

Monthly Wholesale Trade

Measuring the U.S. Economy

The U.S. Census Bureau measures the nation's people, places, and economy.

Visit the MWTS website for access to the latest data, full release reports, historical data, information on methodology, and to create your own customizable time series at www.census.gov/wholesale.

For more information on the MWTS data, contact 301-763-6856, or e-mail eid.wholesale.indicator.branch@census.gov.

For more information on the Economic Indicators, visit <https://www.census.gov/economic-indicators/>.



ECONOMIC DATA | ST. LOUIS FED

Receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators by downloading the FRED App for both Apple and Android devices. FRED, the signature database of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, now incorporates the Census Bureau's 13 economic indicators. <https://fred.stlouis-fed.org/>.

A Vital Resource for Wholesale Businesses

What is the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey (MWTS)?

The MWTS produces the most comprehensive data available on wholesale economic activity in the United States. It is a sample of approximately 4,200 firms. The release contains preliminary current-month estimates and revised estimates for the previous month.

What value does the MWTS provide?

- An up-to-date indication of trends for sales and inventories of U.S. merchant wholesalers.
- Reliable measure of current economic activity that is essential to an objective assessment of a wide range of public policy decisions.
- Businesses and industry groups use the estimates to forecast future demand.
- Researchers use the estimates to benchmark the results from their own sampling operations.
- Manufacturers can use inventories estimates as a proxy for distributors' confidence for future expected sales.

What data items are included?

- Sales
- Inventories
- Inventories/sales ratios
- Measures of sampling variability
- Seasonally adjusted and not-adjusted data

What is covered in the MWTS?

The MWTS covers Wholesale Trade (NAICS Sector 42), including merchant wholesalers but excludes manufacturers' sales branches and offices (or MSBOs) and agents and brokers.

What geographic levels are provided?

Data are provided at the national level.

How frequently is it conducted and released?

The MWTS is conducted monthly. The MWTS is released online, approximately 6 weeks after the close of the data month.

Is respondent information kept confidential?

Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 requires the Census Bureau to keep respondent information confidential and to use responses only to produce statistics.

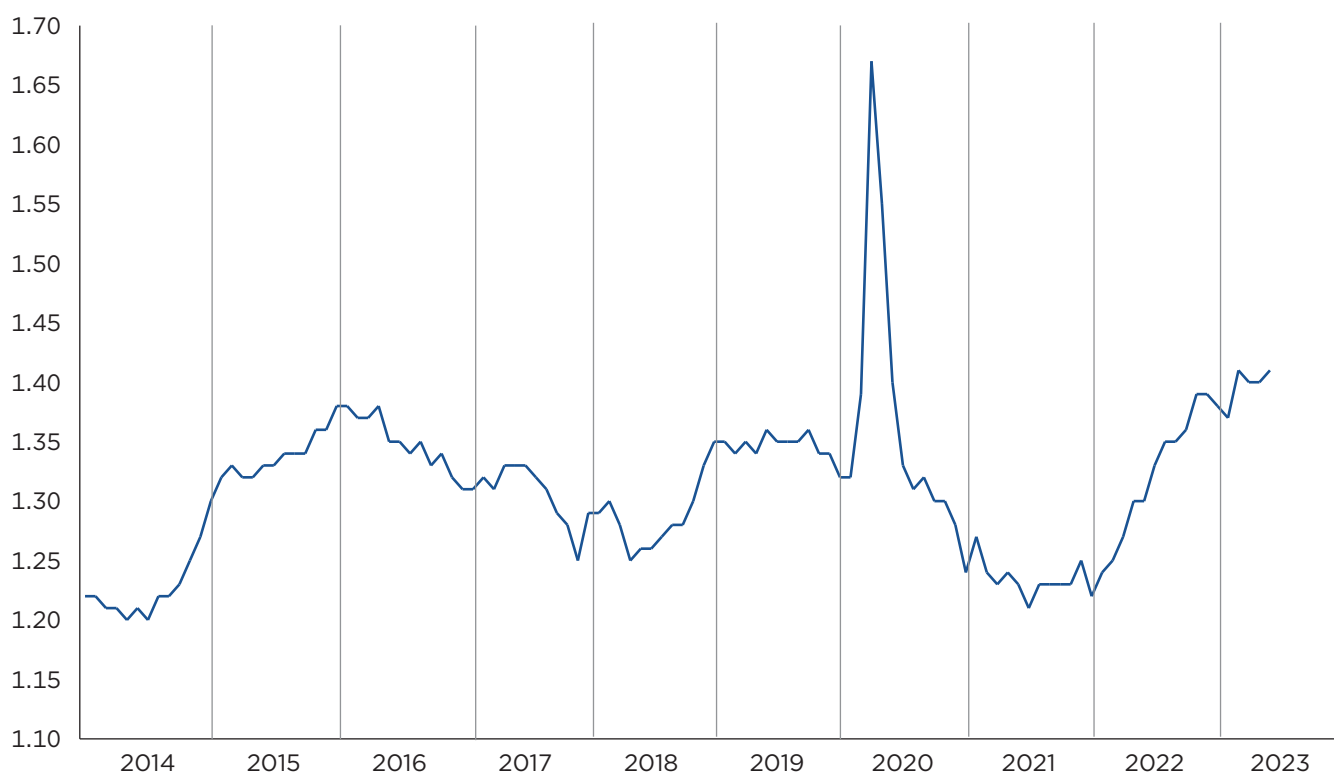
What are Real Dollar Estimates of Wholesale Sales?

- A monthly experimental data product that adjusts survey data for price movement.
- Monthly estimates are available from January 2012 forward and were first released on September 19, 2022.
- Find out more www.census.gov/wholesale/realsales.

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Monthly Inventories/Sales Ratios of Merchant Wholesalers, Except Manufacturers' Sales Branches and Offices: 2014 to 2023



Note: Data adjusted for seasonality but not price changes. Explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability can be found on our website at www.census.gov/wholesale/www/how_surveys_are_collected/monthly_methodology.html.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey, August 8, 2023. Estimates adjusted for seasonal and trading day differences, but not for price changes.

Are there other programs that provide similar data?

Selected annual data are available, including data from the Annual Wholesale Trade Survey www.census.gov/programs-surveys/awts.html and County Business Patterns www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp.html. Detailed statistics from the 5-year Economic Census www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census.html are also available.