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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



September 2021

Release Date: October 8, 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 Summary, September 2021

Nonfarm payroll employment increased by 194,000 in September. Leisure and hospitality, professional and business services, retail trade, and transportation and warehousing added jobs. Public education lost jobs over the month. Total nonfarm employment is 5.0 million lower than its peak level in February 2020.¹

The employment change for August revised up from +235,000 to +366,000, and the change for July revised up from +1,053,000 to +1,091,000. On net, employment over these months is 169,000 higher than previously reported.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls rose by 19 cents or 0.6 percent in September. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 4.6 percent. In September, average weekly hours rose by 0.2 hour to 34.8 hours.

+74,000 Leisure and Hospitality

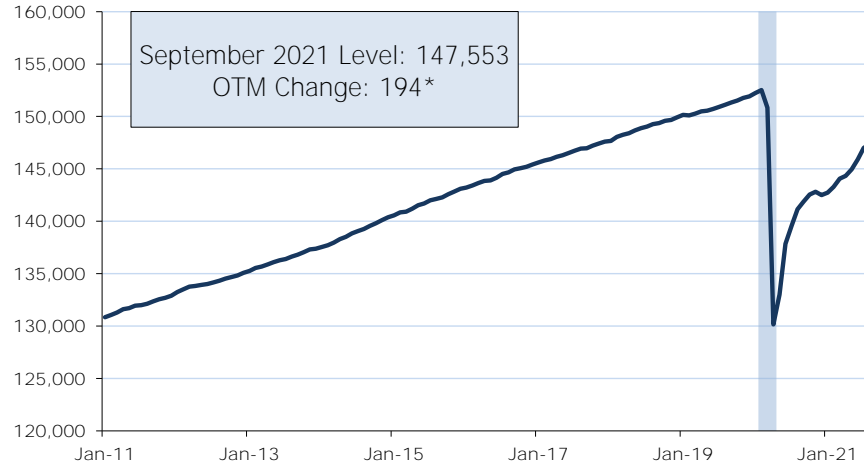
Leisure and hospitality added 74,000 jobs in September, with arts, entertainment, and recreation (+43,000) accounting for more than half of the increase. Employment in leisure and hospitality is 1.6 million lower than its pre-pandemic peak in February 2020.¹

+60,000 Professional and Business Services

Employment rose by 56,000 in the professional and technical industries, led by gains of 15,000 each in architectural and engineering services and in management and technical consulting. Employment continued to trend up in computer systems design (+9,000).

For professional and business services as a whole, employment is 385,000 lower than the February 2020 peak,¹ with employment down by 543,000 in administrative and waste services and by 86,000 in management of companies and enterprises. During this period, however, employment expanded in professional and technical services (+244,000),

Employment in total nonfarm
January 2011–September 2021
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 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, September 2021

with net growth in nearly all of its components.

+56,000 Retail Trade

Employment rose by 56,000 in retail trade. Clothing and accessories stores (+27,000) accounted for nearly half of the increase, followed by building material and garden supply stores and by general merchandise stores (+16,000 each). Food and beverage stores lost 12,000 jobs over the month. Retail employment has risen by 2.2 million since April 2020 but is 202,000 below its February level of that year.

+47,000 Transportation and Warehousing

Transportation and warehousing added 47,000 jobs in September, with gains in warehousing and storage (+16,000), couriers and messengers (+13,000), and air transportation (+10,000).

Employment in transportation and warehousing is 72,000 above its February 2020 level, with recovery driven largely by job growth in couriers and messengers (+162,000) and in warehousing and storage (+153,000).

+32,000 Information

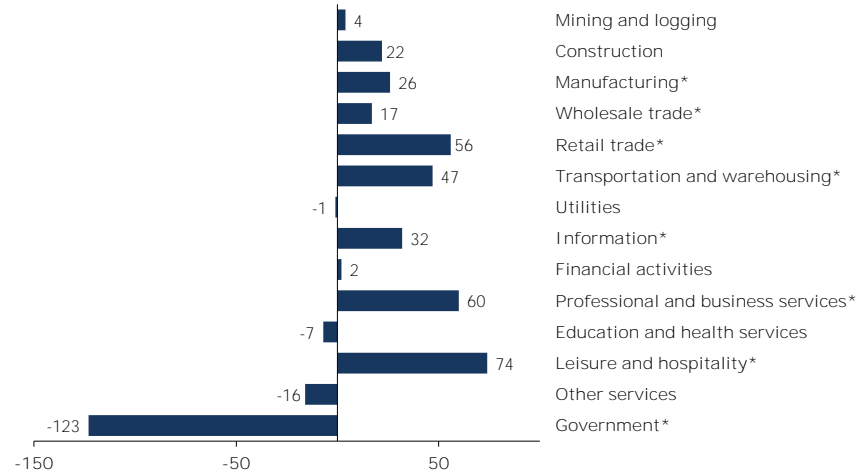
In September, information employment rose by 32,000. Job gains occurred in motion pictures and sound recording (+14,000), publishing industries (+11,000), and data processing, hosting, and related services (+6,000).

+26,000 Manufacturing

Manufacturing added 26,000 jobs in September, including gains in fabricated

Employment in total nonfarm
Over-the-month change, September 2021
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:
194*

