

[“Quarterly Report on General Household Survey” for July to September 2024 published](#)

The "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey" for July to September 2024 is now available for access and download.

The report contains statistics on labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment for the third quarter of 2024. It also contains detailed analyses of the characteristics of different categories of members of the labour force, including their age, sex, educational attainment, employment status, occupation, industry, hours worked per week and monthly employment earnings, etc. Information on duration of unemployment for the unemployed is also presented.

Users can browse and download the report at the website of the Census and Statistics Department (www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=B1050001&scode=200).

The summary of broad survey findings published in the report is shown in Table 1 attached. Enquiries about the contents of the report can be directed to the General Household Survey Section (3), Census and Statistics Department (Tel: 2887 5508 or email: ghs@censtatd.gov.hk).

[HKMA launches Digital Bond Grant Scheme](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) launched today (November 28) the Digital Bond Grant Scheme (DBGS), which was announced in the 2024 Policy Address.

The DBGS aims to promote the development of the digital securities market and encourage broader adoption of tokenisation technology in capital market transactions. Subject to the satisfaction of relevant eligibility requirements under the DBGS, a maximum grant of HK\$2.5 million will be offered to each eligible digital bond issuance in Hong Kong.

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Following industry consultation, the HKMA has set out the details of the DBGS in the [Guideline on the Digital Bond Grant Scheme](#). The DBGS will start

accepting applications today, with an initial period of three years.

inSight: [Eddie Yue on Project Evergreen: From concept to application](#)

[Speech by SJ at opening ceremony of 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Prosecutors \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, at the opening ceremony of the 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference of the International Association of Prosecutors today (November 28):

The Honorable Chief Executive John Lee, Vice President of the IAP (International Association of Prosecutors) First Deputy Prosecutor General Tong Jianming (First Deputy Prosecutor General of the Supreme People's Procuratorate of the People's Republic of China, Class One Grand Prosecutor), Deputy Commissioner Fang Jianming (Deputy Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region), Deputy Head Chen Feng (Deputy Head of the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region), Secretary-General of the IAP Roel Dona, Attorneys General, Prosecutors General, Consuls-General, delegates, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the International Association of Prosecutors for giving Hong Kong the valuable opportunity of hosting the 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference. I also extend a very warm welcome to delegates and representatives of prosecutorial agencies across the world who are joining us for this meaningful event.

The International Association of Prosecutors, or "IAP" in short, was established in 1995, and is the only worldwide organisation of prosecutors. Today, it has more than 183 organisational members from over 177 jurisdictions. Hong Kong was elected to organisational membership of the IAP in 2001.

Since joining the IAP, Hong Kong has played an active role. At present, Mr Grenville Cross SC, a former Director of Public Prosecution of Hong Kong,

is the Vice-Chairman of the Management Committee of the Senate of the IAP. Back in November 2004, Hong Kong hosted the 2nd Asia and Pacific Regional Conference. This was followed by the hosting of the 12th Annual Conference and General Meeting in September 2007.

And today, we gather together again to open the IAP's 11th Asia and Pacific Regional Conference. 20 years ago, representatives from some 14 jurisdictions attended the 2nd Regional Conference. This time, we have around 100 distinguished guests, senior government officials, legal professionals and experts, and representatives coming from around 30 jurisdictions and Hong Kong. Even though this is a regional conference of the Asia and Pacific, we have friends from the Middle East, Europe, Africa, North and South America.

This conference, like other conferences of the IAP, is significant because it serves as an important forum for members to consider collectively how we may better achieve the following purposes and objectives of the IAP, namely, "To improve international co-operation to combat crime" and, in particular, "to promote international co-operation in gathering and providing evidence; in tracking, seizing and forfeiting the proceeds of serious crime; and in the prosecution of fugitive criminals" as well as "to promote speed and efficiency in such international co-operation."

Hong Kong's strong commitment to support and participate in the work of the IAP is beyond doubt. In Hong Kong, prosecutors must follow the Prosecution Code promulgated by the Department of Justice. The Standards of Professional Responsibility and Statement of the Essential Duties and Rights of Prosecutors of the IAP adopted in 1999 are expressly mentioned and appear as Appendix II in the Code. Paragraph 5.1 of the Standards stresses the importance of international co-operation to ensure the fairness and effectiveness of prosecutions.

