

22 questions to be asked at the Council meeting of 8 January 2025

Subject matters

Questions for oral replies

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|
| 1 | Hon Lillian KWOK | <u>Healthy Mind Pilot Project</u> |
| 2 | Hon Edward LEUNG | <u>Persons emigrated overseas returning to Hong Kong for welfare benefits and services</u> |
| 3 | Hon CHAN Yung | <u>Guangdong-Hong Kong and Shenzhen-Hong Kong collaboration</u> |
| 4 | Hon Adrian HO | <u>Promoting the development of the sports industry</u> |
| 5 | Prof Hon CHOW Man-kong | <u>Developing “concert economy”</u> |
| 6 | Hon Kenneth LEUNG | <u>Population policy</u> |

Questions for written replies

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|--|
| 7 | Hon Martin LIAO | <u>Advancing research and development of aerospace science and technology</u> |
| 8 | Hon Dominic LEE | <u>Louvre enclosure works in public rental housing</u> |
| 9 | Hon CHAN Chun-ying | <u>Illegal sales of pets</u> |
| 10 | Hon Tony TSE | <u>Handling of construction waste</u> |
| 11 | Revd Canon Hon Peter Douglas KOON | <u>Manpower of dentists</u> |
| 12 | Hon CHAU Siu-chung | <u>Supporting the employment of elderly and middle-aged persons</u> |
| 13 | Hon Rock CHEN | <u>Driving tests of the Transport Department</u> |
| 14 | Dr Hon TIK Chi-yuen | <u>Employment of people with disabilities in the civil service</u> |
| 15 | Hon CHAN Kin-por | <u>Combating ticket scalping</u> |
| 16 | Hon CHAN Hok-fung | <u>Cancer treatment</u> |
| 17 | Hon Carmen KAN | <u>Credit Data Smart</u> |
| 18 | Hon Kingsley WONG | <u>Retiring in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area</u> |
| 19 | Hon Vincent CHENG | <u>Enhancement of Kowloon Park’s facilities</u> |
| 20 | Hon LUK Chung-hung | <u>School-based After School Care Service Scheme</u> |
| 21 | Hon YUNG Hoi-yan | <u>Regulation of online second-hand trading platforms</u> |
| 22 | Hon LAI Tung-kwok | <u>Non-refoulement claims</u> |

Question 1
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Healthy Mind Pilot Project

Hon Lillian KWOK to ask:

Since August last year, the Government has implemented the Healthy Mind Pilot Project (“the Pilot Project”) at three District Health Centre or District Health Centre Expresses to offer free initial mental health assessments to members of the public and refer those in need to receive follow-up services. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is learnt that the Pilot Project has partnered with non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”) in the same district, of the relevant tendering procedure and selection process;
- (2) given that under the protocol of the Pilot Project, cases assessed to be in need of follow-up will be followed up by the partnering NGOs’ Wellbeing Practitioners who have received mental health training, of the qualifications and professional qualifications required of the persons concerned; and
- (3) of the number of persons who have received initial assessments since the launch of the Pilot Project and, among them, the respective numbers of those in need of referral and follow-up; whether it will regularly review the effectiveness of the Pilot Project; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 2
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Persons emigrated overseas returning to Hong Kong
for welfare benefits and services

Hon Edward LEUNG to ask:

It is learnt that persons who have emigrated overseas can return to Hong Kong to enjoy some of the local welfare benefits, such as medical treatment, as long as they hold a valid Hong Kong identity card. There are views that such a practice will incur additional and unnecessary public expenditure and is not in the best interests of the local community. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has compiled statistics respectively on data relating to returning to Hong Kong for medical treatment and the additional public expenditure involved in the past three years;
- (2) whether it will commence a study on the situation of returning to Hong Kong for medical treatment, so as to conduct a systematic analysis of and formulate response plans for the relevant phenomenon, e.g. restricting the use of subsidized public healthcare services by persons who have emigrated overseas; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that at present only some welfare policies (e.g. Old Age Living Allowance) are subject to a limit of absence from Hong Kong, whether the authorities have considered, from the perspective of policy consistency, likewise imposing a limit of absence from Hong Kong on all welfare policies and subsidized public services, so as to prevent persons who have emigrated overseas from continuing to enjoy such welfare benefits and services; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 3
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Guangdong-Hong Kong and Shenzhen-Hong Kong collaboration

Hon CHAN Yung to ask:

