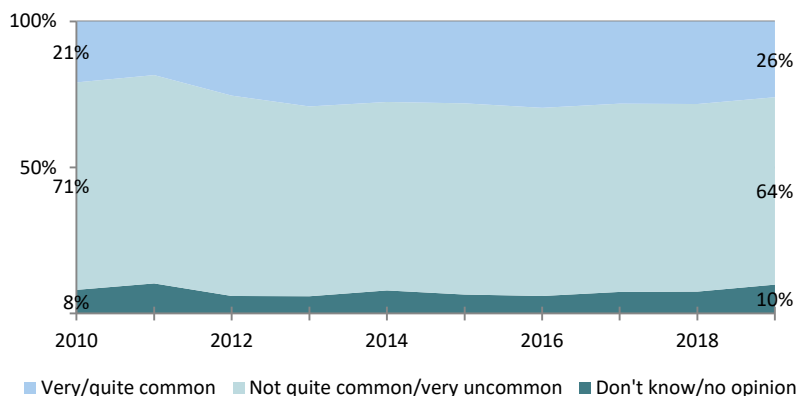


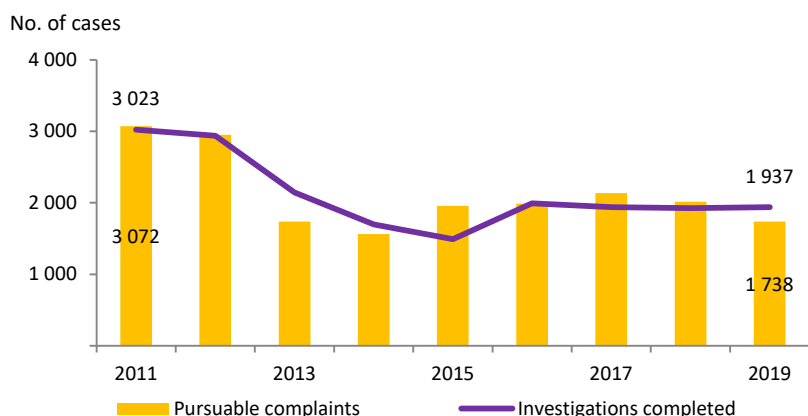
Anti-corruption in Hong Kong

Figure 1 – Perception on corruption in Hong Kong⁽¹⁾



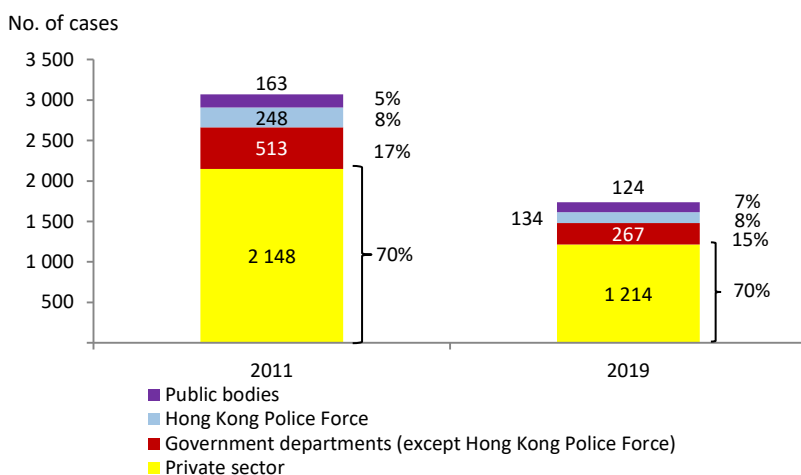
Note: (1) Share of local respondents on perceived prevalence of corruption in Hong Kong, based on annual survey conducted by ICAC.

Figure 2 – Pursuable corruption complaints lodged to ICAC⁽¹⁾



Note: (1) Corruption complaints are available as from 2011. This is not strictly comparable to corruption reports (which may contain multiple complaints in a single report) beforehand.

Figure 3 – Distribution of pursuable corruption complaints by sector



Highlights

- Independent Commission Against Corruption ("ICAC") is an independent law enforcement agency established in 1974. It is dedicated to investigate and prosecute against (a) corruption practices under the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201) and (b) election-related offence under the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (Cap. 554). This piece focuses on anti-corruption work of ICAC.
- Probity and fairness have become the core social value of Hong Kong, upon more than four decades of anti-corruption work by ICAC. In a recent survey conducted by ICAC in 2019, as much as 99% of the local respondents agreed to the statement that "keeping Hong Kong corruption-free is important" to local development. However, the public has an impression that local corruption problem has worsened in recent years, conceivably due in part to a few corruption scandals involving former senior government officials. During 2010-2019, the proportion of respondents citing that corruption is "very/quite common" in Hong Kong increased visibly, from 21% to 26% (**Figure 1**).
- As a matter of fact, the number of pursuable corruption complaints has dropped by 43% to 1 738 cases during 2011-2019, upon decades of public education (**Figure 2**). So did completed investigations by 40% to 1 937 cases. ICAC thus remarks that local corruption "continues to be under control".
- A closer examination shows that most of the pursuable corruption complaints are seen in the private sector, with its proportion in caseload hovering at 70% during 2011-2019, so did those against the Police at 8% (**Figure 3**). On the other hand, the corresponding share of corruption complaints lodged against other government departments fell from 17% to 15%.

