



Internet Address: <http://www.bls.gov/ro2/home.htm>
Information: Martin Kohli, (646) 264-3620
Media Contact: Michael L. Dolfman, (212) 337-2500

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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN NEW JERSEY: THIRD QUARTER 2007

Middlesex County employment growth leads State Somerset County records highest wage

Middlesex County recorded over-the-year employment growth of 1.1 percent in September 2007, the fastest increase among New Jersey's 15 largest counties, those with 75,000 or more jobs (as measured by 2006 average annual employment), according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Michael L. Dolfman noted that Middlesex was the only large county in New Jersey to exceed the nationwide employment increase of 0.9 percent. (See chart A.) Just over half (8) of the State's large counties lost jobs over the year.

In the third quarter of 2007, average weekly wages in Somerset County increased 5.8 percent over the year, the largest increase among New Jersey's large counties. (See chart B.) Mercer County ranked second in the State with 5.5-percent growth, followed by Gloucester and Monmouth Counties with wage gains of 5.1 and 4.9 percent, respectively. All 4 counties exceeded the national increase of 4.3 percent and ranked among the top 75 in the nation in wage growth in the third quarter of 2007.

Chart A. Top ranking large counties
in employment growth, September 2007

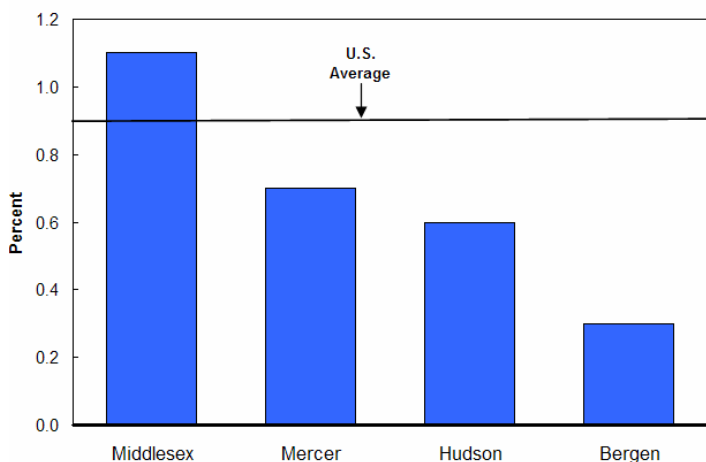
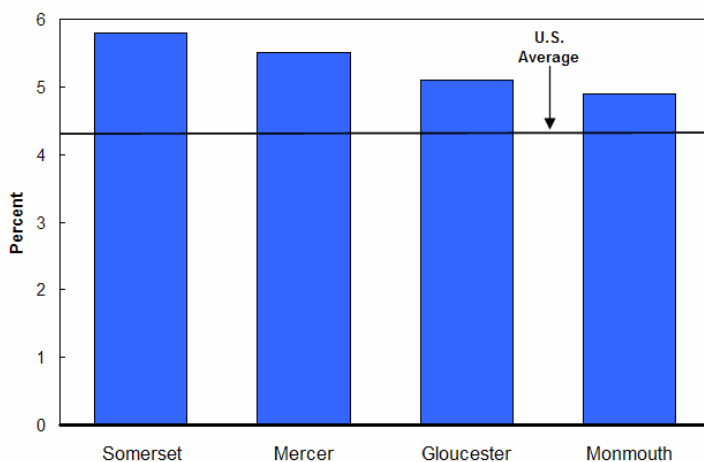


Chart B. Top ranking large counties by percent growth
in average weekly wage, third quarter 2007



Round-the-clock recorded messages for the Consumer Price Index and a variety of other *Bureau of Labor Statistics* data are available by dialing the *New York Information Office's* main telephone number: (646) 264-3600. For recorded messages, press '2'.

Somerset County also recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$1,210 in the third quarter of 2007, followed by Morris at \$1,142. Among the nation's 328 large counties, Somerset's average weekly wage ranked 10th highest. Twelve of the 15 large counties (80 percent) in the State reported average weekly wages above the \$818 average for the nation. Nationally, 112 of the 328 large counties (34 percent) reported wages above the U.S. average.

Wage and employment levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the six counties in New Jersey with employment less than 75,000. Four of these counties had weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

Employment in Large Counties

Employment in New Jersey's largest counties ranged from a high of 454,200 in Bergen to a low of 104,200 in Gloucester in September 2007. Taken together, the large counties in New Jersey accounted for 91 percent of the State's employment, while nationally, large counties accounted for 71 percent of employment.

