

2018

Characteristics of Older Workers in Oklahoma



**Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
Economic Research and Analysis Division**

Characteristics of Older Workers in Oklahoma 2001-2017

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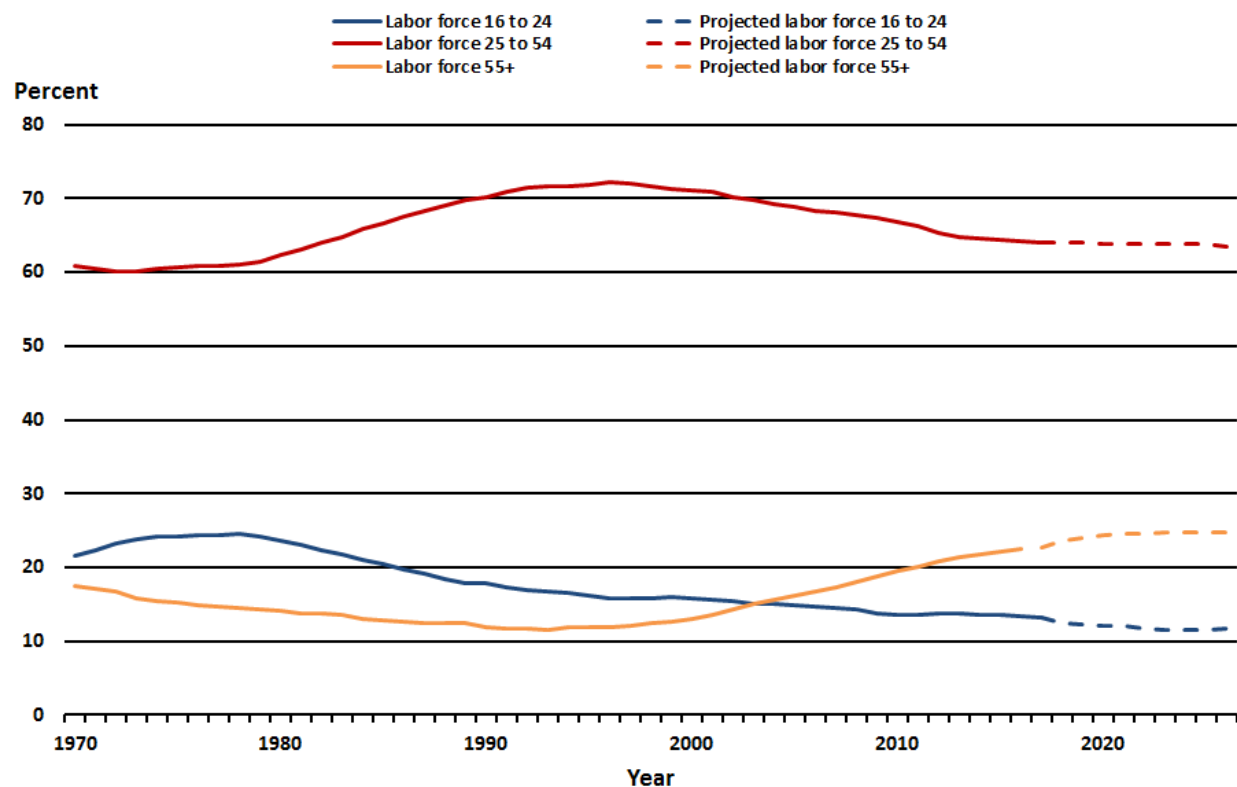
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Characteristics of Older Workers in Oklahoma, 2001-2017

Introduction

As the baby-boom generation, defined as persons born between 1946 and 1964, begins joining the ranks of those aged 65 and over, the graying of the American workforce is only just beginning.¹ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), between 1977 and 2007, employment of people 65 and over doubled while employment for everyone 16 and over increased by less than 60 percent. The BLS also noted that about 40 percent of people ages 55 and older were working or actively looking for work in 2014. That number, known as a labor force participation rate, is expected to increase fastest for the oldest segments of the population—most notably, people ages 65 to 74 and 75 and older—through 2024. In contrast, participation rates for most other age groups in the labor force aren't projected to change much over the 2014–24 decade.² Chart 1, below, shows U.S. labor force shares by age groups from 1970 through 2016 (and projected 2016 to 2026). The labor market share of workers in the age group of 55 years and older has grown steadily since the early 1990s, nearly doubling from 11.8 percent in 1991 to 22.8 percent in 2017. This age group is also projected to grow to 24.8 percent by 2026.

