

# Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade in July 2018

Further to the external merchandise trade statistics in value terms for July 2018 released earlier on, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (September 20) the volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for that month.

In July 2018, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods increased by 7.5% over July 2017. Concurrently, the volume of imports of goods increased by 11.5%.

Comparing the first seven months of 2018 with the same period in 2017, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods increased by 6.8%. Concurrently, the volume of imports of goods increased by 8.4%.

Comparing the three-month period ending July 2018 with the preceding three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the volume of total exports of goods increased by 0.6%. Concurrently, the volume of imports of goods increased by 0.1%.

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

Comparing July 2018 with July 2017, the prices of total exports of goods increased by 2.4%. Concurrently, the prices of imports of goods increased by 2.6%.

As regards price changes in the first seven months of 2018 over the same period in 2017, the prices of total exports of goods increased by 2.5%. Concurrently, the prices of imports of goods increased by 2.6%.

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 2017, the index decreased by 0.2% and 0.1% in July 2018 and in the first seven months of 2018 respectively.

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

Comparing July 2018 with July 2017, double-digit increases were recorded

for the total export volume to Vietnam (+25.9%) and India (+14.2%). Concurrently, the total export volume to the mainland of China (the Mainland) and the USA increased by 9.3% and 6.5% respectively. On the other hand, the total export volume to Japan decreased by 9.4%.

Over the same period of comparison, the total export prices to the USA, the Mainland and Japan increased by 3.7%, 3.3% and 2.4% respectively. On the other hand, the total export prices to Vietnam and India decreased by 2.1% and 4.1% respectively.

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

Comparing July 2018 with July 2017, a double-digit growth of 18.4% was recorded for the import volume from Korea. Concurrently, the import volume from Taiwan, Japan, the Mainland and Singapore increased by 9.6%, 8.0%, 7.1% and 1.0% respectively.

Over the same period of comparison, the import prices from Korea, the Mainland, Japan and Singapore increased by 7.8%, 2.8%, 2.8% and 2.4% respectively. On the other hand, the import prices from Taiwan decreased by 0.4%.

Further information

Details of the above statistics are published in the July 2018 issue of "Hong Kong Merchandise Trade Index Numbers". Users can download the publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp?productCode=B1020006](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp230.jsp?productCode=B1020006)).

Enquiries on merchandise trade indices may be directed to the Trade Analysis Section (1) of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 4918).

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## **Employment and vacancies statistics for June 2018**

According to the figures released today (September 20) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), total employment in the private sector surveyed increased by 1.4% or 40 100 persons in June 2018 compared with a year earlier. The total number of vacancies was 79 200, representing an increase of 14% or 9 610 over the preceding year.

Employment statistics

In June 2018, the selected industries as a whole employed 2 871 500

persons. The import and export trade engaged 477 600 persons, followed by the professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) engaging 301 600 persons, the retail trade 272 100 persons, and the food and beverage services 249 900 persons.

Employment increased in many surveyed industries compared with a year earlier. Increases in employment were mainly recorded in the industries of accommodation services (covering hotels, guesthouses, boarding houses and other establishments providing short term accommodation) (4.5% or 1 700 persons), human health services (3.4% or 4 300 persons), professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) (3.3% or 9 500 persons), food and beverage services (3.0% or 7 300 persons), and construction sites (manual workers only) (2.9% or 3 300 persons). On the other hand, employment decreased mainly in the industries of manufacturing (-3.8% or -3 600 persons), and cleaning and similar services (-1.6% or -1 300 persons). Employment figures for selected major industries are shown in Table 1.

#### Vacancies statistics

Among the 79 200 private sector vacancies, 12 060 were from the industry of food and beverage services, 7 980 from retail trade, 7 870 from professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services), 6 440 from import and export trade, and 6 210 from financing and insurance.

Vacancies increased in majority of the selected industries in June 2018 over a year earlier. Increases were mainly observed in the industries of human health services (1 980 or 111%); professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) (1 110 or 16%); transportation, storage, postal and courier services (1 100 or 31%); food and beverage services (910 or 8%); and retail trade (900 or 13%). On the other hand, vacancies decreased mainly in the industry of construction sites (manual workers only) (-930 or -62%). Job vacancies figures for selected major industries are shown in Table 2.

Analysed by major occupation category, private sector vacancies were observed mainly in the categories of service and sales workers (21 750 vacancies), associate professionals (15 660 vacancies), elementary occupations (15 190 vacancies), and clerical support workers (9 430 vacancies). Job vacancies figures by major occupation category are shown in Table 3.

