

## Contents

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[Summary](#)

[Mining & Logging](#)

[Construction](#)

[Manufacturing](#)

[Wholesale Trade](#)

[Retail Trade](#)

[Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities](#)

[Information](#)

[Financial Activities](#)

[Professional & Business Services](#)

[Private Education & Health Services](#)

[Leisure & Hospitality](#)

[Other Services](#)

[Government](#)

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# Current Employment Statistics Highlights



**January 2021**

**Release Date:** February 5, 2021

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

202-691-6555

[Email CES](#)

### Current Employment Statistics Summary, January 2021

Nonfarm payroll employment changed little in January (+49,000). Professional and business services and public and private education added jobs, while leisure and hospitality, retail trade, health care, and transportation and warehousing lost jobs. Total nonfarm employment is down by 9.9 million since reaching a peak in February 2020.

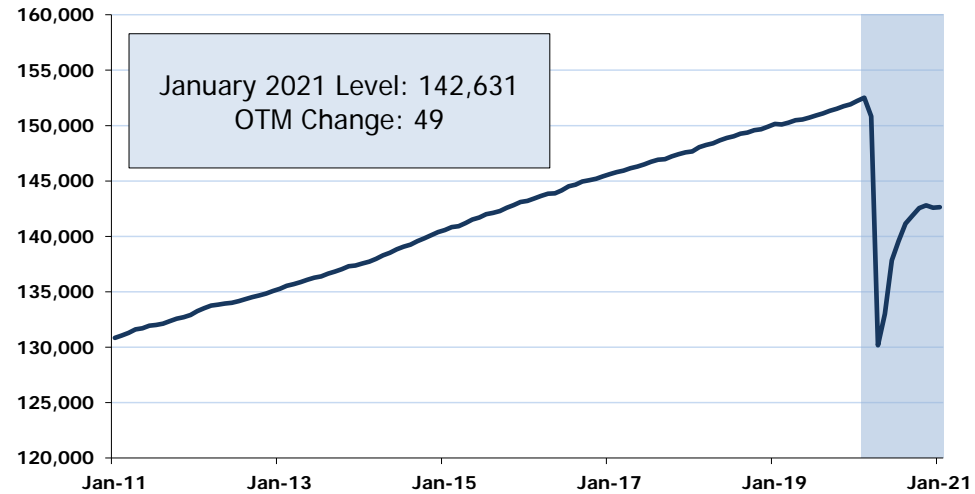
Average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls rose by 6 cents or 0.2 percent in January. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 5.4 percent. In January, average weekly hours increased by 0.3 hour to 35.0 hours.

In accordance with annual practice, CES data have been revised to reflect comprehensive counts of payroll jobs, or benchmarks, derived primarily from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, which enumerates jobs covered by unemployment insurance tax records. CES employment for March 2020 was revised down by 250,000 (by -121,000 or 0.1 percent on a not seasonally adjusted basis). See [www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cesbmart.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cesbmart.pdf) for an analysis of benchmark revisions.

The seasonally adjusted employment change for December revised down from -140,000 to -227,000, and the change for

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

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, February 05, 2021.  
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.  
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\* denotes significance.

November revised down from +336,000 to +264,000.

#### +97,000 Professional and Business Services

Employment in professional and business services rose by 97,000 in January. The industry has recovered 1.6 million of the 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April of 2020. In January, temporary help services accounted

for 81,000 of the increase, followed by smaller gains in management and technical consulting (+16,000), computer systems design (+11,000), and scientific research and development (+10,000). The gains were partly offset by job losses in services to buildings and dwellings (-14,000) and in advertising and related services (-6,000).

## Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, January 2021

### +43,000 Government

Government employment rose by 43,000 in January. Job gains in local education (+49,000) and state education (+36,000) were partly offset by a loss of 24,000 jobs in federal government. Overall government employment is down by 1.3 million since February 2020.

### +14,000 Wholesale Trade

Employment in wholesale trade rose by 14,000 in January 2021 but is down by 269,000 since a peak one year ago. The gain in January was distributed among durable and nondurable goods industries.

### +9,000 Mining and Logging

Mining added 9,000 jobs in January, mostly in support activities. Employment in the industry had declined by 151,000 between January 2019 and August 2020, but it has changed little since (+18,000).

### -7,000 Education and Health Services

Private educational services added 34,000 jobs in January. Since reaching an employment peak in January 2020, however, private education has lost 434,000 jobs.

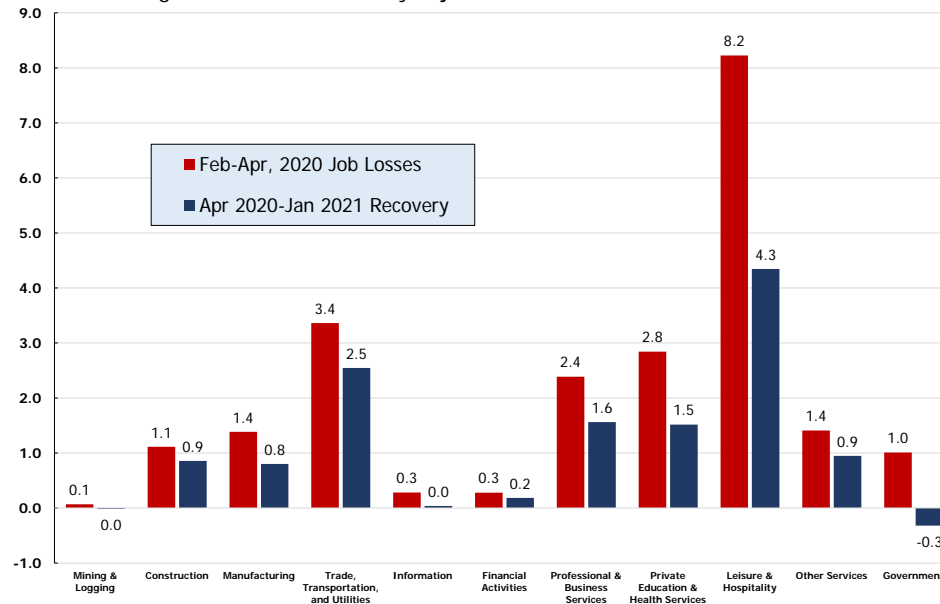
In January 2021, health care lost 30,000 jobs, mostly concentrated in nursing care facilities (-19,000), home health care (-13,000), and community care facilities for the elderly (-7,000). Since February 2020, employment in health care has decreased by a net 542,000.

