

# RGC Forum highlights Hong Kong's commitment to research endeavours

The Research Grants Council (RGC) Forum 2025 was held today (June 12) with an aim of fostering mutual understanding and exchanges between the RGC and local scholars. It was officiated by the Acting Secretary for Education, Dr Sze Chun-fai, and was well-received with participation from senior management of the eight University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities and more than 400 local and overseas scholars.

Speaking at the opening session of the Forum, Dr Sze said that the Government attaches great importance to investing in education and developing strategies and initiatives to establish a comprehensive research and development policy framework to ensure Hong Kong remains technologically and economically equipped for future challenges. Through strengthening support for researchers and cultivating a research-centric environment, Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness will be elevated by strong research competence, thereby upholding Hong Kong's status as a world-class city and an international hub for higher education.

"We firmly support funding research projects and activities across the eight UGC-funded universities, as well as the self-financing degree sector. With the backing of the RGC, numerous research initiatives are in progress, aiming at nurturing research capabilities, fostering a conducive research atmosphere and delving into uncharted realms of knowledge," he added.

Dr Sze highlighted that, to attract more exceptional students to study and conduct research in Hong Kong, the quota of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme will increase to 400 places in the 2025/26 academic year. As a metropolis with a unique blend of Eastern and Western cultures, Hong Kong attracts a rich variety of top scholars with vast international experience; some 70 per cent of them come from outside Hong Kong. The high degree of internationalism not only provides a solid foundation for Hong Kong's academic and research excellence, but also elevates Hong Kong's status as a global centre for education.

In his remarks, the Chairman of the RGC, Professor Timothy W Tong, highlighted the RGC's commitment to promoting high-quality and impactful research, as well as the Council's endeavours in working with the research community to advance knowledge discovery and bring benefits to Hong Kong society.

"The unwavering pursuit of research excellence by the Hong Kong academia underpins the city's position as a vibrant international hub for higher education. Notwithstanding the continuous increase in the number of research projects in recent years, it is heartening to note that the overall quality of the research proposals has remained meritorious and highly competitive, which demonstrates the steadfastness of our research community," said

Professor Tong.

The Forum featured engaging presentations by the RGC Panel Chairs and their representatives, who shared observations on research funding applications in the latest round of the exercise, pointers for crafting competitive research proposals as well as the latest trends and developments in their respective research fields. The Forum concluded with an interactive question and answer session, which further enriched the discussions.

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## [Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency leads industry delegation to participate in Annecy International Animation Film Festival and Market 2025 in France \(with photos\)](#)

The Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) of the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau led an industry delegation to participate in the Annecy International Animation Film Festival and Market 2025 in France and joined forces with the Hong Kong Digital Entertainment Association (HKDEA) to set up the Hong Kong Pavilion themed "AI-assisted Animation Production" and organised a series of activities, with the aim of increasing overseas exposure of Hong Kong original animation works and creative teams, enhancing their reach in market development, and enabling them to explore collaboration opportunities.

As the international animation film festival with a rich history and the largest scale of its kind, the Annecy International Animation Film Festival commands high respect from the global animation industry. Its film market, the Annecy International Animation Film Market, is a prominent annual business-oriented exhibition that takes place from June 10 to 13 (Annecy time). In the opening ceremony of the Hong Kong Pavilion held on June 10, the Assistant Commissioner for Cultural and Creative Industries, Mrs Lowell Cho, expressed hope that through a series of activities during this promotion, the CCIDA and the industry join hands to promote Hong Kong animation works to the animation industry professionals and audiences from all over the world, hence enabling the original animation by Hong Kong to shine bright on the international stage and to strive for opportunities to strengthen ties with global industry counterparts. She also warmly congratulated the film "Another World", funded by the Film Development Fund (FDF) and produced by an animation creative team from Hong Kong, for being selected for the non-

competitive section of the Annecy International Animation Film Festival 2025 and that it will be screened at the "Midnight Specials" session on the evening of June 13 (Annecy time). "Another World" brings international recognition, which serves as a significant booster for the Hong Kong animation industry, showcasing the global appreciation for Hong Kong animation.

The Hong Kong animation film "Another World" is directed by Tommy Ng, and produced and scripted by Polly Yeung. The production team attended the Annecy International Animation Film Festival in person to engage with audiences and industry counterparts. In 2019, the team participated in the sixth Animation Support Program, a project funded by the CCIDA through the CreateSmart Initiative (CSI), and was granted a subsidy to initiate the production of the short version of "Another World", which won the Gold Award under the Small Animation Enterprises (Advanced Production) category. Subsequently, the team, with its proposal to develop "Another World" into a feature-length animation film, successfully applied for the Film Production Financing Scheme under the FDF and was granted the subsidy to bring the debut animation feature film directed by Ng into fruition, paving the way for the film's global premiere at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival. Yeung was also invited by the Hong Kong Film Development Council to participate in the 81st Venice International Film Festival in Italy and the 78th Cannes Film Festival in France to seek production investment, attend various producer matching activities, and exchange ideas with filmmakers from all over the world, increasing publicity for "Another World" and opening doors for overseas distribution of the film project.

