

Key Takeaways

Employment

- Ciudad Juárez experienced mixed Year-over-Year (YoY) employment gains across sectors, with a decrease of 5,458 jobs (-1.1%). Employment declines were registered in Ciudad Juárez in the Manufacturing sector, with a decrease of 14,240 jobs (-4.3%).
- El Paso also experienced relatively flat YoY employment gains across sectors. Employment stagnation was observed in the Transportation and Utilities sector, the Manufacturing sector, and the Services sector.

Border Encounters

- Although national border encounters recorded a 9.4% increase from 2022 to 2023, the Southwest border experienced a slight decrease of 1.4%, dropping from approximately 2.57 million to 2.53 million over the same period.
- Most sectors on the Southwest border experienced a decrease in encounters in 2023 when compared to 2022.¹
- Chinese citizens' encounters surged in this period by an astounding 923.0%, while encounters of Ecuadorian citizens increased by 111.0%.

Trade

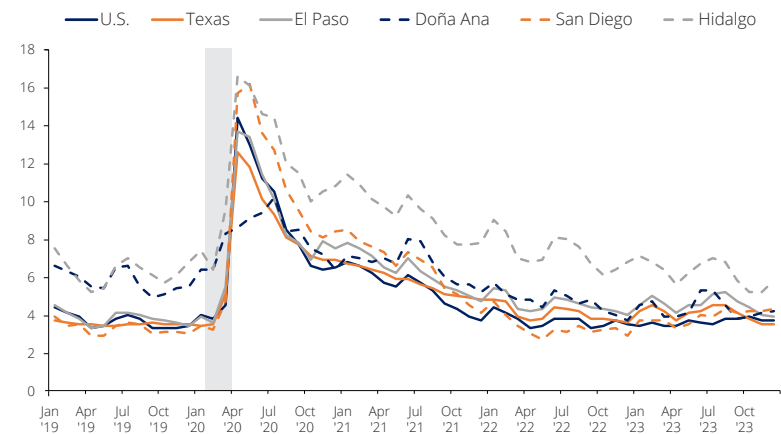
- Total trade at the top ten ports of entry (PoEs) increased by \$20,503 million (3.1%) in 2023 compared to 2022.
- For total trade, among the top ten U.S.-Mexico border PoEs, Laredo and Nogales experienced the largest increase of \$21,309 million (7.1%) and \$3,262 million (11.2%), respectively, in 2023 compared to 2022
- Among these, El Paso and Santa Teresa were the only land ports to record the largest decrease in total trade of \$4,108 million (-15.5%) and \$3,789 million (-12.0%), respectively, during this period.

Upcoming Events



Quick-Glance Indicators

Unemployment Rates for U.S., State, and Selected MSA Economies



Note: Data as of December 2023. Shaded area indicates recession as defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (2020 recession began in February and ended in April).

Source: Hunt Institute calculations using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Employment

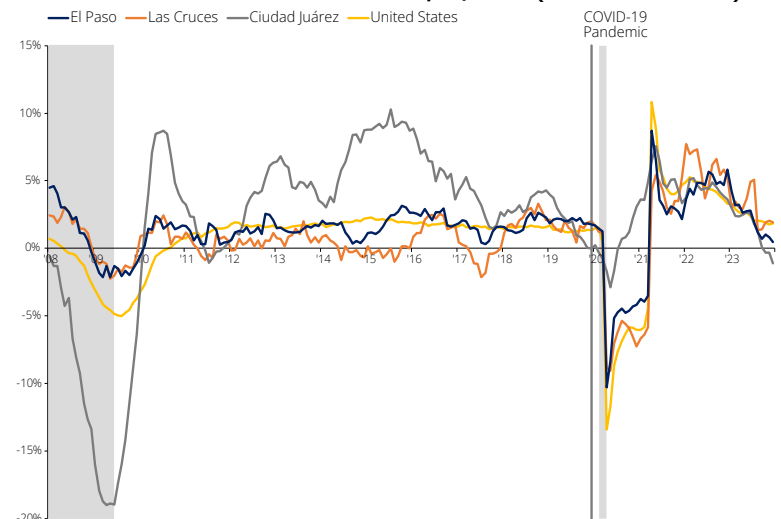
Continued Non-farm Employment

Growth in the Paso del Norte Region

Non-farm employment in December 2023 for the Paso del Norte region exceeded that of December 2022.

