



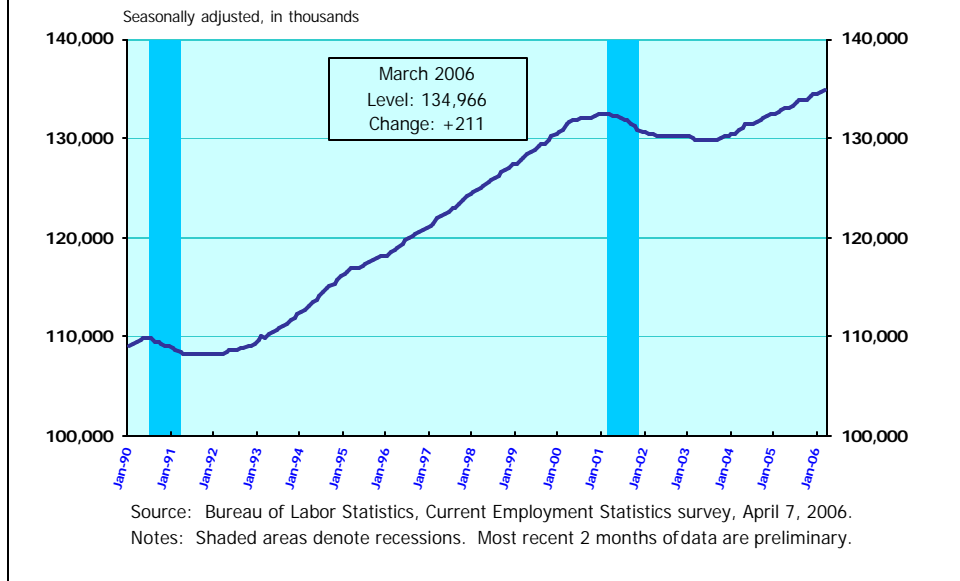
# **Current Employment Statistics**

## **Highlights**

### **March 2006**

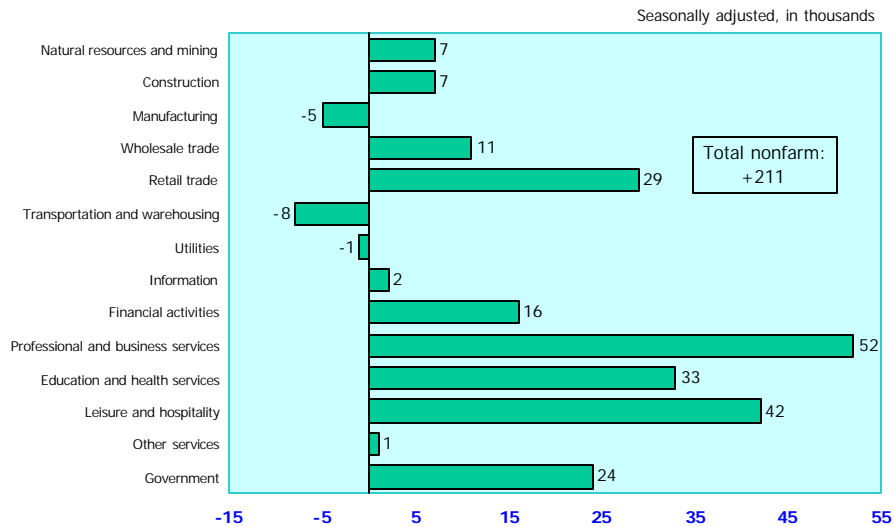
Bureau of Labor Statistics  
April 7, 2006

