

為可持續發展 Enhancing 提升人口潛能 Population Potential for a Sustainable Future



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Enhancing 提升人口潛能
Population Potential for
a Sustainable Future



可持續發展
Sustainable Development

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前言

香港的貿易、金融、商業及通訊活動朝氣蓬勃，舉世聞名。為了保持這份朝氣和活力，我們必須確保香港的發展是可持續的。我們現時享受的生活水平，有賴前人的努力。作為守業者，我們也得為子孫後代設想一下，我們留給他們的將會是一個怎樣的城市。

我們在追求發展和進步的同時，會遇到各種挑戰。在這方面，可持續發展的概念逐漸為世界各地認同和採納，以應付這些挑戰。可持續發展概念所確立的原則，是在社會、經濟及環境這些不同價值之間，尋求共通之處。這些原則有助我們在為將來籌謀時，集中處理重要事項，並懂得如何在各種需求之間取得平衡。

可持續發展委員會為香港的可持續發展工作奠定基礎。委員會的社會參與過程徵集了持份者的不同意見，而這些意見將影響在可持續發展方面的政策決定。首個持份者參與過程在2004及2005年舉行。當時，持份者分別就固體廢物管理、可再生能源及都市生活空間三個試點範疇進行討論。社會參與過程不但有助我們制定長遠的可持續發展策略，同時也提供機會讓社會大眾積極參與。在過程中，我們讓社會大眾意識到，要面對日後的挑戰，大家必須改變目前的生活方式；而要為香港找出最佳的解決方案，全體市民必須攜手合作、羣策羣力。

持份者參與過程是一個極難得的機會，讓全港市民一起探討未來。正如2004年發表的誠邀回應文件一樣，本文件提供了重要的資料，作為日後討論的基礎。本文件並非代表政府或委員會的立場，而是反映一群持份者所關注的事項，旨在邀請廣大市民作更深入的討論。

我們懇切期望，市民大眾會就本文件所提出的廣泛議題提出意見，因為有關結果將影響我們日後的生活以至生活質素。我們面前有不少挑戰，而在這段崎嶇的道路上，我們所作出的抉擇將影響深遠，不但關係到現今一代，也關係到子孫後代的福祉。在本誠邀回應文件發表後，我們將舉辦一系列的活動，現誠邀你積極參與。我們未來的路向，有賴社會各界的共識和領導。



行政摘要

香港的人口趨勢和海外經驗

過去數十年，香港人口穩定增長，主要是經濟發展迅速使然。在未來，香港人口將有所轉變，成因包括 —

- 生育率下降
- 人口高齡化
- 平均壽命延長
- 人口流動
- 受供養人口比率改變

假如缺乏高瞻遠矚和貫徹一致的人口政策，香港可能面對下述情況 —

- 勞動人口萎縮，其組合和結構或未能配合不斷轉變的經濟環境。
- 長者人口比例上升，而供養他們的具生產力人口則減少。
- 勞動人口具生產力的年期可能會延長，但假如我們不設法加以善用，則可能會損失寶貴的人力資源。
- 內地和海外的合適求職者和本地人才都可能會決定接受其他地方提供的就業機會。
- 勞動人口的整體身心健康可能會因為工作壓力而受損，而整體生活質素則會下降。
- 香港目前擁有的活力和朝氣可能會減低。

世界上其他主要城市也正受到類似問題所困擾。有些已開始推行政策和措施，以應付有關問題。這些政策和措施包括 —

- 提供財政誘因、方便照顧家庭的工作環境，以及在照顧幼兒方面的協助等，從而鼓勵生育，並吸引女性在生育後加入（或重新加入）工作行列。
- 逐步提高退休年齡，從而紓緩退休基金所承受的壓力、鼓勵長者繼續參與工作並保持生產力，以及好好利用今日更長壽、更健康的長者所擁有的精力和經驗。
- 提供具競爭力和靈活的誘因，吸引和挽留人才。
- 採取能鼓勵國內和國際人才自由流動的入境政策。
- 協助勞動人口在工作與家庭責任，以至社交和個人目標之間取得平衡。

香港可持續發展人口政策有些甚麼方案？

我們可以從三個可持續發展的角度考慮未來的方案，這三個角度包括經濟發展、社會和諧以及自然環境保護。以下是一些可行的方案，供進一步討論。



(1) 經濟角度

- 提供適當的教育和培訓，並提倡延長人口的工作年期或逐步提高退休年齡，以提升現有和未來勞動人口的工作能力。
- 提供方便為人母親者繼續參與或重投工作行列的環境，和鼓勵長者在自願情況下繼續工作，以開拓潛在的人力資源。
- 提供具競爭力的發展機會，和具吸引力的社會和生活環境，以吸引內地和海外的人才，並挽留本地人才。

(2) 社會角度

- 支援就業女性，以便她們在事業發展、家庭責任、生育期望和個人目標之間取得更佳平衡。
- 回應長者、殘疾人士和長期病患的社會需要，並尋找有創意的方法，以確保他們的精力和經驗得以妥善運用，造福社會。
- 鼓勵更健康的生活模式，並提倡在工作、家庭和康樂之間取得更佳平衡，從而改善本港人口的生活質素。
- 推廣靈活人生的概念，鼓勵按個人意願選擇人生模式。
- 推廣多元文化和種族共融的價值觀和好處，並回應移民和少數族裔人士的社會和家庭需要，令他們感到受歡迎和獲接納。

(3) 環境角度

- 節約並保育天然資源，促進長遠可持續發展，讓所有人共享美好將來。
- 透過更佳的城市規劃和樓宇設計、便利的服務，以及各種康樂文化設施，締造一個對於外來和本地人士均具吸引力的生活環境。
- 提供能照顧所有人士（包括長者、殘疾人士和健全人士）行動需要的設施、建築物和生活空間，讓所有人都能享用。

邀請社會人士回應

本文件第三章載有一系列問題，引導社會大眾討論和提出意見。問題分成以下四類 —

- 生活質素
- 家庭與社會需要
- 人口高齡化和退休
- 培育、吸引和挽留人才

引言

人口政策涵蓋事項廣泛，每一項都與我們息息相關，而當中所牽涉的並不單純是數字和統計資料。人口政策對我們的社會結構和組合有明顯和長遠的影響，因而影響到我們的經濟競爭力、社會和文化活力，以及市民的生活質素。因此，生育率不斷下降和人口高齡化現象自然引起社會普遍關注。然而，我們有能力轉危為機，並藉此機會加以反思，提出具創意的解決方案。

關於人口政策，各位可隨意就如何鼓勵生育、輸入專才，或加強退休保障提出意見。同時，我們也希望大家更進一步，考慮人口政策將如何影響我們的經濟、社會和環境。為達致可持續發展，我們時刻緊記，必須作出經深思熟慮的（有時也是艱難的）選擇，從而在經濟發展、社會和諧，以及自然環境保護之間取得平衡。以這個理念為基礎，我們嘗試就目前情況和對應上述三個範疇的可行方案作出分析，希望藉此引導社會上的持份者進行討論和探討未來路向。這些問題沒有簡單的答案或解決方法。有些時候，這三個範疇的方案甚至會互相衝突。我們現在面對的問題是如何取得平衡，以及市民認為在目前以至將來，甚麼是對香港而言的正確選擇。我們面對的所有事項都很複雜，而且涉及多個層面。我們需要有你參與和提供寶貴意見，才可找到答案。

本文件會就以下各方面提供一些基本資料 —

- 香港的人口趨勢和相關的海外情況；
- 人口趨勢目前如何在經濟、社會和環境方面影響香港；以及
- 有哪些方案可考慮用以處理目前情況和預計的人口趨勢。

我們也列出了一些問題，或有助持份者思考有關的重要事項並發表意見。這些問題載於本文件第三章。

我們殷切期待你的意見。你就本文件所述事項提出的意見和作出的選擇，將影響香港的未來路向。

人口政策支援小組召集人
黃紹倫

第一章

香港人口趨勢和海外經驗

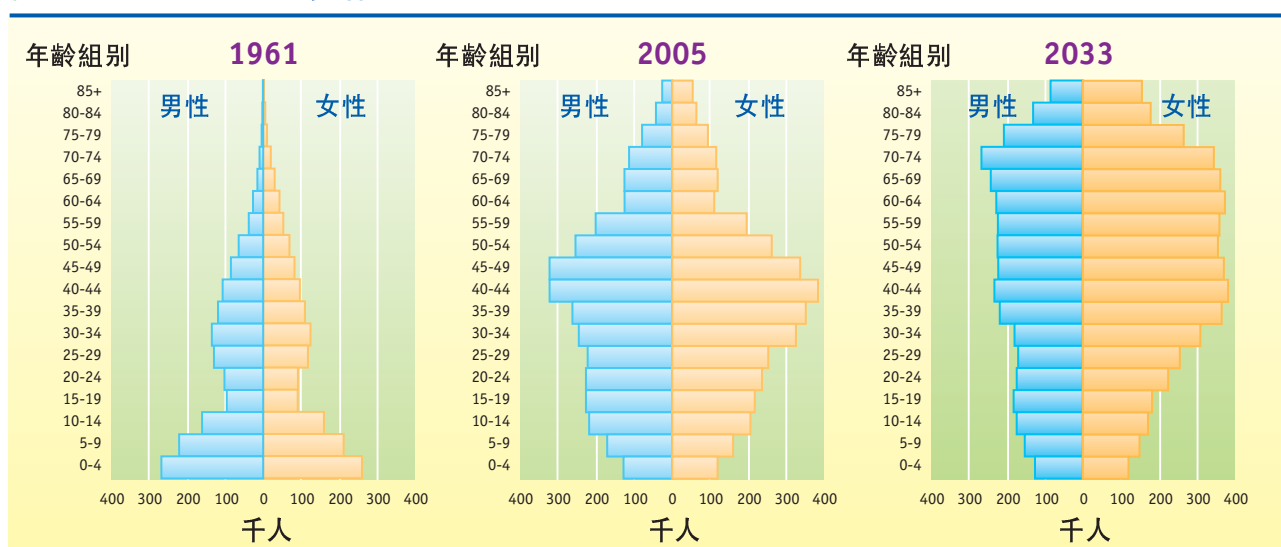


過去數十年，香港經歷了急劇的經濟發展。本港工業從低增值和勞工密集的生產模式轉向高增值模式，並以服務業為主。在這段期間，香港的人口也有明顯增長，但增長趨勢現已放緩。在2005年年中，本港人口約為694萬，預計未來每年平均增長率為0.7%，至2033年達838萬¹，遠較八十及九十年代的1%至2%為低。另值得注意的是，隨着人口增長放緩，人口將持續高齡化；導致這種情況的原因有很多，其中包括生育率低和平均壽命延長。

表1.1 香港在1961年至2005年的人口，以及至2033年的推算人口²

香港在1961年至2005年（年中）的人口					
年份	人口	長者 (65+)	長者 人口百分比	少年兒童 (0-14)	少年兒童 人口百分比
1961	3 168 100	100 100	3.2%	1 283 900	40.5%
1971	4 045 300	182 300	4.5%	1 452 100	35.9%
1981	5 183 400	344 300	6.6%	1 277 300	24.6%
1991	5 752 000	502 400	8.7%	1 198 700	20.8%
2001	6 724 900	753 600	11.2%	1 104 100	16.4%
2005	6 935 900	836 400	12.1%	1 005 400	14.5%
至2033年的推算人口					
2013	7 386 900	978 000	13.2%	899 600	12.2%
2023	7 970 200	1 548 500	19.4%	922 600	11.6%
2033	8 384 100	2 243 100	26.8%	895 300	10.7%

圖1.1 香港人口金字塔³



¹ 《香港人口推算2004-2033》，香港特區政府統計處，2004年6月。

² 香港特區政府統計處

³ 香港特區政府統計處

(a) 生育

2. 我們的人口預計會出現性別失衡的現象。香港整體的性別比率預計會由2005年的979名男性(相對每1000名女性計)變為2033年的749名男性⁴。再者，選擇遲婚或不婚的人口比例持續上升。女性首次結婚年齡的中位數由1980年的24歲升至2005年的28歲，而同時期男性的首次結婚年齡則由27升至31⁵。這意味著延遲生育，婚生育率下降，以及全港總和生育率⁶大幅下降。其中總和生育率由七十年代每名婦女生育3名子女降至2005年的少於1名(即0.966名)，遠低於人口更替水平(即每名婦女生育2.1名子女)。這個下降趨勢預料近期內不會逆轉，因此人口高齡化的問題將較預期更為嚴峻⁷。

表1.2 香港與其他經濟地區在1983年至2005年的總和生育率的比較，以及至2033年的推算數字⁸

經濟地區	實際						推算		
	1983	1993	1999	2001	2003	2005	2013	2023	2033
(每1 000名女性所生育的存活嬰兒數目)									
香港	1 722	1 342	982	932	901	966	993	993	993
日本	1 800	1 460	1 340	1 330	1 290	—	1 340	1 380	1 390
美國 ⁽¹⁾	1 800	2 020	2 010	2 030	2 040	—	2 140	2 200	2 210
英國	—	1 760	1 690	1 630	1 710	—	1 730	1 740	1 740

註：(1) 推算數字摘自1999至2100年人口推算數列(在三個假設情況中)的中間生育率估值。

3. 此外，內地女性在香港所生嬰兒所佔的比率正在上升。在2005年，共有57 098個在香港生育存活的嬰兒，當中19 232個嬰兒(即34%)是內地女性所生的。這包括10 395個嬰兒，其父親是香港居民；以及8 837個嬰兒，其父母均是中國籍人士而非香港居民⁹。這意味着在香港出生嬰兒的數目並不一定能補充香港的本地人口。

⁴ 數字不包括外籍家庭傭工。《香港人口推算2004-2033》，香港特區政府統計處，2004年6月。

⁵ 2005年的暫定數字。香港特區政府統計處

⁶ “總和生育率”是指每1 000名女性，若她們在生育齡期(即15至49歲)經歷了一如該年的年齡組別生育率，其一生中所生育存活子女的平均數目。

⁷ YIP, P.S.F. and LEE, J. (2002). *The impact of the changing marital structure on the fertility rate of Hong Kong SAR. Social Science and Medicine*, 55, 2159-2169.

