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### Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2026-27

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare**

**Session No. : 21**

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)001**

**(Question Serial No. 1785)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Government launched a three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme in mid-2024. It is mentioned in the paragraph 245 of the Budget that the Scheme has been well-received. Since its launch one and a half years ago, over 37 000 placements have been recorded, and the provision for the Scheme will be increased to \$222 million in the coming financial year. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Regarding the expenditure of \$222 million for the coming financial year, has the Government evaluated the multiplier effect of the Scheme on the economy, i.e. how much economic benefits can an increase in the stable income from these 37 000 persons employed under the Scheme bring to the local silver consumer market?
- (b) To facilitate regularisation of employment schemes in the long run, will the Government consider allocating some of the estimated provision to directly subsidise employers to optimise workplace accessories (such as introducing assistive devices, reorganising job duties, and implementing flexible working hours), so as to rationalise the difficulties encountered by enterprises in employing older and middle-aged persons at source?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chung-ye, Alan (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable. As at February 2026, 40 629 placements were recorded under the Scheme, of which 9 573 (24%) involved participants aged 60 or above. This shows that more older persons are encouraged to re-join the labour market under the REA Scheme to earn income and enhance their purchasing power, contributing to the local economy (including the silver consumer market). LD has not evaluated the multiplier effect of the REA Scheme on the economy.

- (b) In tandem with the REA Scheme, LD has implemented the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to engage older and middle-aged persons, and provide them with training. Employers engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 or above will receive a maximum on-the-job training (OJT) allowance of \$5,000 per month for 3 to 12 months. The OJT allowance can be used to adjust and optimise the workplace accessories to support the employment of older and middle-aged persons. The estimated expenditure for the disbursement of OJT allowance to eligible employers under EPEM in 2026-27 is about \$40 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)002**

**(Question Serial No. 2432)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme has been implemented on a regular basis. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please set out by industry sector the numbers of applications received, approved and rejected over the past 12 months, as well as the main reasons for rejection;
- (b) The dedicated staff establishment and estimated expenditure of and the number of inspections conducted by the Labour Department in combating illegal employment over the past 12 months;
- (c) What targeted measures has the Government put in place to step up the crackdown on situations such as “forging documents for bogus recruitment”, “ghost jobs”; will the Government consider introducing criminal penalties to enhance the deterrent effect; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023, allowing employers with genuine needs to apply for importation of workers for posts that were generally excluded under the previous Supplementary Labour Scheme. LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, and measures to protect the rights and benefits of imported workers. The review is expected to be completed in the first half of 2026.

- (a) In 2025, ESLS received a total of 12 885 applications for importing 86 994 workers. During the period, 8 839 applications involving 52 570 imported workers were approved while 42 applications involving 148 imported workers were rejected, mainly because such applications failed to fully meet the requirements of ESLS (e.g. manning ratio of imported workers to local employees, requirements of local open recruitment) or the

employers had adverse records, etc. A breakdown of the numbers of applications received, approved and rejected by industry sector is at Annex.

- (b) To deter employers from employing illegal workers, Labour Inspectors (LIs) of LD conduct workplace inspections to ensure employers' compliance with labour laws, including checking the identity documents of employees and the employee records kept by employers. In 2025, LIs conducted a total of 153 370 workplace inspections.

As LIs concurrently enforce various labour laws, the manpower and expenditure involved in combating illegal employment cannot be separately identified.

- (c) Employers must truthfully report the required information when submitting ESLS applications. An employer knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false or misleading during the application commits an offence and is liable to prosecution. LD rigorously processes each application to ensure compliance with ESLS requirements. If necessary, LD will require an employer to provide additional information or supporting documents, or arrange LIs to conduct inspection to an employer's office and workplace of prospective imported worker to verify the application information. If an employer is suspected of breaching other laws, LD will refer the case to the relevant law enforcement departments for follow-up.

To ensure the employment priority for local workers, employers applying for importation of workers under ESLS must undertake local open recruitment and give priority to employing qualified local workers to fill the vacancies. LD has strengthened the regulation of interview arrangements and the requirements on placing recruitment advertisements for local recruitment. This includes requiring, starting from July 2025, employers to conduct interviews within 5 working days after job seekers have been referred by LD, and the arrangements must not be handled by intermediaries. Starting from January 2026, if a recruitment advertisement fails to effectively achieve the objective of local recruitment (e.g. where an employer places the advertisement on a recruitment platform that is inconsistent with the industry sector of the post applied for), the employer must republish the advertisement and extend the local recruitment period. LD will also consider rejecting the application.

Upon completion of the local recruitment procedures, employers must report the results to LD. LD will contact each of the unsuccessful local job seekers to verify the interview details and confirm if the reasons for not employing the job seekers as reported by the employers are consistent with the facts and reasonable, so as to assess whether the employers have sincerity in recruiting local workers. If there is evidence showing that an employer has breached the requirements of local recruitment, refused to interview or employ qualified local job seekers without reasonable grounds, or breached other ESLS requirements, LD will reject the application, and consider imposing administrative sanction. Depending on the nature of the breach(es), LD will refuse to process applications subsequently submitted by the employer (with a debarment period of up to 2 years). Approvals for importation of labour previously granted may be withdrawn.

**Numbers of applications received, approved and rejected under ESLS in 2025:  
a breakdown by industry sector**

<b>Industry sector<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of applications received*</b>	<b>No. of applications approved*</b>	<b>No. of applications rejected*</b>
1. Agriculture and Fisheries	383	321	1
2. Manufacturing	1 089	867	0
3. Construction	0	0	0
4. Import/Export Trades and Wholesale	1 112	711	2
(i) <i>Import/Export Trades</i>	(640)	(388)	(2)
(ii) <i>Wholesale</i>	(472)	(323)	(0)
5. Retail, Accommodation and Food Services	5 877	4 375	30
(i) <i>Retail</i>	(1 290)	(876)	(2)
(ii) <i>Accommodation Services</i>	(95)	(72)	(0)
(iii) <i>Food and Beverage Services</i>	(4 492)	(3 427)	(28)
6. Transportation, Storage, Information and Communications	572	394	0
7. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Professional and Business Services	1 711	826	1
8. Public Administration, Social and Personal Services	2 141	1 345	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 885</b>	<b>8 839</b>	<b>42</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of industries may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received towards year-end may be completed in the following year, and hence the numbers of applications approved and rejected within the year do not correspond to the number of applications received in the same year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)003**

**(Question Serial No. 1650)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the employment agencies (EAs) for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs), please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of EAs providing placement services for FDHs (FDH-EAs) in the past 3 years;
- (b) The number of complaints against FDH-EAs handled in each of the past 3 years; the respective numbers of cases lodged by FDHs and employers; the reasons for complaints;
- (c) The number of staff responsible for conducting inspections to FDH-EAs in each of the past 3 years; the number of inspections and the expenditure; their proportion to the total departmental expenses; and specifically how the inspection and regulation of FDH-EAs will be stepped up and the estimated expenditure in the 2026-27 financial year;
- (d) The number of non-compliance cases detected in inspections in each of the past 3 years; the details of the non-compliances and penalties; and
- (e) The number of prosecutions taken out against non-compliance cases in each of the past 3 years; the details of the prosecutions and penalties.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- (a) From 2023 to 2025, the numbers of employment agencies (EAs) providing placement services for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) (FDH-EAs) in each year were 1 746, 1 826 and 1 963 respectively.
- (b) From 2023 to 2025, the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department (LD) in each year received 267, 255 and 288 complaints against FDH-EAs respectively. These complaints mainly involved non-compliance with the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies (CoP), unsatisfactory service quality, issues

concerning refund of service fees, suspected misconduct of inducing FDHs to “job-hop”, overcharging commission from FDHs, unlicensed operation, etc. LD does not keep a breakdown of the complaints by identity of complainants.

- (c) From 2023 to 2025, the numbers of inspections to FDH-EAs conducted by LD in each year were 1 688, 1 656 and 1 704 respectively.

From 2023-24 to 2025-26, EAA’s staff establishment and expenditure are set out at Annex. As the staff of EAA are responsible for performing licensing-related duties, conducting inspections to EAs, investigating complaints, carrying out the related publicity and educational work, etc., the manpower involved in conducting inspections to FDH-EAs cannot be separately identified.

For 2026-27, EAA’s staff establishment comprises 26 Labour Officer Grade and 9 Clerical Grade posts. The staff cost is \$25.57 million and the operating expenses are \$5.85 million. In 2026-27, EAA will continue to closely monitor the implementation of the CoP, and will, through licensing, inspection and complaint investigation, ensure that EAs comply with Part XII of the Employment Ordinance, the Employment Agency Regulations (EAR), and the requirements and standards as set out in the CoP.

- (d) From 2023 to 2025, 883, 747 and 683 inspections were conducted in each year respectively. The irregularities detected from the inspections mainly included failure to comply with the requirements and standards as set out in the CoP, failure to display the licence or the schedule under EAR specifying the maximum commission which may be received from job seekers, failure to maintain proper records, etc. LD has issued verbal and/or written warnings to all non-compliant EAs to urge for rectification. LD will take out prosecution against an EA, or revoke or refuse to issue or renew its licence if there is sufficient evidence to prove that the EA has breached the law or failed to comply with the CoP.
- (e) From 2023 to 2025, LD in each year prosecuted 3, 6 and 2 FDH-EAs respectively. The irregularities mainly involved unlicensed operation of EAs, overcharging commission from FDHs, furnishing information which was known or reasonably ought to be known to be false or misleading in the material particular when submitting an application for renewal of licence, failure to notify LD of changes in the place of business within the statutory timeframe, etc. All the above 11 cases were convicted, with 1 case resulting in a person sentenced to a community service order by the court for unlicensed operation of EA, while the remaining cases were fined by the court.

**Staff establishment and expenditure of EAA of LD from 2023-24 to 2025-26**

	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>
No. of Labour Officer Grade staff	26	26	26
No. of Clerical Grade staff	9	9	9
Staff cost (\$million)	23.84	24.82	25.57
Operating expenses (\$million)	7.59	9.63	5.26 (Revised estimate)

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)004**

**(Question Serial No. 1681)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 246 of the Budget Speech that under the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM), employers will, for employing each eligible person, receive a maximum allowance of \$5,000 per month for 3 months to 12 months. Nearly 4 500 placements were subsidised under EPEM last year. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The actual subsidy expenditure on the nearly 4 500 placements under EPEM last year, and the percentage share of subsidy for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to the subsidy for these placements;
- (b) Whether the Government has kept track of data to analyse the average retention rate of older and middle-aged employees in the SMEs after the allowance period?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

In 2025, there were 4 491 eligible placements and 2 980 preliminary applications for OJT allowance recorded under EPEM. In the same year, LD issued 2 962 approvals-in-principle for the preliminary applications for OJT allowance submitted by employers (approvals-in-principle of some preliminary applications were issued in the next year) and disbursed \$43 million of OJT allowance to employers. LD does not keep a breakdown of employers who received OJT allowance by their business scale.

- (b) LD conducts surveys regularly to find out the retention status of those placed into employment under EPEM. According to the surveys conducted up to December 2025, 83% of the employees who received OJT under EPEM had stayed in employment for 4 months or more, and 70% for 6 months or longer. LD does not keep a breakdown of participating employers under EPEM by their business scale.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)005**

**(Question Serial No. 1682)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 245 of the Budget Speech that over 37 000 placements have been recorded under the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) since its launch one and a half years ago, and the provision for the REA Scheme will be increased to \$222 million in the coming financial year. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The actual subsidy expenditure since the launch of the REA Scheme?
- (b) Of the 37 000 placements recorded since its launch, what is the proportion of employers by small and medium enterprises; and how will the additional provision be allocated to benefit more job seekers?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. Each eligible participant may receive a maximum re-employment allowance (REA) of \$20,000 during the implementation of the REA Scheme.

The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. During the same period, LD received 28 867 applications for REA and processed 24 591 applications involving around \$237 million of REA.

- (b) In 2026-27, the estimated expenditure for the disbursement of REA to eligible participants is \$222 million. LD does not maintain a breakdown of employers hiring the participants of the REA Scheme by their business scale.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)006**

**(Question Serial No. 2488)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department (LD) states in its aim that it provides voluntary conciliation service to assist employers and employees to resolve labour disputes and claims, and administers the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF) to provide ex gratia payments to employees affected by business closures. Regarding PWIF, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please tabulate the respective numbers of applications processed and approved by PWIF, and the percentage of approved applications in those processed in each of the past 5 years;
- (b) Please tabulate the number of applications approved by PWIF and its percentage in the total number of applications in each of the past 5 years with a breakdown by industry sector; as well as the amount involved for each industry sector and its percentage in the total amount applied for;
- (c) Please tabulate the total amount granted by PWIF and the average amount approved per application, as well as the year-on-year percentage change in each of the past 5 years;
- (d) Please tabulate the financial position of PWIF (income, expenditure, surplus/deficit, accumulated surplus) in each of the past 5 years;
- (e) What is the number of cases of suspected abuse of PWIF referred by LD to law enforcement departments, the numbers of successful prosecutions and convictions, and the number of successful applications to the court for disqualifying responsible individuals of companies from being directors and taking part in the formation or management of a company in each of the past 5 years;
- (f) As there are views pointing out that the abuse of PWIF has become increasingly prevalent in recent years, turning it into some sort of "ATM" for some employers to maliciously default on wage payments, whether the Government will consider

increasing the penalties for PWIF abuse by legislative amendments so as enhance deterrence; if yes, what are the details and timetable; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- (a) From 2021 to 2025, the numbers of applications processed and approved by the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF) as well as the percentage of approved applications in those processed in each year are as follows:

Year	No. of applications processed	No. of applications approved	Percentage of approved applications in those processed (%)
2021	3 738	3 388	90.6
2022	2 447	2 167	88.6
2023	3 904	3 545	90.8
2024	4 962	4 671	94.1
2025	5 917	5 533	93.5

- (b) From 2021 to 2025, a breakdown of the number of applications approved and the amount granted by PWIF in each year (including applications received in the same year or before) by industry sector is at Annex 1.
- (c) From 2021 to 2025, the total amount of ex gratia payment granted by PWIF and the average amount per application approved in each year are at Annex 2.
- (d) PWIF's financial position from 2021-22 to 2025-26 is at follows:

Year	Income (\$million)	Expenditure (\$million)	Surplus/(Deficit) (\$million)	Accumulated surplus (\$million)
2021-22	462.4	89.9	372.5	6,670.5
2022-23	462.1	164.2	297.9	6,968.5
2023-24	568.4	219.1	349.3	7,317.8
2024-25	320.6#	350.9	(30.3)	7,287.5
2025-26*	199.3#	270.4	(71.1)	7,216.4

# PWIF's sources of income mainly comprise the annual business registration (BR) levy, money recovered by subrogation and bank interest income. To relieve the impact on business due to the increase of BR fee as announced in the 2024-25 Budget, the Government waives the BR levy of \$150 payable to PWIF by enterprises for 2 years starting from 1 April 2024.

\* Figures as at February 2026.

- (e) From 2021 to 2025, the Labour Department (LD) referred a total of 11 cases involving suspected abuse of PWIF to law enforcement departments. Of these, investigations into 4 cases have been completed, and no evidence indicating abuse of PWIF was found. The remaining cases are still being followed up.

During the same period, of the cases referred by LD, the Official Receiver's Office (ORO) disqualified through the court a total of 9 company directors and/or responsible persons from assuming a director of a company and from taking part in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

- (f) LD is highly concerned of suspected abuse of PWIF by employers, and has set up an inter-departmental Task Force comprising representatives from LD, the Commercial Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) and ORO to strengthen investigation of suspicious cases.

LD has put in place a stringent mechanism to vet every application submitted to PWIF, including the identification of duplicate or suspicious applications. LD pays attention to whether the responsible persons of a company are involved in any other unlawful acts while operating the business and managing the finance of the company. If it is found that anyone is suspected of illegal transfer of assets, theft of company money, evasion of liabilities by deception, failure to keep proper accounting records, etc., or if anyone makes a false statement, produces any false documents or records with the intent to deceive, LD will, depending on the specific details of the case, refer such cases to the Police and/or ORO for follow-up. When there is sufficient evidence, the law enforcement departments will take out prosecution in accordance with the Theft Ordinance, the Crimes Ordinance, and other legislation, etc. Upon conviction, the maximum penalty is imprisonment for 14 years (for example, in the case of fraud).

In addition, as stipulated under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Ordinance, any person who, in providing information in respect of a PWIF application, makes any statement which he knows to be false, or recklessly makes a false statement, or produces any false documents or records with the intent to deceive, may be prosecuted. Upon conviction, the maximum penalty is a fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for 3 months.

**Number of applications approved and the amount of payment granted by PWIF  
from 2021 to 2025**

From 2021 to 2025, a breakdown of the number of applications approved and the amount of payment granted by PWIF in each year (including applications received in the same year or before) by industry sector is as follows:

Year	Industry sector	No. of applications approved	Percentage	Amount granted (\$million)	Percentage
2021	Food and beverage service activities	1 014	30%	26.9	24%
	Retail	446	13%	17.8	16%
	Construction	410	12%	11.5	10%
	Import and export trade	269	8%	11.8	11%
	Sports and other entertainment activities	266	8%	6.2	5%
	Other personal service activities	130	4%	4.4	4%
	Financial service activities (except insurance and pension funding)	85	3%	3.7	3%
	Others	768	22%	30.8	27%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3 388</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>113.1</b>	<b>100%</b>
2022	Construction	570	26%	15.1	20%
	Food and beverage service activities	463	21%	14.8	20%
	Printing and reproduction of recorded media	161	7%	6.7	9%
	Travel agency, reservation service and related activities	123	6%	3.6	5%
	Retail	106	5%	3.6	5%
	Education	78	4%	3.9	5%
	Financial service activities (except insurance and pension funding)	63	3%	2.9	4%
	Others	603	28%	24.1	32%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2 167</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>74.7</b>	<b>100%</b>

Year	Industry sector	No. of applications approved	Percentage	Amount granted (\$million)	Percentage
2023	Food and beverage service activities	929	26%	35.0	23%
	Construction	539	15%	22.8	15%
	Postal and courier activities	293	9%	10.6	7%
	Travel agency, reservation service and related activities	225	6%	10.9	7%
	Retail	197	6%	9.0	6%
	Other personal service activities	191	5%	7.3	5%
	Human health activities	148	4%	3.5	2%
	Others	1 023	29%	55.7	35%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3 545</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>154.8</b>	<b>100%</b>
2024	Food and beverage service activities	1 172	25%	45.5	18%
	Construction	746	16%	43.6	18%
	Publishing activities	610	13%	31.5	13%
	Manufacture of food products	440	9%	27.2	11%
	Retail	202	4%	10.2	4%
	Education	176	4%	8.6	3%
	Other personal service activities	148	3%	6.5	3%
	Others	1 177	26%	74.0	30%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4 671</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>247.1</b>	<b>100%</b>
2025	Food and beverage service activities	1 640	30%	66.3	25%
	Construction	1 375	25%	60.4	23%
	Sports and other entertainment activities	852	15%	49.3	19%
	Retail	281	5%	11.9	4%
	Import and export trade	146	3%	9.1	3%
	Financial service activities (except insurance and pension funding)	142	3%	14.1	5%
	Employment activities	117	2%	5.4	2%
	Others	980	17%	50.5	19%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5 533</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>267.0</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Total amount of ex gratia payment granted by PWIF and  
average amount per application approved from 2021 to 2025**

From 2021 to 2025, the total amount of ex gratia payment granted by PWIF and the average amount per application approved in each year are as follows:

Year	Total amount of ex gratia payment granted (\$million)	Year-on-year percentage change	Average amount per application approved (\$)	Year-on-year percentage change
2021	113.1	+44%	33,369	+3%
2022	74.7	-34%	34,489	+3%
2023	154.8	+107%	43,671	+27%
2024	247.1	+60%	52,911	+21%
2025	267.0	+8%	48,255	-9%

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)007**

**(Question Serial No. 2500)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Reimbursement of Maternity Leave Pay Scheme (the Scheme), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please set out in tabulated form, under the Scheme in 2024 and 2025,
  - (i) the numbers of applications received;
  - (ii) the numbers of applications approved;
  - (iii) the numbers of applications rejected;
- (b) Please set out in tabulated form, under the Scheme in 2024 and 2025,
  - (i) the staff establishment and administrative expenses;
  - (ii) the amount of reimbursements made each year;
- (c) For every \$10,000 of reimbursement amount, please set out the respective numbers of approved applications in 2024 and 2025;

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) In 2024 and 2025, the numbers of applications received, approved and rejected under the Reimbursement of Maternity Leave Pay (RMLP) Scheme are as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
(i) No. of applications received	7 600	7 531
(ii) No. of applications approved*	7 050	7 670
(iii) No. of applications rejected	4	38

\* The numbers of applications approved include those received in the previous year.

- (b) The Employment Benefits Support Division (EBSD) of the Labour Department has been responsible for the implementation of the RMLP Scheme since April 2024. As the staff of EBSD have to take up other duties in addition to the work of the RMLP Scheme,

the staff establishment and administrative expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

The RMLP Scheme disbursed reimbursements of \$183 million and \$207 million in 2024 and 2025 respectively.

- (c) The numbers of applications approved in 2024 and 2025 with a breakdown by reimbursement amount are as follows:

<b>Reimbursement amount</b>	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Below \$10,000	298	270
\$10,000 – below \$20,000	3 049	3 167
\$20,000 – below \$30,000	1 702	1 873
\$30,000 – below \$40,000	910	976
\$40,000 – below \$50,000	459	589
\$50,000 – below \$60,000	258	364
\$60,000 – below \$70,000	127	160
\$70,000 – below \$80,000	50	74
\$80,000	197	197
Total	7 050	7 670

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)008**

**(Question Serial No. 0669)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Since the launch of ESLS,
- (i) the number of applications received by the Government (and the number of imported workers involved);
  - (ii) the number of applications approved by the Government (and the number of imported workers involved);
  - (iii) the number of applications rejected by the Government (and the number of imported workers involved); and
  - (iv) the number of imported workers who have arrived to work in Hong Kong, with a tabulated breakdown by
    - (1) the 26 job categories generally excluded under the Supplementary Labour Scheme;
    - (2) unskilled or low-skilled posts (including cleaner, security guard, room attendant, etc.); and
    - (3) other posts;
- (b) Since the launch of ESLS, the number of imported workers approved in the catering industry, with a breakdown by post;
- (c) Since the launch of ESLS, the number of vacancies in the catering industry available at the job centres of the Labour Department (LD) and job fairs organised by LD, as well as the number of applicants for these vacancies, the number of applicants who received employment offers from employers, and the number of applicants who accepted employment offers;
- (d) Many workers in the catering industry indicated that the median wages of various job types in the catering industry under the existing ESLS are far below the reasonable market levels, and that the working conditions offered by employers intending to import workers during recruitment are all the more unreasonable, leading many local workers

to decline the offers, and resulting in manpower mismatch in the employment market. Has the Government plans to introduce measures to address the above situation? If yes, what are the details; if no, what are the reasons;

- (e) The total number of complaints received by LD from imported workers arrived in Hong Kong about infringement of their labour rights;
- (f) Will the Government consider stepping up administrative sanctions against employers violating the requirements of ESLS, such as imposing a permanent ban on labour importation? If yes, what are the details; if no, what are the reasons; and
- (g) Will the Government explore resuming the arrangement under which the 26 designated job categories as well as unskilled or low-skilled posts were prohibited from importing labour, so as to safeguard the employment opportunities of workers in the related industry sectors? If yes, what are the details; if no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023. As at February 2026, a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers were received. During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved while 91 applications involving 426 imported workers were rejected. Breakdowns of the numbers of imported workers applied for, approved, and rejected under ESLS by the 26 job categories and unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS), and other posts are set out at Annex 1.

During the same period, 6 450 applications from the food and beverage services industry involving 41 962 imported workers were approved. A breakdown of the number of imported workers approved for the food and beverage services industry by job category is set out at Annex 2.

As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS, and a breakdown by major job category is set out at Annex 3.

- (c) Since 10 September 2025, LD has implemented new measures, requiring employers applying to import waiters/waitresses and junior cooks to join a job fair held at a job centre specified by LD once a week during the local recruitment period (which has been extended from 4 weeks to 6 weeks from 18 September) and conduct job interviews on the spot. As at February 2026, employers participating in the job fairs offered a total of 2 396 vacancies (including 792 waiter/waitress vacancies, 773 junior cook vacancies, and 831 vacancies in other positions such as dishwasher and cleaner), and a total of 547 on-the-spot interviews were conducted during the local recruitment period. Among the confirmed results of job interviews, employers made offers to 179 local job seekers, of whom 9 accepted the offers and were successfully employed; the remaining 170 declined the offers, mainly due to reasons such as working hours being too early/late, having

found another job, not accepting/dissatisfied with the job nature, and not accepting/dissatisfied with shift work requirements.

- (d) To safeguard the employment priority for local workers, LD stringently processes each ESLS application, and conducts initial screenings for each post under application to ensure that the scope of duties of a job vacancy is reasonable and that the salary offered by an employer reaches the median monthly wage commensurate with the post. LD, in consultation with relevant government bureaux/departments/training bodies/professional organisations, determines the median monthly wages of the posts and make regular adjustments. After passing the initial screening, employers shall adopt the recruitment terms as agreed by LD when hiring local job seekers through any channels during the local recruitment period. LD will impose administrative sanctions against employers violating the requirements of local recruitment, including withdrawing the approvals granted to the employers for labour importation, rejecting the applications concerned and refusing to process applications subsequently submitted by the employers in the following 2 years.
- (e) Since the implementation of ESLS and as at February 2026, LD received a total of 965 complaints, of which 398 involved employment rights or work arrangements of imported workers. LD does not keep a breakdown of complaints by identity of complainants.
- (f)&(g) LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, etc. To facilitate the completion of the review on ESLS in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.

The Government will continue to closely monitor and respond to developments in the employment market, and will implement the arrangements for labour importation in a dynamic and targeted manner, thereby striking an appropriate balance between ensuring employment priority for local workers and maintaining an adequate manpower supply to support economic development.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for, approved and rejected under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by job category**

<b>(I) 26 job categories generally excluded from SLS<sup>®</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers rejected*</b>
1. Waiter/Waitress	22 203	14 065	33
2. Junior Cook	18 390	10 430	43
3. Sales Assistant	12 377	7 697	32
4. Warehouse Keeper	9 025	5 025	3
5. Clerical Worker	4 569	2 664	12
6. Food Processing Worker	4 299	2 880	-
7. Driver	3 900	1 986	1
8. Receptionist	3 050	1 778	4
9. Sales Representative	1 593	603	1
10. Washer	964	693	-
11. Delivery Worker	933	439	-
12. Cashier	896	406	-
13. Hair Stylist	726	350	-
14. Telephone Operator	543	324	-
15. Presser	304	174	-
16. Spray Paint Worker	171	26	-
17. Demolition Worker	164	78	-
18. Computer/Key Punch Operator	109	5	-
19. Inspection Operative	46	25	-
20. Linen Attendant	44	10	-
21. Drain Layer	31	27	-
22. Cutter	31	19	-
23. Leakage Worker	27	2	-
24. Teller	24	0	-
25. Mason	16	7	-
26. Cutting Room Operative	2	1	-
Subtotal	84 437	49 714	129

<b>(II) Unskilled or low-skilled posts<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers rejected*</b>
1. Cleaner	17 804	7 067	3
2. Security Guard	14 847	5 575	-
3. Dish Washer	9 075	5 653	18
4. Room Attendant	1 461	1 010	-
5. Others	1 748	541	-
Subtotal	44 935	19 846	21
<b>(III) Other posts<sup>@</sup></b>			
1. Cook	13 001	8 112	41
2. Bartender/Soda Fountain Captain	4 068	2 174	1
3. Fitter/Mechanical Fitter	2 757	2 087	2
4. Delivery Gangleader/Foreman	2 583	1 621	4
5. Others	30 208	18 587	228
Subtotal	52 617	32 581	276
<b>Total</b>	<b>181 989</b>	<b>102 141</b>	<b>426</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the numbers of imported workers approved and rejected do not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

**Numbers of imported workers approved  
in the food and beverage services industry under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by job category**

Job category <sup>@</sup>	No. of imported workers approved*
1. Waiter/Waitress <sup>#</sup>	13 347
2. Junior Cook <sup>#</sup>	9 390
3. Cook	7 695
4. Dish Washer <sup>^</sup>	5 122
5. Bartender/Soda Fountain Captain	2 035
6. Captain	749
7. Food Processing Worker <sup>#</sup>	633
8. Sales Assistant <sup>#</sup>	556
9. Receptionist <sup>#</sup>	545
10. Others	1 890
<b>Total</b>	<b>41 962</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the number of imported workers approved does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>#</sup> Falling within the 26 job categories generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

<sup>^</sup> Falling within the unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

**Number of imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS:  
a breakdown by major job category  
(as at February 2026)**

Job category	No. of imported workers working in Hong Kong*
1. Waiter/Waitress	7 871
2. Junior Cook	6 196
3. Cook	4 222
4. Cleaner	2 984
5. Dish Washer	2 902
6. Warehouse Keeper	2 374
7. Sales Assistant	2 360
8. Security Guard	2 000
9. Food Processing Worker	1 457
10. Others	16 203
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 569</b>

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The above figures on imported workers working in Hong Kong include those workers approved to work in Hong Kong under SLS before 4 September 2023 and under ESLS thereafter.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)009**

**(Question Serial No. 0670)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

On supporting the employment of the elderly and middle-aged, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) In each of the past 2 years and this year so far,
- (i) the number of placements eligible for joining the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (the Employment Programme), and, of which
  - (ii) the number of cases in which employers had submitted preliminary applications for on-the-job training (OJT) (and its percentage) and
  - (iii) the number of cases which had been approved in principle (and its percentage in the total number of cases of preliminary application for OJT), with a tabulated breakdown by age group of the employees involved, i.e.
    - (1) 40 to 44,
    - (2) 45 to 49,
    - (3) 50 to 54,
    - (4) 55 to 59,
    - (5) 60 to 64, and
    - (6) 65 and above;
- (b) Among cases with approvals-in-principle mentioned under item (a)(iii), the number of cases in which OJT allowance was granted in each year and its percentage, with a tabulated breakdown by the concerned employees'
- (i) age group,
  - (ii) mode of employment (i.e. full-time or part-time),
  - (iii) industry,
  - (iv) occupation,
  - (v) salary level, and
  - (vi) educational attainment;
- (c) Among the cases mentioned under item (b) in which OJT allowance was granted in each year, the respective numbers and percentages of cases in which the employees stayed in

employment upon completion of OJT for 4 months to less than 6 months and 6 months or more, with a breakdown by the concerned employees’

- (i) age group;
- (ii) mode of employment (i.e. full-time or part-time); and
- (iii) industry;

- (d) Whether the Government will consider further extending the OJT period under the Employment Programme and raising the cap of monthly OJT allowance; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

From 2024 to 2026 (as at February), there were respectively 4 443, 4 491 and 670 eligible placements under EPEM each year. In the same period, LD received respectively 2 556, 2 980 and 431 preliminary applications for OJT allowance each year, and issued 2 588, 2 962 and 448 approvals-in-principle each year (approvals-in-principle of some preliminary applications were issued in the next year). The numbers of placements and preliminary applications for OJT allowance received, and approvals-in-principle issued with a breakdown by age of employees are at Annex 1 and Annex 2.