## All employees on nonfarm payrolls 1990-2006



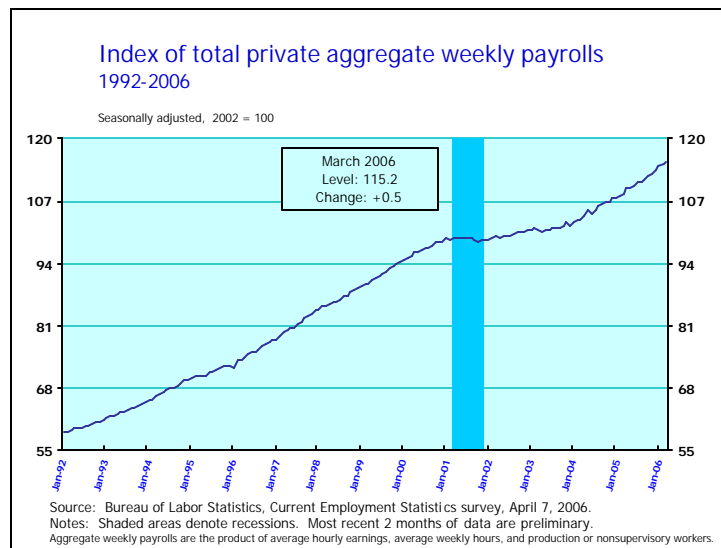
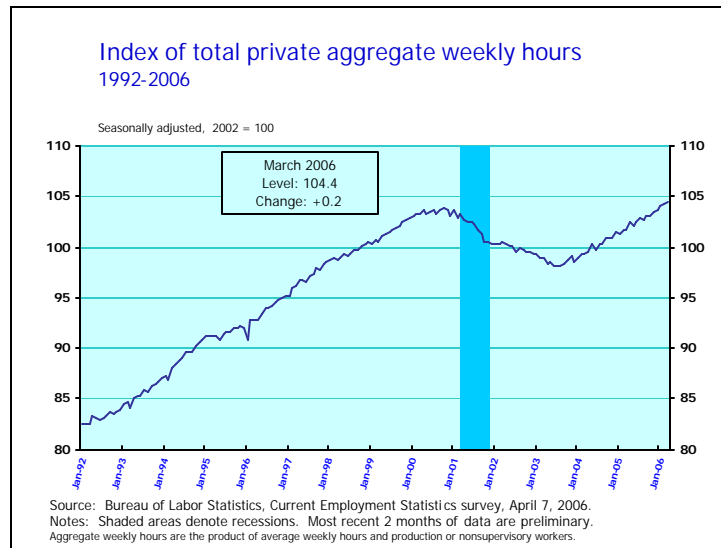
- Nonfarm payroll employment increased by 211,000 in March to 135.0 million. This increase follows gains of 154,000 in January and 225,000 in February. Over the year, payroll employment has grown by 2.1 million.
- The average hourly earnings of production or nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 3 cents to \$16.49, seasonally adjusted. Average hourly earnings have increased 21 cents in the last 4 months. Over the year, average hourly earnings increased by 3.4 percent.
- Average weekly hours of production or nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls were unchanged in March, and remain at 33.8 hours, seasonally adjusted. Since late 2002, the average workweek has been flat, fluctuating between 33.6 and 33.8 hours.

## Employment in total nonfarm and supersectors Over-the-month change, March 2006



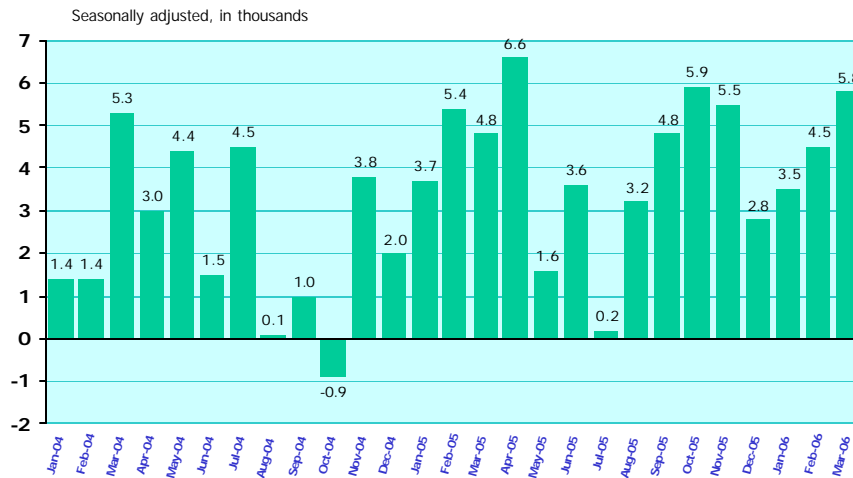
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 7, 2006.  
Note: Data are preliminary.

- Gains among the goods-producing industries were subdued in March as construction, which has accounted for much of the growth in this sector, remained essentially unchanged over the month.
- The private service-providing industries experienced widespread gains in March. This sector, led by gains in professional and business services (+52,000), leisure and hospitality (+42,000), education and health services (+33,000), and retail trade (+29,000), accounted for over 80 percent of total nonfarm growth over the month.
- In the public sector, government added 24,000 jobs to payrolls in March. These gains occurred primarily among local governments, where both the education and non-education components experienced solid growth.



