

**Council for Sustainable Development's Report on the
Public Engagement Process on Population Policy:
Government Response**

The Council for Sustainable Development (the Council), established in March 2003, is a high-level advisory body responsible for, inter alia, advising the Government on the priority areas for promoting sustainable development and promoting public awareness and understanding of the principles of sustainable development. The Council conducted a public engagement process on population policy from June to October 2006. To ensure the fairness and transparency of the process, the Council engaged the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University to provide independent analysis and reporting services for the community views gathered during the engagement process.

2. In June 2007, the Council released its Report on the Public Engagement Process on Population Policy putting forward 24 recommendations for a sustainable population policy for Hong Kong. The Council's recommendations touched upon a wide-range of issues under the aegis of the population policy, which included but were not limited to the provision of more open space and recreational outlets as well as the development of culture and the arts to enhance the population's quality of life; financial incentives and other supportive measures to promote parenthood; continued enhancement of the current retraining programmes and relevant talent admission schemes to nurture a quality manpower for Hong Kong; and the promotion of healthy and active ageing.

3. Population policy is a highly complex and multi-faceted subject, which is continuously evolving. To develop a population policy that would fit Hong Kong's long-term social and economic development, complement family requirements and address the interests of different sectors in the community, a Task Force on Population Policy was set up in September 2002. In its report published in February 2003, the Task Force came up with 33 recommendations in respect of matters such as training for new arrivals, education and manpower development, attracting talents and quality migrants, foreign domestic helpers, and elderly and welfare policies. Many of the recommendations have been implemented or adopted as on-going measures by the relevant bureaux and departments. Given the Hong Kong Population Projections 2007-2036 published by the Census and Statistics Department in July 2007 and the Council's Report on the Public Engagement Process on Population Policy, we are examining whether there is a need for adjusting or updating our policy in the

light of the latest development. The Council's recommendations have been taken into account in our study, and we have also made reference to the report on the independent analysis conducted by the PPRI on the stakeholder views gathered during the public engagement process.

4. The Council's Report and PPRI's analysis serve as useful references for the development of a sustainable population policy in Hong Kong. A table detailing our response to the individual recommendations of the Council's Report is at Annex. The main points are summarized as follows.

Principles and Targets

5. We accept the principles and targets put forward by the Council for developing a sustainable population policy which are in line with the overall objective of Hong Kong's population policy, that is, to secure and nurture a quality population that supports and sustains Hong Kong's development as a knowledge-based economy and world-class city.

Quality of Life

6. We recognize the importance of work-life balance and family-friendly employment measures on the quality of our working environment and the well-being of our population. We agree with the principles put forward by the Council in relation to creating a better living environment and to enhancing the quality of life through the promotion of various family-friendly measures. For example, to improve our air quality, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Guangdong Government are jointly implementing a comprehensive Pearl River Delta Regional Air Quality Management Plan to improve the air quality of the entire region and Hong Kong. The target is to reduce the emission levels of four major air pollutants: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, respirable suspended particulates and volatile organic compounds by 40%, 20%, 55% and 55% respectively by 2010, from their 1997 levels. We will continue to undertake various programmes to deepen the work-life balance culture within the community and promote family-friendly employment measures (such as flexible work arrangements, family leave benefits and employee support scheme) among employers.

Declining Fertility Rate

7. A declining fertility rate can have a negative impact on our workforce. Whilst we respect that the decision on childbearing and child rearing is very much a personal decision of individual couples, we recognize the importance of fostering an environment that is conducive to childbearing and child rearing, so that couples who wish to raise children can have the necessary support to enable them to more fully appreciate the joys of being parents. In recognition of the rising cost of raising children and to alleviate the burden of parents in supporting children's maintenance, the child allowance under salaries tax for the third to ninth child has been increased from \$40,000 to \$50,000 per child with effect from 2007-08. An additional child allowance of \$50,000 in the year of assessment in which the child was born has also been introduced. Starting from the 2007-08 school year, the government has also provided direct fee subsidy for parents towards school fees for pre-primary education in eligible kindergartens. With effective from the 2008-09 school year, we will provide free senior secondary education for all students in public sector schools. We will also provide full subvention for full-time courses offered by the Vocational Training Council for Secondary 3 school leavers. We will continue to explore further means to foster an environment that is conducive to childbearing and child rearing. In this regard, we would strengthen the provision of more flexible childcare services and support services for working/needful families.

