

# 2014 JOB VACANCY AND HIRING SURVEY REPORT

SPRING

Firm size  
Industries  
Occupations  
Areas  
Education



**Employment Security Department**

WASHINGTON STATE

Labor Market and Performance Analysis

December 2014



# 2014 Spring Job Vacancy and Hiring Survey Report

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# About the job vacancy and hiring survey

Each spring and fall, the Employment Security Department surveys Washington employers. In spring 2014, employers were surveyed to collect information within two components:

1. Job vacancies.
2. Recent hires.

A recent hire was defined as any new external hire – a worker hired from outside the firm. This definition excludes internal promotions, including those promotions to a newly created position within the firm.

The same scientific sample was used for both components of the survey. This sample was drawn from the universe of employers covered by the unemployment insurance system, after removing from the population the public-administration industry sector and private households. All estimates based on the survey and all references to total covered employment throughout this report refer to this universe.

The job vacancy component asked employers whether they were currently recruiting for any vacancies at their location – using their current Washington business address. The information collected revealed a snapshot-in-time of Washington's job vacancy situation. We learned about the estimated number of vacant positions by occupation and industry sector, the characteristics of those vacant positions and the workforce needs of employers. In the job vacancy component, we collected the following information:

- Job title of each opening.
- Number of current openings.
- Number of current openings that were newly created.
- How long the positions had been open.
- Full-time or part-time status of each opening.
- Education level required for each opening.
- Permanent or seasonal status of each opening.
- License or certification requirement of each opening.
- Previous experience required for each opening.

The hiring component asked employers whether they made any new external hires from January 1 through March 31, 2014.

In the hiring component, we collected the following information:

- Job title of each hire.
- Number of positions filled.
- Number of positions filled that were newly created.
- How long the positions were open.
- Starting hourly wage paid.

The two components of the spring 2014 survey were treated separately because the questions relevant to each section (vacancies and hires) were not answered by all respondents in the sample (12,000 for spring 2014). For example, some employers answered the questions concerning vacant positions but did not answer the questions in the hiring component. As a result, the response for each set of variables was different for the two components. This is why the estimated relative shares for different variables cannot be directly compared.

## Publication standards

For an estimate to be publishable, it had to pass three criteria:

- The number of respondents in any given cell had to be at least four.
- The coefficient of variation had to be less than 50 percent.
- The lower limit of the 95 percent confidence interval had to be greater than zero.

## Changes to the survey

The Employment Security Department has conducted the job vacancy survey since 2003. Beginning in 2012, hiring data were published for the first time. As a one-year addition, the spring and fall 2013 surveys included questions about expected future vacancies to gather insight into employers' future hiring needs.

Prior to the 2012 reports, data were broken out by the 12 workforce development areas (WDAs). Beginning in 2012, results were displayed by four types of geographic areas in the state: west urban, west rural, east urban and east rural. *Appendix 1* identifies the counties that make up these four areas.

The spring 2014 job vacancy and hiring survey is the last to be conducted and published due to funding reductions.

# Executive summary

This report presents the results of the 2014 spring job vacancy and hiring survey, which collected data by surveying 12,000 Washington employers in April through June 2014.

Estimated job vacancies increased by 13.8 percent (from 85,424 in spring 2013 to 97,203 in spring 2014). Estimated hiring rose nearly seven percent from 157,371 in spring 2013 to an estimated 168,143 in spring 2014.

## Spring 2014 job vacancy results

### Job vacancies by area

Employers reported an estimated 97,203 vacancies statewide, representing an estimated 3.5 percent of employment covered by unemployment insurance.<sup>1</sup> Regionally, employers in the west-urban area of the state reported the largest number of vacancies, an estimated 66,045. The west-rural area had the fewest vacancies at an estimated 8,295.

### Top three occupations

The three occupations with the most vacancies were:

- Retail salespersons (7,110 vacancies, comprising 7.3 percent of total vacancies).
- Customer service representatives (2,481 vacancies, comprising 2.6 percent of total vacancies).
- Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse (2,346 vacancies, comprising 2.4 percent of total vacancies).

### Top three industry sectors

The three industry sectors with the most vacancies were:

- Healthcare and social assistance (17,346 vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.0 percent of covered employment).
- Retail trade (13,046 vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.3 percent of covered employment).
- Accommodation and food services (10,581 vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.6 percent of total covered employment).

### Vacancy duration

Statewide, job vacancies had been open for an average of 44.5 days. The longest average duration, 49.4 days, was in the west-urban area. This was an increase since spring 2013, when vacancies were open an estimated average of 31.3 days, but a decrease since fall 2013, when vacancies were open an estimated average of 100.2 days.

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<sup>1</sup> Shares were estimated based on survey design. For more detail, see *Appendix 5*.

### Vacancies in newly created positions

Newly created positions made up 25.0 percent of estimated vacancies statewide.

### Vacancies by firm employment size

Firms with 100 to 499 workers had the highest number of vacancies statewide (21,076 vacancies, 21.7 percent of all vacancies).

### Educational requirements

More than two-thirds of all vacancies required either no educational requirement or only a high school education.

### License or certification requirements

Statewide, 36.5 percent of the vacancies required some form of license or certification.

### Experience requirements

Statewide, 49.3 percent of vacancies required some experience.

### Vacancies for STEM occupations

The increasingly competitive global market has increased the demand for workers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations.

“In the 21st century, scientific and technological innovations have become increasingly important as we face the benefits and challenges of both globalization and a knowledge-based economy. To succeed in this new information-based and highly technological society, students need to develop their capabilities in STEM to levels much beyond what was considered acceptable in the past.”<sup>2</sup>

The federal Department of Labor’s Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) has designated certain occupations as STEM occupations. The three STEM occupations with the most vacancies were:

- Automotive service technicians and mechanics (823 vacancies, comprising 0.85 percent of total vacancies).
- Software developers, applications (676 vacancies, comprising 0.70 percent of total vacancies).
- Civil engineers (503 vacancies, comprising 0.52 percent of total vacancies).

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<sup>2</sup> National Science Foundation. [www.nsf.gov/nsb/documents/2007/stem\\_action.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/nsb/documents/2007/stem_action.pdf)

## Spring 2014 hiring results

Statewide, there were an estimated 168,143 hires from January 1 through March 31, 2014 that made up 6.1 percent of covered employment at that time.

### Hires by area

The urban areas of the state accounted for about four out of five hires. The largest number of new hires was in the west-urban area (101,426).

### Hires paid \$13.95 average hourly wage

In spring 2014, the average estimated hourly wage for hires was \$13.95, up slightly from the \$13.67 average wage reported in 2013. The average ranged from \$11.57 in the east-rural area of the state to \$15.13 in the west-urban area.

### Top three occupations

The three occupations with the most hires were:

- Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse (16,541, comprising 9.8 percent of total hires).
- Retail salespersons (9,078, comprising 5.4 percent of total hires).
- Cashiers (5,734, comprising 3.4 percent of total hires).

### Top three industry sectors

The three industry sectors with the most hires were:

- Healthcare and social assistance (26,312 hires, comprising 6.1 percent of covered employment).
- Accommodation and food services (21,439 hires, comprising 9.3 percent of covered employment).
- Retail trade (21,291 hires, comprising 7.0 percent of covered employment).

### 30-day average to hire

On average, positions were open statewide for about one month (29.6 days). That was longer than in spring 2013 (16.2 days) but far shorter than in fall 2013 (65.8 days).

Industry sectors with the longest time to hire were:

- Accommodation and food services (40.7 days).
- Healthcare and social assistance (37.5 days).
- Information (36.6 days).

### Hiring times by firm employment size

- Firms employing fewer than 10 workers experienced the shortest time to hire (22.7 days).
- Firms employing 100 through 499 workers experienced the longest time to hire (34.7 days).

## Spring 2014 relative probability of filling job vacancies (hazard ratios)

Hazard ratios were used to compare the relative likelihood of filling a job vacancy by various characteristics (e.g., types of geographic areas, occupation, industry, firm size). Based upon both the vacancy and hiring components of the survey, the hazard ratio shows how relatively easy it was, in terms of a given time-period, to fill a given position.

### Areas

The west-urban area had the lowest relative probability of filling its job vacancies within a given time period. In contrast, the east-urban area had the highest relative probability of filling its job vacancies.

### Occupations

Legal occupation vacancies had the highest probability of being filled, while computer and mathematical occupations had the lowest probability of being filled.

### Industry sectors

The mining-industry sector had the highest probability of filling its job vacancies within a given time period. Firms in the information industry sector had the lowest probability of filling vacancies in a given time.

# Spring 2014 job vacancy survey results

The job vacancy component asked Washington state employers whether they were currently recruiting for any vacancies at their location. The information collected revealed a snapshot-in-time of Washington employment conditions. We learned the estimated number of vacant positions, the characteristics of those vacant positions, the workforce needs of employers and vacancy trends by industry sector and occupation.

Of the 12,000 employers in the survey sample, 6,344 employers provided usable responses to the job vacancy component, for a response rate of 52.9 percent. Estimates were produced with 95 percent confidence intervals. This measure of statistical reliability was used for determining whether the data met Employment Security Department (ESD) publishing standards. (See description of publishing standards in *Appendix 4*).

## Vacancies by areas

An estimated 97,203 positions were vacant statewide. These vacancies represented 3.5 percent of employment covered by the unemployment insurance program.<sup>3</sup> Statewide, the area with the largest estimated share of vacancies as a percent of total covered employment was east rural, at a 4.2 percent share. The east-urban area registered a 2.7 percent share; representing the smallest estimated share of vacancies as a percent of total covered employment (*Appendix 4*).

Spring 2014 vacancies in west urban Washington alone were estimated to be 66,045 jobs. *Figure 1* shows the vacancies by area for spring 2014. These estimates were consistent with spring 2013 estimates.

### Figure 1. Vacancies by areas

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Areas	Vacancies	Estimated percent of vacancies in covered employment
East rural	9,846	4.2%
East urban	13,017	2.7%
West rural	8,295	3.6%
West urban	66,045	3.6%
<b>Washington state</b>	<b>97,203</b>	<b>3.5%</b>

<sup>\*</sup>Shares were estimated based on survey design. For more detail, see *Appendix 5*.

*Although most vacancies were in the west urban area, the east-rural area had the largest proportion of vacancies to total covered employment.*

<sup>3</sup> All public administration sectors and the private households sector has been removed from the initial population. All estimates based on the survey and all references to total covered employment throughout this report refer to this adjusted universe.

## Top 25 occupations with vacancies

For this survey, every job title was coded based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, other federal agencies and most state employment agencies also use SOC codes for occupation-based research and reporting.

The top 25 occupations represented 41,408 of the 97,203 estimated vacancies, or 42.6 percent of the total, as shown in *Figure 2*.

From the state total of estimated vacancies, the top three occupations, in terms of their share of total vacancies, were:

- Retail salespersons (7,110 vacancies, 7.3 percent).
- Customer service representatives (2,481 vacancies, 2.6 percent).
- Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse came in third with 2,346 vacancies (2.4 percent of the vacancy total).

Year over year, the top three occupational vacancies in spring 2013 were retail salespersons; farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse; and food preparation workers. Retail salespersons and farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse remained in the top three occupations with vacancies since fall 2012.

