

Statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2021

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (March 3) released the statistics on vessels, port cargo and containers for the fourth quarter of 2021.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, total port cargo throughput decreased by 11.9% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 54.0 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 15.6% and 4.8% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 34.0 million tonnes and 20.0 million tonnes respectively.

For 2021 as a whole, total port cargo throughput decreased by 14.3% compared with the whole year of 2020 to 213.7 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 20.6% and 0.7% compared with the whole year of 2020 to 134.9 million tonnes and 78.8 million tonnes respectively.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput decreased by 6.3% in the fourth quarter of 2021. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo decreased by 5.0% and 8.6% respectively compared with the preceding quarter. The seasonally adjusted series enables more meaningful shorter-term comparison to be made for discerning possible variations in trends.

Port cargo

Within port cargo, seaborne cargo increased by 2.6% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 37.8 million tonnes, while river cargo decreased by 33.8% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 16.2 million tonnes.

Within inward port cargo, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 24.0% and 4.4% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 17.5 million tonnes and 16.5 million tonnes respectively. For outward port cargo, exports (including domestic exports and re-exports) and outward transshipment decreased by 5.9% and 4.4% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 4.8 million tonnes and 15.2 million tonnes respectively.

Within port cargo, seaborne cargo increased by 0.1% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to 149.3 million tonnes, while river cargo decreased by 35.6% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to 64.5 million tonnes.

Within inward port cargo, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 32.6% and 1.1% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to 70.9 million tonnes and 64.0 million tonnes respectively. For outward port cargo, exports increased by 1.3% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to 19.2 million tonnes, while outward transshipment decreased by 1.3% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to 59.6 million tonnes.

The detailed port cargo statistics are summarised in Table 1.

The main countries/territories of loading of inward port cargo and countries/territories of discharge of outward port cargo are shown in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively.

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2021 with the fourth quarter of 2020, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Indonesia (+82.2%), Vietnam (+29.4%) and Singapore (+10.6%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in the mainland of China (-28.0%), Japan (-19.2%) and Malaysia (-16.7%). For outward port cargo, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the Philippines (+44.9%), Thailand (+39.2%), Taiwan (+26.1%) and Korea (+18.2%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Macao (-55.3%), Japan (-11.4%) and Malaysia (-10.6%).

Comparing the whole year of 2021 with the whole year of 2020, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Indonesia (+55.9%) and Vietnam (+23.0%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (-56.1%), the mainland of China (-31.7%) and Korea (-18.0%). For outward port cargo, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Korea (+30.8%), Taiwan (+22.7%), the Philippines (+21.5%) and Thailand (+11.7%). On the other hand, double-digit decrease was recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the mainland of China (-12.2%).

The principal commodities of inward port cargo and outward port cargo are shown in Table 4 and Table 5 respectively.

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2021 with the fourth quarter of 2020, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "coal, coke and briquettes" (+69.6%), "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (+11.9%), "machinery" (-10.3%), "iron and steel" (-14.8%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-24.3%) and "stone, sand and gravel" (-51.9%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of "metalliferous ores and metal scrap" (+34.9%), "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-12.2%), "pulp and waste paper" (-22.3%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-25.6%) and "stone, sand and gravel" (-32.9%).

Comparing the whole year of 2021 with the whole year of 2020, double-

digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "coal, coke and briquettes" (+63.3%), "iron and steel" (+13.6%), "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (-11.7%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-18.9%) and "stone, sand and gravel" (-59.9%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of "metalliferous ores and metal scrap" (+12.7%), "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-16.1%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-19.7%) and "pulp and waste paper" (-24.6%).

Containers

In the fourth quarter of 2021, the port of Hong Kong handled 4.45 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 4.5% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020. Within this total, laden containers decreased by 5.8% to 3.74 million TEUs, while empty containers increased by 2.6% to 0.71 million TEUs. Among laden containers, inward and outward containers decreased by 7.0% and 4.4% to 1.95 million TEUs and 1.79 million TEUs respectively.

For 2021 as a whole, the port of Hong Kong handled 17.80 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 1.0% compared with the whole year of 2020. Within this total, laden and empty containers decreased by 1.1% and 0.2% to 14.88 million TEUs and 2.91 million TEUs respectively. Among laden containers, inward containers decreased by 2.6% to 7.76 million TEUs, while outward containers increased by 0.7% to 7.12 million TEUs.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput decreased by 6.1% in the fourth quarter of 2021. Within this total, inward and outward laden containers decreased by 5.0% and 7.3% respectively.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, seaborne laden containers increased by 1.0% compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 2.77 million TEUs, while river laden containers decreased by 21.0% to 0.97 million TEUs.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 4.0% and 8.1% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 0.54 million TEUs and 1.41 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment decreased by 0.9% and 5.4% in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with the fourth quarter of 2020 to 0.43 million TEUs and 1.36 million TEUs respectively.

In the whole year of 2021, seaborne laden containers increased by 7.7% compared with the whole year of 2020 to 11.17 million TEUs, while river laden containers decreased by 20.6% to 3.72 million TEUs.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 3.4% and 2.4% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to 2.16 million TEUs and 5.60 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment increased by 1.4% and 0.4% in the whole year of 2021 compared with the whole year of 2020 to

1.73 million TEUs and 5.39 million TEUs respectively.

The detailed container statistics are summarised in Table 6.

Port cargo and laden container statistics are compiled from a sample of consignments listed in the cargo manifests supplied by shipping companies and agents to the C&SD.

Vessel arrivals

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2021 with the fourth quarter of 2020, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 5.5% to 4 003, while the total capacity increased by 1.1% to 63.5 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 18.2% to 11 738, with the total capacity also decreasing by 2.5% to 15.7 million net tons.

Comparing the whole year of 2021 with the whole year of 2020, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 26.1% to 16 256, with the total capacity also decreasing by 29.5% to 245.1 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 29.8% to 46 221, with the total capacity also decreasing by 33.7% to 57.1 million net tons.

The statistics on vessel arrivals in Hong Kong are given in Table 7.

Vessel statistics are compiled by the Marine Department primarily from general declarations submitted by ship masters and authorised shipping agents. Pleasure vessels and fishing vessels plying exclusively within the river trade limits are excluded.

Further information

More detailed statistics on port cargo, containers and vessels are published in the report "Hong Kong Shipping Statistics, Fourth Quarter 2021". Users can download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020008&scode=230).

For enquiries about port cargo and container statistics, please contact the Outward Processing and Shipping Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 2126 or email: shipping@censtatd.gov.hk). For enquiries about vessel statistics, readers may contact the Statistics Section under the Planning, Development and Port Security Branch of the Marine Department (Tel: 2852 3662 or email: st-sec@mardep.gov.hk).