

# NOWCASTING REPORT

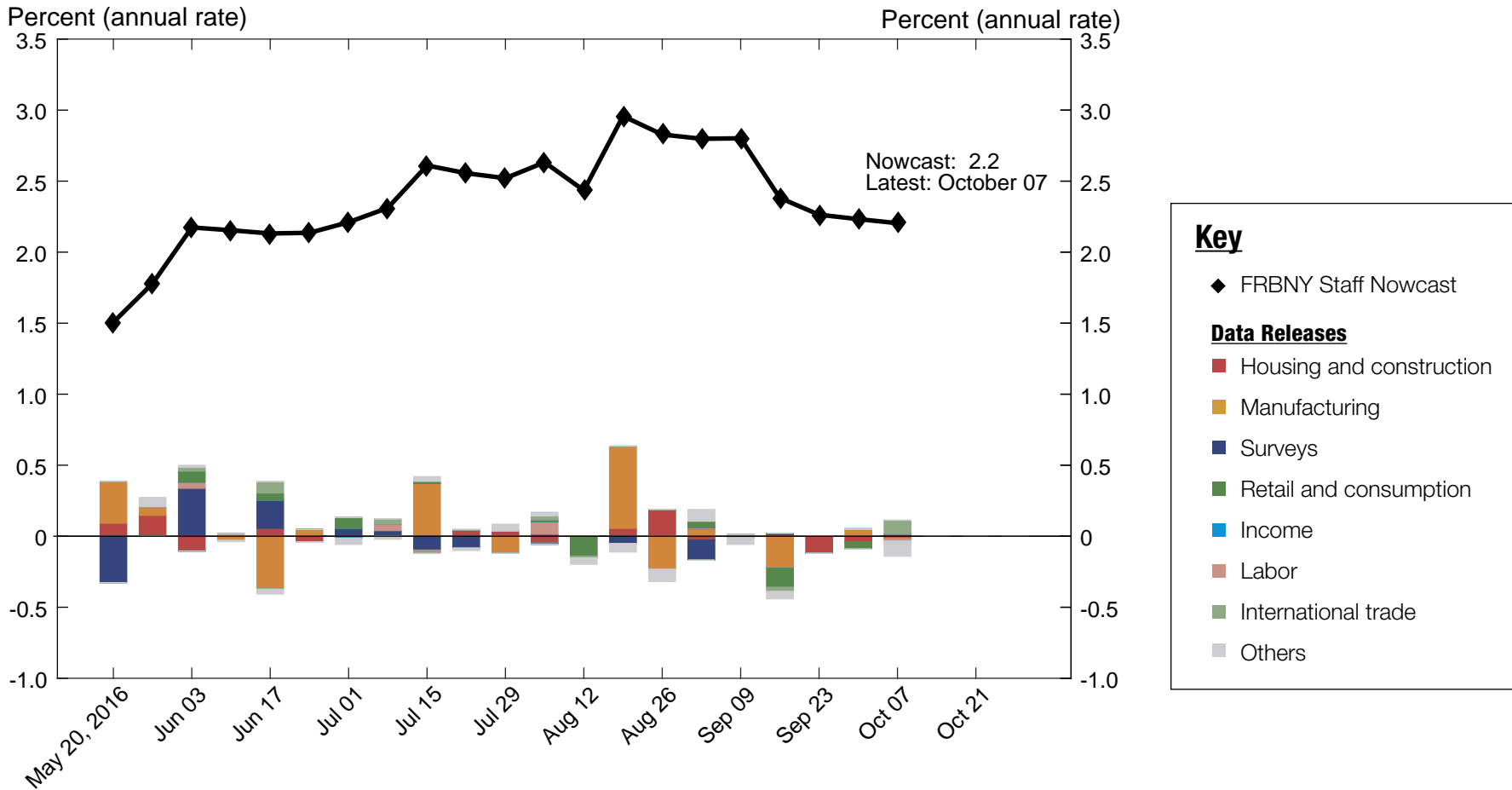
Updated: October 7, 2016

- The FRBNY Staff Nowcast stands at 2.2% for 2016:Q3 and 1.3% for 2016:Q4.
- News from this week's data releases left the nowcast for Q3 virtually unchanged and pushed the nowcast for Q4 up slightly.
- Positive news came from international trade data as well as the manufacturing and non-manufacturing ISM business surveys.

