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County Employment and Wages in Michigan — Fourth Quarter 2014

Eight of the 10 large counties in Michigan reported employment gains from December 2013 to December 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2013 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that Ottawa County had the largest increase, up 4.1 percent, followed by the counties of Kent (3.1 percent) and Wayne (2.2 percent). (See table 1.)

Nationally, employment advanced 2.2 percent from December 2013 to December 2014 as 319 of the 339 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Weld, Colo., and Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increases, with gains of 8.0 percent each over the year. Atlantic, N.J., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment, with a loss of 5.0 percent.

Among the 10 largest counties in Michigan, employment was highest in Wayne County (706,500) and Oakland County (704,800) in December 2014. Two other counties, Kent (371,300) and Macomb (312,700) had employment levels of more than 300,000. Together, the 10 largest Michigan counties accounted for 69.8 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 339 largest counties made up 72.1 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the fourth quarter of 2013 to the fourth quarter of 2014, Ottawa County recorded the fastest rate of increase in average weekly wages among the 10 large counties in Michigan, registering a gain of 4.7 percent. (See table 1.) Oakland County recorded the highest average weekly wage among these large counties at $1,164 per week, followed by Wayne County at $1,119. Nationally, the average weekly wage was $1,035, up 3.5 percent from a year ago.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 73 counties in Michigan with employment levels below 75,000. Wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average in the fourth quarter of 2014. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Ottawa County's 4.7-percent rise in average weekly wages from the fourth quarter of 2013 to the fourth quarter of 2014 ranked 60th among the nation's 339 largest counties. (See table 1.) Recording similar increases over the year were Washtenaw (4.2 percent, 99th) and Oakland County (4.0 percent, 113th). Of the 10 large counties in Michigan, MaComb County had the lowest wage increase at 1.5 percent.

Nationally, 332 of the 339 largest counties registered over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Benton, Ark., had the largest wage gain, up 9.9 percent from the fourth quarter of 2013. Washington, Pa., was second with a wage increase of 9.2 percent, followed by the counties of Midland, Texas (9.0 percent), Brazoria, Texas (8.9 percent), and Douglas, Colo. (8.8 percent).

Of the 339 largest U.S. counties, 7 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. San Mateo, Calif., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages, with a loss of 20.4 percent from the fourth quarter 2013. Olmsted, Minn., had the second largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 5.5 percent, followed by Morris, N.J. (-2.9 percent); Rockland, N.Y. (-1.3 percent); and Camden, N.J., and Butler, Pa. (-0.8 percent each).

Large county average weekly wages

As noted, Oakland County ($1,164) had the highest average weekly wage in the state and ranked 53rd among the 339 largest U.S. counties. Wayne ($1,119, 63rd) and Washtenaw ($1,069, 79th) Counties also reported average weekly wages above the national average of $1,035. Saginaw ($818) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state's large counties and ranked 286th nationwide.

Nationally, 95 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of $1,035 in the fourth quarter of 2014. San Mateo, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of $2,166. New York, N.Y., was second at $2,138, followed by Santa Clara, Calif. ($2,114), Suffolk Mass. ($1,856), and San Francisco, Calif. ($1,850).

Seventy-two percent of the largest U.S. counties (244) reported weekly wages below the national average. Horry County, S.C., reported the lowest wage ($610), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron ($621) and Hidalgo ($641), and the Florida counties of Osceola ($687) and Lake ($691).

Average weekly wages in Michigan's smaller counties

All 73 counties in Michigan with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average of $1,035. Among these smaller counties, Midland had the highest average weekly wage at $1,024, while Keweenaw had the lowest at $489. (See table 2.)

When the 83 counties in Michigan were considered, all but 3 had wages below the national average. Three reported average weekly wages less than $600, 18 had wages from $600 to $699, 32 reported wages from $700 to $799, 19 had wages from $800 to $899, and 11 had wages of $900 or more. (See chart 1.)

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2013 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2014 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2013 are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2013/home.htm. The 2014 edition of Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online will be available in September 2015.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, September 17, 2015.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.5 million employer reports cover 139.2 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 10 largest counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2014

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	December 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2013-14 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, fourth quarter 2013-14 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	139,204.8	2.2	--	$1,035	--	3.5	--
Michigan	4,158.9	2.1	--	984	20	3.3	37
Genesee, Mich.	135.8	0.9	259	837	270	3.1	208
Ingham, Mich.	151.4	-0.3	325	966	153	3.3	191
Kalamazoo, Mich.	114.6	1.4	214	934	179	3.7	143
Kent, Mich.	371.3	3.1	84	909	202	3.4	179
Macomb, Mich.	312.7	2.1	151	1,025	107	1.5	306
Oakland, Mich.	704.8	1.6	197	1,164	53	4.0	113
Ottawa, Mich.	116.7	4.1	36	914	197	4.7	60
Saginaw, Mich.	84.8	-0.1	323	818	286	3.0	220
Washtenaw, Mich.	203.9	1.9	162	1,069	79	4.2	99
Wayne, Mich.	706.5	2.2	140	1,119	63	3.0	220

