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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



August 2021

Release Date: September 3, 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, August 2021

Payroll employment rose by 235,000 in August after growing by 1.1 million in July and 962,000 in June. Since April 2020, employment has risen by 17.0 million but is 5.3 million, or 3.5 percent, lower than a peak in February 2020. ¹

In August, job growth occurred in professional and business services, transportation and warehousing, manufacturing and other services. Retail trade lost jobs over the month.

The employment change for June revised up from +938,000 to +962,000, and the change for July revised up from +943,000 to +1.1 million. On net, employment over June and July is 134,000 higher than previously reported.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls increased by 17 cents, or 0.6 percent, in August. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 4.3 percent. In August, average weekly hours were unchanged at 34.7 hours.

+74,000 Professional and Business Services

Professional and business services added 74,000 jobs in August, including gains in architectural and engineering services

(+19,000), computer systems design and related services (+10,000), scientific research and development services (+7,000) and legal services (+4,000). After falling by 2.4 million in March and April of 2020, employment in

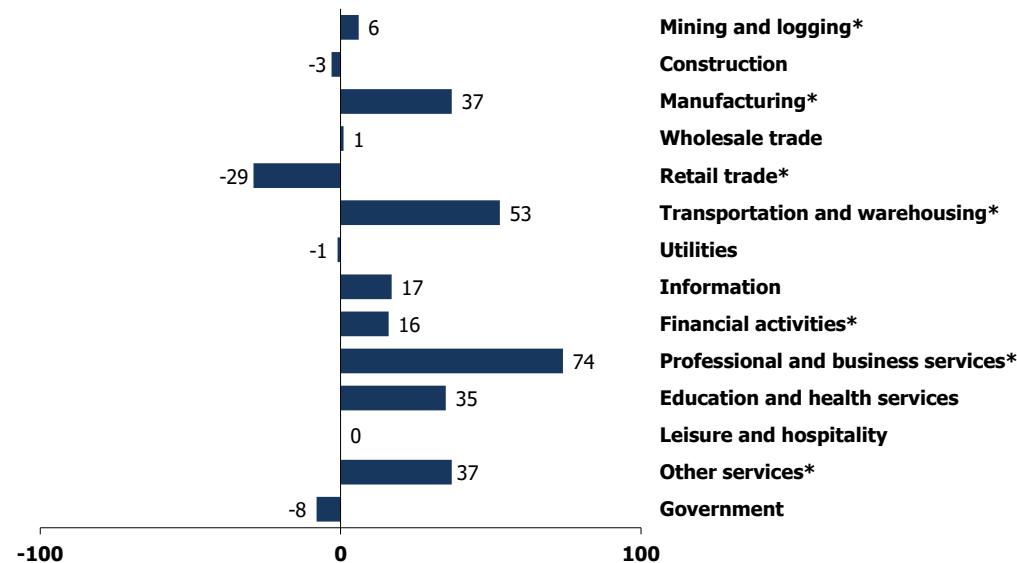
professional and business services has risen by 1.9 million.

Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:
235*



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.

Data are preliminary.

* denotes significance

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, August 2021

+53,000 Transportation and Warehousing

Transportation and warehousing added 53,000 jobs in August. Within the industry, job gains in couriers and messengers (+20,000), warehousing and storage (+20,000), air transportation (+11,000), and support activities for transportation (+5,000) more than offset a job loss in transit and ground passenger transportation (-8,000). Employment in transportation and warehousing has recovered jobs lost between February and May 2020, and employment is slightly above (+22,000) the February 2020 peak.¹

+37,000 Manufacturing

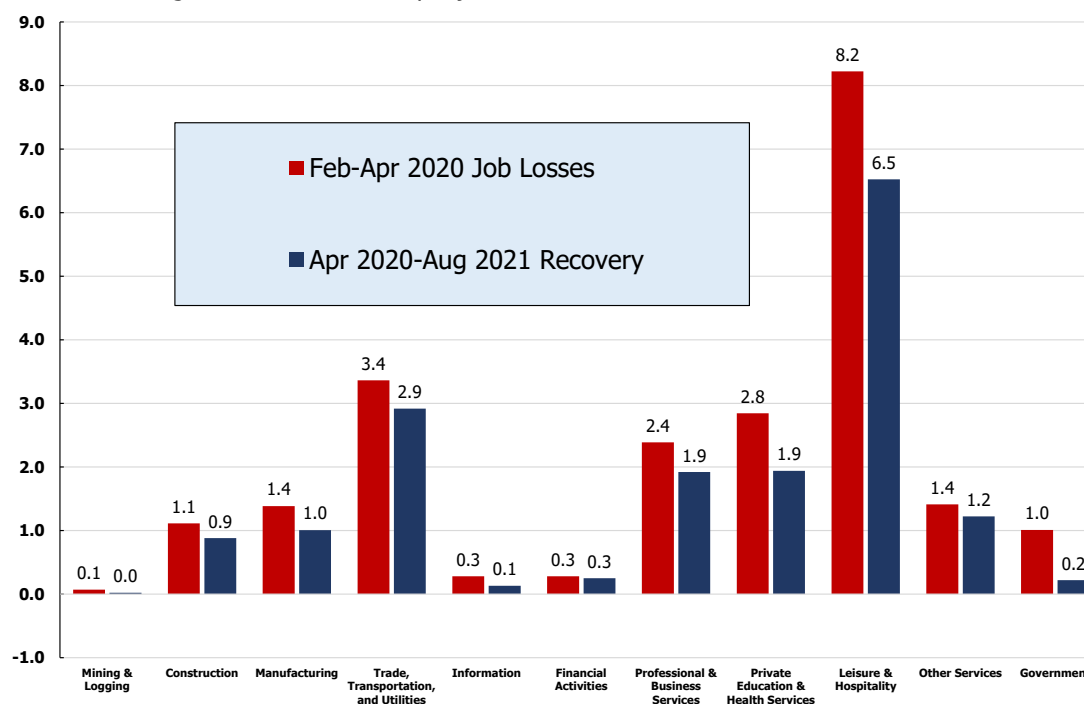
Durable goods manufacturing added 31,000 jobs in August, with gains concentrated in motor vehicles and parts (+24,000) and in fabricated metal products (+7,000). Manufacturing has recovered 1.0 million of 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

