



To News Editors  
For Immediate Release

19 July 2019

### **CUHK Releases Hong Kong Quality of Life Index 2018 Quality of Life Declines Slightly**

The Centre for Quality of Life of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) released the “CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index” 2018 (the Index) today (19 July). According to this latest Index, the overall score in 2018 was 105.96, a decrease of 0.63 points from the score in 2017 (106.59). The result indicates that the quality of life in Hong Kong slightly declined in the past year (Appendix 1). The Economic sub-index has decreased to its lowest on record; the Social sub-index has increased to the highest on record; the Culture and Leisure sub-index and the Environmental sub-index have increased to their second-highest on record.

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 their coverage, representativeness, measurability, and importance to the quality of life of Hong Kong people. **The higher the indicator scores, the better it performs.**

Compared with 2017, the Health, the Culture and Leisure, and the Economic sub-indices have dropped in 2018, while the Social and the Environmental sub-indices improved (Appendix 3). In particular, the Economic sub-index decreased by 5.96% (0.75 points) to 11.89. The Culture and Leisure sub-index decreased by 0.74% (0.14 points) to 18.76. The Health sub-index decreased by 0.67% (0.17 points) to 24.62. The Social sub-index went up to a record high again this year, increasing by 0.72% (0.21 points) to 29.06. The Environmental sub-index increased by 1.04% (0.22 points) to 21.63.

8 out of the 23 indicators improved in 2018 (Appendix 4). Noticeable increases in the enrolment rate of the relevant age groups for first-year-first degree places of UGC-funded programmes and the Index of current economic conditions were observed, with 9.13% and 7.23% increases between 2017 and 2018, respectively. The air index, the overseas travel index and the unemployment rate also improved by 4.10%, 3.74% and 2.15%, respectively. The increases in the remaining indicators were relatively mild, ranging from 0.49% to 2.01%. Among the 8 improved indicators, 7 of them have increased to the highest on record (Appendix 1). The overseas travel index has improved for the fifteenth consecutive year, the index of the overall crime rate has improved for the twelfth consecutive year, and the index of the enrolment rate of the relevant age groups for first-year-first degree places of UGC-funded programmes has increased for the ninth consecutive year.

Compared with 2017, 10 out of the 23 indicators worsened in 2018 (Appendix 5). The housing affordability ratio and the real rental index decreased substantially and again

hitting record lows, with 17.72% and 13.21% decreases between 2017 and 2018, respectively. The government performance index dropped 7.42% and the freedom of speech index dropped 2.15%. The decreases in the remaining indicators were relatively mild, ranging from 0.20% to 1.87%. Among the 10 worsened indicators, 3 of them have decreased to the lowest on record (Appendix 1). The freedom of speech index has decreased for the ninth consecutive year.

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 the need to improve 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 the 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 at the Centre for Quality of Life of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies refines the composition and calculation methodology of the Index from time to time. From 2014 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.

The telephone survey of the “CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index” 2018 was sponsored by Department of Government and Public Administration, Department of Social Work, Department of Psychology, Lau Chor Tak Institute of Global Economics and Finance, and School of Journalism & Communication.

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](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/hkiaps/qol).

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# Appendix 1: CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index <sup>Note 1</sup>

