

Legislative Council

Agenda

Wednesday 16 February at 11:00 am,
Thursday 17 February and Friday 18 February 2022 at 9:00 am on both days
(Remote meeting by video conferencing)

I. Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

6 items of subsidiary legislation and 3 other papers to be laid on the Table of the Council set out in **Appendix 1**

II. Written Questions

Members to ask 22 questions for written replies

Contents of the questions, Members to ask such questions and the public officers to reply set out in **Appendix 2**

III. Member's Motion

Motion debate on the 2021 Policy Address

Mover : Hon Starry LEE

Wording of the motion : **Appendix 3**

Public officers to attend and the debate arrangements set out in LC Paper No. **CB(3) 84/2022** issued on 14 February 2022

Clerk to the Legislative Council

**Council meeting on 16, 17 and 18 February 2022
(Remote meeting by video conferencing)**

Laying of Papers on the Table of the Council

Subsidiary legislation	Legal Notice No.
1. <u>Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) (Amendment) Regulation 2022</u>	12 of 2022
2. <u>Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) (Amendment) Regulation 2022</u>	13 of 2022
3. <u>Prevention and Control of Disease (Vaccine Pass) Regulation</u>	14 of 2022
4. <u>Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) (Amendment) Regulation 2022</u>	15 of 2022
5. <u>Import and Export (General) Regulations (Amendment of Schedule 7) Notice 2022</u>	16 of 2022
6. <u>Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Civic Centres) (Amendment of Thirteenth Schedule) Order 2022</u>	17 of 2022
 Other papers	
7. <u>Education Scholarships Fund Trustee's Report on the Administration of the Fund and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2021 (including Report of the Director of Audit)</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Education)	
8. <u>Occupational Safety and Health Council Annual Report 2020-2021 (including Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report)</u> (to be presented by Secretary for Labour and Welfare)	
9. <u>Report No. 1/2022 of the House Committee on Consideration of Subsidiary Legislation and Other Instruments</u> (to be presented by Hon Starry LEE, Chairman of the House Committee)	

**22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting on 16, 17 and 18 February 2022
(Remote meeting by video conferencing)**

		Subject matters	Public officers to reply
Questions for written replies			
1	Hon LAM So-wai	<u>Operation of concrete batching plants</u>	Secretary for Development
2	Hon Stanley NG	<u>Applications for Home Ownership Scheme</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
3	Hon Edmund WONG	<u>Mandatory Provident Fund investments in bonds of specified Mainland authorities</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
4	Hon CHU Kwok-keung	<u>Manpower and remuneration of middle and senior-level staff in primary schools</u>	Secretary for Education
5	Hon Joephy CHAN	<u>Compulsory testing at cordoned-off buildings</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
6	Dr Hon TAN Yueheng	<u>Promoting the development of the innovation and technology industries</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
7	Hon Jimmy NG	<u>Distance Business Programme</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
8	Hon Benson LUK	<u>Facilitating exchange activities on the Mainland for Hong Kong young people amid the epidemic</u>	Secretary for Home Affairs
9	Hon Jeffrey LAM	<u>The 100% Personal Loan Guarantee Scheme</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
10	Hon CHAN Kin-por	<u>Trading of digital assets</u>	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
11	Hon CHAN Pui-leung	<u>Measures to reduce traffic accidents involving taxis</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
12	Hon Doreen KONG	<u>Expediting the processes for public housing production</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
13	Hon Carmen KAN	<u>Development planning for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area</u>	Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
14	Hon SHIU Ka-fai	<u>Supporting wholesale and retail sectors in developing e-commerce</u>	Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
15	Hon CHAN Han-pan	<u>Hillside escalator links and elevator systems</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
16	Hon CHAN Hok-fung	<u>Introducing progressive payment mortgage into subsidized sale flat schemes</u>	Secretary for Transport and Housing
17	Hon LAM Chun-sing	<u>Promoting the popularization of electric vehicles</u>	Secretary for the Environment
18	Prof Hon SUN Dong	<u>Developing Hong Kong into an international innovation and technology hub</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
19	Hon CHAU Siu-chung	<u>Supply of innovation and technology talents</u>	Secretary for Innovation and Technology
20	Hon Kenneth LEUNG	<u>Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme</u>	Secretary for Labour and Welfare
21	Prof Hon LAU Chi-pang	<u>Facilitating students' understanding of the Motherland</u>	Secretary for Education
22	Hon CHAN Hak-kan	<u>Land Sharing Pilot Scheme</u>	Secretary for Development