⁸ 香港特區政府統計處

⁹ 香港特區政府統計處

(b) 預期壽命

4. 在生命的另一端，隨著醫學日益昌明和生活水平的提高，香港人口的平均預期壽命也不斷延長。香港是人口長壽的地區之一¹⁰。在2005年，香港男性及女性的出生時平均預期壽命¹¹分別為78.8歲及84.4歲，與其他已發展的經濟地區比較，毫不遜色。

表1.3 香港與其他經濟地區在1983至2005年的出生時平均預期壽命的比較，以及至2033年的推算數字¹²

經濟地區	實際						推算		
	1983	1993	1999	2001	2003	2005	2013	2023	2033
男性									
香港	72.3	75.3	77.7	78.4	78.5	78.8 [#]	80.3	81.6	82.5
日本	74.2	76.3	77.1	78.1	78.4	–	78.9	79.6	80.2
美國 ⁽¹⁾	71.0	72.2	73.9	74.4	74.8	–	76.2 (2015)	77.6 (2025)	79.1 (2035)
英國	71.3	73.7	75.0	75.7	76.3	–	79.0	80.5	81.7
女性									
香港	78.4	80.9	83.2	84.6	84.3	84.4 [#]	86.0	87.1	88.0
日本	79.8	82.5	84.0	84.9	85.3	–	86.3	87.3	88.2
美國 ⁽¹⁾	78.1	78.8	79.4	79.8	80.1	–	82.2 (2015)	83.6 (2015)	84.8 (2015)
英國	77.3	79.0	79.9	80.4	80.7	–	82.7	84.2	85.3

註：(1) 推算數字摘自1999年至2100年人口推算數列（在三個假設情況中）的中間生育率估值。括號中的數字為該推算出生時平均預期壽命的年份。

暫定數字

(c) 人口流動

5. 人口轉變的另一個元素是人口的遷移和流動。這對於維持一個朝氣蓬勃的人口和城市的活力至為重要。在過往數十年，內地大量移民改變了香港的人口結構。近年，單程通行證持有人的移入仍然是人口流動的重要元素，預計日後亦會佔人口增長約八成。另一方面，有愈來愈多香港居民前往內地工作及居住。

10 LAW, C.K. and YIP, P.S.F. (2002). *Healthy Adjusted Life Years of Hong Kong SAR*. *International Journal of Public Health*, 81, 1-7.

11 “出生時平均預期壽命”是指某年出生的人士，若其一生經歷一如該年按年齡及性別劃分的死亡率所反映的死亡情況，他/她預期能活的年數。

12 香港特區政府統計處

6. 在2005年，香港人口的淨流入為36 100人，其中包括55 100名單程證持有人和20 400名非香港永久性居民的淨流入，以及39 500名香港永久性居民的淨流出¹³。現時，合資格人士如擁有本港無法即時提供的技能，並已獲得按市場薪酬支付的本地聘任，便可申請來港工作。將於2006年推行的「優秀人才入境計劃」中，合資格人士可在未有預先獲得本地聘任的情況下，申請來港定居。工作年齡人口的淨流入，有助紓緩人口高齡化的問題。

表1.4 1991至2005年單程證持有人到港的統計數字¹⁴

年份	人數	年份	人數
1991	26 782	1998	56 039
1992	28 366	1999	54 625
1993	32 909	2000	57 530
1994	38 218	2001	53 655
1995	45 986	2002	45 234
1996	61 179	2003	53 507
1997	50 287	2004	38 072
		2005	55 106

表1.5 2005年單程證持有人按年齡及性別劃分¹⁵

年齡組別	男性	女性	人數
0 – 14	7 493	7 045	14 538
15 – 24	2 573	2 591	5 164
25 – 49	5 075	28 084	33 159
50 – 64	542	1 232	1 774
65 及以上	140	331	471
總數	15 823	39 283	55 106

(d) 受供養人口

7. 表1.6顯示人口的總撫養比率¹⁶將會增加，意味著經濟體系中具生產力的勞動人口正在逐步減少。另一方面，少年兒童撫養比率的下降被老年撫養比率的上升所抵消。圖1.2顯示一個人口窗口¹⁷，這個窗口因過往數十年間出生率以至總撫養比率下降而展開。

¹³ 香港特區政府統計處。由於進位關係，所有數字相加可能不等於有關總數。

¹⁴ 香港特區政府統計處

¹⁵ 香港特區政府統計處

¹⁶ 少年兒童和老年撫養比率是指相對每1 000名15至64歲的人口，15歲以下和65歲及以上人口的分別數目。“總撫養比率”是少年兒童和老年撫養比率的總和。

¹⁷ 人口窗口是建基於一個總撫養比率的特定水平。如該水平設定為400，則人口窗口會在1997年至2019年間出現，而在這期間的總撫養比率均低於400。

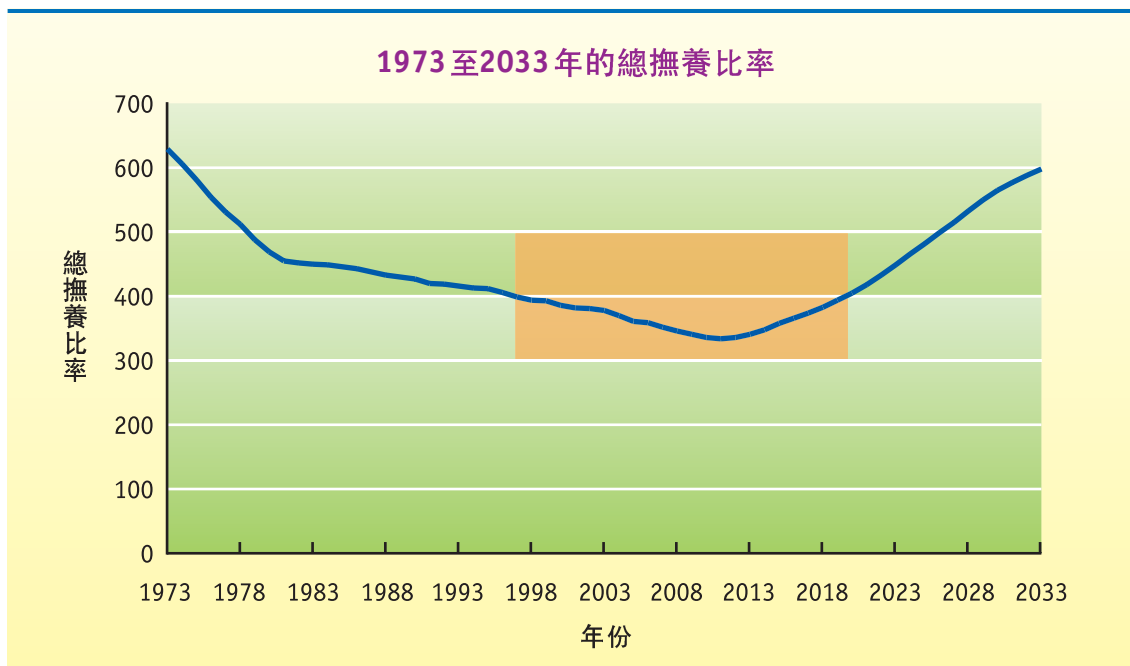
不過，這個窗口會因將來長者人口以至總撫養比率上升而消失。這人口窗口所代表的時期，總撫養比率以至勞動人口的負擔都較低，因而提供一個發展經濟，為未來作好準備的機會。這個機會必須在總撫養比率再度上升前好好把握。

表1.6 香港的撫養比率¹⁸

	年份	少年兒童	老年	整體
實際	2001	227	155	382
	2003	216	161	378
	2005	197	164	361
推算	2013	163	178	341
	2023	168	282	449
	2033	171	428	598

註：由於進位關係，所有數字相加可能不等於有關總數。

圖1.2 人口窗口¹⁹



(e) 質素事宜

8. 除了人口數量，人口的質素及其生活質素均是制訂可持續發展人口政策的重要議題。人口的質素對於我們的經濟效益和生產力非常重要；而隨着經濟改善，生活質素也應有所提升。

¹⁸ 香港特區政府統計處

¹⁹ 香港特區政府統計處。人口窗口是指總撫養比率低於400的時期（1997年至2019年），即2名受供養人士相對5名非受供養人士。

9. 在八十年代，大量香港人士移居外國，當中多數是有經濟能力、教育程度高，以及具技能的人士。當這些人士離開香港，這期間便出現了“人才外流”的問題。然而回歸後，香港在“一國兩制”的原則下穩定發展，因此很多人近年回流香港尋找新機會。這些回流人士也為香港勞動人口灌注新的動態和活力。

10. 然而，香港經濟步伐迅速，導致各行各業要求僱員長時間工作的風氣愈來愈普遍，對就業人士造成沉重的心理社會壓力。日積月累，大眾的身心健康可能受到不良甚至嚴重的影響。人們往往難以撥出時間兼顧生活上的其他需要，例如參與社交或家庭活動。這些情況增加了對於照顧幼兒及長者服務的需求。近年來，大眾對有關問題的警覺性似乎略有提高，但仍然未足夠。我們仍需進一步保障和促進本港人口的生活質素。

表1.7 香港人口按每周工時劃分 (1993年及2005年)²⁰

每周工時	1993 (%)	2005 (%)
< 29	5.9	9.6
30 – 39	12.4	9.9
40 – 49	62.5	44.0
50 – 59	9.2	18.0
60 及以上	10.1	18.4
總數	100.0	100.0

註：由於進位關係，所有數字相加可能不等於有關總數。

海外經驗

11. 人口高齡化帶來的挑戰並非香港獨有。內地以至全球其他城市，同樣有需要面對低生育率和預期壽命延長這些趨勢。

12. 很多國家已推行鼓勵生育的政策和措施，包括經濟誘因（例如稅務優惠及津貼）、方便照顧家庭的工作環境和對照顧幼兒的協助。舉例來說，瑞典的政策目標，是協助婦女加入工作行列，並促進男女平等，結果有74.5%的婦女（年齡介乎16至64歲之間）加入了工作行列，而總和生育率則達1.7。整體來說，全球已發展的經濟地區主要是提供支援人們生育及撫養兒童的環境。雖然至今仍沒有確實證據證實這些措施有效鼓勵生育，但預料這些措施至少能維持現有生育率，不致繼續下降。



²⁰ 數字不包括外籍家庭傭工。香港特區政府統計處

13. 至於預期壽命延長的問題，有鑑於長者較佳的健康狀況和他們期望繼續為社會作出貢獻，現時的普遍趨勢是提高退休年齡。縱使改變退休年齡涉及很多考慮因素，但現時國際上的普遍做法，是在一段長時間內，逐步提高工作人口可享用退休金的年齡。例如，在日本可享退休金的年齡由60歲提高至65歲，在美國則由65歲提高至67歲。

14. 此外，已發展的經濟地區正在全球競奪人才和專業人士。主要城市如倫敦、紐約和東京等，都不斷努力吸引和挽留合適的求職者。這些城市一般都可吸納從其國家內其他地方自由流入的人才。然而在香港，內地人才的流入則由於各種逼切的原因而受管制，這些原因包括關注為內地人士提供來港捷徑的風險。事實上，近年隨著「輸入內地人才計劃」等各項計劃的推行，這方面的管制已有所放寬。至於從其他國家流入的人才，香港在這方面的管制則與很多已發展經濟地區相若。在經濟蓬勃的城市，按年齡劃分的人口分布一般都很平穩。這是由於工作年齡組別的移民流入尋找發展機會，以及年長人士移居外地尋找較平靜和較儉樸的生活方式²¹。人口不斷遷移和流動是維持城市活力的關鍵。例如，在內地的主要城市如北京和上海，市政府主動和具彈性地提供優惠待遇，務求吸引和挽留曾往海外留學的中國學生和其他人才，以協助發展個別城市的主要工業。

15. 在西方國家，人們愈來愈重視工作和生活之間的平衡，以及生活質素。他們的就業人士會較傾向為處理家庭事務而請假離開工作崗位，或間中小休一會，以助維持工作效率。此外，他們的僱主及同事也較願意接受和配合這些需要。這些國家也有較多具彈性和不同種類的工作安排，供就業人士因應他們生命中不同階段的各種承擔和處境而作出選擇。



