

Comparing Frequently Cited U.S. Economic Data Sources

	YourEconomy Time Series (YTS)	County Business Patterns (CBP)	Current Employment Statistics (CES)	Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) ²	American Community Survey (ACS)	National Establishment Time Series (NETS) ¹
Summary	Time series of all U.S. business, government, and non-profit establishments intending to conduct commercial activities	Subnational economic data for establishments with paid employees	Industry estimates of nonfarm employment, hours, and earnings	A quarterly count of employment and wages	Helps local officials, community leaders, and businesses understand the changes taking place in their communities	A time series database describing the dynamics of the U.S. economy
Provider	Universities of Wisconsin	US Census	Bureau of Labor Statistics	Bureau of Labor Statistics	US Census	Walls & Associates
Period	Semi Annually	Annually	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually and 5 year	Annually
Availability	2 months after semi annual period from 1997	16 months after subject year	First week after subject month	5 months after subject quarter	1 year after subject year	2-3 years after annual period from 19891
Data Source	Establishments that are verified in business or are intending to be in business - No paper companies (those only registered to hold title to real estate) - collected by Data Axle	Payroll records filed the week of March 12	Survey of businesses	State unemployment insurance filings, supplemented by survey data	Survey of households	Establishments including paper companies - collected by Dun & Bradstreet
Excluded Industries or Jobs³	None	Farms, rail, postal service, notaries, and government Establishments without employees on payroll	Farms, self-employed persons, some government workers	Establishments that do not file unemployment insurance forms with state government, or are in a farming industry	N/A - questionnaire asks about household members, not establishments	None
Geographic Areas	US, state, CBSA, county, congressional district, census tract, and zip code	US, state, metro area, county, congressional district and zip code	US, state, metro area	US, state, metro area and county	US, state, metro area, county, congressional district, zip code and census tract	US, state, CBSA, county, and zip code
Individual Records or Contacts	Available for purchase, including all variables	None - prohibited by law	None - prohibited by law	None - prohibited by law	N/A - does not survey establishments	Available for purchase, including all variables ¹
Units Measured	Firms, establishments, jobs	Establishments, employees on payroll, annual payroll	Establishments, employees on payroll, number of paid hours	Establishments, employees on payroll, wages, unemployment	Household members, demographics, personal finances, work status	Firms, establishments, jobs
Time Series/Snapshot	Time Series	Snapshot	Snapshot	Snapshot	Snapshot	Time Series
Formats	Informed aggregates, time series graphs, individual records, custom graphs, charts and maps	Aggregated numbers	Aggregated numbers	Aggregated numbers, interactive maps	Aggregated numbers, maps, tables, custom tabulations	Individual records

1) NETS discontinued January 2024 and no longer available from Walls & Associates January 2025

2) QCEW relies on unemployment insurance (ES-202) data which is also used in Business Employment Dynamics (BED/BDM) data

3) Jobs - includes all people engaged in the operations of the establishment, whether they are on official payroll filings or are non-payroll workers (owners, partners, self-employed, etc)