



May 2025

Iowa Jobs and Labor Force Update

April 2025

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Introduction

In April, Iowa reported a net gain of 5,200 jobs. Most of the job loss was driven by gained jobs in professional and business services (+1,400) and construction (+1,300) employment. Alongside the revised March numbers, the April employment update brings Iowa's cumulative nonfarm job growth for 2025 to 6,400. This marks the second lowest cumulative job growth in April nonfarm employment among the five post-pandemic years.

Iowa's labor market demonstrates resilience in key areas. The unemployment rate grew 0.1% to 3.5%. Labor force participation rate (LFPR) grew 0.2% to 67.2%. Nationally, Iowa's labor market metrics continue to stand out despite the slight uptick in unemployment. The state ranks 17th for the lowest unemployment rate among all 50 states, down two spots, and holds the 8th-highest LFPR, up one spot. These rankings alongside April's strong job growth underscore Iowa's ability to maintain a competitive and robust labor market, even as unemployment ticks up.

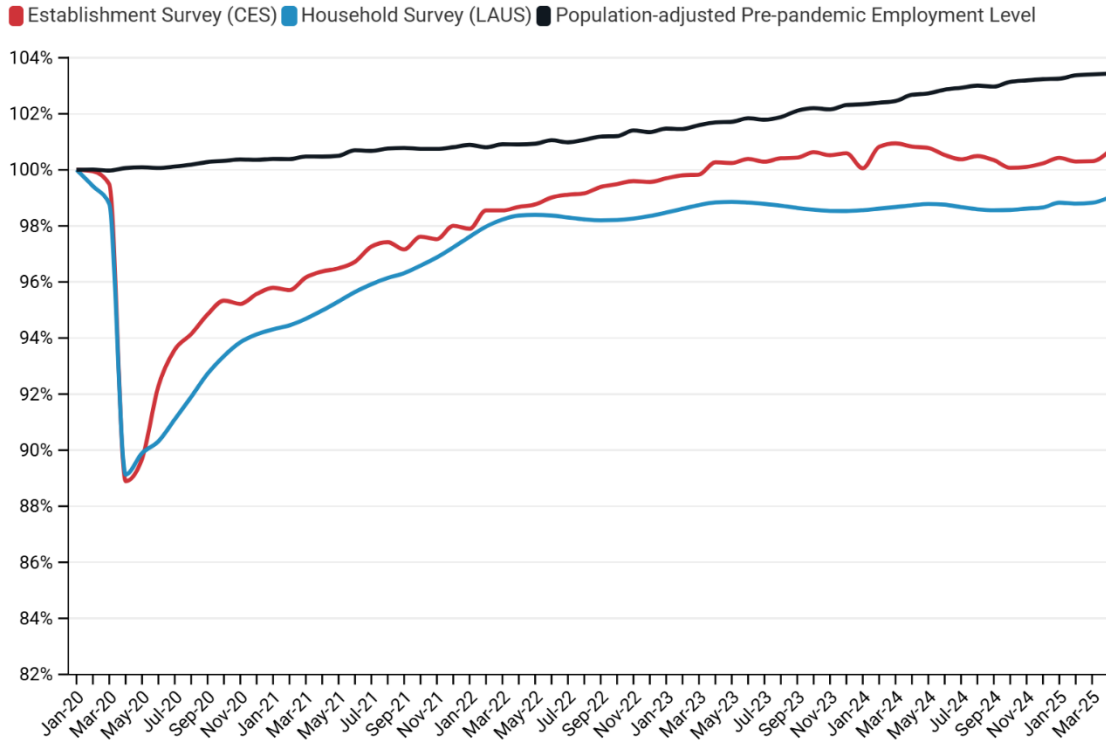
Key Findings—Iowa April 2025 Employment Data

- **In April, Iowa gained 5,200 jobs. 8 of 11 major sectors contributed to this gain.**
 - The professional and business services sector gained 1,400 jobs. The next largest gained was construction at 1,300 jobs gained.
 - Manufacturing and trade, transportation, and utilities both saw the largest monthly decline, losing 500 jobs.
- **Revisions indicate March performed better than initially expected.**
 - State Revisions: The state reported 1,700 more jobs in March 2025 compared to pre-revised March 2025.
 - Industry Revisions: Construction (+700) and manufacturing (+600) contributed the most to the upward revision.
- **Iowa has the 17th lowest unemployment rate in the nation, down two from last month.**
 - Unemployment: Iowa's unemployment was 3.5% in April, up 0.1% from last month.
- **Iowa ranks 8th highest in labor force participation, one spot higher from last month.**
 - LFPR: Iowa's LFPR was 67.2% in April, up 0.2% from last month.
- **So far, from December '24 to April '25, the private sector has gained 6,800 jobs.**
 - Total nonfarm employment has gained 6,400 jobs in this period. **So far, cumulative growth in nonfarm employment is higher than in 2024, but still the lowest of the remaining three post-pandemic years.**

Establishment vs. Household Survey

- According to both the employment figures from the BLS survey of establishments (CES) and the number of people employed from the BLS survey of households (LAUS), **Iowa has yet to recover to a pre-pandemic employment-to-population ratio.**
- Based on the **establishment survey**, employment grew by 5,200 or 0.33%.
- Based on the **household survey**, employment grew by 2,957 jobs or 0.18%.