December 2023 marked the thirty-third consecutive month of Year-over-Year (YoY) non-farm employment gains in the U.S., El Paso, and Las Cruces. At the national level, YoY gains of 2,884,000 jobs (1.9%) were observed in December 2023. Total non-farm employment also increased in El Paso by 1,600 jobs (0.5%) and Las Cruces by 1,500 jobs (1.9%). Ciudad Juárez experienced a third consecutive YoY non-farm employment loss, with a decrease of 5,458 jobs (-1.1%). The decrease in YoY non-farm employment in the last three periods is due to the massive layoffs in the Manufacturing

Paso del Norte Total Non-Farm Employment (Year-over-Year, %)



Note: Preliminary data for December 2023. Shaded area indicates recession as defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (2020 recession began in February and ended in April).

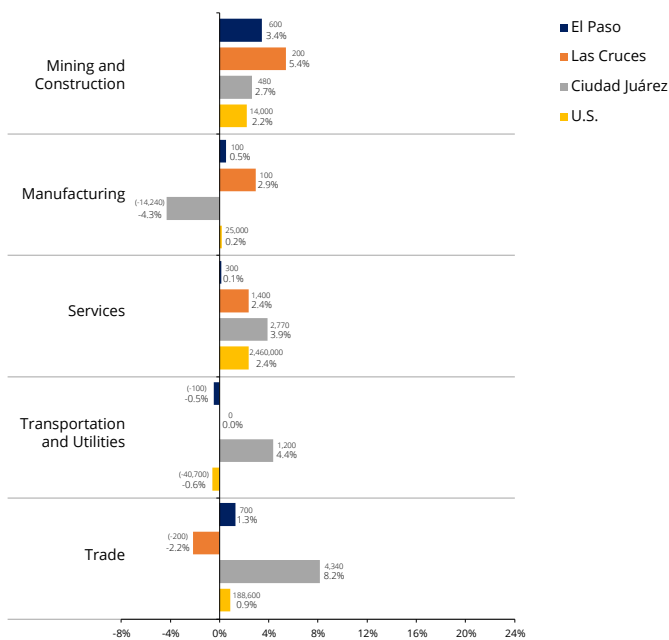
Source: Hunt Institute calculations using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social.

¹ The Southwest sectors include Big Ben, TX, Del Rio, TX, El Centro, TX, El Paso, TX, Laredo, TX, Rio Grande, TX, San Diego, CA, Tucson, AZ and Yuma, AZ.

industry in Ciudad Juárez, with Mexican outlets reporting up to 20,000 jobs lost by the end of 2023.²

The Hunt Institute tracks five non-farm employment sectors in the Paso del Norte region. In El Paso, the following sectors experienced employment growth on a YoY basis from December 2022 to December 2023: Services by 300 jobs (0.1%), Mining and Construction by 600 jobs (3.4%), Trade by 700 jobs (1.3%), and Manufacturing by 100 jobs (0.5%), while the Transportation and Utilities sector shrank by 100 jobs (-0.5%). In Las Cruces, non-farm employment increased in the Services sector by 1,400 jobs (2.4%), Mining and Construction sector by 200 jobs (5.4%), and Manufacturing sector by 100 jobs (2.9%), while the Trade sector lost 200 jobs (-2.2%). The Transportation and Utilities sector remained stagnant.

Paso del Norte Total Non-Farm Employment by Sector, December 2023 (Year-over-Year)



Note: Preliminary data for December 2023. Services excludes Transportation and Utilities, and Trade. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Source: Hunt Institute calculations using data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social.

Border Encounters

Southwest Border Encounters Reverse Trend in 2023

Southwest Border encounters reached over 2.5 million in 2023, a 1.4% decrease compared to 2022.

In 2023, Southwest border encounters totaled over 2.5 million, reflecting a 1.4% decrease compared to the previous year. In contrast, national-level encounters increased by 9.4% over the same period. United States Border Patrol (USBP) encounters comprise Title 8 Apprehensions and Title 42 Expulsions,

² Jorge Meza, "Tienen maquilas un negro panorama: Acumulan 20 mil despidos en tres meses," El Heraldo de Juárez, November 24, 2023. <https://www.elheraldodejuarez.com.mx/local/juarez/tienen-maquilas-un-negro-panorama-acumulan-20-mil-despidos-en-tres-meses-11047321.html>

with demographics including family unit encounters (FMU), unaccompanied children encounters (UC), and single adult encounters (SA).

