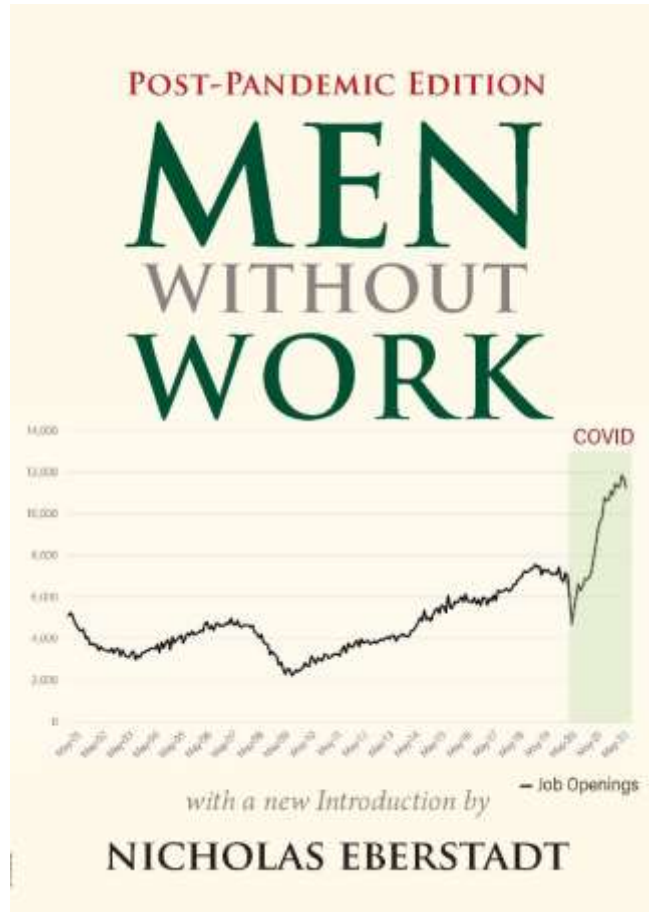


Men Without Work: A Problem We Ignore At Our Peril



Nicholas Eberstadt

Wendt Chair in Political Economy

American Enterprise Institute

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Work Attraction and Retention Task Force

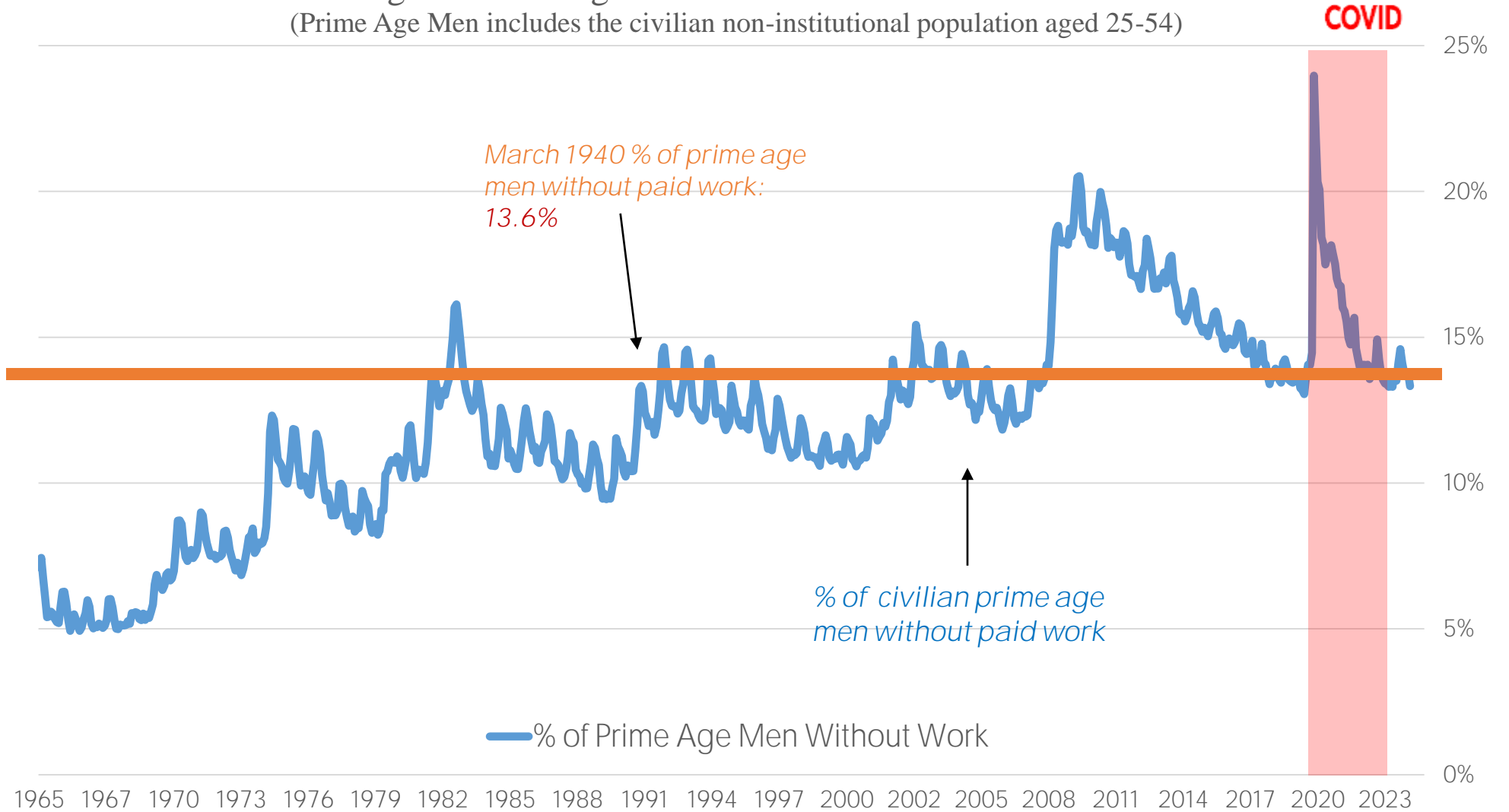
Kentucky General Assembly

July 30 2024

Back To Depression-Era Employment Levels for Men

Percentage of Prime Age Men Without Paid Work 1965 – 6/2024
 (Prime Age Men includes the civilian non-institutional population aged 25-54)

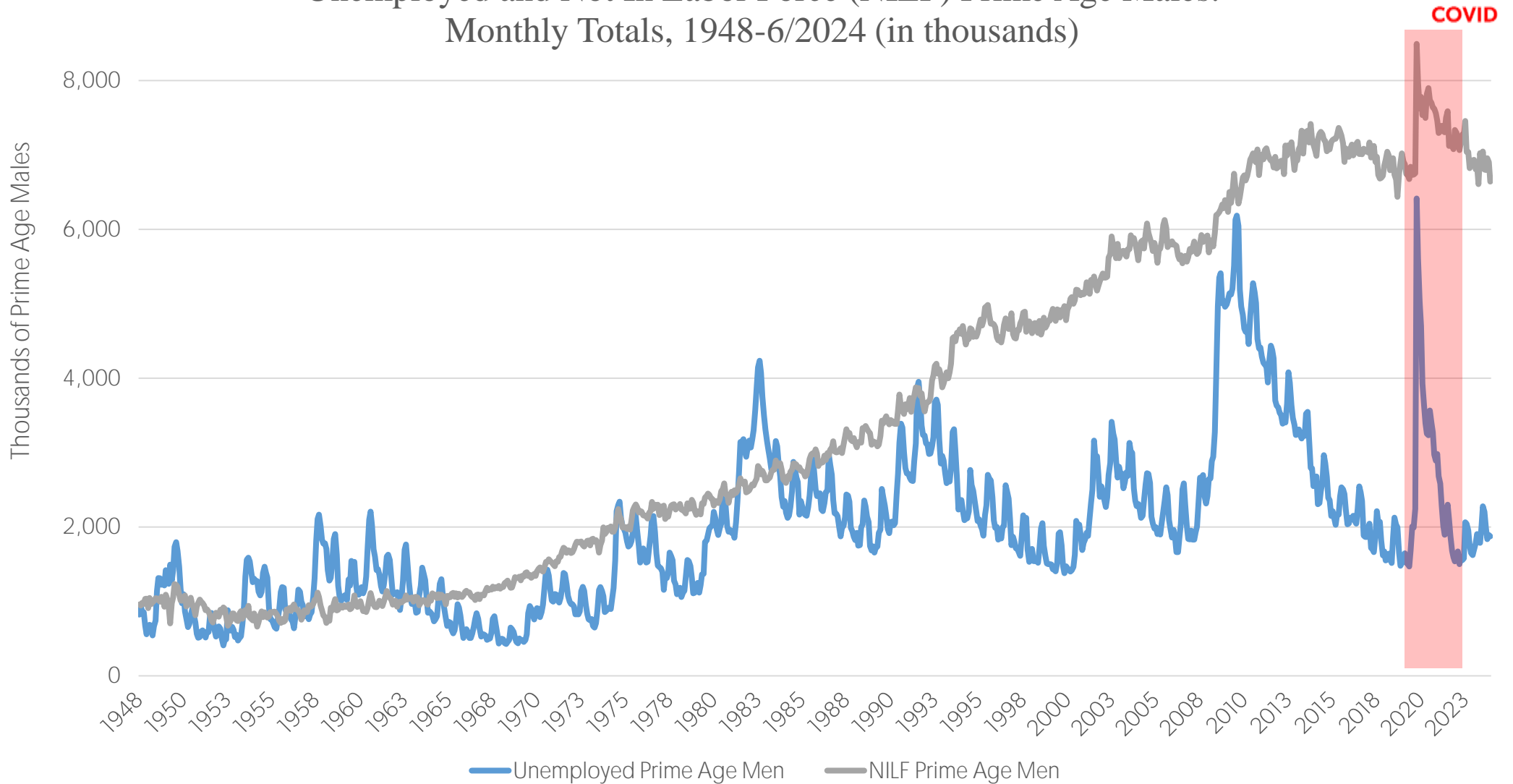
Decade	Percent Without Paid Work
1950s	6.2%
1960s	6.3%
1970s	8.7%
1980s	11.5%
1990s	12.1%
2000s	13.5%
2010s	16.1%
2020s	15.4%
2000-present	14.9%



The Great Postwar Flight from Work By Men

Unemployed and Not In Labor Force (NILF) Prime Age Males:
Monthly Totals, 1948-6/2024 (in thousands)

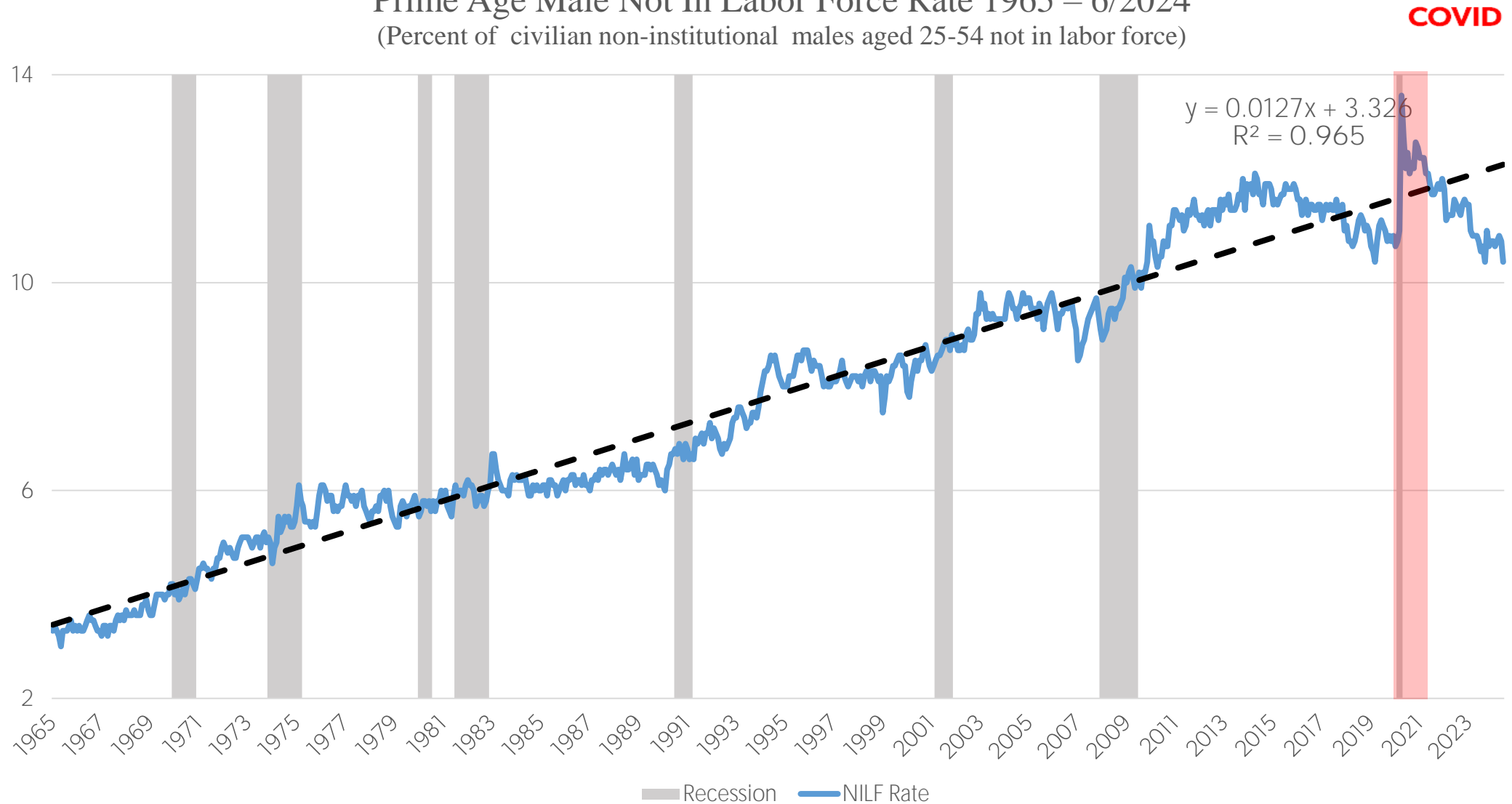
Decade (Yr)	NILFs per 100 Unemployed
1950s	86
1960s	114
1970s	150
1980s	115
1990s	182
2000s	219
2010s	236
2020s	275
(2023)	(378)



