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Regional Differences Underlie Statewide Job Vacancies

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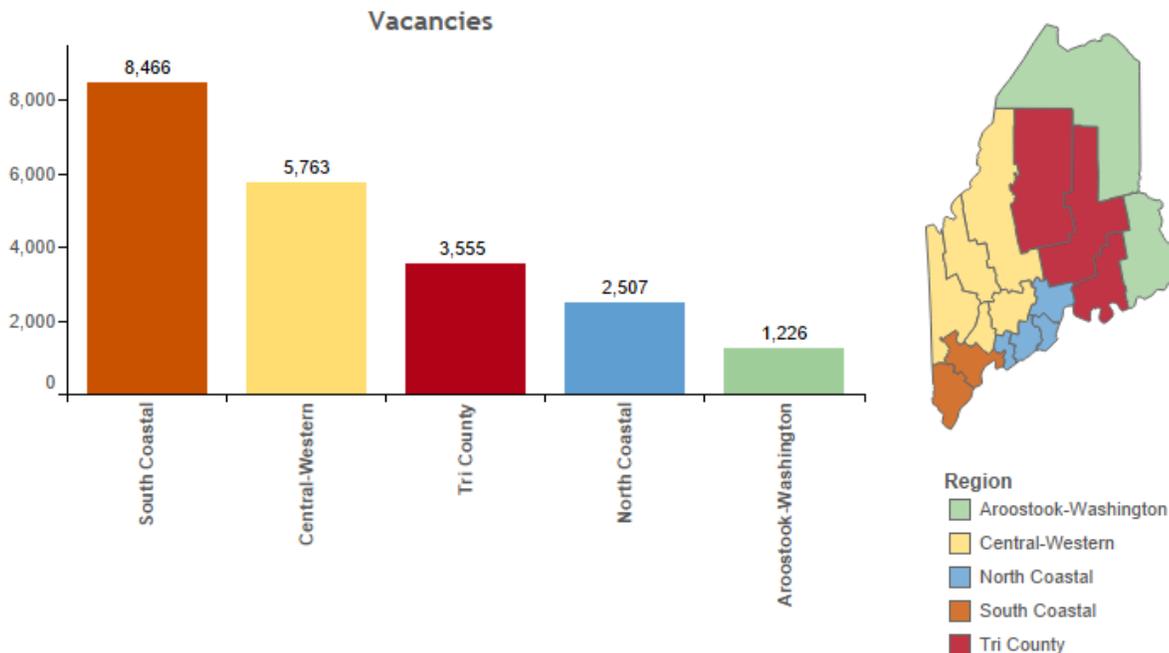
Regional Differences Underlie Statewide Job Vacancies

In this post, we examine the regional distribution of job vacancies by industry sector and occupational group. The September 2014 job vacancy survey was designed to develop findings for five regions: Aroostook-Washington, Central-Western (Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford and Somerset Counties), North Coastal (Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc and Waldo Counties), and South Coastal (Cumberland and York Counties), and Tri County (Hancock, Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties).

As previously reported, job vacancies occurred in similar geographical distribution to jobs and population, with the largest shares of vacancies located in regions that contain Maine’s metropolitan areas: 39 percent in the South Coastal region (Portland); 27 percent in the Central-Western region (Lewiston-Auburn); and 17 percent in the Tri County region (Bangor). Twelve percent of vacancies were located in the North Coastal region and 6 percent in the Aroostook-Washington region.

Region	Vacancies	Full-time Positions	Part-time Positions	Seasonal or Temporary	Median Hourly Wage (OES 2013)
South Coastal	8,466	63%	36%	4%	\$17.00
Central-Western	5,763	67%	32%	24%	\$15.56
Tri County	3,555	60%	39%	14%	\$14.91
North Coastal	2,507	46%	54%	10%	\$16.07
Aroostook-Washington	1,226	65%	34%	2%	\$14.84
Maine (statewide)	21,517	62%	38%	12%	\$16.06

Display
Vacancies



Prior blogs documented the share of full-time and seasonal or temporary positions by [sector](#) and [occupational group](#). Industry and occupational distribution underlie regional variations in these characteristics. Consider North Coastal, a region that attracts a high volume of tourism. More than half unfilled jobs were for part-time positions, due in part to a concentration of unfilled jobs in accommodation and food service - a sector with a large part-time workforce.