- (b) From 2024 to 2026 (as at February), there were respectively 1 832, 2 083 and 313 placements with OJT allowance granted under EPEM each year (OJT allowance of some approval-in-principle cases was granted in the next year). Breakdowns of placements with OJT allowance granted by age, mode of employment, industry, occupation, salary range and educational attainment of employees are at Annex 3.
- (c) LD conducts surveys regularly to find out the retention status of those placed into employment under EPEM. According to the surveys conducted up to December 2025, a breakdown of placements with OJT allowance granted under EPEM in 2023 and 2024 by retention period of employees is at Annex 4.
- (d) LD is conducting a mid-term review of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme, along with EPEM, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Breakdown of eligible placements and  
preliminary applications for OJT allowance under EPEM  
by age of employees from 2024 to 2026 (as at February)**

Age	No. of placements (%) No. of preliminary applications for OJT allowance (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
40-44	530 (12%)	541 (12%)	78 (12%)
	238 (9%)	314 (11%)	45 (10%)
45-49	625 (14%)	667 (15%)	102 (15%)
	284 (11%)	379 (13%)	59 (14%)
50-54	840 (19%)	835 (19%)	114 (17%)
	416 (16%)	495 (17%)	65 (15%)
55-59	916 (21%)	889 (20%)	124 (19%)
	514 (20%)	574 (19%)	77 (18%)
60-64	937 (21%)	957 (21%)	163 (24%)
	606 (24%)	714 (24%)	109 (25%)
65 or above	595 (13%)	602 (13%)	89 (13%)
	498 (19%)	504 (17%)	76 (18%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 443 (100%)</b>	<b>4 491 (100%)</b>	<b>670 (100%)</b>
	<b>2 556 (100%)</b>	<b>2 980 (100%)</b>	<b>431 (100%)</b>

Note : Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

**Breakdown of placements under EPEM with  
approvals-in-principle issued  
by age of employees from 2024 to 2026 (as at February)**

Age	No. of placements with approvals-in-principle (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
40-44	247 (10%)	312 (11%)	50 (11%)
45-49	294 (11%)	378 (13%)	56 (13%)
50-54	425 (16%)	488 (16%)	72 (16%)
55-59	509 (20%)	572 (19%)	78 (17%)
60-64	614 (24%)	709 (24%)	116 (26%)
65 or above	499 (19%)	503 (17%)	76 (17%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 588 (100%)</b>	<b>2 962 (100%)</b>	<b>448 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPEM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

**Breakdowns of placements under EPEM with OJT allowance  
granted by age, mode of employment, industry,  
occupation, salary range and educational attainment of employees  
from 2024 to 2026 (as at February)**

## (i) By age

Age	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
40-44	178 (10%)	220 (11%)	33 (11%)
45-49	194 (11%)	280 (13%)	45 (14%)
50-54	294 (16%)	376 (18%)	52 (17%)
55-59	335 (18%)	447 (21%)	69 (22%)
60-64	473 (26%)	434 (21%)	65 (21%)
65 or above	358 (20%)	326 (16%)	49 (16%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>	<b>313 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPEM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

## (ii) By mode of employment

Mode of employment	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Full-time	1 644 (90%)	1 908 (92%)	288 (92%)
Part-time	188 (10%)	175 (8%)	25 (8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>	<b>313 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPEM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

(iii) By industry

Industry	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Real estate and business services	601 (33%)	802 (39%)	141 (45%)
Community, social and personal services	375 (20%)	307 (15%)	62 (20%)
Manufacturing	88 (5%)	115 (6%)	12 (4%)
Wholesale and retail trades	178 (10%)	170 (8%)	18 (6%)
Import and export trades	155 (8%)	114 (5%)	11 (4%)
Restaurants and hotels	87 (5%)	166 (8%)	18 (6%)
Construction	87 (5%)	97 (5%)	7 (2%)
Transport, storage and communications	116 (6%)	178 (9%)	22 (7%)
Others	145 (8%)	134 (6%)	22 (7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>	<b>313 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPDM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

(iv) By occupation

Occupation	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Managers and administrators, professionals and associate professionals	307 (17%)	302 (14%)	44 (14%)
Clerical support workers	379 (21%)	462 (22%)	61 (19%)
Services workers and shop sales workers	248 (14%)	318 (15%)	45 (14%)
Agricultural and fishery workers as well as craft and related workers	145 (8%)	136 (7%)	29 (9%)
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	98 (5%)	134 (6%)	19 (6%)
Elementary occupations	655 (36%)	731 (35%)	115 (37%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>	<b>313 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPDM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

(v) By salary range

Monthly salary	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Below \$5,000	32 (2%)	28 (1%)	4 (1%)
\$5,000-below \$10,000	271 (15%)	372 (18%)	40 (13%)
\$10,000-below \$15,000	867 (47%)	830 (40%)	125 (40%)
\$15,000-below \$20,000	495 (27%)	643 (31%)	124 (40%)
\$20,000-below \$25,000	109 (6%)	146 (7%)	16 (5%)
\$25,000-below \$30,000	34 (2%)	37 (2%)	2 (1%)
\$30,000 or above	24 (1%)	27 (1%)	2 (1%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>	<b>313 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPEM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

(vi) By educational attainment

Educational attainment	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Secondary 3 or below	691 (38%)	728 (35%)	121 (39%)
Secondary 4-7	768 (42%)	950 (46%)	125 (40%)
Diploma and Certificate	194 (11%)	200 (10%)	33 (11%)
Sub-degree	13 (1%)	19 (1%)	4 (1%)
Bachelor's Degree	127 (7%)	134 (6%)	21 (7%)
Master's Degree or above	39 (2%)	52 (2%)	9 (3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>	<b>313 (100%)</b>

Note (1): Approvals-in-principle and OJT allowance for some preliminary applications under EPDM were granted in the next year.

Note (2): Individual percentages may not add up to the total owing to rounding.

**Breakdown of placements under EPEM  
with OJT allowance granted by retention period  
in 2023 and 2024**

<b>Retention period</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>	
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
4 months or more	1 416	2 082
6 months or more	1 225	1 884

Note: Employees in some of the placements did not receive OJT in the same year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)010**

**(Question Serial No. 2475)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of applications received under PWIF, as well as the number of applications approved and the amount granted in each of the past 2 years and this year so far, with a breakdown by industry sector;
- (b) The average amount of ex gratia payment granted per approved application under PWIF in each of the past 2 years and this year so far;
- (c) The average processing time per PWIF application in each of the past 2 years and this year so far, and the time taken in respect of the case requiring the longest processing time; and
- (d) The number of cases involving suspected abuse of PWIF referred by the Labour Department to the Police Force in the past 2 years and this year so far. Are there any substantiated cases involving abuse of PWIF recorded?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (a) Breakdowns of the numbers of applications received and approved as well as the amount granted under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF) in each year from 2024 to 2026 (as at February) by industry sector are at Annex.
- (b) The average amounts of ex gratia payment granted per approved application under PWIF were \$52,911, \$48,255 and \$46,350 respectively in each year from 2024 to 2026 (as at February).

- (c) A breakdown of the number of applications approved under PWIF (including applications received before that year and then approved in that year) in each year from 2024 to 2026 (as at February) by the time required for effecting payment is as follows:

Time required for effecting payment*	No. of applications approved		
	2024	2025	January to February 2026
4 weeks or less	4 435	4 746	799
More than 4 weeks to 6 weeks	194	757	211
More than 6 weeks to 8 weeks	42	30	1
Total	4 671	5 533	1 011

\* Calculated upon receipt of all information required for application processing by the Labour Department (LD).

- (d) From 2024 to 2026 (as at February), LD referred a total of 7 cases involving suspected abuse of PWIF to the Police. Investigation into 1 case has been completed and no evidence indicating abuse of PWIF was found, while the remaining cases are still being followed up.

**Breakdown of the numbers of applications received and approved  
and the amount granted under PWIF  
by industry sector from 2024 to February 2026**

(i) Number of applications received

Year	Industry sector	No. of applications
2024	Food and beverage service activities	1 195
	Construction	909
	Sports and other entertainment activities	763
	Manufacture of food products	380
	Retail	242
	Import and export trade	173
	Education	167
	Others	1 286
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5 115</b>
2025	Food and beverage service activities	1 976
	Construction	1 782
	Retail	263
	Manufacture of food products	240
	Import and export trade	139
	Sports and other entertainment activities	127
	Other personal service activities	118
	Others	1 197
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5 842</b>
January to February 2026	Food and beverage service activities	358
	Construction	319
	Wholesale	28
	Retail	25
	Other professional, scientific and technical activities	24
	Information technology service activities	21
	Other personal service activities	20
	Others	138
	<b>Total</b>	<b>933</b>

(ii) Number of applications approved and the amount granted (including applications received in the same year or earlier)

Year	Industry sector	No. of applications approved	Amount granted (\$million)
2024	Food and beverage service activities	1 172	45.5
	Construction	746	43.6
	Publishing activities	610	31.5
	Manufacture of food products	440	27.2
	Retail	202	10.2
	Education	176	8.6
	Other personal service activities	148	6.5
	Others	1 177	74.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4 671</b>	<b>247.1</b>
2025	Food and beverage service activities	1 640	66.3
	Construction	1 375	60.4
	Sports and other entertainment activities	852	49.3
	Retail	281	11.9
	Import and export trade	146	9.1
	Financial service activities (except insurance and pension funding)	142	14.1
	Employment activities	117	5.4
	Others	980	50.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5 533</b>	<b>267.0</b>
January to February 2026	Food and beverage service activities	415	15.9
	Manufacture of food products	204	12.8
	Construction	117	3.6
	Activities of membership organisations	47	3.5
	Security and investigation activities	42	0.8
	Employment activities	23	1.0
	Retail	19	1.2
	Others	144	8.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1 011</b>	<b>46.9</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)011**

**(Question Serial No. 2476)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The estimated provision and actual expenditure for implementing the REA Scheme in each of the past years;
- (b) The numbers of applications received and successful placements since the launch of the REA Scheme, with a breakdown by participants'
  - (i) age group, i.e.
    - (1) 40-44,
    - (2) 45-49,
    - (3) 50-54,
    - (4) 55-59,
    - (5) 60-64, and
    - (6) 65 and above;
  - (ii) industry;
  - (iii) mode of employment (i.e. full-time job, part-time job and qualified "casual work"), and
  - (iv) occupation;
- (c) The numbers of participants who received the first tranche and the second tranche of allowances since the launch of the REA Scheme, with a tabulated breakdown by mode of employment; and
- (d) In view of the forthcoming mid-term evaluation of the REA Scheme, whether the Government will consider conducting a comprehensive review of the mode and amount of allowance, including introducing allowance for participants who have worked for 18 and 24 consecutive months, as well as provision of additional allowance for participants engaged in occupations facing manpower shortage, etc.; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. In 2024-25 and 2025-26 (as at February), the total expenditures of the REA Scheme were \$29 million and \$227 million respectively. In 2026-27, the estimated expenditure of the REA Scheme is \$230 million.
- (b) The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. A breakdown of the number of participants by age is at Annex 1; and breakdowns of placements by age, industry, mode of employment and occupation of participants are at Annex 2.
- (c) Each eligible participant who has worked full-time for 6 consecutive months will be provided with a first tranche of re-employment allowance (REA) of \$10,000, while those who have worked full-time for 12 consecutive months will be given an additional second tranche of REA of \$10,000. Half-rate REA will be given to those who have worked part-time. Each eligible participant may receive a maximum REA of \$20,000 during the implementation of the REA Scheme. As at February 2026, LD approved a total of 24 591 applications for REA, involving 17 185 participants who completed 6 months of work and 7 399 participants who completed 12 months of work. A breakdown of placements with REA approved by mode of employment of participants is at Annex 3.
- (d) LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Breakdown of the number of participants under the REA Scheme  
by age from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
40 - 44	14 176
45 - 49	13 200
50 - 54	13 502
55 - 59	12 237
60 - 64	10 312
65 or above	5 507
<b>Total</b>	<b>68 934</b>

**Breakdown of placements under the REA Scheme  
by age, industry, mode of employment,  
and occupation of participants from July 2024 to February 2026**

## (i) By age

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
40 - 44	7 795
45 - 49	7 594
50 - 54	8 122
55 - 59	7 545
60 - 64	6 504
65 or above	3 069
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

## (ii) By industry

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Real estate and business services	13 526
Community, social and personal services	10 781
Construction	2 072
Wholesale and retail trades	3 315
Import and export trades	826
Restaurants and hotels	4 549
Manufacturing	790
Transport, storage and communications	2 114
Others	2 656
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

(iii) By mode of employment

<b>Mode of employment</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Full-time	34 010
Part-time	4 174
Qualified casual work	2 445
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

(iv) By occupation

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Managers and administrators	2 782
Professionals and associate professionals	3 377
Clerical support workers	5 833
Service workers	12 291
Shop sales workers	2 338
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	62
Craft and related workers	959
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	1 374
Elementary occupations	9 296
Others	2 317
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

**Breakdown of placements with REA approved under the REA Scheme  
by mode of employment of participants  
from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Mode of employment</b>	<b>No. of placements with REA approved *</b>	
	First tranche of REA	Second tranche of REA
Full-time	16 997	7 836
Part-time	1 702	714
Qualified casual work	533	188
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 232</b>	<b>8 738</b>

\* Some of the participants with REA approved are involved in more than 1 placement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)012**

**(Question Serial No. 2737)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Under section 53(1) of the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations (Cap. 59I), where, in any construction site, any flammable liquid or goods which involves danger from fire is intended to be used, the Commissioner for Labour may by order in writing prohibit smoking in such construction site. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of orders in writing issued by the Commissioner for Labour under section 53(1) in each of the past 5 years and this year so far, as well as the locations and nature of works of the relevant sites respectively;
- (b) How many contractors were prosecuted by the Government for failing to enforce an order in writing issued by the Commissioner in each of the past 5 years and this year so far; and, among those prosecuted cases, what were the number of convicted cases and the penalties imposed respectively; and
- (c) How many employees were prosecuted by the Government for breaching an order in writing issued by the Commissioner in each of the past 5 years and this year so far; and, among those prosecuted cases, what were the number of convicted cases and the penalties imposed respectively?

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) does not keep statistics on the number of orders in writing issued under regulation 53(1) of the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations (Cap. 59I). In response to changes in occupational safety risks, LD is currently enhancing the relevant enforcement database to facilitate future compilation of statistics on the number of relevant orders in writing issued.
- (b)&(c) From 2021 to 31 January 2026, no contractors or employees were prosecuted for

breaching the above orders in writing.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)013**

**(Question Serial No. 3229)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department provides support to ethnic minority (EM) job seekers through the implementation of the Employment Services Ambassador (ESA) Programme for EMs and the Racial Diversity Employment Programme (RDEP). In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the annual numbers of successful placements of participants under the two programmes (the ESA Programme for EMs and RDEP) in the past? Please provide a breakdown by year;
- (b) What is the annual expenditure involved in the above programmes? What are the total expenditure and the related administrative expenses for employment support services for EMs in the past 3 years respectively? What is the annual estimate for the ongoing implementation of these programmes in future; and
- (c) Will the Government set key performance indicators for these programmes? If yes, what are the specific details of related indicators as well as the monitoring and review mechanism?
- (d) Will the Government review the effectiveness of RDEP? What are the detailed arrangements for optimising the pilot services?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) provides diversified and free employment services to job seekers, including ethnic minority (EM) job seekers. LD has also commissioned non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to implement the Racial Diversity Employment Programme (RDEP) to provide one-stop employment support services for EM job seekers through a case management approach. In addition, LD employs EM Employment Assistants to promote and provide employment services to the EM communities at job centres; and implements the

Employment Services Ambassador (ESA) Programme for EMs, under which trainees of the Youth Employment and Training Programme who can communicate in EM languages are employed as ESAs at job centres to enhance their employability. LD also organises employment briefings for EM job seekers as well as large-scale and district-based inclusive job fairs to help EM job seekers secure employment.

The number of placements under RDEP and the number of trainees employed under the ESA Programme for EMs are set out at Annex 1.

The expenditures for RDEP, the employment of EM Employment Assistants, the ESA Programme for EMs and the organisation of large-scale inclusive job fairs from 2023-24 to 2025-26 (as at February 2026), and the estimated expenditure for 2026-27 are set out at Annex 2.

Other than the employment programmes and services mentioned above, the manpower and estimated expenditure involved in employment services provided to EM job seekers have been absorbed within the recurrent operational expenses of LD and cannot be separately identified.

- (c)&(d) LD launched the three-year RDEP in 2020. After reviewing its effectiveness, the Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address the implementation of the regularised RDEP and the introduction of enhancement measures, with the aim of providing one-stop employment support for 400 EMs each year. Since its regularisation in November 2023, RDEP provided employment support to 475 and 500 EMs respectively in 2024 and 2025. LD will continue to monitor the implementation of RDEP and make timely adjustments to the operational details in light of the employment market situation and the views of stakeholders.

As the number of vacancies under the ESA Programme for EMs and the willingness of trainees to receive training are subject to factors such as service demand and the labour market conditions, it is not appropriate to set key performance indicators for the Programme.

**Number of placements under RDEP from 2021 to 2025**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of placements</b>
2021	259
2022	122
2023	129
2024	138
2025	158

**Number of trainees employed under the ESA Programme for EMs from 2021 to 2025**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of trainees employed</b>
2021	17
2022	9
2023	12
2024	3
2025	8

**Expenditures for RDEP, employment of EM Employment Assistants, the ESA Programme for EMs and organisation of large-scale inclusive job fairs from 2023-24 to 2025-26 (as at February 2026) and 2026-27**

## RDEP

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Expenditure (\$million)</b>
2023-24	4.55
2024-25	6.09
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	5.76
2026-27 (estimated expenditure)	8.01

Note: Including staff cost and payment of service fees to NGOs.

## Employment of EM Employment Assistants

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Expenditure (\$million)</b>
2023-24	2.18
2024-25	3.05
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	2.12
2026-27 (estimated expenditure)	2.31

## ESA Programme for EMs

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Expenditure (\$million)</b>
2023-24	1.21
2024-25	0.87
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	0.71
2026-27 (estimated expenditure)	1.66

## Organisation of large-scale inclusive job fairs

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Expenditure (\$million)</b>
2023-24	0.83
2024-25	0.86
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	0.48
2026-27 (estimated expenditure)	0.05

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)014**

**(Question Serial No. 0020)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

On combating illegal employment, would the Government provide the following information:

- (a) The number of inspections/enforcement operations conducted by the Labour Department or those jointly conducted with relevant departments, the average duration of operations (if any), and the relevant number of persons arrested (please provide the respective numbers of illegal workers and employers) in the past 3 years;
- (b) The overall expenditure and staff establishment involved in combating illegal employment by the Government in the past 3 years;
- (c) Please set out the number of reported cases of illegal employment received, the number of targeted combating operations conducted, and the relevant number of persons arrested/prosecuted (please provide the respective numbers of illegal workers and employers) by the Government in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by industry sector; and
- (d) The number of publicity activities launched by the Government in combating illegal employment, number of participants, and expenditure and staff establishment involved in the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Pui-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

- (a)&(c) To deter employers from employing illegal workers, Labour Inspectors (LIs) of the Labour Department (LD) conduct workplace inspections to ensure employers' compliance with labour laws, including checking the identity documents of employees and the employee records kept by employers. From 2023 to 2025, the numbers of workplace inspections conducted by LD in each year were 150 172, 152 671 and 153 370 respectively.

The number of reported cases involving illegal employment received by LD during the same period with a breakdown by industry is at Annex.

LD mounts intelligence-based joint operations with the Immigration Department (ImmD) and the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) from time to time to raid establishments suspected to have been involved in illegal employment. From 2023 to 2025, LD conducted 40, 41 and 44 targeted joint operations with ImmD and HKPF respectively. LD does not keep statistics on the duration of inspections and joint operations.

LIs do not have the power of arrest. The arrest of suspected offenders and subsequent investigation of suspected offences of illegal employment are carried out by ImmD or HKPF. LD will refer all suspected cases of illegal employment to relevant law enforcement agencies for follow-up actions. LD does not keep the number of arrests/prosecutions instituted by ImmD or HKPF.

- (b) As LIs concurrently enforce various labour laws, the expenditure and manpower involved in combating illegal employment cannot be separately identified.
- (d) From 2023 to 2025, LD launched publicity activities through various channels, including disseminating publicity messages on LD website, placing advertisements on public transport network, newspapers, periodic journals of major trade union federations, second pouch boxes of Hongkong Post, popular websites and mobile applications, etc., with a view to encouraging the public to report suspected cases of employers employing illegal workers. As other enforcement work of LD is also promoted through the publicity activities concerned, the expenditure and manpower involved in the publicity on combating illegal employment cannot be separately identified.

**Number of reported cases involving illegal employment  
received by LD from 2023 to 2025  
with a breakdown by industry**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Number of reported cases received involving illegal employment</b>		
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	46	96	102
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	12	28	36
Community, social and personal services	17	13	46
Transport, storage and communications	11	10	17
Construction	18	34	89
Manufacturing	8	8	11
Others	0	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>305</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)015**

**(Question Serial No. 0021)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that “the Labour Department (LD) will utilise Artificial Intelligence (AI) to optimise job matching to provide better services for job seekers and employers”. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The current progress of the LD’s research on the AI job matching system; the expected timetable for completing the research, commencing system development and officially launching the system; and the number of job centres and job types to be covered in the first phase of implementation;
- (b) The estimated expenditure for the above initiative to optimise job matching with AI; and a breakdown of the estimate for system development, data storage and analysis, system maintenance and staff training, etc.;
- (c) How will the AI system incorporate big data analytics to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of matching; whether the system will collect employers’ and job seekers’ personal and post-related information for analysis, and the operational details of the relevant mechanism;
- (d) How will the Government use the AI system to reduce the risk of “bogus recruitment”; whether an automatic vetting mechanism will be introduced, or whether cross-checking with the Immigration Department and the existing job vacancies database of LD will be conducted, and the number of “bogus recruitment” cases expected to be reduced; and
- (e) How will the Government evaluate the overall effectiveness of the AI system, such as the expected improvement on the success rate of job matching, shortening of the average matching time for job seekers, and contribution to unleashing the potential of local workforce and ensuring the employment priority of local workers; and whether, if the results are satisfactory, the Government will further extend the application of the system to the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme or other specific industry sectors facing manpower shortage?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Pui-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

- (a) to (e) The Interactive Employment Service (iES) website of the Labour Department (LD) and its mobile application provide job seekers with 24-hour services for browsing employment information and searching for job vacancies. LD will take forward the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to optimise the job matching function on the iES website and its mobile application. The AI system will analyse and match suitable job vacancies (including job vacancies under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme) based on job seekers' background information, job preferences and their feedback, and provide personalised employment and vocational training information so that the employment information provided can better serve job seekers' needs and improve their chances of securing employment.

The AI job matching system is still under development. In this regard, LD is maintaining close liaison with the Digital Policy Office to strive to finalise all details as soon as possible. The services are expected to roll out in phases, with the earliest phase starting in mid-2027.

Upon the launch of the AI job matching system, job centres will continue to provide recruitment and employment services to employers and job seekers, including district-based job fairs and employment counselling.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)016**

**(Question Serial No. 2568)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Supplementary Labour Scheme was previously enhanced in terms of its coverage and operation to alleviate manpower shortage in various industry sectors. The new scheme has been open for application since 4 September 2023. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please provide information on the applications under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) so far, including the number of applications and those approved, the number of vacancies, a breakdown of the industry sectors and job types involved (please set out whether the jobs belong to the 26 posts previously excluded from labour importation), wage level, average vetting time, and the longest and shortest processing time among the cases;
- (b) The number of applications processed by the Labour Department (LD) has increased since the launch of ESLS. Has LD increased the manpower and expenditure for processing the applications? If yes, what are the number of staff concerned and the expenditure involved; if no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Pui-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023, allowing employers with genuine needs to apply for importation of workers for posts that were generally excluded under the previous Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS). As at February 2026, ESLS received a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers. During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved. Breakdowns of the numbers of applications and/or imported workers applied for and approved by industry sector, job category and monthly wage are at Annex 1 to Annex 3. As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS.

The time required by LD for processing each application is affected by various factors, which include whether the post under application is a common post (e.g. cleaner, warehouse keeper, sales assistant, etc.), whether the applicant employer has provided sufficient information, whether there are changes in the application details during processing, and the time taken by the employer to respond to LD's enquiry or suggestion, etc. In general, upon receipt of all information and documents required for processing and after screening-in of applications, LD can complete the vetting of applications within 3 months, including the time taken by applicant employers to conduct local recruitment under ESLS.

- (b) ESLS is administered by the Supplementary Labour Division (SLD) of LD. SLD created 12 Labour Officer Grade posts in 2024-25 and 16 time-limited Labour Officer Grade posts for a five-year period in 2025-26. The estimated expenditure for the 28 posts as mentioned above is \$26.40 million in 2026-27. SLD also employs about 80 non-civil service contract staff and post-retirement service contract staff to assist in implementing ESLS. The estimated expenditure for the posts concerned is \$36.64 million in 2026-27.

**Numbers of applications and imported workers applied for and approved  
under ESLS from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by industry sector**

Industry sector <sup>@</sup>	No. of applications received*	No. of imported workers applied for*	No. of applications approved*	No. of imported workers approved*
1. Agriculture and Fisheries	809	3 914	822	3 530
2. Manufacturing	2 257	15 760	1 612	9 918
3. Construction <sup>+</sup>	0	27	26	372
4. Import/Export Trades and Wholesale	1 880	7 622	1 198	4 467
(i) <i>Import/Export Trades</i>	(1 021)	(3 772)	(607)	(1 948)
(ii) <i>Wholesale</i>	(859)	(3 850)	(591)	(2 519)
5. Retail, Accommodation and Food Services	11 749	86 293	8 102	52 692
(i) <i>Retail</i>	(2 266)	(13 761)	(1 460)	(8 341)
(ii) <i>Accommodation Services</i>	(266)	(3 535)	(192)	(2 389)
(iii) <i>Food and Beverage Services</i>	(9 217)	(68 997)	(6 450)	(41 962)
6. Transportation, Storage, Information and Communications	1 057	8 253	665	4 464
7. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Professional and Business Services	2 536	18 004	1 292	7 813
8. Public Administration, Social and Personal Services <sup>++</sup>	3 784	42 116	2 379	18 885
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 072</b>	<b>181 989</b>	<b>16 096</b>	<b>102 141</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of industries may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

<sup>\*</sup> LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the numbers of applications and imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the numbers of applications and imported workers approved do not correspond to the numbers of applications and imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>+</sup> Including applications submitted under SLS prior to the launch of the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector.

<sup>++</sup> Including applications submitted under SLS prior to the launch of the Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved  
under ESLS from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by job category**

Job category <sup>@</sup>	No. of imported workers applied for <sup>*</sup>	No. of imported workers approved <sup>*</sup>
1. Waiter/Waitress <sup>#</sup>	22 203	14 065
2. Junior Cook <sup>#</sup>	18 390	10 430
3. Cleaner <sup>^</sup>	17 804	7 067
4. Security Guard <sup>^</sup>	14 847	5 575
5. Cook	13 001	8 112
6. Sales Assistant <sup>#</sup>	12 377	7 697
7. Dish Washer <sup>^</sup>	9 075	5 653
8. Warehouse Keeper <sup>#</sup>	9 025	5 025
9. Clerical Worker <sup>#</sup>	4 569	2 664
10. Others	60 698	35 853
<b>Total</b>	<b>181 989</b>	<b>102 141</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

<sup>\*</sup> LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the number of imported workers approved does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>#</sup> Falling within the 26 job categories generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

<sup>^</sup> Falling within the unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved  
under ESLS from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by monthly wage**

Monthly wage <sup>@</sup>	No. of imported workers applied for*	No. of imported workers approved*
1. \$8,000 or below	-	-
2. Above \$8,000-\$10,000	120	6
3. Above \$10,000-\$12,000	18 119	8 132
4. Above \$12,000-\$14,000	17 495	9 712
5. Above \$14,000-\$16,000	75 842	43 873
6. Above \$16,000-\$18,000	35 710	19 099
7. Above \$18,000-\$20,000	20 535	12 557
8. Above \$20,000	14 168	8 762
<b>Total</b>	<b>181 989</b>	<b>102 141</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of monthly wages may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the number of imported workers approved does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)017**

**(Question Serial No. 2569)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department launched a three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to re-join the employment market, so as to unleash potential labour force. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the total number of participants of the REA Scheme and the total amount of allowance disbursed so far? What are the estimated number of participants each year, and the types and number of participating organisations (including service organisations such as trade unions);
- (b) What is the estimated total expenditure of the REA Scheme? What are the specific arrangements for disbursing the allowance of up to \$20,000 to each eligible participant? Please set out the conditions for phased disbursement, application procedures and verification mechanisms, etc.;
- (c) How the Government will assess the effectiveness of the REA Scheme, such as the placement rate and employment stability of participants, its contribution to unleashing potential labour force (especially the proportion of silver-age persons aged 60 or above), and its synergy with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged? Please set out the relevant performance indicators and factors;
- (d) Whether the Government will review the implementation of the REA Scheme and adjust its details having regard to its effectiveness; if yes, will the Government consider further enhancements, including extending the allowance period, introducing additional incentives for specific occupations facing manpower shortages, and expanding the coverage to benefit marginalised groups, so as to unleash more silver-age labour force while alleviating employers' recruitment burden, thereby promoting a more inclusive employment market and its sustainable development, and the details; and

- (e) If the REA Scheme is proved to be effective, will the Government consider regularising and further extending it to cover other age groups or employment groups, such as women, persons with disabilities or ethnic minorities, and what are the details of the plan and the implementation?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Pui-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched a three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. LD has commissioned 2 labour organisations as service organisations to assist in implementing the REA Scheme.