**Figure 2.** Top 25 occupations with vacancies  
 Washington state, spring 2014  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

SOC	Occupations	Vacancies	Percent of total vacancies
41-2031	Retail salespersons	7,110	7.3%
43-4051	Customer service representatives	2,481	2.6%
45-2092	Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse	2,346	2.4%
51-9198	Helpers-production workers	2,282	2.3%
29-1141	Registered nurses	2,156	2.2%
41-2011	Cashiers	2,133	2.2%
31-1014	Nursing assistants	2,092	2.2%
35-3031	Waiters and waitresses	2,090	2.1%
53-7062	Laborers and freight, stock and material movers, hand	1,774	1.8%
53-3032	Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers	1,675	1.7%
35-3021	Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	1,671	1.7%
39-9021	Personal care aides	1,575	1.6%
35-2014	Cooks, restaurant	1,320	1.4%
41-4012	Sales reps., wholesale and manuf., except technical and scientific products	1,084	1.1%
37-2012	Maids and housekeeping cleaners	1,068	1.1%
35-2021	Food preparation workers	1,032	1.1%
25-2021	Elementary school teachers, except special education	981	1.0%
37-2011	Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	881	0.9%
43-5081	Stock clerks and order fillers	878	0.9%
25-2031	Secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education	849	0.9%
49-3023	Automotive service technicians and mechanics	823	0.8%
49-9071	Maintenance and repair workers, general	807	0.8%
39-5012	Hairdressers, hairstylists and cosmetologists	806	0.8%
43-4171	Receptionists and information clerks	786	0.8%
37-3011	Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	707	0.7%
	<b>Total of top 25 occupations</b>	<b>41,408</b>	<b>42.6%</b>

*The three occupations with the most estimated vacancies were retail salespersons, customer service representatives, and farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse.*

## Vacancies by industry sectors

Employers were classified into industries based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, other federal agencies and most state employment agencies use NAICS for industry-based research and reporting.

Although total covered employment could not be estimated for occupations, this comparison could be made for industries. The top three industry sectors for vacancies, in terms of the number of vacancies, were:

- Healthcare and social assistance (17,346 vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.0 percent of total covered employment).
- Retail trade (13,046 vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.3 percent of total covered employment).
- Accommodation and food services (10,581 vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.6 percent of total covered employment).

Last spring, the top three industry sectors for vacancies were healthcare and social assistance, accommodation and food services, and administrative and support and waste management. Only one sector was different this year, retail trade (spring 2014) rather than administrative and support services and waste management (spring 2013).

*Figure 3* shows the number of vacancies and estimated percent of vacancies in employment covered by unemployment insurance for each major industry sector.

At 7.2 percent, the management of companies and enterprises industry sector had the largest proportional share of vacancies relative to total covered employment.

**Figure 3. Vacancies by industry sector**

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

NAICS	Industry sector	Vacancies	Estimated percent of vacancies in total covered employment <sup>1</sup>
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3,579	3.7%
21	Mining	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>
22	Utilities	267	1.5%
23	Construction	5,350	3.5%
31-33	Manufacturing	6,372	2.4%
42	Wholesale trade	3,080	2.5%
44-45	Retail trade	13,046	4.3%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	4,682	5.4%
51	Information	3,003	6.6%
52	Finance and insurance	2,980	3.4%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	1,539	3.1%
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	4,371	3.0%
55	Management of companies and enterprises	893	7.2%
56	Administrative and support and waste management	6,042	5.0%
61	Educational services	6,736	1.6%
62	Healthcare and social assistance	17,346	4.0%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	2,670	3.9%
72	Accommodation and food services	10,581	4.6%
81	Other services	4,667	5.0%

<sup>1</sup>Shares were estimated based on the survey design. For more detail, see Appendix 5. <sup>2</sup>Too few observations for reporting purposes.

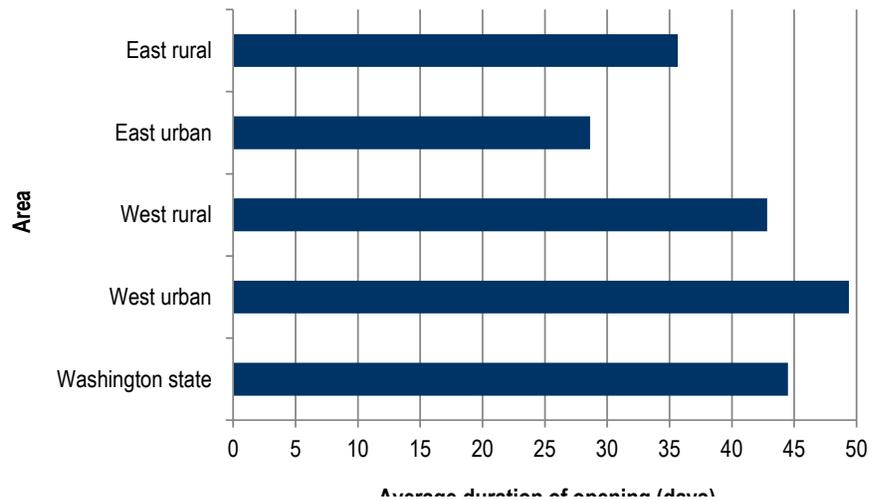
*The healthcare and social assistance industry sector had the most vacancies at an estimated 17,346 vacancies, representing 4.0 percent of total covered employment in that industry sector.*

## Vacancy duration by area<sup>4</sup>

Statewide, employers spent an average of 44.5 days searching for workers to fill vacant positions, with substantial variation among regions and industry sectors (*Figure 4*). Vacancies had the shortest duration in the east-urban area (28.6 days). The longest duration, 49.4 days, was in the west-urban area.

Average duration was higher in spring 2014 than was estimated in spring 2013 (31.3 days), but the regional distribution was the same. Average duration was much lower in spring 2014 than was estimated in fall 2013 (100.2 days), and regional distribution differed: the longest average duration (191.9 days) was estimated for the east-urban area, and the shortest duration was estimated in the east-rural area (37.2 days).

**Figure 4.** Average days vacancies were open, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



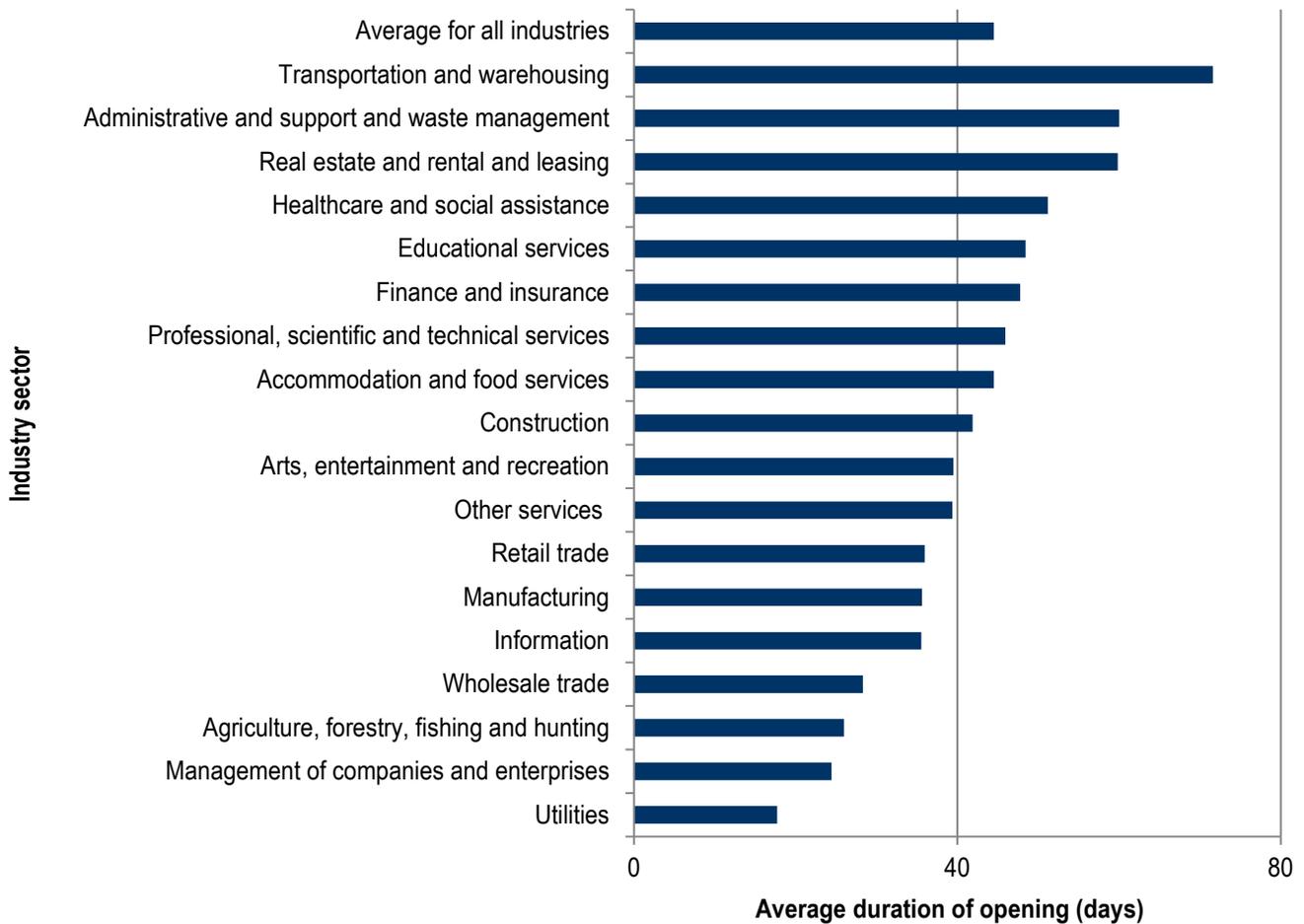
*Job vacancies were open the shortest period in the east-urban area.*

<sup>4</sup> Questions regarding vacancy duration were not asked prior to the spring 2013 survey.

## Vacancy duration by industry sector

On average, positions were vacant for 71.6 days in the transportation and warehousing sector (*Figure 5*). This contrasts with the average vacancy duration of 44.5 days for all industry sectors combined. The utilities industry sector reported the shortest duration, on average (17.7 days).

**Figure 5.** Average days vacancies were open, by industry sector  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



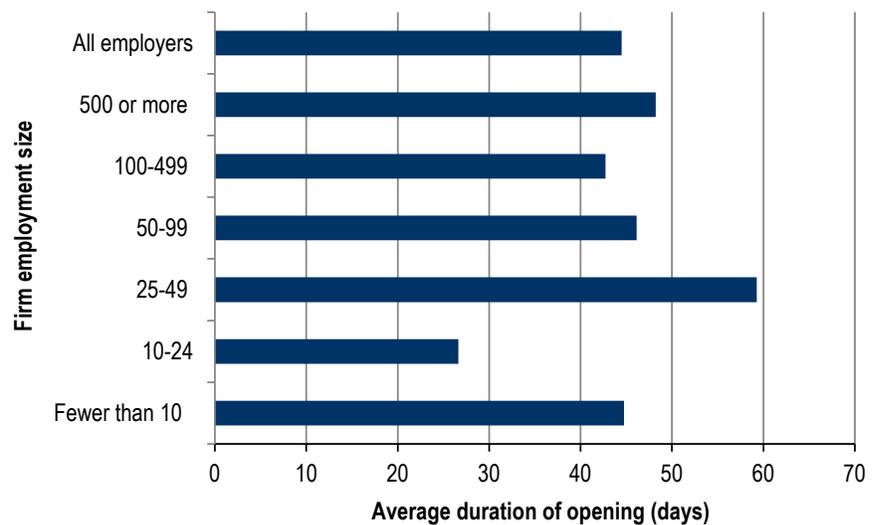
*The transportation and warehousing industry sector reported the longest duration of vacancies, on average (71.6 days).*

## Vacancy duration by firm employment size

Firms employing 25 to 49 workers reported average vacancy duration of 59.3 days – the longest vacancy duration among employment size groups (*Figure 6*). The shortest job vacancy duration (26.6 days) was for firms with 10 to 24 workers.

Even with this variation, all were well below the durations from fall 2013, where durations ranged from 73.2 days (firms with 100 to 499 workers) and 135.4 days (firms with 500 or more workers).

