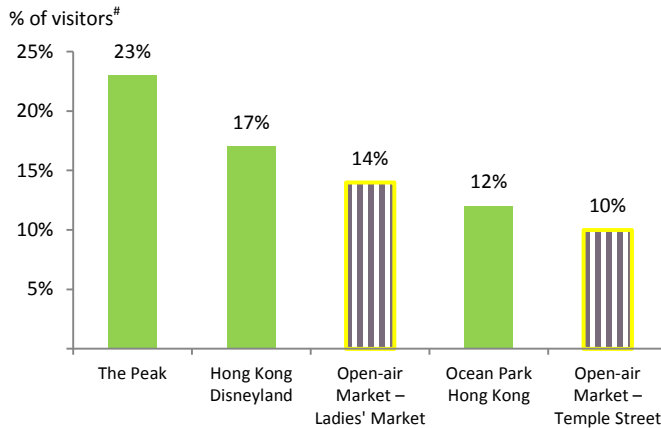




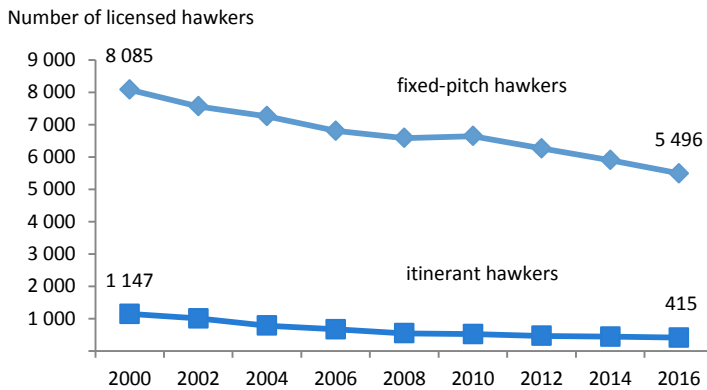
**Hawker control in Hong Kong**

**Figure 1 – Top five most visited tourist destinations in Hong Kong, 2016**



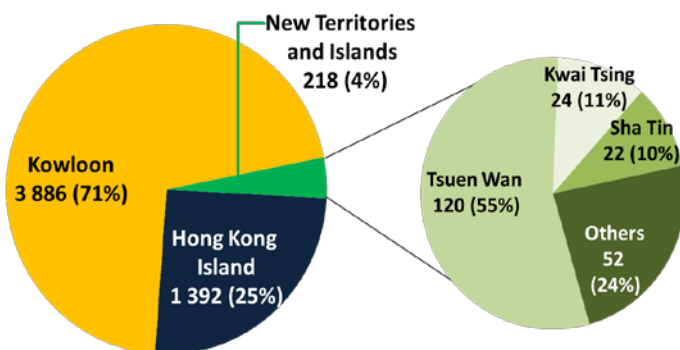
Note: (#) Proportion of visitors having visited the tourist spots.

**Figure 2 – Number of licensed hawkers in Hong Kong, 2000-2016\***



Note: (\*) Year-end figures.

**Figure 3 – Distribution of fixed-pitch hawker licences at end-2016**



**Highlights**

- In Hong Kong, hawking provides job opportunities for the grassroots and offers a cheaper source of goods for the public at large. Some hawker areas are also popular tourist attractions, as evidenced by the ranking of Ladies' Market and Temple Street among Hong Kong's top five places most visited by tourists in 2016 (Figure 1).
- Notwithstanding the above, it has been a long-standing policy of the Government to regulate the growth of hawkers in view of the various problems possibly arising from street hawking. The Government has since the 1970s stopped issuing new hawker licences and imposed restrictions on the succession and transfer of hawker licences, as well as implementing voluntary licence surrender programmes since 2002 to buy back licences from hawkers. As a result, the total number of licensed hawkers decreased from some 50 000 in 1974 to 9 200 in 2000 and to fewer than 6 000 in recent years (Figure 2).
- Amid the virtual freeze in the issue of new hawker licences, there were 5 496 fixed-pitched hawker licences across the territory at end-2016. They were concentrated on Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, accounting for 96% of the total (Figure 3). The New Territories accounted for the remaining 4%, of which more than half of them were in Tsuen Wan. Against the above, there have been calls for the Government to relax the existing territory-wide restriction and consider the issue of new hawker licences in the less crowded New Territories.

