

# Government urged to review how it measures poverty

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The government has been urged to review how it measures poverty, after officials downplayed the administration's own statistics showing more people in the city living below the poverty line.

Figures released by the Commission on Poverty earlier this month showed that a total of 1.35 million people were living in poverty last year – a nine-year high.

But the government argued that the poverty line – calculated as half of the average monthly household income – did not take into account family assets, government subsidies, and various poverty alleviation measures.

Chou Kee-lee, chair professor of social policy at the Education University, said when the government first established the poverty line, it promised it would refine the measurement.

He said it was time for the government to use other indicators, such as households' expenditure patterns.

Meanwhile, Professor Wong Hung from the Chinese University's Department of Social Work, said the government's poverty alleviation measures hadn't helped.

He said the government has to tackle the working poor problem, and one thing the government can do is

to review the city's minimum wage every year – instead of every two years.

He also suggested the government set up a "living wage" for its outsourced workers.

Website: <http://gbcode.rthk.hk/TuniS/news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1429915-20181124.htm?spTabChangeable=0>