



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT & BUDGET  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: April 23, 2015

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# **March Unemployment Rates Little Changed in Michigan's Regional Labor Markets**

*Lansing* – Seasonally unadjusted unemployment rates in March declined slightly in nine of the state's 17 major labor market areas, according to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget. Total employment levels edged upward over the month in the majority of areas, while labor force levels were mixed throughout the various regions.

"Michigan's regional labor markets remained relatively stable in March, with very little movement in area jobless rates," said Jason Palmer, director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives. "However, over the past year there has been clear and ongoing labor market improvement throughout the state's local regions."

From February to March, unemployment rates in the state's regional labor markets recorded only modest changes. Over the month, nine areas registered minor jobless rate reductions ranging from -0.1 to -0.3 of a percentage point. Four regions reported slight rate increases of 0.1 of a percentage point, while the remaining four areas showed no unemployment rate change since February. In March, nine Michigan regions displayed unemployment rates below the national non-seasonally adjusted rate of 5.6 percent.

### ***Jobless Rates Down Over Year***

Since March 2014, unemployment rates fell in all 17 major regions. Declines ranged from -1.7 to -3.8 percentage points with a significant median rate reduction of -2.6 percentage points. The largest jobless rate decreases over that period were recorded in the Northeast Lower Michigan region (-3.8), the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (-3.4), and the Northwest Lower Michigan region (-2.9).

### ***Total Employment Up Over Month, Year***

In March, total employment rose moderately in nine regions, with a median gain of 0.5 percent. The largest total employment advances over the month were reported in the Niles-Benton Harbor MSA (1.2%), the Monroe MSA (0.7%), and the Northeast Lower Michigan region (0.7%). Total employment declined slightly by -0.3 percent or less in five areas, while the remaining three regions recorded essentially no change over the month.

From March 2014 to March 2015, total employment rose in all 17 Michigan regions. Most gains were substantial, with a median advance of 2.2 percent. Total employment increases ranged from 0.5 percent to 3.8 percent with the sharpest growth rates over the year recorded in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming, Battle Creek, and Muskegon MSAs.

**Note:** Employment, unemployment and unemployment rate data for all 12 months of 2014 have been recently revised. Additionally, payroll job estimates have been revised for all metro areas for 2013 and 2014, and for prior years in some cases. Estimates for January, February and March 2015 are not comparable to previously released data. For newly revised estimates, please call 313-456-3090. **Please see the note at the bottom of page 6 for more detailed information.**

### **Labor Force Levels Mixed Over Month, Down Over Year**

From February to March, workforce levels were generally little changed. Labor force levels increased slightly in eight regions in March, with a median gain of 0.4 percent. Five regions showed minor workforce reductions over the month of -0.6 percent or less, while the remaining four areas recorded essentially no change.

Over the year, labor force levels declined in 11 regions with a median reduction of -0.8 percent. Five areas posted workforce increases since March 2014, and the labor force level in the Muskegon MSA was essentially unchanged over that period.

### **Moderate Gain in March Payroll Jobs**

The monthly survey of employers indicated that seasonally unadjusted payroll jobs in Michigan edged up by 11,000 or 0.3 percent in March to 4,193,000. Modest seasonal job increases in March were posted in leisure and hospitality services (+7,000) and construction (+3,000). Other job changes over the month included a 4,000 reduction in professional and business services that was nearly offset by an advance in education and health services (+3,000). The remaining major industry sectors in the state recorded only minor changes over the month.

From February to March, payroll jobs rose slightly in 11 of the 14 metropolitan areas in the state. Area job gains ranged from 0.1 to 1.7 percent, with a median advance of only 0.3 percent. The largest area percentage increases were registered in the Niles-Benton Harbor and Monroe MSAs, with jobs in those regions advancing by 1.7 and 1.2 percent respectively. The remaining over-the-month regional advances were relatively small. Payroll jobs fell slightly over the month in the Bay and Flint MSAs, while the March job count in the Jackson MSA was essentially unchanged.

From March 2014 to March 2015, seasonally unadjusted payroll jobs increased statewide by 78,000 or 1.9 percent. Over-the-year job gains were displayed in all of Michigan's major job sectors with the exception of government (-3,000). The bulk of the job gains since March 2014 were concentrated in six of the state's 11 major sectors which included professional and business services (+22,000), manufacturing (+19,000), education and health services (+11,000), construction (+11,000), trade, transportation and utilities (+9,000), and leisure and hospitality services (+5,000).

Since March 2014, payroll jobs rose in all 14 metropolitan regions of the state with gains ranging from 0.8 to 2.9 percent. The largest over-the-year percentage job additions were recorded in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming (+2.9%), Monroe (+2.9%), and Battle Creek (+2.8%) MSAs.

### **County Jobless Rates Down Over Month, Year**

Fifty-three of Michigan's 83 counties recorded mostly minor unemployment rate reductions in March with a median decline of just -0.2 of a percentage point. Jobless rates were up slightly over the month in 16 counties, while 14 counties posted no rate change.