	2002 Base year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018 compared with 2017
<b>Health sub-index</b>													
1. Life expectancy at birth (years)	4.35	4.40	4.42	4.43	4.45	4.46	4.48	4.48	4.50	4.50	4.52	4.53 @	Similar #
2. Public expenditure on health	4.35	3.25	3.65	3.57	3.40	3.67	4.60	4.94	3.96	4.67	4.12	4.13 @	Similar
3. Average patient days	4.35	5.21	5.23	5.32	5.28	5.34	5.15	5.26	5.23	5.17	5.07	4.98	Worse
4. Stress index ^	4.35	5.55	5.54	5.86	5.67	5.79	5.78	5.75	5.89	5.80	5.95	5.91	Worse
5. General life satisfaction index ^	4.35	4.68	4.85	4.85	4.74	4.79	4.85	4.79	4.84	5.07	5.12	5.06	Worse
<b>Health sub-index</b>	<b>21.74</b>	<b>23.08</b>	<b>23.69</b>	<b>24.02</b>	<b>23.55</b>	<b>24.05</b>	<b>24.85</b>	<b>25.22</b>	<b>24.41</b>	<b>25.19</b>	<b>24.78</b>	<b>24.62</b>	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Social sub-index</b>													
6. Freedom of speech index ^	4.35	4.50	4.50	4.45	4.44	4.38	4.29	4.11	4.04	4.01	3.99	3.90	Worse &
7. Press criticism index	4.35	3.64	3.44	3.61	3.75	3.86	4.16	4.00	4.09	3.98	3.71	3.70 @	Worse
8. Government performance index ^	4.35	5.66	6.28	6.01	5.11	5.62	5.20	5.01	4.68	4.87	5.62	5.20	Worse
9. Overall crime rate	4.35	4.34	4.39	4.52	4.55	4.59	4.77	5.07	5.18	5.50	5.77	5.88	Better #
10. Public expenditure on education	4.35	3.38	4.84	3.51	3.36	3.57	3.84	3.62	3.29	3.40	3.32	3.34 @	Better
11. Enrolment rate of the relevant age groups (age 17-20) for first-year-first degree places of UGC-funded programmes	4.35	4.76	4.76	4.79	4.96	5.17	5.27	5.45	5.63	5.89	6.45	7.04	Better #
<b>Social sub-index</b>	<b>26.09</b>	<b>26.27</b>	<b>28.22</b>	<b>26.88</b>	<b>26.18</b>	<b>27.19</b>	<b>27.53</b>	<b>27.26</b>	<b>26.91</b>	<b>27.64</b>	<b>28.85</b>	<b>29.06</b>	<b>Better #</b>
<b>Culture &amp; Leisure sub-index</b>													
12. Cultural programmes attendance index	4.35	2.71	2.46	2.55	2.42	2.49	2.43	2.32	2.24	2.15	2.50	2.08 *	-
13. Recreation and sport activities participation index	4.35	6.26	6.05	5.60	6.31	5.71	6.50	5.65	6.31	5.66	6.72	6.63	Worse
14. Overseas travel index	4.35	5.26	5.35	5.73	5.95	6.44	7.06	7.53	8.45	9.07	9.68	10.04	Better #
<b>Culture &amp; Leisure sub-index</b>	<b>13.04</b>	<b>14.23</b>	<b>13.86</b>	<b>13.88</b>	<b>14.68</b>	<b>14.64</b>	<b>15.99</b>	<b>15.49</b>	<b>17.00</b>	<b>16.89</b>	<b>18.90</b>	<b>18.76</b>	<b>Worse</b>
<b>Economic sub-index</b>													
15. Housing affordability ratio	4.35	1.45	0.94	-0.90	-2.03	-3.34	-4.54	-5.17	-6.13	-5.06	-6.62	-7.79	Worse &
16. Real rental index	4.35	3.44	4.16	3.42	2.45	2.31	2.06	2.14	1.80	2.14	1.68	1.46	Worse &
17. Unemployment rate	4.35	6.52	5.64	6.21	6.69	6.74	6.74	6.78	6.76	6.70	6.88	7.03	Better #
18. Index of current economic conditions ^	4.35	4.63	4.74	5.46	5.03	5.10	5.44	5.79	5.75	5.89	6.16	6.61	Better
19. Real wage index	4.35	4.32	4.30	4.27	4.39	4.46	4.47	4.36	4.38	4.44	4.54	4.59	Better #
<b>Economic sub-index</b>	<b>21.74</b>	<b>20.36</b>	<b>19.78</b>	<b>18.46</b>	<b>16.52</b>	<b>15.27</b>	<b>14.17</b>	<b>13.90</b>	<b>12.55</b>	<b>14.11</b>	<b>12.65</b>	<b>11.89</b>	<b>Worse &amp;</b>
<b>Environmental sub-index</b>													
20. Air index	4.35	3.73	4.37	4.45	4.00	4.71	4.26	4.64	4.99	5.38	5.47	5.69	Better #
21. Water index	4.35	4.77	4.91	4.92	4.78	4.99	5.06	4.99	4.77	4.91	5.08	5.00 *	-
22. Noise index	4.35	6.17	6.28	6.41	6.56	6.44	6.58	7.08	6.97	7.18	7.05	7.03	Worse
23. Recycle rate of municipal solid waste	4.35	5.84	5.91	6.22	5.74	4.65	4.39	4.37	4.24	4.01	3.81	3.91 *	-
<b>Environmental sub-index</b>	<b>17.39</b>	<b>20.52</b>	<b>21.47</b>	<b>22.01</b>	<b>21.08</b>	<b>20.80</b>	<b>20.29</b>	<b>21.08</b>	<b>20.98</b>	<b>21.48</b>	<b>21.41</b>	<b>21.63</b>	<b>Better</b>
<b>CUHK Quality of Life Index</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>104.46</b>	<b>107.02</b>	<b>105.24</b>	<b>102.00</b>	<b>101.94</b>	<b>102.84</b>	<b>102.95</b>	<b>101.84</b>	<b>105.30</b>	<b>106.59</b>	<b>105.96</b>	<b>Worse</b>

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

^ subjective index (data from telephone survey)

@ provisional figures

\* forecasted figures

■ revised figures

# Highest on record

& Lowest on record

## **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 expectancy of life at birth for males and females.
2. Public expenditure on health as a proportion (in percent) of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
3. Average patient days (per person) refers to the number of days in hospitals for treatment per person.
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 public attitude towards freedom of speech in Hong Kong (base rate = 100).
7. Press criticism index refers to the frequency of criticisms of Hong Kong corporations, the Hong Kong SAR Government, and the People's Republic of China Government by the press (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 1,000 population) refers to the total number of violent and non-violent crimes reported per 1,000 population.
10. Public expenditure on education as a proportion (in percent) of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
11. Enrolment rate of the relevant age groups (age 17-20) for first-year-first degree (FYFD) places of UGC-funded programmes (in percent).

