

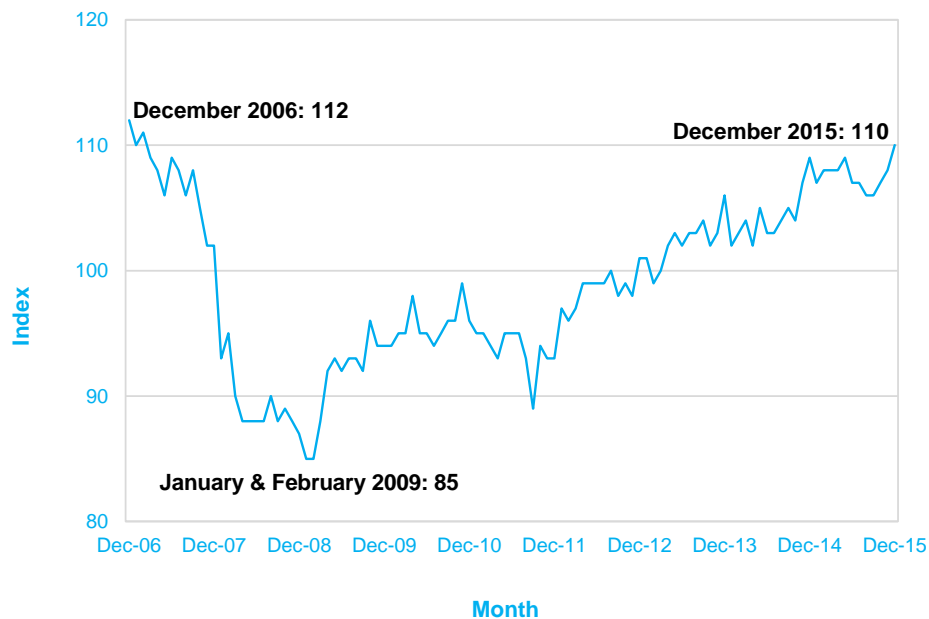
Decision Analyst Economic Index

December 2015

U.S. Economy Ends 2015 On An Upturn, According To Decision Analyst's Economic Index

Arlington, Texas—The Decision Analyst U.S. Economic Index registered **110 in December 2015**, a 2-point increase from November 2015. The recovery from the "Great Recession" continues its slow, upward march. However, the Economic Index has only increased 1-point over the past 12 months, indicating that 2016 will be another year of slow economic expansion. The Economic Index tends to lead U.S. economic activity by 6 to 12 months. Below is the past-10-year history of the U.S. Economic Index.

United States Economic Index December 2015



Past-12-Month Change
(From December 2014 to
December 2015)



"The Economic Index in the U.S. increased sharply during the last three months of 2015 as the costs of oil, gasoline, and natural gas remained low. Reduced energy costs are, on balance, a stimulus to the U.S. economy: consumers have more money to spend on groceries, eating out, clothing, etc., and corporations can operate offices and factories at reduced costs. Likewise, reduced commodity prices worldwide are saving money for many manufacturers, another positive economic influence," said Jerry W. Thomas, President/CEO of Decision Analyst, a global marketing research and analytical consulting firm. "The potential for the continuing slow growth of the U.S. economy will help mute the worldwide economic slowdown in 2016. Russia, Brazil, China, and Europe face a difficult 2016, and the whole of Africa and the Mid-East is an economic disaster."



















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Global Indices

The following tables compare Decision Analyst's U.S. Economic Index to its Economic Indices for other countries.

In Europe, Germany continues to lead with an Index of **109 in December 2015** which is a 6-point increase over December 2014. Meanwhile, France is languishing with an Index of **84 in December 2015**; this is a 5-point decrease from December 2014. In South America, Brazil has plunged 17 points in the past 12 months; they declined from 107 in December 2014 to **90 in December 2015**.

