

San Luis Valley Region

Job Vacancy Survey

Summer 2003



See Colorado First

San Luis Lakes State Park
Alamosa County
Photo by J. Koshak
Courtesy of Colorado State Parks

San Luis Valley Region Job Vacancy Survey



Conducted
August 25–27, 2003

State of Colorado
Bill Owens, *Governor*

**Colorado Department of
Labor & Employment**

Jeffrey M. Wells
Executive Director

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Analyst for this region:

Steven Krichbaum

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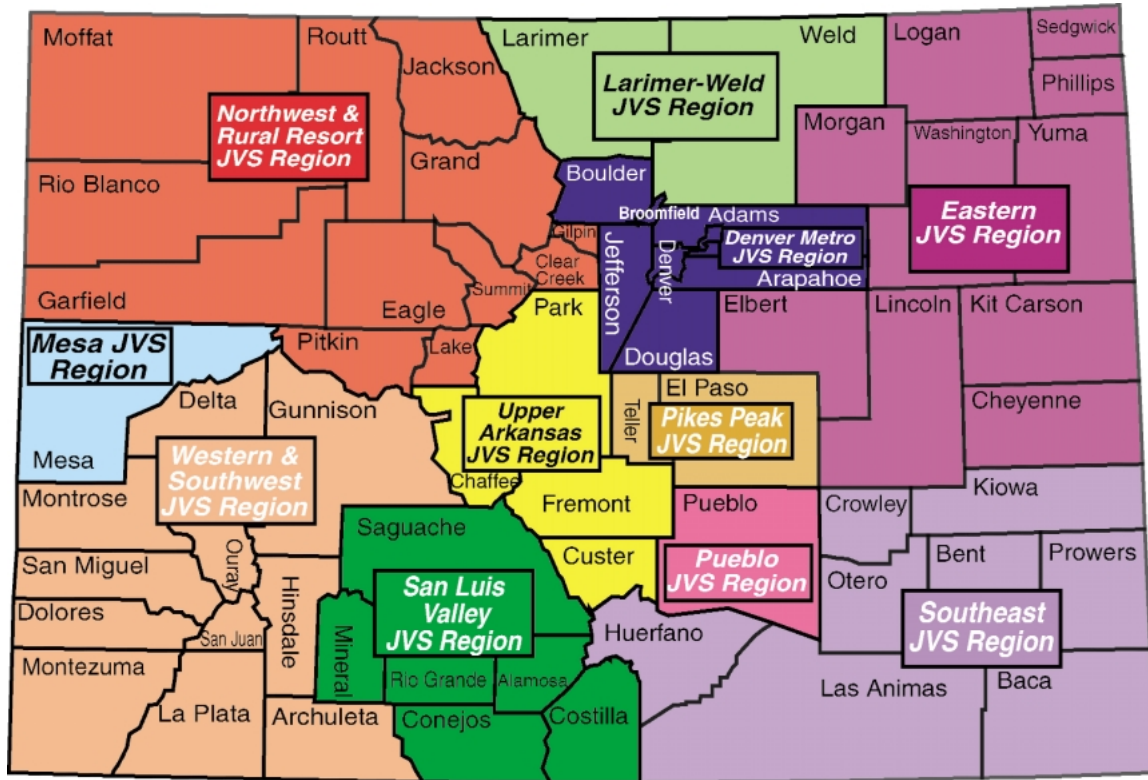
Workforce Research & Analysis
Labor Market Information
Two Park Central, Suite 300
1515 Arapahoe Street
Denver, CO 80202-2117

(303) 318-8890

Email: Imi@state.co.us

www.coworkforce.com/Imi/wra/home.htm

Figure 1: Colorado Job Vacancy Survey Regions



Introduction to the Colorado Job Vacancy Survey

The unemployment rate, along with the level and growth rate of employment, has been used as an indicator of labor market conditions for decades. While this indicator provides information about changes in the supply and demand for labor, it reveals nothing about the skills most sought after by employers. As such, individuals preparing themselves for the job market have done so with limited knowledge of what skills are necessary to successfully compete in the contemporary labor market. Employers have had an equally difficult time determining appropriate compensation levels due to a limited knowledge of what similar firms in their region are currently offering.

Job seekers and employers, as well as Workforce Centers and economic developers need more than a measure of demand for workers at a specific point in time. They also need a measure of where in the economy that demand is located and what education and experience levels are most preferred. The Colorado Department of Labor

and Employment (CDLE) developed the Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) to meet this need. The JVS is designed to provide a snapshot estimate of job vacancies along with detailed information and analysis on accompanying wages, skill requirements and work experience.

The CDLE's survey unit collects original data by conducting phone interviews with a representative sample of employers in a given region. The department's economists analyze the raw data, estimate the number of vacancies in the area and publish the report within weeks of the original data collection, providing a timely portrait of the employment situation.

The survey is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The survey is produced for each region in Colorado by Labor Market Information's office of Workforce Research and Analysis.



Executive Summary

The 2003 Summer San Luis Valley Job Vacancy Survey was conducted from August 25th through August 27th, 2003. The goal of the survey is to provide current information on the demand for workers so that employers, job seekers, economic developers, educators and workforce centers can make more informed decisions in the San Luis Valley Region.

A random sample of small to mid-size private employers with at least five employees was contacted over the survey period. Additionally, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) survey unit attempted to interview all large employers and government entities.

Employers were asked if they were actively hiring at the time of the survey along with a variety of questions about the positions that they were seeking to fill.

A total of 422 employers, representing approximately 55% of the region's total employment, responded to the survey. Out of these, 85 were government agencies, 13 were large employers and 324 were small to mid-sized entities. The survey had a 80% response rate. The margin of sampling error for the overall result is plus or minus 8% or about 10 vacancies. The major findings of the report are as follows:

- ◆ An estimated 122 jobs were open for immediate hire in the region during the survey period, down from 210 a year ago.Page 4
- ◆ The unemployment rate for August 2003 was 7.2% compared to 6.3% in September of 2002¹.Page 4
- ◆ The overall average wage offered by surveyed employers is \$14.80 per hour.Page 8
- ◆ Employers find open positions less difficult to fill than in last year's survey and vacancies have been open for shorter periods of time.Pages 15, 16
- ◆ Fifty-nine percent of vacancies offer medical insurance with most of them offering to pay a portion of the policy premium.Page 17
- ◆ Healthcare Practitioner & Technical occupations account for over 40% of all vacancies found.Page 19
- ◆ Healthcare Practitioner & Technical occupations offer the highest wages while Food Preparation & Serving related positions offer the lowest average wages.Page 19
- ◆ Sixty-three vacancies are estimated to be open in the Education and Health Services JVS Sector, the most in any category.Page 8
- ◆ Sixty-four percent of the vacancies require education beyond the high-school/GED level.Page 13
- ◆ Large private employers and government entities offer higher wages than small to mid-size private employers on average.Page 11
- ◆ There are no sign-on bonuses offered in the survey.Page 17

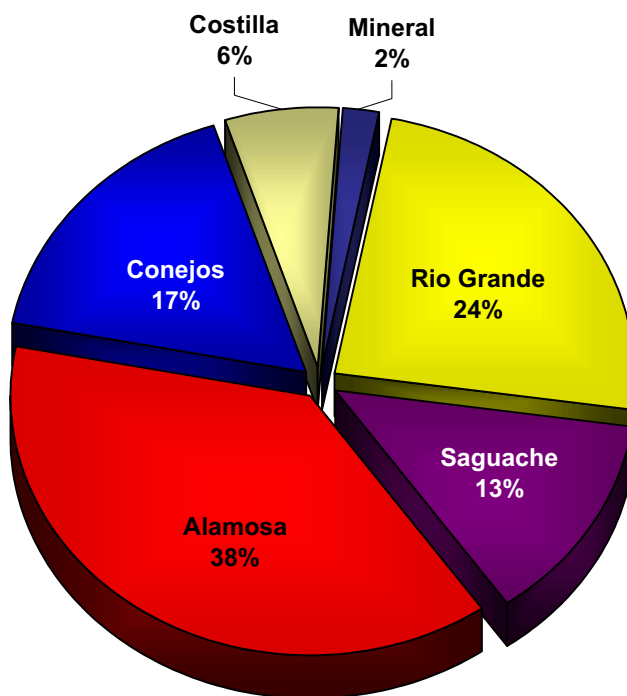
¹The 2002 San Luis Valley Job Vacancy Survey was conducted in mid September.

San Luis Valley Region

The San Luis Valley Region consists of Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande and Saguache counties and is located in the Southcentral portion of Colorado. The valley surrounded by the San Juan and Sangre de Cristo Mountains is at an average elevation of 7,600². The region is known both for its beauty and fertile soil.

The Demography Section of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs estimated the region's population at 47,270 as of July of 2002. The region's population increased by 403 or .9% between 2001 and 2002. The population of Colorado as a whole increased 1.7% during the same time period. The region employed 21,683 in August 2003 out of a labor force of 23,376³.

Figure 2: Employment by County, August 2003

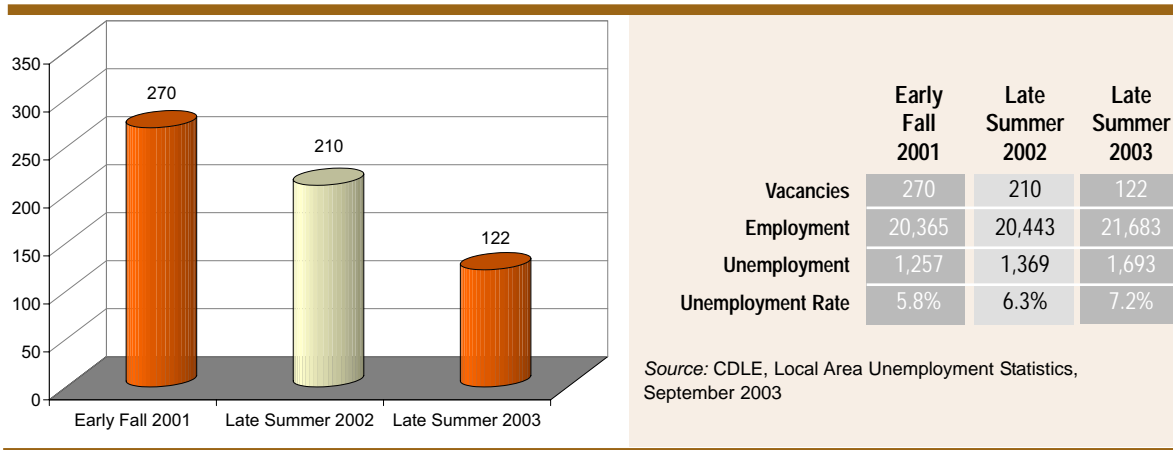


Source: CDLE, Local Area Unemployment Statistics
Released September 2003

²Dillon, Merlin. "Agriculture: Lifeblood of the San Luis Valley"

³The Fall 2001 labor force numbers published in this report are slightly different from the labor force numbers published in the fall 2001 Job Vacancy Survey. Every year the labor force numbers are benchmarked and adjusted to reflect information obtained since the original numbers were published. This report uses these revised numbers which are the most accurate available.



Figure 3: Historical Vacancies San Luis Valley Region

Since the first San Luis Valley Job Vacancy Survey was conducted in early fall 2001, the number of estimated vacancies has decreased steadily. It is clear that the drop from 270 vacancies in 2001 to 122 vacancies in 2003 suggests a decline in employer hiring levels⁴.

During the same time period the number of people looking for work has increased. At the time of the summer 2001 survey the unemployment rate was 5.8%⁵ and there were approximately 1,257 unemployed. The unemployment rate increased to 6.3% a year later and the number of unemployed increased to 1,369. During the summer 2003 survey the unemployment rate was 7.2% with a total number of 1,693 people unemployed.

Increased unemployment and fewer openings increase competition for job seekers in the San Luis Valley Region, but they are not alone. This trend is occurring throughout the state and the nation as the U.S. economy struggles to sustain a weak economic recovery. Ideally, economic expansions are accompanied by large increases in output, increasing employment, decreasing unemployment and rising equity markets. Output – the total amount of goods and services produced in the U.S. economy, increased each quarter in 2002 and the first three quarters of 2003, although many people do not feel that they are experiencing a growing economy. Fewer people are working in both the state and the nation and wages have only increased slightly.

The last two years have been difficult for job seekers, but there are signs that the national, state and local economic

environment may soon improve. The U.S. equity markets have climbed steadily since March 2003 and are on pace to finish the year in positive territory for the first time since 1999⁶. Historically, the stock market has been an excellent predictor of national economic activity⁷. Interest rates are at the lowest levels in decades encouraging both individuals and businesses to continue spending.

