

Provides Accurate Measures

Every 5 years—in years ending in “2” and “7”—the Economic Census collects reliable business statistics that are essential to understanding the American economy. Only the Economic Census provides information on industry revenues and other measures of American business performance that are consistent, comparable, and comprehensive across industries and geographic areas.

Consistent

You can use Economic Census data to compare one industry or geographic area with another. Most census reports use the same methods, classifications, and definitions.

Comparable

You can track and compare Economic Census data for industries and geographic areas over time. Geographic notes and bridging data are provided when definitions or boundaries change.

Comprehensive

You can use the Economic Census to learn about most parts of the nonfarm private economy with:

- Statistics for 18 of 20 industry sectors defined under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The U.S. Census Bureau also conducts the Census of Governments.
- Statistics for all incorporated and unincorporated cities and towns in the US with 2,500 or more inhabitants or jobs.
- The number of locations, employment, payroll, total revenue, and product sales for every industry—plus over 150 detailed statistics for various industries.

Many federal economic statistics would not be possible without the Economic Census, including:

- Annual Surveys of Retail, Services, and Manufacturing
- Research Development
- Business Expenses
- Business Investment
- Manufactured Housing
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Energy Consumption
- Commodity Flows

For more information about the Economic Census, please visit business.census.gov

The Economic Census

How it Works for You

At the end of 2012, millions of American businesses will receive Economic Census forms.

Important Dates

Oct–Dec 2012 - Forms Mailed
Feb 12, 2013 - Forms Due
Dec 2013 - First Results Published

The Economic Census affects every American who runs a business, saves for retirement, or takes out a mortgage on a home.

—Steve Landefeld, Director
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov



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Census
Bureau
Economic Statistics

The Importance of the Economic Census

The Economic Census affects every American. Businesses make decisions about where they locate and how much to produce based on what they learn in the Census. The data also serve as critical inputs into monetary, fiscal and trade policy. In short, statistics from the Economic Census are vital to the functioning of our market economy.

—Maurine Haver, National Association for Business Economics

Statistics from the Economic Census on franchising show the vital role that franchise businesses play in the U.S. economy as contributors to growth and jobs for thousands of entrepreneurs and millions of American workers.

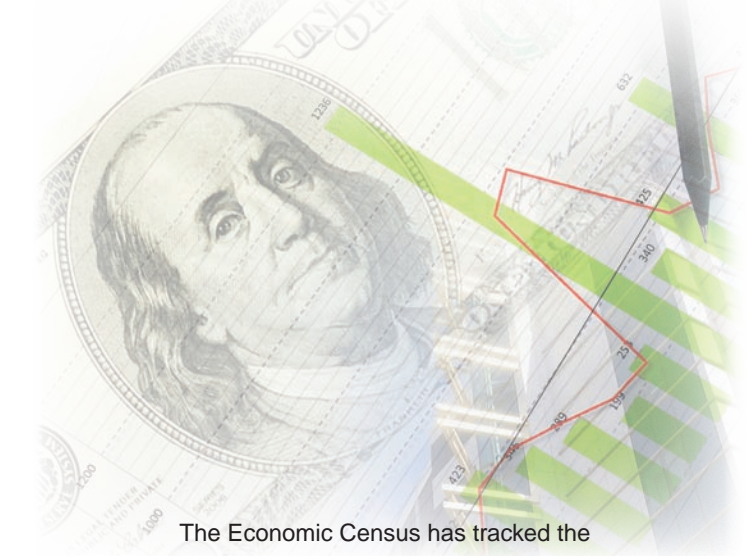
—Ken Walker, International Franchise Association

If the states are to be our policy laboratories, they must be equipped with the tools they need to innovate. Timely and accurate data from the Economic Census is clearly one of those tools.

—Dr. William Shobe, Center for Economic and Policy Studies, University of Virginia

The need for the benchmark statistics provided by the Bureau of the Census is greater today than ever before and promises to grow in intensity.

—Watkins Commission Report, 1953



The Economic Census has tracked the American economy for 200 years: see inside.

From the birth of our Nation, the Economic Census has tracked and measured the changing American economy.

