

*INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES (ISQOLS)  
16TH ANNUAL MEETING (2018, HONG KONG)*

*SESSION ON  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INDEX IN HONG KONG*

---

# **Subjective Social Development Index: Conceptualization and Operationalization**

---

*Dr Robert CHUNG*

*Director of Public Opinion Programme  
The University of Hong Kong*

*16 June 2018*

# Questions to be Addressed...

---

- Is the rich happier than the poor?
- Does long life means less suffering?
- Social development is very often measured by objective indicators, like poverty rate, life expectancy, and other QoL indicators.
- However, where subjective well-being is concerned, objective achievements must be measured against subjective expectations before achieving satisfaction.

# From the Abstract...

---

- During the time when Hong Kong's Social Development Index (SDI) was developed, the author working at The University of Hong Kong also worked on a parallel set of indices to measure Hong Kong people's subjective feeling towards social development.
- The Subjective Social Development Index (SSDI), along with its 14 sub-indices by social aspects and 5 sub-indices by selected demographic groups are meant to supplement SDI findings in all these domains.

# From the Abstract...

---

- SSDI readings are compiled from random telephone surveys, and the wordings used in SSDI surveys are:
  - How satisfied are you with Hong Kong's social development (in a certain aspect)?
  - How would you compare the current situation (in this aspect) with that 10 years ago?
- To prepare for the compilation of composite scores, respondents were also asked to rate the importance of each social aspect in terms of social development.
- The original plan was to conduct SSDI surveys once every two years to match SDI releases. The idea was gradually dropped after 2008.

# Seven (7) Waves of SSDI Surveys in 15 Years

Year	Date of Survey	Successful sample	Response rate
2000	26-30/6/2000 (SSSI)	1,002	52.1%
	17-19/7/2000 (SSDI)	1,040	55.7%
	20-24/7/2000 (SSVPI)	1,097	55.6%
2002	6-11/6/2002 (SSDI)	1,087	67.0%
	11-17/6/2002 (SSSI)	1,014	65.6%
	20-26/6/2002 (SSVPI)	1,097	68.6%
2004	28-30/6/2004 (SSDI)	1,033	61.5%
	12-14/7/2004 (SSSI)	1,026	60.8%
	14-22/7/2004 (SSVPI)	1,036	64.0%
2006	15/6-7/7/2006	1,018	55.8%
2008	29/7-4/8/2008	1,020	65.0%
2012	26/11-30/12/2012	1,021	66.8%
2014-15	22/01-04/02/2015	1,008	64.6%

\* In 2000, 2002 and 2004, three separate modules of questionnaires were developed, namely **SSDI** (Subjective Social Development Index), **SSSI** (Subjective Social Satisfaction Index) and **SSVPI** (Subjective Social Vulnerable Population Index). Since 2006, the three modules were combined into one single module.

# Social Development Index (SDI)

**Abstracted from a presentation made by  
Mr Keith Wong\* at HKU on 6 Apr 2016**

**\*Mr Wong was the Chief Officer (Social Development)  
of The Hong Kong Council of Social Service**





# Why Social Development Matters?

UN Copenhagen  
Declaration on Social  
Development (1995)

Our Council's  
responsibility to  
promote and  
advocate for social  
development in Hong  
Kong

Launched the SDI in  
1999



# Objectives of the Social Development Index (SDI) Project

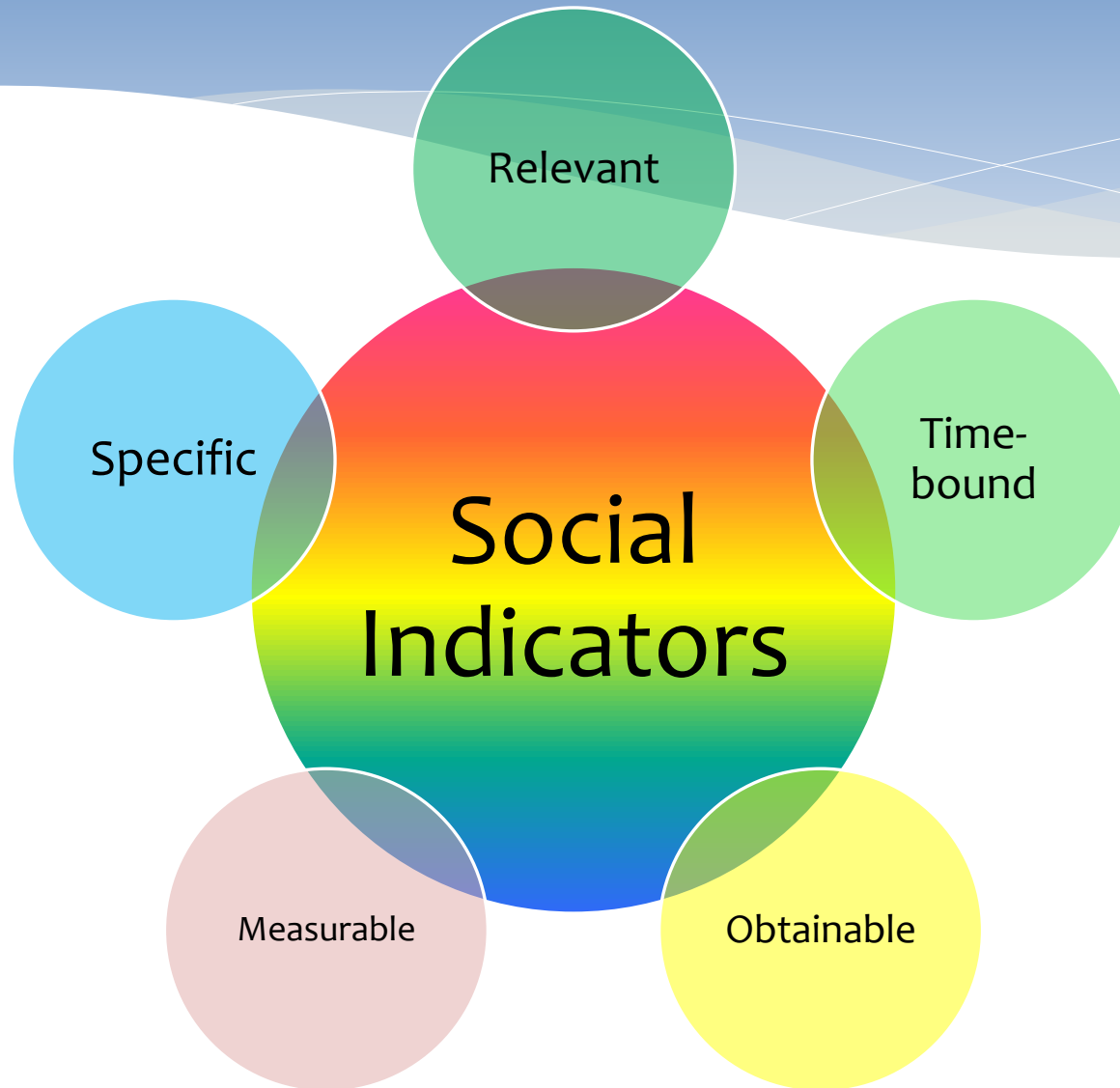
Develop a systematic, objective, and analytical tool to

