BEA
BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistcs Administation

A Guide to BEA's Direct Investment Surveys

Introduction

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) prepares official U.S. economic statistics, such as the U.S. international transactions accounts, the national income and product accounts, and the input-output accounts. These statistics provide timely, accurate, and relevant economic information that helps gauge the performance of the U.S. economy and the role of the United States in the global economy. The statistics on U.S. direct investment abroad (outward direct investment) and foreign direct investment in the United States (inward direct investment) are important components of these accounts.

Statistics from the surveys

BEA publishes two broad sets of statistics on outward direct investment and on inward direct investment: (1) statistics on international transactions and direct investment positions and (2) statistics on the activities of multinational enterprises. Both sets are derived from information collected in surveys of U.S. multinational enterprises and surveys of U.S. affiliates of foreign multinational enterprises that are conducted by BEA. These statistics are available in considerable detail by country and by industry. BEA also publishes statistics on new inward direct investment.

International transactions and direct investment positions. For outward direct investment, the statistics cover the U.S. affiliates' transactions with their foreign parents. For inward direct investment, the statistics on international transactions cover the foreign affiliates' transactions with their U.S. parents. These statistics focus on the parents' share, or interest, in their affiliates rather than on the affiliates' overall size or level of operations. These statistics are essential to the compilation of the U.S. international transactions accounts, the international investment position accounts, and the national income and product accounts. The major items include financial transactions, which are the funds that parents provide to their affiliates, and income, which is the return on these funds. These items are flows and provide measures for a quarter or for a year.

Statistics on direct investment positions are stocks and are cumulative; they measure the total outstanding level of outward and inward direct investment at the end of each quarter. Direct investment is recorded in the international investment position accounts at market value, and supplemental information is provided both at historical cost and at current cost. For the historical-cost statistics, tables are published annually by country and by industry.

Activities of multinational enterprises. Statistics on the activities of multinational enterprises provide a picture of the overall activities of foreign affiliates and their U.S. parent companies and the activities of U.S. affiliates of foreign parents. These statistics also provide a variety of indicators of the financial structure and operations of multinational enterprises. The statistics on foreign affiliates and U.S. affiliates cover the entire operations of the affiliate, irrespective of the percentage of U.S. or foreign ownership. These statistics include the following items: value added, sales, employment, compensation of employees, capital expenditures, exports, imports, and research and development expenditures,

among others. This information is used to analyze the characteristics, performance, and economic impact of multinational enterprises. Statistics are also available for affiliates that are majority owned by their U.S. or foreign parents, because the concept of majority control is often important in the analysis of the activities of multinational enterprises.

New foreign direct investment in the United States. Statistics on new foreign direct investment in the United States provide information on the acquisition and establishment of U.S. business enterprises by foreign investors and on the expansion of existing U.S. affiliates of foreign companies to establish new production facilities. These annual statistics provide information on the amount and characteristics of new investments in the United States by foreign investors.

Availability of the statistics

BEA publishes its most detailed statistics on direct investment positions in the September issue of its monthly online journal, the Survey of Current Business. Less detailed annual and quarterly statistics on international transactions and direct investment positions are released in March, June, September, and December as part of the international transactions accounts and the international investment position accounts; these statistics are published in the April, July, October, and January issues of the Survey. Summary statistics on the activities of multinational enterprises are published in the August and November issues of the Survey.

All these statistics are available on BEA's Web site in customizable interactive tables at www.bea.gov/iTable/index_MNC.cfm. They are also available in both Adobe® PDF and MS Excel® formats.

