

# **Labor Market Information Shops as Assets for Workforce Development:** *Lessons and Examples from Three States*

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January 2017



## Introduction

Regardless of the labor market information (LMI) shop's roles, responsibilities, scope and location within state government, a state's LMI shop can produce incredibly valuable products and services for their customers. The examples of Utah, Michigan and Washington demonstrate how.

State LMI shops are crucial assets to state workforce development, education and training, and economic development efforts. The roles and responsibilities of each shop vary by state. Some are focused solely on producing labor force statistics in partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and disseminating key workforce and labor market information under the U.S. Department of Labor's Education and Training Administration's Workforce Information Grants. Others are also responsible for a wider range of operational and performance data, which can include a state's Unemployment Insurance (UI), One-Stop, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), child support, food assistance, and other programs. The organizational structure and placement within state government also vary by state. Some are housed within the state workforce agency, while others are housed in a separate administrative agency. State workforce agencies themselves can also vary in scope, with some including health and human services programs.

## **Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives**

**Where is the LMI shop?** The Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives (The Bureau or LMISI) is within the Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB). The Director reports to the DTMB Chief Deputy and to the State Budget Director. The Bureau administers Michigan's federal-state cooperative agreements with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau, and handles the Workforce Information Grant (WIG). Because the Bureau is not organized within the Michigan Talent Investment Agency (TIA), they are treated as a high-priority customer, a relationship formalized through an interagency agreement.

**What are the LMI shop's sources of funding?** The Bureau has four main funding sources: BLS, U.S. Employment and Training Administration (ETA), TIA, and State General Fund. About two-thirds of Bureau funds are federal funds, with the remaining third coming from interagency agreements and dedicated funds to support labor market and demographic information.

**What are the biggest obstacles for LMI shops in serving their customers?** One of the biggest obstacles in serving our customers is striking a balance between our role as the "official source" for demographic and labor market information and customer expectations which often call for very specific or very local information delivered immediately and in user-friendly, attractive packages. This is complicated further by vendors that package and sell our demographic and labor market information that, after being run through proprietary methodology, claims to be accurate for very specific or very local requests.

**What are the biggest successes for LMI shops in serving their customers?** One of our biggest successes came from facing this obstacle head-on. By building a web-based tool that rolled our "official" data into customizable infographics for regions, occupations, industries, and industry sectors we were able to show proof of concept and garner additional support for the development of a mobile app (due out in March 2017). In addition, we are designing a regional dashboard using Tableau.

**What changes to federal law/regulation would make serving LMI customers easier?** Modernizing federal-state cooperative agreements and grant requirements would make serving customers easier. In doing so, we would like to see more funds available to states to build and maintain longitudinal data systems and to develop interactive tools that better meet the needs of the workforce system.

## Utah Workforce Research and Analysis Division

**Where is the LMI Shop?** The Workforce Research and Analysis (WRA) Division is part of Utah's Department of Workforce Services (DWS). DWS is one of the nation's most integrated state workforce agencies, overseeing UI, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Wagner-Peyser, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid eligibility, TANF, Housing, and Refugee Services. The WRA director reports to one of two deputies under the agency's executive director. WRA administers the BLS federal-state statistics programs, the ETA's WIG, federal and state reporting for all program administered by DWS, and all in-depth research pertaining to the state's labor markets and workforce programs.

**What are the LMI Shop's Sources of Funding?** WRA is funded by the BLS, the WIG, and the funds associated with the programs upon which we report. WRA is also a partner in Utah's Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant program and receives some funding for the work done in support of the grant.

**What are the biggest obstacles for LMI shops in serving their customers?** Customers' appetite for easy-access to specialized data has grown well beyond the bounds of the grants that fund us, both in volume and sophistication. While we are funded to deliver analysis on aggregated data in synthesized and accessible manner, data customers are evolving and now more than ever seek instead to gain access to microdata. Additionally, they often wanted it enhanced by other datasets through linkages. Funding to provide datasets, along with the privacy protections that govern the data, become obstacles to meeting our customers' expectations.

**What are the biggest successes for LMI shops in serving their customers?** Our biggest successes fit into two categories: delivering the best analysis possible through strong relationships with the workforce development staff in DWS, and utilizing data visualization tools to increase the effectiveness of data delivery. Investing time into these two efforts has paid off immensely in ensuring that we deliver what the customer wants with specificity, and in empowering our customers to access the data they need in the most nimble manner possible.

