

立法會 *Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(4)1202/17-18

Ref: CB(4)/SC/PL(17-18)

Paper for the House Committee meeting on 8 June 2018

Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee

Proposed parliamentary visit to the United Kingdom and Scottish Parliaments

Purpose

This paper invites the House Committee to consider the recommendations of the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee ("the Subcommittee") on organizing a visit by a Legislative Council ("LegCo") delegation to the United Kingdom ("UK") in early September 2018, the size of LegCo delegations on visits organized by the Subcommittee, and the mechanism for selecting Members to join such delegations in the current term.

Background

2. Formed under the House Committee, the Subcommittee coordinates all parliamentary liaison activities between LegCo and other parliamentary organizations outside Hong Kong. In developing good relationship with parliamentary organizations, the Subcommittee members would, on a regular basis, receive parliamentarians and delegations visiting Hong Kong. The Subcommittee also makes recommendation to the House Committee on sending delegations of LegCo Members on visits outside Hong Kong and organizes such visits.

3. Except for the Third LegCo term¹, the Subcommittee had organized visits by LegCo delegations to legislatures in other jurisdictions. These visits were useful in establishing and reinforcing links with other legislatures, fostering better mutual understanding, keeping overseas Members of Parliaments ("MPs") as well as community and business leaders abreast of the latest developments in Hong Kong, and sustaining their interest in Hong Kong affairs. These visits also provided valuable experience for LegCo Members to gain first-hand information on the political and electoral systems of other countries, as well as the functions and operation of overseas legislatures. Overseas MPs who received the LegCo delegations during the visits sometimes would return visits to LegCo, thereby further strengthen mutual ties and understanding.

4. Past visits organized by the Subcommittee are summarized as follows:

Term	Places visited	Date
First (1998–2000)	Japan	23 to 27 February 1999
	Europe (London, Strasbourg and Berlin)	13 to 20 February 2000
Second (2000–2004)	Canada (Ottawa and Toronto)	16 to 24 February 2002
	Singapore and Thailand (Bangkok)	12 to 18 February 2004
Fourth (2008–2012)	Central Europe (Prague, Zagreb, Rijeka and Budapest)	13 to 23 September 2009
Fifth (2012–2016)	Northern Europe (Helsinki, Oslo and Copenhagen)	14 to 21 September 2014
	Germany (Berlin and Bremen) ²	1 to 6 March 2015

1 PLS decided at the beginning of the Third term that it would not organize visits to other legislatures unless invited by the legislatures concerned. Since no invitation had been received, the Subcommittee had not organized any visit subsequently during the term.

2 The Subcommittee was invited by the German Government to visit the Deutsche Bundestag, the Federal Parliament of Germany. The German Government covered all travel expenses, accommodation, transportation, travel insurance, meals and cultural programmes for the delegation of this visit.

Proposed visit to the United Kingdom

5. The Subcommittee has discussed the parliamentary visits to be organized in the current term and considered that parliamentary visits should continue to be organized in this term of LegCo so as to enable LegCo to establish and maintain closer relationship with an overseas parliament.

6. The Subcommittee has examined options of visiting parliaments of Norway, UK, South Korea and Russia. Having made references to the information prepared by the Research Office of the Secretariat, the Subcommittee recommends that a visit should be made to UK and Scotland in mid-September 2018 with the following objectives:

- (a) to gain useful knowledge and insights on how these legislatures deal with various procedural issues that arise frequently during meetings;
- (b) to learn how the Scottish Parliament maintained relationship with its sovereign state while preserving autonomy under devolution, and related issues including the scope of devolution, the share of power and responsibilities between the UK and Scottish Parliaments, and the mechanism of dispute resolution on constitutional and sovereignty matters; and
- (c) to gain first-hand information on issues relating to UK's exit from the European Union ("Brexit").