8. Furthermore, the Government fully recognizes that family harmony is the foundation of social harmony. We are committed to strengthening the function of families and adopting a holistic family approach in formulating social policies and planning social services to meet the needs of different gender and different age group within families. The Government has recently established a high-level Family Council. The Council will advise the Government on the formulation of policies and strategies for supporting and strengthening the family and on the development of related programmes/activities, and will monitor their implementation.

Manpower

9. We recognize the need to maximize the potential of our local workforce and to better prepare them to face the competition and challenges in the global market. To provide more young people, more unemployed people and local workers with training and retraining opportunities, the Government has relaxed the eligibility criteria of the Employees Retraining Scheme to cover young people aged 15-29 and people with education level at sub-degree or below with effect from 1 December 2007.

10. Global competition means that we have to compete for markets as well as talent. To maintain our competitive advantage in the global market, Hong Kong's future development requires more talent from the Mainland and overseas. We recognize the need to attract talent to Hong Kong to enhance our competitiveness and vibrancy. Many factors affect the attractiveness of Hong Kong to non-local talent, such as the business/job opportunities, tax regime, living costs and environment. We are mindful of enhancing Hong Kong's strength in these aspects. Furthermore, we will continue to open our door to non-local talent who are interested in migrating to Hong Kong. We are reviewing the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme in the light of public feedback and the experience gained since its launching in mid-2006, with a view to completing the review by early 2008 and putting in place the review recommendations by mid-2008. We are also working to step up the promotion of various talent admission schemes and to streamline their application procedures.

11. Hong Kong is not without its own talent, and we have been producing a lot of talented people who have excelled in their respective professions both locally and internationally. We recognize the need to nurture and retain local talent, and will examine ways to better nurture and retain our own talent. We also recognize the need to encourage Hong Kong people being educated overseas to return to live and work here, and our overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices will make use of various channels to encourage Hong Kong people being educated overseas to return to live and work in Hong Kong.

Ageing Population

12. We recognize that population ageing is a major challenge to Hong Kong, and that an ageing population will have a far-reaching impact on the economy, healthcare, welfare, retirement protection, education and public finance. We agree that the Government should promote healthy and active ageing, and to facilitate more diverse choice in post-retirement life so that healthy older persons would remain a resource to their families and the community. We also recognize the accessibility needs of an ageing population in a built environment and would endeavour to work with all relevant sectors to help meet the accessibility needs of an ageing population.

Way Forward

13. To optimize our demographic structure and attract talent, the Chief Executive announced in his 2007 Policy Address that the Administration would focus its efforts initially on the following four priority areas:

- (a) raising the quality of our education through developing our education on all fronts and taking forward education reform;
- (b) developing Hong Kong as a regional education hub to attract more quality non-local students to study in Hong Kong's higher education institutions, and retain them to stay and work in Hong Kong after graduation;
- (c) attracting talent to Hong Kong so as to maintain our competitiveness; and
- (d) adopting a full range of health care reform initiatives, including introducing supplementary financing, to ensure the sustainability of our health care system and promote the good health of the community.

Actions are being taken by the relevant bureaux and departments to implement the detailed measures under these four priority areas.

14. Apart from the four priority areas covered in the Policy Address, we have also identified other areas that require further study. These areas include encouraging parenthood, promoting active and healthy ageing, upgrading and nurturing our manpower resources, more efficient and effective delivery of our welfare services, and improving the quality of life.

15. To better plan and coordinate efforts on population policy with a view to achieving the optimal policy outcomes, a Steering Committee on Population Policy has been established with the Chief Secretary for Administration as chairman, and comprising the Financial Secretary, Secretary for Education, Secretary for Security, Secretary for Food and Health, Secretary for Home Affairs, Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury and directorate officers of the Departments concerned as core members. The Steering Committee will identify the main social and economic challenges to Hong Kong having regard to the changes to the local population profile in the next 30 years, and follow up on the areas that require further study. It will develop strategies and practical measures for pursuing the objectives of Hong Kong's population policy.