- Keep track of local social development
- Assess local social, political, and economic needs
- Be an alert system which helps to identify critical issues of public concern





# Social Indicators for Observations



# SDI—Levels of Analysis

Hong Kong Society as a whole

14 Sectors of development that make up the SDI

7 'historically vulnerable' population groups of special concern to the HKCSS



# Data Sources

## **Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department**

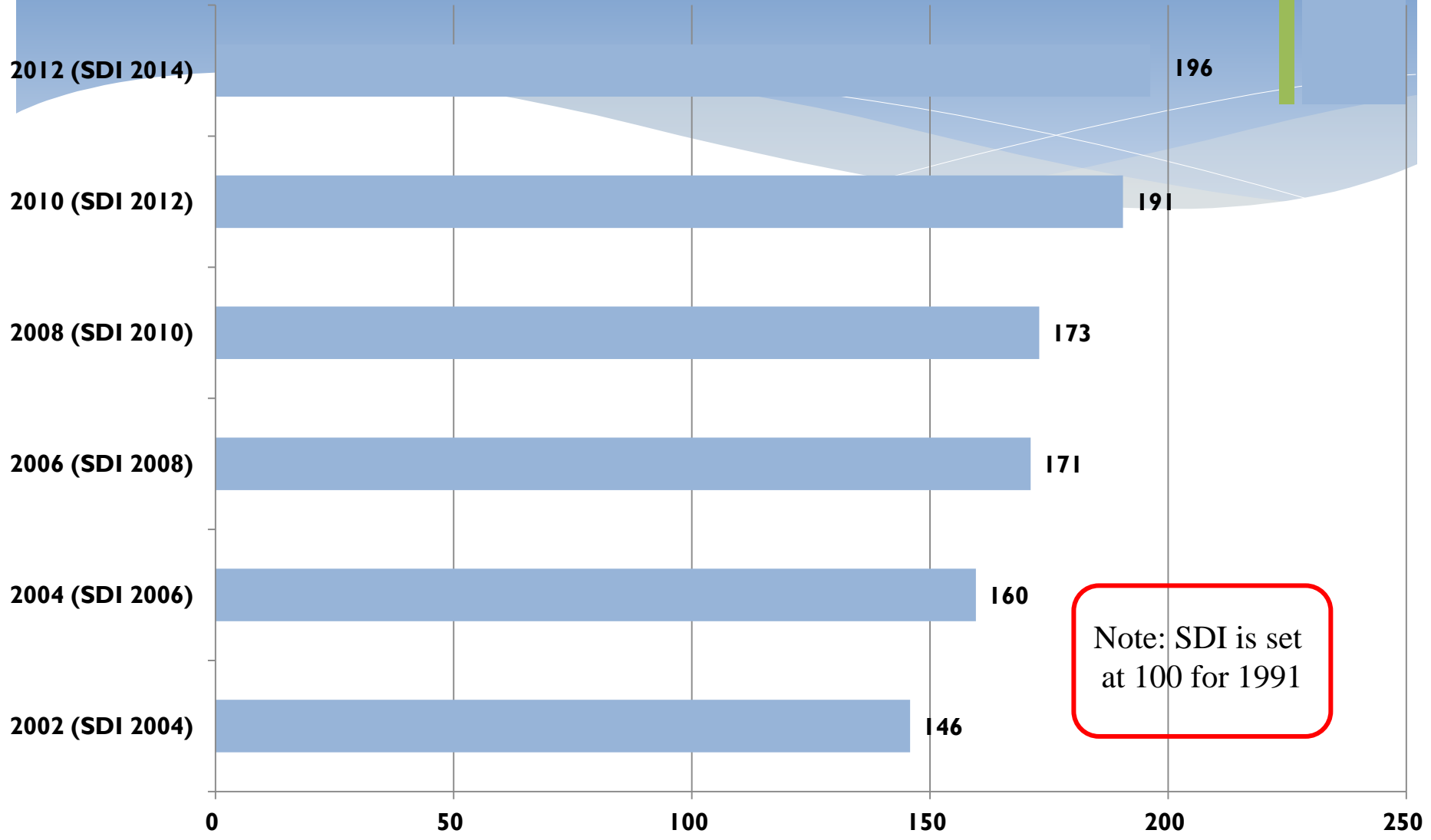
- \* **Census and Statistics Department**
- \* **Civil Service Bureau**
- \* **Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau**
- \* **Correctional Services Department**
- \* **Customs and Excise Department**
- \* **Department of Health**
- \* **Education Bureau**
- \* **Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau**
- \* **Home Affairs Bureau**
- \* **Hong Kong Law Society**
- \* **Hong Kong Monetary Authority**
- \* **Hong Kong Police Force**
- \* **Hospital Authority**
- \* **Housing Authority**
- \* **Immigration Department**
- \* **Inland Revenue Department**

## **Judiciary**

- \* **Labour Department**
- \* **Legal Aid Department**
- \* **Leisure and Cultural Services Department**
- \* **Office for Film, Newspaper & Article Administration**
- \* **Office of the Commissioner of Insurance**
- \* **Office of the Communications Authority**
- \* **Radio Television Hong Kong**
- \* **Registration and Electoral Office**
- \* **Security Bureau**
- \* **Social Welfare Department**
- \* **Thomson Reuters Corporation**
- \* **Tourism Commission**
- \* **Transportation Department**
- \* **Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong**
- \* **Water Supplies Department**