Chart 1: U.S. Labor Force Shares by Age, 1970 to 2016 and Projected 2016-26
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



¹ “Are there more older people in the workplace?” July 2008, *Spotlight on Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

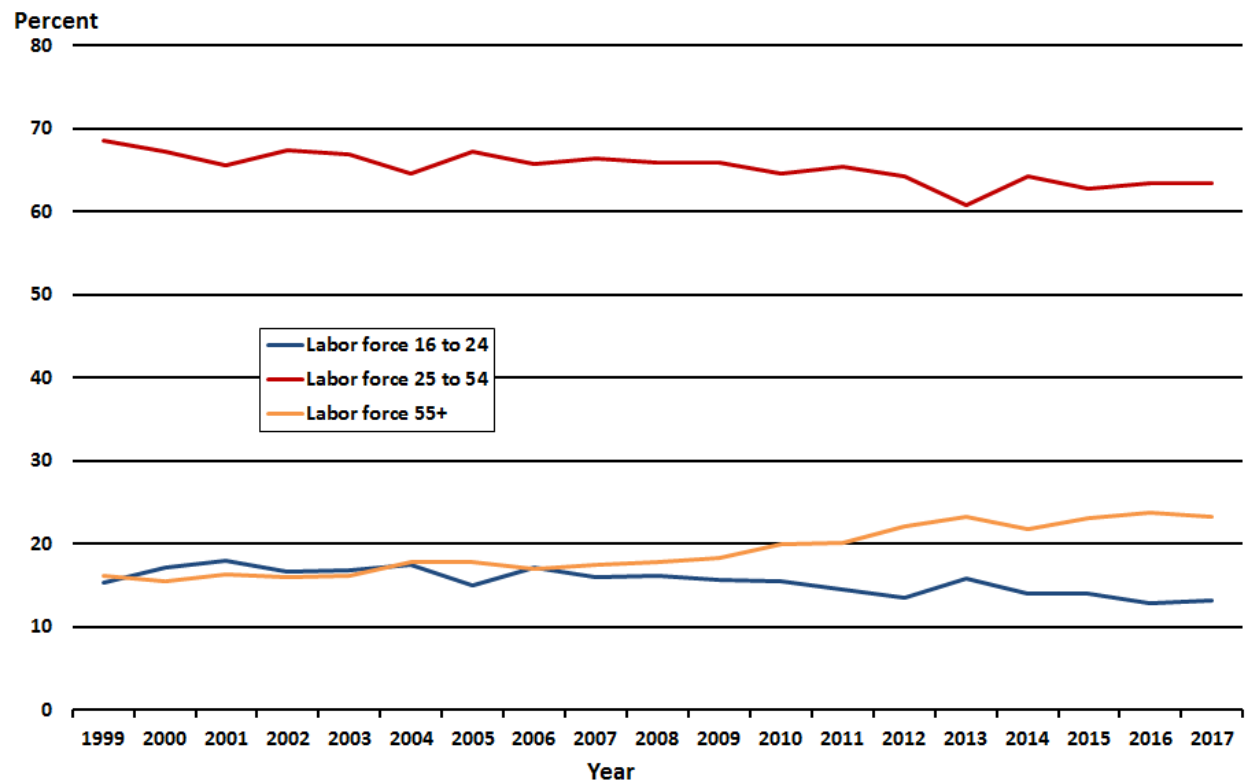
² Mitra Toossi and Elka Torpey, “Older workers: Labor force trends and career options.” May 2017, *Career Outlook*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This analysis reexamines a previous study³ of the characteristics and trends of older workers in Oklahoma using the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) Explorer from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics program along with supporting data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Current Population Survey (CPS) and the Employment Projections program. We will use these datasets to describe Oklahoma’s older workers in terms of employment, gender, industries, earnings and more.

Oklahoma Labor Force Trends, 1999-2017 (Current Population Survey)

Oklahoma’s labor force has also displayed trends similar to the U.S. over the past as the labor market share of workers in the age group of 55 years and older grew from 16.1 percent in 1999 to 23.4 percent in 2017—adding approximately 164,000 workers (61.7 percent). During the same timeframe, the labor market share of workers 16 to 24 years old shrank from 15.3 percent (in 1999) to 13.2 percent in 2017, while the 25 to 54 year old share declined from 68.6 percent to 63.5 percent (see Chart 2, below).

Chart 2: Oklahoma Labor Force Shares by Age, 1999 to 2017
 SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS)

