

Provisional statistics on index of industrial production and producer price index for the industrial sector for the fourth quarter of 2019 and the whole year of 2019

According to the provisional results of a survey released today (March 24) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries as a whole decreased by 0.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the same quarter of 2018, as against a year-on-year increase of 0.5% in the third quarter of 2019. The corresponding producer price index increased by 1.1% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the same quarter of 2018, following a year-on-year increase of 1.3% in the third quarter of 2019.

The index of industrial production for sewerage, waste management and remediation activities decreased by 1.0% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the same quarter of 2018, following a year-on-year decrease of 3.4% in the third quarter of 2019. The corresponding producer price index also decreased by 4.3% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the same quarter of 2018, following a year-on-year decrease of 4.6% in the third quarter of 2019.

Indices of industrial production reflect changes in the volume of local industrial output after discounting the effect of price changes. The price changes are measured by the producer price indices compiled from data on producer prices of selected industrial goods/services collected in the same survey.

Comparing the industrial production in respect of major manufacturing industries in the fourth quarter of 2019 with the same quarter of 2018, decreases in output volume were recorded in the metal, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment industry (-3.2%); and the food, beverages and tobacco industry (-2.1%). On the other hand, increases in output volume were mainly recorded in the paper products, printing and reproduction of recorded media industry (+1.0%); and the textiles and wearing apparel industry (+0.6%).

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries as a whole decreased by 0.8% in the fourth quarter of 2019 compared with the third quarter of 2019.

For 2019 as a whole, the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries increased by 0.4% while that for sewerage, waste management and remediation activities decreased by 0.7% compared with 2018.

Producer price indices reflect changes in the prices of local output. They measure changes in the actual prices (net of any discounts or rebates allowed to buyers, plus any surcharges) received by producers for their output. Transportation and other incidental charges are not included.

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2019 with the same quarter of 2018, increases in producer prices were recorded mainly in the metal, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment industry (+1.7%); the food, beverages and tobacco industry (+0.8%); and the paper products, printing and reproduction of recorded media industry (+0.4%).

For 2019 as a whole, the producer price indices for manufacturing industries increased by 1.0% while that for sewerage, waste management and remediation activities decreased by 2.7% compared with 2018.

Table 1 shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the indices of industrial production by selected industry grouping. Table 2 shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the producer price indices for the industrial sector by selected industry grouping.

The revised figures on indices of industrial production and producer price indices for the industrial sector for the fourth quarter of 2019 and the whole year of 2019 will be released at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/bbs.jsp) and relevant publications of the Department starting from April 24, 2020.

Users can download the reports "Quarterly Index of Industrial Production, 4th Quarter 2019" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp310.jsp?productCode=B1070002) and "Quarterly Producer Price Index for Industrial Sector, 4th Quarter 2019" (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp280.jsp?productCode=B1070003) free of charge at the website of the C&SD.

Readers who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Industrial Production Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7247; Fax: 2123 1048; email: ind-production@censtatd.gov.hk).

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 is 109.3 (down 0.5 against yesterday's index).

New notification arrangements on Secondary One discretionary places and distribution of school choice documents for Central Allocation

Parents of Primary Six students participating in the current (2020) cycle of the Secondary School Places Allocation (SSPA) System will receive notifications from the participating secondary schools on April 7 if their children have applied for the discretionary places (DP) of the schools concerned and have been selected as successful applicants. The parents concerned do not need to reply to the schools to say whether they accept the DP offers or not, a spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) said today (March 24).

For parents who have also successfully applied for a school place in a non-participating Direct Subsidy Scheme secondary school (NDSS secondary school) for their children, they should decide whether to retain the offer from the NDSS secondary school. If the parents concerned decide to retain the offer, they should disregard the notifications from the participating secondary schools. Their children will be allocated to the NDSS secondary school according to the established mechanism. If the parents concerned decide to decline the offer, they should notify the NDSS secondary school concerned and retrieve the signed undertaking and the original copy of the Primary 6 Student Record Form on or before April 16 in order to retain the school place successfully applied for in the DP stage.

