By Brian G. Long, Ph.D., C.P.M.
Director, Supply Chain Management Research
Grand Valley State University
(269) 870-0428

West Michigan Current Business Trends

May 7, 2025

Despite Tariff Troubles, Economy Still Modestly Positive

Key Take-Aways from April 2025 Statistics:

- **NEW ORDERS for April Remain Marginally Positive.**
- **Tariffs Continue to Confuse Business Planners.**
- **Short and Long-Term Business Confidence Drop Significantly.**

	Apr.	Mar.
NEW ORDERS Index (business improvement)	+ 2	+10
PRODUCTION Index (aka "output")	+ 10	+13
EMPLOYMENT Index	+ 2	- 2
LEAD TIMES Index	+ 6	+ 0

Key Participant Comments for April

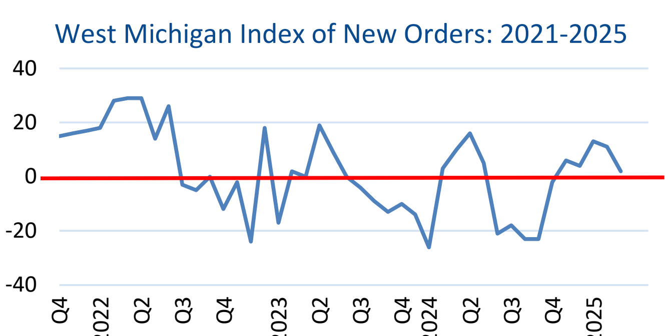
"It's a chaotic environment due to tariffs. All prices are up and all demand is down."

"We are finishing up a couple of back-to-back record months, but are completely uncertain what happens next. All of our shipments to our China division are on hold. We continue to look for alternatives to supply from China, but finding many items are still cheaper than domestic even with the tariffs."

"Business is staying surprisingly strong. We've had to pass along some price increases due to inputs in material costs, and so far, demand has held up."

"Trump's tariffs are having major impact to our cost and our ability to satisfy customer demands. We are moving four production lines to another country. Are we great again yet?"

The Local Economy. Despite the world's economic turmoil, the West Michigan Economy remains marginally positive. According to the data collected in the last two weeks of April, NEW ORDERS, our closely-watched index of business improvement, eased to +2 from +10. The PRODUCTION Index, a.k.a. "output," eased modestly to +10 from +13, although some of the production activity can be attributed to attempts to get ahead of the potential tariffs. Despite all the impending challenges posed by the industrial marketplace, activity in the purchasing offices, the index of PURCHASES backtracked to -5 from +4. To no one's surprise, spot shortages are starting to appear for components and assemblies that go back and forth at the Detroit/Windsor border crossing. Granted, Foreign-Trade Zones (FTZs) help, because they are designated areas of a few square acres where goods can be imported, stored, and re-exported without being subject to customs duties and taxes. However, for some firms that did not foresee the current trade problem, a few spot shortages have appeared. Unfortunately, the Michigan auto industry in particular imports a wide assortment of low-value components from China. We can



expect that a resolution of the trade imbalance with China may take months. However, the trade problems with Canada and Mexico are assumed to be more easily resolved, given that the Purchasing Manager's indices (PMIs) for both countries are being adversely affected by the tariff situation. We thought resolution might take just a few weeks, but it may turn into months. Business planners are now in the dark, although some appear to be marching ahead blindfolded in hopes that most problems will soon be resolved. Others are putting plans on hold, which is especially bad for the capital equipment manufacturers. Curiously, our index of EMPLOYMENT remains marginally positive, meaning businesses are continuing to hire despite the potential uncertainties.

