

---

**Research shows a majority of people in Hong Kong are accepting of transgender people and support legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity**

For immediate release  
1 February 2019

The Centre for Comparative and Public Law (CCPL) has published the results of a survey of Hong Kong people's awareness and attitudes about transgender people and support for related anti-discrimination legislation. Only a minority of Hong Kong people (20%) said they do not accept transgender people. A majority (80%) said they are either very accepting, moderately accepting, or a little accepting of transgender people. In addition, 67% of people agreed that Hong Kong should have a law that protects people from being discriminated against because they are transgender. 72% of people agreed that transgender individuals should be free to express their gender identity.

The research was led by Kelley Loper from the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law, Holning Lau from the University of North Carolina School of Law, Charles Lau from RTI International, and Yiu-tung Suen from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The team commissioned the Social Sciences Research Centre (SSRC) at the University of Hong Kong to conduct a telephone survey of a random, representative sample of Hong Kong residents in May and June 2017.

According to Professor Suen, "the survey results are consistent with recent trends in Hong Kong which indicate growing public support for the rights of LGBT people more generally".

Professor Loper notes, however, that "our study reveals a gap between existing policy and public opinion. Hong Kong lacks gender recognition legislation allowing transgender people to modify identity documents to reflect their gender identity. Hong Kong also has not introduced legislation to protect people from gender identity discrimination in the private sector."

Professor Holning Lau adds that "we hope our survey results will contribute to better-informed discussions about public attitudes when the government deliberates on various policy options."

In recent years, Hong Kong courts have considered the rights of transgender people. In 2013, the Court of Final Appeal held that denial of a transgender woman's right to marry in her acquired gender was unconstitutional. In August 2018, the Court of First Instance (CFI) decided a case involving the treatment of a transgender woman in detention. The CFI handed down a judgment today in a case challenging Hong Kong's lack of gender recognition legislation. This decision may eventually be decided by higher courts on appeal and impact future law reform outcomes.

There is currently no legislation in Hong Kong which provides for the recognition of the reassigned, acquired or preferred gender of a person for all legal purposes. Government departments and private institutions are not required by law to accept the sex entry on a person's Hong Kong identity card as that person's legal gender. Neither is there any mechanism to have the sex entry on a person's birth certificate amended to reflect his or her reassigned, acquired or preferred gender.

The Chinese and English versions of the survey report are available at:  
<http://www.law.hku.hk/ccpl/>.

---

The survey results informed a CCPL submission to the Hong Kong Government's Inter-departmental Working Group on Gender Recognition in December 2017 which is available in English at: <http://www.law.hku.hk/ccpl/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CCPL%20Submission%20to%20the%20IWG.pdf>

Professor Loper is available for press inquiries in English at [kloper@hku.hk](mailto:kloper@hku.hk). Professor Suen is available for press inquiries in Chinese and English at [suenyiutung@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:suenyiutung@cuhk.edu.hk) and 3943 6624.