Question 1
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Operation of concrete batching plants

Hon LAM So-wai to ask:

In reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council at the Council meeting on 16 June last year, the Secretary for Development indicated that the Government was studying the provision of a site in Tseung Kwan O (“TKO”) Area 137 for reprovisioning a concrete batching plant (“CBP”) in the Yau Tong Industrial Area, and it anticipated that the CBP would be put into operation in 2024 at the earliest. I have learnt that residents of the district have rallied to object to the plan and submitted to the Government a letter jointly signed by over 10 000 residents to express their opposition. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the details and progress of the aforesaid study;
- (2) given that Area 137 has been planned as a new community primarily for housing purpose, and a large number of residents in the TKO district are concerned about the impacts of the aforesaid CBP on the environment, traffic safety and air quality of the district, whether the Development Bureau will scale up the aforesaid study to make long-term planning for the siting of the aforesaid CBP, including relocating it to a rock cavern; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that law enforcement officers of the Environmental Protection Department had repeatedly found malpractices of a CBP located at No. 22 Tung Yuen Street, Yau Tong, the Department issued on 29 April 2021 a notice to reject the CBP’s application for renewal of a Specified Process Licence (“SPL”), but it is learnt that the CBP is still in operation after lodging an appeal, of the outcome of the appeal case; whether the Government will amend the legislation and step up law enforcement efforts targeting cases of violations of SPL terms, so as to improve the licensing regime concerned; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 2
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Applications for Home Ownership Scheme

Hon Stanley NG to ask:

It is learnt that flats put up for sale by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”) under the Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) have always received overwhelming responses from members of the public. Some eligible applicants who have applied over the years but have been unsuccessful feel hopeless about home ownership. Regarding applications for HOS, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following information in respect of each of the HOS sale exercises launched by HA in the past five years: (i) the number of flats put up for sale, (ii) the number of applications received, (iii) the number of oversubscriptions, (iv) the number of applications invited for flat selection, and (v) the categories of applicants (in the order of flat selection priority);
- (2) of the respective numbers of applicants in each of the HOS sale exercises launched by HA in 2019 and 2020 who were first-time applicants, second-time applicants, and those having applied for three times or more (set out in a table); and
- (3) whether it will review the balloting mechanism for HOS applications, so as to increase the chance of success in a ballot for those applicants who have been unsuccessful for a number of times (especially “other nuclear family applicants”); if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 3
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Mandatory Provident Fund investments in bonds of
specified Mainland authorities

Hon Edmund WONG to ask:

The Government plans to amend the current legislation governing Mandatory Provident Fund (“MPF”) investments to include the Central People’s Government and three Mainland policy banks (i.e. the China Development Bank, the Export-Import Bank of China and the Agricultural Development Bank of China) (“specified Mainland authorities”) in the scope of “exempt authority”, so as to facilitate MPF investments in bonds issued by these authorities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the number of individual bonds issued by each of these specified Mainland authorities in each of the past three years; of the shortest and longest tenors as well as the ranges of yields of such bonds;
- (2) given that under the current restrictions, MPF investments in bonds issued by specified Mainland authorities only account for 0.27% of MPF’s total asset value, whether the Government has estimated the increase in the percentage of investments in bonds issued by the specified Mainland authorities within the first year after making amendments to the relevant legislation; and
- (3) as the Government has proposed that upon inclusion of the specified Mainland authorities in the scope of exempt authority, each MPF fund may invest up to 30% of its funds in these authorities’ bonds of the same issue and may also choose to invest all of its funds in such bonds of at least six different issues, of the justifications for such proposed caps?

