



New York City Employment Trends

New York City is benefiting from the longest and largest job expansion since the end of World War II. Over the past ten years, the City has added 907,600 jobs, twice as many as during the 1992-2000 expansion, the previous record-holder (see Figure 1). In addition, job growth in New York City between 2009 and 2019 (24.3 percent) has outpaced the nation (15.3 percent) and New York State (14.5 percent).¹

Despite concerns that job growth would slow, New York City added 87,200 jobs in 2019, about the same as in the two prior years (see Figure 2). In total, employment reached 4.6 million jobs in 2019, more than at any time in the City's history.

In 2019, job growth was concentrated in three employment sectors (see Figure 3), with health care accounting for 40 percent of the jobs added. Growth was also strong in business services and social assistance.

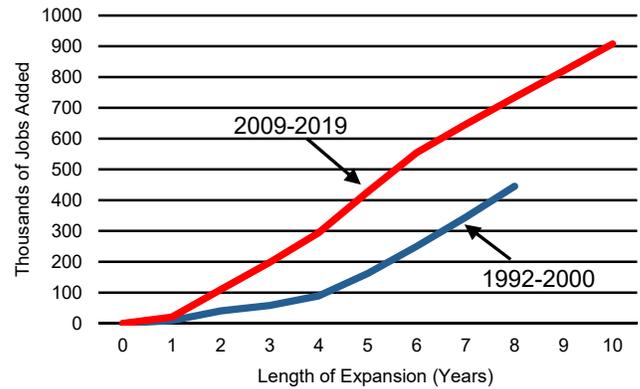
While the numbers remain robust, growth has slowed in some sectors, and others have lost jobs. The construction industry, for example, continues to add jobs, but the pace of growth has slowed sharply in recent years. Full-service restaurants in the leisure and hospitality sector, as well as the securities industry in the financial activities sector, lost jobs in 2019.

The boroughs outside of Manhattan were responsible for 48 percent of the citywide private sector job gains over the past ten years, a larger share than in any prior expansion since at least 1975. As a result, the unemployment rate has fallen to historic lows across the City.

From a budgetary perspective, strong job growth has helped boost personal income and sales tax collections, making it easier for New York City to afford new services and to balance the budget. Given current trends, the City is likely to continue to benefit from solid job growth in 2020.

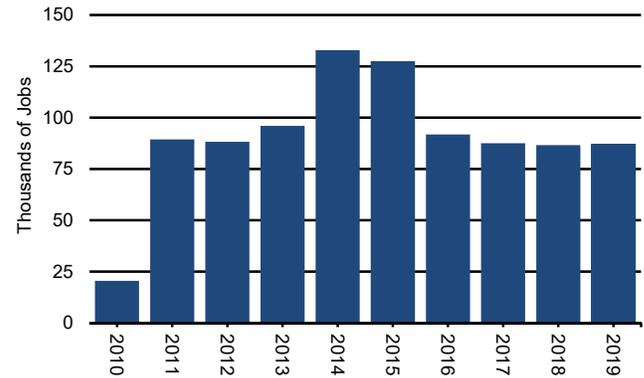
¹ Excluding New York City, employment in the rest of New York State grew by 6.9 percent.

FIGURE 1
The Two Largest and Longest NYC Job Expansions



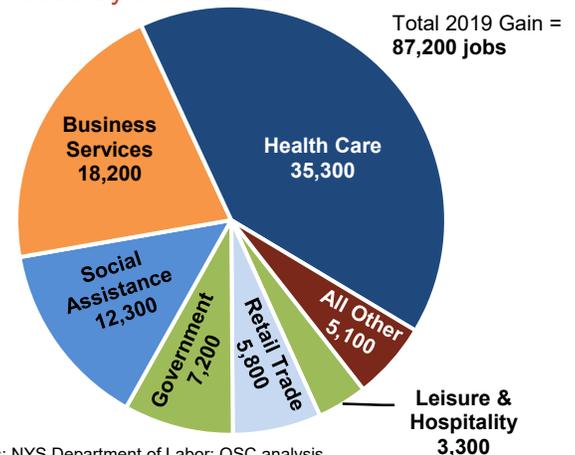
Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; OSC analysis

FIGURE 2
Annual Change in Employment in New York City



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 3
Jobs Added by Sector in 2019



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

Health care has added jobs every year since 1990, when the current data series began. In 2019, the sector added 35,300 jobs, more than any other sector. In 2019, there was a total of 585,900 jobs in health care. Gains in the health care sector have accelerated in recent years, accounting for an increasing share of the jobs added each year (see Figure 4).

