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Parish Employment and Wages in Louisiana – First Quarter 2014

Employment rose in six of the seven largest parishes in Louisiana from March 2013 to March 2014 the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties/parishes are those with 2013 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that one Louisiana parish ranked among the top 50 for job growth nationwide. The 3.6-percent employment gain in Orleans Parish was the fastest in the state and ranked 42nd nationally. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 1.7 percent from March 2013 to March 2014 as 281 of the 339 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Weld County, Colo., recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 7.5 percent over the year. Peoria, Ill., registered the largest percentage employment decline, down 2.6 percent.

Among the seven largest parishes in Louisiana, employment was highest in East Baton Rouge (265,700) in March 2014, followed by Jefferson (191,200) and Orleans (187,200). Together, Louisiana's seven large parishes accounted for 55.9 percent of the state's total employment. Nationwide, the 339 largest counties made up 72.0 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the first quarter of 2013 to the first quarter of 2014, Lafayette recorded the fastest rate of increase in average weekly wages among the seven large parishes in Louisiana, registering a gain of 4.3 percent. (See [table 1](#).) Orleans had the highest average wage among the largest parishes at \$980 per week. Nationally, average weekly wages increased 3.8 percent over the year to \$1,027.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 57 parishes in Louisiana with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in seven of these smaller parishes were above the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large parish wage changes

Lafayette Parish's 4.3-percent rise in average weekly wages from the first quarter of 2013 to the first quarter of 2014 ranked 59th among the nation's 339 largest counties. (See [table 1](#).) Weekly wages increased at rates from 2.4 to 2.0 percent in the parishes of Caddo, Jefferson, and Calcasieu.

Over-the-year wage gains in Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and St. Tammany were less than 2.0 percent.

Nationally, 323 of the 339 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Chester, Pa., had the largest wage gain, up 13.9 percent from the first quarter of 2013. New York, N.Y., was second with a wage increase of 12.0 percent, followed by the counties of Forsyth, N.C., and San Mateo, Calif. (both up 9.6 percent).

Among the nation's 339 largest counties, 15 experienced over-the-year wage decreases. Benton, Ark., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages, with a loss of 3.2 percent. Cumberland, N.C., had the second largest wage decline (-2.0 percent), followed by Dutchess, N.Y. (-1.6 percent), Ocean, N.J. (-1.3 percent), and McLean, Ill. (-1.0 percent).

Large parish average weekly wages

Weekly wages in the state's seven large parishes were below the national average of \$1,027 in the first quarter of 2014. However, average weekly wages in three of these parishes were high enough to place in the top half of the national ranking. At \$980 per week, Orleans led among the state's largest parishes and ranked 125th in the country. Other parishes ranking in the top half nationally were Lafayette (\$954, 142nd) and East Baton Rouge (\$915, 161st). Average weekly wages in the four remaining large parishes placed in bottom half of the national ranking, ranging from \$875 to \$779.

In the first quarter of 2014, nearly three-fourths of the largest U.S. counties (244) reported wages below the national weekly average of \$1,027. Horry County, S.C., reported the lowest wage (\$571), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$581) and Hidalgo (\$597).

Among the nation's 339 largest counties, 95 registered weekly wages above the U.S. average. New York, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,749, more than four times the wage levels in the three lowest-paid counties. Santa Clara, Calif., was second-highest at \$2,074 per week, followed by the counties of San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,058) and Somerset, N.J. (\$2,048).

Average weekly wages in Louisiana's smaller parishes

For smaller parishes in Louisiana – those with employment below 75,000 – 50 of 57 reported weekly wages below the national average (\$1,027) in the first quarter of 2014. In the seven remaining smaller parishes, wages not only exceeded the national average, but also were the highest in the state and ranged from \$1,304 in St. Charles to \$1,041 in Lafourche. The parishes of Franklin and Madison reported the lowest weekly wages in the state at \$524 and \$525, respectively. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 64 parishes were considered, 9 reported average wages of \$599 or less per week, 20 registered wages from \$600 to \$699, 12 had wages from \$700 to \$799, 7 had wages from \$800 to \$899, and 16 had wages of \$900 or more. (See [chart 1](#).) The higher-paying parishes were concentrated in the southern half of the state around the metropolitan areas of Baton Rouge, Houma, Lafayette, Lake Charles, and New Orleans. The lower-paid parishes, those with weekly wages under \$599, were generally located in the northeastern quadrant of the state.

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 2012 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 2013 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2012* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2012/home.htm. The 2013 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in late September 2014.

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.