**Figure 6.** Average days vacancies were open, by firm employment size  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



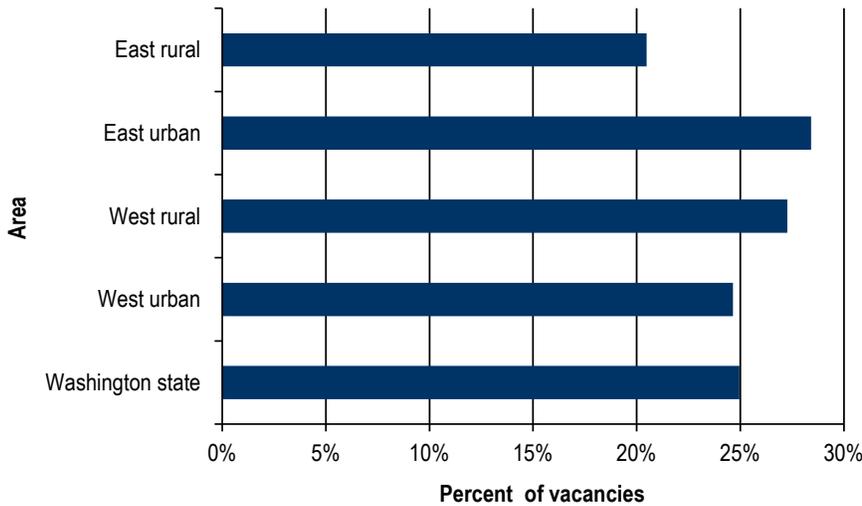
*Firms employing 24 to 49 workers experienced the longest average duration of vacancies.*

## 1 in 4 vacancies were newly created positions

For each reported vacancy, the survey asked employers how many of those openings were newly created positions. A newly created position was defined in the survey as a position that was never previously filled. In general, estimations of the newly created positions show employment growth.

Newly created positions made up 25.0 percent of estimated vacancies statewide. This compares to 26.0 percent estimated new vacancies in the spring 2013 survey. At 28.4 percent, the east-urban area had the highest percent of new vacancies. The lowest percent of new vacancies, 20.5 percent, was in the east-rural area (*Figure 7*).

**Figure 7.** Vacancies in newly created positions, by area  
 Washington state, spring 2014  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

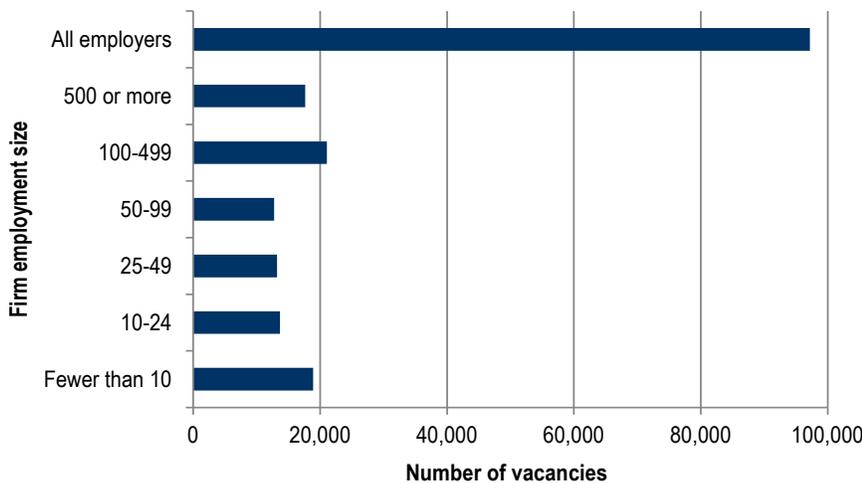


The east-urban area of the state had the highest share of newly created estimated vacancies, at 28.4 percent.

## The largest firms had the most vacancies, but vacancies at smaller firms made up a greater share of employment

The survey found that firms with 100 to 499 employees had the greatest share of vacancies, at 21,076 (21.7 percent of the 97,203 total estimated vacancies). Firms employing fewer than 10 workers reported 18,884 vacancies (19.4 percent of the total vacancies reported statewide). *Figure 8* shows the number of vacancies by firm employment size.

**Figure 8.** Vacancies by firm employment size  
 Washington state, spring 2014  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



Employers with 100 to 499 employees had the most vacancies, accounting for 21,076 of the estimated 97,203 vacancies statewide.

When the estimated vacancies were viewed as a percent of the total covered employment by firm employment size, employers with fewer than 10 employees had the highest proportion of vacancies, comprising an estimated 4.9 percent of total covered employment (18,884). Firms employing 500 or more workers were the lowest, accounting for 2.7 percent of total covered employment. *Figure 9* shows the estimated vacancies and the percent of total covered employment by firm employment size.

**Figure 9.** Vacancies by firm employment size and percent of total covered employment

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

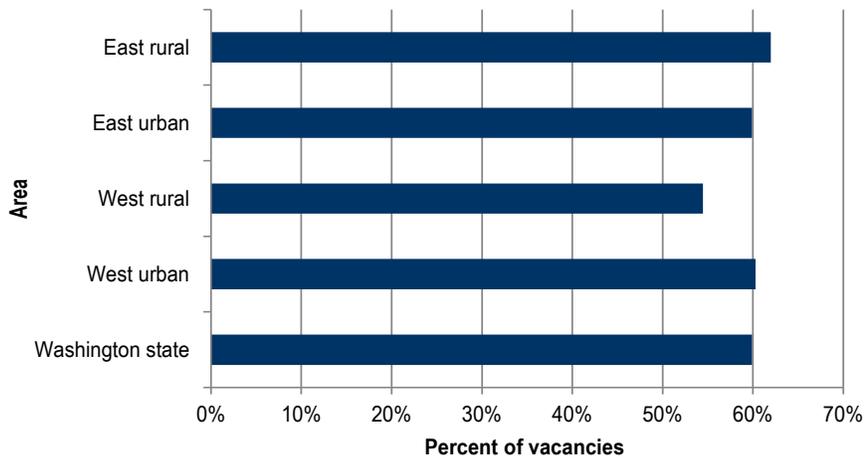
Firm employment size	Vacancies	Total covered employment	Vacancies as a percent of covered employment
Fewer than 10	18,884	385,170	4.9%
10-24	13,668	388,743	3.5%
25-49	13,189	335,750	3.9%
50-99	12,735	339,707	3.7%
100-499	21,076	643,098	3.3%
500 or more	17,652	660,367	2.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>97,203</b>	<b>2,752,834</b>	<b>3.5%</b>

*Employers with fewer than 10 employees had the greatest percent of estimated vacancies based on total covered employment.*

## About three out of five vacancies were full-time positions

Of the total estimated vacancies statewide, an estimated 59.9 percent were full-time positions (*Figure 10*). This is relatively consistent with the 62.4 percent reported in the spring 2013 report. The highest percent of full-time vacant positions was in the east-rural area of the state (62.0 percent), followed by the west-urban area (60.3 percent).

**Figure 10.** Vacancies in full-time positions, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



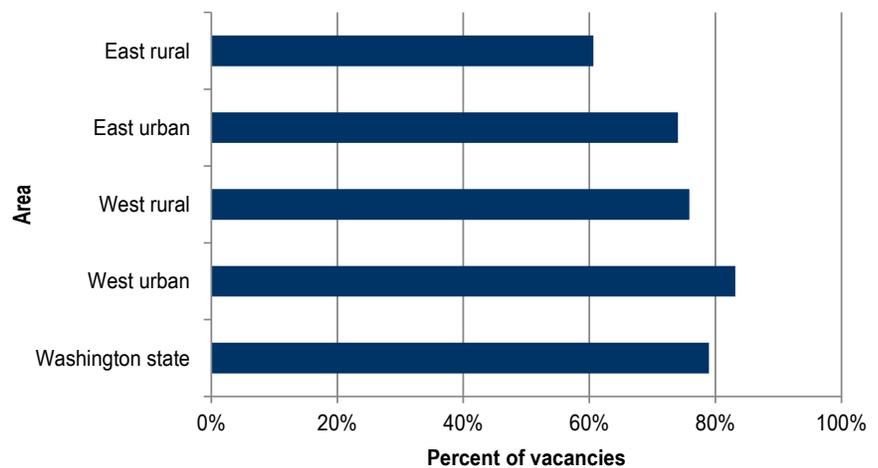
*The east-rural area of the state had the highest percentage of full-time vacancies, with 62.0.*

## Nearly four in five vacancies were permanent positions

For each reported vacancy, employers were asked whether the vacancy was a permanent or seasonal (non-permanent) position. The survey did not define permanent or seasonal employment.

Statewide, an estimated 79.0 percent (75,009) of estimated vacancies were permanent positions (*Figure 11*). This is comparable with 77.8 percent of new positions being permanent in spring 2013. The west-urban area had the highest percentage of permanent positions at 83.2 percent, followed by the west-rural area with 75.9 percent. East rural, with its high proportion of seasonal farm workers, had the smallest percent of permanent new vacancies at 60.7 percent.

**Figure 11.** Vacancies in permanent positions, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



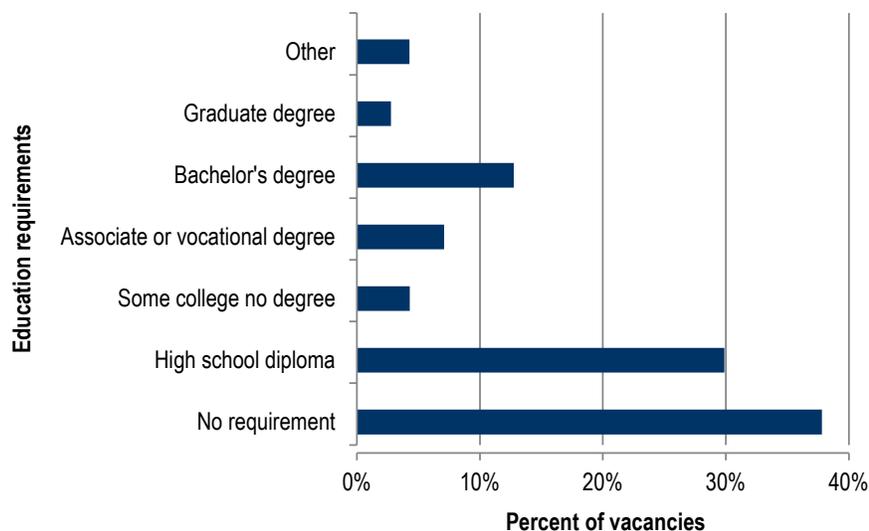
*Of all vacancies, 79.0 percent were permanent positions. At 83.2 percent, the west-urban area had the largest percent of permanent positions.*

## Most vacancies required only a high school diploma or had no educational requirement

Employers were asked about education requirements for current job vacancies, with response options of: no requirement, high school diploma, some college, no degree, associate or vocational degree, bachelor's degree, graduate degree, or other. The "other" category accommodates education requirements that did not fit into any of the available categories.

The survey results showed that an estimated 29.9 percent of all estimated vacancies required a high school diploma and an additional 37.8 percent had no education requirement. Associate degrees were required for 7.1 percent of the vacancies, bachelor's degrees were required for 12.7 percent of the vacancies and graduate degrees were required for 2.8 percent of vacancies. *Figure 12* shows the education-level requirements of vacancies.

**Figure 12.** Vacancies by education level  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Of the total estimated vacancies, more than two-thirds required either a high school diploma or no education requirement at all.*

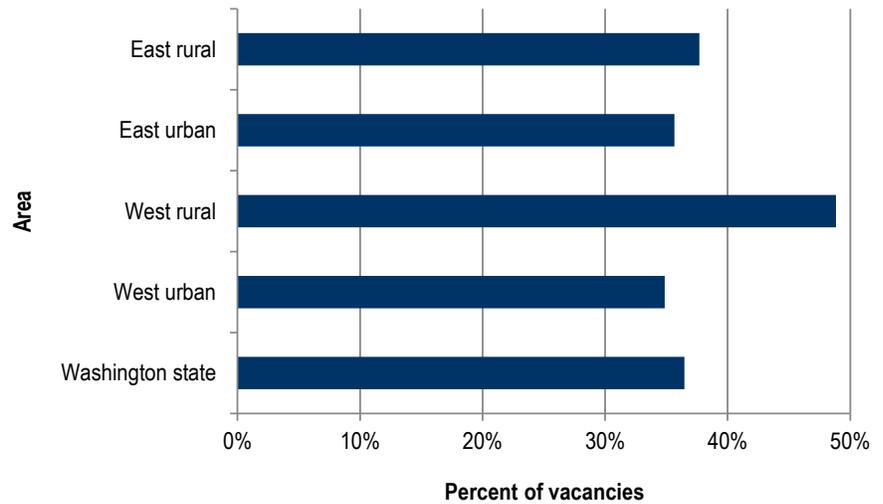
It is important to note that these were the minimum education requirements listed in job postings. A position could require a high school diploma, but, based on the applicant pool, the employer might hire someone with more education.