Although Middlesex, with a 1.1-percent increase in employment, was the only county with growth exceeding the national average, five other large counties in New Jersey added jobs over the year. Mercer and Hudson Counties had the next highest growth rates in the State, up 0.7 and 0.6 percent, respectively. Employment in Bergen, Ocean, and Gloucester Counties grew from 0.3 to 0.1 percent. In contrast, eight counties lost jobs from September a year ago. Burlington, Somerset, and Monmouth Counties posted declines that ranged from 0.2 to 0.7 percent. Four counties experienced employment decreases in the neighborhood of 1.0 percent: Essex, Camden, Morris, and Passaic. The sharpest decline occurred in Atlantic County, where employment dropped 3.8 percent over the year.

Nationally, employment rose in 217 of the 328 large counties from September 2006 to September 2007. Orleans County, La., which includes the city of New Orleans, had the largest over-the-year employment growth with an 8.6-percent increase. Fort Bend County, Texas, followed with an over-the-year gain of 7.1 percent. Employment growth in Orleans reflected significant recovery from the substantial job losses that occurred in 2005 and 2006, due to Hurricane Katrina. In contrast, employment decreased in 86 large counties across the nation. Trumbull County, Ohio, posted the largest decline, 5.7 percent.

Wage Changes in Large Counties

Four of the 15 (27 percent) large counties in New Jersey had wage increases exceeding that for the nation in the third quarter of 2007, with Somerset County's 5.8-percent increase the highest in the State. Somerset's wage growth ranked 40th among the 328 largest counties in the nation. Mercer, Gloucester, and Monmouth Counties followed with growth rates of 5.5, 5.1, and 4.9 percent, respectively, and placed 48th, 64th, and 71st. While none of the other large New Jersey counties had wage increases that exceeded the national average of 4.3 percent, six posted growth rates ranging from 4.2 to 3.1 percent: Hudson, Atlantic, Camden, Bergen, Essex, and Burlington. The only decline in average weekly wages occurred in Middlesex County (-0.1 percent).

Among the largest counties in the United States, Clayton County, Ga., led the nation in wage growth with an increase of 23.9 percent from the third quarter of 2006. Muscogee, Ga., was second with growth of 12.1 percent, followed by the counties of Santa Clara, Calif. (11.8 percent), Rock Island, Ill. (11.5 percent), and Davidson, Tenn. (9.1 percent). Ten large counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages led by Trumbull, Ohio, down 10.6 percent.

Wages in Large Counties

Twelve of New Jersey's large counties had average weekly wages exceeding the national average in the third quarter of 2007. Seven of these counties had weekly wages above \$1,000, led by Somerset at \$1,210. Morris and Hudson Counties followed, with average wages that topped \$1,100, then Union, Mercer, Essex and Bergen. Only three large New Jersey counties had below-average weekly wages—Gloucester, Atlantic, and Ocean Counties posted averages that ranged from \$746 to \$679.

Nationally, Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,585) recorded the highest average weekly wage, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$1,544), Washington, D.C. (\$1,376), and Arlington, Va. (\$1,364). The lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron County, Texas (\$518), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$529), Horry, S.C., (\$536), Webb, Texas (\$548), and Yakima, Wash. (\$568).

Employment and Wages in Small Counties

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for New Jersey's six small counties, those with less than 75,000 as measured by 2006 average annual employment. These counties accounted for 9 percent of statewide employment. Among the small counties, Cumberland reported the highest job total in September 2007 at 63,800, followed by Hunterdon (49,400) and Cape May (47,800). Salem County had the fewest jobs—23,300.

Hunterdon had the highest average weekly wage in the State among the small counties, \$925, more than \$100 above that for the nation. Salem (\$831) was the only other small county with a wage exceeding the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2007. Cape May County, at the southern tip of New Jersey, had the lowest weekly wage, averaging \$559. (See chart 1.) When all 21 counties in New Jersey are considered, 14 had average weekly wages above the \$818 national average.

Additional Statistics and Other Information

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2006* is now available for sale from the United States Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250, telephone 866-512-1800, outside of Washington, D.C. Within Washington, D.C., the telephone number is 202-512-1800. The fax number is 202-512-2104. The bulletin is available in a portable document format (PDF) on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn06.htm>. Also, the quarterly press release, County Employment and Wages, presents employment and wage data for the largest counties in the United States and is available at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339. For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Covered Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the New York-New Jersey Information Office at (646) 264-3600 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

TECHNICAL NOTE

QCEW data are the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. For this reason, county and industry data are not designed to be used as a time series.

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. The potential differences result from several causes. Differences between BLS and state published data may be due to the 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.

Average weekly 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 reports submitted by employers subject to state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The 9.0 million employer reports cover 136.2 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage is first compiled by dividing the total quarterly payroll of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of these employees. This number, then, is divided by 13, the number of weeks in the quarter. It is to be noted 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 <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>; however, data in QCEW press releases may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site because of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons.