Two of the most promising signs for the national economy are increased business confidence and corporate profits. While consumers have continued to spend over the last two years, businesses have cut back on payrolls and have been reluctant to invest in new capital. Business confidence has increased in 2003 and is up over 50% this year⁸. Corporate profits decreased in 2001, and it was not until the fourth quarter of 2002 that they topped 2000 levels. Through the first three quarters of 2003 corporate profits increased by 20.6%⁹. The improvement in corporate profits will likely mean that corporations will be willing to start investing in new capital and to hire more workers.

In the San Luis Valley Region agriculture and tourism industries are the most important drivers of the local economy. Both have been adversely affected by one of the worst droughts in Colorado history and the national economic downturn. As the drought lessens in severity and the economy improves both agriculture and tourism are expected to strengthen. Although there is typically a lag, overall economic improvement usually creates more opportunities for job seekers in the labor market.

⁴The number of vacancies refers to the period when the survey was conducted and not to the entire year. There were 122 estimated vacancies from August 25-27, 2003. Many more vacancies would be available during the entire year.

⁵See Footnote 3.

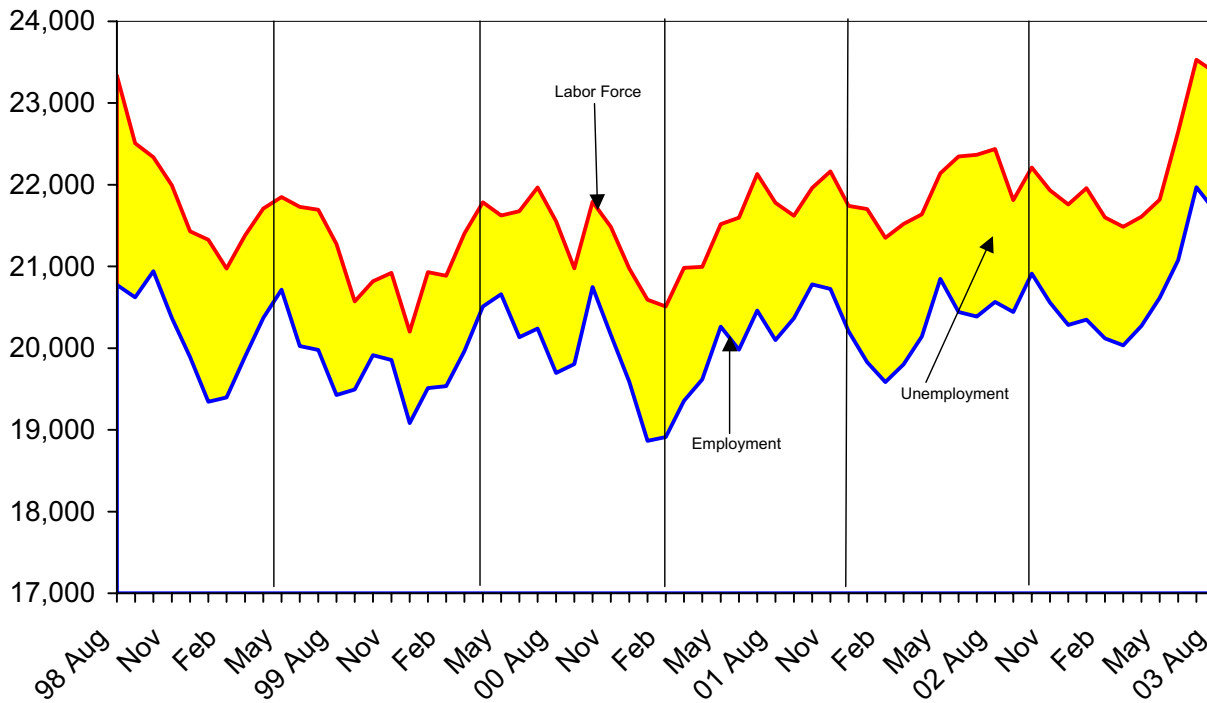
⁶*The New York Times*. "Dow Jones Industrial Average", "Standard & Poor's 500 Index", "Nasdaq 100 Index". Retrieved December 10, 2003, www.nytimes.com.

⁷The Conference Board. "Business Cycle Indicators: Leading Indicators". Retrieved December 10, 2003, www.conference-board.com.

⁸Economy.com. "Survey of Business Confidence", Released 12/08/2003. www.economy.com

⁹Bureau of Economic Analysis, U. S. Department of Commerce. "Corporate Profit Series". Retrieved December 10, 2003, www.bea.gov.

Figure 4: Employment and Labor Force Trends for the San Luis Valley Region
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: CDLE, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Released September 2003

Figure 4 shows a 5-year history of both the region's labor force and the employment levels between August 1998 and August 2003. Many conclusions may be drawn from this graph:

- ◆ **The labor force and employment levels have grown since 2000.**
Because labor force and employment levels vary from season to season, change does not occur smoothly. Both levels gradually decreased until February of 2001 and have since gradually increased. Both the labor force and employment have now exceeded their 1998 highs.
- ◆ **The unemployment level has decreased.**
The unemployment level is the gap between labor force and employment. The larger the distance between the two lines, the larger the number of unemployed. In August 1998 there were 2,562 people unemployed compared to 1,693 in August 2003, a 34% decline. In that time the unemployment rate dropped from 11.0% to 7.2%.

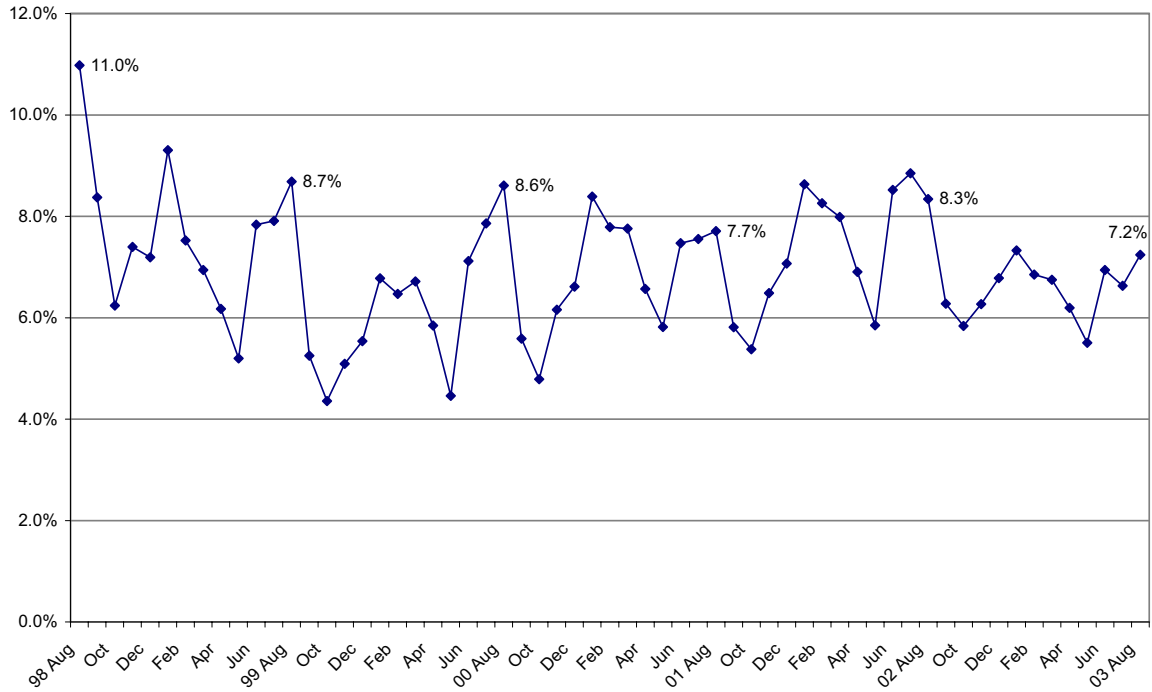
- ◆ **In addition, Figure 4 demonstrates the region's seasonal trend.**
Both employment levels and the labor force peak in late spring and early fall and then bottom out in winter. The Job Vacancy Survey is conducted in late summer or early fall, when employment is increasing but has not yet reached its seasonal highs. A survey at this time gives a good indication of the jobs in demand as the labor market nears its peak. The region's labor force does not fluctuate as much as its employment level, which leads to an unemployment rate highly affected by seasonal fluctuations.



From August 1998 to August 2003, the unemployment rate has dropped from 11.0% to 7.2%. Over that period the rate reached its lowest point in October of 1999 at 4.4%. There is a significant seasonal fluctuation in San Luis Valley's unemployment rate. The rate decreases from January to May each year and then climbs again until August. Harvest season decreases the unemployment rate

again until October when it again rises into winter. This seasonal trend is expected in economies dominated by agriculture. The steady and predictable fluctuation in the region's unemployment rate, suggests that the labor market has remained stable in the past few years without any remarkable growth or decline.

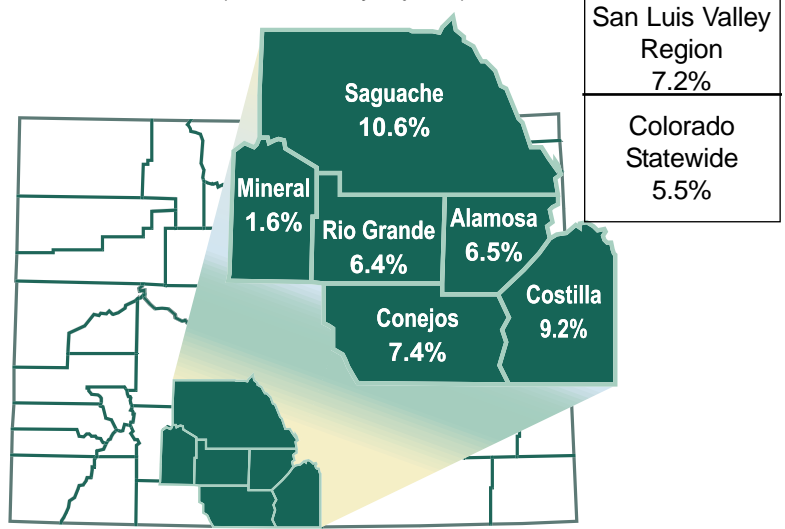
Figure 5: San Luis Valley Region Unemployment Rate Trend
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: CDLE, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Released September 2003

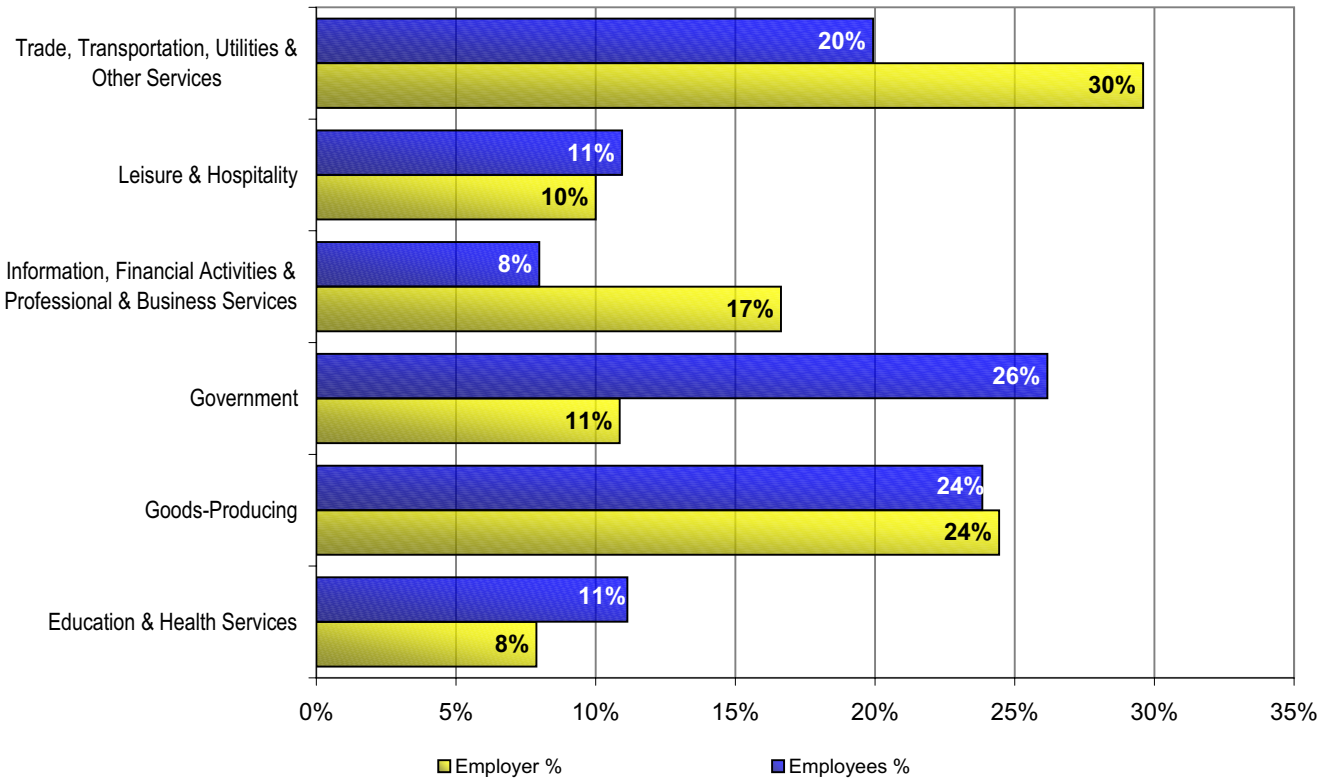
The overall unemployment rate in the San Luis Valley Region in August 2003 is higher than the statewide rate of 5.5%. Mineral County has the lowest unemployment rate while Saguache has the highest. The two counties with the largest labor forces, Alamosa and Rio Grande, have unemployment rates of 6.6% and 6.3% respectively.