Conclusion

16. Population policy covers a wide range of issues, all of which have a direct impact on our lives. We will continue to work on developing a population policy which suits Hong Kong's long-term social and economic development, addresses the interests of different sectors in our community, and takes into account the needs of families. We will also endeavour to foster inter-departmental collaboration, and to induce and consolidate community support for creating an environment conducive to the vibrant development of Hong Kong's economy.

**Council for Sustainable Development's Report on the Public Engagement Process on Population Policy
Government Response on the Council's Recommendations**

	Principles and Targets	Council Recommendations	Response
(I)	<p>Quality of Life</p> <p>(1) Living Environment</p> <p>Principle 1: The Government and the community should join hands to improve air quality, increase the provision of open space and recreational outlets, implement more greening measures, enhance investment in culture and the arts, conserve tangible and intangible heritage and promote sustainable urban design, with a view to creating a better living environment.</p> <p><i>Target 1: To provide an enjoyable living environment for our population and, at the same time, help attract and retain talent.</i></p>	<p>1. To work on a comprehensive programme with a view to improving the air quality of Hong Kong.</p>	<p>The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Guangdong Government are jointly implementing a comprehensive Pearl River Delta (PRD) Regional Air Quality Management Plan to improve the air quality of the entire region and Hong Kong. The target is to reduce the emission levels of four major air pollutants: sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), respirable suspended particulates (RSP) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) by 40%, 20%, 55% and 55% respectively by 2010, from their 1997 levels.</p> <p>Programmes and initiatives being implemented and pursued include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) launch a comprehensive Air Quality Objectives review; (b) provide \$3.2 billion grant for replacing diesel vehicles; (c) reduce tax on environment friendly cars; (d) consult public on banning idling vehicles; (e) provide tax incentive to promote the early introduction of Euro V diesel; (f) require industrial and commercial activities to use ultra low sulphur diesel; (g) promote the use of biodiesel; (h) encourage ferries to use cleaner fuels; (i) require bus companies to procure environmentally friendly buses for new buses;

	Principles and Targets	Council Recommendations	Response
			<p>(j) implement new legislations to control VOC; (k) enact legislation on mandatory energy efficiency labels; and (l) helping industries in PRD to reduce pollution.</p> <p>To reduce emissions from power plants, the Government has –</p> <p>(a) forbidden any new coal-fired generation units; (b) required power plants to maximise the use of gas; (c) imposed emission caps on power companies to ensure the lowest possible emission of SO₂, NO_x and RSP; and (d) proposed to link the permitted rate of return of power companies to their achievement of the emission caps in their licences in the post-2008 Scheme of Control.</p> <p>Guangdong has reiterated their commitment to achieve the targets and has been implementing a series of measures to reduce emissions in the Mainland.</p> <p>We are confident about meeting the 2010 targets. Upon the introduction of the planned emission reduction initiatives in Guangdong, we will see the air quality gradually improving in the next few years.</p> <p>Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) will also continue to work jointly with franchised bus operators on the implementation of environmentally friendly measures.</p>

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		<p>2. To provide more open space and recreational outlets in all districts, and to implement more greening measures, for the enjoyment of our population.</p>	<p>Development Bureau's (DEVB) plans include: (a) bringing about noticeable improvements in urban greenery; (b) enhancing existing greened areas; and (c) maximizing greening opportunities during the planning and development of public works projects. The main initiatives being undertaken include compiling a territory-wide greening programme each year to facilitate planning and monitoring of related progress and outcome; pursuing the development and implementation of Greening Master Plans (GMPs) for urban areas by mid-2009 with plan to extend the development of GMPs to the New Territories; and incorporating roof-top or podium landscape designs in new government building projects wherever practicable.</p> <p>On top of a dozen projects now under construction, Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) plans to commence construction of about 45 major projects in the next four years from 2007-08 to 2010-11, involving a total cost of around \$12 billion, to provide more open space and recreational facilities and to implement more greening measures to improve the living environment for the enjoyment of the population in the various districts in Hong Kong.</p> <p>Drainage Services Department (DSD) will develop a strategy for the rehabilitation and improvement of Yuen Long Nullahs to enhance the local environment and the ecological value of the nullahs. A feasibility study is being conducted, and it is expected to be completed by September 2008.</p>

