

# 香港統計月刊

## Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics

2018 年 11 月  
November 2018

*專題文章*  
*Feature Article*

香港的人力資本情況  
Human Capital in Hong Kong

## 香港的人力資本情況 Human Capital in Hong Kong

人力資本發展一向被視為是一個經濟體提升競爭力和推動經濟發展的原動力之一。本文重點分析人力資本中的兩個類別，即曾受專上教育的人士和從事專業／輔助專業職級的人士，這兩類人士對一個經濟體邁向知識型經濟至為重要。

Human capital development has long been seen as one of the thrusts for enhancing competitiveness and sustaining economic development of an economy. This article focuses on two groups in human capital, viz. persons with post-secondary education and persons working as professionals/associate professionals, who are crucial to the development of a knowledge-based economy.

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# 香港的人力資本情況

## Human Capital in Hong Kong

### 1. 引言

1.1 人力資本發展一向被視為是一個經濟體提升競爭力和推動經濟發展的原動力之一。有關人力資本的統計數據是非常有用的資料，能顯示一個經濟體持續發展的情況。

1.2 本文重點分析人力資本中的兩個類別，即曾受專上教育的人士和從事專業／輔助專業職級的人士，這兩類人士對一個經濟體邁向知識型經濟至為重要。

1.3 本文的分析，主要是運用 2011 年人口普查以及 2006 年和 2016 年中期人口統計的數據。

### 2. 人力資本的涵蓋範圍

2.1 曾受**專上教育**的人士是指其教育程度（最高就讀程度）為下列各類的人士：

- 專上教育：文憑／證書及副學位課程
- 專上教育：學士學位課程
- 專上教育：深造課程

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Human capital development has long been seen as one of the thrusts for enhancing competitiveness and sustaining economic development of an economy. Statistics on human capital are useful information to throw light on the sustainable development of an economy.

1.2 This article focuses on two groups in human capital, viz. persons with post-secondary education and persons working as professionals/associate professionals, who are crucial to the development of a knowledge-based economy.

1.3 The analyses in this article are mainly based on data from the 2011 Population Census and the 2006 and 2016 Population By-censuses.

### 2. Coverage of human capital

2.1 Persons with *post-secondary education* refer to persons with educational attainment (highest level attended) belonging to the following categories :

- Post-secondary : diploma/certificate and sub-degree courses
- Post-secondary : first degree courses
- Post-secondary : postgraduate courses

2.2 從事專業／輔助專業職級的人士包括從事下列各類職業的人士：

- 商業、行政及有關專業人員／輔助專業人員
- 自然科學及工程專業人員／輔助專業人員
- 資訊及通訊科技專業人員／輔助專業人員
- 保健專業人員／輔助專業人員
- 教學專業人員／輔助專業人員
- 法律、社會科學及文化專業人員／輔助專業人員

2.3 在本文的分析中，外籍家庭傭工數字並不包括在內。

### 3. 人力資本發展的主要趨勢

3.1 曾受專上教育或從事專業／輔助專業職級的人數佔香港 15 歲及以上人口的百分比由 2006 年的 28% 上升至 2016 年的 37%。（表 1）

3.2 曾受專上教育的人數和從事專業／輔助專業職級的人數皆持續增加。前者由 2006 年佔 15 歲及以上人口的 23% 上升至 2016 年的 33%。而後者則由 2006 年的 13% 增至 2016 年的 17%。（圖 1）

3.3 在勞動人口中，從事專業／輔助專業職級兼具有專上教育程度人士的比例由 2006 年的 14% 上升至 2016 年的 21%；而同期從事專業／輔助專業職級而未曾受專上教育人士的有關比例則保持在約 7% 至 8% 的水平。（表 1）

2.2 Persons working as *professionals/associate professionals* cover persons in the following categories of occupations :

- Business, administration and related professionals/associate professionals
- Science and engineering professionals/associate professionals
- Information and communications technology professionals/associate professionals
- Health professionals/associate professionals
- Teaching professionals/associate professionals
- Legal, social science and cultural professionals/associate professionals

2.3 Figures on foreign domestic helpers are not included in the analyses of this article.

### 3. Key trends of human capital development

3.1 Number of persons with post-secondary education or working as professionals/associate professionals as a percentage of the population aged 15 and over in Hong Kong went up from 28% in 2006 to 37% in 2016. (Table 1)

