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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



December 2020

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

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Current Employment Statistics Summary, December 2020

Nonfarm payroll employment fell by 140,000 in December, following increases over the prior 7 months. Employment, however, remains 9.8 million, or 6.5 percent, below its level in February. In December, a large employment decline in leisure and hospitality more than offset job gains in professional and business services, retail trade, and construction.

The employment change for November revised up from +245,000 to +336,000 and the change for October also revised up from +610,000 to +654,000.

In December, average hourly earnings for all employees on private-sector payrolls rose by 23 cents, or 0.8 percent. The large employment decline in leisure and hospitality, an industry with below average earnings, put upward pressure on average hourly earnings at the total private level. Average hourly earnings for all employees are up 5.1 percent over the year. Average weekly hours, at 34.7 hours, fell by 0.1 hour over the month.

-498,000 Leisure and Hospitality

Employment in leisure and hospitality fell by 498,000 in December. Within the industry, employment declined by 372,000 in food

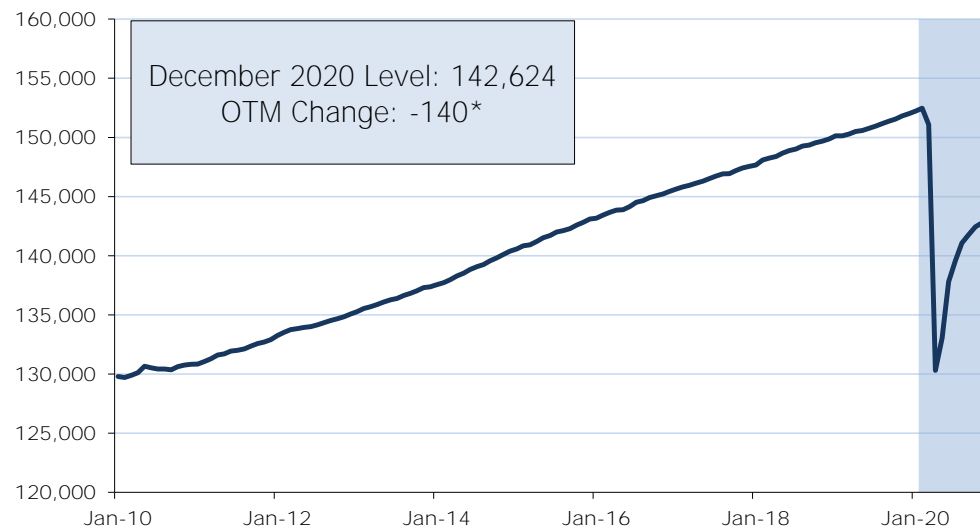
services and drinking places, by 92,000 in amusements, gambling, and recreation, and by 24,000 in accommodation. Employment in leisure and hospitality remains 3.9 million lower than it was in February.

+161,000 Professional and Business Services

Within professional and business services, December job gains occurred in temporary

Employment in total nonfarm January 2010–December 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 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 Survey Summary, December 2020

help services (+68,000), computer systems design and related services (+20,000), other professional and technical services (+11,000), and management of companies and enterprises (+11,000). Although rising over the past 8 months, employment in professional and business services is still down by 858,000 since February.

+121,000 Retail Trade

Employment in retail trade increased by 121,000 in December. Within the industry, general merchandise stores (+57,000), motor vehicles and parts dealers (+15,000), nonstore retailers (+14,000) and health and personal care stores (+10,000) added jobs over the month. Retail trade has recovered 2.0 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April.

+51,000 Construction

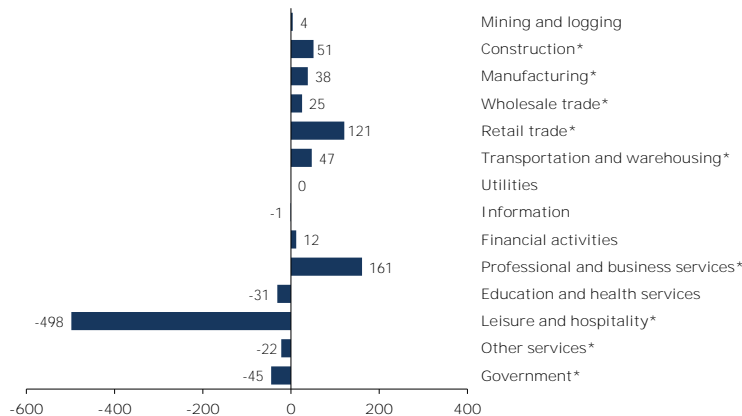
Employment in construction grew by 51,000 in December. Over half of the job gains were concentrated in specialty trade contractors (+32,000). Heavy and civil engineering construction (+15,000) and residential building (+9,000) also added jobs over the month. Construction has added 857,000 jobs since April, but employment remains 226,000 lower than its employment peak in February.

Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, December 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:
-140*



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 08, 2021. Data are preliminary.

+47,000 Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in transportation and warehousing rose by 47,000 in December. Job gains were concentrated in couriers and messenger services (+37,000), warehousing and storage (+8,000), and truck transportation (+7,000). Transit and ground transportation (-9,000) lost jobs. Although employment in transportation and warehousing has risen over

the past 7 months, it is still 90,000 below a peak in January.

+38,000 Manufacturing

Manufacturing employment grew by 38,000 in December. Job growth was concentrated in durable goods manufacturing (+25,000), including gains of 7,000 in motor vehicles and parts and 6,000 in nonmetallic mineral products. Manufacturers of nondurable goods added 13,000 jobs over the month. After falling by 1.4 million in March and April,

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, December 2020

manufacturing employment has risen by 820,000 over the past 8 months.

+25,000 Wholesale Trade

Employment in wholesale trade rose by 25,000 in December, with growth split between durable goods (+11,000) and nondurable goods (+11,000). After losing 397,000 jobs in March and April, wholesale trade has added 147,000 jobs over the past 8 months.

-22,000 Other Services

Employment in other services fell by 22,000 in December. Within the industry, personal and laundry services lost 12,000 jobs. Although employment in other services had been on the rise over the prior 7 months, employment is still 453,000 lower than in February.

