

Paving the Way

Leveraging Labor Market Insights for Strategic Planning

Poway Chamber of Commerce

5/12/2026



BLS: The big picture

BLS is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics.



About us:

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415.625.2282

Setting the journey - today's agenda

Key road signs



Unemployment rate



Job openings and labor turnover



Inflation

Setting the journey - today's agenda

The road ahead



Labor force

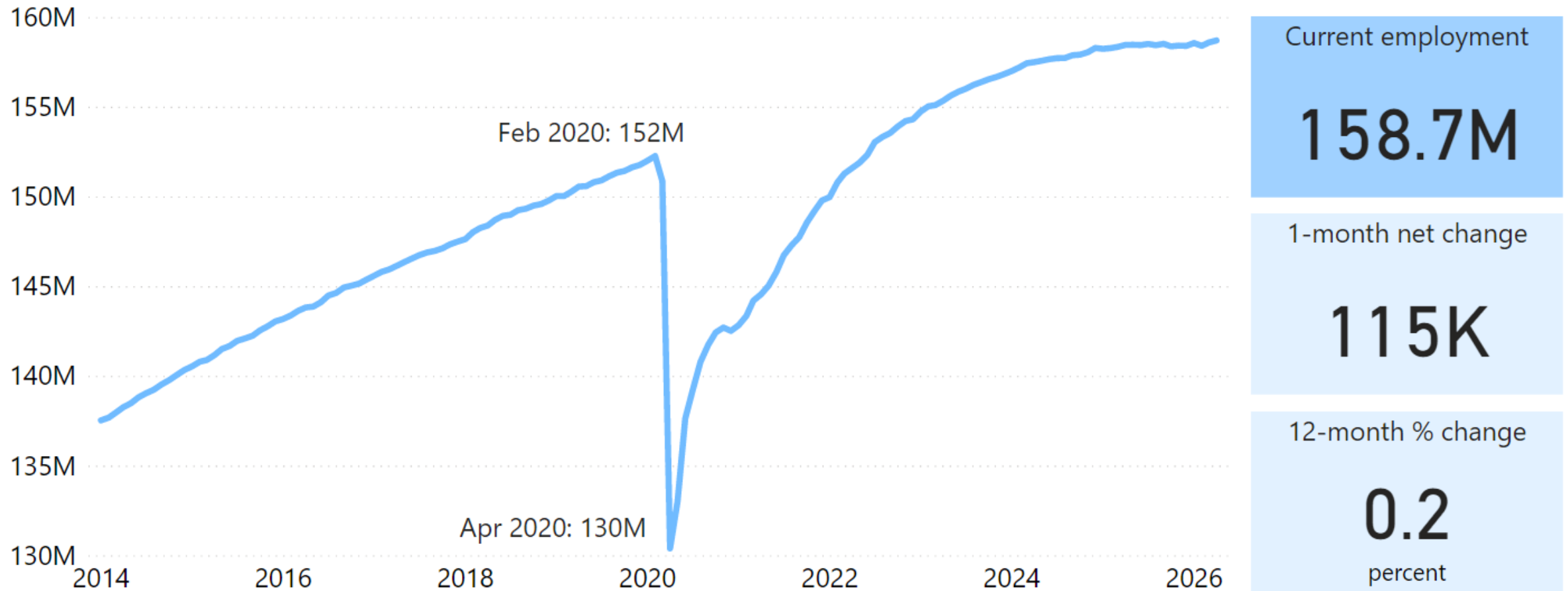


Employment projections

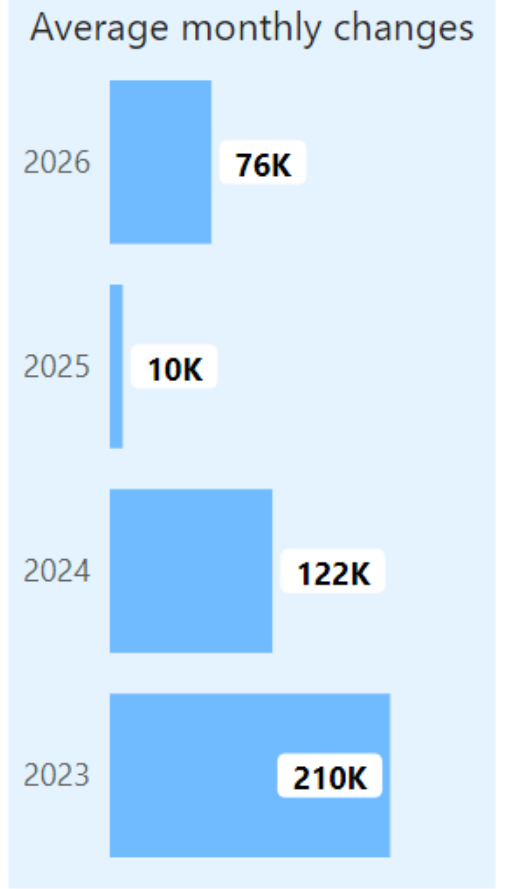
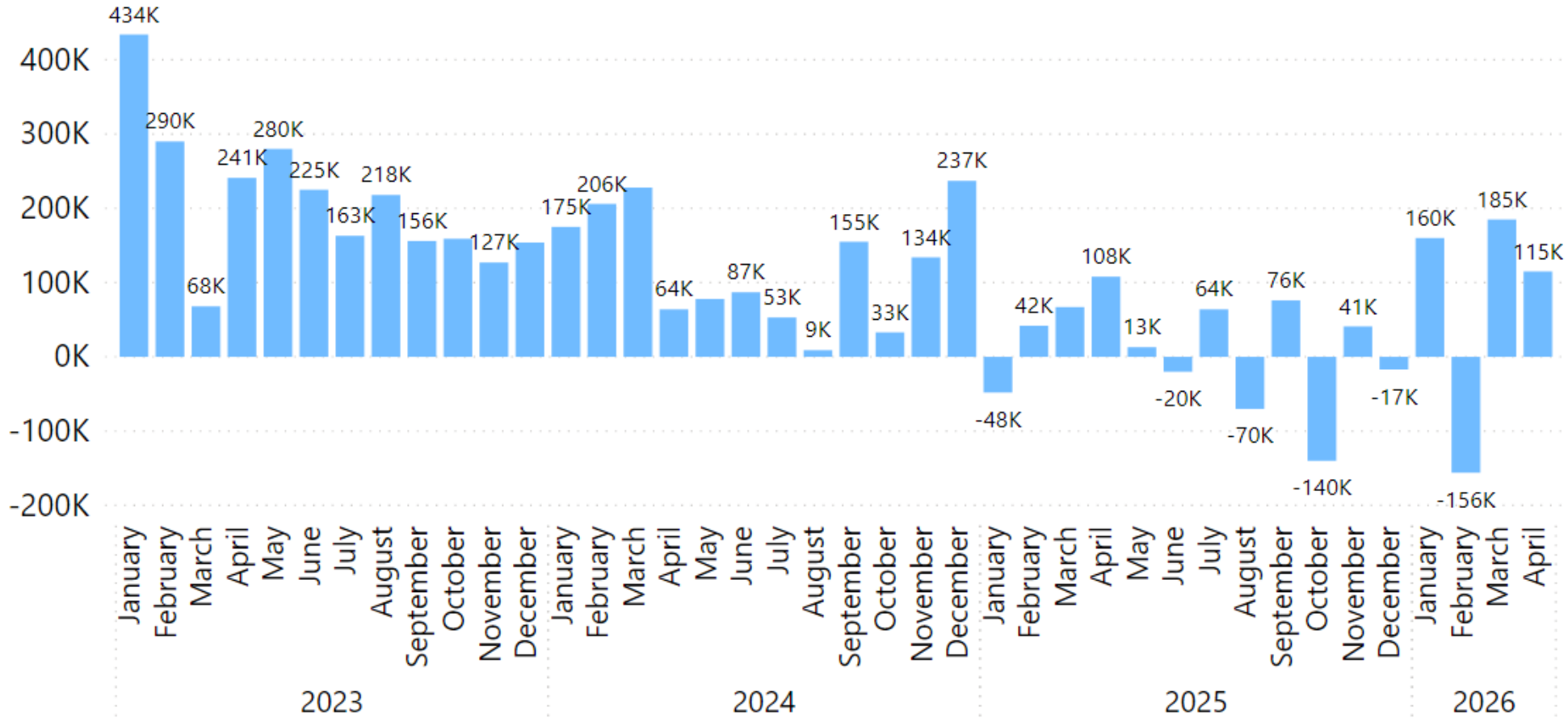


Takeaways

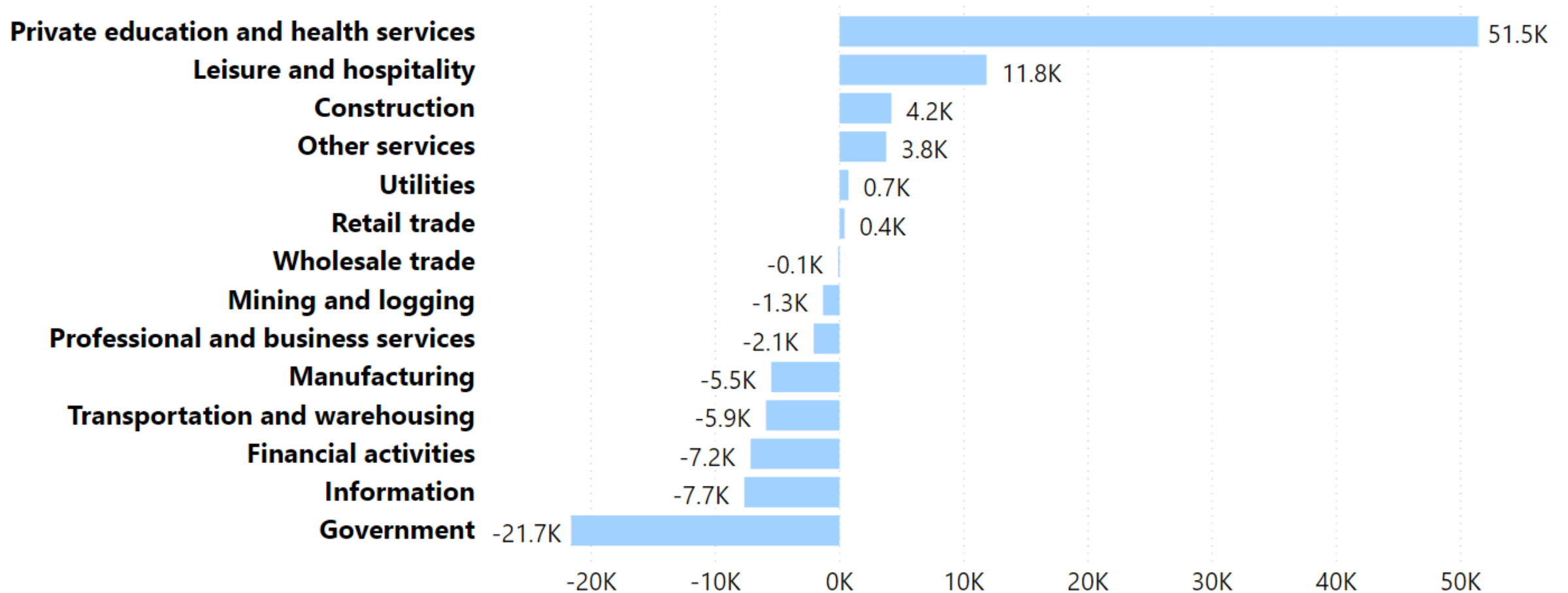
Employment levels



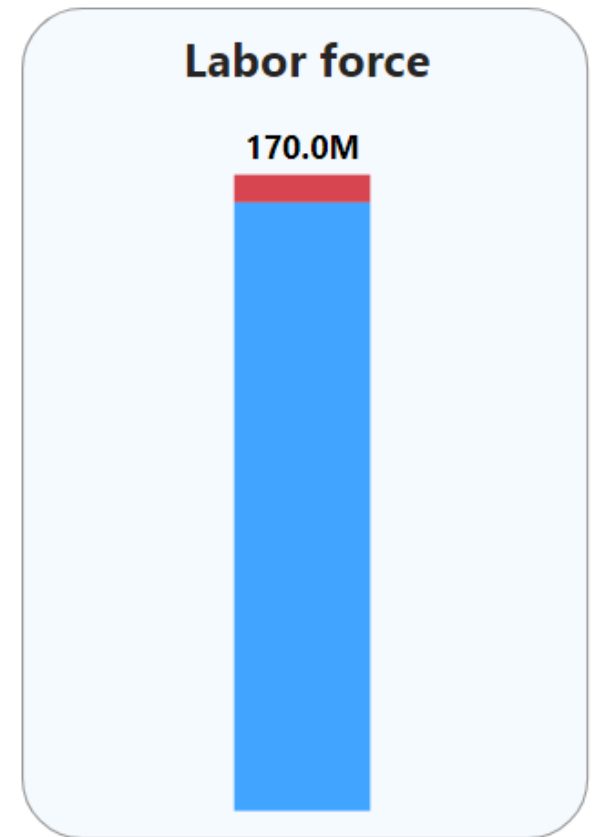
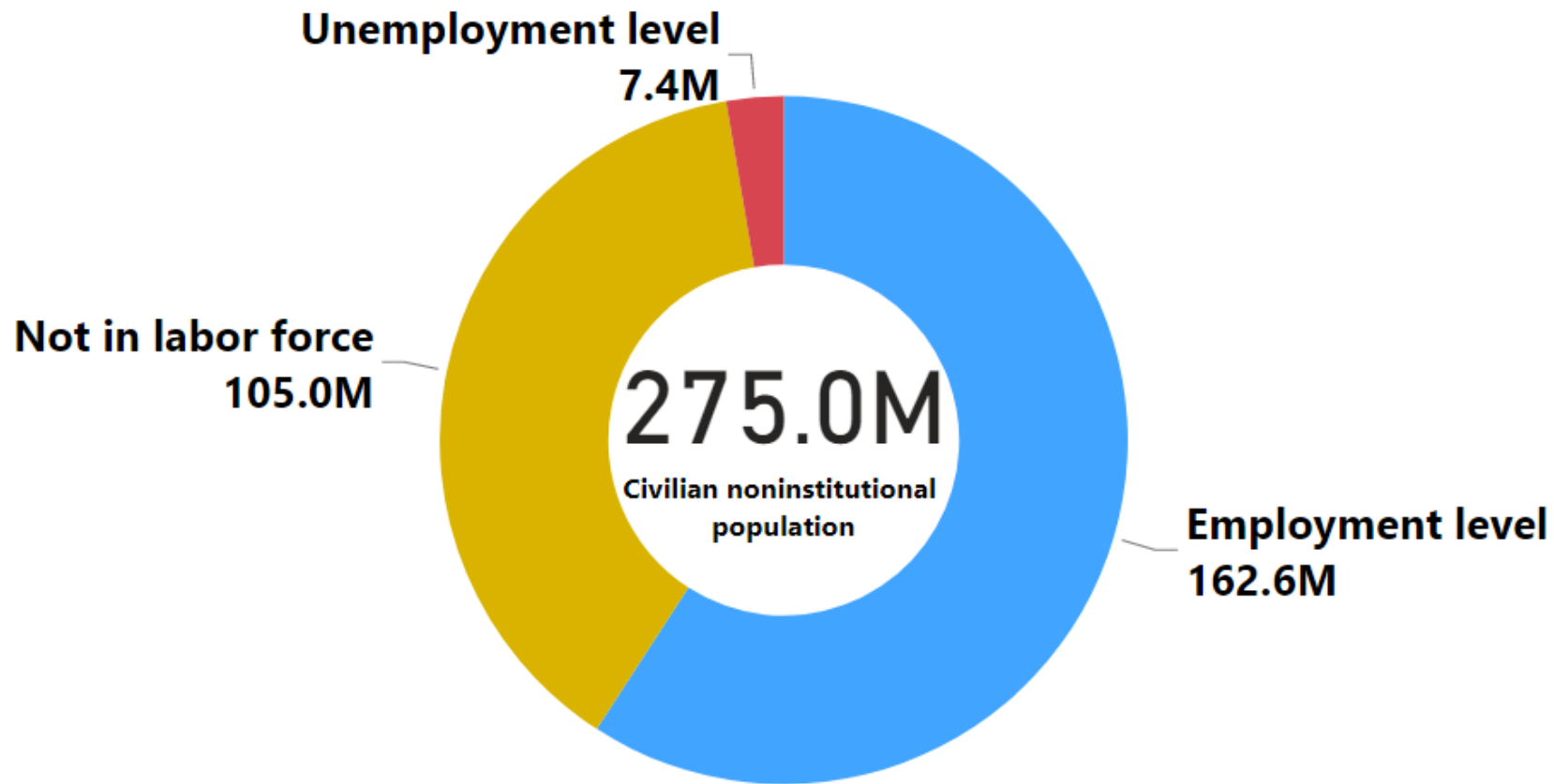
Monthly employment changes