Source: Bureau of Labor Force Statistics, LNU03000061& LNU05000061, <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/srgate>, dates accessed: 1948-1975: July 1, 2016; 1976-2022: March 10, 2022; 2023-2024: July 24, 2024; totals are not seasonally adjusted.

The Uncanny Regularity of the Male Flight From Work

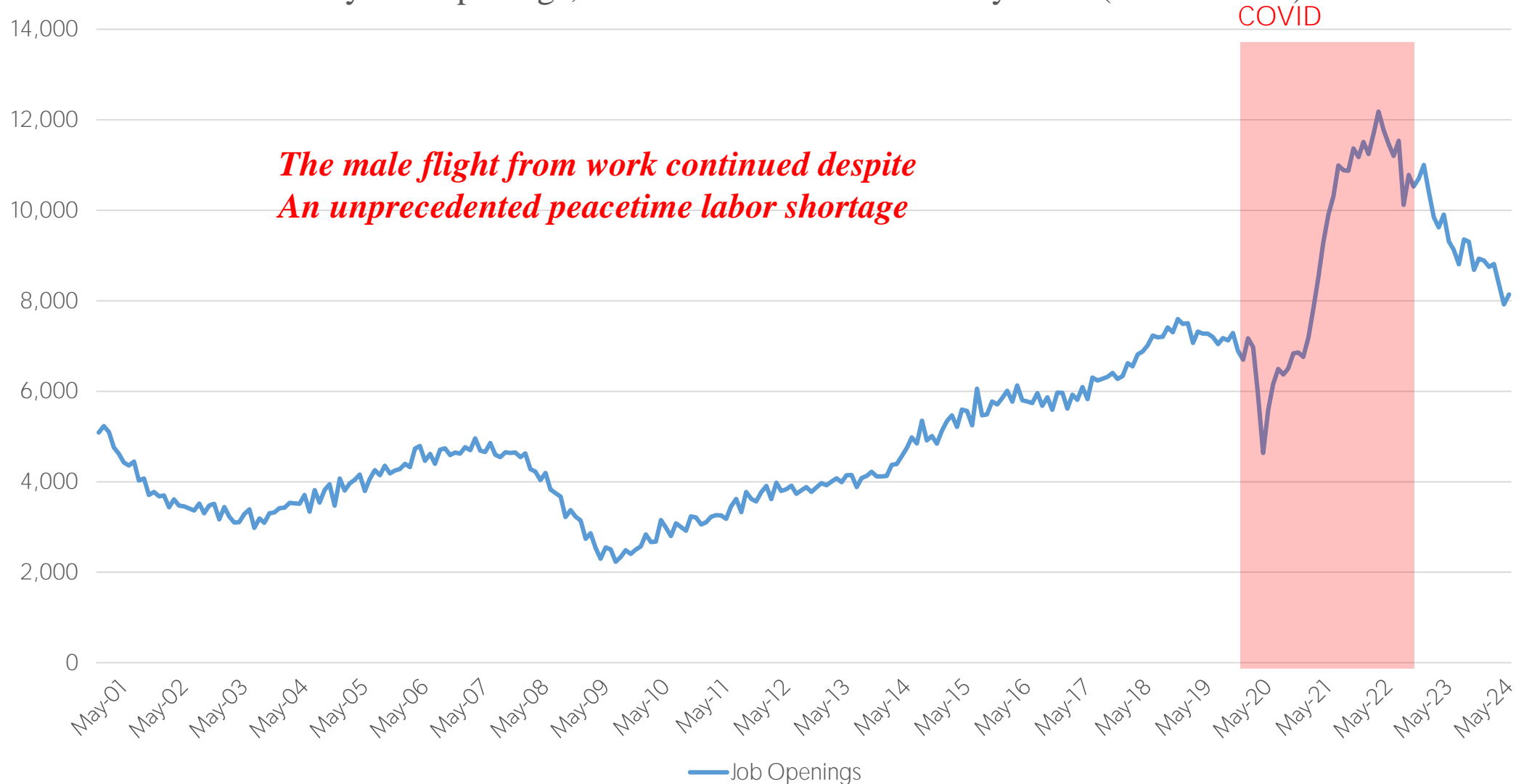
Prime Age Male Not In Labor Force Rate 1965 – 6/2024
(Percent of civilian non-institutional males aged 25-54 not in labor force)



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From “Men Without Work” to Work Without Men—Or Women

Monthly Job Openings, USA: December 2000 – May 2024 (in thousands)

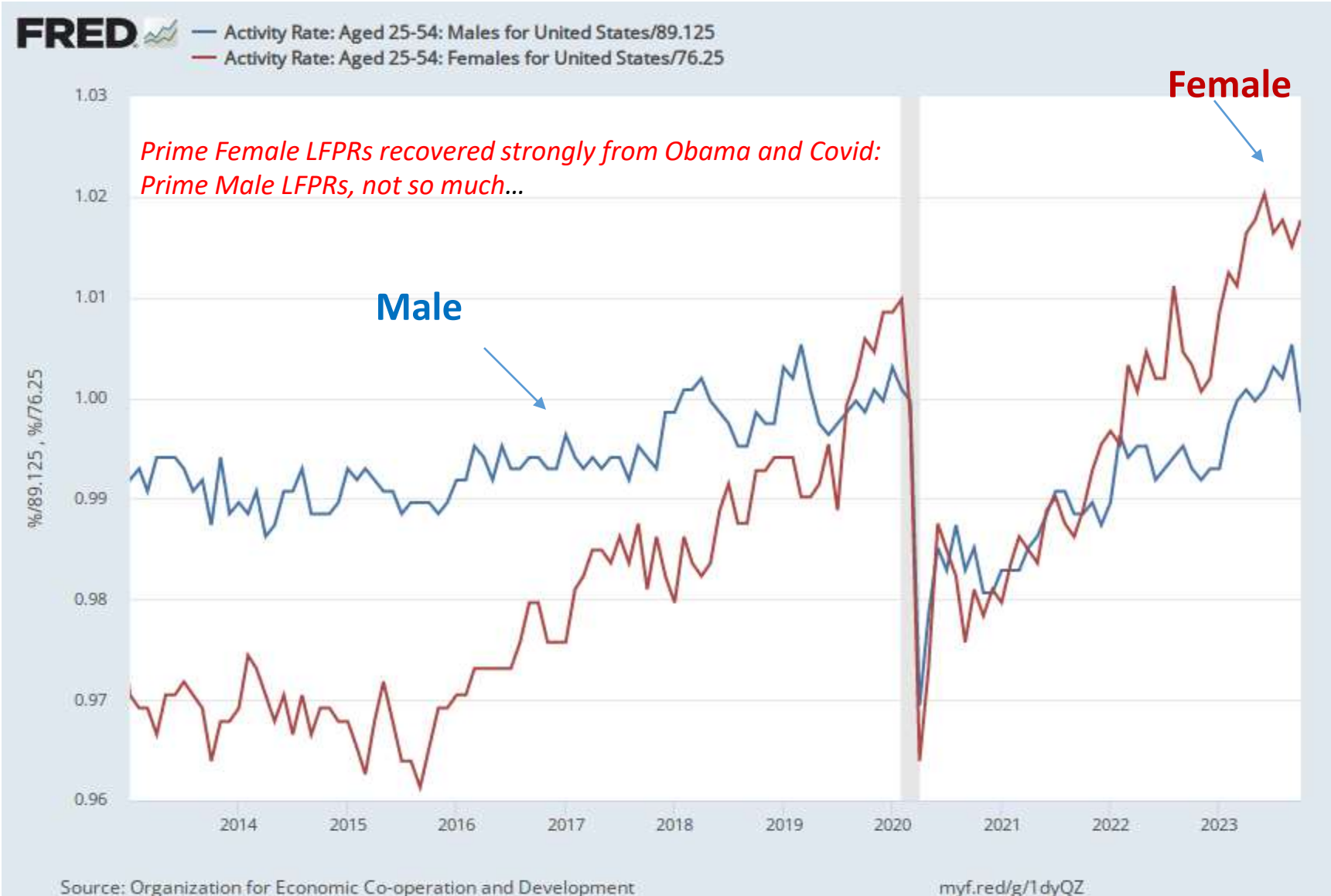


*The male flight from work continued despite
An unprecedented peacetime labor shortage*

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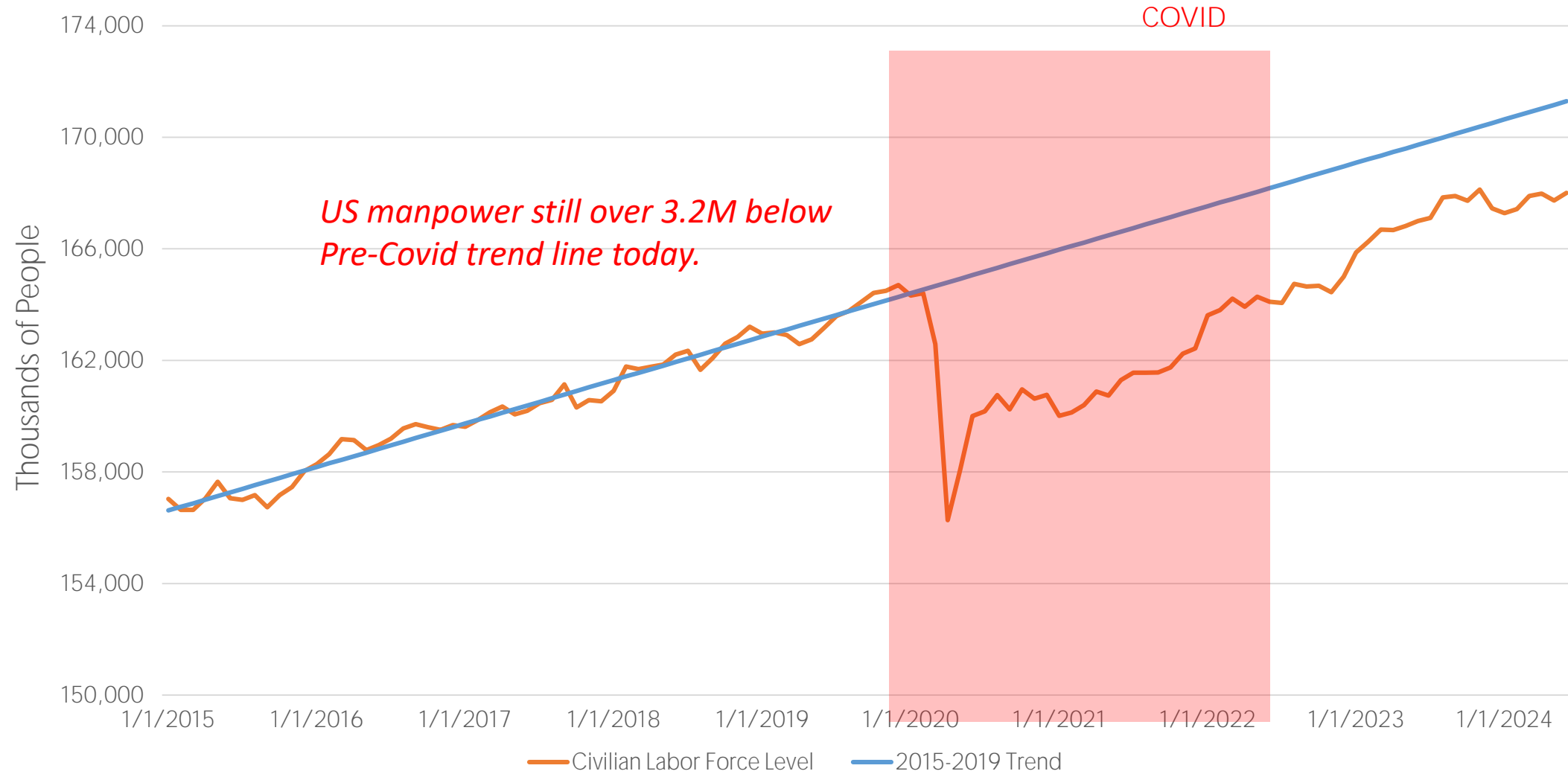
Male Fail

Relative LFPRs, 2013-2023: Prime Age Male vs Prime Age Female (2019 = 100)



Where Are All The Workers?

