

During the first quarter of 2021, seasonally adjusted turnover for selected service activities increased by 11.2 per cent over the fourth quarter of 2020. When compared to the same quarter of 2020, working-day adjusted turnover for these activities decreased by 9.1 per cent.

Short-term Services Indicators: Q1/2021

Cut-off date:
17 May 2021

Quarterly comparison

When compared to the fourth quarter of 2020, the seasonally adjusted services turnover index increased by 11.2 per cent.

Increases in turnover were recorded in the accommodation and food service activities (23.4 per cent), transportation and storage (19.5 per cent), real estate activities (17.5 per cent), wholesale trade (15.6 per cent), professional, scientific and technical activities (15.0 per cent) and administrative and support service activities (4.4 per cent). On the other hand, motor trade, information and communication activities and retail trade registered negative changes in turnover of 0.7, 0.6 and 0.1 per cent respectively (Table 1).

The seasonally adjusted employment (Table 3) and hours worked (Table 7) decreased by 0.4 and 1.6 per cent respectively. Seasonally adjusted gross wages and salaries increased by 2.6 per cent (Table 5).

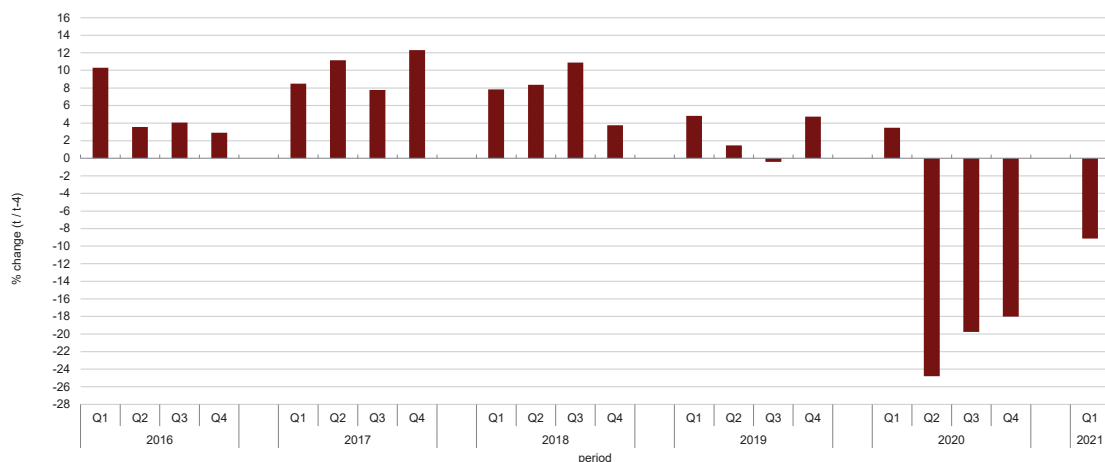
Annual comparison

When compared to the first quarter of 2020, the working-day adjusted services turnover index decreased by 9.1 per cent.

Decreases in turnover were registered in the accommodation and food service activities (49.5 per cent), administrative and support service activities (28.7 per cent), transportation and storage (15.0 per cent), wholesale trade (13.7 per cent), motor trade (7.5 per cent) and retail trade (4.9 per cent). On the other hand, turnover increases of 13.3, 6.1 and 0.9 per cent were registered in the information and communication, real estate activities and professional, scientific and technical activities respectively (Table 2).

Unadjusted employment (Table 4), working-day adjusted gross wages and salaries (Table 6) and hours worked (Table 8) decreased by 8.4, 6.6 and 10.5 per cent respectively over the same quarter in 2020 ■

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
Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with previous quarter				
						2020				2021
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	123.8	93.5	100.6	102.5	110.8	3.9	-24.4	7.6	1.8	8.1
Motor trade	108.6	74.6	99.8	101.2	100.5	14.1	-31.3	33.8	1.4	-0.7
Wholesale trade	125.2	90.1	94.6	93.5	108.1	4.9	-28.0	5.0	-1.2	15.6
Retail trade	125.9	102.4	111.7	119.8	119.7	1.5	-18.7	9.2	7.2	-0.1
Food	139.8	113.3	117.9	124.0	125.9	6.6	-19.0	4.1	5.2	1.5
Non-food	116.9	95.2	107.6	117.0	115.8	-2.2	-18.6	13.1	8.7	-1.0
Transportation and storage	160.3	102.4	99.9	114.0	136.2	4.2	-36.1	-2.4	14.1	19.5
Accommodation and food service activities	99.0	10.4	26.8	54.7	67.5	-21.0	-89.5	157.7	104.0	23.4
Information and communication	148.4	149.4	158.3	169.2	168.2	-7.5	0.7	5.9	6.9	-0.6
Real estate activities	133.8	86.4	107.4	120.9	142.0	-30.8	-35.4	24.3	12.6	17.5
Professional, scientific and technical activities	108.4	97.2	101.9	95.1	109.4	-0.1	-10.3	4.8	-6.7	15.0
Administrative and support service activities	150.8	85.8	95.4	103.1	107.6	-2.8	-43.1	11.1	8.1	4.4
Total	131.4	95.0	100.6	107.4	119.4	0.3	-27.7	5.9	6.7	11.2

