**CHAPTER 6 : THE LABOUR SECTOR**

### Summary

* *The labour market showed signs of stabilisation towards the latter part of 2025. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate retreated slightly to 3.8% in the fourth quarter of 2025 from 3.9% in the previous quarter after trending up from 3.1% in the fourth quarter a year ago.*
* *The unemployment rates of many sectors went down in the fourth quarter of 2025* *as compared to the preceding quarter.*
* *The underemployment rate went up to 1.7% in the fourth quarter of 2025 from 1.1% a year ago.*
* *Establishment surveys indicated that wages and labour earnings* *saw further year-on-year growth in the first three quarters of 2025. More recent General Household Survey (GHS) data also pointed to continued increase in employment earnings throughout 2025.*

**Overall labour market situation(1)**

6.1 The labour market showed signs of stabilisation towards the latter part of 2025. The seasonally adjusted *unemployment rate*(2) retreated slightly to 3.8% in the fourth quarter of 2025 from 3.9% in the previous quarter after trending up from 3.1% in the fourth quarter a year ago. The unemployment rates of many sectors went down in the fourth quarter of 2025 as compared to the preceding quarter. The overall *underemployment rate*(3) went up to 1.7% in the fourth quarter from 1.1% a year ago. Meanwhile, establishment surveys indicated that wages and labour earnings saw further year-on-year growth in the first three quarters of 2025. More recent GHS data also pointed to continued increase in employment earnings throughout 2025.



Note : # Provisional figures.

**Table 6.1 : The unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted), underemployment rate and long-term unemployment rate**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Unemployment rate\* (%) | Underemployment rate (%) | Long-term unemployment rate (%) |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2024 Annual | 3.0 | 1.2 | 0.8 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Q1 | 3.0 | 1.1 | 0.7 |
| Q2 | 3.0 | 1.2 | 0.8 |
| Q3 | 3.0 | 1.2 | 0.7 |
| Q4 | 3.1 | 1.1 | 0.8 |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2025 Annual# | 3.6 | 1.4 | 1.1 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Q1 | 3.2 | 1.1 | 0.9 |
| Q2 | 3.5 | 1.4 | 1.0 |
| Q3 | 3.9 | 1.6 | 1.3 |
| Q4 | 3.8 | 1.7 | 1.1 |

Notes : \* Seasonally adjusted (except for annual figures).

# Provisional figures.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.

**Labour force and total employment**

6.2 The *labour force*(4) increased by 0.1% to 3 805 200 in the fourth quarter of 2025 over a year earlier. Over the same period, the working age population (i.e. land-based non-institutional population aged 15 and above) rose by 0.4% to 6 709 400, whereas the overall labour force participation rate went down by 0.2 percentage point to 56.7%.  Analysed by age groups, the labour force participation rates of those aged 15-24 and those aged 60 and above decreased, whereas those of other age groups went up.

6.3 *Total employment*(5) declined by 0.5% to 3 667 000 in the fourth quarter of 2025 from a year ago, though the trends varied across different sectors. Some major sectors, including the construction sector, the retail sector, the import and export trade sector, the information and communications sector, and the food and beverage service activities sector, recorded year-on-year decreases in employment. On the other hand, employment of some other sectors increased year-on-year, including the human health activities sector, the social work activities sector, the professional and business services sector (excluding cleaning and similar activities), and the financing sector.

**Table 6.2 : The labour force, and persons employed,**

**unemployed and underemployed**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Labour force | Persons employed | Persons  unemployed(a) | Persons underemployed |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2024 Annual | 3 807 400 (-0.4) | 3 693 600 (-0.4) | 113 800 | 43 900 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Q1 | 3 801 900 (-0.2) <-0.5> | 3 690 000 (-0.1) <-0.6> | 111 900 | 40 000 |
| Q2 | 3 807 800 (§) <0.2> | 3 693 100 (§) <0.1> | 114 700 | 44 400 |
| Q3 | 3 810 500 (-0.7) <0.1> | 3 691 500 (-0.9) <§> | 119 000 | 45 800 |
| Q4 | 3 799 800 (-0.5) <-0.3> | 3 687 000 (-0.7) <-0.1> | 112 800 | 43 100 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2025 Annual# | 3 811 100 (0.1) | 3 672 900 (-0.6) | 138 200 | 55 000 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Q1 | 3 815 500 (0.4) <0.4> | 3 692 700 (0.1) <0.2> | 122 800 | 42 700 |
| Q2 | 3 793 500 (-0.4) <-0.6> | 3 657 300 (-1.0) <-1.0> | 136 200 | 52 600 |
| Q3 | 3 830 100 (0.5) <1.0> | 3 674 500 (-0.5) <0.5> | 155 600 | 60 000 |
| Q4 | 3 805 200 (0.1) <-0.6> | 3 667 000 (-0.5) <-0.2> | 138 200 | 64 800 |

Notes : (a) These include first-time job-seekers and re-entrants into the labour force.

(  ) % change over a year earlier.

  % change over a quarter earlier.

§ Change within ±0.05%.

