



Legco  
Attention Panel on Health Services

29<sup>th</sup> January 2013

Dear members,

Clear the Air is a local NGO and registered Hong Kong Government charity. The new Chief Executive has admirably allocated funding and shown a proven intent to solve our pollution problems after the last administration's failed debacle. Pollution, according to the Hedley Environmental Index killed **3,117** Hong Kong people last year. A shocking statistic.

However in the Policy speech the CE failed to address a far larger killer – tobacco;

<http://www.bvsde.paho.org/bvsacd/cd51/hong-kong.pdf>

**7,000 people** die from smoking and passive smoking annually in Hong Kong at a cost of \$6 billion to our medical system. And moreover, it is completely preventable if Government has the political will to do so.

The WHO, World Bank and world experts agree that tobacco excise taxation, increased at least yearly and adjusted for inflation is the most significant measure Governments can take to stop youth starting smoking and thereby, their addiction, and to persuade adults to stop smoking.

In order to be effective the tobacco taxation must reflect the local costs of living and relative affordability of the products to youth.

In the Mercer 2012 Cost of Living study (attached) Hong Kong was rated the ninth most expensive place in the world whilst Singapore was sixth most expensive.

Yet Hong Kong has the least expensive cigarettes in the attached list of first world countries.

Recently Australia instituted plain packaging of tobacco products and a packet of cigarettes in Brisbane now costs HK\$ 139 versus just HK\$50 here, yet Brisbane is 24<sup>th</sup> on the Mercer list versus Hong Kong's 9<sup>th</sup> place. It shows the Australian Government has the political will to prevent the deaths of their citizens.

We must at least match the Singapore retail tobacco prices if we are going to prevent our youth smoking and to save lives as well as the horrendous treatment cost for tobacco related illnesses which cost our society \$ billions per year.

Yours sincerely,

*James Middleton*

Chairman

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1st WORLD CIGARETTE RETAIL PRICES 2013 (excluding countries like Japan which have major Government Tobacco company ownerships)

Control : pack of Marlboro retail price	Local	Converted	Mercer 2012 Cost of living Rank
CITY	Cost	HK\$	
BRISBANE	AUD 17.11	139.6	24
PERTH Australia	AUD 17	138.7	19
SYDNEY	AUD 16.88	137.7	14
MELBOURNE	AUD 16.82	137.2	15
OSLO	€ 12.39	127.8	18
AUCKLAND	NZ\$ 16.3	106.5	56
NEW YORK	US\$ 12.29	95.87	33
DUBLIN Ireland	€ 9.09	93.75	72
OTTAWA	C\$ 12.11	93.4	115
LONDON	£7.39	90.7	25
SINGAPORE	SGD 12.12	76.5	6 (joint)
PARIS	€ 6.21	64	37
GENEVA	€ 6.17	63.6	5
ZURICH	€ 6.17	63.6	6 (joint)
STOCKHOLM	€ 5.92	61	46
COPENHAGEN	€ 5.40	55.7	21
HONG KONG	HK\$ 50	50	9

Source: <http://www.expatistan.com/price/cigarretes/> (enter city name)

Other reference site:

<http://www.the-tma.org.uk/tma-publications-research/facts-figures/uk-cigarette-prices/>

<http://www.the-tma.org.uk/tma-publications-research/facts-figures/eu-cigarette-prices/>

Forex used: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) 24 Jan 2013

Euro rate: 10.314  
 NZ\$ rate: 6.524  
 AUD rate: 8.157  
 £ rate: 12.27  
 C\$ rate: 7.753  
 S\$ rate: 6.312



**Mercer Cost of Living Survey – Worldwide Rankings 2012**  
 (The Mercer international basket, including rental accommodation costs)

Rank as of March		City	Country
2012	2011		
1	2	Tokyo	Japan
2	1	Luanda	Angola
3	6	Osaka	Japan
4	4	Moscow	Russia
5	5	Geneva	Switzerland
6	7	Zurich	Switzerland
6	8	Singapore	Singapore
8	3	N'Djamena	Chad
9	9	Hong Kong	Hong Kong
10	11	Nagoya	Japan
11	14	Sydney	Australia
12	10	São Paulo	Brazil
13	12	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
14	16	Bern	Switzerland
15	21	Melbourne	Australia
16	21	Shanghai	China
17	20	Beijing	China
18	15	Oslo	Norway
19	30	Perth	Australia
20	12	Libreville	Gabon
21	17	Copenhagen	Denmark
22	19	Seoul	South Korea
23	34	Canberra	Australia
24	31	Brisbane	Australia
25	18	London	United Kingdom
26	44	Khartoum	Sudan
27	46	Adelaide	Australia
28	29	St. Petersburg	Russia
29	51	Caracas	Venezuela
30	43	Shenzhen	China
31	24	Tel Aviv	Israel
31	38	Guangzhou	China
33	32	New York City NY	United States
34	23	Niamey	Niger
35	70	Yangon	Myanmar
36	61	Kinshasa	Dem. Rep. of the Congo
37	27	Paris	France

