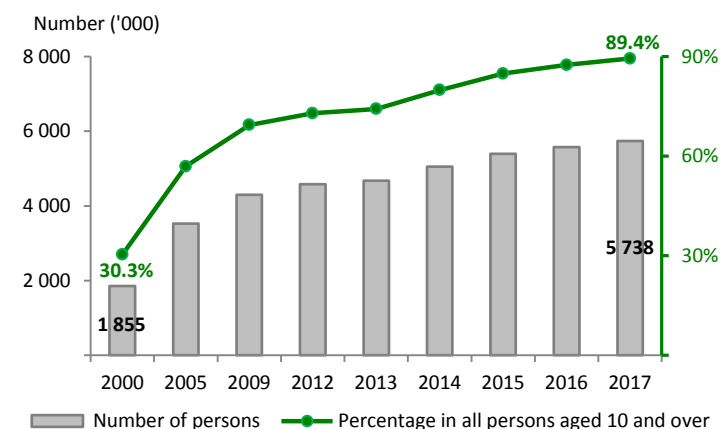




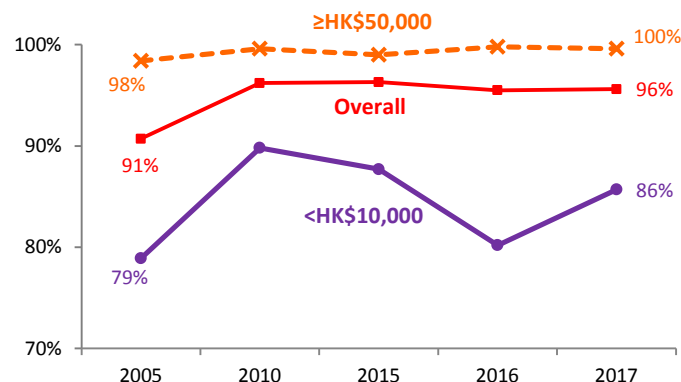
Digital inclusion in Hong Kong

Figure 1 — Persons aged 10 and over who had used the Internet over the past year*



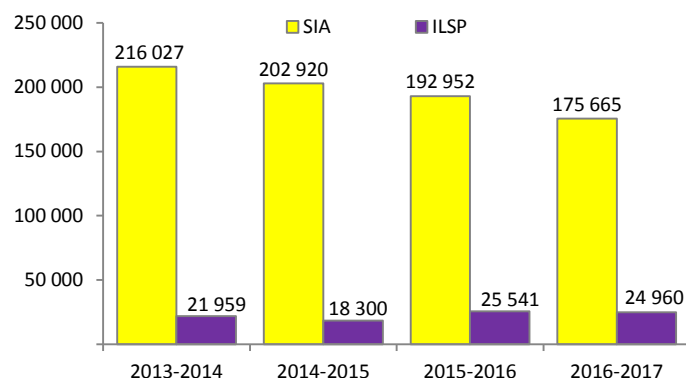
Note: (*) Referring to those who had used the Internet during the 12 months before enumeration.

Figure 2 — Internet penetration rate[#] of households with children* by monthly income



Notes: (#) Percentage of households with computers connected to Internet.
(*) Referring to households having children aged 10-17 (for 2005). For other selected years, children referred to those aged 6-17.

Figure 3 — Numbers of beneficiary families of SIA and ILSP



Highlights

- Penetration of Internet is considered as a key indicator of development of information society. In Hong Kong, the proportion of persons aged 10 and over who had used the Internet during the 12 months before enumeration has surged from 30% in 2000 to 89% in 2017 (**Figure 1**). This rate is comparable to the neighbouring economies like Japan (93%), South Korea (93%) and Singapore (81%).
- Under the "Digital 21 Strategy" in 2008, the Government has targeted three needy groups for enhancement in digital inclusion, namely (a) students from low-income families; (b) the elderly; and (c) persons with disabilities.
- More specifically for students from low-income families, the Internet penetration rate of households with monthly household income under HK\$10,000 was 86% in 2017, up from 79% in 2005. That said, it was still somewhat lower than the respective figure of 96% for overall households in Hong Kong (**Figure 2**).
- To assist the low-income families with children to acquire computers and subscribe to Internet access services, the Government introduced the "Subsidy Scheme for Internet Access Charges" (SIA) in 2010 and the "Internet Learning Support Programme" (ILSP) in 2011. Yet the response appears to be lukewarm, with the number of families receiving SIA dropping by 19% in three years to 175,700 in 2016-2017 (**Figure 3**). While the number of ILSP recipients increased by 14% over the same period, the time-limited ILSP will come to an end by August 2018.

