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The Institute is a nonprofit, independent research organization devoted to finding and promoting solutions to employment-related problems at the international, national, state, and local levels. The Institute is an activity of the W.E. Upjohn Unemployment Trustee Corporation, which was established in 1932 to administer a fund set aside by Dr. W.E. Upjohn, founder of the Upjohn Company, to conduct research on the causes and effects of unemployment and seek measures for the alleviation of the hardships suffered by the unemployed.

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President

Randall W. Eberts and George A. Erickcek

Where Have All the Michigan Auto Jobs Gone?

In May 2009, General Motors, the icon of corporate America and the historic backbone of this country's industrial might, filed for bankruptcy. After years of losing ground to foreign automakers and suffering severe losses during the current recession, General Motors found itself with no other recourse but to undergo a drastic restructuring and downsizing. Its two Detroit-based companions, Ford and Chrysler, also have been hit hard by foreign competition and the economic downturn. Chrysler joined GM in

recession to hit the U.S. and global economies in 70 years. As the recession appears to be bottoming out, it is perhaps a good time to begin to assess the damage to Michigan's auto industry and to look for signs of what the future might hold. This article examines the change during the past decade in employment in Michigan's auto industry and traces how and why the landscape has changed both statewide and regionally.

Michigan's Share of Auto Jobs

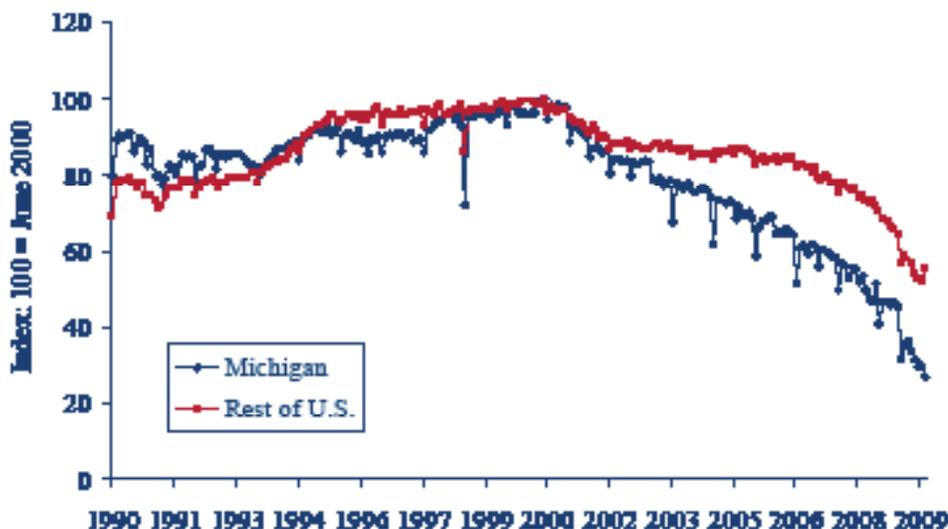
While the recession has taken its toll on Michigan's auto industry, the results of the cyclical downturn pale in comparison to the structural changes that have taken place during the past several decades. During the 1990s, Michigan's and the nation's auto industry experienced healthy growth.¹ Michigan's auto employment peaked in June 2000 at 333,000, claiming 29 percent of the nation's 1.2 million auto jobs. But even then, Michigan was on its way to relinquishing its dominance in the auto industry. Just 10 years earlier Michigan boasted 32 percent of the nation's auto jobs, with a 38 percent share of the nation's auto assembly workers. Even before the recession, Michigan lost 211,000 auto jobs from 2000 to December 2007—nearly three times the number of auto jobs lost to date during the recession. Figure 1 shows the steady decline in Michigan auto employment since the peak of June 2000 (at which

Even before the recession, Michigan lost 211,000 auto jobs from 2000 to December 2007—nearly three times the number of auto jobs lost to date during the recession.

declaring bankruptcy, while Ford has managed to stay out of court. Since the operations of these three companies and their suppliers are heavily concentrated in Michigan, the state has suffered a larger than proportionate share of auto job losses. As a result, Michigan has lost more auto jobs during the past decade than remain today.

