



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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

Date: April 2, 2015

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# **February Unemployment Rates Decline in All Michigan Regional Labor Markets**

*Lansing* – Seasonally unadjusted unemployment rates in February decreased moderately in all of the state’s 17 major labor market areas, according to the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget. Total employment levels increased over the month in most areas, while labor force levels were mixed throughout the various regions.

“Jobless rates fell throughout the state in February, but the more important trend was the significant jobless rate reductions over the past year,” said Jason Palmer, director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives. “In addition, payroll job levels rose in all Michigan metro areas since February 2014.”

From January to February, unemployment rate reductions ranged from -0.4 to -1.1 percentage points with a median decline of -0.6 of a percentage point. The largest February rate decrease of -1.1 percentage point was posted in the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). This decline was followed by reductions in the Flint, Lansing-East Lansing, and Saginaw MSAs, with all three displaying a drop of -0.8 of a percentage point. In February, nine Michigan regions reported unemployment rates below the national non-seasonally adjusted rate of 5.8 percent.

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

Since February 2014, unemployment rates fell in all 17 major regions. Declines ranged from -1.8 to -3.9 percentage points with a significant median rate reduction of -2.7 percentage points. The largest jobless rate decreases over that period were recorded in the Northeast Lower Michigan region (-3.9), the Detroit-Warren-Dearborn MSA (-3.2), the Flint MSA (-3.1), and the Northwest Lower Michigan region (-3.1).

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

In February, total employment rose moderately in 14 regions, with a median gain of 0.7 percent. The most pronounced over-the-month advances were registered in the Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo-Portage, and Lansing-East Lansing MSAs. Total employment was up in those three areas in February by at least 1.2 percent. Three regions recorded minor over-the-month total employment reductions. From February 2014 to February 2015, total employment rose in all 17 Michigan regions. Most gains were significant, with a median advance of 2.7 percent. Total employment increases ranged from 1.3 percent to 4.4 percent with the largest recorded growth over the year posted in the Battle Creek, Grand Rapids-Wyoming, 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 and February 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, Year***

From January to February, workforce levels were generally little changed. Labor force levels increased slightly in eight regions in February, with a median advance of only 0.2 percent. Six regions posted minor workforce reductions over the month, with the remaining three areas showing essentially no change.

Over the year, labor force levels declined in ten regions with a modest median reduction of -0.4 percent. Six areas registered workforce increases since February 2014, and the labor force level in the Midland MSA was essentially unchanged over that period.

### ***Seasonal Increases in Government and Private Education Drive Up February Payroll Jobs***

The monthly survey of employers indicated that seasonally unadjusted payroll jobs in Michigan increased by 27,000 or 0.7 percent in February to 4,182,000. Over-the-month job gains were recorded in government (+14,000), education and health services (+8,000), manufacturing (+6,000), and professional and business services (+6,000). These increases were countered by seasonal job reductions in trade, transportation and utilities (-6,000).

Within the government sector, jobs in local government education (+8,000), and state government education (+7,000) advanced seasonally due to the continued return of students to colleges, universities and local schools following the holiday break. Job gains in education and health services were primarily due to a seasonal increase in private education. Manufacturing jobs rose in February as a result of recalls from short-term January layoffs in the auto industry.

From January to February, payroll jobs rose in 12 of the 14 metropolitan areas in the state. Area job gains ranged from 0.2 to 1.5 percent, with the largest increases recorded in the Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo-Portage, and Lansing-East Lansing MSAs. Job counts were essentially unchanged in February in the Bay City and Saginaw MSAs.

From February 2014 to February 2015, seasonally unadjusted payroll jobs increased statewide by 83,000 or 2.0 percent. Over-the-year job gains were displayed in all of Michigan's major job sectors with the exception of government (-6,000). The most notable job advances since February 2014 occurred in professional and business services (+30,000), manufacturing (+22,000), education and health services (+10,000), trade, transportation and utilities (+10,000), and construction (+8,000).

Since February 2014, payroll jobs rose in all 14 metropolitan regions of the state with a median advance of 2.0 percent. The largest over-the-year percentage job gains were recorded in the Battle Creek (+3.4%), Grand Rapids-Wyoming (+2.9%), and Flint (+2.8%) MSAs.

