

Mid-year population for 2018

According to the statistics released by the Census and Statistics Department today (August 14), the provisional estimate of the Hong Kong population was 7 448 900 at mid-2018, representing an increase of 57 200 or 0.8% from 7 391 700 at mid-2017 (Table 1).

Population increase comprises natural increase (i.e. births less deaths) and net movement of Hong Kong residents (i.e. inflow less outflow). The natural increase of the population from mid-2017 to mid-2018 amounted to 7 600, with 55 000 births and 47 300 deaths. Over the same period, there was a net movement of 49 600 persons, of which 41 000 were inflow of One-way Permit holders and 8 500 were net inflow of other Hong Kong residents.

The Hong Kong population is measured on the definition of Resident Population, which comprises Usual Residents and Mobile Residents. Among the total population at mid-2018, 7 228 100 (provisional) were Usual Residents and 220 800 (provisional) were Mobile Residents.

"Usual Residents" refer to two categories of people: (1) Hong Kong Permanent Residents who have stayed in Hong Kong for at least three months during the six months before or for at least three months during the six months after the reference time-point, regardless of whether they are in Hong Kong or not at the reference time-point; and (2) Hong Kong Non-permanent Residents who are in Hong Kong at the reference time-point.

For those Hong Kong Permanent Residents who are not "Usual Residents", they are classified as "Mobile Residents" if they have stayed in Hong Kong for at least one month but less than three months during the six months before or for at least one month but less than three months during the six months after the reference time-point, regardless of whether they are in Hong Kong or not at the reference time-point.

The revised figure for the year-end population for 2017 was 7 413 100. The number of Usual Residents was revised to 7 181 400 and the number of Mobile Residents to 231 700. The population growth rate from end-2016 to end-2017 was also revised to 0.5%.

The population figures for recent years are shown in Table 2.

Under the current practice, the latest population figure is released on a provisional basis in each round. The revised figure will be released six months later. In other words, while the provisional population figure for mid-2018 is released today, the corresponding revised figure will be released in February 2019.

Social enterprises to offer delightful flavours at Hong Kong Trade Development Council Food Expo 2018 (with photos)

Visitors to the Hong Kong Trade Development Council Food Expo 2018, set to open on August 16 (Thursday), will be able to enjoy the delightful flavours of products offered by social enterprises.

The seven social enterprises participating in this year's Food Expo aspire to provide delicious and healthy food to the public. Established with social missions of enhancing the employment capabilities and social integration of the socially disadvantaged, including ex-offenders, young people with autism and women, the social enterprises provide food that can offer customers tasty flavours. Brief information on the exhibiting social enterprises is set out in the Annex.

The social enterprise booths will be located at Booth A18 of Hall 1E at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. People patronising the seven social enterprise booths can receive a nice and useful souvenir while stocks last.

The Food Expo will be open from 10am to 10pm from August 16 to 19, and from 10am to 6pm on August 20. The admission fee is \$25. Admission is free for children aged 3 or below and senior citizens aged 65 or above.

A spokesman for the Home Affairs Department said, "The Food Expo provides a good occasion for social enterprises to showcase their quality products and services, while at the same time demonstrating social enterprises' diverse and remarkable operation models, as well as their missions in enhancing the self-confidence and employability of the socially disadvantaged for better integration into society."

Those who wish to support social enterprise food and restaurants further may search for "social enterprise" on the online platforms OpenRice and iPick to have easy access to information on about 80 social enterprise restaurants.

Apart from offering food, social enterprises also provide a wide variety of products and services. The Social Enterprise Directory (SE Directory) (socialenterprise.org.hk/en/sedb) published by the Social Enterprise Business Centre provides detailed information on about 600 social enterprises in Hong Kong. To facilitate easy searching of social enterprises, the SE Directory also features an online search engine, including a user-friendly geographical search function which allows users to search for social enterprises on a map.



Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, August 14, 2018 is 104.7 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Illegal worker jailed

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts today (August 14).

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case in March. Enforcement officers arrested a male Pakistani worker, aged 27,

conveying metal waste in Yuen Long. Upon identity checking, he was found to be a holder of a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment, and further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts today with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. After the trial, he was sentenced to 22 months' and two weeks' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

SLW visits Social Welfare Department (with photos)

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, visited the Social Welfare Department (SWD) Headquarters this morning (August 14) to take a closer look at its work. The Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Caspar Tsui, also joined the visit.

Accompanied by the Director of Social Welfare, Ms Carol Yip, Dr Law first met with the directorate staff to get an update on the SWD's services, including family and child welfare services, elderly services, social security and rehabilitation services. He said that colleagues' dedication and contribution were crucial to the smooth implementation of various new social welfare policy initiatives. He encouraged colleagues to uphold professionalism and continue to provide people-oriented services for the public.

Dr Law then visited the Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services Branch to learn more about the latest service provision to support different kinds of persons with disabilities. Among the services, the Pilot Scheme on On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services will be regularised from the new 2018/19 school year and the number of service places will be increased from about 3 000 to 7 000 in two years. He said he was glad to note that the enhancement of the SWD's Central Referral System for Rehabilitation Services (Disabled Pre-Schoolers) was near completion for more efficient service placement.

He also visited the Information Systems and Technology Branch and was briefed on how the SWD established the next-generation information technology infrastructure (ITI) to improve service efficiency. The new ITI not only supports 238 SWD offices over the territory, but also serves as the backbone information system supporting the disbursement of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance and various social security allowances to over 1.25 million recipients. It also provides an electronic platform to enhance the SWD's communications with welfare service providers. He reminded SWD colleagues to better utilise information technology and strengthen data analysis to provide modernised quality services.

In addition, Dr Law went to the Subventions Branch and was updated on its work on monitoring subvented services of non-governmental organisations under the social welfare subvention system. He was also briefed on the latest developments of projects under the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses to increase residential care places and day care places for the elderly and persons with disabilities as well as other measures, including redevelopment and conversion projects of welfare buildings led by the SWD, public and private housing development projects, redevelopment

projects of the Urban Renewal Authority and development projects of government buildings.

He pointed out that, in response to an ageing population, increasing demand for elderly services and severe shortage of rehabilitation service facilities, the Government must continue to maximise land use and expedite land identification for building residential care homes and hardware for community support, and improve long-term planning in parallel. He said he was pleased to know the redevelopment works at the site of the ex-Kai Nang Sheltered Workshop and Hostel in Kwun Tong and those of the former Siu Lam Hospital in Tuen Mun, both led and steered by the SWD, were under way as scheduled. Both projects will provide a total of 2 210 residential and day rehabilitation service places and are expected to complete by the first quarter of 2019 and the third quarter of 2020 respectively to run services in the third quarter of 2019 and the second quarter in 2021 respectively.

