

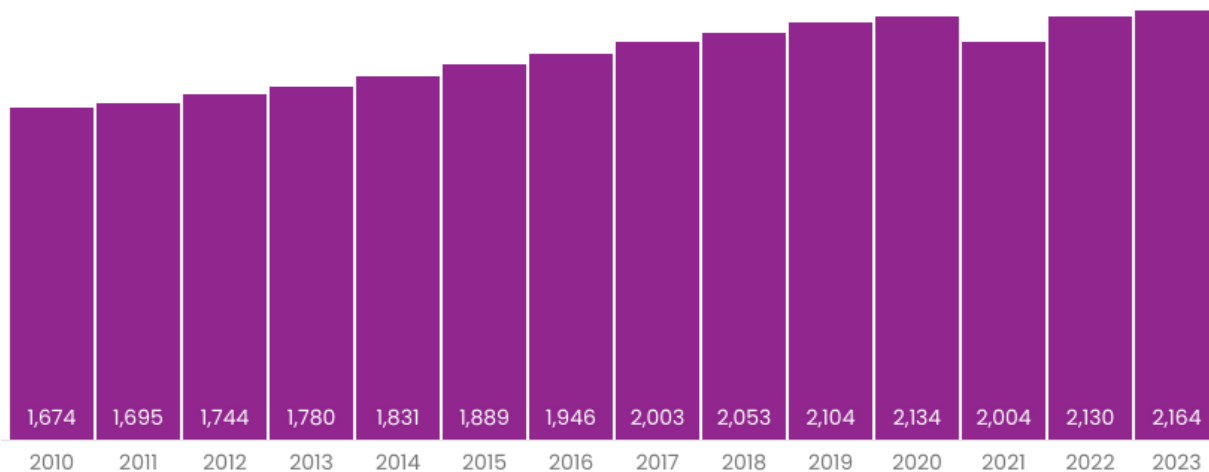
## Region’s Employment Surpasses Pre-Pandemic High

### Central Puget Sound region gains over 34,000 jobs in 2023

Three years after the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in the central Puget Sound, 2023 employment data shows that the region surpassed its pre-pandemic employment high of 2.13 million jobs. By March 2023, regional employment had passed the old employment high mark by around 30,000 jobs, hitting a new regional employment high of 2.16 million jobs.

Over 130,000 jobs, or more than 6.1% of total employment, in the central Puget Sound region were lost between 2020 and 2021, erasing roughly three years of growth. Employment in the region had nearly recovered by 2022 with an estimated gain of over 126,000 jobs, or 6.3%, over that year. Job growth in 2023 continues the central Puget Sound’s long-term job growth.

### Covered Employment (in Thousands) in the Central Puget Sound Region, 2010–2023



Source: PSRC Covered Employment estimates for King, Kitsap, Pierce & Snohomish counties (rounded to the nearest thousand)

While employment in all four counties of the central Puget Sound region experienced growth between 2022 and 2023, Snohomish County remained below its 2020 employment high by 2,000 jobs in 2023. Of the central Puget Sound’s four counties, Snohomish County experienced the greatest employment reduction at an over 8% decline in jobs between 2020 and 2021. This was in large part due to a 19% contraction of the county’s manufacturing workforce.

## Covered Employment by County, 2020–2023

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
King	1,431,000	1,342,000	1,434,000	1,451,000
Kitsap	92,000	87,000	91,000	93,000
Pierce	319,000	306,000	322,000	329,000
Snohomish	293,000	269,000	283,000	291,000

*Source: PSRC Covered Employment estimates for King, Kitsap, Pierce & Snohomish counties (rounded to the nearest thousand)*

While manufacturing jobs have begun recovering, the sector employed 15% less workers in 2023 than in 2020 in Snohomish County. Regionwide, manufacturing employed 11% less people in 2023 than the sector did in 2020. Other sectors that have yet to employ as many people as they did in 2020 include government and education, which are respectively employing 2% and 3% less people in 2023 than they did in 2020.

