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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



March 2024

Release Date: April 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, March 2024

Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 303,000 in March, higher than the average monthly gain of 231,000 over the prior 12 months. In March, job gains occurred in health care, government, and construction.

The employment change for January revised up from +229,000 to +256,000, and the change for February revised down from +275,000 to +270,000. On net, employment over these months is 22,000 higher than previously reported.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls rose by 12 cents, or 0.3 percent, in March. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 4.1 percent. In March, average weekly hours of all employees edged up 0.1 hour to 34.4 hours.

+88,000 Private Education and Health Services

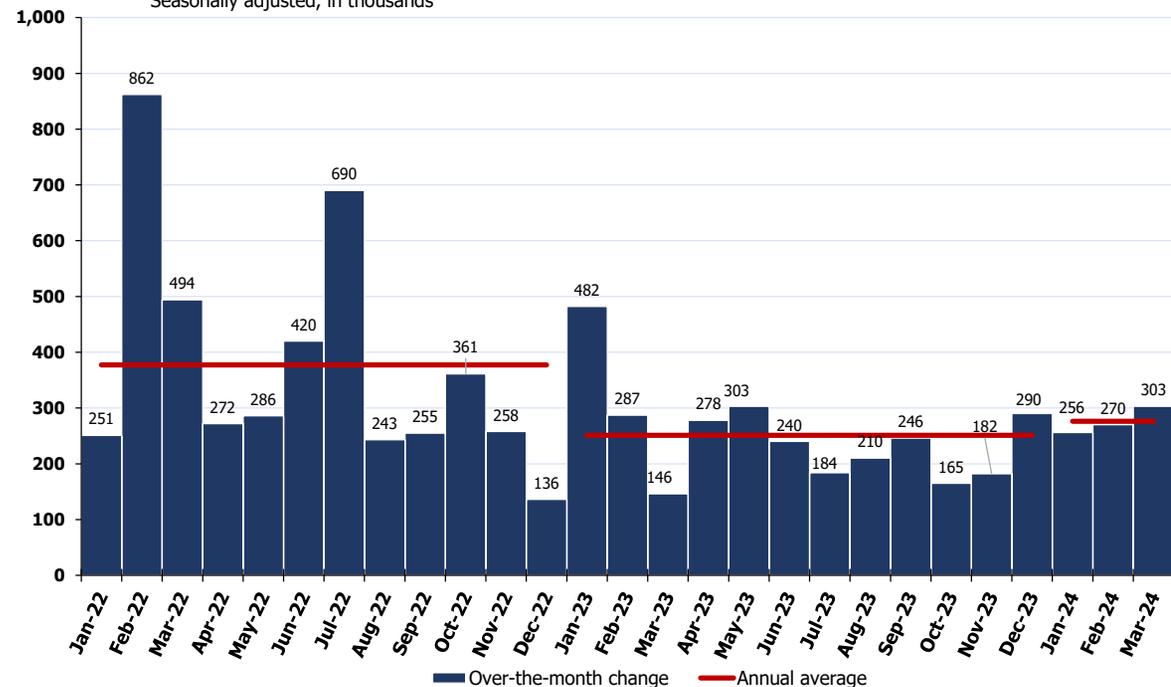
Health care added 72,000 jobs in March, above its prior 12-month average gain of 60,000. In March, ambulatory health care services (+28,000), hospitals (+27,000), and nursing and residential care facilities (+18,000) added jobs.

Employment in social assistance continued to trend up in March (+9,000), below the average monthly gain of 22,000 over the prior 12 months.

Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, January 2022–March 2024

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



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

+71,000 Government

Employment in government increased by 71,000 in March, higher than the average monthly gain of 54,000 over the prior 12 months. In March, employment growth occurred in local government (+49,000) and federal government (+9,000).

+49,000 Leisure and Hospitality

Employment in leisure and hospitality trended up in March (+49,000), above the average monthly gain of 37,000 over the prior 12 months. Industry employment has recovered to its pre-pandemic February 2020 level.

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, March 2024

+39,000 Construction

Employment in construction increased in March (+39,000), above its prior 12-month average gain of 19,000. Over the month, nonresidential specialty trade contractors added 16,000 jobs.

+18,000 Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade changed little in March (+18,000). In March, job gains occurred in warehouse clubs, supercenters, and other general merchandise retailers (+12,000) and in department stores (+8,000). Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers lost jobs over the month (-10,000).

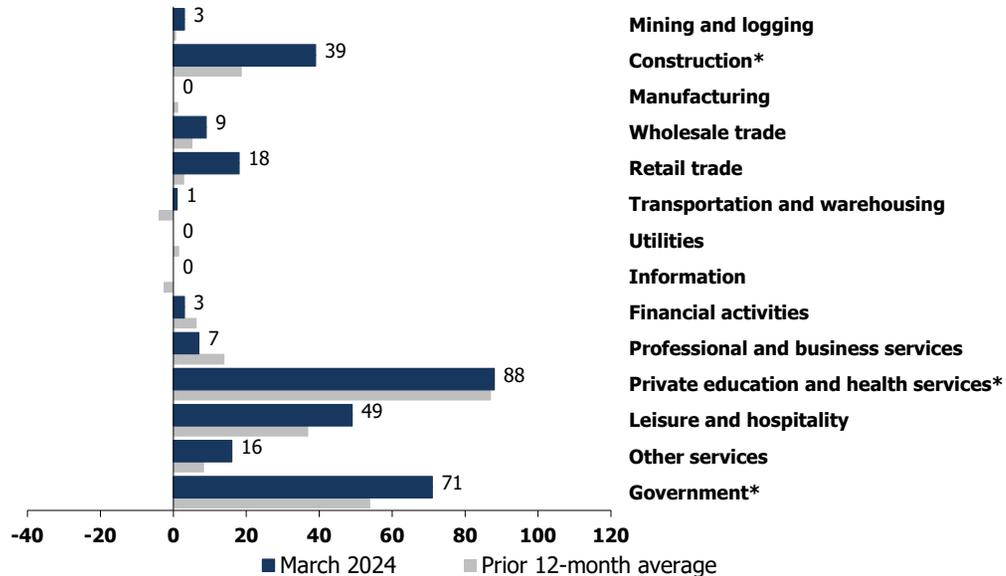
+16,000 Other Services

Employment in other services continued its upward trend in March (+16,000). The industry had added an average of 8,000 jobs per month over the prior 12 months. Other services employment is 40,000 below its February 2020 level.

