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Occupational Employment and Wages in Mobile – May 2014

Workers in the Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.68 in May 2014, about 13 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, one group, production, had significantly higher wages than its respective national average. Eighteen groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including computer and mathematical, sales and related, and construction and extraction.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including sales and related, construction and extraction, and production. Conversely, 10 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations, computer and mathematical, and management. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Mobile	United States	Mobile	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$22.71	\$19.68*	-13
Management	5.0	3.7*	54.08	51.10*	-6
Business and financial operations	5.1	2.9*	34.81	31.01*	-11
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.5*	40.37	29.12*	-28
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.0*	39.19	35.75*	-9
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	(2)	33.69	28.39*	-16
Community and social services	1.4	0.9*	21.79	18.93*	-13
Legal	0.8	0.7*	48.61	42.84	-12
Education, training, and library	6.2	5.4*	25.10	23.23	-7
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.7*	26.82	17.88*	-33
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.8	6.7*	36.54	31.90*	-13
Healthcare support	2.9	2.5*	13.86	12.08*	-13
Protective service	2.4	2.1*	21.14	15.60*	-26
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	8.4*	10.57	9.39*	-11
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.2	12.68	11.37*	-10
Personal care and service	3.1	2.7	12.01	10.05*	-16
Sales and related	10.5	12.2*	18.59	15.66*	-16
Office and administrative support	16.0	16.2	17.08	15.03*	-12
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	(2)	12.09	(2)	
Construction and extraction	3.9	5.6*	22.40	18.72*	-16
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	5.4*	21.74	20.82*	-4
Production	6.6	8.3*	17.06	20.65*	21

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Mobile	United States	Mobile	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Transportation and material moving	6.8	8.2*	16.57	15.71*	-5

Footnotes:

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

(2) Estimate not released

* 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. Mobile had 13,970 jobs in production, accounting for 8.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$20.65, significantly above the national wage of \$17.06.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the production group included welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers (1,480), metal and plastic layout workers (1,400), and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,190). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers and metal-refining furnace operators and tenders, with mean hourly wages of \$31.89 and \$26.41, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers (\$10.91) and production workers helpers (\$12.96). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/oes_33660.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 Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, layout workers, metal and plastic were employed at 86.0 times the national rate in Mobile, and metal-refining furnace operators and tenders, at 21.5 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers had a location quotient of 1.0 in Mobile, 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 Alabama 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 Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,948 establishments with a response rate of 77 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.

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 **Mobile, Ala. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Mobile County.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southeast. 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, Mobile Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Production Occupations	13,970	1.3	\$20.65	\$42,940
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1,190	1.6	31.89	66,320
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	60	0.2	19.80	41,190
Engine and Other Machine Assemblers	40	0.8	20.89	43,440
Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	180	1.9	18.25	37,950
Fiberglass Laminators and Fabricators	100	4.2	16.76	34,870
Team Assemblers	250	0.2	15.56	32,360
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	200	0.7	13.72	28,540
Bakers	140	0.7	10.20	21,220
Butchers and Meat Cutters	50	0.3	15.12	31,440
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	500	2.7	10.91	22,690
Food Batchmakers	70	0.5	12.40	25,790
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	60	0.3	17.00	35,360
Forging Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	60	2.3	27.83	57,880
Rolling Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	110	2.6	25.76	53,590
Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	280	1.2	18.52	38,530
Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	200	2.3	16.19	33,670
Machinists	620	1.3	19.25	40,040
Metal-Refining Furnace Operators and Tenders	560	21.5	26.41	54,930
Molding, Coremaking, and Casting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	60	0.4	25.65	53,350
Multiple Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	190	1.5	13.46	28,010
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,480	3.2	20.75	43,150
Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	410	5.9	20.60	42,850
Heat Treating Equipment Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	120	4.7	31.80	66,140
Layout Workers, Metal and Plastic	1,400	86.0	24.17	50,270
Tool Grinders, Filers, and Sharpeners	(5)	(5)	16.48	34,270
Printing Press Operators	(5)	(5)	10.96	22,790
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	190	0.8	9.62	20,010
Pressers, Textile, Garment, and Related Materials	(5)	(5)	9.66	20,100
Sewing Machine Operators	50	0.3	11.46	23,840
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	70	0.6	12.57	26,140
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	100	1.2	13.86	28,830
Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	140	1.0	20.89	43,450
Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers	140	2.7	29.30	60,940
Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	650	8.1	29.01	60,330
Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	70	0.5	19.14	39,810
Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	60	0.8	15.87	33,010
Extruding, Forming, Pressing, and Compacting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	120	1.5	16.19	33,680
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	590	1.0	20.15	41,910
Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers	50	1.8	15.39	32,020
Dental Laboratory Technicians	70	1.5	16.17	33,640
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	160	0.3	18.18	37,810

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders.....	90	0.8	14.79	30,760
Painters, Transportation Equipment.....	70	1.2	19.21	39,960
Helpers--Production Workers.....	990	1.9	12.96	26,960

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Mobile, AL, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_33660.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.