

# Regional Focus: Central Jersey

Data and analysis for the Edison and Trenton-Ewing labor areas

## Regional Payrolls Advance for Third Consecutive Year

The five-county (Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset counties) Central Region experienced a 1,100 payroll increase from March 2013 to March 2014. Total nonfarm employment reached a level of 1,245,300 in March 2014 and represented 32.1 percent of jobholding statewide. Regional gains were concentrated in the private sector which was up by 2,600 while the public sector shed 1,500 jobs over the year. In comparison, statewide jobholding declined minimally by 0.4 percent. The region reached a March peak employment level of 1,271,300 in 2008 before posting declines for three consecutive years. Jobholding rebounded in 2012 and posted a gain each March through 2014.

Although construction remained stable over the year, the sector has improved by 4,700 jobs or 12.7 percent since 2011 over the March-to-March period due to ongoing residential and non-residential projects underway throughout the region. Large residential projects include several subdivisions under construction throughout the region. On the non-residential front, Ocean County Community College is building a new student center at its Toms River campus (Ocean County) which is expected to be completed in April 2015. Also in Ocean County, Lavallette has started work on a new municipal building that is expected to be completed in April 2015. In Neptune (Monmouth County), Meridian Health Systems is constructing facilities to house and care for senior citizens. And along the shore, construction workers continue the repair of buildings and highways damaged by Hurricane Sandy.

## Educational and Health Services Leads Regional Job Growth

Over-the-year the region gained 2,700 jobs in educational and health services; 1,100 jobs in trade transportation and utilities; 600 jobs in other services, and 200 jobs each in manufacturing and professional and business services. At the state level, employment gains occurred in trade, transportation and utilities (+11,100 jobs), educational and health services (+4,200 jobs), and other services (+800 jobs).

Jobholding in the Edison Labor Area (Monmouth, Middlesex, Ocean and Somerset counties), the state's largest labor area with an employment level of 995,200 in March 2014, was down by 4,900 jobs or 0.5 percent since March 2013. The area's employers added 1,700 jobs in educational and health

### Change in Nonfarm Employment March 2013 - March 2014p (not seasonally adjusted)

	Region		State	
	Net	%	Net	%
Total Nonfarm Employment	1,100	0.1	-13,700	-0.4
Private Sector	2,600	0.3	-9,000	-0.3
Construction	0	0.0	-6,600	-5.2
Manufacturing	200	0.3	-1,600	-0.7
Trade, Trans. & Utilities	1,100	0.5	11,100	1.4
Information	-800	-2.7	-3,700	-4.9
Financial Activities	-1,300	-1.8	-3,600	-1.4
Prof. & Business Svcs.	200	0.1	-100	0.0
Ed. & Health Svcs.	2,700	1.3	4,200	0.7
Leisure & Hospitality	-1,200	-1.3	-9,600	-2.9
Other Services	600	1.2	800	0.5
Government	-1,500	-0.7	-4,700	-0.7

