

VIETNAM BUSINESS REVIEW

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Also in the issue

Total revenue from retail sales of goods and services in Vietnam increase by 8.7%

E-commerce sales in Vietnam are expected to surpass the \$30 billion mark by the end of 2024

Vietnam attracted over US\$18 billion in foreign direct investment during the first seven months of the year

Despite positive developments for seaport but challenges remain

DPPA approval a win for clean energy



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Finance





Vietnamese stock market sees remarkable 24-year transformation

Vietnam's stock market has evolved significantly since its inception on July 28, 2000, with the establishment of the Ho Chi Minh Securities Trading Centre, now the Ho Chi Minh Stock Exchange (HoSE). Initially, the market had only five listed securities with a market capitalization of approximately \$39 million (VND986 billion), representing 0.28% of GDP. Over 24 years, the market has seen substantial growth in securities supply and demand, market capitalization, and liquidity.

The number of traded securities has expanded dramatically from two initial ticker symbols to 2,183, including stocks, bonds, derivatives, ETFs, and covered warrants. The total volume of listed securities reached 237.6 billion by May 2024. The derivatives market, introduced in 2017, has also grown significantly, with the VN30 index futures contract showing an average annual growth of 38.6% during 2018–2022.

By the first quarter of 2022, the stock market's total capitalization reached approximately \$294 billion (VND6.9 quadrillion), surpassing the 70% target set for 2020. By May 2024, the market cap stood at \$294 billion (VND6.9 quadrillion), representing 68% of GDP. The securities market has become a crucial capital mobilization channel, raising nearly \$123 billion (VND2.9 quadrillion) from 2011–2020.

Investor participation has surged, with over 7.9 million securities accounts registered by May 2024, representing 8% of the population. Foreign and institutional investors have increased, enhancing corporate governance practices. The market's infrastructure and trading systems have been modernized, with continuous order execution and reduced settlement times.

Legal frameworks, starting with the 2006 Securities Law, have been crucial in protecting investors and aligning with international practices. Efforts to upgrade Vietnam's market from frontier to emerging status continue, aiming to attract more foreign capital and reach nine million accounts by 2025 and 11 million by 2030. An upgrade could lead to significant inflows from funds tracking the MSCI Emerging Markets index. VOV

Back to top

Logistics





Despite positive developments for seaport but challenges remain

In the first half of 2024, joint venture seaports in Vietnam showed significant improvement despite past challenges. SSIT, a joint venture between Vietnam Maritime Corporation (VIMC) and SSA Marine from the US, welcomed the MSC Vigour III as part of the new Saola line, enhancing Vietnam's connectivity with China. SSIT's throughput reached over one million tonnes, showing a 29% year-on-year increase, with container throughput hitting over 300,000 TEUs, a 26% rise.

Other joint venture ports like Cai Mep International Terminal (CMIT) and SP-PSA also saw impressive growth. CMIT reported a 41% increase in container throughput, reaching over 700,000 TEUs, while SP-PSA's throughput rose by 23%, meeting 58.3% of its annual plan. The collaboration between CMIT and Tan Cang-Cai Mep Thi Vai Terminal (TCTT) has created a seamless wharf, enhancing cargo handling efficiency.

Despite these positive developments, challenges remain. The global shipping market is facing fluctuations, with low growth in transport demand and an increasing supply of new ships. VIMC CEO Nguyen Canh Tinh expressed concerns about the aging local fleet and the impact of larger ships, particularly those destined for Europe, on Vietnam's ports. To counter these challenges, seaports are focusing on strengthening cooperation and service quality.

Overall, while joint venture seaports in Vietnam have shown resilience and growth, the industry faces ongoing challenges that require continued adaptation and innovation. VIR

E-commerce





E-commerce sales in Vietnam are expected to surpass the \$30 billion mark by the end of 2024

E-commerce sales in Vietnam are expected to surpass the \$30 billion mark by the end of 2024, driven by growing consumer trends and increasing online sales via e-platforms, according to delegates at a meeting in Ho Chi Minh City on July 29.

Metrics, an e-commerce data analysis company, reported that Vietnamese consumers spend approximately VND800 billion (more than \$32 million) daily on the five major e-commerce platforms: Shopee, Lazada, Tiki, Sendo, and TikTok Shop. The total sales for these platforms in the first half of the year reached VND143.9 trillion (\$5.7 billion), a 54.91% increase compared to the same period in 2023. This growth rate is seven times higher than that of the retail industry over the past six months, as per the General Statistics Office.

New forms of online shopping, such as live streaming sales and multi-channel sales, have contributed significantly to this growth, providing substantial revenue to professional sellers. Le Hoang Tai, Deputy Director of the Vietnam Trade PromotionAgencyunder the Ministry of Industry and Trade, highlighted Ho Chi Minh City's role as the country's digital economic hub, noting the city's progress in applying information technology and digital transformation across various sectors, particularly in economics.

