

Pockets of Opportunity in the Labor Market

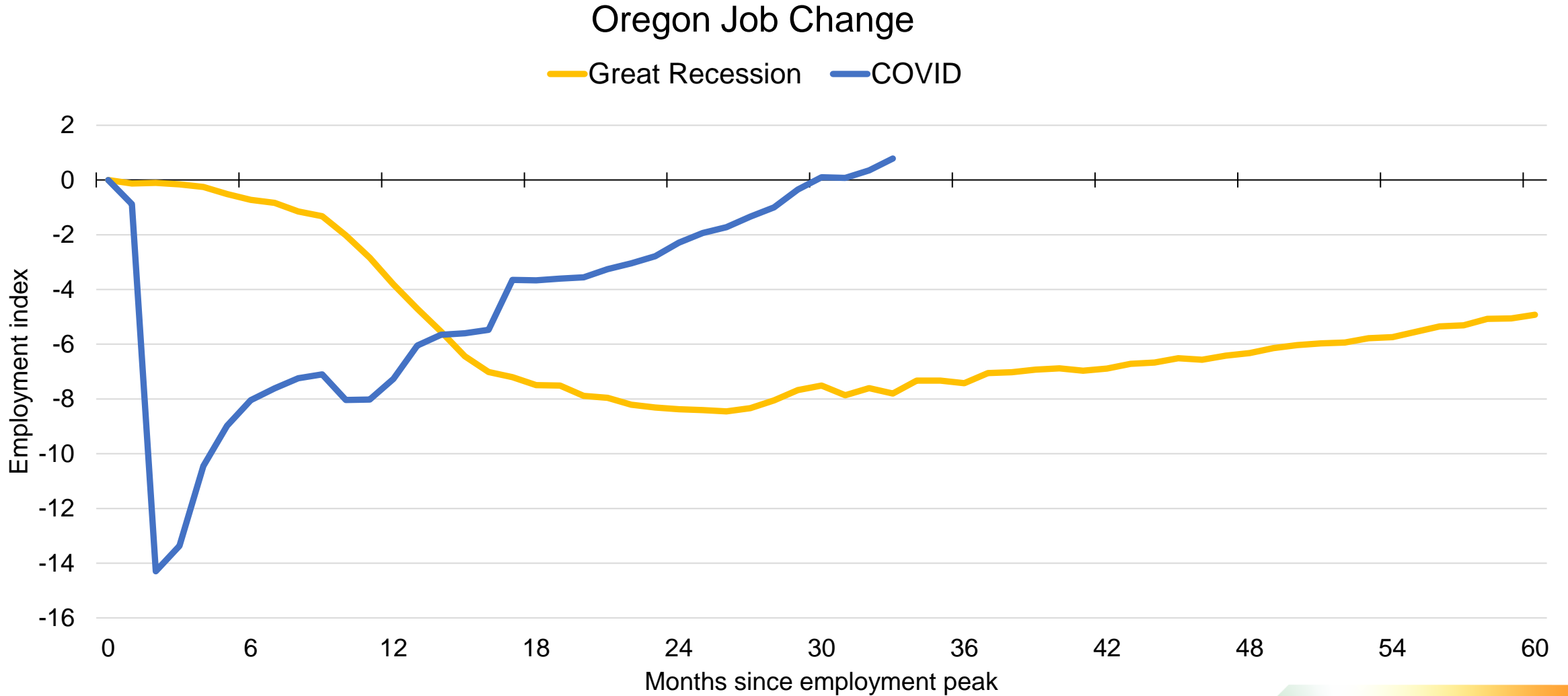
Henry Fields, Lane and Douglas County
Workforce Analyst

August 7th, 2023

Labor Market and Economic Context

- What does everyone need to know about what's happening in the economy?
- Are we on our way out of the tight labor market?

Overall, jobs recovery is fast by historical standards

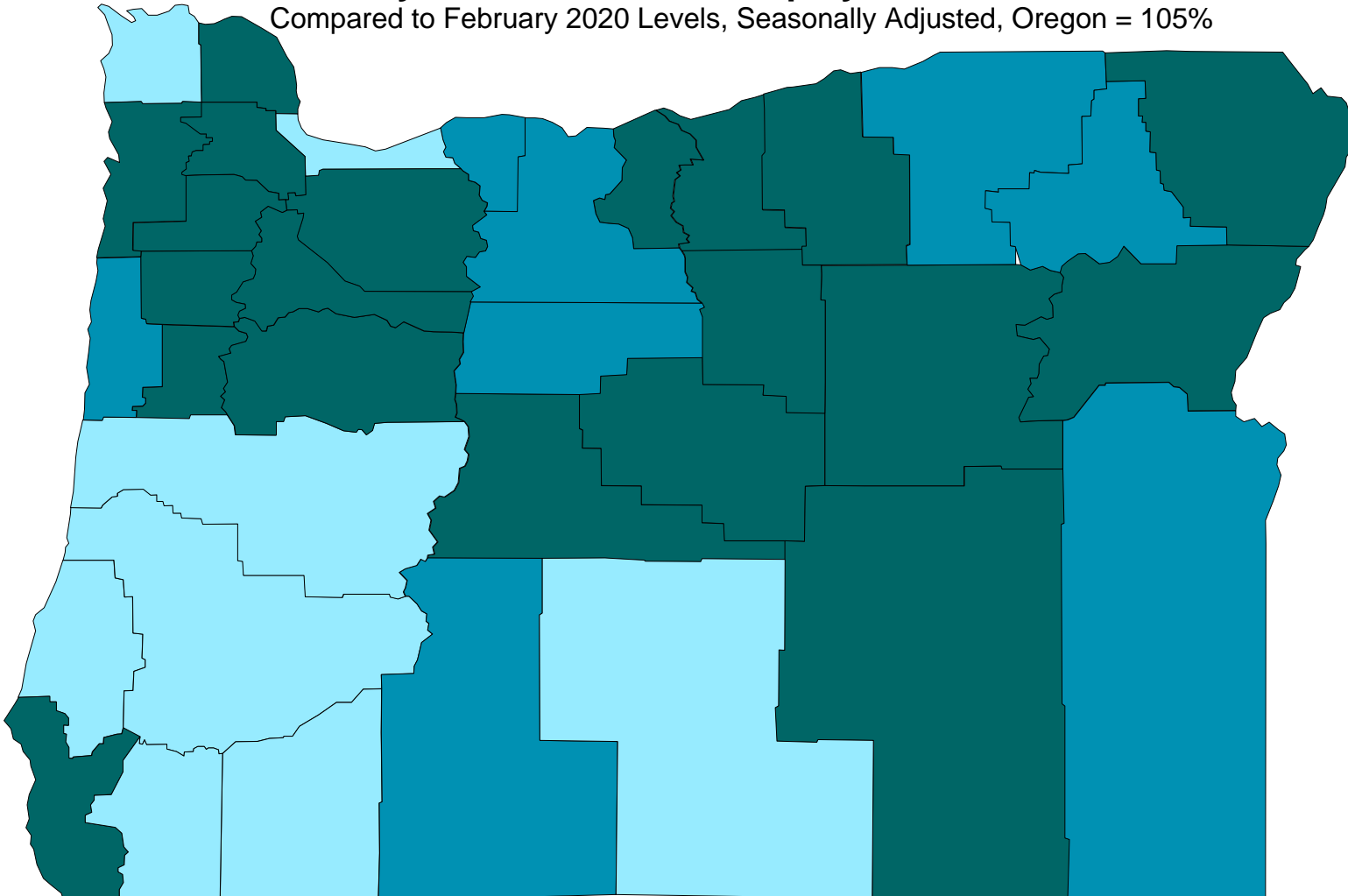


Source: Oregon Employment Department, Current Employment Statistics

Oregon has more jobs now than before the pandemic recession

Recovery of Total Nonfarm Employment as of June 2023

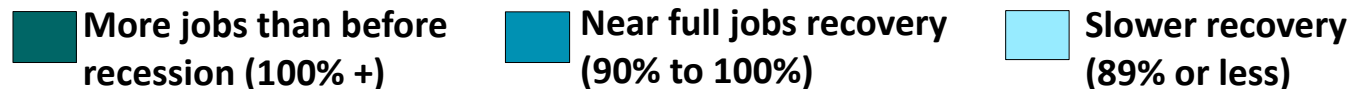
Compared to February 2020 Levels, Seasonally Adjusted, Oregon = 105%