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Labor – New York

Table 1. Covered¹ employment and wages in the United States, New Jersey, and 15 large counties, third quarter 2007²

Area	Employment		Average weekly wage ³			
	September 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2006-07 ⁴	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁵	Percent change, third quarter 2006-07 ⁴	National ranking by percent change ⁵
United States ⁶	136,246.9	0.9	\$818	--	4.3	--
New Jersey	3,985.2	0.1	965	--	3.7	--
Atlantic	148.5	-3.8	719	216	4.1	117
Bergen	454.2	0.3	1,009	29	3.9	134
Burlington	203.9	-0.2	871	78	3.1	204
Camden	210.1	-1.0	833	98	4.0	125
Essex	357.4	-0.9	1,022	24	3.2	199
Gloucester	104.2	0.1	746	187	5.1	64
Hudson	237.7	0.6	1,110	15	4.2	110
Mercer	223.9	0.7	1,027	23	5.5	48
Middlesex	411.0	1.1	996	33	-0.1	307
Monmouth	257.5	-0.7	874	75	4.9	71
Morris	286.1	-1.1	1,142	12	0.4	303
Ocean	153.6	0.2	679	272	2.0	267
Passaic	176.6	-1.1	853	86	2.4	248
Somerset	174.1	-0.6	1,210	10	5.8	40
Union	234.8	(⁷)	1,056	21	(⁷)	--

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 Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

⁵ Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

⁶ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁷ Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.

Table 2. Covered¹ employment and wages, the United States, New Jersey and counties in New Jersey, third quarter, 2007²

Area	Employment September 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage ³
United States ⁴	136,246.9	\$ 818
New Jersey	3,985.2	965
Atlantic	148.5	719
Bergen	454.2	1,009
Burlington	203.9	871
Camden	210.1	833
Cape May	47.8	559
Cumberland	63.8	724
Essex	357.4	1,022
Gloucester	104.2	746
Hudson	237.7	1,110
Hunterdon	49.4	925
Mercer	223.9	1,027
Middlesex	411.0	996
Monmouth	257.5	874
Morris	286.1	1,142
Ocean	153.6	679
Passaic	176.6	853
Salem	23.3	831
Somerset	174.1	1,210
Sussex	40.6	745
Union	234.8	1,056
Warren	37.5	792

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.

Table 3. Covered¹ employment and wages by state and territory, third quarter 2007²

Area	Employment		Average weekly wage ³		
	September 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁴	Percent change, third quarter 2006-07	National ranking by percent change ⁴
United States ⁵	136,246.9	\$818	-	4.3	-
Alabama	1,959.0	707	32	3.7	37
Alaska	327.3	840	13	5.4	9
Arizona	2,644.9	783	20	4.1	25
Arkansas	1,184.5	629	46	4.1	25
California	15,755.0	932	6	4.5	18
Colorado	2,314.3	844	12	3.2	42
Connecticut	1,696.9	1,021	2	6.6	2
Delaware	425.2	860	10	1.2	50
District of Columbia	679.0	1,376	1	5.3	12
Florida	7,879.9	741	26	4.1	25
Georgia	4,089.4	782	21	4.1	25
Hawaii	624.4	760	22	5.4	9
Idaho	675.5	634	45	3.4	41
Illinois	5,917.6	866	9	4.0	32
Indiana	2,937.4	702	34	2.2	49
Iowa	1,494.5	668	40	4.2	22
Kansas	1,368.7	680	38	2.7	46
Kentucky	1,814.3	676	39	3.0	44
Louisiana	1,880.8	716	31	4.5	18
Maine	615.3	660	44	3.9	35
Maryland	2,563.7	892	7	4.1	25
Massachusetts	3,261.0	1,002	4	5.5	5
Michigan	4,218.2	808	16	2.4	48
Minnesota	2,713.3	822	15	4.6	16
Mississippi	1,142.2	607	50	3.8	36
Missouri	2,746.7	719	29	4.2	22
Montana	446.1	608	49	4.6	16
Nebraska	922.7	666	41	5.4	9
Nevada	1,286.4	792	19	5.5	5
New Hampshire	637.2	799	18	3.2	42
New Jersey	3,985.2	965	5	3.7	37
New Mexico	830.4	682	37	4.1	25
New York	8,585.3	1,009	3	6.1	3
North Carolina	4,104.1	719	29	3.5	40
North Dakota	347.4	621	48	5.8	4
Ohio	5,331.9	745	25	2.8	45
Oklahoma	1,548.2	666	41	5.5	5
Oregon	1,751.7	750	24	4.2	22
Pennsylvania	5,673.4	802	17	4.4	20
Rhode Island	486.1	759	23	-0.1	51
South Carolina	1,904.7	664	43	3.6	39
South Dakota	397.5	598	51	4.7	15
Tennessee	2,774.4	728	28	4.3	21
Texas	10,304.9	825	14	5.0	13

