



Small Business Credit Survey, 2013 Federal Reserve Bank of New York

SMALL BUSINESS CREDIT SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Overview

The Small Business Credit Survey (SBCS) is an establishment survey conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, reporting information about business characteristics, performance, financing choices, and borrowing experiences. The May 2013 survey also asks small businesses about their experience with Superstorm Sandy. The SBCS captures the perspectives of businesses with fewer than 500 employees in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The SBCS is distributed through civic and non-profit partners, primarily Chambers of Commerce, but also industry associations, and development corporations/authorities.

In total, there were 812 responses to the survey fielded from February 25, 2013 to April 5, 2013. The number of responses to each individual question varied, based on relevance. Results are weighted to reflect the full population of small businesses in the tri-state region, along the dimensions of industry, age, employee size, and geography.

Sample Design

The SBCS questionnaire is available on the web. The SBCS is distributed by more than 30 partner organizations. Partners contact businesses on their membership lists, asking them to participate in the survey and provide a URL address. As such, the SBCS is not a random sample. Not all small businesses are members of the partner organizations, and therefore results should not be interpreted as a statistical representation of small businesses in the Second District or the nation. Rather, the results should be viewed as suggestive and analyzed with awareness of potential methodological biases.

Weighting

To reduce coverage bias, we use US Census Bureau data¹ to weight responses along the dimensions of industry, age, employee size, and geography. Survey weights are derived to allow estimates to be generated from the sample so as to represent the true small business population. For example, by reweighting our data, we correct for the overrepresentation of older firms. See Appendix A for sampling distributions of the 2013 SBCS after weighting.

Comparisons to Previous Survey

It is possible to compare select survey question results from the 2012 and 2013 SBCS. In these instances, results are weighted such that we are comparing two representative datasets from two points in time².

¹ Age data from US Census Business Dynamics Statistics, 2010. All other data from Census Business Patterns, 2010.

² The 2012 survey included only Fairfield County, CT. Therefore, the 2012 data are weighted to represent the New York and New Jersey small business populations. Connecticut is not included in the analysis. For clarity of analysis, comparisons between the 2012 and 2013 surveys are based on weighted New York and New Jersey data.



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Appendix A: Selected Characteristics of Firms in the Survey Sample, 2013

	Sample Size 2013	Sample Distribution After Weighting	Percentage of Total for Weighted Sample
Firm Age			
0-2 years	81	195,389	23.38%
3-5 years	109	147,653	17.67%
6-10 years	140	167,312	20.02%
11-20 years	165	192,291	23.01%
20+ years	317	132,982	15.91%
All Firm Ages	812	835,627	100%
Firm Size			
1-4 employees	398	498,067	59.60%
5-9 employees	131	142,482	17.05%
10-19 employees	127	96,125	11.50%
20-99 employees	129	83,404	9.98%
100-499 employees	27	15,549	1.86%
All Firm Sizes	812	835,627	100%
Geography			
Connecticut	106	89,038	10.66%
New Jersey	176	228,412	27.33%
New York (minus NYC)	266	298,831	35.76%
New York City	264	219,346	26.25%
All Geographies	812	835,627	100%
Industry			
Agriculture	4	885	0.11%
Construction	99	74,323	8.89%
Manufacturing	78	29,339	3.51%
Retail	104	122,048	14.61%
Wholesale/Transportation	80	72,418	8.67%
Information/Media/Telecommunications	33	16,402	1.96%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	63	90,129	10.79%
Professional and Business Services	161	98,080	11.74%
Personal Services	26	85,819	10.27%
Education/Healthcare and Social Assistance	43	103,726	12.41%
Leisure and Hospitality	48	91,302	10.93%
Other	73	51,156	6.12%
All Industries	812	835,627	100%