3.2 Sustained increases were recorded in both the number of persons with post-secondary education (from 23% of the population aged 15 and over in 2006 to 33% in 2016) and those working as professionals/associate professionals (from 13% in 2006 to 17% in 2016). (Chart 1)

3.3 Among the labour force, the proportion of professionals/associate professionals with post-secondary education rose from 14% to 21% between 2006 and 2016, while the corresponding proportion for those professionals/associate professionals without post-secondary education remained at the level of about 7% to 8% during the period. (Table 1)

**表 1 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年曾受專上教育或從事專業／輔助專業職級的 15 歲及以上的人數（不包括外籍家庭傭工）**

**Table 1 Number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education or working as professionals/associate professionals (excluding foreign domestic helpers), 2006, 2011 and 2016**

	千人 Thousands		
	2006 <sup>(1)</sup>	2011 <sup>(2)</sup>	2016 <sup>(2)</sup>
15 歲及以上人口 Population aged 15 and over	5 737.5	5 993.7	6 184.3
勞動人口 Labour force	3 385.2	3 473.1	3 633.0
曾受專上教育或從事專業／輔助專業職級的人數 Number of persons with post-secondary education or working as professionals/associate professionals	1 590.6 (27.7%)	1 945.5 (32.5%)	2 313.6 (37.4%)
<i>曾受專上教育並從事專業／輔助專業職級的人數 Number of persons with post-secondary education <u>and</u> working as professionals/associate professionals</i>	483.5 (8.4%) [14.3%]	642.8 (10.7%) [18.5%]	774.7 (12.5%) [21.3%]
<i>曾受專上教育而並非從事專業／輔助專業職級的人數 Number of persons with post-secondary education but <u>not</u> working as professionals/associate professionals</i>	842.8 (14.7%) [24.9%]	1 019.6 (17.0%) [29.4%]	1 279.0 (20.7%) [35.2%]
<i>從事專業／輔助專業職級而未曾受專上教育的人數 Number of persons working as professionals/associate professionals but <u>without</u> post-secondary education</i>	264.3 (4.6%) [7.8%]	283.1 (4.7%) [8.2%]	259.9 (4.2%) [7.2%]

註釋：圓括號內數字代表佔 15 歲及以上人口的百分比。

方括號內數字代表佔勞動人口的百分比。

由於四捨五入關係，個別數字加起來可能與總數不符。

(1) 2006 年的統計數字是以「國際標準職業分類 1988 年版」為藍本而編定的職業分類編製。

(2) 2011 年及 2016 年的統計數字是根據「2011 年人口普查」所採用的職業分類編製。該職業分類大致上是以「國際標準職業分類 2008 年版」為藍本而編定。由於「國際標準職業分類 1988 年版」與「國際標準職業分類 2008 年版」在專業人員及輔助專業人員的定義上只有相對輕微的改動，因此本統計表內的 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年的統計數字大致可作比較。

Notes: Figures in round brackets represent the percentages to total population aged 15 and over.