Figure 6: Unemployment Rates for August 2003
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: CDLE, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 7: San Luis Valley Region Employers and Employees, 3rd Quarter, 2002



Source: CDLE, Colorado Employment and Wages (ES-202)

Figure 7 presents employer and employee data for the six JVS sectors used in rural areas in Colorado (Page 27). The JVS sectors are based on the 2002 manual of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which is being used in the Job Vacancy Survey for the first time in 2003. This new classification system presents vacancies in a more relevant and detailed manner that better reflects today’s service based economy¹⁰.

Government employs more people in the San Luis Valley Region than any other JVS sector. The Goods Producing category employs the second most. Included in Goods Producing are the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, Mining, Construction and Manufacturing sectors.

If agriculture is the primary driver of the San Luis Valley economy, why does it not have the largest employment according to Employment and Wages (ES-202) in the 3rd Quarter of 2002? It is important to note that the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Employment and Wages (ES-202) program collects information on firms whose employees are covered by unemployment insurance. Nationally, this program captures 98% of total employment¹¹. Agriculture, however, is an industry in which much of the employment is not covered. Many agricultural employers are exempt from paying unemployment insurance tax, and therefore are not represented in ES-202 numbers. Simply put, the Goods Producing JVS Sector’s employment represents a much larger part of the San Luis Valley Region labor market than indicated by the 24% reported under the Employment and Wages program.

¹⁰For more information on the industry changes please see *North American Industry Classification System, Page 28*.

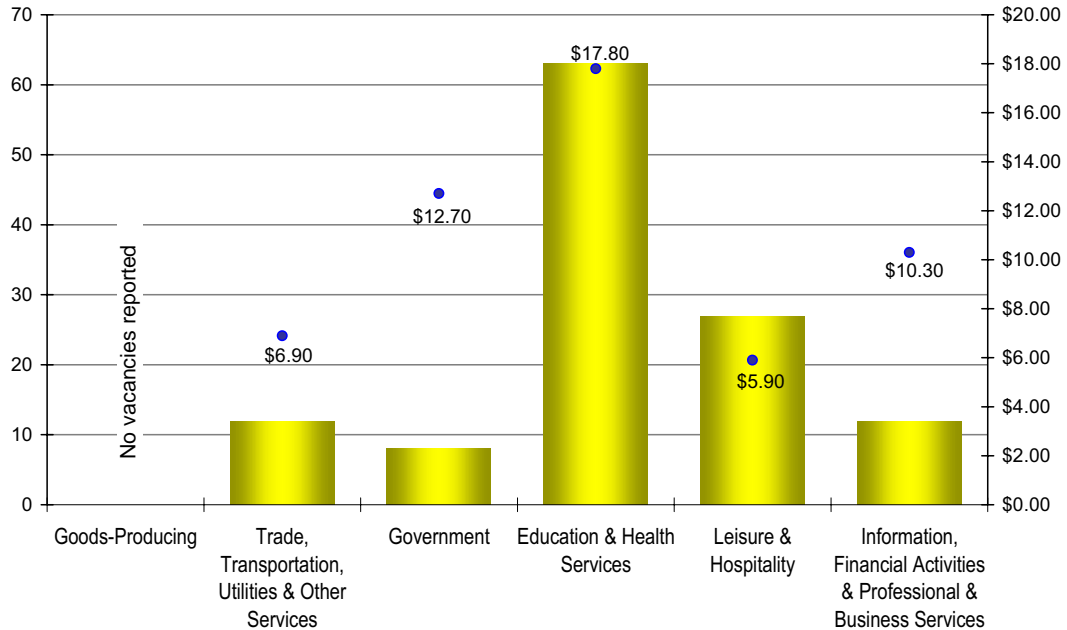
¹¹U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/cew/home.htm>.



Estimated Vacancies

JVS Sectors and Employer Size

Figure 8: Estimated Vacancies and Average Wages by JVS Sectors



During the survey period, an estimated 122 vacancies were open for immediate hire with private firms having at least 5 employees and all government employers in the San Luis Valley Region. The total number of estimated vacancies is down from the 210 found in the summer of 2002. Both surveys were conducted in the summer, within three weeks of each other, using similar methods. The drop in vacancies suggests a decline in hiring activity in line with the general weak economic recovery nationwide.

The region's estimated vacancy rate is .8%, meaning that there are approximately 8 vacancies in the survey for every 1,000 positions. The vacancy rate dropped from 1.5% a year ago. The overall vacancy rate is calculated by dividing the estimated number of vacancies by the sum of estimated number of vacancies and total employment. The demand for labor is composed of people currently employed plus all of the open positions that employers want to fill. Employment steadily increased over the previous five months, but declined in August. The results of this survey also show that employers hiring levels were down during the week when this survey was conducted. It appears that the region experienced a decline in the demand for labor during late summer 2003.

The total and JVS sector-specific vacancy rates are two of the most important pieces of information that the Job Vacancy Survey produces. Because of the switch to the North American Industry Classification System it will be impossible to compare the JVS sector vacancy rates for several years. Also, the survey has only been conducted for three years so it is difficult to determine exactly what an overall vacancy rate of .8% tells us about the demand for workers in the economy. Watching the change in the vacancy rates through several economic expansions and contractions will help to better gauge the level of demand for labor.

The amount of employment in a JVS Sector is not necessarily a good predictor of which sector will have the most vacancies. For example, Government employs more people than any other JVS sector in the region, but has the fifth highest number of vacancies. Eleven percent of the employment in the region is in the Education & Health Services field, but over 50% of the vacancies are in that field. The difference in demand among JVS sectors illustrates the importance of conducting a job vacancy survey. People in the San Luis Valley Region need to know which JVS sectors are demanding new workers and which are not.

Figure 8 shows estimated vacancies and the overall average wage range offered in each JVS sector. In this survey the most openings occur in the Education & Health Services JVS Sector. The second most vacancies occur in Leisure & Hospitality. The highest wages are offered in Education & Health Services. The lowest average wages are offered in Leisure & Hospitality and Trade, Transportation, Utilities & Other Services. The overall average wage in the survey is \$14.80. While wages do reflect the labor force supply and demand they are also heavily affected by the particular occupations that employers are looking to fill during the survey period¹².

Not only were the highest wages offered in the Education and Health Services category, but this JVS sector also has the widest range of average wages. Employers are asked to provide a both a minimum and maximum wage for each open position for which they are actively recruiting. Typically, employers are willing to offer a candidate more or less money, depending on a candidate's prior experience and education. Most of the vacancies in

the Education & Health Services category are Healthcare Practitioners & Technical positions. Greater experience and education can add to the effectiveness of nurses, paramedics and technicians.

Occupations with the most reported vacancies by JVS sector are as follows:

Trade, Transportation, Utilities & Other Services
 – Sales & Related Occupations and Transportation & Material Moving Occupations

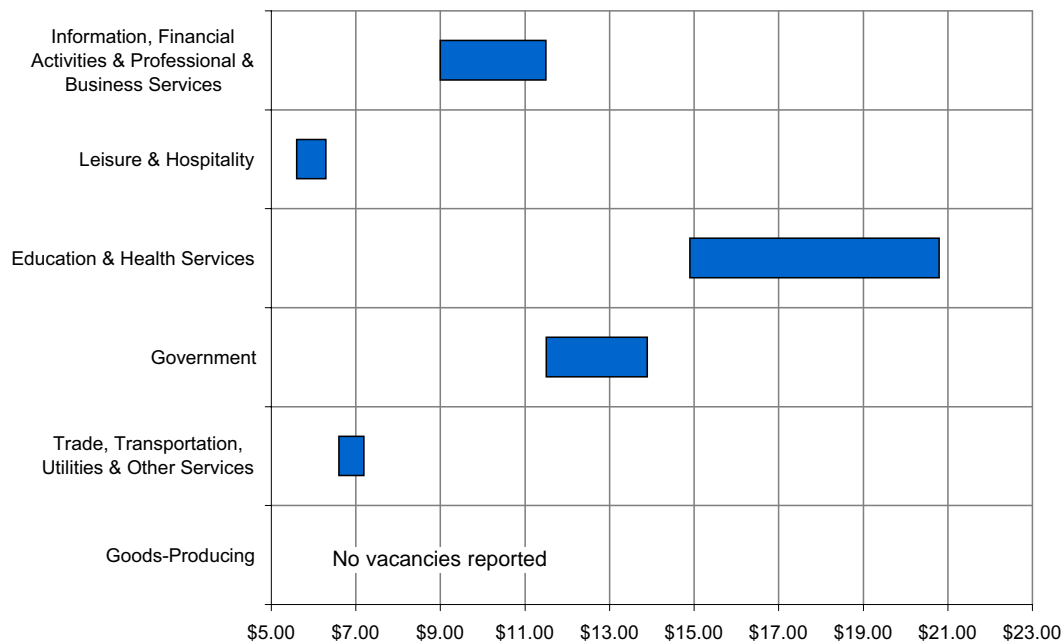
Government
 – Education, Training & Library Occupations

Education & Health Services
 – Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations

Leisure & Hospitality
 – Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations

Information, Financial Activities & Professional & Business Services
 – Office & Administrative Support Occupations

Figure 9: Reported Average Wage Ranges by JVS Sectors



¹²The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is an excellent source for accurate and detailed wages by occupation.



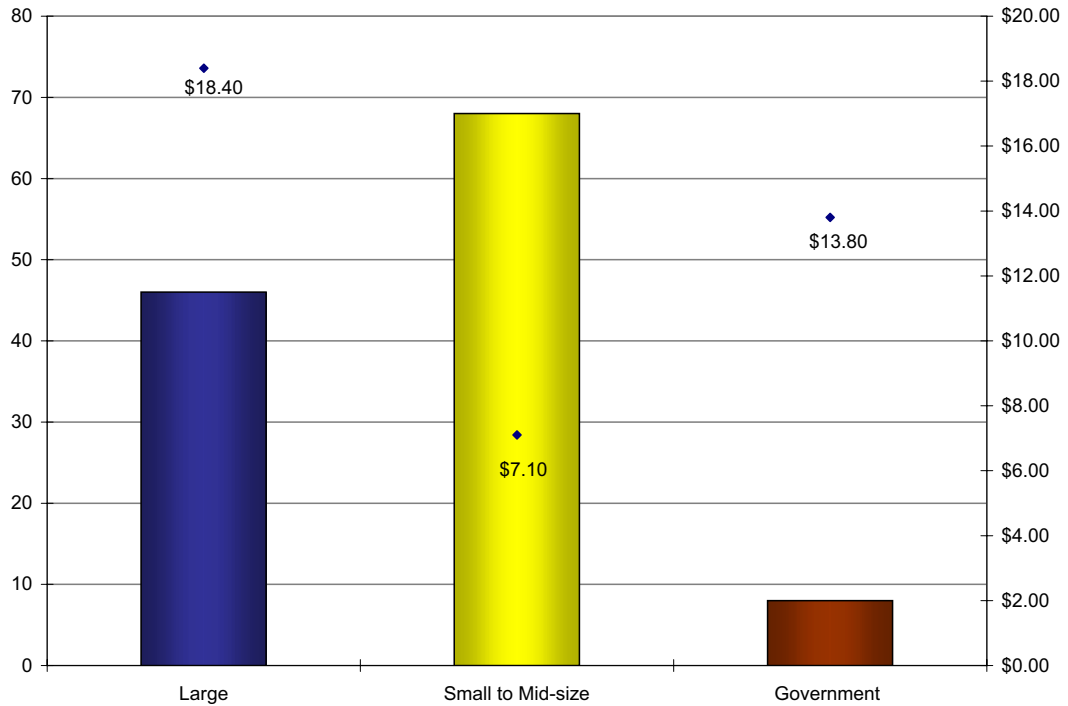
Most vacancies are found in the small to mid-size (5 to 74 employees) category. Large employers and Government agencies combined make up 44% of the vacancies. Does this imply that job seekers should target small to mid-size firms? Not necessarily. It is important to consider that while large firms (private firms with 75 or more employees) make up less than 1% of all firms in the region, they have a large number of vacancies per employer. Overall, there are more vacancies in small to mid-size firms, but because there are more small to mid-size firms, there are actually fewer vacancies per employer than with Government or large employers. There are 2.9 vacancies per large private employer, 0.1 vacancies per Government entity and 0.1 vacancies per small to mid-size employer.

