



News

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PRESS CONFERENCE PRESENTER:

Nick Beleiciks, State Employment Economist

CONTACT INFORMATION:

David Cooke, Economist (503) 947-1272

Oregon's Unemployment Rate Drops Below 9.0 Percent for the first time in Three Years

Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.9 percent in December and 9.1 percent in November. Meanwhile, the U.S. seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged down to 8.5 percent in December from 8.7 percent in November.

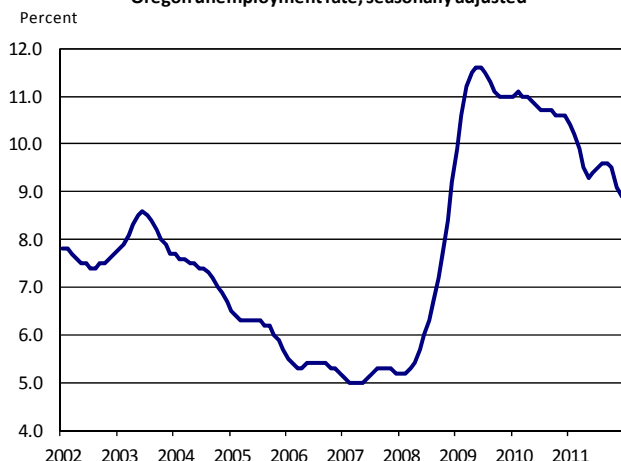
Industry Payroll Employment (Establishment Survey Data)

Oregon's seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment gained 2,400 in December, following a revised loss of 1,100 in November. December job gains were led by leisure and hospitality (+2,700 jobs) and government (+1,700). Gains were offset by losses in educational and health services (-2,200 jobs).

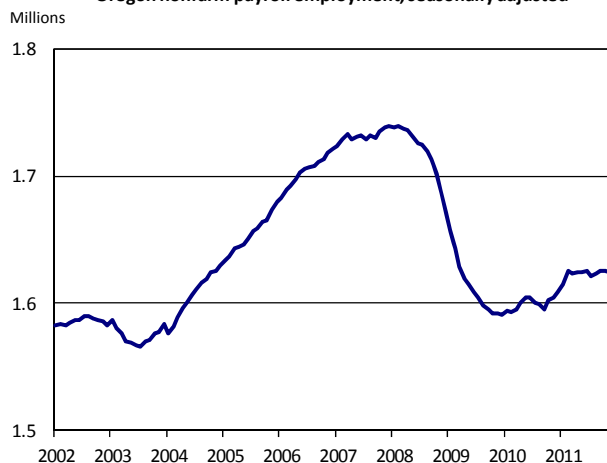
December Labor Market Highlights

- Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped below 9.0 percent for the first time since November 2008.
- At 1,626,300 in December, Oregon's seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment has been relatively flat for most of the past 10 months. Since February it has stayed between 1,621,700 and 1,626,300, which is a range of only 4,600 jobs or 0.3 percent.
- Construction employment showed modest improvement in December, gaining 600 jobs on a seasonally adjusted basis, and adding 3,100 jobs or 4.6 percent since December 2010.

