



Technical Note
Gross Domestic Product
Fourth Quarter of 2011 (Second Estimate)
February 29, 2012

This technical note provides background information about the source data and estimating methods used to produce the estimates presented in the GDP news release. The complete set of estimates for the fourth quarter is available on BEA's Web site at www.bea.gov; a brief summary of "highlights" is also posted on the Web site. In a few weeks, the estimates will be published in BEA's monthly journal, the *Survey of Current Business*, along with a more detailed analysis of the estimates ("GDP and the Economy").

Sources of Revision to Real GDP

Real GDP increased 3.0 percent (annual rate) in the fourth quarter, an upward revision of 0.2 percentage point from the advance estimate. The upward revision to real GDP reflected an upward revision to nonresidential fixed investment, a downward revision to imports, and an upward revision to consumer spending.

- The upward revision to nonresidential fixed investment reflected an upward revision to nonresidential structures that was based on newly available Census Bureau construction spending data for December and revised data for October and November.
- The downward revision to imports reflected a downward revision to goods that was based on newly available Census goods data for December and revised data for November.
- The upward revision to consumer spending was more than accounted for by an upward revision to services. The largest contributor to the revision was "other" services, specifically cellular phone services, based on newly available cellular telephone service provider revenue data for the fourth quarter.

The price index for gross domestic purchases increased 1.1 percent in the fourth quarter, an upward revision of 0.3 percentage point. This revision was mostly due to prices for personal consumption expenditures and reflected revised Bureau of Labor Statistics seasonally adjusted consumer price indexes.

Revisions to Wages and Salaries and Disposable Personal Income

In addition to presenting revised estimates for the fourth quarter, today's release also presents revised estimates of third-quarter wages and salaries, personal taxes, and contributions for government social insurance. Wage and salary disbursements are now estimated to have increased \$107.2 billion in the third quarter of 2011, an upward revision of \$82.4 billion. These estimates reflect newly available wage and salary tabulations for the third quarter from the BLS

quarterly census of employment and wages (QCEW). These data are more comprehensive than the monthly employment and earnings data that were used for the earlier estimates—the QCEW data include irregular pay, such as bonuses and gains from the exercise of stock options.

Real disposable personal income is now estimated to have increased 0.7 percent in the third quarter and 1.4 percent in the fourth. (By comparison, the estimates that were available last month showed an decrease of 1.9 percent in the third quarter and an increase of 0.8 percent in the fourth.)

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Table A.--SOURCE DATA FOR THE ADVANCE AND SECOND ESTIMATES OF GDP FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 2011

This table shows the actual data used for the second estimate of GDP for the fourth quarter of 2011. For these key series, actual data for December were not available in time for inclusion in the advance GDP estimate released on January 27, 2012, and BEA made assumptions for these source data. The numbers in brackets show the December values that had been assumed for the advance estimate. For most series, the data incorporated for November and, in some cases, for October, were preliminary, and the numbers shown in brackets are the values used last month.

All series shown in the table are in billions of dollars, seasonally adjusted at annual rates, and are published by the Bureau of the Census.

	2011					
	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Private fixed investment:						
Nonresidential structures:						
1 Value of new nonresidential construction put in place.....	270.7	276.2	280.2	280.8 {278.5}	279.4 {278.6}	288.5 {278.5}
Residential structures:						
Value of new residential construction put in place:						
2 Single family.....	105.7	106.6	106.8	107.4 {107.4}	109.3 {109.1}	111.0 {110.6}
3 Multifamily.....	15.0	15.7	15.3	15.2 {15.2}	16.1 {15.4}	16.1 {15.6}
Change in private inventories:						
NOTE: Historical (July–October) data may reflect concurrent seasonal factors.						
4 Change in inventories for nondurable manufacturing.....	1.1 {2.3}	-16.8 {-14.4}	4.5 {5.1}	49.5 {48.9}	10.7 {10.6}	-1.8 {4.8}
4a Change in inventories for merchant wholesale and retail industries other than motor vehicles and equipment...	28.9 {29.9}	24.7 {24.6}	-17.6 {-14.1}	66.0 {66.5}	22.1 {26.1}	48.3 {60.2}
Net exports:						
Exports of goods:						
5 U.S. exports of goods, international-transactions-accounts basis.....	1520.9	1519.5	1550.7	1536.4	1513.9 {1518.7}	1525.1 {1528.0}
5a Excluding gold.....	1489.0	1481.7	1494.2	1492.0	1482.2 {1487.0}	1491.9 {1494.9}
Imports of goods:						
6 U.S. imports of goods, international-transactions-accounts basis.....	2252.6	2247.8	2261.4	2235.7	2264.1 {2276.8}	2296.7 {2307.4}
6a Excluding gold.....	2238.3	2232.5	2242.6	2219.3	2247.4 {2259.4}	2279.6 {2289.2}
7 Net exports of goods.....	-731.7	-728.3	-710.7	-699.4	-750.3 {-758.1}	-771.6 {-779.4}
7a Excluding gold.....	-749.3	-750.8	-748.4	-727.4	-765.2 {-772.4}	-787.7 {-794.3}
Government:						
State and local:						
Structures:						
8 Value of new construction put in place.....	249.2	254.5	257.1	254.5 {253.9}	256.1 {257.3}	257.4 {255.6}