21 Richard Wong and Ka-fu Wong, HKU. *The importance of migration flow to Hong Kong's future*, November 2005

第二章

香港可持續發展人口政策 有些甚麼方案？

在考慮各個有利於維持香港社會活力的可持續發展人口政策方案時，我們必須先考慮是否有一個最適合香港獨特情況和挑戰的理想或目標人口。

2. 任何理想的香港人口數字都可能不攻自破，因為這個數字很大程度上須視乎科技等領域的最新發展而定。另一方面，我們可以從質量方面，包括人口的組合，探討這個議題。我們應為本港找出適當的人口組合，從而提高香港的競爭力和吸引力，以及提升本港市民的生活質素。

3. 同時，我們必須理解，一個城市的人口組合與經濟結構息息相關。我們要考慮的問題是，應以人口組合去配合經濟結構，還是由人口組合去決定經濟結構。

4. 下文分別從經濟、社會及環境三個角度探討人口政策的可持續發展考慮因素。當中所探討的方案並非可行辦法的全部，也不代表可持續發展委員會的立場。他們只是其中一些可行辦法。我們提及這些方案，是希望帶出一個有意義和有用的討論。

(A) 經濟角度

5. 香港是一個小城市，天然資源有限。我們最寶貴和重要的“資源”是人力資源。人口的創意和生產力是維持經濟發展和活力不可缺少的元素。



6. 未來數十年，香港將面對勞動人口減少和人口高齡化的趨勢，這些趨勢預料會為公共財政帶來沉重壓力。這種情況意味著兩個主要後果：本地生產總值下降，庫房稅收因而減少；而由公帑支付的衛生、福利及其他相關服務的需求則增加。舉例來說，衛生和社會福利的開支預算分別佔2006-07年度政府經常性開支的15.0%和17.3%。若他們的開支繼續增加，則意味著其他重要公共服務將獲分配較少資源。

7. 為了維持香港在國際社會的經濟競爭力，有人提出應就逐步下降的勞動人口，以及新的經濟結構與勞動人口之間的差距和錯配，尋求策略性的解決辦法。這些解決辦法也須顧及人口的社會需要。

在制訂一個將影響日後數十年發展的長遠人口政策時，我們必須高瞻遠矚，並留有足夠的靈活性，以便配合社會的未來轉變。

8. 擴大勞動人口或延長他們的工作年期有不同的方法。

(1) 提升勞動人口的工作能力

針對現有和未來的勞動人口，我們可以提供適當的教育和培訓，提高他們的工作能力，以配合經濟轉型的需要。例如，提升學生兩文三語的能力和擴闊他們的國際視野，均有助提升勞動人口的質素。



香港並沒有法定退休年齡。個別僱主或機構可與他們的員工共同訂定合適的退休年齡。在2005年，年齡介乎60至64歲以及65至69歲的長者勞動人口參與率分別為30.2%和11.9%。有鑑於人口的預期壽命延長，以及年長人士的生產力有所提升，我們可以考慮提倡延長人口的工作年期，或逐步提高退休年齡。



(2) 開拓潛在的人力資源

我們不可忽略社會中潛在的人力資源。這些資源如獲開拓，將可擴大具生產力的勞動人口。

根據政府統計處在2004年10月至12月所作的調查²²，統計時有214 900名15歲及以上人士沒有從事經濟活動，但若遇上一份合適的工作並獲聘請，他們是願意工作的。他們佔統計時整體15歲及以上非從事經濟活動人口的9.6%。

另一方面，雖然無論男性或女性人口的教育程度都一直有所提升，但在2006年第一季，當男性的整體勞動人口參與率達71.1%時，女性則只有52.1%²³。

表2.1 香港人口按教育程度及性別劃分 (1993年及2005年)²⁴

	男性		女性	
	1993 (%)	2005 (%)	1993 (%)	2005 (%)
未受教育/幼稚園	13.2	7.9	21.9	13.3
小學	30.7	23.0	29.3	24.3
初中	18.5	19.0	13.7	15.5
高中	23.5	25.3	23.3	24.9
預科	3.2	4.1	3.0	4.2
專上：非學位課程	4.6	6.8	4.9	6.3
專上：學位課程	6.3	13.9	3.8	11.4
總數	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

註：由於進位關係，所有數字相加可能不等於有關總數。

²² 《第四十一號專題報告書：非從事經濟活動人士若遇上合適工作時會接受工作的意願》，香港特區政府統計處，2005年8月。

²³ 香港特區政府統計處

²⁴ 數字不包括外籍家庭傭工。香港特區政府統計處

由於女性的教育程度提高，我們有必要確保女性的潛在勞動力得以善用，在社會發展中發揮作用。然而，在現今香港的市場結構中，部分女性可能認為要兼顧個人和家庭需要，及同時外出工作，是很困難的。僱主和商界應考慮參考海外經驗，提供靈活和多元化的工作機會，例如兼職和職位分擔，以配合個人所需，從而擴大潛在的勞動生產力。這些多元化的工作機會也可鼓勵更多長者繼續留在工作行列。

表2.2 香港與其他經濟地區的女性勞動人口參與率 (%)²⁵

年齡	日本 (2006年3月)	美國 (2004年)	新加坡 (2005年6月)	英國 (2006年第一季 ⁽³⁾)	香港 (2006年第一季)
15-19	15.9	43.8 ⁽¹⁾	14.4	(4)	11.6
20-24	68.6	70.5	73.6		70.7
25-29	74.5	73.1	86.6		86.2
30-34	61.8	74.0	78.6		79.3
35-39	62.8	74.5	69.9	79.1	71.6
40-44	71.1	76.7	66.1		66.6
45-49	72.1	78.2	63.6		61.7
50-54	70.1	74.5	54.0		52.1
55-59	59.0	65.0	38.0	70.1	36.4
60-64	38.5	45.4	19.6		14.7
65及以上	12.2	11.1	(2)		1.6
總數	47.6	59.2	56.6	56.6	52.1

註：(1) 年齡介乎16至19歲

(2) 年齡介乎65至69歲、70至74歲，和75歲及以上的勞動人口參與率分別為9.7、4.2和1.2。

(3) 經季節性調整的數字

(4) 年齡介乎16至17歲和18至24歲的勞動人口參與率分別為48.7和69.8。

(3) 吸引人才

除了提高本地勞動生產力外，另一個配套辦法是從其他地方吸引人才。現今國際上的經濟體系已高度全球化並且互相牽連。所有已發展的經濟地區都需要高質素的人才，而香港在這方面須面對與世界其他國家和城市的激烈競爭。香港是否能吸引內地及海外

人才和挽留本地人才，視乎我們所提供的發展機會是否多元化，以及預期的生活質素而定。容許合適求職者自由地雙向流動，對經濟極為有利。



藉着在學校和大學提供更多學生交流計劃，以及吸引內地和海外學生來港就學，我們可以跟世界各地的年青人建立更多連繫。我們希望藉此為他們提供在香港居住和發展機會方面的第一手經驗。此外，能吸引在海外就學的香港人回流貢獻香港，也非常重要。

(B) 社會角度

9. 人口是我們城市的最大資產。保護和促進人們的福祉有助確保一個動態和平衡的城市發展。

10. 正如上文提及，我們有必要開拓女性人口中的潛在人力資源。雖然女性參與勞動市場的比率普遍增加，但婦女須肩負照顧家庭責任的傳統觀念依然存在。因此，她們經常面對事業或家庭的困難選擇。有些女性或會選擇在婚後或生育後離開勞動市場；另一些則可能會選擇以事業為重，而非家庭或生兒育女。另一方面，“在職母親”同時要兼顧兩個非常吃力的角色，大都感到身心疲累。這兩個角色的責任和理想更不時有所衝突，有損就業女性的身心健康。為確保本港人口的長遠可持續發展，有需要訂立政策，以便婦女在發展事業、照顧家庭和生兒育女的理想之間，取得真正平衡。



11. 此外，長者的社會和財政需要也必須得到正視。

他們身體的健康狀況固然對公共醫療服務的需求有所影響，但他們的心理社會健康狀況對於健康的老年生活也是重要的一環。活得有意義、能夠持續自我增值、自力更生、財政獨立，以及與他人維持融洽關係，都有助促進長者的心理社會健康。

12. 與此同時，香港愈來愈多獨居人士（包括長者和年青成年人）。他們的家庭網絡薄弱，因此其社會需要與傳統家庭截然不同。我們須考慮建立一個能提升這個社羣的福祉和配合他們需要的制度。

13. 為提高本港人口的生活質素，我們可考慮向全民推廣更健康的生活方式，並提供一個富有活力、對內地和海外人才以及本地人口同樣具吸引力的社會環境。

(1) 推廣更健康的生活方式

更健康的生活方式包括健康飲食、適量運動和積極正面的思想。以上各項對改善個人健康都有幫助。長者和整個社會的健康得到改善，有助延長整體人口具生產力的年期，並減少對整體社會，尤其是醫療和社會服務的依賴。我們的社會制度應當容納和善用長者的經驗和能力，這對長者本身和整體社會都有好處。他們可通過各種方法參與社會，作出貢獻。這些方法包括從事自由特約工作、參加社區服務和志願工作等。同樣地，我們也應照顧殘疾人士和長期病患的需要。我們不應忽視或低估他們可作出的積極貢獻。

香港經濟富有活力、步伐急速。就業人口面對工時長和壓力大的情況日益普遍。工作壓力大和缺乏穩定的工作可能令人不願意生兒育女。我們需要推廣一套平衡工作與生活的文化，鼓勵人們注意生活上的其他事項，例如家庭、娛樂、文化和康體活動等。政府和部分私人機構正探討或實行每週五天工作的運作模式，以減輕就業人口的壓力和提高他們的家庭生活質素。此外，我們可推廣更具彈性的工作機會，例如家庭辦公室和自由特約工作等。這些措施不但可促進市民的社會健康，長遠而言，也可擴大具生產力的勞動人口。

如果人們逐漸對家庭、生兒育女和兩性在家庭中的角色有正面的態度改變，再加上某些措施的配合（例如為雙職家庭提供更多的幼兒照顧設施），都可能有助穩定本港正在不斷下降的生育率。推廣家庭的重要性和生兒育女的無形益處，也有助鼓勵人們決定生育。然而，生育始終是個人決定，必須獲得尊重。

隨着人口的預期壽命愈來愈長，以及為了延長人口具生產力的年期，有建議認為應推廣靈活人生。根據這個概念，社會和就業架構應容許人們有更大的自由和空間去選擇自己的人生模式。例如，退休年齡應由個人決定，而不是受制於社會因素。同樣地，因個人理由而暫停工作的決定不應成為將來重投勞動市場的障礙。



(2) 提供具吸引力的社會環境

求職者在揀選工作和居住地點時，會考慮該地點的整體吸引力。我們在制訂能夠滿足經濟需求的合適移民或輸入人才政策／計劃時，也應考慮特定對象的社會需要。一個能夠顧及對象需要（例如容許家屬或主要僱員入境），以社會為本的移民政策，有助吸引合適的求職者。舉例來說，是否有足夠國際學校學位可能是海外人才決定是否帶同家人來港的其中一個重要考慮因素。豐富的家庭康樂活動和多元化的文化節目，也可為移民帶來更多家庭生活樂趣。

香港的主要人口是華人，同時也有小部分外籍和少數族裔人士在港居住。我們有需要就多元文化和種族共融的好處，以及移民和少數族裔人士對本地經濟作出的貢獻，多作推廣，以建立社會共識。他們感到被本地社會接受和受歡迎，是非常重要的。

(C) 環境角度

14. 香港的生活環境不單對我們的生活質素非常重要，也同時影響本港對內地及海外人才的吸引力。同樣地，香港的生活環境也影響海外投資者作出是否來港投資的決定。

15. 世界人口賴以生存的天然資源並非用之不竭。舉例來說，化石燃料的累積和形成需時很長。然而，過去數十年，全球各方面的發展則迅速地消耗這些天然資源。

16. 香港擁有相對較少的土地和天然資源去應付龐大並不斷增長的人口。香港是世界上人口密度最高的城市之一，摩天大廈林立的都市是我們標誌性的景觀特色。要締造高質素的都市生活空間，同時享有各項基本服務和公共交通的便利，是香港面對的一項挑戰。運用有限的天然資源可滿足短期經濟增長的需要，但我們須同時考慮如何善用這些資源，以滿足我們的社會需要，提高香港的吸引力，從而提升我們的長遠競爭力。

(1) 保護我們有限的天然資源

過去，經濟迅速發展往往帶來人口迅速增長的壓力，並引致擠塞和擁擠。這不單對自然環境產生影響，還牽涉對長遠經濟競爭力、人們的心理社會健康和公眾衛生方面的影響。

我們必須謹慎使用和保護我們的資源，以維持經濟和社會發展，及令我們的城市得以可持續發展。從正面來看，人口增長率的下降可能提供了契機，讓我們得以反思和周詳策劃，從而減少對自然環境和資源持續造成壓力。

(2) 締造一個具吸引力的生活環境

人們愈來愈嚮往低密度的居住環境和優質生活。因此，若要提供能吸引內地及海外人才和挽留本地人才的生活環境，便必須滿足這些需求。這生活環境應既能吸引正於全球尋找機會、朝氣勃勃的一代，也須滿足高齡人口的需要。大眾對香港空氣質素的關注也必須恰當地處理。

出色的建築作品是具吸引力的城市景觀的重要元素。此外，提供天然通風廊和陽光的優質城市設計、活化的社區、環保和創新的樓宇，以及有趣味的地區傳統特色，均有助締造具吸引力的生活環境，從而提升整體生活質素和推廣更健康的生活方式。

