

Employment and vacancies statistics for December 2020

According to the figures released today (March 19) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), total employment in the private sector surveyed decreased by 4.7% or 132 100 persons in December 2020 compared with a year earlier. The total number of vacancies was 35 060, representing a decrease of 36% or 19 370 over the preceding year.

Employment statistics

In December 2020, the selected industries as a whole employed 2 687 900 persons. The import and export trade engaged 388 300 persons, followed by professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) engaging 306 600 persons, retail trade 250 300 persons, financing and insurance 238 700 persons, education 204 800 persons, and food and beverage services 202 700 persons.

Employment decreased in many surveyed industries compared with a year earlier. Decreases in employment were mainly recorded in the industries of accommodation services (covering hotels, guesthouses, boarding houses and other establishments providing short term accommodation) (-19.1% or -7 900 persons); food and beverage services (-13.6% or -31 800 persons); import and export trade (-11.6% or -50 800 persons); wholesale (-10.1% or -5 600 persons); and transportation, storage, postal and courier services (-7.5% or -13 400 persons). On the other hand, employment increased mainly in the industries of human health services (3.4% or 4 700 persons), cleaning and similar services (1.2% or 1 000 persons), and real estate (1.2% or 1 700 persons). Employment figures for selected major industries are shown in Table 1.

Vacancies statistics

Among the 35 060 private sector vacancies, 4 730 were from the industry of financing and insurance, 3 800 from education, 3 600 from residential care and social work services, 3 570 from professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services), and 2 910 from retail trade.

Vacancies decreased in all the selected industries in December 2020 over a year earlier. Decreases were more notable in the industries of professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) (-2 540 or -42%); arts, entertainment, recreation and other services (-2 180 or -67%); food and beverage services (-2 040 or -52%); retail trade (-1 960 or -40%); and import and export trade (-1 570 or -39%). 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 (9 120

vacancies), service and sales workers (7 580 vacancies), and elementary occupations (6 270 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 September 2020, the seasonally adjusted total employment and total vacancies in the surveyed industries decreased by 0.9% and 8.9% respectively in December 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, December 2020"
(www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050003)

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

Users can download these publications 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, the C&SD (Tel: 2582 5076; fax: 2827 2296; email: employment@censtatd.gov.hk).