

CUHK Releases Hong Kong Quality of Life Index 2014 Quality of Life in Hong Kong Slightly Declined

The Centre for Quality of Life at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) released the CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index 2014 today (16 October). Compared with 2013, the overall Index score of 2014 has declined slightly. The economic sub-index has decreased for the eighth consecutive year; the Health and Social sub-indices worsened.

The Index consists of 23 indicators that are grouped into five sub-indices: Health, Social, Culture and Leisure, Economic, and Environmental (Appendix 2). The indicators are selected according to the coverage, representativeness, measurability, and importance to the quality of life of Hong Kong people. The higher the indicator scores, the better it performs.

According to the latest CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index, the overall score in 2014 was 101.75, dropped 0.17 points from the revised score in 2013 (101.92). The result indicates that generally the quality of life in Hong Kong declined in the past year (Appendix 1).

Compared with 2013, the Culture and Leisure sub-index and Environmental sub-index have slightly improved in different degrees in 2014, while the Health, Social and Economic sub-indices dropped. Particularly, the Social sub-index decreased significantly by 0.83 points to 26.94. The Economic sub-index fell to its record low of 14.35 since 2002 (the base year) (Appendix 3). The result shows that the social and economic aspects of the quality of life in Hong Kong worsened in the past year.

11 out of the 23 indicators worsened in 2014 (Appendix 4). Particularly, decline in freedom of speech was the most noticeable with an 18.63% plunge between 2013 and 2014, as the lowest since the Index was launched. The housing affordability ratio also dropped to a record low, showing that housing has been continuously less affordable in 2014. Besides, the stress index, general life satisfaction index, press criticism index, government performance index, cultural programmes attendance index, recreation and sport activities participation index, public expenditure on education, real wage index and the water index also worsened.

Compared with 2013, 11 out of the 23 indicators improved in 2014 (Appendix 5), the air quality index, real rental index, index of current economic conditions, and overall crime rate have significantly improved. The increase of the remaining indicators was relatively mild.

The 'CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index' was designed by the Faculty of Social Science in 2003. This composite index is intended to measure and keep track of the quality of life in Hong Kong in the 21st century, and to provide policy makers and the community with a useful reference tool. It also aims at raising the awareness of enhancing the quality of life of Hong Kong people. To continue this mission, in 2006, the Centre for Quality of Life was set up by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, CUHK to conduct on-going quality of life research and release the latest Index annually. Since 2012, the Centre for Quality of Life

of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies has also compiled the ‘MTR-CUHK Youth Quality of Life Index’. The results of these two indices can be used for comparison and cross-reference.

2002 was the base year of the ‘CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index’, and the value of the Index for that year was set at 100. If the value of the Index of a subsequent year is above 100, it means that the quality of life in Hong Kong in that year is better than that of 2002. If the value of the Index is below 100, it reveals that the quality of life in Hong Kong in that year is worse than that of 2002. If the value of Index is 100, it indicates that the quality of life in Hong Kong in that year is the same as that of 2002.

In order to measure and monitor more aspects of the quality of life in Hong Kong, based on the stage of social development, the research team of the Centre for Quality of Life of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies will refine the composition and calculation methodology of the Index from time to time. From last year onwards, the number of sub-indices of the ‘CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index’ has been increased from three to five, namely, **Health, Social, Culture and Leisure, Economic** and **Environmental** sub-indices. The number of indicators included in the Index has been increased from 21 to 23.

For more information on the ‘CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index,’ please visit the website of the Centre for Quality of Life, Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, CUHK: www.cuhk.edu.hk/hkiaps/qol.

Media enquiries: Prof. Wong Hong, Director of the Centre for Quality of Life, CUHK (Tel: 3943 7510 or Email: hwong@cuhk.edu.hk)

