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Services Survey Series

The Services Sector

Reference Year 2018

Services Survey Series

Reference Year 2018

THE SERVICES SECTOR



SINGAPORE DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS

Services Survey Series 2018 –

The Services Sector

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The Singapore Department of Statistics conducts an annual survey on the services industries to collect a wide range of data for studies and analyses. The first survey on the services industries was conducted in 1968 for the reference year 1967 and subsequently at regular intervals. Since 1984, the inquiry was carried out on an annual basis.

The latest survey was carried out in 2019 for reference year 2018. This report focuses on several services industries of importance to the Singapore economy. It aims to provide a comprehensive view of the performance of the services sector. The detailed statistical tables can be found on the Department of Statistics' website.

The publication of this report is made possible by the co-operation of the businesses and organisations which provided information for the survey. I would like to express my appreciation to them and to all others who have contributed towards this publication.

Wong Wee Kim
Chief Statistician
Singapore

February 2020

Our Vision

A National Statistical System of Quality, Integrity and Expertise.

Our Mission

We Deliver Insightful Statistics and Trusted Statistical Services that Empower Decision Making.

Our Guiding Principles

Professionalism & Expertise	<i>We adhere to professional ethics and develop statistical competency to produce quality statistics that comply with international concepts and best practices.</i>
Relevance & Reliability	<i>We produce statistics that users need and trust.</i>
Accessibility	<i>We facilitate ease of access to our statistics through user-friendly platforms.</i>
Confidentiality	<i>We protect the confidentiality of information collected by us.</i>
Timeliness	<i>We disseminate statistics at the earliest possible date while maintaining data quality.</i>
Innovation	<i>We constantly seek ways to improve our processes, leveraging on new technology, to deliver better products and services to users.</i>
Collaboration	<i>We engage users on data needs, data providers and respondents on supply of data, and undertake the role of national statistical coordination.</i>
Effectiveness	<i>We optimise resource utilization, leveraging on administrative and alternate data sources to ease respondent burden.</i>

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NOTES

The Services Survey Series contains statistics that are the most recent available at the time of its preparation.

Numbers may not add up to the totals due to rounding.

Industries are classified according to the Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) 2015 (version 2018).

Values are shown in Singapore dollars (unless otherwise stated).

Some statistics, particularly for the more recent time periods are preliminary and may be subject to revision in later issues.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

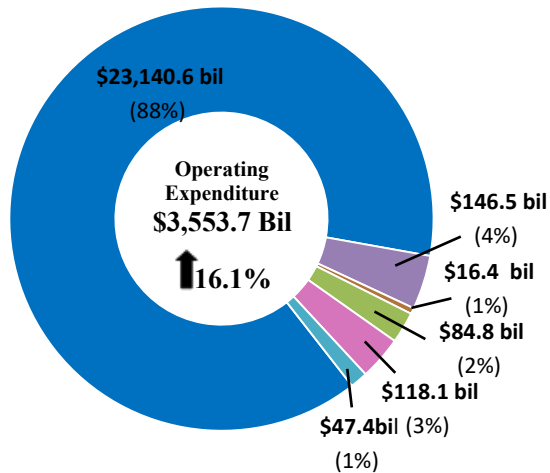
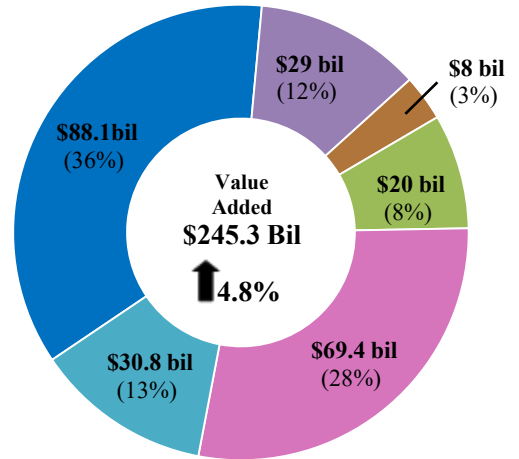
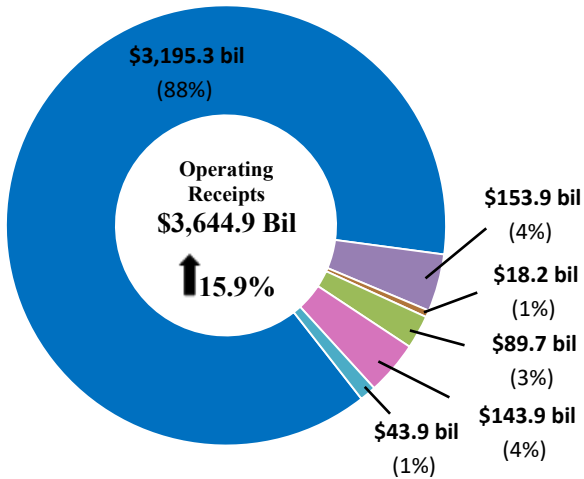
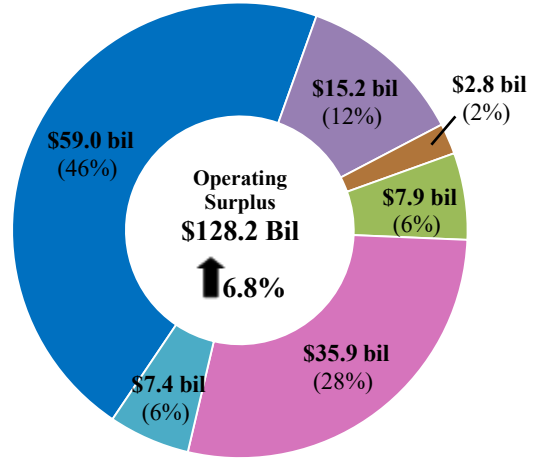
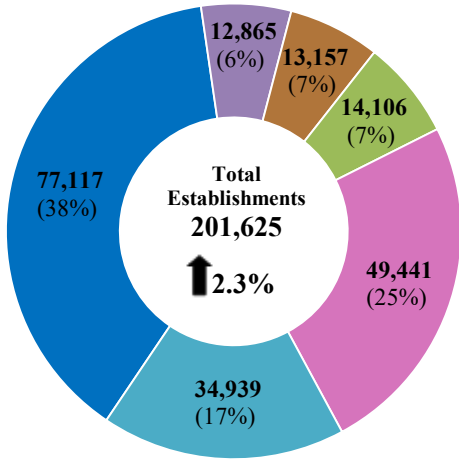
Obtain statistical data series on the services industries through the SingStat Website at <http://www.tablebuilder.singstat.gov.sg>

Visualize key insights through easy-to-understand infographics at <http://www.singstat.gov.sg/find-data/search-by-theme/industry/services/visualising-data>

