

Update on cases of Legionnaires' disease

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (June 17) reported the latest number of cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD), and stressed the importance of using and maintaining properly designed man-made water systems, adding that susceptible groups should strictly observe relevant precautions.

From June 9 to 15, the CHP recorded three community-acquired LD cases and one imported LD case:

1. A male patient, aged 56 with good past health, who had been to Indonesia during the incubation period and was classified as an imported case;
2. A female patient, aged 82 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Yuen Long District;
3. A male patient, aged 48 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Kwai Tsing District; and
4. A female patient, aged 76 with underlying illnesses, who lives in Shatin District.

"Epidemiological investigations are ongoing to identify potential sources of infection, high-risk exposure and clusters, if any," a spokesman for the CHP said.

As of June 15, 45 LD cases had been recorded this year. In 2023 and 2022, there were 121 and 80 cases respectively.

"Men, people aged over 50, smokers, alcoholics and persons with weakened immunity are more susceptible to LD. Some situations may also increase the risk of infection, including poor maintenance of water systems; living in areas with old water systems, cooling towers or fountains; using electric water heaters, whirlpools and spas or hot water spring spas; and recent stays in hotels or vessels," the spokesman said.

Legionellae are found in various environmental settings and grow well in warm water (20 to 45 degrees Celsius). They can be found in aqueous environments such as water tanks, hot and cold water systems, cooling towers, whirlpools and spas, water fountains and home apparatus that support breathing. People may become infected when they breathe in contaminated droplets (aerosols) and mist generated by artificial water systems, or when handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes.

Immunocompromised persons should:

- Use sterile or boiled water for drinking, tooth brushing and mouth rinsing;

- Avoid using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices; and
- If using humidifiers, or other mist- or aerosol-generating devices, fill the water tank with only sterile or cooled freshly boiled water, and not water directly from the tap. Also, clean and maintain humidifiers/devices regularly according to manufacturers' instructions. Never leave stagnant water in a humidifier/device. Empty the water tank, wipe all surfaces dry, and change the water daily.

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â€‹The public should observe the health advice below:

- Observe personal hygiene;
- Do not smoke and avoid alcohol consumption;
- Strainers in water taps and shower heads should be inspected, cleaned, descaled and disinfected regularly or at a frequency recommended by the manufacturer;
- If a fresh-water plumbing system is properly maintained, it is not necessary to install domestic water filters. Use of water filters is not encouraged as clogging occurs easily, which can promote growth of micro-organisms. In case water filters are used, the pore size should be 0.2 micrometres (μm) and the filter needs to be changed periodically according to the manufacturer's recommendations;
- Drain and clean water tanks of buildings at least quarterly;
- Drain or purge for at least one minute infrequently used water outlets (e.g. water taps, shower heads and hot water outlets) and stagnant points of the pipework weekly or before use;
- Seek and follow doctors' professional advice regarding the use and maintenance of home respiratory devices and use only sterile water (not distilled or tap water) to clean and fill the reservoir. Clean and maintain the device regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions. After cleaning/disinfection, rinse the device with sterile water, cooled freshly boiled water or water filtered with 0.2 μm filters. Never leave stagnant water in the device. Empty the water tank, keep all surfaces dry, and change the water daily; and
- When handling garden soil, compost and potting mixes:
 1. Wear gloves and a face mask;
 2. Water gardens and compost gently using low pressure;
 3. Open composted potting mixes slowly and make sure the opening is directed away from the face;
 4. Wet the soil to reduce dust when potting plants; and
 5. Avoid working in poorly ventilated places such as enclosed greenhouses.

â€‹â€‹The public may visit the CHP's [LD page](#), the [Code of Practice for Prevention of LD](#) and the [Housekeeping Guidelines for Cold and Hot Water Systems for Building Management](#) of the Prevention of LD Committee, and the CHP's [risk-based strategy](#) for prevention and control of LD.

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on June 14 to noon today (June 17), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 387 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category, in the past three days (including last Saturday and Sunday). No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan" (www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 150 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 59 583 samples of food imported from Japan (including 38 522 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea

salt) and 14 790 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

[Hong Kong's Gross National Income and external primary income flows for the first quarter of 2024](#)

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (June 17) the preliminary statistics on Hong Kong's Gross National Income (GNI) and related figures for the first quarter of 2024.

Hong Kong's GNI, which denotes the total income earned by Hong Kong residents from engaging in various economic activities, increased by 9.6% in the first quarter of 2024 over a year earlier to \$831.0 billion at current market prices. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP), estimated at \$769.7 billion at current market prices in the same quarter, recorded a 7.1% increase over a year earlier. The value of GNI was larger than GDP by \$61.3 billion in the first quarter of 2024, which was equivalent to 8.0% of GDP in that quarter, mainly attributable to a net inflow of investment income.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, Hong Kong's GNI increased by 6.3% in real terms in the first quarter of 2024 over a year earlier. The corresponding GDP in the same quarter increased by 2.7% in real terms.

Hong Kong's total inflow of primary income, which mainly comprises investment income, estimated at \$494.9 billion in the first quarter of 2024 and equivalent to 64.3% of GDP in that quarter, recorded a significant increase of 14.0% over a year earlier. Meanwhile, total primary income outflow, estimated at \$433.6 billion in the first quarter of 2024 and equivalent to 56.3% of GDP in that quarter, also increased by 9.9% over a year earlier.

As for the major components of investment income inflow, direct investment income (DII) increased by 6.1% over a year earlier, mainly due to the increase in earnings of some prominent local enterprises from their direct investment abroad. Portfolio investment income (PII) recorded a significant increase of 20.1% over a year earlier, mainly attributable to the increase in interest income received by resident investors from their holdings of non-resident debt securities.