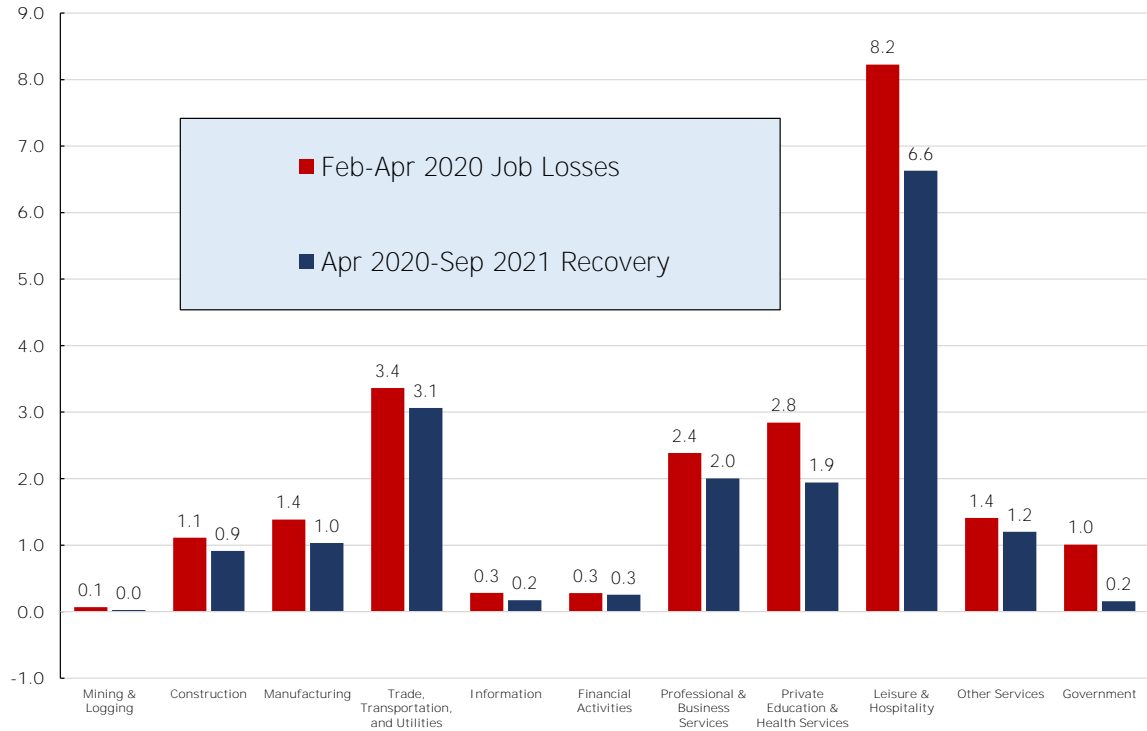


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 2021.
Data are preliminary.
* denotes significance

metals products (+8,000), machinery (+6,000), and printing and related support activities (+4,000). Motor vehicles and parts lost 6,000 jobs over the month. Although employment in manufacturing has risen by 1.0 million since a trough in April 2020,¹ it is 384,000 below the last peak in February 2019.

Current Employment Statistics Summary, September 2021

Employment changes by industry sector
Net change, in millions, seasonally adjusted



+22,000 Construction

Construction employment rose by 22,000 in September but has changed little, on net, so far this year. Employment in the industry is 201,000 lower than its peak in February 2020.¹

+17,000 Wholesale Trade

Wholesale trade added jobs in September, mostly in the durable goods component (+16,000). Employment in wholesale trade has trended up since April 2020 but is 165,000 lower than its peak in January of that year.¹

-123,000 Government

Government employment fell by 123,000 in September. Local government education lost 144,000 jobs, and state education lost 17,000 jobs over the month. Local government, excluding education added 43,000 jobs to partly offset the losses in education. Since reaching peaks in February 2020,¹ employment in local government and state government is down by 617,000 and 257,000, respectively.

-7,000 Private Education and Health Services

Employment in health care changed little in September (-18,000). Community care

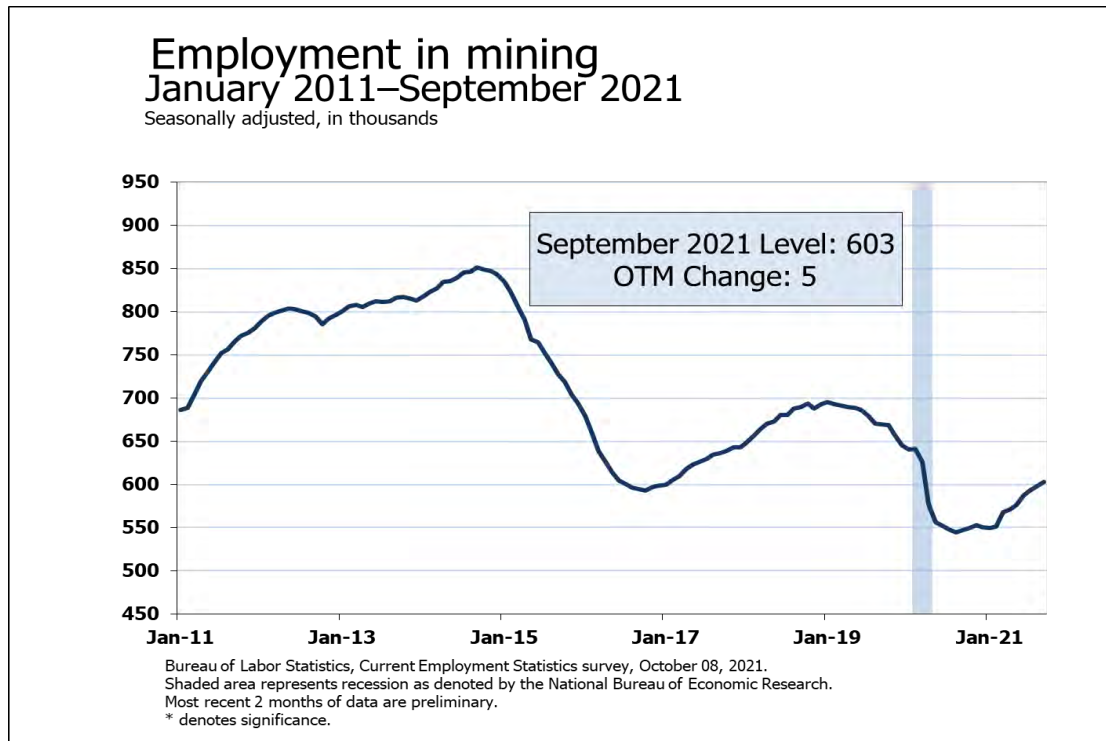
facilities for the elderly (-20,000), nursing care facilities (-16,000), and hospitals (-8,000) lost jobs over the month. The losses were partly offset by gains in offices of other health practitioners (+11,000) and home health care services (+8,000). Health care employment is 524,000 below its February 2020 peak.¹

Social assistance added 30,000 jobs in September, with child day care services (+18,000) accounting for most of the increase.