PART I
SUMMARY FINDINGS

Key Indicators of The Services Sector¹ 2018

Value and % Share of Industry Groups



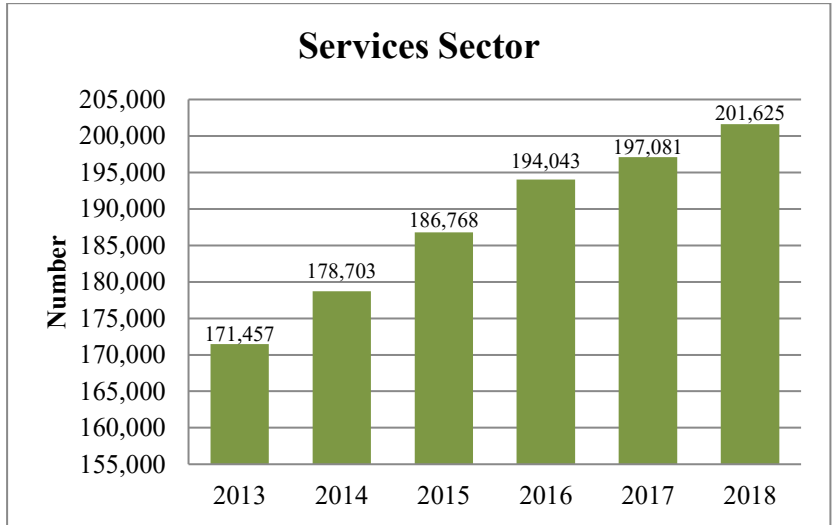
- Wholesale & Retail Trade
- Transport & Storage
- Accommodation & Food Services
- Information & Communications
- Business Services
- Recreation, Community & Personal Services

¹ Exclude financial & insurance services and public administration activities.

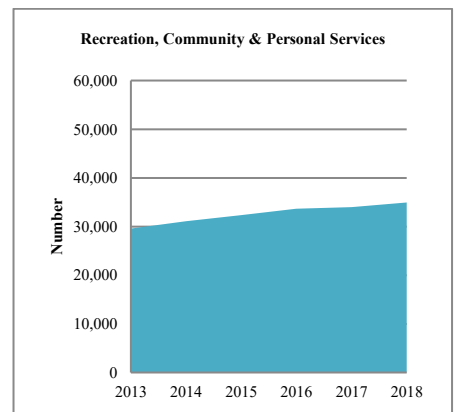
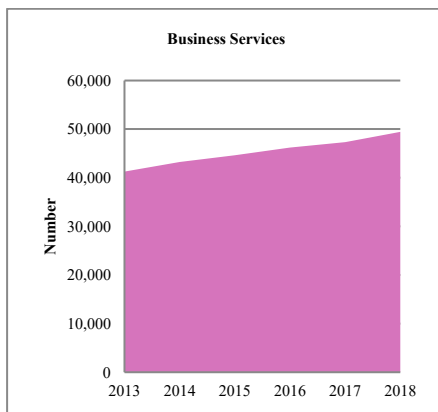
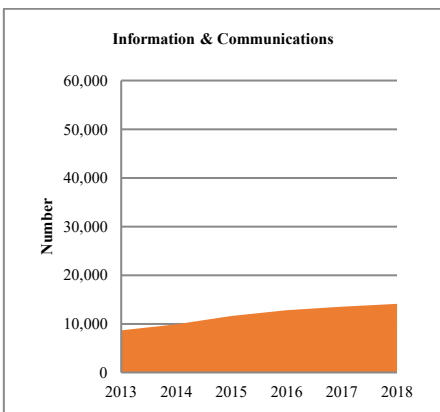
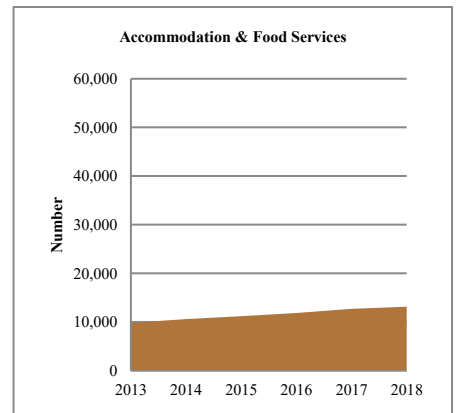
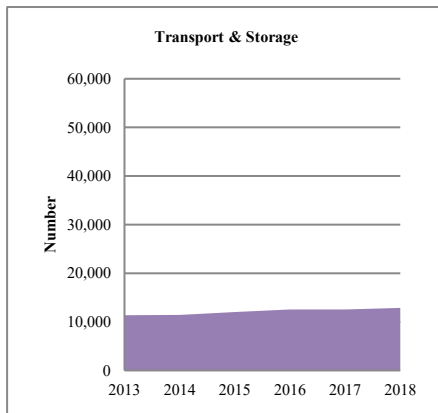
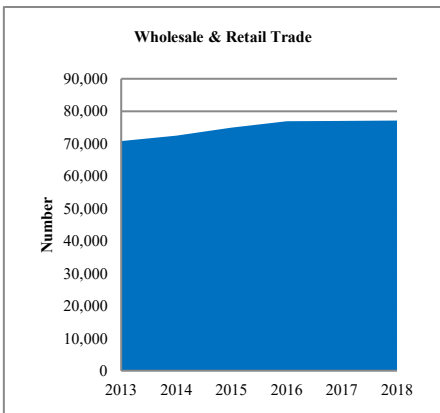
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Number of Establishments

In 2018, there were 201,600 establishments in the Services Sector, an increase of 2.3 per cent over 2017.



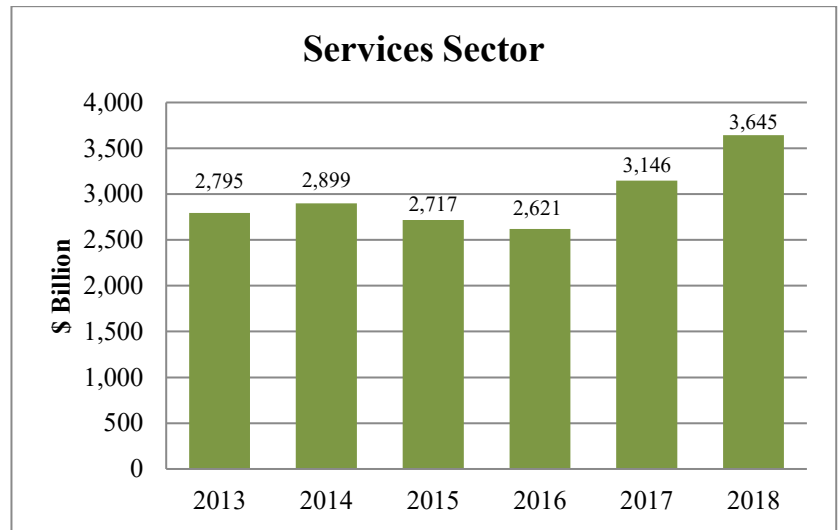
The Wholesale & Retail Trade industry group accounted for 38.2 per cent of the total number of establishments in 2018, followed by the Business Services industry group, which made up 24.5 per cent of the total count.