See *Appendix 6* for education-level requirements by area.

## More than one-third of vacancies required a license or certification

Statewide, a license or certification was required for 36.5 percent of all vacancies (*Figure 13*). This is comparable to the 38.4 percent reported in the spring 2013 survey. West-rural Washington had the highest percent of vacancies requiring a license or certification, at 48.8 percent. East-rural Washington followed this with an estimated 37.7 percent of all vacancies requiring a license or certification.

**Figure 13.** Vacancies requiring a license or certification, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

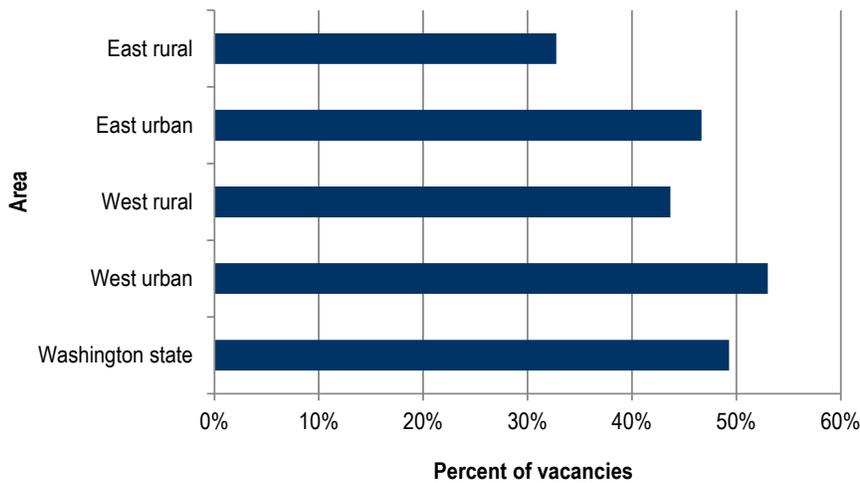


*More than one-third of the vacancies statewide required a license or certification.*

## About half of vacancies required previous experience

Based on survey responses, an estimated 49.3 percent of vacancies in spring 2014 required experience. Vacancies requiring experience dropped, year over year, with an estimated 52.7 percent of all vacancies that required previous work experience in spring 2013. At 53.0 percent, west-urban area vacancies were most likely to require job experience. At 32.7 percent, east-rural area vacancies were least likely to require job experience (*Figure 14*).

**Figure 14.** Vacancies requiring experience, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



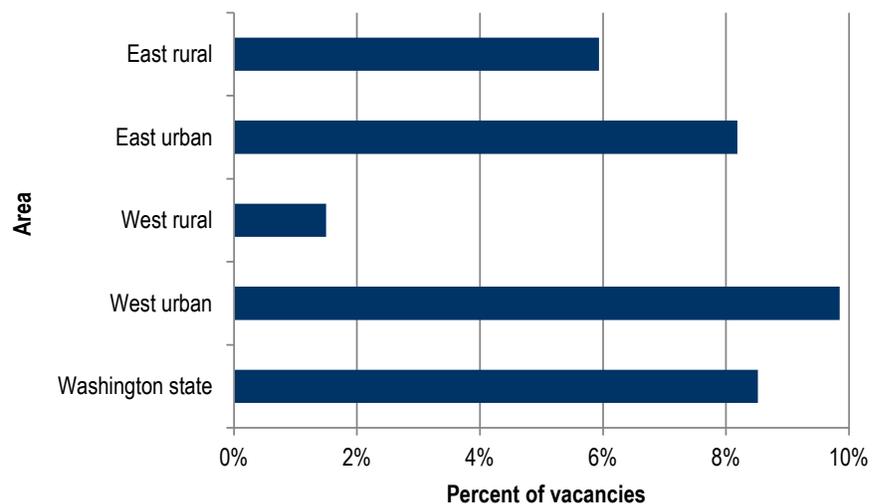
*Statewide, an estimated 49.3 percent of vacancies required experience.*

## About 1 out of 12 vacancies were in STEM occupations

The federal Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) has designated certain occupations in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as STEM occupations. *Figure 15* shows the percent of vacancies estimated to be STEM occupations. Statewide, 8.5 percent, or one out of every 12 vacancies, were in STEM-designated occupations.<sup>5</sup>

The percent of STEM vacancies have held steady statewide, changing little since spring 2013 (from 8.3 to 8.5 percent). The distribution between areas was similar. The west-rural area had the lowest share of STEM vacancies (1.5 percent). The fall 2013 distribution varied much more, ranging from 1.5 (east rural) to 24.8 percent (west rural), across all areas.

**Figure 15.** Percent of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) vacancies, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Statewide, one out of 12 vacancies was estimated to be a STEM occupation.*

<sup>5</sup> STEM occupations are identified based on O\*NET definitions, which can be found at [www.onetonline.org/find/stem](http://www.onetonline.org/find/stem).

The top 10 occupations represented 4,081 of the 97,203 estimated vacancies, or 4.2 percent of the total, as shown in *Figure 16*.

The three STEM occupations with the most vacancies were:

- Automotive service technicians and mechanics (823 vacancies, comprising 0.85 percent of total vacancies).
- Software developers, applications (676 vacancies, comprising 0.70 percent of total vacancies).
- Civil engineers (503 vacancies, comprising 0.52 percent of total vacancies).

**Figure 16.** Top 10 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations with vacancies Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

SOC	Occupations	STEM vacancies	Percent of total STEM vacancies	Percent of total vacancies
49-3023	Automotive service technicians and mechanics	823	9.9%	0.85%
15-1132	Software developers, applications	676	8.2%	0.70%
17-2051	Civil engineers	503	6.1%	0.52%
15-1199	Computer occupations, all other	486	5.9%	0.50%
15-1151	Computer user support specialists	350	4.2%	0.36%
11-9021	Construction managers	308	3.7%	0.32%
17-2199	Engineers, all other	238	2.9%	0.25%
17-1011	Architects, except landscape and naval	234	2.8%	0.24%
13-2011	Accountants and auditors	233	2.8%	0.24%
11-9199	Managers, all other	229	2.8%	0.24%
	<b>Total top 10 STEM occupations</b>	<b>4,081</b>	<b>49.3%</b>	<b>4.20%</b>

*The top 10 STEM occupations account for nearly half of all estimated STEM vacancies (49.3 percent).*



# Spring 2014 hiring results

The hiring component of the survey asked employers whether they made any new external hires (workers hired from outside the firm) from Jan. 1 through March 31, 2014. This information provided an indicator of employment growth and the relative vigor of the state economy. We learned the estimated number of positions filled, the characteristics of those positions, the workforce needs employers were able to meet and trends by industry sector and occupation.

For the purpose of this survey, hires were defined as any new external hire for both new and existing positions, excluding internal promotions.

The same employers were surveyed for the hiring and job vacancy components of this report. The hiring component received 6,317 usable responses, with a response rate of 52.6 percent. Estimates were produced with 95 percent confidence intervals. This measure of statistical reliability was used to determine whether the data met Employment Security Department (ESD) publishing standards. (See the description of publishing standards in *Appendix 4*.)

## Hires by area

As *Figure 17* shows, hires represented an estimated 6.1 percent of total employment covered by the unemployment insurance program. Employers hired an estimated 168,143 new external workers statewide from January 1 through March 31, 2014. Although this is a decrease from the 209,092 estimated for fall 2013, the year-over-year change represented an increase over the 157,371 hires estimated for the spring 2013 survey.

As a percent of total covered employment, hires ranged from an estimated 5.6 percent in the west-urban area to 7.4 percent in the east-rural area.

### Figure 17. Hires by area

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Area	Hires	Percent of hires	Estimated percent of hires in covered employment*
East rural	17,123	10.2%	7.4%
East urban	34,510	20.5%	7.3%
West rural	15,084	9.0%	6.5%
West urban	101,426	60.3%	5.6%
<b>Washington state</b>	<b>168,143</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>

\*Shares were estimated based on the survey design. For more detail, see *Appendix 5*.

*Hires represented 6.1 percent of total employment covered by the unemployment insurance program.*

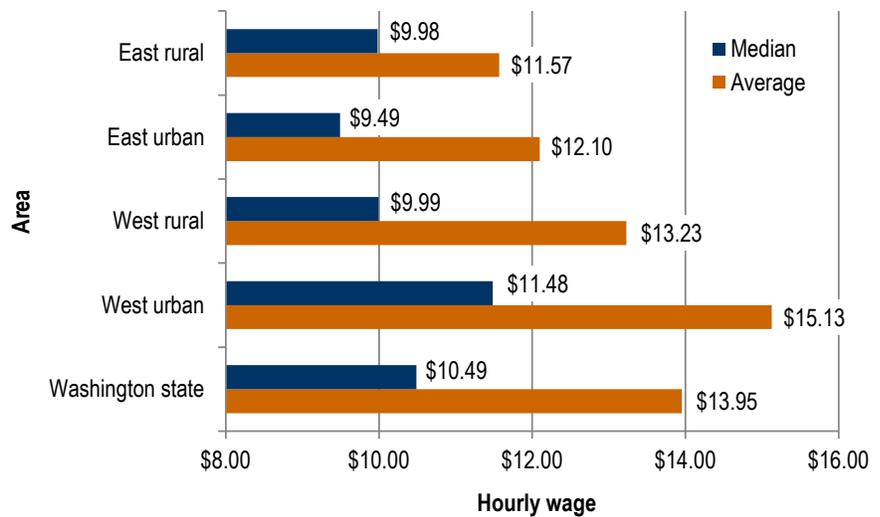
## Hires paid \$13.95 average hourly wage

For each hire, employers were asked for the starting wage offered. Regionally, the average hourly wage ranged from an estimated \$15.13 in the west-urban area to \$11.57 in the east-rural area. Average hourly wage rates for the state remained relatively unchanged compared to the spring 2013 survey. Statewide, the average hourly wage rate was an estimated \$13.95 for spring 2014, compared to \$13.67 for spring 2013.

Median wages were considerably lower than their respective average hourly wages, which suggests that somewhat fewer workers were paid a much higher wage rate.<sup>6</sup> The statewide median hourly wage offered was \$10.49. The highest median hourly wage was in the west-urban area at \$11.48 and the lowest was in the east-urban area at \$9.49. *Figure 18* shows the average and median hourly wages for hires by area.

**Figure 18.** Average and median hourly wage rates for hires, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Across all areas, the average starting wage offered was higher than the median. The highest average starting hourly wage offered to hires was in the west-urban area.*

<sup>6</sup> The median is that number which separates the sample into halves – half of the observations lie below the median and half of the observations lie above the median.

## Top 25 occupations for hires

Every job title was defined and coded based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, other federal statistical agencies and most state employment agencies also use SOC coding for occupation-based research and reporting.

The top 25 occupations accounted for 89,471 of the estimated 168,143 hires (53.2 percent), as shown in *Figure 19*. Among the top 25 occupations, the top three by number of hires were:

- Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse (16,541, comprising 9.8 percent of total hires).
- Retail salespersons (9,078, comprising 5.4 percent of total hires).
- Cashiers (5,734, comprising 3.4 percent of total hires).

Compared to spring 2013, the top three occupations were the same.

The average hourly wage rates (estimated) for the top 25 hires by occupation are shown in *Figure 19*. Among the top 25 occupations, the three occupations with the highest average hourly wage rate were:

- Registered nurses (\$26.96 per hour).
- Carpenters (\$20.25 per hour).
- Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, all other (\$18.61 per hour).

Within the top 25 occupations, the median hourly wage rate was always less than the average hourly wage rate. For four of the 25 top hires by occupation, the median hourly wage equaled the state minimum wage.

The top three occupations in the spring 2013 survey, by average hourly wage, were registered nurses (\$27.37), electricians (\$25.35) and carpenters (\$20.54).