### -61,000 Leisure and Hospitality

Leisure and hospitality lost 61,000 jobs in January, and weakness was widespread.

### Employment changes by industry sector

Net change, in millions, seasonally adjusted



Employment edged down by 27,000 in amusements, gambling, and recreation and by 18,000 in accommodation, and it continued to trend down in food services and drinking places (-19,000).

Employment in leisure and hospitality fell by about 50 percent during the first two months of the pandemic, started to recover over the following 7 months, and then turned down again. Employment in the sector is still

### Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, January 2021

3.9 million lower than in February 2020, with food services and drinking places accounting for 2.4 million of the net loss.

#### -38,000 Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade declined by 38,000 in January, led by losses in general merchandise stores (-38,000), electronics and appliance stores (-29,000), and nonstore retailers (-15,000). In contrast, both food stores and clothing stores added 15,000 jobs, while health and personal care stores added 14,000 jobs. Retail employment is down 383,000 since February 2020.

#### -28,000 Transportation and Warehousing

In January, warehousing and storage (-17,000) and couriers and messengers (-14,000) lost jobs, which were partly offset by a gain of 15,000 in air transportation. Since February 2020, employment in transportation and warehousing is down by 164,000, although both couriers and warehousing have shown net job gains over this period.

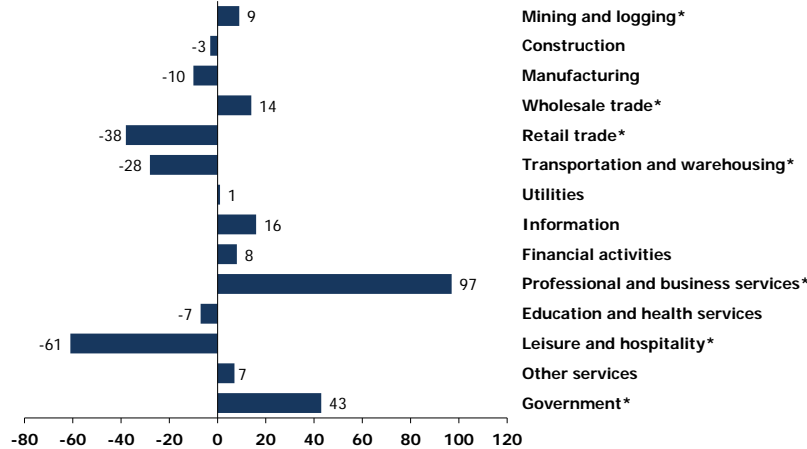
#### -10,000 Manufacturing

Employment in manufacturing changed little over the month. Durable goods lost 17,000 jobs, including 6,000 in nonmetallic

### Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, January 2021  
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:  
49



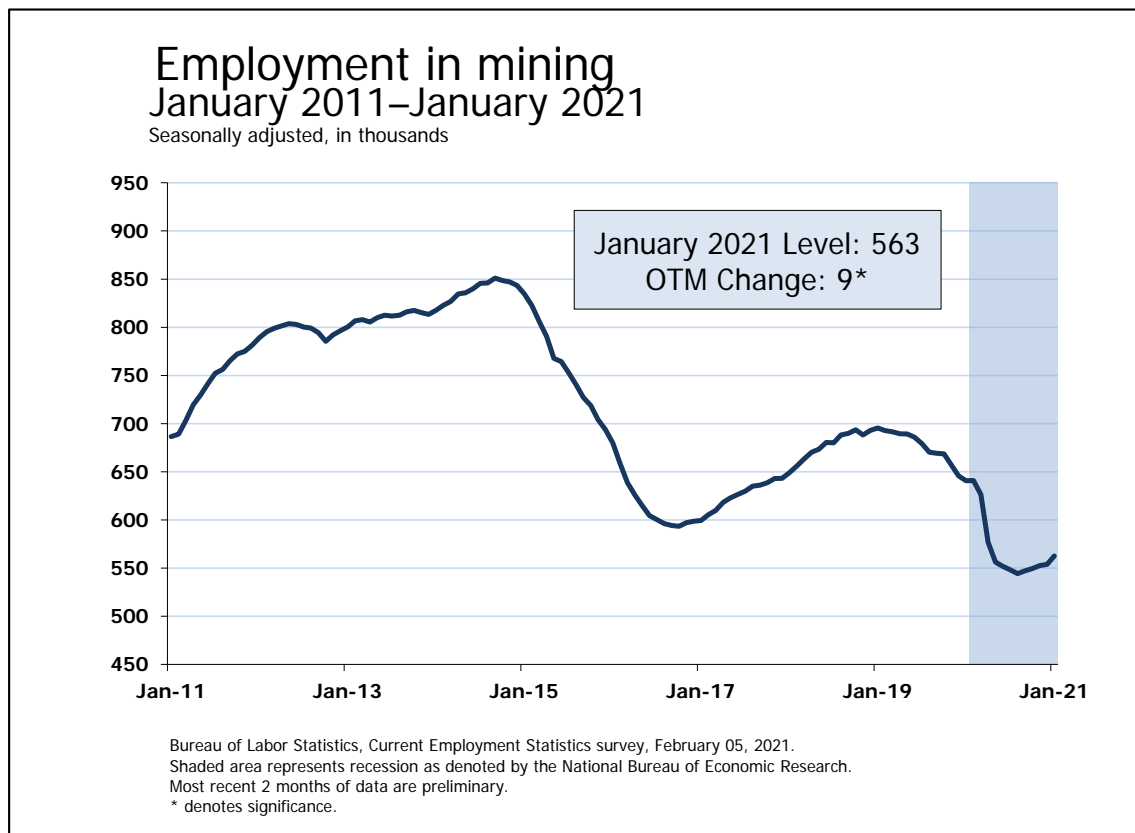
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\* denotes significance

mineral products. Within nondurable goods, chemicals added 11,000 jobs.

#### -3,000 Construction

Construction employment was flat in January after 8 months of growth; however, employment is 256,000 lower than in February 2020.

