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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN LEXINGTON-FAYETTE, MAY 2010

Workers in the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.92 in May 2010, roughly 11 percent below the nationwide average of \$21.35, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups including management, computer and mathematical, and protective service.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment had a lower concentration in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including business and financial operations, office and administrative support, and sales and related. Conversely, four groups had employment shares significantly above their national representation, including production, healthcare practitioners and technical, and food preparation and serving related. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Lexington-Fayette had 22,150 jobs in production occupations, accounting for 9.3 percent of local area employment, 43 percent higher than the 6.5-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$15.73, not significantly different than the national wage of \$16.24.

With employment of 6,070, team assemblers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,480), and inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (1,340). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers, and tool and die makers, with mean hourly wages of \$23.81 and \$20.19, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$9.22) and bakers (\$10.49). (Detailed occupational data for production is presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_30460.htm.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2010

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage	
	United States	Lexington-Fayette	United States	Lexington-Fayette
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$21.35	\$18.92 *
Management	4.7	4.9	50.69	40.27 *
Business and financial operations	4.8	3.6 *	32.54	26.50 *
Computer and mathematical science	2.6	2.7	37.13	30.34 *
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.9	36.32	31.06 *
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.9	31.92	22.95 *
Community and social service	1.5	1.3 *	20.76	18.73 *
Legal	0.8	0.7 *	46.60	40.01 *
Education, training, and library	6.7	6.3 *	24.25	25.59
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	1.4	25.14	18.83 *
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	7.2 *	34.27	30.50 *
Healthcare support	3.1	2.5 *	12.94	13.15
Protective service	2.5	2.4	20.43	14.64 *
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	9.4 *	10.21	9.54 *
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.1	12.16	10.65 *
Personal care and service	2.7	2.3	11.82	10.65 *
Sales and related	10.6	9.8 *	17.69	15.59 *
Office and administrative support	16.9	15.9 *	16.09	14.71 *
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.9 *	11.70	11.96
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.3 *	21.09	18.31 *
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.9	20.58	18.29 *
Production	6.5	9.3 *	16.24	15.73
Transportation and material moving	6.7	6.3	15.70	14.11 *

* 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.

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 Lexington-Fayette area, above average concentrations of employment were found in a number of the occupations within the production group. For instance, team assemblers, the largest occupation in the grouping, were employed at 3.5 times the national rate in Lexington-Fayette and all other assemblers and fabricators, at over 2.5 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, laundry and dry-cleaning workers had a location quotient of 1.3, indicating that this particular occupation's local employment share was close to the national average.

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 Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and nearly 800 non-military detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas.

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Lexington-Fayette 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 also are surveyed, but their data are not included in this release. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2010 survey was 78.2 percent based on establishments and 74.4 percent based on employment. May 2010 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2010, November 2009, May 2009, November 2008, May 2008, and November 2007. The sample in the Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,200 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 May 2010 OES estimates mark the first set of estimates based in part on data collected using the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Nearly all the occupations in this release are 2010 SOC occupations; however, some are not. The May 2012 OES data will reflect the full set of detailed occupations in the 2010 SOC. For a list of all occupations, including 2010 SOC occupations, and how data collected on two structures were combined, see the OES Frequently Asked Questions online at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm#Ques41.

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 **Lexington-Fayette, Ky. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Jessamine, Scott, and Woodford Counties in Kentucky.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm. If you have additional questions, contact the Southeast Economic Analysis and Information Unit at 404-893-4222. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Lexington-Fayette Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2010

Occupation	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ¹	Location quotient ²	Hourly	Annual
Production occupations	22,150	1.4	\$15.73	\$32,720
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,480	1.4	23.81	49,530
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	290	0.9	15.61	32,470
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	30	0.2	17.14	35,660
Team assemblers	6,070	3.5	13.81	28,730
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	1,200	2.6	13.16	27,370
Bakers	70	0.3	10.49	21,810
Butchers and meat cutters	120	0.5	12.74	26,500
Food batchmakers	(3)	(3)	17.58	36,560
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	180	0.8	16.24	33,780
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	90	0.6	14.91	31,010
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	790	2.3	15.33	31,880
Machinists	(3)	(3)	19.47	40,490
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	380	1.8	13.14	27,330
Tool and die makers	280	2.2	20.19	41,990
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	580	1.0	17.27	35,920
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	60	0.8	17.57	36,560
Prepress technicians and workers	80	0.9	14.14	29,400
Printing press operators	400	1.1	18.81	39,130
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	500	1.3	9.22	19,180
Sewing machine operators	180	0.7	11.59	24,110
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders	(3)	(3)	10.86	22,580
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	80	0.5	16.73	34,790
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	140	0.7	17.43	36,250
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders	80	1.2	19.07	39,670
Crushing, grinding, and polishing machine setters, operators, and tenders	40	0.7	11.65	24,230
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	350	1.5	19.88	41,340
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	140	1.3	18.42	38,320
Extruding, forming, pressing, and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	360	2.9	16.69	34,720
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	1,340	1.7	16.48	34,290
Jewelers and precious stone and metal workers	70	1.8	12.58	26,170
Dental laboratory technicians	70	0.9	16.95	35,260
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	550	0.8	16.84	35,030
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators and tenders	280	1.9	15.97	33,220
Painters, transportation equipment	70	0.8	18.03	37,500
Painting, coating, and decorating workers	50	1.0	10.76	22,370
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	80	0.7	12.02	25,010
Adhesive bonding machine operators and tenders	(3)	(3)	14.57	30,300
Molders, shapers, and casters, except metal and plastic	90	1.4	13.23	27,520
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders	230	1.4	16.11	33,510
Helpers--production workers	1,170	1.6	10.85	22,580
Production workers, all other	780	1.8	14.95	31,090

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ Estimates not released.