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County Employment and Wages in Oregon – Fourth Quarter 2015

All six of Oregon's large counties had employment gains from December 2014 to December 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are those with 2014 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that all of the large counties in Oregon had rates of employment gains above the 1.9-percent national average. Employment increases ranged from 3.5 percent in both Marion and Multnomah Counties to 2.2 percent in Jackson County. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 308 of the 342 largest U.S. counties had employment gains from December 2014 to December 2015. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase, up 6.8 percent over the year. Ector, Texas had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the large U.S. counties with a loss of 11.8 percent.

Among the large counties in Oregon, Multnomah reported the highest employment (490,900) in December 2015. Together, the six large counties accounted for 72.0 percent of Oregon's total employment. Nationwide, the 342 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 141.9 million, up 2.7 million from December 2014.

From the fourth quarter of 2014 to the fourth quarter of 2015, Jackson County had the largest increase in average weekly wages among Oregon's large counties with a gain of 6.9 percent. Washington County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's large counties at $1,285. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 4.4 percent to $1,082 in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 30 counties with employment below 75,000 in Oregon. Wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

All six of Oregon's large counties had over-the-year wage gains that exceeded the national average of 4.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2015. Jackson County (6.9 percent, 33rd) and Multnomah County (6.6 percent, 43rd) ranked in the top third among the 342 large U.S. counties. Washington County (4.9 percent, 161st) posted the smallest over-the-year increase among Oregon's largest counties.

Among the 342 largest U.S. counties, 325 recorded gains in average weekly wages. Wyandotte, Kan., had the largest wage increase (10.4 percent). In contrast, 10 large counties nationwide had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Midland, Texas, had the largest over-the-year wage decline with a loss of 11.5 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in Washington County ($1,285, 38th) and Multnomah County ($1,099, 87th) placed in the top third among the 342 largest U.S. counties. Average weekly wages in the state's remaining four large counties ranged from $998 to $837 in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Nationally, 100 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of $1,082 in the fourth quarter of 2015. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of $2,335. New York, N.Y., was second at $2,235, followed by San Mateo, Calif., at $2,095.

Seventy percent of the large U.S. counties (241) reported average weekly wages below the national average of $1,082. Cameron, Texas, reported the lowest weekly wage ($649), followed by Horry, S.C. ($653) and Hidalgo, Texas ($661). Average weekly wages in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif., were more than three times the average weekly wage in the lowest-ranked county, Cameron, Texas.

Average weekly wages in Oregon's smaller counties

All of the 30 smaller counties in Oregon, those with employment below 75,000, had average weekly wages lower than the national average of $1,082. Morrow County reported the highest weekly wage ($1,045), followed by Clackamas ($998). Wheeler reported the lowest weekly wage in the state, averaging $560 in the fourth quarter of 2015. (See table 2.)

When all 36 counties in Oregon were considered, 8 counties reported average weekly wages under $699, 17 reported wages from $700 to $799, 6 reported wages from $800 to $899, 2 reported wages from $900 to $999, and 3 reported wages 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 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 first quarter 2016 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, September 7, 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 9.7 million employer reports cover 141.9 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

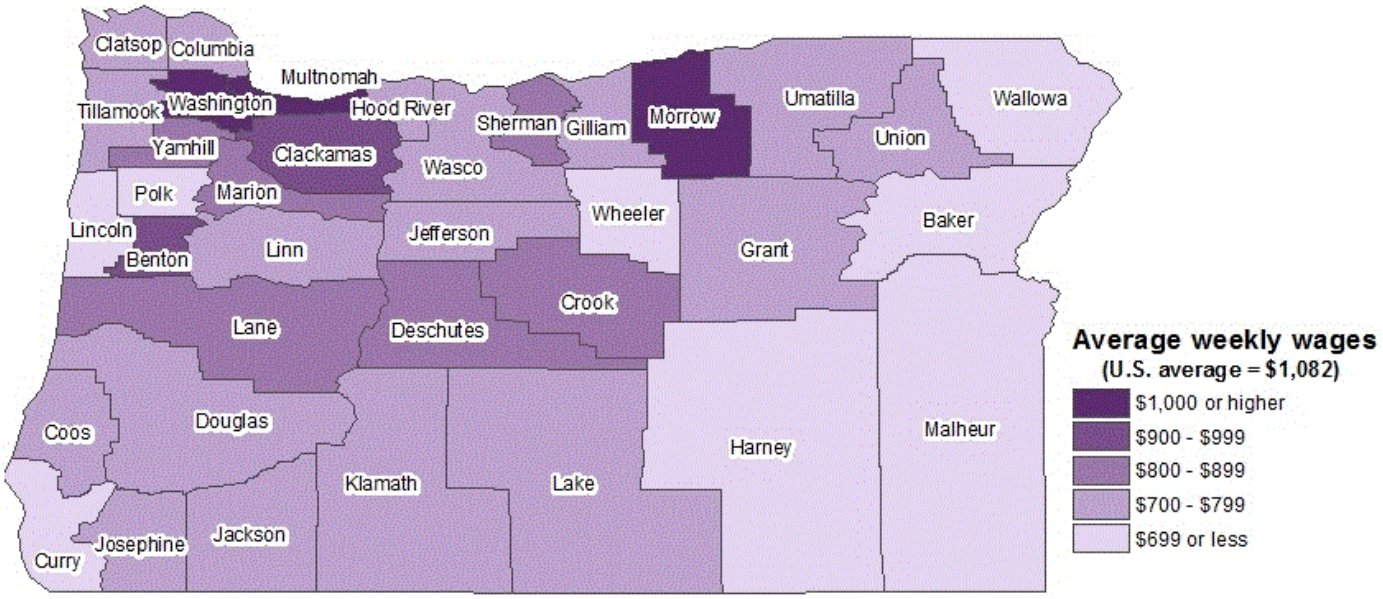
number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for 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.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Oregon, fourth quarter 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	December 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2014-15 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, fourth quarter 2014-15 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	141,924.5	1.9	--	$1,082	--	4.4	--
Oregon	1,814.8	3.3	--	979	23	5.5	8
Clackamas, Ore.	153.9	3.1	87	998	166	5.2	137
Jackson, Ore.	84.4	2.2	144	793	325	6.9	33
Lane, Ore.	150.7	3.4	63	837	310	5.0	154
Marion, Ore.	145.5	3.5	58	853	295	5.2	137
Multnomah, Ore.	490.9	3.5	58	1,099	87	6.6	43
Washington, Ore.	280.3	3.0	93	1,285	38	4.9	161