Industry Composition of Regional Vacancies

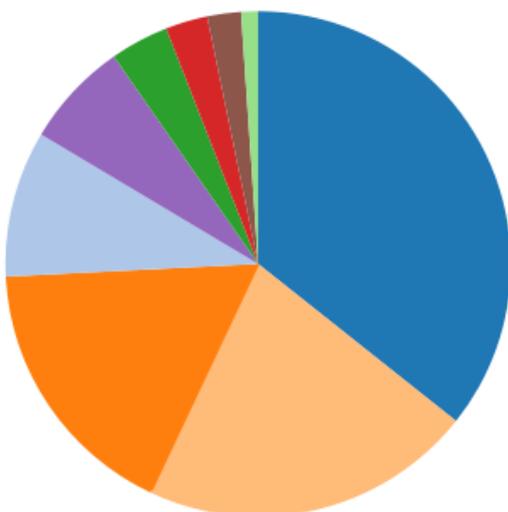
Businesses are coded by industry according to the primary good(s) or service(s) they produce or provide; industry sectors are broad categories of related industries. Previously, we described the statewide industry composition of job vacancies in which 80 percent of unfilled jobs occurred in five sectors: healthcare and social assistance (27%), retail trade (14%), administrative and waste management (13%), accommodation and food services (13%), and construction (10%). Most regions vary from the state as a whole in industry composition and in relative demand for new hires (vacancies relative to jobs).

In some regions, there were high concentrations of vacancies in some sectors. Nearly half of unfilled jobs in construction were located in Central-Western Maine, a region which garnered 27 percent of total vacancies statewide. Twenty-eight percent of accommodation and food service vacancies were in North Coastal region, compared to 12 percent of the state total. Thirty percent of unfilled administrative and waste services jobs were in Tri County, compared to the region’s 17 percent share of the state total.

The following charts show the sector distribution of job vacancies (pie chart, left) and shares of vacancies compared to private jobs (bar charts, right) by sector. Where the sector shares of vacancies and jobs are roughly equal, demand for new hires is considered proportional or average; a share of vacancies greater than the share of jobs indicates above-average (higher) demand; a share of vacancies lower than the share of jobs indicates below average (lower) demand. [A longer description of this assessment appeared in our [March 4 blog](#).]

