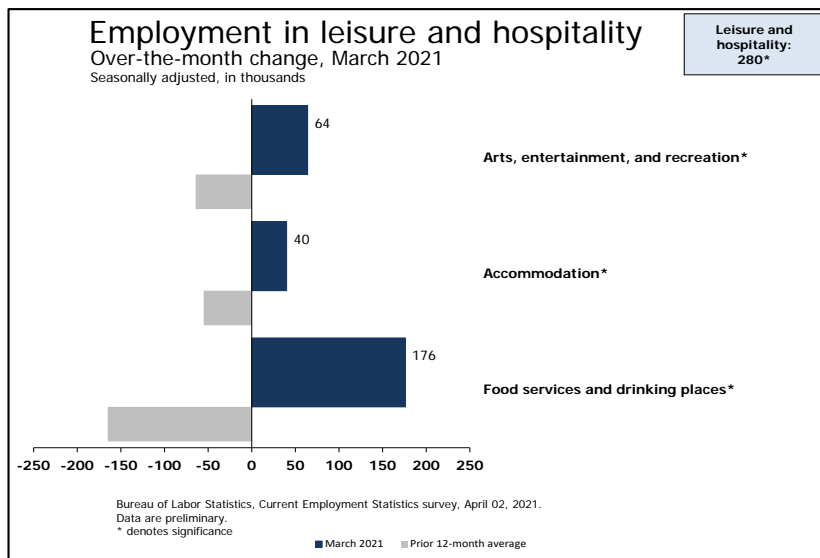
In March, education and health services added 101,000 jobs, with private educational services accounting for 64,000 of the gain. Employment in health care changed little over the month (+12,000), although offices of other health practitioners added jobs (+8,000).



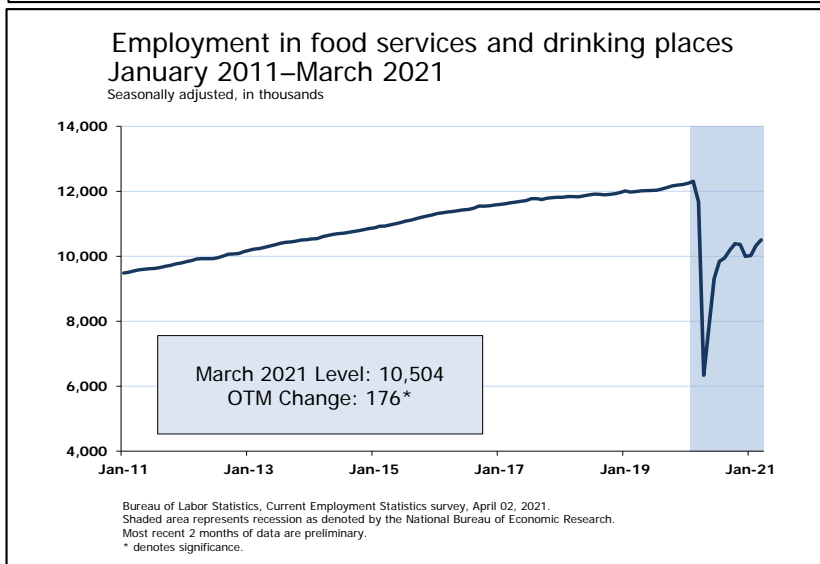
Within social assistance, individual and family services added 20,000 jobs in March. The industry has recovered 158,000 of 251,000 jobs lost in March and April 2020.



## Leisure and Hospitality



Employment in leisure and hospitality rose by 280,000 in March as [consumer confidence](#) also rose substantially.



Food services and drinking places continued to drive employment growth in March, adding 176,000 jobs as states continued to [loosen restrictions](#) on restaurants. The industry has recovered 4.2 million of 6.0 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

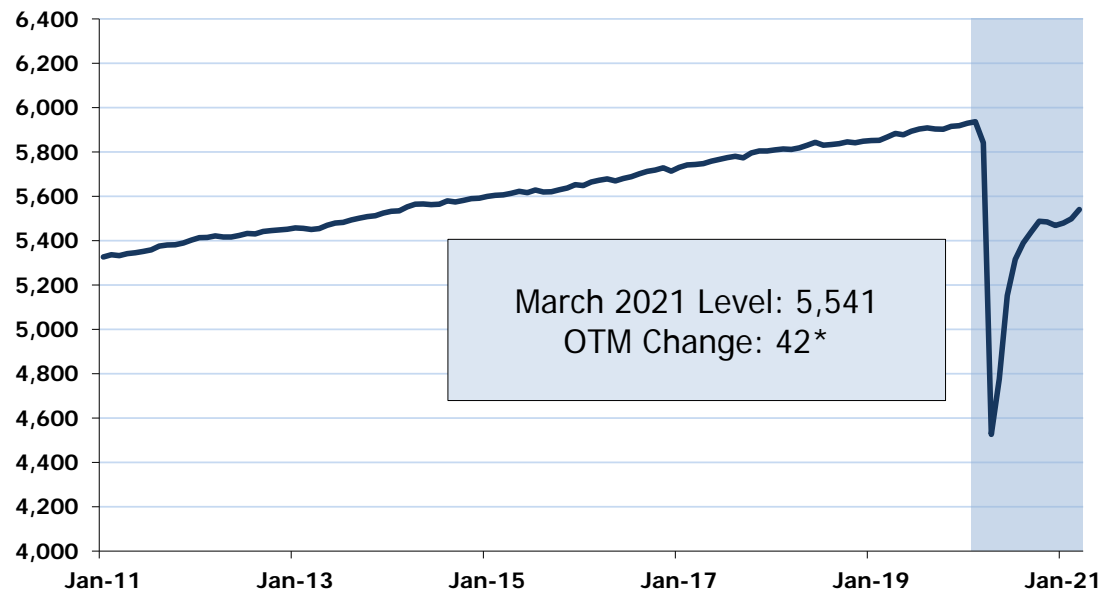
Arts, entertainment, and recreation (+64,000) and accommodation (+40,000) also added jobs in March 2021.