US Civilian Labor Force 2015 – 6/2024 (in thousands)

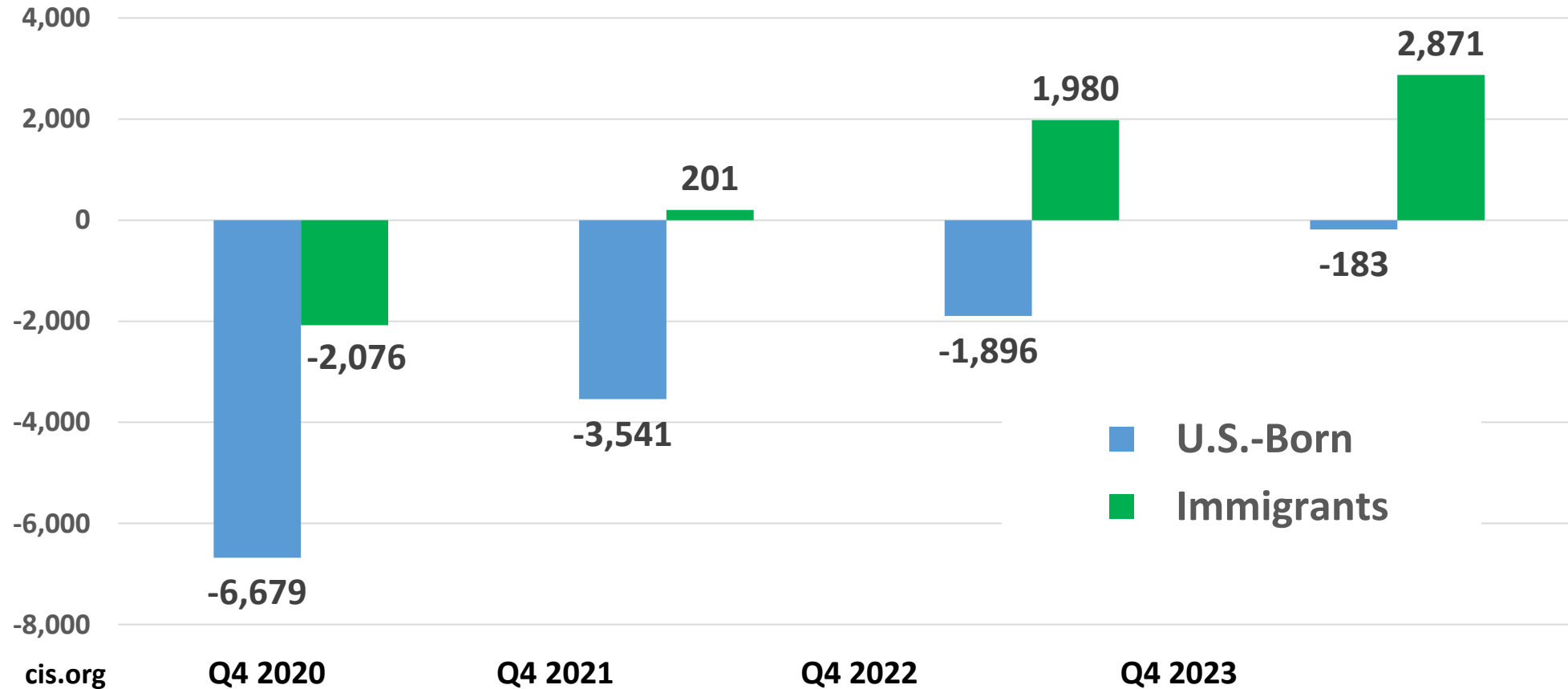


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No Post-COVID Recovery YET For Native Born Workers

Change in Number Working Compared to 4th Quarter of 2019 (in 000s)

Employment of U.S.-born is still below 2019 level, while immigrant employment is well above.



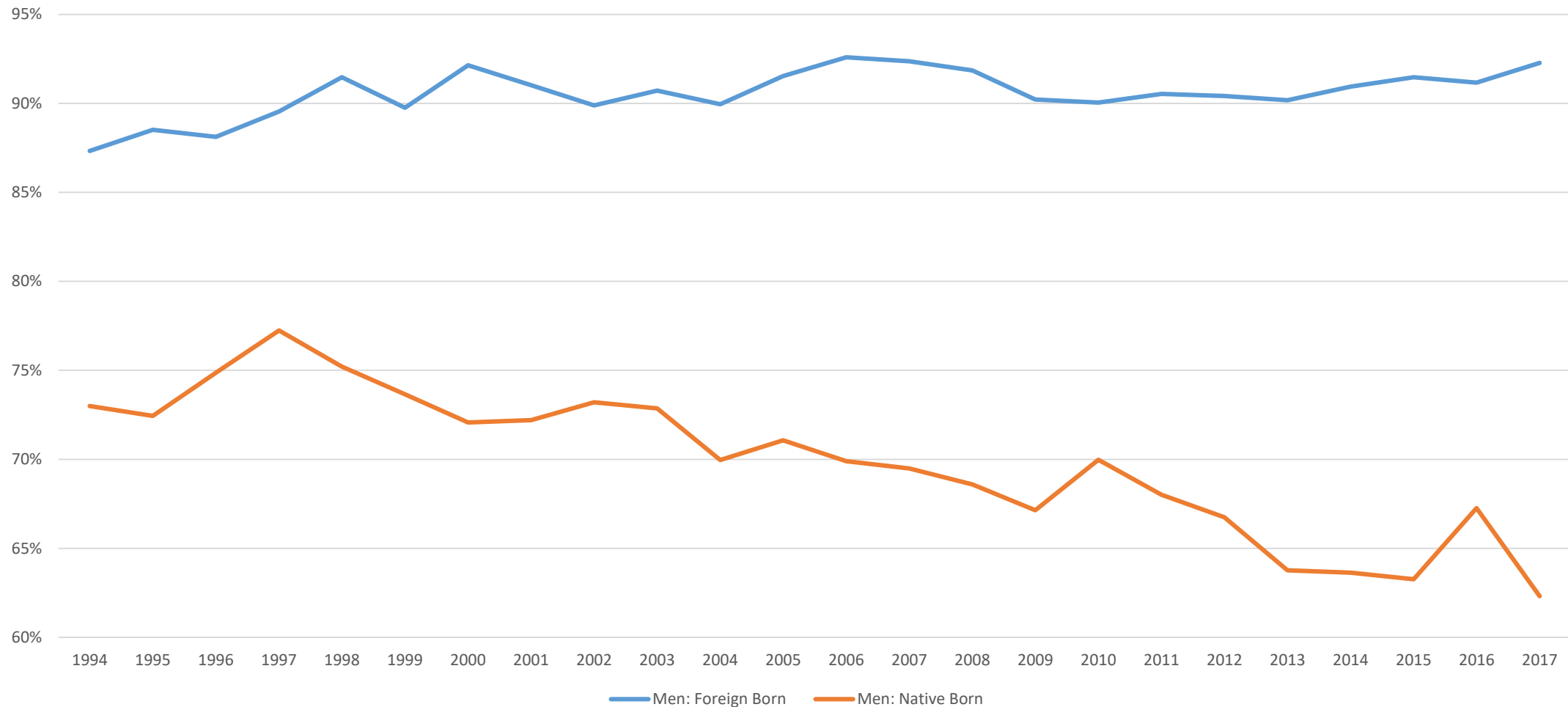
Source: <https://cis.org/Report/Employment-Situation-Immigrants-and-USborn-Fourth-Quarter-2023>

Center for Immigration Studies analysis of the Current Population Survey public-use files for every year from the fourth quarter of 2019 to the fourth quarter of 2023. All figures are seasonally unadjusted and are for non-institutionalized civilians, which does not include those in institutions such as prisons and nursing homes.

"Immigrant" matches the Census Bureau's definition of "foreign-born" and includes all persons who were not U.S. citizens at birth.

Not All High School Dropouts Are Disadvantaged In The Labor Force

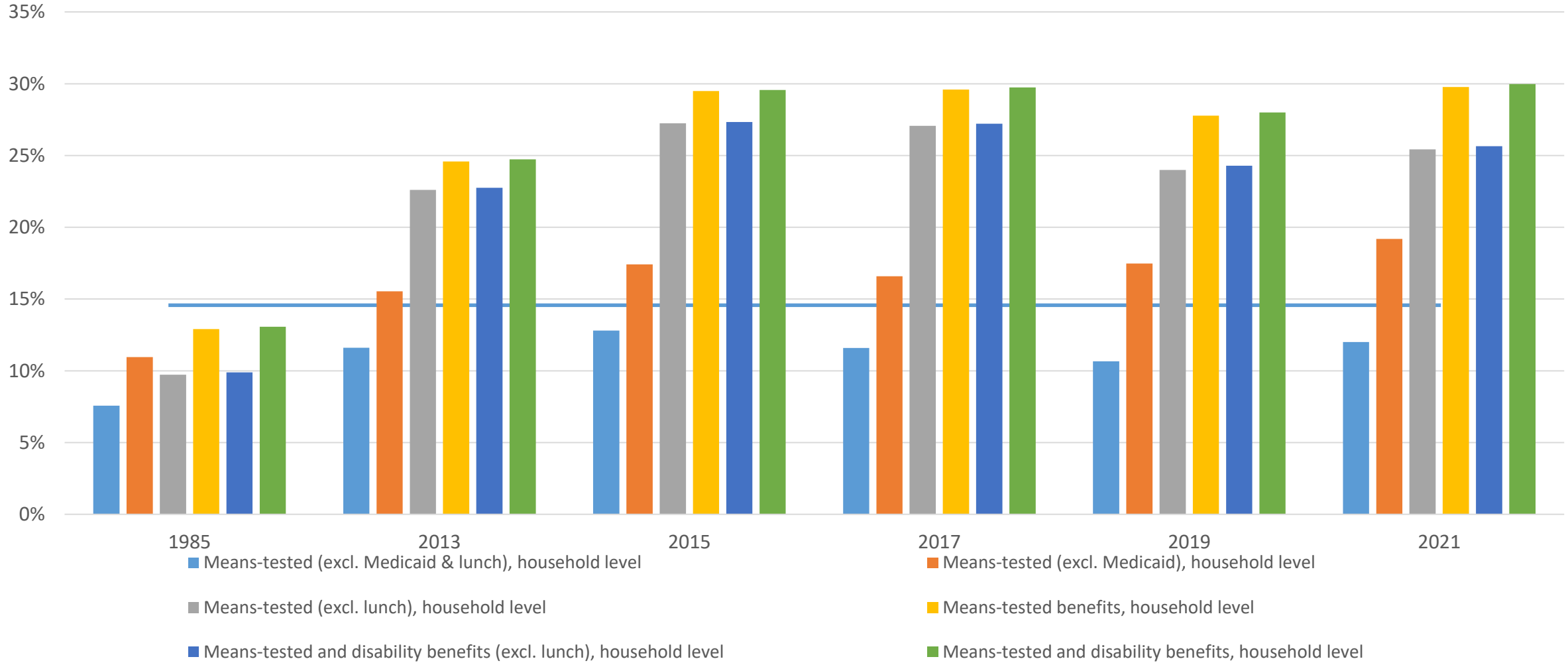
Labor Force Participation Rates for Native and Foreign Born Prime Age Men With Less than a High School Education (1994-2017)