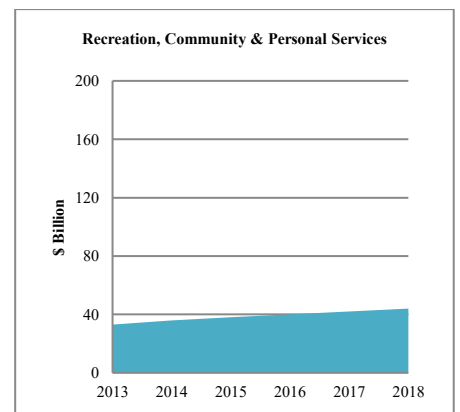
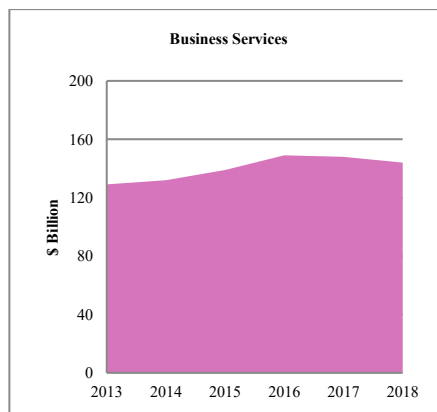
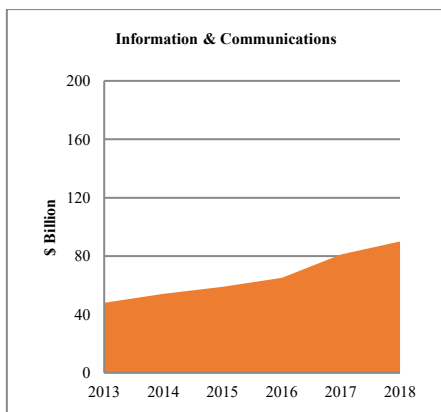
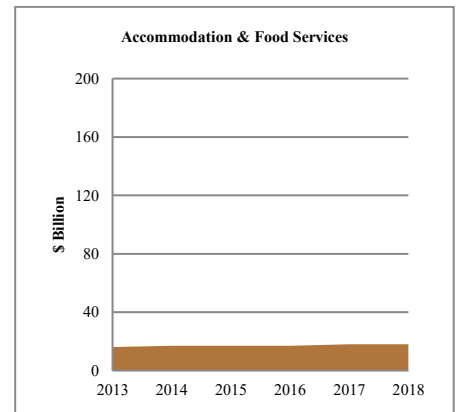
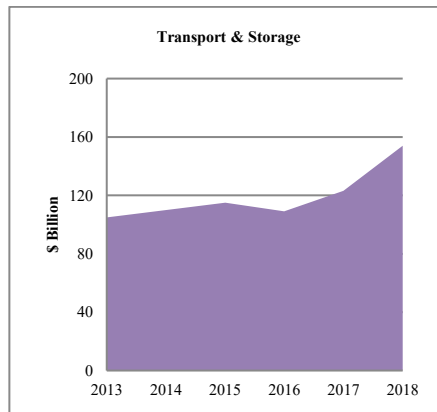
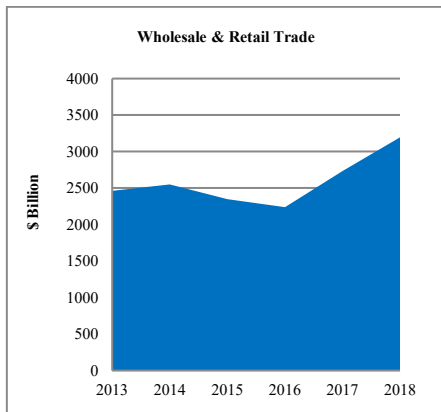
THE SERVICES SECTOR

Operating Receipts

In 2018, the Services Sector generated a total of \$3,644.9 billion in operating receipts, 15.9 per cent higher than in 2017. Operating receipts per establishment was \$18.1 million in 2018, an increase of 13.3 per cent over 2017.



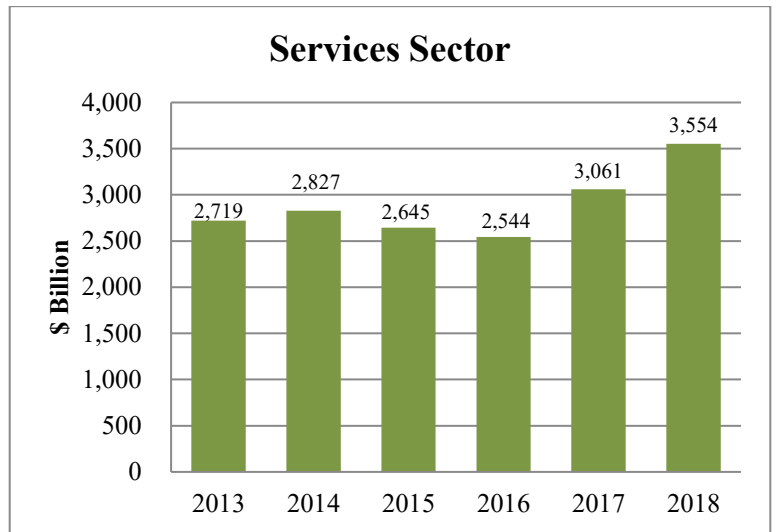
Most industry groups within the Services Sector recorded growths in operating receipts in 2018 compared to the previous year. The Transport & Storage industry group registered a year-on-year increase of 24.7 per cent. Similarly, the Information & Communications and Wholesale & Retail Trade industry groups reported double-digit growth rates of 16.9 per cent and 10.4 per cent respectively.