## Other Services

### Employment in other services January 2011–March 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

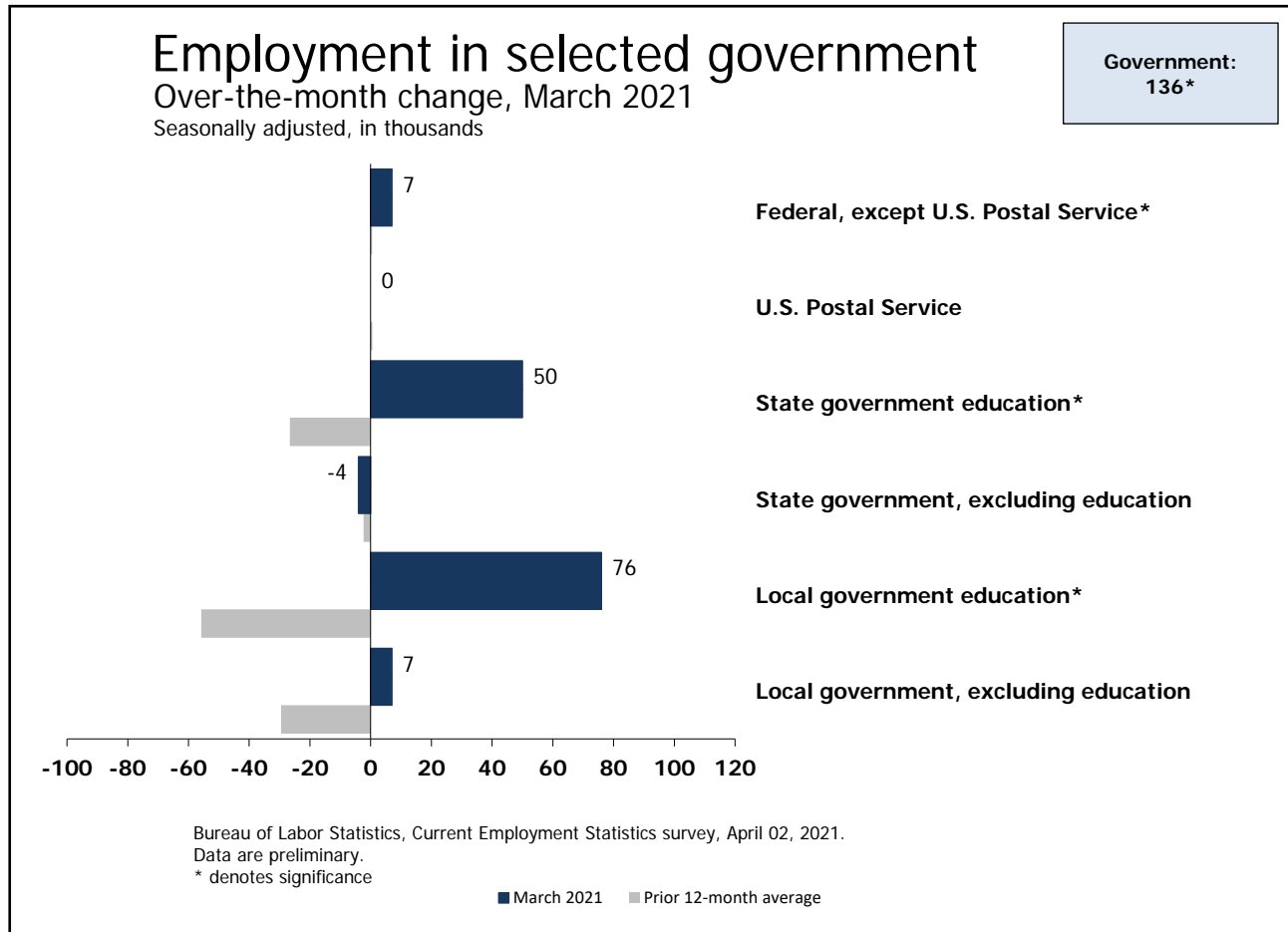


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Employment in other services grew by 42,000 in March. The industry has recovered 1.0 million of 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

In March 2021, repair and maintenance (+18,000) and personal and laundry services (+19,000) added jobs.

## Government



Government employment increased by 136,000 in March. Local education (+76,000) and state education (+50,000) added the majority of jobs as schools transitioned to more [in-person learning](#).

In March, the Federal government also added jobs (+7,000).



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