## Mining and Logging



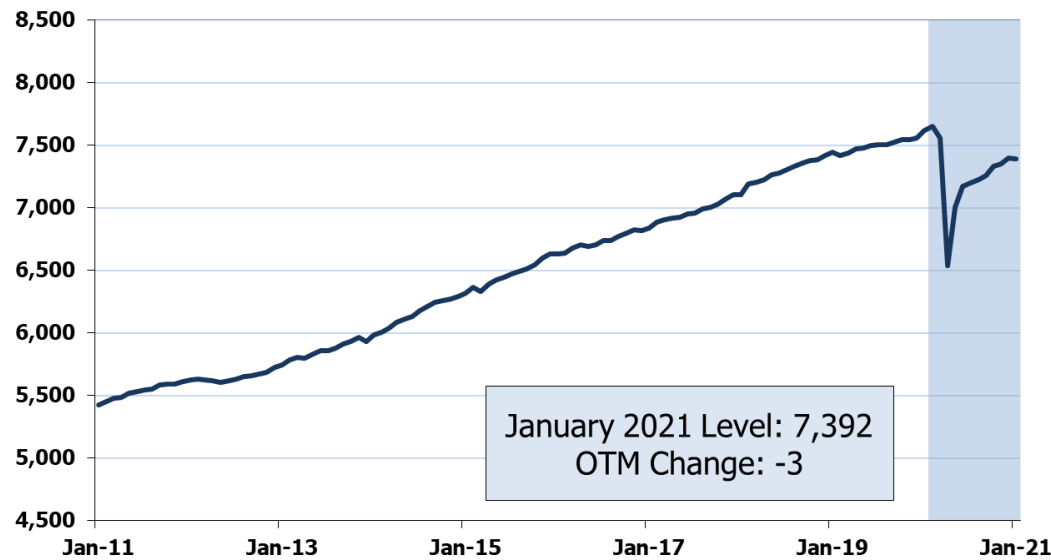
Mining employment increased by 9,000 in January. Support activities for mining accounted for 8,000 of the over-the-month change. Since declining by 151,000 between January 2019 and August 2020, employment in mining has shown little net change (+18,000).

In January, the strength in mining employment corresponded with increases in the number of active [North American rotary rigs](#) and in the price of [West Texas Intermediate crude oil](#).

## Construction

### Employment in construction January 2011–January 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

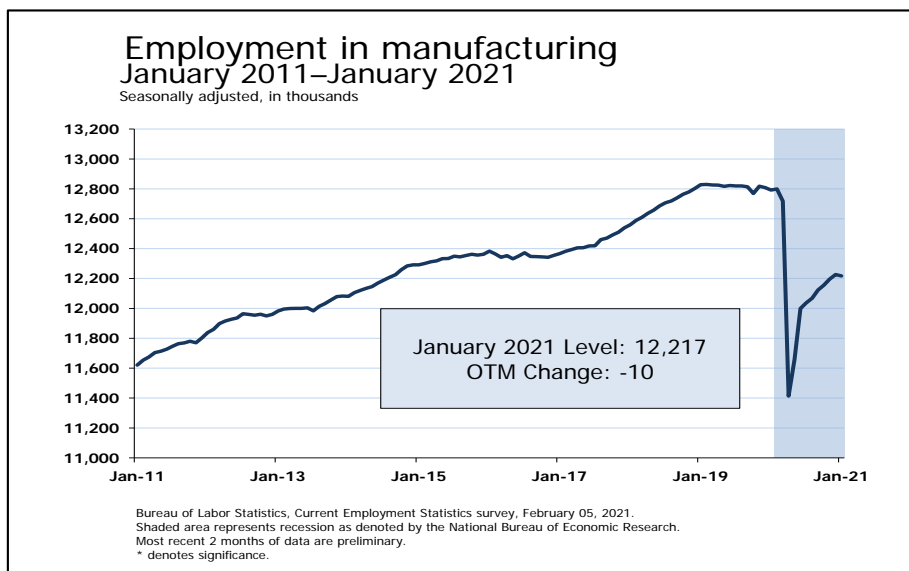


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Construction employment changed little in January (-3,000). The industry had added jobs over the prior 8 months, but employment is still 256,000 lower than in February 2020.

The employment weakness in January followed growth in [construction spending](#) and [new home sales](#) in December.

## Manufacturing



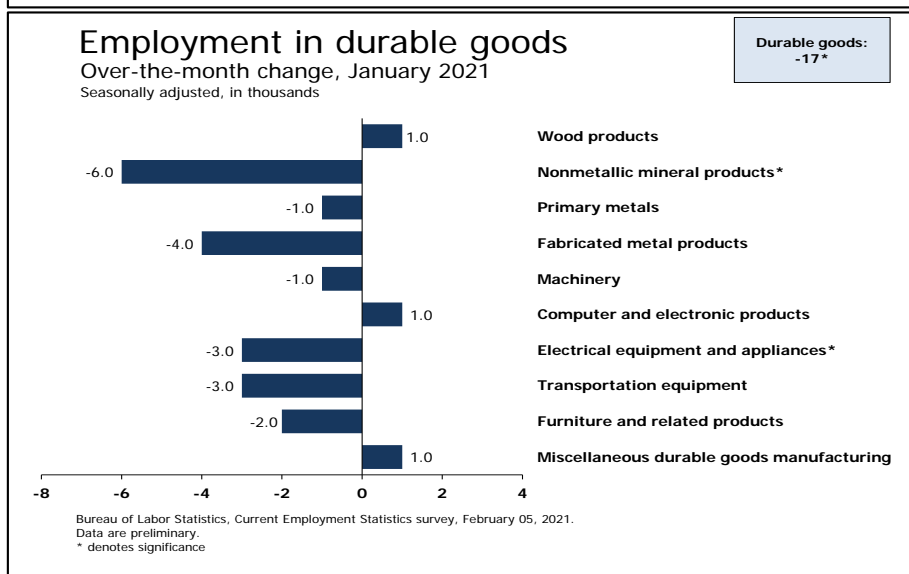
Manufacturing employment changed little in January (-10,000) after 8 months of growth. As of January, manufacturing has recovered 803,000 of the 1.4 million jobs lost during March and April 2020.

In January, the manufacturing 1-month diffusion index decreased to 43.3, a change of -26.0 points, indicating that more manufacturing industries are losing jobs than are adding jobs.

Employment in durable goods decreased by 17,000 in January, with losses in nonmetallic mineral products (-6,000) and electrical equipment and appliances (-3,000). Within nondurable goods, chemicals added 11,000 jobs over the month.

In January, average hourly earnings for all employees in manufacturing rose 2 cents to \$29.02. Average hourly earnings of production workers increased by 5 cents to \$23.22.