The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. During the period, LD approved 24 591 applications for re-employment allowance (REA) and disbursed REA of \$237 million. LD expects that the number of participants in 2026-27 will be comparable to that in 2025-26.

- (b) Since the launch of the REA Scheme up to February 2026, the cumulative expenditure was \$256 million in total. For 2026-27, the estimated expenditure of the REA Scheme is \$230 million.

Each eligible participant who has worked full-time for 6 consecutive months will be provided with a REA of \$10,000, while those who have worked full-time for 12 consecutive months will be given an additional REA of \$10,000. Half-rate REA will be given to those who have worked part-time. Each eligible participant may receive a maximum REA of \$20,000 during the implementation of the REA Scheme. The REA Scheme allows participants to change jobs (the break of employment shall not be longer than 30 days). Participants must submit their allowance applications to LD within 2 months after completing the Qualified Employment Period. LD will conduct random checks and re-examine allowance applications to ensure the proper use of public funds. For further details of the REA Scheme, please refer to its dedicated webpage ([www.jobs.gov.hk/rea/guideline](http://www.jobs.gov.hk/rea/guideline)).

- (c) to (e) The REA Scheme recorded 40 629 placements as at February 2026, of which, participants aged 60 or above accounted for 24%. As the number of placements and retention status of employees are subject to factors such as the economy, labour market conditions and the personal circumstances of job seekers, it is not appropriate to set quantitative targets on placement and retention for the REA Scheme.

The REA Scheme aims to provide incentives for inactive older and middle-aged workforce to enter the employment market. It applies to persons of different genders, races, or physical conditions. LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and

Middle-aged, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)018**

**(Question Serial No. 3087)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To assist in importation of Mainland workers for specific industry sectors in Hong Kong, labour service enterprises or their affiliated companies operate local licensed employment agencies (EAs) to arrange Mainland workers to work in Hong Kong. However, there have been reports that some agencies (including Mainland “agents” or agencies not directly regulated by the laws of Hong Kong) overcharged intermediary fees under various pretexts. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) How many labour importation applications for various industry sectors has the Labour Department (LD) received from licensed EAs (or relevant labour service enterprises) which arranged Mainland workers to work in Hong Kong since the implementation of the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS)? How many of them were approved or rejected? (please provide a breakdown by industry sector, e.g. major industry sectors such as catering, cleaning and security)
- (b) How many complaints against licensed EAs which arranged Mainland workers to work in Hong Kong has LD received since the implementation of ESLS? How many of them involved suspected overcharging or other non-compliance?
- (c) Did LD conduct investigations into the above complaints? How many of these cases were substantiated after investigations? What were the outcomes of the subsequent follow-up actions? Has any licensed EA been issued a warning or penalised, or has any licensed EA's licence been revoked? In addition, what are the details of the communication or follow-up actions that took place between the Government and relevant Mainland authorities (such as the Ministry of Commerce) regarding the allegations of overcharging by Mainland agencies?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Pui-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

- (a) Applicants of the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) must be employers carrying on business in Hong Kong and the employers may authorise representatives

(such as licensed employment agencies (EAs) in Hong Kong) to submit their applications for labour importation. The Labour Department (LD) does not maintain records of the number of applications for labour importation submitted by employers through EAs.

- (b) ESLS has started accepting applications since 4 September 2023. As at February 2026, LD received a total of 73 complaints against EAs which arranged Mainland workers to work in Hong Kong. Of these, 49 cases involved licensed EAs in Hong Kong suspected of charging job seekers fees exceeding the permissible limit under Part XII of the Employment Ordinance (EO) and the Employment Agency Regulations, while the remaining cases involved suspected unlicensed operation of EAs and non-compliance with the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies (CoP).
- (c) LD initiated investigation into every complaint received, including contacting the complainants and seeking information, conducting inspections to the EAs concerned, making enquiries with the responsible persons of EAs, issuing warnings and urging for rectifications of the irregularities detected during inspections. LD has also conducted detailed investigations to examine whether the EAs concerned have breached Part XII of EO or the CoP. If there is sufficient evidence to prove that an EA has breached the law or the CoP, LD will take out prosecution, or revoke, refuse to issue or renew its licence.

From September 2023 to February 2026, LD issued a total of 9 written warnings to EAs which arranged Mainland workers to work in Hong Kong.

Employers recruiting workers from the Mainland to work in Hong Kong under various labour importation schemes are required to make arrangements through labour service enterprises which have been approved by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and granted the permission to operate business on labour service co-operation with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, with a view to enhancing the protection for Mainland workers. LD will continue to maintain liaison with the relevant Mainland authorities on matters relating to labour service agencies.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)019**

**(Question Serial No. 1299)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2026-27, the Labour Department plans to complete the review on the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS). In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of applications received under ESLS;
- (b) The number of imported workers approved and their distribution in the respective industry sector;
- (c) Given that the manpower situation varies across job types, whether the Government will consider linking the ratio between local employees and imported workers of a job type to the unemployment rate of that job type so as to flexibly adjust the manning ratio; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons;
- (d) Whether the Government will consider introducing a halt mechanism, under which the importation of labour would be suspended when the unemployment rate of a single industry sector is higher than a specified rate; if so, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon CHONG Ho-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023. As at February 2026, a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers were received. During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved. According to the statistics of the Immigration Department, there were around 48 500 imported workers working in Hong Kong under ESLS as at February 2026. A breakdown of the number of imported workers approved by industry sector is at Annex.

(c)&(d) On the premise of safeguarding employment priority for local workers, importing labour at an appropriate scale can help local enterprises sustain their operations, transform and enhance their services, and is conducive to economic development. The Government has been closely monitoring the employment market and adjusting the implementation arrangements of ESLs in a flexible and targeted manner. Having regard to the job types with more imported workers and the employment market situation, ESLs has implemented new requirements on local recruitment from 10 September 2025, requiring employers applying to import waiters/waitresses and junior cooks to join a job fair held at a job centre specified by LD once a week during the local recruitment period (which has been extended from 4 weeks to 6 weeks from 18 September) and conduct job interviews on the spot. In addition, from 18 September 2025, employers applying to import workers for the above 2 job types are required to comply with a more stringent manning ratio requirement of 2:1 by changing the calculation basis from all posts of an applicant employer to each post under application.

LD is reviewing ESLs, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, etc. To facilitate the completion of the review on ESLs in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.

The Government will continue to closely monitor and respond to developments in the employment market, and will implement the arrangements for labour importation in a dynamic and targeted manner, thereby striking an appropriate balance between ensuring employment priority for local workers and maintaining an adequate manpower supply to support economic development.

**Number of imported workers approved under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by industry sector**

Industry sector <sup>@</sup>	No. of imported workers approved*
1. Agriculture and Fisheries	3 530
2. Manufacturing	9 918
3. Construction <sup>+</sup>	372
4. Import/Export Trades and Wholesale	4 467
(i) <i>Import/Export Trades</i>	(1 948)
(ii) <i>Wholesale</i>	(2 519)
5. Retail, Accommodation and Food Services	52 692
(i) <i>Retail</i>	(8 341)
(ii) <i>Accommodation Services</i>	(2 389)
(iii) <i>Food and Beverage Services</i>	(41 962)
6. Transportation, Storage, Information and Communications	4 464
7. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Professional and Business Services	7 813
8. Public Administration, Social and Personal Services <sup>++</sup>	18 885
<b>Total</b>	<b>102 141</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of industries may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS) prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the number of imported workers approved does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>+</sup> Including applications submitted under SLS prior to the launch of the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector.

<sup>++</sup> Including applications submitted under SLS prior to the launch of the Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)020**

**(Question Serial No. 1301)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The aim of the Labour Department is to ensure that risks to the safety and health of people at work are properly managed by legislation, as well as enforcement, education and publicity efforts. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The statistics on fatal industrial accidents that happened at public and private sector sites in the past 5 years;
- (b) The number of public sector sites in Hong Kong at present;
- (c) The number of private sector sites in Hong Kong at present.

Asked by: Hon CHONG Ho-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

- (a) The numbers of fatal industrial accidents that happened at public and private sector sites from 2021 to 2025 are tabulated below:

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Public sector sites	7	1	10	5	5
Private sector sites	16	16	10	9	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>

Notes:

1. Public sector sites include construction sites under the purview of the Development Bureau, Housing Department, Highways Department, Environmental Protection Department, MTR Corporation Limited and Airport Authority Hong Kong.
2. Private sector sites refer to construction sites other than public sector sites, including superstructures on sites above the MTR stations.

3. Fatal industrial accidents refer to fatal cases arising from industrial activities in industrial undertakings in Hong Kong as defined under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance.
4. The number of fatal industrial accidents in 2025 are provisional figures as some cases are still under investigation.

(b)&(c) According to the latest quarterly statistics released by the Census and Statistics Department, the number of public sector sites under operation was 850 while the number of private sector sites under operation was 792 in September 2025.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)021**

**(Question Serial No. 0044)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Please provide a breakdown by industry of the numbers of labour disputes and claims received, the number of cases for which conciliation service was provided by the Labour Department in 2025-26, and the number and percentage of cases that were resolved through conciliation.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

From 2025 to February 2026, the numbers of labour disputes (i.e. cases involving more than 20 employees) and claims (i.e. cases involving 20 or less employees) handled by the Labour Department (LD) with a breakdown by industry are set out at Annex 1.

During the same period, the numbers of labour disputes and claims with conciliation service rendered by LD as well as the numbers and percentages of cases resolved through conciliation with a breakdown by industry are set out at Annex 2.

**Numbers of labour disputes and claims handled by LD  
from 2025 to February 2026 with a breakdown by industry#**

## (i) Labour disputes

Industry	Number of labour disputes	
	2025	January to February 2026
Manufacturing	1	-
Construction	95	21
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	1	1
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	2	-
Accommodation and food service activities	24	3
Professional, scientific and technical activities	-	1
Other service activities	4	-
Total	127	26

## (ii) Claims

Industry	Number of claims	
	2025	January to February 2026
Construction	4 303	659
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	1 015	152
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	743	144
Accommodation and food service activities	2 692	452
Administrative and support service activities	1 438	259
Other service activities	1 299	196
Work activities within domestic households	888	163
Others*	1 964	294
Total	14 342	2 319

- # Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification Version 2.0 (HSIC V2.0) of the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) is adopted for industrial classification.
- \* Including individual industries that account for less than 5% of the total number of claims.

**Numbers of labour disputes and claims with conciliation service  
rendered by LD from 2025 to February 2026  
with a breakdown by industry<sup>#</sup>**

## (i) Labour disputes

Industry	2025		January to February 2026	
	Number of cases with conciliation service rendered	Number of cases resolved through conciliation (%)	Number of cases with conciliation service rendered	Number of cases resolved through conciliation (%)
Manufacturing	1	1 (100%)	-	-
Construction	90	45 (50%)	20	3 (15%)
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	-	-	1	-
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	2	1 (50%)	-	-
Accommodation and food service activities	9	-	3	-
Professional, scientific and technical activities	-	-	1	-
Other service activities	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>47 (46.1%)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3 (12%)</b>

(ii) Claims

Industry	2025		January to February 2026	
	Number of cases with conciliation service rendered	Number of cases resolved through conciliation (%)	Number of cases with conciliation service rendered	Number of cases resolved through conciliation (%)
Construction	3 954	3 061 (77.4%)	624	470 (75.3%)
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	858	659 (76.8%)	135	107 (79.3%)
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	672	490 (72.9%)	133	96 (72.2%)
Accommodation and food service activities	2 271	1 762 (77.6%)	395	313 (79.2%)
Administrative and support service activities	1 379	1 117 (81.0%)	256	210 (82.0%)
Other service activities	1 185	914 (77.1%)	183	138 (75.4%)
Work activities within domestic households	872	706 (81.0%)	154	131 (85.1%)
Others*	1 704	1 263 (74.1%)	258	191 (74.0%)
Total	12 895	9 972 (77.3%)	2 138	1 656 (77.5%)

# HSIC V2.0 of C&SD is adopted for industrial classification.

\* Including individual industries that account for less than 5% of the total number of claims.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)022**

**(Question Serial No. 0045)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The provisional statistics from the Labour Department show that there were 243 fatal accidents in non-industrial undertakings in 2025-26 compared with 210 in 2024-25, increasing by more than 15%. The situation was far from satisfactory. Has the Government any publicity campaign to step up efforts to prevent fatal accidents in non-industrial undertakings in the next financial year?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

Occupational injuries refer to cases in workplaces reported under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, resulting in death or incapacity for work of over 3 days. The majority of the 210 and 243 cases reported under "fatal accidents in non-industrial undertakings" in 2024 and 2025 respectively were fatalities that occurred in workplaces but were not caused by work-related accidents, such as cases died of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases (CCVDs) during work.

Development of CCVDs is associated with multiple risk factors. Apart from work factors, personal risk factors such as medical history, advanced age, and unhealthy lifestyle are also involved. The Labour Department (LD) has been raising employers' and employees' understanding of preventing CCVDs by distributing information publications and organising activities such as occupational health talks. Since 2022, LD has implemented the "Heart Caring Campaign" jointly with the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) to encourage employers and employees in the property management and construction industries to implement health-friendly measures at workplace, raise the relevant employees' awareness of the risk of CCVDs, and teach them how to manage these risks properly. In 2026, the "Heart Caring Campaign" will be extended to cover other industry sectors so as to encourage employers and employees of various sectors to actively promote the prevention of CCVDs at workplace. Moreover, LD has planned to strengthen its collaboration with the Primary Healthcare Commission (PHC Commission) under the Health Bureau, the Department of Health (DH), the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and OSHC to further promote on-site body checks for construction workers for early detection of risk factors related to CCVDs

such as hypertension, diabetes and hyperlipidaemia, and encourage their participation in “Chronic Disease Co-Care Scheme” of PHC Commission, under which they can receive appropriate treatment to control these risk factors and prevent CCVDs.

At the same time, LD co-organises activities such as seminars, sponsorship schemes, roving exhibitions and out-reaching promotional visits in collaboration with OSHC, trade associations and workers’ unions to enhance the OSH awareness of employers and employees. LD also disseminates the latest OSH messages on its webpage and the “OSH 2.0” mobile application, publishes and updates safety guidelines, produces text and animated versions of “Work Safety Alert” and “Systemic Safety Alert”, and extensively promotes OSH safety messages to stakeholders across various industry sectors through emails, television, radio, newspapers, publicity platforms of major public transport modes, websites and social media frequently used by workers, the OSH mobile application and conspicuous locations such as external walls of shopping malls and buildings, roadsides and bridges.

Meanwhile, LD is pressing ahead with legislative amendment on total smoking ban in all construction sites, and has planned to collaborate with DH, CIC, OSHC, the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health, and non-governmental organisations to step up publicity on the harm of smoking on working environment and health for construction workers, encouraging smokers to quit smoking early to reduce the risk of various smoking-induced diseases (including CCVDs).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)023**

**(Question Serial No. 0046)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Would the Government advise the reasons why the number of promotional visits to workplaces conducted by the Labour Department under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance and the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance will substantially decrease from 6 637 in 2025-26 to 5 550 currently planned in the next year?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

In planning the number of promotional visits in respect of occupational safety and health, the Labour Department (LD) will consider factors such as departmental manpower resources and changes in workplaces across Hong Kong every year, and will make appropriate adjustments within that year, taking into account the actual risks. The number of promotional visits originally planned by LD for 2025 was 5 550, and the actual number of visits after risk-based adjustments was 6 637. The planned number of visits for 2026 is 5 550, which is the same as that originally planned for 2025.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)024**

**(Question Serial No. 0047)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Would the Government advise the total number of inspections conducted by the Labour Department in 2025-26 to combat illegal employment, as well as the numbers of reports of illegal employment received, prosecutions instituted and cases successfully prosecuted with a breakdown by industry?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

To deter employers from employing illegal workers, Labour Inspectors (LIs) of the Labour Department (LD) conduct workplace inspections to ensure employers' compliance with labour laws, including checking the identity documents of employees and the employee records kept by employers. The number of workplace inspections conducted by LIs in 2025-26 (as at February) with a breakdown by industry is at Annex.

During the same period, LD received 311 reported cases involving illegal employment. LIs do not have the power of arrest. The arrest of suspected offenders and subsequent investigation of suspected offences of illegal employment are carried out by the Immigration Department (ImmD) or the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF). LD mounts joint operations with law enforcement agencies from time to time and refers suspected cases of illegal employment to ImmD or HKPF for follow-up actions. LD does not keep the number of prosecutions instituted by ImmD or HKPF.

**Number of workplace inspections conducted by LIs of LD  
in 2025-26 (as at February)  
with a breakdown by industry**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Number of inspections</b>
Wholesale, retail, import/export trades, restaurants and hotels	61 364
Financing, insurance, real estate and business services	34 910
Community, social and personal services	22 862
Transport, storage and communications	8 499
Construction	6 072
Manufacturing	5 289
Others	2 166
<b>Total</b>	<b>141 162</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)025**

**(Question Serial No. 2445)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The financial provision of the Labour Department (LD) under Employees' Rights and Benefits for 2025-26 increased by more than 50% from 2024-25. Would the Government advise the reasons for a decrease instead of an increase in the number of sick leave clearance interviews for injured employees conducted by LD from 38 262 in 2024-25 to 34 891 in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The revised estimate of the Labour Department (LD) under the Programme of Employees' Rights and Benefits for 2025-26 is \$1.2212 billion, which is comparable to the original estimate (i.e. \$1.2243 billion). The revised estimate for 2025-26 increased by 52.7% as compared with the actual expenditure of \$800 million in 2024-25. As set out in last year's Budget, this is mainly due to the subsidies disbursed under the Subsidy Scheme for Abolition of MPF Offsetting Arrangement with effect from 1 May 2025, and the corresponding increase in the operational expenses.

LD handles employees' compensation cases involving employees who sustain injuries in accidents arising out of and in the course of employment in accordance with the Employees' Compensation Ordinance. Upon receipt of a reported work injury case, the Occupational Medicine Unit of LD arranges timely medical clearance for the injured employee. The number of related interviews varies depending on the number of employees' compensation claims received during the year. The number of sick leave clearance interviews for injured employees conducted in 2025 was 8.8% lower than that in 2024. It mainly reflects the situation of employees' compensation claims received by LD, and has no direct relationship with the change in the actual expenditure under the Programme of Employees' Rights and Benefits.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)026**

**(Question Serial No. 2643)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The financial provision of the Labour Department (LD) under Employees' Rights and Benefits for 2025-26 is over 50% higher than that for 2024-25. Would the Government advise the reasons for a decrease instead of an increase in the number of employees' compensation claims processed by LD from 41 498 in 2024-25 to 39 545 in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The revised estimate of the Labour Department (LD) under the Programme of Employees' Rights and Benefits for 2025-26 is \$1.2212 billion, which is comparable to the original estimate (i.e. \$1.2243 billion). The revised estimate for 2025-26 increased by 52.7% as compared with the actual expenditure of \$800 million in 2024-25. As set out in last year's Budget, this is mainly due to the subsidies disbursed under the Subsidy Scheme for Abolition of MPF Offsetting Arrangement with effect from 1 May 2025, and the corresponding increase in the operational expenses.

LD handles employees' compensation cases involving employees who sustain injuries or die in accidents arising out of and in the course of employment in accordance with the Employees' Compensation Ordinance. The number of employees' compensation claims processed in 2025 was 4.7% lower than that in 2024. It mainly reflects the situation of employees' compensation claims received by LD, and has no direct relationship with the change in the actual expenditure under the Programme of Employees' Rights and Benefits.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)027**

**(Question Serial No. 2526)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As stated in paragraph 246 of the Budget Speech, the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) encourages employers to hire persons aged 40 or above and provide them with on-the-job training. Employers will, for employing each eligible person, receive a maximum allowance of \$5,000 per month for 3 to 12 months. Nearly 4 500 placements were subsidised under EPEM last year. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Since the launch of EPEM, what are the respective numbers of persons employed under EPEM in different age groups (please provide a breakdown by 40 to 49, 50 to 59, 60 to 69, 70 to 79, and 80 and above)?
- (b) Since the launch of EPEM, has the Government compiled statistics on the length of employment of persons employed under EPEM? If so, please provide the details.
- (c) Please assess the effectiveness of EPEM.

Asked by: Hon FONG Kwok-shan, Christine (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

From 2021 to 2025, there were respectively 3 340, 2 707, 3 873, 4 443 and 4 491 eligible placements under EPEM each year. A breakdown by age of employees is at Annex.

(b)&(c) LD conducts surveys regularly to find out the retention status of those placed into employment under EPEM. According to the surveys conducted up to December 2025, 83% of the employees who received OJT under EPEM had stayed in employment for 4 months or more, and 70% for 6 months or longer, which reflected EPEM's effectiveness in assisting older and middle-aged persons in securing employment. LD is conducting a mid-term review of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme, along with EPEM, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Breakdown of eligible placements under EPEM  
by age of employees from 2021 to 2025**

Age	No. of eligible placements				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
40 to 49	1 039	739	985	1 155	1 208
50 to 59	1 406	1 073	1 452	1 756	1 724
60 to 69	840	816	1 303	1 370	1 412
70 to 79	53	77	131	160	145
80 or above	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 340</b>	<b>2 707</b>	<b>3 873</b>	<b>4 443</b>	<b>4 491</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)028**

**(Question Serial No. 0325)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To facilitate the employment of young people in Hong Kong and enhance their competitiveness in the labour market, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Whether the Government has currently grasped the specific number and demographic characteristics of young people who are not in education or employment; if yes, the relevant data; if not, whether additional resources will be allocated in future to conduct dedicated study on and keep track of the employment situation of this group, so as to assist in formulating more targeted employment support policies;
- (b) In each of the past 3 years, the number and employment rate of Hong Kong young people successfully employed and stationed to work in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) under the GBA Employment Scheme (GBA YES), as well as the major industry sectors or job posts in which they were engaged;
- (c) Since the age ceiling for participants in GBA YES and the Youth Employment and Training Programme was raised to 29 last year, the number of applications received from the 24-29 age group under each of the two schemes, and the proportion of applicants from such age group in the total number of applicants under each of the two schemes;
- (d) Whether the Government has plans to encourage more quality enterprises in the Mainland cities of the GBA to participate in GBA YES so as to increase the variety and number of job vacancies; if yes, the target number of enterprises, the estimated number of job vacancies to be provided, and the estimated expenditure for related promotional activities; and
- (e) To dovetail with the development of innovation and technology and new quality productive forces, whether the Government will allocate additional resources to strengthen the provision of upskilling and re-skilling training for young people?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (a) Based on the results of the General Household Survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department, the statistics for young people aged 15 to 24 who were not in employment, education or training in 2022 to 2024 are at Annex 1.
- (b) The Government has regularised the Greater Bay Area (GBA) Youth Employment Scheme (GBA YES) since 2023, encouraging enterprises to employ Hong Kong young people to work in the Mainland cities of the GBA in accordance with the Hong Kong laws. From 2023 to 2025, GBA YES recorded 718, 417 and 607 employed young people in each year respectively. Breakdowns of the number of employed young people by industry sector and occupational group are at Annex 2.
- (c) Since January 2025, the requirements for joining GBA YES have been relaxed to include young people aged 29 or below with sub-degree or higher qualifications. In 2025 and 2026 (as at February), GBA YES respectively recorded 607 and 25 employed young people, of whom 329 and 13 were aged 25 to 29, accounting for 54.2% and 52% of the total number of employed people.

The upper age limit for participants of the Youth Employment and Training Programme (YETP) has also been relaxed to 29 since January 2025. In the 2024/25 programme year (i.e. September 2024 to August 2025), 4 059 people applied to YETP, of whom 769 were aged 25 to 29, accounting for 24% of the number of participants after the relaxation. Upon commencement of the 2025/26 programme year in September 2025, 2 034 people applied to YETP as at February 2026, of whom 501 were aged 25 to 29, accounting for 25% of the total number of participants.

- (d) The Labour Department (LD) proactively liaises with major trade associations, enterprise associations, LD's industry-based tripartite committees and human resources associations to introduce GBA YES and appeal to enterprises to offer job vacancies. LD also facilitates job matching through organising large-scale job fairs and briefings, and participating in recruitment activities and talks organised by employers' associations, business associations and tertiary institutions. As the numbers of enterprises participating in GBA YES and job vacancies provided are affected by factors such as the economy and labour market, LD has not set a specific target number. In 2026-27, the estimated expenditure for the promotion and operation of GBA YES is \$6.81 million.
- (e) LD will adjust and refine youth employment services in a timely manner, including exploring with stakeholders ways to sharpen young people's skills, in response to Hong Kong's economic and youth employment market situations, so as to dovetail with the development of innovation and technology and new quality productive forces.

**A breakdown on the number of young people aged 15-24  
who were not in employment, education or training by gender,  
and the percentage shares in respective demographic groups in 2022 to 2024**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2022</b>		<b>2023</b>		<b>2024</b>	
	<b>No. of persons</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>No. of persons</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>No. of persons</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	20 000	6.9	19 200	6.3	18 900	6.3
Female	18 200	6.5	16 900	5.6	14 800	5.1
Total	38 200	6.7	36 100	5.9	33 700	5.7

Notes:

Figures for 2025 as a whole are not yet available.

Number of persons are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Figures in the table may not add up to the total due to rounding.

**Breakdowns of employed young people  
under the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme  
by industry sector and occupational group**

## (i) By industry sector

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Number of employed young people</b>		
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Business services	275	112	235
Finance	184	87	78
Educational services	39	36	54
Import and export trades	28	20	31
Real estates	19	17	8
Communication	19	5	8
Other manufacturing industry	18	16	19
Manufacture of electronic parts	13	20	24
Others	123	104	150
<b>Total</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>

## (ii) By occupational group

<b>Occupational group</b>	<b>Number of employed young people</b>		
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Managers and administrators	247	119	143
Professionals	227	110	192
Associate professionals	146	120	145
Clerical support workers	92	61	125
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	4	1	0
Others	2	6	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)029**

**(Question Serial No. 1064)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the safety of sites involving repair, maintenance, alteration and addition works across the territory, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) respectively conducted the following in the above sites in each year from 2020 to 2025:
- (i) inspections;
  - (ii) prosecutions;
  - (iii) issue of improvement notices; and
  - (iv) the number of suspension notices issued; and
- (b) Whether the above sites included those under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme; if so, would the Government provide a breakdown of the numbers of inspections and enforcement actions conducted by LD at relevant sites in the format specified in (a).

Asked by: Hon HUNG Kam-in (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) learns of workplaces involving repair, maintenance, alteration and addition works through various channels, such as the statutory and voluntary reporting systems, accident reporting, complaints and area patrols. The relevant figures on occupational safety and health (OSH) inspections and enforcement actions conducted by LD at the above sites from 2020 to 2025 are tabulated as follows:

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
No. of inspections	34 616	41 538	38 907	44 447	44 605	47 263
No. of prosecutions	910	774	838	828	782	878
No. of improvement notices	762	851	956	1 158	1 258	1 388
No. of suspension notices	204	284	270	157	196	221

- (b) When conducting inspections and enforcement actions at sites, LD does not distinguish between whether the works are carried out under the Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme (MBIS). Therefore, a statistical breakdown of the works under MBIS cannot be provided.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)030**

**(Question Serial No. 1068)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Speech that the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) aims to encourage employers to hire persons aged 40 or above and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers will, for employing each eligible person, receive a maximum allowance of \$5,000 per month for 3 to 12 months. EPEM subsidised nearly 4 500 placements last year. Besides, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) launched 2 new training courses dedicated for persons aged 50 or above last year. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the numbers of subsidised placements and participating employers, as well as the participation and training completion rates of silver-age persons aged 60 or above under EPEM over the past year and in aggregate? Will the Government, during the review, introduce enhancement measures specifically for the silver-age group, such as extending the allowance period, increasing the allowance ceiling, or providing additional incentives for industries such as community care and retail?
- (b) ERB launched 2 new training courses dedicated to persons aged 50 or above last year. What are the course names, the number of enrolments, the completion and employment rates, and the assessment of their effectiveness? Will the Government expand such dedicated courses, increase the training places, or introduce flexibility (e.g. part-time mode, digital skills training) so as to enhance the employment opportunities of older and middle-aged persons; and
- (c) To further promote the employment of older and middle-aged persons, as well as silver employment, will the Government, in its review of EPEM and the retraining courses, consider integrating measures (e.g. providing employers with additional OJT allowances or tax concessions, offering retention incentives to employees), and lowering the participation threshold of and putting in more resources to industries facing manpower shortages? Please elaborate the direction and preliminary intention of the review.

Asked by: Hon HUNG Kam-in (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

From 2021 to 2025, EPEM recorded 3 340, 2 707, 3 873, 4 443 and 4 491 eligible placements and received 1 659, 1 530, 1 980, 2 556 and 2 980 preliminary applications for OJT allowance in each year respectively. During the period, there were respectively 1 177, 1 201, 1 546, 1 832 and 2 083 placements with OJT allowance granted in each year, involving 567, 623, 723, 778 and 898 employers. A breakdown of placements with OJT allowance granted by age of employees is at Annex.

LD conducts surveys regularly to find out the retention status of placed employees under EPEM. According to the surveys conducted up to December 2025, 83% of the employees had stayed in employment for 4 months or more, and 70% for 6 months or longer, indicating that the majority of employees were able to complete OJT under EPEM.