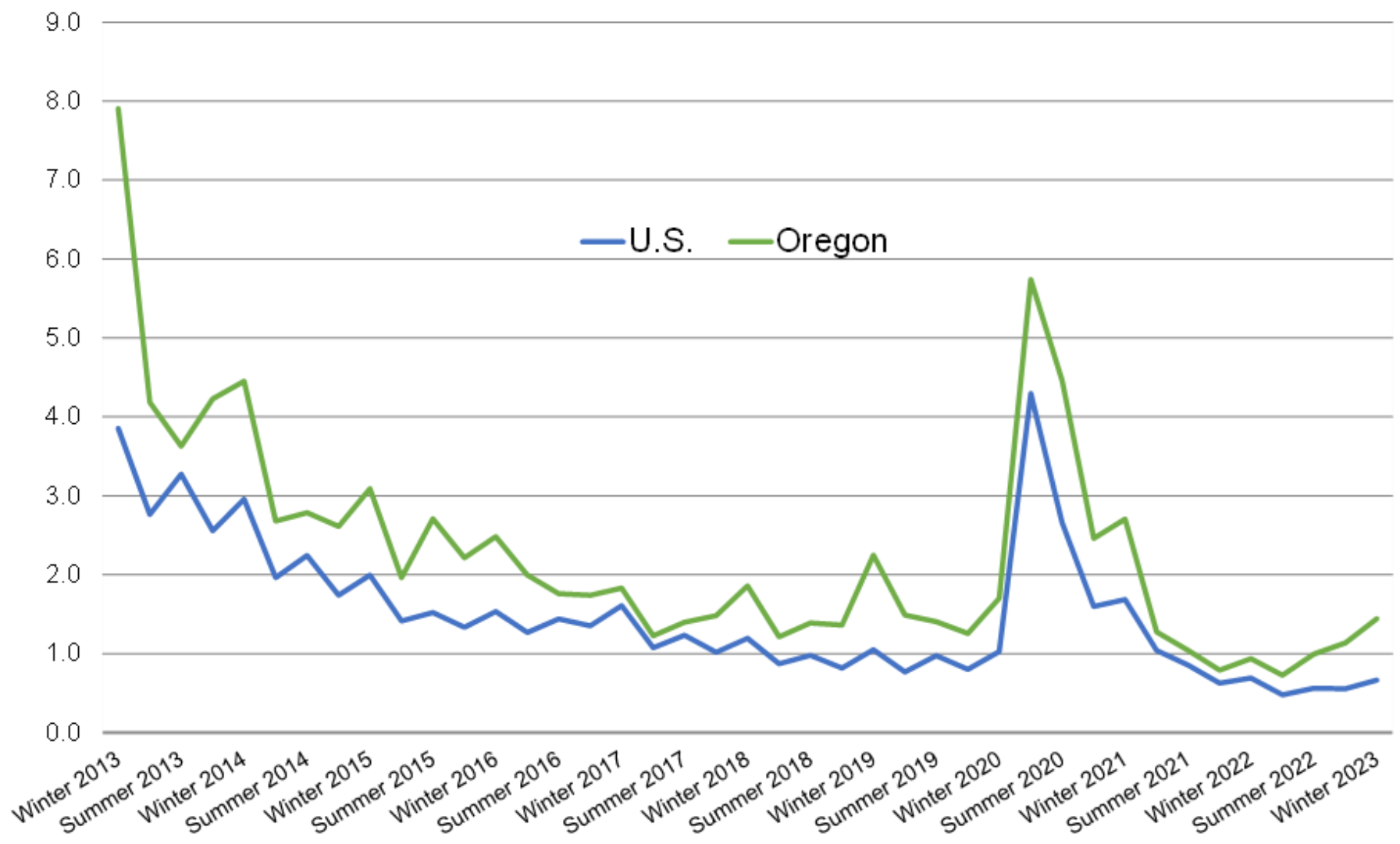
Jobs recovery and expansion is widespread across the state:

- 19 counties have regained their total pandemic recession job losses.
- Recovery has been a bit slower in Southern Oregon.

Source: Oregon Employment Department



Recent data shows a low jobseeker to vacancy ratio



Number of unemployed people per private job opening

Source: Oregon Employment Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Definition of unemployed

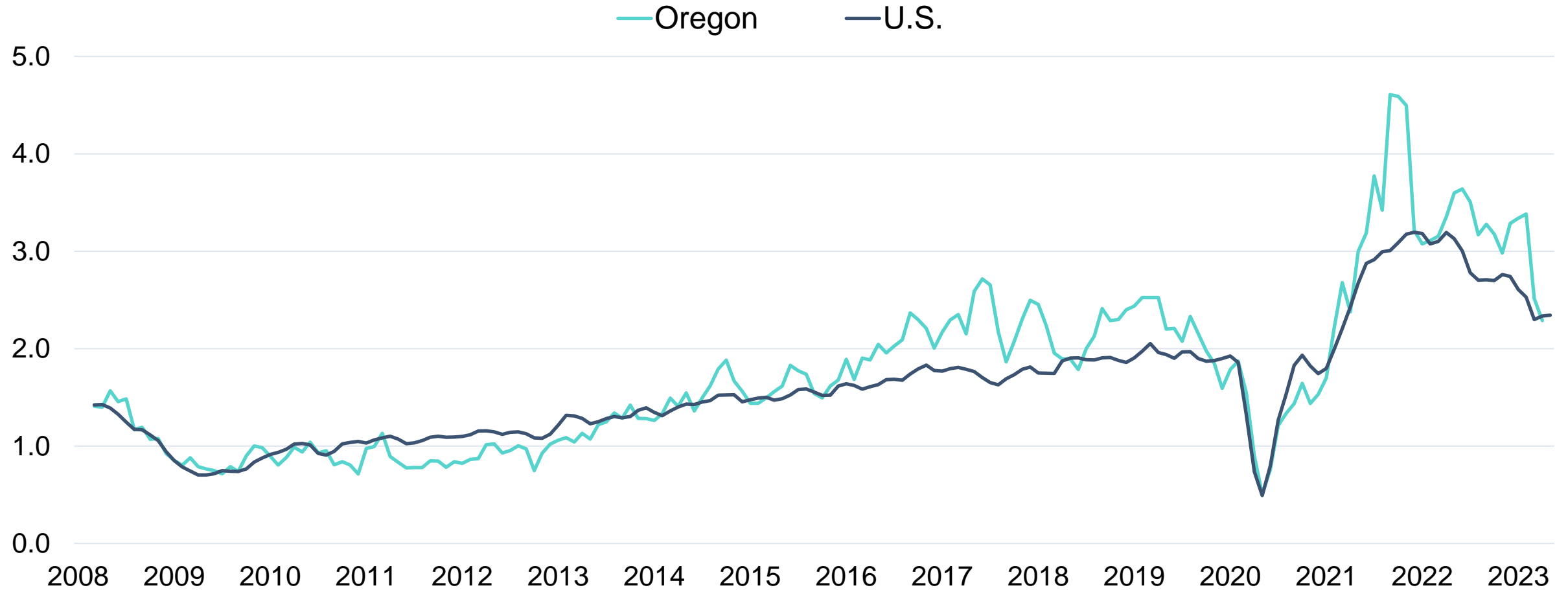
To be counted as unemployed (in the regularly used definition), an individual must be age 16 or older, not on active duty in the military, not in an institution, and:

- Not employed
- Available for work
- Making specific efforts to find employment within the last four weeks.

Note: whether or not an individual has applied for, is receiving, or has ever received unemployment insurance benefits is not a factor in the statistical definition of the unemployed.