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The FRBNY Staff Nowcast is not an official forecast of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, its president, the Federal Reserve System, or the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC). While we are precluded from publishing our estimates during blackouts surrounding FOMC meetings, we continue to update our model internally and share the analysis in the next Nowcasting Report.

# 1 | 2016:Q3 GDP Growth



Source: Authors' calculations.  
Note: Colored bars reflect the impact of each data release on the nowcast.

# 1.1 | Nowcast Detail

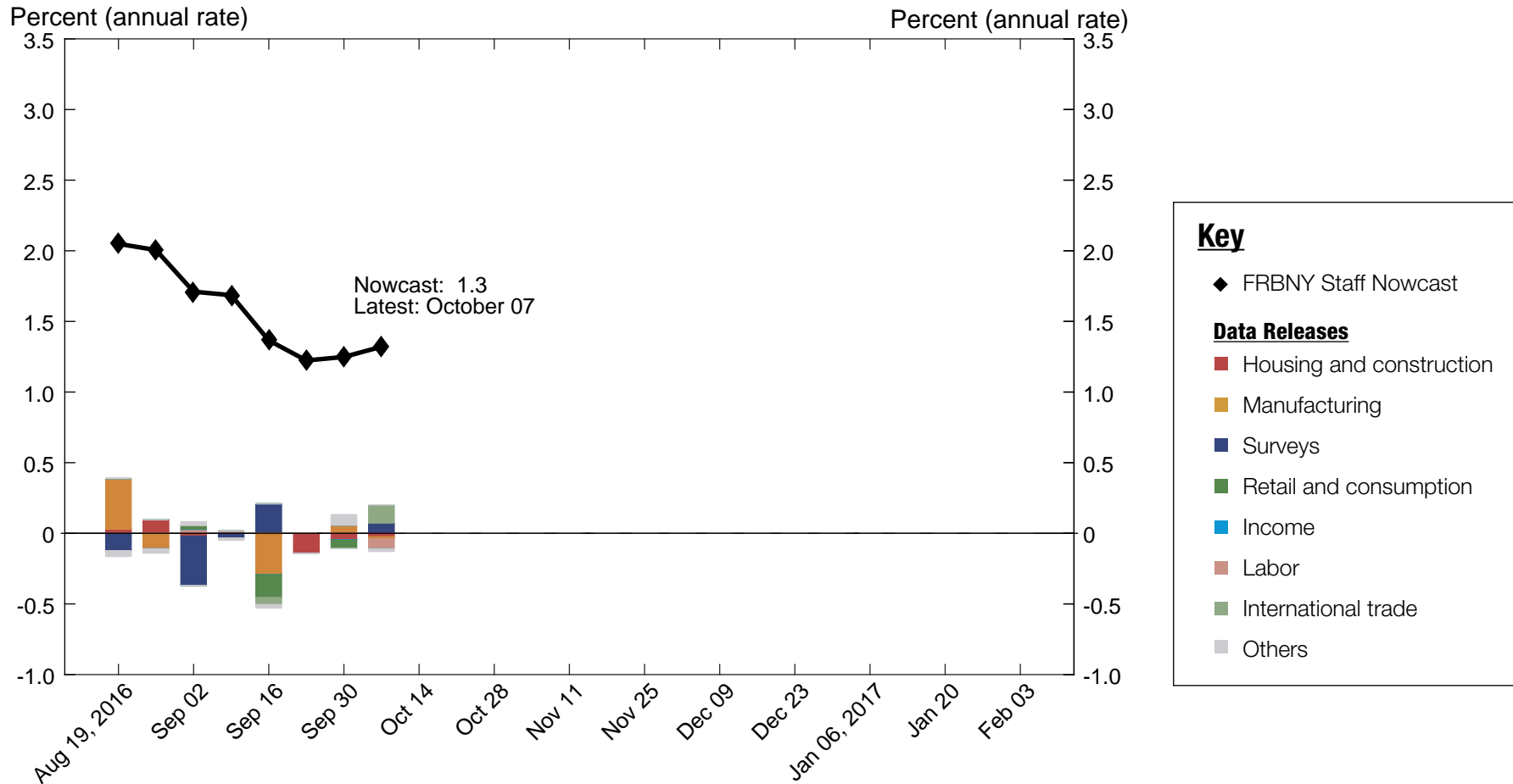
■ Housing and construction 
 ■ Manufacturing 
 ■ Surveys 
 ■ Retail and consumption 
 ■ Income 
 ■ Labor 
 ■ International trade 
 ■ Others