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 9.4 million employer reports cover 136.6 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 (see Technical Note below) 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.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 7 largest parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2014

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2013-14 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2013-14 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	134,555.0	1.7	--	\$1,027	--	3.8	--
Louisiana	1,909.8	1.2	--	868	28	2.6	35
Caddo, La.....	114.3	-1.6	331	779	286	2.4	182
Calcasieu, La.....	87.2	0.3	265	856	213	2.0	215
East Baton Rouge, La.....	265.7	1.2	177	915	161	1.1	279
Jefferson, La.....	191.2	0.3	265	875	186	2.1	207
Lafayette, La.....	140.0	0.9	207	954	142	4.3	59
Orleans, La.....	187.2	3.6	42	980	125	1.8	230
St. Tammany, La.....	82.0	3.0	64	841	225	1.0	288

(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: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2014

Area	Employment March 2014	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	134,554,959	\$1,027
Louisiana	1,909,764	868
Acadia	14,851	648
Allen	7,912	653
Ascension.....	40,377	989
Assumption.....	4,408	752
Avoyelles	10,831	569
Beauregard.....	8,426	742
Bienville	4,477	726
Bossier	44,367	665
Caddo.....	114,265	779
Calcasieu.....	87,248	856
Caldwell.....	2,468	553
Cameron.....	4,991	1,082
Catahoula	2,254	553
Claiborne	3,632	681
Concordia	5,789	612
De Soto	7,293	965
East Baton Rouge	265,701	915
East Carroll.....	1,822	640
East Feliciana.....	4,772	706
Evangeline.....	8,257	607
Franklin.....	4,803	524
Grant	3,478	728
Iberia	32,484	914
Iberville	14,288	1,233
Jackson	3,877	724
Jefferson.....	191,245	875
Jefferson Davis.....	8,638	688
La Salle	4,566	654
Lafayette.....	140,038	954
Lafourche	40,166	1,041
Lincoln	17,528	707
Livingston	23,383	656
Madison	3,219	525
Morehouse	7,095	564
Natchitoches.....	13,246	615
Orleans.....	187,209	980
Ouachita	70,283	704
Plaquemines.....	14,858	1,254
Pointe Coupee.....	5,138	648
Rapides	58,001	724
Red River	2,592	724
Richland	6,480	567
Sabine	5,195	667
St. Bernard	10,519	884
St. Charles.....	26,206	1,304
St. Helena.....	1,416	667
St. James	7,993	1,270
St. John the Baptist	14,220	1,065
St. Landry	24,175	641
St. Martin	13,538	814
St. Mary	27,030	986
St. Tammany.....	82,017	841
Tangipahoa.....	41,108	651
Tensas	1,054	670

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2014 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2014	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
Terrebonne	57,267	982
Union	4,758	546
Vermilion.....	13,765	800
Vernon	13,519	643
Washington.....	10,368	666
Webster	12,223	706
West Baton Rouge	13,149	894
West Carroll.....	2,336	554
West Feliciana.....	5,123	1,008
Winn	4,866	630

(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: Covered employment and wages 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, first quarter 2014

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2013-14	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2013-14	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	134,555.0	1.7	\$1,027	--	3.8	--
Alabama	1,849.5	0.6	825	38	1.6	50
Alaska	319.1	0.3	1,023	15	3.5	17
Arizona	2,540.8	1.9	918	22	3.1	26
Arkansas	1,152.6	0.3	784	46	2.5	37
California	15,572.9	2.8	1,165	6	4.5	5
Colorado	2,370.1	3.1	1,046	13	4.2	9
Connecticut	1,627.2	0.5	1,362	3	3.3	24
Delaware	412.5	2.0	1,110	7	3.9	13
District of Columbia	727.3	1.2	1,701	1	5.3	3
Florida	7,752.4	2.9	868	28	3.0	28
Georgia.....	3,974.8	2.6	972	18	3.4	18
Hawaii.....	624.9	1.2	857	32	1.9	42
Idaho	631.5	3.3	722	50	3.9	13
Illinois	5,651.2	0.9	1,104	8	4.2	9
Indiana.....	2,842.5	1.2	845	35	1.7	48
Iowa	1,485.4	1.5	824	39	3.0	28
Kansas	1,343.0	1.7	840	36	4.1	11
Kentucky.....	1,784.1	1.1	811	40	2.7	33
Louisiana	1,909.8	1.2	868	28	2.6	35
Maine.....	565.9	0.7	786	45	1.9	42
Maryland.....	2,512.8	0.1	1,086	9	1.8	47
Massachusetts	3,272.2	1.3	1,300	4	5.3	3
Michigan	4,013.5	1.7	950	20	3.1	26
Minnesota.....	2,652.3	0.8	1,036	14	3.4	18
Mississippi.....	1,096.8	0.6	707	51	1.7	48
Missouri.....	2,634.6	1.0	866	31	2.9	30
Montana	429.9	0.7	730	49	3.3	24
Nebraska	930.7	1.7	797	42	2.6	35
Nevada	1,183.5	3.4	867	30	2.7	33
New Hampshire.....	614.2	1.3	970	19	3.4	18
New Jersey.....	3,794.3	0.6	1,263	5	2.2	38
New Mexico.....	787.0	0.2	793	43	1.9	42
New York	8,699.5	1.6	1,460	2	7.3	1
North Carolina	4,003.2	1.7	914	23	3.4	18
North Dakota	428.9	3.3	944	21	6.7	2
Ohio	5,071.5	1.3	909	24	2.8	32
Oklahoma	1,565.2	0.7	854	34	3.9	13
Oregon	1,688.5	2.8	893	25	3.4	18
Pennsylvania.....	5,560.9	0.3	1,007	16	4.1	11
Rhode Island	449.7	1.1	996	17	4.4	8
South Carolina.....	1,873.6	2.7	787	44	1.9	42
South Dakota.....	400.2	1.4	741	48	4.5	5
Tennessee.....	2,718.2	1.7	874	27	2.2	38
Texas	11,220.6	2.6	1,062	11	4.5	5
Utah	1,270.8	3.1	831	37	3.4	18
Vermont.....	301.1	0.5	807	41	1.9	42
Virginia.....	3,613.2	0.0	1,050	12	2.2	38
Washington.....	2,966.3	2.6	1,068	10	3.8	16
West Virginia	694.6	-0.9	779	47	1.4	51
Wisconsin.....	2,694.5	1.0	856	33	2.9	30
Wyoming	275.4	1.0	877	26	2.1	41
Puerto Rico.....	914.9	-1.8	521	(3)	1.4	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.3	-3.6	744	(3)	2.6	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