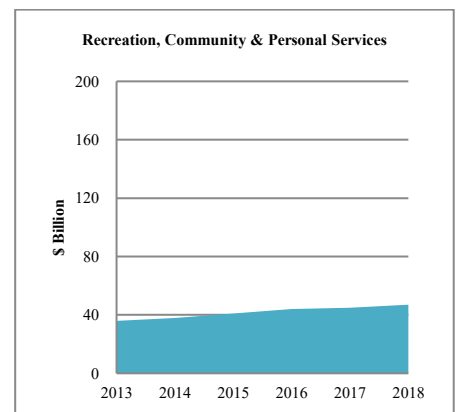
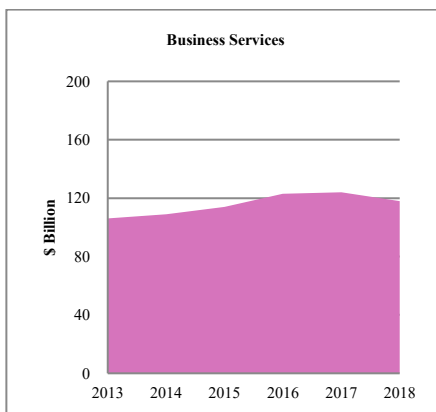
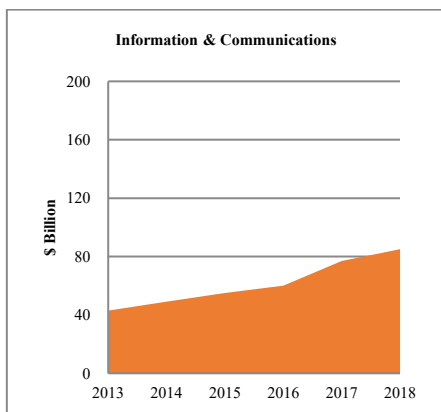
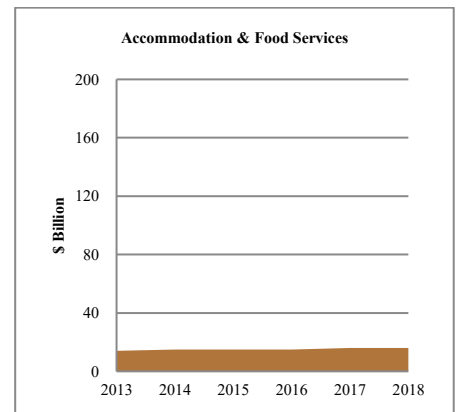
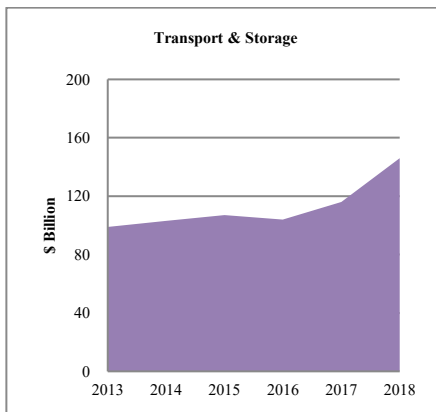
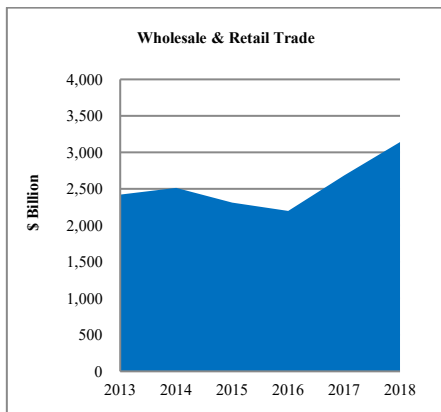
THE SERVICES SECTOR

Operating Expenditure

Operating expenditure incurred by the Services Sector reached \$3,553.7 billion in 2018, an increase of 16.1 per cent from the \$3,061.3 billion in 2017. On a per establishment basis, operating expenditure rose 13.5 per cent, reaching \$17.6 million in 2018.



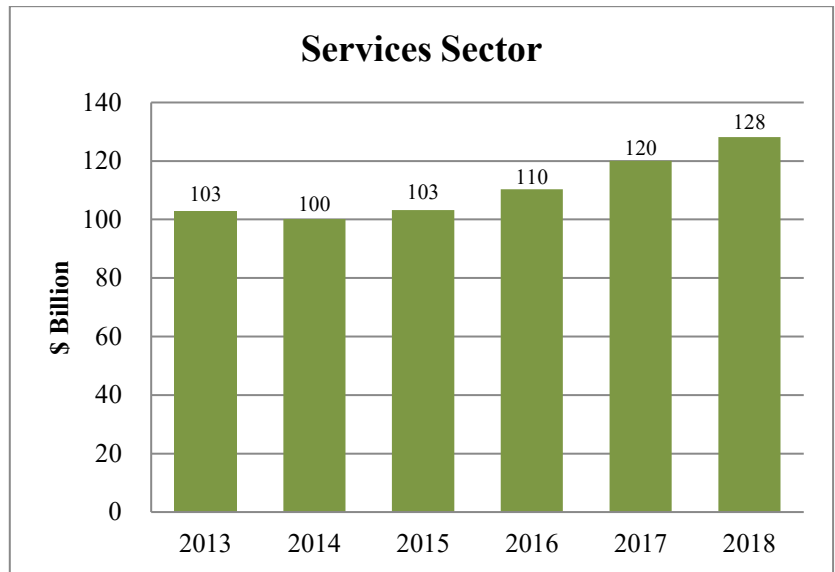
Operating expenditure of most industry groups in the Services Sector rose in 2018 compared to a year ago. The Transport & Storage, Wholesale & Retail Trade and Information & Communications industry groups recorded year-on-year increases in operating expenditure of 26.7 per cent, 17.0 per cent and 10.7 per cent respectively, in tandem with the double-digit growths in their operating receipts.



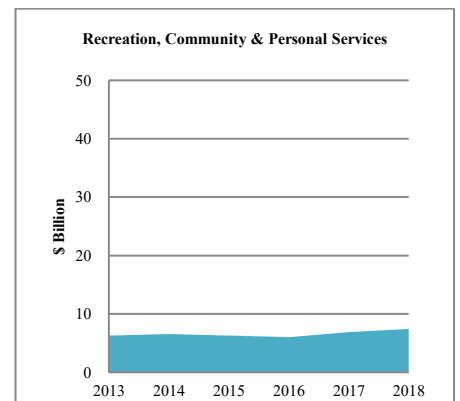
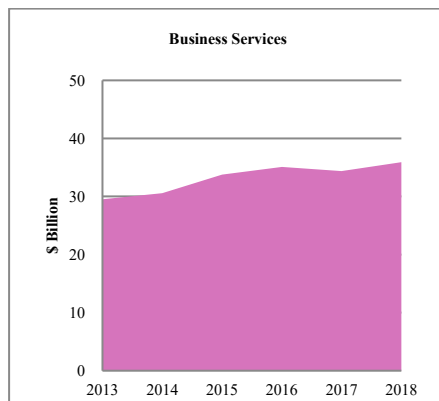
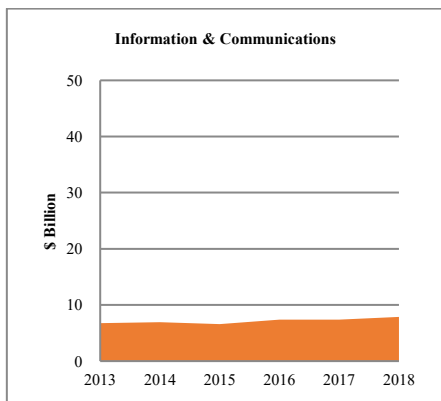
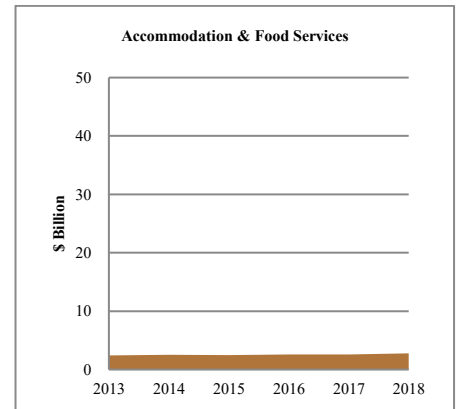
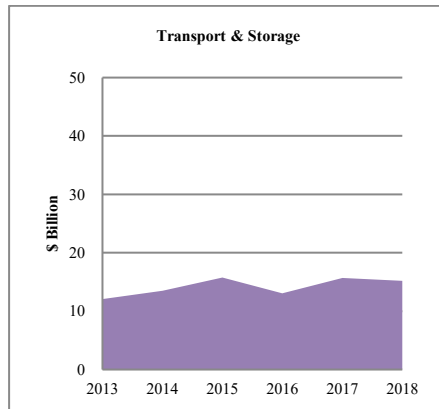
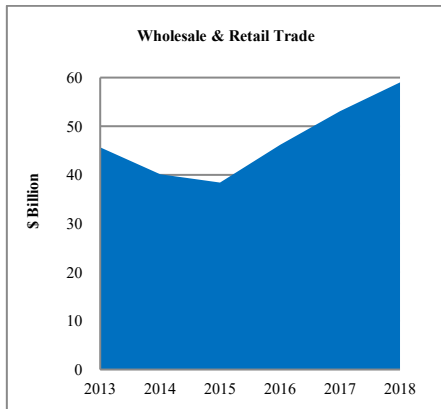
THE SERVICES SECTOR

