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SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.
Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast
Media contact: (404) 893-4220

County Employment and Wages in Georgia — Fourth Quarter 2014

Eight of the nine large counties in Georgia reported employment gains from December 2013 to December 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are those with 2013 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that Chatham County had the largest increase, up 4.6 percent, followed by the counties of Cobb and Fulton, at 4.1 percent each. (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 decline in employment among the largest counties in the U.S. with a loss of 5.0 percent.

Among the largest counties in Georgia, employment was highest in Fulton County (790,500) in December 2014. Three other counties—Gwinnett, Cobb, and De Kalb—had employment levels exceeding 275,000. Together, Georgia's nine large counties accounted for 55.4 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, Clayton County recorded the fastest rate of increase in average weekly wages among the 9 large counties in Georgia, registering a gain of 7.6 percent. (See table 1.) Fulton County recorded the highest average weekly wage among these large counties at $1,338 followed by Cobb County ($1,081) and DeKalb ($1,013). Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.5 percent over the year to $1,035.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 150 counties in Georgia with employment levels below 75,000. With the exception of Burke County ($1,078), wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average in December 2014. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Average weekly wages increased in all of Georgia's large counties from the fourth quarter of 2013 to the fourth quarter of 2014. Clayton County's 7.6-percent wage increase ranked 7th among the nation's 339 large counties and Bibb County's 4.7 percent gain ranked in the top 100 nationwide. Wage increases in the remaining large counties ranged from 3.7 to 1.8 percent. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 332 of the 339 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. 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).

Among the largest U.S. counties, seven experienced over-the-year wage decreases in average weekly wages. San Mateo, Calif., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages, with a loss of 20.4 percent. Olmsted, Minn., had the second largest percentage decrease 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

Average weekly wages in 5 of Georgia's 9 largest counties placed in the top half of the national ranking among the 339 largest counties in the fourth quarter of 2014. The highest-paid counties—Fulton and Cobb—were both above the U.S. average of $1,035 and ranked in the top 75 nationwide. De Kalb ($1,013), Gwinnett ($991), and Clayton ($977) ranked 116th, 131st, and 142nd, respectively. Average weekly wages in the remaining four large counties placed in the bottom third of the national ranking.

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 among the highest-paid large counties 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 Georgia's smaller counties

With the exception of Burke County ($1,078), all 150 counties in Georgia with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average of $1,035. Among these smaller counties, Chattahoochee had the second highest average weekly wage at $1,014, while Echols had the lowest at $482. (See table 2.)

When all 159 counties in Georgia were considered, 32 reported wages below $600, 70 reported wages from $600 to $699, 31 reported wages from $700 to $799, and 26 had wages at or above $800. (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 Online Annual Averages 2013* are now available 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: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 9 largest counties in Georgia, 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	--
Georgia	4,131.9	3.7	--	958	21	3.8	25
Bibb, Ga.	83.7	2.3	130	802	304	4.7	60
Chatham, Ga.	142.4	4.6	21	871	243	2.7	235
Clayton, Ga.	115.6	3.8	46	977	142	7.6	7
Cobb, Ga.	332.6	4.1	36	1,081	75	3.6	157
De Kalb, Ga.	289.8	2.3	130	1,013	116	2.2	273
Fulton, Ga.	790.5	4.1	36	1,338	21	3.7	143
Gwinnett, Ga.	333.3	3.8	46	991	131	3.1	208
Muscogee, Ga.	95.1	-0.4	328	804	300	2.0	291
Richmond, Ga.	104.1	2.3	130	834	275	1.8	300

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 [1] employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, 4th quarter 2014 [2]