Appendix 1: CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index Note 1

	2002 Base year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2014 compared with 2013
Health sub-index												
1. Life expectancy at birth (in year)	4.35	4.36	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.42	4.43	4.45	4.46	4.47	4.48	Better
2. Public expenditure on health as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP	4.35	3.79	3.46	3.62	3.28	3.45	3.28	3.13	3.36	3.58	3.58#	No Change
3. Hospitalization rate (per 1000 population)	4.35	4.71	4.93	5.01	4.90	4.96	4.87	4.98	5.07	5.13	5.19*	Better
4. Stress index ^	4.35	5.52	5.46	5.53	5.20	5.22	5.41	5.33	5.38	5.36	5.31	Worse
5. General life satisfaction index ^	4.35	4.78	4.89	4.79	4.68	4.85	4.85	4.74	4.79	4.85	4.79	Worse
Health sub-index	21.74	23.16	23.14	23.35	22.45	22.90	22.84	22.63	23.05	23.39	23.35	Worse
Social sub-index												
6. Freedom of speech index ^	4.35	4.41	4.42	4.52	4.51	4.50	4.45	4.43	4.38	4.28	3.49	Worse
7. Press criticism index	4.35	3.43	3.36	3.56	3.64	3.44	3.61	3.75	3.86	4.16	4.00	Worse
8. Government performance index ^	4.35	7.38	7.66	7.98	5.67	6.31	6.03	5.13	5.63	5.22	5.01	Worse
9. Overall crime rate (per 1000 population)	4.35	4.27	4.10	4.16	4.32	4.39	4.51	4.54	4.60	4.78	5.08	Better
10. Public expenditure on education as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP	4.35	4.46	4.13	3.80	3.59	4.78	3.80	3.70	3.80	4.13	3.91#	Worse
11. Age participation rate for first-degree programmes in local universities (in percent)	4.35	4.50	4.73	4.78	4.76	4.76	4.78	4.96	5.17	5.20	5.45	Better
Social sub-index	26.09	28.45	28.39	28.80	26.48	28.18	27.18	26.51	27.44	27.77	26.94	Worse
Culture & Leisure sub-index												
12. Cultural programmes attendance index	4.35	2.96	3.35	2.60	2.62	2.46	2.55	2.42	2.49	2.43	2.38*	Worse
13. Recreation and sport activities participation index	4.35	5.06	5.26	5.54	6.28	6.05	5.76	6.49	5.89	6.49	6.29*	Worse
14. Oversea travel index	4.35	4.72	4.94	5.23	5.28	5.35	5.73	5.95	6.44	7.06	7.51	Better
Culture & Leisure sub-index	13.04	12.74	13.55	13.38	14.18	13.86	14.04	14.86	14.82	15.97	16.18	Better
Economic sub-index												
15. Housing affordability ratio	4.35	2.92	3.23	2.35	1.57	1.09	-0.78	-1.93	-3.19	-4.37	-5.01	Worse
16. Real rental index	4.35	4.09	3.92	3.49	3.03	3.80	2.99	2.63	2.50	2.26	2.33	Better
17. Unemployment rate	4.35	5.41	5.92	6.37	6.52	5.63	6.21	6.69	6.73	6.72	6.78	Better
18. Index of current economic conditions ^	4.35	6.23	6.22	6.63	4.63	4.74	5.47	5.03	5.10	5.44	5.89	Better
19. Real wage index	4.35	4.29	4.29	4.32	4.35	4.30	4.27	4.38	4.45	4.46	4.36	Worse
Economic sub-index	21.74	22.94	23.58	23.17	20.10	19.56	18.16	16.79	15.59	14.51	14.35	Worse
Environmental sub-index												
20. Air quality index	4.35	3.39	3.48	3.40	3.70	4.35	4.44	3.97	4.69	4.25	4.65	Better
21. Water index	4.35	4.72	4.72	4.72	4.77	4.91	4.92	4.78	4.99	5.06	4.99	Worse
22. Noise index (per 1000 population)	4.35	5.79	5.70	5.99	6.17	6.28	6.41	6.56	6.45	6.59	6.67*	Better
23. Recycle rate of municipal solid waste	4.35	5.16	5.46	5.46	5.84	5.91	6.22	5.74	4.65	4.39	4.62*	Better
Environmental sub-index	17.39	19.06	19.36	19.57	20.48	21.45	21.99	21.05	20.78	20.28	20.93	Better
Quality of Life index	100.00	106.35	108.02	108.26	103.70	105.95	104.21	101.84	101.68	101.92	101.75	Worse

Note 1 The higher the indicator scores, the better it performs.

^ subjective index (data from telephone survey)

provisional figures

* forecasted figures

Appendix 2: Composition of and Data for Compiling the CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index

HEALTH SUB-INDEX

1. Life expectancy at birth (in years) refers to the life expectancy at birth for males and females.
2. Public expenditure on health as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP.
3. Hospitalization rate refers to the number of hospitalized persons per 1000 population.
4. Stress index refers to the stress that the Hong Kong people are facing (base rate = 100).
5. General life satisfaction index refers to the degree of satisfaction of Hong Kong people with their current lives (base rate = 100).

SOCIAL SUB-INDEX

6. Freedom of speech index refers to the degree of press freedom in Hong Kong (base rate = 100).
7. Press criticism index refers to the frequency of criticisms by the press of the Hong Kong Corporation, the Hong Kong SAR Government, and the People's Republic of China Government (base rate = 100).
8. Government performance index refers to the degree of satisfaction of Hong Kong people with the performance of Hong Kong SAR Government (base rate = 100).
9. Overall crime rate (per 1000 population) refers to the total number of violent and non-violent crimes reported per 1000 population.
10. Public expenditure on education as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP.
11. Age participation rate for first-degree programmes in local universities (in percent).

CULTURE & LEISURE SUB-INDEX

12. Attendances of indoor cultural programmes refer to the amount of attendances of indoor cultural programmes organized at the venues of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.
13. Participation of recreation and sport activities refers to the amount of participants of recreation and sport activities organized by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.
14. Oversea travel refers to the number of Hong Kong resident departures by the airport.