"Students who have not been notified as successful DP applicants are required to participate in the Central Allocation," the spokesman said. Primary schools participating in the SSPA System have been informed to collect the following documents on April 3:

- Secondary One Choice of Schools Form (Choice Form);
- Notes for Parents on Central Allocation (Notes for Parents);
- Secondary School List (SSL); and
- Handbook for Unrestricted School Choices (Handbook).

Each Primary Six student will receive the Choice Form, the Notes for Parents and the SSL for the school net he or she belongs to from his or her primary school. Parents may refer to the Handbook distributed to primary schools or obtain the school lists in the Handbook through the EDB's homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) and the fax service of the EDB's automatic telephone enquiry system on 2891 0088.

To guard against the spread of COVID-19, the EDB advised that primary schools should make flexible arrangements in providing support for parents in making school choices. Schools may consider distributing the above documents

to parents by post or by prior appointment to the school for collection. Instead of organising large-scale parents' briefings, schools could consider providing parents with information or advice on school choices by phone or email.

"The Choice Form is divided into two parts (Part A and Part B). Parents should refer to the Handbook when filling in Part A 'Unrestricted School Choices' of the Choice Form and choose not more than three secondary schools from any school net (including the student's school net). As for Part B 'Restricted School Choices', parents should refer to their child's SSL and choose a maximum of 30 secondary schools according to their preference. Parents must not enter any school choices which are not in the SSL of the school net of the child in Part B since invalid school choices will not be processed," the spokesman said.

The spokesman reminded parents that prior to making school choices for their children, they should read carefully the Notes for Parents. Parents are encouraged to watch the DVD "Secondary School Places Allocation System 2018/2020 Cycle" distributed to them in October last year to understand in detail the SSPA System. Parents should also refer to the Secondary School Profiles 2019/2020 published in December last year by the Committee on Home-School Co-operation for information supplied by the secondary schools and visit the Secondary School Profiles homepage (www.chsc.hk/secondary/en) for the schools' latest developments.

"Parents must complete and return the Choice Form to their children's primary schools for submission to the EDB on or before May 13," the spokesman said.

Parents who have questions in completing the Choice Form are advised to consult their children's primary schools. Relevant information about the SSPA System and some frequently asked questions will be uploaded to the EDB's homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) on April 3 for parents' reference.

Parents may call the EDB's automatic telephone enquiry system on 2891 0088 for information by then. Further enquiries may also be directed to the School Places Allocation Section (SSPA) on 2832 7740 and 2832 7700.

[Exchange Fund Bills tender results](#)

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

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:

Tender date : March 24, 2020
Paper on offer : EF Bills

Issue number : Q2013
Issue date : March 25, 2020
Maturity date : June 24, 2020
Amount applied : HK\$98,028 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$44,156 MN
Average yield accepted : 0.65 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 0.75 PCT
Pro rata ratio : About 14 PCT
Average tender yield : 0.85 PCT

Tender date : March 24, 2020
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : H2042
Issue date : March 25, 2020
Maturity date : September 23, 2020
Amount applied : HK\$35,160 MN
Amount allotted : HK\$11,000 MN
Average yield accepted : 0.67 PCT
Highest yield accepted : 0.72 PCT
Pro rata ratio : About 60 PCT
Average tender yield : 0.87 PCT

Hong Kong Monetary Authority tenders to be held in the week beginning March 30:

Tender date : March 31, 2020
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : Q2014
Issue date : April 1, 2020
Maturity date : July 2, 2020
Tenor : 92 Days
Amount on offer : HK\$57,340 MN

Tender date : March 31, 2020
Paper on offer : EF Bills
Issue number : H2043
Issue date : April 1, 2020
Maturity date : September 30, 2020
Tenor : 182 Days
Amount on offer : HK\$15,000 MN

Temporary suspension of Coin Cart services

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

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, the Coin Cart services will be temporarily suspended with effect from tomorrow (March 25) until further notice. The service suspension is a preventive measure to reduce social contact.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) will continue to monitor and review the situation closely, and make further announcement as appropriate. Members of the public are advised to visit the [HKMA website](#) or the official [Facebook page](#) for the latest information of Coin Cart services.