

Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme to open for application on July 13

The Government today (June 15) announced that the Water Safety Plan Subsidy Scheme (WSPSS) will be open for application from July 13.

The Chief Executive announced in the 2019 Policy Address the Government's plan to launch the WSPSS to encourage property owners and management agents to implement the Water Safety Plan for Buildings (WSPB) at their premises in order to further safeguard drinking water safety. Private residential or composite (commercial and residential) buildings (including buildings held by Civil Servants' Co-operative Building Societies) with the average annual rateable value not exceeding the specified ceiling are eligible for the WSPSS. A total of \$440 million was allocated to the WSPSS for five years. It is envisaged to benefit about 5 000 eligible buildings.

The scope covered by the WSPSS includes water safety risk assessment on the internal plumbing system of the building and formulation of the WSPB, as well as the necessary maintenance works and measures for controlling the risks as identified by the water safety risk assessment. Furthermore, a subsidy will be provided for the expenses incurred in the first two cycles (2-year period for each cycle) of the implementation of WSPB.

For details of the WSPSS, the public may visit the [dedicated webpage](#) of the Water Supplies Department (WSD), or call the WSD (2824 5000, press 05 after language selection) for enquiries. The application form and application notes can be downloaded from the dedicated webpage or obtained from the WSD's Customer Enquiry Centres, respective Home Affairs Enquiry Centres, and the Urban Renewal Authority's Urban Renewal Resource Centre and Cheung Sha Wan Office.

The drinking water supplied by the WSD complies with the Hong Kong Drinking Water Standards, but the quality of drinking water could be affected by the internal plumbing systems of buildings. Property owners and management agents of buildings should properly manage and maintain the buildings' internal plumbing systems. Since 2017, the WSD has been promoting the implementation of the WSPB in accordance with the recommendation of the World Health Organization. By devising templates and guidelines, the WSD assists property owners and management agents of buildings to formulate and implement their respective WSPB at their premises, so as to enhance the management and maintenance of the buildings' internal plumbing systems to ensure drinking water safety in buildings.

Hong Kong's Gross National Income and external primary income flows for first quarter of 2020

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) released today (June 15) the preliminary statistics on Hong Kong's Gross National Income (GNI) and related figures for the first quarter of 2020.

Hong Kong's GNI, which denotes the total income earned by Hong Kong residents from engaging in various economic activities, decreased by 7.1% in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier to \$679.0 billion at current market prices. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP), estimated at \$662.9 billion at current market prices in the same quarter, recorded a 6.3% decrease over the same period. The value of GNI was larger than GDP by \$16.0 billion in the first quarter of 2020, which was equivalent to 2.4% of GDP in that quarter, mainly attributable to a net inflow of investment income.

After netting out the effect of price changes over the same period, Hong Kong's GNI decreased by 9.8% in real terms in the first quarter of 2020 from a year earlier. The corresponding GDP in the same quarter decreased by 8.9% in real terms.

Hong Kong's total inflow of primary income, which mainly comprises investment income, estimated at \$346.1 billion in the first quarter of 2020 and equivalent to 52.2% of GDP in that quarter, recorded a decrease of 6.3% from a year earlier. Meanwhile, total primary income outflow, estimated at \$330.0 billion in the first quarter of 2020 and equivalent to 49.8% of GDP in that quarter, decreased by 4.7% from a year earlier.

As for the major components of investment income inflow, direct investment income (DII) decreased by 3.3% from a year earlier, mainly due to the decrease in earnings of some prominent local enterprises from their direct investment abroad. Portfolio investment income (PII) recorded a significant decrease of 11.8% from a year earlier, mainly attributable to the decrease in dividend income received by resident investors from their holdings of non-resident equity securities.

Regarding the major components of investment income outflow, DII decreased by 2.9% from a year earlier, mainly due to the decrease in earnings of some prominent multinational enterprises from their direct investment in Hong Kong. PII decreased by 6.0%, mainly attributable to the decrease in dividend payout to non-resident investors from their holdings of resident equity securities.