為人們提供市政服務是很重要的。衛生的環境、良好的治安、社會穩定和市民可負擔的醫療服務都是必要的。此外，提供文化娛樂的設施和活動也可為城市生活增添色彩。

(3) 為所有人士提供一個方便易達的環境

雖然醫療科技的發展和推廣更健康生活方式，將有助增強長者的體魄，但綜合而言，我們預期行動不便的長者數目將會持續上升。因此，我們須在規劃和設計建築物 and 各項設施時，考慮長者的需要，以協助他們獨立，並行動自如。

我們需要為所有人士提供一個方便易達的環境。我們期望未來的建築物，可滿足所有人士（包括長者、殘疾以及健全人士）的行動需要。

第三章

邀請社會人士回應



本文件勾劃出與香港的可持續發展人口政策有關的主要事項，以及一些可行方案。

2. 可持續發展委員會誠邀各位就本文件作出回應，並就相關事項和方案提出意見和作出抉擇。你的寶貴意見對本港的可持續發展將產生長遠影響，對現今一代和我們的子孫後代均意義重大。

3. 第二章的分析環繞經濟發展、社會和諧以及自然環境保護這三個可持續發展的考慮因素。然而，下文提出的問題並不是根據這三個因素作歸納，原因是避免問題重覆而引致混淆。為了方便組織日後的討論，有關問題將被歸納為四大類別——生活質素、家庭與社會需要、人口高齡化和退休，以及培育、吸引和挽留人才。

4. 歡迎你就第二章所闡述的事項和方案，以及下列的問題作出回應。我們同時期待你就人口政策提出進一步資料、建議和問題。可持續發展委員會將就香港的可持續發展人口政策的未來路向為政府提供建議，你的意見將有助委員會擬定有關建議。

問題

生活質素

1. 你對香港生活質素的滿意程度如何？為甚麼？你希望哪些方面可作改善，從而提高生活質素？
2. 有意見認為我們不應強調增加人口，而應在人口增長放緩的情況下，集中考慮如何改善人們的生活質素。你對此有甚麼意見？

家庭與社會需要

3. 哪些因素會影響你的生育決定？你認為哪些措施可有效鼓勵人們生兒育女？
4. 你對“家庭”和“生兒育女”有何見解？你認為是否需要推廣家庭的重要性和生兒育女的無形益處？



5. 如果我們更着重提倡方便照顧家庭的工作環境，以及平衡工作與生活的文化，你認為會提升還是妨礙香港的經濟競爭力？在這方面，商界和僱主的角色是甚麼？哪些具體措施有助推廣這文化？
6. 香港愈來愈多獨居人士（包括長者和年青成年人）。他們的家庭網絡薄弱，因此其社會需要與傳統家庭截然不同。我們的社會可如何更有效地配合這些獨居人士的社會需要？

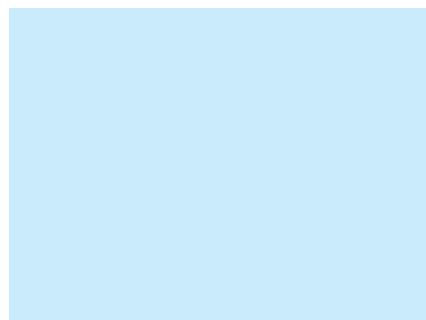
人口高齡化和退休

7. 你希望如何享受晚年生活？你希望如何繼續參與和融入社會？
8. 你認為是否有需要提倡延長人口的工作年期，或提高退休年齡？甚麼才是適合離開工作崗位的年齡？
9. 你對“靈活人生”²⁶的概念有甚麼看法？



培育、吸引和挽留人才

10. 當我們在考慮滿足社會需求的方案時，我們應將重點放在培育和訓練本地人口，以及吸引海外就學的香港學生回流；還是應專注於吸引內地和海外的人才？
11. 我們可如何促進香港成為人才匯聚的地方？提供更多元化的教育和發展機會？更具吸引力的生活環境？推廣多元文化和種族共融？



²⁶ “靈活人生”的概念是指社會和就業架構容許人們有更大的自由和空間去選擇自己的人生模式。

進一步資料

5. 我們力求本文件精簡，提供必需的資料，讓你在掌握有關資訊的情況下，與我們交流意見。如果你有興趣進一步探討相關事項，你可登入以下網站：

– 可持續發展策略網站

www.susdev.org.hk

– 政府統計處：香港統計資料

http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hong_kong_statistics/statistics_by_subject/index.jsp

– 入境事務處

www.immd.gov.hk

– 經濟合作及發展組織有關便利家庭政策的資料

http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_34819_1_1_1_1_37419,00.html

– 國際兒童、青少年和家庭政策

www.childpolicyintl.org

– 澳洲政府的家庭援助部門

<http://www.familyassist.gov.au/>

– 經濟合作及發展組織有關高齡化社會的資料

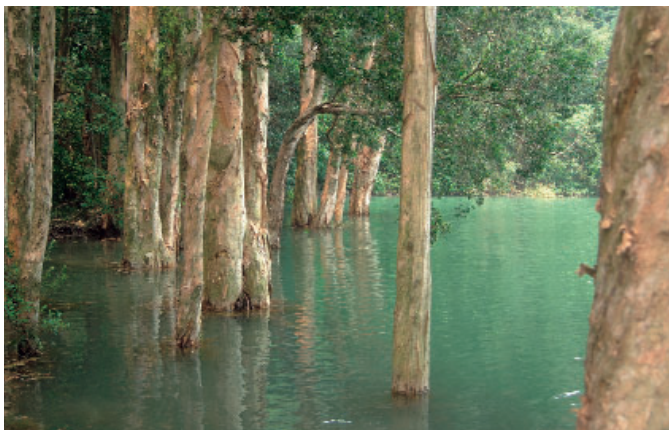
http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_37435_1_1_1_1_37435,00.html

– 世界衛生組織－積極的晚年：政策綱領

<http://www.who.dk/document/hea/eactagepolframe.pdf>

– 香港中文大學老年學及老年病學研究中心

http://healthyageing.sph.cuhk.edu.hk/main_en.htm



回應方法

6. 在未來數月，可持續發展委員會將與各界別的伙伴機構合作推行一系列的活動，旨在邀請社會大眾就本文件所闡述的事項提供意見。我們將接觸不同的持份者和市民，希望從中收集更廣泛的意見。
7. 此外，可持續發展策略網站www.susdev.org.hk設立了一個公開和互動的溝通平台。該網站載有各項活動的最新資訊，以及一個網上論壇，讓你與其他社會人士交流意見。
8. 請於**2006年10月31日**或之前以郵寄、傳真或電郵形式，將你的意見交到委員會秘書處。

地址：香港中環花園道

美利大廈閣樓

持續發展組

傳真：3150 8168

電郵：comments@susdev.org.hk

9. 除非提交意見的人士聲明有所保留，否則我們會假設他們容許我們無須獲其批准或對其作出鳴謝，而可用任何形式複製、發表其全部或部分意見，以及使用、改寫或進一步研究任何已提交的建議。

可持續發展委員會的社會參與過程

何謂可持續發展？

為邁向可持續發展，我們有需要就如何在滿足經濟和社會發展的需要和保育我們的自然環境之間取得最佳平衡，作出知情的抉擇。

2. 國際社會愈來愈強調可持續發展的重要性。1992年聯合國的「廿一世紀議事日程」呼籲各國、各大城市以及其他行政機關各自制訂適合自己的可持續發展策略或議程。一個可持續發展策略通常包括一個願景或方向，以及對於長遠可持續發展重要的領域之目標和計劃。

“既能滿足我們現今的需求，又不損害子孫後代能滿足他們的需求的發展模式”
— 摘自 Mrs G. H. Brundtland 1987 年呈交予聯合國的報告《我們的共同未來》。

可持續發展委員會

3. 可持續發展委員會（委員會）在2003年3月成立，為當局提供關於制訂香港可持續發展策略等方面的意見。在委員會的第一個任期，委員會設計和推行了一個包括五個階段的社會參與過程，邀請社會大眾參與討論經揀選的三個試點範疇（固體廢物管理、可再生能源和都市生活空間）的可持續發展未來路向。

4. 在首個社會參與過程中，委員會舉行了四個公眾論壇、11個地區性公眾工作坊、一個青年論壇，以及一個可持續發展策略峯會。上述活動共吸引了1 400多名人士參與。另外，估計有22 000名人士參觀了委員會在各大公共場所舉辦的巡迴展覽。委員會並從特設的溝通途徑中收集了1 900多份關於試點範疇的回應意見。委員會接受持份者的意見，並向政府提交了建議。隨着政府在2005年5月發表香港首個可持續發展策略，首個社會參與過程便告終結。其後，政府和其他持份者共同擬定行動計劃，務求達到該策略所定的可持續發展目標和指標。

第二個社會參與過程

5. 委員會正在推行第二個社會參與過程，該過程的五個階段如下 —

I. 找出優先範疇

委員會在2005年7月舉辦了一個持份者公眾論壇，邀請持份者就新的優先範疇發表意見。經考慮該論壇的討論結果，委員會決定推行兩個優先範疇：更佳空氣質素和人口政策。

委員會設立了一個研究小組，以綜合有關空氣質素的資料，讓委員會在知悉有關資料後，決定就這優先範疇推行社會參與過程的事宜。

本文件涉及的社會參與過程有關第二個優先範疇，即人口政策。

II. 擬備誠邀回應文件

委員會成立了一個由持份者主導的人口政策支援小組，負責就這次的誠邀回應文件擬備工作提供意見。這文件旨在向市民大眾提供必需的資料，讓他們在知悉相關資料的情況下，討論有關事項的可持續發展路向。

III. 直接讓社會人士廣泛參與

支援小組準備舉行一系列的論壇、工作坊和峯會，讓社會人士一起就香港人口政策的可持續發展方案進行討論。伙伴機構會協助我們邀請多個不同界別的持份者廣泛參與，以收集他們的意見。另外還會有其他溝通途徑，例如網上論壇等。

IV. 報告

委員會轄下的可持續發展策略工作小組會在支援小組的協助下，分析社會人士的回應，向委員會提交報告，並特別指出有共識和有不同意見之處。其後，委員會會向政府提出關於人口政策可持續發展路向的建議。

V. 政府行動

政府會參考委員會的意見，發表一份關於人口政策的策略文件，勾劃政府的策略目標、指標和行動計劃，以期達到可持續發展的結果。

6. 委員會將繼續檢討社會參與過程，並會就市民大眾關心的其他優先範疇重複推行這個過程。

可持續發展委員會的職權範圍及成員

職權範圍

- a. 就推動可持續發展的優先範疇，向政府提供意見；
- b. 就為香港籌劃一套融合經濟、社會及環境因素的可持續發展策略，提供意見；
- c. 透過包括可持續發展基金的撥款在內的不同渠道，鼓勵社區參與，以推動香港的可持續發展；
- d. 增進大眾對可持續發展原則的認識和了解。

成員名單

主席： 政務司司長

副主席： 鄭維健博士，**G.B.S.**，**J.P.**

成員： 蔣麗莉博士

蔡素玉議員，**J.P.**

高保利先生

方敏生女士，**J.P.**

捷成漢先生，**B.B.S.**

郭炳江先生，**J.P.**

賴錦璋先生，**J.P.**

林健枝教授，**J.P.**

廖長城議員，**S.B.S.**，**S.C.**，**J.P.**

潘樂陶先生，**B.B.S.**

戴希立先生，**B.B.S.**，**J.P.**

徐立之教授

經濟發展及勞工局局長

環境運輸及工務局局長

衛生福利及食物局局長

房屋及規劃地政局局長

可持續發展策略工作小組的職權範圍及成員

職權範圍

- a. 協助可持續發展委員會制訂香港的可持續發展策略；
- b. 透過持份者和社會大眾的參與，及落實一套可持續發展委員會認可的諮詢計劃，以確保可持續發展策略涵蓋廣泛並為社會大眾所接受；
- c. 向可持續發展委員會就制訂可持續發展策略的過程作出定期的匯報。

成員名單

主席： 潘樂陶先生，**B.B.S.**

成員： 蔣麗莉博士

蔡素玉議員，**J.P.**

捷成漢先生，**B.B.S.**

林健枝教授，**J.P.**

陳偉群博士，**J.P.***

趙柯安娜女士*

蔡海偉先生*

黎廣德先生*

程子俊先生*

脫瑞康先生*

王惠蘭女士*

黃紹倫教授，**B.B.S.**，**J.P.***

* 增選成員

人口政策支援小組的職權範圍及成員

職權範圍

- a. 定出優先範疇中有關香港長遠可持續發展的關鍵事項，並適當參考海外經驗和最佳做法；
- b. 收集相關的背景資料（參考本地和海外經驗），以及編製誠邀回應文件；
- c. 設計和落實社會參與過程的公眾參與階段，以便公眾就誠邀回應文件及相關事項進行討論；
- d. 向公眾闡述誠邀回應文件，並鼓勵和促使持份者之間的互動討論，從而在主要團體之間建立共識；
- e. 收集和整理持份者提出的回應，向可持續發展委員會和其策略工作小組提供建議。

成員名單

召集人：黃紹倫教授，**B.B.S.**，**J.P.**

成員： 陳偉群博士，**J.P.**

蔡海偉先生

羅善清醫生

麥美娟女士

潘國城博士，**S.B.S.**

黃宏泰先生

葉兆輝博士

中央政策組的代表

衛生福利及食物局的代表

保安局的代表

民政事務局的代表

Foreword

Hong Kong is internationally known for its vibrant activities in trade, finance, business and communications. In order to maintain this vibrancy, we must ensure that our city's continued development is both viable and sustainable. While the efforts of preceding generations have helped create the standard of living we now enjoy, we, as custodians, must think about what kind of city that subsequent generations will inherit.

