

For '14, Beloit 2nd highest in joblessness

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Beloit ended the year 2014 with an unemployment rate of 7.7 percent — the second highest rate among Wisconsin's 32 largest communities.

The December rate of 7.7 percent was up slightly from the November unemployment rate of 7.4 percent, but down from the 9.5 percent unemployment rate for Beloit recorded in December of 2013.

Beloit's highest unemployment rate in 2014 was in February when it reached 10.6 percent. The Beloit jobless rate was at its lowest in 2014 in September when it was at 7 percent.

Racine once again had the highest unemployment rate among Wisconsin's largest communities at 8.8 percent in December, up from 8.5 percent in November.

Milwaukee had the third highest jobless rate in Wisconsin at 7.2 percent in December, down slightly from 7.3 percent in November.

Caledonia had the lowest unemployment rate in December at 2.4 percent, down from 2.7 percent in November. Madison had the next lowest rate at 3 percent in December, down from 3.2 percent in November.

Nearby Janesville had the seventh highest jobless rate in the state at 5.9 percent in December, unchanged from its November rate.

Of the 32 communities tracked by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 15 saw unemployment rates increase between November and December, 12 saw rates go down and five reported no change in unemployment rates.

Rock County's unemployment rate in December was in the middle of the pack, ranking at number 31 among Wisconsin's 72 counties.

Rock County's jobless rate was 5.7 percent in December, up slightly from 5.5 percent in November, but down from 6.9 percent reported in December of 2013.

Iron County had the highest unemployment rate in Wisconsin in December at 10.4 percent, up from 9.4 percent in November.

Dane County had the lowest unemployment rate among the 72 counties in Wisconsin in December at 3.2 percent, unchanged from November.

Nearby Walworth County had an unemployment rate of 5.2 percent in December, up from 4.8 percent in November.

Unemployment rates increased in 64 of Wisconsin's 72 counties between November and December while rates decreased in three counties and they stayed the same in five counties.

Beloit's unemployment rates in 2014 included January, 10.5%; February, 10.6%; March, 10.3%; April, 9.2%; May, 8.8%; June, 9.5%; July, 9.5%; August, 8.2%; September, 7%; October, 7.4%; November, 7.4%; December, 7.7%.