Over the past ten years, health care has added 180,800 jobs, representing one-fifth of the jobs added in New York City during this period. Home health care services has been the driving force behind the growth, responsible for 78 percent of the jobs. Home health care, however, is among the lowest-paying jobs in the health care sector.

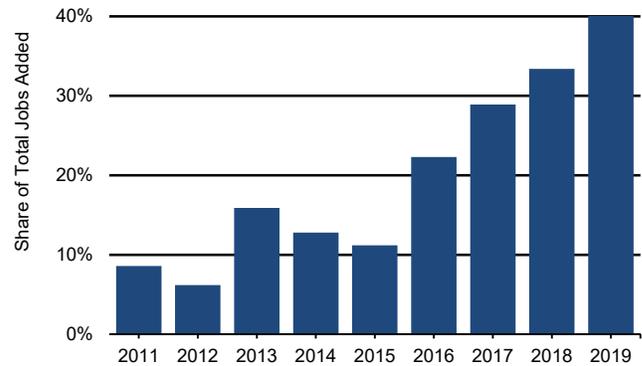
Employment in **social assistance** has risen steadily since 1990, reaching 212,800 in 2019. Job growth in the social assistance sector was particularly strong in the past two years, with 10,900 jobs added in 2018 and another 12,300 added in 2019 (see Figure 5).

It appears that much of the growth was driven by an increase in jobs that serve the elderly and people with disabilities.² Jobs that serve these populations now account for about half of the jobs in the sector.

Business services (which includes accountants, lawyers, programmers and clerks) added 18,200 jobs in 2019, the smallest gain since 2010 when the current job expansion began (see Figure 6). Nonetheless, the sector added 211,200 jobs between 2009 and 2019, the most of any sector during this period, accounting for 23 percent of those added in the City since the end of the recession. In 2019, there were 780,300 jobs in business services, nearly 17 percent of all jobs in New York City.

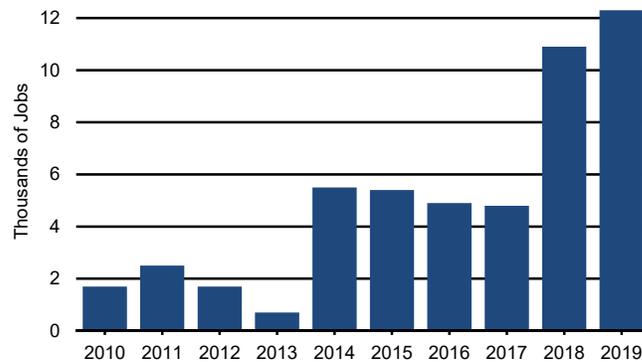
² This observation was drawn from data from the New York State Department of Labor’s Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages series for 2018 and the first half of 2019.

FIGURE 4
Health Care as a Share of Jobs Added By Year



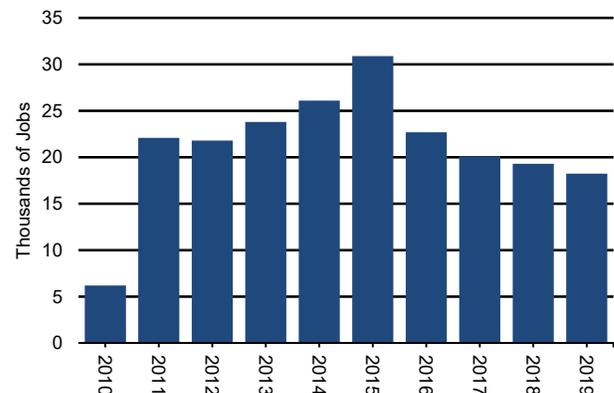
Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 5
Change in Social Assistance Employment



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 6
Change in Business Services Employment



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

The **leisure and hospitality** sector had been a major source of job growth during the expansion, but growth has slowed dramatically in recent years. After adding an average of 18,600 jobs annually between 2009 and 2017, the sector added 4,600 jobs in 2018 and 3,300 in 2019.