Regarding the major components of investment income outflow, DII increased by 4.3% over a year earlier, mainly due to the increase in earnings of some prominent multinational enterprises from their direct investment in

Hong Kong. PII increased by 8.8%, mainly attributable to the increase in interest payout to non-resident investors from their holdings of resident debt securities.

Analysed by country/territory, the mainland of China continued to be the largest source of Hong Kong's total primary income inflow in the first quarter of 2024, accounting for 40.5%. This was followed by the British Virgin Islands (BVI), with a share of 15.3%. Regarding total primary income outflow, the mainland of China and the BVI remained the most important destinations in the first quarter of 2024, accounting for 30.9% and 19.6% respectively.

Further information

GDP and GNI are closely related indicators for measuring economic performance. GDP is a measure of the total value of production of all resident producing units of an economy. GNI denotes the total income earned by residents of an economy from engaging in various economic activities, irrespective of whether the economic activities are carried out within the economic territory of the economy or outside.

Figures of GNI and primary income flows analysed by income component from the second quarter of 2022 to the first quarter of 2024 are presented in Table A, while selected major country/territory breakdowns of primary income inflow and outflow for the same quarters are presented in Tables B(1) and B(2) respectively.

Statistics on GDP and GNI from 2022 onwards and primary income flows from 2023 onwards are subject to revision when more data are incorporated.

More detailed statistics are given in the report "Gross National Income and External Primary Income Flows, First Quarter 2024". Users can browse and download this publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1040005&scode=250).

For enquiries about GNI and related statistics, please contact the Balance of Payments Branch (2) of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7054 or email: gni@censtatd.gov.hk).

[Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade in April 2024](#)

Further to the external merchandise trade statistics in value terms for

April 2024 released earlier on, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (June 17) the volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for that month.

In April 2024, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 7.7% and 0.5% respectively over April 2023.

Comparing the first four months of 2024 with the same period in 2023, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 7.3% and 2.6% respectively.

Comparing the three-month period ending April 2024 with the preceding three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the volume of total exports of goods increased by 2.5%, while the volume of imports of goods decreased by 1.3%.

Changes in volume of external merchandise trade are derived from changes in external merchandise trade value with the effect of price changes discounted.

Comparing April 2024 with April 2023, the prices of total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 3.8% and 3.2% respectively.

As regards price changes in the first four months of 2024 over the same period in 2023, the prices of total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 4.3% and 4.2% respectively.

Price changes in external merchandise trade are reflected by changes in unit value indices of external merchandise trade, which are compiled based on average unit values or, for certain commodities, specific price data.

The terms of trade index is derived from the ratio of price index of total exports of goods to that of imports of goods. Compared with the same periods in 2023, the index increased by 0.6% in April 2024, whereas it remained virtually unchanged in the first four months of 2024.

Changes in the unit value and volume of total exports of goods by main destination are shown in Table 1.

Comparing April 2024 with April 2023, increases were recorded for the total export volume to Vietnam (18.2%), the mainland of China (the Mainland) (15.5%) and the USA (11.2%). On the other hand, the total export volume to Taiwan (-1.1%) and India (-26.6%) decreased.

Over the same period of comparison, the total export prices to the USA (6.3%), Taiwan (5.1%), the Mainland (4.8%) and Vietnam (3.2%) increased. On the other hand, the total export prices to India decreased by 0.3%.

Changes in the unit value and volume of imports of goods by main supplier are shown in Table 2.

Comparing April 2024 with April 2023, increases were recorded for the import volume from Korea (37.1%), Singapore (30.5%), the Mainland (2.4%) and Japan (1.7%). On the other hand, the import volume from Taiwan decreased by 20.6%.

Over the same period of comparison, the import prices from Singapore (11.3%), Korea (6.4%), the Mainland (3.2%) and Taiwan (1.9%) increased. On the other hand, the import prices from Japan decreased by 0.2%.

Further information

Details of the above statistics are published in the April 2024 issue of "Hong Kong Merchandise Trade Index Numbers". Users can browse and download the report at the website of the C&SD

(www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020006&scode=230).

Enquiries on merchandise trade indices may be directed to the Trade Analysis Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 4918).

June 2024 issue of "Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics" now available

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) published today (June 17) the June 2024 issue of the "Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics" (HKMDS).

Apart from providing up-to-date statistics, this issue also contains a feature article entitled "The Cultural and Creative Industries in Hong Kong".

"The Cultural and Creative Industries in Hong Kong"

The cultural and creative industries are among the most dynamic economic sectors in Hong Kong, contributing to both economic growth and job creation. They comprise a set of knowledge-based activities that deploy creativity and intellectual capital as primary inputs and deliver goods and services with cultural, artistic and creative contents. This feature article provides the statistics of the cultural and creative industries in Hong Kong for 2018 to 2022.

For enquiries about this feature article, please contact the Construction and Miscellaneous Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 6962; email: asps@censtatd.gov.hk).

Published in bilingual form, the HKMDS is a compact volume of official statistics containing about 130 tables. It collects up-to-date statistical series on various aspects of the social and economic situation of Hong Kong.

Topics include population; labour; external trade; National Income and Balance of Payments; prices; business performance; energy; housing and property; government accounts, finance and insurance; and transport, communications and tourism. For selected key statistical items, over 20 charts depicting the annual trend in the past decade and quarterly or monthly trend in the recent two years are also available. Users can download the Digest at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1010002&scode=460).

Enquiries about the contents of the Digest can be directed to the Statistical Information Dissemination Section (1) of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 4738; email: gen-enquiry@censtatd.gov.hk).