

## 30 secondary students to depart for Beijing and Hainan to join Young Astronaut Training Camp (with photos)

Thirty secondary students who have been selected to participate in the Young Astronaut Training Camp 2024, jointly organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, will visit Beijing, Wenchang of Hainan Province and Jiuquan to receive a nine-day training camp from July 16 to August 3. A send-off ceremony of the training camp was held at the Hong Kong Space Museum today (July 16).

Addressing the send-off ceremony, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, said that upon the country's plan to expedite its development to become the world's leading space-faring nation, Hong Kong shoulders the responsibility as an international innovation and technology hub to contribute its own power to the country's aerospace endeavours. He encouraged students of the training camp to grasp the opportunity to learn in earnest, broaden their horizons and gear up themselves. He also encouraged them to learn from the country's aerospace heroes as their role model and make greater contributions to the betterment of the country and Hong Kong in future.

Other officiating guests included the Director-General of the Department of Educational, Scientific and Technological Affairs of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Dr Wang Weiming; the Chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Dr Jonathan Choi; the Under Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Raistlin Lau; member of the Working Group on Patriotic Education of the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee Ms Melissa Kaye Pang; the Chairman of the Museum Advisory Committee, Professor Douglas So; the Acting Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Miss Eve Tam; Deputy Manager of the Science Technology and Innovation Division, Beijing-Hong Kong Academic Exchange Centre Mr Franky Chan; and Vice-Chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce Mr Charles Cheung.

Launched in 2009, the Young Astronaut Training Camp has entered its 13th year. A total of 360 students have participated in the programme so far. The recruitment of this year's training camp started in May and received an overwhelming response. After three rounds of the selection, which included a quiz on astronomy and space science, a three-day training camp and an interview, 30 students from Secondary Two to Secondary Six were selected as Young Astronauts out of around 200 applicants from more than 130 secondary schools.

The students participating in the nine-day training camp will visit various key astronomy and aerospace facilities. They will also have a chance

to meet with aerospace experts and astronauts to learn more about the development of the country's aerospace programmes and distinguished achievements. This year's students will be among the first participants of the long-running programme to visit the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site. Being China's most-advanced rocket launch facility, the site is primarily responsible for launching missions of the Tiangong space station modules and the Tianzhou cargo craft. After visiting the launch site, they will visit the Wenchang Aerospace Science Center, the Wenchang Aerospace Supercomputing Center, and more. The students will then travel to Beijing to visit the National Astronomical Observatories. At the China Astronaut Research and Training Center, they will experience astronaut training activities, including the donning and doffing of spacesuits, wilderness survival training and savouring space food. Their final stop will be the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, which is responsible for launching manned spaceflights, and the National Time Service Center of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Xian.

The training camp is jointly presented by the LCSD and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, in association with the Beijing-Hong Kong Academic Exchange Centre. It is co-ordinated by the Hong Kong Space Museum and sponsored by the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. For details of the training camp, please visit the website of the Hong Kong Space Museum at [hk.space.museum/en/web/spm/activities/yatc.html](http://hk.space.museum/en/web/spm/activities/yatc.html) or call 2734 2765.

The training camp is one of the activities in the Chinese Culture Promotion Series. The LCSD has long been promoting Chinese history and culture through organising an array of programmes and activities to enable the public to learn more about the broad and profound Chinese culture. For more information, please visit [www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ccpo/index.html](http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ccpo/index.html).





---

## Cluster of chickenpox cases in Kwai Chung Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

The spokesperson for Kwai Chung Hospital (KCH) made the following announcement today (July 16):

A 19-year-old patient hospitalised in a male ward for learning disabilities presented with rashes on June 18. He was confirmed to have chickenpox infection after viral tests. The KCH Infection Control Team conducted contact tracing upon notification of the case. The hospital has informed contacts and arranged antibody testing for individuals who either had not received chickenpox vaccines in the past or are unsure of their infection history of varicella zoster virus, in order to assess the needs of medical surveillance or isolation. Subsequently, two more patients (aged 19 and 22) in the same ward developed symptoms during the medical surveillance period and were confirmed to have chickenpox. The patients concerned have recovered after being treated in isolation.

A thorough cleaning and disinfection have been conducted in the ward concerned, while infection control measures have been enhanced. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patients. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

---



## Hong Kong Customs detects two smuggling cases involving ocean-going vessels (with photos)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs detected two suspected smuggling cases involving ocean-going vessels in July. A large batch of suspected smuggled goods with a total estimated market value of about \$80 million was seized.