Region:
Aroostook-Washington

Job Vacancies by Industry
Aroostook-Washington

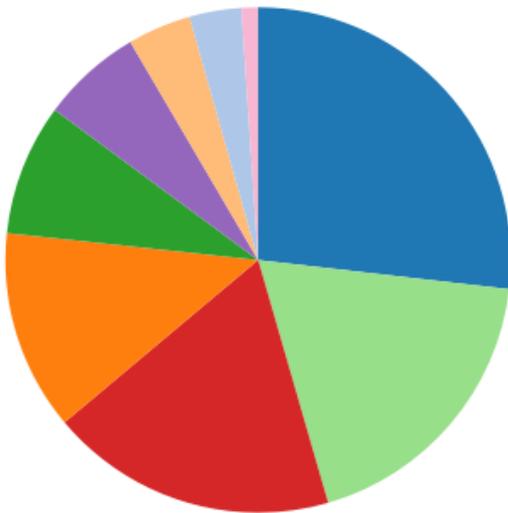


Industry Share of Vacancies and Jobs

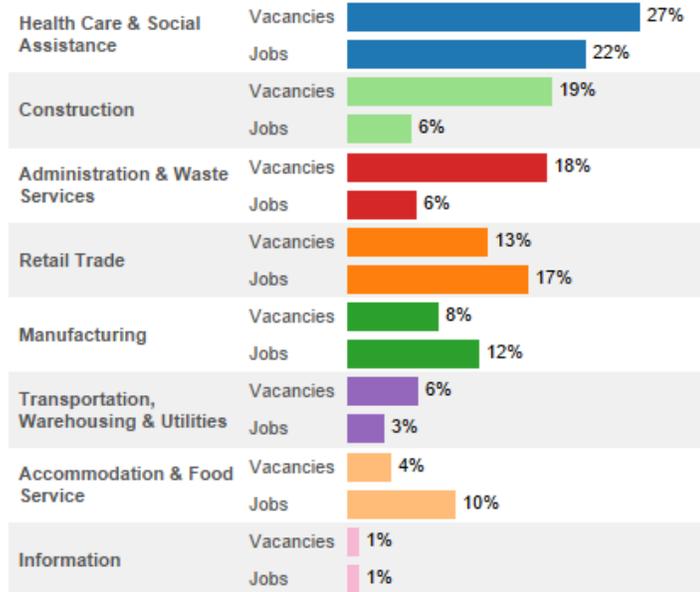


Region:
Central-Western

Job Vacancies by Industry Central-Western

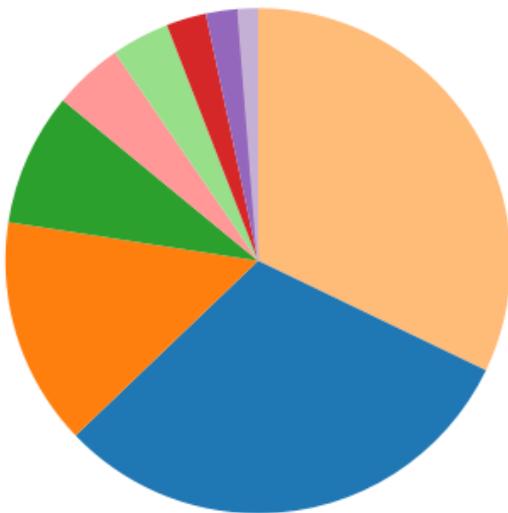


Industry Share of Vacancies and Jobs

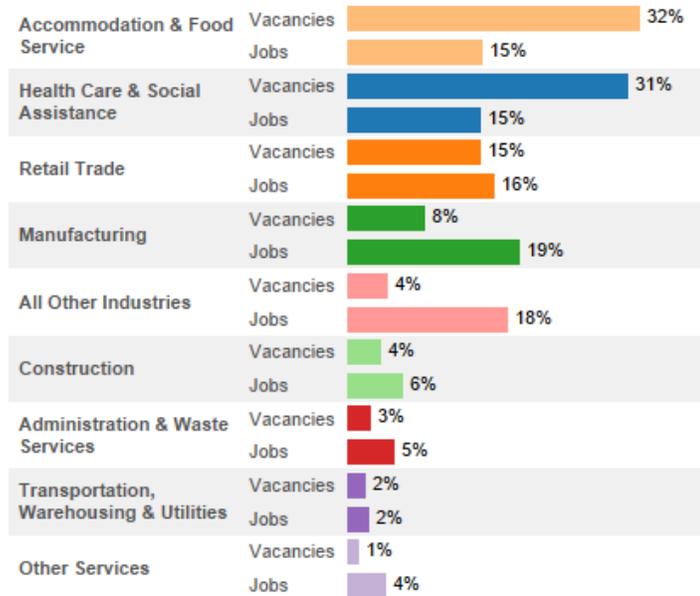


Region:
North Coastal

Job Vacancies by Industry North Coastal

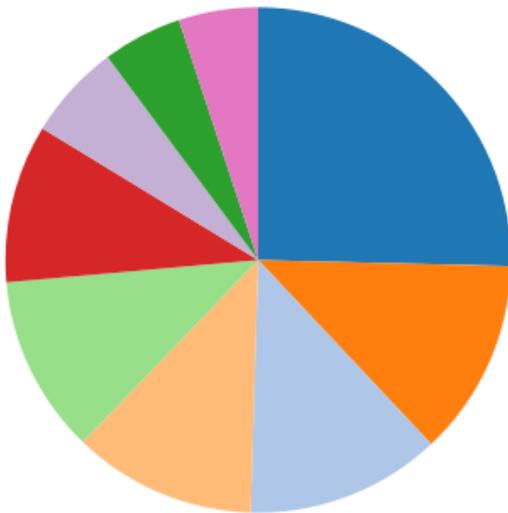


Industry Share of Vacancies and Jobs

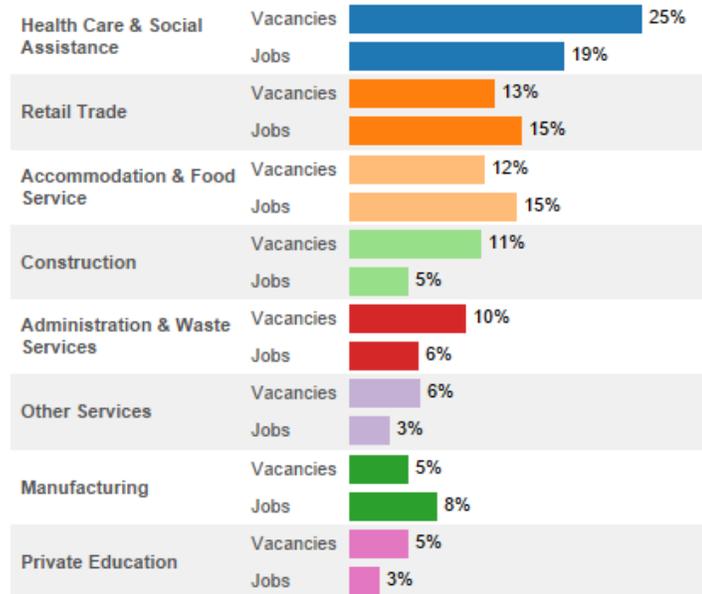


Region:
South Coastal

Job Vacancies by Industry South Coastal

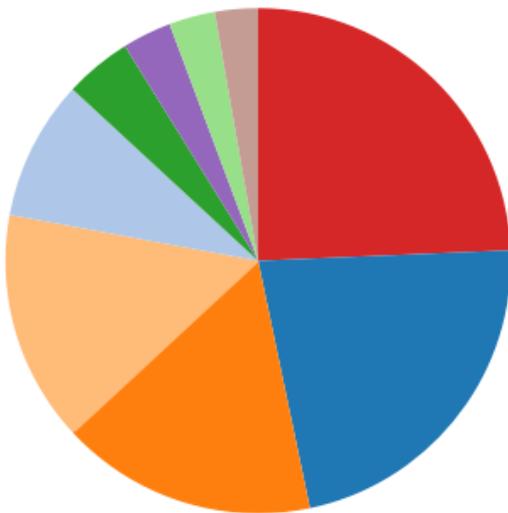


Industry Share of Vacancies and Jobs

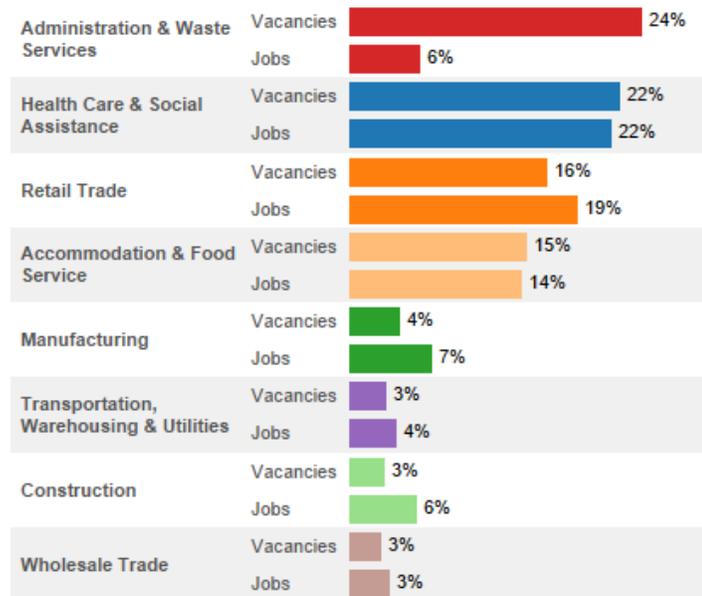


Region:
Tri County

Job Vacancies by Industry Tri County



Industry Share of Vacancies and Jobs



Regional industry characteristics of note:

- In the Aroostook-Washington region, the industry distribution is dominated by healthcare and social assistance (36%), and accommodation and food service (21%), which were larger than the statewide shares (27% and 13%, respectively). These two sectors and retail trade accounted for roughly three quarters of job vacancies in the region. Vacancies in healthcare and social assistance, accommodation and food service, and transportation and warehousing represent an above-average demand for new hires; in other sectors, demand in retail trade was average, and

demand for new hires in manufacturing, natural resources and construction sectors was below average within the region.

