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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES MARCH 2013

INTENTION TO REVISE: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised to reflect the introduction of a new sample, new seasonal factors and results of the 2011 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised adjusted and not adjusted estimates are scheduled to be released on May 31, 2013. For further information, see <http://www.census.gov/retail/faqs.html>.

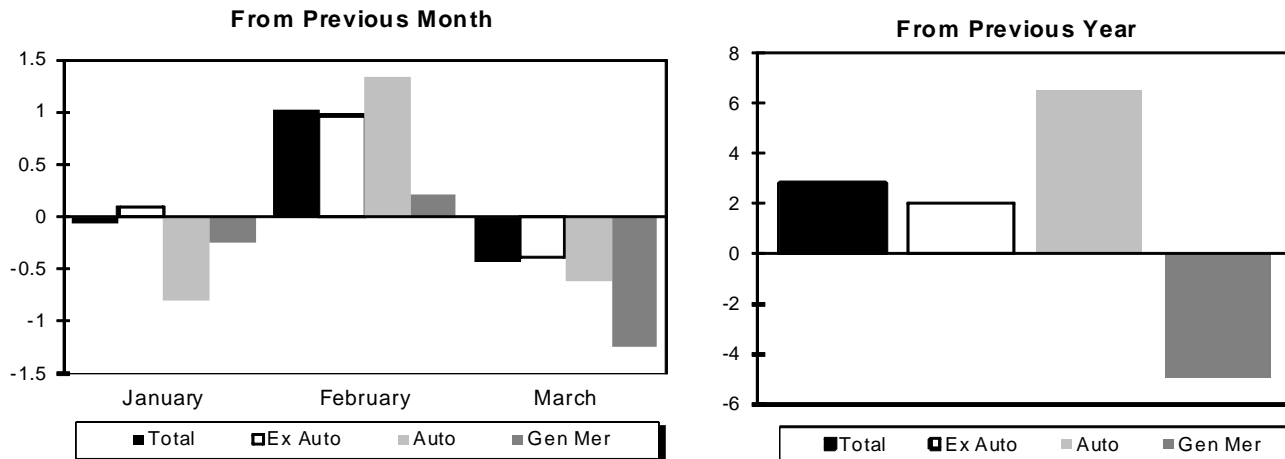
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for March, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$418.3 billion, a decrease of 0.4 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month, but 2.8 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above March 2012. Total sales for the January through March 2013 period were up 3.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The January to February 2013 percent change was revised from +1.1 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) to +1.0 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from February 2013, but 2.6 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 13.5 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) from March 2012 and auto and other motor vehicle dealers were up 7.4 percent ($\pm 2.1\%$) from last year.

The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Census Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 retail and food services firms whose sales are then weighted and benchmarked to represent the complete universe of over three million retail and food services firms. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.

Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Estimates adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for April is scheduled to be released May 13, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

For customized retail time series estimates by industry, visit the Census Bureau's web site at www.census.gov/timeseries.

To receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators, download the America's Economy app for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets.

For additional survey information, visit www.census.gov/retail.

