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# News Release

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## Unemployment at record low, job numbers up

BENSON, Arizona — According to data from Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity, Cochise County's unemployment rate (unadjusted) in December 2021 was 2.8 percent, its lowest level on record (with records back to 1990). The December rate was down by more than half from 5.7 percent in December 2020.

City-level unemployment rates for December were Benson, 2.3 percent (down from 4.8 percent in December 2020); Bisbee, 1.5 percent (down from 3.1 percent); Douglas, 5.2 percent (down from 10.3 percent); Huachuca City, 4.1 percent (down from 8.4 percent); Sierra Vista, 2.1 percent (down from 4.7 percent); Tombstone, 3.0 percent (down from 6.1 percent); and Willcox, 3.5 percent (down from 7.0 percent).

Arizona's unadjusted unemployment rate in December was 2.8 percent (down from 6.7 percent in December 2020). The national unemployment rate in December was 3.7 percent (down from 6.5 percent a year prior).

The number of nonfarm jobs in Cochise County was up by 900 in 2021, for job growth of 2.6 percent. The gains, based on average monthly job numbers for the year, were led by the private sector, which added 800 jobs (3.4 percent).

Within the countywide private sector, goods-producing jobs were up by 800 (22.2 percent) in 2021, with the addition of 700 construction and mining jobs (23.3 percent) and 100 manufacturing jobs (16.7 percent).

Private-sector service jobs in Cochise County were up by 100 (0.5 percent) in 2021, with the gain of 200 professional and business services jobs (4.4 percent) and 100 financial activities jobs (12.5 percent), partially offset by the loss of 100 educational and health services jobs (-2.3 percent) and 100 jobs in leisure and hospitality (-3.2 percent). Countywide job numbers stabilized in trade, transportation, and utilities, along with the information and other services industries in 2021.

Cochise County's government sector lost 100 jobs in 2021, for job growth of -0.9 percent. All the losses were in federal government (-2.0 percent), with state and local government job numbers stabilizing at the previous year's level.

In December comparisons, Cochise County job numbers were up by 1,000 (2.8 percent) in December 2021 (compared to December 2020), slightly ahead of the job growth over the year. All the job gains in the 12 months ended December were in the private sector, which grew by 4.1 percent. Within the private sector, goods-producing jobs were up by 600 (15.0 percent) with the addition of 500 construction and mining jobs (14.7 percent) and 100 manufacturing jobs (16.7 percent).

Private-sector, service-providing jobs countywide were up by 400 (2.0 percent) from December 2020 to December 2021, with the gain of 300 professional and business services jobs (6.7 percent), 100 financial activities jobs (12.5 percent), and 100 jobs in leisure and hospitality (3.3 percent), partly offset by the loss of 100 jobs in trade, transportation, and utilities. Job numbers in Cochise County's information industry and educational and health services held steady in the 12 months ended December.

Average weekly earnings in Cochise County were \$700.04 in December 2021 (down 15.2 percent from December 2020). For the year, average weekly earnings in 2021 were \$759.57 (down 7.2 percent from 2020).

Average hourly earnings countywide in December 2021 were \$20.65 (down 18.2 percent from the same month the year prior). For the year, average hourly earnings were \$22.81 (down 6.1% from 2020).

The decline in earnings is due largely to the impact of the COVID pandemic, which resulted in the loss of disproportionately lower-paying jobs in 2020, placing upward pressure on average earnings that year (since the jobs retained were higher paying). In 2020, Cochise County's average annual earnings jumped nearly 20 percent with to the elimination of lower-paying jobs and retention of higher-paying jobs through the COVID pandemic. With the economic recovery, the restoration of those previously lost, lower-paying jobs (such as those in the accommodation and food service industries) places downward pressure on average earnings.

In December 2021, the average weekly hours worked in Cochise County were 33.9 (up from 32.7 in December 2020). For the year, average weekly hours in 2021 were 33.3 (down slightly from 33.7 in 2020).

For more information on the Cochise County economy, including current and historical data, visit [CochiseEconomy.com](http://CochiseEconomy.com), a project of SAEDG in partnership with Arizona G&T Cooperatives and community sponsors.

Unemployment rates (%)		
	<i>December 2021</i>	<i>December 2020</i>
United States	3.7	6.5
Arizona	2.8	6.7
Cochise County	2.8	5.7
Benson	2.3	4.8
Bisbee	1.5	3.1
Douglas	5.2	10.3
Huachuca City	4.1	8.4
Sierra Vista	2.1	4.7
Tombstone	3.0	6.1
Willcox	3.5	7.0
<i>Note.</i> Not seasonally adjusted. Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics		

Cochise County average earnings and hours				
	<i>December 2021</i>	<i>December 2020</i>	<i>2021 (annual)</i>	<i>2020 (annual)</i>
Weekly Earnings	\$700.04	\$825.35	\$759.57	\$818.57
Weekly Hours	33.9	32.7	33.3	33.7
Hourly Earnings	\$20.65	\$25.24	\$22.81	\$24.29
<i>Note.</i> Not seasonally adjusted. Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity				

Cochise County nonfarm jobs (annual)				
	2021	2020	Annual Change	Annual Job Growth Rate
<b>Total Nonfarm Jobs</b>	35,300	34,400	900	2.6%
<b>Total Private Sector Jobs</b>	24,500	23,700	800	3.4%
<b>Goods Producing Jobs</b>	4,400	3,600	800	22.2%
Construction and Mining	3,700	3,000	700	23.3%
Manufacturing	700	600	100	16.7%
<b>Service Providing Jobs</b>	30,900	30,800	100	0.3%
<b>Private Service Providing Jobs</b>	20,200	20,100	100	0.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	6,200	6,200	0	0.0%
Information	300	300	0	0.0%
Financial Activities	900	800	100	12.5%
Professional and Business Services	4,700	4,500	200	4.4%
Educational and Health Services	4,300	4,400	-100	-2.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	3,000	3,100	-100	-3.2%
Other Services	700	700	0	0.0%
<b>Government Jobs</b>	10,700	10,800	-100	-0.9%
Federal Government	4,800	4,900	-100	-2.0%
State and Local Government	5,900	5,900	0	0.0%
Note. Numbers rounded to nearest 100; discrepancies due to rounding. Based on average monthly data for each year. Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity and US Economic Research				

Cochise County nonfarm jobs (December comparisons)				
	<i>December 2021</i>	<i>December 2020</i>	<i>12-month Change</i>	<i>12-month Job Growth Rate</i>
<b>Total Nonfarm Jobs</b>	36,100	35,100	1,000	2.8%
<b>Total Private Sector Jobs</b>	25,300	24,300	1,000	4.1%
<b>Goods Producing Jobs</b>	4,600	4,000	600	15.0%
Construction and Mining	3,900	3,400	500	14.7%
Manufacturing	700	600	100	16.7%
<b>Service Providing Jobs</b>	31,500	31,100	400	1.3%
<b>Private Service Providing Jobs</b>	20,700	20,300	400	2.0%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	6,600	6,700	-100	-1.5%
Information	300	300	0	0.0%
Financial Activities	900	800	100	12.5%
Professional and Business Services	4,800	4,500	300	6.7%
Educational and Health Services	4,300	4,300	0	0.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	3,100	3,000	100	3.3%
Other Services	700	700	0	0.0%
<b>Government Jobs</b>	10,800	10,800	0	0.0%
Federal Government	4,700	4,800	-100	-2.1%
State and Local Government	6,100	6,000	100	1.7%
Note. Numbers rounded to nearest 100; discrepancies due to rounding. Source: Arizona Office of Economic Opportunity and US Economic Research				

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