

General Household Survey 2005

The Singapore Department of Statistics has just launched the General Household Survey (GHS) 2005. This is a mid-decade national survey collecting information on the population and households in Singapore.

The GHS is conducted in between the Population Censuses which are taken once in ten years, during the years ending in '0'. This is in line with the practices of a number of developed countries, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan which conduct population censuses in intervals of 5 years.

As a mini-Census, the GHS is the most comprehensive source of information on the profile of the population and households. It provides benchmark data for demographic, social and labour force statistics between Censuses.

The GHS 1995 was the first in the series of large-scale mid-decade household surveys undertaken by the Department. It adopted a key innovation for data collection, involving the use of Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) to interview households. Learning from the experience of the 1990 Population Census, the GHS 1995 made improvements to the use of database linkages to obtain basic particulars of households.

The current GHS 2005 is built upon the experiences of the Population Census 2000, in using a register-based approach and supplementing with a large-scale

sample survey. Under the register-based approach, basic data items (eg sex, age, ethnic group) are obtained from the Department's database which contains information from administrative sources. Additional data items are collected from a sample survey of 7 per cent of dwelling units.

The GHS 2005 adopts the tri-modal data collection strategy which was successfully exploited in the Population Census 2000. This comprises Internet enumeration, CATI and fieldwork. For fieldwork, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) are used to further improve the survey operational procedures.

The tri-modal data collection strategy means that the collection of personal and household information for the majority of the population is no longer conducted through face-to-face interviews. As such, data confidentiality and security issues are of paramount importance to the Department.

To ensure confidentiality, all selected respondents will receive a notification letter with a unique, randomly generated House Reference Number. Respondents who wish to provide their information via Internet, are invited to visit the GHS 2005 website for Internet submission. They can register their GHS Internet accounts using the House Reference Number and some selected personal information. If the information provided is verified and matched with our records, they will be asked to create their own password. This account/password can be used immediately for Internet enumeration.

For CATI, interviewers would quote the respondent's unique House Reference Number over the telephone to identify themselves as genuine GHS 2005 officers before proceeding with the interview. If there is any doubt over the identity of the CATI interviewers, households can call the GHS05 Hotline to verify their identity.

Each GHS 2005 field interviewer is issued with a Letter of Authorisation and Identification Badge as a form of authentication. Interviewers are instructed to display their identification badge prominently while on duty. They are also required to produce their

identification badge and authorization letter for inspection upon request. Respondents can also call the GHS05 Hotline to verify the interviewer's identity.

The GHS is the second largest statistical project in Singapore after the Census and is considered to be an exercise of national importance. The success of the GHS 2005 depends critically on the full cooperation and support of the population of Singapore.

GHS05 Hotline: 1800-8777-888
Email: singstat_ghs@singstat.gov.sg

2004 in Brief

Singapore's population

... reached a total size of 4.24 million in June 2004.

Average life expectancy at birth

... was 77 years for males and 81 years for females.

Literacy rate

... was 97.3 per cent among males and 92.0 per cent among females.

Home ownership rate

... was 93.0 per cent.

Labour force participation rate

... was 75.6 per cent among males and 54.2 per cent among females.

Per capita Gross National Income

... was S\$41,513.

Official foreign reserves

... increased to S\$184 billion.

Mobile phone subscribers

... reached 911 per 1,000 population.

Residential broadband subscribers

... was 133 per 1,000 resident population.

Crime rate

... increased to 813 per 100,000 population.

Change in 2004 (Year-on-Year)

Unit Labour Cost Index

... was 4.0 per cent lower.

Consumer Price Index

... increased by 1.7 per cent.

Domestic Supply Price Index

... rose by 5.2 per cent.

Retail Sales Index

... was 12.4 per cent higher.

Catering Trade Index

... was 4.2 per cent lower.

Domestic Wholesale Trade Index

... grew by 18.7 per cent.

Foreign Wholesale Trade Index

... rose by 24.6 per cent.

Business Receipts Index

... increased by 10.0 per cent.

Industrial Production Index

... rose by 13.9 per cent.

Revision and Rebasing of the Consumer Price Index (Base Year 2004 = 100)

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Introduction

The Singapore Department of Statistics has completed the revision and rebasing of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The new CPI series with base year 2004=100 was compiled based on the results of the eighth Household Expenditure Survey (HES) conducted between October 2002 and September 2003.

Coverage of CPI

The CPI measures the change in the price of a fixed basket of goods and services commonly purchased by the majority of households over time. The types and specifications of the goods and services in the CPI basket as well as their quantities are kept constant at the base period. This ensures that any changes in the index reflect solely price changes over time.

Non-consumption expenditure such as transfers, income and property taxes, as well as purchase of house, shares or other financial assets are outside the scope of CPI.

Source Data for Updating CPI Weighting Pattern

The weighting pattern of the CPI shows the relative importance of each item in the basket of goods and services. Consumers change their consumption patterns in response to a myriad of factors, including relative price changes, changes in real income and consumer preferences, availability of new items and outlets, etc. To reflect these changes, the CPI weighting pattern is updated once every five years based on the results of the quinquennial HES. The HES collects up-to-date data on the detailed consumption expenditure of private households.