Source: NJLWD, Current Employment Statistics



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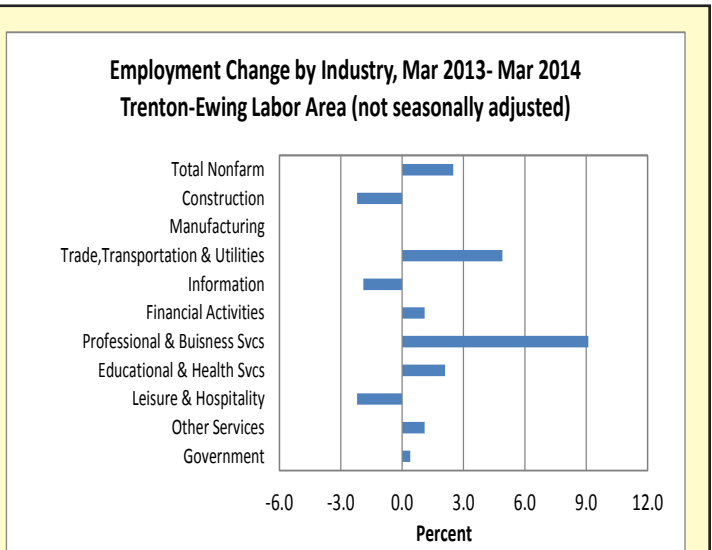
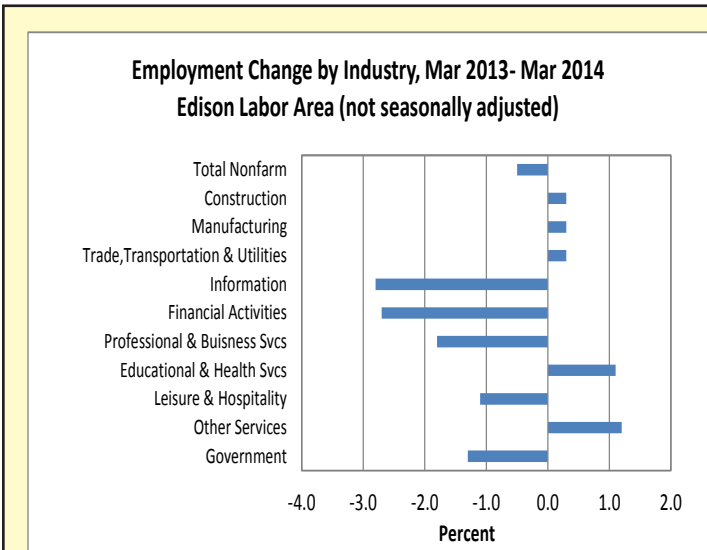
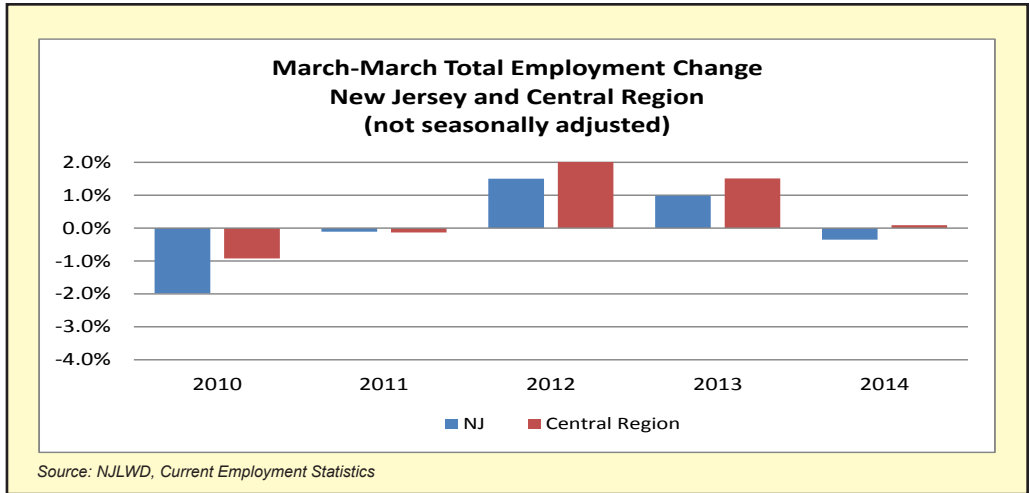
services; 700 jobs in trade, transportation and utilities; 500 jobs in other services; 200 jobs in manufacturing; and 100 new construction jobs, all of the other sectors relinquished jobs to post declines over the year. Professional and business services led the declining sectors posting 3,200 less jobs, followed by financial activities with a drop of 1,500 jobs. On a bright note, computer systems design and related services, a component industry of the professional and business services sector, added 1,300 jobs over the year marking the fifth consecutive year of payroll gains during the March-to-March period.

The Trenton-Ewing Labor Area (Mercer County) posted a gain of 6,000 jobs or 2.5 percent over the year. With an increase of 3,400 jobs or 9.1 percent, professional and business services was the labor area's job growth leader.