Footnotes:
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.
(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2014

Area	Employment December 2014	Average weekly wage [1]
United States [2]	139,204,840	$1,035
Michigan	4,158,910	984
Alcona	1,593	683
Alger	2,287	796
Allegan	36,684	874
Alpena	11,186	744
Antrim	4,859	624
Arenac	4,416	634
Baraga	3,492	682
Barry	11,635	778
Bay	35,728	816
Benzie	3,923	602
Berrien	59,695	882
Branch	13,126	756
Calhoun	56,529	952
Cass	8,618	736
Charlevoix	9,835	806
Cheboygan	5,707	616
Chippewa	12,694	714
Clare	6,455	735
Clinton	15,715	835
Crawford	3,692	765
Delta	13,366	729
Dickinson	13,947	869
Eaton	36,967	828
Emmet	17,349	745
Genesee	135,831	837
Gladwin	3,976	674
Gogebic	5,557	710
Grand Traverse	47,386	835
Gratiot	13,157	793
Hillsdale	12,159	840
Houghton	11,659	766
Huron	11,034	747
Ingham	151,446	966
Ionia	21,698	616
Iosco	7,482	696
Iron	3,571	704
Isabella	29,433	721
Jackson	57,172	868
Kalamazoo	114,578	934
Kalkaska	3,888	983
Kent	371,313	909
Keweenaw	349	489
Lake	1,360	634
Lapeer	20,488	704
Leelanau	5,775	709
Lenawee	27,458	767
Livingston	55,136	820
Luce	1,833	722
Mackinac	3,191	634
Macomb	312,659	1,025
Manistee	6,555	743
Marquette	26,935	825
Mason	10,276	791
Mecosta	12,829	847
Menominee	7,515	665

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2014 - Continued

Area	Employment December 2014	Average weekly wage [1]
Midland	36,980	1,024
Missaukee	3,309	650
Monroe	41,398	864
Montcalm	15,394	782
Montmorency	1,885	667
Muskegon	62,206	811
Newaygo	11,587	731
Oakland	704,761	1,164
Oceana	6,365	665
Ogemaw	6,081	605
Ontonagon	1,331	604
Osceola	5,798	860
Oscoda	1,571	571
Otsego	9,571	749
Ottawa	116,692	914
Presque Isle	3,080	711
Roscommon	5,101	596
Saginaw	84,819	818
St. Clair	44,633	817
St. Joseph	22,354	769
Sanilac	10,772	693
Schoolcraft	2,654	766
Shiawassee	16,238	723
Tuscola	11,737	751
Van Buren	20,792	723
Washtenaw	203,874	1,069
Wayne	706,495	1,119
Wexford	13,141	770

Footnotes
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

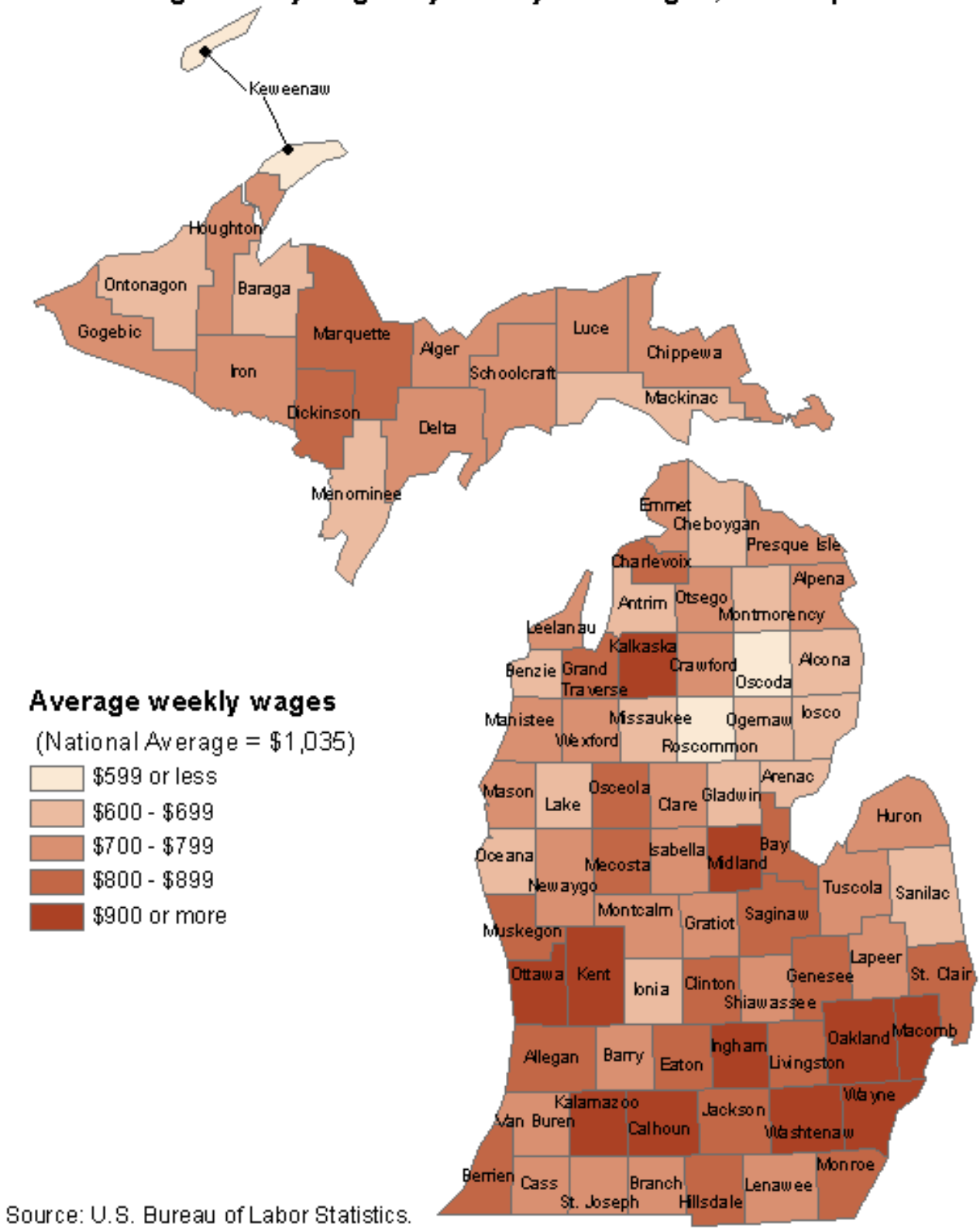
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2014