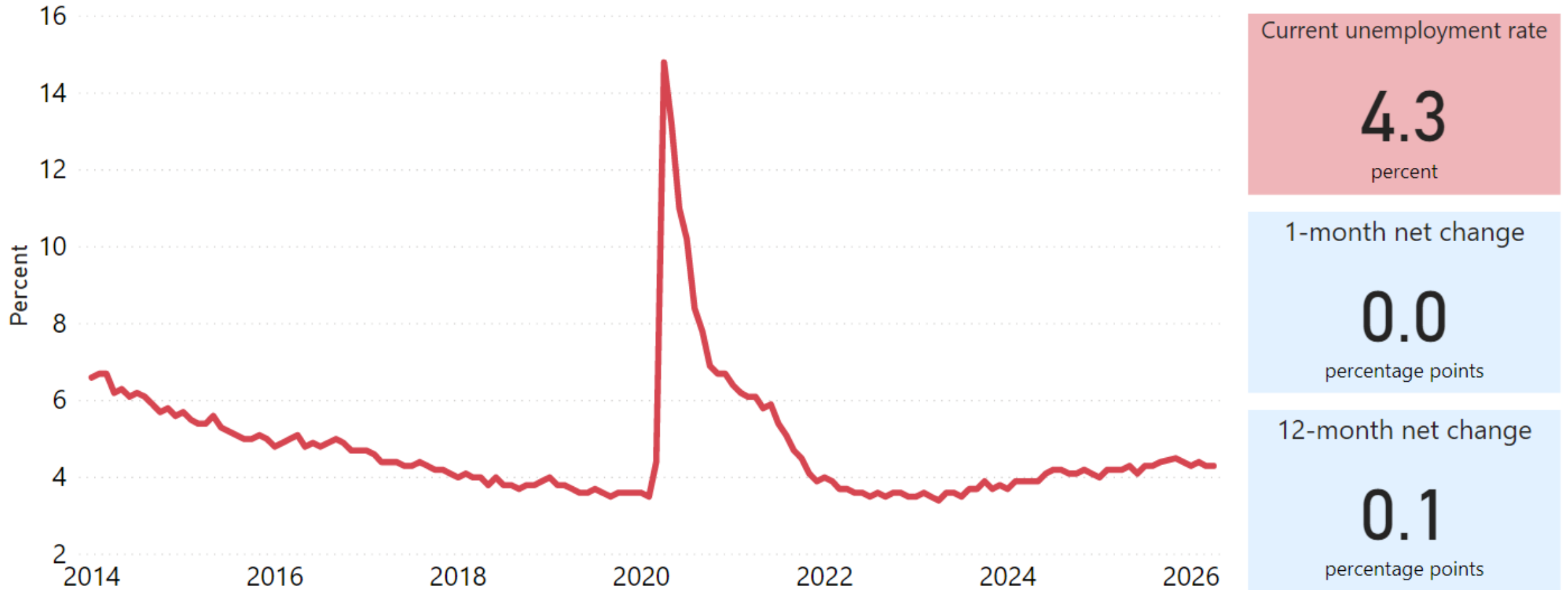
Latest 12-month averages



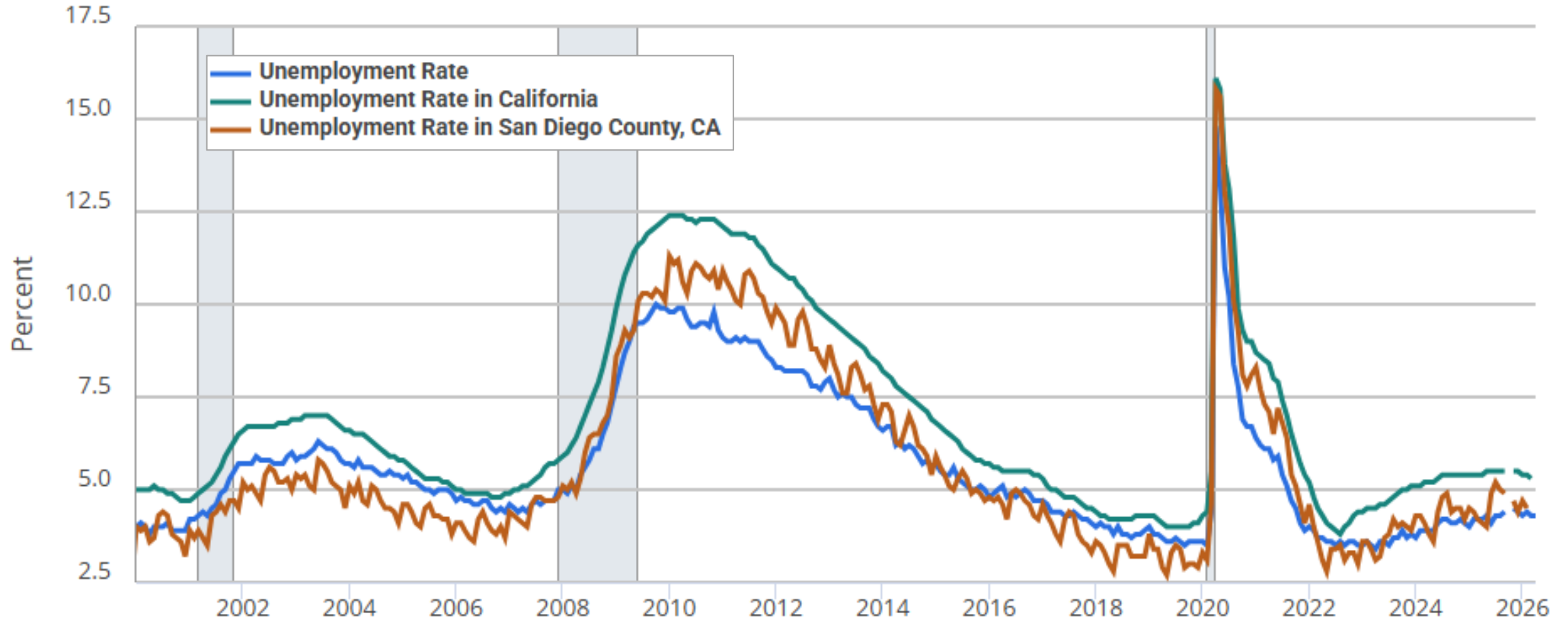
105 million not in labor force



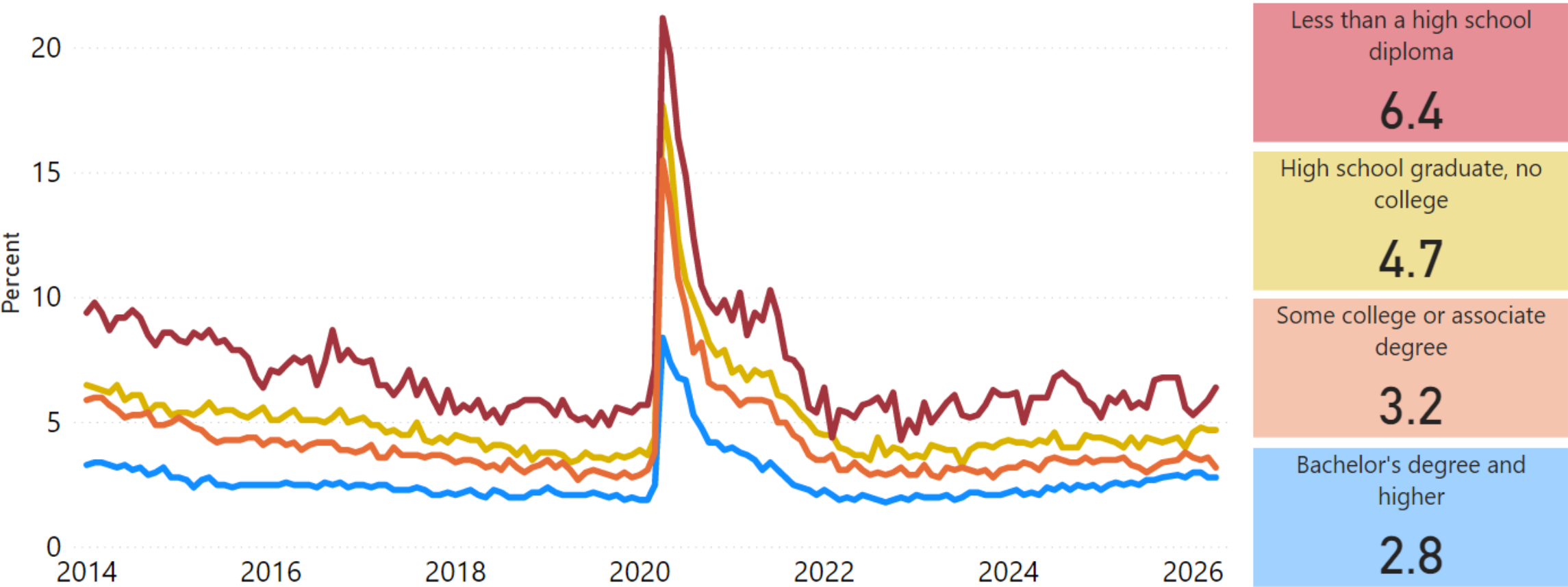
Unemployment rate



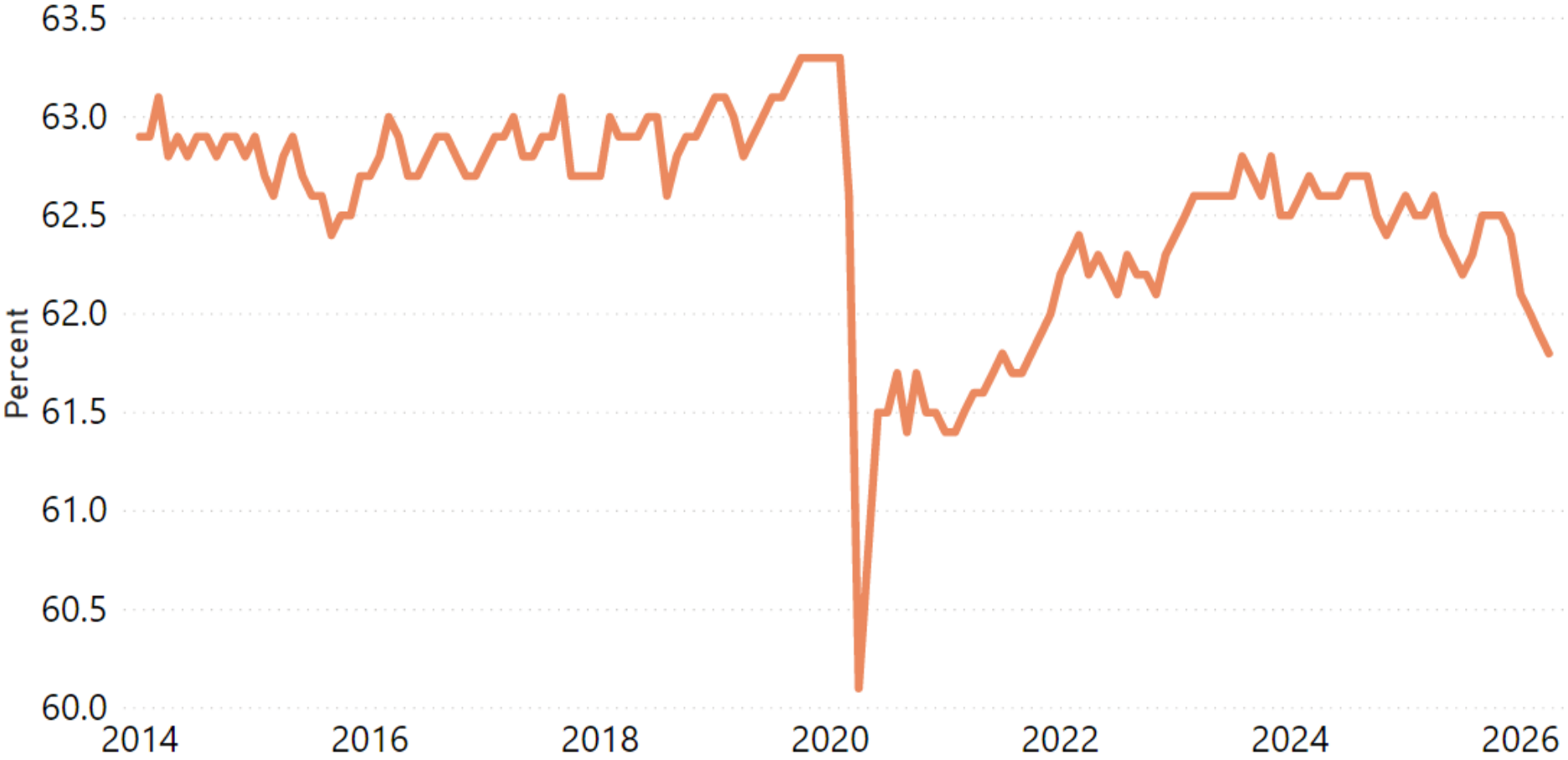
Unemployment rate



Unemployment rates by educational attainment



Labor force participation rate



Labor force participation rate

61.8
percent

1-month net change

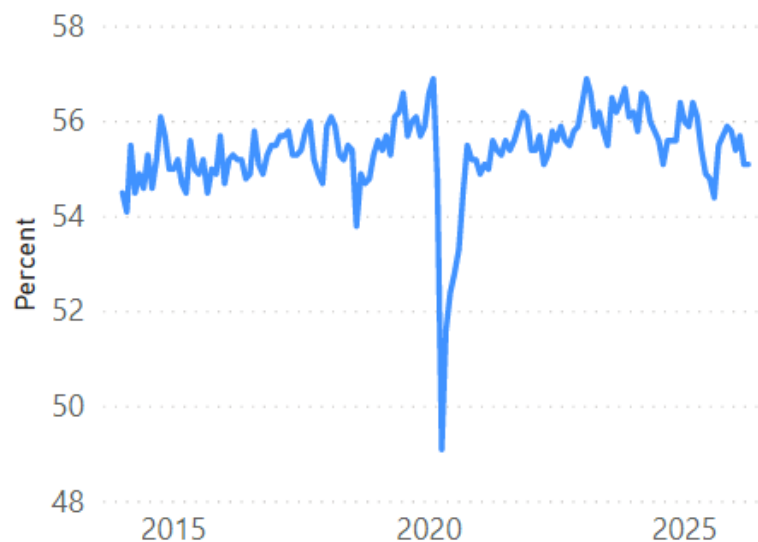
-0.1
percentage points

12-month net change

-0.8
percentage points