Operating Surplus

Total operating surplus of the Services Sector rose to \$128.2 billion in 2018, 6.8 per cent higher than in 2017. Operating surplus per establishment increased 4.4 per cent over the same period.



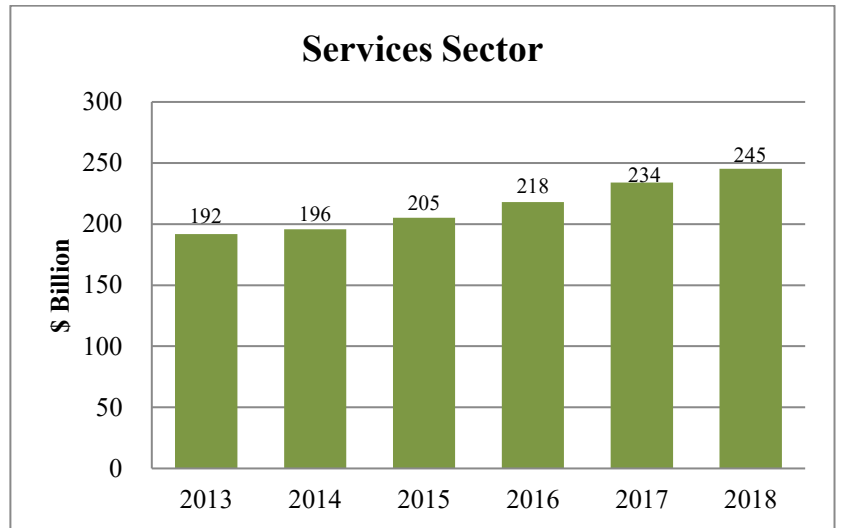
Among the industry groups, Wholesale & Retail Trade registered the highest growth in operating surplus of 11.1 per cent in 2018. In contrast, Transport & Storage registered a decline of 3.0 per cent during the same period.



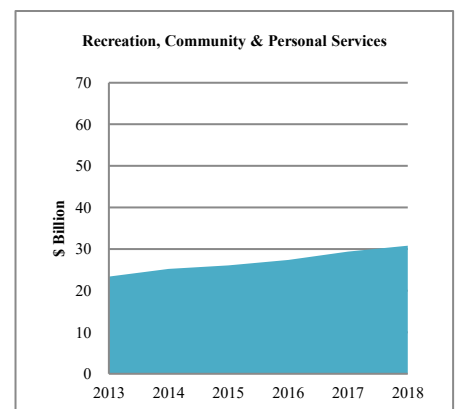
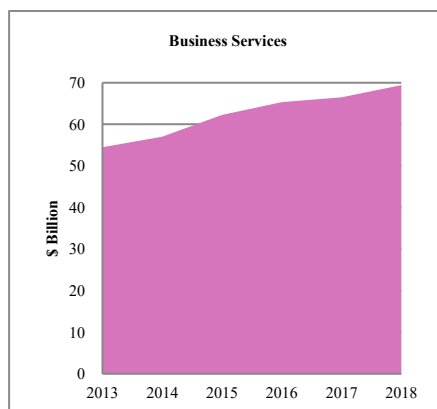
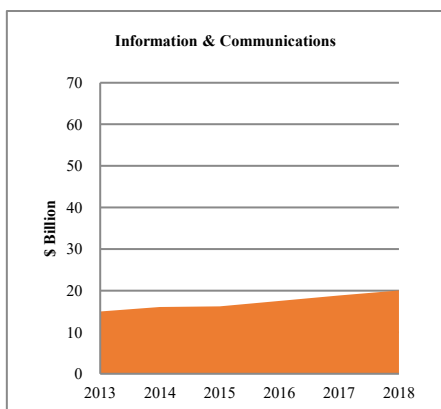
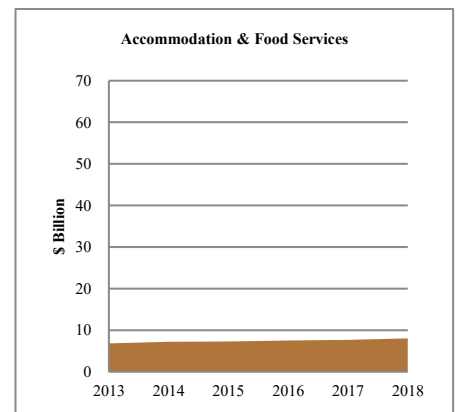
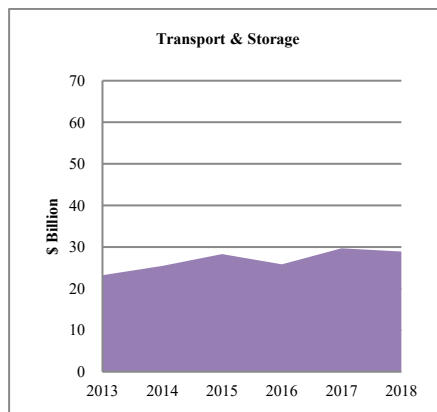
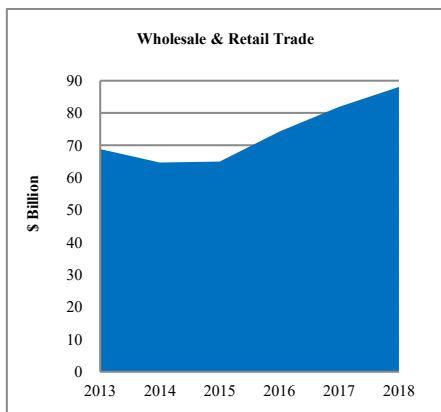
THE SERVICES SECTOR

Value Added

Total value added of the Services Sector was \$245.3 billion in 2018, representing a growth of 4.8 per cent over 2017. Value added per establishment increased 2.5 per cent, to \$1.2 million in 2018.



