

External merchandise trade statistics for April 2021

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (May 27) the external merchandise trade statistics for April 2021. In April 2021, the values of Hong Kong's total exports and imports of goods both recorded year-on-year increases, at 24.4% and 25.2% respectively.

In April 2021, the value of total exports of goods increased by 24.4% over a year earlier to \$384.9 billion, after a year-on-year increase of 26.4% in March 2021. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 25.2% over a year earlier to \$416.7 billion in April 2021, after a year-on-year increase of 21.7% in March 2021. A visible trade deficit of \$31.8 billion, equivalent to 7.6% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in April 2021.

For the first four months of 2021 as a whole, the value of total exports of goods increased by 30.8% over the same period in 2020. Concurrently, the value of imports of goods increased by 25.5%. A visible trade deficit of \$99.1 billion, equivalent to 6.2% of the value of imports of goods, was recorded in the first four months of 2021.

Comparing the three-month period ending April 2021 with the preceding three months on a seasonally adjusted basis, the value of total exports of goods increased by 14.5%. Meanwhile, the value of imports of goods increased by 8.6%.

Analysis by country/territory

Comparing April 2021 with April 2020, total exports to Asia as a whole grew by 22.8%. In this region, increases were registered in the values of total exports to most major destinations, in particular India (+168.6%), the Philippines (+106.6%), Taiwan (+35.7%) and Vietnam (+33.1%). The value of total exports to the mainland of China (the Mainland) also increased by 20.5%. On the other hand, a decrease was recorded in the value of total exports to Japan (-14.9%).

Apart from destinations in Asia, increases were registered in the values of total exports to some major destinations in other regions, in particular the USA (+22.6%).

Over the same period of comparison, increases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular India (+288.0%), Taiwan (+44.2%), Korea (+36.9%), Vietnam (+27.5%), the Mainland (+21.1%) and Japan (+21.1%). However, a decrease was recorded in the value of imports from Malaysia (-11.2%).

For the first four months of 2021 as a whole, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports to most major destinations, in

particular the United Kingdom (+127.9%), Taiwan (+45.3%), India (+39.5%) and the Mainland (+34.2%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of imports from most major suppliers, in particular India (+72.0%), Taiwan (+41.6%), Vietnam (+40.8%) and Singapore (+30.7%). The value of imports from the Mainland also increased by 27.9%.

Analysis by major commodity

Comparing April 2021 with April 2020, increases were registered in the values of total exports of most principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$40.4 billion or 30.0%), "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$8.7 billion or 204.5%), "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$8.5 billion or 18.0%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$7.5 billion or 61.9%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "power generating machinery and equipment" (by \$1.3 billion or -16.7%).

Over the same period of comparison, increases were registered in the values of imports of most principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$39.9 billion or 27.7%), "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$15.0 billion or 34.1%), "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$8.7 billion or 134.2%) and "miscellaneous manufactured articles (mainly jewellery, goldsmiths' and silversmiths' wares)" (by \$7.4 billion or 43.4%). However, a decrease was registered in the value of imports of "power generating machinery and equipment" (by \$2.9 billion or -29.4%).

For the first four months of 2021 as a whole, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of total exports of most principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$190.5 billion or 39.4%), "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$49.0 billion or 26.4%), "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$25.3 billion or 19.6%) and "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$22.7 billion or 70.6%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of total exports of "power generating machinery and equipment" (by \$4.3 billion or -13.8%).

Over the same period of comparison, year-on-year increases were registered in the values of imports of most principal commodity divisions, in particular "electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances, and electrical parts thereof" (by \$172.3 billion or 32.8%), "telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment" (by \$53.9 billion or 30.2%), "non-metallic mineral manufactures" (by \$19.9 billion or 57.9%) and "office machines and automatic data processing machines" (by \$19.1 billion or 18.7%). However, a year-on-year decrease was registered in the value of imports of "power generating machinery and equipment" (by \$12.4 billion or

-30.9%).

