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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



December 2023

Release Date: January 5, 2024

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, December 2023

Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 216,000 in December. Job growth averaged 225,000 per month in 2023, compared with the average monthly gain of 399,000 in 2022. In December, employment continued to trend up in government, health care, social assistance, and construction, while transportation and warehousing lost jobs.

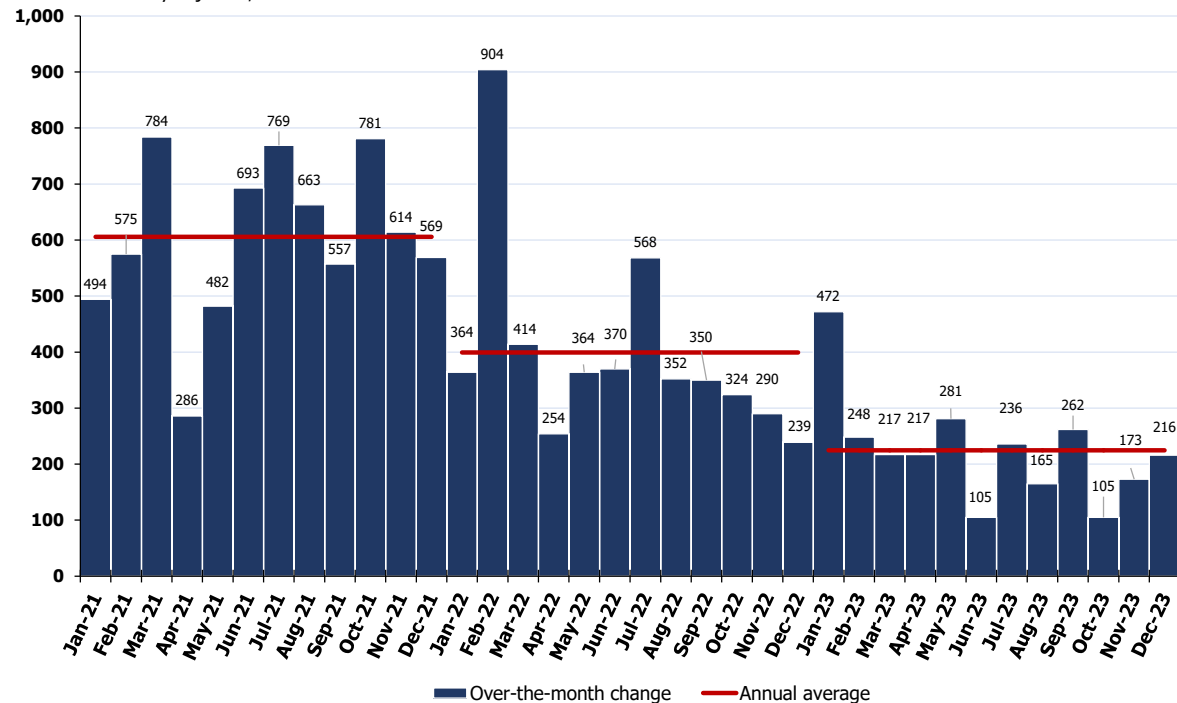
The total nonfarm employment change for October revised down from +150,000 to +105,000, and the change for November revised down from +199,000 to +173,000. On net, employment over these months is 71,000 lower than previously reported.

In December, average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls rose by 15 cents, or 0.4 percent. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 4.1 percent. In December, average weekly hours of all employees edged down 0.1 hour to 34.3 hours.

+74,000 Private Education and Health Services

Employment in health care increased by 38,000 in December. Over the month, employment continued to trend up in ambulatory health care services (+19,000) and hospitals (+15,000). Job growth in health care

Employment in total nonfarm
Over-the-month change, January 2021–December 2023
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, January 05, 2024.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

averaged 55,000 per month in 2023, compared with the average gain of 46,000 per month in 2022.

Social assistance employment increased by 21,000 in December, with job growth concentrated in individual and family services

(+17,000). Social assistance added an average of 22,000 jobs per month in 2023, little different than the average monthly gain of 19,000 in 2022.

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, December 2023

+52,000 Government

Employment in government increased by 52,000 in December. Over the month, employment continued to trend up in local government (+37,000) and federal government (+7,000). Job growth in government averaged 56,000 per month in 2023, more than double the average of 23,000 per month in 2022.

+40,000 Leisure and Hospitality

In December, employment in leisure and hospitality changed little (+40,000) and is below its pre-pandemic February 2020 level by 163,000. In 2023, leisure and hospitality added an average of 39,000 jobs per month, less than half the average monthly gain of 88,000 in 2022.

+17,000 Construction

In December, employment in construction continued to trend up (+17,000). Nonresidential building construction added 8,000 jobs over the month. Job growth in construction averaged 16,000 per month in 2023, little different than the average gain of 22,000 per month in 2022.

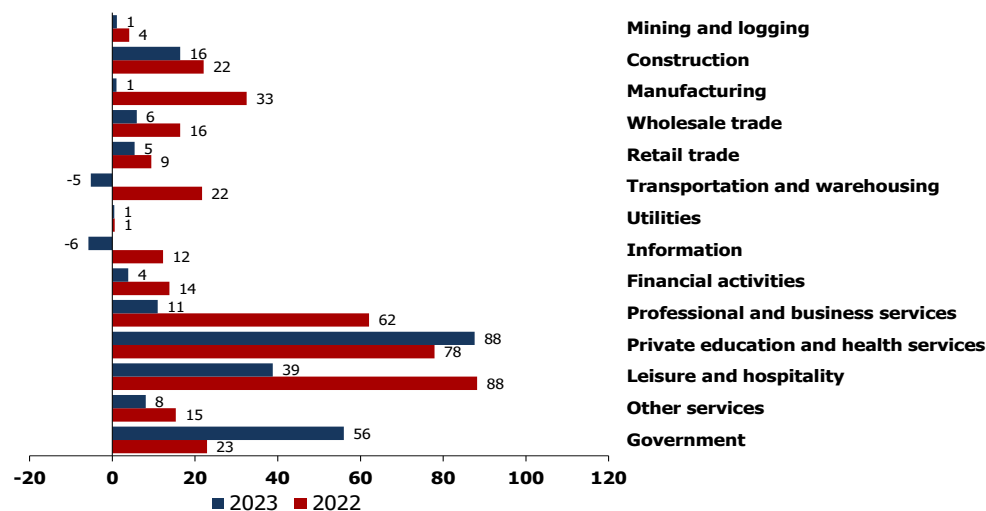
+13,000 Professional and Business Services

Employment in professional and business services changed little in December (+13,000).

