

NICEC Seminar

Revisiting Labour Market Information (LMI) and its place in career guidance

17 March 2022

NICEC

National Institute for
Career Education
and Counselling



Feedback from group discussions re LMI

Prompt questions for the groups

- Any surprises, questions or comments on the Rosie's presentation?
- How could we use LMI better?
- What would help us to do this?

Room 1

- The seminar and discussion reminded people how complex the issue of labour market information is
- Access to *meaningful* LMI is the issue – and is not easy
- LMI is not just facts and figures
- People need to be 'walked through' LMI
- Both individuals and practitioners need training around LMI – an aspect of careers education for individuals. Training would help pull together messaging around LMI.
- Overarching point about *quality* and validity of information
- The approach appears to be more strategic in Scotland and Wales and practice in England more patchy
- People need support on how to use social media effectively to explore LMI

Room2

- Interested in the idea of linking LMI to career theory ie how it will be used/ positioned
- It's hard! Using LMI is both difficult and time consuming.

- Different LMI needs and uses at different points in the lifespan it needs to be nuanced
- Information (eg in HE) about destinations of people who have taken courses is useful, especially for vocational courses
- Need more two-way exchange re skills employers are looking for and the skills gained by students from studying different subjects
- It is difficult and probably inappropriate to 'push' areas of LM shortage at individuals making choices – no reason to assume those areas will be appropriate for them. Can this undermine the impartiality of the adviser? Misuse of LMI is a potential risk to ethical practice.

Room 3

- Current sources of LMI are more useful to policy makers but it is not good enough for individuals making decisions
- LMI is a simplification of the world (ie real world is complex and granular) – so LMI gives us clues but not answers
- It is important for individuals to encounter sources of information, to be encouraged to be curious but also to be tolerant of ambiguity and risks
- So we're talking about information literacy – as in all areas of life – What does the data say? Gaining a more nuanced view of data. Careers education should help to develop helpful encounters with LMI and support people to think about who produced it, what does it say, how do we aggregate information

Room 4

- Our understanding of labour markets is always in the past eg job roles change over time and may be quite different by the time people (especially children) reach the labour market
- How should we respond to those who would wish to withhold information about areas of the labour market/ types of work they consider to be unethical eg industries they disapprove of and potential no go areas. Advisers are potentially in a gatekeeping role. Advisers tend to know more about the formal labour market than informal work opportunities.
- We need to equip career leaders to support effective use
- We need to be equipping individuals to evaluate data
- We need to decide what to share – to take care that it is relevant and not too much

Some end comments

- Came back to the need to define labour market information/intelligence – certainly in this discussion people were seeing it quite broadly – qual skills as well as quant; local/occupational as well as national; kinds of career, different occupations, routes in and not just demand and supply
- Practitioner curriculum structure currently differentiates between careers information and labour market information – they are in different modules. Is that distinction possible or useful to make? Would it not be better to teach these together?
- Discussion around how skills in using social media, both as a source of LMI and for production of LMI are of growing importance. Risks of “fake news” in LMI just as in other areas of information production
- Discussion about the challenges of how data is aggregated which can oversimplify career routes – for example sectors, occupations, degree subjects, graduate routes...
- Discussion about how LMI is a higher level skill, requiring ethical consideration. Particularly in relation to contemporary changes in the labour market, social justice and using LMI critically become important.
- Information relevant to policy makers is not necessarily useful for individuals
- There are some trusted commentators that can help us to understand trends and emerging patterns – Tony Wilson from IEA, Jonathan Boys Labour Market Economist from CIPD <https://twitter.com/JonathanBoys> Jonathan presented a seminar on LMI earlier this week. The recording will be available on the CIPD London YouTube channel shortly <https://www.youtube.com/c/CIPDLondon>
- The following sources were identified as useful by participants :-
 - (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/>,
 - Charlie Ball,
<https://highpeakdata.wordpress.com/author/highpeakcharlie/>
 - <https://www.jobs.ac.uk/>, J
 - Jobbank.gc.ca - government stats sourced site
 - <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>, <https://insights.ise.org.uk/>
 - People who pull LMI together and comment well (IES, Work and Learning Institute etc), ONS for Labour Force Survey, local/regional/

professional bodies, those with specific education sectors (eg HESA), Skill Development Scotland

- Local Authority Eco Dev Dept - HESA dest - IUni own Leavers Survey AGCAS/Prospects
 - iCould
 - cedefop
 - Imiforall.org,
 - ISE, ONS, Parliament Library, BEIS, AGCAS
 - Conversations with people!
 - LinkedIn,
 - education–employment linkages:
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820903491716>
 - <https://peopleandplanet.org/fossil-free-careers> is interesting
 - <https://www.cbi.org.uk/articles/skills-for-an-inclusive-economy-cbibirkbeck-education-and-skills-survey-2021/>
 - Emsi and their free webinars
 - <https://www.economicmodelling.co.uk/2021/06/11/new-report-city-guilds-skills-index-2021/>
- Rosie ended with advice to her younger self (when she struggled to understand the role of LMI in guidance); her advice would be: LMI is broader than you think it is, and you don't have to always give information for information to be helpful in guidance.