# Provisional figures.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.



**Table 6.3 : Labour** **force participation rates by gender and by age group (%)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Annual | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Annual# | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Male |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24 | 28.8 | 27.6 | 27.4 | 30.3 | 29.1 | 28.2 | 27.5 | 27.8 | 29.9 | 27.6 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *15-19* | *7.0* | *6.5* | *6.4* | *8.1* | *6.2* | *6.8* | *5.1* | *7.1* | *8.4* | *6.5* |
| *20-24* | *50.0* | *48.6* | *48.1* | *51.7* | *50.9* | *49.2* | *49.5* | *48.0* | *51.0* | *48.4* |
| 25-29 | 88.4 | 88.3 | 87.0 | 88.6 | 89.3 | 87.2 | 88.2 | 86.4 | 86.8 | 87.4 |
| 30-39 | 94.4 | 94.3 | 94.2 | 94.3 | 94.4 | 94.5 | 94.3 | 94.6 | 94.6 | 94.5 |
| 40-49 | 93.3 | 92.9 | 93.5 | 93.2 | 93.4 | 93.9 | 94.0 | 93.8 | 93.9 | 94.0 |
| 50-59 | 85.0 | 84.6 | 85.1 | 84.8 | 85.3 | 85.1 | 85.2 | 84.8 | 84.6 | 85.5 |
| ≥ 60 | 30.8 | 31.0 | 31.0 | 30.8 | 30.4 | 29.7 | 30.0 | 29.4 | 30.0 | 29.3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Overall | 62.7 | 62.7 | 62.7 | 62.8 | 62.6 | 62.1 | 62.3 | 61.9 | 62.4 | 61.9 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Female |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24 | 30.2 | 29.3 | 28.9 | 31.5 | 30.4 | 28.8 | 28.9 | 28.9 | 29.8 | 27.6 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *15-19* | *7.0* | *6.2* | *6.1* | *8.9* | *7.5* | *6.3* | *6.8* | *6.0* | *6.8* | *5.6* |
| *20-24* | *51.1* | *50.8* | *49.7* | *51.7* | *50.7* | *49.3* | *49.0* | *49.6* | *50.9* | *47.8* |
| 25-29 | 83.4 | 83.9 | 83.4 | 83.4 | 83.1 | 86.0 | 84.9 | 85.3 | 86.8 | 87.1 |
| 30-39 | 80.5 | 80.1 | 80.8 | 80.3 | 80.6 | 81.4 | 80.7 | 80.5 | 82.0 | 82.4 |
| 40-49 | 75.6 | 75.2 | 75.8 | 75.6 | 76.2 | 76.7 | 76.6 | 76.4 | 76.6 | 77.1 |
| 50-59 | 65.8 | 65.7 | 65.2 | 66.1 | 66.3 | 67.0 | 66.9 | 67.4 | 67.0 | 66.8 |
| ≥ 60 | 17.5 | 17.5 | 18.0 | 17.4 | 17.3 | 17.6 | 17.7 | 17.8 | 17.7 | 17.3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Overall | 52.3 | 52.3 | 52.4 | 52.3 | 52.2 | 52.6 | 52.5 | 52.5 | 52.8 | 52.5 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Both genders  combined |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24 | 29.5 | 28.5 | 28.2 | 30.9 | 29.7 | 28.5 | 28.2 | 28.3 | 29.9 | 27.6 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *15-19* | *7.0* | *6.3* | *6.2* | *8.5* | *6.8* | *6.5* | *5.9* | *6.5* | *7.7* | *6.1* |
| *20-24* | *50.5* | *49.7* | *48.9* | *51.7* | *50.8* | *49.3* | *49.3* | *48.8* | *50.9* | *48.1* |
| 25-29 | 85.8 | 86.0 | 85.1 | 85.9 | 86.1 | 86.6 | 86.5 | 85.8 | 86.8 | 87.2 |
| 30-39 | 86.4 | 86.2 | 86.6 | 86.3 | 86.5 | 87.1 | 86.6 | 86.6 | 87.5 | 87.7 |
| 40-49 | 82.7 | 82.3 | 82.9 | 82.7 | 83.1 | 83.6 | 83.6 | 83.4 | 83.6 | 83.9 |
| 50-59 | 74.0 | 73.7 | 73.7 | 74.0 | 74.4 | 74.7 | 74.7 | 74.8 | 74.5 | 74.7 |
| ≥ 60 | 23.7 | 23.8 | 24.1 | 23.6 | 23.4 | 23.2 | 23.4 | 23.2 | 23.4 | 22.9 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Overall | 57.0 | 56.9 | 57.0 | 57.0 | 56.9 | 56.9 | 56.9 | 56.7 | 57.1 | 56.7 |

Note : # Provisional figures.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.

