

CHICAGO BUSINESS ACTIVITY INDEX – April 2020

CBAI increased in February

The Chicago Business Activity Index (CBAI) increased to 103.3 in February from 101.9 in January. The increase is mainly attributed to an improvement in retail sales, positive manufacturing, nonmanufacturing and construction job growth.

In February, the national and regional economies presented mixed features. Industrial production rose 0.6 percent in February after falling 0.5 percent in January. Manufacturing output edged up 0.1 percent in February. At 109.6 percent of its 2012 average, the level of total industrial production in February was unchanged from a year earlier. Capacity utilization for the industrial sector increased 0.4 percentage point in February to 77.0 percent, a rate that is 2.8 percentage points below its long-run (1972–2019) average. The Chicago Fed reported that the Chicago Fed National Activity Index (CFNAI) moved up to 0.06 in February from -0.27 in January. In the Chicago region, employment in the manufacturing sector increased 0.24 percent and employment in the nonmanufacturing sector increased 0.02 percent in February. Employment in the construction sector increased 0.15 percent and retail sales are estimated to have increased 1.42 percent during the same period.

In March, the economy began to be hit hard by the spread of COVID-19. Total nonfarm payroll employment fell by 701,000 in March, and the unemployment rate rose to 4.4 percent. Therefore, a harsh recession is expected to significantly impact the index in the coming months.

Chicago Business Activity Index

Release Date:
April 18, 2020

Next Release Date:
May 18, 2020

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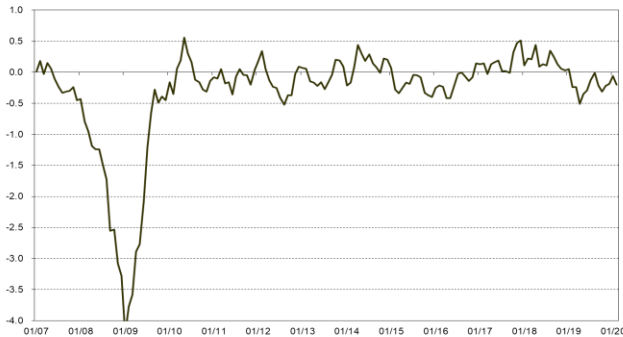


CBAI (Current: 103.3)			
	1 month	3 month	1 year
Historical (ago)	101.9	99.6	98.8
Forecast (ahead)	101.6	97.3	-

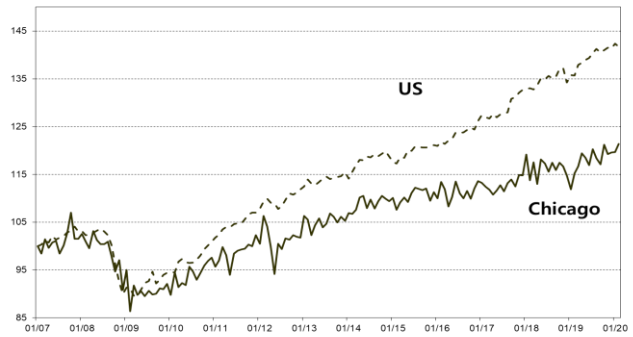
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* January 2007 = 100

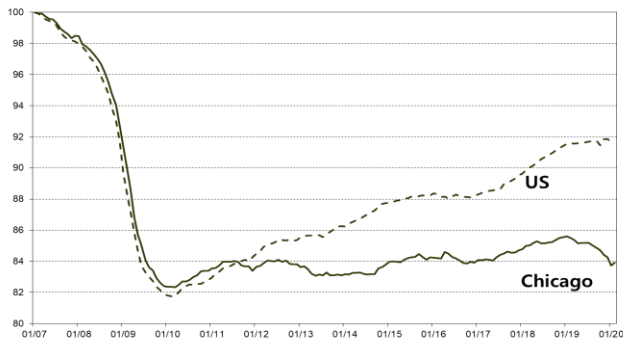
Chicago Fed National Activity Index(CFNAI-MA3)



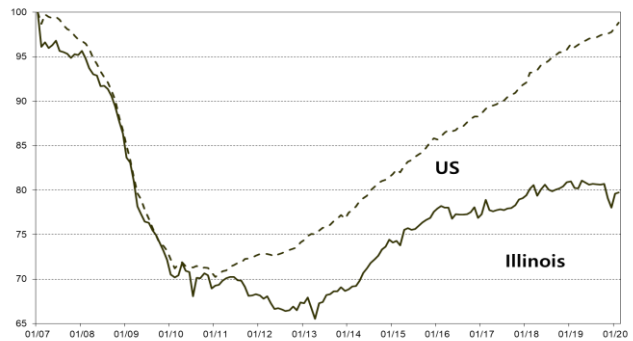
Retail Sales



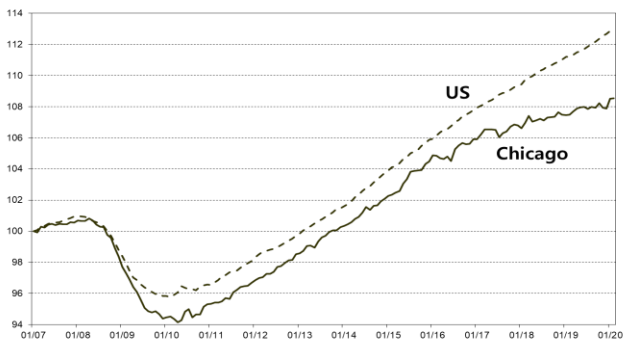
Manufacturing Employment



Construction Employment



Non-manufacturing Employment



Economic Activity: Summary

Months ago	Percentage change compared to the previous period					
	National			Chicago		
	12	3	1	12	3	1
Mfgn	0.21	-0.09	0.10	-1.86	-0.60	0.24
NMfgn	1.69	0.49	0.19	0.97	0.56	0.02
Cons	2.84	1.26	0.54	-0.61	0.83	0.15
Retail	4.43	0.15	-0.48	5.37	1.79	1.42

Note: All series are seasonally adjusted.

The Chicago Business Activity Index (CBAI) is a monthly statistic that measures the changes in the business cycle status of the Chicago metropolitan area. The CBAI leads the local business cycle by three-to-four months. REAL's approach to constructing this index, using the principal components regression method, directs attention to the relationship between local and national business cycle.

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