The U.S. Economy. As expected, the national economy continued to backtrack in April, but remained close to break-even. In the May 1 report from the Institute for Supply Management (ISM), the index of NEW ORDERS edged up to +1 from -3. However, the April PRODUCTION Index modestly eased to -4 from +0. The SUPPLIER DELIVERY Index upticked to +10 from +7. Although many firms continue to brace for new import tariffs and higher prices, rate of inventory accumulation declined in April, and index of INVENTORIES eased to +1 from +9. ISM's ORDER BACKLOG Index for April eased modestly to -13 from -11. It is hardly a surprise that the index of NEW EXPORT ORDERS fell to -14 from -1. Given the obvious shake-up in the world's industrial markets, we had expected more change in ISM's April statistics. So far, it appears that many firms are still taking a wait-and-see attitude. Hopefully, this trend may not continue in May. After statistical adjustments, ISM's Composite Index, a compilation of all the aforementioned statistics remained below the 50.0 break-even point and posted at 48.7, modestly lower than March's 49.0.

S&P Global, the British-based economic consulting firm which also surveys U.S. purchasing managers, painted a similar picture of the April economy. The S&P overall index registered unchanged at

50.2, which the survey author declared to be "flat." The Production or "Output" Index declined for the second month in a row, but New Orders upticked as a result of at least some firms shifting to domestic suppliers from foreign sources. The survey author further noted that this is what is SUPPOSED to be happening with the new tariffs, but further notes that more time and patience will be required before it will have a significant impact on our trade statistics. Chris Williamson, Chief Business Economist at S&P, further noted:

> "Manufacturing continued to flat-line in April amid worrying downside risks to the outlook and sharply rising costs. Factory output fell for a second successive month as tariffs were widely blamed on a slump in export orders and curbed spending among customers more broadly amid rising uncertainty. Although the survey saw some producers report evidence of beneficial tariff-related switching of customer demand away from imports, any such sales increase was countered by worries over tariff-related disruptions to supply chains and lost export sales. This served to drive business confidence about prospects in the year ahead down sharply to the gloomiest for 10 months. Concerns have also spiked in terms of input costs, especially for imported materials and components, due to the triple whammy of tariff-related price hikes, supply shortages, and the weaker dollar. Manufacturers are responding to these changing demand, supply and cost conditions by raising their selling prices and trimming headcounts to help protect their margins."

The World Economy. Every month, J.P. Morgan (JPM) collects the Purchasing Managers Indexes from as many as 50 countries to compose the Worldwide Manufacturing report. For April, the global economy eased into negative territory for the first time in four months. JPM's Global Manufacturing PMI fell to 49.8 from 50.3. Among the major economies in the world, the composite index of New Orders fell for the first time in four months. However, the Production Index remained marginally positive. All of the indices were lifted by positive PMIs from India, China, Greece, Ireland and the Philippines. Major negative PMIs were posted by Mexico, Canada, Germany, Japan, Spain, and the U.K. The April PMI for Canada, our largest trading partner, fell to 45.3, down from 46.3, and the lowest the index has been since the heart of the pandemic in May 2020. Because of a significant drop in export orders to the U.S., the April PMI for Mexico fell to 44.8, down from 46.5. However, the PMI for China, our third largest trading partner, still managed to remain above the neutral mark of 50.0 and came in at 50.4, down from 51.2 in March. Bennett Parrish, Global Economist at JPM, further commented:

> "Of the 28 nations for which PMI New Export Orders data were available for April 2025, all except three (Germany, India and Greece) saw new export business decrease. North America was particularly hard hit with the U.S., Canada and Mexico all seeing substantial drops in new export work, although the Business Optimism Index fell to its lowest ebb since October 2022. Reasons cited by companies for their gloomier outlooks were mostly centred on concerns about the impact of tariffs and protectionism on their order books, supply chains and pricing. The level of global manufacturing business sentiment is not far off lows seen in 2019 when concerns about trade protectionism were also on the rise."