### **CULTURE & LEISURE SUB-INDEX**

12. Cultural programmes attendance index (per 1,000 population) refers to the number of attendances at indoor cultural programmes organised at the venues of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department per 1,000 population.
13. Recreation and sport activities participation index (per 1,000 population) refers to the number of participants in recreation and sport activities organised or subvented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department per 1000 population.
14. Oversea travel index (per person) refers to the number of departures from the airport per person.

### **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. meter, divided by monthly medium income times 12).
16. Real rental index refers to the real rental index of 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 the economic conditions in Hong Kong.
19. Real wage index<sup>(1)</sup> 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 quality index refers to the annual air quality of all general stations.
21. Water index refers to the percentage of the inland waters of Hong Kong graded as 'good' and 'excellent' by the monitoring stations.
22. Noise index (per 1,000 population) refers to the number of noise complaints received by the Environmental Protection Department and the Police Force per 1,000 population.
23. Recycle rate of municipal solid waste refers to the recycle rate of solid domestic waste, and commercial and industrial waste (in percent).

#### **Notes:**

- <sup>(1)</sup> 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 surveys.

Press criticism index is compiled based on the content analysis of six major local newspapers.

Data for all other indices are obtained from the government or related institutions.

## Data for Compiling the CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index

	2002	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Health sub-index</b>												
1. Life expectancy at birth (years)	F: 84.5 M: 78.5	F: 85.5 M: 79.3	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: 86.9 M: 81.2	F: 87.3 M: 81.4	F: 87.3 M: 81.3	F: 87.6 M: 81.9	F: 87.6 @ M: 82.2 @
2. Public expenditure on health as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP	2.63	1.97	2.21	2.16	2.06	2.22	2.79	2.99	2.40	2.83	2.50	2.51 @
3. Average patient days @	1.40	1.12	1.12	1.09	1.10	1.08	1.14	1.11	1.12	1.14	1.17	1.20
4. Stress index ^	100.00	72.28	72.67	65.24	69.49	66.82	67.07	67.66	64.62	66.68	63.16	64.11
5. General life satisfaction index^	100.00	107.54	111.62	111.44	108.98	110.08	111.52	110.25	111.24	116.53	117.75	116.48
<b>Social sub-index</b>												
6. Freedom of speech index ^	100.00	103.53	103.54	102.24	102.08	100.73	98.64	94.53	93.01	92.30	91.76	89.81
7. Press criticism index	100.00	83.65	79.15	83.10	86.29	88.77	95.62	92.03	93.96	91.51	85.38	85.00 @
8. Government performance index ^	100.00	130.07	144.49	138.20	117.58	129.25	119.66	115.20	107.62	111.91	129.16	119.58
9. Overall crime rate (per 1,000 population)	11.25	11.28	11.13	10.81	10.74	10.62	10.16	9.37	9.11	8.27	7.58	7.28
10. Public expenditure on education as a proportion (in percent) of the GDP	4.06	3.15	4.52	3.28	3.14	3.33	3.58	3.38	3.07	3.17	3.10	3.11 @
11. Enrolment rate of the relevant age groups (age 17-20) for first-year-first degree places of UGC-funded programmes	17.00	18.60	18.60	18.70	19.40	20.20	20.60	21.30	22.00	23.00	25.2	27.5
<b>Culture &amp; Leisure sub-index</b>												
12. Cultural programmes attendance (per 1,000 population)	253.28	157.73	143.03	148.40	140.74	144.88	141.45	134.97	130.44	125.31	145.42	121.42 *
13. Recreation and sport activities participation (per 1,000 population)	303.13	436.65	421.92	390.25	440.10	398.21	453.20	393.60	438.85	394.65	468.58	462.35
14. Oversea travel times	0.74	0.89	0.91	0.97	1.01	1.09	1.20	1.28	1.43	1.54	1.64	1.70
<b>Economic sub-index</b>												
15. Housing affordability ratio	4.60	7.67	8.20	10.16	11.35	12.73	14.00	14.67	15.68	14.56	16.21	17.45
16. Real rental index	108.29	130.78	112.86	131.39	155.60	159.08	165.23	163.38	171.86	163.31	174.72	180.25
17. Unemployment rate	7.34	3.68	5.17	4.20	3.39	3.31	3.30	3.24	3.28	3.38	3.06	2.81
18. Index of current economic conditions ^	76.55	81.55	83.40	96.22	88.50	89.72	95.74	102.01	101.24	103.77	108.45	116.29
19. Real wage index	117.53	116.68	116.25	115.45	118.65	120.58	120.83	117.88	118.33	120.03	122.78	124.08
<b>Environmental sub-index</b>												
20. Air quality index	2.24	2.56	2.23	2.18	2.42	2.05	2.28	2.09	1.91	1.71	1.66	1.55
21. Water index	74.40	81.70	84.10	84.20	81.80	85.40	86.60	85.40	81.70	84.00	87.00	85.50 *
22. Noise index (per 1000 population)	1.85	1.07	1.03	0.97	0.91	0.96	0.90	0.69	0.73	0.65	0.70	0.71
23. Recycle rate of municipal solid waste	36.30	48.76	49.30	51.95	47.94	38.85	36.61	36.48	35.37	33.51	31.82	32.66 *