Labor force participation rate by age group

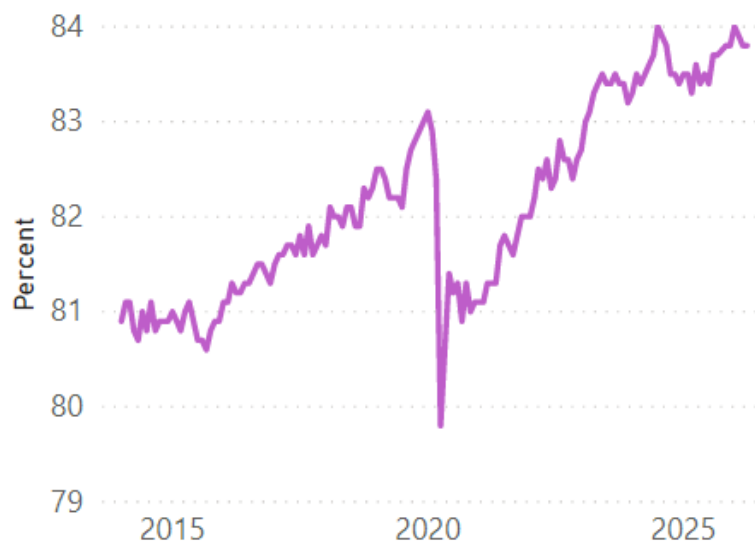
16 to 24 years



16 to 24 labor force participation rate

55.1
percent

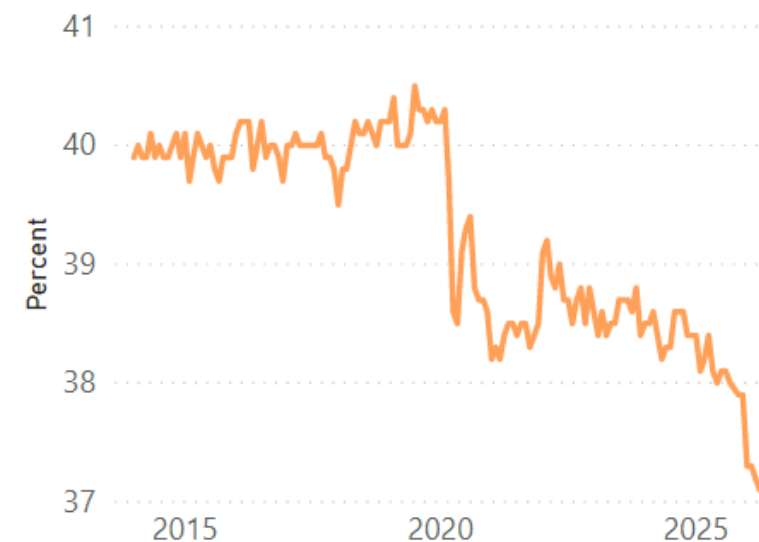
25 to 54 years



25 to 54 labor force participation rate

83.8
percent

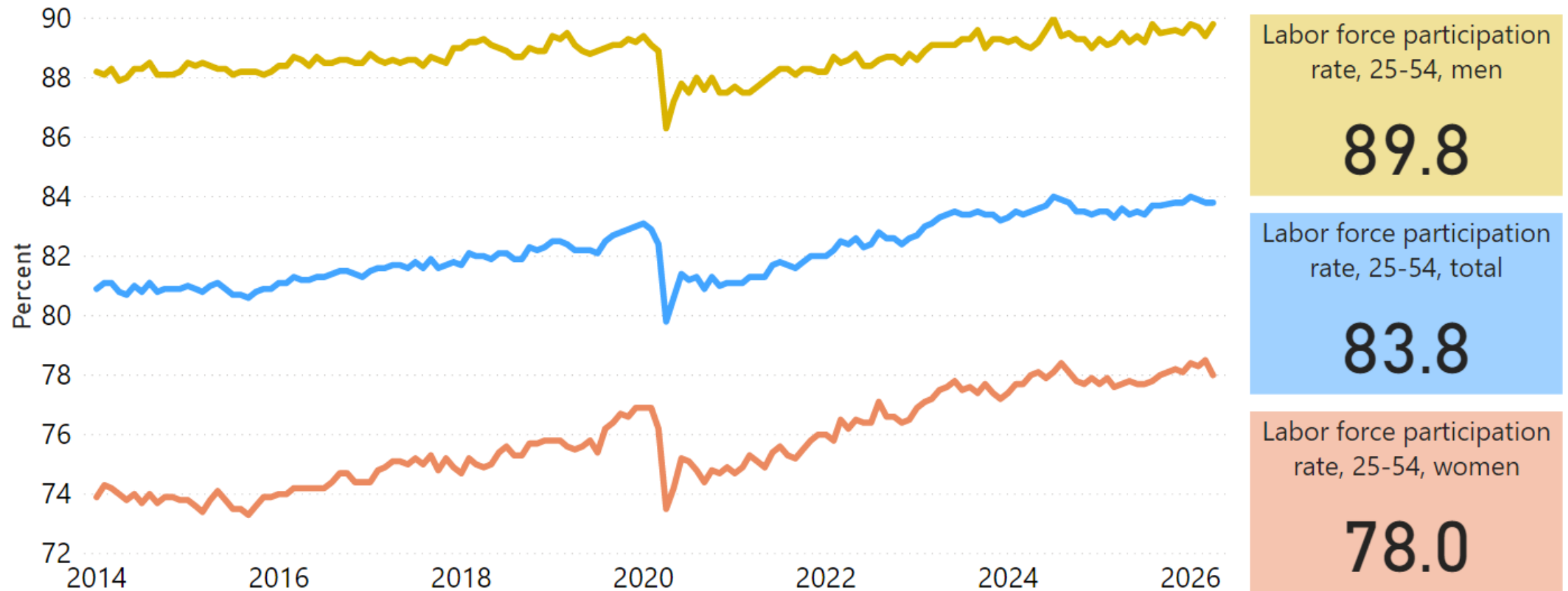
55 years and over

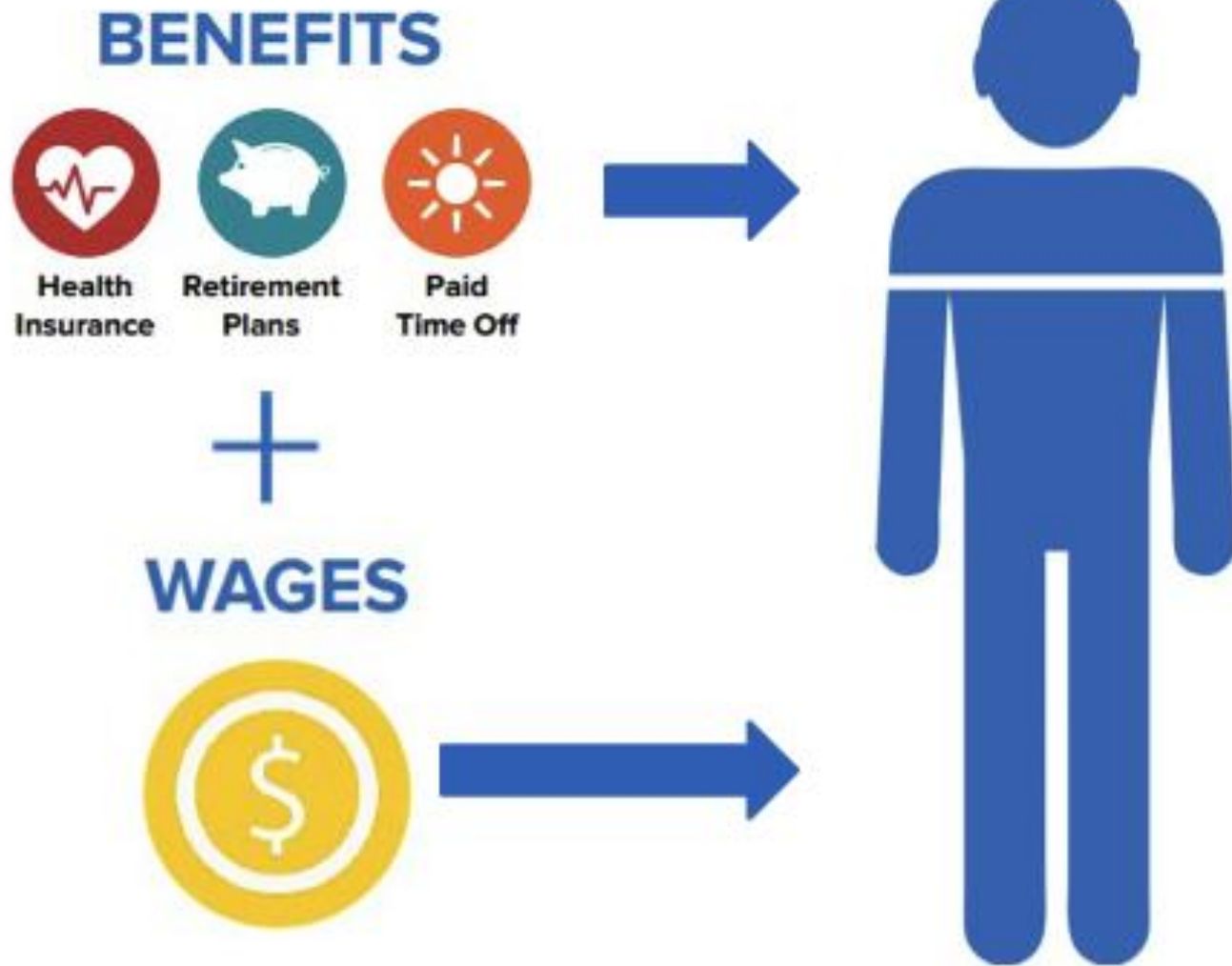


55 & over labor force participation rate

37.1
percent

A closer look at prime age labor force



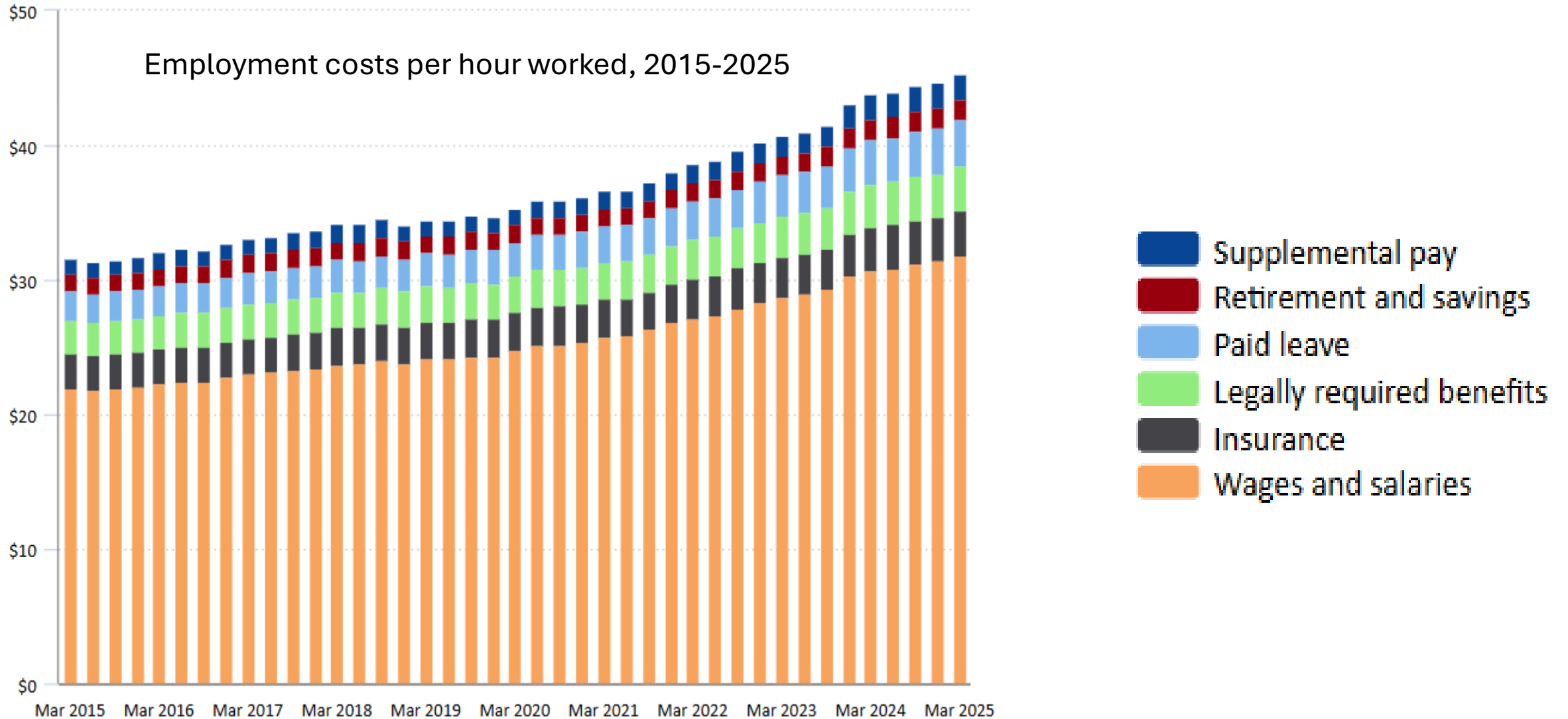


Tracking labor costs:

The Employment Cost Index



Total compensation signs: Wages + benefits

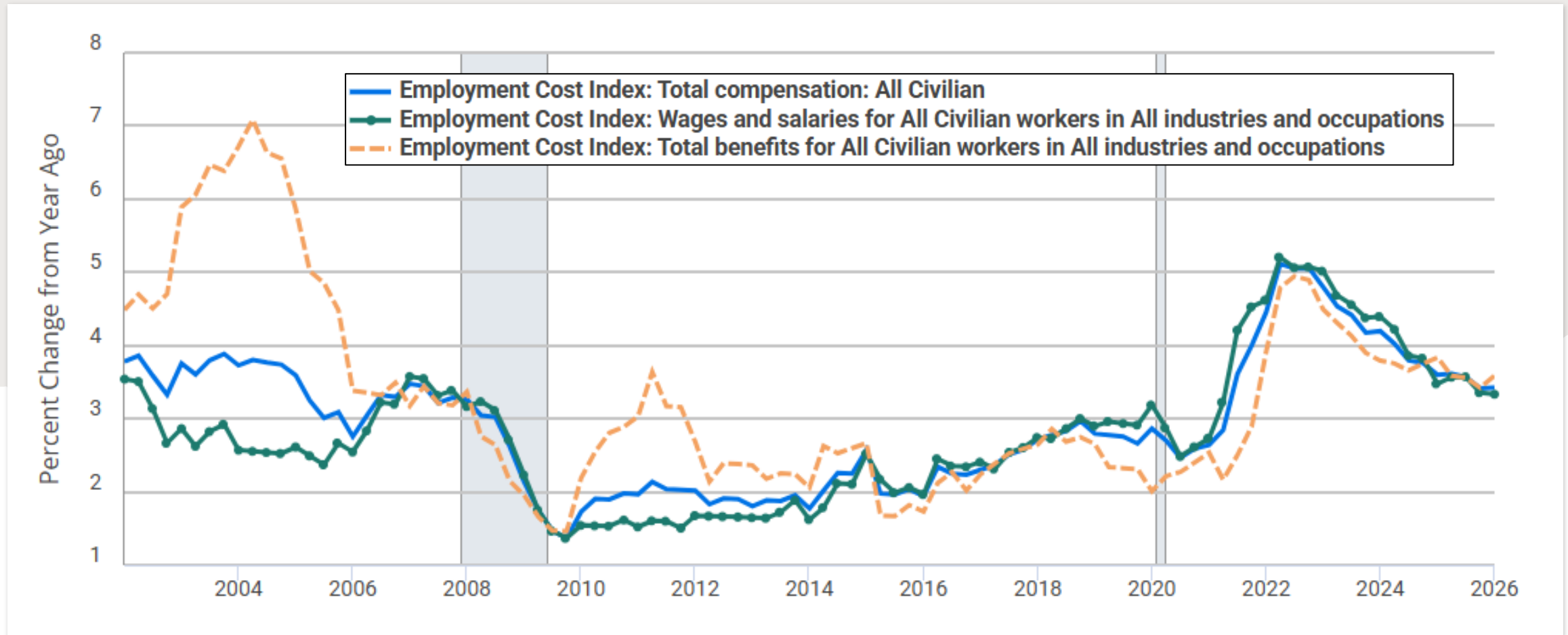


Private vs public total compensation

Compensation component	Private industry workers		State and local government	
	Cost (\$)	Percent of compensation (%)	Cost (\$)	Percent of compensation (%)
Total compensation	46.15	100.0	65.68	100.0
Wages and salaries	32.36	70.1	40.49	61.7
Total benefits	13.79	29.9	25.19	38.3
Paid leave	3.52	7.6	4.84	7.4
Supplemental pay	1.87	4.1	0.69	1.0
Insurance	3.51	7.6	7.49	11.4
Life	0.05	0.1	0.08	0.1
Health	3.30	7.1	7.31	11.1
Short-term disability	0.10	0.2	0.04	0.1
Long-term disability	0.05	0.1	0.06	0.1
Retirement and savings	1.55	3.4	8.69	13.2
Defined benefit	0.39	0.9	8.08	12.3
Defined contribution	1.16	2.5	0.61	0.9
Legally Required benefits	3.34	7.2	3.48	5.3

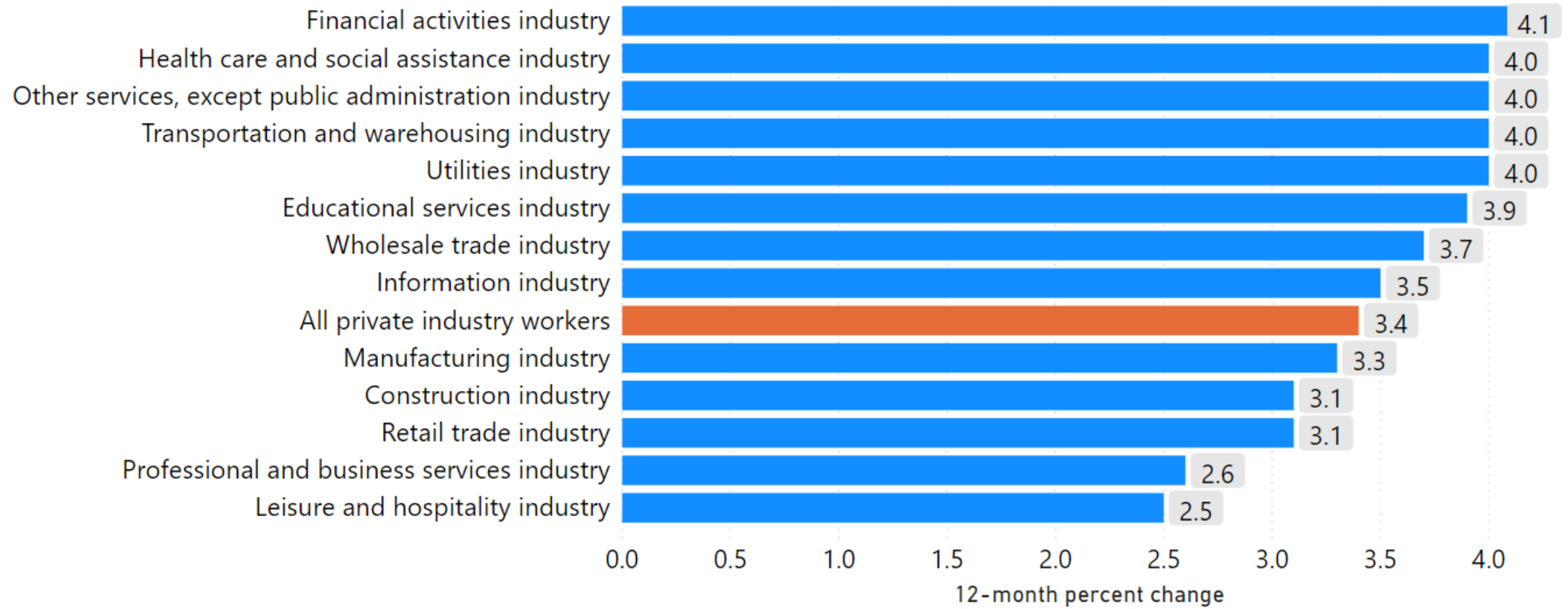
How labor costs are changing

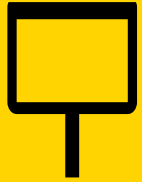
Employment Cost Index



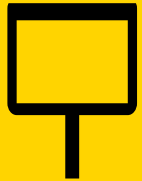
12-month wage increases by industry

Employment Cost Index

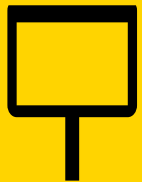




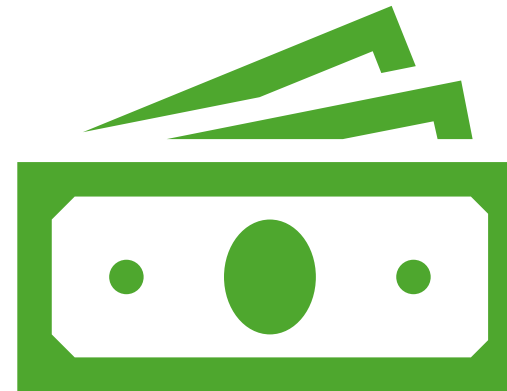
Unemployment rate



Job openings and labor turnover



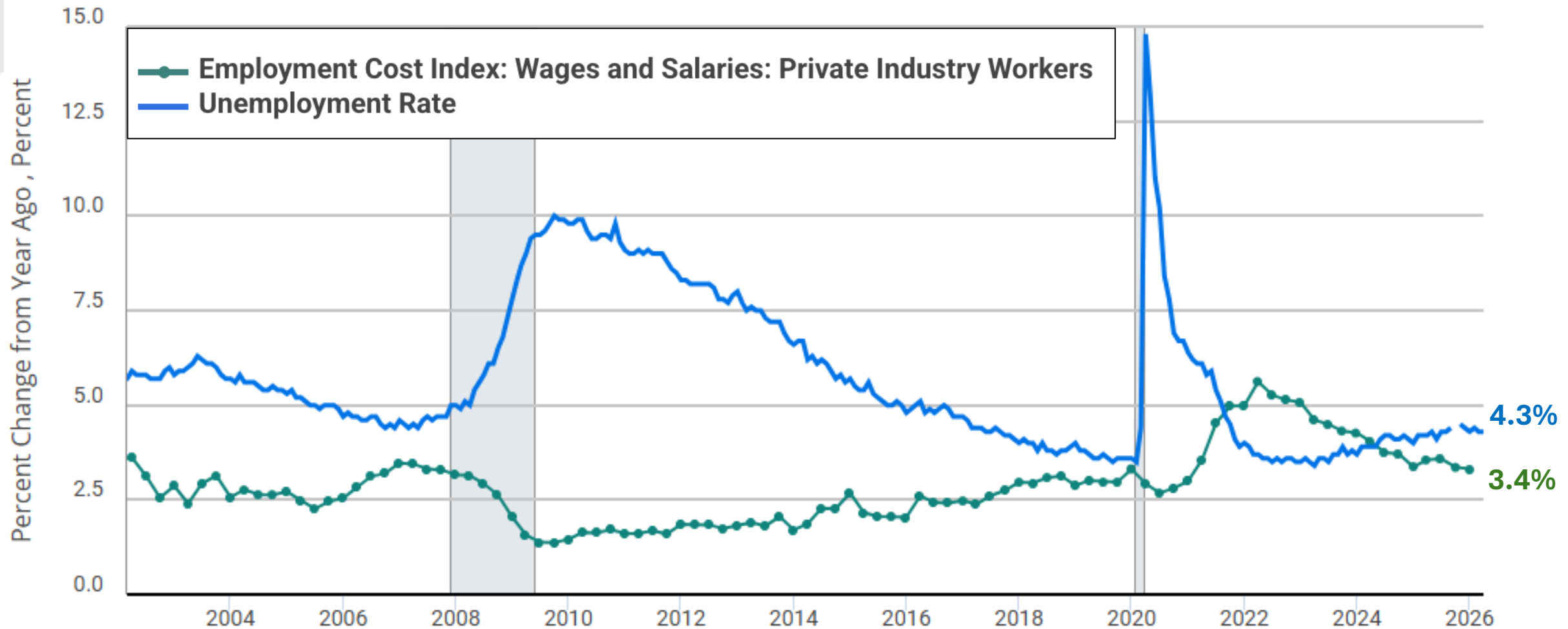
Inflation



ECI - Wages

The unemployment rate

The most famous sign



Unemployment

When unemployment is low it means talent is scarce. Recruiting gets harder, and the fight for retention gets tougher.

- *In low-unemployment times, you may need to double down on employer branding and invest in retention strategies.*

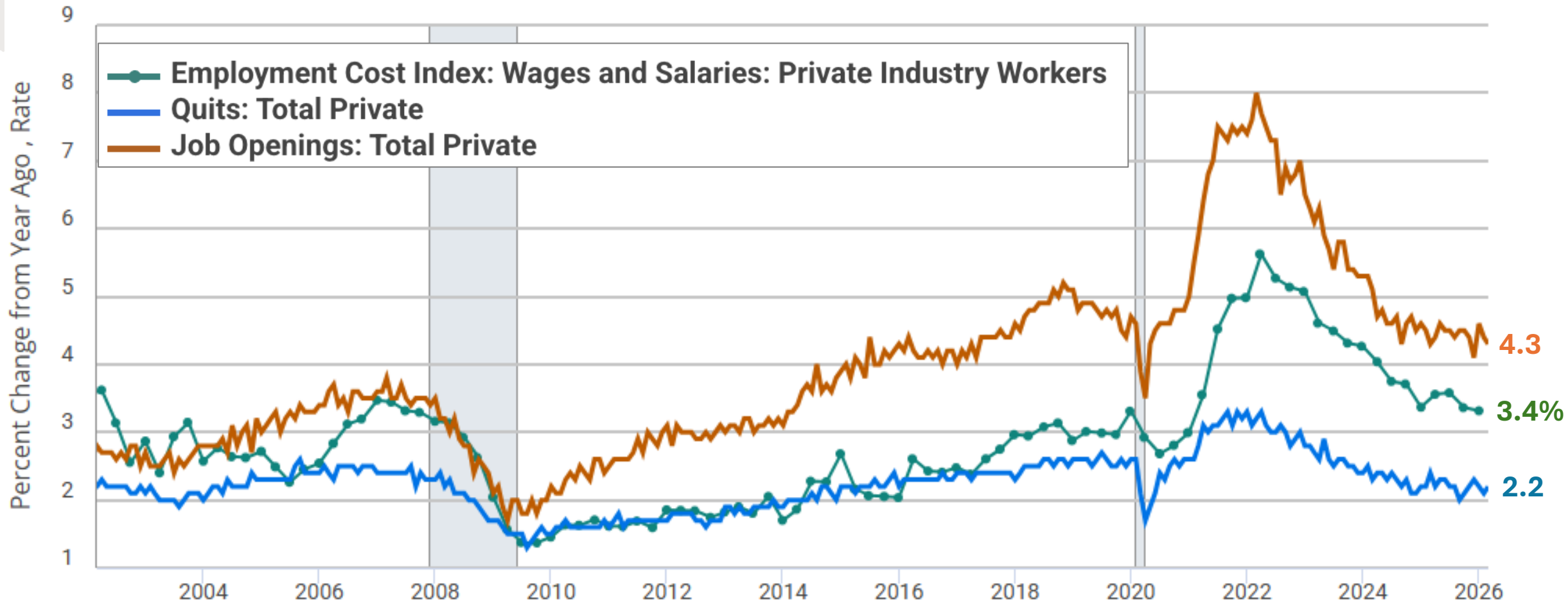
When unemployment rises, there's a bigger pool of applicants. Recruiting may get easier, but employees may feel more anxious, and engagement could suffer.

- *In high-unemployment times, you may want to strengthen internal communication to support employees' sense of security, even if you own company is stable.*



Job openings and labor turnover

Another key sign



Labor turnover

When job openings are high, competition is fierce.

- *If openings are high, consider whether you need to shorten hiring processes or adjust pay to compete.*

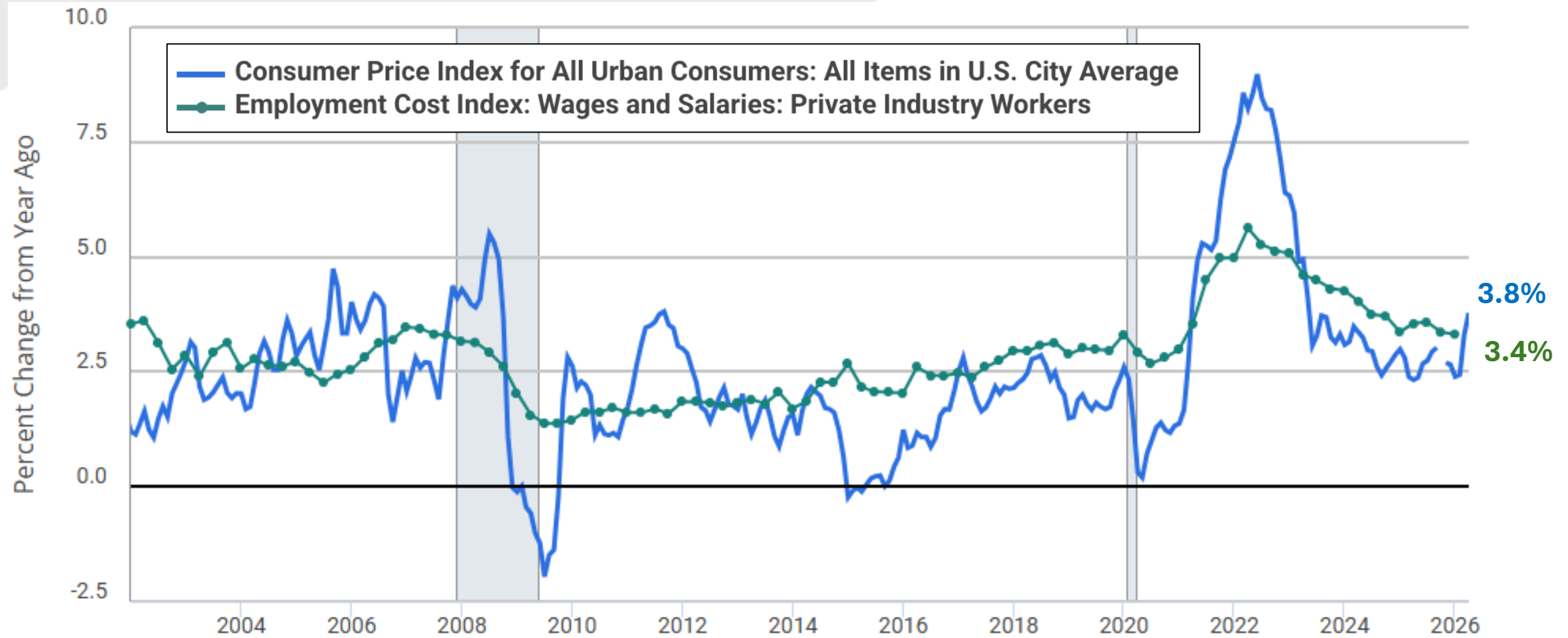
When quit rates are high, employees are feeling confident about leaving.

