

External Merchandise Trade Statistics for April 2022

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (May 26) the external merchandise trade statistics for April 2022. In April 2022, the values of Hong Kong's total exports and imports of goods both recorded year-on-year increases, at 1.1% and 2.1% respectively.

In April 2022, the value of total exports of goods increased by 1.1% over a year earlier to \$389.0 billion, after a year-on-year decrease of 8.9% in March 2022. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 2.1% over a year earlier to \$425.6 billion in April 2022, after a year-on-year decrease of 6.0% in March 2022. A visible trade deficit of \$36.6 billion, equivalent to 8.6% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in April 2022.

For the first four months of 2022 as a whole, the value of total exports of goods increased by 2.8% over the same period in 2021. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 2.7%. A visible trade deficit of \$99.5 billion, equivalent to 6.1% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in the first four months of 2022.

Comparing the three-month period ending April 2022 with the preceding three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the value of total exports of goods decreased by 12.0%. Meanwhile, the value of imports of goods decreased by 11.7%.

Analysis by country/territory

Comparing April 2022 with April 2021, total exports to Asia as a whole dropped by 2.0%. In this region, decreases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations, in particular the mainland of China (the Mainland) (-9.4%) and the Philippines (-7.3%). On the other hand, increases were recorded in the values of total exports to India (+79.4%), Malaysia (+33.0%), Vietnam (+30.3%) and Taiwan (+27.5%).

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 (+31.3%) and Germany (+25.3%).

Over the same period of comparison, increases were registered in the values of imports from some major suppliers, in particular the USA (+26.4%), Singapore (+15.9%), Taiwan (+14.5%) and Vietnam (+12.1%). Concurrently, decreases were recorded in the values of imports from Japan (-8.0%) and the Mainland (-5.3%).

For the first four months of 2022 as a whole, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports to most major destinations, in

particular India (+53.0%), Taiwan (+34.6%), Singapore (+29.5%) and the United Arab Emirates (+25.8%). However, the value of total exports to the Mainland decreased by 3.1%.

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular Taiwan (+27.2%), the USA (+14.8%), the Philippines (+10.8%) and Vietnam (+8.1%). However, decreases were recorded in the values of imports from Japan (-4.1%) and the Mainland (-3.3%).

Analysis by major commodity

Comparing April 2022 with April 2021, 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 \$19.8 billion or 11.3%), "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$3.8 billion or 19.4%) and "professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus" (by \$3.3 billion or 39.9%). However, decreases were registered in the values of total exports of "non-ferrous metals" (by \$5.4 billion or -48.8%) and "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$4.8 billion or -8.5%).

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 \$7.0 billion or 3.8%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$3.4 billion or 10.5%), "professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus" (by \$3.4 billion or 41.1%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$3.2 billion or 13.3%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of imports of "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$9.3 billion or -15.8%).

For the first four months of 2022 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 \$81.4 billion or 12.1%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$17.1 billion or 11.1%), "professional, scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus" (by \$16.9 billion or 51.9%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$8.6 billion or 12.2%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$52.5 billion or -22.4%).

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 \$57.3 billion or 8.2%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$20.8 billion or 17.2%), "professional,

scientific and controlling instruments and apparatus" (by \$13.6 billion or 42.1%) and "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (by \$8.3 billion or 52.4%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of imports of "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$47.7 billion or -20.5%).

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that the value of merchandise exports resumed meagre growth in April 2022 over a year earlier. Epidemic-induced transportation disruptions, though easing somewhat in the latter part of the month, continued to constrain export performance. Exports to the Mainland fell while exports to the US and the EU posted visible growth. Exports to other major Asian markets saw increases of varying degrees.

Looking ahead, the global economic outlook has worsened amid rampant inflation in some major economies and monetary policy tightening by respective central banks in response, tensions in Ukraine, and the lingering threat of the pandemic. This would continue to weigh on Hong Kong's export performance in the near term. Nonetheless, the stable local epidemic situation should be conducive to the gradual revival of cross-boundary land transportation, alleviating some of the pressures facing the external sector. The Government will monitor the situation closely.

Further information

Table 1 presents the analysis of external merchandise trade statistics for April 2022. Table 2 presents the original monthly trade statistics from January 2019 to April 2022, 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 2022 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 2022.

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 2022 will be released in mid-June 2022.