Uses of the statistics

The statistics on outward and inward direct investment can be used to measure the scale of the global business activity of U.S. multinational enterprises and the effects of these activities on the U.S. economy and on foreign host economies. They can also be used to measure the scale of foreign-controlled business activities in the United States and the effects of these activities on the U.S. economy. For example, the statistics can be used to measure the following:

- The current-dollar value of, and returns on, outward and inward direct investment

- The shares of U.S. and foreign gross domestic product, employment, exports and imports of goods, capital stock, and research and development expenditures accounted for by U.S. multinational enterprises and by U.S. affiliates of foreign multinational enterprises

For example, researchers and policymakers can use the statistics to analyze

- The characteristics of firms, of industries, and of countries that influence the decisions to directly invest abroad

- The effects of direct investment on employment, wages, productivity, and tax revenues
- The effects of tax policies on inward direct investment
- Differences in content, profitability, and productivity between foreign-owned firms and U.S.-owned firms
- Differences in wage rates, plant sizes, capital intensity, and productivity between foreign-owned and U.S.-owned enterprises
- The extent of foreign direct investment by state and industry both in absolute terms (such as the number of employees) and as percentages of the values

Collecting the statistics

BEA conducts seven mandatory surveys to collect information on direct investment. These surveys consist of quarterly, annual, and benchmark surveys of outward and inward direct investment and a survey of new inward direct investment. The quarterly surveys provide information on direct investment transactions and income for the international transactions accounts and on direct investment positions for the international investment position accounts. Annual and benchmark surveys provide information on the activities of multinational enterprises and the more detailed information that is needed for annual and benchmark revisions of direct investment transactions and positions.

Benchmark surveys are conducted every 5 years. They provide the most comprehensive coverage of business entities, transactions, and data items. Quarterly and annual surveys are largely cutoff sample surveys of U.S. parents and their foreign affiliates and of U.S. affiliates of foreign parents above size-exemption levels.

Legal authority and confidentiality

Reporting on BEA's direct investment surveys is mandatory under the International Investment and Trade in Services Survey Act (P.L. 94–472, 90 Stat. 2059, 22 U.S.C. 3101–3108, as amended). The act protects the confidentiality of the data that companies report. The assurance of confidentiality is essential to securing the cooperation of reporters and thus to maintaining the integrity of the statistical system.

Without the prior written permission of the reporter, BEA cannot publish or otherwise release the data collected on its surveys in a form that would allow the data of an individual reporter to be identified. Therefore, BEA aggregates the survey data to the level of country and industry detail used for publication and performs a rigorous nondisclosure analysis to identify data cells that require

suppression in order to ensure the confidentiality of individual reporters' data. If a data cell must be suppressed, a "D" is shown in that data cell in the published tables.

The act specifies that the survey data may only be used for statistical and analytical purposes. Access to the data is limited to officials and employees (including consultants and contractors and their employees) of government agencies that are designated by the President to perform functions under the act. Certain other government agencies may be granted access to the data under the Foreign Direct Investment and International Financial Data Improvements Act of 1990, but only for limited statistical purposes. BEA is prohibited from granting another agency access to the data for tax, investigative, or regulatory purposes.

Like all U.S. government data collections, BEA surveys must be approved by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act. As part of the survey design and clearance process, BEA publishes notices about proposed surveys in the Federal Register. In these notices, BEA requests comments from users and respondents on all aspects of the data collection, including BEA's estimate of the burden imposed by the reporting requirements. BEA considers all comments before making final decisions on the scope and design of its surveys. BEA makes every effort to balance the needs of data users for complete, accurate, detailed, and timely data and the concerns of respondents about the burden imposed by the reporting requirements.

Surveys of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad

All U.S. persons that own, directly or indirectly, 10 percent or more of the voting securities of an incorporated foreign business enterprise or an equivalent interest in an unincorporated foreign business enterprise are required to report.[1] A U.S. person who is required to report is referred to as "a U.S. reporter." An affiliate outside the United States in which a U.S. person holds a 10 percent or more voting interest (or the equivalent) is referred to as "a foreign affiliate."

