

Measuring the U.S. Economy

Economic Indicators

The U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Indicators keep the world informed by providing the first official measures of the U.S. economy.

Manufacturing, Retail and Wholesale Trade, and Services

Advance Report on Durable Goods Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders (AdvM3) & Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders (M3)

The Advance Report on Manufacturing covers shipments, inventories, orders and unfilled orders for durable goods in the United States. The Full Report includes any revisions to durable goods from the Advance Report and the addition of the nondurable portion of U.S. manufacturing. [census.gov/m3](https://www.census.gov/m3)

Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services (MARTS)

The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services is the earliest available monthly estimates of broad-based retail trade activity and consumer spending. The survey provides reliable measures of current economic activity that are essential to an objective assessment of the need for, and impact of, a wide range of public policy decisions. [census.gov/retail](https://www.census.gov/retail)

Monthly Wholesale Trade (MWTS)

The Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey is conducted to provide data on the sales and inventories of U.S. Merchant Wholesalers, excluding Manufacturers' Sales Branches and Offices (MSBOs). The survey provides a reliable measure of current economic activity in the wholesale sector that is essential to an objective assessment of the need for and impact of a wide range of public policy decisions. [census.gov/wholesale](https://www.census.gov/wholesale)

Manufacturing & Trade Inventories & Sales (MTIS)

The Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales Report provides measures of combined changes in domestic retail trade, wholesale trade, and manufacturers' activities. This report contains end-of-month inventories and inventories-to-sales ratio estimates for all three sectors, as well as estimates of retail sales, wholesale sales, and manufacturer shipments. [census.gov/mtis](https://www.census.gov/mtis)

Quarterly Services Survey (QSS)

The Quarterly Services Survey is the only source of service industry indicator performance providing estimates of revenue for selected service industries, source-of-revenue estimates for a subset of industries, estimates of total operating expenses from tax-exempt firms in industries that have a large not-for-profit component, as well as estimates of inpatient days and discharges for hospital services. [census.gov/services](https://www.census.gov/services)

Quarterly Financial Report—Manufacturing, Mining, Wholesale Trade, and Selected Service Industries (QFRM) & Retail Trade (QFRR)

The Quarterly Financial Report is the sole source of quarterly statistics on the financial results and position of privately and publicly held nonfinancial corporations in the United States. The program produces statistics on the sales, profits, assets, liabilities, stockholders' equity, and related financial and operating ratios of corporations in the manufacturing, mining, wholesale trade, information, and professional, scientific and technical services (excluding legal services) sectors. [census.gov/econ/qfr](https://www.census.gov/econ/qfr)

New! Advance Economic Indicators Report

Provides an early economic snapshot on:

- International Trade in Goods
- Wholesale Trade Inventories
- Retail Trade Inventories
- Quarterly Services Survey

See [census.gov/econ/indicators](https://www.census.gov/econ/indicators) for more.

How do we know?

The U.S. Census Bureau has devoted decades to collecting comprehensive timely statistics via its censuses and surveys that tell the story of our changing economy.

Today, the Economic Indicators, Economic Census, and our quarterly and annual economic surveys give Congress, policy makers, and business and community leaders the information they need to make informed decisions that shape our economy.

Trade associations, chambers of commerce, and businesses large and small rely on information from these censuses and surveys for economic development, business decisions, and strategic planning.



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International Trade

U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services (FT-900)

The U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services report, released jointly with the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, is the official source of comprehensive data on imports and exports of goods and services. This report provides the most timely measures of U.S. trade by commodity, country, and state, impacting business and policy decisions in both the private and public sectors. census.gov/foreign-trade

Construction and Housing

New Residential Construction (NRC)

The New Residential Construction series, released jointly with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, provides monthly estimates of the numbers of new privately-owned housing units authorized by permits, started, and completed, as well as the inventories of units authorized but not yet started and units under construction. census.gov/starts

New Residential Sales (NRS)

The New Residential Sales series, released jointly with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, provides monthly estimates of the numbers of new houses sold and for sale, as well as median and average prices of new houses sold. census.gov/newhomesales

Construction Put in Place (VIP)

The Construction Spending series (otherwise known as the Value of Construction Put in Place) provides monthly estimates of the total dollar value of construction work done in the United States. This includes new residential and nonresidential structures as well as improvements to existing structures. census.gov/constructionspending

Housing Vacancies and Homeownership (HVS)

The Housing Vacancies and Homeownership quarterly release provides data on rental and homeowner vacancy rates and homeownership rates for the United States, regions, states, and for the 75 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas, including estimates of the total housing inventory, characteristics of units available for occupancy, and percent distributions of vacant for-rent and for-sale units for the United States and regions. census.gov/housing/hvs

Want to Know More?

Economic Census

Use the Economic Census as a valuable complement to annual current survey data. Updated every 5 years, it includes the number of establishments, employment and payroll, and is the only source of local area business revenue. census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census.html

Public Sector

Find data on the organization, finances, and employment of approximately 90,000 state and local governments. census.gov/govs

Visit census.gov/econ or contact our Customer Services Center at 1-800-923-8282



Visit the Economic Indicator Briefing Room web site for access to the latest data, full release reports, historical data, and time series and trend charts.

census.gov/economic-indicators

A screenshot of the Economic Indicator Briefing Room website. It shows three sections: 'Quarterly Financial Report - Retail Trade', 'Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales', and 'Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services'. Each section has a 'Current Press Release' link and 'Archived Releases' information. A red circle highlights the 'Time Series/Trend Charts' link in the 'Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales' section.



Select an economic indicator and customize your data selection. Ability to download the data to a spreadsheet and create your own time series charts.

census.gov/econ/currentdata