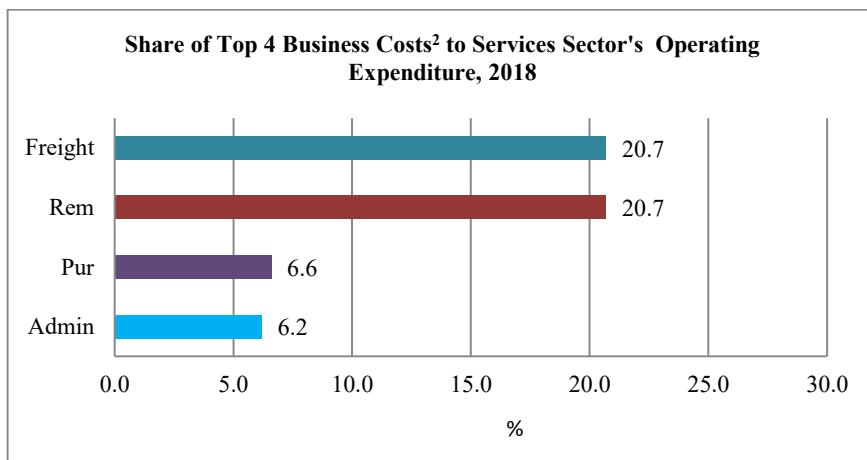
In 2018, the value added for the Wholesale & Retail Trade industry group accounted for 35.9 per cent of the total in the Services Sector. Business Services made up the second largest industry group, with 28.3 per cent of the total value added. Most industry groups in the Services Sector generated higher value added in 2018 compared to 2017, with Wholesale & Retail Trade leading the growth at 7.5%. Conversely, Transport & Storage registered a year-on-year decline of 2.5 per cent.



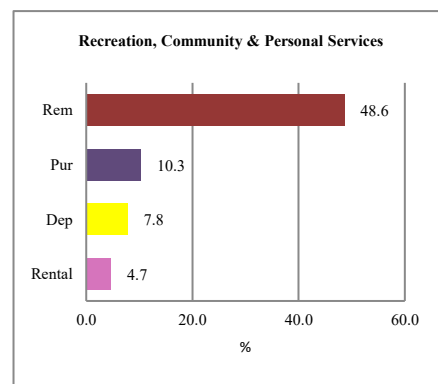
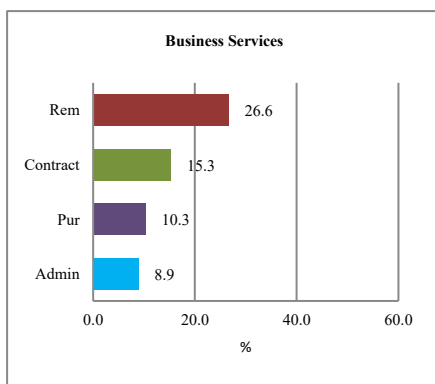
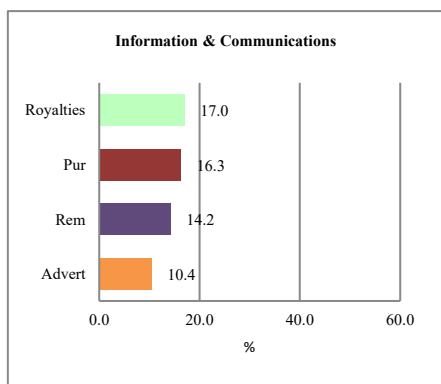
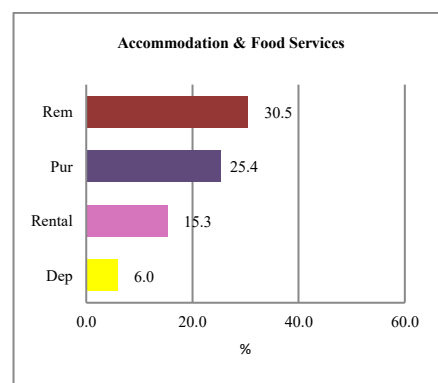
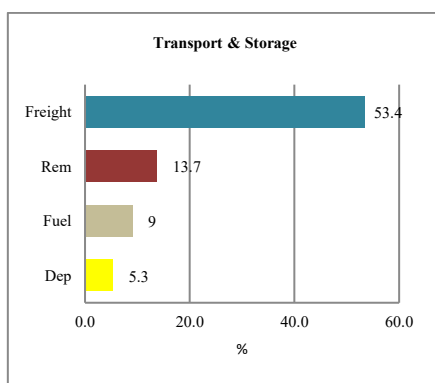
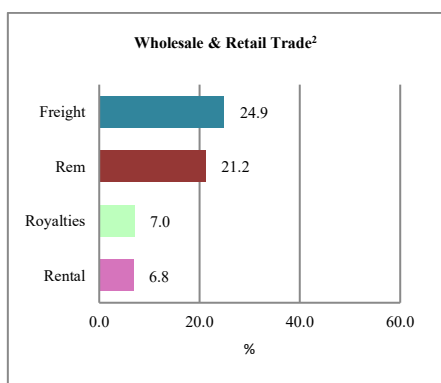
THE SERVICES SECTOR

Business Costs

Freight and remuneration were the top business cost items for the Services Sector in 2018, accounting for 20.7 per cent of the total expenditure for the Services Sector. This was followed by purchases of goods & materials (6.6 per cent) and administrative & management fees (6.2 per cent).



Remuneration was among the top business cost items for all industry groups and was the largest business cost item for the Accommodation & Food Services, Business Services and Recreation, Community & Personal Services industry groups. Freight & transport charges was the largest business cost item for the Wholesale & Retail Trade and Transport & Storage industry groups, while royalties was the largest business cost item for the Information & Communications industry group.



Notation

Admin: Administrative & management fees
 Contract: Subcontract charges / Work given out
 Dep : Depreciation
 Freight : Freight & transport charges

Freight : Freight & transport charges
 Prof: Professional services
 Pur: Purchases of goods & materials

