

**Legislative Council Secretariat
Press Release**

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**Delegation of LegCo Subcommittee to Study the Subject
of Combating Poverty returns from the United Kingdom and Ireland**

A delegation of the LegCo Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty returned on 24 September 2005 after visiting the United Kingdom (UK) (London) and Ireland (Dublin) from 19 to 24 September 2005 to study anti-poverty measures in these countries.

The delegation was led by Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, JP, Chairman of the Subcommittee. Members of the delegation included Hon LEE Cheuk-yan, Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung and Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung.

During its stay in UK, the delegation held discussions with senior government officials from the Social Exclusion Unit of Office of Deputy Prime Minister, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Education and Skills and Low Pay Commission. Members also exchanged views with academics of the London School of Economics and Political Science on UK's anti-poverty measures. In addition, the delegation visited a local programme run by a community association, to obtain first-hand information on the operation of Sure Start in UK.

In Ireland, the delegation held discussions with senior government officials from National Economic and Social Forum, Combat Poverty Agency, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, FAS and Department of Social and Family Affairs. The delegation also met with the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Social and Family Affairs and the Minister for Social Affairs to understand more about their anti-poverty measures.

The delegation was of the view that the experience of the visit had provided useful reference for Hong Kong. The information and research studies on the policies on child poverty and work poverty were very enlightening. The delegation was impressed by the strong commitment of both UK and Irish governments to tackle the poverty problem. To develop, coordinate and steer the inclusion process, a Social Inclusion Unit was set up in UK while Ireland set up the Office of Social Inclusion. The delegation considered that the policy intervention approach, the poverty proofing analysis for new policy initiatives, and the consultative mechanism in formulating anti-poverty strategies/priorities were successful experience in these countries that Hong Kong could model upon.