Trade, transportation and utilities gained 1,500 jobs on the strength of a 1,100 jobs increase in retail hiring. The March 2014 opening of Mrs. Green's Natural Market, an organic food store, along Route 571 in West Windsor contributed to this gain. Although leisure and hospitality lost 300 jobs over the year, the Trenton-Ewing Labor Area continued to attract new restaurants. For example, a Corner Bakery opened in the Princeton Market Fair (West Windsor) employing about 50 people while a Brio Tuscan Grille opened at the Quakerbridge Mall (Lawrence Township).

Total Nonfarm Employment (unadjusted March data, employment in thousands)						
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
New Jersey	3,874.0	3,797.4	3,793.3	3,850.2	3,888.2	3,874.5
Central Region	1,214.3	1,203.1	1,201.5	1,225.7	1,244.2	1,245.3
Edison Labor Area (Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, and Somerset counties)	976.7	965.8	962.9	983.4	1,000.1	995.2
Trenton-Ewing Labor Area (Mercer County)	237.6	237.3	238.6	242.3	244.1	250.1

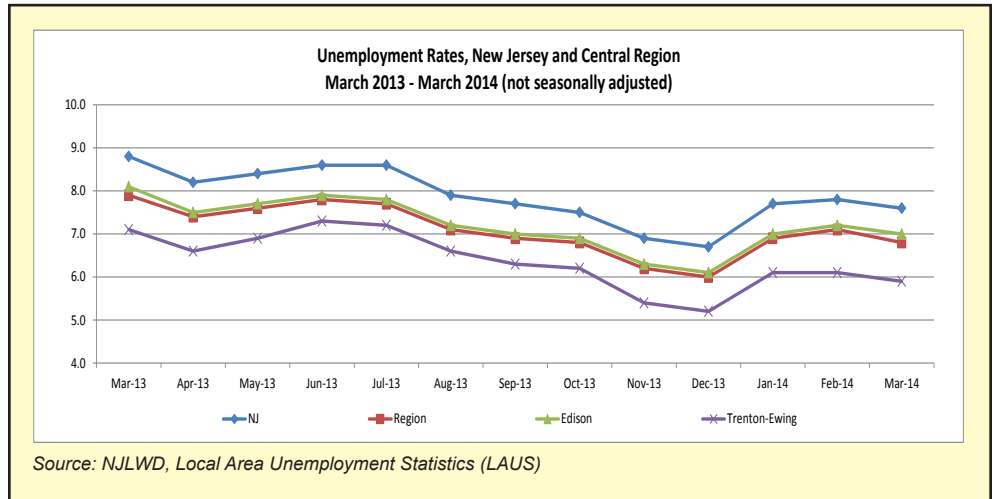
Source: NJLWD, Current Employment Statistics



More detailed data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program can be found at: [http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/ces/ces\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/ces/ces_index.html)

## LABOR FORCE DATA

- The unemployment rate in New Jersey fell from 8.8 percent in March 2013 to 7.6 percent in March 2014 (not seasonally adjusted). The region's unemployment rate declined by 1.1 percentage points from 7.9 percent in March 2013 to 6.8 percent in March 2014. There were 19,200 fewer Central Region residents in the labor force in March 2014, a decline of 1.5 percent from March 2013.



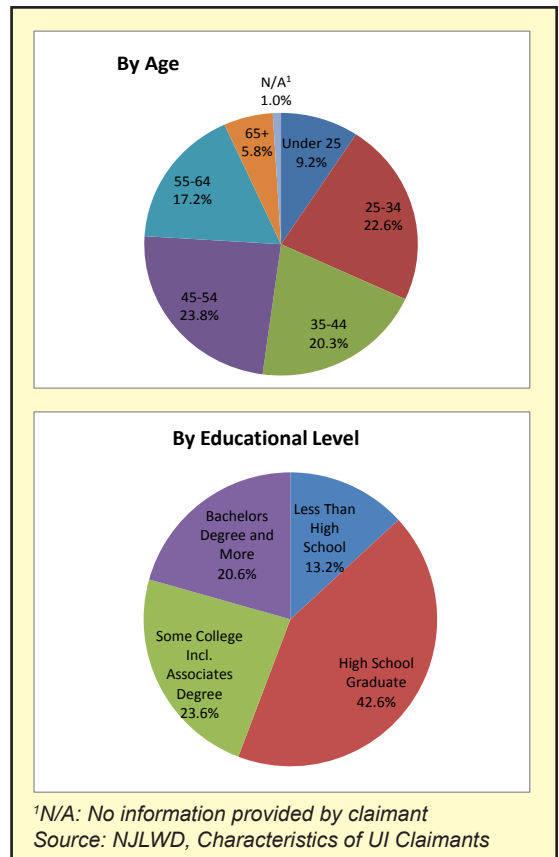
- Both the Trenton-Ewing and the Edison labor areas saw declines in the unemployment rate over the year. A year ago, the unemployment rate in the Edison Labor Area stood at 8.1 percent while the rate in the Trenton-Ewing Labor Area was 7.1 percent. By March 2014, those rates declined to 7.0 percent and 5.9 percent, respectively. The labor force in the Trenton-Ewing Labor Area increased slightly (+600 residents). There were 2,900 more Mercer County residents employed during March 2014 than there were a year earlier. The four-county Edison Labor Area saw a decline in its resident labor force of 1.6 percent while resident employment dropped by 5,100.

