



For immediate release
October 29, 2015
Revised December 15, 2015

Contacts: Tamarine Cornelius, 608-284-0580 ext 305
Jon Peacock, 608-284-0580 ext 307

Wisconsin Public Sector Near Average in Per Capita Revenue and Spending

State and local spending and revenue in Wisconsin is not much different than in other states, according to new figures for 2013 released this week by the U.S. Census Bureau and analyzed by the Wisconsin Budget Project.

The Wisconsin Budget Project has released a new analysis, [Middle of the Pack: Wisconsin Government Revenue is Not out of Line](#), which found the following:

- Wisconsin state and local governments ranked 29th in revenue (including federal aid) per capita, and were 3.6% below the national average on that measure.
- Looking at state and local revenue per capita, but excluding federal financing, Wisconsin ranked 22nd and was 1.8% below average.
- Wisconsin ranked 25th in total spending per capita, 4.2% below average, and 23rd (1.5% below average) in a slightly narrower spending measure – direct general spending – which is better for comparative purposes because it excludes spending on things like state-owned enterprises.

“Wisconsin is pretty typical in most areas of revenue and spending,” said Tamarine Cornelius, analyst at the Wisconsin Budget Project.

Wisconsin’s rankings are also close to the middle when spending is measured as a share of income, even though personal income in Wisconsin is below the average nationally. Wisconsin is 0.5% below average (25th) in total spending as a share of income, and 2.3% above average (24th) in direct general spending.

Wisconsin ranks 15th in state and local taxes as a percentage of income. Wisconsin’s rank on that measure has gradually been moving from near the top, falling from 4th in 2000. Wisconsin is higher on this measure than on the other spending and revenue measures for several reasons:

- Wisconsin state and local governments rely less on fees and more on taxes than most other states.
- Wisconsin ranks fairly low in federal financing, with only 13 states receiving less federal revenue per person in 2013.
- Because of our lower average income, we rank higher (15th) when that is the denominator for the tax ranking than the per capita measure (22nd).

The Wisconsin Budget Project, an initiative of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, is an independent Madison-based research group that focuses on tax and budget policy.

The full analysis is on the Wisconsin Budget Project website: [Middle of the Pack: Wisconsin Government Revenue is Not Out of Line](#). Also available is a short quiz, [Test Your Knowledge of Taxes and Spending in Wisconsin](#).