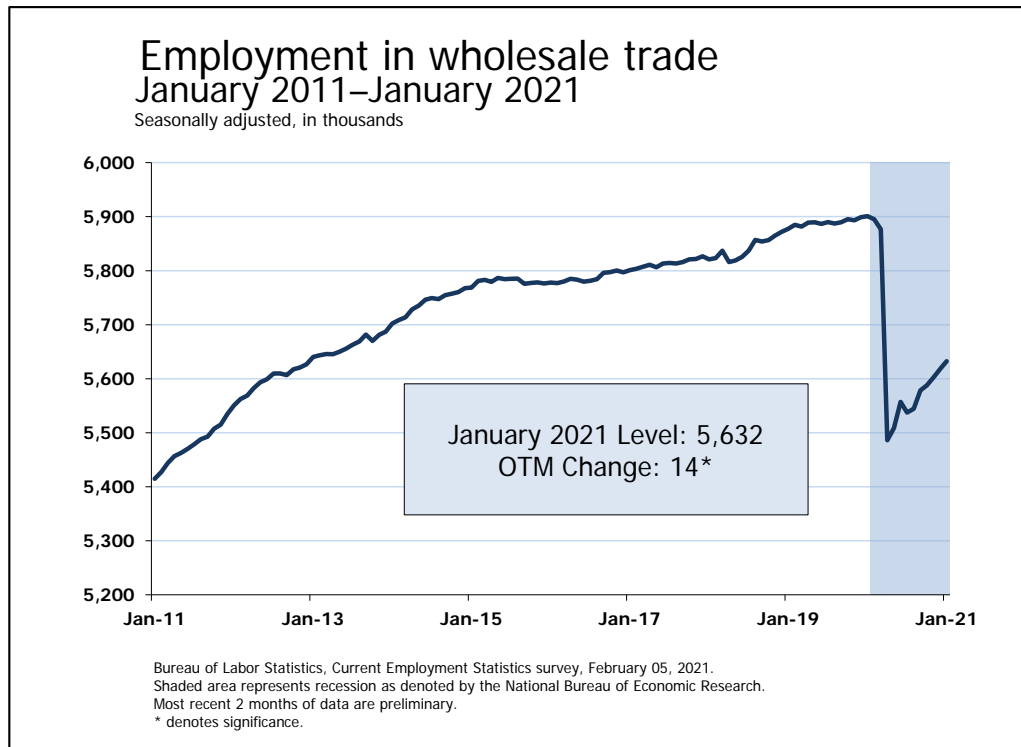
Average weekly hours of all employees in January increased 0.3 hour to 40.4 hours. For production workers, the average workweek increased by 0.2 hour to 41.5 hours.



## Wholesale Trade

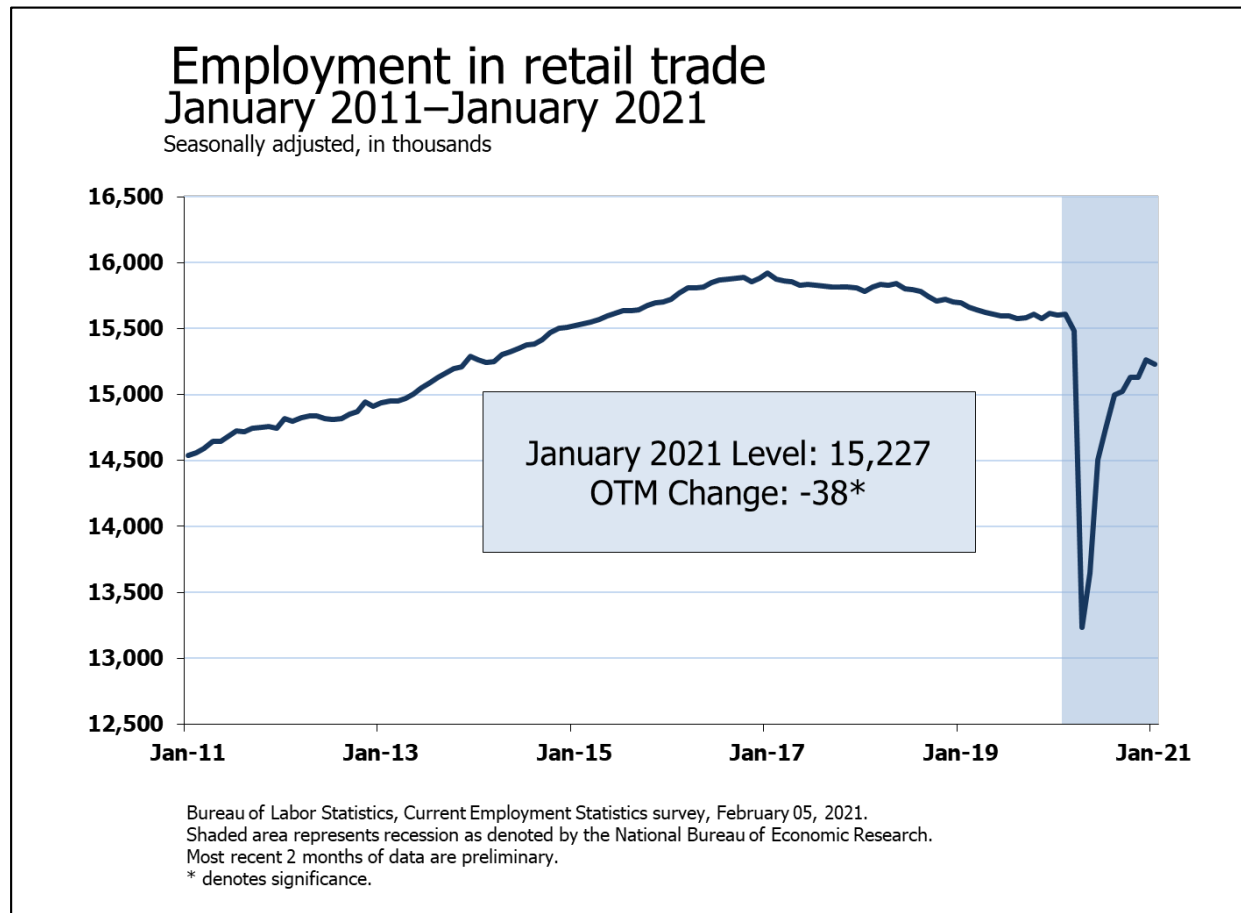
Employment in wholesale trade increased by 14,000 in January and the industry has recovered 146,000 of the 415,000 jobs lost in February, March, and April. Gains during this recovery have been evenly split between durable and nondurable goods.

As of January 2021, employment in wholesale trade remained 269,000 below its peak in January 2020.