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

Eighty of Michigan's 83 counties recorded unemployment rate reductions in February with a moderate median decline of -0.6 of a percentage point. In February, 25 Michigan counties reported jobless rates at or below the U.S. non-seasonally adjusted rate of 5.8 percent. From February 2014 to February 2015, jobless rates dropped in all 83 of the state's counties. The median decline over this period was a significant -3.0 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 February workforce estimates for Michigan and its 17 major labor market areas follows, along with a listing of county jobless rates for February.*

*Note to Editors: Please ensure that the source for state unemployment rates reads "Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget."*

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>ANN ARBOR MSA</b> (Washtenaw County)					
Civilian Labor Force	186,900	185,100	186,500	0.8%	-0.2%
Total Employment	177,100	177,700	180,100	1.4%	1.7%
Unemployment	9,800	7,400	6,400	-13.5%	-34.7%
Rate (percent)	5.3	4.0	3.4		

Contact: Jeff Aula, DTMB Economic Analyst (313) 456-3144

	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>BATTLE CREEK MSA</b> (Calhoun County)					
Civilian Labor Force	63,500	64,600	64,700	0.2%	1.9%
Total Employment	58,700	60,900	61,300	0.7%	4.4%
Unemployment	4,800	3,700	3,400	-8.1%	-29.2%
Rate (percent)	7.6	5.8	5.2		

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

	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>BAY CITY MSA</b> (Bay County)					
Civilian Labor Force	53,400	53,500	53,300	-0.4%	-0.2%
Total Employment	48,500	49,800	49,900	0.2%	2.9%
Unemployment	4,800	3,700	3,400	-8.1%	-29.2%
Rate (percent)	9.1	7.0	6.4		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-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	2,015	1,999	1,973	-1.3%	-2.1%
Total Employment	1,824	1,852	1,848	-0.2%	1.3%
Unemployment	191	147	125	-15.0%	-34.6%
Rate (percent)	9.5	7.4	6.3		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>FLINT MSA</b> (Genesee County)					
Civilian Labor Force	184,700	185,600	185,600	0.0%	0.5%
Total Employment	167,400	172,500	174,000	0.9%	3.9%
Unemployment	17,300	13,200	11,600	-12.1%	-32.9%
Rate (percent)	9.4	7.1	6.3		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>GRAND RAPIDS - WYOMING MSA</b> (Barry, Kent, Montcalm, Ottawa counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	537,600	547,100	548,000	0.2%	1.9%
Total Employment	505,500	522,700	526,500	0.7%	4.2%
Unemployment	32,000	24,400	21,600	-11.5%	-32.5%
Rate (percent)	6.0	4.5	3.9		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>JACKSON MSA</b> (Jackson County)					
Civilian Labor Force	72,900	72,700	72,700	0.0%	-0.3%
Total Employment	67,000	68,200	68,600	0.6%	2.4%
Unemployment	5,900	4,500	4,100	-8.9%	-30.5%
Rate (percent)	8.0	6.2	5.6		

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<b>KALAMAZOO - PORTAGE MSA</b> (Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	162,400	163,000	164,200	0.7%	1.1%
Total Employment	150,500	153,900	156,000	1.4%	3.7%
Unemployment	11,900	9,100	8,200	-9.9%	-31.1%
Rate (percent)	7.3	5.6	5.0		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>LANSING - EAST LANSING MSA</b> (Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	242,200	241,600	242,400	0.3%	0.1%
Total Employment	226,600	228,500	231,300	1.2%	2.1%
Unemployment	15,600	13,100	11,100	-15.3%	-28.8%
Rate (percent)	6.4	5.4	4.6		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MIDLAND MSA</b> (Midland County)					
Civilian Labor Force	41,300	41,300	41,300	0.0%	0.0%
Total Employment	38,100	38,900	39,100	0.5%	2.6%
Unemployment	3,100	2,400	2,200	-8.3%	-29.0%
Rate (percent)	7.5	5.7	5.3		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MONROE MSA</b> (Monroe County)					
Civilian Labor Force	76,100	75,600	75,700	0.1%	-0.5%
Total Employment	70,700	71,600	72,100	0.7%	2.0%
Unemployment	5,300	4,100	3,600	-12.2%	-32.1%
Rate (percent)	7.0	5.4	4.7		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MUSKEGON MSA</b> (Muskegon County)					
Civilian Labor Force	76,100	76,600	76,700	0.1%	0.8%
Total Employment	69,300	71,600	72,100	0.7%	4.0%
Unemployment	6,900	5,000	4,600	-8.0%	-33.3%
Rate (percent)	9.0	6.5	6.0		