Digital inclusion in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 — Internet usage rate of elderly population

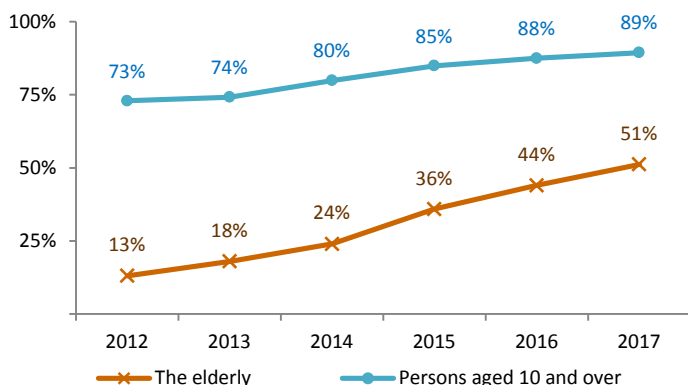
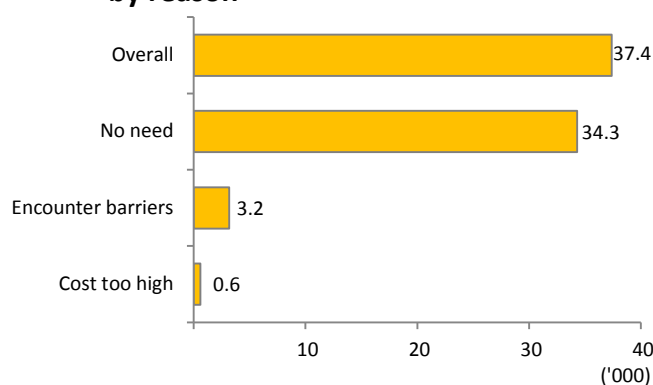


Figure 5 — Rate of elderly households[#] with smartphone or internet-connected computer

	2015	2016	2017
(a) Used the Internet in the past 12 months	30.0%	38.7%	46.1%
(b) With at least one smartphone	29.7%	40.8%	48.1%
(c) With computer connected to the Internet	21.1%	22.4%	23.6%

Note: (#) Referring to those singleton and two-person households with all members aged 65 and above.

Figure 6 — Persons with disabilities[#] with computer devices* who had not used the Internet by reason



Notes: (#) Excluding persons with intellectual disability. Respondents were allowed to provide multiple answers.

(*) Including those who used desktop/notebook/tablet/smartphone during the 12 months before enumeration.

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Highlights

- Turning to the elderly persons aged 65 and above, their Internet usage has witnessed a phenomenal growth in recent years. According to the survey conducted in 2017, 51% of the elderly had used the Internet during the 12 months before enumeration. Although this was still far behind the overall usage rate of 89% among persons aged 10 and above, it almost quadrupled the respective proportion of just 13% recorded five years earlier (**Figure 4**).
- To a considerable extent, the significant increase in Internet usage among the elderly was attributable to proliferation of smartphones in recent years, as older persons find it easier to use graphical interfaces in smartphones than keyboard commands in computers. In 2017, 48% of the elderly households owned at least one smartphone, but just 24% of them had Internet-connected computers (**Figure 5**).
- As regards persons with disabilities, only 131 400 or 23% of them had used a computer device to connect to the Internet during the 12 months before enumeration in 2013, based on the latest statistics available. For the rest of 37 400 computer device users with disabilities who had not used the Internet, 92% of them indicated that they did not have any need to go online, precipitating concerns over their possible exclusion from the digital society (**Figure 6**). At present, while the government websites are mostly user-friendly for persons with disabilities, this is not the case for many websites in private sector. Looking ahead, the Government is planning to establish a web-based portal to assist persons with disabilities in acquiring digital skills.

Data sources: Latest figures from Census and Statistics Department, World Bank and Innovation and Technology Bureau.

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