The April PMI for the eurozone, as compiled by the Hamburg Commercial Bank, rose to a 32-month high of 49.0, up from 48.6 in March. Just as last month, the PMIs for Germany, Italy, Spain, and France remain the region's weakest performers, although business conditions continue to marginally improve for most of them. Positive PMIs were reported from Greece and Ireland. Just as last month, at least some of the uptick in the industrial market can be traced to increases in defense spending by several NATO countries in the zone. Dr. Cyrus de la Rubia, Chief Economist at HCB, further noted:

> "A fourth consecutive increase in the HCOB PMI can be seen as a sign that the situation in the manufacturing sector is stabilising. This comes as a surprise given the many uncertainties and shocks of recent months. However, the situation remains fragile, as evidenced by the fact that the headline index remains below the threshold value of 50. Industrial activity remains highly exposed to U.S. tariff policy, but the planned sharp increase in defence spending in the EU could help stabilize the situation in the long term. This is confirmed by the survey's optimism gauge, which is relatively elevated when compared with the trend over the past three years. The near stabilisation of the industrial economy was helped by a production pick-up in both Germany and France in April, and Italy is fighting its way back into expansion territory. This may have been spurred by the fall in oil and gas prices in April, and this was underscored by a decline in input prices, which had risen in each of the three months prior. Interest rate cuts by the ECB and the prospect of further monetary easing are also likely to have been welcome news for companies. Manufacturers were clearly able to expand their profit margins in April, as purchasing prices fell while selling prices rose at their fastest pace in two years. This is unlikely to continue, however, as U.S. tariff policy is likely to see Chinese goods being offered more widely in the EU, intensifying competition."

Automotive. The April auto sales reported by *Automotive News* are fairly strong in part because of a "pre-tariff stampede" for models made outside of the country that are subject to steep tariffs. For the automakers who still report monthly, most reported double-digit increases. Mazda led the way with a 21.0 percent year-over-year gain, followed by American Honda posting an 18.1 percent increase, Ford rising 16.3 percent, Hyundai-Kia also up by 16.3 percent, and Toyota gaining 10.0 percent. Subaru reported a modest 0.3 percent gain, largely because customers cleared the dealer lots almost completely last month. The April SAAR (Seasonally Adjusted Annualized Rate) was estimated to be 17.8 million units by Motor Intelligence. Needless to say, no one expects sales for the next few months to be as strong. Philip Nussel, an editor at Automotive News, further commented:

> "The April U.S. sales numbers from the automakers reporting monthly results looked robust today, led by Hyundai, Kia, Mazda, Honda, Ford and Toyota. It all begs the question: How much of these sales gains are cannibalizing future months with buyers accelerating their decisions in fear of tariffs? After all, tariff concerns and low consumer confidence are surely going to impact buying decisions, right? You wouldn't know it based on April and year-to-date results."

Consumer Confidence. Most of the news in recent weeks has been loaded with uncertainty, and uncertainty breeds pessimism. The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index released on April 21 fell by 7.9 points to 86.0 (1985=100), down from 92.9, and considerably below December's stellar posting of 109.5. According to Stephanie Guichard, a senior economist at the Conference Board, "The decline was largely driven by consumers' expectations. The three expectation components—business conditions, employment prospects, and future income—all deteriorated sharply, reflecting pervasive pessimism about the future." The percentage of consumers expecting fewer jobs in the next six months rose to 32.1 percent, a level nearly as high as the April 2009 level recorded at the peak of the Great Recession. For the University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index, there was a less-severe decline. The April index posted at 52.2, down 8.4 percent, but 32.4 percent lower than April 2024. The survey author further noted that expectations have fallen a precipitous 32% since January, the steepest three-month percentage decline seen since the 1990 recession.

Business Confidence. The SHORT-TERM BUSINESS OUTLOOK Index, which asks West Michigan firms about their business perceptions for the next three to six months, dropped from -5 to -16. The LONG-TERM BUSINESS OUTLOOK Index which queries the perceptions for the next three to five years, fell from +43 to +20. By contrast, this index posted a near-high of +58 just three months ago. In short, business confidence for West Michigan continues to fall at a fairly significant rate, and the post-election euphoria is long gone. At the national level, the most recent Small Business Optimism Index from the National Federation of Independent Business fell by 3.3 points to 97.4, dropping just below the 51-year average of 98. The Uncertainty Index decreased eight points from February's second highest reading to 96. Commenting on the most recent survey results, NFIB Chief Economist Bill Dunkelberg noted:

> "The implementation of new policy priorities has heightened the level of uncertainty among small business owners over the past few months. Small business owners have scaled back

expectations on sales growth as they better understand how these rearrangements might impact them."

