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Occupational Employment and Wages in Pittsburgh – May 2015

Workers in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$22.24 in May 2015, 4 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, 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 12 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical, protective service, and community and social service. Three other occupational groups had average wages that were measurably higher than their respective national averages: management; production; and construction and extraction.

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 personal care and service. Conversely, nine occupational groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included management; production; and transportation and material moving. (See [table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Pittsburgh metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Pittsburgh		United States	Pittsburgh		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100%	100%		\$23.23	\$22.24	*	-4
Management	5.0	4.0	*	55.30	56.93	*	3
Business and financial operations	5.1	5.1		35.48	32.42	*	-9
Computer and mathematical	2.9	2.9		41.43	35.35	*	-15
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.0	*	39.89	37.05	*	-7
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.9	*	34.24	31.41	*	-8
Community and social service	1.4	1.8	*	22.19	19.55	*	-12
Legal	0.8	0.8		49.74	48.68		-2
Education, training, and library	6.2	5.7	*	25.48	26.32		3
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.0	*	27.39	25.47	*	-7
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	7.2	*	37.40	33.38	*	-11
Healthcare support	2.9	3.2	*	14.19	14.13		0
Protective service	2.4	2.1	*	21.45	18.50	*	-14
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	8.9	*	10.98	10.40	*	-5
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.9	*	13.02	12.92		-1
Personal care and service	3.1	3.8	*	12.33	11.52	*	-7
Sales and related	10.5	10.5		18.90	18.68		-1
Office and administrative support	15.8	16.8	*	17.47	16.88	*	-3
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	*	12.67	13.21		4

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Pittsburgh metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Pittsburgh		United States	Pittsburgh		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	4.5	*	22.88	23.39	*	2
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.0		22.11	21.22	*	-4
Production	6.6	5.6	*	17.41	18.63	*	7
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	6.4	*	16.90	16.63		-2

Footnotes:

(1) 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.

* 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.

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 51,430 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 4.5 percent of local area employment, significantly above the 4.0-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$23.39, which was significantly above the national average of \$22.88.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the construction and extraction group included construction laborers (9,060), carpenters (8,040), and operating engineers and other construction equipment operators (4,660). Among the higher-paying jobs were boilermakers (\$34.05) and first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers (\$33.88). At the lower end of the wage scale were construction laborers and electrician helpers, with mean hourly wages of \$18.30 and \$12.77, respectively. (Detailed occupational data for construction and extraction 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, carpet installers were employed at 2.6 times the national rate in Pittsburgh, and oil and gas rotary drill operators were employed at 3.0 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.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the issuance of data for May 2015, the OES program has incorporated redefined metropolitan area definitions as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. OES data are available for 394 metropolitan areas, 38 metropolitan divisions, and 167 OES-defined nonmetropolitan areas. A listing of the areas and their definitions can be found at www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm.

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. The OES program produces employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations for all industries combined in the nation; the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 432 metropolitan areas and divisions; 167 nonmetropolitan areas; and Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. National estimates are also available by industry for NAICS sectors, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industries, and by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

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. May 2015 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, and November 2012. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 73.5 percent based on establishments and 69.6 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.9 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area included 6,059 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 May 2015 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.

Metropolitan 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** 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: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment ⁽²⁾		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Construction and extraction occupations	51,430	1.1	\$23.39	\$48,650
First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers	3,990	0.9	33.88	70,470
Boilermakers	310	2.3	34.05	70,830
Brickmasons and blockmasons	920	1.8	24.19	50,310
Carpenters	8,040	1.5	23.70	49,290
Carpet installers	560	2.6	20.03	41,660
Floor layers, except carpet, wood, and hard tiles	(5)	(5)	12.91	26,860
Tile and marble setters	320	1.1	21.15	43,990
Cement masons and concrete finishers	1,100	0.8	22.17	46,120
Construction laborers	9,060	1.2	18.30	38,070
Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators	470	1.1	24.48	50,910
Pile-driver operators	(5)	(5)	24.73	51,430
Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators	4,660	1.6	22.96	47,760
Drywall and ceiling tile installers	410	0.6	23.91	49,720
Tapers	70	0.5	24.53	51,030
Electricians	4,530	0.9	26.49	55,090
Glaziers	300	0.8	20.49	42,610
Insulation workers, mechanical	220	0.9	31.71	65,950
Painters, construction and maintenance	1,310	0.8	19.26	40,070
Pipelayers	250	0.8	25.81	53,680
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	3,420	1.1	28.71	59,720
Plasterers and stucco masons	(5)	(5)	16.32	33,940
Reinforcing iron and rebar workers	40	0.2	25.52	53,080
Roofers	890	1.0	18.03	37,500
Sheet metal workers	700	0.6	30.35	63,140
Structural iron and steel workers	480	0.9	25.88	53,830
Helpers--brickmasons, blockmasons, stonemasons, and tile and marble setters	120	0.6	14.83	30,840
Helpers--carpenters	190	0.6	15.38	31,990
Helpers--electricians	470	0.8	12.77	26,550
Helpers--painters, paperhangers, plasterers, and stucco masons	(5)	(5)	11.05	22,980
Helpers--pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	340	0.8	15.58	32,410
Helpers--roofers	(5)	(5)	12.75	26,510
Construction and building inspectors	1,590	2.1	25.09	52,190
Elevator installers and repairers	(5)	(5)	28.05	58,340
Hazardous materials removal workers	490	1.4	21.22	44,130
Highway maintenance workers	1,720	1.5	19.32	40,190
Rail-track laying and maintenance equipment operators	80	0.7	16.68	34,700
Septic tank servicers and sewer pipe cleaners	210	0.9	20.40	42,420
Derrick operators, oil and gas	(5)	(5)	24.35	50,640
Rotary drill operators, oil and gas	620	3.0	26.18	54,460
Service unit operators, oil, gas, and mining	670	1.4	22.63	47,080
Earth drillers, except oil and gas	200	1.2	19.77	41,130
Continuous mining machine operators	(5)	(5)	21.22	44,150
Mine cutting and channeling machine operators	(5)	(5)	20.13	41,870
Roustabouts, oil and gas	700	1.2	21.59	44,910
Helpers--extraction workers	430	2.3	16.08	33,440

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area, 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.