+37,000 Other Services

Employment in other services grew by 37,000 in August. Personal and laundry services (+19,000) and repair and maintenance (+9,000) added jobs over the month. Other

Employment changes by industry sector

Net change, in millions, seasonally adjusted



services has recovered 1.2 million of 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

+35,000 Education and Health Services

In August, job growth in education and health services was concentrated in private educational services (+40,000). Within health

care, job losses came in home health care services (-12,000) and in nursing care facilities (-7,000). Since losing 2.8 million jobs in March and April 2020, education and health services has recovered 1.9 million jobs.

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, August 2021

+17,000 Information

Within information, job growth was concentrated in data processing, hosting and related services (+12,000). Although the information industry has recovered 172,000 jobs since July 2020, employment is 150,000 below its February 2020 peak.¹

+16,000 Financial Activities

Financial activities added 16,000 jobs over the month. Job growth was concentrated in real estate (+11,000). Employment in financial activities is 29,000 below its February 2020 peak,¹ marking a 90-percent recovery of jobs lost in March and April 2020.

+6,000 Mining and Logging

Mining employment rose by 6,000 in August, with job gains in support activities for mining (+4,000) and in coal mining (+1,000). Employment in mining reached a low in August 2020 and has since risen by 55,000.

0 Leisure and Hospitality

Leisure and hospitality employment was unchanged in August. Within the industry, job losses in food services and drinking places (-42,000) offset gains in arts, entertainment, and recreation (+36,000). Employment in

leisure and hospitality is 1.7 million lower than in February 2020.

-3,000 Construction

Employment in construction changed little in August (-3,000), and has shown little net change thus far in 2021 (+16,000). Over the month, residential specialty trade contractors added jobs (+17,000), while heavy and civil engineering construction lost jobs (-8,000). Employment in construction is 232,000 lower than in February 2020.

-8,000 Government

Within government, employment declined in state government education (-21,000). Government employment is 790,000 lower than its peak in February 2020.¹

-29,000 Retail Trade

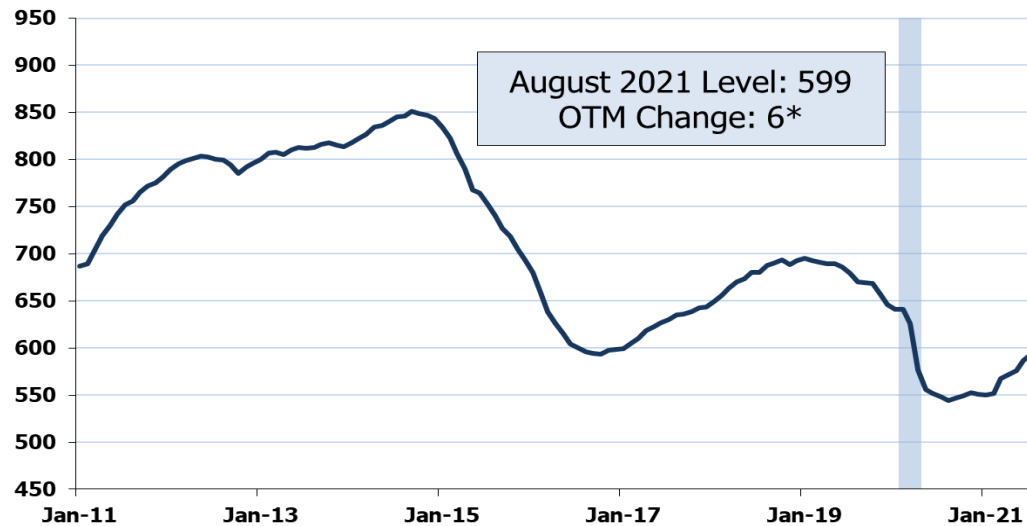
Employment in retail trade declined by 29,000 in August. Job losses were concentrated in food and beverage stores (-23,000) and in building material and garden supply stores (-13,000). Retail employment is 285,000 lower than in February 2020.

Summary	Mining & Logging	Construction	Manufacturing	Trade: Wholesale Retail	Transp., Warehousing & Utilities	Information	Financial Activities	Professional & Business Services	Private Education & Health Services	Leisure & Hospitality	Other Services	Government
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Mining and Logging

Employment in mining January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