Of the 6,069 households with two or more persons who were covered in the 2002/03 HES, the records of some 5,460 households were used to derive the weighting pattern for the 2004-based CPI. These households constituted the middle 90 per cent of all households by expenditure distribution. The remaining 10 per cent of the households in the two extreme ends were excluded as their consumption patterns differed significantly from the general households.

The 2004-Based CPI Weighting Pattern

The 2004-based CPI weighting pattern was compiled using the 2002/03 HES expenditure values and further updated to 2004 on account of price changes. Chart 1 shows the 1997/98-based and the 2004-based CPI weighting pattern.

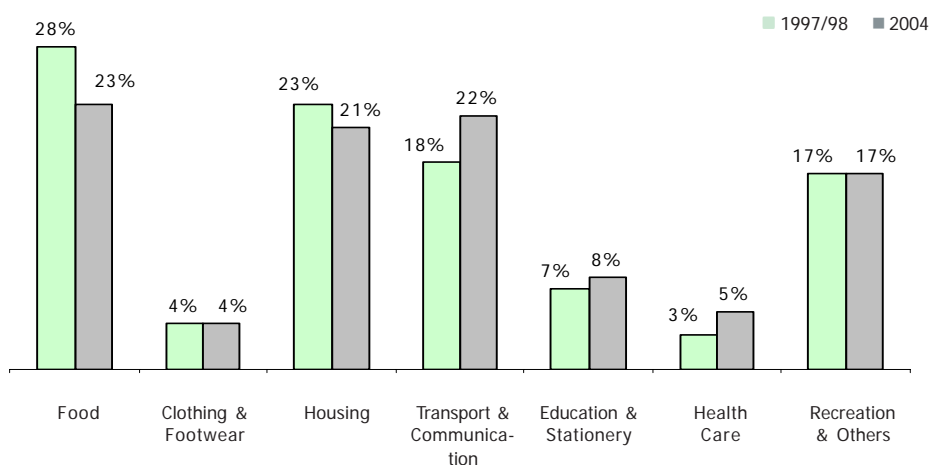
There were significant changes in the weighting pattern. The weight for food fell by 5 percentage points, from 28 per cent in 1998 to 23 per cent in 2004. Nevertheless, it still accounted for the largest proportion of the total household expenditure.

Transport and communication overtook housing to become the second most important group, with its

weight rising from 18 per cent in 1998 to 22 per cent in 2004. The higher share of transport and communication was due to greater spending on cars, petrol, MRT, bus and taxi fares (partly due to fare increases during the same period), mobile phone sets and call charges as well as internet subscriptions.

Housing ranked third, accounting for 21 per cent in 2004 compared with 23 per cent in 1998. The decline in its percentage share was attributed to lower expenditure on owner-occupied housing and household durables. Despite a significant shift to better housing among households, expenditure on owner-occupied housing declined as a result of lower imputed rentals for private housing. Prices of most consumer durables dropped, averaging some 8 per cent during 1998–2004.

CHART 1 WEIGHTING PATTERN BY MAIN GROUP, 1998–2004



Households spent relatively more on health care and education and stationery in 2004. The weight for health care rose by 2 percentage points to 5 per cent on account of greater spending on hospitalisation fees, specialized medical treatment and proprietary medicines. Specifically, the increased expenditure on specialised medical treatment reflected higher charges, as well as the rise in the outpatient attendance at public specialist outpatient clinics and the surge in the number of day surgeries during 1998–2003.

Education and stationery accounted for 8 per cent of the total share in 2004, slightly higher than the 7 per cent registered in 1998. The rise reflected an overall increase in the student enrolment and higher school fees at local educational institutions during the same period.

Recreation and others¹, and clothing and footwear retained their shares at 17 per cent and 4 per cent respectively in the 2004-based CPI basket.

New Items/Outlets Included in the CPI Basket

To reflect current consumption pattern, the CPI basket of goods and services and the sample of outlets have also been reviewed and updated. Items with relatively high weights and are representative as price indicators for similar items in the same category are included. For those items which are not

selected, their weights have been distributed to the selected akin items accordingly.

For the 2004-based CPI basket, the number of items selected for pricing has been expanded to 5,170, from 4,940 in the 1997/98-based CPI basket. New items in the CPI basket include health screening packages, aromatherapy products, slimming products, spa treatment, medical insurance packages, festive goodies, electronic games, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) etc. Correspondingly, obsolete items such as pager, car cassette player and rental of video tapes have been excluded.

The outlets selected for regular pricing are those commonly patronised by shoppers. The total number of outlets selected for regular pricing has been increased to 3,000 as compared with 2,410 for the 1997/98-based CPI. Some of the new outlets include private specialist clinics, cyber cafes, pubs and day rehabilitation centres.

