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Occupational Employment and Wages in Brownsville-Harlingen, 2013

Workers in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$15.45 in May 2013, 31 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.33, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 19 of the 22 major occupational groups, including legal; construction and extraction; and computer and mathematical. Local wages in the remaining occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups, including personal care and service; education, training, and library; and office and administrative support. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; computer and mathematical; and management. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.33	\$15.45	*	-31
Management	4.9	2.8	*	53.15	38.94	*	-27
Business and financial operations.....	5.0	2.4	*	34.14	26.78	*	-22
Computer and mathematical	2.8	0.6	*	39.43	26.52	*	-33
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.4	*	38.51	30.97	*	-20
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.2	*	33.37	25.77	*	-23
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.7		21.50	19.91	*	-7
Legal.....	0.8	0.5	*	47.89	27.67	*	-42
Education, training, and library.....	6.3	9.2	*	24.76	20.11	*	-19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	0.5	*	26.72	16.73	*	-37
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	5.6		35.93	36.57		2
Healthcare support	3.0	3.7	*	13.61	10.52	*	-23
Protective service	2.5	3.8	*	20.92	20.12		-4
Food preparation and serving related	9.0	9.5	*	10.38	9.30	*	-10
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	2.9	*	12.51	9.44	*	-25
Personal care and service.....	3.0	12.4	*	11.88	8.52	*	-28
Sales and related	10.6	10.1		18.37	12.52	*	-32
Office and administrative support.....	16.2	17.8	*	16.78	12.26	*	-27
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	11.70	13.59		16

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		United States	Brownsville-Harlingen		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Construction and extraction.....	3.8	2.1	*	21.94	13.61	*	-38
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.4	*	21.35	15.20	*	-29
Production	6.6	5.0	*	16.79	12.06	*	-28
Transportation and material moving.....	6.8	5.4	*	16.28	12.62	*	-22

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Brownsville-Harlingen is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—education, training, and library—illustrates the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Brownsville had 12,100 jobs in the education, training, and library group, accounting for 9.2 percent of local employment, significantly higher than the 6.3-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At \$20.11 an hour, the mean wage for Brownsville education, training, and library workers was nearly 20 percent below the \$24.76 national average.

With employment of 2,670, elementary school teachers, except special education, was one of the largest occupations within the education, training, and library group, as were secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education (1,870). These same occupations were also among the higher paying jobs with secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education, averaging a mean annual wage of \$51,380, and middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education, averaging \$50,240. At the lower end of the wage scale were teacher assistants (\$21,590) and substitute teachers (\$22,460). (Detailed data for the education, training, and library group are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of occupations see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_15180.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Brownsville metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the education, training, and library group. For instance, elementary school teachers, except special education, were employed at 2.0 times the national rate in Brownsville, and middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education, 2.5 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, preschool teachers, except special education, had a location quotient of 1.0 in Brownsville, indicating the local employment share in this particular occupation matched the national average.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Texas Workforce Commission.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

Note: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year for a 3-year period. May 2013 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected in May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, November 2011, May 2011, and November 2010. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 75.3 percent based on establishments and 71.6 percent based on employment. The sample in the Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,459 establishments with a response rate of 62 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2013 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Cameron County in Texas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/home.htm. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2013/may/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Brownsville-Harlingen Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Education, training, and library occupations.....	12,100	1.5	\$20.11	\$41,820
Vocational education teachers, postsecondary.....	220	1.8	25.52	53,070
Preschool teachers, except special education.....	350	1.0	19.90	41,380
Kindergarten teachers, except special education.....	230	1.5	(5)	44,620
Elementary school teachers, except special education.....	2,670	2.0	(5)	48,120
Middle school teachers, except special and career/technical education.....	1,510	2.5	(5)	50,240
Career/technical education teachers, middle school...	50	3.1	(5)	49,650
Secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education.....	1,870	2.0	(5)	51,380
Career/technical education teachers, secondary school.....	190	2.2	(5)	50,060
Special education teachers, kindergarten and elementary school.....	200	1.0	(5)	49,470
Special education teachers, middle school.....	90	0.9	(5)	47,330
Special education teachers, secondary school.....	190	1.4	(5)	48,110
Adult basic and secondary education and literacy teachers and instructors.....	(5)	(5)	16.10	33,490
Self-enrichment education teachers.....	50	0.3	13.46	28,000
Substitute teachers.....	1,530	2.5	10.80	22,460
Teachers and instructors, all other, except substitute teachers.....	150	0.6	(5)	24,070
Librarians.....	160	1.2	25.33	52,680
Instructional coordinators.....	140	1.1	31.05	64,590
Teacher assistants.....	1,850	1.6	(5)	21,590

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Brownsville-Harlingen MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_15180.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimates not released.