#### Seasonally adjusted statistics

For discerning the latest trend in employment and vacancies in the private sector, it is useful to look at changes over a three-month period in the respective seasonally adjusted figures. Compared with March 2018, the seasonally adjusted total employment and total vacancies in the surveyed industries increased by 0.4% and 3.5% respectively in June 2018. The changes over three-month periods in the seasonally adjusted series of employment and vacancies are shown in Table 4.

## Other information

The above employment and vacancies statistics were obtained from the Quarterly Survey of Employment and Vacancies and the Quarterly Employment Survey of Construction Sites conducted by the C&SD. In the former survey, some economic activities (e.g. those dominated by self-employment, including taxi operators and hawkers) are not covered. Therefore, the respective employment and vacancies figures relate only to those selected industries included in the survey. In the latter survey on construction sites, employment and vacancies figures relate to manual workers only.

A detailed breakdown of the above statistics is published in the following reports:

"Quarterly Report of Employment and Vacancies Statistics, June 2018"  
([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050003](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050003))

"Quarterly Report of Employment and Vacancies at Construction Sites, June 2018"  
([www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050004](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?productCode=B1050004))

Users can download these publications free of charge at the website of the C&SD.

Enquiries on more detailed employment and vacancies statistics can be directed to the Employment Statistics and Central Register of Establishments Section, C&SD (Tel: 2582 5076; fax: 2827 2296; email: [employment@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:employment@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## [Speech by FS at "In Style•Hong Kong" Symposium in Ho Chi Minh City \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the "In Style•Hong Kong" Symposium in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, today (September 20):

Deputy Minister Le (Deputy Minister, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vietnam, Mr Lê Hoài Trung), Vice Chairman Le (Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, Mr Le Thanh Liem), Consul-General Wu (Chinese Consul-General in Ho Chi Minh City, Mr Wu Jun), Vincent (Chairman, Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Mr Vincent Lo), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

And welcome to "In Styleâ€\$Hong Kong", the largest Hong Kong promotion event ever to take place in Vietnam.

It's a great pleasure to be here, in Vietnam, and for the second time in less than a year. Last October, I took part in the APEC Finance Ministers' Meeting in Hoi An, with its magnificent ancient town, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

I'm pleased to be back, this time in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's largest city and one of the world's most dynamic urban centres. For Vietnamese businesses and consumers, the good news is that I've brought with me a big slice of Hong Kong – from the business symposium that begins in just a few moments, to the two-day B2B exhibition "In Styleâ€\$Hong Kong" Expo.

The Expo features more than 130 Hong Kong companies and their high-style brands. They range from designer goods and fine jewellery to fashion, smart living and gourmet delicacies. And there's more, including a fabulous, citywide showcase of Hong Kong lifestyle, in products, fashion and fine food as well. And all of it on offer to Vietnamese consumers throughout Ho Chi Minh City.

We're here, ladies and gentlemen, because we're confident that, working together, Hong Kong and Vietnam have much to gain, this week and indeed long down the road.

The numbers certainly underline that. Over the past five years, merchandise trade between Hong Kong and Vietnam has grown, on average, almost 10 per cent a year.

Last year, Vietnam was Hong Kong's 10th largest merchandise trading partner, with trade volume exceeding US\$18 billion.

There's also a strong Hong Kong business community in Vietnam, ranging from garment manufacturing to property development and investment banking.

And that business co-operation will surely grow, given the Free Trade Agreement and the related Investment Agreement signed, last November, between Hong Kong and the 10 member states of ASEAN.

Since then, both sides have been busy ratifying and making arrangements for the Agreements, which will formally take effect at the beginning of next year. I can tell you and assure you that Hong Kong will be ready to implement the Agreements on January 1, 2019, as planned. And, no doubt, Vietnam is working towards the same target timeline.

The two Agreements send a clear and compelling message to the world about our common aspiration – to expand trade and investment throughout the Asian region.

For Hong Kong, as for ASEAN – and that very much includes Vietnam – the

Agreements will bring legal certainty and, of course, much better market access in trade and investment. And that can only boost business opportunities, enhancing trade and investment flow between our economies and the businesses that drive them.

The Hong Kong SAR Government currently has two Economic and Trade Offices in the ASEAN region, in Jakarta and Singapore. And we are planning a third ETO, this one in Bangkok, to strengthen our ties with ASEAN, to make it much easier to capitalise on the business and investment opportunities sure to follow, for all concerned.