Employment in total nonfarm Over-the-month change, March 2024

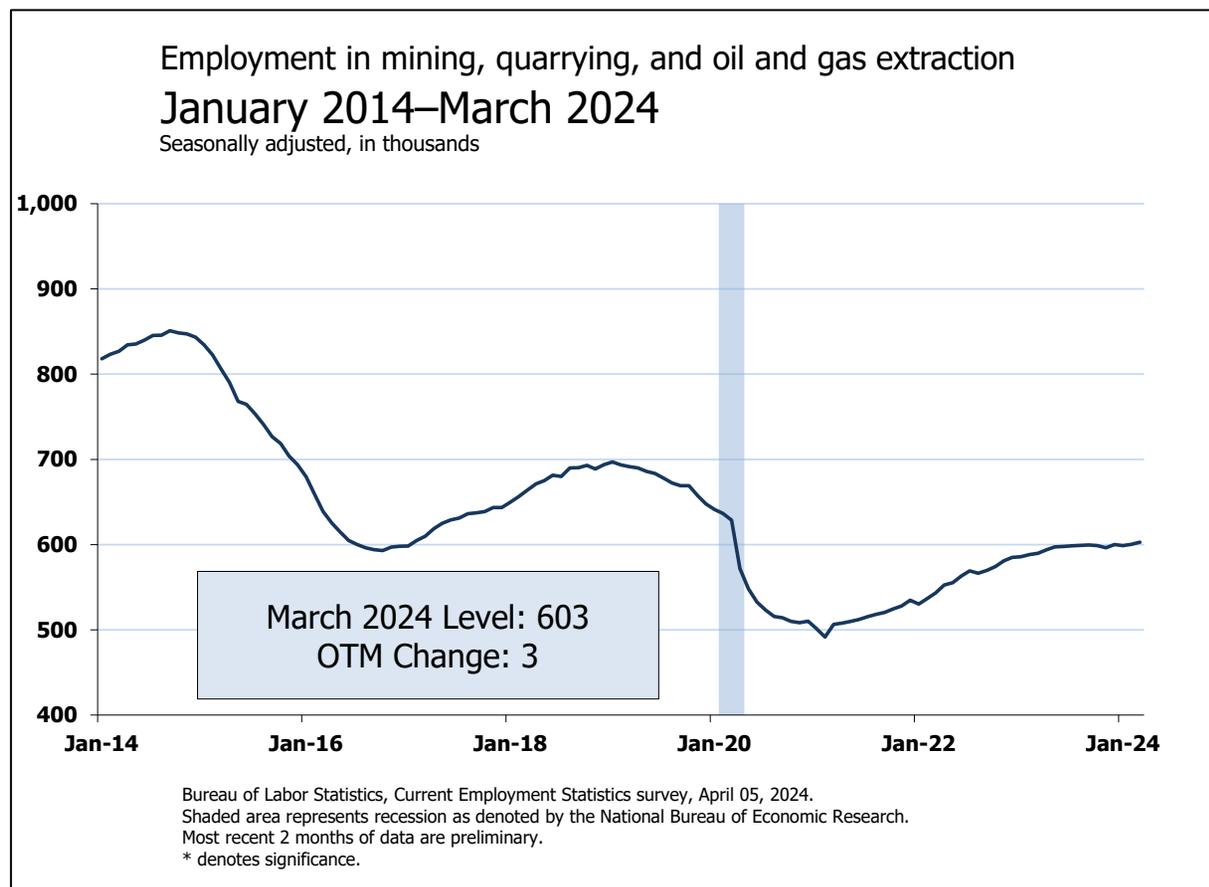
Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:
303*



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

Mining and Logging



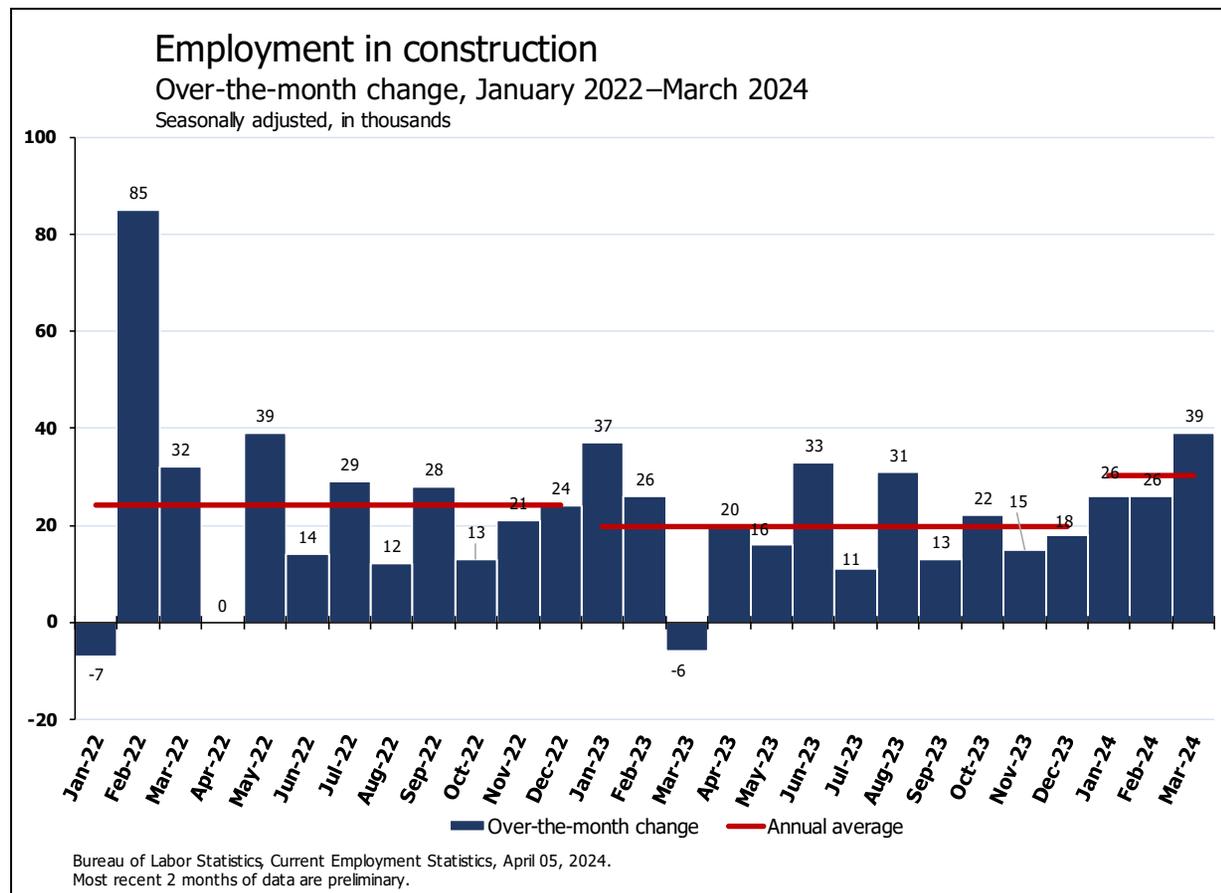
In March, employment changed little in mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (+3,000).