Area	Employment December 2014	Average Weekly Wage [3]
United States [4]	139,204,840	$1,035
Georgia	4,131,921	958
Appling	6,561	792
Atkinson	1,801	692
Bacon	3,803	633
Baker	456	654
Baldwin	15,125	650
Banks	3,852	585
Barrow	17,668	689
Bartow	34,083	828
Ben Hill	5,429	626
Berrien	3,918	555
Bibb	83,683	802
Bleckley	2,636	530
Brantley	2,116	567
Brooks	3,056	654
Bryan	7,058	631
Bulloch	24,827	627
Burke	6,958	1,078
Butts	5,989	679
Calhoun	1,147	595
Camden	16,094	837
Candler	2,892	654
Carroll	39,462	760
Catoosa	13,850	661
Charlton	1,994	688
Chatham	142,429	871
Chattahoochee	2,317	1,014
Chattooga	6,388	609
Cherokee	51,625	769
Clarke	66,724	808
Clay	530	580
Clayton	115,570	977
Clinch	2,298	607
Cobb	332,641	1,081
Coffee	15,985	654
Colquitt	14,084	624
Columbia	31,309	734
Cook	3,904	561
Coweta	36,449	766
Crawford	1,264	632
Crisp	8,078	664
Dade	3,251	630
Dawson	7,928	519
Decatur	8,271	611
De Kalb	289,801	1,013
Dodge	5,029	576
Dooly	3,101	620
Dougherty	47,258	779
Douglas	39,522	703
Early	4,416	848
Echols	640	482
Effingham	9,398	756
Elbert	5,695	636
Emanuel	6,677	605
Evans	4,337	752
Fannin	5,588	564

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered [1] employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, 4th quarter 2014 [2] - Continued

Area	Employment December 2014	Average Weekly Wage [3]
Fayette	40,426	783
Floyd	38,396	790
Forsyth	68,591	940
Franklin	6,731	659
Fulton	790,500	1,338
Gilmer	7,384	567
Glascock	402	496
Glynn	35,523	768
Gordon	21,096	729
Grady	6,055	622
Greene	5,595	693
Gwinnett	333,277	991
Habersham	14,409	638
Hall	78,153	867
Hancock	1,694	618
Haralson	6,275	760
Harris	4,522	545
Hart	6,007	709
Heard	2,124	846
Henry	53,435	702
Houston	56,964	834
Irwin	1,921	586
Jackson	21,352	743
Jasper	2,111	549
Jeff Davis	4,570	636
Jefferson	4,617	676
Jenkins	1,355	548
Johnson	1,632	608
Jones	4,340	637
Lamar	3,615	647
Lanier	1,345	611
Laurens	17,602	702
Lee	5,760	867
Liberty	18,103	796
Lincoln	1,269	606
Long	942	535
Lowndes	47,967	667
Lumpkin	7,010	625
McDuffie	7,233	671
McIntosh	1,805	527
Macon	2,807	748
Madison	3,032	599
Marion	1,361	591
Meriwether	4,140	637
Miller	1,707	626
Mitchell	7,572	585
Monroe	7,444	675
Montgomery	1,539	578
Morgan	6,460	642
Murray	10,060	655
Muscogee	95,070	804
Newton	22,167	774
Oconee	9,642	757
Oglethorpe	1,727	541
Paulding	21,667	668
Peach	8,735	767

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered [1] employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, 4th quarter 2014 [2] - Continued

Area	Employment December 2014	Average Weekly Wage [3]
Pickens	7,480	819
Pierce	3,882	640
Pike	2,659	637
Polk	11,169	679
Pulaski	2,755	667
Putnam	5,551	655
Quitman	393	505
Rabun	4,347	584
Randolph	1,847	645
Richmond	104,122	834
Rockdale	31,372	952
Schley	993	671
Screven	3,306	641
Seminole	2,286	663
Spalding	21,287	666
Stephens	9,113	720
Stewart	1,137	721
Sumter	10,968	672
Talbot	714	641
Taliaferro	206	494
Tattnall	5,838	651
Taylor	1,520	692
Telfair	3,414	518
Terrell	2,484	651
Thomas	20,181	792
Tift	18,817	846
Toombs	11,750	634
Towns	3,107	540
Treutlen	1,099	527
Troup	38,513	825
Turner	2,121	599
Twiggs	1,096	647
Union	6,621	605
Upson	6,723	666
Walker	12,433	632
Walton	19,982	733
Ware	14,417	662
Warren	1,438	790
Washington	6,802	706
Wayne	8,097	722
Webster	532	735
Wheeler	1,195	623
White	6,987	632
Whitfield	55,004	828
Wilcox	1,223	534
Wilkes	2,887	601
Wilkinson	3,135	965
Worth	3,398	640