Methodological Improvements/Issues

Use of Geometric Mean Formula

For the 2004-based CPI, DOS has adopted the geometric mean (GM) formula in the computation of elementary aggregate price indices, wherever applicable, in place of the arithmetic mean (AM). For higher levels of aggregation, the current

¹ Recreation and others include recreation and entertainment, alcoholic drinks and tobacco, personal care, domestic services, holiday expenses, etc.

Laspeyres AM formula is retained. The GM formula is one of the latest recommendations adopted by the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2003.

The GM formula is mainly applied to those elementary items without specific weights. As this methodology takes into account the substitution effect between outlets and items for a particular good/service, it enhances the accuracy of the CPI. Countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia have also used this approach to combine selected individual price quotations at lower levels of aggregation. The adoption of the GM formula brings DOS in line with the latest international best-practice guidelines on the compilation of CPI.

Treatment of Owner-Occupied Accommodation in the CPI

The treatment of owner-occupied accommodation is one of the most difficult issues faced by compilers of CPI. The purchase of a house is generally regarded as a capital investment rather than a consumption expenditure. As such, it would be more appropriate to measure the cost to the homeowner of utilising the flow of services provided by their homes. That is, the opportunity cost of occupying a dwelling instead of renting out.

Since 1977/78, DOS has adopted the internationally accepted rental equivalence method for the computation of owner-occupied accommodation index in the housing group. This method measures the shelter cost in terms of the expected rental the

owner would have to pay if he were a tenant of the premise. This value is termed as imputed rental. In Singapore's CPI, the Annual Assessed Value (AAV) which is defined as the annual equivalent of the gross rent at which the house is let out to the occupier, is used to track the imputed rental over time.

Linking of Historical Series

To facilitate comparison of price changes over time, the historical CPI data series were linked to the 2004-based CPI data series at the new reference period (year 2004), ie a link factor was derived independently for each index series by taking the new index for the reference period (year 2004) divided by the corresponding index based on the 1997/98 base period. This allows for the recompilation of continuous historical data series associated with the new reference period while preserving the growth rates associated with previous base periods. However, the preservation of the growth rates for the component data series would result in a loss of additivity prior to the link period, that is, the weighted components of the linked data series prior to the link period would not necessarily add up to the total.

Comparison between 1997/98-Based and 2004-Based CPI

A comparison of the CPI for January 2005 based on the 2004 weighting pattern with that based on the 1997/98 CPI basket is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 PER CENT CHANGE IN CPI, JANUARY 2005
 (Over Same Period of Previous Year)

Main Group	1997/98-Based	2004-Based
All Items	0.9	0.4
Food	1.7	1.6
<i>Non-Cooked Food</i>	2.5	2.8
<i>Cooked Food</i>	1.1	0.7
Clothing & Footwear	-0.2	-0.9
Housing	0.8	0.6
Transport & Communication	-0.1	-1.8
<i>Transport</i>	-0.1	-2.2
<i>Communication</i>	-0.2	-0.3
Education & Stationery	2.6	2.4
Health Care	1.1	0.4
Recreation & Others	0.1	0.6

Compared with a year ago, the 2004-based CPI for January 2005 rose by 0.4 per cent, lower than the corresponding 0.9 per cent for the 1997/98-based CPI. The lower growth rate in the 2004-based CPI is the result of significant changes in compositions of items between and within the expenditure groups and the associated price changes. Prices of many new items such as info-communication products and services, clothing and health care services experienced significant price decreases during the period.

Conclusion

The 2004-based CPI series reflects the updated consumption pattern of private households, thus enhancing the relevance of the CPI as a measurement of consumer price changes. This new CPI series, commencing from January 2004, has been released in March 2005. The linked historical series are also made available to facilitate comparisons.

More details on the rebasing of the CPI are available in the Information Paper on "Revision and Rebasing of the Consumer Price Index (Base Year 2004 = 100)" posted at the Department's website at

<http://www.singstat.gov.sg/papers/op/ip-e28.pdf>.

Trends in the Domestic Supply Price Index, 1995–2004

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Introduction

The Domestic Supply Price Index (DSPI) measures the changes in the price level of goods manufactured locally or imports which are retained for use in the domestic economy. The DSPI is also an input based Producer Price Index (PPI) as it provides an indication of the price trends of goods used in the domestic economy.