Over the month, both the [North American rotary rigs count](#)* and the average weekly price of [West Texas Intermediate crude oil](#)** increased.

*To access the North American rotary rigs: select the link named "North America Rotary Rig Count (Jan 2000 – Current)", go to the 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 reference 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 one year, including the 12th of the month.

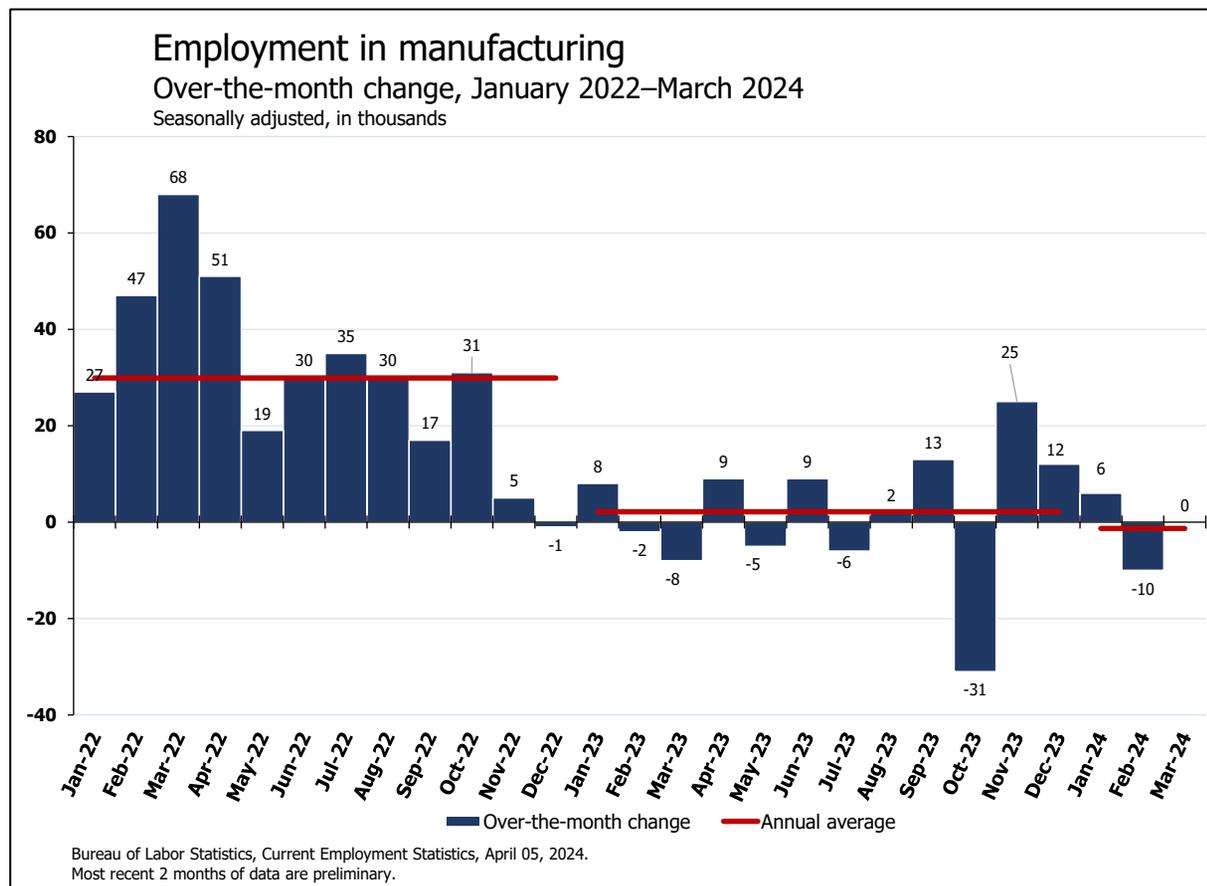
Construction



Employment in construction increased by 39,000 in March, above its prior 12-month average gain of 19,000. Over the month, nonresidential specialty trade contractors added 16,000 jobs.

Recent construction-related indicators are mixed. [Residential building permits and housing starts](#) increased in February. In contrast, [new residential sales](#) decreased in February but have increased over the year. The [30-year fixed mortgage rate](#) changed little in March.

Manufacturing



Employment in manufacturing was unchanged in March (0).

The manufacturing 1-month diffusion index fell by 5.5 to 43.1 in March. A number below 50 indicates that more manufacturing industries are losing jobs than are adding jobs.