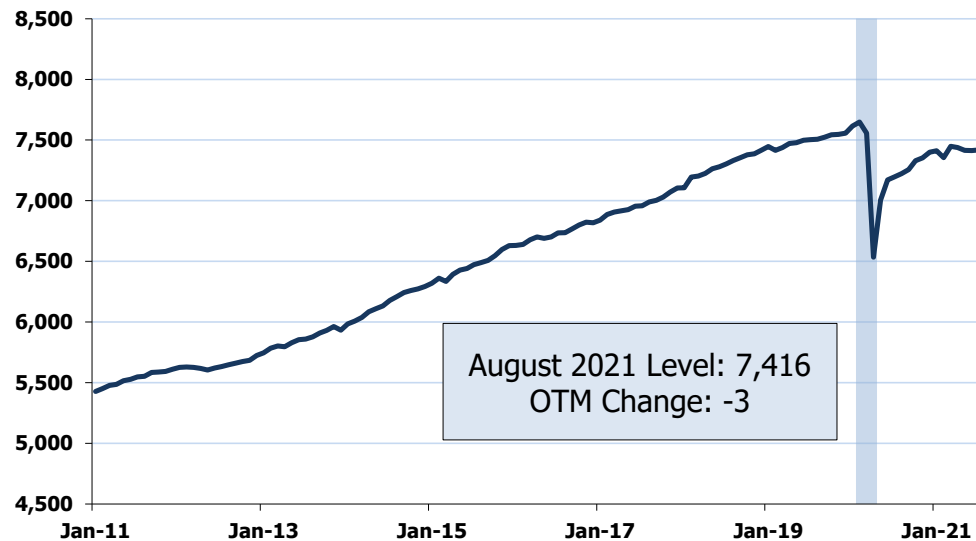
Employment in mining increased by 6,000 in August due to an uptick in support activities for mining (+4,000). Mining has added 55,000 jobs since its employment trough in August 2020.

Recent moderate growth in mining employment has coincided with an increase in the count of active [North American rotary rigs](#), despite a decrease in the average weekly price of [West Texas Intermediate crude oil](#).

Construction

Employment in construction January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
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* denotes significance.

Employment in construction changed little in August (-3,000) and has shown little net change so far this year (+16,000). Construction employment is now 232,000 below its February 2020 peak.¹

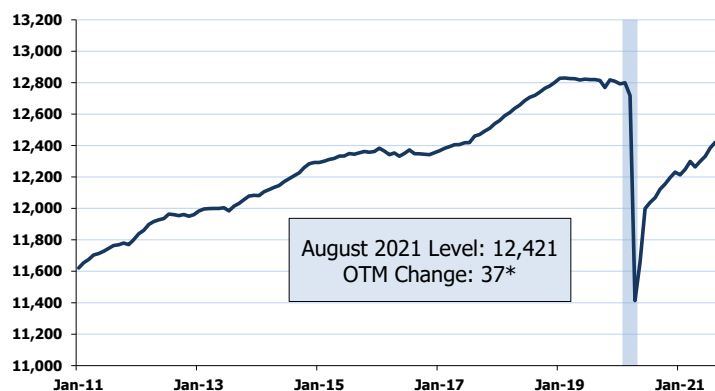
In August, a job gain in residential specialty trade contractors (+17,000) was offset by downward movements in nonresidential specialty trade contractors (-9,000) and in heavy and civil engineering construction (-8,000). Residential specialty trade contractors has fully recovered 338,000 jobs lost in March and April 2020, and employment exceeds its February 2020 level by 37,000.

The weakness in construction employment in August follows a decline in [housing starts](#) in July, as well as stagnation in [residential building permits](#) and [new home sales](#).

Manufacturing

Employment in manufacturing January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

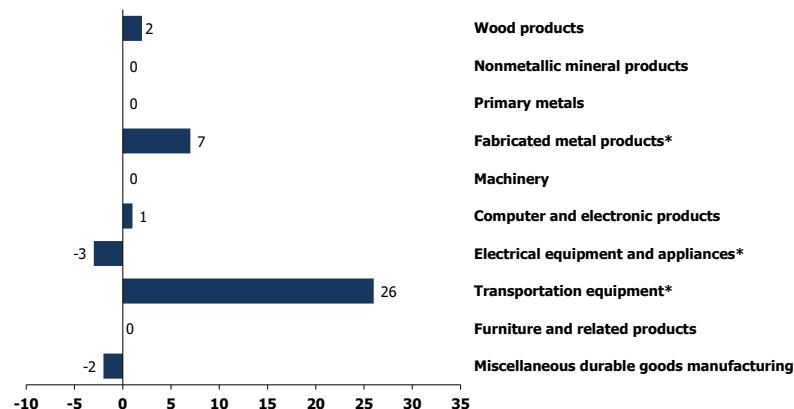


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
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* denotes significance.

Employment in durable goods

Over-the-month change, August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Data are preliminary.
* denotes significance

Manufacturing employment continued to rise in August (+37,000), following growth in July (+52,000) and June (+32,000). As of August, the industry has recovered 1.0 million of 1.4 million jobs lost during March and April 2020.

The manufacturing 1-month diffusion index decreased by 10.7 points to 55.3. Despite the decline, a number above 50 indicates that more manufacturing industries are adding jobs than are losing jobs.

Durable goods added 31,000 jobs in August, with motor vehicles and parts manufacturing accounting for 24,000 of the gain. A job gain in fabricated metal products (+7,000) was partially offset by a loss in electrical equipment and appliances (-3,000).

Manufacturing employment gains correspond with strength in both the [Institute of Supply Management's Purchasing Managers' Index \(PMI\)](#) and [IHS Markit US Manufacturing PMI](#), which measure business sentiment and expectations.