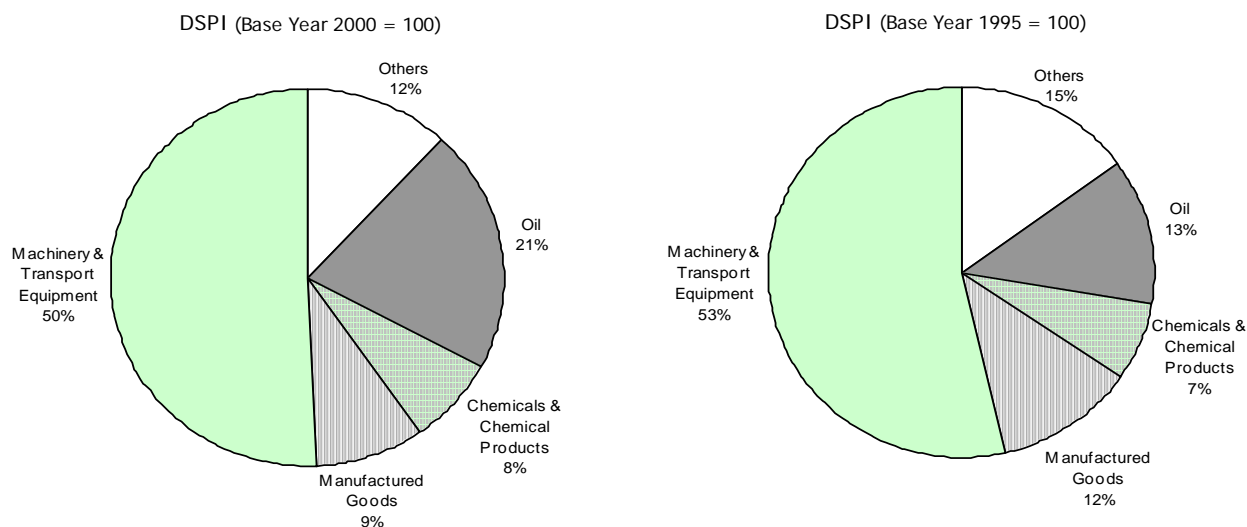
The DSPI is compiled by combining the cif (covering insurance and freight) prices collected from importers together with the ex-factory prices collected from local manufacturers. The DSPI is a Laspeyres price index, compiled on the basis of a fixed basket of commodities in the base year. It is classified according to the Standard Industrial Trade Classification, Revision 3 (SITC, Rev 3).

Rebasing of the DSPI

The series of DSPI was first compiled for the reference period 1974. The next revision exercise was for reference year 1985 and since then, the rebasing of the series has been carried out every five years. The basket of commodities and their relative weights were derived from the value of the total (external and local) supply of goods available in the domestic market in the base year period. The external supply and the local supply were represented respectively by retained imports and locally produced goods used in the domestic economy.

From 1995 to 1999, the DSPI was compiled based on the 1995 weighting pattern while the series from 2000 to 2004 were based on the 2000 weighting pattern. Chart 1 shows the weights of the DSPI for base years 1995 and 2000.

CHART 1 WEIGHTING PATTERN FOR DSPI, 1995 AND 2000



The Machinery and Transport Equipment accounted for more than half of the total weightage for both periods. Oil ranked second followed by Manufactured Goods. Between 1995 and 2000, there was a shift towards higher relative share for Oil and Chemicals and Chemical Products with a corresponding lower relative share for Machinery and Transport Equipment and Manufactured Goods. This reflected the rapid pace of economic and industrial restructuring in Singapore, in particular the rising importance of the chemical industries.

The relative share of Oil increased from 13 per cent in 1995 to 21 per cent in 2000. The increase was due primarily to higher oil prices which almost doubled between 1995 and 2000. When oil prices trebled in the 1980's compared with the 1970's, oil

accounted for a much higher weightage of 35 per cent in the 1985-based DSPI series versus 16 per cent for the 1974-based series.

Price Trends, 1995–2004

Overall

On a year-on-year comparison, the DSPI registered declines in five of the ten years, during 1996 to 1998, and 2001 to 2002 (see Table 1 and Chart 2). This period witnessed two economic recessions which had a significant impact on commodity prices, especially oil prices. During the years 1999 to 2000 and 2003 to 2004, the DSPI registered increases, led mainly by higher oil prices.

TABLE 1 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGES OF DSPI BY COMMODITY SECTION
(Base Year 2000 = 100)

Commodity Section	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Per Cent
											Average Annual Increase (1995–2004)
Overall	-	-3.0	-4.0	-3.2	2.1	10.1	-1.7	-3.2	2.0	5.2	0.4
Oil	2.2	12.0	1.2	-21.5	31.1	55.8	-9.2	-0.2	15.9	19.1	9.6
Non-Oil	-0.4	-5.2	-4.9	0.1	-2.1	1.3	0.3	-3.9	-1.4	1.1	-1.7
Food	1.3	1.9	1.1	2.1	0.2	-2.0	1.1	-2.1	2.5	5.0	1.1
Beverages & Tobacco	-0.1	1.7	-	3.5	-0.8	0.6	2.0	1.6	4.0	1.6	1.6
Crude Materials	5.0	2.0	-1.2	-9.2	-8.5	3.2	-0.3	-2.2	1.3	7.6	-0.9
Animal & Vegetable Oils & Fats	10.3	-8.4	-0.2	14.8	-9.0	-15.3	-10.5	21.3	7.0	7.0	-
Chemicals & Chemical Products	1.0	-5.6	-1.4	-1.8	3.0	6.0	-3.0	-2.8	3.8	12.1	1.0
Manufactured Goods	3.7	-1.6	-1.9	-0.9	-4.4	2.2	-3.6	-2.1	3.2	11.9	0.2
Machinery & Transport Equipment	-3.4	-6.8	-7.2	0.7	-2.4	0.9	1.3	-5.1	-3.6	-2.9	-2.8
Miscellaneous Manufactures	1.2	-3.8	-1.9	-0.7	-1.0	0.3	1.4	-0.8	0.3	0.6	-0.6

