



2023 Manpower Projection

Labour and Welfare Bureau

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2023 MP - background and objectives

- The Government has been conducting periodic MP exercises to assess Hong Kong's future manpower situation at a macro level.
- A new round of MP exercise commenced in 2023 to assess the manpower demand and supply five years ahead.
- **Two major enhancements :**
 - Detailed analyses are provided for **17 selected industries**, projecting **manpower shortages and in-demand skills by industry** with statistics and data extensively collected from the Government, open sources and sectoral consultations.
 - The projection period is shortened to **five years**, with a mid-term update planned to reflect market changes.

Selected industries for detailed analyses

Eight Centres



East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange (EICE centre)
[233 800]



International aviation hub (Aviation hub)
[56 900]



International financial centre (Financial centre)
[269 100]



International innovation and technology centre (I&T centre)
[52 400]



International trade centre (Trade centre)
[575 100]



International transportation centre (Transportation centre)
[238 600]



Regional centre for international legal and dispute resolution services (Legal & ADR centre)
[24 600]



Regional intellectual property trading centre (IP trading centre)
[57 100]

Nine Significant Sectors



Accommodation and food
[249 900]



City operation
[540 500]



Construction industry
[295 300]



Education
[174 000]



Health services
[165 700]



Manufacturing
[75 700]



Retail
[273 100]



Social services
[74 500]



Tourism
[163 200]



Covering over 2.8 million employed persons, or 80% of the labour force, and contributing more than 70% of the Gross Domestic Product

Notes: [] The figures in square brackets refer to the employment in 2023 in the relevant selected industries.

As certain economic activities are pertinent to multiple selected industries, the relevant manpower figures would overlap.

City operation includes seven specific categories of occupations - automobile, beauty care and hairdressing, electrical and mechanical services, electronics and telecommunications, information technology, real estate services and security services.

Manpower situation in 2023

Post-pandemic economic recovery drove manpower demand in a tight labour market, resulting in manpower shortages across all occupation groups. There was an overall shortfall of **around 50 000 workers**. The shortfalls in the “Managers, supervisors and professionals” and “Service industry workers” groups were more notable.