-31,000 Education and Health Services

In December, a job loss in private education (-63,000) was partially offset by job gains in health care (+39,000). Within health care, job gains came in hospitals (+32,000) and ambulatory health care services (+21,000), but these gains were partially offset by job losses in nursing and residential care services (-

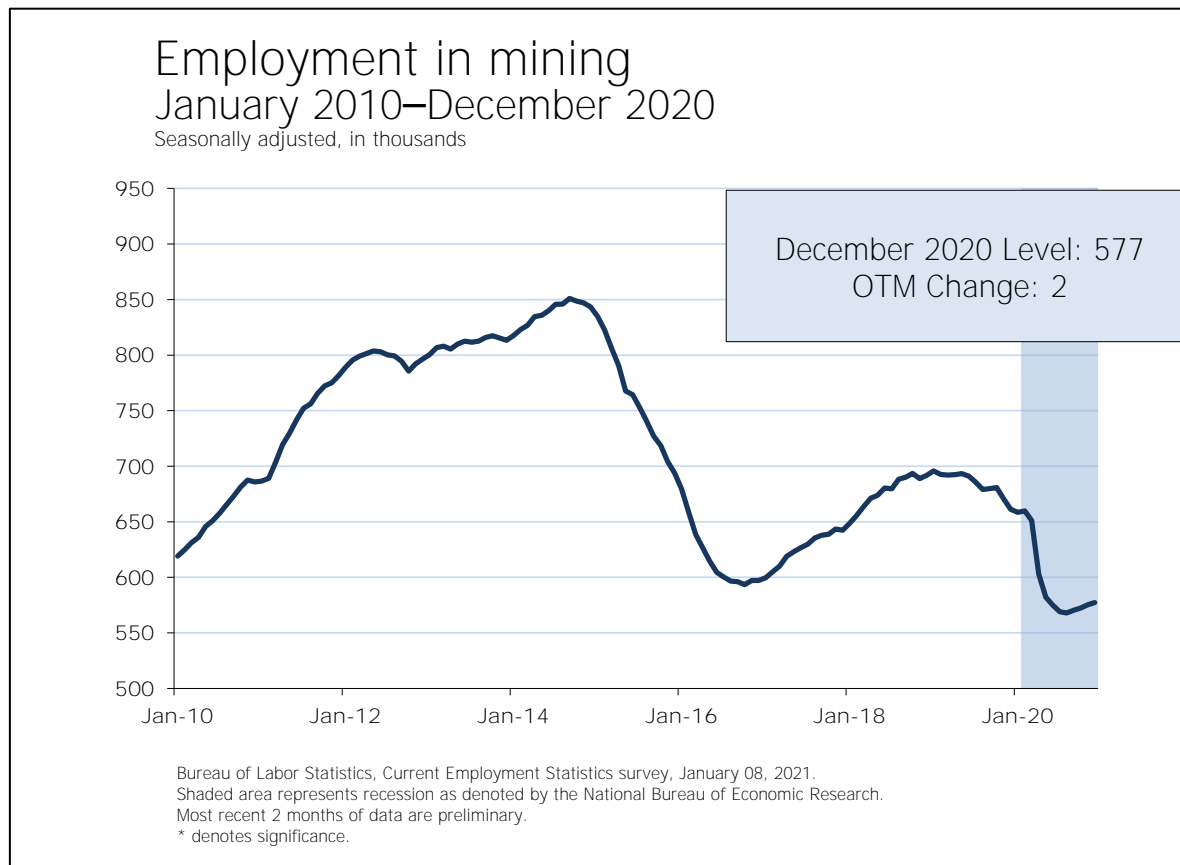
13,000). Although employment in education and health services had risen over the prior 7 months, it remains 1.3 million lower than in February.

-45,000 Government

Government employment fell by 45,000 in December. Within the industry, job losses in local government, excluding education (-32,000) and state government education (-20,000) were slightly offset by a gain of 6,000 jobs in Federal government, which included a decline of 3,000 temporary census workers as work on the 2020 Census has largely wrapped up.

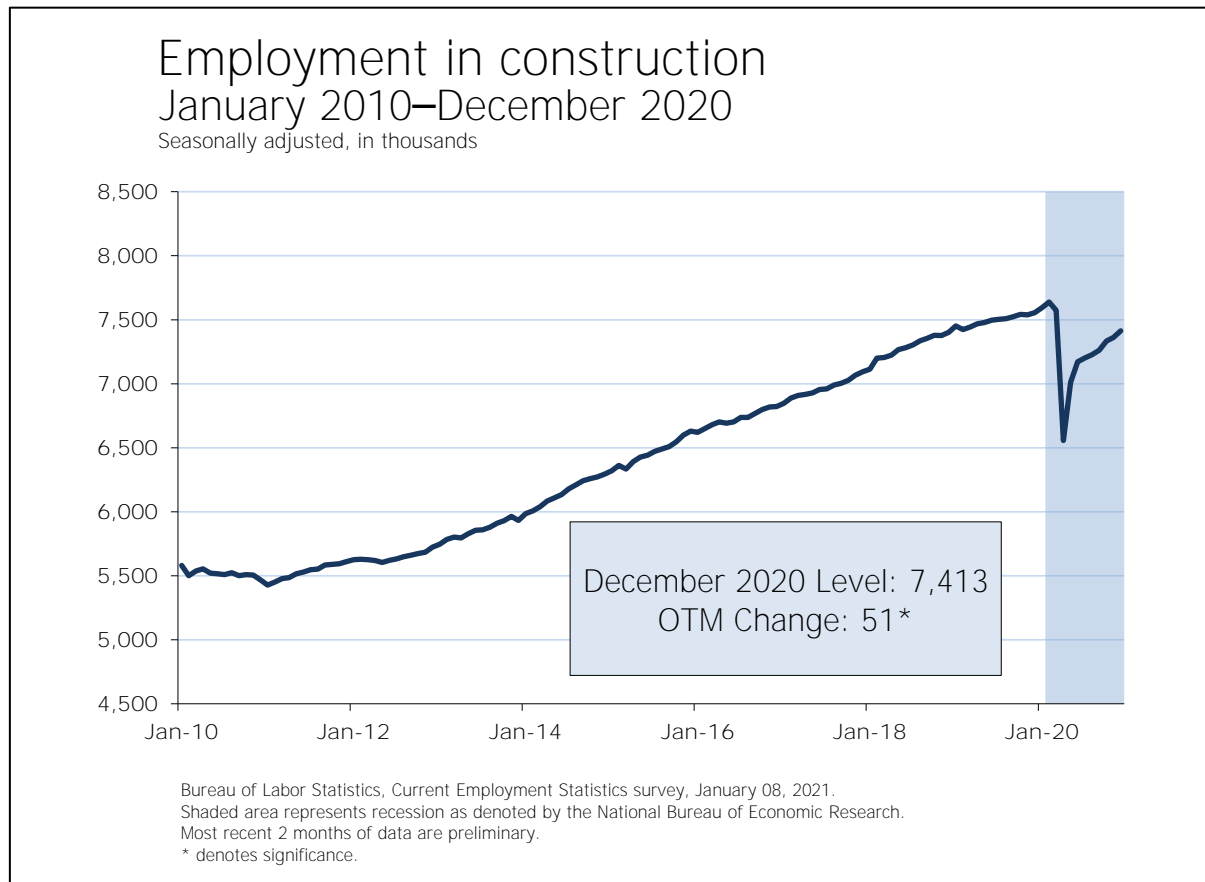
Summary	Mining & Logging	Construction	Manufacturing	Trade: Wholesale Retail	Transp., Warehousing & Utilities	Information	Financial Activities	Professional & Business Services	Private Education & Health Services	Leisure & Hospitality	Other Services	Government
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Mining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



