

# RE: DRIVERS RE: Heartland interactive questions

Mark Muro

Wed 8/1/2018 11:55 AM

To: Jacob Whiton <JWhiton@brookings.edu>; Alec Friedhoff <AFRIEDHOFF@brookings.edu>;

Cc: Robert Maxim <RMaxim@brookings.edu>; David Lanham <DLanham@brookings.edu>; Luisa Zottis <LZottis@brookings.edu>;

 1 attachments (32 KB)

Front-measures\_updated 3x4 format\_073118.docx;

Jacob, thanks for getting this over to Alec.

Alec, I thought I'd share a little context.

Basically, we are employing a framework that begins as a 3x3 Monitor-like assessment of Heartland "Outcomes" and then places under that a 4x2 set of metrics treating four "Drivers." See the attached framework section.

In that vein, it seems like the interactive could lead with the Monitor-like Outcomes (and build very closely on your nice format for the previous Monitor interactive) and then below that provide a similar Drivers section, labeled to introduce the explanatory purpose there.

Happy to discuss soon on the phone. Thanks for working with us.

Mark

**Mark Muro**

Senior Fellow

Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings

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**From:** Jacob Whiton

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 01, 2018 10:53 AM

**To:** Alec Friedhoff <AFRIEDHOFF@brookings.edu>

**Cc:** Mark Muro <MMURO@brookings.edu>; Robert Maxim <RMaxim@brookings.edu>

**Subject:** DRIVERS RE: Heartland interactive questions

**Importance:** High

And as promised, Alec, attached here is the remaining data for the nine Driver indicators we're also wanting to include in the interactive. All except two—Population and Broadband—have only state-level data.

I've also included a map I made as an illustration of how we might want to overlay the different sub-state geographies. It's too cluttered as a static image, but I was imagining that you might be able to either 1) hover your cursor over it and have a particular metro, micro, or rural area highlighted with the data presented as a tooltip along with the name and geography type of that particular place or 2) select your geography of interest from a menu which then highlights only places of that type (tooltip would still be necessary to display data).

Something for you to consider!

**Jacob Whiton** | Research Assistant

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**From:** Jacob Whiton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 31, 2018 4:35 PM  
**To:** Alec Friedhoff <[AFRIEDHOFF@brookings.edu](mailto:AFRIEDHOFF@brookings.edu)>  
**Cc:** Mark Muro <[MMURO@brookings.edu](mailto:MMURO@brookings.edu)>; Robert Maxim <[RMaxim@brookings.edu](mailto:RMaxim@brookings.edu)>  
**Subject:** UPDATE RE: Heartland interactive questions  
**Importance:** High

Hey Alec,

So we've continued to dialogue with Ross at the Walton Family Foundation and have also in the meantime received some good feedback from other Metro scholars on how we're structuring the factbook. Hopefully it won't be too disruptive, but we've made some revisions to the bucketing and ordering of the indicators. The core 9 are basically the same, but we've eliminated Population, substituted Employment-Population Ratio for the Unemployment Rate, and added in Median Annual Earnings. Jobs at Young Firms is now a Growth indicator and Average Wages has moved to Prosperity. The indicator list attached not only reflects this new flow, but also explains some of the data constraints we faced with our new measures and how we'd like them displayed in the interactive.

Also to note: for both Emp-Pop Ratio and Median Earnings, there are three MSAs for which we are unable to get consistent 2010-16 annual data because they were redefined in 2013. This normally wouldn't be a problem if we had access to complete county data, but unfortunately, counties and micros are just too small to have sufficient sample sizes from single year ACS data. For just those three we'll show 2013-16 growth and note as such somewhere on the interactive page. I've also reclassified Enid, OK as a micro for those since it only became an MSA in 2015 (if that makes a difference for the display).

Lastly, the indicator list highlights which of the Driver indicator we've also chosen to include in the interactive and at which geographies they're available. Those will be headed your way tomorrow morning. That should cover everything, but please reach out if any further clarification on these updates is needed!

Cheers,

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**From:** Alec Friedhoff  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2018 10:11 PM  
**To:** Jacob Whiton <[JWhiton@brookings.edu](mailto:JWhiton@brookings.edu)>  
**Cc:** Mark Muro <[MMURO@brookings.edu](mailto:MMURO@brookings.edu)>; Robert Maxim <[RMaxim@brookings.edu](mailto:RMaxim@brookings.edu)>; Julia Kraeger <[JKraeger@brookings.edu](mailto:JKraeger@brookings.edu)>; David Lanham <[DLanham@brookings.edu](mailto:DLanham@brookings.edu)>; Luisa Zottis <[LZottis@brookings.edu](mailto:LZottis@brookings.edu)>  
**Subject:** Re: Heartland interactive questions

Hey Jacob, Thanks for sending!

One immediate question that comes to mind is, why only present data for the Heartland states?

I'll look this through and follow up with any questions.

Best,  
Alec

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**From:** Jacob Whiton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2018 9:44:59 PM  
**To:** Alec Friedhoff  
**Cc:** Mark Muro; Robert Maxim; Julia Kraeger; David Lanham; Luisa Zottis  
**Subject:** RE: Heartland interactive questions

Hey again Alec,

Attached here is a spreadsheet of all of the underlying data for our 9 top-line indicators that will definitely be included in the interactive. As I said before, we're still deciding on the additional 5-6, but those won't be long in coming. We've also received Ross's sign-off on the complete indicator list that I've attached here to give you a sense for the flow of the whole document and how we're organizing it.