- (b) In alignment with the Government's policy to develop silver economy, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) launched 2 new training courses dedicated to persons aged 50 or above in 2025, namely the "Foundation Certificate in Workplace Re-entry (Catering Industry)" and "Foundation Certificate for Welfare Workers (House Parents or Instructors) in Residential Child Care Services". As at February 2026, a total of 36 trainees enrolled in the above courses, of whom 35 completed the courses. As the placement follow-up services of the above courses are still underway, the placement rate is not yet available for the time being. ERB will explore the development of more training courses that meet the training needs of persons aged 50 or above, and consider increasing the number of training places according to market needs. Persons aged 50 or above can also enrol in about 800 courses of ERB open to the general public (including part-time and digital skills-related courses) according to their aspirations and qualifications to enhance employability. In 2025-26 (as at February 2026), there were more than 98 000 enrolments in ERB's courses involving persons aged 50 or above.
- (c) LD closely monitors the implementation of EPEM, and makes timely adjustments to its implementation details in light of the employment market condition and the views of stakeholders. LD is conducting a mid-term review of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme, along with EPEM, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

ERB launched the pilot "One-stop Training and Employment Scheme" (the Scheme) in February 2024, under which employers may arrange enterprise-based pre-employment training with the provision of retraining allowance, and offer 6-month placement follow-up services and skills training for trainees, with a view to encouraging and assisting persons who are unemployed, seeking employment or wishing to change their careers as well as the potential workforce to join the industries with keen manpower

demand. ERB has completed a review of the Scheme, and will regularise the Scheme from April 2026 to support employers and the local workforce with training and employment needs.

**Breakdown of placements with OJT allowance granted under EPEM  
by age of employees from 2021 to 2025**

Age	No. of placements with OJT allowance granted (%)				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
40-59	770 (65%)	753 (63%)	763 (49%)	1 001 (55%)	1 323 (64%)
60 or above	407 (35%)	448 (37%)	783 (51%)	831 (45%)	760 (36%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 177 (100%)</b>	<b>1 201 (100%)</b>	<b>1 546 (100%)</b>	<b>1 832 (100%)</b>	<b>2 083 (100%)</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)031**

**(Question Serial No. 2551)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) has been well-received. Since its launch one and a half years ago, over 37 000 placements have been recorded. The provision for the scheme will be increased to \$222 million in the coming financial year. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) As at the latest date, what are the total numbers of registered participants and successful placements, the total amount of allowance actually disbursed, and the average amount of allowance disbursed per placement under the REA Scheme? Does the Government have any specific target figures or expected ranges for the numbers of registered participants and successful placements for 2026-27? Moreover, what are the number of support service organisations commissioned by the Labour Department for the Scheme (please set out the number of service spots by Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories), their key functions (e.g. job matching, support for reporting employment and assistance in applying for the allowance) and overall coverage (e.g. hotline support, distribution of service spots across districts, average number of enquiries handled per month, etc.)?
- (b) What is the estimated overall cumulative expenditure of the Scheme (including the amount actually appropriated so far and the estimated provision of \$222 million for 2026-27)? What are the details of the phased disbursement of the maximum allowance of \$20,000 per eligible participant, including:
  - (i) the differences in allowance amounts and calculation methods between full-time employment (working not less than 30 hours per week) and part-time employment (working less than 30 hours per week);
  - (ii) the specific conditions for completion of 6 and 12 consecutive months of work (e.g. the definition of “continuous employment”, cap on permitted absence/leave, and arrangements in case of job changes or break of employment);
  - (iii) the application deadline for the allowance (e.g. the number of months within which an application must be submitted after the completion of work);

- (iv) the disbursement method (e.g. by cheque or bank transfer, and the required supporting documents, such as pay slips, Mandatory Provident Fund records, etc.)?
- (c) How will the Government comprehensively assess and continuously monitor the effectiveness of the Scheme, e.g. through the percentage of participants who continue to be employed after completing 6 months and 12 months of work (including the attrition rate and an analysis of the main reasons for departure), job stability (e.g. frequency of job changes or switching to other trades), and the actual contribution (e.g. the proportion of participants re-entering the workforce and improvements in income levels) to older and middle-aged workforce (with specific breakdown by age group of 40-59 and 60 or above)? and
- (d) Please provide information on the key quantitative and qualitative indicators adopted by the Government in reviewing the Scheme (e.g. the number of placements, proportion of participants who have completed the Qualified Employment Period, distribution of age/gender/industry of participants, assessments of the impact of economic cycles or labour market conditions, etc.), as well as the specific timetable for the mid-term review in the first quarter of 2026 (e.g. the months by which it is expected to be completed and to announce the results), the key directions of the review (e.g. whether to expand the scope of eligibility, optimise the allowance levels, enhance district support or further integrate with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged), and whether adjustments will be made accordingly to the allowance amounts, eligibility criteria, disbursement arrangements or implementation details?

Asked by: Hon HUNG Kam-in (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. Each eligible participant who has worked for 12 consecutive months may receive a maximum re-employment allowance (REA) of \$20,000. The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. During the same period, LD received 28 867 applications for REA and processed 24 591 applications with \$237 million of REA disbursed. The average amount of REA disbursed per approved application was \$9,600. LD expects that the numbers of participants and placements in 2026-27 will be comparable to those in 2025-26.

LD has commissioned 2 service organisations to assist in implementing the REA Scheme, providing a total of 12 service spots across the territory (2 on Hong Kong Island and 5 each in Kowloon and the New Territories) to receive forms and documents submitted by participants, answer public inquiries, and, where necessary, provide job matching services.

- (b) Since the launch of the REA Scheme and up to February 2026, the cumulative expenditure under the REA Scheme was \$256 million. For 2026-27, the estimated expenditure under the Scheme is \$230 million. Since the REA Scheme

is managed and implemented by LD through deployment of internal resources, the related administrative and publicity expenses have been absorbed within the recurrent operational expenses of LD and cannot be separately identified.

Each eligible participant who has worked full-time for 6 consecutive months will be provided with a REA of \$10,000, while those who have worked full-time for 12 consecutive months will be given an additional allowance of \$10,000. Half-rate REA will be given to those who have worked part-time. Each eligible participant may receive a maximum REA of \$20,000 during the implementation of the REA Scheme. The REA Scheme allows participants to change jobs (the break of employment shall not be longer than 30 days). Participants must submit their allowance applications to LD within 2 months after completing the Qualified Employment Period. LD will disburse the allowance by cheque upon approval. For further details of the REA Scheme, please refer to its dedicated website ([www.jobs.gov.hk/rea/guideline](http://www.jobs.gov.hk/rea/guideline)).

- (c)&(d) Since the launch of the REA Scheme and up to February 2026, LD received 28 867 applications for REA from participants who have secured employment and completed at least 6 consecutive months of work. Among these applications, those involving participants aged 40-59 and 60 or above accounted for 76% and 24% respectively, reflecting the Scheme's effectiveness in encouraging more older and middle-aged persons to re-enter the labour market.

LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme to collect and consolidate relevant details of participants and placements for analysis, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, so as to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons. The mid-term review is expected to be completed in the second half of 2026. As the number of placements and retention status of employees are subject to factors such as the economy, labour market conditions and the personal circumstances of job seekers, it is not appropriate to set quantitative targets on placement and retention for the REA Scheme.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)032**

**(Question Serial No. 2564)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Programme that the total financial provision for 2026-27 will increase by 2.8%, and that relevant legislative amendments for prohibition of smoking in all construction sites will be introduced to reduce fire risk. How will the Labour Department allocate the estimated provision for monitoring fire safety in construction sites? Will the relevant provision be used to promote the application of technology for law enforcement actions instead of relying solely on manual inspection? If so, what specific estimated provision will be allocated?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Fu-yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure for Safety and Health at Work (Programme 3) in the estimated financial provision for 2026-27 is \$850.7 million, a decrease of about \$27.90 million (a decrease by 3.2%) when compared with the revised estimate for 2025-26.

The Labour Department (LD) is pressing ahead at full speed with the legislative amendment on total smoking ban in all construction sites. Appropriate law enforcement actions will be taken by LD after the new legislation comes into operation and publicity efforts will be stepped up to remind duty holders to duly fulfil their legal responsibilities. LD will continue to conduct timely inspections of high-risk workplaces by deploying internal resources under the risk-based principle. Besides, LD will leverage innovative technologies by using small unmanned aircraft for aerial photography and videography to assist in executing its work, and has planned to introduce small unmanned detection vehicles for entering the confined spaces to monitor the hazardous gas level and detect sludge, etc., so as to assist frontline staff in performing such duties as occupational safety and health inspection and evidence collection.

LD has deployed internal resources of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch to take forward the application of technologies for law enforcement work. As the staff concerned also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the manpower and relevant expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)033**

**(Question Serial No. 0671)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme (the Employment Scheme) and the Arrangements for Mainland Youth to Work in Hong Kong (the Arrangements), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The following information regarding the Employment Scheme in each of the past 2 years and this year so far:
- (i) the numbers of job vacancies and relevant enterprises (with a breakdown by industry sector);
  - (ii) the age distribution of employed young people;
  - (iii) the distribution of educational attainment of employed young people (i.e. degree or sub-degree);
  - (iv) the distribution of salary levels of employed young people;
  - (v) the distribution of industry sectors in which employed young people were engaged;
  - (vi) the distribution of occupational groups of employed young people; and
  - (vii) the number of employed young people with breakdown by location of institutions from which they graduated (i.e. Hong Kong, the Mainland and other regions);
- (b) The following information regarding the Arrangements since its implementation:
- (i) the number of Mainland young people approved to come to Hong Kong for employment through the Arrangements and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals;
  - (ii) the age distribution of employed Mainland young people;
  - (iii) the distribution of salary levels of employed Mainland young people;
  - (iv) the distribution of industry sectors in which employed young people were engaged; and
  - (v) the distribution of occupational groups of employed young people;
- (c) The number of young people who completed the 18-month on-the-job training under the Employment Scheme in each of the past 2 years and this year so far; and the number and percentage of those who stayed in employment after completing the training; and

- (d) What is the total amount of allowances disbursed by the Government to enterprises in each year since the regularisation of the Employment Scheme?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (a) The Government has regularised the Greater Bay Area (GBA) Youth Employment Scheme (GBA YES) since 2023, encouraging enterprises to employ Hong Kong young people to work in the Mainland cities of the GBA in accordance with Hong Kong laws. From 2024 to 2026 (as at February), GBA YES recorded 249, 338 and 119 enterprises offering 2 186, 2 721 and 755 job vacancies, as well as 417, 607 and 25 employed young people in each year respectively. A breakdown of the number of job vacancies and relevant enterprises by industry sector, as well as breakdowns of the number of employed young people by age, educational attainment, salary level, industry sector, occupational group, and location of institutions from which they graduated are at Annex 1.
- (b) The Government has implemented the GBA Youth Employment Scheme – Arrangements for Mainland Youth to Work in Hong Kong under the GBA Youth Employment Scheme since January 2025. Enterprises which have participated in GBA YES and employed Hong Kong young people to work in the Mainland cities of the GBA may apply for the same number of Mainland young people to work in Hong Kong according to relevant requirements, so as to foster talent exchange in the GBA. Enterprises are required to apply to the Immigration Department for entry permits for the Mainland young people under the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals. From 2025 to February 2026, a total of 12 applications under the Arrangements for Mainland Youth to Work in Hong Kong were approved. Breakdowns of the number of employed Mainland young people by age, salary level, industry sector and occupational group are at Annex 2.
- (c) In 2023, a total of 718 young people were employed under GBA YES. Among them, 314 completed the 18-month on-the-job training (OJT); and 171 were further employed by the enterprises, accounting for 54.5% of the total number of young people who completed OJT. As some young people employed under GBA YES between 2024 and 2026 are still undergoing OJT, the Labour Department will compile the relevant data in due course.
- (d) As at February 2026, allowances of HK\$15.07 million, HK\$51.06 million and HK\$40.98 million were disbursed to enterprises under GBA YES in 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 (as at February 2026) respectively.

**Breakdown of job vacancies and relevant enterprises by industry sector; and  
breakdowns of employed young people by age, educational attainment, salary level,  
industry sector, occupational group, and  
location of institutions from which they graduated  
under the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme**

(i) Breakdown of job vacancies and relevant enterprises by industry sector

Industry sector	Number of job vacancies		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Business services	405 (48)	758 (99)	308 (42)
Finance	182 (13)	232 (20)	37 (7)
Educational services	414 (19)	545 (29)	45 (12)
Import and export trades	127 (25)	185 (34)	70 (7)
Real estates	30 (5)	14 (4)	0 (0)
Communication	31 (8)	47 (10)	0 (0)
Other manufacturing industry	98 (16)	82 (19)	45 (7)
Manufacture of electronic parts	117 (17)	181 (17)	44 (4)
Others	782 (98)	677 (106)	206 (40)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 186 (249)</b>	<b>2 721 (338)</b>	<b>755 (119)</b>

\*The figure in brackets denotes the number of enterprises offering job vacancies.

(ii) Breakdown of employed young people by age

Age	Number of employed young people		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
20-24	257	278	12
25-29	151	329	13
30 or above	9	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>25</b>

(iii) Breakdown of employed young people by educational attainment

Educational attainment	Number of employed young people		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Sub-degree	0	29	0
Bachelor's Degree	306	441	23
Master's Degree	110	135	2
Doctorate or above	1	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>25</b>

(iv) Breakdown of employed young people by salary level

Salary level	Number of employed young people		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Below \$18,000	0	3	0
\$18,000 - \$21,000	384	543	24
\$21,001 - \$24,000	22	36	1
\$24,001 - \$27,000	8	14	0
\$27,001 - \$30,000	2	3	0
\$30,001 or above	1	8	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>25</b>

(v) Breakdown of employed young people by industry sector in which they were engaged

Industry sector	Number of employed young people		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Business services	112	235	15
Finance	87	78	1
Educational services	36	54	3
Import and export trades	20	31	1
Real estates	17	8	0
Communication	5	8	0
Other manufacturing industry	16	19	0
Manufacture of electronic parts	20	24	0
Others	104	150	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>25</b>

(vi) Breakdown of employed young people by occupational group

Occupational group	Number of employed young people		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Managers and administrators	119	143	3
Professionals	110	192	5
Associate professionals	120	145	11
Clerical support workers	61	125	6
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	1	0	0
Others	6	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>25</b>

(vii) Breakdown of employed young people by location of institutions from which they graduated

Location of institutions from which they graduated	Number of employed young people		
	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Mainland	232	313	11
Hong Kong	120	195	9
Other regions	65	99	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>25</b>

**Breakdowns of employed Mainland young people  
by age, salary level, industry sector,  
and occupational group under the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme –  
Arrangements for Mainland Youth to Work in Hong Kong**

(i) Breakdown of employed Mainland young people by age

Age	Number of employed Mainland young people (As at February 2026)
20-24	3
25-29	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

(ii) Breakdown of employed Mainland young people by salary level

Salary level	Number of employed Mainland young people (As at February 2026)
\$18,000 - \$21,000	11
\$21,001 - \$24,000	0
\$24,001 - \$27,000	0
\$27,001 - \$30,000	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

(iii) Breakdown of employed Mainland young people by industry sector

Industry sector	Number of employed Mainland young people (As at February 2026)
Finance	3
Information Technology	5
Others	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

(iv) Breakdown of employed Mainland young people by occupational group

<b>Occupational group</b>	<b>Number of employed Mainland young people (As at February 2026)</b>
Managers and administrators	2
Professionals	2
Associate professionals	6
Clerical support workers	1
Others	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)034**

**(Question Serial No. 0679)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding inspections related to imported workers, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of inspections conducted by the Labour Department (LD) to the local accommodations arranged by employers for imported workers, as well as the number of suspected non-compliance cases identified through inspections or reports in the past 2 years and this year so far;
- (b) According to the requirements under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS), employers may provide accommodations on the Mainland for imported workers. What measures have been taken by the Government to ensure that the Mainland accommodations provided by employers are in compliance with the standard as stipulated in the Schedule to the Standard Employment Contract? The details and figures on the implementation of the above measures by the Government since the launch of ESLS; and
- (c) What are the respective numbers of cases reported by imported workers to LD involving suspected breaches of the imposed conditions of employment or the Employment Ordinance by employers, and of substantiated non-compliance cases in the past 2 years and this year so far?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

- (a) In 2024, 2025 and 2026 (as at February), Labour Inspectors of the Labour Department (LD) respectively carried out 2 372, 2 549 and 310 inspections on the accommodations in Hong Kong for imported workers provided by employers, and detected 12, 16 and 1 cases respectively of suspected non-compliance with the accommodation standard as stipulated in the Schedule to the Standard Employment Contract (SEC). The employers concerned had rectified the non-compliant items upon LD's follow-up actions.

- (b) Accommodations provided by employers for imported workers approved under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) both in Hong Kong or on the Mainland shall comply with the requirements of ESLS and the standard stipulated in the Schedule to SEC. According to the observations of LD, most employers of the imported workers approved under ESLS have arranged for the imported workers to reside in Hong Kong. LD organises briefings on employment rights to explain to all imported workers their rights, including the standard of accommodations. If imported workers suspect that the accommodations provided by their employers do not meet the requirements, they may lodge complaints with LD. LD will follow up on all complaints received.
- (c) In 2024, 2025 and 2026 (as at February), LD received 69, 749 and 133 complaints relating to ESLS each year respectively, of which 49, 273 and 63 involved employment rights or work arrangements of imported workers. LD followed up on all complaints received, including carrying out inspections on the workplaces of imported workers and the accommodations in Hong Kong for imported workers provided by employers, as well as verifying relevant employment records. LD will take out prosecution if there is sufficient evidence substantiating breach(es) of labour laws by an employer. During the period, LD issued 35, 35 and 8 warning letters respectively to employers suspected of breaching the law or the requirements of ESLS, and employers in 7, 18 and 4 offence cases were convicted by the court respectively after prosecution by LD.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)035**

**(Question Serial No. 0683)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding protection for digital platform workers, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of cases received by the Labour Department from persons engaging in digital platform work (including food and goods delivery platform workers, etc.) who sought assistance due to disputes over employment relationship with platform companies and filing of employment claims in each of the past 3 years and this year so far;
- (b) In view of the rapid development of platform economy in Hong Kong, will the Government consider commissioning the Census and Statistics Department to conduct regular surveys on the characteristics and working conditions of platform workers? If yes, what are the details; if no, what are the reasons; and
- (c) Will the Government consider including wage and retirement protection in the forthcoming new legislation on protecting platform workers; if yes, what are the details; if no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) handled 27, 10, and 6 claims filed by digital platform workers (platform workers) respectively in each year from 2023 to 2025. Among them, a total of 7 cases involved disputes over whether an employment relationship existed between the platform worker and the platform company concerned. No such case was recorded between January and February 2026.
- (b) LD commissioned the Census and Statistics Department in 2024 to conduct a Thematic Household Survey with a view to understanding the characteristics and working conditions of platform workers. LD will closely monitor the development of local

platform work, and will consider collecting relevant data and information through appropriate channels in a timely manner.

- (c) According to the findings of the above Thematic Household Survey and feedback from stakeholders, work injury protection is the primary concern of platform workers. LD is currently formulating new legislation to improve the work injury compensation mechanism for platform workers. The Government will continue to make good use of the Tripartite Committee for the Digital Platform Industry, which comprises representatives from the Government, platform companies and labour organisations, to discuss other issues of concern to the stakeholders.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)036**

**(Question Serial No. 2478)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the prevention of heat stroke of employees at work, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The respective numbers of heat stress-related cases and fatal cases registered to the Labour Department (LD) in the past 2 years and this year so far, with a breakdown by industry sector and job type;
- (b) The numbers of complaints received by LD relating to preventive measures against heat stroke in the past 2 years and this year so far;
- (c) The type and distribution ratio of the workplaces at which LD conducted surprise inspections targeting complaints related to the preventive measures against heat stroke in the past 2 years and this year so far;
- (d) In the past 2 years and this year so far, the following information regarding LD's inspections at workplaces with a higher risk of heat stroke: the numbers of enforcement actions taken, and the respective numbers of warning letters, improvement notices and suspension notices issued during inspections; and
- (e) Whether the Government will consider enacting legislation on the "Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work" to require employers to implement appropriate preventive measures against heat stroke for their employees so as to strengthen the occupational safety and health protection for employees; if so, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- (a) The numbers of heat stress-related work injury cases registered by the Labour Department (LD) from 2024 to 2026 (as at January) are tabulated below. There was no fatal case during the period.

Year	2024	2025	2026 (as at January)
No. of cases	29	31*	0

\* As some suspected cases are still under investigation, the number of cases in 2025 is provisional and the final figure is subject to change based on the investigation outcome.

The major industry sectors involved in the above heat stress-related work injury cases registered include public administration, social and personal services, professional and business services, construction, real estate, accommodation and food services, transportation, storage, postal and courier services, etc. The job types in which such cases were engaged primarily include security guards, cleaners, gardening workers, construction workers, and members of the disciplined services, etc.

- (b) The numbers of complaints received by LD relating to the preventive measures against heat stroke from 2024 to 2026 (as at January) are tabulated below:

Year	2024	2025	2026 (as at January)
No. of cases	243	135	2

Upon receipt of complaints, LD will deploy staff to conduct surprise inspections at the workplaces concerned as early as possible, and take necessary follow-up actions depending on the investigation outcome. LD will keep the complaints confidential during the course of investigation.

- (c) The type and distribution ratio of the workplaces at which LD conducted surprise inspections targeting complaints related to the preventive measures against heat stroke from 2024 to 2026 (as at January) is as follows:

Year	2024	2025	2026 (as at January)
Type of workplaces			
Construction sites	35%	38%	0%
Security	15%	23%	0%
Food and beverage services	12%	7%	0%
Outdoor cleansing	3%	6%	0%
Horticulture	1%	0%	0%
Others (e.g. factories or airport, etc.)	34%	26%	100%

- (d) The relevant figures on inspections and enforcement actions targeting workplaces with a higher risk of heat stroke (e.g. construction sites, cleansing workplaces) conducted by LD during the summers of 2024 and 2025 are as follows:

Year <sup>@</sup>	2024	2025
No. of inspections <sup>#</sup>	23 620	23 054
No. of warning letters	1 031	708
No. of improvement notices	-	-
No. of suspension notices	-	-

<sup>@</sup> As the inspections targeting workplaces with a higher risk of heat stroke in 2026 will be formally launched in summer, the figures for 2026 are not available.

<sup>#</sup> Counted on an officer-times basis. LD has kept records of the number of workplaces inspected from 2023 onwards, and the numbers for 2024 and 2025 were 17 309 and 17 043 respectively.

- (e) According to the general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance, every employer must, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure the safety and health at work of all his/her employees. To assist employers in fulfilling their responsibilities, LD has issued the “Guidance Notes on Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work” (GN) for reference by employers of related industry sectors, so that they can implement appropriate heat stroke preventive measures to safeguard the occupational safety and health (OSH) of employees. If employers are found to have failed to implement the necessary OSH measures in accordance with GN during inspections, LD officers will follow up based on the general duty provisions of the OSH legislation and demand improvements. Corresponding enforcement actions will also be taken depending on the seriousness of the cases and the evidence collected. LD will continue to step up inspections and enforcement actions in summer targeting workplaces with a higher risk of heat stroke.

In addition, LD encourages stakeholders of different industry sectors to refer to the principles and recommendations provided in its GN having regard to the circumstances of their industries, and adopt a risk-based and consultative approach to devise practical guidelines that are reasonable and mutually agreed by employees and employers, thereby implementing effective measures against heat stroke. LD will monitor the implementation of GN and conduct inspections at various workplaces so as to ensure that employers adopt appropriate preventive measures against heat stroke to reduce the risks of employees suffering from heat stroke at work.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)037**

**(Question Serial No. 2748)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme (WOPS) implemented by the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department (LD), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The following information on WOPS in each of the past 2 years and this year so far: the number of vacancies registered, the number of new placements, the number of employers involved in the placements, the number of disabled employees engaged, the number and percentage of employees who failed to complete the first 3 months of employment, the number and percentage of employees who still stayed in employment after the allowance period, and the total amount of allowance disbursed under WOPS; and
- (b) The number of complaints regarding WOPS received by LD, the number of complaints substantiated and the details thereof, and the subsequent follow-up actions taken in each of the past 2 years and this year so far.

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme (WOPS) to encourage employers to engage persons with disabilities who are fit for open employment and provide them with training and support. Employers may participate in WOPS after engaging eligible job seekers with disabilities without the need for prior registration of vacancies under WOPS. Breakdowns of the numbers of placements, the employers involved and the disabled employees engaged under WOPS by year from 2024 to 2026 (as at February), and the amount of allowance disbursed to employers under WOPS by year from 2023-24 to 2025-26 (as at February 2026) are at Annex.

LD conducted a tracking survey on the 1 134 placements recorded under WOPS in 2024. As shown by the survey, there were 700 cases (61.7 % of the total) in which the disabled employees remained employed in the 13<sup>th</sup> month after placement under WOPS and

483 cases (42.6 % of the total) in which the employees continued to hold the same position after the allowance period, while 377 cases (33.2 % of the total) in which the employees did not complete the three-month employment period in the same position. As some of the placements recorded in 2025 and 2026 (as at February) are still undergoing on-the-job training, LD will compile retention figures for those cases in due course.

- (b) From 2024 to 2026 (as at February), LD received 1 complaint involving vetting of WOPS allowance, which was fully settled after follow-up.

### Work Orientation and Placement Scheme

- (i) Breakdown of the numbers of placements, the employers involved and the disabled employees engaged by year from 2024 to 2026 (as at February)

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026 (as at February)</b>
No. of placements	1 134	1 172	278
No. of employers involved	460	466	154
No. of disabled employees engaged	975	995	259

- (ii) Amount of allowance disbursed to employers by year from 2023-24 to 2025-26 (as at February 2026)

	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26 (as at February 2026)</b>
Amount of allowance (\$million)	33.88	34.29	28.86

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)038**

**(Question Serial No. 3162)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026-27 that the Government will “review the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to explore further measures for encouraging silver employment”. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The numbers of applicants and those approved, as well as the expenditure on the allowance for each year since the launch of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme. Please set out the information by age group of participants;
- (b) The number and proportion of beneficiaries who participated in the above Scheme and successfully maintained employment for more than 6 months and 12 months over the past 2 years. Please set out the information by age group of participants;
- (c) The expected completion date of the mid-term review conducted in the first quarter of 2026; and
- (d) On “exploring further measures for encouraging silver employment”, does the Government at present have any preliminary policy directions, or ideas for a new scheme?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. Each eligible participant of the REA Scheme who has worked full-time for 6 consecutive months will be provided with a first tranche of re-employment allowance (REA) of \$10,000, and those who have worked full-time for 12 consecutive months will be given a second tranche of REA of \$10,000. Half-rate REA will be given to those who have worked part-time. Each eligible

participant may receive a maximum REA of \$20,000 during the implementation of the REA Scheme.

The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants recorded as at February 2026. A breakdown of the number of participants by age is at Annex 1. During the period, LD approved a total of 24 591 applications for REA, involving REA of \$237 million. In respect of the applications approved, 17 185 participants completed 6 months of work and 7 399 participants completed 12 months of work. A breakdown of placements with REA approved by age of participants is at Annex 2.

- (c)&(d) LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme to collect and consolidate relevant details of participants and placements for analysis, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, so as to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons. The mid-term review is expected to be completed in the second half of 2026.

**Breakdown of the number of participants under the REA Scheme  
by age from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
40 - 59	53 115
60 or above	15 819
<b>Total</b>	<b>68 934</b>

**Breakdown of placements with REA approved under the REA Scheme  
by age of participants from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of participants with REA approved</b>	
	First tranche of REA	Second tranche of REA
40 - 59	13 094	5 696
60 or above	4 091	1 703
<b>Total</b>	<b>17 185</b>	<b>7 399</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)039**

**(Question Serial No. 0563)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The three-year Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work (the Pilot Programme) concluded on 22 September 2025. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Whether the Government has completed the comprehensive review on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Pilot Programme, including the number of persons benefited from the Programme, success rate of rehabilitation, the proportion of employees who managed to return to work, service utilisation rates. If yes, what are the details;
- (b) The latest overall arrangements of the Government in regard to the rehabilitation service for employees injured at work after the conclusion of the Pilot Programme. Will new work injury rehabilitation support programme be introduced to serve as an interface? If yes, what are the details.

Asked by: Hon LAM Tzit-yuen, David (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- (a) The three-year Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work (the Pilot Programme) launched by Labour Department (LD) on 23 September 2022 has ceased to accept new applications upon its expiry on 23 September 2025. Currently, the Pilot Programme continues to provide services to admitted cases that still require rehabilitation treatment and follow-up service.

A total of 2 437 injured employees participated in the Pilot Programme, and the details are as follows:

	Construction industry	Catering and hotel industry	Transportation and logistics industry
(i) Number of participating cases	1 399	474	564

(ii) Number of cases preliminarily identified as suitable for the Programme and its percentage (i/ii)	5 797 (24%)	1 100 (43%)	1 303 (43%)
(iii) Number of cases that reached maximum medical improvement (i.e. recovered) upon treatment as at the end of February 2026	1 154	420	507
(iv) Number* of return-to-work cases and its percentage as at the end of February 2026 (iv/iii)	610 (53%)	271 (65%)	342 (67%)
(v) Number of cases that still require treatment and follow-up service under the Pilot Programme as at the end of February 2026	15	3	11

\* The return-to-work status of some of the recent recovery cases is still being followed up.

LD will analyse the information and data collected from the Pilot Programme to conclude the experience of implementation and assess its effectiveness.

- (b) Upon conclusion of the Pilot Programme, injured employees may continue to receive publicly-funded rehabilitation treatment services at public hospitals and clinics as usual, or opt to participate in other private rehabilitation treatment programmes provided by their employers (if available). In addition, with LD's promotion, the insurance industry has launched the Voluntary Rehabilitation Programme since 2003 to provide injured employees with an additional channel to receive free rehabilitation services in the private sector through the insurers' arrangements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)040**

**(Question Serial No. 0035)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Would the Government advise this Committee of the following since the launch of the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS):

- (a) Please tabulate by job type
  - (i) the number of imported workers applied for;
  - (ii) the number of imported workers approved;
  - (iii) the number of imported workers still working in Hong Kong; and
  - (iv) their median monthly wage;
- (b) The expenditure and staff establishment of the Government for processing applications for labour importation in 2025-26;
- (c) To safeguard the employment priority for local workers, employers applying to import waiters/waitresses and junior cooks under ESLS are required to extend the local recruitment period. During this period, they must also once a week attend an on-site job fair organised by the Labour Department (LD). Since the implementation of the new initiatives,
  - (i) the number of enterprises participating in the ESLS job fairs, as well as the numbers of job vacancies, job seekers and successful placements;
  - (ii) the expenditure and staff establishment of LD for organising job fairs;
- (d) Will the Government consider establishing a “support mechanism for industry sectors with higher unemployment rates” under which support measures will be activated when the unemployment rate of an industry sector is higher than a specified level within a specified period? These include proactively communicating with trade unions to understand the situation, organising industry-specific job fairs, launching dedicated employment support schemes, providing targeted subsidies to unemployed persons in the industry sectors for retraining and vocational reorientation, and enhancing measures to safeguard the employment priority for local workers including immediate suspension of labour importation.