Higher quits and lower layoffs = more labor leverage

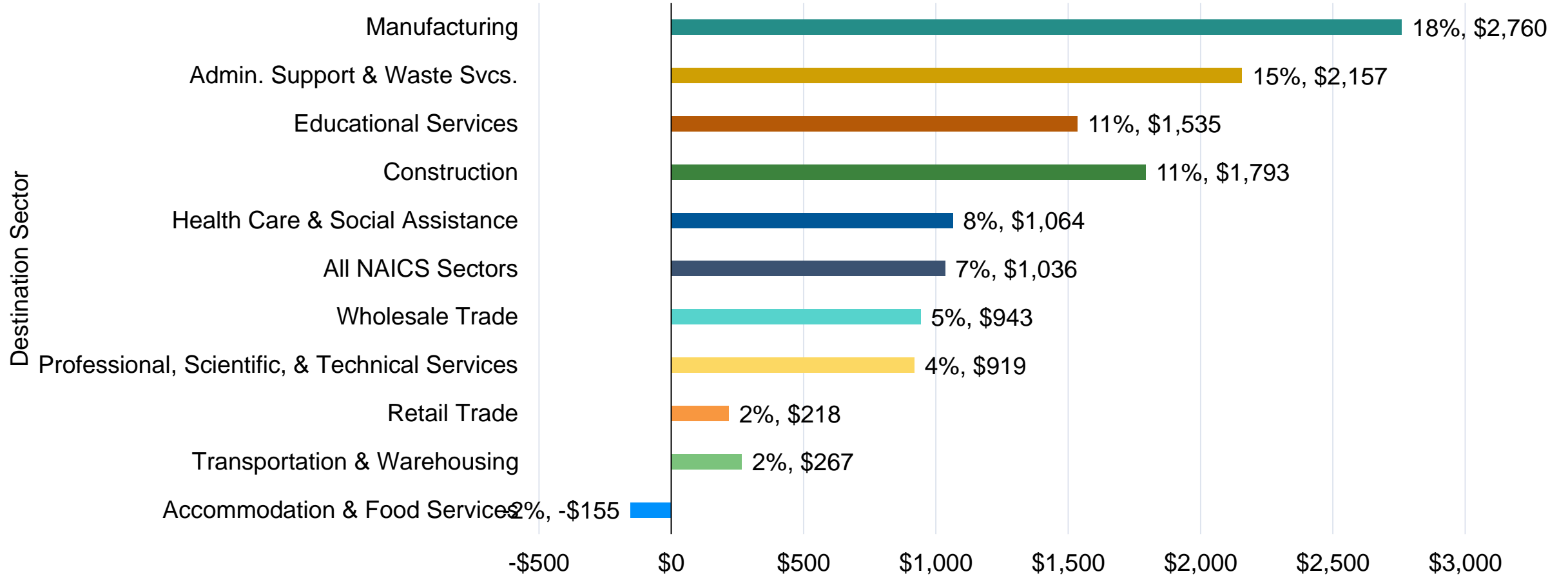
Labor Leverage Ratio (3 month average)



Source: Oregon Employment Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics

When people switch jobs, they're getting higher wages

Change in Quarterly Average Wage following job-to-job flow
Oregon, 2022 Q1

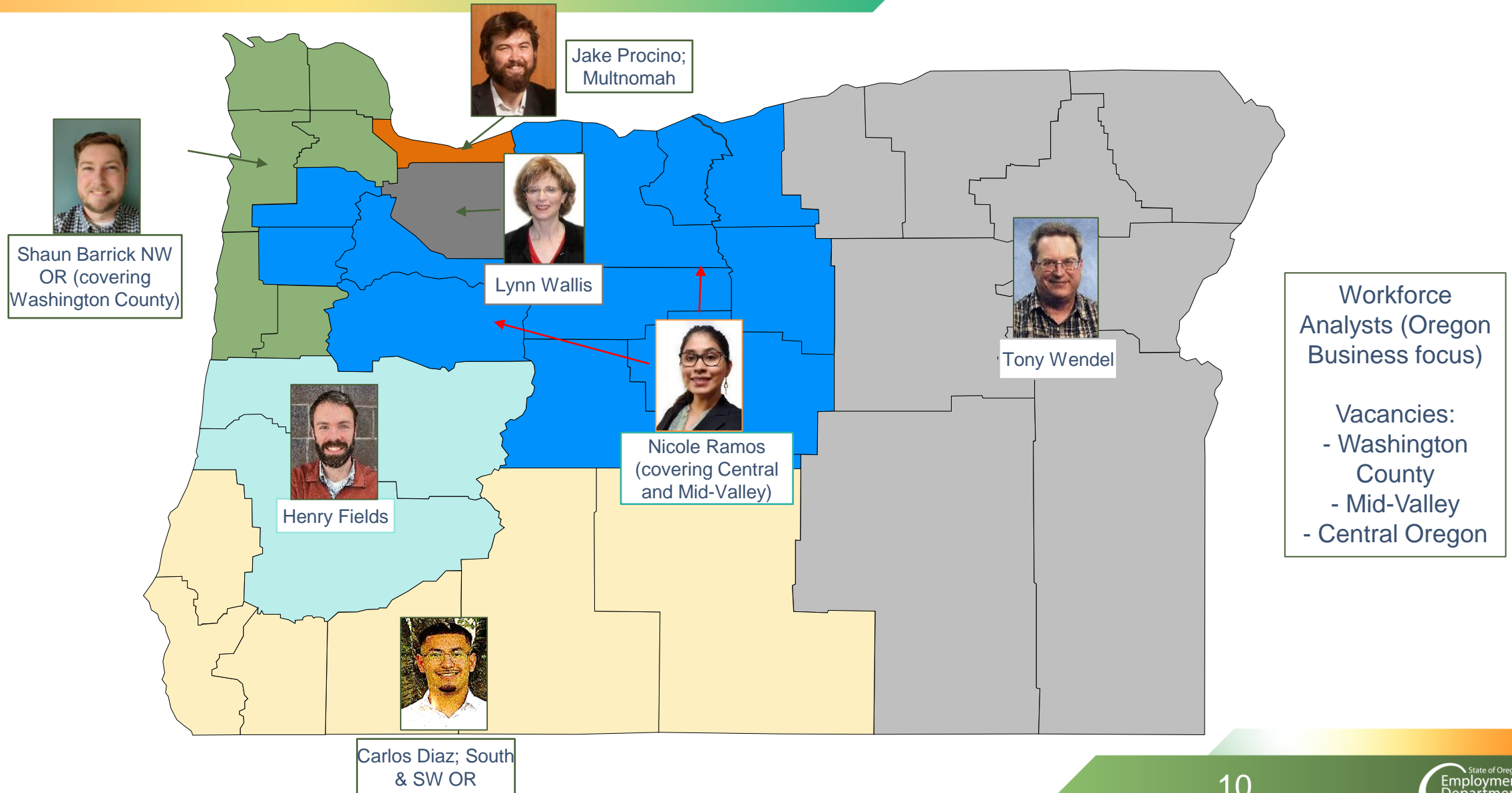


Source: Oregon Employment Department, U.S. Census Bureau Job to Job Flows Explorer

Where can I get the information I need for projects I'm working on?

- OED's Workforce Analysts are here to help
- Quality Info is the state's public labor market information website

Workforce Analysts cover 9 regions of Oregon



Taking advantage of public data resources

Contact us and access data at our website, [Qualityinfo.org](https://qualityinfo.org).

The screenshot displays the State of Oregon Employment Department website. The header includes the logo and tagline 'Quality Information, Informed Choices', a search bar, and navigation links for Tools, Regional Info, Data, Publications, and Press Release. The main content is divided into two sections: 'OUR LATEST RESEARCH' and 'OREGON ECONOMIC INDICATORS'. The research section features a 'BREAKING NEWS' banner for a report on family, medical, and safe leave impacts, dated July 26. The economic indicators section lists four key metrics: Unemployment Rate (3.5%, down 0.2%), Total Unemployed (75,588, down 5,090), Nonfarm Employment (1,985,600, up 5,700), and Job Vacancies (69,171, down 7.7%).