Mining employment changed little in December (+2,000). Employment in oil and gas extraction increased by 2,000 over the month. Mining employment has leveled off over the past 4 months, yet the industry has lost 82,000 jobs since February.

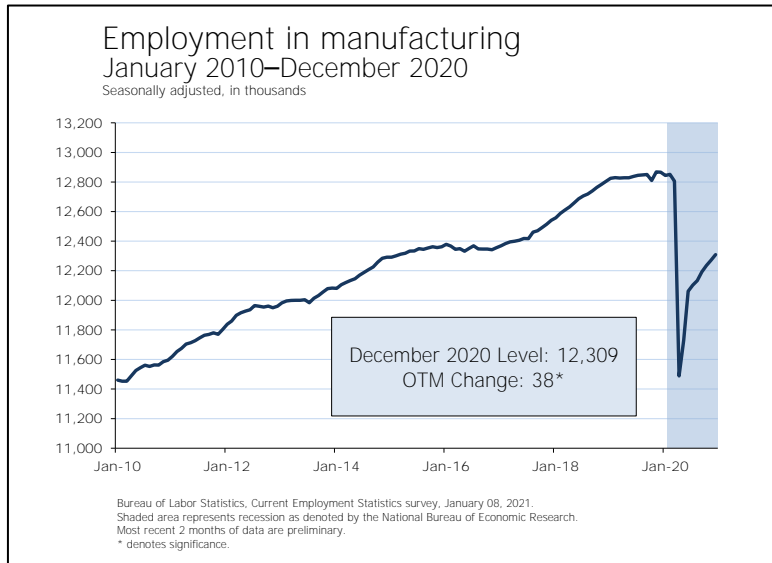
Construction



Construction employment increased by 51,000 in December, with gains in specialty trade contractors (+32,000), heavy and civil engineering construction (+15,000), and residential construction of buildings (+9,000). Since April, construction has added 857,000 jobs, but employment is still 226,000 below its February peak.

Employment growth in December followed strength in [residential building permits](#) in November.

Manufacturing

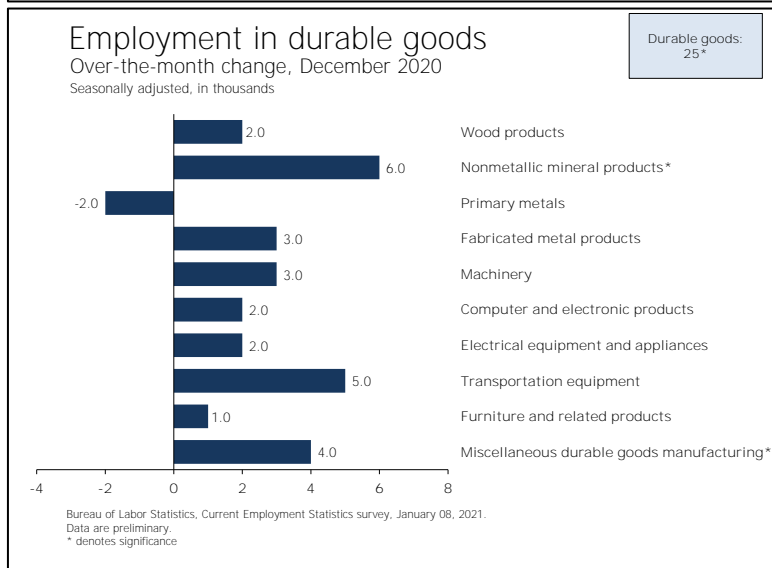


In December, manufacturing employment increased by 38,000. Despite 8 consecutive months of gains, employment in manufacturing is still 543,000 below its February level.

The manufacturing 1-month diffusion index increased to 71.1, a change of 9.9, indicating that more manufacturing industries added jobs than lost jobs in December.

Employment in durable goods increased by 25,000 in December, with gains in motor vehicles and parts (+7,000), nonmetallic mineral products (+6,000), and miscellaneous durable goods manufacturing (+4,000). Durable goods has recovered 547,000 of the 932,000 jobs lost in March and April.

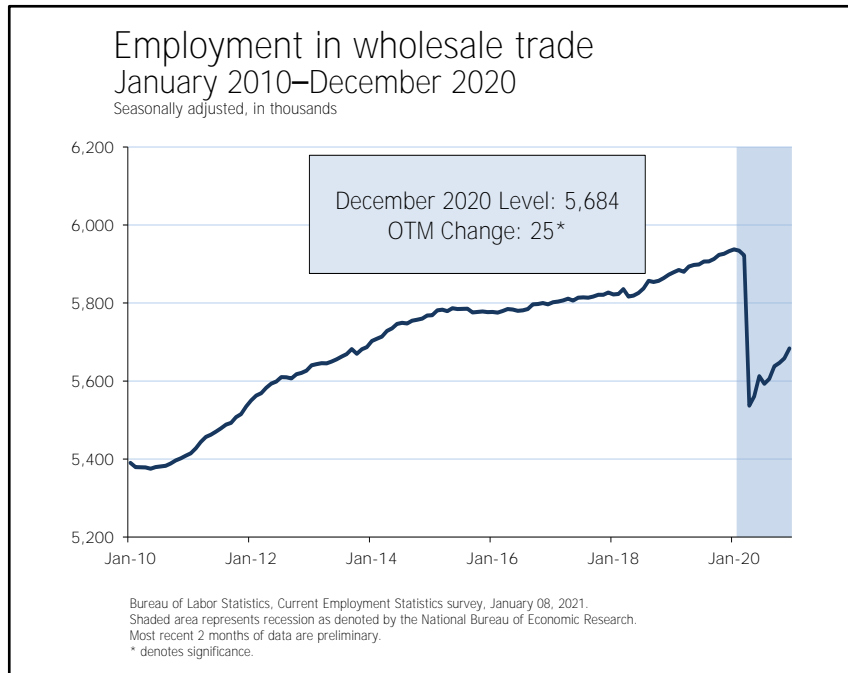
In December, manufacturing employment gains are reflected in indicator data, which showed increases in both the Institute of Supply Management's [Purchasing Managers' Index](#) (PMI) and the IHS Markit's [PMI](#).



