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Occupational Employment and Wages in the U.S. Virgin Islands – May 2016

Workers in the U.S. Virgin Islands had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.10 in May 2016, about 24 percent below the United States average of \$23.86, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Chief Regional Economist Martin Kohli noted that, after testing for statistical significance, average wages in the local area were lower than their respective U.S. averages in 19 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, food preparation and serving related, and protective service. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their mainland representation, including computer and mathematical; production; and healthcare practitioners and technical. (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 2016

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%	\$23.86	\$18.10*	-24
Management	5.1	8.5*	56.74	34.28*	-40
Business and financial operations.....	5.2	3.7*	36.09	26.02*	-28
Computer and mathematical	3.0	0.9*	42.25	27.44*	-35
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.6*	40.53	28.71*	-29
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.8	35.06	22.93*	-35
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.2*	22.69	20.12*	-11
Legal.....	0.8	1.3*	50.95	46.99	-8
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	6.7*	26.21	19.90*	-24
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.	1.4	0.7*	28.07	21.44*	-24
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	2.9*	38.06	31.19*	-18
Healthcare support	2.9	1.0*	14.65	13.72*	-6
Protective service	2.4	6.7*	22.03	16.14*	-27
Food preparation and serving related	9.2	12.0*	11.47	12.18	6
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	5.7*	13.47	11.22*	-17
Personal care and service.....	3.2	3.0	12.74	11.24*	-12
Sales and related	10.4	10.9	19.50	13.34*	-32
Office and administrative support.....	15.7	17.8*	17.91	15.48*	-14
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1*	13.37	15.27*	14
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	3.2*	23.51	20.35*	-13
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.4*	22.45	17.38*	-23
Production	6.5	1.8*	17.88	15.25*	-15

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016 - Continued

Major occupational group	Employment share (percent of total)		Average (mean) hourly wage		
	United States	Virgin Islands	United States	Virgin Islands	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	6.0*	17.34	13.20*	-24

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.

* 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 6,660 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 17.8 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 15.7-percent U.S. share. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$15.48, significantly lower than the U.S. wage of \$17.91.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (980); store clerks and order fillers (930); and general office clerks (740). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, with a mean hourly wage of \$23.46, and executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants (\$21.22). At the lower end of the wage scale were tellers (\$10.96) and stock clerks and order fillers (\$9.71). (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 4.6 times the U.S. rate in the Virgin Islands. On the other hand, general office clerks had a location quotient of 0.9 in the Virgin Islands, indicating that this particular occupation’s local 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 on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

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 data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates 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. Each year, two semiannual panels approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2016 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, and November 2013. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 73 percent based on establishments and 69 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Virgin Islands included 781 establishments with a response rate of 81 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2016 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 the 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, the U.S. Virgin Islands, May 2016

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	6,660	1.1	\$15.48	\$32,190
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	630	1.6	23.46	48,800
Switchboard operators, including answering service.....	80	3.3	13.56	28,210
Bill and account collectors.....	30	0.4	16.44	34,190
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.....	380	0.9	15.06	31,320
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	60	1.4	15.30	31,820
Tellers.....	120	0.9	10.96	22,800
Customer service representatives.....	450	0.6	16.36	34,020
File clerks.....	40	1.2	13.26	27,590
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks.....	220	3.4	11.87	24,680
New accounts clerks.....	70	6.5	15.39	32,010
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping.....	80	2.1	18.26	37,980
Receptionists and information clerks.....	240	0.9	11.84	24,620
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks.....	180	4.6	11.41	23,730
Couriers and messengers.....	50	2.4	14.44	30,040
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	30	0.7	15.30	31,820
Postal service clerks.....	80	3.5	27.21	56,590
Postal service mail carriers.....	30	0.4	27.74	57,690
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators.....	30	1.2	27.24	56,660
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	70	0.4	14.22	29,580
Stock clerks and order fillers.....	930	1.7	9.71	20,190
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants.....	210	1.3	21.22	44,150
Legal secretaries.....	50	0.9	22.10	45,970
Medical secretaries.....	70	0.5	17.10	35,570
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	980	1.6	15.27	31,760
Data entry keyers.....	130	2.6	12.81	26,650
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service.....	60	2.6	14.25	29,640
Office clerks, general.....	740	0.9	15.42	32,070
Office and administrative support workers, all other.....	60	1.0	16.61	34,540

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.