

## Primer: Accessing BEA Direct Investment Data Interactively

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) recently launched a free service on its Web site that allows users to interactively access detailed direct investment data. The data are an embellishment to BEA's rich array of data on direct investment transactions and positions and on the financing and operations of multinational companies (MNCs). The data are widely used by economists, researchers, government officials and others.

In addition to the new direct investment interactive system, interactive tables for the U.S. international transactions accounts (ITAs) are available on the BEA Web site. Data on direct investment appear in "Table 6a. Direct Investment: Income, Capital, Royalties and License Fees, and Other Private Services." The new system supplements the estimates in this table by providing interactive entrée to more detailed annual estimates on direct investment by country and by industry.<sup>1</sup> In addition, as noted, the new system provides detailed data on the financing and operations of MNCs in an interactive format for the first time.

The new system makes it easy for users to create time series and cross-sectional tabulations of the detailed data that can be viewed and downloaded in various formats. This primer is intended to be a general guide to the new service, demonstrating how to select and display information.

The service is capable of providing a high degree of customization. Users may opt for broad coverage over many years. For example, they can create a table displaying U.S. direct investment abroad since 1990 by country or industry, with subtotals for each major geographic area or industry. Users can also create a more narrowly drawn table that shows U.S. direct investment activity in a specific country—Germany or China, for example—over just a few years, with or without industry breakdowns.

For both U.S. direct investment abroad and foreign direct investment in the United States, two categories of data are available:

- Balance of payments and direct investment position data and
- Financial and operating data.

**Balance of payments and direct investment position data.** These data cover international transactions and positions between parent companies and their affiliates.

1. However, the estimates in the new system will differ in some aspects from those included in the ITAs (these differences are highlighted in the new system), because adjustments to improve the consistency of the data with balance of payments concepts sometimes can be made only at aggregate levels.

Users can choose from among 12 time series, including direct investment positions on a historical-cost basis, equity capital transactions, reinvested earnings, inter-company debt transactions, royalties and licensing fees, and services transactions. Users can further choose to display only aggregate data, data by country, or data by country and industry. For foreign direct investment in the United States, the data are classified by industry according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) for 1997 forward; Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) data are available for 1990–96. For U.S. direct investment abroad, the data are classified on a NAICS basis for 1999 forward and on a SIC basis for 1990–98.

**Financial and operating data.** These data include a broad range of statistics on the financing and operation of U.S. multinational companies and on the U.S. operations of foreign multinational companies. For U.S. direct investment abroad, data are available for U.S. parent companies, all foreign affiliates, and majority-owned foreign affiliates. For foreign direct investment in the United States, data are available for all U.S. affiliates and majority-owned U.S. affiliates. Data are available for items such as total assets, employment, employee compensation, sales, value added, and net income. Users can choose to display aggregate data or more specific data, such as by industry of affiliate and country. In some cases, data on U.S. operations of foreign MNCs can also be displayed by state. For U.S. direct investment abroad, NAICS data are available for 1999 forward, and SIC data are available for 1997 and 1998. For foreign direct investment in the United States, data is available for 1997 forward on a NAICS basis.

Each interactive table can be downloaded as a comma separated value (.csv) file or a spreadsheet file (.xls). The tables can also be optimized for easy printing. Downloaded files include the documentation that accompanies tables as they appear on the Web site.

In addition, users can choose to display data graphically in bar or line charts or even in three-dimensional charts. These charts can depict the movement of a single time series or of multiple series. All charts can be viewed as either JPEG or Flash files (JPEG files can be easily downloaded).

In the near future, BEA plans to enhance and refine the service in several ways by adding data for more years, more detail for series currently covered, and more data series. To access the service, please visit <[www.bea.gov/bea/di/home/directinv.htm](http://www.bea.gov/bea/di/home/directinv.htm)>. Questions or comments can be e-mailed to <[internationalaccounts@bea.gov](mailto:internationalaccounts@bea.gov)>.

**Example**

The service is designed to display data that users customize in several logical steps.

Suppose a user wanted to retrieve data about employment by majority-owned affiliates of U.S. multinational

companies in China, Germany, and India.

To start, please visit <[www.bea.gov/beatdi/home/directinv.htm](http://www.bea.gov/beatdi/home/directinv.htm)> and click on “Interactive Tables” under “U.S. direct investment abroad” and “Financial and operating data.”

**Step 1, select “Majority-Owned Foreign Affiliates.”****Step 2, select “Employment.”**

The screenshot shows the BEA International Economic Accounts website. The page title is "International Economic Accounts". The navigation menu includes "Tools", "About International", "Methodologies", "Articles", "Release Schedule", "FAQs", "Staff Contacts", and "Search". The breadcrumb trail is "Home > International Economic Accounts > Direct Investment". The main heading is "Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank)" followed by "U.S. Direct Investment Abroad".

**Step 1. Choose Type of Entity:**

- U.S. Parent Companies
- All Foreign Affiliates
- Majority-Owned Foreign Affiliates

**Step 2. Choose Series:**

- Total Assets
- Capital Expenditures
- Employment
- Compensation of Employees
- U.S. Exports of Goods
- U.S. Imports of Goods
- Net Income
- Research and Development Expenditures
- Value Added (Gross Product)
- Sales
- Net Property, Plant, and Equipment

Two black arrows point to the selected options in Step 1 and Step 2. A grey callout box with an information icon contains the text: "Interactive help is available by clicking on the ? or on the hyperlinked terms".