Update	Release Date	Data Series	Reference Period	Units	Forecast	Actual	Weight	Impact	Nowcast GDP Growth
					[a]	[b]	[c]	[c(b - a)]	
Sep 09	8:30 AM Sep 14	Import price index	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.119	-0.248	0.015	-0.002	<b>2.80</b>
	8:30 AM Sep 14	Export price index	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.058	-0.826	0.031	-0.028	
	8:30 AM Sep 15	Retail sales and food services	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.489	-0.295	0.167	-0.131	
	8:30 AM Sep 15	PPI: Final demand	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.021	0.000	0.022	0.000	
	8:30 AM Sep 15	Empire State Mfg. Survey: General business conditions	Sep	Index	-0.583	-1.99	0.002	-0.003	
	8:30 AM Sep 15	Philly Fed Mfg. business outlook: Current activity	Sep	Index	-1.50	12.8	0.002	0.025	
	9:20 AM Sep 15	Industrial production index	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.051	-0.433	0.325	-0.124	
	9:20 AM Sep 15	Capacity utilization	Aug	Ppt. chg.	-0.100	-0.357	0.403	-0.104	
	8:30 AM Sep 16	CPI-U: All items	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.048	0.199	0.031	0.005	
	8:30 AM Sep 16	CPI-U: All items less food and energy	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.142	0.252	0.012	0.001	
			Data revisions					-0.059	
	Sep 16	8:30 AM Sep 20	Housing starts	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.070	-5.78	0.019	
8:30 AM Sep 20		Building permits	Aug	Level chg. (thousands)	1.15	-5.00	0.002	-0.012	
			Data revisions					0.001	
Sep 20	10:00 AM Sep 26	New single family houses sold	Aug	MoM % chg.	-4.10	-7.59	0.011	-0.039	<b>2.26</b>
	8:30 AM Sep 28	Manufacturers' new orders: Durable goods	Aug	MoM % chg.	-1.72	-0.037	0.021	0.035	
	8:30 AM Sep 28	Manufacturers' shipments: Durable goods	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.177	-0.357	0.090	-0.016	
	8:30 AM Sep 28	Mfrs.' unfilled orders: All manufacturing industries	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.069	-0.133	-0.010	0.002	
	8:30 AM Sep 28	Manufacturers' inventories: Durable goods	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.085	0.133	-0.259	-0.013	
	8:30 AM Sep 29	Merchant wholesalers: Inventories: Total	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.249	-0.149	-0.101	0.040	
	8:30 AM Sep 30	Real disposable personal income	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.137	0.083	0.023	-0.001	
	8:30 AM Sep 30	PCE less food and energy: Chain price index	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.137	0.178	0.076	0.003	
	8:30 AM Sep 30	PCE: Chain price index	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.072	0.144	0.062	0.004	
	8:40 AM Sep 30	Real personal consumption expenditures	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.094	-0.096	0.260	-0.049	
			Data revisions					0.002	
	Sep 30	10:00 AM Oct 03	ISM mfg.: Pmi composite index	Sep	Index	51.1	51.5	0.024	
10:00 AM Oct 03		ISM mfg.: Prices index	Sep	Index	55.3	53.0	0.002	-0.005	
10:00 AM Oct 03		Value of construction put in place	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.214	-0.738	0.024	-0.012	
10:00 AM Oct 03		ISM mfg.: Employment index	Sep	Index	49.8	49.7	0.006	-0.001	
8:05 AM Oct 05		ADP nonfarm private payroll employment	Sep	Level chg. (thousands)	180.2	154.0	0.202*	-0.005	
8:30 AM Oct 05		Exports: Goods and services	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.156	0.789	0.058	0.055	
8:30 AM Oct 05		Imports: Goods and services	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.216	1.17	0.045	0.043	
10:00 AM Oct 05		ISM nonmanufacturing: NMI composite index	Sep	Index	52.8	57.1	0.002	0.010	
10:00 AM Oct 05		Inventories: Total business	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.038	0.183	-0.059	-0.009	
8:30 AM Oct 07		All employees: Total nonfarm	Sep	Level chg. (thousands)	165.2	156.0	0.057*	-0.001	
8:30 AM Oct 07		Civilian unemployment rate	Sep	Ppt. chg.	-0.047	0.100	-0.046	-0.007	
			Data revisions					0.015	
			Parameter revisions					-0.122	
Oct 07								<b>2.20</b>	