Anti-corruption in Hong Kong (cont'd)

Figure 4 – Corruption prosecutions and convictions

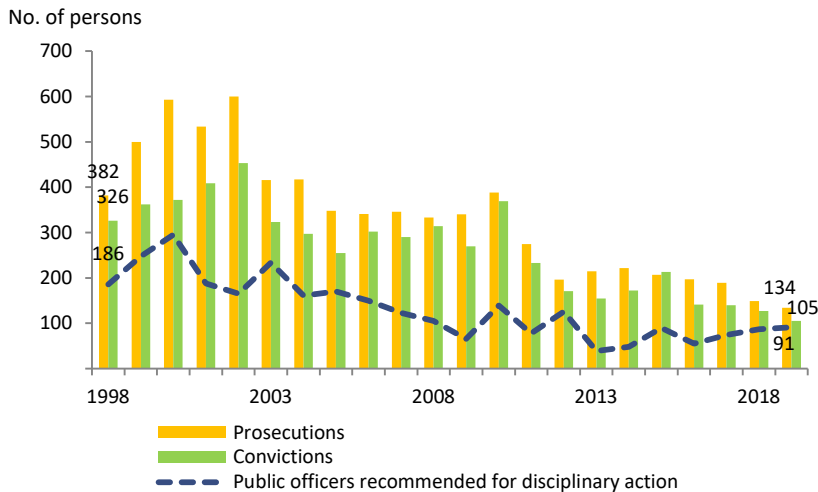


Figure 5 – Prosecutions against corruption related to public officers by top three departments

	2010-2014	2015-2019	2010-2019
Prosecutions	HKPF (25)	HKPF (16)	HKPF (41)
	CSD (12)	CED (7)	CSD (16)
	LCSD (12)	FSD (5)	LCSD (15)
	Others (46)	Others (36)	Others (87)
Total:	95 persons	64 persons	159 persons

Note: Figures in brackets are number of persons prosecuted in each department. The abbreviations of departments refer to: (a) HKPF – Hong Kong Police Force; (b) CSD – Correctional Services Department; (c) CED – Custom & Excise Department; (d) LCSD – Leisure & Cultural Services Department; and (e) FSD – Fire Services Department.

Figure 6 – Global ranking of corruption perception of selected places in Asia-Pacific

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
New Zealand	1	1	1	2	1
Singapore	7	7	6	3	4
Canada	10	9	8	9	12
Australia	13	13	13	13	12
Hong Kong	18	15	13	14	16
Japan	18	20	20	18	20
The United States	16	18	16	22	23
South Korea	43	52	51	45	39

Note: Ranking is inversely related to corruption perception on the public sector of a jurisdiction perceived by experts and business executives surveyed by Transparency International.

Highlights

- In line with the downtrend in complaints, persons prosecuted for corruption has plummeted by a total of 65% to 134 persons during 1998-2019, whereas the respective figures for conviction were 68% and 105 persons. For minor offences of corruption, ICAC issues caution to offenders, and recommends disciplinary action if such offenders are public officers. Over the past two decades or so, such recommendations likewise plunged by 51% to 91 persons (Figure 4).
- During 2015-2019, a total of 64 public officers were prosecuted for corruption, down from 95 during 2010-2014. For 2010-2019 as a whole, staff of disciplined services accounted for over half (53%) of such prosecutions. More specifically on individual departments, the Police have the largest share of prosecutions (26%), followed by the Correctional Services Department (10%) and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (9%). The overall conviction rate against public officers prosecuted for corruption was 78% over the same decade (Figure 5).
- Upon decades of anti-corruption practice and with declining corruption caseload, Hong Kong is globally acclaimed as one of the corruption-free cities. According to a global ranking of perception of "public sector corruption" in 180 places, Hong Kong took the 16th position in 2019 (Figure 6). However, confining to the Asia-Pacific region, Hong Kong is still lagging behind New Zealand, Singapore, Canada and Australia.

Data sources: Latest figures from Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption and Transparency International.

Research Office
Information Services Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
22 June 2020
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. Please refer to the Disclaimer and Copyright Notice on the Legislative Council website at www.legco.gov.hk for details. The paper number of this issue of Statistical Highlights is ISSH29/19-20.