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		<p>3. To enhance investment in development of culture and the arts, particularly in making culture and the arts more accessible to the public, encouraging public participation in and promoting appreciation of the arts, as well as to improve measures on heritage conservation, with a view to strengthening the population's cultural identity and social cohesion.</p>	<p>The Government has been continuing with its investment in culture and the arts through the work of Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), LCSD, the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), and the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts.</p> <p>LCSD's vision and mission are to provide quality leisure and cultural services which are commensurate with Hong Kong's development as a world-class city and events capital. Its cultural strategies follow a dual approach: to enhance the cultural literacy of the public in the appreciation of culture and the arts, and to promote culture and the arts in the community. It also actively encourages community involvement and forges strategic partnership in the delivery of cultural services.</p> <p>The HKADC, a statutory body established in 1995 to promote and develop the arts, has a mandate, inter alia, to prepare and implement proposals for improving the knowledge, practice, appreciation, accessibility and informed criticism of the arts. Arts education and promotion is one of the key areas of the on-going work of the HKADC.</p> <p>The Government is planning to develop a world-class integrated arts and cultural district in West Kowloon (the West Kowloon Cultural District), which is effectively a major strategic investment in culture and the arts. We are planning to take a series of measures to strengthen cultural software, which includes mainly the provision of stronger support for arts groups, young and budding artists, arts education, enhancing manpower training for the arts, cultural exchange and co-operation, as well as improvement in management of existing arts and cultural venues.</p>

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		<p>4. To continue implementation of the guidelines on sustainable urban design and explore sustainable building features with a view to enhancing our living environment.</p>	<p>Buildings Department (BD) has commissioned a consultancy study to explore measures to promote building design features that support sustainable urban living space. The study will be completed by early 2008 and bureaux/departments concerned will carefully consider the recommendations of the study and the way forward.</p> <p>Planning Department will continue to apply sustainable urban design guidelines in the plan making and development control processes.</p> <p>DSD will implement sustainable greening programme for sewage treatment works and pumping stations to improve the living environment of nearby neighbourhoods.</p> <p>DEVB will continue to pursue the development and implementation of GMPs for urban areas by mid-2009 and plan to extend the development of GMPs to the New Territories.</p> <p>THB will continue to promote sustainable public housing developments by designing for green and healthy living, and ensuring effective and rational use of housing resources.</p>

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	<p>(2) Working Environment</p> <p>Principle 2: To enhance our quality of life, the Government should actively work with the business community and NGOs to study ways to promote various family-friendly measures, such as flexi-time arrangements, job sharing and home-based work.</p> <p><i>Target 2: To facilitate the employers' and the community's understanding of the importance of work-life balance for employees, and encourage employers to implement measures promoting a family-friendly work environment.</i></p>	<p>5. To organise promotional activities targeting employers and the public at large, with a view to deepening the work-life balance culture and promoting family-friendly employment measures conducive to family care.</p>	<p>Labour Department (LD) will organise various promotional activities to disseminate information on good family-friendly employment practices, including roving exhibitions at different locations throughout the territory to increase public awareness on the subject. It will also promote enlightened family-friendly employment practices among human resources practitioners through its network of 18 Human Resources Managers Clubs formed in various trades and industries.</p> <p>The Civil Service Training and Development Institute will continue to promote work-life balance among civil servants through activities such as seminars, workshop, etc. and providing on line resources and information inside the webpage of Cyber Learning Centre Plus.</p> <p>The Women's Commission co-organised a seminar on Family-friendly Employment Practices with the LD, Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management, Hong Kong People Management Association and Hong Kong Council of Social Service on 1 June 2007. The Commission has also issued a promotional leaflet on Family-friendly Employment Policies and Practices (FEPP) and widely distributed it to different sectors, including the business sector. It is planning to publish a booklet of good practices on FEPP in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.</p>