Summary

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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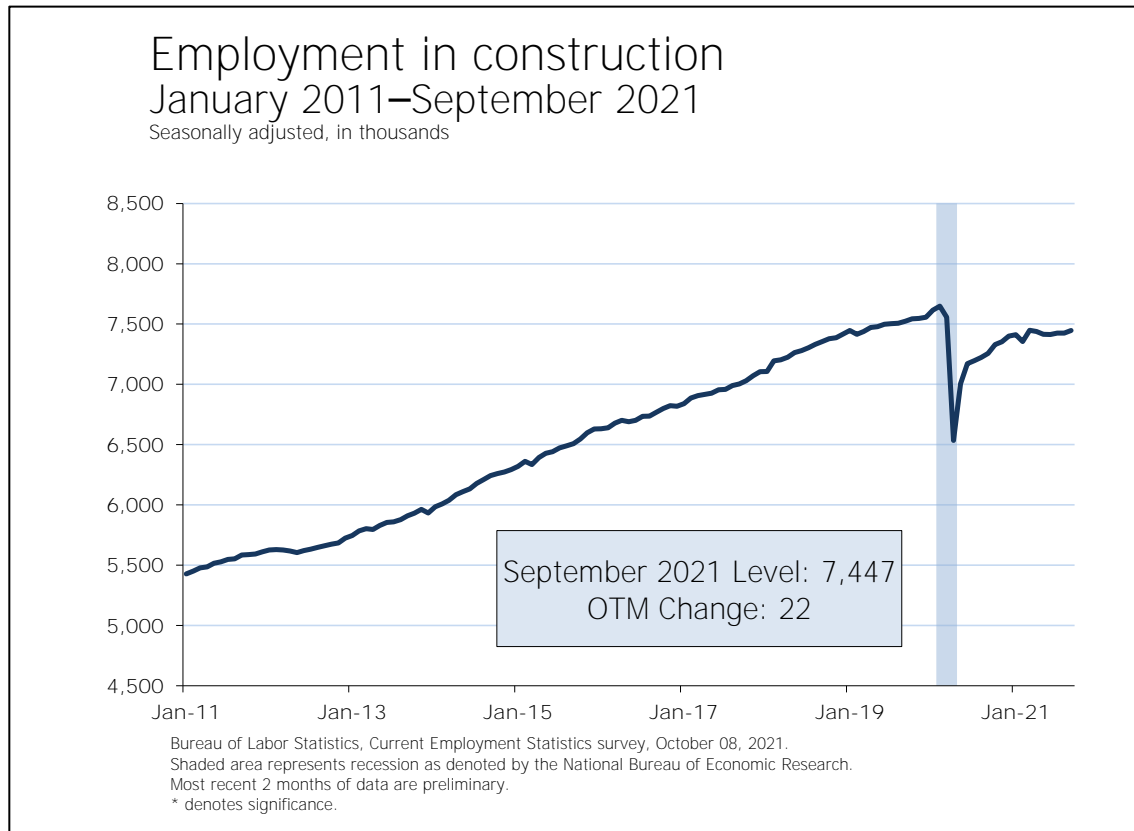
Mining and Logging



Employment in mining increased by 5,000 in September due to an uptick in support activities for mining (+4,000). Mining has added 59,000 jobs since an employment trough in August 2020.

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

Construction

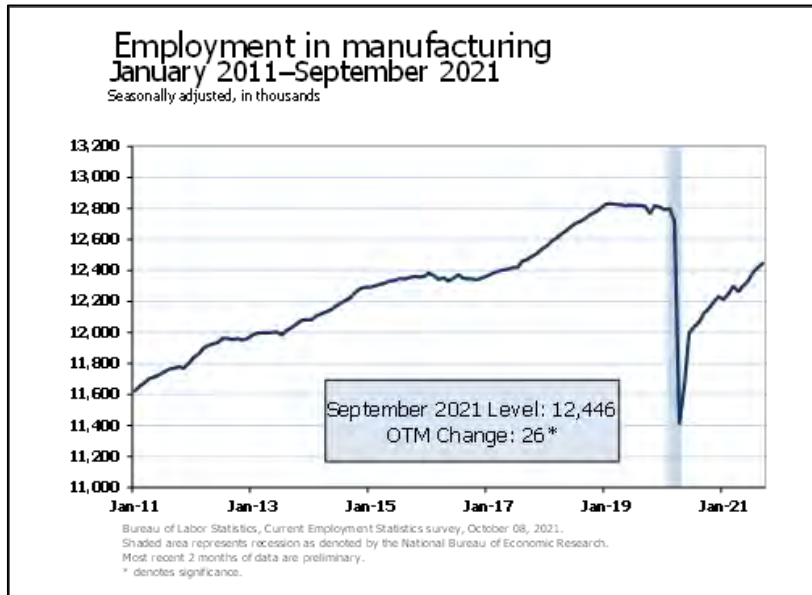


Employment in construction rose by 22,000 in September, but has shown little net change so far this year (+47,000). Construction employment is 201,000 below its February 2020 peak.¹

In September, nonresidential specialty trade contractors (+11,000) accounted for half of the job gain in construction. Employment in nonresidential specialty trade contractors is 166,000 below its February 2020 peak.¹

The September strength in construction employment follows increases in [housing starts](#) and [residential building permits](#) in August, although [new home sales](#) stagnated.

Manufacturing

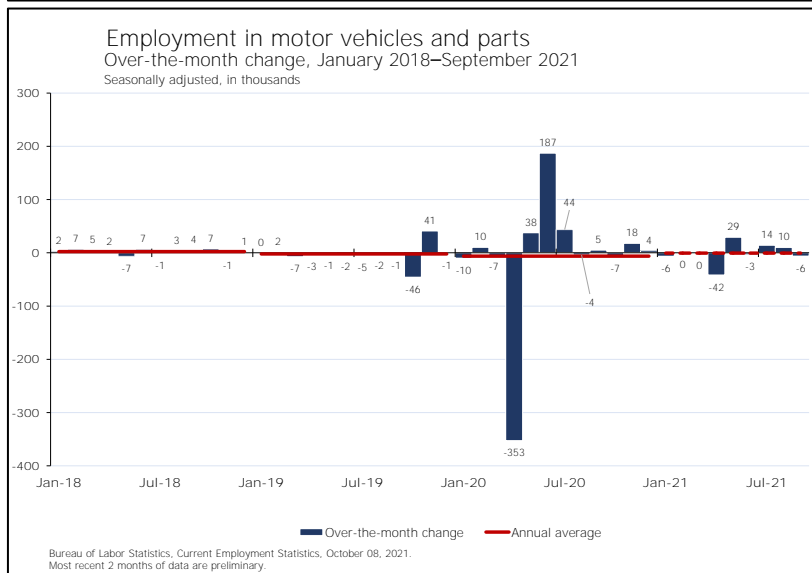


Manufacturing employment continued to rise in September (+26,000), following growth in August (+31,000) and July (+57,000). As of September, the industry has recovered 1.0 million of 1.4 million jobs lost during March and April 2020.