Employment in total nonfarm

Average monthly change, 2023 and 2022

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



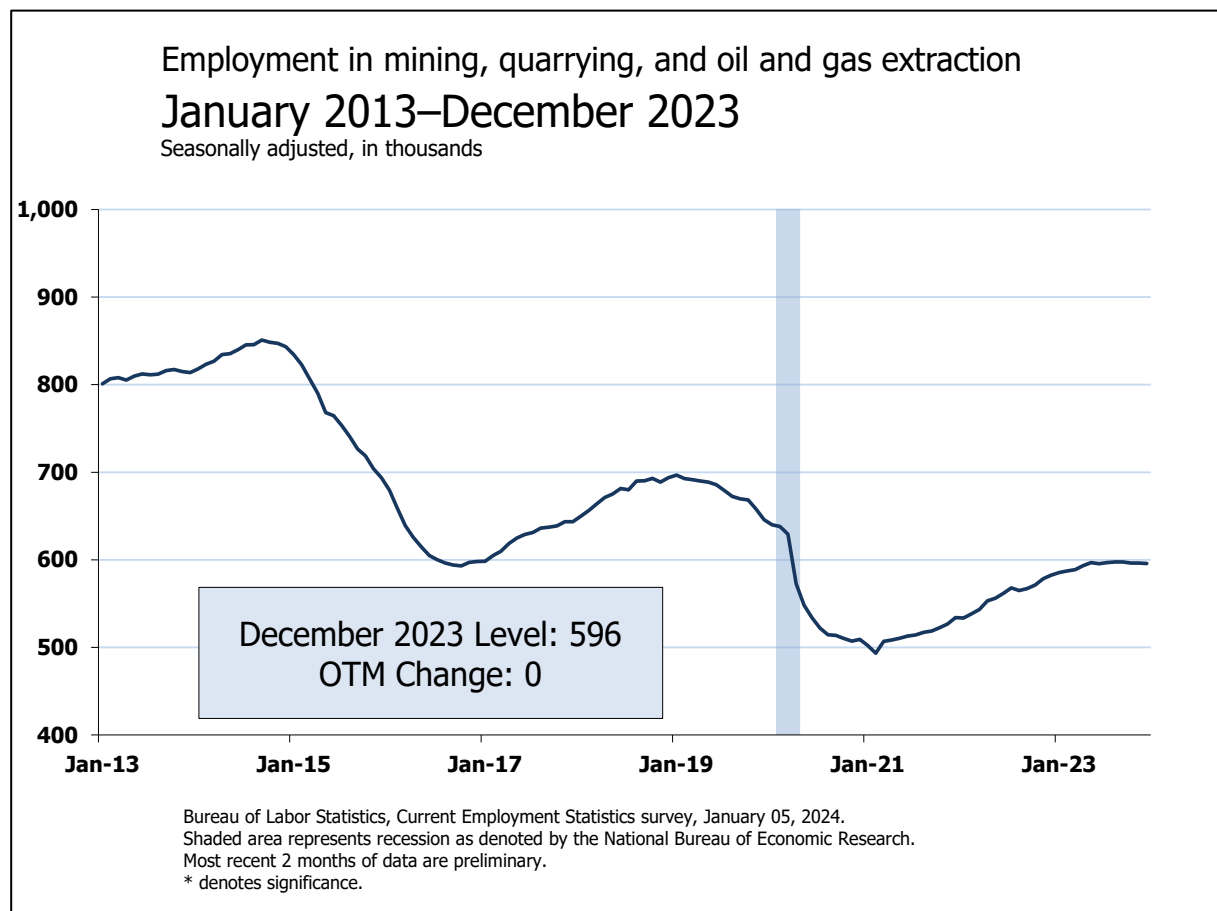
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 05, 2024.
Data are preliminary.

In 2023, job growth averaged 11,000 per month, below the average monthly gain of 62,000 in 2022. In December, employment in professional, scientific, and technical services continued to trend up (+25,000), while employment in temporary help services continued to trend down (-33,000). Since reaching a peak in March 2022, temporary help services has shed 346,000 jobs.

-23,000 Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in transportation and warehousing fell by 23,000 in December. Over the month, couriers and messengers lost 32,000 jobs, while air transportation added 4,000 jobs. In 2023, job losses in transportation and warehousing averaged 5,000 per month, after an average monthly gain of 22,000 in 2022.

Mining and Logging



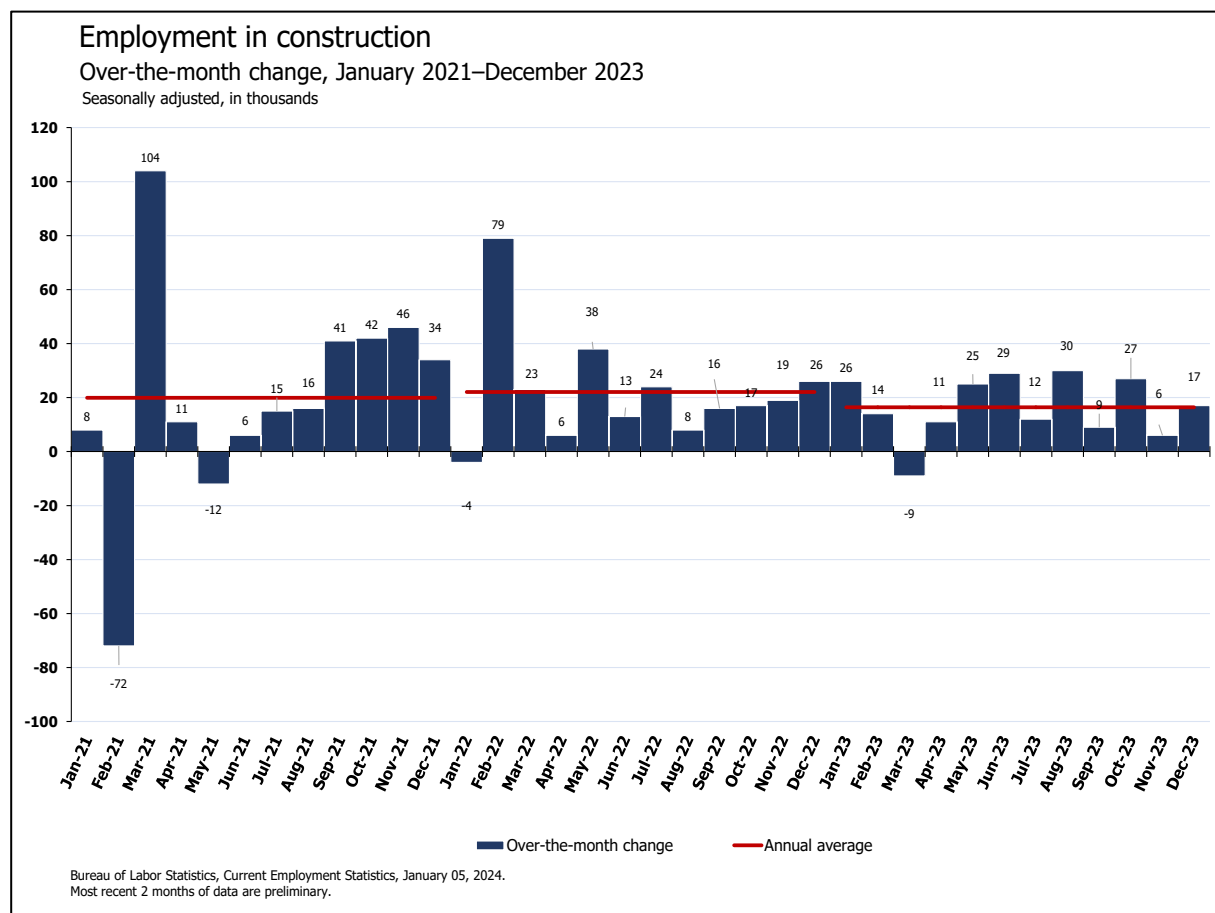
Employment in mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction was flat in December (0). The industry has shown little net change in 2023 (+13,000), compared to a gain of 48,000 in 2022.