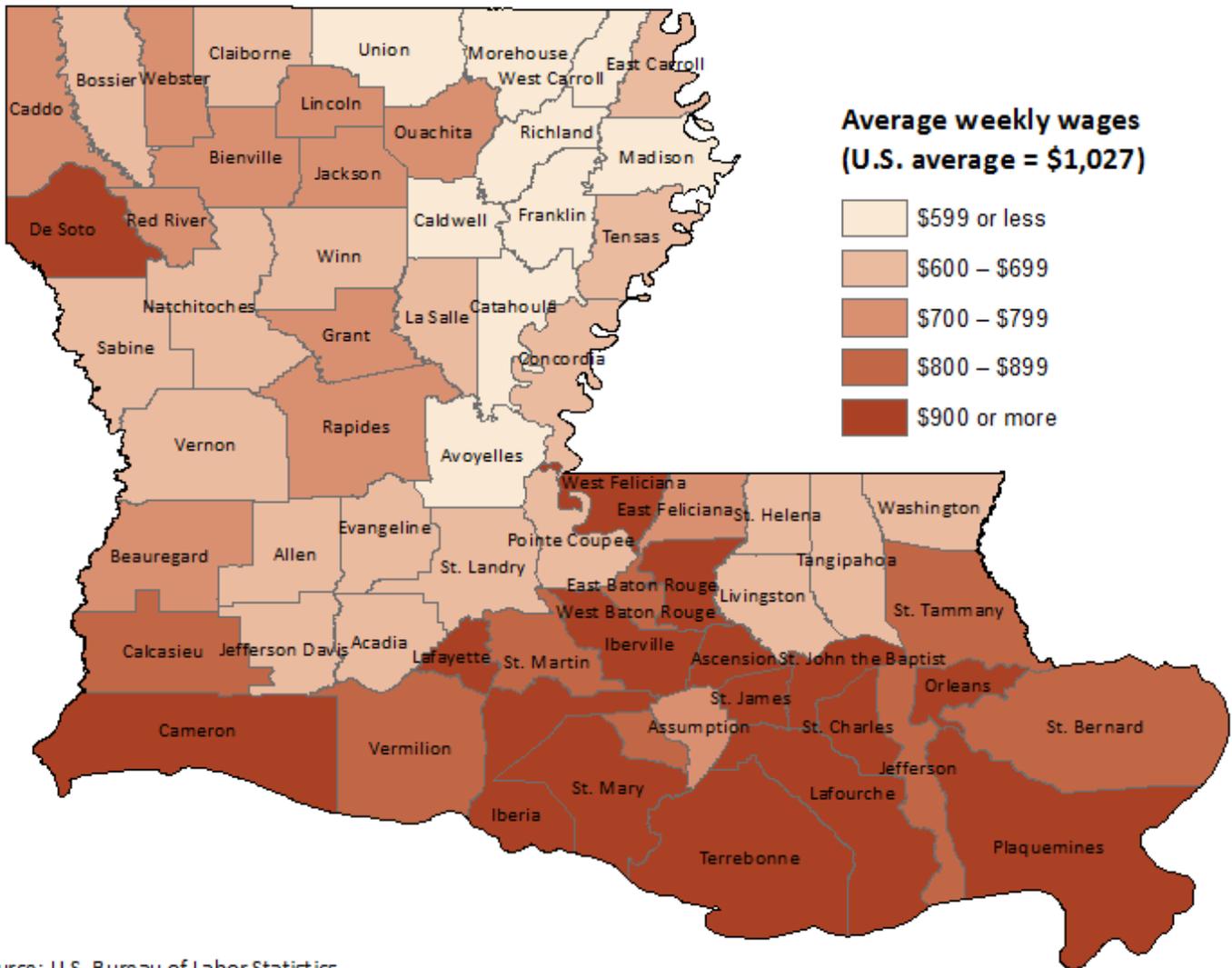
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by parish in Louisiana, first quarter 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.