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Labor Force Quality Gains in El Paso

Labor force quality is an essential component of economic achievement. Because the importance of labor force quality is widely recognized, close attention is paid to educational attainment. The U.S. Census Bureau publishes educational profiles of adults aged 25 years and older for all 3,007 counties in the nation every year as part of the American Community Survey (ACS).

The most recent year for which complete ACS data are available is 2021. The 2021 El Paso County data indicate that local educational attainment has improved substantially since 2012. Prior Border Region Modeling Project studies have quantified the income improvements associated with greater educational attainment. The recent gains are very encouraging.

One of the notable areas of progress is high school completion. In 2012, 26.7 percent of El Paso adults aged 25 years or older were high school dropouts. By 2021, that figure declined to 20.2 percent. In 2012, the percentage of adults whose maximum educational attainment was earning a high school diploma was 24.1 percent. By 2021, that category declined slightly to 23.8 percent.

Fewer high school dropouts and fewer high school-only graduates mean more El Paso County adults are enrolling in post-secondary education and training programs. The percentage of adults aged 25 or older that attended some college without completing a degree did not change from 22.3 percent. The percentage of the adult labor force who received an Associate’s Degree rose from 6.7 percent in 2012 to 9.0 percent in 2021.

Greater community college enrollments also translate into greater college and university attendance. The percentage of El Paso County adults over the age of 25 who attended college but did not receive a Bachelor’s degree rose from 29.0 percent in 2012 to 31.3 percent in 2021. The percentages of college graduates also increased.

In 2012, adults over the age of 25 who held a Bachelor’s Degree represented 13.6 percent of the workforce in El Paso County. By 2021, that figure rose to 16.6 percent. The percentage of adults older than 25 who held Graduate or Professional Degrees was 6.6 percent in 2012. It grew to 8.1 percent by 2021.

Gains in educational attainment are strongly correlated with improved labor force quality. The latter is associated with greater regional productivity. Greater productivity translates into higher incomes and a more prosperous business sector. The latest ACS data underscore welcome progress for El Paso County in recent years.

Thomas M. Fullerton, Jr., Steven L. Fullerton, and Brianna A. Perez
El Paso Metropolitan Business Cycle Index

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas Data
El Paso Metropolitan Business Cycle Index

Seasonally Adjusted Index (October 1980 = 100)

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas Data
Average Treasury Yield Curve Rates

Reflects 1 month, 2 month, 3 month, 6 month, 12 month, 2 yr, 3 yr, 5 yr, 7 yr, 10 yr, 20 yr, 30 yr.

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Treasury, Daily Treasury Yield Curve Rates Data
El Paso Household Economic Stress Index

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project
El Paso Household Economic Stress Index

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project
El Paso County Unemployment Rate

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Bureau of Labor Statistics Data
El Paso County Unemployment Rate

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Bureau of Labor Statistics Data
El Paso County SNAP (Food Stamp) Enrollment

Number of SNAP Recipients

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Starting in September, 2014, the number of SNAP recipients is recorded for the end of each month.

El Paso County SNAP Enrollment

El Paso County SNAP (Food Stamp) Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of SNAP Recipients</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>160,000</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>180,000</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>360,000</td>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>2019</td>
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<td>2020</td>
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<td>2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>460,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>480,000</td>
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Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Texas Health and Human Services Commission
El Paso Median Housing Prices

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Texas A&M Real Estate Center Data
El Paso Median Housing Prices from 2006 to 2023

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Texas A&M Real Estate Center Data
Months of Housing Inventory for El Paso

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Texas A&M Real Estate Center Data
Months of housing inventory in El Paso for single family homes 2006-2023

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Texas A&M Real Estate Center Data
Three year trend El Paso gasoline prices from 2021-2023

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using GasBuddy.com Data
El Paso unleaded gasoline prices from January 2006 to May 2023

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using GasBuddy.com Data
Doña Ana County Unemployment Rate

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using NM Workforce Data
Unemployment rate for Doña Ana county ranging from January 2006 to May 2023.

