NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

For Release: Thursday, September 03, 2015 15-1739-SAN

WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.
Technical information: (415) 625-2270 BLSinfoSF@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/west
Media contact: (415) 625-2270

County Employment and Wages in California – Fourth Quarter 2014

Employment increased in all 26 of California's large counties from December 2013 to December 2014, 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 2013 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that employment increases ranged from 4.8 percent in San Mateo County to 0.3 percent in Kern County.

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

Among the 26 largest counties in California, employment was highest in Los Angeles (4,243,800) in December 2014, while Yolo had the smallest employment level (92,300). Together, California's large counties accounted for 92.6 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 339 largest counties made up 72.1 percent of total U.S. employment.

Average weekly wages increased in 25 of the 26 largest counties in California from the fourth quarter of 2013 to the fourth quarter of 2014. Nineteen of these counties had annual wage gains at or above the national increase of 3.5 percent. San Mateo was the only county with a wage decrease, but by level had the highest average weekly wage in the state and the nation ($2,166). Ten additional large counties in the state had average weekly wages that exceeded the national average weekly wage of $1,035. (See table 1.)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 32 counties in California with employment below 75,000. All except one of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average in the fourth quarter of 2014. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Average weekly wages increased over the year in all but 1 of the 26 large counties in California in the fourth quarter of 2014. Yolo County's 7.1-percent wage gain placed 10th among the nation's 339 large counties. The over-the-year wage increase in Santa Clara County (6.8 percent) ranked 15th in the national ranking. Wage gains in three additional large counties—Tulare (6.2 percent, 23rd), Marin (5.9 percent, 29th), and Placer (5.8 percent, 31st)—placed in the top 10 percent of the national ranking.

Among the 339 largest U.S. counties, 332 recorded gains in average weekly wages. Benton, Ark., had the largest wage increase (9.9 percent). In contrast, seven large counties nationwide experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. San Mateo, Calif., had the largest over-the-year wage decline (-20.4 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Weekly wages in 11 of the state's 26 large counties were above the national average of $1,035 per week. In the fourth quarter of 2014, average weekly wages in San Mateo ($2,166), Santa Clara ($2,114), and San Francisco ($1,850) ranked in the top five nationally. In contrast, at $739 per week, wages in Tulare ranked 326th among the nation's 339 largest counties.

Nationally, 95 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of $1,035 in the fourth quarter of 2014. In addition to the three California counties mentioned above, New York, N.Y. ($2,138) and Suffolk, Mass. ($1,856) were in the top five nationwide.

Among the 244 counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2014, Horry County, S.C., reported the lowest average weekly wage ($610), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron ($621) and Hidalgo ($641).

Average weekly wages in California's smaller counties

All except 1 of the 32 counties in California with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of $1,035. Among the smaller counties, Alpine County had the highest average weekly wage at $1,055. Mariposa County reported the lowest weekly wage among all counties in the state, averaging $648 in the fourth quarter of 2014. (See table 2.)

When all 58 counties in California were considered, 6 had wages below $700. Seventeen counties had average weekly wages ranging from $700 to $799, 16 had wages from $800 to $899, 3 had wages from $900 to $999, and 16 had wages at or above $1,000. (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, which was published in September 2014, 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 https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn13.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 9.2 million employer reports cover 134.0 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.

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 26 largest counties in California, 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	--
California	16,068.5	2.6	--	1,209	6	2.9	41
Alameda, Calif.	708.7	2.8	104	1,319	24	4.4	81
Contra Costa, Calif.	344.1	1.8	174	1,215	43	2.1	278
Fresno, Calif.	349.4	0.6	284	808	294	4.9	50
Kern, Calif.	306.9	0.3	303	873	239	2.7	235
Los Angeles, Calif.	4,243.8	1.6	197	1,201	49	3.5	168
Marin, Calif.	112.0	0.6	284	1,280	27	5.9	29
Monterey, Calif.	159.4	1.9	162	851	261	3.7	143
Orange, Calif.	1,506.0	2.6	112	1,162	55	4.3	87
Placer, Calif.	144.6	3.4	71	1,034	96	5.8	31
Riverside, Calif.	641.2	3.5	66	803	301	4.0	113
Sacramento, Calif.	620.7	2.2	140	1,095	68	2.7	235
San Bernardino, Calif.	682.3	4.4	25	852	258	3.5	168
San Diego, Calif.	1,359.7	1.9	162	1,138	58	2.6	244
San Francisco, Calif.	659.1	4.4	25	1,850	5	4.9	50
San Joaquin, Calif.	217.7	2.5	118	835	273	2.5	248
San Luis Obispo, Calif.	109.4	1.8	174	837	270	3.7	143
San Mateo, Calif.	385.0	4.8	18	2,166	1	-20.4	339
Santa Barbara, Calif.	186.5	2.5	118	981	138	4.9	50
Santa Clara, Calif.	999.3	3.6	57	2,114	3	6.8	15
Santa Cruz, Calif.	94.6	3.7	51	926	187	5.0	46
Solano, Calif.	129.6	1.7	183	1,026	104	0.9	322
Sonoma, Calif.	192.0	0.9	259	952	162	4.2	99
Stanislaus, Calif.	170.3	2.5	118	832	277	3.9	125
Tulare, Calif.	146.5	0.7	272	739	326	6.2	23
Ventura, Calif.	317.5	0.9	259	1,025	107	5.0	46
Yolo, Calif.	92.3	1.2	227	1,092	70	7.1	10

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 California, fourth quarter 2014 (2)