West Michigan Unemployment. As little as two years ago, the official West Michigan unemployment numbers from the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget (DTMB) were among the lowest in the state. However, West Michigan's NEW ORDERS Index began to reflect slower sales in the office furniture industry and among our auto parts suppliers. As this happened, the index of EMPLOYMENT began to track negative in single digits negative for the first time since the pandemic. However, our monthly survey is more "real time" and most of the workforce reduction reported by DTMB did not begin to show up until recently. For our April survey, the index of EMPLOYMENT came in modestly positive at +2, up from -2. According to the February data (latest month available), the unemployment rates for almost all cities and counties in West Michigan are 1 to 1.5 percent higher than a year ago, and the pace is increasing. The February year-over-year unemployment rate for Ottawa County posted at 4.6 percent, up sharply from 3.5 percent a year earlier. Kent County unemployment posted a similar jump from 3.5 percent to 4.7 percent. Plainfield Township, which usually reports one of the most favorable unemployment rates in the state, came in at 4.6 percent, up from 3.4 percent, again year-over-year. By contrast, the current unemployment rate for some of the counties in the Detroit area like Livingston County came in at 3.9 percent and Oakland County at 4.1 percent. At the national level, ISM's April index of EMPLOYMENT remained negative but edged up to -3 from -10. At the international level, the JPM index of EMPLOYMENT continued to post slightly below the 50.0 break-even point and edged lower to 49.1 from 49.6.

Industrial Inflation. Until the current tariff war began, industrial inflation WAS under control and the supply chains had returned to stability after the pandemic disruption. At the national level, ISM's index of PRICES for most of the last half of 2024 was only single digit positive. The January index edged up to +10, and the rumors began to spread that a tariff war might be brewing. In ISM's most recent report, the index of PRICES posted at +40, up slightly from March's +39 reading. At the local level, our survey of West Michigan purchasing managers came in at +37, up from +30, but far higher than the December 2024 index of +0. At the international level, the April J.P. Morgan international survey reported the World Price Index at 55.1, down from 55.2. S&P Global, which tracks both worldwide price pressures and supply pressures, reported that the S&P Price Pressure Index for April was unchanged from March, but still at a 30-month high. S&P's April Supply Shortage Index ticked up to 0.7 from 0.6 which is not far ahead of the 61-month low of 0.5 reported as recently as February. Most of these statistics were collected before the trade war became a major concern, so the report for May could be much less positive. Usamah Bhatti, Economist at S&P Global Market Intelligence, further commented:

> "Reports of price pressures remained above the long-run trend for the second successive month at the start of the second quarter, with the respective index unchanged from March's 30-month high. Twenty-four of the 26 monitored commodities reported prices had increased, led by Semiconductors where reports were their highest seen in 14 months and over four times the long-run average. This was followed by higher prices for Electrical Items, Packaging, Stainless Steel and Timber. According to global manufacturing firms, input prices rose markedly once again, partly in response to the introduction of new tariffs."

Consumer Inflation. Despite all the talk of tariffs causing more inflation, the April 10 inflation index from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the "headline" CPI inflation rate fell to 2.4 percent from 2.8 percent. The CPI index which excludes food and energy also edged lower to 2.8 percent from 3.1 percent. The "Fed preferred" index from the Bureau of Economic Research (BEA) entitled the Personal Consumption Expenditures Index or PCE eased marginally lower to 2.4 percent from 2.5 percent according to the April 30 posting. The PCE sub-index which excludes food and energy also ticked lower to 2.6 from 2.8 percent. Again, all of these statistics were collected in late March before tariffs actually took hold in April. Of course, the current statistics are moving in the right direction, but the next report appears likely to be less favorable. The Fed's target of 2.0 precent inflation now seems to be less likely to be achieved if rates are prematurely cut due to political pressure.

