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Contact information: (972) 850-4800 • BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/ro6

OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN NEW ORLEANS-METAIRIE-KENNER, MAY 2011

Workers in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.24 in May 2011, about 7 percent below the nationwide average of \$21.74, 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 lower than their respective national averages in 17 of the 22 major occupational groups, including legal, protective service and computer and mathematical. Only 4 groups had wages that were measurably higher than their respective national averages, including production workers and architecture and engineering.

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 2011

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%	\$21.74	\$20.24 *	-7
Management	4.8	4.9	51.64	46.96 *	-9
Business and financial operations	4.8	3.9 *	33.05	28.53 *	-14
Computer and mathematical	2.7	1.3 *	37.85	31.57 *	-17
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.0	37.08	40.54 *	9
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.7 *	32.44	30.29 *	-7
Community and social service	1.5	1.3 *	21.07	19.05 *	-10
Legal	0.8	1.2 *	47.30	39.37 *	-17
Education, training, and library	6.6	5.6 *	24.46	22.73 *	-7
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.1 *	25.89	19.26 *	-26
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	6.3 *	34.97	32.37 *	-7
Healthcare support	3.1	2.9	13.16	12.15 *	-8
Protective service	2.5	2.9 *	20.54	17.72 *	-14
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	10.6 *	10.30	9.95 *	-3
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.1	12.29	10.75 *	-13
Personal care and service	2.8	2.4 *	11.84	11.03 *	-7
Sales and related	10.6	11.5 *	18.04	16.22 *	-10
Office and administrative support	16.7	15.9 *	16.40	15.50 *	-5
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	11.68	16.51 *	41
Construction and extraction	3.9	5.1 *	21.46	18.95 *	-12
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.8 *	20.86	20.64	-1
Production	6.5	5.0 *	16.45	20.50 *	25
Transportation and material moving	6.7	7.3 *	15.96	17.30 *	8

* 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.

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.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including food preparation and serving related, construction and extraction, and installation, maintenance, and repair. Conversely, employment shares were significantly below their national representation in 10 groups, including production, computer and mathematical, and education, training, and library. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

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-Metairie-Kenner had 37,310 jobs in transportation and material moving, accounting for 7.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.7-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group was \$17.30, 8 percent above the national average of \$15.96.

With employment of 9,750, hand laborers and freight, stock, and material movers was the largest occupation within the transportation and material moving group, followed by heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (4,390) and light truck or delivery services drivers (4,210). Among the higher paying jobs were captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels (also the fourth largest occupation within the group) and ship engineers, with mean hourly wages of \$35.09 and \$35.02, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were parking lot attendants (\$9.43) and cleaners of vehicles and equipment (\$9.90). (Detailed data for transportation and material moving workers are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of all available 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-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical 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 22.2 times the national rate in New Orleans, and sailors and marine oilers, at 19.5 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, commercial pilots had a location quotient of 1.1 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. 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 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 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 also are 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 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2011 survey was 77.3 percent based on establishments and 73.3 percent based on employment. May 2011 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2011, November 2010, May 2010, November 2009, May 2009, and November 2008. The sample in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area included 3,896 establishments with a response rate of 75 percent. For more information about OES and methodology, see www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2011 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.

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.

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.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2011

Occupation ¹	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ²	Location quotient ³	Hourly	Annual ⁴
Transportation and material moving occupations	37,310	1.1	\$17.30	\$35,990
First-line supervisors of helpers, laborers, and material	890	1.4	25.06	52,120
First-line supervisors of transportation and material-moving	990	1.3	26.11	54,310
Commercial pilots	130	1.1	[5]	63,690
Ambulance drivers and attendants, except emergency	[5]	[5]	10.61	22,070
Bus drivers, transit and intercity	1,150	1.6	14.89	30,960
Bus drivers, school or special client	1,230	0.7	12.95	26,940
Driver/sales workers	1,000	0.7	13.40	27,870
Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers	4,390	0.7	19.44	40,430
Light truck or delivery services drivers	4,210	1.4	16.87	35,100
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs	960	1.5	12.13	25,230
Sailors and marine oilers	2,420	19.5	17.82	37,060
Captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels	2,660	22.2	35.09	72,980
Ship engineers	410	10.3	35.02	72,850
Bridge and lock tenders	110	8.1	15.46	32,160
Parking lot attendants	650	1.3	9.43	19,610
Automotive and watercraft service attendants	150	0.4	11.88	24,700
Transportation inspectors	70	0.8	33.21	69,080
Transportation workers, all other	70	0.5	[5]	[5]
Conveyor operators and tenders	70	0.5	18.66	38,800
Crane and tower operators	370	2.3	21.13	43,950
Excavating and loading machine and dragline operators	210	1.1	18.40	38,270
Industrial truck and tractor operators	1,210	0.6	16.01	33,300
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment	810	0.7	9.90	20,590
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	9,750	1.2	12.14	25,250
Packers and packagers, hand	820	0.3	11.49	23,900
Refuse and recyclable material collectors	670	1.4	11.07	23,020
Tank car, truck, and ship loaders	370	8.6	22.31	46,400
Material moving workers, all other	320	2.8	17.18	35,740

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 available.