



Adopted by the Board of Directors of the South Central Council of Governments – June 26, 2015

## Table of Contents

Introduction to the CEDS	Page 1
Background	Page 1
*Geography	Page 1
*Climate	Page 1
*People	Page 2
*Culture	Page 3
*Housing	Page 3
*Educational Facilities	Page 4
*Transportation	Page 4
*Regional Economy and Employment Opportunities	Page 4
Community and Private Sector Participation	Page 5
Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities	Page 7
CEDS Goals and Objectives – Defining Regional Expectations	Page 8
Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities	Page 9
* Our Region’s Innovative Ideas for Economic Development	Page 9
*Tourism	Page 9
*Economic Gardening	Page 12
*Embracing Tactical Urbanism	Page 12
* State Efforts to Promote Economic Development in Our Region	Page 13
* Special Overweight Vehicle Permit Issuance	Page 13
* New Mexico Chile Advertising Act	Page 14
* Improvements to Strengthen Our Region	Page 14
CEDS Plan of Action	Page 16
Performance Measures	Page 16
Appendix A – Southwestern Region Workforce Snapshot	Attached



## Introduction to the CEDS

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for New Mexico Planning and Development District 7 is a roadmap to diversify and strengthen our regional economy. This CEDS has brought together the public and private sectors to analyze the regional economy, establish regional goals and objectives, develop a regional plan of action, and identify investment priorities. This CEDS has the flexibility to adapt to global economic conditions to fully utilize our region's unique advantages to maximize economic opportunity for our residents. This CEDS will serve as a benchmark by which our regional economy can evaluate economic development opportunities and successes.

## Background



**Geography** – New Mexico Planning and Development District 7 comprises Sierra, Socorro, and Doña Ana counties. Our region extends for 14,581 square miles down the center of New Mexico from the middle of the state to its southern border with Mexico and Texas. The center of our region contains the fertile Rio Grande valley. Our region is located in the high desert and ranges from over 3,000 feet above sea level in the river valley to over 10,000 feet above sea level at mountain peaks. On the east side of the river valley are the Oscura Mountains, San Andres Mountains and the Organ Mountains. On the west side are the Magdalena Mountains and the Black Range.

**Climate** – Our region, located in the Chihuahuan Desert, has a sunny arid climate. We have over 300 days of clear blue skies each year. Windy season comes in the spring and the yearly monsoon season lasts from July through September, bringing afternoon thunderstorms. Average yearly rainfall for our region is approximately 10 inches. However, recent years have seen drought conditions. Wintertime temperatures generally reach the mid to upper 50s (Fahrenheit) during the day and fall to the lower to mid-20s at night. In the summer, daytime highs average in the mid-90s with nighttime lows in the mid to upper 60s.







**People** – Doña Ana County is the most populous county in our region with the highest median household income. All counties in our region have a lower median household income and higher percent of people living below the poverty level than the state as a whole. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, State and County QuickFacts.

#### **2013 Population Estimates**

Doña Ana County	213,460
Sierra County	11,572
Socorro County	17,584
Total	242,616

#### **Population Percent Change April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013**

Doña Ana County	2.0%
Sierra County	-3.5%
Socorro County	-1.6%
New Mexico	1.3%

#### **Percent of Persons below Poverty Level 2008-2012**

Doña Ana County	25.8%
Sierra County	25.3%
Socorro County	25.0%
New Mexico	19.5%

#### **Median Household Income 2008-2012**

Doña Ana County	\$38,462
Sierra County	\$29,185
Socorro County	\$34,337
New Mexico	\$44,886

#### **Bachelor's Degree or Higher, Percent of Persons Age 25+, 2008-2012**

Doña Ana County	26.0%
Sierra County	20.6%
Socorro County	20.3%
New Mexico	25.6%

#### **High School Graduate or Higher, Percent of Persons Age 25+, 2008-2012**

Doña Ana County	76.9%
Sierra County	85.4%
Socorro County	79.5%
New Mexico	83.4%

#### **Mean Travel Time to Work (in Minutes), Workers Age 16+ 2008-2012**

Doña Ana County	19.5
Sierra County	14.0
Socorro County	19.2
New Mexico	21.7

#### **Persons Over 65 Years Old in 2012**

Doña Ana County	13.0%
Sierra County	32.0%
Socorro County	15.4%
New Mexico	14.1%

#### **Persons Under 18 Years Old in 2012**

Doña Ana County	26.3%
Sierra County	16.4%
Socorro County	23.7%
New Mexico	24.7%

#### **Persons Under 5 Years Old in 2012**

Doña Ana County	7.5%
Sierra County	4.6%
Socorro County	6.6%
New Mexico	6.9%

#### **Race and Ethnicity, 2012**

	Doña Ana County	Sierra County	Socorro County	New Mexico
White	92.5%	93.7	82.9%	83.2%
Black	2.1%	0.7%	1.2%	2.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2.1%	2.4%	12.4%	10.2%
Asian	1.3%	0.4%	1.3%	1.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Persons Reporting Two or More Races	1.7%	2.7%	2.1%	2.4%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin	66.4%	28.9%	48.9%	47.0%
White Persons Not Hispanic	29.4%	67.2%	37.1%	39.8%

**Culture** – Our region is friendly, laid back, and multicultural. Our cuisine features our region’s red and green chile. We enjoy local festivals such as The Whole Enchilada Fiesta, county fairs with 4H exhibits, and wine festivals showcasing wines from our region’s vineyards. Our dramatic desert and mountain scenery provides a backdrop for relaxing motorcycle rides along back roads and hiking adventures for those of us who enjoy the outdoors. Spring and fall provide a great climate for sitting outside, enjoying a family barbeque at our local parks, and strolling through our historic plazas and downtowns. During our hot summers we enjoy boating and fishing in Elephant Butte Lake and floating down the Rio Grande.



**Housing** – Our region has a total of 97,907 housing units, 90% of which are occupied.

Occupied Housing Units	Doña Ana County		Sierra County		Socorro County		Total	
Owner-Occupied	48,514	64.2%	4,282	72.4%	4,858	69.3%	57,654	65.2%
Renter-Occupied	27,018	35.8%	1,635	27.6%	2,156	30.7%	30,809	34.8%
Total	75,532	100%	5,917	100%	7,014	100%	88,463	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, DP-1.



Out of the 88,463 occupied housing units, 65.2% are owner occupied and 34.8% are renter occupied. Sierra County has the highest percentage of owner-occupied housing units.

Out of the total housing units in our region, 2.26% are for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. However, the breakdown between the counties in our region is striking, with Doña Ana County and Socorro County having lower percentages of .8% and 2.5% respectively, and Sierra County having an average of 15.9% of housing units for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

**Educational Facilities** – Our region is home to two major universities. New Mexico State University (NMSU) has a main campus in the City of Las Cruces as well as Doña Ana Community College branches throughout Doña Ana County. NMSU serves over 23,000 students. It is a land grant university, a NASA Space Grant College, and a Hispanic-serving institution. It offers a broad range of majors and degrees. New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech) is located in the City of Socorro and serves over 2,000 students. It offers outstanding preparation in science, engineering, and technology related fields. Both New Mexico State University and New Mexico Tech offer undergraduate and graduate degrees. New Mexico State University offers certificates, licensure programs and associate degree programs as well.



**Transportation** – I-25 runs north and south through New Mexico Planning & Development District 7 and connects with I-10 south of Las Cruces. I-10 enters the state on the west from Arizona and continues through New Mexico south to the Texas border. Highway 70 also runs through our region from Las Cruces to the east.

Union Pacific Railroad recently built a multi-modal ramp in the Santa Teresa area of Doña Ana County. BNSF also has lines that run through our region.



New Mexico Planning & Development District 7 also has a number of transit options in Doña Ana and Sierra counties. Roadrunner Transit operates bus routes throughout the City of Las Cruces in Doña Ana County. Commuter service is also available between the City of Las Cruces and the City of El Paso, Texas. The South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD) in conjunction with Z-Trans, Rio Grande, and Roadrunner Transit systems is providing the public with a regional transit pilot program for Doña Ana and Sierra counties. Routes are available from Las Cruces south to Anthony, Sunland Park, and Chaparral in Doña Ana County; north from Las Cruces to Hatch and Garfield in Doña Ana County and to Williamsburg, Truth or Consequences, and

Elephant Butte in Sierra County; and east from Las Cruces through the East Mesa to Organ in Doña Ana County and Alamogordo in Otero County.

**Regional Economy and Employment Opportunities** – Based on the “Southwestern Region Workforce Snapshot” prepared by the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions Economic Research and Analysis Bureau for the seven county area that includes Doña Ana, Sierra, and Socorro Counties, healthcare and social assistance is the top industry in terms of employment. This is followed by



educational services, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. The report found that certain industries are more concentrated in our counties than in the state as a whole. Even if they do not employ a large number of people, they are important to our economic base:

Industry	More concentrated in this county than in the state as a whole
Utilities	Sierra County, Socorro County
Education	Doña Ana County, Socorro County
Construction	Sierra County
Healthcare	Sierra County
Agriculture	Doña Ana County, Sierra County, Socorro County

The report also found that over 40 percent of workers in the Southwestern Region are employed in four major occupational groups—office and administrative support; education, training, and library; food preparation and serving; and sales and related.

Employment in general is expected to grow more slowly in the Southwestern Region compared to other regions in the state, but the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is projected to grow faster than all other MSAs in the state except for the Farmington MSA.

The report also found that employment in the health care and social assistance industry is projected to grow the most and fastest of all industries. Three quarters of the growth in the region is projected to occur in the top four major industries. While retail trade is included in the top four



growth industries, it is not projected to grow the fastest. Transportation and Warehousing will grow faster than retail trade.

In addition, the report found that personal and home care aides and cashiers are projected to see the most average annual job openings (160 each) between 2010 and 2020. However, these are often lower wage jobs. The report found that the best job opportunities identified for the Southwestern Region and the Las Cruces MSA include elementary and middle school teachers; registered nurses; postsecondary education administrators; postsecondary teachers; and clinical, counseling, and school psychologists because these jobs are projected to grow in numbers and

typically pay higher wages.

Source: "Southwestern Region Workforce Snapshot" prepared by the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions Economic Research and Analysis Bureau.

## Community and Private Sector Participation

### Private Sector Involvement

One goal of the previous CEDS for New Mexico Planning & Development District 7 was to increase private sector participation in the CEDS process. During the data gathering phase of this CEDS, we received input from the following industry sectors:

- Hospitality & Tourism
- High Tech, including Aerospace and Information Technology
- Retail
- Professional services
- Film

Our goal for the future is to gather input from all of the following industry sectors:

- Healthcare
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Manufacturing
- Aerospace
- Mining
- Construction
- Information Technology
- Retail
- Railroads
- Real Estate
- Insurance
- Professional Services
- Agriculture
- Ranching
- Homebuilding
- Food Service
- Logistics and Warehousing
- Film

The industry sectors identified above are involved are aligned with the regional workforce priority industries for the Southwest Area Workforce Development Board, which are healthcare, hospitality & tourism, manufacturing, aerospace, mining, construction, and information technology.

### Local Government Needs

We conducted a survey of local government needs. Our future goal is to obtain a 100% participation rate from our local government entities.



## Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities

New Mexico Planning and Development District 7 contains the following industry clusters: aviation and aerospace, film, farming and ranching, logistics and warehousing, high tech, defense, renewable energy, and healthcare.

As SWOT analysis was done for the region and the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were recorded:

**Strengths:** Our district contains protected airspace, plenty of sunshine and open space, it is close to maquiladoras in Mexico, along trade routes and a port of entry, bisected by interstate highways, has a Spaceport, White Sands Missile Range, NASA, research institutions, a film-ready workforce, historic and cultural attractions, a low cost of living, a relaxed lifestyle, and a low cost of labor.

**Weaknesses:** Public education system for k-12, local college graduates lack some skills desired by industry, lack of buildings, and the region cannot always attract young educated people from other parts of the state and country and/or keep them here.

**Opportunities:** Space flight and tourism overall, growth of the film industry, growth of aviation and aerospace R&D and manufacturing, beef cattle feedlots, and technology transfer and commercialization.

**Threats:** Budget cuts at the federal, state and local levels because of the high levels of government employment, drought, competing spaceports and UAV testing facilities.



## CEDS Goals and Objectives – Defining Regional Expectations

### GOAL 1: ENCOURAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS EXPANSION WITHIN THE REGION

- Objective 1: Cultivate the growth and expansion of our existing local employers and entrepreneurs.
- Objective 2: Increase the number of economic development tools available to the local governments in our region.
- Objective 3: Support the recruitment of firms from outside the area.

### GOAL 2: BUILD AND MAINTAIN ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE

- Objective 1: Support the construction of infrastructure in the region that will promote economic development.

### GOAL 3: PROMOTE REGIONAL TOURISM

- Objective 1: Publicize our tourist attractions as a region.



## Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities

### Our Region's Innovative Ideas for Economic Development

**Tourism** – Our goal is to promote regional tourism. Our region has developed along the north-south route of the Camino Real, which runs alongside Interstate 10 from El Paso to Las Cruces and along Interstate 25 from Las Cruces to our northern boundary. Our tourist attractions begin just outside of El Paso, TX at the southern end of our region and continue northward toward Albuquerque. There is something to see and do all along this route. These are great opportunities for day and weekend trips for Texas and Albuquerque residents. They also provide a unique road trip opportunity for visitors flying into either the El Paso or Albuquerque airports. Our region is interested in promoting tourism throughout our entire region by developing a regional tourism initiative to promote the attractions along our north-south artery.



**Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino** – The Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino is located at the southern edge of our region in the City of Sunland Park. It is across the border from the City of El Paso, Texas, and the City of Juarez, Chihuahua Mexico, and is located approximately 40 miles south of the City of Las Cruces. It opened as a racetrack in 1959 and added slot machines in the 1990s. The Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino also has live entertainment and various giveaways. Shuttle service is available from El Paso and Las Cruces.

**Historic Old Mesilla** – Historic Old Mesilla is located approximately 40 miles north of the City of Sunland Park. It is adjacent to the City of Las Cruces. Mesilla was founded in 1848 by residents of the nearby Village of Doña Ana when the border with Mexico was shifted southward and they wanted to remain on Mexican soil. Mesilla has witnessed historical events including the negotiation and confirmation of the Gadsden Purchase in 1854, a Confederate Army occupation in 1861, and the incarceration and trial of Billy the Kid in 1881. The Town of Mesilla has strived to preserve its historic nature. Visitors can enjoy strolling through the historic plaza, visiting shops in adobe buildings, and eating lunch at renowned restaurants such as La Posta or the Double Eagle.







**Las Cruces Farmers and Crafts Market** – The Las Cruces Farmers and Crafts Market is located on Main Street right in the heart of newly revitalized Downtown Las Cruces. The Market was established in 1971 and is one of the largest farmers and crafts market in the country. It is open every Wednesday and Saturday morning from 8:00 am - 12:30 in the summer and 9:00 am - 1:30 pm in the winter and features arts, crafts and other original merchandise from Doña Ana County, and food and produce from a three county area.

**White Sands National Monument** – The White Sands National Monument, located just to the east of our district, draws visitors from around the world - many of which stay in nearby Las Cruces. Located 60 miles to the east of Las Cruces on Highway 70, the White Sands National Monument showcases 275 square miles of gypsum sand dunes. Visitors can hike the dunes, bring a picnic, rent disc sleds to coast down the gypsum dunes, enjoy sunset strolls and full moon hikes, and even listen to ghost stories during full moon nights!

**Spaceport America** - Spaceport America is the world's first purpose-built, commercial spaceport designed with the needs of the commercial, space business in mind. Located 55 miles north of Las Cruces, 30 miles northeast of the Village of Hatch, and 30 miles southeast of Truth or Consequences, Spaceport America contains an airfield, launch pads, and terminal / hangar facility. It will be capable of accommodating both vertical and horizontal takeoff space launch vehicles, serving as the base for pre-flight and post-flight activities, and providing a tourism experience for interested visitors and spectators. Commercial space flights will be provided by Spaceport tenant Virgin Galactic. Weekly preview tours of Spaceport America are currently available through Sun, Inc. Public tours will be available in the future.

**Hatch Chile Festival** – During the yearly harvest season, stop by the Village of Hatch to stock up on roasted green chile to freeze for the rest of the year! Over Labor Day weekend, the Village of Hatch holds the annual Hatch Chile Festival featuring both read and green chile from local growers. Visitors can watch their green chile roast while at the fair! **Sparky's** restaurant in downtown Hatch is a popular attraction year round. They serve world famous green chile cheeseburgers as well as barbeque and showcase live blues bands and microbrewery beer on select Sundays.





**Truth or Consequences Hot Springs Historic District** – T or C, located approximately 77 miles north of Las Cruces, features the Hot Springs Historic district with mineral-rich geothermal springs. Visitors come from around the state and the country to soak in these mineral-rich geothermal springs to promote health and relaxation. Some of the springs are located outside overlooking the picturesque Rio Grande and some are located inside stylish retro hotel rooms in 1950's-era motor courts. A number of facilities offer spa services and packages for weekend getaways. Visitors can enjoy shopping in T or C's downtown and can dine at eclectic restaurants. Visit for the day or spend the night or weekend.

**Elephant Butte Lake State Park** – Elephant Butte Lake State Park is the largest state park in New Mexico and contains the largest lake in New Mexico. Located 7 miles north of Truth or Consequences, Elephant Butte Lake boasts all kinds of water sports – a very exciting getaway in our desert environment! Visitors can go camping, hiking, boating, swimming, water skiing, fishing, and can relax by the lake. This lake is the largest reservoir in New Mexico which was created by the building of the Elephant Butte Dam between 1911 and 1916.



**Bosque del Apache** – The Bosque del Apache is a national wildlife refuge where tens of thousands of birds—including sandhill cranes, Arctic geese, and many kinds of ducks--gather each autumn and stay through the winter. It is located at the northern edge of the Chihuahuan desert, and straddles the Rio Grande, approximately 20 miles south of the City of Socorro. It provides habitat and protection for migratory birds and endangered species and

provides the public with a high quality wildlife and educational experience. The Festival of the Cranes celebrates the efforts of the Bosque each year in November.



**Owl Café and Buckhorn Tavern in San Antonio** – Located approximately 11 miles south of Socorro, the small community of San Antonio has *two* restaurants famous for our state's green chile cheeseburgers! Located across the street from each other, the Owl Café and the Buckhorn Tavern have been serving up famous green chile cheeseburgers to visitors for decades. Located right off I-25, these two restaurants are a great place to stop for locals and out-of-town visitors alike.

**Magdalena Ridge Observatory** – The Magdalena Ridge Observatory is a multi-use research and educational astronomy observatory built and operated by the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. It is located in the Magdalena Mountains of the Cibola National Forest in Socorro County, approximately 20 miles west of Socorro and approximately 30 miles east of Magdalena. The mission of the observatory is to support astronomy, space situational awareness, and education.

**Very Large Array** - The Very Large Array is located 50 miles west of Socorro, New Mexico on U.S. Highway 60. It consists of twenty-seven, 230-ton, 25-meter diameter dish antennas that together comprise a single radio telescope system. Astronomers from around the world use it to study objects from our Solar System to the edges of the known Universe, billions of light-years from the Earth. The Very Large Array Visitor Center is open for self-guided tours as well as guided tours on the first Saturday of each month.

