Manufacturing in America

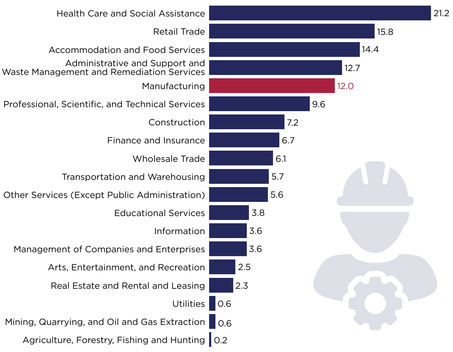
October 2022

Manufacturing plays a major role in our economy, with 12.0 million employees producing goods that we consume domestically or export abroad. In recognition of the eleventh annual Manufacturing Day on October 7, 2022, the U.S. Census Bureau joins a group of public and private organizations in celebrating the importance of the manufacturing sector to the nation's economy. The nation relies on several key Census Bureau programs to track America's manufacturing industries, and the most recent data from some of these programs are highlighted below.

How does manufacturing compare to other industries?

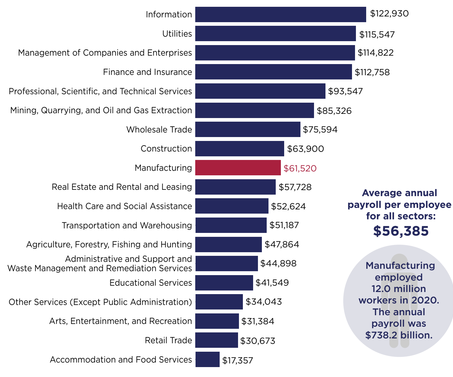
Manufacturing Is the Fifth-Largest Employer

(Millions of employees)



Note: Rankings may vary slightly due to nonsampling error and disclosure avoidance methods used to protect the confidentiality of the data. Number of employees is for the pay period including March 12.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 County Business Patterns, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp.html>.

Average Annual Payroll Per Employee by Industry



Average annual payroll per employee for all sectors: $56,385

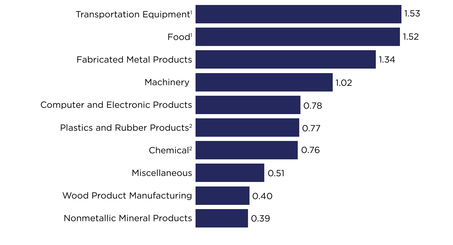
Manufacturing employed 12.0 million workers in 2020. The annual payroll was $738.2 billion.

Note: Rankings may vary slightly due to nonsampling error and disclosure avoidance methods used to protect the confidentiality of the data. Number of employees is for the pay period including March 12. Average for all sectors includes data for establishments where industry classification is unknown.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 County Business Patterns, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp.html>.

Which manufacturing subsectors have the largest number of employees?

Top 10 Subsectors by Number of Employees: 2020

(Millions of employees)

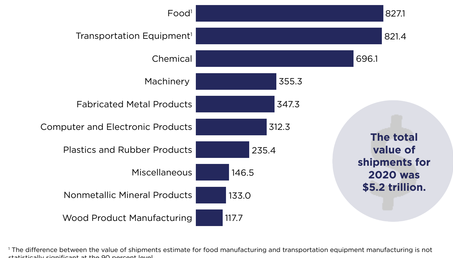


[1] The difference between the number of employees estimate for transportation equipment manufacturing and food manufacturing is not statistically significant at the 90 percent level.
[2] The difference between the number of employees estimate for plastics and rubber products manufacturing and chemical manufacturing is not statistically significant at the 90 percent level.
Note: These statistics are estimated from a sample survey and are subject to sampling variability, as well as nonsampling error.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Annual Survey of Manufactures, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/asm.html>.

Which manufacturing subsectors have the largest value of shipments?

Top 10 Subsectors by Value of Shipments: 2020

(Billions of dollars)



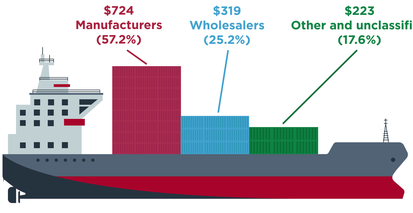
The total value of shipments for 2020 was $5.2 trillion.

[1] The difference between the value of shipments estimate for food manufacturing and transportation equipment manufacturing is not statistically significant at the 90 percent level.
Note: These statistics are estimated from a sample survey and are subject to sampling variability, as well as nonsampling error.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Annual Survey of Manufactures, <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/asm.html>.

How does manufacturing contribute to exports?

U.S. Exports by Company Type: 2020[1]

(Billions of dollars)



[1] Graphic shows the known value of the portion of U.S. exports that could be matched to specific companies.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Profile of U.S. Importing and Exporting Companies, 2019–2020, <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/Press-Release/edb/edbrel2020.pdf>.

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