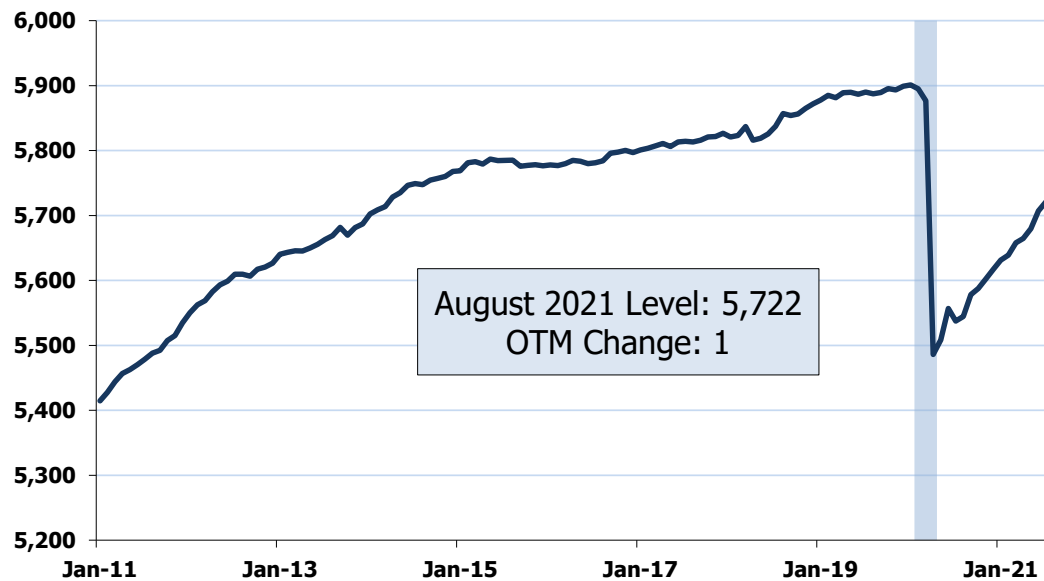
In August, average hourly earnings for all employees in manufacturing increased by 10 cents to \$29.85. Average hourly earnings of production workers increased by 13 cents to \$24.01.

Average weekly hours of all employees fell 0.2 hour to 40.3 hours in August. The average workweek of production employees was unchanged at 41.5 hours. Average weekly overtime hours for all employees has remained at 3.2 hours since October 2020. Overtime hours for production workers grew by 0.1 hour to 4.2 hours in August.

Wholesale Trade

Employment in wholesale trade January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
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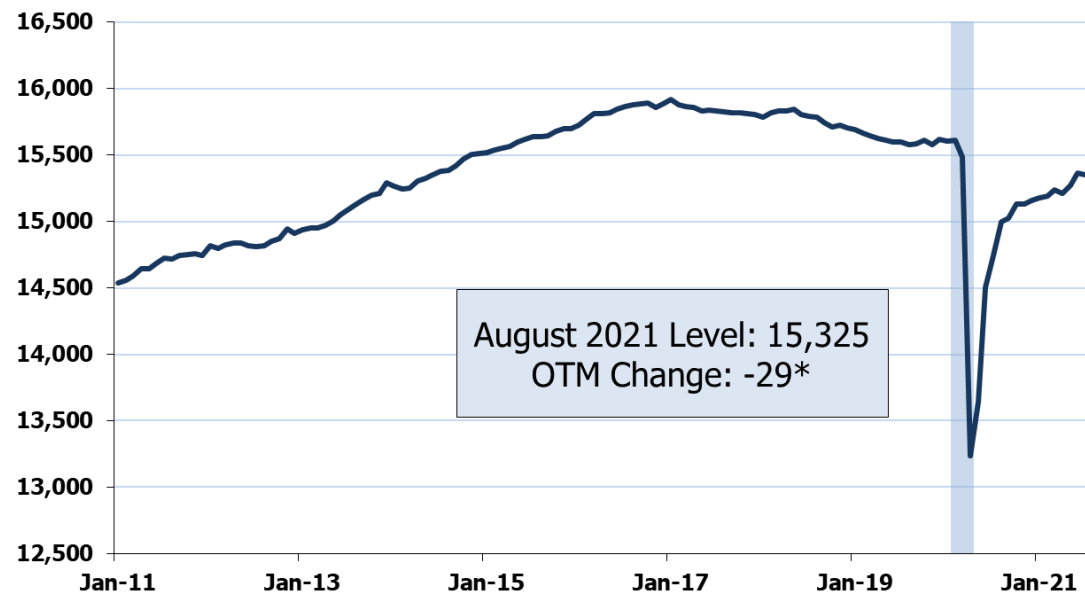
Employment in wholesale trade was essentially unchanged in August (+1,000), after rising by 14,000 in July and 27,000 in June.

As of August, employment in the industry is 173,000 lower than its February 2020 level.

Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



August 2021 Level: 15,325
OTM Change: -29*

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Employment in retail trade declined by 29,000 in August, although the industry has recovered 2.1 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

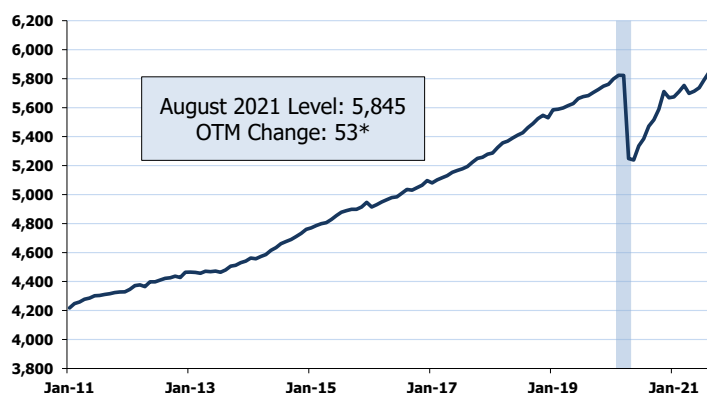
In August, job losses occurred in food and beverage stores (-23,000) and in building material and garden supply stores (-13,000). These declines were partially offset by an increase of 4,000 jobs in electronics and appliance stores.

In line with employment, retail-related economic indicators are mostly negative. [Retail sales](#) and [auto sales](#) decreased in July, and in August, the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) decreased and the price per gallon of [regular gasoline](#) increased.

Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in transportation and warehousing January 2011–August 2021

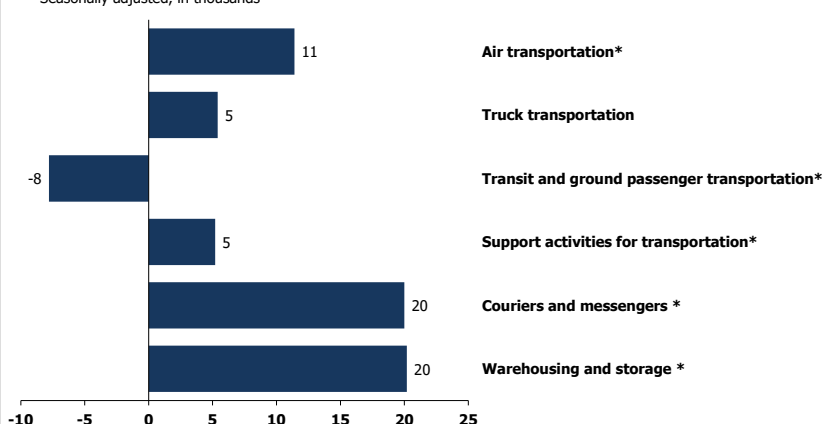
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Employment in transportation and warehousing grew by 53,000 in August and is 22,000 above its February 2020 level.

Employment in select transportation and warehousing industries Over-the-month change, August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



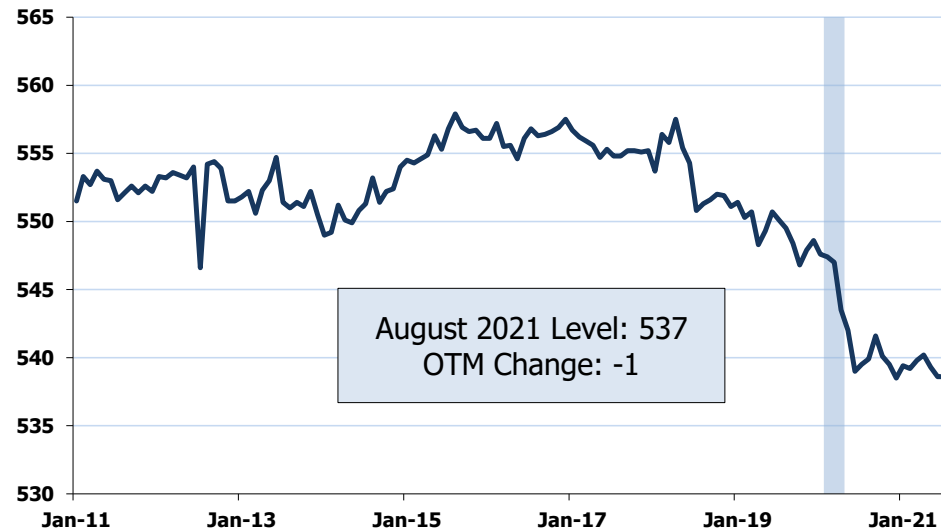
Employment rose by 20,000 in couriers and messengers and in warehousing and storage in August. Employment in couriers and messengers has grown by 149,000 since February 2020, while employment in warehousing and storage has grown by 142,000.

In August, job gains in air transportation (+11,000) and support activities for transportation (+5,000) were partially offset by losses in transit and ground passenger transportation (-8,000).

Utilities

Employment in utilities January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



August 2021 Level: 537
OTM Change: -1

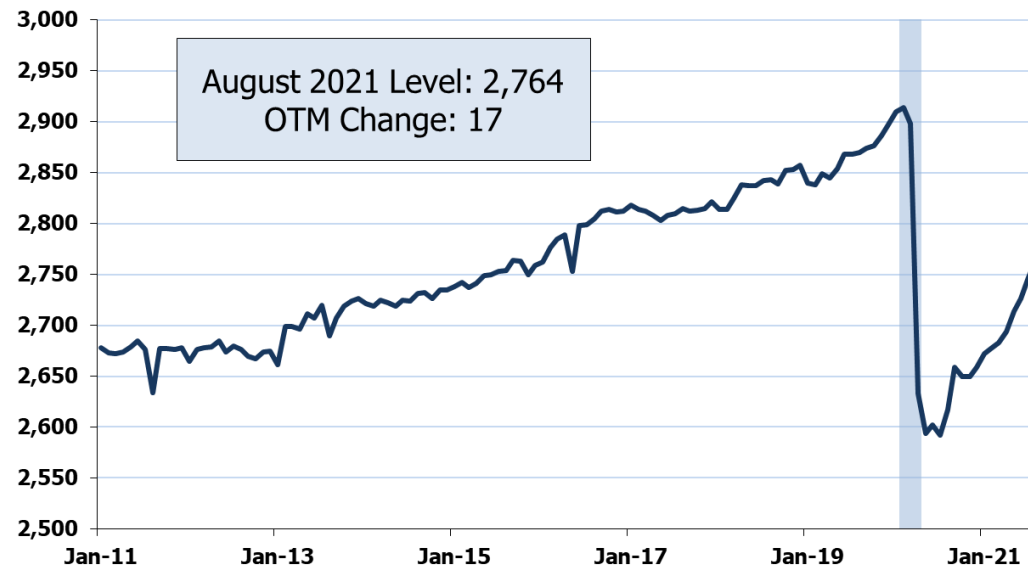
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Employment in utilities was essentially unchanged in August. Since February 2020, employment has fallen by 10,000.

