

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)1232/14-15

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

Paper for the House Committee meeting on 3 July 2015

**Proposed duty visit to Germany and Switzerland
by the Panel on Education**

Purpose

This paper seeks the permission of the House Committee for the Panel on Education ("the Panel") to conduct a duty visit to Germany and Switzerland.

Background

2. In the 2014 Policy Address, the Chief Executive highlighted that mainstream education is not a straightjacket that fits all young people as everyone has his or her own interests and abilities. The Government should re-establish the positioning of vocational education in our education system and guide the younger generation in choosing their career. In this regard, the Administration has stated that it is committed to providing quality flexible and diversified study pathways with multiple entry and exit points for secondary school leavers. Vocational education plays a pivotal role in broadening the learning opportunities for school leavers and in-service personnel as well as nurturing the requisite human capital to support Hong Kong's development.

3. The Panel is aware of the entrenched bias among some people in the community in favour of traditional academic pursuits. Members consider that the Administration, in collaboration with other stakeholders, should actively promote vocational education as an articulation option for school leavers. Meanwhile, the Panel notes that in some overseas jurisdictions, vocational education and training ("VET") is widely accepted as an attractive pathway for young people in addition to general academic education. Available information indicates that the VET systems in Germany and Switzerland are highly regarded and have drawn global attention. The relatively low unemployment rate among young people and the dynamic and market-responsive workforce in these two countries are often attributed to their VET which enjoys a high take-up rate by young people.

4. At the meeting of the Panel held on 11 May 2015, members noted and raised no objection to the Deputy Chairman's suggestion to conduct a duty visit to Germany and Switzerland to study their VET systems. Subsequently, the Panel also took note of an information note on the VET system in Germany and Switzerland respectively, as well as the proposed arrangements of the visit as set out in LC Paper No. CB(4)1059/14-15(01).

Objectives of the proposed duty visit

5. The principal objectives of the proposed duty visit are –

- (a) to acquire first-hand understanding on the policy aspects and implementation experience (including resources allocation) of vocational education in Germany and Switzerland;
- (b) to study whether and how VET has served as an effective articulation pathway for young people; and
- (c) to study the respective roles of and collaboration between the Government, academic sector, business sector and other stakeholders in the provision of VET.

6. The delegation would also like to take the opportunity to learn about the implementation of kindergarten education and integrated education in the two countries. This request has been conveyed to the Consulates-General of the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland in Hong Kong for arrangements, where practicable.

The tentative visit programme

7. The proposed visit will take place from 20 to 26 September 2015. The tentative visit programme is at **Appendix I**. The detailed programme is being drawn up with the assistance of the Consulates-General of the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland in Hong Kong. The Panel will also seek the assistance of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Berlin where necessary.

Participants of the visit

8. Both Panel and non-Panel members have been invited to indicate whether they would join the visit. A total of nine Members have indicated interest in participating in the visit. A list of the participants is at **Appendix II**.

Funding arrangements

9. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit ("ODV") account of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organized by committees of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in one term in excess of the approved allocation has to be paid by the Member personally. If by the end of a term there are unused balances in Members' ODV accounts, the funds available will be used to pay those Members who have expended more than their allocation, in proportion to their excess qualifying expenditure.

10. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure (including airfare, hotel accommodation, meals, in-town travelling and sundry expenses) to be incurred by each participating Member for the proposed duty visit is about \$29,000 (for economy class air passage) and \$54,000 (for business class air passage). A breakdown of the estimated expenditure is in **Appendix III**. The actual expenditure will be adjusted in the light of the final visit programme, and the airfare and hotel room rates at the time of confirmation.

Advice sought

11. Rule 22(v) of the House Rules provides that should any Panel consider it necessary to undertake any activities outside Hong Kong under the name of the Panel of the Council, the prior permission of the House Committee shall be sought.

12. The House Committee's permission is sought for the Panel to conduct the overseas duty visit as proposed in the foregoing paragraphs.

Panel on Education

Overseas duty visit to Germany and Switzerland

Proposed timing 20 September (Sunday) to 26 September (Saturday) 2015**Tentative programme**

(As at 24 June 2015)

Date	Place	Programme
20 September 2015 (Sun) (evening)	On flight	→ Hong Kong to Frankfurt
21 September 2015 (Mon)	Germany	Arrival in early morning
22 September 2015 (Tue)	Germany	<i>Detailed programme to be drawn up*</i>
23 September 2015 (Wed)	Germany	
24 September 2015 (Thur)	Switzerland	<i>Detailed programme to be drawn up, but will include*</i> - - State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation - Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training - Parliamentary Committee for Science, Education and Culture of Switzerland - relevant training institutions and enterprises
25 September 2015 (Fri)	Switzerland	
		→ Zurich to Hong Kong in late evening
26 September 2015 (Sat) (afternoon)	On flight	Arrival at Hong Kong

* The detailed programme is being drawn up with the assistance of the Consulates-General of the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland in Hong Kong and the relevant authorities in Germany and Switzerland.

Panel on Education

Proposed overseas duty visit

List of participants

Panel Members

Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

Non-Panel Members

Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
2 July 2015

Panel on Education
Proposed overseas duty visit
Tentative estimate of expenditure

Proposed timing : 20 to 26 September 2015 (including flight time)

Routing of visit : Hong Kong / Frankfurt / Zurich / Hong Kong

Breakdown of expenses

Items	Estimated expenses (per person) HK\$	
	<u>Economy Class</u>	<u>Business Class</u>
1. Return air passage Hong Kong / Frankfurt / Zurich / Hong Kong	12,900 ^(Note 1)	37,000 ^(Note 1)
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>12,900</i>	<i>37,000</i>
2. Hotel accommodation (60% of the subsistence allowance ^(Note 2)) Frankfurt (2 nights) Zurich (2 nights)	3,540 4,360	
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>7,900</i>	
3. Meals and sundries (35% of the subsistence allowance ^(Notes 2 and 3))	<i>5,880</i>	
4. Travel insurance	<i>250</i>	
5. Contingency (5% of items 1 to 4)	<i>1,350</i>	<i>2,560</i>
TOTAL (Items 1 to 5) ^(Note 4):	28,280	53,590

NOTE:

1. Airfare quotation obtained in late June 2015. Price inclusive of tax and surcharges.

2. Subsistence allowance for the cities:

Frankfurt	- EUR 346
Zurich	- CHF 440

3. As in-town transport will be provided by the Secretariat, the subsistence allowance payable is reduced by 5%. Other expenditure including hospitality, interpretation services and souvenirs will be charged against other votes of the Secretariat.

4. The actual expenditure will be adjusted in the light of the final visit programme, and the airfare and hotel room rates at the time of confirmation. The exchange rates as at June 2015 are:

Euro 1 = HK\$8.52
CHF 1 = HK\$8.25

Council Business Division 4
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