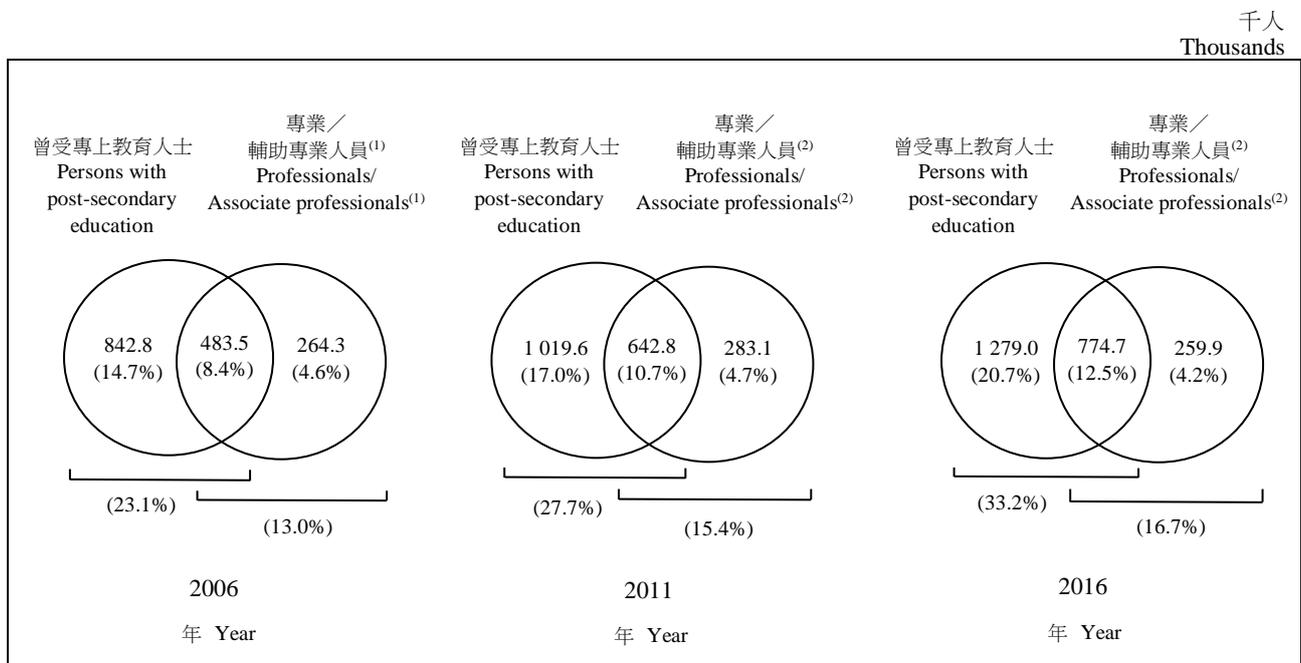
Figures in square brackets represent the percentages to labour force.

Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

(1) Figures for 2006 are compiled based on the occupation classification modelled on the International Standard Classification of Occupations 1988 (ISCO-88).

(2) Figures for 2011 and 2016 are compiled based on the occupation classification adopted in the 2011 Population Census, which is broadly modelled on the International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008 (ISCO-08). As the changes in the definitions of professionals and associate professionals between ISCO-88 and ISCO-08 are relatively minor, figures for 2006, 2011 and 2016 presented in this table are broadly comparable.

**圖 1 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年曾受專上教育或從事專業／輔助專業職級的 15 歲及以上的人數（不包括外籍家庭傭工）**  
**Chart 1 Number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education or working as professionals/associate professionals (excluding foreign domestic helpers), 2006, 2011 and 2016**



註釋：括號內數字代表佔 15 歲及以上人口的百分比。

Notes: Figures in brackets represent the percentages to total population aged 15 and over.

由於四捨五入關係，個別數字加起來可能與總數不符。

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- (1) 2006 年的統計數字是以「國際標準職業分類 1988 年版」為藍本而編定的職業分類編製。
- (2) 2011 年及 2016 年的統計數字是根據「2011 年人口普查」所採用的職業分類編製。該職業分類大致上是以「國際標準職業分類 2008 年版」為藍本而編定。由於「國際標準職業分類 1988 年版」與「國際標準職業分類 2008 年版」在專業人員及輔助專業人員的定義上只有相對輕微的改動，因此本統計圖內的 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年的統計數字大致可作比較。

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#### 4. 曾受專上教育的人士

##### 曾受專上教育人士的數目正不斷上升

4.1 一個社會的知識和技術水平與其人口的教育程度息息相關。在今天知識主導的社會中，人人力求上進，越來越多人接受高等教育。近年來，本港人口的教育程度持續提高。年齡 15 歲及以上曾受專上教育的人數由 2006 年的 133 萬人（佔 15 歲及以上人口的 23%）增加至 2016 年的 205 萬人（33%）。（表 2 和圖 1）

4.2 在曾受專上教育的人士中，擁有深造課程學歷的人士比例由 2006 年的 15% 輕微上升至 2016 年的 16%。（表 2）

#### 4. Persons with post-secondary education

##### Number of persons with post-secondary education on the rise

4.1 The level of knowledge and skills in a community is highly related to the educational attainment of its population. In today's knowledge-driven society, people in general are keen to better equip themselves and there is an upward shift towards higher education. The educational attainment of the population has improved continuously in recent years. The number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education increased from 1.33 million (representing 23% of the population aged 15 and over) in 2006 to 2.05 million (33%). (Table 2 and Chart 1)