Michigan's auto industry has gone through cycles before, but this time it is different. Michigan's dominance has steadily eroded over the past decade, even before it was jolted by the worst

Figure 1 Total Motor Vehicle Employment for Michigan and the Rest of the U.S. Indexed to June 2000, the Peak of Employment over the Past Two Decades



SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

time the index is equal to 100), while the industry in the rest of the United States experienced relatively steady employment after the 2001 recession up until mid-2006. By August 2009, Michigan retained only 27 percent of the jobs it started with in 2000, while the rest of the United States, which peaked at the same time as Michigan in 2000, was left with 56 percent of its peak employment. Prior to 2000, Michigan's employment trends tracked that of the rest of the country fairly closely.

While the current recession further exacerbated the problems facing Michigan's auto industry, the causes started long before the recession began. One could argue that Michigan's problems are rooted in its past success. For years, GM, Ford, and Chrysler dominated the auto industry, and Michigan benefited from their ability to set prices and dictate trends for the auto industry. However, factors such as inflexibility in responding to changing consumer preferences, rising oil prices, the accumulation of large legacy costs from generous health care and pension benefits to retired auto workers, and the higher production costs associated with an increasingly older, higher-paid incumbent workforce eroded their competitive position.

As foreign companies—such as Toyota, Honda, Nissan, and Mercedes-Benz—gained a stronger foothold in the U.S. auto market and began to establish domestic production facilities, they looked outside of Michigan to build their assembly plants. While Honda set up facilities in Ohio and Indiana, other companies built plants in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama. Parts suppliers moved with them to be within a day's

As foreign automakers began to build assembly plant outside of Michigan, parts suppliers moved with them.

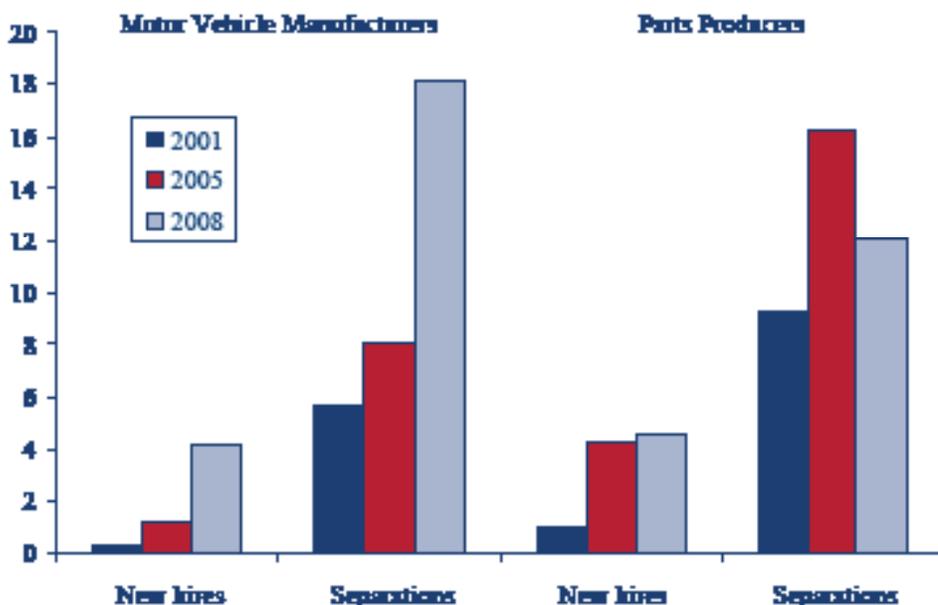
drive of their assembly plants, creating a shift in the epicenter of auto production from Michigan and the Midwest to the South. States south of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River gained employment share at the expense of Michigan and the Midwest states.² Within this broad geographical area, which claims 75 percent of U.S. auto jobs, Michigan's share has dropped from 23 percent in 2000 to 19.4 percent in 2006 (the most recent data available at the county level), while the share of auto jobs in the South has grown from 21.3 percent to 26.4 percent.