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(II)	<p>Declining Fertility Rate</p> <p>Principle 3: To promote parenthood, the Government should implement measures conducive to childbearing and child rearing. However, it should not interfere with the childbearing decision of individual couples.</p> <p><i>Target 3: To promote community-based childcare support and enhance developmental support for children.</i></p>	<p>6. To promote mutual childcare support among needy families through community networks.</p>	<p>The Government has all along encouraged local organisations to set up mutual help child care centres to provide support to families in need. In addition, there are regular services provided by child care centres and kindergarten-cum-child care centres throughout the territory. Some of these centres offer extended hours service to cater for the needs of parents who work shifts or longer hours. There is also an occasional child care service to meet the sudden and ad hoc child care needs of parents.</p> <p>The Government monitors the delivery of different forms of child care services closely and will enhance the provision of more flexible types of child care services to meet diversified child care needs. In particular, Social Welfare Department (SWD) will step up efforts in promoting more responsive neighbourhood mutual help child care services. In addition to providing financial incentives to mutual help child care centres to enhance their services in the evenings, at weekends and during holidays, SWD has also been subsidizing foster homes to provide non-residential day care service since October 2007. Within 2007-08, some small group homes will start offering day care places.</p> <p>The Government has also been encouraging neighbourhood support projects through the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF), and many projects have a child care element. Quite a number of them are showing initial success and we encourage the extension of similar models to other districts/areas.</p>

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		7. To provide financial incentives with a view to promoting parenthood.	<p>In recognition of the rising cost of raising children and to alleviate the burden of parents in supporting children's maintenance, with effect from 2007-08, the child allowance under salaries tax for the third to ninth child is increased from \$40,000 to \$50,000 per child. An additional child allowance of \$50,000 in the year of assessment in which the child was born has also been introduced in 2007-08.</p> <p>Starting from the 2007-08 school year, the Government has provided direct fee subsidy for parents towards school fees for pre-primary education in eligible kindergartens.</p>
		8. To enhance public understanding of the various education reform measures being implemented.	Education Bureau (EDB) will step up publicity on education policies and strengthen communication with parents.
	Principle 4: The Government should seek to reinforce the importance of healthy family function and promote family support, in order to enhance social harmony and build a more sustainable social network of care and support for the population.	9. To consider whether a Family Commission should be set up for more effective co-ordination of policies and initiatives relating to family support.	A high-level Family Council has been set up to advise the Government on the formulation of policies and strategies for supporting and strengthening the family and on the development of related programmes/activities, and will monitor their implementation. It will advise the Government on the integration of family policies and related programmes across different bureaux/departments for different age and gender sectors, including the work of the Elderly Commission, the Women's Commission and the Commission on Youth, to ensure effective coordination.

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	<i>Target 4: To promote family values and support in the community.</i>	10. To enhance the promotion of mutual support among different generations.	<p>Mutual support among different generations is promoted through programmes organized by Integrated Family Service Centres and District Elderly Community Centres / Neighbourhood Elderly Centres. Local organizations are also involved through district networks of the SWD.</p> <p>The CIIF also promotes across-generational support among families through community participation and mobilizing social capital. We have seen quite a number of such successful projects and are seeking to extend such models to other districts/areas.</p> <p>In addition, a Family Support Programme has been launched since early 2007 with an aim to, through the development of community support network, identify and motivate at-risk families to receive support services early.</p> <p>On family education, the curriculum reform will continue to strengthen the development of positive family values, responsibility and commitment through relevant existing curricula, moral and civic education at all levels of schooling, as well as Liberal Studies in the new senior secondary education to be implemented in 2009.</p>