The manufacturing 1-month diffusion index decreased by 2.0 points to 54.0. Despite the decline, a number above 50 indicates that more manufacturing industries are adding jobs than are losing jobs.

Motor vehicles and parts lost 6,000 jobs in September as the ongoing [semiconductor chip shortage](#) continues to impact automakers throughout the United States.

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.



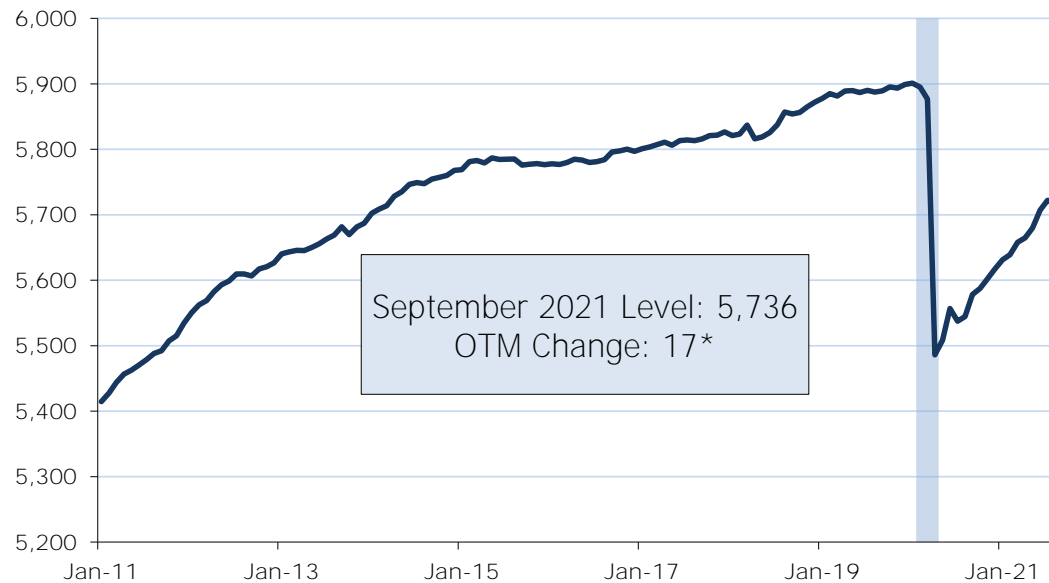
In September, average hourly earnings for all employees in manufacturing increased by 15 cents to \$30.02. Average hourly earnings of production workers increased by 14 cents to \$24.18.

Average weekly hours of all employees were unchanged at 40.4 hours in September. The average workweek of production employees decreased 0.1 hour to 41.4 hours. Average weekly overtime hours for all employees grew by 0.1 hour to 3.3 hours. Overtime hours for production workers remained unchanged at 4.2 hours in September.

Wholesale Trade

Employment in wholesale trade January 2011–September 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 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 wholesale trade increased by 17,000 in September. Job gains were concentrated in durable goods (+16,000).

Employment in wholesale trade is 165,000 lower than its pre-pandemic peak in January 2020,¹ however, the industry has added 250,000 jobs since April 2020. These gains are split between durable goods and nondurable goods (+140,000 and +107,000, respectively).

Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade January 2011–September 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



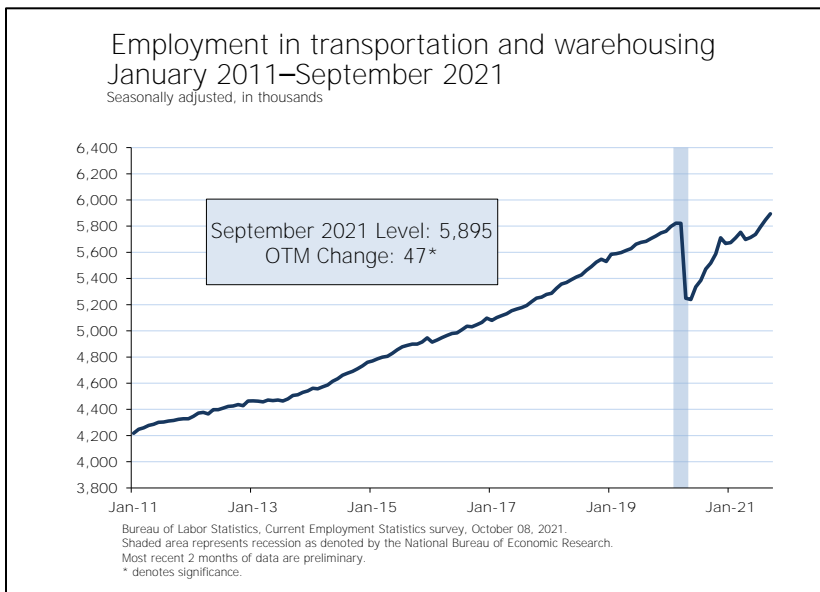
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 2021.
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 * denotes significance.

Employment in retail trade increased by 56,000 in September; the industry has recovered 2.2 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

Within the industry, job gains occurred in clothing and clothing accessories stores (+27,000), building material and garden supply stores (+16,000), and general merchandise stores (+16,000). These increases were partially offset by a decline of 12,000 jobs in food and beverage stores.

Retail-related economic indicators are mixed. [Retail Sales](#) increased in August and the per gallon price of [regular gasoline](#) decreased in September. Conversely, [auto sales](#) and the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) declined in August and September, respectively.