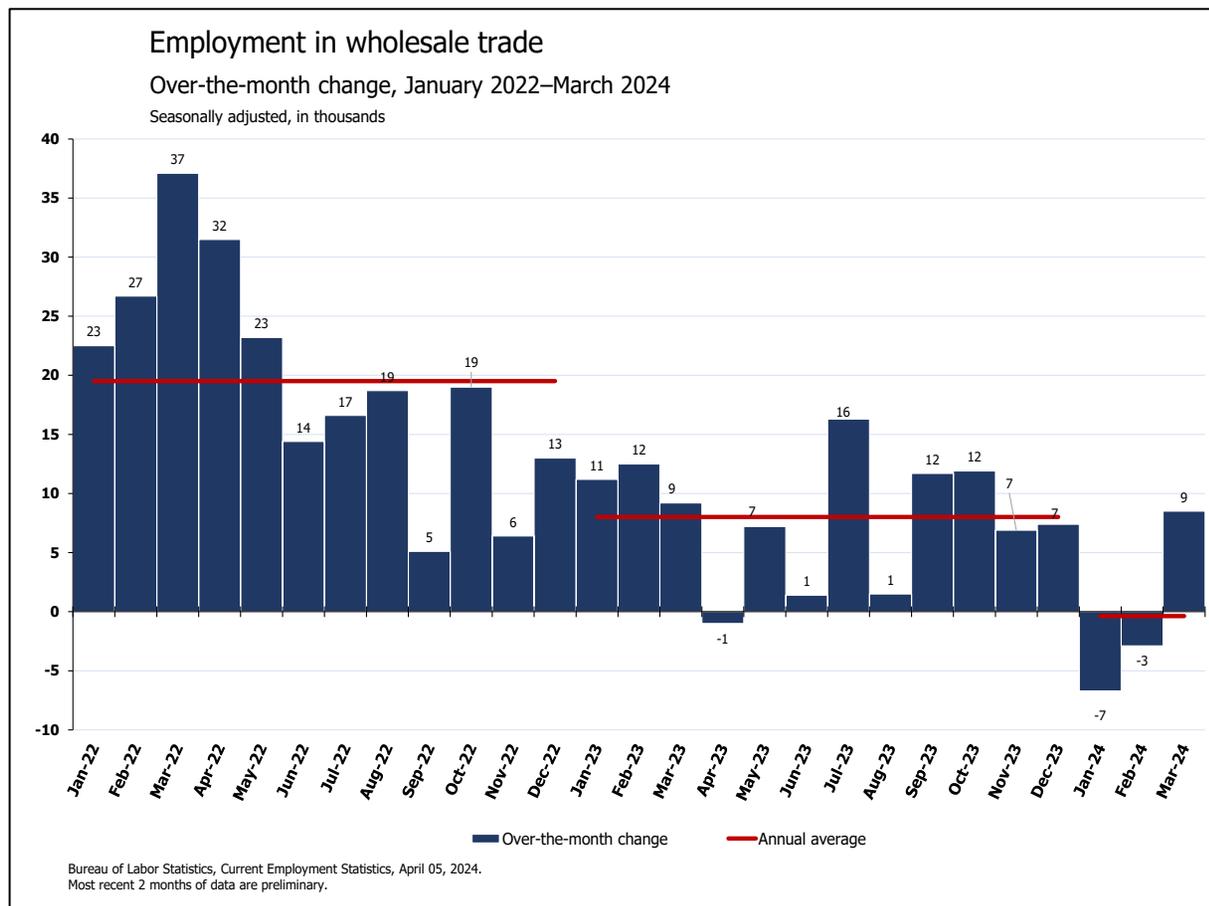
Manufacturing-related indicators, which measure business sentiment and expectations, were mixed over the month. [The Institute of Supply Management’s Purchasing Managers’ Index \(PMI\)](#) increased in March, while [the S&P Global US Manufacturing PMI](#) decreased.

In March, average hourly earnings for all employees in manufacturing rose by 20 cents to \$33.63. Production employees’ average hourly earnings rose by 12 cents to \$27.48.

Average weekly hours of all employees in manufacturing were unchanged at 40 hours in March. The average workweek for production employees edged up by 0.1 hour to 40.7 hours. Average weekly overtime hours for all employees edged down by 0.1 hour to 2.9 hours and production employees’ overtime hours were unchanged at 3.6 hours.

Wholesale Trade

In March, employment in wholesale trade changed little (+9,000). Over the most recent 12 months, wholesale trade has added 62,000 jobs.

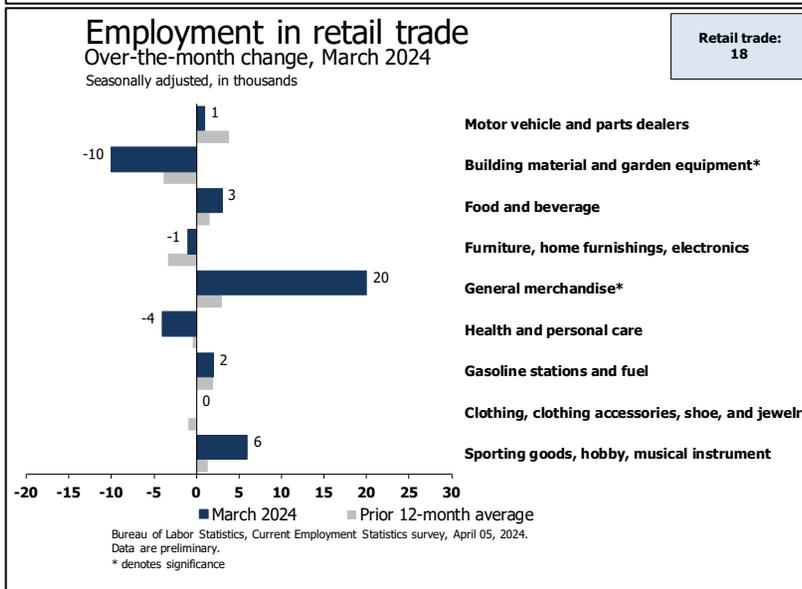


Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade changed little in March (+18,000).

