LOGISTICS
MARKET SNAPSHOT

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CENTER OF INNOVATION

APRIL 2025

U.S. MARKET:

Gross Domestic Product	Real gross domestic product (GDP) **decreased at an annual rate of 0.3% in the first quarter of 2025**, according to the advance estimate released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. In the fourth quarter of 2024, real GDP increased 2.4%. The decrease in real GDP in the first quarter primarily reflected an increase in imports, which are a subtraction in the calculation of GDP, and a decrease in government spending. These movements were partly offset by increases in investment, consumer spending, and exports. *Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis*
U.S. Trade Deficit	The goods and services deficit **was $122.7 billion in February 2025, down $8.0 billion from $130.7 billion in January, revised.** The February decrease in the goods and services deficit reflected a decrease in the goods deficit of $8.8 billion to $147.0 billion and a decrease in the services surplus of $0.8 billion to $24.3 billion. **Year-to-date, the goods and services deficit increased $117.1 billion**, or 86.0%, from the same period in 2024. Exports increased $24.0 billion or 4.6%. Imports increased $141.2 billion or 21.4%. *Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis*
Import Volumes	**February 2025 imports were $401.1 billion, less than $0.1 billion less than January imports.** For the 3 months ending in February average imports increased $16.5 billion to $389.0 billion in February. Imports of goods decreased $0.5 billion to $328.9 billion in February. Imports of services increased $0.5 billion to $72.2 billion in February. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis*
Export Volumes	**February 2025 exports were $278.5 billion, $8.0 billion more than January exports.** For the 3 months ending in February average exports increased $1.6 billion to $271.8 billion. Exports of goods increased $8.3 billion to $181.9 billion in February. Exports of services decreased $0.4 billion to $96.5 billion in February. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis*
Import & Export Price Indexes	**U.S. import prices decreased 0.1% in March 2025 following a 0.2% increase in February.** Lower prices for fuel imports more than offset higher prices for nonfuel imports in March. The March decline was the first monthly drop since the index decreased 0.4% in September 2024. Prices for U.S. imports increased 0.9% from March 2024 to March 2025. **Prices for U.S. exports were unchanged in March following increases of 0.5% in February and 1.4% in January.** U.S. export prices have not declined on a 1-month basis since September 2024. The price index for U.S. exports advanced 2.4% from March 2024 to March 2025. *Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*
Unemployment Rate	**Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 228,000 in March 2025, and the unemployment rate changed little at 4.2%.** Job gains occurred in health care, in social assistance, and in transportation and warehousing. Employment also increased in retail trade, partially reflecting the return of workers from a strike. Federal government employment declined. **The number of long-term unemployed** (those jobless for 27 weeks or more), at 1.5 million, changed little in March. The long-term unemployed accounted for 21.3% of all unemployed people. **Georgia's unemployment rate comes in at 3.6% for March 2025**, ranking 18th in the U.S. of states with the lowest unemployment, tying with Connecticut, Tennessee, and Florida. South Dakota shows the lowest level of unemployment at 1.8%. Nevada ranks highest in unemployment with a rate of 5.7%. *Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*
Labor Force Participation Rate	For March 2025 the labor force participation rate read at **62.5%, a 0.1% increase from the previous month.** The labor force participation rate for March 2025 for those of **prime working age (25-54) had a reading of 83.3%.** *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Workforce Participation Rate measures the share of Americans at least 16 years old who are either employed or actively looking for work)*
Leading Economic Index	The Leading Economic Index (LEI) for the US **declined by 0.7% in March 2025 to 100.5 (2016=100), after a decline of 0.2% (revised up from –0.3%) in February.** The LEI also fell by 1.2% in the six-month period ending in March 2025, a smaller rate of decline than its –2.3% contraction over the previous six months (March–September 2024). "The US LEI for March pointed to slowing economic activity ahead," per the Conference Board. "March's decline was concentrated among three components that weakened amid soaring economic uncertainty ahead of pending tariff announcements: 1) consumer expectations dropped further, 2) stock prices recorded their largest monthly decline since September 2022, and 3) new orders in manufacturing softened. **That said, the data does not suggest that a recession has begun or is about to start.**" *Source: The Conference Board (the LEI is a composite of 10 economic indicators that together create an analytic system designed to signal peaks and troughs in the business cycle. The LEI reveals patterns in economic data in a clearer and more convincing manner than any individual component alone)*

Pending Home Sales Index

The Pending Home Sales Index **increased 6.1% in March 2025** – the greatest month-to-month increase since December 2023 (+7.0%) – according to the National Association of REALTORS. The Northeast experienced month-over-month losses in transactions, while the Midwest, South and West saw gains, which were most substantial in the South. Year-over-year, contract signings grew in the Midwest but fell in the Northeast, South and West – with the Northeast undergoing the greatest decrease. Year-over-year, pending transactions lessened by 0.6%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001. "**Home buyers are acutely sensitive to even minor fluctuations in mortgage rates**," says the National Association of Realtors. "While contract signings are not a guarantee of eventual closings, the solid rise in pending home sales implies a sizable build-up of potential home buyers, fueled by ongoing job growth." Mortgage rates fell by around 20 to 30 basis points in March from the first two months of this year. The average mortgage rate was 6.65% in March, down from a 6.96% average in January and down from a 6.84% average in February.

