

Thai International Trade in March 2023

Thai exports in March 2023 amounted to 27,654.4 million USD (942,939 million Baht), a 4.2 percent contraction, while Thai exports of real sector (excluding gold, oil-related products, and weaponry) increased by 0.01 percent. The exports contracted less than expected, with a value exceeding the 5-year average of 23,904.9 million USD, and reached its highest levels of the past 12 months, as evidenced by positive signals in major markets such as the United States, Japan, South Korea, and India, notably in relation to agricultural and agro-industrial products, as well as several key industrial products. In addition, Thailand's international trade balance in goods returned to a surplus for the first time in 12 months. However, the global economic outlook remains uncertain due to inflationary pressures that, although easing, still persist at a high level. The continued acceleration of interest rates in recent times has had a sustained impact on the banking sector, businesses, and consumer purchasing power, while the gradual decline in oil prices due to global market factors has resulted in a continued contraction in exports related to oil. For the first quarter of 2023, Thai exports decreased by 4.5 percent while Thai exports of real sector (excluding gold, oil-related products, and weaponry) decreased by 0.9 percent.

Thai exports in March 2023 decreased by 4.2 percent to 27,654.4 million USD while imports decreased by 7.1 percent to 24,935.5 million USD, resulting in a **trade surplus** of 2,718.8 million USD. For the first quarter of 2023, Thai exports decreased by 4.5 percent to 70,280.1 million USD while imports decreased by 0.5 percent to 73,324.3 million USD, resulting in a **trade deficit** of 3,044.2 million USD.

Export Products

Thai exports of agricultural and agro-industrial products expanded for two consecutive months with the rate of **4.2 percent** (YoY), from the expansion of both agricultural products and agro-industrial products which grew by **1.2 percent** and **7.1 percent**, respectively. Products that greatly expanded were sugar (+73.9%), cassava products (+5.7%), rice (+7.2%), fresh, chilled, frozen, and dried fruits (+94.5%), animal and vegetable fats and oils (+6.2%), drinks (13.2%), and fresh, chilled, and frozen chicken (+47.9%). On the contrary, exports of some products decreased, namely, rubber (-41.1%), pet food (-25.0%), and canned and processed fruits (-17.8%). For the first quarter of 2023, the exports of agricultural and agro-industrial products expanded by **1.9 percent**.

Industrial product exports declined for six consecutive months with the rate of **-5.9 percent** (YoY). Products that expanded were automobiles, equipment, and parts (+1.4%), air conditioner and components (+16.7%), semiconductors, transistors and diodes (+66.4%), fax machines, telephones, equipment, and parts (+27.4%), motorcycles and components (+5.0%), and electrical transformers and parts (+55.9%). Meanwhile, exports of some products declined, such as oil-related products (-14.2%), computers, equipment, and parts (-6.0%), Machinery and Mechanical Components (-13.7%), and gems and jewellery (excluding gold) (-3.5%). For the first quarter of 2023, the exports of industrial products decreased by **5.8 percent**.

Export Markets

- Exports to primary markets decreased by **0.8 percent**. Exports to China, CLMV, ASEAN (5), and EU (27) decreased by **3.9%**, **3.5%**, **2.1%**, and **7.3%** respectively, while exports to the US and Japan grew by **1.7%** and **10.2%**
- Exports to secondary markets decreased by **3.4 percent**. Exports to South Asia and Australia decreased by **6.9%** and **23.3%**, while exports to Russia and CIS, Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the UK grew by **228.0%**, **3.0%**, **2.1%**, **5.9%**, and **5.8%** respectively
- Exports to other markets decreased by **39.5 percent** as exports to Switzerland declined by **43.5%**.

Promotion Strategies and Export Prospects

The Ministry of Commerce has been proactive in advancing and facilitating Thai export. Important operations in the past month included: **(1) Implementation of the Fruit Management Measures for 2023** to cope with the expected export volume of 6.78 million tons of fruit to both domestic and international markets. The measures were divided into four aspects, namely, production plan, domestic marketing, seeking new markets, and negotiation with trade partners to reach the target for exports of fresh and processed fruits at 4.44 million tons which involves 22 proactive measures, such as monitoring product standards for export, providing subsidies to fruit exporters, negotiating and matching online and offline trade, and organizing international trade fairs; **(2) Facilitating the export of Thai goods to China** through an inspection trip to the Mohan Railway Checkpoint, a major border crossing point with China. In addition, The Ministry's delegation met with the customs authorities to discuss facilitating the export of Thai fruits to the Chinese market and prepare to accommodate Thai fruits during the upcoming fruit season in 2023; **(3) Launching the Young Exporter from Local to Global (YELG) project for 2023**, which emphasizes the importance of SMEs in developing and preparing entrepreneurs for international markets. The project provides essential training, knowledge, and skills for Thai entrepreneurs to succeed in the global market.

With respect to the export outlook, the Ministry of Commerce assesses that the overall global economy is still sluggish due to pressures from various factors, including inflation rates and interest rates in each region of the world which remain high. The financial crisis of financial institutions continues to undermine consumer and business confidence, as well as political conflicts affecting fluctuations in energy prices. However, in the first quarter of 2023, the Ministry of Commerce's efforts to restore relationships and open up new markets in the Central and Eastern European countries, and regional trade agreements with potential markets in China, South Korea, and India have helped to increase income from exports to Thailand. It is expected to support Thailand's exports to overcome the sluggishness of the global economy.



Trade Policy and Strategy Office
Ministry of Commerce
26 April 2023

Thai International Trade Value in March 2023

Unit: Million USD

	Mar 2023	Jan – Mar 2023
Trade Value	52,589.9 -5.6%	143,604.5 -2.5%
Export value	27,654.4 -4.2%	70,280.1 -4.5%
Exports of real sector	23,386.6 +0.01%	61,500.6 -0.9%
Import value	24,935.5 -7.1%	73,324.3 -0.5
Trade Balance	2,718.8	-3,044.2

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

Top 10 Thai Export Products – March 2023

