

# External merchandise trade statistics for September 2018

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (October 25) the external merchandise trade statistics for September 2018. In September 2018, the values of Hong Kong's total exports and imports of goods both recorded year-on-year increases, at 4.5% and 4.8% respectively.

In September 2018, the value of total exports of goods increased by 4.5% over a year earlier to \$375.0 billion, after a year-on-year increase of 13.1% in August 2018. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 4.8% over a year earlier to \$422.7 billion in September 2018, after a year-on-year increase of 16.4% in August 2018. A visible trade deficit of \$47.7 billion, equivalent to 11.3% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in September 2018.

For the first nine months of 2018 as a whole, the value of total exports of goods rose by 9.2% over the same period in 2017. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 10.9%. A visible trade deficit of \$421.7 billion, equivalent to 12.1% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in the first nine months of 2018.

Comparing the third quarter of 2018 with the preceding quarter on a seasonally adjusted basis, the value of total exports of goods increased by 1.5%. Meanwhile, the value of imports of goods increased by 2.5%.

## Analysis by country/territory

Comparing September 2018 with September 2017, total exports to Asia as a whole grew by 5.4%. In this region, increases were registered in the values of total exports to most major destinations, in particular Thailand (+23.2%), Korea (+9.9%), Malaysia (+9.4%), the Philippines (+7.6%) and the mainland of China (the Mainland) (+7.0%). On the other hand, decreases were recorded in the values of total exports to Japan (-13.9%) and Taiwan (-9.5%).

Apart from destinations in Asia, decreases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations in other regions, in particular Germany (-15.5%) and the United Kingdom (-6.9%). Concurrently, an increase was registered in the value of total exports to the USA (+5.6%).

Over the same period of comparison, increases were registered in the values of imports from some major suppliers, in particular Malaysia (+51.4%), Singapore (+18.8%), Korea (+9.8%), the USA (+2.8%) and the Mainland (+2.8%). Concurrently, decreases were recorded in the values of imports from India (-15.2%) and the Philippines (-4.5%).

For the first nine months of 2018 as a whole, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports to most major destinations, in particular the Mainland (+11.6%), Thailand (+10.2%), Singapore (+10.0%), the

USA (+9.6%), the Netherlands (+8.2%) and Vietnam (+7.8%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of total exports to India (-11.7%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular Malaysia (+84.9%), Korea (+20.0%), Taiwan (+10.6%), the Mainland (+8.9%), Singapore (+8.6%) and the USA (+8.6%). On the other hand, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of imports from India (-14.2%).

#### Analysis by major commodity

Comparing September 2018 with September 2017, increases were registered in the values of total exports of some principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$16.8 billion or 12.8%), "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$2.2 billion or 11.2%) and "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$1.9 billion or 5.0%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus" (by \$0.6 billion or -7.0%).

Over the same period of comparison, increases were registered in the values of imports of some principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$12.1 billion or 8.3%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$3.6 billion or 10.7%) and "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (by \$3.2 billion or 47.7%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of imports of "professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus" (by \$0.6 billion or -7.2%).

For the first nine months of 2018 as a whole, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports of some principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$180.9 billion or 18.0%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$44.4 billion or 15.3%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$26.0 billion or 17.4%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$15.8 billion or -10.7%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of imports of most principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$184.7 billion or 16.2%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$60.2 billion or 24.0%) and "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (by \$19.5 billion or 37.3%).

#### Commentary

A Government spokesman noted that merchandise exports grew further over a year earlier in September, but at a much decelerated pace. While the slower

growth was partly due to the impacts of the US-Mainland trade conflicts, the disruption to trading activities by typhoon Mangkhut also contributed.

Looking forward, the impacts of the US-Mainland trade conflicts on Hong Kong's exports will likely turn more visible in the coming months, particularly so if the trade conflicts are to escalate further. The Government will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Further information

Table 1 at the annex presents the analysis of external merchandise trade statistics for September 2018. Table 2 presents the original monthly trade statistics from January 2015 to September 2018, and Table 3 gives the seasonally adjusted series for the same period.

The values of total exports of goods to 10 main destinations for September 2018 are shown in Table 4, whereas the values of imports of goods from 10 main suppliers are given in Table 5.

Tables 6 and 7 show the values of total exports and imports of 10 principal commodity divisions for September 2018.

All the merchandise trade statistics described here are measured at current prices and no account has been taken of changes in prices between the periods of comparison. A separate analysis of the volume and price movements of external merchandise trade for September 2018 will be released in mid-November 2018.

The September 2018 issue of "Hong Kong External Merchandise Trade" contains detailed analysis on the performance of Hong Kong's external merchandise trade in September 2018 and will be available in mid-November 2018. Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp)).