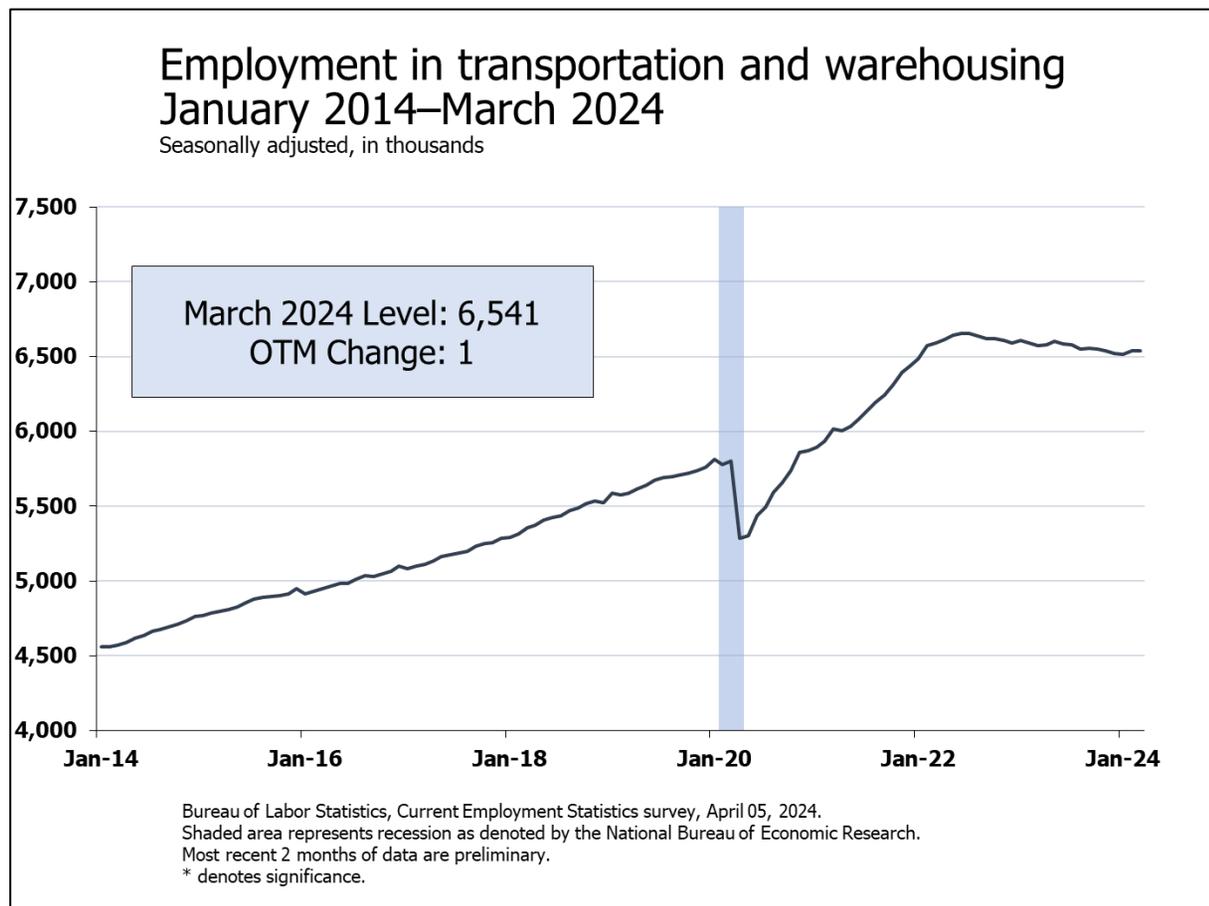
Employment gains in warehouse clubs, supercenters, and other general merchandise retailers (+12,000) and department stores (+8,000) were partially offset by a loss in building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (-10,000).

Recent retail-related economic indicators are mostly positive. In February, [Auto Sales](#), [Real Personal Consumption Expenditures](#) for goods, and [Retail Sales](#) increased. In contrast, the per-gallon price of [regular gasoline*](#) increased in March, and the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) was essentially unchanged.



*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 following the week of the 12th for both months.

Transportation and Warehousing

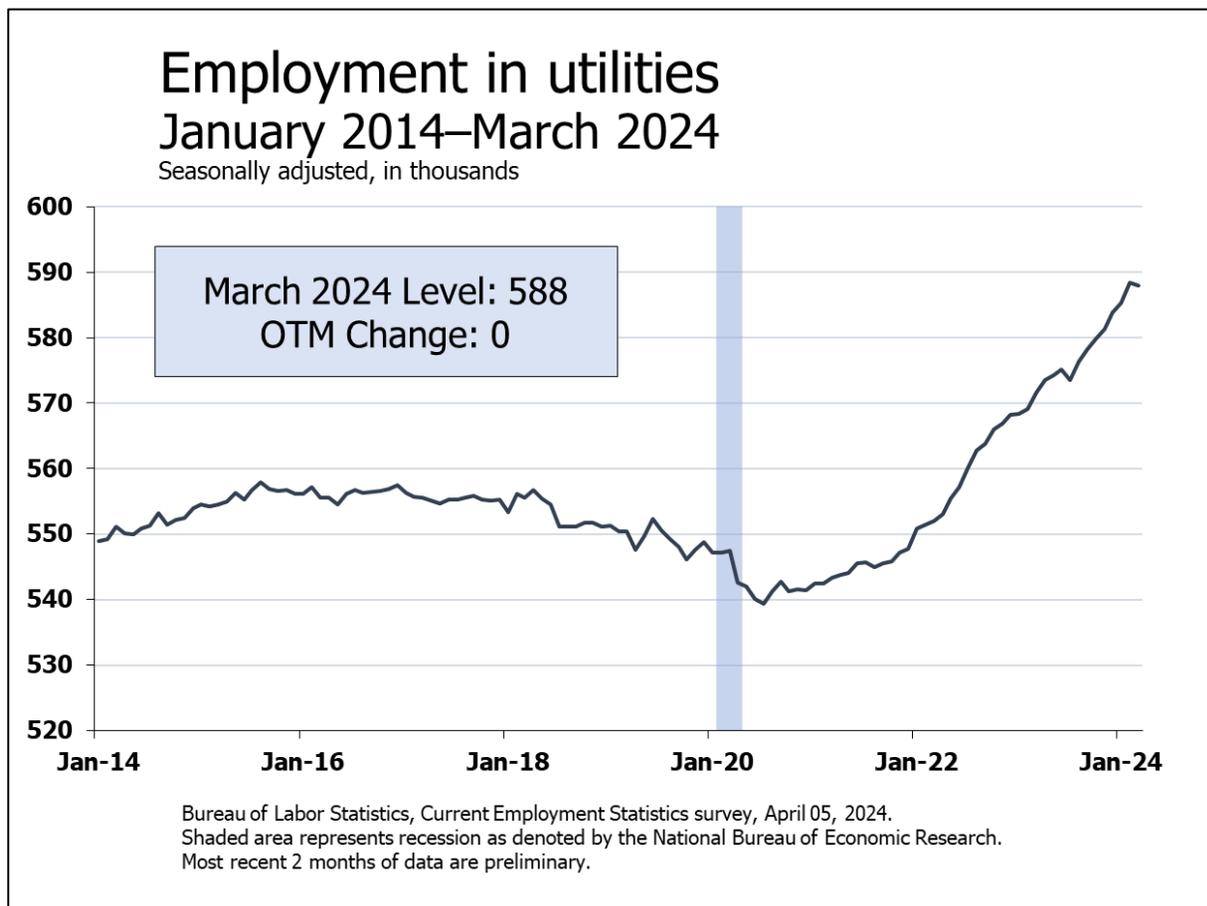


Employment in transportation and warehousing was flat in March (+1,000) and is 115,000 below its most recent peak in July 2022.

Water transportation added 2,000 jobs in March and has added 6,000 jobs over the year.

Utilities

Employment in utilities was unchanged in March (0).



