

Labor Market Information in the Americas: the United States

Workshop On Labor Migration and Labor Market Information Systems

**Inter-American Network for Labor Administration
(RIAL)**

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Labor market information in the U.S.

- Decentralized organizational structure
- Types of labor market information
- Key uses and users
- Major types of data production
- Approaches to analysis and dissemination
- Major challenges



Decentralized structure

- Federal roles
 - Setting statistical policy and standards
 - Operating statistical programs
 - Providing (most, but not all) funding to States
 - Analysis and dissemination
- State roles
 - Administrative data
 - Partners in BLS federal-State statistical programs
 - Analysis and dissemination
 - Special surveys and projects



Decentralized structure: Federal Roles

- Setting statistical policy and standards
 - Oversight by the Office of Management and Budget in the Office of the President
 - http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg_statpolicy/
 - Policy on objectivity, confidentiality, release of principle federal economic indicators, and other topics
 - Budget “cross-cut” to ensure no duplication
 - Classification standards for industries, occupations, geographic areas, and race-ethnicity
 - Clearance of data collection



Decentralized structure: Federal Roles

- Operating statistical programs
- Over 80 Federal agencies with statistical functions
- 13 “principle statistical agencies”
 - Census Bureau in the U.S. Department of Commerce
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in the U.S. Department of Labor
 - Primary responsibility for labor market topics



Decentralized structure: Federal Roles

- Providing funding
 - Federal funding for State labor market information activities
 - BLS
 - Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor
 - Analysis and dissemination



Decentralized structure: State roles

- Provide administrative data
 - State-operated unemployment insurance system
 - States oversee most education functions
- Partners in the five BLS Federal-State statistical programs
 - Roles vary by program
 - Data collection and editing
 - Analysis, estimation
 - Publication
 - Participate in program improvement



Decentralized structure: State roles

- Analysis, dissemination, data user support
- Special surveys and projects



Types of labor market information

- Population size, characteristics, and projections
- Labor force, employment, and unemployment statistics **
- Industry employment and wages
 - Administrative (unemployment insurance) data **
 - Monthly establishment survey **
- Mass layoffs and plant closings **
- Business and labor force dynamics



Types of labor market information

- Occupational employment and wages **
- Occupational skills
- Employment projections
 - Labor force, industry, occupation
- Education and training information
- Labor exchange system information on job openings and job seekers



Key uses and users

- Also decentralized
 - National, state, and local level uses and users
- Primary Federal Economic Indicators key users
 - Macroeconomic policy: fiscal, monetary, international
 - Budget and tax policy: all levels of government
 - Investors and business decision-makers
- Information for national policy
 - Workforce development policy and administration
 - Immigration policy and administration
 - Federal wage and employment policy and administration



Key uses and users

- Information targeted primarily for decision-making at the State and local levels
 - Education and training
 - Workforce development
 - Economic development
 - Business location and market decisions
 - State and local wage and employment policies
 - Wage setting and labor negotiations
 - Labor exchange activities
- Information targeted primarily toward individuals
 - Career exploration and decision-making
 - Job search



Major types of data production

- Household surveys
 - Conducted by U.S. Census Bureau
 - Provide data on immigration and foreign-born population and workforce
- Specific household surveys
 - Current Population Survey (joint Census-BLS program) – monthly
 - American Community Survey – continuous
 - Census of Population – every 10 years



Major types of data production

- Administrative data
 - Employer unemployment insurance tax reports
 - Unemployment insurance claims
- Employer (establishment) surveys
 - Current Employment Statistics (monthly payroll survey)
 - Occupational Employment Statistics survey
- Statistical and econometric modeling
 - Especially in producing local area data
- Employment projections



Approaches to analysis and dissemination

- Internet as primary dissemination medium
 - Traditional web sites (www.bls.gov)
 - Graphic presentation
 - User access to data (custom tables, searchable and downloadable databases)
 - Writing content for the web versus for print
 - Web 2.0 and beyond
- Working with the media (press)
- Cooperating with third-party providers

