The FRED® Blog

GDP recovery after 1933, 1982, and 2009

Posted on March 7, 2016

FRED 📈
- Real Gross Domestic Product, 1933=100
- Real Gross Domestic Product, 1982=100
- Real Gross Domestic Product, 2009=100

Index

Periods from Value Scaled to 100

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis via FRED®

Customize | Download Data
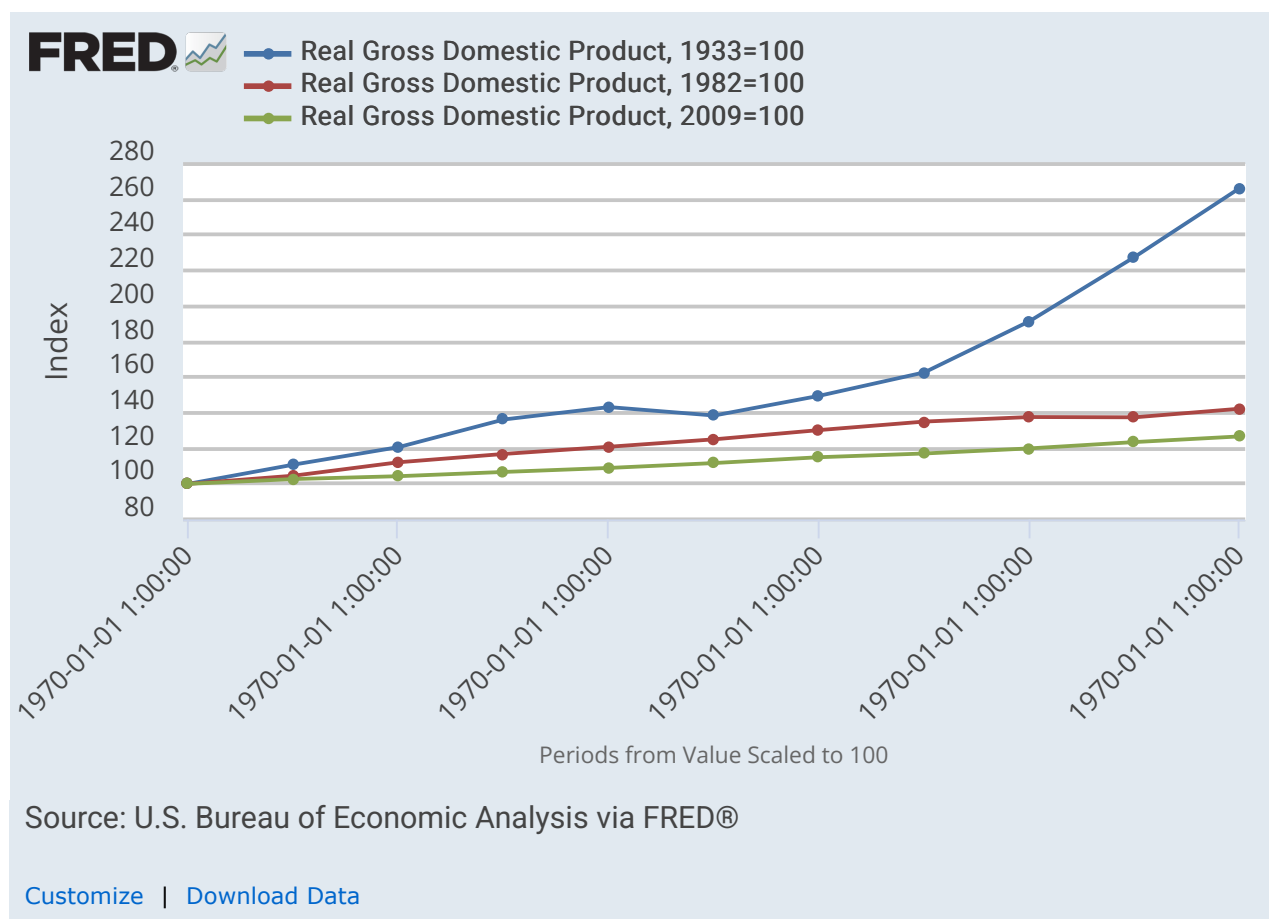
Sure, FRED has data related to several economic downturns and recovery periods. But it can be tough to accurately and clearly compare these different periods unless we do a little extra work. This graph uses a relatively more complicated FRED feature—integer periods—to

*un*complicate the comparison of GDP growth after three economic downturns.

The graph shows GDP growth in the first 10 years after the Great Depression (blue line), in the first 10 years after the early 80's recession (red line), and in the first 6 years since the Great Recession (green line). GDP is indexed to 100 in the year each downturn ended, shown on the x-axis as period 0, where all the lines begin. This makes the comparison more accurate and easier to follow.

As the graph clearly shows, GDP bounced back with gusto after the Great Depression and also ramped up moderately after the early 80's recession. So far, we have only 6 years of GDP data since the previous recession, so we don't know yet if the current recovery will catch up with past recoveries.

How this graph was created: For all three data series, search FRED for "annual real gross domestic product," select the series with the ID "GDPCA," change the units to "Index," and use the expanded menu to select the date to index each series to. From the recession trough menu, select dates for the three series: March 1, 1933; November 1, 1982; and June 1, 2009, which are the end dates of the Great Depression, early 80's recession, and Great Recession (according to the NBER), respectively.

For each series, check the "Display integer periods" box. The x-axis will show integers as time periods instead of dates. The base period is shown as 0: Negative numbers represent periods (years, in this case) before the base period, and positive numbers represent periods after the base period. Change the start integer to 0, so the graph begins at the end of each recession. Change the end integer to 10, so the graph ends 10 years after each recession.

Finally, to use the same graph style shown here, select the circle option under "Mark Type" and width 3 under "Mark Width."

Suggested by Keith Taylor.

View on FRED, series used in this post: GDPCA