7. The Subcommittee recommends that the visit should last for nine days. Initial contact with the UK and Scottish Parliaments suggests that the proposed visit may be scheduled for 8 to 16 September 2018 so that the delegation could return before the commencement of the new LegCo session. Subject to the House Committee's approval of the size of the delegation and the mechanism for selecting Members to join the delegation (paragraphs 10 to 15 below), applications from Members to join the visit will be invited. The programme of the visit will be drawn up in consultation with the delegation upon its formation. The assistance of the British Consulate-General Hong Kong and Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in London will also be enlisted in making arrangements for the visit.

Financial arrangements

8. The financial provision for visits to other legislatures organized by the Subcommittee is separate from the Overseas Duty Visit accounts provided to individual Members in each term. The approved budget for such visits for the Sixth LegCo term is \$2 million. This covers Members' travelling expenses, accommodation costs, subsistence allowances, travel insurance and other ancillary expenses such as interpretation, souvenirs and official entertainment.

9. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure to be incurred by each participating Member for the proposed visit is about \$36,000 (for economy class air passage), or about \$64,000 (for business class air passage). The actual expenditure will vary subject to the final visit programme, and the airfare and hotel room rates at the time of confirmation.

Proposed size of delegations and selection mechanism

Size of delegations

10. According to the decision made by The Legislative Council Commission ("the Commission") in 1997, Members going on an overseas duty visit in their capacity as LegCo delegates should be fully sponsored. For the purpose of budget control, the number of delegates sponsored for each overseas trip should, under normal circumstances, be limited to no more than six for a parliamentary visit, and Members not fully-sponsored may join the delegation on a self-financing basis.

11. In the Second LegCo, the House Committee endorsed the Subcommittee's recommendations at its meeting held on 19 January 2001, that a LegCo delegation should comprise eight fully-sponsored Members and two self-financing Members. This was to ensure that the delegation could be representative of the groupings in LegCo and of a manageable size. The recommendations were approved by the Commission on 20 February 2001. In the Fourth LegCo, the House Committee endorsed the Subcommittee's recommendation that the number of self-financing Members should be increased to not more than seven, so that the delegation could be representative of the groupings in LegCo and interested Members not selected for a delegation could participate in the visit on a self-financing basis.

12. At its meeting held on 30 May 2014, the House Committee endorsed the Subcommittee's recommendations that the number of fully-sponsored Members and self-financing Members on a parliamentary visit for the Fifth LegCo be set at nine and seven, respectively, taking into account the increase of the number of Members from 60 to 70. The House Committee's recommendations was subsequently approved by the Commission at its meeting held on 10 June 2014.

13. For the current term, as the number of Members is the same as the Fifth LegCo, the Subcommittee recommends that the size of the delegation for a visit to be organized by the Subcommittee should remain as nine fully-sponsored Members and seven self-financing Members. Participating Members should attend the entire visit.

Mechanism for selecting Members for visits

14. Similar approaches were adopted for allocating the places of the LegCo delegation in previous terms of LegCo. To ensure that the composition of the delegation is balanced and broadly representative of the membership of the Council, Members were divided into certain number of groups having regard to Members' affiliation and the number of Members in each group. The fully-sponsored places were allocated among the groups on a pro-rata basis. Each group of Members would decide its own way to nominate the participating Member(s).

15. The Subcommittee consulted all Members in May 2018 on the proposed mechanism for allocating places to the LegCo delegation, which is modeled on the one used for past visits. In the light of Members' comments received, the Subcommittee recommends that the following mechanism should be adopted:

- (a) For the purpose of deciding how the nine fully-sponsored places in the LegCo delegation should be allocated, Members are divided into seven groups, having regard to the affiliations of Members of the current term and the number of Members in each group. The grouping is presented in the **Appendix**.
- (b) The nine fully-sponsored places should then be allocated among the seven groups of Members on a pro-rata basis. Each group of Members should decide its own way to nominate the participating Member(s). Any unallocated place(s) in any group may be filled by other Members by drawing lots.