Commentary

A Government spokesman said that merchandise exports grew strongly on a year-on-year basis in April, with exports to many major markets showing visible gains. For the first four months of 2021 as a whole, the value of total merchandise trade was way higher than the previous high recorded in the same period in 2018, reflecting vibrant trading activities amid a sharp rebound in external demand.

Looking ahead, the sustained revival of the global economy should continue to render support to Hong Kong's export performance in the near term. Yet, the evolving pandemic situation, along with other risk factors such as China-US relations and geopolitical tensions, still warrant attention. The Government will monitor the situation closely.

Further information

Table 1 presents the analysis of external merchandise trade statistics for April 2021. Table 2 presents the original monthly trade statistics from January 2018 to April 2021, and Table 3 gives the seasonally adjusted series for the same period.

The values of total exports of goods to 10 main destinations for April 2021 are shown in Table 4, whereas the values of imports of goods from 10 main suppliers are given in Table 5.

Tables 6 and 7 show the values of total exports and imports of 10 principal commodity divisions for April 2021.

All the merchandise trade statistics described here are measured at current prices and no account has been taken of changes in prices between the periods of comparison. A separate analysis of the volume and price movements of external merchandise trade for April 2021 will be released in mid-June 2021.

The April 2021 issue of "Hong Kong External Merchandise Trade" contains detailed analysis on the performance of Hong Kong's external merchandise trade in April 2021 and will be available in mid-June 2021. Users can download the publication at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/scode230.html).

Enquiries on merchandise trade statistics may be directed to the Trade Analysis Section (2) of the C&SD (Tel: 2582 5042).

[Government invites MTRCL to proceed with detailed planning and design of Hung Shui Kiu Station](#)

The Chief Executive in Council has given approval for the Government to invite the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) to proceed with the detailed planning and design of Hung Shui Kiu (HSK) Station.

HSK Station is one of the seven recommended railway schemes in the Railway Development Strategy 2014. It will be on the West Rail Line between Tin Shui Wai Station and Siu Hong Station, primarily to serve the transport need of the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area (HSK/HT NDA) in the future.

Upon full development, the HSK/HT NDA will accommodate a total population of 218 000, including 176 000 new population, and 150 000 new jobs. HSK Station will bring convenience to residents choosing to commute using railway and reduce travelling time.

A spokesperson of the Transport and Housing Bureau said, "The journey from the future town centre of the HSK/HT NDA to Tin Shui Wai Station now takes about 24 minutes during rush hours, while the journey to Siu Hong Station takes about 20 minutes. With HSK Station, the journey from town centre to these two stations by railway is expected to be about four minutes. It is estimated that HSK Station will save the public a cumulative total of about 314 million hours over 50 years of operation. The economic benefits, including the said time saving, of HSK Station are estimated to be about \$55 billion in 2018 prices."

The Government has invited the MTRCL to proceed with the detailed planning and design of HSK Station, and will further negotiate with the MTRCL on the financing arrangement of the project.

It is expected that construction of HSK Station may commence in 2024 for completion in 2030 to tie in with the development plan of the HSK/HT NDA.

[CE welcomes passage of Improving Electoral System \(Consolidated Amendments\) Bill 2021](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, welcomed the passage of the

Improving Electoral System (Consolidated Amendments) Bill 2021 by the Legislative Council (LegCo) today (May 27), hailing it as a landmark occasion for ensuring "patriots administering Hong Kong" in accordance with the principle of "One Country, Two Systems".

"With a view to plugging the loopholes in Hong Kong's electoral system that seriously jeopardised Hong Kong's constitutional order, endangered national security and obstructed governance as reflected in the political chaos in recent years, the National People's Congress (NPC) passed a Decision on March 11 to improve the electoral system of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and, with the NPC's authorisation, the NPC Standing Committee approved amendments to Annex I and Annex II to the Basic Law on March 30. I am pleased that we have expeditiously completed the task to amend the local electoral legislation within two months," Mrs Lam said.