**Seville National Wildlife Refuge** – The Seville National Wildlife Refuge is New Mexico’s largest wildlife refuge and one of the largest refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System in the lower 48 states. It is located approximately 37 miles north of the City of Socorro at the northern part of our region. The Rio Grande runs through 230,000 acres managed as closely as possible in their natural state. The refuge contains four distinct biomes - the Colorado Plateau Shrub Steppe, Great Plains Short Grass Prairie, the Chihuahuan Desert, and the Pinyon-Juniper Woodland – containing a vast array of biological diversity. Commonly seen wildlife on the refuge includes mule deer, coyotes, pronghorns, snakes, lizards, and many different types of birds.

**Economic Gardening** – Our region is interested in promoting economic gardening as one of our economic development strategies. Economic gardening focuses efforts on existing businesses and sees existing businesses as the drivers of job growth. These businesses have already made our region their home and have hired local residents. By fostering the entrepreneurial spirit behind these businesses, our region hopes to inspire more growth.

We would like to provide services to existing businesses including connecting business owners to information sources on markets, customers, and competitors to take some of the uncertainty out of business growth and expansion.



The City of Las Cruces is working on an economic gardening initiative to help local businesses grow.



## Embracing Tactical Urbanism

Embracing tactical urbanism means embracing small-scale public and private actions that lead to incremental change within our communities. From temporary outdoor public seating to street art on the sides of buildings, tactical urbanism is a way for communities in our region to test out new concepts without a large outlay of public or private capital. If they are popular with the public and local business community and achieve their intended goals, such as increasing foot traffic in our downtown shopping areas, funding can be sought to make these changes permanent.



An example of tactical urbanism is street art. Sometimes street art can be encouraged in an effort to prevent graffiti. Some communities use street art to promote the creation and cohesion of arts and cultural districts and organize walking tours around their street art installations. Street art and community murals have long been a part of the Las Cruces community. Recently, there has been an increase in street art, especially on the East Mesa along Highway 70. Although street art on the East Mesa is unlikely to spur a walking tour because of the spread out nature of development in that area, it does catch your attention. Efforts such as this can draw attention to businesses and improve the appearance of areas. It can add vibrancy and the sense that there is life and activity in an area.



Tactical urbanism can aid in the revitalization of our communities, help with community building by providing informal public spaces for our residents to interact, and help the public sector work with our private sector interests such as local shop owners. This will foster the vitality of our local economies.



## State Efforts to Promote Economic Development in Our Region

**Special Overweight Vehicle Permit Issuance** – The Special Overweight Vehicle Permit Issuance Act, as passed by the New Mexico State Legislature in 2011, provides for the issuance of special permits to operate overweight vehicles with reducible loads within six miles of a port-of-entry facility on the Border with Mexico. The act states that the department of public safety and local highway authorities may, in their discretion, upon application in writing and good cause being shown, issue a special permit in writing authorizing an applicant to operate or move a vehicle or load of a size or weight exceeding the maximum specified in state law on a highway under the jurisdiction of the state transportation commission or local authorities.

Prior to this, reducible loads, such as international trade containers, had to be reduced into lighter loads before travelling on state roads. This legislation allowed larger loads to enter and leave the area around our region's Santa Teresa Port of Entry. This will make our region a more competitive location for warehousing operations. Large shipments can come in, be stored in warehouses, and then the loads can be reduced before being shipped out across the country. Similarly, shipments can come in from across the state and country to be stored in warehouses prior to being exported to Mexico via reducible loads.

**New Mexico Chile Advertising Act** – The Chile Advertising Act, as passed by the New Mexico State Legislature in 2011, states that it is unlawful for a person to knowingly advertise, describe, label or offer for sale chile peppers as New Mexico chile, or to advertise, describe, label or offer for sale a product as containing New Mexico chile, unless the chile peppers or chile peppers in the product were grown in New Mexico. The New Mexico Department of Agriculture is given the authority to issue cease and desist orders to any company not complying with this law and can take the matter to district court to request an injunction to enforce compliance. This act is intended to protect New Mexico chile growers from products from other states and from out of the country that claim to be New Mexico chile or to be made from New Mexico chile. This act was further strengthened in 2013.



## Improvements to Strengthen Our Region

Based on the business and government input into this CEDS, it is suggested that projects are needed in the following areas to improve the economic climate and quality of life in New Mexico Planning and Development District 7:

- New Industrial Sites/Parks
- New Industrial Buildings

- Public Improvements/Utilities to Support Sites & Buildings (access roads, water & sewer connections, rail spurs, etc.)
- Marketing/Utilization of Existing Sites and Buildings
- Job Skills Training (OJT or classroom)
- Development of New Products/Markets (i.e. value added processing)
- Downtown/Commercial Redevelopment
- Seed, Venture and Expansion Capital or Loans
- Market and Business Planning Technical Assistance
- Business Incubators/Technology Transfer
- Tourism Development and Expansion
- Export/International Trade Assistance
- Affordable/Available Housing
- Transportation Facilities (roads, streets and highways, rail service, air service, etc.)
- Education Facilities and Services
- Cultural/Recreational Facilities and Programs (libraries, community centers museums/arts centers, parks, etc.)
- Health Care Facilities and Services
- Environmental Protection (solid waste management, air and water quality, conservation of natural resources, etc.)
- Telecommunications (software, hardware, towers, etc.)
- Other Infrastructure/Public Works (public buildings, water/sewer systems, drainage, etc.)
- Benefit Assistance (food stamps, social services, etc.)
- Services for the Elderly (home healthcare, home delivered meals, transportation, homemaker services, senior center activities)
- Child Care

Infrastructure remains a critical issue for our smaller and unincorporated communities. Adequate public infrastructure of all kinds is crucial for enabling economic development.

The CEDS committee believes that the following projects are vital projects, i.e. catalytic projects, for our region:

- Santa Teresa Port of Entry/Border Industrial Area
- Sunland Park Port of Entry
- Anthony Youth Farm
- Arrowhead Research Park
- Spaceport America
- Spaceport America Visitor Center in Truth or Consequences
- Socorro Rodeo Arena
- Regional Tourism Initiative



The CEDS Committee is also committed to encouraging all of the counties and municipalities to pass LEDA ordinances to increase the economic development tools available to them and, therefore, to the region as a whole.



## CEDS Plan of Action

**STRATEGY 1:** Encourage economic gardening initiatives to cultivate the growth and expansion of our existing local employers and entrepreneurs.

**STRATEGY 2:** Promote the adoption of LEDA ordinances among our local government entities to increase the tools available for economic development projects in our region.

**STRATEGY 3:** Support all economic development projects, including catalytic projects, financially and politically.

**STRATEGY 4:** Encourage the streamlining of local regulations to create a business friendly climate and to speed up the approvals process for economic development projects.

**STRATEGY 5:** Support additional financial incentives for the film industry at the state level.

**STRATEGY 6:** Support infrastructure projects throughout our region as identified in local entity Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plans (ICIP).

**STRATEGY 7:** Support infrastructure projects for the film industry, including a sound stage.

**STRATEGY 8:** Identify the key players in launching a regional tourism initiative.

**STRATEGY 9:** Develop a plan for funding a regional tourism initiative.

**STRATEGY 10:** Promote tactical urbanism as a method of experimenting with local place based economic development projects.



## Performance Measures

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1:** A decrease in the unemployment rate in all three counties.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2:** A decrease in the number of people living below the poverty line in all three counties.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3:** An increase in the median household income in all three counties relative to the statewide median household income.



# SOUTHWESTERN REGION WORKFORCE SNAPSHOT

OCTOBER 2013

[WWW.DWS.STATE.NM.US](http://WWW.DWS.STATE.NM.US)

ECONOMIC RESEARCH & ANALYSIS BUREAU



This report was prepared for the South Central Council of Governments by the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS), Economic Research and Analysis Bureau (ER&A). Major contributors were Mark Flaherty, Economist; Ashley Leach, Economist; and Jessa Rianelli, Statistician. For more information or copies of this report, please contact 505-383-2737.

**OCTOBER 2013**

# SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

## UNDERSTANDING KEY FACTORS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S LABOR MARKET

This report provides a snapshot of the employment situation in the Southwestern Region of New Mexico. Current and historical trends in labor force, employment, and unemployment are evaluated and compared to other regions of the state to gain perspective on how the Southwestern Region is faring after the great recession and during the recovery. In addition, this report looks at the industries and occupations that are the largest and that play a more significant role in the region to better understand the region's strengths. While many of these industries and occupations are also important statewide, the analysis is meant to provide an outlook on where the region's labor market is now and where it looks to be headed into the future. This can help to develop conversations and future research on key areas of potential growth and investment as the Southwest, and the entire state, works to move in a positive direction through the recovery.

### **POPULATION SUMMARY**

Population is one of many factors that impact the labor force of a region. Evaluating historical and projected population growth is essential in gaining a better understanding of the regions' existing and future supply and demand of workers across industries and occupations.

- The Southwestern Region is the least populated region in New Mexico. As of 2012, it was home to 15 percent of New Mexico's population. Approximately 70 percent of the region's population lives in Doña Ana County. Hidalgo and Catron counties have the smallest populations (each under 5,000 persons).
- The population in the Southwest grew more quickly between 1992 and 2012 than the population of the Northern and Eastern regions, but lagged the growth in the Central Region. Doña Ana County, which is also the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), experienced the fastest population growth over the 20-year period. Hidalgo County was the only county in the Southwestern Region to experience a decline in population during this time.
- The Southwestern Region's population is projected to grow more slowly than the statewide population between 2010 and 2040. Population in Doña Ana County will continue to grow the quickest in the region, followed by the population in Luna County. Grant, Socorro, and Hidalgo counties are projected to see a decline in their populations.

*Population data is from the U.S. Census Bureau, with 2012 being the most recent year for which data is available. Population projections data is for 2010 to 2040 and is from the University of New Mexico Bureau of Business & Economic Research.*

### **THE CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN THE SOUTHWEST**

What is the current employment situation in the Southwest and how does it compare to the employment situation of New Mexico's other regions? Evaluating current data on the civilian labor force, employment, and unemployment serves to identify existing strengths and weaknesses in a region's labor market.

- The Southwestern Region's civilian labor force and employment each make up about 15 percent of the statewide labor force and employment. Unemployment in the Southwestern Region, however, makes up a larger percentage of statewide unemployment (approximately 17 percent). The region's share of unemployment is relatively higher than that of the other regions.
- The majority of labor force, employment, and unemployment in the Southwestern Region are found in Doña Ana County. This is understandable considering the county's population. Luna County has a disproportionate share of the regions unemployment. As of July 2013, unemployment in Luna County made up 18 percent of the region's unemployment, whereas labor force and employment made up 8 to 10 percent of the region's labor force and employment.
- The Southwestern Region's unemployment rate is the highest of New Mexico's regions. In July 2013, the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) was 8.7 percent, as compared to 7.5 percent for the state as a whole. This rate is largely driven by the persistently high unemployment rate of Luna County, and is less

# SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

## UNDERSTANDING KEY FACTORS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S LABOR MARKET

significantly driven by the rates in Doña Ana and Grant counties, which also had rates above the state average. Socorro had the lowest unemployment rate (5.8 percent).

*Civilian labor force, employment, and unemployment data is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Local Area Employment Statistics (LAUS) program, in conjunction with NMDWS ER&A. Current data presented is from July 2013, the most recent month for which data is available, and is not seasonally adjusted.*

### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

An analysis of the historical employment situation is just as valuable as analysis on the current situation. An overview of how the region has fared compared to others over a longer period of time can help to identify areas in which the region is stronger and showing patterns of improvement, as well as persistent areas of concern. Historical analysis can provide a story on the region's unique position in the statewide labor market.

- The Southwestern Region's labor force did not experience as large of a decline as those of most other regions during the recession and early recovery (barring the Eastern Region). The labor force fell by 3.7 percent between its peak and trough. Likewise, the Southwestern Region's labor force has experienced more positive growth than other regions since the recession, and has been growing overall for a longer period of time.
- As with civilian labor force, the Southwestern Region's employment fared better than other regions during the recession and recent recovery period. The region experienced the shortest period of employment decline during the recession and employment declined by less than those of all but the Eastern Region. Likewise, employment began to recover more quickly in the Southwest, emerging from its over-the-year losses several months before other regions. The region has also gained back more of the employment it lost than the state.
- Unemployment increased significantly in all regions of the state during the recession. Over-the-year changes in unemployment followed similar patterns for all of the regions (with the Eastern Region being somewhat unique). All regions saw over-the-year declines in unemployment through 2011 and 2012, but have recently again seen unemployment increase over the year.
- Unemployment is an area in which the Southwestern Region struggles more than other regions. In at least the last 10 years, the unemployment rate in the Southwestern Region has been higher than that of other regions and the state (with few exceptions). After peaking at 9.4 percent in February 2010, the rate has only dropped by 0.7 percentage points, whereas rates in other regions have declined by more, even though rates continue to remain fairly high in almost all regions.
- The higher unemployment rate in the Southwestern Region is largely driven by the unemployment rate of Luna County. Even when considering the large seasonal fluctuations in this agricultural county, rates have remained above 10 percent since November 2008.
- Grant County's unemployment rate spiked quickly during the recession, but has returned to a rate similar to that of the state. Socorro has fared better than other counties, with its unemployment rate remaining below that of the state since the beginning of the recession.
- Nearly all counties have seen their unemployment rates become somewhat stagnant through the recovery. Sierra County, for example, has seen its seasonal peak unemployment, usually registering in February of each year, remain around 7.4 to 7.5 percent for the last three years. Doña Ana has seen its seasonal peak (in June of each year) hover between 7.9 and 8.5 percent since the end of the recession.

*Civilian labor force, employment, and unemployment data is from the BLS LAUS program, in conjunction with NMDWS ER&A. Historical data is from January 2003 to July 2013 and has not been seasonally adjusted.*



# SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

## UNDERSTANDING KEY FACTORS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S LABOR MARKET

### THE INDUSTRIAL BASE IN THE SOUTHWEST & MAJOR INDUSTRIES

Understanding the industrial base in the Southwest is important in identifying industries that play a larger role in the economy and labor market as well as areas where additional focus could garner an ever greater competitive advantage for the region.

- Health care is the largest employing industry in not only the Southwest, but in the state as a whole. Employment in health care comprises nearly 18 percent of all employment in the Southwestern Region. Employment in education, retail trade, accommodation and food services, and public administration followed that of health care. Over 60 percent of all employment can be found in these five industries, with each comprising at least 9 percent of total employment.
- ER&A calculated location quotients to identify industries that had a larger concentration of employment in the Southwest (employment comprises a larger percentage of total employment) than in the state as a whole. A location quotient greater than one means that an industry has a larger concentration in the region as opposed to the state. Even if industries with high location quotients don't employ a large number of people, they are still very important to the region's industry base, labor market, and identity.
- Based on location quotient analysis, several industries were identified as being more concentrated in the Southwestern Region. Public administration has a significant presence in both Catron and Hidalgo counties. This is likely driven by these counties' small populations. Employment in education was particularly concentrated in Socorro and Doña Ana counties, driven by New Mexico State University and New Mexico Tech. Construction has a higher concentration of employment in Catron, Sierra, and Luna counties, while health care has a higher share of employment in Sierra.
- There are several industries that stand out as particularly unique to the Southwestern Region in terms of employment concentration. Agriculture is a dominant industry in several counties. Employment in agriculture comprises 6.4 times more of Sierra County's total employment than employment at the state level. Agriculture is also a major presence in Doña Ana, Luna, and Socorro counties. Luna County has a high location quotient in manufacturing, and this is tied to food production and the agriculture industry in the region.
- Mining is particularly important in Grant County. Copper mining is a major driver of mining employment, which has a location quotient of 5.3. At the same time, the utilities industry is relatively significant in Catron, Sierra, and Socorro counties.

*Employment data is from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. Data is for 2012, the most recent year for which an entire year of data is available.*

### HOW INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT HAS CHANGED IN RECENT YEARS

It is important to understand industry-level employment changes because positive and negative changes can drive much larger impacts within the general economy. This can also lead to decisions regarding industries that need additional focus to more fully recovery from recessionary job losses, as well as industries that can provide job opportunities as other industries continue to struggle.

- The health care and social assistance industry is the success story out of all the industries through the recession and recovery. While other industries lost jobs, health care in the Southwestern Region saw employment grow by 9.6 percent between 2007 and 2010, and employment continued to grow by 12.8 percent between 2010 and 2012.
- Mining has also seen recent employment growth. Between 2010 and 2012, employment in mining grew by 70 to 80 percent, the highest of any industry.

## SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### UNDERSTANDING KEY FACTORS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S LABOR MARKET

- Several other industries that have experienced general growth between 2007 and 2012 including transportation and warehousing; utilities (a major industry in several counties); finance and insurance; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and agriculture.
- The construction industry was hit the hardest statewide by job losses during the recession. In the Southwestern Region, this industry lost between 20 and 30 percent of its total employment between 2007 and 2010 and continued to see job losses into 2012, although losses had slowed. Real estate, a related industry, has also continued to experience job losses throughout the recovery period.
- The education industry, a major industry in the Southwestern Region, was continuing to see job growth through the recession. This industry has, unfortunately, seen job losses between 2010 and 2012.

*Employment data is from the QCEW program. Data is for 2012, the most recent year for which an entire year of data is available.*

### THE OCCUPATIONAL BASE IN THE SOUTHWEST

So much of understanding the employment situation in a region is identifying the jobs its workers hold and the employment opportunities available to them. The occupational base provides information on specific jobs and opportunities for the workers in industries, just as industry base and employment provides information on business activity that is significant and unique to the region. What workers do and the incomes they earn lead to economic activity within the region.

- Over 40 percent of workers in the Southwestern Region are employed in four major occupational groups—office and administrative support; education, training, and library; food preparation and serving; and sales and related. Occupations within these groups typically have a higher number of workers by the nature of the industries in which they are found.
- ER&A calculated location quotients for occupations as it did for industries. In this case, location quotients compared employment levels across regions and the state. Based on regional analysis, production, protective service, healthcare support, and farming occupations were identified as having higher concentrations of employment in the Southwestern Region as compared to those occupations in other regions.
- The higher location quotient in production occupations is likely driven by the manufacturing industry in Luna County. This industry, which also has a high location quotient, is tied to food production and, ultimately, the significant agriculture industry in the county and region. The higher location quotient in protective service occupations is likely related to border patrol operations in the region.
- The Southwest also had a larger concentration of workers employed in community and social service; building and grounds cleaning and maintenance; and education, training, and library occupations when compared to the concentration of the state. The higher concentration of workers in education, training, and library is somewhat driven by the vast network of postsecondary institutions in the region.
- Annual median wages in the Southwestern Region were lower than those in all other regions of the state. In 2012, the median annual wage was \$28,090, as compared to \$31,430 statewide. Annual median wages in the Las Cruces MSA also lagged those of other MSAs and most other regions. This may be an area of concern for the Southwestern Region.
- Workers in management occupations, in general, make more than workers in any other occupation in the Southwestern Region. The median wage of most occupations is higher in the Las Cruces MSA than in the non-metropolitan areas of the region. The median wage of workers in the Las Cruces MSA is \$28,290 versus \$26,310 for workers in non-metropolitan areas. Of the major occupational groups, only protective service, health care practitioners and technicians, and construction and extraction workers make more outside of the Las Cruces MSA.

# SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

## UNDERSTANDING KEY FACTORS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S LABOR MARKET

*Employment and wage data are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program. Data is for 2012, the most recent year for which data is available.*

### **THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET—PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION**

Identifying future employment opportunities for workers in the Southwestern Region is essential to drawing a full picture of the employment situation. Data on projected employment growth for industries and occupations leads to a better understanding of how to prepare for the demands of the future economy and its workers. It can also inform decisions on where to focus funding and efforts related to education and training.