- (c) Either the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman of the Subcommittee should be a member of the delegation. If both the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman are interested in joining the delegation, the one who is not nominated to take the fully-sponsored place in their group may join the group on a self-financing basis.
- (d) To facilitate their work in the Subcommittee, members of the Subcommittee should have priority in joining the delegation on a self-financing basis. If there are more than seven Subcommittee members who wish to join, allocation should be made by drawing lots. If there are remaining places, allocation to non-Subcommittee members should also be determined by drawing lots.
- (e) The additional expenses incurred due to the addition of the self-financing Members, other than those that can be attributed to them individually (e.g. air passage, airport tax, hotel accommodation, travel insurance and visa application fee), should be sponsored.

Advice sought

16. The House Committee is invited to endorse the proposed visit in paragraphs 6 to 7, the size of LegCo delegation on visits organized by the Subcommittee in paragraph 13, and the mechanism for selecting Members to join such delegation in the current term in paragraph 15.

**Proposed mechanism for the allocation of fully sponsored places for
a delegation on overseas duty visit organized by
the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee of
the Sixth Legislative Council**

<u>Group</u>	<u>Members' grouping</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>No. of place(s) to be allocated</u>
A	Chairman / Deputy Chairman of Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee	1. Hon IP Kin-yuen# 2. Hon Kenneth LEUNG#	1
B	Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong	1. Hon WONG Ting-kwong 2. Hon Starry LEE Wai-king 3. Hon CHAN Hak-kan 4. Hon Steven HO Chun-yin 5. Hon CHAN Han-pan 6. Hon LEUNG Che-cheung 7. Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT# 8. Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan 9. Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding# 10. Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing 11. Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan 12. Hon LAU Kwok-fan 13. Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun	2
	Liberal Party	14. Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan 15. Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming 16. Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan# 17. Hon SHIU Ka-fai	
C	Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong (excluding Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen)	1. Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him 2. Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung 3. Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun 4. Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung 5. Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok 6. Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung	2

<u>Group</u>	<u>Members' grouping</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>No. of place(s) to be allocated</u>
	The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions	7. Hon WONG Kwok-kin 8. Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen# 9. Hon KWOK Wai-keung 10. Hon HO Kai-ming 11. Hon LUK Chung-hung	
	New People's Party	12. Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye 13. Hon YUNG Hoi-yan	
	Political affiliation undeclared / Independents	14. Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun# 15. Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka 16. Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu	
D	Roundtable	1. Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun	1
	The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions	2. Hon POON Siu-ping	
	New Century Forum	3. Hon MA Fung-kwok	
	Political affiliation undeclared / Independents	4. Hon CHAN Kin-por 5. Hon YIU Si-wing 6. Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong# 7. Hon CHAN Chun-ying 8. Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen	
E	Democratic Party	1. Hon James TO Kun-sun# 2. Hon WU Chi-wai 3. Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan# 4. Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin 5. Hon LAM Cheuk-ting 6. Hon HUI Chi-fung 7. Hon KWONG Chun-yu	1
	Labour Party	8. Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung#	

<u>Group</u>	<u>Members' grouping</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>No. of place(s) to be allocated</u>
F	Civic Party	1. Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki 2. Hon Dennis KWOK Wing-hang 3. Hon Alvin YEUNG# 4. Hon Tanya CHAN 5. Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho	1
	Civic Passion	6. Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai	
	Political affiliation undeclared/ Independent	7. Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long 8. Dr Hon Pierre CHAN	
G	The Professional Commons	1. Hon Charles Peter MOK	1
	Neighbourhood and Workers' Service Centre	2. Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung	
	Hong Kong First	3. Hon Claudia MO	
	People Power	4. Hon CHAN Chi-chuen	
	Neo Democrats	5. Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai	
	Political affiliation undeclared/ Independent	6. Hon CHU Hoi-dick 7. Hon SHIU Ka-chun 8. Hon AU Nok-hin#	

Notes

- # Member of the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee
- Each group of Members should decide its own way to nominate the participating Member(s).
 - Unallocated place(s) in any group may be filled by other Members by drawing lots.