In the spreadsheet, each geographic level is separated out onto its own sheet for each metric. We're wanting the interactive to reflect the report as much as possible, so at minimum that'd mean the latest year of absolute data plus a change-over-time metric. **Mark** and **Rob**, do either of you want to weigh in on what specific metrics should be displayed?

I'll your point of contact on the data, Alec, so happy to answer any questions you have or continue dialoguing on how best to display this information. I can send along tomorrow a mockup I did of how the three sub-state geographies might look displayed on a single map. You'll notice that only data for Heartland states (and sub-state geographies) is included. For each indicator we only want to display the Heartland and Non-Heartland figures for comparison, so while you might decide to include the other lower-48 states, they'll likely need to be recessed or shaded differently so users know that we're not showing data for them separately.

Best,

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**From:** Jacob Whiton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 24, 2018 9:43 AM  
**To:** Alec Friedhoff <[AFRIEDHOFF@brookings.edu](mailto:AFRIEDHOFF@brookings.edu)>  
**Cc:** Mark Muro <[MMURO@brookings.edu](mailto:MMURO@brookings.edu)>; Robert Maxim <[RMaxim@brookings.edu](mailto:RMaxim@brookings.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: Heartland interactive questions

Hey Alec,

We've been further refining our selection of indicators to include in the interactive, but just wanted to give you a heads up that I'll be transmitting a first tranche of data to you later today. I'll include some additional explanation then about how things are organized and what we're imagining for the display, but basically we've decided on categorizing our indicators into three buckets: growth, prosperity, and inclusion. Each bucket will have three top-line metrics and those are what I'll be getting to you first. All nine have complete data for Heartland states, MSAs, micropolitan areas, and remaining rural (non-metro, non-micro) areas as a whole for each state. Mark, Rob, and I will then assess which additional 5 or so indicators besides these top 9 we'll also want to include, but we think 15 total is an appropriate number.

Anyway, wanted to keep you posted on where things stood on this.

Cheers,

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**From:** Alec Friedhoff  
**Sent:** Friday, July 13, 2018 3:37 PM  
**To:** Jacob Whiton <[JWhiton@brookings.edu](mailto:JWhiton@brookings.edu)>  
**Cc:** Mark Muro <[MMURO@brookings.edu](mailto:MMURO@brookings.edu)>; Robert Maxim <[RMaxim@brookings.edu](mailto:RMaxim@brookings.edu)>  
**Subject:** Re: Heartland interactive questions

Hey Jacob,

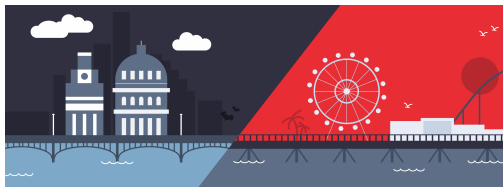
On the number of indicators, it's hard to say what's ideal. If we went with 25, I think some kind of bucketing would be very important to help the user navigate through all of the data to find what they're interested in. In general, I'd encourage you to think about trimming the number of indicators as much as possible or at least thinking about placing them in a couple of tiers. Top tier indicators could get more prominent placement/viz treatment while secondary indicators could be used to build out context and may not require anything more than a text box or table. As an example, if you had 4 categories, we could focus strong visuals on 3 indicators in each category and place the rest in a table.

Not all of the indicators need sub-state data, but I do think it'd be good to limit the levels of detail. My preference would be to stick with metro-level data, but we should talk about what you're thinking there. Do you have county, place, or other levels of geography?

Lastly, here are a couple of sites that might help our thinking. [Census Reporter](#) is an example of a straightforward data explorer that covers tons of data (waaay more than we have here). It's a nice resource, but doesn't give the reader any narrative. Meanwhile, this "[State of Salaries](#)" report places a greater emphasis on situating the data within a narrative. I like the prompts at the top and we could do something similar with data categories or other findings.

Hope this helps.

Best,  
Alec



## State of Salaries Report - Hired

hired.com

Hired is back for year three of the annual State of Salaries report — and, once again, results reveal that tech is booming. We looked through our 2017 data on technology workers, including software engineers, designers, product managers, and data analytics roles, to help answer the workplace ...

Best,  
Alec

Alec Friedhoff  
Communications Officer and Associate Fellow  
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**From:** Jacob Whiton  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 11, 2018 5:05:38 PM  
**To:** Alec Friedhoff  
**Cc:** Mark Muro; Robert Maxim  
**Subject:** Heartland interactive questions

Hey Alec,

We're finalizing our timeline for the last push here on the Heartland report, so wanted to touch base about your data needs for constructing the accompanying interactive. To start, we had some questions:

What would you imagine to be the optimal number of indicators to include? At this point our indicator list for the fact book is hovering around 25-30, but that's likely to be culled a bit.

In line with that, do you think that bucketing the indicators somehow would be useful for orienting the user?

As we've discussed before, we'd like to include sub-state data for some of the indicators. Will we be able to display all of that on a single map and should every indicator have some sub-state cut?

These are just what Mark and I have discussed, but if you have any additional questions for us, please let us know. We'll likely be finalizing our indicator list early next week when we speak again with Ross at the Walton Foundation, and after that can begin passing along data to you.

Thanks!

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