**What changes to federal law/regulation would make serving LMI customers easier?** Federal law has not kept up with the data appetites of customers. Regulations that focus less on method and more on outcome would allow states to adapt their approach to the evolving needs of today's data users.



## Washington Labor Market and Performance Analysis Division

**Where is the LMI shop?** The Labor Market and Performance Analysis (LMPA) Division is located within the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD), which is Washington's state workforce agency. The Director of LMPA reports directly to the Commissioner of ESD. LMPA is responsible for BLS current labor force statistics programs, requirements of the WIG, operational and performance data and analysis for both the UI and One-Stop systems, and more in-depth research and program evaluation.

**What are the LMI shop's sources of funding?** LMPA's sources of funding include the BLS, the WIG, Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) grant (through June 2018), UI administrative funds, Wagner-Peyser funds, Foreign Labor Certification funds, and state dedicated funds.

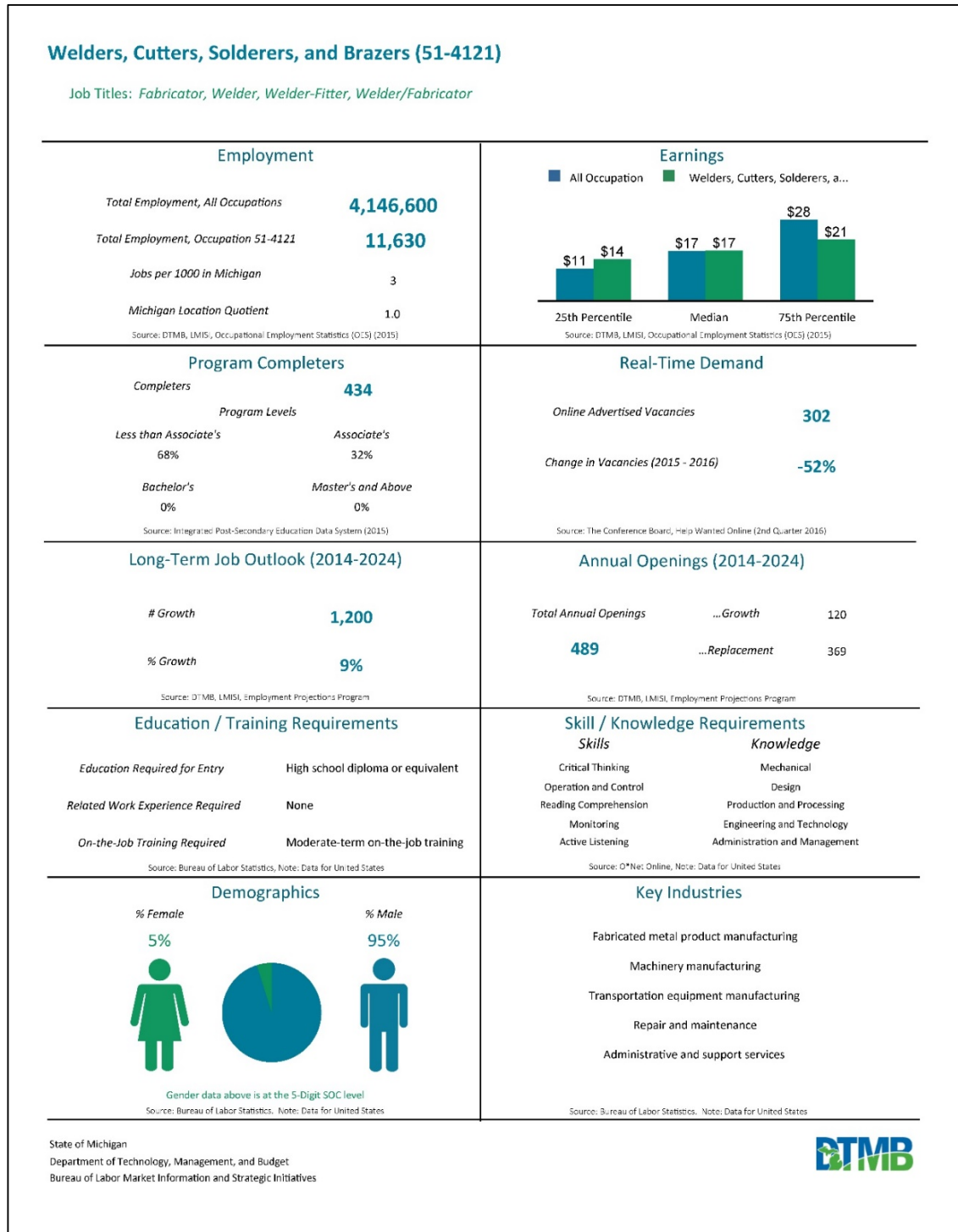
**What are the biggest obstacles for LMI shops in serving their customers?** One of the biggest obstacles in serving our customers is keeping up with technology. Our customers expect to access information through the most advanced technology, which changes rapidly. Currently, customer expectations include interactive and customizable graphics and information and graphics easily accessible on tablets and smartphones. It is difficult to keep up with the latest technology with existing funds when our customers are routinely accessing services and information via cutting edge technology in their personal and professional lives.

