



SINGAPORE DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS

PRESS RELEASE

Wholesale Trade Index Fourth Quarter 2009

Highlights

Domestic Wholesale Trade

- Domestic wholesale trade (seasonally adjusted) increased by 10.0% in 4Q2009 compared to 3Q2009, with increased sales in general wholesale trade, petroleum & petroleum products and electronic components. Excluding petroleum, overall domestic sales grew by 6.1%.
- Compared to the same period a year ago, domestic wholesale trade in 4Q2009 increased by 19.4%, with higher sales in the general wholesale trade, petroleum & petroleum products and telecommunications & computers sectors. The increase was also partly due to price effect. After removing price effect, domestic wholesale trade volume showed a year-on-year increase of 8.3%.

Foreign Wholesale Trade

- Foreign wholesale trade (seasonally adjusted) increased by 11.5% in 4Q2009 over 3Q2009, with higher sales in most of the wholesale sectors. Excluding petroleum, foreign wholesale trade rose by 8.9% over the previous quarter.
- Compared to the same period a year ago, foreign wholesale trade increased by 12.6%, with strong growths in petroleum & petroleum products and chemicals & chemical products sectors. Excluding petroleum, foreign wholesale trade increased by 2.5%.
- After adjusting for price changes, foreign wholesale trade volume grew by 3.2%. Excluding petroleum, the foreign wholesale trade volume increased by 4.2% over a year ago.

Domestic Wholesale Trade by Sector

Quarter-on-Quarter Change (Seasonally Adjusted)

All sectors, except industrial & construction machinery, registered positive growths in domestic wholesale trade in 4Q2009 over 3Q2009.

Sectors that registered double-digit increases over the previous quarter included general wholesale trade (21.9%), petroleum & petroleum products (12.8%) and electronic components (11.5%). After removing price effect, domestic sales volume of the general wholesale trade and electronic components sectors increased by 20.5% and 13.1% respectively, while that of the petroleum & petroleum products sector declined by 3.6%.

Other sectors such as food, beverages & tobacco, telecommunications & computers, timber, paints & construction materials, household equipment & furniture as well as chemicals & chemical products experienced quarter-on-quarter increases of between 5.1% and 7.9%.

In contrast, the industrial & construction machinery sector declined by 5.3% in domestic wholesale trade compared to 3Q2009.

Year-on-Year Change

In 4Q2009, most wholesale sectors reported year-on-year increases in domestic wholesale trade.

Domestic wholesale trade of general wholesale trade, petroleum & petroleum products and telecommunications & computers increased by between 26.9% and 39.3% over the same period a year ago. After removing price effect, the sales volume of general wholesale trade and telecommunications & computers sectors increased by 34.8% and 34.9% respectively while that of the petroleum & petroleum products sectors increased by 11.5%.

Other sectors that experienced double-digit year-on-year increases in domestic wholesale trade included household equipment & furniture (14.1%), chemicals & chemical products (11.1%) and electronic components (10.6%).

Sectors that experienced negative growths included ship chandlers & bunkering (-17.8%), industrial & construction machinery (-11.7%) and transport equipment (-5.1%).

Foreign Wholesale Trade by Sector

Quarter-on-Quarter Change (Seasonally Adjusted)

After seasonal adjustment, all sectors other than household equipment & furniture reported positive quarter-on-quarter growths in foreign wholesale trade in 4Q2009.

Sectors such as the industrial & construction machinery, timber, paints & construction materials and electronic components recorded double-digit increases of between 13.3% and 17.4% over the previous quarter. Foreign wholesale trade of food, beverages & tobacco, petroleum & petroleum products and telecommunications & computers rose by between 7.2% and 9.9%.

On the other hand, the household equipment & furniture sector experienced a marginal drop of 0.8% in foreign wholesale trade over 3Q2009.

Year-on-Year Change

Most sectors registered higher foreign sales in 4Q2009 compared to 4Q2008.

The petroleum & petroleum products, chemicals & chemical products and food, beverages & tobacco sectors experienced double-digit increases of between 10.8% and 28.1%. After adjusting for price changes, foreign wholesale trade volume for chemicals & chemical products and food, beverages & tobacco sectors rose by 11.0% and 14.3% respectively while that of the petroleum & petroleum products sector increased by a smaller 2.1%.