Within Michigan, the auto employment landscape has also shifted, but in this case from a more geographically dispersed industry to one that is consolidating back, ironically, to Detroit, where it began a century ago. The Detroit metropolitan area's share of Michigan's auto jobs grew from 53 percent in 2000 to 60 percent in 2006, and by July 2009 its share had grown to 66 percent. This is not to say that Detroit gained jobs. On the contrary, it lost 60 percent of its auto jobs between 2000 and July 2009. However, it lost at a slower rate than the rest of the state: a 60 percent decline for the Detroit metro area versus a 77 percent decline outside the metro area. Detroit's share of auto assembly workers grew the most, as the Detroit Three consolidated operations during this period. But Detroit also became home to a larger share of auto parts producers. In July 2009, the Detroit metro area accounted for 77 percent of Michigan's auto assembly jobs—up from 67 percent in 2000—and it comprised 62 percent of the state's parts manufacturing jobs—an increase of 47 percent in 2000.

Operational Structure

Michigan's auto industry has restructured in two distinct ways. The auto assembly sector reduced the number of workers in their facilities, without reducing the number of facilities in the state. Parts producers, on the other hand, cut workers and shut down plants. As of 2008, Michigan and the United States as a whole had slightly more auto assembly plants than they started with in 2001. However, in Michigan the average staffing levels of these facilities were cut in half during that period, while for the rest of the nation the levels were reduced by 27 percent. Michigan still has the largest facilities, with an average of 525 workers per establishment compared with 368 per plant in the rest of the country. At the beginning of the decade, however, Michigan's plants were twice as large as those located elsewhere, averaging 1,026 workers compared to 502 in the rest of the country. Michigan's assembly plants were also more productive in 2000 than they are now. Value-added per production

Figure 2 New Hires and Separations for Motor Vehicle Manufacturers and Parts Producers as a Percentage of Total Employment



SOURCE: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau.

worker hours was 17 percent higher than the rest of the nation in 2000, but there was no difference in 2006.

Auto parts manufacturers, on the other hand, shuttered hundreds of facilities throughout the country, with Michigan accounting for half the net closures. Michigan had 300 fewer establishments in 2008 than in 2001—a 25 percent reduction of the 2001 total of 1,234. Establishment size was also reduced. Michigan’s auto parts makers shrunk by 28 percent to an average of 120 workers per establishment, while parts producers in the rest of the country downsized by 19 percent to an average plant size of 80 workers.

Yet, while jobs have been drastically cut from Michigan’s auto industry, the industry is not totally lifeless. At the same time workers are being laid off, others are being hired. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Quarterly Workforce Indicators, new hires as a percentage of total employment were higher in the four-quarter period at the beginning of the recession than the same four-quarter period in 2000, as shown in Figure 2. In 2008, new hires by auto assembly plants were 4.11 percent of total employment

compared with only 0.28 percent in 2001. New hires were up during the more recent period for parts manufacturers as well. Of course, separations were also much higher—18 percent versus 6 percent for auto assembly workers and 12 percent versus 9 percent for parts producers, which accounts for the decline

The higher level of hiring and separations is a strong indication of the intensity of restructuring taking place now compared to 10 years ago.

in employment during that period. The higher level of hiring and separations is a strong indication of the intensity of restructuring taking place now compared to 10 years ago.

What’s Next?

