

## Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at yesterday (December 19), a total of 4 143 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are hospitalised for treatment. Among the hospitalised confirmed patients, 558 were new patients, 2 823 required isolation, 521 required oxygen therapy and 63 required ventilator support. There were 18 newly reported critical patients and 21 newly reported serious patients. There were a total of 132 patients in critical condition and 136 in serious condition, of which 37 critical patients are receiving intensive care. Moreover, there were 501 patients who have recovered, including 407 patients who have been discharged. In addition, 33 patients who passed away in public hospitals were reported.

The overall occupancy of medical beds in acute hospitals is around 113 per cent.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

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## Exchange Fund Bills tender results

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

Exchange Fund Bills tender results:

Tender date	: December 20, 2022
Paper on offer	: EF Bills
Issue number	: Q2251
Issue date	: December 21, 2022
Maturity date	: March 22, 2023
Amount applied	: HK\$179,711 MN
Amount allotted	: HK\$55,806 MN
Average yield accepted	: 4.25 PCT
Highest yield accepted	: 4.29 PCT
Pro rata ratio*	: About 64 PCT
Average tender yield	: 4.38 PCT

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Tender date : December 20, 2022  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : H2280  
Issue date : December 21, 2022  
Maturity date : June 21, 2023  
Amount applied : HK\$44,000 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$9,000 MN  
Average yield accepted : 4.41 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 4.45 PCT  
Pro rata ratio\* : About 12 PCT  
Average tender yield : 4.93 PCT

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Tender date : December 20, 2022  
Paper on offer : EF Bills  
Issue number : Y2298  
Issue date : December 21, 2022  
Maturity date : December 20, 2023  
Amount applied : HK\$30,550 MN  
Amount allotted : HK\$2,100 MN  
Average yield accepted : 4.51 PCT  
Highest yield accepted : 4.57 PCT  
Pro rata ratio\* : About 50 PCT  
Average tender yield : 4.78 PCT

\*"Pro rata ratio" refers to the average percentage of allotment with respect to each tender participant's tendered amount at the "highest yield accepted" level.

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## **CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 2 710 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 11 402 cases by RATs as well as 870 imported cases**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (December 20) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, December 20, the CHP was investigating 14 112 additional locally

acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 2 710 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (1 355 confirmed cases, 1 016 asymptomatic cases and 339 cases with pending status) and 11 402 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 870 additional imported cases were reported, including 754 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (140 confirmed cases, 520 asymptomatic cases and 94 cases with pending status) and 116 cases that tested positive by RATs. Among the additional imported cases, 560 of them involved samples at the airport, 208 of them involved samples during Day 1 to Day 3, and the remaining 102 involved samples during Day 4 to Day 7.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 1 118 861 and 1 266 424 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations of the cases. Please refer to the Annex and the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for more information.

The CHP has been closely monitoring the situation of positive cases involving mutant strains by genetic analysis. As of 0.00am, December 20, the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) had identified 226 cases of sub-lineage XBB, six of XBD, eight of BA.2.75.2, seven of BA.4.6, 13 of BF.7 and 38 of BQ.1.1 among imported cases in Hong Kong, while 144 cases of sub-lineage XBB, 18 of XBD, one of BA.2.75.2, 10 of BF.7 and 169 of BQ.1.1 have also been detected among local cases.

Among the specimens received by the DH's PHLSB during December 11 to 17 for verification testing of local cases, 0 per cent and about 53.02 per cent of them (seven-day moving average) are related to the sub-lineages BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) of the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, December 20, a total of 11 030 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 10 929 and 97 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as four deaths reported from private hospitals. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 11 243 death cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (December 19), the total number of confirmed cases was 487 601, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 378 170, 31 and 249 595 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP said that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to

receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients, children and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.

The CHP appeals to the community to keep on maintaining personal hygiene and comply with social distancing measures in order to jointly contain the risk of virus transmission. The spokesman reminded members of the public that they can call various hotlines to make enquiries on COVID-19

([www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html#hotline](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html#hotline)).

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## Consumer Price Indices for November 2022

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (December 20) the Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures for November 2022. According to the Composite CPI, overall consumer prices rose by 1.8% in November 2022 over the same month a year earlier, the same as that in October 2022. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rate of increase in the Composite CPI (i.e. the underlying inflation rate) in November 2022 was 1.7%, also the same as that in October 2022.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the average monthly rate of increase in the Composite CPI for the 3-month period ending November 2022 was 0.2%, the same as that for the 3-month period ending October 2022. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the corresponding rates of increase were both 0.1%.

Analysed by sub-index, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 1.8%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively in November 2022, as compared to 2.0%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively in October 2022. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the year-on-year rates of increase in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 1.8%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively in November 2022, as compared to 1.7%, 1.6% and 1.8% respectively in October 2022.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, for the 3-month period ending November 2022, the average monthly rates of increase in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were all 0.2%. The corresponding rates of increase for the 3-month period ending October 2022 were 0.1%, 0.2% and 0.2% respectively. Netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures, the average monthly rates of increase in the seasonally adjusted CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) for the 3-month period ending November 2022 were all 0.1%, the same as those rates of increase for the 3-month period ending October 2022.