In December, the [North American rotary rigs count](#)* increased, while the average weekly price of [West Texas Intermediate crude oil](#)** decreased.

*To access the North American rotary rigs: select the first link named “North America Rotary Rig Count (Jan 2000 – Current)”, go to US Count by Basin tab, scroll to the Total US Rig Count column, take the difference of the two weeks that include the 12th of the current and previous month.

**To access West Texas Intermediate crude oil: select “EDIT GRAPH” and change the “Modify frequency” to “Weekly, Ending Friday.” Above the graph, modify date range to a year, including the 12th of the month.

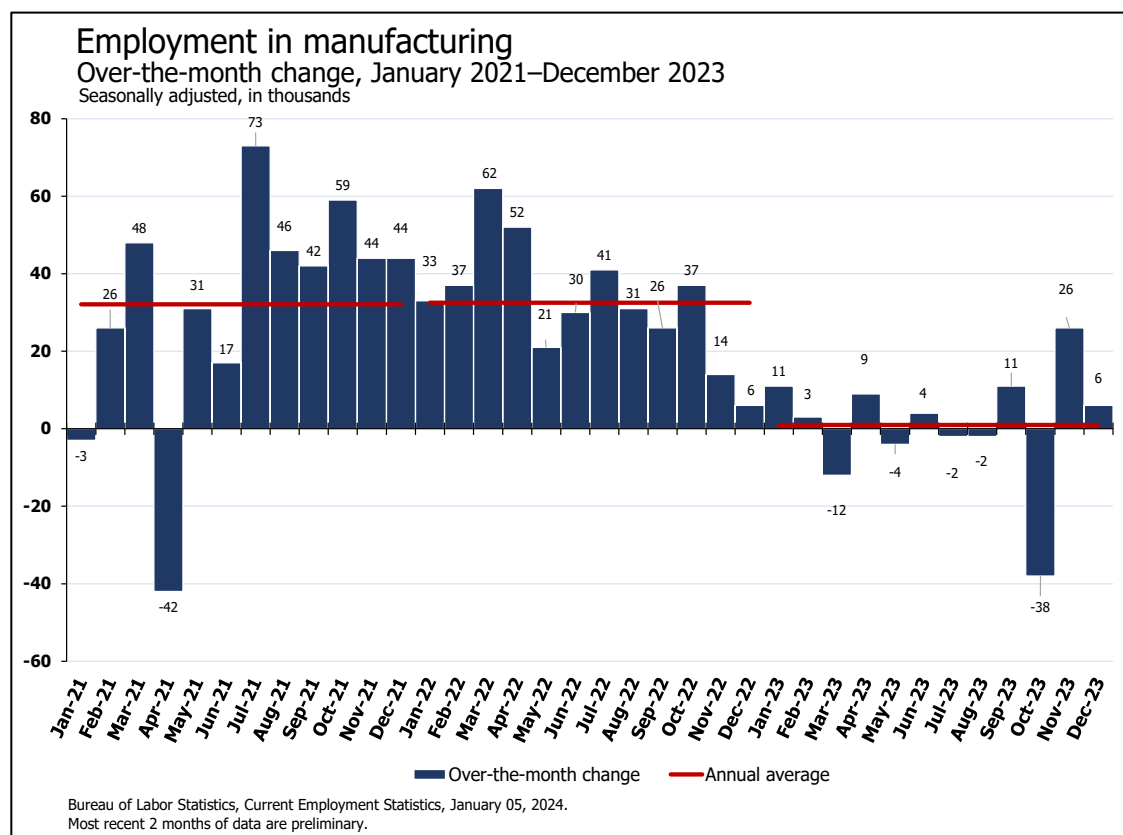
Construction



Employment in construction continued to trend up in December (+17,000), with nonresidential building construction adding 8,000 jobs. In 2023, construction added an average of 16,000 jobs per month, about in line with the average gain of 22,000 per month in 2022.

Recent construction-related indicators are mixed. The [30-year fixed mortgage rate](#) declined in December, following increases in [housing starts](#) and [construction spending](#) in November. In contrast, both [residential building permits](#) and [new residential sales](#) decreased in November.

Manufacturing



Manufacturing employment changed little in December (+6,000), following offsetting movements in November (+26,000) and October (-38,000) due to strike activity in the transportation equipment sector.