When considering the relative demand for new employees across size classifications it is best to turn to vacancy rates. Large employers have an average vacancy rate of

2.2%, small to mid-size employers 0.8% and Government 0.2%. Thus, relative to the number of people employed in each category, large private employers are looking to fill more positions than small to mid-size and Government employers combined.

Compared to a year ago, the number of vacancies in Government and Small to Mid-Size employers has dropped much more significantly than the number in Large Employers. Large employers had 50 vacancies compared to 46 this year. Both Small to Mid-Size and Government employers have less than half the number of vacancies that they did a year ago. While the drop from one survey to another does not signify in itself any trend, it will be interesting to see in the future how employers of different size groups adjust their hiring practices at different points in the economic cycle.

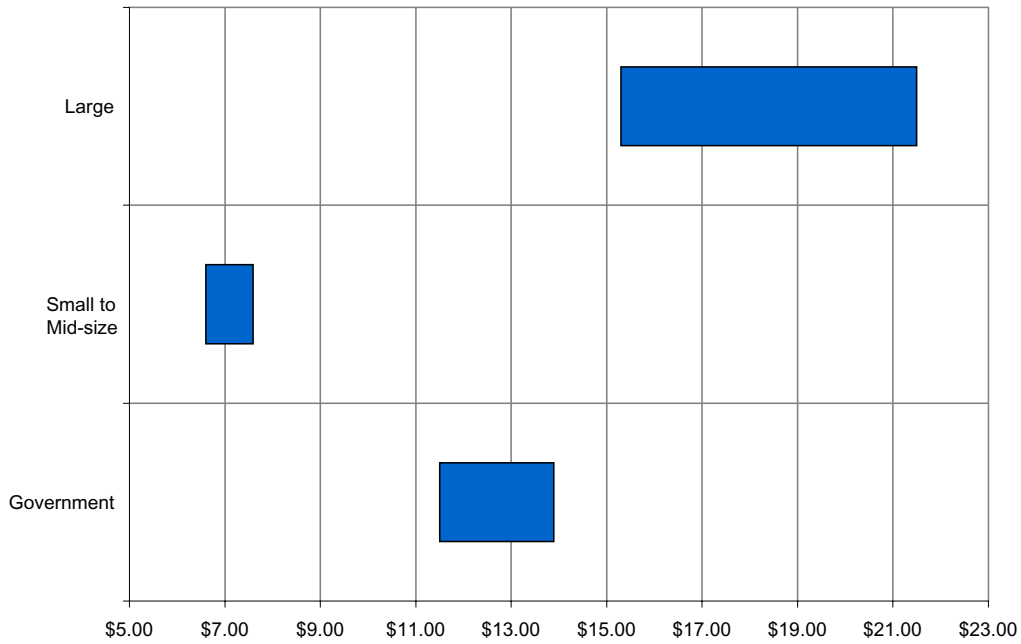
Figure 10: Estimated Vacancies and Average Wages by Employer Size



In this survey, large employers offered higher wages than small to mid-size or government employers. Like all the categories discussed in this report, occupations found in a size class play a major role in determining the average wage in that category. The vast majority of healthcare related occupations are found in the large size category.

Vacancies in the Government category are dominated by Education, Training & Library occupations. These relatively high paying positions push up the average wages. The most prominent occupational group in the small to mid-size category is Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations.

Figure 11: Reported Average Wage Ranges by Employer Size



Vacancies

Employment Status, Education, and Experience Requirements

The remainder of this report provides descriptive statistics of the vacancies reported in and unique to this survey; this is supplemental data of interest to the reader. The survey design does not allow for application of this detail to the region as a whole, but it can be used to understand characteristics of those job vacancies and occupations reported.

Ninety-six percent of the vacancies reported are permanent employment opportunities. Eighty-nine percent are full-time/permanent positions, 7% are part-time/permanent positions. Four percent of the positions are temporary up from 2% a year ago.

In this survey, full-time/permanent positions offer by far the highest average wages. The results are similar to last year in that part-time/permanent positions offer the lowest average wage and full-time/temporary positions offer an average wage in the middle of the two categories.

As in all of the past surveys, full-time/permanent positions offer the highest average wages in the San Luis Valley Region. The highest paying occupations reported in the full-time/permanent category are Registered Nurses, Postsecondary teachers and Respiratory Therapy Technicians.

Figure 12: Vacancies by Employment Status

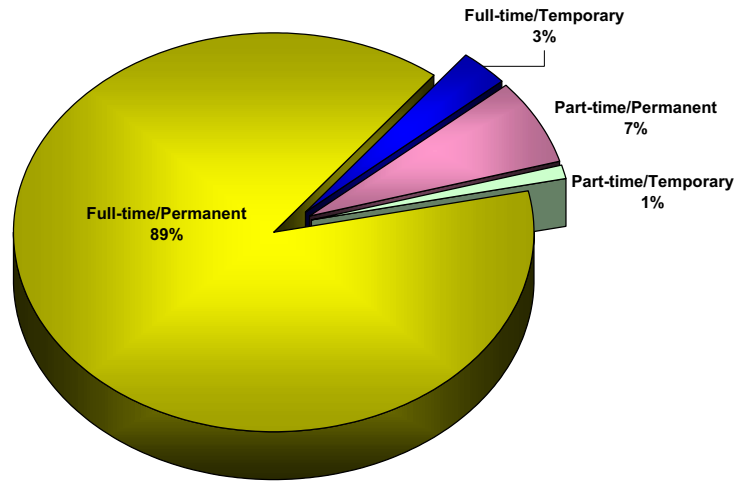
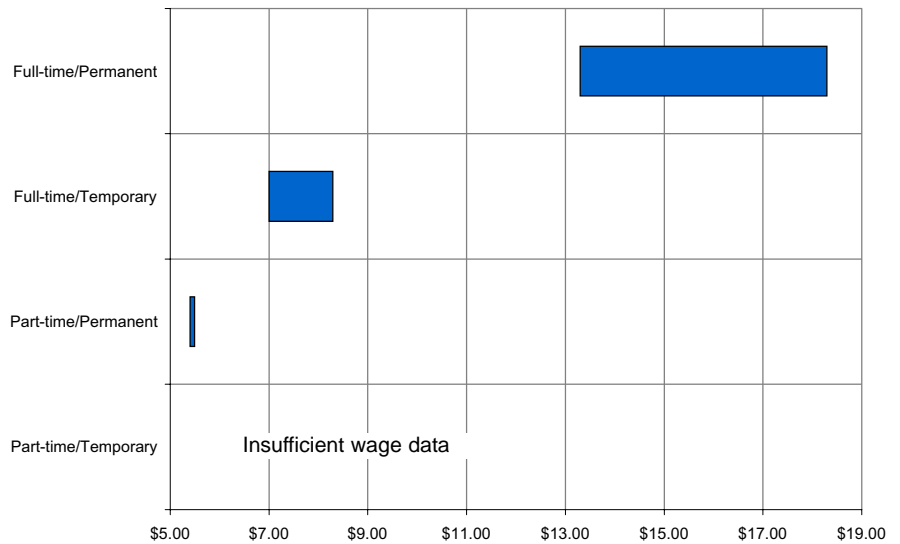


Figure 13: Reported Average Wage Ranges by Employment Status



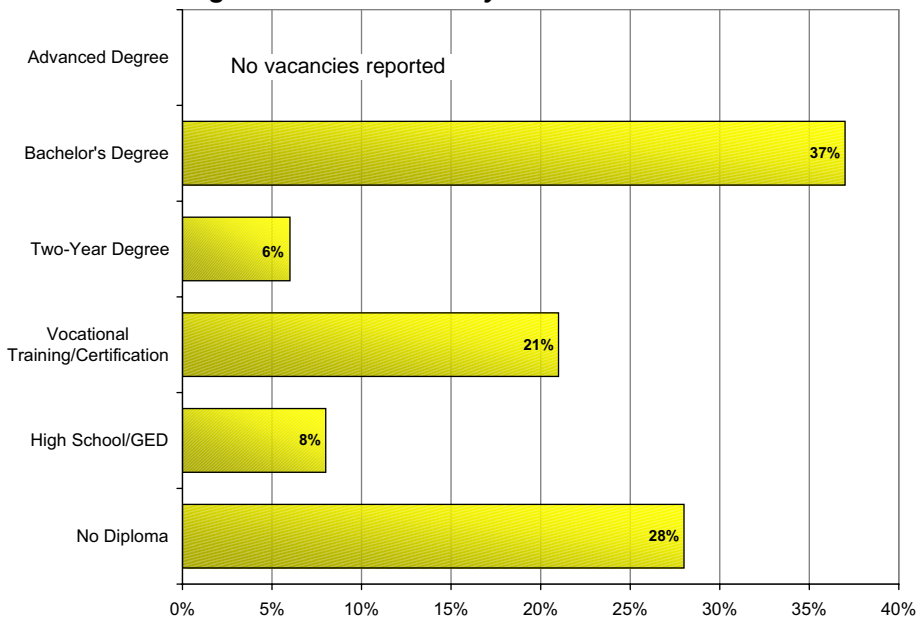
The majority of economic reporting treats all workers as if they are part of the same labor market. For example, if the unemployment rate is high, one might assume there are plenty of qualified candidates and no job openings. The reality is that even in recessions there are many employers who cannot find qualified candidates for their open positions. It is important, therefore, that job seekers have information regarding what education and experience levels are in highest demand.

Thirty-seven percent of vacancies in the survey require a bachelor's degree, none required an advanced degree and

28% have no educational requirement. The proportion of vacancies requiring a bachelor's degree is higher than in either of the previous two surveys; 8% in 2001 and 20% in 2002. This is due to the extremely large proportion of healthcare workers found in the current survey. All of the positions requiring a bachelor's degree, save two, are in the Healthcare Practitioners & Technical occupational group.

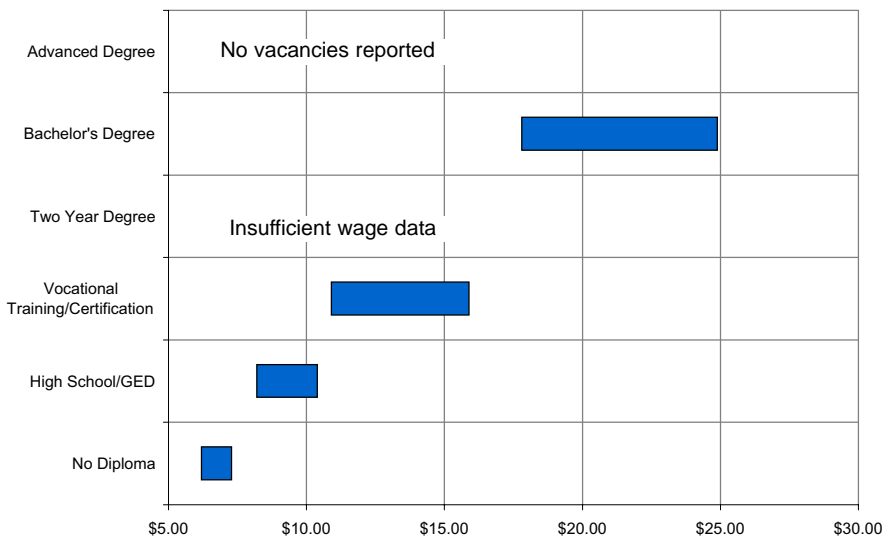
There are actually slightly fewer vacancies in the healthcare occupations this year than last, but the decrease in vacancies in other occupational groups has increased the proportional importance of healthcare in this survey.

Figure 14: Vacancies by Education



Generally, the greater the education required for a position, the higher the wage offered. It is important for people considering whether or not to continue their education to have an idea of how it will affect their earnings. Positions requiring a Bachelor's degrees offered between \$17.80 and \$24.90 an hour in this survey, while a high school diploma or GED commanded on average between \$8.20 and \$10.40 an hour. While obtaining higher levels of education may be expensive and difficult, the difference in pay offers a powerful incentive.

