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Occupational Employment and Wages in Laredo, May 2014

Workers in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of $16.76 in May 2014, about 26 percent below the nationwide average of $22.71, 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 lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical; sales and related; and personal care and service. 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 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support; personal care and service; and transportation and material moving. Conversely, 12 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production; healthcare practitioners and technical; 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 Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Laredo		United States	Laredo		Percent difference[1]
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		$22.71	$16.76	*	-26
Management	5.0	3.4	*	54.08	40.48	*	-25
Business and financial operations	5.1	3.3	*	34.81	30.58	*	-12
Computer and mathematical	2.8	0.8	*	40.37	27.06	*	-33
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.5	*	39.19	28.59	*	-27
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.3	*	33.69	26.09	*	-23
Community and social service	1.4	1.1	*	21.79	21.12		-3
Legal	0.8	0.3	*	48.61	37.04	*	-24
Education, training, and library	6.2	8.2	*	25.10	19.35	*	-23
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.7	*	26.82	19.46	*	-27
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	3.8	*	36.54	35.07		-4
Healthcare support	2.9	2.9		13.86	11.55	*	-17
Protective service	2.4	4.6	*	21.14	24.60		16
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	9.9	*	10.57	8.97	*	-15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.4	*	12.68	9.45	*	-25
Personal care and service	3.1	6.5	*	12.01	8.60	*	-28
Sales and related	10.5	12.6	*	18.59	13.26	*	-29
Office and administrative support	16.0	20.5	*	17.08	13.91	*	-19
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	NA		12.09	NA		NA
Construction and extraction	3.9	3.0	*	22.40	19.38	*	-13

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Laredo		United States	Laredo		Percent difference[1]
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.4		21.74	15.74	*	-28
Production	6.6	2.0	*	17.06	13.97	*	-18
Transportation and material moving	6.8	9.9	*	16.57	14.88	*	-10

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Laredo is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.
Note: * 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.
NA: estimate is not available.

One occupational group – office and administrative support – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Laredo had 19,150 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 20.5 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 16.0-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At $13.91 an hour, the mean wage for Laredo office and administrative support workers was 19 percent below the $17.08 national average.

With employment of 3,980, general office clerks was one of the largest occupations within the office and administrative support group, as were secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (1,550) and stock clerks and order fillers (1,360). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, as well as executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, with mean hourly wages of $24.89 and $21.64, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were receptionists and information clerks ($9.75) and stock clerks and order fillers ($10.03). (Detailed data for office and administrative support occupations are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of all detailed occupations see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29700.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 Laredo metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, cargo and freight agents were employed at 21.7 times the national rate in Laredo, and dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance, at 2.8 times the U.S. average. Both location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks had a location quotient of 1.0 in Laredo, 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.

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. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,145 establishments with a response rate of 58 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 2014 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 **Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Webb 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, Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation[1]	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level[2]	Location quotient[3]	Hourly	Annual[4]
.....	19,150	1.3	$13.91	$28,940
Office and administrative support occupations				
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers	1,470	1.5	24.89	51,780
Switchboard operators, including answering service	50	0.6	10.81	22,480
Bill and account collectors	270	1.1	16.23	33,750
Billing and posting clerks	670	2.0	14.48	30,120
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	1,040	1.0	13.52	28,110
Payroll and timekeeping clerks	180	1.6	12.38	25,760
Tellers	580	1.6	11.00	22,880
Court, municipal, and license clerks	90	1.0	14.40	29,950
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks	(5)	(5)	13.59	28,270
Customer service representatives	1,240	0.7	11.50	23,910
File clerks	110	1.1	11.44	23,780
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	120	0.7	9.01	18,730
Library assistants, clerical	60	0.9	10.67	22,190
Loan interviewers and clerks	(5)	(5)	13.92	28,940
New accounts clerks	(5)	(5)	14.60	30,370
Order clerks	180	1.3	16.61	34,550
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	100	1.1	14.20	29,540
Receptionists and information clerks	500	0.7	9.75	20,280
Cargo and freight agents	1,170	21.7	15.21	31,640
Couriers and messengers	130	2.7	9.20	19,130
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance	620	4.7	16.86	35,060
Postal service mail carriers	120	0.6	25.11	52,230
Production, planning, and expediting clerks	240	1.2	16.71	34,750
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks	1,280	2.8	13.25	27,550
Stock clerks and order fillers	1,360	1.1	10.03	20,860
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	200	0.4	21.64	45,000
Legal secretaries	140	1.0	14.39	29,930
Medical secretaries	500	1.4	11.83	24,600
Secretaries & administrative assistants, except legal, medical, & executive	1,550	1.0	13.00	27,050
Data entry keyers	(5)	(5)	10.44	21,720
Office clerks, general	3,980	2.0	12.39	25,770

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Laredo MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29700.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.