4.2 Among those persons with post-secondary education, the proportion of persons with postgraduate attainment increased slightly from 15% in 2006 to 16% in 2016. (Table 2)

表 2 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年按教育程度（最高就讀程度）及性別劃分的 15 歲及以上曾受專上教育的人數（不包括外籍家庭傭工）

Table 2 Number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education (excluding foreign domestic helpers) by educational attainment (highest level attended) and sex, 2006, 2011 and 2016

教育程度 Educational attainment	2006			2011			2016		
	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes
文憑／證書及副學位課程 Diploma/certificate and sub-degree courses	218.6 (31.6%)	219.2 (34.5%)	437.8 (33.0%)	275.7 (32.6%)	283.7 (34.7%)	559.4 (33.7%)	323.4 (31.3%)	325.1 (31.9%)	648.5 (31.6%)
學士學位課程 First degree courses	357.2 (51.7%)	332.7 (52.4%)	689.9 (52.0%)	407.9 (48.3%)	407.0 (49.8%)	814.9 (49.0%)	527.4 (51.0%)	541.3 (53.1%)	1 068.7 (52.0%)
深造課程 Postgraduate courses	115.5 (16.7%)	83.1 (13.1%)	198.6 (15.0%)	161.0 (19.1%)	127.1 (15.5%)	288.1 (17.3%)	182.6 (17.7%)	153.9 (15.1%)	336.5 (16.4%)
總計 Total	691.3 (100.0%)	635.0 (100.0%)	1 326.3 (100.0%)	844.6 (100.0%)	817.8 (100.0%)	1 662.4 (100.0%)	1 033.4 (100.0%)	1 020.3 (100.0%)	2 053.7 (100.0%)
佔 15 歲及以上人口的百分比 Percentage share in population aged 15 and over	24.8%	21.5%	23.1%	29.4%	26.2%	27.7%	35.1%	31.5%	33.2%

註釋：由於四捨五入關係，個別數字加起來可能與總數不符。

Note: Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

### 曾受專上教育的女性人數迅速趕上

4.3 另一點值得關注的現象是男女的知識差距逐漸拉近。由於接受教育的機會大增，曾受專上教育的女性在數目和比例上均顯著上升。年齡 15 歲及以上曾受專上教育的女性人數由 2006 年的約 63 萬（佔 15 歲及以上曾受專上教育的整體人數的 48%）大幅增加至 2016 年的約 102 萬（50%）。（表 2 和圖 2）

4.4 女性曾受深造課程教育的數目亦有增加的趨勢。在曾受專上教育的女性中，擁有深造課程學歷女性的比例由 2006 年的 13% 上升至 2016 年的 15%。（表 2）

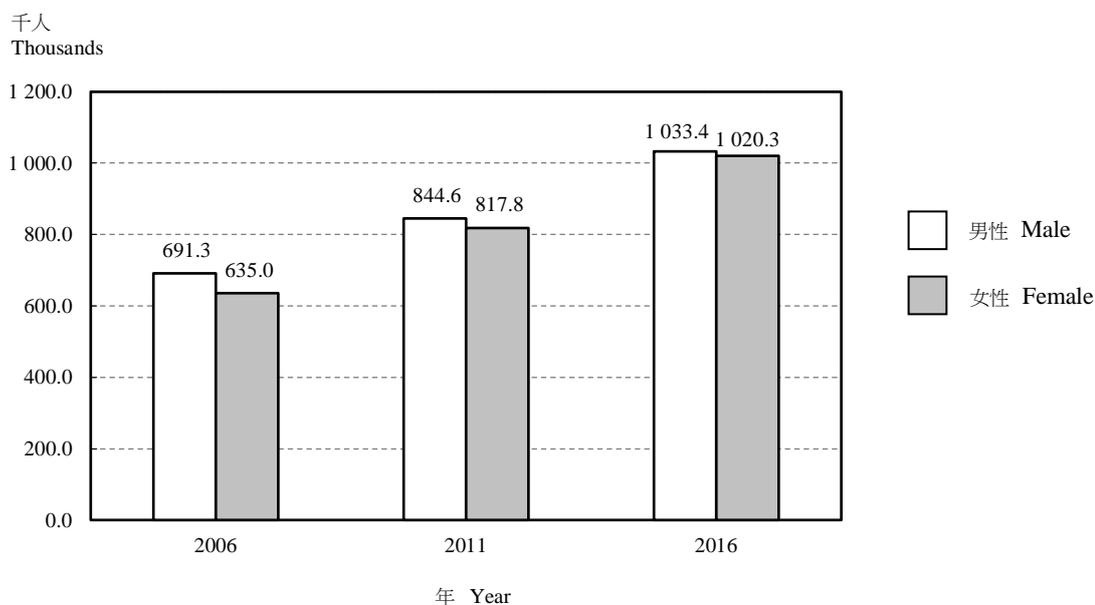
### Females catching up fast in pursuing post-secondary education