CHART 2A DSPI AND NON-OIL DSPI (2000 = 100)

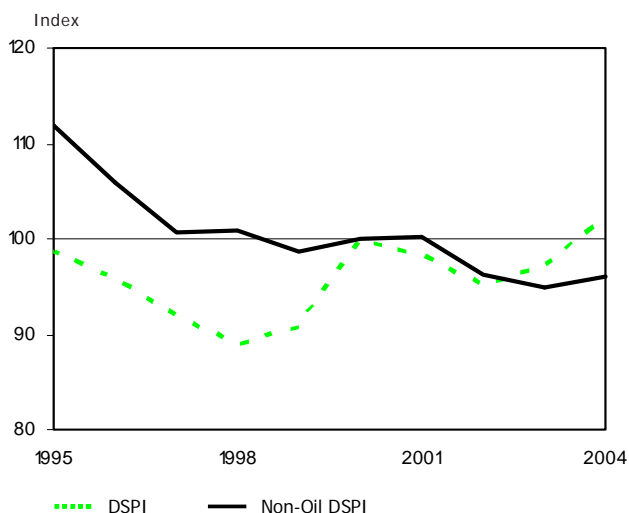


CHART 2B YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



Oil DSPI

The Oil DSPI which comprised mainly of crude petroleum imports and locally refined petroleum derivatives (eg fuel oils, diesel fuel and kerosene) exhibited great volatility in some years. The Oil DSPI fluctuated sharply from a trough of -22 per cent in 1998 to a peak of 56 per cent in 2000. The volatility of the Oil DSPI throughout the period 1995–2004 had a significant impact on the Overall DSPI as it accounted for between 13 and 21 per cent of the DSPI’s weighting basket.

At the height of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1998, Oil DSPI plunged by 22 per cent. In the following years, as Asian economies recovered from the Asian Financial Crisis, world demand for oil increased strongly and coupled with OPEC oil production cutbacks and low oil stock levels, the Oil DSPI rebounded sharply by 31 per cent in 1999 and further by 56 per cent in 2000.

During 2001, the economic slowdown in the United States, which was exacerbated by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, caused fears of a sharper worldwide economic downturn. Consequently, the Oil DSPI fell by 9.2 per cent. The year 2001 also saw our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declining by 2.4 per cent.

The US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 as well as rising tension in the Middle-East led to an increase in global demand for crude petroleum. As a result, Oil DSPI increased by 16 per cent in 2003 and again by 19 per cent in 2004.

Non-Oil DSPI

The Non-Oil DSPI was less volatile compared to the Oil DSPI. It moved within a relatively narrow band of -5.2 per cent to 1.3 per cent over the period 1995 to 2004.

The Machinery and Transport Equipment sub-index which accounted for about two-thirds of the Non-Oil DSPI, dominated the movements of the Non-Oil DSPI. During 1995 to 2003, the Machinery and Transport Equipment sub-index moved in the same direction and tracked quite closely the Non-Oil DSPI except 2004 (Chart 3). The sub-index monitors the price trends of mainly information and communication technology (ICT)-related products such as integrated circuits, micro-computers, printed circuits, disk drives, etc. As many electronic products experienced rapid technological changes, prices of electronic products generally declined over time. As a result, during

the period 1995 to 2004, the Machinery and Transport Equipment sub-index posted an average decline of 2.9 per cent, compared to the Manufactured Goods and Chemicals and Chemical Products sub-indices which registered average gains of 0.7 per cent and 1.1 per cent respectively.

In 2004, the Non-Oil DSPI rose by 1.1 per cent as increases in Chemicals and Chemical Products (12.1 per cent), Manufactured Goods (11.9 per cent) and other Non-Oil sub-indices more than offset the 2.9 per cent decline in the Machinery and Transport Equipment sub-index.

CHART 3A DSPI OF SELECTED COMMODITY SECTIONS (2000 = 100)