Indicator	Value	Change
Unemployment Rate - June 2023	3.5%	↓ 0.2%
Total Unemployed - June 2023	75,588	↓ -5,090
Nonfarm Employment - June 2023	1,985,600	↑ 5,700
Job Vacancies - 2nd Quarter 2023	69,171	↓ -7.7%

I made a list of publicly accessible data sources on labor force and population statistics. Check it out:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19qlwUMexIbYMy4vypCG2FZD1IqB4bxrrwTtZlrrxJAY/edit?usp=sharing>

Finding the pockets of opportunity

- Bringing more people into the labor market, but also new industries and opportunities
- Learning from examples
- Thinking about each “link in the chain” when it comes to systemic issues

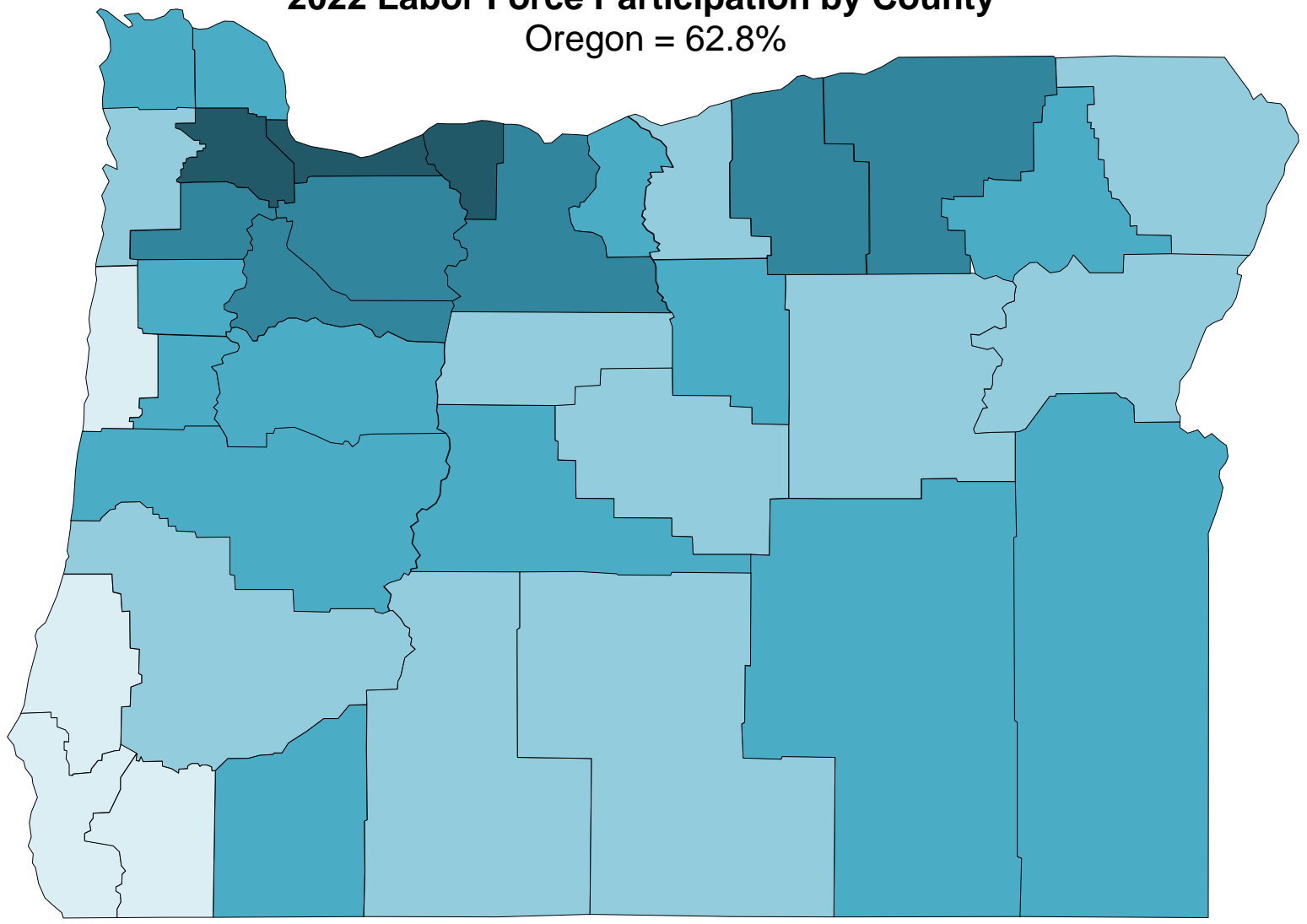


Geographic

Labor force participation rates vary widely across Oregon's counties.

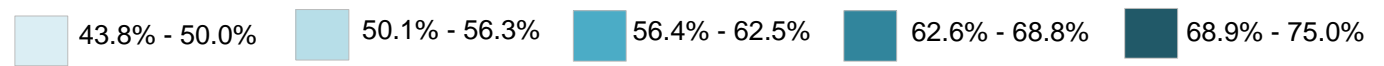
2022 Labor Force Participation by County