## Worldwide Cost of Living Survey 2012 – city ranking

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<b>Rank as of March</b>		<b>City</b>	<b>Country</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>		
38	25	Milan	Italy
39	41	Lagos	Nigeria
39	63	Bamako	Mali
41	67	Abidjan	Côte d'Ivoire
42	34	Rome	Italy
43	55	Brazzaville	Congo
44	39	Djibouti	Djibouti
45	33	Brasilia	Brazil
46	39	Stockholm	Sweden
47	37	Nouméa	New Caledonia
48	36	Vienna	Austria
49	48	Baku	Azerbaijan
50	25	Victoria	Seychelles
50	44	Dakar	Senegal
52	91	Lomé	Togo
53	56	Douala	Cameroun
53	63	Bogota	Colombia
53	155	Conakry	Guinea
56	118	Auckland	New Zealand
57	50	Amsterdam	Netherlands
58	49	Bangui	Central African Rep.
58	52	Taipei	Taiwan
60	83	Yaoundé	Cameroun
61	59	Toronto	Canada
61	69	Jakarta	Indonesia
63	65	Vancouver	Canada
64	82	Abuja	Nigeria
65	42	Helsinki	Finland
66	101	Qingdao	China
67	75	Beirut	Lebanon
68	77	Los Angeles CA	United States
69	47	Prague	Czech Republic
70	74	Cotonou	Benin
71	62	Brussels	Belgium
72	58	Dublin	Ireland
72	104	Tianjin	China
74	75	Santiago	Chile
74	136	Wellington	New Zealand
76	67	Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates
77	53	Athens	Greece
78	60	Madrid	Spain
79	57	Bratislava	Slovakia

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<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>		
<b>79</b>	70	Istanbul	Turkey
<b>81</b>	80	Almaty	Kazakhstan
<b>81</b>	88	Bangkok	Thailand
<b>83</b>	93	Bandar Seri Begawan	Brunei
<b>84</b>	72	Luxembourg	Luxemburg
<b>85</b>	66	Barcelona	Spain
<b>85</b>	122	Shenyang	China
<b>87</b>	79	Montreal	Canada
<b>88</b>	73	Frankfurt	Germany
<b>89</b>	98	Pointe-à-Pitre	Guadeloupe
<b>90</b>	78	Munich	Germany
<b>90</b>	106	San Francisco CA	United States
<b>92</b>	96	Calgary	Canada
<b>93</b>	171	Maputo	Mozambique
<b>94</b>	81	Dubai	United Arab Emirates
<b>94</b>	115	Nanjing	China
<b>94</b>	124	Chengdu	China
<b>97</b>	88	Riga	Latvia
<b>98</b>	99	White Plains NY	United States
<b>99</b>	53	Havana	Cuba
<b>99</b>	86	Accra	Ghana
<b>101</b>	111	Port-au-Prince	Haiti
<b>102</b>	94	Kiev	Ukraine
<b>102</b>	104	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
<b>104</b>	91	Düsseldorf	Germany
<b>105</b>	103	Amman	Jordan
<b>106</b>	84	Berlin	Germany
<b>107</b>	108	Washington DC	United States
<b>108</b>	86	Lisbon	Portugal
<b>109</b>	88	Hamburg	Germany
<b>110</b>	108	Chicago IL	United States
<b>110</b>	115	Miami FL	United States
<b>112</b>	120	Lyon	France
<b>113</b>	85	New Delhi	India
<b>114</b>	95	Mumbai	India
<b>115</b>	114	Ottawa	Canada
<b>116</b>	117	Honolulu HI	United States
<b>117</b>	134	Manila	Philippines
<b>118</b>	127	Montevideo	Uruguay
<b>119</b>	97	Stuttgart	Germany
<b>120</b>	139	Lima	Peru
<b>121</b>	159	Buenos Aires	Argentina