**Table 6.4 : Employment by major economic sector**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|  | Annual | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Annual# | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Import/export trade and wholesale | 296 500  (-5.0) | 300 500  (-5.1) | 298 400  (-2.9) | 296 100  (-4.2) | 292 100  (-4.0) | 285 400  (-3.8) | 290 900 (-3.2) | 282 900 (-5.2) | 283 400 (-4.3) | 284 300 (-2.7) |
| *of which* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Import and export trade* | *282 800*  *(-4.0)* | *286 000*  *(-3.8)* | *284 400 (-1.7)* | *283 000 (-2.9)* | *279 400 (-3.3)* | *272 200 (-3.8)* | *278 000 (-2.8)* | *270 300 (-5.0)* | *269 400 (-4.8)* | *270 900 (-3.0)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Retail, accommodation and food services | 513 700 (-4.4) | 523 300 (-1.9) | 513 300 (-3.8) | 508 200 (-5.5) | 505 000 (-5.2) | 492 000 (-4.2) | 498 400 (-4.8) | 490 500 (-4.4) | 489 600 (-3.7) | 489 800 (-3.0) |
| *of which* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Retail* | *251 500*  *(-6.2)* | *256 800 (-4.1)* | *251 600 (-6.0)* | *247 000 (-8.4)* | *244 200 (-7.2)* | *235 900 (-6.2)* | *238 800 (-7.0)* | *235 400 (-6.5)* | *235 800 (-4.5)* | *233 800 (-4.3)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Accommodation services* | *41 300 (1.0)* | *40 000 (-4.2)* | *41 100 (1.5)* | *42 600 (1.7)* | *42 200 (3.6)* | *41 600 (0.7)* | *41 700 (4.3)* | *40 700 (-0.9)* | *42 000 (-1.6)* | *42 100*  *(-0.4)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Food and beverage service activities* | *220 800 (-3.2)* | *226 500 (1.1)* | *220 600 (-2.1)* | *218 600*  *(-3.3)* | *218 600 (-4.3)* | *214 500 (-2.9)* | *217 900 (-3.8)* | *214 400 (-2.8)* | *211 800 (-3.1)* | *213 900 (-2.1)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Transportation, storage, postal and courier services | 290 900 (0.5) | 283 200 (-1.6) | 288 200 (-1.0) | 290 400 (0.1) | 285 100 (-0.4) | 286 400 (-1.5) | 289 000 (2.1) | 288 700 (0.2) | 286 000 (-1.5) | 282 000 (-1.1) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information and communications | 130 900 (-1.0) | 136 900 (2.7) | 132 600 (-0.3) | 129 200 (-2.4) | 131 700 (-2.7) | 129 900 (-0.8) | 131 100 (-4.2) | 129 200 (-2.6) | 130 800 (1.3) | 128 300 (-2.6) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Financing, insurance, real estate, professional and business services | 849 600 (0.1) | 843 300 (-1.7) | 845 400 (-0.8) | 853 700 (-0.5) | 858 500 (1.0) | 862 900 (1.6) | 860 200 (2.0) | 858 400 (1.5) | 868 900 (1.8) | 864 000 (0.6) |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Financing* | *196 100 (-3.5)* | *198 000 (-4.9)* | *193 500 (-6.2)* | *199 200 (-3.6)* | *198 800 (-2.9)* | *201 800 (2.9)* | *200 200 (1.1)* | *200 900 (3.8)* | *204 000 (2.4)* | *202 200 (1.8)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar activities)* | *349 400 (1.4)* | *349 700 (1.1)* | *351 000 (2.8)* | *346 300 (-1.1)* | *348 500 (0.2)* | *354 100 (1.3)* | *351 900 (0.6)* | *353 900 (0.8)* | *355 500 (2.7)* | *355 000 (1.9)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Public administration, social and personal services | 1 149 500  (1.9) | 1 139 400 (2.3) | 1 151 300 (2.4) | 1 153 300 (1.0) | 1 152 900 (0.9) | 1 165 900 (1.4) | 1 161 300 (1.9) | 1 157 700 (0.6) | 1 170 300 (1.5) | 1 174 300 (1.9) |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Human health activities* | *165 900 (4.8)* | *160 800 (0.7)* | *163 600 (2.3)* | *165 800 (3.3)* | *167 300 (4.7)* | *172 200 (3.8)* | *171 300 (6.5)* | *171 200 (4.7)* | *172 700 (4.1)* | *173 700 (3.8)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Social work activities* | *93 300 (6.7)* | *92 200 (9.3)* | *96 000*  *(9.0)* | *92 400 (2.5)* | *92 000 (0.9)* | *93 700 (0.5)* | *93 600 (1.5)* | *93 100*  *(-3.1)* | *93 900 (1.6)* | *94 400 (2.5)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Manufacturing | 86 500  (-3.3) | 88 800 (1.3) | 88 200  (-0.6) | 83 600  (-5.0) | 86 100  (-3.6) | 88 200 (2.1) | 88 200  (-0.7) | 90 700 (2.8) | 87 600 (4.7) | 86 500 (0.5) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction | 351 600 (0.8) | 350 700 (3.7) | 350 800 (3.1) | 352 600 (2.5) | 350 900 (-0.1) | 336 600 (-4.3) | 345 300 (-1.5) | 335 200 (-4.4) | 332 700 (-5.6) | 333 100 (-5.1) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Overall | 3 693 600 (-0.4) | 3 690 000 (-0.1) | 3 693 100 (§) | 3 691 500  (-0.9) | 3 687 000  (-0.7) | 3 672 900 (-0.6) | 3 692 700 (0.1) | 3 657 300  (-1.0) | 3 674 500  (-0.5) | 3 667 000  (-0.5) |

Notes : (  ) % change over a year earlier.

# Provisional figures.

§ Change within ±0.05%.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.