Information

Employment in information January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
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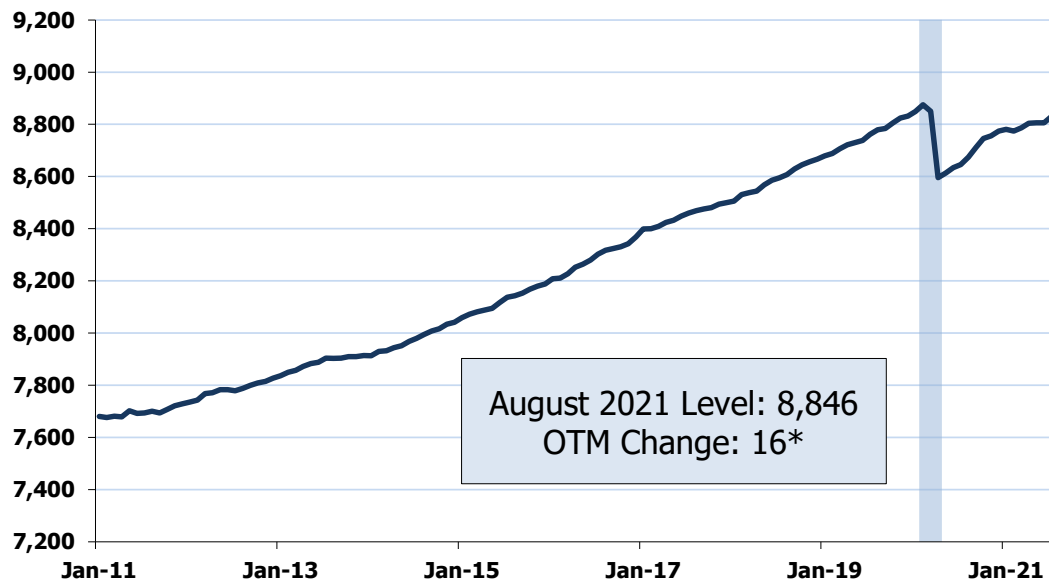
Employment in information continued to trend up in August (+17,000), and the industry has recovered 53 percent of jobs lost between March and May 2020. Employment in the industry is 150,000 below its February 2020 level.

In August, data processing, hosting, and related services added 12,000 jobs.

Financial Activities

Employment in financial activities January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



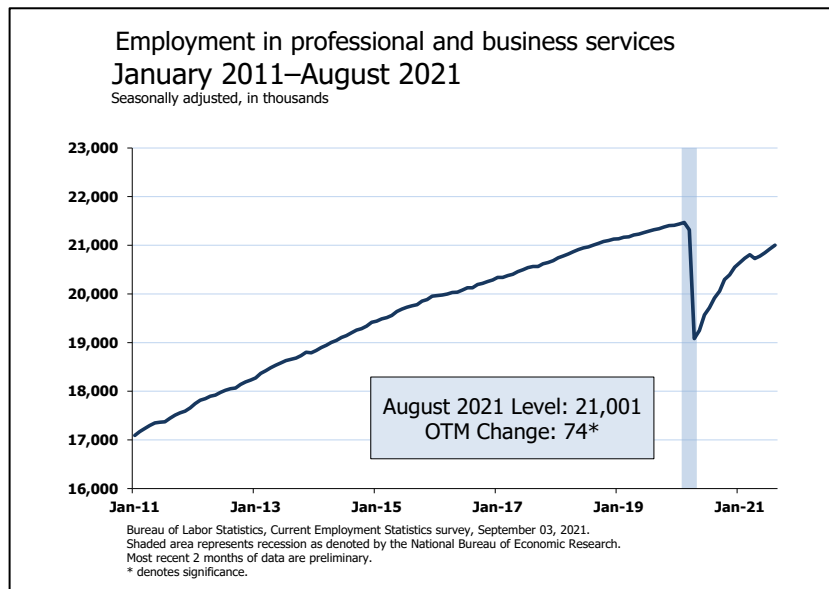
August 2021 Level: 8,846
OTM Change: 16*

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Employment in financial activities increased by 16,000 in August, following a gain of 24,000 in July. The industry has added a net 250,000 jobs since April 2020, but employment is 29,000 below its most recent peak reached in February 2020.¹

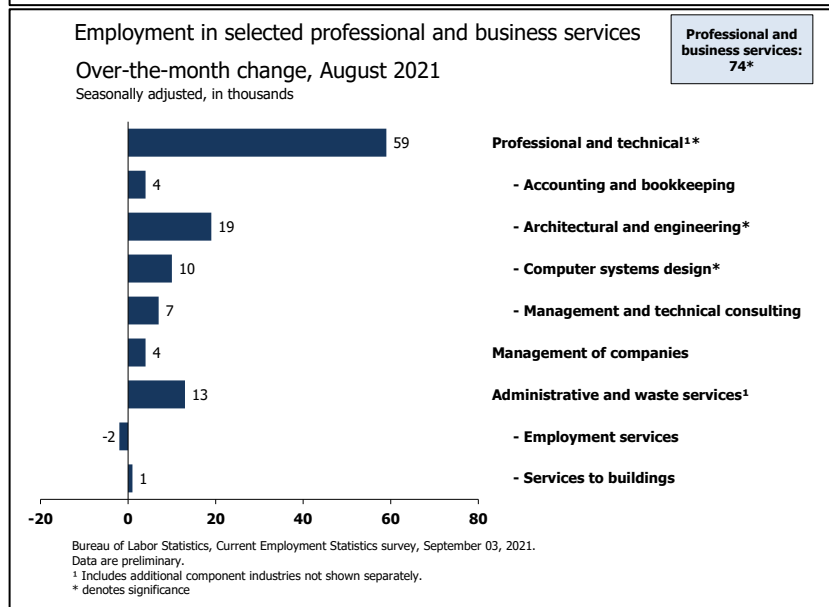
In August, job gains were concentrated in real estate (11,000), which coincides with a relatively low [average 30-year fixed mortgage rate](#).

Professional and Business Services



Professional and business services added 74,000 jobs in August; however, employment is 468,000 below the level in February 2020.