Question 4
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Manpower and remuneration of
middle and senior-level staff in primary schools

Hon CHU Kwok-keung to ask:

In March 2019, the Task Force on Professional Development of Teachers put forward to the Government 18 recommendations to tie in with the establishment and promotion of a Professional Ladder for Teachers, among which the recommendation on “rationalizing the salaries of school heads and deputy heads and improving the manpower at the middle management level in public sector primary schools” (“the recommendation”) has not yet been implemented. Some primary school teachers have relayed that since the implementation of an all-graduate teaching force, the number of middle-level posts in primary schools has not increased correspondingly, resulting in a shortage of administrative and management staff. Many teachers even need to wear multiple hats, which affects the quality of teaching. On the other hand, the current salary structure for senior and middle ranks in primary schools is unreasonable. For example, (i) the starting pay point for deputy heads of primary schools whose workload is heavy is Master Pay Scale (“MPS”) Point 34, which is merely above MPS Points 30 to 33 for Primary School Masters/Mistresses; (ii) some of the pay points for Headmasters/Headmistresses I and Headmasters/Headmistresses II (“HMIIIs”) of primary schools overlap, and the starting pay point for HMIIIs of primary schools is MPS Point 35, which is only at roughly the same level as the starting pay point (i.e. Point 34) for Senior Graduate Masters/Mistresses of secondary schools; and (iii) heads of primary schools operating 11 or fewer classes are merely at the rank of Senior Primary School Master/Mistress. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that since the cancellation of the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee (“FC”) in the last term of this Council, the Education Bureau (“EDB”) has not re-submitted to FC the funding application relating to the recommendation, whether EDB will submit the relevant funding application to FC of the current term; and
- (2) for primary schools currently operating a relatively small number of classes, whether EDB will consider upgrading the rank of their heads to HMII, so as to retain talents?

Question 5
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Compulsory testing at cordoned-off buildings

Hon Joephy CHAN to ask:

At the end of last month, the Government exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make “restriction-testing declarations” and issue compulsory testing notices, under which persons within three buildings at Kwai Chung Estate with an outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic (i.e. Yat Kwai House, Ying Kwai House and Ha Kwai House) were required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. During the operations, some residents expressed dissatisfaction with the chaotic arrangements of the authorities (particularly about the testing and the environmental hygiene of the buildings). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the total number of staff involved in the aforesaid operations, with a breakdown by government departments, relevant authorities and outsourced service contractors;
- (2) of the daily number of (i) compulsory tests conducted for the residents by the authorities (among them, the number of door-to-door tests conducted for residents with special needs), and (ii) staff deployed to undertake the relevant work, during the aforesaid operations;
- (3) whether the authorities regularly removed household waste from each floor of the buildings, as well as cleaned and disinfected the entire buildings, during the aforesaid operations; if so, of the details (including the frequency and manpower);
- (4) of the total number of requests for assistance made by residents which were received by the authorities (including the one-stop service hotline 1823) during the aforesaid operations, and the follow-up actions taken; and
- (5) whether it will learn from the experience gained in the aforesaid operations, and designate a government department to take charge of the coordination, set up hotlines for affected residents, and procure the required services and supplies in advance, so as to avoid the recurrence of the chaotic situation; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 6
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Promoting the development of
the innovation and technology industries

Dr Hon TAN Yueheng to ask:

The “Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People’s Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035” proposes to adhere to innovation-driven development and enhance the technological innovation capability of enterprises. There are views that financial capital will play an important role in the relevant processes. On the other hand, the Chief Executive mentioned in the 2021 Policy Address that the Government’s Innovation and Technology Venture Fund (“ITVF”) co-invests with venture capital funds on a matching basis in local innovation and technology (“I&T”) start-ups. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has reviewed ITVF in terms of its effectiveness, investment amount, etc.;
- (2) whether it has plans to set up more master funds and guidance funds to promote the development of I&T industrialization; and
- (3) given that Hong Kong already has a better legislative framework and an initial public offering exit channel, whether the Government has plans to formulate policies to promote the development of private equity investment industry so as to assist I&T enterprises in financing, thereby developing Hong Kong into an I&T hub?

