

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Over the last several years, there has been increasing interest among labor market analysts and others in what has come to be called *real-time labor market information* (RT LMI). States, regions, municipalities, and all types of education and training providers currently use traditional sources of labor market information such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census Bureau, and State Departments of Labor to help guide them in their decision-making and enhancing their service delivery. Many view RT LMI as an important new data source that should be included in their analyses, but are unfamiliar with its potential.

In late 2013, ETA invested technical assistance funding in a project to increase knowledge of the RT LMI landscape and support states in building staff capacity to leverage RT LMI across a variety of workforce development programs. Part of this technical assistance project is the development of a tool to assist interested states explore areas where RT LMI may be useful; define priorities for their use of RT LMI; and determine their key needs and next steps. The intended user audience for this tool is state-level labor market information staff, as well as other interested state-level staff, such as state WIB and state workforce agency staff involved in labor market analysis, strategic planning, and investment decision-making.

Please note that this assessment is intended to help states complement and enhance their work with a variety of forms of labor market information; it views RT LMI as supplementary to more traditional forms of LMI. Completion of this assessment tool is entirely voluntary; however, states are welcome to share assessment results, areas of interest, and technical assistance needs with their ETA Regional Office Federal Project Officers and/or Labor Market Information Leads.

Finally, states are encouraged to review ETA's September 2014 report, *Real-Time Labor Market Information: An Environmental Scan of Vendors and Workforce Development Users*, as a companion piece to this assessment tool. This report provides readers with information about a variety of RT LMI tools and their applications, and highlights how several state and regional users are leveraging real-time job posting data.

THE ASSESSMENT TOOL

1. Current Use of RT LMI and Areas of Interest

In the middle column below, please indicate the areas in which you are currently using RT LMI. In the right column, please indicate the areas in which you are interested in using or expanding your integration of RT LMI.

Use of Real-Time LMI	Currently Using	Interested in Using
Increase/enhance job listings in the state's job bank		
Track industry and occupational hiring trends		
Match job seekers with jobs		
Modify or improve job vacancy surveys		
Perform research on industries and/or occupations		
Identify employers' education, skill, and certification requirements		
Enhance the state's training or other investments		
Offer career guidance and coaching to job seekers		
Create and disseminate reports and other publications		
Develop industry sector and employer engagement strategies		
Map career pathways		
Design of training programs/curriculum		
Modify or improve projections		
Improve/streamline job vacancy survey methodologies		

2. Increasing Use of RT LMI: Challenges and Needs

In the right column below, please indicate the areas your state needs to explore and/or address to increase your use of RT LMI. Please rank these areas in priority order, with 1 being the highest priority.

Challenge/Need	Level of Priority for Our State
Identifying funding to purchase licenses for RT LMI tools	
Increasing staffing and/or staff capacity to use RT LMI	
Obtaining the data required to “make the case” to decision-makers as to the value of purchasing RT LMI tool	
Understanding the various tools that exist, and uses for which each tool is best suited	
Engaging with internal state partners and/or external partners to explore collaborating on the tool purchase and use	
Working with peers in other states to learn more about how they obtained RT LMI and put it to use	
Receiving technical assistance from RT LMI experts	

3. Defining Next Steps

In the right column below, please indicate your state’s plans for next steps. Please rank these areas in priority order, with 1 being the highest priority.

Next Step	Level of Priority for Our State
Contact vendors of RT LMI to schedule demonstrations of the tools	
Review RT LMI resources available on ETA’s LMI Community of Practice (https://winwin.workforce3one.org/page/resources)	
Conduct research on how other states have effectively used RT LMI	
Contact peers in other states to learn more about how they obtained RT LMI tools and put them to use	
Explore potential funding for the purchase of RT LMI tools	
Explore current staff capacity to use RT LMI tools and identify capacity gaps	
Engage with internal state partners and/or external partners to explore collaborating around tool purchase and use	
Seek out technical assistance from RT LMI experts	
Obtain the data required to convince decision-makers about the value of investing in RT LMI	

Contact Information

Upon completing this assessment, feel free to contact your ETA Regional Office Federal Project Officer and/or Labor Market Information Lead (listed below) with additional questions or potential areas of support. Please share any additional challenges you've experienced with your current RT LMI resources, as well as opportunities for technical assistance and training. For more insight into existing RT LMI vendors and applications of RT LMI in workforce development, please consult ETA's September 2014 report, *Real-Time Labor Market Information: An Environmental Scan of Vendors and Workforce Development Users*.

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