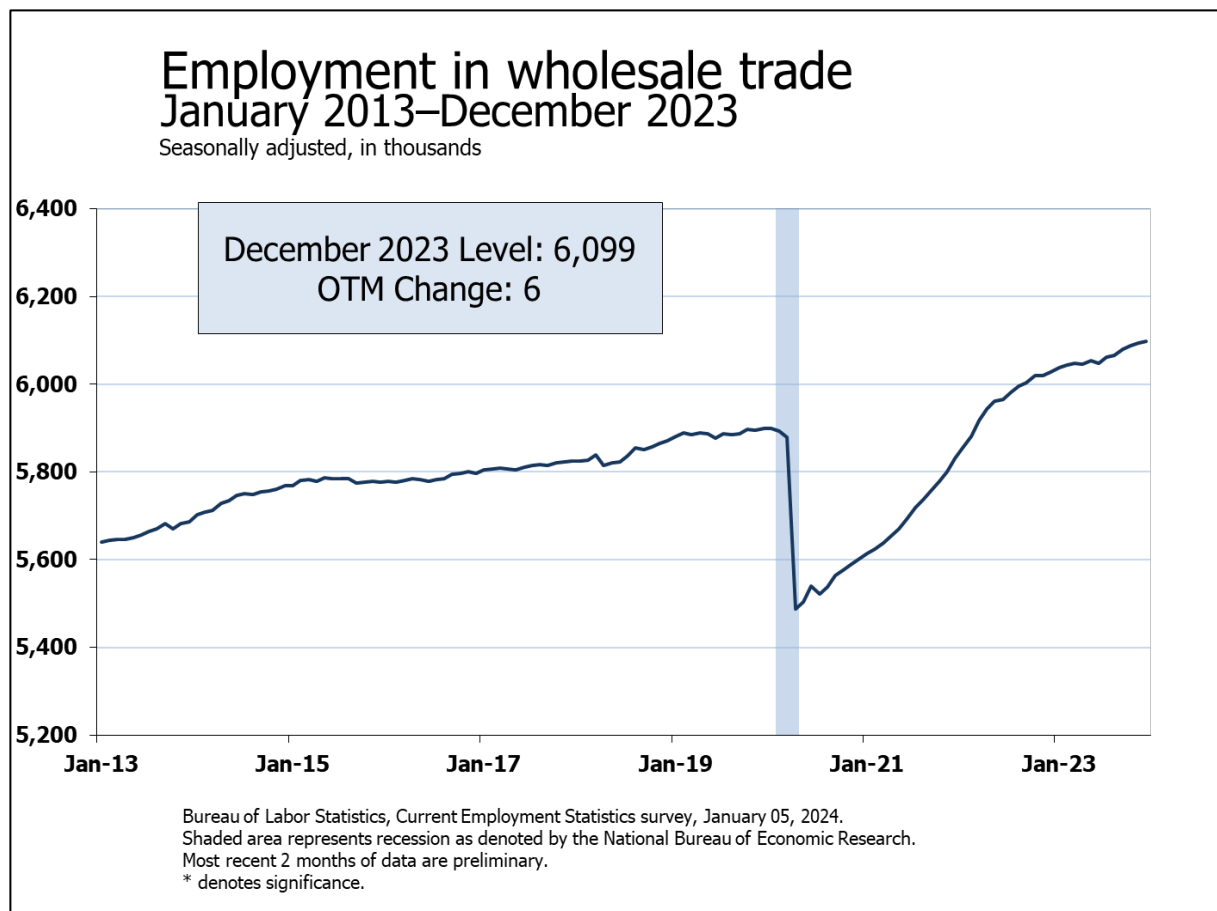
In 2023, manufacturing added 12,000 jobs on net, well below the 390,000 jobs added on net in 2022. This corresponds with weakness in both the [Institute of Supply Management's Purchasing Managers' Index \(PMI\)](#) and the [S&P Global US Manufacturing PMI](#), which measure business sentiment and expectations.

The manufacturing 1-month diffusion index fell by 0.7 to 47.9 for December. A number below 50 indicates that more manufacturing industries are losing jobs than are adding jobs.

In December, average hourly earnings in manufacturing for all employees rose by 16 cents to \$33.25. Average hourly earnings of production workers increased by 25 cents to \$27.16. In 2023, average hourly earnings grew by 5.7 percent for all employees and by 5.8 percent for production workers.

Over the month, average weekly hours for all employees and production workers in manufacturing were little changed at 39.8 hours and 40.4. hours, respectively. Average weekly overtime hours for all employees were unchanged at 2.9 hours in December, while average weekly overtime hours for production workers increased by 0.1 hour to 3.5 hours.

Wholesale Trade



In December, employment in wholesale trade changed little (+6,000). Wholesale trade added a net 70,000 jobs in 2023, well below the net gain of 198,000 in 2022.

Retail Trade

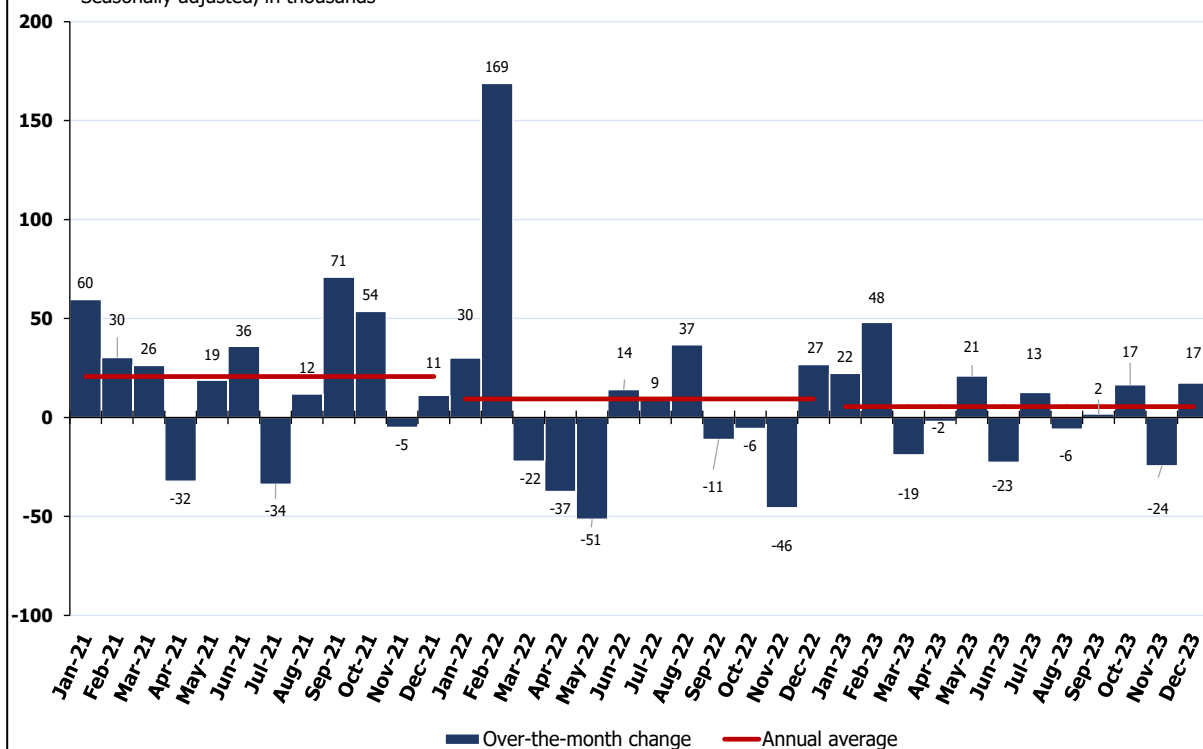
Employment in retail trade changed little in December (+17,000). In 2023, employment in the industry changed little on net (+66,000), compared with an increase of 113,000 in 2022.

In December, employment increased in warehousing clubs, supercenters, and other general merchandise retailers (+14,000); building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+8,000); and automotive parts, accessories, and tire retailers (+4,000). By contrast, department stores lost 13,000 jobs.

Retail-related economic indicators for the month are mostly positive. In December, the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) increased, and the per-gallon price of [regular gasoline](#)* decreased. Similarly, [Real Personal Consumption Expenditures](#) for goods and [Retail Sales](#) increased in November, although [Auto Sales](#) decreased.

*The per-gallon price of regular gasoline is a weekly measure, and the over-the-month change reflects the difference in price for the week including the 12th for both months.