## Retail Trade

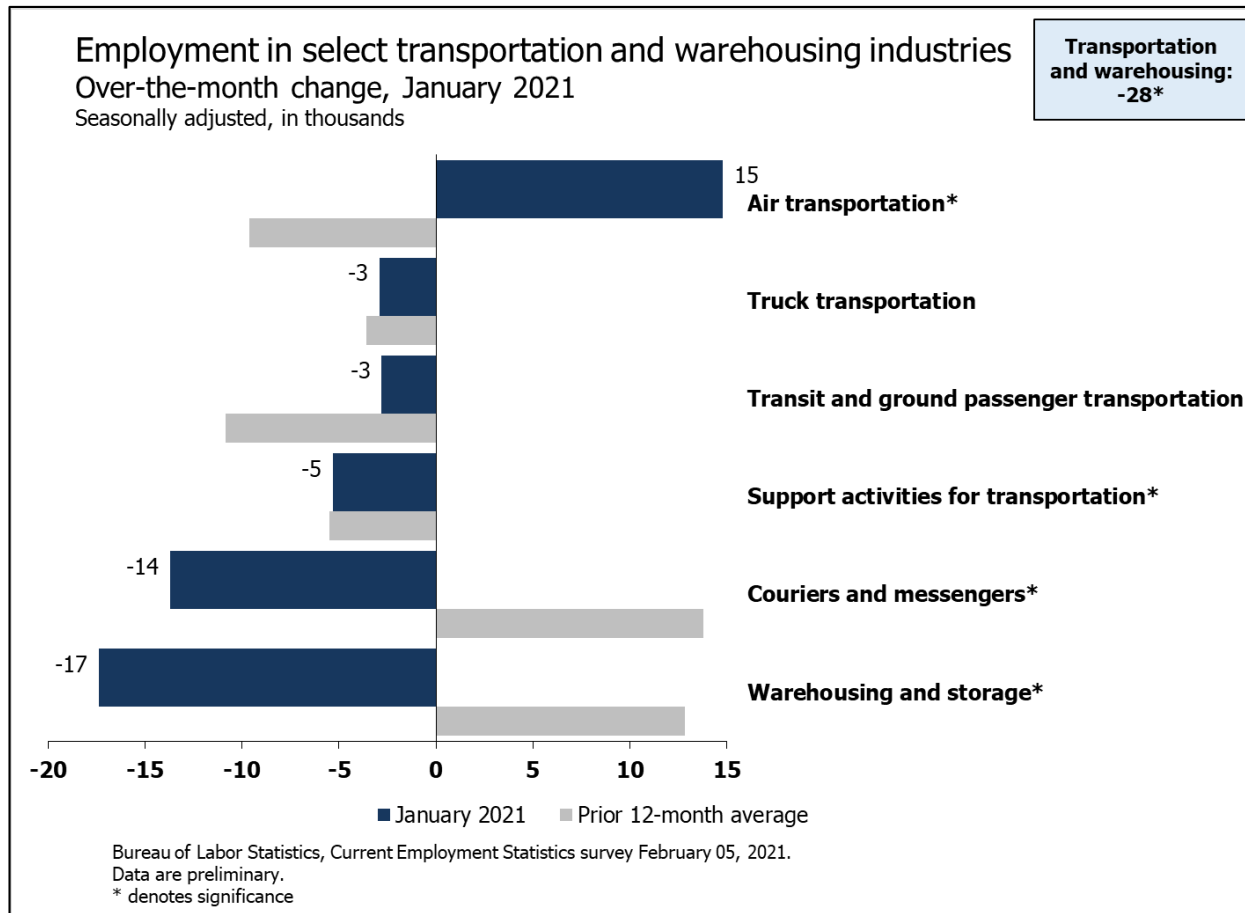


Employment in retail trade declined by 38,000 in January, although the industry has recovered 2.0 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

Within the industry, employment declines occurred in general merchandise stores (-38,000), and electronics and appliance stores (-29,000). These declines were partially offset by job gains in food and beverage stores (+15,000), clothing and clothing accessories stores (+15,000), and health and personal care stores (+14,000).

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

## Transportation and Warehousing



Employment in transportation and warehousing fell by 28,000 in January, after declining by 24,000 in December. Industry employment remains 164,000 below its most recent peak in February 2020.

Job losses in January were driven by warehousing and storage (-17,000) and couriers and messengers (-14,000). Despite the losses, warehousing and storage has added 97,000 jobs since February 2020, while couriers and messengers has added 137,000 jobs.

Air transportation gained 15,000 jobs, partly offsetting losses in January. The growth comes as airlines call back [furloughed workers](#) due to renewed federal aid included in the most recent COVID-19 relief package.

## Utilities

### Employment in utilities January 2011–January 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



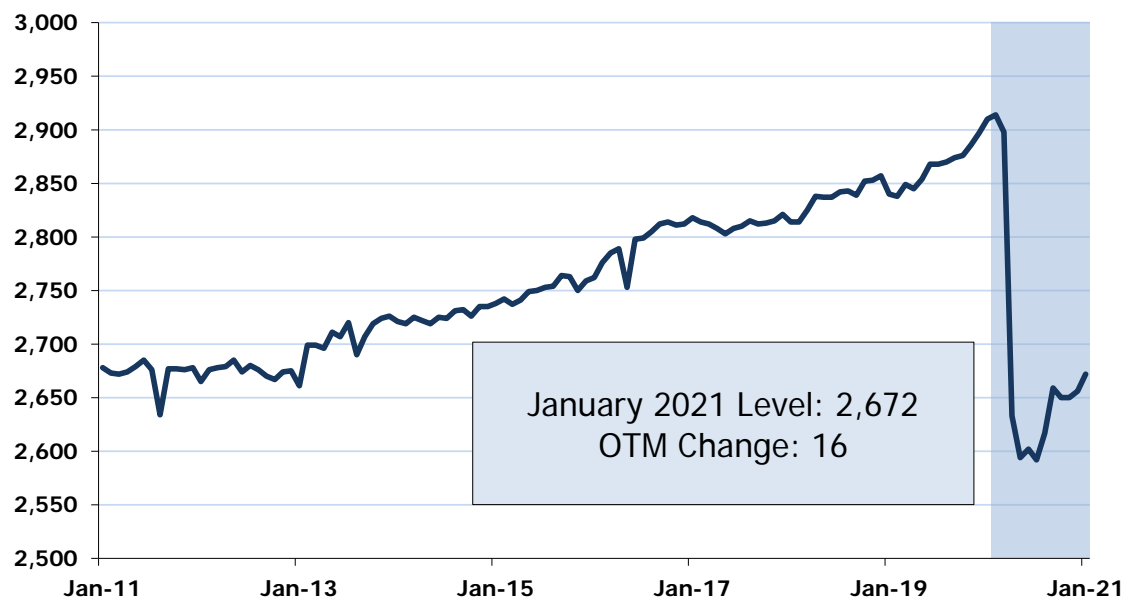
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Utilities employment was flat in January (+1,000). Over the year, the industry has lost 9,000 jobs.