Information

In March, employment in information was unchanged (0).

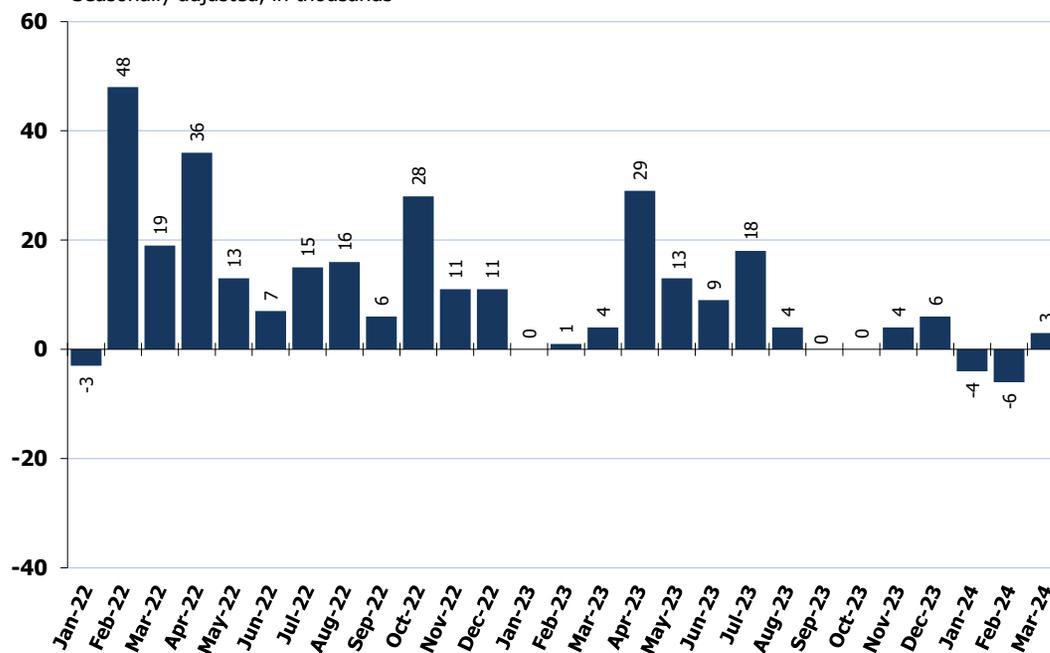


Financial Activities

Employment in financial activities

Over-the-month, January 2022-March 2024

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



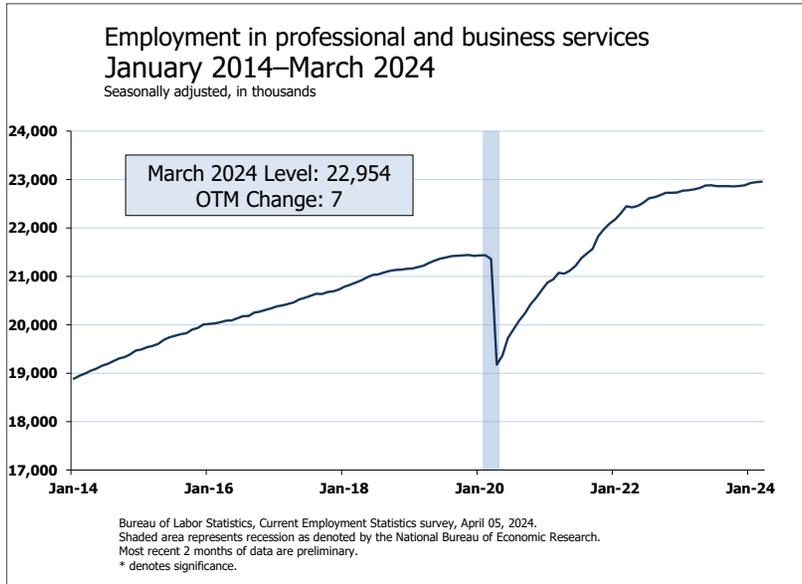
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 05, 2024.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Employment in financial activities changed little in March (+3,000) and has shown no net change over the past 6 months.

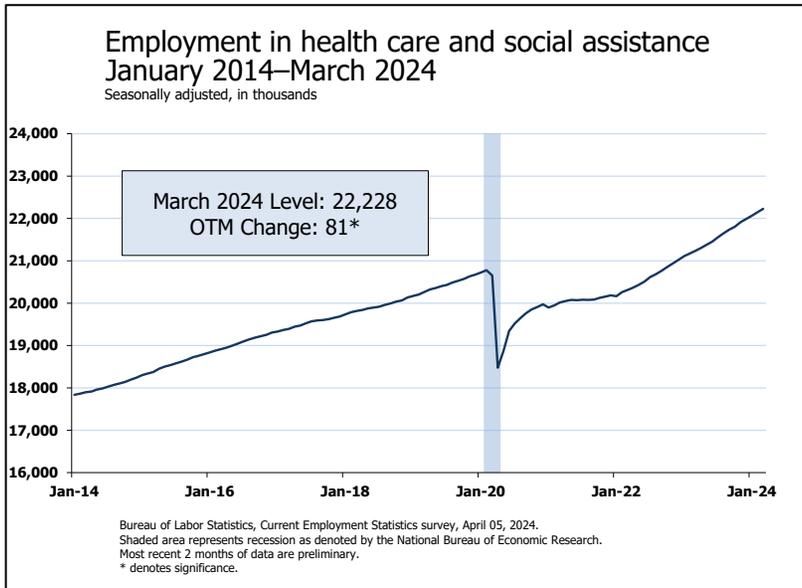
Professional and Business Services

Employment in professional and business services changed little in March (+7,000). Over the prior 12 months, this industry had added an average of 14,000 jobs per month.

Employment in temporary help services changed little in March (-1,000), coinciding with recent weakness in the [ASA Staffing Index](#). Since reaching an employment peak in March 2022, temporary help services has shed 422,000 jobs, a decline of 13.3 percent.