Oregon = 62.8%



High
Hood River County
75.0%

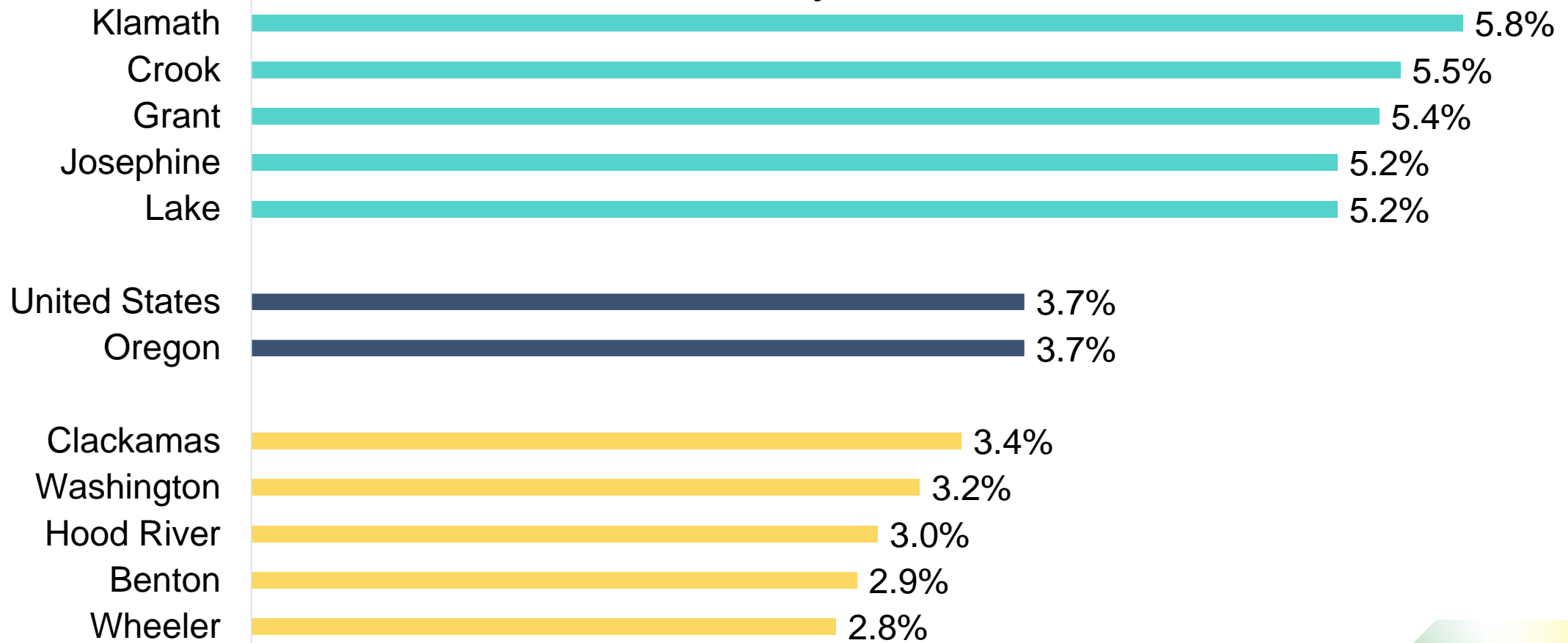
Low
Curry County
43.8%



Source: Oregon Employment Department

Even in low unemployment there's regional variation

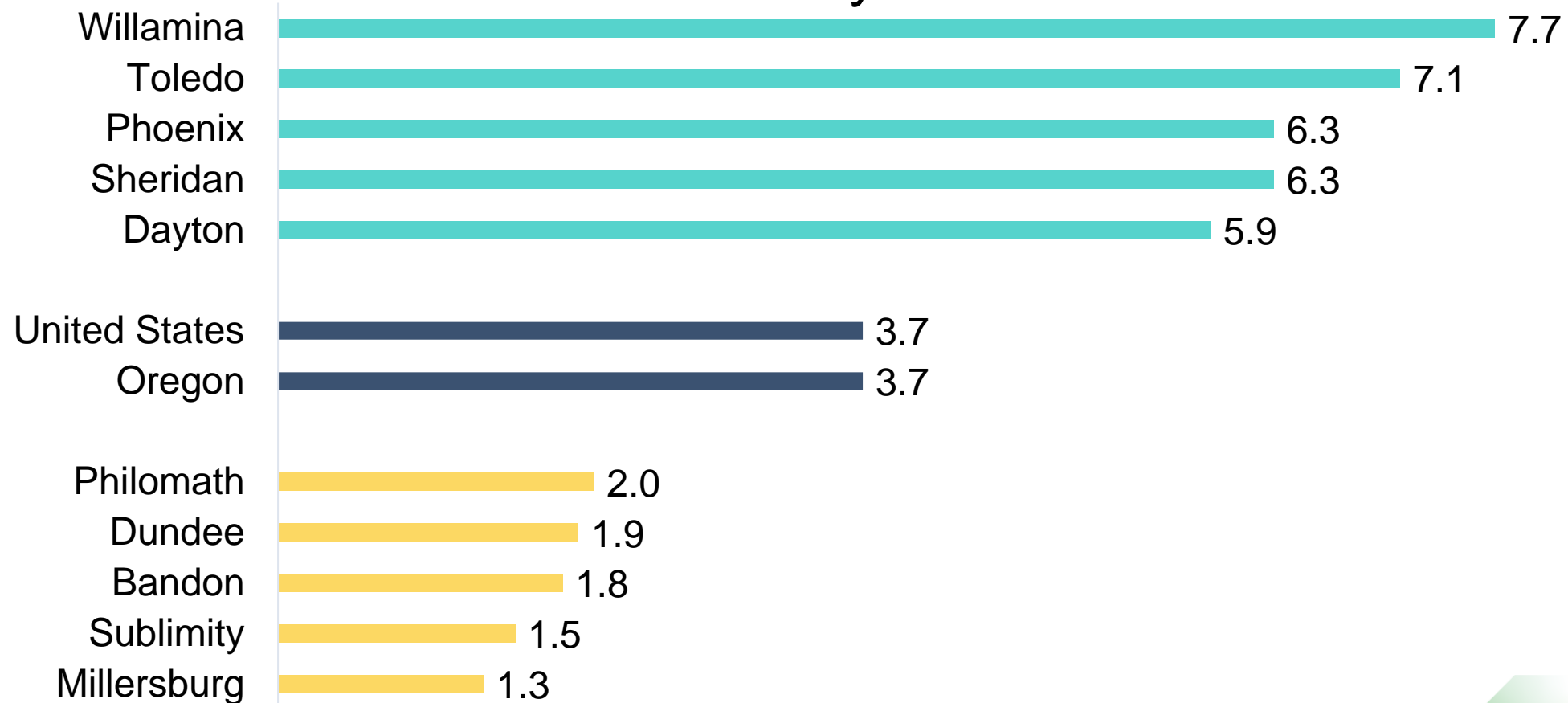
Unemployment Rate May 2023



Source: Oregon Employment Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics

At the locality level, there's even more variation

Unemployment Rate May 2023



Source: Oregon Employment Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics

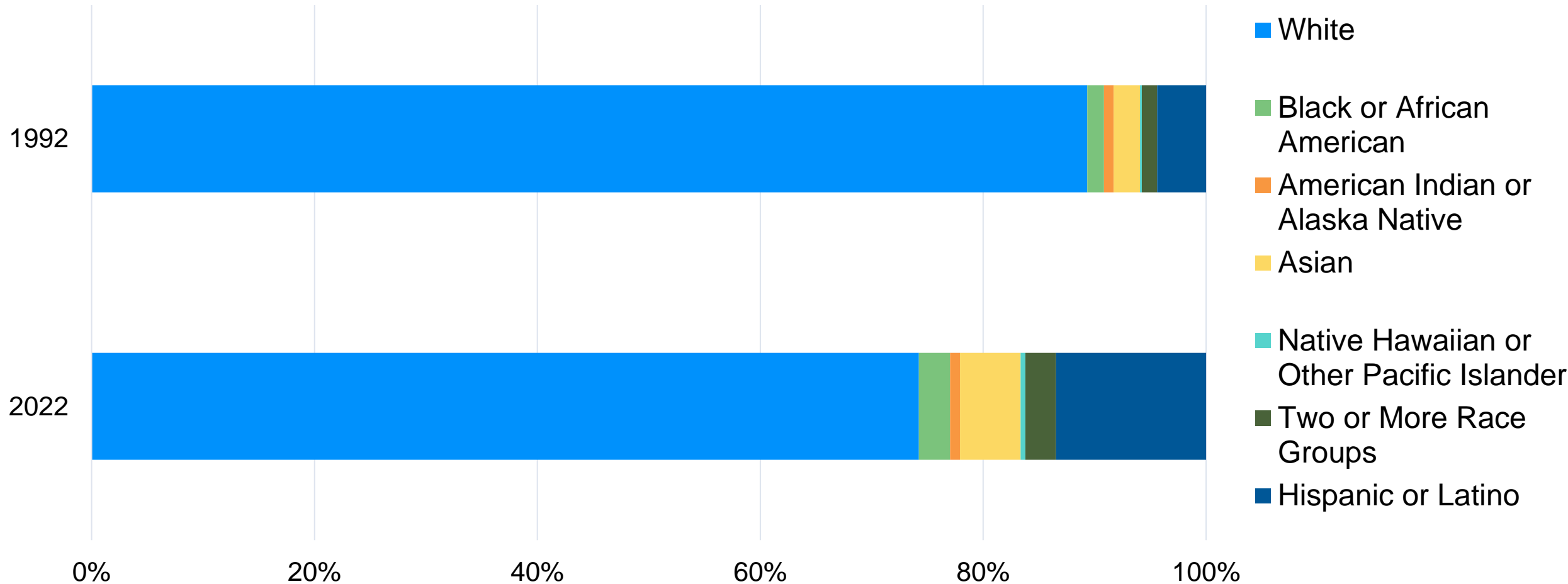
Suggestions

- Work with local WorkSource staff to find best local worker leads and trends
- Workforce Analysts can help you find key trends in your area

Race, Ethnicity, Gender

Oregon's workforce isn't as diverse as the U.S....

