

# 眾說紛紜

*zhong4 shuo1 fen1 yun2*

As far as “livability” (宜居性) is concerned, Hong Kong is slipping fast, falling 15 places over the past 12 months to 46th among 140 cities.

A spokesman for the Economist Intelligence Unit that compiled the latest rating said it is “primarily a result of heightened fears of unrest following pro-democracy protests.”

But a student leader said people do not fear unrest, but the weaknesses that were exposed by the movement, such as a government that only works for Beijing - not the locals - and the erosion of Hong Kong’s core values. Others said unaffordable housing is the main complaint.

The situation can be called “眾說紛紜” (*zhong4 shuo1 fen1 yun2*).

“眾” (*zhong4*) means “a crowd,” “numerous,” “說” (*shuo1*) means “to say,” “to speak” and “紛紜” (*fen1 yun2*) is “profuse and confusing.” Literally, “眾說紛紜” (*zhong4 shuo1 fen1 yun2*) means

## Idiom by Lon Yan

“numerous sayings profuse and confusing.” That is basically what the idiom means, which is “opinions are widely divided,” or “views are diverse.”

The idiom “各執一詞” (*ge4 zhi2 yi4 ci2*) also describes diverse views on a subject, but connotes an unyielding attitude on the part of all parties. “眾說紛紜” just means many people are expressing different views, and does not necessarily refer to a head-on argument.

“眾說紛紜” (*zhong4 shuo1 fen1 yun2*) is often used with “莫衷一是” (*mo4 zhong1 yi2 shi4*). “眾說紛紜, 莫衷一是” means many different opinions have been expressed, and we do not know which one is right. It also means the lack of consensus (共識).

**Terms containing the character “說” (*shuo1*) include:**

胡說 (*hu2 shuo1*) - talk nonsense

小說 (*xiao3 shuo1*) - a novel

說明 (*shuo1 ming2*) - to explain

說明書 (*shuo1 ming2 shu1*) - note of instructions, a manual