

During the fourth quarter of 2020, working-day adjusted turnover in selected service activities decreased by 15.9 per cent over the same quarter in 2019. Seasonally adjusted services turnover increased by 8.3 per cent over the previous quarter.

Short-term Services Indicators: Q4/2020

Cut-off date:
12 February 2021

Annual comparison

When compared to the fourth quarter of 2019, the working-day adjusted services turnover index decreased by 15.9 per cent.

Decreases in turnover were registered in the accommodation and food service activities (58.2 per cent), real estate activities (37.5 per cent), administrative and support service activities (25.8 per cent), transportation and storage (21.6 per cent), wholesale trade (21.3 per cent), retail trade (2.9 per cent) and professional, scientific and technical activities (2.7 per cent). On the other hand, turnover increases of 5.4 per cent and 2.4 per cent were registered in the information and communication activities and motor trade respectively (Table 1).

Unadjusted employment (Table 3), working-day adjusted gross wages and salaries (Table 5) and hours worked (Table 7) decreased by 7.8 per cent, 7.5 per cent and 9.7 per cent respectively over the same quarter in 2019.

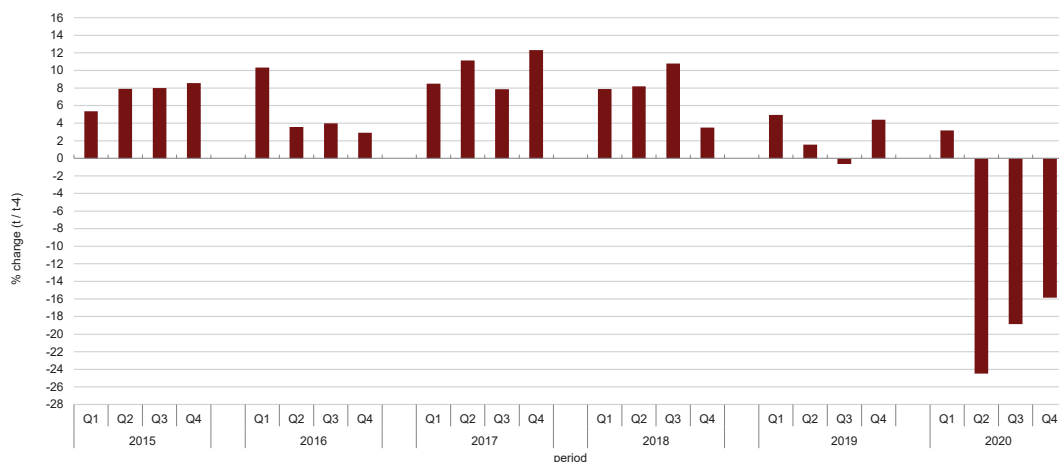
Quarterly comparison

When compared to the previous quarter, the seasonally adjusted services turnover index increased by 8.3 per cent.

The largest increase was recorded in the accommodation and food service activities where the index went up from 35.9 to 57.6 points. Positive percentage changes in turnover were also recorded in the administrative and support service activities (23.9 per cent), transportation and storage (19.1 per cent), real estate activities (12.6 per cent), retail trade (8.0 per cent) and information and communication activities (5.6 per cent). On the other hand, professional, scientific and technical activities, motor trade and wholesale trade registered negative percentage changes in turnover of 3.6 per cent, 2.6 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively (Table 2).

The seasonally adjusted employment (Table 4) and gross wages and salaries (Table 6) increased by 0.1 per cent and 3.0 per cent respectively. Seasonally adjusted hours worked decreased by 0.9 per cent (Table 8) ■

Chart 1. Annual working-day adjusted turnover in services
(% change in comparison with the corresponding quarter in previous year)



Statistics in this News Release should be interpreted in the context of the COVID-19 situation.