However, the rising tariffs are unlikely to have a major impact on the current cost of housing or "shelter." The latest Shelter CPI reported by the BLS posted at 4.0 percent, down from 4.2 percent. The shelter component remains the most heavily weighted statistic and the most troublesome component of both the CPI and the PCE. In other housing statistics, the national rent index increased by 0.5% in April 2025, marking the third consecutive month-over-month increase, according to "Apartment List" on the web. By contrast, the Rent Index Report from Realtor.com posted a year-over-year decline of 0.9 percent. The latest Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price NSA Index, released April 29, shows that annual home-price growth increased in February by 3.9 percent, which is down from January's 4.1 percent. Assessing the housing market on a May 2 podcast, Danielle Hale, Chief Economist at Realtor.com commented:

> "Despite concerns about what's ahead, mortgage rates were fairly steady, dropping 5 basis points, but remaining solidly in high-6% territory. We'll need to see some policy news or bigger data shifts to drive a larger change in mortgage rates. The Realtor.com April Housing Trends Report showed that more homes were newly listed, helping to push overall inventory to the highest since April 2020. Homes spent more time on market, but the median home list price eked out another small gain even as price reductions ticked higher."

GDP. The BEA's preliminary estimate for growth in the first quarter of 2025 came in at a -0.3 percent decline, a disappointment given that the average estimate by many forecasts was more in the range of 1.6 percent growth. Most of the damage was caused by a surge in imports as businesses rushed to get ahead of tariffs and other new border taxes. In fact, surging imports alone subtracted over 5 percent from BEA's estimate of total first quarter GDP. As always, the forecasters now focus on the 2025 second quarter GDP. Although the Atlanta Fed's GDPNow model, which previously turned sharply negative for the first quarter and posted at -3.7 percent was correct to predict a negative reading, the model's -3.7 percent was an overshoot. As of May 1, the GDPNow model predicts a second quarter growth of 1.1 percent. The Blue Chip forecast from a monthly survey of 50 economists averaged a second quarter growth rate of only 0.8 percent. However, in the second quarter, any number of events could still impact to the economy in either direction.

Looking Forward. It almost goes without saying the that the future perspective of the economy is changing on a daily basis. A new trade agreement with Mexico or Canada would obviously be a plus, but we need to keep in mind that fentanyl trafficking and border security are non-trade issues simultaneously being pushed by the president with both countries. An enforceable peace treaty in Ukraine would be a plus, but an escalation of the war in Gaza would be a minus. If the Federal Reserve bows to pressure and cuts interest rates, the economy would be stimulated, but it could encourage more inflation which in turn creates another whole set of problems. Over the next thirty days, conventional wisdom says that that we are unlikely to see very much clarity about the economic outlook for the remainder of 2025.

April 2025 Survey Statistics

	UP	SAME	DOWN	N/A	Apr. Index	Mar. Index	Feb. Index	25 Year Average
Sales (New Orders)	30%	42%	28%	0%	+ 2	+10	+11	+14
Production (Gross Output)	30%	44%	20%	0%	+10	+13	+ 1	+14
Employment	15%	72%	13%	0%	+ 2	- 2	- 8	+ 8
Purchases	17%	61%	22%	0%	- 5	+ 4	- 17	+ 7
Prices Paid (major commodities)	48%	41%	11%	0%	+37	+30	+25	+15
Lead Times (from suppliers)	15%	74%	9%	2%	+ 6	+ 0	- 9	+11
Purchased Materials Inv. (Raw materials & supplies)	17%	48%	22%	13%	- 5	+ 6	- 4	- 4
Finished Goods Inventory	26%	48%	17%	9%	+ 9	- 3	- 5	- 2
Short Term Business Outlook (Next 3-6 months)	20%	34%	46%	0%	-16	- 5	+20	-
Long Term Business Outlook (Next 3-5 years)	33%	52%	13%	2%	+20	+43	+58	-

Items in short supply:

Steel, scrap steel, alloys from Canada, aluminum, aluminum coil, high intensity sweeteners, sorbitol, annatto, mechanical engineers, controls engineers.