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different than zero.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Total sales estimates are shown in millions of dollars and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS ¹ code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted						Adjusted ²					
		3 Month Total		2013			2012		2013			2012	
		2013	% Chg. 2012	Mar. ³ (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar.	Feb.	Mar. ³ (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar. (r)	Feb. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	1,189,046	2.8	427,092	380,150	381,804	419,599	376,652	418,284	420,100	415,797	406,806	402,559
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	961,321	2.2	342,723	306,509	312,089	337,676	305,549	340,494	341,827	338,553	333,758	329,932
	Retail	1,057,055	2.7	379,081	338,329	339,645	373,528	335,404	372,733	374,888	370,367	363,137	359,186
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	88,572	85,868	99,246	91,461	(*)	99,373	99,440	100,555	99,449
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	227,725	5.5	84,369	73,641	69,715	81,923	71,103	77,790	78,273	77,244	73,048	72,627
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	208,410	6.5	77,516	67,371	63,523	74,661	64,465	70,985	71,368	70,425	66,072	65,580
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	54,536	53,017	61,366	52,960	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,270	6,192	7,262	6,638	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	23,049	2.0	8,161	7,293	7,595	8,094	7,424	8,112	8,041	8,158	7,889	7,881
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,988	3,992	4,566	4,436	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,305	3,603	3,528	2,988	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	23,280	-1.6	7,802	7,756	7,722	8,167	7,949	8,122	8,257	8,282	8,393	8,195
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,881	5,657	5,939	6,047	(*)	6,178	6,162	6,180	6,145
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,875	2,065	2,228	1,902	(*)	2,079	2,120	2,213	2,050
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	64,147	1.4	24,730	19,400	20,017	25,254	19,280	25,483	25,465	25,284	25,292	24,430
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,749	17,384	20,989	16,812	(*)	21,336	21,252	21,222	20,679
445	Food & beverage stores	156,733	2.9	55,031	49,306	52,396	52,981	49,208	53,999	54,029	53,586	52,430	52,065
4451	Grocery stores	141,418	2.5	49,415	44,358	47,645	47,746	44,437	48,257	48,268	47,884	46,994	46,678
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,316	3,233	3,597	3,248	(*)	3,883	3,853	3,708	3,691
446	Health & personal care stores	69,011	-0.4	23,699	21,883	23,429	23,889	22,618	22,986	23,059	23,083	22,926	22,939
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,023	19,613	19,732	18,823	(*)	19,032	19,097	19,028	19,129
447	Gasoline stations	129,629	-0.2	46,798	41,598	41,233	47,587	41,540	46,565	47,595	45,162	46,746	46,053
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	53,593	2.7	20,667	17,638	15,288	20,054	17,831	20,302	20,274	20,345	19,883	19,949
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	550	593	665	583	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,812	2,631	3,801	2,999	(*)	3,396	3,476	3,526	3,491
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,412	5,742	7,911	6,564	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,177	1,715	2,526	2,365	(*)	2,338	2,327	2,417	2,464
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	21,347	6.4	7,494	6,347	7,506	7,170	6,131	7,790	7,855	7,843	7,500	7,378
452	General merchandise stores	142,374	-4.0	50,918	46,640	44,816	52,809	49,130	51,109	51,752	51,636	53,737	52,859
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	37,884	-5.4	13,893	12,337	11,654	14,850	13,482	14,570	14,731	14,942	15,770	15,449
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,584	11,897	15,087	13,702	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,303	33,162	37,959	35,648	(*)	37,021	36,694	37,967	37,410
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	29,717	28,864	32,925	31,147	(*)	31,954	31,614	32,958	32,581
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,586	4,298	5,034	4,501	(*)	5,067	5,080	5,009	4,829
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	28,408	2.6	9,943	9,312	9,153	9,758	9,347	10,467	10,383	10,404	10,029	10,070
454	Nonstore retailers	117,759	12.8	39,469	37,515	40,775	35,842	33,843	40,008	39,905	39,340	35,264	34,740
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,160	30,827	27,045	24,885	(*)	31,429	31,013	27,373	26,932
722	Food services & drinking places ...	131,991	3.8	48,011	41,821	42,159	46,071	41,248	45,551	45,212	45,430	43,669	43,373

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business.

(NA) Not available (S) Suppressed (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics>

(2) Estimates are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variation and for holiday and trading day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-13ARIMA-SEATS program. The factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted estimates shown in this table. Year-to-date seasonally adjusted sales estimates are not tabulated. Adjustment factors and explanatory material can be found on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/retail>

(3) Advance estimates are based on early reports obtained from a small sample of firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS) sample. All other estimates are from the MRTS sample

(4) GAFO represents firms which specialize in department store types of merchandise and is comprised of furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances (443), clothing & accessories (448), sporting goods, hobby, book, and music (451), general merchandise (452), office supply, stationery, and gift stores (4532).

