



August 2024

Oregon Jobs and Labor Force – July 2024 Update

With a booming month of estimated job growth in July, Oregon’s payrolls continue on the rollercoaster ride they have been on for the past two years. Since the middle of 2022, the rate of job growth has swung well above and below the national average. After starting 2024 very soft, gains have accelerated once more in recent months.

Although Oregon experienced large job gains in July, cause for concern remains. In particular, there have been several mass layoff announcements among Oregon’s major industry clusters. Also, growth has lagged among industries that are most sensitive to the interest rate environment, including financial services and manufacturing. Even so, initial and continuing claims for unemployment insurance remain below where they were last year.

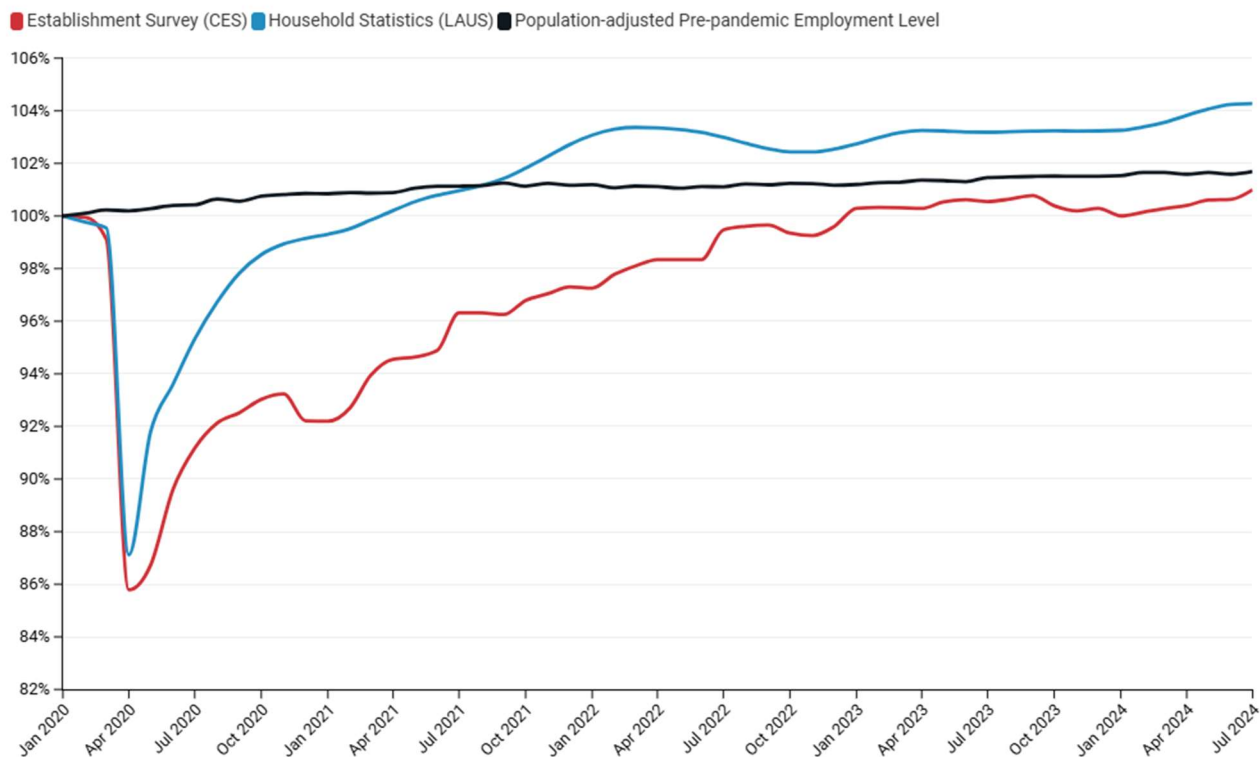
Mass layoff announcements have occurred in the semiconductor, apparel, software and wood product industries. Although these amount to a drop in the bucket of Oregon’s two million jobs, they are an ominous signal, nonetheless. NIKE eliminated 741 local jobs, while Intel has announced that it plans to reduce its global workforce by 15% by the end of the year. Many of the laid-off NIKE workers will likely land at the more than 700 other outdoor gear and apparel firms in the state, many of which are growing rapidly. As for Intel, 15% of the Oregon workforce would amount to around 3,000 local jobs. In past periods of downsizing, Oregon has fared better than other state operations, given its focus on cutting-edge R&D and its many engineers and front-office workers. Oregon operations may not be so lucky this time around, given that the firm has been planning to expand its foundry operations. Longer term, the outlook for the semiconductor cluster remains stable given that the billions of dollars pledged by the federal CHIPS act have yet to flow into the state.

Oregon’s total employment grew by 8,500 (+0.4%) jobs in July—after a small decline in jobs from May to June, the state’s employment level has fully recovered from the decline of 0.3% in January. Over the past 12 months, Oregon’s education and health services grew by 16,500 jobs (+5.2%). The private sector is up 3,700 jobs since July 2023. While adding only 3,700 jobs (+0.2%) over the past 12 months, the private sector has been trending upwards since January 2024, adding 16,000 jobs. Finally, Oregon’s unemployment rate remains unchanged month-over-month at 4.1% but is up 5 percentage points from 12 months ago when it was 3.6%.

