

U.S. Data

Published U.S. Balance of Payments data on services transactions is, for the most part, less detailed than Canada's -- for example, the U.S. has no survey which provides details comparable to those reported on the quadrennial survey of business services referred to above. The Canada-United States components of the travel expenditure estimates are derived from a cooperative effort which results in each country exchanging and receiving essentially the same quality of data.

Canada and the U.S. undertake a highly detailed joint reconciliation of their Balance of Payments data on an annual basis. As a result, it is fair to conclude that the U.S. has no better data on services transactions than does Canada. In fact, for a significant number of items, Canadian data contributes to better U.S. estimates.

The U.S. consultants' report "The International Operations of U.S. Service Industries: Current Data Collection and Analysis" (June, 1981) by Economic Consulting Services, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as ECS) has quite a different focus from this report, and as a result comparisons are of little value. The ECS report contains estimates of the international activities of a number of service industries but international activity is defined to include sales of foreign subsidiaries of U.S. corporations abroad, whereas Balance of Payments concepts classify foreign subsidiaries as non-resident corporations, in which case their transactions with non-residents go unrecorded. Furthermore, while the ECS report is about industry activity, this report rests on a classification of services, a distinction emphasized by Mr. Neil McKellar, author of the companion report on a classification of services. The other major U.S. report, "International Transactions of the United States: Proposals for Improvement in Data Collection" (September, 1981) by E. P. Lederer, W. Lederer and R. L. Sammons, also has a different focus from the recommendations made in this report. The U.S. report consciously departs from Balance of Payments concepts and proposes means of collecting data on the foreign subsidiaries of corporations, not just data on exports and imports. This report on Canadian data only makes recommendations for improvements in the Balance of Payments data on Canada's exports and imports of services.