(5) Estimates include data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line are not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>

Table 2. Estimated Change in Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change ¹					
		Mar. 2013 Advance from --		Feb. 2013 Preliminary from --		Jan. 2013 through Mar. 2013 from --	
		Feb. 2013 (p)	Mar. 2012 (r)	Jan. 2013 (r)	Feb. 2012 (r)	Oct. 2012 through Dec. 2012	Jan. 2012 through Mar. 2012
	Retail & food services, total	-0.4	2.8	1.0	4.4	1.0	3.7
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	-0.4	2.0	1.0	3.6	0.8	2.9
	Retail	-0.6	2.6	1.2	4.4	1.0	3.6
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-0.6	6.5	1.3	7.8	1.7	7.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-0.5	7.4	1.3	8.8	1.8	8.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.9	2.8	-1.4	2.0	0.7	3.1
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.6	-3.2	-0.3	0.8	-1.0	-0.8
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	0.1	0.8	0.7	4.2	2.2	2.6
445	Food & beverage stores.....	-0.1	3.0	0.8	3.8	0.8	3.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.0	2.7	0.8	3.4	0.6	2.8
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.3	0.3	-0.1	0.5	0.7	0.5
447	Gasoline stations	-2.2	-0.4	5.4	3.3	0.4	1.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.1	2.1	-0.3	1.6	0.8	2.9
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-0.8	3.9	0.2	6.5	2.5	6.5
452	General merchandise stores.....	-1.2	-4.9	0.2	-2.1	-1.1	-3.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-1.1	-7.6	-1.4	-4.6	-1.9	-4.9
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.8	4.4	-0.2	3.1	-0.2	4.0
454	Nonstore retailers	0.3	13.5	1.4	14.9	3.6	14.5
722	Food services & drinking places	0.7	4.3	-0.5	4.2	0.7	4.8

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Reliability of Estimates

Because the estimates presented in this report are based on a sample survey, they contain sampling error and nonsampling error.

Sampling error is the difference between the estimate and the result that would be obtained from a complete enumeration of the sampling frame conducted under the same survey conditions. This error occurs because only a subset of the entire sampling frame is measured in a sample survey. Standard errors and coefficients of variation (CV), as given in Table 3 of this report, are estimated measures of sampling variation.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the percent change estimate is +1.2 percent and its estimated standard error is 0.9 percent, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.5 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.3 percent to +2.7 percent. If the interval contains 0, then one does not have sufficient evidence to conclude at the 90 percent

confidence level that the change is different from zero and therefore the change is not statistically significant. Estimated changes shown in the text are statistically significant unless otherwise noted. For a monthly total, the median estimated coefficient of variation is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated monthly total). The Census Bureau recommends that individuals using estimates in this report incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error could affect the conclusions drawn from the estimates.

Nonsampling error encompasses all other factors that contribute to the total error of a sample survey estimate. This type of error can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, mistakes in the recording and coding of data, and other errors of collection, response, coverage, or processing. Although nonsampling error is not measured directly, the Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the process to minimize this type of error.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates Mar. 2013

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey and Monthly Retail Trade Survey)

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Median CV ⁽¹⁾ for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error ⁽¹⁾ for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change ⁽²⁾	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.5	1.0	0.6	1.2	0.0	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.5	1.1	0.6	1.3	0.0	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.3	1.5	0.8	2.0	0.0	0.2
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.6	0.6	0.8	1.3	-0.4	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers.....	2.9	1.4	0.9	2.4	0.1	0.6
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	1.4	0.2	0.3	0.6	-0.1	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.6	0.3	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	2.4	0.5	0.3	0.9	-0.2	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	2.7	0.6	0.6	0.7	-0.1	0.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	5.0	1.6	1.4	2.9	0.3	0.6
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	-0.2	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.4	2.1	1.4	3.2	0.1	0.5
454	Nonstore retailers	2.3	1.1	0.6	1.4	0.3	0.3
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.4	0.8	0.7	1.3	0.1	0.3

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading-day differences. Medians are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.

(2) These columns provide measures of the difference between the advance-to-preliminary and preliminary-to-final estimates of month-to-month change for the same pair of months as measured by the Advance sample and MRTS sample. The average and median revisions are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.