Source: National Association of Realtors (an index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001)

Housing Starts

Privately-owned housing starts in **March 2025 were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,324,000.** This is 11.4% below the revised February estimate of 1,494,000, but is 1.9% above the March 2024 rate of 1,299,000. Single-family housing starts in March were at a rate of 940,000; this is 14.2% below the revised February figure of 1,096,000. **The March rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 371,000.**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Light-Vehicle Sales

New light-vehicle sales in **March 2025 recorded the highest monthly SAAR in nearly four years. March 2025's SAAR reached 17.8 million units**, as customers rushed to dealer lots to purchase vehicles before the 25% tariffs on imported vehicles took effect. **The SAAR in March 2025 represented an increase of 13.3% year over year and an increase of 11.0% compared to February 2025.** A SAAR of 17.8 million units is the highest since April 2021, when the SAAR reached 18.2 million units just before the semiconductor microchip shortage significantly impacted new light-vehicle sales and production. **If tariffs proceed as announced, this may be the highest monthly SAAR for some time as price increases from new trade duties likely push new-vehicle prices significantly higher.** Both retail and fleet deliveries increased in March 2025. According to Ward's Intelligence, the total raw sales volume reached 1.585 million. Retail sales accounted for an estimated 1.3 million units, an increase of 17.3% year over year, and fleet volume also increased 5% to 281,000 units.

Source: National Automobile Dealers Association (Light vehicle sales record the number of domestically produced units of cars, SUVs, mini-vans, and light trucks that are sold. Because motor vehicle sales are a large part of consumer spending in the United States, the motor vehicle sales data can provide important information on consumer-spending trends and on the overall direction of the economy)

Personal Income and Outlays

Personal income increased $116.8 billion (0.5% at a monthly rate) in March 2025. Disposable personal income (DPI)—personal income less personal current taxes—increased $102.0 billion (0.5%) and personal consumption expenditures (PCE) increased $134.5 billion (0.7%). **Personal outlays**—the sum of PCE, personal interest payments, and personal current transfer payments—increased $136.6 billion in March. **Personal saving** was $872.3 billion in March and the **personal saving rate**—personal saving as a percentage of disposable personal income—was 3.9%.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (personal income is the income that people get from wages and salaries, Social Security and other government benefits, dividends and interest, business ownership, and other sources; it does not include realized or unrealized capital gains or losses)

Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index

Personal consumption expenditures (PCE) increased $134.5 billion, or 0.7%. The $134.5 billion increase in current-dollar PCE in March 2025 reflected increases of $54.5 billion in spending for goods and $79.9 billion in spending for services. **From the preceding month**, the PCE price index for March decreased less than 0.1%. Excluding food and energy, the PCE price index increased less than 0.1%. **From the same month one year ago**, the PCE price index for March increased 2.3%. Excluding food and energy, the PCE price index increased 2.6 % from one year ago.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (the PCE price index is a measure of the prices that people living in the United States, or those buying on their behalf, pay for goods and services; it is known for capturing inflation (or deflation) across a wide range of consumer expenses and reflecting changes in consumer behavior)

Retail Sales

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales **for March 2025, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were $734.9 billion, up 1.4% from the previous month, and up 4.6% from March 2024.** Total sales for the January 2025 through March 2025 period were up 4.1% from the same period a year ago. The January 2025 to February 2025 percent change was unrevised from up 0.2%. Retail trade sales were up 1.4% from February 2025, and up 4.6% from last year. Motor vehicle and parts dealers were up 8.8% from last year, while nonstore retailers were up 4.8% from March 2024.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Non-store retail sales are measured monthly and include internet-only sales outlets as well as other direct-to-customer channels)

E-Commerce

The estimate of U.S. retail e-commerce sales for the **4th quarter of 2024, adjusted for seasonal variation, but not for price changes, was $308.9 billion, an increase of 2.7% from the third quarter of 2024.** Total retail sales for the 4th quarter of 2024 were estimated at $1,883.3 billion, an increase of 1.8% from the third quarter of 2024. The 4th quarter 2024 e-commerce estimate increased 9.4% from the 4th quarter of 2023 while total retail sales increased 3.8% in the same period. **E-commerce sales in the 4th quarter of 2024 accounted for 16.4% of total sales.**

Note: Next release for Q1 2025 – E-Commerce, will be published May 2025.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (E-Commerce sales are measured on a quarterly basis and include the sales of goods and services where the buyer places an order, or the price and terms of the sale are negotiated over an Internet, mobile device (M-commerce), extranet, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) network, electronic mail, or other comparable online system. Payment may or may not be made online)

Consumer Confidence Index

The Consumer Confidence Index **fell by 7.9 points in April 2025 to 86.0.** The Present Situation Index—based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions—decreased 0.9 points to 133.5. The Expectations Index—based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business, and labor market conditions—dropped 12.5 points to 54.4, the lowest level since October 2011 and well below the threshold of 80 that usually signals a recession ahead. According to The Conference Board, **"Consumer confidence declined for a fifth consecutive month in April, falling to levels not seen since the onset of the COVID pandemic"**. "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. Notably, the share of consumers expecting fewer jobs in the next six months (32.1%) was nearly as high as in April 2009, in the middle of the Great Recession. In addition, expectations about future income prospects turned clearly negative for the first time in five years, suggesting that concerns about the economy have now spread to consumers worrying about their own personal situations.