Source: Authors' calculations.

Notes: MoM % chg. indicates month over month percentage change. QoQ % chg. indicates quarter over quarter percentage change. The weights with the asterisk are multiplied by 1,000 for legibility.

## 2 | 2016:Q4 GDP Growth



Source: Authors' calculations.

Notes: Colored bars reflect the relative impact of each data release on the nowcast.

## 2.1 | Nowcast Detail

■ Housing and construction 
 ■ Manufacturing 
 ■ Surveys 
 ■ Retail and consumption 
 ■ Income 
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	8:30 AM Sep 15	Empire State Mfg. Survey: General business conditions	Sep	Index	-0.583	-1.99	0.014	-0.019	
	8:30 AM Sep 15	Philly Fed Mfg. business outlook: Current activity	Sep	Index	-1.50	12.8	0.016	0.228	
	9:20 AM Sep 15	Industrial production index	Aug	MoM % chg.	-0.051	-0.433	0.415	-0.158	
	9:20 AM Sep 15	Capacity utilization	Aug	Ppt. chg.	-0.100	-0.357	0.520	-0.134	
	8:30 AM Sep 16	CPI-U: All items	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.048	0.199	0.062	0.009	
	8:30 AM Sep 16	CPI-U: All items less food and energy	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.142	0.252	0.021	0.002	
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	8:30 AM Sep 29	Merchant wholesalers: Inventories: Total	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.249	-0.149	-0.129	0.051	
	8:30 AM Sep 30	Real disposable personal income	Aug	MoM % chg.	0.137	0.083	0.029	-0.002	
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		Data revisions						0.061	
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8:30 AM Oct 07	Civilian unemployment rate	Sep	Ppt. chg.	-0.047	0.100	-0.139	-0.020		
		Data revisions						0.017	
		Parameter revisions						-0.036	
Oct 07									<b>1.32</b>

Source: Authors' calculations.

Notes: MoM % chg. indicates month over month percentage change. QoQ % chg. indicates quarter over quarter percentage change. The weights with the asterisk are multiplied by 1,000 for legibility.

# **Nowcasting Report Q&A**

## **1. What is the ultimate goal of the exercise?**

Our model produces a “nowcast” of GDP growth, incorporating a wide range of macroeconomic data as it becomes available. With this approach, we aim to read the real-time flow of information and evaluate its effects on current economic conditions. The platform provides a model-based counterpart to the more routine analysis at the bank, which has traditionally been based on expert knowledge.