From March 2014 to March 2015, jobless rates dropped in all 83 of the state's counties. The median decline over this period was a significant -2.9 percentage points.

*Note: Data in this release is **not seasonally adjusted**. As a result, employment and unemployment trends may differ from previously released Michigan seasonally adjusted data. A breakdown of seasonally unadjusted March workforce estimates for Michigan and its 17 major labor market areas follows, along with a listing of county jobless rates for March. Note to Editors: Please ensure that the source for state unemployment rates reads "Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget."*

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>ANN ARBOR MSA</b> (Washtenaw County)					
Civilian Labor Force	187,300	186,700	187,400	0.4%	0.1%
Total Employment	177,600	180,300	180,900	0.3%	1.9%
Unemployment	9,800	6,400	6,500	1.6%	-33.7%
Rate (percent)	5.2	3.4	3.5		

Contact: Luke Bunge, DTMB Economic Analyst (517) 335-3875

	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>BATTLE CREEK MSA</b> (Calhoun County)					
Civilian Labor Force	63,800	64,700	64,700	0.0%	1.4%
Total Employment	59,200	61,300	61,300	0.0%	3.5%
Unemployment	4,600	3,400	3,400	0.0%	-26.1%
Rate (percent)	7.3	5.2	5.2		

Contact: Leonidas Murembya, DTMB Regional Economic Analyst (517) 841-5634

	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>BAY CITY MSA</b> (Bay County)					
Civilian Labor Force	53,700	53,300	53,100	-0.4%	-1.1%
Total Employment	48,900	49,800	49,700	-0.2%	1.6%
Unemployment	4,800	3,400	3,400	0.0%	-29.2%
Rate (percent)	8.9	6.4	6.3		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>DETROIT-WARREN-DEARBORN MSA</b> <b>(Data in thousands)</b> (Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Lapeer, Livingston, St. Clair counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	2,023	1,973	1,961	-0.6%	-3.1%
Total Employment	1,833	1,848	1,843	-0.3%	0.5%
Unemployment	189	125	118	-5.6%	-37.6%
Rate (percent)	9.4	6.3	6.0		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>FLINT MSA</b> (Genesee County)					
Civilian Labor Force	185,500	185,600	185,100	-0.3%	-0.2%
Total Employment	168,500	174,000	173,400	-0.3%	2.9%
Unemployment	16,900	11,600	11,800	1.7%	-30.2%
Rate (percent)	9.1	6.2	6.3		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>GRAND RAPIDS - WYOMING MSA</b> (Barry, Kent, Montcalm, Ottawa counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	541,100	547,900	550,300	0.4%	1.7%
Total Employment	509,400	526,400	528,700	0.4%	3.8%
Unemployment	31,700	21,500	21,700	0.9%	-31.5%
Rate (percent)	5.9	3.9	3.9		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>JACKSON MSA</b> (Jackson County)					
Civilian Labor Force	73,000	72,700	72,800	0.1%	-0.3%
Total Employment	67,300	68,600	68,800	0.3%	2.2%
Unemployment	5,700	4,100	4,000	-2.4%	-29.8%
Rate (percent)	7.8	5.6	5.5		

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<b>KALAMAZOO - PORTAGE MSA</b> (Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	163,800	163,900	163,900	0.0%	0.1%
Total Employment	152,100	155,700	155,800	0.1%	2.4%
Unemployment	11,700	8,200	8,100	-1.2%	-30.8%
Rate (percent)	7.2	5.0	4.9		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>LANSING - EAST LANSING MSA</b> (Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	242,700	242,500	242,000	-0.2%	-0.3%
Total Employment	227,400	231,400	231,100	-0.1%	1.6%
Unemployment	15,300	11,100	10,900	-1.8%	-28.8%
Rate (percent)	6.3	4.6	4.5		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MIDLAND MSA</b> (Midland County)					
Civilian Labor Force	41,500	41,300	41,400	0.2%	-0.2%
Total Employment	38,400	39,100	39,200	0.3%	2.1%
Unemployment	3,100	2,200	2,200	0.0%	-29.0%
Rate (percent)	7.5	5.3	5.4		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MONROE MSA</b> (Monroe County)					
Civilian Labor Force	75,900	75,700	76,300	0.8%	0.5%
Total Employment	70,700	72,200	72,700	0.7%	2.8%
Unemployment	5,200	3,600	3,600	0.0%	-30.8%
Rate (percent)	6.8	4.7	4.7		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MUSKEGON MSA</b> (Muskegon County)					
Civilian Labor Force	76,700	76,700	76,700	0.0%	0.0%
Total Employment	70,000	72,100	72,100	0.0%	3.0%
Unemployment	6,700	4,600	4,500	-2.2%	-32.8%
Rate (percent)	8.7	6.0	5.9		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>NILES - BENTON HARBOR MSA</b> (Berrien County)					
Civilian Labor Force	73,000	72,100	72,800	1.0%	-0.3%
Total Employment	67,000	68,000	68,800	1.2%	2.7%
Unemployment	6,000	4,000	3,900	-2.5%	-35.0%
Rate (percent)	8.2	5.6	5.4		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>SAGINAW MSA</b> (Saginaw County)					
Civilian Labor Force	89,500	88,600	88,600	0.0%	-1.0%
Total Employment	81,500	83,200	83,200	0.0%	2.1%
Unemployment	8,000	5,400	5,400	0.0%	-32.5%
Rate (percent)	8.9	6.1	6.1		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>UPPER PENINSULA LMA</b> (15 counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	144,300	142,800	142,500	-0.2%	-1.2%
Total Employment	129,200	131,700	131,400	-0.2%	1.7%
Unemployment	15,100	11,100	11,100	0.0%	-26.5%
Rate (percent)	10.5	7.7	7.8		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>NORTHEAST LOWER MICHIGAN</b>					
(Alcona, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	82,700	80,500	81,000	0.6%	-2.1%
Total Employment	71,300	72,300	72,800	0.7%	2.1%
Unemployment	11,400	8,300	8,100	-2.4%	-28.9%
Rate (percent)	13.8	10.3	10.0		