ECONOMIC SUB-INDEX

15. Housing affordability ratio refers to the annual average of affordable property price (i.e. average property price times 39.9 sq. feet, divided by monthly medium income times 12).
16. Real rental index refers to the real rental index for the Hong Kong property market.
17. Unemployment rate refers to the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate (in percent).
18. Index of current economic conditions refers to the public attitude towards economic conditions in Hong Kong.
19. Real wage index⁽¹⁾ refers to the real wages for employees up to supervisory level (excluding managerial and professional employees) in all selected industry sectors.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-INDEX

20. Air index refers to the Annual Air Quality index.
21. Water index refers to the percentage of rivers in Hong Kong categorized as 'good' and 'excellent' by the monitoring station.
22. Noise index (per 1000 population) refers to the number of noise complaints received by the Environmental Protection Department and the Police per 1000 population.
23. Recycle rate of municipal solid waste refers to the recycle rate (in percent) of solid waste from households and from commercial and industrial sources.

Notes:

- ⁽¹⁾ The real wage index is derived by deflating the nominal wage indices by the CPI(A).

Sources:

Stress index, general life satisfaction index, freedom of speech index, government performance index and index of current economic conditions are compiled based on the results of telephone survey conducted by Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The press criticism index is compiled based on a content analysis of six major local newspapers. Data for all other indices are obtained from the government and related institutions.

Data for Compiling the CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Health sub-index													
1. Life expectancy at birth (in year)	F:84.5 M:78.5	F: 84.4 M: 78.5	F:84.8 M:79.0	F:84.6 M:78.8	F:85.5 M:79.4	F:85.4 M:79.4	F:85.5 M:79.4	F:85.9 M:79.8	F:86.0 M:80.1	F:86.7 M:80.3	F:86.4 M:80.7	F:86.7 M:81.1	F:86.7# M:81.2#
2. Public expenditure on health as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP	2.64	2.70	2.70	2.30	2.10	2.20	1.99	2.09	1.99	1.90	2.04	2.17	2.17#
3. Hospitalization rate (per 1000 population)	3.18	2.93	2.87	2.91	2.75	2.70	2.77	2.73	2.79	2.72	2.65	2.67*	2.67*
4. Stress index ^	100.00	88.75	79.51	72.95	74.42	72.91	80.36	80.00	75.53	77.45	76.71	75.51	77.88
5. General life satisfaction index ^	100.00	100.68	105.62	109.94	112.47	110.22	107.57	111.66	111.46	109.01	110.10	111.57	110.28
Social sub-index													
6. Freedom of speech index ^	100.00	101.22	100.26	101.43	101.55	103.92	103.64	103.54	102.30	101.95	100.72	98.53	80.23
7. Press criticism index	100.00	103.23	91.02	78.82	77.25	81.86	83.65	79.15	83.10	86.29	88.77	95.62	92.03
8. Government performance index ^	100.00	103.23	132.23	169.79	176.29	183.48	130.48	145.10	138.62	118.03	129.52	120.03	115.26
9. Overall crime rate (per 1000 population)	11.18	13.13	11.81	11.37	11.83	11.67	11.25	11.08	10.76	10.74	10.61	10.14	9.36
10. Public expenditure on education as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP	4.00	4.30	4.60	4.10	3.80	3.50	3.30	4.40	3.50	3.40	3.5	3.80	3.60#
11. Age participation rate for first-degree programmes in local universities (in percent)	17.00	17.70	17.50	17.60	18.50	18.70	18.60	18.60	18.70	19.40	20.20	20.35	21.30
Culture & Leisure sub-index													
12. Cultural programmes attendance (per 1000 population)	253.28	194.36	181.72	172.19	195.03	151.73	152.80	143.03	148.40	140.74	144.79	141.28	138.83
13. Recreation and sport activities participation (per 1000 population)	303.13	346.94	337.42	352.82	366.78	386.59	437.90	421.92	401.51	452.74	410.91	452.48	438.30
14. Oversea travel times	0.74	0.67	0.79	0.80	0.84	0.89	0.89	0.91	0.97	1.01	1.09	1.20	1.27
Economic sub-index													
15. Housing affordability ratio	4.68	4.49	5.31	6.22	5.88	6.83	7.68	8.19	10.20	11.44	12.79	14.06	14.75
16. Real rental index	87.97	79.67	84.55	93.16	96.68	105.27	114.54	98.99	115.38	122.68	125.33	130.28	128.80
17. Unemployment rate	7.34	7.93	6.76	5.55	4.69	3.92	3.68	5.17	4.20	3.39	3.31	3.33	3.24
18. Index of current economic conditions ^	76.55	81.32	99.95	109.75	109.48	116.70	81.55	83.40	96.22	88.50	89.72	95.74	103.65
19. Real wage index	117.68	117.70	116.38	116.15	116.08	116.90	117.75	116.25	115.58	118.65	120.58	120.83	117.88
Environmental sub-index													
20. Air index	2.22	2.60	3.00	2.71	2.67	2.71	2.55	2.22	2.18	2.42	2.05	2.27	2.07
21. Water index	74.40	75.6	76.9	80.80	80.80	80.70	81.70	84.10	84.20	81.8	85.4	86.6	85.4
22. Noise index (per 1000 population)	1.85	1.44	1.39	1.27	1.28	1.15	1.08	1.03	0.97	0.91	0.96	0.90	0.86*
23. Recycle rate of municipal solid waste	36.30	40.82	40.35	43.09	45.59	45.62	48.76	49.30	51.95	47.92	38.85	36.61	38.60*

