

Comments on: “Future Direction of the Regional Accounts”

Heather Stephens, Ph.D.
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Overall Comments

- I commend the regional directorate for its ongoing commitment to the expansion of regional data
 - And to more timely release of such data
- When thinking about your stakeholders,
 - You might also think about the myriad of federal programs that use combinations of regional statistics to identify eligibility
 - For example: to measure “distress” and identify places most in need of grant or other assistance
- I am especially interested in the new efforts to expand access to data through use of synthetic data and differential privacy protection
 - As this may allow researchers (and others) to have more regional data without sacrificing privacy protections

- These other efforts are also moving in the right direction to expand access to regional data:
 - Data science and alternative data sources
 - Applications for QCEW microdata (firm-level data)
 - Alternative data sources from payroll processors, credit card intermediaries, and budgeting service providers
 - Partnering with Opportunity Insights, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics
 - Alternative methods such as machine learning, nowcasting, and hierarchical modeling
 - Migration of all production procedures to Python programming language, 2024-2025
 - Research Efforts

- Overall, more data are needed at the sub-state level overall.
 - I'll now turn to suggestions based on current data efforts based on my own experience and discussions with others
- Can you create a version of Regional Price Parities (RPPs) that are available for non-metro counties or non-metro areas of states?
- With the new work on state income distributions and income inequality statistics,
 - Could you provide data on the county-level distribution within the states?
 - Many states may have high-income and low-income geographies that are masked by the state-level measures

- The distribution of R&D is also likely to vary within states
 - Even if much of the detail is missing, could you provide some measures at the county level?
- Increase transparency and data with the regional input-output (I/O) Tables that are used by researchers but also by local and state governments who are estimating the impact of new economic activity.
 - Provide employment by industry with the Input-Output (I/O) Tables
 - Those who use them attempt to create their own measures, but they are probably wildly inaccurate
 - Add a disclosure to the I/O Tables with redefinitions and reallocations as they will not match up with employment measures based on the before redefinition and reallocation tables

- What other data could be provided at the sub-state level?
 - Perhaps due to the use of differential privacy or alternative data sources
- Finally, I know regional has generally stopped at the county level,
 - I urge you to consider sub-county measures
 - These are necessary to understand that heterogeneity that can exist within counties
 - Can also help better target funding (especially in terms of the programs I mentioned that target distress)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the important work that BEA is doing to enhance regional data.

Heather Stephens, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, West Virginia University
heather.stephens@mail.wvu.edu