Analysed by country/territory, the mainland of China continued to be the largest source of Hong Kong's total primary income inflow in the first quarter of 2020, accounting for 42.8%. This was followed by the British

Virgin Islands (BVI), with a share of 24.7%. Regarding total primary income outflow, the BVI and the mainland of China remained the most important destinations in the first quarter of 2020, accounting for 27.3% and 25.8% respectively.

Further information

GDP and GNI are closely related indicators for measuring economic performance. GDP is a measure of the total value of production of all resident producing units of an economy. GNI denotes the total income earned by residents of an economy from engaging in various economic activities, irrespective of whether the economic activities are carried out within the economic territory of the economy or outside.

Figures of GNI and primary income flows analysed by income component from the second quarter of 2018 to the first quarter of 2020 are presented in Table A, while selected major country/territory breakdowns of primary income inflow and outflow for the same quarters are presented in Tables B(1) and B(2) respectively.

Statistics on GDP and GNI from 2018 onwards and primary income flows from 2019 onwards are subject to revision when more data become available.

Enquiries about GNI and related statistics may be directed to the Balance of Payments Branch (2) of the C&SD at 3903 7054.

Quarterly Survey of Employment and Vacancies for June 2020 starts

The Census and Statistics Department announced today (June 15) that it has commenced a new round of the Quarterly Survey of Employment and Vacancies to collect data on employment and vacancies in major industry sections of the economy in respect of June 2020. This survey is conducted quarterly. The survey results are useful in serving as short-term economic indicators and providing information on the latest changes in the labour market.

This round of the survey covers about 30 000 establishments which are drawn from various industry sections including industrial sections (such as mining and quarrying; manufacturing; and electricity, gas and waste management) and the services sections (such as import/export, wholesale and retail trades; accommodation and food services; transportation, storage, postal and courier services; information and communications; financing and insurance; real estate; professional and business services; and social and personal services). Information on the number of persons engaged and vacancies, together with the characteristics of job vacancies, as at June 30,

2020, will be sought from each selected establishment.

Questionnaires are being sent by mail or by fax to selected establishments. In accordance with the Census and Statistics Ordinance, these establishments are required to complete and return the questionnaires to the department within the specified period. If individual establishments have any difficulties in completing the questionnaires, they may contact the department for assistance at 2234 3800.

Formation of Assessment Committee of the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organisations

The Government today (June 15) appointed six non-official members to the Assessment Committee of the Funding Scheme to Support Transitional Housing Projects by Non-government Organisations for a term of three years till June 2023.

The Government attaches great importance to relieving the pressure of families living in unpleasant conditions and those who have waited for public rental housing for a long time. The Chief Executive announced in the 2019 Policy Address the target of providing a total of 10 000 transitional housing units within the next three years. On January 14, the Government announced that it would further increase transitional housing by raising the three-year target to 15 000 units. As one of the proactive approaches in facilitating non-government organisations to take forward transitional housing projects and to increase transitional housing supply, the Legislative Council approved on March 6 the Government's proposal on setting up the \$5 billion Funding Scheme.

The Assessment Committee will vet applications and oversee the implementation of the Funding Scheme. The first meeting will tentatively be held in late June.

The membership of the Assessment Committee is as follows:

Chairman

Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Non-official members

Mr Ho Chi-shing (Representative of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers)
Mr Stephen Ho Kin-wai (Representative of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects)
Mr Raymond Kam Ka-fai (Representative of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors)
Professor Rebecca Chiu Lai-har
Ms Tennessy Hui Mei-sheung
Ms Joey Lee Hau-yee

Official members

Director of Housing or his/her representative
Director of Social Welfare or his/her representative

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, June 15, 2020 is 108.1 (up 0.2 against last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, June 13, 2020 was 107.9 (up 0.2 against last Friday's index).