**Figure 19.** Starting average hourly and median wage rates for the top 25 hires by occupation  
 Washington state, spring 2014  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

SOC	Occupations	Hires	Percent of total hires	Average hourly wage	Median hourly wage
45-2092	Farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery and greenhouse	16,541	9.8%	\$9.66	\$9.32
41-2031	Retail salespersons	9,078	5.4%	\$9.99	\$9.41
41-2011	Cashiers	5,734	3.4%	\$9.78	\$9.35
43-4051	Customer service representatives	5,171	3.1%	\$11.87	\$10.11
35-3021	Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	4,845	2.9%	\$9.50	\$9.32
39-9021	Personal care aides	3,850	2.3%	\$10.70	\$10.17
31-1014	Nursing assistants	3,778	2.2%	\$10.94	\$10.66
35-3031	Waiters and waitresses	3,729	2.2%	\$9.43	\$9.32
51-9198	Helpers-production workers	3,631	2.2%	\$11.26	\$10.02
53-7062	Laborers and freight, stock and material movers, hand	3,441	2.0%	\$11.62	\$10.22
43-4171	Receptionists and information clerks	2,932	1.7%	\$11.88	\$10.93
47-2061	Construction laborers	2,548	1.5%	\$16.29	\$12.93
35-3022	Counter attendants, cafeteria, food concession and coffee shop	2,525	1.5%	\$9.84	\$9.31*
29-1141	Registered nurses	2,402	1.4%	\$26.96	\$26.58
35-2014	Cooks, restaurant	2,231	1.3%	\$11.09	\$10.36
53-3032	Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers	2,195	1.3%	\$18.61	\$16.78
41-4012	Sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products	1,860	1.1%	\$15.32	\$11.26
43-9061	Office clerks, general	1,761	1.0%	\$13.03	\$11.76
49-9071	Maintenance and repair workers, general	1,743	1.0%	\$15.51	\$13.17
37-3011	Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	1,683	1.0%	\$11.20	\$9.97
43-6014	Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical and executive	1,682	1.0%	\$15.92	\$15.45
37-2012	Maids and housekeeping cleaners	1,564	0.9%	\$10.12	\$9.32
37-2011	Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	1,530	0.9%	\$11.75	\$10.80
47-2031	Carpenters	1,510	0.9%	\$20.25	\$19.89
35-2021	Food preparation workers	1,508	0.9%	\$9.99	\$9.34
	<b>Total of top 25 occupations</b>	<b>89,471</b>	<b>53.2%</b>	<b>\$13.95</b>	<b>\$10.49</b>

\*The mean wage fell below the Washington state minimum wage due to selection criteria used prior to estimation; the cutoff for wages was set at \$9.00/hour.

*Average hourly wage rates were consistently higher than median hourly wage rates, suggesting that somewhat fewer workers were paid higher wages across occupations.*

## Hires by industry sectors

Employers are defined and coded into industries based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, other federal statistical agencies and most state employment agencies also use NAICS for industry-based research and reporting.

The top three industry sectors with the greatest number of estimated hires were:

- Healthcare and social assistance (26,312 hires, comprising 6.1 percent of total covered employment).
- Accommodation and food services (21,439 hires, comprising 9.3 percent of total covered employment).
- Retail trade (21,291 hires, comprising 7.0 percent of total covered employment).

The top three industry sectors were the same as spring 2013, but in a different order.

At an estimated 18.4 percent, the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting-industry sector had the largest proportional share of estimated hires relative to total covered employment. Most of these were in agriculture, which reflects the normal seasonal hiring pattern. At 1.2 percent, educational services had the smallest share of estimated hires relative to total covered employment and the smallest absolute number of estimated hires (4,878). *Figure 20* shows the estimated number of hires by industry sector.

**Figure 20. Hires by industry sector**

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

NAICS	Industry sector	Hires	Estimated percent of hires in covered employment <sup>1</sup>
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	17,586	18.4%
21	Mining	N/A <sup>2</sup>	N/A <sup>2</sup>
22	Utilities	395	2.3%
23	Construction	9,125	6.0%
31-33	Manufacturing	12,365	4.6%
42	Wholesale trade	6,263	5.2%
44-45	Retail trade	21,291	7.0%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	6,039	6.9%
51	Information	2,569	5.6%
52	Finance and insurance	4,395	4.9%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	2,160	4.3%
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	9,483	6.4%
55	Management of companies and enterprises	1,241	10.1%
56	Administrative and support and waste management	10,356	8.6%
61	Educational services	4,878	1.2%
62	Healthcare and social assistance	26,312	6.1%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	4,527	6.8%
72	Accommodation and food services	21,439	9.3%
81	Other services	7,769	8.3%

<sup>1</sup>Shares were estimated based on survey design. For more detail, see *Appendix 5*. <sup>2</sup>Too few observations for reporting purposes.

*At 18.4 percent, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting had the largest proportional share of estimated hires relative to total covered employment in that industry sector.*

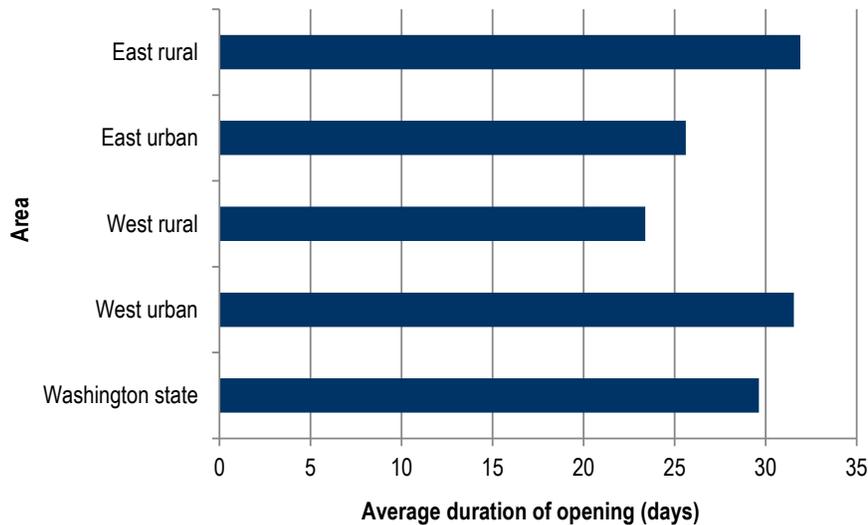
## On average, vacant positions were open less than one month

For each hire that a company reported, employers were asked how long the position was open.

Statewide, these positions took an estimated average of 29.6 days to fill (*Figure 21*). This is an increase from the estimated average of 16.2 days from spring 2013, but less than half of the average duration from fall 2013 of 65.8 days.

Employers in the west-urban and east-rural areas filled their positions in slightly more than 30 days each – about one month. The west-rural and east-urban areas took less than 30 days to fill the average vacancy (23.4 and 25.6 days, respectively).

**Figure 21.** Average days hires were open by area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Statewide, hires took less than one month to fill.*

## Average duration of openings by industry sectors

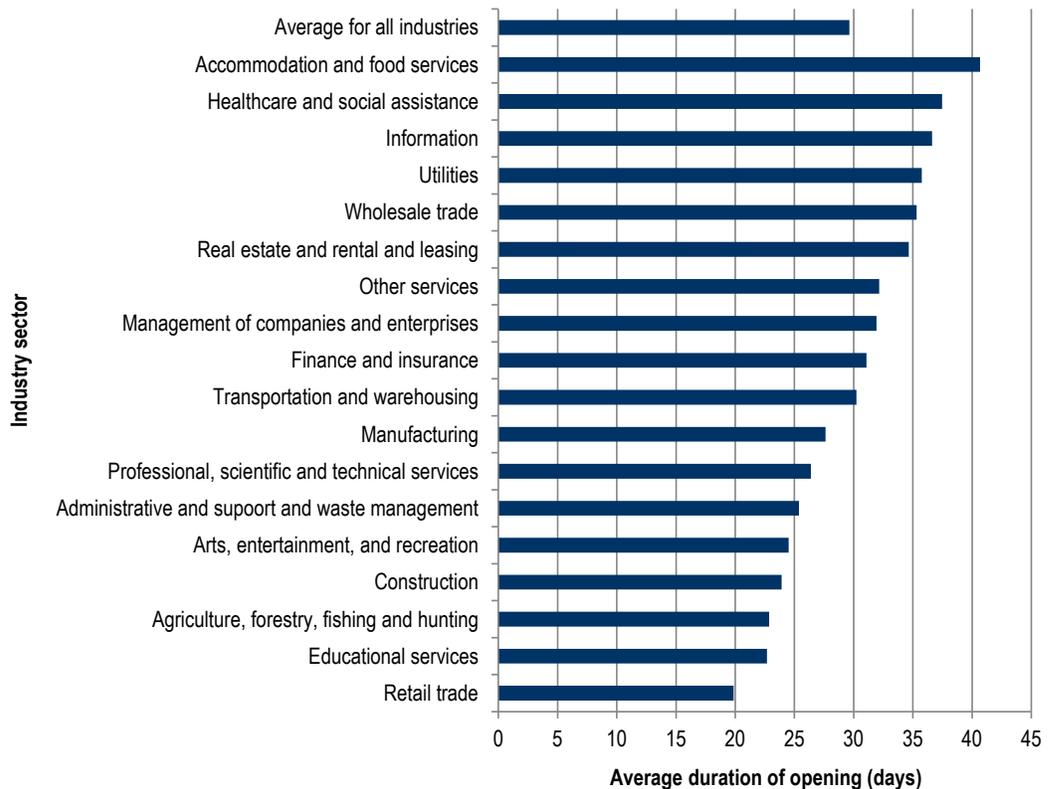
Figure 22 shows the average length of time to fill positions by industry sector. The industry sectors with the longest estimated vacancy durations were:

- Accommodation and food services (40.7 days).
- Healthcare and social assistance (37.5 days).
- Information (36.6 days).

Retail-trade positions were filled in the shortest time period (19.9 days), followed by educational services (22.7 days) and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (22.9 days).

Compared to last spring, the longest durations were in utilities (39.8 days), transportation and warehousing (29.5 days), finance and insurance and management of companies and enterprises (tied at 28.8 days). The range in average duration between industry sectors for spring 2014 (19.9 to 40.7 days) is smaller compared to spring 2013 (10.4 to 39.8 days).

**Figure 22.** Average days that hires were open by industry sector  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

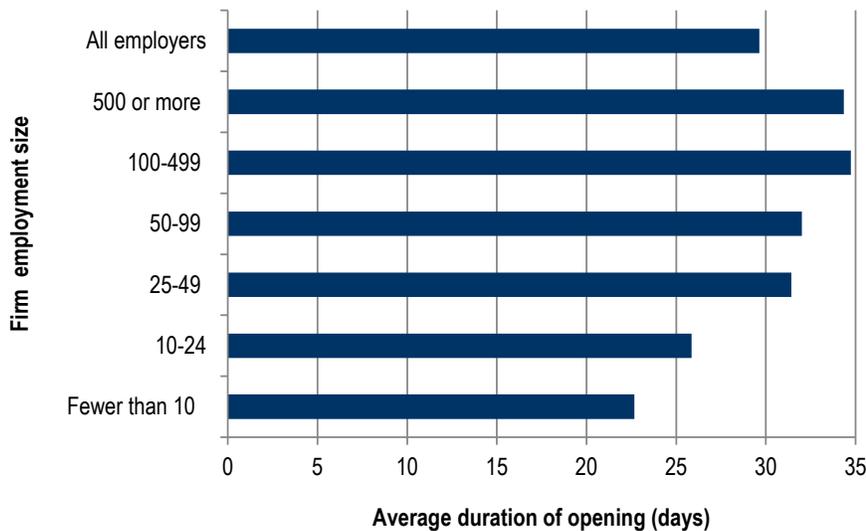


*Accommodation and food services took an estimated average of 40.7 days to fill positions compared to the overall estimated average of 29.6 days.*

## Larger firms took the longest to fill hires

Firms with larger labor forces took longer on average to hire. Firms with 100 through 499 workers required an estimated 34.7 days to hire, firms with 500 or more employees required an estimated 34.3 days and firms with fewer than 10 employees took just an estimated 22.7 days. *Figure 23* shows the estimated duration by firm employment size.