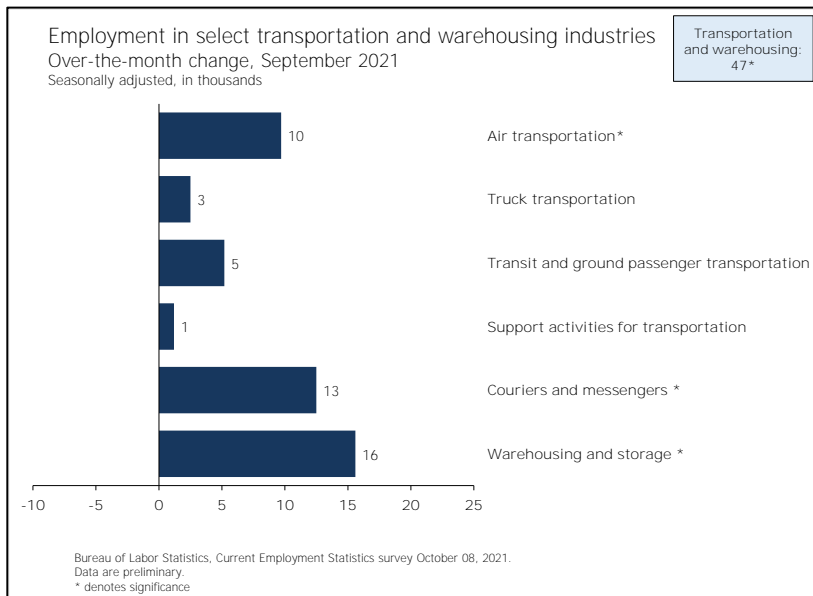
Transportation and Warehousing



Employment in transportation and warehousing grew by 47,000 in September and is 72,000 above its February 2020 level.

In September, job gains were concentrated in warehousing and storage (+16,000) and in couriers and messengers (+13,000).

Elsewhere in transportation and warehousing, employment in air transportation grew (+10,000) in September as [airlines resumed hiring](#) to meet rising travel demand. Employment in transit and ground passenger transportation also edged up over the month (+5,000).



Utilities

Employment in utilities
January 2011–September 2021
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



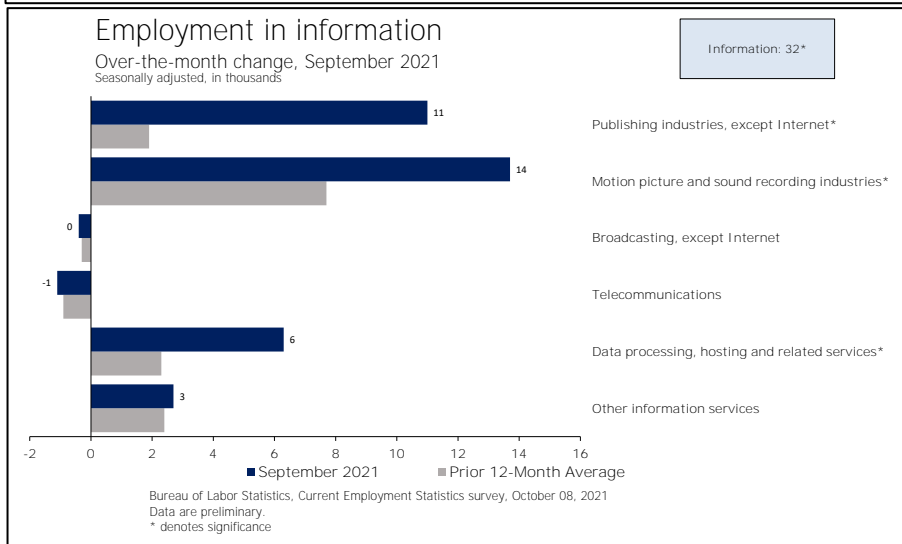
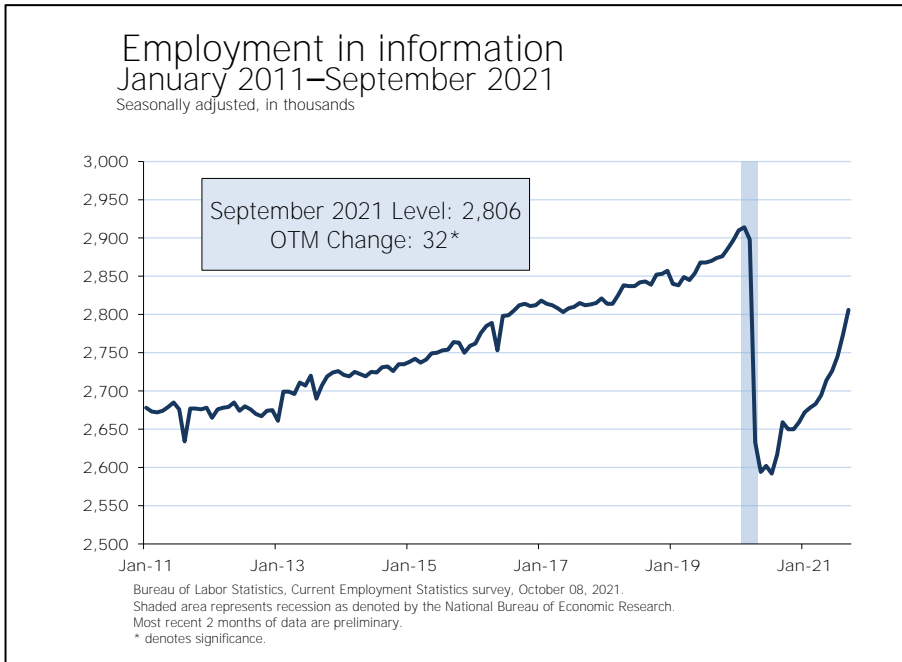
September 2021 Level: 538
OTM Change: -1

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 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 utilities changed little in September. Since February 2020, employment has declined by 10,000.