Box 6.1

Opportunities and challenges of population ageing in Hong Kong

Population ageing is a global issue, and Hong Kong is no exception. According to the statistics published by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the number of persons aged 65 and above in Hong Kong surged from 0.60 million([[1]](#footnote-2)) in 1995 to 1.79 million in 2025, with their share in total population more than doubled from 10.0% to 25.0% (***Chart 1***). The median age of Hong Kong’s population rose notably in tandem from 33.8 to 49.4.

**Chart 1: Hong Kong’s population**([[2]](#footnote-3)) **by age group and median age**



Note: (\*) Provisional figures.

Source: C&SD.

There are two major forces driving population ageing in Hong Kong. First, fertility of Hong Kong was on a downtrend in the past few decades, with the total fertility rate decreasing visibly from 1 295 live births per 1 000 females in 1995 to 841 in 2024, far below the replacement level of 2 100. Second, people in Hong Kong are living longer. The life expectancy at birth of male and female in Hong Kong reached 82.7 years and 88.2 years respectively in 2024, one of the highest in the world and much higher than their respective levels of 76.0 and 81.5 in 1995. Such trends of low fertility and increasing life expectancy are expected to persist. According to C&SD’s projections, the life expectancy at birth of male and female will rise further to 86.4 and 91.8 in 2046 respectively, and the total fertility rate will stay low at 938. As a result, population ageing is projected to intensify further going forward, with the share of persons aged 65 and above reaching 36.0% of Hong Kong’s population in 2046.

**Box 6.1 (Cont’d)**

As a larger proportion of people in Hong Kong are expected to approach retirement, the overall labour force will be subject to increased downward pressure. That being said, it is noted that the labour force participation rates of prime-age adults (i.e. those aged 25-54) and older age groups (i.e. those aged 55-74) in Hong Kong have been trending up according to C&SD’s figures and projections (***Chart 2***). The latter implies that more older people stay active in the labour market, with the labour force aged 55 and above increasing from 0.3 million in 1995 to 0.9 million in 2025, and projected to rise further to 1.0 million in 2046. This will partly offset the drag of population ageing on labour force growth. Taking these factors into consideration, the labour force of Hong Kong is projected to remain relatively stable in size over the next two decades and peak in 2038 followed by a decline (***Chart 3***).

**Chart 2: Labour force participation rate of selected age groups**



Note: (\*) Provisional figures.

Source: C&SD.

**Chart 3: Labour force by age group**



Note: (\*) Provisional figures.

Source: C&SD.

**Box 6.1 (Cont’d)**

The projected relatively stable labour force reflects the Government’s multi-pronged strategy to mitigate the impact of population ageing on the economy. A number of measures have been launched in recent years to 1) provide stronger incentives for childbirth: measures ranging from newborn baby bonus and tax concessions for eligible parents to giving priority to families with newborns in the allocation of public housing; 2) promote stronger participation in the labour market: the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (launched in July 2024) to encourage more locals to join the workforce and more aided child care centres to facilitate more parents to stay in the labour market after childbirth; and 3) leverage outside talents: the Top Talent Pass Scheme and various enhanced talent admission regimes (e.g. General Employment Policy and Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals) proactively trawl for outside talents and inject fresh vitality into the workforce.

Separately, various initiatives have been implemented to enhance labour productivity. These include the enhancement of skills-based training for the workforce via the Employees Retraining Board. The Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme will also include artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity digital solutions to encourage small and medium enterprises to use AI to enhance their competitiveness.

While population ageing poses challenges, it also brings about opportunities. With an increasing proportion of elderly in the population, the prominence of the silver economy will be on the rise, creating a sizable demand for related products and services. It is crudely estimated that the consumption expenditure of persons aged 60 and above will increase from $342 billion in 2024 to $496 billion in 2034. To better seize the opportunities brought by the silver economy, the Government set up a Working Group on Promoting Silver Economy in 2024, and announced 30 measures in May 2025 covering five areas, namely boosting “silver consumption”; developing “silver industry”; promoting “quality assurance of silver products”; enhancing “silver financial and security arrangements”; and unleashing “silver productivity”.

To tackle the challenges brought about by an ageing population and further promote the development of silver economy, the Government has set up a Working Group on Ageing Society Strategies led by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, with all the 15 policy bureaux as members. The Working Group will look into how community resources and market participation may be capitalised to drive cross-sector collaboration and synergise with government policy initiatives to formulate timely and strategic responses to ageing society. The Working Group will submit a report to the Chief Executive this year.

**Profile of unemployment**

6.4 The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate retreated slightly to 3.8% in the fourth quarter of 2025 from 3.9% in the previous quarter after trending up from 3.1% in the fourth quarter a year ago. The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) decreased by 11.1% or 17 300 to 138 200 in the fourth quarter from the preceding quarter, despite being 22.6% or 25 500 higher than the level a year earlier.