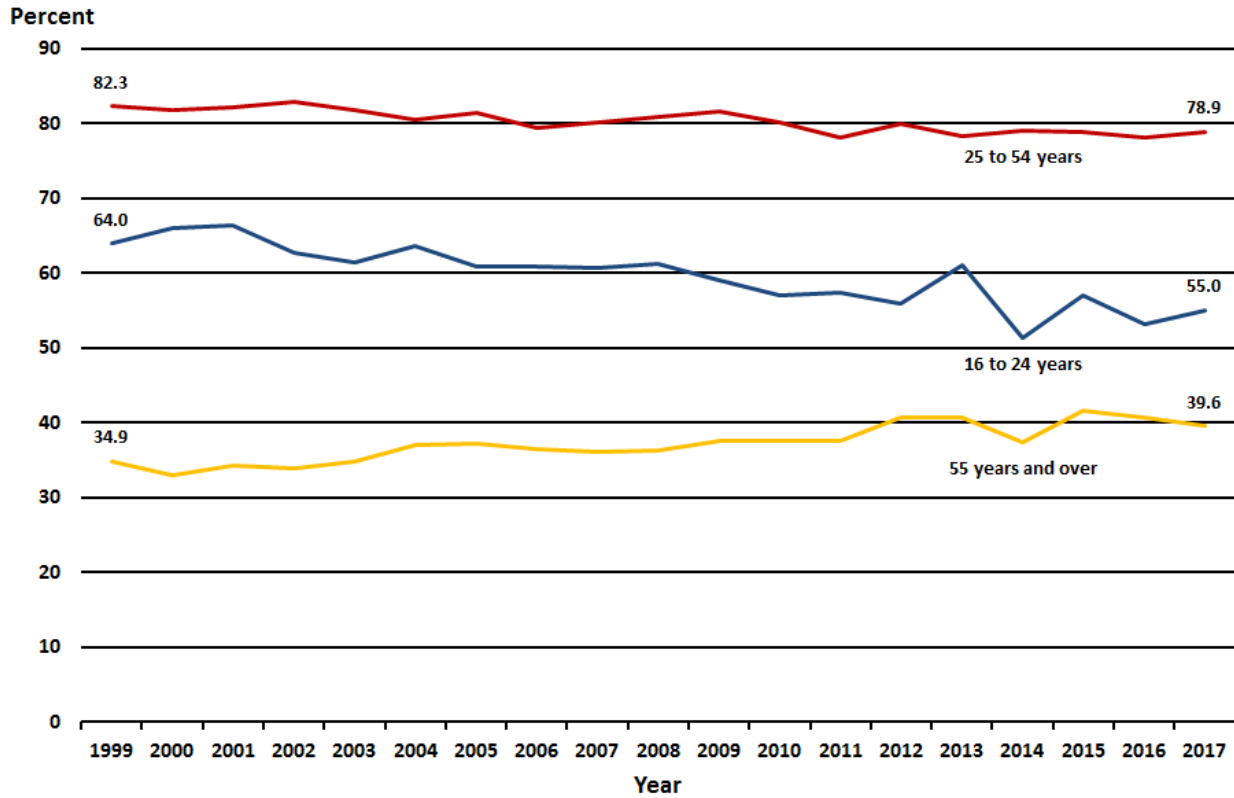


Within the group of workers in the age group of 55 years and older, the 65 years and older group has more than doubled from 1999 to 2017, adding a remarkable 60,000 workers for a growth rate of 101.7 percent.

³ Regina Story, “Characteristics of Older Workers in Oklahoma, 2001-2007.” January 2010, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, Economic Research and Analysis Division.

The labor force participation rate, the percent of those who were working or actively looking for work, has also steadily increased for people aged 55 and older in Oklahoma. In 1999, the labor force participation rate for the 55 years and older age group was 34.9 percent; that figure climbed to 41.7 percent by 2015 and was at a preliminary 39.6 percent in 2017, (see Chart 3, below).

Chart 3: Oklahoma Labor Force Participation Rates by Age Group, 1999 to 2017
 SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS)



During the same time period, the 16 to 24 year old age group’s labor force participation rate dropped from 64.0 percent in 1999 to 55.0 percent in 2017, while the 25 to 54 year old group’s labor force participation rate declined from 82.3 percent to 78.9 percent.

Within the 55 years and older age group, the 65 years and older cohort’s labor force participation rate increased from 14.1 percent in 1999 to 19.7 percent in 2017.

Characteristics of Older Workers in Oklahoma, 2001-2017 (Quarterly Workforce Indicators)

The Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau provide local labor market statistics by industry, worker demographics, employer age and size. Unlike statistics tabulated from firm or person-level data, the QWI source data are unique job-level data that link workers to their employers. Because of this link, labor market data in the QWI is available by worker age, sex, educational attainment, and race/ethnicity. This allows for analysis by demographics of a particular local labor market or industry – for instance, identifying industries with an aging workforce.

Employment by Gender

The QWI data for Oklahoma reveals a similar pattern as the labor force trends in the previous section. Both male and female workers in the 55 years and older age group have steadily increased from 2001 to 2017. This age group grew by 80.9 percent between 2001 and 2017, adding 154,663 workers (see Table 1, below). The male segment of workers age 55 and over grew 78.8 percent, adding 76,608 workers, while the female segment grew 83.1 percent, adding 78,054 workers. At the same time, workers age 65 and older more than doubled, growing from 43,083 in 2001 to 93,214 in 2017 and adding 50,131 workers for a remarkable 116.4 percent growth rate. The male segment of this group grew at a 111.6 percent rate, adding 24,996 workers, while the female segment grew at 121.5 percent adding 25,135 workers, (see Table 1).