Figure 15: Reported Average Wage Ranges by Education



The occupations most in demand by education category are as follows:

No Diploma

- Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations

High School/GED

- Farming, Fishing & Forestry Occupations

Vocational Training/Certification

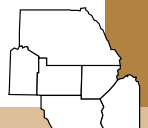
- Healthcare Practitioners & Technical

Two-Year Degree

- Education, Training & Library Occupations

Bachelor's Degree

- Healthcare Practitioners & Technical



Sixty-five percent of the vacancies require experience in a field related to the open position. Sixteen percent require experience in the same occupation as the vacant position. The experience required in this survey is generally higher than in the past two surveys. In the 2001 and 2002 surveys vacancies requiring no experience were most prevalent (56% and 34% respectively).

The proportional shift in the experience category is again due to the large influence of healthcare occupations. All but two of the Healthcare Practitioners & Technical positions require experience in a related field. The decrease in the No Experience Required category from last year is probably due to fewer Food Preparation & Serving related occupations found in the current survey.

Figure 16: Vacancies by Experience

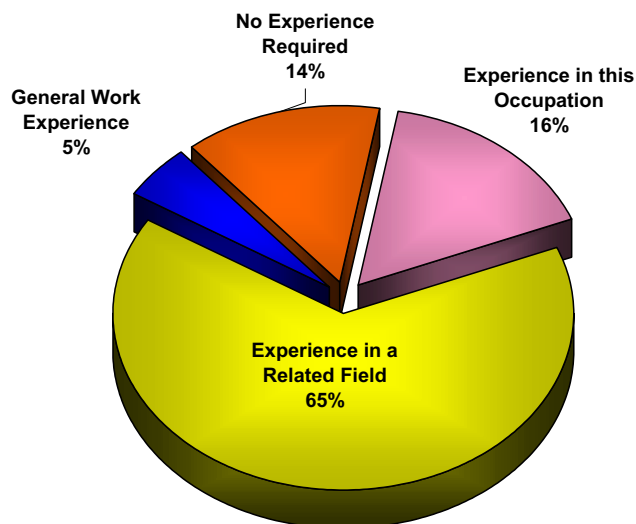
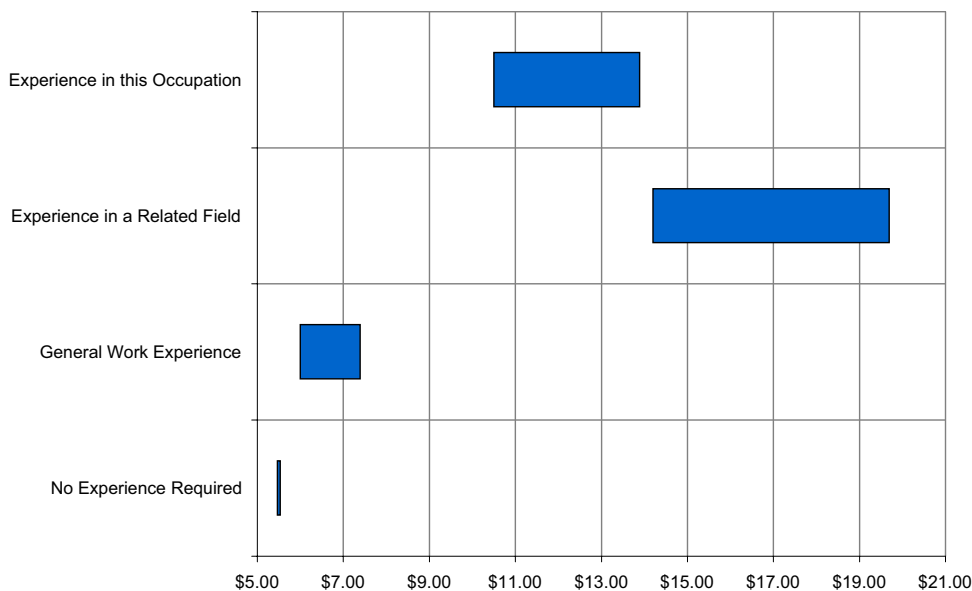


Figure 17: Reported Average Wage Ranges by Experience



Positions requiring higher levels of experience generally pay higher wages. The primary reason for this is that workers with higher levels of experience are often more productive. Also, higher-level positions, such as management, require related experience to be effective. It is typical that individual surveys, however, will include results that differ from general or expected trends. The 2003 San Luis Valley Job Vacancy Survey was conducted during one week, and during that week the wages for various experience levels differed from what is generally the case.

Open positions requiring Experience in a Related Field offer the highest wages in the survey and vacancies with no experience requirements offer the lowest. Experience in This Occupation and General Work Experience fall in the middle.

The occupations most in demand by experience category are as follows:

Experience in this Occupation

- Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations

Experience in a Related Field

- Healthcare Practitioners & Technical

General Work Experience

- Office & Administrative Support Occupations

No Experience Required

- Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations

Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations are most prevalent in both the highest and lowest experience categories. Waiters & Waitresses and Cooks fall into the Experience in this Occupation category and Dishwashers, Waiters & Waitresses, and Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food are found in the No Experience Required category.

Vacancies

Difficulty to Fill and Time Open for Hire

The level of difficulty an employer experiences when filling a vacancy can vary dramatically depending on the nature of the individual vacancy as well as the prevailing labor market conditions. For example, finding a high level executive with the right qualifications is usually more difficult than locating a qualified waiter or waitress. In tight labor markets, such as the one in Colorado during the late 1990s, it may be difficult to fill vacancies no matter what the position. The candidates available to work will also affect the difficulty employers experience when trying to fill vacancies. The availability of candidates suited to fill a vacancy requiring a specific skill set is not always sufficient to meet all of the region's demand. If employers are finding the same positions difficult to fill one survey after another, then local education and training institutions may want to design programs to train candidates to meet that demand. The current nursing shortage, for example, is partially due to too few spaces available in nursing programs in the state.

In addition to asking employers about their perceived difficulty in filling vacant positions, the Job Vacancy Survey also measures the amount of time that employers have been actively recruiting. This information allows the

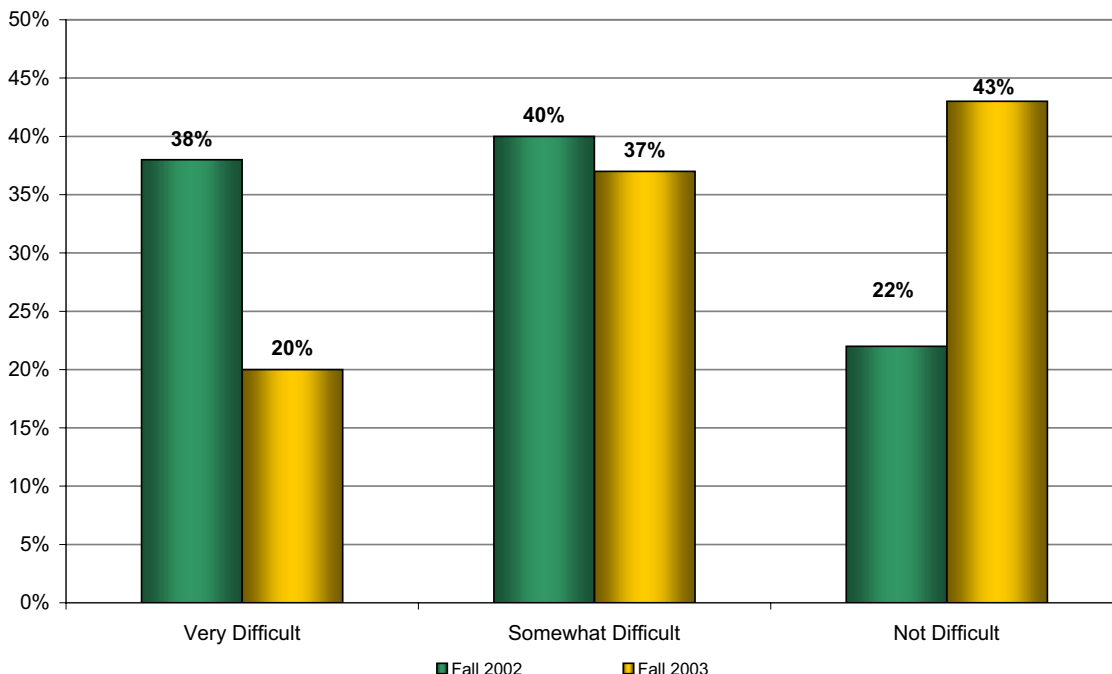
reader to better judge the difficulty of hiring new employees, as opposed to wholly relying on employer perceptions.

Employers are finding it easier to hire qualified workers than in the summer of 2002. In comparing the Summer 2002 Job Vacancy Survey with the Summer 2003 Job Vacancy Survey:

- ◆ The proportion of vacancies reported as very difficult to fill dropped from 38% to 20%.
- ◆ Openings reported as somewhat difficult to fill decreased from 40% to 37%.
- ◆ Vacancies reported as not difficult to fill increased from 22% to 43%.

Over the last 3 years, employers in the state have gradually had an easier time filling their vacancies. While the national and statewide labor market recession has been difficult for job seekers and workers, it has coincided with a large increase in the productivity¹³ of those workers employed and employers have found it much easier to meet their labor needs. The large productivity advances will eventually make workers and job seekers much better off. The excess capacity of workers and equipment from the late 1990's is shrinking and employers will once again

Figure 18: Vacancies by Difficulty to Fill



¹³Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Commerce. "Productivity and Costs" Series, released 12/03/2003. www.bls.gov.



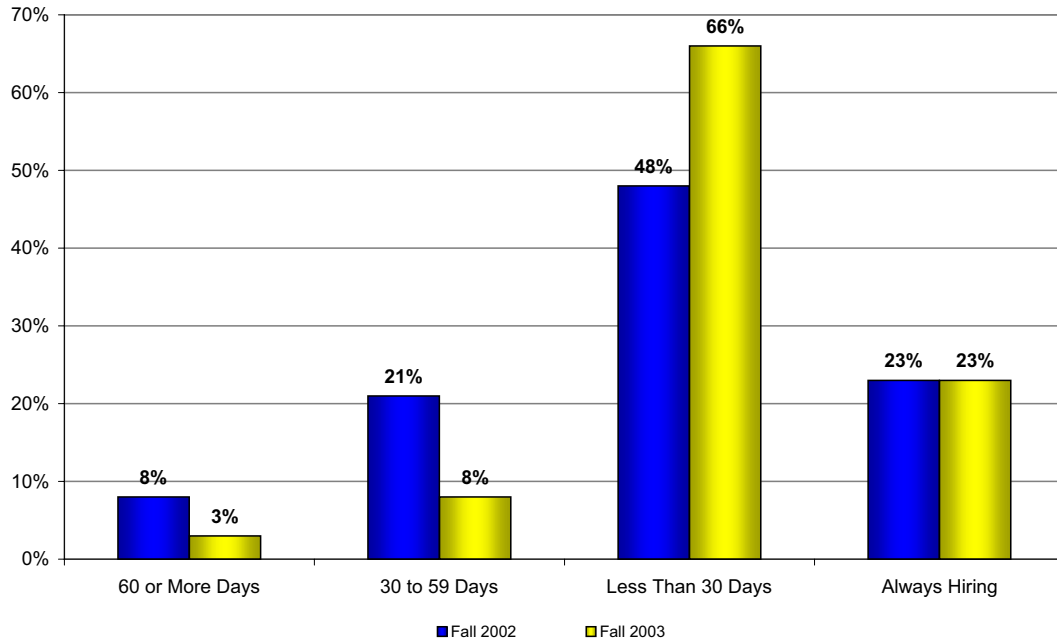
need to hire more workers to meet demand for their products. Workers wages will eventually increase to reflect their increased ability to produce goods and services.

In this survey vacancies have been open for shorter lengths of time than they were a year ago, suggesting that employers are currently finding it much easier to attract qualified candidates:

- ◆ Vacancies open for less than 30 days increased from 48% to 66%.

- ◆ Positions open between 30 and 59 days decreased from 21% to 8%.
- ◆ Vacancies open for 60 days or more dropped from 8% to 3%.
- ◆ Positions for which employers are always hiring again make up 23% of the vacancies.