Note: The calculation of growth rates from the indices tables may differ slightly from the published growth rates due to rounding.

Table 2. Services turnover index by period and NACE classification
Working-day adjusted

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2020				2021
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	114.8	94.9	102.8	106.3	102.7	6.3	-20.9	-15.1	-14.0	-10.5
Motor trade	107.1	77.9	98.7	99.4	99.1	-16.6	-37.8	-13.7	6.4	-7.5
Wholesale trade	116.4	91.7	97.6	95.5	100.5	9.8	-21.6	-18.4	-21.7	-13.7
Retail trade	113.2	104.1	113.4	127.9	107.6	5.2	-16.3	-9.3	-3.4	-4.9
Food	127.4	114.7	123.0	127.7	114.8	11.5	-12.3	-10.2	-5.5	-9.9
Non-food	103.9	97.2	107.2	128.0	102.9	0.6	-19.1	-8.7	-2.0	-1.0
Transportation and storage	140.7	106.1	111.1	110.8	119.6	6.6	-30.2	-32.6	-25.9	-15.0
Accommodation and food service activities	63.7	20.9	62.4	43.9	32.2	-20.4	-84.1	-60.5	-61.6	-49.5
Information and communication	148.4	149.4	158.3	169.2	168.2	14.0	12.5	16.2	5.4	13.3
Real estate activities	133.8	86.4	107.4	120.9	142.0	-10.7	-48.3	-38.4	-37.5	6.1
Professional, scientific and technical activities	102.4	98.7	98.2	102.2	103.3	0.2	-6.8	-3.5	-12.4	0.9
Administrative and support service activities	130.8	90.3	100.1	103.4	93.2	-8.2	-45.8	-39.3	-33.5	-28.7
Total	118.5	97.2	106.4	109.3	107.7	3.5	-24.8	-19.8	-18.0	-9.1

Table 3. Services employment index by period and NACE classification
Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with previous quarter				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	2020				2021
						Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	111.8	106.5	107.1	106.4	105.3	-1.2	-4.7	0.5	-0.6	-1.0
Motor trade	114.2	111.0	110.3	112.4	114.0	0.7	-2.8	-0.6	1.9	1.4
Wholesale trade	110.4	106.6	105.8	104.1	102.8	-0.5	-3.5	-0.7	-1.7	-1.2
Retail trade	112.3	105.9	107.4	107.0	105.5	-1.8	-5.7	1.4	-0.4	-1.4
Food	116.4	110.2	109.7	111.5	110.8	-0.6	-5.4	-0.5	1.7	-0.6
Non-food	110.4	103.9	106.3	104.9	103.0	-2.4	-5.9	2.3	-1.3	-1.8
Transportation and storage	109.0	103.5	102.8	104.2	104.3	-2.4	-5.0	-0.6	1.3	0.1
Accommodation and food service activities	96.5	81.4	82.7	77.8	78.4	1.0	-15.7	1.7	-6.0	0.8
Information and communication	107.1	99.4	99.3	101.9	97.5	0.6	-7.2	-0.1	2.7	-4.3
Real estate activities	107.4	102.3	98.3	99.9	103.4	3.9	-4.7	-3.9	1.6	3.5
Professional, scientific and technical activities	115.1	108.9	111.7	114.1	117.2	-3.3	-5.4	2.6	2.1	2.7
Administrative and support service activities	136.4	133.2	127.5	128.6	121.6	1.1	-2.3	-4.3	0.9	-5.4
Total	113.4	105.3	104.1	104.3	103.9	0.6	-7.2	-1.1	0.2	-0.4

Table 4. Services employment index by period and NACE classification
Unadjusted ¹