Employment in retail trade
Over-the-month change, January 2021–December 2023
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

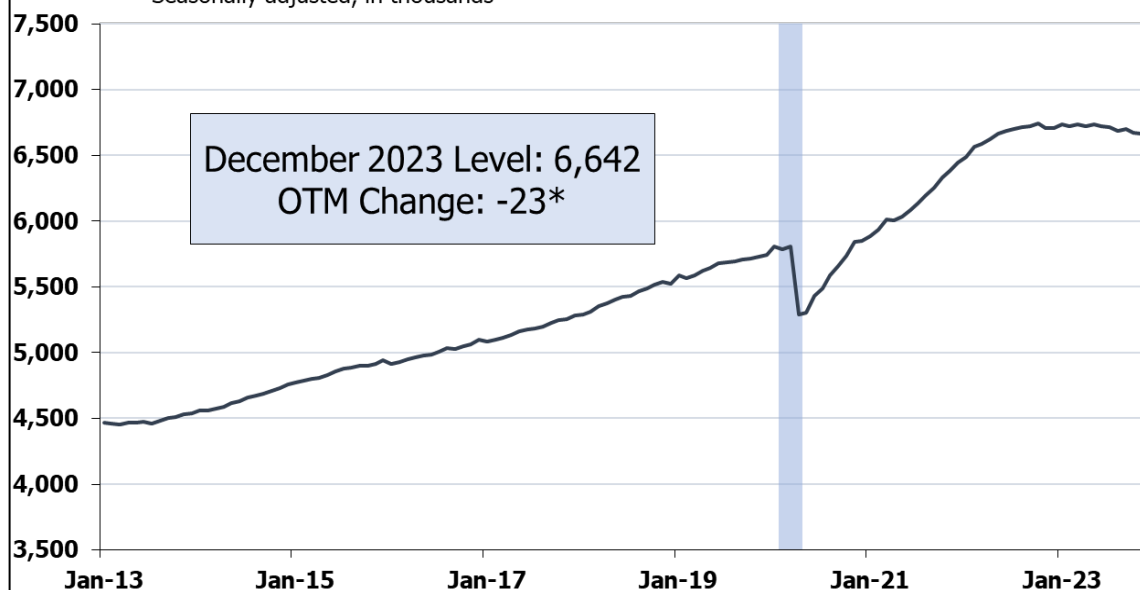


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, January 05, 2024.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in transportation and warehousing January 2013–December 2023

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 05, 2024.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Employment in transportation and warehousing decreased by 23,000 in December. Since reaching a peak in October 2022, employment in transportation and warehousing has decreased by 100,000.

In December, couriers and messengers lost 32,000 jobs, while air transportation added 4,000 jobs.

Utilities

Employment in utilities January 2013–December 2023

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



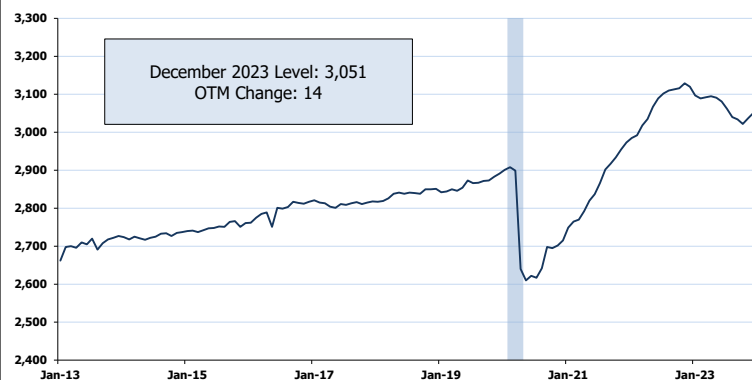
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 05, 2024.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Employment in utilities was flat in December (0). Employment in utilities has shown little net change (+4,000) since the most recent peak in August 2015.

Information

Employment in information January 2013–December 2023

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



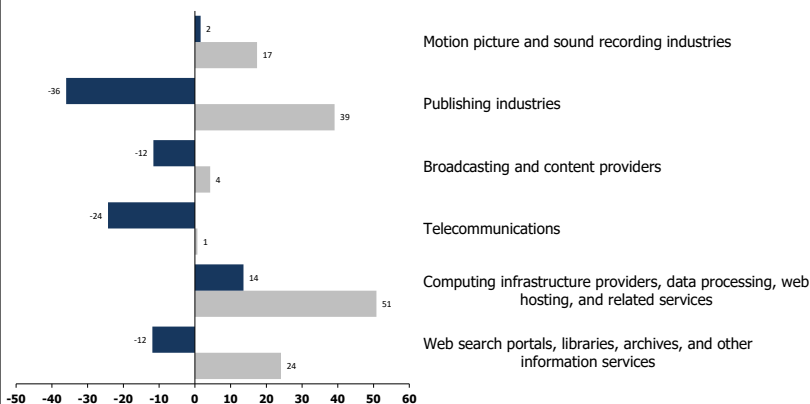
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 05, 2024.
Shaded area represents recession as denoted by the National Bureau of Economic Research.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

In December, employment in information changed little (+14,000). Motion picture and sound recording industries added 11,000 jobs over the month. In 2023, information employment was down by 69,000, on net, following net growth of 147,000 in 2022.

Employment in information Over-the-year change

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

■ 2023 ■ 2022



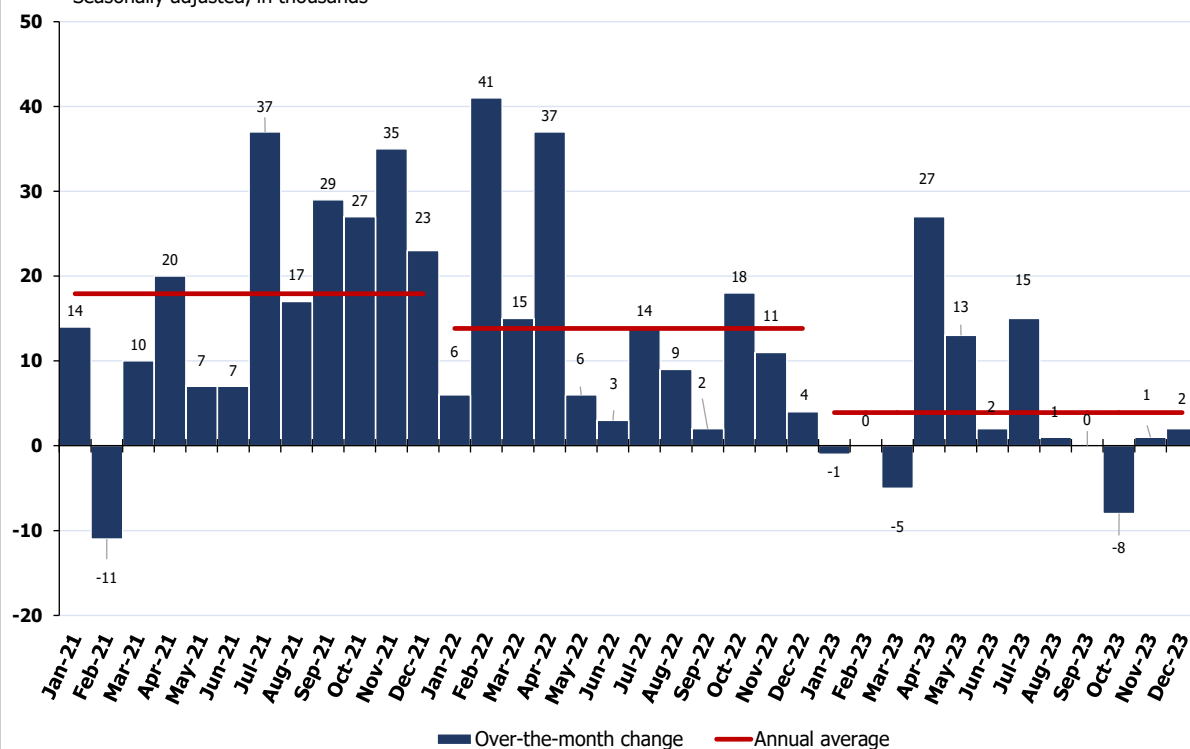
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 05, 2024.
Data are preliminary.
* denotes significance.

