

24 February 2022 | 1100 hrs | 032/2021

During the fourth quarter of 2021, seasonally adjusted services turnover increased by 3.8 per cent over the third quarter of 2021. When compared to the same quarter of 2020, working-day adjusted turnover in selected service activities increased by 18.4 per cent.

Short-term Services Indicators: Q4/2021

Cut-off date:
15 February 2022

Quarterly comparison

After adjusting for seasonal effects and the working-day pattern, the total services turnover index increased by 3.8 per cent between the third and fourth quarters of 2021.

The highest increase was registered in the accommodation and food service activities (36.6 per cent). Positive turnover percentage changes were also recorded in motor trade (20.5 per cent), administrative and support service activities (13.3 per cent), information and communication (9.8 per cent), real estate activities (4.9 per cent) and retail trade (2.1 per cent). On the other hand, the turnover indices of professional, scientific and technical activities, transportation and storage and wholesale trade registered decreases of 7.1 per cent, 3.7 per cent and 1.2 per cent respectively (Table 1).

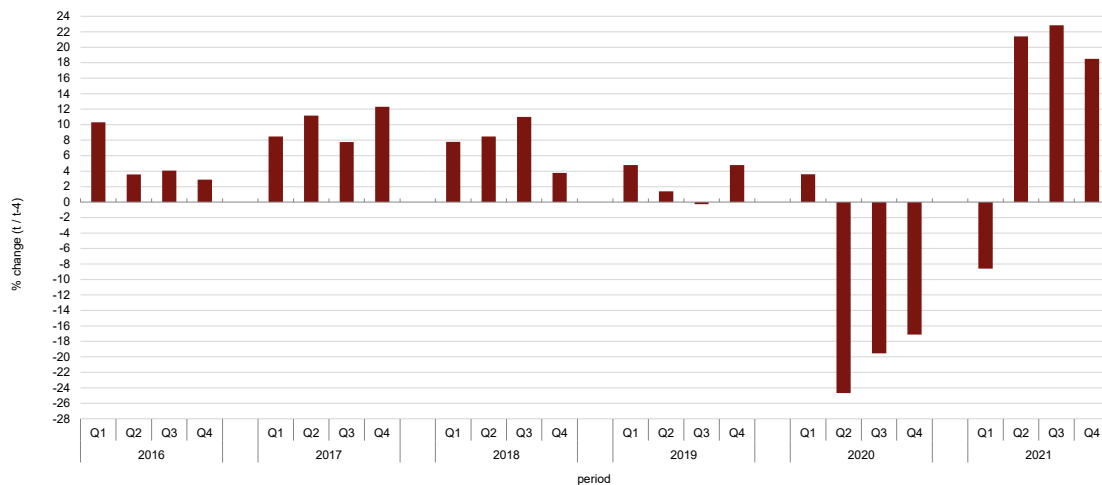
The number of persons employed (Table 3) and gross wages and salaries (Table 5) increased by 0.3 per cent and 0.8 per cent respectively between the third and fourth quarters of 2021. On the other hand, the index for hours worked (Table 7) decreased by 0.8 per cent.

Annual comparison

During the fourth quarter of 2021, the total services turnover index increased by 18.4 per cent on an annual basis after adjusting for the working-day pattern. Turnover increases were registered across all the services activities with the highest increase being recorded in the accommodation and food service activities (80.0 per cent). This was followed by increases in motor trade (41.3 per cent), transportation and storage (22.3 per cent), information and communication (22.2 per cent), real estate activities (21.4 per cent), wholesale trade (17.7 per cent), administrative and support service activities (11.0 per cent), professional, scientific and technical activities (9.8 per cent) and retail trade (8.7 per cent) (Table 2).