At present, Guangdong-Hong Kong and Shenzhen-Hong Kong collaborations are continuously strengthening and deepening, and Hong Kong is also accelerating its integration into the overall development of the country. Guangdong-Hong Kong and Shenzhen-Hong Kong cooperation task forces have even been set up to cover various major areas of cooperation, with the common goal of taking forward exchange and cooperation projects in the direction of complementarity and mutual benefits, and promoting Hong Kong's better integration into the overall development of the country from different aspects. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the cooperation projects which have been taken forward and implemented through Guangdong-Hong Kong and Shenzhen-Hong Kong collaborations so far, and the specific development directions between Guangdong and Hong Kong and between Shenzhen and Hong Kong in the future to promote the high-quality development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("GBA");
- (2) whether it has plans to report regularly to this Council on the work progress of Guangdong-Hong Kong collaboration and the GBA development, so as to enable this Council to better follow up on the relevant work; and
- (3) as there are views that the Northern Metropolis project is an important new driving force for Hong Kong's development as well as a representative project under the task forces, and that it appears that its development can be even faster and more efficient, how the Government will expedite the development of the Northern Metropolis, and of the project's latest timetable and roadmap?

Question 4
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Promoting the development of the sports industry

Hon Adrian HO to ask:

Neighbouring regions such as the Mainland and Singapore have been committed to developing the sports industry in recent years, and “The Road to Becoming a Sports Powerhouse—The Value and Inspiration of Xi Jinping’s Important Discourses on Sports” released by the Xinhua Institute earlier on has even identified the sports industry as one of the three important development directions in the theoretical system for the construction of a sports powerhouse. However, there are views that the development of Hong Kong’s sports industry has been lagging far behind that of neighbouring regions. For example, the average annual growth rate of the value-add of Mainland’s sports industry was as high as 13.5% between 2017 and 2022, whereas the average annual growth rate of the value added of sports and related activities in Hong Kong was only 2.35% during the same period. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether the authorities have made reference to the measures taken by neighbouring regions to promote the development of the sports industry; if so, how the authorities plan to improve the progress of developing sports in Hong Kong as an industry through such measures; if not, of the reasons for that;
- (2) whether the authorities will set performance indicators for the development of sports as an industry in the future, such as specifying the growth value of the value added of sports and related activities; and
- (3) given that the Government has engaged a consultant to study issues relating to the professionalism in the sports sector and the development of sports as an industry, and that the consultant has already submitted a report in May 2023, of the recommendations made in the report to assist in the development of sports in Hong Kong as an industry, as well as the recommendations therein which have been implemented or planned to be implemented by the Government?

Question 5
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Developing “concert economy”

Prof Hon CHOW Man-kong to ask:

There are views that the Government should expedite the development of “concert economy” and explore the potential for cultural and tourism consumption therein, with a view to increasing the number of tourists and stimulating the overall local economy. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has compiled statistics on the number of large-scale pop music concerts held in Hong Kong since 2023, their themes, the numbers of local and non-local audience, the economic benefits brought to peripheral industries (including, among others, the catering industry and hotel industry), as well as the venue rental income brought to the performance venues under the Government, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority and the AsiaWorld-Expo;
- (2) whether it will consider formulating measures to encourage concert organizers to collaborate with large shopping malls, restaurants and hotels in the vicinity of the performance venues to provide consumption concessions to audience, so as to boost the local economy, create job opportunities and foster the development of the tourism industry, thereby promoting Hong Kong’s popularity and prosperity; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) of the schedule of the key programmes to be held at the Kai Tak Sports Park (“KTSP”) this year; whether it will consider inviting singers who are highly influential among the Chinese communities at home and abroad (e.g. the “Four Heavenly Kings” in Hong Kong’s music scene) to stage a large-scale concert at the opening ceremony of KTSP, so as to make a grand debut and raise the profile of KTSP internationally; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 6
(For oral reply)

(Translation)

Population policy

Hon Kenneth LEUNG to ask:

Quite a number of studies and views have pointed out that Hong Kong needs to increase its population in order to become a megacity under the national standards on city size, thereby supporting sustainable socio-economic development as well as enhancing competitiveness; the Chief Executive also highlighted the need to increase the population in a media interview earlier on. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has set targets for increasing the population; if so, of the details (including the targets and implementation timetable); if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it has estimated, based on the finalized report of “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030”, the population that Hong Kong can accommodate after 2030 having regard to the overall spatial planning, land and infrastructure development; whether it will conduct new studies in the future to update the planning for the further expansion of the city’s capacity; and
- (3) as there are views that Hong Kong’s population needs are already different from those outlined in the “Population Policy - Strategies and Initiatives” in 2015, whether the authorities will include the population policy as a major and priority task and set up a high-level cross-departmental team to comprehensively review and holistically consider the population policy, so as to achieve the then target of “review of effectiveness and timely adjustment”; if not, of the reasons for that?

