

Comparing Frequently Cited Economic Data Sources

	Your Economy (YE)	County Business Patterns (CBP)	Current Employment Statistics (CES)	Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)	American Community Survey (ACS)
Provided by	University of Wisconsin System	US Census	Bureau of Labor Statistics	Bureau of Labor Statistics	US Census
Reported time period	Annually ¹	Annually	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually and 5 year
Availability	3 months after subject year.	16 months after subject year.	First week after subject month.	5 months after subject quarter.	1 year after subject year. (currently COVID delayed)
Source of data	Time series assembled from verified individual establishment records 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.
Excluded industries and/or sizes	None.	Farms, rail, postal service, notaries, and government. Establishments without employees on payroll.	Farms, self-employed persons, some government workers.	Establishments with fewer than 3 employees on payroll. Farms are also excluded.	N/A. Questionnaire asks about household members, not establishments.
Geographic areas available	US, state, metro area, county, congressional district and zip code. ²	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.
Availability of individual records	Available for purchase, including all variables.	None. Prohibited by law.	None. Prohibited by law.	None. Prohibited by law.	N/A. Does not survey establishments.
Units measured³	Firms, establishments, jobs, sales.	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.
Time series or snapshot	Time Series and Snapshot	Snapshot	Snapshot	Snapshot	Snapshot
Formats available	Aggregated numbers, Time Series graphs, individual records, custom graphs, charts and maps.	Aggregated numbers.	Aggregated numbers.	Aggregated numbers, interactive maps.	Aggregated numbers, maps, tables, custom tabulations.

¹ Data also available Quarterly from 2020.

² Census Tract available from 2019. City and Latitude/Longitude available for most recent year.

³ There are two variations of “workers” among these sources. The term “jobs” is used here when the data 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.).