The surveys of U.S. direct investment abroad may be filed electronically through BEA's eFile system on BEA's Web site at www.bea.gov/efile. The forms and instructions are available at www.bea.gov/dia. For questions about the quar-terly survey (BE–577), call 301–278–9261 or e-mail be577@bea.gov. For ques-tions about the annual survey (BE–11) and the benchmark survey (BE–10), call 301–278–9418 or e-mail be10/11@bea.gov. Respondents are encouraged to use the secure messaging system (available through eFile) to correspond securely with BEA staff.

1. In a broad legal sense, a "U.S. person" is any individual, branch, partnership, associated group, association, estate, trust, corporation, or other organization that is resident in, or subject to, the jurisdiction of the United States. In a geographic sense, the United States consists of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and all territories and possessions of the United States.

Quarterly Survey of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad (Form BE–577)

The purpose of the quarterly survey is to report positions and transactions between a U.S. reporter and its foreign affiliates. Reports are required even though a foreign affiliate may have been established, acquired, seized, liquidated, expropriated, sold, or inactivated during the reporting period. Reports must be filed within 30 days after the close of the U.S. reporter's calendar or fiscal quarter or within 45 days if the report is for the final quarter of the U.S. reporter's financial reporting year. Entities required to report will be contacted individually by BEA. Entities not contacted by BEA have no reporting responsibilities for the BE–577.

Form BE–577. This form is filed for each directly owned foreign affiliate that has total assets, annual sales or gross operating revenues excluding sales taxes, or annual net income after paying foreign income taxes of more than $60 million (positive or negative) at any time during the affiliate's fiscal reporting year. It is also filed for each indirectly owned foreign affiliate that meets the $60 million threshold and that has an intercompany debt balance with the U.S. reporter that exceeds $1 million.

BE–577 Certification of Exemption. This section of the BE–577 form is filed if a foreign affiliate meets the following criteria for exemption:

- The foreign affiliate's total assets, annual sales or gross operating revenues, and annual net income (not just the U.S. reporter's share) were equal to or less than $60 million (positive or negative) for the most recent financial reporting year.

- The U.S. ownership in the foreign affiliate is held indirectly and neither the foreign affiliate's end-of-quarter payables to the U.S. reporter nor the foreign affiliate's end-of-quarter receivables from the U.S. reporter exceeded $1 million.

Annual Survey of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad (Form BE–11)

The purpose of the annual survey is to report annual financial and operating data of the U.S. reporter and its foreign affiliates. Only entities that are contacted by BEA are required to report. Entities not contacted by BEA have no reporting responsibilities for the BE–11.

This survey has five forms. A U.S. reporter must file on a fully consolidated U.S. domestic business enterprise basis and for each of its foreign affiliates, whether they are held directly or indirectly. The U.S. reporter is required to report for each foreign affiliate; however, the U.S. reporter may file a consolidated report for affiliates in the same country when they are in the same detailed industry or when they are integral parts of the same business operation. A complete filing is one and only one BE–11A and one or more BE–11B, C, or D forms.

Form BE–11A. This form is filed for the fully consolidated U.S. domestic business enterprise of a U.S. reporter that has a reportable foreign affiliate.

Form BE–11B. This form is filed for a majority-owned[2] foreign affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $60 million (positive or negative). If the affiliate is a foreign affiliate parent of another foreign affiliate that is being reported on Form BE–11B or BE–11C, then this form must be filed for the foreign affiliate parent even if total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income did not exceed $60 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–11C. This form is filed for a minority-owned[3] foreign affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $60 million (positive or negative). If the affiliate is a foreign affiliate parent of another foreign affiliate being reported on Form BE–11C, then this form must be filed for the foreign affiliate parent even if the total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income do not exceed $60 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–11D. This form is filed for a foreign affiliate established or acquired during the fiscal year that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $25 million (positive or negative) but for which none of these exceed $60 million (positive or negative) at the end of the affiliate's fiscal year.