Prices on the UP side:

Steel, steel based products, aluminum, aluminum diecastings, copper and copper-based products, packaging materials, annatto coloring, anything imported.

Prices on the DOWN side:

PA6 and PC resin, Asian steel *, steel-based products*, fuel, polypropylene, crude oil, some wood, some paper, corn syrup.

*Item reported as both up AND down in price.

Latest Unemployment Reports:

March data, except as noted.
Except as noted, data are NOT seasonally adjusted.

	Mar. 2025	Mar. 2024	Aug. 2009*	25-Year Low
State of Michigan (Mar.)	5.5%	4.2%	14.6%	3.2%
State of Michigan (Unadj.)	5.7%	4.3%	14.1%	2.9%
Kent County	4.7%	3.5%	11.9%	2.1%
Kalamazoo County	4.9%	3.7%	11.1%	2.1%
Calhoun County	6.2%	4.7%	12.8%	2.7%
Ottawa County	4.6%	3.5%	13.3%	1.8%
Barry County	5.6%	4.4%	10.9%	2.2%
Kalamazoo City	6.0%	4.6%	15.2%	3.2%
Portage City	4.4%	3.3%	8.7%	1.3%
Grand Rapids City	5.7%	4.3%	16.1%	3.0%
Kentwood City	5.1%	4.1%	10.7%	1.4%
Plainfield Twp.	4.6%	3.4%	8.0%	1.4%
U.S. Official Rate (Mar.)	4.2%	3.9%	9.6%	3.4%
U.S. Rate (Unadjusted)	4.2%	3.9%	9.6%	3.1%
U.S. U-6 Rate (Mar.)**	7.9%	7.3%	22.9%	6.7%

** August 2009 = low point of the Great Recession*

***U-6 for Michigan = 8.5% for the previous four quarters*

APRIL COMMENTS FROM SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

“Tariff information is coming in on items that are not directly imported by us.”

“Tariff threats are producing potential price increases from our suppliers across most commodities.”

“Asian suppliers are reducing pricing in response to tariff situation.

"Scar. Wish we knew Trump’s end game plan. Business decisions are being changed daily based administration continuing changing of minds. A lot of time, resources, and money is being wasted on all these changes. It makes it hard to run a business.

“We see market uncertainty and slowing orders.”

“It’s a chaotic environment due to tariffs. All prices are up and all demand is down.”

“We were expecting a much larger uptick in orders this month due to construction season starting, but so far, it has been fairly quiet and we are just keeping up with last year’s total revenue.”

“Budgeting for our next fiscal year has begun. Due to the uncertainty of tariffs, sales for next year are difficult to predict. Tariffs are undoubtedly having a negative impact on our customers' decision-making around quotes and new projects.”

“ALL focus is on tariffs and potential exemptions.”

“Business is staying surprisingly strong. We've had to pass along some price increases due to inputs in material costs, and so far, demand has held up.”

“Tariffs are a primary focus.”

“February and March were terrific months, April started strong but appears to be slowing with tariff fears.”

“Tariffs are the unknown at this point. What effect it will have on the market?”

“We are seeing surprise notices of price impacts for items due to tariff charges on base materials and components made of steel.”

“Tariffs are causing a lot of chaos in the supply chain.”

“Trump's tariffs are having major impact to our cost and our ability to satisfy customer demands. We are moving four production lines to another country. Are we great again yet?”

“There’s yet a lot of uncertainty how the potential tariffs will affect our business.”

“We are navigating tariff impacts with suppliers and customers .

“Tariffs.... Tariffs...Tariffs!!!”

“Small businesses are struggling. I’ve been talking to all the small businesses in the Fremont downtown area, and they are all saying times are tough. They are uncertain if they will be able to stay open. The tariff war is doing more harm than good at this time.”

“We are finishing up a couple of back to back record months, but are completely uncertain what happens next. All of our shipments to our China division are on hold. We continue to look for alternatives to supply from China, but finding many items are still cheaper than domestic even with the tariffs.”

“The capital equipment market is real slow, but the future is very hopeful.”

