

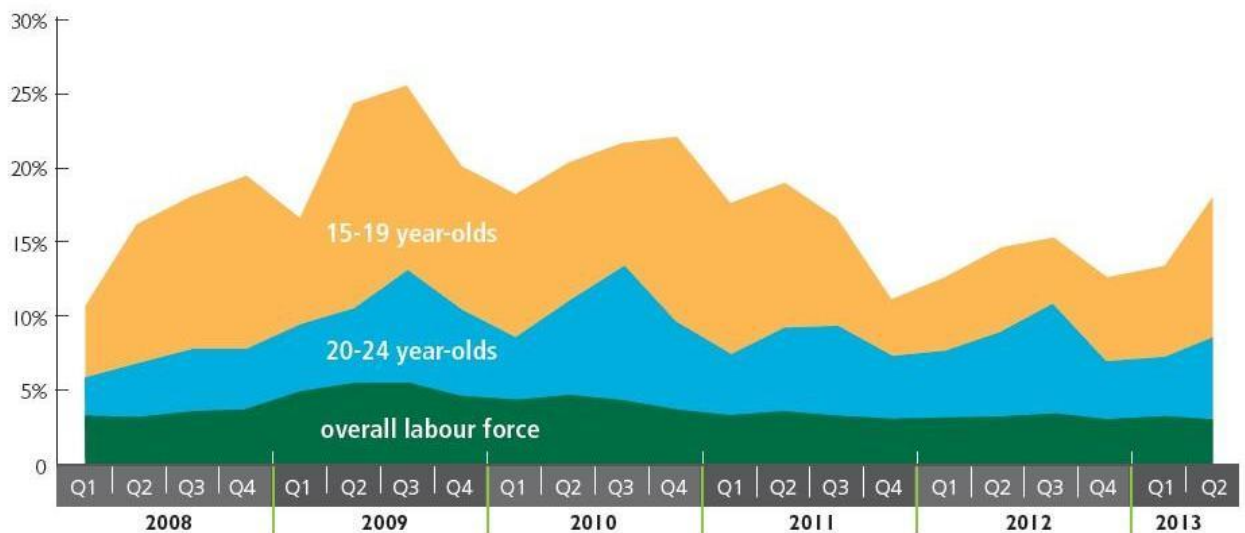
## Youth Trends in Hong Kong 2013

“Youth Trends in Hong Kong” compiles and analyzes statistical data and research findings. The latest “Trends” is the eleventh in the series that has been published by the HKFYG Youth Research Centre since 1997. Six important topics of concern covered by the book are summarized here.

### Employment

Youth unemployment in Hong Kong continues to be 2-5 times greater than in the population overall. In the second quarter of 2013, unemployment rates for 15-19 year-olds and 20-24 year-olds were 17.8% and 8.3% respectively, equivalent to 31,300 unemployed youth. Within the labour force, young people aged 15-24 who have attained only junior secondary education or less have little work experience. It is difficult for them to secure employment. Even if they can find jobs, their salaries are relatively low due to their weak bargaining power.

**Figure 1: Quarterly youth unemployment rate**



Source: Census and Statistics Department, HKSARG

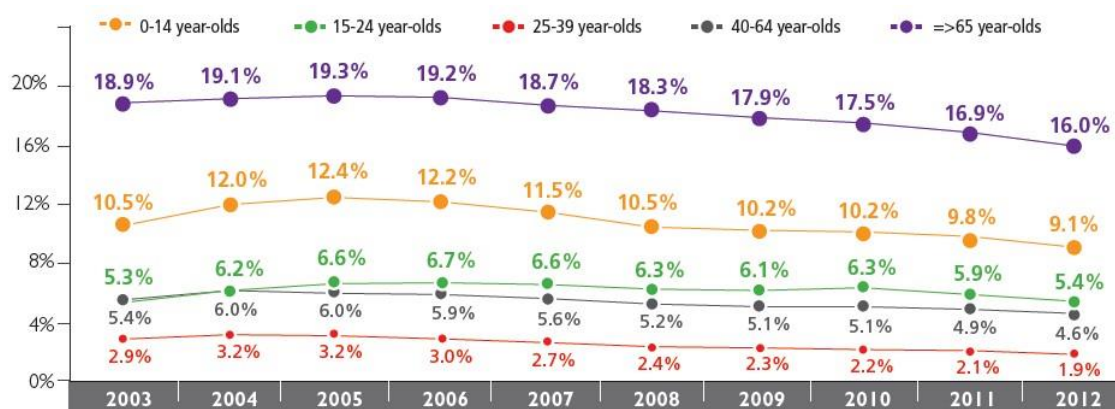
### Poverty

The Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme, operated by the Social Welfare Department (SWD), provides a safety net for those who cannot support themselves

