

# EPD to launch peach blossom tree recycling service

To encourage the reduction and recycling of yard waste, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has called on members of the public and commercial and industrial (C&I) organisations to deliver peach blossom trees (PBTs) intended for disposal to designated collection points for recycling. The EPD's contractor will process the collected PBTs and recycle them into useful materials such as mulch and compost to conserve resources and reduce waste.

Members of the public are encouraged to deliver the PBTs with decorations removed to the 37 Public Refuse Collection Points and six Outlying Islands Transfer Facilities from February 18 to 25. Please refer to the Annex for the locations and opening hours of the collection points.

C&I organisations, such as property management companies, and members of the public can also deliver the PBTs to the EcoPark (address: 133, Lung Mun Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories) on the above specified dates from 9am to 6pm. C&I organisations should only deliver the PBTs to the EcoPark directly. Other collection points will not accept PBTs delivered by C&I organisations.

For enquiries, please call the hotline of the recycling service at 9706 6549 during 9am to 6pm on weekdays. During the collection dates of PBTs (February 18 to 25), the hotline service will operate from 8am to 8pm. For more details, please refer to the Hong Kong Waste Reduction website ([www.wastereduction.gov.hk](http://www.wastereduction.gov.hk)).

An EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that this recycling service is limited to PBTs and they should remove all decorations, fai chun, tape, etc before delivering the PBTs to the collection points to facilitate the subsequent recycling processes. Festive decorations can be stored for reuse. For other small potted plants (such as kumquat trees), the public are advised to replant them to help reduce waste.

An e-certificate will be provided to all participants and C&I organisations who deliver PBTs to the EcoPark in Tuen Mun.

The EPD also welcomes other organisations and associations to provide recycling services for PBTs to help the public and C&I organisations to participate and enhance waste reduction for all.

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## Update on latest MERS situation in Oman

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 12) closely monitoring five additional cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), including two deaths, reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) by Oman between January 27 to 31, and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit.

According to the WHO, this was a household cluster affecting five female patients aged 30 to 59. Among them, three had underlying illnesses and four had contact with previously confirmed patients. They resided on a farm where dromedary camels and other animals were kept.

According to the latest information, 2 311 cases have been reported to the WHO (with at least 811 deaths).

"We will maintain close communication with the WHO and relevant health authorities," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus," the spokesman said.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS page of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the WHO's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

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## Hong Kong's trade in services statistics for 2017

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (February 12) the Hong Kong's trade in services (TIS) statistics for 2017, with detailed breakdowns by service component and by main destination/source.

Comparing 2017 with 2016, the value of total exports of services increased by 6.3% to \$812.9 billion, and that of total imports of services increased by 4.7% to \$605.5 billion. An invisible trade surplus at \$207.4 billion, equivalent to 34.3% of the value of total imports of services, was recorded in 2017. This was greater than the corresponding surplus of \$186.7 billion in 2016, equivalent to 32.3% of the value of total imports of services in 2016.

#### Analysis by service component

Analysed by service component, travel was the largest component in exports of services, accounting for 32.0% of the value of total exports of services in 2017. This was followed by transport (29.2%), financial services (19.5%) and other business services (13.7%).

As for imports of services, travel accounted for 32.7% of the value of total imports of services in 2017, followed by transport (22.5%), other business services (15.2%) and manufacturing services (15.1%).

Amongst various service components, the net exports of financial services contributed most significantly to the overall invisible trade surplus, at \$116.4 billion in 2017. This was followed by transport (\$101.2 billion) and travel (\$62.0 billion).

On the other hand, manufacturing services imported by Hong Kong in outward processing were substantial, resulting in a deficit of \$91.3 billion in 2017. This was followed by charges for the use of intellectual property (\$9.4 billion).

#### Analysis by main destination/source

The mainland of China (the Mainland) and the United States of America (the USA) were the top two main destinations of exports of services of Hong Kong, accounting for 39.9% and 14.3% respectively of the value of total exports of services in 2017. They were followed by the United Kingdom (the UK) (8.2%), Japan (4.3%) and Singapore (4.2%).

