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Occupational Employment and Wages in Pittsburgh – May 2014

Workers in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.84 in May 2014, 4 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, 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 13 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical, community and social service, and protective service. Four other groups had wages that were measurably higher than their respective national averages; among these were production and construction and extraction. (See [table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Employment share (percent of total)			Average (mean) hourly wage			
	United States	Pittsburgh	Significant difference (1)	United States	Pittsburgh	Significant difference (1)	Percent difference (2)
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.71	\$21.84	Yes	-4
Management	5.0	3.9	Yes	54.08	55.22	Yes	2
Business and financial operations	5.1	5.1	No	34.81	31.83	Yes	-9
Computer and mathematical	2.8	2.8	No	40.37	34.17	Yes	-15
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.0	Yes	39.19	36.20	Yes	-8
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	1.0	Yes	33.69	30.59	Yes	-9
Community and social service	1.4	1.8	Yes	21.79	18.88	Yes	-13
Legal	0.8	0.8	No	48.61	48.24	No	-1
Education, training, and library	6.2	5.9	Yes	25.10	25.81	No	3
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.0	Yes	26.82	24.93	Yes	-7
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	7.0	Yes	36.54	33.69	Yes	-8
Healthcare support	2.9	3.3	Yes	13.86	13.55	Yes	-2
Protective service	2.4	2.0	Yes	21.14	18.95	Yes	-10
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	9.1	No	10.57	10.23	Yes	-3
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.0	Yes	12.68	12.47	No	-2
Personal care and service	3.1	3.5	Yes	12.01	11.35	Yes	-5
Sales and related	10.5	10.6	No	18.59	18.43	No	-1
Office and administrative support	16.0	16.7	Yes	17.08	16.51	Yes	-3
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.0	Yes	12.09	13.45	Yes	11
Construction and extraction	3.9	4.6	Yes	22.40	23.00	Yes	3
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.9	No	21.74	21.20	Yes	-2
Production	6.6	5.8	Yes	17.06	18.34	Yes	8
Transportation and material moving	6.8	6.2	Yes	16.57	16.41	No	-1

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) Statistical significance testing at the 90-percent confidence level.

(2) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Pittsburgh is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Pittsburgh employment shares were significantly higher in 8 of the 22 occupational groups including healthcare practitioners and technical, office and administrative support, and construction and extraction. Conversely, eight groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included management, production, and transportation and material moving.

One occupational group—construction and extraction—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Pittsburgh had 51,740 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 4.6 percent of local area employment, significantly above the 3.9-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$23.00, which was significantly above the national average of \$22.40.

With employment of 8,910, construction laborers was the largest occupation within the construction and extraction group, followed by carpenters (8,650). Among the higher-paying jobs were first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers (\$32.90) and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters (\$27.53). At the lower end of the wage scale were highway maintenance workers and electrician helpers, with mean hourly wages of \$18.71 and \$12.34, respectively. (Detailed occupational data for community and social service are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_38300.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 Pittsburgh area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, oil and gas rotary drill operators were employed at twice the national rate in Pittsburgh, and carpet installers were employed at almost three times the U.S. average. On the other hand, roofers had a location quotient of 1.0 in Pittsburgh, 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 Pittsburgh 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. Each year, forms are mailed to two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments, one panel in May and the other in November. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on employment. The sample in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area included 6,143 establishments with a response rate of 75 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 2014 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 **Pittsburgh, Pa. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties in Pennsylvania.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at 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/current/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, Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation (1)	Employment (2)		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient (3)	Hourly	Annual (4)
Construction and extraction occupations	51,740	1.2	\$23.00	\$47,840
First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers	4,070	1.0	32.90	68,440
Boilermakers	280	2.0	(5)	(5)
Brickmasons and blockmasons	770	1.6	24.16	50,250
Carpenters	8,650	1.7	22.79	47,390
Carpet installers	640	2.9	21.86	45,470
Floor layers, except carpet, wood, and hard tiles	(5)	(5)	15.06	31,330
Tile and marble setters	180	0.7	19.98	41,560
Cement masons and concrete finishers	1,200	0.9	23.87	49,650
Construction laborers	8,910	1.3	18.06	37,550
Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators	580	1.3	24.87	51,730
Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators	4,540	1.6	22.65	47,100
Drywall and ceiling tile installers	330	0.5	21.90	45,560
Tapers	110	0.8	26.18	54,460
Electricians	4,650	1.0	26.48	55,090
Glaziers	(5)	(5)	23.95	49,810
Insulation workers, mechanical	230	1.0	31.47	65,460
Painters, construction and maintenance	1,490	0.9	19.97	41,550
Pipelayers	280	0.8	24.07	50,060
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	3,650	1.2	27.53	57,260
Plasterers and stucco masons	(5)	(5)	16.69	34,720
Reinforcing iron and rebar workers	50	0.3	26.93	56,020
Roofers	880	1.0	18.80	39,100
Sheet metal workers	850	0.8	26.30	54,700
Structural iron and steel workers	510	1.0	24.66	51,290
Helpers--brickmasons, blockmasons, stonemasons, and tile and marble setters	(5)	(5)	14.70	30,570
Helpers--carpenters	280	0.9	13.94	28,990
Helpers--electricians	470	0.8	12.34	25,670
Helpers--pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	270	0.6	16.17	33,640
Construction and building inspectors	1,430	1.9	25.00	52,000
Elevator installers and repairers	110	0.7	28.81	59,920
Hazardous materials removal workers	480	1.4	20.49	42,620
Highway maintenance workers	1,980	1.7	18.71	38,920
Septic tank servicers and sewer pipe cleaners	140	0.7	19.30	40,140
Derrick operators, oil and gas	90	0.5	21.56	44,850
Rotary drill operators, oil and gas	430	2.0	23.98	49,870
Service unit operators, oil, gas, and mining	500	1.0	21.60	44,920
Earth drillers, except oil and gas	160	1.0	21.74	45,230
Continuous mining machine operators	130	1.4	17.89	37,220
Roustabouts, oil and gas	530	0.9	20.03	41,660
Helpers--extraction workers	(5)	(5)	14.43	30,010

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Pittsburgh MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_38300.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) Estimates not available.