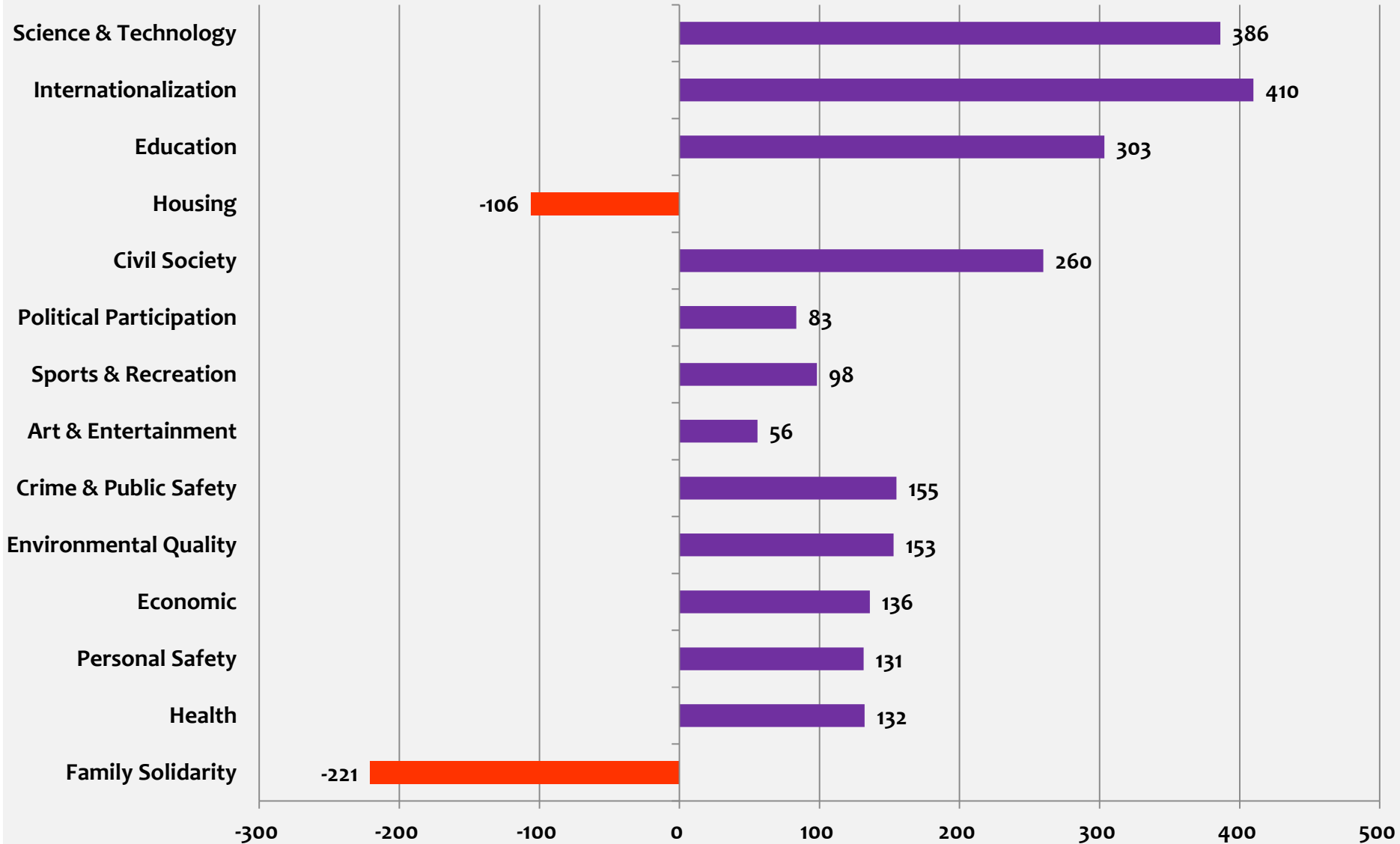
# Standardized Weighted SDI Scores (2004 – 2014)



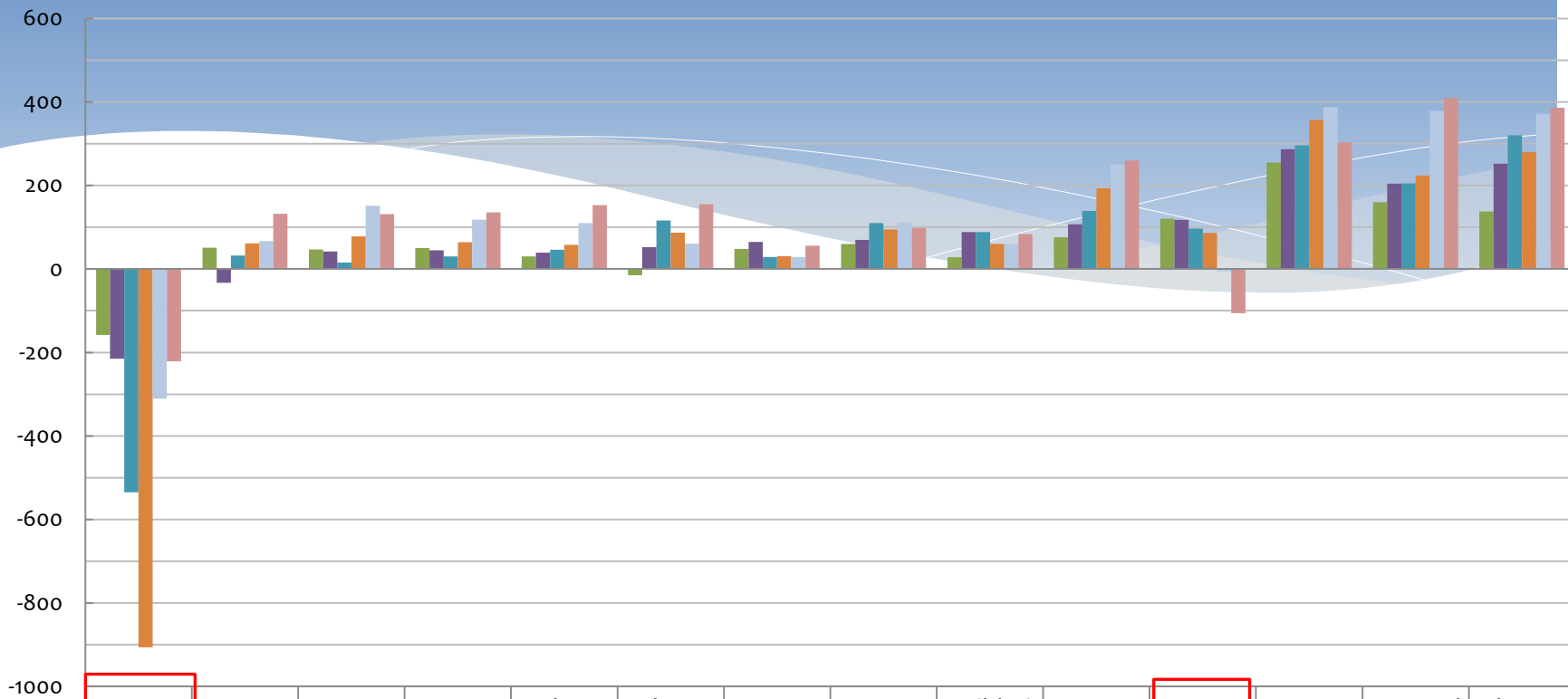
Note: SDI is set at 100 for 1991



# Overview of Social Development Sub-indexes (2012)



# Social Development Trends by Sub-index (2002-2012)



	Family Solidarity	Health	Personal Safety	Economic	Environmental Quality	Crime & Public Safety	Art & Entertainment	Sports & Recreation	Political Participation	Civil Society	Housing	Education	Internationalization	Science & Technology
■ 2002 (SDI 2004)	-158	51	47	50	30	-15	48	60	28	76	120	255	160	138
■ 2004 (SDI 2006)	-215	-33	42	45	39	52	65	70	89	107	118	287	204	252
■ 2006 (SDI 2008)	-535	32	15	30	46	116	29	110	89	139	97	296	205	320
■ 2008 (SDI 2010)	-906	61	78	64	58	87	31	95	60	193	86	357	224	280
■ 2010 (SDI 2012)	-311	67	151	118	110	61	29	111	60	250	-5	387	378	372
■ 2012 (SDI 2014)	-221	132	131	136	153	155	56	98	83	260	-106	303	410	386



