

Provisional statistics of retail sales for December 2018 and for whole year of 2018

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released the latest figures on retail sales today (January 30).

The value of total retail sales in December 2018, provisionally estimated at \$44.9 billion, edged up by 0.1% over the same month in 2017. The revised estimate of the value of total retail sales in November 2018 increased by 1.4% over a year earlier.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales in December 2018 edged up by 0.2% over a year earlier. The revised estimate of the volume of total retail sales in November 2018 increased by 1.2% over a year earlier.

Analysed by broad type of retail outlet in descending order of the provisional estimate of the value of sales and comparing December 2018 with December 2017, the value of sales of commodities in department stores increased by 4.9%. This was followed by sales of commodities in supermarkets (+2.4% in value); medicines and cosmetics (+6.9%); food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (+1.0%); other consumer goods, not elsewhere classified (+9.4%); motor vehicles and parts (+8.9%); footwear, allied products and other clothing accessories (+5.8%); fuels (+1.0%); furniture and fixtures (+2.5%); books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (+6.7%); Chinese drugs and herbs (+10.5%); and optical shops (+6.2%).

On the other hand, the value of sales of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts decreased by 4.9% in December 2018 compared with a year earlier. This was followed by sales of wearing apparel (-0.3% in value); and electrical goods and other consumer durable goods, not elsewhere classified (-15.2%).

Based on the seasonally adjusted series, the provisional estimate of the value of total retail sales decreased by 1.8% in the fourth quarter of 2018 compared with the preceding quarter, while the provisional estimate of the volume of total retail sales decreased by 1.1%.

For 2018 as a whole, the value of total retail sales was provisionally estimated at \$485.2 billion, increased by 8.8% in value and 7.6% in volume over 2017.

Analysed by broad type of retail outlet in descending order of the provisional estimate of the value of sales and comparing the whole year of 2018 with the whole year of 2017, the value of sales of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts increased by 13.7%. This was followed by sales of commodities in department stores (+9.6% in value); commodities in

supermarkets (+1.2%); wearing apparel (+6.0%); medicines and cosmetics (+14.3%); electrical goods and other consumer durable goods, not elsewhere classified (+7.3%); food, alcoholic drinks and tobacco (+4.7%); other consumer goods, not elsewhere classified (+15.7%); motor vehicles and parts (+7.6%); fuels (+8.6%); footwear, allied products and other clothing accessories (+10.5%); furniture and fixtures (+4.6%); books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (+2.5%); Chinese drugs and herbs (+5.3%); and optical shops (+5.1%).

These retail sales statistics measure the sales receipts in respect of goods sold by local retail establishments and are primarily intended for gauging the short-term business performance of the local retail sector. They cover consumer spending on goods but not on services (such as those on housing, catering, medical care and health services, transport and communication, financial services, education and entertainment) which account for over 50% of the overall consumer spending. Moreover, they include spending on goods in Hong Kong by visitors but exclude spending outside Hong Kong by Hong Kong residents. Hence they should not be regarded as indicators for measuring overall consumer spending.

Users interested in the trend of overall consumer spending should refer to the data series of private consumption expenditure (PCE), which is a major component of the Gross Domestic Product published at quarterly intervals. Compiled from a wide range of data sources, PCE covers consumer spending on both goods (including goods purchased from all channels) and services by Hong Kong residents whether locally or abroad. Please refer to the C&SD publication "Gross Domestic Product (Quarterly)" for more details.

Commentary

A government spokesman indicated that the value of retail sales in December 2018 slackened further to record little change from a year earlier, reflecting the cautious consumption sentiment. Thanks to the robust growth in the first half of 2018, retail sales value rose by 8.8% for the year as a whole.

The spokesman commented further that, retail sales performance would continue to be affected by the cautious consumption sentiment amid moderating global economic growth and the uncertainty stemming from the US-Mainland tensions in the near term, though the full employment situation and sustained expansion in visitor arrivals should provide some support. The Government will closely monitor the situation.

Further information

Table 1 presents the revised figures on value index and value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for November 2018 as well as the provisional figures for December 2018. The provisional figures on the value of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet as well as the corresponding year-on-year changes for the whole year of 2018 are also shown.

Table 2 presents the revised figures on volume index of retail sales for all retail outlets and by broad type of retail outlet for November 2018 as well as the provisional figures for December 2018. The provisional figures on year-on-year changes for the whole year of 2018 are also shown.