Hong Kong, after all, boasts a well-established international trade network, world-class infrastructure and seamlessly connected communications and logistics networks. We are the world's leading financial centre in Asia, and we ranked number one in five of the past nine years in terms of funds raised through IPOs. We are also a platform for different high value-added services, supported by highly skilled professionals. We have unparalleled knowledge of the Mainland market, and deep economic connections with the Mainland and the rest of the world. With this high degree of connectivity, globally and with the Mainland, Hong Kong helps people and businesses achieve their goals, making our city ASEAN's, and Vietnam's, natural partner to connect and excel, and realise the promising business opportunities of the Mainland.

On top of that, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development adds more opportunities for Hong Kong – and the countries and companies that work with us.

Linking Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Guangdong Province, including Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Zhuhai, the Greater Bay Area counts a combined population of 69 million and a collective GDP worth US\$1.5 trillion, which is comparable to that of Korea. Working together, the synergies to be brought about by these cities are obvious and tremendous. The world-class financial services of Hong Kong, the vibrant tech sector in Shenzhen and the advanced manufacturing bases in the other cities in the area enable the Greater Bay Area to have the combined advantages of the New York bay area and the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Greater Bay Area will certainly have all it takes to become an international innovation and technology hub.

Coming Sunday and later this year, two major mega cross-border infrastructure projects, namely the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, will be operational, further enhancing Hong Kong's connectivity with the Greater Bay Area and beyond.

With the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the travelling time from Hong Kong to Macao and Zhuhai will be cut down substantially to less than an hour. A one-hour living circle will be created. And most of the cities in the Pearl River Delta area are within three hours' drive. Cities in Indochina, such as Hanoi in Vietnam, can be reached in about one day. And with the Express Rail Link, the journey time between Guangzhou and Hong Kong will be reduced to 48

minutes only, and passengers from Hong Kong can easily access the over-20,000-kilometre national high-speed rail network connecting all major cities in the Mainland. That means a very sizeable and easily accessible market is waiting for us to tap. To Vietnamese businesses, I say join us. Partner with Hong Kong in building a rewarding future – in the Bay Area, in ASEAN. And right here, today and tomorrow, at "In Style • Hong Kong".

My sincere thanks to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council for organising "In Style" Hong Kong". And to all of you, for your enthusiastic support in taking bilateral relations between Hong Kong and Vietnam to a new level of promise and opportunity.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all the best of business – and pleasure – at "In Style" Hong Kong".

Thank you.

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## Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, September 20, 2018 is 104.3 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

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## Sewage Treatment Works facilities and public sewers affected by Typhoon Mangkhut

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (September 20) said that after Typhoon Mangkhut, the DSD had inspected its facilities and found that some of the pipes and secondary treatment facilities at the Sai Kung Sewage Treatment Works were damaged during the typhoon, such that the Sewage Treatment Works could only maintain its primary sewage treatment service. DSD staff conducted emergency repair works immediately with a view to resuming the normal operation of the sewage treatment plant as soon as possible. However, subsequent detailed inspections have found that the facilities were seriously damaged and it will take some time to complete the restoration works. As a temporary measure, an additional disinfection process has been arranged for the primary treated sewage before being bypassed for nearshore discharge, so as to minimise the impact to nearby waters.

In addition, three sections of rising main in Southern District of Hong Kong, namely a 450mm diameter pipe near Mills & Chung Path, a 150mm diameter pipe near Deep Water Bay Barbecue Area and a 300mm diameter pipe near Tai Tau Chau of Shek O, were damaged during Typhoon Mangkhut, leading to the discharge of sewage. The DSD has already arranged for emergency repairs and will start replacing the damaged sewers with a view to completing the repair works within three weeks.

Due to the need to clean up the debris after the typhoon and repair the shark prevention nets at the beaches nearby the Sai Kung Sewage Treatment Works (i.e. Kiu Tsui Beach, Trio Beach and Hap Mun Bay Beach), as well as Deep Water Bay Beach and Shek O Beach, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced on September 17 that these beaches would be temporarily closed until further notice. Red flags have also been hoisted.

Seawater samples had already been collected by EPD staff at the three Sai Kung beaches, Deep Water Bay Beach and Shek O Beach and for testing to check the water quality of the beaches.

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The sewage bypass and overflow may lead to temporary deterioration of seawater quality in the vicinity. For health reasons, the public are advised to avoid recreational activities, angling or seawater abstraction in the potentially affected sea or waterfront areas at Port Shelter near Sai Kung Sewage Treatment Works and Deep Water Bay and Shek O in Southern District of Hong Kong.

The EPD and the DSD will continue monitoring the water quality at the beaches and nearby waters. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from EPD's websites ([www.beachwq.gov.hk](http://www.beachwq.gov.hk) or [www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach)) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666.