## Social Development Sub-index – Housing

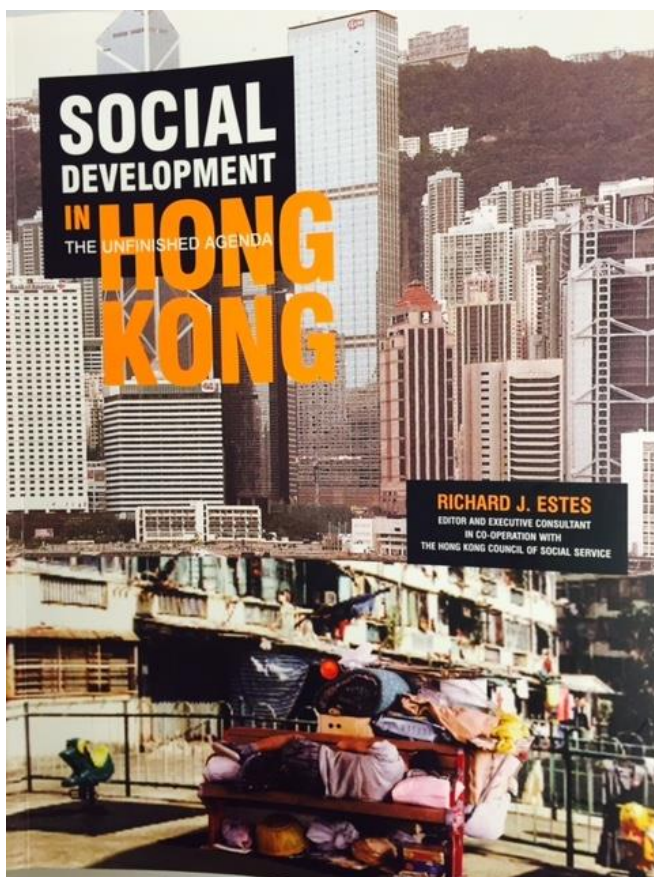
	Raw Data					
Housing sub-index	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
No. of waiting list applicants for Housing Authority rental flats	91,578	92,556	106,575	111,264	145,000	189,500
Percentage of expenditure on housing as share of total household expenditure	32.2	32.2	30.6	30.6	32.8	32.8

Source: Housing Authority, 2013

- The number of waiting list applicants for public rental flat keeps increasing. The number surged to 230 thousands in 2013 from 190 thousands in 2012.
- The percentage of expenditure on housing as share of total household expenditure of 2010 and 2012 is 32.8%, which is at decade high.

To learn more...

<http://www.socialindicators.org.hk/en>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the "Social Indicators of Hong Kong" website. The header includes the logo and the title in both Chinese and English. Navigation tabs for "Social Indicators", "Social Development Index", "Other Indicators", "SD Highlight", and "Publications" are visible. A main navigation bar highlights "Population-specific sub-domains" with icons for Women, Low Income, Child, Elderly, Youth, People with Disabilities, and New Arrivals. Below this, there are sections for "SD Highlight" (2014), "Latest Indicator", and "Latest Publication", each with a "More" button and a list of topics.



# Beginning of SSDI

---

- During the designing stage of SDI, the author was invited by The Hong Kong Council of Social Service to sit on its expert panel.
- The author suggested the incorporation of public opinions surveys to measure people's satisfaction with Hong Kong's social development.
- Such suggestions later evolved into running regular SSDI surveys by the Public Opinion Programme at The University of Hong Kong using its own resources.

# Questionnaire Structure of SSDI Surveys

Core Questions	No. of questions	Order in qre
Overall satisfaction rating with the current <b>social development status</b> in HK (pre & post*)	2	1, 17
Overall comparison rating between the current <b>social development status</b> in HK and that of N** years ago (pre & post*)	2	2, 18
Individual <b>satisfaction rating</b> with the current development status for each of the <b>14 sectors</b>	14	3a-16a
Individual <b>importance level</b> of each of the <b>14 sectors</b> with respect to the overall social development	14	3b-16b
Individual <b>comparison rating</b> for each of the <b>14 sectors</b> of development c.f. N** years ago	14	3c-16c
Overall evaluation rating of the current <b>quality of life</b> of all HK people (pre & post*)	2	19, 26
Overall comparison rating between the current <b>quality of life</b> of all HK people and that of N** years ago (pre & post*)	2	20, 27
Individual evaluation rating of the current quality of life for each of the <b>5 vulnerable population groups</b>	5	21a-25a
Individual comparison rating of the quality of life for each of the <b>5 vulnerable population groups</b> c.f. N** years ago	5	21b-25b
Total	60	

\* Such questions are asked twice in the interview, i.e. before and after the set of questions for 14 sectors/5 vulnerable population groups.

\*\* This time frame, e.g. N years, corresponds to the time lapse since the last data point collected. In 2000 survey, the time frame used was "10 years".

# Methodology of SSDI Surveys

---

- Telephone surveys with real interviewers were used.
- Target sample size for each survey was set at no less than 1,000 Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong citizens aged 18 or above.
- Random sampling method was used to select the target household, and “next birthday” rule was used to select one qualified respondent from the household.
- The first survey was conducted in 2000, then repeated in 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2012 and 2015.