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	December 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2013-14	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2013-14	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	139,204.8	2.2	$1,035	--	3.5	--
Alabama	1,891.4	1.3	881	35	3.5	31
Alaska	317.6	0.8	1,063	13	4.0	20
Arizona	2,630.8	2.2	926	25	2.3	47
Arkansas	1,180.5	2.2	807	47	4.5	5
California	16,068.5	2.6	1,209	6	2.9	41
Colorado	2,478.0	3.9	1,066	12	4.1	17
Connecticut	1,681.2	1.2	1,278	4	2.7	45
Delaware	433.0	2.9	1,049	16	1.5	51
District of Columbia	736.9	0.9	1,696	1	3.7	28
Florida	8,009.6	3.5	911	28	3.1	40
Georgia	4,131.9	3.7	958	21	3.8	25
Hawaii	638.3	0.7	908	29	4.2	15
Idaho	650.7	2.5	782	50	4.0	20
Illinois	5,844.1	1.4	1,089	8	2.8	42
Indiana	2,946.5	1.7	846	41	3.9	22
Iowa	1,527.6	1.1	870	38	4.3	11
Kansas	1,377.2	1.3	855	39	2.6	46
Kentucky	1,852.2	1.8	836	43	4.1	17
Louisiana	1,954.0	2.1	923	26	3.8	25
Maine	592.7	0.9	826	44	5.1	4
Maryland	2,590.3	1.3	1,113	7	3.5	31
Massachusetts	3,415.6	2.2	1,315	3	4.5	5
Michigan	4,158.9	2.1	984	20	3.3	37
Minnesota	2,762.9	1.4	1,024	17	3.6	30
Mississippi	1,118.6	1.0	747	51	2.3	47
Missouri	2,709.8	1.5	891	32	3.4	34
Montana	442.2	0.5	794	48	4.5	5
Nebraska	958.1	1.4	837	42	5.2	3
Nevada	1,229.6	4.2	899	30	1.6	50
New Hampshire	638.0	1.4	1,081	10	6.3	2
New Jersey	3,933.6	1.3	1,211	5	2.0	49
New Mexico	808.4	1.3	850	40	4.4	10
New York	9,067.6	2.0	1,321	2	4.3	11
North Carolina	4,141.8	2.4	890	33	3.4	34
North Dakota	454.8	4.5	1,050	15	7.1	1
Ohio	5,264.3	1.6	922	27	3.9	22
Oklahoma	1,614.3	2.1	876	36	2.8	42
Oregon	1,755.4	3.2	928	23	3.8	25
Pennsylvania	5,716.5	1.2	1,013	18	3.7	28
Rhode Island	471.5	1.9	1,003	19	4.5	5
South Carolina	1,931.4	2.9	817	46	3.2	39
South Dakota	412.5	1.3	791	49	4.2	15
Tennessee	2,822.1	2.4	927	24	3.5	31
Texas	11,662.7	3.7	1,070	11	4.3	11
Utah	1,324.2	3.0	872	37	4.3	11
Vermont	311.0	0.7	882	34	4.1	17
Virginia	3,691.4	0.6	1,057	14	2.8	42
Washington	3,069.7	3.2	1,082	9	4.5	5
West Virginia	712.0	0.1	818	45	3.3	37
Wisconsin	2,789.3	1.3	894	31	3.4	34
Wyoming	283.6	1.5	952	22	3.9	22
Puerto Rico	944.2	-1.5	556	[3]	0.7	[3]
Virgin Islands	38.5	-0.3	746	[3]	-1.2	[3]

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
(3) Data not included in the national ranking.
Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Michigan, fourth quarter 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.