Notes: Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles, and J. Robert Warren. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 6.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V65.0>, accessed September 7, 2018

Dependent Men In The Prime Of Life

Percentage of Prime-Age Men (25-54) in Households Receiving Means-Tested Assistance: Census ASEC, 1985, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021

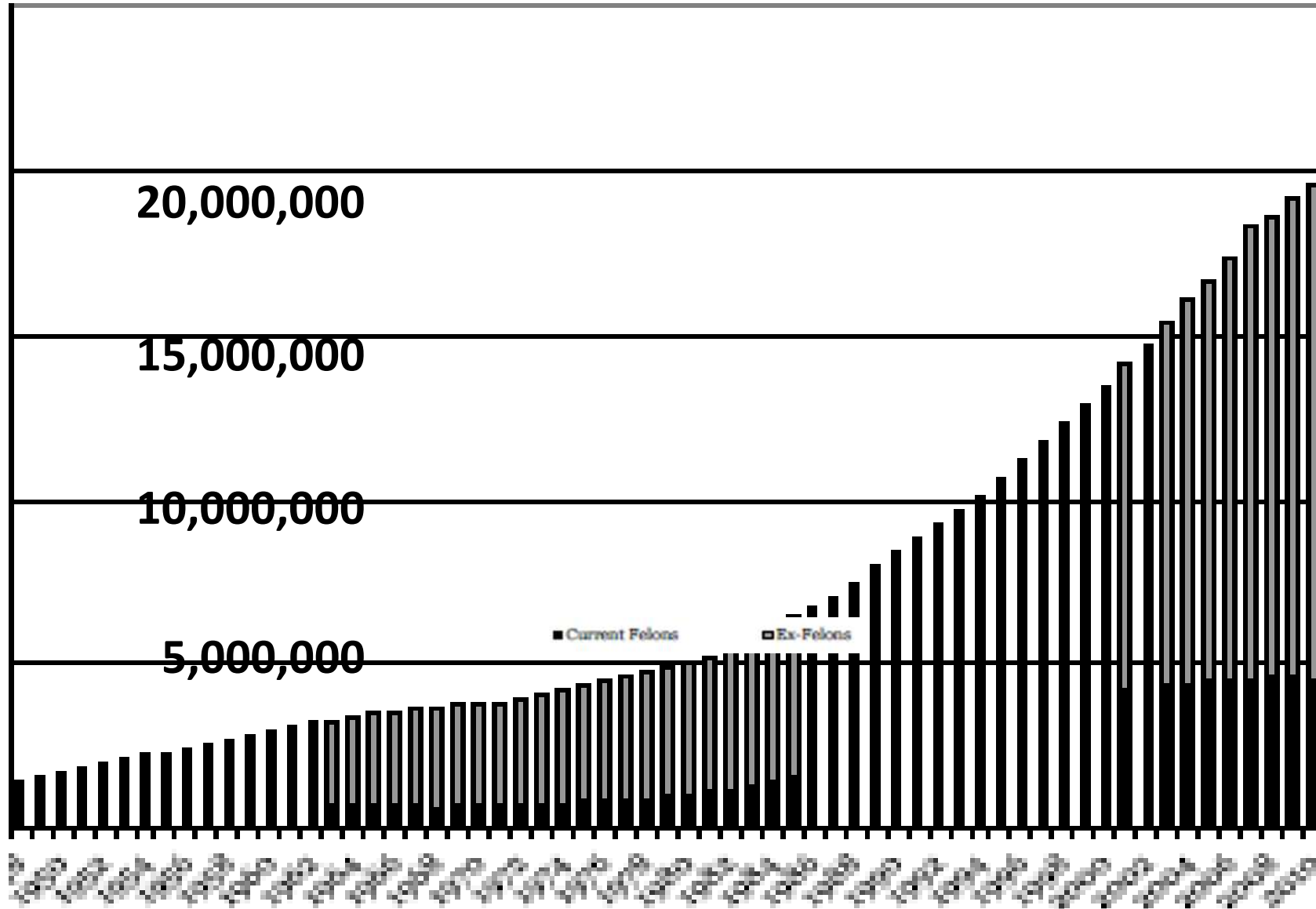


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Note: Means-tested programs included energy subsidies, SNAP, WIC, TANF, rent subsidies, free lunches, Medicaid and SSI; ASEC weighted individuals and households.
 Source: Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles, J. Robert Warren and Michael Westberry. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V9.0>.

One Nation Under Correctional Supervision

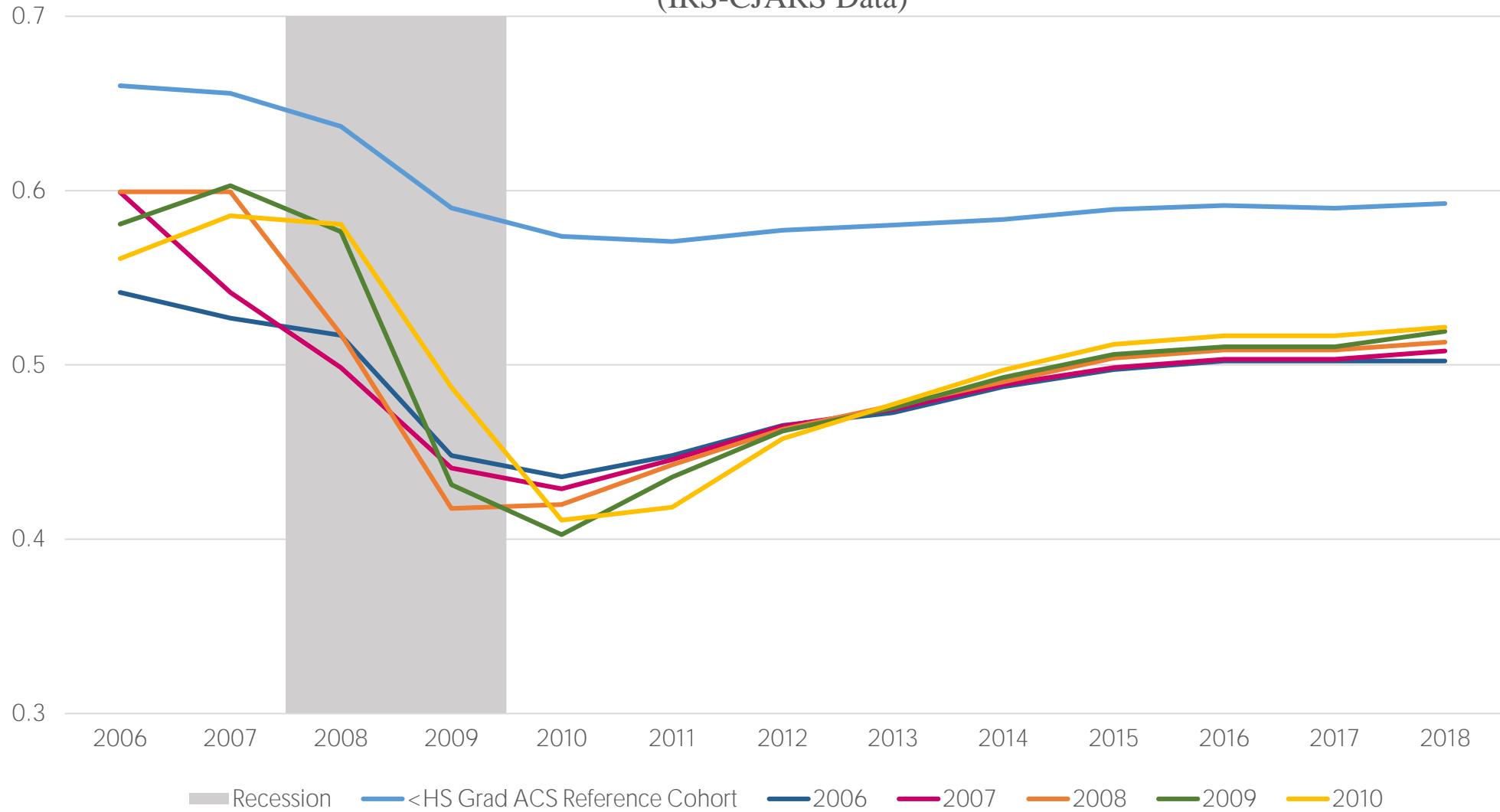
Estimated Population of Felons and Ex-Felons: USA, 1948-2010



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The Felony Penalty in the Labor Market

Probability of Employment among Individuals with Felony Convictions by Year of Conviction
(IRS-CJARS Data)



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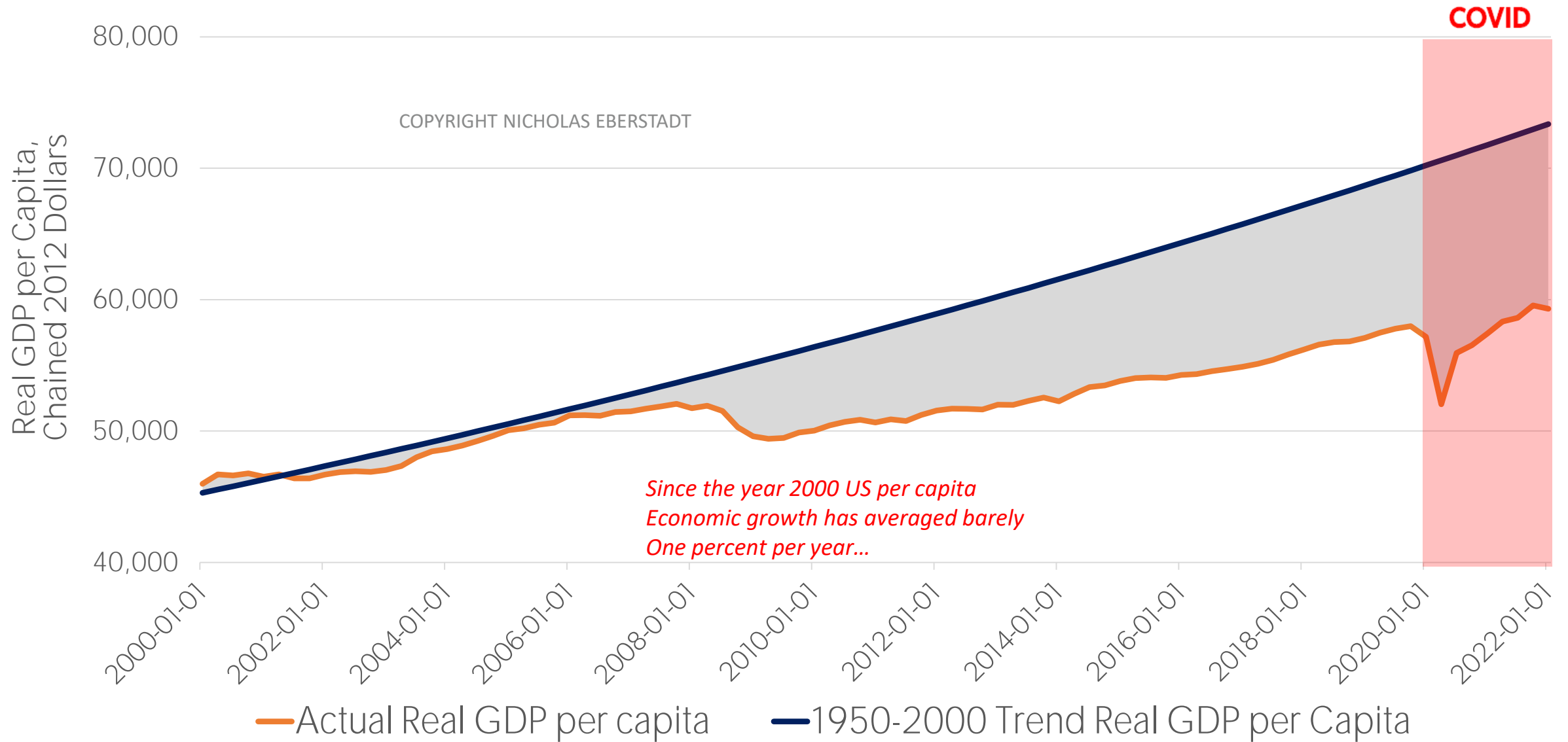
The Death Of The Summer Job

