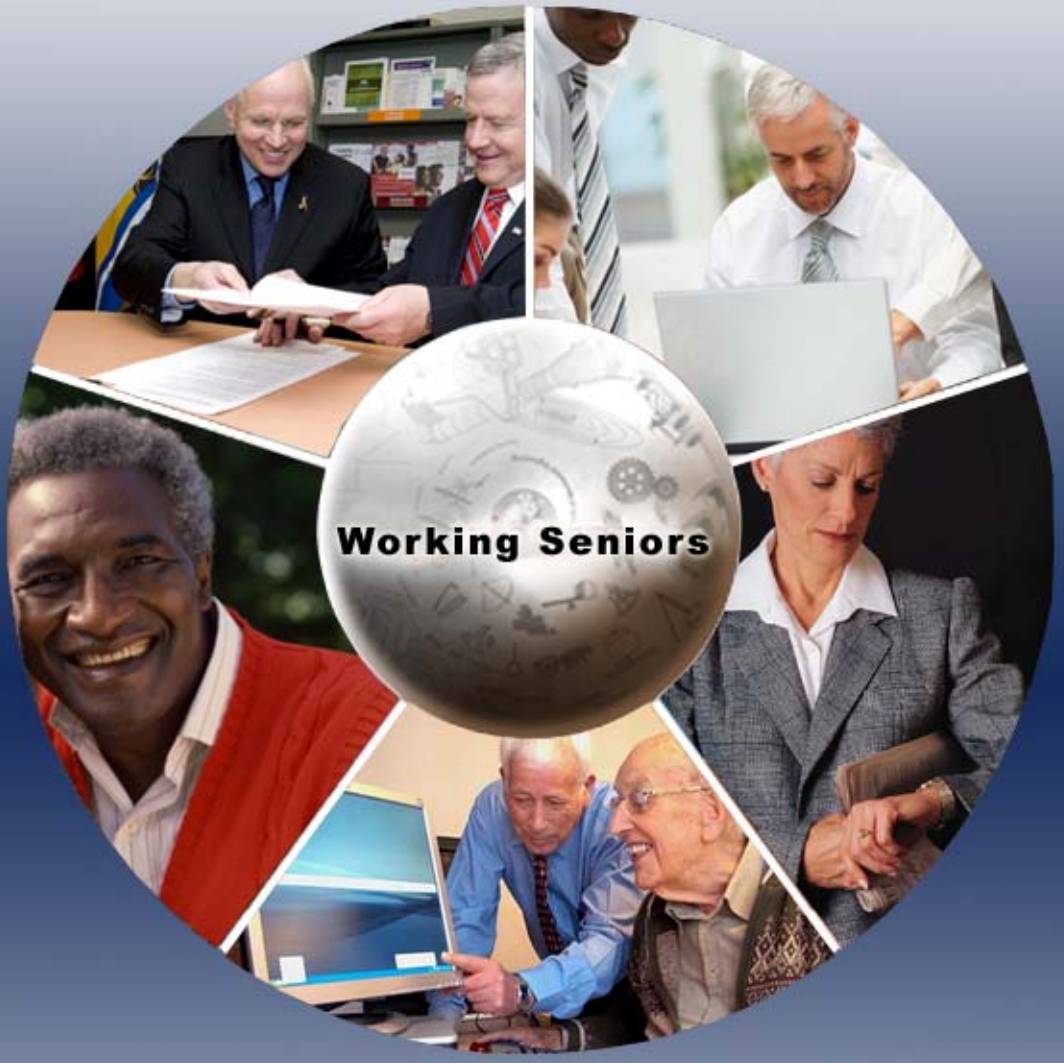
Characteristics of Older Workers in Oklahoma



Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
Economic Research and Analysis Division

Characteristics of Older Workers 2001-2008

a publication from

Oklahoma Employment Security Commission
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2001-2008

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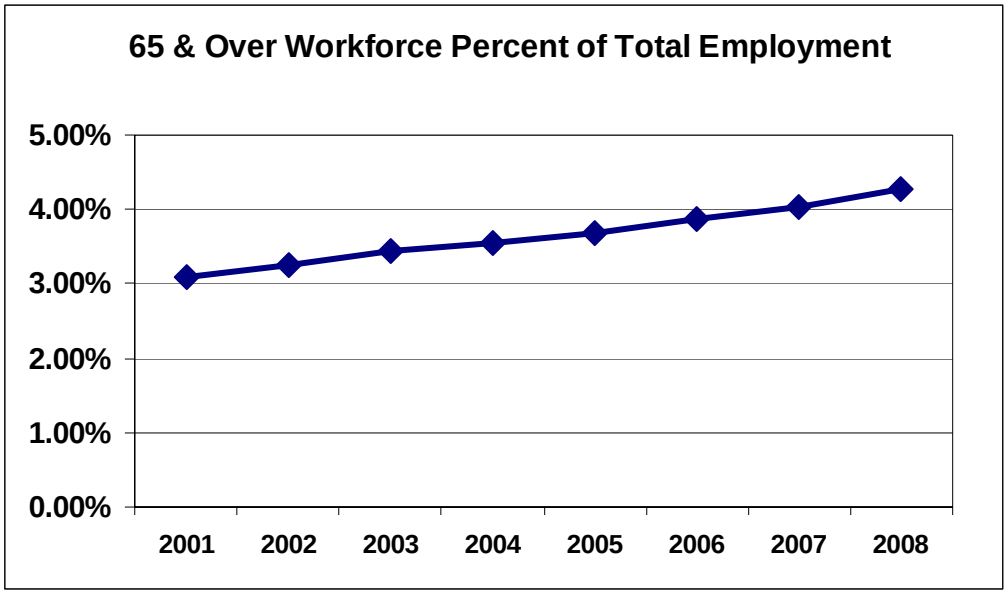
Source: Local Employment Dynamics Data
http://www.ok.gov/oesc_web/Services/Find_Labor_Market_Statistics/Local_Employment_Dynamics/
http://www.vrdc.cornell.edu/news/data/qwi-public-use-data/

Employment Levels

In Oklahoma, employment of workers aged 65 and over increased from an average of 43,779 in 2001 to 64,165 in 2008. This is an increase of 20,386 average workers for this age group, or 46.57%, over these seven years.

Although the senior workforce represents only a small percentage of the total workforce, it is steadily increasing. As shown in the graph below, the 65 and over workforce represented 3.1% of the total workforce in 2001. In 2008, this group represented 4.27% of the workforce and had increased slightly for each year in between.

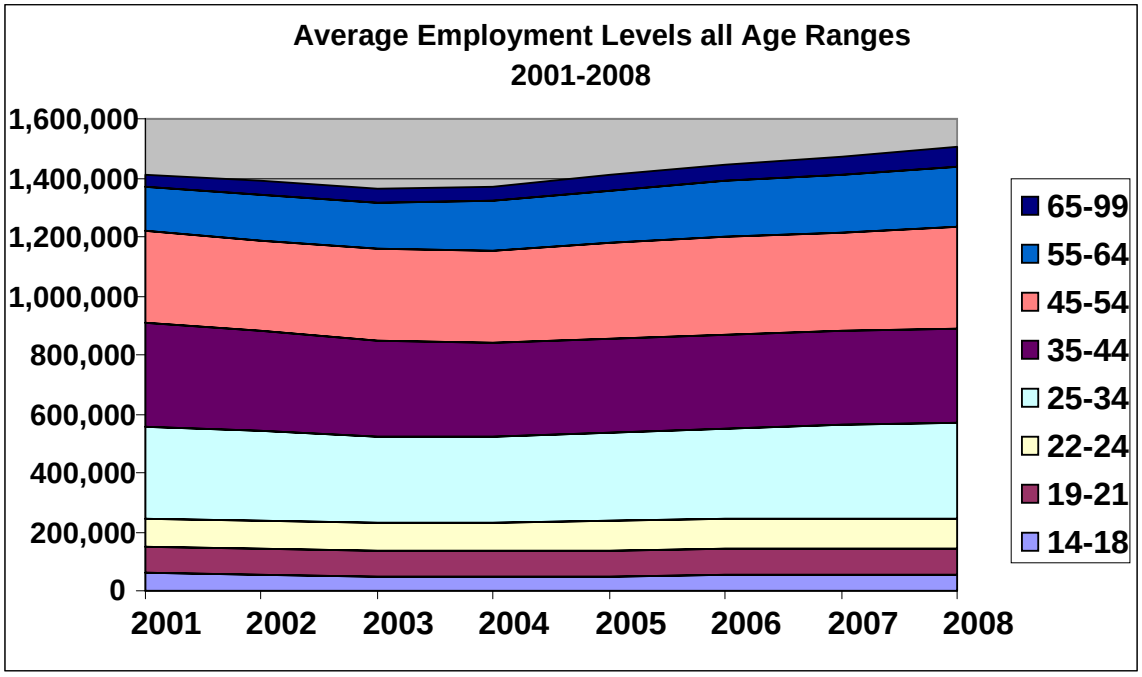


Average Employment

As displayed below, the only age groups which experienced a shrinking in the average employment levels over this seven year period were the 14-18, 19-21, and the 35-44 year olds.