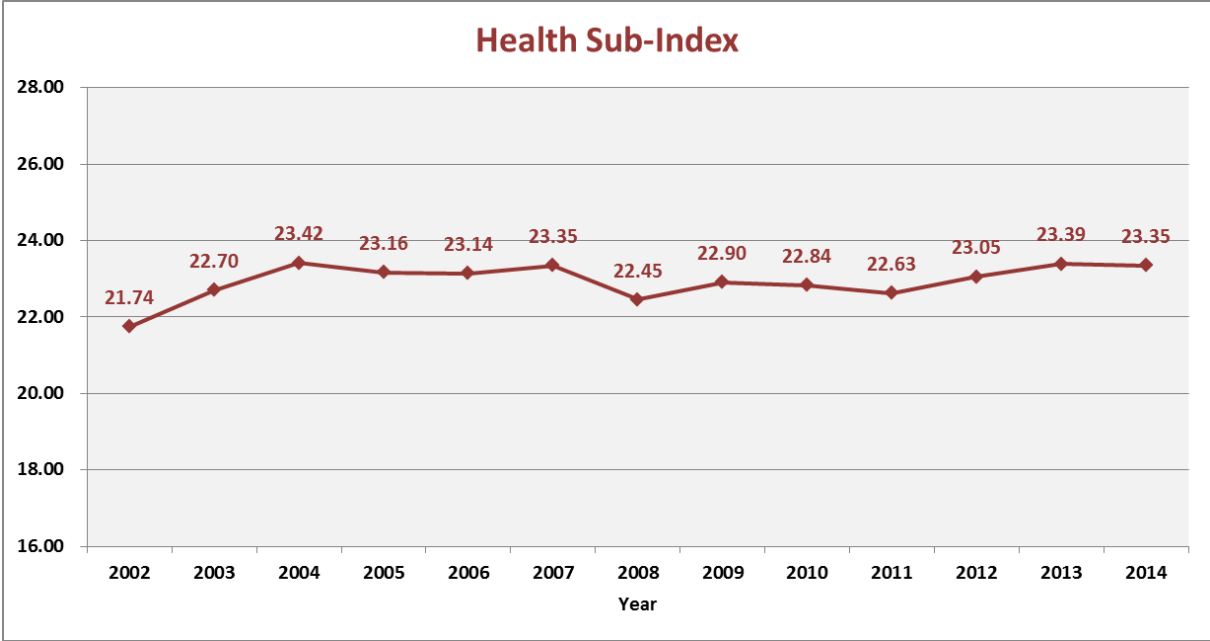
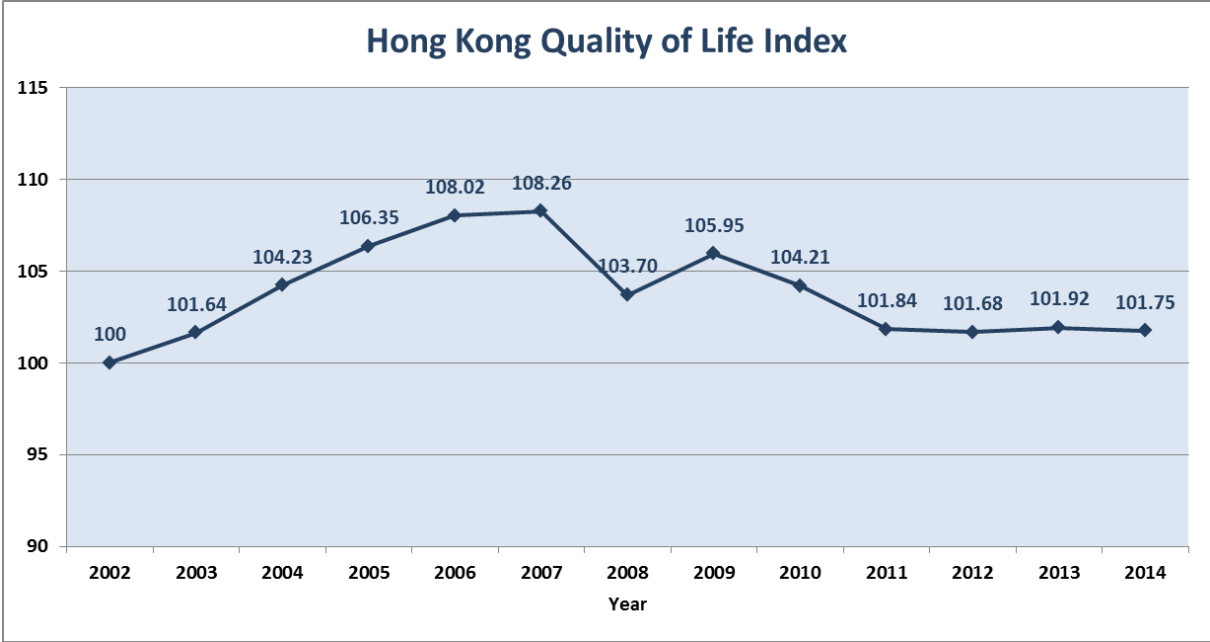
^ subjective index (data from telephone survey)

