Productivity Reports

Productivity declined in 1982 in a majority of industries measured

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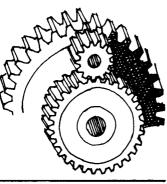
Productivity, as measured by output per employee hour, declined in 1982 in more than half of the industries for which the Bureau of Labor Statistics regularly publishes data. This falloff is in contrast to 1981, when most industries recorded productivity gains. The 1982 productivity drop in a majority of the industries is consistent with the situation in the nonfarm business sector of the economy, where productivity declined 0.1 percent.

Table 1 shows productivity trends in industries measured by the Bureau and includes new measures introduced for additional industries: miscellaneous plastics products, instruments to measure electricity, valves and pipefittings, fabricated pipe, red meat products (including separate measures for meatpacking plants and sausages), switchgear and switchboard apparatus, and apparel and accessory stores (including separate measures for men's and boys' clothing stores, women's ready-to-wear clothing stores, family clothing stores, and shoe stores).¹

Changes by industry

Manufacturing. The steel industry, one of the more important industries covered, had a steep 1982 productivity decline of 19.5 percent as output dropped sharply—40.1 percent. These declines in productivity and output were the largest since the measure was begun in 1947. Demand fell in almost all steel markets, as the industry was severely affected by the economic slowdown. The 1982 productivity falloff in this industry is in contrast to a large gain (8.8 percent) in 1981. Another key industry, motor vehicle manufacturing, posted a productivity gain of 5.7 percent in 1982, its second annual productivity increase after 3 years of declines. A drop in output of motor vehicles of 6.5 percent was more than offset by a decline in employee hours.

Many of the basic metal and metal fabricating industries also were adversely affected by the economic downturn and experienced large declines in productivity. Steel foundries had a productivity decrease of 21.5 percent, as output fell 41.2 percent. As in the basic steel industry, both the productivity and the output drops in steel foundries were the



greatest since the measure for this industry was begun in 1954. Other metal-related industries with large productivity drops included: metal forming machine tools (-13.1 percent); copper rolling and drawing (-9.4 percent); primary aluminum (-6.5 percent); primary copper (-4.2 percent); and gray iron foundries (-4.0 percent). These industries recorded output declines of more than 20 percent in 1982.

Many other manufacturing industries recorded large productivity drops in 1982. Several of these can be attributed to the lowered construction activity in 1982: construction machinery, in which productivity declined 16.0 percent as output dropped steeply, 37.9 percent; brick and structural clay tile, with productivity down 11.9 percent and output down 26.0 percent; clay refractories, in which productivity fell 10.2 percent and output dropped 34.0 percent; and clay construction products, in which productivity decreased 6.1 percent and output fell 20.3 percent.

Although some manufacturing industries posted productivity gains in 1982, most of these advances resulted from hours dropping more sharply than output. Among the industries with large increases were: metal cans (12.5 percent); glass containers (7.8 percent); household furniture (7.4 percent); household refrigerators and freezers (6.6 percent); sawmills and planing mills (4.4 percent); corregated and solid fiber boxes, and folding paperboard boxes (both 4.1 percent); and flour and other grain mill products (4.0 percent). Of these industries, only metal cans and flour had gains in output in 1982 and these were less than 1 percent.

Mining. With the exception of copper mining, all of the mining industries covered experienced productivity declines in 1982, whereas in 1981, all the industries except nonmetallic minerals posted gains. Iron mining (usable ore) had a large 1982 drop in productivity of 14.9 percent. Productivity decreased 7.5 percent in nonmetallic minerals, as output fell 13.7 percent, because of the slowdown in construction activity. Construction is the major market for nonmetallic minerals. Productivity in coal mining dropped 5.2 percent as output was up slightly, but hours increased even more. On the other hand, copper mining (recoverable metal) recorded a large productivity increase of 14.5 percent. However, this gain was based on a very large decline in output of 25.9 percent, as demand for copper fell off sharply, and an even larger drop in hours as many mines were closed in 1982.