**What are the biggest successes for LMI shops in serving their customers?** One of the biggest successes has been investing in technology. This has specifically included purchasing Tableau licenses so that we could add interactive, customizable features to our website. This has required not only an investment of funds to purchase the licenses, but also an investment of staff time to learn how to use the application. This has more than paid off as it has allowed us to create products that our customers value, and return to.

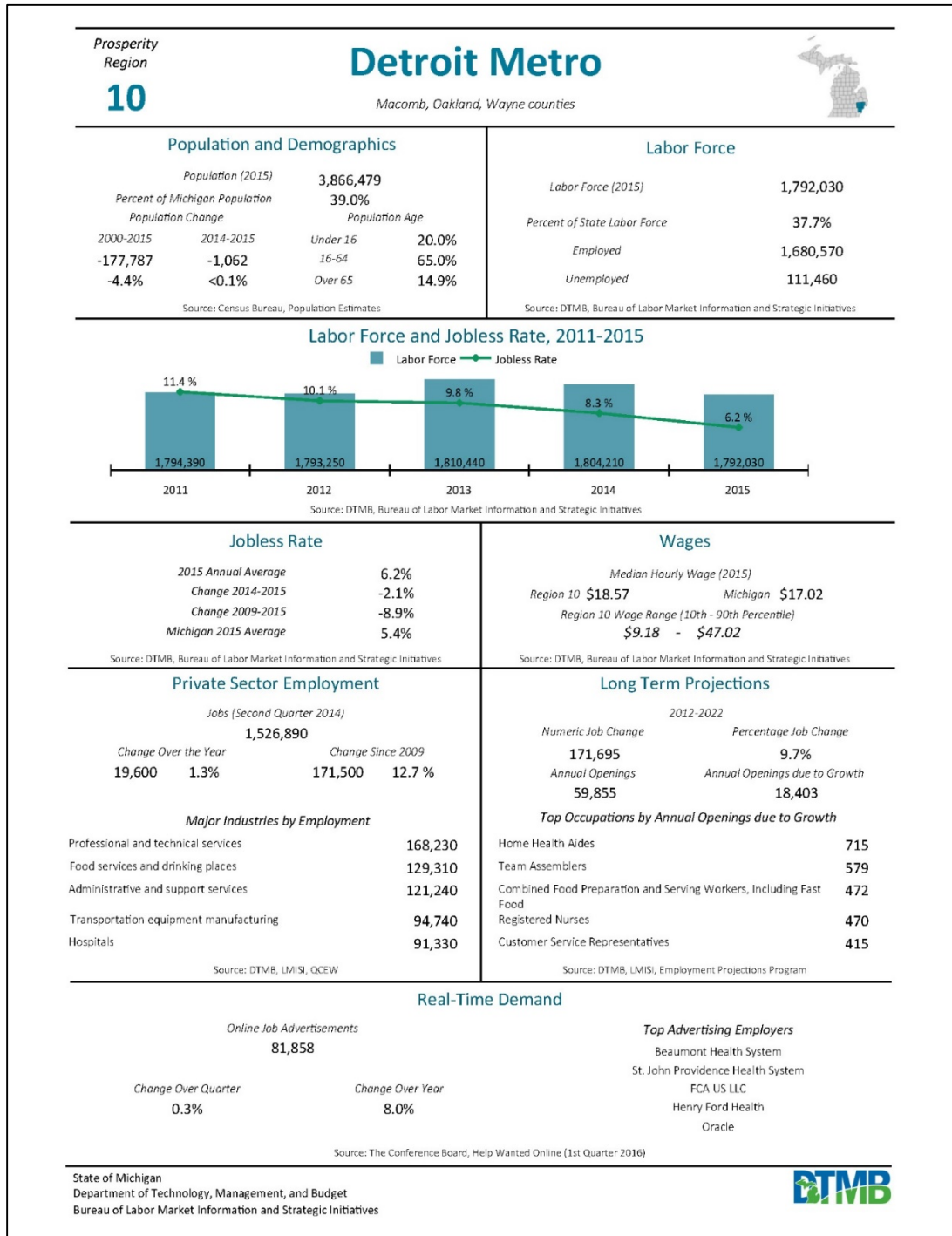
**What changes to federal law/regulation would make serving LMI customers easier?** It would be easier to serve our customers if we didn't have to "check the boxes" of the mandatory WIG deliverables. Additional flexibility would allow us to make the very most of critical funds to develop new tools and information, and share those with our customers.

