

**For information**

**LegCo Panel on Manpower**

**Youth Employment and Training Programmes Offered by  
the Labour Department**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the progress of the youth employment and training programmes offered by the Labour Department (LD).

**Commitment of the Government**

2. The Administration is fully committed to taking all possible measures to address the problem of youth unemployment. To this end, the LD is implementing three employment and training programmes for young people with educational attainment below degree level, namely the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP), the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS) and the Youth Self-employment Support Scheme (YSSS). Together they provide a comprehensive range of options and services to cater for different employment and training needs of our young people of various age groups. The ultimate aim of these programmes is to better equip them in seeking employment.

3. The implementation of the YPTP and the YWETS has helped relieve youth unemployment as evidenced by the significant drop in the unemployment rate of young people between 15 and 19 from the peak of 36.1% with 26 400 unemployed in the third quarter of 2003 to 24.8% in March-May 2004 with 16 000 unemployed.

4. In 2004-5, we have allocated some \$310 million for these three programmes to provide a total of 23 000 training places for young people entering the labour market.

### **Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP)**

5. The objective of the YPTP is to equip young school leavers aged 15 – 19 with comprehensive pre-employment training which covers soft inter-personal skills and vocational training in a wide variety of fields. Various government departments, training bodies and voluntary agencies join hands to provide the following four modular training:

- (a) leadership, discipline and team building;
- (b) job-search and interpersonal skills;
- (c) elementary/ intermediate computer application; and
- (d) job-specific skills training.

These modules are designed to enhance the employability of youths and facilitate their smooth transition from school to the world of work.

6. YPTP was first launched in September 1999 and has been well received by the community. Some 50 000 youths have so far received training under the programme and close to 70% have found jobs after training. We will continue to run the Programme on a recurrent basis.

### **Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS)**

7. YWETS aims to provide employment in the form of on-the-job training for youths aged 15-24 with educational attainment below degree level. Participating employers will receive a monthly training subsidy of \$2,000 for each trainee engaged for 6 to 12 months, depending on the nature and duration of training. Case managers who are registered social workers will provide trainees with induction training and careers counselling of up to 50 hours. In addition, trainees are entitled to a subsidy of not more than \$4,000 to receive off-the-job vocational training.

8. YWETS was launched in July 2002 with a target of providing 10 000 employment and training places for youths within two years. As at 30 June 2004, more than 13 000 trainees have been successfully placed in training

vacancies under the scheme and another 8 400 trainees placed in other jobs in the open employment market through the assistance of case managers. This has far exceeded our original target of placing 10 000 youths in employment within two years. Given this success, the Administration has decided to extend the Scheme for another two years to place an additional 10 000 youths into jobs.

### **Youth Self-employment Support Scheme (YSSS)**

9. YSSS is a new pilot project launched in May 2004 to train and assist young people aged 18 to 24 with education attainment below degree level assessed to have motivation to become self-employed.

10. Under the YSSS, each trainee will receive training and a full range of support services and facilities for a full year from a non-government organisation commissioned by LD.

11. We have already approved 36 projects providing a total of about 1 500 training places in areas such as beauty therapy and personal care, computer assembling and fixing, webpage and graphic design, sports instruction, tour guides and docents, pets grooming and training, handicraft and accessories making, modelling and body movement performance, music and dance, and catering. As at 2 July, we have received 3 049 applications. Training has commenced earlier this month.

### **Employment Training Scheme for University Graduates**

12. Apart from the above three programmes, LD launched a Graduate Employment Training Scheme (GETS) in August last year to assist fresh university graduates of 2003 in finding their first job.

13. Under the GETS, employers who employ fresh university graduates and provide them with on-the-job training would be paid a monthly training allowance of \$2,000 for each trainee for a maximum period of six months. The seven universities funded by the University Grants Committee were responsible for placing their own graduates, while LD helped overseas and local graduates from outside the seven universities. The scheme was successfully concluded earlier this month. On completion of the scheme, 1

371 university graduates have been placed. Of these, 1 156 were local graduates. The remaining 215 overseas graduates were mainly from universities in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and USA.

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