- *If quits rates are high, consider having ‘stay’ interviews – not just exit interviews.*



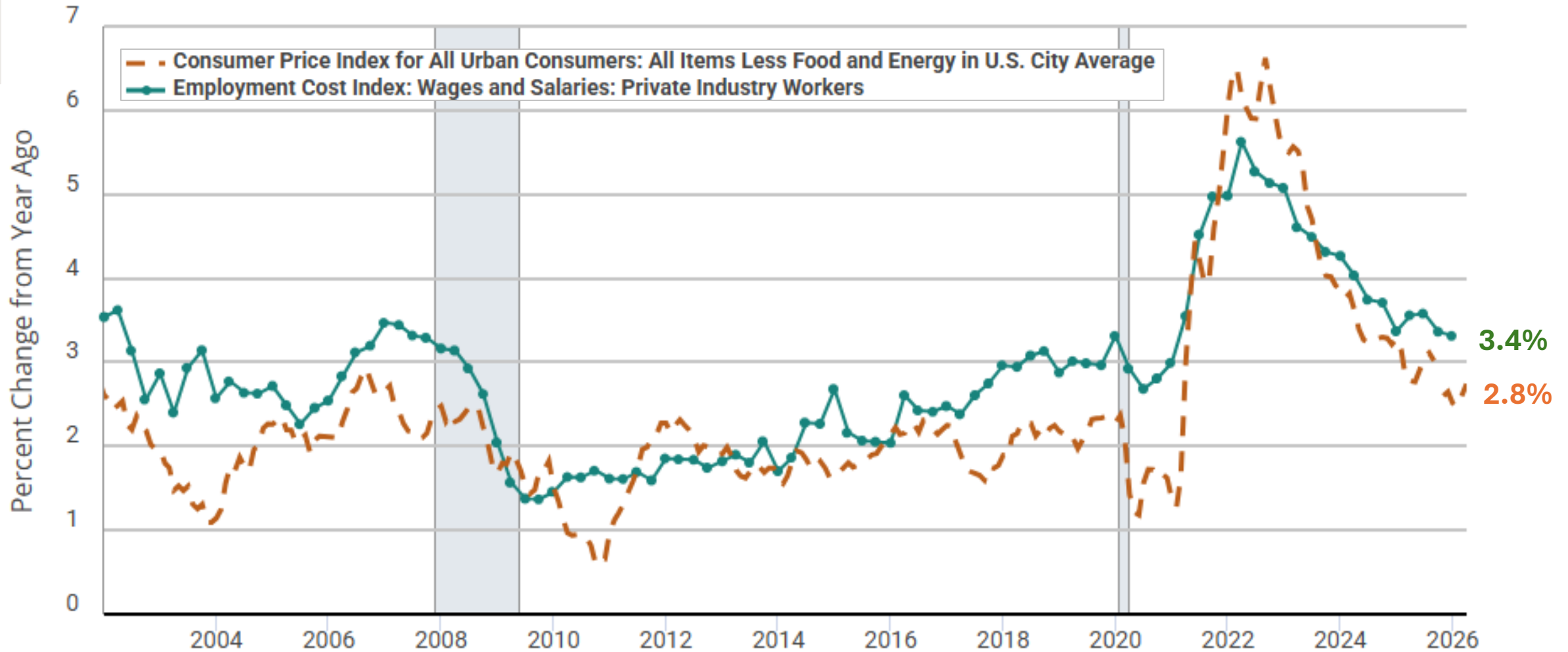
Inflation

Cost of living sign



Inflation

Cost of living sign



Inflation

If wages in the market are rising faster than inflation, and you're not keeping up, you risk losing people.

- *Use external wage growth data to inform your compensation strategy – not just what competitors are doing.*

If inflation is high but wages are flat, employees feel squeezed. They may stay, but engagement, productivity, and morale can take a hit.

- *Pay attention to inflation as a pressure point on employees' lives, even if it doesn't directly hit your payroll budgets.*



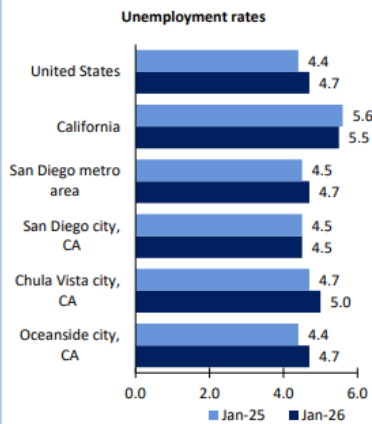
Keeping up to date with local signs

San Diego Area Economic Summary

Updated April 16, 2026

This summary presents a sampling of economic information for the area; supplemental data are provided for regions and the nation. Subjects include **unemployment, employment, wages, prices, spending, and benefits**. All data are not seasonally adjusted and some may be subject to revision. Area definitions may differ by subject. For more area summaries and geographic definitions, see <https://www.bls.gov/regions/economic-summaries.htm>.

Unemployment rates for the nation and selected areas



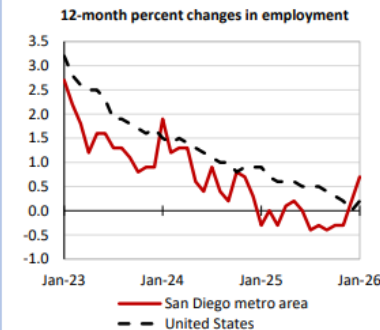
Source: U.S. BLS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

Average weekly wages for all industries by county San Diego metro area, third quarter 2025 (U.S. = \$1,459; Area = \$1,603)



Source: U.S. BLS, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

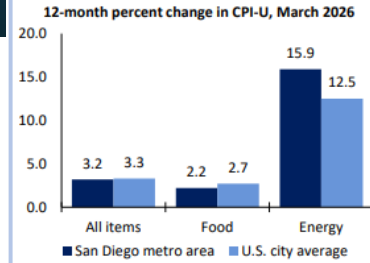
Employment on nonfarm payrolls and employment by major industry sector, over-the-year changes



San Diego metro area employment (number in thousands)	Jan. 2026	Change from Jan. 2025 to Jan. 2026	
		Number	Percent
Total nonfarm	1,564.1	10.9	0.7
Mining and logging	0.3	0.0	0.0
Construction	85.9	-2.6	-2.9
Manufacturing	109.4	-1.2	-1.1
Trade, transportation, and utilities	219.0	-1.9	-0.9
Information	17.3	-1.4	-7.5
Financial activities	72.3	0.3	0.4
Professional and business services	263.6	0.7	0.3
Education and health services	282.3	16.6	6.2
Leisure and hospitality	201.6	5.9	3.0
Other services	59.1	3.0	5.3
Government	253.3	-8.5	-3.2

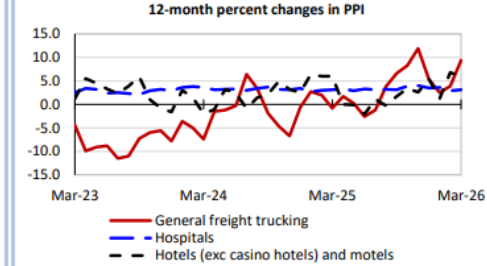
Source: U.S. BLS, Current Employment Statistics.

Prices paid by urban consumers for selected categories, over-the-year change



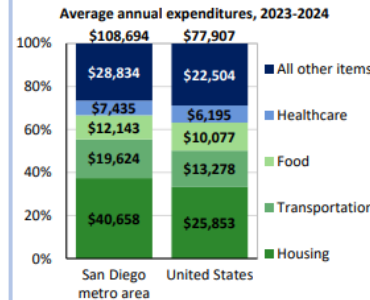
Source: U.S. BLS, Consumer Price Index.

Selling prices received by producers for selected industries nationwide, over-the-year change



Source: U.S. BLS, Producer Price Index.

Average annual spending and percent distribution for selected categories



Source: U.S. BLS, Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Average hourly wages for selected occupations, May 2024

Occupation	San Diego metro area	United States
All occupations	\$37.85	\$32.66
Natural sciences managers	103.93	83.41
Computer hardware engineers	83.62	75.37
Computer and information research scientists	61.81	73.23
Medical scientists, except epidemiologists	60.44	54.18
Marriage and family therapists	31.06	34.96
Home health and personal care aides	17.55	16.82

Source: U.S. BLS, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics.

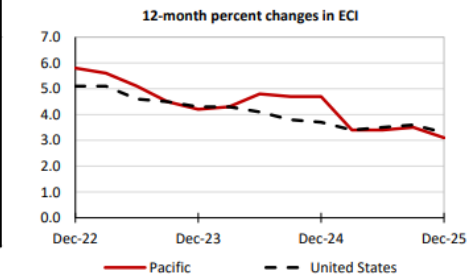
Employer costs per hour worked for wages and selected employee benefits by census division

Private industry, December 2025	Pacific	United States
Total compensation	\$54.56	\$46.15
Wages and salaries	37.52	32.36
Total benefits	17.04	13.79
Paid leave	4.42	3.52
Vacation	2.18	1.75
Supplemental pay	2.56	1.87
Insurance	3.85	3.51
Retirement and savings	2.06	1.55
Legally required benefits	4.15	3.34

Map of Census Regions and Divisions.

Source: U.S. BLS, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation.

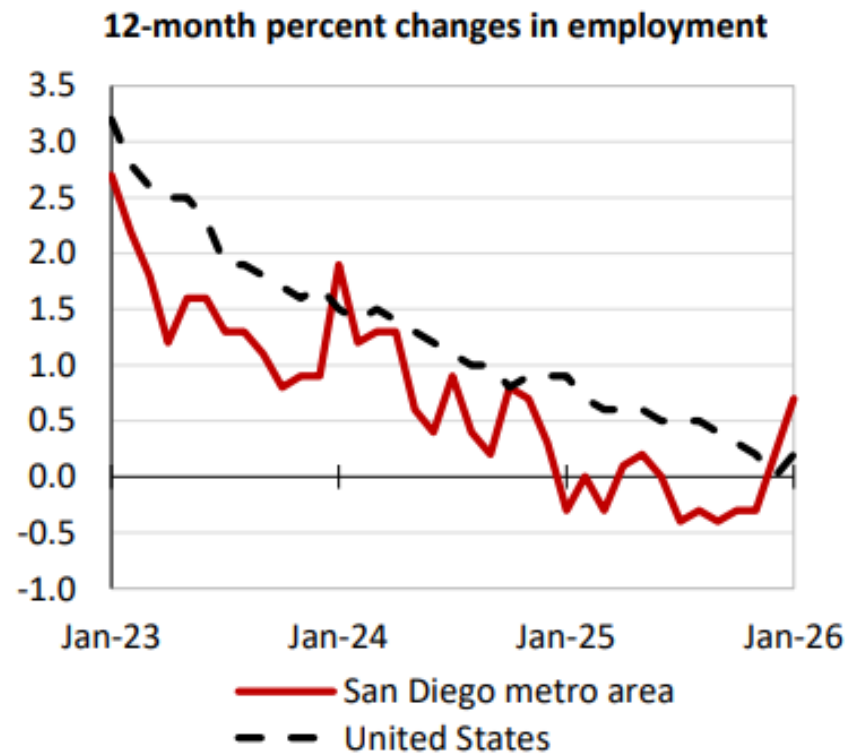
Changes in wages and salaries over-the-year



Source: U.S. BLS, Employment Cost Index.

Keeping up to date with local signs

Employment on nonfarm payrolls and employment by major industry sector, over-the-year changes



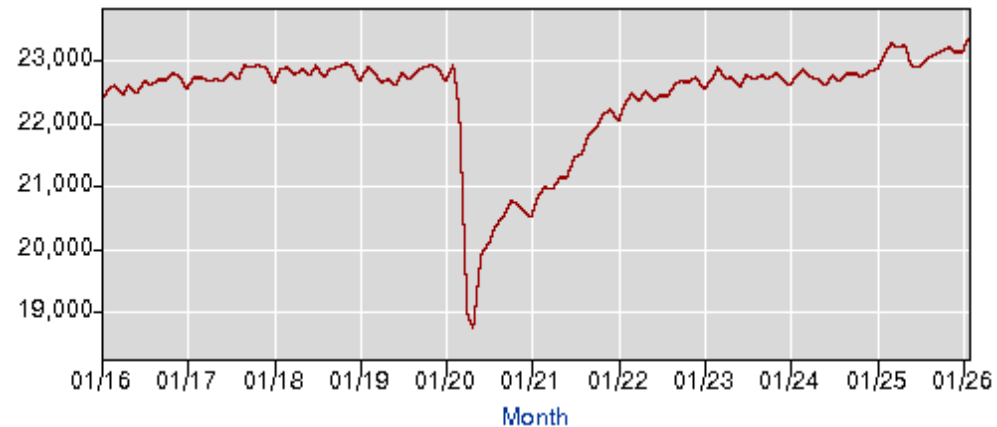
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Keeping up to date with local signs – Poway, CA