The indicators for the number of persons employed (Table 4), gross wages and salaries (Table 6) and hours worked (Table 8) increased by 2.1 per cent, 8.6 per cent and 4.3 per cent respectively over the fourth quarter of 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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with previous quarter				
	2020				2021				2020		2021		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	102.9	111.1	109.3	117.3	118.9				1.8	7.9	-1.6	7.3	1.4
Motor trade	102.4	101.7	104.9	120.1	144.7				0.0	-0.8	3.2	14.4	20.5
Wholesale trade	93.4	107.5	103.5	111.1	109.8				-1.4	15.1	-3.7	7.3	-1.2
Retail trade	119.9	120.1	122.6	127.2	129.9				6.8	0.2	2.0	3.8	2.1
Food	124.7	126.0	126.3	131.9	134.8				5.8	1.0	0.2	4.5	2.2
Non-food	116.8	116.5	120.0	124.0	126.7				7.8	-0.2	3.0	3.4	2.2
Transportation and storage	119.4	128.2	129.6	151.9	146.3				16.6	7.4	1.1	17.2	-3.7
Accommodation and food service activities	55.0	67.9	29.6	65.9	90.0				91.2	23.4	-56.4	122.7	36.6
Information and communication	179.7	173.4	194.7	200.0	219.6				13.9	-3.5	12.3	2.7	9.8
Real estate activities	120.9	142.0	149.6	140.0	146.8				12.6	17.4	5.4	-6.4	4.9
Professional, scientific and technical activities	95.6	115.3	113.4	113.4	105.3				-5.5	20.6	-1.6	0.0	-7.1
Administrative and support service activities	107.6	107.3	87.6	107.4	121.7				15.0	-0.3	-18.4	22.7	13.3
Total	108.6	120.1	115.9	124.0	128.7				7.6	10.6	-3.5	6.9	3.8

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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
	2020				2021				2020		2021		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	106.9	103.1	110.4	120.0	123.4				-13.5	-10.2	16.0	16.0	15.4
Motor trade	100.6	99.9	109.3	119.3	142.1				7.8	-7.8	38.0	17.3	41.3
Wholesale trade	95.6	100.6	104.3	114.8	112.5				-21.4	-13.5	13.6	17.4	17.7
Retail trade	129.3	108.5	122.1	129.7	140.5				-2.7	-4.4	16.8	13.5	8.7
Food	129.8	116.0	124.6	138.1	140.8				-4.4	-9.1	9.0	12.0	8.5
Non-food	129.0	103.6	120.5	124.2	140.3				-1.6	-0.5	22.7	14.5	8.8
Transportation and storage	114.0	115.1	134.7	167.9	139.4				-23.7	-18.4	26.1	48.6	22.3
Accommodation and food service activities	43.5	32.0	40.8	102.2	78.3				-62.0	-49.3	99.5	57.3	80.0
Information and communication	179.7	173.4	194.7	200.0	219.6				12.1	17.2	30.0	26.8	22.2
Real estate activities	120.9	142.0	149.6	140.0	146.8				-37.5	6.1	73.1	30.5	21.4
Professional, scientific and technical activities	101.6	108.9	115.8	110.3	111.6				-13.0	6.4	16.8	12.3	9.8
Administrative and support service activities	101.2	94.1	97.4	113.9	112.3				-35.5	-28.2	8.9	15.1	11.0
Total	110.6	108.4	118.2	131.4	131.0				-17.1	-8.6	21.4	22.9	18.4

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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with previous quarter				
	2020				2021				2020		2021		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	106.8	105.9	107.3	109.0	108.3	105.9	107.3	109.0	108.3	0.5	1.3	1.6	-0.6
Motor trade	113.2	114.9	115.4	116.7	116.5	114.9	115.4	116.7	116.5	1.8	0.5	1.1	-0.2
Wholesale trade	104.7	102.5	105.4	106.6	105.6	102.5	105.4	106.6	105.6	-0.7	2.8	1.1	-0.9
Retail trade	107.1	106.7	107.2	109.3	108.8	106.7	107.2	109.3	108.8	1.1	0.5	1.9	-0.5
Food	112.9	112.8	112.7	112.0	110.8	112.8	112.7	112.0	110.8	2.4	-0.1	-0.6	-1.1
Non-food	104.5	103.9	104.7	108.1	107.9	103.9	104.7	108.1	107.9	0.5	0.8	3.2	-0.2
Transportation and storage	101.0	99.6	98.2	99.4	101.2	99.6	98.2	99.4	101.2	-0.1	-1.4	1.2	1.8
Accommodation and food service activities	77.7	76.9	77.3	80.6	82.7	76.9	77.3	80.6	82.7	-4.6	0.5	4.3	2.6
Information and communication	101.4	96.7	98.5	100.4	103.1	96.7	98.5	100.4	103.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	2.7
Real estate activities	103.2	105.8	107.3	107.1	105.0	105.8	107.3	107.1	105.0	0.5	1.4	-0.2	-2.0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	110.0	111.6	113.5	114.6	115.0	111.6	113.5	114.6	115.0	0.4	1.7	1.0	0.3
Administrative and support service activities	127.1	123.9	127.0	125.3	127.5	123.9	127.0	125.3	127.5	-1.4	2.5	-1.4	1.8
Total	103.0	102.6	104.5	104.6	104.9	102.6	104.5	104.6	104.9	-1.0	1.8	0.1	0.3

