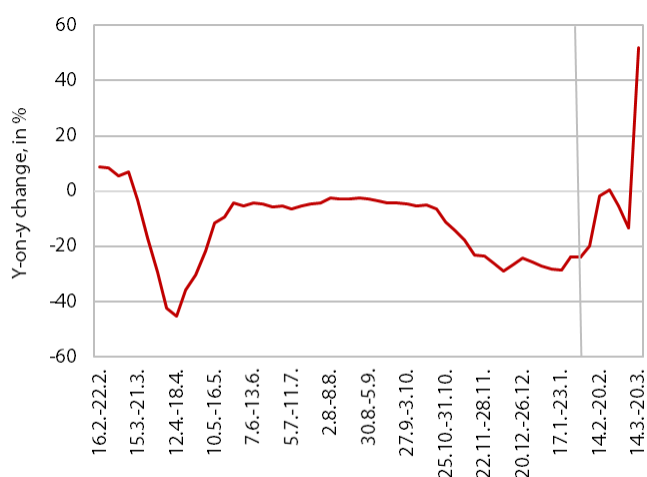


CURRENT ECONOMIC TRENDS

22–26 March 2021

With the relaxation of containment measures, confidence in trade continued to improve in March; in services it was unchanged after rising in the previous two months. Data on fiscally verified invoices point to high year-on-year turnover growth in the third week of March, which mainly arose from trade, as most non-essential shops were closed in this period last year. The easing of measures has also led to a fall in unemployment, which strengthened somewhat further at the end of March due to seasonal factors. Confidence in manufacturing and construction, which were not affected much by the second wave of the epidemic, rose above pre-epidemic levels. Favourable developments in industry were also indicated by electricity consumption and freight traffic on Slovenian motorways, which in the third week of March were close to the levels of the comparable pre-crisis year 2019.

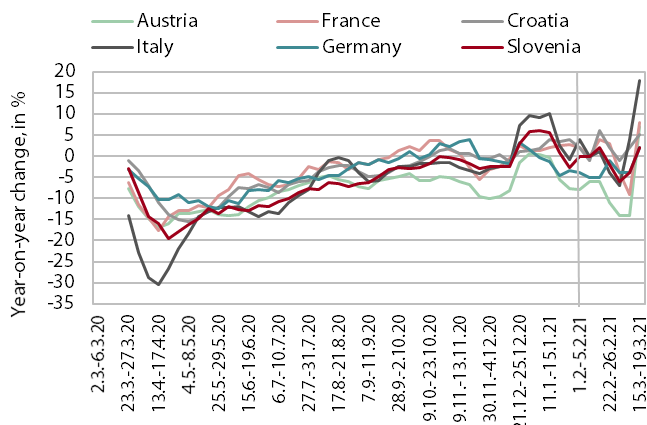
Fiscal verification of invoices, March 2021



Source: FURS; calculations by IMAD. Up to the end of January 2021, 4-week moving averages are shown.

According to data on fiscal verification of invoices, turnover declined sharply in the second week of March; in the third, it was considerably higher year on year due to the low base. The greater turnover fall in the second week of March was largely a consequence of the relatively significant year-on-year decline in retail trade, as last year before the declaration of the epidemic households mainly stockpiled food, beverages and toiletries. Turnover in the sale of motor vehicles and wholesale trade remained higher year on year. The year-on-year fall in accommodation and food service activities (in bars and restaurants) declined relative to previous weeks due to the opening of bar terraces and gardens. Strong year-on-year growth in turnover in the third week of March was mainly a consequence of high growth rates in trade, as last year all non-essential shops were closed in this period. However, some service activities were (partly or completely) closed, so total turnover was still 2% lower than in the comparable week of 2019.

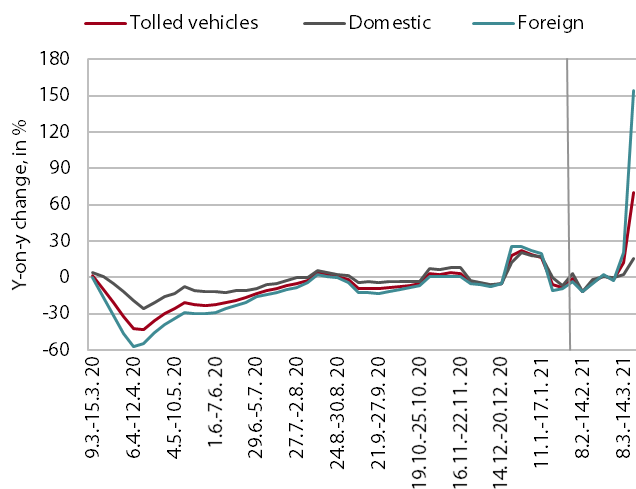
Electricity consumption, March 2021



Source: ENTSO-E and Bruegel.org. Notes: Only consumption on working days (between 8.00 and 18.00) is considered. The percentages are adjusted for temperature differences. Up to the end of January 2021, 4-week moving averages are shown.