LFPR and Work Rates: 15-17 Year Olds, 1976 – 2022 (CPS)



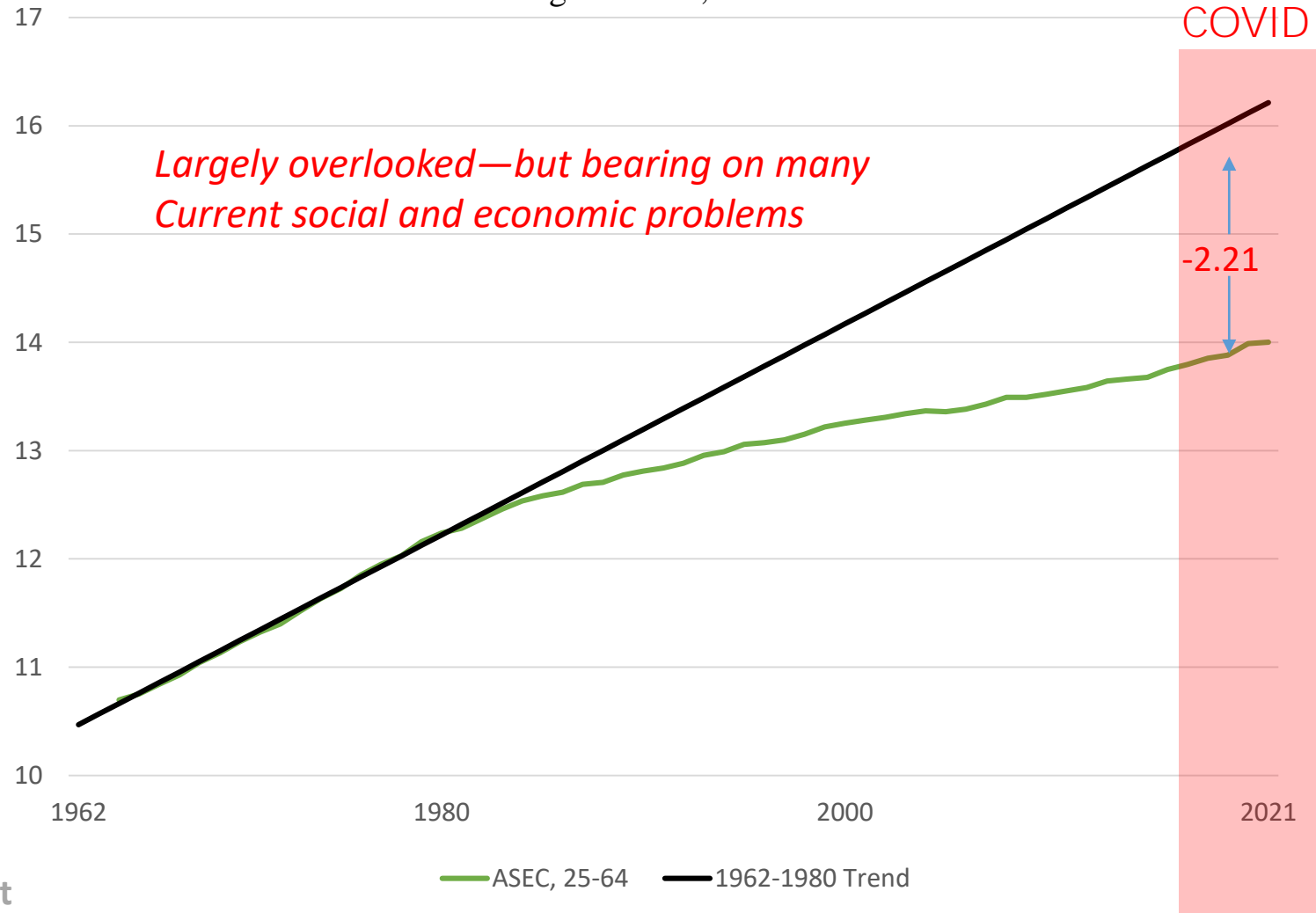
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The US 21st Century Economic Slowdown



Broken Educational Escalator

Mean Years of Schooling by Age Group
Americans Aged 25-64, 1962-2021



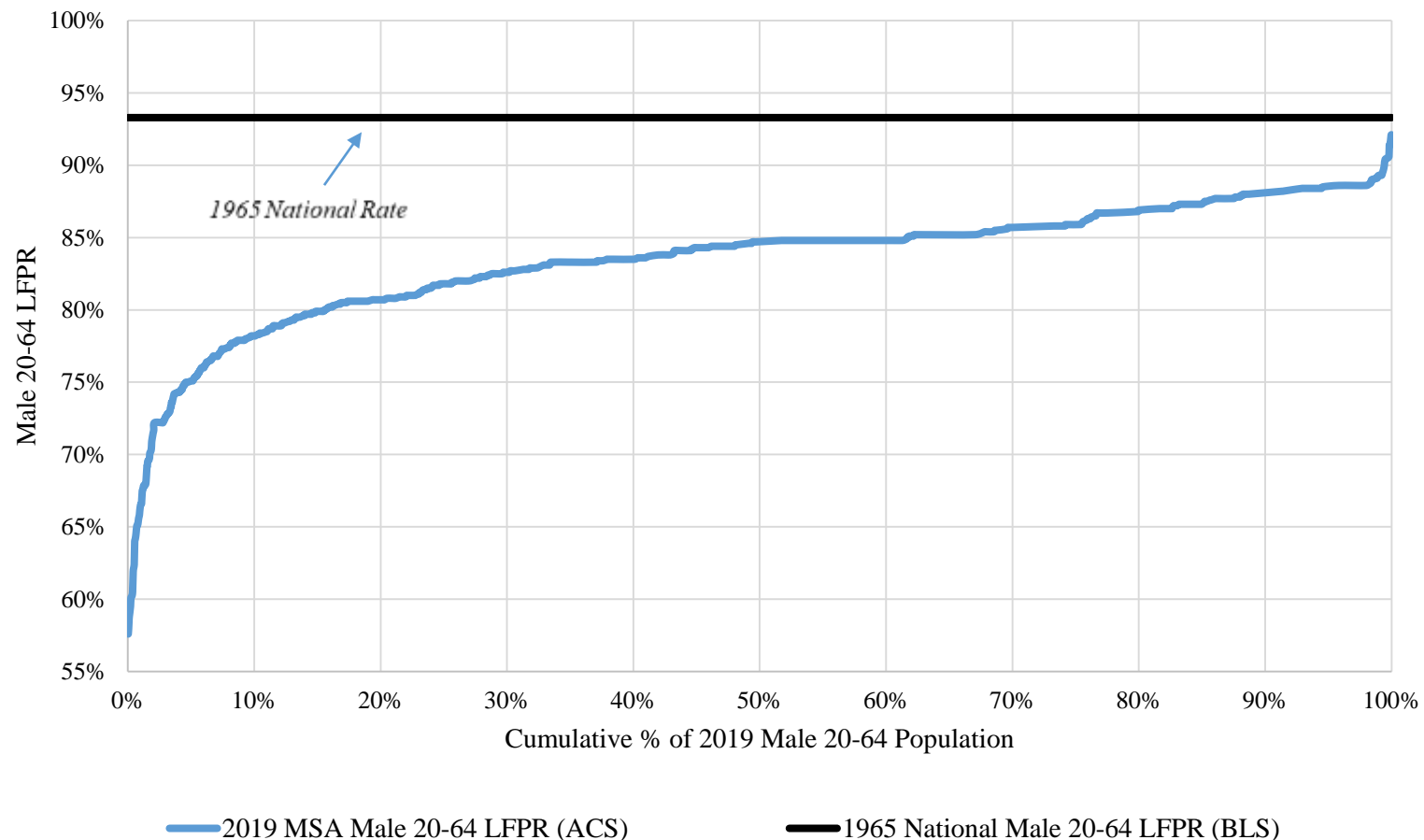
Copyright Nicholas Eberstadt

Notes: Fitted data are based on trends between 1962 (the first year for which Census microdata is available from IPUMS) and 1980.
Sources: Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles and J. Robert Warren. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 8.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V8.0>.

**ADDENDUM ON
WORK AND NON-WORK
IN AMERICA TODAY**

The New Abnormal for Male Work In America

Lorenz Curve For LFPRs by MSA: US Men 20-64, 2019

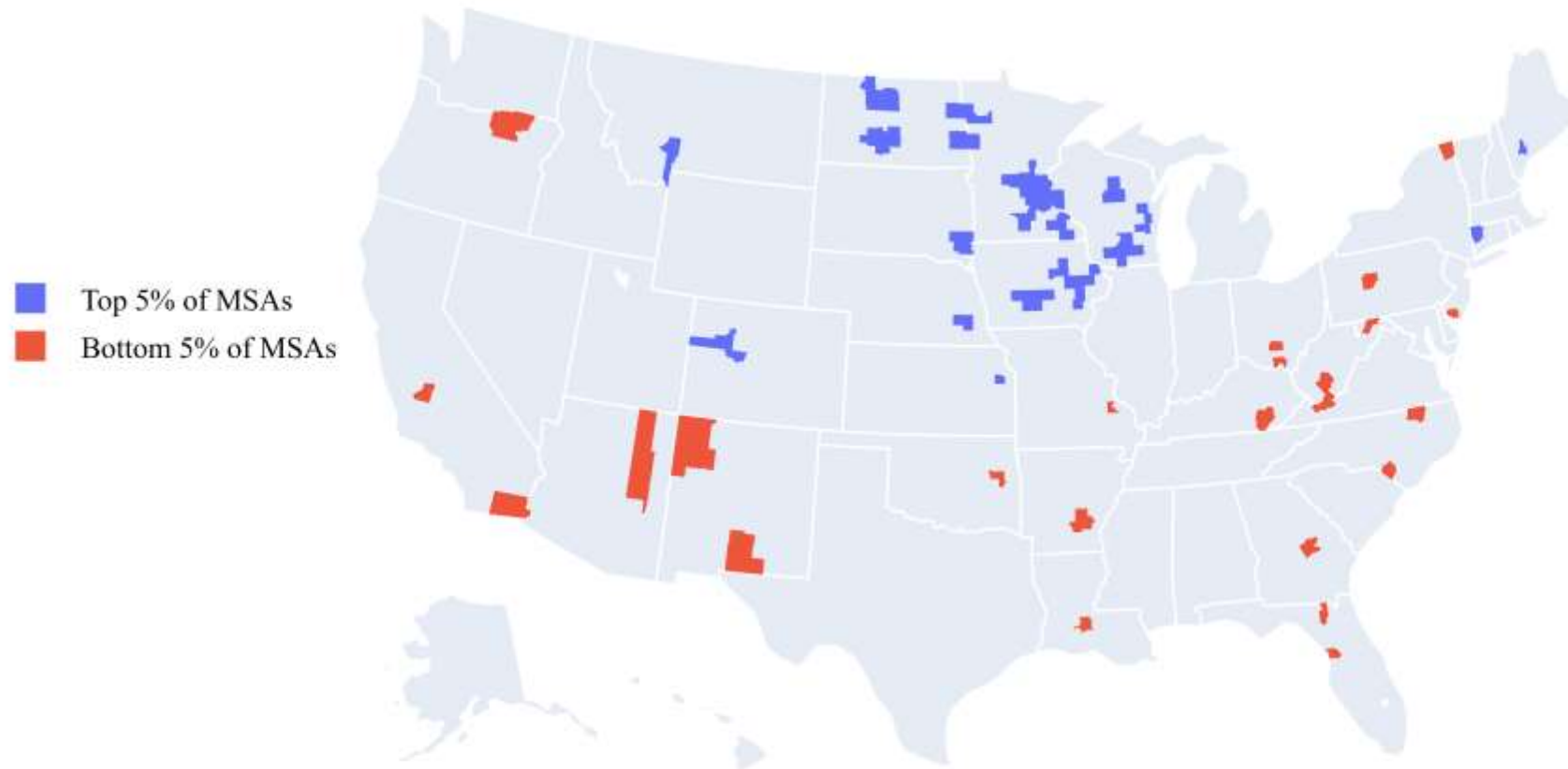


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Table S2301, 2019 1-year Estimates, American Community Survey, United States Census Bureau,
[https://data.census.gov/table?q=s2301&g=0100000US\\$3100000&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S2301](https://data.census.gov/table?q=s2301&g=0100000US$3100000&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S2301).

