Louisiana Economic Vitals

Friday, July 10, 2026

PREFACE

Louisiana Economic Vitals is a weekly report prepared by LED's State Economic Competitiveness (SEC) team. This report provides readers with data from federal and state governmental entities, as well as other credible third-party sources. All data has been independently analyzed and summarized to ensure clarity, brevity, and practical utilization.

Louisiana Economic Development July 2026 Announcements:

Louisiana's Moment Became Louisiana Momentum
July 8th, 2026

Pool Products Manufacturer Invests at Least $8 Million for Louisiana Expansion
July 8th, 2026

Louisiana NOW Takes National Stage at the Great American State Fair
July 2nd, 2026

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LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LED PROJECT PIPELINE

Since Governor Landry took office in January 2024, LED has announced 104 projects representing over $110.4 billion USD in new investment and more than 15,520 direct new jobs across Louisiana.

As of July 9, 2026, LED is actively tracking and involved in 204 distinct projects with a combined value exceeding $269.4 billion and the potential to create more than 58,340 direct new jobs.

CERTIFIED SITE PROGRAM

Since the launch of its Certified Sites Program, LED has certified 170 industrial sites, with all or portions of 42 sites advancing into active commerce. At full build-out, these projects represent more than $40.2 billion in capital investment, over 7,140 direct new jobs, and more than $468 million in total annual wages statewide. Currently, there are 129 actively marketed certified sites across every region of Louisiana.

Active Certified Sites by Region

Acadiana	29
Bayou	6
Capital	22
Central	9
Northeast	14
Northwest	17
Southeast	18
Southwest	14
TOTAL	129

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LOUISIANA COMPETES *NOW*

Louisiana Leads the Nation in Workforce Participation Growth

New workforce data released last week indicate Louisiana is leading the nation in one of the clearest indicators of economic momentum: more people are entering the workforce. According to the latest labor market data, Louisiana tied for the nation's largest increase in labor force participation over the past year and ranked #1 in the nation for year-over-year construction employment growth.

Over the past year

- Louisiana's labor force participation rate increased from **57.9% to 58.8%**, tying for the **largest increase in the nation**.
- Nearly **33,000 additional Louisianans** entered the labor force, meaning they are either employed or actively seeking work.
- While Louisiana's labor force participation rate increased by **nearly a full percentage point**, the national labor force participation rate declined by **0.6 percentage points** during the same period. **Only one in five states** experienced any year-over-year increase.
- Louisiana also ranked **#1 in the nation** for year-over-year construction employment growth, with construction employment increasing by approximately **9,300 jobs** (+6.7%) over the past year.

Source: laworks.net

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LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. LABOR MARKET ACTIVITY

Figures 1–3 present Louisiana metropolitan employment, average hourly wages, and average weekly hours as indexes with May 2025 = 100. Indexing facilitates comparisons across metropolitan areas by emphasizing relative year-over-year changes rather than differences in absolute employment or wage levels.

Source: bls.gov

Key Takeaways

- Baton Rouge continues to lead Louisiana's metro employment growth, while most other metros have seen relatively modest changes in payroll employment.
- Wage growth has diverged considerably across metros, with northern and southwest Louisiana generally outperforming Lafayette and Houma.
- New Orleans-Metairie has experienced the largest increase in average weekly hours, suggesting employers are meeting demand by extending hours in addition to hiring.

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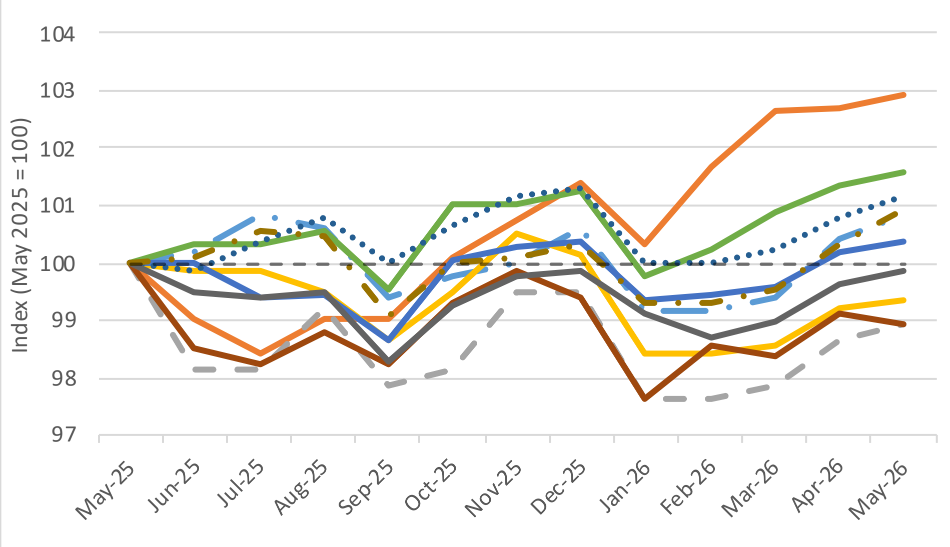