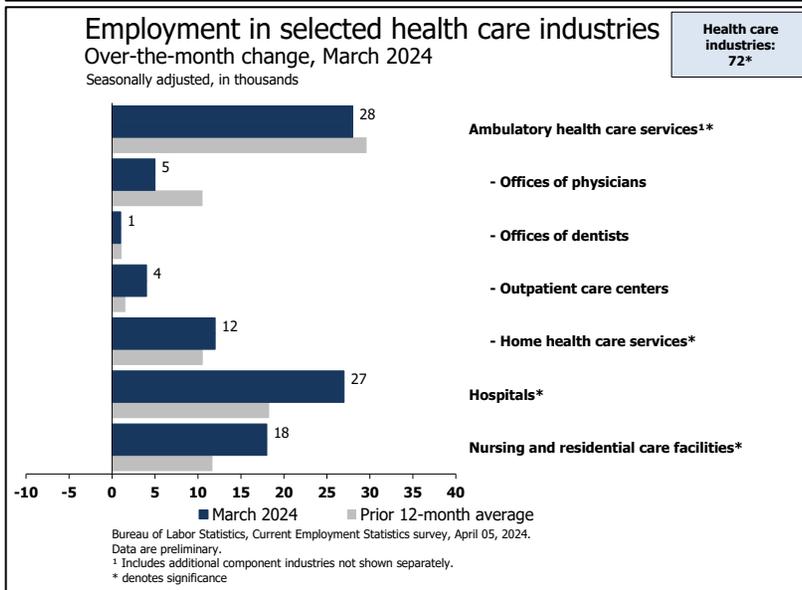
Private Education and Health Services



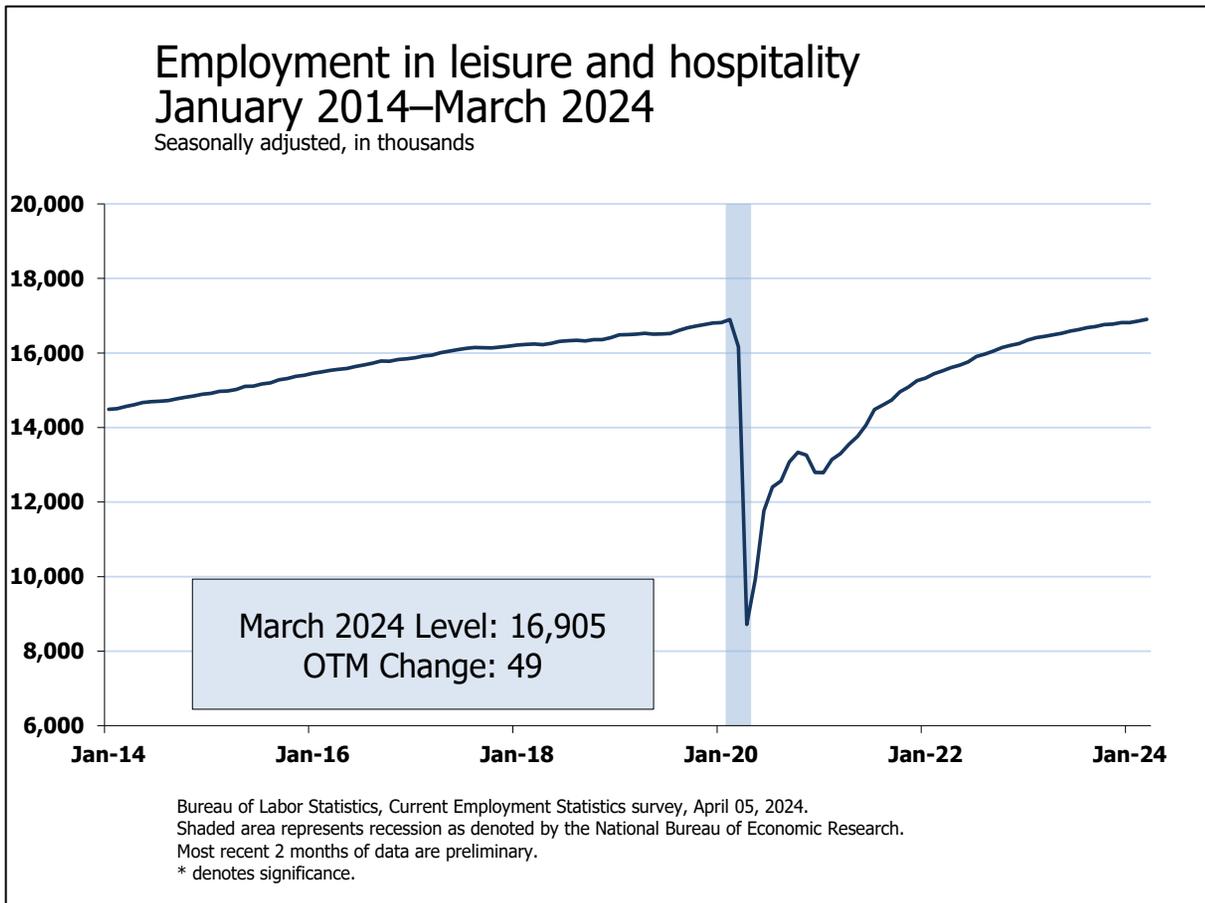
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Over the month, ambulatory health care services (+28,000), hospitals (+27,000), and nursing and residential care facilities (+18,000) added jobs.

