

U.S. Territories

As their economies tend to be small (making it difficult to support large businesses), small businesses dominate the U.S. territories. This profile from the Office of Advocacy compiles the latest facts and figures on the status and role of small business. (Because of limited firm size information, the number of business establishments is used as a proxy to represent the number of small businesses. In the United States in 2009, firms with fewer than 500 employees owned 84.1 percent of all private-sector establishments.)

- 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; its annual private sector payroll was only larger than six states, each of which has less than half the number of employees.

- While the economies of the territories have fared relatively well during the downturn, the largest territory, Puerto Rico has undergone declines in employment and number of establishments.

- Puerto Rico's unemployment rate hovered in the 10-12 percent range in the early 2000's but has been in the 15-16 percent range since early 2009.

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.

U.S. Territory Business Facts

	2009*	2008	2002
Private Sector Establishments			
Puerto Rico	45,549	46,348	45,642
Virgin Islands	2,845	2,805	2,615
Guam	3,235	3,226	2,926
Northern Marianas	1,232	1,229	1,276
American Samoa	458	445	1,061
	2010*	2009	2008
Employment			
Puerto Rico	1,088,604	1,126,728	1,208,392
Virgin Islands	44,000	43,700	45,600
Guam	n.a.	60,910	58,810
Northern Marianas	n.a.	10,188	11,974
American Samoa	n.a.	9,991	9,232
Business Bankruptcies			
Puerto Rico	430	396	349
Virgin Islands	8	9	4
Guam	11	6	4
Northern Marianas	2	0	0
Business Loans under \$100,000			
Puerto Rico	15,007	20,337	10,859
Virgin Islands	486	533	59
Guam	497	510	†
American Samoa	5	2	110
Value of Business Loans under \$100,000			
Puerto Rico (\$ million)	475.6	571.4	178.0
Virgin Islands (\$ million)	9.5	11.0	1.8
Guam (\$ million)	10.4	11.2	†
American Samoa (\$ million)	n.a.	n.a.	3.1
Bank Branches (Fiscal Year)			
Puerto Rico	484	526	554
Virgin Islands	24	24	25
Guam	32	32	32
Northern Marianas	10	10	10
American Samoa	6	6	6

* Latest available data. n.a. = not available.

† Reporting issues occurred with the Bank of Guam.

Sources: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts; U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy (www.sba.gov/advocacy/7540/14968).

Table 1: Establishments and Employment in Puerto Rico by Major Industry and Employment Size, 2009

Industry	Total Establishments	Employment Size of Establishment			Private Sector Employment
		1-19	20-499	500+	
Total	45,549	39,497	5,921	131	702,063
Forestry, etc. and agriculture support	12	11	1	-	51
Mining	50	33	17	-	886
Utilities	23	20	3	-	353
Construction	2,487	2,021	459	7	43,772
Manufacturing	2,014	1,416	560	38	96,509
Wholesale trade	2,204	1,801	403	-	34,338
Retail trade	10,633	9,485	1,142	6	126,053
Transportation and warehousing	1,077	930	144	3	15,157
Information	550	451	95	4	19,296
Finance and insurance	2,057	1,752	298	7	37,660
Real estate and rental and leasing	1,678	1,577	101	-	12,120
Professional, scientific, and technical svcs.	4,299	4,024	275	-	28,526
Management of companies and enterprises	77	38	39	-	3,824
Admin., support, waste mgt., remed. svcs.	1,835	1,418	397	20	69,515
Educational services	778	458	308	12	37,338
Health care and social assistance	7,223	6,769	429	25	79,471
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	430	380	50	-	3,604
Accommodation and food services	4,258	3,230	1,019	9	71,957
Other services (except public admin.)	3,504	3,325	179	-	21,103
Unclassified	360	358	2	-	530

Note that large firms may operate small establishments.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns.

Table 2: Establishment and Employment Turnover in Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands, 2009-2010 (Non-Farm)

	Establishments					Employment				
	Net Change	Openings	Expansions	Contractions	Closings	Net Change	Openings	Expansions	Contractions	Closings
Puerto Rico										
2009										
Quarter 1	-543	1,790	6,476	9,718	2,333	-18,884	8,585	28,806	45,995	10,280
Quarter 2	-265	1,619	7,001	8,683	1,884	-13,752	7,810	29,931	43,230	8,263
Quarter 3	269	1,883	7,355	8,491	1,614	-3,236	9,864	31,772	37,653	7,219
Quarter 4	-123	1,705	8,180	7,567	1,828	4,478	9,013	36,634	32,092	9,077
2010										
Quarter 1	-307	1,504	6,783	9,023	1,811	-6,138	7,572	31,045	37,493	7,262
Quarter 2	-493	1,258	7,295	8,273	1,751	-6,837	6,682	30,478	36,331	7,666
Quarter 3	-216	1,435	7,363	7,806	1,651	-579	8,050	31,788	32,742	7,675
Quarter 4	-259	1,355	8,463	7,017	1,614	8,628	6,876	38,081	27,943	8,386
Virgin Islands										
2009										
Quarter 1	-11	96	497	602	107	-960	392	1,281	2,121	512
Quarter 2	-3	96	481	597	99	-899	448	1,263	2,084	526
Quarter 3	-25	103	473	503	128	-259	543	1,388	1,731	459
Quarter 4	-28	98	482	508	126	462	447	1,914	1,389	510
2010										
Quarter 1	-19	84	476	528	103	735	310	2,322	1,481	416
Quarter 2	-19	85	507	487	104	-819	455	1,551	1,798	1,027
Quarter 3	3	111	532	469	108	569	490	1,837	1,375	383
Quarter 4	3	94	508	507	91	449	350	1,899	1,513	287

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