- In Central Western Maine, 27 percent of vacancies in healthcare and social assistance was consistent with the statewide distribution. Setting the region apart from the state were vacancies in construction (19%) and administrative and waste services (18%). These shares were large in comparison to the state distribution as well as in comparison to jobs in those sectors (6% of jobs in each sector), indicating above-average demand for new hires. Transportation, warehousing and utilities also had above-average demand. Regional demand was relatively low for new hires in accommodation and food service.
- The North Coastal region's industry distribution was dominated by two sectors accounting for nearly two-thirds of total vacancies: accommodation and food services (32%) and healthcare and social assistance (31%). With vacancies twice the share of jobs, these sectors showed a higher demand for new hires. Retail trade had average demand, and most other sectors had below-average demand for new hires.
- The industry composition of job vacancies in the South Coastal region conformed most closely to the statewide distribution. Within the region, there was higher demand for new hires in healthcare and social assistance, construction, administrative and waste services, other services and private education; demand was near average in retail trade and accommodation and food services, and below average in manufacturing.
- In the Tri County region, the largest share of job openings occurred in administrative and waste services (24%), followed by healthcare (22%), retail trade (17%) and accommodation and food service (15%). Of these, the share of vacancies in administrative and waste services differs significantly from the share of jobs (6%), representing higher demand in that sector. Other sectors were roughly proportional, indicating average demand, except for manufacturing and construction, where demand for new hires was below average.

Occupational Composition of Regional Vacancies

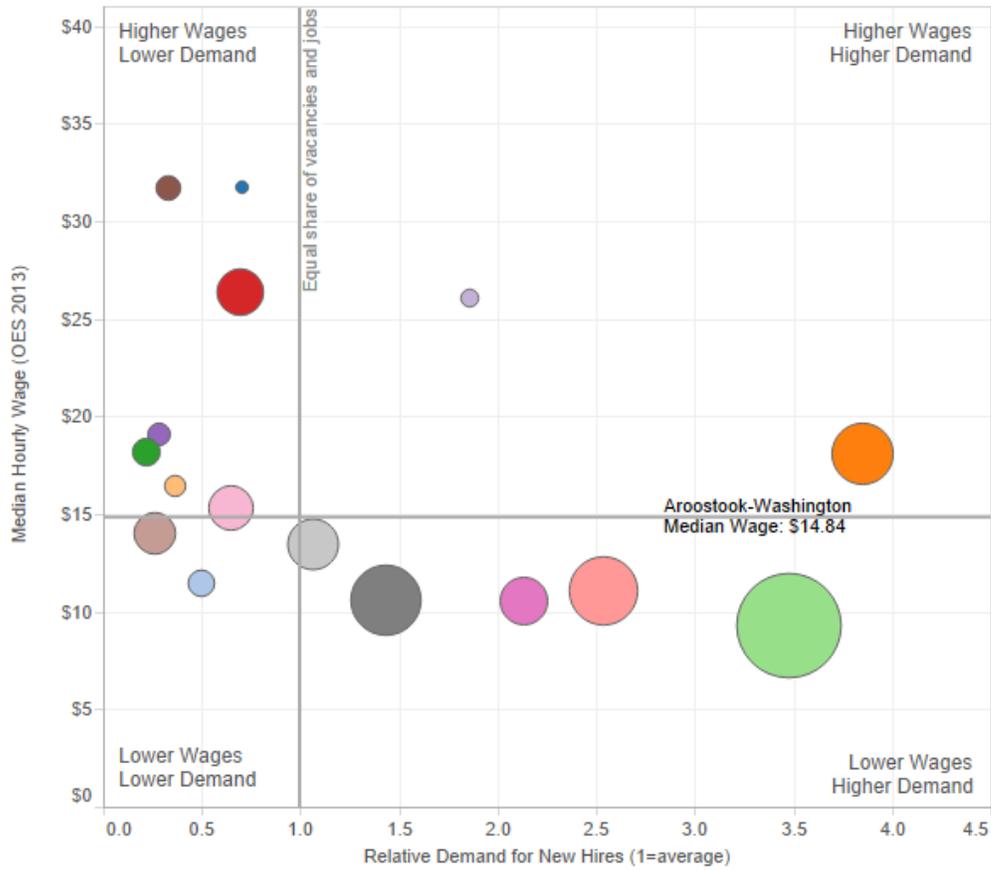
The following chart shows occupational groups plotted by relative demand, median hourly wage and estimated number of vacant positions by specified region. Like sectors to industries, occupational groups are broad categories of related occupations. The chart is divided into quadrants, vertically bisected at the value 1 – the benchmark indicating that the share of job vacancies is equal to the share of jobs; the position left or right of the vertical axis signifies lower or higher demand (respectively) compared to the average for the region. The chart is horizontally bisected at the regional median hourly wage for all occupations in 2013 – signifying below- or above-average *wages within the region*. The size of each bubble reflects the number of job vacancies in that occupational group.