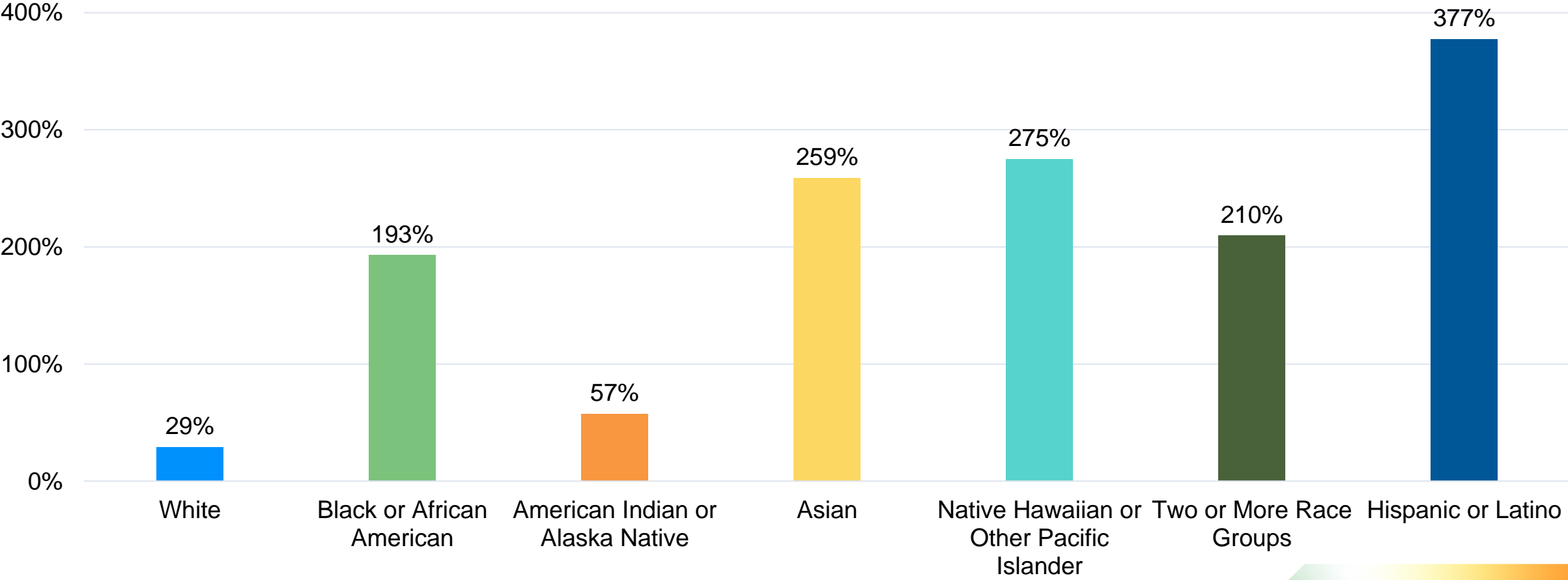
Oregon Workforce by race and ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

...but change is happening very rapidly

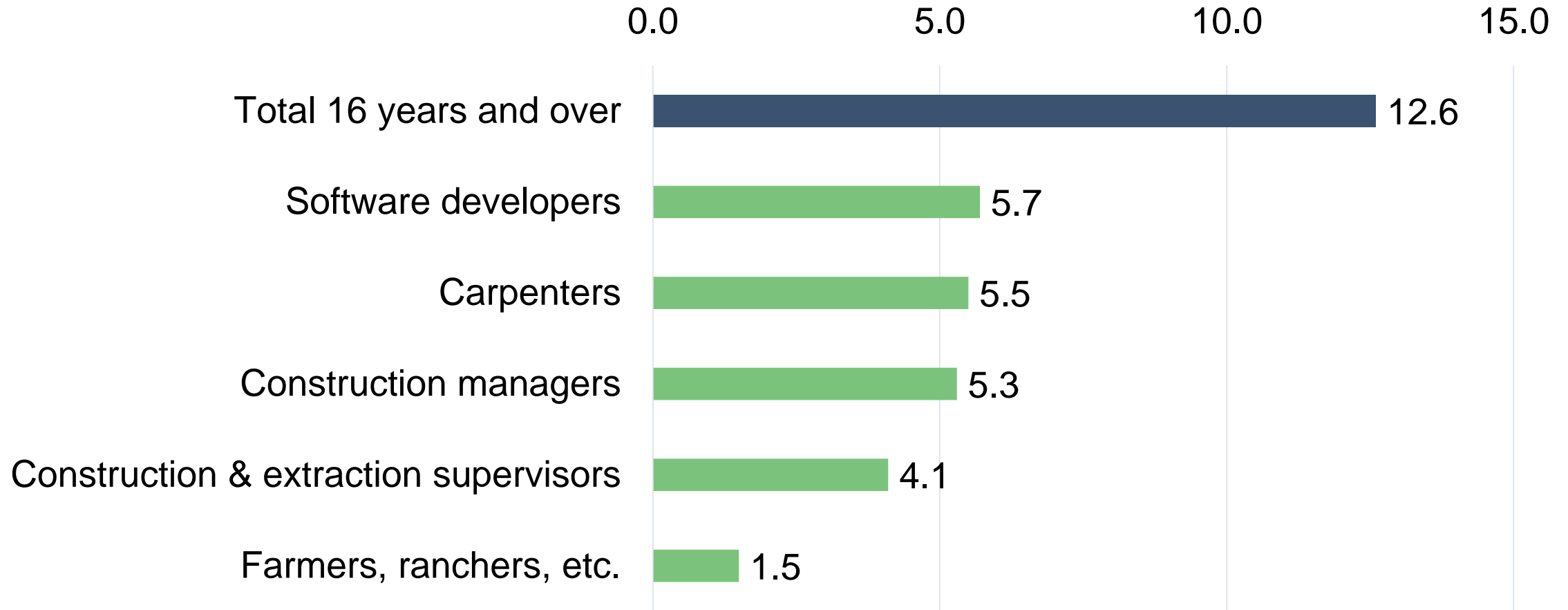
Percentage growth in workforce by race/ethnicity Oregon, 1992-2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Some examples of occupational underrepresentation

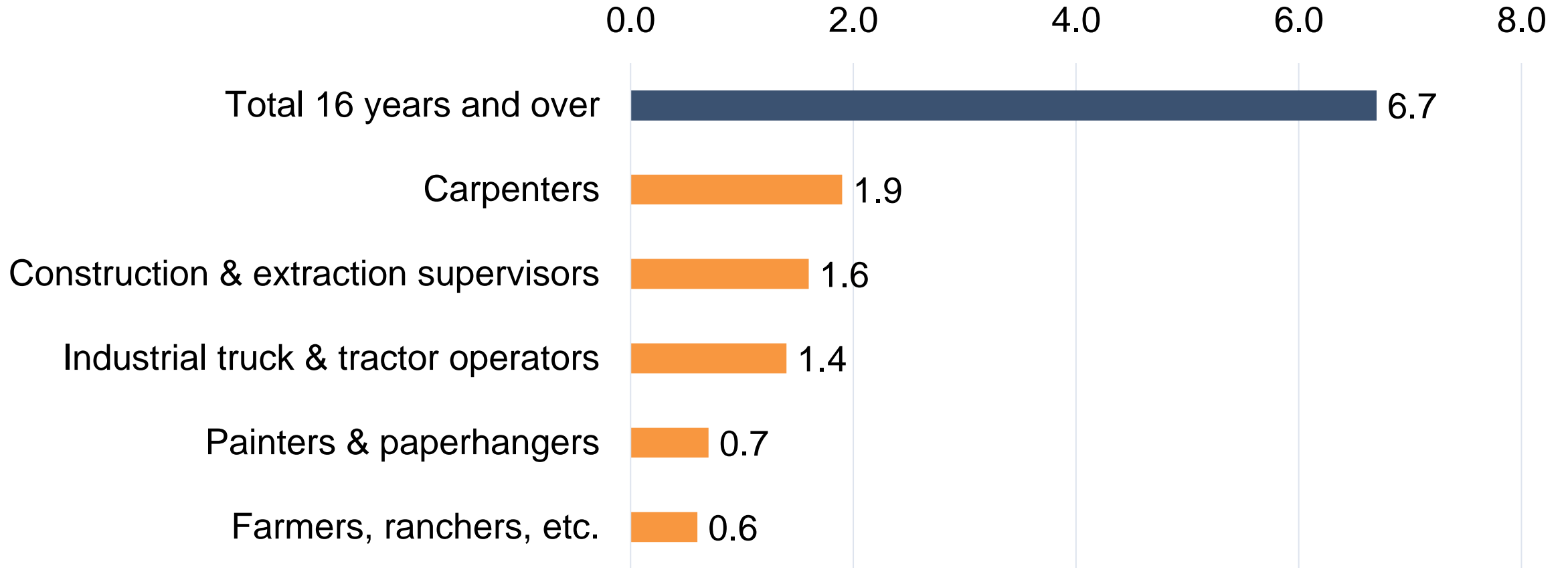
Percentage of U.S. workers that are Black or African American