Table 4. Services employment index by period and NACE classification
Unadjusted¹

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
	2020				2021				2020		2021		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	106.8	105.9	107.3	109.0	108.3	105.9	107.3	109.0	108.3	-5.6	1.2	2.6	1.4
Motor trade	113.2	114.9	115.4	116.7	116.5	114.9	115.4	116.7	116.5	-0.7	3.3	4.9	2.9
Wholesale trade	104.7	102.5	105.4	106.6	105.6	102.5	105.4	106.6	105.6	-5.7	-0.9	1.0	0.9
Retail trade	107.1	106.7	107.2	109.3	108.8	106.7	107.2	109.3	108.8	-6.3	2.2	3.2	1.6
Food	112.9	112.8	112.7	112.0	110.8	112.8	112.7	112.0	110.8	-4.0	1.5	1.6	-1.9
Non-food	104.5	103.9	104.7	108.1	107.9	103.9	104.7	108.1	107.9	-7.4	2.6	3.9	3.3
Transportation and storage	100.5	99.4	98.2	100.1	100.8	99.4	98.2	100.1	100.8	-9.2	-4.6	-1.6	0.3
Accommodation and food service activities	78.1	74.5	75.2	84.4	83.4	74.5	75.2	84.4	83.4	-19.7	-9.3	-1.0	6.8
Information and communication	101.6	97.0	97.7	100.6	103.5	97.0	97.7	100.6	103.5	-4.0	-1.4	0.9	1.9
Real estate activities	103.2	105.8	107.3	107.1	105.0	105.8	107.3	107.1	105.0	-1.8	2.5	4.4	1.7
Professional, scientific and technical activities	110.0	111.6	113.5	114.6	115.0	111.6	113.5	114.6	115.0	-8.0	5.9	4.6	4.5
Administrative and support service activities	127.1	123.9	127.0	125.3	127.5	123.9	127.0	125.3	127.5	-5.7	-1.2	-2.9	0.3
Total	103.7	101.9	103.1	105.7	105.9	101.9	103.1	105.7	105.9	-8.4	-1.3	0.5	2.1

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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with previous quarter				
	2020				2021				2021				
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	128.4	132.0	134.1	135.8	142.4	2.1	2.8	1.6	1.2	4.9			
Motor trade	127.6	146.0	144.1	146.5	154.6	-1.8	14.4	-1.3	1.6	5.5			
Wholesale trade	125.7	128.8	130.8	132.8	140.6	2.3	2.4	1.6	1.6	5.9			
Retail trade	131.4	133.0	136.4	137.7	142.2	2.0	1.3	2.5	1.0	3.3			
Food	132.5	128.5	139.4	139.1	145.7	3.2	-3.0	8.5	-0.2	4.7			
Non-food	131.7	134.0	135.1	137.3	141.6	1.9	1.7	0.8	1.6	3.1			
Transportation and storage	109.5	108.7	118.7	110.1	116.9	7.1	-0.7	9.2	-7.3	6.2			
Accommodation and food service activities	83.0	83.1	81.4	108.2	110.1	-7.6	0.1	-2.0	33.0	1.8			
Information and communication	132.3	128.0	126.0	128.2	128.9	8.0	-3.2	-1.6	1.7	0.5			
Real estate activities	122.8	117.9	120.4	116.5	126.5	10.0	-4.0	2.1	-3.2	8.6			
Professional, scientific and technical activities	115.8	114.6	115.7	124.9	125.8	4.4	-1.0	1.0	8.0	0.7			
Administrative and support service activities	145.9	136.5	143.4	138.7	152.8	11.4	-6.4	5.0	-3.3	10.2			
Total	119.3	119.7	126.8	127.8	128.8	1.8	0.3	5.9	0.8	0.8			