Employment Levels in Iowa since January 2020



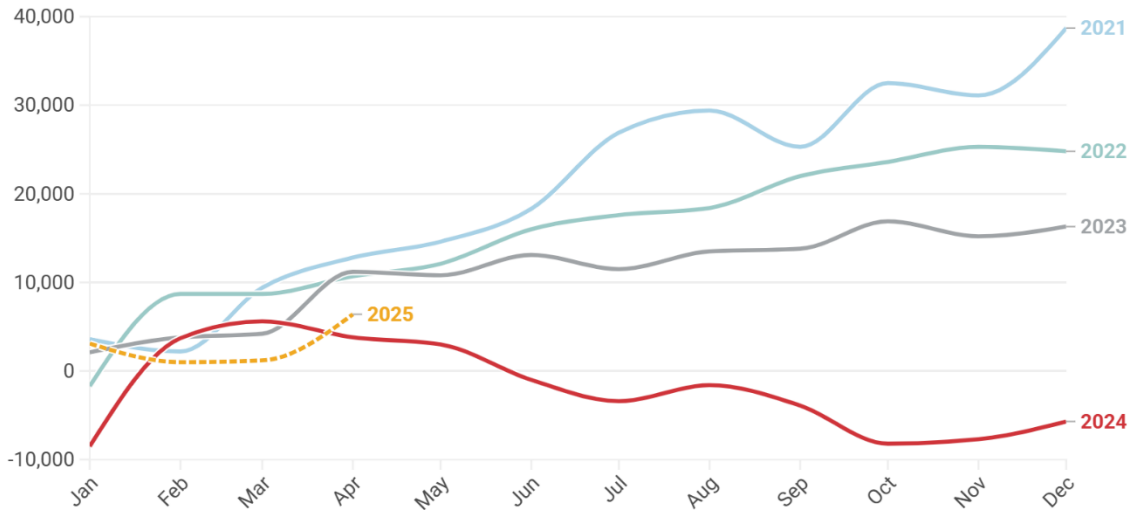
Revisions

- **United States** – In May, the BLS revised March 2025 seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment nationally upward by 900 (0.001%).
- **Iowa** – In May, the BLS revised March 2025 seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment in Iowa upward by 1,700 (0.11%).
- **Iowa by Sector** – In May, the BLS revised March 2025 seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment for the following major sectors:
 - Construction upward by 700 jobs.
 - Manufacturing upward by 600 jobs.
 - Professional and business services and other services both by 300 jobs.
 - Trade, transportation, and utilities and financial services both by 200 jobs.
 - Government downward by 100 jobs.
 - Leisure and hospitality downward by 200 jobs.
 - Education and health services downward by 300 jobs.

Cumulative Jobs Added by Year - Iowa

Iowa cumulative employment growth in 2025 continues to be the lowest of all post-pandemic years. From December 2024 to March 2025, employment fell by 500 jobs.

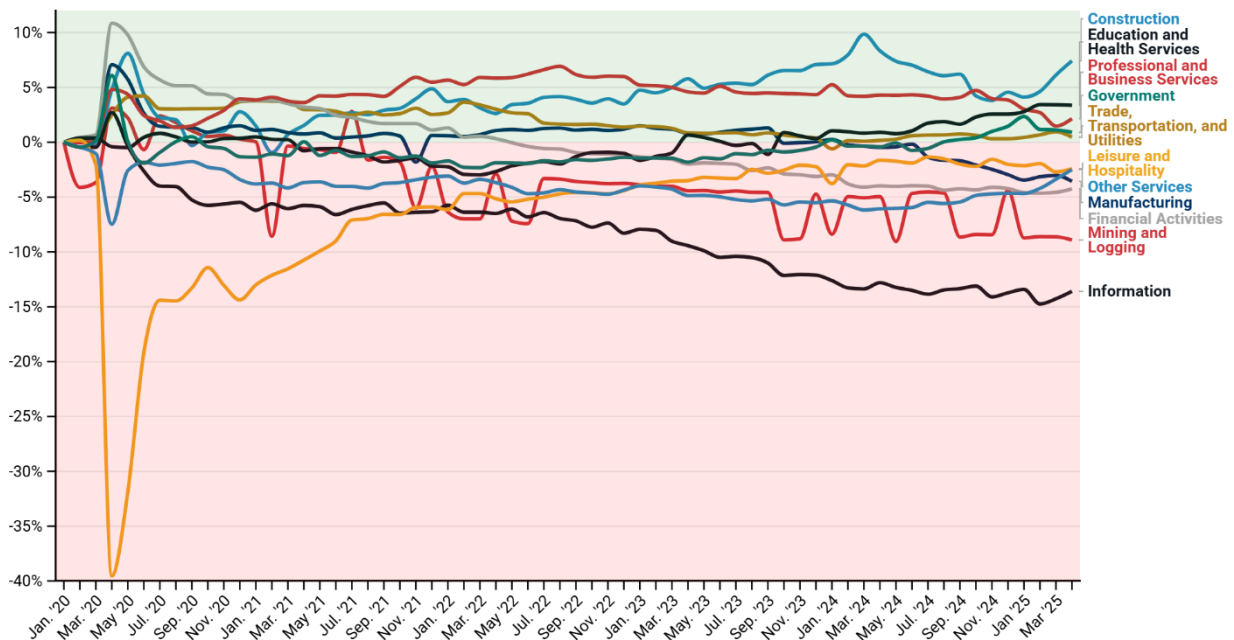
Cumulative Job Gains



A Deeper Dive into Iowa Industries (BLS CES Survey)