6.5 The unemployment rates of many sectors went down in the fourth quarter of 2025 as compared to the preceding quarter. In the retail, accommodation and food services sector, the unemployment rate fell visibly by 0.7 percentage point to 5.2%, though was still 0.9 percentage point higher than a year ago. In the construction sector, the unemployment rate dropped by 0.5 percentage point to 6.7%, driven mainly by the visible decline of 0.7 percentage point in the unemployment rate of the foundation and superstructure sector to 6.3%, whereas that of the decoration, repair and maintenance for buildings sector went up by 0.4 percentage point over the preceding quarter to 8.3%. For the financing, insurance, real estate, professional and business services sector, the trend was mixed. The unemployment rate of the financing sector fell visibly by 0.8 percentage point to 2.1%, and was 0.1 percentage point lower than the level a year ago. The unemployment rate of the professional and business services sector (excluding cleaning and similar activities) fell by 0.3 percentage point to 3.8%, but was 0.5 percentage point higher than the level a year ago. On the other hand, the unemployment rate of the insurance sector went up by 0.5 percentage point to 2.7%. For the *low-paying sectors*(6) as a whole, the unemployment rate decreased by 0.4 percentage point to 3.0%, though it still exceeded its year-ago level by 0.5 percentage point.

6.6 Analysed by skill segment, the unemployment rates of both the lower-skilled workers and the higher-skilled workers fell by 0.3 percentage point and 0.4 percentage point to 3.8% and 2.4% respectively in the fourth quarter of 2025, though they were still 0.7 percentage point and 0.4 percentage point higher than their respective year-ago levels.

6.7 Analysed by other socio-economic attributes, the unemployment rates of all age groups and educational attainment groups decreased in the fourth quarter of 2025 as compared to the preceding quarter, particularly those aged 15-24 (down 2.3 percentage points from the preceding quarter to 12.1%), those with lower secondary education (down 0.7 percentage point from the preceding quarter to 4.4%), and those aged 50-59 (down 0.5 percentage point from the preceding quarter to 3.8%). Compared with a year ago, the unemployment rates of all age groups and educational attainment groups increased.





**Table 6.5 : Unemployment rates by major economic sector**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Annual | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Annual# | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Import/export trade and wholesale | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 3.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Retail, accommodation and food services | 4.2 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 5.3 | 4.7 | 5.2 | 5.9 | 5.2 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Retail* | *3.9* | *3.3* | *3.9* | *4.4* | *4.1* | *4.7* | *4.3* | *4.7* | *5.3* | *4.6* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Accommodation services* | *3.2* | *2.6* | *3.4* | *3.4* | *3.4* | *3.7* | *3.1* | *4.0* | *4.3* | *3.6* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Food and beverage service activities* | *4.8* | *4.6* | *4.6* | *5.2* | *4.7* | *6.1* | *5.3* | *6.0* | *6.8* | *6.2* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Transportation, storage, postal and courier services | 2.7 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 2.9 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information and communications | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.6 | 4.3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Financing, insurance, real estate, professional and business services | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.0 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Financing* | *2.4* | *2.3* | *2.8* | *2.3* | *2.2* | *2.8* | *2.6* | *3.4* | *2.9* | *2.1* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Insurance* | *1.6* | *2.2* | *1.7* | *0.9* | *1.3* | *2.0* | *1.5* | *1.7* | *2.2* | *2.7* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar activities)* | *3.2* | *3.3* | *3.3* | *3.1* | *3.3* | *3.9* | *3.7* | *4.0* | *4.1* | *3.8* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Public administration, social and personal services | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Manufacturing | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.1 | 3.9 | 3.5 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 6.4 | 5.0 | 6.8 | 7.2 | 6.7 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Foundation and superstructure* | *3.8* | *3.7* | *4.0* | *4.0* | *4.0* | *6.1* | *4.6* | *6.4* | *7.0* | *6.3* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Decoration, repair and maintenance for buildings* | *5.7* | *5.9* | *5.2* | *5.7* | *6.1* | *7.8* | *6.6* | *8.3* | *7.9* | *8.3* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Overall\* | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.6 |
|  |  | (3.0) | (3.0) | (3.0) | (3.1) |  | (3.2) | (3.5) | (3.9) | (3.8) |

Notes : \* Including first-time job-seekers and re-entrants into the labour force.

(  ) Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates.

# Provisional figures.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.



**Table 6.6 : Unemployment rates**\* **by skill segment**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Annual | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Annual# | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Higher-skilled segment | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 2.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Managers | 1.8 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Professionals | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 2.1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Associate professionals | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lower-skilled segment^ | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3.8 | 3.3 | 3.8 | 4.1 | 3.8 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Clerical support workers | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Services and sales workers | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 4.6 | 4.1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Craft and related trades workers | 3.9 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 6.1 | 4.7 | 6.2 | 6.9 | 6.5 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Plant and machine operators and assemblers | 2.4 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Elementary occupations | 2.2 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |

Notes : \* Not seasonally adjusted, and not including first-time job-seekers and re-entrants into the labour force.

^ Including other occupations.

