

# Why LMI matters

Labour Market Information (LMI) is at the very heart of effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). It is simply not possible to help individuals to realise their occupational aspirations and progress their careers without an awareness and understanding of the labour market. However, it is not always obvious precisely what it is; why it is so central to effective practice; and how it should be used.

## What is labour market information?

**Labour Market Information (LMI) comes from a wide range of sources and includes:**

- Information on general employment trends (e.g. levels of employment; salary information; unemployment rates; skills gaps; future demand). For example, for sector information for IT and Telecoms, see: <http://www.guidance-research.org/future-trends/it/info>
- Data on the structure of the labour market (i.e. what jobs exist, how many, and in which occupational sectors). For example, for occupational information in the audio-visual industries, see: <http://www.guidance-research.org/future-trends/media/occupations>
- Information about the way the labour market functions (i.e. how people get into jobs and move between employers). For example, for information on applications, CVs and interviews, see: [http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home\\_page/Applications\\_CVs\\_and\\_interviews/p!eefmd](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Applications_CVs_and_interviews/p!eefmd)
- Data focusing on equality and diversity (which individuals are employed in different sectors and at what levels?). For example, for information on equal opportunities in the construction section, see: <http://www.guidance-research.org/future-trends/construction/equal-op>

For LMI for IAG, further distinctions can be made between:

- Labour Market Information which refers to quantitative or qualitative data found in original sources such as tables, spreadsheets, graphs and charts (e.g. women and members of minority ethnic groups are under-represented in the construction industry); and
- Labour market intelligence which relates to the interpretation of labour market information, often referring to sub-sets of information that have been subjected to further analysis (e.g. to meet future labour demands, the construction industry needs to recruit from groups which, for this sector, are non-traditional).

And LMI that is:

- Non-interactive: LMI which is generally linear in nature, paper-based, often broader in range and more detailed in topic coverage (its use can be limited, however, for motivating further exploratory behaviour in users).
- Interactive (using ICT): LMI which is generally non-linear, with the user maintaining some control over the selection and sequencing information (whilst typically less detailed in topic coverage, it can increase motivation for career exploration!).

## Why is it important for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)?

**For clients, LMI is important as it helps them understand:**

- the availability of particular jobs within specific geographical areas and the level of existing competition (If I do this course, will I be able to get a job in [a specific occupation], within 15 miles of my home? How difficult will this be?);
- rewards offered (How much will I get paid as a new employee? And then after five years?);
- entry routes (How do I get into that job?);
- the relative value of particular qualifications, experience or training (Which course should I do? Where is it best to do that course? Will my experience count?)

LMI that is most likely to be useful to clients will therefore focus on: the supply and demand for labour in various sectors; regional employment trends; progression routes into particular occupations; education and training; the transferability of skills and qualifications; and methods of recruitment and selection.

1 Sampson, J.P. Jr., Reardon, R.C., Peterson, G.W. & Lenz, J.G. (2004) Career Counseling and Services: a cognitive information processing approach, Belmont, CA: Thompson Brooks/Cole.

## How can it be used?

The use of LMI is an integral feature of all the major evidence-based frameworks that inform IAG practice. The particular way(s) in which IAG practitioners chose to use LMI with their clients will, therefore, depend on which of these framework(s) they have selected to inform their practice. For example:

- LMI may be given directly to clients during an IAG session for the purpose of changing behaviour (e.g. information about deadlines for course or job applications given to motivate clients to conform to these deadlines) or influencing attitudes (e.g. information about individuals employed in non-traditional occupations to challenge stereotypes).
- Rather than provide LMI directly, clients may simply be informed about sources, together with methods of accessing these sources (i.e. as a method of both assessing an individual's level of motivation to pursue an occupational goal and developing the necessary research skills for clients to undertake their own future investigations). Or
- LMI can be used as part of an educational process which requires clients to engage actively with material so that they can increase their knowledge and understanding about the world of work (e.g. a 'true/false' quiz about occupations or a role play exercise on selection interviews).

To find out more about using LMI effectively with clients, an on-line module has been developed and can be accessed free of charge at: <http://www.guidance-research.org/lmi-learning>

Examples of websites providing different types of LMI follow below.

### Nomis

Nomis can be accessed at [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk). It provides access to a wide range of LLMI (on employment, unemployment, vacancies [notified to Jobcentre Plus], earnings, demography, etc) for different spatial units. These data provide a valuable source for analysis purposes. However, the emphasis in this section is on access to area profiles.

### Neighbourhood Statistics

At ward level a **Local Area Profile**, and **Indices of Deprivation** are also available from **Neighbourhood Statistics** <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/>

### Working Futures

'Working Futures' provides information on broad historical trends and projections by occupation and industry, by drawing on data from the Labour Force Survey and the Census of Population to feed into a macroeconomic model. The aim of the Working Futures

projections is to provide a range of useful labour market information and intelligence, and to provide a sound statistical foundation for planning of key agencies concerned with skills and the labour market.

Working Futures reports may be accessed via the UKCES website: <http://www.ukces.org.uk/default.aspx?page=4685>

Many websites exist where job vacancies can be found. There inclusion here does not imply quality – rather an indication of the variety of resources:

### General

- Work Thing - [www.workthing.com](http://www.workthing.com)
- People Bank - [www.peoplebank.com](http://www.peoplebank.com)

### Regional

- <http://NIjobs.com> – job vacancies in Northern Ireland [www.nijobs.com](http://www.nijobs.com)
- Jobs in Wales – part of the Careers Wales website
- <http://www.careerswales.com/jobsinwales.asp>

### Sector/occupational

- [www.bilinguagroup.com](http://www.bilinguagroup.com) – Jobs in UK and overseas for people with language skills
- [www.languageswork.org.uk/careers/recruit/agencies.htm](http://www.languageswork.org.uk/careers/recruit/agencies.htm) - the job site for people with languages
- Gappweb – Accountancy and Finance Jobs United Kingdom [www.gaapweb.com](http://www.gaapweb.com)
- Jobsin.co.uk – UK vacancies and professional appointments [www.jobsin.co.uk](http://www.jobsin.co.uk)
- The Career Engineer [www.thecareerengineer.com](http://www.thecareerengineer.com)  
An Engineering jobs recruitment website with vacancies in the UK engineering industry, including Automotive, Aerospace, Defence, Construction, Civil and Petrochemical sectors.
- SkillsActive – limited jobs in the sector advertised [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

### Target group

- Activate – jobs for students and graduates - [www.activate.co.uk](http://www.activate.co.uk)
- Reed – jobs for graduates - [www.reed.co.uk](http://www.reed.co.uk)

### Regional and sector specific

- NICS recruitment – job vacancies in the Northern Ireland Civil Service <http://nicsrecruitment.vhost.tibus.com/>

### Regional and client attribute

- Gradsouthwest - [www.gradsouthwest.com](http://www.gradsouthwest.com)