Demand by Wages	How to read this chart: Quadrants
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Wages/Demand:
All

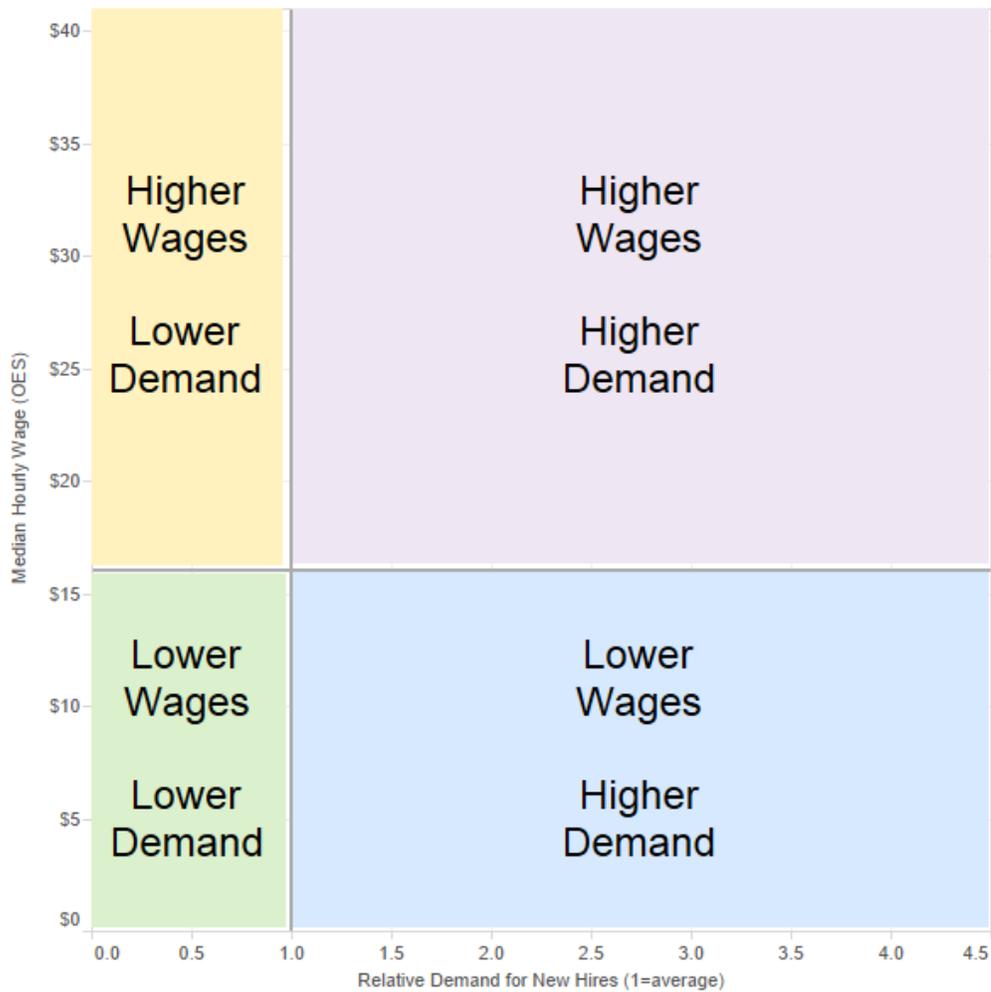
Region:
Aroostook-Washington

Hover over bubbles for detailed information



Demand by Wages

How to read this chart:
Quadrants



Occupational composition of vacancies varied across regions. In most regions, food preparation, sales, office support and healthcare occupations were among the top five groups ranked by number of unfilled jobs. Less common were regional concentrations in community and social service (Aroostook-Washington), construction (Central-Western Maine and South Coastal), transportation and material moving (Central-Western Maine and Aroostook-Washington), production (North Coastal), personal care (South Coastal), business and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations (Tri County).

Statewide, 36 percent of job vacancies were in occupational groups with median hourly wages higher than the median for all occupations (\$16.06 in 2013). The median wage for all occupations varies by region from a low of \$14.84 in Aroostook-Washington to a high of \$17.00 in South Coastal. By region, the proportion of vacancies in higher-paying groups (those above the regional median) ranged from a low of 24 percent of job vacancies in the Tri County region to a high of 39 percent of job vacancies in Central-Western Maine. This variation is due both to the occupational mix of vacancies, and regional differences in employment and wages.

The next post will examine vacancies reported by employers to be difficult to fill.