The remaining age ranges all grew slightly, with the 55-64 age range increasing the most, by 58,650 over the seven years. The aging "baby boomers" could be contributing to the growth in this age range. Baby boomers are defined as those born in the years from 1946 to 1964. These employees would be aged 37-55 at the beginning of the employment counts in 2001 and 44-62 at the end of this reporting data in 2008. This could also be the contributing factor in the growth in the 45-54 year olds, which grew 33,093 over the seven years, making it the next largest overall growth. The overall loss of 38,196 from the age group 35-44 may also be affected simply due to aging of these existing employees.

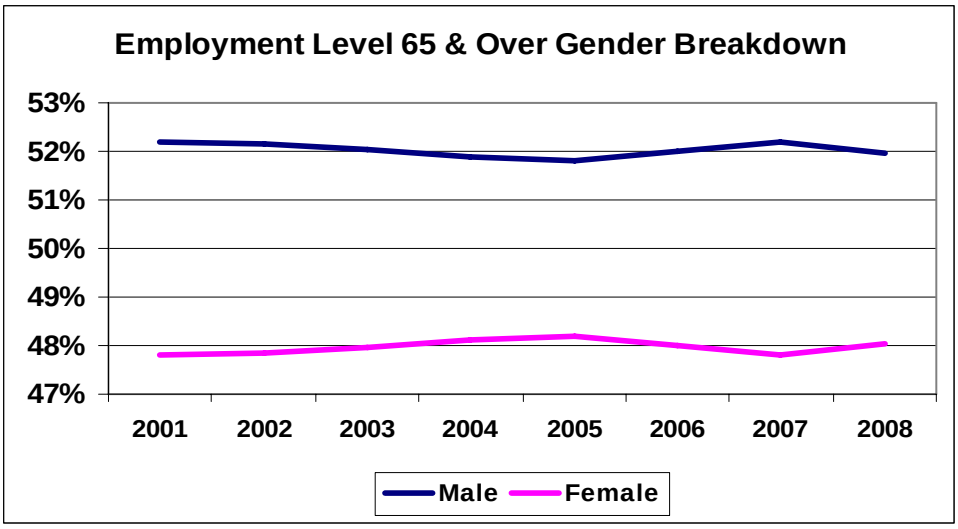
Specifically pertaining to senior aged employment levels, those 65 and over, it is again evident that this group is steadily increasing in Oklahoma when comparing it to all levels.

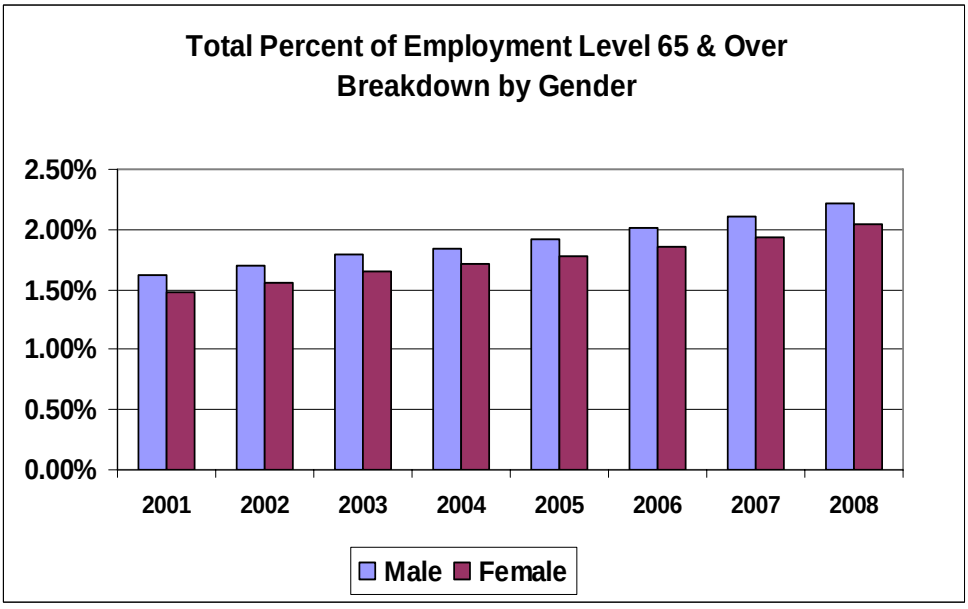


Gender

When looking at a breakdown by gender, the segment of the workforce 65 and older hovers closely around the 2001 levels, with the males making up about 52% and the females comprising 48% on average.

The second graph shows the male and female breakdown as a percent of average employment in Oklahoma among all age groups. This shows the overall growth in the senior age group over the seven years, broken down by men and women. The proportion of males to females stays relatively the same over these seven years.





Industry

The distribution of the older workforce is displayed in the following graphs listing each NAICS category. Please refer to the table listed below showing the major NAICS codes as needed during this analysis.

North American Industry Classification System Codes	***Titles Codes Refer To***
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
21	Mining
22	Utilities
23	Construction
31-33	Manufacturing
42	Wholesale Trade
44-45	Retail Trade
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing
51	Information
52	Finance & Insurance
53	Real Estate, Rental & Leasing
54	Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
55	Management of Companies & Enterprises
56	Administrative, Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services
61	Education Services
62	Health Care & Social Assistance
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
72	Accommodation and Food Services
81	Other Services
92	Public Administration

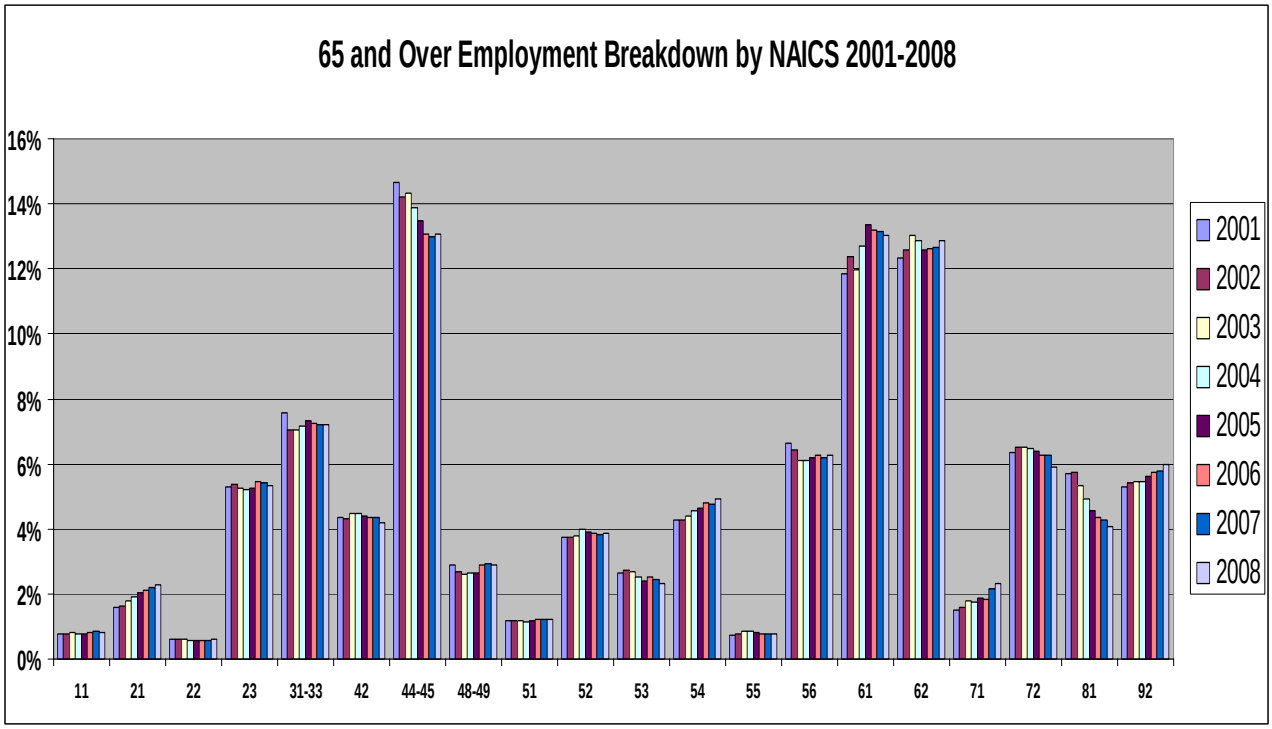
Industry

By looking at the distribution of the senior workforce across the various industries, it becomes evident which industries have the largest group of senior employees.

