
Section 22

Domestic Trade

This section presents statistics relating to the distributive trades, specifically wholesale trade and retail trade. Service industries that were formerly included in this section, may now be found in new Section 27, Accommodation, Food Services, and Other Services. Data shown for the trades are classified by kind of business and cover sales or receipts, establishments, employees, payrolls, and other items. The principal sources of these data are from the Census Bureau and include the 1997 *Economic Census* reports, annual survey reports, and the *County Business Patterns* program. These data are supplemented by several tables from trade associations such as the National Automobile Dealers Association (Table 1026), and the National Mail Order Association (Table 1041). Several notable research groups are also represented such as Claritas (Table 1024), Simmons Market Research Bureau (Tables 1042 to 1044), National Research Bureau and the International Council of Shopping Centers (Tables 1045 and 1046), Jupiter Communications (Table 1035), and Forrester Research, Inc. (Table 1036).

Data on retail and wholesale trade appear in several other sections. For instance, labor force employment and earnings data (Table 609) appear in Section 12, Labor Force; gross domestic product of the industry (Table 641) appear in the Section 13, Income, Expenditures, and Wealth; financial data (several tables) from the quarterly *Statistics of Income Bulletin*, published by the Internal Revenue Service, appear in Section 15, Business Enterprise.

Censuses—Censuses of retail trade and wholesale trade have been taken at various intervals since 1929. Beginning with the 1967 census, legislation provides for a census of each area to be conducted every 5 years (for years ending in "2" and "7"). For more information on these censuses, see the *History of the 1997 Economic Census* found at <<http://www.census.gov/prod/ec97/pol00-hec.pdf>>.

The industries covered in the censuses and surveys of business are those classified in 13 sectors defined in the *North American Industry Classification System*, called NAICS (see below). *Retail trade* refers to places of business primarily engaged in retailing merchandise generally in small quantities to the general public; *wholesale trade*, to establishments primarily engaged in selling goods to other businesses and normally operate from a warehouse or office that have little or no display of merchandise; and *services*, to establishments primarily engaged in providing a wide range of services for individuals and for businesses. All Census Bureau tables in this section are utilizing the new NAICS codes, which replaced the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. NAICS makes substantial structural improvements and identifies over 350 new industries. At the same time, it causes breaks in time series far more profound than any prior revision of the previously used SIC system. For information on this system and how it affects the comparability of retail and wholesale statistics historically, see text, Section 15, Business Enterprise, and especially the Census Bureau Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html>>. In general, the 1997 Economic Census has two series of publications and documents for these two sectors subject series with reports on such as commodity line sales and establishment and firm sizes and geographic reports with individual reports for each state. For information on these series, see the Census Bureau Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/97EC42.htm>> and <<http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/97EC44.htm>>.

Current surveys—Current sample surveys conducted by the Census Bureau cover various aspects of the retail and wholesale trade and selected service industries. Its *Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services* contains monthly estimates of sales, inventories, and inventory/sales ratios, purchases, and accounts receivable

for the United States, by kind of business. Annual figures on sales, year-end inventories, and inventory/sales ratios, by kind of business, appear in the *Annual Benchmark Report for Retail Trade and Food Services*. Statistics from the Bureau's monthly wholesale trade survey include national estimates of merchant wholesalers' sales, inventories, and inventory/sales ratios by major summary groups "durable and nondurable," and selected kinds of business. Merchant wholesalers are those wholesalers who take title to the goods they sell (e.g., jobbers, exporters, importers, industrial distributors). These data, based on reports submitted by a sample of firms, appear in the *Monthly Wholesale Trade Report*. Annual figures on sales, inventory/sales ratios, year-end inventories, and purchases appear in the *Annual Benchmark Report for Wholesale Trade*. The reports just mentioned may appear in print in some cases, but principally are available as documents on the Census Bureau Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/econ/www/retmenu.html>>.

E-commerce—Electronic commerce (or e-commerce) are sales of goods and services over the Internet and extranet,

electronic data interchange (EDI), or other online systems. Payment may or may not be made online. This edition again has several new tables on e-commerce sales such as Tables 1037 to 1039 in this section, 976 in Section 21, Manufactures, and 1265 in the new Section 27, Accommodation, Food Services, and Other Services. Also, there are several private sources for similar data such as Forrester Research Inc., Cambridge MA; BizRate.com, Los Angeles, CA; and Jupiter Communications, New York, NY. These sources show estimated and projected online retail sales by key categories from business to consumers or to other businesses. Their methods of collecting the data vary widely between the sources and consequently these estimates of this activity vary also. Users of these estimates may want to contact the sources for descriptions of their methodology.

Statistical reliability—For a discussion of statistical collection and estimation, sampling procedures, and measures of statistical reliability applicable to Census Bureau data, see Appendix III.

No. 1042. Catalog Sales—Method Used and Characteristic of Purchaser: 2000

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No. 1043. Merchandise or Services Ordered by Mail or Phone by Characteristic of Purchaser: 2000

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No. 1044. Population Ordering by Catalog by Type of Product and Characteristic of Purchaser: 2000

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