Hong Kong has signed bilateral mutual legal assistance agreements with 33 jurisdictions. In addition, 13 multilateral conventions targeting serious crimes which provide for mutual legal assistance have been applied to Hong Kong. And even in the absence of any applicable bilateral agreement or multilateral convention, mutual legal assistance may still be provided on the basis of a reciprocity undertaking provided by the requesting place.

We live in a world where technology is advancing at an unprecedented rapid pace. But while our society benefits substantially from modern technology, so too do criminals. New technologies enable traditional crimes to be committed by new methods, and peoples' heavy reliance on technology is constantly being exploited by criminals for illicit gains. Furthermore, crimes in this technological age are very often transboundary. It is clear that crimes featuring the use of modern technology have created novel challenges to prosecutors. For example, it can be difficult to identify the criminals or their whereabouts; and even if they can be identified and found, it can be difficult to bring them to justice in the relevant jurisdiction. How to preserve, transfer and adduce digital or technological evidence properly before the court can be challenging. To trace and recover the proceeds of crime in order to ensure that criminals will not benefit from

their wrongdoings and victims can recover their loss is also a daunting task.

Even though we are coming from different jurisdictions having different criminal justice systems, we face the common question of how to maintain and promote the effectiveness of prosecutions in the light of these new challenges. International co-operation has become even more essential; and one important aspect is the sharing of knowledge and experience. That is why we have decided to select the theme of our Conference to be "Effective Prosecution Service in the Technological Age". Over the course of the next two days, there will be five plenary sessions in which distinguished speakers will lead us to explore various topics including law reform to combat technological crimes, the changing landscape and challenges of decentralisation from social media to virtual assets, strengthening mutual legal assistance arrangements, obtaining and handling digital evidence, and the impact of technological advancements on criminal evidence and procedure.

Modern technology is, of course, not inherently evil; it becomes evil only when it is misused and abused by criminals. Our overriding objective is not only to prevent, suppress and punish such misuses and abuses but also to outwit the criminals by becoming better users of modern technology, and make modern technology our close ally in our war against the criminals. I am confident that with a strong sense of determination, solidarity and co-operation among the prosecutors from around the world, we shall prevail.

Before I conclude, I wish to remind ourselves on one important point. While the theme of this conference is focused on effective prosecutions, we must never lose sight of the crucial importance that prosecutions must always be fair. While we may have to change our law, practice and procedure as well as to enhance international co-operation in different ways in order to meet the challenges posed by crimes in this technological age, fundamental principles governing fairness of prosecutions must not be compromised. After all, the rule of law requires that prosecutions must be both fair and effective.

On this note, I wish this Conference every success, and that all of you will have a fruitful and enjoyable time in Hong Kong. Thank you very much.

[Speech by CE at HKGCC International Business Summit \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at the HKGCC International Business Summit today (November 28):

Ms Agnes Chan (Chairman of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce), Consuls-General, business leaders from around the world, distinguished

guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It's a pleasure to be here with you, once again, at the International Business Summit.

My congratulations to the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce for organising this Summit, now into its milestone 30th year. Established in 1861, the Chamber's roots run long and deep in the Hong Kong economy and community. Throughout the years, the Chamber remained committed to creating exchange platforms for different sectors, and this Summit is testament to your dedicated efforts in fostering exchange.

In an ever-changing world, this year's Summit brings together some 400 prominent and influential professionals from Hong Kong, the Mainland and around the world. You're here to discuss the future of business, and Hong Kong's place in that future.

The Summit's theme is "Shifting Economic Center of Gravity: Hong Kong's Role". As today's programme underlines, more and more businesses are turning to new areas of growth in emerging markets, such as ASEAN states and the Middle East – Hong Kong companies, and the Hong Kong SAR Government, are very much among them.

Under the "one country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong has long been a "super connector" and "super value-adder", creating opportunities in both traditional and emerging markets. It helps that we have long proved ourselves in international trade and co-operation, and continue to do so.