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<b>NILES - BENTON HARBOR MSA</b> (Berrien County)					
Civilian Labor Force	72,200	72,200	72,000	-0.3%	-0.3%
Total Employment	66,000	67,600	68,000	0.6%	3.0%
Unemployment	6,200	4,500	4,000	-11.1%	-35.5%
Rate (percent)	8.6	6.3	5.6		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>SAGINAW MSA</b> (Saginaw County)					
Civilian Labor Force	89,200	89,200	88,800	-0.4%	-0.4%
Total Employment	81,200	83,100	83,400	0.4%	2.7%
Unemployment	8,000	6,100	5,400	-11.5%	-32.5%
Rate (percent)	8.9	6.8	6.0		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>UPPER PENINSULA LMA</b> (15 counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	144,200	142,600	142,700	0.1%	-1.0%
Total Employment	128,900	131,000	131,600	0.5%	2.1%
Unemployment	15,300	11,700	11,100	-5.1%	-27.5%
Rate (percent)	10.6	8.2	7.7		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-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	82,300	81,400	80,500	-1.1%	-2.2%
Total Employment	70,600	72,500	72,200	-0.4%	2.3%
Unemployment	11,700	8,900	8,300	-6.7%	-29.1%
Rate (percent)	14.2	11.0	10.3		

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<b>NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN</b>					
(Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Wexford counties)					
Civilian Labor Force	144,500	145,000	143,400	-1.1%	-0.8%
Total Employment	129,100	133,400	132,600	-0.6%	2.7%
Unemployment	15,300	11,600	10,800	-6.9%	-29.4%
Rate (percent)	10.6	8.0	7.5		

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	<u>Feb-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	% change month	% change year
<b>MICHIGAN (Data in thousands)</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	4,731	4,723	4,698	-0.5%	-0.7%
Total Employment	4,323	4,409	4,424	0.3%	2.3%
Unemployment	408	314	274	-12.7%	-32.8%
Rate (percent)	8.6	6.6	5.8		

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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 to 2014 data.

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 the Grand Rapids MSA

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

1	Washtenaw County	3.4	43	Van Buren County	7.3
2	Ottawa County	3.7	44	Wayne County	7.3
3	Kent County	3.8	45	Gogebic County	7.3
4	Clinton County	4.2	46	Alpena County	7.3
5	Kalamazoo County	4.3	47	Mason County	7.4
6	St. Joseph County	4.5	48	Luce County	7.6
7	Barry County	4.7	49	Sanilac County	7.6
8	Eaton County	4.7	50	Tuscola County	7.6
9	Ingham County	4.7	51	Charlevoix County	7.7
10	Allegan County	4.7	52	Wexford County	7.7
11	Isabella County	4.7	53	Missaukee County	7.8
12	Monroe County	4.7	54	Delta County	7.8
13	Ionia County	4.9	55	St. Clair County	7.9
14	Oakland County	5.0	56	Manistee County	8.1
15	Livingston County	5.2	57	Gladwin County	8.4
16	Calhoun County	5.2	58	Iron County	8.7
17	Cass County	5.3	59	Lapeer County	8.7
18	Lenawee County	5.3	60	Benzie County	8.8
19	Midland County	5.3	61	Clare County	8.9
20	Menominee County	5.4	62	Crawford County	9.0
21	Branch County	5.4	63	Antrim County	9.2
22	Jackson County	5.6	64	Baraga County	9.2
23	Berrien County	5.6	65	Iosco County	9.2
24	Hillsdale County	5.7	66	Kalkaska County	9.4
25	Grand Traverse County	5.8	67	Chippewa County	9.4
26	Dickinson County	5.9	68	Emmet County	9.5
27	Gratiot County	6.0	69	Ogemaw County	9.5
28	Muskegon County	6.0	70	Alcona County	9.6
29	Saginaw County	6.0	71	Keweenaw County	9.9
30	Macomb County	6.2	72	Alger County	10.0
31	Montcalm County	6.3	73	Ontonagon County	10.0
32	Genesee County	6.3	74	Lake County	10.2
33	Huron County	6.4	75	Oceana County	10.4
34	Newaygo County	6.4	76	Oscoda County	10.7
35	Marquette County	6.4	77	Roscommon County	10.9
36	Shiawassee County	6.4	78	Arenac County	11.3
37	Bay County	6.4	79	Schoolcraft County	11.3
38	Houghton County	6.5	80	Montmorency County	12.0
39	Mecosta County	6.5	81	Presque Isle County	14.6
40	Leelanau County	6.9	82	Cheboygan County	16.9
41	Otsego County	7.1	83	Mackinac County	20.8
42	Osceola County	7.2			

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