Figure 19: Vacancies by Time Open for Hire



The most frequently reported occupational groups in each category are:

60 or More Days

- Education, Training & Library occupations

30 to 59 Days

- Management, Healthcare Practitioners & Technical and Healthcare Support occupations

Less Than 30 Days

- Food Preparation & Serving Related occupations

Always Hiring

- Healthcare Practitioners & Technical occupations

Figure 20: Reported Average Wage Ranges by Time Open for Hire



Vacancies

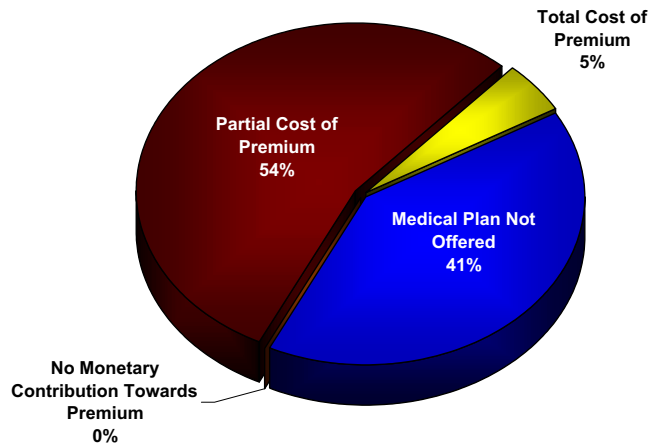
Additional Compensation

Medical Insurance

Employers frequently offer compensation related benefits to recruit qualified candidates. Some of these perks are paid time off, transportation or parking vouchers and subsidized childcare. One of the most important benefits offered to employees is medical insurance via an employer group plan. Employers may pay all, part of or none of the monthly insurance premium. How can an employer offer medical insurance and not pay for it? While this scenario is uncommon, employers can and do offer employees the opportunity to participate in their group medical insurance plans even though they do not contribute to the premium.

For 59% percent of the vacancies, employers offer medical insurance. This is roughly the same percentage as a year ago. When medical insurance is offered, employers contribute a partial cost of the premium the vast majority of the time. No employers offered to include employees in their group plan without contributing to the premium; 54% included partial cost of the premium and 5% included payment of the entire insurance premium.

Figure 21: Employers' Contribution to Medical Insurance



Sign-On Bonus

Employers did not offer sign-on bonuses for any of the vacancies in the survey. Over the last three years the frequency of sign-on bonuses in the labor market has

dropped significantly. As hiring activity increases, it is likely that the number of sign-on bonuses offered will rise.



Occupations

The information reported in the Job Vacancy Survey is partly intended to provide job seekers and employers with useful and current information to help them make informed decisions about job hunting and hiring. Estimating the number of overall vacancies in a region and breaking those numbers down by categories such as JVS sector and employer size provides a useful overview of the job market, but when it comes down to looking for a job, the more detailed the information the better. Reporting vacancies at the individual occupation level is the most detailed information the survey can provide without breaking confidentiality with participating employers.

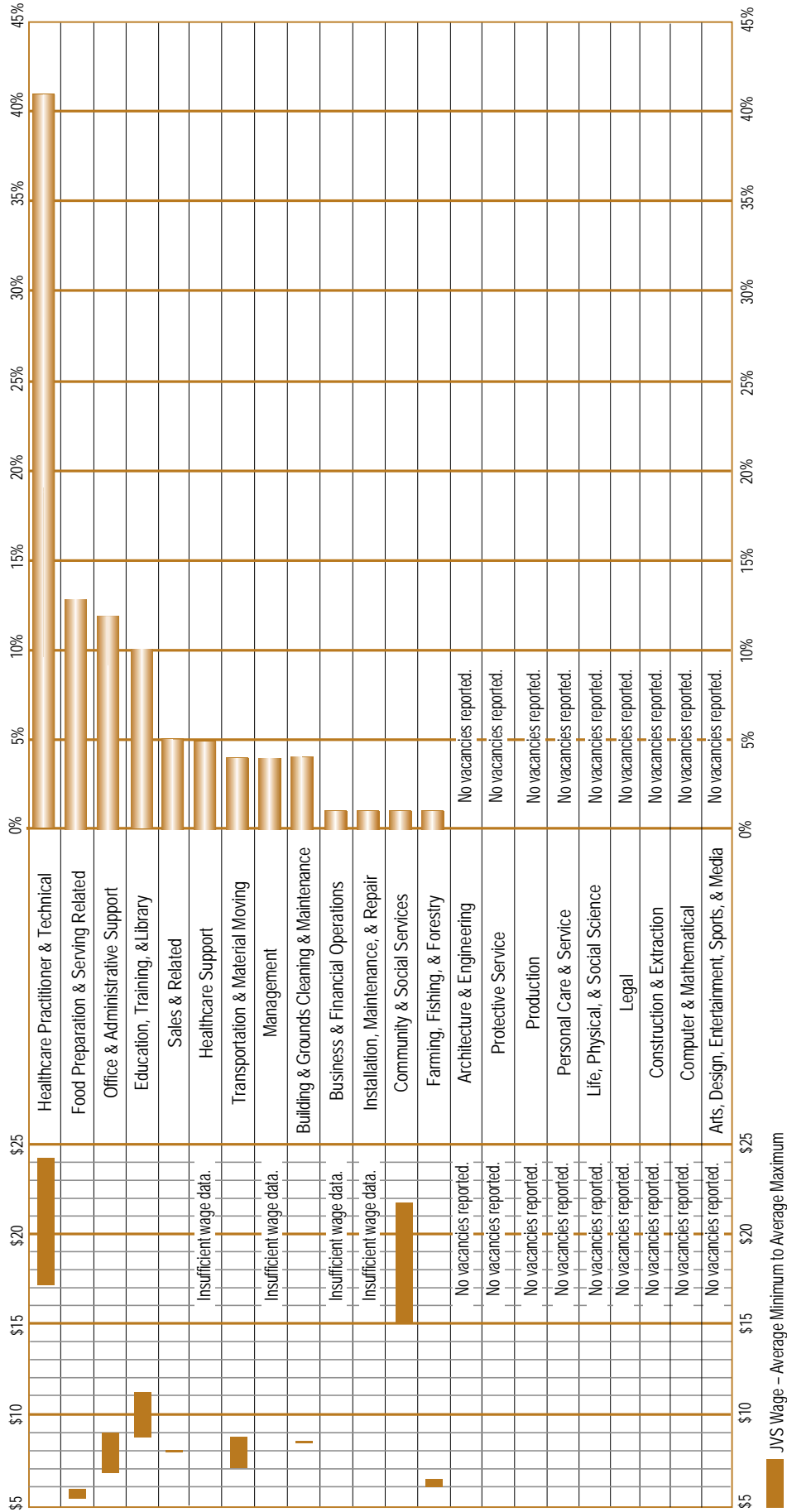
To facilitate comparisons between the results of this survey and other sources of employment statistics, all jobs reported are assigned a Standard Occupational

Classification (SOC) code from the *2000 Standard Occupational Classification Manual*.

The Healthcare Practitioners & Technical major occupational group dominates the 2003 San Luis Valley Job Vacancy Survey. If Healthcare Support Occupations are included, more than 45% of the vacancies found in the survey are in the healthcare field. Not only are these occupations in demand, but they also pay the highest average wages in the survey. On average, positions in the Healthcare Practitioners & Technical group offer between \$17.10 and \$24.20 an hour.

Food preparation & Serving Related occupations as well as Office & Administrative occupations are also in demand. Both of these occupations, however, offer wages on the lower end of what was found in the survey.

Figure 22: Vacancies and Reported Average Wage Ranges by Major Occupational Groups



Occupational Estimates

Tables 1 and 2 contain a list of all the detailed SOC job titles that were assigned to vacancies reported in this survey. Because a census of large employers and Government agencies is conducted, the list contains titles for nearly all of the vacancies available at the time of the survey for those employers. Almost one-third of all small to mid-size employers were contacted for the random sample, so the list also includes occupations reported by those employers. Given the large size of the random sample collected, the list of occupations should be fairly comprehensive; however it is not exhaustive. Most likely, if a different random sample had been drawn there would be some differences in the job titles reported, but there would also be many of the same.

Estimated Vacancies

Because nearly all large employers and Government agencies are contacted, the number of vacancies by occupation for those groups is not estimated; it is an actual accounting of the vacancies. Those vacancies reported by small to mid-size employers are then added to the others as well as additional estimated vacancies. The additional estimated vacancies are based on the assumption that the vacancies by occupation in the region are distributed exactly like the filled positions in the region at the major occupational group level. Estimated vacancies by major occupational group are then distributed among the specific occupations reported in the survey.

Vacancies Found

The number of vacancies by occupation reported in the survey.

Average JVS Wage

Average wages found in the survey are reported for each occupation. Reported averages are based solely on information provided by employers responding to this survey and do not reflect information from other sources or wages paid for currently filled positions.

Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Wage Data

Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) wage data are provided for each occupation. OES data are based on a national survey of employers and refer to filled positions, not vacancies. The data provided here are reported for the San Luis Valley Region when available and statewide otherwise. Data were collected in 2000 and 2001 and aged to 2002 using the Employment Cost Index (ECI). A complete description of the OES survey is available on the Internet at: <http://www.bls.gov/>.

While the Job Vacancy Survey average wages reflect what is being offered to fill vacancies at the time of the survey, OES wage data reflect what is being paid to already filled positions. Together, these data provide employers and job seekers with a good indication of the compensation available in the current job market.

Table 1: Occupations with Four or More Estimated Vacancies

Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2002)												
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	Vacancies		Average JVS Wage	Average Wages			Percentile Distribution				
		Estimated	Found		Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
29-1111	Registered Nurses	29	28	\$21.50	\$15.31	\$19.75	\$21.96	\$14.80	\$16.70	\$19.73	\$22.01	\$23.55
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	9	5	\$7.70	\$7.25	\$9.98	\$11.34	\$6.86	\$7.74	\$9.60	\$12.40	\$13.65
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	5	5	\$5.20	\$6.15	\$7.56	\$8.27	\$5.74	\$6.18	\$6.93	\$9.32	\$10.58
31-1012	Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	5	4	†	\$8.04	\$9.14	\$9.69	\$7.60	\$8.05	\$8.80	\$10.12	\$11.70
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4	2	†	\$6.10	\$6.60	\$6.85	\$5.62	\$5.93	\$6.44	\$6.98	\$8.26
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	4	2	\$9.80	\$9.56	\$15.67	\$18.72	\$9.27	\$10.72	\$12.91	\$15.88	\$30.95

† Insufficient Wage Data Available

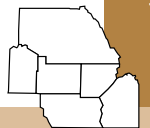


Table 2: Occupations with Fewer than Four Estimated Vacancies

Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2002)											
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	Average Wages			Percentile Distribution						
		Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th		
53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	\$10.52	\$11.85	\$12.52	\$9.81	\$11.05	\$11.94	\$12.97	\$13.59		
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	\$7.09	\$8.48	\$9.18	\$6.68	\$7.38	\$8.19	\$9.38	\$11.29		
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	\$5.97	\$7.25	\$7.88	\$5.47	\$5.78	\$6.29	\$6.82	\$8.31		
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$11.42	\$15.03	\$16.84	\$8.79	\$14.05	\$15.64	\$17.08	\$19.68		
* 43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	\$7.45	\$9.28	\$10.20	\$7.09	\$8.09	\$9.38	\$10.54	\$11.31		
43-6014	Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	\$7.62	\$10.25	\$11.57	\$7.24	\$7.86	\$9.22	\$11.91	\$15.74		
45-2041	Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products	\$6.10	\$6.56	\$6.78	\$5.67	\$5.99	\$6.51	\$7.14	\$8.13		
* 35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	\$7.20	\$9.40	\$10.49	\$6.69	\$7.77	\$9.34	\$10.83	\$12.65		
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	\$16.80	\$29.10	\$35.25	\$14.37	\$20.22	\$27.30	\$33.79	\$45.33		
11-9199	Managers, All Other	\$9.09	\$23.52	\$30.74	\$6.16	\$13.25	\$24.89	\$32.93	\$36.94		
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education	\$27,686	\$35,214	\$38,979	\$26,367	\$29,583	\$34,361	\$39,191	\$46,454		
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	\$13,109	\$16,450	\$18,120	\$12,429	\$13,547	\$15,718	\$19,038	\$22,637		
29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	\$9.34	\$11.37	\$12.37	\$8.59	\$9.83	\$11.04	\$12.96	\$14.93		
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	\$6.14	\$8.91	\$10.30	\$5.84	\$6.48	\$9.25	\$11.11	\$12.78		
41-2011	Cashiers	\$6.19	\$8.69	\$9.93	\$5.83	\$6.30	\$7.08	\$9.78	\$16.05		
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	\$6.19	\$8.78	\$10.08	\$5.95	\$6.62	\$7.82	\$9.18	\$13.44		
* 13-1071	Employment, Recruitment, and Placement Specialists	\$14.13	\$19.81	\$22.65	\$13.04	\$15.32	\$17.71	\$22.28	\$28.49		
* 29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	\$14.21	\$19.18	\$21.67	\$13.35	\$15.86	\$19.16	\$22.66	\$26.25		
* 29-1122	Occupational Therapists	\$18.41	\$23.96	\$26.73	\$17.30	\$20.20	\$23.78	\$26.88	\$30.69		
* 35-9021	Dishwashers	\$6.10	\$7.51	\$8.22	\$5.89	\$6.60	\$7.56	\$8.41	\$9.13		
* 11-9051	Food Service Managers	\$11.35	\$18.63	\$22.27	\$10.53	\$12.71	\$16.50	\$20.93	\$27.67		
21-1022	Medical and Public Health Social Workers	\$10.45	\$12.44	\$13.45	\$8.71	\$11.95	\$13.00	\$14.05	\$14.64		
* 25-1121	Art, Drama, and Music Teachers, Postsecondary	\$32,758	\$51,659	\$61,114	\$30,433	\$38,716	\$49,832	\$62,069	\$75,895		

Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2002)										
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	Average Wages			Percentile Distribution					
		Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th	
25-4031	Library Technicians	\$6.31	\$7.10	\$7.49	\$6.01	\$6.55	\$7.20	\$7.96	\$8.49	
29-1123	Physical Therapists	\$16.28	\$20.23	\$22.21	\$14.26	\$18.83	\$20.81	\$22.72	\$26.15	
* 29-2054	Respiratory Therapy Technicians	\$8.95	\$13.88	\$16.35	\$7.91	\$10.46	\$14.70	\$17.02	\$19.29	
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$6.80	\$8.98	\$10.08	\$6.31	\$7.26	\$8.38	\$10.26	\$11.61	
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	\$8.77	\$11.22	\$12.43	\$8.05	\$9.22	\$10.61	\$12.67	\$15.52	
* 43-6013	Medical Secretaries	\$9.53	\$11.84	\$13.00	\$9.05	\$9.96	\$11.39	\$13.54	\$15.93	
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	\$6.28	\$8.71	\$9.92	\$6.03	\$6.76	\$8.40	\$10.32	\$12.39	
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$6.06	\$6.96	\$7.42	\$5.62	\$6.00	\$6.61	\$7.64	\$9.31	

* OES wages reported for Colorado statewide

† Insufficient Wage Data Available



Sector Briefs

Government JVS Sector

With 26% of the employment in the San Luis Valley, Government is the largest employer in the region. Typically Government makes up a large proportion of employment in less populated rural areas and a smaller proportion of employment in densely populated metropolitan areas. The Denver Metropolitan Region for instance employs 14% of its labor force in government, despite being the state capital and headquarters to almost all state and federal agencies in the state. Government must provide an adequate level of core services such as education and police protection in every part of the state regardless of population. Although there are less firemen, policemen, teachers and city administrators in rural areas, there are more of these workers for each member of the community.

The Government JVS Sector is made up of local, state and federal government entities. Federal agency employment makes up 9% of government employment in the region, state agencies make up 21% and local government entities make up 70% of the employment. The two largest government employers in the region are Alamosa School District and Adams State College.

While the Government JVS Sector employs the most people in the San Luis Valley, it has the second lowest

number of vacancies. Government hiring activity significantly lags the private sector in responding to economic expansions and contractions. Government's revenue source, taxes, are much more stable than private sector revenues such as crop prices, construction or restaurant patronage. Government is a stabilizing force in the labor market. When economic times are good, government does not increase its employment as much as private sector employers, but when economic times are bad government does not decrease hiring as much either. While Colorado's labor market and level of production of goods and services will finish 2003 in better shape than 2002, government budgets and hiring activity are still reflecting lower 2002 tax revenues.

Eight vacancies are estimated to be open in the Government JVS Sector in the 2003 survey. The average wage offered for vacant positions is \$12.70 an hour, the second highest among JVS Sectors.

Most of the government vacancies found in the survey were for Education, Training and Library occupations. These positions tend to require higher levels of education and experience and almost all of them offer medical insurance benefits.

How to Use This Report

With the analysis of labor market conditions, many questions regarding labor demand and supply, as well as labor skills requirements, often arise...

- ◆How many job openings are there?
- ◆What industries are hiring?

- ◆What skills are employers seeking?
- ◆Are employers having difficulty filling positions?

The answers to these and similar questions are important in the decision-making processes of employers, employees, job seekers, trainers, and planning officials.

While Labor Market Information (LMI) provides data on the local labor force supply, the Job Vacancy Survey complements this by providing information about the demand for labor and offers a more complete picture of local labor markets.

Employers

The Job Vacancy Survey measures the area's current vacancies along with education and experience requirements. This report can serve as a strategic planning tool in the following areas:

Employee Recruitment—

If findings indicate that employers have had positions open for a significant period of time, and compensation is sufficient, one might deduce a shortage of applicants in the area. Therefore, recruitment efforts could

be focused outside of the region in areas where the necessary skills are more likely to be found.

Compensation and Benefits Planning—

The Job Vacancy Survey provides wages offered for surveyed job openings. Tables in this report also detail current wages by occupation from Occupational Employment Statistics data. Together these pieces of information can be used to develop wage guidelines for compensation practices.

New Site Selection—

Employers considering relocating or expanding to the area can study the survey and determine how easily the company's employment needs will be met by reviewing current vacancies. Companies need a sufficient, qualified labor pool to operate. High labor demand within a particular JVS sector segment along with indications of difficulty filling these positions should caution a firm requiring a similar labor profile.

Job Seekers

The Job Vacancy Survey provides job seekers with a broad view of which industries are hiring, which occupations are in demand along with currently offered salaries and benefits, and what education and experience levels are required. This report is a roadmap that can be used to determine where the best paying jobs are

given an individual's skills and level of education.

Job seekers can also use Labor Market Information's occupational projections, which provide a long-term outlook of occupational demand, along with the survey, which illustrates the current level of

demand in the local job market to determine how current employment opportunities can contribute to their long-term career goals. Career minded individuals can tailor education, training, and work-experience to fit future high-demand positions.

Workforce Centers

The Job Vacancy Survey is designed to aid Colorado's Workforce Centers and other job placement organizations. As Workforce Centers serve job seekers and employers, the report acts as a handy reference for information on current vacancies, position requirements, wages and benefits offered, seasonal employment trends, and dominant regional industries. Workforce Center representatives can increase placement success by directing job seekers toward high demand occupations and

industries. The Workforce Research and Analysis survey unit cooperates with regional Workforce Centers to list reported vacancies given the approval of the reporting businesses.

While this report is a picture of the area's current employment needs and historical seasonal patterns, other Labor Market Information products provide projections of occupational growth and anticipated openings. These can be accessed at

www.coworkforce.com/lmi/oeo/oeo.htm. Projections highlight growing as well as declining occupations. Public officials, educational institutions, and Government agencies can use this survey information to effectively apply resources to education, training, and job placement programs. Investments in the workforce can be directed toward occupations or industries that continuously contribute to the local economy or to those where there is a constant need for workers.

Economic Developers

Economic development professionals can use the Job Vacancy Survey to track the labor situation in key industries and evaluate the area's labor needs. The survey results help determine where bottle-

necks may occur should current vacancies persist. Economic developers can also generate a comprehensive picture of the region by determining where labor demand stands today, as identified by the survey, and

where the local market is trending using Labor Market Information's employment projections.



Caveats

The Job Vacancy Survey uses sampling methods to estimate overall job vacancies for regions. As such, readers should be mindful of sampling issues.

Sampling error results from the Job Vacancy Survey producing estimates from one particular sample, rather than examining the entire population. Different samples will likely result in different estimates for the population, thus we report the overall estimate with a confidence interval; *i.e.*, the range of values within which the actual sample derived vacancy estimate is likely to fall 95% of the time.

Non-sampling error occurs primarily from reporting, translating data to standard terms, and incorrect information about firms in our sample frame. Some examples

include placing reported vacancies in the wrong occupational codes, inadequate data collection in a JVS sector due to non-response, and estimating errors. The majority of non-sampling errors are corrected in the Job Vacancy Survey's extensive review and validation process that takes place before estimates are published.

The study provides estimates of job openings for a point-in-time and does not attempt to project the level of vacancies into the future. Readers should be aware that events having occurred since the time period analyzed such as plant closings or the migration of people in and out of the area might significantly affect the vacancy status of some occupations. Job openings are very dynamic—current openings are

being filled, new positions are being created, and some roles are being phased-out.

Occupational demand is subject to seasonal changes and is affected by business cycles. For example, the reader would want to be aware that a decrease in vacancies for construction workers from April to November could represent seasonal variations, not necessarily a long-term decrease in the demand for such workers. When several years of survey data have been collected, patterns that more accurately reflect changing labor market conditions may be identified. Regional surveys are timed to make these comparisons possible.

Given the caveats, appropriate application by the user is a key element in this report being a useful tool for job vacancy analysis.

Methodology

The Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) conducted by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment involves the collection, processing, and dissemination of regional job vacancies and their characteristics. The survey design allows for estimation of a job vacancy rate and the total job vacancies within a region by

industry and size of firm. Additional data related to these vacancies is informative of the occupations for which they are reported, but is not indicative of overall vacancy characteristics in the regional *universe*.

The number of vacancies—used to calculate the job vacancy rate—is an important

measure of the unmet demand for labor. With this statistic, it is possible to paint a more complete picture of the regional labor market than by looking solely at the unemployment rate, a measure of the excess supply of labor.

Survey Design

The Job Vacancy Survey was designed to accurately estimate the number of job vacancies for firms employing five or more people. The secondary purpose of the survey is to obtain and report significant vacancy characteristics.

The survey estimates vacancies based on the ratio of vacancies to employment size in each stratification. It attempts to determine how many positions in a region are filled and unfilled. A filled position is an employee and an unfilled position is a job vacancy. Because positions are not independent of one another or evenly dispersed, we collect this information in naturally occurring clusters, *i.e.* firms. Firms are

asked how many employees they have and how many positions they are actively recruiting. In each size and industry stratification a ratio of vacancies to employment is calculated based on the sampled firms. That ratio is then applied to the total number of employees in that stratification to obtain the estimated number of vacancies in that stratification. The total number of vacancies for a region is the sum of each stratification's estimated vacancies.

Stratifications containing small and medium sized private employers are randomly sampled. In order to report vacancy characteristics such as education and experience requirements demanded, the survey

must contact more employers than would be necessary if the survey only estimated the total number of vacancies. For this reason all of the large employers and government agencies are contacted in the region. These employers provide the most cost effective means of obtaining large amounts of vacancy information. Approximately 35% of the employment in the region is found in large and government employers that make up less than 1% of the total number of employers. Conducting a census of these entities allows us to cover a large portion of the region's employment while contacting relatively few entities.

Survey Sample

The San Luis Valley survey was conducted from August 25 through August 27, 2003. For the purpose of this report, all large employers, government entities and small to mid-size private employers with five or more employees are referred to as the sample frame. Firms with fewer than five employees make up a very large portion of all employers in the region, but a small proportion of the total employment. Employment in the sample frame accounts for 80% of the region's total employment.

The Job Vacancy Survey separates employers into either government or private industry. Private firms are then split into large and small to mid-size categories. Firms with at least 75 employees are considered large employers. Attempts are made to contact all government agencies and large firms in the sample frame. The

remaining small to mid-size firms are split into JVS industry sectors.

The number of firms surveyed in each sector varies according to the number of employees and employers in the sector. In most JVS sectors half of all employers are contacted up to 200 employers. In JVS sectors with less than 1,000 employees, efforts are made to capture at least 500 employees in the sample. If less than 500 employees work in a sector then all employers are contacted. This sampling method insures that all the vacancy estimates are based on a sufficiently large sample size.

Government makes up almost 28% of the employment in the sample frame, while private industry employers make up the remaining 72%. Large firms account for 20% of private industry employment in the sample frame. Firms employing from five to

74 individuals are considered small to mid-size employers, and account for the remaining 80% of private industry employment.

The margin of error for the overall vacancy estimate is plus or minus 8% or 10 vacancies at a .95 certainty level. In other words, in 95 out of 100 samples taken, the actual number of vacancies in the region will be between 112 and 132 in the survey period. Labor Market Information is confident that the estimates in this survey are accurate and that the survey was conducted according to recognized survey research standards.

The survey response rate is 80%. This measures the quality of the survey database, or the success experienced in contacting eligible employers. The cooperation rate is 99% and measures the success in obtaining data once an employer is contacted.

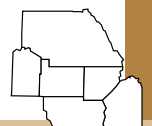
JVS Sectors

The new North American Industry Classification System increases the number of major groups to 20 from the Standard Industrial Classification System. The new coding system better reflects today's service based economy and allows comparison of industries in the United States, Mexico and Canada.

In the San Luis Valley Region, the 20 NAICS sectors have been combined into six JVS sectors. These groupings are based on the NAICS sectors, but are somewhat unique to the Job Vacancy Survey. The new groupings allow the Job Vacancy Survey to study local Colorado labor markets in a more relevant and meaningful way.