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<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>		
122	108	Nairobi	Kenya
123	135	Riyadh	Saudi Arabia
124	132	Algiers	Algeria
125	126	Port of Spain	Trinidad & Tobago
125	129	Boston MA	United States
127	120	Casablanca	Morocco
128	119	Limassol	Cyprus
129	128	Cairo	Egypt
130	100	Zagreb	Croatia
131	124	Tallinn	Estonia
132	147	Dallas TX	United States
133	150	Birmingham	United Kingdom
134	159	Kuwait City	Kuwait City
134	182	Blantyre	Malawi
136	136	Hanoi	Vietnam
136	156	Kigali	Rwanda
138	165	San José	Costa Rica
138*	190	Tripoli*	Libya
140	28	Ouagadougou	Burkina Faso
141	141	Ho Chi Minh City	Vietnam
142	113	Budapest	Hungary
142	141	Panama City	Panama
144	111	Lusaka	Zambia
144	143	Houston TX	United States
146	130	Tehran	Iran
146	146	San Juan	Puerto Rico
148	133	Vilnius	Lithuania
148	138	Leipzig	Germany
148	144	Aberdeen	United Kingdom
151	140	Ljubljana	Slovenia
152	150	Atlanta GA	United States
153	102	Warsaw	Poland
154	131	Johannesburg	South Africa
154	149	Mexico City	Mexico
156	157	Manama	Bahrain
157	107	Port Louis	Mauritius
157	162	Santo Domingo	Dominican Rep.
159	163	Seattle WA	United States
159	173	Harare	Zimbabwe
161	148	Glasgow	United Kingdom
161	161	Morristown NJ	United States
163	145	Nurnberg	Germany

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<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>		
<b>164</b>	169	Minneapolis MN	United States
<b>165</b>	178	Belfast	United Kingdom
<b>166</b>	123	Damascus	Syria
<b>166</b>	154	Colombo	Sri Lanka
<b>168</b>	178	Detroit MI	United States
<b>169</b>	153	Kingston	Jamaica
<b>169</b>	164	Doha	Qatar
<b>171</b>	195	Gaborone	Botswana
<b>172</b>	168	Guatemala City	Guatemala
<b>173</b>	172	St. Louis MO	United States
<b>174</b>	181	Pittsburgh PA	United States
<b>175</b>	175	Cleveland OH	United States
<b>176</b>	152	Bucharest	Romania
<b>177</b>	166	Rabat	Morocco
<b>178</b>	186	Portland OR	United States
<b>179</b>	158	Cape Town	South Africa
<b>179</b>	184	Muscat	Oman
<b>181</b>	169	Sofia	Bulgaria
<b>182</b>	167	Yerevan	Armenia
<b>183</b>	188	Phnom Penh	Cambodia
<b>184</b>	174	Dhaka	Bangladesh
<b>184</b>	183	Monterrey	Mexico
<b>186</b>	185	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia
<b>187</b>	180	Bangalore	India
<b>188</b>	191	Tbilisi	Georgia
<b>189</b>	204	Asunción	Paraguay
<b>190</b>	194	Chennai	India
<b>191</b>	176	Banjul	Gambia
<b>192</b>	176	Tashkent	Uzbekistan
<b>193</b>	187	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania
<b>194</b>	211	Addis Ababa	Ethiopia
<b>195</b>	197	Winston Salem NC	United States
<b>196</b>	193	Minsk	Belarus
<b>197</b>	189	Belgrade	Serbia
<b>198</b>	196	Quito	Ecuador
<b>199</b>	199	San Salvador	El Salvador
<b>200</b>	202	Kampala	Uganda
<b>201</b>	192	Sarajevo	Bosnia-Herzegovina
<b>202</b>	198	Windhoek	Namibia
<b>203</b>	205	Nouakchott	Mauritania
<b>204</b>	206	Ashkhabad	Turkmenistan
<b>205</b>	200	Tirana	Albania

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<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>		
<b>205</b>	208	Tegucigalpa	Honduras
<b>207</b>	200	Skopje	Macedonia
<b>208</b>	203	Kolkata	India
<b>209</b>	207	Tunis	Tunisia
<b>210</b>	212	La Paz	Bolivia
<b>211</b>	210	Bishkek	Kyrgyzstan
<b>212</b>	213	Managua	Nicaragua
<b>213</b>	209	Islamabad	Pakistan
<b>214</b>	214	Karachi	Pakistan

\* For Tripoli, it was not possible to conduct an accurate cost-of-living survey in March 2012. For this report's purposes, Tripoli's prices are based on the September 2010 survey (the next-most-recent one), adjusted according to exchange rates between the Libyan dinar (LYD) and the US dollar (USD) in effect in March 2012.