# Examples of Michigan State Tools

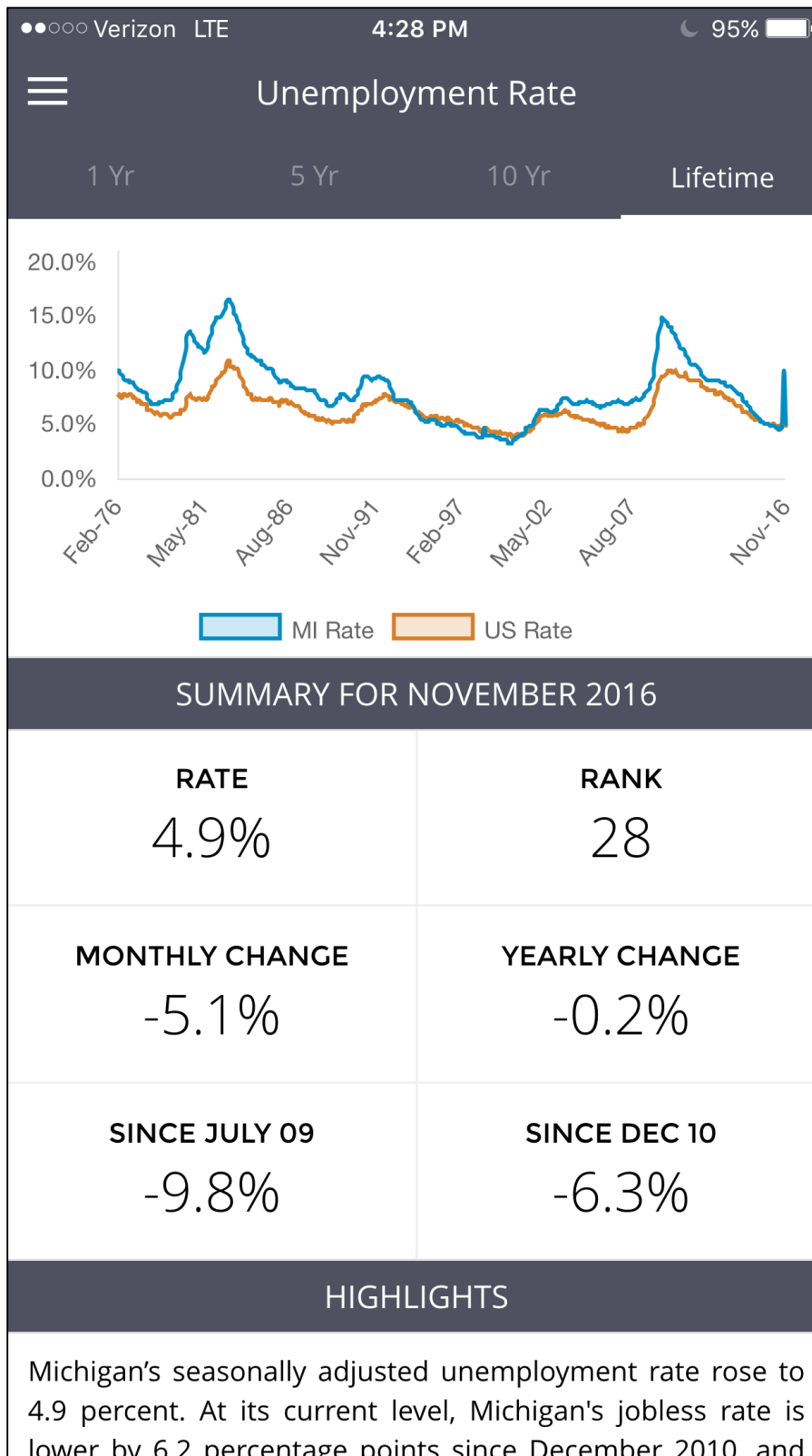
## (1) Occupation Report



## (2) Region Report

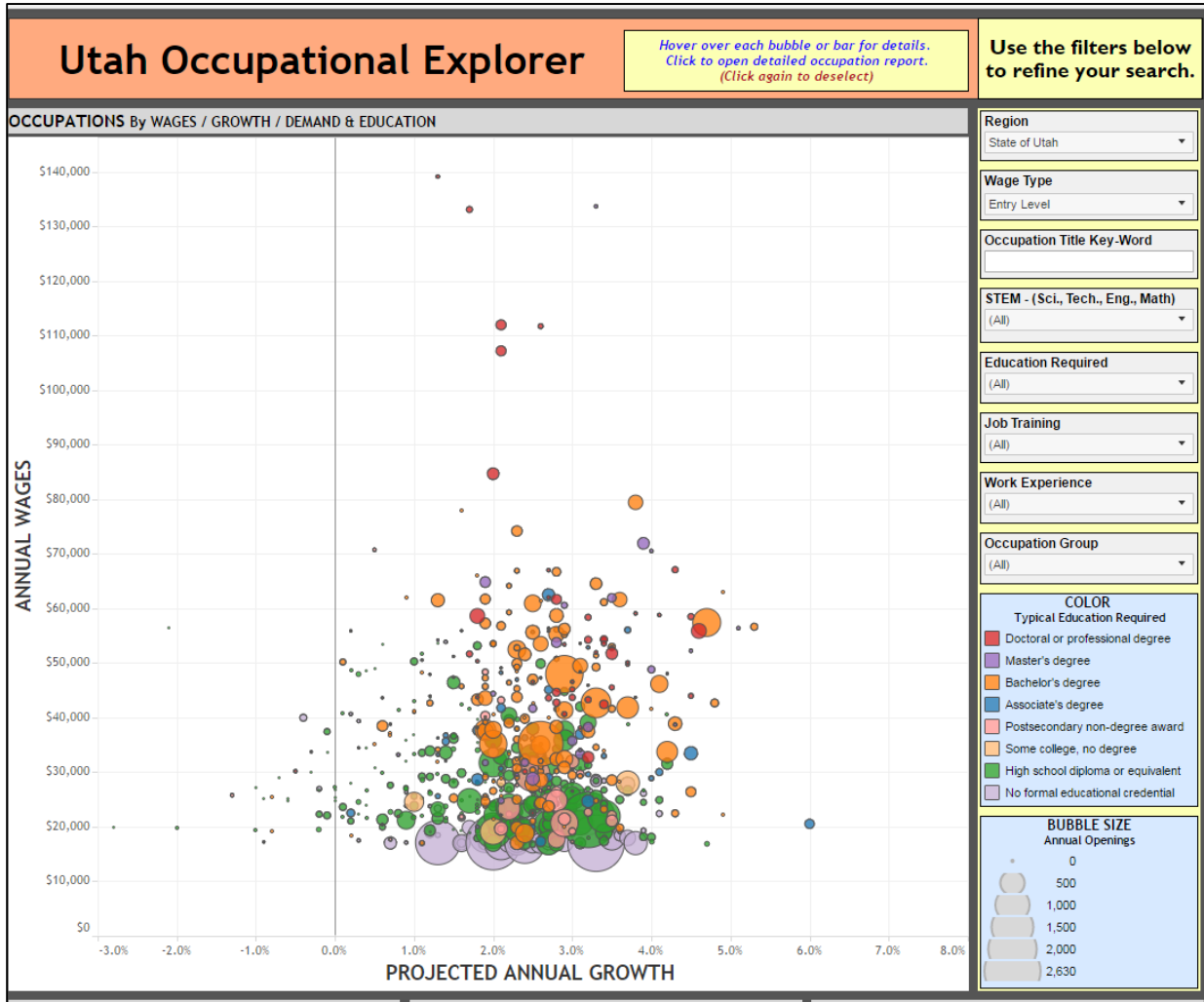


### (3) Mobile LMI



# Example of Utah State Tools

## (1) Occupational Comparison Dashboard



## (2) Site Selection Tool

### Utah Site Selection Tool

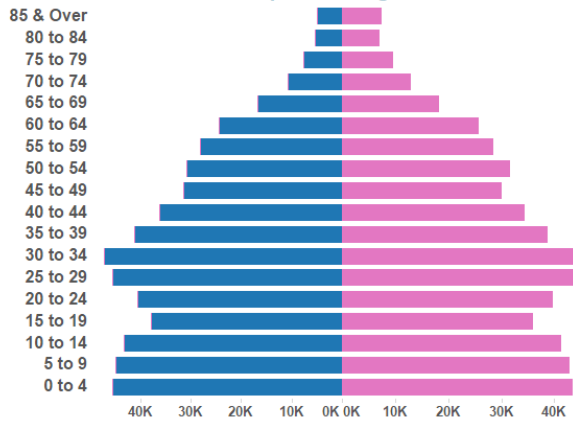
Demographics | Labor Force Profile | Commuting | Wages | Largest Employer All Industries | Download Instructions

# Salt Lake County Population Demographics

Last Updated: 12/2016

Area: Salt Lake County

#### 2011-2015 Population Age Tree



#### Educational Attainment

	Individuals	% of Total
Less than 9th grade	24,777	3.73%
9th to 12th grade	44,582	6.72%
High school	151,131	22.77%
Some college	171,222	25.79%
Associate's degree	58,771	8.85%
Bachelor's degree	137,986	20.79%
Graduate degree	75,382	11.36%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>663,851</b>	