**Figure 23.** Average days positions were open by firm employment size  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

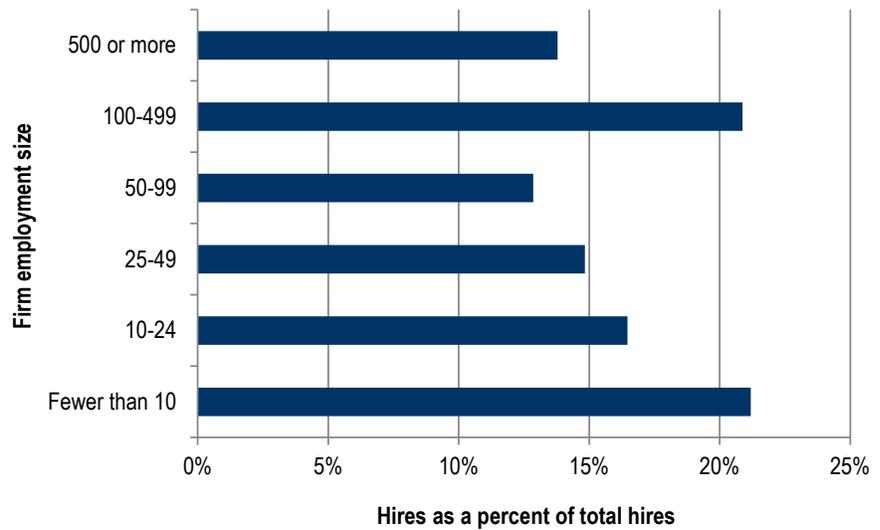


*Firms with 100 through 499 employees took the longest estimated time to hire.*

## Firms with fewer than 50 employees made the majority of hires

Firms with fewer than 10 employees hired an estimated 35,648 workers, while firms with 500 or more employees hired an estimated 23,194 (*Figure 24*). The shares of hires as a percent of total hires are similar to the pattern for the spring 2013 survey.

**Figure 24.** Hires as a percent of total hires by firm employment size  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

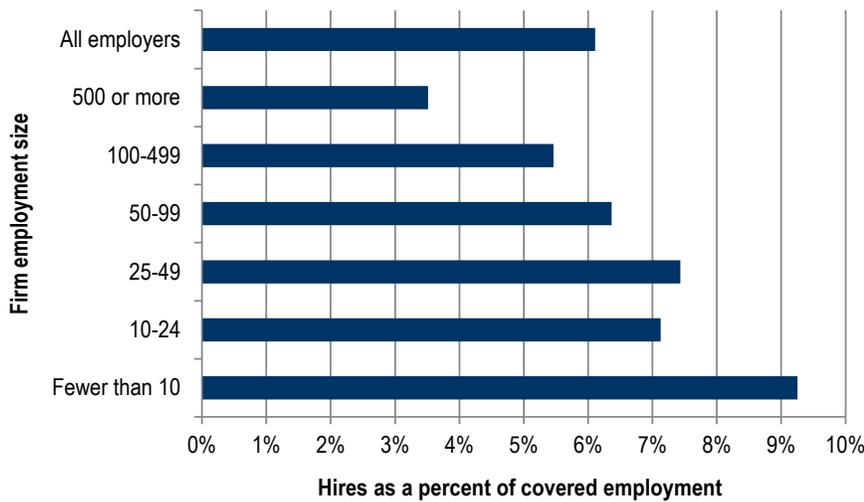


*Firms with fewer than 50 employees accounted for the majority of hires.*

## Firms with fewer than 10 employees had the highest share of hires relative to their firm employment size

Figure 25 displays the estimated percent of hires with respect to total covered employment by firm employment size. At an estimated 9.3 percent, firms with fewer than 10 employees had the highest share of estimated hires relative to total covered employment. At 3.5 percent, firms with 500 or more employees had the smallest share of estimated hires relative to total covered employment.

**Figure 25.** Hires as a percent of total covered employment by firm employment size  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages



*Hires for firms with fewer than 10 employees comprised an estimated 9.3 percent of total covered employment.*

## Less than six percent of hires were in STEM occupations

The increasingly competitive global market has increased the demand for workers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations. The federal Department of Labor's Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) has designated certain occupations as STEM occupations.

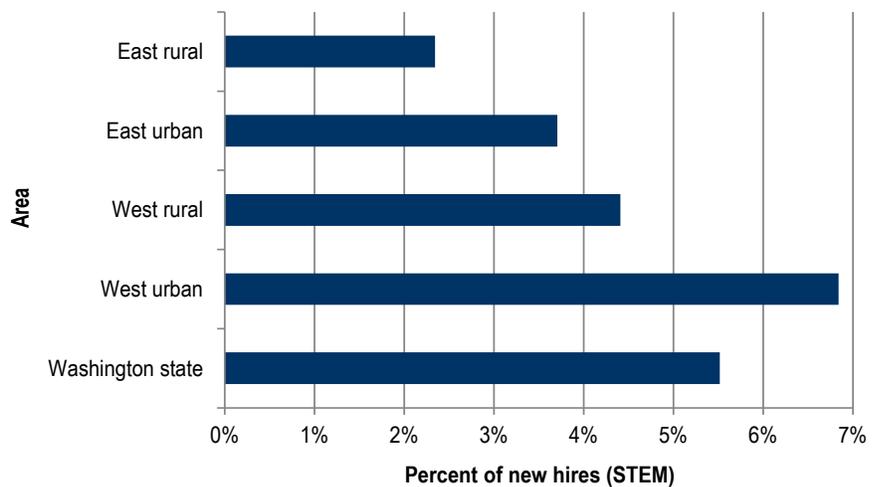
Statewide, an estimated 5.5 percent of hires were in STEM occupations (*Figure 26*). An estimated 6.8 percent of all hires in the west-urban area of the state were STEM employees. The east-rural area, at 2.3 percent, contained the lowest estimated share of STEM hires out of total estimated hires.

Compared to both spring 2013 (6.0 percent) and fall 2013 (5.9), the 5.5 percent of hires estimated for spring 2014 fell.

Compared to spring 2013, the main difference was seen in the east-rural area: 2.3 percent in spring 2014 and 5.9 percent in spring 2013. Relative to the fall 2013 estimates, the main difference was in the west-rural area: 4.4 percent in spring 2014 and 5.7 percent in fall 2013.

**Figure 26.** Percent of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) hires, by area  
Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Of all hires in the west-urban area of the state, 6.8 percent were employed in STEM occupations.*

## The top 10 STEM hires accounted for more than half of total hires

The top 10 STEM occupations, by number of estimated hires, are displayed in *Figure 27*. The three STEM occupations with the greatest number of estimated hires were:

- Automotive service technicians and mechanics (1,094, comprising 0.65 percent of total new hires).
- Accountants and auditors (738, comprising 0.44 percent of total new hires).
- Computer user support specialists (607, comprising 0.36 percent of total new hires).

**Figure 27.** Top 10 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) hires Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

SOC	Occupations	STEM hires	Percent of total STEM hires	Percent of total hires
49--3023	Automotive service technicians and mechanics	1,094	11.5%	0.65%
13-2011	Accountants and auditors	738	7.8%	0.44%
15-1151	Computer user support specialists	607	6.4%	0.36%
11-9199	Managers, all other	573	6.0%	0.34%
15-1199	Computer occupations, all other	446	4.7%	0.27%
15-1132	Software developers, applications	441	4.6%	0.26%
13-1051	Cost estimators	407	4.3%	0.24%
17-2051	Civil engineers	377	4.0%	0.22%
17-1011	Architects, except landscape and naval	311	3.3%	0.18%
35-2012	Cooks, institution and cafeteria	300	3.1%	0.18%
	<b>Total top 10 STEM occupations</b>	<b>5,294</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>3.15%</b>

*The top 10 STEM occupations account for 5,294 of all estimated STEM new hires (55.6 percent).*

## Survey results compared to online job postings

The Help Wanted OnLine®<sup>7</sup> (HWOL) data series provides a measure of real-time labor demand captured through online job ads. This unique data series was used to determine possible bias within the job vacancy and hiring survey results. Real-time labor demand data can themselves be biased, for reasons including the following:

- Not all vacancies are posted on the Internet.
- Some job announcements are not currently available vacancies – that is, positions for which employers are actively, currently recruiting.

By analyzing these two sets of data side-by-side, we can better assess true employer demand.<sup>8</sup> As shown in *Figure 28*, both hiring and vacancies based on the survey were significantly lower than what was posted online. The differences were particularly striking, for both vacancies and hires, for the following three occupational groups:

- Computer and mathematical occupations.
- Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations.
- Management occupations.

A few occupational groups were significantly higher for vacancies and hires based on the survey. Food preparation and serving-related and production occupations had higher shares for both vacancies and hires.

For vacancies, these differences were largest for the following three occupational groups:

- Food preparation and serving-related occupations.
- Production occupations.
- Transportation and material moving occupations.

For hires, these differences were largest for the following occupational groups:

- Farming, fishing and forestry occupations.
- Food preparation and serving-related occupations.
- Production occupations.

Generally, the number of online announcements from HWOL was relatively larger for high-end occupations,<sup>9</sup> but lower for the lower-end occupations. Even within the same sector, healthcare for

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<sup>7</sup> Technical notes and methodology for the Help Wanted OnLine® data series can be found online at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/docs/occupational-reports/hwol-technical-notes.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> In order to make HWOL and survey time frames comparable, difference comparison bases from HWOL were used for vacancies (April through May 2014) and hiring (January through March 2014).

<sup>9</sup> For reporting purposes, high-end occupations were defined as management (11-0000), business and financial operations (13-0000), computer and mathematical (15-0000), architecture and engineering (17-0000), life, physical and social science (19-0000), community and social service (21-0000), legal (23-0000), education, training and library (25-0000), art, design entertainment and media (27-0000) and healthcare practitioners and technical (29-0000) occupational groups.

example, healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (high-end occupations) from HWOL were relatively higher than survey results, but healthcare support occupations (low-end occupations) were relatively lower.

This implies that online job announcements may not be as realistic as the job vacancy and hiring survey estimates since lower-end occupations were underestimated and agriculture-related openings were nearly excluded. Still, the job vacancy and hiring survey data did not fully reflect high-end occupational demand.

**Figure 28.** Job vacancy and hire shares compared to Help Wanted OnLine job announcements by major occupational group Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; The Conference Board, Help Wanted OnLine® job announcements

SOC	Major occupational group	April through May 2014			January through March 2014		
		Survey share of vacancies	HWOL shares (all)	HWOL shares (new)	Survey share of hires	HWOL shares (all)	HWOL shares (new)
11	Management	4.8%	10.8%	8.8%	3.5%	11.1%	9.3%
13	Business and financial operations	2.7%	5.4%	4.8%	3.3%	5.5%	4.9%
15	Computer and mathematical	2.8%	17.4%	13.1%	1.4%	17.3%	13.4%
17	Architecture and engineering	2.1%	3.1%	2.7%	1.3%	2.8%	2.7%
19	Life, physical and social science	0.5%	1.2%	1.0%	0.3%	1.1%	1.0%
21	Community and social service	2.2%	1.8%	2.1%	1.8%	1.7%	2.1%
23	Legal	0.2%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%
25	Education, training and library	5.4%	1.8%	1.9%	2.2%	1.7%	1.9%
27	Art, design, entertainment and media	1.1%	1.9%	2.0%	0.9%	2.0%	2.2%
29	Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.2%	11.8%	8.6%	3.1%	12.1%	8.4%
31	Healthcare support	4.9%	3.1%	3.4%	4.7%	4.0%	4.6%
33	Protective service	1.4%	0.8%	0.8%	1.3%	0.7%	0.7%
35	Food preparation and serving related	10.0%	4.3%	6.0%	11.6%	3.9%	5.0%
37	Building, grounds cleaning and maint.	3.0%	2.0%	2.8%	3.2%	1.5%	2.2%
39	Personal care and service	4.8%	1.6%	2.4%	4.6%	1.8%	2.9%
41	Sales and related	12.9%	10.2%	10.4%	11.7%	10.7%	10.9%
43	Office and administrative support	10.7%	9.7%	11.9%	12.0%	9.7%	12.3%
45	Farming, fishing and forestry	3.1%	0.2%	0.3%	10.6%	0.1%	0.2%
47	Construction and extraction	4.3%	2.2%	3.6%	4.2%	1.7%	2.6%
49	Installation, maintenance and repair	3.1%	3.5%	4.4%	3.3%	3.6%	4.3%
51	Production	6.7%	2.3%	2.8%	7.6%	2.2%	2.6%
53	Transportation and material moving	8.1%	4.3%	5.5%	6.9%	4.1%	5.0%
	<b>All occupations</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Help Wanted OnLine® announcements were relatively higher than survey results for high-end occupations, but lower than survey results for the lower-end occupations.*



# Hazard ratios: the relative likelihood of job vacancies and hires being filled in a given time period

Hazard ratios are used to estimate the relative likelihood of the occurrence of an event over some period of time. Hazard ratios are expressed as follows: one of the events being analyzed is assigned a value of 1 (the base reference value) and other events are expressed as multiples of 1. Thus, an event with a hazard ratio of 1.5 is three times more likely to occur over a given period of time than an event with a hazard ratio of 0.5.