Asked by: Hon LAM Wai-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023. As at February 2026, ESLS received a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers. During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved. As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS)/ESLS. Breakdowns of the numbers of imported workers applied for and approved by job category and the corresponding median monthly wage, and of the number of imported workers working in Hong Kong by job category are set out in Annex 1 and Annex 2.
- (b) ESLS is mainly administered by the Supplementary Labour Division (SLD) of LD. In 2025-26, the staff establishment of SLD comprises 57 Labour Officer Grade posts, 14 Clerical Grade posts and 1 Workman II post (excluding staff temporarily deployed by LD). SLD also employs non-civil service contract staff and post-retirement service contract staff to assist in implementing ESLS. The revised estimated expenditure for SLD in 2025-26 is \$112 million (including staff cost). As some of the staff responsible for processing ESLS applications also undertake other duties, the manpower and expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.
- (c) Having regard to the job types with more imported workers and the employment market situation, ESLS has implemented new requirements on local recruitment from 10 September 2025, requiring employers applying to import waiters/waitresses and junior cooks to join a job fair held at a job centre specified by LD once a week during the local recruitment period and conduct job interviews on the spot. As at February 2026, a total of 202 employers participated in the job fairs, which offered a total of 2 396 vacancies (including 792 waiter/waitress vacancies, 773 junior cook vacancies, and 831 vacancies in other positions such as dishwasher and cleaner), while a total of 547 on-the-spot interviews were conducted during the local recruitment period. Among the confirmed results of job interviews, employers made offers to 179 local job seekers, of whom 9 accepted the offers and were successfully employed; the remaining 170 declined the offers, mainly due to reasons such as working hours being too early/late, having found another job, not accepting/dissatisfied with the job nature, and not accepting/dissatisfied with shift work requirements.

LD has deployed internal resources for organising ESLS job fairs. As relevant staff also undertake other duties, the staff establishment and expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- (d) To safeguard the employment priority for local workers, applicant employers under ESLS are required to conduct local recruitment and accord priority to employing suitable local workers. LD will concurrently conduct job matching for the vacancies concerned, and disseminate vacancy information to members of the Labour Advisory Board, trade unions and training bodies to facilitate their referral of suitable local job seekers for job application. Employers must also sign a Standard Employment Contract with the imported workers and shall pay them a salary not lower than the median monthly wage of a comparable position to prevent the imported workers from

becoming “cheap labour” and undermining the employment opportunities of local workers. The Government has been closely monitoring the employment market and adjusting the implementation arrangements of ESLS in a flexible and targeted manner.

LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, etc. To facilitate the completion of the review on ESLS in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
breakdowns by job category and corresponding median monthly wage**

<b>Job category<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>Median monthly wage<sup>+</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for<sup>*</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved<sup>*</sup></b>
1. Waiter/Waitress <sup>#</sup>	\$14,930 to \$16,330	22 203	14 065
2. Junior Cook <sup>#</sup>	\$14,250 to \$16,050	18 390	10 430
3. Cleaner <sup>^</sup>	\$10,890 to \$15,520	17 804	7 067
4. Security Guard <sup>^</sup>	\$14,700 to \$16,400	14 847	5 575
5. Cook	\$16,280 to \$28,840	13 001	8 112
6. Sales Assistant <sup>#</sup>	\$14,690 to \$19,400	12 377	7 697
7. Dish Washer <sup>^</sup>	\$15,720 to \$16,345	9 075	5 653
8. Warehouse Keeper <sup>#</sup>	\$13,490 to \$16,600	9 025	5 025
9. Clerical Worker <sup>#</sup>	\$14,230 to \$22,390	4 569	2 664
10. Others	—	60 698	35 853
<b>Total</b>		<b>181 989</b>	<b>102 141</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

<sup>+</sup> The figures refer to the latest published median monthly wages for the corresponding job categories. The median monthly wage for the same position may vary from one industry sector to another.

<sup>\*</sup> LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the number of imported workers approved does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>#</sup> Falling within the 26 job categories generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

<sup>^</sup> Falling within the unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

**Number of imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS:  
a breakdown by job category  
(as at February 2026)**

Job category	No. of imported workers working in Hong Kong*
1. Waiter/Waitress	7 871
2. Junior Cook	6 196
3. Cook	4 222
4. Cleaner	2 984
5. Dish Washer	2 902
6. Warehouse Keeper	2 374
7. Sales Assistant	2 360
8. Security Guard	2 000
9. Food Processing Worker	1 457
10. Others	16 203
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 569</b>

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The above figures on imported workers working in Hong Kong include those workers approved to work in Hong Kong under SLS before 4 September 2023 and under ESLS thereafter.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)041**

**(Question Serial No. 0036)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work (the Pilot Programme) concluded in September 2025. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Since the launch of the Pilot Programme up to 23 September 2025, in respect of the construction industry, the catering and hotel industry and the transportation and logistics industry,
  - (i) the numbers of cases participating in the Pilot Programme;
  - (ii) their percentages to the total number of work injuries in their respective industry sectors;
  - (iii) the numbers of cases that reached maximum improvement after treatment; and
  - (iv) the numbers of return-to-work cases and their percentages;
- (b) The data on the cases that still require rehabilitation treatment and follow-up after conclusion of the Programme;
- (c) How will the Government make optimal use of the balance of \$230 million currently under the Pilot Programme to enhance the protection of safety and health at work?

Asked by: Hon LAM Wai-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The three-year Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work (the Pilot Programme) launched by Labour Department (LD) on 23 September 2022 has ceased to accept new applications upon its expiry on 23 September 2025. During the application period of the Pilot Programme, LD and the Work Injury Rehabilitation Office established by the service contractor, based on the reported work injury cases, preliminarily identified injured employees suitable for the Pilot Programme and proactively invited them to participate in the Programme.

A total of 2 437 injured employees participated in the Pilot Programme, and the details are as follows:

	Construction industry	Catering and hotel industry	Transportation and logistics industry
(i) Number of participating cases	1 399	474	564
(ii) Number of cases preliminarily identified as suitable for the Programme and its percentage (i/ii)	5 797 (24%)	1 100 (43%)	1 303 (43%)
(iii) Number of cases that reached maximum medical improvement (i.e. recovered) upon treatment as at the end of February 2026	1 154	420	507
(iv) Number* of return-to-work cases and its percentage as at the end of February 2026 (iv/iii)	610 (53%)	271 (65%)	342 (67%)
(v) Number of cases that still require treatment and follow-up service under the Pilot Programme as at the end of February 2026	15	3	11

\* The return-to-work status of some of the recent recovery cases is still being followed up.

(c) The balance of the provision under the Pilot Programme is approximately \$230 million as at the end of March 2026. Currently, the Pilot Programme

continues to provide services to the admitted cases that still require rehabilitation treatment and follow-up services. The remaining balance will be brought back to the General Revenue Account of the Government upon conclusion of all cases.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)042**

**(Question Serial No. 2541)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department (LD) regulates employment agencies (EAs) in Hong Kong. Please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The staff establishment of LD for regulating EAs in 2025-26;
- (b) Please tabulate the following information by type of complaints against EAs received by LD in 2025:
  - (i) the number of complaints;
  - (ii) investigations conducted;
  - (iii) the number of prosecutions taken out;
  - (iv) the industries or posts involved;
- (c) According to information available, there are currently over 250 EAs offering placement services for imported workers in Hong Kong. What were the details of the complaints involving imported workers received by LD in the past 3 years? Did LD penalise EAs or revoke their licences due to serious non-compliance? There are views that imported workers may be charged double for commission by intermediaries in the Mainland and EAs in Hong Kong. What established measures does LD have to handle this situation?

Asked by: Hon LAM Wai-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

- (a) The Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department (LD) is responsible for administering Part XII of the Employment Ordinance (EO), the Employment Agency Regulations (EAR) and the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies (CoP). EAA's staff establishment for 2025-26 comprises 26 Labour Officer Grade and 9 Clerical Grade posts responsible for performing licensing-related duties, conducting inspections to employment agencies (EAs), investigating complaints, and carrying out the related publicity and educational work, etc. to ensure that EAs comply with the relevant requirements.

- (b) LD handles all complaints against EAs in a serious manner. The breakdowns of complaints against EAs received and investigated and successful prosecutions taken out by LD in 2025 by major types of breaches are set out at Annex. LD does not keep information on the industries or posts involved in the complaints.
- (c) From 2023 to 2025, LD in each year respectively received 18, 17 and 44 complaints against EAs which arranged Mainland workers to work in Hong Kong. These complaints mainly involved EAs suspected of having charged job seekers fees beyond the permissible limit under Part XII of EO and EAR, unlicensed operation of EAs, and non-compliance with CoP. During the same period, LD issued 1, 1 and 7 written warnings respectively to the EAs concerned.

Employers recruiting workers from the Mainland to work in Hong Kong under various labour importation schemes are required to make arrangements through labour service enterprises which have been approved by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and granted the permission to operate business on labour service co-operation with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, with a view to enhancing the protection for imported workers.

**Breakdowns of complaints against EAs received and investigated and successful prosecutions taken out by LD in 2025 by major types of breaches**

	<b>No. of complaints received and investigated</b>	<b>No. of successful prosecutions taken out against EAs</b>
Overcharging commission from foreign domestic helper (FDH) job seekers	56	--
Unlicensed operation	47	1
Non-compliance with CoP	202	--
Others	68*	4 <sup>^</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>5</b>

\* Including complaints about poor service quality of EAs, issues concerning refund of service fees, EAs suspected of inducing FDHs to “job-hop”, etc.

<sup>^</sup> Including 2 EAs that failed to notify LD of changes in the management within the statutory timeframe; 1 EA that failed to notify LD of changes in the place of business within the statutory timeframe; and 1 EA that furnished information which was known or reasonably ought to be known to be false or misleading in the material particular when submitting an application for renewal of licence.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)043**

**(Question Serial No. 3016)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the publicity and promotional work on occupational safety and health, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The expenditure and staff establishment involved in the talks, lectures and seminars organised by the Labour Department (LD) in the past 3 years;
- (b) Please tabulate the numbers of participants (with the numbers and proportions of practitioners and non-practitioners) of the talks, lectures and seminars organised by LD in the past 3 years with a breakdown by industry sector;
- (c) The reasons for the decrease in the number of talks, lectures and seminars planned to be organised by LD in 2026 as compared with those in 2024 and 2025.

Asked by: Hon LAM Wai-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

- (a) Organising talks, lectures and seminars on occupational safety and health (OSH) is an integral part of the ongoing efforts of the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department (LD). The staff concerned have to undertake other duties at the same time, hence the expenditure and staff establishment involved cannot be separately identified.
- (b) From 2023 to 2025, the numbers of participants of OSH talks, lectures and seminars organised by LD were 115 890, 137 644 and 128 387 respectively. LD does not keep a breakdown of the number of participants by industry sector.
- (c) The actual numbers of OSH talks, lectures and seminars organised by LD in 2024 and 2025 were 2 379 and 2 273 respectively, and 2 040 OSH talks, lectures and seminars are planned to be organised in 2026. Having taken into account an increasing demand for online talks in recent years, LD expects that the proportion of online talks in the applications for OSH talks will continue to increase in 2026. As online talks allow

staff from different locations and divisions to attend at the same time, there is a decreasing need for the relevant organisations to apply to organise multiple on-site talks, resulting in an anticipated decrease in the overall number of talks to be organised. In addition, the number of talks, lectures and seminars is subject to change depending on various factors, including public demand for the themes of relevant activities and venue arrangements, etc. LD will, having regard to the actual situation, adjust the arrangements for OSH publicity and promotion as appropriate.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)044**

**(Question Serial No. 3018)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding occupational hygiene surveys, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please tabulate, by type of workplaces, the number of occupational hygiene surveys conducted by survey staff of the Labour Department (LD) in the past 3 years;
- (b) Please tabulate the numbers of cases over the past 3 years in which the survey staff of LD have assessed that the workplaces may pose
  - (i) general health hazards to the employees;
  - (ii) specific health hazards to the employees; please also set out the specific types of hazards posed;
- (c) What follow-up measures have been taken after assessment by survey staff of LD so as to enhance the protection of employees' safety and health at work?

Asked by: Hon LAM Wai-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) Occupational Hygienists of the Labour Department (LD) are responsible for inspecting workplaces with potential occupational health hazards, including restaurants, construction sites, factories, hospitals, offices, etc., and conducting occupational hygiene surveys to assess occupational health risks posed to employees at work. In addition to assessing the general health hazards in the overall working environment, Occupational Hygienists will also conduct in-depth surveys on some specific health hazards, such as assessing the risk of workers developing silicosis and occupational deafness by measuring the silica dust and noise levels at construction sites, assessing the heat stress level in kitchens that contributes to the risk of heat stroke among workers, and assessing the risk of workers losing consciousness or suffering from asphyxiation by monitoring the hazardous gas level in confined spaces.

The numbers of occupational hygiene surveys conducted by LD from 2023 to 2025 with a breakdown by survey type are as follows:

Year \ Survey type	2023	2024	2025
General health hazard	2 301	2 067	2 215
Specific health hazard	3 770	3 493	4 160
Total	6 071	5 560	6 375

LD does not keep statistics on the occupational hygiene surveys by workplace.

- (c) Occupational Hygienists of LD will analyse the information obtained from occupational hygiene surveys and based on the assessment findings, review whether appropriate control measures have been formulated and implemented by duty holders to protect employees' occupational safety and health (OSH), and will take follow-up actions in accordance with the OSH legislation. Besides requiring duty holders to make improvements where necessary, Occupational Hygienists will also take corresponding enforcement actions having regard to the severity of the cases and the available evidence.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)045**

**(Question Serial No. 3019)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please tabulate the following figures in each of the past 3 years:
  - (i) the number of eligible placements recorded;
  - (ii) the number of eligible employers involved;
- (b) Please tabulate the following figures in each of the past 3 years:
  - (i) the number of placements in which eligible employees were granted on-the-job training (OJT) allowance;
  - (ii) the proportion of (i) to eligible placements;
  - (iii) the amount involved;
- (c) Please tabulate the following figures in each of the past 3 years:
  - (i) the number of placements in which eligible employers were granted OJT allowance;
  - (ii) the amount involved;
- (d) The expenditure incurred by the Labour Department in publicising and promoting, as well as processing applications for EPEM, and the staff establishment involved over the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon LAM Wai-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- (a) to (c) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to

12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

The numbers of eligible placements and the employers involved under EPEM, as well as the numbers of placements in which employers were granted OJT allowance and the amount involved in each year from 2023 to 2025 are at Annex. EPEM does not provide any allowance to employees direct.

- (d) From 2023 to 2025, the expenditures for publicising and promoting EPEM were \$610,000, \$510,000 and \$12,000 respectively in each year. EPEM is managed and implemented by LD through deployment of internal resources. As the staff concerned also undertake other duties at the same time, the staff establishment and expenditure involved in EPEM cannot be separately identified.

**Numbers of eligible placements and the employers involved under EPEM, and numbers of placements with OJT allowance granted and the amount involved from 2023 to 2025**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
No. of eligible placements	3 873	4 443	4 491
No. of employers involved	1 420	1 559	1 504
No. of placements with OJT allowance granted *	1 546	1 832	2 083
Amount (\$million)	29.56	33.62	44.59

\* Some placements approved with a longer OJT period (e.g. 12 months) will only apply for OJT allowance upon completion of OJT in the following year, and the applications for allowance received towards year-end may be approved in the following year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)046**

**(Question Serial No. 2460)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With the ageing of buildings across Hong Kong, there is a sharp increase in the number of buildings requiring statutory major maintenance. The fire precaution awareness of construction workers directly affects the safety of residents during major maintenance. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The numbers of inspections conducted by the Labour Department (LD) on buildings undergoing major maintenance in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by regular inspection, surprise inspection and targeted inspection upon receipt of complaints.
- (b) The numbers of cases in which written warnings, improvement notices and suspension notices were issued and prosecutions were taken out by LD against irregularities on fire safety during inspections on buildings undergoing major maintenance in each of the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon LEE Hoey Simon (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The required information is as follows:

- (a)&(b) The occupational safety inspections conducted by the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department (LD) are surprise inspections. The numbers of occupational safety inspections conducted by LD on work sites involving repair, maintenance, alteration and addition works, as well as the numbers of written warnings issued from 2023 to 2025 are tabulated below:

Year	2023	2024	2025
No. of inspections	44 447	44 605	47 263
No. of written warnings	8 776	8 477	8 614

The figures on enforcement actions taken by LD against non-conformity with fire safety requirements in the above inspections are tabulated below:

Year	2023	2024	2025
No. of improvement notices	3	0	2
No. of suspension notices	0	0	0
No. of prosecutions	0	3	1

As LD does not distinguish whether its inspection and enforcement efforts involve statutory major building maintenance works, a relevant statistical breakdown of the relevant enforcement actions is therefore not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)047**

**(Question Serial No. 0037)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding continuous enhancement of occupational safety and health (OSH), good use of innovative technologies and AI as well as support for the industry in developing technology products that enhance OSH, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The expenditure and staff establishment of the Government for developing and putting to use the innovative technologies and AI to enhance OSH level in 2025-26;
- (b) The estimated expenditure and staff establishment of the Government for planning to develop and putting to use the innovative technologies and AI to enhance OSH level in 2026-27;
- (c) Please illustrate with examples of the application of innovative technologies in OSH and the initial results achieved; and
- (d) The Labour Department has planned to take forward the use of technology to inspect high-risk drainage works and investigate related accidents for law enforcement purposes in 2026-27. What are the expenditure and staff establishment involved? What enforcement effect is expected to achieve?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kwong-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) deploys internal resources of the Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions to explore the use of innovative technologies for enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement work, and to promote the development and application of innovative technologies and AI, etc. in the industry for enhancing the level of site safety. As the staff concerned also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the manpower involved in developing and putting to use the innovative technologies and AI and the relevant expenditure cannot be separately identified.

- (c) LD utilises innovative technologies for enhancing the effectiveness of frontline staff in law enforcement. LD has started using small unmanned aircraft (SUA) from October 2025 for aerial photography and videography and generating three-dimensional photo-realistic models from the site images captured to assist in occupational safety and health (OSH) inspections, accident investigation and evidence collection etc. From October 2025 to January 2026, LD conducted a total of 22 special enforcement operations using SUA, with 87 prosecutions taken and 240 Improvement Notices issued.

Besides, the industry has been developing technological products that enhance OSH, and LD will give advice from the regulatory perspective for these products to facilitate their introduction and application in the industry, thereby eliminating or controlling OSH risks at the source. Currently, advice on occupational safety standards is being given by LD for such technological products as Remote-control Tower Crane System and Remote-control Excavator System.

To prevent trapping injuries of workers caused by tail lifts of goods vehicles, LD also supports the industry to develop AI Tripping Device, and has included this device into the Guidance Notes on Prevention of Trapping Hazard of Tail Lifts which was revised in 2025.

- (d) LD has planned to use technology to assist in inspecting high-risk drainage works and investigating related accidents on a trial basis in 2026-27. Small unmanned detection vehicles will mainly be used for entering the confined spaces to monitor the hazardous gas level, detect sludge and take photographs and videos and for generating three-dimensional photo-realistic models from the images captured, so as to assist in OSH inspection, accident investigation and evidence collection, etc. LD will carry out the above work through deployment of internal resources. As the staff concerned also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the manpower and relevant expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)048**

**(Question Serial No. 0148)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As indicated in government papers, the number of cases of suspected breaches under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS)/the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) increased from 63 in 2024 to 194 in 2025, while the estimated figure for 2026 is 300, reflecting an upward trend in such cases in recent years. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of proactive inspections conducted by the Labour Department targeting workplaces employing supplementary workers in the past 3 years, of which, the numbers of cases of suspected breaches identified through proactive inspections and disclosed through workers' complaints;
- (b) Whether inter-departmental joint operations on the above work were conducted in the past 3 years; if yes, please provide a breakdown by year of the number of joint operations, the leading department(s), the total number of cases of suspected breaches identified during the joint operations, and the results of follow-up actions; and
- (c) What measures will the Government adopt in 2026-27 to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness in handling cases of suspected breaches under SLS/ESLS?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kwong-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

- (a) In each year from 2023 to 2025, Labour Inspectors (LIs) of the Labour Department (LD) carried out 5 695, 5 417 and 6 422 inspections respectively to workplaces of imported workers and the accommodation in Hong Kong for imported workers provided by employers. During the period, 73, 73, and 144 cases of suspected breaches were detected respectively.
- (b) LD works closely with relevant law enforcement departments (such as the Police and the Immigration Department) and refers suspected offence cases to relevant departments for follow-up action. In addition, the Government has set up an inter-departmental

Task Force to follow up on cases of suspected exploitation of imported workers seriously to strengthen the protection of their rights.

- (c) LD implements the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) in a stringent manner, striving to combat breaches. LD follows up on all complaints received, including conducting inspections at workplaces of imported workers and verifying relevant employment records. If breaches of labour or immigration laws, requirements of ESLS or the Standard Employment Contract are substantiated, LD will impose administrative sanction against the employers. Depending on the nature of the breach(es), LD will reject the labour importation applications concerned, withdraw the approvals for labour importation granted to the employers, and refuse to process the applications for labour importation subsequently submitted by the employers, with a debarment period of up to 2 years. Moreover, LD reviews its workflow and manpower arrangements from time to time, and flexibly deploys LIs to carry out inspections to safeguard the employment rights of imported workers.

LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, and measures to protect the rights and benefits of imported workers, etc. The review is expected to be completed in the first half of 2026.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)049**

**(Question Serial No. 0484)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 49 of the Budget Speech that the Labour Department (LD) will utilise Artificial Intelligence (AI) to optimise job matching to provide better services for job seekers and employers. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please give a detailed account of how LD will implement the utilisation of AI to optimise job matching. What kind of enhanced services will be provided for job seekers and employers?
- (b) How much expenditure and manpower resources does LD expect to save after utilising AI to optimise job matching?
- (c) What employment indicators (including the expected numbers of registered employed persons and successful job matches, etc.) does LD expect to achieve after utilising AI to optimise job matching?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kwong-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- (a) to (c) The Interactive Employment Service (iES) website of the Labour Department (LD) and its mobile application provide job seekers with 24-hour services for browsing employment information and searching for job vacancies. LD will take forward the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to optimise the job matching function on the iES website and its mobile application. The AI system will analyse and match suitable job vacancies based on job seekers' background information, job preferences and their feedback, and provide personalised employment and vocational training information so that the employment information provided can better serve job seekers' needs and improve their chances of securing employment.

The AI job matching system is still under development. In this regard, LD is maintaining close liaison with the Digital Policy Office to strive to finalise all

details as soon as possible. The services are expected to roll out in phases, with the earliest phase starting in mid-2027.

Upon the launch of the AI job matching system, job centres will continue to provide recruitment and employment services to employers and job seekers, including district-based job fairs and employment counselling.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)050**

**(Question Serial No. 0403)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In recent years, the Government has proactively launched various labour importation schemes to address manpower shortage. Regarding the impact of the related measures on employment of local workers and the protection mechanism, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The specific measures and related expenditure of the Labour Department (LD) for ensuring employment priority for local workers in 2026-27, including the estimated expenditure for enhancing the Interactive Employment Service website, strengthening monitoring of employers' local recruitment arrangements, conducting special inspection operations and complaint-handling mechanism;
- (b) The latest progress of LD's review on the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) (including the coverage, operational arrangements, and measures to promote employment priority for local workers); and whether enhancement measures of ESLS will be introduced in 2026-27 upon completion of the review;
- (c) The respective numbers of persons approved to work in Hong Kong under various labour importation schemes (including ESLS and sector-specific labour importation schemes) in each of the past 3 years; the top 5 industry sectors with the highest numbers of imported workers approved and their numbers of imported workers approved since the launch of ESLS;
- (d) What specific mechanism does the Government have in place to monitor the impact of labour importation on the local employment market for the grassroots? Will the Government consider establishing a mechanism which allows both additions and deductions of quotas to import labour in the light of the unemployment rates of industry sectors and suspends or adjusts applications for labour importation from industry sectors with higher unemployment rates? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

- (e) The number of complaints regarding suspected breach of requirements on employment priority for local workers received by the Government, as well as the numbers of inspections conducted and successful prosecutions last year (2025-26).

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- (a) The Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) is mainly administered by the Supplementary Labour Division (SLD) of the Labour Department (LD). The estimated expenditure for SLD in 2026-27 is \$100 million (including staff cost).

Since June 2025, LD has implemented a series of measures to strengthen the protection of the employment priority for local workers, including launching an online complaint form on the ESLS dedicated webpage, displaying the names of applicant companies when publishing ESLS job vacancies on the Interactive Employment Service website; requiring employers to report information on full-time local employees and imported workers as well as the relevant manning ratios based on a risk-based approach; and strengthening the monitoring of applicant employers' local recruitment arrangements, etc. As the relevant staff also undertake other duties, the expenditure for implementing the above measures cannot be separately identified.

- (b) LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, and measures to protect the rights and benefits of imported workers. To facilitate the completion of the review on ESLS in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB), so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.
- (c) LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023, allowing employers with genuine needs to apply for importation of workers for posts that were generally excluded under the previous Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS). In addition, LWB launched the Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes in June 2023. The Development Bureau and the Transport and Logistics Bureau also respectively launched sector-specific labour importation schemes for the construction and transport sectors in July 2023. From 2023 to 2025, the numbers of quotas of imported workers approved under various labour importation schemes in each year are at Annex.

As at February 2026, a total of 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved under ESLS. In the order of the number of workers approved, the 5 industry sectors with the highest numbers were food and beverage services (41 962), retail (8 341), cleaning services (5 128), security services (4 689), and agriculture and fisheries (3 530). As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS.

- (d) All relevant bureaux and departments implement the labour importation schemes in accordance with the principle of ensuring employment priority for local workers. Applicant employers must undertake local recruitment and give priority to employing

suitable local workers. Employers approved to import labour shall also meet the manning ratio of local employees to imported workers, sign a Standard Employment Contract with the imported workers, and pay a salary not lower than the median monthly wage of a comparable position to prevent the imported workers from becoming “cheap labour” and undermining the employment opportunities of local workers.

The Government has been closely monitoring the employment market situation and adjusting the implementation arrangements for labour importation, adhering to the principle of ensuring employment priority for local workers. For example, from 18 September 2025, employers applying to import waiter/waitress and junior cook under ESLS are required to comply with a more stringent manning ratio requirement of 2:1 by changing the calculation basis from all posts of an applicant employer to each post under application. In addition, ESLS has implemented new requirements on local recruitment from 10 September 2025, requiring employers applying to import workers for the above 2 job types to join a job fair held at a job centre specified by LD once a week during the local recruitment period (which has been extended from 4 weeks to 6 weeks from 18 September) and conduct job interviews on the spot.

- (e) In 2025-26 (as at February 2026), LD received 612 complaints involving ESLS requirements of safeguarding the employment priority for local workers. LD follows up on all complaints received, including carrying out inspections at workplaces of imported workers and verifying relevant employment records. During the period, LD imposed administrative sanction on a total of 7 employers for breaching the requirements of local open recruitment or displacing serving local employees with imported workers. These sanctions included rejecting the labour importation applications concerned, withdrawing the approvals granted to the employers for labour importation, and refusing to process the applications for labour importation subsequently submitted by the employers for up to 2 years.

**Quotas of imported workers approved  
under labour importation schemes  
from 2023 to 2025**

Labour importation scheme	Quotas of imported workers approved		
	2023	2024	2025
Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes <sup>Note(1)</sup>	2 896	4 292	3 780
Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector	6 349	3 614	3 769
Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector - Aviation Industry	2 841	2 982	3 561 <sup>Note(2)</sup>
Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector - Public Light Bus/Coach Trade	969	849 <sup>Note(3)</sup>	371 <sup>Note(4)</sup>
ESLS <sup>Note(1)</sup>	1 600	42 025	52 570

Note:

- (1) Including the quotas for contract renewal.
- (2) The quota ceiling for the Scheme is 6 300. After 2 rounds of applications in the first 2 years, there were a total of 2 206 unused and remaining quotas. All these quotas were approved in the third round of applications in March 2025. Additionally, 1 355 quotas for contract renewal were approved under the Scheme in July 2025.
- (3) Including 118 unused quotas approved in the first round of application in 2023, which were carried forward to the second round in 2024 for allocation.
- (4) All 1 700 quotas were approved in 2 rounds of applications in September 2023 and July 2024. There were no additional quotas under the Scheme thereafter. The figure for 2025 is the number of quotas for contract renewal.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)051**

**(Question Serial No. 0080)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the two-year Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) launched by the Government in September 2023, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of contracts of imported workers applied for under ESLS that have expired, and of which, the respective numbers of renewal applications submitted, approved and rejected, the reasons for rejection, as well as the average vetting time for renewal applications;
- (b) Regarding the performance measures in respect of employment services, the reasons for the discontinued and withdrawn applications out of 12 214 ESLS applications processed in 2025 and the number of job types involved, as well as the number of applications for each job type under processing;
- (c) ESLS was originally scheduled to conclude in September last year but was subsequently extended after review by the Government. Given the shrinking workforce in Hong Kong and that the job types covered by ESLS are mostly low-skilled jobs with long working hours and more strenuous work which are difficult to draw young people to join them, would the Government consider regularising ESLS? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons; and
- (d) What are the manpower and expenditure involved in vetting ESLS applications?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Chun, Jonathan (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- (a) Employers whose applications for labour importation under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) are approved have to recruit the imported workers themselves and obtain the visas/entry permits issued by the Immigration Department before arranging the imported workers to work in Hong Kong. The visa/entry permit is normally valid for a period of 24 months or the full term of the

employment contract, whichever is shorter. The Government does not keep information on the expiry of employment contracts of individual imported workers, and the statistics on the number of renewal applications for labour importation among these imported workers.