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			<p>HAB works closely with the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education in the promotion of civic education amongst the general public. One of our major foci in recent years was to help promote a harmonious community through a wide range of activities including sponsoring NGOs to organise projects on the theme of "Harmonious Community". The objectives of the theme include developing a sense of mutual care, trust and support among members of the public; encouraging them to actively participate in voluntary work to serve the community, and to care for the needs of the disadvantaged and to help them become self-reliant.</p> <p>The Government has implemented a set of enhanced public housing arrangements to promote mutual family support and care for the elderly.</p>
		<p>11. To review the public housing policy, including the public housing allocation system, to support and promote the care of extended family members.</p>	<p>Housing Department (HD) has already implemented a series of enhanced housing arrangements for fostering harmonious families in public housing with a view to promoting mutual family support and care for the elderly. The new initiatives include enhanced housing arrangements on the addition policy, transfer scheme, amalgamation of tenancies for tenants as well as enhancement on the existing priority schemes for application of public rental housing.</p>

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(III)	<p>Manpower</p> <p>Principle 5: To maximize the potential of our local workforce and to better prepare them to face challenges in the global market, the Government should enhance its efforts in the training, retraining and continuing education of our local workforce to meet the manpower needs of the day.</p>	<p>12. To enhance current retraining programmes for our workforce and expand the target groups of these programmes with respect to age and educational attainment.</p>	<p>With effect from 1 December 2007, Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) has relaxed the eligibility criteria of the Employees Retraining Scheme (ERS) (previously for people aged 30 or above and those with education level at junior secondary or below) to cover young people aged 15 to 29 and people with education level at sub-degree or below. New arrivals who are eligible for the ERS will also benefit from the relaxation.</p> <p>In tandem, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) is conducting a strategic review on its future role and responsibilities. More concrete plans on how the ERB would expand the scope and enhance the quality of its training and retraining services, including the optimum use of the Employees Retraining Levy, will be drawn up under the strategic review.</p>

Principles and Targets	Council Recommendations	Response
<p><i>Target 5: To provide enhanced employee training, retraining and continuing education programmes that are wider in scope and coverage, to enable more members of the population to benefit from these programmes and upgrade themselves.</i></p>	<p>13. To continue to implement the qualifications framework (QF) that clearly defines the standards for different qualifications, ensures their quality and provides articulation ladders among different levels of qualifications.</p>	<p>EDB will assist more industries to set up Industry Training Advisory Committees, which are responsible for developing Specifications of Competency Standards (SCS) for the relevant industries. More SCS-based training programmes will also be introduced.</p> <p>Upon implementation of the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) will be responsible for ensuring the quality of qualifications under the QF. The HKCAAVQ will also maintain the Qualifications Register, which is a web-based database on qualifications, learning programmes and providers recognized under the QF.</p>
	<p>14. To relax the eligibility criteria and scope of the Continuing Education Fund (CEF).</p>	<p>A comprehensive review of the scope and operation of the CEF was completed in May 2007. We have obtained the support of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Manpower Panel for a series of improvement measures, to be implemented in phases. Under the first phase, we have, with effect from 1 September 2007, lifted the upper age limit of eligible applicants of the CEF from 60 to 65 to enable more learners to enjoy the financial subsidy of the CEF. Other enhancement measures will follow.</p>

Principles and Targets	Council Recommendations	Response
<p>Principle 6: The Government should continue to implement suitable schemes and keep them under review, with a view to admitting suitable talent to Hong Kong to enhance our society's competitiveness and vibrancy.</p> <p><i>Target 6: To ensure that suitable talent admission schemes are in place to meet the prevalent needs of Hong Kong.</i></p>	<p>15. To review the relevant talent admission schemes from time to time, and to further step up their promotion.</p>	<p>The Government adopts a liberal policy for the admission of talents and professionals, and reviews the relevant admission schemes from time to time. We will repackage the schemes in 2008 so that the focus will be on the people (talents and professionals) rather than the schemes, and explore means to widen their nets.</p> <p>The Government has all along the years endeavoured to work together with other relevant parties (e.g. the Trade Development Council and chambers of commerce) in promoting the schemes through various means, such as conducting press interviews; giving presentations to external organisations; and participating in international exhibitions.</p> <p>The Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) in overseas have also been actively promoting the talent admission schemes when meeting with interlocutors, in media sessions and in speaking engagements. In addition, publicity leaflets on the schemes are displayed/distributed in their offices and in suitable activities and events. Information on the schemes is also included in the ETOs' newsletters and/or websites. Some ETOs also organise career talks and career video conferences in universities to attract talents to Hong Kong. The promotion is an on-going effort.</p>