Table 1. Oklahoma: Employment by Gender and Age Group, Annual Averages, 2001-2017

Year	14 to 24 years old		25 to 54 years old		55 years and older		65 years and older					
	14 to 24 years old	14 to 24 years old, male	14 to 24 years old, female	25 to 54 years old	25 to 54 years old, male	25 to 54 years old, female	55 years and older, male	55 years and older, female	65 years and older, male	65 years and older, female		
2001	244,828	122,289	122,537	975,250	498,635	476,613	191,111	97,182	93,929	43,083	22,402	20,681
2002	236,984	116,786	120,197	952,731	482,160	470,570	200,672	100,758	99,913	44,785	23,241	21,544
2003	225,889	110,234	115,653	930,261	470,443	459,818	208,527	103,821	104,707	46,669	24,197	22,472
2004	224,623	109,468	115,155	930,213	471,138	459,074	217,277	107,808	109,468	48,787	25,251	23,535
2005	230,043	112,417	117,625	947,793	480,035	467,758	230,007	113,836	116,171	52,237	27,011	25,226
2006	234,900	115,599	119,301	964,142	491,639	472,501	244,058	121,078	122,980	56,331	29,213	27,118
2007	234,800	115,479	119,321	978,454	498,668	479,785	258,300	128,482	129,817	60,317	31,397	28,919
2008	233,375	115,262	118,112	994,592	508,139	486,452	273,670	136,091	137,577	65,369	33,883	31,485
2009	211,586	102,009	109,576	963,573	484,079	479,492	278,819	136,787	142,031	67,174	34,262	32,912
2010	198,619	95,766	102,852	945,902	476,487	469,411	283,295	138,826	144,467	67,953	34,531	33,421
2011	200,527	98,086	102,439	955,538	489,863	465,672	294,501	145,702	148,799	70,749	36,131	34,617
2012	207,656	102,531	105,124	967,757	500,500	467,255	308,152	153,542	154,609	77,068	39,380	37,688
2013	213,059	105,678	107,378	974,586	505,973	468,612	318,356	159,548	158,808	81,120	41,332	39,788
2014	218,249	108,196	110,052	983,378	510,567	472,810	328,508	165,203	163,304	85,239	43,407	41,832
2015	220,551	108,503	112,045	988,354	509,651	478,701	338,225	170,356	167,868	88,705	45,280	43,424
2016	212,422	102,811	109,607	971,865	495,228	476,635	341,608	171,254	170,354	90,822	46,136	44,686
2017	209,175	101,437	107,735	962,888	490,187	472,699	345,774	173,790	171,983	93,214	47,398	45,816

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

From 2001 to 2017, the number of workers 25 to 54 years old fell from 975,250 to 962,888, shedding 12,362 workers for a 1.3 percent decline. Male workers aged 25 to 54 years old saw a larger reduction than female workers during this time losing 8,448 (-1.7 percent) while the number of female workers declined 3,914 (-0.8 percent). Meanwhile, the 14 to 24 year old age group saw an even larger drop in workforce, falling by 35,653 workers (-14.6 percent) from 2001 to 2017. In the 14 to 24 year old age group, the number of male workers fell 20,852 (-17.1 percent) while female workers dropped 14,802 (12.1 percent).

Male and female workers were fairly evenly split in the 55 years and older age group. In 2001, the male share of workers aged 55 years and older was 50.9 percent and the female share was 49.1 percent. Those shares had shifted a bit more in 2017 where males represented 50.3 percent of the 55 years and older group and females comprised 49.7 percent.

Similarly, for the 65 years and older group, the male share was 52.0 percent and the female share was 48.0 percent in 2001, but by 2017 those shares had shifted more towards the female workers, who accounted for 49.2 percent while male workers' share was 50.8 percent.

Employment by Industry

What industries employ the largest number of older workers in Oklahoma? The Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) dataset reveals that the largest number of workers age 65 years and older were employed in NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance. In 2001, approximately 5,354 workers, (3.1 percent), aged 65 and older employed in the health care industry but by 2017, that number grew to 12,690 and comprised 5.9 percent of total employment in that industry. NAICS 62 Educational Services is a close second, as the number of workers aged 65 and older in that industry has grown from 5,146 (3.6 percent of industry employment) in 2001 to 12,415 (8.9 percent of industry employment) in 2017. Employment in NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade was also high for those aged 65 and older, accounting for 6,380 workers (3.7 percent) in 2001 and growing to 11,417 (6.5 percent) in 2017, (see Table 2 below).