For more information on the North American Industry Classification System see Page 28.

<i>San Luis Valley Region JVS Sectors</i>	<i>include</i> →	<i>NAICS Sectors</i>
Goods-Producing		Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting Mining Construction Manufacturing
Trade, Transportation, Utilities & Other Services		Utilities Wholesale Trade Retail Trade Transportation & Warehousing Other Services (except Public Administration)
Information, Financial Activities & Professional & Business Services		Information Finance & Insurance Real Estate & Rental & Leasing Professional, Scientific & Technical Services Management of Companies & Enterprises Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services
Education & Health Services		Educational Services Health Care & Social Assistance
Leisure & Hospitality		Accommodation & Food Services Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
Government		Public Administration



Data Collection

Data for the Job Vacancy Survey are collected using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) process. While this system of data collection has been in use in the private sector for several years, Colorado is the first state in the nation to pioneer the use of CATI data collection for the Job Vacancy Survey.

Professional interviewers, trained in economic data collection processes, gather

the information from a call center located in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. This interview process results in increased control over the survey process, better accuracy, and dependable results.

Employers are asked if they have job vacancies or open positions which they are actively seeking to fill. Those that are actively hiring are then asked to provide more detail about each position—compensation offered,

levels of education and experience required, and the employer's perceived difficulty in filling the vacancy along with the number of days the position has been opened. Employers are also asked if sign-on bonuses and health insurance coverage are offered for these positions. These data are collected in addition to the minimum and maximum wages in order to describe more fully the compensation offered.

Occupational Coding

The job title, duties, education and experience requirements reported by employers are used to code vacancies in accordance with the latest release of the Standard Occupational Classification system.

Data Editing

Once data collection is complete, measures are taken to prepare the data for analysis. To ensure accuracy, follow-up phone calls are made when employer responses need clarification.

Wage Conversion

Standard conversions are used to translate salaries into hourly wages: 2,080 hours for annual, 173.3 hours for monthly.

All wages reported below the federal minimum are adjusted to that amount. Currently, the federal minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour. Where only a single wage figure is reported, that wage is used as both the minimum and maximum wage for that job vacancy.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in cooperation with agencies from Mexico and Canada has developed an industry classification system called the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS pronounced *nakes*) that replaced the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. While work has been underway since 1993, OMB formally adopted NAICS on January 16, 2001.

History of Process

The Office of Management and Budget established the Economic Classification Policy Committee in 1992 to pursue a fresh slate examination of economic classifications for statistical purposes¹. Since 1939 the U.S. has been using the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. While SIC had undergone periodic revisions, the last one in 1987, rapid changes in the U.S. and world economies brought SIC under increased scrutiny. In response to the need for a classification system that better reflected the dynamic nature of economies, OMB established the Economic Classification Policy Committee². Government agencies from the United States, Mexico and Canada³ were tasked with the development

of a system that accounted for rapid changes in the U.S and world economies.

Industrial Classification vs. Occupational Classification

NAICS is a system concerned with classifying organizations into different industries; as opposed to classification at the occupational level. The newly revised Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system classifies occupations by job duties. Occupations specific to certain industries may be found in a different industry category because of the shift to NAICS, yet the Standard Occupational Classification Code remains the same. Systems like O*NET and other classification systems based on SOC are not subject to changes because of the shift to NAICS. Professionals who use information at the occupational level will not notice changes in job categories as a result of the shift to NAICS, unless they are looking at occupations by industry.

Benefits

Comparable—NAICS is organized in such a way so as to allow direct comparison of economic data with our NAFTA trading partners Canada and Mexico.

Relevant—NAICS recognizes hundreds of new businesses in the economy with 20 broad industry sectors, up from SIC's 10. Some new industry categories include an Information sector and a Health Care & Social Assistance sector formerly lumped into Services under SIC.

Consistent—NAICS classifies an organization based on how it produces something, not simply what it produces. Businesses that use identical or similar technologies and processes to produce something will be grouped together. For example, software creation falls under the new Information sector, while software duplication falls under Manufacturing. Under SIC

¹Executive Office of the President Office of Management and Budget. *North American Industry Classification System*. White Plains, MD: Bernan and U.S. Department of Commerce, 2002

²ECPC is chaired by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, with representatives from the Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

³Specifically, Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI) and Statistics Canada

both enterprises were grouped under the same major industry sector, because both were engaged in production of software.

Adaptable—Regular updates, which are scheduled in five-year intervals, account for emerging industries not currently known.

Things to Consider

The shift to NAICS means a break in historical time series. SIC and NAICS industry groupings are not directly comparable since the code changes for NAICS have split some SIC groups.

New Industries Reflected in NAICS

- ◆ NAICS heralds the creation of a new Information sector that pulls businesses

from communications, publishing, motion picture and sound recording and online services to recognize an information-based economy.

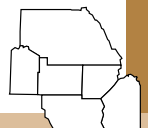
- ◆ Formerly, under SIC, corporate headquarters were not distinguished from the industry category of the product or service they produced. Now corporate headquarters are recognized in the new Management sector.
- ◆ Manufacturing is restructured to account for high-tech industries.
- ◆ An increase in the amount of detail overall accompanies the shift to NAICS

including a further breakdown of SIC's Services sector into nine new sectors.

- ◆ Eating and drinking places move out of Retail Trade into a new category called Accommodation & Food Services.
- ◆ The difference between Retail and Wholesale is now based on how each store conducts business. For example, many computer stores are reclassified from Wholesale to Retail.

Comparison of NAICS and SIC Major Industry Groups	
SIC Standard Industrial Classification	NAICS North American Industry Classification System
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
Mining	Mining
Construction	Construction
Manufacturing	Manufacturing
Transportation, Communications & Public Utilities	Utilities Transportation & Warehousing
Wholesale Trade	Wholesale Trade
Retail Trade	Retail Trade Accommodation & Food Services
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	Finance & Insurance Real Estate & Rental & Leasing
Services	Information Professional, Scientific & Technical Services Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services Educational Services Health Care & Social Assistance Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation Other Services (except Public Administration)
Public Administration (parts of all divisions)	Public Administration Management of Companies & Enterprises

U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce



Glossary

These definitions are meant to clarify data gathered for the Job Vacancy Survey. For other data sources referenced in the document, please see that source for a complete definition.

Average Maximum Wage

An average maximum wage is calculated by summing the maximum wages offered for all vacancies in a given category and then dividing by the number of vacancies in that category.

Average Minimum Wage

An average minimum wage is calculated by summing the minimum wages offered for all vacancies in a given category and then dividing by the number of vacancies in that category.

Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)

A structured system of data collection by telephone that speeds up the collection and editing of such data.

Cooperation Rate

The number of completed interviews divided by the number of all units surveyed that are eligible. Measures the effectiveness of surveyors in gaining information once an eligible employer is contacted.

Educational Attainment

The highest diploma or degree, or level of work towards a diploma or degree, an individual has completed. In this survey, an individual recorded in the bachelor's degree category has completed the degree.

Effective Response Rate

The number of completed interviews divided by the sum of all units surveyed that are eligible as well as those with unknown eligibility. This is a measure of how well the survey obtains completed interviews from employers in the sample.

Employed Persons (Employment)

Persons 16 years and over in the civilian non-institutional population who, during the reference period

- a) did any work at all (at least one hour) as paid employees, worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a member of the family, and
- b) all those who were not working but who had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, bad weather, childcare problems, maternity or paternity leave, labor-management dispute, job training, or other family or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid for the time off or were seeking other jobs.

Employer

A person or establishment that employs one or more people for wages or salary.

Full-time Employee

Employees who usually work 35 hours per week or more.

Goods Producing Industries (NAICS)

Includes manufacturing, construction, mining, and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting.

Industry

A group of establishments that use similar processes and technologies to produce goods and services. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) groups establishments using closely similar technologies into industries.

Job Seeker

A person actively looking for employment or researching career options.

Job Vacancy

A specific position of employment at an establishment with the condition that there is work available for the position and the employer is actively recruiting for the position.

Job Vacancy Rate

The estimated number of vacancies divided by the sum of current employment and estimated vacancies.

Labor Force

The labor force includes all persons classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the definitions contained in this glossary.

Medical Insurance

Refers to any insurance plan that includes coverage for medical and related care.

Medical Insurance Premium

Payments that a holder of an insurance policy pays in order to keep his/her policy current.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

The successor to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system; this system of classifying business establishments is used by the United States, Canada and Mexico. See full description within *Appendix*.

Not Seasonally Adjusted

This term is used to describe data series not subject to the seasonal adjustment process. In other words, the effects of regular, or seasonal, patterns have not been removed from these series.

Occupation

Represents a set of activities and skills for which an employee is paid to perform. Employees that perform essentially the same tasks are grouped into the same occupation whether or not they are in the same industry. Some occupations are concentrated in a few particular industries, other occupations are found in most or all industries.

Part-time Employee

An employee who usually works between one and 34 hours per week.

Percentile Wage Estimate

Shows what percentage of workers in an occupation earn less than a given wage and what percentage earn more. For example, a 25th percentile wage of \$15.00 indicates that 25% of workers (in a given occupation in a given area) earn at or less than \$15.00; therefore 75% of workers earn at or more than \$15.00.

Permanent Employment

A vacancy is classified as a permanent position if the employee is hired to be employed for more than six months.

Sample

A subset of the population selected for interview as a representative subset of the sample frame.

Sample Frame

A listing of all units in a population. For this report the sample frame includes employers with five or more employees; government entities are drawn from ES-202 while private companies come from the ALMIS (America's Labor Market Information System) database.

Seasonally Adjusted

Seasonal adjustment removes the effects of events that follow a more or less regular pattern each year. These adjustments make it easier to observe the cyclical and other non-seasonal movements in a data series.

Service Producing Industries (NAICS)

Includes utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; transportation and warehousing; information; finance and insurance; real estate and rental and leasing; professional, scientific, and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; administrative and support and waste management and remediation services; educational services; health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment, and recreation; accommodation and food services; other services (except public administration); public administration.

Sign-on Bonus

An additional financial incentive offered by a firm to a potential new employee to influence his/her decision to agree to employment with that firm. The bonus, for purposes of this survey, is a monetary lump sum.

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System

This system is used by all Federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into one of over 820 occupations according to their occupational definition. To facilitate classification, occupations are combined to form 23 major groups, 96 minor groups, and 449 broad occupations. Each broad occupation includes detailed occupations requiring similar job duties, skills, education, or experience.

Temporary Employment

A vacancy is classified as a temporary position if the employee is hired to be employed for six months or less.

Unemployed Persons

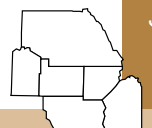
Persons 16 years of age and over who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the four-week period ending with the reference week. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate represents the number unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

Wages

Hourly straight-time wage rate or, for workers not paid on an hourly basis, straight-time earnings divided by the corresponding hours. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime and for work on weekends and holidays, shift differentials, and non-production bonuses such as lump-sum payments provided in lieu of wage increases.



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<http://parks.state.co.us/home>

San Luis Valley Region

WORKFORCE CENTERS IN THE SAN LUIS VALLEY JOB VACANCY SURVEY REGION

Alamosa Workforce Center

1016 W. Ave. #6
Alamosa, CO 81101
Phone: 719-589-5118
Fax: 719-589-6762

Monte Vista Workforce Center

2079 Sherman Avenue
Monte Vista, CO 81144
Phone: 719-852-5171
Fax: 719-852-3817

Antonita Workforce Satellite

307 Main Street
Antonita, CO 81120
Phone: 719-376-2355

Saguache Workforce Satellite

Mountain Valley Schools
403 Pitkin
Saguache, CO 81149
Phone: 719-336-2256

Blanca/Fort Garland Workforce Satellite

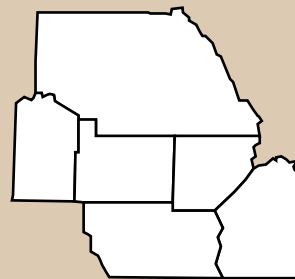
Community Center
17591 Highway 160
Blanca, CO 81123
Phone: 719-379-3450

San Luis Workforce Satellite

Colorado Acequia Association
367 Main Street
San Luis, CO 81152
Phone: 719-672-3005

Center Workforce Satellite

Center Branch Library
400 S. Worth
Center, CO 81125
Phone: 719-754-3156



For a listing of all Colorado Workforce Centers: www.coworkforce.com/EMP/WFCs.asp

Workforce Research & Analysis
Labor Market Information
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

 **CDLE** (303) 318-8890
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & EMPLOYMENT lmi@state.co.us
www.coworkforce.com/lmi.wra/home.htm