Sustainable development has become an accepted approach worldwide in tackling the challenges we face in pursuit of development and progress. The principles entrenched within this concept aim to seek common ground among competing social, economic and environmental values. They help us focus on what is important when considering our future and how to address the balance between competing needs.

The Council for Sustainable Development has made a mark in Hong Kong's pursuit of sustainable development by spearheading an engagement process that solicits the diverse opinions of various stakeholders. Their views will subsequently have an impact on policy decisions regarding sustainable development. The first stakeholder engagement process took place during 2004 and 2005, where three pilot areas were discussed: solid waste management, renewable energy and urban living space. The process not only helped us navigate a way forward on long-term sustainable development strategies, but also provided an opportunity for the community to actively participate. It has created an awareness that changes have to be made in our lifestyles in order to meet the challenges ahead. It has also enabled the community to understand that, in finding the best solutions for Hong Kong, we must work together.

The stakeholder engagement process has been providing a unique opportunity to engage Hong Kong people in a dialogue about our future. As with the Invitation and Response document issued in 2004, the current one also presents important information that will establish the foundation for upcoming discussions. The document does not represent the stances and positions of the Government or the Council. Rather, it reflects issues raised by a group of stakeholders, with a view to engaging the wider community in further deliberation.

It is our fervent hope that the community will put forward its thoughts and views on the wide ranging issues set out in this document, as the results will affect both our future livelihood as well as our quality of life. We face many challenges ahead; and how we choose to navigate this complex course is a responsibility that matters not only to the current generation, but to all the generations to come. There are a series of events that follow the launch of this Invitation and Response document. I urge you to participate in as many as possible. Our way forward must be based on consensus and leadership from all sectors of the community.

Otto Poon

Chairman, Strategy Sub-committee, Council for Sustainable Development



Executive Summary

HONG KONG POPULATION TRENDS AND OVERSEAS PERSPECTIVES

The Hong Kong population has grown steadily during the past decades, mainly due to rapid economic growth. It is about to undergo changes in the years ahead as a result of –

- Declining fertility rate
- Ageing of the population
- Longer life expectancy
- Population movements
- Changing dependency ratio

Without a farsighted and coherent population policy, Hong Kong *may* face the following possible situations –

- The size of the labour force will shrink, with a composition and structure that may not support the changing economic environment.
- The growing proportion of elderly people will have fewer productive workers to support them.
- The productive lifespan of the labour force may be lengthened but if we do not find effective ways to take advantage of this, valuable human capital may be lost.
- Qualified job seekers from the Mainland and abroad as well as local talent may decide to accept employment opportunities elsewhere.
- The overall physical and mental health of the labour force might be compromised as a result of job pressures while overall quality of life suffers.
- The current dynamism and vibrancy of Hong Kong may decline.

Other major cities around the world are struggling with problems similar to Hong Kong. Some have begun to introduce policies and measures to address relevant problems. These include –

- Providing financial incentives, family-friendly workplace arrangements and childcare assistance etc. to promote parenthood and induce the female population to enter (or re-enter) the workforce after having children.
- Gradually raising the retirement age to ease pressure on pension funds, keep older people productive and engaged, and take advantage of the energy and experience of the elderly who are living longer and healthier lives.
- Offering competitive and flexible incentives to attract and retain talent.



- Adopting immigration policies that encourage the free flow of talent within and between countries.
- Adopting measures which help working population better balance work and family commitments as well as social and personal pursuits.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE POPULATION POLICY FOR HONG KONG?

Options for the future may be considered from the three sustainability perspectives, including economic development, social harmony and protection of the natural environment. Possible options identified for further discussion are set out below.

(1) Economic Perspective

- Enhancing the capacity of the current and potential members of the workforce by providing appropriate education and training as well as advocating the extension of the population's working life or gradually raising the retirement age.
- Unleashing hidden human capital by making it easier for mothers to stay in or re-enter the workforce, and encouraging older people to remain in the workforce if they so choose.
- Attracting talent from the Mainland and abroad and retaining local talent by offering competitive development opportunities, as well as attractive social and living environments.

(2) Social Perspective

- Supporting working women so that they can achieve a better balance between career development, family commitments, parenthood aspirations, and personal goals.
- Addressing the social needs of the elderly as well as the disabled and chronically ill, and finding creative ways to ensure that their energy and experience are properly channeled to the benefit of our society.
- Improving the quality of life of our population by encouraging healthier lifestyles, and promoting a better balance between work, family and leisure.
- Advocating the notion of a flexible life horizon to promote individual choices on life patterns.
- Promoting the value and benefit of cultural diversity and ethnic inclusiveness, and addressing the social and family needs of the immigrants and minorities so that they feel welcomed and accepted.

(3) Environmental Perspective

- Conserving and preserving natural resources to promote long-term sustainability for all.
- Creating an attractive living environment with better urban planning and buildings, accessible essential services, and a broad range of cultural and recreational facilities to attract incomers and retain local people.
- Ensuring accessibility for all by providing facilities, buildings and living spaces that cater for a wide range of accessibility needs including the elderly, physically challenged as well as able-bodied.

INVITING RESPONSES FROM THE COMMUNITY

A list of questions is included in Chapter 3 of this document to guide discussion and the submission of views from the community. The questions are divided into four categories –

- Quality of Life
- Family and Social Needs
- Ageing and Retirement
- Nurturing, Attraction and Retention of Talent



Introduction

Population Policy covers a wide array of issues, all of which have a direct bearing on our lives. It is not only about numbers and statistics. It has a clear and long-term impact on the structure and composition of our society, which in turn determine our economic competitiveness, the cultural and social vibrancy of our community, as well as the quality of life of our people. Rightly so, there is general concern over a falling fertility rate and the greying of the population. However, we *can* turn this threat into opportunities for careful reflection and creative solutions.

On Population Policy, you might wish to express your views on the means to promote parenthood, admit talent, or enhance security upon retirement. Also, we would like to invite you to take a step further and consider how population policy might affect our economy, society and environment. To move towards sustainable development, we are mindful that informed and sometimes difficult choices have to be made in order to balance economic development, social harmony, and protection of our natural environment. In line with this philosophy, we have attempted to analyse the current situation and possible options that address these three parameters. We hope to lead community stakeholders to discuss the issues and explore the way forward. There are no simple answers or solutions. Sometimes the solutions for the three sustainability pillars might even be in conflict. What we are faced with are questions of balance and what Hong Kong people feel is right for Hong Kong, for now and the future. All of the issues before us are complex and multi-faceted. We must rely on your participation and wisdom to guide us through.

This document aims to provide you with some basic information on –

- Population trends in Hong Kong as well as relevant overseas perspectives;
- How the population trends are affecting Hong Kong from the economic, social and environmental perspectives; and
- Potential options that we can consider to address the current situation and the envisaged demographic trends.

We have also identified some questions that may help guide stakeholders to think through and offer views on these important issues. These questions are set out in Chapter 3 of this document.

We look forward to receiving your views. Your comments and choices made on the issues presented in this document will make a real difference to the future of our city.

Wong Siu-lun

Convenor, Support Group on Population Policy

Chapter 1

Hong Kong Population Trends and Overseas Perspectives

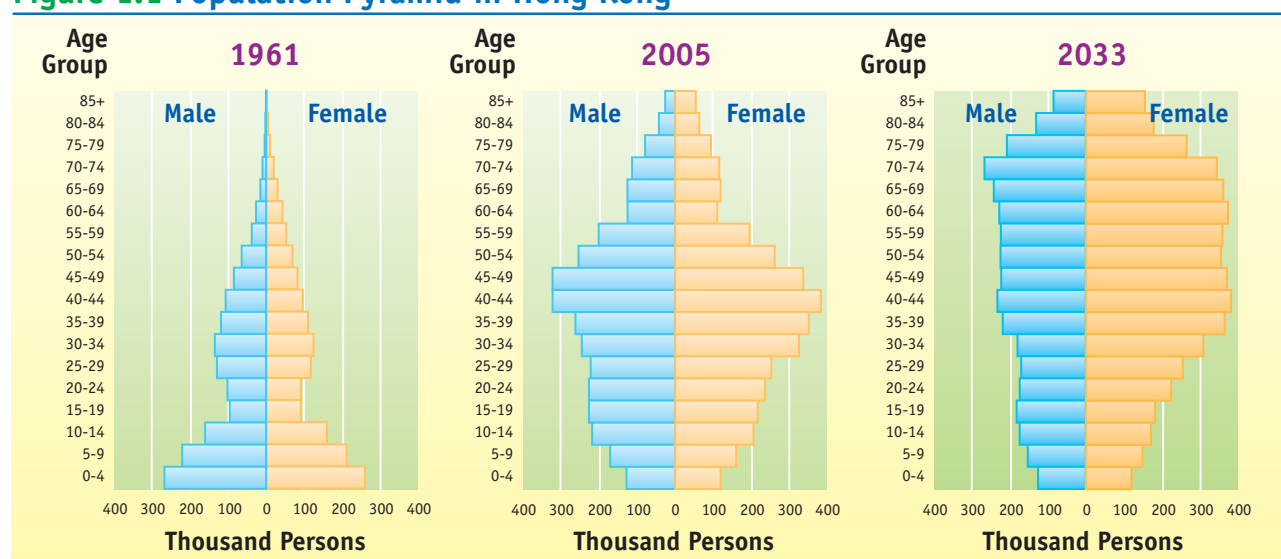


In the past few decades, Hong Kong has undergone significant economic development. Our industries have changed from a low-value-added and labour-intensive production mode to a high-value-added and service-oriented one. During this time, Hong Kong's population has also undergone significant expansion. However, this growth trend is now slowing down. The population in mid-2005 was approximately 6.94 million. This is projected to increase only at an average annual rate of 0.7% to 8.38 million in 2033¹, much slower than the 1% to 2% experienced in the 1980s and 1990s. It is also important to note that a continuous ageing trend accompanies this declining growth. These are the results of a combination of factors, including low fertility rate and extended life expectancy.

Table 1.1 Hong Kong Population in 1961-2005 and Projections up to 2033²

Hong Kong Population in 1961-2005 (mid-year)					
Year	Population	The elderly (65+)	Proportion of the elderly	Children (0-14)	Proportion of children
1961	3 168 100	100 100	3.2%	1 283 900	40.5%
1971	4 045 300	182 300	4.5%	1 452 100	35.9%
1981	5 183 400	344 300	6.6%	1 277 300	24.6%
1991	5 752 000	502 400	8.7%	1 198 700	20.8%
2001	6 724 900	753 600	11.2%	1 104 100	16.4%
2005	6 935 900	836 400	12.1%	1 005 400	14.5%
Population Projections up to 2033					
2013	7 386 900	978 000	13.2%	899 600	12.2%
2023	7 970 200	1 548 500	19.4%	922 600	11.6%
2033	8 384 100	2 243 100	26.8%	895 300	10.7%

Figure 1.1 Population Pyramid in Hong Kong³



¹ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong Population Projections 2004 – 2033*, June 2004

² HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

³ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

(a) Fertility

2. There is a projected gender imbalance in our population. The overall sex ratio in Hong Kong is expected to change from 979 males per 1000 females in 2005 to 749 in 2033⁴. Besides, there is a growing tendency towards men and women marrying late or never marrying. The median marrying age for females at first marriage has increased from 24 in 1980 to 28 in 2005, and that for males has increased from 27 in 1980 to 31 in 2005⁵. This phenomenon concomitantly translates into delayed childbearing, a drop in the marital fertility rate, and a significant decline in the total fertility rate⁶ in Hong Kong. The total fertility rate has fallen from 3 children per woman in the 1970s to less than 1 (i.e. 0.966) in 2005, which is far below the requisite replacement level of 2.1 per woman. This decline is not expected to be reversed in the near future, thereby making the ageing phenomenon more serious than anticipated⁷.

Table 1.2 Comparison with Selected Economies on Total Fertility Rate in 1983-2005 and Projections up to 2033⁸

Economy	Actual						Projected		
	1983	1993	1999	2001	2003	2005	2013	2023	2033
(Number of live births per 1 000 women)									
H.K.	1 722	1 342	982	932	901	966	993	993	993
Japan	1 800	1 460	1 340	1 330	1 290	–	1 340	1 380	1 390
U.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	1 800	2 020	2 010	2 030	2 040	–	2 140	2 200	2 210
U.K.	–	1 760	1 690	1 630	1 710	–	1 730	1 740	1 740

Notes: (1) Projected figures are extracted from the middle fertility assumption (among three scenarios) of the population projection series 1999–2100.

3. Furthermore, the proportion of Hong Kong live births born to Mainland mothers is on the increase. In 2005, there were a total of 57 098 live births, out of which 19 232 (around 34%) were born to Mainland mothers. These included 10 395 babies whose fathers were Hong Kong residents and 8 837 whose parents were both Chinese nationals but not Hong Kong residents⁹. This means that the number of Hong Kong live births does not necessarily translate into actual replenishment of the local population.

