

NOWCASTING REPORT

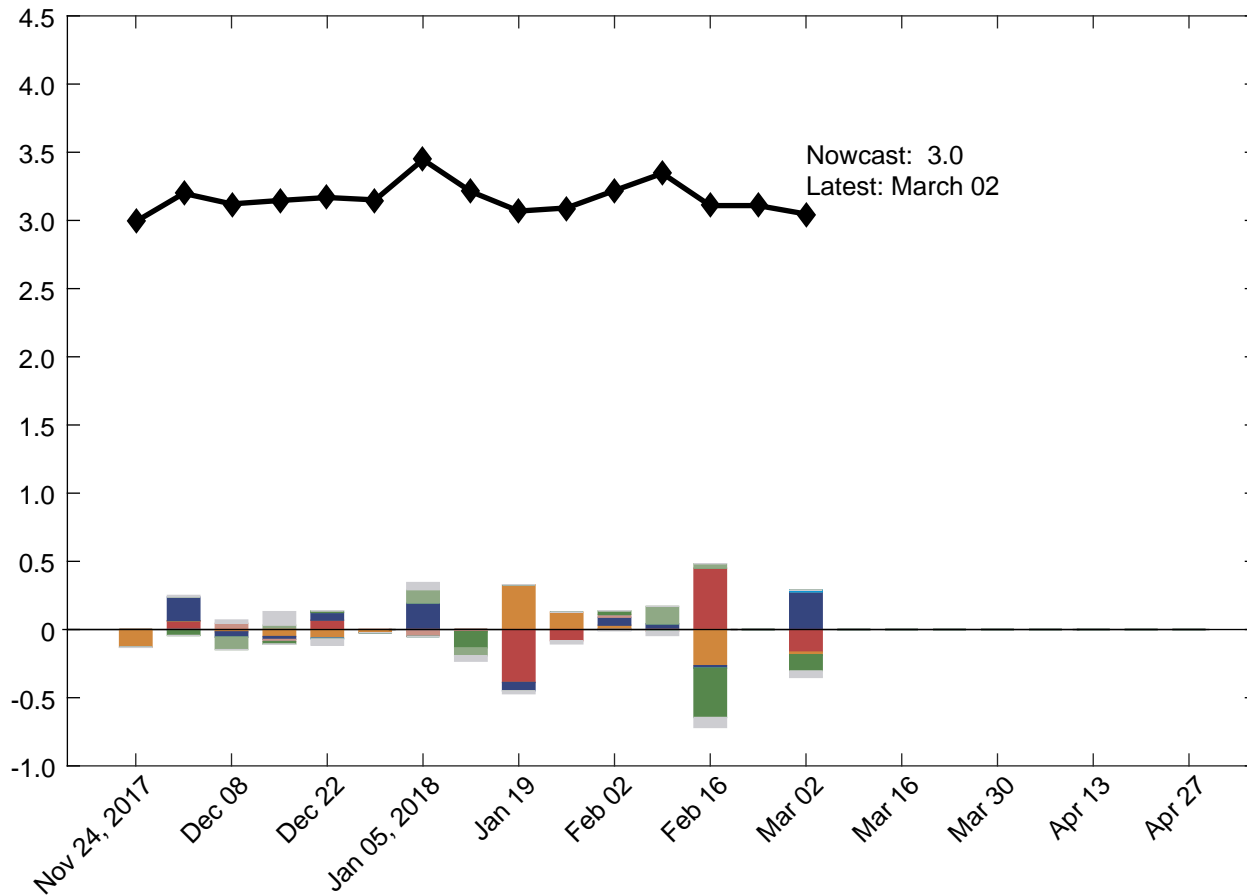
Updated: March 2, 2018

- The New York Fed Staff Nowcast for 2018:Q1 stands at 3.0%.
- News from this week's data releases decreased the nowcast by 0.1 percentage point.
- Negative surprises from new home sales and personal consumption expenditures were partially offset by positive surprises from the ISM manufacturing survey.

The New York Fed 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).

1 | 2018:Q1 GDP Growth

Percent (annual rate)



Key

◆ New York Fed Staff Nowcast

Data Releases

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

Source: Authors' calculations, based on data accessed through Haver Analytics.