Figure 1. Louisiana Metro Employment Growth (May 2025 = 100)

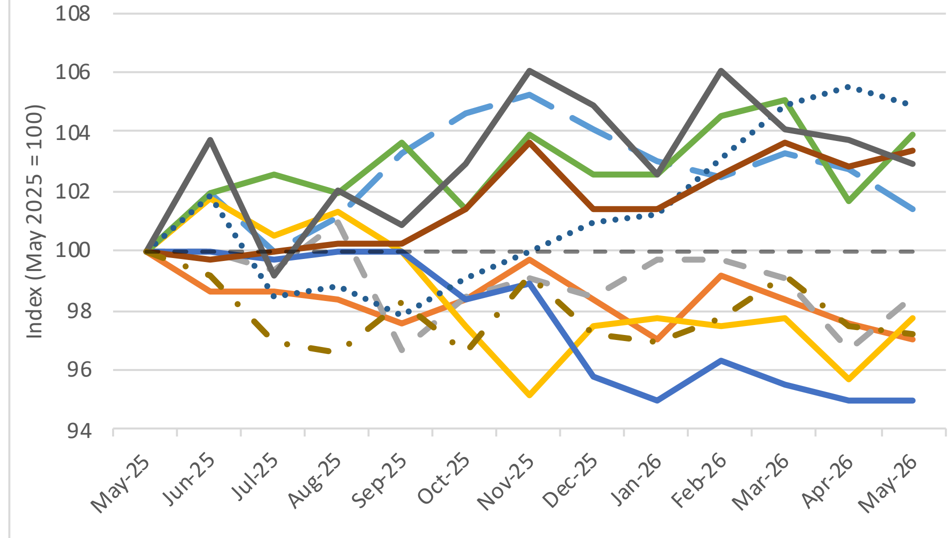

Figure 2. Louisiana Metro Average Hourly Wage Growth (May 2025 = 100)

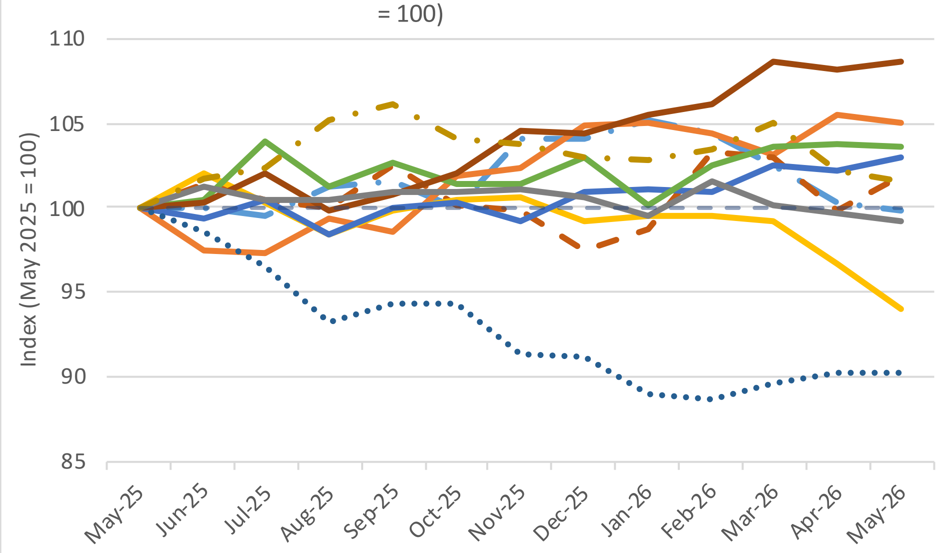

Figure 3. Louisiana Metro Average Weekly Hours Growth (May 2025 = 100)