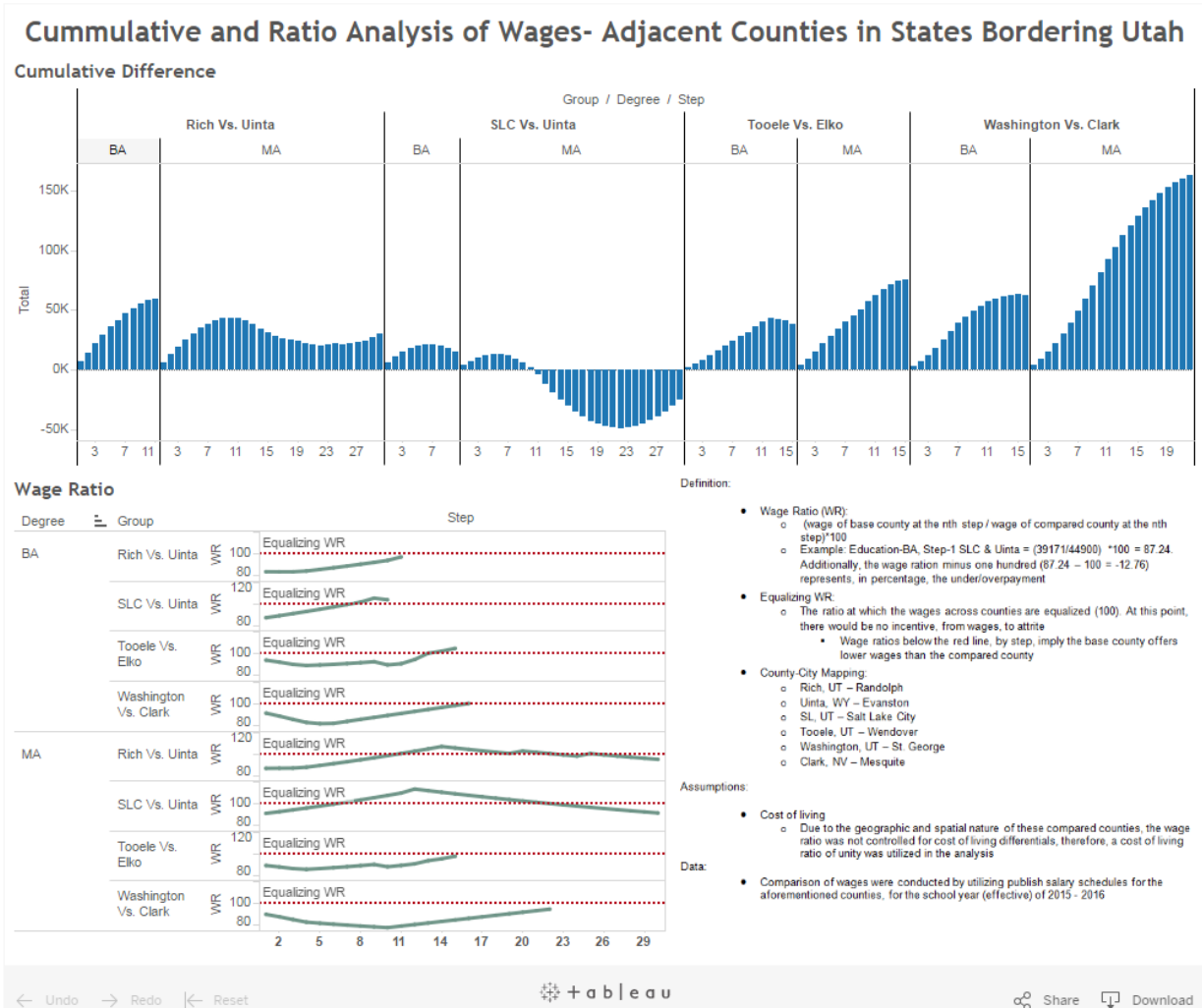
#### School Enrollment

	Students	% of Total
Preschool	21,013	6.52%
Kindergarten	17,048	5.29%
Grade 1 to grade 4	69,294	21.51%
Grade 5 to grade 8	66,264	20.57%
Grade 9 to grade 12	64,789	20.11%
College, undergraduate	69,226	21.49%
Graduate school	14,500	4.50%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>322,134</b>	

#### Components of Population Change

	2014	2015
Natural Increase	12,072	12,011
Net Migration	-673	2,709
<b>Change</b>	<b>10,876</b>	<b>14,426</b>