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

1.1 | Nowcast Detail

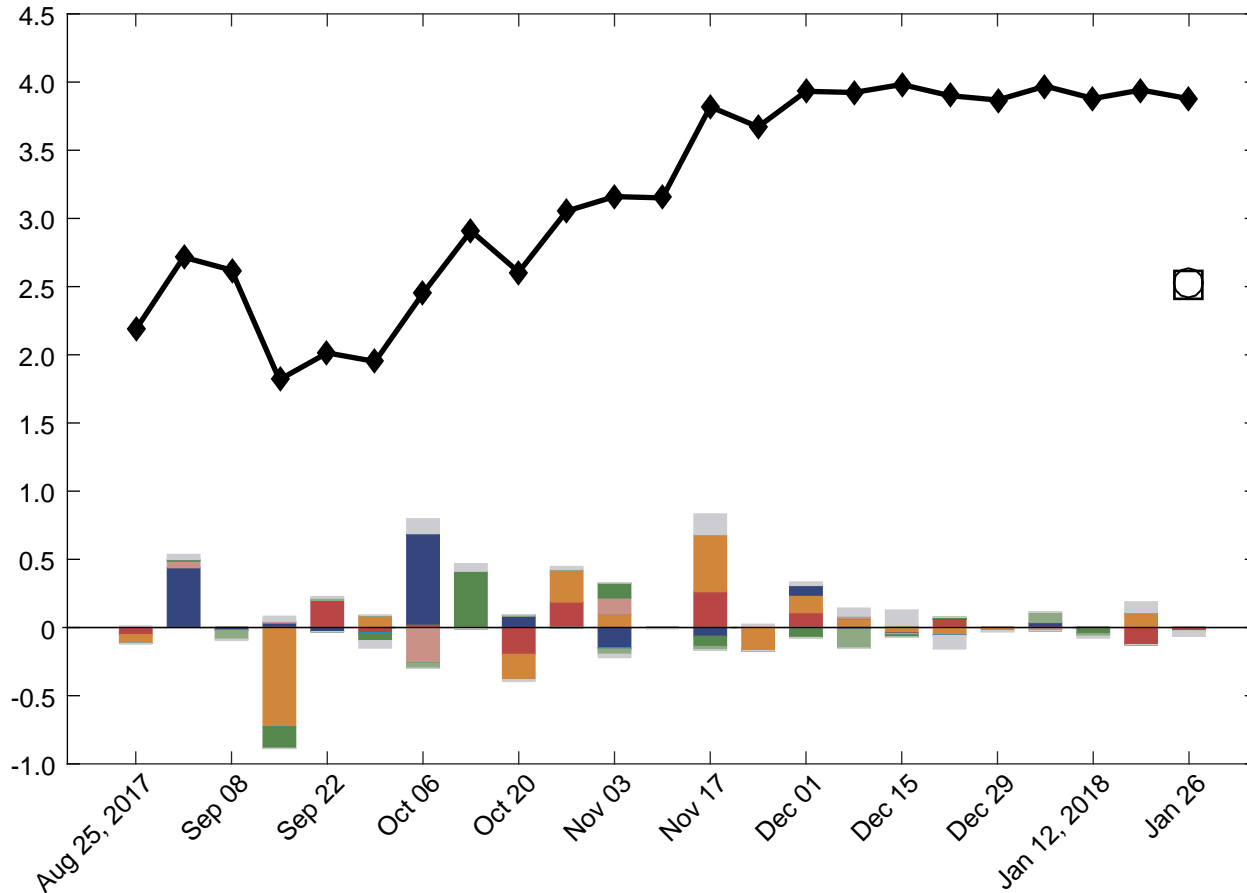
■ Housing and construction ■ Manufacturing ■ Surveys ■ Retail and consumption ■ Income ■ Labor ■ International trade ■ Others										
Update	Release Date	Data Series	Reference Period	Units	Forecast	Actual	Weight	Impact	Nowcast GDP Growth	
					[a]	[b]	[c]	[c(b - a)]		
Feb 02	10:00 AM Feb 05	ISM nonmanufacturing: NMI composite index	Jan	Index	56.2	59.9	0.011	0.042	3.22	
	8:30 AM Feb 06	Exports: Goods and services	Dec	MoM % chg.	1.06	1.77	0.069	0.049		
	8:30 AM Feb 06	Imports: Goods and services	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.841	2.49	0.048	0.079		
	10:00 AM Feb 06	JOLTS: Job openings: Total	Dec	Level chg. (thousands)	21.3	-167.0	0.065*	-0.012		
		Data revisions						-0.032		
Feb 09	8:30 AM Feb 14	Retail sales and food services	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.736	-0.263	0.362	-0.362	3.35	
	9:00 AM Feb 14	CPI-U: All items	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.237	0.539	0.095	0.029		
	9:00 AM Feb 14	CPI-U: All items less food and energy	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.185	0.349	0.105	0.017		
	8:30 AM Feb 15	PPI: Final demand	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.132	0.437	0.037	0.011		
	8:30 AM Feb 15	Empire State Mfg. Survey: General business conditions	Feb	Index	18.5	13.1	0.006	-0.032		
	8:30 AM Feb 15	Philly Fed Mfg. business outlook: Current activity	Feb	Index	23.4	25.8	0.006	0.015		
	9:20 AM Feb 15	Industrial production index	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.237	-0.052	0.366	-0.106		
	9:20 AM Feb 15	Capacity utilization	Jan	Ppt. chg.	0.131	-0.205	0.477	-0.160		
	8:30 AM Feb 16	Housing starts	Jan	MoM % chg.	2.73	9.68	0.025	0.177		
	8:30 AM Feb 16	Import price index	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.334	0.956	0.019	0.012		
	8:30 AM Feb 16	Building permits	Jan	Level chg. (thousands)	-5.77	96.0	0.003	0.273		
