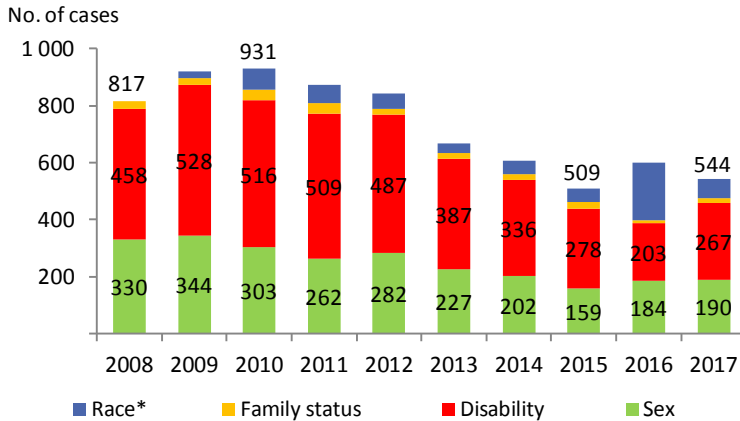




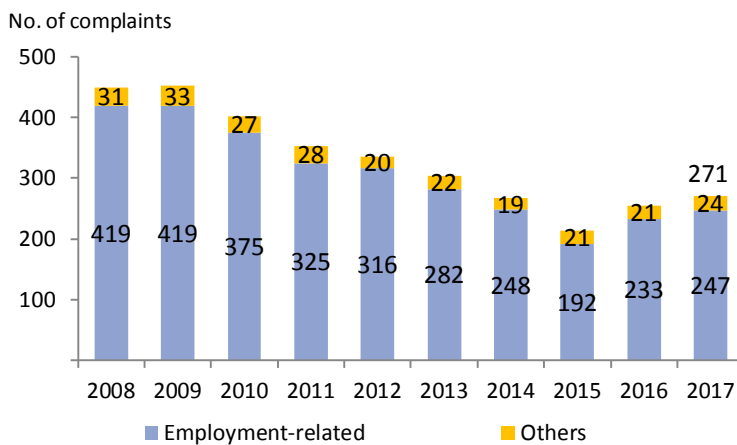
Equal opportunities and sex discrimination

Figure 1 – Discrimination complaints during 2008-2017



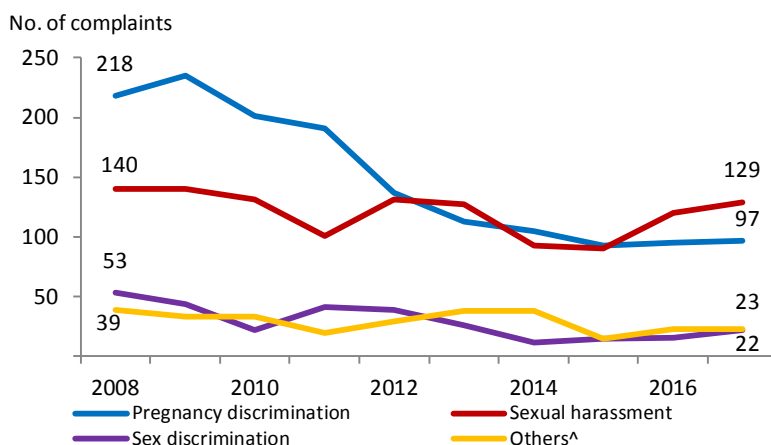
Note: (*) The Race Discrimination Ordinance came into force in 2009.

Figure 2 – Complaints* on sex discrimination related to employment, 2008-2017



Note: (*) Referring to complaints handled by EOC.

Figure 3 – SDO-related complaints by nature, 2008-2017



Note: (^) "Others" refers to victimization and marital status discrimination.

Highlights

- The Equal Opportunities Commission ("EOC") is a statutory body established in 1996 to handle discrimination-related matters in Hong Kong. Over the past decade, overall new complaints lodged to EOC has fallen noticeably by 33% to 544 cases in 2017, along with initiatives taken by EOC to tackle such discrimination. Within this total, disability discrimination registered the largest caseload, with a share of 49% in 2017. Sex discrimination, which is the focus of this short note, took the second position, with a share of 35% (Figure 1).
- Under the Sex Discrimination Ordinance ("SDO"), there are seven fields of protection (e.g. employment, education, eligibility to vote, premises management) offered to both men and women. For those complaints on sex discrimination handled by EOC, the field of employment has persistently accounted for more than nine-tenths of the caseload throughout the past decade, with 247 cases and a share of 91% in 2017 (Figure 2).
- Analyzed by nature of SDO-related complaints, there has been a structural shift in the caseload from pregnancy discrimination to sexual harassment over the past decade. Reflecting this, while the share of pregnancy discrimination has declined from 48% to 36% during 2008-2017, that for sexual harassment has surged from 31% to 48%. This structural shift appeared to be in line with growing global awareness against sexual harassment in recent years (Figure 3).

