

# Missouri Economy Indicators

## Gross Domestic Product Trends

VOL. 7, ISSUE 3, 23 FEB 2026

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the total value of goods and services produced in an area. Provided by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), GDP tracks how state and local economies expand or contract over time. These measures provide insight into the overall health of a regional economy, its performance relative to peer areas, and the industries driving growth or experiencing decline. An increase in real GDP, which is adjusted for inflation, reflects income and profit growth that has outpaced the rising cost of living.

### Missouri Metros Lead GDP Growth From 2021 to 2024

Missouri's economy rebounded after the pandemic-related declines of 2020 and, by 2024, had reached \$449 billion in GDP. Between 2021 and 2024, the state's real GDP expanded by 6.6%, trailing U.S. growth by just under two percentage points. This performance ranked Missouri 31st among the states, placing it slightly ahead of Indiana.

Economic performance varied between Missouri's metro and nonmetro areas. Missouri's metro areas grew their GDP by 6.8% from 2021 to 2024. The state's nonmetro areas increased 5.7%.

### 2021-24 Percent Change in Real GDP by Area and Selected Sectors

	MO Metro	MO Nonmetro	Missouri	U.S.
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
Manufacturing	7.0%	4.5%	6.4%	2.7%
Retail Trade	22.9%	23.4%	23.0%	18.6%
Prof. & Business Services	6.5%	18.9%	7.1%	13.6%
Health & Educ. Services	14.9%	23.3%	15.8%	15.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	10.9%	5.0%	9.8%	13.0%

Source: MU Extension graphic using BEA real GDP data. Missouri rates represent county aggregations based on metro and nonmetro designations.

### Missouri's Nonmetro Growth Significantly Outpaces the U.S. in Health Care, and Professional and Business Services

Retail trade rebounded strongly in the years following the 2020 downturn, especially in Missouri. From 2021 to 2024, retail GDP grew by 18.6% nationally, while Missouri retailers increased output by 23%. Health and educational services, driven largely by hospitals and other health care providers, also experienced comparable high growth (15% or more) in the U.S. and Missouri. Manufacturing showed a notable relative strength in Missouri. The state's manufacturing output increased 6.4% over the period, more than double the 2.7% growth recorded nationally. Missouri trailed national growth in professional and business services and in leisure and hospitality, the tourism-related sector encompassing arts, recreation, hotels, and restaurants.

Missouri's nonmetro areas recorded comparatively strong gains in professional and business services and in health care output, outperforming the state's metro areas in these sectors from 2021 to 2024. In contrast, metro regions led the state in manufacturing and in leisure and hospitality growth.

## Economic Growth Slower in 2024, Remains Uneven Regionally

From 2023 to 2024, Missouri's metro areas saw a 1.9% increase in real GDP, lagging the national average (2.8%). Nonmetro counties recorded a gain of 1.4% in real GDP—an improvement from 2021 and 2022 (-0.2%), but slower than 2022 to 2023 (2.8%). Missouri's nonmetro growth fell below the national nonmetro average (2.6%), which was also down from 2022 to 2023 (5.2%).

Roughly 59% of the state's 115 counties, including St. Louis City, grew their economies from 2023 to 2024. This is a significant improvement from 2021 to 2022, when only 37% of the state's 115 counties grew their economies, but a decrease from 2022 to 2023 when nearly 82% of counties saw growth. Nationally, 74% of counties experienced GDP gains between 2023 and 2024, a slight decrease from the previous period when 76% experienced gains.

Among Missouri's metro counties, the largest GDP growth was concentrated in mid-Missouri's two largest metro areas: Columbia—Moniteau (12.5%) and Boone (7.2%); and Jefferson City—Osage (8.4%) and Callaway (7.3%). The Springfield area also saw notable GDP growth as every county in the Springfield MSA experienced growth, with Christian (6.5%), Dallas (6.3%), and Webster (5.0%) leading the way. All the counties bordering the Springfield MSA, except for Laclede (-0.4%) and St. Clair (-4.3%), also experienced growth.

In nonmetro areas, agriculture-dependent counties across northern Missouri—Atchison (-18.1%), Shelby (-13.3%), and Clark (-10.3%)—saw notable GDP declines. Mining-dependent counties in southeastern Missouri—Iron (-17.7%) and Reynolds (-17.1%)—also saw significant GDP declines. In Missouri's Bootheel, New Madrid County (8.3%) saw the most significant shift from 2022 to 2023 when it experienced a 11.1 GDP decline.

### Additional Notes and Resources

- **The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis** tracks GDP at the national, state, metro, and county levels. Data is updated annually in December. [See the summary tables and interactive data](#) on the bureau's website for details on your county or metropolitan area.

[All Missouri Economy Indicators briefs in this series are available online.](#)

[Sign up for the Exceed newsletter.](#)

Authors: Luke Dietterle, Extension Specialist, [luke.dietterle@missouri.edu](mailto:luke.dietterle@missouri.edu)

Alan Spell, Assistant Extension Professor, [alan.spell@missouri.edu](mailto:alan.spell@missouri.edu)