**Step 3, select “By Country Only (Major Countries).” Then click “Continue.”**

The screenshot shows the BEA International Economic Accounts website. The page title is "International Economic Accounts". The navigation menu is the same as in the previous screenshot. The breadcrumb trail is "Home > International Economic Accounts > Direct Investment > Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank) Interactive Data". The main heading is "Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank)" followed by "U.S. Direct Investment Abroad, Majority-Owned Foreign Affiliates, Employment".

**Step 3. Choose Classification :**

- Aggregate Totals Only
- By Industry of Affiliate Only (Major Industries)
- By Industry of Affiliate Only (All Industries)
- By Industry of Affiliate and Country
- By Industry of U.S. Parent Company
- By Country Only (Major Countries)
- By Country Only (All Countries)
- By Country and Industry

A black arrow points to the selected option in Step 3. Below the list is a "Continue" button. At the bottom of the page, there is a "Back" link and a "Table Select Home" link. The footer contains the text: "Home | Contact Us | Policies | Information Quality Guidelines | Data Dissemination Practices | Privacy Policy | FirstGov" and "Bureau of Economic Analysis is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce".

Step 4, select "All Years." Then click "Continue."

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International Economic Accounts

Tools: About International Methodologies Articles Release Schedule FAQs Staff Contacts Search:  Go

Home > International Economic Accounts > Direct Investment > Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank) Interactive Data

Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank)

U.S. Direct Investment Abroad, Majority-Owned Foreign Affiliates, Employment  
By Country Only (Major Countries)

**Step 4. Select Year Range**

1997  
1998  
1999

OR  All Years

To select multiple years, hold down the CTRL (Control) Key and click on each year.

Continue

[Back](#)

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Step 5, select China, Germany, and India. (To select more than one country, click on each selection while holding down the Control key.) Then click "Display Selected Data."

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International Economic Accounts

Tools: About International Methodologies Articles Release Schedule FAQs Staff Contacts Search:  Go

Home > International Economic Accounts > Direct Investment > Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank) Interactive Data

Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank)

U.S. Direct Investment Abroad, Majority-Owned Foreign Affiliates, Employment  
By Country Only (Major Countries) for (1998,1999,2000)

**Step 5. Select Geographical Areas**

Select **Geographical Areas** - OR - Select **Individual Countries or Geographical Areas**

-- All Geographical Areas --  
Africa  
All Countries Total  
Asia and Pacific  
Canada

Honduras  
Hong Kong  
Hungary  
India  
Indonesia

To select multiple items, hold down the CTRL (Control) Key and click on each item.

Display Selected Data

Clear Selections

[Table Select Home](#)

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The data will appear in a table on the screen.

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**International Economic Accounts**

Tools: About International Methodologies Articles Release Schedule FAQs Staff Contacts Search:  Go

Home > International Economic Accounts > Direct Investment > Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank) Interactive Data

Financial and Operating Data (Nonbank)

Select New Year Range

1997  OR  All Years here  
1998   
1999  Refresh Table

[To select multiple years, hold down the CTRL (Control) Key and click on each year.]

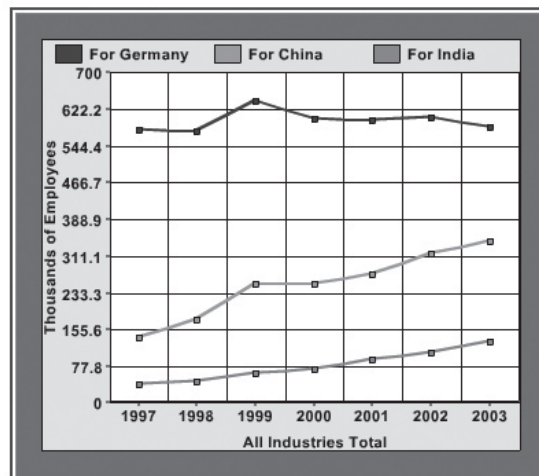
U.S. Direct Investment Abroad, Majority-Owned Foreign Affiliates, Employment  
By Country Only (Major Countries) for (1997,1998,1999,2000,2001,2002,2003) (Thousands of Employees)

**Interactive graphs**  
Click on the row title for a single series or  
Check multiple boxes and press the Graph Rows Now  
button at the bottom of the table

		All Industries Total						
		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<input type="checkbox"/>	Germany	579.3	576.7	640.6	601.3	599.5	606.5	584.3
<input type="checkbox"/>	China	138.4	175.5	252.4	252.0	273.0	316.7	343.6
<input type="checkbox"/>	India	38.8	44.9	62.2	70.8	92.9	105.5	130.7

(\*) indicates a non-zero value between -\$500,000 and +\$500,000, or fewer than 50 employees, as appropriate.  
(D) indicates that the data in the cell have been suppressed to avoid disclosure of data of individual companies.

To generate graphs of the data, check the boxes next to the countries that you wish to graph, then click the “Graph Rows Now” button.



To download tables, use the options that are shown at the bottom of the screen that displays the table.

[Download displayed data as a CSV file](#)

[Download displayed data as a Spreadsheet file \(xls\)](#)

[Display data in a Printer Friendly window \(Use your File:Print option to print the table\)](#)