4.3 Another notable phenomenon is the gradual narrowing of the “knowledge gap” between men and women. As a result of the greater education opportunity, there had been a substantial increase in both the number and share of female persons with post-secondary education. The number of females aged 15 and over with post-secondary education increased significantly from 0.63 million (representing 48% of the total number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education) in 2006 to 1.02 million (50%) in 2016. (Table 2 and Chart 2)

4.4 There was also a growing trend towards postgraduate educational attainment for females. Among females with post-secondary education, the proportion of them having attained postgraduate level increased from 13% in 2006 to 15% in 2016. (Table 2)

圖 2 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年按性別劃分的 15 歲及以上曾受專上教育的人數（不包括外籍家庭傭工）

Chart 2 Number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education (excluding foreign domestic helpers) by sex, 2006, 2011 and 2016



### 商科仍然是最熱門的修讀科目

4.5 與香港以服務業為主的經濟結構正蓬勃發展情況相吻合，在過去 10 年，最熱門的修讀科目仍然是「商科課程」。在 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年，曾修讀這學科的人士分別佔整體曾受專上教育人士的 32%、33% 及 33%。第二及第三熱門的修讀科目是「文學及社會科學」及「機械、電機、電子及輪機工程」。(表 3)

### Business studies still the most favourite subject

4.5 In line with the vibrant service-oriented structure of the economy in Hong Kong, “Business and commercial studies” was still the most popular choice of study in the past decade. About 32%, 33% and 33% of the persons with post-secondary education in 2006, 2011 and 2016 respectively had studied in this field. The second and third popular choices of study were “Arts and social science” and “Mechanical, electrical, electronic and marine engineering” respectively. (Table 3)

表 3 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年按修讀科目劃分的 15 歲及以上曾受專上教育的人數（不包括外籍家庭傭工）

Table 3 Number of persons aged 15 and over with post-secondary education (excluding foreign domestic helpers) by field of education, 2006, 2011 and 2016

修讀科目 Field of education	2006	2011	2016
商科課程 Business and commercial studies	426.8 (32.2%)	547.5 (32.9%)	673.2 (32.8%)
文學及社會科學 Arts and social science	234.6 (17.7%)	278.1 (16.7%)	354.6 (17.3%)
機械、電機、電子及輪機工程 Mechanical, electrical, electronic and marine engineering	122.2 (9.2%)	143.4 (8.6%)	173.6 (8.5%)
建築及營造工程 Architecture and construction engineering	101.1 (7.6%)	128.8 (7.7%)	166.3 (8.1%)
電腦課程 Computer studies	103.8 (7.8%)	123.9 (7.5%)	148.0 (7.2%)
純科學 Pure science	76.4 (5.8%)	88.7 (5.3%)	129.5 (6.3%)
醫療衛生課程 Medical and health related studies	81.6 (6.2%)	98.0 (5.9%)	113.1 (5.5%)
教育 Education	42.9 (3.2%)	79.1 (4.8%)	98.7 (4.8%)
紡織、設計及其他工業技術 Textile, design and other industrial technology	26.9 (2.0%)	33.4 (2.0%)	30.5 (1.5%)
其他科目 Other fields	110.0 (8.3%)	141.5 (8.5%)	166.3 (8.1%)
<b>總計 Total</b>	<b>1 326.3 (100.0%)</b>	<b>1 662.4 (100.0%)</b>	<b>2 053.7 (100.0%)</b>

