

U.S. Territories

Small businesses dominate the economies of the U.S. territories, as their economies tend to be small (making it difficult to support large businesses). This profile from the Office of Advocacy compiles the latest facts and figures on the status and role of small business in the territories. Because of limited firm size information, the number of business establishments is used as a proxy to represent the number of small businesses.*

- Puerto Rico has the largest economy of the U.S. territories. Puerto Rico had more private sector establishments and employment than 14 states and the District of Columbia in 2009. But wages are relatively low in Puerto Rico, as its annual private sector payroll was only larger than six states. The states it outranked in terms of payroll had fewer than half as many employees as Puerto Rico.
- The economy of Guam fared better from 2008 to 2009 than Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, as employment rose in Guam.
- In 2009, Puerto Rico's unemployment rate rose from 13.3 to 15.0 percent.

For Further Information

- Data on all the states and territories is available at www.sba.gov/advocacy/848.
- For other small business data and analysis, visit www.sba.gov/advocacy/847, call (202) 205-6533, or email advocacy@sba.gov.
- Visit <http://web.sba.gov/list> to subscribe to Advocacy's Listservs.

*This is a rough approximation; in the U.S. in 2008, firms with fewer than 500 employees owned 84 percent of all private-sector establishments.

U.S. Territory Business Facts

	2008†	2007	2002
Number of Private Sector Establishments			
Puerto Rico	46,348	47,340	45,642
Virgin Islands	n.a.	2,583	2,615
Guam	n.a.	3,143	2,926
Northern Marianas	n.a.	1,191	1,276
American Samoa	n.a.	812	1,061
	2009†	2008	2007
Employment			
Puerto Rico	962,030	999,010	1,028,800
Virgin Islands	43,220	44,910	46,000
Guam	60,910	58,810	57,900
Northern Marianas	n.a.	n.a.	22,622
American Samoa	n.a.	n.a.	11,247
Business Bankruptcies			
Puerto Rico	396	349	276
Virgin Islands	9	4	8
Guam	6	4	3
Northern Marianas	0	0	2
Business Loans under \$100,000			
Puerto Rico	20,337	22,741	21,325
Virgin Islands	533	865	190
Guam	510	917	1,023
American Samoa	2	9	10
Value of Business Loans under \$100,000			
Puerto Rico (\$million)	574.4	710.2	776.5
Virgin Islands (\$million)	11.0	15.0	8.3
Guam (\$million)	11.2	17.4	22.1
American Samoa (\$million)	n.a.	0.1	0.4
Bank Branches (Fiscal Year)			
Puerto Rico	526	554	569
Virgin Islands	24	25	23
Guam	32	32	32
Northern Marianas	10	10	10
American Samoa	6	6	7

n.a. not available. † Latest available data.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau; U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy.

Table 1: Establishments and Employment in Puerto Rico by Major Industry and Employment Size, 2008

Industry	Total Establishments	Employment Size of Establishment			Private Sector Employment
		1-19	20-499	500+	
Total	46,348	39,932	6,263	153	748,838
Forestry, etc. and agriculture support	13	12	1	-	71
Mining	56	39	17	-	968
Utilities	28	24	4	-	375
Construction	2,716	2,141	566	9	55,402
Manufacturing	2,064	1,419	606	39	106,132
Wholesale trade	2,338	1,917	419	2	36,360
Retail trade	10,811	9,600	1,204	7	131,689
Transportation and warehousing	1,093	929	161	3	16,798
Information	448	341	101	6	20,862
Finance and insurance	2,178	1,840	330	8	40,710
Real estate and rental and leasing	1,716	1,607	107	2	14,848
Professional, scientific, and technical svcs.	4,235	3,945	290	-	30,341
Management of companies and enterprises	100	44	55	1	5,986
Admin., support, waste mgt., remed. svcs.	1,741	1,322	395	24	69,968
Educational services	769	460	298	11	35,306
Health care and social assistance	7,117	6,654	434	29	79,624
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	447	399	48	-	4,082
Accommodation and food services	4,300	3,257	1,032	11	74,733
Other services (except public admin.)	3,520	3,328	191	1	23,320
Unclassified	658	654	4	-	1,263

Note that large firms may operate small establishments.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce: Census Bureau, County Business Patterns.

Table 2: Establishment and Employment Turnover in Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, 2008-2009 (Non-Farm)

	Establishments					Employment				
	Net Change	Expansions	Openings	Contractions	Closings	Net Change	Expansions	Openings	Contractions	Closings
Puerto Rico										
2008										
Quarter 1	-194	7,532	2,025	9,891	2,219	-11,664	33,278	10,082	44,909	10,115
Quarter 2	-140	7,788	1,948	9,214	2,088	-6,646	34,779	10,446	42,336	9,535
Quarter 3	-332	7,839	1,385	8,993	1,717	-5,065	36,753	8,026	40,406	9,438
Quarter 4	-305	8,482	1,671	8,338	1,976	-6,947	36,876	7,891	41,490	10,224
2009										
Quarter 1	-543	6,476	1,790	9,718	2,333	-18,884	28,806	8,585	45,995	10,280
Quarter 2	-265	7,001	1,619	8,683	1,884	-13,752	29,931	7,810	43,230	8,263
Quarter 3	269	7,355	1,883	8,491	1,614	-3,236	31,772	9,864	37,653	7,219
Quarter 4	-123	8,180	1,705	7,567	1,828	4,478	36,634	9,013	32,092	9,077
Virgin Islands										
2008										
Quarter 1	-8	528	93	557	101	119	1,833	408	1,587	535
Quarter 2	-2	527	104	567	106	-263	1,702	524	2,018	471
Quarter 3	16	545	113	562	97	-211	1,583	494	1,895	393
Quarter 4	17	463	116	631	99	-288	1,465	495	1,890	358
2009										
Quarter 1	-11	497	96	602	107	-960	1,281	392	2,121	512
Quarter 2	-3	481	96	597	99	-899	1,263	448	2,084	526
Quarter 3	-25	473	103	503	128	-259	1,388	543	1,731	459
Quarter 4	-28	482	98	508	126	462	1,914	447	1,389	510

Source: U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Business Employment Dynamics.