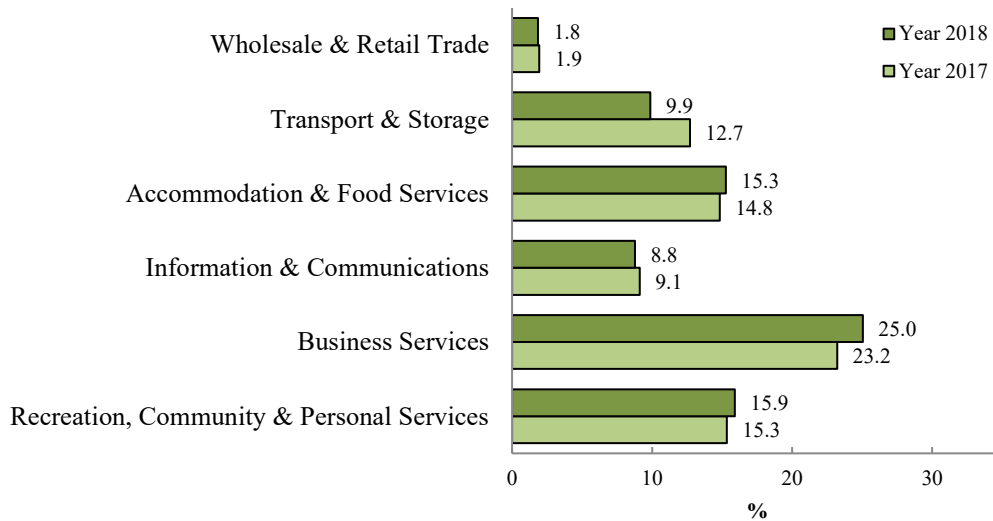
Rem : Remuneration
 Rental : Renting of offices, shops & other premises
 Royalties : Royalties

² Exclude purchases of goods & materials for wholesale & retail trade

THE SERVICES SECTOR

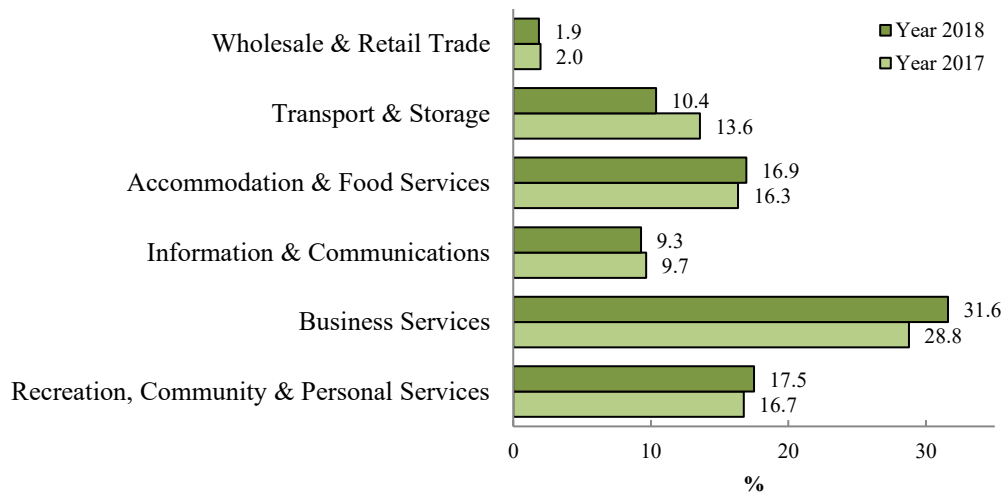
Key Performance Ratios

Profitability Ratio³



Profitability ratio (defined as the ratio of operating surplus to operating receipts) of the Services Sector was 3.5 per cent in 2018, lower than the 3.8 per cent recorded in 2017. Within the Services Sector, the Recreation, Community & Personal Services, Business Services and Accommodation & Food Services industry groups registered higher profitability ratios in 2018 compared to 2017.

Earnings-Expenditure Ratio³



Earnings-Expenditure Ratio (defined as the ratio of operating surplus to operating expenditure) for the Services Sector was 3.6 per cent in 2018, a decrease from 3.9 per cent in 2017. The Recreation, Community & Personal Services, Business Services and Accommodation & Food Services industry groups recorded higher earnings-expenditure ratio while the remaining industry groups reported a decline over the same period.

³ Exclude non-profit organisations

PART II
TECHNICAL NOTES

Objective

The data presented in this report were compiled from the results of the Annual Survey of Services, 2018.

The objective of the survey is to gather information on the services sector for studying the structure and performance of various activities in the sector. The data are also used for the compilation of national accounts, input-output tables and other related studies. In addition, the results are used by policy makers, economic planners, academicians, the business community and other interested users in their work.

Legal Authority

The survey is conducted under the Statistics Act (Chapter 317), which makes the submission of returns mandatory. Individual returns received are kept in confidence in accordance with the Statistics Act.

Scope and Coverage

The survey covered establishments engaged in Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transport & Storage, Accommodation & Food Services, Information & Communications Services, Business Services and Recreation, Community & Personal Services, as classified under Sections G, H, I, J, L, M, N, P, Q, R and S of the Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) 2015 (version 2018). Establishments engaged in Financial & Insurance Services and Public Administration Activities are excluded. Taxi drivers, hawkers and stall-holders, independent artistes, self-employed persons operating private hire vehicles and other individual self-employed persons not registered with the Accounting & Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) are also excluded.

Sample Selection

The sampling frame is based on the list of 'live' establishments obtained from the Department's establishment database. The database is updated regularly using information obtained from administrative and survey sources.

The sampling method for the survey was based on stratified random sampling. All establishments in the sampling frame were first stratified by activity and within each activity, establishments were stratified by operating receipts into three size strata (large, medium and small). All establishments in the large size stratum were selected with certainty whereas the firms in the medium and small size strata were selected using simple random sampling without replacement. The Lavallée and

Hidiroglou method was used to determine the size stratum boundaries and sample sizes that minimise the total sample size required to achieve the target level of precision of estimation.

Data Collection

Respondents could submit their survey returns via the internet and mail. Secured transmission of statistical information via the internet was enabled through a service known as E-Survey. Queries or clarifications with respondents on omissions and inconsistencies were conducted through telephone or email.

Respondents were given 6 weeks to complete and submit their returns. A reminder was sent to establishments which failed to respond without reasonable explanations. A second reminder was sent to establishments which did not respond to the first reminder.

Response

The survey covered a total of 22,733 establishments. At the close of the survey, 1,343 establishments were excluded from the survey for one reason or another, such as those that had ceased, or were dormant, untraceable, not in operation yet or engaged in activities outside the scope of the survey. For compilation purpose, survey returns from 16,808 establishments were used. In addition, administrative data were used to supplement the survey data for final tabulation and analysis.

Data Processing

All data of completed returns were computer-edited for code validity, completeness and consistency to detect errors and inconsistencies. The erroneous data were amended and re-processed. Tabulation was carried out only after all records had passed the computer editing.

Estimation Method

Stratified (Horvitz-Thompson) estimator was used to estimate the population totals. For non-response cases, imputation was performed.

With the incorporation of more administrative data and updated survey returns, the estimated principal statistics for previous years have been correspondingly updated.

Year of Reference

The reference period is the calendar year 2018. However, for establishments whose accounting year differed from the calendar year, they were asked to report according to the accounting or financial year covering the major part of 2018.