Information

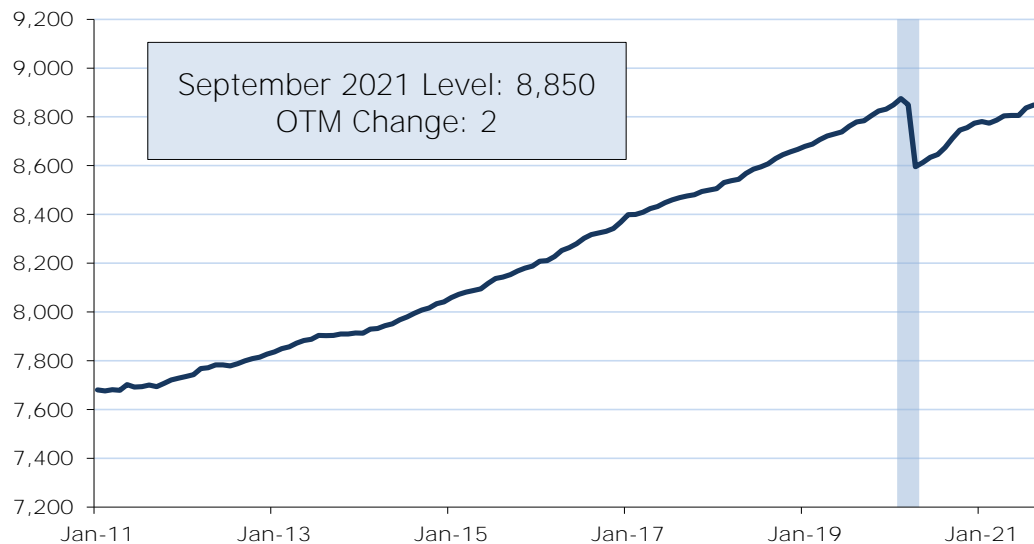
Employment in information continued to grow in September (+32,000), and the industry has recovered 66 percent of 320,000 jobs lost in March, April, and May 2020.



Jobs gains in September occurred in motion picture and sound recording industries (+14,000), in publishing industries, except internet (+11,000), and in data processing, hosting and related services (+6,000).

Financial Activities

Employment in financial activities
January 2011–September 2021
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

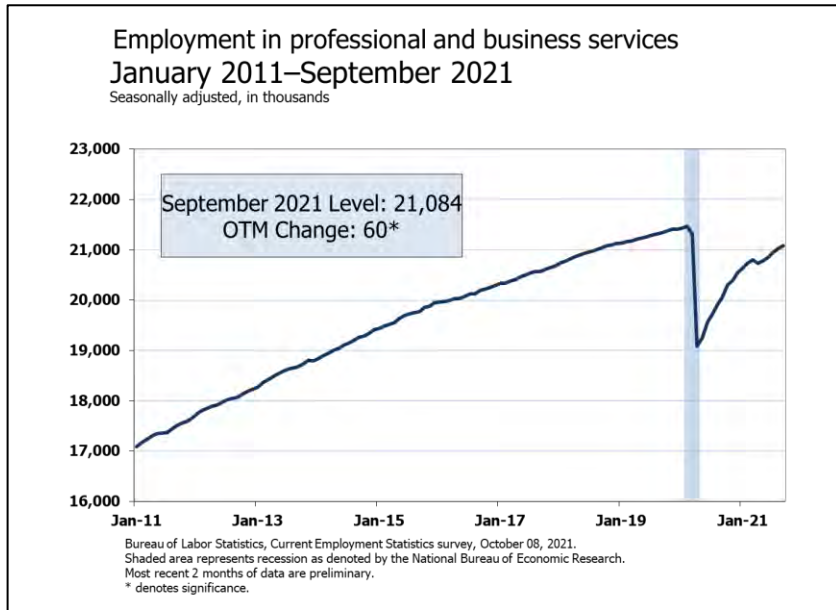


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 2021.
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Employment in financial activities was flat (+2,000) in September and is 25,000 lower than in February 2020.

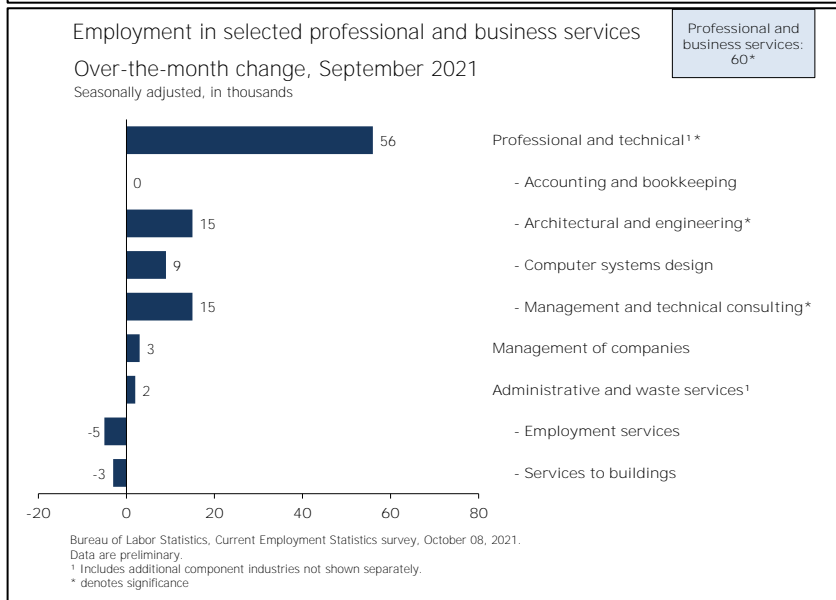
Activities related to credit intermediation (-4,000) and commercial banking (-3,000) lost jobs in September.

Professional and Business Services



Professional and business services added 60,000 jobs in September 2021; however, employment is 385,000 below the level in February 2020.

In September, professional and technical services added 56,000 jobs, with architectural and engineering services and management and technical consulting services adding 15,000 jobs each. Scientific research and development services (+5,000) and advertising and related services (+5,000) also added jobs. Employment in professional and technical services has expanded by 244,000 above its February 2020 level.



In September, employment in temporary help services changed little (-5,000) and is 257,000 lower than in February 2020.