- Based on the establishment survey, the net growth of 5,200 jobs in April was driven by net job gains in 8 of 11 major sectors.
 - Professional and business services gained 1,400 jobs (0.99%).
 - Construction gained 1,300 jobs (1.55%).
 - Leisure and hospitality gained 900 jobs (0.63%).
 - Financial activities (0.66%), education and health services (0.29%), and other services (1.23%) all gained 700 jobs.
 - Government gained 300 jobs (0.11%).
 - Information gained 200 jobs (1.12%).
 - Mining and logging remained unchanged.
- Two sectors saw a net gain in jobs from March to April.
 - Manufacturing (-0.23%) and trade, transportation and utilities (-0.16%) both lost 500 jobs.
- So far, from December '24 to April '25, the private sector has gained 6,800 jobs.
 - Total nonfarm employment, which includes government employment, has gained 6,400 jobs in this same period. **So far, this cumulative growth in nonfarm employment is higher than 2024, but still the lowest of the remaining three post-pandemic years.**

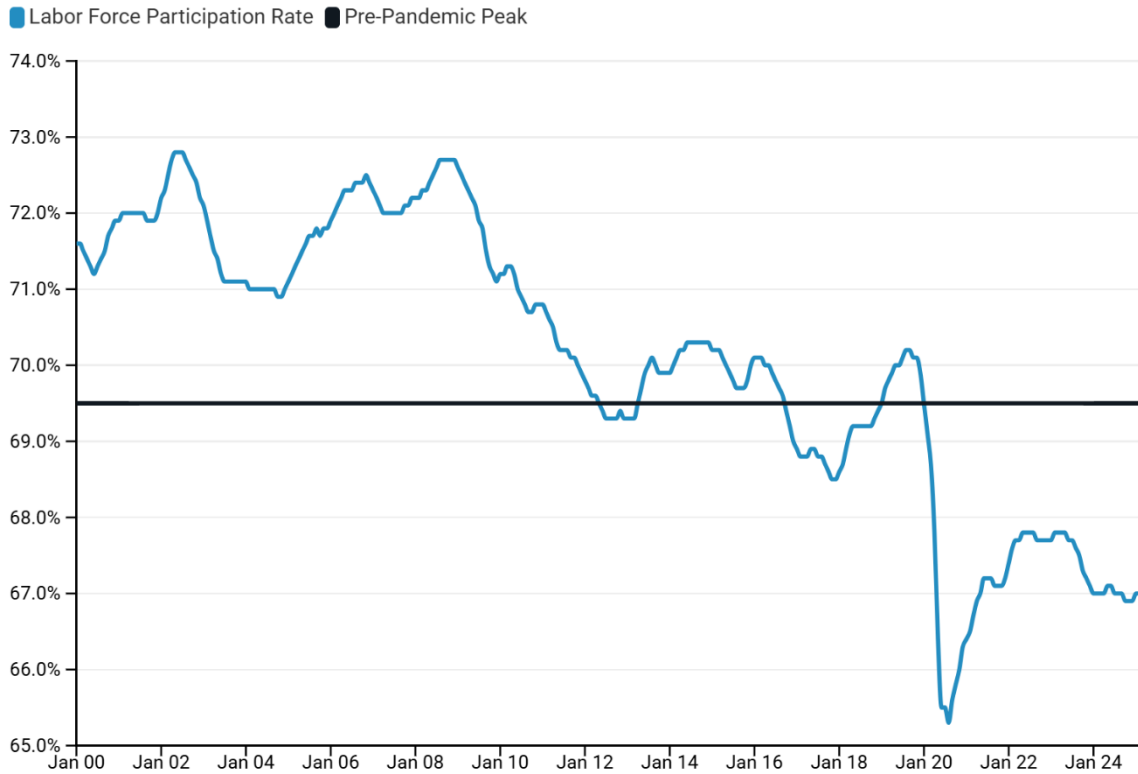
Changing Industry Shares of Total Iowa Employment since January 2020



Iowa Labor Force Update

- In April, Iowa's LFPR grew 0.2% to 67.2%, 2.3% below the pre-pandemic LFPR of 69.5% in January 2020.
- Iowa's unemployment rate in April grew by 0.1% to 3.5%.
- Iowa ranked 17th lowest in unemployment rate among all 50 states, down two spots from last month.

Labor Force Participation Rate in Iowa Since 2000



Data Sources

The data in this report are compiled from monthly and annual data released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), including data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey and the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Survey. Some data are sourced directly from BLS and others are retrieved from FRED.