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Occupational Employment and Wages in Reading – May 2014

Workers in the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.74 in May 2014, 9 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, 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 8 of the 22 major occupational groups, including life, physical, and social science; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; and computer and mathematical. Only one group had an hourly wage that was significantly higher than its respective national average—production. (See [table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Employment share (percent of total)			Average (mean) hourly wage			
	United States	Reading	Significant difference (1)	United States	Reading	Significant difference (1)	Percent difference (2)
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.71	\$20.74	Yes	-9
Management	5.0	3.4	Yes	54.08	54.34	No	0
Business and financial operations	5.1	3.7	Yes	34.81	30.66	Yes	-12
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.4	Yes	40.37	33.57	Yes	-17
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.6	Yes	39.19	36.33	Yes	-7
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.5	Yes	33.69	24.88	Yes	-26
Community and social service	1.4	1.8	Yes	21.79	20.53	Yes	-6
Legal	0.8	0.5	Yes	48.61	42.69	No	-12
Education, training, and library	6.2	7.1	Yes	25.10	25.38	No	1
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.8	Yes	26.82	20.26	Yes	-24
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	5.8	No	36.54	33.84	No	-7
Healthcare support	2.9	3.8	Yes	13.86	13.01	Yes	-6
Protective service	2.4	1.4	Yes	21.14	21.68	No	3
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	8.4	Yes	10.57	10.37	No	-2
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.0	Yes	12.68	12.80	No	1
Personal care and service	3.1	2.8	Yes	12.01	11.63	No	-3
Sales and related	10.5	9.7	Yes	18.59	17.21	Yes	-7
Office and administrative support	16.0	15.0	Yes	17.08	16.74	No	-2
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.2	Yes	12.09	12.59	No	4
Construction and extraction	3.9	3.4	Yes	22.40	22.66	No	1
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.7	Yes	21.74	21.42	No	-1
Production	6.6	12.9	Yes	17.06	18.41	Yes	8
Transportation and material moving	6.8	8.0	Yes	16.57	16.65	No	0

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) Statistical significance testing at the 90-percent confidence level.

(2) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Reading is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Reading employment shares were significantly higher in 6 of the 22 occupational groups, including production; transportation and material moving; and installation, maintenance, and repair. Conversely, 15 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included management, computer and mathematical, and business and financial operations.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Reading had 21,690 jobs in production, accounting for 12.9 percent of local area employment, nearly twice the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$18.41, measurably above the national wage of \$17.06.

With employment of 2,480, team assemblers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by metal and plastic multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders (1,860) and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,330). Among the higher-paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers and metal and plastic multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, with mean hourly wages of \$26.67 and \$21.96, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were bakers (\$12.20) and sewing machine operators (\$12.85). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_39740.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 Reading area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, metal and plastic multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders were employed at over 15 times the national rate in Reading, and metal and plastic molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders at almost 6 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers had a location quotient of 1.2 in Reading, 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.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Reading 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. Each year, forms are mailed to two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments, one panel in May and the other in November. 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 employment. The sample in the Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,991 establishments with a response rate of 76 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/oesrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oesrcma.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.

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 **Reading, Pa. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Berks County in Pennsylvania.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at <https://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: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation (1)	Employment (2)		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient (3)	Hourly	Annual (4)
Production occupations	21,690	2.0	\$18.41	\$38,300
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,330	1.8	26.67	55,480
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	230	0.9	14.10	29,330
Engine and other machine assemblers	(5)	(5)	17.29	35,950
Structural metal fabricators and filters	330	3.4	20.74	43,130
Team assemblers	2,480	1.8	17.31	36,010
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	(5)	(5)	13.30	27,660
Bakers	400	1.9	12.20	25,370
Butchers and meat cutters	(5)	(5)	14.21	29,550
Meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers	(5)	(5)	14.34	29,820
Food batchmakers	290	2.0	13.89	28,890
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	410	2.3	19.37	40,290
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	(5)	(5)	29.49	61,340
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	320	3.5	18.07	37,580
Rolling machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	(5)	(5)	14.06	29,250
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	370	1.6	17.93	37,290
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	260	3.0	15.40	32,040
Lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	70	1.4	18.75	38,990
Milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	50	1.8	20.42	42,470
Machinists	860	1.8	19.88	41,350
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	190	7.2	23.20	48,250
Pourers and casters, metal	140	11.5	15.45	32,140
Patternmakers, metal and plastic	30	6.5	17.81	37,050
Foundry mold and coremakers	70	5.0	15.97	33,220
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	930	5.8	19.43	40,420
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	1,860	15.3	21.96	45,680
Tool and die makers	180	1.9	21.02	43,720
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	920	2.0	20.11	41,820
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	200	4.5	17.66	36,730
Metal workers and plastic workers, all other	230	8.2	18.27	38,000
Prepress technicians and workers	(5)	(5)	15.32	31,860
Printing press operators	(5)	(5)	21.27	44,250
Print binding and finishing workers	(5)	(5)	16.55	34,430
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	160	0.7	10.48	21,790
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials	60	1.0	11.18	23,250
Sewing machine operators	470	2.6	12.85	26,720
Sewers, hand	(5)	(5)	12.85	26,740
Tailors, dressmakers, and custom sewers	(5)	(5)	12.42	25,840
Textile bleaching and dyeing machine setters, operators, and tenders	30	2.4	16.43	34,160
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders	50	3.1	14.44	30,030
Textile knitting and weaving machine setters, operators, and tenders	110	3.8	18.67	38,840
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	260	2.4	17.85	37,120
Furniture finishers	40	2.0	16.71	34,750
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood	80	1.4	16.33	33,970

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Reading Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014 - Continued

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment ⁽²⁾		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing.....	80	0.9	15.68	32,620
Power plant operators	40	0.9	36.80	76,540
Stationary engineers and boiler operators	(5)	(5)	22.21	46,200
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	160	1.2	21.95	45,650
Gas plant operators.....	50	2.7	21.07	43,810
Chemical equipment operators and tenders	210	2.7	18.63	38,740
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders.....	60	1.2	16.66	34,650
Grinding and polishing workers, hand.....	60	1.7	13.83	28,770
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	170	1.1	13.57	28,230
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	100	1.3	15.32	31,870
Extruding, forming, pressing, and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	110	1.3	20.45	42,540
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers.....	720	1.2	19.33	40,210
Jewelers and precious stone and metal workers	(5)	(5)	21.87	45,490
Dental laboratory technicians	90	1.9	17.85	37,130
Medical appliance technicians.....	80	5.1	17.35	36,090
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders ...	400	0.8	15.15	31,510
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	200	1.8	17.19	35,750
Painters, transportation equipment	100	1.7	20.44	42,520
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	70	2.0	11.76	24,470
Molders, shapers, and casters, except metal and plastic	(5)	(5)	14.48	30,110
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders ...	210	1.9	16.84	35,030
Helpers--production workers	1,050	2.0	14.15	29,430
Production workers, all other.....	110	0.4	13.30	27,670

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Reading MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_39740.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.