Source: The Conference Board (the consumer confidence index is based on a monthly survey of 5,000 U.S. household. It is designed to gauge the financial health, spending power, and confidence of the average U.S. consumer. Base year 1985=100)

Consumer & Producer Price Index

The **Consumer Price Index decreased 0.1% on a seasonally adjusted basis in March 2025**, after rising 0.2% in February. Over the last 12 months, the all items index increased 2.4% before seasonal adjustment. The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.1% in March, following a 0.2% increase in February. Indexes that increased over the month include personal care, medical care, education, apparel, and new vehicles. The indexes for airline fares, motor vehicle insurance, used cars and trucks, and recreation were among the major indexes that decreased in March.

The **Producer Price Index for final demand decreased 0.4% in March 2025**, seasonally adjusted. Final demand prices increased 0.1% in February and 0.6% in January. On an unadjusted basis, the index for final demand advanced 2.7% for the 12 months ended in March. In March, over 70% of the decrease in the index for final demand can be traced to prices for final demand goods, which fell 0.9%. The index for final demand services declined 0.2%.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (the CPI measures the change in prices paid by consumer for goods and services. Base year 1999=100; the PPI measures the average price changes by producers for domestically produced goods, services, and construction. Base year 2009=100)

Small Business Optimism Index

The Small Business Optimism Index **declined by 3.3 points in March 2025 to 97.4**, falling just below the 51-year average of 98. The Uncertainty Index decreased eight points from February's second highest reading to 96. The net percent of owners expecting better business conditions fell 16 points from February to a net 21% (seasonally adjusted). This is the third consecutive monthly decline and the largest monthly decline since December 2020.

Source: National Federation of Independent Business

Industrial Production & Capacity Utilization

Industrial production (IP) decreased 0.3% in March 2025 but increased at an annual rate of 5.5% in the first quarter. The March decline was led by a 5.8% drop in the index for utilities, as temperatures were warmer than is typical for the month. In contrast, the indexes for manufacturing and mining grew 0.3% and 0.6%, respectively. At 103.9% of its 2017 average, total IP in March was 1.3% above its year-earlier level. **Capacity utilization stepped down to 77.8%**, a rate that is 1.8 percentage points below its long-run (1972–2024) average.

Source: The Federal Reserve (The industrial production and capacity utilization rates cover manufacturing, mining, and electric and gas utilities. The industrial detail provided by these measures helps illuminate structural developments in the economy)

Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales

Manufacturers' and trade inventories for February 2025, adjusted for seasonal and trading day differences but not for price changes, were estimated at an end-of-month level of $2,590.0 billion, up 0.2% from January 2025 and were up 2.1% from February 2024. The combined value of **distributive trade sales and manufacturers' shipments** for February, adjusted for seasonal and trading day differences but not for price changes, was estimated at $1,921.1 billion, up 1.2% from January 2025 and was up 3.6% from February 2024. The total **business inventories/sales ratio** based on seasonally adjusted data at the end of February was 1.35. The February 2024 ratio was 1.37.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Purchasing Managers Index, Manufacturing	The Manufacturing PMI **registered 49% in March 2025, 1.3 percentage points lower compared to the 50.3% recorded in February.** The overall economy continued in expansion for the 59th month after one month of contraction in April 2020. The New Orders Index contracted for the second month in a row following a three-month period of expansion; the figure of 45.2% is 3.4 percentage points lower than the 48.6% recorded in February. The March reading of the Production Index (48.3%) is 2.4 percentage points lower than February's figure of 50.7%. The index dropped back into contraction after two months of expansion, with eight months of contraction before that. The Prices Index surged further into expansion (or 'increasing') territory, registering 69.4%, up 7 percentage points compared to the reading of 62.4% in February. The Backlog of Orders Index registered 44.5%, down 2.3 percentage points compared to the 46.8% recorded in February. The Employment Index registered 44.7%, down 2.9 percentage points from February's figure of 47.6%. ISM representatives say "In March, U.S. manufacturing activity slipped into contraction after expanding only marginally in February. The expansion in both February and January followed 26 consecutive months of contraction. Demand and output weakened while input strengthened further, a negative for economic growth." *Source: Institute for Supply Management (The PMI combines data on new orders, production, employment, supplier deliveries, and inventory. A reading above 50 % indicates that the manufacturing economy is generally expanding.)*
Purchasing Managers Index, Services	In March 2025, the Services PMI registered 50.8%, 2.7 percentage points lower than the February figure of 53.5%. The Business Activity Index registered 55.9% in March, 1.5 percentage points higher than the 54.4% recorded in February. This is the index's 58th consecutive month of expansion. The New Orders Index recorded a reading of 50.4% in March, 1.8 percentage points lower than the February figure of 52.2%. The Employment Index dropped into contraction territory for its first time in six months; the reading of 46.2% is a 7.7-percentage point decrease compared to the 53.9% recorded in February. Ten industries reported growth in March, a drop of four from the 14 industries reported in each of the previous two months. The Services PMI has expanded in 55 of the last 58 months dating back to June 2020. The March reading of 50.8% is 2.7 percentage points below the February reading of 53.5%, and it is the lowest Services PMI reading since June 2024 (49.2%). *Source: Institute for Supply Management (The PMI combines data on business activity, new orders, employment, supplier deliveries, and inventory.* A reading above 50 % indicates that the manufacturing economy is generally expanding.*)*
Logistics Managers' Index	The March 2025 Logistics Manager's Index **reads in at 57.1, down (-5.6 from February's reading of 62.8. The January and February readings represented the fastest rate of growth in the overall index since June of 2022. March's reading is departure from this trend, as this is the lowest overall reading for the index since August of 2024.** The contraction in the overall index was driven by a sharp decline in all three of the price/cost metrics. In January, all three metrics were up significantly, with all three of them reading in above 70.0 for the first time since 2022. This trajectory continued into February for Inventory Costs and Warehousing Prices. Many of those shifts reversed this month, with Inventory Costs (-6.7 to 70.6), Warehousing Prices (-16.0 to 61.0), and Transportation Prices (-9.0 to 56.4) all down significantly in March. This suggests that supply chains revved up in February and early March to bring goods in, but have slowed in more recent weeks as more trade controls have been implemented. Logistics costs in February were high, so if the Inventory Costs and Warehousing Prices stay where they are now and don't go down it may represent stabilization, further contraction could be an issue though. It is a different story for Transportation Prices, which fell significantly in the second half of the month from 60.5 in early March to 51.1 (close to no expansion) later in the month. *Source: Logistics Manager's Index (The LMI score is a combination eight unique components that make up the logistics industry, including: inventory levels and costs, warehousing capacity, utilization, and prices, and transportation capacity, utilization, and prices. The LMI is calculated using a diffusion index, in which any reading above 50% indicates that logistics is expanding; a reading below 50% is indicative of a shrinking logistics industry.)*
U.S. Market News Clip	The U.S. dollar advanced on Tuesday, lifted by the Trump administration's plan to ease the impact of auto duties on local car manufacturers as well as the prospect of more tariff deals with some trading partners. The greenback also benefited from month-end buying, as investors sought to rebalance their portfolios after President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariff announcement led to massive selling in U.S. equities and bonds in April. At the same time, the dollar got a boost from comments by U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent on Tuesday who said the administration is making substantial progress on tariff negotiations, noting that deals are forthcoming for India and South Korea. *Source: MSN; link to article*
INTERMODAL:	
Dow Jones Transportation Average	As of April 29, 2025, the Dow Jones Transportation Average **closed at a reading of 13,575.77.** *Source: Marketwatch (A price-weighted average of 20 U.S. companies in the transportation industry. The index includes railroads, airlines, trucking, marine transportation, delivery services, and logistics companies.)*
NASDAQ Transportation Index	As of April 29, 2025, the NASDAQ Transportation Index **closed at a reading of 5,662.63.** *Source: Marketwatch, Inc (A capitalization-weighted stock market index designed to measure the performance of all NASDAQ stocks in the transportation sector.)*

Freight Transportation Services Index

The Freight Transportation Services Index, which is based on the amount of freight carried by the for-hire transportation industry, **rose 0.9% in February 2025 from January**, rising after a one-month decline, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation Bureau of Transportation Statistics. From February 2024 to February 2025 the index rose 0.9%. The Freight TSI increased in February due to seasonally adjusted increases in air freight, rail carload, pipeline and trucking, while water decreased, and rail intermodal was unchanged.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics (TSI is based on the amount of freight carried by the for-hire transportation industry)

Freight Index for Shipments and Expenditures

The **shipments component of the Cass Freight Index was unchanged in March 2025 month-over-month.** The decline in shipments narrowed to 5.3% year-over-year in March from 5.5% in February. In SA terms, the index fell 2.1% month-over-month, after a 4.9% gain in February after severe January weather. Some of the improvement in February was also likely from pre-tariff shipping. The recent 90-day pause on most reciprocal tariffs will likely lead to more pre-tariff shipping in Q2. However, this will contend with adverse effects from the extreme tariffs on China at this writing, and other tariffs. The **expenditures component of the Cass Freight Index rose 2.8% month-over-month in March 2025**. The year-over-year decline narrowed to 2.0%, from 4.6% in February. The year-over-year decline was more than explained by lower volumes, as shipments fell 5.3%, and we infer rates rose 3.5% year-over-year in March. In SA terms, the expenditures index rose 1.5% month-over-month, with shipments down 2.1% and rates up 3.7%, largely due to mix changes, but reversing most of the drop in February.
Source: Cass Information Systems (Based upon transportation dollars and measures the total amount spent on freight and shipments of Cass clients comprised of over 400 shipping companies)