Question 7
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Advancing research and development of aerospace science and technology

Hon Martin LIAO to ask:

Our country attaches great importance to the space industry, and the Chief Executive has proposed in the 2024 Policy Address to advance research and development (“R&D”) of aerospace science and technology. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the Government will set up a research centre under the InnoHK research cluster to participate in the Chang’E-8 mission, and that according to a paper of the China National Space Administration, the Chang’E-8 mission, scheduled to be launched in 2028, will take on five tasks with a plan to carry 14 science payloads, whether the Government has assessed the specific tasks under the Chang’E-8 mission to which contribution can be made by the research centre within a span of three-odd years; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as it has been reported that the “Hong Kong Youth Scientific Innovation” satellite jointly developed by The Chinese University of Hong Kong and ADA SPACE was successfully launched in Shandong in September last year, and that the “HKUST-FYBB#1” satellite developed by The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology was also successfully launched in 2023, there are views that while Hong Kong possesses strong scientific research capabilities, a comprehensive industry chain blueprint has yet to be formulated, and given the Mainland’s rich aerospace resources, whether the Government has measures in place to promote cooperation between Hong Kong and aerospace cities in the Mainland, so as to give full play to Hong Kong’s strengths in scientific research and contribute to the country’s space industry through the transformation of cooperation results; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) as it has been reported that the country’s first commercial aerospace industrial base with whole industry chain in Nansha of Guangzhou was completed in 2023 to help drive various industries involving R&D of aerospace power, R&D of satellite, rocket satellite measurement, etc., and that the Nansha New District has also promulgated measures known in short as the “Nine Principles for Space Exploration” focusing on promoting the high-quality development of the commercial space industry, whether the Government will introduce similar measures to promote the

development of R&D of aerospace in Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 8
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Louvre enclosure works in public rental housing

Hon Dominic LEE to ask:

It is learnt that some public rental housing (“PRH”) units in North East New Territories (“NENT”) are required to carry out enclosure works for corridor-facing louvres (“enclosure works”) in accordance with the Fire Safety (Buildings) Ordinance (Cap. 572). However, some affected residents are worried that the enclosure of louvres may lead to poor ventilation and insufficient lighting in their units, which may potentially affect elderly persons or residents with chronic diseases. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following information about PRH estates in NENT which are affected by the enclosure works: name of the estates, number of buildings, number of units involved and whether there are issues of insufficient lighting or poor ventilation in the units concerned; whether the authorities have conducted additional assessment in the light of the environment and special needs of the district;
- (2) whether the authorities will consider installing additional ventilation or lighting facilities, such as exhaust fans or fluorescent tubes, in PRH estates in NENT affected by the enclosure works, and introducing a special subsidy scheme to subsidize residents for carrying out improvement works; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether the authorities will, when carrying out the enclosure works, examine in tandem other problems involving structural safety or ageing facilities in the estates concerned, such as cracks on walls, ageing wires or water seepage through bay windows; if so, of the scope and progress of the examinations; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether the authorities will organize more community consultation sessions or forums for residents in NENT to enable residents affected by the enclosure works to have a clear understanding of the arrangements, impact and solutions relating to the works, and to receive residents’ suggestions with a view to further enhancing the relevant measures; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 9
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Illegal sales of pets

Hon CHAN Chun-ying to ask:

According to the data of the most recent survey on keeping of cats and dogs by households conducted by the Census and Statistics Department in 2018, some 241 900 households were keeping cats or dogs in Hong Kong (involving some 184 100 cats and some 221 100 dogs), representing 9.4% of all households. It is learnt that the pet market is still expanding. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is learnt that incidents involving illegal sales of pet cats and dogs occur from time to time, of the major measures currently adopted by the authorities as well as the channels involved to combat illegal sales of pets;
- (2) of the number of cases in which the authorities successfully combated illegal sales of pet cats and dogs in the past three years, as well as the major obstacles and difficulties encountered in the process; and
- (3) how the authorities handle pet cats and dogs seized in the course of combating illegal sales activities, and whether they will cooperate with social organizations to provide immediate treatment for sick cats and dogs found during seizure?

