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Occupational Employment and Wages in Reading – May 2013

Workers in the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of $20.70 in May 2013, 7 percent below the nationwide average of $22.33, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 8 of the 22 major occupational groups, including arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; computer and mathematical; and business and financial operations. Only one group had an hourly wage that was significantly higher than its respective national average—production. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Reading	United States	Reading	Percent difference[1]
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	$22.33	$20.70*	-7
Management	4.9	3.3*	53.15	54.44	2
Business and financial operations	5.0	3.8*	34.14	30.96*	-9
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.5*	39.43	33.48*	-15
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.6*	38.51	37.74	-2
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.4*	33.37	26.41*	-21
Community and social service	1.4	1.9*	21.50	20.16*	-6
Legal	0.8	0.5*	47.89	46.51	-3
Education, training, and library	6.3	6.8	24.76	25.60	3
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.9*	26.72	18.75*	-30
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.2	35.93	33.23*	-8
Healthcare support	3.0	3.5*	13.61	13.34	-2
Protective service	2.5	1.4*	20.92	19.35	-8
Food preparation and serving related	9.0	8.3*	10.38	10.14*	-2
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.8*	12.51	12.81	2
Personal care and service	3.0	2.7	11.88	11.43	-4
Sales and related	10.6	10.2	18.37	17.29*	-6
Office and administrative support	16.2	15.3*	16.78	16.51	-2
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1*	11.70	13.12	12
Construction and extraction	3.8	3.5*	21.94	22.51	3
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.7*	21.35	21.07	-1
Production	6.6	12.7*	16.79	18.15*	8
Transportation and material moving	6.8	7.8*	16.28	16.51	1

*** The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.**

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:
(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Reading is above the national mean wage, while a negative percent difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Reading employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups, including production; transportation and material moving; and installation, maintenance, and repair. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included management, computer and mathematical, and business and financial operations.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Reading had 21,020 jobs in production, accounting for 12.7 percent of local area employment, nearly twice the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was $18.15, measurably above the national wage of $16.79.

With employment of 2,280, team assemblers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by metal and plastic multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders (1,780) and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,310). Among the higher-paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers and metal and plastic multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, with mean hourly wages of $26.63 and $21.46, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were laundry and dry-cleaning workers ($10.24) and bakers ($12.34). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_39740.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See table 1.) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area as it does nationally. In the Reading area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, metal and plastic multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders were employed at over 15 times the national rate in Reading, and metal and plastic molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders at over 6 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers had a location quotient of 1.2 in Reading, indicating that this particular occupation’s local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

NOTE: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year for a 3-year period. May 2013 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected in May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, November 2011, May 2011, and November 2010. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 75.3 percent based on establishments and 71.6 percent based on employment. The sample in the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,007 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2013 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Reading, Pa. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Berks County in Pennsylvania.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2013/may/methods_statement.pdf. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation[1]	Employment[2]		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient[3]	Hourly	Annual[4]
Production occupations	21,020	1.9	$18.15	$37,760
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,310	1.8	26.63	55,390
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	300	1.2	13.95	29,020
Engine and other machine assemblers	50	0.9	16.78	34,900
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	340	3.5	20.44	42,510
Team assemblers	2,280	1.7	16.97	35,290
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	120	0.4	13.88	28,860
Bakers	300	1.5	12.34	25,660
Butchers and meat cutters	(5)	(5)	13.77	28,630
Meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers	(5)	(5)	14.21	29,550
Food batchmakers	250	1.8	14.93	31,060
Food cooking machine operators	40	0.9	13.06	27,160
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	410	2.4	19.52	40,600
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	(5)	(5)	27.45	57,090
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	280	3.1	18.51	38,500
Rolling machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	(5)	(5)	13.93	28,980
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	410	1.7	17.79	37,010
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	310	3.5	15.38	31,990
Lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	100	1.8	19.00	39,520
Milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	80	2.5	20.28	42,190
Machinists	730	1.5	19.04	39,820
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	220	8.0	22.67	47,150
Pourers and casters, metal	150	11.5	16.01	33,300
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	970	6.2	18.63	38,750
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	1,780	15.3	21.46	44,630
Tool and die makers	150	1.5	20.55	42,740
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	920	2.1	20.35	42,340
Heat treating equipment setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	30	1.2	17.80	37,030
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	160	3.5	18.93	39,370
Metal workers and plastic workers, all others	200	7.2	(5)	(5)
Prepress technicians and workers	(5)	(5)	16.28	33,870
Printing press operators	250	1.2	18.21	37,880
Print binding and finishing workers	50	0.8	17.11	35,580
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	200	0.8	10.24	21,300
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials	70	1.1	11.37	23,650
Sewing machine operators	440	2.5	13.16	27,380
Sewers, hand	(5)	(5)	12.80	26,630
Textile bleaching and dying machine setters, operators, and tenders	30	2.1	16.65	34,620
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders	60	3.0	14.11	29,350
Textile knitting and weaving machine setters, operators, and tenders	90	3.4	(5)	(5)
Fabric and apparel patternmakers	30	4.2	14.16	29,440
Upholsterers	(5)	(5)	16.75	34,840
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	210	2.1	17.47	36,340
Furniture finishers	40	2.0	16.23	33,750

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013 - Continued

Occupation[1]	Employment[2]		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient[3]	Hourly	Annual[4]
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood	80	1.5	15.88	33,040
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing	80	0.9	14.66	30,490
Power plant operators	40	0.9	31.10	64,680
Stationary engineers and boiler operators	(5)	(5)	21.66	45,050
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	120	0.9	22.24	46,250
Chemical equipment operators and tenders	220	3.0	18.26	37,970
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders	60	1.2	18.61	38,710
Grinding and polishing workers, hand	(5)	(5)	13.22	27,510
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	190	1.3	13.79	28,690
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	170	2.3	16.91	35,160
Extruding, forming, pressing and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	140	1.6	20.27	42,160
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	690	1.2	19.76	41,110
Jewelers and precious stone and metal workers	(5)	(5)	23.69	49,270
Dental laboratory technicians	90	1.9	15.45	32,130
Metal appliance technicians	90	5.4	16.98	35,320
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	610	1.3	13.38	27,830
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	130	1.2	17.71	36,840
Painters, transportation equipment	80	1.3	20.80	43,270
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	100	2.2	10.62	22,090
Molders, shapers, and casters, except metal and plastic	(5)	(5)	14.93	31,060
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders	140	1.2	16.99	35,330
Helpers--production workers	1,050	2.0	14.39	29,930
Production workers, all other	(5)	(5)	12.45	25,890

Footnotes:
(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Reading MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_39740.htm
(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.
(5) Estimate not released.