NAICS code 44-45 noticeably stands out as having the greatest percentage of 65 and over employment. This is the retail trade industry. The industries with code 61 and 62 are noticeably higher as well, with these being education services and health care, respectively.

The industries that are comprised of the fewest senior workers are noticeable at a glance as well. These are NAICS code 22 with the lowest, which is the utilities industry. NAICS code 55, management of companies and enterprises, and NAICS code 11, agriculture, alternated as the second and third lowest over the seven year period analyzed.

All other industries generally had 1% to 7.5% of their workforce fall in the 65 and over age group during this time period.

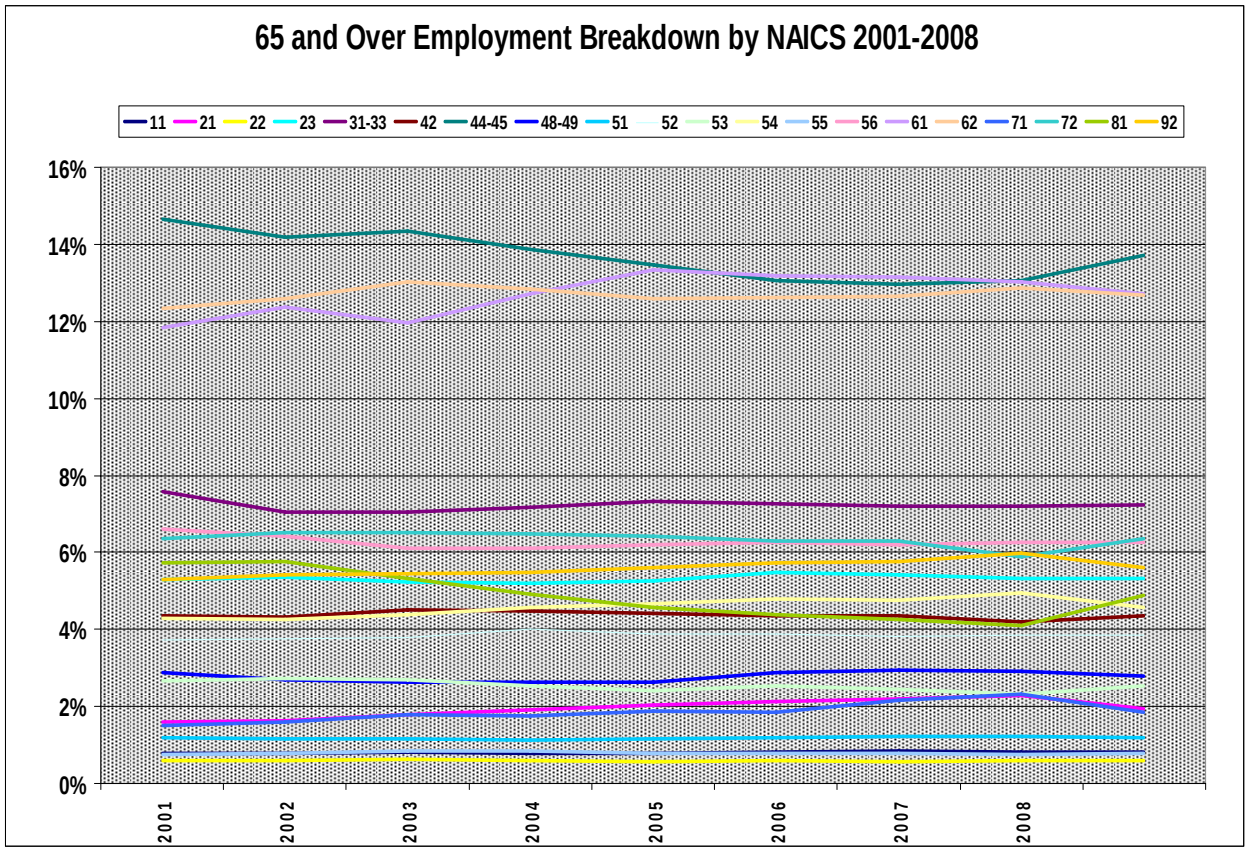


Industry

Demonstrated below is another view of all the industries and the levels of senior workforce that each industry employs as a percentage of their total workforce.

The highest percentages as shown before are the Retail Industry (NAICS code 44-45), Education Services (NAICS code 61), and Health Care (NAICS code 62).

It is obvious to see from this graph that there have been no dramatic changes for any industries in the portion of seniors they employ.



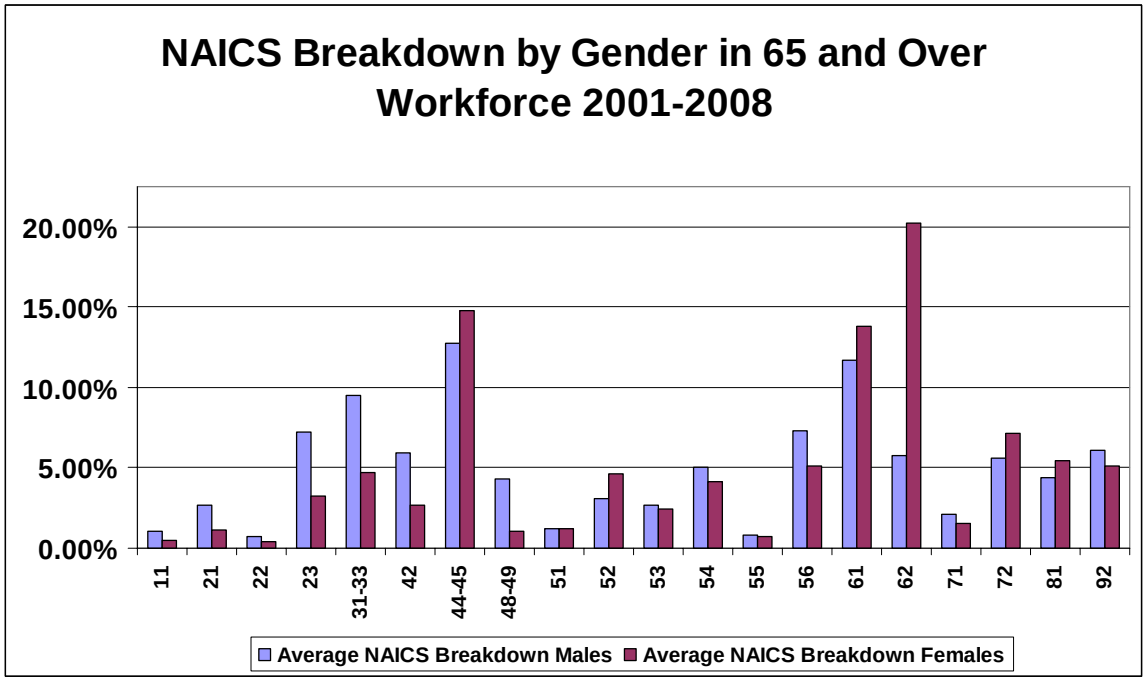
Male to Female Comparison of Industries

When analyzing data for both males and females employed at age 65 and over in Oklahoma, the industries in which they are employed tend to vary slightly.

For males in the senior workforce, the largest sectors are Retail Trade with 12.72%, Education Services with 11.69%, and Manufacturing with 9.54%. Most of the remaining industries comprise between 1% and 7.5% of the senior male workforce. The industries comprising the lowest percentage of senior males are Management of Companies & Enterprises with 0.83% and the lowest is Utilities with 0.73%.

For females working into their senior years, the largest sectors are much more noticeable than their male counterparts in Oklahoma.

As displayed below, the largest industry for females is the Health Care and Social Assistance sector with 20.19% of the senior female workforce, Retail Trade with 14.77%, and Education Services with 13.80%. Most of the remaining industries employed between 1% and 7.5%. The industries with the lowest percentage of senior females are Management of Companies & Enterprises with 0.76%, Agriculture with 0.51%, and the lowest is Utilities with 0.44%.