^ subjective index (data from telephone survey)

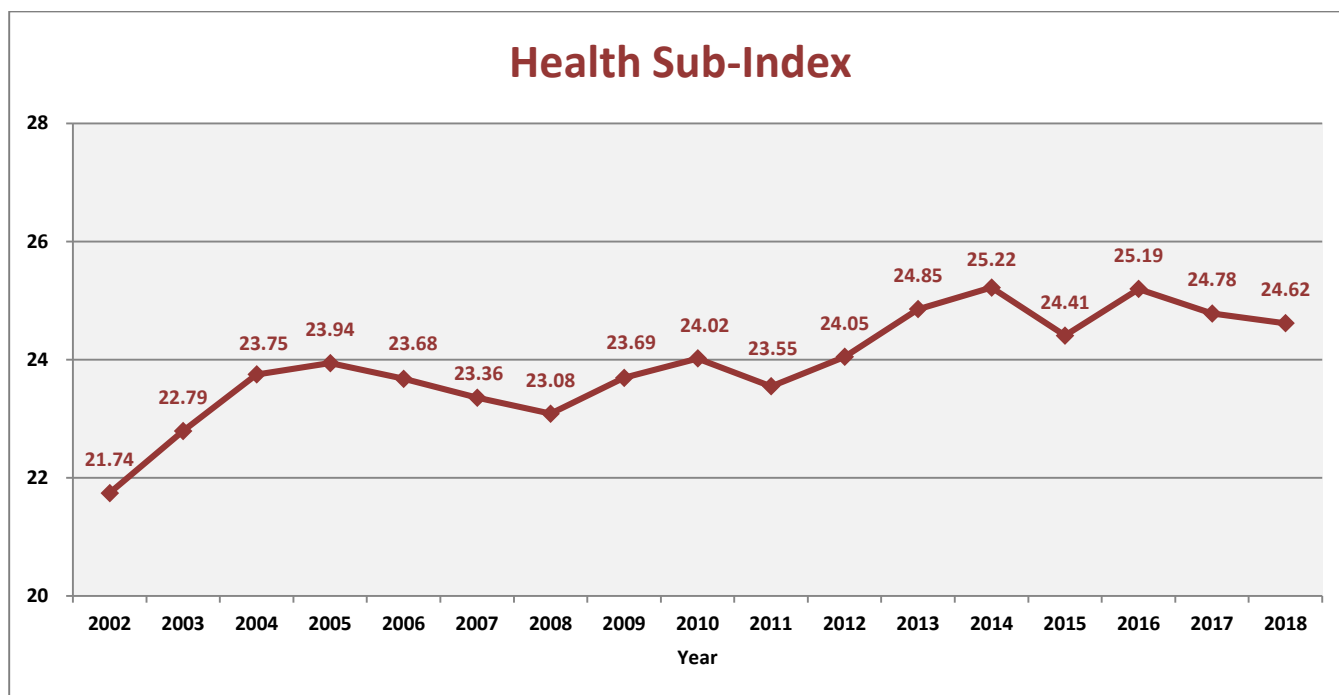
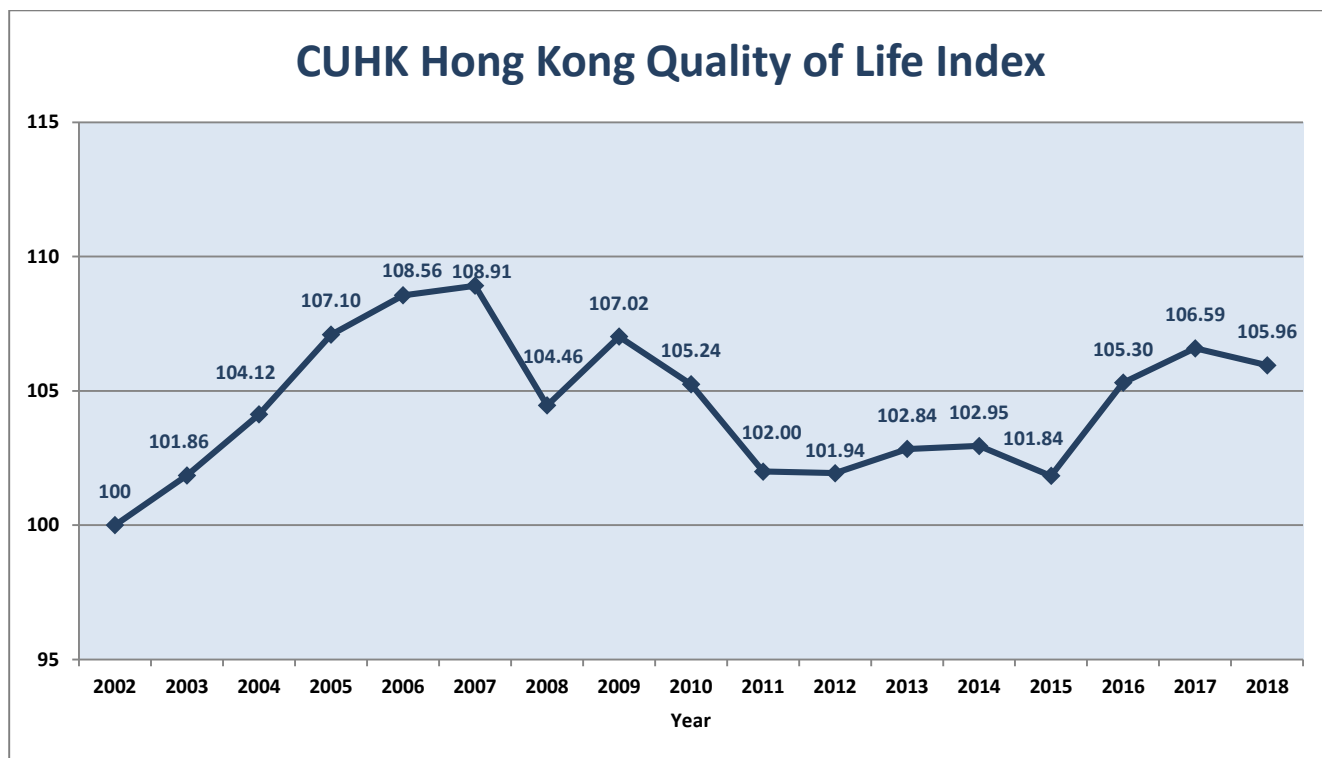
@ provisional figures

