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County Employment and Wages in Wisconsin — Third Quarter 2015

Five of the six large counties in Wisconsin had employment increases from September 2014 to September 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2014 annual average employment.) Dane County had the largest increase, up 1.8 percent, followed by Outagamie and Waukesha Counties, up 1.3 percent each. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that the employment gains in the state's five large counties were less than the national increase of 1.9 percent. (See table 1.)

Among the six large counties in Wisconsin, employment was highest in Milwaukee (484,900) in September 2015, followed by Dane (322,800), and Waukesha (237,000). Each of the three other counties—Brown, Outagamie, and Winnebago—had employment levels of less than 153,000. Collectively, Wisconsin's six large counties accounted for 49.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 342 largest counties made up 72.2 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Dane County rose 4.6 percent from the third quarter of 2014 to the third quarter of 2015, the largest increase among Wisconsin's large counties, followed by Brown and Waukesha Counties at 3.8 percent each. Waukesha County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at $953, followed by Dane County at $938 and Milwaukee County at $925. (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 2.6 percent over the year to $974 in the third quarter of 2015.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 66 counties in Wisconsin with employment below 75,000. All of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

All of Wisconsin's large counties recorded wage gains greater than the national increase of 2.6 percent from the third quarter of 2014 to the third quarter of 2015. (See table 1.) As noted, Dane County had the state's largest average weekly wage increase, up 4.6 percent, and ranked 24th among the 342 largest U.S. counties. The over-the-year wage gains in Brown and Waukesha Counties, at 3.8 percent each, ranked 53rd nationally. The three remaining counties had average weekly wage increases ranging from 3.3 to 2.8 percent, ranking in the top-half nationwide.

Nationally, 319 of the 342 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Rockland, N.Y., had the largest wage gain, up 24.9 percent from the third quarter of 2014. Lake, Ill., was second with a wage increase of 11.7 percent, followed by Onondaga, N.Y. (6.5 percent); Washington, Ore. (6.4 percent); and Marin, Calif.; and Santa Cruz, Calif. (6.1 percent each).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 20 experienced over-the-year wage decreases. Midland, Texas, had the largest wage decrease with a loss of 6.7 percent. Ector, Texas, had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 4.9 percent from the third quarter 2014, followed by Lafayette, La. (-3.2 percent); Stark, Ohio (-2.1 percent); and Gregg, Texas (-1.5 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in Wisconsin's six largest counties were below the national average of $974 in the third quarter of 2015. As noted, Waukesha County ($953) had the highest average weekly wage in the state, ranking 114th among the 342 largest U.S. counties, followed by Dane ($938) and Milwaukee ($925) which placed 126th and 147th, respectively. The state's remaining large counties had average weekly wages that placed in the bottom half of the national ranking.

Nationwide, average weekly wages were above the U.S. average ($974) in 100 of the 342 largest counties in the third quarter of 2015. Santa Clara, Calif., recorded the highest average weekly wage at $2,090, followed by San Mateo, Calif. ($1,894); New York, N.Y. ($1,829); San Francisco, Calif. ($1,712); and Washington, D.C. ($1,667).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 242 had weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2015. Horry County, S.C. ($598), reported the lowest wage, followed by Cameron, Texas ($615); Hidalgo, Texas ($624); Webb, Texas ($658); and Marion, Fla. ($658).

Average weekly wages in Wisconsin's smaller counties

Of the 66 counties in Wisconsin with employment below 75,000, Racine County had the highest average weekly wage at $846. Florence County had the lowest weekly wage at $490, followed by Bayfield at $525. (See table 2.)

When all 72 counties in Wisconsin were considered, 22 reported average weekly wages of $649 or lower, 29 had wages from $650 to $749, 16 had wages from $750 to $849, and 5 had wages from $850 or higher. (See chart 1.)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly 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 the QCEW Web site at 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 2014 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 2015 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2014* are now available online at https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn14.htm. The 2015 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2016.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 8, 2016.

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 9.6 million employer reports cover 140.4 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) 877-8342.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 6 largest counties in Wisconsin, third quarter 2015

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2014-15 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, third quarter 2014-15 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	140,442.2	1.9	--	$974	--	2.6	--
Wisconsin	2,815.7	0.9	--	834	33	3.5	5
Brown, Wis.	152.3	1.0	231	856	208	3.8	53
Dane, Wis.	322.8	1.8	172	938	126	4.6	24
Milwaukee, Wis.	484.9	0.0	313	925	147	2.8	138
Outagamie, Wis.	105.4	1.3	217	835	232	3.3	82
Waukesha, Wis.	237.0	1.3	217	953	114	3.8	53
Winnebago, Wis.	90.6	0.7	266	888	177	3.1	104

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 Wisconsin, third quarter 2015