Full-service restaurants were responsible for 40 percent of the job gains in the leisure and hospitality sector between 2009 and 2017, but these restaurants have lost 4,600 jobs in the past two years despite record tourism (see Figure 7). It appears that most of the decline in the number of restaurants and associated jobs were concentrated in Manhattan.²

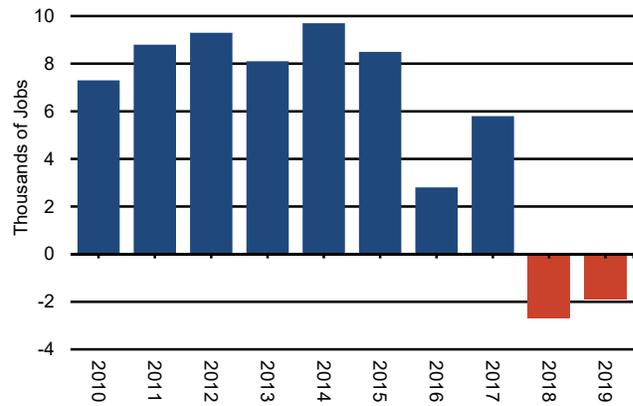
Despite an increase in the number of businesses that provide accommodations (e.g., hotels and motels), the industry reported job losses of 200 jobs in 2018 and another 700 in 2019.

After growing rapidly in recent years, job growth in the **construction** sector has begun to slow. While the industry added 300 jobs in 2019, it was the smallest gain since the end of the recession. Still, employment reached a record of 158,100 in 2019 (see Figure 8), an increase of 45,700 (41 percent) since 2011.

The **financial activities** sector added 7,200 jobs in 2018, but lost 2,800 in 2019. Although commercial and retail banking added 900 jobs, the rest of the sector (e.g., real estate, insurance and securities) lost 3,700 jobs. The real estate industry, which gained an average of 2,200 jobs annually between 2010 and 2018, lost 1,800 in 2019. Insurance continued its long-term decline, losing 600 jobs in 2019.

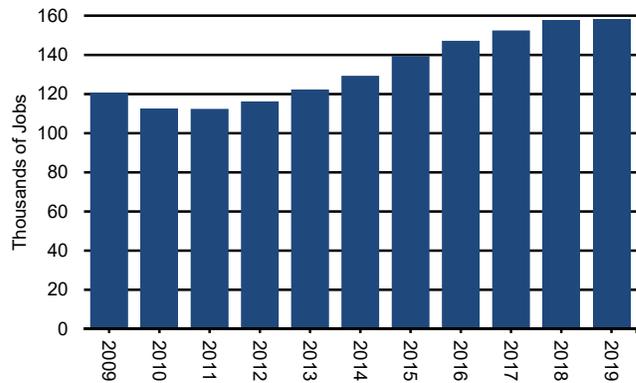
The securities industry had strong job gains in four of the past six years, but lost 1,300 jobs in 2019 (see Figure 9), and remains almost 5 percent smaller than before the recession. Despite its size (less than 5 percent of private sector employment), the securities industry has the highest average salary of any major sector and is responsible for one-fifth of all private sector wages paid in New York City.

FIGURE 7
Change in Full-Service Restaurant Employment



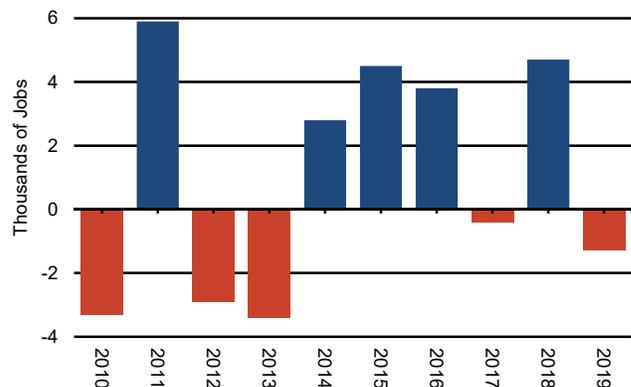
Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 8
Construction Employment



Note: Also includes natural resources and mining.
Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 9
Change in Securities Industry Employment



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

Technology is changing the way goods are distributed and sold. The retail sector showed strong job growth during the first half of the expansion, but since 2014 growth has been weak. In 2019, the sector added 5,900 jobs, the largest gain in five years.