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Covered¹ employment and wages by state and territory, third quarter 2007² -- continued

Area	Employment	Average weekly wage ³			
	September 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁴	Percent change, third quarter 2006-07	National ranking by percent change ⁴
Utah	1,231.6	\$696	36	5.5	5
Vermont	305.2	699	35	4.0	32
Virginia	3,686.6	857	11	5.0	13
Washington	2,976.5	878	8	6.7	1
West Virginia	713.8	623	47	4.0	32
Wisconsin	2,802.3	705	33	2.6	47
Wyoming	284.3	734	27	4.1	25
Puerto Rico	1,008.0	453	(⁶)	2.5	(⁶)
Virgin Islands	45.0	682	(⁶)	-0.3	(⁶)

¹ Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

² Data are preliminary.

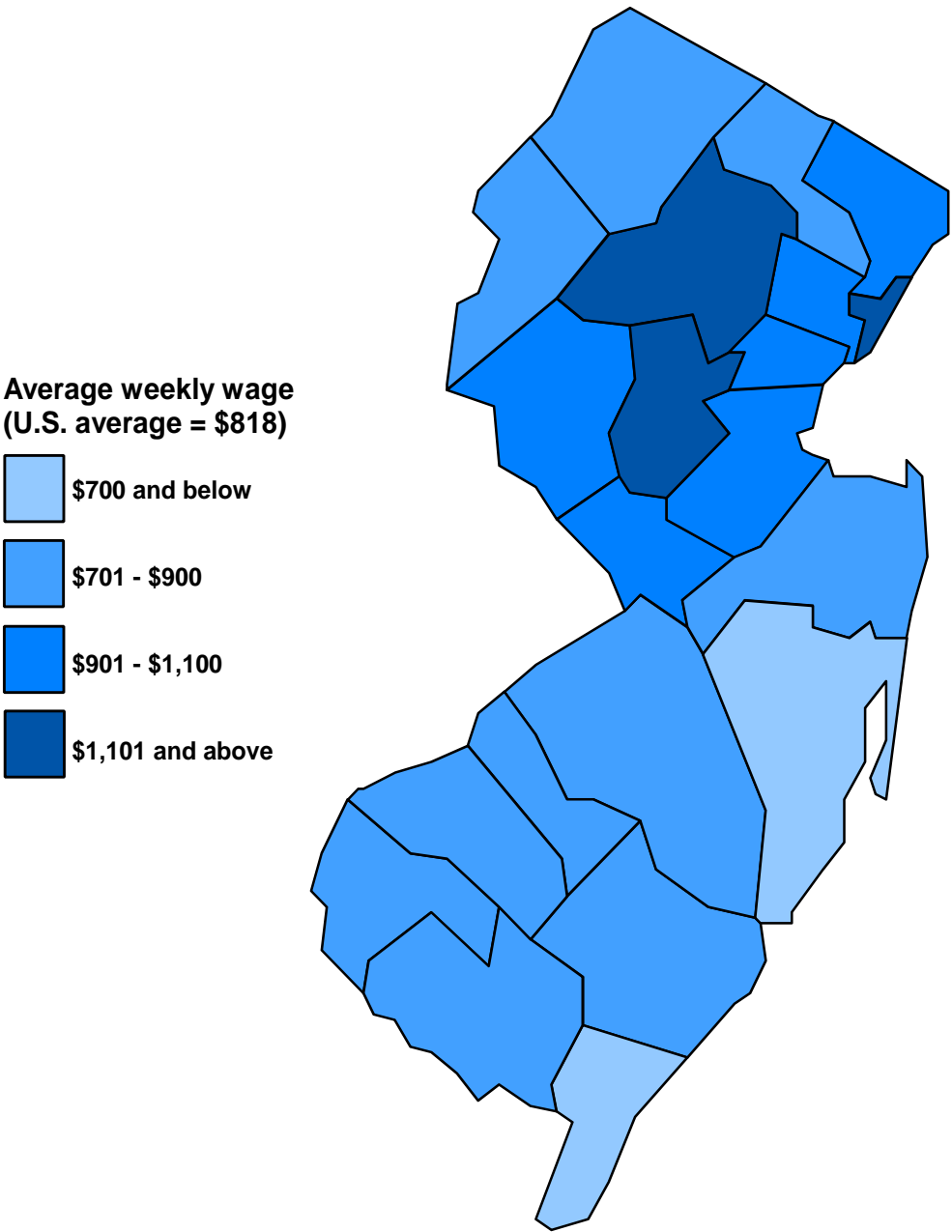
³ Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

⁴ Ranking does not include Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁵ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

⁶ Data not included in the national ranking.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages, counties in New Jersey, third quarter 2007



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2008