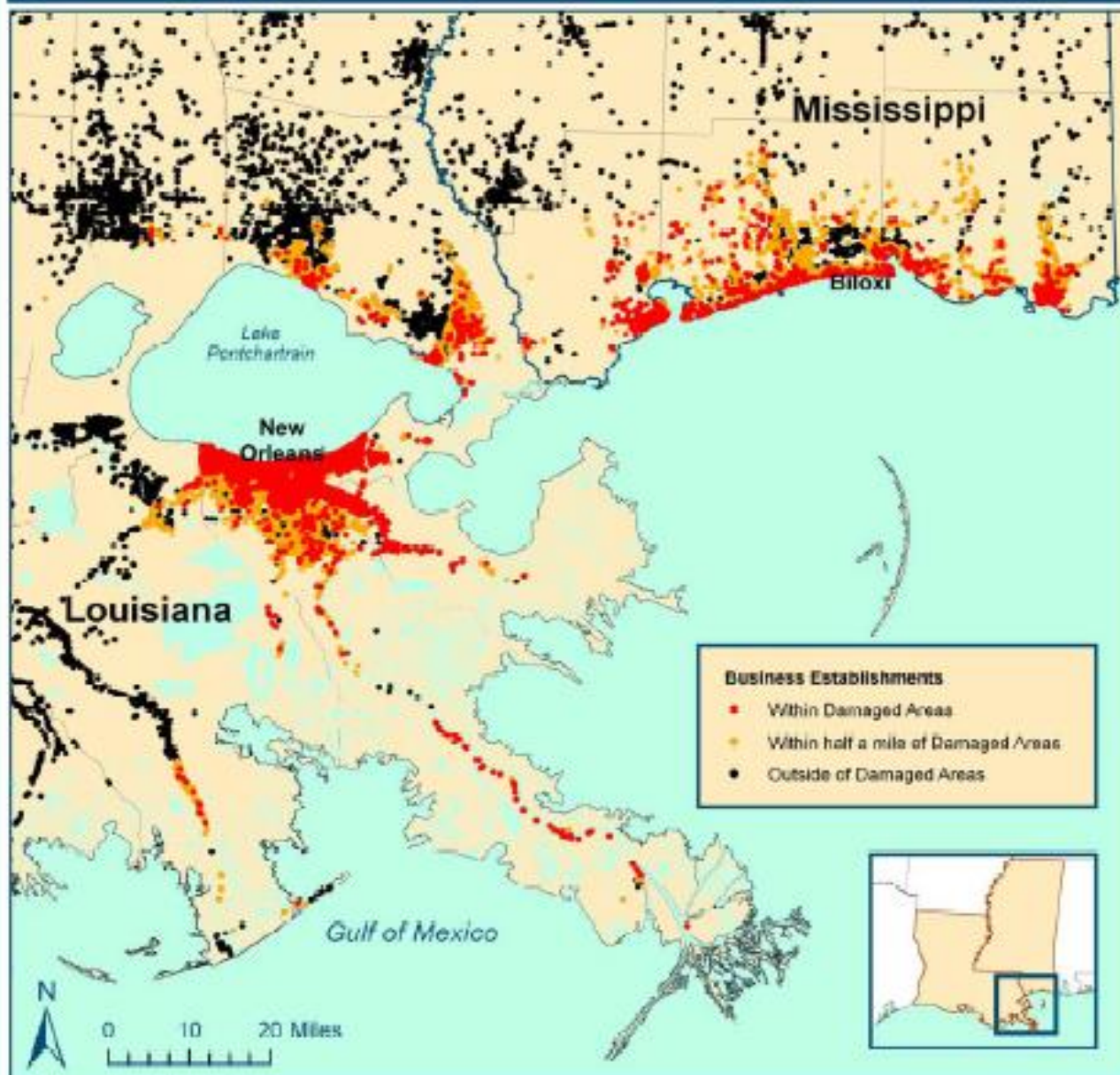


Approaches to analysis and dissemination

- Getting the most out of the data we have
 - Creating longitudinal databases to produce employment dynamics
 - Geocoding microdata and producing GIS products (mapping)
 - Linking multiple databases to produce new analyses
- Analyses of timely topics or for targeted audiences



Business Establishments within Katrina-Damaged Areas as Identified by FEMA Louisiana and Mississippi



Louisiana

17% of Louisiana's employment was within the FEMA Identified Damage Areas

| Business Establishments | Employees | Quarterly Wages |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 18,987 | 318,993 | \$3,547,142,870 |

27% was inside or within half a mile of the FEMA Identified Damage Areas

| Business Establishments | Employees | Quarterly Wages |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 51,122 | 499,650 | \$1,669,063,730 |

Mississippi

5% of Mississippi's employment was within the FEMA Identified Damage Areas

| Business Establishments | Employees | Quarterly Wages |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 3,352 | 55,081 | \$419,130,867 |

13% was inside or within half a mile of the FEMA Identified Damage Areas

| Business Establishments | Employees | Quarterly Wages |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 7,716 | 138,406 | \$1,082,573,551 |

Data source:

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), developed through a cooperative program between the states and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. FEMA Imagery Derived Assessment Damage Areas September 6, 2005. www.dismaps.fema.gov

Data notes:

Employment is from December 2004. Quarterly Wages are the total paid for the fourth quarter of 2004. Data are adjusted to include business establishments for whom accurate addresses are not available.

Cartography by:

State of California
Employment Development Department
www.labormarketinfo.ca.gov
September 2005



Major challenges

- Funding
- Balance between national versus State and local needs
- Managing cross-agency and Federal-State relationships
- Adapting to new technology for data collection, analysis, and dissemination



Major challenges

- Responding to new topics and information needs
 - For example, “green jobs”
- Developing a customer focus and managing customer expectations
- Maintaining response to surveys and reducing respondent burden
- Maintaining and upgrading the statistical workforce



Thank you!

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