In this analysis, we compared the relative likelihood of filling a job vacancy among different areas, occupations, industries and firm sizes. To calculate the hazard ratio, we combined the results relating to duration from the job vacancy and hiring components of the survey. The hazard ratio was measured from the perspective of the employer rather than the employee and shows how relatively easy it was, in terms of a given time duration, to fill a given position. The model used in this study assumed that the ratios were constant over time.

*Figure 29* shows the relative hazard ratios for filling job vacancies, by area, of the state. The most important point of this figure is that the areas of the state varied widely in their relative chance of filling job vacancies within a given time period. The base comparison was the west-urban area with an assigned scale of 1.00.<sup>10</sup> The hazard ratio was assumed constant over time, so that all other areas of the state were more likely than the west-urban area to fill a job at any given point in time. The chances in the east-urban area, however, were 32 percent more likely than in the west-urban area.

The spring 2014 estimates show more variance between areas than was estimated from the fall 2013 results (0.81 to 1.00) but less variance than estimated from the spring 2013 results (0.63 to 1.29).

## **Figure 29.** Hazard ratios for duration of vacancies by area

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Area	Hazard ratio
East rural	1.14
East urban	1.32
West rural	1.15
West urban	1.00

*The state economic/geographic areas varied widely in their relative likelihood of filling their job vacancies within a given time period.*

<sup>10</sup>The base reference for hazard ratio comparisons was developed in SAS. One categorical value is selected as a base.

## Occupational groups varied widely in their relative likelihood of filling job vacancies

As shown in *Figure 30*, major occupational groups in the state varied widely in their relative likelihood of having the average job vacancy filled within a given time period. Using transportation and material moving occupations as the base comparison,<sup>11</sup> legal occupations had the highest relative likelihood of filling their vacancies within a given period of time (1.82) and the computer and mathematical occupations had the lowest relative likelihood (0.57).

In spring 2013, construction and extraction occupations had the highest relative likelihood of filling their vacancies within a given period of time (2.58), followed by food preparation and serving-related occupations (2.17) and legal occupations (2.04). The computer and mathematical occupations (0.79) had the lowest relative likelihood of filling vacancies.

The fall 2013 survey reported the occupational groups with the highest relative likelihood of filling their vacancies within a given period of time as: legal (1.72), protective service (1.67) and production (1.26). Education, training and library had the lowest relative likelihood of filling vacancies (0.52).

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<sup>11</sup> The base reference for hazard ratio comparisons was developed in SAS. The SAS program automatically selects one of the categorical values as a base.

**Figure 30.** Hazard ratios for duration of vacancies by occupational group  
 Washington state, spring 2014  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

SOC	Major occupational group	Hazard ratio
11	Management occupations	0.75
13	Business and financial operations occupations	1.06
15	Computer and mathematical occupations	0.57
17	Architecture and engineering occupations	0.81
19	Life, physical and social science occupations	0.86
21	Community and social services occupations	0.95
23	Legal occupations	1.82
25	Education, training and library occupations	0.71
27	Arts, design, entertainment, sports and media occupations	0.99
29	Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	0.70
31	Healthcare support occupations	1.22
33	Protective service occupations	0.80
35	Food preparation and serving related occupations	1.32
37	Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	1.45
39	Personal care and service occupations	0.96
41	Sales and related occupations	1.21
43	Office and administrative support occupations	1.20
45	Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1.62
47	Construction and extraction occupations	1.40
49	Installation, maintenance and repair occupations	1.14
51	Production occupations	1.29
53	Transportation and material moving occupations	1.00

*Legal occupations had the highest relative likelihood of filling their vacancies within a given period of time.*

## Industry sectors varied widely in their relative likelihood of filling job vacancies

Figure 31 shows the relative hazard ratios for filling job vacancies by industry sector. The key point of this figure is that the various industry sectors varied widely in their relative likelihood of filling the average job vacancy within a given time period. Using “other services” as the base comparison,<sup>12</sup> the information sector had the lowest relative likelihood of filling its vacancies within a given time period, with a hazard ratio of 0.52. On the other hand, the mining sector had the highest likelihood of filling its job vacancies, with a hazard ratio of 1.88 – more than three and one-half times more likely than the information-services sector.

In spring 2013, the construction industry had the highest likelihood of filling its vacancies within a given time period (1.53); management of companies and enterprises had the lowest (0.52).

In fall 2013, the wholesale-trade industry sector had the highest relative likelihood of filling its vacancies within a given time period (1.22); educational services had the lowest (0.50).

**Figure 31.** Hazard ratios for duration of vacancies by industry sector  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

NAICS	Industry sector	Hazard ratio
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1.42
21	Mining	1.88
22	Utilities	0.98
23	Construction	1.19
31-33	Manufacturing	1.10
42	Wholesale trade	1.02
44-45	Retail trade	1.27
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	0.72
51	Information	0.52
52	Finance and insurance	0.79
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	0.77
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	1.04
55	Management of companies and enterprises	0.82
56	Administrative and support and waste management	1.01
61	Educational services	0.66
62	Healthcare and social assistance	0.92
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.02
72	Accommodation and food services	1.15
81	Other services	1.00

*The information sector took the longest time to fill its vacancies, with a hazard ratio of 0.52.*

<sup>12</sup>The base reference for hazard ratio comparisons was developed in SAS. The SAS program automatically selects one of the categorical values as a base.

## The largest firms in terms of employment size were less likely to fill their vacancies than smaller firms

Figure 32 shows the hazard ratios for filling vacancies by firm employment size. Smaller firms were more likely to fill their vacancies in a given period of time than larger firms. Firms with 500 or more employees took the longest time to fill their vacancies, with a hazard ratio of 0.68.

Smaller firm sizes, in spring 2014, fall 2013 and spring 2013 were more likely to fill their vacancies within a given period of time.

**Figure 32.** Hazard ratios for duration of vacancies by firm employment size  
Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Firm employment size	Vacancies (spring 2014)	Hazard ratio
Fewer than 10	50,123	1.00
10-24	27,483	1.17
25-49	18,063	0.89
50-99	23,743	0.87
100-499	23,939	0.84
500 or more	13,864	0.68

*The largest firms, in terms of employment size, took longer to fill their job vacancies.*



# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Definition of areas

Data in this report are broken out by four types of geographic areas in the state: West urban, west rural, east urban and east rural. *Appendix figure A1-1* identifies the county composition of each area.

### Appendix figure A1-1. Washington state areas

Washington state, spring 2014

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

County	Area
Adams	East rural
Asotin	East rural
Benton	East urban
Chelan	East rural
Clallam	West rural
Clark	West urban
Columbia	East rural
Cowlitz	West urban
Douglas	East rural
Ferry	East rural
Franklin	East urban
Garfield	East rural
Grant	East rural
Grays Harbor	West rural
Island	West rural
Jefferson	West rural
King	West urban
Kitsap	West urban
Kittitas	East rural
Klickitat	East rural
Lewis	West rural
Lincoln	East rural
Mason	West rural
Okanogan	East rural
Pacific	West rural
Pend Oreille	East rural
Pierce	West urban
San Juan	West rural
Skagit	West urban
Skamania	West rural
Snohomish	West urban
Spokane	East urban
Stevens	East rural
Thurston	West urban
Wahkiakum	West rural
Walla Walla	East rural
Whatcom	West urban
Whitman	East rural
Yakima	East urban

## Appendix 2. Industry sector classifications

We classify the reporting establishments into industries based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, other federal statistical agencies and most state employment agencies also use the NAICS for industry-based research and reporting.

The table below lists the 20 2-digit industry sector classifications and descriptions used in this report. To learn more, visit the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics NAICS website at [www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm).

### Appendix figure A2-1. NAICS industry classifications

United States, 2012

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, North American Classification System

NAICS	Industry sector	Industry sector description
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	Firms engaged in growing crops, raising animals, harvesting timber and harvesting fish and other animals from farms, ranches or the animals' natural habitat.
21	Mining	Firms that extract naturally occurring mineral solids, liquid minerals and gases.
22	Utilities	Firms engaged in generating, transmitting and/or distributing electricity, gas, steam and water and removing sewage through a permanent infrastructure.
23	Construction	Firms engaged in erecting buildings and other structures, heavy construction other than buildings and alterations, reconstruction, installation and maintenance and repairs.
31-33	Manufacturing	Firms engaged in the mechanical, physical or chemical transformation of materials, substances or components into new products.
41-43	Wholesale trade	Firms engaged in selling or arranging for the purchase of sale of goods for resale, capital or durable nonconsumer goods and raw and intermediate materials and supplies used in productions and providing services incidental to the sale of merchandise.
44-45	Retail trade	Firms engaged in retailing merchandise, generally in small quantities to the general public and providing services incidental to the sale of the merchandise.
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	Firms that provide transportation of passengers and cargo, warehousing and storing goods, scenic and sightseeing transportation and supporting these activities.
51	Information	Firms engaged in distributing information and cultural products, providing the means to transmit or distribute these products as data or communications and processing data.
52	Finance and insurance	Firms engaged in the creation, liquidation or change in ownership of financial assets (financial transactions) and/or facilitating financial transaction.
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	Firms engaged in renting, leasing or otherwise allowing the use of tangible or intangible assets (except copyrighted works) and providing related services.
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	Firms specializing in performing professional, scientific and technical services for the operations of other organizations.
55	Management of companies and enterprises	Firms who hold securities of companies and enterprises, for the purpose of owning controlling interest or influencing their management decision, or administering, overseeing and managing other establishments of the same company or enterprise and normally undertaking the strategic or organizational planning and decision making of the company or enterprise.
56	Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	Firms performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operation of other organizations.
61	Educational services	Firms providing instruction and training in a wide variety of subjects.
62	Healthcare and social assistance	Firms providing healthcare and social assistance for individuals.
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	Firms engaged in operating of facilities or providing services to meet varied cultural, entertainment and recreational interests of their patrons.
72	Accommodation and food services	Firms providing customers with lodging and/or preparing meals, snacks and beverages for immediate consumption.
81	Other services (except public administration)	Firms providing services not elsewhere specified, including repairs, religious activities, grant making, advocacy, laundry, personal care, healthcare and other personal services.
92*	Public administration	Federal, state and local government agencies that administer, oversee and manage public programs and have executive, legislative or judicial authority over other institutions in a given area.

\*Public administration was excluded from the employer universe from which the survey sample was drawn and for which estimates were provided in this report.

## Appendix 3. Occupational classifications

We classify the major occupational groups and specific occupations based on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, other federal statistical agencies and most state employment agencies also use SOC coding for occupation-based research and reporting.

*Appendix figure A3-1* lists the 22 two-digit major occupational groups used in this report and provides examples of the occupations in each group. For the complete SOC dictionary and to learn more about the SOC system, visit the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics SOC website at [www.bls.gov/soc/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/soc/home.htm).