Oregon unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted



Oregon nonfarm payroll employment, seasonally adjusted



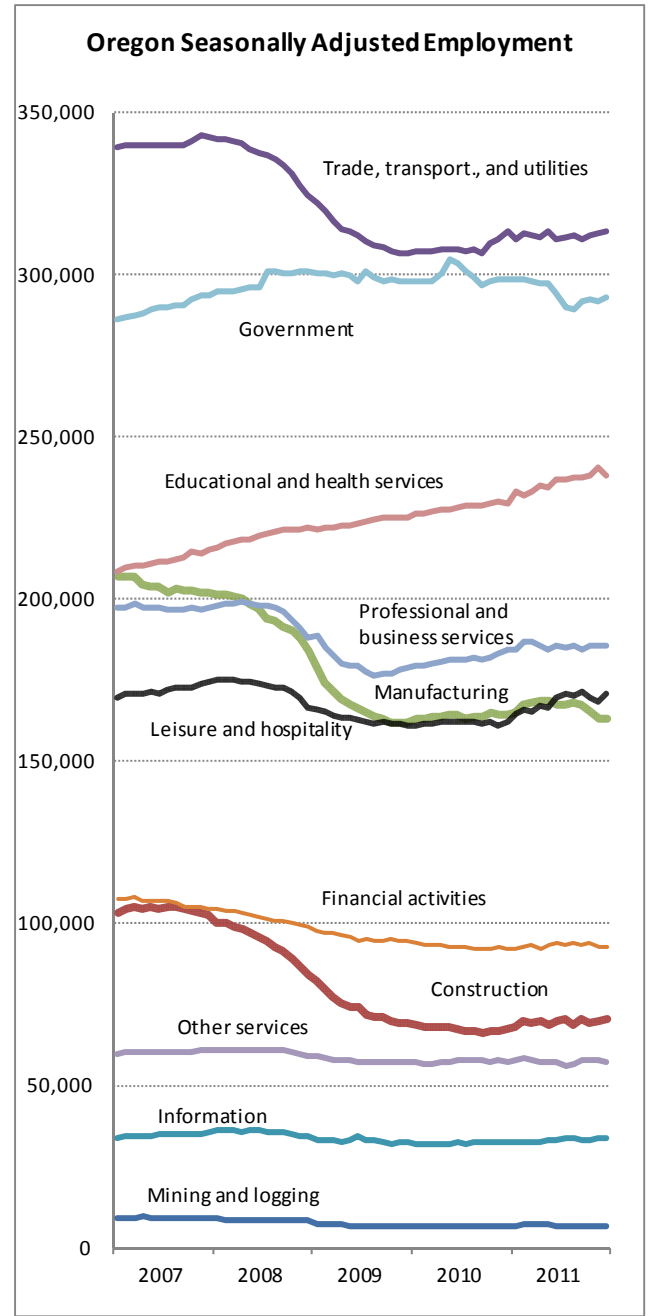
Leisure and hospitality added 500 jobs in December, when a loss of 2,200 is the normal seasonal pattern. This industry spiked downward sharply in October and November, but rebounded in December. Accommodation and food services grew rapidly over the past year, adding 7,300 jobs since December 2010, a gain of 5.3 percent. The rapid growth brings the sector close to its highest ever December figure, which was 148,500 jobs in December 2007.

Seasonal Expectations and Over-the-Month Employment Changes
November to December 2011

INDUSTRY	Normal Seasonal Movement	Unadjusted Change	Seasonally Adjusted Change
Total nonfarm payroll employment	-10,600	-8,200	2,400
Total private	-5,500	-4,800	700
Mining and logging	-400	-300	100
Construction	-2,900	-2,300	600
Manufacturing	-1,800	-2,000	-200
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,500	1,800	300
Information	0	0	0
Financial activities	600	500	-100
Professional and business services	0	200	200
Educational and health services	100	-2,100	-2,200
Leisure and hospitality	-2,200	500	2,700
Other services	-400	-1,100	-700
Government	-5,100	-3,400	1,700

Government cut only 3,400 jobs in December, when a loss of 5,100 would have been the normal seasonal pattern. Local government cut only 2,400 for the month, when a larger loss would have been normal. Local government education dropped 2,000, and is down 3,800 since December 2010. Severe reductions at local K through 12 school districts during June through August brought local government employment 8,800

below its comparable 2010 headcount. Since then, seasonally adjusted employment has been gradually rising, but it is still well below year-ago levels.



Federal government continues to trend downward, with the December figure of 26,700 the lowest in decades. Meanwhile, state government performed about as expected in

December, with a loss of 500 jobs. State education added 1,100 jobs during the past 12 months, while the remainder of state government cut 300 over the same period.

Private educational and health services cut 2,100 jobs, when a gain of 100 is the norm for December. The industry returned from a one-month spike upward in the prior month. Over the longer term, private educational and health services has trended upward rapidly and consistently, gaining 9,100 jobs, or 3.9 percent, since December 2010. Each of this broader industry's five published component industries has gained at least 1,100 jobs in those 12 months.

Construction performed above the normal seasonal pattern, but from a low base. It cut only 2,300 jobs in December, when a loss of 2,900 was expected due to seasonality. Most of its component industries cut jobs in December, but building equipment contractors showed a slight gain of 300 jobs.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, construction bottomed in late 2010 at about 67,000 jobs. Since then the industry has gradually inched ahead to employed 70,800 such jobs by December. This was the industry's highest seasonally adjusted headcount since employing 71,000 in September 2009. These recent job gains are partially reflected in a slight upturn in Oregon residential building permits, which were up about 8 percent for January through November 2011 compared with the same period in 2010.