The **technology sector** is made up of components of the business services, information and manufacturing sectors. Employment in this sector increased by 78 percent (62,000 jobs) between 2009 and 2018 (the latest available data), reflecting New York City's expanding role as a national center for technology.

The tech sector added 6,800 jobs in 2018 and was on pace at the midpoint to add another 8,900 in 2019. This would bring employment to a record 150,100 jobs (see Figure 10). Most of the gains have been centered in software publishing, data processing, internet publishing and web portals, and computer system design.

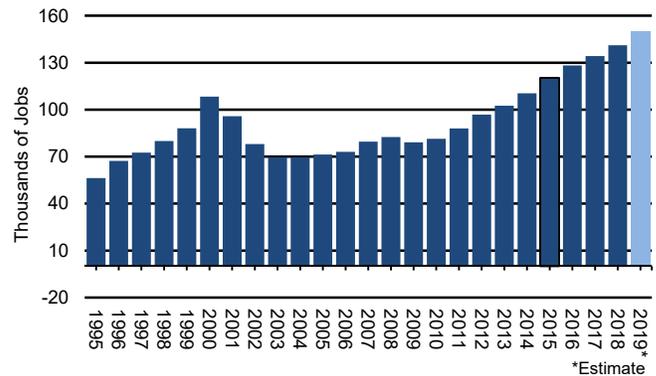
Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate fell from 9.3 percent in 2009 during the Great Recession to 4.1 percent in 2018, the lowest level since 1976 when the data series began (see Figure 11). The unemployment rate remained at its historic low of 4.1 percent in 2019.

While the unemployment rate for African Americans declined from 15.4 percent in 2009 to 5.7 percent in 2017, it increased to 7.8 percent in the two following years. At the same time, rates for Asians (1.8 percent), Whites (2.6 percent) and Hispanics (4.8 percent) have continued to decline to all-time lows.

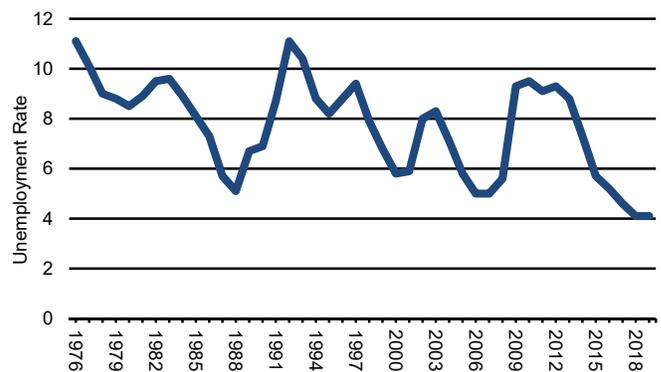
In 2019, the unemployment rate was below the 2008 prerecession level in each of the five boroughs (see Figure 12). Queens had the lowest unemployment rate (3.6 percent) and although the Bronx had the highest rate (5.6 percent), it experienced the largest decline from its precession level.

FIGURE 10
Employment in New York City's Tech Sector



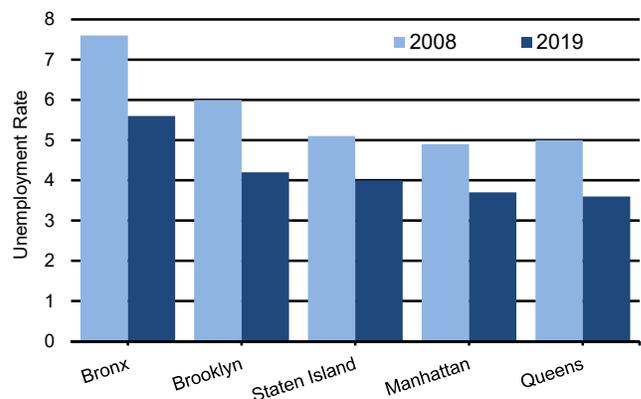
Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 11
New York City Unemployment Rate



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis

FIGURE 12
Annual Unemployment Rates by Borough



Sources: NYS Department of Labor; OSC analysis