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

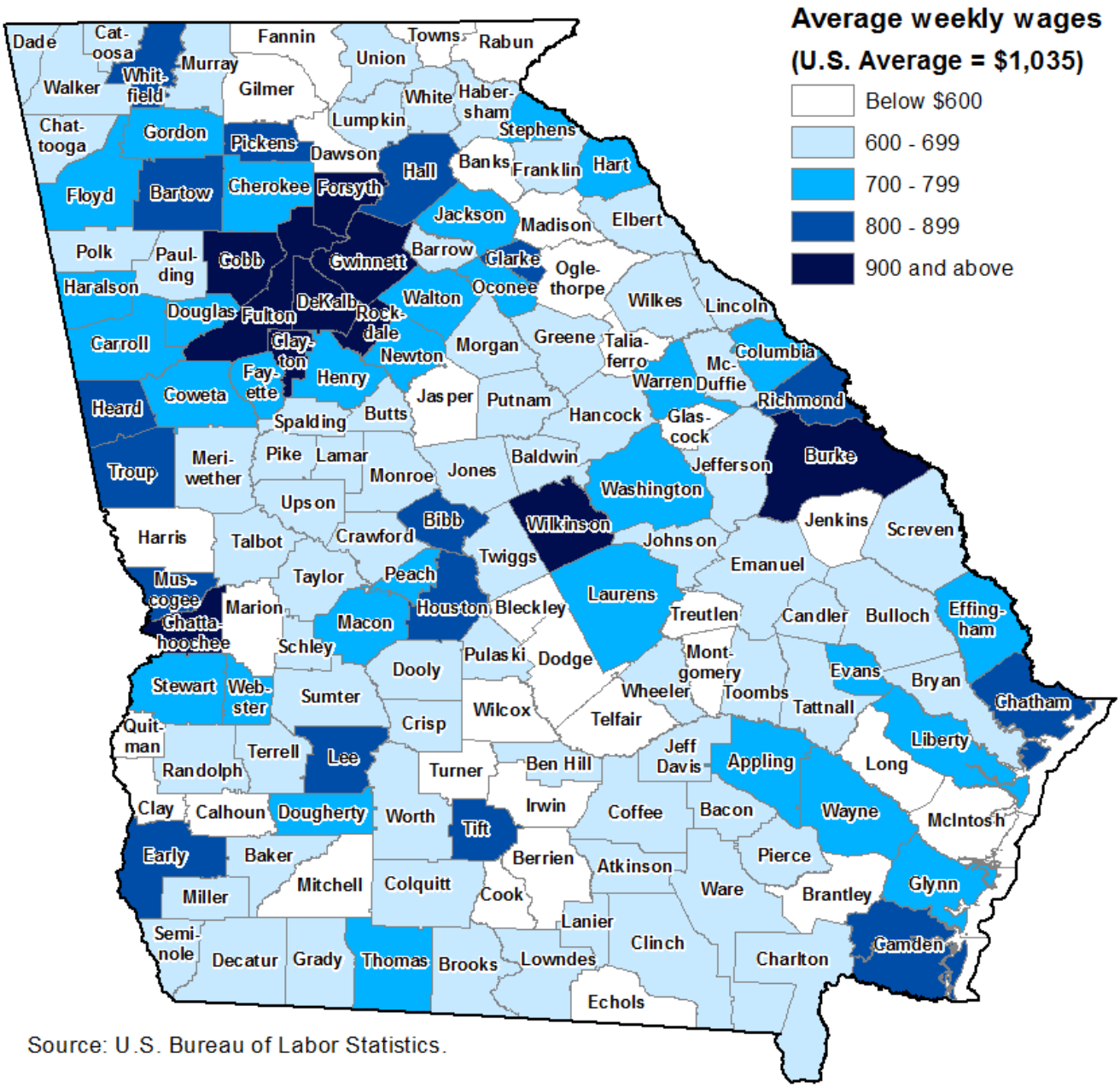
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2014

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 in Georgia, fourth quarter 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.