千人  
Thousands

註釋：由於四捨五入關係，個別數字加起來可能與總數不符。

Note: Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

### 曾受專上教育的勞動人口比例持續上升

4.6 隨着本港人口的教育程度持續提高，曾受專上教育的勞動人口在過去 10 年持續上升，由 2006 年的 102 萬人，大幅增加 53% 至 2016 年的 155 萬人。在勞動人口中，曾受專上教育的人士比例亦由 2006 年的 30% 顯著上升至 2016 年的 43%。（表 4）

### Higher proportion of persons with post-secondary education in the labour force

4.6 Along with the improving educational attainment of the Hong Kong's population, the labour force with post-secondary education rose continuously in the past decade, increasing considerably by 53% from 1.02 million in 2006 to 1.55 million in 2016. The proportion of persons with post-secondary education in the labour force also increased significantly from 30% in 2006 to 43% in 2016. (Table 4)

表 4 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年按教育程度（最高就讀程度）及性別劃分的勞動人口（不包括外籍家庭傭工）

Table 4 Labour force (excluding foreign domestic helpers) by educational attainment (highest level attended) and sex, 2006, 2011 and 2016

教育程度 Educational attainment	2006			2011			2016		
	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes
小學及以下 Primary and below	276.5 (14.3%)	205.0 (14.1%)	481.5 (14.2%)	225.8 (11.7%)	178.6 (11.5%)	404.4 (11.6%)	193.1 (9.6%)	157.8 (9.7%)	350.9 (9.7%)
中學 Secondary	1 099.8 (57.0%)	788.0 (54.1%)	1 887.8 (55.8%)	1 028.0 (53.4%)	769.6 (49.7%)	1 797.6 (51.8%)	995.5 (49.5%)	736.0 (45.4%)	1 731.5 (47.7%)
專上教育 Post-secondary	552.4 (28.6%)	463.4 (31.8%)	1 015.8 (30.0%)	671.4 (34.9%)	599.7 (38.7%)	1 271.1 (36.6%)	824.3 (41.0%)	726.3 (44.8%)	1 550.6 (42.7%)
總計 Total	1 928.8 (100.0%)	1 456.5 (100.0%)	3 385.2 (100.0%)	1 925.2 (100.0%)	1 548.0 (100.0%)	3 473.1 (100.0%)	2 013.0 (100.0%)	1 620.0 (100.0%)	3 633.0 (100.0%)

千人  
Thousands

註釋：由於四捨五入關係，個別數字加起來可能與總數不符。

Note: Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

## 5. 從事專業／輔助專業職級的人士

5.1 香港正朝着知識型經濟的方向發展，對具備專業知識和技術的人力需求不斷增加。因此，在過去 10 年，專業／輔助專業人員的人數和比例均顯著上升。從事專業／輔助專業職級的人數由 2006 年的 75 萬（佔勞動人口的 22%）增加至 2016 年的 103 萬（28%）。（表 1 和 5）

## 5. Persons working as professionals/associate professionals

5.1 Since Hong Kong is developing in the direction of a knowledge-based economy, there has been increasing demand for manpower with professional knowledge and skills. As such, there was a notable increase in both the number and share of persons working as professionals/associate professionals in the past decade. The number of persons working as professionals/associate professionals increased significantly from 0.75 million (constituting 22% of labour force) in 2006 to 1.03 million (28%) in 2016. (Tables 1 and 5)

**男性專業／輔助專業人員的數目在過去 10 年不斷增加**

5.2 男性專業／輔助專業人員的數目由 2006 年的 41 萬躍升至 2016 年的 59 萬，增幅達 44%（相應的女性專業／輔助專業人員的數目增幅為 31%）。同期，在專業／輔助專業人員中，男性的比例維持在 50% 以上。（表 5）

**Growing number of male professionals/associate professionals in the past decade**

5.2 The number of male professionals/associate professionals surged from 0.41 million in 2006 to 0.59 million in 2016, representing an increase of 44% (corresponding increase in the number of female professionals/associate professionals was 31%). Among the professionals/associate professionals, the proportion of males stayed over 50% during the period. (Table 5)