The Laredo and Yuma sectors recorded the largest relative declines in encounters at 59.2% and 64.6%, respectively. El Paso recorded the least relative decline in encounters at 18.5%. However, San Diego and Tucson are the only sectors with an increase in encounters, with 44.6% and 91.4%, respectively.

In 2023, 57.0% of the encounters at the Southwest border were single adults, 37.6% were family units, and 5.4% were unaccompanied children. The reduction in encounters could indicate potential changes in migration patterns, enforcement efforts, or other factors affecting border crossings.

The data shows a shift in Southwest border encounter patterns by citizenship in 2023. Chinese citizens' encounters surged by an astounding 925.0%, while encounters of Ecuadorian citizens increased by 111.8%. Even though the percentage change in encounters for these nationalities was extremely high, the level of encounters is still lower than that observed for other nationalities.

Meanwhile, encounters from individuals from Venezuela rose by 62.3%, and those from Guatemala and Honduras increased by 20.8% and 18.8%, respectively.

Southwest Border Encounters by Sector

Sector	Jan-Dec 2023			Total		B-A	B-A (Δ%)
	FMU	UC	SA	A Jan-Dec 2022	B Jan-Dec 2023		
Big Bend, TX	645	556	7,832	25,641	9,033	(16,608)	-64.8%
Del Rio, TX	148,785	18,114	235,915	531,896	402,814	(129,082)	-24.3%
El Centro, CA	10,208	1,043	21,278	83,406	32,529	(50,877)	-61.0%
El Paso, TX	87,718	20,272	235,346	421,451	343,336	(78,115)	-18.5%
Laredo, TX	4,745	3,420	31,709	97,738	39,874	(57,864)	-59.2%
Rio Grande, TX	161,506	48,362	113,250	415,206	323,118	(92,088)	-22.2%
San Diego, CA	58,831	5,689	208,183	188,556	272,703	84,147	44.6%
Tucson, AZ	220,079	29,602	255,512	264,002	505,193	241,191	91.4%
Yuma, AZ	40,197	3,316	68,568	316,642	112,081	(204,561)	-64.6%
Southwest Border Total	954,809	137,651	1,447,461	2,576,094	2,539,921	(36,173)	-1.4%
National Total	1,145,591	138,376	2,033,571	3,033,671	3,317,538	283,867	9.4%

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate negative numbers. Numbers are by calendar year; USBP reports by fiscal year that goes from October to September. FMU are family unit encounters. UC are unaccompanied children's encounters and SA are single adult encounters.

Source: Hunt Institute calculations using data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Conversely, there has been a noticeable decrease in encounters with Mexican nationals. Encounters from Mexico decreased by 18.3% and countries like Peru and El Salvador also experienced a significant decline ranging from 21.4% to 27.3%.

Furthermore, encounters from Eastern European countries like Romania and Ukraine have experienced significant reductions, with encounters from Ukraine falling by 90.6%. Moreover, there

have been drastic declines in encounters with individuals from Cuba, Nicaragua, and Haiti, ranging from 87.3% to 94.0%. A detailed summary of Southwestern border encounters by citizenship is presented in the table below.

Southwest Border Encounters by Citizenship

Citizenship	A Jan-Dec 2022	B Jan-Dec 2023	B-A	B-A (Δ%)
Mexico	735,029	600,197	(134,832)	-18.3%
Venezuela	163,820	265,837	102,017	62.3%
Guatemala	210,366	254,171	43,805	20.8%
Honduras	171,122	203,246	32,124	18.8%
Other	78,273	165,821	87,548	111.8%
Colombia	164,867	148,366	(16,501)	-10.0%
Ecuador	57,151	120,571	63,420	111.0%
Peru	75,941	59,699	(16,242)	-21.4%
El Salvador	79,639	57,882	(21,757)	-27.3%
India	23,218	43,693	20,475	88.2%
China	3,626	37,166	33,540	925.0%
Brazil	29,579	28,001	(1,578)	-5.3%
Nicaragua	215,973	22,819	(193,154)	-89.4%
Cuba	306,099	18,319	(287,780)	-94.0%
Turkey	18,197	15,638	(2,559)	-14.1%
Russia	9,739	3,448	(6,291)	-64.6%
Haiti	20,211	2,574	(17,637)	-87.3%
Romania	5,691	1,826	(3,865)	-67.9%
Ukraine	743	70	(673)	-90.6%

Note: Encounters involving Canadian, Philippine, and Burmese citizenship were excluded due to availability of data.

