



For Release: Thursday, July 17, 2014

14-1333-DAL

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Occupational Employment and Wages in New Orleans–Metairie–Kenner, May 2013

Workers in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.42 in May 2013, about 9 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.33, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly higher than their respective national averages in 4 of the 22 major occupational groups, including production; architecture and engineering; and transportation and material moving. Wages were measurably lower than their respective national averages in 14 groups, including protective service and computer and mathematical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 9 of the 22 occupational groups, including food preparation and serving related; sales and related; and construction and extraction. Conversely, employment shares were significantly below their national representation in nine groups, including production; computer and mathematical; and office and administrative support. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.33	\$20.42	*	-9
Management	4.9	4.9		53.15	45.87	*	-14
Business and financial operations	5.0	4.0	*	34.14	29.43	*	-14
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.2	*	39.43	32.84	*	-17
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.9		38.51	42.28	*	10
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.7	*	33.37	32.50		-3
Community and social service	1.4	1.1	*	21.50	19.10	*	-11
Legal	0.8	1.1	*	47.89	45.41		-5
Education, training, and library	6.3	5.4	*	24.76	22.51	*	-9
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.7	*	26.72	24.32		-9
Healthcare practitioners and technical ..	5.8	6.1	*	35.93	31.85	*	-11
Healthcare support	3.0	2.5	*	13.61	12.42	*	-9
Protective service	2.5	3.2	*	20.92	16.83	*	-20
Food preparation and serving related ..	9.0	10.8	*	10.38	10.21		-2
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.2		12.51	11.02	*	-12
Personal care and service	3.0	3.0		11.88	10.65	*	-10

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Sales and related	10.6	12.0	*	18.37	16.40	*	-11
Office and administrative support	16.2	15.0	*	16.78	15.71	*	-6
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	*	11.70	19.08	*	63
Construction and extraction	3.8	5.0	*	21.94	20.10	*	-8
Installation, maintenance, and repair ...	3.9	4.7	*	21.35	20.31	*	-5
Production	6.6	4.7	*	16.79	21.10	*	26
Transportation and material moving	6.8	7.5	*	16.28	17.84	*	10

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner 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—transportation and material moving—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. New Orleans had 39,540 jobs in transportation and material moving, accounting for 7.5 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the national share of 6.8 percent. The local wage for this occupational group was also significantly higher than the national average. The mean hourly wage for transportation and material moving workers in New Orleans was \$17.84, 10 percent above the national average of \$16.28.

With employment of 11,270 hand laborers and freight, stock, and material movers was among the largest occupations within the transportation and material moving group, as were heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (5,570) and light truck or delivery services drivers (3,390). Among the higher paying jobs were captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, as well as ship engineers, with mean hourly wages of \$42.83 and \$42.51, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were parking lot attendants (\$9.29) and cleaners of vehicles and equipment (\$9.98). (Detailed occupational data for transportation and material moving are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all detailed occupations, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.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 New Orleans metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the transportation and material moving group. For instance, captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels were employed at 20.4 times the national rate in New Orleans, and sailors and marine oilers at 22.2 times the U.S. average. The New Orleans' location quotients for both captains and sailors ranked second in the country among all metropolitan areas, with Houma, LA., leading both rankings. On the other hand, heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers had a location quotient of 0.9 in New Orleans, 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 Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner 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. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year for a 3-year period. May 2013 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected in May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, November 2011, May 2011, and November 2010. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 75.3 percent based on establishments and 71.6 percent based on employment. The sample in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area included 4,055 establishments with a response rate of 74 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 2013 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 **New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes in Louisiana.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/home.htm. 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/2013/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: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	39,540	1.1	\$17.84	\$37,100
Aircraft cargo handling supervisors.....	50	1.9	25.67	53,400
First-line supervisors of helpers, laborers, and material movers, hand.....	820	1.2	24.17	50,270
First-line supervisors of transportation and material-moving machine and vehicle operators...	950	1.2	26.96	56,080
Commercial pilots.....	(5)	(5)	(5)	65,610
Ambulance drivers and attendants, except emergency medical technicians.....	40	0.6	11.08	23,050
Bus drivers, transit and intercity.....	990	1.6	12.84	26,710
Bus drivers, school or special client.....	1,350	0.7	12.69	26,390
Driver/sales workers.....	1,300	0.8	12.69	26,390
Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers.....	5,570	0.9	19.65	40,870
Light truck or delivery services drivers.....	3,390	1.1	16.09	33,480
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs.....	1,130	1.7	10.04	20,870
Sailors and marine oilers.....	2,540	22.2	20.74	43,130
Captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels.....	2,440	20.4	42.83	89,090
Ship engineers.....	480	12.2	42.51	88,420
Bridge and lock tenders.....	120	9.4	16.18	33,640
Parking lot attendants.....	850	1.6	9.29	19,330
Automotive and watercraft service attendants.....	300	0.7	12.35	25,700
Traffic technicians.....	40	1.7	13.93	28,970
Transportation inspectors.....	(5)	(5)	27.93	58,090
Transportation attendants, except flight attendants.....	190	2.2	10.47	21,780
Transportation workers, all other.....	130	0.8	20.63	42,910
Conveyor operators and tenders.....	40	0.3	16.91	35,180
Crane and tower operators.....	720	4.4	24.81	51,600
Excavating and loading machine and dragline operators.....	160	0.9	21.66	45,060
Industrial truck and tractor operators.....	1450	0.7	16.61	34,550
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment.....	720	0.6	9.98	20,760
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand.....	11,270	1.3	12.63	26,260
Machine feeders and offbearers.....	30	0.1	11.85	24,660
Packers and packagers, hand.....	740	0.3	11.23	23,350
Pump operators, except wellhead pumpers.....	50	1.0	(5)	(5)
Refuse and recyclable material collectors.....	340	0.7	9.40	19,560
Tank car, truck, and ship loaders.....	490	9.8	18.92	39,360
Material moving workers, all other.....	90	0.9	16.45	34,210

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.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.