⁴ Figures excluded foreign domestic helpers. HKSARG Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong Population Projections 2004 – 2033*, June 2004

⁵ Provisional figures for 2005. HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

⁶ “Total fertility rate” refers to the average number of children that would be born alive to 1 000 women during their lifetime if they were to pass through their childbearing ages 15–49 experiencing the age specific fertility rates prevailing in a given year.

⁷ YIP, P.S.F. and LEE, J. (2002). *The impact of the changing marital structure on the fertility rate of Hong Kong SAR*. *Social Science and Medicine*, 55, 2159–2169.

⁸ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

⁹ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

(b) Life Expectancy

4. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the life expectancy of Hong Kong people has increased, which is largely attributable to advancements in medical technology and improvements in living standards. Hong Kong is one of the places that enjoy a long life expectancy¹⁰. Our population's expectation of life at birth¹¹ was 78.8 years for men and 84.4 for women in 2005, which compared favourably with other developed economies.

Table 1.3 Comparison with Selected Economies on Life Expectancy at Birth in 1983-2005 and Projections up to 2033¹²

Economy	Actual						Projected		
	1983	1993	1999	2001	2003	2005	2013	2023	2033
Male									
H.K.	72.3	75.3	77.7	78.4	78.5	78.8 [#]	80.3	81.6	82.5
Japan	74.2	76.3	77.1	78.1	78.4	–	78.9	79.6	80.2
U.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	71.0	72.2	73.9	74.4	74.8	–	76.2 (2015)	77.6 (2025)	79.1 (2035)
U.K.	71.3	73.7	75.0	75.7	76.3	–	79.0	80.5	81.7
Female									
H.K.	78.4	80.9	83.2	84.6	84.3	84.4 [#]	86.0	87.1	88.0
Japan	79.8	82.5	84.0	84.9	85.3	–	86.3	87.3	88.2
U.S.A. ⁽¹⁾	78.1	78.8	79.4	79.8	80.1	–	82.2 (2015)	83.6 (2015)	84.8 (2015)
U.K.	77.3	79.0	79.9	80.4	80.7	–	82.7	84.2	85.3

Notes: (1) Projected figures are extracted from the middle fertility assumption (among three scenarios) of the population projection series 1999–2100. Figures in bracket refer to the years of the projected expectation of life at birth.

Provisional figures

(c) Movements

5. Another causative factor of population change is the net movement of population in and out of Hong Kong. This is of crucial importance in maintaining a dynamic population and ensuring our city's vibrancy. Changes to Hong Kong's demographic structure in the past decades were affected by massive immigration from the Mainland. The inflow of One-way Permit holders remains a major component in net movement in recent years, and is expected to contribute to approximately 80% of the population growth in the future. At the same time, there are also more Hong Kong residents moving to the Mainland to work and live.

10 LAW, C.K. and YIP, P.S.F. (2002). *Healthy Adjusted Life Years of Hong Kong SAR*. *International Journal of Public Health*, 81, 1-7.

11 "Expectation of life at birth" refers to the number of years of life that a person born in a given year is expected to live if he/she were subject to the prevailing mortality conditions as reflected by the set of age-sex specific mortality rates for that year.

12 HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

6. In 2005, there was a net inflow of 36 100 to the Hong Kong population, comprising an inflow of 55 100 One-way Permit holders and 20 400 Hong Kong non-permanent residents, as well as a net outflow of 39 500 Hong Kong permanent residents¹³. Currently, qualified candidates possessing skills not readily available in Hong Kong and having secured local job offers at market-rate remuneration may apply to enter Hong Kong for employment. Under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme to be implemented in 2006, qualified individuals may apply to come to Hong Kong for settlement without obtaining a prior local job offer. The net inflow of people at working age may partly help redress population ageing.

Table 1.4 Statistics on Arrival of One-way Permit Holders in 1991 - 2005¹⁴

Year	Number	Year	Number
1991	26 782	1998	56 039
1992	28 366	1999	54 625
1993	32 909	2000	57 530
1994	38 218	2001	53 655
1995	45 986	2002	45 234
1996	61 179	2003	53 507
1997	50 287	2004	38 072
		2005	55 106

Table 1.5 One-way Permit Holders by Age and Sex, 2005¹⁵

Age group	Male	Female	Total
0-14	7 493	7 045	14 538
15-24	2 573	2 591	5 164
25-49	5 075	28 084	33 159
50-64	542	1 232	1 774
65 and over	140	331	471
Total	15 823	39 283	55 106

(d) Dependency

7. As shown in Table 1.6 below, the overall dependency ratio¹⁶ in the population is expected to increase, implying a shrinking productive labour force in the economy. On the other hand, it is apparent that the lower child dependency ratio is countered by a

¹³ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department. The figures may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

¹⁴ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

¹⁵ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

¹⁶ Child and Elderly dependency ratios refer to the number of persons aged under 15 and those aged 65 and above respectively per 1 000 persons aged between 15 and 64. "Overall dependency ratio" refers to the sum of child and elderly dependency ratios.

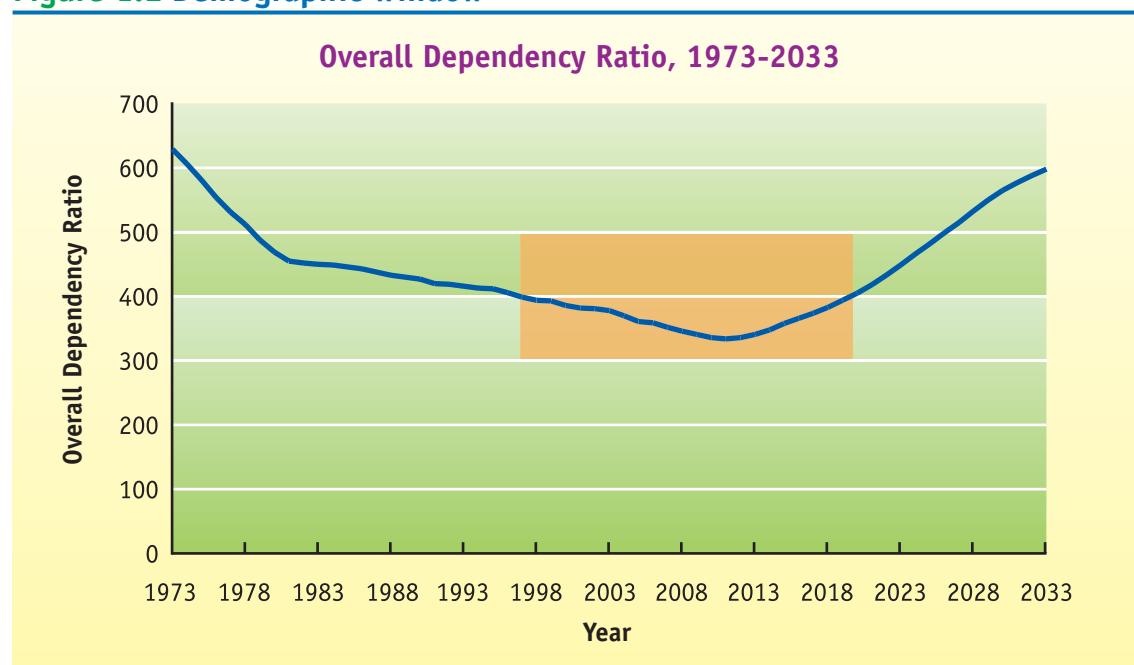
concurrent rise in the elderly dependency ratio. Figure 1.2 points to a demographic window¹⁷, which opened up when the overall dependency declined because of the falling fertility rate experienced in the past several decades. However, this window will close in the years ahead as the overall dependency rises again with an increasing elderly population. The demographic window, with a lower overall dependency ratio and hence a smaller burden on the working population, provides an opportunity for the economy to grow and make preparations for the future before the overall dependency ratio starts to rise again.

Table 1.6 Dependency ratios in Hong Kong¹⁸

	Year	Child	Elderly	Overall
Actual	2001	227	155	382
	2003	216	161	378
	2005	197	164	361
Projected	2013	163	178	341
	2023	168	282	449
	2033	171	428	598

Notes: Figures may not add up to the respective totals owing to rounding.

Figure 1.2 Demographic window¹⁹



¹⁷ The demographic window is constructed by setting a cut-off for the overall dependency ratio. If the cut-off point is 400, we will then have a demographic window from 1997 to 2019, between which the overall dependency ratio is lower than 400.

¹⁸ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

¹⁹ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department. The demographic window shown is the period (1997–2019) during which the overall dependency ratio is lower than 400, i.e. 2 dependents to 5 independents.

(e) Quality issues

8. Quantitative issues aside, the quality of our population and their quality of life are also central considerations in the formulation of a sustainable population policy. The former contributes significantly to the efficiency and productivity of our economy, while the latter should be the positive result of an improved economy.

9. The 1980s witnessed a trend of mass emigration of Hong Kong people. These were mainly people who were financially well-off, highly educated and skilled. When these people left Hong Kong, it gave rise to a “brain drain” problem. However, following reunification with the Mainland and stabilization under the “One Country, Two Systems” principle, many have returned to Hong Kong in recent years to explore new opportunities. This pool of returnees has contributed to the dynamism and vibrancy of the current labour force.

10. However, in a fast-paced economy such as Hong Kong, it is becoming more and more common that employment across many industries demand long working hours, resulting in significant psycho-social pressures on the working population. Over time, this may have a negative and possibly serious impact on the physical and mental health of the population. People are finding it more difficult to allocate time to accommodate other demands in their lives, such as social and family commitments. This translates into increased demand for substitute care for children and the elderly. There is an increasing albeit still small awareness of this problem among the population. More needs to be done to promote and safeguard their quality of life.

Table 1.7 Hong Kong Population by Hours of Work (per week), 1993 and 2005²⁰

Hours of Work (per week)	1993 (%)	2005 (%)
<29	5.9	9.6
30-39	12.4	9.9
40-49	62.5	44.0
50-59	9.2	18.0
60 and over	10.1	18.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Notes: Figures may not add up to the respective totals owing to rounding.

²⁰ Figures excluded foreign domestic helpers. HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

OVERSEAS PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCE

11. The challenges presented by an ageing population are not unique for Hong Kong. Other cities around the world and the Mainland see a similar need to address the trends of low fertility and increased life expectancy.

12. Many countries have introduced policies and initiatives to promote parenthood. These include financial incentives (such as tax incentives and allowances), family-friendly workplace arrangements and childcare assistance. For instance, the policy in Sweden aims at supporting women's participation in the workforce and promoting gender equality, resulting in 74.5% of the female population aged 16 – 64 participating in the workforce and a total fertility rate of 1.7. Overall, developed economies around the world focus on providing an environment that supports the population's childbearing and child rearing needs. There is yet no conclusive evidence on the effectiveness of these measures in promoting parenthood, but it is anticipated that they can at least help keep the fertility rate from dropping further.



13. In response to the increasing life expectancy, there is a general inclination towards raising the retirement age, in view of the improved health status of older people and their aspirations to remain actively engaged in the community. While changes to the retirement age involve a wide spectrum of considerations, it is common in the international arena to, in the context of pension entitlement, gradually raise the retirement age over an extended period of time. In Japan, the entitlement age to pensions has been raised from 60 to 65, and in the United States, from 65 to 67.

14. In addition, there is international competition for talent and professional skills among developed economies. Major cities such as London, New York and Tokyo have put in much effort to attract and retain qualified job seekers. These cities typically enjoy a free flow of talent from other parts of their countries. However, the inflow of Mainland talent into Hong Kong has been subject to regulatory control due to various compelling reasons such as concerns over the risk of opening a backdoor for Mainlanders to come to Hong Kong. Indeed, such control has been relaxed in recent years with the introduction of schemes such as the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talent and Professionals. Insofar as the inflow of talent from other countries is concerned, Hong Kong's regulatory framework is comparable to those adopted by many developed economies. Economically vibrant cities in general exhibit stable age distributions in the population. This is mainly achieved through immigration of working age groups looking for development opportunities, as well as emigration of older people seeking quieter and less costly life styles²¹. This continuous ebb and flow of the population is key to maintaining the cities' vibrancy. For instance, in major Mainland cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, municipal governments are proactive and flexible in offering preferential treatment to attract and retain overseas-trained Chinese students as well as other talent that support the pillar industries of individual cities.

15. In western countries, there is a growing emphasis on work-life balance and quality of life. The employees there are more inclined to take leave from work to attend to family matters, as well as to take refreshing breaks which will help sustain their productivity at work. Furthermore, employers and peers are more likely to accede to and be supportive of these needs. There are also more flexible and varied job arrangements for employees, so as to cater for a range of commitments and circumstances that change with different stages of their lives.

21 Richard Wong and Ka-fu Wong, HKU. *The importance of migration flow to Hong Kong's future*, November 2005

Chapter 2

What Are the Options for a Sustainable Population Policy for Hong Kong?

In considering options for a sustainable population policy to help Hong Kong maintain its vibrancy, we have to first consider whether there is an ideal or target population that best suits the unique circumstances and challenges facing Hong Kong.

