



# New challenges faced by civil servants

*Civil servants face challenges. These include political pressure, gaining mutual trust with politically appointed officials and problems attracting talented recruits. What can be improved?*

Respondents to this survey were asked to give views on certain questions using a scale of 0–10 points. They thought that civil servants encountered political pressure of an average severity level of 6.79 points. The severity level of failure to establish mutual trust with politically appointed officials stood at 6.31 points and to recruit talent at 5.83 points. Furthermore, respondents gave only 5.94 points for the performance of civil servants. Despite these findings, about 57% regarded a civil service job as ideal and 44% would join the civil service if they had the chance.

**Who's in the Hong Kong civil service?**  
The civil service in Hong Kong is managed by 13 policy bureaux in the Government Secretariat and 67 departments and agencies, mostly staffed by civil servants. In June 2016, there were 165,526 civil servants excluding bureau heads of the Government Secretariat who are nominated by the Chief Executive and are not politically neutral career civil servants.

### Comments

Given today's challenging environment, strengthening civil service responsiveness and enhancing public trust would be well worthwhile.

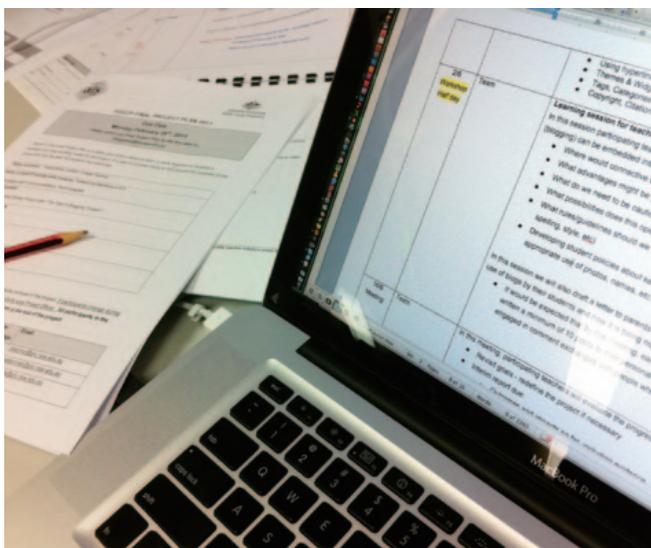
**Richard Cheng** Group convener "Young people acknowledge the roles and contributions of civil servants but we think trust in them among the public needs to be strengthened in today's changing political and social environment."

**Ray Poon** Group member "The government should conduct regular opinion polls about public services with both civil servants and members of the public to provide solid evidence for improvement."

**Alan Lau** Group member "The professionalism of civil servants is widely recognized so we would encourage the government and Hong Kong civil servants to ensure that standards are maintained."

### Sources

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- [censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?tableID=018&ID=0&productType=8](http://censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp452.jsp?tableID=018&ID=0&productType=8)
- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principal\\_Officials\\_Accountability\\_System](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Principal_Officials_Accountability_System)
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523 18-39 year-olds took part in a territory-wide random sample phone poll in September 2016.

Twenty were invited for face-to-face interviews as were four experts or academic specialists.

**Full details** [in Chinese]

[yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/news.aspx?id=5e608f3f-34a3-49d5-a900-bb8c93a52e05&corpname=yrc&i=9559](http://yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/news.aspx?id=5e608f3f-34a3-49d5-a900-bb8c93a52e05&corpname=yrc&i=9559)