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage [1]
United States [2]	140,442,224	$974
Wisconsin	2,815,728	834
Adams	4,728	639
Ashland	8,118	679
Barron	21,950	672
Bayfield	4,324	525
Brown	152,348	856
Buffalo	3,752	660
Burnett	4,734	575
Calumet	13,472	695
Chippewa	24,628	712
Clark	10,944	657
Columbia	21,953	710
Crawford	7,621	622
Dane	322,755	938
Dodge	35,024	784
Door	14,863	591
Douglas	15,702	715
Dunn	17,020	725
Eau Claire	56,651	780
Florence	979	490
Fond du Lac	46,708	807
Forest	3,155	653
Grant	17,610	647
Green	15,794	680
Green Lake	6,649	755
Iowa	10,477	708
Iron	1,653	575
Jackson	8,797	741
Jefferson	32,808	710
Juneau	9,195	692
Kenosha	61,215	758
Kewaunee	6,967	690
La Crosse	68,286	760
Lafayette	3,913	620
Langlade	7,471	630
Lincoln	10,854	721
Manitowoc	33,645	756
Marathon	70,152	816
Marinette	19,096	740
Marquette	3,800	587
Menominee	2,091	636
Milwaukee	484,924	925
Monroe	19,915	738
Oconto	9,104	585
Oneida	16,967	704
Outagamie	105,400	835
Ozaukee	42,076	808
Pepin	2,303	667
Pierce	9,976	617
Polk	16,103	662
Portage	34,148	756
Price	5,702	696
Racine	73,921	846
Richland	5,984	647
Rock	64,818	780
Rusk	5,145	619

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Wisconsin, third quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage [1]
St. Croix	33,274	714
Sauk	37,444	675
Sawyer	6,839	611
Shawano	12,665	595
Sheboygan	59,515	813
Taylor	7,871	679
Trempealeau	14,486	714
Vernon	8,831	611
Vilas	8,163	573
Walworth	40,725	667
Washburn	5,970	609
Washington	53,808	802
Waukesha	237,042	953
Waupaca	20,219	661
Waushara	6,291	596
Winnebago	90,598	888
Wood	37,206	785

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

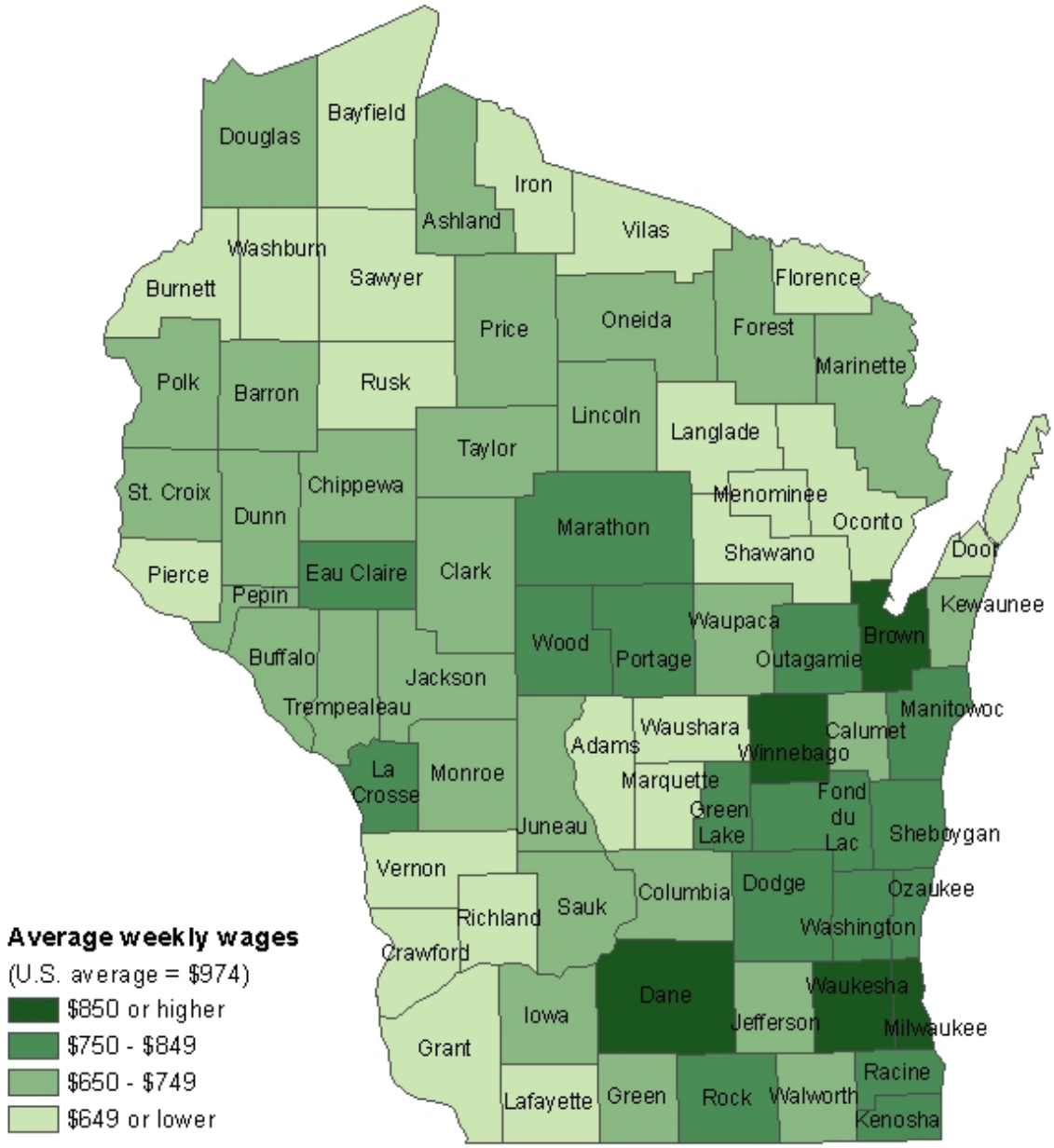
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2015