## Hawker control in Hong Kong (cont'd)

**Figure 4 – Hawker licences by business type at end-2016**

| Fixed-pitch hawker licences      |       |                         | Itinerant hawker licences |     |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----|-------------------------|
| Categories                       | No.   | % of total <sup>^</sup> | Categories                | No. | % of total <sup>^</sup> |
| Barber                           | 29    | 0.5%                    | Frozen confectionery      | 64  | 15.4%                   |
| Bootblack                        | 7     | 0.1%                    | Mobile van                | 15  | 3.6%                    |
| Cooked food or light refreshment | 161   | 2.9%                    | Newspaper                 | 2   | 0.5%                    |
| Newspaper                        | 417   | 7.6%                    | Other classes             | 334 | 80.5%                   |
| Tradesman                        | 166   | 3%                      |                           |     |                         |
| Wall stall                       | 309   | 5.6%                    |                           |     |                         |
| Other classes                    | 4 407 | 80.2%                   |                           |     |                         |

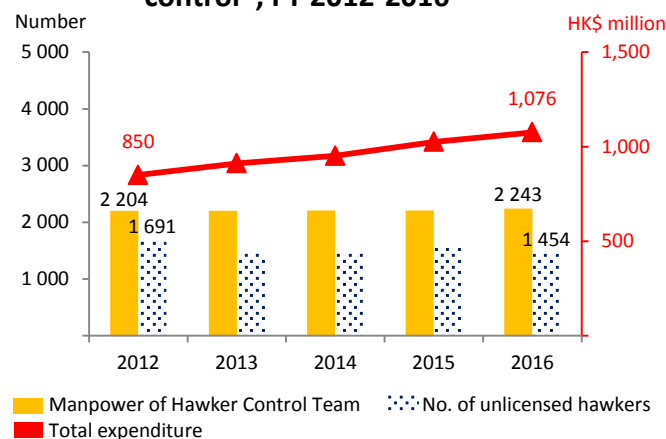
Note: (^) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 5 – Number of unlicensed hawkers and hawker blackspots in selected areas in 2016**

|                     | Unlicensed hawkers <sup>^</sup> | Hawker blackspots |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Sham Shui Po        | 388                             | 3                 |
| Yau Tsim Mong       | 295                             | 6                 |
| Central and Western | 143                             | 3                 |
| Kwun Tong           | 79                              | 4                 |
| North               | 72                              | 2                 |
| Kowloon City        | 64                              | 1                 |
| Kwai Tsing          | 63                              | 1                 |
| Others              | 350                             | 25                |
| Total               | 1 454                           | 45                |

Note: (^) Estimated figures at end-2016.

**Figure 6 – Manpower and expenditure in hawker control\*, FY 2012-2016**



Note: (\*) Number of unlicensed hawkers were year-end estimated figures; manpower and expenditure in hawker control in FY 2016 were estimated figures.

## Highlights

- According to the Government, its hawker management policy is to strike a proper balance among the needs to allow legal hawking activities, maintain environmental hygiene and reduce nuisance. As shown in **Figure 4**, the business types of licensed hawkers are diversified and their impact on environmental hygiene and nuisance to nearby residents vary. Hence, there are views that the Government should replace its existing "across-the-board" restriction with a licensing policy based on the business types for issuing hawker licences. Indeed, the Government had, between July 2009 and April 2012, issued 61 new Itinerant (Frozen Confectionery) and 218 new Fixed Pitch (Other Classes) Hawker Licences following the hawker licensing policy review concluded in early 2009.
- As regards unlicensed hawking activities, the Government estimated that there were 1 454 unlicensed hawkers operating in 45 blackspots at end-2016 (**Figure 5**). Hawker Control Teams of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") are deployed to deal with illegal hawking, and the number of prosecutions against unlicensed hawkers averaged 24 218 per year during 2012-2016. The figure represented an annual average of 16 prosecutions per unlicensed hawker during the period.
- Notwithstanding the stringent enforcement action against illegal hawking and the manpower and expenditure devoted by FEHD, the number of unlicensed hawkers showed no visible signs of easing during 2012-2016 (**Figure 6**). Added to this, Yau Tsim Mong and Sham Shui Po remained the top two blackspots, where both taken together accounted for about half of unlicensed hawkers in 2016 as shown in **Figure 5** above.

Data sources: Latest figures from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Food and Health Bureau, The Professional Commons and Hong Kong Tourism Board.

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