### (3) Teacher Salary Comparison Tool

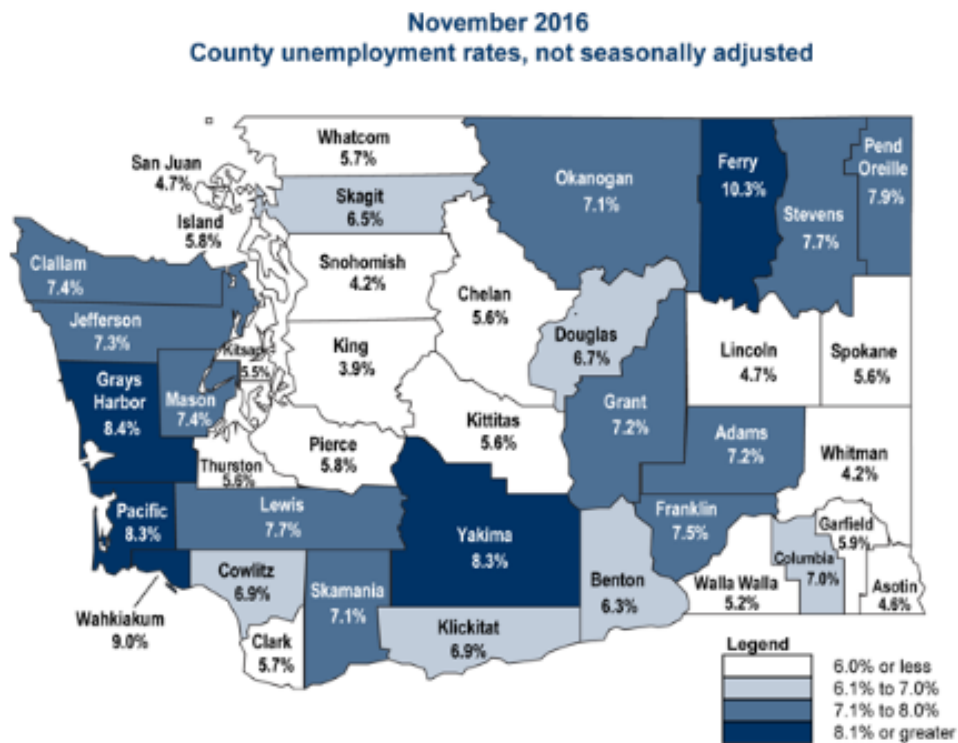


## Examples of Washington State Tools

### (1) Employment Report

## Monthly employment report

The monthly employment report is a comprehensive report on Washington's job market. We report the unemployment rate statewide and for the nation, the number of people in Washington's workforce and the number of jobs by industry. Open the [current monthly employment report](#) (PDF 1249 KB), or for county-level data, see the map below of county unemployment rates. Alternate measures of labor underutilization (**U6**) are [discussed here](#).



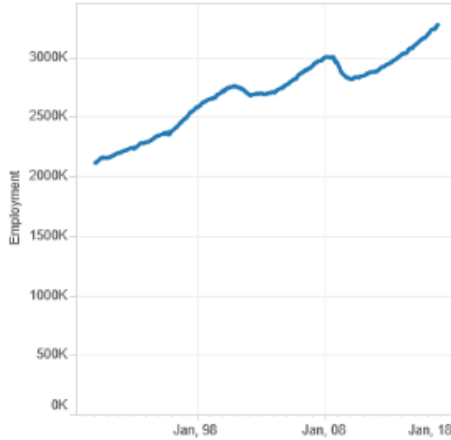
The [Labor force by county snapshot](#) can be accessed here and additional reports in the [report library](#).



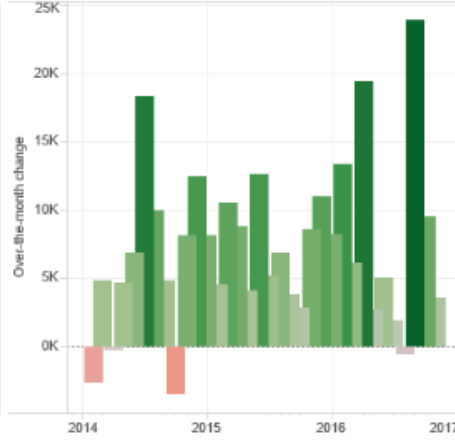
Washington gained 3,600 jobs in November, unemployment rate drops to 5.3%.  
 The U-6 unemployment rate, 4th quarter 2015 through 3rd quarter 2016, is 10.7%.

Washington state nonfarm employment
Historical industry level employment
Alternative measures of labor underutilization

Washington state nonfarm employment



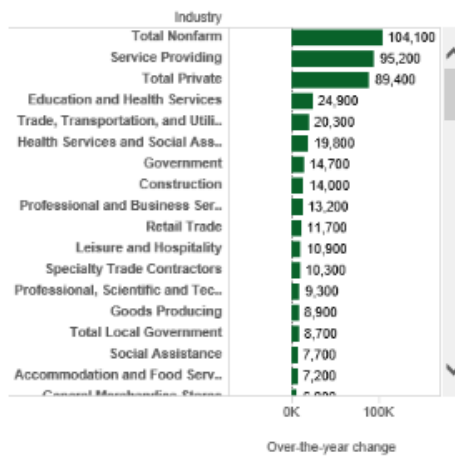
Monthly nonfarm employment change



Over-the-month employment change



Over-the-year employment change



## (2) Occupation Tool

### Learn about an occupation tool

Use this tool to search for or select an occupation title to get a job description, educational requirements, pay, employment trends and resources, or to explore careers. Filter by county or Washington state. The Occupations in Demand (OID) list is the key component in the "Learn about an occupation tool." Click here for detailed information [about the list](#).

#### Workforce Development Councils - maintenance of the OID list:

Please send any updates and/or feedback you have for the Occupations in Demand list to [Robert Haglund](#) (LMPA) who will update the list for you.

Displaying 100 of 445

Reset

Select Locations & Categories

Demand	SOC#	Occupation Title	Workforce Development Area
↑	111011	Chief Executives	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	111021	General and Operations Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	112021	Marketing Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	112022	Sales Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↔	112031	Public Relations and Fundraising Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↔	113011	Administrative Services Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↑	113021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	113031	Financial Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	113051	Industrial Production Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	113061	Purchasing Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↓	113071	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county
↑	113121	Human Resources Managers	SnohomishWDA: Snohomish county



[www.naswa.org](http://www.naswa.org)