

# US Monthly Economic Insights

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April 2026

## Insight of the Month

San Francisco, CA (3.0% of members are AI engineering talent), Seattle, WA (2.4%), and Austin, TX (2.3%) have the highest concentration of AI talent in the US (0.9% nationally). [Learn more](#)

## AI-era startups are starting smaller. [Learn more](#)

- The average headcount in its first year has fallen 26%, from 4.6 for companies founded in 2021 to 3.4 for companies founded in 2024.
- Among startups with at least 5 employees in its first year, their headcount in year three has fallen 57%, from 32.5 for companies founded in 2018 to 20.7 for companies founded in 2022.
- Technology startups show the steepest 3-year headcount slowdown, followed by Financial Services and Professional Services.

## Hiring slowed mildly in March. [Learn more](#)

- US hiring was -1.3% M/M and -6.3% Y/Y in March 2026. Hiring is now 24% below pre-pandemic levels in February 2020. Hiring in March marked the third consecutive month of slowing.
- Hiring in Financial Services (-20%), Technology, Information, and Media (-28%), and Professional Services (-30%) remains well below its pre-pandemic pace in February 2020.
- Hiring remains historically weak in San Francisco, down 36% from pre-pandemic levels in February 2020.

## Job seeking intensity in the US has declined over the past year and job competition appears to be stabilizing. [Learn more](#)

- Applications per applicant in the US, a measure of job seeking intensity, fell sharply (-24%) over the past year.
- Job postings per applicant in the US, a measure of available roles relative to applicants, edged down slightly (-2%) over the past year.
- As a result, job competition appears to be stabilizing as fewer applications are being submitted per job seeker for a similar number of available jobs.

## LinkedIn Top Companies 2026 reveals the best workplaces to grow your career in the US. [Learn more](#)

1. JPMorganChase
2. Alphabet
3. Microsoft
4. Amazon
5. Wells Fargo
6. Northrop Grumman
7. Walmart
8. Capital One
9. AT&T
10. Bank of America



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## Flexible work stays steady at around 1 in 5 of US jobs. Applications for remote work are declining.

- In March 2026, 20% (1 in 5) of US paid job postings on LinkedIn offered remote (9%) or hybrid (11%) work. This is steady from 20% of flexible jobs offering remote (8%) or hybrid (12%) work last year in March 2025.
- As of March 2026, paid remote jobs on LinkedIn (9% of all paid jobs) continue to attract an outsized proportion of applications (37%) and views (31%). The demand for remote jobs has decreased from 8% of remote jobs attracting 41% of applications and 35% of views in March 2025