A Geography Of Work and Non-Work In America

Prime Age LFPR: Top & Bottom 5% of MSAs

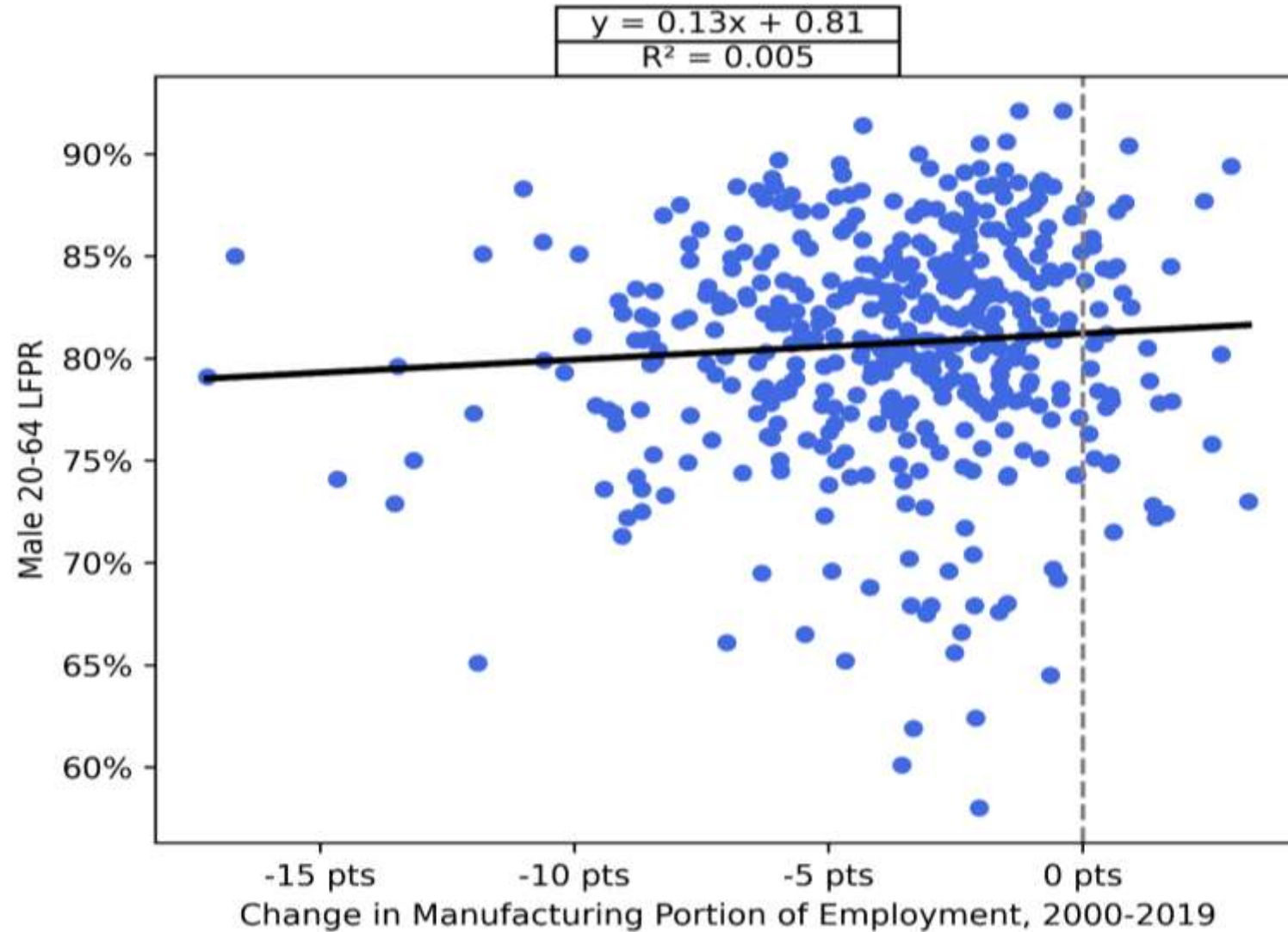


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Table S2301, 2019 1-year Estimates, American Community Survey, United States Census Bureau,
[https://data.census.gov/table?q=s2301&g=0100000US\\$3100000&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S2301](https://data.census.gov/table?q=s2301&g=0100000US$3100000&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S2301).

No Relationship

2019 LFPRs vs. Change in Manufacturing Portion of Employment:
US Males 20-64 by MSA, 2019



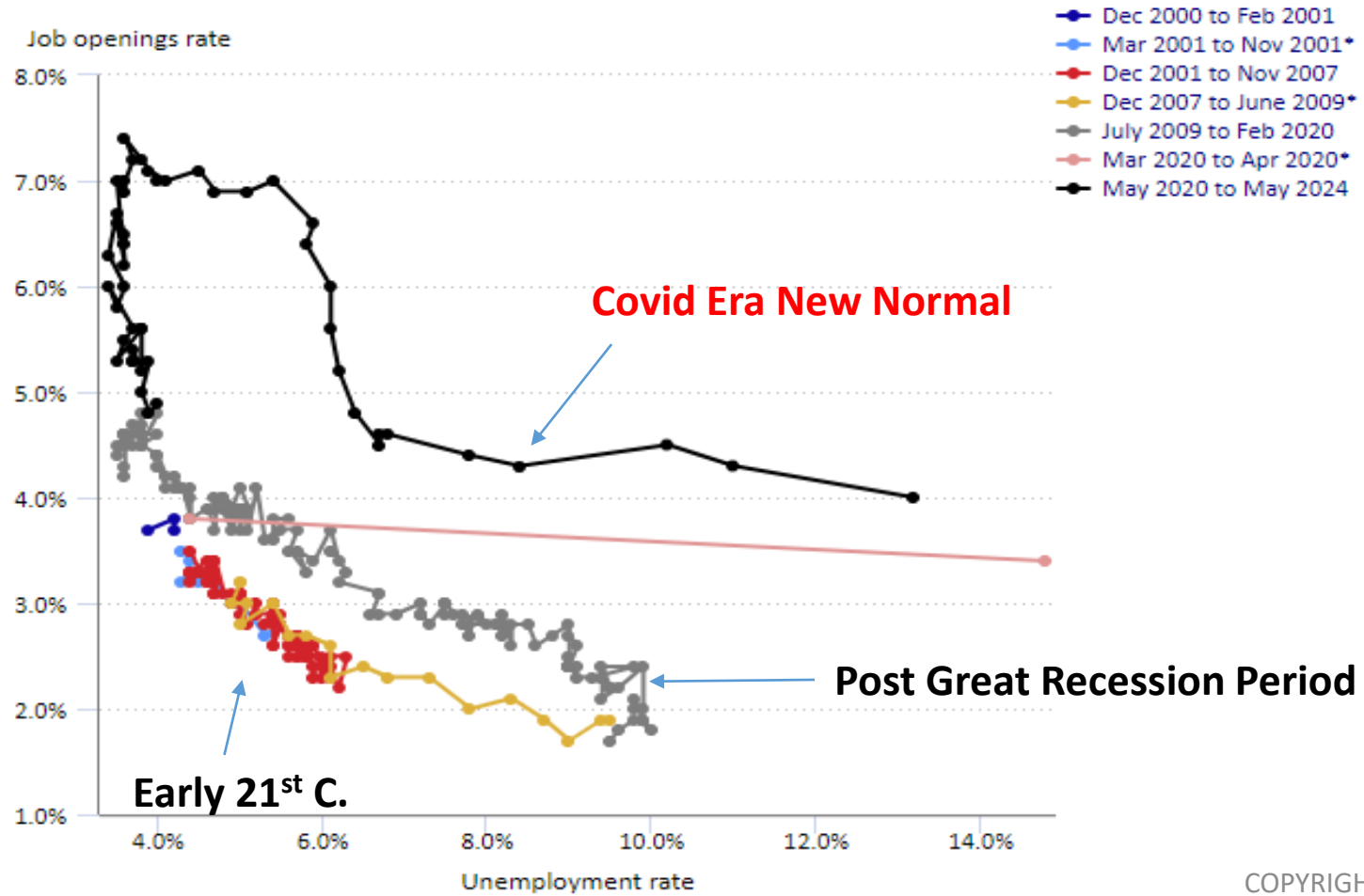
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Table S2301, 2019 1-year Estimates, American Community Survey, United States Census Bureau, [https://data.census.gov/table?q=s2301&g=0100000US\\$3100000&y=2019&tid=ACST1Y2019.S2301](https://data.census.gov/table?q=s2301&g=0100000US$3100000&y=2019&tid=ACST1Y2019.S2301),
Table P049, 2000 Decennial Census, United States Census Bureau, [https://data.census.gov/table?q=p049&g=0100000US\\$0500000&tid=DECENNIALS32000.P049](https://data.census.gov/table?q=p049&g=0100000US$0500000&tid=DECENNIALS32000.P049).
For mapping county-level 2000 data to 2019 MSAs:
March 2020 Delineation File, "Core based statistical areas (CBSAs), metropolitan divisions, and combined statistical areas (CSAs)," United States Census Bureau,
<https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/time-series/demo/metro-micro/delineation-files.html>.

Disorienting Beveridges

The Beveridge Curve (job openings rate vs. unemployment rate), seasonally adjusted

Click and drag within the chart to zoom in on time periods

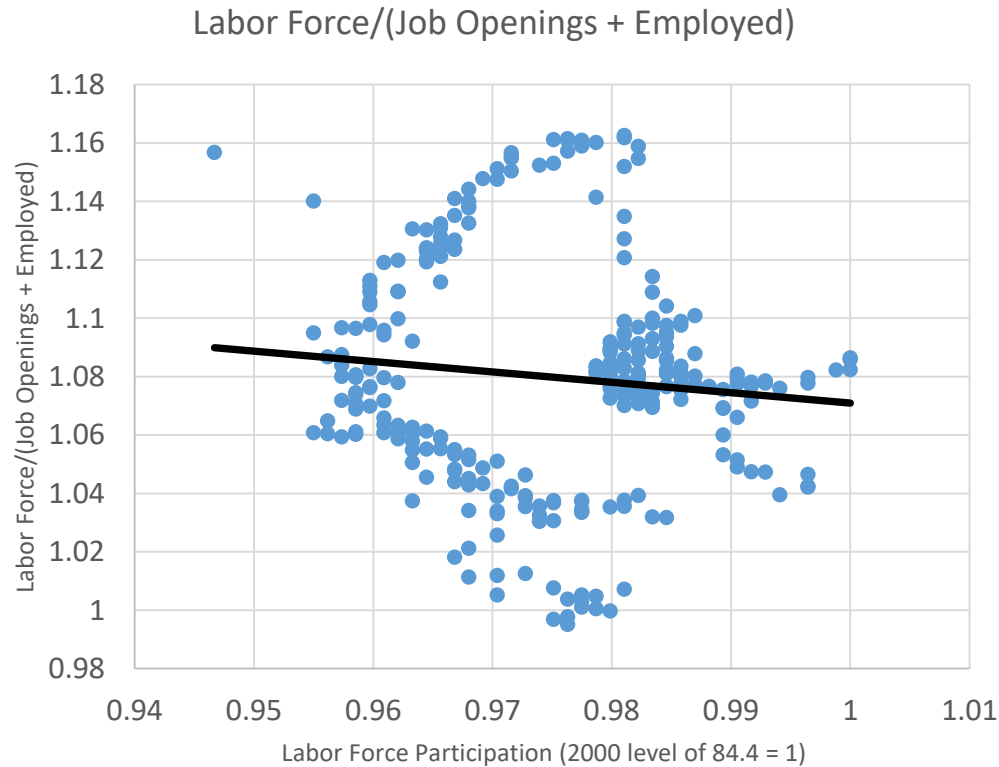


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Note: * represents recession, as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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Tighter Labor Markets Do Not Draw Labor Force Dropouts Back In