During the exhibition period, a series of networking and exchange activities were launched at the Hong Kong Pavilion, and six short original animated works created with AI assistance were also showcased, demonstrating to the international market the creativity and unique charisma of Hong Kong productions. The Hong Kong Partner Pitches was held on June 11, where the six Hong Kong companies selected under the 2nd Future Animation – AI-assisted Animation Production Support Scheme organised by the HKDEA and sponsored by the CCIDA, namely 924 Studio Limited, Astro Heart Limited, Free-D Workshop, ManyMany Creations Ltd, Morph Workshop and Stepco, conducted exchanges with elite animation companies from all over the world. They took the opportunity to broaden their horizons, enhance their promotion to overseas practitioners and investors, and pursue more collaboration possibilities.

The Animation Support Program, a government-funded project under the CSI, is now in its 12th edition. It focuses on supporting local start-ups and small animation companies and cultivating local animation talent. Over the years, it has assisted more than 250 local animation companies and enabled them to produce more than 270 original animation works. As a scheme under the FDF with the longest history and well-received by the film industry, the Film Production Financing Scheme aims to provide government financing for film productions with small-to-medium production budgets. As of the end of May 2025, approved films have received more than 150 local and international film awards.



## Thematic Household Survey Report No. 82 published

The Thematic Household Survey Report No. 82 is published by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) today (June 12).

This publication contains key findings on information technology usage and penetration based on the Thematic Household Survey conducted from April to August 2024.

The survey results showed that the majority of households (96.7%) had Internet access at home in 2024. Among these households, smartphone was the most popular type of device used for Internet connection at home (99.9%), followed by personal computer (74.4%).

Usage of the Internet remained popular. The rate of persons aged 10 and over having used the Internet during the 12 months before enumeration was 95.8% in 2024, while the corresponding rate in 2023 was 96.0%. In addition, the popularity of smartphones remained at a high level. The smartphone penetration rate was 96.3% in 2024, comparable with the corresponding rate in 2023.

The usage of mobile payments was also common in Hong Kong. In 2024, 65.6% of persons aged 15 and over had used mobile payments during the 12 months before enumeration, while the corresponding rate in 2023 was 64.9%.

#### Other information

The survey successfully enumerated target respondents in some 10 100 households in accordance with a scientific sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong.

Detailed findings of the survey, together with the population coverage and concepts/definitions of key terms, are presented in the publication. Users can browse and download the publication at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1130201&scode=453](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1130201&scode=453)).

Enquiries about the survey findings can be directed to the Social Surveys Section (1) of the C&SD (Tel: 2887 5103 or email: [thematic@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:thematic@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## **Provisional statistics on index of industrial production and producer price index for manufacturing and waste management sectors for first quarter of 2025**

According to the provisional results of a survey released today (June 12) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries as a whole increased by 0.7% in the first quarter of 2025 compared with a year earlier, following a year-on-year increase of 1.0% in the fourth quarter of 2024. The corresponding producer price index increased by 4.8% in the first quarter of 2025 compared with a year earlier, following a year-on-year increase of 4.1% in the fourth quarter of 2024.

The index of industrial production for sewerage, waste management and remediation activities increased by 1.8% in the first quarter of 2025 compared with a year earlier, as against a year-on-year decrease of 0.7% in the fourth quarter of 2024. The corresponding producer price index increased by 1.3% in the first quarter of 2025 compared with a year earlier, following a year-on-year increase of 3.4% in the fourth quarter of 2024.



Indices of industrial production reflect changes in the volume of local industrial output after discounting the effect of price changes. The price changes are measured by the producer price indices compiled from data on producer prices of selected industrial goods/services collected in the same survey.

Comparing the industrial production in respect of major manufacturing industries in the first quarter of 2025 with that a year earlier, increases in output volume were recorded mainly in the paper products, printing and reproduction of recorded media industry (+2.9%), the metal, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment industry (+2.4%), and the textiles and wearing apparel industry (+0.8%). On the other hand, a decrease in output volume was recorded in the food, beverages and tobacco industry (-0.3%).

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the index of industrial production for manufacturing industries as a whole decreased by 0.5% in the first quarter of 2025 compared with the fourth quarter of 2024.

Producer price indices reflect changes in the prices of local output. They measure changes in the actual prices (net of any discounts or rebates allowed to buyers, plus any surcharges) received by producers for their output. Transportation and other incidental charges are not included.

Comparing the first quarter of 2025 with a year earlier, increases in producer prices were recorded mainly in the metal, computer, electronic and optical products, machinery and equipment industry (+9.7%), the paper products, printing and reproduction of recorded media industry (+3.5%), and the food, beverages and tobacco industry (+0.9%). On the other hand, a decrease in producer price was recorded in the textiles and wearing apparel industry (-0.5%).