More detailed data from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program can be found at: [http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/uirate/lfest\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/uirate/lfest_index.html)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW JERSEY'S INSURED UNEMPLOYED CENTRAL REGION, FIRST QUARTER 2014

CLAIMANTS BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUP		
	Number	Percent
Management	6,120	8.6
Business and financial	2,718	3.8
Professional and related Services	8,744	12.3
Services	12,048	16.9
Sales and related	5,334	7.5
Office and administrative support	9,576	13.5
Farming, fishing and forestry	222	0.3
Construction and extraction	8,447	11.9
Installation, maintenance and repair	2,865	4.0
Production	5,547	7.8
Transportation and material moving	9,183	12.9
Military	292	0.4

- In the first quarter of 2014, nearly 28 percent of New Jersey's insured unemployed claiming continued benefits resided in the Central Region. During the quarter there were 71,136 regional residents claiming continued benefits; an improvement of 25,680 claimants (-26.5%) from the first quarter of 2013. In comparison, there were 89,100 (-34.7%) less residents statewide claiming continued benefits during the first quarter of 2014.
- Three industries accounted for over half of the region's continued claims during the first quarter: trade, transportation and utilities (19.7%); professional and business services (18.3%) and construction (10.3%). The majority of the region's residents who claimed unemployment insurance benefits during the first quarter of 2014 were previously employed in services (16.9%), office and administrative support (13.5%), transportation and material moving (12.9%) or construction and extraction (11.9%) occupations.



## REGIONAL POPULATION ESTIMATES

### Intercensal Population Estimates for New Jersey and the Central Region: 2010 to 2013

	Population		Change	
	2010	2013	Number	Percent
New Jersey	8,791,909	8,899,339	107,430	1.2%
Central Region	2,707,752	2,743,004	35,252	1.3%
Mercer	367,511	370,414	2,903	0.8%
Middlesex	809,860	828,919	19,059	2.4%
Monmouth	630,378	629,672	-706	-0.1%
Ocean	576,565	583,414	6,849	1.2%
Somerset	323,438	330,585	7,147	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

- Population estimates for July 2013 indicate that the Central Region of the state accounted for about 31 percent of the statewide population. Three Central Region counties are in the top ten in the state in terms of population: Middlesex (2nd), Monmouth (5th) and Ocean (6th), respectively.
- The Central Region added 31,211 persons to its population base from 2010 through 2013. Middlesex (2nd) and Somerset (tied for 3rd) counties were among the top five fastest growing counties in the state.
- During the past three years the region had a net gain of 40,200 residents from international immigration; almost 28 percent of the statewide total. Middlesex County ranked second among the state's counties

with a net gain of 21,700. However the region had a net domestic migration loss of 34,200 persons which represented 23 percent of the state's total. Ocean County was the only New Jersey county to gain population from domestic migration (+1,519); however, this gain was lower than its gains in the past two decades. Among the top five counties to lose population due to domestic migration, Middlesex County ranked 4th in the state with a net domestic migration loss of 16,500.