\* forecasted figures

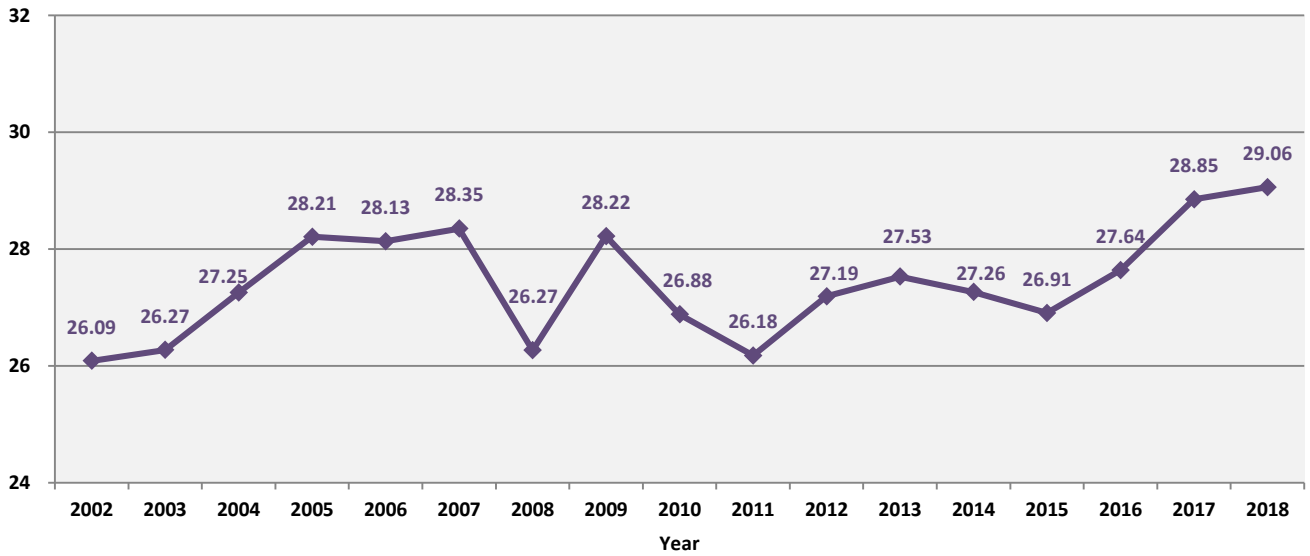
■ revised figures

### Appendix 3: Line Charts of CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index and Sub-indices

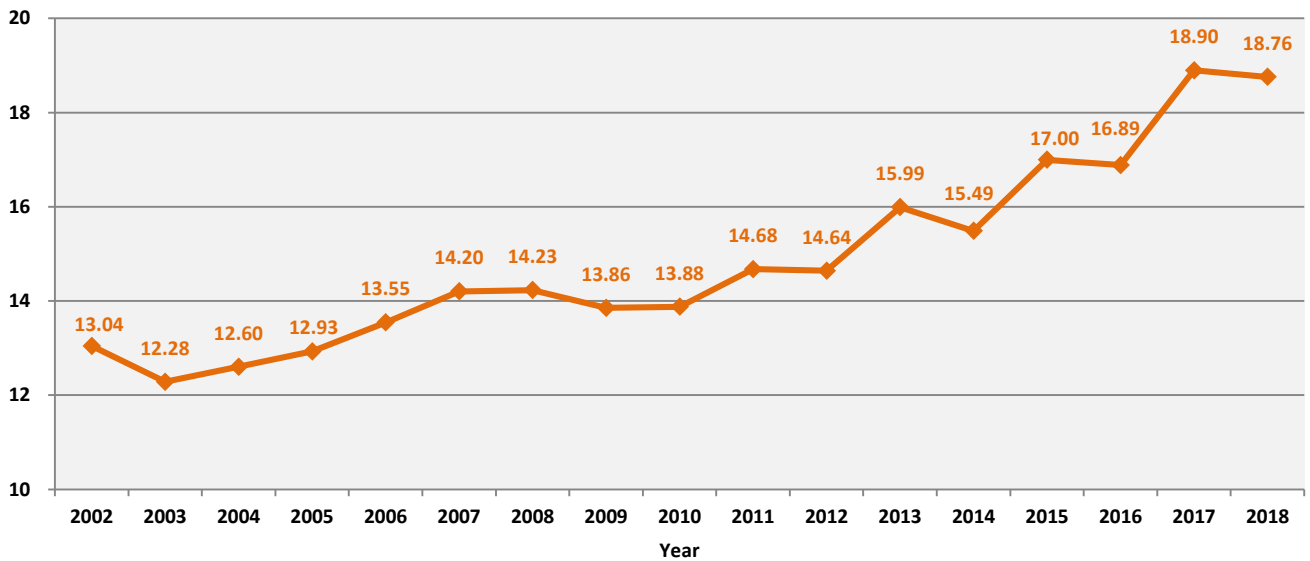
The higher the indicator scores, the better it performs.