Table 2. Oklahoma: Employment of Workers 65 Years and Older by Industry, Annual Averages, 2001-2017

	2001		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	342	4.3	783	7.5
NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	700	2.4	2,273	5.0
NAICS 22 Utilities	254	1.5	676	4.3
NAICS 23 Construction	2,245	3.2	4,892	6.1
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	3,240	1.9	6,137	4.8
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	1,852	3.2	3,721	6.5
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	6,380	3.7	11,417	6.5
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	1,186	2.6	2,881	5.6
NAICS 51 Information	517	1.3	1,054	4.6
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	1,606	2.9	3,633	6.4
NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,162	4.8	1,891	9.0
NAICS 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,798	3.5	5,345	7.5
NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	325	2.4	992	4.9
NAICS 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2,867	3.0	5,406	5.6
NAICS 61 Educational Services	5,146	3.6	12,415	8.9
NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	5,354	3.1	12,690	5.9
NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	649	3.8	2,291	5.7
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	2,690	2.4	6,475	4.3
NAICS 81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,460	6.2	2,968	8.2
NAICS 92 Public Administration	2,301	3.1	5,269	6.3

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

As Table 2 illustrates, from 2001 to 2017, both the number of workers age 65 years and older and the industry employment share of these workers has noticeably increased in every 2-digit NAICS sector.

Industry Employment by Gender

In general, employment in some Oklahoma industries tends to be male dominated while other industries are female dominated. Examples of typically male-dominated industries are the goods-producing industries, (NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting; NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; NAICS 22 Utilities; NAICS 23 Construction; and NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing), along with NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade; NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing. Female-dominated industries include NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance; NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance; NAICS 61 Educational Services; and NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services.

As stated previously, there has been a shift in the male-female composition of workers aged 65 years and older in Oklahoma during the 2001-2017 period. In 2001, approximately 22,402 (52.0 percent) of workers age 65 years and older were male while 20,681 (48.0 percent) were female. By 2017, that makeup had swung to 47,398 (50.8 percent) male and 45,816 (49.2 percent) female. Table 3, below, summarizes industry employment for workers age 65 years and older by gender for 2001 and 2017.

Table 3. Oklahoma: Employment of Workers 65 Years and Older by Industry and Gender, 2001-2017

	2001		2017	
	Percent Male	Percent Female	Percent Male	Percent Female
NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	70.2	29.8	67.6	32.4
NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	69.3	30.7	68.1	31.9
NAICS 22 Utilities	65.7	34.3	66.1	33.9
NAICS 23 Construction	72.2	27.8	68.8	31.1
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	68.1	31.9	69.6	30.4
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	70.4	29.6	69.8	30.2
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	48.2	51.8	49.7	50.3
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	79.8	20.2	76.5	23.5
NAICS 51 Information	51.8	48.0	50.4	49.6
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	44.0	56.0	42.6	57.4
NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	54.7	45.2	57.9	42.1
NAICS 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	56.5	43.5	55.8	44.2
NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	57.8	42.2	49.9	50.1
NAICS 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	62.2	37.7	55.5	44.5
NAICS 61 Educational Services	49.6	50.4	39.9	60.1
NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	23.1	76.9	28.9	71.1
NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	60.9	39.0	54.0	46.0
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	42.6	57.4	47.2	52.8
NAICS 81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	44.7	55.3	49.7	50.2
NAICS 92 Public Administration	57.4	42.6	51.6	48.5

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

From 2001 to 2017, the share of female workers age 65 and older has increased for most industries. Some of the most remarkable gains occurred in NAICS 61 Educational Services where the female share of employment increased from 50.4 percent to 60.1 percent and employment nearly tripled from 2,593

in 2001 to 7,464 in 2017. Employment of female workers age 65 and older more than quadrupled in NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, growing from 253 in 2001 to 1,053 in 2017 and their industry share for that age group increased from 39.0 percent to 46.0 percent.

Male workers age 65 and older saw the largest gain in NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance, as their share increased from 23.1 percent to 28.9 percent and employment almost tripled from 1,236 workers in 2001 to 3,664 in 2017. Significant gains were also seen in NAICS 81 Other Services where the male share grew from 44.7 percent in 2001 to 49.7 percent in 2017.

Hiring Trends by Industry

QWI's measure of employment change includes the indicator, Hires All ('HirA'), which is the estimated number of workers who started a new job in a specified quarter. This indicator includes workers who started a new job, (Hires New, 'HirN'), along with workers who returned to the same employer where they had worked within the previous year, (Hires Recalls, 'HirR').

From 2001 to 2017, overall hiring levels declined for the 14 to 24 year old and 25 to 54 year old age groups while increasing in the 55 years and older age group as well as the 65 years and older group, (see Table 4, below). The 65 years and older group's share of total hiring increased from 2.0 percent in 2001 to 3.3 percent in 2017.