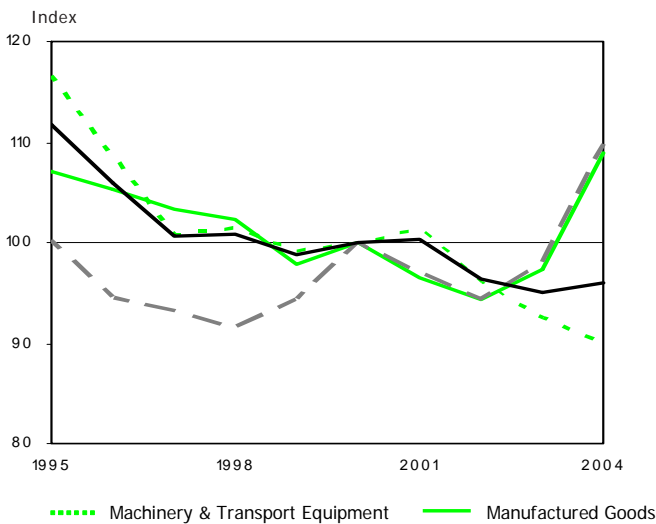
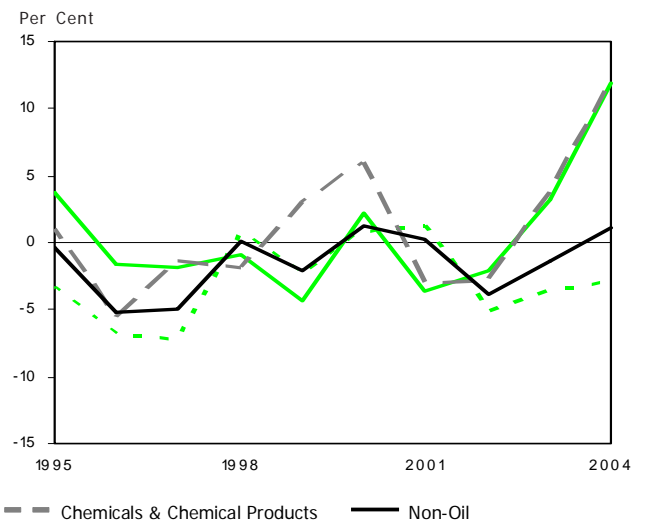


CHART 3B YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE



Conclusion

The DSPI tracks the price changes of goods used in the domestic economy. Over the period from 1995

to 2000, the greater volatility of the Oil DSPI in comparison to the Non-Oil DSPI had exerted a significant impact on the overall DSPI vis-à-vis the Non-Oil DSPI.

Singapore Standard Industrial Classification 2005

Introduction

The Singapore Department of Statistics has just released the Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) 2005. The SSIC 2005 is the ninth and latest edition. It adopts the basic framework of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) Revision 4, the draft version of which was released in May 2004, with the necessary modifications to meet national requirements while providing for international comparability of data. It replaces the SSIC 2000 which was based on ISIC Revision 3.

The SSIC is designed for use in statistical surveys and administrative records requiring classification of economic activities. It is also used in the presentation of a wide range of statistics, including national income, production, as well as demographic, social and labour statistics.

Comparison with the SSIC 2000

The main changes between the SSIC 2000 and SSIC 2005 are as follows :

- ◆ The number of sections has increased to 22 in SSIC 2005 from 18 in SSIC 2000.
- ◆ The two sections of 'Agriculture and Forestry' and 'Fishing' have been merged and renamed as 'Agriculture and Fishing'.
- ◆ A new section consolidating all environment-related activities has been created, namely

'Water Supply, Sewerage and Waste Management'.

- ◆ Another new section 'Information and Communications' has also been created, encompassing the following info-comm activities which were previously classified in different sections in SSIC 2000 –
 - Publishing
 - Telecommunications and broadcasting
 - IT services
 - Motion picture, TV and radio activities
 - Libraries, news agencies and other information services
- ◆ The section on 'Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities' in SSIC 2000 has been divided into three sections in SSIC 2005 to reflect better the variety and heterogeneity of services, namely –
 - Real Estate, Rental and Leasing Activities
 - Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities
 - Administrative and Support Service Activities
- ◆ Another section on 'Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities' has been divided into the following two sections namely –
 - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
 - Other Service Activities

A comparison of the sections in SSIC 2005 and SSIC 2000 is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 COMPARISON OF SECTIONS IN SSIC 2005 AND SSIC 2000

SSIC 2005	SSIC 2000
A Agriculture and Fishing	A Agriculture and Forestry B Fishing
B Mining and Quarrying	C Mining and Quarrying
C Manufacturing	D Manufacturing
D Electricity and Gas Supply	E Electricity, Gas and Water Supply
E Water Supply, Sewerage and Waste Management	
F Construction	F Construction
G Wholesale and Retail Trade	G Wholesale and Retail Trade
H Transport and Storage	I Transport, Storage and Communications
J Hotels and Restaurants	H Hotels and Restaurants
K Information and Communications	Parts of Section I (telecommunications, broadcasting), K (IT services, publishing, news agencies) and O (motion picture, TV and radio activities, libraries)
L Financial and Insurance Activities	J Financial Intermediation
M Real Estate, Rental and Leasing Activities	K Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities
N Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	
O Administrative and Support Service Activities	
P Education	M Education
Q Health and Social Work	N Health and Social Work
R Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	O Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities including Repair of Vehicles
S Other Service Activities	
T Public Administration and Defence	L Public Administration and Defence
U Domestic Work Activities	P Domestic Work Activities
V Extra-Territorial Organisations and Bodies	Q Extra-Territorial Organisations and Bodies
W Activities Not Adequately Defined	R Activities Not Adequately Defined

The number of divisions has also increased, due partly to the increase in the number of sections. The new divisions are shown below :