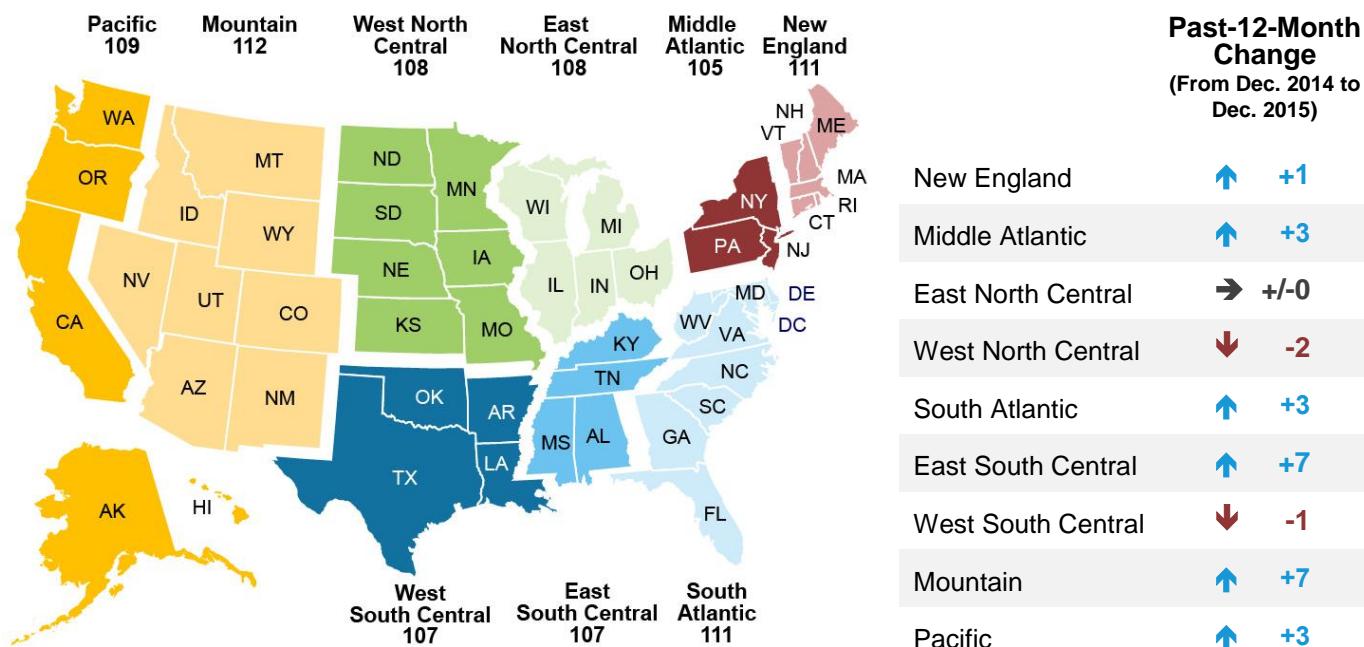
| Decision Analyst Global Economic Indices December 2015 | | | Past-12-Month Change (From December 2014 to December 2015) | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|--|-----|
| North America | | December 2015 Index | | |
|  | United States | 110 | ↑ | +1 |
|  | Canada | 91 | ↓ | -8 |
|  | Mexico* | 95 | ↑ | +3 |
| South America | | | | |
|  | Argentina* | 94 | ↑ | +13 |
|  | Brazil* | 90 | ↓ | -17 |
|  | Chile* | 94 | ↓ | -6 |
|  | Colombia* | 105 | ↓ | -8 |
|  | Peru* | 107 | ↓ | -5 |
| Europe | | | | |
|  | France | 84 | ↓ | -5 |
|  | Germany | 109 | ↑ | +6 |
|  | Italy | 94 | ↑ | +9 |
|  | Russian Federation* | 89 | ↓ | -10 |
|  | Spain* | 98 | ↑ | +6 |
|  | United Kingdom | 105 | ↓ | -2 |
| Australia/Asia | | | | |
|  | Australia* | 95 | ↑ | +2 |
|  | India* | 125 | ↓ | -3 |

* The Index numbers for Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, India, Mexico, Peru, the Russian Federation, and Spain are 3-month moving averages to smooth out month-to-month fluctuations. The reported Index number averages the current month with the previous 2 months.

U.S. Census Divisions

In the past 12 months the East South Central Division and Mountain Census Division each increased 7 points. The East South Central Division increased from 100 in December 2014 to **107 in December 2015**. The Mountain Division increased from 105 in December 2014 to **112 in December 2015**. Both the West North Central and the West South Central Divisions saw declines over the past 12 months, probably related to the declining prices of energy. The West North Central Division decreased from 110 in December 2014 to **108 in December 2015**, while the West South Central Division decreased from 108 in December 2014 to **107 in December 2015**.

United States Census Divisions Economic Index December 2015*



* The Index numbers for the Census Divisions are 3-month moving averages to smooth out fluctuations due to smaller sample sizes. The reported Index number averages the current month with the previous 2 months.

Methodology

The Decision Analyst Economic Index is based on a monthly online survey of several thousand households balanced by gender, age, and geography. The scientific survey is conducted in the last 10 days of each month. The Economic Index is calculated from 9 different economic measurements using a sophisticated econometric model. The result is a snapshot of coming economic activity in each country surveyed, as seen through the eyes of representative consumers living in the respective countries.

Decision Analyst conducts its concurrent economic surveys each month in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Peru, the Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States. Whenever the Decision Analyst Economic Index is greater than 110, it tends to signal an expanding economy. An Index value of 90 to 110 suggests a no-growth or slow-growth economy, and near or below 90 generally indicates economic contraction. These guidelines vary by country, however.

About Decision Analyst

Decision Analyst (www.decisionanalyst.com) is a global research and analytical consulting firm specializing in strategy research, new product development, advertising testing, and advanced modeling for marketing decision optimization. For more than 35 years the firm has delivered competitive advantage to clients throughout the world in consumer packaged goods, high technology, retail, medical, automotive, and other industries.