Foreign sales of the timber, paints & construction materials and electronic components sectors increased by 8.5% and 7.8% respectively.

On the other hand, foreign sales of the household equipment & furniture sector was 5.7% lower compared to a year ago, while that of the transport equipment sector remained at similar level.

**Table 1 Quarter-on-Quarter Change of Domestic Wholesale Trade Index (2007=100)¹
(Seasonally Adjusted)**

Activity	Weights	% Change at Current Prices		% Change at Constant Prices	
		3Q09 / 2Q09	4Q09 / 3Q09	3Q09 / 2Q09	4Q09 / 3Q09
Total	10,000	8.7	10.0	1.6	1.3
Total (Excluding petroleum)	5,604	5.5	6.1	2.4	4.4
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	407	4.3	7.9	3.5	7.9
Household Equipment & Furniture	298	4.5	6.1	5.6	9.2
Petroleum & Petroleum Products	4,396	15.0	12.8	1.6	-3.6
Chemicals & Chemical Products	406	16.9	5.1	10.8	-3.8
Electronic Components	839	7.4	11.5	9.8	13.1
Industrial & Construction Machinery	285	-9.6	-5.3	-4.1	-2.9
Telecommunications & Computers	567	5.7	7.7	7.4	11.7
Timber, Paints & Construction Materials	357	11.7	6.6	15.1	6.3
General Wholesale Trade	572	9.7	21.9	2.5	20.5
Ship Chandlers & Bunkering	883	11.1	1.4	-4.8	-3.2
Other Wholesale Trade	800	6.9	6.5	6.5	6.1

**Table 2 Quarter-on-Quarter Change of Foreign Wholesale Trade Index (2007=100)¹
(Seasonally Adjusted)**

Activity	Weights	% Change at Current Prices		% Change at Constant Prices	
		3Q09 / 2Q09	4Q09 / 3Q09	3Q09 / 2Q09	4Q09 / 3Q09
Total	10,000	2.9	11.5	-1.2	3.1
Total (Excluding petroleum)	5,456	-3.1	8.9	-2.3	5.7
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	374	-10.9	9.9	-10.4	10.9
Household Equipment & Furniture	287	4.8	-0.8	7.1	3.6
Petroleum & Petroleum Products	4,544	13.0	7.5	-0.9	-1.0
Chemicals & Chemical Products	513	6.3	2.3	-1.5	-0.1
Electronic Components	1,084	-4.2	13.3	-4.3	12.6
Industrial & Construction Machinery	257	-5.6	17.4	-5.6	32.4
Telecommunications & Computers	799	12.8	7.2	14.9	8.8
Timber, Paints & Construction Materials	186	8.6	15.4	7.2	15.2
General Wholesale Trade	574	-2.0	2.8	-3.7	3.0
Ship Chandlers & Bunkering	229	19.1	4.7	5.8	-0.9
Other Wholesale Trade	865	-7.5	16.0	-6.9	2.9

¹ The industry "Transport Equipment" is not presented in showing seasonally adjusted figures. The series was first introduced in 1Q2007 and is too short for seasonal adjustment.

Table 3 Year-on-Year Change of Domestic Wholesale Trade Index (2007=100)

Activity	Weights	% Change at Current Prices		% Change at Constant Prices	
		3Q09 / 3Q08	4Q09 / 4Q08	3Q09 / 3Q08	4Q09 / 4Q08
Total	10,000	-23.3	19.4	5.1	8.3
Total (Excluding petroleum)	5,604	-15.7	6.6	-2.8	5.7
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	407	-1.1	5.7	0.0	7.5
Household Equipment & Furniture	298	1.5	14.1	-1.3	17.1
Petroleum & Petroleum Products	4,396	-30.1	37.7	14.9	11.5
Chemicals & Chemical Products	406	-11.6	11.1	27.8	2.1
Electronic Components	839	-19.3	10.6	-19.4	14.6
Industrial & Construction Machinery	285	-3.1	-11.7	1.3	-0.2
Telecommunications & Computers	567	-3.5	26.9	-5.0	34.9
Timber, Paints & Construction Materials	357	-14.7	7.0	-1.2	22.4
General Wholesale Trade	572	-23.8	39.3	-6.5	34.8
Ship Chandlers & Bunkering	883	-38.9	-17.8	-0.1	-30.3
Transport Equipment	190	-12.3	-5.1	-15.2	-3.8
Other Wholesale Trade	800	-0.1	7.9	1.7	8.3