In August, professional and technical services added 59,000 jobs with gains in architectural and engineering services (+19,000), in computer systems design and related services (+10,000), and in scientific research and development services (+7,000). Employment in professional and technical services is 188,000 above its February 2020 level.

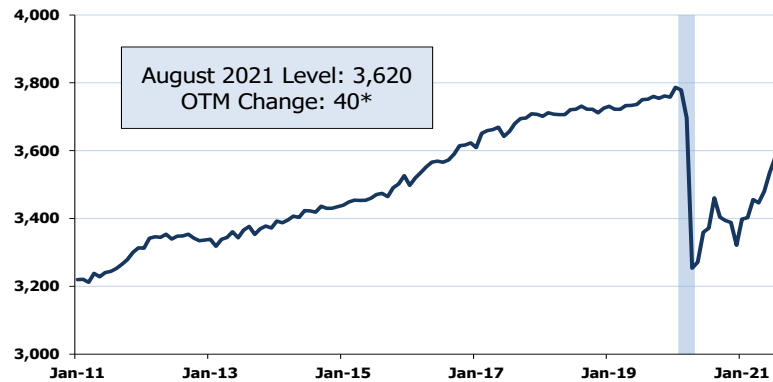


Within administrative and waste services, office administrative services added 6,000 jobs in August.

Private Education and Health Services

Employment in educational services January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



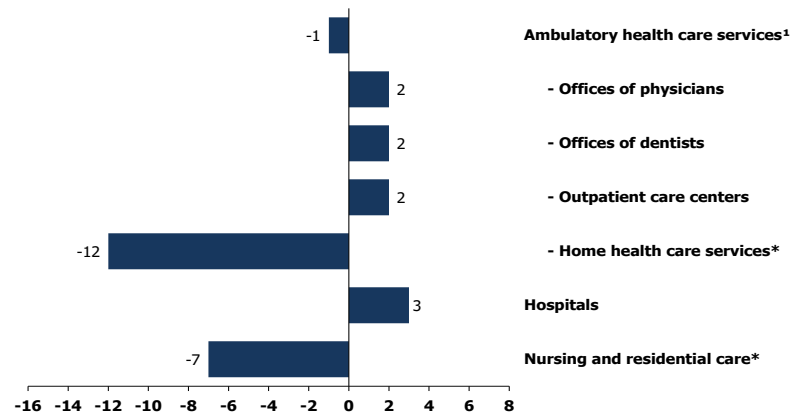
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Employment in private education increased by 40,000 in August and is 159,000 lower than in February 2020.

Employment in selected health care industries Over-the-month change, August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Health care industries:
-5



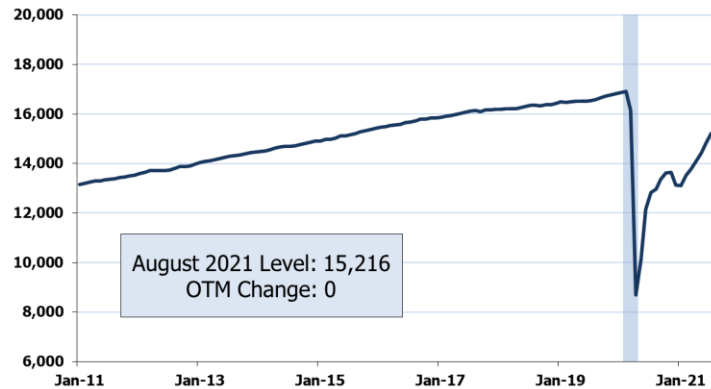
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Data are preliminary.
¹ Includes additional component industries not shown separately.
* denotes significance

Within health care, home health care services (-12,000) and nursing care facilities (-7,000) lost jobs in August. Employment in health care is 513,000 lower than in February 2020.

Leisure and Hospitality

Employment in leisure and hospitality January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



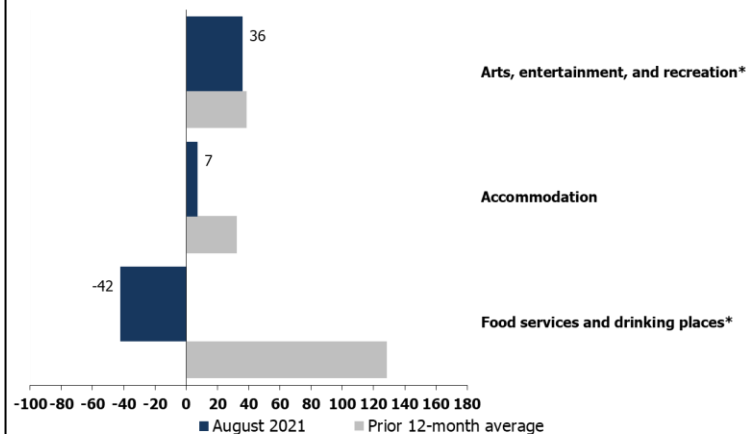
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Employment in leisure and hospitality was unchanged in August, after increasing by an average 350,000 per month over the prior 6 months. Although the industry has recovered 6.5 million jobs since April 2020, employment is 1.7 million below its February 2020 level.

