

News Release

Embargoed for release:
8:30 am Eastern Time
7:30 am Central Time
December 29, 2017

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What is the Midwest Economy Index?

The index is a weighted average of 129 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 historically 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 has been associated with the Midwest economy expanding at its historical trend (average) rate of growth; positive values with above-average growth (in standard deviation units); and negative values with below-average growth. A zero value for the relative MEI has been associated with the Midwest economy growing at a rate historically consistent with the growth of the national economy; positive values with above-average relative growth (in standard deviation units); and negative values with below-average relative growth.

The next MEI will be released:
January 31, 2018
8:30 am Eastern Time
7:30 am Central Time

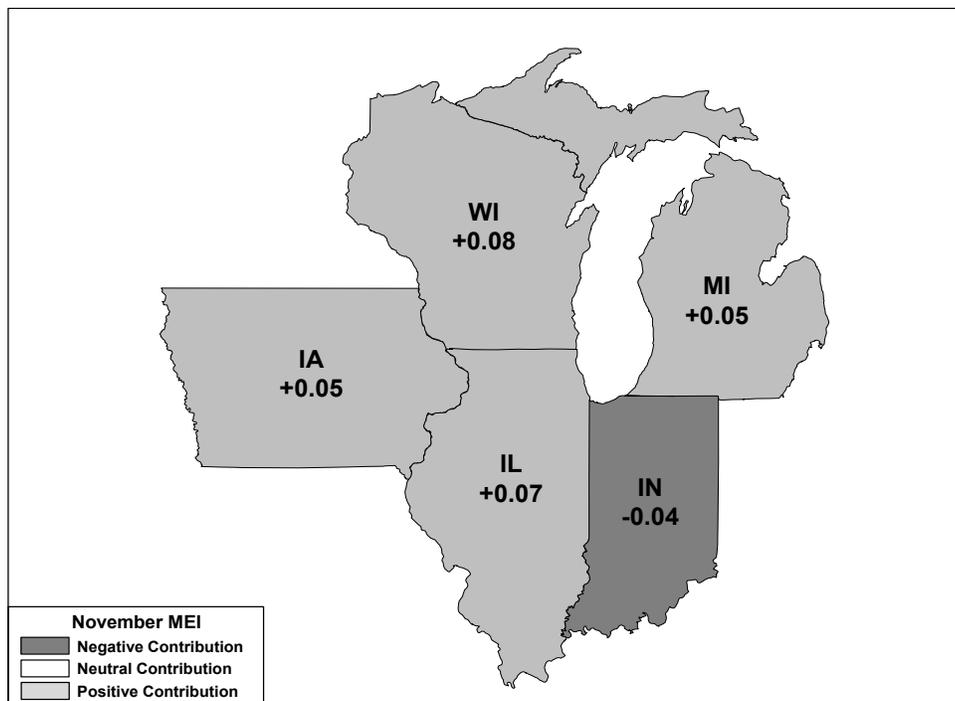
**FEDERAL RESERVE BANK
 OF CHICAGO**

Midwest Economy Index

Index points to a pickup in Midwest economic growth in November

The Midwest Economy Index (MEI) increased to +0.22 in November from -0.11 in October. Contributions to the November MEI from all four broad sectors of nonfarm business activity increased from October, though only the manufacturing sector made a positive contribution to the index. Contributions from all five Seventh Federal Reserve District states also increased from October. The relative MEI moved down to -0.25 in November from -0.07 in October. Contributions to the November relative MEI from three of the four sectors and four of the five states decreased from October.

MEI and the Seventh Federal Reserve District States



Note: The map's shading 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

November 2017

MEI	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Michigan	Wisconsin	Regional	
Manufacturing	+0.15	+0.01	+0.05	+0.04	+0.11	0.00	+0.35
Construction	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.00	-0.06
Services	-0.04	+0.01	-0.02	+0.05	-0.01	0.00	-0.01
Consumer	-0.01	-0.04	+0.02	-0.03	-0.01	+0.02	-0.05
	+0.07	-0.04	+0.05	+0.05	+0.08	+0.01	+0.22

Relative MEI	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Michigan	Wisconsin	Regional	
Manufacturing	+0.13	0.00	+0.02	0.00	+0.08	+0.01	+0.23
Construction	-0.02	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	-0.02	0.00	-0.10
Services	-0.16	-0.03	-0.09	+0.02	-0.03	0.00	-0.29
Consumer	-0.02	-0.02	+0.01	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01	-0.10
	-0.08	-0.09	-0.09	0.00	+0.01	0.00	-0.25