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LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2. COMMODITIES

The following tables provide data on the weekly prices of energy and agricultural commodities, reflecting the broader economic performance of these sectors

The spot price is the price for immediate delivery, as agreed right now in the market. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude spot price is for delivery at Cushing, Oklahoma, a pipeline hub. WTI is a light, sweet (low sulfur) crude and is the primary U.S. benchmark. It is landlocked at Cushing. The Brent Crude spot price refers to crude loaded onto tankers at offshore terminals in the North Sea (originally from the Brent oilfield, a blend of several North Sea crudes). Because it is seaborne, it more directly reflects the global market price. The Henry Hub Natural Gas spot price is for natural gas delivered at the Henry Hub pipeline interchange in Louisiana, the largest natural gas trading hub in North America. The U.S. regular conventional gasoline price is the retail price paid at the pump, including taxes, based on a weekly survey of retail stations across the country. It covers regular grade - lowest octane - and does not include reformulated gasoline areas.

Source: eia.gov & tradingeconomics.com

Key Takeaways

- Energy prices spiked sharply following the onset of the Iran conflict but largely retraced those gains by early July as supply concerns eased; for now.
- Crude oil prices fell nearly 30% over the past month, while natural gas prices continued to strengthen.
- Coffee remained the strongest-performing agricultural commodity, whereas orange juice continued its sharp year-over-year decline.
- Agricultural commodity prices remained mixed overall, reflecting commodity-specific supply and demand conditions rather than a broad-based price trend.

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Table 1. Energy Commodities, Weekly							
					Change		
Commodity	7/3/26	6/26/26	6/5/26	7/4/25	WoW	MoM	YoY
Brent Crude Oil Price	$69.70	$73.63	$98.95	$69.61	-5.3%	-29.6%	0.1%
WTI Crude Oil Price	$70.48	$73.59	$96.87	$67.43	-4.2%	-27.2%	4.5%
Henry Hub Natural Gas Spot Price	$3.34	$3.20	$3.03	$3.19	4.4%	10.2%	4.7%
U.S. Regular Conventional Gas Price	$3.65	$3.70	$3.99	$3.01	-1.4%	-8.5%	21.3%

Table 2. Agricultural Commodities, Daily Period of July 9, 2026							
				Change			
Commodity	Listed Price	Dollar ($)	Unit of Measurement	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	YoY
Soybeans	$1,177.29	$11.77	$/Bu	-1.5%	4.0%	4.8%	16.3%
Wheat	$609.28	$6.09	$/Bu	1.6%	3.2%	3.7%	9.9%
Lumber	$623.46	$6.23	$/MBF	-0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	-6.4%
Palm Oil	$4,594.00	$45.94	$/MT	-0.3%	2.0%	1.2%	10.8%
Sugar (No. 11)	$15.14	$0.15	$/Lb	0.2%	2.0%	5.2%	-6.9%
Coffee	$341.23	$3.41	$/Lb	10.2%	13.3%	39.5%	17.7%
Corn	$425.24	$4.25	$/Bu	-2.2%	0.1%	1.5%	6.5%
Rice	$13.41	$0.13	$/CWT	2.1%	4.7%	8.8%	3.8%
Orange Juice	$144.91	$1.45	$/Lb	-5.2%	-15.3%	-13.1%	-45.1%

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Figure 4 displays the daily prices of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil, Brent crude oil, and U.S. Gulf Coast regular gasoline from February 17 through July 6, 2026. Vertical reference lines denote the onset of the conflict (Day 0) and the 30-, 60-, 90-, and 120-day milestones used to illustrate the evolution of energy prices over the first four months following the event.