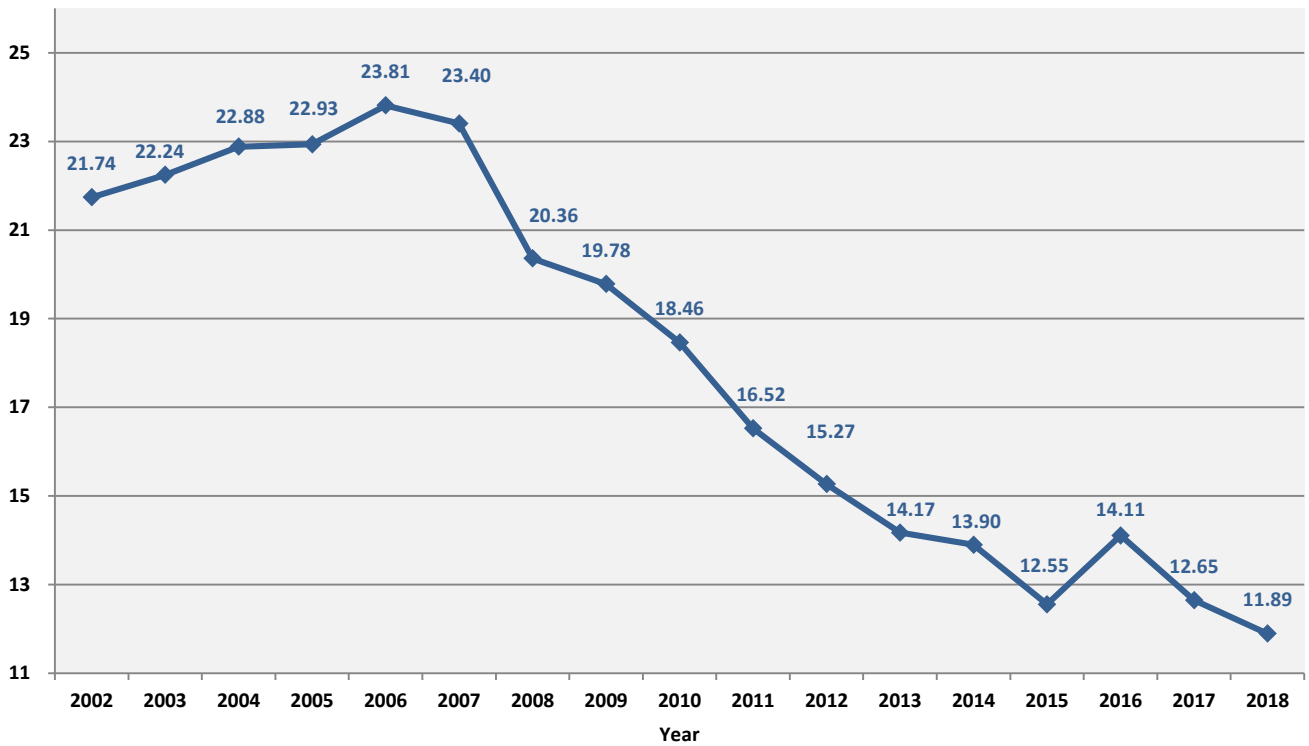
## Social Sub-Index



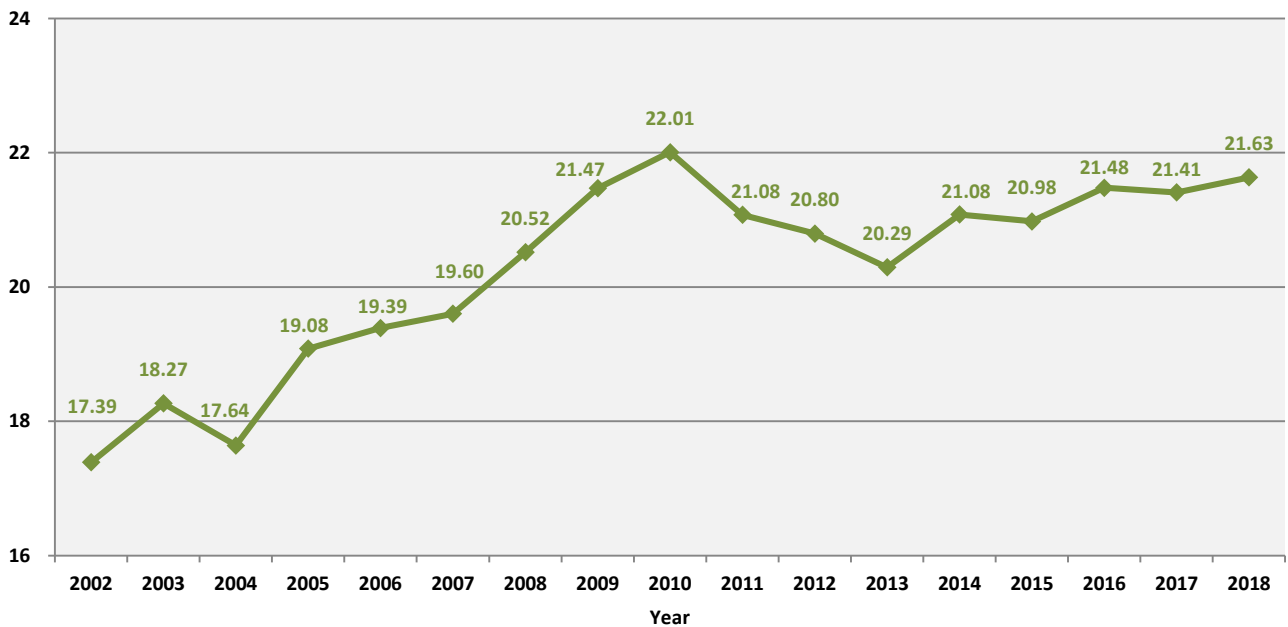
## Culture & Leisure Sub-Index



## Economic Sub-Index



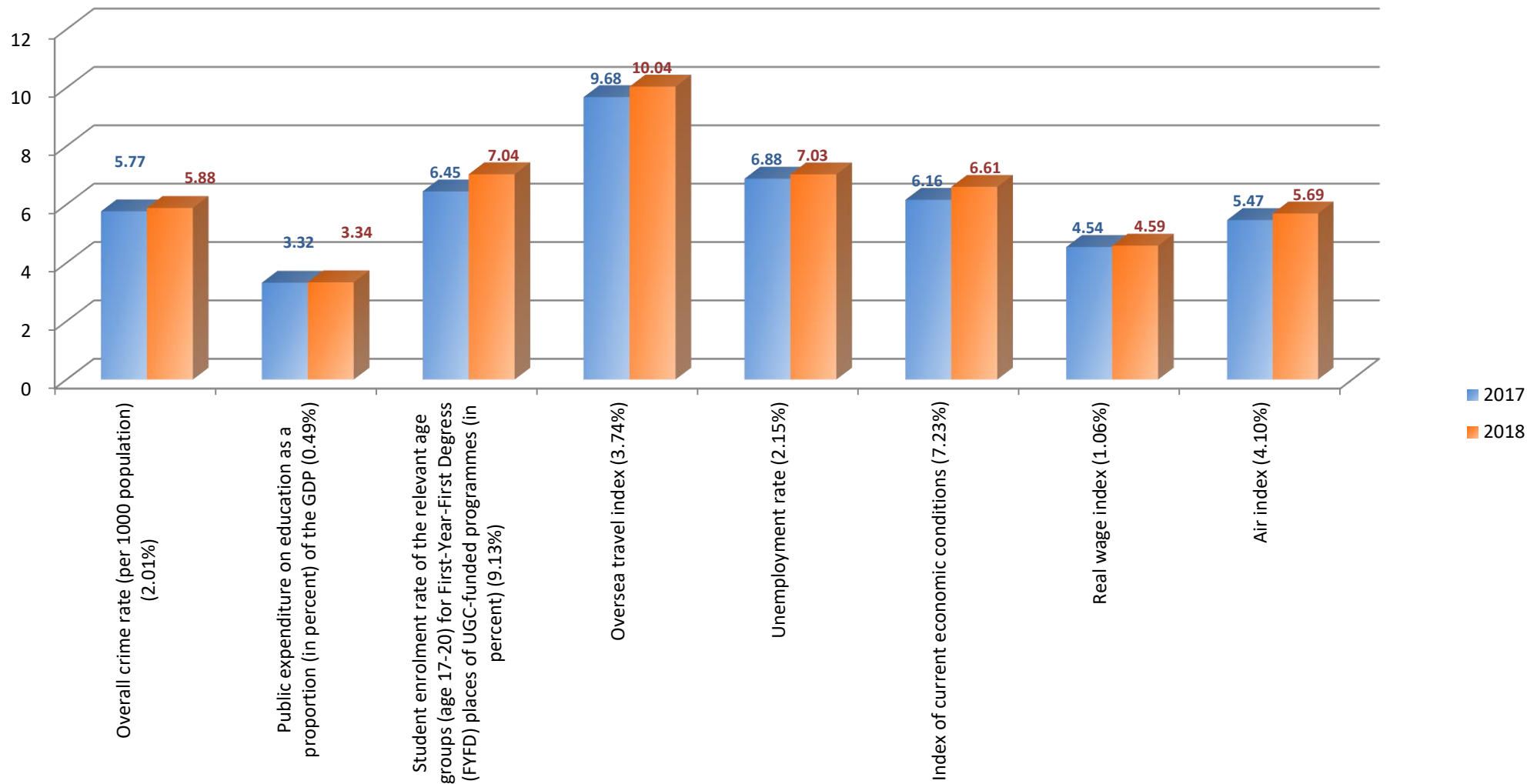