Question 7
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Distance Business Programme

Hon Jimmy NG to ask:

A person-in-charge of an enterprise has relayed to me that he has received earlier on a subsidy under the Distance Business Programme (“the Programme”) for adopting information technology (“IT”) solutions in business operation, and he has selected a service provider from the IT service providers (“service providers”) reference list published by the Hong Kong Productivity Council (“HKPC”), which is the secretariat of the Programme. However, he suffered monetary loss as a result of the failure on the part of the service provider concerned to provide IT service for distance business in accordance with the contract. He subsequently lodged complaints with the Innovation and Technology Commission and HKPC separately but the complaints were not entertained. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the total number of complaints received by the authorities against service providers since the launch of the Programme, with a breakdown by type of complaints;
- (2) whether the authorities have conducted investigations regarding the complaints mentioned in (1); if so, of the details, including the staffing establishment involved in the investigations; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether, since the launch of the Programme, any service providers have been called to account or removed from the aforesaid reference list due to poor performance; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether, under the circumstances that a service provider has failed to provide service in accordance with the contract, the authorities will consider not recovering from the enterprise concerned the subsidy disbursed, so as to reduce the loss it suffered; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 8
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Facilitating exchange activities on the Mainland
for Hong Kong young people amid the epidemic

Hon Benson LUK to ask:

There are views that allowing young people to go to the Mainland for exchanges and internships is an effective way to keep them well informed of national affairs and national policies. However, in view of the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, a number of schemes for young people to go to the Mainland for exchanges and internships have been suspended since 2020. Among them, the number of participants for the “Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland” dropped significantly from 18 000 in 2019 to 60 in 2020, and the “Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland”, which had 3 700 participants in 2019, was even suspended in 2020. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will allocate additional resources to the Civil Service College so that it can organize courses on national affairs jointly with youth organizations to enable young people to grasp the pulse of national development; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it has plans, upon the easing of the epidemic situation, to include the various schemes for young people to go to the Mainland for exchanges and internships in the quota on quarantine-free travel, so as to resume young people’s exchange and internship activities on the Mainland as soon as possible; and
- (3) whether it has plans to facilitate exchanges between young people in Hong Kong and on the Mainland amid the epidemic; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 9
(For written reply)

(Translation)

The 100% Personal Loan Guarantee Scheme

Hon Jeffrey LAM to ask:

The Government announced in September last year that the application deadline for the 100% Personal Loan Guarantee Scheme (“PLGS”) would be extended to the end of April this year. Regarding PLGS, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of applications received, approved, rejected and being processed by the participating lending institutions (“PLIs”) since PLGS was launched; the total amount of loans granted to date; in respect of those rejected applications, the trades and industries in which the applicants were engaged and the reasons for the rejection;
- (2) whether it knows the average and longest time taken by PLIs for processing the applications mentioned in (1); whether the Government will urge PLIs to further expedite the time for processing applications, so as to provide timely relief for borrowers; and
- (3) whether it will further extend the application deadline for PLGS, as well as increase the maximum loan amount and extend the maximum repayment period?

Question 10
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Trading of digital assets

Hon CHAN Kin-por to ask:

It is learnt that in recent years, digital assets such as non-fungible tokens (“NFTs”) and virtual currencies have attracted the attention of quite a number of Hong Kong investors. This type of assets can be traded on quite a number of overseas online platforms. Owing to such assets’ extremely volatile prices and their characteristics of anonymity and decentralization, the trading of such assets is susceptible to being used by lawbreakers in the absence of regulation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has grasped the current situation of NFTs trading in Hong Kong; if so, whether it will publish the relevant information; if it will not publish such information, of the reasons for that;
- (2) of the trend in the past three years in respect of those crimes involving NFTs and virtual currencies;
- (3) whether it has plans to regulate the trading of NFTs to prevent such trading from becoming tools for money laundering and terrorist financing; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it will actively take measures to raise public vigilance against the risks involved in trading digital assets such as NFTs and virtual currencies; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 11
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Measures to reduce traffic accidents involving taxis

Hon CHAN Pui-leung to ask:

Regarding measures to reduce traffic accidents involving taxis, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of (a) the number of traffic accidents involving taxis and (b) the proportion of such number in the overall number of traffic accidents, in each of the past five years, with a breakdown by (i) the vehicle age group to which the taxis concerned belonged (i.e. below 10 years, 10 to 19 years, 20 years or above), and (ii) the age group to which the taxi drivers concerned belonged (i.e. aged below 30, 30 to 39, 40 to 49, 50 to 59, 60 to 69, 70 to 79, 80 or above);
- (2) whether it will consider providing impetus for the taxi trade to establish a central database on rentee taxi drivers for easy reference by taxi owners/companies/administrators when they rent taxis to drivers, so as to reduce the potential risks associated with drivers;
- (3) as it is learnt that some middle-aged and elderly taxi drivers have not undergone physical examinations regularly because of the high costs, whether the Government will introduce a mechanism to require taxi drivers to undergo regular health examinations, and provide related subsidies to elderly drivers;
- (4) given that for the purpose of enhancing driving safety and service quality for taxis, starting from 1 October 2020, persons applying for a full driving licence to drive a taxi are all required to have completed the specified pre-service course and obtained the certificate, whether it knows the cumulative numbers of persons who have enrolled in the course and passed the relevant assessment so far, as well as the effectiveness of the course; and
- (5) whether it will consider requiring all taxis in Hong Kong to be installed with driver assistance systems such as the Collision Prevention Assist and the Automatic Emergency Braking System?