## **2. What is the modeling strategy?**

The platform employs Kalman-filtering techniques and a dynamic factor model. The approach has a number of desirable features. It is based on:

- a reliable big data framework that captures in a parsimonious way the salient features of macroeconomic data dynamics;
- a design that digests the data as “news,” mimicking the way markets work.

## **3. What are the input data? What has been driving the data selection?**

We include all the market-moving indicators—the same data that are also constantly monitored by market participants and commentators.

## **4. Why should we trust the model?**

Extensive back-testing of the model, research, and practical experience have shown that the platform is able to approximate best practices in macroeconomic forecasts. The model produces forecasts that are as accurate as, and strongly correlated with, predictions based on best judgment.

The methodology has been tested for accuracy in many countries, including large developed economies (the Euro area, Italy, France,

Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Canada), small open economies (Australia, Ireland, Belgium, New Zealand, the Czech Republic, and Scotland), fast-growing economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and developing economies (Mexico, Indonesia, and Argentina).

## **5. How should we read the output of the model?**

- The model produces forecasts for all variables taking into account their dynamic interactions.
- Since it is a fully specified dynamic model, the platform provides an intuitive reading of the incoming data as “news.”
- The difference between two consecutive forecasts (that is, the forecast revision) is the weighted average of the news during the week.
- News is defined as the difference between released data and model predictions. The weights account for the information content as well as the timeliness of the data releases.
- The contribution of new data to the forecast revision is reported in the two charts with colored bars. To make the charts easier to read, we grouped variables in a few broad categories. Detailed information about the composition of the groupings is provided in the accompanying tables.

## **References**

- *Banbura, M., D. Giannone, M. Modugno, and L. Reichlin.* 2013. “Nowcasting and the Real-Time Data Flow.” In G. Elliott and A. Timmermann, eds., *Handbook of Economic Forecasting*, Vol. 2. Amsterdam: Elsevier-North Holland.
- *Giannone, D., L. Reichlin, and D. Small.* 2008. “Nowcasting: The Real-Time Informational Content of Macroeconomic Data.” *Journal of Monetary Economics* 55, no.4 (May): 665-76.

## **Nowcasting Report FAQs**

### **1. For how long do you report a quarter?**

We start reporting the nowcast of GDP growth for a reference quarter about one month before the quarter begins; we stop updating it about one month after the quarter closes.

Precise dates are related to the Commerce Department's schedule for the release of official GDP estimates. For example, we began reporting 2016:Q1 on November 20, 2015, just after the government released the second GDP estimate for 2015:Q3. We stopped updating the nowcast for 2016:Q1 on April 28, 2016, with the release of the advance GDP estimate for the reference quarter. We continued reporting 2016:Q1 until the second GDP estimate for the quarter became available. At that point, we started computing the nowcasts for 2016:Q3.

### **2. What are the major conceptual differences between the FRBNY Staff Nowcast and the Atlanta Fed's Nowcast?**

The FRBNY Staff Nowcast and the Atlanta Fed's GDPNow are both based on statistical filtering techniques applied to a dynamic factor model. These techniques are very common in big data analytics since they effectively summarize the information contained in large data sets through a small

number of common factors. The general framework for macroeconomic nowcasting has been developed in the academic literature over the past ten years, as discussed in the Q&A included in this report. The FRBNY Staff Nowcast is a straightforward application of the most advanced techniques developed in this academic literature. GDPNow adapts these techniques to mimic the methods used by the BEA to estimate real GDP growth, as well explained by GDPNow's own FAQs.

Because GDPNow and the FRBNY Staff Nowcast are different models, they can generate different forecasts of real GDP growth. Our policy is not to comment on or interpret any differences between the forecasts of these two models.

### **3. Is the “annual rate” the y/y growth rate?**

No. We track the annualized quarterly (“q/q”) growth rate of GDP, not the four quarters (“y/y”) growth rate.

### **Authors**

FRBNY Time-Series Analysis Team