

# Free Trade Agreement between Hong Kong and ASEAN enters into force

The commitments made under the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Hong Kong and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) among Hong Kong and three ASEAN member states, namely Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand, will enter into force on June 11, a government spokesman said today (May 9). The dates of entry into force of the FTA for the remaining seven ASEAN member states will be announced as soon as they are confirmed.

Upon the implementation of the FTA, on trade in goods, Singapore commits to binding all its customs duties at zero, whereas Myanmar and Thailand will progressively eliminate and reduce their customs duties on goods originating from Hong Kong. The tariff reduction commitments cover different kinds of Hong Kong commodities, including jewellery, articles of apparel and clothing accessories, watches and clocks and toys.

To enjoy the preferential tariff treatment for exporting Hong Kong goods to Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand, Hong Kong traders need to comply with the relevant preferential rules of origin and fulfil the related requirements. Applications for certificates of origin should be made to the Trade and Industry Department (TID) or Government Approved Certification Organizations of Hong Kong. For details, please refer to the relevant trade circulars issued by the TID at [www.tid.gov.hk/english/aboutus/tradecircular/coc/2019/coc2019.html](http://www.tid.gov.hk/english/aboutus/tradecircular/coc/2019/coc2019.html).

On trade in services, upon the implementation of the FTA and in respect of Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand, Hong Kong service providers will enjoy better business opportunities and legal certainty in market access for a comprehensive range of services sectors. These include services sectors in which Hong Kong has traditional strengths or has potential for development, including professional services, business services, telecommunications services, construction and related engineering services, educational services, financial services, tourism and travel related services, transport services and arbitration services.

ASEAN comprises 10 member states, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Hong Kong and ASEAN signed the FTA and an Investment Agreement (IA) at the end of 2017.

Under the FTA, upon the notification of Hong Kong and four ASEAN member states to the ASEAN Secretariat of their ratification of the FTA, the FTA will enter into force officially for these five signatories. However, until the signatories concerned have separately notified the ASEAN Secretariat of their ratification of the IA, their rights and obligations under the FTA will be suspended.

Up to now, among the remaining seven ASEAN member states, Vietnam has ratified the FTA, but not the IA. As such, as far as Vietnam is concerned, the FTA will not be implemented for the time being. The other six ASEAN member states have not yet ratified the FTA.

For details and key features of the FTA, please refer to the website of the TID at [www.tid.gov.hk/english/ita/fta/hkasean/index.html](http://www.tid.gov.hk/english/ita/fta/hkasean/index.html).