Shippers Conditions Index

The Shippers Conditions Index **improved in January 2025 to +0.6 from December's reading of -1.8.** Freight dynamics – utilization, rates and volume – were slightly favorable for shippers in January, but higher fuel costs offset almost all those benefits. The market outlook for shippers technically is negative after March through the forecast horizon, but the SCI is mostly very close to neutral over that period. According to FTR Transportation Intelligence, "Broadly speaking, the freight market is still fairly comfortable for shippers despite softening over the past few months. However, conditions vary depending on freight profiles. For example, in the spot market for truck freight, 2025 has been rather sluggish for dry van and refrigerated equipment but has been increasingly hot for flatbed. In rail, carload volumes have been only marginally stronger than comparable 2024 weeks, but intermodal is still running strong year over year. **Tariffs and anticipation of tariffs likely are big components of these distortions, and it will be advantageous for the whole supply chain to have clarity and certainty soon.**"
Source: FTR Transportation Intelligence (Figures below zero indicate a less-than-ideal environment for shippers)

North American Transborder Freight

Total transborder freight moved by all modes of transportation between the United States and North American countries Mexico and Canada for **February 2025 was valued at $131.6 billion, increasing 2.1% compared to February 2024.** Freight **between the U.S. and Canada** totaled $63.2 billion, up 2.2% from February 2024. Freight **between the U.S. and Mexico** totaled $68.4 billion, up 2.0% from February 2024. **Trucks** moved $86.6 billion of freight, up 3.9% compared to February 2024. **Railways** moved $15.1 billion of freight, down 11.7% compared to February 2024. **Pipelines** moved $10.0 billion of freight, up 23.1% compared to February 2024. **Vessels** moved $7.7 billion of freight, down 22.9% compared to February 2024. **Air** moved $4.8 billion of freight, up 4.8% compared to February 2024.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Intermodal News Clip

U.S.-based manufacturers of intermodal chassis were materially injured by imports of chassis and subassemblies from Mexico, Thailand and Vietnam, the U.S. International Trade Commission said. A coalition led by Stoughton Trailers and Cheetah Chassis Corp. in a Feb. 26 complaint filed with both ITC and the Department of Commerce accused manufacturers in the three countries of selling their products at below market prices and receiving anticompetitive government support. In a preliminary determination issued April 14, ITC concluded that there was a reasonable indication to support these claims.
Source: Transport Topics; link to article

RAIL:

U.S. Freight Rail Traffic

For the week ending April 19, 2025, **total U.S. weekly rail traffic was 496,053 carloads and intermodal units, up 4.5% compared with the same week last year.** Total carloads for the week ending April 19 were 224,436 carloads, up 3.4% compared with the same week in 2024, while U.S. weekly intermodal volume was 271,617 containers and trailers, up 5.4% compared to 2024. **3 of the 10 carload commodity groups posted an increase** compared with the same week in 2024. They were coal, up 10,124 carloads, to 57,595; miscellaneous carloads, up 615 carloads, to 10,057; and farm products excl. grain, and food, up 11 carloads, to 16,722. **Commodity groups that posted decreases** compared with the same week in 2024 included petroleum and petroleum products, down 1,103 carloads, to 9,652; nonmetallic minerals, down 992 carloads, to 30,795; and motor vehicles and parts, down 412 carloads, to 16,459.
Source: Association of American Railroads (Report includes rail car-loadings by 20 different major commodity categories)

Railroad Fuel Price Index

The index of **average railroad fuel prices for March 2025 was 462.6,** a decrease from 494.7 the previous month. The index for March 2024 was 541.3, or difference of 15.68%.
Source: Association of American Railroads (Average monthly price for gallons purchased by freight railroads; Includes federal excise taxes, transportation, and handling expenses)

Class 1 Railroad Employment

Total railroad employment for **February 2025 was 119,562 workers**, down from 119,373 workers in January 2025. Total number of workers in February 2024 was 123,377.
Note: The March 2025 Class 1 Railroad Employment has not released at time of Logistics Market Snapshot publication.
Source: U.S. Surface Transportation Board

Rail Freight News Clip

A $2.4 billion rail project that would have been a key part of Los Angeles' 2028 Olympic infrastructure has been scrapped after local opposition. The Inglewood Transit Connector Project replaced plans for a suspended light-rail system with a shuttle bus network after a series of consultations with businesses and communities in the area.
Source: MSN; link to article

ROAD:

