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SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas
 Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest
 Media contact: (972) 850-4800

Occupational Employment and Wages in El Paso, 2013

Workers in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$17.32 in May 2013, 22 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 construction and extraction; personal care and service; and sales and related. Local wages in three occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages: protective service; community and social service; and legal.

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

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	El Paso		United States	El Paso		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.33	\$17.32	*	-22
Management	4.9	3.4	*	53.15	45.20	*	-15
Business and financial operations	5.0	3.7	*	34.14	27.98	*	-18
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.1	*	39.43	28.09	*	-29
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.9	*	38.51	34.06	*	-12
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.5	*	33.37	26.15	*	-22
Community and social service	1.4	1.3	*	21.50	20.97		-2
Legal	0.8	0.6	*	47.89	45.28		-5
Education, training, and library	6.3	8.0	*	24.76	23.26	*	-6
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.7	*	26.72	22.06	*	-17
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	5.1	*	35.93	32.66	*	-9
Healthcare support	3.0	2.8		13.61	12.25	*	-10
Protective service	2.5	3.7	*	20.92	21.61		3
Food preparation and serving related	9.0	10.1	*	10.38	9.04	*	-13
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.2		12.51	9.94	*	-21
Personal care and service	3.0	4.1	*	11.88	8.92	*	-25
Sales and related	10.6	11.0		18.37	13.91	*	-24
Office and administrative support	16.2	18.9	*	16.78	13.47	*	-20
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	*	11.70	9.49	*	-19

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	El Paso		United States	El Paso		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Construction and extraction.....	3.8	3.6		21.94	15.04	*	-31
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.2	*	21.35	16.52	*	-23
Production	6.6	5.8	*	16.79	12.99	*	-23
Transportation and material moving.....	6.8	7.3		16.28	13.28	*	-18

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in El Paso 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 – office and administrative support – illustrates the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. El Paso had 53,100 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 18.9 percent of local employment, significantly above the 16.2-percent national share. However, at \$13.47 per hour, the local average hourly wage for this occupational group was 20 percent below the national average of \$16.78.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included general office clerks (8,930), customer service representatives (7,540), and secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (5,500). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers and executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, with mean hourly wages of \$23.04 and \$22.11, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were data entry keyers (\$9.80) and stock clerks and order fillers (\$9.85). (Detailed occupational data for office and administrative support are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all detailed occupations go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21340.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 El Paso metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, cargo and freight agents were employed at 1.8 times the national rate in El Paso, and data entry keyers at 2.8 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, stock clerks and order fillers had a location quotient of 1.1 in El Paso, indicating that this particular occupation’s local and national employment shares were similar.

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

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the El Paso 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 El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,481 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 **El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes El Paso 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, El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	53,100	1.2	\$13.47	\$28,010
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	3,200	1.1	\$23.04	\$47,910
Switchboard operators, including answering service ..	290	1.2	\$10.26	\$21,350
Bill and account collectors.....	700	0.9	\$14.82	\$30,830
Billing and posting clerks.....	1,190	1.1	\$12.86	\$26,740
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	2,840	0.8	\$15.14	\$31,490
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	510	1.4	\$15.73	\$32,710
Procurement clerks	200	1.4	\$16.85	\$35,040
Tellers	1,210	1.1	\$10.97	\$22,810
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	380	1.4	\$12.99	\$27,020
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks	90	0.8	\$14.76	\$30,700
Customer service representatives.....	7,540	1.5	\$12.12	\$25,200
File clerks	330	1.0	\$10.90	\$22,660
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	440	0.9	\$8.57	\$17,820
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	500	1.2	\$12.14	\$25,250
Library assistants, clerical	210	1.0	\$11.04	\$22,960
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	440	1.0	\$16.89	\$35,120
New accounts clerks	110	1.0	\$14.38	\$29,900
Order clerks	350	0.8	\$12.02	\$24,990
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	430	1.5	\$15.08	\$31,370
Receptionists and information clerks.....	1,800	0.9	\$10.48	\$21,800
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks	160	0.5	\$18.32	\$38,100
Information and record clerks, all other	530	1.4	\$16.87	\$35,090
Cargo and freight agents.....	290	1.8	\$15.56	\$32,370
Couriers and messengers	280	1.8	\$9.69	\$20,150
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers.....	190	0.9	\$16.06	\$33,410
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	430	1.1	\$14.70	\$30,570
Meter readers, utilities	40	0.5	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾
Postal service clerks.....	80	0.6	\$24.11	\$50,150
Postal service mail carriers	490	0.7	\$23.89	\$49,680
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators	160	0.6	\$23.60	\$49,090
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	490	0.8	\$20.21	\$42,030
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	1,860	1.3	\$12.21	\$25,390
Stock clerks and order fillers	4,370	1.1	\$9.85	\$20,500
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping.....	80	0.5	\$11.52	\$23,970
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	990	0.6	\$22.11	\$45,990
Legal secretaries	240	0.5	\$17.62	\$36,650
Medical secretaries	1,570	1.4	\$12.40	\$25,800
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive	5,500	1.2	\$12.87	\$26,760
Data entry keyers	1,250	2.8	\$9.80	\$20,380
Word processors and typists	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾	\$16.04	\$33,370
Desktop publishers.....	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾	\$10.06	\$20,910
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	460	0.9	\$14.09	\$29,310
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	170	0.8	\$12.09	\$25,140
Office clerks, general.....	8,930	1.5	\$11.88	\$24,710
Office machine operators, except computer.....	230	1.7	\$10.05	\$20,910
Office and administrative support workers, all other ...	100	0.2	\$15.08	\$31,360

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

- (1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the El Paso MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21340.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.