Through intelligence analysis and risk assessment, Customs discovered that criminals intended to use ocean-going vessels to smuggle goods. Strategies were thus formulated, with two suspicious containers scheduled to depart from Hong Kong to the United States and one suspicious container scheduled to depart from Hong Kong to Korea selected for inspection on July 9 and 11 respectively.

Upon examination, Customs officers found a large batch of suspected smuggled goods, including refrigerants, perfumes and lighters, in the two containers destined for the United States. The two containers were declared as carrying "mat, bottle" and "storage bag, bottle" respectively. Also, a large batch of suspected smuggled electronic products, including touch screens, oximeters and electronic parts, was seized in the container departing for Korea declared as carrying "plastic gloves and other rubbers".

Investigations are ongoing. The likelihood of arrests is not ruled out.

Being a government department primarily responsible for tackling smuggling activities, Customs has long been combating various smuggling activities at the front line. Customs will keep up its enforcement action and continue to fiercely combat sea smuggling activities through proactive risk management and intelligence-based enforcement strategies, with targeted anti-smuggling operations carried out at suitable times to disrupt these activities.

Smuggling is a serious offence. Under the Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting unmanifested cargo is liable to a maximum fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years upon conviction.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002)).





## [DH releases Thematic Report on Iron Status \(Population Health Survey 2020-22\) \(with photo\)](#)

The Department of Health (DH) today (July 16) released the Thematic Report on Iron Status (Population Health Survey (PHS) 2020-22), which presents the iron status of the general population of Hong Kong. The survey revealed that women of reproductive age (aged 15 to 49) have a higher prevalence of iron deficiency (ID) than men and women of post-menopausal age (aged 50 to 84), similar to that of relevant studies in high-income countries. Women of reproductive age are advised to pay special attention to their diet to ensure adequate iron intake.

Conducted between November 2020 and February 2022, the [PHS 2020-22](#) comprises a household survey and a health examination. With regard to the health examination, apart from the earlier announced [iodine status](#), biochemical testing of blood for haemoglobin (Hb) and serum ferritin (SF) were included for the first time to assess the iron status of the local population (aged 15 to 84).

A spokesman for the DH said that iron is vital for oxygen transport and cellular functions of the human body. Inadequate iron intake or excessive iron loss (e.g. during menstruation for female) can both lead to ID. A prolonged deficiency may result in iron deficiency anaemia (IDA), causing fatigue and reduced exercise tolerance, as well as affecting cognitive functions in children. IDA in early pregnancy is associated with increased risks of preterm labour, a low birthweight baby, and infant mortality.

Based on recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), SF was adopted as the indicator to assess the local prevalence of ID, and a cut-off value of below 15 µg/L was used for defining ID among healthy adolescents and

adults. Anaemia was defined as Hb levels lower than 12 g/dL in women and lower than 13 g/dL in men according to the WHO. IDA was defined in individuals who were found to have both ID and anaemia.

The survey results revealed that the prevalence of ID among the local population aged 15 to 84 was about 5.7 per cent, whereas that for women of reproductive age (aged 15 to 49) reached 17.5 per cent. The prevalence of men and women of post-menopausal age was 0.7 per cent and 2.7 per cent respectively. Also, a remarkable difference in the prevalence of IDA between men (0.3 per cent) and women (6.4 per cent) was observed. Prevalence of IDA was higher among women of reproductive age (10.6 per cent) than women of post-menopausal age (2.1 per cent).

The ID prevalence of the local population in Hong Kong (including women of reproductive age) falls within 5.0 to 19.9 per cent (i.e. 5.7 per cent for local population and 17.5 per cent for the aforementioned women of reproductive age) and is classified as a "mild magnitude of public health problem" according to the WHO guidelines on use of ferritin concentrations to assess iron status. Also, the local findings of a higher prevalence of ID and IDA among women of reproductive age are similar to that of relevant studies in high income countries, and are believed to be due to their regular and heavy menstrual blood loss.