Under ESLS, employers wishing to continue employing imported workers upon expiry of their employment contracts are required to submit applications to the Labour Department (LD), and the requirements and procedures for such applications are the same as those for new applications for labour importation, including requiring employers to conduct local recruitment and accord priority to employing suitable local job seekers, and meet the relevant manning ratio requirement of local employees to imported workers. After an employer has completed the local recruitment, LD will analyse each application so as to assess the employer's actual manpower needs and the number of serving local employees, etc., and invite members of the Labour Advisory Board to give views. The Commissioner for Labour will thoroughly assess various factors and determine whether to approve or reject the relevant applications for labour importation.

The time required by LD for processing each application is affected by various factors, which include whether the post under application is a common post (e.g. cleaner, warehouse keeper, sales assistant, etc.), whether the applicant employer has provided sufficient information, whether there are changes in the application details during processing, and the time taken by the employer to respond to LD's enquiry or suggestion, etc. In general, upon receipt of all information and documents required for processing and after screening-in of applications, LD can complete the vetting of applications within 3 months, including the time taken by applicant employers to conduct local recruitment under ESLS.

- (b) Of the 12 214 applications processed under ESLS in 2025, 3 267 were discontinued due to reasons such as withdrawal by employers or failure to pass the preliminary screening. LD does not maintain a statistical breakdown of discontinued applications by job category. As at February 2026, 3 131 applications were under processing under ESLS.
- (c) The Government has been closely monitoring the employment market, and adjusting the implementation arrangements of ESLS in a flexible and targeted manner having regard to the latest labour market situation. LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements; measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers; and measures to protect the rights and benefits of imported workers. To facilitate the completion of review on ESLS in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.
- (d) ESLS is mainly administered by the Supplementary Labour Division (SLD) of LD. In 2025-26, the staff establishment of SLD comprises 57 Labour Officer Grade posts, 14 Clerical Grade posts and 1 Workman II post (excluding staff temporarily deployed by LD). SLD also employs non-civil service contract staff and post-retirement service contract staff to assist in implementing ESLS. The revised estimated expenditure for

SLD in 2025-26 is \$112 million (including staff cost). As some of the staff responsible for vetting ESLs applications also undertake other duties, the manpower and expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)052**

**(Question Serial No. 0979)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In response to the acute manpower shortage faced by specific industry sectors, the Government launched the Sector-specific Labour Importation Schemes (the schemes) in 2023. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The numbers of imported workers applied for and approved under the Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes, the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector, and the Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector, as well as the numbers of persons who have come to Hong Kong under the schemes and those whose contract renewal applications upon expiry have been approved since the launch of the schemes;
- (b) The number of workers in various industry sectors who have come to Hong Kong and chosen to reside locally. In view of the rent increase in Hong Kong compared with that when the schemes were implemented 2 years ago, as the median wage is adjusted having regard to the pay trend in the market, whether the Government will consider adjusting the percentage of imported workers' wages deductible for accommodation having regard to rent increase; and
- (c) What are the average numbers of days required for processing new applications and vetting renewal applications under the schemes, as well as the resources involved?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Chun, Jonathan (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour and Welfare Bureau launched the Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes (Care Workers Special Scheme) in June 2023, with the overall importation quota capped at 7 000. The Government, having reviewed the demand for and supply of care workers in the sector, raised the ceiling of the overall importation quota to 15 000 in July 2024. In July 2023, the Development Bureau (DEVB) launched the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector (Construction Sector Scheme), while the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB)

launched the Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector - Aviation Industry (Aviation Industry Scheme), and the Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector - Public Light Bus (PLB)/Coach Trade (Transport Sector Scheme). The numbers of quotas for imported workers applied for and approved, the number of imported workers who have arrived in Hong Kong, and the number of quotas approved for applications in respect of contracts due for renewal as at February 2026 are set out at Annex.

- (b) Employers who import workers through the Care Workers Special Scheme, the Aviation Industry Scheme and the Transport Sector Scheme are required to continuously provide the imported workers with accommodation that meets the standards stipulated in the Schedule to the Standard Employment Contract (SEC). If the imported workers are Mainland residents, employers may opt to provide accommodation in Hong Kong or on the Mainland for the imported workers, or allow the imported workers to reside in their residential premises on the Mainland. The majority of imported workers under the Care Workers Special Scheme and the Transport Sector Scheme reside in Hong Kong. As the workplaces under the Aviation Industry Scheme are in the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) near the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the majority of the imported workers opt to reside in Zhuhai and commute daily to work at HKIA. Having regard to the characteristics of the construction industry, the Construction Sector Scheme requires that the accommodation for imported workers resided in Hong Kong must be either designated quarters arranged by the Government or quarters provided at the construction sites under the principal contractors. For imported workers from the Mainland, the principal contractors may opt for providing them with accommodation on the Mainland or allowing them to reside in their own residential premises on the Mainland.

In accordance with SEC, an employer may deduct the actual cost of accommodation in respect of a period that an imported worker occupies the accommodation from the wages payable to the worker, or 10% of the amount of wages (excluding overtime pay) for the corresponding period, whichever is the less. This requirement is consistent with that under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS). LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, and measures to protect the rights and benefits of imported workers. The review is expected to be completed in the first half of 2026.

- (c) The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is responsible for implementing the Care Workers Special Scheme, which accepts applications in 3 to 4 rounds each year, with each application period lasting around 2 weeks. Residential care homes are required to submit applications for new quota and quota renewal within the deadlines, and SWD will complete the vetting in about 2 months' time. SWD has a total of 5 staff members designated to implement the Care Workers Special Scheme, comprising staff from the Social Work Officer grade, Executive Officer grade and Clerical grade. Existing resources are also deployed to assist with the related administrative work.

DEVB is responsible for implementing the Construction Sector Scheme, which accepts applications on a quarterly basis (generally in the months of January, April, July and October). Applicants generally apply for importing workers for works activities that

will commence in the coming months, on the premise that they can demonstrate that they have conducted local recruitment as required, but failed to employ sufficient local workers. In general, applicants will be notified of the results of their applications for quota within 2 months after the relevant application deadlines.

The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) is responsible for implementing the Aviation Industry Scheme, under which 3 rounds of application were accepted in July 2023, March 2024 and March 2025 respectively, with all 6 300 quotas fully allocated. As the contracts of the first batch of imported workers are expiring progressively since the end of 2025, TLB and AAHK have, since July 2025, begun inviting employers around every 6 months to apply for quotas for contract renewal, so as to facilitate their renewal of contracts with existing imported workers. It normally takes about 2 weeks to complete the processing of new applications and renewal-related applications.

The Transport Department (TD) is responsible for implementing the Transport Sector Scheme, under which a total of 900 PLB and 800 coach driver quotas were approved through 2 rounds of application in September 2023 and July 2024 respectively. As the contracts of the first batch of imported workers are expiring progressively since the end of 2025, TD already briefed the operators granted with quotas on the renewal arrangements in August 2025, and has continued to process renewal applications in an orderly manner, which normally takes about 8 weeks to complete.

As some of the staff responsible for processing applications under the above labour importation schemes also undertake other duties, the resources involved in processing relevant applications cannot be separately identified.

**Numbers of quotas for imported workers applied for and approved,  
number of imported workers who have arrived in Hong Kong,  
and number of quotas for contract renewal approved  
under labour importation schemes  
(as at 28 February 2026)**

<b>Labour importation scheme</b>	<b>No. of quotas for imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of quotas for imported workers approved*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers who have arrived in Hong Kong</b>	<b>No. of quotas for contract renewal approved</b>
Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes	8 935	6 049	9 878 <sup>Note(1)</sup>	6 953 <sup>Note(2)</sup>
Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector	25 433	13 732 (5 737 approved and active quotas for imported workers) <sup>Note (3)</sup>	10 391 (3 547 active quotas for imported workers who have arrived in Hong Kong) Note(3)	Not applicable <sup>#</sup>
Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector - Aviation Industry	9 216	6 300	5 373	3 266
Labour Importation Scheme for the Transport Sector - Public Light Bus/Coach Trade	3 074	1 700	1 600	589

\* Excluding the number of quotas for contract renewal.

# The Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector is a supplementary measure for addressing manpower shortages in specific trades of the industry at different times. The approving authority will determine the validity period of the quotas for imported workers (up to a maximum of 24 months) with regard to the method statement of works. Quota allocation is on a rolling basis, i.e. quotas will be released for application upon partial completion of the works or expiry of the quota validity period. If imported workers are still needed for the works, applicants are required to apply afresh for the quotas for imported workers, and the approving authority will re-consider those quotas applied for in light of the progress of and manpower requirements for the works.

Note:

- (1) Including imported workers who quitted their jobs after arriving in Hong Kong.
- (2) Including care workers previously imported under the Supplementary Labour Scheme.
- (3) As at February 2026, there were a total of 5 737 approved and active quotas for imported workers under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector. Of these, 3 547 imported workers had arrived in Hong Kong. Quota allocation under the Labour Importation Scheme for the Construction Sector is on a rolling basis, i.e. quotas will be released for application upon partial completion of the works.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)053**

**(Question Serial No. 2572)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Government announced in the 2023 Policy Address the launch of a three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (the Pilot Scheme) to encourage older or middle-aged persons aged 40 or above to re-enter the employment market. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The number of applicants since the implementation of the Pilot Scheme and up till now, with a breakdown by age group (i.e. 40-49, 50-59, 60-65, 66-69, and 70 or above);
- (b) The occupation in which the applicants were engaged, as well as the number of applicants who had completed 6 months of work and were granted an allowance of \$10,000, and the number of applicants who had completed 12 consecutive months of work and were granted an additional allowance of \$10,000; and
- (c) In 2026-27, the Labour Department will review the Pilot Scheme, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to explore further measures for encouraging silver employment. What are the details of relevant work, the expected completion date of the review, and the manpower resources and expenditure involved in such work?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Chun, Jonathan (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. As at February 2026, the REA Scheme recorded 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements. A breakdown of the number of participants by age is at Annex 1.
- (b) Each eligible participant who has worked full-time for 6 consecutive months will be provided with a first tranche of re-employment allowance (REA) of \$10,000, while those who have worked full-time for 12 consecutive months will be given a second

tranche of REA of \$10,000. Half-rate REA will be given to those who have worked part-time. Each eligible participant may receive a maximum REA of \$20,000 during the implementation of the REA Scheme.

As at February 2026, LD approved a total of 24 591 applications for REA, involving 17 185 participants who completed 6 months of work and 7 399 participants who completed 12 months of work. A breakdown of placements with REA approved by occupation in which participants were engaged is at Annex 2.

- (c) LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme to collect and consolidate relevant details of the participants and placements for analysis, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, so as to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons. The mid-term review is expected to be completed in the second half of 2026. The REA Scheme is managed and reviewed by LD through deployment of internal resources. As the staff concerned also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the manpower resources and expenditure involved in reviewing the REA Scheme cannot be separately identified.

**Breakdown of the number of participants under the REA Scheme  
by age from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
40 - 49	27 376
50 - 59	25 739
60 - 65	11 746
66 - 69	2 812
70 or above	1 261
<b>Total</b>	<b>68 934</b>

**Breakdown of placements with REA approved under the REA Scheme  
by occupation in which participants were engaged  
from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of placements with REA approved*</b>	
	<b>First tranche of REA</b>	<b>Second tranche of REA</b>
Managers and administrators	1 417	656
Professionals and associate professionals	1 513	689
Clerical support workers	2 971	1 416
Service workers	5 252	2 143
Shop sales workers	1 112	535
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	40	18
Craft and related workers	451	225
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	802	436
Elementary occupations	4 936	2 505
Others	738	115
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 232</b>	<b>8 738</b>

\* Some of the participants with REA approved were involved in more than 1 placement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)054**

**(Question Serial No. 2485)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The total number of labour importation applications the Government has received since the launch of ESLS, with a breakdown by industry sector and post;
- (b) The total number of labour importation applications involving waiter/waitress and junior cook the Government has received after it tightened the measures for these posts since last September, the number of cases approved; if there were rejected applications, the main reasons for that;
- (c) The number of special inspections conducted by the Labour Department (LD) in each year since the launch of ESLS; and whether indicators have been set for inspection work;
- (d) The total number of non-compliance cases identified by LD (broken down by type of breaches) since the launch of ESLS; the industry sectors involved; how many non-compliant employers in total were imposed with administrative sanctions?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023. As at February 2026, a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers were received. Breakdowns of the numbers of imported workers applied for by industry sector and job category are set out in Annex 1 and Annex 2.
- (b) New requirements on local recruitment have been implemented under ESLS from 10 September 2025, requiring employers applying to import waiters/waitresses and junior cooks to join a job fair held at a job centre specified by LD once a week during the local recruitment period (which has been extended from 4 weeks to 6 weeks from

18 September) and conduct job interviews on the spot. In addition, from 18 September 2025, employers applying to import workers for the above two posts are required to comply with a more stringent manning ratio requirement of 2:1 by changing the calculation basis from all posts of an applicant employer to each post under application.

Since the implementation of the above new requirements, the number of applications for labour importation from the food and beverage services industry has dropped significantly from a monthly average of nearly 370 applications between June and August 2025 to about 255 applications after September. Upon the implementation of the more stringent manning ratio requirement, the number of imported waiters/waitresses and junior cooks approved have also declined from monthly averages of nearly 610 and 560 respectively between June and August 2025 to about 320 and 180 in recent months.

From September 2025 to February 2026, a total of 30 applications for labour importation from the food and beverage services industry, involving 93 imported workers, were rejected. The major reasons for rejecting the applications included their failure to fully meet the requirements of ESLS (e.g. the manning ratio of imported workers to local employees, requirements of local open recruitment) and relevant employers having adverse records, etc.

- (c) In each year from 2023 (from 4 September to 31 December) to 2026 (as at February), Labour Inspectors of LD carried out a total of 1 709, 5 417, 6 422 and 926 inspections on workplaces of imported workers and the accommodation in Hong Kong for imported workers provided by employers. LD will continue to monitor the implementation of ESLS and conduct timely targeted inspections to ensure employers' compliance with labour laws and the requirements of ESLS.
- (d) LD implements ESLS in a stringent manner. If breaches of labour or immigration laws, requirements of ESLS or the Standard Employment Contract are substantiated, LD will impose administrative sanction against the employers concerned. Depending on the nature of the breaches, LD will reject the labour importation applications concerned, withdraw the approvals for labour importation granted to the employers, and refuse to process the applications for labour importation subsequently submitted by the employers (with a debarment period of up to 2 years). Since the implementation of ESLS and as at February 2026, LD imposed administrative sanction on 29 employers who had breached the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, occupational safety and health legislation, Immigration Ordinance or requirements of ESLS, mainly involving the food and beverage services, waste recycling, manufacturing industries, etc. A breakdown of cases of administrative sanction by nature of non-compliance is at Annex 3.

**Number of imported workers applied for under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by industry sector**

<b>Industry sector<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for</b>
1. Agriculture and Fisheries	3 914
2. Manufacturing	15 760
3. Construction	27
4. Import/Export Trades and Wholesale	7 622
(i) <i>Import/Export Trades</i>	(3 772)
(ii) <i>Wholesale</i>	(3 850)
5. Retail, Accommodation and Food Services	86 293
(i) <i>Retail</i>	(13 761)
(ii) <i>Accommodation Services</i>	(3 535)
(iii) <i>Food and Beverage Services</i>	(68 997)
6. Transportation, Storage, Information and Communications	8 253
7. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Professional and Business Services	18 004
8. Public Administration, Social and Personal Services	42 116
<b>Total</b>	<b>181 989</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of industries may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

**Number of imported workers applied for under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by job category**

Job category <sup>@</sup>	No. of imported workers applied for
1. Waiter/Waitress <sup>#</sup>	22 203
2. Junior Cook <sup>#</sup>	18 390
3. Cleaner <sup>^</sup>	17 804
4. Security Guard <sup>^</sup>	14 847
5. Cook	13 001
6. Sales Assistant <sup>#</sup>	12 377
7. Dish Washer <sup>^</sup>	9 075
8. Warehouse Keeper <sup>#</sup>	9 025
9. Clerical Worker <sup>#</sup>	4 569
10. Others	60 698
<b>Total</b>	<b>181 989</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

<sup>#</sup> Falling within the 26 job categories generally excluded from labour importation under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS).

<sup>^</sup> Falling within the unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

**Administrative sanctions under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by nature of non-compliance**

<b>Nature of non-compliance</b>	<b>No. of cases</b>
1. Breach of labour laws	16
2. Breach of the Immigration Ordinance	6
3. Displacement of serving local employees with imported workers	2
4. Breach of local recruitment requirements	5
<b>Total:</b>	<b>29</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)055**

**(Question Serial No. 2700)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Harmonious and stable labour relations are pivotal to the advancement of economic development of Hong Kong. Regarding labour relations, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The total number of labour disputes and claims received by the Labour Department (LD) in 2025, with a breakdown by case nature;
- (b) Among the labour disputes and claims handled by LD in 2025, please tabulate:
  - (i) the number of claimants involved;
  - (ii) the total amount of claims;
  - (iii) the number and percentage of cases resolved through conciliation;
- (c) Please tabulate the following figures in 2025 by industry sector:
  - (i) the number of labour disputes handled by LD;
  - (ii) the number of claims handled by LD;
  - (iii) the number and percentage of cases resolved through conciliation by LD;
- (d) The time interval in which LD handled each labour dispute and claim in 2025;
- (e) The staff establishment of LD for handling labour disputes and claims in 2025-26 and 2026-27;
- (f) Referring to the data of the past 5 years, there was a noticeable upward trend in the number of labour disputes and claims handled by LD. What measures will the Government introduce to protect employees' rights and foster harmonious labour relations? For instance, will the penalties for wage default be raised to enhance the deterrent effect?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a) In 2025, the numbers of labour disputes (i.e. cases involving more than 20 employees) and claims (i.e. cases involving 20 or less employees) handled by the Labour Department (LD) with a breakdown by major cause are set out at Annex 1.
- (b) In respect of the labour disputes and claims handled by LD in 2025, the numbers of claimants involved, the total amount of claims, the numbers of cases with conciliation service rendered, and the numbers and percentages of cases resolved through conciliation are as follows:

	Labour disputes	Claims
Total no. of claimants involved	18 997	22 377
Total amount of claims (\$million)	429	1,425
No. of cases with conciliation service rendered	102	12 895
No. of cases resolved through conciliation (%)	47 (46.1%)	9 972 (77.3%)

- (c) In 2025, the numbers of labour disputes and claims handled by LD with a breakdown by industry are set out at Annex 2.

During the same period, the numbers of labour disputes and claims with conciliation service rendered by LD as well as the numbers and percentages of cases resolved through conciliation with a breakdown by industry are set out at Annex 3.

- (d) The time taken to handle labour disputes and claims varies from case to case, depending on such factors as the nature of each case, the number of claimants and the issues in dispute. Therefore, LD does not have the relevant statistics.
- (e) The Labour Relations Division (LRD) of LD is responsible for handling labour disputes and claims. In addition, LRD provides consultation services to employers and employees on matters relating to the Employment Ordinance (EO) and conditions of employment, and is responsible for reviewing EO and carrying out legislative amendments, etc. As handling labour disputes and claims is only one of the functions of LRD, the staff establishment involved cannot be separately identified.
- (f) The increase in the number of labour disputes and claims handled by LD reflects, to a certain extent, the enhanced awareness of the employment rights among employees and their heightened trust in LD's handling of labour disputes. LD adopts a multi-pronged strategy for safeguarding employees' rights and fostering harmonious labour relations. LD organises a wide range of publicity activities to enhance employers' and employees' understanding of their rights and obligations, and fosters candid communication and direct dialogue between employers and employees to resolve employment disputes. In addition, LD inspects workplaces and gathers intelligence through different channels, and will proactively intervene and follow up on potential labour disputes identified. If employees are owed wages or their employment rights are infringed, LD will conduct criminal investigations and initiate prosecutions against employers to protect the employees' legitimate rights.

**Numbers of labour disputes and claims handled by LD  
in 2025 with a breakdown by major cause**

## (i) Labour disputes

Major cause	No. of cases
Disputes involving the principal contractor and subcontractor affecting employees' rights and benefits	90
Cessation of business/insolvency	33
Dismissal	3
Others	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>

## (ii) Claims

Major cause	No. of cases
Termination of contract	5 272
Dispute on wages	5 677
Dispute on holiday pay/annual leave pay/rest day pay/sickness allowance	1 383
Cessation of business/insolvency	156
Retrenchment/Lay-off	93
Variation of terms of employment contract	50
Others	1 711
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 342</b>

**Numbers of labour disputes and claims handled by LD in 2025  
with a breakdown by industry<sup>#</sup>**

## (i) Labour disputes

Industry	No. of cases
Manufacturing	1
Construction	95
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	1
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	2
Accommodation and food service activities	24
Other service activities	4
Total	127

## (ii) Claims

Industry	No. of cases
Construction	4 303
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	1 015
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	743
Accommodation and food service activities	2 692
Administrative and support service activities	1 438
Other service activities	1 299
Work activities within domestic households	888
Others*	1 964
Total	14 342

<sup>#</sup> Hong Kong Standard Industrial Classification Version 2.0 (HSIC V2.0) of the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) is adopted for industrial classification.

\* Including individual industries that account for less than 5% of the total number of claims.

**Numbers of labour disputes and claims  
with conciliation service rendered by LD in 2025  
with a breakdown by industry<sup>#</sup>**

## (i) Labour disputes

Industry	No. of cases with conciliation service rendered	No. of cases resolved through conciliation (%)
Manufacturing	1	1 (100%)
Construction	90	45 (50%)
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	-	-
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	2	1 (50%)
Accommodation and food service activities	9	-
Other service activities	-	-
Total	102	47 (46.1%)

(ii) Claims

Industry	No. of cases with conciliation service rendered	No. of cases resolved through conciliation (%)
Construction	3 954	3 061 (77.4%)
Import/export, wholesale and retail trades	858	659 (76.8%)
Transportation, storage, postal and courier services	672	490 (72.9%)
Accommodation and food service activities	2 271	1 762 (77.6%)
Administrative and support service activities	1 379	1 117 (81.0%)
Other service activities	1 185	914 (77.1%)
Work activities within domestic households	872	706 (81.0%)
Others*	1 704	1 263 (74.1%)
Total	12 895	9 972 (77.3%)

# HSIC V2.0 of C&SD is adopted for industrial classification

\* Including individual industries that account for less than 5% of the total number of claims.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)056**

**(Question Serial No. 0571)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) by the Government, would the Government advise the Committee of the following:

- (a) The provision for the REA Scheme for 2026-27, with breakdowns by expenditure on allowance, administrative expenses, publicity and outsourced service (if any);
- (b) The estimated numbers of applications to be processed and successful placements as well as the implementation timetable for that year;
- (c) Whether the Government will set quantitative targets (such as the cost for each successful placement, target numbers of placements in which the employees stay in employment for 6/12 months) having regard to the additional provision, and the announcement and reporting arrangements.

Asked by: Hon NG Kam-wah, Webster (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. For 2026-27, the estimated expenditure for disbursing re-employment allowance to eligible participants is \$222 million, while the estimated expenditure for employing contract staff to assist in its implementation is \$8 million. Since the REA Scheme is managed and implemented by LD through deployment of internal resources, the related administrative and publicity expenses have been absorbed within the recurrent operational expenses of LD and cannot be separately identified.
- (b) In 2025-26 (as at February), the REA Scheme recorded 30 630 participants and 24 280 placements. LD expects that the numbers of participants and placements in 2026-27 will be comparable to those in 2025-26.

- (c) The response to the REA Scheme is very favourable, with the number of placements recorded far exceeding the original estimation of about 6 000 over 3 years. LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme to assess its effectiveness and enhancement measures. As the numbers of placements and retention status of employees are subject to factors such as the economy, labour market conditions and the personal circumstances of job seekers, it is not appropriate to set quantitative targets on placement and retention for the REA Scheme.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)057**

**(Question Serial No. 0572)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the funding arrangements and training effectiveness of the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM), would the Government advise the following:

- (a) The provision for EPEM in 2026-27; and the proportion of allowance (a maximum of \$5,000 per month for each eligible employed person for 3 to 12 months) disbursed in different allowance periods (3/6/9/12 months);
- (b) The distribution of the nearly 4 500 subsidised cases last year (please provide breakdowns by age group: 40-49, 50-59, 60 or above; and by industry/occupation);
- (c) The participation rate and completion rate of on-the-job training, as well as the proportion of further employment after the allowance period and the average length in months of such employment.

Asked by: Hon NG Kam-wah, Webster (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

In 2025, there were 4 491 eligible placements and 2 980 preliminary applications for OJT allowance recorded under EPEM. In the same year, LD issued 2 962 approvals-in-principle for the preliminary applications for OJT allowance submitted by employers (approvals-in-principle of some preliminary applications were issued in the next year). Breakdowns of eligible placements by age,

industry and occupation of employees are at Annex 1. A breakdown of preliminary applications for OJT allowance by approved period of training is at Annex 2.

In 2025-26 (as at February), LD disbursed around \$43 million of OJT allowance to eligible employers. The relevant estimated expenditure for 2026-27 is around \$40 million.

- (c) LD conducts surveys regularly to find out the retention status of those placed into employment under EPEM. According to the surveys conducted up to December 2025, 83% of the employees who received OJT under EPEM had stayed in employment for 4 months or more, and 70% for 6 months or longer, indicating that the majority of employees are able to complete OJT under EPEM. LD does not keep the OJT completion rate of the employed persons and figures on their further employment.

**Breakdowns of eligible placements under EPEM  
by age, industry and occupation in 2025**

## (i) By age

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of eligible placements</b>
40 - 49	1 208
50 - 59	1 724
60 or above	1 559
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 491</b>

## (ii) By industry

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. of eligible placements</b>
Real estate and business services	1 611
Community, social and personal services	787
Manufacturing	207
Wholesale and retail trades	497
Import and export trades	180
Restaurants and hotels	456
Construction	187
Transport, storage and communications	344
Others	222
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 491</b>

## (iii) By occupation

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of eligible placements</b>
Managers and administrators, professionals and associate professionals	499
Clerical support workers	759
Services workers and shop sales workers	954
Agricultural and fishery workers as well as craft and related workers	293
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	289
Elementary occupations	1 697
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 491</b>

**Breakdown of placements with approvals-in-principle issued  
under EPEM by approved period of training in 2025**

<b>Approved period of training</b>	<b>No. of placements with approvals-in-principle issued (%)</b>
3 to less than 6 months	660 (22%)
6 to less than 12 months	1 599 (54%)
12 months	703 (24%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 962 (100%)</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)058**

**(Question Serial No. 2535)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Re-employment allowance: effectiveness and employment quality (retention, wage, working hours)

Question:

Regarding the effectiveness and employment quality of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme), would the Government advise the following:

- (a) The distribution of the over 37 000 successful placements since its launch one and a half years ago (please set out by full-time/part-time mode, industry and occupation);
- (b) The retention rate of the successful placements (e.g. 3/6/12 months), the average and median salaries after employment, as well as the average and median working hours;
- (c) Whether the Government has evaluated the “substitution effect” (replacing existing employees with those receiving allowance) that the REA Scheme has on, and the “net additional employment” in the labour market; if yes, the evaluation method and the summary of the findings.

Asked by: Hon NG Kam-wah, Webster (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable. As at February 2026, there were 40 629 placements, of which 4 174 were part-time placements (i.e. employed under a continuous contract and working fewer than 30 hours per week). Breakdowns of placements by mode of employment, industry and occupation of participants are at Annex. LD does not keep a breakdown of placements by monthly wage.

During the period, LD approved a total of 24 591 applications for re-employment allowance (REA), of which 17 185 participants completed 6 months of work and 7 399 participants completed 12 months of work.

- (c) Hong Kong is in general facing a labour shortage and an ageing workforce. The REA Scheme helps encourage more older and middle-aged persons to re-enter the employment market, thereby filling the shortfall in labour supply to a certain extent. As the REA Scheme disburses REA directly to eligible older and middle-aged persons who have been in employment rather than to the enterprises employing them, there is no obvious incentive for those enterprises to replace the existing employees by employing participants of the REA Scheme. LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme to collect and consolidate relevant details of the participants and placements under the REA Scheme for analysis, so as to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Breakdowns of placements under the REA Scheme  
by mode of employment, industry and occupation of participants  
from July 2024 to February 2026**

## (i) By mode of employment

<b>Mode of employment</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Full-time work	34 010
Part-time work	4 174
Qualified casual work	2 445
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

## (ii) By industry

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Real estate and business services	13 526
Community, social and personal services	10 781
Construction	2 072
Wholesale and retail trades	3 315
Import and export trades	826
Restaurants and hotels	4 549
Manufacturing	790
Transport, storage and communications	2 114
Others	2 656
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

(iii) By occupation

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Managers and administrators	2 782
Professionals and associate professionals	3 377
Clerical support workers	5 833
Service workers	12 291
Shop sales workers	2 338
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	62
Craft and related workers	959
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	1 374
Elementary occupations	9 296
Others	2 317
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)059**

**(Question Serial No. 0521)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (3) that the Labour Department (LD) will partner with the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) to organise the “2nd OSH Innovation and Technology Expo” this year to promote the adoption of innovative products, solutions and technologies on OSH. It includes the “OSH Innovation and Technology Award” supported by the Education Bureau, aiming to encourage the public and students to unleash their creativity by submitting innovative technology designs, projects, or ideas that help improve workplace safety and health. In this connection, would LD inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the respective details of the total expenditure and manpower involved in the first Expo and the upcoming second Expo? Did the actual number of participants in the first Expo meet the expected target?
- (b) What key performance indicators has LD set for the second Expo to measure the actual effectiveness of the Expo in promoting the adoption of innovative technology products in the industry?

