Real gross domestic product—the output of goods and services produced by labor and property located in the U.S.—increased at an annualized rate of 4.1% in the fourth quarter of 2003, according to final estimates recently released by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The estimate of fourth-quarter growth in GDP itself matches last month’s preliminary estimate.

Output growth for personal consumption was the largest factor in GDP growth. In the final estimate, it was revised upward to 2.29 percentage points (pp) for the fourth quarter of 2003 and to about 2.83 pp for the entire year. Growth of exports made the second-largest contribution to percent change in GDP, adding 1.81 pp.

Growth of imports, meanwhile, continued to have the largest negative impact, subtracting 2.14 pp from output growth in the fourth quarter.

Although personal consumption was responsible for the largest growth in the GDP aggregate, personal income grew at a more tepid rate in January, reaching a level only 0.2% above the previous month. January’s growth of $18 billion was the weakest since August. The 12-month percent change of 4.1% is equal to the growth rate for December. Personal income growth, as measured by the 12-month percent change, has not slowed since last April.