

Number of overseas and Mainland companies in HK continues to grow

The number of business operations in Hong Kong with parent companies overseas and in Mainland China climbed to 8 754 in 2018, compared to 8 225 a year ago, according to the results of a joint survey conducted by Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK) and the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD).

Results of the 2018 Annual Survey of Companies in Hong Kong with Parent Companies Located Outside Hong Kong show that the 8 754 respondent companies comprised 1 530 operating as regional headquarters (RHQs), 2 425 as regional offices (ROs) and 4 799 as local offices (LOs).

In terms of jobs, the number of people engaged by the overseas and Mainland companies reached 485 000, compared to 443 000 in 2017.

By sector, import/export trade, wholesale and retail topped the list (3 950), followed by financing and banking (1 806), and professional, business and education services (1 262).

Survey definitions

Regional Headquarters: an office with parent company located outside Hong Kong which has managerial control over offices and/or operations in the region (i.e. Hong Kong plus one other place or more).

Regional Office: an office with parent company located outside Hong Kong which co-ordinates offices and/or operations in the region (i.e. Hong Kong plus one other place or more).

Local Office: an office with parent company located outside Hong Kong which only takes charge of the business in Hong Kong (and nowhere else).

Survey methodology

This survey, the response to which is voluntary in nature, refers to the position as at June 1, 2018. Owing to the lack of a complete sampling frame of companies covered in the survey, the number of RHQs, ROs and LOs enumerated in each survey round represents only the best snapshot that could be taken at the time of the survey. Changes between years in the number of RHQs, ROs and LOs may be affected by the continuous improvement in the sampling frame of companies and response rate. Specifically, the sampling frame for the 2018 survey has been enriched by including additional information obtained from the Companies Registry, consulates and chambers of commerce of overseas countries in Hong Kong. The scope of the survey has also been expanded in the 2018 survey to cover companies with parent companies located outside Hong Kong but not representing their parent companies,

although the effect of such change on the survey results is relatively insignificant. Furthermore, changes between years in the total number of people engaged by the companies concerned may also be affected by the response patterns of companies of different employment sizes. With all the limitations mentioned above, the survey results should be interpreted with some caution.

The survey results will be presented in greater detail in the "Report on 2018 Annual Survey of Companies in Hong Kong with Parent Companies Located outside Hong Kong" published by the C&SD. The publication will be available for download free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp360.jsp?productCode=B1110004) as from end-October 2018.

Users who have enquiries about the survey results may contact the Business Expectation Statistics Section of the C&SD (Tel: 3586 3015; email: regional-offices@censtat.gov.hk).