Employment in leisure and hospitality Over-the-month change, August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Leisure and
hospitality:
0



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Data are preliminary.
* denotes significance

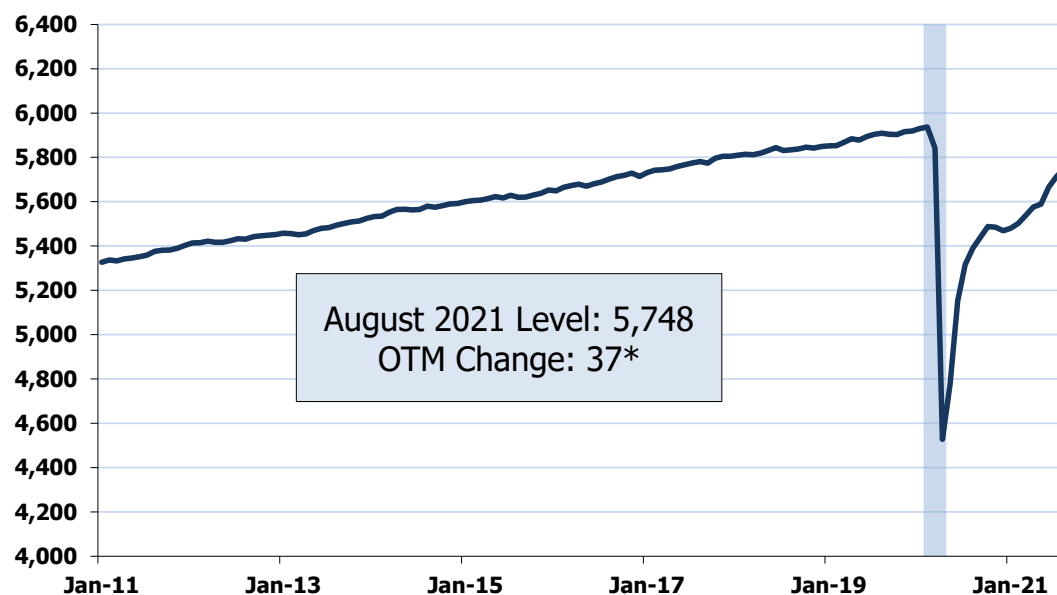
In August, a decline of 42,000 jobs in food services and drinking places more than offset a gain of 36,000 jobs in arts entertainment, and recreation.

The flat employment in leisure and hospitality coincides with a drop in [consumer confidence](#), which fell, in part, due to [concerns](#) about the Delta variant and the continuing rise of COVID-19 [cases](#) in August.

Other Services

Employment in other services January 2011–August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Employment in other services grew by 37,000 in August, after increasing by 76,000 and 46,000 in June and July, respectively. As of August, the industry has recovered 1.2 million of 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

In August, employment in personal and laundry services increased by 19,000 and is 141,000 below its February 2020 level. Repair and maintenance added 9,000 jobs over the month and employment is 5,000 above its February 2020 level.

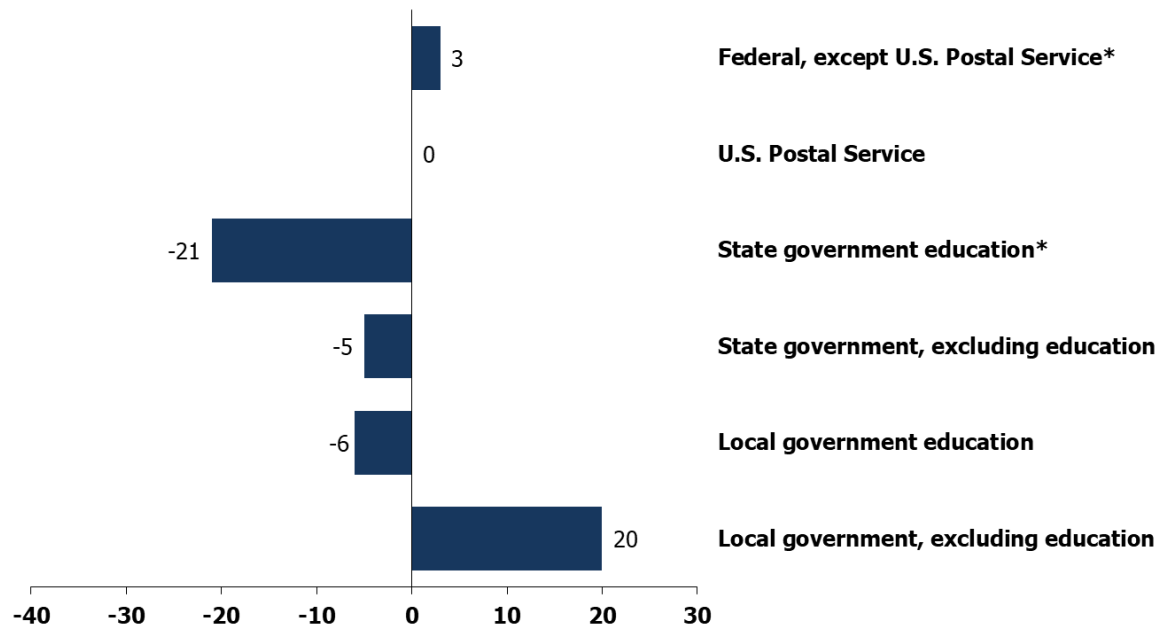
Government

Employment in selected government

Over-the-month change, August 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Government:
-8



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, September 03, 2021.

Data are preliminary.

* denotes significance

Government employment changed little in August (-8,000) and is 790,000 lower than in February 2020.

In August, state government education lost 21,000 jobs, offsetting gains in local government, excluding education (+20,000) and in the federal government (+3,000).

¹ The Current Employment Statistics program for national estimates designates cyclical peaks and troughs in time series of employment, hours, and earnings. Generally, the period between a peak and a trough must be at least 6 months in duration. (See <https://www.bls.gov/ces/tables/peak-trough.htm> for more details.) The extreme magnitude and dispersion of job losses across nearly all industries warrants treating the shorter downturn as a cyclical peak-to-trough phase that occurred primarily from February to April 2020. This determination mirrors a similar decision made by the business cycle dating committee of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) to designate the episode as a recession, even though the downturn was briefer than earlier contractions. (<https://www.nber.org/news/business-cycle-dating-committee-announcement-july-19-2021>)



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