Amongst the various components of the Composite CPI, year-on-year increases in prices were recorded in November 2022 for electricity, gas and water (14.3%); clothing and footwear (5.2%); meals out and takeaway food (3.6%); basic food (3.3%); alcoholic drinks and tobacco (1.7%); transport (1.6%); miscellaneous services (1.6%) and miscellaneous goods (0.4%).

On the other hand, year-on-year decreases in the components of the Composite CPI were recorded in November 2022 for durable goods (-1.6%) and housing (-0.1%).

Taking the first 11 months of 2022 together, the Composite CPI rose by 1.9% over a year earlier. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.2%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.7%, 1.7%, 1.6% and 1.8% respectively.

For the 3 months ending November 2022, the Composite CPI rose by 2.6% over a year earlier, while the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) rose by 4.1%, 1.9% and 1.8% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.7%, 1.7%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively.

For the 12 months ending November 2022, the Composite CPI was on average 1.9% higher than that in the preceding 12-month period. The respective increases in the CPI(A), CPI(B) and CPI(C) were 2.3%, 1.7% and 1.8% respectively. The corresponding increases after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures were 1.7%, 1.7%, 1.6% and 1.8% respectively.

## Commentary

A Government spokesman said that the underlying consumer price inflation remained moderate in November. The year-on-year increase in food prices remained relatively fast, and prices of energy-related items as well as clothing and footwear continued to increase visibly. But price pressures on other major components remained broadly in check.

Import price pressures will likely remain notable amid high inflation in many major economies, but the largely mild domestic cost pressures should help keep overall inflation moderate in the near term. The Government will continue to monitor the situation.

## Further information

The CPIs and year-on-year rates of change at section level for November 2022 are shown in Table 1. The time series on the year-on-year rates of change in the CPIs before and after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures are shown in Table 2. For discerning the latest trend in consumer prices, it is also useful to look at the changes in the seasonally adjusted CPIs. The corresponding time series on the average monthly rates of change during the latest 3 months for the seasonally adjusted CPIs are shown in Table 3. The rates of change in the original and

the seasonally adjusted Composite CPI and the underlying inflation rate are presented graphically in Chart 1.

More detailed CPI data (including year-on-year comparison, month-to-month comparison, seasonally adjusted data series and the CPIs by the Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP)) are available in the monthly reports. Users can download the November 2022 issue of the "Monthly Report on the Consumer Price Index" ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1060001&scode=270](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1060001&scode=270)), the time series of CPIs at detailed level ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600001&scode=270](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600001&scode=270)), the time series of CPIs at COICOP division level ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600002&scode=270](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600002&scode=270)) and the time series of CPIs after netting out the effects of all Government's one-off relief measures ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600003&scode=270](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=D5600003&scode=270)) at the website of the C&SD.

For enquiries about the CPIs, please contact the Consumer Price Index Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7374 or email: [cpi@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:cpi@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## [Employment and vacancies statistics for September 2022](#)

According to the figures released today (December 20) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), total employment in the private sector surveyed decreased by 1.1% or 28 600 persons in September 2022 compared with a year earlier. The total number of vacancies was 74 840, representing an increase of 37% or 20 280 over the preceding year.

### Employment statistics

In September 2022, the selected industries as a whole employed 2 686 900 persons. The import and export trade engaged 379 900 persons, followed by professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services) engaging 297 600 persons, retail trade 245 200 persons, financing and insurance 232 500 persons, and food and beverage services 222 000 persons.

Movements in the employment in different surveyed industries varied when compared with a year earlier. Decreases in employment were mainly recorded in the industries of accommodation services (covering hotels, guesthouses, boarding houses and other establishments providing short term accommodation) (-9.0% or -3 300 persons); manufacturing (-5.1% or -4 000 persons); arts, entertainment, recreation and other services (-3.7% or -4 400 persons); and financing and insurance (-3.2% or -7 600 persons). On the other hand,

employment increased mainly in the industries of wholesale (6.1% or 3 000 persons), construction sites (manual workers only) (3.2% or 3 400 persons), and human health services (2.4% or 3 500 persons). Employment figures for selected major industries are shown in Table 1.

#### Vacancies statistics

Among the 74 840 private sector vacancies in September 2022, 9 380 were from the industry of human health services; 7 910 from education; 7 520 from transportation, storage, postal and courier services; 6 580 from financing and insurance; and 6 100 from professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services).

Vacancies increased in all the selected industries except the import and export trade industry in September 2022 over a year earlier. More distinct increases were observed in the industries of transportation, storage, postal and courier services (4 940 or 192%); human health services (4 540 or 94%); education (2 120 or 36%); food and beverage services (1 160 or 26%); arts, entertainment, recreation and other services (1 060 or 39%); and financing and insurance (1 050 or 19%). 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 (24 750 vacancies), professionals (14 890 vacancies), and associate professionals (14 100 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 June 2022, the seasonally adjusted total employment and total vacancies in the surveyed industries increased by 0.2% and 14.7% respectively in September 2022. 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, September 2022"  
([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050003&scode=452](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050003&scode=452))

"Quarterly Report of Employment and Vacancies at Construction Sites,  
September 2022"

([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050004&scode=452](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050004&scode=452))

Users can download these publications 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 of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 5076 or email: [employment@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:employment@censtatd.gov.hk)).