

# LCQ7: Attracting Mainland residents to visit Hong Kong

Following is a question by the Hon Duncan Chiu and a written reply by Acting Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Raistlin Lau, in the Legislative Council today (March 20):

Question:

According to the information released by the Government on the 18th of last month, during the eight-day Chinese New Year Golden Week of the Mainland from the 10th to the 17th of last month, the Immigration Department preliminarily recorded a total of around 1.436 million visitors to Hong Kong and, among them, 1.255 million Mainland visitors came to Hong Kong through various sea, land and air control points, representing an average of about 157 000 Mainland visitors entering Hong Kong per day. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of a breakdown of the aforesaid number of Mainland visitors by province (including the Guangdong Province) and the relevant percentages;

(2) of the following information on Mainland visitors to Hong Kong during the aforesaid period: the average number of days for which they stayed, per capita spending, the proportion of overnight visitors, and the number of visitors who travelled to other countries or regions to continue their journeys;

(3) of the respective changes in the figures in (1) and (2) compared to the figures for the Chinese New Year Golden Weeks of the Mainland in 2018 and 2023; and

(4) whether it will conduct an in-depth study on the situation of Mainland visitors to Hong Kong during the Chinese New Year, including the changes in visitors from various provinces, as well as their travel patterns, spending situation. and, in the light of the relevant findings, formulate afresh appropriate tourism-related policies and measures to attract more Mainland residents to visit Hong Kong, extend their stays in Hong Kong and promote their spending; if so, of the specific details and work schedule; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In respect of the question raised by the Hon Duncan Chiu, having consulted the Immigration Department, the reply is as follows:

(1) to (3) During the eight-day Chinese New Year Golden Week of the Mainland

from February 10 to 17, 2024, the Immigration Department (ImmD) recorded a total of around 1.436 million inbound visitors to Hong Kong, among which around 1.255 million were Mainland visitors coming to Hong Kong through various sea, land and air control points. The ImmD does not maintain a breakdown of figures concerning Mainland inbound visitors by provinces.

According to the results of the annual Departing Visitor Survey conducted by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) in 2018 and 2023, Mainland visitor arrivals' information regarding average percentage of overnight visitors, average duration of stay in Hong Kong, per capita spending and visitors in transit through Hong Kong to another country or region is set out below:

Mainland visitor arrivals	2018	2023
(i) Percentage of Mainland overnight visitors	39 per cent	46 per cent
(ii) Average duration of stay in Hong Kong	3 days	3.5 days
(iii) Per capita spending of Mainland overnight visitors	\$7,000	\$6,500
(iv) Visitors in transit through Hong Kong to another country or region	18 per cent	20 per cent

Regarding the figures during the Chinese New Year Golden Week of the Mainland, the sample size of the Departing Visitor Survey conducted by the HKTB during the Chinese New Year Golden Week of the Mainland is not sufficient for comparison.

(4) The Government has been keeping a close watch on the situation of Mainland visitors coming to Hong Kong, including their travel preferences, habits and consumption patterns, in order to provide good travel experiences to Mainland visitors.

The HKTB has conducted a series of analyses on Mainland visitor arrivals during this year's Chinese New Year holidays of the Mainland, including visitors' common modes of transport, reasons for visiting Hong Kong and major drawing factors of Hong Kong. In terms of means of transportation, the most frequently used means by Mainland visitors was High Speed Rail, accounting for more than 20 per cent of all Mainland visitor arrivals. The series of mega events held during the Chinese New Year of the Mainland holidays also helped attract Mainland visitors. According to the results of the Departing Visitor Survey conducted by the HKTB, 55 per cent of Mainland visitors came to Hong Kong for the celebratory activities held during the Chinese New Year holidays of the Mainland. Visitors agreed that Hong Kong was full of festive ambience and attached importance to traditional culture while remaining to be a vibrant international city. In addition, tourism with themes on arts, culture and city walks were popular among Mainland visitors, many of whom came to Hong Kong specifically for visiting photo hotspots as well as arts

and cultural attractions.

The Government and the HKTB will continue to promote new thematic travel experiences anchoring different seasons, festivals and mega events which integrates elements of Chinese and Western arts, pop culture, wine and dine experiences, outdoor explorations, active sports, etc., to cater for the interest of various visitor segments while promoting immersive in-depth tourism activities in the light of the new travel trends. We will also encourage the travel trade to launch more tourism products with diversified portfolios.

Regarding arts and culture, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau has launched "Art March" as a brand for the first time this year to promote mega arts and cultural events organised, subsidised, or supported by the Government, providing residents and visitors with an enriching, colourful cultural and arts journey and generating greater economic benefits through the mega arts and cultural events. The HKTB will promote a series of world-class arts events through its "Arts in Hong Kong" year-round promotional platform to showcase to the world Hong Kong's arts appeal. For instance, in this year's promotion, the HKTB has partnered with Mainland arts experts and media to promote various world-class arts events to consolidate Hong Kong's role as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. The HKTB, in partnership with Xiaohongshu, also produces and recommends contents for arts and cultural maps and photo hotspots on its official Mainland social media accounts, including WeChat, Xiaohongshu, Douyin and Weibo. The HKTB also invites key opinion leaders (KOLs) on these platforms to visit Hong Kong to jointly promote Hong Kong's arts and cultural tourism appeal. Various airlines and Mainland travel agencies also target the affluent young Mainland customers with high spending power and roll out travel packages with hotel and attraction spots' tickets to stimulate their spending in town.

In terms of local culture, in addition to continuously enhancing the contents of the HKTB's "Hong Kong Neighbourhoods" programme, the HKTB launched a half-year promotion on Temple Street in mid-December 2023, injecting new momentum to the community with the themes "A taste of Temple Street" and "Captivating street decor" to attract visitors and residents to take photos and discover in-depth authentic Hong Kong experiences.

In terms of promotion, the HKTB strategically distributes customised contents to designated customers at a suitable timing through different platforms to drive Greater Bay Area visitors to visit and spend in Hong Kong, including sending out weekly notifications featuring travel tips in Hong Kong and introducing mega events of the week and recreation hotspots, so as to boost visitors' interest in visiting Hong Kong on selected Mainland media platforms, including news, transport information portals and social media platforms before every weekend. In addition, the HKTB also invites different famous Mainland KOLs to Hong Kong every week to share their first-hand experiences to help attract visitors to Hong Kong. Moreover, the HKTB cooperates with well-known Mainland lifestyle guides to send out the latest information on offers to visitors to encourage their spending in Hong Kong.

We will continue to keep a close watch on the visitors' interest and changes in their travel patterns so that we can update and enhance our tourism products to attract more visitors to the city and drive the tourism development of Hong Kong.