

2020 edition of "Statistical Digest of the Services Sector" published

The 2020 edition of "Statistical Digest of the Services Sector" is published by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (May 26). The Digest is now available for download (in PDF format) free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp70.jsp?productCode=B1080007). A statistical summary of some major service industries is shown in the attached sheet.

The services sector is the heart of Hong Kong's economy. Accurate and detailed statistics play an important role in support of the Government's initiatives on promoting the services sector. The C&SD has accordingly compiled this annual publication.

The Digest brings together in one volume the more important statistical series on 14 major service industries/domains of Hong Kong. Different types of statistics pertaining to a specific service industry/domain are presented in a dedicated section of the Digest, supported by graphical presentations, for easy reference and interpretation. Most of the statistics presented cover the year 2009 and each of the years from 2015 to 2019, to facilitate comparison over the past decade. Where appropriate, quarterly statistics from the third quarter of 2018 to the fourth quarter of 2019 are also provided to show the latest short-term economic performance of selected service industries/domains within the services sector of Hong Kong.

Enquiries about this publication can be directed to the Logistics and Producer Prices Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7255 or email: services@censtatd.gov.hk).

Employment Support Scheme receives overwhelming response on first day of application

A Government spokesman said today (May 25) that the Employment Support Scheme (ESS) has received an overwhelming response from employers and self-employed persons on the first day of the three-week application period today.

"Up to 6pm today, we have received a total of over 41 000 applications from employers and about 27 000 applications from self-employed persons," the Government spokesman said.

Eligible employers and self-employed persons can submit online applications for the first tranche of wage subsidies through the ESS Online Portal at www.ess.gov.hk until 11.59pm on June 14 (Sunday).

The application page was launched successfully at 7am today and has been functioning smoothly throughout the day.

"We encourage employers whose businesses have been hit by the epidemic to make the best use of the ESS wage subsidies to retain their employees who will otherwise be made redundant, and to pay wages to staff who have been put on no-pay leave," the spokesman said.

To facilitate completion of the application and subsequent vetting processes, applicants are encouraged to, before filling out the online application form, read the terms and conditions of application and get the information and documents required in hand to ensure that the information submitted fully meets the application requirements.

All the applications received will be processed expeditiously with a view to disbursing wage subsidies to most successful applicants within three to four weeks.

Interested employers and self-employed persons are advised to visit the ESS Online Portal at www.ess.gov.hk to obtain detailed information on the ESS, including details of eligibility, application procedures, calculation of subsidies, terms and conditions, undertaking and more. They may also send email to enquiry@employmentsupport.hk or call the ESS Hotline (1836 122), for which the operation hours during the application period have been extended to Monday to Sunday from 9am to 6pm.

Applicants who need assistance in completing their online applications may call the above Hotline to make appointments with the three ESS Help Desks at the following locations:

- North Point Help Desk at Room 1701, A T Tower, 180 Electric Road, North Point;
- Kwun Tong Help Desk at Room 2507, Prosperity Center, 25 Chong Yip Street, Kwun Tong; and
- Tsuen Wan Help Desk at Room 1206, Chinachem Tsuen Wan Plaza, 455 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan.

A total of 16 153 enquiries have been received via the Hotline and email, and 345 persons have made visits to the three Help Desks on the first day of application.

Appeal for information on missing man in Chai Wan (with photo)

Police today (May 25) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Chai Wan.

Jim Hiu-ye, aged 37, went missing after he left his residence on Siu Sai Wan Road on May 19 morning. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.75 metres tall, 113 kilograms in weight and of fat build. He has a round face with yellow complexion and short black hair. He was last seen wearing a pair of glasses with black rim, a black short-sleeved shirt, black trousers, red sports shoes and carrying a black bag.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of Hong Kong Island on 2860 1040 or 9886 0034 or email to rmpu-hki@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.



Response to concerns over national security law

Different views have been expressed in recent days by legal sector on the draft Decision on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

(HKSAR) to safeguard national security (draft Decision), a spokesman for the Department of Justice today (May 25) issued the following statement to address the concerns:

The National People's Congress (NPC) is the highest organ of state power in the People's Republic of China. Under the Constitution, the NPC has the power to introduce laws and other legal instruments including making Decisions. The Decision is to be made pursuant to Article 31, 62(2), (14) and (16) of the Constitution and the relevant provisions of the Basic Law. Under Article 6 of the draft Decision, the NPC delegated the Standing Committee of the NPC (NPCSC) the duty to make the national security law applicable to the HKSAR.

National security is outside the limits of the autonomy of the HKSAR but a matter under the purview of the Central Authorities. In view of the current situation in Hong Kong and the difficulty faced by the HKSAR to complete on their own legislation for safeguarding national security in the foreseeable future, the Central Authorities have the right and duty to introduce a national law to improve at the national level the legal framework and enforcement mechanisms for national security for the HKSAR. Such national law is under the ambit of "defence and foreign affairs as well as other matters outside the limits of the autonomy of the Region" as set out in Article 18(3) of the Basic Law.

Under Article 23 of the Basic Law, HKSAR is authorised to legislate national security laws, however, it does not preclude the Central Authorities from legislating at a national level for national security.

As clearly stated in the draft Decision and the Explanatory Statement of the draft Decision, when making the Decision, the NPC will comply with the laws, the "one country, two systems" principle and also endeavour to safeguard the lawful rights and interests of people in Hong Kong.

Article 2 of the Basic Law clearly stipulates that the HKSAR enjoys executive, legislative and independent judicial power, including that of final adjudication. Article 85 also states that the HKSAR courts shall exercise judicial power independently, free from any interference. The independence of the Judiciary is respected and upheld in the HKSAR.

Given that the details of the national security law to be enacted by the NPCSC and introduced to Annex III of the Basic Law to be promulgated by the HKSAR are not yet made public at this stage, it is inappropriate for anyone to make unwarranted speculations on the content of the legislation.

The HKSAR Government would continue to provide explanation when necessary. It is hoped that members of the public would understand in an objective manner.

Rescheduling of LegCo Bills Committee meeting

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The meeting of the Legislative Council Bills Committee on Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2019 originally scheduled for 4.45pm tomorrow (May 26) has been rescheduled.