Form BE–11 Claim for Exemption. This form is filed if a U.S. person meets any of the following criteria:

- The U.S. person does not own or control, directly or indirectly, 10 percent or more of the voting securities of an incorporated foreign business enterprise or an equivalent interest in an unincorporated foreign business enterprise (including a branch or real estate held for other than personal use.)

- None of the U.S. reporter's foreign affiliates are required to be reported on Form BE–11B, BE–11C, or BE–11D because all affiliates are exempt or because the U.S. reporter is fully consolidated in the report of another U.S. person.

After the initial filing, this form is not required to be filed annually unless BEA contacts the U.S. business enterprise that is exempt from filing.

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2. A foreign affiliate is majority owned if the combined direct or indirect voting ownership interests (or the equivalent) of the U.S. parent exceed 50 percent.

3. A foreign affiliate is minority owned if the combined direct or indirect voting ownership interests (or the equivalent) of the U.S. parent are at least 10 percent, but not more than 50 percent.

Benchmark Survey of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad (Form BE–10)

The BE–10 survey is BEA's most comprehensive survey of U.S. direct investment abroad. It is conducted every 5 years (in lieu of the BE–11 annual survey). The most recent benchmark survey covered the fiscal year ending in 2014. A response is required from entities subject to the reporting requirements of the BE–10, whether or not they are contacted by BEA.

This survey has five forms. A U.S. reporter must file on a fully consolidated U.S. domestic business enterprise basis and for each of its foreign affiliates, whether they are held directly or indirectly. The U.S. reporter is required to report for each foreign affiliate; however, the U.S. reporter may file a consolidated report for affiliates in the same country when they are in the same detailed industry or when they are integral parts of the same business operation. A complete filing is one and only one BE–10A and one or more BE–10B, C, or D forms.

Form BE–10A. This form is filed for the fully consolidated U.S. domestic business enterprise of a U.S. reporter that has a reportable foreign affiliate.

Form BE–10B. This form is filed for majority-owned foreign affiliates of a U.S. parent that have assets, sales, or net income of more than $80 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–10C. This form is filed for minority-owned foreign affiliates and for majority-owned foreign affiliates of U.S. parents that have assets, sales, or net income of more than $25 million (positive or negative) but for which none of these exceed $80 million (positive or negative).

It is also filed for foreign affiliates that have assets, sales, or net income of $25 million or less (positive or negative) and that are foreign affiliate parents of other foreign affiliates that are filing forms BE–10B or BE–10C.

Form BE–10D. This form is filed for foreign affiliates that have assets, sales, or net income of less than $25 million (positive or negative) and that are not foreign affiliate parents of other foreign affiliates that are being reported on form BE–10B or form BE–10C.

Form BE–10 Claim for Not Filing. This form is filed if a U.S. person meets any the following criteria:

- The U.S. person does not own or control, directly or indirectly, 10 percent or more of the voting securities of an incorporated foreign business enterprise or an equivalent interest in an unincorporated foreign business enterprise (including a branch or real estate held for other than personal use.)

- The U.S. person that owns or controls, directly or indirectly, 10 percent or more of the voting securities of an incorporated foreign business enterprise or an equivalent interest in an unincorporated foreign business enterprise

(including a branch or real estate held for other than personal use), but this person is a citizen of a foreign country who is residing in the United States as a result of official employment by a foreign government (including the immediate family of the person) or who has been, or expects to be, residing in the United States for less than 1 year, or who is fully consolidated in the report of another U.S. person.

Surveys of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States

Reporting is required of all U.S. business enterprises in which a foreign person (in the broad legal sense, including a company) owns, directly or indirectly, 10 percent or more of the voting securities of an incorporated U.S. business enterprise or an equivalent interest of an unincorporated U.S. business enterprise. This includes foreign ownership of improved and unimproved real estate except residential real estate held exclusively for personal use. A U.S. business enterprise that is required to report is referred to as a "U.S. affiliate." A foreign person that owns a 10 percent or more voting interest (or the equivalent) in a U.S. affiliate is referred to as a "foreign parent." The foreign parent is the first person outside the United States in a foreign chain of ownership.

