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BLS Data: State Unemployment Rate Reaches 14-Year Low at 4.3%

September rate at lowest rate since April 2001, also lowest September rate since 2000

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today released the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) revisions for August and preliminary estimates for September, covering unemployment and employment statistics for the state of Wisconsin. In brief, the estimates show:

- **Place of residence data:** A preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.3 percent in September 2015, its lowest point since April 2001, down from 4.5 percent in August 2015. The 4.3 percent rate is below the national unemployment rate of 5.1 percent for the month and below the state's rate of 5.3 percent in September 2014. The state's September rate is the lowest for the month since September 2000, when the rate was 3.7 percent. Additionally, the state's labor force participation rate of 67.4 percent in September outpaced the national rate of 62.4 percent.
- **Place of work data:** Wisconsin added a statistically significant 45,300 private sector jobs and 53,400 total non-farm jobs from September 2014 to September 2015 (seasonally adjusted). Wisconsin also realized significant year-over-year gains of 6,500 jobs in retail, 4,900 jobs in financial activities and 12,800 jobs in education and health services. The state posted a one-month gain of 1,700 in total nonfarm jobs.

"Wisconsin hasn't seen its September unemployment rate reach this low since former Governor Thompson was in office, and the last time the rate was this low during any month was in April 2001," DWD Secretary Reggie Newson. "And, with the one-year addition of 45,300 private sector jobs, Wisconsin's long-term trend continues to be one of economic growth. At DWD, we remain committed to advancing strong policies to develop the workforce and further strengthen the economy."

The BLS uses three data sets to measure employment and unemployment:

- **Current Employment Statistics (CES):** compiled from a monthly survey sent to about 5,500 employers (3.5 percent of Wisconsin employers). CES data has been shown to be volatile and subject to revision.
- **Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS):** compiled from a monthly survey of 985 households and unemployment insurance claims. Measures the labor force, employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate.
- **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW):** compiled quarterly based on Unemployment Insurance records from some 96% of Wisconsin business establishments. Considered by most economists to be the most accurate measure of jobs, the QCEW includes data from almost all employers in Wisconsin.

(more)

Other indicators of the state of Wisconsin's economy include:

- Average Initial Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims for the first 40 weeks of 2015 dropped to the lowest point since 1990, and the annual average weekly continued UI claims are at their lowest levels since 2000.
- [Department of Financial Institutions](#) new business formation: The number of new business entities formed in Wisconsin in the first nine months of 2015 grew by 3.4% percent compared to same period in 2014. As of September 30, 2015, new business filings totaled 31,062, compared to 30,046 in the same period in 2014.
- [Chief Executive Magazine](#) ranked Wisconsin the "12th Best State for Business" in its annual survey of CEO's, an increase of 2 spots over the 2014 ranking, and a big increase over 2010, when the state ranked 41st.

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Wisconsin Employment and Unemployment Report
AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2015

1. REVISIONS TO ESTIMATES FROM AUGUST 2015

Place of Residence Data	Seasonally Adjusted			Not Seasonally Adjusted		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,071,700	3,071,900	200	3,102,000	3,102,400	400
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	67.4%	67.4%	0.0%	68.0%	68.0%	0.0%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	2,934,300	2,934,500	200	2,979,900	2,980,400	500
UNEMPLOYMENT	137,400	137,400	0	122,100	122,000	-100
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.5%	4.5%	0.0%	3.9%	3.9%	0.0%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.1%	0.0%	5.2%	5.2%	0.0%
Place of Work Data						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,898,600	2,898,800	200	2,923,300	2,923,400	100
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,481,200	2,481,900	700	2,538,600	2,539,200	600
GOODS PRODUCING	583,100	584,300	1,200	602,400	603,600	1,200
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	4,000	4,000	0	4,400	4,400	0
CONSTRUCTION	106,800	107,100	300	118,700	119,000	300
MANUFACTURING	472,300	473,200	900	479,300	480,200	900
Durable Goods	285,600	286,500	900	288,100	289,000	900
Nondurable Goods	186,700	186,700	0	191,200	191,200	0
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,315,500	2,314,500	-1,000	2,320,900	2,319,800	-1,100
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,898,100	1,897,600	-500	1,936,200	1,935,600	-600
TRADE	428,000	428,500	500	432,700	433,200	500
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	102,400	102,300	-100	102,300	102,200	-100
INFORMATION	49,900	50,000	100	50,300	50,400	100
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	155,800	155,500	-300	157,100	156,800	-300
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	314,500	315,700	1,200	321,700	322,900	1,200
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	441,900	440,700	-1,200	438,300	437,100	-1,200
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	270,900	270,300	-600	297,600	296,900	-700
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	134,700	134,600	-100	136,200	136,100	-100
GOVERNMENT	417,400	416,900	-500	384,700	384,200	-500
Federal Government	28,900	28,900	0	28,800	28,800	0
State Government	96,500	96,500	0	89,000	89,000	0
Local Government	292,000	291,500	-500	266,900	266,400	-500