The effective application of digital transformation solutions, such as social networks, websites, livestreams, and email marketing, not only helps businesses reach more customers but also optimizes business management and operations, bringing practical benefits to businesses and the economy. Tai added that these solutions help businesses save time, costs, and human resources while better understanding customer needs to develop more effective trade promotion strategies.

Tai revealed that the Trade Promotion Agency plans to strengthen coordination with e-platform developers, reputable sellers, and relevant agencies to enhance business capacity on digital platforms, develop brands, and build images for local businesses and cooperatives. The agency aims to promote regional connectivity and apply science and technology to improve production and business capacity towards a green and sustainable economy. VOV

Back to top

Energy





DPPA approval a win for clean energy

The US Department of State's Bureau of Energy Resources (ENR) has commended Vietnam for approving a direct power purchase agreement (DPPA) on July 3, marking a crucial step towards the country's net-zero emissions target by 2050. This policy, supported by both domestic and international private sector companies and investors, introduces a clear mechanism for large energy consumers to directly purchase clean energy.

The DPPA allows businesses in Vietnam to procure renewable power directly from private electricity producers, fostering increased private sector investment and aligning corporate emission reduction targets with Vietnam's clean energy objectives. This initiative is expected to stimulate economic growth by promoting sustainable energy practices.

ENR's Clean Energy Demand Initiative (CEDI), in collaboration with the Clean Energy Buyers Alliance, is actively involved in facilitating dialogue between the private sector and the Vietnamese government to support the DPPA's implementation. CEDI serves as a public-private platform connecting countries with companies across various sectors committed to operating on clean energy. It aims to promote policies, regulations, and procurement frameworks that support the development of clean, resilient, and affordable energy systems.

The DPPA's approval is anticipated to unlock up to \$8 billion in clean energy investments in Vietnam, bolstering the country's transition to a sustainable energy future and reinforcing its commitment to environmental stewardship. VIR

Retail





Total revenue from retail sales of goods and services in Vietnam increase by 8.7%

The total revenue from retail sales of goods and services in Vietnam for the first seven months of 2024 was estimated at approximately 152.1 billion USD, reflecting an 8.7% increase compared to the same period last year, according to the General Statistics Office (GSO).

Goods alone accounted for around 118.2 billion USD, making up 77.3% of the total revenue. This segment experienced a 7.4% growth year-on-year, with notable increases in specific categories: food and foodstuffs rose by 10.7%, household appliances by 11.1%, garments by 9.1%, vehicles by 3.4%, and cultural and educational products by 11.2%.

Several localities saw significant increases in retail sales of goods: Quang Ninh rose by 10.2%, Da Nang by 7.8%, Can Tho by 7.6%, Hanoi by 6.6%, and Ho Chi Minh City by 6.3%, compared to the same period last year.

Revenue from accommodation and catering services reached about 17.7 billion USD, up 15.2% from the previous year. Tourism revenue was estimated at approximately 1.5 billion USD, a 31.8% increase, bolstered by favorable visa policies and tourism promotion programs.

Revenue from other services totaled around 15.6 billion USD, up 9.4% over the same period last year.

In July alone, the total revenue from retail sales of goods and services stood at roughly 22.2 billion USD, marking a 9.4% increase compared to July 2023. NDO

Investment





Vietnam attracted over US\$18 billion in foreign direct investment during the first seven months of the year

Vietnam attracted over US\$18 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) during the first seven months of the year, marking a 10.9% increase compared to the same period last year, according to the Foreign Investment Agency (FIA). Foreign investors registered US\$10.76 billion in new projects, up 35.6%, while additional capital inflows totaled nearly US\$4.97 billion, a 19.4% rise. However, capital contributions and share purchases declined by 45.2% to US\$2.27 billion.

The processing and manufacturing industry led FDI attraction with over US\$12.65 billion, up 15.7% year-on-year. The real estate sector followed with more than US\$2.87 billion, a significant 78% increase, while the wholesale and retail industry attracted nearly US\$740.5 million, and science and technological activities received US\$490.6 million.

Singapore emerged as the top investor among 91 countries and territories, contributing nearly US\$6.52 billion, up 79.1%. Other major investors included Hong Kong (China), Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea. Notably, investors from Kyrgyzstan appeared as new players, raising the total number of investing countries and territories to 147.

FDI was distributed across 48 cities and provinces, with Bac Ninh leading at nearly US\$3.2 billion, followed by Quang Ninh with over US\$1.56 billion, and Ho Chi Minh City with nearly US\$1.55 billion. The total FDI disbursed nationwide reached an estimated US\$12.55 billion, reflecting an 8.4% year-on-year increase. VOV

Back to top





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