

Welcome to the Business Trends and Outlook Survey
Content for Cycle 2 Respondent Debriefings
Revised 12/11/2024

The U.S. Census Bureau is requesting your assistance to produce important data on current economic conditions, as well as the impact on our nation's economy when natural disasters or other emergencies occur.

Your response is especially important as it helps policy makers, government officials, and businesses like yours understand these effects. Please complete this quick survey; **it will take approximately 20 minutes.**

The data you provide will be aggregated to create a two-week snapshot of economic activity within the U.S. This survey is not intended to replace more comprehensive surveys that typically require the use of company records.

- **Estimates are acceptable and encouraged.**
- **The survey will take **approximately 20 minutes.****
- **Please include all domestic operations of this consolidated business, including all locations, subsidiaries, and divisions.**

For this survey, please provide data for: **[Name 1] [Name 2]**

1. FOR SINGLE UNITS ONLY Is _____ the Employer Identification Number (EIN) used on this business's latest Internal Revenue Service Form 941, Employer's Federal Quarterly Tax Return?
 - Yes
 - NoIf no, please provide EIN:

2. Overall, how would you describe this business's current performance? *Please include all domestic operations of this consolidated business, including all locations, subsidiaries, and divisions.*
 - Excellent
 - Above average
 - Average
 - Below average
 - Poor

3. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did this business's operating revenues/sales/receipts change? *Please compare this two-week period to the two weeks prior. Estimates are acceptable.*

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

3-alt. How did this business's operating revenues/sales/receipts change in January, compared to December? *Estimates are acceptable.*

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

4. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did this business's number of paid employees change?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

5. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did the total number of hours worked by this business's paid employees change?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

6. Between MM DD - MM DD, did this business have any paid employees who worked from home for at least one workday? *A workday is 6 or more hours.*

- Yes
- No

6-alt. Did this business have any paid employees who worked from home for at least one workday in January? *A workday is 6 or more hours.*

Yes

No

7. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, did this business use Artificial Intelligence (AI)¹ in producing goods or services? (Examples of AI: machine learning, natural language processing, virtual agents, voice recognition, etc.)

- Yes

¹ (Added 10/23/23) AI Definition: Computer systems and software that are able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as decision-making, visual perception, speech recognition, and language processing.

Types or applications of AI include machine learning, natural language processing, virtual agents, predictive analytics, machine vision, voice recognition, decision making systems, data analytics, image processing, etc.

- No
- Do not know

8. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, did this business do any of the following?

Select all that apply.

- Open a new location
- Open a previously closed location
- Temporarily close a location
- Permanently close a location
- None of the above

9. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did the time it takes for this business to receive deliveries from suppliers change?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change
- Not applicable

10. How would you describe this business's current inventories?

- Larger than optimal
- Optimal
- Smaller than optimal
- Not applicable

11. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did demand for this business's goods or services change?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

12. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did the prices this business charges for its own goods or services change?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

13. Between MMM DD – MMM DD, how did the prices this business pays for goods or services change?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

14. In the last six months, in what ways did changes to interest rates negatively impact this business? *Select all that apply.*

- Decreased profitability
- Inability to service debt
- Inability to refinance existing loans
- Inability to invest in this business
- Not applicable

15. In the last six months, did this business experience any monetary losses due to an extreme weather event (for example, hurricane, flood, drought, or heat wave)?

- Yes
- No

16. What type of extreme weather event caused the monetary losses? Select all that apply.

- Wildfire
- Earthquake
- Hurricane
- Tornado
- Flood
- Drought
- High winds
- Severe storm/hail
- Snow/blizzard/ice
- Extreme temperature (heat or cold)
- Other (please describe _____)

17. Six months from now, how do you think you will describe this business's performance?

- Excellent
- Above average
- Average
- Below average
- Poor

18. Six months from now, how do you think this business's number of paid employees will have changed?
- Increased
 - Decreased
 - No change
19. Six months from now, how do you think the total number of hours worked by this business's paid employees will have changed?
- Increased
 - Decreased
 - No change
20. Six months from now, how do you think the time it takes for this business to receive deliveries from suppliers will have changed?
- Increased
 - Decreased
 - No change
 - Not applicable
21. Six months from now, how do you think you will describe this business's inventories?
- Larger than optimal
 - Optimal
 - Smaller than optimal
 - Not applicable
22. Six months from now, how do you think demand for this business's goods or services will have changed?
- Increased
 - Decreased
 - No change
23. Six months from now, how do you think the prices this business charges for its own goods or services will have changed?
- Increased
 - Decreased
 - No change

24. Six months from now, how do you think the prices this business pays for goods or services will have changed?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

25. During the next six months, do you think this business will do any of the following?
Select all that apply.

- Open a new location
- Open a previously closed location
- Temporarily close a location
- Permanently close a location
- None of the above