In December, average hourly earnings for all employees in manufacturing fell 4 cents to \$28.92. Average hourly earnings of production workers increased by 5 cents to \$23.12.

Average weekly hours of all employees in December were unchanged at 40.2 hours. For production workers, the average workweek increased by 0.1 hour to 41.3 hours.

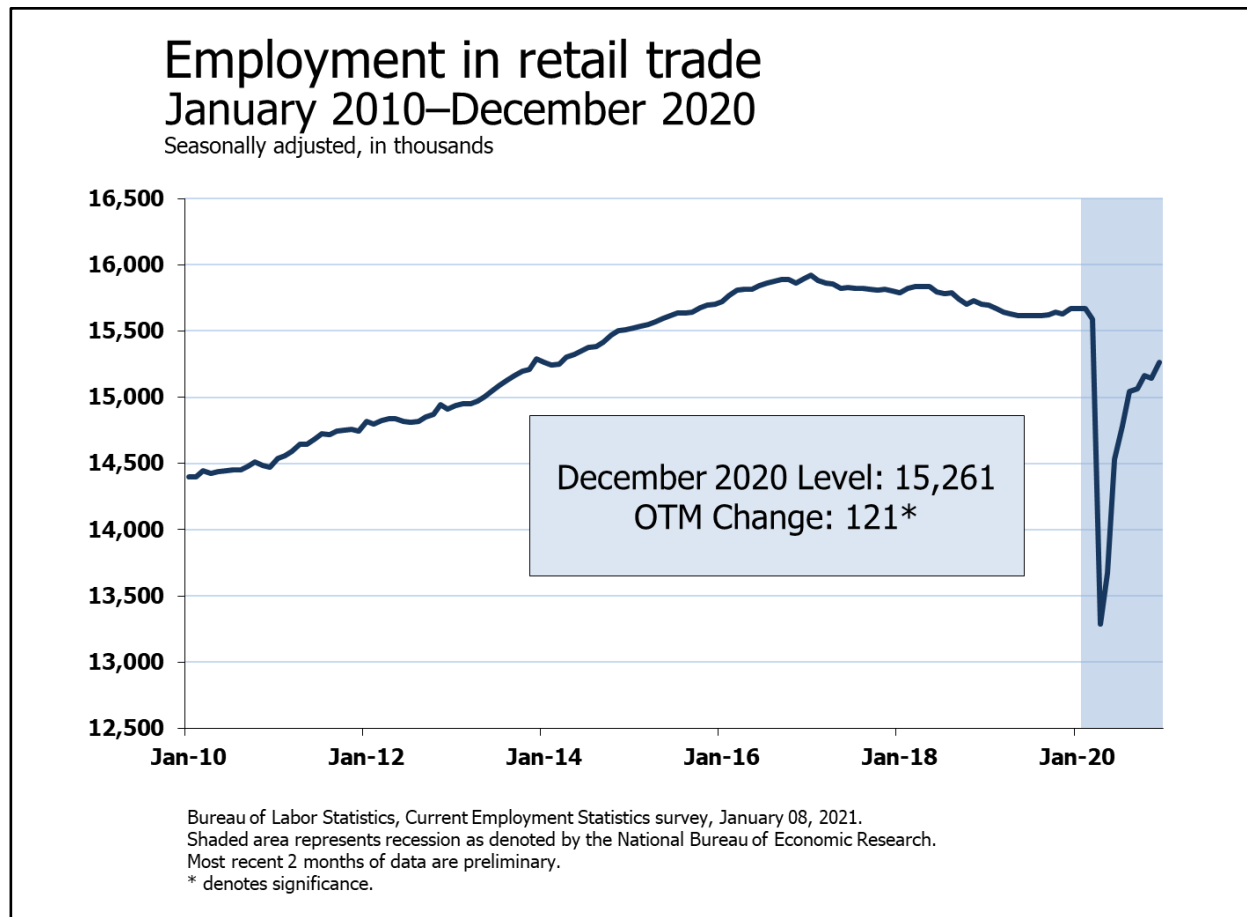
Wholesale Trade



Wholesale trade employment increased by 25,000 in December as durable goods and nondurable goods added 11,000 jobs each. Employment in wholesale trade has grown by 147,000 over the last 8 months, recovering 37 percent of the jobs lost in February, March, and April. Gains over this 8-month period were about evenly split between durable and nondurable goods.

As of December, employment in wholesale trade remained 254,000 below its peak in January 2020.

Retail Trade

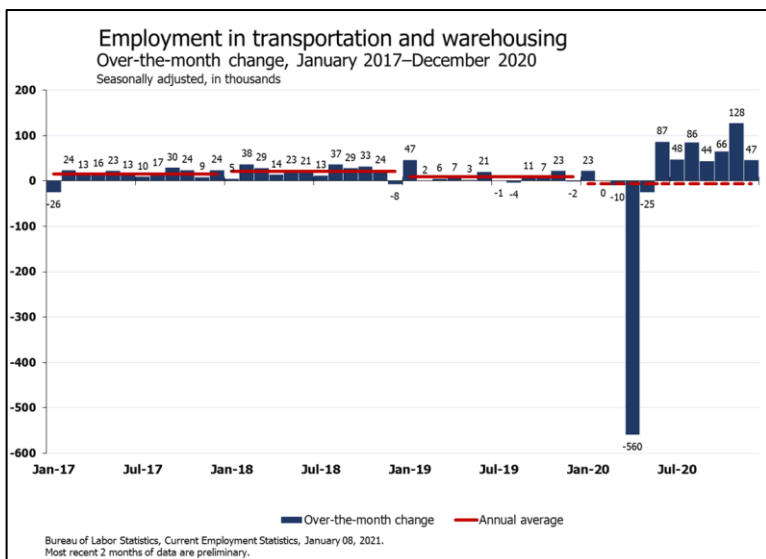


Employment in retail trade increased by 121,000 in December. The industry has recovered 2.0 million of 2.4 million jobs lost in March and April.