# 14 Sub-indexes

---

Questions were set on satisfaction rating, importance level, and comparison rating for each of these 14 social aspects:

1. Science & Technology Sub-index 科技發展狀況
2. Education Sub-index 教育發展狀況
3. Arts & Entertainment Sub-index 文娛發展狀況
4. Internationalization Sub-index 國際化發展狀況
5. Health Sub-index 衛生健康狀況
6. Personal Safety Sub-index 人身安全狀況
7. Civil Society Sub-index 參與社會組織狀況
8. Political Participation Sub-index 政治參與狀況
9. Housing Sub-index 房屋發展狀況
10. Crime & Public Safety Sub-index 治安狀況
11. Economic Sub-index 經濟發展狀況
12. Sports & Recreation Sub-index 康體發展狀況
13. Environmental Quality Sub-index 環境質素
14. Family Solidarity Sub-index 家庭團結狀況

# 5 Vulnerable Population Groups

---

Questions were set on evaluation and comparison rating for each of these 5 vulnerable population groups:

1. **Women Status Sub-index** 香港婦女生活質素
2. **Elderly Status Sub-index** 香港長者生活質素
3. **Child Status Sub-index** 香港兒童生活質素
4. **Youth Status Sub-index** 香港青年生活質素
5. **Low Income Status Sub-index** 香港低收入人士生活質素

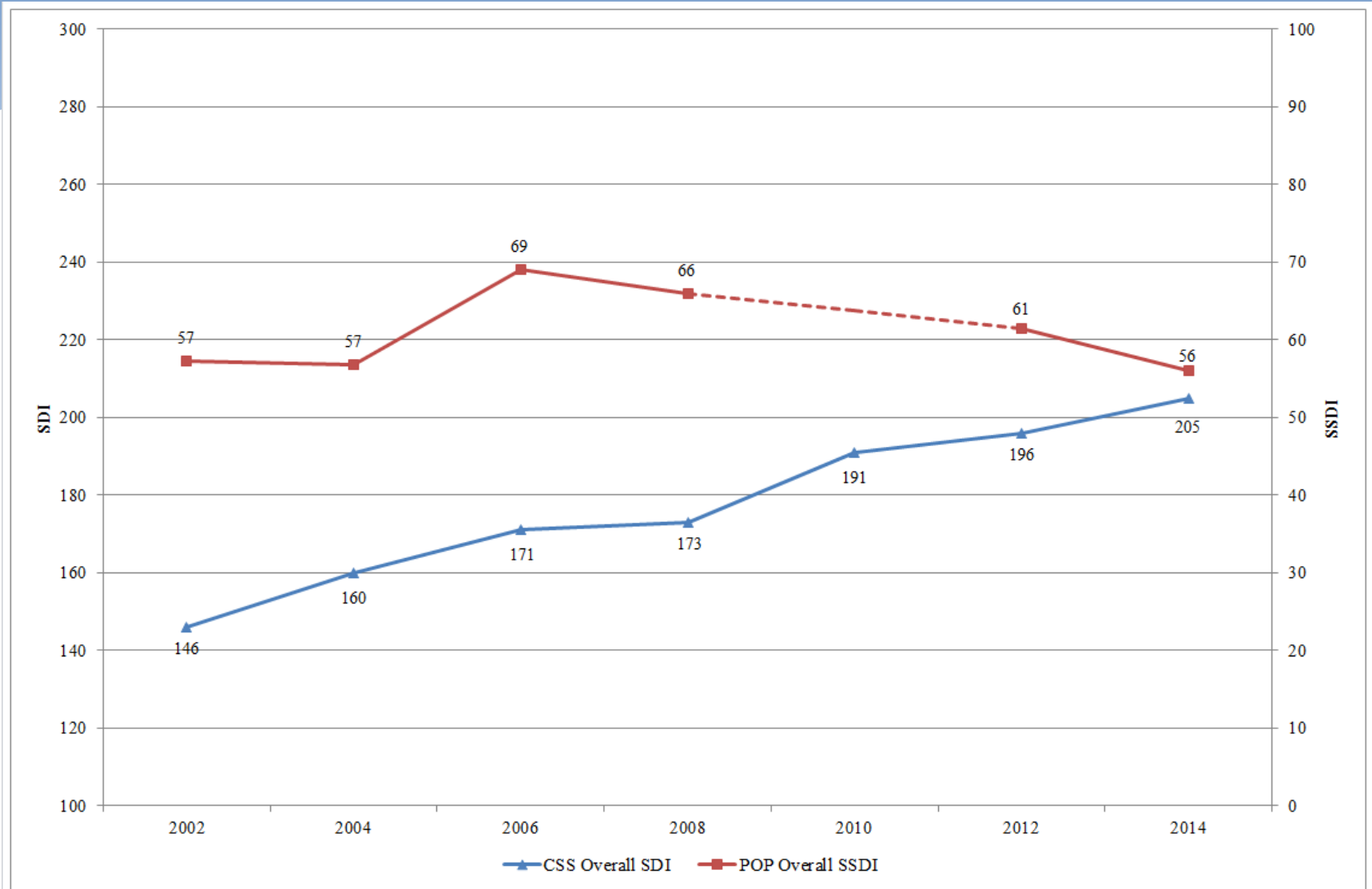
# Reduction of Scale over 15 Years

Year	Date of Survey	Successful sample	Response rate
2000	26-30/6/2000 (SSSI)	1,002	52.1%
	17-19/7/2000 (SSDI)	1,040	55.7%
	20-24/7/2000 (SSVPI)	1,097	55.6%
2002	6-11/6/2002 (SSDI)	1,087	67.0%
	11-17/6/2002 (SSSI)	1,014	65.6%
	20-26/6/2002 (SSVPI)	1,097	68.6%
2004	28-30/6/2004 (SSDI)	1,033	61.5%
	12-14/7/2004 (SSSI)	1,026	60.8%
	14-22/7/2004 (SSVPI)	1,036	64.0%
2006	15/6-7/7/2006	1,018	55.8%
2008	29/7-4/8/2008	1,020	65.0%
2012	26/11-30/12/2012	1,021	66.8%
2014-15	22/01-04/02/2015	1,008	64.6%

\* In 2000, 2002 and 2004, three separate modules of questionnaires were developed, namely *SSDI* (Subjective Social Development Index), *SSSI* (Subjective Social Satisfaction Index) and *SSVPI* (Subjective Social Vulnerable Population Index). Since 2006, the three modules were combined into one single module.