**表 5 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年按職業、教育程度（最高就讀程度）及性別劃分的專業／輔助專業人員的人數**  
**Table 5 Number of persons working as professionals/associate professionals by occupation, educational attainment (highest level attended) and sex, 2006, 2011 and 2016**

千人  
Thousands

職業及教育程度 Occupation and educational attainment	2006 <sup>(1)</sup>			2011 <sup>(2)</sup>			2016 <sup>(2)</sup>		
	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes	男性 Male	女性 Female	合計 Both sexes
專業人員 Professionals	125.7 (31.0%)	79.8 (23.3%)	205.4 (27.5%)	133.8 (26.4%)	97.6 (23.3%)	231.4 (25.0%)	152.3 (26.0%)	112.4 (25.0%)	264.8 (25.6%)
中學及以下 Secondary and below	8.4 (2.1%)	5.0 (1.4%)	13.5 (1.8%)	1.9 (0.4%)	1.4 (0.3%)	3.2 (0.3%)	0.2 (\$)	0.2 (\$)	0.4 (\$)
專上教育 Post-secondary	117.2 (28.9%)	74.7 (21.8%)	191.9 (25.7%)	131.9 (26.1%)	96.2 (22.9%)	228.1 (24.6%)	152.1 (26.0%)	112.2 (25.0%)	264.3 (25.6%)
輔助專業人員 Associate professionals	279.7 (69.0%)	262.7 (76.7%)	542.3 (72.5%)	372.5 (73.6%)	322.1 (76.7%)	694.6 (75.0%)	433.1 (74.0%)	336.7 (75.0%)	769.8 (74.4%)
中學及以下 Secondary and below	140.0 (34.5%)	110.8 (32.4%)	250.7 (33.5%)	167.0 (33.0%)	113.0 (26.9%)	280.0 (30.2%)	168.1 (28.7%)	91.3 (20.3%)	259.4 (25.0%)
專上教育 Post-secondary	139.7 (34.5%)	151.8 (44.3%)	291.5 (39.0%)	205.6 (40.6%)	209.1 (49.8%)	414.7 (44.8%)	265.0 (45.3%)	245.3 (54.6%)	510.3 (49.3%)
<b>總計 Total</b>	<b>405.3 (100.0%)</b>	<b>342.4 (100.0%)</b>	<b>747.7 (100.0%)</b>	<b>506.3 (100.0%)</b>	<b>419.7 (100.0%)</b>	<b>926.0 (100.0%)</b>	<b>585.4 (100.0%)</b>	<b>449.1 (100.0%)</b>	<b>1 034.5 (100.0%)</b>
佔勞動人口的百分比 Percentage share in labour force	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>26.7%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>28.5%</b>

註釋：由於四捨五入關係，個別數字加起來可能與總數不符。

§ 少於 0.05%。

(1) 2006 年的統計數字是以「國際標準職業分類 1988 年版」為藍本而編定的職業分類編製。

(2) 2011 年及 2016 年的統計數字是根據「2011 年人口普查」所採用的職業分類編製。該職業分類大致上是「國際標準職業分類 2008 年版」為藍本而編定。由於「國際標準職業分類 1988 年版」與「國際標準職業分類 2008 年版」在專業人員及輔助專業人員的定義上只有相對輕微的改動，因此本統計表內的 2006 年、2011 年及 2016 年的統計數字大致可作比較。

Notes: Figures may not add up to total due to rounding.

§ Less than 0.05%.

(1) Figures for 2006 are compiled based on the occupation classification modelled on the International Standard Classification of Occupations 1988 (ISCO-88).

(2) Figures for 2011 and 2016 are compiled based on the occupation classification adopted in the 2011 Population Census, which is broadly modelled on the International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008 (ISCO-08). As the changes in the definitions of professionals and associate professionals between ISCO-88 and ISCO-08 are relatively minor, figures for 2006, 2011 and 2016 presented in this table are broadly comparable.

## 6. 結語

6.1 一個經濟體的人口的知識及技能水平需要不斷改善，以配合其不同階段的經濟發展。透過持續學習以提升人口的教育基礎對發展知識型經濟極其重要。

## 6. Concluding remarks

6.1 The knowledge and skill levels of an economy's population need to be continuously improving to cope with its economic development at different stages. Improving the educational foundation of the population through continuous learning is essential to the development of a knowledge-based economy.