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

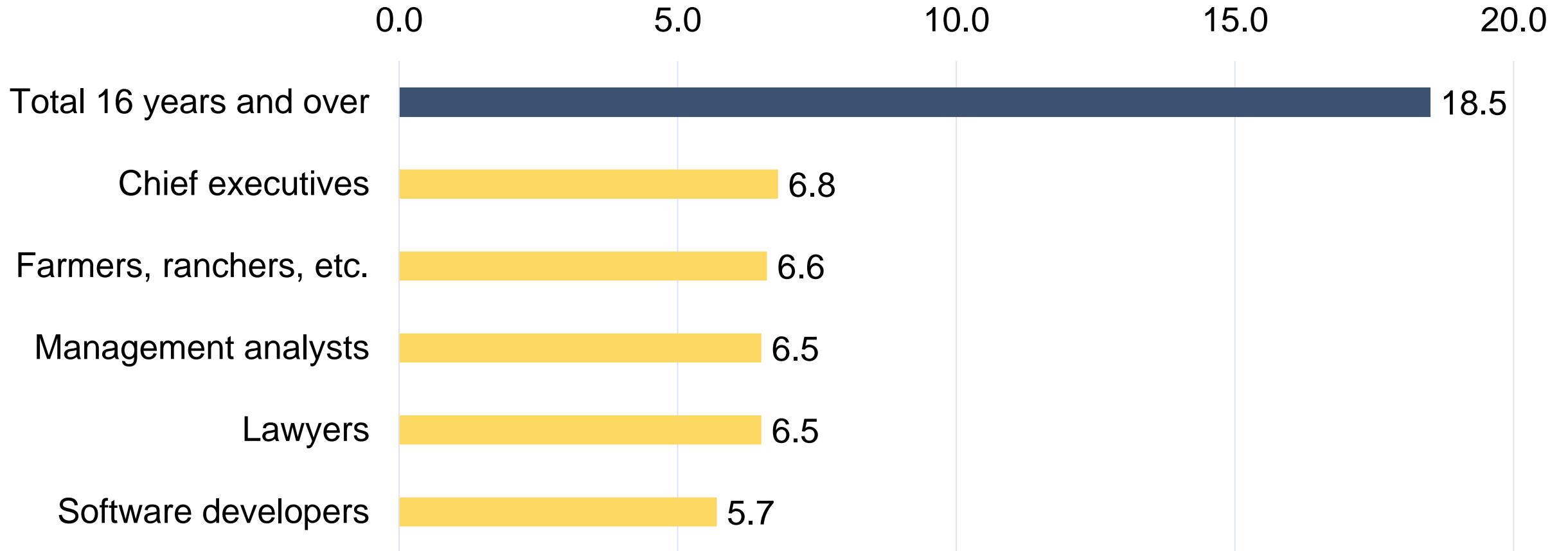
Some examples of occupational underrepresentation

Percentage of U.S. workers that are Asian



Some examples of occupational underrepresentation

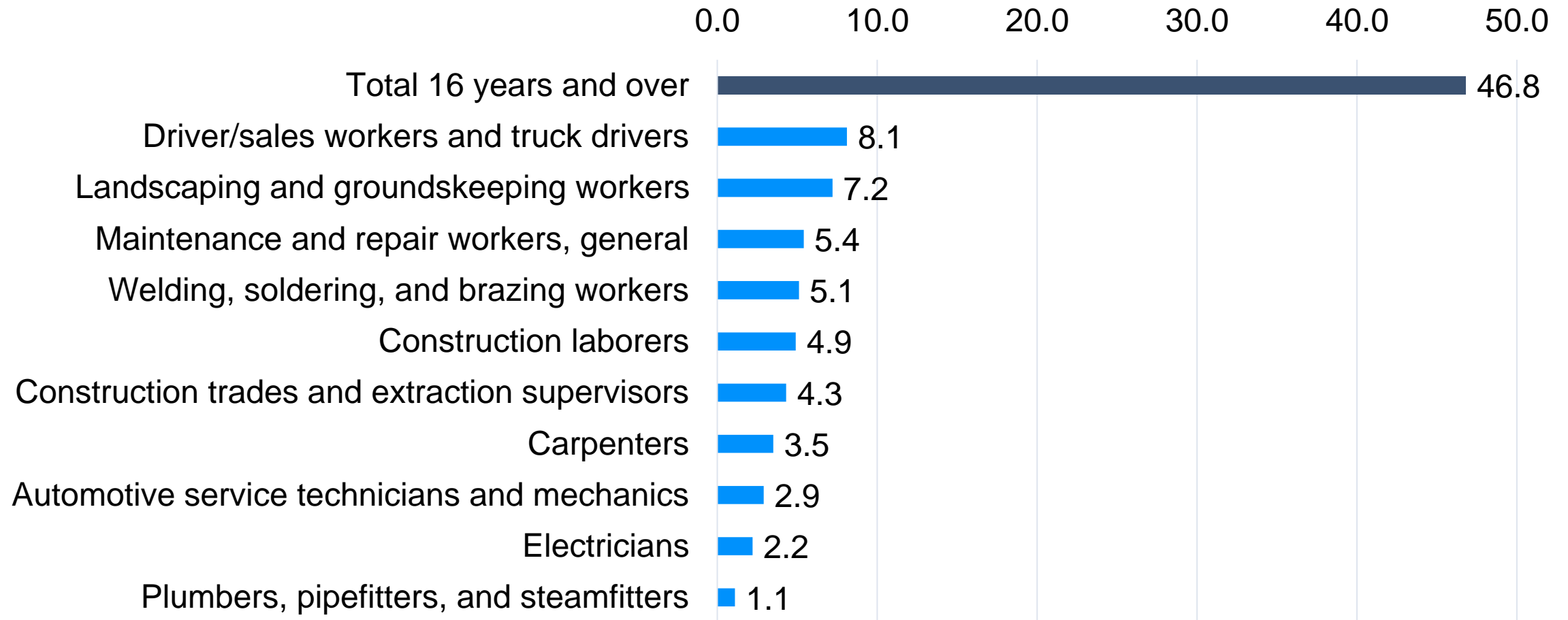
Percentage of U.S. workers that are Hispanic or Latino



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Women are dramatically represented in many occupations

Percentage of U.S. workers that are women



Suggestions

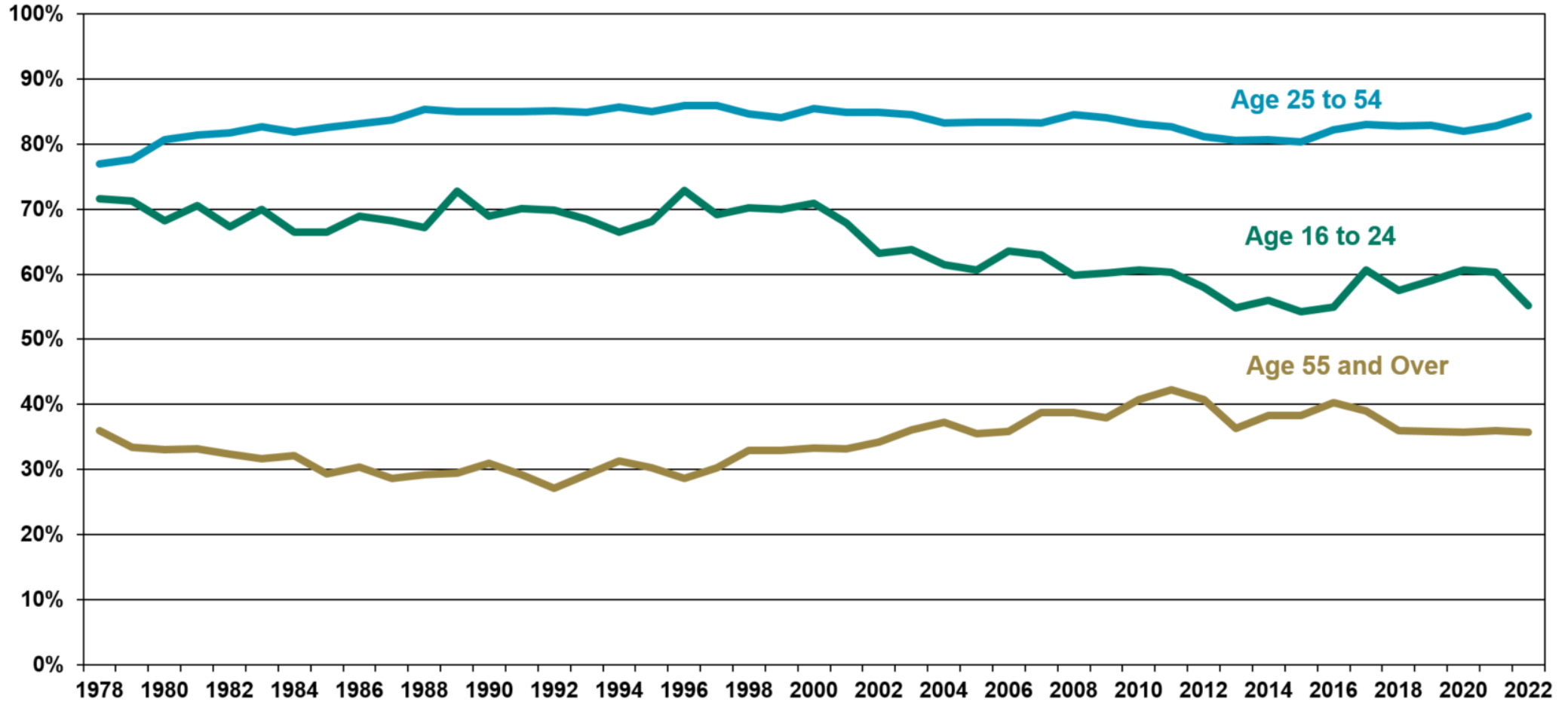
- Take full advantage of the labor market value of overcoming underrepresentation
- However – systematic issues aren't solved overnight.
- Working with nonprofits, trade and industry groups can be powerful:
 - ▶ [Oregon Tradeswomen](#)