“We have seen a sharp decline in activity over the last week with several customers commenting on the tariffs. Most are in favor of the tariffs against China and believe the tariffs will be a positive for their business. The slowdown seems to be from waiting to see how this all plays out. I was at an automotive supplier this week that said their phone is ringing off the hook with customers that are voluntarily moving work back from China.”

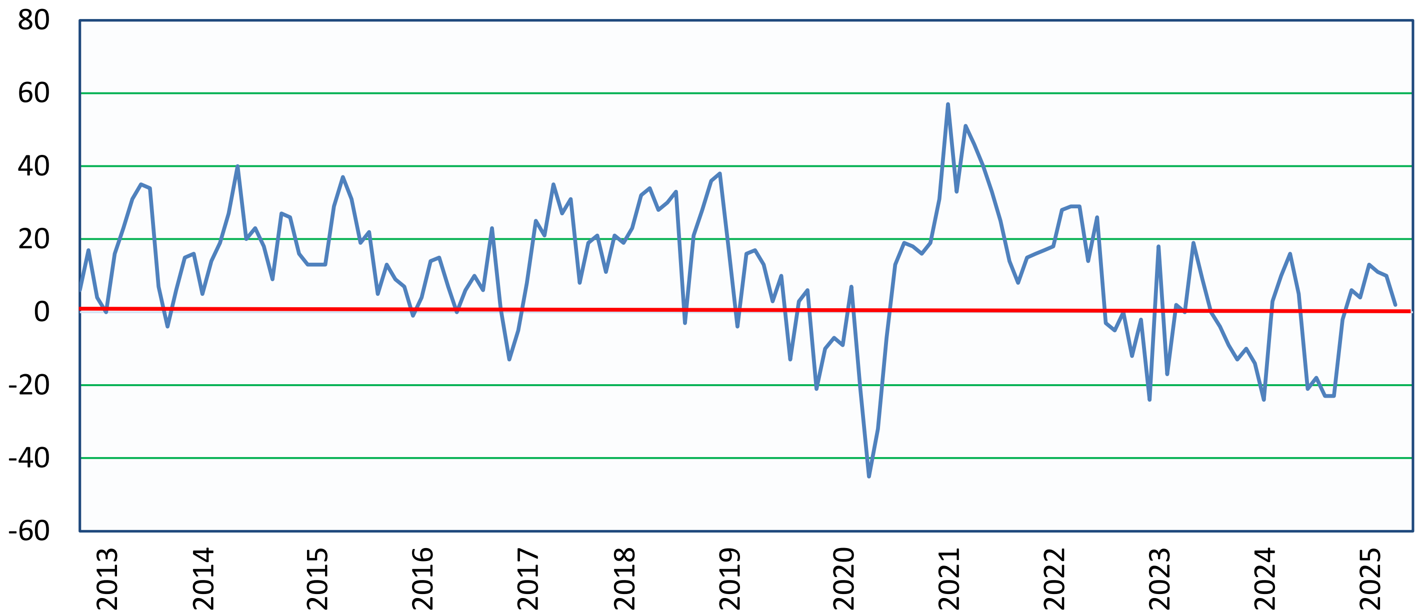
“We’ve had a slight bump in new orders which is positive, but not sure if the trend will continue. Overall, the short-term outlook is lower than expected.”

“Tariffs continue to provide volatility to the market. We will continue to see shifting prices until there is confirmation on whatever the final rates/countries will be.”

“We are closely monitoring the tariff situation for automotive parts. The information changes constantly. We are pushing back on potential price increases from our suppliers due to tariffs.”

