Of Rhode Island’s 913,136 working age residents, approximately 355,674 (39.0%) were aged 55 and older in 2021. Nationally, 37.0 percent of the US working age population is aged 55 and older.

Rhode Island had a larger percentage of working age residents aged 55-64 (17.0%) than the national average (16.0%) and also aged 65 & older (21.9%) than the national average (20.9%).

Among the working age population, the percentage of RI residents aged 55–64 increased from 15.4% in 2010 to 17.0% in 2021.

Of the New England states, New Hampshire (18.7%) had the highest percentage of the working age population aged 55-64, while Massachusetts (16.6%) had the lowest. Rhode Island (17.0%) ranked fifth in New England.

In 2021, the total civilian labor force participation rate for the state was 65.0 percent. The labor force participation rate for those aged 55-64 was 72.2 percent, while the labor force participation rate for 65+ was 20.8 percent. Nationally, the labor force participation rate for these two groups were 66.1 percent and 18.5 percent, respectively.

Men (49.7%) aged 55 and older were more likely to be participating in the labor force than women (37.8%).

Nationally, the civilian labor force participation rate for those aged 55-64 was 66.1%, 6.1 percentage points lower than Rhode Island (72.2%). In New England, Massachusetts (73.6%) and Connecticut (73.5%) had the highest participation rate for those aged 55-64.
In 2021, the unemployment rate for the 55 to 64 age group (4.0%) was 3.7 percentage points lower than the 7.7% state average (16 and older age group). The unemployment rate for the 65+ age group was 8.7%.

Nationally, the unemployment rate for workers aged 16 and older was 6.3%. Workers aged 55 to 64 had an unemployment rate of 5.1%, while those aged 65 and older had an unemployment rate of 5.8%.

In Rhode Island, women (4.0%) and men (4.0%) in the 55-64 age group were equally likely to be unemployed. Nationally, men (5.2%) were more likely to be unemployed than women (4.9%).

In 2021, out of a Rhode Island civilian labor force of 591,545 (those aged 16 and older) who were either working or actively seeking employment, 26.0%, or 153,902, were aged 55 and older.

Nationally, men accounted for 53.4% of the labor force aged 55 and older, while 46.6% were women.

In Rhode Island, men (52.6%) and women (47.4%) comprised nearly equal percentages of the labor force aged 55 and older.

Median weekly earnings in the United States were greatest, on average, for the 35-44 age bracket at $1,204, followed by workers aged 45-54 at $1,200.

The median weekly earnings for workers 65 and older were $1,047.

The national median usual weekly earnings for all workers employed full-time aged 16 and older were $1,085 in the fourth quarter of 2022.