Asked by: Hon NG Wun-kit (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- (a) Committed to promoting the enhancement of occupational safety and health (OSH) level through innovation and technology (I&T), the Labour Department (LD) and the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) organised the first “OSH Innovation and Technology Expo” (INNO Expo) in March 2024. The event featured exhibitions, seminars and the presentation ceremony of the “OSH Innovation & Technology Award”, attracting about 20 000 participants in total. The INNO Expo brought together over 50 organisations from local, the Mainland and other places to showcase technological breakthroughs and the latest applications in OSH, while experts from local, the Mainland and other places attended the seminars to share their experiences in enhancing OSH through I&T. Feedback from the participants were generally positive. Building on the success of the inaugural event, the second INNO Expo will be held from

2 to 3 June this year. It is expected to be larger in scale, with over 60 exhibitors from local, the Greater Bay Area and other places, and more than 30 speakers from local, the Mainland and other places to be invited to discuss the latest I&T applications and adoption, such as artificial intelligence, in areas like OSH, logistics and port, and physical and mental health, etc.

The total expenditure of the first INNO Expo was about \$4.3 million, of which \$500,000 was contributed by LD and the remaining amount was contributed by OSHC. The estimated expenditure for the second INNO Expo is about \$5.6 million, of which \$1.8 million will be contributed by LD. The INNO Expo is implemented by OSHC and the staff of LD provide assistance in various aspects. As the LD staff also undertake other duties at the same time, the staff establishment involved in the INNO Expo cannot be separately identified.

- (b) The INNO Expo helps promote the application of I&T in OSH, fosters cross-sector collaboration, raises the industry's understanding of I&T, and motivates technology exchange and practical application. It has played a positive role on improving safety management and enhancing OSH and is worth continuing so as to accumulate and amplify the positive effects. LD will continue to collaborate with OSHC to promote local and the Greater Bay Area I&T achievements in fostering OSH level to the industry through diverse channels and approaches, while at the same time assist I&T institutes in identifying OSH pain points of the industry, and facilitate supply-demand alignment and collaboration.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)060**

**(Question Serial No. 0541)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (3) that a New Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme will be launched in collaboration with the Occupational Safety and Health Council to raise safety and health awareness and advance the safety culture; would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

What is the total estimate earmarked for this new scheme in the 2026-27 financial year? Please provide details of the specific allocation of this estimate and the specific arrangements in respect of staff establishment and the indicators for evaluating its effectiveness under the scheme.

Asked by: Hon NG Wun-kit (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The New Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme (the New Scheme) recognises contractors with excellent performance in occupational safety and health (OSH) management and practices and shares the experiences of frontline workers, thereby motivating the industry to actively enhance safety management standards and promoting continuous improvement in overall OSH performance. The New Scheme also helps enhance the OSH level of Hong Kong by reinforcing the importance of safety culture among the industry, fostering long-term behavioural changes and inheritance of good practices, and generating a positive demonstration and driving effect in the industry.

The total estimate for the New Scheme is \$1.86 million, of which \$1.06 million will be contributed by the Labour Department (LD) (including \$0.7 million in 2025-26 and \$0.36 million in 2026-27), while the remaining \$0.8 million will be contributed by the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC). The estimate will mainly be used for publicity and promotion, production of videos showcasing award-winning sites/projects, and organising of the award ceremony. OSHC will be responsible for implementing the New Scheme with the assistance of LD staff. As the LD staff concerned also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the staff establishment involved in assisting in the implementation of the New Scheme cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)061**

**(Question Serial No. 1331)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding enforcement efforts to eliminate fall-from-height hazards, would the Labour Department advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The numbers of warnings issued to and the numbers of prosecutions taken out against employers and employees respectively in the past 3 years; and the numbers of sentencing for the relevant cases after conviction in court, including the number of cases punished with fines and imprisonment and the amount of fines/period of imprisonment;
- (b) The staff establishment, performance indicators and breakdown of expenditure involved in the above enforcement work?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (a) The numbers of prosecutions taken out by the Labour Department (LD) on unsafe work-at-height activities from 2023 to 2025 with a breakdown by duty holder are tabulated as follows:

Duty holder	No. of prosecutions taken out		
	2023	2024	2025
Employer (including occupier of premises)	812	757	660
Employee	2	6	7
Other persons	2	-	3
<b>Total</b>	816	763	670

Note: "Other persons" refer to competent examiners and competent persons under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (FIUO) and its subsidiary regulations.

Based on the prosecution figures in the above table, the breakdowns of the number of summonses convicted and the penalties imposed are tabulated by duty holder as follows:

Duty holder	No. of summonses convicted			Average fine imposed (per summons)		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
Employer (including occupier of premises)	585	525	287	\$11,815	\$14,136	\$16,600
Employee	2	6	7	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$4,071
Other persons	2	-	-	\$3,500	-	-
<b>Total</b>	589	531	294	-	-	-

Note: The hearing proceedings involved in the prosecution summonses taken out each year may not be completed in the same year. As a result, the number of convicted summonses within the year does not correspond to the number of prosecutions in the same year.

The numbers of written warnings issued by LD to duty holders for non-compliance with FIUO and the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance and their subsidiary regulations from 2023 to 2025 are tabulated as follows:

Year	2023	2024	2025
No. of written warnings	32 279	32 714	31 873

Note: LD does not specifically keep statistics on written warnings issued against unsafe work-at-height activities.

- (b) Law enforcement efforts against unsafe work-at-height activities are mainly undertaken by Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions under the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of LD and are part of the regular duties of the Divisions. As relevant staff also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the staff establishment and expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)062**

**(Question Serial No. 1341)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department indicates that major plans for 2026-27 include implementing the annual review mechanism of the Statutory Minimum Wage. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the details, staff establishment and estimated expenditure for the relevant work?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The Government has implemented the new annual review mechanism of the Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW) rate, under which the following formula is adopted for reviewing the SMW rate:

The annual rate of adjustment in SMW (%) = Headline Consumer Price Index (A) (CPI(A)) inflation<sup>Note</sup> (subject to a lower bound of zero) + [(the growth rate of the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the latest year – the trend growth rate of the real GDP in the latest decade) × 20%] (economic growth factor). The economic growth factor is subject to an upper bound of one percentage point and a lower bound of zero. (Note: It refers to the year-on-year rate of change in the headline CPI(A).)

The indicators adopted in the formula are objective and easily comprehensible, which can enhance the transparency and predictability of the SMW adjustment, as well as minimise controversy. An annual review also allows closer alignment of SMW with socioeconomic changes.

The Minimum Wage Commission (MWC) has completed the review on the SMW rate under the new mechanism. In February 2026, the Chief Executive in Council accepted the recommendation of MWC on raising the SMW rate from its prevailing level of \$42.1 per hour to \$43.1, an increase of \$1.0 or 2.38%. Subject to the approval of the Legislative Council, the new SMW rate will come into force on 1 May 2026. The Labour Department (LD) will carry out extensive promotional activities to enhance public awareness of the new mechanism.

In 2026-27, the Statutory Minimum Wage Division of LD will continue to support MWC in conducting the next SMW review under the new annual review mechanism. As the work related to reviewing the SMW rate is undertaken by the staff concerned among their other duties, the manpower and expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)063**

**(Question Serial No. 2446)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Major plans of the Labour Department for 2026-27 include introducing relevant legislative amendments for prohibition of smoking in all construction sites to reduce fire risk, and carrying out related enforcement and publicity work. Would the Government advise this Committee of the estimated manpower required, the performance indicators (if any) and a breakdown of the expenditure for the related enforcement and publicity work respectively?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) has been adopting a multi-pronged strategy involving inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion, education and training, as well as application of innovative technology, to take forward the work of improving the overall occupational safety and health (OSH) performance. LD is pressing ahead with the legislative amendment on total smoking ban in all construction sites. After the new legislation comes into operation, LD will take appropriate enforcement actions and actively step up publicity efforts to remind duty holders to duly fulfil their legal responsibilities.

Besides, LD has planned to collaborate with the Department of Health, the Construction Industry Council, the Occupational Safety and Health Council, the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health, and non-governmental organisations to step up publicity on the harm of smoking on working environment and health for construction workers, encouraging smokers to quit smoking early to reduce the risk of various smoking-induced diseases (including cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases).

As implementing the above work is an integral part of LD's ongoing efforts, the relevant staff establishment and resources involved cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)064**

**(Question Serial No. 2447)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department's estimated financial provision for this Programme for 2026-27 involves over \$2.416 billion, which is \$1.1948 billion (97.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2025-26. It is mentioned that this is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for the Subsidy Scheme for Abolition of Mandatory Provident Fund Offsetting Arrangement. Please give a detailed account of the reasons.

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure on the Subsidy Scheme for Abolition of Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) Offsetting Arrangement (SSA) under the Programme of Employees' Rights and Benefits for 2026-27 is \$1.5508 billion, representing a substantial increase of \$1.1748 billion when compared with the revised estimate for 2025-26. The 25-year SSA, which was launched in tandem with the implementation of the abolition of MPF offsetting arrangement in May of 2025-26, seeks to share out the expenses of the post-transition portion of severance payment (SP)/long service payment (LSP) to be borne by the employers affected by the abolition. Since the launch of SSA in 2025-26, the amount of the post-transition portion of SP/LSP payable by employers has increased correspondingly with the increase in employees' lengths of service. The Government has anticipated that more employers will apply to SSA in 2026-27, and that the expenditure on the subsidies involved will increase significantly when compared with last year. Under SSA, the "capped amount" of SP/LSP payable by employers remains unchanged for the first 3 years, i.e. the "capped amount" per case that falls within the \$500,000 threshold is \$3,000, and the remaining amount will be subsidised by SSA.

The remaining increase in the estimated expenditure of \$20 million under this Programme for 2026-27 is mainly due to salary increments for staff and increase in operational expenses.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)065**

**(Question Serial No. 1498)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 245 of the Budget Speech that the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme has been well-received with a record of more than 37 000 placements since its launch one and a half years ago, and the provision for the Scheme will be increased to HK\$220 million in the coming financial year. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please provide the distribution of the placements involved by industry, job role and age;
- (b) Whether the Government will review the Scheme, assess its effectiveness and regularise it.

Asked by: Hon TAM Chun-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. Breakdowns of placements by age, industry and occupation of the employed persons are at Annex.
- (b) LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Breakdowns of placements under the REA Scheme  
by age, industry and occupation of the employed persons  
from July 2024 to February 2026**

## (i) By age

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
40 to 59	31 056
60 or above	9 573
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

## (ii) By industry

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Real estate and business services	13 526
Community, social and personal services	10 781
Construction	2 072
Wholesale and retail trades	3 315
Import and export trades	826
Restaurants and hotels	4 549
Manufacturing	790
Transport, storage and communications	2 114
Others	2 656
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

(iii) By occupation

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Managers and administrators	2 782
Professionals and associate professionals	3 377
Clerical support workers	5 833
Service workers	12 291
Shop sales workers	2 338
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	62
Craft and related workers	959
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	1 374
Elementary occupations	9 296
Others	2 317
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)066**

**(Question Serial No. 3219)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that the review on the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) will be completed. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The numbers of applications received, approved and rejected by the Government, as well as the respective numbers of imported workers involved in each year since the launch of ESLS;
- (b) The number of complaints received by the Government relating to imported workers; the nature of the cases concerned and the follow-up actions taken;
- (c) A "local full-time manning ratio requirement" for the posts of waiter/waitress and junior cook has been introduced under ESLS since September 2025. How effective is such requirement in enhancing the employment rate of local workers? Whether the Government will consider extending similar requirements to other posts; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TAM Chun-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023, allowing employers with genuine needs to apply for importation of workers for posts that were generally excluded under the previous Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS). As at February 2026, ESLS received a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers. During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved while 91 applications involving 426 imported workers were rejected. As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS. The numbers of applications received and imported workers applied for, approved and rejected in each year under ESLS are set out at Annex.

- (b) Since the implementation of ESLS and as at February 2026, LD received a total of 965 relevant complaints, mainly involving suspected displacement of serving local employees with imported workers, non-compliance with the manning ratio requirement of full-time local employees to imported workers, work arrangements of imported workers, etc. LD follows up on all complaints received, including conducting inspections at workplaces of imported workers and verifying relevant employment records. If non-compliance of an employer is substantiated, LD will impose administrative sanctions against the relevant employer. Depending on the nature of the breach(es), LD will reject the labour importation applications concerned, withdraw the approvals for labour importation granted to the employers, and refuse to process the applications for labour importation subsequently submitted by the employers (with a debarment period of up to 2 years).
- (c) From 18 September 2025, employers applying to import waiter/waitress and junior cook are required to comply with a more stringent manning ratio requirement of 2:1 by changing the calculation basis from all posts of an applicant employer to each post under application. In addition, ESLS has implemented new requirements on local recruitment from 10 September 2025, requiring employers applying to import workers for the above 2 job types to join a job fair held at a job centre specified by LD once a week during the local recruitment period (which has been extended from 4 weeks to 6 weeks from 18 September) and conduct job interviews on the spot. Since the implementation of the above new requirements, the number of applications for labour importation from the food and beverage services industry has dropped markedly from a monthly average of nearly 370 applications between June and August 2025 to about 255 applications after September. The numbers of imported waiters/waitresses and junior cooks approved have also declined significantly from monthly averages of nearly 610 and 560 respectively between June and August 2025 to about 320 and 180 in recent months.

The Government will continue to closely monitor and respond to the employment market situation to adjust the implementation arrangements of ESLS in a flexible and targeted manner, and ensure employment priority for local workers. LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, etc. To facilitate the completion of the review on ESLS in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.

**Numbers of applications received and  
imported workers applied for, approved and rejected under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by year**

Year	Applications received*		Applications approved*		Applications rejected*	
	No. of applications	No. of imported workers	No. of applications	No. of imported workers	No. of applications	No. of imported workers
2023 (September to December)	2 380	25 222	411	1 600	30	140
2024	7 266	59 300	5 739	42 025	5	78
2025	12 885	86 994	8 839	52 570	42	148
2026 (January to February)	1 541	10 473	1 107	5 946	14	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 072</b>	<b>181 989</b>	<b>16 096</b>	<b>102 141</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>426</b>

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the numbers of applications and imported workers approved only reflect the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the numbers of applications and imported workers approved and rejected do not correspond to the numbers of applications and imported workers applied for during the same period.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)067**

**(Question Serial No. 1424)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 259 of the Budget Speech that the civil service establishment will be reduced by 2% in each of the coming 2 financial years. According to the estimated expenditure for 2026-27, the staff establishment of the Labour Department will be reduced from 2 503 posts as at 31 March 2026 to 2 447 posts as at 31 March 2027, representing a net decrease of 2.2%. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) A detailed breakdown of the above reduction in establishment by grade and rank;
- (b) The division(s) and section(s) under which the above reduced establishment originally serve/their areas of work;
- (c) Whether any existing services will be cancelled/scaled down/replaced by other services upon completion of the above reduction in establishment; if yes, whether the Government has assessed the number of service users affected, and whether alternative services will be provided.

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- (a) to (c) The Government has strictly controlled the civil service establishment with the implementation of the zero-growth policy since 2021-22, containing the overall establishment at a level not exceeding that as at end-March 2021. To tie in with the Government's Productivity Enhancement Programme and the objective of optimising the use of manpower resources, the civil service establishment will be reduced by 2% each in 2026-27 and 2027-28. By 1 April 2026, the civil service establishment is expected to be reduced to about 188 000 posts, resulting in a cumulative deletion of over 10 000 posts within this term of Government.

After reviewing factors such as the overall service demand, operational needs and vacancy situation, arrangement has been made by LD to facilitate the Government's reduction of the civil service establishment by 2% in 2026-27. In

2026-27, together with the time-limited posts to be lapsed upon expiry and posts to be reduced as a result of re-engineering or redeployment of internal resources, LD will delete a total of 56 posts, primarily involving General Grades civil service posts.

LD reviews its manpower resources from time to time and implements management measures and digitalisation such as re-prioritisation of work, internal manpower deployment, streamlining of work procedures and application of technology, with a view to enhancing efficiency, optimising the use of manpower resources, and ensuring the delivery of quality and pertinent services to the public.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)068**

**(Question Serial No. 1425)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Paragraph 49 of the Budget Speech mentioned that the Government is proactively leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) and related technologies to promote digital intelligence for enhancing the standard of public services, and that the Labour Department will utilise AI to optimise job matching to provide better services for job seekers and employers. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Details of the relevant plan, the estimated expenditure, the staff establishment involved and the implementation timetable;
- (b) In addition to optimising job matching, has the Government any plan to process and post job vacancies with AI to enhance efficiency (with the current service target of displaying only 90% of vacancies within 5 working days upon receipt of requests from employers) and save manpower?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Interactive Employment Service (iES) website of the Labour Department (LD) and its mobile application provide job seekers with 24-hour services for browsing employment information and searching for job vacancies. LD will take forward the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to optimise the job matching function on the iES website and its mobile application. The AI system will analyse and match suitable job vacancies based on job seekers' background information, job preferences and their feedback, and provide personalised employment and vocational training information so that the employment information provided can better serve job seekers' needs and improve their chances of securing employment. In parallel, LD will also develop an AI-powered job vacancy processing system to assist in vetting and processing job vacancy information, thereby enhancing efficiency and saving manpower.

LD is maintaining close liaison with the Digital Policy Office regarding the AI job matching and job vacancy processing systems to strive to finalise all details as soon as possible. The services are expected to roll out in phases, with the earliest phase starting in mid-2027.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)069**

**(Question Serial No. 2511)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (4) Employees' Rights and Benefits  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding complaints relating to employment of imported workers under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS), would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please tabulate, by complaint item, the following information on complaints relating to employment of imported workers received by the Labour Department (LD) in each year since the launch of ESLS:
  - (i) the number of complaints;
  - (ii) the number of complaints in respect of which investigations had been completed;
  - (iii) the number of complaints in which sufficient evidence was found to substantiate the employers' breaches of ESLS requirements;
- (b) The number of employers subject to administrative sanctions for breaching the ESLS requirements since 20 August 2025. The sanctions include refusing to process their applications for labour importation under ESLS, withdrawing the approvals granted for labour importation, etc.;
- (c) The staff establishment and administrative expenditure involved by LD in handling complaints relating to employment of imported workers since the launch of ESLS;
- (d) Will the Government consider further enhancing the transparency of the implementation of labour importation schemes and the relevant data, including by regularly releasing the number of imported workers by industry sector or job type, the list of enterprises employing imported workers, the number of complaint cases involving breaches of labour importation requirements and the follow-up actions taken, etc., and by standardising the modes and intervals of data release, so as to strengthen monitoring and enhance deterrence?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023. From 2023 (4 September to 31 December) to 2026 (as at February), LD received 14, 69, 749 and 133 complaints relating to ESLS in each year respectively, involving 20, 93, 1 063 and 210 complaint items respectively.

As about half of the complaints were received in or after September 2025, and some cases involve multiple complaint items and investigations by different law enforcement departments/agencies, it takes time for the Government to conduct a comprehensive investigation. As at February 2026, LD completed investigation of 269 complaints. Regarding the complaints in respect of which investigations were completed, LD issued 83 warning letters to the employers suspected of non-compliance. In respect of 7 complaints and 22 cases in which employers were convicted for breaching the law, LD imposed administrative sanctions on a total of 29 employers, including rejecting the labour importation applications concerned, withdrawing the approvals granted to the employers for labour importation, and refusing to process the applications for labour importation subsequently submitted by the employers (with a debarment period of up to 2 years). A breakdown of complaint cases received by major complaint item, as well as a breakdown of administrative sanction cases by item of non-compliance are at Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively.

- (c) LD follows up on all complaints involving ESLS, including conducting inspections to and gathering evidence at workplaces of imported workers and the accommodation in Hong Kong for imported workers provided by employers, meeting with employers and employees individually, and verifying relevant employment records. As the staff concerned also undertake other duties, the staff establishment and expenditure involved in handling complaints relating to imported workers cannot be separately identified.
- (d) LD continuously enhances the operation and implementation arrangements of ESLS, including putting in place various measures to enhance information transparency. LD has displayed the names of applicant companies when publishing ESLS job vacancies for local recruitment on the Interactive Employment Service (iES) website since June 2025, and set up a dedicated webpage on ESLS job vacancies on the iES website in September 2025 to facilitate job seekers' access to information on the posts under ESLS. In addition, if an employer's non-compliance with ESLS requirements for safeguarding employment priority for local workers is substantiated, LD will impose administrative sanction against the employer concerned and publish the name of the defiant employer to enhance deterrence. The Government also reports regularly to the Labour Advisory Board on the implementation and relevant statistics of various labour importation schemes, as well as the vetting results of ESLS applications.

LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, as well as measures to protect the rights and benefits of imported workers. The review is expected to be completed in the first half of 2026.

**Number of complaint items received under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026**

Complaint item	No. of complaint items			
	2023 (4 September to 31 December)	2024	2025	2026 (January to February)
1. Employer displacing serving local employees with imported workers	1	19	418	72
2. Employer failing to meet the manning ratio requirement	0	0	161	41
3. Work arrangements of imported workers	7	19	175	42
4. Employment rights and benefits of imported workers	9	35	142	30
5. Others <sup>#</sup>	3	20	167	25
<b>Total<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>20</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>1 063</b>	<b>210</b>

<sup>#</sup> Example: providing false information to LD during application.

<sup>@</sup> Since a complaint may involve more than one complaint item, the sum of the complaint items may not be equal to the total number of complaints.

**Number of administrative sanctions under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026**

<b>Non-compliance</b>	<b>2023 (4 September to 31 December)</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026 (January to February)</b>
1. Breach of labour laws	0	2	13	1
2. Breach of the Immigration Ordinance	0	0	5	1
3. Displacement of serving local employees with imported workers	0	0	2	0
4. Breach of local recruitment requirements	0	0	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)070**

**(Question Serial No. 3208)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department (LD) is responsible for enforcing the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (OSHO) and the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (FIUO) and conducting inspections at workplaces (including construction sites). Please advise of the following:

- (a) The number of inspections per field officer under FIUO and OSHO was 503 in 2025. What was the number of field officers responsible for inspecting construction sites? What were the changes in the staff establishment responsible for such inspections over the past 3 years? Did these changes correspond to those in construction output?
- (b) The actual number of inspections in 2025 was 148 016, exceeding the original target of 145 800. How many of these inspections targeted construction sites? What percentage did they account for in the total number of inspections? What were the main categories of potential safety hazards identified during inspections (e.g. work-at-height, electrical safety, lifting safety, fire safety measures, etc.)? What is the proportion of each category?
- (c) LD issued a total of 5 720 suspension notices/improvement notices in 2025. Of which, what were the respective numbers of suspension notices and improvement notices issued against construction sites? What percentage did they account for in the total number of such notices? What were the numbers of notices issued against construction sites in each of the past 3 years and the trend of changes? Please set out the figures by year.
- (d) In the past 3 years, what were the most common categories of potential safety hazards involved in the notices issued against construction sites (e.g. inadequate protection for work-at-height, electrical safety issues, unsafe lifting operations, defective fire safety measures, risks in excavation works, etc.)? Please set out the proportion of each category by year.
- (e) It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026-27 that the Government will “intensify preventive and enforcement efforts to tackle fall-from-

height hazards and other work hazards in workplaces through executing targeted inspection strategies, etc., especially for the construction industry, including public works projects”. What are the specific details of the targeted inspection strategies? Are dedicated inspections for high-risk work processes (e.g. scaffolding erection, curtain wall installation, lifting operations) included? How will the Government assess the effectiveness of these dedicated inspections in reducing fall-from-height accidents?

- (f) Since February 2023, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has required public works contracts with contract sum exceeding \$30 million to fully adopt the Smart Site Safety System (4S). Of the notices issued by LD, what is the proportion of those against public works projects? Has the number of notices received by these projects decreased following the adoption of 4S? How do LD and DEVB coordinate to ensure that there is no overlap or omission in the safety supervision of public works projects?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ho-ming, Augustine (LegCo internal reference no.: 79)

Reply:

- (a) When inspecting construction sites, the Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions (the Divisions) under the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of the Labour Department (LD) focus on the occupational safety and health (OSH) performance of the sites and their compliance with relevant OSH legislation. The changes in the Divisions’ staff establishment for inspections to construction sites from 2023 to 2025 are tabulated as follows:

<b>Rank</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Divisional Occupational Safety Officer	37	37	37
Occupational Safety Officer I	78	78	78
Occupational Safety Officer II	98	99	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>214</b>

Pursuant to the risk-based principle and keeping close tabs on the OSH risk levels and changes (including construction output) of the construction industry, LD has been formulating the strategies of inspection and enforcement, as well as deploying manpower in a timely manner to prevent accidents.

- (b) In 2025, LD conducted 148 016 inspections under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (FIUO) (Cap. 59) and the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (OSHO) (Cap. 509). The number of inspections targeting construction sites was 76 429, accounting for 51.6 % of the total number of inspections. A breakdown of the numbers of suspension notices (SNs)/improvement notices (INs) issued in respect of safety hazards identified during inspections is set out in part (d) below.

- (c) From 2023 to 2025, the total numbers of SNs/INs issued by LD, the numbers of such notices issued against construction sites, and their respective percentages to the total number of notices issued are tabulated as follows:

Year	No. of SNs			No. of INs		
	Total	Issued for construction sites		Total	Issued for construction sites	
		Total	Percentage to total		Total	Percentage to total
2023	351	292	83.2%	5 225	4 150	79.4%
2024	376	308	81.9%	5 355	4 259	79.5%
2025	347	328	94.5%	5 373	4 184	77.9%

- (d) From 2023 to 2025, a breakdown of the numbers of SNs/INs issued by LD for construction sites by risk category involved is tabulated as follows:

Risk category	2023	2024	2025
Unsafe hoists, lifting appliances/gear, goods lifts and lifting operations	350	262	212
Unsafe machinery	142	54	64
Unsafe working at height	2 070	2 321	2 464
Unsafe excavation	22	16	16
Not provision/not wearing of personal protective equipment	584	652	590
Non-conformity with fire safety requirements	3	3	4
Electrical hazards	332	323	258
Hazards caused by chemical/gas/dust	9	4	3
Non-compliance with general duties provisions	156	103	136
Ventilation/housekeeping/noise/lighting/manual handling issues	306	395	400
Others	468	434	365
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 442</b>	<b>4 567</b>	<b>4 512</b>

- (e) LD will continue to adopt the risk-based principle to conduct targeted inspection and enforcement actions against high-risk workplaces, plant, and work processes. Regarding construction sites, in addition to routine inspections, LD will conduct special enforcement operations and in-depth surprise inspections targeting high-risk work sites (e.g. those involving work-at-height, scaffolding erection, curtain wall installation, lifting operation, electrical work, etc.) or those with poor safety performance. For minor repair, maintenance, alteration and addition works, LD will also conduct area patrols to curb unsafe work practices. The above strategies, which tie in with publicity and promotion, as well as education and training, etc., help enhance the vigilance and OSH awareness among various industry stakeholders, thereby reducing accidents.
- (f) LD has been conducting inspections and enforcement actions for public works and construction sites adopting the Smart Site Safety System (4S) with the risk-based principle. In 2025, the numbers of SNs/INs issued by LD for public works accounted for 9.2% of the overall number of such notices issued for all construction sites. LD does not maintain statistics on such notices issued for public works by site category with the adoption of 4S.

LD has been working closely with the Development Bureau (DEVB) to actively encourage the industry to provide a safer working environment. Under an established notification mechanism, if a construction site issued with a 4S Label (indicating the use of 4S) is found to have obviously failed to apply 4S properly during LD's inspection, LD will notify DEVB as soon as possible for follow-up action. In addition, works departments and their resident site staff directly monitor the safety performance of contractors of public works contracts on a day-to-day basis. In addition to complying with the OSH legislation administered by LD (including FIUO, OSFO, and their subsidiary legislation), contractors of public works contracts when conducting works must also comply with the obligations and requirements as required in DEVB's Construction Site Safety Manual under their public works contracts, as well as contract terms specifically worked out for individual projects.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)071**

**(Question Serial No. 2117)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To safeguard workers' rights, the Government has set up the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF) to provide short-term and immediate financial relief to affected employees in the event of the closure of business, bankruptcy or insolvency of their employers. The number of PWIF applications processed increased from 4 962 in 2024 to 5 917 in 2025. As the Government has forecast a continuous increase in the number of applications in 2026, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The financial position of PWIF for 2024 and 2025, including PWIF balance, levy income, total amount of ex gratia payment granted and LD's administrative expenses on management of PWIF; and the relevant estimated figures for 2026;
- (b) In view of the surge in PWIF applications, will the Government review the long-term sustainability of PWIF? If yes, what is the specific direction; if no, what are the reasons?
- (c) Given that some employers are suspected of abusing PWIF, will the Government consider establishing an "employer blacklist" system to enhance deterrence? If no, what are the reasons?
- (d) At present, it normally takes 3 to 6 months to effect payment under PWIF, depending on the complexity of cases, which falls short of the objective of "relieving employees' hardship in a timely manner". Will the Government explore introducing artificial intelligence or other technologies to expedite preliminary vetting, followed by random manual checks, so as to enhance the efficiency of effecting payment under PWIF?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- (a) The financial position of the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF) in 2024-25 and 2025-26 is as follows:

Financial Year	PWIF balance (\$million)	Levy income <sup>#</sup> (\$million)	Amount of ex gratia payment granted (\$million)	Administrative expenses <sup>@</sup> (\$million)
2024-25	7,287.5	16.6	297.0	53.9
2025-26*	7,216.4	6.0	220.9	49.5
2026-27(Estimate)	7,309.7	243.0	274.0	74.4

\* Figures as at February 2026.

# PWIF is mainly financed by a levy per annum on business registration (BR). To relieve the impact on business due to the increase of business registration fee as announced in the 2024-25 Budget, the Government waives the BR levy of \$150 payable to PWIF by enterprises for 2 years starting from 1 April 2024.

@ Administrative expenses mainly include government supervision fees, legal and professional fees and staff remuneration, etc.