Electricity consumption in the third week of March was 2% higher compared with the same week of 2020, but 4% lower compared with the same week of the pre-crisis year 2019. Year-on-year higher consumption was also recorded in our main trading partners, from 2% in Germany to 18% in Italy. The main reason was the base effect, as last year electricity consumption dropped notably as a result of the stringent containment measures adopted at the beginning of the epidemic. Compared with the same week of 2019, most countries recorded declines. The largest was in Italy (7%), in Austria it was 4% and in France and Germany 2%. The exception is Croatia, where consumption was 4% higher with regard to the comparable week in 2019.

Traffic of electronically tolled vehicles on Slovenian motorways, March 2021



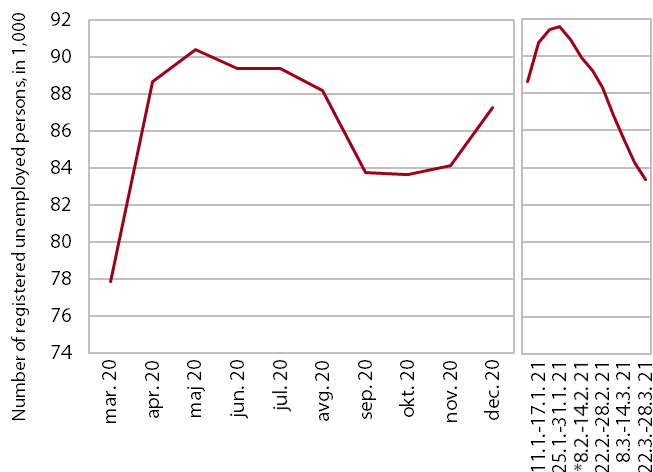
Source: Internal reports obtained from DARS; calculations by IMAD. Up to the end of January, 4-week moving averages are shown.

Freight traffic on Slovenian motorways¹ in the third week of March was 70% higher than in the comparable week last year, when strict containment measures were already in force due to the beginning of the first wave of the epidemic. Between 15 and 21 March, domestic vehicle traffic was 16% higher and foreign vehicle traffic as much as 154% higher year on year. Although in the third week of March the volume of freight traffic remained high,² this strong growth is mainly a consequence of the base effect, given that traffic dropped sharply in the same period of last year. Freight traffic was approximately the same as in the comparable week of 2019 (somewhat higher in domestic and somewhat lower in foreign vehicles).

¹ Measured in kilometres driven.

² It again exceeded 21 million kilometres driven, while domestic vehicle traffic, at 8.9 million, was the highest weekly traffic since the beginning of the epidemic.

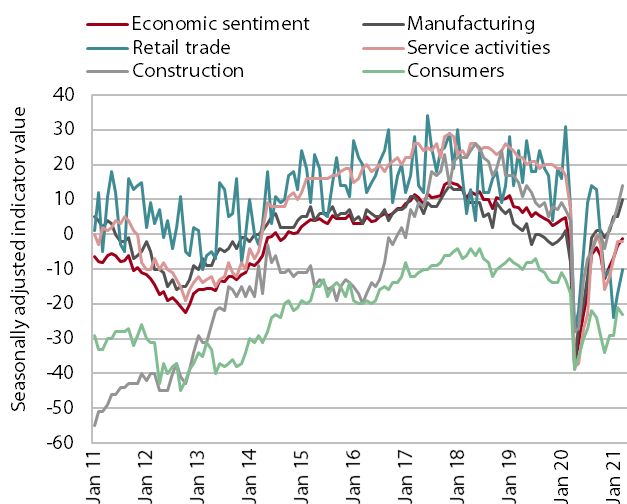
Registered unemployment, March 2021



Source: ESS. Note: Left: official data at the end of the month; right: daily (unofficial) data.