This year, for example, we were once again ranked the world's freest economy. And we were named the world's third-largest financial centre in the latest Global Financial Centres Index. Earlier this year, the World Competitiveness Yearbook ranked Hong Kong fifth among 67 economies. That's up from seventh last year. And the Index covers political, cultural and other dimensions, as well as GDP and productivity.

In short, Hong Kong remains among the most liberal and easiest places in the world to do business.

These, and many other advantages, make Hong Kong a natural bridge for ASEAN and Middle East businesses and investors looking to Mainland markets and opportunities.

Hong Kong, of course, has long enjoyed mutually beneficial trade and economic relations with ASEAN. Indeed, ASEAN is our second-largest goods partner, with total trade reaching US\$145 billion last year.

In 2022, ASEAN was our sixth-largest source of inward direct investment and third-largest destination of our outward investment. Hong Kong, let me add, is home to about 650 offices with parent companies located in ASEAN.

And we expect those numbers to grow in the coming years, given the

ASEAN-Hong Kong, China Free Trade Agreement and related Investment Agreement, both of which came into force in 2021.

Our FTA with ASEAN also made possible the Economic and Technical Cooperation Work Programme, set up for best practice sharing and capacity building.

I am pleased to say that the Hong Kong SAR Government supports an extension of the Work Programme, with enhanced financial contribution. This will strengthen our people-to-people ties and enhance the region's overall competitiveness.

Talking about people-to-people ties, I led a high-level delegation to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam this summer, following my visit last year to Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Nearly 90 co-operation documents were signed between Hong Kong and these economies, covering a welcome variety of industries, areas and institutions. Each in its own discrete way injects fresh impetus into our long-term collaboration with the member states of ASEAN.

We have, let me add, relaxed the criteria for Cambodian, Lao, Myanmar and Vietnamese nationals applying for multiple-entry visas to Hong Kong, either for travel or business. We have also extended their validity period from two to three years.

And we will provide self-service immigration clearance for invited visitors here for business, development and other activities from ASEAN countries, making it more convenient for our ASEAN friends to come to Hong Kong.

I believe that the next natural step in our growing ties with ASEAN is for Hong Kong to become a member of RCEP, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. RCEP, the world's largest FTA, includes all 10 member states of ASEAN.

I am pleased to note the RCEP Joint Committee's adoption in September of an accession protocol for new members. That milestone underlines RCEP's determination to be open and inclusive.

As a champion of free and multilateral trade, Hong Kong is fully prepared to join RCEP. Doing so will boost our ties in trade and benefit companies and investors throughout the nations of ASEAN and RCEP. And I continue to count on business leaders like your good selves – people who know Hong Kong well and appreciate the value that Hong Kong can add to RCEP – to speak up in support of our accession bid.

We are also expanding our connection with other economies. The Middle East is among our priorities.

I visited the Middle East in February last year and, since then, we have

been reaching out to governments, businesses and investors throughout the region.

Developments are encouraging. Our merchandise trade with member states of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf grew 15 per cent from 2022 to 2023 year on year. And we signed an Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement with Bahrain in March, Hong Kong's third IPPA with a Middle East country, following agreements with Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

In my Policy Address last month, I introduced various measures to create a welcome environment for Middle East and ASEAN visitors, including providing information at the airport in Arabic, compiling a list of restaurants offering halal food, and encouraging more commercial establishments to provide worship facilities in hotels. We want our visitors from the Middle East and from ASEAN to feel at home here in Hong Kong.

We are making progress, too, in Latin America. Earlier this month, I visited the beautiful city of Lima, the capital of Peru, for the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting. While I was there, I witnessed the signing of a free trade agreement between Hong Kong and Peru.

With a burgeoning consumer market and continuing infrastructure development, Peru presents tremendous market potential.

In 2012, we signed an FTA with Chile. Adding Peru now will reinforce the message to other Latin American economies that Hong Kong is ready, and eager, to build closer economic ties throughout the region.

When it comes to new centres of economic growth, our country certainly shines on the global stage. With our prowess in professional services, Hong Kong is the place for a world of investors to grasp the opportunities of the Mainland market.