Table 4. Oklahoma: Hires by Gender and Age Group, Annual Averages, 2001-2017

Year	14 to 24		25 to 54		55 years and older		65 years and older					
	14 to 24 years old	14 to 24 years old, male	25 to 54 years old	25 to 54 years old, male	55 years and older	55 years and older, male	65 years and older	65 years and older, male				
2001	148,194	76,692	71,501	202,268	106,069	96,199	24,442	12,925	11,515	7,480	4,014	3,465
2002	127,585	65,166	62,419	176,478	91,901	84,574	22,446	11,601	10,844	6,666	3,548	3,118
2003	117,274	59,514	57,757	185,215	97,933	87,282	26,173	13,712	12,460	7,140	3,839	3,300
2004	117,752	59,568	58,183	179,456	93,083	86,370	25,451	12,880	12,571	7,126	3,727	3,399
2005	125,273	63,856	61,415	189,436	99,500	89,935	27,232	14,064	13,168	7,746	4,097	3,649
2006	130,463	66,201	64,260	195,010	101,803	93,206	28,518	14,717	13,800	8,289	4,384	3,904
2007	131,631	66,974	64,656	199,595	104,395	95,198	29,797	15,320	14,476	8,689	4,598	4,090
2008	126,079	64,394	61,683	197,345	103,585	93,759	30,426	15,812	14,614	8,824	4,639	4,185
2009	90,976	44,878	46,096	157,255	81,196	76,058	26,191	13,533	12,657	7,483	3,961	3,521
2010	89,629	45,620	44,008	163,762	88,553	75,209	28,629	14,989	13,639	8,292	4,318	3,973
2011	92,418	47,126	45,291	160,920	87,630	73,289	27,202	14,399	12,802	7,827	4,146	3,680
2012	98,869	50,700	48,169	167,130	90,667	76,462	28,390	15,039	13,349	8,281	4,368	3,912
2013	100,666	51,529	49,136	167,038	90,201	76,836	29,535	15,809	13,724	8,848	4,778	4,070
2014	104,093	53,484	50,608	174,438	94,180	80,257	30,832	16,378	14,453	9,279	4,912	4,366
2015	100,928	50,495	50,431	169,779	89,288	80,490	31,153	16,425	14,727	9,441	4,899	4,542
2016	94,089	46,768	47,321	162,570	85,298	77,268	30,379	15,895	14,484	9,239	4,810	4,429
2017	97,627	49,413	48,213	169,062	91,703	77,359	31,933	17,335	14,597	9,763	5,314	4,449

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

Which industries are hiring older workers? In general, those industries with higher concentrations of workers age 65 years and older, (see Table 2, page 6), tended to correspond to the industries hiring workers in this age group. Also, with the exception of one industry, (NAICS 81 Other Services), the share of workers 65 years and older being hired increased in every industry between 2001 and 2017, (see Table 5, next page).

Table 5. Oklahoma: Hiring by Industry, Workers 65 Years and Older, 2001-2017

	2001		2017	
	Number of Hires	Percent Total Hiring	Number of Hires	Percent Total Hiring
NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	100	3.7	86	4.9
NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	121	2.0	250	2.5
NAICS 22 Utilities	27	2.1	N/A*	N/A*
NAICS 23 Construction	660	2.5	700	3.5
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	440	1.8	401	2.6
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	238	2.4	257	3.2
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	763	1.4	964	2.6
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	163	2.0	315	3.1
NAICS 51 Information	59	1.0	144	3.1
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	140	2.0	159	3.4
NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	145	2.7	144	4.1
NAICS 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	335	2.8	554	5.0
NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	43	1.6	108	5.0
NAICS 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,111	1.7	1,145	2.6
NAICS 61 Educational Services	712	3.5	853	6.4
NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	618	1.7	965	2.9
NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	122	1.8	267	3.1
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	926	1.5	1,436	2.5
NAICS 81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	457	3.8	286	3.7
NAICS 92 Public Administration	292	3.6	287	4.6

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

*Aggregate of cells, some of which have significantly distorted data

NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services hired the highest level of workers age 65 years old and over in 2017 with 1,436 hires, more than one-and-a-half times greater than the 2001 hiring level, and accounting for nearly 2.5 percent of total hiring in that industry. NAICS 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services followed as that industry hired 1,145 workers age 65 and older in 2017, representing 2.6 percent of total hiring in this industry. NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance hired 965 workers age 65 and over, (2.9 percent of total industry hires), in 2017.

NAICS 61 Educational Services had the largest share of workers age 65 years old and over hired in 2017 at 6.4 percent. This industry also had the second-largest employment share of 65 and over workers at 8.9 percent, (NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing had the largest share at 9.0 percent in 2017). NAICS 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services' share of hires of older workers increased from 2.8 percent, (335 hires), in 2001 to 5.0 percent, (554 hires), in 2017.

Industries seeing the largest hiring expansions of workers age 65 years and older between 2001 and 2017 were NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises, where hiring more than doubled. Also, NAICS 51 Information, NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction all more than doubled hiring levels of older workers between 2001 and 2017.

Earnings

What are older workers being paid and what industries are paying the highest and lowest wages to older workers? One of QWI's measures of earnings, the indicator 'Full-Quarter Employment (Stable): Average Monthly Earnings', ('EarnS'), reports average monthly earnings of employees with stable jobs (i.e. worked with the same firm throughout the quarter). Using this indicator, we can determine the wage levels for different age groups by gender and industry in Oklahoma.