# Provisional figures.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.

**Table 6.7 : Unemployment rates**\* **by age and educational attainment**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | Annual | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Annual# | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Age |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15-24 | 9.5 | 9.9 | 8.2 | 11.3 | 8.6 | 11.4 | 8.9 | 9.9 | 14.4 | 12.1 |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *15-19* | *10.5* | *8.1* | *9.7* | *15.4* | *7.8* | *11.4* | *7.7* | *11.3* | *15.0* | *10.8* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *20-24* | *9.3* | *10.1* | *8.0* | *10.7* | *8.7* | *11.4* | *9.1* | *9.8* | *14.4* | *12.3* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25-29 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 5.1 | 4.8 | 5.5 | 5.2 | 5.0 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 30-39 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.7 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 40-49 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 2.9 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 50-59 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 3.8 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ≥ 60 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.4 | 3.0 |
| Educational attainment |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Primary education and below | 2.3 | 1.9 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.5 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lower secondary education | 3.4 | 2.9 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 4.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Upper secondary education^ | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 3.4 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 3.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Post-secondary education | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 3.6 |

Notes : \* Not seasonally adjusted, but including first-time job-seekers and re-entrants into the labour force.

^ Including craft courses.

# Provisional figures.

Source : General Household Survey, Census and Statistics Department.

6.8 The long-term unemployment situation worsened in 2025, but displayed some relative improvement in the last quarter of the year. The long-term unemployment rate (i.e. the proportion of persons unemployed for six months or longer in the labour force) was 1.1% in the fourth quarter, lower than the 1.3% in the third quarter, though still higher than the 0.8% a year ago. The number of long-term unemployed persons declined by 9.7% or 4 700 from the preceding quarter to 43 700 in the fourth quarter, despite being 44.8% or 13 500 higher than the year-ago level. Compared with a year ago, the medium duration of unemployment lengthened by around 12 days to 95 days in the fourth quarter.

**Underemployment situation**

6.9 The underemployment rate went up to 1.7% in the fourth quarter of 2025 from 1.1% a year ago. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons increased by 50.5% or 21 700 to 64 800.

**Vacancies**

6.10 Private sector vacancies decreased by 22.6% year-on-year to 51 450 in September 2025, but the decline turned narrower than that recorded in June 2025. Vacancies of many industries decreased at a slower pace from a year earlier.

6.11 The overall manpower balance situation eased slightly further in September 2025. The ratio of job vacancies per 100 unemployed persons decreased slightly further to 33 in September from 36 three months ago. Yet, the manpower shortage situation remained evident in some sectors, including the human health services sector and the residential care and social work services sector, with their corresponding ratios staying well above 100.

**Table 6.8 : Vacancies by major economic sector**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | | | | | 2025 | | |
|  | Annual |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | average | Mar | Jun | Sep | Dec | Mar | Jun | Sep |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Import/export trade  and wholesale | 4 070  (5.2) | 4 030  (-5.1) | 4 480  (6.3) | 4 330  (12.3) | 3 420  (8.7) | 3 990  (-1.1) | 3 420  (-23.7) | 3 410  (-21.2) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Retail | 4 230  (-30.5) | 4 720  (-26.3) | 3 940  (-40.2) | 4 460  (-24.5) | 3 810  (-30.0) | 3 730  (-20.9) | 3 500  (-11.2) | 3 220  (-27.7) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Accommodation services | 1 470  (-42.7) | 2 100  (-25.6) | 1 580  (-39.8) | 1 220  (-52.1) | 1 000  (-56.5) | 980  (-53.4) | 970  (-38.2) | 880  (-27.7) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Food and beverage services | 5 630  (-6.8) | 5 930  (2.2) | 5 680  (-6.2) | 5 440  (-12.6) | 5 480  (-10.2) | 4 860  (-18.0) | 4 090  (-27.9) | 3 620  (-33.4) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Transportation, storage, postal and courier services | 6 390  (-4.1) | 8 820  (18.5) | 7 640  (8.7) | 5 040  (-26.4) | 4 080  (-24.0) | 3 740  (-57.6) | 3 320  (-56.6) | 2 780  (-44.9) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Information and communications | 2 660  (-8.5) | 3 100  (2.5) | 3 040  (0.1) | 2 350  (-17.7) | 2 140  (-20.7) | 2 430  (-21.5) | 2 330  (-23.5) | 2 610  (10.7) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Financing, insurance, real estate, professional and business services | 17 300  (-8.9) | 17 570  (-9.5) | 17 630  (-13.4) | 17 520  (-5.2) | 16 490  (-6.8) | 14 990  (-14.7) | 14 630  (-17.0) | 15 800  (-9.9) |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Financing and insurance* | *4 880*  *(-17.1)* | *4 840*  *(-22.0)* | *4 780*  *(-23.3)* | *5 000*  *(-12.5)* | *4 920*  *(-9.2)* | *4 660*  *(-3.7)* | *5 180*  *(8.5)* | *5 860*  *(17.1)* |
| *Professional and business services (excluding cleaning and similar services)* | *6 430*  *(-4.8)* | *6 720*  *(-1.2)* | *7 120*  *(-5.1)* | *6 210*  *(-5.5)* | *5 670*  *(-7.7)* | *5 050*  *(-24.9)* | *4 810*  *(-32.4)* | *5 120*  *(-17.6)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Social and personal services | 21 430  (-18.3) | 23 810  (-5.9) | 20 950  (-19.6) | 22 370  (-21.2) | 18 590  (-26.2) | 17 730  (-25.5) | 15 220  (-27.3) | 16 980  (-24.1) |
| *of which:* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Human health services* | *5 420*  *(-20.9)* | *6 380*  *(-3.4)* | *4 870*  *(-17.9)* | *6 590*  *(-22.3)* | *3 850*  *(-39.9)* | *3 620*  *(-43.2)* | *3 350*  *(-31.3)* | *4 830*  *(-26.7)* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Manufacturing | 2 140  (-15.1) | 2 750  (15.7) | 2 510  (1.6) | 1 810  (-32.8) | 1 470  (-41.8) | 1 800  (-34.5) | 1 700  (-32.5) | 1 750  (-2.9) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction sites (covering manual workers only) | 1 840  (-12.0) | 2 070  (221.1) | 1 800  (-34.9) | 1 760  (-31.4) | 1 730  (-27.7) | 730  (-64.9) | 180  (-90.0) | 240  (-86.3) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **All establishments surveyed in the private sector(a)** | **67 370**  **(-13.9)** | **75 180**  **(-3.3)**  **[2.9]**  **<0.4>** | **69 440**  **(-14.8)**  **[-7.6]**  **<-7.2>** | **66 460**  **(-17.6)**  **[-4.3]**  **<-9.5>** | **58 410**  **(-20.1)**  **[-12.1]**  **<-5.2>** | **55 170**  **(-26.6)**  **[-5.5]**  **<-7.9>** | **49 530**  **(-28.7)**  **[-10.2]**  **<-9.8>** | **51 450**  **(-22.6)**  **[3.9]**  **<-1.7>** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Civil service(b)* | *19 470*  *(-0.4)* | *19 740*  *(2.9)* | *19 380*  *(-1.6)* | *19 290*  *(-0.8)* | *19 470*  *(-2.0)* | *18 940*  *(-4.0)* | *19 290*  *(-0.5)* | *19 590*  *(1.5)* |