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		16. To review and, where necessary, enhance the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS) in light of the experience gained since its launch in 2006.	We have started a review of the QMAS, in the light of the experience gained since its launching in mid-2006 and public feedback. We aim to complete the review in early 2008.
(IV)	Ageing Population Principle 7: The Government should implement measures to promote healthy and active ageing, and to accommodate individual choices in post-retirement life. <i>Target 7: To facilitate more diverse choice in post-retirement life, including volunteer work, exploration of new hobbies, spending more time with family, continuing education, and part-time or freelance work.</i>	17. To further promote the Senior Citizen Card Scheme among public and private sectors, with a view to introducing additional benefits to facilitate healthy and active ageing of the elderly. 18. To work with community organisations to continue to promote community health, with an emphasis on healthy ageing.	We have worked to leverage on the image of Senior Citizen Card and gave special recognition to those supportive of the Scheme through the programmes of the Active Ageing Evening held on 28 July 2007. The Visiting Health Teams and the Elderly Health Centres of the Department of Health will continue to collaborate with the elderly service providers, including the elderly centres, and various community organizations to promote health education to elders in the community.

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		19. To plan for hospital and healthcare services necessary for an ageing population.	Food and Health Bureau is planning to further consult the public on proposals for healthcare reform including financing arrangements in early 2008.
		20. To promote active ageing and elder learning.	LWB will continue to promote active ageing to encourage elders to lead a fruitful life. 32 Elder Academies covering 18 districts will start operation in succession. We have launched the TV “Golden Age Series V” and are producing two Announcements of Public Interest to promote active ageing.
		21. To encourage more elderly to participate in volunteer work.	HAB will continue to provide support to organisations which promote volunteerism and provide volunteering opportunities and relevant support for volunteers, including the elderly ones. In recent years, HAB and the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education through the Community Participation Scheme have been providing sponsorship to community organisation to organise projects on the theme of "Harmonious Community". One of the major objectives is to encourage members of the public including the elderly to actively participate in voluntary work.

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		22. To promote to employers the notion of active ageing such as engaging the retired elderly in volunteer, part-time and freelance work.	LD will help disseminate educational materials to employers to promote the notion of active ageing such as engaging the retired elderly in voluntary work.
		23. To examine the adequacy, sustainability and choice of retirement protection schemes.	Central Policy Unit has commissioned two studies, one on the financial disposition and retirement planning of current and future generations of retired persons, and the other on the sustainability of the “three pillars” (first pillar: Comprehensive Social Security Assistance and Old Age Allowance; second pillar: Mandatory Provident Fund and other occupational retirement schemes; third pillar: voluntary savings and investment) for old age financial protection. These studies are expected to be completed by end 2007. The Government will consider the findings of the study before deciding on the way forward.

	Principles and Targets	Council Recommendations	Response
	<p>Principle 8: The Government should work with all relevant sectors to help meet the accessibility needs of an ageing population in a built environment.</p> <p><i>Target 8: To improve accessibility of buildings and facilities for the elderly in the community</i></p>	<p>24. To facilitate barrier-free access and universal design of buildings and facilities for an ageing population.</p>	<p>HD has adopted Universal Design in designing new estates including the layout, interior arrangement of the flats, building provisions, estate facilities and other factors so that when residents have aged or developed physical disabilities, they would be able to move around in their existing homes and in the familiar surroundings.</p> <p>The review on the “Design Manual – Barrier Free Access 1997” has been completed by the then Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (now LWB) and BD. Building design guidelines for the elderly are also included in the Design Manual. LWB, together with BD, will continue to co-ordinate the necessary legislative amendments to relevant building regulations, in order to bring the new design requirements of barrier free access and facilities for the disabled into effect as soon as possible in 2008. Secretary for Development, being the authority to make regulations under the Buildings Ordinance, will exercise her power to assist in the formalities of the legislative amendment exercise, including issuance of drafting instructions to Department of Justice and tabling of subsidiary legislation at LegCo.</p>