Table 3 shows the movements of the value and volume of total retail sales in terms of the year-on-year rate of change for a month compared with the same month in the preceding year based on the original series, and in terms of the rate of change for a three-month period compared with the preceding three-month period based on the seasonally adjusted series.

The classification of retail establishments follows the Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification (HSIC) Version 2.0, which is used in various economic surveys for classifying economic units into different industry classes.

More detailed statistics are given in the "Report on Monthly Survey of Retail Sales". Users can download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD

(www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=B1080003).

Alternatively, the historical series of retail sales statistics can be downloaded in the form of a statistical table at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp320.jsp?productCode=D5600089).

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Distribution Services Statistics Section of C&SD (Tel: 3903 7400; email: mrs@censtatd.gov.hk).

EDB launches video series on good books recommended by celebrities

The "Lifelong Love of Reading: Good Books Recommended by Celebrities" video series jointly produced by the Education Bureau (EDB) and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) for the promotion of reading was launched on the RTHK TV 31 and EDB Educational Television (ETV) website (etv.edb.gov.hk/home.aspx) today (January 30).

The series consists of eight three-minute videos featuring eight celebrities, namely the Permanent Secretary for Education, Mrs Ingrid Yeung; Mok Hing Yiu Professor of Medicine of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Professor Joseph Sung; parent-child relationship and parenting educator, Ms Shirley Loo; the former president of the Legislative Council, Mr Jasper Tsang; early childhood educator Ms Ponny Shum; the Chairman of the Committee on Home-School Co-operation, Mr Henry Tong; Hong Kong high jump team member Ms Cecilia Yeung; and playwright Ms Chong Mui-ngam. They will share aspects of their reading experience and recommend good books to arouse public

interest in reading.

The first to share the joy of reading today is the Permanent Secretary for Education, Mrs Ingrid Yeung. She will talk about her reading experience and a touching story she has read. The rest of the series will be rolled out soon.

"Lifelong Love of Reading: Good Books Recommended by Celebrities" is the third series jointly produced by the EDB and RTHK. The other two are the "Lifelong Love of Reading: The Reading Atmosphere in Schools", which features schools' good practices in the promotion of reading, and "Lifelong Love of Reading: Sharing the Joy of Reading", which looks at the experience of scholars, writers and artists in developing children's reading interest and habits. Besides RTHK TV 31 and EDB ETV, these series are also available at the Hong Kong Education City (HKEdCity) ETV website (www.hkedcity.net) and the ETV mobile application.

"The benefits of reading are endless. The EDB is committed to the promotion of reading and collaborates closely with schools to organise various activities and provide resources. In the latest 'Secondary Education Curriculum Guide', schools are encouraged to extend 'Reading to Learn' to 'Reading across the Curriculum' and 'Language across the Curriculum' with a view to broadening students' knowledge base and connecting their learning experiences in different subjects," an EDB spokesman said.

"We will organise two large-scale reading activities, namely the 'Joyful Reading Carnival' and the '2019 World Book Day Fest – Towards a Reading City: Folktaleoscope' in March and April respectively this year. We will collaborate with schools and reading-related groups to organise a wide range of activities and create a vigorous and lively atmosphere to encourage more students, teachers, parents and the general public to enjoy reading," the spokesman said.

Building on the existing foundation and strengths, the EDB will engage different stakeholders in cultivating a reading atmosphere and promoting a reading culture. The aim is to nurture students' interest and help them develop a reading habit from a young age so that they will enjoy it and develop their thinking skills and creativity, and thereby sustain the development of a reading atmosphere and culture across the city.

[Phishing emails related to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking](#)

Corporation Limited

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited on phishing emails, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the emails concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the emails should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

LCQ13: Electric mobility devices

Following is a question by the Hon Charles Peter Mok and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (January 30):

Question:

In recent years, the authorities of quite a number of cities (such as Singapore) have permitted, through a registration or licensing system, newly emerged electric personal mobility devices (e.g. mini-motor cycles, pedelecs, electric scooters and electric unicycles) to be used on roads legally, and regulated matters such as the sizes, horsepower, maximum speeds and safety equipment of such mobility devices. However, under the laws of Hong Kong, all such devices are prohibited from being used on roads. On the other hand, one of the study items of the "Consultancy Study on Enhancing Walkability in Hong Kong", commenced by the Transport Department in 2017, is to explore whether such mobility devices are suitable for use in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the scope of the aforesaid study includes an assessment of (i) the demand of members of the public for electric personal mobility devices, and (ii) the roles that can be played by such devices in Hong Kong's transport infrastructure (e.g. serving as short-haul feeder transport means in districts where public transport services are inadequate); if so, of the progress of the assessment and the timetable for putting forward preliminary recommendations; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether it will, by making reference to the practices in other cities,

establish a registration and licensing system for electric personal mobility devices to the effect that such devices may be used on designated roads legally; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) whether it will explore launching a trial scheme under which electric personal mobility devices are permitted to be used at designated places (e.g. roads with relatively low vehicular flow as well as designated public spaces, cycle tracks and footpaths), so as to assess the feasibility of legalising the use of such devices; if not, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My consolidated reply to the various parts of the Hon Charles Peter Mok's question is as follows:

The Government endeavours to take forward "Walk in HK" and encourages citizens to "walk more, ride less". Various measures have been launched to enhance the overall walkability of Hong Kong so as to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment. In this connection, the Transport Department (TD) has commissioned the Consultancy Study on Enhancing Walkability in Hong Kong, which covers several key issues on encouraging walking, including the feasibility of the use of electric mobility devices in Hong Kong.

Currently, according to the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap 374), "motor vehicle" means any mechanically propelled vehicle. Electric mobility devices such as mini-motor cycles, pedelecs, electric scooters and electric unicycles are all mechanically propelled and thus belong to "motor vehicles", which must be licensed for use on roads.

In view of the rapid technological advancement of electric mobility devices, the Consultancy Study on Enhancing Walkability in Hong Kong will look into the latest development of relevant technology, the usage of electric mobility devices in Hong Kong, the suitability of their use in Hong Kong for short-distance commuting, etc. The TD will also review the regulation of electric mobility devices in overseas regions and evaluate the implications of the use of these devices in Hong Kong on road safety, accessibility and road users, as well as the relevant legal requirements, management and implementation issues, etc.

The Consultancy Study on Enhancing Walkability in Hong Kong is expected to be completed in mid-2020. The Government will make reference to the findings of the study to consider the need to introduce a regulatory system and a trial scheme for electric mobility devices.

EPD to revise Indoor Air Quality Objectives on July 1

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (January 30) that the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Objectives under the Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme for Offices and Public Places (the Scheme) will be revised from July 1, 2019.

An EPD spokesman said that, in revising the IAQ Objectives, the EPD has made reference to the latest IAQ guidelines published by the World Health Organization (WHO) and has taken into account local circumstances. The IAQ Objectives under the Scheme will be revised as follows: tighten the concentration levels of carbon monoxide, respirable suspended particulates and radon; add new short-term objectives for formaldehyde and nitrogen dioxide; add a new parameter of mould; and remove the three physical parameters of room temperature, relative humidity and air movement which are not directly related to IAQ.

The EPD has been implementing the Scheme since 2003 to encourage property owners and management to adopt good IAQ management practices in their premises. Premises that are used as offices or public places and are served by mechanical ventilation and air conditioning systems may join the Scheme. Premises' owners or management who wish to participate in the Scheme have to commission accredited IAQ certificate-issuing bodies to assess whether the IAQ of the premises can meet Excellent Class or Good Class IAQ under the Scheme. Premises participating in the Scheme are required to carry out full certification of all IAQ parameters every five years and for the years in between to carry out re-certification of specified IAQ parameters annually.

Premises which have joined the Scheme before July 1, 2019 may, during the annual renewal of the IAQ certificate, either continue to carry out the re-certification of specified parameters of the current IAQ Objectives until the end of that 5-year re-certification cycle or adopt the revised IAQ Objectives by carrying out full certification of all IAQ parameters. Premises newly joining the Scheme or which have completed their 5-year re-certification cycle on or after July 1, 2019 shall adopt the revised IAQ Objectives for full certification. To distinguish premises complying with the current or the revised IAQ Objectives, IAQ labels and certificates of different design will be issued for premises certified under the revised IAQ Objectives.

Information about the Scheme and the revised IAQ Objectives is available in the website of EPD's IAQ Information Centre at www.iaq.gov.hk.