Manpower situation in 2023



Manpower supply:
3.50 million



Manpower requirements:
3.55 million



Overall balance:
- 50 000 workers

Manpower balance by occupation group



*Managers,
supervisors and
professionals* - 15 000



*Service industry
workers* - 24 000



*Skilled technical
workers* - 10 000



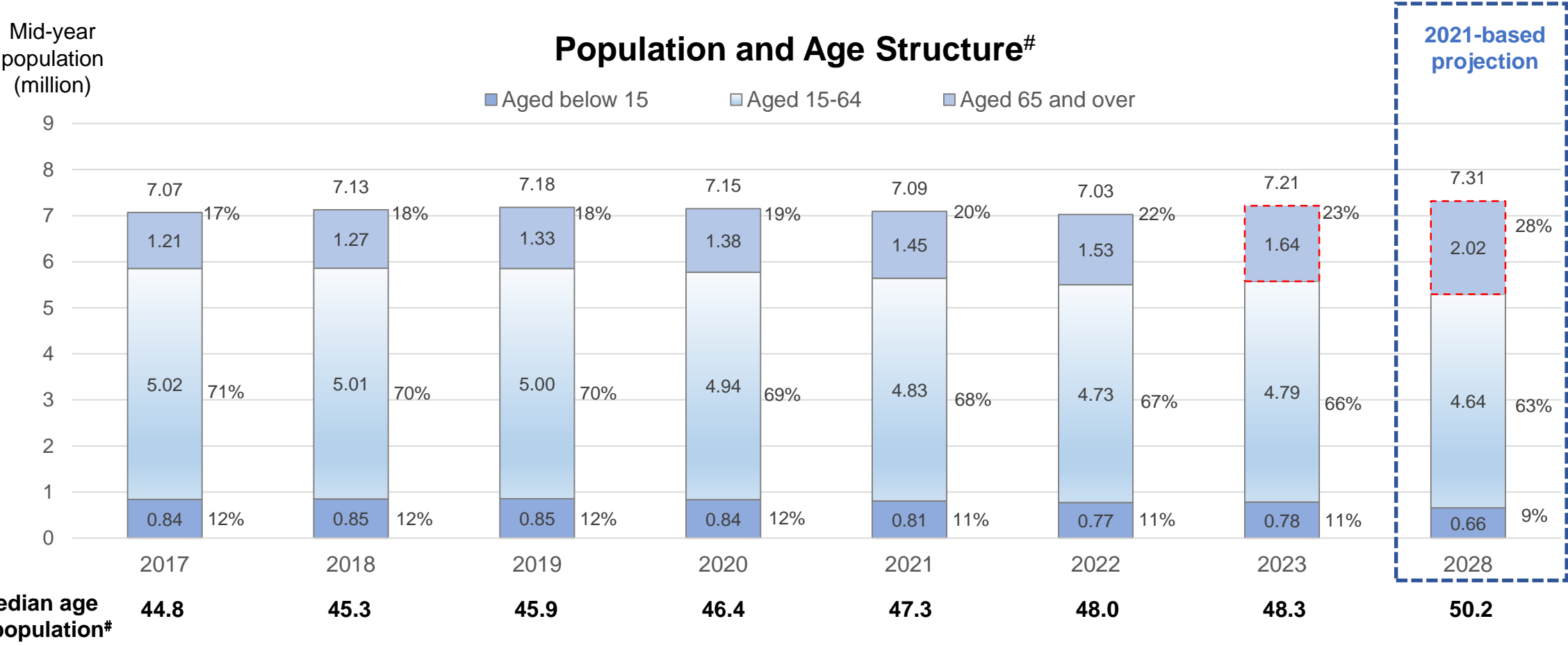
*Manual
labourers* - 2 000

Definitions of the four occupation groups

Occupation group	Number of employed persons in 2023	Description	Examples
Managers, supervisors and professionals	1 525 000 (45%)	Individuals who plan, direct and coordinate organisational activities , typically requiring advanced education or significant experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate executives • Researchers and academics (e.g. scientists, university professors) • Professionals (e.g. doctors, accountants, architects, engineers, teachers)
Service industry workers	1 127 000 (33%)	Non-managerial level personnel providing essential support or customer-facing services .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooks • Salespersons • Security guards • Flight attendants • Administrative clerks
Skilled technical workers	401 000 (12%)	Workers with specialised skills or training to perform tasks related to construction, maintenance and operation of machinery and structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&M mechanics/ technicians • Lift/escalator mechanics • Aircraft maintenance technicians • Skilled construction workers • Telecommunication technicians
Manual labourers	334 000 (10%)	Individuals who carry out routine tasks that do not require specialised training or significant work experience .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaners • Hotel room attendants • Kitchen helpers • Warehouse operative staff and porters

Hong Kong population projection






Due to the pandemic, Hong Kong's population decreased for three consecutive years starting in 2019. Following the implementation of various talent attraction measures in late 2022, the population returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2023. However, the number of residents aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 380 000 from 2023 to 2028, presenting a significant challenge to the labour force.



Note: # Excluding foreign domestic helpers.
Source: C&SD

Labour force ageing : 500 000 workers are aged 60 and over








In the next five years, they would gradually retire and leave the labour market, especially for “Skilled technical workers” and “Manual labourers”.










	Occupation group	Median age of employed persons in 2023	Number and proportion of employed persons aged 55 to 59	Number and proportion of employed persons aged 60 and over
1.	 Managers, supervisors and professionals	41	141 000 (9%)	148 000 (10%)
2.	 Service industry workers	44	129 000 (11%)	158 000 (14%)
3.	 Skilled technical workers	50	57 000 (14%)	104 000 (26%)
4.	 Manual labourers	53	55 000 (17%)	102 000 (31%)
	Overall 	45	383 000 (11%)	513 000 (15%)

Note: () Figures in brackets refer to the percentages of the total number of employed persons in the relevant occupation group.

Labour-intensive and emerging sectors faced significant manpower shortages

Including the I&T sector that the Government is actively promoting, as well as Retail, Accommodation and food and Tourism which had been affected by the pandemic.

Eight centres		Manpower balance in 2023
	I&T centre	- 6 000
	Transportation centre	- 4 000
	Aviation hub	- 3 000
	EICE centre	§
	Financial centre	§
	IP trading centre	§
	Legal & ADR centre	§
	Trade centre	+ 5 000

Nine significant sectors		Manpower balance in 2023
	Construction industry	- 15 000
	City operation	- 9 000
	Health services	- 8 000
	Accommodation and food	- 7 000
	Retail	- 7 000
	Tourism	- 5 000
	Social services	- 4 000
	Education	- 4 000
	Manufacturing	+ 1 000

Note: § denotes manpower balance within ± 500.

Factors affecting manpower demand and supply in the next five years

Demand side



Domestic economic growth and structural shifts



Government policies and measures on development of industries



Automation and digitalisation in business operation



National development strategies and integration with the Mainland



Geopolitical tensions and global economy

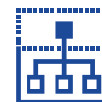
Supply side



Ageing population



Increasing education level of the labour force



Labour force participation and skills mismatch



Talent and labour movements

Manpower situation in 2028

Local economy is projected to sustain growth but the labour force ages fast in tandem. Local manpower supply would not be able to cater for the demand. Manpower shortfall would **rise to 180 000 workers**. Manpower shortages are forecasted to worsen significantly across all occupation groups. The situation of “Skilled technical workers” would be the worst.

