

Consumer Price Indices for April 2019

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (May 23) the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures for April 2019. According to the Composite CPI, overall consumer prices rose by 2.9% in April 2019 over the same month a year earlier, larger than the corresponding increase (2.1%) in March 2019. The larger year-on-year rate of change in the Composite CPI in April was mainly attributable to the lower ceiling of rates concession, from \$2,500 per quarter for each rateable tenement to \$1,500 starting from April 2019. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rate of increase in the Composite CPI (i.e. the underlying inflation rate) in April 2019 was also 2.9%, larger than that in March 2019 (2.6%), mainly due to the enlarged increases in the charges for package tours and the increases in inbound and outbound transport fares.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the average monthly rate of increase in the Composite CPI for the three-month period ending April 2019 was 0.4%, and that for the three-month period ending March 2019 was 0.2%. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the corresponding rates of increase were 0.3% and 0.2%.

Analysed by sub-index, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 3.0%, 2.8% and 3.0% respectively in April 2019, as compared to 2.4%, 1.9% and 1.9% respectively in March 2019. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 3.1%, 2.7% and 2.9% respectively in April 2019, as compared to 3.0%, 2.4% and 2.3% respectively in March 2019.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, for the three-month period ending April 2019, the average monthly rates of increase in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were all 0.4%. The corresponding rates of increase for the three-month period ending March 2019 were 0.2%, 0.2% and 0.1% respectively. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the corresponding average monthly rates of increase in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) for the three-month period ending April 2019 were all 0.3%, and the corresponding rates of increase for the three-month period ending March 2019 were 0.3%, 0.2% and 0.2% respectively.

Amongst the various components of the Composite CPI, year-on-year increases in prices were recorded in April 2019 for food (excluding meals bought away from home) (4.6%), housing (4.3%), miscellaneous services (3.1%), transport (2.7%), alcoholic drinks and tobacco (2.3%), meals bought away from home (2.2%) and miscellaneous goods (1.9%).

On the other hand, year-on-year decreases in the components of the Composite CPI were recorded in April 2019 for electricity, gas and water (-4.3%); durable goods (-2.1%) as well as clothing and footwear (-1.0%).

Taking the first four months of 2019 together, the Composite CPI rose by 2.4% over a year earlier. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.7%, 2.3% and 2.2% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 2.7%, 3.2%, 2.6% and 2.5% respectively.

For the three months ending April 2019, the Composite CPI rose by 2.3% over a year earlier, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) rose by 2.7%, 2.2% and 2.2% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 2.7%, 3.1%, 2.5% and 2.4% respectively.

For the 12 months ending April 2019, the Composite CPI was on average 2.4% higher than that in the preceding 12-month period. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.8%, 2.3% and 2.2% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 2.8%, 3.1%, 2.7% and 2.5% respectively.

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that inflation pressure remained largely moderate in recent months. The underlying consumer price inflation rate went up somewhat in April, mainly reflecting a larger year-on-year increase in the charges for package tours amid the late arrival of the Easter holidays (which started in mid-April this year but in late March last year). The increase in headline inflation rate in April also reflected the lower ceiling of the Government's rates concession in the new financial year.

Looking ahead, inflation will likely stay moderate in the near term. The earlier easing in fresh-letting residential rentals should have a mitigating effect in the coming months. External price pressures have also eased recently. The Government will continue to monitor the situation closely, particularly the impact on the lower-income people.

Further information

The CPIs and year-on-year rates of change at section level for April 2019 are shown in Table 1. The time series on the year-on-year rates of change in the CPIs before and after removing the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures are shown in Table 2. For discerning the latest trend in consumer prices, it is also useful to look at the changes in the seasonally adjusted CPIs. The corresponding time series on the average monthly rates of change during the latest three months for the seasonally adjusted CPIs are shown in Table 3. The rates of change in the original and the seasonally adjusted Composite CPI and the underlying inflation rate are presented graphically in Chart 1.

More detailed CPI data (including year-on-year comparison, month-to-month comparison, seasonally adjusted data series and the CPIs by the Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP)) are available in the monthly reports. Users can download the April 2019 issue of

the "Monthly Report on the Consumer Price Index" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp270.jsp?productCode=B1060001), the time series of CPIs at detailed level (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp270.jsp?productCode=D5600001), the time series of CPIs at COICOP division level (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp270.jsp?productCode=D5600002) and the time series of CPIs after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp270.jsp?productCode=D5600003) free of charge at the website of the C&SD.