Telecommunications employment fell by 24,000 in 2023, after showing little net change in 2022 (+1,000). Since March 2001, the industry has shed 57 percent of its employment.

Employment in computing infrastructure providers, data processing, web hosting, and related services showed little net change in 2023 (+14,000), after increasing by 51,000 in 2022.

Financial Activities

Employment in financial activities
Over-the-month change, January 2021–December 2023
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

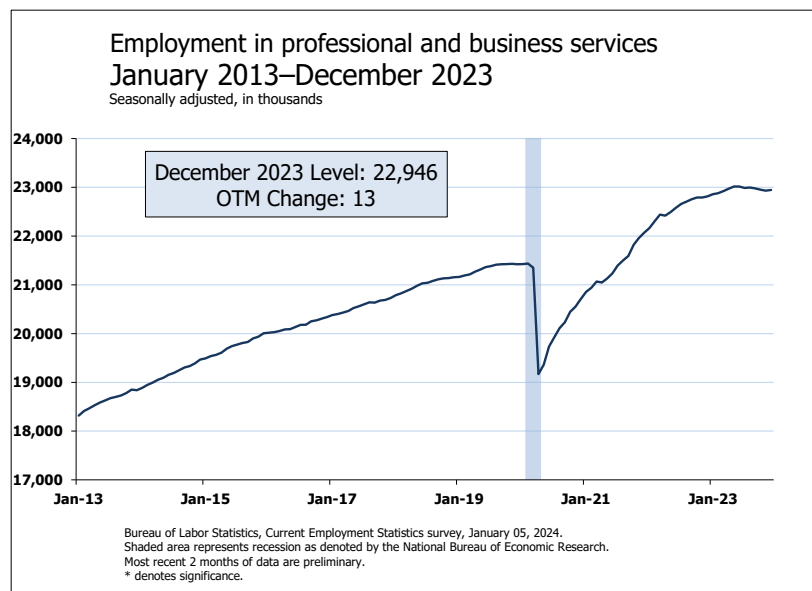


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, January 05, 2024.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Employment in financial activities changed little in December (+2,000). Industry employment showed little net change in 2023 (+47,000), compared with 166,000 added in 2022.

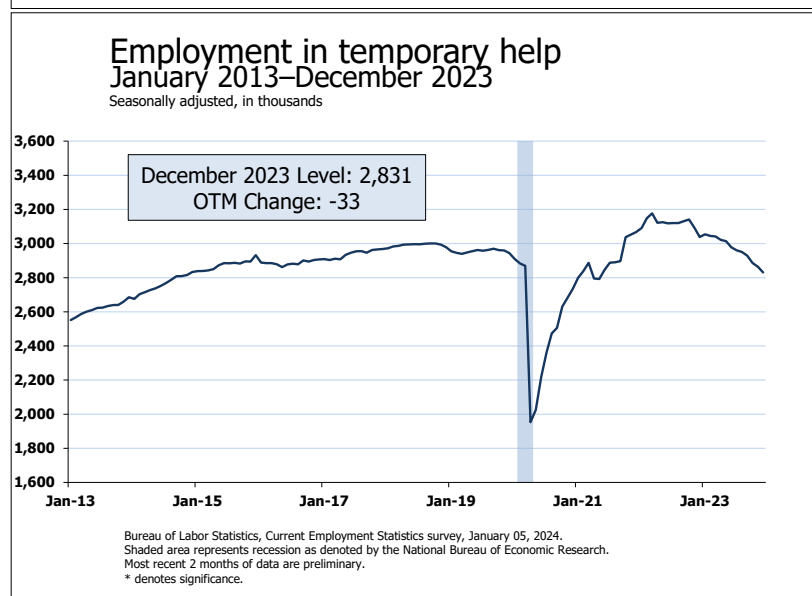
In December, employment continued to trend down in credit intermediation and related activities (-6,000). Within the industry, commercial banking lost 3,000 jobs.

Professional and Business Services



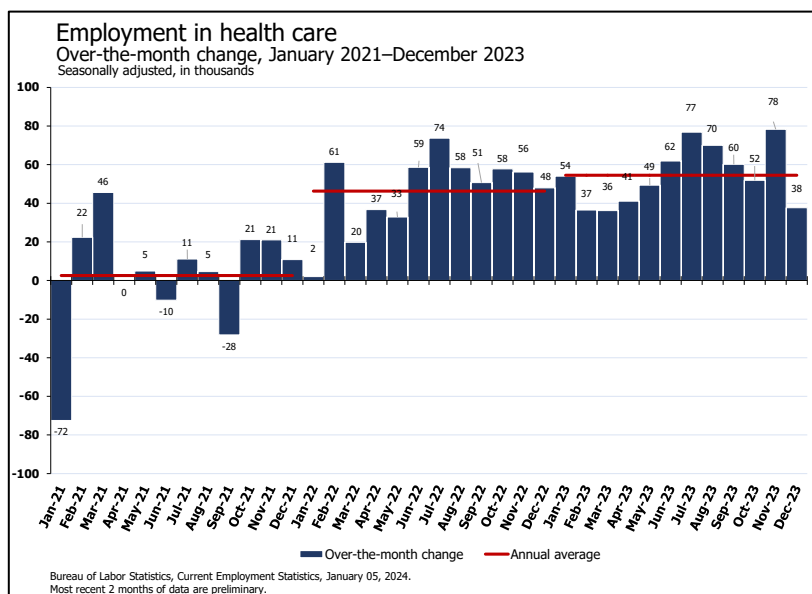
Employment in professional and business services changed little in December (+13,000). Job growth averaged 11,000 per month in 2023, lower than the average monthly gain of 62,000 per month in 2022.