	8:30 AM Feb 16	Export price index	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.238	0.802	0.036	0.020		
		Data revisions						-0.131		
Feb 16		No tracked data releases this week								3.11
Feb 23		No tracked data releases this week							3.11	
	10:00 AM Feb 26	New single family houses sold	Jan	MoM % chg.	2.85	-7.78	0.014	-0.145		
	8:30 AM Feb 27	Manufacturers' new orders: Durable goods	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.173	-3.68	0.021	-0.080		
	8:30 AM Feb 27	Merchant wholesalers: Inventories: Total	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.730	0.693	-0.161	0.006		
	8:30 AM Feb 27	Manufacturers' shipments: Durable goods	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.721	0.238	0.115	-0.056		
	8:30 AM Feb 27	Mfrs.' unfilled orders: All manufacturing industries	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.783	-0.272	-0.028	0.030		
	8:30 AM Feb 27	Manufacturers' inventories: Durable goods	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.545	0.307	-0.336	0.080		
	8:30 AM Mar 01	Real disposable personal income	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.162	0.553	0.036	0.014		
	8:30 AM Mar 01	PCE less food and energy: Chain price index	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.154	0.271	0.210	0.025		
	8:30 AM Mar 01	PCE: Chain price index	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.183	0.368	0.121	0.022		
	8:30 AM Mar 01	Real personal consumption expenditures	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.218	-0.141	0.330	-0.118		
	10:00 AM Mar 01	Value of construction put in place	Jan	MoM % chg.	0.581	0.007	0.035	-0.020		
	10:00 AM Mar 01	ISM mfg.: Pmi composite index	Feb	Index	58.3	60.8	0.056	0.141		
	10:00 AM Mar 01	ISM mfg.: Prices index	Feb	Index	71.2	74.2	0.008	0.024		
	10:00 AM Mar 01	ISM mfg.: Employment index	Feb	Index	54.4	59.7	0.021	0.110		
		Data revisions						-0.094		
Mar 02										3.05