Table 1. Services turnover index by period and NACE classification
Working-day adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2019	2020			
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	123.7	114.2	95.6	102.7	106.7	3.1	5.7	-20.3	-15.2	-13.8
Motor trade	93.2	107.3	77.9	98.7	95.5	-26.5	-16.4	-37.8	-13.7	2.4
Wholesale trade	122.5	117.2	92.3	97.9	96.5	5.9	10.4	-21.1	-18.3	-21.3
Retail trade	131.9	109.9	105.2	112.5	128.0	4.2	2.3	-15.3	-9.8	-2.9
Food	135.2	120.9	116.2	122.6	127.7	4.8	6.0	-11.0	-10.3	-5.6
Non-food	129.6	102.7	97.9	105.9	128.1	3.8	-0.4	-18.4	-9.5	-1.2
Transportation and storage	148.3	140.3	105.0	111.3	116.2	5.8	4.3	-31.0	-32.4	-21.6
Accommodation and food service activities	106.7	65.6	17.2	71.4	44.6	6.3	-18.2	-86.7	-54.1	-58.2
Information and communication	158.8	146.6	149.4	158.5	167.3	22.8	12.9	13.5	17.5	5.4
Real estate activities	193.3	133.8	86.4	107.4	120.9	3.5	-10.7	-48.3	-38.4	-37.5
Professional, scientific and technical activities	117.3	111.0	107.2	106.3	114.1	-5.9	8.1	-0.1	3.6	-2.7
Administrative and support service activities	154.0	123.4	84.9	96.3	114.3	-3.6	-12.3	-49.1	-40.5	-25.8
Total	132.6	118.3	97.5	107.3	111.6	4.4	3.2	-24.5	-18.9	-15.9

Table 2. Services turnover index by period and NACE classification
Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with previous quarter				
						2019	2020			
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	119.3	123.2	94.3	100.5	102.8	0.6	3.3	-23.5	6.6	2.3
Motor trade	94.9	108.8	74.7	99.8	97.2	-18.0	14.6	-31.4	33.7	-2.6
Wholesale trade	119.9	126.0	90.8	94.9	94.4	3.2	5.1	-27.9	4.5	-0.5
Retail trade	123.2	122.8	103.3	110.7	119.6	0.3	-0.3	-15.9	7.1	8.0
Food	130.3	133.9	114.8	117.2	123.1	-0.3	2.7	-14.2	2.1	5.0
Non-food	118.6	115.6	95.8	106.3	117.2	1.0	-2.5	-17.2	10.9	10.3
Transportation and storage	153.0	158.4	101.3	100.7	120.0	2.8	3.5	-36.1	-0.5	19.1
Accommodation and food service activities	119.6	98.9	6.6	35.9	57.6	-0.5	-17.3	-93.3	445.8*	60.3*
Information and communication	158.8	146.6	149.4	158.5	167.3	17.8	-7.7	1.9	6.1	5.6
Real estate activities	193.3	133.8	86.4	107.4	120.9	11.0	-30.8	-35.4	24.3	12.6
Professional, scientific and technical activities	109.7	116.7	105.4	110.7	106.7	2.7	6.4	-9.7	5.0	-3.6
Administrative and support service activities	152.9	144.0	80.5	91.4	113.3	-0.9	-5.9	-44.1	13.6	23.9
Total	130.5	131.3	95.3	101.3	109.8	4.5	0.6	-27.4	6.3	8.3

Notes:

1. The calculation of growth rates from the indices tables may differ slightly from the published growth rates due to rounding.
2. * The changes of 445.8 per cent and 60.3 per cent when compared to the previous quarter should be interpreted with caution due to pronounced COVID-19 disruptions.

Table 3. Services employment index by period and NACE classification
Unadjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2019		2020		
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	112.8	111.4	106.7	106.8	105.4	3.0	1.0	-4.5	-5.5	-6.6
Motor trade	111.9	112.3	109.2	107.2	109.9	0.0	0.9	-3.3	-4.8	-1.9
Wholesale trade	110.6	110.1	106.5	105.7	103.4	3.1	3.0	-1.7	-5.2	-6.5
Retail trade	114.3	112.0	106.4	107.4	106.0	3.4	-0.1	-6.3	-5.7	-7.3
Food	117.0	115.5	110.8	110.8	112.2	2.8	-0.1	-5.3	-5.5	-4.1
Non-food	113.1	110.3	104.4	105.9	103.1	3.6	-0.2	-6.7	-5.9	-8.8
Transportation and storage	110.8	108.4	103.9	102.6	100.1	4.0	-2.8	-7.0	-8.6	-9.7
Accommodation and food service activities	93.5	91.0	77.7	81.7	75.8	-0.4	0.2	-17.0	-15.7	-18.9
Information and communication	107.3	106.9	99.3	99.8	100.7	2.3	1.3	-5.6	-6.4	-6.2
Real estate activities	96.0	98.6	93.8	92.2	93.5	-9.5	2.2	-6.0	-5.3	-2.6
Professional, scientific and technical activities	118.9	115.1	108.7	111.6	111.7	-0.1	-2.6	-3.9	-4.6	-6.0
Administrative and support service activities	134.8	136.2	133.2	131.9	132.7	10.0	9.8	3.2	-1.0	-1.5
Total	112.3	110.8	104.5	105.2	103.5	3.2	1.6	-5.6	-7.1	-7.8