Question 10
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Handling of construction waste

Hon Tony TSE to ask:

According to a research publication of the Legislative Council Secretariat, the construction waste generated in Hong Kong in 2022 accounted for 75% of the overall amount of solid waste in the territory, and nearly two-thirds of such construction waste were sent to public fill banks awaiting reuse (e.g. for use in reclamation projects), while the rest was disposed of by other means, including being sent directly to landfills for dumping. Under the existing arrangement, if local reuse cannot absorb all the public fill materials generated in Hong Kong, the surplus fill materials will be sent to the Mainland for handling, for which the Government has to pay a handling fee each year amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars. With the works of the airport's third runway and the reclamation in Tung Chung being completed one after another, and reclamation projects such as the Kau Yi Chau artificial island being deferred, the stockpile of fill materials stranded at public fill banks reached a record high in March last year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) in each of the past five years, of (i) the quantity of construction waste generated in Hong Kong and the methods of handling such waste, (ii) the stockpiles at various public fill banks, and (iii) the quantity of fill materials needed to be sent to the Mainland for handling and the related costs; whether it has made projections on the relevant figures in the coming five years; if so, of the details; if not, whether it will make such projections expeditiously;
- (2) whether it has assessed the impact of surplus of public fill materials on the operation, expenditure and estimated closure time of various landfills; and
- (3) of the measures in place to reduce the generation of construction waste, address the surplus of public fill materials, as well as step up efforts in combating the problem of illegal dumping of construction waste?

Question 11
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Manpower of dentists

Revd Canon Hon Peter Douglas KOON to ask:

It has been reported that according to the information from the Dental Council of Hong Kong (“DCHK”), the dentist-to-population ratio in Hong Kong is relatively low, with an average of only about 3.7 dentists per 10 000 citizens, lagging behind many developed countries and the Mainland. In addition, the results of the latest round of healthcare manpower projection conducted by the Hospital Authority indicate a manpower gap of 210, 180 and 120 dentists respectively in this year, 2030 and 2035, and the situation is worrying. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as there are views pointing out that the serious wastage of government dentists is mainly attributed to the fact that the remuneration of government dentists is far inferior to that of private dentists, whether the Government will, by drawing reference from the situation in the private market, review the existing grade structure, remuneration package and progression pathway of government dentists, so as to attract and retain dental talents to serve in the Government; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as it is learnt that non-locally trained dentists are currently required to pass the Licensing Examination (“LE”) of DCHK before they can register and practise in Hong Kong, but the passing rate of LE is on the low side, whether the Government will review the existing assessment system for overseas dentists seeking to practise in Hong Kong, and suitably increase the frequency of LE or simplify LE, so as to allow more overseas-trained dentists to practise in Hong Kong, and to ensure that the relevant measures can truly increase the manpower supply of dentists; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) given that in the reply to my question on the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-2025, the Secretary for Health has indicated that the Government cannot solely rely on increasing the number of local training places to address the imminent shortage of dentists, but there are views that in the long run, the Government should still adopt a multi-pronged approach to actively train up local dentists, whether the Government will allocate additional resources to motivate more institutions (including collaborating with institutions in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area) to offer dental degree courses, and continuously increase the number of places of

the undergraduate programme in dentistry offered by the University of Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 12
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Supporting the employment of elderly and middle-aged persons

Hon CHAU Siu-chung to ask:

On supporting the employment of elderly and middle-aged persons, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) in each of the past seven years, of (a) the number of placements eligible for joining the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (“EPEM”) and, among them, (b) the number of cases in which employers had submitted the preliminary application for on-the-job training (“OJT”) (and its percentage), and (c) the number of cases which had been approved in principle (and its percentage in the total number of cases of preliminary application for OJT), and set out in the table below a breakdown by age group of the employees concerned (i.e. aged (i) 40 to 44, (ii) 45 to 49, (iii) 50 to 54, (iv) 55 to 59, (v) 60 to 64, and (vi) 65 and above);

Age group of the employees concerned	2018					2024		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)
(i)									
.....									
(vi)									
Total									

- (2) given that according to Report No. 72 of the Director of Audit published by the Audit Commission in 2019, the EPEM Coordination Office (“the Office”) will mail invitation letters to all eligible employers for joining EPEM, and if the employers have not responded, the Office will follow up by calling at a maximum of three times, of the number of eligible employers to whom the Office mailed in each of the past seven years and, among them, the respective numbers of employers who (i) responded that they intended to participate in EPEM, (ii) did not intend to participate in EPEM, and (iii) did not respond; for those employers who did not respond, of the respective numbers of cases in which the Office had called them for once, twice and thrice and, among them, the respective numbers of employers who (i) responded that they intended to participate in EPEM, (ii) did not intend to participate in EPEM, and (iii) did not respond;
- (3) among the approved-in-principle cases mentioned in (1)(c), of the number of cases in which OJT allowance was granted in each of the past seven years and its percentage, with a tabulated breakdown by (a) age group (i.e. aged (i) 40 to 44, (ii) 45 to 49, (iii) 50 to 54, (iv) 55 to 59, (v) 60 to 64, and (vi) 65 and above), (b) form of employment