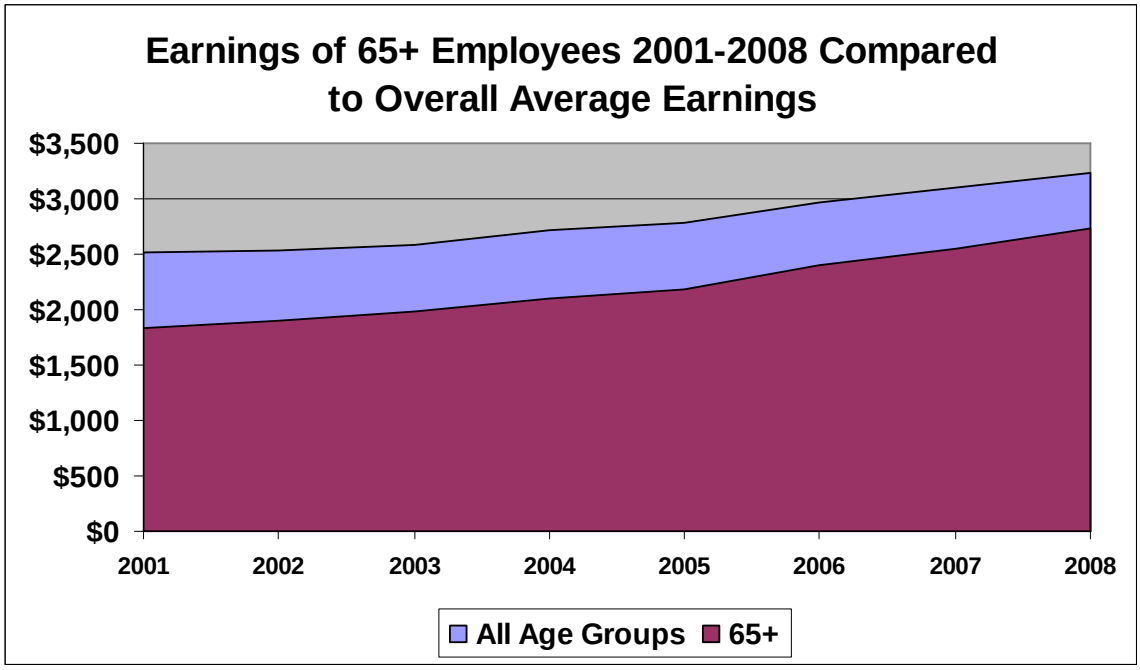


Earnings

The chart shown below displays the average monthly earnings for all employed in Oklahoma, which has grown from $2,471 in 2001 to $3,182 in 2008.

The 65 and over workforce earned on average $1,829.25 in 2001, and this grew to an average of $2,731.75 in 2008. Their portion is represented by the fuchsia portion of the chart to differentiate between the average earnings of the senior workforce and the total average earnings.

Although this segment of the workforce earned 74.02% of the total average earnings in 2001, the chart and data reflects the senior workforce has narrowed this gap over the past seven years. Currently, this age group earns 85.85% of the total average earnings.



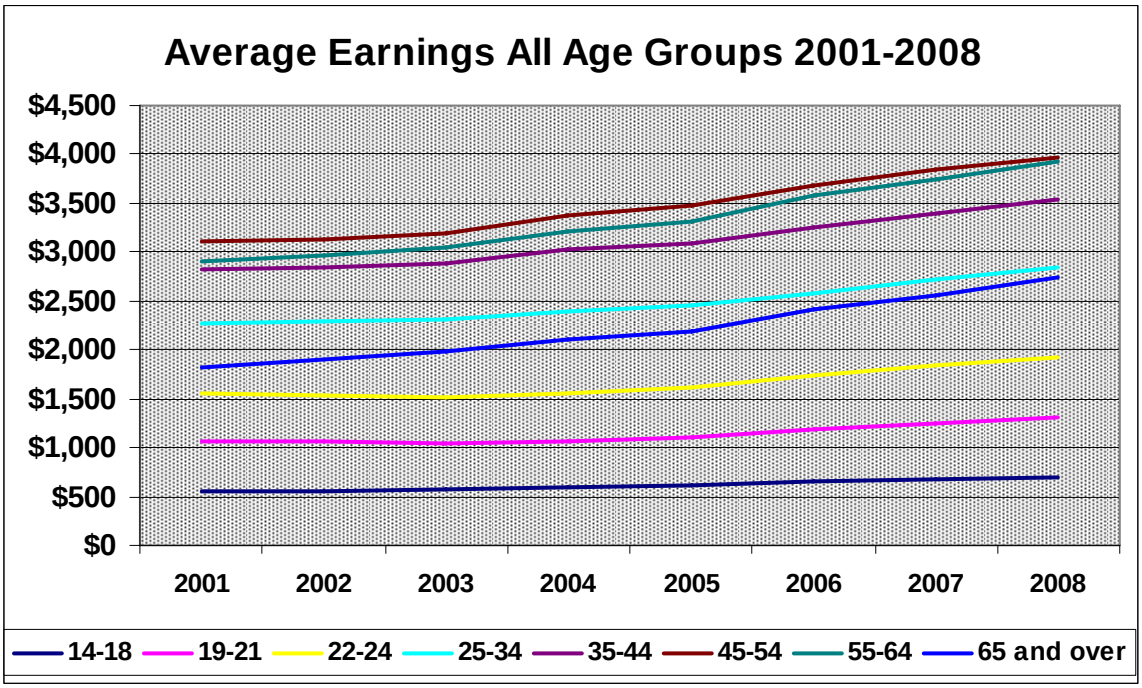
Earnings

When analyzing the average monthly earnings of all age groups in Oklahoma from 2001 to 2008, the 65 and over workforce lands in the middle of the earning ranges.

The 45 to 54 year old age range has the highest average monthly earnings from 2001 to 2008, with 2001 average earnings of $3,115 and 2008 average earnings of $3,966.75. This age group has consistently had the highest average monthly earnings with the 55 to 64 age range following closely behind. The 55 to 64 age range in 2001 had average monthly earnings of $2,903.25, and by 2008 the average monthly earnings had risen to $3,932.75.

The lowest monthly average earnings were found in the 14-18 age group which had average earnings in 2001 of $562, and in 2008 this had risen only to $702.50 on average.

While the average earnings of seniors seems to be approaching that of the 25 to 34 year old range, they are still surpassed in earnings by the three age ranges after the 25-34 year old range. This could be due to the number of workers in these three middle aged categories or as seen in later charts, the level of new hires in these age groups.

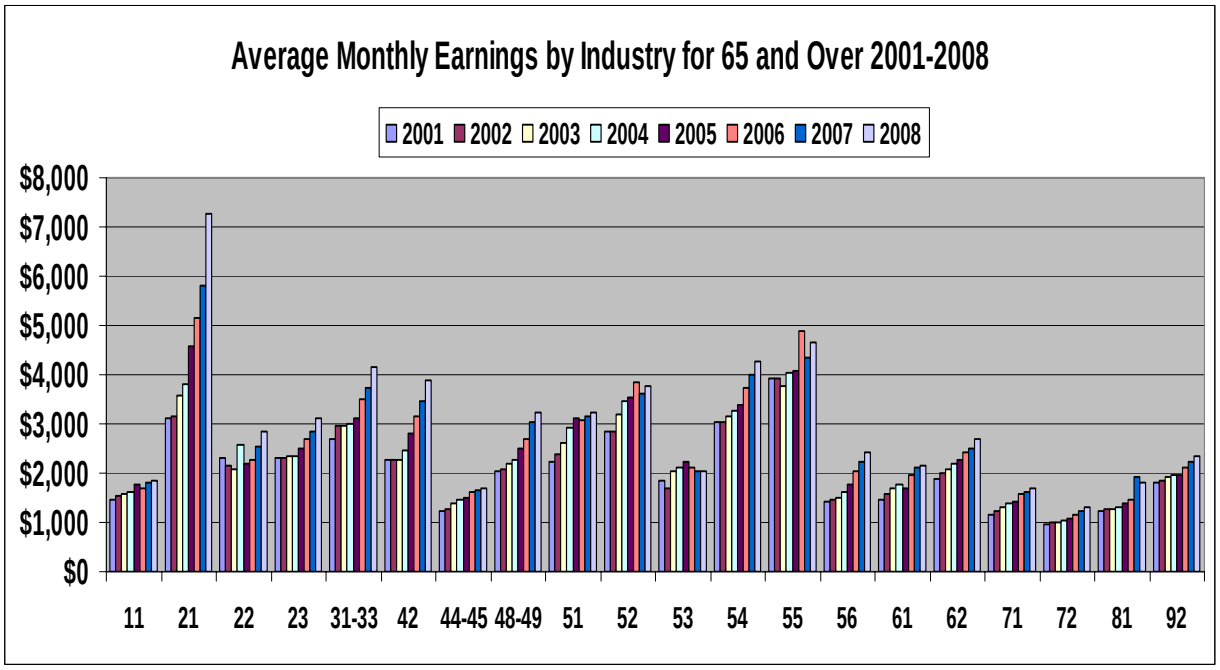


Earnings

Below is an illustration of the average earnings for the 65 and over workforce in Oklahoma across all industry groups.