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	2020				2021
						Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	111.8	106.5	107.1	106.4	105.3	1.1	-4.7	-5.5	-5.9	-5.8
Motor trade	114.2	111.0	110.3	112.4	114.0	2.0	-3.0	-3.1	-0.9	-0.2
Wholesale trade	110.4	106.6	105.8	104.1	102.8	3.1	-1.6	-5.3	-6.2	-6.9
Retail trade	112.3	105.9	107.4	107.0	105.5	-0.2	-6.7	-5.9	-6.5	-6.1
Food	116.4	110.2	109.7	111.5	110.8	0.0	-6.4	-7.3	-4.8	-4.8
Non-food	110.4	103.9	106.3	104.9	103.0	-0.3	-6.9	-5.2	-7.3	-6.7
Transportation and storage	108.4	103.9	103.7	103.4	103.7	-2.7	-6.9	-7.6	-6.7	-4.3
Accommodation and food service activities	93.6	81.7	86.3	76.7	75.4	3.1	-12.9	-11.4	-18.8	-19.4
Information and communication	106.9	99.4	99.8	101.4	97.3	1.3	-5.6	-6.4	-4.2	-9.0
Real estate activities	107.4	102.3	98.3	99.9	103.4	3.8	-5.5	-7.5	-3.3	-3.7
Professional, scientific and technical activities	115.1	108.9	111.7	114.1	117.2	-2.5	-3.7	-4.6	-4.2	1.8
Administrative and support service activities	136.4	133.2	127.5	128.6	121.6	9.9	3.2	-4.4	-4.6	-10.9
Total	111.7	105.4	105.7	104.1	102.3	2.1	-5.0	-6.9	-7.5	-8.4

¹ Refer to methodological note 4.

Table 5. Services gross wages and salaries index by period and NACE classification
Seasonally adjusted

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with previous quarter				
						2020				2021
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	135.3	120.8	124.9	128.5	131.7	1.3	-10.7	3.4	2.9	2.5
Motor trade	146.5	122.9	128.6	126.7	146.5	1.5	-16.1	4.6	-1.5	15.6
Wholesale trade	133.3	117.1	120.3	125.0	129.6	3.0	-12.2	2.7	3.9	3.7
Retail trade	137.5	122.3	130.6	132.9	133.0	1.0	-11.0	6.7	1.8	0.1
Food	140.7	124.7	128.9	133.7	128.5	2.6	-11.4	3.4	3.7	-3.9
Non-food	135.7	121.1	131.4	133.0	134.5	-0.2	-10.7	8.5	1.2	1.1
Transportation and storage	128.7	99.2	105.0	107.3	122.3	4.4	-22.9	5.8	2.2	14.0
Accommodation and food service activities	116.5	82.7	85.2	81.7	84.4	-0.5	-29.0	3.0	-4.1	3.3
Information and communication	130.4	125.8	122.2	129.4	128.3	3.9	-3.6	-2.9	5.9	-0.9
Real estate activities	121.4	103.1	108.4	113.5	109.3	-4.0	-15.1	5.2	4.7	-3.7
Professional, scientific and technical activities	115.5	111.9	114.0	120.9	119.7	-3.1	-3.1	1.9	6.0	-1.0
Administrative and support service activities	149.1	142.1	132.6	145.2	133.8	-7.8	-4.7	-6.7	9.5	-7.9
Total	132.1	115.2	117.4	120.3	123.4	1.0	-12.8	1.9	2.4	2.6

Table 6. Services gross wages and salaries index by period and NACE classification
Working-day adjusted

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2020				2021
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	134.9	119.0	124.2	131.8	131.1	5.8	-6.4	-4.8	-3.6	-2.8
Motor trade	143.3	122.4	128.6	130.0	143.2	7.6	-13.3	-10.8	-12.3	-0.1
Wholesale trade	132.3	116.4	118.4	128.6	128.7	5.4	-4.7	-4.9	-3.4	-2.7
Retail trade	136.4	121.3	130.0	135.6	131.9	5.9	-7.0	-3.6	-2.3	-3.3
Food	140.7	124.7	128.9	133.7	128.5	7.3	-7.7	-8.1	-2.6	-8.7
Non-food	134.5	119.9	130.5	136.4	133.4	5.3	-6.6	-1.5	-2.1	-0.8
Transportation and storage	128.7	99.2	105.0	107.3	122.3	6.8	-20.4	-16.8	-13.0	-5.0
Accommodation and food service activities	109.8	83.3	90.2	80.9	79.5	1.7	-26.7	-25.8	-30.2	-27.6
Information and communication	130.4	125.8	122.2	129.4	128.3	7.5	3.0	2.3	3.0	-1.6
Real estate activities	121.4	103.1	108.4	113.5	109.3	11.2	-9.3	-4.7	-10.3	-10.0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	115.5	111.9	114.0	120.9	119.7	-3.8	-5.0	-3.3	1.5	3.6
Administrative and support service activities	149.1	142.1	132.6	145.2	133.8	8.4	-0.8	-4.9	-10.2	-10.3
Total	130.6	115.1	116.8	122.5	122.0	5.2	-8.7	-8.5	-8.0	-6.6