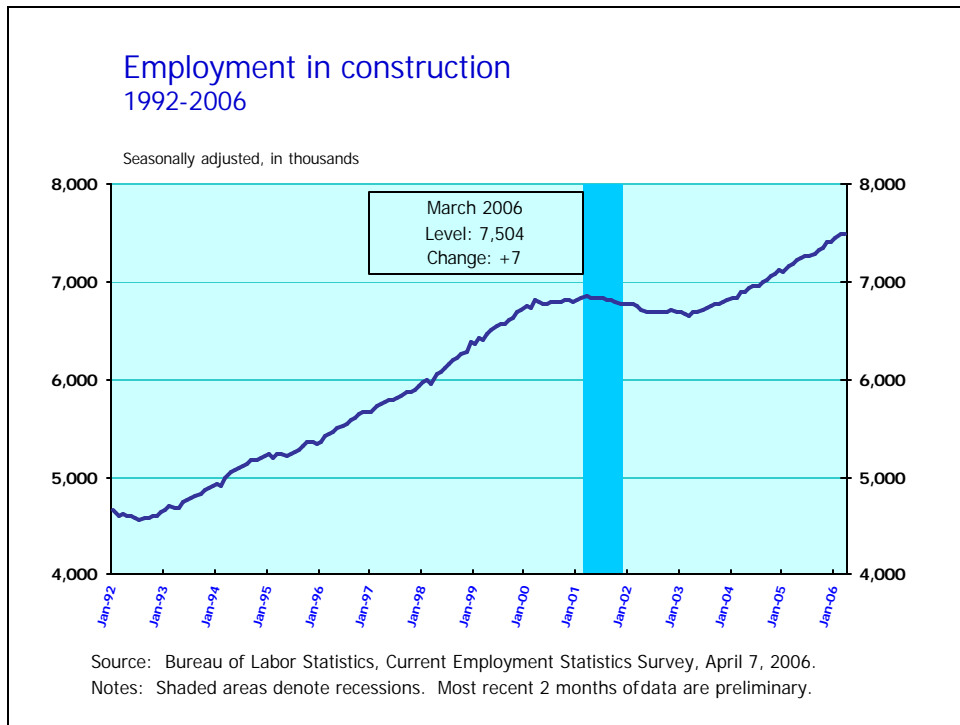
- The index of aggregate weekly hours of production or nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls increased by 0.2 percent to 104.4 in March, seasonally adjusted. Since its most recent trough in August 2003, the index has increased by 6.3 percent, surpassing the level of its most recent peak (103.9) in October 2000.
- The index of aggregate weekly payrolls of production or nonsupervisory workers on private nonfarm payrolls increased by 0.4 percent to 115.2 in March, seasonally adjusted. Over-the-year, this index has grown by 6.1 percent—the largest March-to-March increase since 1999-2000.

## Employment in mining Over-the-month change, 2004-06



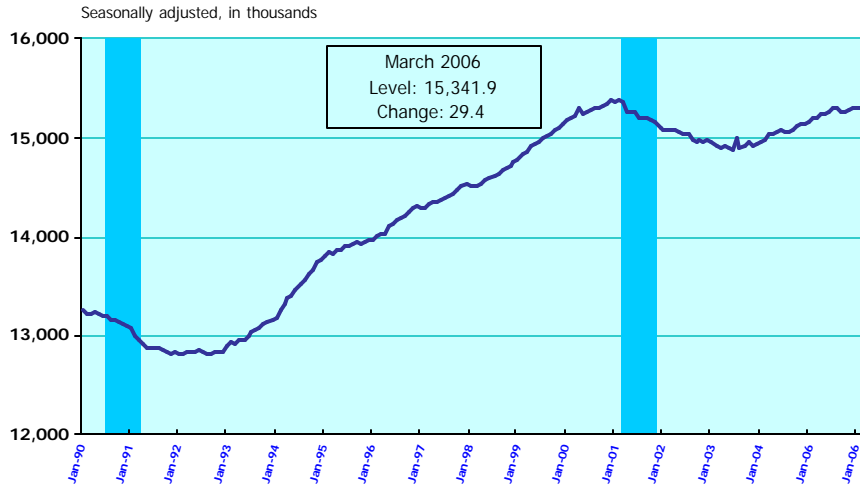
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 7, 2006.  
Note: Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

- Employment in mining continued to expand in March, adding 6,000 jobs to payrolls. Since reaching an employment trough in April 2003, mining employment has increased by 97,000.
- Support activities for mining, particularly those related to oil and gas, accounted for much of the over-the-month gain. Oil and gas extraction also posted a gain of 1,200 jobs—roughly double its prior 12-month trend. Employment in these industries continues to be driven by high oil and gas prices which are being fueled, at least in part, by increasing demand and ongoing supply disruptions, such as those caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.