Hours and Earnings (Establishment Survey Data)

The average workweek for Oregon manufacturing production workers spiked up to 41.5 hours in December, a gain from 38.9 in July, just five months prior. This was the highest level since 41.6 hours in July 2006. This measure of the workweek has risen rapidly over the past two and a half

years and is up from the December 2010 figure of 39.2 hours.

Average earnings of all private-sector payroll employees in Oregon surged to \$22.30 per hour in December from \$21.89 in November. The December figure was up 64 cents per hour, or 3.0 percent, from December 2010.

Unemployment (Household Survey Data)

The national unemployment rate dropped from 8.7 percent in November to 8.5 percent in December. Oregon's December rate of 8.9 percent was 0.4 percentage point above the U.S. rate. 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 been on a generally declining trend for the past two and a half years. Since reaching a high point of 11.6 percent in May and June 2009, Oregon's rate has trended downward. At 8.9 percent in December, it is at its lowest rate since November 2008, when Oregon's rate was 8.4 percent.

In December, 175,830 Oregonians were unemployed. This is 29,152 fewer individuals than in December 2010 when 204,982 Oregonians were unemployed.

Next Press Releases

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the December county and metropolitan area unemployment rates on Monday, January 23rd and the statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data for January on Tuesday, February 28th.

For many years, monthly employment estimates for Oregon and its metropolitan areas were developed by Oregon Employment Department economists. These economists were also responsible for revising the initial sample-based estimates annually, based on more complete information from Oregon businesses. This revisions process is known as benchmarking.

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.

BLS staff is also taking over responsibility for the annual benchmarking process. The results of this process will be reflected when revised data for 2010 and 2011 are released in February and March 2012.

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.

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.

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

Oregon Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	December 2011	November 2011	December 2010	Change From November 2011	Change From December 2010
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	1,983,580	1,994,149	1,981,326	-10,569	2,254
Unemployed	175,830	166,686	204,982	9,144	-29,152
Unemployment rate	8.9	8.4	10.3	0.5	-1.4
Unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted	8.9	9.1	10.6	-0.2	-1.7
Employed	1,807,750	1,827,463	1,776,344	-19,713	31,406
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm payroll employment	1,634,000	1,642,200	1,616,500	-8,200	17,500
Total private	1,338,900	1,343,700	1,315,800	-4,800	23,100
Mining and logging	6,500	6,800	6,600	-300	-100
Logging	5,100	5,300	5,200	-200	-100
Construction	69,700	72,000	66,600	-2,300	3,100
Construction of buildings	15,400	16,000	15,500	-600	-100
Residential building construction	9,000	9,300	9,000	-300	0
Nonresidential building construction	6,400	6,700	6,500	-300	-100
Heavy and civil engineering construction	8,100	8,900	8,500	-800	-400
Specialty trade contractors	46,200	47,100	42,600	-900	3,600
Building foundation and exterior contractors	8,900	8,900	8,700	0	200
Building equipment contractors	24,000	23,700	19,400	300	4,600
Building finishing contractors	8,100	9,000	8,900	-900	-800
Other specialty trade contractors	5,200	5,500	5,600	-300	-400
Manufacturing	163,000	165,000	164,200	-2,000	-1,200
Durable goods	115,500	116,600	115,000	-1,100	500
Wood product manufacturing	17,800	18,100	18,900	-300	-1,100
Sawmills and wood preservation	6,100	6,200	5,900	-100	200
Plywood and engineered wood product mfg.	6,000	6,100	6,500	-100	-500
Other wood product manufacturing	5,700	5,800	6,500	-100	-800
Primary metal manufacturing	7,700	7,900	7,600	-200	100
Fabricated metal product manufacturing	14,400	14,400	14,300	0	100
Machinery manufacturing	10,900	10,800	10,000	100	900
Computer and electronic product manufacturing	36,800	36,700	35,400	100	1,400
Semiconductor and electronic component mfg.	27,300	27,300	26,200	0	1,100
Electronic instrument manufacturing	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	0
Transportation equipment manufacturing	10,300	10,400	10,200	-100	100
Nondurable goods	47,500	48,400	49,200	-900	-1,700
Food manufacturing	23,600	23,600	25,200	0	-1,600
Fruit and vegetable preserving and specialty	7,900	8,200	8,600	-300	-700
Paper manufacturing	4,700	4,700	4,900	0	-200
Trade, transportation, and utilities	321,800	320,000	321,800	1,800	0
Wholesale trade	72,300	72,000	72,000	300	300
Merchant wholesalers, durable goods	30,100	30,000	30,000	100	100
Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods	28,100	28,100	29,100	0	-1,000
Electronic markets and agents and brokers	14,100	13,900	12,900	200	1,200
Retail trade	196,400	195,500	194,700	900	1,700
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	22,600	22,900	21,900	-300	700
Building material and garden supply stores	12,500	12,700	12,700	-200	-200
Food and beverage stores	40,400	40,500	39,300	-100	1,100
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	17,400	16,800	17,400	600	0
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	11,200	11,000	10,700	200	500
General merchandise stores	41,100	40,600	40,100	500	1,000
Miscellaneous store retailers	9,700	9,700	10,200	0	-500
Nonstore retailers	8,500	8,500	8,500	0	0

