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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES FEBRUARY 2015

Intention to Revise Retail Estimates: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2013 Annual Retail Trade Survey and the preliminary results from the 2012 Economic Census. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted estimates are scheduled for release on April 30, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

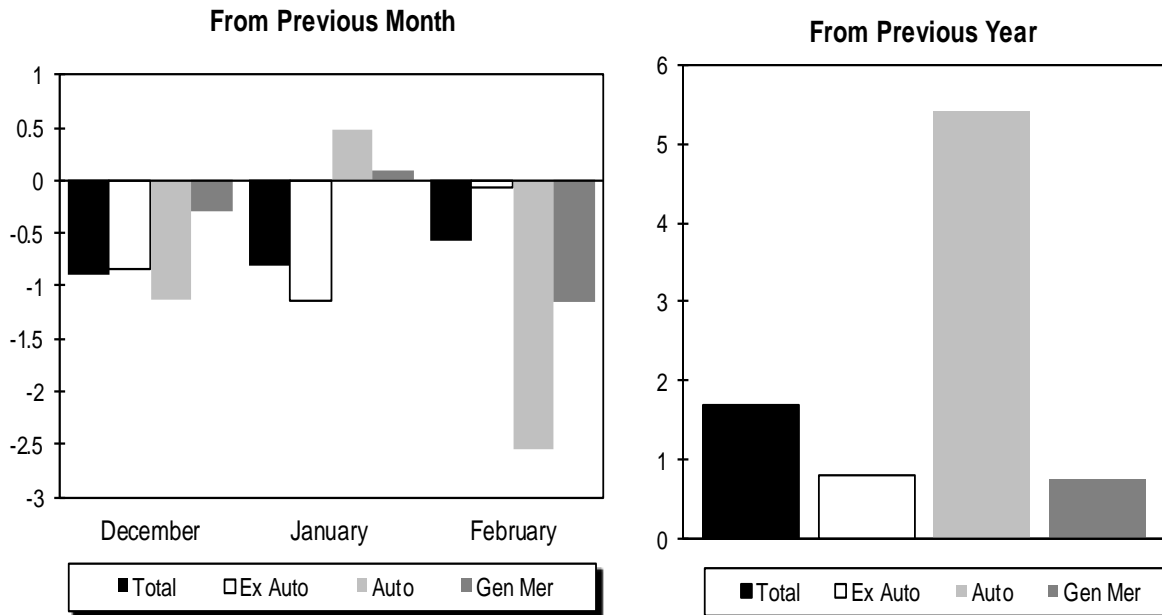
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for February, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$437.0 billion, a decrease of 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the previous month, but up 1.7 percent ($\pm 0.9\%$) above February 2014. Total sales for the December 2014 through February 2015 period were up 2.9 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from the same period a year ago. The December 2014 to January 2015 percent change was unrevised from -0.8 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.6 ($\pm 0.5\%$) from January 2015, but up 1.0 percent ($\pm 0.9\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 8.6 ($\pm 2.1\%$) from February 2014 and food services and drinking places were up 7.7 percent ($\pm 3.5\%$) from last year. Gasoline stations were down 23.0 percent ($\pm 1.6\%$) from the previous 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 4,900 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 60% 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 March is scheduled to be released April 14, 2015 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.

The U.S. Census Bureau updated its Application Programming Interface (API) with monthly and quarterly economic indicators. The API allows developers to combine Census Bureau statistics with other data sets to create tools for research on a variety of topics. For more information, visit www.census.gov/developers.