financially. It is designed to give them enough to meet basic needs. CSSA figures from SWD show that there was a drop in the number of CSSA recipients in 2012. Young people aged 15-24 in receipt of CSSA numbered 46,676 accounting for 5.4% of the population.

Hong Kong's phenomenon of regionalized poverty also affects the young. 40% of 15-24 year-old CSSA recipients live in Yuen Long, Kwun Tong and Kwai Tsing. These three districts have the highest concentration of youth living in poverty. In view of this situation, the government is urged to develop policies that counter continuing poverty among young people and to address the issue of regionalized poverty. It is also recommended that policies make it possible for poor youth to enhance their upward mobility. This can be done by providing them with more opportunities and a wider variety of career choices.

**Figure 2: Comprehensive Social Security Assistance by age group**

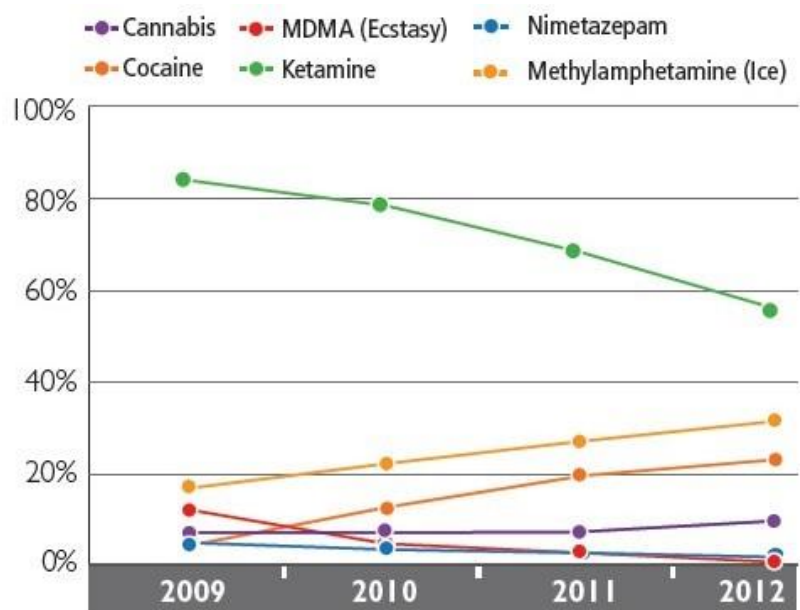


Source: Social Welfare Department, HKSARG

### Behaviour

Although the most commonly used drug among those aged under 21 is ketamine, its use has been decreasing since 2009 while the use of methylamphetamine (Ice) and cocaine has been rising. It is possible that the effects of the two other drugs are less well known by youth than those of ketamine. Therefore, "Youth Trends 2013" suggests that the government should educate youth more about the side effects of all drug types to enhance awareness of the dangers and risks.

Figure 3: Common drugs abused by under 21s



Source: Narcotics Division, Security Bureau, HKSARG

### Cross-border students

One of the main factors affecting cross-border issues is the permanent residency rights granted by the Basic Law to Chinese citizens who are born in Hong Kong. There were 43,982 babies born to mainland mothers in Hong Kong in 2011, accounting for more than 40% of all infants born here. Up to 81.3% of the parents of such infants are not permanent Hong Kong residents. Since children born to non-local parents add pressure on the medical, education and other services, the government decided to implement a “zero delivery quota” policy for mainland mothers whose husbands are not Hong Kong residents as of 2013. This means they cannot make any bookings to give birth at public hospitals in Hong Kong.

The number of mainland children crossing the border daily to attend Hong Kong schools has also increased, from 3,803 in 2004-2005 to 16,356 in 2012-2013. To ease the pressure on places in North District schools, which are overloaded with children from the mainland, about 900 places will be set aside for them by the Education Bureau in areas such as Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tai Po. There are to be at least two such places for them per Primary One class. “Youth Trends 2013” also suggests that a comprehensive assessment of cross-border

students should be carried out with planning for various potential social needs and the formulation of an appropriate population policy.