### Information

## Employment in information January 2011–January 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



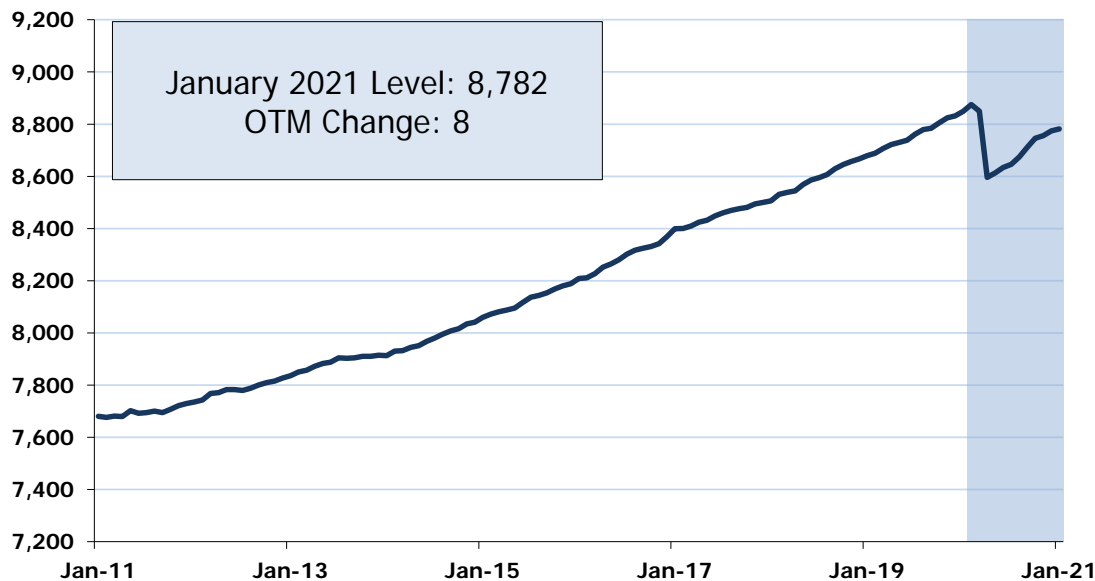
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Employment in information changed little in January (+16,000), although telecommunications added 6,000 jobs. Information employment remains 242,000 below its February 2020 level.

### Financial Activities

## Employment in financial activities January 2011–January 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

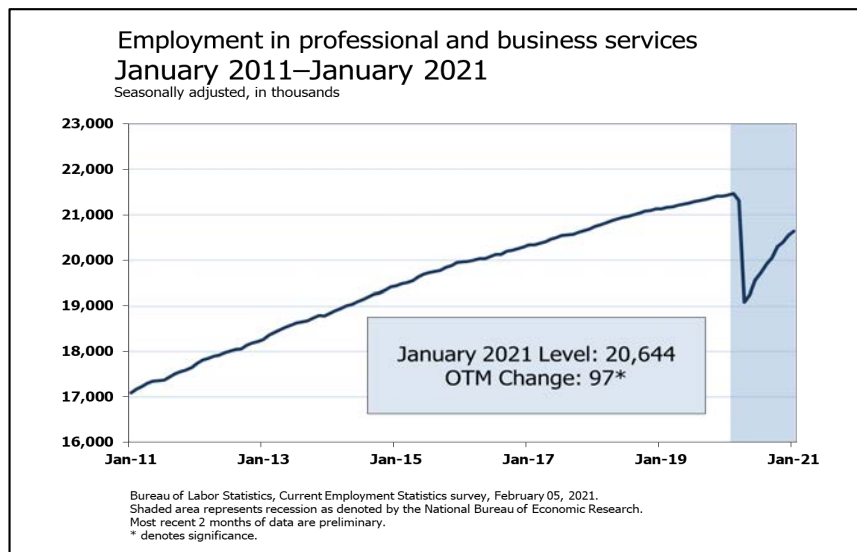


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Employment in financial activities changed little in January (+8,000). The industry has recovered 186,000 of the 279,000 jobs lost in March and April 2020, and employment remains 93,000 lower than its peak in February 2020.

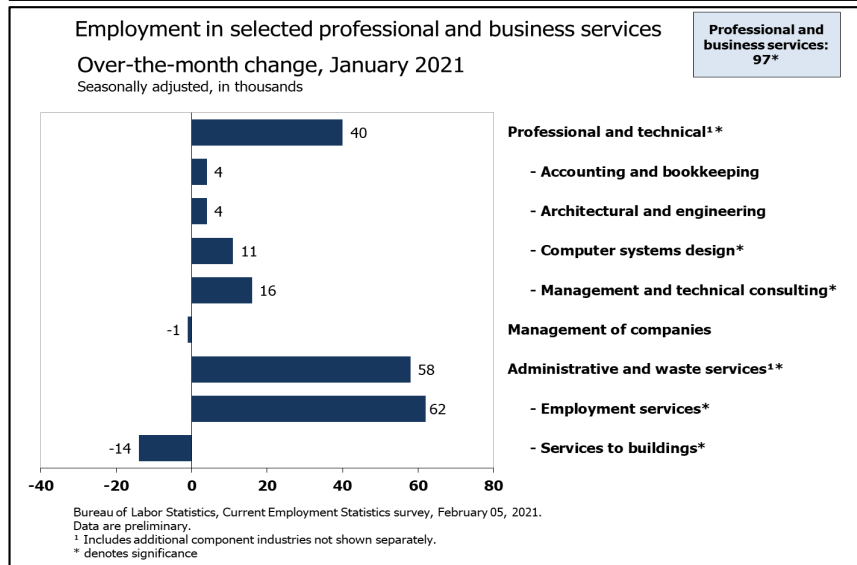
Within the industry, job losses occurred in insurance carriers and related activities (-9,000) and commercial banking (-4,000). These declines were partially offset by an increase of 9,000 jobs in securities and commodities.

## Professional and Business Services



Employment in professional and business services increased by 97,000 in January but is still 825,000 below its peak in February 2020.

In January 2021, employment gains occurred in professional and technical services (+40,000), led by management and technical consulting (+16,000), computer systems design and related services (+11,000), and scientific research and development services (+10,000). Over the past 9 months, professional and technical services has recovered 403,000 of 545,000 jobs lost in March and April 2020.



