

WAGES OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND PRICES OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

4th QUARTER/2008

No. 4

I. Wages of Construction Workers

The average daily wage of construction workers was MOP526 in the fourth quarter of 2008, down by 3.0% quarter-to-quarter. The average daily wage of *skilled & semi-skilled workers* dropped by 1.4% to MOP549 and that of *unskilled workers* rose by 2.6% to MOP358.

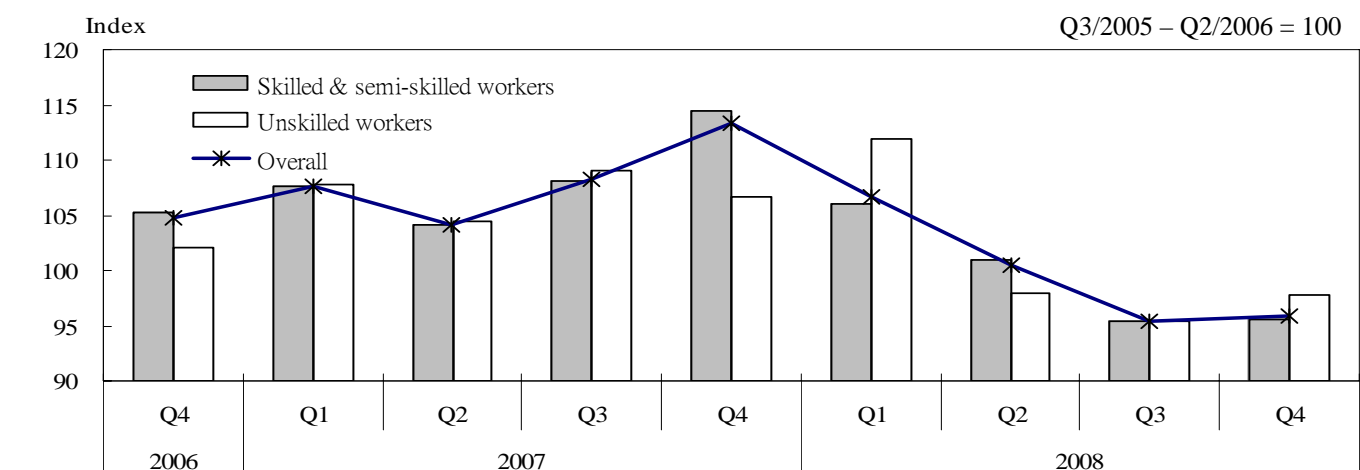
Among the *skilled & semi-skilled workers*, *structural iron erectors* had the highest average daily wage of MOP713, up by 12.8% over the previous quarter, which was followed by *plant operators*, *concrete formwork carpenters* and *plumbers*, with MOP673, MOP652 and MOP574 respectively.

Table 1. Average daily wages of construction workers

Occupation	Daily wage (MOP)			Variation (%)	
	2007	2008		Quarter-to-quarter	Year-on-year
	Q4	Q3	Q4		
Overall average	595	542	526	-3.0	-11.6
Skilled & semi-skilled workers	625	557	549	-1.4	-12.2
Of which:					
Structural iron erectors	621	632	713	12.8	14.8
Plant operators	651	662	673	1.7	3.4
Concrete formwork carpenters	651	598	652	9.0	0.2
Plumbers	576	556	574	3.2	-0.4
Levellers	631	551	557	1.1	-11.7
Unskilled workers	364	349	358	2.6	-1.7

After discounting the effect of inflation, the wage index of construction workers for the fourth quarter of 2008 was 95.8 in real terms, up slightly by 0.4% quarter-to-quarter, with that of *skilled & semi-skilled workers* increasing by 0.2% to 95.6 and that of *unskilled workers* going up by 2.4% to 97.7.

Graph 1. Real wage indices of construction workers by quarter



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Among the *skilled & semi-skilled workers*, the real wage indices of *structural iron erectors*, *concrete formwork carpenters* and *plumbers* increased by 12.7%, 8.8% and 3.1% respectively over the previous quarter, but those of *painters*, *scaffolders* and *carpenters* recorded decreases of 9.8%, 6.6% and 6.5% respectively.

For the whole year of 2008, the average wage index of construction workers declined by 8.0% year-on-year to 99.6 in real terms.

Table 2. Real wage indices of construction workers by occupation

Occupation	Index					Variation (%)	
	2007		2008			Quarter-to-quarter	Year-on-year
	Annual average	Q4	Annual average	Q3	Q4		
Overall index	108.3	113.4	99.6	95.4	95.8	0.4	-15.5
Skilled and semi-skilled workers	108.5	114.4	99.5	95.4	95.6	0.2	-16.4
<i>Of which:</i>							
Structural iron erectors	94.5	94.9	94.4	90.0	101.4	12.7	6.8
Concrete formwork carpenters	97.5	101.2	90.3	86.7	94.3	8.8	-6.8
Plumbers	108.9	109.3	104.1	98.3	101.3	3.1	-7.3
Carpenters	109.2	115.8	93.8	93.8	87.7	-6.5	-24.3
Scaffolders	100.9	109.1	88.1	87.6	81.8	-6.6	-25.0
Painters	120.4	114.9	107.2	106.6	96.2	-9.8	-16.3
Unskilled workers	107.0	106.7	100.7	95.4	97.7	2.4	-8.4

Q3/2005 – Q2/2006 = 100

II. Prices of Construction Materials

In the fourth quarter of 2008, the average price of *spiral and round reinforcing steel bars* fell sharply by 20.3% quarter-to-quarter to MOP6,094 per tonne, and that of *concrete* declined by 4.7% to MOP319 per cubic metre; however, the average price of *ordinary clear sheet glass* registered an increase of 2.2%, at MOP83 per square metre.