Transportation and utilities. Productivity changes were mixed among transportation and utility industries. Produc-

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SIC code ¹	Industry	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982²	Percent change, 1981–82	Average annual percent change, 1977–82
011 011 021 021 11,121 21 4 42	Mining Iron mining, crude ore Iron mining, usable ore Copper mining, crude ore Copper mining, recoverable metal Coal mining Bituminous coal and lignite mining Nonmetallic minerals, except fuels Crushed and broken stone	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	116.8 119.2 109.6 107.6 106.4 106.7 104.6 109.0	125.5 125.6 108.8 97.8 99.4 99.6 102.4 108.4	129.0 127.5 99.1 91.3 112.5 112.6 96.2 103.3	139.0 136.8 101.4 97.2 122.2 122.7 96.0 100.7	116.0 116.4 103.1 111.3 115.9 116.9 88.8 96.5	- 16.5 - 14.9 1.7 14.5 - 5.2 - 4.7 - 7.5 - 4.2	3.8 3.5 - 0.5 3.7 3.9 - 2.6 - 1.3
2011,13 2011 2013 2026 203 2033 204 204 204 204 2044 2045 2046 2047,48 205 2061,62,63 2061,62 2063	Manufacturing Red meat products Meatpacking plants Sausages and other prepared meats Fluid milk Preserved fruits and vegetables Canned fruits and vegetables Grain mill products Floud milk Preserved fruits and vegetables Canned fruits and vegetables Grain mill products Flour and other grain mill products Cereal breakfast foods Rice milling Blended and prepared flour Wet corn milling Prepared feeds for animals and fowls Bakery products Sugar Raw and refined cane sugar Beet sugar	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	99.1 101.4 93.6 108.0 104.4 101.5 101.7 92.7 92.5 102.0 100.8 97.2 101.0 100.7 101.2	102.9 106.5 94.6 116.3 99.3 101.4 102.2 98.5 107.6 96.3 91.0 110.8 102.0 94.1 109.1 107.3 110.9	108.1 110.9 101.8 124.8 101.2 100.6 107.5 99.8 106.5 111.8 104.8 129.2 106.2 92.3 109.1 107.8 111.7	109.8 116.8 94.3 129.3 99.6 99.7 112.9 98.8 110.0 117.9 104.6 143.8 112.6 94.3 111.2 111.1	(³) (¹) (³) (¹) (¹) (³) (¹)	(³) (³)	$\begin{array}{c} 42.8\\ 44.1\\ 4-0.3\\ -6.0\\ 4-0.4\\ 4-0.4\\ 422\\ 0.2\\ 42.4\\ 45.3\\ 42.2\\ 410.1\\ 42.9\\ -1.5\\ 2.3\\ 2.1\\ 2.6\end{array}$
2082 2086 2111,21,31 2121 2251,52 2281 2421 2431 2435,36 2435 2435	Malt beverages Bottled and canned soft drinks All tobacco products Cigarettes, chewing and smoking tobacco Cigars Hosiery Nonwool yarn mills Sawmills and planing mills, general Millwork Veneer and plywood Hardwood veneer and plywood Softwood veneer and plywood	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	100.0 104.5 102.8 103.8 98.2 101.4 104.2 101.4 90.4 101.7 100.7	107.4 105.6 102.2 102.1 103.7 106.5 