



WORKFORCE INFORMATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

WIAC and U.S. Department of Labor's Recommendations for Improving the Workforce and Labor Market Information System

Presented on September 8, 2020



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WIAC Recommendations

In January 2018, the Workforce Information Advisory Council (WIAC) published *Recommendations to Improve the Nation's Workforce and Labor Market Information System*:

- Four recommendations focused on workforce and labor market information (WLMI) products; and
- Five recommendations focused on the WLMI system.



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WIAC Recommendation 1

Enhance Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Records:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary pursue the inclusion of additional data elements to UI wage records, including occupational title, hours worked, and work site.



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WIAC Recommendation 2

Expand Information on Occupations, Skills, and Credentials:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary increase investments in information on the workforce skill requirements of current and emerging occupations, including credential attainment and outcomes and transferability of skills among industries and occupations.



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WIAC Recommendation 3

Develop and Disseminate a K-12 Career Awareness Educational Framework:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary develop and disseminate a K-12 career awareness educational framework to address the career awareness gap and increase public understanding of career pathways and options starting at an early age.



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WIAC Recommendation 4

Develop Information on the Changing Nature of Work:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary pursue the collection and development of information that provides an understanding of the scope and volume of alternative work arrangements or other causes for the reduction in traditional workforce participation.



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WIAC Recommendation 5

Increase Support for State and Local Information in the WLMI System:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary include in the Department of Labor budget for FY2020 a request for annual funding to states from BLS for the Federal-State Cooperative Statistics System and from ETA for Workforce Information Grants to states at twice the current funding level to strengthen the provision of state and local information in the nationwide WLMI system.



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WIAC Recommendation 6

Overcome Barriers to Data Sharing:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary enable greater use of WLMII for evidence-based workforce investment decision-making by supporting and facilitating the implementation of recommendations of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking to advance policy, program, and personal decisions on workforce investments.



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WIAC Recommendation 7

Improve Consistency and Availability of Program Evaluation Data:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary improve consistency and availability of workforce program assessment and evaluation data by establishing the state WLMI unit or other unit determined by the state as the designated state entity for the provision of WIOA workforce program participant outcomes, performance assessments, and evaluations.



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WIAC Recommendation 8

Create a 21st Century WLMI System Using Advanced Technologies:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary create a 21st century WLMI system based on a distributed knowledge management system that uses an open architecture/open data approach and artificial intelligence and related advanced technologies.



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WIAC Recommendation 9

Initiate Collaboration Among WLMI System Agencies:

The WIAC recommends that the Secretary initiate collaboration among WLMI system agencies by directing ETA and BLS to convene a one-day gathering of representatives from federal and state programs that contribute information essential to a well-functioning workforce and labor market information system, as defined by Congress.



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U.S. DOL Recommendations

- In 2020, U.S. DOL published a set of 12 recommendations for improving the WLMI system at the state and national level as part of its *Two-Year Plan for Workforce and Labor Market Information*.
- U.S. DOL Recommendations support individual WIAC recommendations.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 1

Improve quality of local area data:

- Develop criteria for publishing Current Employment Statistics (CES) State and Area Estimates.
- Continue improving accuracy of Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) models.
- Research methods for allowing comparisons over time of Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) data, and implement 2018 SOC system.
- Continue working collaboratively with states to account for UI system modernizations.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 2

Expand local area data:

Publish more local data—some data is experimental where users, including state partners, are being asked to provide feedback—including:

- CES experimental diffusion index series for states;
- Exploration of state production of medium-term employment projections;
- Restoration of LAUS estimates for small New England areas;
- Exploration of further publication of employment, wages, and occupations for establishments with foreign ownership; and
- Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) experimental state and metropolitan statistical area (MSA) data.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 3

Exploring the feasibility of medium-term employment projections:

Through Projections Managing Partnership (PMP), explore feasibility of states producing medium-term employment projections under the Workforce Information Grants (WIG).



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 4

Enhance BLS IT systems and data processes:

- Replacing two Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) IT systems.
- Replacing OES IT system.
- Exploring automated occupational coding system for OES.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 5

Explore new/alternative data sources for BLS data products:

Potential cost-effective measure to collect information to support published data. These sources can be used to improve the quality of existing data or expand product lines, such as:

- Datasets from other government agencies;
- Datasets provided by online job-posting companies; and
- Results of new Occupational Requirements Survey.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 6

Improve dissemination and user experience:

- Enhancements to local data app that allows access to state, metro area, and county data from LAUS, CES, QCEW, and OES programs.
- Moving to annual employment projections, and releasing employment projections a month early.
- Rolling out Occupational Outlook Handbook content on an ongoing basis, and offering that content through an app.
- Adding short videos on a variety of topics.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 7

Updating and promoting O*NET and CareerOneStop websites, web services, and open data:

- Continue exploring additional ways to make datasets open, available, and interoperable.
- O*NET to:
 - Adopt the 2018 SOC taxonomy;
 - Add new and emerging occupations for data collection;
 - Engage in increased testing of the application of new methods—such as artificial intelligence, natural language processing, and machine learning—to explore ways to augment and efficiently update occupational information in the O*NET system and to link to other specialty skill frameworks; and
 - Explore feasibility of developing a methodology to track changes in skill demands over time resulting from the impacts of technology and automation.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 8

Launch Eligible Training Provider Scorecard:

Allow job seekers, industry leaders, administrators, and policy makers to view training provider outcomes at a program of study level.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 9

Enhancing UI Wage Records:

- Consult with businesses and states to better understand the benefits and any possible concerns regarding enhancing UI wage records.
- Continue working with several states on a pilot test, which would allow BLS to create the infrastructure necessary to receive UI wage records. These individual wage records are expected to enhance the quality of important data series, to allow for the production of new data series at more detailed industry and geographic levels in existing programs, and to allow for the production of new economic data at detailed levels of industry and geography.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 10

WLMI in WIOA 2020 State Plans:

Encouraging the use of WLMI in data-driven strategic state planning through guidance and technical assistance to the public workforce system and its partners.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 11

Exploring Applications of Behavioral Interventions to Improve Outcomes Related to LMI Use and Presentation:

Undertaking a feasibility assessment to explore how behavioral interventions could be used to improve both proximal and potentially longer-term outcomes for these populations of interest. If found feasible, may pursue behavioral trials in this area.



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U.S. DOL Recommendation 12

Technical Assistance for the Workforce System on WLMI:

- Continue providing webinars for workforce professionals on the uses of labor market information;
- Provide guidance for states in developing their WIOA state plans;
- Continue providing relevant links to BLS data (especially the current contact information for each state's LMI Director); and
- Incorporate the work of U.S. DOL regional and state analysts to promote new ideas and workforce products.



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Any questions?