Significant restructuring within the auto industry, particularly in Michigan, has accounted for the bulk of the job losses over the past decade. The prospect of the state reclaiming a large proportion of these jobs as the recovery gains

momentum or even in the more distant future is highly unlikely. Competitive issues facing the Detroit Three auto producers and the relentless increase in productivity of the industry in general mean fewer auto jobs for Michigan and for the nation. Nonetheless, Michigan’s auto legacy may also hold its future. As of 2007, the state housed more than 330 auto-related research and development facilities, which includes facilities for nine of the world’s largest auto manufacturers, including Honda, Nissan and Toyota (Michigan Economic Development Corporation 2007). In addition, Michigan’s preeminent research universities and the state’s emphasis on alternative energy sources offer additional potential for path-breaking research for ways to power the next generation of motor vehicles. However, even with this potential, it seems unlikely that the auto industry will be in the position to support Michigan’s economy in the future as it has done in the past.

Notes

1. We define the auto industry as tier one motor vehicle manufacturers or auto assembly plants (NAICS 3361) and tier two motor vehicle parts manufacturers (NAICS 3363).

2. Midwest states included Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. The South were states below the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi, which included Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

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Randall W. Eberts is the president of the Upjohn Institute, and George A. Erickcek is a senior regional analyst at the Institute.

➔ For more information on the auto industry, see the Upjohn Institute’s recently published book, *Who Really Made Your Car? Restructuring and Geographic Change in the Auto Industry*, by Thomas Klier and James Rubenstein.

David C. Stapleton and Craig Thornton

Is It Time to Establish a National Disability Data System?

The federal government spends more than \$226 billion a year on some 200 programs that provide income, health insurance, housing, and a wide array of services to millions of working-age people with disabilities (Goodman and Stapleton 2007; Government Accountability Office 2005). Managing this set of programs has become increasingly difficult as more people seek benefits, as the programs face greater budget pressures, and as efforts have risen to foster better service integration among programs. Yet the data that could inform administrators and policymakers remain a morass of program-specific data sets and largely uncoordinated surveys. It is not even possible to obtain accurate counts of the aggregate number of people being served or the extent to which people draw on multiple programs. While substantial progress is being made to improve data on program participants, these efforts could be enhanced considerably by the creation of a National Disability Data System (NDDS).

The existing programs provide invaluable services to people with disabilities, and in many ways they work well. Yet there is dissatisfaction with many elements of these programs, particularly with program fragmentation and conflicting incentives. Policymakers trying to address those concerns are faced with a host of questions: How will new rules in one program affect use and expenditures of other programs? Do the number and characteristics of people being served vary substantially across states and over time? Are eligible people making effective use of all the programs that might help them? Does the overall service system adequately meet their needs?

Many of these questions cannot be answered adequately despite the fact that the federal government collects voluminous data on Americans with disabilities every year. A primary reason? Federal data collection and analysis activities for this population are only loosely coordinated among the numerous agencies that collect them. In this article, we discuss why an NDDS might greatly increase the value of the multitude of federal disability data collection efforts. We draw heavily on several chapters from *Counting Working-Age People with Disabilities: What Current Data Tell Us and Options for Improvement*

The data that could inform administrators and policymakers are a morass of program-specific data sets and largely uncoordinated surveys.

(Houtenville et al. 2009), which was published this year by the Upjohn Institute. See p. 7 for more information about the book.

Background

Millions of people in the United States live with serious impairments or disability. A long history of legislation reflects the broad public concern over their well-being. In particular, the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sets out society's intent to include these individuals fully in employment and public life, and a wide array of programs have been enacted to provide direct assistance. In 2005, 9.7 million working-age people with disabilities received income from Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) or

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs, both administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Approximately 10.9 million people with disabilities were enrolled in Medicare or Medicaid. Furthermore, many also receive supports for housing, food, employment services, transportation, and other goods and services from a range of federal, state, and local disability-focused programs, and an unknown but large number received income from such broadly targeted assistance programs as Unemployment Insurance and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Stapleton, Wittenburg, and Thornton 2009).