Key Findings—Oregon July 2024 Employment Data

- **Oregon gained 8,500 jobs in July, of which 6,700 were in the private sector. The private sector is up 3,700 jobs from July of 2023.**
- **The state’s total employment is 1.0% higher than it was in early 2020, ranking 38th among states in employment growth since 2020.**
- **8 out of 11 major sectors added jobs in July. The leisure and hospitality sector lost 700 jobs in July, the highest loss of the major sectors.**
- **Oregon’s largest major sector, trade, transportation and utilities, gained 100 jobs in July.**
- **The state’s unemployment rate remained at 4.1% in July but remains above its 3.6% level one year ago.**
- **Oregon’s LFPR (labor force participation rate) remained unchanged at 63% in July.**

Employment Levels in Oregon since January 2020



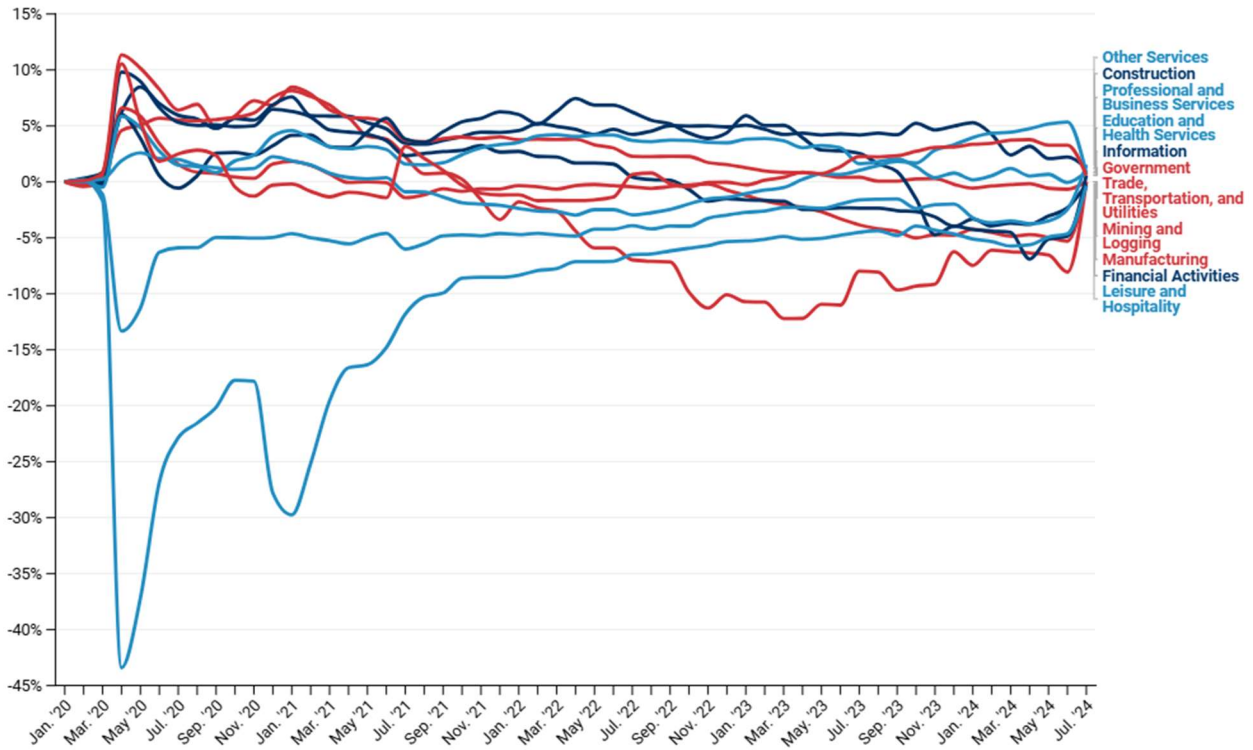
- According to the BLS survey of establishments (CES), Oregon has recovered to its pre-pandemic employment-to-population ratio in August 2021.
- According to the BLS measure of local employment (LAUS), which captures both traditional jobs and self-employment, Oregon's employment recovered to its pre-pandemic level in March 2021 and has remained above since.

A Deeper Dive into Oregon Industries (BLS CES Survey)

- Oregon gained 8,500 jobs in July, of which 6,700 were in the private sector.
- The education and health services sector grew the most, at 2,300 jobs, while the financial activities sector lost 200.
- In Oregon, the trade, transportation and utilities sector holds the highest share of total employment, followed by the education and health services sector, which has the second highest share.
- Over the past 12 months, the education and health services sector has gained 16,500 jobs, while the trade, transportation and utilities sector has lost 3,600 jobs (-1.0%).
- Oregon's federal, state, and local governments gained 1,800 jobs in June, following a loss of 900 jobs in April.
- The state's private sector grew by 3,700 jobs since July 2023. Despite a large decline in jobs in January 2024, the private sector has added 16,000 jobs since then.
- 4 of the 11 major sectors are below what they were in January of 2020.
 - The mining and logging sector employment level is 7.5% lower than it was in January 2020.

- The education and health services sector employment level is 6.8% higher than its level in January 2020.

Changing Industry Shares of Total Oregon Employment since January 2020



Oregon Labor Force Update

Oregon’s LFPR (labor force participation rate) and the unemployment rate both remained unchanged at 63% and 4.1% in July.

Key Findings—Oregon July ‘24 Labor Force Data (FRED)

- Oregon’s LFPR is currently 63%, 1.9 percentage points higher than in January 2020.
 - Although the LFPR declined considerably in 2020, its consistent rise since then is an encouraging trend and is now at its highest since 2012.
- The unemployment rate remained at 4.1% in July, though it remains significantly higher than its 3.5% rate from one year ago.

Labor Force Participation Rate in Oregon 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 Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS). Some data are sourced directly from BLS, and others are retrieved from FRED.