26. During the next six months, do you think this business will be using Artificial Intelligence (AI)² in producing goods or services? (*Examples of AI: machine learning, natural language processing, virtual agents, voice recognition, etc.*)

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

27. Approximately what percentage of this business's paid employees currently work from home any of their workdays? *A workday is 6 or more hours. Total must equal 100% of paid employees. Estimates are acceptable.*

- _____ % never work from home
- _____ % work from home occasionally
- _____ % work from home 1 day per week
- _____ % work from home 2 days per week
- _____ % work from home 3 days per week
- _____ % work from home 4 days per week
- _____ % work from home 5 or more days per week

² (Added 10/23/23) AI Definition: Computer systems and software that are able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as decision-making, visual perception, speech recognition, and language processing.

Types or applications of AI include machine learning, natural language processing, virtual agents, predictive analytics, machine vision, voice recognition, decision making systems, data analytics, image processing, etc.

100% paid employees

- Do not know/Not applicable

28. Five years ago (in 2019), approximately what percentage of this business's paid employees worked from home any of their workdays? A *workday* is 6 or more hours. Total must equal 100% of paid employees. Estimates are acceptable.

_____% never worked from home

_____% occasionally worked from home

_____% worked from home 1 day per week

_____% worked from home 2 days per week

_____% worked from home 3 days per week

_____% worked from home 4 days per week

_____% worked from home 5 or more days per week

100% paid employees

- Do not know/Not applicable

29. Looking forward to five years from now (in 2029), approximately what percentage of this business's paid employees do you think will work from home any of their workdays? A *workday* is 6 or more hours. Total must equal 100% of paid employees. Estimates are acceptable.

_____% will never work from home

_____% will occasionally work from home

_____% will work from home 1 day per week

_____% will work from home 2 days per week

_____% will work from home 3 days per week

_____% will work from home 4 days per week

_____% will work from home 5 or more days per week

100% paid employees

- Do not know/Not applicable

30. Does this business pay its fully remote employees based partly on the cost of living where they live (locality pay)?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know/ Not applicable

31. What factors limit the ability of this business's paid employees to work from home?

Select all that apply.

- Parts or all of the job cannot be performed from home
- Management of employees working from home too costly/complicated
- Efficiency/productivity concerns
- Challenges around mentoring/learning or teamwork/socialization
- Legal/regulatory/tax reasons
- Security concerns (IT or other)
- Other (*please describe* _____)
- No factors limit work from home

32. Does this business have a work from home policy with any minimum in-person (onsite) requirements?

- Yes
- No

33. How does this business track whether paid employees meet the minimum in-person (onsite) requirements? *Select all that apply.*

- Badge swipe or sign-in sheet
- Attendance at in-person meetings
- Manager checks
- Other (*please describe* _____)
- This business does not track whether in-person (onsite) requirements are met

34. How does this business monitor the activity of paid employees working from home?

Select all that apply.

- Computer activity
- Attendance/participation in online meetings
- Specific measures of output (for example, number of customers served or calls answered, sales, units produced, etc.)
- Other (*please describe* _____)
- This business does not monitor paid employees working from home

35. How does this business monitor the activity of paid employees working in-person (onsite)? *Select all that apply.*

- Arrival/departure times
- Computer activity
- Attendance/participation in meetings
- Specific measures of output (for example, number of customers served or calls answered, sales, units produced, etc.)
- Other (*please describe* _____)
- This business does not monitor paid employees working in-person (onsite)

36. Has this business observed differences in productivity for paid employees based on whether they are working from home or in-person (onsite)?

- Yes, work from home more productive
- Yes, in-person (onsite) more productive
- No observed differences in productivity
- Do not know/Not applicable

37. Would you like to provide any information about your responses to these questions or this business?

Remarks (500 characters)

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38. For future Business Trends and Outlook Survey requests, please provide your preferred contact information:

Contact name:

Contact title:

Email:

This collection has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The eight-digit OMB approval number is 0607-1022 and appears in the lower left corner of each reporting screen. Without this approval, we could not conduct this survey.

Authority and Confidentiality

Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131 and 182, authorizes the U.S. Census Bureau to conduct this collection and to request your voluntary assistance. The Census Bureau is required by Section 9 of the same law to keep your information confidential and use your responses only to produce statistics. The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release your responses in a way that could identify your business, organization, or institution. Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, your data are protected from cybersecurity risks through screening of the systems that transmit your data.

Burden Estimate Statement

We estimate the Business Trends and Outlook Survey will take an average of 20 minutes to complete. Factors such as company size, complexity and activity will affect your actual time to complete the survey. This estimate includes the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the survey.

You may email comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: econ.btos@census.gov. Be sure to use "EID Survey Comments 0607-1022" as the subject.