TABLE 2 NEW DIVISIONS IN SSIC 2005

Section		Division	
Section C	Manufacturing	15	Manufacture of Food Products
		16	Manufacture of Beverages
		26	Manufacture of Pharmaceutical and Biological Products
Section H	Transport and Storage	56	Post and Courier Activities
Section K	Information and Communication	60	Publishing Activities
		61	Motion Picture, Radio, Television, Sound Recording and Broadcasting Activities
		62	Telecommunications
Section N	Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	73	Legal, Accounting, Management and Management Consultancy Activities
		74	Architectural and Engineering Activities; Technical Testing and Analysis
		76	Other Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities
Section O	Administrative and Support Service Activities	78	Administrative and Support Service Activities
Section Q	Health and Social Work	85	Health Activities
		86	Social and Community Activities
Section S	Other Service Activities	92	Repair and Maintenance of Vehicles, Office Equipment, Personal and Household Goods

At the more detailed level, a number of new five-digit codes have been introduced for new industries as well as existing ones which have become significant but which were subsumed in one code with other industries previously. Some examples are listed below :

- Manufacture of photographic film, paper, plate and chemicals; petroleum lubricating oil, epoxy moulding compounds, ultrapure electronic chemicals; petroleum refineries and colour separation services in Section C - Manufacturing.
- Generation and transmission, distribution and sale of electricity in Section D - Electricity and Gas Supply.
- Wholesale and retail of computer and electronic games, musical instruments and scores in Section G - Wholesale and Retail Trade.
- Web search portals, development and publishing of computer games, sound recording production and distribution in Section K - Information and Communications.
- Leasing of non-financial intangible assets (eg patents, trademarks), arbitration services, landscape design and architecture, and furniture design in Section N - Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities.
- Maid agencies, executive search services, management of human resources functions and office administrative services on a fee or contract basis in Section O - Administrative and Support Service Activities.

Insignificant industries like growing of tobacco, rubber and coconut; retail of firewood and charcoal, Turkish baths and processing of nuclear fuel were either consolidated or deleted.

The Singapore Standard Industrial Classification (SSIC) 2005 is available for sale at S\$7.75.



The softcopy can be purchased at SingStat DataShop@GovMall, which is accessible from the SingStat website at <http://www.singstat.gov.sg>.

The hardcopy of the publication will be available for sale at the following location :

SNP Corporation Ltd
 1 Kim Seng Promenade
 #18-01/06
 Great World City, East Tower
 Singapore 237994

Seminar on United Nations Statistics Division's Statistical Activities

The Singapore Department of Statistics held a seminar on the statistical activities of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) on 28 March 2005. Dr Paul Cheung, Director of UNSD provided an update on the 36th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and information on the new statistical activities to be embarked upon.

As the statistical secretariat of the United Nations, the UNSD's main functions are :

- (a) to develop methodologies for the global statistical system
- (b) to maintain and update global databases
- (c) to coordinate international statistical programmes and activities
- (d) to provide technical assistance to countries

Member countries also provide statistical support to the expert groups formed by UNSD to review various methodological issues in specific statistical subject matters.

The UNSD is currently working on the following programmes/projects :

Revision of System of National Accounts 93 (SNA 93)

Work on the 2008 update of SNA 93 is currently in progress. Advisory groups may be established to review the implementation of the revisions.

The UNSD, in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), will be organizing a workshop in Bangkok in April 2005 for countries to develop a regional forum for consultation on methodological and practical issues relating to the SNA 93 update.

Key issues of the SNA 93 update and expert recommendations for changes on topics such as treatment of military assets, employer retirement pension schemes, and stock options, will be introduced and discussed.

Review of Energy and Industrial Statistics

UNSD has identified the need to review these areas of statistics, to update the methodologies used and to assess their relevance to users.

The energy statistics programme was reviewed at the 36th session of the UNSC. A report from Statistics Norway, which provided an overview of new needs for energy statistics and the resources available to meet these needs, was tabled for discussion.

For the 37th session of the UNSC, the review of the industrial statistics programme is planned. Issues such as frequent changes in products due to shortening of product life cycle, changes in quality of the product, price changes for the value series, as well as the recommended methodology to link indices and the rebasing of data series will be discussed.

System of Environmental Economic Accounting 2003 (SEEA 2003)

The SEEA 2003, a satellite system of the SNA, comprises various categories of accounts that cover information relating to the use of energy and materials, supply of natural resources, and costs of protecting the environment and managing natural resources. A task force will be formed to look into

the viability of implementing the framework for environmental-economic accounting within the next five years.

2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme

UNSD has commenced work on the 2010 round of global population censuses programme. It aims to identify critical issues related to the planning of the next round of population and housing censuses, set priorities and propose outputs for the development of the programme. In 2000, countries either adopted the register-based approach or the traditional fieldwork approach in census taking. More countries have since moved towards the adoption of the register-based approach. UNSD is currently reviewing the UN *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses.