Age

Young people are less likely to participate in the labor force...

Oregon Labor Force Participation Rates by Age Group



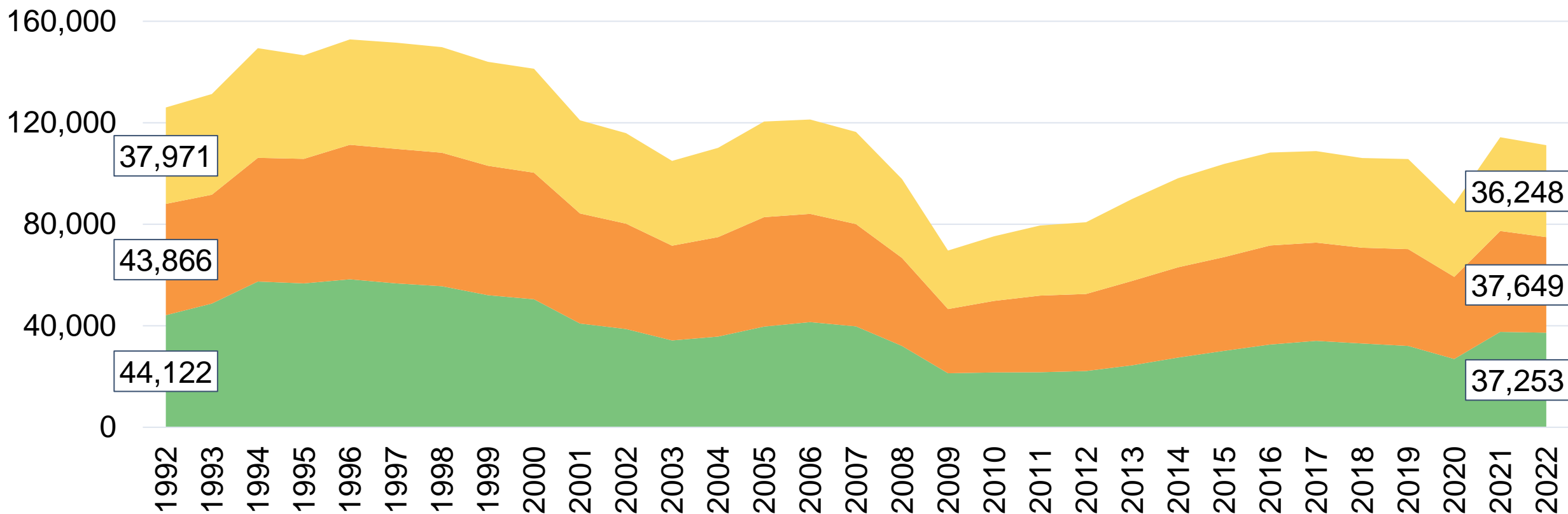
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

...but less job access is a “chicken and egg” problem.

Teen summer jobs are less plentiful than they used to be

3rd Quarter New Hires by age, Oregon

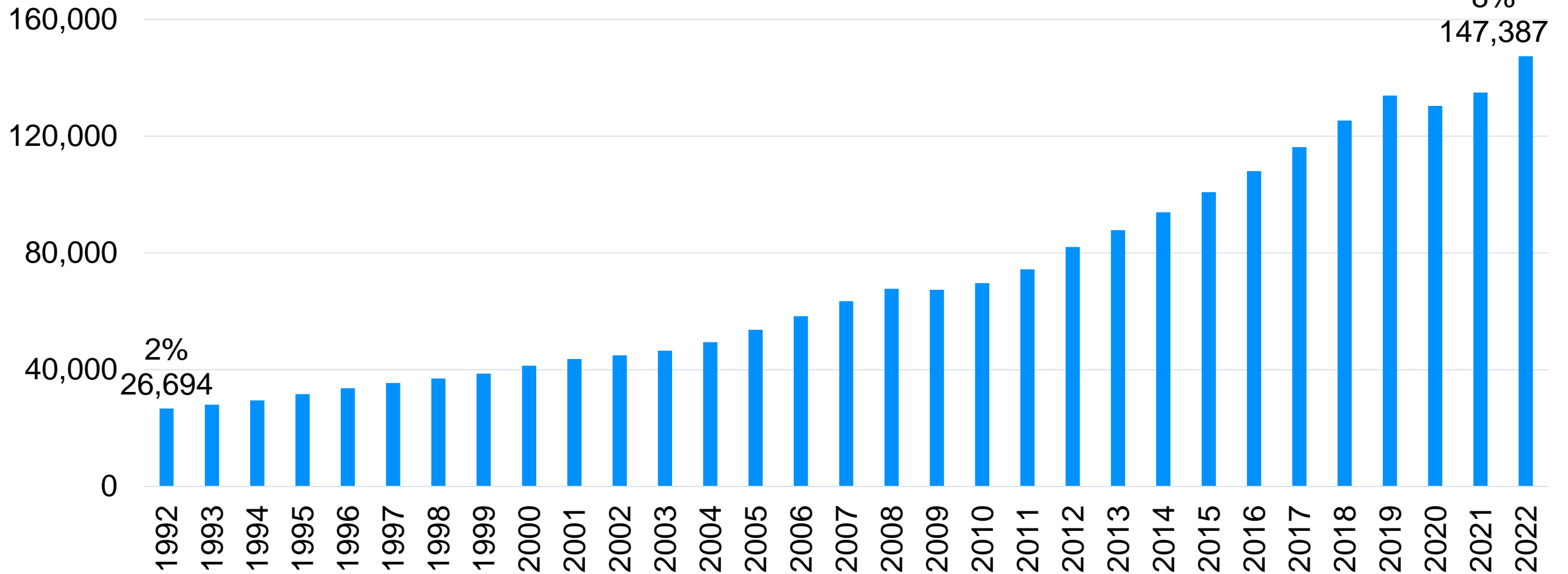
■ 14-18 ■ 19-21 ■ 22-24



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

There are many more workers 65+ in the workforce

Workers 65 and older in the Oregon workforce



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Suggestions

- Age of workers is heavily skewed by industry – understand demographic and regional trends.
- Help older workers become a key part of the workforce solution rather than a liability.
- Providing access to the labor market for young workers may pay off down the line.

Henry Fields

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