103.9 104.6 92.3 94.6 97.8 93.4	112.1 109.8 102.2 101.1 110.3 105.3 99.8 101.8 92.7 102.7 104.1 102.7	113.0 114.3 100.6 98.9 112.5 118.6 103.2 104.5 96.9 107.8 102.2 112.4	112.7 117.8 100.3 98.5 113.0 103.1 109.1 (³) (³) (³) (³) (³)	$ \begin{array}{c} -0.3 \\ 3.1 \\ -0.3 \\ -0.4 \\ 0.4 \\ -3.0 \\ -0.1 \\ 4.4 \\ \binom{3}{(3)} \\ \binom{3}{(3)} \end{array} $	2.9 3.3 -0.1 -0.7 3.1 3.4 0.2 1.4 4-0.4 41.6 40.8 42.4
251 2511,17 2512 2514 2515 252 2521 2522 2611,21,31,61 2643 2651 2653	Household furniture Wood household furniture Upholstered household furniture Metal household furniture Mattresses and bedsprings Office furniture Wood office furniture Metal office furniture Paper, paperboard, and pulp mills Paper and plastic bags Folding paperboard boxes Corrugated and solid fiberboard boxes	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	104.6 104.9 108.8 97.4 100.1 100.7 99.9 103.2 99.9 102.8 103.5	101.3 101.5 104.9 89.9 102.6 107.3 110.7 104.8 105.4 97.6 101.4 107.1	99.7 97.1 101.9 93.1 111.9 112.5 109.2 114.4 105.2 94.0 97.1 111.3	102.6 97.0 110.1 97.9 113.7 109.1 99.4 114.7 105.2 91.7 98.6 110.2	110.2 (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) 106.6 (3) 102.6 114.7	7.4 (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (3) (4,1) 4.1	1.2 4 - 1.4 41.3 4 - 0.9 43.6 43.0 40.7 44.2 1.1 4 - 2.3 - 0.1 2.6
2823,24 2834 2841 2844 2851 2911 2079 214 2221 2241 2251 2251,53,59 2251,53,59 2251 2251 2253 2255 2251 2253 2253 2253	Synthetic fibers	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	105.2 99.0 105.2 99.3 104.7 101.3 108.8 102.5 101.4 101.3 102.6 102.6 102.6 102.6 102.6 105.3 102.9 98.6 103.1 108.3	115.0 106.4 104.0 93.1 105.7 94.9 109.5 94.8 100.2 106.7 96.1 92.1 85.8 111.8 109.1 94.6 99.9 106.9	115.7 107.3 108.4 82.5 101.8 94.2 105.6 95.7 99.1 112.0 87.0 97.8 94.8 85.6 120.3 108.0 93.2 93.1 102.9	120.9 105.8 105.9 74.9 102.5 83.7 123.2 98.5 97.0 118.7 91.1 100.9 98.4 85.2 126.5 109.0 92.5 95.4 112.0	105.4 (³) (³) 98.7 82.5 122.0 91.1 127.9 92.0 93.7 92.4 75.1 (³) 97.9 (³) (³) 90.2	$ \begin{array}{c} -12.8 \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ -3.7 \\ -1.4 \\ -1.0 \\ (3) \\ -6.1 \\ 7.8 \\ 1.0 \\ -7.1 \\ -6.1 \\ -11.9 \\ (3) \\ -10.2 \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ -19.5 \end{array} $	$\begin{array}{c} 2.0\\ 42.0\\ 41.5\\ -7.3\\ -0.5\\ -4.3\\ 3.9\\ 4-0.8\\ -1.8\\ 5.1\\ -2.4\\ -1.0\\ 4-1.9\\ 4-5.0\\ 0.2\\ 4-2.1\\ 4-1.9\\ -1.3\end{array}$
321 324,25 331,32,33	Gray iron foundries	100.0 100.0 100.0	102.1 98.1 96.5	96.8 99.4 106.5	90.8 99.1 103.7	92.5 90.8 118.5	88.8 71.3	-4.0	- 1.3 - 2.7 - 5.4