All industry groups had an increase in their average earnings over this seven year period. The real estate, rental, and leasing industry (NAICS Code 53) grew the least amount. In 2001, the average earnings in this industry were $1,844.75, and these had grown to only $2,033.50 by 2008 for this age group.

As a contrast, the industry group that had the greatest increase in its average earnings over this time period was the mining sector (NAICS Code 21). This area in 2001 had average monthly earnings of $3,108.50, and then by 2008 had reached $7,252.75.



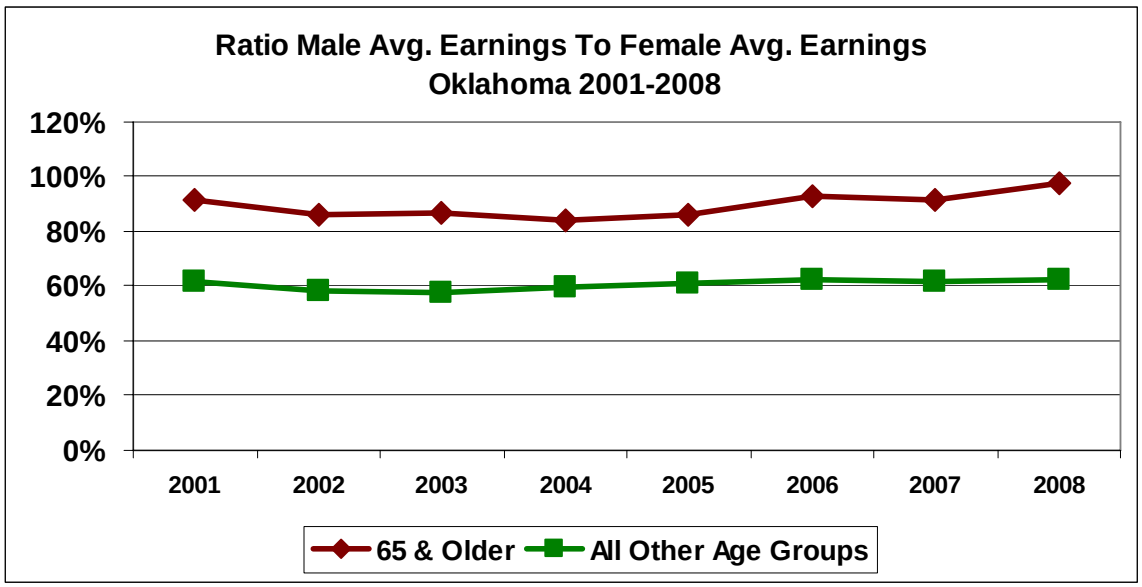
Earnings Broken Down by Gender

When further analyzing the earnings of the senior workforce, the earnings of males have outpaced the earnings of females. Although this is generally true for all other age groups, what is different is the rate in which earnings of males surpass the earnings of females.

For 2001 to 2008, see below table showing the average earnings of males and females 65 and older in Oklahoma. The third column shows the difference between the two, and the final column shows the percent in which the average male earnings exceed the average female earnings.

	Average Earnings Males 65+	Average Earnings Females 65+	Difference Between Average Earnings	Rate Males Exceed Females
2001	$2,374.75	$1,240.50	$1,134.25	91.43%
2002	$2,434.00	$1,306.25	$1,127.75	86.33%
2003	$2,561.00	$1,373.50	$1,187.50	86.46%
2004	$2,689.50	$1,463.00	$1,226.50	83.83%
2005	$2,819.50	$1,517.25	$1,302.25	85.83%
2006	$3,127.75	$1,622.75	$1,505.00	92.74%
2007	$3,307.50	$1,727.75	$1,579.75	91.43%
2008	$3,584.75	$1,813.50	$1,771.25	97.67%

The plot below demonstrates the rate that male earnings exceed female earnings. Although male earnings outpace female earnings in the other age groups, the difference is not approaching 100% as in the senior workforce. The remaining workforce of males tends to hover around 60% in the rate in which they exceed female earnings.

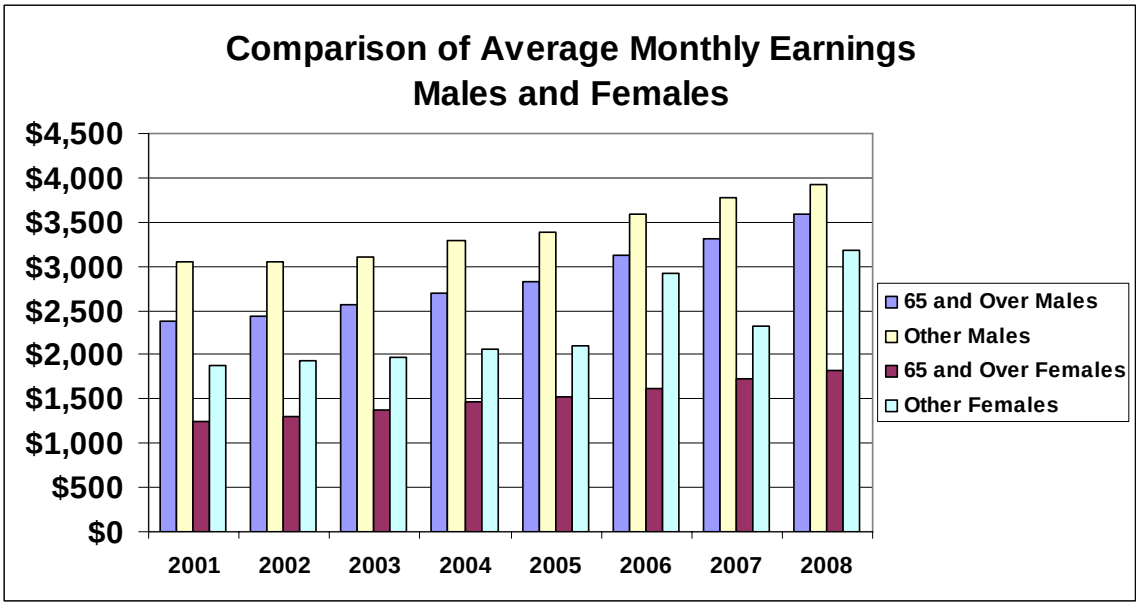


Earnings Broken Down by Gender

Upon further analysis of average earnings of seniors as compared to other age groups, an interesting trend does become noticeable. While both males and females in younger age groups on average have earned more than their senior counterparts over the past seven years, there is a much more noticeable difference between the females than the males when comparing the senior workforce earnings to the remainder of the workforce.

Another item that is noticeable with the average earnings is the difference in ranges that the males and females have experienced over the past seven years. While the male lowest average earnings were $2,374 in 2001 with the under 65 workforce, the highest average earnings for males were over $3,932 monthly in 2008 with this same group of under 65 workers.

The female lowest average earnings were $1,240 in 2001 with the senior workforce, and the highest earnings were just over $3,182 in 2008 with the females under 65. The highest average earnings for females in 2008 only surpassed the average earnings of the males that fell in the three youngest age ranges, 14-24 years old.

