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MICHIGAN DEPT. OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECON. GROWTH/LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS - SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES
By Place of Residence/Seasonally Unadjusted. March, 2009 **

Areas	CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE					EMPLOYMENT					UNEMPLOYMENT RATES		
	Mar. 2009	Feb. 2009	Mar. 2008	Monthly Change	Annual Change	Mar. 2009	Feb. 2009	Mar. 2008	Monthly Change	Annual Change	Mar 09	Feb 09	Mar 08
Jackson MSA	74,500	74,500	76,600	0	-2,100	64,500	65,100	70,500	-600	-6,000	13.4	12.7	7.9
Hillsdale Co.	21,425	21,125	21,075	300	350	17,550	17,550	19,100	0	-1,550	18.1	17.0	9.5
Lenawee Co.	48,175	48,150	49,275	25	-1,100	40,750	40,950	44,500	-200	-3,750	15.4	15.0	9.7
Michigan	4,820,000	4,822,000	4,933,000	-2,000	-113,000	4,175,000	4,208,000	4,544,000	-33,000	-369,000	13.4	12.7	7.9
U.S.A.*	153,728	153,804	153,135	-76	593	139,833	140,105	145,108	-272	-5,275	9.0	8.9	5.2

* Expressed in thousands; ** All labor force and employment numbers are rounded to the nearest 25 for counties, 100 for MSAs, and 1,000 for the State and the U.S.

Jobless Rates Continued to Rise in March in All Regional Counties

Regional unemployment rates increased for the third consecutive month in March. The area recorded a modest spike in the number of individuals looking for jobs. Jobless rates in the four Southwest Michigan metro areas were up by an average of six tenths of a percentage point in March. Rates rose in all regional counties at an average of seven tenths of a percentage point. The highest unemployment rate increases were recorded in Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties at 1.1 percentage points.

Labor Force Changes Mixed Over the Month but Mostly Down Over the Year

Labor force was up over the month in seven of the twelve regional counties, ranging from +25 in Lenawee to +300 in Hillsdale County. Labor force declined over the month in Barry, Cass, and Van Buren counties, and remained unchanged in Calhoun and Jackson counties.

Over the year, labor force fell in almost all regional counties, with the exception of Hillsdale (+350), Branch (+250), and St. Joseph (+50). Labor force declines over the year ranged from -775 in Cass to -4,675 in Kalamazoo County.

Employment by Place of Residence Down Over the Month and Over the Year

From February to March, employment by place of residence decreased in all regional counties at an average rate of six tenths of a percentage point. Layoffs continued to occur in the manufacturing sector, although at a much lower rate than in the previous two months. The culprit continues to be troubles in the auto industry. Employment declines in March ranged from -50 in Branch to -825 in Kalamazoo County. Employment was flat over the month in Hillsdale County.

Over the year, employment plummeted in all regional counties, ranging from -1,375 in Branch to -9,725 in Kalamazoo County. The average rate of employment decline over the year in March was estimated at eight percentage points.

Jobless Rates Up Over the Month and Over the Year

Unemployment rates were up over the month in all regional counties at an average of seven tenths of a percentage point. Five regional counties recorded lower rates than the statewide rate of 13.4 percent in March (Kalamazoo, Barry, Cass, Calhoun, and Berrien). Jackson and Van Buren counties' unemployment rates matched the statewide rate. The remaining five regional counties (Allegan, St. Joseph, Branch, Lenawee, and Hillsdale) registered higher jobless rates than the state.

Over the year, unemployment rates shot upward to new highs over the past two decades in all regional counties. Jobless rates escalated over the year at an average of six percentage points. Hillsdale County recorded the highest jobless rate increase over the year (+8.6 percentage points), followed by Branch (+7.3) and St. Joseph County (+6.8).

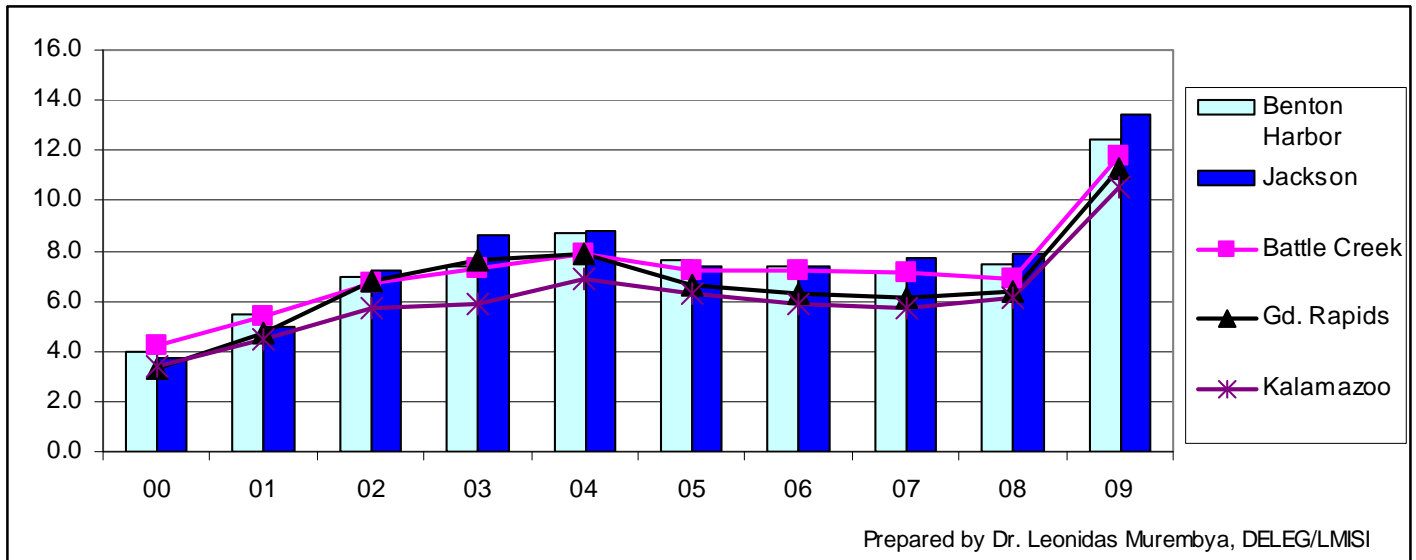
Local MSAs March Unemployment Rates Since 2000

From March 2000 to March 2009, jobless rates rose significantly in the Jackson (+9.7 percentage points), Niles-Benton Harbor (+8.4), Grand Rapids (+8.0), Battle Creek (+7.6), and Kalamazoo (+7.1) metro areas.

March unemployment rates rose from 2000 to 2004, fell in 2005 and 2006; remained stable in 2007; then, began to rise again in 2008 in most regional metropolitan areas. Metro area jobless rates jumped sharply in January 2009 and have remained high since then.

Comparing the Trend of Local MSAs' March Unemployment Rates Since 2000

Year \ Area	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09
Jackson	3.7	5.0	7.2	8.6	8.8	7.4	7.4	7.7	7.9	13.4



Payroll jobs in the Jackson MSA (Jackson County) were estimated at 54,400 in March (up 100 from February). 100 jobs each were added in private education and health services, and leisure and hospitality. However, Jackson lost 100 jobs in professional and business services.

Compared to March 2008, payroll job levels in most industries either declined or remained unchanged. Manufacturing employment plummeted by 1,000 over the year. Employment in retail trade and professional and business services was down by 500 each. Leisure and hospitality lost 300 jobs over the year. Overall payroll employment in Jackson was 2,900 below last year's March level.