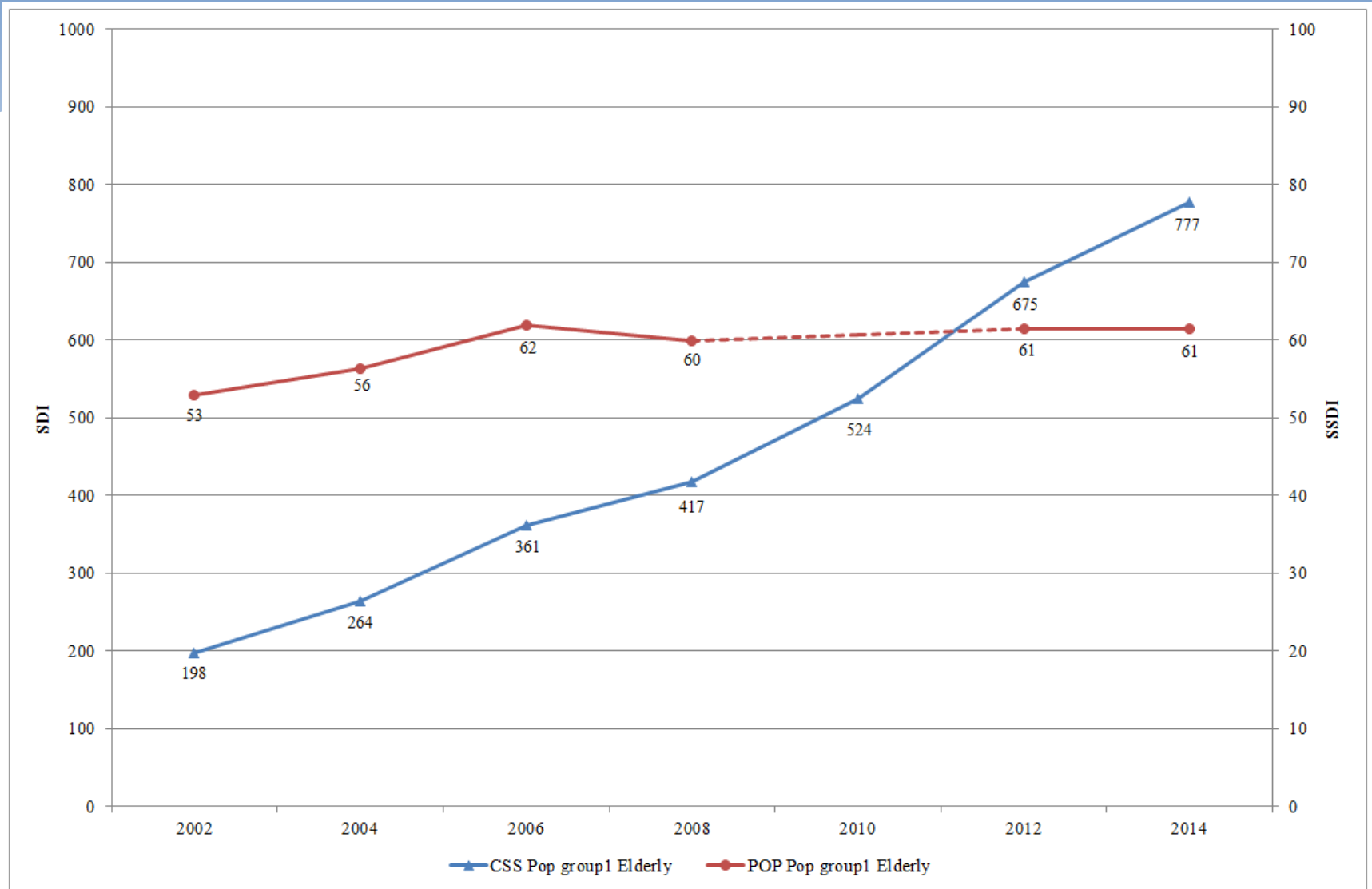
# **Selected Findings**

# Overall SDI vs SSDI

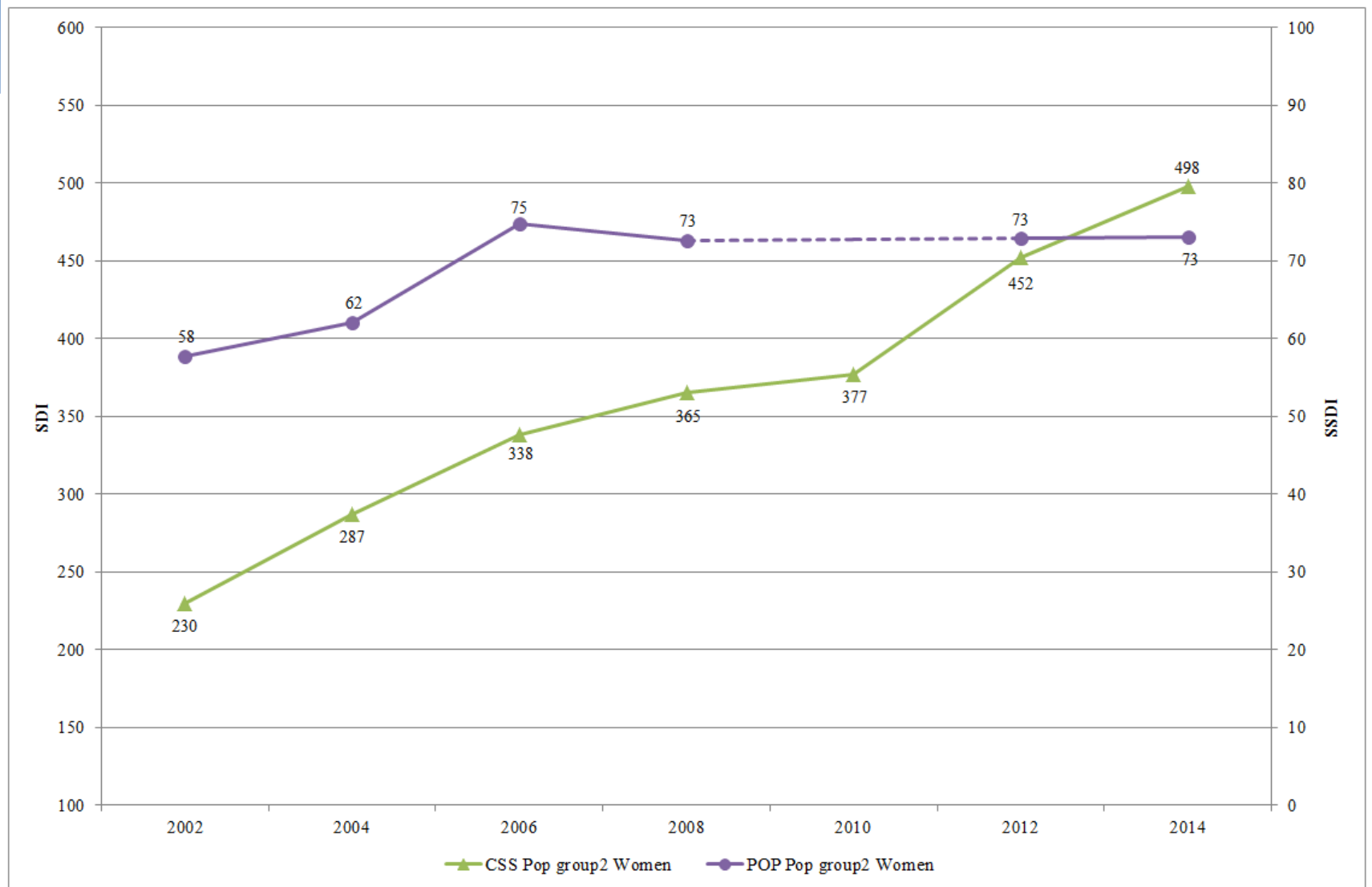




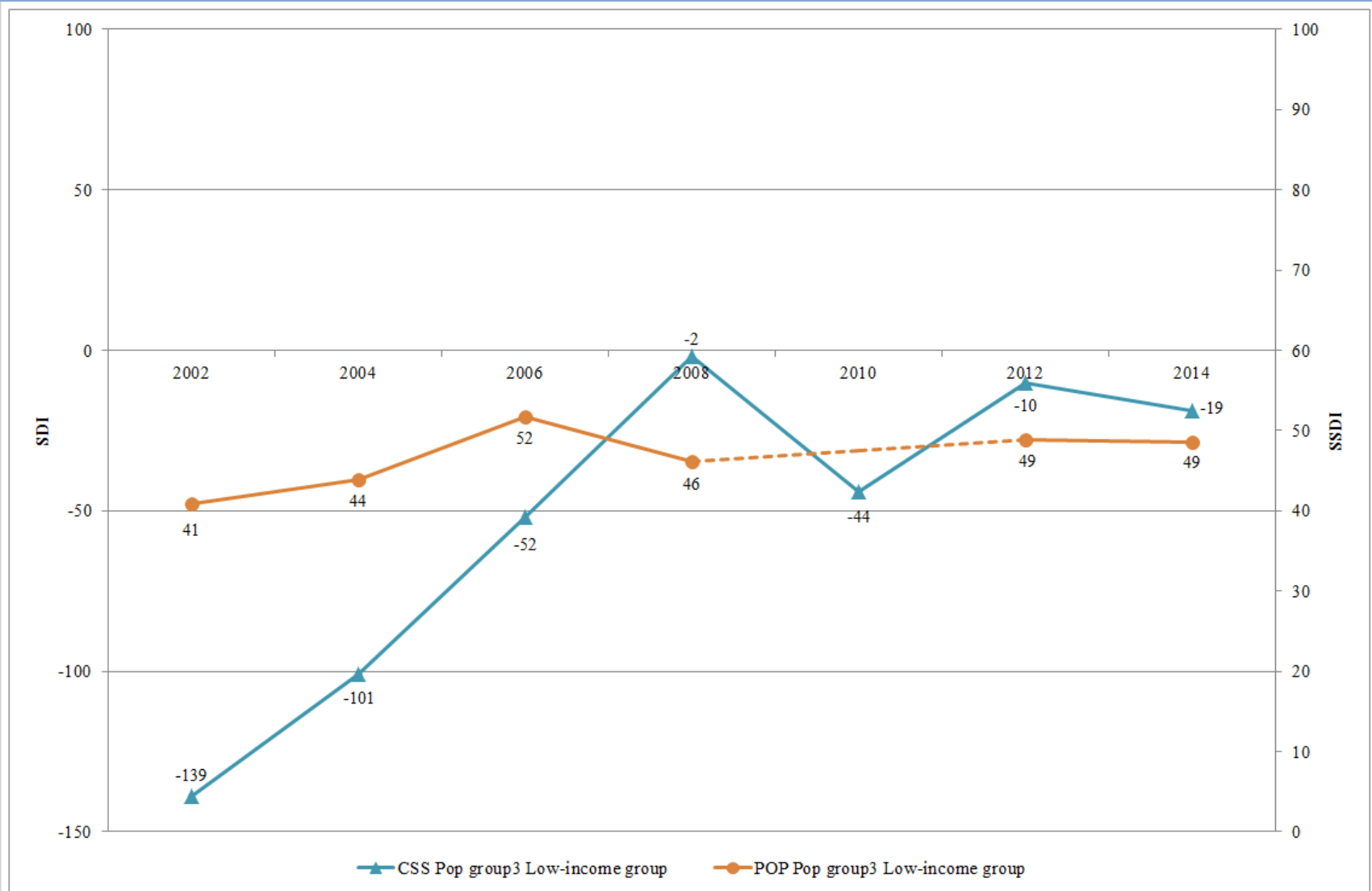
# Elderly SDI vs SSDI



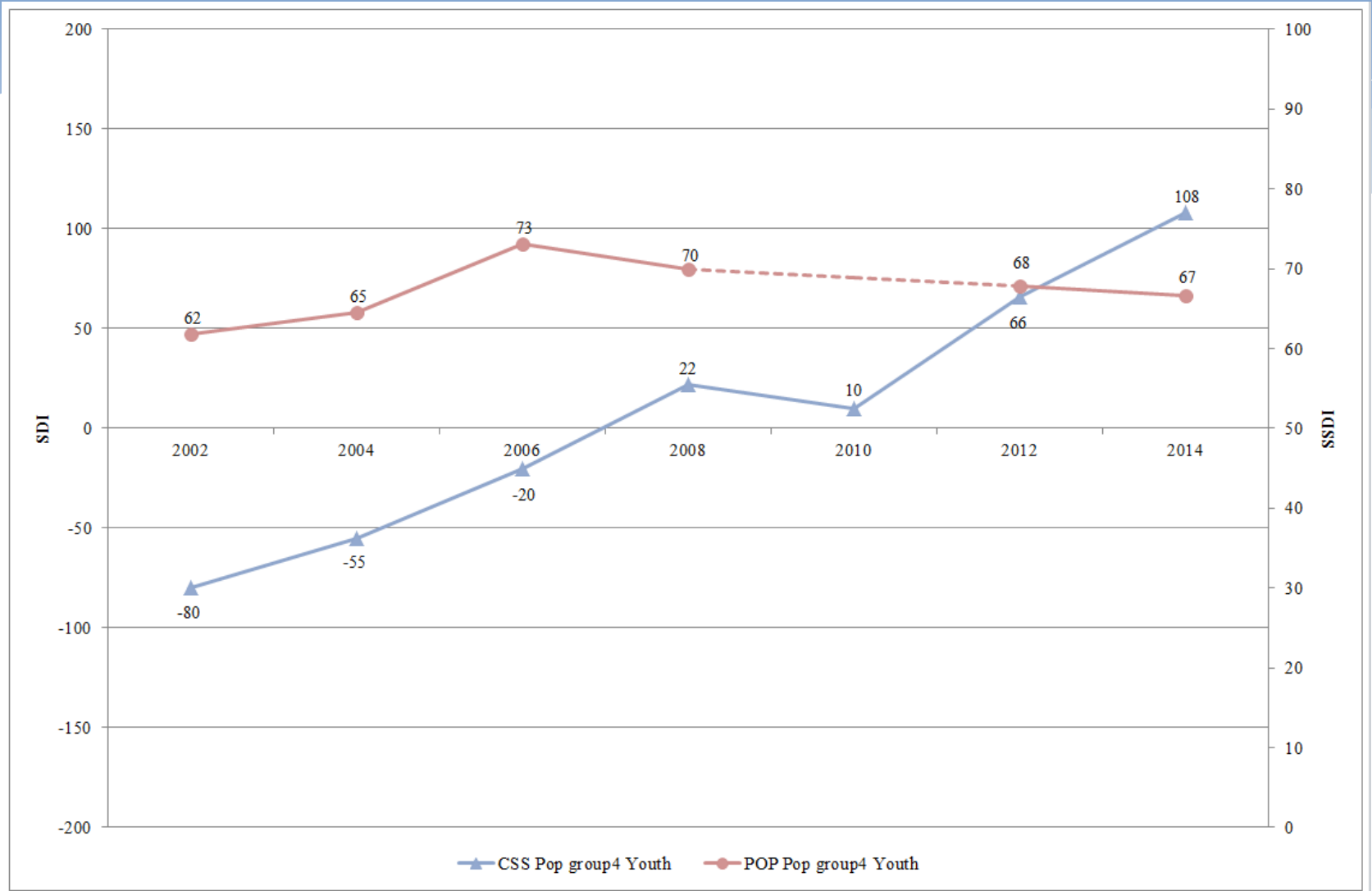
# Women SDI vs SSDI



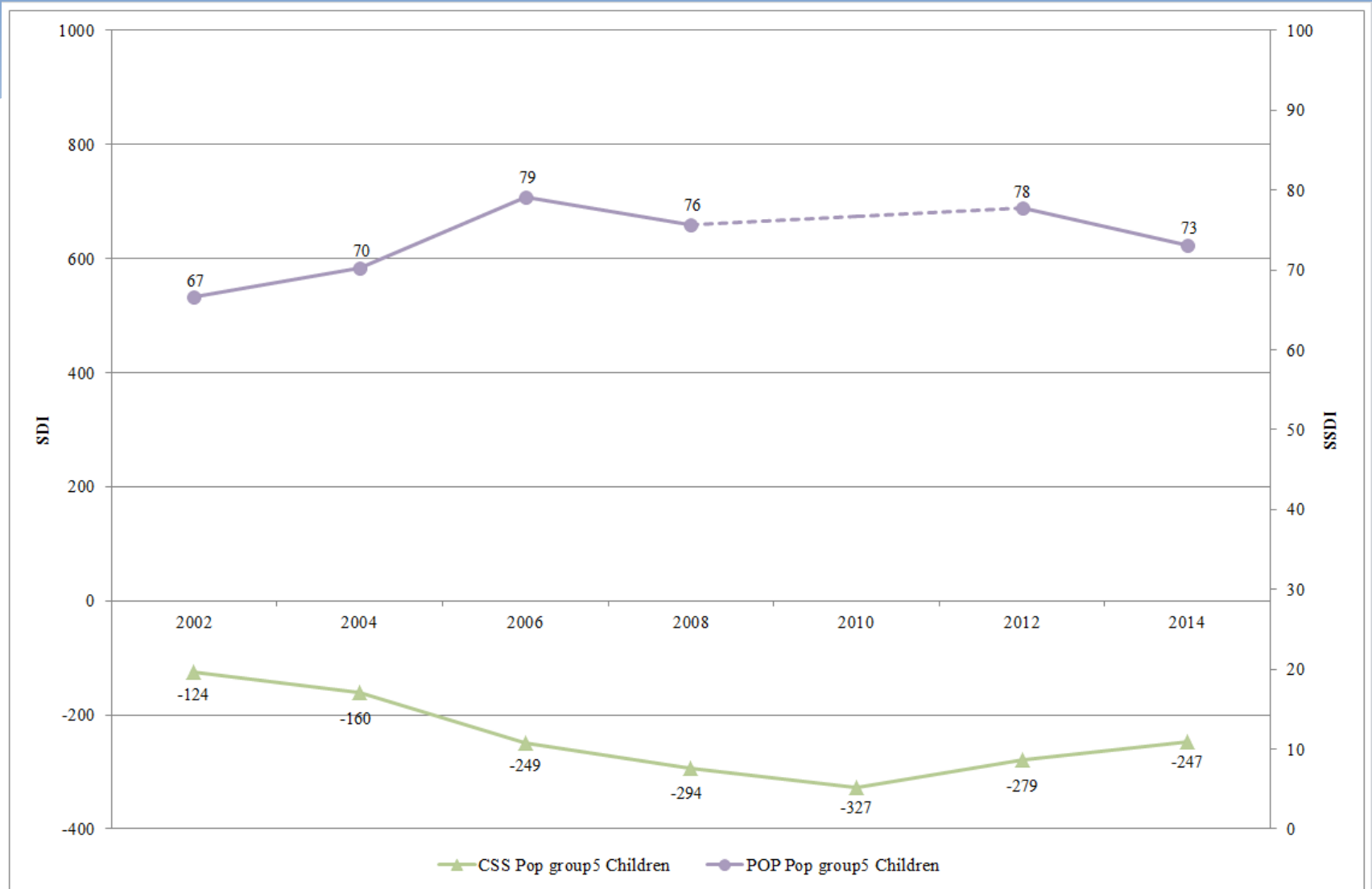
# Low-income Group SDI vs SSDI



# Youth SDI vs SSDI



# Children SDI vs SSDI



# **Concluding Remarks**

# SDI and Beyond...

---

- While SDI appears to be going up in almost all aspects across all population groups, it has not been matched by SSDI measurements.
- This indicates that objective “upward” development has not induced subjective satisfaction, probably due to people’s rising expectations.
- Releasing SDI and SSDI scores at the same time can give a more comprehensive picture of social development, especially when social policies need to be prioritized.
- In order to be more useful strategically, both SDI and SSDI findings should be released more frequently and in a timely manner. The current cycle of one SDI release every two years should be reviewed.
- Since SDI is meant to be good for international comparison, SSDI questions should also be incorporated into regular international survey vehicles, like QoL (Quality of Life) surveys, World Value Surveys, social barometer surveys, and the like.

# References and Contacts...

---

**HKCSS website:**

<http://www.socialindicators.org.hk/en/node/206>

**HKUPOP website:**

<https://www.hkupop.hku.hk/english/>

**Title and contacts of the presenting author:**

Robert Chung - [robert.chung@hkupop.hku.hk](mailto:robert.chung@hkupop.hku.hk)

Director of Public Opinion Programme (POP),

The University of Hong Kong (HKU);

President, Asia Chapter of the World Association for Public  
Opinion Research (WAPOR Asia).

(WAPOR is holding its 71st Annual Conference in Marrakesh during 27-30 June 2018.)