

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

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

In the third quarter of 2021, total port cargo throughput decreased by 12.4% compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 55.5 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo decreased by 19.3% compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 34.6 million tonnes, while outward port cargo increased by 2.2% compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 20.9 million tonnes.

For the first nine months of 2021, total port cargo throughput decreased by 15.0% compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 159.7 million tonnes. Within this total, inward port cargo decreased by 22.2% compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 100.9 million tonnes, while outward port cargo increased by 0.8% compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 58.8 million tonnes.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, total port cargo throughput increased by 3.8% in the third quarter of 2021. Within this total, inward port cargo and outward port cargo increased by 6.0% and 0.3% 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 4.2% in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 39.0 million tonnes, while river cargo decreased by 36.2% in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 16.5 million tonnes.

Within inward port cargo, imports decreased by 31.6% in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 17.9 million tonnes, while inward transshipment remained virtually unchanged in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020, at 16.8 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports (including domestic exports and re-exports) and outward transshipment increased by 4.8% and 1.3% in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 5.1 million tonnes and 15.8 million tonnes respectively.

Within port cargo, seaborne and river cargo decreased by 0.8% and 36.2% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 111.4 million tonnes and 48.3 million tonnes respectively.

Within inward port cargo, imports decreased by 35.0% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 53.4 million tonnes, while inward transshipment increased by 0.1% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 47.5 million tonnes. For outward port cargo, exports increased by 4.0% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 14.5 million tonnes, while outward transshipment decreased by 0.2% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 44.4 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 third quarter of 2021 with the third quarter of 2020, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Indonesia (+52.3%) and Vietnam (+12.8%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (-52.2%) and the mainland of China (-32.0%). For outward port cargo, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Taiwan (+39.9%), Korea (+32.8%), Thailand (+25.8%) and the United States of America (+19.8%).

Comparing the first nine months of 2021 with the first nine months of 2020, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Indonesia (+49.5%) and Vietnam (+20.7%). On the other hand, double-digit decreases were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo loaded in Taiwan (-65.0%), the mainland of China (-32.9%) and Korea (-24.9%). For outward port cargo, double-digit increases were recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in Korea (+35.2%), Macao (+23.7%), Taiwan (+21.4%), the Philippines (+15.1%), Malaysia (+12.6%) and the United States of America (+11.6%). On the other hand, double-digit decrease was recorded in the tonnage of outward port cargo discharged in the mainland of China (-13.1%).

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

Comparing the third quarter of 2021 with the third quarter of 2020, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "coal, coke and briquettes" (+40.9%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-19.3%) and "stone, sand and gravel" (-61.9%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of "metalliferous ores and metal scrap" (+14.0%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-16.8%) and "pulp and waste paper" (-17.8%).

Comparing the first nine months of 2021 with the first nine months of 2020, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of inward port cargo of "coal, coke and briquettes" (+61.7%), "iron and steel" (+24.6%),

"artificial resins and plastic materials" (-17.0%), "petroleum, petroleum products and related materials" (-18.9%) and "stone, sand and gravel" (-61.9%). As for outward port cargo, double-digit changes were recorded in the tonnage of "stone, sand and gravel" (+18.5%), "logs and timber; wood, simply worked" (-17.4%), "artificial resins and plastic materials" (-17.5%) and "pulp and waste paper" (-25.3%).

Containers

In the third quarter of 2021, the port of Hong Kong handled 4.64 million TEUs of containers, representing a decrease of 1.2% compared with the third quarter of 2020. Within this total, laden containers increased by 0.4% to 3.94 million TEUs, while empty containers decreased by 9.4% to 0.70 million TEUs. Among laden containers, inward containers decreased by 2.9% to 2.01 million TEUs, while outward containers increased by 4.1% to 1.93 million TEUs.

For the first nine months of 2021, the port of Hong Kong handled 13.35 million TEUs of containers, representing an increase of 0.3% compared with the first nine months of 2020. Within this total, laden containers increased by 0.6% to 11.15 million TEUs, while empty containers decreased by 1.1% to 2.20 million TEUs. Among laden containers, inward containers decreased by 1.1% to 5.81 million TEUs, while outward containers increased by 2.5% to 5.34 million TEUs.

On a seasonally adjusted quarter-to-quarter comparison, laden container throughput increased by 1.9% in the third quarter of 2021. Within this total, inward and outward laden containers increased by 0.8% and 3.1% respectively.

In the third quarter of 2021, seaborne laden containers increased by 8.1% compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 2.90 million TEUs, while river laden containers decreased by 16.3% to 1.05 million TEUs.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 0.2% and 4.0% in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 0.57 million TEUs and 1.45 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment increased by 10.4% and 2.0% in the third quarter of 2021 compared with the third quarter of 2020 to 0.51 million TEUs and 1.42 million TEUs respectively.

In the first nine months of 2021, seaborne laden containers increased by 10.2% compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 8.40 million TEUs, while river laden containers decreased by 20.5% to 2.75 million TEUs.

Within inward laden containers, imports and inward transshipment decreased by 3.1% and 0.3% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 1.62 million TEUs and 4.19 million TEUs respectively. For outward laden containers, exports and outward transshipment increased by 2.1% and 2.6% in the first nine months of 2021 compared with the first nine months of 2020 to 1.30 million TEUs and 4.04 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 third quarter of 2021 with the third quarter of 2020, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 23.1% to 4 137, with the total capacity also decreasing by 30.7% to 62.8 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 21.6% to 12 131, with the total capacity also decreasing by 23.0% to 15.7 million net tons.

Comparing the first nine months of 2021 with the first nine months of 2020, the number of ocean vessel arrivals decreased by 31.0% to 12 253, with the total capacity also decreasing by 36.2% to 181.6 million net tons. Meanwhile, the number of river vessel arrivals decreased by 33.0% to 34 484, with the total capacity also decreasing by 40.9% to 41.4 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, Third 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).