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Occupational Employment and Wages in the U.S. Virgin Islands – May 2014

Workers in the U.S. Virgin Islands had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$16.81 in May 2014, about 26 percent below the United States average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Chief Regional Economist Martin Kohli noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective U.S. averages in 20 of the 22 major occupational groups, including life, physical, and social science; computer and mathematical; and sales and related.

When compared to the U.S. distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support, protective service, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance. Conversely, 12 groups had employment shares significantly below their mainland representation, including production; healthcare practitioners and technical; and computer and mathematical. (See [table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Employment share (percent of total)		Average (mean) hourly wage		
	United States	Virgin Islands	United States	Virgin Islands	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$22.71	\$16.81*	-26
Management	5.0	6.8*	54.08	33.10*	-39
Business and financial operations.....	5.1	3.8*	34.81	24.18*	-31
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.0*	40.37	24.73*	-39
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.4*	39.19	27.03*	-31
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	2.3*	33.69	14.02*	-58
Community and social service.....	1.4	0.9*	21.79	18.97*	-13
Legal.....	0.8	1.2*	48.61	42.39*	-13
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	7.1*	25.10	18.91*	-25
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	0.4*	26.82	20.29*	-24
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	2.8*	36.54	27.07*	-26
Healthcare support	2.9	1.1*	13.86	12.50*	-10
Protective service	2.4	6.9*	21.14	15.98*	-24
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	10.5*	10.57	10.73	2
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	5.7*	12.68	11.09*	-13
Personal care and service.....	3.1	2.5*	12.01	10.58*	-12
Sales and related	10.5	10.5	18.59	12.81*	-31
Office and administrative support.....	16.0	21.1*	17.08	15.07*	-12
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1*	12.09	12.18	1
Construction and extraction.....	3.9	3.1*	22.40	18.00*	-20
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.2	21.74	17.13*	-21
Production	6.6	1.8*	17.06	13.78*	-19
Transportation and material moving.....	6.8	5.7*	16.57	13.48*	-19

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the U.S. Virgin Islands is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

Note: * 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—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. The Virgin Islands had 8,040 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 21.1 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 16.0-percent U.S. share. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$15.07, significantly lower than the U.S. wage of \$17.08.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included general office clerks (1,310); secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (960); and first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers (720). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, with a mean hourly wage of \$24.15, and executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, with a wage of \$21.26. At the lower end of the wage scale were stock clerks and order fillers (\$11.68) and reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks (\$12.06). (Detailed occupational data for office and administrative support are presented in [table 1](#) ; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_vi.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 U.S. 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 in the U.S. In the Virgin Islands, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks were employed at 5.5 times the U.S. rate in the Virgin Islands. On the other hand, bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks had a location quotient of 1.0 in the Virgin Islands, indicating that this particular occupation's Virgin Islands and U.S. 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 U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor.

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. 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 weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 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 Virgin Islands included 806 establishments with a response rate of 87 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.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/new-york-new-jersey. 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/2014/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, the U.S. Virgin Islands, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	8,040	1.32	\$15.07	\$31,350
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	720	1.83	24.15	50,240
Switchboard operators, including answering service.....	130	4.30	11.49	23,910
Bill and account collectors.....	70	0.68	15.78	32,830
Billing and posting clerks.....	120	0.90	14.96	31,110
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.....	430	0.96	15.67	32,590
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	50	1.16	16.25	33,810
Customer service representatives.....	830	1.18	13.86	28,830
File clerks.....	60	1.37	12.10	25,180
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks.....	140	2.05	11.85	24,650
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	30	0.52	20.05	41,700
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping.....	60	1.54	17.24	35,860
Receptionists and information clerks.....	270	0.97	12.83	26,680
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks.....	220	5.54	12.06	25,090
Cargo and freight agents.....	100	4.71	15.12	31,440
Couriers and messengers.....	70	3.25	12.12	25,200
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	30	0.62	14.46	30,070
Postal service clerks.....	90	4.25	26.81	55,770
Postal service mail carriers.....	40	0.43	26.14	54,370
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators.....	40	1.26	24.53	51,010
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	130	0.72	16.20	33,690
Stock clerks and order fillers.....	940	1.78	11.68	24,290
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants.....	270	1.32	21.26	44,220
Legal secretaries.....	50	0.89	21.48	44,670
Medical secretaries.....	90	0.60	18.24	37,930
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	960	1.54	14.14	29,410
Data entry keyers.....	110	1.92	12.57	26,150
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks.....	40	0.57	(5)	(5)
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service.....	40	1.42	14.29	29,720
Office clerks, general.....	1,310	1.61	12.20	25,370

Footnotes:

- (1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the U.S. Virgin Islands, see https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_vi.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 released.