Within the industry, job gains occurred in general merchandise stores (+57,000), motor vehicle and parts dealers (+15,000), nonstore retailers (+14,000), and in health and personal care stores (+10,000).

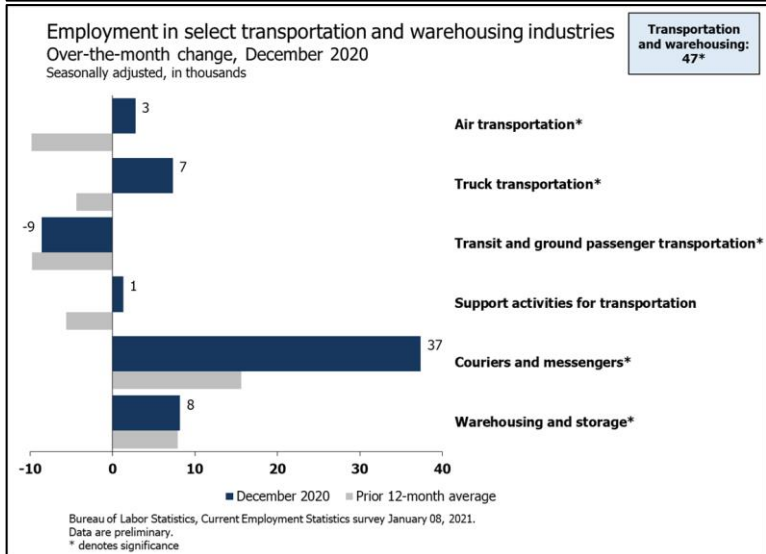
Retail-related economic indicators are mostly negative. [Retail Sales](#) declined in November. In December, the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) declined, and the per gallon price of [regular gasoline](#) increased.

Transportation and Warehousing



Employment in transportation and warehousing grew by 47,000 in December. Although the industry has added 506,000 jobs over the past 7 months, employment is still 90,000 below its January peak.

Job gains in December were driven by couriers and messengers (+37,000). The growth follows continued strength in [e-commerce sales](#) during the third quarter of 2020. Since February, employment in couriers and messengers has risen by 222,000.



Warehousing and storage (+8,000), truck transportation (+7,000), and air transportation (+3,000) also added jobs in December. These gains more than offset a loss of 9,000 jobs in transit and ground passenger transportation. Since February, employment in transit and ground passenger transportation has declined by 130,000.

Utilities

Employment in utilities January 2010–December 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



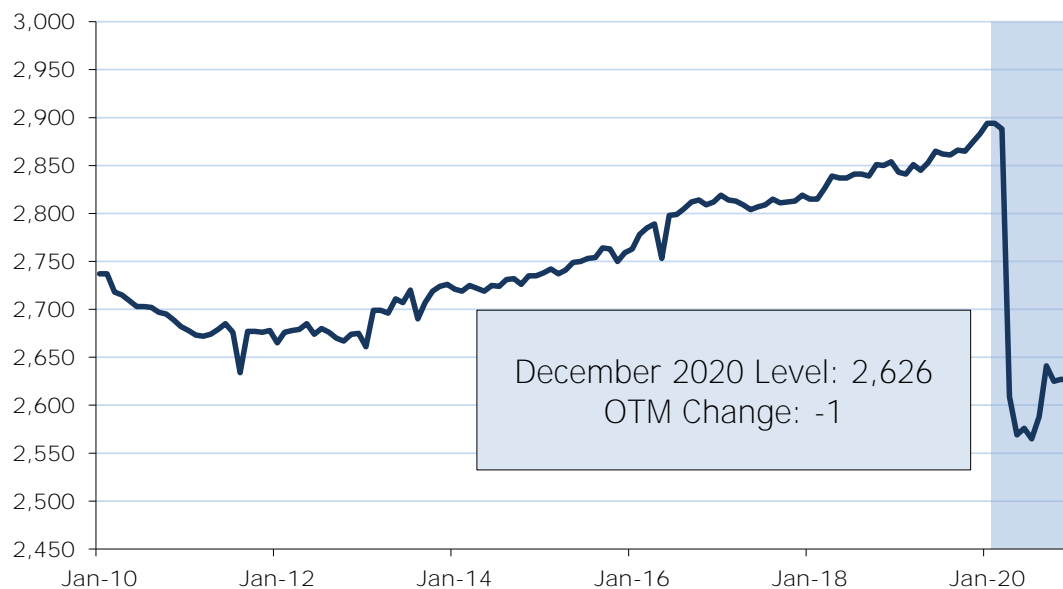
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 08, 2021.
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Employment in utilities was unchanged over the month. Since December 2019, the industry has lost 10,000 jobs.

Information

Employment in information January 2010–December 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



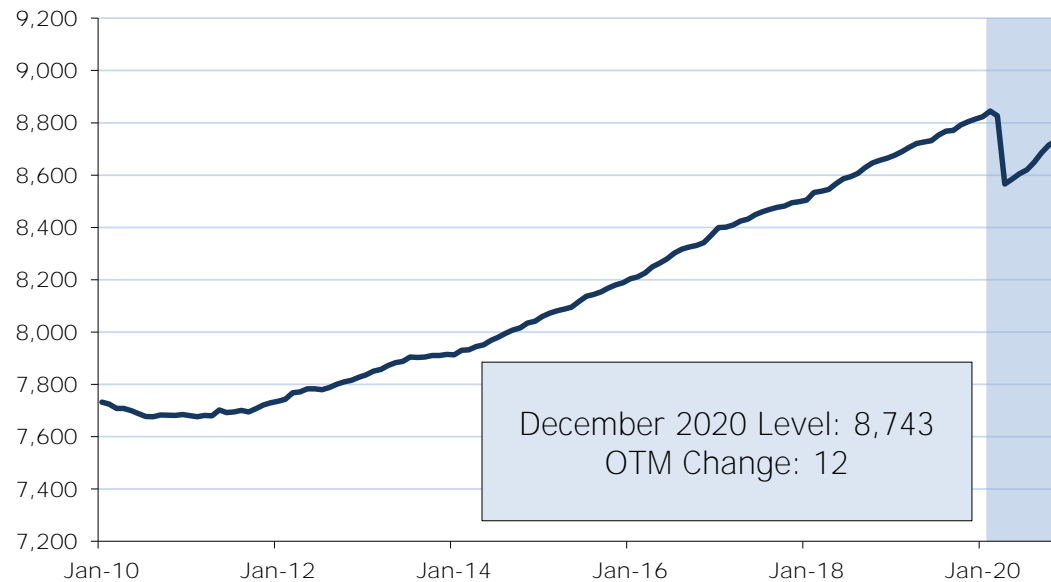
Employment in information was essentially unchanged in December and remains 268,000 below its peak in February.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 08, 2021.
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Financial Activities