Table 4 Year-on-Year Change of Foreign Wholesale Trade Index (2007=100)

Activity	Weights	% Change at Current Prices		% Change at Constant Prices	
		3Q09 / 3Q08	4Q09 / 4Q08	3Q09 / 3Q08	4Q09 / 4Q08
Total	10,000	-28.6	12.6	-5.1	3.2
Total (Excluding petroleum)	5,456	-21.7	2.5	-13.2	4.2
Food, Beverages & Tobacco	374	-2.8	10.8	-3.3	14.3
Household Equipment & Furniture	287	-15.2	-5.7	-12.2	0.5
Petroleum & Petroleum Products	4,544	-35.7	28.1	6.9	2.1
Chemicals & Chemical Products	513	-26.5	15.9	4.2	11.0
Electronic Components	1,084	-19.7	7.8	-22.0	11.4
Industrial & Construction Machinery	257	-33.0	-17.6	-31.5	-6.7
Telecommunications & Computers	799	-3.4	3.9	-1.9	11.0
Timber, Paints & Construction Materials	186	-24.3	8.5	-9.4	18.0
General Wholesale Trade	574	-35.5	1.2	-27.4	3.0
Ship Chandlers & Bunkering	229	-35.8	5.1	6.9	-6.7
Transport Equipment	288	-19.2	0.0	-25.8	-3.6
Other Wholesale Trade	865	-27.1	-4.3	-11.0	-7.4

Explanatory Notes

Introduction

The Wholesale Trade Index (WTI) measures the performance of wholesale trade activities. Two series of the WTI are compiled - the Domestic WTI and Foreign WTI. The Domestic WTI records wholesale sales in Singapore. The Foreign WTI pertains to wholesale sales outside Singapore, which comprises domestic exports, re-exports, transshipment cargo and offshore merchandise.

The WTI indices are presented at both current prices and constant prices. The indices at current prices measure the changes of sales value which can result from changes in both price and quantity. By removing the price effect, the indices at constant prices measure the changes in the sales volume.

To reflect the changes in the structure of the wholesale trade sector over the years, the weighting patterns of the index series are revised regularly. The WTI series have been re-based from base year 2000 to 2007, the second re-basing exercise since the index was first introduced in 1995. The new WTI series (2007=100) have been released with effect from 1Q2008 report.

Data Collection

Data for the compilation of the WTI are obtained from the results of the quarterly survey of over 1,000 wholesale establishments. Wholesalers supply the merchandise to manufacturers, commercial and institutional clients for use in production, or to other wholesalers and retailers for resale. Wholesalers may also perform related functions such as sorting, breaking bulk, packing and logistics services. Data are collected from a sample of the wholesale establishments for quarterly domestic wholesale sales and foreign wholesale sales.

Index Compilation

To derive the Domestic / Foreign WTI index at detailed industry level, the quarterly domestic / foreign wholesale sales for that industry is divided by the average quarterly domestic / foreign sales for the same industry in base year. The overall WTI index is then computed by combining the sales indices of the detailed industries, using the weights to measure each industry's relative importance in the overall wholesale trade sector.

To derive the constant prices indices, the sales indices at current prices at the detailed industry level are first deflated by appropriate price indices. These component indices at constant prices are then weighted and aggregated to derive the overall indices at constant prices.

Seasonal Adjustment

Seasonal effects are observed in some of the Domestic WTI and Foreign WTI series, due to intra-year periodic variations that repeat in the same quarter every year. Seasonal adjustment is the process of estimating and removing the seasonal effects from a time series to show more clearly its underlying trend and short-term movements.

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More data are available at SingStat website at <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/pubn/business.html#wti>
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