Table 4. Services employment index by period and NACE classification
Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with previous quarter				
						2019		2020		
		Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	111.9	112.3	109.2	107.2	109.9	-0.6	0.4	-2.8	-1.9	2.5
Motor trade	110.6	110.1	106.5	105.7	103.4	-0.8	-0.4	-3.3	-0.8	-2.2
Wholesale trade	114.3	112.0	106.4	107.4	106.0	0.3	-2.0	-5.0	1.0	-1.4
Retail trade	117.0	115.5	110.8	110.8	112.2	-0.1	-1.3	-4.1	0.0	1.3
Food	113.1	110.3	104.4	105.9	103.1	0.5	-2.4	-5.4	1.5	-2.7
Non-food	112.8	111.4	106.7	106.8	105.4	-0.2	-1.3	-4.2	0.1	-1.3
Transportation and storage	111.6	109.0	103.5	101.7	100.8	0.3	-2.4	-5.1	-1.7	-0.9
Accommodation and food service activities	94.5	94.1	77.4	78.0	76.7	1.4	-0.4	-17.8	0.8	-1.6
Information and communication	107.5	107.1	99.5	99.3	100.9	1.3	-0.4	-7.2	-0.1	1.5
Real estate activities	96.0	98.6	93.8	92.2	93.5	-1.4	2.8	-4.9	-1.8	1.4
Professional, scientific and technical activities	118.9	115.1	108.7	111.6	111.7	1.6	-3.2	-5.6	2.6	0.1
Administrative and support service activities	134.8	136.2	133.2	131.9	132.7	1.2	1.0	-2.2	-1.0	0.6
Total	112.4	112.6	104.4	103.6	103.6	0.9	0.1	-7.3	-0.8	0.1

Table 5. Services gross wages and salaries index by period and NACE classification
Working-day adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2019	2020			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	135.5	133.0	118.5	124.3	131.4	8.0	5.2	-6.2	-4.0	-3.0
Motor trade	145.1	141.0	122.9	135.1	135.9	5.3	6.3	-12.4	-5.4	-6.4
Wholesale trade	131.8	131.1	117.0	118.2	127.4	9.8	5.2	-3.6	-4.4	-3.3
Retail trade	138.2	133.9	119.5	129.3	135.3	6.6	5.0	-7.8	-3.3	-2.1
Food	135.9	138.1	124.1	129.3	136.7	0.9	6.4	-7.0	-6.5	0.6
Non-food	139.1	132.2	117.6	129.3	134.6	9.2	4.3	-8.2	-1.9	-3.2
Transportation and storage	123.3	128.7	107.1	100.5	105.8	5.3	6.7	-14.0	-20.3	-14.2
Accommodation and food service activities	114.9	106.2	83.1	87.8	78.4	1.9	-1.7	-26.7	-27.6	-31.8
Information and communication	125.5	130.4	125.8	122.0	128.5	6.0	7.5	3.1	2.1	2.4
Real estate activities	125.4	117.8	112.3	109.4	120.0	4.5	4.2	-12.4	-2.7	-4.3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	119.2	115.5	111.7	114.1	118.6	-0.2	-3.9	-5.3	-3.2	-0.4
Administrative and support service activities	161.3	148.5	142.0	136.7	154.7	13.1	8.2	-0.6	-1.6	-4.1
Total	132.6	129.5	116.3	116.3	122.7	6.7	4.5	-7.7	-8.6	-7.5

