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Data Visualization
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When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in the United States in March and residents nationwide were forced into widespread lockdowns to contain the spread of the virus, consumer spending plummeted. However, following an equally abysmal April, which saw spending levels down more than 18 percent compared to January of the same year, personal consumption expenditure started to recover, coming within 1.75 percent of pre-pandemic levels in October before edging down slightly in November and December.

While spending on goods quickly recovered from the initial shock, returning to growth as early as June, consumer spending on services is still more than 5 percent off pre-pandemic levels.

The reasoning behind these numbers is straightforward as the pandemic severely limited people's option to spend money on services, such as restaurant visits, travel and other leisure activities. Thus, spending was shifted towards physical goods, as Americans sat at home and worked to adjust to this new lifestyle.

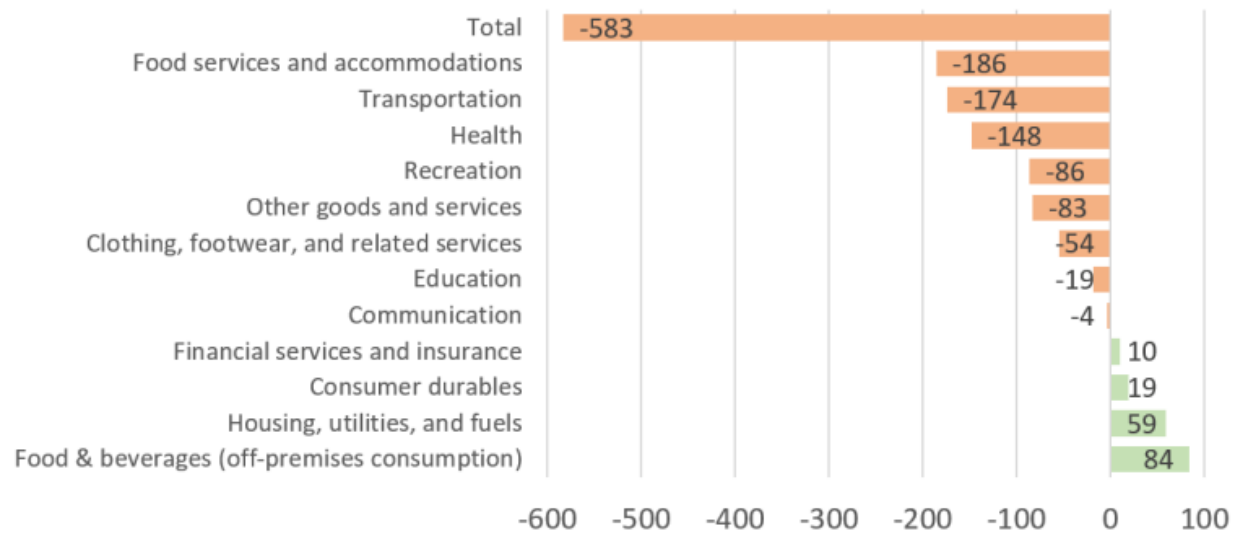
And while it's certainly positive to see overall spending levels recover relatively quickly, especially considering that 10 million Americans are still jobless, the sluggish recovery of consumer spending on services is cause for concern.

The US is a service economy, and when looking at GDP of 2019, personal consumption expenditure on services accounted for 47 percent of the gross domestic product, making it by far the largest contributor to the country's economic output.

Some questions I look to answer through in depth analysis of spending habits of Americans and trends related to goods and services includes shift to online shopping, changes companies have made in order to meet this demand, as well as what kind of categories within both goods and services have prospered and which have withered away. Another possible point of interest is comparing the spending patterns and fluctuations of the COVID-19 pandemic with that of the recession of 2008. Were the dips similar? How did each of these issues impact the priorities of spending, i.e. what goods and services...

Regarding the visualization and its format, it will likely be related to a timeline of sorts in order to display the change from the start of the pandemic towards the end, and similarly for the recession of 2008 if that is to be included as well. Some questions I still have regarding the visualization include the portrayal of the shift from physical purchases to online purchases.

Change in US sectoral spending patterns in 2020 (in \$ billion)



COVID-19 impact across sectors is uneven