Table 1 shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the indices of industrial production for manufacturing and waste management sectors by selected industry grouping. Table 2 shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the producer price indices for manufacturing and waste management sectors by selected industry grouping.

The revised figures on indices of industrial production and producer price indices for manufacturing and waste management sectors for the first quarter of 2025 will be released at the website of the C&SD ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/page\\_8000.html](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/page_8000.html)) and relevant publications of the Department starting from July 18, 2025.

Users can browse and download the reports "Quarterly Index of Industrial Production for Manufacturing and Waste Management Sectors, 1st Quarter 2025" ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1070002&scode=310](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1070002&scode=310)) and "Quarterly Producer Price Index for Manufacturing and Waste Management Sectors, 1st Quarter 2025" ([www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1070003&scode=280](http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1070003&scode=280)) at the website of the C&SD.

For enquiries about indices of industrial production and producer price indices for manufacturing and waste management sectors, please contact the Industrial Production Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3903 7247; email: [ind-production@censtatd.gov.hk](mailto:ind-production@censtatd.gov.hk)).

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## **HA approves implementation arrangements for Sale of Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme Flats 2024**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) Subsidised Housing Committee today (June 12) approved the average selling prices and sales arrangements for the sale of Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (GSH) Flats 2024 (GSH 2024).

"The HA is going to launch GSH 2024 in the third quarter of 2025 offering a total of 2 576 flats from the new GSH development, Wang Chi Court in Kowloon Bay (See Annex 1). With an aim to increase applicants' chances of success, GSH 2024 will implement the enhancement measure of allocating an extra ballot number to applicants who had failed to purchase a flat in GSH 2022 and GSH 2023," a spokesman for the HA said.

"Affected tenants of the HA's announced Public Rental Housing (PRH) clearance projects (i.e. Pik Hoi House, Kam Pik House and Tan Fung House of Choi Hung Estate; and Wah On House and Wah Lok House of Wah Fu Estate) who would like to purchase subsidised sale flats (SSF) in lieu of PRH will be accorded priority in flat selection over other applicants under GSH 2024. On the other hand, a quota of 1 050 GSH flats will be set for families applying under the Priority Scheme for Families with Elderly Members and Families with Newborns Flat Selection Priority Scheme (Priority Newborns Scheme) for GSH 2024. Family applicants with babies born on or after October 25, 2023, will be eligible for the Priority Newborns Scheme if their children are aged 3 or below on the closing day of the application of GSH 2024. Separately, a quota of 250 GSH flats will be set for one-person applicants," the spokesman said (see Annex 2).

Details of the implementation arrangements for GSH 2024 are as follows:

Flats for sale

The HA will offer under GSH 2024 a total of 2 576 new GSH flats from Wang Chi Court, rescinded or unsold flats which were first put up for sale under GSH 2020/21 and GSH 2022, and a new batch of recovered Tenants Purchase Scheme flats.

The new GSH development Wang Chi Court provides flats with saleable areas ranging from about 17.9 square metres to about 43.3 sq m (about 193 square feet to about 466 sq ft). Large flats, with saleable areas ranging from about 41.8 sq m to about 43.3 sq m (about 450 sq ft to about 466 sq ft), which are more popular among applicants, will account for more than a quarter of the total number of flats (See Annex 1).

## Pricing

Under the prevailing pricing mechanism, GSH flats will be sold at a discount of 10 per cent more than that of the preceding Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) sale exercise. Since the discount rate for Sale of HOS 2024 Flats was set at 30 per cent, the average selling prices of all GSH flats for sale under GSH 2024 would be set at a 40 per cent discount from the assessed market values (i.e. for sale at 60 per cent of the assessed market values). The selling prices of the flats in Wang Chi Court range from about \$1.15 million to about \$3.49 million, with an average selling price of about \$2.47 million (See Annex 1).

"Based on the average flat selling price at about \$2.47 million (saleable area of about 34 sq m or about 366 sq ft), the mortgage payment is about \$10,500 per month, assuming that he/she takes out a mortgage at 95 per cent of the flat price for a term of 30 years at an interest rate of 3.5 per cent. For one to two-person flats, the average selling price is about \$1.28 million and the mortgage payment is about \$5,500 per month," the spokesman said.

## Restrictions on ownership of domestic property

Both White Form and Green Form applicants of SSF are subject to restrictions on ownership of domestic property in Hong Kong during the period from 24 months preceding the closing date for submitting the application and up to the time of signing the Agreement for Sale and Purchase for a flat under the current sale exercise. Applicants or any family members listed in the application who have entered into agreement(s) (including preliminary agreement) to purchase any domestic property in Hong Kong during the period from 24 months preceding the closing date for submitting the application, but the agreement(s) has/have subsequently been cancelled or rescinded, are still eligible to apply for SSF.