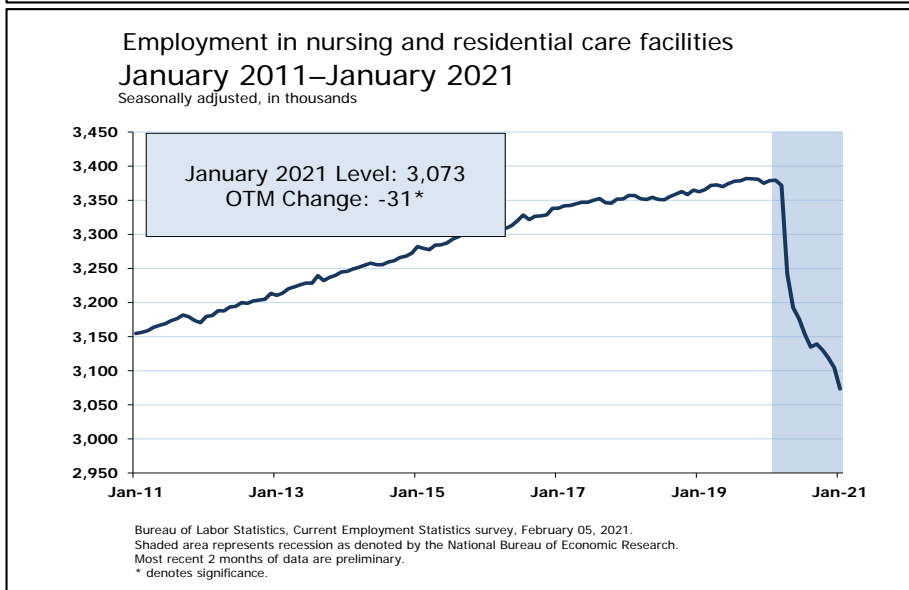
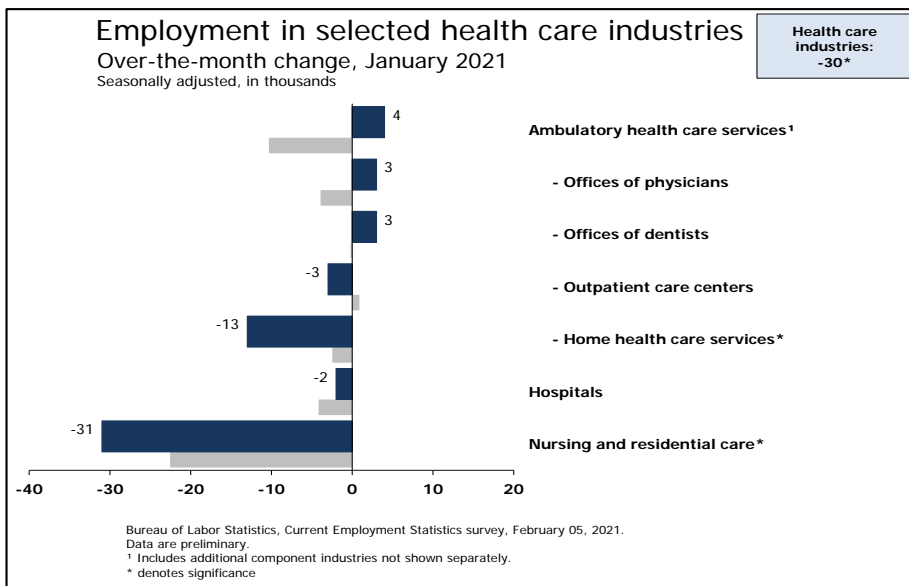
In January, administrative and support services added 59,000 jobs, with temporary help services accounting for 81,000 of the increase. Services to buildings and dwelling lost jobs (-14,000). Over the past 9 months, administrative and support services has added 1.1 million of the 1.7 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

## Private Education and Health Services

Employment in health care decreased by 30,000 in January. Within ambulatory health care services, home health care services lost 13,000 jobs over the month, more than offsetting a gain of 5,000 in other ambulatory health care services.

Private educational services added 34,000 jobs in January. Despite the gain, the industry has lost 434,000 jobs since reaching an employment peak in January 2020.

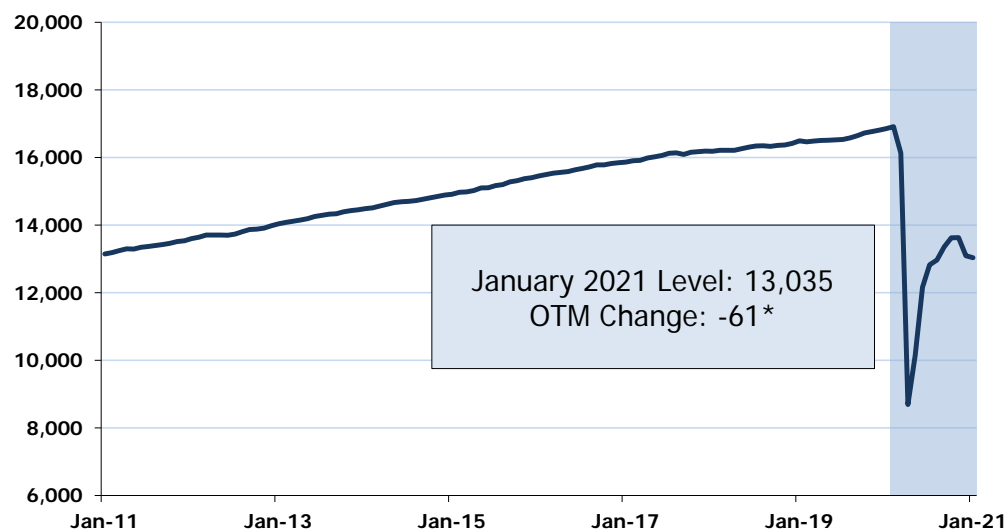
In January, nursing and residential care facilities continued to shed jobs (-31,000), with nursing care facilities accounting for 19,000 of the loss. Community care facilities for the elderly also lost jobs over the month (-7,000). Employment in nursing and residential care facilities has decreased by 306,000 since February.



## Leisure and Hospitality

### Employment in leisure and hospitality January 2011–January 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



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Employment in leisure and hospitality fell by 61,000 in January. Employment edged down by 27,000 in amusements, gambling, and recreation and by 18,000 in accommodation, and it continued to trend down in food services and drinking places (-19,000).