#### *INDUSTRIES*

- Employment in the Southwestern Region is projected to grow more slowly than that of the state and other regions (14.9 percent between 2010 and 2020). Employment in the Las Cruces MSA specifically, however, is projected to grow more quickly than the state and all MSAs, except Farmington. This would indicate much slower projected growth for the non-metropolitan areas of the region.
- Employment in the health care and social assistance industry is projected to grow the most and fastest of all industries, with employment increasing by 4,070, or 28.7 percent. Three quarters of the growth in the region is projected to occur in the top four major industries. While retail trade is included in the top four growth industries, it is not projected to grow the fastest. The growth rate of employment in the transportation and warehousing industry surpasses that of retail trade.
- Projected industry employment growth in the region reflects similar growth patterns projected for the Las Cruces MSA. Two exceptions include (1) large employment growth projected for the mining industry in the region, while growth is small for the MSA, and (2) large employment growth projected in government in the MSA, while growth is projected to decline in the region overall.

#### *OCCUPATIONS*

- Personal and home care aides and cashiers are projected to see the most average annual job openings (160 each) between 2010 and 2020. Growth in these two occupations reflects the large growth projected for the health care and retail trade industries. These two occupations, along with retail salespersons and food preparation workers, are also projected to experience the most average annual openings in the Las Cruces MSA.
- Both the region as a whole and the Las Cruces MSA are projected to see many average annual openings for several education-related jobs including elementary and middle school teachers and teacher assistants. These occupations, along with several of those associated with the health care industry, typically pay higher than average wages.
- Farming-related occupations are also identified as top growth occupations in the region, reflecting the significance of the agriculture industry in the region. Most of these openings, however, are projected to result from replacement needs (retirements and turnover) as opposed to newly created positions.
- Based on methodology designed by ER&A, the best job opportunities identified for the Southwestern Region and the Las Cruces MSA include elementary and middle school teachers; registered nurses; postsecondary education administrators; postsecondary teachers; and clinical, counseling, and school psychologists. These jobs are projected to grow in number and quickly, and pay some of the best wages of these high- and fast-growth occupations.

*Employment data is from NMDWS ER&A using BLS methodologies and tools. Data is for the 2010 to 2020 period, the most recent period for which long-term projections data is available.*



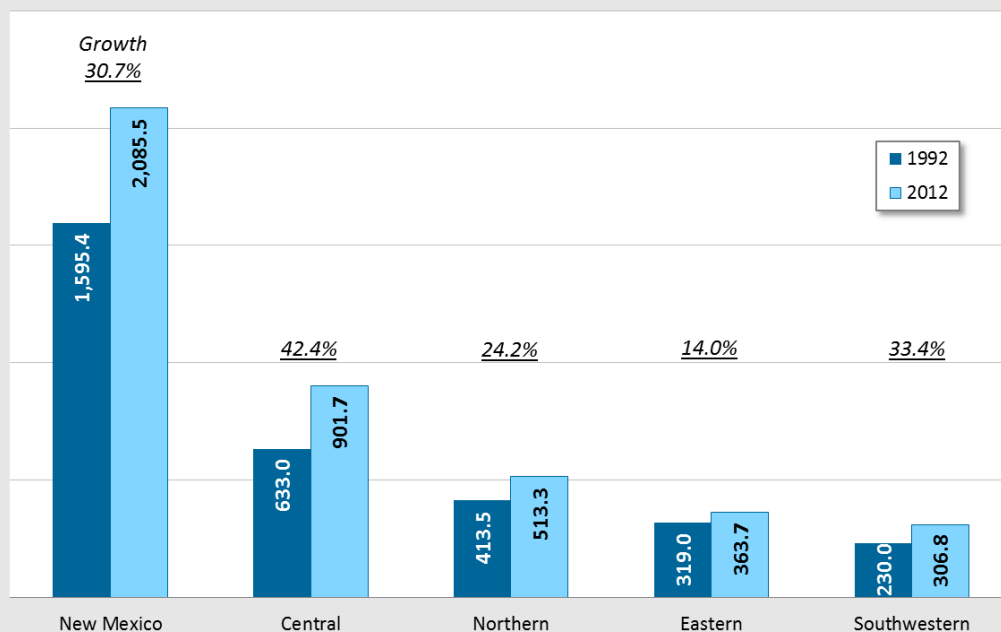
# POPULATION SUMMARY

## A SNAPSHOT OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S POPULATION

### NEW MEXICO'S POPULATION

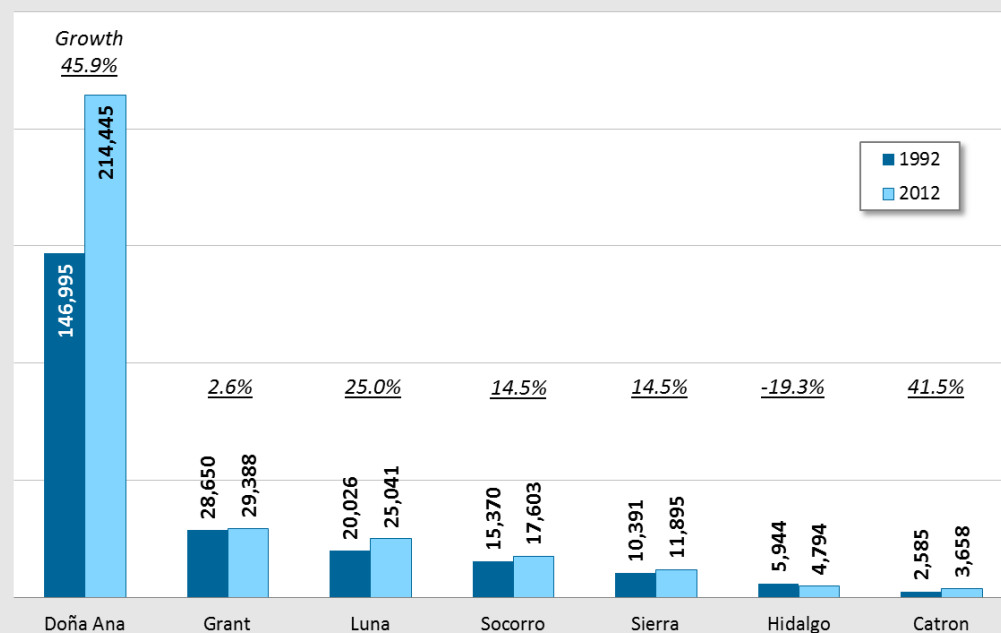
- The Southwestern Region is the least populated New Mexico region and was the home to nearly 15 percent of the state's total population in 2012 (306,800 people).
- Population in the Southwest grew faster than that of the Northern and Eastern regions in the last 20 years (33.4 percent) but slower than that of the Central Region.
- About 70 percent of the Southwestern Region's population was living in Doña Ana County in 2012 (214,400 people). Catron is the least populated of the counties, with just 1.2 percent of the region's total population. Catron County is one of the least populated counties in New Mexico; its population trailed only that of De Baca and Harding counties in 2012.
- Population growth in Doña Ana County between 1992 and 2012 far exceeded that of the other counties (45.9 percent growth). Smaller counties may show large growth in percentage but not in numbers. Growth rates in Luna and Socorro were the second and third fastest of the Southwestern counties that accounted for more than 5 percent of New Mexico's total population.

**Population of New Mexico by Region**  
1992 to 2012, In Thousands



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Population of New Mexico by Southwestern County**  
1992 to 2012, In Thousands

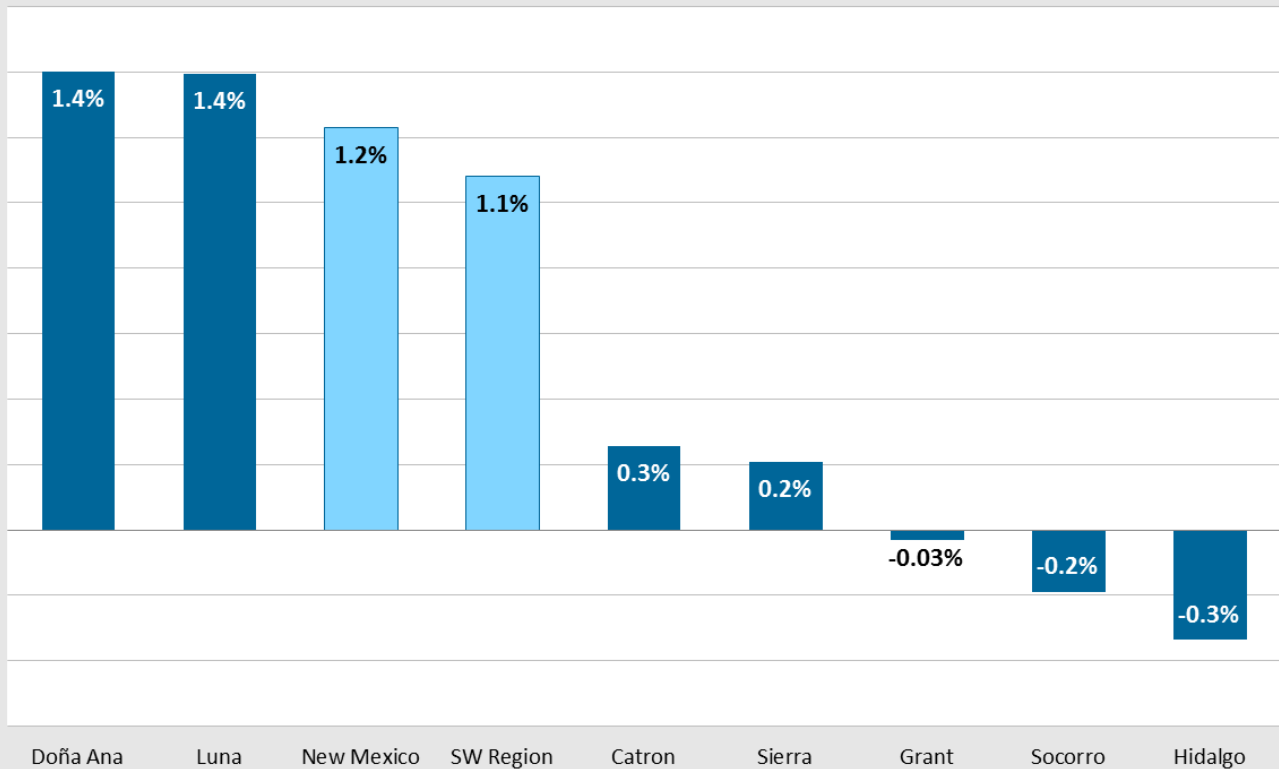


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## POPULATION SUMMARY

### A SNAPSHOT OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S POPULATION

**Projected Average Annual Population Growth**  
*Southwestern Counties, 2010 to 2040*



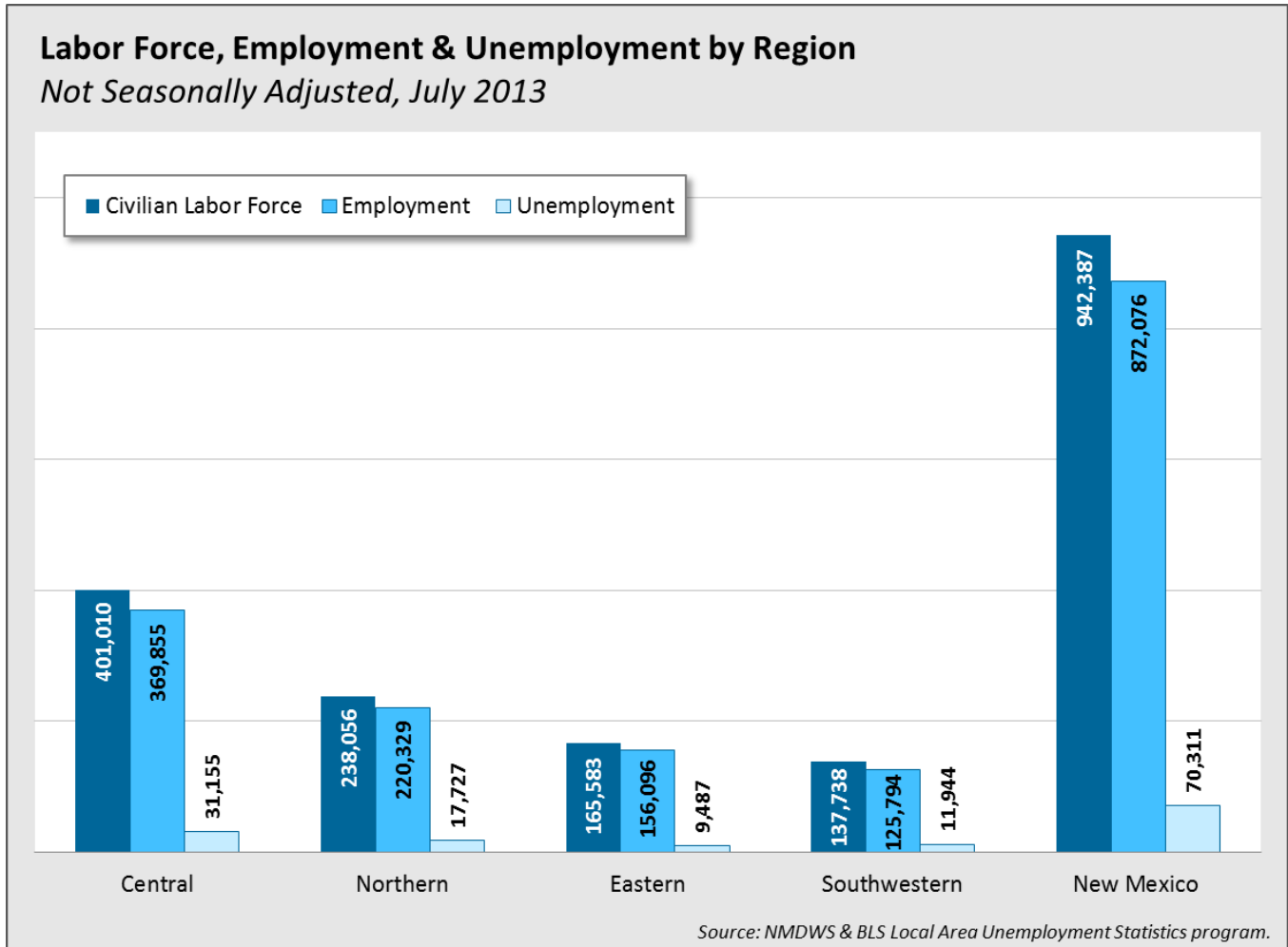
*Source: New Mexico County Population Projections July 1, 2010 to July 1, 2040, Geospatial and Population Studies Group, University of New Mexico. Released November 2012.*

- The Southwestern Region's average annual population growth (1.1 percent) is projected to be slightly slower than that of the state as a whole over the 2010 to 2040 period. The fastest population growth in New Mexico is projected to occur in Sandoval, Lea, and Bernalillo counties.
- Population is projected to grow more quickly in Doña Ana and Luna counties (by 1.4 percent annually each). ; This is faster than the statewide average.
- Population in Sierra and Catron counties is projected to grow more slowly (0.2 and 0.3 percent, respectively).
- Grant County's population is projected to decline minimally each year (-0.03 percent), while both Socorro and Hidalgo counties are anticipated to see their populations decline more quickly (by 0.2 and 0.3 percent, respectively).

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### CURRENT LABOR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT & UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST



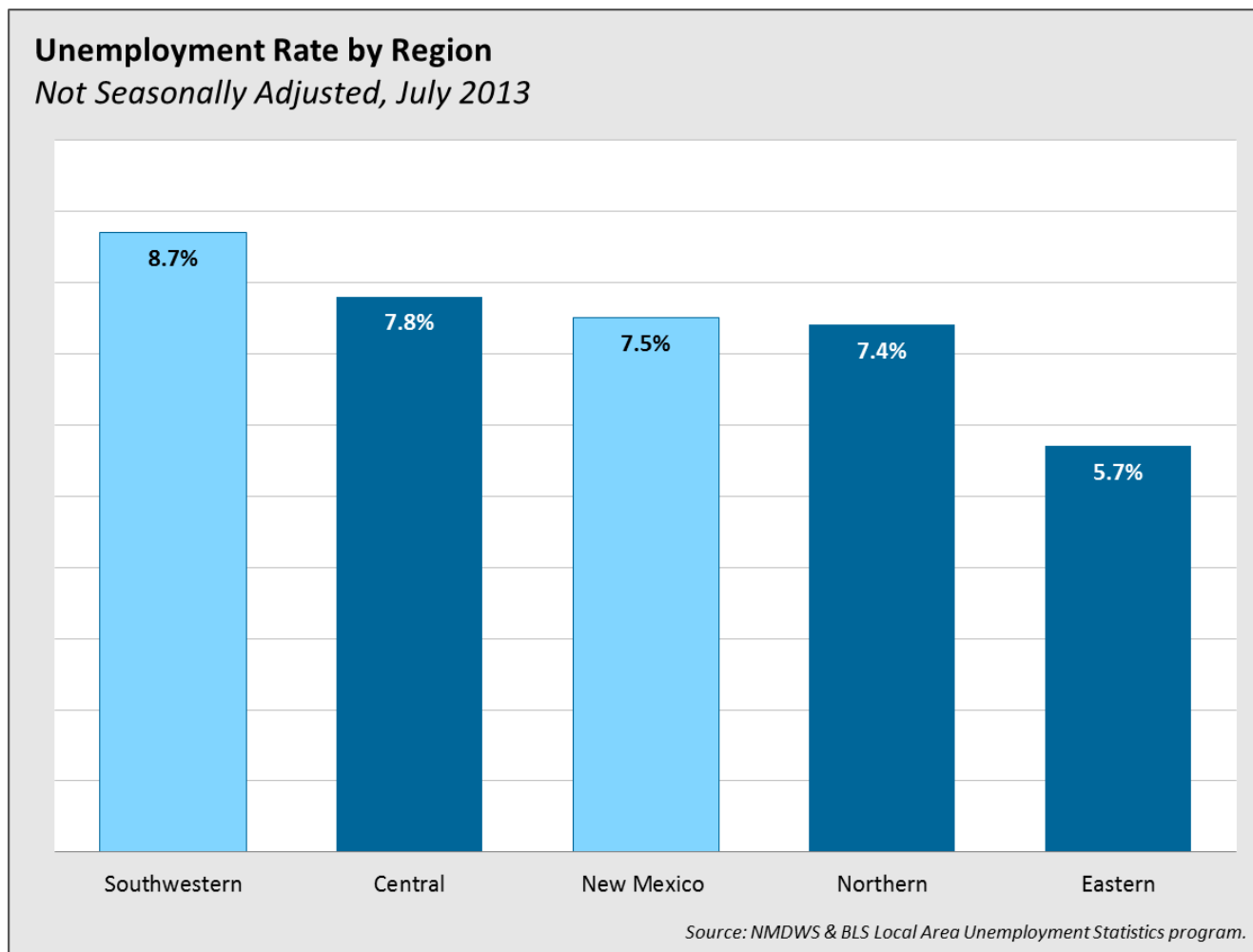
- Of the four New Mexico regions, the Central Region had the largest share of civilian labor force (43 percent), employment (42 percent), and unemployment (44 percent), while the Northern Region made up roughly 25 percent of each of the three measures. These shares reflect the large populations within these two regions.
- The Southwestern Region contributed just less than 15 percent of New Mexico's civilian labor force and employment, the lowest percentage of the four regions. This also reflects the population of the Southwestern Region, which, as shown in the previous section of this report, is the lowest of the four regions.
- Unemployment in the Southwestern Region, as of July 2013, comprised 17 percent of New Mexico's total unemployment. The Southwestern Region's larger share of unemployment relative to employment contrasts to that of the Eastern Region's share, which represented 18 percent of employment and less than 14 percent of unemployment. This indicates that the Southwest may struggle with higher unemployment, which is generally the case, as will be discussed later in this section.



## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN THE SOUTHWEST AND OTHER REGIONS

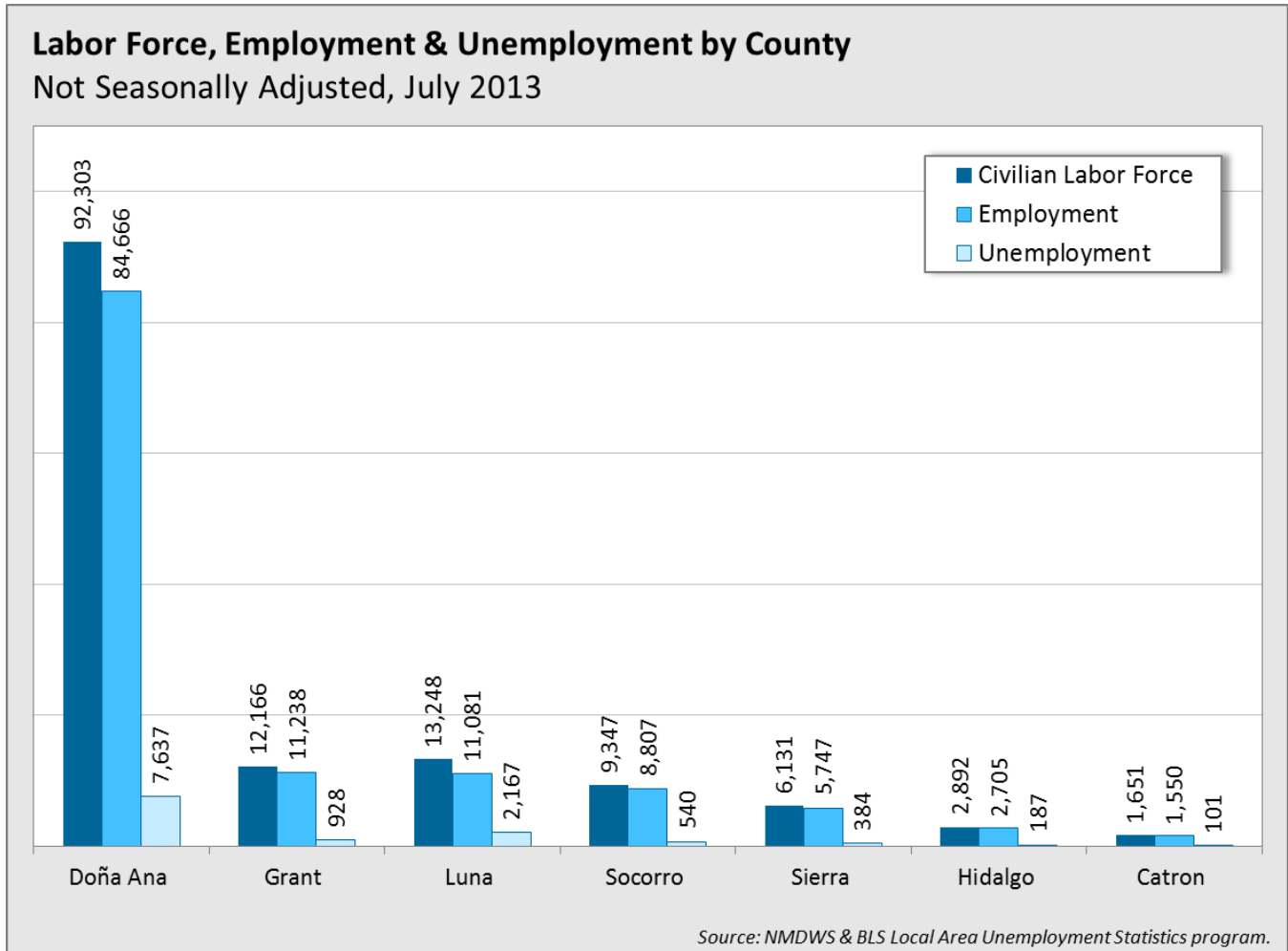


- The Southwestern Region's unemployment rate stands at 8.7 percent, the highest of New Mexico's four regions and 1.2 points above New Mexico's overall unemployment rate of 7.5 percent.
- The Eastern Region has the lowest unemployment rate, just 5.7 percent, falling considerably below (2.2 percentage points) the state average.
- Both the Central and Northern regions have unemployment rates similar to that of the state, as of July 2013, which is unsurprising considering that the two regions house around two-thirds of the state's population and labor force.

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### CURRENT LABOR FORCE, EMPLOYMENT & UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWESTERN COUNTIES

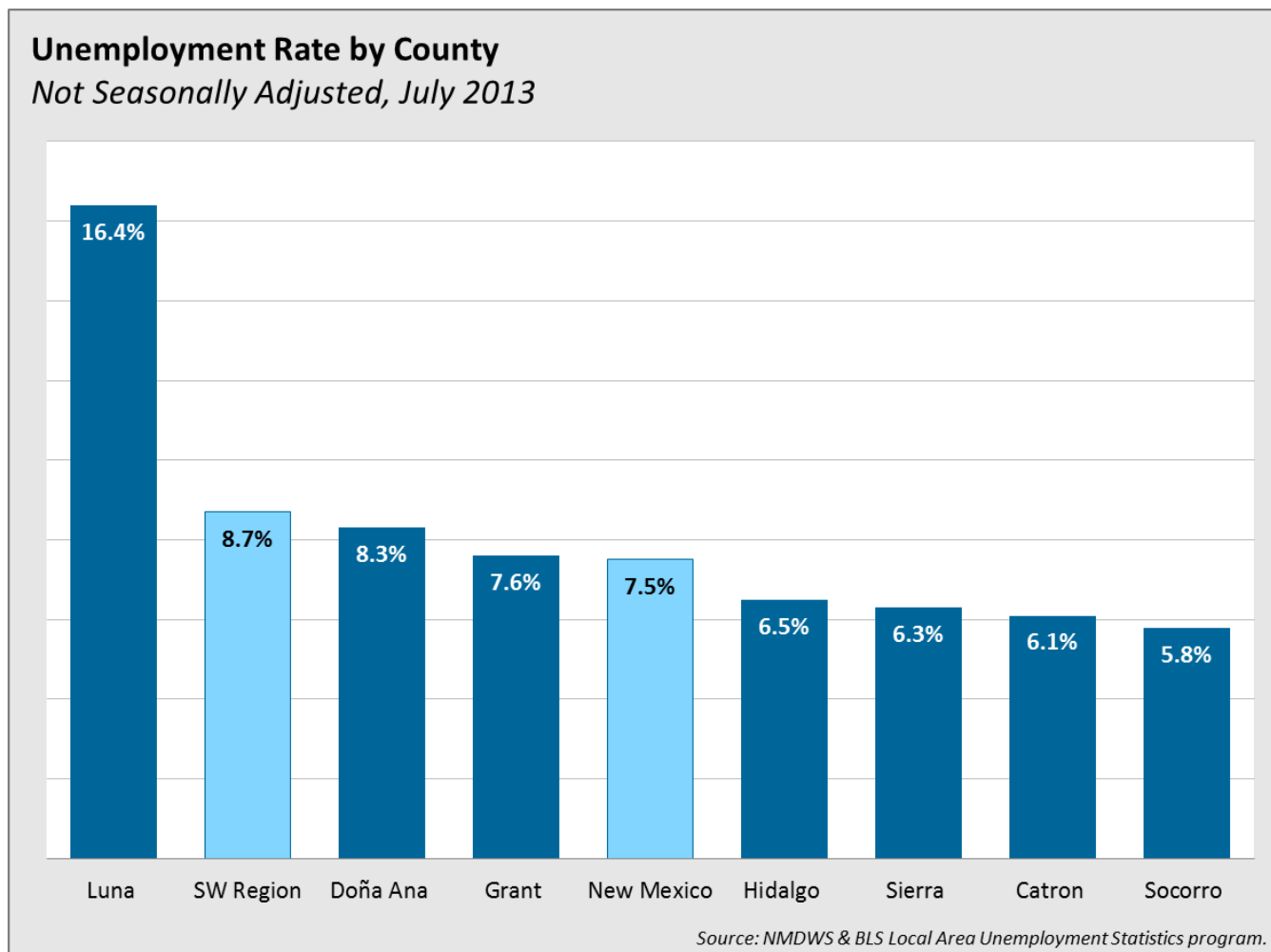


- Within the Southwestern Region, Doña Ana County dominates the numbers, representing 67 percent of both civilian labor force (92,303) and employment (84,666) and 64 percent (7,637) of the region's total unemployment.
- While Luna County represents the next largest share of the civilian labor force (13,248, or 9.6 percent), it falls behind Grant County in terms of the share of employment, with Luna County representing 8.8 percent (11,081) and Grant County 8.9 percent (11,238).
- After Doña Ana County, Luna County has, by far, the largest share of unemployment, at 2,167 (18.0 percent of the regional total). Grant County's share is the next highest, with 928, or 7.8 percent of the Southwestern total.
- Of the remaining regions, only Socorro County registers more than 5 percent of the total share of civilian labor force or employment, with 9,347 (6.8 percent) and 8,807 (7.0 percent), respectively. The sum of the other three counties make up less than 8 percent of civilian labor force, 9 percent of employment, and less than 6 percent of the region's total unemployment.

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN THE SOUTHWESTERN COUNTIES

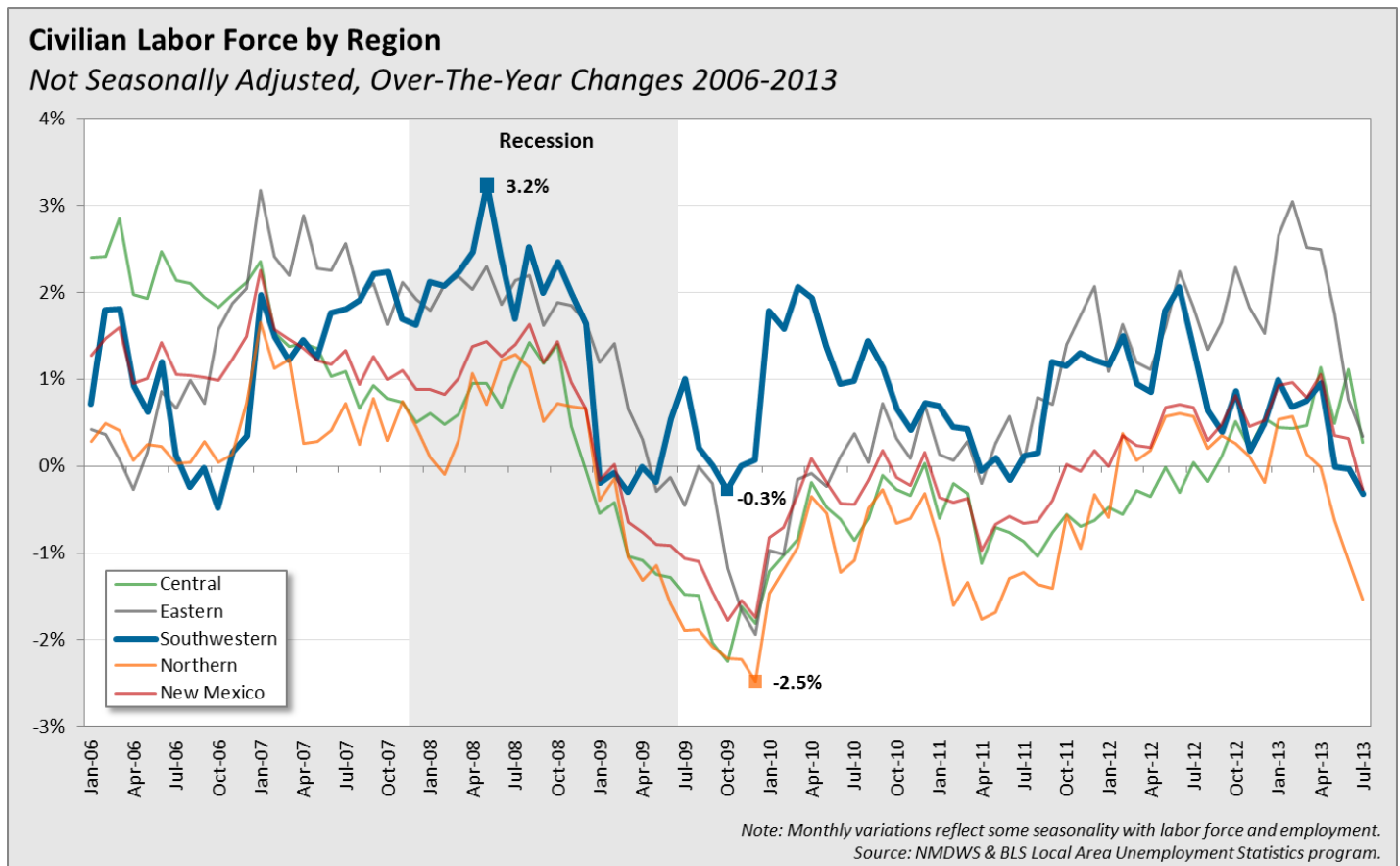


- Luna County's unemployment rate stands at 16.4 percent, the highest of the region's seven counties and 7.7 points above the region's overall unemployment rate of 8.7 percent
- Given Luna's high rate of unemployment relative to other counties, it is unsurprising that it should have such a large effect on the regional rate, making all other six counties fall below the regional average.
- Doña Ana's unemployment rate of 8.3 percent, the second highest in the region, is lower than Luna County's by a margin of 8.1 points and is slightly below the regional average.
- Grant County follows Doña Ana County with an unemployment rate of 7.6 percent. All other counties have unemployment rates around 6 percent, with Socorro being the only county to show an unemployment rate below 6 percent (5.8 percent).

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—CHANGES IN THE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE



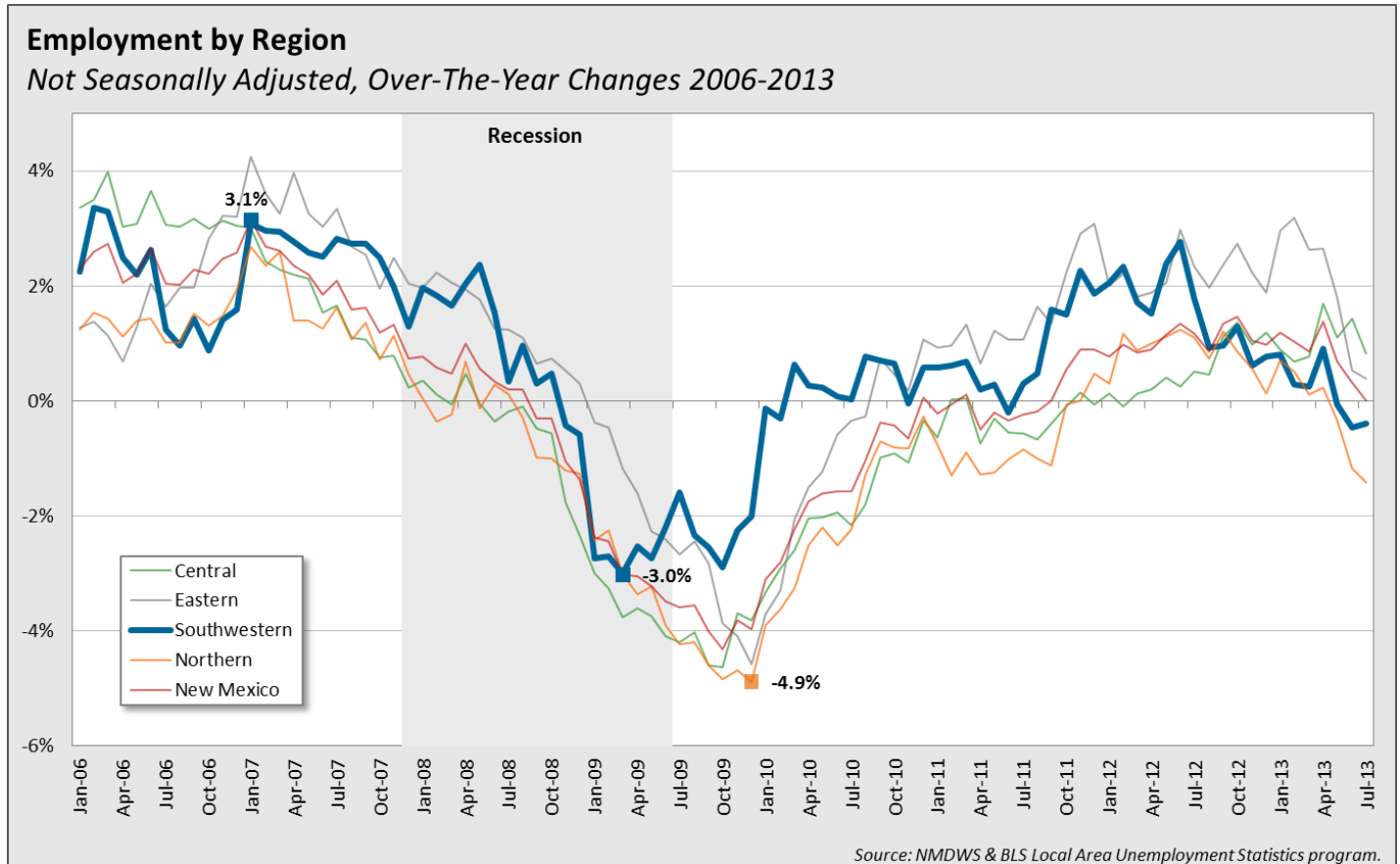
- Declines in civilian labor force lagged the official start of the recession (December 2007) and began in most regions in the summer of 2008. The Southwestern Region saw its over-the-year growth peak at 3.2 percent in May of that year.
- The Southwestern Region's labor force did not experience over-the-year losses as large as those seen in most other regions during the recession and early recovery. Though the civilian labor force of each region peaked and fell at different times, the Southwestern Region's labor force fell overall by only 3.7 percent, less than almost all other regions. The Northern Region's labor force was hit hardest, falling by 6.7 percent. Only the Eastern Region's labor force fell by less than the Southwestern Region, at 2.3 percent.
- Since this decline, the Southwestern Region's labor force has experienced more positive growth than that of other regions, and has been growing overall for a longer period. While the Eastern Region's labor force has risen by 5.5 percent, trough to peak, the Southwestern Region's labor force has grown by 7.8 percent. The recovery in all other regions was even less than that of the Eastern Region.
- During 2013, all regions experienced further decline in their civilian labor forces, with the Northern Region being the hardest hit in terms of over-the-year labor force losses. It is likely, however, that these losses will be less significant once data is processed through standard annual adjustments.



## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT

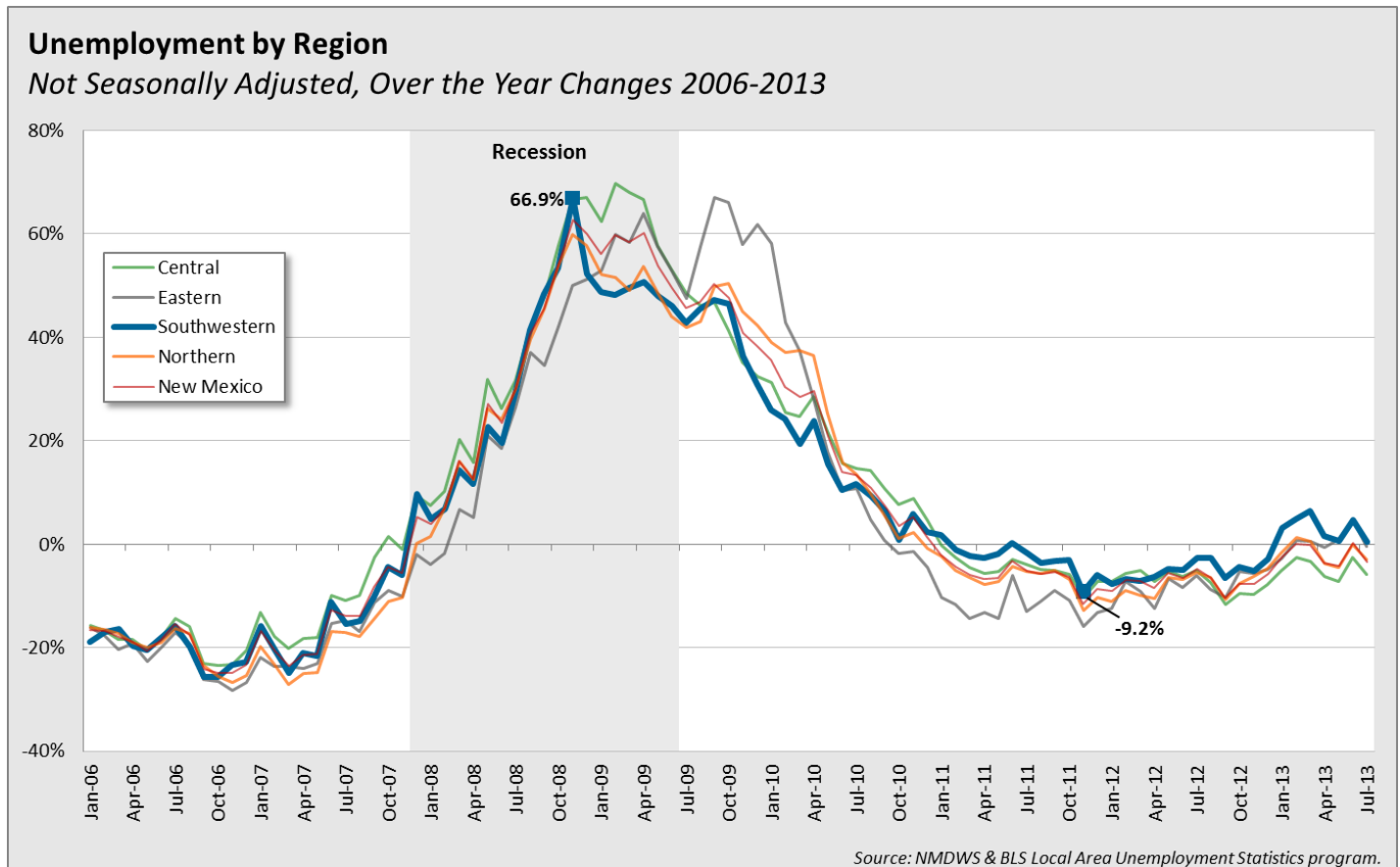


- Over-the-year employment growth in all regions really began to slow in Spring 2007, prior to the official start of the recession. Employment in the Southwestern Region fell in a similar pattern with employment in other regions. However, the Southwestern Region experienced the shortest period of employment decline and has only experienced brief periods of over-the-year losses since Spring 2010.
- Employment in the Southwestern Region declined more sharply, falling by 7.2 percent, than the Eastern Region, which fell by 5.2 percent. However, employment in the Southwestern Region didn't fall as quickly as employment in the Central and Northern regions; these regions saw declines of 8.2 and 8.9 percent, respectively, between their peak and trough employment levels.
- The Southwestern Region also recovered sooner than any other regions, emerging from its over-the-year losses in employment several months before the Eastern Region and over a year and a half before the Northern Region.
- Though employment in other regions did not recover as early as employment in the Southwest, employment in these regions did bounce back. The Southwestern Region, however, recovered more of its lost employment than other regions; employment increased by 8.3 percent from trough to peak, in contrast to the state average growth of 3.8 percent. Seasonal fluctuations can account for some of this overall employment growth.

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—CHANGES IN UNEMPLOYMENT

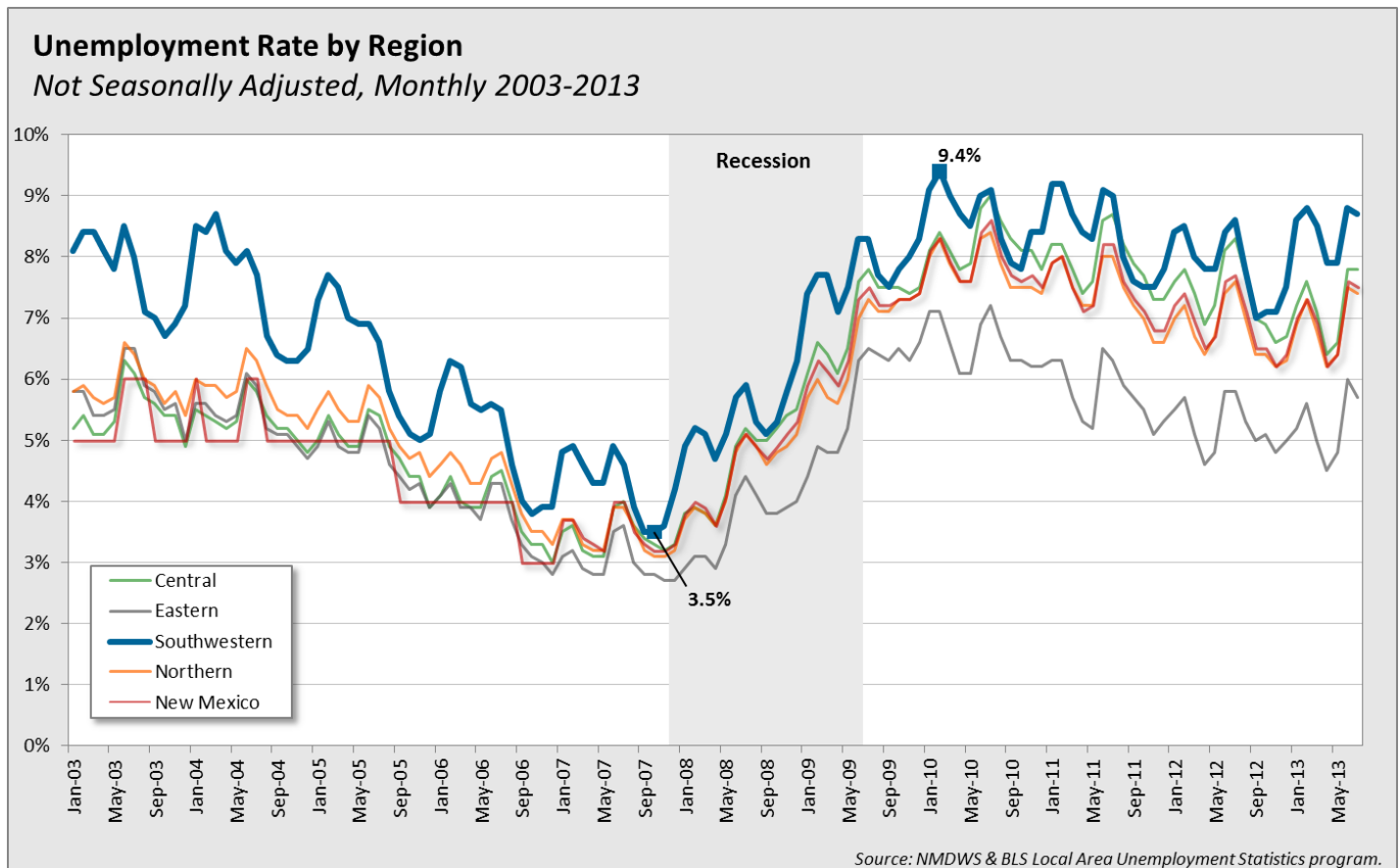


- All regions experienced over-the-year declines in unemployment through mid-2007. The Central and Southwestern regions reached over-the-year declines in unemployment of 23.5 percent and 25.8 percent, respectively.
- Unemployment began to increase at similar rates in all regions just prior to the official start of the recession.
- The Southwestern Region's over-the-year unemployment growth peaked earlier and began to decline earlier than that of other regions. The Eastern Region only reached its peak over-the-year increase in unemployment (Fall 2009) when other regions were several months into seeing their unemployment begin to decline over the year.
- Though unemployment in the Eastern Region was initially slow to decline after peaking in Fall 2009, declines soon quickened and surpassed the declines in unemployment seen in other regions. From peak to trough, unemployment in the Eastern Region declined at a rate of 36.6 percent, while unemployment in the Southwestern Region declined, peak to trough, at 22.1 percent, the slowest of all the regions.
- More recently, unemployment in all regions except the Central Region has again drifted into positive over-the-year growth, with the Southwestern Region's period of growth in unemployment being the most prolonged (from January to July 2013).

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—CHANGES IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

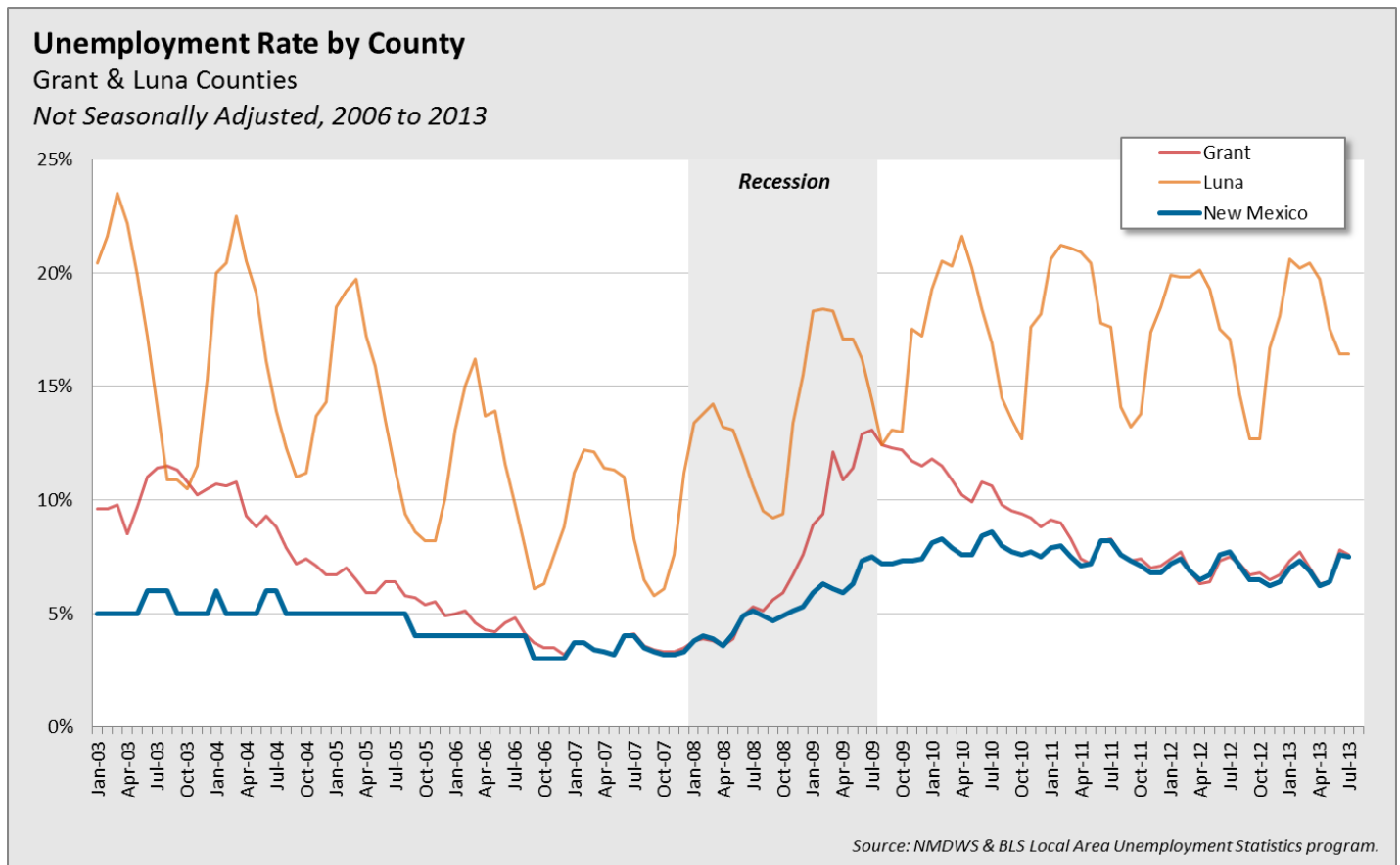


- In spite of large seasonal fluctuations, the Southwestern Region's unemployment rate has generally surpassed all other regions over the past 10 years.
- Before the recession, the Southwestern Region's unemployment rate declined to a trough of 3.5 percent in Fall 2007. During this period, the Northern Region consistently had the next highest unemployment rate (hitting a trough of 3.1 percent in Fall 2007). However, as unemployment rates rose in all regions, the Central Region overtook the Northern Region as the region with the second highest unemployment rate, and the Central Region has stayed in that position since.
- While the Southwestern Region's unemployment rate grew rapidly from 4.2 percent to 8.3 percent during the recession, the Central Region's unemployment rate saw steeper growth (increasing 4.5 points from 3.3 percent to 7.8 percent).
- Unemployment rates in the Southwestern, Central, and Northern regions are still similar to those seen in the last few months of the recession and are still far from pre-recessionary rates. By July 2013, the Eastern Region's unemployment rate (5.7 percent) was close to what it was in early 2004, though still far from its trough of 2.8 percent in December 2007

## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—CHANGES IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN SOUTHWESTERN COUNTIES



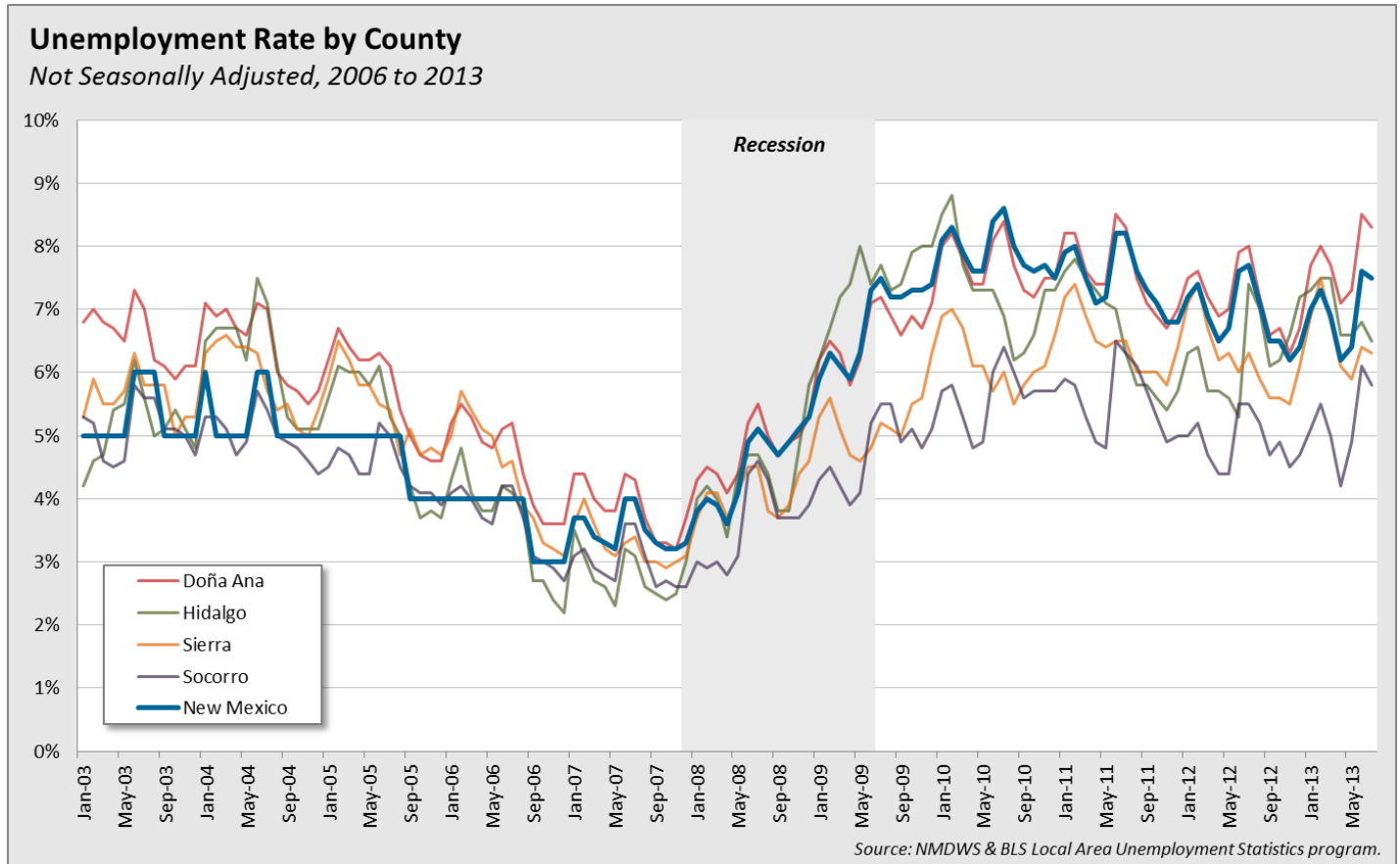
- When the unemployment rate is evaluated by county it is clear that Luna County's high rate, which has been consistently higher than any other county by some margin, has a great impact on the Southwestern Region's average unemployment rate.
- Though Luna County's seasonal fluctuations in its unemployment rate can mask a broader trend, they also tell their own story. The length of fluctuations from peak to trough reduced as unemployment trended down in Winter 2008. However, as unemployment rose again, Luna County's seasonal peaks in its unemployment rate never equaled peaks prior to Spring 2005, whereas those for New Mexico exceeded statewide peaks for the same period.
- Farming is very significant in Luna County and accounts for much of the seasonal trends evident in labor force, employment, and unemployment.
- Grant County's unemployment rate is typically the next highest in the Southwestern Region. Grant County also experienced a much steeper rise in its unemployment rate, relative to both the state average and Luna County, and also reached its peak unemployment rate sooner than other counties. However, its recovery was also been more rapid and dramatic. Grant County saw its unemployment rate bottom out at rates similar to what it experienced around Spring 2005. This is better than the state trend, where the unemployment rate has been above all pre-recession rates since 2003.



## EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

### UNDERSTANDING THE LABOR FORCE & WORKFORCE OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION

#### A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE—CHANGES IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN SOUTHWESTERN COUNTIES

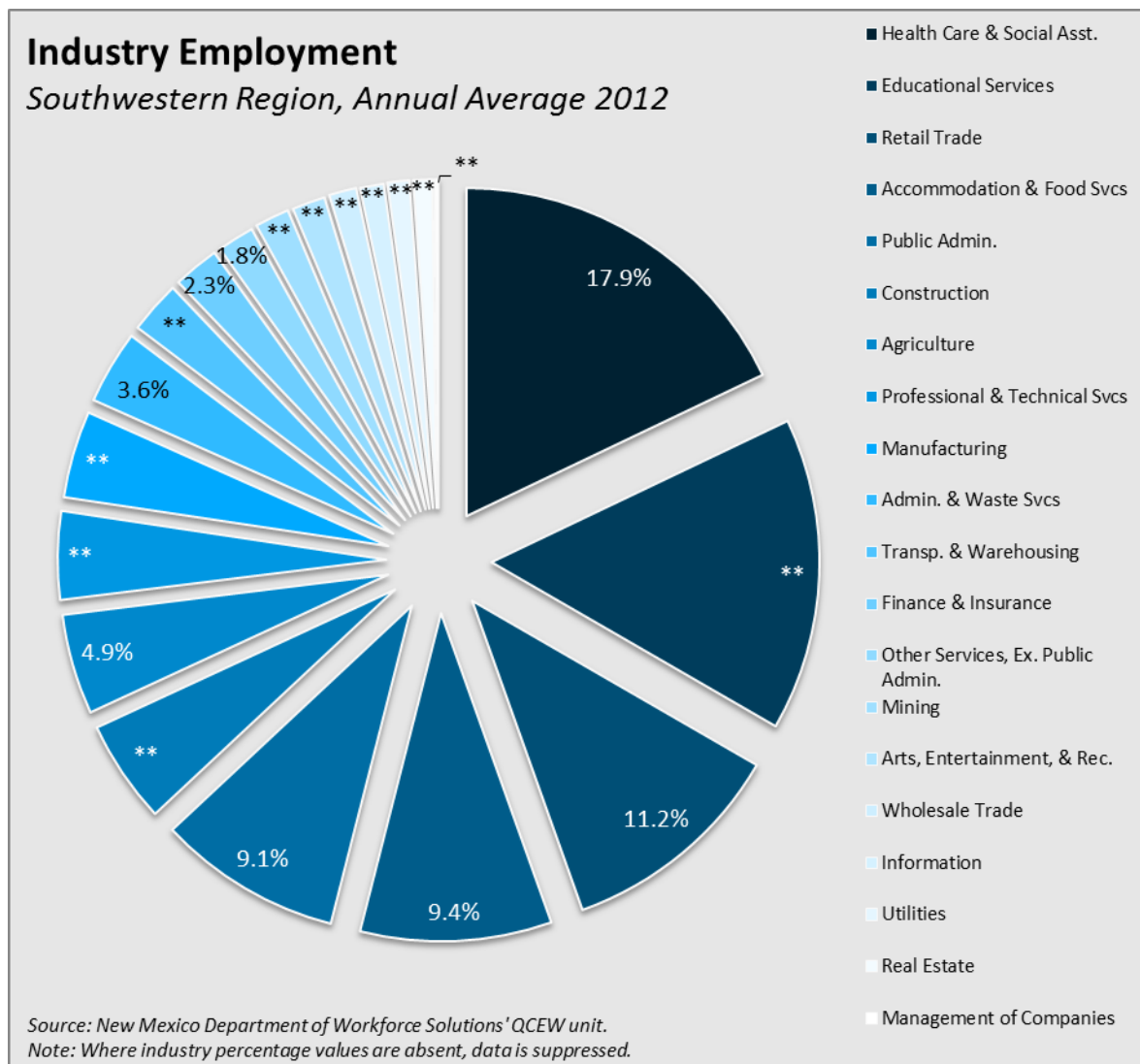


- The unemployment rates of other counties in the Southwestern Region moved in a similar pattern to the state's unemployment rate. All counties reached troughs in their unemployment rates during Winter 2007, with the exception of Hidalgo County, which hit a trough earlier in Winter 2006.
- The unemployment rates in all of the Southwestern Regions peaked after the official end to the recession, with both Socorro County and Doña Ana County's rates peaking in June 2011 (at 6.5 and 8.5 percent, respectively). Sierra County's unemployment rate didn't peak until February 2013, at 7.5 percent.
- Hidalgo County's unemployment rate peaked earlier than the rate of any other Southwestern county (except Grant); the rate peaked in February 2010 at 8.8 percent.
- None of the Southwestern counties, aside from Luna and Grant, have seen major reductions overall in their unemployment rates since Winter 2009, though Sierra and Hidalgo have recovered further from their peak unemployment rates (1.2 points and 2.3 points, respectively) than other counties.

# THE INDUSTRIAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### INDUSTRIES IN WHICH MOST OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S WORKERS ARE EMPLOYED

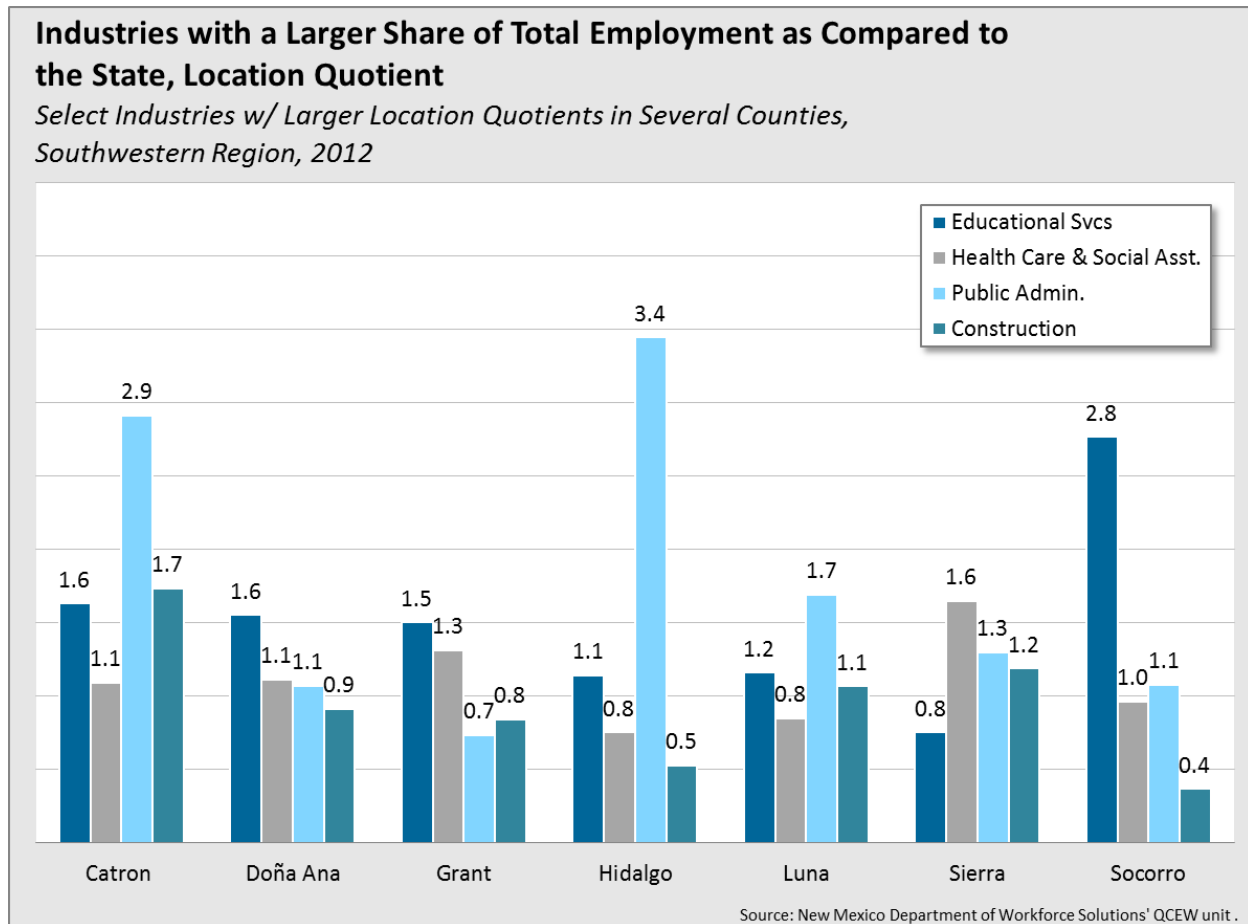


- Health care is the top industry within the Southwestern Region, with 17.9 percent of the region's total employment (17,477). Employment in health care has increased 24 percent since 2007; this increase in employment has been coupled with an increase in its share of Southwestern Region total employment by 3.4 points between 2007 and 2012.
- In both 2007 and 2010, education was the top industry, but jobs within education have contracted between 2 and 5 percent (range given due to confidentiality) over the last six years. Education now accounts for the second highest share of total employment, with employment between 15,450 and 14,950 (range given due to confidentiality).
- Retail trade has consistently had the third highest share of Southwestern Region total employment since 2007. Though employment dropped by 488 jobs during the recession, the industry had recovered almost 90 percent of these jobs by 2012.

# THE INDUSTRIAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### COMPARING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST WITH THAT OF THE STATE



- Four industries were identified as having a larger concentration of employment in several of the seven Southwestern counties than in the state as a whole. NMDWS calculated location quotients to identify these industries, where a location quotient greater than one identifies those industries that have a comparatively larger concentration of employment in the Southwestern Region than in the state.
- Public administration has significant local concentrations of jobs, relative to its state concentration in Catron (3.4) and Hidalgo (2.9) counties. It also has a higher than average relative concentration in Luna County (1.7). A location quotient of 3.4 means this industry comprises 3.4 times more of the county's total employment relative to its share at the state level. These concentrations may be disproportionately influenced by small county populations.
- Education also has strong local employment concentrations in many counties. The concentration of education employment is especially high in Socorro County (2.8), but is also high in Doña Ana (1.6) and Catron (1.6) counties. This high concentration of employment is likely influenced by New Mexico State University in Doña Ana County and New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology in Socorro. Only Sierra has a concentration lower than that of the state as a whole.
- Construction has a higher concentration of jobs relative to the state in Catron County (1.7), and to a less degree in Sierra (1.2) and Luna (1.1) counties. All other counties have concentrations that are lower than that of the state.
- Health care and social assistance, the industry with the highest share of total employment in the Southwestern Region, shows a higher concentration of jobs relative to the state in Sierra (which has a location quotient of 1.6). Other counties have similar concentrations to that of the state as a whole.

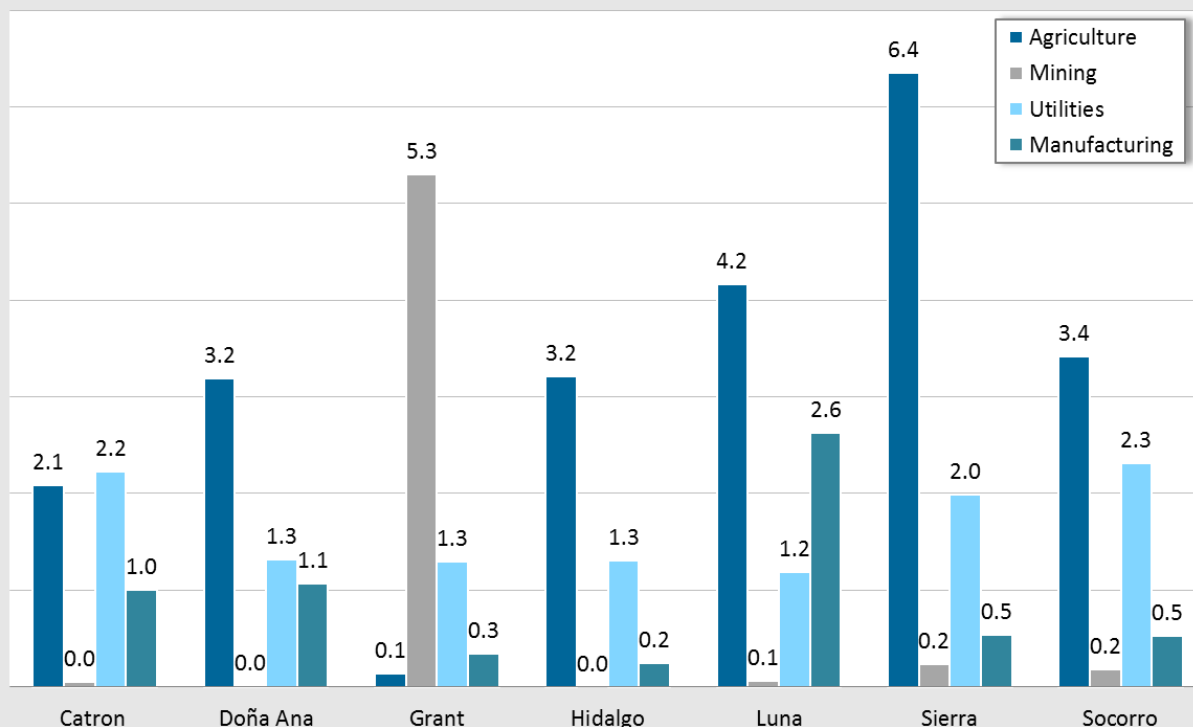
# THE INDUSTRIAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### COMPARING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST WITH THAT OF THE STATE

#### Industries with a Larger Share of Total Employment as Compared to the State, Location Quotient

Select Industries that are Significant to the Region, Southwestern Region, 2012



Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions' QCEW unit.

- Some industries in the Southwest had concentrations of employment larger than that of the state in only one or two counties. These industries, however, are still important to evaluate, as they show where certain industries play a more focused, yet still large, role in the local economies of the region.
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting stands out as an especially dominant industry in several counties. Sierra's location quotient for agriculture shows the highest concentration relative to state over all counties. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting also accounts for the highest location quotient for four of the seven counties (Sierra, 6.4; Doña Ana, 3.2; Luna, 4.2; and Socorro, 3.4), as well as significant location quotients for Hidalgo (3.2) and Catron (2.1) counties. Only Grant County shows a concentration of jobs less than that of the state as a whole.
- Grant County has a location quotient of 5.3 in mining, the second highest location quotient of all industries across all counties. This reflects the importance of the mining industry, particularly in copper mining, within Grant.
- Catron, Sierra, and Socorro counties have relatively significant location quotients (2.2, 2.0, and 2.3, respectively) in the utilities industry.
- Luna also registered a high location quotient in manufacturing. Manufacturing operations are most often related to food processing in this county.



# THE INDUSTRIAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### HOW INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT HAS CHANGED OVER TIME

#### Employment Change by Industry

Southwestern Region, 2007-2012

	2007	2010	2012	Percentage Change		
				2007-2010	2010-2012	2007-2012
Total, All Industries	97,033	96,611	97,550	-0.4%	1.0%	0.5%
Mining	1,095	**	**	-10% to -20%	70% to 80%	45% to 55%
Transp. and Warehousing	1,998	**	**	0% to 10%	10% to 20%	20% to 30%
Health Care and Social Asst.	14,130	15,487	17,477	9.6%	12.8%	23.7%
Utilities	940	1,012	**	7.7%	0% to 10%	10% to 20%
Professional and Technical Svcs	3,850	**	**	20% to 30%	-10% to 0%	0% to 10%
Finance and Insurance	2,091	2,143	2,209	2.5%	3.1%	5.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Rec	1,517	**	**	0% to 10%	0% to 10%	0% to 10%
Agriculture	4,649	4,718	4,817	1.5%	2.1%	3.6%
Retail Trade	11,003	10,513	10,942	-4.5%	4.1%	-0.6%
Accommodation and Food Svcs	9,268	8,783	9,201	-5.2%	4.8%	-0.7%
Admin. and Waste Svcs	**	4,432	3,535	20% to 30%	-20% to -30%	-10% to 0%
Educational Services	15,749	**	**	-10% to 0%	-10% to 0%	-10% to 0%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin.	1,868	1,878	1,773	0.5%	-5.6%	-5.1%
Real Estate	1,056	**	**	-10% to -20%	-10% to 0%	-10% to -20%
Information	**	**	**	-10% to -20%	0% to 10%	-10% to -20%
Manufacturing	5,096	**	**	-10% to -20%	-10% to 0%	-10% to -20%
Wholesale Trade	1,614	**	**	-10% to 0%	-10% to -20%	-10% to -20%
Construction	6,775	**	**	-20% to -30%	-10% to 0%	-20% to -30%
Management of Companies	393	**	**	-30% to -40%	-20% to -30%	-40% to -50%

Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions' QCEW unit.

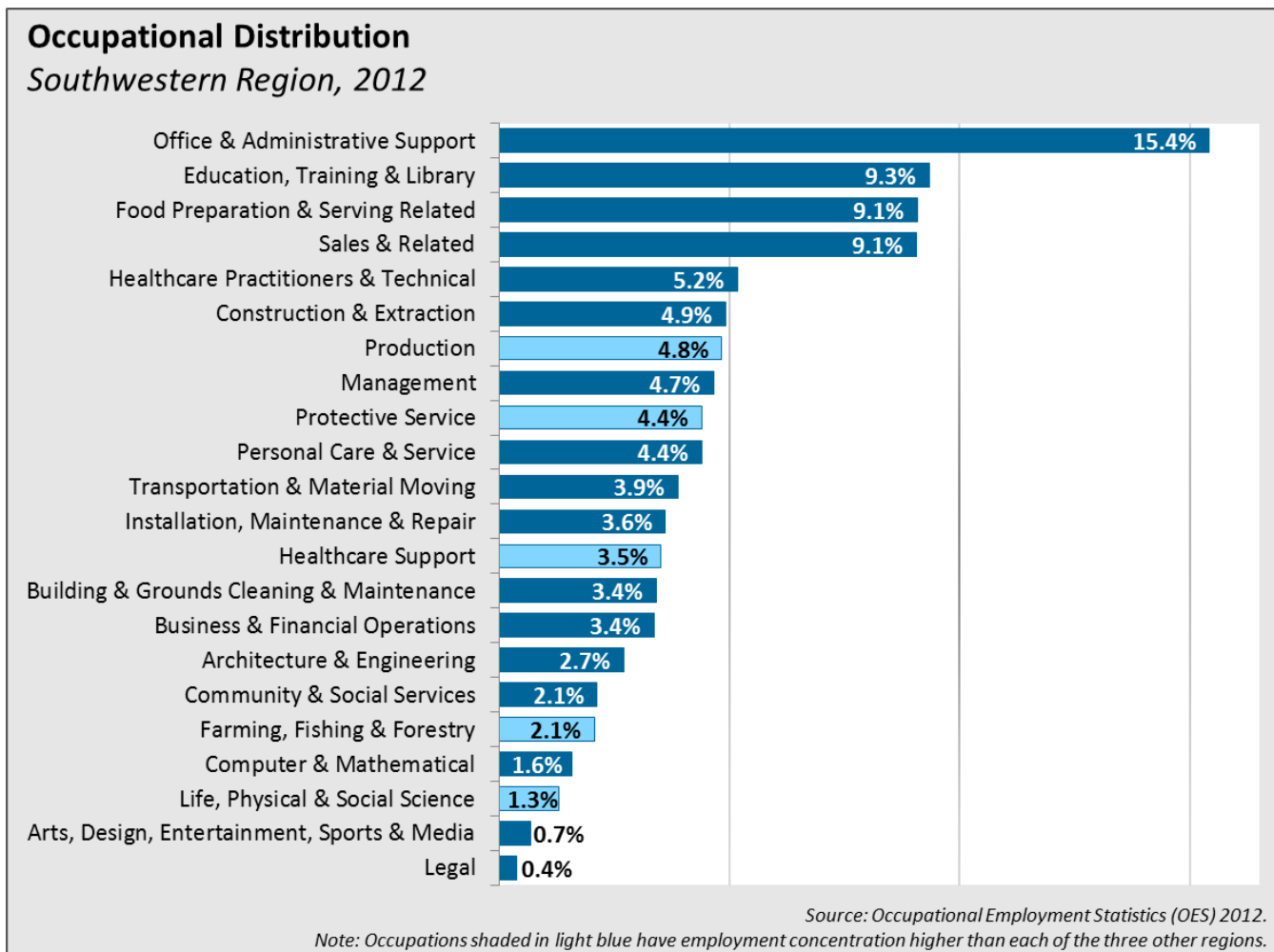
Note "\*\*\*" indicates suppressed data and that ranges are given where data has been suppressed.