Question 12
(For written reply)

Expediting the processes for public housing production

Hon Doreen KONG to ask:

In reply to a question raised by a Member of this Council at the Council meeting on 2 June 2021, the Government indicated that it would take at least six years to transform a piece of “primitive land” (i.e. land without concrete development plan) into a “spade-ready site” (i.e. land ready for commencement of works), as this involved processes for technical feasibility study, rezoning, seeking funding approval, land resumption, site formation and infrastructural works, etc. (“pre-flat-construction processes”). The subsequent building of flats (“flat construction processes”) would take another four to five years. In respect of expediting these two categories of processes for public housing production, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will consider appointing a senior government official or establishing a steering committee to oversee those pre-flat-construction processes that involve various government departments and statutory bodies, so as to shorten the six-year period needed;
- (2) given that currently the Transport and Housing Bureau (“THB”) and the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”) have intertwined leaderships, with the Housing Department (“HD”) acting as HA’s executive arm, and that HA has its own committees to plan and monitor public housing projects (“PHPs”), whether the Government will, in its proposal of reorganizing the government structure for consideration by the next-term Government (“reorganization proposal”), include:
 - (i) reviewing HA’s organization structure and its relationships with THB and HD,
 - (ii) appointing a senior government official or establishing a steering committee to oversee all the flat construction processes for PHPs, and
 - (iii) appointing a dedicated managing director for HA by drawing reference from the practice of the Urban Renewal Authority, so as to shorten the four to five-year period needed for flat construction processes; and
- (3) whether it will, in its reorganization proposal, include appointing a project manager to coordinate the aforesaid two categories of processes for PHPs from inception to completion, so as to expedite the processes for public housing production?

Question 13
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Development planning for the
Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

Hon Carmen KAN to ask:

The Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Outline Development Plan”) covers the cooperation of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao in different aspects, and requires the governments of the three places to strengthen their policy coordination, regulatory interface and connectivity of systems, with a view to achieving coordinated development. Regarding the development planning for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Greater Bay Area”), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether the current-term Government has, in respect of the contents of the Outline Development Plan, signed any agreements or memorandums of understanding (“MoU”) on cooperation arrangements with the authorities of Guangdong and Macao; if so, of the contents of such agreements and MoU, including the implementation timetables and performance indicators;
- (2) of the approach adopted by the Commissioner for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“C(GBA)”) for working with various policy bureaux in areas such as financial and economic development, commercial and industrial development, people’s livelihood as well as innovation and technology; and the collaborative initiatives to be taken forward in the Greater Bay Area on which C(GBA) is holding discussions with various policy bureaux;
- (3) of the areas set out in the Outline Development Plan for which the current-term Government (i) has and (ii) has not completed developing interface and connectivity with the Mainland’s relevant regulations and systems so far;
- (4) whether the relevant policy bureaux have set up dedicated teams responsible for reviewing the development of the Greater Bay Area; if so, of the list of officials; if not, whether they will set up the relevant teams and compile a list of such teams to enhance their communication with stakeholders; and

- (5) given that the Mainland authorities have, in respect of the latest development of the Greater Bay Area, rolled out quite a number of special measures concerning Hong Kong (e.g. the Plan for Comprehensive Deepening Reform and Opening up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone promulgated in September last year and the “Opinions on Certain Special Measures for Relaxing Control over Market Access adopted by Shenzhen in Building a Pioneering Demonstration Zone for Socialism with Chinese Characteristics” published on 24 January this year), of the channels through which the Government seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of the relevant details; how it will make arrangements for policy bureaux to develop connectivity with the Mainland authorities concerned on the new measures?