Cowen/AFS Freight Index

Truckload Rates: In Q1 2025, the truckload rate per mile index came in somewhat higher than expected, at 5.9% above the January 2018 baseline. This uptick can be attributed to shippers pulling inventory forward to get ahead of the latest tariffs, along with the impact of wildfires, natural disasters and continued capacity correction. But a sustained shift toward shorter-haul shipments, defined as those of 500 miles or less, drove the total cost per shipment down to 5% above pre-pandemic levels — the lowest point in over three years, and indicative of a broader trend of more regional distribution and decentralized inventory positioning. **LTL Rates:** Despite economic headwinds and cautious market sentiment, LTL pricing continues to show strength. In Q1 2025, general rate increases (GRIs) took effect and the net fuel surcharge per shipment increased 4%, exerting enough upward pressure to overcome decreased length of haul and sustained low weight to drive a 1.5% quarter-over-quarter and 0.5% year-over-year increase in cost per shipment. **Ground Parcel Rates:** The era of parcel price increases announced on a predictable, annual cadence with plenty of advance notice for shippers is over. Over the past 18 months, FedEx and UPS have pursued a different strategy as they fight for revenue in a low demand environment, with more frequent, subtle pricing changes that take effect more quickly. Through the first three months of 2025, UPS has already announced myriad changes, including new ZIP code-zone alignments, new fees on print and paper invoices, fees for check and wire payment, an increase to the late payment fee and a new payment processing fee. Both carriers have also continued to make fuel surcharge changes, the net result of which is the UPS ground fuel surcharge increasing 15% and the FedEx equivalent rising 12% from Q1 2024 to Q1 2025 — even as the price of diesel fuel fell 8.4% over the same period. **Express Parcel Rates**: Express parcel pricing grew in line with seasonal trends in Q1 2025, with GRIs and fuel surcharge increases powering a 5.2% quarter-over-quarter increase in cost per package. But volume growth remains a challenge in the domestic express parcel market. This is in part driven by carriers' own success in optimizing ground networks, enabling shippers to shift volume to less expensive ground service for similar performance, but is also exacerbated by competition from an increasingly diverse carrier landscape, an example of which is USPS recently launching priority next-day service in 54 markets.
Source: AFS Logistics (An index providing a snapshot of less-than-truckload shipping, full truckload shipping, and parcel shipping.)

Truckload Linehaul Index

The Cass Truckload Linehaul Index **fell 0.1% month-over-month in March 2025, after six straight small increases**. The index was 4.7% above that August low in March. The year-over-year change slowed to a 1.5% increase in March after a 1.9% increase in February. This index fell 10% in 2023 and another 3% in 2024. Where it will go in 2025 is a big question, but it is off to a positive start.
Source: Cass Information Systems (this index measures the per-mile change in linehaul rates and is an indicator of market fluctuations in per-mile dry van truckload pricing in the U.S. and does not include other components like fuel and accessorials. Provides trends in baseline truckload prices)

Truck Tonnage Index

Trucking activity in the United States slipped in March 2025, giving back a little more than half of the gain from February. Specifically, **truck freight tonnage decreased 1.5% after surging 2.8% in February.** "Solid manufacturing output in March, led by robust auto production, likely helped truck freight tonnage not fall more after a very strong February," said ATA experts. "Overall in the first quarter, tonnage increased marginally from both the fourth and first quarters of 2024. While the gains were not strong at half a percent and less, it was the first time that the quarterly average increased both sequentially and from a year earlier in two years. **That tells me that the freight market did in fact turn around in the first three months of the year despite an uncertain outlook.**"
Source: American Trucking Associations (Note: ATA recently revised the seasonally adjusted index to 2015 = 100)

Truckload Freight, Van	The **national van load-to-truck ratio for April 2025 was 4.75.** The previous month's ratio was 4.28 and the April 2024 ratio was 3.54. **Georgia's load-to-truck ratios** for vans for March 2025, average 5.5+ for every truck. For April 2025, the **spot rate** (national average) for dry van freight came in at $1.96. **Contract rates** registered an average of $2.40 for the same month. The average outbound van rate for the Southeast region came in at $1.91 for April 2025. *Source: DAT Freight & Analytics*
Truckload Freight, Refrigerated	The national **load-to-truck ratio for refrigerated hauls came in at 9.49 loads per truck in April 2025.** The previous month's ratio was 6.59 and the March 2024 ratio was 4.78. **Georgia's load-to-truck ratio** for March 2025 averaged 5.6 - 11.9 reefer loads per truck. The average national **spot market reefer rate** for April 2025 was $2.27 per mile**,** no change from the previous month. **Contract rates for reefers** averaged $2.73 for the same month. The average outbound rate for the **Southeast region for reefer freight** registered at $2.14 for April 2025. *Source: DAT Freight & Analytics*
Trucking Conditions Index	The Trucking Conditions Index reading for **February 2025 improved to -0.21 from the January reading of -2.56.** Improved volume and utilization and smaller increases in fuel costs mostly offset weaker freight rates to produce near-neutral market conditions for carriers in February. The outlook is notably weaker than it was previously, however. According to FTR Transportation Intelligence, "With global tariffs and a full-fledged trade war against China, we have reduced our economic and freight forecasts due to expectations of higher inflation and interest rates and a weaker labor market coupled with a payback from elevated imports in the first quarter to avoid tariffs. **With this change, we expect that near-term truck freight market conditions will be more challenging for carriers, postponing a sustained recovery until early next year.**" *Source: FTR Transportation Intelligence (Figures below zero indicate a less-than-ideal environment for trucking)*
Diesel Prices	As of April 22, 2025, the **U.S. average diesel price was $3.534 per gallon**. This is a 4-cent decrease month-over-month and $0.46 lower than the same week in 2024. The average price of diesel in the **Lower Atlantic states came in at $3.505 per gallon**, a 7-cent decrease month-over-month and $0.44 lower than the same week in 2024. *Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (Reflects the costs and profits of the entire production and distribution chain)*
Trucking Employment	March 2025 numbers (preliminary) for the trucking industry **read at 1,525,900 employees,** increasing from 1,515,100 employees (preliminary) for February 2025. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*
Trucking Earnings & Hours	For February 2025, the average earnings (preliminary) for occupations commonly found in truck transportation **were $32.05/hour**, increasing from the previous month's rate of $31.74. February 2025 showed **average weekly hours totaling 39.9 hours** (preliminary) down from 40.1 hours in January. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*
U.S. Truck & Trailer Orders (Class 8)	Preliminary North American Class 8 **net orders totaled 15,700 units in March 2025, declining 14% month-over-month and 22% year-over-year.** This figure was significantly below the seven-year March average of 24,760 net orders and represented a slightly larger-than-expected seasonal month-over-month decline. The vocational market accounted for the bulk of the month-over-month declines, although on-highway orders were predominantly weaker as well. Class 8 orders for the past 12 months totaled 277,927. **The implementation and continued threat of tariffs among North American trading partners combined with ongoing economic and freight market uncertainty have significantly dampened fleet investment in Class 8 trucks and tractors in recent months.** This situation is further complicated by anticipated revisions to the U.S. EPA's 2027 NOx regulations. *Source: FTR Transportation Intelligence*
Road Freight News Clip	At the ACT Expo in Las Vegas, Hyundai Motor Company presented the next-generation XCIENT Fuel Cell truck for the North American market and confirmed a partnership with autonomous driving company Plus. The announcements form part of Hyundai's broader strategy to commercialize hydrogen-powered and autonomous trucks in the United States. *Source: electrive; link to article*

