

Benton & Linn Counties Regional Profile

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Demographics

Population growth

- Regional population grew by 25% from 1990 to 2010, lower than the 35% increase observed across the state overall ¹
- Growth in the region during this period was due more to net migration than to natural increase (natural increase is the excess of births to deaths; net migration is in-migration minus out-migration) ²

Change in ethnic composition ¹

- The size of the Latino population grew by about 200% between 1990 and 2010, from 2.41% to 7.22%, and represents the largest population of color in the region.
- Over the last 2 decades, this region has consistently had lower representation of Latinos than the state, and in 2010 was about 4.5 percentage points lower than the state (Latinos were 11.75% of Oregon's population in 2010).

Age ³

- While Benton County is younger than the state overall, Linn County is very slightly older than the state, and both counties are aging at a rate very similar to the state.

Employment & Labor

Unemployment ⁴

- Since 2000, the region has had consistently lower unemployment than the state (between one and two percentage points lower).
- Unemployment has risen since 1990 – from about 7% in 1990 to about 10% in 2009-13, at a pace slower than the state since 2000.

Sources of income ⁴

- The majority of households (about 71%) get income from wages and salaries, which is just below the state percentage (about 72%).
- About 31% of households get income from social security (close to the state percentage), followed by 20% that get income from retirement (close to the state percentage), and about 4% that receive income from public assistance programs (on par with the state percentage).

Industries employing regional residents: ⁴

- Between 1990 and the 2009-2013 period, the industry in which the highest proportion of regional residents worked did not change. At both times, the highest proportion of employed residents worked in the Education, Health, and Social Services industry (23.92% in 1990; 29.58% in 2009-13).
 - Note: Education, Health, and Social Service industry employment includes work in the public and private sectors.
- In 1990, about 62.63% of regional resident workers were employed in the top three industries of 1) Education, Health, and Social Services, 2) Manufacturing, and 3) Retail Trade. In 2009-2013 that fell to 53.57% of regional resident workers, and the top three industries stayed the same. This decline was due to a combination of decreases in Retail Trade and Manufacturing, without a parallel increase in other industries.
- The region has experienced declines in Manufacturing employment from 1990 to the 2009-2013 period; from 22.26% to 11.76% of employed residents. This decline was higher than the decline Oregon overall experienced.
- Between 1990 and the 2009-2013 period, the region saw significant increases in the percentages of workers employed in the Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation industry as well as the Professional, Science, Management, & Administration industry.

Local jobs: ⁵

- In 2013, the highest proportion of jobs located in the two county region were in state and local government. About sixteen percent (15.95%) of all the full and part time jobs in the region in 2013 were in this industry. Private sector Health Care/Social Assistance and Manufacturing jobs were next, representing 11.71% and 10.65% of jobs in the region respectively. Together, these three top industries accounted for 38.31% of the jobs in the region.
- Between 2001 and 2013 the most significant decline occurred in the proportion of local jobs that were in the Manufacturing sector (decline of 4.74 percentage points)
- Between 2001 and 2013, the most significant increase occurred in the proportion of local jobs that were in the private sector Health Care/Social Assistance industry (increased by 2.76 percentage points).

Commuting patterns: ⁴

- Since 1990, there has not been much change in resident commuters' travel times to work in the region.
- The majority (about 75%) of commuters travel fewer than 30 minutes to work.

Agriculture

Agricultural Economy:

- In 2012, Linn county ranked 6th and Benton county ranked 16th in the state for gross farm and ranch sales (combined sales for the two counties \$403,825,000) ⁶
- In 2012, gross crop sales were (3.8 times) higher than gross animal product sales in the region ⁶
- There was a 40% increase in animal product sales between 2000 and 2012, in inflation-adjusted dollars ⁶
- There was an 8% increase in crop sales between 2000 and 2012, in inflation-adjusted dollars ⁶
- At the same time, there was a slight increase (2%) in the number of harvested acres between 2000 and 2012 ⁶

- While the state overall has seen continued declines over the last 23 years, this region's timber harvest in 2013 increased to about 111% of its 1990 level in 1,000s of board feet ⁷

Land cover change: ⁸

- Between 2000 and 2011, there a 5.1% decrease in forest land cover with a 2.9% increase in shrubland land cover and a 2.4% increase in herbaceous land cover.

Striking Statistics (areas where region stands out from state)

Challenges

- Lower than average percentage of adequately immunized 2-year olds ⁹
- Higher than average arrest rate for behavioral crimes (such as weapons regulation laws, prostitution, drug laws, gambling, offenses against family, DUII, liquor laws, disorderly conduct) ¹⁰
- Higher than average child abuse rate ⁹
- Higher than average poverty rate ⁴
- Lower than average four year high school graduation rate for all students, and for white students specifically ¹²

Strengths

- ✓ Lower than average teen pregnancy rate, per 1,000 females aged 15-17 ⁹
- ✓ Higher than average percentage of mothers receiving prenatal care in the first trimester ⁹
- ✓ Lower than average number of years of potential life lost before age 75 per 1,000 people ⁹
- ✓ Lower than average arrest rate for crimes committed against persons (includes willful murder, negligent homicide, rape, other sex crimes, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault) ¹⁰
- ✓ Better than average coverage of the social services system – ratio of people seeking social services (via *211info*) to social service providers was lower in the region than the state overall, particularly in the housing and utilities sectors ¹³
- ✓ Lower than average percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch ¹²

Sources

Data come from a variety of sources, as reported on the Rural Communities Explorer (<http://oe.oregonexplorer.info/rural/CommunitiesReporter/>)

- ¹ US Census Bureau, Decennial Census
- ² Population Research Center, Portland State University
- ³ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey & Decennial Census
- ⁴ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey
- ⁵ US Bureau of Economic Analysis
- ⁶ Oregon Agricultural Information Network, Oregon State University Extension Service
- ⁷ Oregon Department of Forestry
- ⁸ National Land Cover Database, Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium US Department of the Interior & US Geologic Survey
- ⁹ Oregon Department of Human Services
- ¹⁰ State of Oregon Criminal Justice Commission
- ¹² Oregon Department of Education
- ¹³ 211info