

[Import of poultry meat and products from Skåne County in Sweden suspended](#)

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (May 28) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about an outbreak of low-pathogenic H5 avian influenza in Skåne County in Sweden, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products, including poultry eggs, from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong imported about 0.3 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and 218 000 poultry eggs from Sweden in the first three months of this year.

"The CFS has contacted the Swedish authorities over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE on avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

[External merchandise trade statistics for April 2018](#)

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (May 28) the external merchandise trade statistics for April 2018. In April 2018, the values of Hong Kong's total exports and imports of goods both recorded year-on-year increases, at 8.1% and 11.1% respectively.

In April 2018, the value of total exports of goods increased by 8.1% over a year earlier to \$330.2 billion, after a year-on-year increase of 8.0% in March 2018. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 11.1% over a year earlier to \$377.2 billion in April 2018, after a year-on-year increase of 10.7% in March 2018. A visible trade deficit of \$46.9 billion, equivalent to 12.4% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in April 2018.

For the first four months of 2018 as a whole, the value of total exports of goods rose by 9.3% over the same period in 2017. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 10.7%. A visible trade deficit of \$176.8 billion, equivalent to 12.2% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in the first four months of 2018.

Comparing the three-month period ending April 2018 with the preceding

three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the value of total exports of goods increased by 2.9%. Meanwhile, the value of imports of goods increased by 5.2%.

Analysis by country/territory

Comparing April 2018 with April 2017, total exports to Asia as a whole grew by 7.2%. In this region, increases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations, in particular Taiwan (+27.8%), Singapore (+15.0%), the mainland of China (the Mainland) (+12.9%), Thailand (+12.6%) and Malaysia (+10.4%). On the other hand, decreases were recorded in the values of total exports to India (-49.5%) and Korea (-2.0%).

Apart from destinations in Asia, increases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations in other regions, in particular the USA (+11.7%), Germany (+8.0%) and the United Kingdom (+7.0%).

Over the same period of comparison, increases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular Malaysia (+93.2%), Korea (+26.3%), Taiwan (+23.8%), the Philippines (+17.2%), Japan (+10.5%) and the Mainland (+9.6%). Concurrently, decreases were registered in the values of imports from India (-26.3%) and Singapore (-3.3%).

For the first four months of 2018 as a whole, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports to most major destinations, in particular Taiwan (+15.9%), the Mainland (+12.7%), Germany (+11.3%), Singapore (+10.3%), the USA (+8.5%) and Japan (+5.3%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of total exports to India (-20.7%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular Malaysia (+96.7%), Taiwan (+17.1%), Korea (+16.6%), the Mainland (+8.3%), the Philippines (+8.2%) and Singapore (+5.4%). On the other hand, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of imports from India (-16.2%).

Analysis by major commodity

Comparing April 2018 with April 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 \$19.3 billion or 18.3%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$5.3 billion or 17.3%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$5.0 billion or 31.5%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$9.4 billion or -42.9%).

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 \$22.6 billion or 18.9%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$7.4 billion or 28.3%) and "photographic apparatus,

equipment and supplies, optical goods, watches and clocks" (by \$1.7 billion or 23.0%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of imports of "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$1.8 billion or -7.9%).

For the first four 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 \$77.6 billion or 19.2%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$22.6 billion or 19.2%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$12.8 billion or 20.9 %). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$11.6 billion or -16.5%).

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 \$79.7 billion or 17.1%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$25.3 billion or 25.5%) and "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (by \$6.0 billion or 24.8%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of imports of "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$7.7 billion or -3.5%).

Commentary

A Government spokesman noted that merchandise exports sustained notable year-on-year growth in April, thanks to robust global demand. Exports to most major markets posted visible growth from a year earlier.

The spokesman commented further that, looking ahead, the prevailing momentum of the global economy is likely to continue and should be conducive to Hong Kong's export performance in the near term. However, the external environment is still subject to uncertainties, including those associated with the rise in trade protectionism, pace of US monetary normalisation and geopolitical tensions. The Government will continue to monitor the developments closely.