## REGIONAL JOB OUTLOOK JANUARY 2014 - MARCH 2014

*The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development through its agreement with Burning Glass Technologies is able to provide the the following labor market information aggregated from online employer job listings during the quarter. This data provides valuable insight regarding current demand for characteristics such as skills and educational requirements. Note that this data is not meant to represent all available employment opportunities but rather should be viewed in terms of analysis of labor market demand.*

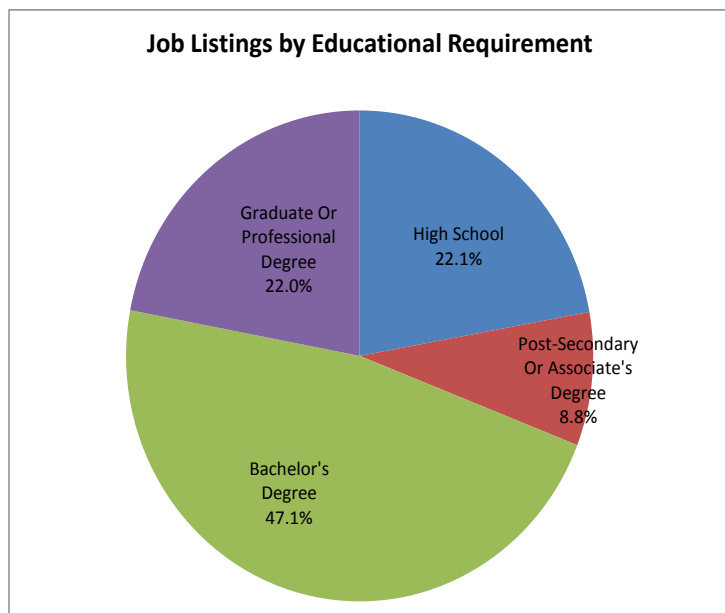
### JOB LISTINGS BY COUNTY

County	Listings
Middlesex	16,691
Somerset	12,452
Mercer	11,123
Monmouth	8,660
Ocean	4,173

### INDUSTRIES WITH THE MOST JOB LISTINGS

Industry	Listings
Professional, Scientific, And Technical Services	3,472
Hospitals	2,936
Chemical Manufacturing	2,889
Educational Services	2,103
Food Services And Drinking Places	1,706
Credit Intermediation And Related Activities	1,648
Ambulatory Health Care Services	1,599
Insurance Carriers And Related Activities	1,557
General Merchandise Stores	1,103
Telecommunications	1,050
Truck Transportation	1,017
Administrative And Support Services	830

In the Central Region during the most recent quarter employers in the professional, scientific and technical services, hospitals, chemical manufacturing, educational services and food services and drinking places exhibited the most occupational demand based on online job listing activity. Concentrated in Middlesex, Somerset and Mercer counties, employers indicated that they were interested in filling positions for software developers, tractor-trailer drivers, retail salespersons, sales representatives, registered nurses, medical and health services managers and computer systems analysts. Skills that were actively sought by employers included sales, collaboration, accounting, scheduling, and technology-related Oracle, SQL and JAVA.



Of the regional job listings in the first quarter for which educational requirements were provided, nearly half required a bachelor's degree.

<b>OCCUPATIONS WITH THE MOST LISTINGS</b>	
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Listings</b>
Software Developers, Applications	2,080
Heavy And Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,855
Retail Salespersons	1,657
Sales Reps, Wholesale And Manufacturing, Except Technical And Scientific Products	1,309
Registered Nurses	1,192
Medical And Health Services Managers	1,101
Computer Systems Analysts	1,051
First-Line Supervisors Of Retail Sales Workers	1,040
Customer Service Representatives	871
Managers, All Other	869
Sales Managers	754
Human Resources Specialists	667

<b>TOP SKILLS IN DEMAND</b>	
<b>Skill</b>	<b>Listings</b>
Sales	2,986
Collaboration	2,580
Accounting	2,537
Scheduling	2,035
SQL	1,996
Oracle	1,996
Mathematics	1,882
Repair	1,790
JAVA	1,778
Business Development	1,709
Cleaning	1,588
Decision Making	1,469