Most federal data about the characteristics, well-being, and activities of people with disabilities come from two major sources: surveys and administrative records. The major national household surveys—the American Community Survey (ACS), Current Population Survey (CPS), National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), and Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)—include substantial samples of people with disabilities. In addition, there have been eight recent special-topic surveys that include large samples of people with disabilities and 14 occasional surveys of specific disability subpopulations. Administrative data systems are maintained by SSA, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA—responsible for overseeing state vocational rehabilitation programs) and contain substantial individual data about the millions of people participating in their programs.

Disability Data Are Increasingly Valuable

Legislation passed in the last two decades—most notably the ADA and 1999 Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act—increased the value of the data and stimulated important efforts to improve it. Efforts to understand the effect of the ADA brought attention to significant limitations in employment statistics for people with disabilities,

ultimately leading to improvements in the identification of people with disabilities in the CPS. Similarly, the agencies responsible for implementing the multiple initiatives of the Ticket Act have seen the need for new data collection efforts (for example, SSA's first survey of all working-age DI and SSI recipients), bilateral agency agreements to match administrative data (between SSA and CMS, and SSA and RSA), improvements in the matching of SIPP and CPS records to SSA records, and, for the first time, the matching of SSA and CMS records and the NHIS and other health surveys.

Incentives for Cooperation Are Limited and the Challenges Are Formidable

It has proven to be extremely difficult to combine data from multiple agencies in order to develop a broad perspective on the people served by any single agency. Staff at individual agencies must reconcile conflicting missions and objectives, address privacy issues, negotiate and enforce rights to access and use, resolve incompatible definitions, and obtain sufficient funding. Consequently, even seemingly simple data improvements have been slow to materialize. For instance, the value of including common disability measures in federal surveys has been recognized for years, but the responsible agencies could not agree on common measures. Finally, at the urging of Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the U.S. Department of Labor and the Census Bureau implemented common measures for the CPS and ACS in 2008. These measures are gradually making their way into other surveys.

Does the Value of the Data Warrant Greater Investment?

Because responsibility for serving and surveying people with disabilities is spread over many agencies, the country tends to underinvest in data about this group. Even though the agencies would likely benefit from having a comprehensive perspective on the people they serve and the disability population

in general, they tend to collect only data pertinent to their own specific mission and programs. As a result, we have many data systems focused on narrow aspects of the population, but few that can support a fuller analysis of the well-being of this population. Nor do we have sufficient data to understand how the various support programs overlap or interact.

Growing demands on the various support programs combined with intense budget pressures have created a growing consensus about the need to have better data to support better program assessment and development. The White House (particularly OMB), Congress and its committees and agencies (notably the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office), and the executive and legislative branches of state governments have all expressed interest in better disability data, as

The value of including common disability measures in federal surveys has been recognized for years, but the responsible agencies could not agree on common measures.

have people with disabilities and their organizations, disability vendor and insurer organizations, and researchers.

What Might an NDDS Look Like, and How Much Would It Cost?

Much more could be done to enhance the data at a low cost: expanding matching efforts to include multiagency matches, matching ACS data to administrative data, improving survey methods to ensure that subjects with disabilities are uniformly included, modifying instruments to capture disability-related information, increasing use of special-topic and special-population supplements, expanding responsible access to administrative data, and producing statistics drawn from longitudinal and matched data. Many improvements are relatively low cost, and some would pay dividends by reducing the need for, or making it easier

to conduct, occasional national disability data surveys (Stapleton, Livermore, and She 2009). Such low-cost enhancements seem like worthwhile investments given the sheer size and complexity of federal and state expenditures to support the working-age population with disabilities.

An NDDS would be a way to coordinate and enhance the various efforts to improve disability data. At its simplest, an NDDS would be a group that guides, provides technical assistance, and supports agency efforts to improve disability data and data use policies. A more extensive system might archive data from multiple sources, produce matched files, make data available to the agencies and other authorized parties through a systematic process that duly protects privacy, quickly provide policymakers with tabulations to inform decisions, create public use files that are cleaned of personally identifiable information, produce and disseminates numerous statistics based on matched data, and provide disability research support to the agencies and other authorized parties.