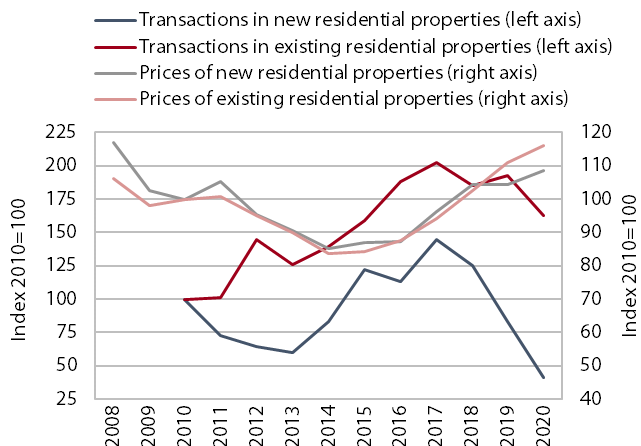
The decline in the number of registered unemployed persons strengthened somewhat further in March. After December's and January's increase in the number of unemployed, which did not deviate significantly from seasonal increases in the same period of previous years, the number of unemployed dropped seasonally adjusted in February. In March, its decline strengthened somewhat further, which, in addition to seasonal factors, is also attributable to the easing of measures. On 25 March, 83,076 persons were unemployed according to ESS unofficial (daily) data, which is 5.7% less than at the end of February and around 7% more than in the same period last year.

Economic sentiment, March 2021



Source: SURS; calculations by IMAD.

Economic sentiment improved further in March. Confidence in the export part of the economy and construction, which were not markedly affected in the second wave of the epidemic, again improved notably in March and was higher than before the epidemic. With the relaxation of some containment measures, confidence also improved significantly at the monthly level in the more affected trade, while in service activities the indicator stopped rising after two consecutive months of growth. Confidence among consumers, who are mainly pessimistic about the future economic situation, deteriorated in March and was, as in trade and services, lower year on year.



Source: SURS; calculations by IMAD. Note: Due to methodological changes transaction data are available from 2010 onwards.

Growth in dwelling prices moderated somewhat in 2020 on average; the number of transactions declined further due to containment measures.

In the year as a whole, prices were 4.6% higher year on year (in 2018 and 2019, 8.7% and 6.7% higher, respectively). They rose particularly due to higher prices of *existing dwellings*, in particular flats (5.4%). Prices of existing flats outside Ljubljana increased more (6.5%), for the third consecutive year. Last year, they exceeded the average 2008 price by a fifth. Prices of existing flats in Ljubljana, which started to rise earlier than in the rest of Slovenia, exceeded the 2008 level by 7.3%. Prices of *newly built dwellings* were also higher year on year, but these dwellings accounted for less than 3% of all transactions. Prices of family houses recorded strong growth (over 13%), but they remained lower than in 2008 (by 14.6%). The growth of prices of new flats was down (by 2.1%), the number of transactions in these flats being at an 11-year low.