- (i.e. full-time or part-time), (c) industry, (d) job type, (e) remuneration level, and (f) education level of the employees concerned; of the major reasons for employers not being granted OJT allowance;
- (4) among the cases mentioned in (3) in which OJT allowance was granted, of the respective numbers and percentages of cases in each of the past seven years in which the employees stayed in their posts upon completion of OJT for (i) four months to less than six months and (ii) six months or more, together with a breakdown by (a) age group (i.e. aged (i) 40 to 44, (ii) 45 to 49, (iii) 50 to 54, (iv) 55 to 59, (v) 60 to 64, and (vi) 65 and above), (b) form of employment (i.e. full-time or part-time), and (c) industry of the employees concerned;
 - (5) whether it will consider stepping up publicity on EPDM and raising the ceiling of OJT allowance, so as to enhance the effectiveness of EPDM;
 - (6) as there are views pointing out that some employers are unwilling or even refuse to employ older job seekers who meet the job requirements, whether it has compiled statistics on the respective numbers of enquiries and complaints received by the Equal Opportunities Commission (“EOC”) and the Labour Department (“LD”) in the past seven years about age discrimination in employment, together with a breakdown by (i) age group of the persons making the enquiries or lodging the complaints, and (ii) nature of the cases; how EOC and LD had followed up on such cases respectively; whether the authorities will consider drawing reference from the practices of other advanced economies and legislating against age discrimination in the workplace, so as to ensure that job seekers or employees can enjoy equal treatment in the workplace regardless of their age;
 - (7) of the respective numbers of applications received and successful placement cases under the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (“REA Scheme”) launched on 15 July last year, together with a breakdown by (a) age group (i.e. aged (i) 40 to 44, (ii) 45 to 49, (iii) 50 to 54, (iv) 55 to 59, (v) 60 to 64, and (vi) 65 and above), (b) industry, and (c) job type of the participants; given that employers hiring participants of the REA Scheme may also join EPDM, of the number of cases in which the employers concerned had submitted the preliminary application for OJT; and
 - (8) whether it will consider formulating performance indicators in respect of raising the labour force participation rate of older persons of the local workforce and enhancing the relevant policy measures, so as to further release the potential labour force?

Question 13
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Driving tests of the Transport Department

Hon Rock CHEN to ask:

It has been reported that the waiting time for certain types of driving tests has been more than 200 days in recent years. On the other hand, the Office of The Ombudsman published results of direct investigation operation into the arrangements of the Transport Department (“TD”) for driving tests in September last year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) as it is learnt that TD removed the target waiting time of the driving tests for non-commercial vehicles in 2016, but it undertook later that it would explore resetting such target in 2024 and endeavour to identify suitable sites for setting up additional driving test centres to meet long-term demand, whether significant progress has been made in respect of such work; if so, of the latest progress; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) as it has been reported that the waiting time for driving tests is rather long at present, whether the Government will consider adopting measures (including but not limited to increasing the number of driving examiners, providing test slots on weekends and during non-peak periods, as well as adopting an electronic and automated driving test system), so as to shorten the waiting period for driving tests and enhance the overall efficiency of tests; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (3) of the respective numbers of applications received and approved by TD for direct issue of Hong Kong driving licence on the strength of driving licence issued by the Mainland or overseas places in the past three years, together with a breakdown by the issuing country or place; whether there is any change in the number of such applications; if so, whether it has studied the reasons for that?

Question 14
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Employment of people with disabilities in the civil service

Dr Hon TIK Chi-yuen to ask:

Regarding the employment of people with disabilities (“PWDs”) in the civil service, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective current numbers of PWD employees in various government departments, including civil servants and non-civil service contract staff, and the respective percentages of such numbers in the numbers of employees in the relevant government departments, with a tabulated breakdown by type of disability (including physical disability, visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectual or mental disability, and other disabilities); whether it has examined which positions are primarily occupied by these PWD employees and whether there are apparent concentrations or limitations in their placement;
- (2) whether it will publish data on the numbers and ratios of PWD employees in government departments on an annual basis; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether the offices of various government departments currently provide barrier-free facilities and technical aids designed for PWDs, including but not limited to stair lifts, accessible toilets, electronic devices and adaptive devices (e.g. Braille readers, text enlarging software and hearing aids); if not, (i) which government departments’ offices lack barrier-free facilities and the relevant technical aids, (ii) of the reasons for the lack of facilities and aids, and (iii) whether it will set a timetable for the full provision of barrier-free facilities and the relevant technical aids in these offices;
- (4) given that the Government currently provides assistance and accommodation (including but not limited to extending the duration of written tests or interviews, providing accessible venues, conducting interviews through written communication, and providing enlarged test papers) during the staff recruitment process in the light of the special needs of applicants with disabilities, of the number of applicants with disabilities who requested assistance and accommodation in the past five years, as well as the respective types of such assistance and accommodation provided; and
- (5) whether the Government will set performance indicators for employing PWDs, including but not limited to recruitment quotas or targets number of recruits, so as to increase the employment ratios of

