

News Release

Embargoed for release:
8:30 am Eastern Time
7:30 am Central Time
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What is the Midwest Economy Index?

The index is a weighted average of 134 state and regional indicators encompassing the entirety of the five states in the Seventh Federal Reserve District (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin). The index measures growth in nonfarm business activity based on indicators of four broad sectors of the Midwest economy: 1) manufacturing, 2) construction and mining, 3) services, and 4) consumer spending.

Why are there two index values?

Over long periods, growth in Midwest economic activity has tended to coincide with growth in national economic activity. However, over shorter periods of time this has not always been the case. To highlight such differences, we construct two separate index values. The MEI captures both national and regional factors driving Midwest growth, and the relative MEI provides a picture of Midwest growth conditions relative to those of the nation.

What do the index numbers mean?

A zero value for the MEI indicates that the Midwest economy is expanding at its historical trend rate of growth; positive values indicate above-average growth; and negative values indicate below-average growth. A zero value for the relative MEI indicates that the Midwest economy is growing at a rate historically consistent with the growth of the national economy; positive values indicate above-average relative growth; and negative values indicate below-average relative growth.

The next MEI will be released:
November 30, 2011
8:30 am Eastern Time
7:30 am Central Time

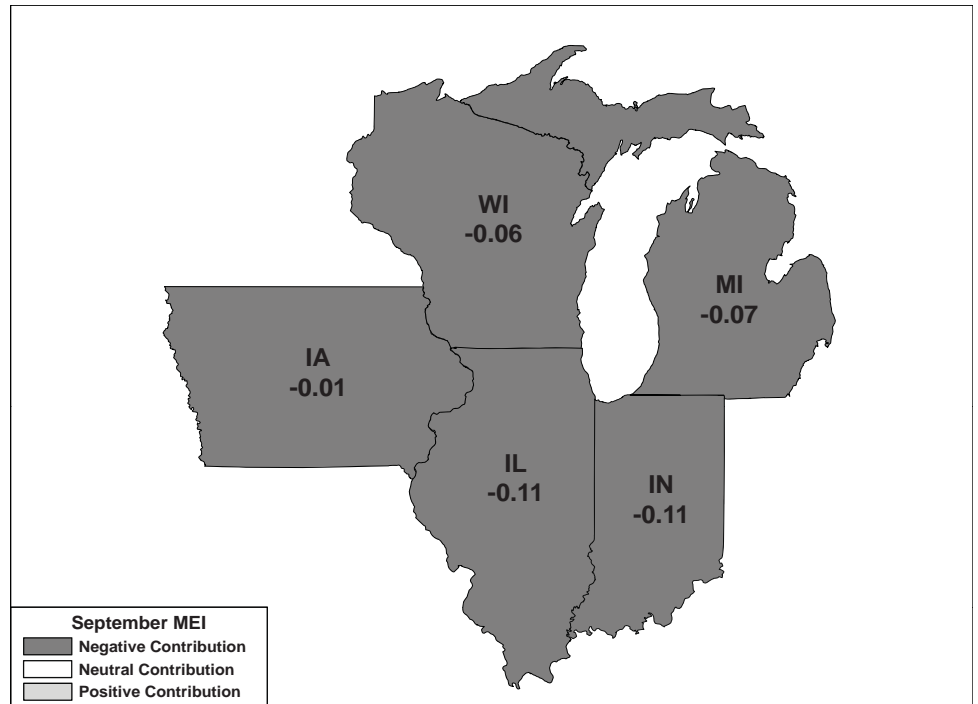
FEDERAL RESERVE BANK
OF CHICAGO

Midwest Economy Index

Index shows Midwest growth slowed in September

The Midwest Economy Index (MEI) decreased to -0.35 in September from -0.24 in August, reaching its lowest value since the end of 2009. The relative MEI decreased from -0.08 in August to -0.26 in September—its lowest value since February 2010 and the second consecutive month it has been negative.

MEI and the Seventh Federal Reserve District States



Note: The map summarizes the most recent contribution to growth in Midwest economic activity from each of the five states in the Seventh Federal Reserve District (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin).

Sectoral and Geographic Contributions to the MEI and Relative MEI

September 2011

MEI

	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Michigan	Wisconsin	Regional	
Manufacturing	0.07	0.01	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.01	0.25
Construction	-0.06	-0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.05	-0.01	-0.16
Services	-0.06	-0.07	-0.04	-0.02	-0.05	0.00	-0.24
Consumer	-0.06	-0.03	-0.02	-0.06	-0.04	0.00	-0.20
	-0.11	-0.11	-0.01	-0.07	-0.06	0.00	-0.35

Relative MEI

	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Michigan	Wisconsin	Regional	
Manufacturing	0.20	0.02	0.09	0.04	0.16	0.00	0.51
Construction	-0.04	0.01	0.01	0.03	-0.03	0.00	-0.02
Services	-0.16	-0.16	-0.05	-0.01	-0.13	0.00	-0.51
Consumer	-0.06	-0.03	-0.03	-0.06	-0.06	0.00	-0.24
	-0.07	-0.16	0.02	0.00	-0.05	-0.01	-0.26