Equal opportunities and sex discrimination (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Conciliation attempts of SDO-related complaints, 2008-2017

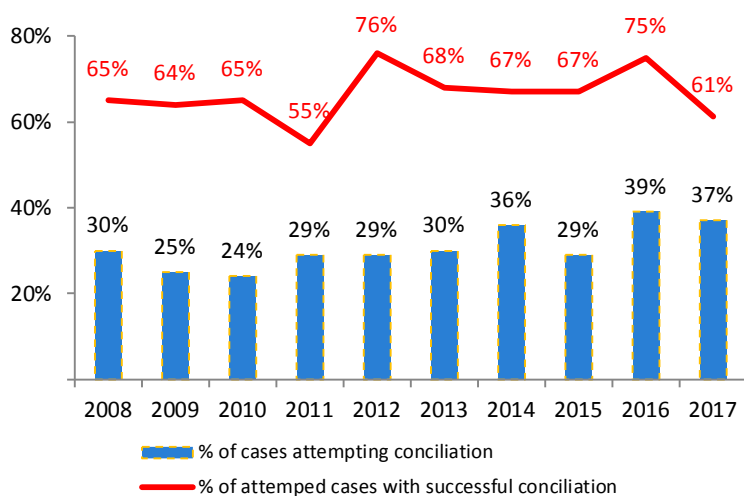
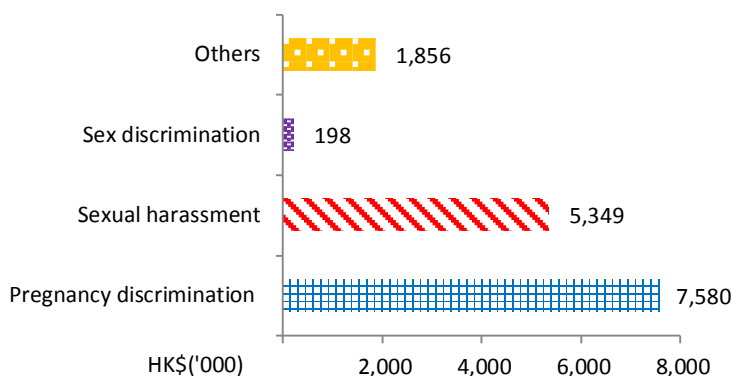


Figure 5 – Conciliation attempts of employment-related discrimination under SDO, 2013-2017

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Pregnancy discrimination	31	32	20	36	39
Sexual harassment	38	40	24	45	53
Sex discrimination	3	6	4	5	1
Others	6	13	1	4	5
Total	78	91	49	90	98

Figure 6 – Cash compensation in conciliation and legal action under SDO, 2013-2017



Highlights

- EOC is obliged to investigate complaints and bring parties in dispute together for conciliation. For those SDO-related complaints, there has been increased attempts to settle the disputes through conciliation, with the proportion of conciliation attempts in overall caseload rising from 30% in 2008 to 37% in 2017. However, just around two-thirds of these conciliation attempts could succeed, while the failure cases were mainly due to disagreements on the apology terms and/or the amount of compensation. In 2017, the success rate of the conciliation attempts was 61%, down from 75% in 2016 (Figure 4).
- There were 98 attempted conciliations in employment-related complaints under SDO in 2017, representing 40% of such complaints handled by EOC, up from 28% in 2013. Pregnancy discrimination and sexual harassment were the two largest categories of such conciliation attempts, with a share of 94% (Figure 5). The success rate for conciliation attempts in pregnancy discrimination was 67% in 2017, higher than that of 57% for sexual harassment.
- Cash compensation secured through conciliation and legal action on SDO-related complaints amounted to HK\$15 million during 2013-2017, or about HK\$68,000 per successful case. Within this total, compensation on pregnancy discrimination accounted for 51% of the total sum, followed by sex harassment (36%) (Figure 6).

Data source : Latest figures from Equal Opportunities Commission.

Research Office
Information Services Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
21 November 2018
Tel: 2871 2129

Statistical Highlights are compiled for Members and Committees of the Legislative Council. They are not legal or other professional advice and shall not be relied on as such. Statistical Highlights are subject to copyright owned by The Legislative Council Commission (The Commission). The Commission permits accurate reproduction of Statistical Highlights for non-commercial use in a manner not adversely affecting the Legislative Council, provided that acknowledgement is made stating the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat as the source and one copy of the reproduction is sent to the Legislative Council Library. The paper number of this issue of Statistical Highlights is ISSH08/18-19.