2. The proposition of an optimal *quantitative* population for Hong Kong may be untenable, as this may to a large extent hinge on new developments on various fronts such as technology. On the other hand, we can explore the *qualitative* dimensions of the issue, which include **population composition**. It is time we consider an appropriate population composition for Hong Kong that would help enhance the city's competitiveness and attractiveness, as well as promote better quality of life for the population.

3. At the same time, we should be aware of the strong and vital inter-relationship between the population make-up and the economic structure of a city. We need to establish whether we wish the population composition to follow the economic structure or for the economic structure to be determined by the population composition.

4. The following sections set out the population policy's sustainability considerations from three perspectives: economy, society and environment. The options explored below are not intended to be an exhaustive list of possible solutions, nor are they the Council for Sustainable Development's preferred way forward. They are only some of the possible approaches, and are mentioned here to stimulate a meaningful and fruitful discussion.



(A) ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

5. Hong Kong is a small city with limited natural resources. The most valuable and important "resource" of the city is its human capital. The creativity and productivity of the population are integral to its economic development and vibrancy.

6. The shrinking labour force and ageing population in the coming decades are envisaged to impose much pressure on Hong Kong's public finances. This phenomenon translates into two major consequences - reduced GDP which means lower tax revenues, and increased demands on health, welfare and other related services funded by the public purse.

For instance, the health and social welfare portfolios are estimated to constitute 15.0% and 17.3% respectively of the recurrent Government expenditure in 2006-07. Further increases in their pies would imply less resources for other essential public services.

7. To sustain the economic competitiveness of Hong Kong in the international arena, there are calls for strategic solutions to our shrinking labour force, and to the gap and mismatch between the new economic structure and the labour force. Solutions should also cater for the social needs of the population. In devising a long-term population policy that will have a bearing on our development for decades to come, we have to be visionary and allow sufficient flexibility to cope with the future changes in our society.

8. There are various approaches to expanding and prolonging the productivity of our labour force.

(1) Enhancing the capacity of the labour force

Targeting current and potential members of the labour force, we can provide suitable **education and training** to enhance their capacity, so that they can meet the needs of the changing economy. For instance, the upgrading of our students' biliteracy and trilingual proficiency, as well as the broadening of their international horizon will help improve the quality of our labour force.

Hong Kong has no mandatory retirement age per se. Individual employers or institutions may work out the appropriate retirement age for their staff members. The labour force participation rates for the elderly aged 60-64 and aged 65-69 were 30.2% and 11.9% respectively in 2005. In view of the increased life expectancy of the population and the improved productivity of older generations, we may consider advocating the **extension of the population's working life** or gradually **raising the retirement age**.



(2) Unleashing hidden human capital

We should not overlook the hidden human capital in our society which, if unleashed, can help expand our productive labour force.

According to a survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department in October – December 2004²², some 214 900 persons aged 15 and over were economically inactive at the time of enumeration but were willing to take up jobs if being offered suitable employment. They represented 9.6% of the total economically inactive population aged 15 and above at the time of enumeration.

Separately, the overall male labour force participation rate in the first quarter of 2006 was 71.1%, but that for female was 52.1%²³ only, although the education attainment level of both the male and female populations has continued to rise.

Table 2.1 Hong Kong Population by Education Attainment and Sex, 1993 and 2005²⁴

	Male		Female	
	1993 (%)	2005 (%)	1993 (%)	2005 (%)
No school / Kindergarten	13.2	7.9	21.9	13.3
Primary	30.7	23.0	29.3	24.3
Lower secondary	18.5	19.0	13.7	15.5
Upper secondary	23.5	25.3	23.3	24.9
Matriculation	3.2	4.1	3.0	4.2
Tertiary : non-degree	4.6	6.8	4.9	6.3
Tertiary : degree	6.3	13.9	3.8	11.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes: Figures may not add up to the respective totals owing to rounding.

In view of the higher education attainment among the female population, it is imperative to utilise this hidden potential for the benefit of our community's development. Nonetheless, given the current employment structure in Hong Kong, a portion of the female population may find it difficult to participate in the labour force while accommodating their own personal goals and family needs. Employers and the business sector in particular should consider drawing reference from overseas, where there is more willingness to offer **flexible and varied employment opportunities** such as part-time jobs and job sharing, to cater for individual needs and thus maximize potential labour productivity. The availability of varied job opportunities may also encourage more elderly to stay in the labour force.

²² HKSARG Census and Statistics Department, *Special Topics Report No. 41: Desire of economically inactive persons for taking up jobs if being offered suitable employment, August 2005*

²³ HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

²⁴ Figures excluded foreign domestic helpers. HKSARG Census and Statistics Department

Table 2.2 Comparison with Selected Economies on Female Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPRs) (%)²⁵

Age	Japan (Mar 2006)	USA (2004)	Singapore (June 2005)	UK (Q1 2006 ⁽³⁾)	Hong Kong (Q1 2006)
15-19	15.9	43.8 ⁽¹⁾	14.4	(4)	11.6
20-24	68.6	70.5	73.6		70.7
25-29	74.5	73.1	86.6	76.1	86.2
30-34	61.8	74.0	78.6		79.3
35-39	62.8	74.5	69.9	79.1	71.6
40-44	71.1	76.7	66.1		66.6
45-49	72.1	78.2	63.6		61.7
50-54	70.1	74.5	54.0	70.1	52.1
55-59	59.0	65.0	38.0		36.4
60-64	38.5	45.4	19.6	11.3	14.7
65 and over	12.2	11.1	(2)		1.6
Overall	47.6	59.2	56.6	56.6	52.1

Notes: (1) For those aged 16-19

(2) The LFPRs for those aged 65-69, 70-74 and 75& over were 9.7, 4.2 and 1.2 respectively.

(3) Seasonally adjusted figures

(4) The LFPRs for those aged 16-17 and 18-24 were 48.7 and 69.8 respectively.

(3) Attracting talent

Apart from enhancing local labour productivity, another complementary solution is the **attraction of talent** from elsewhere. The international economy is highly globalised and interlinked. The need for quality talent is shared by all developed economies, and Hong Kong is faced with immense competition from countries and cities worldwide. Hong Kong's ability to attract talent from the Mainland and abroad as well as to retain local talent is dependent on the variety of development opportunities and the anticipated quality of life that our city is able to provide. Only population movements that include both healthy inflows and outflows of qualified job seekers will be beneficial to the economy.

The provision of more student exchange programmes at schools and universities, and the **attraction of students** from the Mainland and abroad will provide additional links to young people around the world. Hopefully, this will provide them with first-hand experience with living in Hong Kong and the type of development opportunities that are available. It is also important that we are able to induce Hong Kong people trained abroad to return and contribute to their home city.

(B) SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

9. Our population is our city's greatest asset. We must protect and enhance their social well-being to ensure dynamic and balanced development.

10. As mentioned above, it is imperative to unleash the hidden human potential among the female population. In fact, we have been witnessing a general increase in the female labour force participation rate. At the same time, the traditional expectation that women are responsible for the care of their families remains. As a result, women are often faced with making the difficult choice between career and family. Some of them may choose to leave the workforce after marriage or having children, while others opt for career instead of family and parenthood. Being “working mothers” is physically and mentally exhausting for most women as they are concurrently performing two highly demanding roles. Sometimes, the commitments and aspirations of these two roles may be in conflict, which is not conducive to better mental and physical health among the working female population. For the long-term sustainability of our population, there is a pressing need to implement policies to help women attain a *true equilibrium* between their career development, family commitments and parenthood aspirations.



11. In addition, it is important to address the social as well as financial needs of the elderly. Apart from their physical health which will have implications for the demand on public medical services, the promotion of psycho-social well-being is also an important component of healthy ageing. Having a purposeful life with continuous personal development, self-reliance, financial independence and harmonious relationships will all help to cultivate psycho-social well-being in older people.

12. At the same time, there is an increasingly prevalent number of singleton households in Hong Kong, including old people and young adults, who have minimal family network and hence significantly different social needs than the traditional family-oriented households. We should consider a framework which enhances the social well-being and meets the needs of this group of people.

13. In enhancing our population's quality of life, we may consider promoting healthier lifestyles across all segments of society and providing a dynamic social environment that is attractive to talent from the Mainland and abroad as well as our own citizens.

(1) Promoting healthier lifestyle

A **healthier lifestyle** entails healthy diets, proper physical exercise and a positive mental attitude, which contribute to improving overall personal health. An improved

state of health for the elderly and the community will also help lengthen the population's productive lifespan and reduce overall dependency on society, particularly with respect to medical and social services. Our social institutions should embrace and harness the experience and energy of the elderly for the benefit of both themselves and society. They may participate and contribute through various means, including but not limited to, freelance work, community service and volunteer work. Similarly, the needs of people with disabilities and chronic illnesses should also be addressed. We should not neglect or underestimate the positive contributions that this group of people can make.

Hong Kong is a dynamic and fast-paced economy. Long working hours and high job pressures are becoming more and more prevalent. The intense work pressure and lack of employment security in many cases may have been deterrents to childbearing decisions. We need to promote a culture of **work-life balance** to encourage people to pay heed to other elements in their lives, such as family, leisure, as well as cultural and recreational pursuits. The Government and some quarters of the private sector are exploring or implementing the five-day week operation, to help reduce the pressure of the working population and improve the quality of their family life. Besides, flexible job opportunities such as home-office arrangements and freelance work can be promoted. This will not only enhance the social well-being of the population, but may also expand the overall productive labour force in the long run.

An incremental **attitude change** towards family, parenthood, the role of men and women in the family, as well as complementary initiatives such as more childcare facilities for working parents, may also help stabilize the declining fertility rate in Hong Kong. Promoting the **importance of family** and the intangible benefits associated with parenthood may also help encourage decisions to bear children. However, we keep in mind the fact that personal choices regarding parenthood must be respected.



In view of increased life expectancy and with the aim of prolonging the population's productive lifespan, there have been suggestions that a **flexible life horizon** should be promoted. This concept means that societal and employment structures should allow people more flexibility and freedom to make individual lifestyle choices. For example, retirement age should be a personal decision rather than being bound by societal constraints. Similarly, the decision to temporarily leave the workforce to accommodate personal pursuits should not become an obstacle to re-entering the job market at a later stage.

(2) Providing an attractive social environment

Job seekers will take into account a city's overall attractiveness in choosing the place where they work and live. When we consider a suitable immigration or talent admission policy/scheme to meet our own economic needs, we should also be mindful of the social needs of target groups. A **socially-oriented immigration policy**, which addresses needs such as the admission of family members or key employees, could be advantageous in attracting qualified job seekers. For example, the provision of adequate international school places may be an important determining factor when talent from overseas decides whether to move to Hong Kong with his or her family. More family-friendly recreational activities and more diverse cultural programmes may also provide an enjoyable family life for the immigrants.



The population of Hong Kong is essentially ethnic Chinese. Expatriates and ethnic minorities make up a relatively small group. There is a need to build community consensus on and awareness of the advantages of **cultural diversity and ethnic inclusiveness**, as well as the benefits that immigrants and minorities bring to our economy. It is important that they feel welcomed and accepted by the local community.

(C) ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

14. Hong Kong's living environment is not only important to the quality of life of our own population, but also determines the attractiveness of our city to the talent from the Mainland and abroad. This also affects foreign investors' decisions to invest in Hong Kong.

15. The natural resources supporting the world's population are finite. The accumulation and formation of fossil fuels, for example, require a very long time. However, the world's development on various fronts in the past decades has used up our natural resources at a very fast pace.

16. Hong Kong has a relatively small amount of land and natural resources to accommodate a large and growing population. We are one of the most densely populated cities in the world, with our high-rise and closely packed urban landscape as a primary defining feature. To create high quality urban living space with easy access to essential services and public transport is a challenging task in Hong Kong. While our limited natural resources can be utilized for short-term economic growth, we must find ways to make the best use of them in order to satisfy our social needs and enhance Hong Kong's attractiveness, thus boosting our long-term competitiveness.

(1) Preserving our limited resources

In the past, the pressures of a fast-growing population, often closely related to the need to accommodate rapid economic growth, has led to congestion and overcrowding. This has implications not only for the natural environment, but also for our long-term competitiveness, psycho-social well-being and public health.

The **conservative use and preservation of our resources** are necessary for the sustainable development of our city and to support its economic and social growth. The decline in our population growth may, from a positive perspective, offer an opportunity for careful reflection, with a view to reducing the mounting pressure on our natural environment and resources.

(2) Creating an attractive living environment

A living environment that attracts talent from the Mainland and abroad as well as retains local skills will have to meet the increasing aspirations for lower living density and **improved living standards**. It has to appeal to a mobile generation looking for opportunities around the world, and at the same time support the needs of an ageing population. The public concern about Hong Kong's air quality will also have to be addressed properly.

Architecturally striking buildings are essential components in any attractive city landscape. These apart, **good urban design** providing natural air corridors and sunlight, revitalized neighbourhoods, green and innovative buildings, as well as interesting local heritage also contribute to an attractive living environment, and in turn higher overall quality of life and a healthier lifestyle.

The provision of **municipal services** to the population is also important. Hygiene conditions, law and order, social stability, and medical services at affordable costs are all imperative. The availability of cultural and recreational facilities and activities add an attractive dimension to city life.

