



Purchasing Managers' Indices indicate expansions in both Manufacturing and Services activities in March 2026

Sri Lanka Purchasing Managers' Index for Manufacturing (PMI – Manufacturing) increased to 66.7 in March 2026, supported by heightened activity related to seasonal demand. However, many respondents reported a tight production environment, mainly attributed to raw material and fuel shortages, rising costs, and logistical constraints.

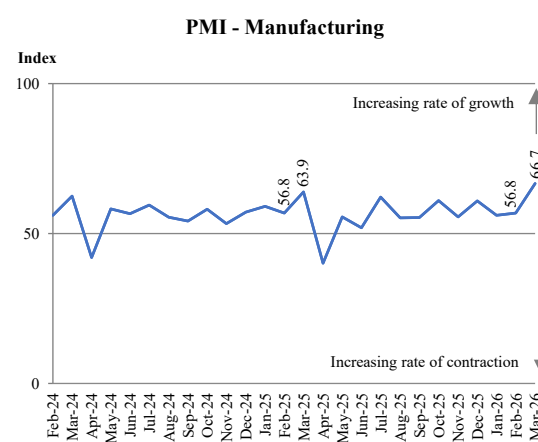
The New Orders and Production sub-indices expanded in March, particularly within the food and beverages and textile and wearing apparel manufacturing sectors. The Stock of Purchases sub-index expanded in line with increasing production demand. Further, some firms reported precautionary stocking to safeguard their production pipelines against potential disruptions due to the ongoing Middle East conflict. The Employment Index expanded, albeit at a slower pace, in March. Meanwhile, the Suppliers' Delivery Time continued to lengthen, particularly due to demand pressures and shipping-related disruptions.

Summary of the PMI - Manufacturing Survey

Variable	Feb.	Mar.	+/-	Direction
PMI - Manufacturing	56.8	66.7	+	Rising, Higher Rate
New Orders	55.0	69.9	+	Rising, Higher Rate
Production	54.5	68.8	+	Rising, Higher Rate
Employment	58.6	55.9	-	Rising, Slower Rate
Stock of Purchases	60.0	59.9	-	Rising, Slower Rate
Suppliers' Delivery Time	59.6	75.5	+	Lengthening, Higher Rate

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

Expectations for manufacturing activities over the next quarter remained above the neutral threshold, though somewhat moderated by uncertainties related to the ongoing Middle East conflict.



Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

The World Outlook Summary of PMI Manufacturing

Country/Territory	Direction
Global	Rising, Slower Rate
India	Rising, Slower Rate
China	Rising, Slower Rate
US	Rising, Higher Rate
UK	Rising, Slower Rate
Eurozone	Rising, Higher Rate

Source: S&P Global¹ as of 16 April 2026 (PMI Releases (spglobal.com))

¹S&P Global compiles PMIs for over 40 economies worldwide.

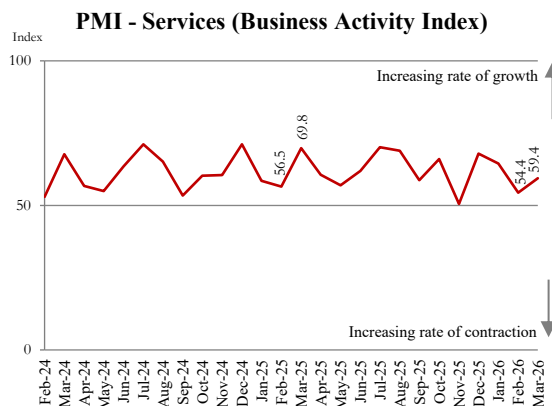
Sri Lanka Purchasing Managers’ Index for Services (PMI – Services) recorded an index value of 59.4 in March 2026, indicating an expansion in services activities compared to the previous month.



The expansion in business activities was supported by broad-based improvements across sectors. The financial services sector remained the primary driver, benefiting from increased lending activity. In addition, wholesale and retail trade showed an expansion due to the festive demand, while professional services and other personal service activities also recorded notable growth.

The expansion of new businesses continued in March 2026, driven by the financial service sector, with further support from significant growth in insurance and pension funding activities.

Employment increased further in March 2026, as firms expanded their workforce to meet rising consumer demand ahead of the festive season. Backlogs of work continued to decline, though the pace of contraction moderated during the month.



Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

Summary of the PMI - Services Survey

Variable	2026 Feb.	2026 Mar.	+/-	Direction
PMI - Services (Business Activity Index)	54.4	59.4	+	Rising, Higher Rate
New Businesses	53.8	57.6	+	Rising, Higher Rate
Employment	55.1	54.2	-	Rising, Slower Rate
Backlogs of Work	47.6	48.1	+	Falling, Slower Rate
Expectations for Activity	65.9	57.1	-	Rising, Slower Rate

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

Expectations for Business Activity over the next quarter remained robust, supported by seasonal demand and new opportunities that could arise despite uncertainties in the current geopolitical environment. However, some firms highlighted downside risks to outlook, including the impact of the Middle East conflict and broader global economic uncertainty.

The World Outlook Summary of PMI Services

Country/Territory	Direction
Global	Rising, Slower Rate
India	Rising, Slower Rate
China	Rising, Slower Rate
US	Falling from Rising
UK	Rising, Slower Rate
Eurozone	Rising, Slower Rate

Source: S&P Global ¹ as of 16 April 2026 (PMI Releases (spglobal.com))

Technical Note

Methodology

Questionnaires are completed in the first half of the succeeding month. For each variable, respondents are asked to report an increase, decrease or no change compared with the previous month, and to provide reasons for any changes. The index compilation and interpretation of indices follow the survey methodology of S&P Global.

PMI – Manufacturing, which is considered as the headline index for Manufacturing, is a weighted average of New Orders, Output, Employment, Suppliers’ Delivery Time and Stocks of Purchases.

The Services Business Activity Index is the headline index for Services, which is referred to as the **PMI – Services**, as per the international best practices. The Services Business Activity Index is comparable to the Manufacturing Production Index.

The Index

PMI is calculated as a ‘Diffusion Index’, where it takes values between 0 and 100.

- PMI=50 - sector remained neutral on a month-on-month basis
- PMI>50 - sector is generally expanding on a month-on-month basis
- PMI<50 - sector is generally declining on a month-on-month basis

Sample

The sampling frame was based on a list of large companies located in the Western province obtained from the EPF Department. Samples for Manufacturing and Services activities were selected based on the GDP sectoral share, with a target of 100 responses for each.

Definitions of Variables

- Employment : Number of staff working for the organization
- Stock of Purchases : Raw materials purchased and kept in a warehouse to be used for production
- Supplier Delivery Time : Time lag between order placement and delivery by the supplier
- Backlogs of Work : Uncompleted orders
- Other variables are self-explanatory.