The April 2022 issue of "Hong Kong External Merchandise Trade" contains detailed analysis on the performance of Hong Kong's external merchandise trade in April 2022 and will be available in mid-June 2022. Users can download the publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode230.html).

Enquiries on merchandise trade statistics may be directed to the Trade

Government follows up on positive results of sewage surveillance and appeals to residents to undergo virus testing

The Government announced today (May 26) that in order to fight the coronavirus epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department and the Drainage Services Department have been collecting sewage samples for virus testing in all districts, and had detected positive results in some areas, indicating that there may be hidden cases in the premises within these areas.

Rapid test

As regards positive sewage testing results with relatively high viral loads in the following areas, the Housing Department and the respective District Offices will commence distributing about 210 000 sets of the COVID-19 rapid antigen test (RAT) kits to residents, cleaning workers and property management staff working in the following areas for them to take the test on their own, in order to help identify infected persons:

- North District – Ka Fuk Estate, Wah Sum Estate, Fai Ming Estate, Yan Shing Court, Ka Shing Court, Flora Plaza, Cheong Shing Court, Parkford Garden, Royal Knoll, Fortune House, Wa Mei Shan Village, Magdalene Garden, Century Court and Wealthy Villas
- Tsuen Wan District – Lei Muk Shue Estate, Lei Muk Shue (1) Estate, Lei Muk Shue (2) Estate, Primrose Hill, The Rise, Yau Ma Hom Resite Village, Chung Kwai Chung Tsuen, Tai Pak Tin Village, Sheung Kwai Chung Village, Hoi Pa San Tsuen Section Two, Shek Wai Kok New Village, Yi Pei Chun New Village and Kwu Hang Village

Members of the public may refer to (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/rat/eng/rat.html) for enquiries relating to the use of the RAT kits.

When using an RAT kit, please pay attention to and follow the instructions from the manufacturer to perform the test and read the result properly. It is advisable to record the displayed result by taking a photo immediately after reading. Users should wash their hands before and after performing the tests, and avoid placing non-essential items within the

specimen collection area. After completing the test, wrap and seal all components of the test kit carefully and dispose of them properly. If the household environment is contaminated during the specimen collecting process, disinfection should be conducted with 1 in 49 diluted bleach solution or 70 per cent alcohol.

People who obtained a positive result through an RAT for the first time can report via the online platform "Declaration System for individuals tested positive for COVID-19 using Rapid Antigen Test" (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp/). If individuals encounter difficulties using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will contact the relevant person later to finish the report procedure.

Government makes "restriction-testing declaration" and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified "restricted area" in Wah Koon House, Wah Sum Estate, Fanling

The Government today (May 26) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" effective from 4.30pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Fanling (i.e. Wah Koon House, Wah Sum Estate, Fanling, excluding kindergarten on G/F. See Annex.) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at about 9am tomorrow (May 27). The operation may be extended depending on test results.

A Government spokesman said, "Under Cap. 599J, the Government can, according to the needs of infection control, make a 'restriction-testing declaration'. Having reviewed a basket of factors, including the viral load in sewage, the information of relevant positive cases, and other circumstantial factors, and conducted a risk assessment, the Government decided to make a 'restriction-testing declaration' for the relevant area."

The Government will set up temporary specimen collection stations at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to

undergo testing before 11.30pm today. Arrangements will be made for persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo a nucleic acid test at specimen collection stations where dedicated staff will collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk. The Government will make arrangement to facilitate specimen collection for people with impaired mobility. All persons in the "restricted area" who have tested positive in the past 14 days, including positive cases identified either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests that have been self-declared to the DH, are not required to undergo testing in this compulsory testing exercise.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 9am tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

According to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any persons other than those specified above who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from May 20 to 26, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before May 28, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons and persons who have recently been tested are also required to undergo testing.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$10,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

HA announces senior appointment (with photo)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson announced the following senior appointment today (May 26):

Dr Tang Kam-shing will be appointed as Hospital Chief Executive (HCE) of Kwong Wah Hospital with effect from July 18, succeeding Dr Eric Cheung, who has taken up the post of Cluster Chief Executive of Kowloon Central Cluster and HCE of Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Dr Tang is a specialist in critical care medicine and has wide experience in health service management at both the hospital and corporate levels. Dr Tang is currently the Chief Manager (Medical Grade) in the head office, steering the professional development in the medical grade, including driving career development, planning and allocation, and developing professional training for medical staff. Prior to his present position, he served as HCE of Duchess of Kent Children's Hospital, TWGHs Fung Yiu King Hospital and MacLehose Medical Rehabilitation Centre from 2018 to 2021, and Service Director (Quality and Safety) of New Territories West Cluster from 2012 to 2018.

