



FEDERAL STATISTICS: BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SMART BUSINESS DECISIONS

Federal statistics are the nation’s hidden gem – a treasure trove of data that serves as a foundation for smart decision-making in the public and private sectors. Federal statistics guide trillions of dollars in economic activity through capital investments and the movement and provision of goods and services to every community in the country. This business activity, in turn, drives employment and housing growth, community development, and economic stability.

Below is a sample of federal statistical activities that produce economic indicators and other vital measurements of America’s demographic, social, and fiscal conditions that can inform business strategies and decisions.

1. **U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics & Statistics Administration**, houses the Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

Program	Frequency/ Geography*	Description	Agency
Decennial census	Every 10 yrs. (2010, 2020, etc.) Block level	Survey of 100% of U.S. households & group living quarters: population count; age; sex; race & Hispanic origin; household relationship; tenure (own v. rent) http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/	Census
American Community Survey	Annual Census tract; block group	Ongoing survey of 3.5M households, covering wide range of population, housing, financial, & social characteristics http://factfinder.census.gov/	Census
Economic Census	Every 5 yrs. (yrs ending in "2" & "7") Places; ZIP Codes	Profiles U.S. national & local economies (non-farm). Basic data, by industry & geographic area, include number of establishments & employees, sales, payroll, product detail. Covers most non-farm industries. http://factfinder.census.gov/	Census
Principal Federal Economic Indicators	Monthly; quarterly Primarily monthly; some quarterly	12 key indicators, including GDP, advance monthly retail sales, manufacturing inventories & sales, personal income & spending, & U.S. trade balance http://www.esa.doc.gov/about-economic-indicators	ESA; BEA; Census

2. **U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics**, principal Federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy. BLS data can help business leaders assess employment costs, identify new markets, conduct comparative analyses, and negotiate smart long-term contracts.

Program	Frequency/ Geography*	Description
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	Monthly; bimonthly; semi-annually Large metro areas; non-metro urban areas	Changes in prices paid by urban consumers for a representative basket of goods & services. http://www.bls.gov/cpi/
Labor force statistics: Employment/unemployment	Monthly; annually Metro areas; many cities	In addition to employment statistics, the Current Population Survey produces data on hours of work, earnings, and labor force characteristics. http://www.bls.gov/cps/
Consumer Expenditure Survey	Annual Selected metro areas; regions	The CE program provides information on the buying habits of consumers, including data on their expenditures, income, and consumer unit characteristics. http://www.bls.gov/cex/

3. **Other federal statistical programs**, including surveys on housing and crime, offer data that can inform business decisions on merchandise and products, facility location, and safety programs for employees and customers.

Program	Frequency/ Geography*	Description	Agency
American Housing Survey	National data: Annually in odd # yrs. 47 metro areas: every 6 yrs.	Conducted by the Census Bureau for HUD, the AHS collects data on type and size of housing, household characteristics, neighborhood quality, housing costs, and recent movers. http://www.huduser.org/Datasets/ahs.html	U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
Uniform Crime Reports	Annual Nation; states; many cities & counties	Most comprehensive analysis of violent crime and property crime in the U.S. Includes volume and rate of crime, arrests and clearance, as well as breakdowns of crime targets, such as businesses, individuals, financial institutions, etc. http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/crimestats	FBI (DOJ)

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* Smallest geographic unit for which data from the program are published. Not all data from each program are available at the smallest geographic level.