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**ABSTRACT**

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## **The public-private debate: what do the data show?**

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Although the average wage is higher for workers in State and local governments, professional and administrative workers typically earn more in the private sector. This article examines the current literature and then uses occupational pay data from the BLS Occupational Compensation Survey Program (OCSF) to compare wages and salaries in State and local governments with pay in nonfarm private industry.

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