



NEWS RELEASE



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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MICHIGAN – FOURTH QUARTER 2011

All 10 large counties in Michigan reported employment gains from December 2010 to December 2011, 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 2010 annual average employment.) Kent and Ottawa Counties posted the largest employment increase, both up 3.6 percent, followed by Oakland County at 3.5 percent. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that 6 of the state's 10 large counties experienced over-the-year employment gains above the national increase.

Nationally, employment increased 1.4 percent during the 12-month period, as 266 of the 322 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Kern, Calif., posted the largest increase, with a gain of 5.3 percent over the year. Benton, Wash., experienced the largest over-the-year decrease in employment with a loss of 3.4 percent.

Among the 10 largest counties in Michigan, employment was highest in Wayne County (684,900) in December 2011, followed by Oakland County (650,000). Two other counties, Kent (327,800) and Macomb (287,400) had employment levels of more than 250,000. Collectively, Michigan's 10 large counties accounted for 69.7 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

Average weekly wages in Ingham and Kalamazoo Counties fell 3.2 percent and 2.0 percent respectively in the fourth quarter of 2011, the two largest declines among Michigan's large counties. Oakland County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,104, followed by Wayne (\$1,075) and Macomb (\$999) Counties. (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage fell 1.7 percent over the year to \$955 in the fourth quarter of 2011.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 73 counties in Michigan with employment below 75,000. With the exception of Midland County (\$1,047), all smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Two of Michigan's large counties recorded wage declines greater than the national decrease of 1.7 percent from the fourth quarter of 2010 to the fourth quarter of 2011. (See table 1.) As noted, Ingham and Kalamazoo Counties experienced the state's largest wage declines, ranking 258th and 176th, respectively, among the nation's 322 largest counties. Four other counties had over-the-year decreases that were at or just below the national average.

In contrast to these wage declines, two of Michigan's large counties recorded over-the-year wage gains in the fourth quarter of 2011. Weekly wages in Wayne and Macomb increased 1.2 percent and 1.1 percent, respectively, ranking 16th and 19th nationwide.

Nationwide, 282 large counties experienced declines in average weekly wages. Olmsted, Minn., had the greatest wage loss among the largest U.S. counties (-21.3 percent). Douglas, Colo., had the second largest decrease (-8.6 percent), followed by Williamson, Tenn. (-6.7 percent).

Among the 322 largest counties, 36 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages in the fourth quarter of 2011. Tulsa, Okla., had the largest average weekly wage increase with a gain of 8.6 percent, followed by the counties of Harford, Md. (5.8 percent), Lake, Ohio (4.9 percent), Snohomish, Wash. (3.0 percent) and Westmoreland, Pa (2.9 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

As noted, Oakland County (\$1,104) had the highest average weekly wage in the state and ranked 47th among the 322 largest counties in the United States. Wayne (\$1,075, 55th), Macomb (\$999, 80th), and Washtenaw (\$993, 82nd) Counties also reported average weekly wages above the national average of \$955. Saginaw (\$786) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state's large counties and ranked 264th nationwide.

Nationally, New York, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$1,889, followed by Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,836), Washington, D.C. (\$1,668), Suffolk, Mass. (\$1,599), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,597).

There were 219 large counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2011. Horry, S.C. (\$569), reported the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$597), Hidalgo, Texas (\$601), and Yakima, Wash. (\$648).

Average weekly wages in Michigan's smaller counties

With the exception of Midland County (\$1,047), all 73 counties in Michigan with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average of \$955. Among these smaller counties, Calhoun County had the second highest average weekly wage at \$882 while Keweenaw County had the lowest at \$369. (See table 2.)

When all 83 counties in Michigan were considered, all but 5 had wages below the national average. Three reported average weekly wages under \$550, 17 had wages from \$550 to \$649, 33 reported wages from \$650 to \$749, 19 had wages from \$750 to \$849, and 11 had wages of \$850 or more. (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 2010 edition of this publication, which was published in November 2011, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2011 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from the *Employment and Wages Annual 2010* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10htm. The 2011 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in 2012.

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 covered 131.3 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 BLS 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; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and the 10 largest counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	December 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, fourth quarter 2010-	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	131,254.2	1.4	--	\$955	--	-1.7	--
Michigan	3,911.8	2.4	--	933	18	-0.5	10
Genesee, Mich.	130.3	0.9	172	829	213	-0.1	38
Ingham, Mich.	155.2	0.1	256	899	146	-3.2	258
Kalamazoo, Mich.	108.3	0.4	231	862	176	-2.0	176
Kent, Mich.	327.8	3.6	14	854	187	-1.7	151
Macomb, Mich.	287.4	2.0	78	999	80	1.1	19
Oakland, Mich.	650.0	3.5	17	1,104	47	-1.6	137
Ottawa, Mich.	105.0	3.6	14	833	207	-0.6	67
Saginaw, Mich.	83.4	2.3	52	786	264	-1.5	126
Washtenaw, Mich.	194.9	0.5	222	993	82	-1.6	137
Wayne, Mich.	684.9	2.3	52	1,075	55	1.2	16

(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.

Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Michigan, fourth quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment December 2011	Average weekly wage (3)	Area	Employment December 2011	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	131,254,162	\$955			
Michigan	3,911,782	933	Keweenaw	361	\$369
Alcona	1,527	633	Lake	1,446	651
Alger	2,361	718	Lapeer	20,094	655
Allegan	33,099	814	Leelanau	5,280	592
Alpena	10,938	734	Lenawee	26,513	721
Antrim	4,485	591	Livingston	45,648	821
Arenac	4,045	580	Luce	1,661	748
Baraga	3,012	696	Mackinac	3,186	619
Barry	11,011	760	Macomb	287,365	999
Bay	35,307	758	Manistee	6,781	694
Benzie	3,816	554	Marquette	26,775	798
Berrien	58,111	783	Mason	9,724	651
Branch	12,430	734	Mecosta	12,487	721
Calhoun	54,451	882	Menominee	7,538	608
Cass	8,457	675	Midland	35,444	1,047
Charlevoix	9,162	851	Missaukee	2,634	616
Cheboygan	5,755	609	Monroe	36,842	842
Chippewa	12,719	681	Montcalm	14,797	698
Clare	6,777	661	Montmorency	1,807	740
Clinton	13,924	747	Muskegon	57,652	769
Crawford	3,709	754	Newaygo	10,146	718
Delta	13,504	695	Oakland	649,959	1,104
Dickinson	13,598	813	Oceana	6,393	601
Eaton	29,698	815	Ogemaw	5,884	546
Emmet	15,975	702	Ontonagon	1,467	558
Genesee	130,301	829	Osceola	5,481	827
Gladwin	3,856	650	Oscoda	1,558	547
Gogebic	5,611	655	Otsego	9,481	688
Grand Traverse	44,290	783	Ottawa	105,032	833
Gratiot	13,081	752	Presque Isle	2,901	647
Hillsdale	11,493	749	Roscommon	5,315	561
Houghton	12,199	669	Saginaw	83,422	786
Huron	11,755	694	St. Clair	44,112	782
Ingham	155,161	899	St. Joseph	18,982	730
Ionia	21,416	578	Sanilac	10,106	699
Iosco	6,817	606	Schoolcraft	2,693	699
Iron	3,573	646	Shiawassee	15,672	661
Isabella	28,457	645	Tuscola	10,972	708
Jackson	54,129	819	Van Buren	19,985	723
Kalamazoo	108,321	862	Washtenaw	194,933	993
Kalkaska	3,800	851	Wayne	684,943	1,075
Kent	327,798	854	Wexford	12,607	699

(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. Covered [1] employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2011 [2]

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [3]			
	December 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2010- 11	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2010-11	National ranking by percent change
United States [4]	131,254.2	1.4	\$955	--	-1.7	--
Alabama	1,828.3	0.2	832	31	-0.8	14
Alaska	311.3	1.6	982	11	-0.5	10
Arizona	2,458.4	1.7	882	21	-1.1	17
Arkansas	1,157.1	0.9	736	47	-1.2	19
California	14,731.8	1.3	1,100	6	-2.7	47
Colorado	2,250.1	2.1	975	13	-2.6	46
Connecticut	1,642.0	0.9	1,188	4	-3.1	49
Delaware	405.9	0.4	984	10	-1.6	26
District of Columbia	708.0	1.3	1,668	1	-1.2	19
Florida	7,364.1	1.4	847	29	-2.8	48
Georgia	3,826.9	1.0	885	20	-2.2	39
Hawaii	607.0	1.4	845	30	-1.5	23
Idaho	606.4	0.8	717	50	-2.2	39
Illinois	5,635.9	1.1	1,013	8	-2.1	35
Indiana	2,799.2	2.0	789	41	-1.9	32
Iowa	1,464.2	1.1	793	40	-0.8	14
Kansas	1,320.1	0.7	800	38	-1.5	23
Kentucky	1,770.2	1.3	786	42	-1.0	16
Louisiana	1,870.8	1.0	850	27	-1.7	28
Maine	580.9	0.4	755	46	-1.8	30
Maryland	2,516.4	1.1	1,058	7	-2.0	33
Massachusetts	3,230.8	1.3	1,192	3	-2.1	35
Michigan	3,911.8	2.4	933	18	-0.5	10
Minnesota	2,636.4	2.1	936	16	-3.9	51
Mississippi	1,083.8	0.3	699	51	-1.1	17
Missouri	2,617.0	0.8	825	32	-1.7	28
Montana	426.7	1.8	727	48	0.7	4
Nebraska	910.5	0.8	762	45	-1.3	21
Nevada	1,124.1	0.8	852	26	-3.2	50
New Hampshire	615.4	0.9	971	15	-0.7	13
New Jersey	3,811.6	0.6	1,138	5	-2.1	35
New Mexico	784.3	-0.3	799	39	-2.2	39
New York	8,618.4	1.4	1,197	2	-1.8	30
North Carolina	3,885.9	1.3	824	33	-2.0	33
North Dakota	397.0	7.6	871	23	7.7	1
Ohio	5,027.6	1.3	855	25	-1.3	21
Oklahoma	1,530.0	1.3	817	34	2.6	2
Oregon	1,629.8	1.2	850	27	-0.2	6
Pennsylvania	5,595.1	0.7	936	16	-1.6	26
Rhode Island	451.9	0.1	919	19	-2.1	35
South Carolina	1,796.1	1.3	763	44	-1.5	23
South Dakota	397.0	1.5	724	49	1.4	3
Tennessee	2,654.9	2.1	858	24	-2.3	42
Texas	10,607.9	2.4	973	14	-0.3	8
Utah	1,202.8	2.8	806	37	-2.5	45
Vermont	303.9	1.3	809	36	-0.5	10
Virginia	3,625.0	1.3	1,004	9	-2.4	43
Washington	2,843.6	1.4	979	12	-0.2	6
West Virginia	714.0	2.2	776	43	-0.3	8
Wisconsin	2,689.6	0.7	817	34	-2.4	43
Wyoming	276.9	2.3	876	22	0.6	5
Puerto Rico	960.9	0.1	552	[5]	-1.1	[5]
Virgin Islands	43.2	-4.0	772	[5]	-3.4	[5]

[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.

[5] Data not included in the national ranking.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Michigan, fourth quarter 2011