Enquiries on merchandise trade statistics may be directed to the Trade Analysis Section (2) of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 5042).

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## **[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected smuggled high-value products \(with photo\)](#)**

Hong Kong Customs seized a batch of suspected high-value smuggled products including bird's nest and electronic products with an estimated market value of about \$30 million at Lok Ma Chau Control Point on October 23.

Customs officers intercepted an outgoing lorry at Lok Ma Chau Control Point for inspection in the morning on October 23 and seized the batch of suspected smuggled goods in the cargo compartment.

The 50-year-old male driver was arrested. He has been released on bail pending further investigation.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).



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## [Housing Authority Committees' Members visit Queen's Hill public housing construction site \(with photos\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

Members of the Hong Kong Housing Authority's (HA) Building Committee and Tender Committee today (October 25) visited the public housing construction site at Queen's Hill, Fanling to see the works progress.

"The area of the public housing development site at Queen's Hill is about 13.65 hectares. After the completion of foundation, site formation, roads and drainage works, building works of domestic blocks have just commenced," said a spokesman for the HA.

The project comprises seven Public Rental Housing (PRH) blocks and six Subsidised Sale Flats (SSF) blocks, with the provision of retail facilities,

carparks, community and social welfare facilities, educational facilities, public transport terminus and ancillary transport facilities.

The overall design and planning embody the HA's objectives of making the best use of land and providing people-oriented, functional and cost-effective designs. Meanwhile, vital elements like strengthening the community network, heritage, protecting trees and sustainable development are also incorporated into the project.

The development is undergoing construction in three building contracts. Committee members appreciated the construction challenges posed by this highly complex mega size project. It is estimated that when all construction works are completed in 2021, the Queen's Hill public housing site will provide in stages a total of 8 865 PRH flats and 3 222 SSF flats for a population of 34 500 people.

During the visit, committee members were also briefed on the site safety performance of the HA's new works contracts, site safety strategy and safe working cycle.

With its various green initiatives, Queen's Hill construction project recently achieved a Provisional Platinum rating under the BEAM Plus New Buildings scheme certified by the Hong Kong Green Building Council.



## **Anti-Drink and Drug Driving Halloween Road Safety 2018 event to be held tomorrow**

The following is issued on behalf of the Road Safety Council:

The Road Safety Council (RSC), Traffic Hong Kong Island of the Hong Kong Police Force and the Hong Kong Road Safety Patrol (Hong Kong Island and Islands) will jointly hold the Anti-Drink and Drug Driving Halloween Road Safety 2018 event at 6pm tomorrow (October 26) at Forbes Street Temporary Playground in Sai Wan. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Highlights will include an artistic roller skating performance by the Kanata Roller Skating Association, a taekwondo performance by the Hong Kong Chido Taekwondo Association, a band performance by the Dawn Society and a performance by the Hong Kong Police Silver Band. After the launch ceremony, the guests will walk through the bar areas of Forbes Street, Cadogan Street and Davis Street to distribute road safety leaflets in order to deliver the "No Drug and Drink Driving" message to road users.

The ceremony will be officiated by the Chairlady of the Road Safety Campaign Committee of the RSC, Ms Rebecca Ma; the Superintendent of Traffic Hong Kong Island (Investigation and Support Division) of the Hong Kong Police Force, Ms Petrina Lai; the Acting Chief Inspector of Police and Assistant Divisional Commander (Administration) of Western Division of the Hong Kong Police Force, Mr Yeung Kwun-chung; Senior Inspector of Police, Road Safety Unit, Traffic Branch Headquarters, Ms Susie Tsai; the Regional Commander of the Hong Kong Road Safety Patrol (Hong Kong Island and Islands), Dr Baldwin Cheng; and the Chairman of the Central and Western District Road Safety Campaign Committee, Mr Chow Chiu-sheung.

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## **Hospital Authority extends maternity leave to 14 weeks**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) Board discussed and endorsed at the Administrative and Operational Meeting today (October 25) the arrangement to extend maternity leave to 14 weeks with immediate effect.

The HA spokesperson said that the arrangement was adopted, following the Policy Address on October 10 which suggested extending statutory maternity

leave from the current 10 weeks to 14 weeks, to allow mothers more time to spend with and take care of their newborn babies. Except for the extension of the duration of maternity leave, the prevailing arrangements in respect of maternity leave for HA employees such as eligibility, the period for commencement of maternity leave, notification and documentary proof requirements shall remain unchanged.

"The HA employees whose actual date of confinement or expected date of confinement falls on or after today are eligible for the extended maternity leave for 14 weeks," the spokesperson said, adding that the HA will issue a human resources circular with frequently asked questions and answers to facilitate staff members' understanding of the implementation details. The relevant webpage will also be updated accordingly for reference.