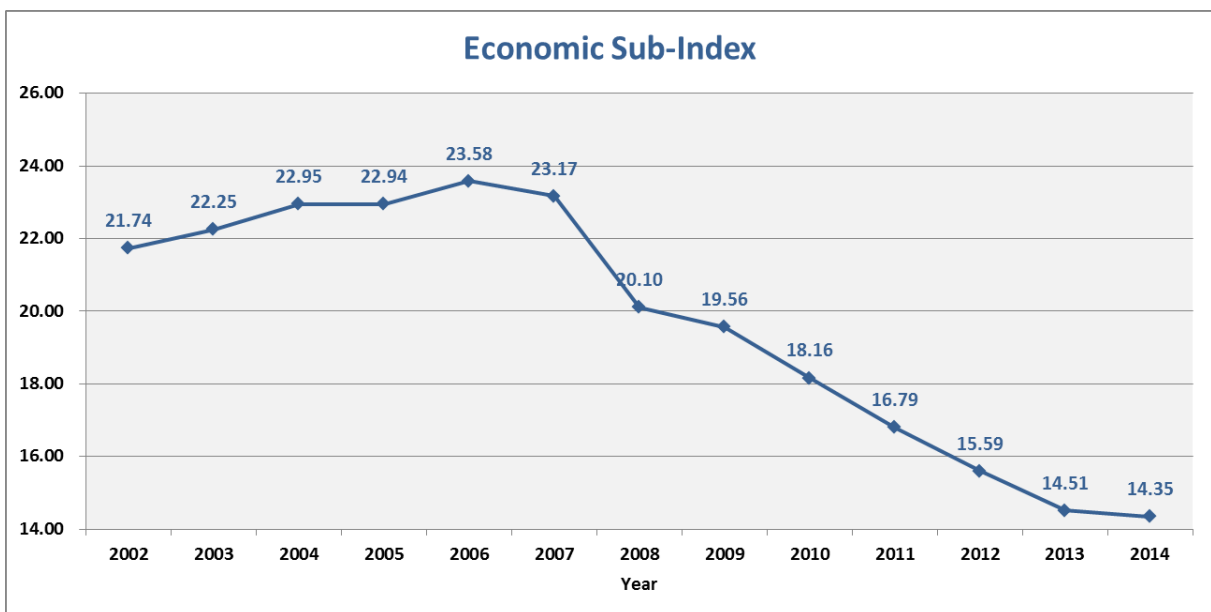
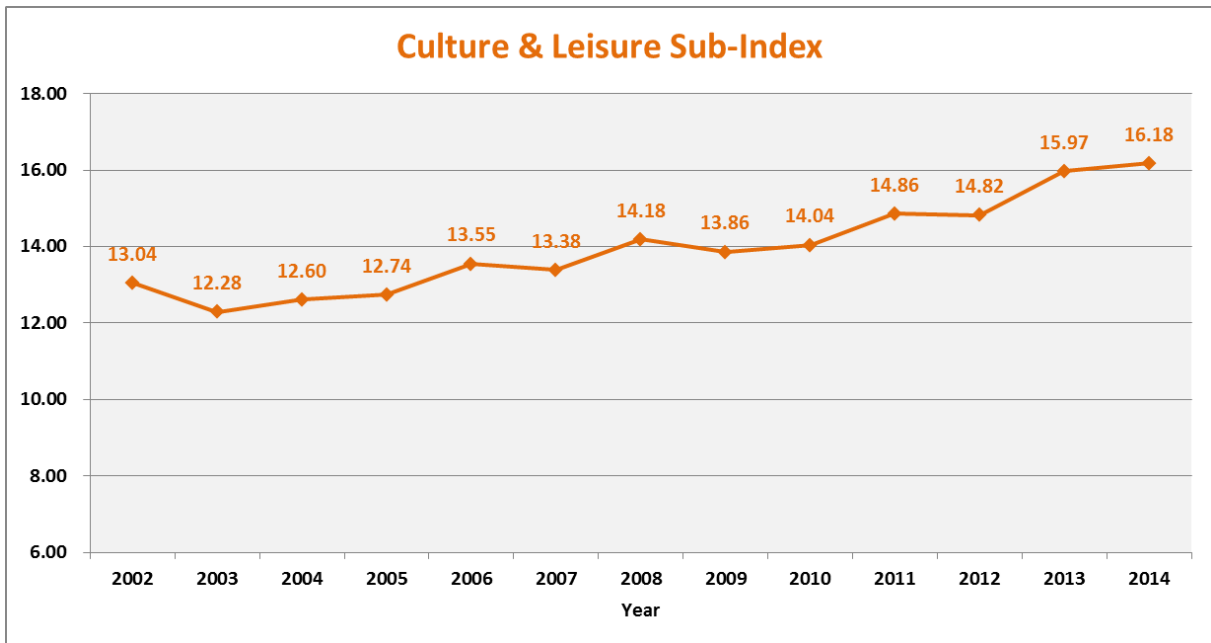
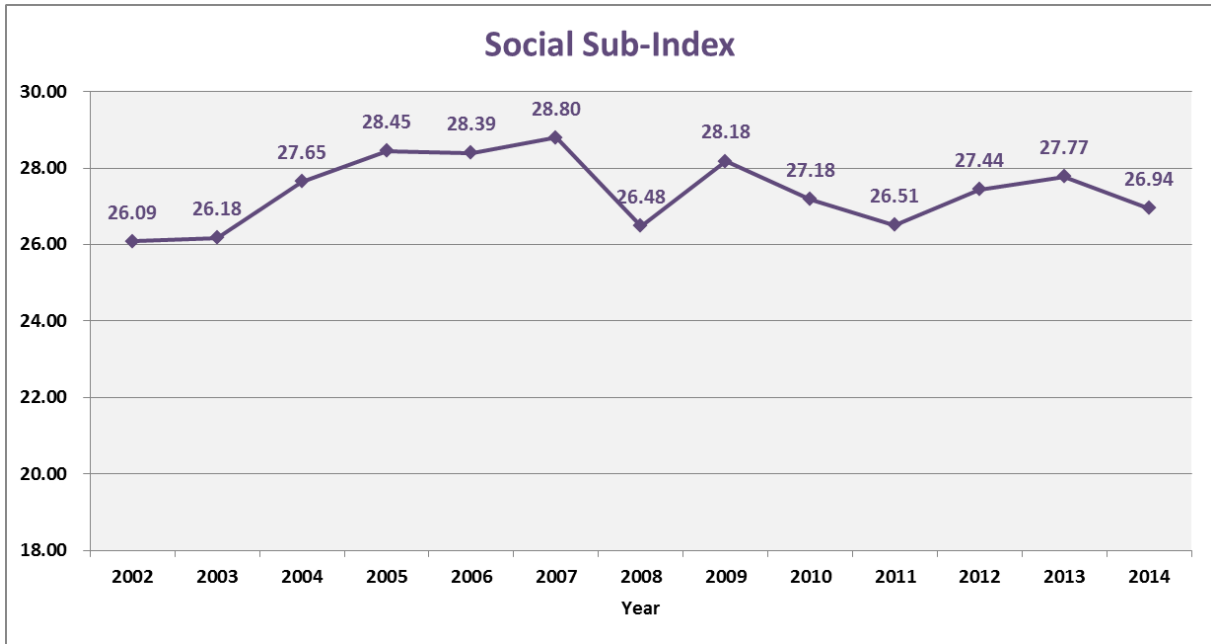
provisional figures