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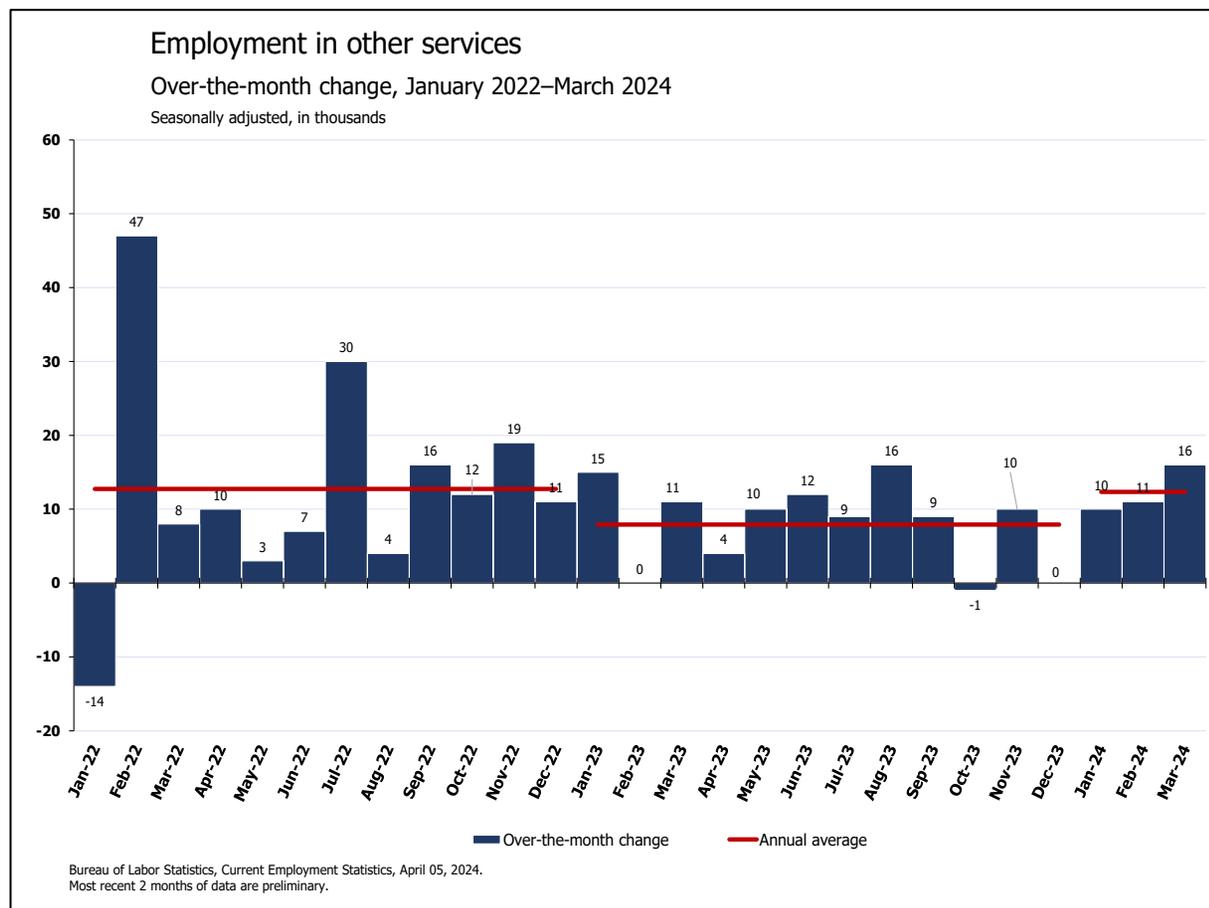
Leisure and Hospitality



Employment in leisure and hospitality trended up in March (+49,000) and has returned to its pre-pandemic February 2020 level. Over the prior 12 months, job growth in the industry had averaged 37,000 per month.

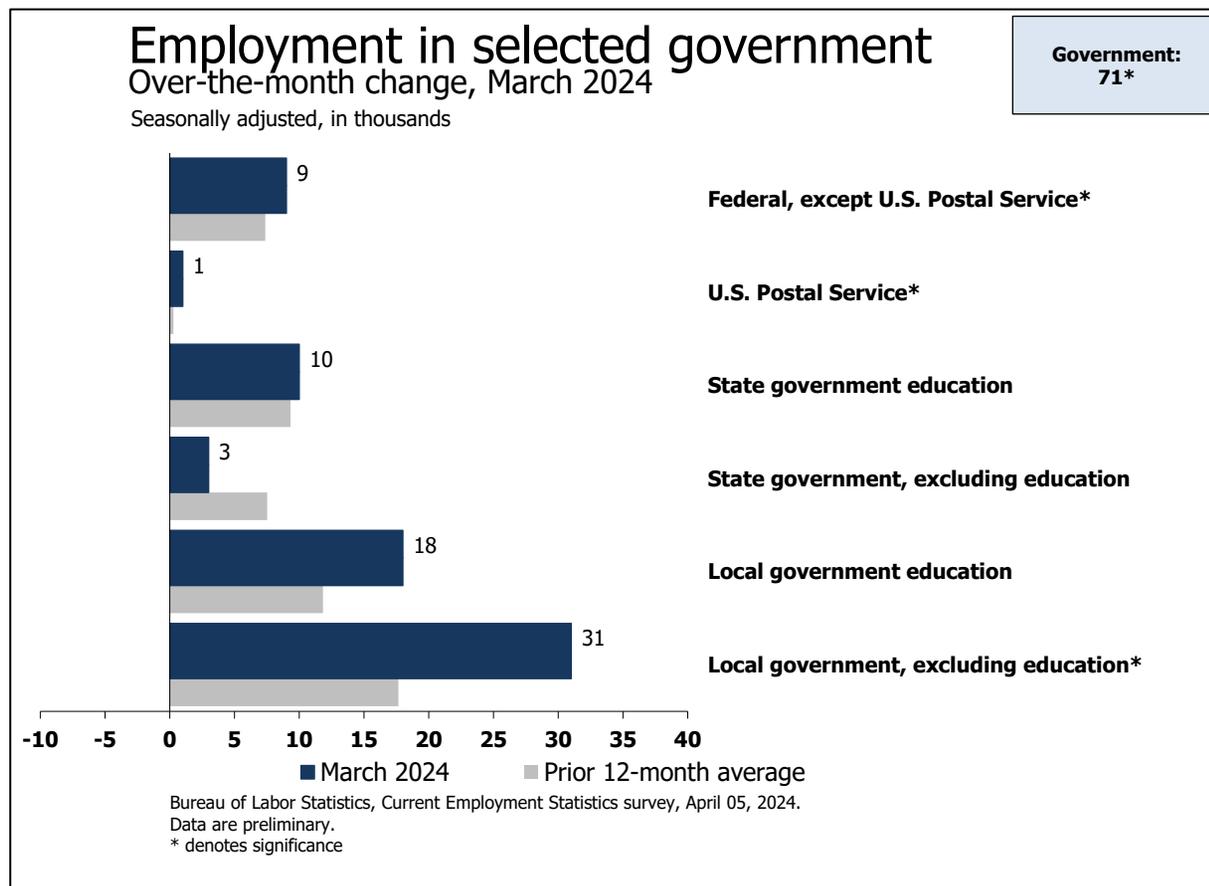
Employment has recovered from pandemic-related losses in arts, entertainment, and recreation and in food services and drinking places, while accommodation employment is 188,000 below its February 2020 level.

Other Services



Employment in other services continued to trend up in March (+16,000). In the most recent 3 months, industry employment has increased by 37,000. Employment in other services remains below its February 2020 level by 40,000, or 0.7 percent.

Government



Employment in government increased by 71,000 in March, higher than its prior 12-month average gain of 54,000 per month.

In March, employment rose by 49,000 in local government and by 9,000 in federal government.



**Prepared by Staff of the National Estimates Branch
Current Employment Statistics Survey
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