

Introduction

This edition of Kevin's Corner reviews changes to the availability of substate labor market data being produced by the Economic & Labor Market Information Division (E&LMI). These changes are the results of changes made by our federal partners at the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and United States Census Bureau.

Background

As previously announced the federal government is discontinuing the use of New England City and Town Areas (NECTAs). This change will affect the Burlington-South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), all Micropolitan Statistical Areas, and Labor Market Areas in Vermont. These Statistical Areas will now be delineated based on counties rather than towns. For the past 20 years, New England States have operated with county and NECTA-based Statistical Areas, whereas the rest of the country has only used county-based areas. This dual system created complexity and inconsistency nationwide. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget's decision to cease updates to the NECTAs in the 2020 Standards for Delineating Core-Based Statistical Areas is driven by these issues and federal agencies' limited use of NECTAs.

The Department acknowledges that this federal decision will impact the availability of sub-state data. However, this does not mean a loss of important sub-state information. Data for towns, counties, and other newly defined federal sub-state regions will continue to be produced by the terms of each data program.

Program Impacts

The Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

The first program affected was the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), starting with the August 2024 release of data for the first quarter of 2024. With that release the publication of labor market areas and the Burlington NECTA ceased. The division now

publishes QCEW at the statewide, town and county level plus the county-based Burlington MSA consisting of Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle counties. In addition, E&LMI began producing QCEW data organized by the state's eleven Regional Planning Commissions. QCEW data using these new geographic definitions is now available back to the year 2000 on our website and as early as 1988 upon request.

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Beginning with the Spring 2025 release of benchmarked 2024 data, the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program will cease publishing previously-defined labor market areas. The Burlington – South Burlington area will be redefined as the sum of Franklin, Grand Isle and Chittenden Counties. The Labor Market Information Division will continue to produce town-level LAUS data as well. Historical data will be available back to 1990.

Current Employment Statistics

With the release of 2024 benchmarked data, the Current Employment Statistics program will cease production of the Barre and Rutland Micropolitan areas. The Burlington area will now be county-based and match the QCEW and LAUS definitions as the sum of Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties.

Occupational Employment and Wages Statistics

The three Vermont regions for the Occupational Employment and Wages Statistics (OEWS) program will become county-based with the release of May, 2024 data. This release is expected in the spring of 2025. With the change, the new Balance of State South will consist of Bennington, Rutland, Windsor and Windham Counties. The Balance of State North will consist of Essex, Orleans, Caledonia, Lamoille, Washington, Orange and Addison Counties. The Burlington Area will consist of Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties.



Kevin's Corner is an occasional review of Vermont economic and demographic data. It is written by Kevin Stapleton, Assistant Director of Economic & Labor Market Information (E&LMI) with support from E&LMI staff. Kevin can be reached at kevin.stapleton@vermont.gov. For more information visit our website at www.vtlni.info.