SIC code ¹	industry	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982 ²	Percent change, 1981–82	Average annual percent change, 1977–82
31 34 351 353,54,55 411 423 441 494 498 52 523 523 524 531 541,42 541	Primary copper Primary aluminum Copper rolling and drawing Aluminum rolling and drawing Metal cans Hand and edge tools Fabricated structural metal Valves and pipe fittings Fabricated pipe and fittings Fabricated pipe and fittings Farm and garden machinery Farm machinery Lawn and garden equipment Construction machinery and equipment Machine tools Metal cutting machine tools	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	99.4 99.6 100.3 104.6 102.3 100.6 100.4 100.9 100.7 101.0 98.4 108.6 105.8 102.5 103.6	113.3 99.7 98.5 101.5 103.6 104.3 102.0 104.3 90.1 103.3 100.2 113.9 100.3 101.9 103.1	105.3 100.0 95.0 101.9 102.6 99.0 101.9 101.4 88.9 96.3 94.0 107.0 97.4 98.7 100.9	124.4 103.8 99.3 99.4 108.1 95.8 98.3 103.5 98.6 98.0 101.3 96.5 99.3	119.2 97.1 90.0 99.9 121.6 (³) (³	$\begin{array}{c} -4.2 \\ -6.5 \\ -9.4 \\ 0.5 \\ 12.5 \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ (3) \\ -16.0 \\ -9.3 \\ -8.1 \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c} 4.3\\ -0.1\\ -1.7\\ -0.4\\ 3.3\\ 4-1.0\\ 4-0.2\\ 40.7\\ 4-2.5\\ 4-0.8\\ 4-0.9\\ 40.1\\ -3.9\\ -2.5\\ -1.7\end{array}$
542 561,63 563 563 562 612 613 621 631,32,33,39	Metal forming machine tools Pumps and compressors Pumps and pumping equipment Air and gas compressors Ball and roller bearings Transformers Switchgear and switchboard apparatus Motors and generators Major household appliances	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	99.9 102.6 101.1 105.5 105.6 103.4 102.4 98.6 100.5	98.4 102.5 100.7 106.1 105.3 108.5 102.7 97.9 108.9	92.4 99.6 96.9 105.5 94.7 110.8 102.6 94.9 105.9	88.0 102.7 100.6 93.4 107.0 98.4 97.7 108.1	76.5 (³) (³) 86.4 103.1 97.1 101.3 106.3	$ \begin{array}{c} -13.1 \\ \binom{3}{} \\ \binom{3}{} \\ -7.5 \\ -3.6 \\ -1.3 \\ 3.7 \\ -1.7 \end{array} $	-5.0 40.2 4-0.3 41.3 4-3.4 0.8 -0.8 (⁵) 1.4
631 632 633 639 641 645,46,47,48 651 71 825	Household cooking equipment Household refrigerators and freezers Household laundry equipment Household laundry equipment classified Electric lamps Lighting fixtures Radio and television receiving sets Motor vehicles and equipment Instruments to measure electricity	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	100.3 98.4 102.3 104.0 103.0 100.6 113.1 99.7 100.3	108.5 112.2 108.2 104.3 106.2 95.0 118.2 98.5 99.0	103.4 114.3 102.2 101.6 104.7 93.9 116.4 92.2 106.3	104.9 117.2 104.0 103.9 108.8 89.4 126.9 95.0 109.1	91.2 124.9 103.5 113.0 111.5 85.1 (³) 100.4	$ \begin{array}{r} -13.1 \\ 6.6 \\ -0.5 \\ 8.8 \\ 2.5 \\ -4.8 \\ (^3) \\ 5.7 \\ (^3) \end{array} $	-1.1 4.8 0.5 1.7 2.0 -3.3 45.2 -0.5 42.4
101 101 1111,31,414 PT 1213 PT 1213 PT 1511,21 PT 1612,13 1811 191,492,493 191,493 PT 192,493 PT 14	Other Railroad transportation, revenue traffic Railroad transportation, car miles Class I bus carriers Intercity trucking ⁶ Intercity trucking, general freight ⁶ Air transportation ⁶ Petroleum pipelines Telephone communications Gas and electric utilities Electric utilities Retail food stores ⁷	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	104.5 102.8 96.7 99.8 98.6 109.3 101.7 105.8 98.2 96.8 101.4 96.0	99.0 104.7 102.9 98.6 96.6 113.1 101.7 110.8 97.6 95.4 103.4 98.3	107.3 107.9 100.8 94.3 87.9 106.2 93.0 118.1 96.2 94.0 102.1 101.3	111.7 107.6 90.9 98.7 92.5 104.9 86.0 124.4 94.4 93.1 98.0 100.7	(³) 115.9 109.7 (³) 114.4 85.9 130.1 90.0 89.8 90.2 101.6	(*) 3.8 2.0 (³) 9.1 -0.1 4.6 -4.7 -3.5 -8.0 0.9	-2.4 2.8 1.9 -1.5 4 - 0.8 4 - 2.7 1.4 - 3.8 5.5 - 1.9 - 1.9 - 1.9 - 1.8 0.7
511 541 6 611 651 651 8 912 02 02 011 21	Franchised new-car dealers Gasoline service stations ⁷ Apparel and accessory stores. ⁷ Men's and boys' clothing stores ⁷ Wormen's ready-to-wear stores ⁷ Family clothing stores ⁷ Shoe stores ⁷ Eating and drinking places ⁷ Drug and proprietary stores ⁷ Commercial banking Hotels, motels, and tourist courts ⁷ Laundry and cleaning services ⁷	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	98.6 104.5 110.0 105.4 111.3 96.4 108.7 99.3 102.3 101.2 103.1 100.6	94.6 109.8 112.0 110.5 115.0 99.6 111.2 99.4 102.9 99.3 102.4 94.0	99.5 108.3 116.4 110.0 116.2 109.6 107.7 99.5 105.6 92.7 98.6 87.7	96.6 111.7 123.6 117.5 124.3 116.3 109.3 97.2 104.7 90.6 96.7 85.0	97.0 119.7 129.4 118.6 130.1 114.9 115.2 98.9 103.3 (³) 90.1 87.1	0.4 7.2 4.7 0.9 4.7 -1.2 5.4 1.7 -1.3 (³) -6.8 2.5	-0.5 3.1 4.9 3.4 4.8 3.9 2.0 -0.3 0.7 4-2.8 -2.1 -3.6