This dynamic also exists in retail employment; however, that statistic is an artifact of the federal government reclassifying jobs in the retail and service sectors in 2022. This classification change is reflected in employment estimates that show a major decline in retail employment and a similarly sized increase in services employment between 2021 and 2022.

Overall, 2023 saw widespread job growth, with employment in most sectors growing by 1–2% between 2022 and 2023. One exception has been Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE), where the sector’s employment saw a 2% decline between 2022 and 2023 in the region.

While total employment had recovered in 2023, analyses by geography and sector show areas that have yet to make a full recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. PSRC will continue to monitor employment data in the central Puget Sound.

*Note: Covered employment refers to jobs "covered" under the state's Unemployment Insurance Program and constitutes 85–90% of total employment. PSRC uses data from March to reduce the impact of seasonality in employment.*

## King County Sector Employment

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2020</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2022</b>
Construction & Resources	77,700	76,900	76,800	78,300	1%	2%
FIRE	69,600	68,800	72,100	70,800	2%	-2%
Manufacturing	101,000	87,600	89,500	91,400	-9%	2%
Retail	163,400	166,900	104,500	104,200	-36%	0%
Services	727,300	668,000	798,300	808,300	11%	1%
WTU	115,100	106,400	122,900	126,200	10%	3%
Government	96,300	93,100	93,800	95,100	-1%	1%
Education	80,200	73,900	76,000	77,200	-4%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,430,600</b>	<b>1,341,600</b>	<b>1,434,000</b>	<b>1,451,500</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Source: PSRC Covered Employment estimates (rounded to the nearest hundred)

## Kitsap County Sector Employment

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2020</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2022</b>
Construction & Resources	5,000	5,000	5,000	4,900	-2%	-3%
FIRE	2,900	2,800	3,000	3,000	3%	1%
Manufacturing	2,800	2,500	2,900	2,600	-5%	-9%
Retail	10,800	10,500	10,700	10,700	0%	1%
Services	33,700	31,100	34,400	35,200	4%	2%
WTU	2,200	2,300	2,500	2,600	15%	2%
Government	27,400	26,500	26,100	26,800	-2%	2%
Education	7,000	5,900	6,600	6,700	-4%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91,700</b>	<b>86,600</b>	<b>91,300</b>	<b>92,500</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

Source: PSRC Covered Employment estimates (rounded to the nearest hundred)

## Pierce County Sector Employment

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2020</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2022</b>
Construction & Resources	25,500	25,100	26,200	25,600	0%	-2%
FIRE	14,000	13,400	13,600	13,400	-4%	-1%
Manufacturing	17,300	16,000	16,900	16,800	-3%	0%
Retail	35,400	36,100	36,400	36,700	4%	1%
Services	135,400	127,800	138,600	144,700	7%	4%
WTU	31,900	31,800	33,200	33,600	5%	1%
Government	35,400	33,800	33,900	34,700	-2%	2%
Education	24,200	22,200	23,300	23,800	-2%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>319,200</b>	<b>306,200</b>	<b>322,100</b>	<b>329,300</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>

Source: PSRC Covered Employment estimates (rounded to the nearest hundred)

## Snohomish County Sector Employment

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2020</b>	<b>2023 vs. 2022</b>
Construction & Resources	25,400	25,500	26,100	27,100	6%	4%
FIRE	13,300	13,100	13,200	12,900	-3%	-2%
Manufacturing	61,900	50,300	50,600	52,800	-15%	4%
Retail	34,600	33,500	34,200	34,500	0%	1%
Services	102,400	95,600	103,700	107,500	5%	4%
WTU	14,200	14,700	15,600	16,200	14%	3%
Government	21,800	20,300	20,600	21,300	-2%	3%
Education	19,400	16,500	18,400	18,800	-3%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>293,000</b>	<b>269,400</b>	<b>282,600</b>	<b>291,100</b>	<b>-1%</b>	<b>3%</b>

Source: PSRC Covered Employment estimates (rounded to the nearest hundred)