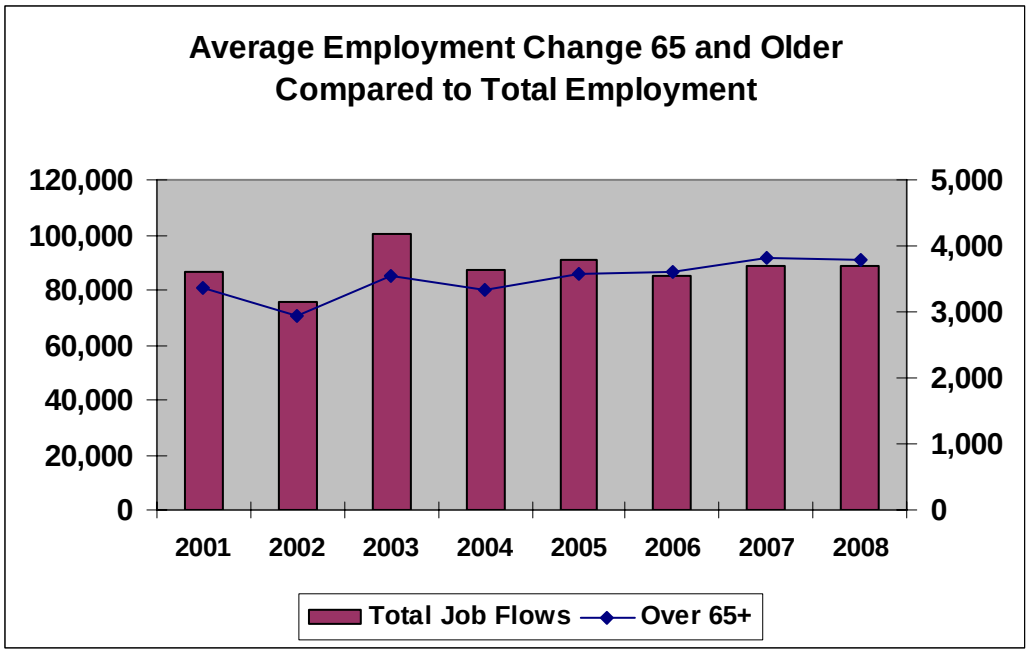


Employment Change

The chart below displays the change in the workforce in Oklahoma. The total net jobs gained from year to year fluctuated, but increased slightly over the seven years.

The net jobs gained for the senior workforce is displayed by the blue corresponding line. It has followed the same trend as the state for the first four years, but has since increased at a slightly higher rate than the state average. In 2001, the average net job gain for the 65 and over workforce was 3,351, and this grew to 3,796 in 2008. In comparison, the statewide average jobs gained in 2001 was 86,567, and in 2008 this had grown to 88,576 jobs added.

The flattening of this trend line and the levels of job gains could be an indication of the lack of jobs gained by all age groups.



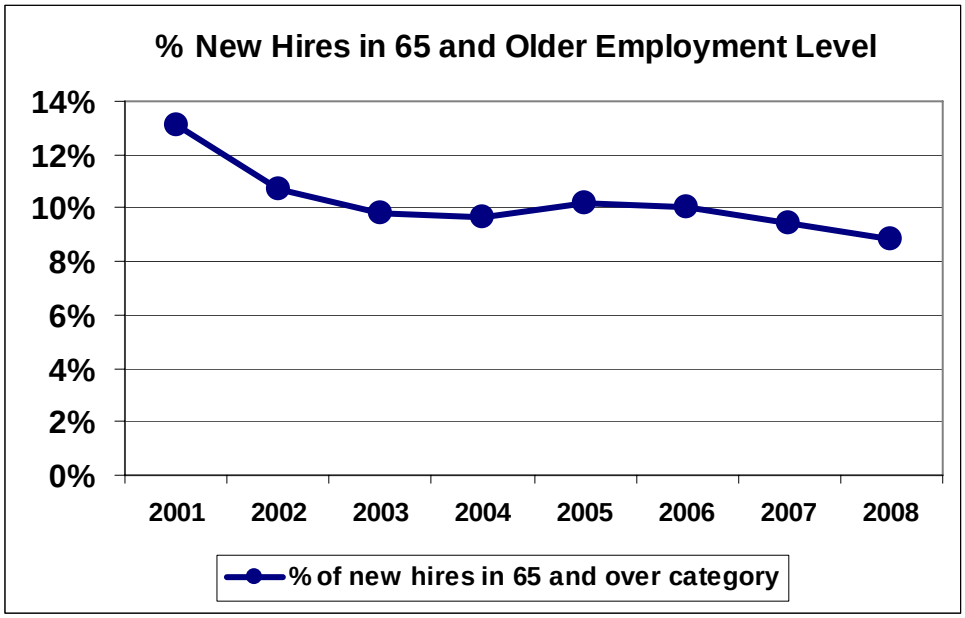
New Hires

In Oklahoma, when looking at all the newly hired employees, the workforce 65 and over represents a very small portion of the new hires. 1.71% of the new hires were 65 and over in 2001, and then, by 2008, this age group represented 1.85%.

There is an interesting trend that is evident when you compare the 65 and over workforce levels to the rate that are newly hired of this age group. While the average workforce level for this age group has increased from 43,779 in 2001 to 64,165 in 2008, the percent of new hires in this age group has decreased each year from 2001 to 2008.

In 2001, the average new hires in this age group totaled 5,730. In 2008, this amount had decreased to 5,646. So while the total employed in this age group increased, one could interpret that these workers were not increasing due to being newly hired after looking at both sets of data.

As shown in the chart below, the 2001 level of new hires as a percentage of total workforce in the age group 65 and over was at 13.09%. By 2008, the rate at which this age group newly hired had fallen to 8.8%.



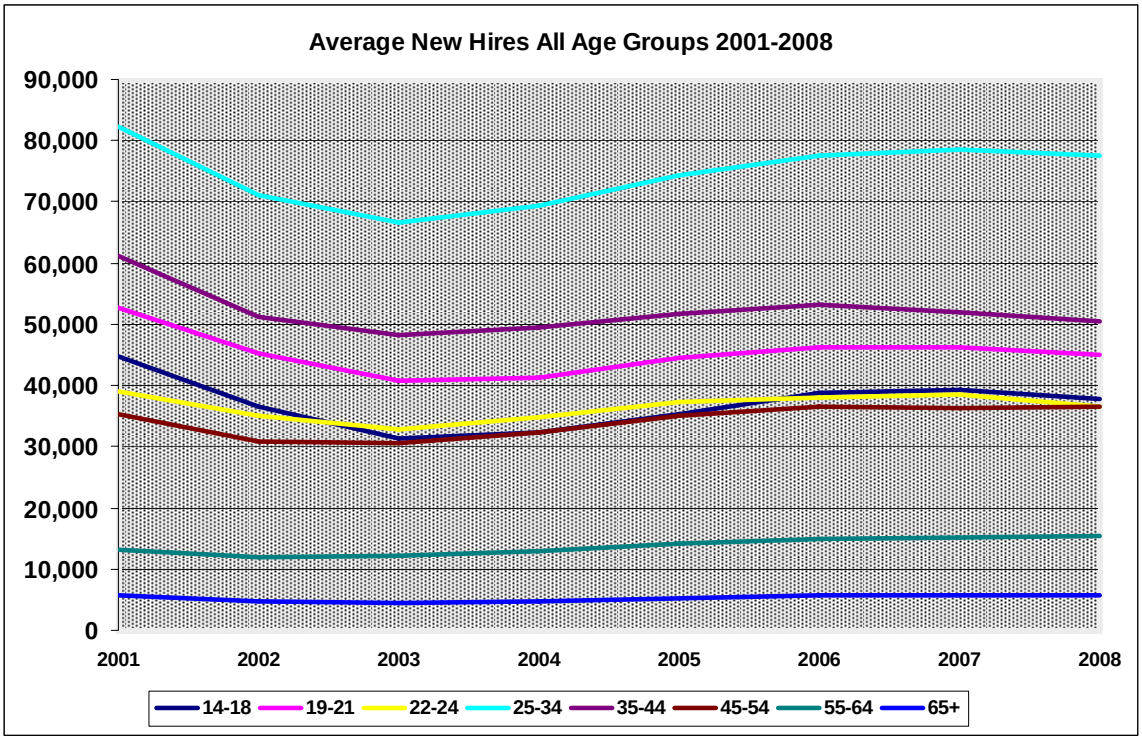
New Hires

When comparing the data for new hires against all age groups, it becomes more apparent which age groups are leading and trailing in this area of analysis.

The group of workers aged 25-34 had the highest overall level for new hires but were down slightly over the seven year period. In 2001, this age group had an average of 82,197 new hires, and in 2008 they had 77,452, which surpassed all other age ranges.

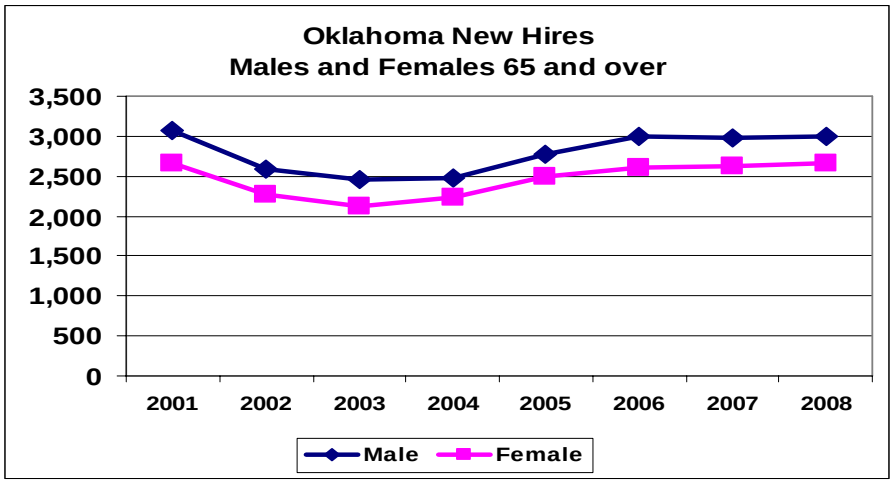
The group of workers 65 and over had the lowest level for new hires. As stated before, this age group on average had 5,730 new hires in 2001 and then in 2008 had 5,646 newly hired, so this number has not changed drastically although the total workforce for this age group has increased. The workers aged 55-64 years old were the next lowest in the average new hires.