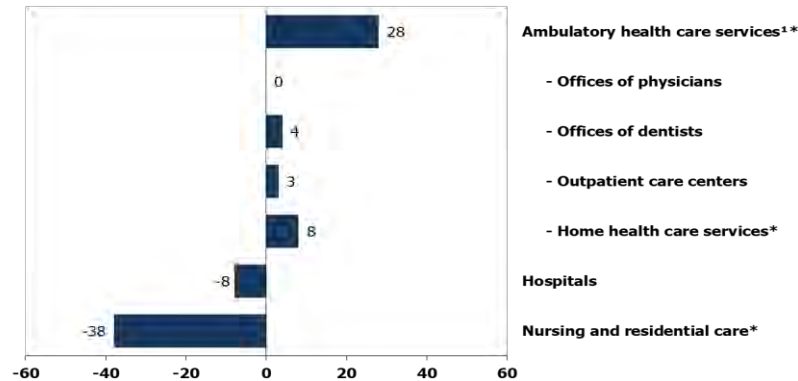
Private Education and Health Services

Employment in selected health care industries

Over-the-month change, September 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Health care industries:
-18



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 2021.
Data are preliminary.
¹ Includes additional component industries not shown separately.
* denotes significance

In September, employment in health care changed little (-18,000) and is 524,000 lower than in February 2020.

In September, employment gains in offices of other health practitioners (+11,000) and in home health care services (+8,000) offset a loss of 8,000 in hospitals.

Employment in nursing and residential care facilities

January 2011–September 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



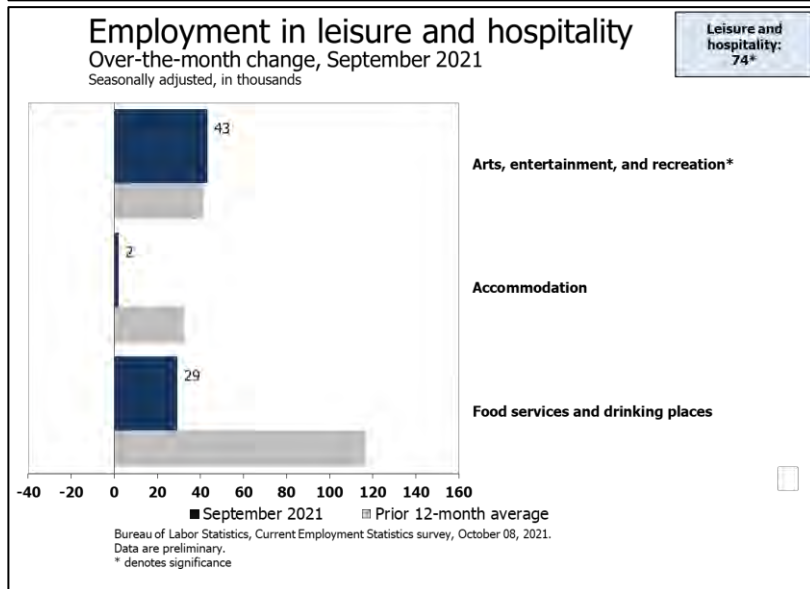
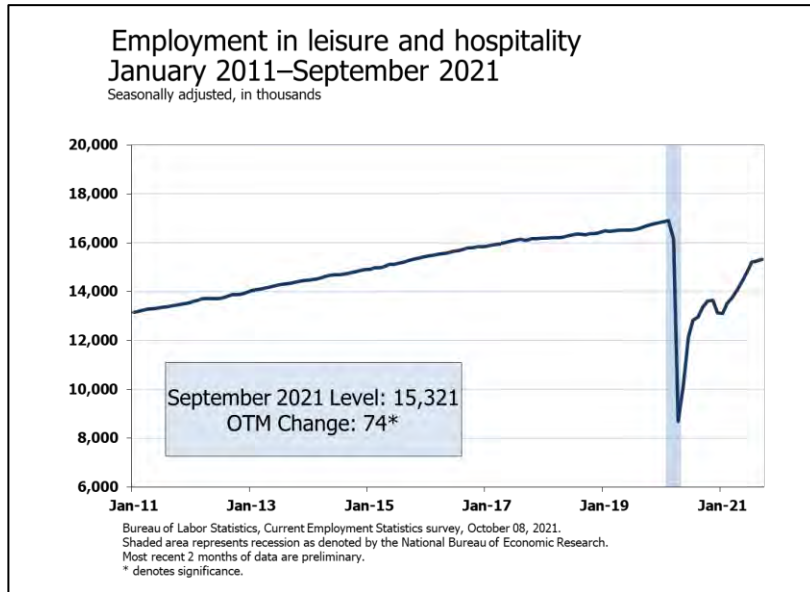
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 2021.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
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* denotes significance.

Nursing and residential care facilities continued to shed jobs in September (-38,000). Job losses occurred in community care facilities for the elderly (-20,000) and in nursing care facilities (-16,000). Employment in nursing and residential care facilities is 426,000 lower than in February 2020.

Within social assistance, child day care services added 18,000 jobs in September. The industry has recovered 265,000 of 373,000 jobs lost in March and April 2020.

