

Provisional Statistics of Retail Sales for September 2022

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest figures on retail sales today (November 1).

The value of total retail sales in September 2022, provisionally estimated at \$28.1 billion, edged up by 0.2% compared with the same month in 2021. The revised estimate of the value of total retail sales in August 2022 edged down by 0.2% compared with a year earlier. For the first 9 months of 2022 taken together, it was provisionally estimated that the value of total retail sales decreased by 1.3% compared with the same period in 2021.

Of the total retail sales value in September 2022, online sales accounted for 10.2%. The value of online retail sales in that month, provisionally estimated at \$2.9 billion, increased by 27.5% compared with the same month in 2021. The revised estimate of online retail sales in August 2022 increased by 21.6% compared with a year earlier. For the first 9 months of 2022 taken together, it was provisionally estimated that the value of online retail sales increased by 22.4% compared with the same period in 2021.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales in September 2022 decreased by 1.5% compared with a year earlier. The revised estimate of the volume of total retail sales in August 2022 decreased by 3.0% compared with a year earlier. For the first 9 months of 2022 taken together, the provisional estimate of the total retail sales decreased by 4.2% in volume compared with the same period in 2021.

Analysed by broad type of retail outlet in descending order of the provisional estimate of the value of sales and comparing September 2022 with September 2021, the value of sales of electrical goods and other consumer durable goods not elsewhere classified increased by 14.0%. This was followed by sales of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts (+8.4% in value); motor vehicles and parts (+26.6%); medicines and cosmetics (+0.5%); fuels (+5.3%); and books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (+9.8%).

On the other hand, the value of sales of commodities in supermarkets decreased by 1.6% in September 2022 over a year earlier. This was followed by sales of food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (-9.5% in value); other consumer goods not elsewhere classified (-2.1%); commodities in department stores (-17.6%); wearing apparel (-7.5%); furniture and fixtures (-7.5%); footwear, allied products and other clothing accessories (-5.4%); Chinese drugs and herbs (-3.3%); and optical shops (-3.5%).

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of the value of total retail sales increased by 0.3% in the third quarter of 2022 compared with the preceding quarter, while the provisional estimate of the

volume of total retail sales increased by 0.7%.

Commentary

A government spokesman said that the value of retail sales reverted to a modest year-on-year growth in September, thanks to the notable increase in sales of electrical goods and other consumer durable goods. For the third quarter as a whole, retail sales value increased further by 1.3% year-on-year.

Looking ahead, the spokesman pointed out that the generally stable local epidemic situation, improved labour market conditions and the Consumption Voucher Scheme will continue to support consumption demand in the near term. However, tightened financial conditions will increasingly offset the positive effects. It remains vital for the community to work together with the Government to contain the epidemic.

Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures on value index and value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for August 2022 as well as the provisional figures for September 2022. The provisional figures on the value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet as well as the corresponding year-on-year changes for the first 9 months of 2022 taken together are also shown.

Table 2 presents the revised figures on value of online retail sales for August 2022 as well as the provisional figures for September 2022. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the first 9 months of 2022 taken together are also shown.

Table 3 presents the revised figures on volume index of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for August 2022 as well as the provisional figures for September 2022. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the first 9 months of 2022 taken together are also shown.

Table 4 shows the movements of the value and volume of total retail sales in terms of the year-on-year rate of change for a month compared with the same month in the preceding year based on the original series, and in terms of the rate of change for a three-month period compared with the preceding three-month period based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The classification of retail establishments follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

These retail sales statistics measure the sales receipts in respect of goods sold by local retail establishments and are primarily intended for gauging the short-term business performance of the local retail sector. Data

on retail sales are collected from local retail establishments through the Monthly Survey of Retail Sales (MRS). Local retail establishments with and without physical shops are covered in MRS and their sales, both through conventional shops and online channels, are included in the retail sales statistics.

The retail sales statistics cover consumer spending on goods but not on services (such as those on housing, catering, medical care and health services, transport and communication, financial services, education and entertainment) which account for over 50% of the overall consumer spending. Moreover, they include spending on goods in Hong Kong by visitors but exclude spending outside Hong Kong by Hong Kong residents. Hence they should not be regarded as indicators for measuring overall consumer spending.

Users interested in the trend of overall consumer spending should refer to the data series of private consumption expenditure (PCE), which is a major component of the Gross Domestic Product published at quarterly intervals. Compiled from a wide range of data sources, PCE covers consumer spending on both goods (including goods purchased from all channels) and services by Hong Kong residents whether locally or abroad. Please refer to the C&SD publication "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly)" for more details.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Monthly Survey of Retail Sales". Users can download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080003&scode=530). Alternatively, the historical series of retail sales statistics can be downloaded in the form of a statistical table at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600089&scode=530).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of C&SD (Tel: 3903 7400; email: mrs@censtatd.gov.hk).