Doña Ana County Unemployment Rate

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using NM Workforce Data
Las Cruces Area SNAP (Food Stamp) Cases

Number of SNAP Cases

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using New Mexico Human Services Department Data
Las Cruces Area SNAP (Food Stamp) cases from January 2006 with a gap in April and May of 2014 continuing June 2014 to April 2023.

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using New Mexico Human Services Department Data
Restaurant Price Ratio and Exchange Rate

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using 85 identical franchise restaurant products sold on both sides of the border.
Restaurant Price Ratio and Exchange Rate

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Banco de Mexico Data
Real Peso-per-Dollar Exchange Rate Index

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project
Real Peso-per-Dollar Exchange Rate Index

Dates range from January 2006 to April 2023.

Index (March 1997 = 100)

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project
EPIA Freight and Mail (Inbound and Outbound), 2021, 2022 and 2023 (3 year comparison)

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using EPIA Operations Data
Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using EPIA Operations Data
EPIA Passengers

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using EPIA Operations Data
EPIA Passengers

Number of Passengers

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using EPIA Operations Data
EPIA Air Carrier Operations 2021, 2022 and 2023 (3 year comparison)

Aircraft Operators

21-Air Carriers  | 22-Air Carriers  | 23-Air Carriers

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using EPIA Operations Data
EPIA Air Carrier Operations

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using EPIA Operations Data
Paso del Norte Monthly Wait Times

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Ysleta Monthly Wait Times

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Bridge of the Americas Monthly Wait Times

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Monthly Border Wait Times

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Personal Vehicle International Bridge Crossings to El Paso

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Aggregate Personal vehicle bridge crossing to El Paso

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Vehicles</th>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>750,000</td>
</tr>
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Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Pedestrian International Bridge Crossings to El Paso

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Aggregate Pedestrian International Bridge Crossing to El Paso

Number of Pedestrians

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Cargo Truck International Bridge Crossings to El Paso

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Cargo Truck International Bridge Crossings to El Paso

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US Customs & Border Protection Data
Total Trade through the El Paso Customs District

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US International Trade Commission Data
Total Trade through the El Paso Customs District

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US International Trade Commission Data
Real Total Trade through the El Paso Customs District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Trade in Millions of 1982 Dollars</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>$4,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>2023</td>
<td>$4,300</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US International Trade Commission Data
Aggregate Real Total Trade through the El Paso Customs District

Total Trade in Millions of 1982 Dollars

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using US International Trade Commission Data
Domestic Passengers Ciudad Juarez International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
Domestic Passengers Ciudad Juarez International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
International Passengers Ciudad Juarez International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
International Passengers Ciudad Juarez International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
Domestic Passengers Chihuahua City International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
Domestic Passengers Chihuahua City International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
International Passengers Chihuahua City International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
International Passengers Chihuahua City International Airport

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Grupo Aeroportuario Centro Norte - OMA Data
Export-Oriented Manufacturing Employment in Ciudad Juárez

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Aggregate Export-Oriented Manufacturing Employment in Ciudad Juárez

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Export-Oriented Manufacturing Employment in Chihuahua City

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Export-Oriented Manufacturing Employment in Chihuahua City

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Northern Mexico Manufacturing Orders Index

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Banco de México Data
Northern Mexico Manufacturing Orders Index

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using Banco de México Data
Quarterly Indicator of Economic Activity for the State of Chihuahua

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Total Value of Construction in the State of Chihuahua

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Total Value of Construction in the State of Chihuahua

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Real Retail Activity Index for the State of Chihuahua

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
Real Retail Activity Index for the State of Chihuahua

Index (2013 = 100)

Source: UTEP Border Region Modeling Project using INEGI Data
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Borderplex Business Barometer is a monthly publication of the Border Region Modeling Project (BRMP), a research unit within the Department of Economics & Finance at the Woody L. Hunt College of Business of The University of Texas at El Paso. BRMP information is available at: https://www.utep.edu/business/border-region-modeling-project/index.html. For additional information, contact the Border Region Modeling Project - CBA 236, UTEP Department of Economics & Finance, 500 West University Avenue, El Paso, TX 79968-0543, USA, (915) 747-7775.