To follow up on the iron levels of the public, the DH has set up the Working Group on Prevention of Iron Deficiency, comprising experts from the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the Hospital Authority, the Hong Kong College of Community Medicine, the Hong Kong College of Family Physicians, the Hong Kong College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Hong Kong College of Pathologists, the Hong Kong College of Physicians, and the Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service. The Working Group has reviewed the key findings of this study and the latest scientific evidence. For asymptomatic individuals at average risk of ID, there is no evidence in supporting routine screening for ID or universal iron supplementation. The following joint recommendations were made on iron intake:

In general, adequate iron intake can be achieved by a healthy balanced diet with iron-rich food. Women of reproductive age have a higher risk of iron loss during menstruation and hence a higher daily requirement for iron. They should pay particular attention to their diet to ensure adequate iron intake.

#### 1. Consume iron-rich food:

- Eat a moderate amount of meat, fish and seafood. Animal-based iron-rich food contains haem iron which can be absorbed easily;
- Eat more dark green vegetables and beans. Plant-based iron-rich food contains non-haem iron which is less readily absorbable, and its absorption is affected by other foods and drinks in the diet; and
- Iron-fortified cereals are also good sources of iron.

## 2. Consume adequate fruit and vegetables:

- Consume vitamin C-rich fruit and vegetables to enhance absorption of iron from plant sources.

## 3. Reduce tea or coffee with meals:

- Try to avoid drinking tea or coffee within one to two hours after meals as these beverages can reduce iron absorption. Plain water or water added with lemon is a better choice as a beverage for meals.

## 4. Additional measures for those at higher risk of iron deficiency:

- People at risk of iron deficiency (including women of reproductive age with heavy menstrual periods, pregnant women, persons on restrictive diets, persons with gastrointestinal disorders and/or having previous gastrointestinal surgery, frequent blood donors, etc) may seek healthcare professionals' advice on management of their health conditions and individual needs for taking iron supplements. Please note: an iron supplement with too much iron can be harmful.

The Government appeals to all doctors, including family doctors, to promote a healthy balanced diet with iron-rich food to citizens. For more information on iron-rich food and heavy menstrual bleeding, please visit the [EatSmart Restaurant Star + Campaign Thematic website](#) of the DH, the "[All about periods](#)" and the "[Eat Smart to Prevent Iron Deficiency](#)" websites of the Family Health Service of the DH, as well as the "[Heavy Menstrual Bleeding and Iron Deficiency Anaemia](#)" website of the DH's Student Health Service.

Please visit [www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/37474.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/37474.html) for the Thematic Report on Iron Status and the Joint Recommendation on Iron Intake for the Public Particularly for Women of Reproductive Age.





# Volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade in May 2024

Further to the external merchandise trade statistics in value terms for May 2024 released earlier on, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (July 16) the volume and price statistics of external merchandise trade for that month.

In May 2024, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 9.8% and 5.9% respectively over May 2023.

Comparing the first five months of 2024 with the same period in 2023, the volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 7.8% and 3.2% respectively.

Comparing the three-month period ending May 2024 with the preceding three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the volume of total exports of goods increased by 0.9%, while the volume of imports of goods decreased by 1.9%.

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

Comparing May 2024 with May 2023, the prices of total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 4.5% and 3.4% respectively.

As regards price changes in the first five months of 2024 over the same period in 2023, the prices of total exports of goods and imports of goods increased by 4.3% and 4.1% respectively.

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 2023, the index increased by 1.0% in May 2024 and 0.2% in the first five months of 2024.

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

Comparing May 2024 with May 2023, increases were recorded for the total export volume to Vietnam (31.2%), the USA (21.3%) and the mainland of China (the Mainland) (15.8%). On the other hand, the total export volume to Taiwan (-2.6%) and India (-14.3%) decreased.

Over the same period of comparison, the total export prices to the Mainland (6.5%), the USA (5.9%), Taiwan (4.9%) and Vietnam (0.6%) increased. On the other hand, the total export prices to India decreased by 1.2%.

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

Comparing May 2024 with May 2023, increases were recorded for the import volume from Korea (48.6%), Singapore (25.5%) and the Mainland (5.8%). On the other hand, the import volume from Japan (-1.0%) and Taiwan (-7.2%) decreased.

Over the same period of comparison, the import prices from Singapore (6.7%), Korea (6.3%), the Mainland (3.6%) and Taiwan (2.9%) increased. On the other hand, the import prices from Japan decreased by 0.1%.

#### Further information

Details of the above statistics are published in the May 2024 issue of "Hong Kong Merchandise Trade Index Numbers". Users can browse and download the report at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020006&scode=230](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1020006&scode=230)).

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