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Occupational Employment and Wages in Wichita – May 2015

Workers in the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.38 in May 2015, about 12 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including legal; management; and computer and mathematical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups, including production; installation, maintenance, and repair; and construction and extraction. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including transportation and material moving; computer and mathematical; and sales and related. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Wichita	United States	Wichita	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$23.23	\$20.38*	-12
Management	5.0	4.3*	55.30	45.84*	-17
Business and Financial Operations	5.1	4.4*	35.48	31.31*	-12
Computer and Mathematical	2.9	1.9*	41.43	32.75*	-21
Architecture and Engineering	1.8	2.4*	39.89	37.54*	-6
Life, Physical, and Social Science	0.8	0.4*	34.24	31.25*	-9
Community and Social Service	1.4	1.4	22.19	18.80*	-15
Legal	0.8	0.5*	49.74	39.65*	-20
Education, Training, and Library	6.2	6.1	25.48	19.76*	-22
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1.3	1.3	27.39	19.26*	-30
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	5.8	5.8	37.40	34.05*	-9
Healthcare Support	2.9	3.1	14.19	12.82*	-10
Protective Service	2.4	2.1*	21.45	17.93*	-16
Food Preparation and Serving Related	9.1	8.8*	10.98	9.74*	-11
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	3.2	2.8*	13.02	12.29*	-6
Personal Care and Service	3.1	3.3	12.33	12.19	-1
Sales and Related	10.5	9.6*	18.90	17.18*	-9
Office and Administrative Support	15.8	16.5*	17.47	15.98*	-9
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	0.3	0.1*	12.67	14.44*	14
Construction and Extraction	4.0	4.7*	22.88	18.98*	-17
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	3.9	4.7*	22.11	22.27	1
Production	6.6	10.2*	17.41	19.89*	14
Transportation and Material Moving	6.9	5.8*	16.90	15.30*	-9

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Wichita 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—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Wichita had 30,030 jobs in production, accounting for 10.2 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$19.89, significantly above the national wage of \$17.41.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the production group included team assemblers (3,140), inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (2,330), and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,760). Among the higher paying jobs were metal and plastic layout workers, as well as petroleum pump system operators, refinery operators, and gaugers, with mean hourly wages of \$32.03 and \$30.91, respectively. Occupations at the lower end of the wage scale included laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$9.57) and production workers' helpers (\$11.02). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2015/may/oes_48620.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 than it does nationally. In the Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, metal and plastic layout workers were employed at 31.6 times the national rate in Wichita, and metal and plastic computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, at 5.7 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, printing press operators had a location quotient of 1.0 in Wichita, 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 Kansas Department of Labor.

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 Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,643 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 **Wichita, Kans. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Butler, Harvey, Kingman, Sedgwick, and Sumner Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/mountain-plains. 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/2015/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: (800) 877-8339.

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

Occupation (1)	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level (2)	Location quotient (3)	Hourly	Annual (4)
Production Occupations	30,030	1.6	\$19.89	\$41,360
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1,760	1.4	29.14	60,620
Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	60	2.0	15.78	32,830
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	370	0.8	18.45	38,370
Electromechanical Equipment Assemblers	60	0.6	16.08	33,450
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	(5)	(5)	25.75	53,570
Team Assemblers	3,140	1.3	15.17	31,550
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	1,170	2.4	15.78	32,830
Bakers	400	1.1	12.34	25,660
Butchers and Meat Cutters	150	0.5	16.53	34,390
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	60	0.2	13.99	29,090
Food Batchmakers	150	0.5	14.72	30,630
Food Processing Workers, All Other	150	1.5	14.73	30,650
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	890	2.9	17.13	35,630
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic	310	5.7	30.75	63,950
Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	270	1.7	16.22	33,740
Forging Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	80	2.0	17.22	35,820
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	580	1.4	15.62	32,500
Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	100	3.0	15.94	33,160
Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	350	2.2	13.24	27,540
Lathe and Turning Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	130	1.5	20.05	41,700
Milling and Planing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	100	2.3	24.11	50,150
Machinists	1,530	1.8	19.67	40,910
Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	220	0.8	14.59	30,340
Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	(5)	(5)	14.72	30,620
Tool and Die Makers	670	4.2	25.01	52,010
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,230	1.5	18.45	38,370
Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	130	1.2	17.33	36,050
Heat Treating Equipment Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	80	1.8	16.65	34,640
Layout Workers, Metal and Plastic	720	31.6	32.03	66,630
Prepress Technicians and Workers	90	1.2	18.74	38,990
Printing Press Operators	370	1.0	15.91	33,100
Print Binding and Finishing Workers	170	1.5	12.74	26,500
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	300	0.7	9.57	19,900
Sewing Machine Operators	290	1.0	11.21	23,310
Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	30	1.1	10.48	21,790
Extruding and Forming Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Synthetic and Glass Fibers	60	1.4	18.64	38,770
Upholsterers	50	0.8	17.87	37,160
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	160	0.8	14.41	29,980
Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood	190	1.8	12.80	26,610
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	180	1.1	14.11	29,340
Power Plant Operators	(5)	(5)	25.61	53,260

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	180	0.7	18.12	37,690
Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers.....	280	3.1	30.91	64,290
Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders.....	70	0.7	19.31	40,170
Crushing, Grinding, and Polishing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders.....	60	0.9	16.69	34,720
Grinding and Polishing Workers, Hand	230	3.8	14.47	30,110
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders.....	240	0.9	17.06	35,490
Cutters and Trimmers, Hand	40	1.1	14.34	29,820
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders.....	140	1.1	16.42	34,150
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers ...	2,330	2.2	24.97	51,940
Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers.....	50	0.9	22.37	46,530
Dental Laboratory Technicians	70	0.8	16.26	33,820
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders..	480	0.6	13.54	28,170
Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders.....	390	2.1	14.88	30,950
Painters, Transportation Equipment	150	1.4	26.47	55,050
Photographic Process Workers and Processing Machine Operators	30	0.6	13.57	28,230
Adhesive Bonding Machine Operators and Tenders.....	80	2.3	13.60	28,300
Etchers and Engravers.....	30	1.5	12.40	25,790
Molders, Shapers, and Casters, Except Metal and Plastic	(5)	(5)	14.61	30,380
Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders..	80	0.4	(5)	(5)
Helpers--Production Workers	690	0.7	11.02	22,910
Production Workers, All Other	350	0.7	13.02	27,090

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Wichita, KS Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_48620.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.