Question 14
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Supporting wholesale and retail sectors in developing e-commerce

Hon SHIU Ka-fai to ask:

Some merchants of the wholesale and retail (“W&R”) sectors have relayed that, in response to online shopping becoming increasingly common due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic, they are planning to develop local and cross-border e-commerce, including expanding their businesses into markets outside Hong Kong such as the Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“Greater Bay Area”). They hope that the Government will provide support in this regard. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the new wave of the epidemic has dealt a blow to merchants of the W&R sectors, whether the Government will allocate \$2.5 billion or more for re-launching the Distance Business Programme which was well received by enterprises, so as to support more merchants of the W&R sectors in developing local and cross-border e-commerce; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) in respect of each of the three funds/programmes, namely (i) the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales, (ii) the SME Export Marketing Fund and (iii) the Technology Voucher Programme, for supporting enterprises in developing markets outside Hong Kong and making use of technologies such as e-commerce, of the respective numbers of applications from merchants of the W&R sectors which were received and approved by the authorities so far, the respective percentages of such numbers in the relevant total numbers of applications, as well as the amount of funding involved in such approved applications, and the percentage of such amount in the total amount of funding approved;
- (3) whether it has assessed the effects that the four aforesaid programmes/funds may have on the development of local and cross-border e-commerce by merchants of the W&R sectors; and
- (4) whether it will roll out other measures to support merchants of the W&R sectors in developing markets in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area through cross-border e-commerce?

Question 15
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Hillside escalator links and elevator systems

Hon CHAN Han-pan to ask:

In 2009, the Government established a mechanism for assessing proposals on hillside escalator links and elevator systems (“HEL”) (“the assessment mechanism”). Upon completion of initial screening and scoring for the proposals received then, the Government decided to take forward 18 of such proposals. In 2017, the Government announced that a consultancy study would be commenced to review and improve the assessment mechanism, and by then the Government received a total of 114 HEL proposals. The Government subsequently indicated that, of the 114 proposals that had been received, around 20 proposals would be shortlisted under the revised assessment mechanism as the first batch of projects for implementation by the first quarter of 2020. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) among all the 114 proposals, of the respective projects the implementation of which has been advanced and postponed (and the reasons for that), and those the implementation of which has remained unchanged, under the revised assessment mechanism (set out in a table);
- (2) among all the 114 proposals, of the respective current numbers of projects which have been completed and are in the pipeline (and the current progress, expected completion dates and estimated expenditures of such projects) (set out in a table);
- (3) of the time normally taken from assessment to completion of an HEL project; whether any mechanism is in place to streamline procedure and reduce construction time; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) given that the Government currently needs to seek funding approval from this Council for taking forward some of the HEL projects, whether the Government will consider making reference to the practice of setting up a dedicated fund for the Universal Accessibility Programme in order to expedite the vetting and approval procedure; if so, of the details and timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 16
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Introducing progressive payment mortgage into
subsidized sale flat schemes

Hon CHAN Hok-fung to ask:

It is reported that the Chief Executive has earlier indicated that efforts would be made to explore the introduction of progressive payment mortgage (“PPM”) into the sale of subsidized sale flats (“SSFs”), whereby the down payment and mortgage repayments payable by the flat buyer during the first ten years after the purchase would be settled using only half of the property price as the calculation basis. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has assessed the additional demand for SSFs that PPM may bring about in the coming five years; of the difference between such additional demand together with the public housing demand originally projected in the Long Term Housing Strategy (“LTHS”) and the actual number of public housing flats to be supplied as estimated in LTHS;
- (2) given that Home Ownership Scheme (“HOS”) flat owners bear less financial burden than private flat owners as HOS flats are currently sold at about 50% discount of the market value with mortgage guarantee offered by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”), whether the Government will consider extending the mortgage guarantee period of HOS (to 360 months, for example) instead of introducing PPM;
- (3) whether it has assessed the impacts on HA’s finance that will be brought about by the introduction of PPM and if HA’s cash flow will be affected, thereby creating pressure on the implementation of the housing production programmes set out in LTHS;
- (4) whether it has assessed if PPM will have any implication on the integrity of the ownership of SSFs; and
- (5) whether it has consulted the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited and the banking sector on PPM; if so, of the outcomes?