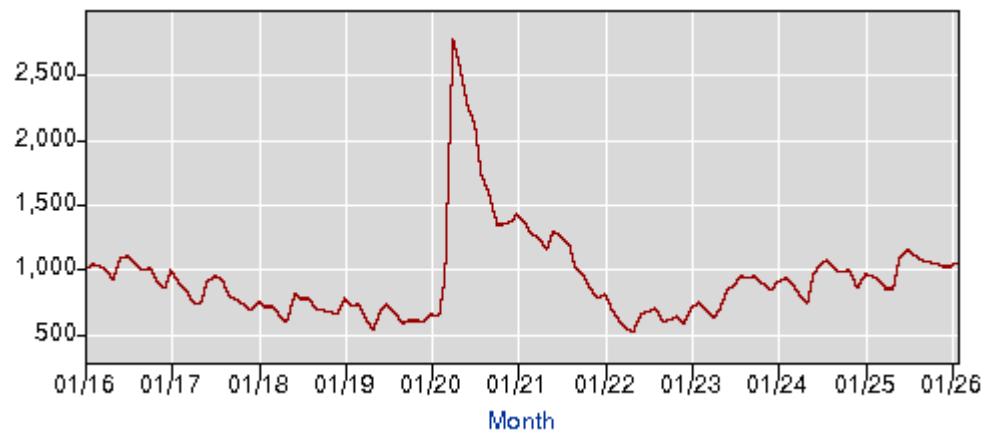
Labor force



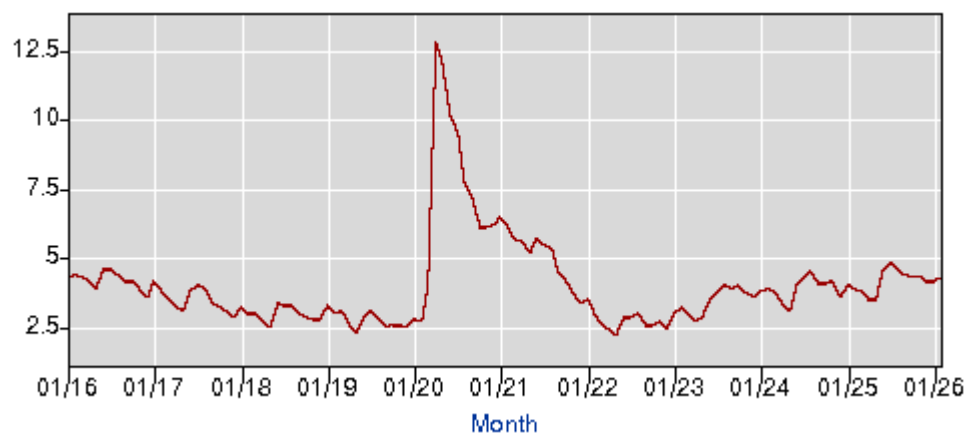
Employment



Unemployment



Unemployment rate



Keeping up to date with local signs

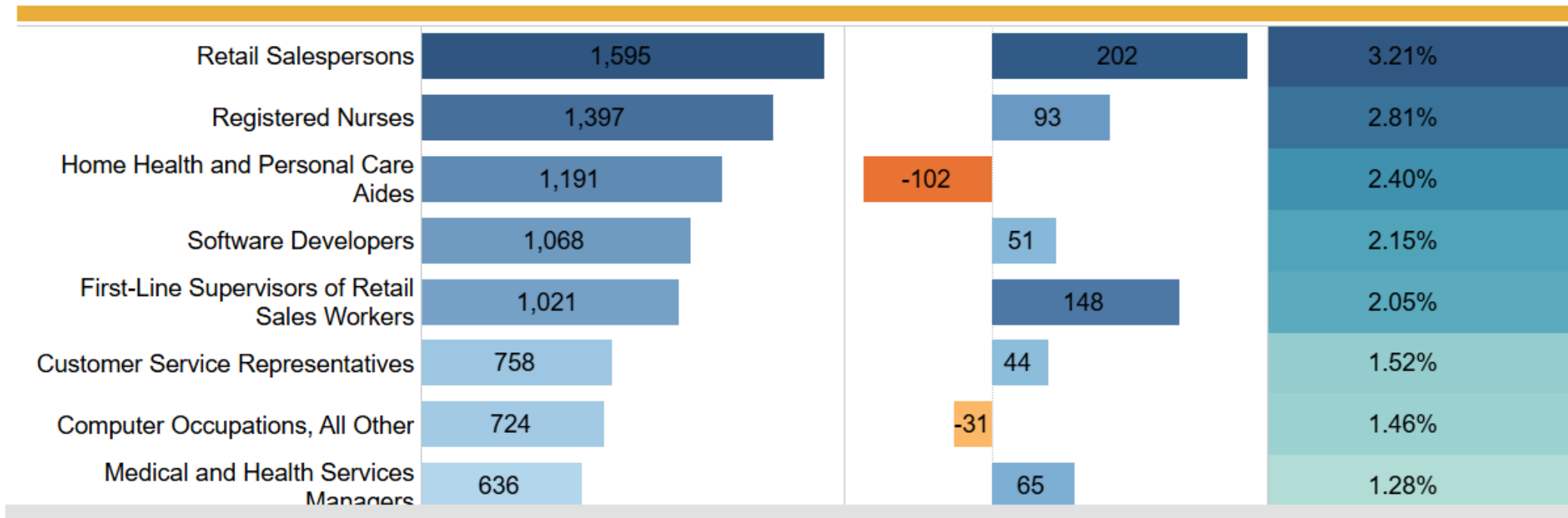


Recent Job Postings San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad MSA March 2026



San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad MSA

Not Seasonally Adjusted
Date Last Updated: Friday, April 17, 2026



Keeping up to date with local signs

State of California

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Labor Market Information Division

May 1, 2026

Contact: Haden Dover
(916) 432-9979

SAN DIEGO-CHULA VISTA-CARLSBAD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (SAN DIEGO COUNTY)

Nonfarm payrolls up 8,100 over the month; up 15,300 over the year

The unemployment rate in San Diego County was 4.3 percent in March 2026, down from a revised 4.5 percent in February 2026, and unchanged the year-ago estimate of 4.3 percent. This compares with an unadjusted unemployment rate of 5.2 percent for California and 4.3 percent for the nation during the same period.

Between February 2026 and March 2026, total nonfarm employment increased from 1,565,300 to 1,573,400, a rise of 8,100 jobs. Agricultural employment gained 100 jobs.

- Private education and health services had the largest month-over gain in employment and recorded an increase of 3,300 jobs. All gains were seen in health care and social assistance. Private educational services fell by 200.
- Five other sectors reported an increase in employment, totaling 5,600 jobs. Government bolstered payrolls by 2,800 jobs, with all gains being attributed to state government (up 1,500) and local government (up 1,300). Leisure and hospitality further strengthened employment by 2,000 jobs, with arts, entertainment, and recreation providing 60% of the expansion.
- Trade, transportation, and utilities and other services experienced month-over declines, weakening overall gains by a combined total of 800 jobs.

May 1, 2026

Employment Development Department
Labor Market Information Division
Contact: LMID RESEARCHERS

San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad MSA (San Diego County)

Industry Employment & Labor Force
March 2025 Benchmark

Data Not Seasonally Adjusted

	Mar 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Mar 26	Percent Change	
			Revised	Prelim	Month	Year
Civilian Labor Force (1)	1,680,200	1,651,500	1,668,000	1,665,100	-0.2%	-0.9%
Civilian Employment	1,607,300	1,574,400	1,592,300	1,593,800	0.1%	-0.8%
Civilian Unemployment	73,000	77,200	75,700	71,300	-5.8%	-2.3%
Civilian Unemployment Rate (CA Unemployment Rate)	4.3%	4.7%	4.5%	4.3%		
(U.S. Unemployment Rate)	4.2%	4.7%	4.7%	4.3%		
Total, All Industries (2)	1,566,600	1,571,500	1,573,500	1,581,700	0.5%	1.0%
Total Farm	8,500	8,000	8,200	8,300	1.2%	-2.4%
Total Nonfarm	1,558,100	1,563,500	1,565,300	1,573,400	0.5%	1.0%
Total Private	1,293,900	1,310,200	1,311,600	1,316,900	0.4%	1.8%
Goods Producing	198,400	195,400	195,300	195,600	0.2%	-1.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	87,800	86,000	85,800	86,300	0.6%	-1.7%
Mining and Logging	300	300	300	300	0.0%	0.0%
Construction	87,500	85,700	85,500	86,000	0.6%	-1.7%
Construction of Buildings	21,500	20,800	20,800	20,900	0.5%	-2.8%
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	6,300	6,500	6,500	6,500	0.0%	3.2%
Specialty Trade Contractors	59,700	58,400	58,200	58,600	0.7%	-1.8%
Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior	10,200	9,900	9,900	10,000	1.0%	-2.0%
Building Equipment Contractors	27,300	26,100	26,000	26,200	0.8%	-4.0%
Building Finishing Contractors	15,300	15,000	14,900	15,000	0.7%	-2.0%
Other Specialty Trade Contractors	6,900	7,400	7,400	7,400	0.0%	7.2%
Manufacturing	110,600	109,400	109,500	109,300	-0.2%	-1.2%
Durable Goods	81,500	81,100	81,200	81,200	0.0%	-0.4%

Questions before we shift into projections data?

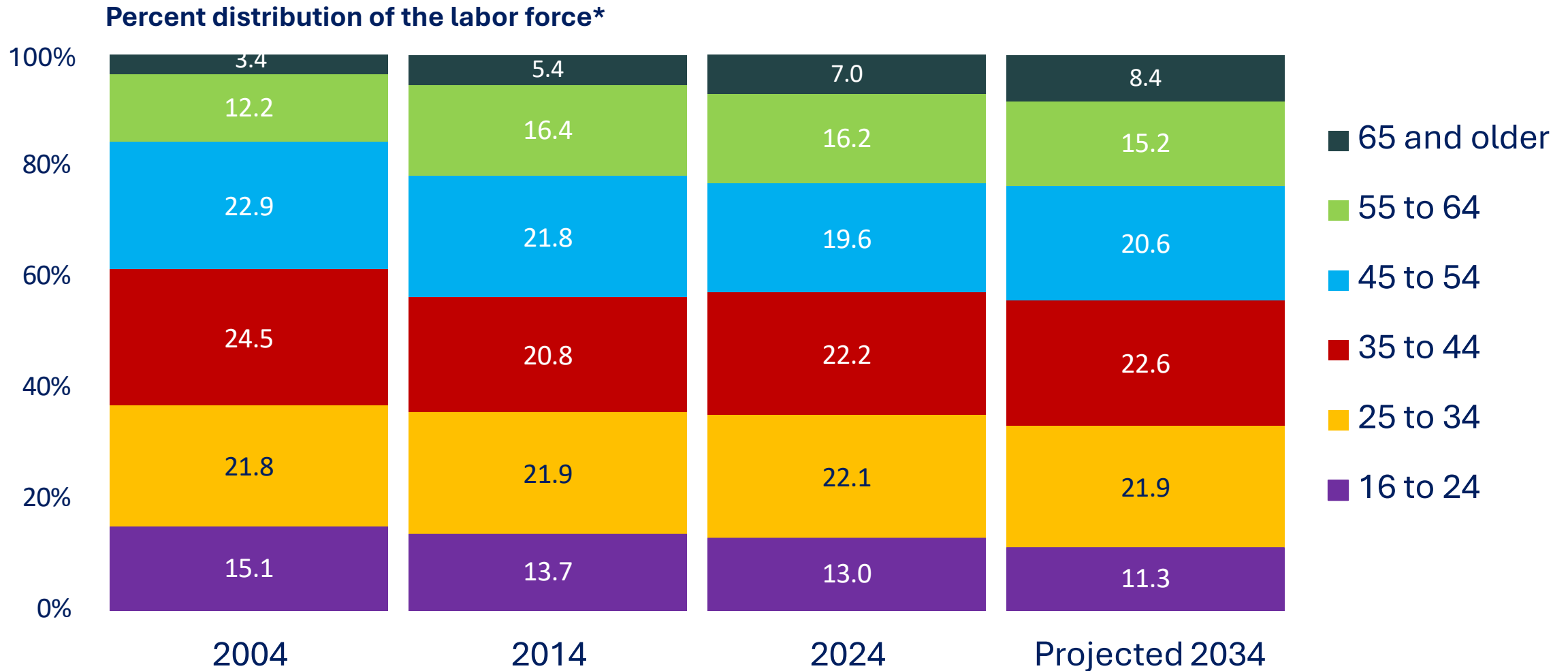


Employment projections products

- Occupational Outlook Handbook
- Long-term employment projections by **industry** and **occupation**
- Technical materials—occupational openings, education and training categories, and more
- Skills data

The screenshot shows the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics website for the Occupational Outlook Handbook. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, SUBJECTS, DATA TOOLS, PUBLICATIONS, ECONOMIC RELEASES, CLASSROOM, and BETA. Below this is a search bar and a link to the Release Calendar. The main content area features a dark blue header with the text 'OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK' and a search bar. Below the header, there is a 'Home' section with a list of 'OCCUPATION GROUPS' including Architecture and Engineering, Arts and Design, Building and Grounds Cleaning, Business and Financial, Community and Social Service, Computer and Information Technology, Construction and Extraction, Education, Training, and Library, Entertainment and Sports, Farming, Fishing, and Forestry, Food Preparation and Serving, Healthcare, and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair. To the right of the list is a 'SELECT OCCUPATIONS BY' section with dropdown menus for 2024 Median Pay, Entry-Level Education, On-the-job Training, Number of New Jobs (Projected), and Growth Rate (Projected), along with a 'GO' button. Below this is a 'FEATURED OCCUPATION' section with a photo of a plumber and the text 'Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters' and a 'view profile' link. At the bottom, there is an 'A-Z INDEX' section with a list of letters from A to Z.

Aging labor force



2024–34 employment outlook trends

Aging Population

Growing elderly population will increase demand for long-term care and therapy services.

Artificial Intelligence

Reduction in labor demand for sales, design, and administrative support because of the growing adoption of AI technologies.

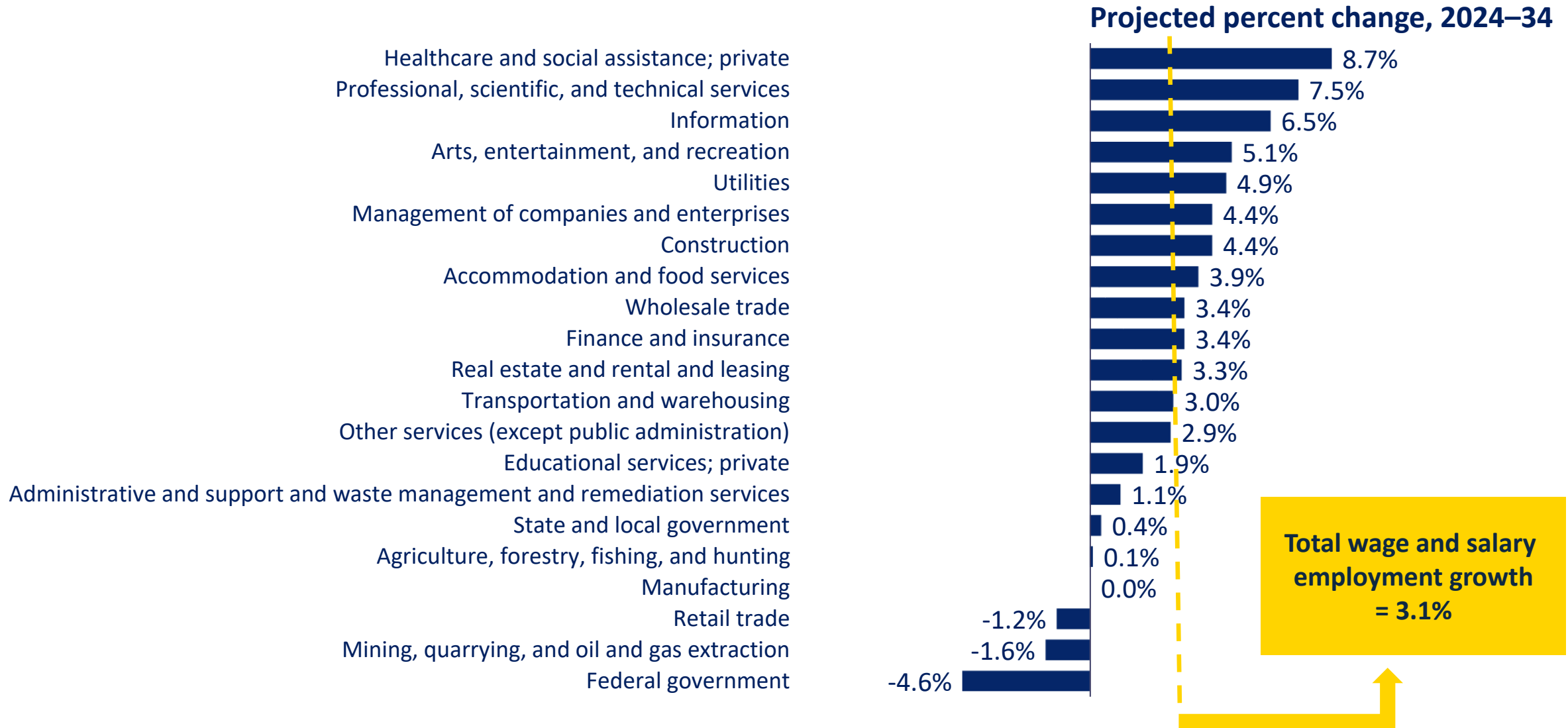
Information Technology

Increasing demand for IT products and services.

