

2019 INNOVATION
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The Bureau of Economic Analysis continually explores the development of new statistics as part of its mission to provide Americans with a timely, accurate, and in-depth understanding of the dynamic U.S. economy. **We're working on innovations that will lead to expanded data in several areas.**

Digital Economy BEA released a new batch of statistics in April 2019 showing that the digital economy accounted for 6.9 percent of U.S. gross domestic product, or \$1.35 trillion, in 2017. These data are part of a broader project at BEA to better capture the impact of fast-changing technologies on the U.S. economy. BEA released its first statistics on the size and growth of the digital economy last year. The project also seeks to improve measures of high-tech goods and services. Other goals include advancing research on digital goods and services, the sharing economy, and free digital content.

County Economies New prototype statistics measuring the economic performance of each of the nation's 3,000-plus counties were released last year, covering the years 2012-2015. BEA is collecting feedback from users and will continue to refine the methodology before beginning annual releases of GDP by county statistics in December 2019. These annual statistics will help businesses identify local markets for their products, assist local governments seeking to attract investment, and give a fuller picture of the economic landscape across the United States.

Puerto Rico BEA plans to produce new economic data for Puerto Rico this year that will lay the groundwork for later estimating the island's GDP. BEA plans to develop and publish this year estimates for specific components that would feed into Puerto Rico's GDP, such as consumer spending, business investment, and trade in goods. Estimates for these components will cover 2012 through 2017 and will be available in current dollars and on an inflation-adjusted basis. For many years, Puerto Rico has produced its own estimates of economic activity. At the request of the Puerto Rican government, BEA has provided technical assistance to improve and modernize the island's economic data. BEA produces GDP and related statistics for American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

— More innovations on reverse —

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— Innovations continued from reverse —

Outdoor Recreation BEA is preparing its first statistics on the role of outdoor recreation in each state's economy, for release in the fall of 2019. The new state data and updated national figures will build upon statistics that BEA debuted last year, working closely with federal recreation agencies. These statistics measure the size and growth of the outdoor recreation economy and the economic effects of activities such as biking, boating, hiking, RVing, and skiing. They also measure supporting activities, such as travel and construction, related to outdoor pursuits. And they show the extent to which industries like retail trade and manufacturing participate in the outdoor recreation economy.

Income Distribution BEA is actively engaged in efforts to measure the distribution of personal income, researching the means, methods, and processes necessary to publish regular measures. BEA plans to release prototype measures within the 2020 calendar year, collect feedback on them, and refine their methodology before finalizing a regular publication schedule. The current effort builds on at least a decade of BEA research and will offer insights into how American households share in overall economic growth.

Health Care A new batch of statistics providing information on how much Americans spent to treat more than 200 specific medical conditions, such as heart attacks and kidney disease, are slated to come out this year, following their debut last year. These data are part of BEA's Health Care Satellite Account, created in 2015 as a new way of analyzing health care spending. Health care spending is broken out by the treatment of disease, rather than by place of service, such as a hospital or doctor's office. These data provide an alternative view of the health care sector that may lead to a better understanding of health care spending trends and policies. These health care statistics, now available for the years 2000 through 2015, combine data from multiple sources, including large claims databases, covering millions of enrollees and billions of claims, marking one of BEA's biggest Big Data projects.

Arts and Culture BEA painted a detailed portrait of the influence of arts and culture throughout the U.S. and state economies with updated annual statistics in 2019. The arts and cultural economy includes music, theater, design, museums, historical sites, nature parks, and more, as well as supporting industries such as broadcasting, filmmaking, and publishing. State-by-state statistics were first published in 2018. This year, BEA updated its arts and cultural statistics with 2016 data and created new website features to make it easier to find a detailed fact sheet for each state or browse highlights across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. BEA's arts and cultural statistics show trends on the sector's size and growth, employment, and compensation.

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