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<b>NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN</b>					
(Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Wexford counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	145,200	143,500	144,000	0.3%	-0.8%
Total Employment	130,200	132,700	133,300	0.5%	2.4%
Unemployment	15,000	10,800	10,700	-0.9%	-28.7%
Rate (percent)	10.3	7.5	7.4		

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	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MICHIGAN (Data in thousands)</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	4,753	4,698	4,693	-0.1%	-1.3%
Total Employment	4,350	4,424	4,426	0.0%	1.7%
Unemployment	403	274	267	-2.6%	-33.7%
Rate (percent)	8.5	5.8	5.7		

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**Note:**

During this year's revision process, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics implemented a number of methodological changes in the production of state and county employment and unemployment estimates. As such, users may notice some counties with larger than normal revisions.

Also, the Current Employment Statistics program, which generates job data by industry for Michigan metro areas, will incorporate new metro area designations in 2015 as defined by the U.S. Office of Management & Budget. The metro areas impacted by these geographic changes include:

- Grand Rapids MSA - New definition: Barry, Kent, Montcalm, and Ottawa counties
- Midland MSA - This is a newly defined metro area; reflecting Midland County
- Former Holland MSA (Ottawa County) – Job estimates now part of Grand Rapids MSA

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**MICHIGAN COUNTIES RANKED BY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE  
MARCH 2015**

1	Washtenaw County	3.5	43	Van Buren County	7.0
2	Ottawa County	3.6	44	Alpena County	7.1
3	Kent County	3.8	45	Mason County	7.1
4	Clinton County	4.0	46	Gogebic County	7.2
5	Kalamazoo County	4.3	47	Luce County	7.4
6	Allegan County	4.5	48	Osceola County	7.4
7	Barry County	4.6	49	Sanilac County	7.4
8	Eaton County	4.6	50	Tuscola County	7.4
9	Ingham County	4.6	51	Charlevoix County	7.5
10	St. Joseph County	4.6	52	St. Clair County	7.5
11	Monroe County	4.7	53	Delta County	7.5
12	Ionia County	4.8	54	Wexford County	7.6
13	Livingston County	4.9	55	Missaukee County	7.7
14	Oakland County	4.9	56	Manistee County	7.9
15	Isabella County	4.9	57	Gladwin County	8.3
16	Cass County	5.2	58	Lapeer County	8.3
17	Calhoun County	5.2	59	Benzie County	8.7
18	Menominee County	5.4	60	Iron County	8.7
19	Lenawee County	5.4	61	Clare County	8.8
20	Midland County	5.4	62	Crawford County	8.9
21	Berrien County	5.4	63	Iosco County	9.0
22	Jackson County	5.5	64	Antrim County	9.2
23	Grand Traverse County	5.6	65	Ogemaw County	9.2
24	Branch County	5.6	66	Chippewa County	9.2
25	Hillsdale County	5.8	67	Emmet County	9.4
26	Macomb County	5.9	68	Kalkaska County	9.4
27	Muskegon County	5.9	69	Alcona County	9.5
28	Dickinson County	6.0	70	Alger County	9.8
29	Saginaw County	6.1	71	Baraga County	9.9
30	Montcalm County	6.2	72	Keweenaw County	10.0
31	Newaygo County	6.2	73	Oceana County	10.0
32	Huron County	6.3	74	Lake County	10.1
33	Shiawassee County	6.3	75	Ontonagon County	10.1
34	Bay County	6.3	76	Oscoda County	10.2
35	Genesee County	6.3	77	Roscommon County	10.6
36	Marquette County	6.4	78	Arenac County	10.9
37	Mecosta County	6.6	79	Schoolcraft County	11.3
38	Houghton County	6.7	80	Montmorency County	12.0
39	Gratiot County	6.7	81	Presque Isle County	14.1
40	Leelanau County	6.8	82	Cheboygan County	16.4
41	Wayne County	6.9	83	Mackinac County	20.6
42	Otsego County	7.0			

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