Leisure and Hospitality

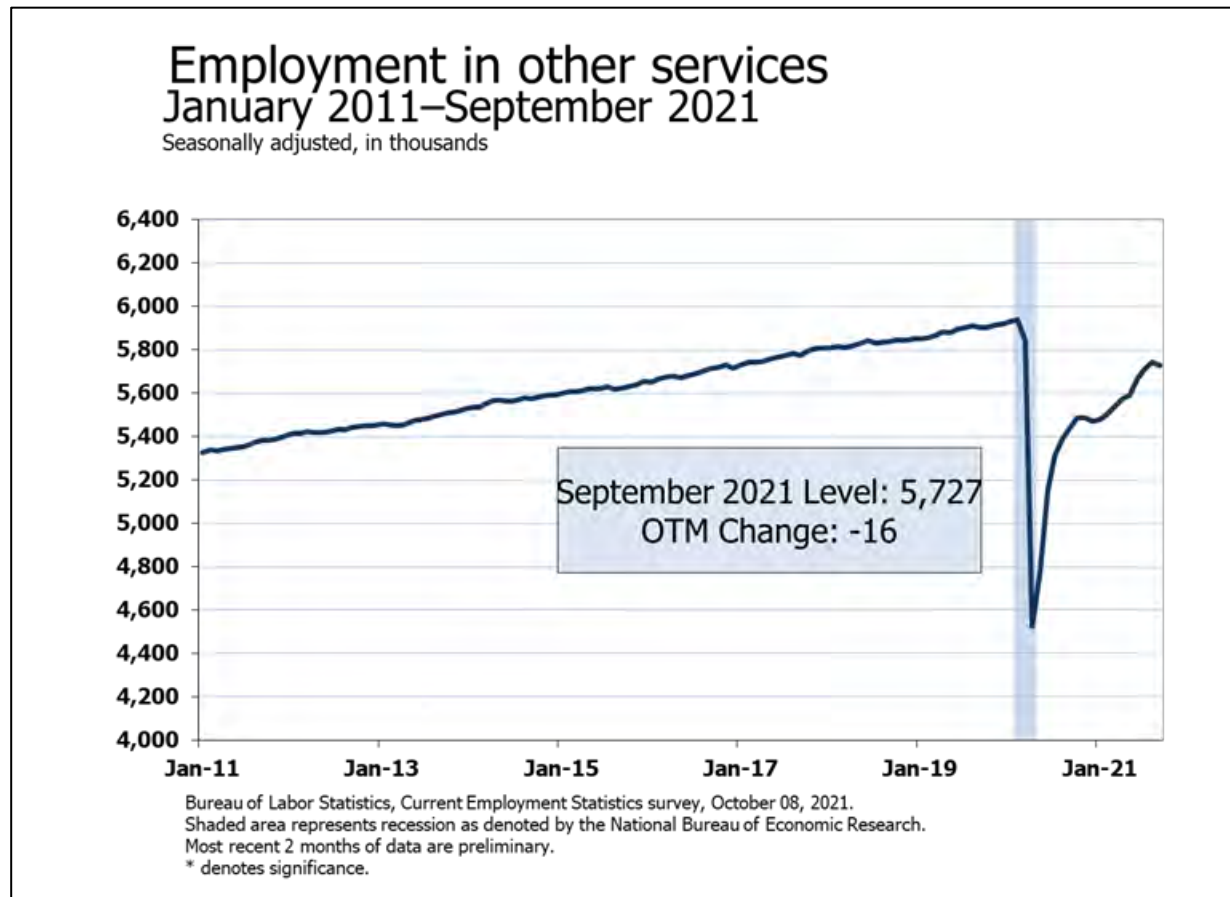
Employment in leisure and hospitality increased by 74,000 in September. Although the industry has recovered 6.6 million jobs since April 2020, employment is 1.6 million below its February 2020 level.



In September, employment gains were concentrated in arts, entertainment, and recreation, which added 43,000 jobs.

The weakness in employment in leisure and hospitality over the past two months coincides with stagnating [sales](#) and operating [cost](#) increases for restaurants, and falling [consumer confidence](#).

Other Services



Employment in other services edged down in September (-16,000) after increasing by an average 51,000 per month over the prior 3 months. As of September, the industry has recovered 1.2 million of 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April 2020.

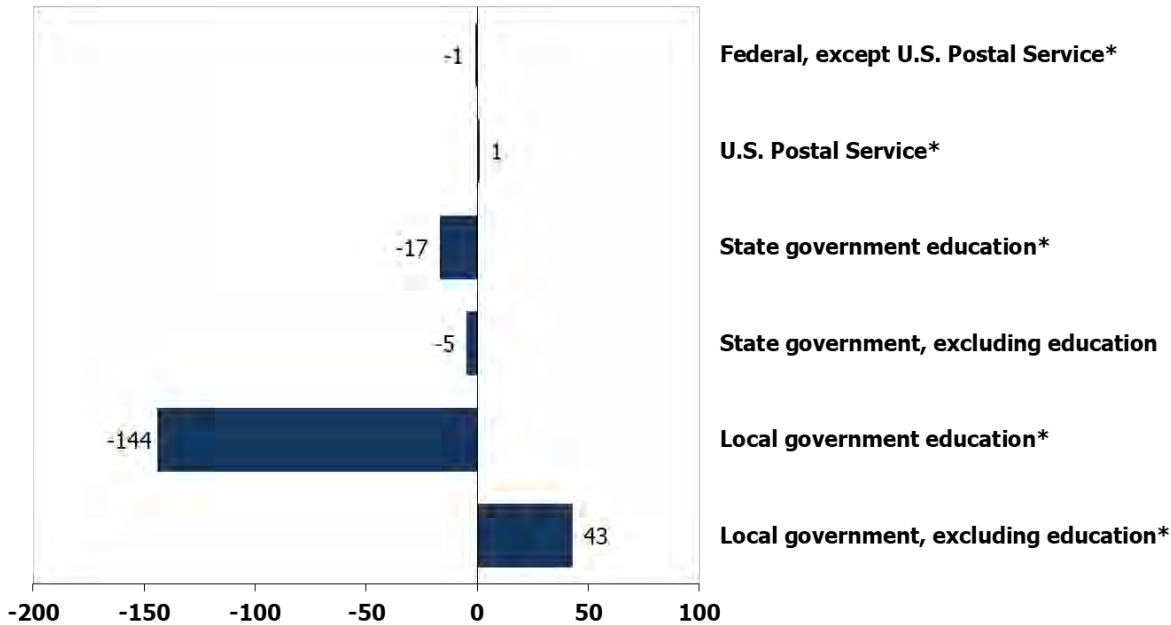
Government

Employment in selected government

Over-the-month change, September 2021

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Government:
-123*



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, October 08, 2021.
Data are preliminary.
* denotes significance

Government employment declined by 123,000 in September and is 851,000 lower than in February 2020.

In September, local education (-144,000) and state education (-17,000) lost jobs. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, employment fluctuations have distorted the normal seasonal buildup and layoff patterns, likely contributing to the job losses in September on a seasonally adjusted basis. The variations make it more challenging to discern current employment trends. Since February 2020, employment is down by 310,000 in local education and by 194,000 in state education.

Employment in local government, excluding education increased by 43,000 in September.

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>)



CES Analysts

Osman Alhassan

Ryan Ansell

Hyun Choi

Steve Crestol

Purva Desai

Tyler Downing

Katelynn Harris

Matthew Hong

Mike McCall

Patrycja Milewska

John Mullins

Maria Ramos

Rhiannon Sneeringer

Carson Wilson

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

202-691-6555

[Email CES](#)