Center for Labor Market Research

The Center for Labor Market Research has two main focus areas: economic forecasting and economic policy analysis. This research group at the Institute was a pioneer in the area of regional economic forecasting, particularly its emphasis on small, local economies at a time when there was virtually no forecasting being done below the national level. Development of a methodology led to publication of a book which has earned academic acclaim and has proven to be a valuable tool for state and local government planners. The strength of the methodology combined with continued refinements over time have resulted in a long, distinguished record for accuracy in forecasting labor market activity for a number of localities, especially their future prospects for employment and income.

Economic forecasting is an attempt to answer questions about what will happen in the future. Another question important to policy makers is, what would be the consequence to the community of a particular action? The Center for Labor Market Research has become an integral element in the area of research-based public policy. The group is often called upon by state and local government planners for expert input on issues of economic development. The group has also been influential in debates over national policy issues. Jointly with the School of Public Health, the group has projected the economic effect of the cessation of tobacco use. Their research findings were published in two articles in the Journal of the American Medical Association, and became an integral part of the public policy debate over governmental tobacco regulation. More recent research has focused on high technology in the regional economy, with an eye to its evolution and factors influencing its growth.

Personnel from the Center for Labor Market Research work with a variety of other campus units, such as the Economics Department (RSQE—the Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics), the School of Public Policy, the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, the School of Public Health, the School of Business, and the U-M Administration.


