

Quarterly business receipts indices for service industries for first quarter of 2021

Business receipts in value terms of most of the major service industries showed increases of different magnitudes in the first quarter of 2021 when compared with the first quarter of 2020, according to the provisional figures of business receipts indices released today (June 10) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD).

Comparing the first quarter of 2021 with the first quarter of 2020, double-digit increases were recorded in business receipts of the courier (+47.3%), warehousing and storage (+39.1%), financing (except banking) (+28.1%), import/export trade (+27.8%), transportation (+19.1%), accommodation services (+16.5%), wholesale (+12.1%) and real estate (+10.6%) industries.

On the other hand, the administrative and support services industry recorded a decrease of 10.9% in business receipts during the same period.

Analysed by service domain, business receipts of the tourism, convention and exhibition services domain decreased by 72.5% year-on-year during the same period, whereas those of the computer and information technology services domain increased by 23.7% year-on-year.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, business receipts in value terms of most of the major service industries recorded increases of different magnitudes in the first quarter of 2021 when compared with the fourth quarter of 2020. In particular, double-digit increases were recorded in business receipts of the banking (+16.7%), import/export trade (+15.5%), transportation (+14.5%), courier (+13.0%), financing (except banking) (+12.0%) and warehousing and storage (+11.9%) industries. On the other hand, business receipts of the accommodation services and real estate industries decreased by 13.3% and 13.2% respectively during the same period.

Comparing the first quarter of 2021 with the fourth quarter of 2020 and on a seasonally adjusted basis, business receipts of the tourism, convention and exhibition services domain decreased by 18.0%, whereas those of the computer and information technology services domain increased by 14.7%.

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that most of the major service industries registered year-on-year growth in business receipts in the first quarter of 2021, yet the pace of recovery was uneven across industries. Specifically, business receipts of import/export trade, warehousing and storage, courier, and financing (except banking) continued to increase visibly. Business receipts in some other industries, such as wholesale, retail, transportation,

accommodation services, information and communications, and real estate, also increased, but it was mainly due to low bases of comparison and the business receipts of some of these sectors were still well below their levels before the recession. Meanwhile, business receipts of some industries such as food services and banking declined in the first quarter.

The spokesman further pointed out that the economic recovery, coupled with the Government's relief measures, should render support to the services industries in the near term. Yet, the evolving global pandemic is still a key source of uncertainty, and the business environment for some industries, including those consumption- and tourism-related industries, will remain challenging. It is essential for the community as a whole to keep the epidemic under control and actively participate in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme so as to create favourable conditions for a full-fledged economic recovery. The Government will continue to monitor the developments closely.

Further information

Table 1 presents the business receipts indices and their corresponding year-on-year rates of change in respect of selected service industries and service domains for the recent five quarters, while Table 2 shows the corresponding quarter-to-quarter rates of change in the business receipts indices for the recent five quarters based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The revised figures of business receipts indices for the first quarter of 2021 will be released at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web_table.html?id=93) and relevant publications of the C&SD starting from July 20, 2021.

Data for compiling the business receipts indices are mainly based on the Quarterly Survey of Service Industries conducted by the C&SD, supplemented by relevant data provided by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

A service domain differs from a service industry in that it comprises those economic activities which straddle different industries but are somehow related to a common theme. It may include all activities carried out by all establishments in a service industry that is closely related to the domain. For a service industry that is less closely related, however, only a portion of the establishments in the industry or even only part of the economic activities of the establishments is related to the domain. Taking the tourism, convention and exhibition services domain as an example, it includes all services of hotels and travel agents, and some (those involving visitors as customers) but not all of the services of restaurants, retailers and transport operators.

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

More detailed statistics are given in the report "Quarterly Business Receipts Indices for Service Industries, First Quarter 2021". Users can

download this publication at the website of the C&SD
(www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080006&scode=520).

Members of the public who have enquiries about the business receipts indices may contact the Business Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7267 or email: business-receipts@censtatd.gov.hk).