LOGISTICS
MARKET SNAPSHOT

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APRIL 2025

AIR:

Air Cargo Traffic	**Global Cargo-Tonne-Kilometers (CTK), climbed 4.4% year-over-year in March 2025**, returning from February's brief, mild decline. Seasonally adjusted, CTK rose by 3.3% from February 2025, also reversing February's soft fall. International CTK saw a rise of 5.5% year-over-year, with most regions and routes posting single-digit gains. Asia Pacific airlines led with 9.6% year-over-year growth. The Europe-North America trade lanes recorded an 8.5% increase, while the Africa-Asia route sank for a fourth consecutive month, down 40.2% year-over-year. Global available cargo space, **Available Cargo Tonne-Kilometers (ACTK), expanded by 4.3% from last March, while capacity utilization, Cargo Load Factor (CLF), ended up by 0.1 points to 47.5% from March 2024.** *Source: International Air Transport Association (Global air freight covers international and domestic scheduled air traffic.)*
Jet Fuel Prices	As of April 25, 2025, the global average jet fuel price **ended at $84.63/bbl, a decrease of 4.57% from the previous month.** This is a 14.6% decline, year-over-year. *Source: International Air Transport Association (the weekly index and price data shows the global average price paid at the refinery for aviation jet fuel)*
Air Freight News Clip	The doorbell rings, and you accept a package delivered by FedEx, United Parcel Service (UPS), Amazon, or one of the other companies engaged in package transportation and delivery. That parcel was likely aboard an aircraft last night, carrying the livery of the same company that delivered it to your door. We take the transportation of goods by air for granted. However, air freight did not blossom into a full-fledged industry until after the Second World War. *Source: Avgeekery; link to article*

OCEAN:

Shanghai Containerized Freight Index	As of April 25, 2025, the China Shanghai Containerized Freight Index **reading was $1,347.84 per FEU.** This is a 0.66% decrease from the previous month, **and a 30.55% decrease year-over year**. *Source: MacroMicro (The Shanghai Containerized Freight Index reflects the spot rates of the Shanghai container transport market. It is a weekly reported average spot rate of 15 major container trade routes exported from Shanghai to regions around the globe.)*
Georgia Ports Authority	In its busiest March ever, **the Port of Savannah's container trade increased by 22.5% or 98,000 TEUs compared to the same month last year.** In intermodal cargo, the Port of Savannah set an all-time record of 52,645 containers moved by rail, an increase of 17% over the same month last year. The Georgia Ports Authority handled 534,000 twenty-foot equivalent container units in March, for its second monthly record in a row. In February, GPA moved 479,850 TEUs, also a high. **Savannah is the fastest growing container port on the U.S. East and Gulf coasts.** *Source: Georgia Ports Authority*
Ocean Freight News Clip	While the U.S.-China trade war has sent shockwaves through the supply chain, trans-Pacific container rates are benefiting from evolving carrier strategies. The imposition of a minimum 145% tariff on all goods from China has led many U.S. importers to cancel orders and pause shipments, said Judah Levine, head of research for shipping analyst Freightos, in an update. This dramatic shift comes as importers hope for a de-escalation in tensions and lower tariffs through direct negotiations between the two countries, which have not yet officially begun. *Source: Freightwaves; link to article*

WAREHOUSING & DISTRIBUTION:

Industrial Vacancy	Demand remained resilient in the first quarter despite tariff uncertainty. The U.S. industrial sector continued to absorb space in the first quarter, registering 23.1 million square feet of positive absorption. This was down from 42.4 million square feet observed in the fourth quarter but on par with the level absorbed in the same quarter one year ago. **Vacancy continued to drift higher to 7%. The combination of vacant speculative deliveries and some occupier dispositions caused the U.S. industrial vacancy rate to rise by 30 basis points to 7%.** After remaining historically tight for several straight years, vacancy is now back in line with the historical average—indicative of a more balanced market. Rent growth continued to moderate. Rising vacancy continues to take some of the pressure off rents. In the first quarter of 2025, rents grew by 4.3% year-over-year but were flat quarter-over-quarter. Moreover, a rising number of markets reported year-over-year declines this quarter. **Savannah, GA** reported a vacancy rate of 9.3% for Q1 2025, compared to 8.6% in Q4 2024. **Atlanta, GA** reported a vacancy rate of 8.6% for Q1 2025, compared to 8.5% in Q4 2024. *Source: Cuman & Wakefield*

Warehouse Rent Rates	Although industrial rents continue to appreciate at a reasonably healthy clip overall—4.3% year-over-year—**a rising number of markets reported rental declines this quarter, keeping the average U.S. rate steady at $10.11 per square foot since year-end 2024.** Nearly 40% of the U.S. markets tracked by Cushman and Wakefield reported annual rental rate declines, as some landlords have responded to softer demand conditions and higher vacancy rates. Also, the composition of available stock has shifted due to recent speculative construction trends as big-box facilities make up more of the total stock available, affecting the weighted average for asking rents. Although rent pressures have eased slightly, many markets have seen rents surge by more than 50% over the last five years. **For Savannah, GA** the average asking rental rate for Q1 2025 was $6.56, compared to $6.56 for Q4 2024. **For Atlanta, GA** the average asking rental rate for Q1 2025 was $7.18, compared to $7.09 for Q4 2024. *Source: Cushman & Wakefield*
Industrial Absorption	Despite trade policy uncertainty, the U.S. economy continues to absorb a healthy amount of industrial space. **In the first quarter of 2025, net absorption registered at 23.1 million square feet, on par with the total reported one year ago.** Warehouse and logistics space was the standout product type this quarter, absorbing 30 million square feet. Conversely, manufacturers gave space back to the market on a net basis, resulting in 5.7 million square feet of negative absorption. The flight to quality trend continues. In the first quarter, the newest industrial space (product built after 2023) accounted for more than 57 million square feet of net occupancy gains. Conversely, older facilities with limited functionality experienced more move-outs than move-ins, resulting in over 33 million square feet of negative absorption. **For Savannah, GA, Q1 2025** net absorption registered at 2,326,100 compared to 14,057,155 for Q4 2024. **For Atlanta, GA, Q1 2025** net absorption registered 511,089 compared to 1,845,316 for Q4 2024. *Source: Cushman & Wakefield (Absorption is the net change in occupied space between two points in time. Positive absorption means that previously unoccupied space is being occupied.)*
Warehouse Employment	Preliminary March 2025 numbers for the warehousing industry workforce comes in at **1,822,400 employees, decreasing from 1,837,400 employees** for February 2025 (preliminary). *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*
Warehouse Earnings & Hours	February 2025 average hourly earnings in the warehousing and storage subsector comes in at **$25.11/hour (preliminary), $0.06 higher** than the January 2025 rate. The **average weekly hours were 39.5 for February 2025** (preliminary) up from 39.2 hours in January 2025. *Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*
Warehouse & Distribution News Clip	Stardust Solar Energy Inc. (TSXV: SUN) (the "Company" or "Stardust Solar"), a leading North American franchisor of renewable energy installation services, today announced that it has entered into a non-binding letter of intent dated effective April 28, 2025 (the "LOI") with RSBC Global Inc. ("RSBC") for the purposes of exploring a strategic partnership that aims to establish a collaborative framework for warehousing and internal distribution capabilities across Canada, with future expansion opportunities into the United States. This partnership is expected to enhance Stardust Solar's distribution network, streamlining the supply chain to deliver high-quality solar photovoltaic (PV) products and renewable energy systems more efficiently to meet robust market demand. *Source: Yahoo Finance; link to article*

The free Logistics Market Snapshot is compiled and prepared monthly by the Georgia Center of Innovation

The Georgia Center of Innovation's logistics team is the leading statewide resource for fueling logistics industry growth and global competitiveness. The Center works to address the needs and opportunities of companies of any size involved in logistics and freight transportation – both providers and heavy consumers of logistics services. The Center provides industry knowledge and technical expertise, connections to state resources in research and innovation, and joins together an extensive cross-sector industry network. As an industry focused component of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) the Center has main offices in Savannah and Atlanta with activity in all parts of the State.

The Center represents all segments of the logistics industry and provides a unique platform for companies to network, address industry issues and share knowledge. **Simply put, the Center is a catalyst to help logistics-enabled businesses clear the path to innovation and growth**.

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