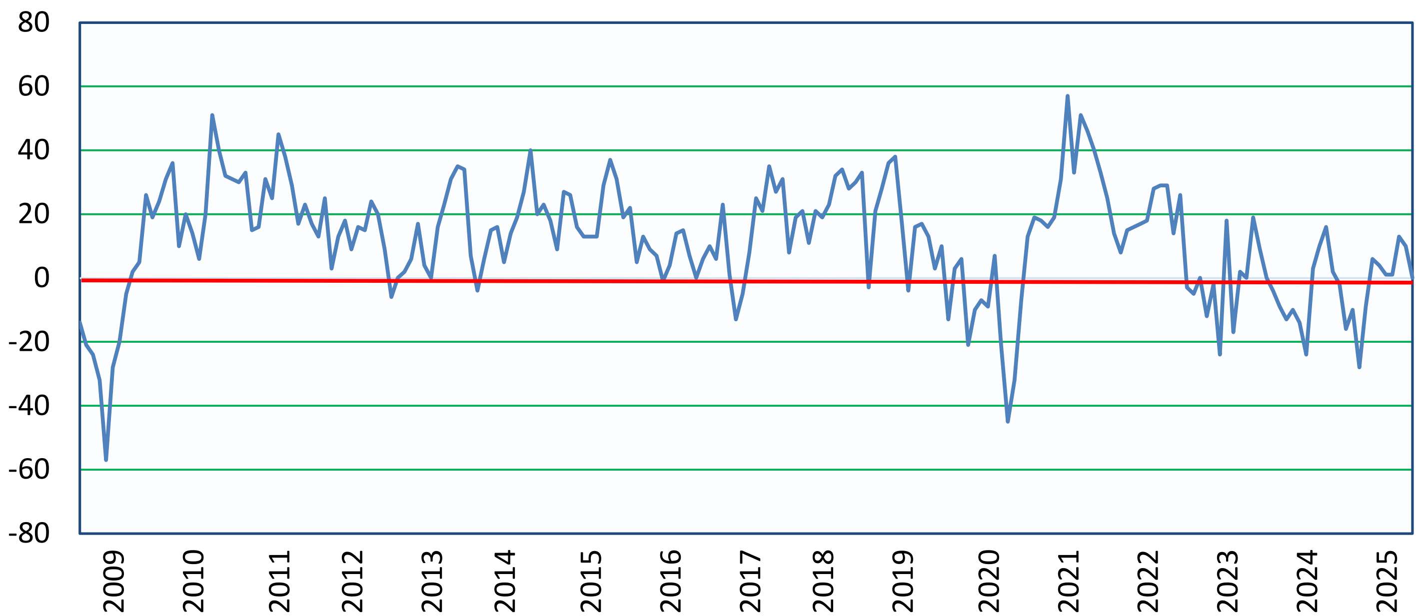
West Michigan Index of New Orders: 2013-2025

As the name implies, the NEW ORDERS index measures new business coming into the firm and signifies business improvement or business decline. When this index is positive for an extended period of time, it implies that the firm or organization will soon need to purchase more raw materials and services, hire more people, or possibly expand facilities. Since New Orders are often received weeks or even months before any money is actually paid, this index is our best view of the future.



West Michigan Index of Production (Output): 2008-2025

As new orders come in and materials arrive at the loading dock, production schedules are posted to meet the customer's needs. Although production schedules respond to demand, they also respond to seasonal factors such as holidays as well as bad weather, materials shortages, or other external influences.



West Michigan Index of Employment: 2017-2025

The index of EMPLOYMENT measures the firm's increases and decreases in staffing, including permanent workers and temps. After economic downturns, it measures new hires as well as previous workers called back to work. When this index is positive for an extended period of time, it almost always signals a reduction in industrial unemployment for West Michigan. Normally, there is about a month or two in lag time between this report and the payroll numbers being reflected by the government statistics. However, almost all employment indexes are laggards, meaning that firms often wait until upticks in orders are confirmed before adding staff, and conversely laying off staff only after a downturn in orders appears to be certain for the foreseeable future.

West Michigan Future Business Outlook: 2013-2025

The indexes of LONG-TERM BUSINESS OUTLOOK and SHORT-TERM BUSINESS OUTLOOK provide a glimpse at current and future attitudes of the business community. Traditionally, most businesses are more optimistic about the long term, although current event can result in perceptions changing very rapidly. Both short and long-term attitudes reflect current business conditions, and are usually higher when sales, production, and employment are positive.