

Taking Account...

Upcoming Revisions to the NIPAs

As previously announced, a regular 2007 annual revision of the national income and product accounts (NIPAs) will be released on July 27, 2007. It will include revised estimates for 2004–2006.

At the May 2006 and November 2006 meetings of the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Advisory Committee, the concept of “flexible annual revisions” was discussed. Traditionally, annual revisions have taken place in July and have revised only the most recent 3 years; comprehensive revisions, which include benchmarking to the input-output accounts and the introduction of major conceptual and methodological changes, have taken place at about 5-year intervals and opened the entire time series to possible revision.

In contrast, flexible annual revisions will take place each year in July, but revisions will not necessarily be limited to the most recent 3 years. Flexible annual revisions will allow BEA to incorporate changes in both the national and industry accounts on a flow basis rather than delaying their incorporation for up to 5 years. Changes in definitions, classifications, and statistical methods can be incorporated for

relevant historical periods because the annual updates will not necessarily be limited to the 3 most recent estimate years. Other advantages: (1) Users will be provided with a more up-to-date set of accounts; (2) the results of important revisions will be delivered on a more timely basis; (3) users will have fewer major changes to “digest” at one time; and (4) summer release dates will conform to requests from some users that BEA avoid scheduling major revisions near the end of the calendar year.

In July 2008, a regular annual revision of the NIPAs will be released and will cover revised estimates for 2005–2007. As a step toward flexible annual revisions, BEA will release a comprehensive revision in July 2009. This revision will incorporate the results of the 2002 benchmark input-output accounts. The reference year for the chain-type indexes and the chained-dollar estimates will be updated to 2005. And the revision will cover the entire time series of estimates, 1929–2008.

Quarterly Data for Travel and Tourism Released

In the first quarter of 2007, real direct tourism output increased at an annual rate of 2.3 percent, compared to a rise of 7.4 percent

in the fourth quarter of 2006, according to the most recent estimates from the BEA travel and tourism satellite accounts.

These widely used accounts are designed to provide economic data about the travel and tourism industry and its role in the economy. They provide estimates of expenditures by tourists on 24 types of goods and services, estimates of income generated by travel and tourism, and estimates of output and employment generated by the industry.

Growth in transportation output remained strong. But growth decelerated in the three other categories—accommodations; food services and drinking places; and recreation, entertainment, and shopping. Direct tourism employment rose 2.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2006 (the most recent period for which data are available), after growing 1.0 percent in the third quarter of 2006.

The quarterly estimates and press release are available at www.bea.gov/newsreleases/industry/tourism/2007/tour107.htm. A more in-depth analysis of the travel and tourism accounts for 1998–2006 was published in the June SURVEY OF CURRENT BUSINESS. Please see www.bea.gov/scb/pdf/2007/06%20June/0607_Travel.pdf.