Labor Market Information and Analysis

What is it?

Labor market information (LMI) includes data that describes economic conditions for employment and workforce. Generally, workforce information is publicly available and could include data on wages, education, demographics, unemployment, etc. This data is typically organized by occupation, geography, and industry.

LMI is useful for providing information to job seekers and employers. It can determine wages, identify opportunity gaps, and highlight racial disparities in sectors. It also provides key insights on economic and business trends for educators, community organizations and government entities.

Where does it come from?

Federal, State, and private organizations may collect LMI. Consider including multiple data sources to ensure validity and credibility. Different data sources can also help contextualize your data and further disaggregate information by race and ethnicity to drive equitable outcomes. Here are some sources of LMI:

Public Sources of Information
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- National Center for Education Statistics
- U.S. Census Bureau
- Additional State data

Business Sources of Information
- Employer Hiring Data
- Employer Employee Data
- JobsEQ
- EMSI

Workforce System Sources of Information
- WorkforceGPS
- Urban Institute
- Budget information
- Community-based organizations and local nonprofits

Education Sources of Information
- U.S. Department of Education

What are the steps for LMI analysis?

1) **Determine the scope of your focus**. Set objectives and identify the core problems or questions you are trying to answer. Do you need this data for a specific region? Is there a sector you need to look at? Is a state-wide analysis appropriate? Is it time-bound?

It is easy for research projects to experience scope creep and your objectives may chage slightly based on your early findings. Consider conducting a preliminary analysis to help refine and guide your objectives. If you have the resources, consider contracting with a partner or professional group to run your analysis.

2) **Set metrics, analyze and contextualize your data.** There are a number of metrics available for use in existing databases. We recommend selecting multiple metrics to help build credibility and validity. It may also help to consider how frequently data is updated and if you will be evaluating this data across a longer time period. Consider this example of assessing skilled positions employers may be trying to fill, metrics may include median wage, number of persons with certifications or higher education, sector, retention.

Remember, these metrics may only report what has already happened. Incorporating more qualitative results will help contextualize drivers or factors influencing these metrics. For instance, if unemployment is up in a specific region, consider if there are economic, political, or other external factors that may have resulted in this change. Disaggregating data by characteristics of individuals will also create clearer pictures of inequities.

3) **Identify your audience and tailor recommendations.** Storytelling is a key component of data analysis and reporting. Consider segmenting your findings to create more robust and actionable takeaways. This could be by sector if speaking with employers. A board member may be interested in a high-level analysis, staying big picture. Community-based organizations may want more specific numbers and more emphasis on workforce demographic characteristics. Visuals and a clear narrative can help you communicate more effectively. You may investigate working with a marketing/communications team to package and refine your analysis.

See an example presentation of a labor market analysis presentation here.