A U.S. affiliate must file on a fully consolidated domestic U.S. basis, including in the full consolidation all U.S. business enterprises proceeding down each ownership chain whose voting securities are more than 50 percent owned by the U.S. business enterprise. The fully consolidated entity is considered one U.S. affiliate.

The surveys of foreign direct investment in the United States may be filed electronically through BEA's eFile system on BEA's Web site at www.bea.gov/efile. The forms and instructions are available at www.bea.gov/fdi. For questions about the survey of new foreign direct investment in the United States (BE–13), call 301–278–9419 or e-mail be13@bea.gov. For questions about the quarterly survey (BE–605), call 301–278–9422 or e-mail be605@bea.gov. For questions about the annual survey (BE–15) and the benchmark survey (BE–12), call 301–278–9247 or e-mail be12/15@bea.gov. Respondents are encouraged to use the secure messaging system (available through eFile) to correspond securely with BEA staff.

Survey of New Foreign Direct Investment in the United States (Form BE–13)

The purpose of the survey of new foreign direct investment in the United States is to capture new investment transactions when a foreign direct investment relationship is created or when an existing U.S. affiliate of a foreign parent establishes a new U.S. legal entity, expands its U.S. operations, or acquires a U.S. business enterprise. The initial report must be filed no later than 45 days after the date of the investment transaction. A response is required from entities subject to the reporting requirements of the BE–13, whether or not they are contacted by BEA.

The information in this report can be used to measure the amount of new foreign direct investment in the United States. It will also identify new U.S. affiliates that meet the reporting criteria for BEA's quarterly, annual, and benchmark surveys of foreign direct investment in the United States.

This survey has six forms. The version of the form that must be filed is determined by the reporting criteria.

Form BE–13A. This form is filed for a U.S. business enterprise when a foreign entity acquires a voting interest (directly or indirectly through an existing U.S. affiliate) in the enterprise, segment, or operating unit, and the acquisition meets the following criteria:

- The total cost of the acquisition is more than $3 million.
- The acquired U.S. business enterprise will operate as a separate legal entity.
- At least 10 percent of the voting interest in the acquired enterprise is now owned, directly or indirectly, by the foreign entity.

Form BE–13B. This form is filed for a U.S. business enterprise when a foreign entity or an existing U.S. affiliate of a foreign entity establishes a new legal entity in the United States, and the establishment of the new entity meets the following criteria:

- The projected total cost to establish the new legal entity is more than $3 million.
- At least 10 percent of the voting interest in the newly established business enterprise is now owned, directly or indirectly, by the foreign entity.

Form BE–13C. This form is filed for an existing U.S. affiliate of a foreign parent when the U.S. affiliate acquires a U.S. business enterprise or a segment of the enterprise that it then merges into its operations, and the total cost to acquire the business enterprise is more than $3 million.

Form BE–13D. This form is filed for an existing U.S. affiliate of a foreign parent when it expands its operations to include a new facility where business is conducted, and the projected total cost of the expansion is more than $3 million.

Form BE–13E. This form is filed for a U.S. business enterprise that previously filed form BE–13B or form BE–13D, and the established or expanded entity is still under construction.

Form BE–13 Claim for Exemption. This form is filed if a U.S. business enterprise meets any the following criteria:

- The U.S. business enterprise was contacted by BEA but does not meet the requirements for filing any of the other forms.

- The U.S. business enterprise, whether or not contacted by BEA, meets all requirements except the $3 million reporting threshold for filing one of the other forms.

Quarterly Survey of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States (Form BE–605)

The purpose of the quarterly survey of foreign direct investment in the United States is to report the positions and the transactions between a U.S. affiliate and its foreign parents and between the U.S. affiliate and the foreign affiliates of the foreign parents. A BE–605 report is required for any U.S. affiliate that was established, acquired, liquidated, sold, or became inactive during the reporting period. Quarterly reports must be filed within 30 days after the close of each of the U.S. affiliate's calendar or fiscal quarter, or within 45 days if the report is for the final quarter of the U.S. affiliate's financial reporting year. Entities required to report will be contacted individually by BEA. Entities not contacted by BEA have no reporting responsibilities for the BE–605.