Employment in financial activities January 2010–December 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

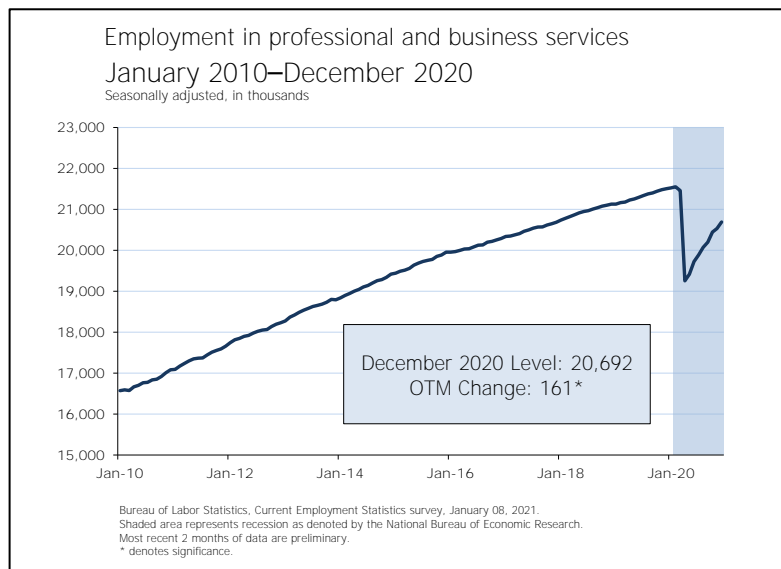


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 08, 2021.
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Employment in financial activities changed little in December (+12,000). The industry has recovered 177,000 of the 279,000 jobs lost in March and April.

In December, employment in commercial banking decreased by 4,000, while it changed little in other component industries.

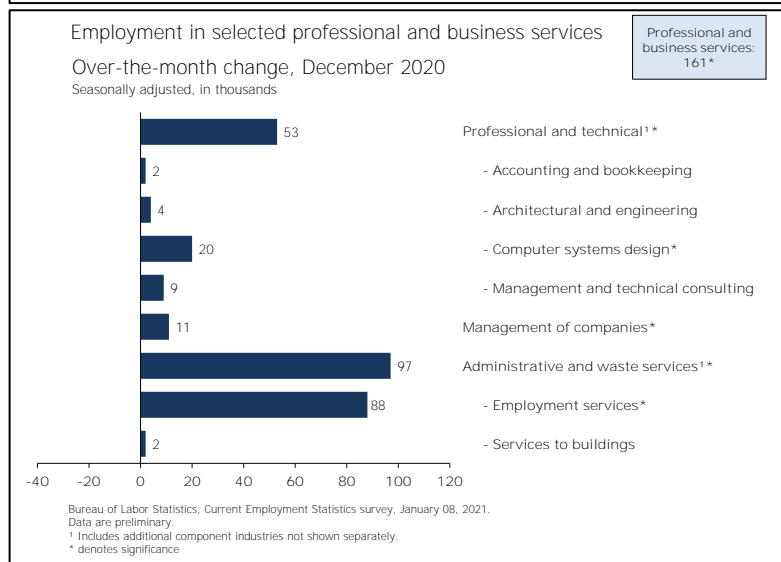
Professional and Business Services



Employment in professional and business services increased by 161,000 in December but is still 858,000 below its peak in February 2020.

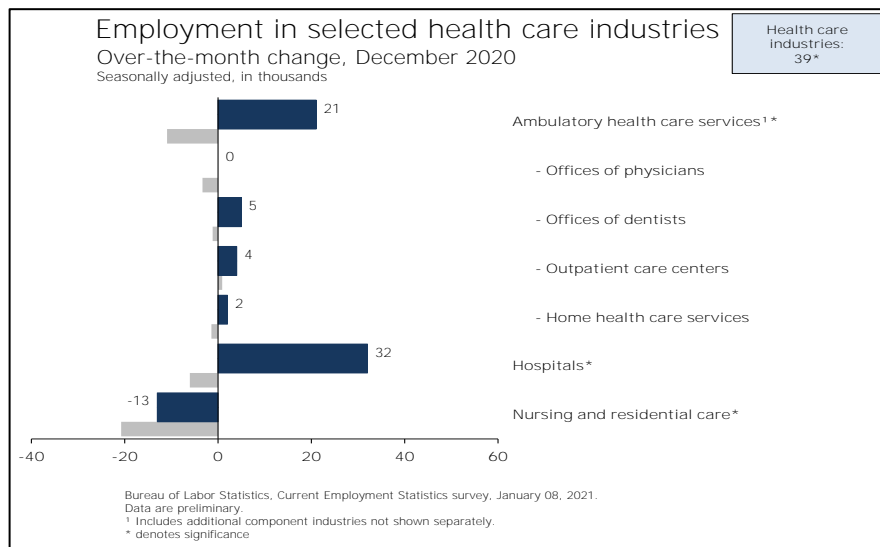
In December, employment gains occurred in professional and technical services (+53,000), led by computer systems design and related services (+20,000) and other professional and technical services (+11,000). Despite job growth over the past 8 months, employment in professional and technical services is still 200,000 below its peak in February 2020.

Management of companies and enterprises added 11,000 jobs in December.



