

Results of monthly survey on business situation of small and medium-sized enterprises for November 2021

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (December 9) the results of the Monthly Survey on Business Situation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) for November 2021.

The current diffusion index (DI) on business receipts amongst SMEs decreased from 46.7 in October 2021 in the contractionary zone to 45.5 in November 2021, whereas the one-month's ahead (i.e. December 2021) outlook DI on business receipts was 49.3. Analysed by sector, the current DIs on business receipts for many surveyed sectors dropped by varying degrees in November 2021 as compared with previous month, particularly for the retail trade (from 48.6 to 43.6) and real estate (from 43.9 to 42.9). On the other hand, the current DI on business receipts for restaurants increased from 44.2 in October 2021 to 47.2 in November 2021.

The current DI on new orders for the import and export trades decreased from 49.1 in October 2021 to 47.4 in November 2021, whereas the outlook DI on new orders in one month's time (i.e. December 2021) was 48.8.

Commentary

A government spokesman said that business sentiment among SMEs softened further in November, but the business situation in the coming month was expected to stabilise. Meanwhile, hiring sentiment was broadly stable.

The spokesman added that development of the global pandemic and supply bottlenecks in many places remain the key uncertainties over the economic outlook. Nonetheless, as long as the local epidemic situation remains under control, the improving employment and income conditions together with the Consumption Voucher Scheme would continue to support consumption-related activities in the near term. It is crucial for the community to strive towards more widespread vaccination and abide by the anti-epidemic measures, so as to strengthen the foundation for a broad-based economic recovery. The Government will monitor the situation closely.

Further information

The Monthly Survey on Business Situation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises aims to provide a quick reference, with minimum time lag, for assessing the short-term business situation faced by SMEs. SMEs covered in this survey refer to establishments with fewer than 50 persons engaged. Respondents were asked to exclude seasonal fluctuations in reporting their views. Based on the views collected from the survey, a set of diffusion indices (including current and outlook diffusion indices) is compiled. A reading above 50 indicates that the business condition is generally

favourable, whereas that below 50 indicates otherwise. As for statistics on the business prospects of prominent establishments in Hong Kong, users may refer to the publication entitled "Report on Quarterly Business Tendency Survey" released by the C&SD.

It should be noted that the results of the survey should be interpreted with care. The survey solicits feedback from a panel sample of about 600 SMEs each month and the survey findings are thus subject to sample size constraint. Views collected from the survey refer only to those of respondents on their own establishments rather than those on the respective sectors they are engaged in. Besides, in this type of opinion survey on expected business situation, the views collected in the survey are affected by the events in the community occurring around the time of enumeration, and it is difficult to establish precisely the extent to which respondents' perception of the business situation accords with the underlying trends. For this survey, main bulk of the data were collected in the last week of the reference month.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Monthly Survey on the Business Situation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises". Users can download the publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1080015&scode=300).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact Industrial Production Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7246; email: sme-survey@censtatd.gov.hk).