Table 6, below, summarizes Oklahoma average worker earnings by age group and gender from 2001 to 2016. While the 25 to 54 year old workers had the highest level of weekly earnings in 2001, by 2016 the 55 years and older workers brought in the highest earnings. Without exception, workers in every age group and gender saw their monthly earnings rise during this period but at different rates depending on age and gender. For example, average monthly earnings of workers 14 to 24 years old rose at 39.7 percent from 2001 to 2016, while workers 25 to 54 years old had a 43.0 percent increase, and the 55 years and older group had a 59.3 percent rise. However, it was the 65 years and older workers who saw the largest increase in earnings, growing at an 89.0 percent rate from 2001 to 2016.

Table 6. Oklahoma: Average Monthly Earnings by Gender and Age Group, Annual Averages, 2001-2016

Year	14 to 24 years old		25 to 54 years old			55 years and older		65 years and older				
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female				
2001	\$1,155	\$1,309	\$1,004	\$2,765	\$3,395	\$2,108	\$2,679	\$3,501	\$1,835	\$1,833	\$2,382	\$1,243
2002	\$1,151	\$1,293	\$1,014	\$2,771	\$3,380	\$2,148	\$2,727	\$3,542	\$1,907	\$1,892	\$2,439	\$1,304
2003	\$1,154	\$1,298	\$1,020	\$2,811	\$3,413	\$2,197	\$2,813	\$3,655	\$1,983	\$1,986	\$2,561	\$1,372
2004	\$1,196	\$1,352	\$1,051	\$2,955	\$3,596	\$2,298	\$2,973	\$3,869	\$2,092	\$2,094	\$2,684	\$1,463
2005	\$1,237	\$1,406	\$1,078	\$3,029	\$3,707	\$2,334	\$3,070	\$4,009	\$2,151	\$2,185	\$2,811	\$1,517
2006	\$1,325	\$1,528	\$1,131	\$3,200	\$3,916	\$2,457	\$3,311	\$4,326	\$2,313	\$2,396	\$3,115	\$1,623
2007	\$1,398	\$1,620	\$1,186	\$3,345	\$4,090	\$2,571	\$3,472	\$4,519	\$2,436	\$2,542	\$3,292	\$1,729
2008	\$1,464	\$1,705	\$1,233	\$3,464	\$4,241	\$2,656	\$3,641	\$4,742	\$2,557	\$2,713	\$3,554	\$1,812
2009	\$1,400	\$1,582	\$1,232	\$3,375	\$4,089	\$2,659	\$3,575	\$4,610	\$2,586	\$2,687	\$3,496	\$1,852
2010	\$1,415	\$1,604	\$1,241	\$3,462	\$4,201	\$2,714	\$3,697	\$4,776	\$2,660	\$2,791	\$3,610	\$1,943
2011	\$1,472	\$1,694	\$1,261	\$3,634	\$4,425	\$2,805	\$3,932	\$5,132	\$2,758	\$2,999	\$3,921	\$2,037
2012	\$1,554	\$1,803	\$1,313	\$3,763	\$4,579	\$2,892	\$4,110	\$5,354	\$2,877	\$3,230	\$4,250	\$2,165
2013	\$1,592	\$1,849	\$1,341	\$3,825	\$4,640	\$2,949	\$4,160	\$5,373	\$2,944	\$3,278	\$4,299	\$2,220
2014	\$1,636	\$1,916	\$1,362	\$3,962	\$4,811	\$3,047	\$4,307	\$5,548	\$3,054	\$3,411	\$4,451	\$2,332
2015	\$1,640	\$1,886	\$1,405	\$4,012	\$4,833	\$3,143	\$4,363	\$5,563	\$3,148	\$3,502	\$4,536	\$2,424
2016	\$1,613	\$1,837	\$1,404	\$3,954	\$4,739	\$3,143	\$4,268	\$5,389	\$3,145	\$3,465	\$4,441	\$2,458

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

Table 6 also illustrates the difference in earnings between males and females in every age group. In 2001, average monthly earnings for male workers 65 years and older was \$2,382, nearly double the earnings of female workers at \$1,243. However, earnings for female workers age 65 and older have grown at a faster rate than their male counterparts and the wage gap has narrowed somewhat. From 2001 to 2016, older female workers' average monthly wages grew 97.7 percent to \$2,458 while male workers grew 86.4 percent to \$4,441 in 2016, (see Table 6, above).

Earnings by Industry

What industries in Oklahoma are paying the highest and lowest wages to older workers? On average, total industry average monthly earnings for workers 65 years and older were \$1,833 in 2001, rising to \$3,465 by 2016 for a growth rate of 89.0 percent. QWI data shows that NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction was the highest paying industry for workers age 65 and over in both 2001 and 2016, (see Table 7, below). Average monthly earnings for workers age 65 and older were \$7,947 in 2016—an increase of \$4,893 and more than doubling the 2001 earnings level of \$3,054. NAICS 22 Utilities paid the second-highest monthly wages to older workers in 2016 at \$6,191, followed by NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance at \$5,772. Average monthly earnings in NAICS 22 Utilities more than doubled over the 15-year period from 2001 to 2016, while earnings in NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance also more than doubled during the same timeframe.