- Health care and social assistance is the success story out of all industries within the Southwestern Region. While most industries suffered heavy losses or at least low growth between 2007 and 2010, health care and social assistance grew by 9.6 percent in the same period. It then experienced increased growth, a further 12.8 percent more jobs, between 2010 and 2012.
- Education lost a marginal amount of jobs between 2007 and 2010, but then went on to lose considerably more between 2010 and 2012 (exact numbers are suppressed due to confidentiality).
- Construction lost 20 to 30 percent of its jobs between 2007 and 2012, and most of these losses occurred between 2007 and 2010. The contraction eased considerably between 2010 and 2012, but the industry was still experiencing over-the-year losses. These declines were greatly due to the national housing crisis/credit crunch that preceded the recession, and this industry saw major declines in nearly all states. The housing crisis may also account for a significant drop of 5 to 15 percent in real estate jobs between 2007 and 2010. The number of jobs lost lessened between 2010 and 2012, but did continue through the period. Exact numbers for real estate and construction are suppressed due to confidentiality.
- Mining, though it only makes up a small percentage of the overall total regional employment, has clearly recovered from the recession. It experienced substantial losses of 10 to 20 percent between 2007 and 2010, but experienced 70 to 80 percent growth, the highest percentage of any industry by a great margin, between 2010 and 2012. (Exact data is suppressed due to confidentiality.)

# THE OCCUPATIONAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### OCCUPATIONS IN WHICH MOST OF THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION'S WORKERS ARE EMPLOYED

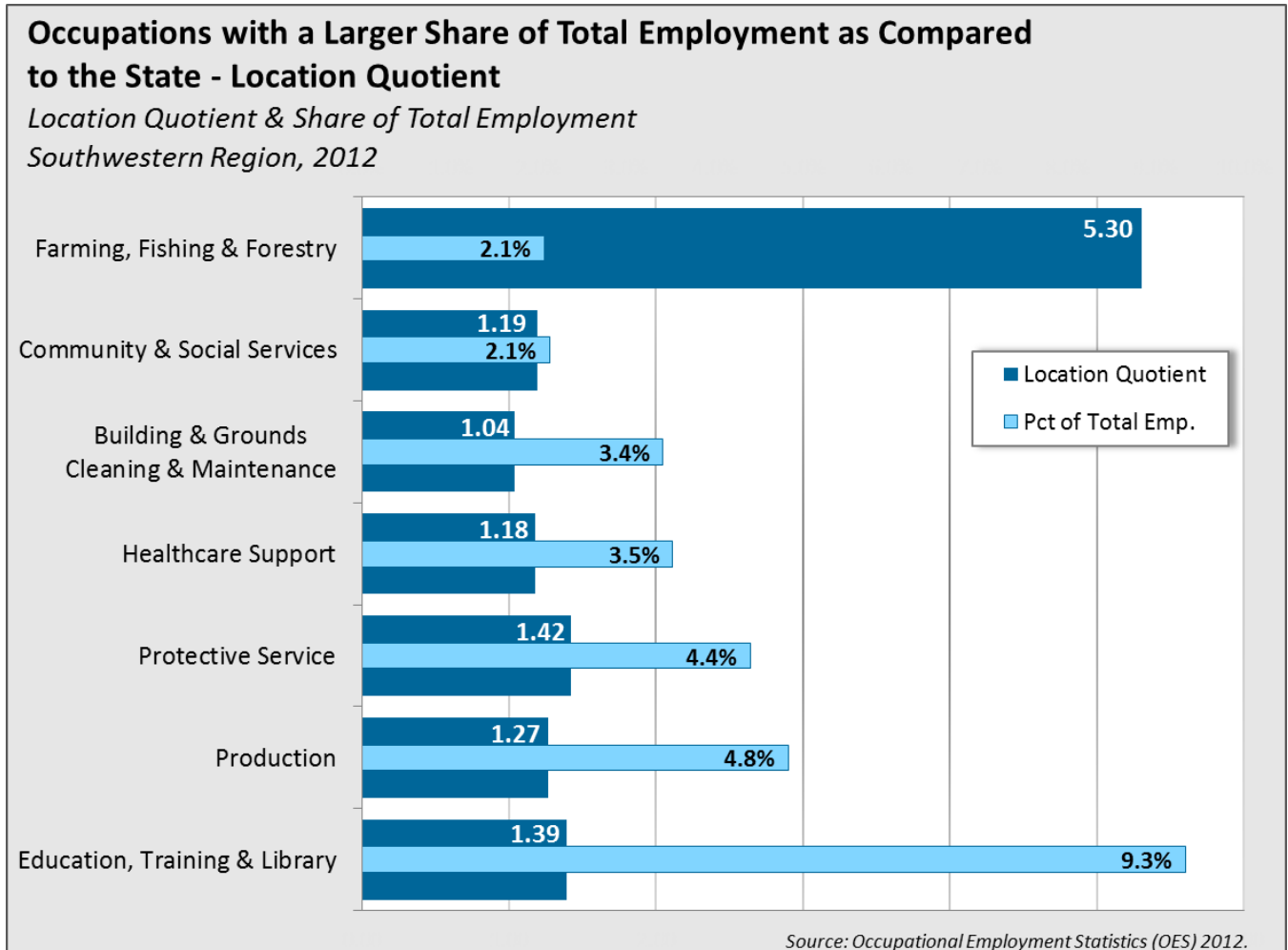


- As of 2012, over 40 percent of workers in the Southwest Region were employed in the top four occupational groups—office and administrative support; education, training, and library service; food preparation and serving-related; and sales and sales-related. Less than 6 percent of all workers were employed in each of the other major occupational groups.
- Four occupational groups were identified as having a larger concentration of employment (employment comprises a larger percentage of total employment) in the Southwest than in the other three regions of the state.
- The percentage of Southwestern workers employed in production, protective service, healthcare support, and farming jobs was greater than the percentage of these workers employed in each of the three other regions of the state. This doesn't mean that a larger number of workers are employed within these occupational groups. It does mean that these occupations play a larger role in the overall occupational make-up of the region than in other regions of the state.
- The higher concentration of workers in production relative to those of other regions can mostly be attributed to food production and manufacturing in Luna County. The higher concentration of workers in protective service is likely related to border patrol operations. The high concentration of farming, fishing, and forestry occupations reflects the variety of farming and ranching operations in the region. Farming operations are particularly large in Luna and Doña Ana counties. Livestock production is also large in Doña Ana, Sierra, and Socorro counties, although production does not rival that of the eastern counties of New Mexico.

# THE OCCUPATIONAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### COMPARING OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST WITH THAT OF THE STATE

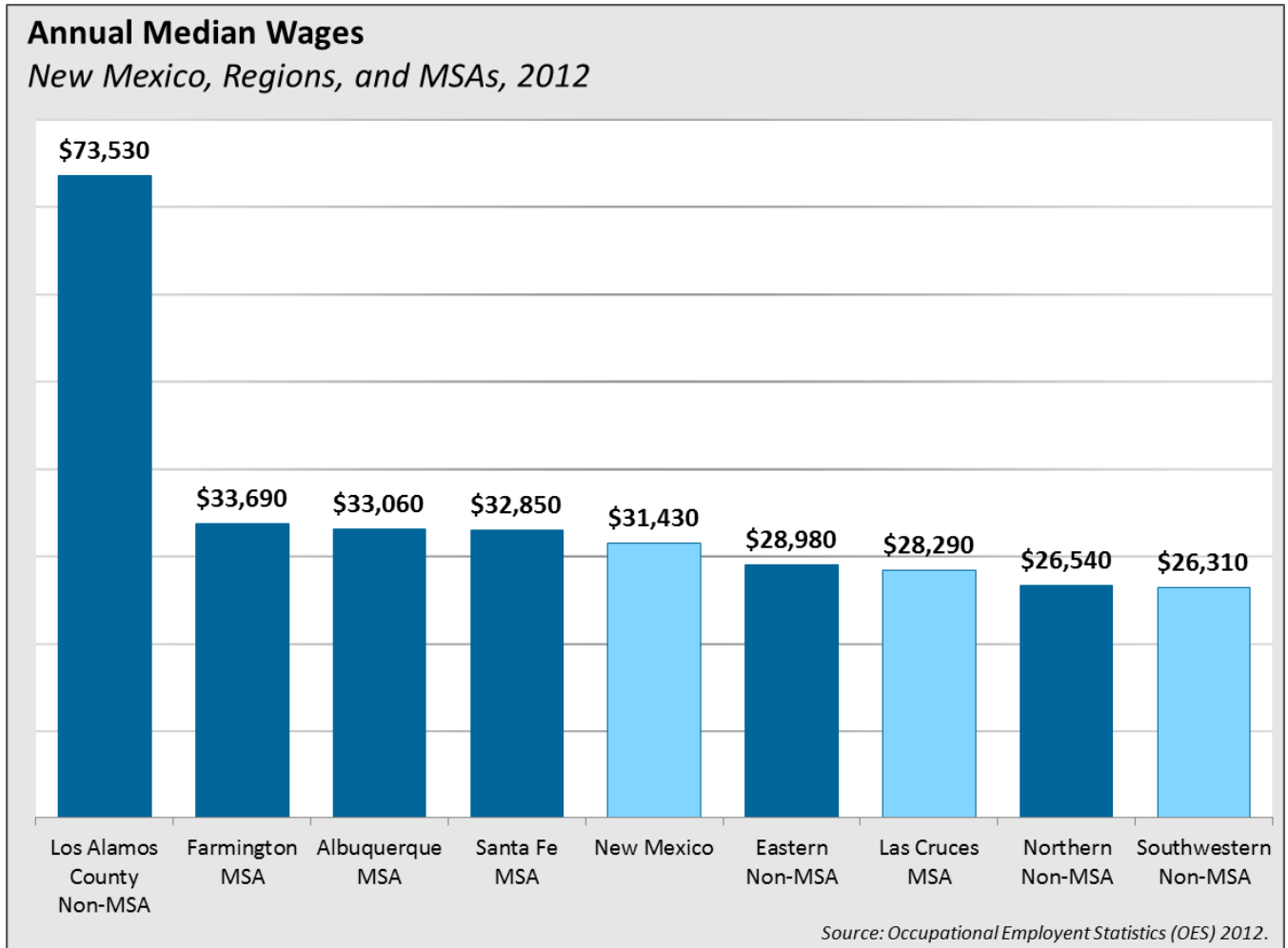


- Seven of the 22 major occupational groups have a larger concentration of workers employed in the Southwestern Region than in the state as a whole. ER&A calculated location quotients to identify these occupational groups, where a location quotient greater than one identifies those occupational groups that have a comparatively larger concentration of employment and are more prominent in the Southwest than in the state as a whole.
- Occupations that are more concentrated in the Southwestern Region, as compared to the state, include those within community and social services; building and grounds cleaning and maintenance; and education, training, and library operations. These occupations are in addition to those listed as more concentrated in the Southwestern Region than the other three regions of the state (see the previous chart).
- The higher concentration, relative to the state, of education, training, and library occupations is likely related to the major presence and influence of New Mexico State University (NMSU), New Mexico Tech, Western New Mexico University (WNMU), a network of community colleges, technical schools, and private postsecondary institutions, and employment within primary educational institutions (pre-kindergarten through high school) across all seven counties. It is more difficult to determine the factors driving higher comparative concentration of employment in community and social services and buildings and grounds cleaning and maintenance. Each of these occupational groups has a fairly low location quotient, albeit still greater than one, and employ between 2.0 and 3.5 percent of all Southwestern workers.

# THE OCCUPATIONAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### OCCUPATIONAL WAGES ACROSS NEW MEXICO



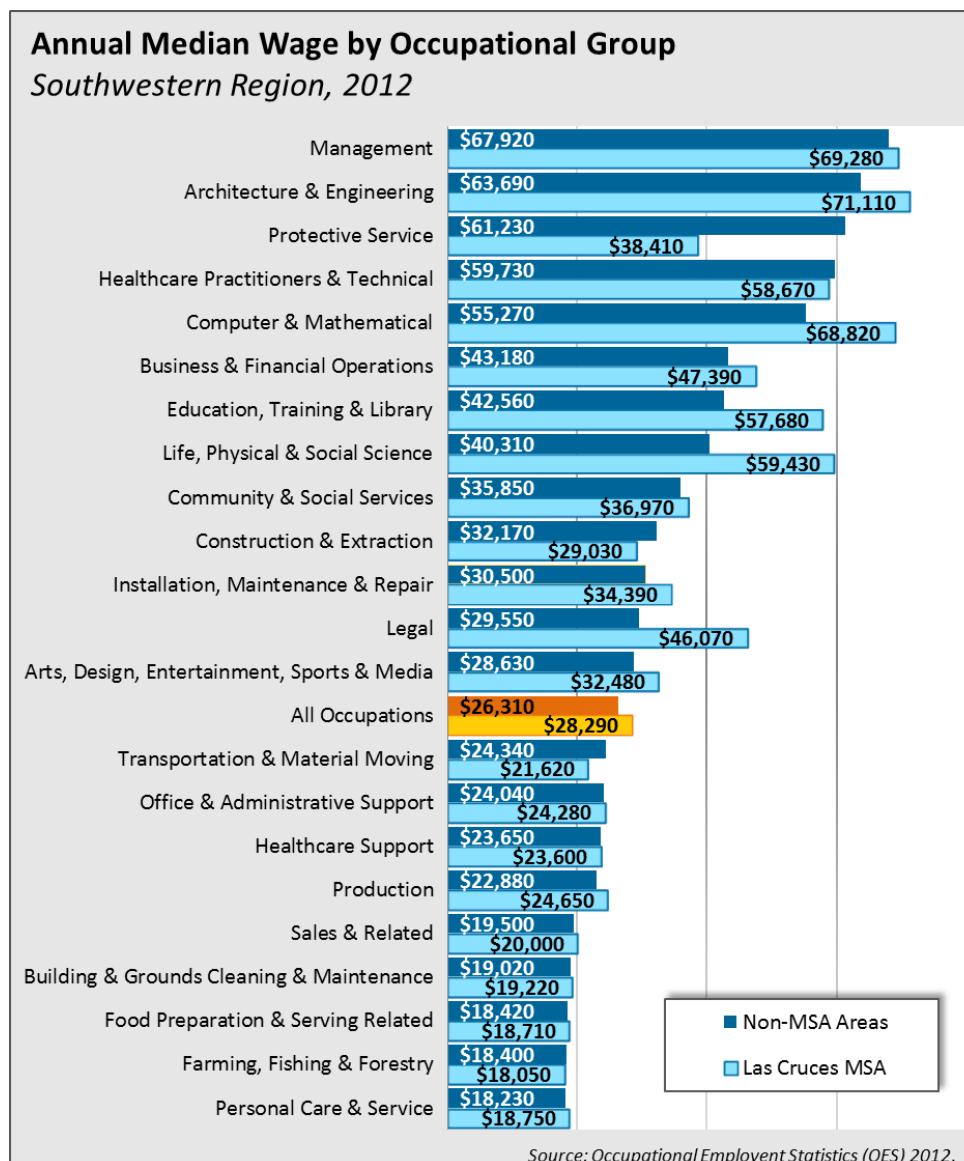
- Information on occupational wages is provided for New Mexico's regions and MSAs. Non-MSAs refer to all areas within a region that are outside of any defined MSAs. For example, the Southwestern Region includes the Las Cruces MSA, and all areas outside of that MSA, but within the region, are referred to as the non-MSA areas.
- Los Alamos County has the highest annual median wage of all non-MSA areas and MSAs in the state. This is driven by the workers and wages paid at Los Alamos National Laboratory.
- Annual median wages in the Las Cruces MSA and Southwestern non-MSA areas are lower than almost all other areas of the state. The wage in the Northern non-MSA areas exceeds that of the Southwest but lags that of the Las Cruces MSA. The Las Cruces MSA annual median wage is about 90 percent of that of the state's, while the wage of the non-MSA areas of the Southwest is about 84 percent of the state annual median wage.
- Annual median wages are consistently higher in MSAs as compared to non-MSA areas. The non-MSA areas of the East are the only non-MSA areas in the state where annual median wages exceed that of an MSA (Las Cruces). This is likely driven by the higher than average wages paid in the oil and gas extraction industry.



# THE OCCUPATIONAL BASE

## UNDERSTANDING OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST

### OCCUPATIONAL WAGES IN THE SOUTHWEST BY OCCUPATION



- Based on 2012 annual median wage data, workers employed within management positions in the non-MSA earn a higher annual median wage than workers in all other occupations. The annual median wage for management working in the Las Cruces MSA is also high, but the wages of those employed in architecture and engineering and computer and mathematical occupations surpass the median wages of those in management.
- The differences in annual median wages for workers employed in the non-MSA and those employed in the Las Cruces MSA are largest in some of the higher paying occupations, such as those in management; architecture and engineering; computer and mathematical; education and training; life, physical, and social science; and legal professions. On the flip side, the annual median wage for workers in protective service is significantly higher for those working in the non-MSA. Some of this disparity comes from the larger number of municipal police officers employed in the Las Cruces MSA who make less than other protective service workers such as border patrol officers.
- The only other occupations in which non-MSA workers earn more are health care practitioners and technicians and construction and extraction workers (some of which may be earning higher wages in the mining industry).

