

How you spend your money matters

As the founder of *American Demographics* magazine, Peter Francese (currently director of Demographic Forecasts for The New England Economic Partnership) states: "Providers of goods and services need timely and accurate information about consumer demand. It is vitally important for researchers and forecasters to understand the spending behavior trends of different types of households such as homeowners, or married couples. Only the BLS surveys are large, accurate, and consistent enough to provide annually comparable data on consumer spending for so many different consumer groups. The BLS survey data is of great value to businesses looking at where to expand (and thus to create jobs), but it is also useful to answer questions about the need for affordable housing or public transportation. I have been using the Consumer Expenditure data for many purposes for over 20 years, and I can safely say that our economic growth would be a lot less predictable and probably smaller without it."

Your input is important. How important? Your household, chosen randomly to participate, actually represents as many as 15,000 other households! By participating, you make sure that the *Consumer Expenditure Survey* is as accurate as possible and represents all Americans. You are helping the United States and performing a public service. Your participation gives you a voice in the statistics that are used to evaluate and guide the actions of the Federal Government. By law, your participation is kept confidential, and you cannot be identified by your responses.



Denver

"Households in the Denver area spent less in 2003-2004 than in the previous 2 years but still exceeded the typical U.S. household by 15.5 percent..."

Rocky Mountain News, 5.19.2006



Atlanta

"...Atlantans are spending 18.7 percent of annual household expenditures on transportation...Atlantans spend more on housing, 36.8 percent."

Janet Frankston, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 6.15.2005



Seattle

"Households in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton area spent an average of \$48,348 a year in 2001-2002, about 21 percent more than the typical U.S. household..."

Stephen H. Dunphy, The Seattle Times, 5.16.2004



New York City

"The New York family's expenses in 2003 were about 25 percent higher, at \$50,319, than the national average. The bulk of that money went toward housing, transportation and food, in that order."

Patrick McGeehan, The New York Times, 5.20.2006

How YOU spend your money...



US CENSUS BUREAU
Helping You Make Informed Decisions



...is in the News

See how news sources from around the country use the Consumer Expenditure Survey to talk about how Americans spend their money.



Spending Gap

"The top 20 percent of U.S. households by income collectively spend more than the bottom 60 percent on goods and services..."

Television Week, 2.6.2006



Gift Giving

"Hispanics spend more on gifts, on average, than other Americans."

David Brooks, *The New York Times*, 3.30.2006



Energy Costs

"In [2003] households in southern states spent an average of \$1,321 on gasoline and motor oil, a 28 percent increase over a 5-year period. Electricity costs averaged \$1,251, a 9 percent increase."

Thomas S. Brown, *Daytona Beach News-Journal Online*, 8.27.2005



Young Adults

"Younger heads of households spend more than three times as much on entertainment and dining out than on health care..."

Joseph Perkins, *The Decatur Daily Democrat*, 5.27.2004



Gasoline

"...[I]n 2004, consumer expenditures per household averaged \$43,395; spending on gasoline and motor oil, with gasoline accounting for virtually the entire sum, were 3.7 percent of that, or \$1,598."

Daniel Gross, *The New York Times*, 5.7.2006

Kids' Clothes

"...[P]arents spend as much as \$44,280 on clothing and miscellaneous items for their children through age 17."

Eleska Aubespain, *Gannett News Service*, 4.5.2004

Households

"Average household spending for housing was \$13,918 last year, up 3.6 percent... Average spending on food was \$5,781, up 8.3 percent..."

Mark Dolliver, *Adweek.com*, 12.12.2005



Apparel

"Spending on clothes rose 11 percent in 2004, or \$176. Women's clothes accounted for most of that increase."

Gregory Karp, *Morning Call*, 12.18.2005