Most importantly, an NDDS could provide a vehicle for agencies and organizations with broad perspectives on disability policy (such as Congress and OMB), to work with agencies such as SSA, CMS, and others that have more focused responsibilities. An NDDS could bring together the many narrow data sets in order to provide the comprehensive perspective and information required by all agencies to develop a more effective and responsive disability system. The wider perspective provided by a functioning NDDS will likely lead to significant gains in program administration and to improvements in disability policy that would foster better matching of services and benefits to the needs of people with disabilities.

Existing efforts, and the information they have generated, show that it is possible to improve the data, demonstrate the value of improvements, and provide valuable experience to build upon. The challenge is to expand on the significant gains of sporadic and isolated efforts by creating a well-organized, permanent NDDS. The value of improved data has never been higher than it is now. So while

the challenges to improving the data are substantial, they pale in comparison to the likely consequences of failing to do so, both for people with disabilities and for taxpayers.

Note

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Age People with Disabilities: What Current Data Tell Us and Options for Improvement, Andrew J. Houtenville, David C. Stapleton, Robert R. Weathers II, and Richard V. Burkhauser, eds. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, pp. 381–418.

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New Books

Counting Working-Age People with Disabilities

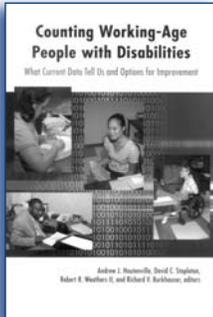
What Current Data Tell Us and Options for Improvement

Andrew J. Houtenville, David C. Stapleton, Robert R. Weathers II, and Richard V. Burkhauser, Editors

U.S. government agencies compile a thorough set of statistics on populations defined by age, race, ethnicity, and marital status—but not by disability status. Therefore, working-age people with disabilities are often overlooked in discussions of the latest statistics on employment, income, poverty, and other measures of status of a particular population.

This book offers a systematic review of what current statistics and data on working-age people with disabilities can and cannot tell us, and how the quality of the data can be improved. It provides an overview of the costly yet not well coordinated efforts to collect data on this population, both through surveys and through administrative data systems. One conclusion that arises is that better coordination of these independent efforts is critical for improving current data. The authors argue that this can be accomplished by the use of common disability-related questions on existing survey data sets, expansion and improvements to the matching of administrative records across agencies, and easier access to matched data to the broader research community.

430 pp. \$45 cloth 978-0-88099-347-0
\$22 pbk. 978-0-88099-346-3. 2009.



Strategies for Improving Economic Mobility of Workers

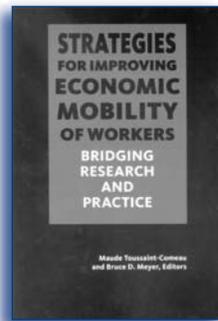
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- What practitioners should know about the limits of evaluating community-based programs and services.

227 pp. \$40 cloth 978-0-88099-353-1
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The International Law of Economic Migration

Toward the Fourth Freedom

Joel P. Trachtman

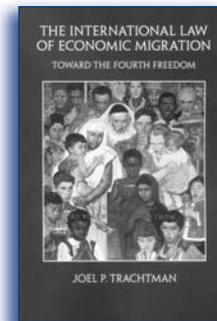
Economists agree that liberalization of international migration could produce very substantial global welfare gains. Such gains, according to a recent World Bank study, are estimated at \$155 billion annually and would be distributed predominantly to developing countries. If an agreement existed within which states could negotiate specific liberalization commitments regarding immigration, it would be more likely that states could free up these welfare increases. It is also possible that enough additional welfare could be generated to compensate workers in destination states who are hurt, and to compensate home states for the negative effects of brain drain.

Trachtman examines the welfare economics, political economy, and legal experience in international economic migration, and suggests the structure of a multilateral framework agreement on international economic migration that could help achieve the goal of unlocking immigration-related welfare increases.

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