

# I. THE NATION SERVED BY FREIGHT

The Nation's 117 million households, 7.4 million business establishments, and 89,500 governmental units are part of an enormous economy that demands the efficient movement of freight. While the U.S. economy has been affected by an economic downturn, it is expected to recover and continue to grow. Long-term economic growth will result in even greater demand for freight transportation.

Freight transportation has grown over time with the expansion of population and economic activity within the United States and with the increasing interdependence of economies across the globe. The U.S. population grew by nearly 36 percent between

**Table 1-1. Economic and Social Characteristics of the United States: 1980-2009**

	1980	1990	2000	2008	2009	Percent change, 1980 to 2009
Resident population (thousands)	226,546	248,791	281,425	304,375	307,007	35.5
Households (thousands)	80,776	93,347	104,705	116,783	117,181	45.1
Median household income (2005 \$)	42,067	44,758	47,608	46,707	45,211	7.5
Civilian labor force (thousands)	106,940	125,840	142,583	154,287	154,142	44.1
Employed <sup>1</sup> (thousands)	99,303	118,793	136,891	145,362	139,877	40.9
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (percent)	NA	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.5	NA
Mining	NA	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.5	NA
Construction	NA	6.9	7.3	7.5	6.9	NA
Manufacturing	NA	16.8	14.4	10.9	10.2	NA
Wholesale and retail trade	NA	14.7	14.6	14.2	14.1	NA
Transportation and utilities	NA	5.1	5.4	5.3	5.2	NA
Information	NA	2.9	3.0	2.4	2.3	NA
Financial activities	NA	7.1	6.8	7.0	6.9	NA
Professional and business services	NA	9.4	10.0	10.7	10.7	NA
Education and health services	NA	17.5	19.1	21.6	22.7	NA
Leisure and hospitality	NA	8.0	8.2	8.8	9.1	NA
Other services	NA	4.3	4.7	4.8	5.0	NA
Public administration	NA	4.7	4.5	4.7	4.9	NA
Business establishments (thousands)	NA	6,176	7,070	7,601	7,433	NA
Governmental units <sup>2</sup>	<sup>3</sup> 81,831	<sup>4</sup> 85,006	<sup>5</sup> 87,576	<sup>6</sup> 89,527	NA	NA
Gross domestic product (millions of 2005 \$)	(R) 5,834,000	(R) 8,027,100	(R) 11,216,400	(R) 13,161,900	12,703,100	117.7
Foreign trade (millions of 2005 \$)	631,335	1,168,168	2,572,000	(R) 3,793,847	3,346,839	440.2
Goods (percent)	74.0	71.6	78.8	(R) 77.5	75.4	1.9
Services (percent)	26.0	28.4	21.2	(R) 22.5	24.6	-5.3

**Key:** NA = not available; R = revised.

<sup>1</sup>Based on the 2002 Census Industry Classification system. Data for 1990 do not appear in the source document; they are estimated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics crosswalk from the 1990 Census Industry Classification system to the 2002 Census Industry Classification system.

<sup>2</sup>Data for governmental units come from the Census of Governments, which is collected every five years.

<sup>3</sup>1982

<sup>4</sup>1992

<sup>5</sup>2002

<sup>6</sup>2007

**TABLE 1-1. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1980-2009**

**Sources:** **Population:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Population Profile of the United States*, available at [www.census.gov/population/www/pop-profile/profile.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/pop-profile/profile.html) as of August 9, 2011. **Households:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Families and Living Arrangements, table HH-1, available at [www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html) as of August 9, 2011. **Civilian Labor Force:** U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey*, available at [www.bls.gov/data](http://www.bls.gov/data) as of August 9, 2011. **Employment:** U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, available at [www.bls.gov/ces](http://www.bls.gov/ces) as of August 9, 2011. **Median household income:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Historical Income Tables, table H-6, available at [www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/index.html](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/household/index.html) as of August 9, 2011. **Business establishments:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, available at [www.census.gov/econ/cbp/](http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/) as of August 9, 2011. **Governmental units:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Census of Governments*, available at [www.census.gov/govs](http://www.census.gov/govs) as of August 9, 2011. **Gross domestic product and foreign trade:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Income and Product Accounts Tables, tables 1.1.5, 1.1.6, and 4.2.4, available at [www.bea.gov/national/FA2004/index.asp](http://www.bea.gov/national/FA2004/index.asp) as of August 9, 2011.

1980 and 2009 and climbed to 308.7 million in 2010. The U.S. economy, measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP), more than doubled in real terms, while household income, another indicator of economic growth, rose by eight percent between 1980 and 2009. Foreign trade grew faster than the overall economy, quintupling in real value over the same period, reflecting unprecedented global interconnectivity.

**Table 1-2. Population and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Region: 1980-2009**

	1980	1990	2000	2008	2009	Percent change, 1980 to 2009
<b>Resident Population (thousands)</b>	<b>226,549</b>	<b>248,789</b>	<b>282,172</b>	<b>304,375</b>	<b>307,007</b>	<b>35.5</b>
Northeast	49,136	50,828	53,668	55,060	55,284	12.5
Midwest	58,868	59,670	64,494	66,596	66,837	13.5
South	75,372	85,454	100,560	112,021	113,318	50.3
West	43,173	52,837	63,451	70,698	71,568	65.8
<b>GDP (millions of 2005 \$)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>5,696,999</b>	<b>7,883,332</b>	<b>11,223,130</b>	<b>13,100,045</b>	<b>12,773,853</b>	<b>124.2</b>
Northeast	1,248,023	1,808,010	2,344,250	2,675,477	2,601,053	108.4
Midwest	1,423,439	1,766,102	2,490,900	2,688,533	2,601,907	82.8
South	1,812,981	2,503,020	3,763,080	4,509,795	4,442,409	145.0
West	1,212,557	1,806,199	2,622,605	3,226,165	3,126,002	157.8
<b>GDP per capita (millions of 2005 \$)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>25,147</b>	<b>31,687</b>	<b>39,774</b>	<b>43,039</b>	<b>41,608</b>	<b>65.5</b>
Northeast	25,399	35,571	43,681	48,592	47,049	85.2
Midwest	24,180	29,598	38,622	40,371	38,929	61.0
South	24,054	29,291	37,421	40,258	39,203	63.0
West	28,086	34,184	41,333	45,633	43,679	55.5

<sup>1</sup>As of October 26, 2006, the Bureau of Economic Analysis renamed the gross state product (GSP) series to gross domestic product (GDP) by state.

**Notes:** Chained dollars are not additive, especially for periods farther away from the base year of 2005. Thus, GDP for all regions is not equal to total GDP. Numbers may not add to totals due to rounding.

Although freight moves throughout the United States, the demand for freight transportation is driven primarily by the geographic distribution of population and economic activity. Both population and economic activity have grown faster in the West and South than in the Northeast and Midwest, but the growth in economic activity per capita has been highest in the Northeast.

**TABLE 1-2. POPULATION AND GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) BY REGION: 1980-2009**

**Sources:** Population: 1980-1990: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2004-2005* (Washington, DC: 2005); 2000-2009: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Population Estimates, table 8, available at [www.census.gov/popest/states/NST-ann-est.html](http://www.census.gov/popest/states/NST-ann-est.html) as of August 8, 2011. **Gross Domestic Product:** U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts, available at [www.bea.gov/regional/as](http://www.bea.gov/regional/as) as of August 8, 2011.