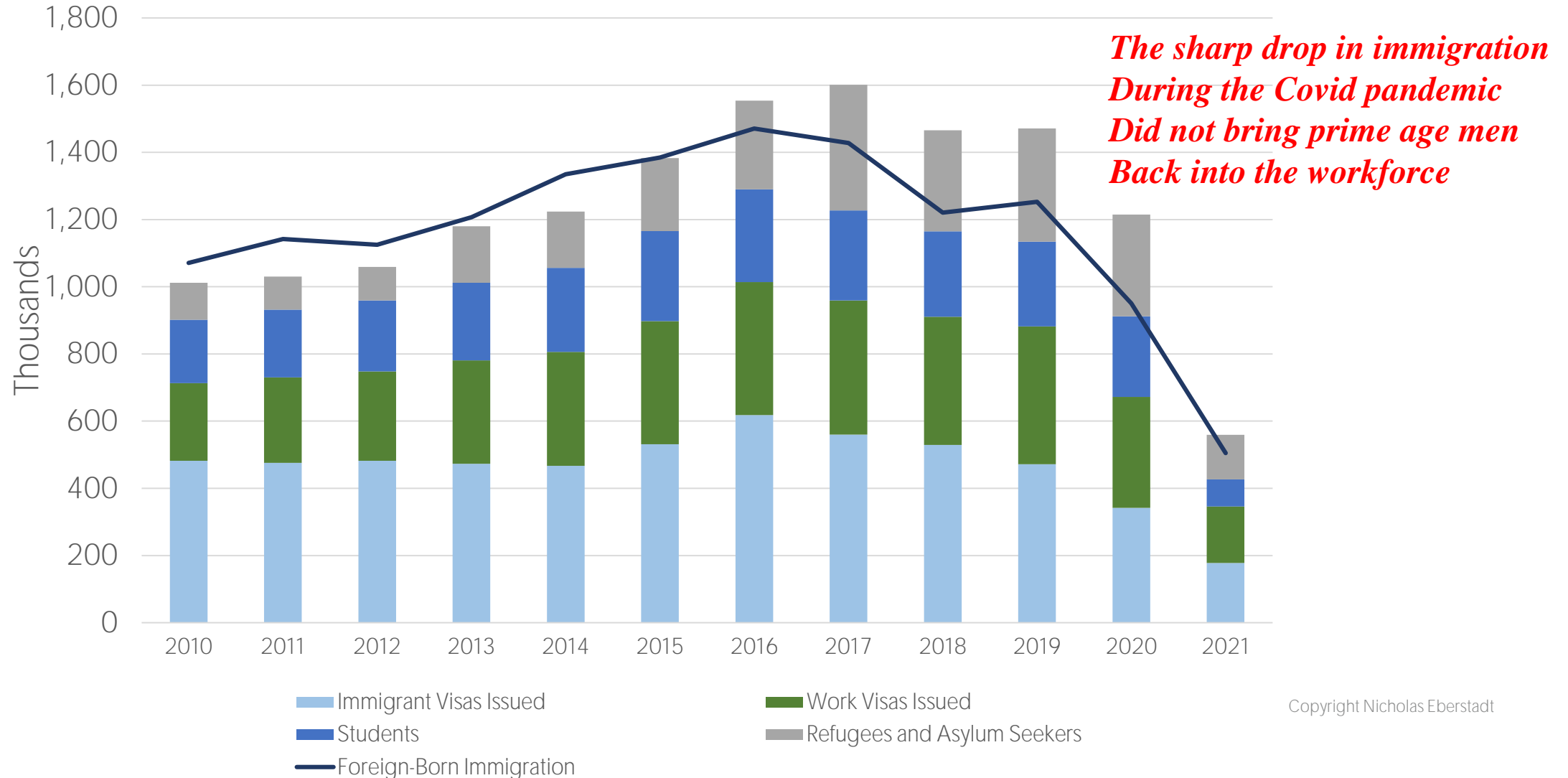
Variables	Labor Force/(Job Openings + Employed)
LFPR (2000)	-0.357*
	(0.210)
Constant	1.428***
	(0.205)
Observations	277
R-squared	0.010
	(December 2000 – January 2023)

The chart above shows the correspondence between labor market tightness and Labor force participation rates for prime age men and women since the year 2000-- There is almost none!

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Civilian Labor Force Level [CLF16OV], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CLF16OV>, March 15, 2023; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, All Employees, Total Nonfarm [PAYEMS], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PAYEMS>, March 15, 2023; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings: Total Nonfarm [JTSJOL], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/JTSJOL>, March 15, 2023; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Labor Force Participation Rate - 25-54 Yrs. [LNS11300060], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNS11300060>, March 15, 2023.

The Covid Immigration Slump

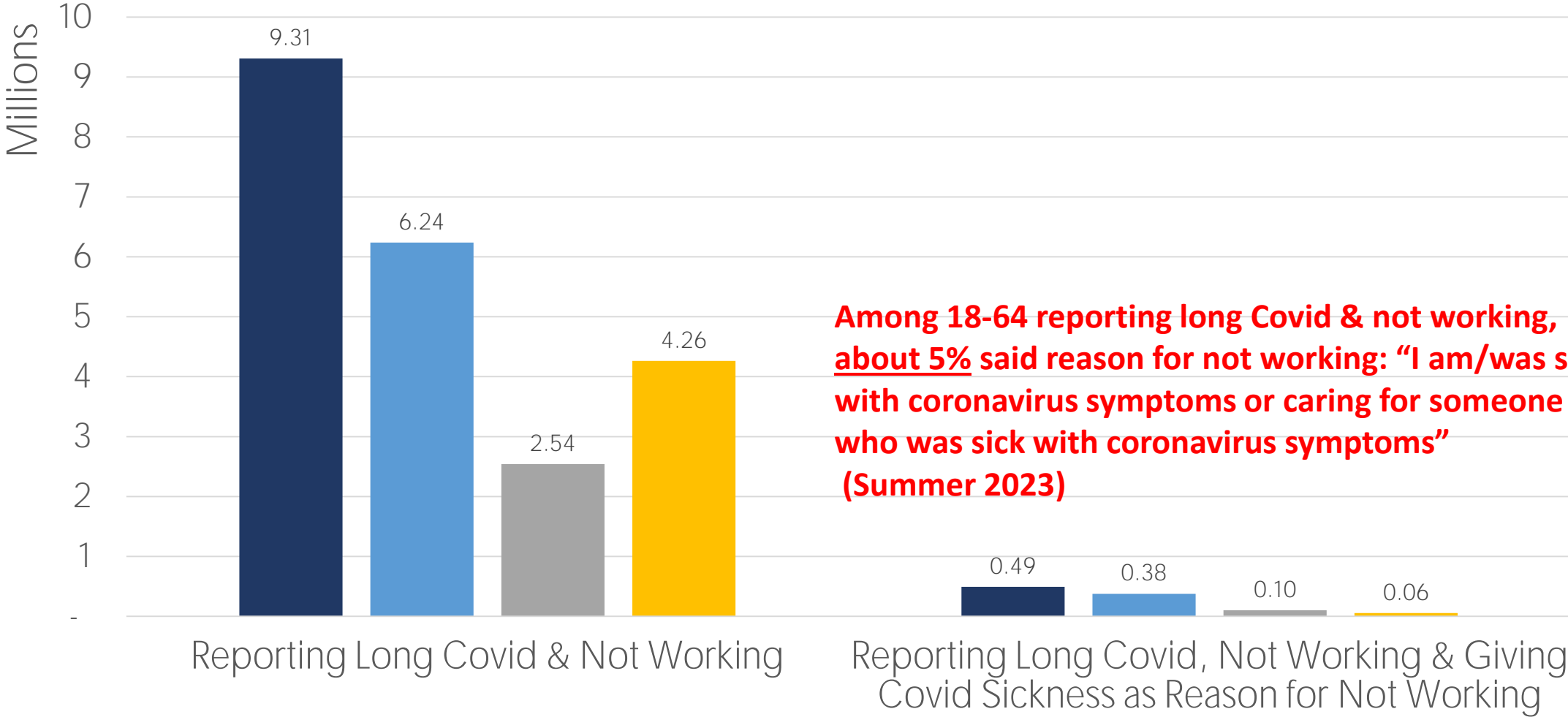
Foreign Immigration 2010-2021 (Census Bureau Estimates, 000s)



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Long Absence from Work due to Long Covid?

Census Pulse Survey July 26 – August 7, 2023



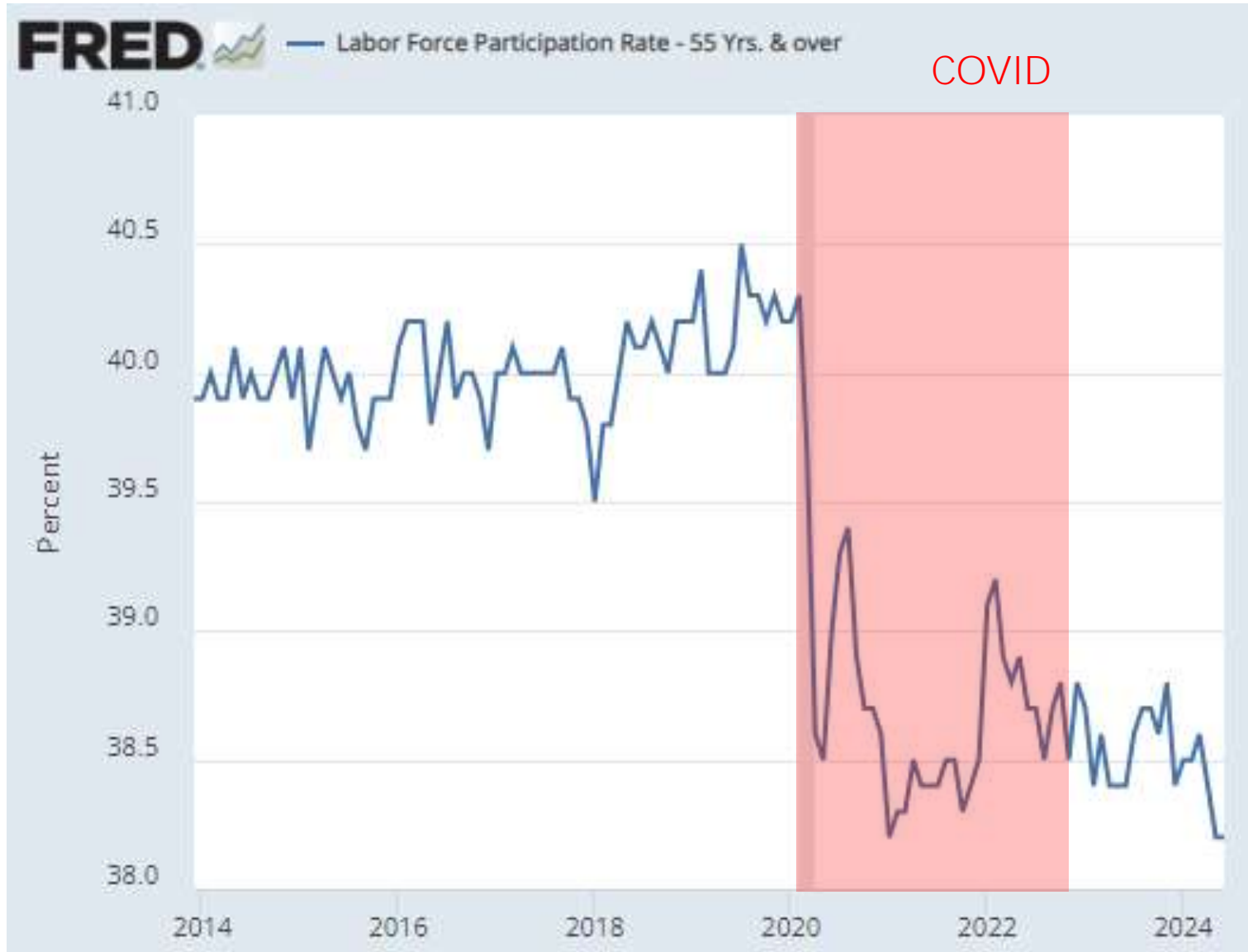
Among 18-64 reporting long Covid & not working, about 5% said reason for not working: “I am/was sick with coronavirus symptoms or caring for someone who was sick with coronavirus symptoms” (Summer 2023)

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■ 18-64 ■ 25-54 ■ 55-64 ■ 65+