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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
	2020				2021				2021				
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	132.6	131.8	132.0	133.5	147.2	-3.4	-2.6	10.9	7.7	11.0			
Motor trade	130.4	143.9	143.3	146.1	158.0	-12.5	0.7	16.9	12.7	21.2			
Wholesale trade	130.8	129.9	128.3	128.5	146.8	-2.6	-2.5	9.6	7.7	12.2			
Retail trade	135.0	131.9	134.5	137.0	146.0	-2.7	-3.4	11.3	6.9	8.1			
Food	132.5	128.5	139.4	139.1	145.7	-3.1	-8.5	11.9	8.4	10.0			
Non-food	136.1	133.4	132.4	136.2	146.1	-2.5	-1.1	11.0	6.2	7.3			
Transportation and storage	109.5	108.7	118.7	110.1	116.9	-11.2	-15.8	10.6	7.7	6.8			
Accommodation and food service activities	83.3	79.5	81.8	111.4	110.7	-29.4	-28.9	-0.7	20.1	32.9			
Information and communication	132.3	128.0	126.0	128.2	128.9	5.4	-2.0	0.1	4.6	-2.6			
Real estate activities	122.8	117.9	120.4	116.5	126.5	-5.4	-7.2	11.9	4.3	3.0			
Professional, scientific and technical activities	115.8	114.6	115.7	124.9	125.8	-2.7	-0.5	5.8	12.7	8.6			
Administrative and support service activities	145.9	136.5	143.4	138.7	152.8	-8.8	-4.2	5.8	6.0	4.7			
Total	123.6	119.9	122.9	126.5	134.2	-7.3	-7.9	6.7	9.0	8.6			

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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with previous quarter				
	2020				2021				2020		2021		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	105.6	105.4	107.1	107.1	108.1					-0.3	1.5	0.0	0.9
Motor trade	114.7	114.5	115.4	120.1	118.8					-1.6	0.8	4.1	-1.1
Wholesale trade	101.1	98.9	104.2	104.3	103.4					-2.8	5.4	0.1	-0.9
Retail trade	107.3	108.6	108.7	108.8	109.8					0.1	0.0	0.2	0.9
Food	118.8	115.3	120.1	120.2	122.3					0.6	4.2	0.0	1.7
Non-food	102.5	105.1	103.2	104.0	104.7					0.0	-1.8	0.8	0.7
Transportation and storage	98.1	99.3	101.2	100.4	102.9					-3.5	1.9	-0.8	2.5
Accommodation and food service activities	76.6	74.5	70.6	91.4	91.2					-3.0	-5.3	29.6	-0.2
Information and communication	97.7	93.3	91.7	98.4	93.9					2.6	-1.7	7.4	-4.6
Real estate activities	101.0	101.3	107.1	97.3	106.1					7.9	5.7	-9.1	9.0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	112.1	112.1	112.3	115.2	114.2					0.5	0.2	2.6	-0.9
Administrative and support service activities	127.0	129.9	128.3	130.4	129.2					0.7	-1.3	1.7	-0.9
Total	101.4	102.9	106.5	106.0	105.2					-0.9	3.5	-0.5	-0.8

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

Economic Activity (NACE)	2020				2021				% change compared with same quarter of the previous year				
	2020				2021				2020		2021		
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	106.0	104.1	107.0	108.1	108.5					-6.4	4.8	1.1	2.4
Motor trade	114.7	114.5	115.4	120.1	118.8					-1.5	10.0	3.0	3.6
Wholesale trade	101.1	98.9	104.2	104.3	103.4					-8.2	1.8	0.2	2.2
Retail trade	108.9	106.9	108.1	109.6	111.5					-5.6	6.6	1.5	2.4
Food	120.6	113.1	119.1	121.7	124.1					-0.7	7.9	1.7	2.9
Non-food	103.8	103.7	103.0	104.4	106.0					-8.0	6.0	1.4	2.1
Transportation and storage	99.1	97.5	100.9	101.5	104.0					-12.4	3.7	-1.2	4.9
Accommodation and food service activities	75.6	67.2	71.5	98.9	90.2					-28.6	12.3	14.4	19.3
Information and communication	97.7	93.3	91.7	98.4	93.9					-5.4	-4.7	3.4	-3.9
Real estate activities	101.0	101.3	107.1	97.3	106.1					-9.3	15.7	4.0	5.0
Professional, scientific and technical activities	112.1	112.1	112.3	115.2	114.2					-4.1	4.8	3.2	1.9
Administrative and support service activities	127.4	125.2	128.5	134.5	129.6					-7.9	10.2	3.4	1.7
Total	103.5	99.8	102.7	110.3	108.0					-10.9	5.5	3.9	4.3

Methodological Notes

1. The aim of this news release 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 in the 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, since adjustments are made directly to the aggregated raw data.

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:

[EUROSTAT Website/Homepage/Statistics Database](#)

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