

10 April 2024

Job ads still trending lower

Job ads ease in March, but at a slower pace

Applications per job ad more than double year earlier levels

All regions see annual drop in job ads; Wellington falls most

Legal stands out with the strongest positive job ad trend

OVERVIEW

SEEK NEW JOB ADS

	Mar-22	Mar-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
m/m % change	-2.3	0.4	0.7	-2.6	-0.4
m/m % change (trend)	1.1	-1.5	-2.3	-1.7	-0.9
3m/3m	9.6	-5.6	-10.2	-7.2	-3.9
Ann % change (m/m)	23.7	-10.9	-24.2	-26.7	-27.2
Ann % change (3m/3m)	34.8	-12.5	-25.5	-25.1	-26.0
Ann % change (12m/12m)	62.9	4.3	-22.1	-23.2	-24.5

Seasonally adjusted unless otherwise indicated

Labour market conditions continue to show softening trends. Job ads eased 0.4% in March, to be down 27.2% on a year ago. There is more evidence of some moderation in the pace of decline, but still nothing to indicate any material improvement is likely any time soon.

Applications per job ad ratio trending higher

The number of applications per job ad continue to trend firmly higher, albeit with a very small dip in February itself. The ratio of job applications per job ad is 114% above year earlier levels. The data are consistent with very low employment growth and an increase in the unemployment rate.

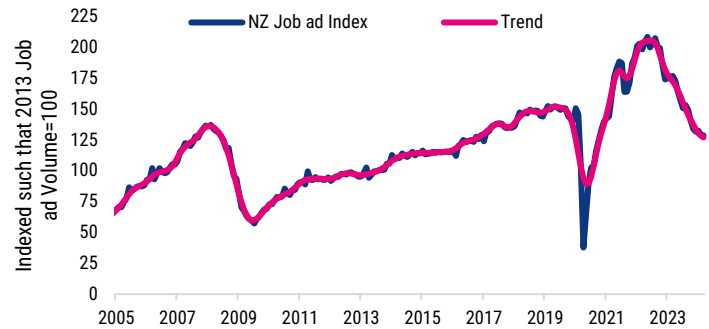
Widespread downtrend in job ads

While there remains considerable monthly volatility in job ads across regions, a general widespread downtrend persists. All major regions saw significantly fewer job ads this March compared to a year ago. By region, Wellington recorded the largest annual decline in job ads, down 37.8% over the period. Relatedly, job ads for Government & Defence saw the largest annual decline among industries, down 53.2%.

Legal job ads trending higher

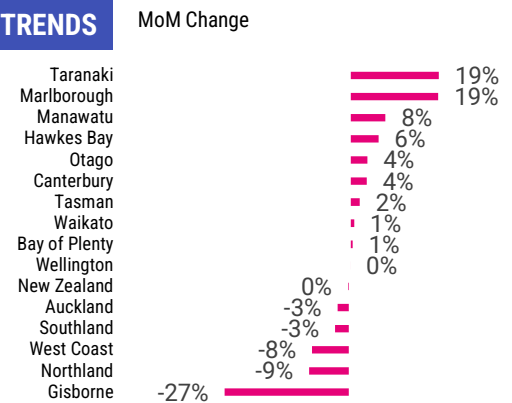
There was a wide range of increases and decreases in job ads across industries in March. In the month, Advertising, Arts & Media job ads fell the most across industries with its 16% drop adding to the industry's already firm downtrend. In contrast, Human Resources & Recruitment job ads rose 15% in the month. While this was enough to recoup all of the drop in the previous month, job ads in that industry remain low and down 23% on year earlier levels. Legal job ads rose 10% in March, keeping this industry as the one with the strongest positive job ad trend.

NZ JOB ADS



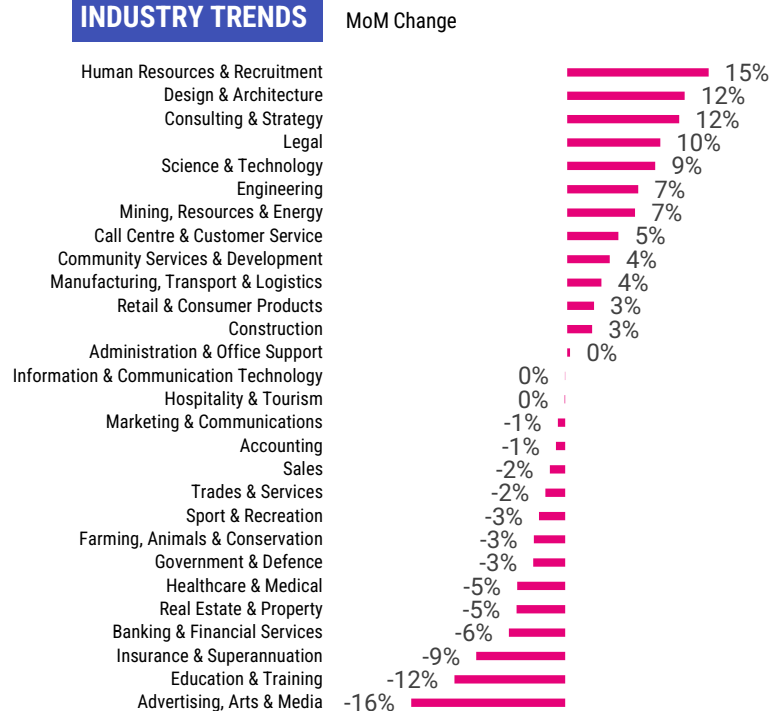
Source: SEEK, BNZ

REGIONAL TRENDS



Source: SEEK, BNZ

INDUSTRY TRENDS



Source: SEEK, BNZ



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The Covid-19 pandemic led to a high level of volatility in labour market data between April 2020 and March 2022. As a result, caution is recommended when interpreting trend estimates during this period as large month-to-month changes in variables generated multiple trend breaks.

The applications per ad index contains a series break at Jan 2016 when the calculation of this series changed from using gross variables (inclusive of all SEEK job listings) to net variables (removing duplicate job listings). This change has a negligible impact on recent data points, but caution is recommended when interpreting data immediately following the series break, and particularly in 2016 where growth rates have not been adjusted for the series break.