* forecasted figures

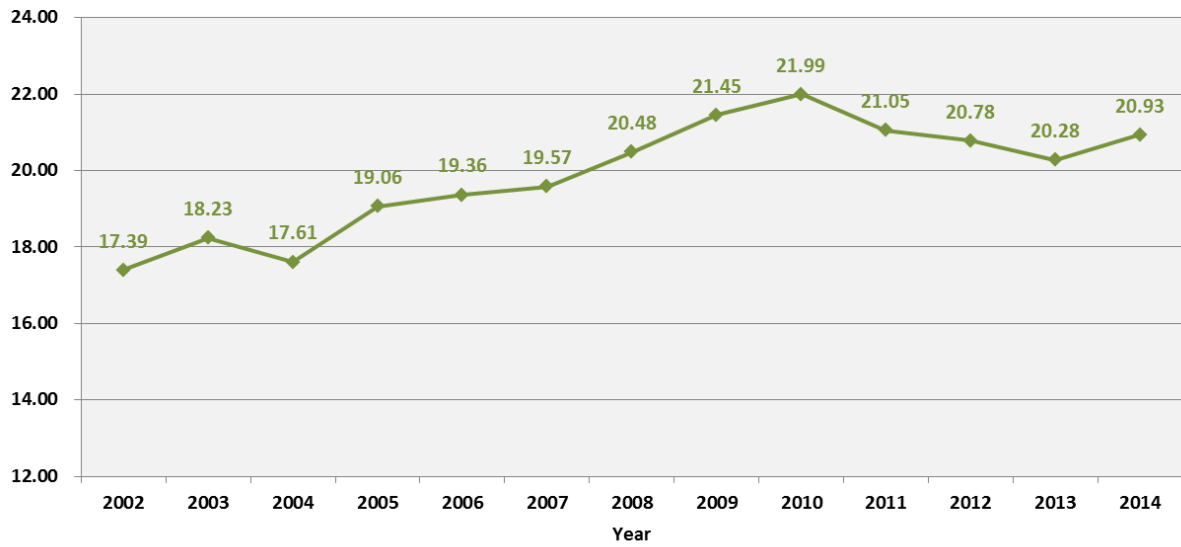
Appendix 3.1: Line Charts of CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index and Sub-indices