Further information

Table 1 at the annex presents the analysis of external merchandise trade statistics for April 2018. Table 2 presents the original monthly trade statistics from January 2015 to April 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 April 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 April 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 April 2018 will be released in mid-June 2018.

The April 2018 issue of "Hong Kong External Merchandise Trade" contains detailed analysis on the performance of Hong Kong's external merchandise trade in April 2018 and will be available in mid-June 2018. Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (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).

Statement of Commitment to Foreign Exchange Global Code

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) issued today (May 28) the Statement of Commitment (Annex) to the Foreign Exchange Global Code. By issuing the Statement, the HKMA demonstrates its commitment to adhering to the Code when acting as a market participant in the foreign exchange market.

The Foreign Exchange Global Code is a set of global principles of good practice in the foreign exchange market, developed to provide a common set of guidelines to promote the integrity and effective functioning of the wholesale foreign exchange market. It was developed by a partnership between central banks and market participants from 16 jurisdictions, including Hong Kong, and was launched in May 2017 after it was endorsed by the Global Foreign Exchange Committee (GFXC), of which the HKMA is a member. The latest version of the Code and information about the GFXC can be found at: www.globalfxc.org.

The HKMA will continue to work with other GFXC members to promote adherence to the Code in the global foreign exchange market.

LegCo to debate motion on

strengthening regional collaboration and jointly building the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) will hold a meeting on Wednesday (May 30) at 11am in the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. During the meeting, Members will debate a motion on strengthening regional collaboration and jointly building the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area.

The motion, moved by Mr Jeffery Lam, states: "That this Council urges the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government to seize the opportunities presented by the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (the Bay Area) to lobby the relevant Mainland ministries and the Guangdong Provincial Government for implementation of various measures, so as to make life more convenient for Hong Kong people (including studying, working, retiring, etc.) in the Bay Area; the HKSAR Government should also strengthen communication and cooperation with the Macao Special Administrative Region Government and the relevant Mainland provincial/municipal departments, in a bid to foster diversified economic development in the region and jointly develop the Bay Area into a first-class international bay area and a world-class city cluster; specific policy measures include:

- (1) striving for the Mainland authorities' further relaxation of the restrictions on investment, business start-up and employment faced by Hong Kong people on the Mainland, so as to facilitate the flows of personnel, goods and capital between both places, thereby increasing development opportunities for Hong Kong people;
- (2) promoting the development of creative industries and related enterprises, and inducing top-class Mainland and overseas enterprises, research and development organisations and tertiary institutions to move into the Bay Area, so as to expedite the formation of an innovation and technology industry chain in the region;
- (3) exploring the feasibility of allowing Hong Kong people working in the Bay Area to pay tax to either the Hong Kong Government or the Mainland Government, so as to avoid them having to pay double tax;
- (4) promoting mutual recognition of professional qualifications, providing support to professionals who wish to seek development on the Mainland, and issuing work permits to overseas technology talents employed by Hong Kong companies, so as to facilitate the flows of talents between Hong Kong and various cities in the Bay Area;
- (5) promoting tourism integration in the Bay Area to expedite tourism

development of the Bay Area; and

(6) striving for the opening up of more 24-hour boundary control points, so as to deepen exchanges between both places and bring convenience to Hong Kong residents who frequently work in the Bay Area."

Dr Lo Wai-kwok, Mr Christopher Cheung, Mr Charles Mok, Ms Yung Hoi-yan, Mr Yiu Si-wing, Mr Tony Tse, Mr Michael Tien, Dr Pierre Chan, Mr Wu Chi-wai, Mr Martin Liao, Mr Kenneth Leung, Mr Ho Kai-ming, Dr Chiang Lai-wan and Mr Jimmy Ng will move separate amendments to Mr Jeffrey Lam's motion.