## Environmental Sub-Index





**Appendix 4**

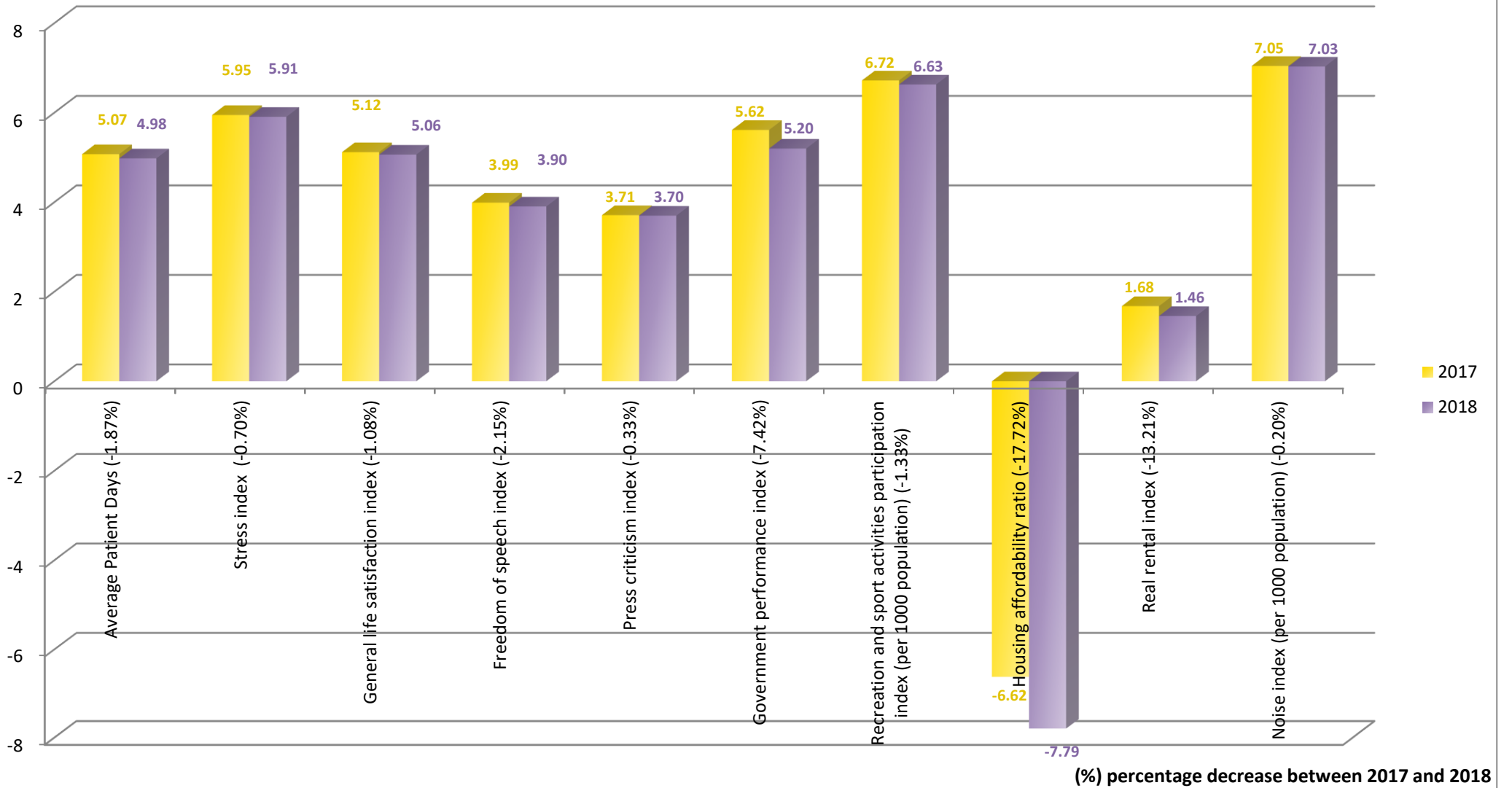
**2017-2018 CHUK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index - Better Indicators**



(%) percentage decrease between 2017 and 2018

**Appendix 5**

**2017-2018 CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index - Worse Indicators**



## **Working Group of the CUHK Hong Kong Quality of Life Index**

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