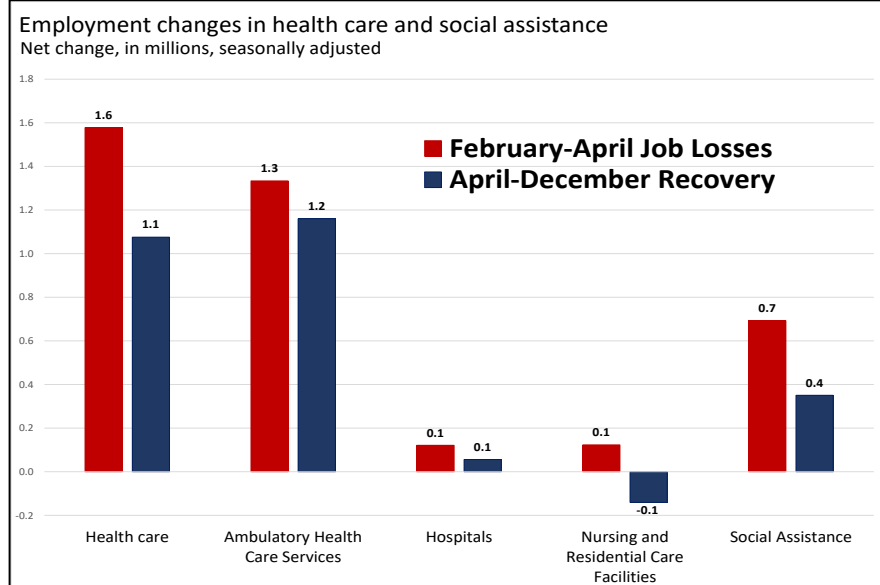
Administrative and support services added 96,000 jobs over the month, with temporary help services accounting for 68,000 of the increase. Business support services (+7,000) also added jobs. Over the past 8 months, administrative and support services has added 1.1 million of the 1.6 million jobs lost during March and April.

Private Education and Health Services



Employment in health care increased by 39,000 in December. Employment gains were concentrated in hospitals (+32,000) and ambulatory health care services (+21,000), while nursing and residential care facilities lost 13,000 jobs.

Employment in educational services decreased by 63,000 over the month and has declined by 461,000 since reaching a peak in January.

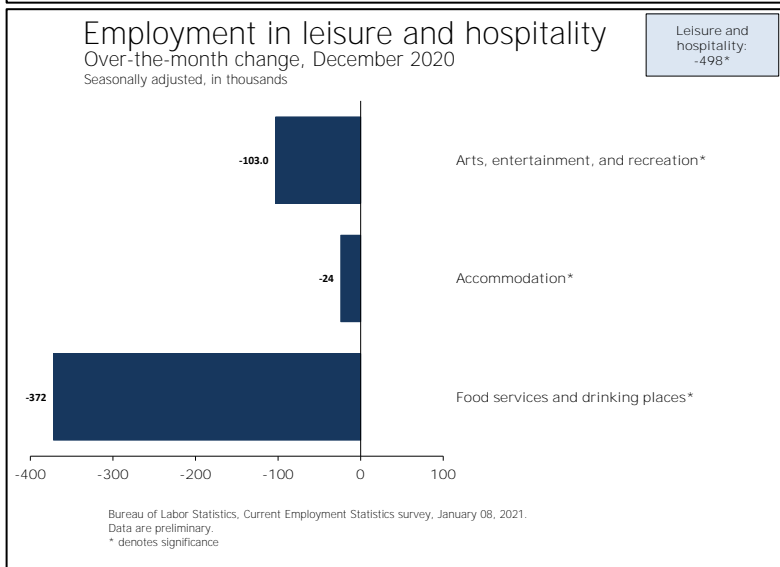
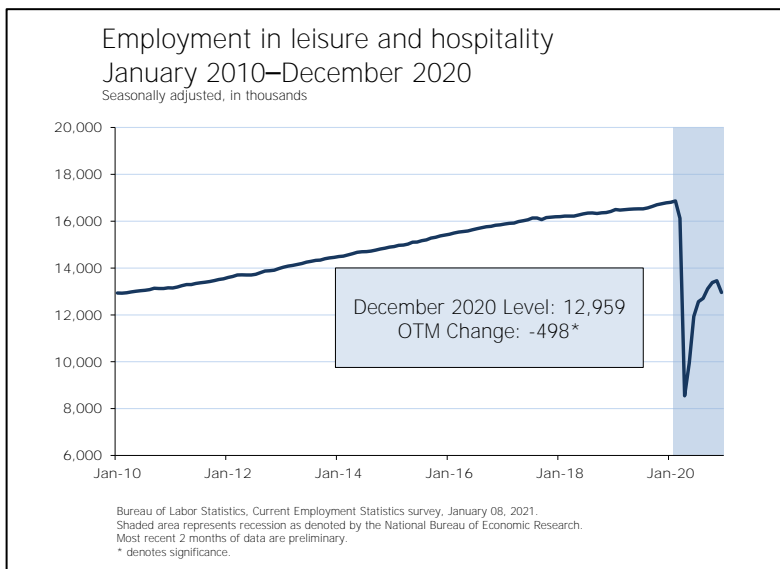


Since April, health care has recovered 1.1 million of the 1.6 million jobs lost in March and April. As of December, employment in ambulatory health care services is 173,000 below its February peak, and employment in hospitals is 70,000 lower than its March peak. Employment in nursing and residential care facilities continued to decline, and the industry has shed 264,000 jobs since a peak in February.

Since April, employment in social assistance has recovered 351,000 of the 692,000 jobs lost in March and April.

Leisure and Hospitality

Employment in leisure and hospitality fell by 498,000 in December, following growth in the prior 7 months. The industry has recovered 4.4 million, or 53 percent, of the 8.3 million jobs lost in March and April. December's slump in employment coincides with recent [restrictions](#) on dining due to [rising COVID-19 infection rates](#) in the United States.



In December, food services and drinking places shed 372,000 jobs, and employment remains 2.5 million below February's peak.

Arts, entertainment, and recreation lost 103,000 jobs over the month, and employment remains 797,000 below its peak in December 2019.