Mr Wu Chi-wai will move a motion on developing primary healthcare services. The motion states: "That the Chief Executive outlined in her Policy Address the governance vision on primary healthcare, and the Financial Secretary also indicated in the Budget that as the Government was conducting a comprehensive review of the planning for primary healthcare services with a view to drawing up a blueprint, he would set aside necessary resources to fully support this initiative; in order to effectively develop primary healthcare services, this Council urges the Government to:

(1) in the allocation of overall resources for public healthcare services, increase the resources for primary healthcare services, and allocate \$10 billion to set up a seed fund to subsidise the public to undergo physical check-ups for prevention of diseases;

(2) in response to the growth of the elderly population, comprehensively review the service model of elderly health centres, and set up additional community health centres in various districts, so that the public can receive the necessary medical and nursing services in the community;

(3) increase the annual amount of subsidy under the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme to no less than \$3,000, and step up regulation of healthcare service providers, so as to prevent elderly people from being misled into using healthcare vouchers improperly;

(4) develop comprehensive public dental services, including extending the School Dental Care Service to secondary school students and implementing a universal dental care service scheme;

(5) provide half-fee concessions to all elderly people using public healthcare services, so as to prevent them from delaying disease treatment due to financial problems;

(6) make better use of the funds for public-private partnership to implement more screening programmes, so that members of the public can take measures to address their health problems as early as possible; and

(7) relax the application threshold of the Samaritan Fund, waive the requirement that means test must be conducted on a household basis, and lower the proportion of drug costs to be shared by patients."

Mrs Regina Ip, Professor Joseph Lee, Mr Chan Han-pan, Mr Michael Tien, Ms Alice Mak and Mr Leung Yiu-chung will move separate amendments to Mr

Wu Chi-wai's motion.

In addition, the Chief Secretary for Administration will move a proposed resolution under Article 73(7) of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and section 7A of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal Ordinance (Cap. 484) to seek the Council to endorse the appointments of the Honourable Mr Justice Andrew Cheung Kui-nung as a Permanent Judge, the Honourable Mr Justice Robert Tang Ching as a non-permanent Hong Kong judge, the Right Honourable the Baroness Brenda Hale of Richmond and the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin as non-permanent judges from other common law jurisdictions to the Court of Final Appeal.

Members will also ask the Government 22 questions on various policy areas, six of which require oral replies.

The agenda of the above meeting can be obtained via the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk). Please note that the agenda is subject to change, and the latest information about the agenda could be found on the LegCo Website.

Members of the public are welcome to observe the proceedings of the meeting from the public galleries of the Chamber of the LegCo Complex. They may reserve seats by calling 3919 3399 during office hours. Members of the public can also watch or listen to the meeting via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website.

Speech by CE at Groundbreaking Ceremony for Hong Kong Palace Museum

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Hong Kong Palace Museum today (May 28):

I am delighted to be here today for the ground-breaking ceremony of the Hong Kong Palace Museum. As the much anticipated West Kowloon Cultural District is gradually becoming a prominent landmark on the waterfront of Victoria Harbour, the Hong Kong Palace Museum will be the jewel on the crown. It will enrich the scope of the cultural district, complementing traditional Chinese performing arts showcased at the Xiqu Centre with visual arts while at the same time juxtaposing the ancient with the contemporary in visual culture together with M+.

The Hong Kong Palace Museum builds on the very strong and solid co-operation we have had with the Palace Museum over the years. You may recall that every time we put up an exhibition of the Palace Museum treasures in town, it was always a blockbuster. With the new dedicated museum, local residents and visitors will enjoy long-term opportunities to appreciate the

exquisite Palace Museum collection, to be curated in a comprehensive and in-depth manner with Hong Kong characteristics.

Delivering this world class museum to Hong Kong is no easy task. We are deeply grateful for the strong support of the Central Government and relevant agencies for this project, as well as the generous donation of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. Today's ceremony marks another key milestone as the project enters into the construction phase. I wish it all the best and, like every one of us in Hong Kong, eagerly look forward to its early completion and opening. Thank you very much.