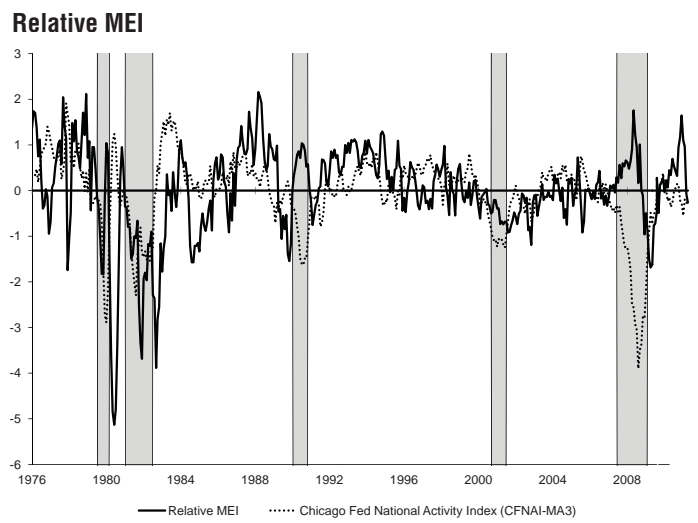
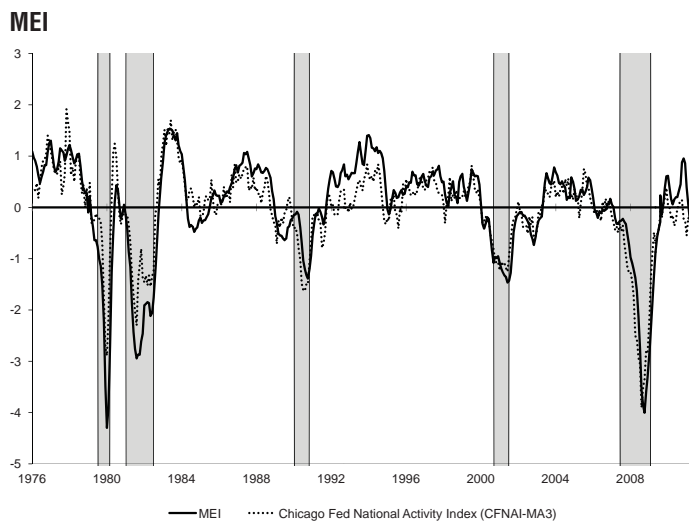
Notes: The table summarizes the most recent contribution to the MEI and relative MEI by sector and geography. The sectoral (rows) and geographic (columns) contributions may not sum to the index in each time period because of rounding. Manufacturing and construction and mining are composed of production and employment indicators. Services contains only employment indicators, while consumer spending contains employment, unemployment, per capita personal income, and home and retail sales indicators.

Manufacturing's contribution to the MEI decreased to +0.25 in September from +0.29 in August. However, manufacturing remained the only sector to make a positive contribution to the index in September. The pace of manufacturing activity decreased in Michigan and Wisconsin, but increased in Indiana and was steady in Illinois and Iowa. Manufacturing's contribution to the relative MEI was also lower in September, declining to +0.51 from +0.56 in the previous month.

The construction and mining sector's contribution to the MEI edged down to -0.16 in September from -0.15 in August. The pace of construction and mining activity decreased in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin, but increased in Indiana. Construction and mining's contribution to the relative MEI also softened in September, edging down to -0.02 from -0.01 in August.

The service sector contributed -0.24 to the MEI in September, down from -0.19 in August. The pace of service sector activity was lower in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, but the pace experienced a slight uptick in Indiana and Michigan. The service sector's contribution to the relative MEI declined to -0.51 in September from -0.42 in the previous month.

The contribution from consumer spending indicators to the MEI was -0.20 in September, down from -0.18 in August. Consumer spending indicators were down in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan, but steady in Iowa and Wisconsin. Consumer spending's contribution to the relative MEI was also lower in September, decreasing to -0.24 from -0.20 in August.



Notes: Both the MEI and the CFNAI-MA3 have been standardized to have a zero mean and are expressed in standard deviation units. MEI values greater than zero indicate growth in Midwest economic activity above its historical trend, and CFNAI-MA3 values greater than zero indicate growth in national economic activity above its historical trend; negative values indicate the opposite. Shading indicates official periods of recession as identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

Notes: Both the relative MEI and the CFNAI-MA3 have been standardized to have a zero mean and are expressed in standard deviation units. The relative MEI is constructed from the standardized residuals from linear regressions of each of the 134 MEI indicators on the CFNAI-MA3. Relative MEI values greater than zero indicate that growth in Midwest economic activity is higher on average than would typically be suggested based on the CFNAI-MA3; negative values indicate the opposite. Shading indicates official periods of recession as identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

2011 MEI Release Dates

<i>Date of Release</i>	<i>Monthly Data for</i>
<i>November 30, 2011</i>	<i>October 2011</i>
<i>December 29, 2011</i>	<i>November 2011</i>