- Employment in construction was essentially unchanged in March, following strong gains in the prior 2 months. Mild winter weather, which allowed firms to bring on additional workers earlier in the season, and a residential housing market that appears to be cooling both contributed to the current month's slowdown in employment growth. Construction, however, has added 311,000 jobs over the year, growing at a rate of 4.3 percent
- March's weakness was concentrated largely in specialty trade contractors (-3,100), an industry which has grown steadily in recent years. In fact, March's movement represents only the second employment loss experienced by this industry since March 2003. The residential portion of specialty trade contractors was entirely responsible for this drop, shedding 10,700 jobs—the largest one-month decline in the history of the series (which extends back to January 2001).

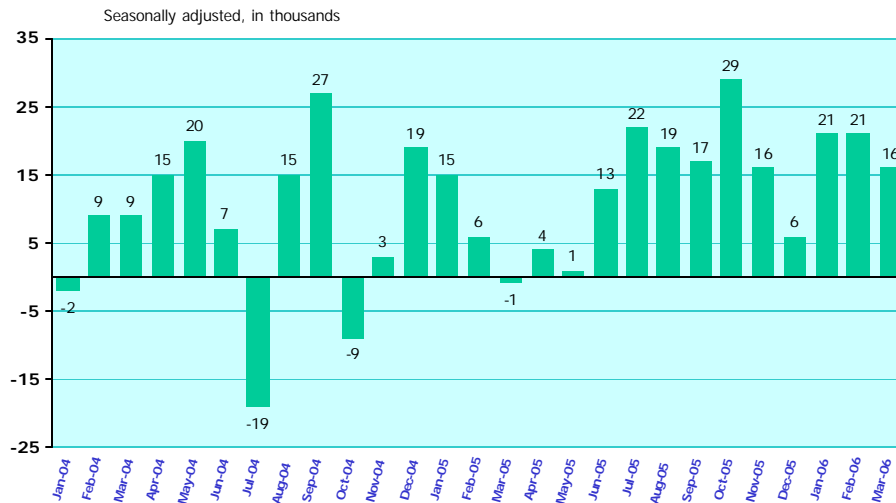
## Employment in retail trade 1990-2006



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Survey, April 7, 2006.  
Notes: Shaded areas denote recessions. Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

- Retail trade added 29,000 jobs to payrolls in March. The industry is now just 0.2 percent below its December 2000 peak.
- This above-average job gain was concentrated in general merchandise stores, which had its largest over-the-month employment increase since February 2002.
- Building material and garden supply stores experienced slightly above-average job growth. Employment in this industry has expanded by 44,000 over the year.