The New Face of The Flight From Work In America

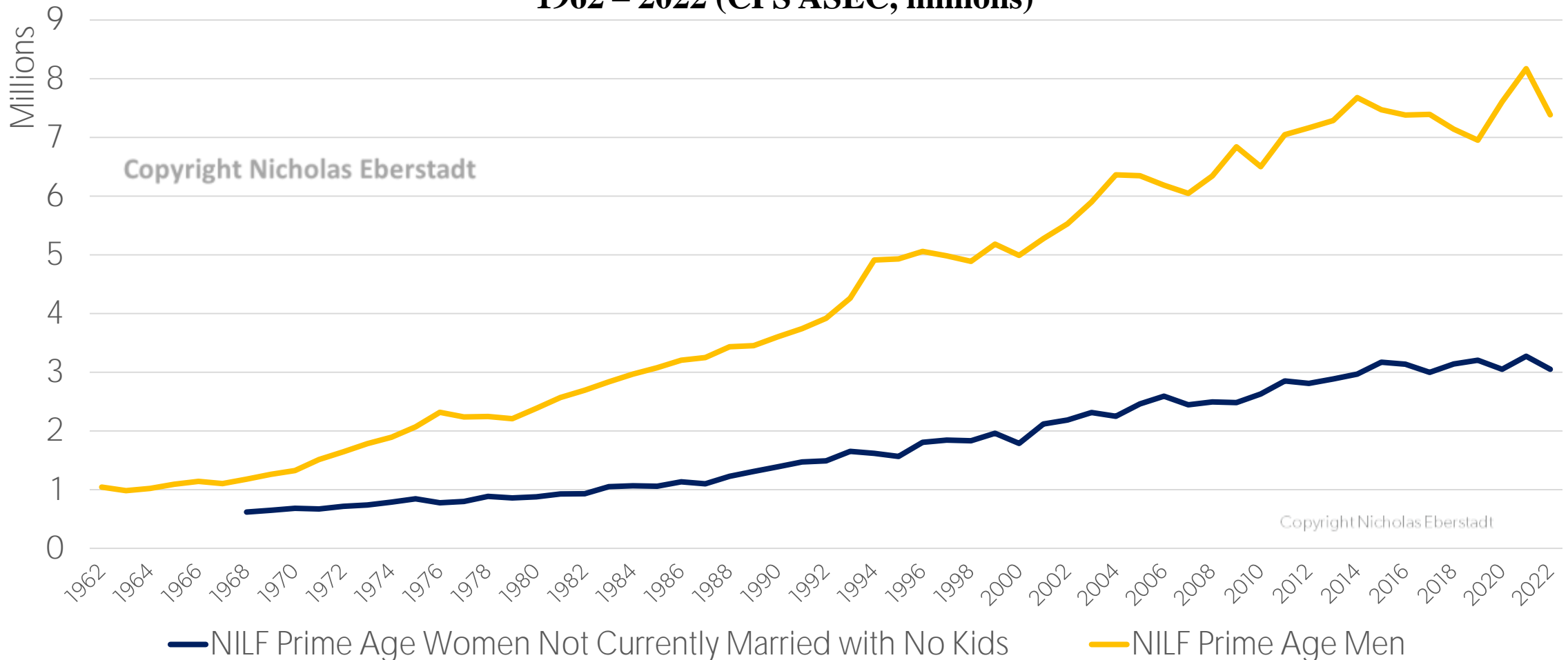
Labor Force Participation Rates Ages 55+: USA, 12/2013 – 12/2024



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Participation Rate - 55 Yrs. & over [LNS11324230], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNS11324230>, date accessed: July 24, 2024; figures are seasonally adjusted.

A Tale of Two NILFs

NILF Prime Age Men vs. NILF Prime Age Women Without Children at Home and Not Currently Married: 1962 – 2022 (CPS ASEC, millions)



Is The “Men Without Work” Syndrome Spreading?

(Derived from BLS American Time Use Survey)

	2015-2019			2020-2021		
Copyright Nicholas Eberstadt	NEET Men 25-54	NEET Women 25-54 No Kids at Home, Not Currently Married	NILF Men 55-64	NEET Men 25-54	NEET Women 25-54 No Kids at Home, Not Currently Married	NILF Men 55-64
Personal Care	639	687	595	604	673	589
Work	14	8	3	3	8	9
Care for Household Members	45	9	9	31	1	9
Eating	57	51	61	56	46	69
Education	6	5	1	11	0	1
Household Maintenance	96	146	126	131	94	147
Religion	5	4	11	6	5	5
Socializing, Relaxing & Leisure	447	410	479	424	492	494
Screen Time	311	274	347	304	266	372
Sports	29	2	24	36	8	22
Traveling	47	56	55	61	29	36
Volunteering	5	0	12	2	1	6

Memorandum Item: Daily Pain Medication Use (ATUS-WB)

44% (2013)

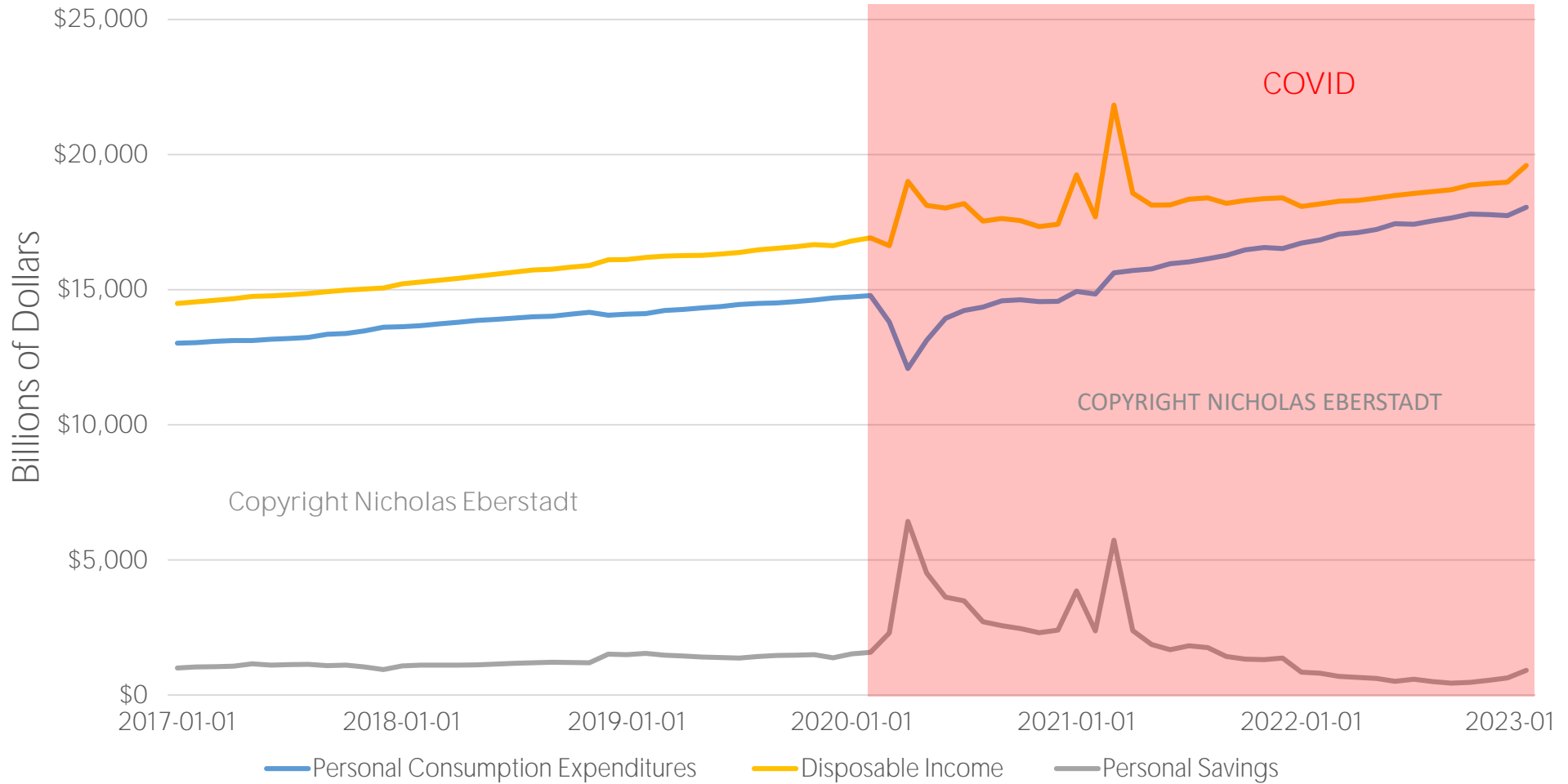
46% (2021)

45% (2021)

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This Time Really Was Different

Personal Consumption Expenditures, Disposable Income and Personal Savings, Billions of Dollars 2017 - 1/2023 (current prices)



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COVID

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures [PCE], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PCE>; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Disposable Personal Income [DPI], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/DPI>; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Saving [PMSAVE], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PMSAVE>, date accessed: March 10, 2023. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=ZOWO>.

“Covid Policy Wealth Effects”

Average Net Worth Held by Households in the Bottom 50% in constant PCE 2022 \$



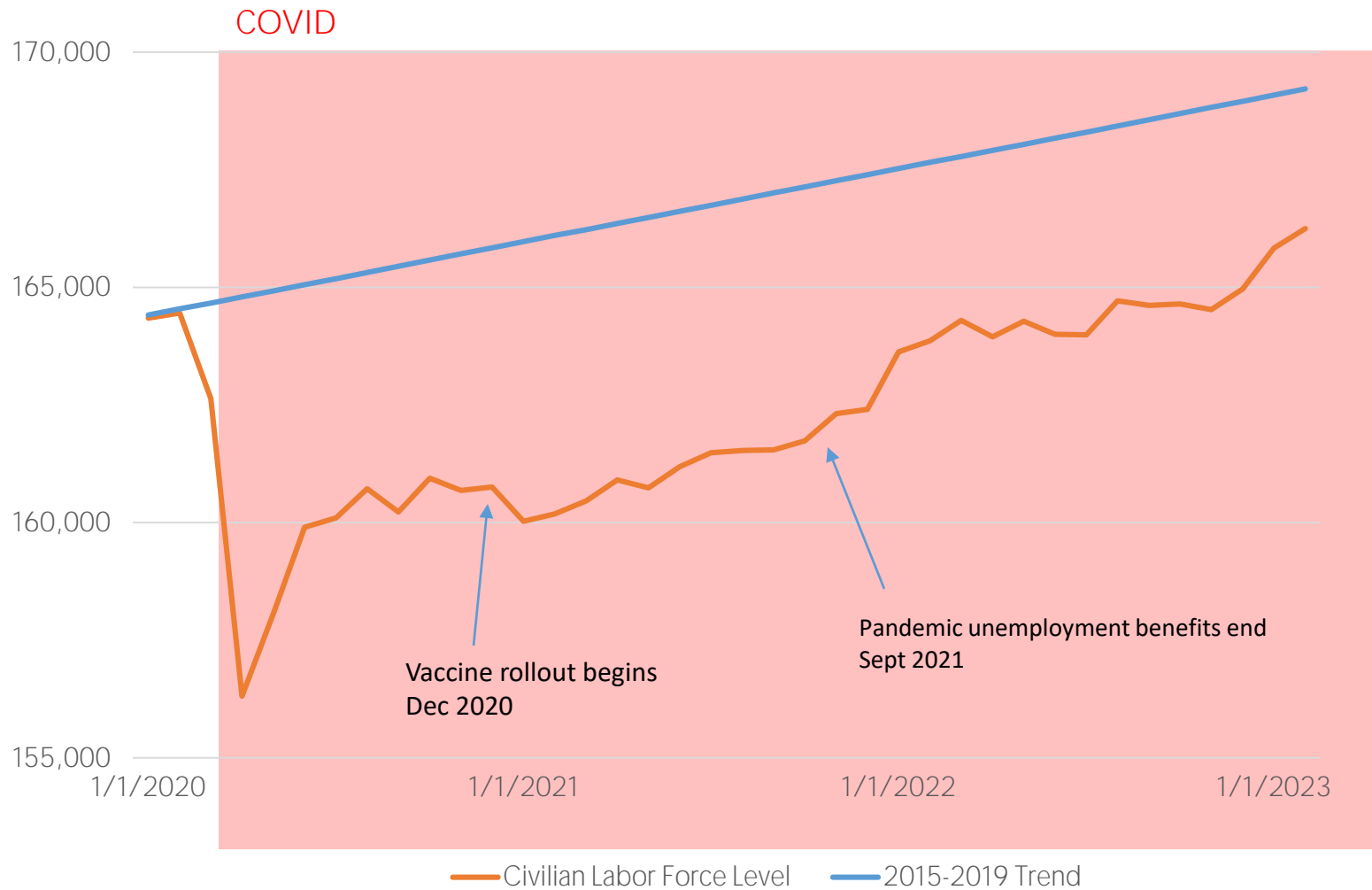
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— Net Worth per Household in 2022 \$

Sources: Federal Reserve Distribution of Financial Accounts, dfa-networth-levels-detail.csv, <https://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/z1/dataviz/dfa/>; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures: Chain-type Price Index [PCEPI], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PCEPI>.

Pandemic Benefits and the Return to the Workforce

(Civilian Labor Force, January 2020- February 2023, in 000s)



9 Month Labor Force Increments

12/20 – 9/21: 800K

9/21 – 6/22: 2.55M

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