Area	Employment December 2014	Average Weekly Wage (1)
United States (2)	139,204,840	$1,035
California	16,068,487	1,209
Alameda	708,653	1,319
Alpine	536	1,055
Amador	11,443	816
Butte	76,994	757
Calaveras	8,238	708
Colusa	7,894	851
Contra Costa	344,074	1,215
Del Norte	7,842	703
El Dorado	50,559	899
Fresno	349,436	808
Glenn	8,188	734
Humboldt	46,096	724
Imperial	64,035	685
Inyo	7,279	808
Kern	306,904	873
Kings	43,632	795
Lake	14,985	661
Lassen	10,472	793
Los Angeles	4,243,837	1,201
Madera	46,645	782
Marin	111,966	1,280
Mariposa	4,824	648
Mendocino	31,341	704
Merced	73,806	740
Modoc	2,345	678
Mono	6,574	717
Monterey	159,400	851
Napa	70,226	1,003
Nevada	29,349	842
Orange	1,505,987	1,162
Placer	144,598	1,034
Plumas	5,752	784
Riverside	641,238	803
Sacramento	620,734	1,095
San Benito	15,008	851
San Bernardino	682,327	852
San Diego	1,359,701	1,138
San Francisco	659,074	1,850
San Joaquin	217,711	835
San Luis Obispo	109,429	837
San Mateo	384,952	2,166
Santa Barbara	186,503	981
Santa Clara	999,316	2,114
Santa Cruz	94,644	926
Shasta	62,168	784
Sierra	546	827
Siskiyou	12,499	699
Solano	129,596	1,026
Sonoma	192,046	952
Stanislaus	170,313	832
Sutter	27,062	751
Tehama	16,407	763
Trinity	2,491	677
Tulare	146,544	739

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Area	Employment December 2014	Average Weekly Wage (1)
Tuolumne	16,834	783
Ventura	317,505	1,025
Yolo	92,333	1,092
Yuba	16,213	887

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.

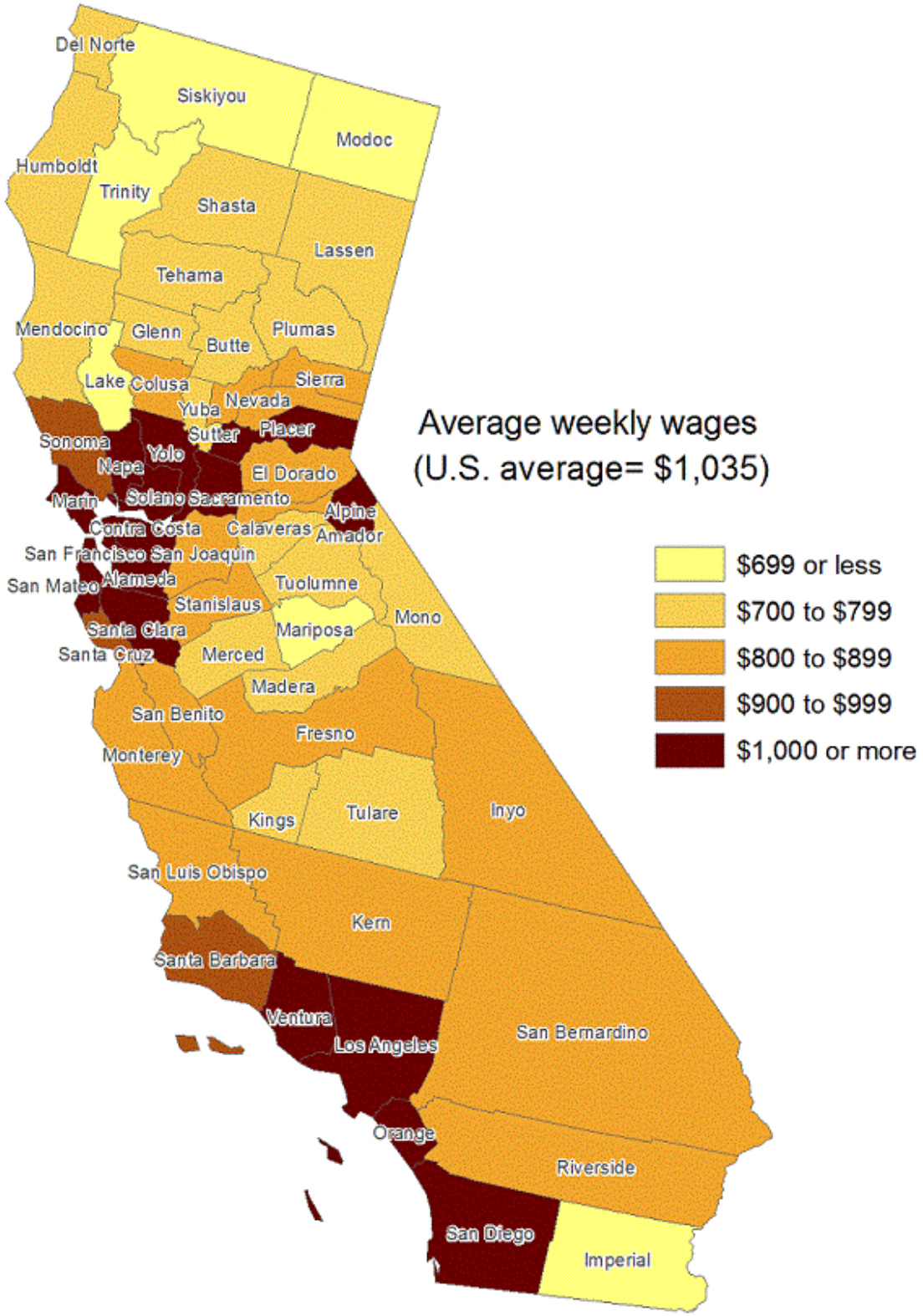
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2014

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 California, fourth quarter 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.