Figure 4. Daily Crude Oil and Gulf Coast Gasoline Prices During the Iran Conflict

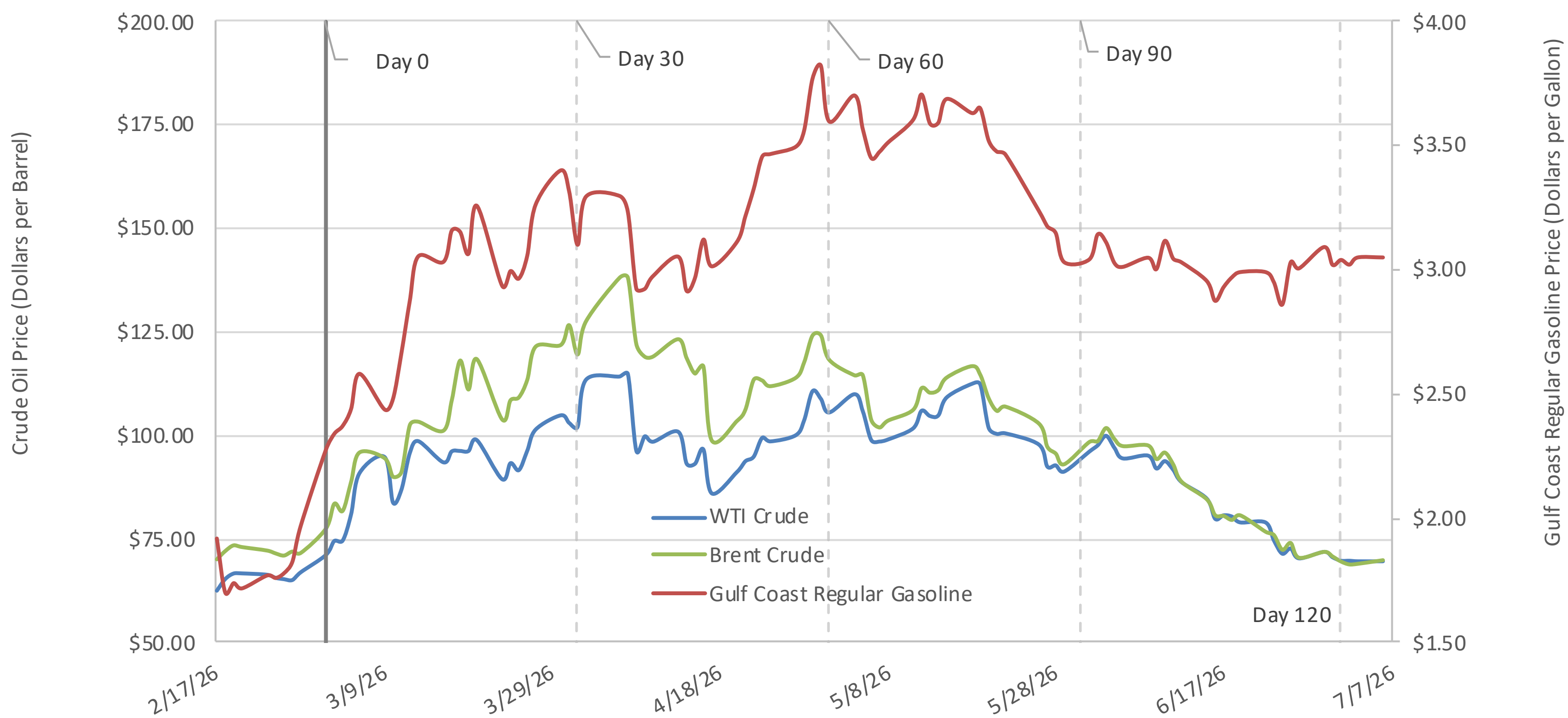

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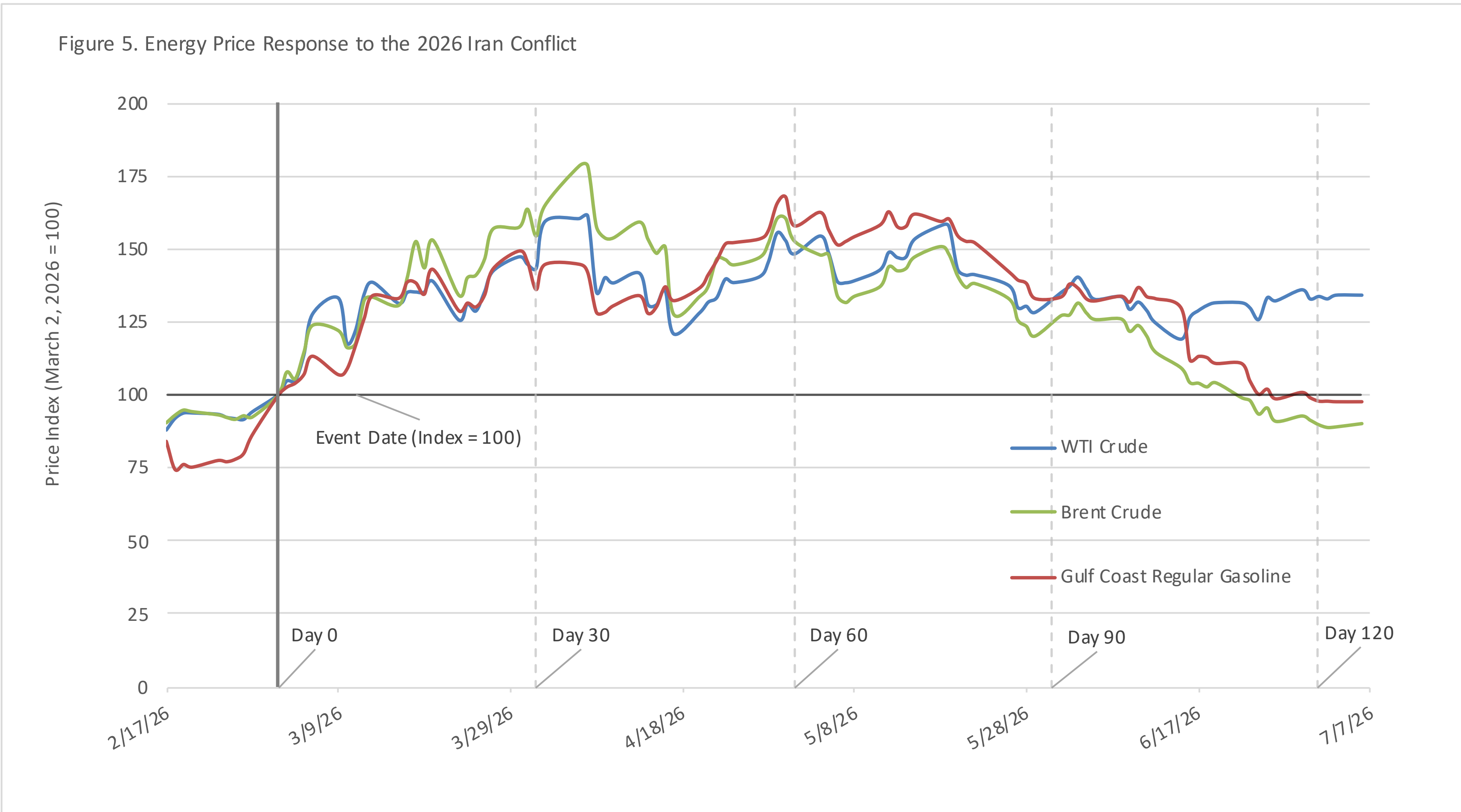
Figure 5 presents the same daily energy price series indexed to their March 2, 2026 values (March 2, 2026 = 100). Indexing each series to a common baseline facilitates comparison of the relative changes in WTI crude oil, Brent crude oil, and U.S. Gulf Coast regular gasoline prices during the first 120 days following the onset of the conflict.



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3. LOUISIANA APPRENTICESHIPS