Question 17
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Promoting the popularization of electric vehicles

Hon LAM Chun-sing to ask:

On promoting the popularization of electric vehicles (“EVs”), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the development of the EV industry involves talents in different areas, whether it has any comprehensive plans for nurturing EV talents, such as setting training targets for EV talents to be reached by 2035, strengthening the cooperation between the industry and vocational education institutions to attract young people to join the industry, as well as facilitating the occupation switching of fuel-propelled vehicle workers; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) of the number of newly registered EVs in Hong Kong in each of the past three years; whether it will provide economic incentives to boost the popularization rate of EVs, such as reviewing the eligibility criteria for and the first registration tax (“FRT”) concessions offered by the “One-for-One Replacement” Scheme (which provides higher FRT concessions to car owners for replacing their old private cars with EVs), subsidizing the installation of EV chargers in private housing estates, as well as encouraging private developers to provide additional EV chargers and necessary ancillary facilities in their development projects; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the respective numbers of parking spaces equipped with standard, medium and quick EV chargers among the existing 30 000-odd parking spaces at the carparks under the Hong Kong Housing Authority (“HA”); as it is learnt that drivers have strong demands for parking spaces equipped with quick EV chargers, whether HA will increase the number of such parking spaces expeditiously; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) as the Chief Executive has indicated in the 2021 Policy Address that the Government will introduce the hydrogen fuel cell battery electric buses for use in Hong Kong, whether it will study in collaboration with stakeholders the supply and safety issues of hydrogen fuel, and enact the relevant legislation; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 18
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Developing Hong Kong into
an international innovation and technology hub

Prof Hon SUN Dong to ask:

The State President indicated clear support for Hong Kong's development into an international innovation and technology ("I&T") hub in as early as 2018, and the Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address also devoted a substantial part to I&T development and the development of an international I&T hub. However, there are views that the Government has not formulated specific medium- and long-term planning so far for developing Hong Kong into an international I&T hub. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) when the medium- and long-term planning for developing Hong Kong into an international I&T hub will be introduced; as there are views that the establishment of an international I&T hub will help Hong Kong achieve economic restructuring, boost economic growth and resolve deep-rooted conflicts, of the implementable proposals that the Government has in place;
- (2) given that the Chief Executive set a goal in the 2017 Policy Address to increase the ratio of the gross domestic expenditure on research and development ("R&D") to the Gross Domestic Product ("GDP") ("R&D expenditure ratio") from 0.73% to 1.5% by the end of the current Government's term of office, but the ratio still only stood at 0.99% as at 2021, of the measures that the Government will take within its current term of office to achieve such goal;
- (3) as it has been reported that the R&D investment in Hong Kong is lower than that on the Mainland and in the surrounding regions (taking 2019 as an example, the R&D investments on the Mainland and in South Korea represented 2.23% and 4.64% of their GDP respectively, and the R&D spending in the Taiwan region represented 3.5% of its GDP, while the R&D expenditure ratio in Hong Kong was less than 1%), of the measures that the Government will take within its current term of office to narrow the gap between Hong Kong and the Mainland as well as other regions; and

- (4) whether the I&T development in the Northern Metropolis aims to build up an advantageous I&T industry in Hong Kong; if so, how much growth in GDP is expected to be achieved, and how many upward mobility opportunities in terms of employment, career development and entrepreneurship are expected to be provided for young people; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 19
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Supply of innovation and technology talents

Hon CHAU Siu-chung to ask:

Regarding the supply of innovation and technology (“I&T”) talents needed for Hong Kong’s development into an international I&T hub and for promoting re-industrialization, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows (a) the total number of places for I&T-related programmes offered by local degree-awarding higher education institutions, as well as (b) the respective numbers of (i) local and (ii) non-local students who graduated from such programmes (with a tabulated breakdown by type of degree), in each of the past five years;
- (2) whether it knows, among the (a) local and (b) non-local graduates in each of the past five years mentioned in (1), the respective numbers of those who (i) engaged in the first year after graduation and (ii) are currently still engaging in I&T-related industries in Hong Kong (with a tabulated breakdown by type of degree);
- (3) of the respective numbers of non-local talents with I&T-related academic qualifications and working experience who (i) applied for admission and (ii) were admitted to Hong Kong under the various admission schemes of the Government, in each of the past five years; whether it knows, among such talents who were admitted to Hong Kong, the number of those who have been engaging in I&T-related industries since their arrival in Hong Kong (with a tabulated breakdown by the admission scheme concerned);
- (4) whether it knows the number of I&T talents who emigrated from Hong Kong in each of the past five years, and the reasons for their leaving Hong Kong; and
- (5) whether it has evaluated the effectiveness of the existing policies and measures for attracting local and non-local I&T talents to stay in Hong Kong for career development; whether it will take additional measures to step up the training and retainment of such talents; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 20
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme

Hon Kenneth LEUNG to ask:

The Government launched the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme (“the Scheme”) last year to encourage enterprises to employ local university graduates and deploy them to station and work in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the enterprises concerned will be granted an allowance according to the number of graduates employed. It is learnt that graduates have submitted more than 20 000 job applications for some 3 000 job vacancies offered by enterprises under the Scheme. However, as at the middle of last month, the Government has only received preliminary applications for allowance from enterprises for employing 1 090 graduates, reflecting that about 2 000 job vacancies under the Scheme cannot be matched with the nearly 19 000 job applications. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has gained an understanding of the reasons why the aforesaid job vacancies cannot be matched with the job applications;
- (2) whether it will consider expanding the scope of the Scheme to cover graduates of higher diploma and sub-degree programmes, so as to enable more young people to participate in the Scheme; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) given that the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area proposes to build a globally competitive modern industrial system which encompasses cultural and creative industries, daily service industries and intellectual property trading, whether the Government will (i) encourage the relevant enterprises to provide more job opportunities under the Scheme, and (ii) increase the amount of allowance to be granted to them, so as to respond to the vision stated in the Outline; and
- (4) whether it will extend the period for provision of the allowance to participating enterprises under the Scheme, so that such enterprises can provide graduates with more opportunities of vocational training and job rotation?

Question 21
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Facilitating students' understanding of the Motherland

Prof Hon LAU Chi-pang to ask:

It is learnt that various sectors of society generally consider that Hong Kong lacks comprehensive national education, resulting in students' weak affection for the country and their difficulties in building up a sense of national identity, which is not conducive to the stable development of Hong Kong society. In addition, it is unacceptable that most senior secondary ("SS") students do not have the opportunity to take the subject of Chinese History and quite a number of them do not even know where their native places are. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether the Government will require kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools to include a column of "native place" on the Student Information Form of their students, so as to help students acquire an understanding of their homeland from an early age, thereby cultivating in them a caring attitude towards the country; if so, of the implementation date; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as the optimizing measures of the four SS core subjects have been implemented in this school year, whether the Government will take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the adjustment of the lesson time of the SS core subjects to make Chinese History a compulsory SS subject, so as to provide all SS students with a further opportunity to learn Chinese history; and
- (3) whether the Government will consider providing, in the form of continuing professional development activities, refresher courses on Chinese history and culture for all kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers, so as to improve their level of competence in telling China's stories in class?

Question 22
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Land Sharing Pilot Scheme

Hon CHAN Hak-kan to ask:

The Government announced on 6 August 2021 that it had received an application under the “Land Sharing Pilot Scheme”. The application concerns a site located at She Shan Road and Lam Kam Road, Tai Po (near Lam Tsuen) (“the site”), which covers about 19.3 hectares of land and is estimated to provide about 12 120 residential units. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the progress in processing the application; whether it will conduct public consultation on the application;
- (2) of the current traffic flow of Lam Kam Road which is mainly linked to the site; the additional traffic flow estimated to be brought about by the development plan of the site (“the development plan”);
- (3) of the design capacity of Lam Kam Road; the current utilization rates of the road during the morning and afternoon peak hours, as well as the proportions of various types of vehicles;
- (4) of the current population of the villages near the site; as the population that may be brought about by the development plan is estimated to be as high as 33 937, of the anticipated impacts of the development plan on nearby villages and residents, as well as the estimated number of residents affected; whether it will give compensations to the affected residents, and whether it has planned how to assist the residents concerned; and
- (5) given that the development plan proposes to construct two primary schools with 30 classrooms each, whether the Government has assessed if there will be sufficient school-age children for admission to the two schools in the future?

(Translation)

**Motion of Thanks
to be moved by Hon Starry LEE**

Wording of the Motion

That this Council thanks the Chief Executive for her address.