Table 7. Oklahoma: Average Monthly Earnings, Workers 65 Years and Older by Industry, Annual Averages, 2001-2016

	2001	2016	Change	Percent Change
NAICS 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$1,455	\$2,611	\$1,156	79.5
NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	\$3,054	\$7,947	\$4,893	160.2
NAICS 22 Utilities	\$2,314	\$6,191	\$3,877	167.5
NAICS 23 Construction	\$2,334	\$3,897	\$1,563	67.0
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	\$2,700	\$4,590	\$1,890	70.0
NAICS 42 Wholesale Trade	\$2,314	\$4,383	\$2,069	89.4
NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade	\$1,231	\$2,142	\$911	74.0
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	\$2,041	\$3,924	\$1,883	92.3
NAICS 51 Information	\$2,243	\$3,714	\$1,471	65.6
NAICS 52 Finance and Insurance	\$2,851	\$5,772	\$2,921	102.5
NAICS 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$1,859	\$3,067	\$1,208	65.0
NAICS 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$3,051	\$5,420	\$2,369	77.6
NAICS 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$3,917	\$5,480	\$1,563	39.9
NAICS 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	\$1,430	\$3,025	\$1,595	111.5
NAICS 61 Educational Services	\$1,462	\$2,498	\$1,036	70.9
NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance	\$1,906	\$3,803	\$1,897	99.5
NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$1,130	\$2,358	\$1,228	108.7
NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services	\$949	\$1,576	\$627	66.1
NAICS 81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$1,247	\$2,304	\$1,057	84.8
NAICS 92 Public Administration	\$1,801	\$3,054	\$1,253	69.6

SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, (qwexplorer.ces.census.gov)

The lowest-paying industry for older workers was NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services with an average monthly wage of \$1,576 in 2016. This industry also had the smallest change in average monthly earnings between 2001 and 2016, only adding \$627 over the period. NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade, with an average monthly wage of \$2,142 in 2016, also had the second-smallest change in earnings over the 2001 to 2016 period, only \$911 more than the 2001 level of \$1,231. NAICS 81 Other Services (except Public Administration) and NAICS 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation followed closely with average monthly earnings of \$2,304 and \$2,358 respectively, (see Table 7, above).

Summary

By 2026, the U.S. labor force is projected to be much older and, as a result, the median age of the labor force is expected to increase. This increase is being fueled by the aging baby-boom generation, a large group of people born between 1946 and 1964. The shares of both the youth and the prime age groups in the labor force are projected to decline, whereas older workers will continue to increase their share to about one-quarter of the labor force by 2026.⁴ Oklahoma's labor force has experienced similar trends over the past 15 years as the 65 years and older age group has more than doubled from 1999 to 2017.

Employment of workers age 65 and older in Oklahoma also more than doubled, growing from 43,083 in 2001 to 93,214 in 2017, adding 50,131. During this period, female workers slightly outpaced male workers, adding 25,135 workers (121.5 percent) while males grew at a 111.6 percent rate, adding 24,996 workers. Male and female workers were fairly evenly split in the 65 years and older group in 2017; the male share was 50.8 percent while the female share was 49.2 percent.

By industry, the largest number of older workers was employed in NAICS 62 Health Care and Social Assistance, with 12,690 workers 65 years and older employed and comprising 5.9 percent of total employment in this industry in 2017. NAICS 62 Educational Services and NAICS 44-45 Retail Trade also had high concentrations of workers 65 years and older. In general, those industries with higher concentrations of workers 65 years and older tended to correspond to the industries hiring workers in this age group.

Compared to workers in the 14 to 24 years old and 25 to 54 years old age groups, workers 65 years and older saw the largest increase in earnings, growing 89.0 percent from 2001 to 2016. NAICS 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction was the highest paying industry for workers 65 and over with an average monthly wage of \$7,947 in 2016. The lowest-paying industry for older workers was NAICS 72 Accommodation and Food Services with an average monthly wage of \$1,576 in 2016.

People are working later in life for a number of reasons. They are healthier and have a longer life expectancy than previous generations. They are better educated, which increases their likelihood of staying in the labor force. And changes to Social Security benefits and employee retirement plans, along with the need to save more for retirement, create incentives to keep working.⁵

⁴ T. Alan Lacey, Mitra Toossi, Kevin S. Dubina, and Andrea B. Gensler, "Projections overview and highlights, 2016–26", *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2017.

⁵ Mitra Toossi and Elka Torpey, "Older workers: Labor force trends and career options", *Career Outlook*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2017.

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