For enquiries about the CPIs, please contact the Consumer Price Index Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7374 or email: cpi@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Three useful tools to help students prepare for HKDSE Examination results release day](#)

To assist Secondary Six graduates to prepare for the release of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination results on July 10, the Education Bureau (EDB) has produced the "Three useful tools for 710", namely the e-Navigator; 710 Further Studies and Career Map; and 2019 Compass@710. These tools, uploaded to the EDB website today (May 23), allow graduates, parents and schools to obtain useful information in a timely manner.

Graduates, parents and schools can use the e-Navigator to search for programme information across different levels including degrees, sub-degrees and the Diploma Yi Jin. The 710 Further Studies and Career Map provides a checklist of multiple pathways and key dates for course registration, reminding graduates to take necessary actions accordingly. The 2019 Compass@710 provides users with essential information to make better preparation for the release of the HKDSE Examination results. It includes information on further studies, multiple pathways and various supporting services.

A spokesman for the EDB said, "The broad and balanced senior secondary curriculum provides diversified choices to cater for students' different interests, abilities and needs. It promotes whole-person development, fully stretches students' potential and equips them with lifelong learning capabilities by the time of graduation. We hope that all graduates will make good use of the 'Three useful tools for 710' together with the flexible and diversified study and career pathways with multiple entry and exit points under the New Academic Structure, to choose the right directions according to

their interests, needs and aptitudes, so as to develop their full potential and realise their aspirations."

The EDB will continue to maintain close communication and collaboration with schools and other stakeholders to help students plan for their future, the spokesman said.

The "Three useful tools for 710" are available on the 2019 HKDSE Examination Results Release Designated Webpage (www.edb.gov.hk/s6/en), which also provides other latest information about multiple pathways.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, May 23, 2019 is 105.7 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

InvestHK encourages Nanjing enterprises to leverage Hong Kong's innovation and technology advantages to "go global" (with photo)

Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) held an investment promotion seminar in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, today (May 23) to update Nanjing enterprises on Hong Kong's unique business advantages and the latest developments of its innovation and technology industry, encouraging them to expand their business globally via Hong Kong.

The seminar, entitled "Leveraging Hong Kong's platform for Nanjing innovation and technology enterprises to 'go global'", was jointly organised by InvestHK and the Nanjing Municipal Bureau of Commerce, and co-organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Shanghai. Associate Director-General of Investment Promotion Mr Vincent Tang and the Deputy Director of the Nanjing Municipal Bureau of Commerce, Ms Liu Liya, delivered welcome remarks at the event.

Mr Tang said, "Hong Kong has been an important economic and trade partner as well as a key conduit for foreign investment in Nanjing over many years. The city is also the key fundraising market for Nanjing companies.

Operating under the principle of 'one country, two systems' allows Hong Kong to enjoy dual advantages. Nanjing enterprises can leverage our world-class financial and professional services to finance projects and mergers and acquisitions deals, and access the very best accounting and tax, legal, construction engineering design, management and project planning services, as well as manpower training and much more. Looking forward, we can further enhance co-operation between the two places to fully tap the opportunities arising from the Belt and Road Initiative."

He also told the audience that the Hong Kong Government has introduced various policies and measures to boost innovation and technology development, which include developing innovation and technology infrastructure, building the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park at the Lok Ma Chau Loop, and earmarking the development of Cyberport 5 as stated in the Budget last year. It has also introduced tax incentives to promote local research and development (R&D), encouraging private enterprises to undertake more R&D activities.

The Head of Innovation and Technology of InvestHK, Mr Simon Tsang, further elaborated on Hong Kong's advantages and how Mainland enterprises in the innovation and technology sector can capitalise on the city's advantages to "go global". The CEO of Xcelom Limited, Mr Alex Wong, also spoke with the audience on the latest developments of the biotech industry in Hong Kong and his company's experience in setting up in the city. Two other speakers were the Director of Outbound M&A Tax, KPMG, Ms Karen Lin, and the Assistant Vice President of Market Development Mainland Affairs, Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited, Mr Mark Liu. They talked about how to make use of Hong Kong's tax incentives to capture opportunities amid Belt and Road initiatives, as well as the latest developments of the Hong Kong stock market and how to list in Hong Kong.

About InvestHK

InvestHK is the department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government responsible for attracting foreign direct investment and supporting overseas and Mainland businesses to set up or expand in Hong Kong. It provides free advice and customised services for overseas and Mainland companies enrolled as its clients. For more information, please visit www.investhk.gov.hk.



Appeal for information on missing man in Kwai Chung (with photo)

Police today (May 23) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Kwai Chung.

Yung Kwok-leung, aged 56, went missing after he left a hostel on Tai Loong Street on May 20 morning. Staff of the hostel made a report to Police yesterday (May 22).

He is about 1.6 metres tall, 61 kilograms in weight and of thin build. He has a round face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a white shirt, blue jeans and grey sports shoes.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1173 or 6331 8151 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.