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 Oregon, fourth quarter 2015

Area	Employment December 2015	Average Weekly Wage (1)
United States (2)	141,924,459	$1,082
Oregon	1,814,780	979
Baker	5,206	683
Benton	36,762	941
Clackamas	153,864	998
Clatsop	17,299	709
Columbia	10,851	747
Coos	22,520	724
Crook	5,885	817
Curry	6,295	692
Deschutes	73,923	831
Douglas	36,710	765
Gilliam	768	778
Grant	2,373	706
Harney	2,350	663
Hood River	12,638	732
Jackson	84,443	793
Jefferson	6,460	717
Josephine	25,088	708
Klamath	22,172	730
Lake	2,343	733
Lane	150,735	837
Lincoln	17,366	686
Linn	44,418	796
Malheur	12,380	679
Marion	145,456	853
Morrow	5,522	1,045
Multnomah	490,933	1,099
Polk	19,360	682
Sherman	829	888
Tillamook	8,966	703
Umatilla	28,987	753
Union	9,966	724
Wallowa	2,373	657
Wasco	10,737	769
Washington	280,341	1,285
Wheeler	276	560
Yamhill	34,205	809

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 2015

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	December 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2014-15	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2014-15	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	141,924.5	1.9	$1,082	--	4.4	--
Alabama	1,916.2	1.4	912	37	3.4	37
Alaska	315.9	-0.5	1,095	13	2.9	43
Arizona	2,701.8	2.6	967	24	4.4	28
Arkansas	1,201.4	1.7	838	46	3.8	35
California	16,593.8	3.1	1,274	5	5.4	10
Colorado	2,537.5	2.5	1,103	11	3.3	40
Connecticut	1,685.1	0.3	1,334	4	4.3	29
Delaware	441.2	1.8	1,086	15	3.4	37
District of Columbia	754.2	2.2	1,756	1	3.4	37
Florida	8,308.1	3.7	958	26	5.2	16
Georgia	4,249.4	2.9	1,001	21	4.5	27
Hawaii	653.0	2.2	957	27	5.4	10
Idaho	670.1	3.4	803	50	2.6	45
Illinois	5,931.2	1.4	1,146	8	5.1	18
Indiana	2,996.3	1.7	891	40	5.3	14
Iowa	1,539.0	0.7	920	34	5.7	3
Kansas	1,382.1	0.4	898	38	5.0	20
Kentucky	1,881.3	1.6	885	41	5.9	1
Louisiana	1,937.4	-1.0	940	29	1.8	47
Maine	596.9	0.7	873	43	5.7	3
Maryland	2,636.7	1.7	1,175	7	5.6	5
Massachusetts	3,479.1	1.6	1,385	2	5.4	10
Michigan	4,218.9	1.5	1,043	18	5.9	1
Minnesota	2,805.8	1.5	1,073	16	4.8	22
Mississippi	1,133.8	1.3	770	51	3.1	41
Missouri	2,759.6	1.8	933	33	4.6	25
Montana	453.2	2.5	818	49	3.0	42
Nebraska	971.8	1.4	880	42	5.1	18
Nevada	1,272.2	3.5	935	32	4.0	31
New Hampshire	648.6	1.7	1,139	9	5.4	10
New Jersey	3,988.4	1.7	1,262	6	4.0	31
New Mexico	808.9	-0.1	865	44	1.8	47
New York	9,227.6	1.7	1,372	3	3.9	34
North Carolina	4,247.1	2.5	939	30	5.5	8
North Dakota	428.1	-5.9	1,021	20	-2.8	51
Ohio	5,328.8	1.2	964	25	4.6	25
Oklahoma	1,605.0	-0.7	896	39	2.3	46
Oregon	1,814.8	3.3	979	23	5.5	8
Pennsylvania	5,759.7	0.7	1,063	17	4.9	21
Rhode Island	478.1	1.5	1,043	18	4.0	31
South Carolina	1,987.1	2.8	860	45	5.3	14
South Dakota	417.7	1.2	832	47	5.2	16
Tennessee	2,898.1	2.8	980	22	5.6	5
Texas	11,832.1	1.4	1,099	12	2.7	44
Utah	1,375.6	3.8	913	36	4.7	23
Vermont	312.1	0.3	919	35	4.1	30
Virginia	3,806.2	3.0	1,094	14	3.5	36
Washington	3,137.2	2.3	1,132	10	4.7	23
West Virginia	703.7	-1.3	829	48	1.3	49
Wisconsin	2,820.5	1.1	944	28	5.6	5
Wyoming	276.0	-2.9	937	31	-1.7	50
Puerto Rico	929.9	-1.6	565	[3]	1.6	[3]
Virgin Islands	38.4	-0.3	787	[3]	4.7	[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.