

Thai International Trade in April 2022

Thai exports in April 2022 amounted to 23,521.4 million USD (782,146 million Baht) with the growth rate of 9.9 percent while Thai exports of real sector (excluding gold, oil-related products, and weaponry) rose by 6.9 percent. Thai exports continued to expand for the 14th consecutive month amid pressure from the war in Ukraine and economic sanctions on Russia which have caused the global supply chain disruption and rising inflation in many countries. Although China's economic slowdown from the zero-COVID strategy affected the overall global economy, the Global Manufacturing PMI still stayed above 50, especially the Manufacturing PMI in the United States, Europe, India, South Korea and ASEAN. Moreover, the demand for essential goods increased worldwide, hence Thai exports, especially agricultural and food products, continued to grow. In the first four months of 2022, Thai exports expanded by 13.7 percent and Thai exports of real sector (excluding gold, oil-related products, and weaponry) increased by 8.2 percent, showing that export was still a key factor supporting the growth of Thai economy.

Thai exports in April 2022 increased by 9.9 percent to 23,521.4 million USD while imports increased by 21.5 percent to 25,429.8 million USD, resulting in a **trade deficit** of 1,908.4 million USD. For the first four months of 2022, Thai exports expanded by 13.7 percent to 97,122.8 million USD while imports rose by 19.2 percent to 99,975.1 million USD, resulting in a **trade deficit** of 2,852.4 million USD.

Products that expanded well in April 2022 included: 1) Products whose export value increased in line with the global energy prices, such as refined oil, chemicals, plastic resins, rubber tires, and iron, steel and their products; 2) Agricultural and food products whose foreign demand increased as people stock up essential goods during war time, such as rice, cassava products, sugar, processed chicken, canned and processed seafood, canned and processed fruits, palm oil, soy bean oil, and condiments; 3) Electronics, electrical appliances and durable goods which were in greater demand from the economic and employment recovery, such as microwave ovens and heating appliances, faxes, telephones and parts, circuit boards, refrigeration compressors; and 4) Medical products such as medical devices, and pharmaceutical products.

Export Products

Thai exports of agricultural and agro-industrial products rose for the 17th consecutive month with the growth rate of 10.8 percent (YoY). Products that expanded favourably were cassava products (+49.5%), rice (+44.0%), animal or vegetable fats and oils (+126.7%), sugar (+87.9%), and pet food (+24.7%). On the contrary, exports of some products decreased, namely, fresh, chilled, frozen and dried fruits (-12.4%), rubber (-8.6%), beverages (-14.5%), fresh, chilled, frozen chicken (-12.7%), and milk and dairy products (-25.7%).

Industrial product exports increased for the 14th consecutive month with the growth rate of 8.3 percent (YoY). Products that expanded favourably included oil-related products (+19.9%), circuit boards (+15.3%), gems and jewelry (excluding gold) (+48.5%), iron, steel and their products (+25.6%), and aluminum products (+53.2%). Meanwhile, exports of some products declined, such as automobiles, equipment and parts (-10.9%), computers, equipment and parts (-30.7%), rubber products (-5.2%), air conditioners and parts (-8.1%), and semiconductors, transistors and diodes (-8.6%).

Export Markets

- **Exports to primary markets expanded by 7.6 percent.** Exports to the US, ASEAN (5), and CLMV expanded by 13.6%, 26.9%, and 9.3%, respectively, while exports to China, Japan, and EU (27) decreased by 7.2%, 0.3%, and 0.2%, respectively.
- **Exports to secondary markets expanded by 12.4 percent.** Exports to South Asia, Middle East, Africa, and Latin America grew by 33.9%, 25.4%, 14.9%, and 2.0%, respectively, while exports to Australia and Russia and CIS decreased by 4.5% and 65.2%.
- **Exports to other markets expanded by 172.2 percent** as exports to Switzerland increased by 392.2%.

Export Prospects and Promotion Strategies in 2022

Thai exports are expected to expand further in 2022 as agricultural and food product exports tend to increase because trading partners want to ensure food security. In addition, exports of industrial products are likely to expand well from intermediate goods such as iron, steel, and oil-related products (plastic resins, chemicals, refined oils, liquefied petroleum gas, natural gas). Lifestyle goods will also benefit from the relaxation of COVID-19 control measures. However, Thai exports in the first half of the year may still be affected by a shortage of raw materials used in semiconductor production. With respect to export destinations, some markets have a tendency to expand amid the Russia-Ukraine situation. For instance, the ASEAN market has the positive prospect as its social and economic activities have resumed after the gradual reopening and lifting of the restrictions. In addition, exports to the Middle East are likely to grow with the recovery of its energy sector which has a positive effect on the purchasing power. At the same time, the depreciation trend of Thai Baht is conducive to Thai exports. Nevertheless, rising inflation in major trading partners may be the factor which might dampen exports in the future, and hence has to be monitored.

Regarding export promotion plans, the Ministry of Commerce is proactive in advancing and facilitating the export of Thai entrepreneurs, including (1) **Unlocking the barriers to fruit product export to China** by encouraging transport by ships in order to reduce the congestion of land border checkpoints as well as expediting negotiations with Chinese authorities to facilitate land transportation; (2) **Reviving the Saudi Arabia market** by encouraging Thai entrepreneurs to join the SAUDI FOOD EXPO, organizing business matching, and launching promotional activities for Thai products such as rice, halal food, and fruits in Saudi Arabia's leading supermarkets; (3) **Promoting trade with environmental friendly production** in order to accommodate the changing trade context in the next few years, especially for trading with the EU; and (4) **Accelerating the FTA and mini-FTA negotiations** to enhance opportunities and competitiveness of Thai entrepreneurs and strengthening relations with trading partners at both bilateral and multilateral levels.



Thai International Trade Value in April 2022

Unit: Million USD

	April 2022	Jan – April 2022
Trade Value	48,951.2 +15.6%	197,097.9 +16.4%
Export value	23,521.4 +9.9%	97,122.8 +13.7%
Exports of real sector	+6.9%	+8.2%
Import value	25,429.8 +21.5%	99,975.1 +19.2%
Trade Balance	-1,908.4	-2,852.3

Source: Information and Communication Technology Center, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce

Top 10 Thai Export Products – April 2022