## Employment in financial activities Over-the-month change, 2004-06

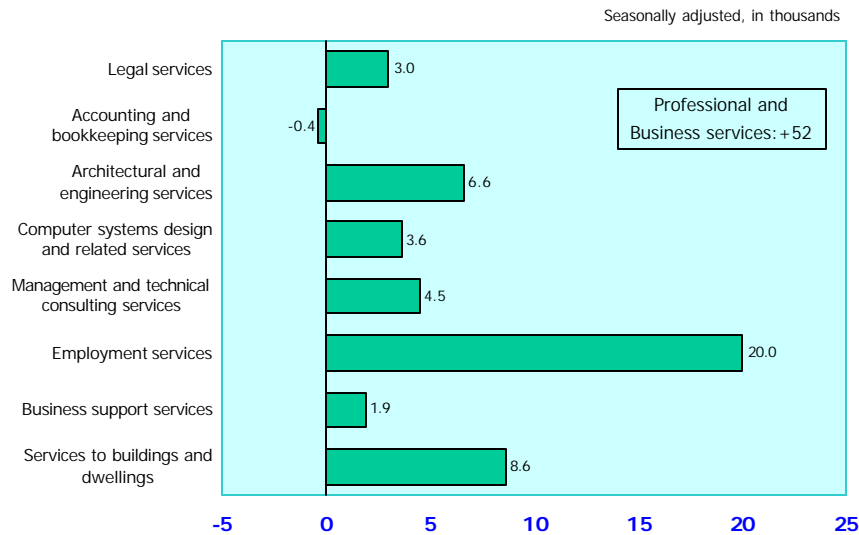


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 7, 2006.  
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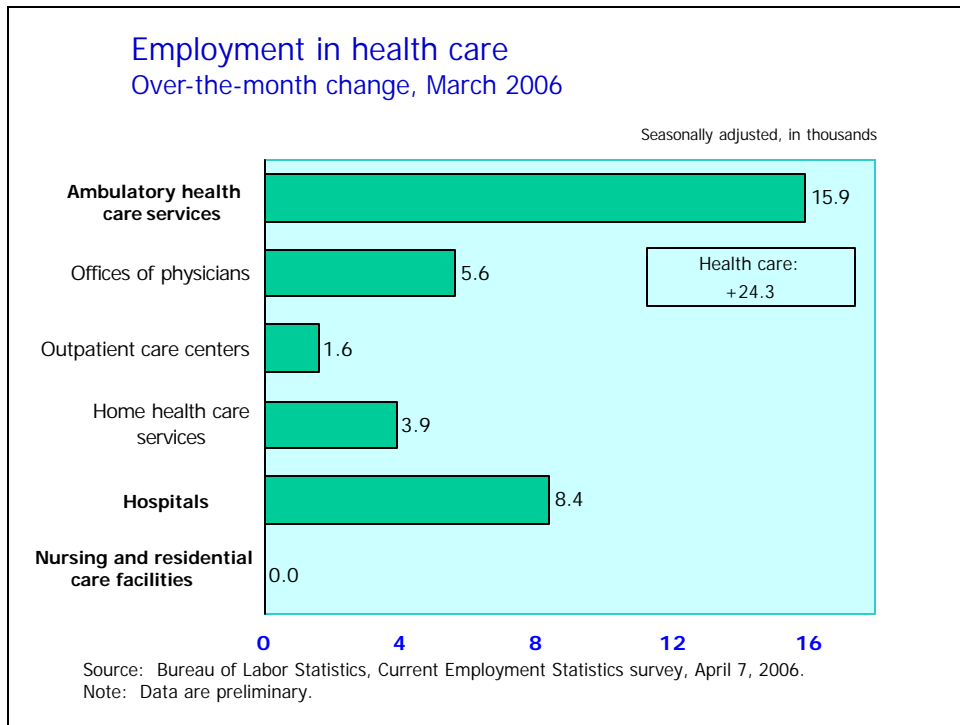
- Employment in financial activities edged up over the month, following stronger gains in January and February. Financial activities employment has risen by 185,000 over the year.
- Employment in most of the industry was flat in March; however, depository credit intermediation and insurance carriers and related activities added 7,000 jobs each, following similar gains in February. The gain in depository credit intermediation was concentrated in commercial banking.



## Employment in selected professional and business services Over-the-month change, March 2006

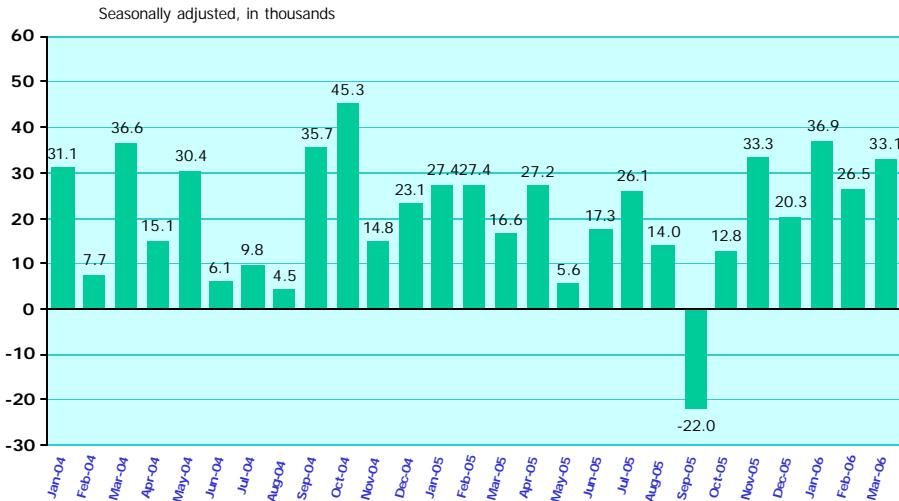


- Professional and business services grew for the fifth straight month, adding 52,000 jobs in February. The industry has added 469,000 jobs over the year.
- Employment growth was spread amongst the component industries.
- Employment notched up in administrative and support services, which includes temporary help services and services to buildings. Temporary help employment has changed little since November.



- Health care continued in March with average job growth. Over the year, employment has expanded by 293,000.
- Ambulatory health care services contributed the largest employment increase in March, adding 16,000 jobs and reflecting continued job growth in hospitals, doctors' offices, and home health care services.

## Employment in food services and drinking places Over-the-month change, 2004-06



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 7, 2006.

Note: Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

- Food services and drinking places continued its trend of solid job growth by adding 33,000 jobs in March. Over-the-year, this industry has added 231,000 jobs to payrolls and accounted for over 80 percent of the jobs added to the leisure and hospitality industry. The continued job growth coincides with strong sales in food services and drinking places industry.