PWDs in government departments; if so, of the timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 15
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Combating ticket scalping

Hon CHAN Kin-por to ask:

There are views pointing out that the problem of ticket scalping, which has existed all along, is rampant. Section 6 of the Places of Public Entertainment Ordinance (Cap. 172) provides that any person who sells or offers for sale any ticket authorizing admission to any place of public entertainment in any public thoroughfare, or in the entrance hall of, or approaches to, any such place, or at a price exceeding the amount fixed by such proprietor, manager or organizer to be charged shall be liable on conviction to a fine of HK\$2,000. However, events held in venues managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") (e.g. the Hong Kong Coliseum, the Queen Elizabeth Stadium, the Hong Kong Stadium, etc.) are not subject to the regulation of the aforesaid Ordinance. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of reports of ticket scalping received by the Hong Kong Police Force and relevant departments in the past two years, and the number of convicted cases among them;
- (2) whether it will consider amending Cap. 172 to bring the venues managed by LCSD under the regulation of the Ordinance; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether it will consider increasing the penalty to effectively deter ticket scalping; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it will consider implementing real-name registration for ticket sales, as well as setting up an official transfer platform, so as to eradicate the problem of ticket scalping?

Question 16
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Cancer treatment

Hon CHAN Hok-fung to ask:

It is learnt that cancer is the leading fatal disease in Hong Kong. In 2021, there were nearly 40 000 new cases of cancer in Hong Kong, with an average of 105 people diagnosed with cancer every day. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has compiled statistics on the respective average time taken in the past three years by patients suffering from lung cancer, colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer and liver cancer to proceed from diagnosis of a suspected case (e.g. scheduling an X-ray examination) to the stage of formally undergoing the first treatment (e.g. undergoing a surgical operation or chemotherapy) (set out in a table);
- (2) as it is learnt that the majority of cancer patients are elderly people, with the median age at death due to cancer being 72 years for males and 73 years for females in 2021 for example, whether it knows the considerations and criteria (e.g. age and medical conditions) adopted by public hospitals for determining the priority of cancer patients in terms of the time of receiving treatment;
- (3) as it is learnt that the prices of targeted therapy drugs for treating cancer in Hong Kong are 10 times higher than those on the Mainland, of the reasons for such a price gap, and whether it has studied options to narrow the relevant gap; if so, of the options; and
- (4) given that according to the information from the Hong Kong Cancer Registry, the overall five-year survival rate for cancer patients has steadily increased over the past two decades, rising from 42% in the early 2000s to 55% in recent years, whether the Government has compiled statistics on the rates of increase in drug expenses for treating cancer patients in the past three years; whether it has adjusted the estimates of such expenses in view of the ageing population?

Question 17
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Credit Data Smart

Hon Carmen KAN to ask:

“Credit Data Smart” (“CDS”), the Credit Reference Platform operating under the Multiple Credit Reference Agencies Model, officially started service on 26 April last year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) given that the Hong Kong Monetary Authority has undertaken to supervise the appointment of an independent third party by industry associations to monitor the exit work of Nova Credit Limited, a consumer credit reference agency (“operator”) which exited CDS in July last year, whether it knows the progress of the relevant work and how to ensure the proper handling of related consumer credit data;
- (2) given the exit of the aforesaid operator from CDS, whether it knows if the authorities will introduce additional operators for CDS; if they will introduce additional operators, of the relevant mechanism and processes, as well as whether the mechanism will be made public; if they will not introduce additional operators, of the measures in place to promote competition in the industry;
- (3) given that according to the information from The Hong Kong Association of Banks (“HKAB”), as at 19 December last year, there were 93 financial institutions participating in CDS (as Subscribed Members, including 63 “Type One Members” and 30 “Type Two Members”), whether it knows the percentage of the number of each of the two types of participating institutions in the total number of Subscribed Members of their respective type; whether it knows if the authorities have made it a requirement that participating financial institutions must enter into credit reference service agreements with at least two operators; if there is such a requirement, of the details and whether they have maintained a list of financial institutions that have entered into agreements with the two operators (set out by type of Subscribed Members in a table); if there is no such requirement, whether the authorities have studied ways to reduce the risk of a single point of failure;
- (4) whether it knows if there are unified standards and specifications on the input of data into the CDS system; if there are, of the details (including the name(s) of the organization(s) responsible for formulating, administering and vetting such standards and specifications, the requirements of the relevant specifications, and

the time spans and types of data to be input by operators (set out in a table)); if there are not, the reasons for that; whether it knows the measures in place under CDS to ensure the security, compliance, integrity, comprehensiveness and availability of operators' data;