²Preliminary data. ³Not available. ⁴Percent change, 1977–81. ⁵Rate of change is less than 0.05 percent. ⁶Output per employee. ⁷Output per hour of all persons.

an enjoyees engaged in each industry, they do not interstite the specific continuotion of labor, capital, or any other single factor of production. Rather, they reflect the joint ef-fects of many influences, including new technology, capital investment, the level of out-put, capacity utilization, energy use, and managerial skills, as well as the skills and efforts of the work force. Some of these measures use a labor input series that is based on hours paid and some use a labor input series that is based on plant hours.

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tivity was up 9.1 percent in air transportation, as output grew 3.7 percent and employee hours fell 5.0 percent. In railroads (revenue traffic), productivity grew 3.8 percent. Although railroad output dropped 12.1 percent because of declines in freight and passenger service caused in part by the economic downturn, hours fell even more. This was the third consecutive year that railroad output declined. Productivity grew 2.0 percent for bus carriers, as output was up 1.0 percent and hours fell 1.0 percent. The 1982 productivity gain in this industry was in contrast to a sharp decline of 9.8 percent in 1981. In petroleum pipelines, productivity dropped 0.1 percent, the third consecutive annual decline in this industry.

Productivity was up 4.6 percent in the telephone communications industry as output grew 2.9 percent and employee hours dropped 1.6 percent. This increase extended the gains in this industry which have been recorded since the measure was begun in 1951. Productivity continued to decline in gas utilities (-8.0 percent) and electric utilities (-3.5 percent) in 1982. Output of gas utilities fell 7.1 percent because of a lack of demand from the industrial sector which can be attributed to the economic slowdown; however, employee hours were up slightly, because of growth in the overall number of customers. In electric utilities, where output declines have been very unusual, output fell 0.5 percent, while hours were up slightly, resulting in the 1982 falloff.