The higher the rate, the better performance for the indicator



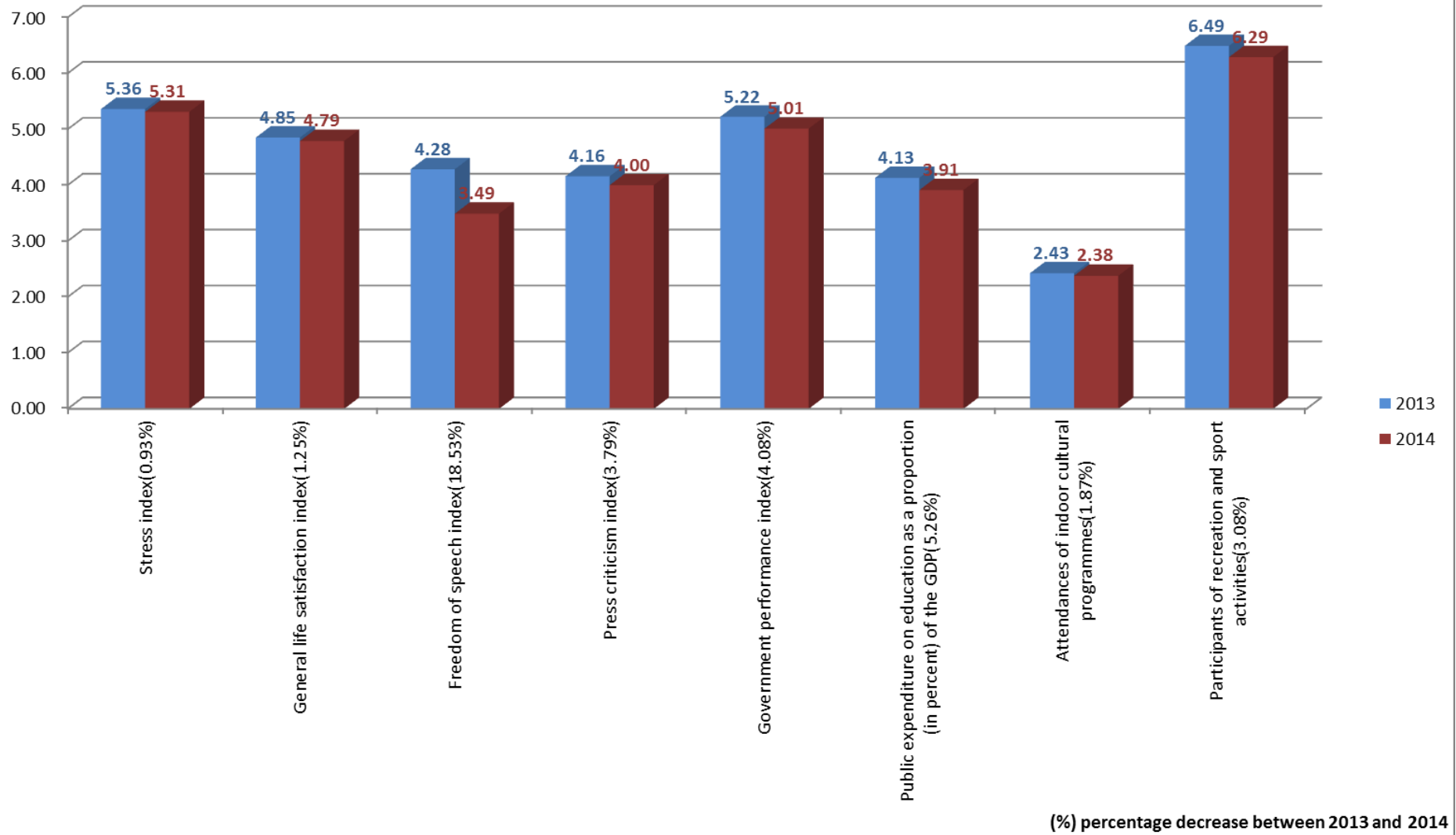


Environmental Sub-Index



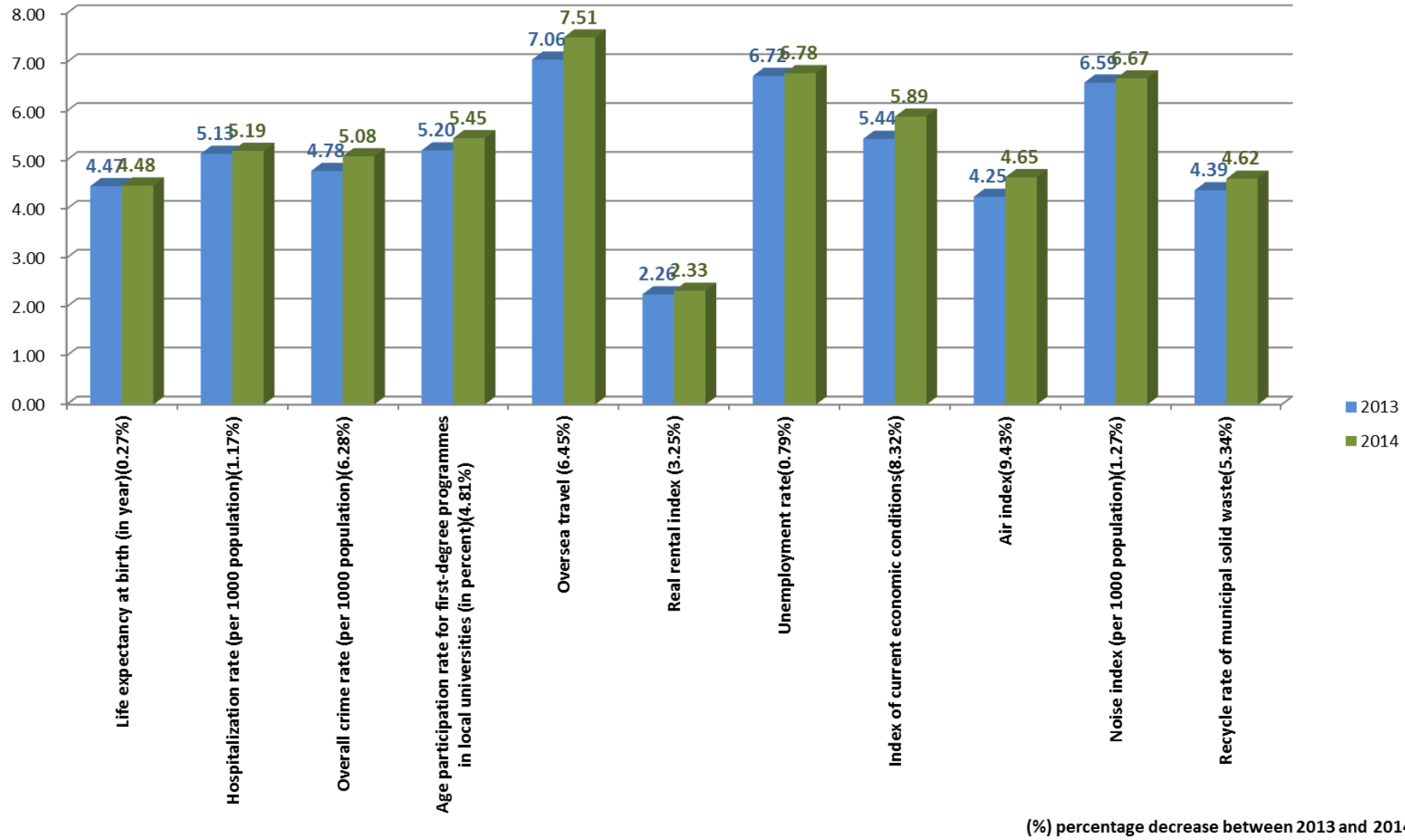
Appendix 4

2013-2014 Quality of Life Indices - Worse Indices



Appendix 5

2013-2014 Quality of Life Indices - Better Indices



Working Group of the CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index

Prof. Wong Hung
Director, Centre for Quality of Life;
Associate Professor,
Department of Social Work, CUHK
Tel: 3943-7510
Email: hwong@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Chu S.C. Donna
Associate Professor,
School of Journalism and
Communication, CUHK
Tel: 3943-1908
Email: donnachu@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Lee S.N. Paul
Professor,
School of Journalism and
Communication, CUHK
Tel: 3943-6234
Email: plee@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Ng Sai Leung
Associate Professor,
Department of Geography and Resource
Management, CUHK
Tel: 3943-6527
Email: slng@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Tsou Jin Yeu
Professor,
School of Architecture, CUHK
Tel: 3943-6558
Email: jinyeutsou@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Chong Tai Leung
Associate Professor,
Department of Economics, CUHK
Tel: 3943-8193
Email: chong2064@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Kwong Kai Sun
Associate Professor,
Department of Economics, CUHK
Tel: 3943-8198
Email: kaisunkwong@cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Mak W.S. Winnie
Associate Professor,
Department of Psychology, CUHK
Tel: 3943-6577
Email: wwsmak@psy.cuhk.edu.hk

Prof. Ting Kwok Fai
Professor,
Department of Sociology, CUHK
Tel: 3943-6626
Email: kfting@cuhk.edu.hk

Dr. Zhang Y. Nick
Research Associate
Centre for Quality of Life, CUHK
Tel: 3943-3400
Email: zhangyin@cuhk.edu.hk