### Appendix figure A3-1. Occupational classifications

United States, 2012

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

SOC	Major occupational group	Sample occupations
11	Management	Educational administrators, marketing managers and medical and health service managers
13	Business and financial operations	Accountants, financial analysts and human resource specialist
15	Computer and mathematical	Actuaries, computer programmers and computer support specialists
17	Architecture and engineering	Architects, chemical engineers and drafters
19	Life, physical and social science	Anthropologists, chemists and geographers
21	Community and social service	Clergy, health educators, marriage and family therapists
23	Legal	Court reporters, lawyers and paralegals
25	Education, training and library	Librarians, postsecondary teachers and special education teachers
27	Art, design, entertainment and media	Coaches, producers and directors and radio operators
29	Healthcare practitioners and technical	Dentists, physicians and registered nurses
31	Healthcare support	Dental assistants, home health aides and pharmacy aides
33	Protective service	Animal control workers, detectives and police officers
35	Food preparation and serving related	Cooks, food preparation workers and waiters and waitresses
37	Building, grounds cleaning and maintenance	Housekeeping cleaners, janitors and pest control workers
39	Personal care and service	Childcare workers, hairdressers and hairstylists and personal and home care aids
41	Sales and related	Cashiers, insurance sales agents and retail salespersons
43	Office and administrative support	Customer service representatives, tellers and secretaries
45	Farming, fishing and forestry	Agricultural inspectors, animal breeders and farmers
47	Construction and extraction	Construction laborers, carpenters and electricians
49	Installation, maintenance and repair	Automotive service technicians and mechanics, motorcycle mechanics and millwrights
51	Production	Butchers and meat cutters, foundry mold and coremakers and machinists
53	Transportation and material moving	Airline pilots, bus drivers and truck driver

## Appendix 4. Survey methodology and response rate

### Approach

The job vacancy and hiring survey is a bi-annual survey conducted by the Employment Security Department each spring and fall. Washington employers were surveyed to collect information about their job vacancies, expected future vacancies and hires. Beginning in 2012, there were two components of this survey:

- Job vacancies.
- Recent hires.

A recent hire was defined as any new external hire and excluded internal promotions (even for newly created positions). Then, in spring 2013, a third component was added: expected future vacancies 12 months from the date surveyed. As of the spring 2014, the expected-future-vacancy component was no longer a part of the survey.

Since the vacancy and hiring components used the same base sample, the initial sampling weights used to adjust the sample statistics to the population measures were the same.

The two components of the spring 2014 survey were treated separately because the questions relevant to each section (vacancies and hires) were not answered by all respondents in the sample (of 12,000 for spring 2014). For example, some employers answered the questions concerning vacant positions but did not answer the questions in the hiring component. As a result, the response for each set of variables was different for the two components. This is why the estimated relative shares for different variables cannot be directly compared.

### Sample Design

The survey is a scientific unstratified sample drawn by using the probability of selection proportional to size (PPS) without replacement method. The official source for this sample is the Enhanced Quarterly Unemployment Insurance (EQUI) file for second-quarter 2013, with the sample drawn by establishment unemployment insurance account and the accompanying address. The EQUI file contains all employment covered by the unemployment insurance system for Washington state. Since individual locations were used, primary accounts were removed. Private households and all public administration establishments were removed from the EQUI file, creating the population that was used for this survey. From this population, a sample of 12,000 establishments was selected to be contacted. The total employment referenced in this report is the employment of the sample weighted to reflect the total population from which it was drawn. The estimated shares in total employment were based on weights adjusted by class sizes. Consequently, except for class sizes, multiplying these weights by total covered employment would not produce the universe for the domains used in the tables (for industries and areas). See *Appendix 5* for more information.

### Response

The sample frame consisted of 12,000 establishments in Washington state. The vacancy component received 6,344 usable responses, for a response rate of 52.9 percent. The hiring component received 6,317 usable responses, for a response rate of 52.6 percent. Estimates are available with 95 percent confidence interval. In this report, confidence intervals were used to determine which cells to report and which were to be suppressed for publication. (See further discussion of publishing standards.)

## Comparability

Results of the spring 2014 survey can be compared to the fall 2013, spring 2013, fall 2012 and spring 2012 surveys, but not to prior years' surveys due to changes in methodology. Comparisons cannot be made to past surveys for three reasons. First, past estimations were based on data collected from online sources. This method has largely been replaced with more interactive data-collection methods. Second, the weighting method used for the surveys beginning with spring 2012 has been enhanced, taking firm employment size into account for non-response adjustments. Third, for surveys prior to 2012, the sample was stratified by workforce development area (WDA). This imposed significant error on the estimated statewide values that were estimated by this stratified sample. Beginning with the 2012 survey, an un-stratified sample was created, which allows estimations to be made at the state level with far greater accuracy. In turn, this un-stratified sample changed the nature of area estimations.

## Geography

Beginning in 2012, the survey grouped counties into four economic/geographical areas: east urban, east rural, west urban and west rural. East and west were defined by the Cascade Range as a divide. Urban and rural were defined based on population. Counties that contained a city with a population greater than 35,000 were defined as urban. All other counties were defined as rural. See Appendix Figure A1-1 for a list of counties and their type of geographic-area designations.

## Publishing standards

For an estimate to be publishable, it had to pass three criteria:

- The number of respondents in any given cell had to be at least four.
- The coefficient of variation had to be less than 50 percent.
- The lower limit of the 95 percent confidence interval had to be greater than zero.

## Appendix 5. Technical notes

### Sample selection

SAS software was used for sample selection and estimations.

The sample was not stratified. The size of each primary sampling unit (PSU) was defined by the average total covered employment in second-quarter 2013. Once firm employment size was determined, the default selection method was used – the probability of selection proportional to size (PPS) without replacement. This method is more complex than selection with replacement, but provides the ability to produce estimations that are more accurate. Under the PPS method of sample selection without options, the probability of selection for each unit is equal to:

$$\text{(Unit size) x (number of units in sample) / total sample size.}$$

A “certainty” option was applied by an iteration, which provided a smooth transition of probabilities from sample units with a certainty of selection to the selection of those firms with the next largest firm size. After 13 iterations, the firm size that determined PPS with certainty (a probability of selection equal to 1.0) was calculated to be those firms having 241 or more employees.

To avoid extreme weights for small units, a MINSIZE option was applied, which interpreted each sampling unit of size less than MINSIZE as equal to the MINSIZE value for PPS selection. The MINSIZE was determined to be a firm with 10 employees, which allows limiting the maximum initial weight to 24.1.

### Weighting adjustments

Beginning with 2012, the weight adjustments for the survey were enhanced, taking the size of firm into account for non-response adjustments.

To account for missing values due to non-responses and invalid responses, each class size was assumed to have the same distribution as the respondents in the primary sample unit (PSU) with valid responses. Primary weights were adjusted for missing values based on this assumption and the final weights used for the population estimates were then calculated.

### Survey estimations

Since the sample was not stratified, all estimates of variance (except for median wage rates) were produced using the DOMAIN statement SURVEYMEANS procedure (PROC SURVEY MEANS) in SAS.

“The DOMAIN statement names the variables that identify domains, which are called domain variables. It is common practice to compute statistics for domains. The formation of these domains might be unrelated to the sample design. Therefore, the sample sizes for the domains are random variables. In order to incorporate this variability into the variance estimations, you should use a DOMAIN statement.”

The estimated shares in total employment are based on weights adjusted by firm employment size. Except for firm size, multiplying these weights by total covered employment would not produce the same universe for the domains used in figures (industries and areas). Consequently, for each industry sector and area, multiplying the initial universe (Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages) by the estimated percent of vacancies in total covered employment would not produce the number of estimated vacancies.

For estimations of median wage rates, domain estimation could not be used. For these estimations, subgroup estimations were treated as if the sample for that subgroup were stratified by the estimation variable. We can produce standard errors only as a proxy for domain variances. These standard errors were multiplied by 1.96 (for the 95 percent confidence level) to compare the standard errors with coefficient of variances.

## Appendix 6. Vacancies by education level and area

**Appendix figure A6-1.** Vacancies by education level and area  
Washington state, spring 2014  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Area	Education requirements	Number of vacancies	Percent of total vacancies
East rural	No requirement	3,703	3.9%
	High school diploma	3,322	3.5%
	Some college no degree	312	0.3%
	Associate or vocational degree	472	0.5%
	Bachelor's degree	1,083	1.1%
	Graduate degree	189	0.2%
	Other	714	0.7%
East urban	No requirement	5,285	5.5%
	High school diploma	3,984	4.1%
	Some college no degree	533	0.1%
	Associate or vocational degree	926	1.0%
	Bachelor's degree	1,501	1.6%
	Graduate degree	340	0.4%
	Other	390	0.4%
West rural	No requirement	3,393	3.5%
	High school diploma	2,156	2.2%
	Some college no degree	402	0.4%
	Associate or vocational degree	535	0.6%
	Bachelor's degree	807	0.8%
	Graduate degree	225	0.2%
	Other	694	0.7%
West urban	No requirement	24,371	25.4%
	High school diploma	19,580	20.4%
	Some college no degree	2,926	3.0%
	Associate or vocational degree	4,966	5.2%
	Bachelor's degree	9,000	9.4%
	Graduate degree	1,944	2.0%
	Other	2,352	2.4%
Washington state	No requirement	36,752	38.2%
	High school diploma	29,042	30.2%
	Some college no degree	4,173	4.3%
	Associate or vocational degree	6,899	7.2%
	Bachelor's degree	12,391	12.9%
	Graduate degree	2,697	2.8%
	Other	4,151	4.3%

**Appendix figure A7-1.** Job vacancy and hiring survey form page 1  
 Washington state, spring 2014  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

<div style="text-align: right; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 10px;">1</div> <h2 style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Spring 2014 Washington State Job Vacancy and New Hires Survey</h2> <p><b>About the survey</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please direct this survey to your personnel manager or human resources department.</li> <li>• <b>All information collected is confidential and will not be provided to any other entity; it is used for research purposes only. Survey results are presented in aggregate form so that no individual response can be identified.</b></li> <li>• In order to use your information, please respond <b>within 15 days</b>. Your prompt response is appreciated.</li> <li>• Please respond even if you have no current vacancies or new hires.</li> <li>• Results from the latest Job Vacancy and New Hires Survey can be found at: <a href="https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/reports-publications/occupational-reports/job-vacancy-report">https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/reports-publications/occupational-reports/job-vacancy-report</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Options for responding to the survey</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope, or</li> <li>• Fax both sides to 866-406-2449 or scan and email to <a href="mailto:JVSSurvey@esd.wa.gov">JVSSurvey@esd.wa.gov</a>.</li> <li>• Contact us at 855-222-4383 to report by telephone.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Contact Person</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Title: _____</p> <p>Telephone: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p><b>Thank you for participating!</b></p> <p>Your information is important. Results from the latest Job Vacancy and New Hires Survey can be found at: <a href="https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/reports-publications/occupational-reports/job-vacancy-report">https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/reports-publications/occupational-reports/job-vacancy-report</a></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Labor Market and Performance Analysis</p>
<p><b>Please report for the location listed on the address label</b></p> <p>How many employees do you currently have at this location? (include full time and part time) _____</p> <p>How many hours per week do employees need to work to be considered full time? _____</p> <p>Currently, are you actively hiring for job vacancies at this location (excluding consultants, outside contractors or others not considered employees)?</p> <p>Yes _____ No _____</p> <p>If yes, complete section 1 on reverse side.</p> <p>Did you have any new external hires from January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> (excluding internal transfers or promotions of existing workers within your organization)?</p> <p>Yes _____ No _____</p> <p>If yes, complete section 2 on reverse side.</p> <p>Would you like to be contacted by WorkSource for assistance filling your vacancies?</p> <p>Yes _____ No _____</p>	<p>PO Box 9046, Olympia, WA 98507-9046      Phone: 855-222-4383; Fax: 866-406-2449; Email: <a href="mailto:JVSSurvey@esd.wa.gov">JVSSurvey@esd.wa.gov</a></p> <p>The Employment Security Department is an equal-opportunity employer and provider of programs and services. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to people with disabilities. Washington Relay Service: 800-833-6384</p>



