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Occupational Employment and Wages in El Paso, May 2017

Workers in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.56 in May 2017, about 24 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 19 of the 22 major occupational groups, including construction and extraction; personal care and service; and computer and mathematical. Local wage levels were similar to their respective national averages in three groups: protective service; community and social service; and life, physical, and social science.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support; education, training, and library; and sales and related. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including management; production; and computer and mathematical. (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 2017

| 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 | \$24.34 | \$18.56* | -24 |
| Management | 5.1 | 2.8* | 57.65 | 51.45* | -11 |
| Business and financial operations..... | 5.2 | 3.7* | 36.70 | 31.48* | -14 |
| Computer and mathematical | 3.0 | 1.4* | 43.18 | 31.39* | -27 |
| Architecture and engineering | 1.8 | 0.8* | 41.44 | 34.18* | -18 |
| Life, physical, and social science | 0.8 | 0.3* | 35.76 | 32.55 | -9 |
| Community and social service..... | 1.5 | 1.2* | 23.10 | 22.66 | -2 |
| Legal..... | 0.8 | 0.5* | 51.62 | 38.19* | -26 |
| Education, training, and library..... | 6.1 | 8.5* | 26.67 | 22.54* | -15 |
| Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media..... | 1.4 | 0.8* | 28.34 | 23.25* | -18 |
| Healthcare practitioners and technical | 6.0 | 5.9 | 38.83 | 33.32* | -14 |
| Healthcare support | 2.9 | 3.0 | 15.05 | 13.36* | -11 |
| Protective service | 2.4 | 3.5* | 22.69 | 22.97 | 1 |
| Food preparation and serving related | 9.3 | 10.5* | 11.88 | 9.84* | -17 |
| Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance ... | 3.1 | 2.8* | 13.91 | 11.00* | -21 |
| Personal care and service..... | 3.6 | 4.5* | 13.11 | 9.48* | -28 |
| Sales and related | 10.2 | 11.9* | 19.56 | 15.45* | -21 |
| Office and administrative support..... | 15.4 | 17.8* | 18.24 | 14.91* | -18 |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry | 0.3 | 0.1* | 13.87 | 10.53* | -24 |
| Construction and extraction..... | 4.0 | 3.8 | 24.01 | 16.22* | -32 |
| Installation, maintenance, and repair | 3.9 | 4.2* | 23.02 | 17.93* | -22 |

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 2017 - Continued

| Major occupational group | Percent of total employment | | Mean hourly wage | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---------|------------------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| | United States | El Paso | United States | El Paso | Percent difference ⁽¹⁾ |
| Production | 6.3 | 4.7* | 18.30 | 14.25* | -22 |
| Transportation and material moving | 7.0 | 7.3 | 17.82 | 15.20* | -15 |

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area 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—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. El Paso had 25,620 jobs in education, training, and library, accounting for 8.5 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.1-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$22.54, significantly below the national wage of \$26.67.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the education, training, and library group included substitute teachers (4,030), elementary school teachers, except special education (3,850), and secondary school teachers, except special and career/technical education (3,000). Among the higher-paying jobs were health specialties teachers, postsecondary, and psychology teachers, postsecondary, with mean annual wages of \$89,910 and \$85,550, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were substitute teachers (\$22,160) and teachers assistants (\$26,540). (Detailed occupational data for education, training, and library are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available 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 Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the education, training, and library group. For instance, graduate teaching assistants were employed at 5.9 times the national rate in El Paso, and substitute teachers, at 3.1 times the U.S. average. Both El Paso location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, preschool teachers, except special education, had a location quotient of 1.0 in El Paso, indicating that this 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.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.htm.

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 survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,452 establishments with a response rate of 58 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm.

The May 2017 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.