We recently signed an amendment to the Agreement on Trade in Services under CEPA, the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement. The revised agreement will offer expanded liberalisation measures across several service sectors where Hong Kong enjoys competitive advantages.

Hong Kong-invested enterprises will be allowed to adopt Hong Kong law and choose Hong Kong for arbitration in the GBA.

And the three-year requirement for business operations in Hong Kong to qualify as a service supplier for most sectors has been removed. That will allow companies and entrepreneurs from around the world to use Hong Kong as their base for exploring the Mainland market, enjoying preferential CEPA treatment much faster.

To tap into the Mainland market, you need to look no further than the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, a cluster city development that

brings together Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Southern China.

With a population of 86 million, the GBA has a combined economic output of nearly US\$2 trillion last year, rivalling the world's 10th largest economy. Its potential is not to be missed. And Hong Kong is your gateway to this economic powerhouse.

That's why earlier this week, I led a high-level delegation to visit Mainland cities of the GBA. I'm glad to note that Chairman Agnes Chan was part of the delegation too, among other prominent business leaders from Hong Kong. We all work very hard, with ease and without ease. There, we promoted to our Mainland counterparts the wide range of professional services on offer in Hong Kong, as we go global and seize a world of opportunities together.

And more good news. As announced in my Policy Address, the multiple-entry visa for foreign staff of Hong Kong-registered companies has been extended to a maximum of five years. Meanwhile, the new Mainland Travel Permit for non-Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, launched by the Central Authorities in July, is well received in the community. Some 20 000 permits have been issued to non-Chinese permanent residents in our city. With the permit, our large population of permanent residents with foreign nationalities could more conveniently visit the Mainland for business, leisure, or visiting their families and friends.

These are just a few of the advantages Hong Kong can offer to overseas investors. They highlight our singular advantage under "one country, two systems". In so many ways, Hong Kong is your great connector.

It helps, too, that we can count on our Hong Kong chambers and institutions, and so many other organisations and individuals – people like you, every one of you – who believe in Hong Kong, in our heritage, in what we've accomplished and in the flourishing future we are working to realise, for us all.

My thanks, once again, to the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce for organising this essential gathering.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you a rewarding Summit and the best of business and health in the year to come.

Thank you.

[Special traffic and transport](#)

arrangements for holding of parade in Causeway Bay this Sunday

The Transport Department (TD) today (November 28) reminded members of the public that the following special traffic and transport arrangements will be implemented in Causeway Bay to facilitate the holding of a parade this Sunday (December 1):

Traffic arrangements

The following road sections will be temporarily closed from 2.30pm to 4.30pm on that day, and traffic diversion will be implemented:

- (i) East Point Road;
- (ii) Great George Street;
- (iii) the section of Kingston Street westbound between Paterson Street and Gloucester Road; and
- (iv) the section of Paterson Street between Kingston Street and Great George Street.

Depending on the on-site crowd and traffic conditions, the Police may consider further temporary closure of roads and traffic diversions in the vicinity of Causeway Bay near Victoria Park, including Sugar Street, Cleveland Street, Kingston Street (eastbound), Gloucester Road and Moreton Terrace flyover.

Public transport service arrangements

- (i) In connection with the above-mentioned road closure arrangements, Citybus route Nos. 2, 99, cross-harbour route Nos. 102, 106, 307, All operating via the affected road sections will be temporarily diverted, and the associated bus stops located within the affected areas will be suspended or relocated accordingly;
- (ii) Hong Kong Island green minibus route No. 25 will be temporarily diverted, and the terminal point at Paterson Street will be relocated to Tung Lo Wan Road opposite St Paul's Convent School; and
- (iii) The public light bus stands at Sugar Street and Paterson Street and the taxi and cross-harbour taxi stands at Paterson Street will be suspended from 2.30pm to 4.30pm on that day.

For details of the special traffic and public transport arrangements, members of the public may visit the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk) or its mobile application "HKeMobility". Passengers may also refer to the passenger notices displayed by the relevant public transport operators.

The TD and the Police will closely monitor the traffic situation and

implement appropriate measures when necessary. The public should pay attention to the latest traffic news through radio, television or "HKeMobility".