In December, employment in professional, scientific, and technical services continued to trend up (+25,000), while administrative and support and waste management and remediation services continued to trend down (-18,000).

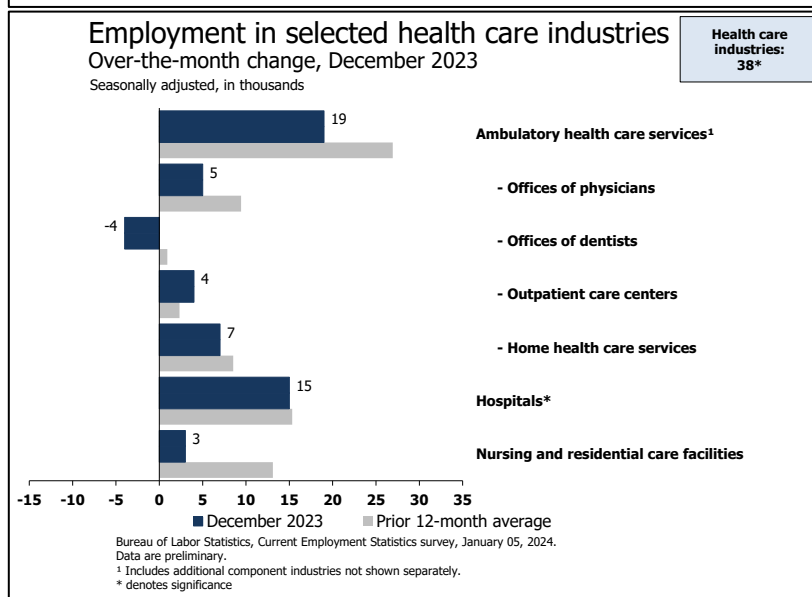


Within administrative and support and waste management and remediation services, employment in temporary help services continued to trend down (-33,000), coinciding with recent weakness in the [ASA Staffing Index](#). Since reaching an employment peak in March 2022, temporary help services has shed 346,000 jobs.

Private Education and Health Services



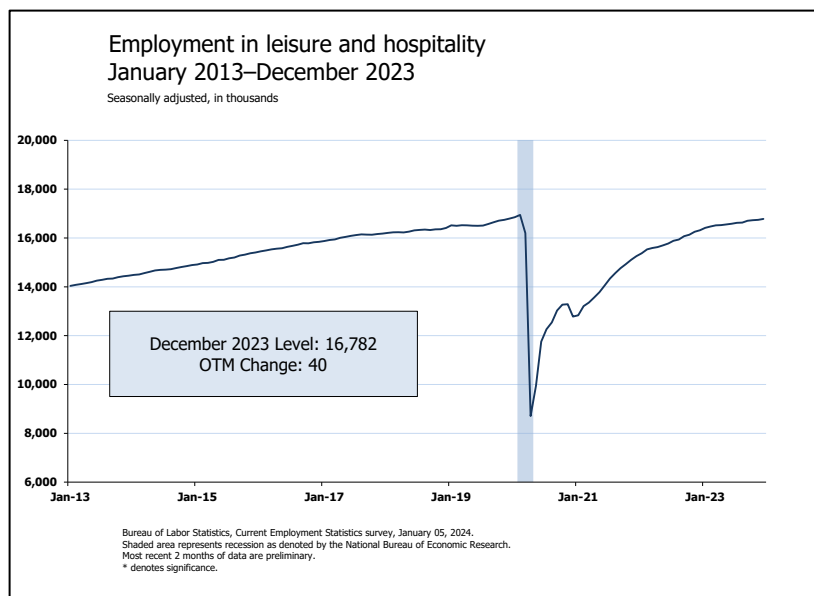
Employment in health care increased by 38,000 in December. In 2023, job growth in health care averaged 55,000 per month, compared with the average monthly gain of 46,000 in 2022.



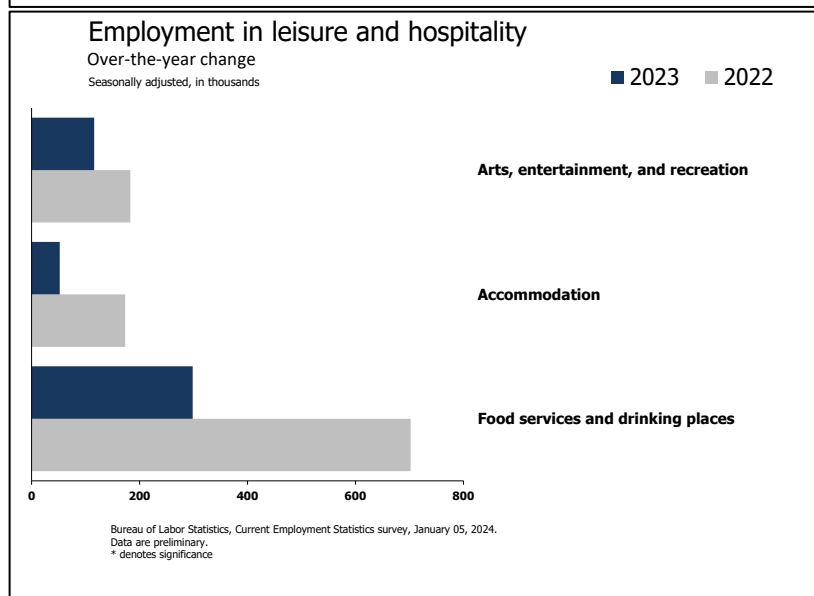
Within health care, employment continued to trend up in ambulatory health care services (+19,000) and hospitals (+15,000). Employment in nursing and residential care facilities is 154,000 below its February 2020 level, reflecting slow growth in skilled nursing care facilities.

In December, employment in social assistance increased by 21,000, with individual and family services accounting for 17,000 of the gain. In 2023, social assistance added an average of 22,000 jobs per month, similar to the average monthly gain of 19,000 in 2022.