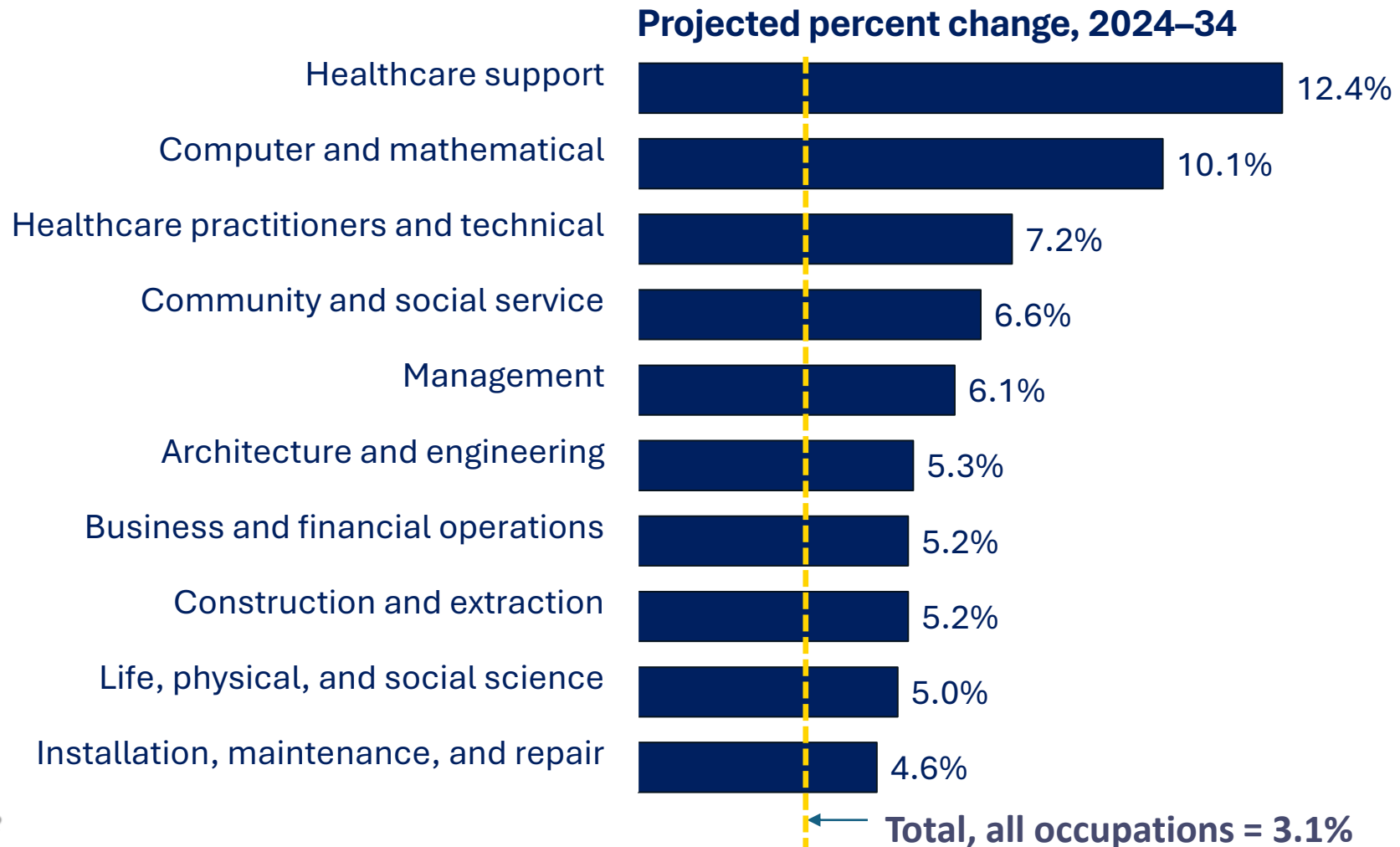
E-Commerce

Continued e-commerce growth conversely impacts employment demand in retail trade and transportation and warehousing sector.

Projected percent change in industry sector employment, 2024–34

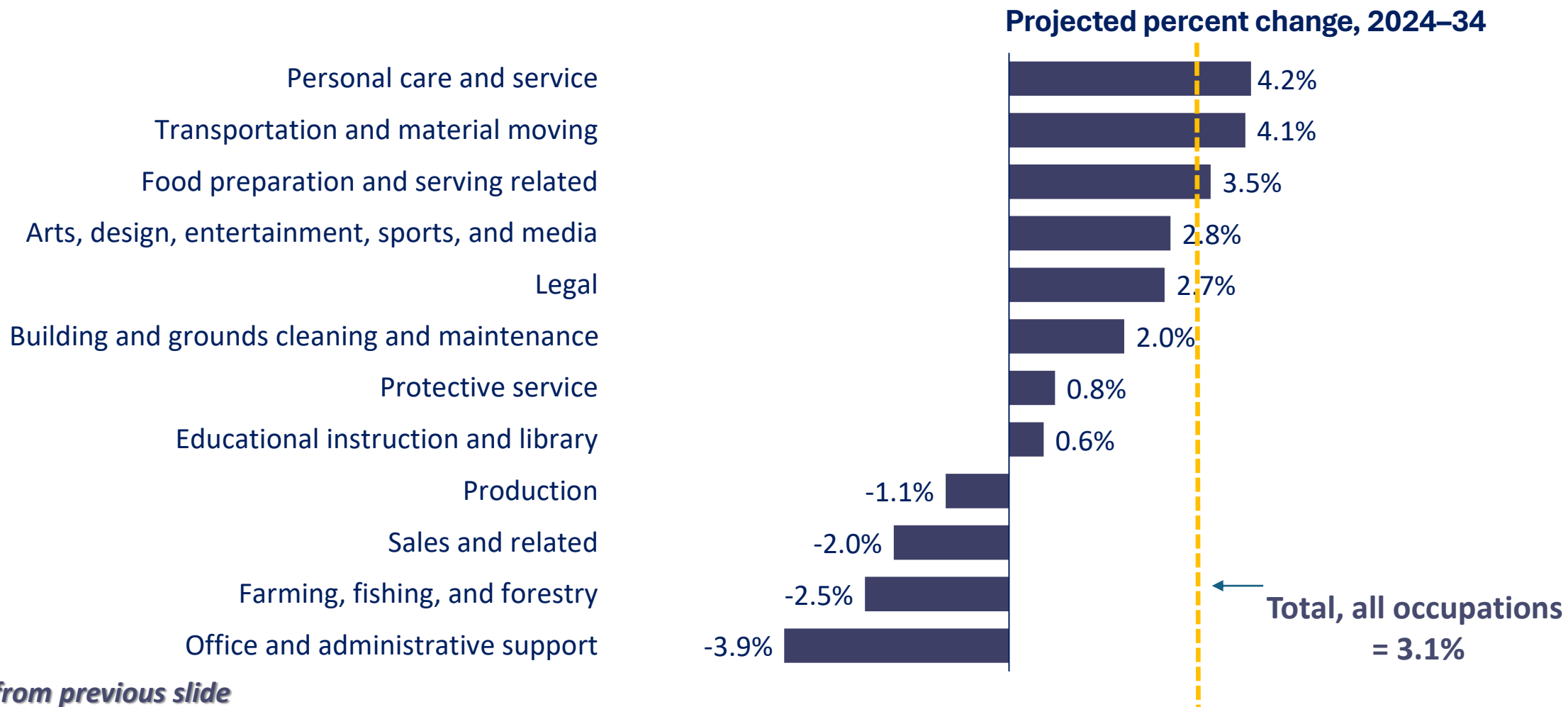


Healthcare support occupations projected to grow the fastest



Continues on next slide

Office and administrative support occupations projected to be the fastest declining













Continued from previous slide

Occupations with largest projected growth

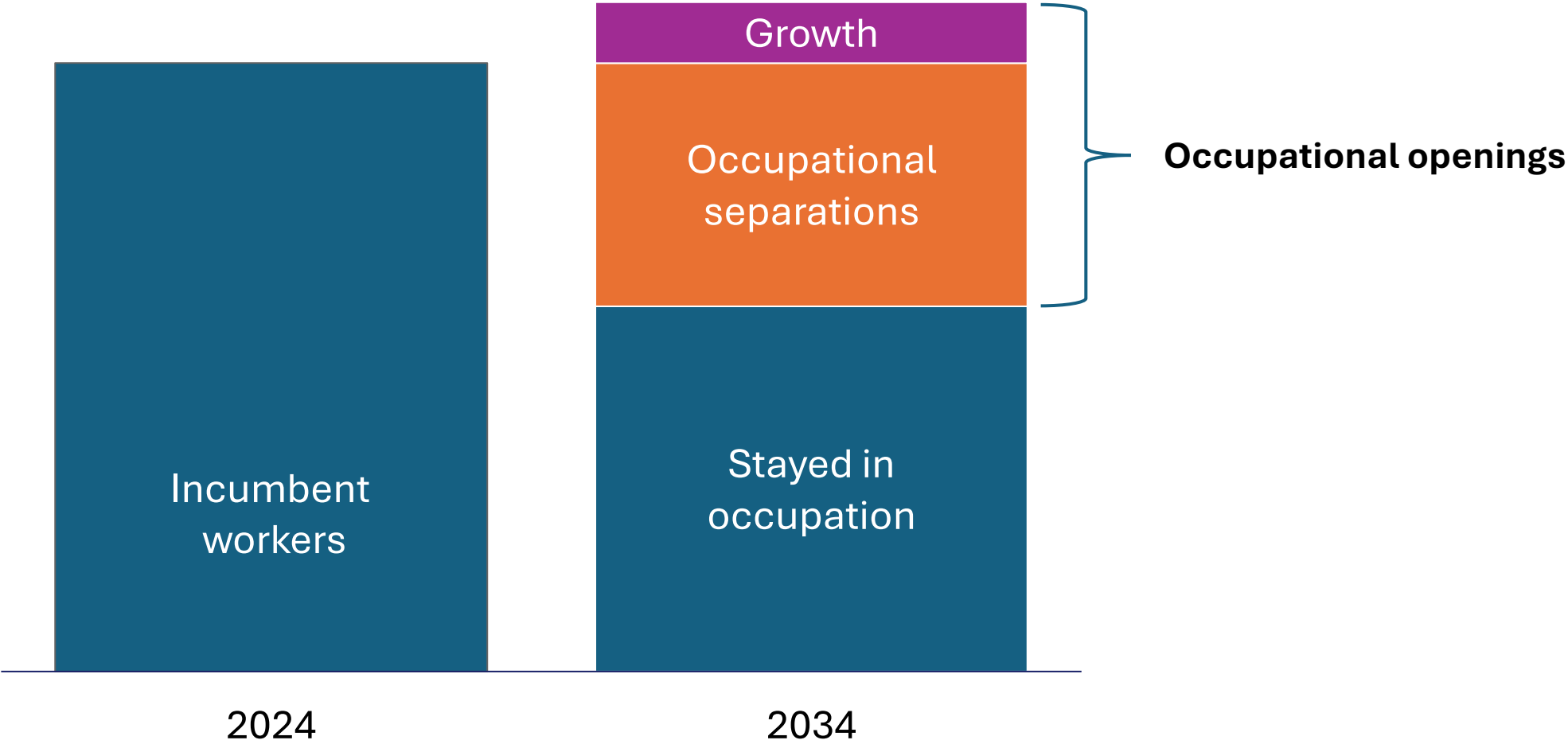
	Projected percent change, 2024–34	Projected employment change, 2024–34, in thousands	Median annual wage, May 2024
Home health and personal care aides	17.0%	739.8	\$34,900
Software developers	15.8%	267.7	\$133,080
Stockers and order fillers	8.5%	235.0	\$37,090
Fast food and counter workers	6.1%	233.2	\$30,480
Cooks, restaurant	14.9%	217.0	\$36,830
Registered nurses	4.9%	166.1	\$93,600
General and operations managers	4.4%	164.0	\$102,950
Medical and health services managers	23.2%	142.9	\$117,960
Financial managers	14.8%	128.8	\$161,700
Nurse practitioners	40.1%	128.4	\$129,210

Occupations with largest projected decline

Projected employment change, 2024–34, in thousands	Median annual wage, May 2024
-313.6 	Cashiers \$31,190
-177.8 	Office clerks, general \$43,630
-153.7 	Customer service representatives \$42,830
-94.3 	Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks \$49,210
-90.3 	Cooks, fast food \$30,160
-72.3 	First-line supervisors of retail sales workers \$47,320
-66.3 	Shipping, receiving, and inventory clerks \$43,190
-44.9 	Tellers \$39,340
-36.7 	Data entry keyers \$39,850
-32.2 	Packers and packagers, hand \$35,580