Notes : (a) The total figures on private sector vacancies cover also vacancies in mining and quarrying; and in electricity and gas supply, and waste management, besides vacancies in the major sectors indicated above.

(b) These figures cover only vacancies for those staff to be employed on civil service terms of appointment.

(  ) % change over a year earlier.

[ ] Non-seasonally adjusted % change compared with the level three months ago.

< > Seasonally adjusted % change compared with the level three months ago.

Sources : Quarterly Survey of Employment and Vacancies, Census and Statistics Department.

Quarterly Employment Survey of Construction Sites, Census and Statistics Department.





**Wages and earnings**

6.12 Wages and labour earnings saw further year-on-year growth in the first three quarters of 2025, according to quarterly statistics collected from private sector establishments that are available up to September 2025. The average nominal wage rate, as measured by the nominal wage index for all selected industry sections which covers regular payment to employees at the supervisory level or below, rose by 3.3% in September, after increasing by 3.5% in both March and June. After discounting for *inflation*(7), the average wage rate increased by 1.8% in real terms in September.

6.13 Nominal *labour earnings*(8), as measured by the index of payroll per person engaged for all selected industry sections which covers basic wage, overtime pay, discretionary bonuses and other irregular payments, increased by 2.8% in the third quarter of 2025, after rising by 3.2% in the first quarter and 3.6% in the second quarter. After discounting for inflation, labour earnings rose by 1.7% in real terms in the third quarter.



Note : The year-on-year rates of change of the CPIs from the fourth quarter of 2020 onwards are computed from the new 2019/20-based series, and those before are from the old 2014/15-based series.

6.14 Statistics compiled from the GHS, though not strictly comparable to those from the business establishment surveys, pointed to continued increase in employment earnings throughout 2025. The median monthly employment earnings of full-time employees (excluding foreign domestic helpers) increased by 4.2% in nominal terms or 2.8% in *real terms*(9) in the fourth quarter over a year earlier.

**Highlights of related measures and policy developments**

6.15 The Government enhanced the talent policy to attract outside talents to Hong Kong. A new channel under the General Employment Policy (GEP) and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP) was introduced in June 2025 to allow outside individuals to apply for entry into Hong Kong to join eight skilled trades facing acute manpower shortage. Applicants are required to be non-degree professionals meeting the relevant qualifications as specified in the Technical Professional List and aged between 18 and 40. This pilot arrangement will last for three years with an overall quota of 10 000, and the quota for each skilled trade is limited to 3 000.

6.16 The Talent List was also updated with effect from 1 March 2025 to include nine newly added professions covering a total of 60 professions under nine industry segments to attract top talents and professionals required for the development of the “*eight centres*”(10). Outside talents who meet the eligibility criteria for relevant professions can enjoy immigration facilitation when applying under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the GEP and the ASMTP.

6.17 To safeguard employment priority for local workers, the Government has been strengthening the implementation arrangements of the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS). A number of measures were rolled out since June 2025, including launching an online complaint form to enable local employees to report suspected violations, displaying the names of applicant companies alongside job vacancies on the Interactive Employment Service (iES) website, refusing to process new applications submitted by the same employer within six months, launching a special inspection campaign to check whether establishments employing imported workers have continuously met the manning ratio requirement of full-time local employees to imported workers of 2:1, and requiring employers to report information on full-time local employees and imported workers as well as the relevant manning ratios based on a risk-based approach.