(3) Building an accessible environment for all

Although the advancement of medical technology and the promotion of healthier lifestyles might help enhance the overall physical well-being of the elderly, it is envisaged that the number of elderly people requiring some type of mobility assistance will continue to rise. Hence, the planning and design of buildings and facilities should take into account the needs of the elderly in order to help them maintain independence and mobility.

We need an **accessible environment for all**. In future, buildings will hopefully be capable of catering for a wide range of accessibility needs, regardless of whether users are elderly, physically challenged or able-bodied.

Chapter 3

Inviting Responses from the Community

This document outlines the key issues pertinent to a sustainable population policy for Hong Kong as well as some possible options.

2. The Council for Sustainable Development would like to invite you to respond to this document, advising us on your views and choices on these issues and options. It is important that we have your views as these will have a long-term bearing on the sustainable development of our city not only for us but for our future generations as well.
3. Our analysis in Chapter 2 revolves around the three sustainability pillars of economic development, social harmony and environmental protection. However, the questions listed below are not organised under these three pillars. This is done to avoid confusion that may be caused by overlapping issues. For better organisation during ensuing discussions, the questions are grouped under four broad categories, namely Quality of Life, Family and Social Needs, Ageing and Retirement, as well as Nurturing, Attraction and Retention of Talent.
4. We welcome feedback on the issues and options presented in Chapter 2 and the questions below. We also look forward to receiving any further information, suggestions and questions that you might have relating to population policy. Your views will help shape the recommendations that the Council for Sustainable Development will give to the Government on the way forward for a sustainable population policy for Hong Kong.

QUESTIONS

Quality of Life

1. How satisfied are you with the quality of life in Hong Kong? Why? Are there any particular aspect which you would like to address in order to improve your quality of life?
2. Some suggest that instead of putting emphasis on increasing the population, we should consider ways to enhance the quality of life of the population, amidst a slower population growth rate. What are your opinions on this?



Family and Social Needs

3. What are the factors that would affect your decision on childbearing? What incentives do you consider effective in encouraging parenthood?
4. What do the notions of “family” and “parenthood” mean to you? Do you think there is a need to promote the importance of family and the intangible benefits associated with parenthood?
5. Do you consider a stronger emphasis on a family-friendly working environment and work-life balance culture would enhance or impair the economic competitiveness of Hong Kong? What is the role of the business and employer sector in this area? What specific initiatives would be helpful to promote such a culture?
6. How can our community better cater for the social needs of the increasing number of singleton households, including old people and young adults, who have minimal family network and hence significantly different social needs than the traditional family-oriented households?

Ageing and Retirement

7. How would you like to enjoy your elderly life? How would you like to continue to participate in and integrate with the society?
8. Do you think there is a need to advocate extending the working life of the population or raising the retirement age? What is the suitable age for retiring from work?
9. How would you perceive the notion of a “flexible life horizon”²⁶?



²⁶ The concept of “flexible life horizon” means that societal and employment structures should allow people more flexibility and freedom to make individual lifestyle choices.

Nurturing, Attraction and Retention of Talent

10. In considering options to meet society's needs, should we put more emphasis on nurturing and training our own population as well as attracting overseas-trained Hong Kong students to return, or should we focus on attracting talent from the Mainland and abroad?
11. How can we promote Hong Kong as a hub for talent? More diverse education and development opportunities? A more attractive living environment? More cultural diversity and ethnic inclusiveness?

FURTHER INFORMATION

5. We have tried to keep this document concise with the necessary information to facilitate an informed dialogue with you. If you would like to learn more about the related issues, you may wish to look at the following websites.

- Sustainable Development Strategy website
www.susdev.org.hk
- Census and Statistics Department: Hong Kong Statistics
www.censtatd.gov.hk/hong_kong_statistics/statistics_by_subject/index.jsp
- Immigration Department
www.immd.gov.hk
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) information on Family-friendly Policies
www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_34819_1_1_1_1_37419,00.html
- International Child, Youth and Family Policies
www.childpolicyintl.org
- Australian Government Family Assistance Office
www.familyassist.gov.au
- OECD information on Ageing Society
www.oecd.org/topic/0,2686,en_2649_37435_1_1_1_1_37435,00.html
- World Health Organisation Active Ageing: A Policy Framework
www.who.dk/document/hea/eactagepolframe.pdf
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong: Centre for Gerontology and Geriatrics
http://healthyageing.sph.cuhk.edu.hk/main_en.htm

CHANNELS FOR RESPONSE

6. In the coming months, the Council for Sustainable Development will work with the partner organisations from various sectors to implement a programme of events aimed at engaging people in the community to comment on the issues presented in this document. We will reach out to different stakeholders and citizens, hoping to gather opinions from a wide sector of the community.

7. In addition, we have an open and interactive channel of communication through the Sustainable Development Strategy website at www.susdev.org.hk. The website features the latest information on engagement events and an online discussion forum, where you are invited to exchange your views with other members of the public.

8. We welcome comments by post, fax and email, through the office of the Council Secretariat by **31 October 2006**. Please send in your views to –

Sustainable Development Unit

M/F, Murray Building

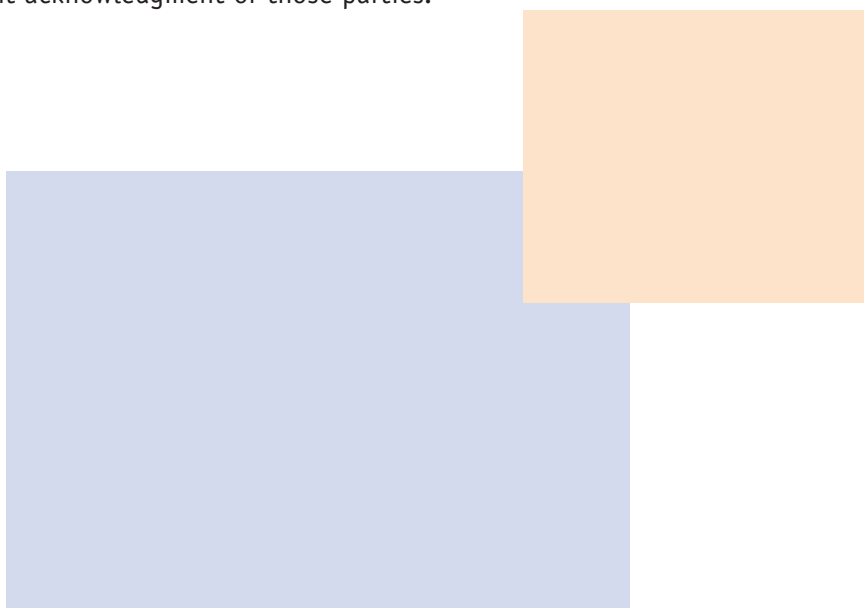
Garden Road, Central

Hong Kong

Fax: 3150 8168

E-mail: comments@susdev.org.hk

9. Unless parties making submissions to us specify a reservation, we shall assume that they have licensed us to reproduce and publish their views in whole or in part in any form and to use, adapt or develop any proposals put forward without the need for permission from or subsequent acknowledgment of those parties.



The Engagement Process of the Council for Sustainable Development

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

In order to move towards sustainable development, we need to make informed choices about how best to advance our economic and social development while protecting our natural environment.

2. The international community increasingly emphasises the importance of sustainability. In 1992, the United Nations Agenda 21 called for countries, cities and other administrations to develop their own strategy or agenda for sustainable development. A sustainable development strategy usually comprises a vision or direction, together with targets and programmes in areas that are important to the long-term sustainability of a society.

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” – Mrs Gro Harlem Brundtland in her report “Our Common Future” to the United Nations, 1987.

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

3. The Council for Sustainable Development was established in March 2003 to advise on, inter alia, the preparation of a sustainable development strategy for Hong Kong. During the initial term of the Council, it designed and implemented a five-stage engagement process to engage the community in a discussion on the sustainable way forward in the three pilot areas chosen for the exercise – solid waste management, renewable energy and urban living space.

4. In the first engagement process, the Council hosted four public forums, 11 regional public workshops, a Youth Forum and a Sustainable Development Strategy Summit. Total attendance at these events exceeded 1,400, and another 22,000 people were estimated to have visited the Council’s roving exhibition that toured various public locations. The Council received over 1,900 responses through the channels set up specifically to gather stakeholders’ views on the pilot areas. The Council was receptive to stakeholders’ comments, and put forward its recommendations to the Government. The first engagement process concluded with the issue of the Government’s First Sustainable Development Strategy for Hong Kong in May 2005. Thereafter, the Government and other stakeholders have been working on the plan of action, with a view to achieving sustainable objectives and targets set out in the Strategy.

SECOND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

5. The Council for Sustainable Development is working on the second engagement process. The five stages of the process are as follows –

I. Identifying Priority Areas

A public stakeholder forum was held in July 2005 to invite stakeholder views on the new priority areas. The Council considered the forum outcome and decided to take forward two priority areas – Better Air Quality and Population Policy.

A separate Study Group has been established to put together the information on the air quality issue, which will form an informed basis for the Council to decide on the engagement process on this priority area.

The current engagement will focus on the second priority area, that is, population policy.

II. Preparation of a document to invite responses

A stakeholder-led Support Group on Population Policy was set up to advise on the preparation of this Invitation and Response (IR) document. This document aims at providing the general public with the necessary information to support their informed discussion on the sustainable way forward on the issue.

III. Directly involving the wider community

The Support Group will arrange a series of forums, workshops and summits to engage the community in a dialogue on the sustainable options for our population policy. Partner organisations will assist in engaging a wide sector of stakeholders to gather their views. Other communication channels such as online discussion forum will also be available.

IV. Reporting

The Strategy Sub-committee of the Council, with the help of the Support Group, will assess the community response and present a report to the Council. The areas of consensus and where there are conflicting views will be highlighted. The Council will then advise the Government on the sustainable way forward for the population policy.

V. The Government to act

The Government will take into consideration the Council's advice and publish a strategy document on the population policy, which will map out its strategic objectives, targets and plan of action with a view to achieving sustainable outcomes.

6. The Council will continue to review and repeat the engagement process with other priority areas which are of concern to the general community.

Terms of Reference and Membership of the Council for Sustainable Development

Terms of Reference

- a. To advise the Government on the priority areas it should address in promoting sustainable development;
- b. To advise on the preparation of a sustainable development strategy for Hong Kong that will integrate economic, social and environmental perspectives;
- c. To facilitate community participation in the promotion of sustainable development in Hong Kong through various means, including the award of grants from the Sustainable Development Fund; and
- d. To promote public awareness and understanding of the principles of sustainable development.

Membership

Chairman: **Chief Secretary for Administration**

Vice-chairman: **Dr. Edgar Cheng, G.B.S., J.P.**

Members: **Dr. Lily Chiang**

The Honourable Choy So-yuk, J.P.

Mr. Barrie Cook

Ms. Christine Fang, J.P.

Mr. Hans Michael Jebsen, B.B.S.

Mr. Thomas Kwok, J.P.

Mr. Michael Lai, J.P.

Professor Lam Kin-che, J.P.

The Honourable Andrew Liao, S.B.S., S.C., J.P.

Ir. Otto Poon, B.B.S.

Mr. Tai Hay-lap, B.B.S., J.P.

Professor Tsui Lap-chee

Secretary for Economic Development and Labour

Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works

Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Terms of Reference and Membership of the Strategy Sub-committee

Terms of Reference

- a. To assist the Council for Sustainable Development with the formulation of a Sustainable Development Strategy for Hong Kong;
- b. To engage stakeholders and the community and implement a consultation programme as agreed by the Council for Sustainable Development with a view to ensuring that the Sustainable Development Strategy is inclusive and widely accepted by the community; and
- c. To report regularly to the Council for Sustainable Development on progress with the formulation of the Sustainable Development Strategy.

Membership

Chairman: **Ir. Otto Poon, B.B.S.**

Members: **Dr. Lily Chiang**
The Honourable Choy So-yuk, J.P.
Mr. Hans Michael Jebsen, B.B.S.
Professor Lam Kin-che, J.P.
Dr. Chan Wai-kwan, J.P. *
Ms. Anne Copeland Chiu *
Mr. Chua Hoi-wai *
Mr. Albert Lai *
Mr. Chandran Nair *
Mr. Ali Tuet *
Ms. Luciana Wong *
Professor Wong Siu-lun, B.B.S., J.P.*

* Co-opted Members

Terms of Reference and Membership of the Support Group on Population Policy

Terms of Reference

- a. To identify key issues relevant to Hong Kong's long-term sustainability in the priority area, with appropriate reference to international experience and best practice.
- b. To collect relevant background information (with reference to local and international experience) and compile an Invitation and Response document.
- c. To design and implement the public involvement stage of the engagement process for public discussion of the Invitation and Response document and related issues.
- d. To present the Invitation and Response document to the public and to encourage and facilitate interactive discussion by stakeholders with a view to building consensus among major groups.
- e. To receive and collate responses from stakeholders, with a view to making proposals to the Strategy Sub-committee and Council for Sustainable Development.

Membership

Convenor: **Professor Wong Siu-lun, B.B.S., J.P.**

Members: **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan, J.P.**

Mr. Chua Hoi-wai

Dr. Sue Lo

Miss Alice Mak Mei-kuen

Dr. Peter K.S. Pun, S.B.S.

Mr. Wong Wang-tai

Dr. Paul Yip

Representative from Central Policy Unit

Representative from Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Representative from Security Bureau

Representative from Home Affairs Bureau