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					
		2 Month Total		2015		2014		2015			2014		
		2015	% Chg. 2014	Feb. ³ (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ³ (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb. (r)	Jan. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	790,776	2.3	389,679	401,097	506,636	384,985	388,279	437,006	439,572	443,157	429,733	424,272
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	628,361	0.9	308,236	320,125	417,012	307,189	315,529	348,370	348,620	352,640	345,644	342,793
	Retail	697,494	1.4	343,990	353,504	456,407	342,461	345,699	387,398	389,684	393,178	383,661	378,974
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	91,167	149,119	90,003	87,020	(*)	105,104	105,317	102,442	101,074
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	162,415	7.9	81,443	80,972	89,624	77,796	72,750	88,636	90,952	90,517	84,089	81,479
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	150,087	8.9	75,285	74,802	83,274	71,410	66,423	81,921	84,142	83,861	77,117	74,549
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	62,761	71,295	57,555	55,649	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,170	6,350	6,386	6,327	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	15,705	6.5	7,789	7,916	10,470	7,387	7,355	8,683	8,689	8,703	8,208	8,056
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,378	4,779	4,077	3,914	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,538	5,691	3,310	3,441	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	16,433	2.0	8,167	8,266	13,597	8,145	7,966	8,858	8,966	8,938	8,780	8,654
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,171	9,996	6,231	5,905	(*)	6,841	6,805	6,700	6,568
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	41,810	4.7	20,185	21,625	25,387	19,499	20,447	27,362	28,018	27,811	26,334	26,152
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,723	21,110	16,809	17,679	(*)	23,375	23,172	21,858	21,772
445	Food & beverage stores	108,241	3.7	51,909	56,332	61,133	50,124	54,297	56,919	56,746	56,888	54,916	55,075
4451	Grocery stores	97,340	3.4	46,536	50,804	52,321	44,996	49,104	50,583	50,351	50,503	48,909	49,006
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,611	5,703	3,428	3,452	(*)	4,179	4,200	4,033	4,047
446	Health & personal care stores	49,305	5.0	23,798	25,507	29,145	22,786	24,150	25,344	25,533	25,611	24,189	23,935
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,401	23,790	18,965	20,455	(*)	21,189	21,317	20,069	20,034
447	Gasoline stations	62,480	-23.8	30,651	31,829	36,259	40,011	42,010	35,641	35,131	38,946	46,309	46,267
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	34,243	3.2	18,200	16,043	33,237	17,779	15,390	21,281	21,287	21,414	20,606	20,713
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	598	1,103	624	559	(*)	759	749	757	723
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,621	5,156	2,855	2,484	(*)	3,576	3,709	3,494	3,393
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,163	12,517	6,300	5,744	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,896	3,475	2,402	1,833	(*)	2,587	2,605	2,591	2,532
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	12,459	4.6	5,835	6,624	12,616	5,650	6,264	7,367	7,200	7,465	7,116	6,801
452	General merchandise stores	97,835	2.4	48,467	49,368	75,035	48,292	47,223	55,057	55,705	55,653	54,647	53,789
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	21,972	-0.7	11,150	10,822	23,802	11,512	10,622	13,641	13,828	13,920	13,978	13,575
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	11,076	24,373	11,776	10,870	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	38,546	51,233	36,780	36,601	(*)	41,877	41,733	40,669	40,214
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	33,992	44,337	32,170	32,312	(*)	36,551	36,461	35,586	35,198
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,554	6,896	4,610	4,289	(*)	5,326	5,272	5,083	5,016
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	17,867	4.6	8,913	8,954	11,759	8,565	8,513	10,236	10,363	10,258	9,768	9,771
454	Nonstore retailers	78,701	3.9	38,633	40,068	58,145	36,427	39,334	42,014	41,094	40,974	38,699	38,282
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,171	50,358	26,926	28,902	(*)	34,518	34,327	30,808	30,201
722	Food services & drinking places ...	93,282	9.6	45,689	47,593	50,229	42,524	42,580	49,608	49,888	49,979	46,072	45,298

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business. (NA) Not available (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(S) Estimate does not meet publication standards because of high sampling variability (coefficient of variation is greater than 30%), poor response quality (total quantity response rate is less than 50%), or other concerns about the estimate's quality.

(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					
		Feb. 2015 Advance from --		Jan. 2015 Preliminary from --		Dec. 2014 through Feb. 2015 from --	
		Jan. 2015 (p)	Feb. 2014 (r)	Dec. 2014 (r)	Jan. 2014 (r)	Sep. 2014 through Nov. 2014	Dec. 2013 through Feb. 2014
	Retail & food services, total	-0.6	1.7	-0.8	3.6	-1.2	2.9
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	-0.1	0.8	-1.1	1.7	-1.4	1.6
	Retail	-0.6	1.0	-0.9	2.8	-1.6	2.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-2.5	5.4	0.5	11.6	-0.5	8.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-2.6	6.2	0.3	12.9	-0.4	9.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.1	5.8	-0.2	7.9	2.0	7.0
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.2	0.9	0.3	3.6	-3.4	3.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-2.3	3.9	0.7	7.1	-0.2	5.9
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.3	3.6	-0.2	3.0	0.9	3.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.5	3.4	-0.3	2.7	0.8	2.9
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.7	4.8	-0.3	6.7	0.6	5.9
447	Gasoline stations	1.5	-23.0	-9.8	-24.1	-15.6	-20.7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.0	3.3	-0.6	2.8	0.0	2.9
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	2.3	3.5	-3.5	5.9	-2.3	4.0
452	General merchandise stores.....	-1.2	0.8	0.1	3.6	-0.4	2.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-1.4	-2.4	-0.7	1.9	-0.8	-0.4
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-1.2	4.8	1.0	6.1	1.4	5.1
454	Nonstore retailers	2.2	8.6	0.3	7.3	1.6	6.8
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.6	7.7	-0.2	10.1	1.8	9.0

(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

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey (MARTS) to provide an early estimate of monthly sales by kind of business for retail and food service firms located in the United States. Each month, questionnaires are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 4,900 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 60% of the total national sales estimate. Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. The change in sales from the previous month is estimated using only units that have reported data for both the current and

previous month. There is no imputation or adjustment for nonrespondents in MARTS. The total sales estimate is derived by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS sample). Detailed industry estimates are summed to derive total estimates at broad industry levels. The monthly estimates are adjusted using annual survey estimates and for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

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 $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.6 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.4 percent to +2.8 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 $\pm 1.753 \times CV \times$ (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 Feb. 2015

(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	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Retail	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.7	1.1	0.6	1.6	0.3	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.6	1.2	0.6	1.7	0.4	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.7	1.4	0.8	1.9	0.3	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.3	0.5	0.6	1.6	0.6	0.5
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers	2.0	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.1	0.7
445	Food & beverage stores	1.3	0.2	0.2	1.3	0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	1.4	0.2	0.2	1.4	0.1	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	2.2	0.4	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.4	0.4	0.9	-0.3	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.3	0.5	0.6	1.6	0.0	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores	2.0	0.7	0.9	1.2	0.5	0.6
452	General merchandise stores	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.3
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	2.8	1.8	1.1	2.0	0.3	1.0
454	Nonstore retailers	1.3	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.2
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.3	0.9	0.7	2.0	0.3	0.6

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading day variation. 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.