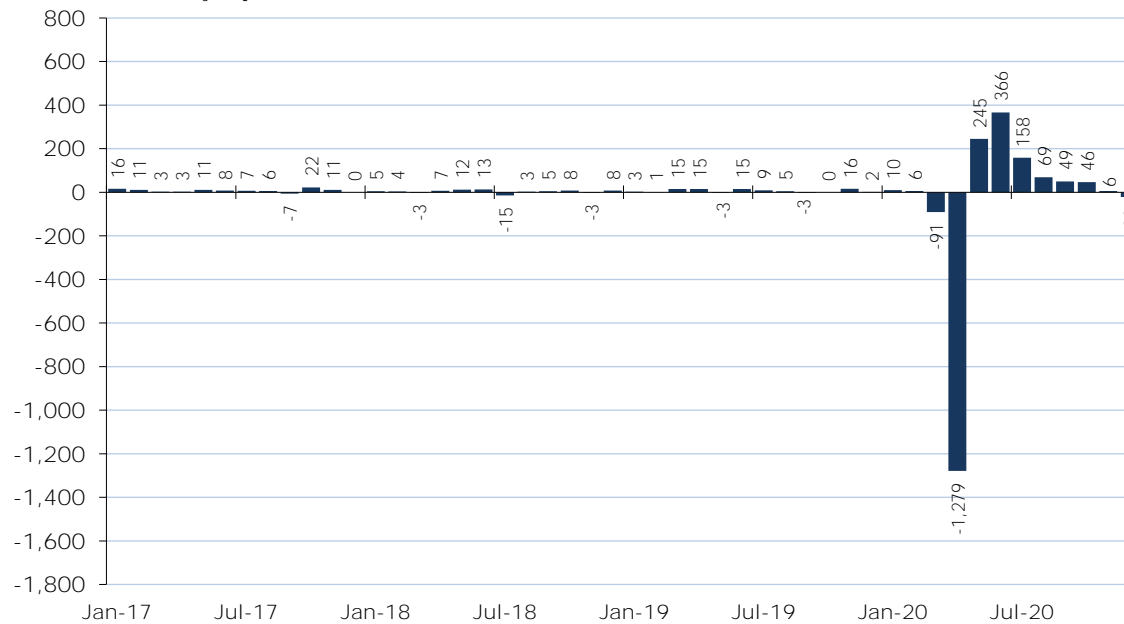
Accommodation employment decreased by 24,000 in December and remains 674,000 below its peak in December 2019.

Other Services

Employment in other services

Over-the-month change, January 2017–December 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

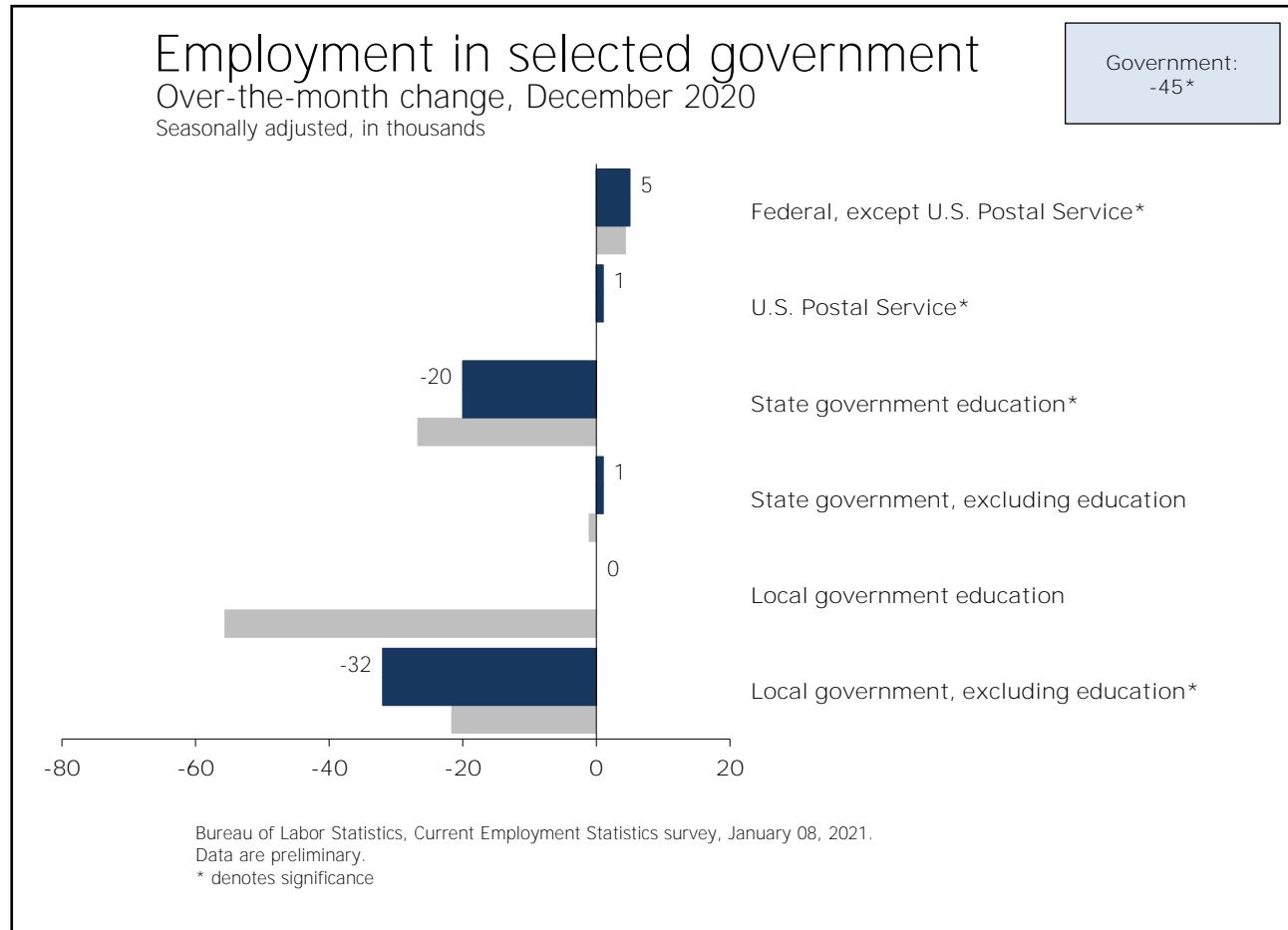


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, January 08, 2021.
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Employment in other services fell by 22,000 in December following 7 months of growth. As of December, the industry had recovered 917,000, or 67 percent, of the 1.4 million jobs lost in March and April.

Employment in personal and laundry services declined by 12,000 in December.

Government



Government employment decreased by 45,000 in December and has declined by 1.3 million since reaching a peak in February.

In December, employment in Federal government (+6,000) includes a decline of 3,000 temporary census employees as work on the 2020 Census wraps up.

In December, employment fell in local government, excluding education (-32,000) and state government education (-20,000).

Since February, employment in state government has declined by 373,000, while local government has shed 1.0 million jobs.



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