Manpower projection in 2028



Manpower supply:
3.56 million



Manpower requirements:
3.75 million



Overall balance:
- 180 000 workers

Manpower balance by occupation group



Managers, supervisors and professionals - 27 000 to - 32 000



Service industry workers - 43 000 to - 48 000







Skilled technical workers - 60 000 to - 65 000



Manual labourers - 44 000 to - 49 000

Occupations in demand in 2028

	Occupation group	Examples of occupations in demand
1.	 Managers, supervisors and professionals	I&T specialists, IT and digitalisation staff, Data analysts, Fintech and blockchain specialists, Actuaries, Engineers, Pilots, Healthcare professionals (e.g. Doctors, Nurses)
2.	 Service industry workers	Flight attendants, Cooks, Salespersons, Waiters, Security guards
3.	 Skilled technical workers	Mechanics / technicians for building services and E&M, Lift / escalator mechanics, Aircraft maintenance technicians, Machine operators for advanced manufacturing, Maintenance technicians for maritime services, Skilled construction workers, Drivers
4.	 Manual labourers	Hotel room attendants, Cleaners, Kitchen helpers, Warehouse operative staff and porters


















A shortage of “Skilled technical workers” has emerged across various sectors, especially for construction and city operation

Selected industries	Number	Examples of occupations in demand
Construction industry	- 30 000 to - 40 000	Skilled / semi-skilled workers (e.g. bar benders and fixers, woodworkers, refrigeration / air-conditioning / ventilation mechanics)
City operation	- 8 000 to - 9 500	Lift / escalator mechanics, E&M mechanics / electricians, Telecommunication technicians, building services maintenance technicians
Manufacturing	- 6 000 to - 8 000	E&M mechanics / technicians for installation and maintenance of advanced manufacturing facilities
Transportation centre	- 4 500 to - 6 500	Smart logistics facility and machinery operators / technicians, E&M mechanics / technicians for maritime services and vehicle maintenance, Drivers, Telecommunication technicians
Trade centre	- 4 400 to - 5 400	
Aviation hub	- 3 200 to - 4 200	Aircraft maintenance technicians, Airport equipment / loader operators

Note: As certain economic activities are pertinent to multiple selected industries, the relevant manpower figures would overlap.

Shortages would be seen across all selected industries. 10 of them would have a shortage of over 10 000 workers

Construction industry, City operation, I&T centre and Aviation hub are particularly vulnerable.

Eight centres		Manpower balance in 2028	Nine significant sectors		Manpower balance in 2028
	I&T centre	- 18 000 to - 23 000		Construction industry	- 45 000 to - 55 000
	Aviation hub	- 18 000 to - 23 000		City operation	- 39 000 to - 44 000
	Trade centre	- 11 000 to - 16 000		Accommodation and food	- 14 000 to - 19 000
	Transportation centre	- 10 000 to - 15 000		Health services	- 13 000 to - 18 000
	EICE centre	- 5 000 to - 8 000		Tourism	- 9 000 to - 14 000
	Financial centre	- 1 500 to - 4 500		Manufacturing	- 9 000 to - 14 000
	IP trading centre	- 1 000 to - 4 000		Retail	- 7 000 to - 10 000
	Legal & ADR centre	§		Social services	- 3 500 to - 6 500
				Education	- 2 000 to - 5 000

Note: § denotes manpower balance within ± 500.

Occupations and skills in demand in 2028

Economic restructuring and increasing technology application across industries would change job roles and skills requirements. The labour force would need to adapt to the evolving market demands.

Essential skills			Essential knowledge		Examples of new job roles		
Adaptability and learning agility	Critical thinking and problem solving	Collaboration and teamwork	Basic digital literacy (including artificial intelligence (AI) application)	Environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles	AI interaction designers	AI researchers / scientists	AI application engineers
Communication skills	Data analytical skills	Digital proficiency			AI risk experts	Automation engineers	Blockchain developers
Innovation and creativity	Resilience and stress management	Multilingual competence	Cultural awareness and sensitivity	National and Greater Bay Area development strategies and market trends	Data scientists / Data analysts	Digital marketing specialists	Digital transformation specialists



Directions for future manpower development strategies

1

Manpower shortage would persist. The Government, employers and stakeholders should explore feasible solutions to boost productivity, optimise work arrangements, and enhance in-service training and support, so as to attract potential labour force to join the labour market.



2

Education institutions and training bodies should provide more **training and upskilling programmes** catering for market demands to help equip the local workforce with the relevant skills and knowledge to maintain competitiveness.



3

There is a continued need for **importing outside talents and labour** in an appropriate scale to fill manpower and skills gaps to support economic development.



Thank you