Trade and services. Productivity increased in most of the trade and service industries. Gasoline service stations posted a productivity advance of 7.2 percent as output grew slightly (0.9 percent), and employee hours fell 5.9 percent. Other industries with gains were: laundries and cleaning services (2.5 percent); eating and drinking places (1.7 percent); retail food stores (0.9 percent); and franchised new-car dealers (0.4 percent). However, productivity in the hotel and motel industry declined sharply, 6.8 percent. There was a large drop in output in this industry because of the economic slowdown, which affected both business and vacation travel, but hours were up slightly as new buildings were completed and staffed. Productivity also fell in the drug and proprietary store industry (-1.3 percent).

Trends, 1977-82

Except for metal forming machine tools, all the industries measured have recorded average annual rates of gain in productivity over the long term (1947–82 for many of the industries). However, over the more recent period, 1977–82, nearly half of the industries posted declining rates of productivity. In addition, about three-quarters of the industries had lower rates of productivity during 1977–82 than in the preceding long-term period (1947–77 for many industries). This slowdown in productivity in the more current period matches the trend in the nonfarm business sector of

the economy, in which productivity recorded no growth from 1977 to 1982, compared with an average annual gain of 2.3 percent from 1947 to 1977.

Gains. In recent years, the wet corn milling industry had the highest rate of productivity gain, an average of 10.1 percent per year from 1977 to 1981 (1982 data are not yet available). Output in this industry increased at the high rate of 8.6 percent per year as the markets for high fructose syrup, one of the industry's key products, continued to expand. Especially noteworthy was the growth in demand for the syrup from the soft drink industry. During this period, several new plants in the wet corn milling industry were opened and a significant amount of highly automatic manufacturing equipment came on line. The industry with the second highest rate of productivity growth was fluid milk, with an annual rate of gain of 6.0 percent from 1977 to 1982. Although output did not grow over the period, hours dropped sharply, as large new plants, using highly automatic computerized processing equipment, replaced older, less efficient plants. Other industries with high rates of growth were: telephone communications (5.5 percent); rice milling and ceramic wall and floor tile (both 5.3 percent from 1977 to 1981); radio and television sets (5.2 percent from 1977 to 1981); and glass containers (5.1 percent).

Declines. Among the numerous industries with declining productivity rates over the more recent period, the largest falloff was in cosmetics—7.3 percent annually from 1977 to 1981. Output in this industry dropped sharply, in contrast to its previous high rate of gain, partly because of the impact of the economic slowdown as consumers purchased fewer impulse and luxury items.

Other industries with large declines during 1977-82 included: steel foundries (-5.4 percent); brick and structural clay tile and metal forming machine tools (both - 5.0 percent); petroleum refining (-4.3 percent); construction machinery (-3.9 percent); and petroleum pipelines (-3.8 percent). Except for petroleum pipelines, these industries recorded average annual declines in output from 1977 to 1982. Many of these decreases were quite large.

A full report, *Productivity Measures for Selected Industries, 1954–82*, BLS Bulletin 2189, is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

[—]FOOTNOTE ——

¹For a detailed report on these industries, see the following *Monthly Labor Review* articles: James D. York, "Productivity growth in plastics lower than all manufacturing average," September 1983, pp. 17–21; Barbara J. Bingham, "Instruments to measure electricity: industry's productivity growth rises," October 1983, pp. 11–17; and Horst Brand and Clyde Huffstuller, "Productivity in two fabricated metals industries," October 1983, pp. 18–24. Articles on the red meat products, switchgear, and apparel and accessory stores industries will appear in forthcoming issues of the *Review*.