"This would not have been possible without the guidance of the Central Government, the full co-operation of the LegCo, the support expressed by members of the community and the hard work of my colleagues, especially those in the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau and the Department of Justice. Together, we have ushered in a new era for Hong Kong's political system that will ensure the full and accurate implementation of 'One Country, Two Systems'.

"I am grateful to LegCo Members for intensively and tirelessly scrutinising the Bill since its introduction on April 14, and for their many constructive suggestions. We have taken on board many of those suggestions through Committee Stage Amendments, which have provided greater clarity to certain legal provisions and will enhance the electoral arrangements. The amended electoral legislation will provide us with a solid basis to conduct the coming elections in accordance with the amended Annex I and Annex II.

"In the past two years, Hong Kong has experienced the most severe political challenges since its return to the motherland. In my 2020 Policy Address, I made it clear that one of our urgent priorities is to put the HKSAR's constitutional order and political system back on the right track. The implementation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (National Security Law) since June 30 last year has effectively restored stability; the passage of the Bill today, which ensures 'patriots administering Hong Kong' in Hong Kong's political structure, marks another milestone. These two key initiatives fully demonstrate the Central Government's unwavering determination in upholding 'One Country, Two Systems', and they will go a long way towards ensuring the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong."

Mrs Lam said, in the legislative process, the HKSAR Government steadfastly dismissed misleading claims by some foreign politicians and media concerning the improvement to the electoral system. Those misplaced comments and their ulterior motives were very much what had been seen in their unjustified criticisms against the National Security Law. She pointed out that the improvement to the electoral system of the HKSAR is both timely and

necessary, as anti-China forces had created chaos in the LegCo, paralysed the operation of the HKSAR Government, and even colluded with external forces to undermine Hong Kong's safety and interests. No country or government could turn a blind eye to such dangers.

"It is natural and in line with international norm to require people vested with governing powers to be patriotic. Whoever meets the requirements and criteria of being a patriot, irrespective of their political stance, can participate in elections and be elected in accordance with the law to serve the HKSAR. The improved electoral system will help the LegCo restore its constitutional function as a platform for rational interaction between the executive authorities and the legislature, which will clearly enhance governance."

The Bill will be published in the Gazette and come into effect on May 31. The Government will then press ahead at full steam with the preparations for the three coming elections, namely the Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections to be held on September 19, 2021; the LegCo General Elections to be held on December 19, 2021; and the Chief Executive Election to be held on March 27, 2022. In particular, a special voter registration arrangement will be conducted from June 1 to July 5. The Chief Executive will appoint the Candidate Eligibility Review Committee, and make a report to the Central Government for the record in due course.

As the LegCo membership will be expanded from 70 to 90 in the next term, the Government will fully support the LegCo in the provision of accommodation and staffing resources. The LegCo has already accepted the scheme to expand the LegCo Complex and funding approval will be sought in due course to enable works to proceed as soon as possible.

The Government will work closely with the Electoral Affairs Commission and the Registration and Electoral Office to enhance public understanding of the improved electoral system, including voter registration, election rules and the improvement measures for voting. Above all, the Government is committed to ensuring elections are conducted in a fair, just and open manner.

Import of poultry meat and products from areas in Poland suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (May 27) that in view of a notification from the General Veterinary Inspectorate of Poland about outbreaks of highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza in Makowski District of Mazowieckie Region and Bialski District of Lubelskie Region in Poland, the CFS has instructed

the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the above-mentioned areas with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 2 920 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 12.06 million poultry eggs from Poland in the first three months of this year.

"The CFS has contacted the Polish authorities over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (May 27), four COVID-19 confirmed patients (case numbers: 11753, 11774, 11792 and 11817) were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 11 565 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 619 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 130 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 31 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 13 public hospitals and the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, among which one patient (case number: 6794) is in critical condition, one (case number: 9907) is in serious condition and the remaining 29 patients are in stable condition.

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.