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Occupational Employment and Wages in Austin-Round Rock — May 2020

Workers in the Austin-Round Rock, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of $27.80 in May 2020, about 3 percent above the nationwide average of $27.07, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Michael Hirniak noted that, after testing for statistical significance, 12 of the 22 occupational groups had average wages in the local area that were significantly lower than their respective national averages, including construction and extraction; life, physical, and social science; and installation, maintenance, and repair.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Austin area employment was more highly concentrated in 9 of the 22 occupational groups, including computer and mathematical, office and administrative support, and business and financial operations. Ten groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including transportation and material moving, production, and healthcare support. (See table A.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Austin metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2020

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Austin	United States	Austin	Percent difference [1]
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	$27.07	$27.80*	3
Management	5.7	6.9*	60.81	60.02	-1
Business and financial operations.............................	6.0	7.3*	38.79	37.02*	-5
Computer and mathematical	3.3	6.8*	46.53	44.80*	-4
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.7*	43.41	43.31	0
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	1.0	38.15	32.78*	-14
Community and social service...................................	1.6	1.2*	25.09	24.02*	-4
Legal..	0.8	1.1*	54.00	54.30	1
Educational instruction and library	6.1	5.7	28.75	26.94	-6
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.......	1.3	1.6*	30.96	28.62*	-8
Healthcare practitioners and technical	6.2	4.8*	41.30	38.45*	-7
Healthcare support	4.6	2.8*	15.50	15.20	-2
Protective service	2.4	2.1*	25.11	25.48	1
Food preparation and serving related	8.1	8.9*	13.30	12.68*	-5
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance ...	2.9	2.7*	15.75	14.82*	-6
Personal care and service..	1.9	1.8*	15.68	15.58	-1
Sales and related	9.4	10.0*	22.00	23.14	5
Office and administrative support.............................	13.3	15.3*	20.38	20.20	-1
Farming, fishing, and forestry..................................	0.3	0.1*	16.02	15.12	-6
Construction and extraction......................................	4.3	4.2	25.93	21.94*	-15
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.5*	25.17	23.17*	-8
Production	6.1	3.9*	20.08	19.23*	-4

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Austin metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2020 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Austin	United States	Austin	Percent difference [1]
Transportation and material moving........................	8.7	5.7*	19.08	17.74*	-7

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

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

One occupational group—computer and mathematical—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Austin had 71,170 jobs in computer and mathematical, accounting for 6.8 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 3.3-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was $44.80, significantly below the national wage of $46.53.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the computer and mathematical group included software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers (25,380), computer user support specialists (9,660), and computer systems analysts (8,380). Among the higher-paying jobs in this group were computer network architects and computer and information research scientists, with mean hourly wages of $65.49 and $56.50, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were computer user support specialists ($25.88) and computer network support specialists ($30.52). (Detailed data for the computer and mathematical occupations are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_12420.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 Austin area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the computer and mathematical group. For instance, information security analysts were employed at 2.4 times the national rate in Austin, and database administrators and architects, at 2.3 times the U.S. average. Statisticians had a location quotient of 1.0 in Austin, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

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

Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Name Change

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program has changed its name to Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) to better reflect the range of data available from the program. Data released on or after March 31, 2021, will reflect the new program name. Webpages, publications, and other materials associated with previous data releases will retain the Occupational Employment Statistics name.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on May 2020 Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics

Due to features of the OEWS methodology, the May 2020 OEWS estimates do not fully reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The May 2020 OEWS estimates are based on survey panels collected for May 2020, November 2019, May 2019, November 2018, May 2018, and November 2017. Because 5 of the 6 survey panels used to produce the estimates date from before the COVID-19 pandemic, only the most recent (May 2020) survey panel reflects changes in occupational proportions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The May 2020 OEWS employment estimates are benchmarked to the average of May 2020 and November 2019 employment from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Although the May 2020 QCEW data reflect the early employment effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the November 2019 QCEW employment data precede the pandemic, and therefore do not reflect its impact.

In addition, as a result of the pandemic, response rates for the November 2019 and May 2020 panels were lower in some areas. Lower response rates may negatively affect data availability and data quality. More information is available at www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-occupational-employment-and-wage-statistics.htm.

Implementing the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System

With the May 2019 estimates, the OEWS program began implementing the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Because the May 2019 and May 2020 estimates are based on a combination of survey data collected using the 2010 SOC and survey data collected using the 2018 SOC, these estimates use a hybrid of the two classification systems that contains some combinations of occupations that are not found in either the 2010 or 2018 SOC. This is the second and final year that the hybrid occupational structure will be used. The May 2021 estimates, to be published in Spring 2022, will be the first OEWS estimates based entirely on survey data collected using the 2018 SOC. For more information on the occupational classification system used in the May 2019 and May 2020 estimates, please see www.bls.gov/oes/soc_2018.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm#qf10.

Upcoming Changes to the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics Methodology

With the May 2021 estimates, to be released in Spring 2022, the OEWS program plans to begin using a new estimation methodology. The new model-based methodology, called MB3, has advantages over the existing methodology, as described in the Monthly Labor Review article at www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2019/article/model-based-estimates-for-the-occupational-employment-statistics-program.htm. OEWS estimates for the years 2015-2018 were recalculated using the new estimation methodology and are available as research estimates at www.bls.gov/oes/oes-mb3-methods.htm.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) survey is a semiannual survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OEWS data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 580 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-digit, most 4-digit, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OEWS data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

The OEWS survey is a cooperative effort between BLS and the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). BLS funds the survey and provides the procedures and technical support, while the State Workforce Agencies collect most of the data. OEWS estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.1 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 180,000 to 185,000 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 2020 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2020, November 2019, May 2019, November 2018, May 2018, and November 2017. The unweighted sample employment of 83 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 56 percent of total national employment. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 69 percent based on establishments and 66 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The sample in the Austin-Round Rock, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area included 5,036 establishments with a response rate of 39 percent. For more information about OEWS concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.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.

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 **Austin-Round Rock, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson Counties.

For more information

Answers to frequently asked questions about the OEWS data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed information about the OEWS program is available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_doc.htm.

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

Table 1. Employment and wage data for computer and mathematical occupations, Austin metropolitan area, May 2020

Occupation [1]	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level [2]	Location quotient [3]	Hourly	Annual [4]
Computer and mathematical occupations	71,170	2.1	$44.80	$93,190
Computer systems analysts	8,380	1.9	41.18	85,650
Information security analysts	2,520	2.4	53.90	112,110
Computer and information research scientists	320	1.4	56.50	117,520
Computer network support specialists	3,010	2.2	30.52	63,480
Computer user support specialists	9,660	2.0	25.88	53,840
Computer network architects	2,740	2.3	65.49	136,230
Network and computer systems administrators	5,290	2.1	41.06	85,400
Database administrators and architects	2,340	2.3	54.37	113,090
Computer programmers	2,660	2.0	42.42	88,240
Software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers	25,380	2.3	52.47	109,130
Web developers and digital interface designers	2,080	1.8	39.04	81,210
Computer occupations, all other	4,210	1.5	43.34	90,140
Actuaries	280	1.6	56.22	116,930
Operations research analysts	1,390	1.9	40.77	84,810
Statisticians	290	1.0	43.24	89,940
Data scientists and mathematical science occupations, all other	550	1.2	51.92	107,990

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Austin metropolitan area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_12420.htm
(2) Estimates for detailed occupations may not sum to the totals due to rounding, and because the totals may include occupations that are 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.