The HA Chairman, Mr Henry Fan, and Chief Executive, Dr Tony Ko, congratulate Dr Tang on his new appointment and wish him every success in taking up the new role.



Auction of personalised vehicle registration marks to be held on June 4

The Transport Department (TD) today (May 26) announced that the next auction of personalised vehicle registration marks (PVRMs) will be held on June 4 (Saturday) at Meeting Room N101, L1, New Wing, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 200 approved PVRMs will be put up for public auction. A list of the marks has been uploaded to the department's website, www.td.gov.hk," a department spokesman said.

The reserve price of each of these marks is \$5,000. Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$5,000 should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price). Otherwise, the PVRM concerned may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following points:

(1) Bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after successful bidding:

(i) the identity document of the successful bidder;
(ii) the identity document of the purchaser (if the purchaser and the successful bidder are different persons);
(iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation (if the purchaser is a body corporate); and
(iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed. Successful bidders may also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS), but are reminded to note the maximum transfer amount in the same day of the payment card. Payment by post-dated cheque, cash, credit card or other methods will not be accepted.

(2) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the Memorandum will not be permitted.

(3) A PVRM can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(4) The display of a PVRM on a motor vehicle should be in compliance with the requirements stipulated in Schedule 4 of the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations.

(5) Any change to the arrangement of letters, numerals and blank spaces of a PVRM, i.e. single and two rows as auctioned, will not be allowed.

(6) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the PVRM to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the PVRM within 12 months, allocation of the PVRM will be cancelled and arranged for reallocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

(7) In view of public health concerns, all persons entering the auction venue will have to undergo on-the-spot body temperature checks arranged by the TD. Any member of the public whose body temperature is higher than 37.5 degrees Celsius or who refuses to undergo a body temperature check will be denied entry to the auction hall and the payment office. The TD also requests all persons entering the auction hall and the payment office to wear masks and clean their hands with alcohol-based sanitiser, and to wear masks throughout the duration of the auction and payment process.

(8) In order to reduce the risk of the virus spreading, the TD will adjust the distance between seats and the number of seats in the auction hall and the payment office, and implement crowd-control measures. The TD also appeals to the bidders to reduce the number of accompanying persons as far as possible. Furthermore, the auctions in the morning and the afternoon will each be divided into two sessions so as to shorten the duration of crowd congregation. The first session of the morning auction will commence at 9.25am while the second session will begin no earlier than 10.30am. The first session of the afternoon auction will commence at 2.25pm while the second session will begin no earlier than 3.50pm. The auction venue will be disinfected before the commencement of the second sessions. Interested bidders may arrive at the auction venue in accordance with the time schedule for the auction of vehicle registration marks.

(9) To align with the Government's arrangement on the strict enforcement of the use of the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application when entering government buildings or offices, except for exempted persons, members of the public are required to use the app to scan the venue QR code before they are allowed to enter the auction venue (including the auction hall and the payment office). Persons who are aged below 12 or aged 65 or above, and those with disabilities that render use of the "LeaveHomeSafe" app difficult, will be exempted from the requirement of using the app when they enter the auction venue. However, they are required to complete a record form to register their names, the first four digits or letters of their identification documents, their contact numbers and the date and time of their visits. They are also required to present relevant identification documents for verification at the request of TD staff during registration. TD staff will also verify the contact numbers by making phone calls. As a result of the arrangement, members of the public are advised to remain patient as the waiting time for

entering the auction venue may be lengthened. Unwillingness to use the app will not be considered as justification for granting exemption.

"Upon completion of the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM, the purchaser will be issued a receipt and a Certificate of Allocation of Personalised Registration Mark. The Certificate of Allocation will serve to prove the holdership of the PVRM. Potential buyers of vehicles bearing a PVRM should check the Certificate of Allocation with the sellers and pay attention to the details therein. For transfer of vehicle ownership, this certificate together with other required documents should be sent to the TD for processing," the spokesman added.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of PVRM, which is available at the department's licensing offices or can be downloaded from its website, www.td.gov.hk.