

# Number of Very Affluent Households in Multnomah County Higher Than Ever

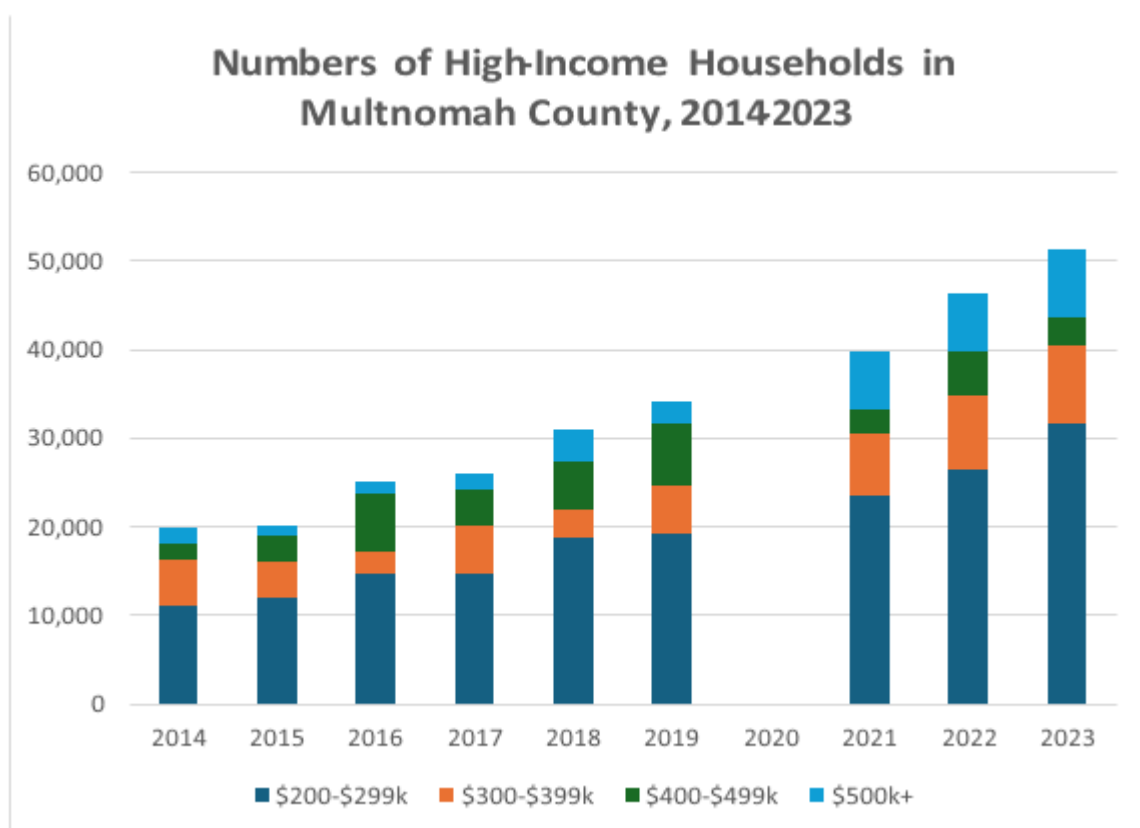
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Apparently high-income households are not fleeing Multnomah County, according to U.S. Census Bureau data provided by the Oregon Employment Department. In fact, the number of households with incomes over \$500,000 tripled from 2019 to 2023, the last year for which data is available. However, high income households may be increasingly evading the Preschool for All and Metro Housing Supports taxes.

The Preschool for All and Metro Housing Supports taxes said to be driving the wealthy out of the County passed easily in 2020. The number of high-income households in the County has steadily increased, seeming unaffected by the implementation of these measures.



**Note:** Data unavailable for 2020, due to the impact of Covid on the response rate to the survey.

**Source:** Oregon Employment Department, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2023 American Community Survey 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample.

The numbers underlying this graph appear on below. They appear to jump around a little, for two reasons. First, household incomes at the top tend to vary, due to the importance of their irregular capital gains incomes compared to steadier wage and salary figures.

Second, sample sizes for these categories are relatively small, reducing the precision of the numbers. Together these households represent approximately the top 14% of households in one populous County. For reference, half the households in Multnomah County had incomes of \$83,290 or less in 2023.<sup>1</sup>

### **Number of High-Income Households by Group by Annual Income Categories, Multnomah County, 2014-2023**

Year	\$200,000-\$299,999	\$300,000-\$399,999	\$400,000-\$499,999	\$500,000 and up
2014	11,107	5,242	1,745	1,677
2015	11,889	4,150	2,814	1,338
2016	14,534	2,690	6,470	1,354
2017	14,485	5,531	4,061	1,963
2018	18,573	3,223	5,572	3,486
2019	19,294	5,303	6,939	2,541
2020	Unavailable due to Covid impact on the survey response rate	Unavailable due to Covid impact on the survey response rate	Unavailable due to Covid impact on the survey response rate	Unavailable due to Covid impact on the survey response rate
2021	23,508	6,813	2,790	6,661
2022	26,266	8,564	4,880	6,488
2023	31,455	9,030	3,015	7,683

**Source:** Oregon Employment Department, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2023 American Community Survey 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample

A real concern for the future of our local preschool and housing programs, though, may be the rise of tax evasion by the 5%, documented by UC Berkeley economists Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman.<sup>2</sup> They describe the rise as facilitated by the lack of third-party reporting of income sources concentrated at the top, the growth of the tax planning industry dedicated to assisting the wealthy, as well as diminished capacity at the IRS.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program, SAIPE Interactive Tool, accessed 5/29/2025. <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/saipe/#/>

<sup>2</sup> Saez, Emmanuel and Gabriel Zucman. *The Triumph of Injustice: How the Rich Dodge Taxes and How to Make Them Pay*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019.