



# News

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## Oregon's Unemployment Rate at 8.5 Percent in April, as Payroll Employment Grows by 2,300

Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.5 percent in April, essentially unchanged from 8.6 percent in March. Oregon's unemployment rate dropped from 9.5 percent in April 2011. Meanwhile, the U.S. seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in April and 8.2 percent in March.

### **Industry Payroll Employment** *(Establishment Survey Data)*

Oregon's seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment rose by 2,300 in April. The March figure was revised upward to show a gain of 1,200 jobs, rather than the loss of 300 that was originally reported.

### **April Labor Market Highlights**

- Continuing its slow decline for nearly three years, Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in April was 8.5 percent, down from 9.5 percent in April 2011.
- Oregon's seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment rose by 2,300 in April, following a revised gain of 1,200 in March.
- Industries typically hiring many teens during the summer were at or above their normal job gains in April: food services and drinking places (+1,300), administrative and support services (+1,600), and retail trade (+1,600).

**Oregon unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted**



**Oregon nonfarm payroll employment, seasonally adjusted**



In April, two of the major industries posted large seasonally adjusted job gains: construction (+1,700 jobs) and professional and business services (+1,700). These gains were partially offset by declines in trade, transportation, and utilities (-1,200 jobs) and educational and health services (-1,000).

**Construction** added 3,800 jobs when a gain of only 2,100 is the normal seasonal pattern in April. These gains followed weak employment trends in February and March.

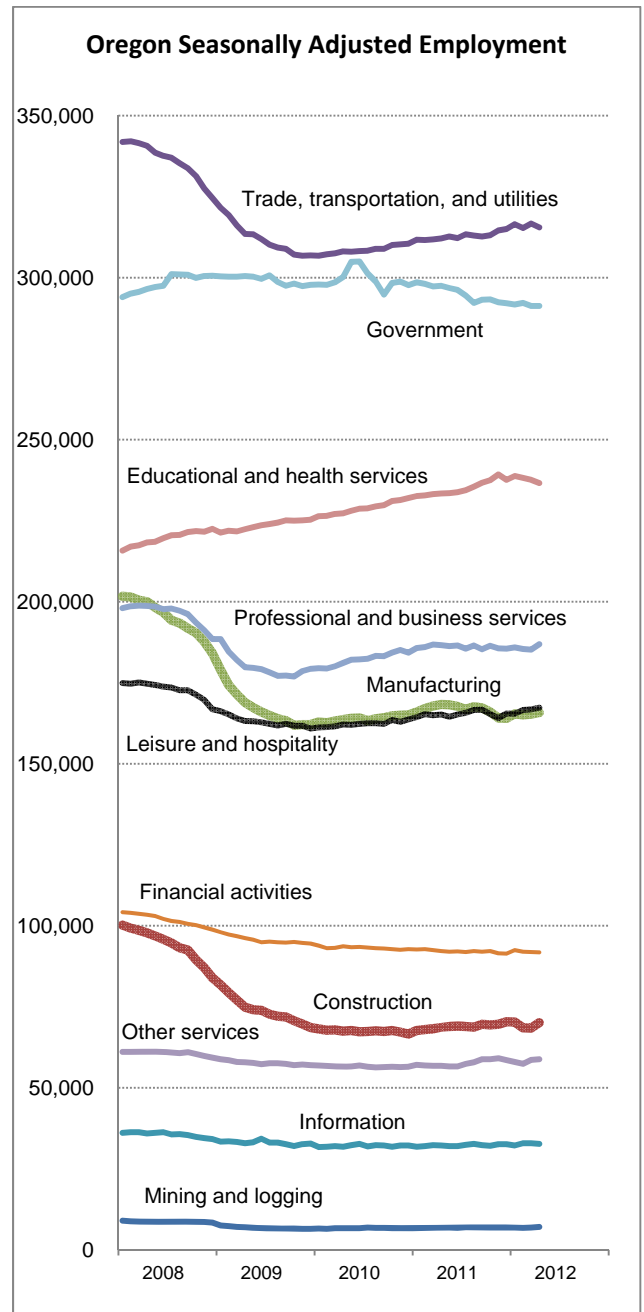
Seasonally adjusted employment in construction, at 70,100 jobs in April, was very close to its January reading of 70,300. Since April 2011, this measure of construction employment is up by 1,400 jobs, or 2.0 percent.