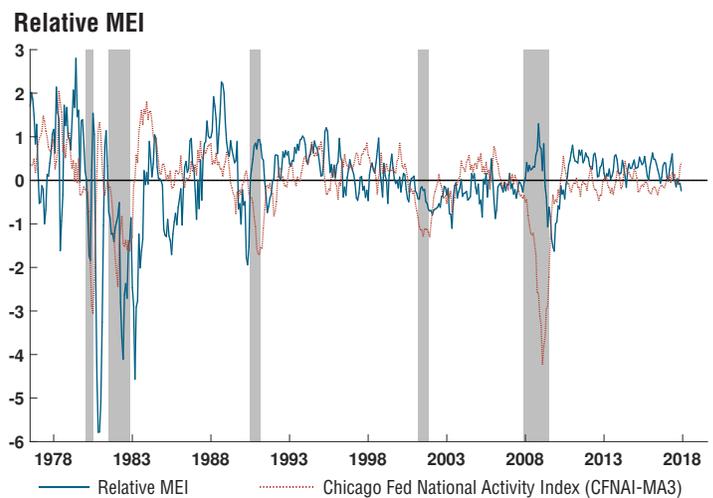
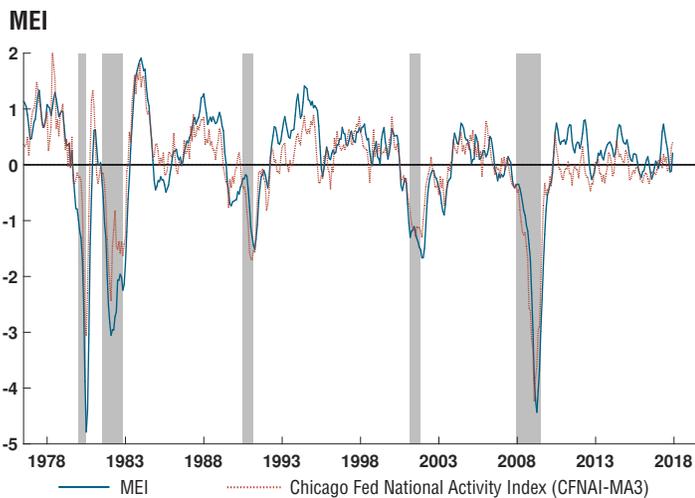
Notes: The table summarizes the most recent contribution to the MEI and relative MEI by sector and geography. The sectoral (rows) and geographic (columns) contributions may not sum to the index in each time period because of rounding. Manufacturing and construction and mining are composed of production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

The manufacturing sector's contribution to the MEI increased to +0.35 in November from +0.21 in October. The pace of manufacturing activity increased in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin, but was unchanged in Indiana. Manufacturing's contribution to the relative MEI decreased to +0.23 in November from +0.31 in October.

The construction and mining sector's contribution to the MEI moved up to -0.06 in November from -0.11 in October. The pace of construction and mining activity was stronger in Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and Wisconsin, but unchanged in Illinois. Construction and mining made a contribution of -0.10 to the relative MEI in November, up slightly from -0.12 in October.

The contribution of the service sector to the MEI increased to -0.01 in November from -0.08 in October. The pace of service sector activity was up in Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin, but down in Iowa and unchanged in Illinois. The service sector's contribution to the relative MEI moved down to -0.29 in November from -0.20 in October.

The contribution from consumer spending indicators to the MEI increased to -0.05 in November from -0.14 in October. Consumer spending indicators were, on balance, up in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, but steady in Indiana and Michigan. Consumer spending's contribution to the relative MEI edged down to -0.10 in November from -0.07 in October.



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 point to growth in Midwest economic activity above its historical trend, and CFNAI-MA3 values greater than zero point to growth in national economic activity above its historical trend; negative values suggest 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 129 MEI indicators on the CFNAI-MA3. Relative MEI values greater than zero point to growth in Midwest economic activity that is higher on average than would historically be suggested based on the CFNAI-MA3; negative values suggest the opposite. Shading indicates official periods of recession as identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

2018 MEI Release Dates

<i>Date of Release</i>	<i>Monthly Data for</i>
<i>January 31, 2018</i>	<i>December 2017</i>
<i>March 30, 2018</i>	<i>January/February 2018</i>
<i>April 30, 2018</i>	<i>March 2018</i>
<i>May 31, 2018</i>	<i>April 2018</i>
<i>June 29, 2018</i>	<i>May 2018</i>
<i>July 31, 2018</i>	<i>June 2018</i>
<i>August 31, 2018</i>	<i>July 2018</i>
<i>September 28, 2018</i>	<i>August 2018</i>
<i>October 31, 2018</i>	<i>September 2018</i>
<i>November 30, 2018</i>	<i>October 2018</i>
<i>December 31, 2018</i>	<i>November 2018</i>

MEI historical data and background information are available at chicagofed.org/mei.