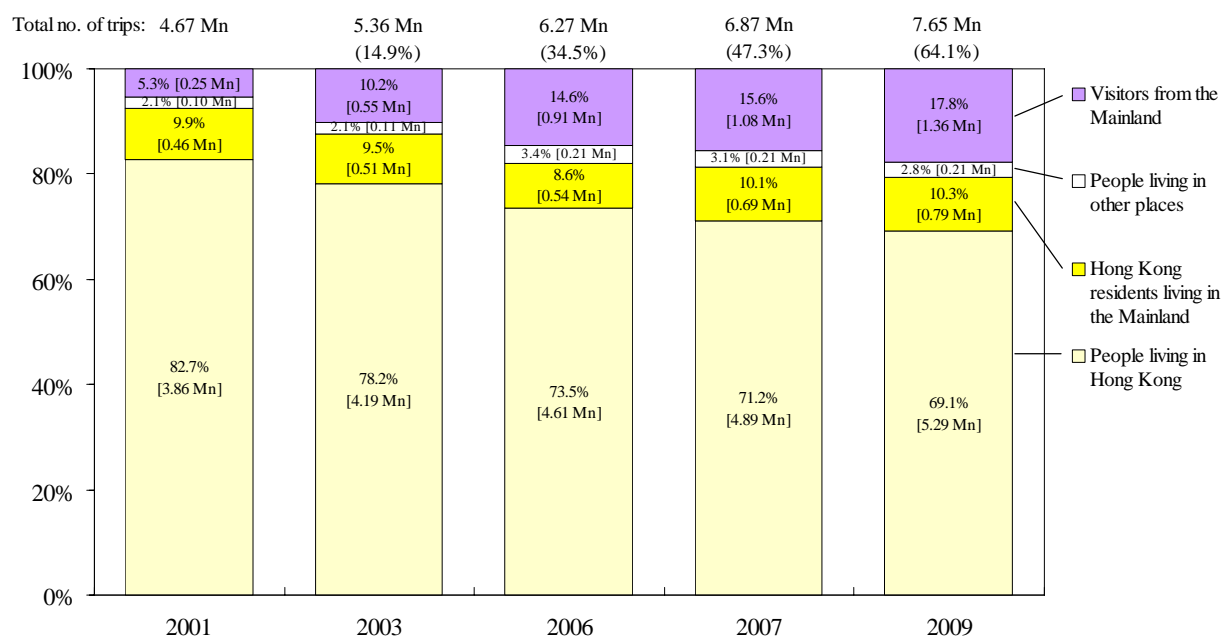


Box 3.2**Characteristics of cross-boundary trip makers**

The ever increasing socio-economic links between Hong Kong and the Mainland, in particular the Pearl River Delta (PRD) region, have been providing a boost to cross-boundary travel activities over the years. With a view to having a better understanding of these trips, the Planning Department commissioned the Cross-boundary Travel Survey 2009 (the Survey) to collect information about the trip makers, including their places of residence and the purpose of their trips, and subsequently released a report entitled *Northbound Southbound 2009* (the Report).

During the two-week period covered by the Survey, there were 7.7 million cross-boundary passenger trips, representing a significant 64% increase over 2001. Among the total, trips made by people living in Hong Kong increased by 37% between 2001 and 2009, but its share in the total number of trips declined from 82.7% to 69.1%. Over the period, trips made by Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland grew markedly by 70% to 0.8 million trips, and their share rose from 9.9% to 10.3%. Meanwhile, trips made by visitors from the Mainland witnessed the sharpest gain, by 452% to 1.4 million. Their share in the total number of cross-boundary trips, at 17.8% in 2009, represented a sharp rise over the share of 5.3% in 2001. The trip purposes of the different major groups of trip maker are examined below.

Cross-boundary passenger trips by trip makers' usual place of residence

Notes : Figures in brackets refer to the cumulative change from 2001.

Figures in square brackets refer to number of cross-boundary passenger trips.

People living in Hong Kong

The Report revealed that leisure was the most common purpose of the cross-boundary trips made by people living in Hong Kong. The number of such trips surged by 84% over 2001 to 3.0 million in 2009, lifting the share from 42.4% to 56.8%. Conceivably, the wide variety of entertainment and leisure activities available, and the improving quality yet competitive prices of the services, have enhanced the attractiveness of Shenzhen and many other cities in Guangdong as a leisure destination.

Box 3.2 (Cont'd)

Trips for work and business purposes combined have dropped persistently since 2003. The number of such trips in 2009, at 1.1 million, was 17% lower than in 2001, and its corresponding share dropped to 21.1% from 34.7%. Conceivably, many Hong Kong employers and employees might find it more cost effective to station in the Mainland rather than to make frequent trips between the two places. The gradual improvement in the physical and living environment in the Mainland has made this an increasingly workable option. Moreover, the advancement in information technology (e.g. emails, instant message computer programme) has facilitated more efficient cross-boundary operational monitoring and management, thereby reducing the need for traveling.

Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland

Most of these trip makers travelled to Hong Kong for work, accounting for 39.5% of the total. Yet the number of such trips rose by only 23% between 2001 and 2009. Over the period, trips for schooling and leisure purposes recorded much faster growth, of 255% and 263% respectively. With the significant improvement in cross-boundary infrastructure and boundary-crossing facilities (e.g. introduction of the 24-hour passenger crossing at the Lok Ma Chau (LMC) Control Point in 2003, opening of the Shenzhen Bay Port and LMC Spur Line Control Point in 2007), more Hong Kong residents, especially those with daily socio-economic activities in northern part of the New Territories, might find it attractive to move to the Mainland given the lower cost of living there. Indeed, most trip makers in this group (60.4% of total) ended their trips in Northeast or Northwest New Territories.

Mainland visitors

With the introduction of the Individual Visit Scheme, the number of cross-boundary leisure trips made by Mainland visitors to Hong Kong grew by eight times, from 90 000 trips in 2001 to 811 000 trips in 2009. These trips accounted for almost 60% of the cross-boundary trips made by Mainlanders. Most of the remaining 40% Mainland visitors came to Hong Kong either to visit relatives and friends or for work and business.