Table 6. Services gross wages and salaries index by period and NACE classification
Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with previous quarter				
						2019	2020			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	132.4	134.0	120.1	124.8	128.1	1.6	1.2	-10.4	3.9	2.6
Motor trade	141.6	144.0	123.4	135.1	132.6	-0.8	1.7	-14.3	9.5	-1.9
Wholesale trade	128.2	132.0	117.7	120.0	124.0	2.1	3.0	-10.8	1.9	3.3
Retail trade	135.6	135.2	120.4	129.8	132.7	1.0	-0.3	-10.9	7.8	2.3
Food	135.9	138.1	124.1	129.3	136.7	-1.7	1.6	-10.1	4.3	5.7
Non-food	135.6	133.6	118.8	130.2	131.1	2.1	-1.4	-11.1	9.6	0.7
Transportation and storage	123.3	128.7	107.1	100.5	105.8	-2.2	4.4	-16.8	-6.2	5.3
Accommodation and food service activities	115.9	112.9	82.5	82.7	79.1	1.4	-2.6	-26.9	0.3	-4.4
Information and communication	125.5	130.4	125.8	122.0	128.5	5.0	3.9	-3.5	-3.0	5.3
Real estate activities	125.4	117.8	112.3	109.4	120.0	11.5	-6.1	-4.6	-2.6	9.7
Professional, scientific and technical activities	119.2	115.5	111.7	114.1	118.6	1.0	-3.1	-3.2	2.2	3.9
Administrative and support service activities	161.3	148.5	142.0	136.7	154.7	16.1	-7.9	-4.4	-3.7	13.1
Total	130.2	131.1	116.3	116.9	120.5	1.8	0.7	-11.3	0.5	3.0

Table 7. Services hours worked index by period and NACE classification

Working-day adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2019	2020			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	113.7	111.2	104.2	107.3	107.2	4.0	2.4	-6.1	-5.5	-5.7
Motor trade	115.4	119.4	103.5	112.1	107.3	-1.9	5.3	-11.4	-4.2	-7.1
Wholesale trade	109.5	107.7	104.0	104.5	101.2	6.6	3.3	-1.2	-5.7	-7.7
Retail trade	116.9	112.9	104.5	109.0	112.4	2.9	1.1	-9.1	-5.6	-3.9
Food	122.2	121.6	110.9	121.7	124.9	-1.9	2.0	-9.9	-4.2	2.2
Non-food	114.7	108.6	101.6	103.5	106.9	5.4	0.1	-8.7	-6.7	-6.8
Transportation and storage	113.1	107.1	109.9	102.6	100.7	0.0	-4.7	-3.9	-11.8	-11.0
Accommodation and food service activities	103.2	90.8	57.2	88.8	72.0	2.7	-4.1	-43.4	-18.2	-30.2
Information and communication	103.7	100.2	96.0	94.7	96.2	2.0	-0.6	-5.1	-7.0	-7.2
Real estate activities	102.6	101.1	79.2	85.5	83.5	-6.1	2.0	-24.6	-14.3	-18.5
Professional, scientific and technical activities	116.7	111.2	110.3	116.8	117.7	5.5	-0.8	-1.0	0.1	0.9
Administrative and support service activities	137.9	133.2	122.2	135.5	133.2	2.3	0.9	-12.6	-6.5	-3.4
Total	115.6	109.7	99.4	107.7	104.3	2.6	-1.1	-12.7	-9.2	-9.7

Table 8. Services hours worked index by period and NACE classification

Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2019	2020				% change compared with previous quarter				
						2019	2020			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	113.3	112.5	104.2	106.6	106.8	0.4	-0.7	-7.4	2.3	0.2
Motor trade	115.4	119.4	103.5	112.1	107.3	-1.3	3.4	-13.3	8.3	-4.2
Wholesale trade	109.5	107.7	104.0	104.5	101.2	-1.2	-1.7	-3.4	0.5	-3.2
Retail trade	115.2	114.9	105.0	108.3	110.7	0.4	-0.3	-8.6	3.2	2.2
Food	120.6	123.5	111.9	120.4	123.2	-4.1	2.4	-9.4	7.6	2.3
Non-food	113.3	110.3	101.6	103.3	105.6	2.4	-2.7	-7.9	1.7	2.3
Transportation and storage	112.2	109.4	110.1	101.2	99.8	-2.3	-2.5	0.7	-8.1	-1.4
Accommodation and food service activities	104.2	98.9	56.5	80.3	73.0	4.1	-5.1	-42.9	42.2	-9.1
Information and communication	103.7	100.2	96.0	94.7	96.2	1.7	-3.3	-4.2	-1.3	1.6
Real estate activities	102.6	101.1	79.2	85.5	83.5	2.8	-1.4	-21.6	7.9	-2.3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	116.7	111.2	110.3	116.8	117.7	0.1	-4.7	-0.8	5.9	0.8
Administrative and support service activities	137.8	137.8	121.7	131.8	133.1	-2.3	0.0	-11.7	8.4	1.0
Total	115.5	112.5	99.3	105.2	104.3	-0.4	-2.6	-11.8	6.0	-0.9