**Figure 4: Number of cross-border students**



Source: Census and Statistics Department, HKSARG

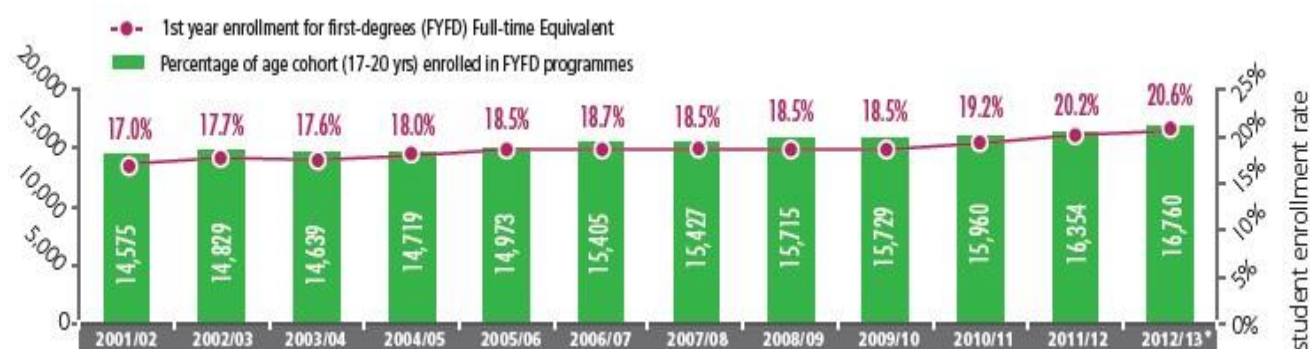
## Education

28,418 candidates who took Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination in 2012 matriculated. However, only 16,760 (approx. two-thirds) entered university. This means that 20.6% of the relevant age cohort enrolled for subsidized undergraduate degrees in 2012/13, through the Joint University Programmes Admissions System (JUPAS), lagging far behind the OECD average of 68%.

There are more than 18,300 sub-degree admissions for self-financed and publicly-funded sub-degree programmes each year. However, since there are only around 2,300 subsidized senior year undergraduate places, there is extremely keen competition.

Increasing global competition has made qualifications at tertiary level more necessary than ever for upward mobility in the job market. In view of this, “*Youth Trends 2013*” urges the government to increase subsidized undergraduate degree places so that first year university enrollment is available for at least 25% of the age cohort. It also recommends speeding up development of local private universities for students who are self-supporting.

**Figure 5: Enrollment in UGC-funded Undergraduate Programmes**



Note: Only students admitted under the new academic structure in 2012/13 academic year are included.

Source: University Grants Committee <http://cdcf.ugc.edu.hk/cdcf/statIndex.do?language=EN>

(10 September 2013).

### Housing

In the past ten years, young people’s incomes have remained almost unchanged but the cost of accommodation has kept rising. Many who want to live independently from their parents find property prices and rents unaffordable because the shortage in the supply of housing has pushed up property prices and rents so much.

Young people may apply for public housing but have very little chance of being allocated a flat, given the Quota and Points System that is weighted in favour of age and time on the waiting list. Still, the number of non-elderly single-person applicants for public housing aged 18-29 has more than tripled, from 14,600 in 2008 to 45,700 in 2012. The average age of non-elderly, single applicants is decreasing, and it will be very difficult for the young to find suitable accommodation independent of their parents.

*Figure 6: Age analysis for non-elderly single applicants for public housing*

Age	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Under 30</b>	14,600 (38%)	16,500 (38%)	21,000 (41%)	29,100 (46%)	45,700 (52%)
<b>30 or over</b>	24,100 (62%)	26,600 (62%)	30,600 (59%)	34,700 (54%)	42,600 (48%)
<b>Total</b>	38,700 (100%)	43,100 (100%)	51,600 (100%)	63,800 (100%)	88,300 (100%)
<b>Average age</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>32</b>

Source: Hong Kong Housing Authority

- End -

Queenie LAU

Youth Research Centre

Article from Youth Hong Kong, September 2013 (Volume 5 Number 3) p.46-49