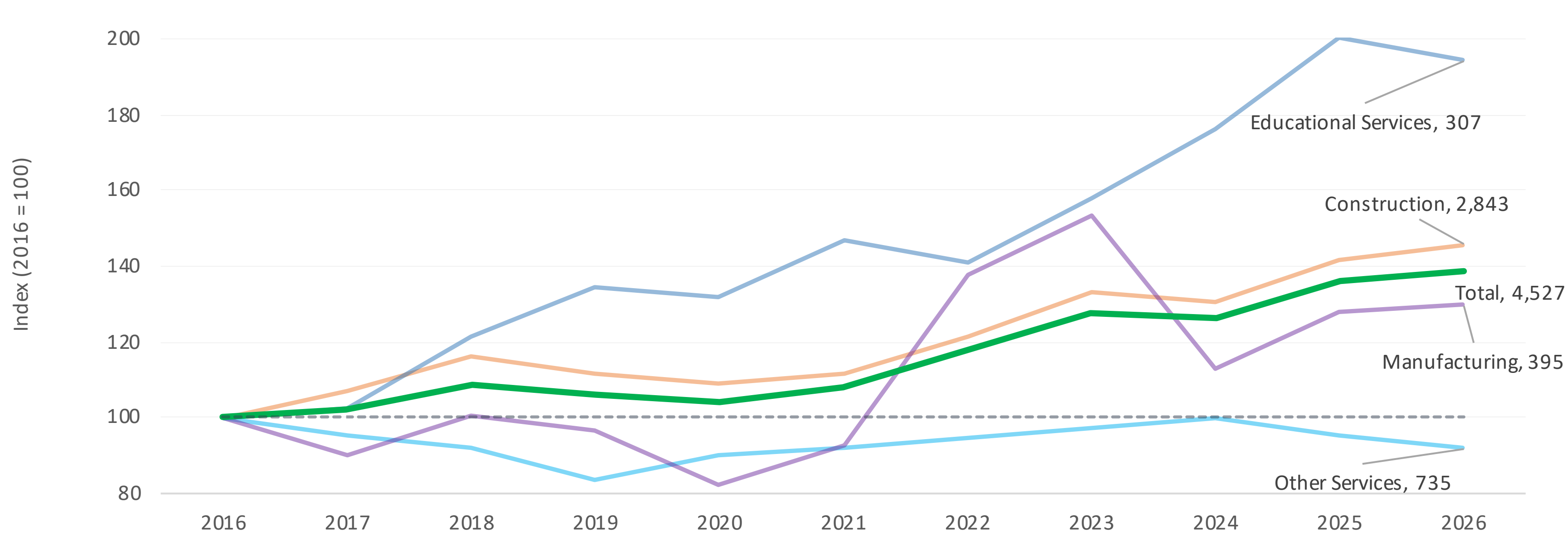
Figure 6 illustrates trends in Louisiana's active registered apprenticeship programs by selected industry from 2016 through 2026. Because industries began the period with different numbers of apprentices, the data are presented as an index (2016 = 100), allowing comparisons of relative growth over time. The 2026 labels identify the actual number of active apprentices in each industry, enabling readers to interpret both the rate of growth and the current scale of apprenticeship activity across sectors. Source: https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics

Source: denr.louisiana.gov & [eia.gov](eia.gov)

Key Takeaways

- Louisiana's active registered apprenticeship system continued to expand over the past decade, with total active apprenticeships reaching 4,527 in 2026—approximately 40 percent above the 2016 baseline.
- Growth occurred across multiple industries but was uneven. Educational Services experienced the most rapid expansion, while Construction posted steady, sustained gains and remained the largest industry among those highlighted, with 2,843 active apprentices in 2026.
- Industry trends suggest that Louisiana's apprenticeship growth has become more diversified over time. Strong gains in Educational Services complemented continued expansion in traditional sectors such as Construction, while Manufacturing (395 apprentices) and Other Services (735 apprentices) showed more modest or variable growth.

Figure 6. Louisiana Active Apprenticeship Growth by Selected Industry (2016 = 100)



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July

2026

Economic Calendar

The *Louisiana Economic Vitals* economic calendar provides insights into upcoming events and data releases. It includes information on national economic indicators, such as GDP, employment figures, inflation rates, and central bank meetings in addition to state and local data.
Links to sources are included.

The July calendar will be revised when dates for additional data are announced.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Metro Employment *[May]* ISM PMI Manufacturing *[June]* Construction Spending *[May]*	2 Employment Situation *[June]* Manufacturing - New Orders *[May]*	3	4
5	6 ISM PMI Services *[June]*	7	8 Wholesale Inventory *[May]*	9 Business Applications *[June]*	10	11
12	13 Federal Budget *[June]*	14 CPI *[June]* Real Earnings *[June]* NFIB Small Business Report *[Feb]*	15 PPI *[June]*	16 NAHB HMI *[July]* Pending Home Sales *[June]* Retail & Food Sales *[June Advance]*	17 U.S. Import & Export PI *[June]* U. of Michigan Sentiment *[July]* Housing Starts *[June]* Industrial Production *[June]*	18
19	20	21 State Employment *[June]*	22 State JOLTS *[Annual 2025]*	23	24 New Residential Sales *[June]*	25
26	27 Durable Goods *[June Advance]*	28 The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index *[July]*	29 Metro Employment *[June]*	30 GDP *[2026:Q2, Advance Estimate]*	31 Employment Cost Index *[2026:Q2]*	