

Contribution (1987-2009) and Stocks (1949-2009) of Research and Development (R&D)

Table 1 shows the year-to year contribution to private nonfarm business sector and Table 2 shows the long-term contribution of Research and Development (R&D) to multifactor productivity (MFP) growth. Table 3 shows R&D stocks. The stock of R&D in private nonfarm business sector is derived by cumulating constant dollar measures of research and development expenditures and allowing for depreciation. Current dollar expenditures for privately financed research and development for the years 1987-2009 are obtained from annual issues of Research and Development in Industry published by the National Science Foundation. The BLS develops price deflators and estimates of the rate of depreciation.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates of R&D spillover stocks are designed to measure the benefits of R&D that spill over from the original investors to other firms.¹ The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) of the Department of Commerce has also prepared estimates of ownership stocks of U.S. R&D, as published in the December 2006 and October 2007 issues of the Survey of Current Business. In contrast to the BLS concept, the BEA measures the value of R&D stocks as an asset to its owners, the private firms, government, or colleges and universities which finance and conduct research; spillover effects are not included. In terms of coverage, BEA includes R&D financed by private firms, government, colleges and universities, and non-profit institutions, whereas the BLS considers only R&D financed by private firms.

Because of these differences in concept and coverage, the BEA and BLS R&D stocks utilize different lags² and rates of depreciation, and report different magnitudes for the U.S. national R&D stock. For example, the BEA reported that in 2002 the R&D stock was \$931 billion, of which R&D financed by private firms was \$581 billion.³ In contrast, in 2002 the BLS R&D stock, limited to the R&D of private firms, was \$1295 billion. BLS stocks are larger because spillovers, associated with the diffusion of knowledge, typically take more time to occur, and therefore depreciate more slowly.⁴ Section I of BLS Working Paper 408, at <http://www.bls.gov/ore/pdf/ec070070.pdf>, contains a further discussion of differences between the BLS and BEA concepts.

Users of R&D data should view the BEA and BLS measures as complementary, since asset and spillover effects both have to be taken into account to describe the total effect of R&D on the economy. The BEA stocks provide information on how much value R&D stocks bring to their owners who hold R&D as an asset. The BLS data show how much R&D spills over to create value for other firms in the economy. Since R&D brings both direct benefits to holders of R&D

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 2331, The Impact of Research and Development on Productivity Growth, available on request, reports the methodology underlying Bureau of Labor Statistics R&D stocks.

² Lags refer to the period of time between an investment in R&D and its ability to contribute to production. R&D stocks often incorporate a lag before R&D is assumed to affect production.

³ Survey of Current Business, December 2006, Table 2.5, page 37. All stocks mentioned here are in 2000 dollars.

⁴ In addition, differences in the R&D deflator also have an important influence upon differences between the BLS and BEA R&D stocks. For example, if the main BEA deflator (BEA Assumption D) were used together with BLS estimates of private R&D expenditures, and their depreciation, the 2002 BLS R&D stock for private business would be 961 billions rather than 1295 billions. The Bureau of Economic Analysis discusses the R&D deflator and several related issues in their article on “BEA’s 2006 Research and Development Satellite Account” in the December 2006 Survey of Current Business.

and indirect benefits to other firms who eventually utilize this same knowledge, both elements have to be included to understand the total impact of R&D.

Further description of these data and methods can be found in the BLS Bulletin 2331, *The Impact of Research and Development on Productivity Growth*, (September 1989). Copies can be obtained by sending an email or calling:

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Table 1. Contribution of Research and Development to Multifactor Productivity: 1987-2009
(percent per year)

Year	R&D contribution
1987	0.24
1988	0.22
1989	0.19
1990	0.20
1991	0.23
1992	0.25
1993	0.25
1994	0.23
1995	0.19
1996	0.19
1997	0.22
1998	0.24
1999	0.26
2000	0.27
2001	0.30
2002	0.34
2003	0.27
2004	0.21
2005	0.19
2006	0.17
2007	0.18
2008	0.21
2009	0.23

Data are based on the results discussed in Multifactor Productivity Trends, March 30, 2011, www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/prod3.pdf.

Table 2. Long-term Contribution of Research and Development to Multifactor Productivity: 1987-2009 (percent)

Period	R&D Contribution
1987-2009	0.23
1987-1990	0.20
1990-1995	0.23
1995-2000	0.24
2000-2007	0.24
2007-2009	0.23
2008-2009	0.23

Data are based on the results discussed in Multifactor Productivity Trends, March 30, 2011, www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/prod3.pdf.

Table 3. Research and Development Stocks: 1949-2009
(in billions of 2005 dollars)
((1) plus (2) equals (3))

Year	Basic Research	Applied Research	Total R&D Stocks
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1949	5.0	41.4	46.4
1950	5.5	44.9	50.4
1951	6.0	46.9	52.9
1952	6.6	49.6	56.3
1953	7.2	52.4	59.6
1954	7.7	57.1	64.8
1955	8.3	64.0	72.4
1956	8.9	70.7	79.7
1957	9.7	77.1	86.8
1958	10.7	86.5	97.2
1959	11.7	95.0	106.6
1960	12.8	104.9	117.7
1961	14.1	115.6	129.8
1962	15.6	127.2	142.7
1963	17.2	138.5	155.7
1964	18.9	150.1	169.0
1965	20.8	161.8	182.6
1966	22.7	174.3	197.1
1967	24.9	188.3	213.2
1968	27.1	203.6	230.7
1969	29.4	220.2	249.6
1970	31.8	237.2	269.0
1971	34.4	254.9	289.3
1972	36.7	270.8	307.5
1973	39.2	284.7	323.9
1974	41.6	299.0	340.6
1975	43.8	314.9	358.7
1976	46.0	330.2	376.2
1977	48.2	342.5	390.7
1978	50.4	356.3	406.6
1979	52.5	370.8	423.3
1980	54.6	386.9	441.6
1981	56.8	405.5	462.3
1982	59.1	426.8	485.9
1983	61.5	449.8	511.3
1984	64.1	474.8	538.8
1985	66.7	502.9	569.6
1986	69.8	536.7	606.5
1987	73.1	573.9	647.0
1988	76.9	607.7	684.6
1989	81.3	638.3	719.6
1990	86.1	671.3	757.4
1991	92.7	707.9	800.7
1992	99.4	748.8	848.2
1993	105.9	790.7	896.7
1994	112.9	830.8	943.7
1995	119.6	864.7	984.3
1996	129.4	896.4	1025.8
1997	138.6	938.9	1077.5
1998	148.0	989.0	1136.9
1999	157.4	1044.9	1202.3
2000	165.9	1109.7	1275.6
2001	176.3	1182.8	1359.1
2002	189.1	1265.0	1454.1
2003	197.0	1335.8	1532.8
2004	205.8	1388.9	1594.7
2005	215.1	1437.2	1652.3
2006	225.5	1482.1	1707.6
2007	235.0	1531.8	1766.8
2008	244.5	1590.2	1834.7
2009	253.7	1654.1	1907.9