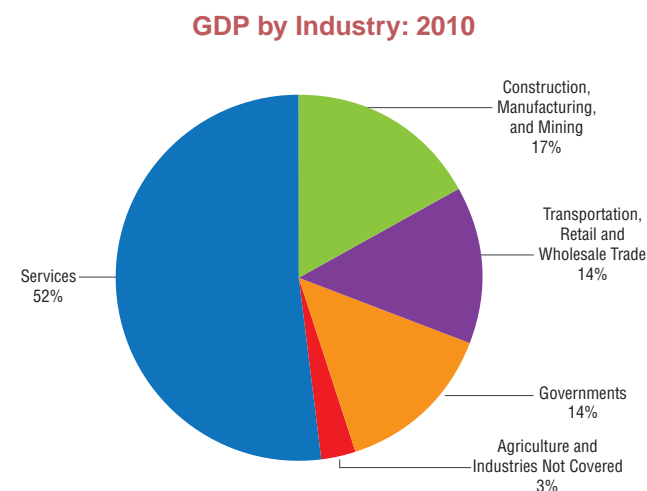
1810–1829	1810—First Economic Census (EC) conducted for manufacturing	1790: First U.S. Census
1830–1849	1830—EC expanded to cover commercial trade, lumberyards, and grocery stores	1848: California Gold Rush
1850–1869	1850—First EC data on railroads, canals, telegraph infrastructure	1869: Transcontinental Railroad Complete
1870–1889	1870—EC measures size of child labor force	1890–1909
1890–1909	1890—EC shows shift in U.S. economy from primarily agrarian to manufacturing	1910–1929
1910–1929	1910—EC adds sawmills, gristmills, steam laundries, and butchering establishments	1930–1949
1930–1949	1933—FDR authorizes first comprehensive EC as part of New Deal	1950–1969
1950–1969	1951—Census Bureau's first computer tabulates EC data	1970–1989
1970–1989	1972—EC adds Survey of Minority-Owned Businesses	1990–Present
1990–Present	1992—EC expanded to cover Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Utilities, and Communications sectors	1994: NAFTA
1990–Present	1997—EC adopts NAICS	1997: NAICS
1990–Present	1997—EC expands to cover Health Services and Social Services	2007: "Great Recession"
1990–Present	2012—EC collects data online and publishes more local data on CD-ROM	1984: Steam Locomotive Invented
1990–Present	1987—First EC data available on CD-ROM	1804–1806: Lewis & Clark Expedition
1990–Present	1967—Companies report EC data on computer tape	1814: Morse Patents Telegraph
1990–Present	1967—EC expanded to cover transportation sector	1861–1865: Civil War
1990–Present	1963—EC expanded to cover Great Depression	1870: Morse Patents Telegraph
1990–Present	1963—EC publishes on SIC basis to support GDP	1889: Transcontinental Railroad Complete
1990–Present	1957—EC publishes on SIC basis to support GDP	1902: Census Bureau Created
1990–Present	1945—EC measures post depression economy	1929 to 1930s: Great Depression
1990–Present	1945—EC measures post depression economy	1934: First GDP Data
1990–Present	1935—EC measures impact of Great Depression	1939–1945: World War II
1990–Present	1935—EC measures impact of Great Depression	1944–1948: World War I
1990–Present	1929 to 1930s: Great Depression	1956: Interstate Highway System
1990–Present	1929 to 1930s: Great Depression	1982: CD-ROM
1990–Present	1929 to 1930s: Great Depression	1994: Census Internet

Establishes Benchmarks for Economic Indicators

The Economic Census provides official output measures for industries and local areas. These facts and figures form the foundation for statistics used by federal, state, and local governments.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Americans produce over \$14 trillion in goods and services every year—that is our GDP—an important component of the economic indicators used to measure our economy. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis uses comprehensive information from the Economic Census to construct Input-Output models of the American economy. These models help form “benchmark” measures of GDP, which impact quarterly and annual GDP estimates.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and U.S. Census Bureau

GDP estimates based on the Economic Census guide decision making:

- Preparing budgets and forecasting revenues.
- Assessing the impact of military base expansions and closings.
- Allocating federal funds (In 2010, \$327 billion in federal funds were allocated using local GDP data and the Economic Census.)

Foundation for Economic Indicators

The Economic Census is the bedrock that economic indicators are built upon, such as:

- Labor Productivity
- Producer Prices
- Industrial Production
- Capacity Utilization
- Monthly Retail Sales
- Durable Goods Orders
- Monthly Wholesale Trade
- Business Sales & Inventories
- Quarterly Services Revenue
- Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories & Orders
- Corporate Finance and Profits



Helps Government Serve Business

Economic Census data help federal, state, and local agencies gauge the effectiveness of their programs.

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency management officials use Economic Census data to:

- Estimate potential losses and plan responses to disasters before they occur.
- Evaluate the economic impact of disasters after they occur and prioritize responses.



Transportation Planning

Transportation planners use the Economic Census to:

- Evaluate the impact of economic development on sewers, roads, fire, police, and other public services.
- Estimate the impact of infrastructure spending on jobs.
- Understand the impact of product movements on America's roads, rails, rivers, and airways.

Promoting American Business

Agencies like the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency use Economic Census data to promote small business and guide investment and entrepreneurship by:

- Tracking trends in business formation.
- Setting small business size standards for government programs and contracting.
- Helping businesses with marketing and investment planning.

Industry Concentration and Competitiveness

The Justice Department, International Trade Administration, and other agencies use Economic Census data to:

- Evaluate the impact of proposed business mergers and acquisitions to ensure a level playing field for businesses.
- Assess the competitiveness and trade of U.S. industries.
- Measure and promote research & development in U.S. industries.

Assists Local Communities

The Economic Census provides detailed data from the national level down to local communities to assist budgeting, planning, and business development.



Local Economic Development

Analysts at state and local levels use Economic Census data to:

- Determine where they have a comparative advantage to attract new businesses.
- Analyze industry structure, entrepreneurship, and competitiveness, and forecast demand for skilled labor.
- Set small business procurement guidelines.

Revenue Forecasts

States use Economic Census data to construct revenue forecasts impacting technology, energy resources, tourism, and other sectors. Inaccurate forecasts can be costly, especially under strict balanced budget constraints.

Workforce Planning and Development

State and local governments use Economic Census data to:

- Anticipate the workforce needs of local industries.
- Plan workforce training and transition.
- Leverage regional competitive advantages to guide workforce development.
- Identify and promote local clusters of economic activity.



Informs Businesses and Associations

Business Marketing & Investment Planning

Businesses use Economic Census data to compare their operations to industry norms, find markets, and to inform key decisions, including:

- What is the best store size for my business?
- Are my employees as productive as the industry average?
- What is the market potential for a new product?
- Where should I open a new store?
- Should I invest in a new product line?



Business Ownership

Industry and community organizations use the Economic Census to learn more about minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses, including:

- What do changing patterns and growth trends mean for future investment and the community?
- How is the rapid growth in small and minority-owned business impacting the economy?
- How can I best advocate for American entrepreneurs?

Industry Associations and Business Groups

Trade and professional associations, chambers of commerce, and business organizations use the Economic Census to help their members by:

- Informing them about industry performance.
- Sharing new information about the industry.
- Advocating on behalf of their members with federal and local policy makers.
- Identifying organizational structure and product trends.
- Guiding government relations strategy for the industry or community.