Millennium Development Indicators

UNSD is reviewing the indicators used to measure the progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, which include eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Formation and Cessation of Companies and Businesses, 2004

Companies

Company formation in 2004 increased by 27 per cent over the previous year to reach 17,150. All major industries registered double-digit growths. The transport and communications industry recorded the strongest growth of 39 per cent. The manufacturing, and financial and business services industries reported significant increases of 35 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.

In 2004, a total of 6,540 companies ceased operations, representing a decline of 14 per cent over 2003. All major industries recorded lower numbers of company closures. Among them, the manufacturing industry recorded the largest drop of 26 per cent in company cessation.

Businesses

The number of new businesses formed stood at 25,010 in 2004, a drop of 3.1 per cent over 2003. Most major industries recorded lower numbers of business formation, except for the manufacturing industry where more new businesses were set up (1.6 per cent).

After three consecutive years of decline in business cessation, the number of business closures increased by 8.3 per cent in 2004 to reach 11,610. With the exception of the construction industry, all major industries recorded a rise in the number of business cessations.

CHART 1 FORMATION AND CESSATION OF COMPANIES

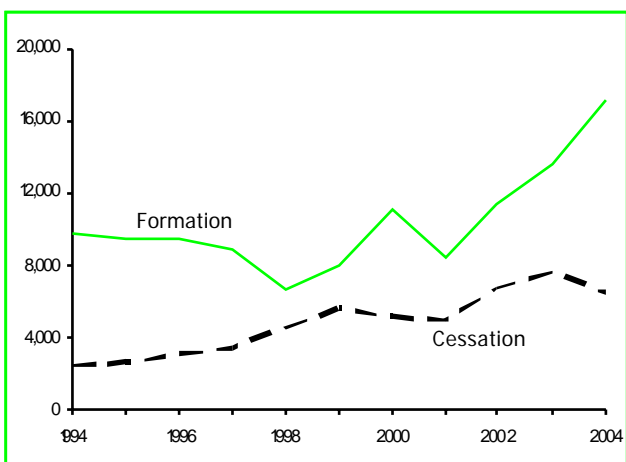
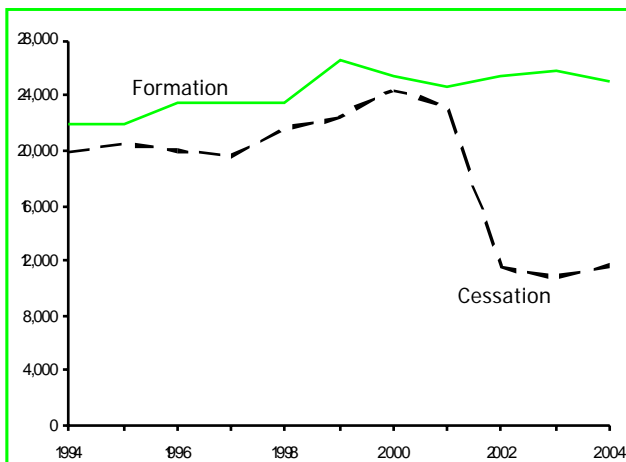


CHART 2 FORMATION AND CESSATION OF BUSINESSES



Overseas Visitors

The Singapore Department of Statistics received the following visitors in the past seven months. Topics discussed include establishment surveys, statistical databases, IT applications and development, Singapore's statistical system, occupational and educational classifications, information/dissemination services and website issues, national accounts compilation, annual survey sampling frame, survey operations, updates on the latest session of the UN Statistical Commission and new activities by UNSD.

Australia

- *Australian Bureau of Statistics*
- Mr Jonathan Palmer
Chief Information Officer
- Ms Gemma Van Halderen
Director
Special Projects Unit
(Methodology Division)
- Dr Tam Siu Ming
First Assistant Statistician
(Information Management Division)

China

- *Statistics Bureau, Beijing City*
- Mr Wang Jun
Vice Director General
- Mr Liu Jinshan
Vice Section Chief
- Ms Zhao Chaomei
Vice Section Chief
- Ms Xia Qinfang
Vice Section Chief
- Mr Ding Wenbin
Vice Director
- Mr Zhao Yongjie
Vice Director
- Ms Mao Zhenfang
Principal Staff Member
- Ms Cui Ping
Vice Principal Staff Member

European Commission

- *ASEAN Statistical Capacity Building Programme (Identification Mission)*
- Ms Sabina Ronconi
Expert

Malaysia

- *Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation*
- Mr M T Rajah
Trade Commissioner

Taiwan

- *Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (Section 4)*
- Ms Hsun-Jung Liu
Auditor
- Ms Yen-Chiu Chen
Specialist
- Ms Shu-Chun Lu
Clerk

United Arab Emirates

- *Department of Planning and Economy - Abu Dhabi*
- Mr Humaid S Al Darei
Advisor
Research and Studies Administration
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United Nations Statistics Division

- Dr Paul Cheung
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The *Statistics Singapore Newsletter* is issued half-yearly by the Singapore Department of Statistics. It aims to provide readers with news of recent research and survey findings. It also serves as a vehicle to inform readers of the latest statistical activities in the Singapore statistical service.

Contributions and comments from readers are welcomed. Please address all correspondence to :

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