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

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with previous quarter				
						2020				2021
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	113.3	103.0	107.0	106.0	105.1	-0.1	-9.1	3.9	-1.0	-0.8
Motor trade	121.0	105.1	116.4	113.9	114.3	3.6	-13.2	10.7	-2.1	0.4
Wholesale trade	108.2	102.7	104.3	100.7	98.6	-1.6	-5.1	1.6	-3.4	-2.1
Retail trade	115.8	103.6	108.7	108.4	108.7	0.9	-10.6	4.9	-0.3	0.3
Food	125.5	111.8	119.2	119.2	114.3	4.3	-10.9	6.6	0.0	-4.1
Non-food	110.7	99.5	104.5	104.0	105.3	-1.8	-10.1	5.0	-0.5	1.3
Transportation and storage	109.3	91.4	101.1	95.8	94.5	-2.5	-16.4	10.6	-5.3	-1.4
Accommodation and food service activities	102.6	60.8	84.4	74.9	78.8	-2.9	-40.8	38.9	-11.2	5.2
Information and communication	100.4	96.1	95.0	97.3	93.3	-2.3	-4.3	-1.1	2.3	-4.1
Real estate activities	108.7	87.1	93.5	95.1	103.5	-1.5	-19.8	7.3	1.7	8.8
Professional, scientific and technical activities	110.1	110.2	116.7	122.5	116.1	-5.2	0.0	5.9	5.0	-5.2
Administrative and support service activities	138.2	121.7	128.3	126.9	124.6	0.2	-11.9	5.4	-1.1	-1.8
Total	113.6	97.4	105.7	103.5	101.8	-1.9	-14.3	8.5	-2.1	-1.6

Table 8. Services hours worked index by period and NACE classification
Working-day adjusted

NACE	2020				2021	% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
						2020				2021
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	112.0	103.1	107.7	106.3	103.9	2.9	-7.2	-5.5	-6.5	-7.2
Motor trade	121.0	105.1	116.4	113.9	114.3	6.3	-10.5	-1.4	-2.5	-5.5
Wholesale trade	108.2	102.7	104.3	100.7	98.6	3.9	-2.2	-6.0	-8.5	-8.9
Retail trade	113.8	103.2	109.4	110.0	106.8	1.5	-10.7	-5.8	-5.6	-6.2
Food	123.6	111.0	120.1	120.9	112.6	2.8	-10.5	-6.3	-1.0	-8.9
Non-food	109.1	99.6	104.8	105.2	103.8	0.1	-10.7	-5.9	-7.8	-4.9
Transportation and storage	107.2	91.2	102.5	96.8	92.4	-4.7	-20.3	-11.9	-14.4	-13.8
Accommodation and food service activities	94.5	61.4	92.9	73.9	70.7	-0.3	-39.6	-15.4	-29.4	-25.2
Information and communication	100.4	96.1	95.0	97.3	93.3	-0.6	-5.2	-6.9	-5.3	-7.1
Real estate activities	108.7	87.1	93.5	95.1	103.5	2.7	-22.5	-14.3	-13.9	-4.8
Professional, scientific and technical activities	110.1	110.2	116.7	122.5	116.1	-1.5	-0.9	0.1	5.5	5.4
Administrative and support service activities	133.6	122.2	131.8	126.9	120.5	1.2	-12.6	-9.1	-8.1	-9.8
Total	110.8	97.6	108.2	103.5	99.2	-0.4	-14.6	-9.2	-10.7	-10.5

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. For NACE Division 68 (real estate activities), the contracts data from the Inland Revenue Department was also used. 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>

8. References to this news release are to be cited appropriately.

9. A detailed news release calendar is available on:

https://nso.gov.mt/en/News_Releases/Release_Calendar/Pages/News-Release-Calendar.aspx

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

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