

Employment and vacancies statistics for March 2020

According to the figures released today (June 22) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), total employment in the private sector surveyed decreased by 3.8% or 110 000 persons in March 2020 compared with a year earlier. The total number of vacancies was 42 270, representing a decrease of 47% or 37 310 over the preceding year.

Employment statistics

In March 2020, the selected industries as a whole employed 2 764 300 persons. The import and export trade engaged 420 100 persons, followed by professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) engaging 305 700 persons, retail trade 254 900 persons, financing and insurance 238 200 persons, and food and beverage services 221 500 persons.

Employment decreased in majority of the surveyed industries compared with a year earlier. Decreases in employment were mainly recorded in the industries of food and beverage services (-12.0% or -30 300 persons), accommodation services (covering hotels, guesthouses, boarding houses and other establishments providing short term accommodation) (-10.0% or -4 200 persons), import and export trade (-8.7% or -40 000 persons), wholesale (-6.6% or -3 800 persons), and retail trade (-6.5% or -17 700 persons). On the other hand, employment increased mainly in the industries of human health services (4.3% or 5 700 persons), and residential care and social work services (2.6% or 1 600 persons). Employment figures for selected major industries are shown in Table 1.

Vacancies statistics

Among the 42 270 private sector vacancies, 5 200 were from the industry of financing and insurance, 5 150 from professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services), 4 060 from residential care and social work services, 3 690 from education, and 3 580 from import and export trade.

Vacancies decreased in all of the selected industries in March 2020 over a year earlier. Decreases were mainly observed in the industries of food and beverage services (-10 070 or -82%); retail trade (-5 300 or -63%); arts, entertainment, recreation and other services (-4 070 or -76%); and professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) (-3 010 or -37%). Job vacancies figures for selected major industries are shown in Table 2.

Analysed by major occupation category, private sector vacancies were observed mainly in the categories of associate professionals (9 810 vacancies), service and sales workers (8 870 vacancies), and elementary

occupations (8 270 vacancies). Job vacancies figures by major occupation category are shown in Table 3.

Seasonally adjusted statistics

For discerning the latest trend in employment and vacancies in the private sector, it is useful to look at changes over a three-month period in the respective seasonally adjusted figures. Compared with December 2019, the seasonally adjusted total employment and total vacancies in the surveyed industries decreased by 1.8% and 24.1% respectively in March 2020. The changes over three-month periods in the seasonally adjusted series of employment and vacancies are shown in Table 4.

Other information

The above employment and vacancies statistics were obtained from the Quarterly Survey of Employment and Vacancies and the Quarterly Employment Survey of Construction Sites conducted by the C&SD. In the former survey, some economic activities (e.g. those dominated by self-employment, including taxi operators and hawkers) are not covered. Therefore, the respective employment and vacancies figures relate only to those selected industries included in the survey. In the latter survey on construction sites, employment and vacancies figures relate to manual workers only.

A detailed breakdown of the above statistics is published in the following reports:

"Quarterly Report of Employment and Vacancies Statistics, March 2020" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050003)

"Quarterly Report of Employment and Vacancies at Construction Sites, March 2020" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050004)

Users can download these publications free of charge at the website of the C&SD.

Enquiries on more detailed employment and vacancies statistics can be directed to the Employment Statistics and Central Register of Establishments Section, C&SD (Tel: 2582 5076; fax: 2827 2296; email: employment@censtatd.gov.hk).