	December 2011	November 2011	December 2010	Change From November 2011	Change From December 2010
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	53,100	52,500	55,100	600	-2,000
Utilities	4,500	4,400	4,500	100	0
Transportation and warehousing	48,600	48,100	50,600	500	-2,000
Truck transportation	16,500	16,500	16,200	0	300
Couriers and messengers	7,400	6,500	7,700	900	-300
Warehousing and storage	6,400	6,400	6,500	0	-100
Information	33,800	33,800	32,700	0	1,100
Publishing industries, except internet	14,400	14,400	14,100	0	300
Newspaper, book, and directory publishers	4,900	4,900	5,000	0	-100
Software publishers	9,500	9,500	9,100	0	400
Telecommunications	6,600	6,600	6,700	0	-100
Financial activities	93,500	93,000	92,500	500	1,000
Finance and insurance	56,700	56,100	56,100	600	600
Credit intermediation and related activities	27,200	26,900	27,100	300	100
Insurance carriers and related activities	23,000	22,900	23,600	100	-600
Real estate and rental and leasing	36,800	36,900	36,400	-100	400
Real estate	31,600	30,900	30,500	700	1,100
Professional and business services	185,200	185,000	183,800	200	1,400
Professional and technical services	73,600	74,000	71,500	-400	2,100
Legal services	11,800	11,900	12,200	-100	-400
Architectural and engineering services	12,700	12,700	12,400	0	300
Computer systems design and related services	10,100	10,200	10,100	-100	0
Management of companies and enterprises	29,900	30,000	30,600	-100	-700
Administrative and waste services	81,700	81,000	81,700	700	0
Administrative and support services	76,500	75,600	76,500	900	0
Employment services	30,900	31,300	31,200	-400	-300
Business support services	13,200	12,700	13,700	500	-500
Services to buildings and dwellings	17,800	17,200	18,100	600	-300
Educational and health services	242,100	244,200	233,000	-2,100	9,100
Educational services	36,000	36,600	33,900	-600	2,100
Health care and social assistance	206,100	207,600	199,100	-1,500	7,000
Ambulatory health care services	72,700	72,900	70,200	-200	2,500
Hospitals	55,000	55,900	53,700	-900	1,300
Nursing and residential care facilities	45,600	45,700	43,500	-100	2,100
Social assistance	32,800	33,100	31,700	-300	1,100
Leisure and hospitality	166,400	165,900	157,900	500	8,500
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	21,800	20,600	20,600	1,200	1,200
Amusement, gambling, and recreation	15,100	14,400	15,300	700	-200
Accommodation and food services	144,600	145,300	137,300	-700	7,300
Accommodation	19,600	20,000	19,000	-400	600
Food services and drinking places	125,000	125,300	118,300	-300	6,700
Full-service restaurants	62,800	63,000	57,600	-200	5,200
Limited-service eating places	49,500	49,400	49,100	100	400
Other services	56,900	58,000	56,700	-1,100	200
Repair and maintenance	14,800	15,100	14,600	-300	200
Personal and laundry services	11,800	12,000	12,100	-200	-300
Membership associations and organizations	30,300	30,900	30,000	-600	300
Religious organizations	15,800	16,200	16,200	-400	-400
Government	295,100	298,500	300,700	-3,400	-5,600
Federal government	26,700	27,200	27,800	-500	-1,100
State government	82,200	82,700	81,400	-500	800
State education	33,500	33,800	32,400	-300	1,100
Local government	186,200	188,600	191,500	-2,400	-5,300
Indian tribal	8,500	8,600	8,400	-100	100
Local education	98,800	100,800	102,600	-2,000	-3,800
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.