- (5) given that some financial institutions participating in CDS have relayed that the current technical threshold for and cost of access to the systems of operators are too high, whether it knows if the authorities have looked into the relevant situation; if they have, of the details and whether they will study adjusting the relevant technical requirements to motivate more financial institutions to join CDS, thereby ensuring data integrity and comprehensiveness;
- (6) whether the authorities will, upon the passage of the Protection of Critical Infrastructures (Computer Systems) Bill, designate the Credit Reference Platform as a critical infrastructure; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (7) given that while, according to the information on HKAB's website, operators are not allowed to transfer consumer credit data outside Hong Kong for storage and processing, some members of the industry have pointed out that some operators are storing such data outside Hong Kong in a certain form or way, whether the authorities know the relevant situation, and of the follow-up actions?

Question 18
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Retiring in the Mainland cities of
the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

Hon Kingsley WONG to ask:

In recent years, the Government has introduced a series of support measures and reformed the policy of portability to facilitate members of the public to work, study, seek medical treatment and retire in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“GBA”). However, it is learnt that under the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112), Hong Kong elderly persons settling in the Mainland do not qualify as dependants for Dependent Parent Allowance, thus depriving taxpayers of tax relief. There are views that this requirement is contrary to the policy of facilitating the retirement of elderly persons in the Mainland cities of the GBA. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it will relax the requirement for the dependants’ ordinary place of residence for Dependent Parent and Dependent Grandparent Allowance to include the nine Mainland cities of the GBA; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (2) whether it will relax the location requirement for residential care homes eligible for the deduction for elderly residential care expenses to include the nine Mainland cities of the GBA, so as to allay the concerns of taxpayers and elderly persons and to provide more choices of quality residential care homes for the elderly; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) of the number of cases in the past three years where taxpayers lost/were denied Dependent Parent and Dependent Grandparent Allowance or deduction for elderly residential care expenses due to the dependants’ ordinary place of residence being changed to/declared to be on the Mainland; and
- (4) of the number of Hong Kong residents usually staying in Guangdong Province in the past three years; among them, the respective numbers of those aged between 55 and 59 and those aged 60 or above?

Question 19
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Enhancement of Kowloon Park's facilities

Hon Vincent CHENG to ask:

According to a paper submitted by the Government to the Panel on Home Affairs, Culture and Sports of this Council on 14 October last year, the Government was planning to convert the former barracks in Kowloon Park into a Chinese Culture Experience Centre. There are views that the authorities should also explore enhancing the play equipment and leisure facilities in Kowloon Park to attract visitors, and as the Park is surrounded by a cluster of museums and the West Kowloon Cultural District (“WKCD”), the Government may develop it into one of the core areas of the “cultural belt” in South Kowloon. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether the authorities have conducted surveys or analyses on the utilizations rates or popularity of the play equipment and leisure facilities in Kowloon Park (including the Children’s Play Area, Discovery Playground, Maze Garden and Hong Kong Avenue of Comic Stars); if so, of the details; if not, whether they have plans to conduct the relevant surveys or analyses;
- (2) whether the authorities will consider updating the under-utilized play equipment and leisure facilities in Kowloon Park, and drawing reference from the practice of the parks serving as “green lungs” on the Mainland and in other places to provide additional facilities and organize more attractive cultural or recreational activities in the Park, such as setting up youth culture bazaars, providing commercially-run recreational facilities (e.g. radio-controlled model cars) and organizing e-sports activities, as well as allowing more public-private partnership activities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) given that while it has been reported that the authorities have suspended the underground space development of Kowloon Park, there are views that the air-raid shelter there may be opened up partially, whether the Government will consider revitalizing the air-raid shelter concerned and allowing it to function as a cultural and tourism spot or a showcase of history, etc.; if so, of the details;
- (4) given that there are views pointing out that the Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre (“the Centre”), which is located near one of the commonly-used entrances/exits of Kowloon Park, is incompatible with the functions of the Park, of the utilization rate of the Centre in the past three years; as the Centre is housed in a building

listed as Grade I historic building, whether the authorities will consider reprovisioning the Centre, so as to revitalize the historic building into a venue associated with culture, tourism, arts or showcase of history; if so, of the details; and

- (5) whether the authorities will consider setting up dedicated bus and minibus routes and improving pedestrian connectivity, so as to enhance the accessibility between Kowloon Park and the surrounding cluster of museums and WKCD; if so, of the details?