Form BE–605. This form is filed for a U.S. affiliate that has total assets, annual sales or gross operating revenues, or annual net income (not just the foreign parent's share) of more than $60 million (positive or negative).

BE–605 Claim for Exemption. This section of the BE–605 form is filed if a foreign affiliate meets the following criteria for exemption. For an initial filing, the U.S. business enterprise must also complete pages 1 through 5.

- The U.S. affiliate's total assets, annual sales or gross operating revenues, and annual net income (not just the foreign parent's share) are each $60 million or less (positive or negative.)

- The U.S. affiliate is foreign-owned indirectly through another U.S. affiliate, and it has no direct transactions with the foreign parent(s) or the foreign affiliates of the foreign parents.

Annual Survey of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States (Form BE–15)

The purpose of the annual survey of foreign direct investment in the United States is to report annual financial and operating data of U.S. affiliates. Entities required to report will be contacted individually by BEA. Entities not contacted by BEA have no reporting responsibilities for the BE–15.

This survey has four forms. The version of the form that must be filed is determined by the reporting criteria.

Form BE–15A. This form is filed for a majority-owned[4] U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $300 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–15B. This form is filed for U.S. affiliates that meet one of the following criteria:

- A majority-owned U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $120 million (positive or negative) but for which none of these exceed $300 million (positive or negative).

- A minority-owned[5] U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $120 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–15C. This form is filed for a U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $40 million (positive or negative) but for which none of these exceed $120 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–15 Claim for Exemption. This form is filed if a U.S. affiliate meets one of the following criteria:

- The foreign voting ownership interest (or the equivalent) in the U.S affiliate is less than 10 percent.

- The U.S. affiliate is fully consolidated or merged with the report of another U.S. affiliate.

- The total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, and net income are all $40 million or less (positive or negative).

After the initial filing, this form is not required to be filed annually unless BEA contacts the U.S. affiliate that is exempt from filing.

Benchmark Survey of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States (Form BE–12).

The BE–12 survey is BEA's most comprehensive survey of foreign direct investment in the United States. It is conducted every 5 years (in lieu of the BE–15 annual survey). The most recent benchmark survey covered the fiscal year ending in 2012. A response is required from entities subject to the reporting requirements of the BE–12, whether or not they are contacted by BEA.

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4. A U.S. affiliate is majority owned if the combined direct or indirect voting ownership interests (or the equivalent) of all the foreign parents of the U.S. affiliate exceed 50 percent.
5. A U.S. affiliate is minority owned if the combined direct or indirect voting ownership interests (or the equivalent) of all the foreign parents of the U.S. affiliate are at least 10 percent, but not more than 50 percent.

This survey has four forms. The version of the form that must be filed is determined by the reporting criteria.

Form BE–12A. This form is filed for a majority-owned U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $300 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–12B. This form is filed for U.S. affiliates that meet the following criteria:

- A majority-owned U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $60 million (positive or negative) but for which none of these exceed $300 million (positive or negative).

- A minority-owned U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of more than $60 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–12C. This form is filed for a U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of $60 million or less (positive or negative).

Only selected data items on this form are filed for a U.S. affiliate that has total assets, sales or gross operating revenues, or net income of less than $20 million (positive or negative).

Form BE–12 Claim for Not Filing. This form is filed if a U.S. affiliate meets one of the following criteria for exemption:

- The foreign voting ownership interest (or the equivalent) in the U.S affiliate is less than 10 percent.

- The U.S. affiliate is fully consolidated or merged with the report of another U.S. affiliate.

- The U.S. business enterprise was liquidated or dissolved.