6.18 The 2025 Policy Address also introduced monitoring measures for applications to import waiters/waitresses or junior cooks under ESLS. Employers are required to (i) attend once a week an on-site job fair organised by the Labour Department (LD) during the local recruitment period which has been extended from four weeks to six weeks, and (ii) comply with a more stringent manning ratio requirement of local to imported labour, with the calculation basis changed from all posts engaged by an employer to the post being applied for. LD also launched a dedicated webpage for ESLS vacancies on iES website to facilitate job seekers to apply for such vacancies in September 2025.

6.19 Separately, the Government has started to conduct a mid-term review of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme which was launched in July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above to re-join the employment market, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to explore measures to promote silver employment in the first quarter of 2026.

6.20 The Minimum Wage Commission (MWC) has completed the review of the Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW) rate under the new annual review mechanism (new mechanism) and submitted its recommendation report to the Chief Executive in Council (CE-in-C) on 2 February 2026.  CE-in-C on 10 February 2026 adopted the recommendation of MWC to raise the SMW rate from its prevailing level of $42.1 per hour to $43.1 per hour, representing an increase of $1.0 or 2.38%.  Subject to the approval of the Legislative Council, the revised SMW rate (i.e. the first SMW rate derived under the new mechanism) is expected to take effect on 1 May 2026.

**Notes :**

(1) Labour force statistics enumerated from the General Household Survey are statistics which involve the use of the population figures in the compilation process. The statistics of the three-month periods from November 2023 – January 2024 to October – December 2024 have been revised to take into account the final end-2024 population estimates.

The classification of occupation adopted by the Census and Statistics Department follows the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), which is used to classify the occupation of an employed person or the previous occupation of an unemployed person.

(2) For a person aged 15 or above to be classified as unemployed, he or she should: (a) not have a job and not be performing any work for pay or profit during the reference period (i.e. seven days before enumeration); (b) be available for work during the reference period; and (c) be seeking work during the 30 days before enumeration.

Notwithstanding the above, the following types of persons are also considered unemployed: (a) persons without a job, having sought work but not available for work because of temporary sickness; (b) persons without a job, available for work but not having sought work because they will take up new jobs or start business at a subsequent date, or expect to return to their original jobs; and (c) discouraged workers not having sought work because they believe work is not available to them.

Even at full employment, some frictional unemployment is bound to exist as workers move between jobs in order to obtain better terms of employment. The precise level of unemployment which can be described as purely frictional varies amongst economies, depending on the structure and characteristics of their labour markets.

The seasonally adjusted series is compiled using the X-12 ARIMA method, which is a standard method applied in compiling seasonally adjusted statistical data series.

(3) The main criteria for an employed person aged 15 or above to be classified as underemployed are: involuntarily working less than 35 hours during the reference period (i.e. seven days before enumeration), and either available for additional work during the reference period or seeking additional work during the 30 days before enumeration.

Following these criteria, employed persons taking no‑pay leave due to slack work during the reference period are also classified as underemployed if they had worked less than 35 hours or were on leave for the entire reference period.

(4) The labour force, or the economically active population, is defined to include all persons aged 15 or above who either were engaged in productive work during the reference period (i.e. seven days before enumeration) or would otherwise have been engaged in productive work but were unemployed.

(5) Figures enumerated from household data. The employed population is defined here to include those persons aged 15 or above who performed work for pay or profit or had a formal job attachment during the reference period (i.e. seven days before enumeration).

(6) The low-paying sectors as identified by the Minimum Wage Commission include:   
(i) retail (including supermarkets and convenience stores, and other retail stores);   
(ii) food and beverage services (including Chinese restaurants, non-Chinese restaurants, fast food cafes, Hong Kong style tea cafes, and other food and beverage services);   
(iii) estate management, security and cleaning services (including real estate maintenance management, security services, cleaning services and membership organisations);  
(iv) other low-paying sectors, including  
 - elderly homes;  
 - laundry and dry cleaning services;  
 - hairdressing and other personal services;  
 - local courier services; and  
 - food processing and production.

(7) Different consumer price indices (CPIs) are used for compiling the real indices of labour earnings and wages, taking into account their relevance to the respective occupation coverage. Specifically, the headline Composite CPI, being an indicator of overall consumer prices, is taken as the price deflator for earnings received by employees at all levels of the occupational hierarchy. The headline CPI(A), being an indicator of consumer prices for the relatively low expenditure group, is taken as the price deflator for wages in respect of employees engaged in occupations up to the supervisory level.

(8) In addition to wages, which include all regular and guaranteed payments like basic pay and stipulated bonuses and allowances, earnings also cover overtime pay and other non-guaranteed or irregular bonuses and allowances, except severance pay and long service payment. Because of this difference, as well as the difference in sectoral and occupational coverage, the movements in average earnings, as measured by payroll per person engaged, do not necessarily match closely with those in wage rates.

(9) The headline Composite CPI, being an indicator of overall consumer prices, is taken as the price deflator for the median monthly employment earnings of full-time employees (excluding foreign domestic helpers).

(10) The National 14th Five-Year Plan has established Hong Kong’s position as the “eight centres”, namely international financial centre, international shipping centre, international trade centre, centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region, international aviation hub, international innovation and technology centre, regional intellectual property trading centre and East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange.

1. () Population and labour statistics quoted in this article exclude foreign domestic helpers. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. () Refers to mid-year population figures. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)