2. MONTHLY ESTIMATES FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

Place of Residence Data	Sep-15 (P)	Aug-15 (R)	Net Change	Sep-15 (P)	Aug-15 (R)	Net Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,076,200	3,071,900	4,300	3,079,500	3,102,400	-22,900
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	67.4%	67.4%	0.0%	67.5%	68.0%	-0.5%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	2,942,800	2,934,500	8,300	2,967,200	2,980,400	-13,200
UNEMPLOYMENT	133,400	137,400	-4,000	112,300	122,000	-9,700
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	4.3%	4.5%	-0.2%	3.6%	3.9%	-0.3%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	5.1%	5.1%	0.0%	4.9%	5.2%	-0.3%
Place of Work Data						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,900,200	2,898,800	1,400	2,919,900	2,923,400	-3,500
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,480,600	2,481,900	-1,300	2,505,700	2,539,200	-33,500
GOODS PRODUCING	580,200	584,300	-4,100	592,400	603,600	-11,200
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	3,900	4,000	-100	4,300	4,400	-100
CONSTRUCTION	105,800	107,100	-1,300	114,600	119,000	-4,400
MANUFACTURING	470,500	473,200	-2,700	473,500	480,200	-6,700
Durable Goods	284,000	286,500	-2,500	284,300	289,000	-4,700
Nondurable Goods	186,500	186,700	-200	189,200	191,200	-2,000
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,320,000	2,314,500	5,500	2,327,500	2,319,800	7,700
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,900,400	1,897,600	2,800	1,913,300	1,935,600	-22,300
TRADE	430,600	428,500	2,100	428,500	433,200	-4,700
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	100,600	102,300	-1,700	102,700	102,200	500
INFORMATION	50,500	50,000	500	50,700	50,400	300
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	155,400	155,500	-100	155,500	156,800	-1,300
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	312,100	315,700	-3,600	317,200	322,900	-5,700
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	443,700	440,700	3,000	442,000	437,100	4,900
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	271,500	270,300	1,200	280,700	296,900	-16,200
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	136,000	134,600	1,400	136,000	136,100	-100
GOVERNMENT	419,600	416,900	2,700	414,200	384,200	30,000
Federal Government	28,600	28,900	-300	28,700	28,800	-100
State Government	101,300	96,500	4,800	103,900	89,000	14,900
Local Government	289,700	291,500	-1,800	281,600	266,400	15,200

*Differences in total may occur as a result of rounding. (1) Includes Labor Market Disputes (P) = Prelim; (R) = Revised Blue changes are outside margin of error.
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

Cautionary note to users: Revised methodological procedures mandated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) force individual state estimates of employment into closer alignment with the national estimate. This change results in larger month-to-month employment change for the states and the information reported by DWD.

3. HISTORY OF REVISIONS OF ESTIMATES FROM PLACE OF WORK SURVEY

	TNF			Private		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
January 2015	+600	+5,000	+4,400	+300	+4,500	+4,200
February 2015	+14,900	+13,000	(1,900)	+13,600	+11,800	(1,800)
March 2015	(4,300)	(4,200)	+100	(5,000)	(5,000)	+0
April 2015	+3,700	+100	(3,600)	+5,400	+2,000	(3,400)
May 2015	(8,600)	(5,800)	+2,800	(6,100)	(3,500)	+2,600
June 2015	+1,900	(2,900)	(4,800)	(300)	(4,600)	(4,300)
July 2015	+12,400	+14,300	+1,900	+8,200	+9,100	+900
August 2015	+7,100	+7,300	+200	+7,200	+7,900	+700
September 2015						
October 2015						
November 2015						
December 2015						

Note: Prelim = original month-over-month change. Revised = updated month-over-month change. The "Change" column represents the difference between the prelim month-over-month change and the revised month-over-month change.

4. LATEST QUARTERLY DATA: CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

	2014 Employment			2015 Employment			Mar-Mar Change	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jan	Feb	Mar	Number	Percent
TOTAL	2,675,081	2,679,761	2,694,741	2,714,689	2,720,000	2,734,324	39,583	1.5%
<i>Total Private</i>	2,296,879	2,295,895	2,309,277	2,336,668	2,333,660	2,348,901	39,624	1.7%
Natural Resources & Mining	24,796	24,866	25,653	26,376	26,411	27,321	1,668	6.5%
Construction	86,610	85,632	88,562	93,453	92,231	94,583	6,021	6.8%
Manufacturing	452,962	451,838	453,585	459,698	459,077	459,850	6,265	1.4%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities (Total)	507,582	503,246	505,848	512,238	506,895	509,982	4,134	0.8%
Information	47,176	47,032	46,784	48,103	47,748	47,440	656	1.4%
Financial Activities	143,147	142,946	143,209	144,294	144,084	144,355	1,146	0.8%
Professional & Business Services	296,318	297,341	296,957	300,589	301,091	301,714	4,757	1.6%
Education & Health Services	401,326	403,312	404,687	405,495	407,851	409,634	4,947	1.2%
Leisure & Hospitality	240,947	242,314	245,133	245,263	246,364	250,756	5,623	2.3%
Other Services	82,014	82,287	82,794	81,688	81,553	82,414	-380	-0.5%
Unclassified	14,001	15,081	16,065	19,471	20,355	20,852	4,787	29.8%
<i>Total Government</i>	378,202	383,866	385,464	378,021	386,340	385,423	-41	0.0%

Data as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages counts are published 6 months after the quarter they describe.

Data from the latest published quarter and a year prior are included here.