**Professional and business services** added 2,900 jobs in April at a time of year when a gain

of only 1,200 is the norm. Recent employment trends in this large industry were nearly flat for over a year. This uptick in April put the industry about even with its year-ago figure. Since April 2011, professional and technical services, which includes legal, architectural, engineering, and computer systems design services, was up 2,200 jobs. Countering these gains was administrative and waste services, which has cut 2,300 jobs over the past 12 months.

**Seasonal Expectations and Over-the-Month Employment Changes**  
March to April 2012

INDUSTRY	Normal Seasonal Movement	Unadjusted Change	Seasonally Adjusted Change
<b>Total nonfarm payroll employment</b>	8,100	10,400	2,300
Total private	8,400	10,700	2,300
Mining and logging	-100	100	200
Construction	2,100	3,800	1,700
Manufacturing	300	800	500
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,700	500	-1,200
Information	0	-200	-200
Financial activities	900	800	-100
Professional and business services	1,200	2,900	1,700
Educational and health services	700	-300	-1,000
Leisure and hospitality	1,800	2,300	500
Other services	-200	0	200
Government	-300	-300	0



**Trade transportation and utilities** added only 500 jobs in April, when a gain of 1,700 was expected. Retail trade performed exactly as expected for the month by adding 1,600 jobs. Retail gains were seen in building material and garden supply stores, which added 400 jobs, and in food and beverage stores, which also added 400. Retail has been expanding gradually over the past two years, but is still well off its all-time high reached in late 2007.

**Private-sector educational and health services** declined on a seasonally adjusted basis for the third consecutive month. Private education declined in recent months following an unusually large spike upward at the end of 2011. Despite the recent pullback, the April seasonally adjusted figure of 34,200 puts education slightly above its rapid growth trend line experienced over most of the past 10 years.

Meanwhile, health care and social assistance has seen its employment peak and then flatten out over the past six months. In April, seasonally adjusted employment for this sector was 202,400, which is very close to its July 2011 level of 202,000. Social assistance is contributing to the flattening trend lately as it is down 400 over the past 12 months. Also, there have been news reports of at least one major hospital cutting employment since last summer.

### **Hours and Earnings** **(Establishment Survey Data)**

The average workweek for Oregon manufacturing production workers ticked up to 40.2 hours in April from 40.1 in March. In April 2011, the average workweek was slightly lower, at 39.6 hours per week. Over the longer term, this average workweek has been generally rising over the past three years.

Average earnings of all private-sector payroll employees in Oregon shot up to \$766.26 per week in April. This was an increase of 4.5 percent from the April 2011 figure of \$733.12

and was by far the highest average weekly earnings for this series dating back to its outset in 2007.

### **Unemployment** **(Household Survey Data)**

The national unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in April. Oregon's rate was 8.5 percent. The difference between the Oregon and the U.S. unemployment rates was not statistically significant.

The latest figures indicate that Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has generally been on a declining trend for nearly three years, after reaching a high point of 11.6 percent in May and June 2009. At 8.5 percent in April, it has not been lower since November 2008, when Oregon's rate was 8.4 percent.

In April, 168,679 Oregonians were unemployed. This is 17,876 fewer individuals than in April 2011 when 186,555 Oregonians were unemployed.

### **Next Press Releases**

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the April county and metropolitan area unemployment rates on Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup> and the statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data for May on Tuesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>.

For many years, monthly employment estimates for Oregon and its metropolitan areas were developed by Oregon Employment Department economists.

In March 2011, responsibility for the monthly employment estimates for Oregon and its metropolitan areas shifted to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The estimates developed by BLS are more heavily dependent on the sample of businesses and less reliant on knowledge of local economic events. They are also likely to demonstrate increased month-to-month variability.