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2014-15	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2014-15	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	140,442.2	1.9	$974	--	2.6	--
Alabama	1,893.6	1.2	830	34	1.8	40
Alaska	346.4	0.4	1,041	9	2.2	34
Arizona	2,613.9	2.9	889	24	1.5	42
Arkansas	1,193.4	1.9	756	48	2.6	22
California	16,474.4	3.0	1,134	5	3.4	6
Colorado	2,513.0	2.9	1,006	12	2.4	30
Connecticut	1,668.3	0.2	1,147	4	2.0	38
Delaware	436.3	2.1	963	15	0.3	48
District of Columbia	743.6	1.4	1,667	1	2.3	33
Florida	8,023.2	3.5	852	31	3.1	10
Georgia	4,171.1	2.8	916	22	2.8	19
Hawaii	635.4	1.4	896	23	3.1	10
Idaho	680.3	3.3	736	50	2.1	37
Illinois	5,888.6	1.3	1,020	10	3.9	3
Indiana	2,971.7	1.6	818	39	2.4	30
Iowa	1,535.9	0.4	823	38	3.0	14
Kansas	1,370.9	0.6	809	41	1.8	40
Kentucky	1,852.5	1.4	804	42	2.9	18
Louisiana	1,926.3	-0.2	858	30	0.7	47
Maine	609.7	0.7	779	46	3.3	7
Maryland	2,607.8	1.3	1,067	8	2.4	30
Massachusetts	3,446.9	1.4	1,197	2	3.0	14
Michigan	4,203.0	1.6	921	20	2.7	20
Minnesota	2,800.7	1.4	990	14	2.6	22
Mississippi	1,118.9	1.2	706	51	1.3	43
Missouri	2,737.9	1.9	846	32	2.2	34
Montana	457.9	1.9	759	47	3.7	4
Nebraska	964.0	1.4	811	40	4.2	2
Nevada	1,254.5	3.2	862	29	2.5	27
New Hampshire	642.8	1.5	952	18	2.7	20
New Jersey	3,933.9	1.4	1,116	6	2.6	22
New Mexico	809.2	0.6	798	43	1.3	43
New York	9,065.4	1.8	1,180	3	3.1	10
North Carolina	4,194.1	2.5	863	28	3.0	14
North Dakota	438.0	-3.8	956	17	-2.3	51
Ohio	5,282.7	1.2	878	25	1.9	39
Oklahoma	1,598.0	0.2	825	37	0.0	49
Oregon	1,812.8	3.0	924	19	4.4	1
Pennsylvania	5,722.1	0.8	961	16	2.5	27
Rhode Island	477.4	1.2	919	21	2.6	22
South Carolina	1,959.7	2.9	788	44	2.6	22
South Dakota	419.5	0.9	756	48	3.1	10
Tennessee	2,850.6	2.7	864	27	3.2	8
Texas	11,681.0	2.1	999	13	1.1	45
Utah	1,353.9	3.7	829	35	3.2	8
Vermont	308.2	0.5	829	35	3.0	14
Virginia	3,759.7	2.5	1,014	11	2.5	27
Washington	3,187.6	2.5	1,111	7	2.2	34
West Virginia	702.4	-1.1	785	45	0.9	46
Wisconsin	2,815.7	0.9	834	33	3.5	5
Wyoming	287.4	-1.5	866	26	-1.1	50
Puerto Rico	891.1	-0.7	512	[3]	1.4	[3]
Virgin Islands	36.8	-2.1	738	[3]	2.1	[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 Wisconsin, third quarter 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.