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Occupational Employment and Wages in Winston-Salem – May 2017

Workers in the Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.59 in May 2017, about 11 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 17 of the 22 major occupational groups, including legal; construction and extraction; and life, physical, and social science. One group—management—had a significantly higher wage than its respective national average.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 4 of the 22 occupational groups, including production and healthcare practitioners and technical. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including computer and mathematical; personal care and service; 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 Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Winston	United States	Winston	Percent difference (1)
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$24.34	\$21.59*	-11
Management	5.1	4.0*	57.65	61.60*	7
Business and financial operations	5.2	4.4*	36.70	35.78	-3
Computer and mathematical	3.0	1.7*	43.18	37.40*	-13
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.1*	41.44	35.60*	-14
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.5*	35.76	28.86*	-19
Community and social service.....	1.5	1.0*	23.10	22.48	-3
Legal.....	0.8	0.6*	51.62	36.79*	-29
Education, training, and library.....	6.1	6.8	26.67	27.70	4
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.4	0.8*	28.34	26.57*	-6
Healthcare practitioners and technical	6.0	8.3*	38.83	33.32*	-14
Healthcare support	2.9	4.2*	15.05	13.81*	-8
Protective service	2.4	1.8*	22.69	17.63*	-22
Food preparation and serving related	9.3	9.1	11.88	10.08*	-15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance ...	3.1	3.0	13.91	11.46*	-18
Personal care and service.....	3.6	2.4*	13.11	11.91*	-9
Sales and related	10.2	9.6*	19.56	18.20*	-7
Office and administrative support.....	15.4	15.0	18.24	16.97*	-7
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1*	13.87	14.89	7
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	3.1*	24.01	18.61*	-22
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.8	23.02	20.65*	-10
Production	6.3	10.4*	18.30	16.83*	-8
Transportation and material moving.....	7.0	8.2*	17.82	14.67*	-18

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area 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—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Winston-Salem had 27,360 jobs in production occupations, accounting for 10.4 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.3-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$16.83, significantly below the national wage of \$18.30.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the production group included assemblers and fabricators, all other, including team assemblers (4,400), first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (1,540), inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (1,330). Among the higher paying jobs in this group were power plant operators and separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders, with mean hourly wages of \$39.01 and \$29.52, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$9.67) and bakers (\$11.19). (Detailed data for production occupations are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_49180.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 Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders were employed at 7.3 times the national rate in Winston, and woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing, at 5.4 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers had a location quotient of 1.1 in Winston, 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 North Carolina Department of Commerce.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.htm.

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. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels; and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,361 establishments with a response rate of 84 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm.

The May 2017 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2017 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 2017 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan 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 **Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, and Yadkin Counties in North Carolina.

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/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: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Production occupations	27,360	1.6	\$16.83	\$35,000
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,540	1.4	29.50	61,350
Coil winders, tapers, and finishers	70	2.7	14.27	29,670
Electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers, except coil winders, tapers, and finishers ...	550	1.1	16.84	35,030
Engine and other machine assemblers	(5)	(5)	20.57	42,800
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	130	0.9	16.43	34,160
Assemblers and fabricators, all other, including team assemblers	4,400	1.8	13.87	28,850
Bakers	400	1.2	11.19	23,280
Butchers and meat cutters	240	1.0	14.27	29,670
Slaughterers and meat packers	70	0.5	12.35	25,680
Food and tobacco roasting, baking, and drying machine operators and tenders	330	8.5	24.90	51,800
Food batchmakers	(5)	(5)	11.07	23,030
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	90	0.3	18.25	37,950
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	50	1.2	25.43	52,890
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	290	2.1	14.51	30,180
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	720	2.1	14.66	30,500
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	110	0.8	13.56	28,200
Machinists	890	1.3	20.15	41,920
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	920	3.2	14.98	31,160
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	450	2.0	18.40	38,280
Tool and die makers	150	1.1	22.24	46,260
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	990	1.4	17.50	36,410
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	290	4.0	22.68	47,170
Heat treating equipment setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	60	1.7	12.56	26,130
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	50	0.7	13.48	28,030
Prepress technicians and workers	70	1.3	19.46	40,490
Printing press operators	610	1.9	16.95	35,250
Print binding and finishing workers	110	1.2	13.70	28,490
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	250	0.7	9.67	20,120
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials	130	1.6	11.70	24,340
Sewing machine operators	670	2.6	11.31	23,510
Textile bleaching and dyeing machine operators and tenders	50	2.9	13.96	29,040
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders ..	80	3.2	13.01	27,050
Textile knitting and weaving machine setters, operators, and tenders	170	4.5	(5)	(5)
Textile winding, twisting, and drawing out machine setters, operators, and tenders	930	16.3	14.23	29,590
Extruding and forming machine setters, operators, and tenders, synthetic and glass fibers	(5)	(5)	19.14	39,800
Upholsterers	150	2.5	17.24	35,870
Textile, apparel, and furnishings workers, all other	70	2.6	13.39	27,860
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	240	1.3	15.22	31,660
Furniture finishers	70	2.0	15.00	31,190
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood .	280	2.9	15.66	32,570

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017 - Continued

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing.....	800	5.4	14.17	29,470
Power plant operators	140	2.3	39.01	81,130
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	(5)	(5)	18.67	38,840
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders.....	650	7.3	29.52	61,400
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	260	1.1	17.06	35,480
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	230	2.1	16.67	34,670
Extruding, forming, pressing, and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	150	1.1	17.64	36,690
Furnace, kiln, oven, drier, and kettle operators and tenders	80	2.3	13.99	29,100
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers.....	1,330	1.3	16.95	35,260
Dental laboratory technicians	(5)	(5)	16.98	35,320
Medical appliance technicians.....	40	1.6	18.96	39,440
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	1,090	1.5	20.01	41,620
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	370	2.3	16.26	33,820
Painters, transportation equipment	120	1.2	20.63	42,910
Painting, coating, and decorating workers	(5)	(5)	12.88	26,780
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	50	1.2	15.07	31,340
Adhesive bonding machine operators and tenders.....	160	5.4	14.38	29,920
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders ...	310	1.8	17.25	35,890
Helpers--production workers	2,230	3.0	14.25	29,640
Production workers, all other.....	(5)	(5)	18.58	38,650

Footnotes:

- (1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Winston-Salem Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_49180.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.