Comments or questions should be directed to Graham Slater, Administrator of the Oregon Employment Department's Workforce and Economic Research Division, at (503) 947-1212.

For the complete version of the news release, including tables and graphs, visit: [www.QualityInfo.org/pressrelease](http://www.QualityInfo.org/pressrelease).

If you need this release in the Spanish language, please contact Loretta Gallegos at 503-947-1794.

For help finding jobs and training resources, visit one of the state's WorkSource Oregon Centers or go to: [www.WorkSourceOregon.org](http://www.WorkSourceOregon.org).

Equal Opportunity program — auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities

### Oregon Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	April 2012	March 2012	April 2011	Change From March 2012	Change From April 2011
<b>Labor Force Status</b>					
Civilian labor force	1,979,703	1,981,709	1,985,667	-2,006	-5,964
Unemployed	168,679	181,969	186,555	-13,290	-17,876
Unemployment rate	8.5	9.2	9.4	-0.7	-0.9
Unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted	8.5	8.6	9.5	-0.1	-1.0
Employed	1,811,024	1,799,740	1,799,112	11,284	11,912
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Employment</b>					
Total nonfarm payroll employment	1,620,800	1,610,400	1,617,800	10,400	3,000
Total private	1,323,200	1,312,500	1,313,200	10,700	10,000
Mining and logging	6,600	6,500	6,600	100	0
Logging	5,100	5,100	5,100	0	0
Construction	67,300	63,500	66,200	3,800	1,100
Construction of buildings	16,400	14,900	16,000	1,500	400
Residential building construction	8,800	8,000	9,000	800	-200
Nonresidential building construction	7,600	6,900	7,000	700	600
Heavy and civil engineering construction	8,100	7,900	9,000	200	-900
Specialty trade contractors	42,800	40,700	41,200	2,100	1,600
Building foundation and exterior contractors	6,200	5,400	7,300	800	-1,100
Building equipment contractors	23,400	22,700	19,800	700	3,600
Building finishing contractors	7,900	7,800	8,800	100	-900
Other specialty trade contractors	5,300	4,800	5,300	500	0
Manufacturing	163,900	163,100	165,700	800	-1,800
Durable goods	117,400	116,900	117,800	500	-400
Wood product manufacturing	18,200	18,100	19,300	100	-1,100
Sawmills and wood preservation	5,600	5,700	5,800	-100	-200
Plywood and engineered wood product mfg.	6,800	6,700	7,000	100	-200
Other wood product manufacturing	5,800	5,700	6,500	100	-700
Primary metal manufacturing	7,300	7,400	7,800	-100	-500
Fabricated metal product manufacturing	15,100	15,000	14,600	100	500
Machinery manufacturing	11,300	11,200	10,400	100	900
Computer and electronic product manufacturing	36,800	36,500	36,100	300	700
Semiconductor and electronic component mfg.	27,500	27,300	27,000	200	500
Electronic instrument manufacturing	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	0
Transportation equipment manufacturing	11,000	11,300	10,800	-300	200
Nondurable goods	46,500	46,200	47,900	300	-1,400
Food manufacturing	22,100	21,900	22,900	200	-800
Fruit and vegetable preserving and specialty	7,400	7,300	8,400	100	-1,000
Paper manufacturing	4,700	4,700	4,800	0	-100
Trade, transportation, and utilities	312,100	311,600	307,700	500	4,400
Wholesale trade	75,000	75,500	73,800	-500	1,200
Merchant wholesalers, durable goods	30,800	30,800	30,500	0	300
Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods	30,700	30,900	30,200	-200	500
Electronic markets and agents and brokers	13,500	13,800	13,100	-300	400
Retail trade	184,600	183,000	181,400	1,600	3,200
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	21,500	21,600	21,700	-100	-200
Building material and garden supply stores	13,500	13,100	13,400	400	100
Food and beverage stores	38,600	38,200	37,900	400	700
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	15,200	15,000	15,300	200	-100
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	10,000	10,000	10,000	0	0
General merchandise stores	37,600	37,400	37,100	200	500
Miscellaneous store retailers	9,200	9,100	9,500	100	-300
Nonstore retailers	5,500	5,400	5,700	100	-200