Employment growth and occupational openings

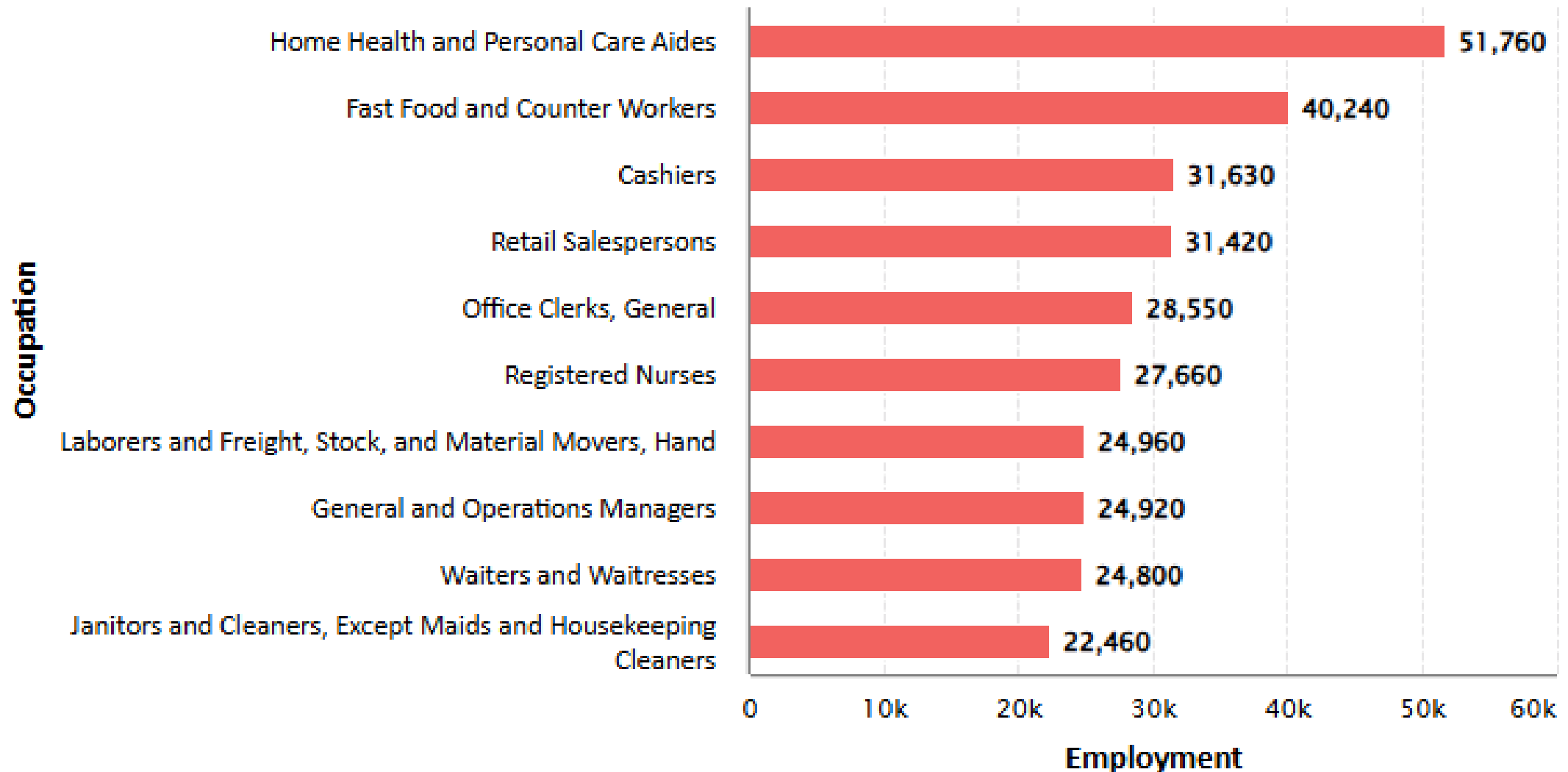
Example



Most projected occupational openings

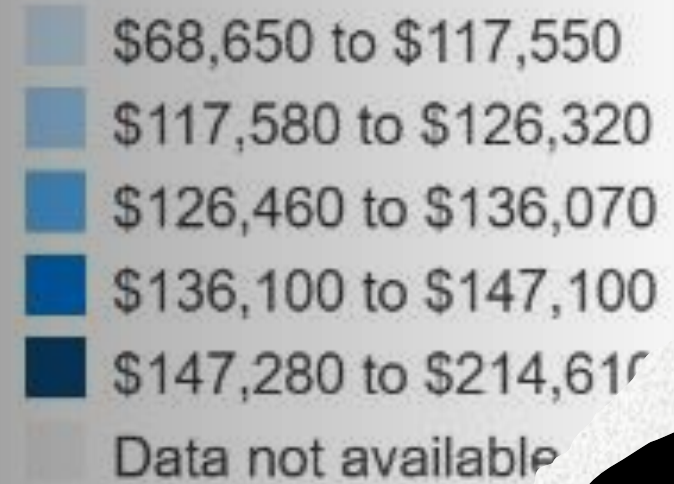
	Projected occupational openings, 2024–34 annual average, in thousands	Median annual wage, May 2024
Fast food and counter workers	904.3	\$30,480
Home health and personal care aides	765.8	\$34,900
Retail salespersons	555.8	\$34,580
Cashiers	542.6	\$31,190
Stockers and order fillers	472.3	\$37,090
Waiters and waitresses	456.7	\$33,760
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	384.3	\$38,940
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	351.3	\$35,930
Customer service representatives	341.7	\$42,830
General and operations managers	308.7	\$102,950

Largest occupations in San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA, May 2024



Employment and wages by occupation and area

Annual mean wage



Creating customized wage reports

Area: San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA

Period: May 2024

Occupation (SOC code)	Employment (1)	Hourly mean wage	Annual mean wage (2)	Hourly 10th percentile wage	Hourly 25th percentile wage	Hourly median wage	Hourly 75th percentile wage	Hourly 90th percentile wage
Computer User Support Specialists (15-1232)	5,110	\$35.01	\$72,820	\$22.54	\$27.86	\$33.43	\$39.76	\$51.22
Software Developers (15-1252)	21,080	\$75.89	\$157,860	\$45.74	\$60.18	\$76.56	\$83.86	\$101.97
Registered Nurses (29-1141)	27,660	\$67.00	\$139,350	\$49.60	\$58.52	\$63.99	\$78.58	\$84.05
Home Health and Personal Care Aides (31-1120)	51,760	\$17.55	\$36,500	\$16.85	\$16.85	\$16.85	\$17.44	\$18.81
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks (43-4081)	2,980	\$20.00	\$41,600	\$17.38	\$17.61	\$18.35	\$21.39	\$23.60
Electricians (47-2111)	7,330	\$39.61	\$82,400	\$22.67	\$28.81	\$36.37	\$48.59	\$61.51
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics (49-3023)	5,180	\$29.84	\$62,060	\$18.00	\$22.48	\$29.34	\$36.08	\$39.32

Footnotes:

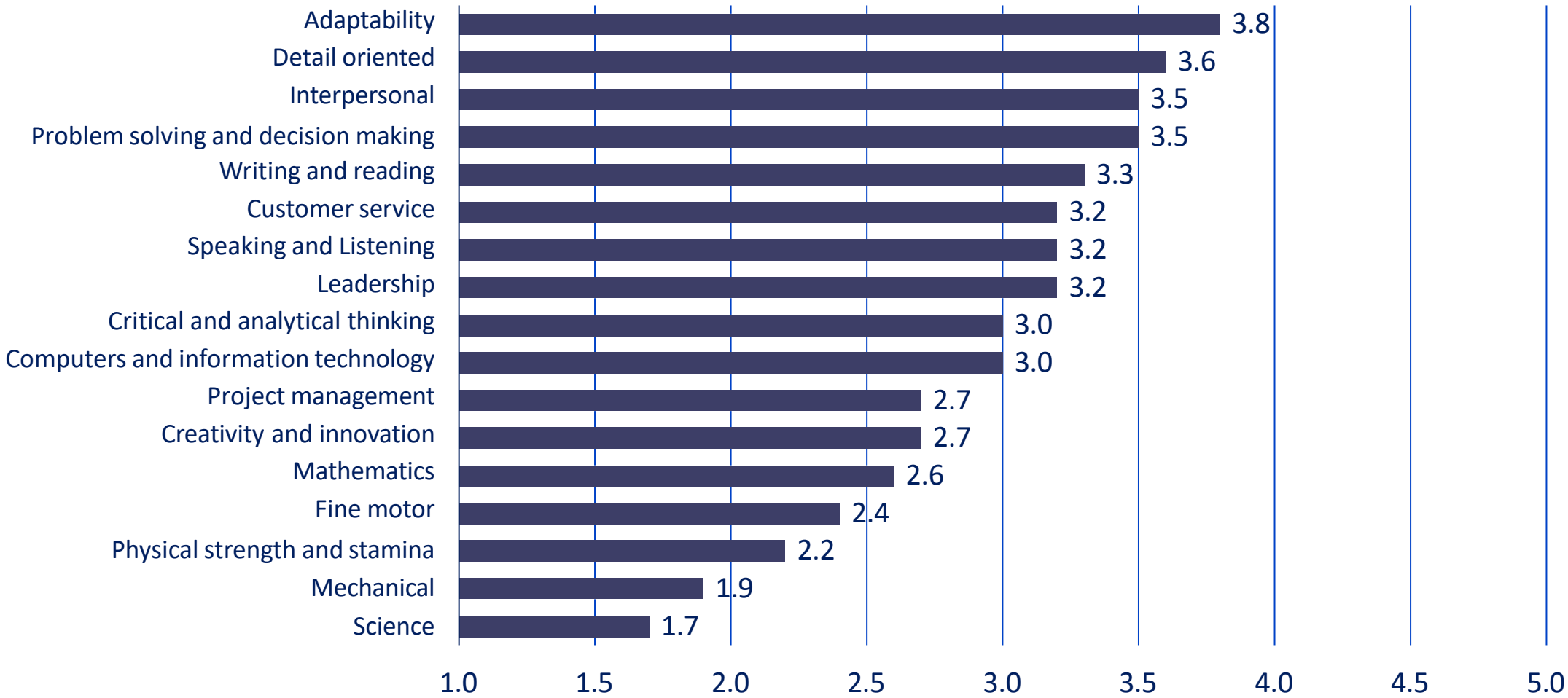
(1) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(2) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the corresponding hourly wage by 2,080 hours.

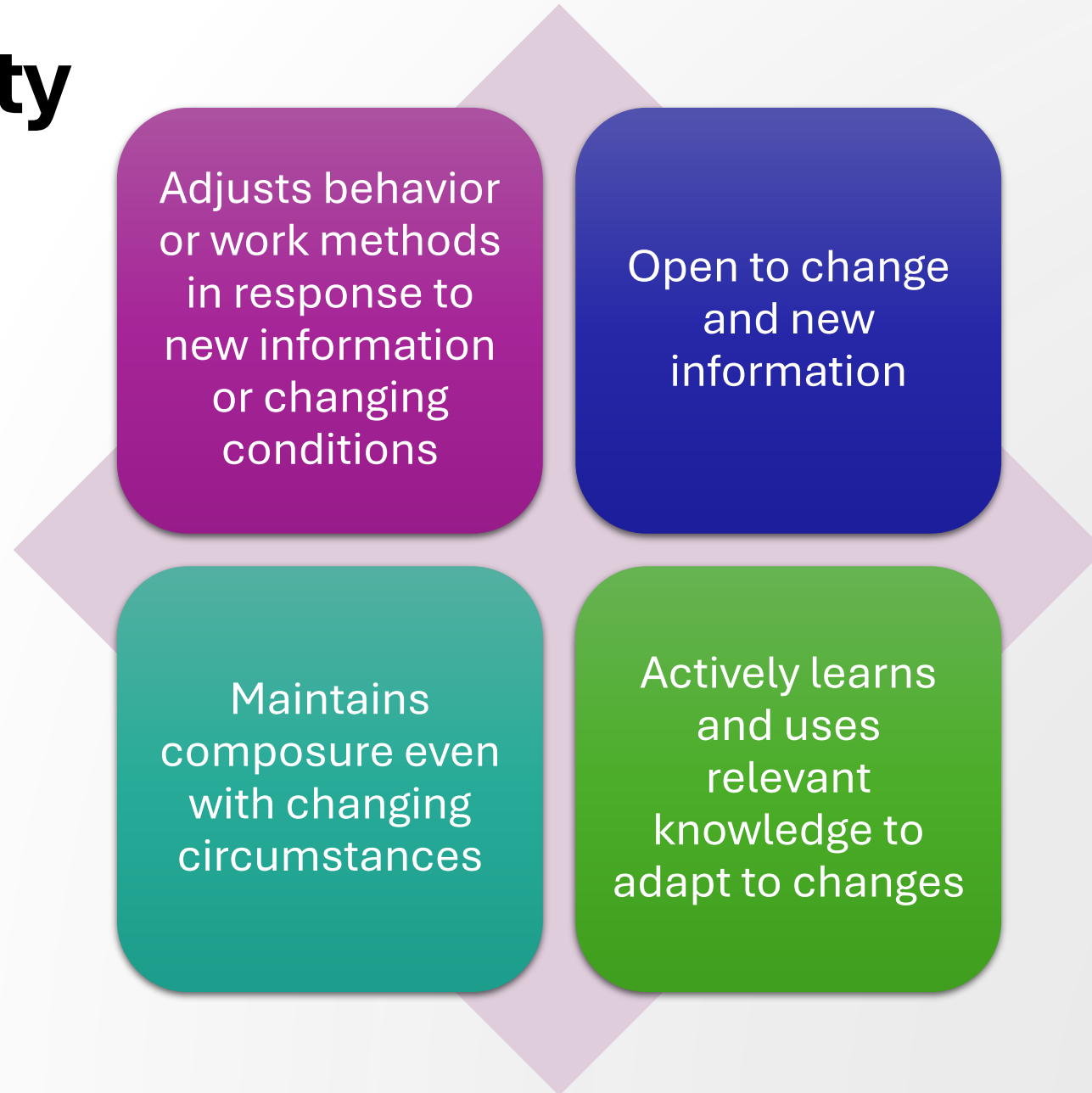
Importance of skills by occupation



Average skills score across all occupations



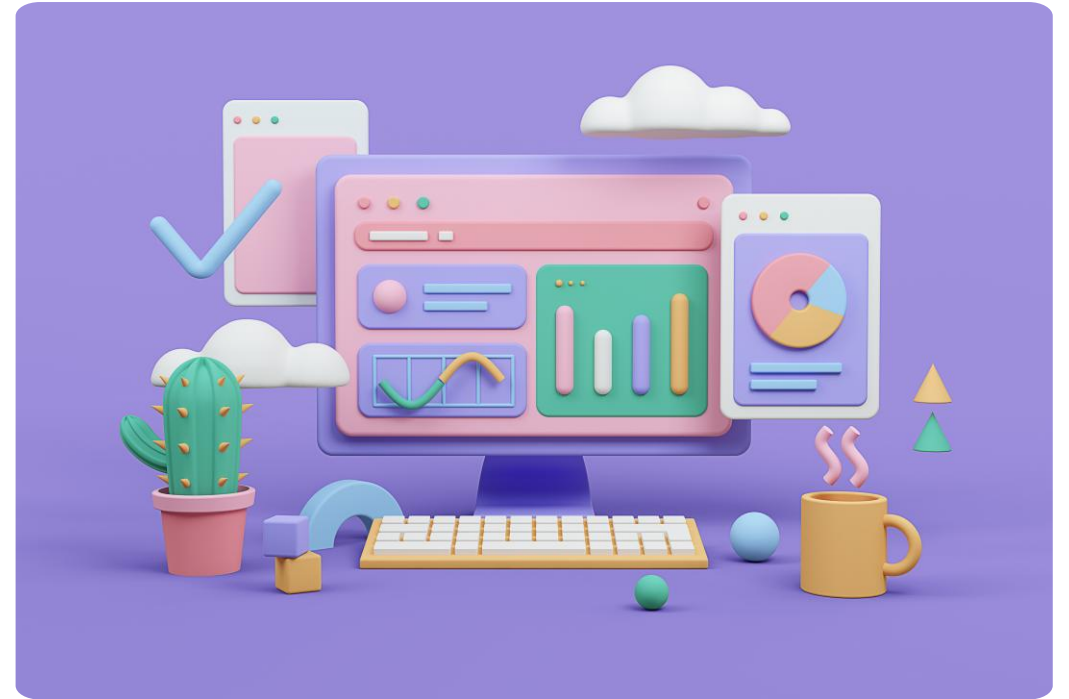
Adaptability



Top skills for fastest growing occupations

Occupation	Top highest skill	Second highest skill	Third highest skill
Wind turbine service technicians	Detail oriented	Mechanical	Adaptability
Solar photovoltaic installers	Detail oriented	Adaptability	Problem solving and decision making
Nurse practitioners	Adaptability	Interpersonal	Problem solving and decision making
Data scientists	Mathematics	Computers and information technology	Writing and reading
Information security analysts	Computers and information technology	Adaptability	Writing and reading
Medical and health services managers	Adaptability	Leadership	Critical and analytical thinking
Physical therapist assistants	Interpersonal	Adaptability	Problem solving and decision making
Actuaries	Mathematics	Critical and analytical thinking	Writing and reading
Operations research analysts	Mathematics	Critical and analytical thinking	Writing and reading
Physician assistants	Adaptability	Interpersonal	Detail oriented

Takeaways: Making data work for you



On the ROAD!



R – Recognize the sign. Don't gloss over it – know which sign matters and what it signals.

O – Orient to your organization. How does this sign connect to your workforce, industry, or local market?

A – Anticipate the curve. What might happen 6-12 months from now if this trend continues?

D – Drive strategy. Adjust your compensation plan, hiring, retention, or training accordingly.



Final facts!

- Nearly all BLS surveys are voluntary.
- Without the cooperation of the people who participate in its surveys, BLS could not provide high-quality information about the economy.
- We greatly appreciate the cooperation of survey respondents and supporters. Thank You!



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