The other five age ranges converged into a more narrow range over the seven year period analyzed. In 2001, these five groups ranged from 35,000 to 61,000 in new hires on average. By 2008, these same groups ranged from 36,000 to 50,000 new hires on average. The only age ranges that increased in the number of new hires over this seven year period were those 45-54 years old and 55-64 years old, and these were both increased only slightly.

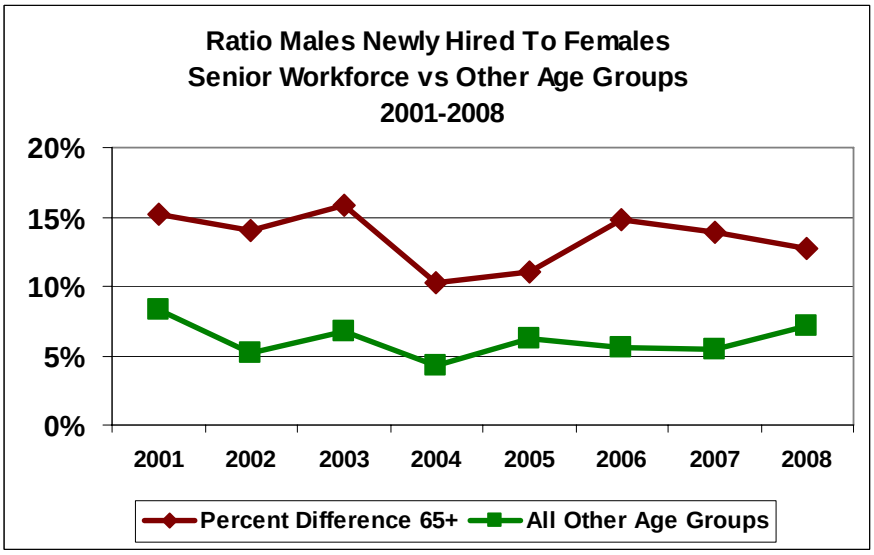


New Hires

The new hires in the 65 and over age group follow the same trend between both men and women, as displayed in the chart below. Both have flattened out in the past two years between 2,500 and 3,000 new hires. While the total workforce for this group continued to rise, the new hires are not increasing, which could be attributed to the aging population and those not leaving the workforce after reaching 65 years old.



When analyzing gender and how it affects the rate of new hires, there is a distinction between those 65 and over and the other age groups. All age groups tend to follow a similar pattern as the senior workforce in hiring more men than women, but the other age groups do not experience as drastic a percentage difference as the older age group between men and women new hires. This chart also indicates that the difference between men and women may be narrowing since 2006.



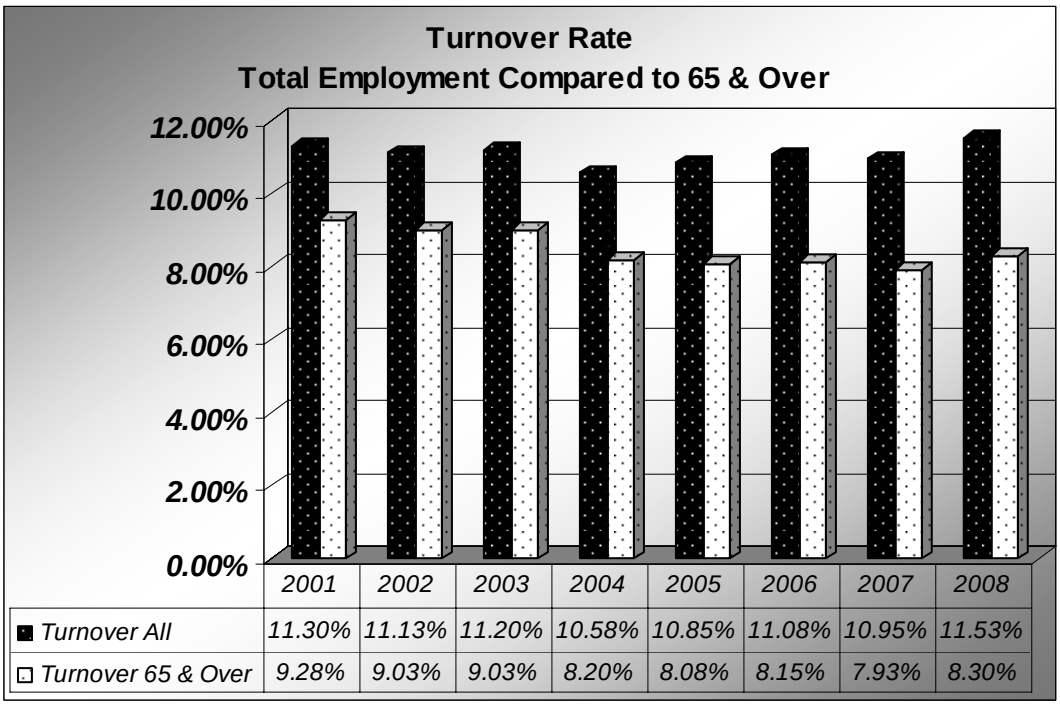
Turnover

A labor turnover event is defined as a change in employment status or in employer. Turnover of 100% would indicate that all employees had experienced a change in employment status or employer.

Shown below is the turnover rate for all employment in Oklahoma as well as the turnover for the senior workforce. The average turnover of all age groups in 2001 was 11.3% and decreased slightly over these seven years, but in 2008 measured above the 2001 level at 11.53%.

In comparison, the turnover rate for the workers 65 and over measured 9.28% in 2001 and this decreased slightly most years. In 2008, turnover for workers 65 and over measured 8.30%.

What is noticeable is that the difference between the two groups is slightly, yet steadily growing. While the difference in these rates in 2001 between these groups is 2.03%, this difference grew slightly each year to its 2008 difference of 3.23%. While a small percentage, it does indicate a pattern of lower turnover in the older workforce when compared to the total workforce. This could be another indication of older workers choosing not to leave the workforce or change employers.



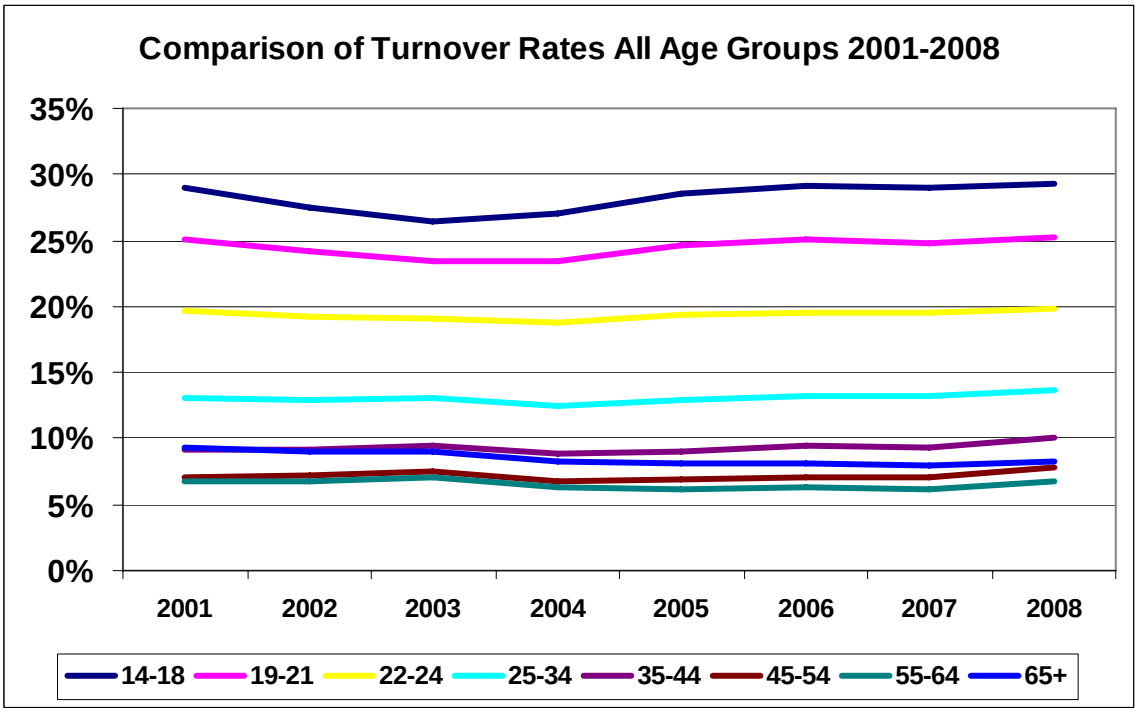
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Turnover All	11.30%	11.13%	11.20%	10.58%	10.85%	11.08%	10.95%	11.53%
Turnover 65 & Over	9.28%	9.03%	9.03%	8.20%	8.08%	8.15%	7.93%	8.30%

Turnover

Further analysis of the turnover rates for all age groups displays a greater contrast between the age groups.