	April 2012	March 2012	April 2011	Change From March 2012	Change From April 2011
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	52,500	53,100	52,500	-600	0
Utilities	4,600	4,600	4,500	0	100
Transportation and warehousing	47,900	48,500	48,000	-600	-100
Truck transportation	17,300	17,400	16,900	-100	400
Couriers and messengers	6,000	6,200	6,000	-200	0
Warehousing and storage	6,400	6,500	6,500	-100	-100
Information	32,700	32,900	32,200	-200	500
Publishing industries, except internet	13,800	13,900	14,000	-100	-200
Newspaper, book, and directory publishers	4,500	4,600	4,900	-100	-400
Software publishers	9,300	9,300	9,100	0	200
Telecommunications	6,600	6,600	6,800	0	-200
Financial activities	92,200	91,400	91,600	800	600
Finance and insurance	56,500	55,800	56,000	700	500
Credit intermediation and related activities	27,500	27,300	27,200	200	300
Insurance carriers and related activities	23,400	23,000	23,600	400	-200
Real estate and rental and leasing	35,700	35,600	35,600	100	100
Real estate	31,600	31,700	30,200	-100	1,400
Professional and business services	186,100	183,200	186,800	2,900	-700
Professional and technical services	77,100	75,500	74,900	1,600	2,200
Legal services	11,200	10,800	11,900	400	-700
Architectural and engineering services	13,000	12,700	12,600	300	400
Computer systems design and related services	10,900	10,800	10,500	100	400
Management of companies and enterprises	29,800	30,000	30,400	-200	-600
Administrative and waste services	79,200	77,700	81,500	1,500	-2,300
Administrative and support services	74,500	72,900	76,400	1,600	-1,900
Employment services	30,400	29,300	30,600	1,100	-200
Business support services	12,800	12,700	13,300	100	-500
Services to buildings and dwellings	17,600	16,300	18,300	1,300	-700
Educational and health services	239,400	239,700	236,300	-300	3,100
Educational services	36,500	36,900	35,300	-400	1,200
Health care and social assistance	202,900	202,800	201,000	100	1,900
Ambulatory health care services	72,500	72,100	71,500	400	1,000
Hospitals	54,200	54,300	53,700	-100	500
Nursing and residential care facilities	44,700	45,000	43,900	-300	800
Social assistance	31,500	31,400	31,900	100	-400
Leisure and hospitality	164,100	161,800	163,400	2,300	700
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	19,300	19,200	22,000	100	-2,700
Amusement, gambling, and recreation	15,200	14,700	16,100	500	-900
Accommodation and food services	144,800	142,600	141,400	2,200	3,400
Accommodation	21,300	20,400	20,500	900	800
Food services and drinking places	123,500	122,200	120,900	1,300	2,600
Full-service restaurants	60,900	59,300	58,600	1,600	2,300
Limited-service eating places	50,800	50,800	51,100	0	-300
Other services	58,800	58,800	56,700	0	2,100
Repair and maintenance	15,200	15,300	15,300	-100	-100
Personal and laundry services	12,800	12,700	12,800	100	0
Membership associations and organizations	30,800	30,800	28,600	0	2,200
Religious organizations	17,700	17,900	16,700	-200	1,000
Government	297,600	297,900	304,600	-300	-7,000
Federal government	27,500	27,000	28,500	500	-1,000
State government	81,400	82,200	82,000	-800	-600
State education	33,200	34,000	32,500	-800	700
Local government	188,700	188,700	194,100	0	-5,400
Indian tribal	8,500	8,400	8,600	100	-100
Local education	100,400	100,700	105,300	-300	-4,900
Labor-management disputes	0	0	0	0	0

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Labor Force Status: Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence. Employed includes nonfarm payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture and labor disputants. Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

Cautionary Note to Users: Starting in December 2009, revised estimation procedures mandated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics may result in unusually large or volatile month-to-month employment changes. These survey-based estimates are revised annually, based on more complete information from quarterly employer tax records.