<b>EMPLOYERS WITH SIGNIFICANT ONLINE JOB LISTING ACTIVITY</b>	
<b>Employer</b>	
Johnson & Johnson	
Meridian Health System	
Verizon Communications Incorporated	
Sears	
Lowe's Companies, Inc	
Bank of America	
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey	
Novo Nordisk	
The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc	
Princeton University	
Princeton Healthcare System	
McDonald's	

Source: Burning Glass Technologies, Labor Insight

Prepared by: New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Bureau of Labor Market Information

## Central Region Developments

The following are some of the economic development projects underway in the Central Region (Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset Counties) during the first quarter of 2014:

### Monmouth County

Efforts continue to redevelop areas of Tinton Falls, Eatontown and Oceanport after the closing of Fort Monmouth. Commvault Systems, a software, data management and data protection company, plans to construct a new headquarters in Tinton Falls. The first phase, a 275,000-sq.ft. building that will house its worldwide corporate headquarters, is underway. The company is expected to construct two additional buildings to bring the total space to 650,000-sq.ft. of high-tech office and other space. The property was formerly owned and utilized by Fort Monmouth. When completed, it is estimated that the company could add 1,500 new jobs to its payroll. The company already employs about 500 workers at its present headquarters in Oceanport.

Several retail stores opened in the county in May 2014, including a Bob's Discount Furniture store in Freehold. The 29,950-sq.ft. store, located in the Freehold Raceway Village shopping center, is expected to bring 28 new jobs to the labor area. In Marlboro, Whole Foods opened a grocery store along Route 9 which employs roughly 200 workers.

### Somerset County

iGATE Technologies, a global technology company has signed a lease for 13,000-sq.ft. of space in Bridgewater to house a New Jersey headquarters. It is reported that the Bridgewater location should open during the second quarter of 2014. In March, Nipro Medical Corporation also opened a North American headquarters in Bridgewater. The company manufactures medical products such as dialyzers, blood tubing sets, and syringes.

### Middlesex County

In South Brunswick, Steel Orca is constructing a \$650 million data center on land formerly occupied by Pfizer. The first phase should open during the first half of 2014. Factors such as location, available space, the availability of large quantities of power and relatively low risk of potential hazards such as natural disasters have helped to make New Jersey a hotspot for data center development.

Two Walmart supercenters are coming to Middlesex County. In Old Bridge a 150,000-sq.ft. Walmart opened in April 2014 at the intersection of Route

18 South and Spring Valley Road bringing between 350 and 400 new jobs to the area. This store joins an older Walmart store located nearby along Route 9 South which is slated to undergo some renovations. Further north in East Brunswick Walmart is constructing a supercenter at the corner of Tices Lane and Route 18 North. This store should open in the summer or fall of 2014.

### Ocean County

Projects at colleges and municipal facilities should help Ocean County's jobholding in construction. In Toms River, Ocean County College is constructing a new student center that is expected to be completed in April 2015. Meanwhile, in Lavallette a new municipal building is under construction at 1306 Grand Avenue.

### Mercer County

As Amazon.com gears up to open its 1.2 million-sq.ft. warehouse in Robbinsville (Mercer County), it is currently accepting applications from prospective workers for a variety of occupations. The facility is expected to open sometime in 2014 and reportedly will employ as many as 1,400 workers.

Frontier Airlines held a recruitment event at Mercer County Community College's West Windsor campus in March to recruit candidates to fill flight attendants position. The additional employees are necessary as the airline has been increasing the number of flights and destinations that it serves from Trenton-Mercer airport in Ewing Township.

In Hamilton Township, an application to build a 5,500-sq.ft. super Wawa gas station and convenience store on property left vacant for several years by the closing of Patterson Chevrolet along Route 33 has been approved. A separate 7,900-sq. ft. retail building will also be constructed on the lot which will be known as Hamilton Point Center.

### Summer Outlook

As we approach the second summer vacation season after the onslaught of Hurricane Sandy, real estate agents in Ocean County stated concern that the region may see less than normal summer rental activity based on early demand. Real estate agents have reported that the on-going construction along Route 35, uncertainty over which beaches will be open, and an unusually cold winter have dampened the demand for early shore rentals.