Methodological Notes

1. The aim of short-term statistics is to provide information on the business cycle within the services sector. The results are compiled and published according to the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community, NACE Rev. 2.
2. Every quarter, questionnaires are sent to approximately 900 enterprises categorised within the services sector. The data is then grossed up to represent the entire services population. For each NACE division (for example NACE Division 45 for motor trade), a sample was selected. The selected enterprises were requested to provide information, including turnover, employment and wages and salaries, on a quarterly basis. The indices were calculated for each division, showing the level of the specified variable (for example employment) relative to the average level throughout the base year 2015. The index numbers in this release are working-day and seasonally adjusted. These statistical methods aid interpretation of data by removing regularly recurring variations from a time series. Working-day adjustment is a statistical method for removing the calendar effect from an economic time series. The calendar effect is the variation caused by the changing number of working days in different quarters.

The number of working days for a given quarter may depend on the timing of certain public holidays, the possible overlap of certain public holidays and non-working days and the occurrence of a leap year. This method is used to make a comparison with the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Seasonal adjustment removes variations which include effects due to quarter length, holidays and particular events such as Christmas.

Statistically, seasonal adjustment takes place after a time series has already been cleared of calendar effects by way of working-day adjustment. This method is used to compare data for a specific quarter with the previous quarter. In seasonal and working-day adjustment, the direct approach is used and refers to the adjustments of aggregated raw component.

3. In line with the Regulation on Short-term Statistics, services exclude Financial and Insurance Activities and Gambling and Betting Activities.
4. **Definitions:**
 - **Turnover:** includes total sales and other income and is expressed net of VAT. Turnover is presented in current prices.
 - **Wages and Salaries:** covers wages and salaries including bonuses, weekly allowances (cost of living allowances), overtime and national social security contributions by the employee. The definition does not include employer's social security charges.
 - **Employment:** covers all persons employed, regardless of whether they are part-time or full-time, and includes paid employees as well as working proprietors and unpaid family workers. Employment is not working day adjusted since the number of employees does not depend on factors that make up the working day effect.
 - **Hours worked:** covers total amount of hours actually worked, regular working hours and during overtime, during nights, Sundays or public holidays. Hours worked but not paid are also considered.
5. The data contained in this release should be considered as provisional and therefore subject to revision. Each release may include revisions of the past quarterly data in respect of a rolling two-year period.
6. **Weighting Structure by activity/industry and variables.**

NACE Section/ Division	NACE label	Turnover	Employment	Hours Worked	Wages and Salaries
G	Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	54.1	33.0	30.5	26.5
G45	Motor trade	3.4	2.7	2.2	1.8
G46	Wholesale trade	33.1	11.4	12.9	13.0
G47	Retail trade	17.6	19.0	15.3	11.7
H	Transportation and storage	10.6	11.1	12.7	16.5
I	Accommodation and food services activities	6.4	18.8	17.6	13.4
J	Information and communication	9.6	7.9	9.7	13.6
L	Real estate activities	3.1	1.8	1.3	1.4
M	Professional, scientific and technical activities	9.7	11.6	11.1	13.5
N	Administrative and support services activities	6.5	15.8	17.1	15.1

7. More information relating to this news release may be accessed at:

Statistical Concepts: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/concepts.aspx>

Metadata: <https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/reports.aspx?id=13>

European statistics comparable to data in this News Release are available at:

[EUROSTAT Website/Homepage/Statistics Database](#)

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