Type of Business Activity

Type of business activity refers to the principal activity undertaken by the establishment. The principal activity is defined as the one in which the establishment devotes most of its resources or from which it derives most of its income. The classification of the principal activity of the establishment is based on the “Singapore Standard Industrial Classification, 2015 (Version 2018)”.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Depreciation	This refers to the value, at current replacement cost, of reproducible fixed assets such as buildings, plants and machinery used during a period of time as a result of normal wear and tear, foreseen obsolescence and the normal rate of accidental damage.
Establishment	Defined as a business or organisation unit engaged in one activity and operating in a single location. Thus, for a multi-activity firm or organisation, units engaged in separate activities in the same location constitute distinct establishments. Similarly, each branch of a multi-branch organisation at a different location is conceptually a different establishment.
Operating Expenditure	This refers to all expenditure incurred by the establishment in its business, with adjustment for changes in inventory. It includes remuneration, purchases, indirect taxes, work given out, rental and maintenance of machinery and equipment, legal, accounting and other professional services, rental and maintenance of premises, depreciation, transport and travelling, utilities, advertisement, entertainment, stationery and printing, postage and telecommunications, fuel, freight charges and other expenses that are connected with the establishment's operation.
Operating Receipts	This refers to income earned from business operations, i.e. income from services rendered, sale of goods, commission fees and rental of premises, machinery and equipment.
Operating Surplus	This refers to the amount of operating receipts less operating expenditure plus depreciation of fixed assets. For non-profit organisations (i.e. entities which cannot distribute any surplus made to their shareholders) which mainly rely on funds (such as grants and donations) other than receipts from sales of goods and services rendered to cover their operating expenditure, operating surplus refers only to depreciation of fixed assets.
Earnings-Expenditure Ratio	This is defined as the ratio of operating surplus to operating expenditure.
Profitability Ratio	This is defined as the ratio of operating surplus to operating receipts. It shows the proportion of operating receipts that is converted to profits.

Remuneration	<p>Total remuneration comprises three components, namely, wages and salaries, employers' contribution to Central Provident Fund (CPF)/pension funds and other benefits.</p> <p><i>(i) Wages and Salaries</i></p> <p>This refers to gross emoluments paid to employees during the reference year, inclusive of commissions, bonuses, overtime pay and allowances before deduction of employees' contribution to CPF or any other deduction. For proprietors or partners, the item refers to amount paid to or withdrawn by them during the year. However, this amount is not included in the analysis and tables of the report.</p> <p><i>(ii) Employers' Contribution to CPF/Pension Funds</i></p> <p>This refers to the net amount contributed by employers towards their employees' CPF/pension funds. It does not include the amount paid to retired employees under company pension scheme.</p> <p><i>(iii) Other Benefits</i></p> <p>This comprises medical benefits, cost of food, accommodation and other benefits in kind provided by employers. Allowances given to unpaid family workers are also included here.</p> <p><i>(iv) Directors' Fee</i></p> <p>This item refers only to the amount paid to directors for attending board of directors' meetings. It does not include the fees paid to directors who are actively engaged in running the establishment.</p>
Value Added (At Basic Price)	<p>This comprises the value of operating surplus, remuneration and taxes (less subsidies) on production.</p>

Sampling Errors

Concept

Sampling errors arise when a sample survey is conducted instead of doing a complete enumeration of the entire population. The sampling error of an estimate refers to the difference between the estimated value obtained from a sample and its population value or true value if a census were to be conducted. Such errors are controlled through efficient probability sampling designs.

Measures of Sampling Errors

The sampling error for a sample estimate is measured by its standard error (SE) which, for a probability sample, can be estimated from the sample results.

For comparison between surveys, the relative standard error (RSE) may be used. The RSE can be expressed as:

$$RSE = 100 * SE / T$$

where

RSE is the relative standard error of T in percentage term

SE is the standard error of T

T is the estimate of the population value

The standard error also provides the basis for the computation of confidence interval of an estimate, which is the estimated range that would contain the true population value of a parameter at a specified level of confidence.

Sampling Errors of Key Indicators

The sampling errors of operating receipts and value added by broad industry group for the Annual Survey of Services 2018 are provided in Tables E1 and E2 respectively.

The relative standard errors for operating receipts and value added of the Services Sector 0.89 per cent and 0.74 per cent for the Annual Survey of Services 2018 sample. At industry-group level, the values were between 0.54 per cent to 3.99 per cent. Among the industry groups, the operating receipts estimate was the most precise for Transport & Storage (relative standard error was the lowest at 0.54 per cent) since a lower relative standard error would mean a smaller confidence interval (i.e. the range in which the true population value would fall into is narrower). For Transport & Storage, the range of the operating receipts estimate at 95% confidence level of \$152.2 billion to \$155.5 billion meant that there would be a 95% chance that this interval contained the true value of the industry group's operating receipts.

Table E.1 Sampling Errors of Operating Receipts by Industry, 2018

Industry	Grossed-up Sample Estimate (\$ Mil)	Standard Error of Estimate (Grossed-up) (\$ Mil)	Relative Standard Error of Estimate (%)	Range of Estimate at 95% Confidence Level	
				Lower (\$ Mil)	Upper (\$ Mil)
TOTAL	3,644,850	32,272	0.89	3,581,598	3,708,102
Wholesale Trade	3,146,870	32,082	1.02	3,083,989	3,209,752
Retail Trade	48,471	858	1.77	46,789	50,152
Food Services	10,959	594	5.42	9,795	12,123
Transport & Storage	153,851	837	0.54	152,210	155,491
Information & Communications	89,726	1,899	2.12	86,005	93,447
Business Services	143,881	2,572	1.79	138,840	148,923
Recreation, Community & Personal Services	43,891	402	0.92	43,103	44,678

Table E.2 Sampling Errors of Value Added by Industry, 2018

Industry	Grossed-up Sample Estimate (\$ Mil)	Standard Error of Estimate (Grossed-up) (\$ Mil)	Relative Standard Error of Estimate (%)	Range of Estimate at 95% Confidence Level	
				Lower (\$ Mil)	Upper (\$ Mil)
TOTAL	245,334	1,819	0.74	241,768	248,900
Wholesale Trade	80,597	903	1.12	78,826	82,367
Retail Trade	7,480	140	1.87	7,207	7,754
Food Services	3,779	177	4.68	3,432	4,125
Transport & Storage	28,954	436	1.50	28,101	29,808
Information & Communications	20,042	800	3.99	18,474	21,611
Business Services	69,426	1,237	1.78	67,001	71,852
Recreation, Community & Personal Services	30,808	286	0.93	30,249	31,368

Users have to be careful when making inferences using the relative standard error of the value added estimate. As the value added estimate would include positive and negative values, the aggregate estimate can be small. This can result in a large relative standard error.

Non-sampling Errors

Non-sampling errors arise from non-response errors and errors in the collection, recording and processing of data (e.g. inaccuracies in reporting by respondents, errors in the recording and coding of data). Such errors can be controlled by the careful design of questionnaires, close supervision of data collection, and consistency checks during data processing, editing and verification.

In the Annual Survey of Services 2018, the following measures were taken to minimise non-sampling errors:

- (i) careful design of questionnaires;
- (ii) careful planning and implementation of operational procedures in data collection, processing and tabulation;
- (iii) standard procedures to follow up with respondents on the outstanding returns; and
- (iv) standardisation of concepts and definitions.

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