

Asia week ahead: Export recovery in full swing

The strong momentum for Asian exports continues and hopefully will be reflected in trade releases from China and Taiwan next week. It's not just favourable base effects at work here, the post-Covid-19 recovery of global demand is also supporting Asian exports, and electronics and automobiles are leading the way



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Trade data dominates

China and Taiwan are due to report trade figures for February, while the Philippines does the same for January.

In general, regional exports have been enjoying a strong run since the fourth quarter of 2020. The January figures revealed strong momentum continued in 2021. The sharp plunge in trading activity with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 explains some of the outsized year-on-year growth and our house forecasts of close to 40% YoY jump in China's exports and a 26% surge in Taiwan's in the first two months of this year underscores this.

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Asian exports*

However, it's not just a favourable base year effect that's at work here. The post-Covid recovery of global demand is also supporting Asian exports. By product type, electronics and automobile are leading the strong growth trend, more so amid the ongoing shortage of semiconductor chips for the automobile sector, which is pressuring these exports higher. Asia's electronics heavyweights - China, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore and Malaysia are the clear beneficiaries.

Meanwhile, manufacturing should follow exports growth upward, though industrial production data from Malaysia nor India is expected to do that. Tighter Covid-19 moment restrictions in Malaysia is the reason while in India, close to flat year-on-year infrastructure industry output in January pointed to the same for total IP growth.

India's inflation for February will be rather interesting next week, as it has come down in recent months to the central bank's policy target of 2-6%, but reports of rising food and fuel prices hint at higher inflation. India's central bank is the first Asian central bank to tighten via a 50 basis points CRR hike in February.

Asia Economic Calendar

Country	Time	Data/event	ING Survey	Prev.
Sunday 7 March				
China		- Feb Exports	39.0	18.1
		- Feb Imports	16.0	6.5
		- Feb Trade Balance	52.1	78.17
		- Feb FX Reserves (USD bn)	3211	3210.6
Monday 8 March				
Indonesia		- Feb Forex Reserves	-	138
Singapore	0900	Feb Foreign Reserves USD	-	370.1
South Korea	2300	Jan Current Account Bal NSA	-	11.51
Tuesday 9 March				
China		- Feb Aggregate finance (Yuan bn)	900	5174
		- Feb Financial institution loans (Yuan bn)	750	3580
		- Feb Money supply (M2) (%YoY)	9.4	9.4
Taiwan	0800	Feb Exports (YoY%)	15.3	36.8
Taiwan	0800	Feb Imports (YoY%)	18.1	29.9
Taiwan	0800	Feb Trade Balance (USD bn)	3.2	6.2
Taiwan	0800	Feb CPI (YoY%)	1.1	-0.2
		Feb WPI (YoY%)	-2.0	-2.9
Wednesday 10 March				
China	0130	Feb CPI (YoY%)	0.0	-0.3
		- Feb PPI (YoY%)	0.3	0.3
Thailand	0300	Feb Consumer Confidence Idx	-	47.8
Malaysia	0400	Jan Industrial Output (YoY%)	-	1.7
Friday 12 March				
Philippines	0100	Jan Exports (YoY%)	-3.7	-0.2
	0100	Jan Imports (YoY%)	-12.6	-9.1
	0100	Jan Trade Balance	-2543	-2180
India	1200	Feb CPI Inflation (YoY%)	5.4	4.06
	1200	Jan Industrial Output (YoY%)	0.0	1.0
Malaysia	0400	Jan Industrial Output (YoY%)	-9.5	1.7

Source: ING, Refinitiv, *GMT

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