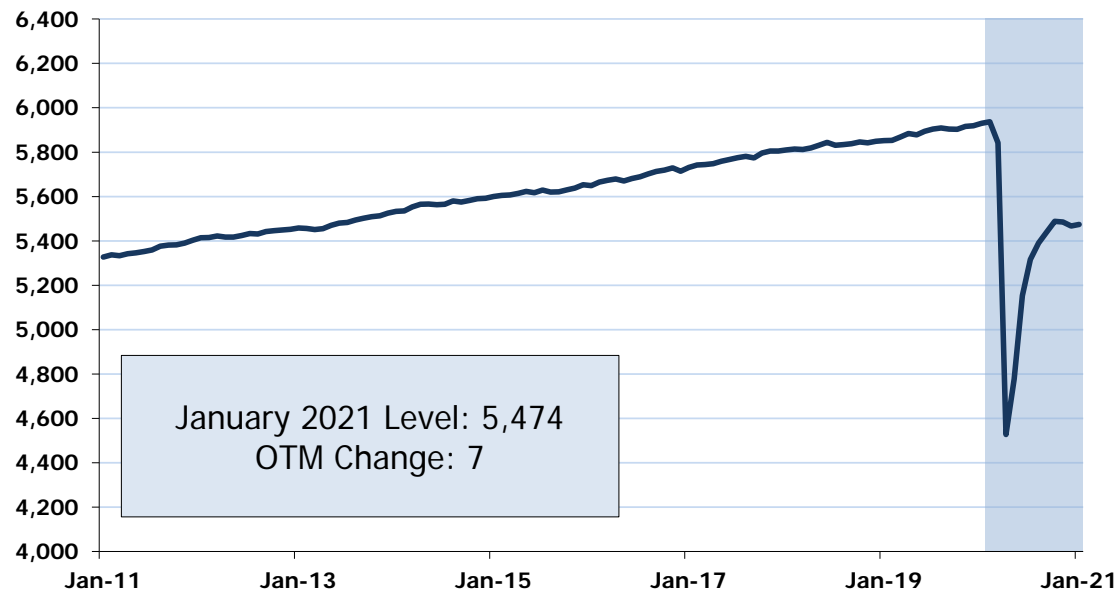
Employment in leisure and hospitality fell by about 8.2 million during the first two months of the pandemic, started to recover over the following 7 months, and then turned down again. Employment in the sector remains 3.9 million below its February 2020 level, with food services and drinking places accounting for 2.4 million of the net loss.



## Other Services

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

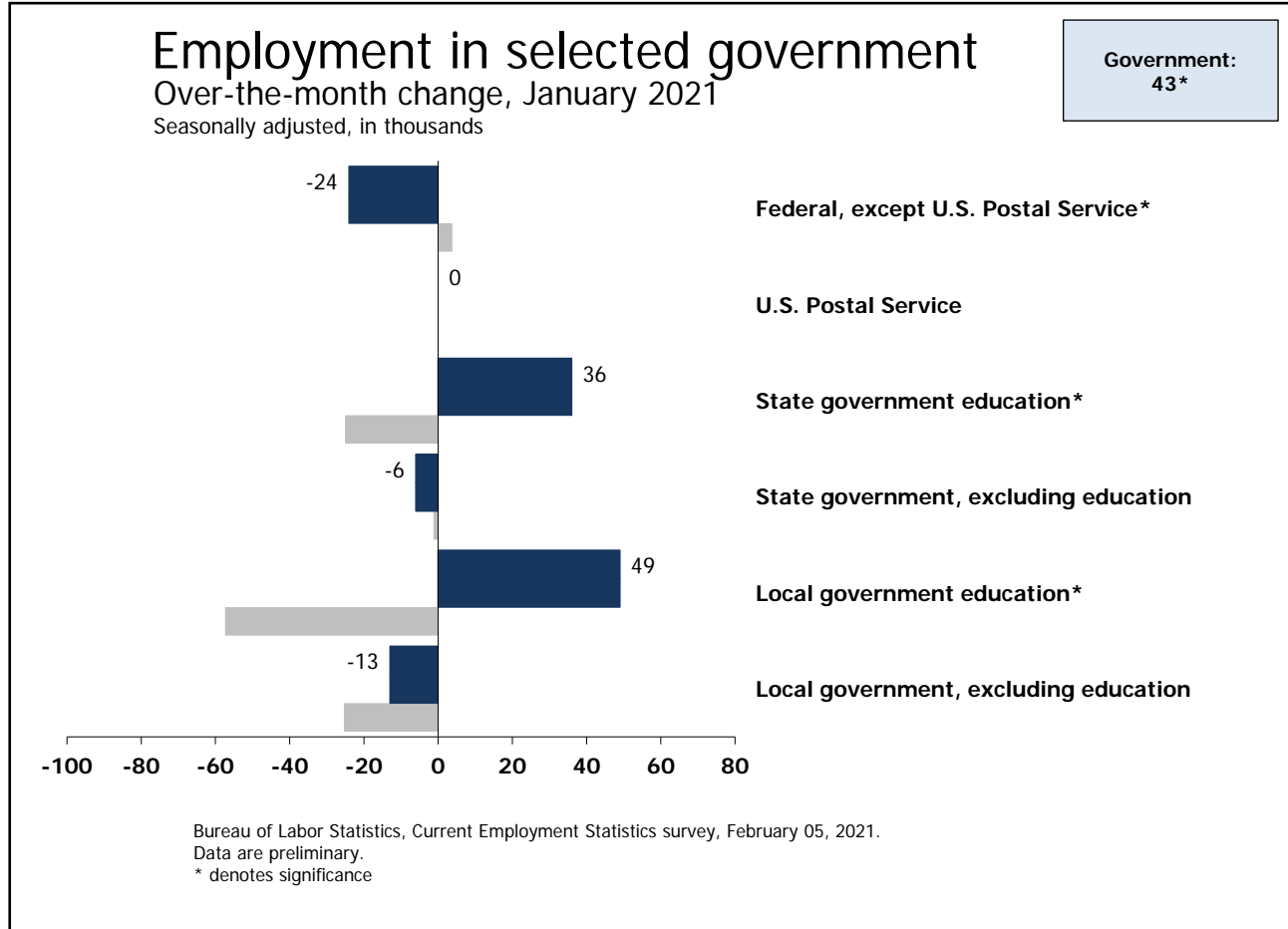
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



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Employment in other services changed little in January (+7,000). The industry has recovered 947,000 of the 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

## Government



Government employment increased by 43,000 in January. Job gains in local education (+49,000) and state education (+36,000) were partially offset by a loss of 24,000 in federal government.



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