The Mainland and the USA were also the top two main sources of imports of services, accounting for 38.2% and 11.1% respectively of the value of total imports of services in 2017. They were followed by Japan (8.4%), the UK (5.8%) and Singapore (4.3%).

Analysed by region, Asia was the most important destination of the exports of services of Hong Kong, accounting for 60.9% of the value of total exports of services in 2017, followed by Western Europe (18.1%) and North America (15.4%).

For imports of services, Asia was also the most important source, accounting for 64.9% of the value of total imports of services in 2017, followed by Western Europe (14.1%) and North America (13.1%).

#### Commentary

A Government spokesman noted that the value of exports of services resumed solid growth in 2017, benefitting from the synchronised global economic upswing in that year. Growth was broad-based across major markets. The quick recovery of our services exports manifested the resilience of our services sector.

The spokesman further pointed out that, reflecting the close economic ties between the two places, the Mainland continued to be the most prominent destination for Hong Kong's exports of services in 2017, contributing around 40% of the total. Looking ahead, the Government will actively perform its role as a "facilitator" and "promoter", so as to grasp the opportunities brought by the Belt and Road Initiative and the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. We will strive to enhance the economic and financial collaborations with the Mainland and other trading partners, with a view to further improving the market access of our services suppliers and creating a favourable environment for our services trade to thrive.

#### Further information

The TIS statistics have incorporated the latest international recommendations given in the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services 2010. For details, please refer to the website of C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/so240.jsp](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/so240.jsp)).

Table 1 presents exports, imports and net exports of services by service component in 2016 and 2017.

Table 2 presents exports of services by main destination and imports of services by main source in 2016 and 2017.

Table 3 presents exports, imports and net exports of services by region of destination/source in 2016 and 2017.

More detailed TIS statistics will be given in the report "Hong Kong Trade in Services Statistics in 2017". Users can download this report (in PDF format) free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp240.jsp?productCode=B1020011](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp240.jsp?productCode=B1020011)) as from end-February 2019.

The TIS statistics presented above are compiled mainly based on data obtained from the Annual Survey of Imports and Exports of Services conducted by the C&SD, supplemented by data from other relevant sources. The TIS statistics for 2017 are subject to minor revision when more data from supplementary sources become available.

Enquiries about trade in services statistics can be directed to the Trade in Services Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7415; email: [tis@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:tis@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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# Coin Collection Programme

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (February 12) announces a new service schedule of the two Coin Carts under the Coin Collection Programme, for the period of March 11 up to May 19. The schedule and other details of the Programme are shown on the HKMA webpage ([coincollection.hkma.gov.hk](http://coincollection.hkma.gov.hk)).

Since the launch of the Programme in October 2014, the two Coin Carts have completed 23 cycles of serving the 18 districts on December 30, 2018. The Carts had carried out 527 000 transactions, collecting 436 million coins with a total face value of HK\$607 million during the period. The collected coins are re-circulated to meet demand.

The Coin Carts provide service at locations that are convenient to the public without affecting the normal flow of traffic and pedestrians. Locations that have suitable power supply facilities, such as the Leisure and Cultural Services Department mobile library service locations, are preferred so as to reduce the need for using the Coin Carts' own stand-by generators. This makes the Programme more environmentally friendly. In selecting the service locations, the HKMA has taken into consideration comments and suggestions given by district councils and members of public; and has consulted the Transport Department and the Hong Kong Police Force as necessary.

The two Coin Carts collect coins from members of public in the 18 districts of Hong Kong on a rotating basis. Under normal circumstances each Coin Cart will stay at a location for a week, subject to availability of the parking space and the maintenance schedule of the Cart. Service hours are from 10am to 7pm. Each vehicle is equipped with two coin counting machines and operational staff will be present to provide assistance. An electrical wheelchair lift is available for use. Users can choose to exchange coins for banknotes or adding value to their stored value facilities, such as Octopus Cards or e-wallets (including AlipayHK, Octopus 0! ePay, Tap&Go, TNG Wallet and WeChat Pay). There is also a Community Chest donation box inside each vehicle. The coin collection service is free of charge.

The HKMA will review the Programme from time and time and will regularly update the service schedule to give advance notice to the public.

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# Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday,

February 12, 2019 is 103.9 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).