Table 3. Prices of selected construction materials

Construction material	Unit	Price			Variation (%)	
		2007	2008		Quarter-to-quarter	Year-on-year
		Q4	Q3	Q4		
Spiral and round reinforcing steel bars (length: 12m, diameter: ≥ 10 mm)	tonne	5 209	7 645	6 094	-20.3	17.0
Clamping plate (plywood) (size: 19mm x 0.9m-1.2m x 1.8m-2.4m)	m ²	63	64	64	-0.3	1.6
Ordinary clear sheet glass (thickness: 3mm-6mm)	m ²	71	81	83	2.2	17.0
Emulsion paint	litre	27	27	28	1.8	3.3
PVC (grey) water supply pipes (thick) (size: 32mm ϕ x 4m)	unit	21	23	23	-	9.0
Concrete	m ³	313	334	319	-4.7	1.7
Portland cement (ordinary)	tonne	603	638	625	-2.0	3.6

MOP

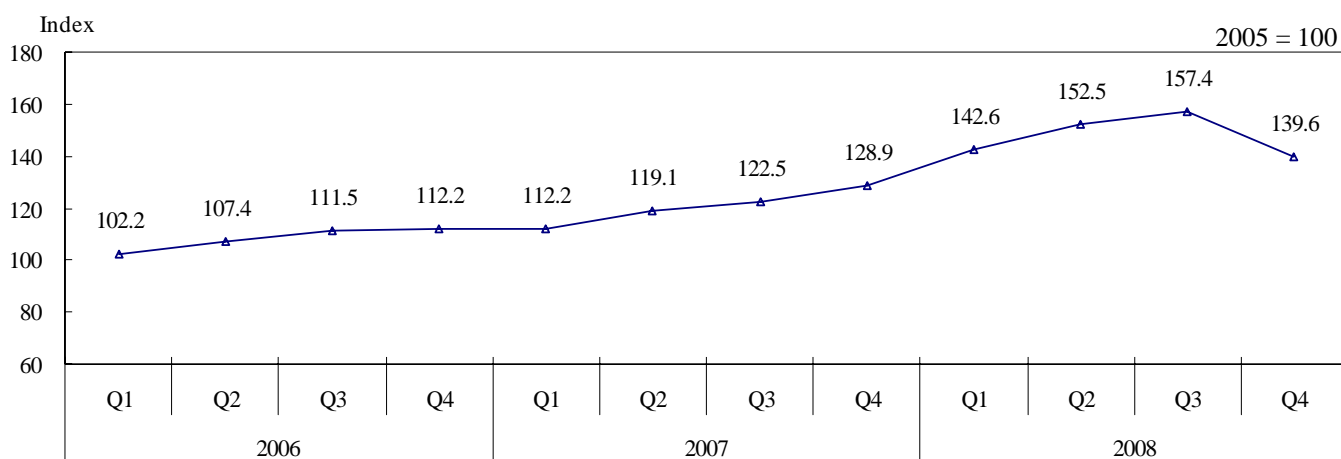
In the fourth quarter of 2008, the price index of construction materials for residential buildings (139.6) dropped by 11.3% quarter-to-quarter after rising for six consecutive quarters. Compared with the same quarter of 2007, the price index registered an increase of 8.3%, owing to a 17.6% and 25.5% surge in the price indices of *steel* and *concrete pipe piles*; besides, the price indices of *timber* and *concrete* went up by 7.7% and 3.8% respectively year-on-year.

In 2008, the average price index of construction materials for residential buildings rose by 22.6% year-on-year to 148.0.

Table 4. Price indices of construction materials for residential buildings

2005 = 100								
Group of construction materials	Weight	Index					Variation (%)	
		2007		2008			Quarter-to-quarter	Year-on-year
		Annual average	Q4	Annual average	Q3	Q4		
Overall index	100.00	120.7	128.9	148.0	157.4	139.6	-11.3	8.3
<i>Of which:</i>								
Steel	27.65	122.2	145.6	188.2	211.4	171.2	-19.0	17.6
Concrete	15.34	97.4	94.3	101.2	102.3	97.9	-4.3	3.8
Timber	14.05	115.1	116.9	123.5	126.2	125.9	-0.2	7.7
Electric wires	9.36	203.6	214.7	217.5	233.1	181.5	-22.1	-15.5
Pipes	8.39	112.0	115.7	139.4	144.8	143.5	-0.9	24.0
Concrete pipe piles	7.08	99.6	107.5	134.9	136.9	134.9	-1.5	25.5
Aluminium	5.94	114.0	109.3	109.9	113.8	97.7	-14.1	-10.6

Graph 2. Price index of construction materials for residential buildings



The following statistical tables are available for download from our website

1. Number of construction projects surveyed and workers engaged in government and private sectors
2. Number of construction projects surveyed and workers engaged by number of workers
3. Average daily wages of construction workers by occupation
4. Nominal wage indices of construction workers by occupation
5. Real wage indices of construction workers by occupation
6. Average prices of major construction materials
7. Price indices of construction materials for residential buildings

Further statistical information can be obtained from the Documentation and Information
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