Source: Hunt Institute calculations using data from U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Trade

Total Trade Increased Across Top U.S.-Mexico Border Ports of Entry

Total trade across the top ten U.S.-Mexico border Ports of Entry (PoEs) increased in 2023. Laredo and Nogales PoEs witnessed the largest increase in absolute value, while in relative terms, Nogales and Eagle Pass experienced the most substantial increment.³

Total trade across the top ten U.S.-Mexico border Ports of Entry (PoEs) increased in 2023 compared to 2022. Laredo and Nogales PoEs witnessed the largest increase in absolute terms, while Nogales and Eagle Pass experienced the most substantial increase in relative terms.

Total trade through the U.S.-Mexico border at the top ten PoEs increased by \$20,503 million (3.1%) in 2023 compared to 2022. The PoEs that experienced the largest growth were Nogales and Eagle Pass with an increase in total trade of \$3,262 million (11.2%) and \$3,118 million (9.2%), respectively. In December, on a Month-over-Month (MoM) basis in 2023, all the top PoEs exhibited a

³ The top ten PoEs are Laredo, TX, Ysleta, TX, Otay Mesa, CA, Hidalgo, TX, Eagle Pass, TX, Nogales, AZ, Santa Teresa, NM, Brownsville, TX, Calexico-East, CA, and El Paso, TX.

decline in total trade. It is worth noting that Eagle Pass, Otay Mesa, El Paso, Hidalgo, and Ysleta experienced declines above 10% on a MoM basis in December 2023.

In 2023, El Paso, Santa Teresa, Otay Mesa, Hidalgo, Laredo, and Eagle Pass PoEs recorded a total commodity import value of \$368,724 million, marking a \$14,107 million (4.0%) increase compared to 2022. Year-over-Year (YoY) performance varied among the selected six PoEs in terms of import value. In December 2023, Santa Teresa and Hidalgo were the only PoEs to record increments of \$4.2 million (0.3%) and \$8 million (0.4%), respectively. In contrast, the others experienced declines, with Otay Mesa PoE recording the most significant decrease of \$544 million (-18.2%).

In 2023, El Paso, Santa Teresa, Otay Mesa, Hidalgo, Laredo, and Eagle Pass PoEs registered a total commodity export value of \$224,689 million, representing a \$1,665 million (0.7%) increase compared to 2022. In December 2023, YoY performance continued to vary among the PoEs in terms of export value. For example, Santa Teresa and Laredo PoEs experienced increases of \$112 million (14.9%) and \$71 million (0.8%), respectively. In comparison, El Paso and Otay Mesa land ports faced significant declines of \$377 million (-11.8%) and \$246 million (-14.6%) respectively.

Top Ten U.S.-Mexico Border Ports of Entry for Total Trade with World, Million USD

Port of Entry	A 2022	B 2023	B-A	B-A (Δ%)	Dec 2023	
					MoM	YoY
Laredo, TX	\$299,301	\$320,611	\$21,309	7.1%	-7.1%	-0.3%
Ysleta, TX	\$77,234	\$76,534	-\$700	-0.9%	-12.9%	-5.3%
Otay Mesa, CA	\$62,468	\$63,096	\$628	1.0%	-21.2%	-16.9%
Hidalgo, TX	\$46,555	\$45,868	-\$687	-1.5%	-14.7%	-5.0%
Eagle Pass, TX	\$34,023	\$37,141	\$3,118	9.2%	-25.5%	-9.4%
Nogales, AZ	\$29,181	\$32,443	\$3,262	11.2%	-1.2%	14.8%
Santa Teresa, NM	\$31,530	\$27,742	-\$3,789	-12.0%	-7.1%	5.5%
Brownsville, TX	\$23,511	\$23,385	-\$127	-0.5%	-7.8%	-8.3%
Calexico-East, CA	\$21,067	\$22,664	\$1,596	7.6%	-8.5%	5.8%
El Paso, TX	\$26,530	\$22,422	-\$4,108	-15.5%	-17.0%	-20.3%

Note: Top ten in 2023. YoY denotes year-over-year; MoM denotes month-over-month.

Source: Hunt Institute calculations using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

About Hunt Institute for Global Competitiveness

Since 2014, the Hunt Institute for Global Competitiveness at The University of Texas at El Paso has provided economic analysis of the Paso del Norte Region that includes the binational communities of El Paso, Texas; Las Cruces, N.M.; and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. The mission of the Hunt Institute is to produce high-quality market analysis tools that strengthen regional and binational cross-border social and economic development.

utep.edu/hunt-institute