



CSSA Scheme and rent allowance

Figure 1 – Annual CSSA expenditure

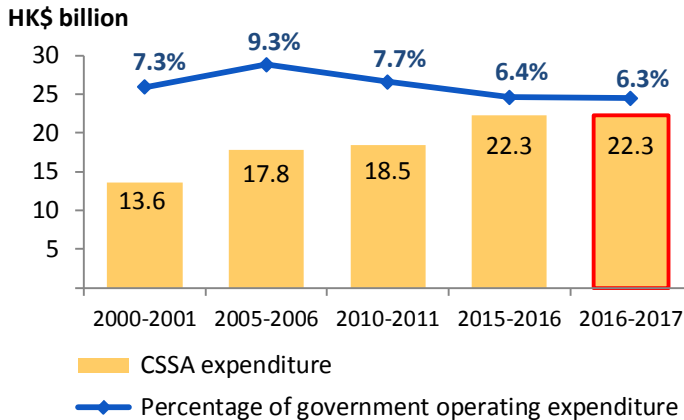
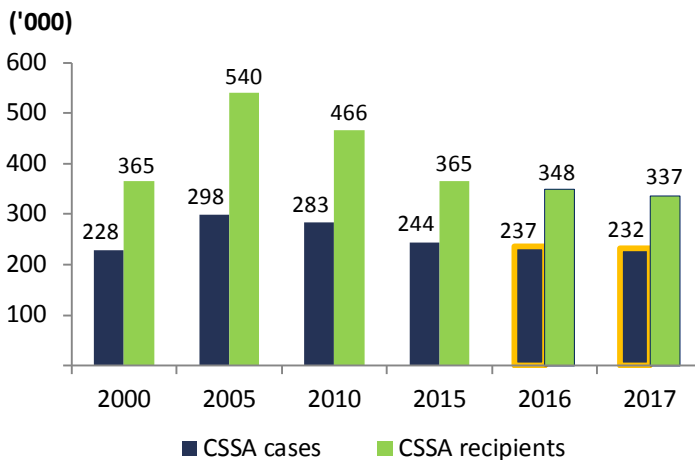


Figure 2 – CSSA caseload and recipients*



Note: (*) As at end of the calendar year.

Figure 3 – CSSA caseload by category*

Case category	2005		2017	
Old age	151 934	(51%)	144 198	(62%)
Single parent	39 755	(13%)	25 792	(11%)
Ill health	23 962	(8%)	23 632	(10%)
Permanent disability	17 482	(6%)	17 133	(7%)
Unemployment	41 436	(14%)	12 741	(5%)
Low-earnings	18 089	(6%)	4 401	(2%)
Others	5 353	(2%)	4 237	(2%)
Total	298 011		232 134	

Note: (*) Figures in parenthesis denote percentage share in total.

Highlights

- The Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme provides means-tested cash benefits to those who cannot financially support themselves in Hong Kong. Against the backdrop of a tighter job market, total CSSA expenditure held stable at HK\$22.3 billion in 2016-2017. The share of CSSA in the operating expenditure of the government also fell from the peak of 9.3% in 2005-2006 to 6.3% in 2016-2017 (**Figure 1**).
- The number of CSSA recipients is larger than that of cases, due to multiple recipients in a single case (e.g. a single parent with children). For the past 12 years since 2005, CSSA cases and recipients have decreased by 22% and 38% respectively, upon the stepping up of the Support for Self-reliance Scheme as a condition of receiving CSSA since 2003 (**Figure 2**).
- Analyzed by category, the old age category remained the largest amidst ageing population in 2017, accounting for 62% of the overall caseload. This was followed by single parent cases (11%) and ill health cases (10%). The unemployment and low-earnings cases have declined by about two-thirds in terms of percentage share over the past 12 years, having benefited from an improved labour market (**Figure 3**).

CSSA Scheme and rent allowance (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Expenditure on CSSA rent allowance

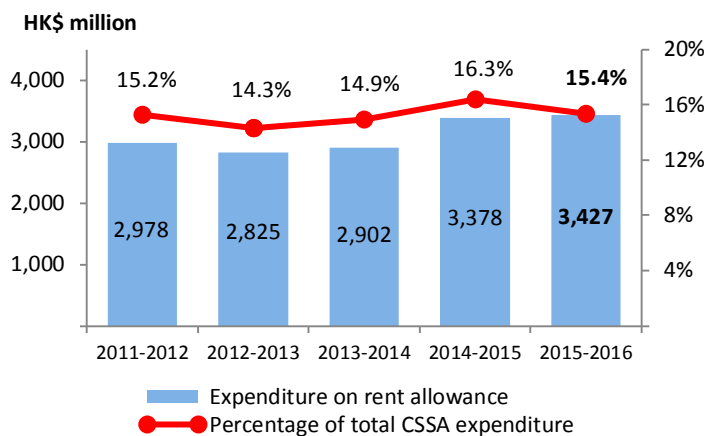
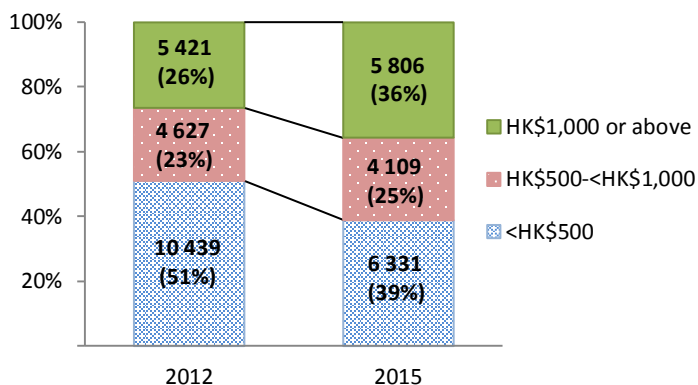


Figure 5 – CSSA cases with rent allowance by housing*

Year	Private housing cases		Public housing cases	
	Total	Rent exceeding allowance	Total	Rent exceeding allowance
2012	35 888	20 487	148 266	4 955
2013	32 640	18 359	142 729	3 534
2014	31 522	16 326	138 446	8 161
2015	30 506	16 246	133 869	5 069
2016	28 930	16 293	129 550	3 536

Note: (*) As at end of the calendar year.

Figure 6 – Shortfalls in rent allowance for CSSA cases in private housing



Highlights

- Over the past five years, around 14%-16% of the total CSSA expenditure has been disbursed as rent allowance to recipients. In 2015-2016, such rent allowance amounted to HK\$3.4 billion, representing a 15% increase over four years earlier (Figure 4).
- There have been public concerns over whether the rent allowance is adequate to cover the actual rent paid by CSSA families living in private housing, in view of rental escalation in recent years. In 2016, 16 293 or 56% of CSSA families living in private housing incurred rental expense higher than the rent allowance, while the corresponding ratio for CSSA families in public housing was just 3% (Figure 5).
- For those cases in which rent allowance was insufficient to cover actual rent in private housing, 5 806 families or 36% had a monthly shortfall of at least HK\$1,000 in 2015, noticeably up from the respective proportion of 26% in 2012 (Figure 6).
- To relieve the rental burden of these households, the Government has launched "Subsidy for CSSA Recipients Living in Rented Private Housing" through the Community Care Fund since 2011. In the latest round for 2017-2019, the monthly subsidy is either 50% of the shortfall in rent allowance or 15% of the maximum allowance, whichever is the less.

Data sources: Latest figures from Census and Statistics Department and Social Welfare Department.

Research Office
Information Services Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
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Tel: 2871 2139

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