Ashleigh Sewell
Abstract
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Genuine Progress in Oregon?

Macroeconomic indicators are widely used by policy makers, the public, and businesspeople to gauge the overall health of the economy and make choices about whether and how to invest resources. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the dominant indicator today, often used as a proxy for judging the overall success of a country, state or region. However, GDP is limited in scope, measuring only expenditures, and has been the subject of criticism from economists and others since its inception. Proposals for alternative measures have come out of these criticisms and met with varying degrees of success. Increasingly, governments are adopting these innovative measures to help fill in parts of the picture GDP statistics leave out. Once such indicator that is gaining recognition among economists and policymakers is the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI). The GPI uses the GDP measure as a base and adjusts it to account for factors such as inequality, household and volunteer labor, changes in natural capital, and defensive spending.

This research will calculate the GPI for the state of Oregon using secondary data analysis and follow the methods used in previous GPI studies. The GPI for Oregon can then be compared to that of the U.S. on the whole and other states for which the calculations have been made. This information will aid decision makers in that state as well as others in determining what Oregonians are doing well and where they can make improvements.