Source: Authors' calculations, based on data accessed through Haver Analytics.

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 | 2017:Q4 GDP Growth

Percent (annual rate)



Key

- ◆ New York Fed Staff Nowcast
- Advance estimate
- Second estimate

Data Releases

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

Source: Authors' calculations, based on data accessed through Haver Analytics.

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

2.1 | Nowcast Detail

		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Update	Release Date	Data Series	Reference Period	Units	Forecast	Actual	Weight	Impact	Nowcast GDP Growth
					[a]	[b]	[c]	[c(b - a)]	
Dec 28									3.87
	10:00 AM Jan 03	■ ISM mfg.: Prices index	Dec	Index	65.1	69.0	0.003	0.011	
	10:00 AM Jan 03	■ Value of construction put in place	Nov	MoM % chg.	0.626	0.795	0.019	0.003	
	10:00 AM Jan 03	■ ISM mfg.: Employment index	Dec	Index	58.8	57.0	0.008	-0.015	
	10:20 AM Jan 03	■ ISM mfg.: Pmi composite index	Dec	Index	57.9	59.7	0.023	0.042	
	8:05 AM Jan 04	■ ADP nonfarm private payroll employment	Dec	Level chg. (thousands)	209.3	251.0	0.210*	0.009	
	8:30 AM Jan 05	■ All employees: Total nonfarm	Dec	Level chg. (thousands)	271.2	148.0	0.137*	-0.017	
	8:30 AM Jan 05	■ Civilian unemployment rate	Dec	Ppt. chg.	-0.072	0.000	-0.133	-0.010	
	8:30 AM Jan 05	■ Exports: Goods and services	Nov	MoM % chg.	1.48	2.27	0.045	0.035	
	8:30 AM Jan 05	■ Imports: Goods and services	Nov	MoM % chg.	1.30	2.46	0.034	0.040	
	10:00 AM Jan 05	■ ISM nonmanufacturing: NMI composite index	Dec	Index	58.0	55.9	0.002	-0.004	
		■ Data revisions						-0.011	
		■ Parameter revisions						0.018	
Jan 05									3.97
	10:20 AM Jan 05	■ Inventories: Total business	Nov	MoM % chg.	0.304	0.389	-0.080	-0.007	
	10:00 AM Jan 09	■ JOLTS: Job openings: Total	Nov	Level chg. (thousands)	171.8	-46.0	0.039*	-0.008	
	8:30 AM Jan 10	■ Import price index	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.766	0.080	0.010	-0.007	
	8:30 AM Jan 10	■ Export price index	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.414	-0.080	0.022	-0.011	
	8:30 AM Jan 11	■ PPI: Final demand	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.228	-0.087	0.023	-0.007	
	8:30 AM Jan 12	■ Retail sales and food services	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.670	0.352	0.118	-0.038	
	8:40 AM Jan 12	■ CPI-U: All items	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.307	0.150	0.035	-0.006	
	8:40 AM Jan 12	■ CPI-U: All items less food and energy	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.149	0.277	0.042	0.005	
		■ Data revisions						-0.013	
Jan 12									3.88
	8:30 AM Jan 16	■ Empire State Mfg. Survey: General business conditions	Jan	Index	19.9	17.7	0.000	-0.001	
	9:20 AM Jan 17	■ Industrial production index	Dec	MoM % chg.	0.461	0.894	0.126	0.054	
	9:20 AM Jan 17	■ Capacity utilization	Dec	Ppt. chg.	0.300	0.636	0.161	0.054	
	8:30 AM Jan 18	■ Housing starts	Dec	MoM % chg.	3.96	-8.24	0.008	-0.101	
	8:30 AM Jan 18	■ Building permits	Dec	Level chg. (thousands)	27.9	-1.00	0.001	-0.025	
	8:30 AM Jan 18	■ Philly Fed Mfg. business outlook: Current activity	Jan	Index	24.4	22.2	-0.001	0.001	
		■ Data revisions						0.080	
Jan 18									3.94
	10:00 AM Jan 25	■ New single family houses sold	Dec	MoM % chg.	-3.31	-9.29	0.004	-0.025	
		■ Data revisions						-0.039	
Jan 26									3.88
	8:30 AM Jan 26	■ Real gross domestic product (advance)	Q4	QoQ % chg. AR	3.88	2.6			
					We have concluded our updates of the Q4 nowcast				
	8:30 AM Feb 28	■ Real gross domestic product (second)	Q4	QoQ % chg. AR		2.5			
					The second GDP release marks our final report of this quarter				

Source: Authors' calculations, based on data accessed through Haver Analytics.

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 the nowcast for 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 New York Fed Staff Nowcast and the Atlanta Fed's Nowcast?

The New York Fed 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 New York Fed 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 New York Fed 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 real GDP, not the four-quarter (“y/y”) growth rate.

4. Can we obtain the data underlying this analysis?

We are not making the underlying data available at this time. The tables list the data series employed in calculating our estimates. Sources include the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Institute for Supply Management, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the New York and Philadelphia Feds, the Fed Board of Governors, and the ADP (Automatic Data Processing, Inc.).

Authors

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