Metropolitan 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** includes El Paso County in Texas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. 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/current/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: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017

| Occupation ⁽¹⁾ | Employment | | Mean wages | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| | Level ⁽²⁾ | Location quotient ⁽³⁾ | Hourly | Annual ⁽⁴⁾ |
| Education, training, and library occupations..... | 25,620 | 1.4 | \$22.54 | \$46,890 |
| Business teachers, postsecondary..... | 90 | 0.5 | (5) | 67,860 |
| Computer science teachers, postsecondary..... | 90 | 1.3 | (5) | 60,100 |
| Mathematical science teachers, postsecondary..... | 160 | 1.5 | (5) | 80,210 |
| Engineering teachers, postsecondary..... | 120 | 1.5 | (5) | 69,510 |
| Biological science teachers, postsecondary..... | 140 | 1.3 | (5) | 56,730 |
| Chemistry teachers, postsecondary..... | 100 | 2.2 | (5) | 58,570 |
| Physics teachers, postsecondary..... | 40 | 1.2 | (5) | 83,360 |
| Political science teachers, postsecondary..... | 60 | 1.9 | (5) | 85,190 |
| Psychology teachers, postsecondary..... | 120 | 1.5 | (5) | 85,550 |
| Health specialties teachers, postsecondary..... | 470 | 1.1 | (5) | 89,910 |
| Nursing instructors and teachers, postsecondary..... | 160 | 1.3 | (5) | 61,980 |
| Education teachers, postsecondary..... | 90 | 0.7 | (5) | 64,450 |
| Criminal justice and law enforcement teachers, postsecondary..... | 50 | 1.5 | (5) | 63,200 |
| Art, drama, and music teachers, postsecondary..... | 150 | 0.8 | (5) | 70,570 |
| English language and literature teachers, postsecondary..... | 230 | 1.5 | (5) | 83,930 |
| Foreign language and literature teachers, postsecondary..... | 100 | 1.8 | (5) | 66,220 |
| History teachers, postsecondary..... | 80 | 1.9 | (5) | 76,660 |
| Philosophy and religion teachers, postsecondary..... | 30 | 0.7 | (5) | 68,610 |
| Graduate teaching assistants..... | 1,700 | 5.9 | (5) | 31,410 |
| Vocational education teachers, postsecondary..... | 250 | 1.0 | 25.54 | 53,120 |
| Postsecondary teachers, all other..... | 90 | 0.2 | (5) | 60,860 |
| Preschool teachers, except special education..... | 830 | 1.0 | 14.20 | 29,540 |
| Kindergarten teachers, except special education..... | 290 | 1.0 | (5) | 59,220 |
| Elementary school teachers, except special education .. | 3,850 | 1.3 | (5) | 59,020 |
| Middle school teachers, except special and career/ technical education..... | 2,090 | 1.6 | (5) | 57,620 |
| Career/technical education teachers, middle school..... | 150 | 6.0 | (5) | 54,700 |
| Secondary school teachers, except special and career/ technical education..... | 3,000 | 1.4 | (5) | 58,710 |
| Career/technical education teachers, secondary school. | 280 | 1.7 | (5) | 69,120 |
| Special education teachers, preschool..... | 90 | 1.4 | (5) | 59,520 |
| Special education teachers, kindergarten and elementary school..... | 300 | 0.8 | (5) | 59,330 |
| Special education teachers, middle school..... | 160 | 0.9 | (5) | 58,070 |
| Special education teachers, secondary school..... | 300 | 1.1 | (5) | 60,510 |
| Adult basic and secondary education and literacy teachers and instructors..... | 140 | 1.1 | 25.09 | 52,190 |
| Self-enrichment education teachers..... | 280 | 0.6 | 19.81 | 41,210 |
| Teachers and instructors, all other, except substitute teachers..... | 1,370 | 2.2 | (5) | 31,370 |
| Substitute teachers..... | 4,030 | 3.1 | 10.66 | 22,160 |
| Librarians..... | 320 | 1.2 | 30.75 | 63,960 |
| Library technicians..... | 150 | 0.8 | 14.65 | 30,470 |
| Audio-visual and multimedia collections specialists..... | 60 | 2.6 | 19.89 | 41,380 |
| Instructional coordinators..... | 510 | 1.5 | 34.42 | 71,590 |
| Teacher assistants..... | 2,590 | 0.9 | (5) | 26,540 |
| Education, training, and library workers, all other..... | 220 | 1.1 | 20.64 | 42,930 |

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, 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) Wages for some occupations that do not generally work year-round, full time, are reported either as hourly wages or annual salaries depending on how they are typically paid.