The highest turnover rates in Oklahoma are found to be in the three youngest age groups, with the highest turnover found in the youngest age range of workers, the 14-18 year olds. In 2008, this age group had an average turnover rate of 29.23%. As would be expected, the next highest turnover rate is found in the 19-21 year olds who ended the time period at 25.18%, and the next highest turnover rate was in the 22-24 age range, which ended 2008 with a rate of 19.78%.

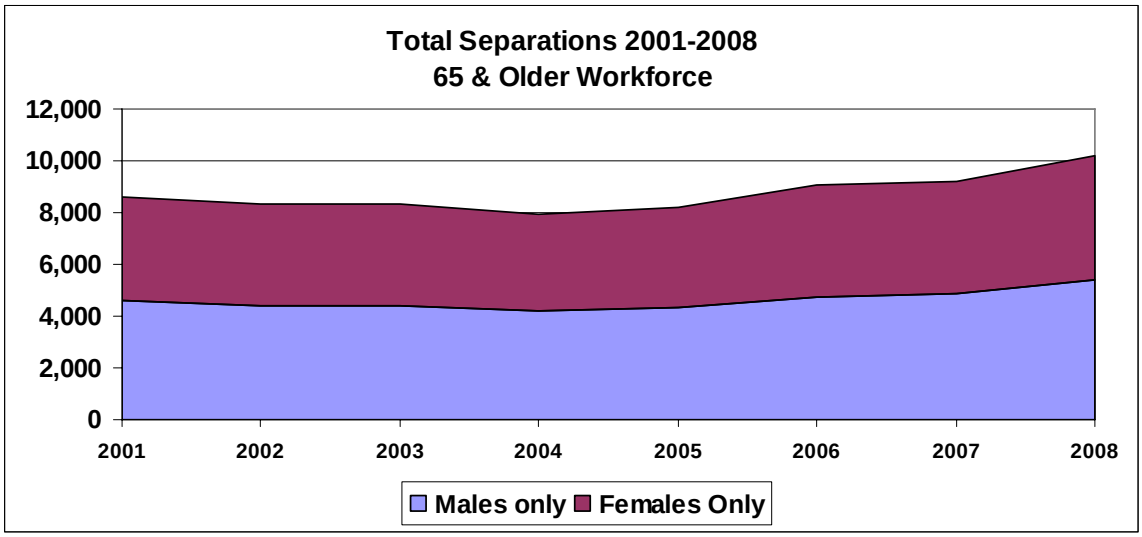
The lowest turnover rates in Oklahoma are found in the three oldest age ranges. The lowest turnover is in the 55 to 64 year old age range, which had a rate of 6.8% in 2008. The next lowest turnover rate is found in the 45-54 age range, which had a rate of 7.85% in 2008. The third lowest rate was the senior workforce with an average rate of 8.30% in 2008. These are all relatively low turnover rates when compared to their younger counterparts for the same years, indicating a negative correlation between age and turnover rate.



Separations

Separations are the total number of terminations of employment occurring at any time during the referenced time period.

When plotting the total separations for senior workers 2001 to 2008, you can see the total represented by the combined shaded areas. The males are indicated by the amount on the bottom of the graph in light purple and females in the darker fuchsia. This graph shows that while separations for both genders in this age group follow the same pattern, the males have a slightly larger number of separations, thus taking up more of the graph surface area.

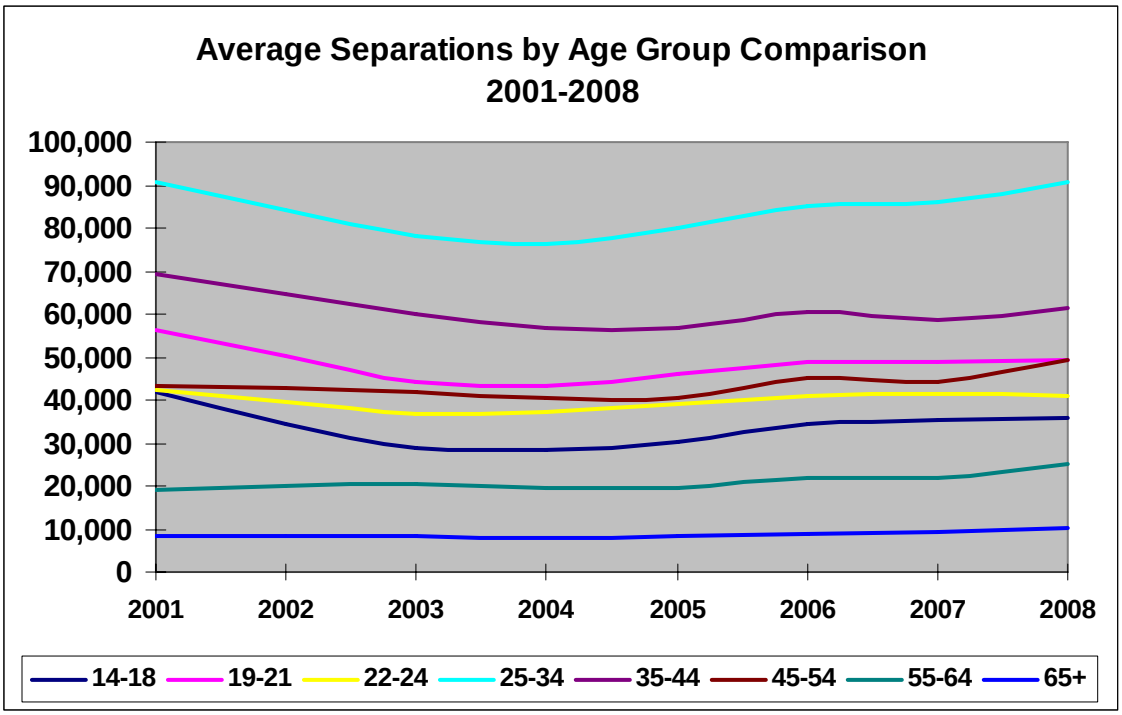


The table below also demonstrates that the workforce number of senior males is larger than the females in this age group, and likewise that the separations for males exceed those of females in this age group.

	Employment Males	Employment Females	Separations Males	Separations Females	Separation Rate Males	Separation Rate Females
2001	22,849	20,930	4,600	3,970	20.13%	18.97%
2002	23,600	21,666	4,416	3,939	18.71%	18.18%
2003	24,456	22,530	4,419	3,882	18.07%	17.23%
2004	25,337	23,489	4,196	3,755	16.56%	15.99%
2005	26,953	25,067	4,316	3,894	16.01%	15.54%
2006	29,036	26,796	4,748	4,302	16.35%	16.06%
2007	31,036	28,443	4,837	4,351	15.58%	15.30%
2008	33,336	30,829	5,382	4,845	16.14%	15.72%

Separations

As evidenced in the prior illustrations, separations for the senior workforce rose only slightly over the past seven years from 8,571 in 2001 to 10,227 in 2008.

When plotting the separations of each age group, the 25-34 year old age group stands out as having the highest average number of separations over this time period. This age group experienced 90,542 separations in 2008. The next highest age group was the 35-44 year olds with 61,601 separations.

Separations can include quits, layoffs, and discharges. The reason for the younger age groups having higher separation rates could be due to layoffs or other company reorganization and these age groups with a lack of tenure experiencing the most effect. With separations including voluntary and involuntary actions, it could also be affected by younger workers seeking upward mobility. However, when reviewing this data in conjunction with the turnover percentages, the separations could be interpreted to be most affected by involuntary employer actions upon the employees.