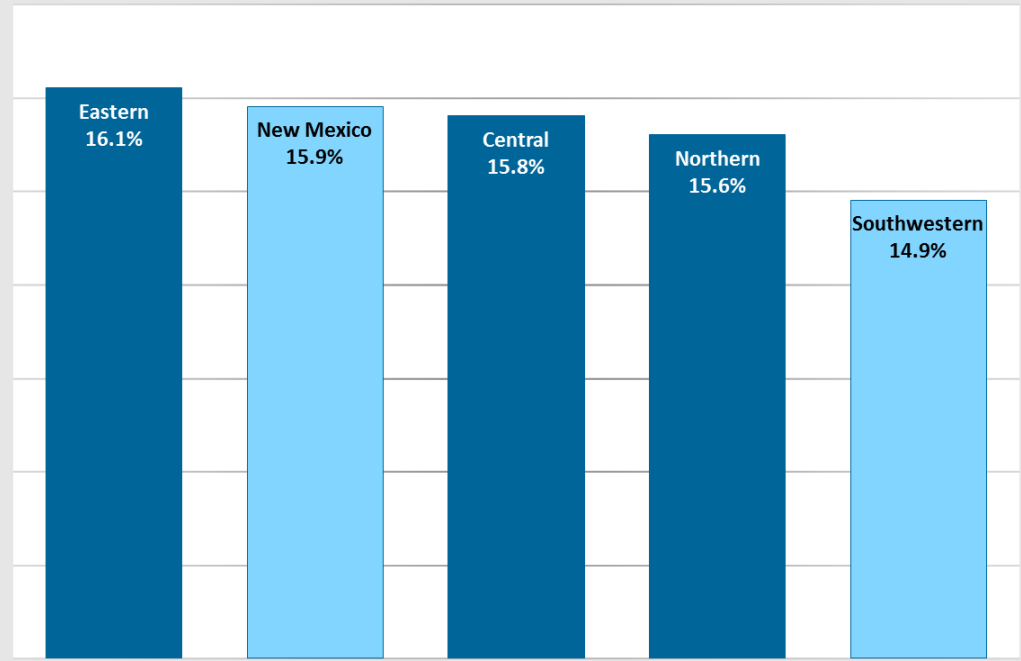
# THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET

## A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE BEST FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH ACROSS NEW MEXICO

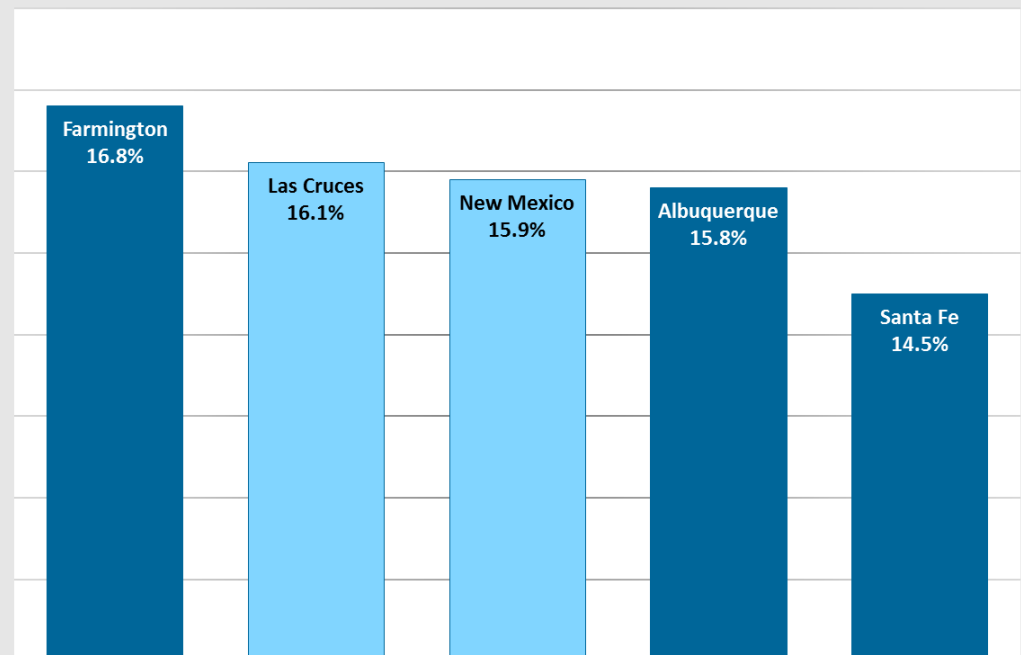
- ER&A compiles industry and occupational employment projections for New Mexico's four regions and four MSAs. Projections methodology is from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and is used by almost all states in preparing long-term employment projections.
- Based on long-term employment projections for the 2010 to 2020 timeframe (the most recent available), employment in the Southwestern Region is projected to grow more slowly than the state and other regions.
- When looking at the state's MSAs, employment in the Las Cruces MSA is projected to grow more quickly than that of the state and all other MSAs except Farmington.
- A slower growth rate in the region, coupled with a faster growth rate in the MSA indicates that employment growth in the non-MSA areas will lag that of the Las Cruces MSA enough to create overall slower growth in the region.

**Projected Employment Growth**  
*New Mexico & Regions, 2010-2020*



Source: NMDWS.

**Projected Employment Growth**  
*New Mexico & MSAs, 2010-2020*

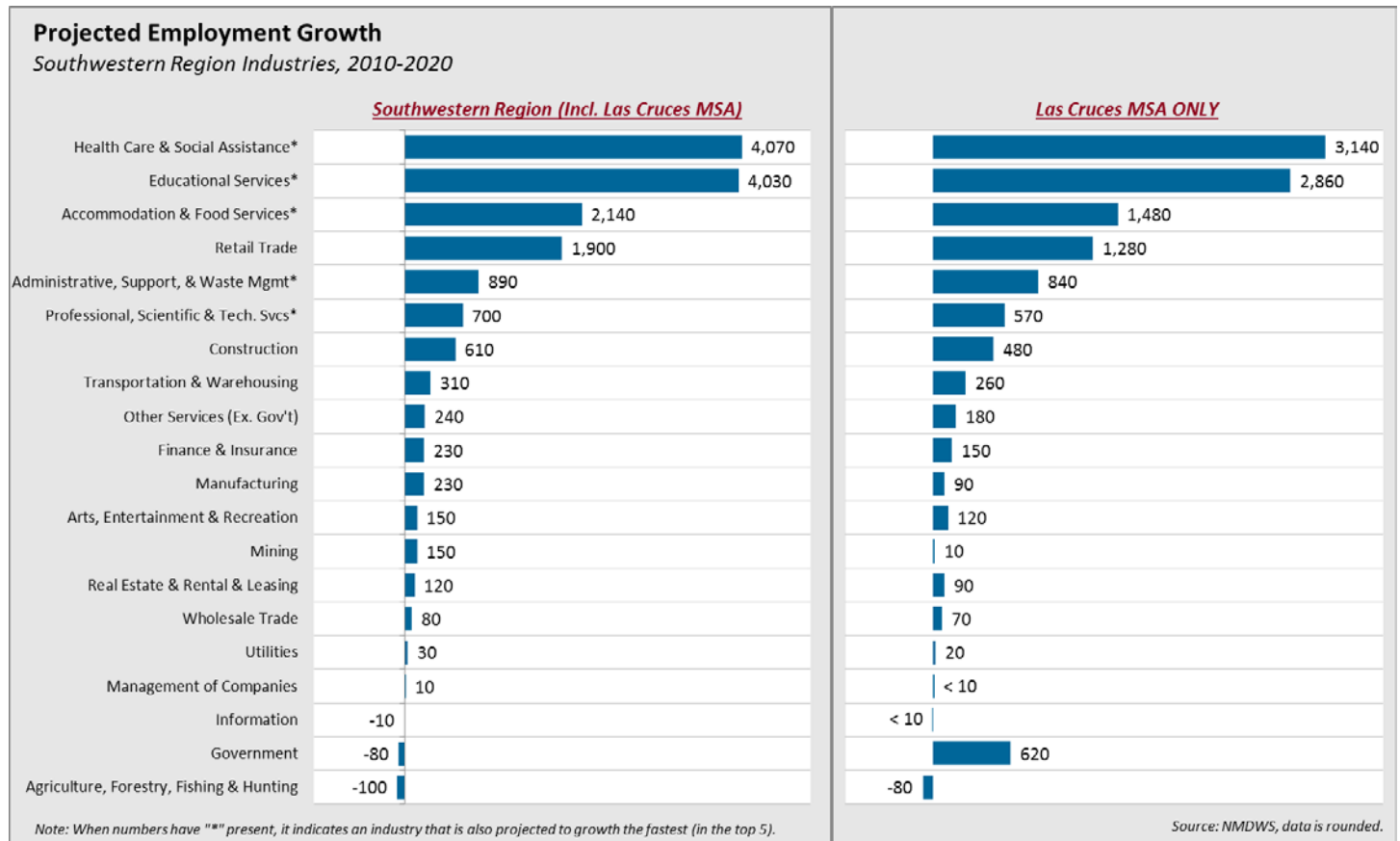


Source: NMDWS.

# THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET

## A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE BEST FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH IN INDUSTRIES



- The health care and social assistance industry is projected to see the largest growth in employment over the 10-year projection period. This industry is projected to grow by over 4,000 jobs in the Southwestern Region (including Las Cruces).
- About three-quarters of all employment growth is projected to occur in the top four major industries—health care, educational services, accommodation and food services, and retail trade. The major industries are projected to be among the top growth industries in all four regions of the state.
- Employment is projected to grow in a similar pattern in both the Southwestern Region and the Las Cruces MSA. Only two of the 20 major industries are projected to see significantly different growth across the two areas. Mining, which is concentrated in Grant County, is projected to grow significantly more in the region overall, with the Las Cruces MSA contributing minimally to that growth. On the other hand, government employment is projected to grow significantly in the Las Cruces MSA, while employment in the rest of the region is projected to decline. This projected decline is driven by anticipated losses in federal government jobs.

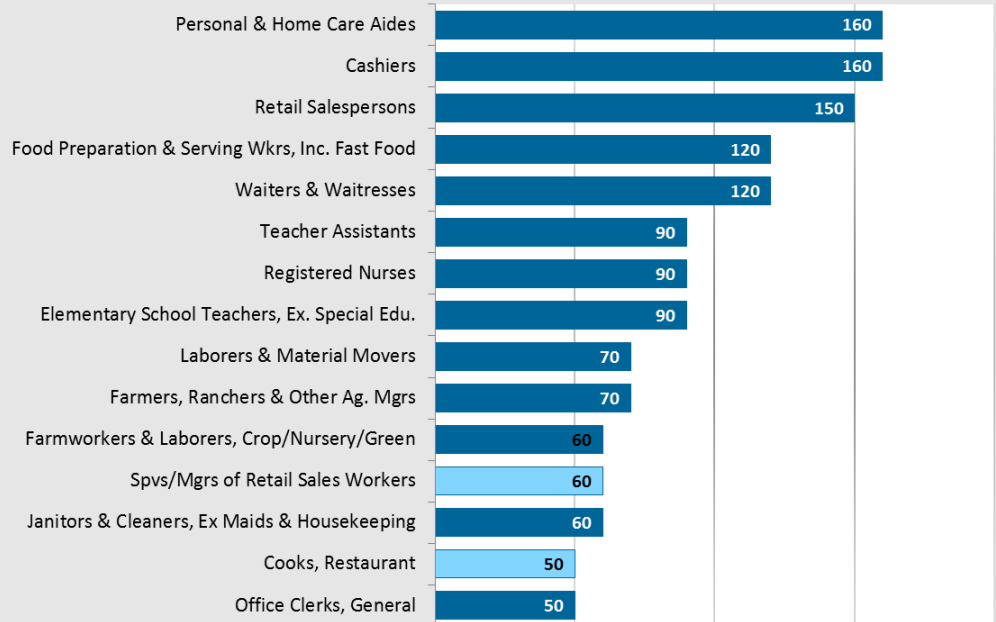
# THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET

## A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE BEST FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### PROJECTED AVERAGE ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS BY OCCUPATION

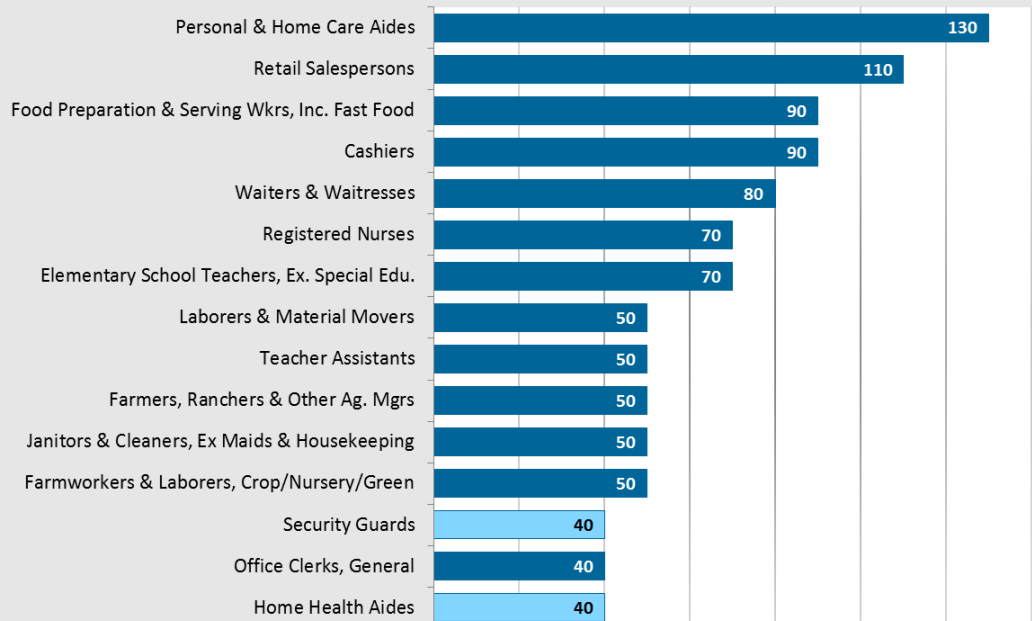
- Personal and home care aides and cashiers are projected to see the most average annual job openings over the projection period; each occupation is projected to have about 160 job openings each year.
- The growth in personal and home care aides is very much related to the health care and social assistance industry, which is anticipated to see the greatest employment growth of the major industries. Cashiers are often associated with the retail trade and food and accommodation services industries, which are also projected to see significant employment growth.
- Personal and home care aides are also projected to see the most average annual job openings in the Las Cruces MSA. Unlike the Southwestern Region, retail salespersons and food preparation workers are projected to see the second and third largest annual openings in the MSA.

**Occupations with the Most Projected Annual Openings**  
*Southwestern Region, 2010-2020*



*Note: Light blue bars represent occupations that are ranked in the top 20 in the region but not in the Las Cruces MSA specifically.*  
*Source: NMDWS, data is rounded.*

**Occupations with the Most Projected Annual Openings**  
*Las Cruces Region, 2010-2020*



*Note: Light blue bars represent occupations that are ranked in the top 20 in Las Cruces but not in the region as a whole.*  
*Source: NMDWS, data is rounded.*

# THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET

## A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE BEST FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### PROJECTED AVERAGE ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS BY OCCUPATION (CONTINUED)

- While supervisors and managers of retail sales workers and cooks are each ranked in the top 15 occupations for the most projected annual job openings in the region, these occupations are not in the top 15 in Las Cruces (although they are close). Annual job openings for security guards and home health aides are projected to be higher in the Las Cruces MSA over the projection period.
- Both areas are projected to see large growth in several health care- and social assistance-related occupations including personal and home care aides and registered nurses.
- Both areas are also projected to see large job openings for elementary school teachers and teacher assistants. Middle school teachers are also projected to see larger annual openings, although this occupation is not listed in the top 15 growth occupations.
- The Southwestern Region and Las Cruces are unique in that farmworkers and laborers, as well as farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers, are among the top occupations projected to see the largest number of annual job openings. What is unique to these occupations, however, is that most of these openings are projected to result from replacement needs in the agriculture industry, i.e. replacing existing workers that will retire, as opposed to openings due to new jobs created.
- Most of the occupations projected to see the largest number of annual openings between 2010 and 2020 are low-paying. Higher-paying occupations within the top 15 include registered nurses, elementary school teachers, and supervisors/managers of retail sales workers.



# THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET

## A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE BEST FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### TOP JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SOUTHWEST AND LAS CRUCES

#### Top Occupations in New Mexico's Southwestern Region

Projected Annual Job Openings (2010 to 2020) & Average Annual Wage (2012)

5-STAR ★★★★★					
	Openings	Wage		Openings	Wage
Elementary Schl. Teachers, Ex. Special Edu.	90	\$64,590	Postsecondary Teachers, All Other**	30	\$52,440
Middle Schl. Teachers, Ex. Special & Vocational Edu.	50	\$67,710	Clinical, Counseling & Schl. Psychologists	20	\$69,390
Special Education Teachers, P-K & Elementary*	30	\$65,130	Business Teachers, Postsecondary	10	\$92,040
Registered Nurses	90	\$63,610	Managers, All Other	30	\$82,650
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	10	\$112,470	Sec'dy Schl. Teachers, Ex. Special & Vocational Edu.	50	\$55,840
4-STAR ★★★★★					
	Openings	Wage		Openings	Wage
Graduate Teaching Assistants**	30	\$31,480	Spvs/Mgrs of Office & Administrative Support Wkrs	50	\$41,030
Edu. Administrators, Elementary & Secondary Schl.	10	\$79,580	Administrative Services Managers	10	\$62,390
Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics	20	\$44,800	Security Guards	50	\$29,680
Educational, Vocational & Schl. Counselors	10	\$56,560	Spvs/Mgrs of Retail Sales Workers	60	\$34,820
Family & General Practitioners	10	\$199,270	Accountants & Auditors	20	\$53,760
Interpreters & Translators	10	\$43,710			
3-STAR ★★★★★					
	Openings	Wage		Openings	Wage
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	20	\$42,280	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	40	\$29,750
Spvs/Mgrs of Construction Trades Extraction Wkrs	20	\$46,110	Pharmacy Technicians	10	\$31,220
Child, Family & Schl. Social Workers	10	\$43,220	Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	20	\$32,720
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	30	\$34,600	Operating Engineers & Other Const. Equip. Optrs	20	\$37,690
Computer Support Specialists*	20	\$45,850	Social & Human Service Assistants	10	\$30,070
Carpenters	30	\$31,600			

Source: Department of Workforce Solutions, Occupational Employment Statistics program, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

\* Wage data is for 2011 as opposed to 2012 due to data limitations.

\*\* Wage data is for 2011 statewide as opposed to 2012 regional due to data limitations.

Other Notes: Openings and wages are rounded. "OJT" refers to On-the-Job Training.

- ER&A prepares a listing of occupations for each region and MSA that identifies jobs that are not only projected to have higher annual openings, but also pay higher than the median wage for the area. An occupation's place on the top jobs list is based on the combination of its rankings with respect to projected annual job openings, rate of job growth, and median wage. These jobs are classified within a star-rating system and are listed as the best job opportunities for the projection period.
- The best job opportunities in the Southwestern Region include elementary and middle school teachers; registered nurses; postsecondary education administrators; postsecondary teachers; and clinical, counseling, and school psychologists. These occupations are often identified as 5-Star occupations in other regions of the state as well.

# THE FUTURE LABOR MARKET

## A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF JOBS IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE BEST FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Top Occupations in the Las Cruces MSA

Projected Annual Job Openings (2010 to 2020) & Average Annual Wage (2012)

5-STAR ★★★★★					
	Openings	Wage		Openings	Wage
Elementary Schl. Teachers, Ex. Special Edu.*	70	\$52,310	Managers, All Other	30	\$81,410
Middle Schl. Teachers, Ex. Special & Vocational Edu.	40	\$69,430	Postsecondary Teachers, All Other***	30	\$52,440
Registered Nurses	70	\$64,590	Education Administrators, Postsecondary*	10	\$71,990
Special Education Teachers, P-K & Elementary**	20	\$70,550	Business Teachers, Postsecondary***	10	\$80,090
4-STAR ★★★★					
	Openings	Wage		Openings	Wage
Graduate Teaching Assistants***	30	\$31,480	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	20	\$53,110
Clinical, Counseling & Schl. Psychologists	20	\$73,070	Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics**	10	\$47,530
Sec'dry Schl. Teachers, Ex. Special & Vocational Edu.	30	\$56,330	Interpreters & Translators	10	\$41,060
Detectives & Criminal Investigators	30	\$82,340	Spvs/Mgrs of Office & Admin Support Wkrs	30	\$40,310
Security Guards	40	\$30,170			
3-STAR ★★★					
	Openings	Wage		Openings	Wage
Spvs/Mgrs of Retail Sales Wkrs	40	\$36,970	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	10	\$42,180
Accountants & Auditors	10	\$54,740	Computer Support Specialists**	10	\$40,130
Child, Family & Schl. Social Wkrs	10	\$46,000	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	30	\$30,510
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	20	\$36,440	Maintenance & Repair Wkrs, General	20	\$30,720
Spvs/Mgrs of Construction Trades Extraction Wkrs	20	\$45,740			

Source: Department of Workforce Solutions, Occupational Employment Statistics program, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

\* Data is for 2012 statewide as opposed to regional due to data limitations.

\*\* Wage data is for 2011 as opposed to 2012 due to data limitations.

\*\*\* Wage data is for 2011 statewide as opposed to 2012 regional due to data limitations.

Other Notes: Openings and wages are rounded. "OJT" refers to On-the-Job Training.

- As would be expected, the Southwestern Region and the Las Cruces MSA have many top jobs in common. Elementary and middle school teachers are, like in the Southwestern Region, the top job opportunities into the near future based on NMDWS methodology