Table: Selected macroeconomic indicators for Slovenia

Selected macroeconomic indicators for Slovenia	Date of release		Unit	Reference period					
	Latest	Next		2019 Q3	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4
GDP, real	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ³	0.6	1.1	-4.8	-10.1	12.2	-1.0
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	3.1	2.0	-2.3	-12.9	-2.4	-4.5
Private consumption, real	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ³	0.3	-0.1	-8.1	-10.3	20.1	-14.5
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	5.8	2.2	-6.4	-17.3	-0.6	-14.5
Government consumption, real	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ³	0.3	-1.0	4.4	-4.5	2.7	0.4
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	2.5	-0.3	4.1	-1.1	1.3	2.8
Gross investment, real	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ³	7.9	-9.9	0.8	-6.6	-0.9	13.9
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	5.8	-1.3	-2.4	-10.1	-17.4	8.2
Exports of goods and services, real	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ³	-1.0	-0.1	-1.5	-21.3	16.0	8.2
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	4.9	1.1	-0.8	-23.4	-9.5	-0.4
Imports of goods and services, real	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ³	-0.1	-2.6	-0.5	-21.4	13.6	7.7
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	7.6	-0.3	-1.9	-24.0	-12.5	-2.0
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
Trade balance¹	16.03.2021	13.04.2021	EUR m	300.2	217.7	86.0	281.4	:	:
Current account¹	16.03.2021	13.04.2021	EUR m	459.6	264.7	184.8	289.7	:	:
	12.03.2021	09.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ⁴	3.9	-1.1	0.2	3.5	:	:
Exports of goods, real²	12.03.2021	09.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	3.2	1.9	8.6	-2.4	:	:
	12.03.2021	09.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ⁴	7.3	13.9	-9.1	-3.5	:	:
Imports of goods, real²	12.03.2021	09.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	-3.8	17.5	4.9	-7.8	:	:
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
Inflation (CPI)	31.03.2021	30.04.2021	% (M/M-1)	0.3	-0.8	-0.3	-0.4	0.3	0.3
	31.03.2021	30.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	-0.1	-0.9	-1.1	-0.7	-1.0	0.1
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
Gross earnings per employee – nominal	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-1)	1.2	11.4	-0.4	-2.2	:	:
	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	4.6	6.9	8.9	9.4	:	:
- private sector	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-1)	0.3	12.0	-2.9	-3.6	:	:
	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	2.9	3.5	5.3	3.7	:	:
- public sector	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-1)	2.9	10.5	3.7	-0.4	:	:
	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	7.1	12.6	14.6	18.4	:	:
- of which government sector	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-1)	3.3	9.4	4.5	2.5	:	:
	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	9.1	16.3	19.3	22.9	:	:
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
Employed persons	16.03.2021	16.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ⁴	0.0	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	:	:
	16.03.2021	16.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	-1.4	-1.6	-1.4	-1.5	:	:
Registered unemployed persons	03.03.2021	06.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ⁴	-2.4	-0.2	-0.6	-0.9	-1.3	:
	03.03.2021	06.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	15.5	16.2	15.9	14.6	13.6	:
Registered unemployment rate	16.03.2021	16.04.2021	%	8.6	8.6	8.9	9.4	:	:
				2019 Q3	2019 Q4	2020 Q1	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q4
Employment, LFS	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-1) ⁵	-1.3	0.3	0.9	-2.1	0.7	0.9
	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	% (Q/Q-4)	-0.8	-0.4	0.4	-2.3	-0.3	0.4
ILO unemployment rate, LFS	26.02.2021	31.05.2021	%	4.8	4.0	4.6	5.2	5.1	5.1
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
Industrial producer prices, domestic market	19.03.2021	21.04.2021	% (M/M-1)	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.7	:
	19.03.2021	21.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.7	:
Production volume in manufacturing, real	10.03.2021	09.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ³	3.1	-0.2	0.1	2.0	:	:
	10.03.2021	09.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	-1.2	2.2	5.3	-1.6	:	:
Construction, real value of construction output	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ³	-0.8	11.4	-10.5	8.4	:	:
	15.03.2021	15.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	0.3	17.3	-0.8	4.2	:	:
Turnover in trade, real	29.03.2021	29.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ³	-1.7	-2.6	-1.4	0.0	:	:
	29.03.2021	29.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	-7.1	-9.4	-7.1	-14.1	:	:
Real turnover in market services	30.03.2021	30.04.2021	% (M/M-1) ³	-7.0	0.9	-1.3	-0.9	:	:
	30.03.2021	30.04.2021	% (M/M-12)	-10.5	-8.0	-9.5	-14.2	:	:
				2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
General government deficit/surplus (ESA 2010)	31.03.2021	30.09.2021	% BDP	-2.8	-1.9	-0.1	0.7	0.4	-8.4
Consolidated gross general government debt (ESA)	31.03.2021	30.09.2021	% BDP	82.6	78.5	74.1	70.3	65.6	80.8
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
Economic sentiment indicator⁵, seasonally adjusted	24.03.2021	23.04.2021	% ³	-6.2	-12.8	-9.2	-6.7	-3.3	-1.1
				2020 m 10	2020 m 11	2020 m 12	2021 m 1	2021 m 2	2021 m 3
EURIBOR, 3-month	Beginning of the month *	%		-0.5091	-0.5209	-0.5381	-0.5472	-0.5411	-0.5391
Long-term government bond yields	Beginning of the month	%		-0.0760	-0.1380	-0.1500	-0.1000	0.0400	0.0240
Exchange rate, USD to EUR	Beginning of the month	US\$		1.1775	1.1838	1.2170	1.2171	1.2098	1.1899

Source: SURS, BS, ECB, EUROSTAT, EURIBOR.org, calculations by IMAD.

Notes: ¹Balance of payments statistics of the BoS. ²External trade statistics SURS. ³Seasonally adjusted – SURS. ⁴Seasonally adjusted – IMAD. ⁵Difference between positive and negative answers, in %.

* calculations by IMAD.

For comparisons with the EU and EMU see: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/euro-indicators/peeis>

The table format accessible to screen reader users can be found on the IMAD website among the appendices to the current graphs of the week (Selected macroeconomic indicators for euro area)

Extra information: phone: +386 1 478 10 04, e-mail: matic.slapsak@gov.si