Leisure and Hospitality

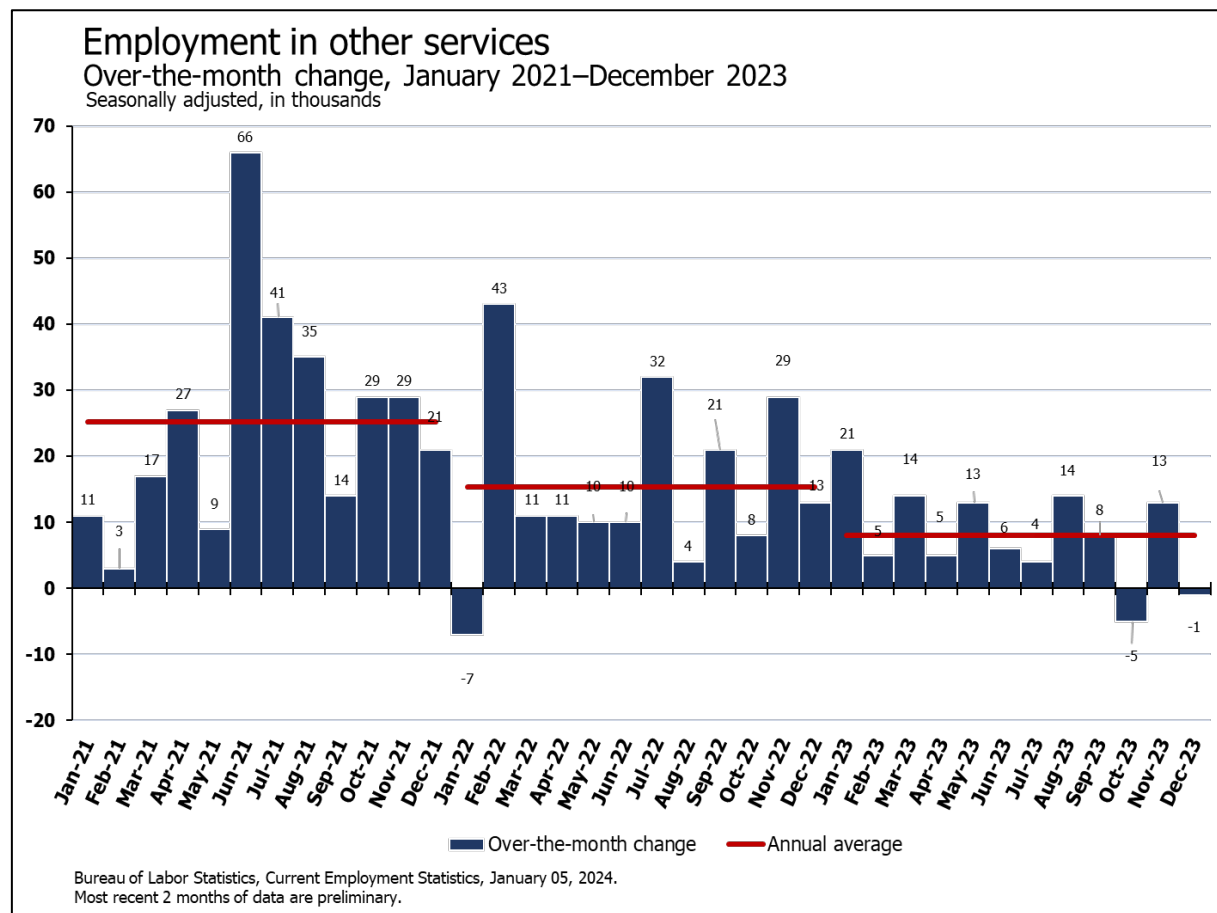


Employment in leisure and hospitality changed little in December (+40,000). On net, employment growth in leisure and hospitality slowed in 2023; the industry added 466,000 jobs in 2023, down from the 1.1 million jobs added in 2022.



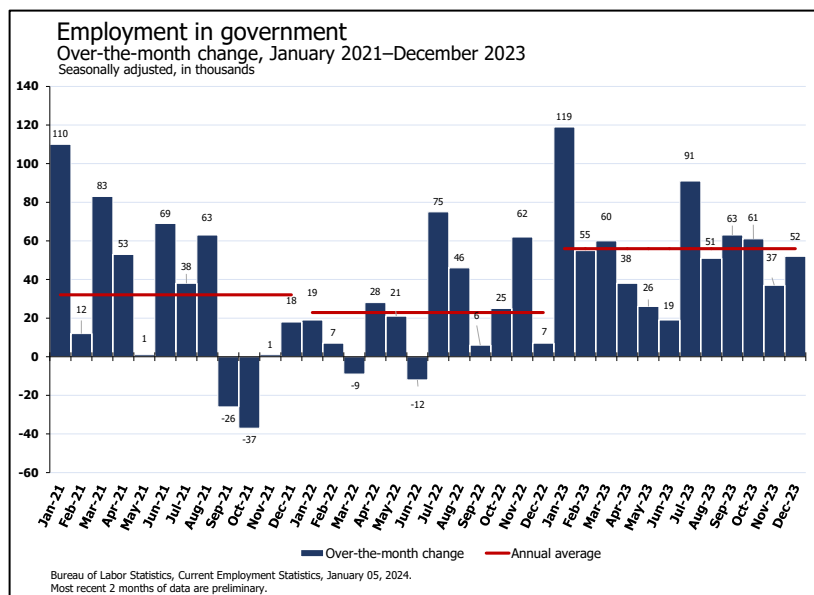
Employment in leisure and hospitality has not recovered from pandemic-related losses. Accommodation employment is 214,000 below its February 2020 level, while employment has recovered in arts, entertainment, and recreation; and in food services and drinking places.

Other Services

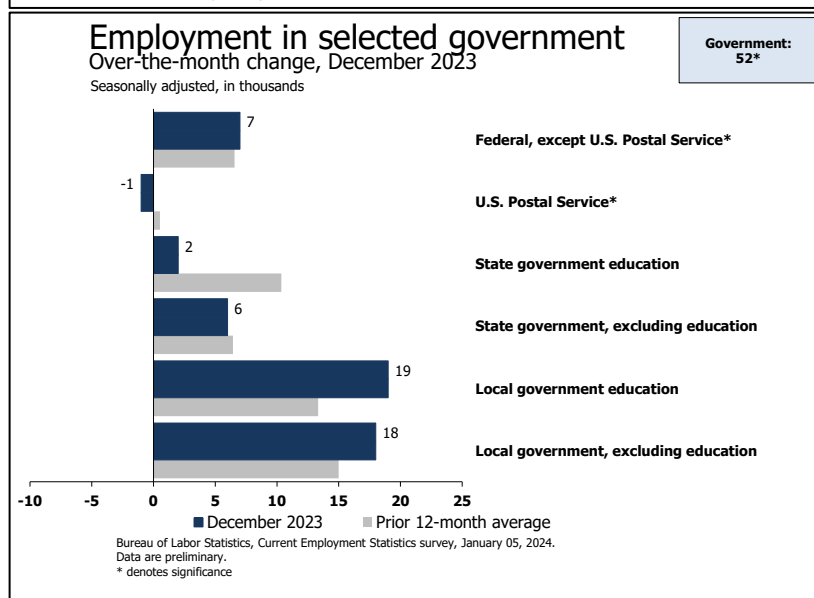


Employment in other services changed little in December (-1,000). Over the year, job growth averaged 8,000 per month, compared with the average monthly gain of 15,000 in 2022. Employment in other services is 45,000 below its February 2020 level.

Government



Employment in government increased by 52,000 in December. In 2023, job growth averaged 56,000 per month, more than double the average monthly gain of 23,000 in 2022.



Over the month, employment continued to trend up in local government (+37,000) and federal government (+7,000).

Current Employment Statistics Highlights

Detailed Industry Employment Analysis



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

202-691-6555

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