Questions about Industry and Occupational Projections and Top Demand Occupations

General Questions   Industry Projections   Occupational Projections   Top Occupations

General Questions

1. **Are projections data available for smaller areas in the state?**
   In addition to the statewide projections, data are available for the eight regional labor market areas (RLMAs) that make up the state.

2. **Can I get data specifically for my parish or local community?**
   Unfortunately, no. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has strict confidentiality rules regarding displaying data. For any given industry, if 80 percent of the employment is from one employer, or if there are fewer than three employers in that industry, the data cannot be displayed. The majority of parish data could not be displayed under these rules.

3. **How are occupational projections and top demand occupations developed?**
   There are three phases to producing the top occupations in demand: (1) developing the industry projections, (2) developing the occupational projections, and (3) identifying the top occupations in demand.

   First, industry employment projections are developed for the state and the eight regional labor market areas (RLMAs). Knowing which industries are likely to expand in the future gives an idea of which occupations may grow.

   The next step is to translate the industry employment projections into occupational employment projections by using data collected by the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) wage survey program under the guidelines of the BLS. Both of these data sets are imported into the Micro Matrix System, a software program used in producing the occupational projections. Additional data sets used to supplement the survey data include separation rates (a rate used to estimate transfers, when workers leave an occupation to enter a different occupation, and exits, when workers leave the labor force entirely), change factors (factors that account for the change in the occupational mix of an industry), and estimates of staffing patterns, self-employed, and state-specific federal employment.

   Finally, the top occupations in demand are derived from the occupational projections based on total demand and growth.

   More details for each of these phases can be found in the questions and answers found below.

   Back to Top

Last Update: July 20, 2018

Industry Projections

1. **What is the foundation for the industry employment projections?**
   Historical data reported through the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program are used as the primary source of data in developing industry employment projections. This program is responsible for the proper reporting of employment and wages for employers in Louisiana participating in unemployment insurance programs. Employers are required by federal law to report this information quarterly. All establishments are assigned a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code and a parish code, so that employment for each firm is recorded in the correct industry and in the proper physical location.

2. **Are the industry projections just a straight-line projection of historical data?**
   No, this data is analyzed by industry, and the general trend may not necessarily be linear. The data is analyzed in detail by a professional economist and includes considerations of other economic indicators such as plant closures, rig counts, employment rates, etc. In addition, the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and the Occupational Forecasting Conference, which includes an economist on staff and two economists that serve on the Conference, review these projections.

   Back to Top

Occupational Projections

1. **What is the foundation of the occupational employment projections?**
   The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), in cooperation with the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), surveys Louisiana firms on the occupational composition of their workforce and the wages for those occupations. This survey is called the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey. Employer responses show the occupations utilized within different industry sectors. These data are used to develop staffing patterns of that particular industry, which are then used to develop specific occupational projections.

2. **How are employees defined by the OES survey?**
   The term "employees" covers all workers who are paid a wage or salary, whether full-time or part-time. The survey does not cover the self-employed, owners/partners of incorporated firms, household workers, and unpaid family workers.

3. **Do the occupational projections contain employment estimates besides those found in the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data?**
   Yes, before the occupational projections are developed, estimates of self-employed and other types of employment that are not part of the industry projections are identified and distributed among those sectors in which self-employment, etc., are concentrated. Occupational profiles by industry are developed next.

4. **Does the OES program survey all establishments?**
   No, a randomly selected sample of approximately 7,500 employers is surveyed each year, representing firms of all sizes.

5. **Are projections data available for all of the surveyed occupations?**
   Yes, but the data is screened for confidentiality. Occupational employment of less than ten is suppressed. The list for all surveyed occupations can be found through the Louisiana Occupational Information System (LOIS) Web portal at https://www.louisianaworks.net/hire/vosnet/lmi/default.aspx?pu=1&plang=E. Downloadable Excel files are available for all occupations for which there are data on from the Louisiana

Workforce Commission (LWC) Web site http://www.LAWorks.net.

6. **What does annual growth represent?**
   Growth for an occupation is directly related to industry growth. If an industry is projected to grow, occupations concentrated in that industry will grow. Subsequently, if an occupation is projected to decline, it can be attributed to the decline of the industry in which it is concentrated. Changes in technology or business practices can reduce the demand for an occupation within an industry.

7. **What does annual exists represent?**
   Exits represent from workers who leave their jobs to retire or leave the workforce for other reasons.

8. **What does total annual transfers represent?**
   Transfers represent workers who leave their jobs to enter other occupations.

9. **What does total annual total openings represent?**
   Total openings represent the summation of job separations (exits and transfers) and new job growth.

   Back to Top

Top Occupations

1. **What are "top demand" occupations?**
   Top demand occupations are occupations identified by the Louisiana Occupational Forecasting Conference as having the greatest average annual potential demand.

2. **Why are occupations labeled "all other" not included in the "top demand" occupations if they represent a large demand?**
   Although these occupations have a significant amount of demand and statistically meet the criteria for inclusion in the top demand occupations, "all other" occupations represent a broad range of job titles. Workers are classified into these categories when there is not enough information about the job title to classify the worker into a specific Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code or the job duties are so unique that they cannot be classified into a specific SOC code.

3. **What if I still have questions?**
   If these "Questions about Projections" did not answer your question(s), or if you need further assistance, please send an email to Answer My Question.

   Back to Top