Question 20
(For written reply)

(Translation)

School-based After School Care Service Scheme

Hon LUK Chung-hung to ask:

The Chief Executive has proposed in the 2024 Policy Address to enhance the School-based After-School Care Service Scheme (“the Scheme”) by increasing the number of primary schools covered by the Scheme from 50 to over 110 starting from the 2024-2025 school year, so as to enable students to stay at schools outside school hours for care and learning support and to allow their parents to take up jobs. Subject to actual utilization and outcome of the Scheme, the Government will encourage more schools to participate in the Scheme in the 2025-2026 school year, without capping the number of places. However, some parents have relayed that the number of schools participating in the Scheme is still on the low side, and that some schools do not consider participating in the Scheme because they do not see themselves as underprivileged schools. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the current number of primary schools in various districts and, among them, the respective numbers of primary schools which have participated in the Scheme and those which are applying to participate in the Scheme;
- (2) whether it has looked into the reasons why some primary schools have not participated in the Scheme, including the reasons for the low participation rate of primary schools which are considered to be relatively privileged; and
- (3) how it will encourage more primary schools to participate in the Scheme, including whether it will consider requiring all primary schools to participate in the Scheme?

Question 21
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Regulation of online second-hand trading platforms

Hon YUNG Hoi-yan to ask:

It has been reported that online second-hand trading platforms (“second-hand platforms”) have been gaining popularity in recent years, but related disputes have also increased. Regarding the regulation of second-hand platforms, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the following information on the cases of complaints and requests for assistance involving second-hand platforms in the past five years:
 - (i) the number of complaints received by the Government and the number of complaints substantiated, as well as the respective highest amounts involved in the disputes in each of the years, with a breakdown by the type and content of the cases; and
 - (ii) the number of requests for assistance received by the Police and the number of successful prosecutions, as well as the respective highest amounts involved in the disputes in each of the years, with a breakdown by the type and content of the cases;
- (2) whether it has plans to step up the regulation of second-hand platforms by, for example, studying the establishment of a licensing regime for second-hand platforms, requiring second-hand platforms to put in place a check mechanism and a return mechanism related to infringing or counterfeit products, as well as imposing penalties for the failure of second-hand platforms to fulfil such requirements, so as to reduce disputes involving second-hand trading and combat the use of second-hand platforms for fraudulent activities; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether it has plans to step up efforts to combat the trading of illegal or objectionable products (including products involving infringement or counterfeiting, controlled prescription drugs, cigarette cartridges prohibited by enacted legislation, objectionable game products, etc.) on second-hand platforms by, for example, drawing up a clear list of prohibited items and making it mandatory for second-hand platforms to prohibit such trading; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (4) whether it has plans to step up the regulation of the collection of personal data by second-hand platforms, so as to minimize users’ provision of unnecessary personal data; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Question 22
(For written reply)

(Translation)

Non-refoulement claims

Hon LAI Tung-kwok to ask:

It has been learnt that at present, unsubstantiated claimants of non-refoulement claims (“claims”) who are still stranded in Hong Kong have different ways to delay their repatriation, such as lodging appeals continuously after their applications for leave for judicial review (“JR”) have been rejected, refusing to cooperate in obtaining travel documents, lodging subsequent claims, and applying for writs of habeas corpus. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of lodged claims received in each month of last year;
- (2) of the number of illegal immigrants (“IIs”) who lodged claims in each month of last year;
- (3) of the current number of claimants in Hong Kong, with a breakdown by (i) nationality, (ii) nature of stay (i.e. IIs, overstayed visitors, overstayed foreign domestic helpers and refused entrants), and (iii) status of stay in Hong Kong (i.e. being screened, being handled by the Appeal Board, being arranged to be repatriated, and requests for subsequent claims yet to be processed, etc.);
- (4) among the applications for leave for JR in respect of claims made by unsubstantiated claimants in the past five years, of the number of those pending determination by the Court of First Instance of the High Court;
- (5) of the number of detained claimants who applied for writs of habeas corpus in each month of last year and, among them, the number of those who were successfully released;
- (6) of the number of subsequent claims lodged by claimants in each month of the past five years, their success rates, and the number of cases in which leave for JR was sought again after the requests for subsequent claims had been rejected; and
- (7) of the number of claimants holding what are commonly known as “going-out passes” who were arrested for committing criminal offences last year, with a tabulated breakdown by type of offences; whether the number of such cases has shown an upward trend?