- (b) As at February 2026, PWIF had an accumulated surplus of more than \$7.2 billion, and the collection of BR levy will be resumed starting from April 2026. The overall financial position of PWIF is healthy, and is expected to be sufficient to cope with the changes in the number of PWIF applications. LD and the PWIF Board will continue to closely monitor the financial position of PWIF.
- (c) LD has established a stringent mechanism for vetting all applications to PWIF, including identifying duplicate or suspicious applications. LD will pay attention to whether the company's responsible persons are involved in any other unlawful acts while operating the business and managing the finance of the company. If it is found that the persons are suspected of illegal transfer of assets, theft of company money, evasion of liabilities by deception, failure to keep proper accounting records, etc., or of making false statements, submitting false documents or records, etc. with the intent to deceive, LD will refer such cases to the Police and/or the Official Receiver's Office for follow-up having regard to the specific circumstances of the cases.
- (d) LD has set time frame for each vetting procedure of PWIF applications to shorten the time taken on information collection. In addition, LD has provided free legal service to applicants since November 2022 by engaging private law firms to assist applicants in filing winding-up or bankruptcy petitions against their employers, so that they can meet the prerequisite for the release of ex gratia payment under PWIF. The measure has saved the applicants' need to apply for legal aid and to go through the means tests at the Legal Aid Department, thereby shortening the application procedure and the time required for processing PWIF applications. LD will continue to review the operation of PWIF and explore the use of technology to enhance the efficiency in processing applications.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)072**

**(Question Serial No. 2118)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The number of inspections of employment agencies (EAs) is one of the Government's performance measures in respect of employment services. A total of 2 006 inspections were recorded in 2024 and 2 090 in 2025, while 2 000 inspections are planned for 2026.

In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The staff establishment and relevant expenditure for regulating and inspecting EAs in the past 3 years;
- (b) The number of inspections conducted in each of the past 3 years; of which, the number of non-compliance cases detected; and the respective numbers of successful prosecutions taken out and licence revocations;
- (c) Whether the Government will consider adopting technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data analytics to assist in inspection and data analysis, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of combating unscrupulous EAs; if yes, what are the specific arrangements; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- (a) The staff establishment and expenditure of the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department (LD) from 2023-24 to 2025-26 are set out at Annex 1. To ensure that employment agencies (EAs) comply with Part XII of the Employment Ordinance, the Employment Agency Regulations, and the requirements and standards as set out in the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies (CoP), the staff of EAA are responsible for performing licensing-related duties, conducting inspections to EAs, investigating complaints, and carrying out the related publicity and educational work, etc. Therefore, the manpower involved in regulating and inspecting EAs cannot be separately identified.

- (b) From 2023 to 2025, the numbers of inspections to EAs conducted by LD in each year were 2 010, 2 006 and 2 090 respectively. If there is sufficient evidence to prove that an EA has breached the law or the CoP, LD will take out prosecution; revoke, refuse to issue or renew its licence; or issue warnings to urge for rectification. During the same period, the numbers of enforcement actions taken by LD against non-compliant EAs are set out at Annex 2.
  
- (c) In addition to issuing licences, investigating complaints and prosecuting EAs suspected of non-compliance, LD conducts inspections based on EAs' risk of non-compliance. LD from time to time reviews its workflow and explores the use of technology to enhance the effectiveness of its work.

**Staff establishment and expenditure of EAA of LD from 2023-24 to 2025-26**

	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b>
No. of Labour Officer Grade staff	26	26	26
No. of Clerical Grade staff	9	9	9
Staff cost (\$million)	23.84	24.82	25.57
Operating expenses (\$million)	7.59	9.63	5.26 (Revised estimate)

**Numbers of enforcement actions taken by LD against non-compliant EAs**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
No. of EAs successfully prosecuted	4	11	5
No. of licences revoked or refused to be issued or renewed	5	3	1
No. of written warnings issued	13	7	17

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)073**

**(Question Serial No. 1976)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF), please advise of the following:

- (a) The number of applications approved, the total amount of ex gratia payment granted and the average amount granted per application under PWIF in 2025;
- (b) Please tabulate the top 3 industry sectors with the highest numbers of PWIF applications approved in 2025, the respective number of applications approved, and the average amount granted per application;
- (c) The number of suspected cases of abuse of PWIF referred to law enforcement departments for investigation in 2024 and 2025, as well as the amounts involved in such cases;
- (d) PWIF's financial position for 2025-26 (including its income, expenditure, surplus/deficit for the year and accumulated surplus); and its estimated financial position for 2026-27; and
- (e) PWIF's major investments and returns (e.g. the term interest rates for and interest income in different currencies) in each of the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (a) In 2025, 5 533 applications were approved (including applications received in the same year or before) under the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund (PWIF), granting a total of \$267 million of ex gratia payment. The average amount granted per application was \$48,255.

- (b) In 2025, the top 3 industry sectors with the highest numbers of applications approved, the respective number of applications approved and the average amount granted per application under PWIF are tabulated as follows:

Industry sector	No. of applications approved	Average amount granted per application (\$)
Food and beverage service activities	1 640	40,433
Construction	1 375	43,951
Sports and other entertainment activities	852	57,842

- (c) In 2024 and 2025, the numbers of suspected cases of abuse of PWIF or other related offences referred by the Labour Department to other law enforcement departments for investigation were 2 and 5 respectively, involving total application amounts of approximately \$1.8 million and \$43.6 million respectively.

- (d) PWIF's financial position for 2025-26 is as follows:

Year	Income (\$million)	Expenditure (\$million)	Surplus/(Deficit) (\$million)	Accumulated surplus (\$million)
2025-26*	199.3 <sup>#</sup>	270.4	(71.1)	7,216.4
2026-27 (Estimates)	446.9	348.3	98.6	7,309.7

\* Figures as at February 2026.

# The revenue of PWIF consists principally of the annual business registration (BR) levy, money recovered by subrogation and bank interest income. To relieve the impact on business due to the increase of BR fee as announced in the 2024-25 Budget, the Government waived the BR levy of \$150 payable to PWIF by enterprises for 2 years starting from 1 April 2024.

- (e) From 2023-24 to 2025-26, PWIF mainly invested in time deposits denominated in Hong Kong Dollar and Renminbi with the returns as follows:

Year	Weighted average interest rate	Interest income (\$million)
2023-24	4.71%	327.9
2024-25	4.15%	295.4
2025-26*	2.73%	181.9

\* Figures as at February 2026.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)074**

**(Question Serial No. 2507)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

There are 2 Occupational Health Clinics (the Clinics) under the Labour Department providing such services as prevention, diagnosis and treatment of occupational diseases, work injuries and work-related diseases. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please tabulate the total number of new patients in the 2 Clinics in the past 3 years up till now by
  - (i) age;
  - (ii) industry sector in which they were engaged;
  - (iii) type of diseases;
- (b) The staff establishment and the actual or estimated expenditure of the 2 Clinics in 2025-26 and 2026-27;
- (c) Please tabulate the following figures relating to the 2 Clinics in 2025:
  - (i) the number of clinical consultation services and the number of persons seeking clinical consultations;
  - (ii) the average waiting time for such services;
- (d) Regarding the confirmed cases of occupational diseases specified in the Second Schedule to the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, occupational deafness, silicosis, asbestosis and mesothelioma in 2025, please tabulate
  - (i) the number of cases;
  - (ii) the industry sectors in which the patients were engaged; and
- (e) According to the estimated indicators of LD, the numbers of investigations of occupational diseases and occupational health problems, as well as clinical consultations planned for 2026 will be less than those in 2024 and 2025. What are the reasons, and what are the expenditure and staff establishment involved?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- (a) The breakdowns of new patients by age, industry, and type of diseases from 2023 to 2025 are at Annex 1.
- (b) Details regarding the staff establishment and expenditure for the provision of clinical services in 2025-26 and 2026-27 are at Annex 2. The 2 Occupational Health Clinics under the Labour Department (LD) are staffed by teams of Occupational Health Officers (OHOs) and Occupational Health Nurses (OHNs) who are responsible for providing clinical consultation and medical examination services on a rotational basis. In addition to clinical services, they are also required to perform other duties, including investigating the notified occupational diseases and gas poisoning incidents, providing medical advice on disputed cases of work injury, and organising occupational health talks, etc. As the provision of clinical services is part of the regular duties of the above-mentioned teams of OHOs and OHNs, the relevant staff establishment cannot be separately identified.
- (c) The number of clinical consultations at LD's Occupational Health Clinics and the average waiting time for new case appointments in 2025 are at Annex 3.
- (d) The number of confirmed cases of occupational diseases specified in the Second Schedule to the Employees' Compensation Ordinance (ECO), occupational deafness, silicosis, asbestosis and mesothelioma in 2025, as well as the major industry sectors in which the patients were engaged are at Annex 4.
- (e) From past experience, there will normally be a temporary decline in the number of persons seeking clinical consultations upon the upward adjustment of clinical consultation fees after the public healthcare fees and charges reform came into effect on 1 January 2026. Hence, LD expects a slight decrease in the number of clinical consultations at the Occupational Health Clinics in 2026 when compared with 2024 and 2025. The actual number of clinical consultations provided by the Clinics will be subject to the demand for services.

**Breakdowns of new patients by age, industry  
and type of diseases for each year from 2023 to 2025<sup>#</sup>**

## (i) By age

Age group	2023	2024	2025
20 or below	3	3	3
Above 20 to 40	308	273	259
Above 40 to 60	1 284	1 063	1 156
Above 60	443	438	519
Total	2 038	1 777	1 937

## (ii) By industry

Industry	2023	2024	2025
Public administration, social and personal services	871	775	819
Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, accommodation and food services	411	364	372
Financing, insurance, real estate, professional and business services	333	245	289
Construction	154	148	174
Transportation, storage, postal, courier services, information and communications	145	127	130
Manufacturing	78	84	112
Others	46	34	41
Total	2 038	1 777	1 937

## (iii) By type of diseases (including injuries)

Type of diseases	2023	2024	2025
Musculoskeletal	1 771	1 563	1 697
Injuries	189	140	188
Auditory	14	18	12
Neurological	23	19	8
Skin	2	7	7
Visual	10	5	6
Respiratory	7	6	2
Others	22	19	17
Total	2 038	1 777	1 937

Note: <sup>#</sup>Figures for 2026 are not available for the time being.

**Staff establishment and expenditure involved in clinical services  
in 2025-26 and 2026-27**

	2025-26	2026-27
	Staff establishment	Staff establishment
No. of Occupational Health Officers	7	7
No. of Occupational Health Nurses	9	8
No. of Clerical Grade staff and support staff	5	5

	2025-26	2026-27
Actual expenditure (\$million) Including staff and operating expenditure	6.64	Not applicable
Estimated expenditure (\$million)	6.84	6.84

**Number of clinical consultations  
at LD's Occupational Health Clinics and  
the average waiting time for new case appointments in 2025**

	No. of clinical consultations	Average waiting time for new case appointments
Kwun Tong Occupational Health Clinic	8 914 (1 300)	2-3 weeks
Fanling Occupational Health Clinic	4 894 (637)	2-3 weeks
Total	13 808 (1 937)	

Note:

- (1) Figures in bracket denote the clinical consultations provided for new patients.
- (2) From January to February 2026, the average waiting time for new case appointments of the 2 Clinics was about 1 week.

**Number of confirmed cases of occupational diseases specified in the Second Schedule to ECO, occupational deafness, silicosis, asbestosis and mesothelioma in 2025 and the major industry sectors in which patients with the above-mentioned occupational diseases were engaged**

Number of confirmed cases of occupational diseases in 2025

Occupational disease		No. of cases
(i) Occupational diseases specified in the Second Schedule to ECO	Tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm	13
	Tuberculosis	4
	Compressed air illness	4
	Occupational dermatitis	1
	Streptococcus suis infection	1
(ii) Occupational Deafness		186
(iii) Silicosis		89
(iv) Asbestosis		9
(v) Mesothelioma		22
Total		329

Major industry sectors in which patients with the above-mentioned occupational diseases were engaged

Occupational disease	Industry sector in which patients were engaged
Tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm	Accommodation and food services, public administration, social and personal services, construction industry, import/export, wholesale and retail trades, financing and insurance
Tuberculosis	Public administration, social and personal services
Occupational dermatitis	Public administration, social and personal services
Compressed air illness	Public administration, social and personal services, construction industry
Streptococcus suis infection	Accommodation and food services
Occupational deafness	Mainly engaged in construction industry
Silicosis, asbestosis, and mesothelioma	Mainly engaged in construction industry

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)075**

**(Question Serial No. 2534)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the promotion of middle-aged and elderly employment, the Financial Secretary mentioned in the Budget Speech that a series of measures in support of middle-aged and elderly employment have been launched in a proactive manner, including the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) which provides re-employment allowance and support to job seekers aged 40 or above to help them re-join the employment market. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The gender and age distribution of the participants of the REA Scheme since its launch one and a half years ago;
- (b) The information on participants of the REA Scheme with breakdowns by industry, occupation and monthly wage;
- (c) The retention rate of participants upon completion of the REA Scheme.

Asked by: Hon WU Yingpeng (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- (a) to (c) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market.

The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. Breakdowns of the number of participants by gender and age are at Annex 1. During the period, LD approved a total of 24 591 applications for re-employment allowance (REA), involving 17 185 participants who completed 6 months of work and 7 399 participants who completed 12 months of work. Breakdowns of placements with REA approved by industry and occupation of in which the participants were

engaged are at Annex 2. LD does not keep a breakdown of the number of placements by monthly wage.

**Breakdowns of the number of participants  
of the REA Scheme by gender and age  
from July 2024 to February 2026**

(i) By gender

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
Male	28 913
Female	40 021
<b>Total</b>	<b>68 934</b>

(ii) By age

<b>Age</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
40 to 59	53 115
60 or above	15 819
<b>Total</b>	<b>68 934</b>

**Breakdowns of placements with REA approved under the REA Scheme  
by industry and occupation in which participants were engaged  
from July 2024 to February 2026**

## (i) By industry

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. of placements with REA approved*</b>
Real estate and business services	8 882
Community, social and personal services	8 109
Construction	617
Wholesale and retail trades	2 436
Import and export trades	639
Restaurants and hotels	3 043
Manufacturing	1 430
Transport, storage and communications	1 491
Others	1 323
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 970</b>

## (ii) By occupation

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of placements with REA approved*</b>
Managers and administrators	2 073
Professionals and associate professionals	2 202
Clerical support workers	4 387
Service workers	7 395
Shop sales workers	1 647
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	58
Craft and related workers	676
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	1 238
Elementary occupations	7 441
Others	853
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 970</b>

\* Some of the participants with REA approved were involved in more than 1 placement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)076**

**(Question Serial No. 2544)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) has recorded over 37 000 placements since its launch approximately one and a half years ago. The Government plans to increase its provision in the coming year to continue implementing the Scheme. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The expenditure of the REA Scheme since its implementation, and a breakdown of the number of beneficiaries involved in the placements by industry;
- (b) In view of the acute manpower shortage in certain industries of Hong Kong's labour market, will the Government, having regard to the circumstances of individual industries, further encourage job seekers to join those industries facing labour shortage, such as catering and retail, cleansing, transportation, property management and security through the Scheme? If yes, what are the relevant measures? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YAO Cho-fai, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 40 629 placements involving 33 381 participants recorded as at February 2026. A breakdown of placements by industry in which participants were engaged is at Annex. The total expenditure of the REA Scheme is \$256 million as at February 2026.
- (b) LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Breakdown of placements under the REA Scheme  
by industry in which participants were engaged from July 2024 to February 2026**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>No. of placements</b>
Real estate and business services	13 526
Community, social and personal services	10 781
Construction	2 072
Wholesale and retail trades	3 315
Import and export trades	826
Restaurants and hotels	4 549
Manufacturing	790
Transport, storage and communications	2 114
Others	2 656
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 629</b>

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)077**

**(Question Serial No. 0740)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Government launched the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) in September 2023 to alleviate the manpower shortage in various industry sectors. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Since the implementation of ESLS, what are the respective numbers of applications received and approved by the Government as well as the number of workers involved; and will the Government keep statistics on/estimate the number of workers who have already arrived to work in Hong Kong; what are the details of the above information on the 26 job categories generally excluded from the Supplementary Labour Scheme;
- (b) Please tabulate the numbers of workers applied for and approved by the Labour Department under ESLS in the past year, with breakdowns by industry sector, job type, age and average monthly wage;
- (c) Since the implementation of ESLS, what are the respective numbers of applications received from the sectors of hotels, guesthouses and travel agents, those under processing, approved and rejected by the Government, as well as the job types involved; will the Government keep statistics on/estimate the number of workers who have already arrived to work in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon YIU Pak-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023. As at February 2026, ESLS received a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers, including 129 372 workers intended to take up posts which were generally excluded from labour importation before (84 437 and 44 935 respectively for the 26 job categories and unskilled or low-skilled posts). During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved, including 69 560 workers approved to take up posts which were generally excluded from labour importation in the past (49 714 and 19 846 respectively

for the 26 job categories and unskilled or low-skilled posts). A breakdown of the numbers of imported workers applied for and approved by the 26 job categories is at Annex 1.

As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under the Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS)/ESLS. A breakdown of the number of imported workers working in Hong Kong by job category is at Annex 2.

- (b) In 2025, ESLS received a total of 12 885 applications for importing 86 994 workers. During the period, 8 839 applications involving 52 570 imported workers were approved. Breakdowns of the numbers of imported workers applied for and approved by industry sector, job category and monthly wage are set out at Annex 3 to Annex 5. Employers are not required to provide LD with information on the age of imported workers.
- (c) As at February 2026, ESLS received 266 applications from employers in the accommodation services industry (including the hotel and guesthouse sectors). During the period, 192 applications were approved (including 2 applications submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS), 37 were discontinued (including employers' withdrawal of applications/failure to provide the required information, and applications failing to pass the preliminary screening, etc.), and 39 were under processing, while no application was rejected. Applications from the accommodation services industry mainly involved posts such as room attendant, receptionist and waiter/waitress. As at February 2026, there were 737 imported workers in the accommodation services industry working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved under ESLS  
from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by the 26 job categories**

<b>26 job categories generally excluded from SLS<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved*</b>
1. Waiter/Waitress	22 203	14 065
2. Junior Cook	18 390	10 430
3. Sales Assistant	12 377	7 697
4. Warehouse Keeper	9 025	5 025
5. Clerical Worker	4 569	2 664
6. Food Processing Worker	4 299	2 880
7. Driver	3 900	1 986
8. Receptionist	3 050	1 778
9. Sales Representative	1 593	603
10. Washer	964	693
11. Delivery Worker	933	439
12. Cashier	896	406
13. Hair Stylist	726	350
14. Telephone Operator	543	324
15. Presser	304	174
16. Spray Paint Worker	171	26
17. Demolition Worker	164	78
18. Computer/Key Punch Operator	109	5
19. Inspection Operative	46	25
20. Linen Attendant	44	10
21. Drain Layer	31	27
22. Cutter	31	19
23. Leakage Worker	27	2
24. Teller	24	0
25. Mason	16	7
26. Cutting Room Operative	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>84 437</b>	<b>49 714<sup>#</sup></b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the number of imported workers approved does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>#</sup> Apart from the 49 714 imported workers approved to take up posts under the 26 job categories listed above, 19 846 imported workers were also approved to take up unskilled or low-skilled posts (such as room attendant, security guard and cleaner).

**Number of imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS:  
a breakdown by job category  
(as at February 2026)**

Job category	No. of imported workers working in Hong Kong*
1. Waiter/Waitress	7 871
2. Junior Cook	6 196
3. Cook	4 222
4. Cleaner	2 984
5. Dish Washer	2 902
6. Warehouse Keeper	2 374
7. Sales Assistant	2 360
8. Security Guard	2 000
9. Food Processing Worker	1 457
10. Others	16 203
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 569</b>

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The above figures on imported workers working in Hong Kong include those workers approved to work in Hong Kong under SLS before 4 September 2023 and under ESLS thereafter.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved under ESLS in 2025:  
a breakdown by industry sector**

<b>Industry sector<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved*</b>
1. Agriculture and Fisheries	1 810	1 391
2. Manufacturing	7 610	5 128
3. Construction	0	0
4. Import/Export Trades and Wholesale	4 360	2 613
(i) <i>Import/Export Trades</i>	(2 260)	(1 234)
(ii) <i>Wholesale</i>	(2 100)	(1 379)
5. Retail, Accommodation and Food Services	36 391	25 106
(i) <i>Retail</i>	(6 671)	(4 347)
(ii) <i>Accommodation Services</i>	(1 071)	(860)
(iii) <i>Food and Beverage Services</i>	(28 649)	(19 899)
6. Transportation, Storage, Information and Communications	4 336	2 699
7. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Professional and Business Services	11 385	4 866
8. Public Administration, Social and Personal Services	21 102	10 767
<b>Total</b>	<b>86 994</b>	<b>52 570</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of industries may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received towards year-end may be completed in the following year, and hence the number of imported workers approved within the year does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for in the same year.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved under ESLS in 2025:  
a breakdown by job category**

<b>Job category @</b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved*</b>
1. Cleaner^	10 008	4 695
2. Waiter/Waitress#	8 729	6 198
3. Junior Cook#	8 139	5 230
4. Security Guard^	6 749	3 039
5. Sales Assistant#	5 795	4 020
6. Warehouse Keeper#	4 791	2 827
7. Cook	4 689	3 267
8. Dish Washer^	4 555	3 224
9. Clerical Worker#	2 449	1 635
10. Others	31 090	18 435
<b>Total</b>	<b>86 994</b>	<b>52 570</b>

@ The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received towards year-end may be completed in the following year, and hence the number of imported workers approved within the year does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for in the same year.

# Falling within the 26 job categories generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

^ Falling within the unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for and approved under ESLS in 2025:  
a breakdown by monthly wage**

<b>Monthly wage<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for*</b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved*</b>
1. \$8,000 or below	-	-
2. Above \$8,000-\$10,000	7	1
3. Above \$10,000-\$12,000	9 749	4 630
4. Above \$12,000-\$14,000	6 207	4 063
5. Above \$14,000-\$16,000	34 922	22 156
6. Above \$16,000-\$18,000	18 483	10 247
7. Above \$18,000-\$20,000	10 074	6 896
8. Above \$20,000	7 552	4 577
<b>Total</b>	<b>86 994</b>	<b>52 570</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of monthly wages may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received towards year-end may be completed in the following year, and hence the number of imported workers approved within the year does not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for in the same year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)078**

**(Question Serial No. 2557)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 45 of the Budget Speech that the Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong to strengthen skills training on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. In the light of the prevalence of AI, what structural changes does the Government anticipate regarding skill requirements in Hong Kong's labour market as a whole over the next 5 years?
2. How will the Upskill Hong Kong collaborate with the Vocational Training Council and the industries to provide specific "skill-based" AI trainings for in-service personnel, in order to respond to changes in job contents? What will be covered in the AI training courses?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chung-ye, Alan (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

1. The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) published the "Report on 2023 Manpower Projection" (the Report) in November 2024, with 2023 as the base year to provide a detailed analysis of the manpower situation, occupations in demand and essential skills in 17 selected industries. In view of economic restructuring and technological advancement such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Report projected that some traditional positions (such as clerical and administrative roles) may gradually be replaced by AI, while the demand for new roles related to AI and digitalised operations (such as AI specialists, data analysts and information technology experts) is expected to increase.

The LWB has commenced a mid-term update of the manpower projection with the latest situation in 2025 as the base year to update the projection on the manpower situation for 2028. The mid-term update will focus on analysing the impact of the recent global and local developments (including the changes in the economic environment, and the rapid adoption of AI and digitalisation in business operations, etc.) on future manpower prospects. The findings are expected to be released in the fourth quarter of 2026.

2. The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025 to enhance its role and positioning, transforming into assisting the entire workforce from all backgrounds and educational attainments to continuously enhance their skills and competitiveness. With the widespread adoption of AI across industries, AI proficiency has become a generic skill across all industries. Since early last year, the ERB has enhanced its services and developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses, covering such areas of skills as AI and technology applications. Upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, it will further provide various types of skills-based training courses, including AI application, and integrate AI knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum.

In 2026-27, the ERB plans to gradually roll out various training courses related to AI, and will continuously review the course contents to help trainees acquire the essential skills required for the development of industries. The courses to be launched cover areas such as digital literacy and skills, smart customer service and game development. The ERB will also enhance the contents of placement-tied courses by incorporating AI-related elements or tools, for example, using generative AI to refine resumes and application letters, simulate interview scenarios, conduct research on industry information and analyse career pathways to improve trainees' effectiveness in job search and career planning capabilities. The ERB will continue to strengthen co-operation and exchanges with training bodies (such as the Vocational Training Council) to collaboratively develop more advanced training courses that fill the skill gaps. In parallel, the ERB will strengthen its Industry Consultative Networks to further enhance industry connections and recognition of its courses.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)079**

**(Question Serial No. 2563)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Hong Kong Talent Engage will continue stepping up its efforts to attract talents from the Mainland and overseas, and expanding its network of working partners to help incoming talents and their families settle in Hong Kong. What measures are in place to help families of incoming talents settle in Hong Kong, in particular those addressing their children needs of primary and secondary education?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hiu-fung, Nick (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) has been maintaining close and direct liaison with talents and analysing their enquiries and requests for supporting services, which have been received by HKTE or designated working partners on the online platform, to understand and follow up their development and needs in Hong Kong, as well as to assist them and their families to settle in for long-term development. To address the needs of incoming talents, the HKTE organised 58 online and offline workshops, themed seminars and job fairs in 2025, covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, such as job seeking, business start-up, children's education, etc. These included 12 online and offline job fairs co-organised with the industries and employer organisations to directly match job-seeking talents with employers. In 2026, HKTE will organise at least 55 online and offline themed seminars on living and working in Hong Kong, job fairs, workshops (including Cantonese classes) and social integration activities (including the Talent+ Volunteer Programme). HKTE will collaborate with volunteer groups to encourage incoming talents to actively participate in volunteer services so as to strengthen the connection and exchange between talents and the local community. Such work helps facilitate the early integration of incoming talents and their families into the local community as well as their settlement in Hong Kong.

Regarding children's education, HKTE, in close collaboration with school sponsoring bodies and school organisations, hosts a series of themed seminars to provide more comprehensive information on local education. Since its establishment, HKTE has organised nine relevant activities, inviting various education organisations and working partners to share the latest information on education in Hong Kong. The topics covered included Hong Kong's

education system and study pathways, primary and secondary school selection and interview strategies, curriculum overviews and further studies arrangements. All these aimed at offering support to address the educational needs of talents' children.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)080**

**(Question Serial No. 1765)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development, (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 28 of the Budget Speech that the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) has drawn over 100 000 global elites to Hong Kong. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the number of expired initial visas, applications for visa extension, approved and rejected applications, and the reasons for refusal since the launch of the TTPS;
2. among the applicants for visa extension under the TTPS, a breakdown by number and percentage of those arriving in Hong Kong alone, with a spouse only, with a spouse and children, and with children only;
3. a breakdown of applicants for visa extension under the TTPS by occupation, industry/sector and monthly income; and
4. the reasons for visa holders not applying for an extension before their visas expired; how does the Government interpret the visa extension rate under the TTPS? Are there any specific key performance indicators set for visa extension rate under the TTPS?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ye, Grace (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

1. The first batch of visas under the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) began expiring since end-December 2024. As at end-February this year, the limit of stay for a total of 43 979 TTPS talents has expired. Among them, 22 735 have submitted their applications for extension of stay, representing an application rate of over 50%. Coupled with the TTPS talents whose limit of stay was set to expire within the next three months and applied for extension of stay ahead of time, the Immigration Department received a total of 26 508 applications for extension of stay under the TTPS during the period. Of these, 25 516 were processed, with 23 901 approved and 230 refused.

In general, the main reason for refusal of applications for entry visas is the applicants' failure to satisfy the eligibility criteria for an extension of stay under the TTPS.

2. A breakdown of the number of applications for extension of stay approved under the TTPS from December 2024 to end-February 2026 by the categories of dependants accompanying the principal applicants is tabulated below:

Category	Number of applications approved	Percentage of total applications approved
Accompanied by a spouse <sup>^</sup> and unmarried dependent children under the age of 18	10 658	45%
Accompanied by a spouse <sup>^</sup> only	2 742	11%
Accompanied by unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 only	2 237	9%
Without dependants	8 264	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>23 901</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>^</sup> Including applicants who have entered into a same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, "same-sex marriage", opposite-sex civil partnership or opposite-sex civil union outside Hong Kong with the sponsor in accordance with the local law in force of the place of celebration.

3. Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS must have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong upon expiry of their first visas so that an extension of stay can be granted. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. These TTPS talents are gradually integrating into the local society, and injecting sustainable impetus into local economic and social development.
4. The Hong Kong Talent Engage under the Labour and Welfare Bureau has been maintaining close contact with TTPS talents to understand and keep track of their development and needs in Hong Kong through both online and offline channels. The key considerations for TTPS talents to pursue their development in Hong Kong include career advancement, children's education, housing, integration into local life, etc. It takes time for TTPS talents and the local community and job market to acclimate, which is a normal interactive process. Whether a TTPS talent ultimately stays in Hong Kong for development depends on various factors, such as individual conditions and personal choices.

While trawling for talents, the Government also focuses on retaining talents. The 2024 Policy Address has thus set a key performance indicator of approving at least 50 000 visa extension applications annually for talents admitted under the various talent admission schemes from 2025 to 2027. The Government has not set a separate indicator specifically for visa extension applications under the TTPS.

Given the global trend of talent mobility, the application rate for TTPS visa extension of over 50% is satisfactory and in line with the Government's expectations. The Government will continue its efforts to provide the necessary support for talents, and to boost the economy and the growth of emerging industries so as to provide a favourable environment for the development of local and overseas talents, thereby providing concrete support for building an international hub for high-calibre talents.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)081**

**(Question Serial No. 2554)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development, (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the various talent admission schemes, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- the respective numbers of applications received, approved and refused, as well as the number of arrivals in Hong Kong under each talent admission scheme from 2023-24 to 2025-26, broken down by year, in the table below:

Talent admission scheme		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) Category A	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
TTPS Category B	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
TTPS Category C	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			

	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
General Employment Policy (GEP)	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS)	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			

Residents (ASSG)	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			
Total	No. of applications received			
	No. of applications approved			
	No. of applications refused			
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong			

2. the respective numbers of approved applicants under each talent admission scheme from 2023-24 to 2025-26, broken down by year and by industry/sector;
3. the respective numbers of approved applicants under each talent admission scheme from 2023-24 to 2025-26, broken down by year and by country/place of origin; and
4. the respective numbers of applications (i) received and (ii) approved for extension of stay under each talent admission scheme from 2023-24 to 2025-26, broken down by year.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-yee, Grace (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1. The numbers of applications received, approved and refused as well as the numbers of talents admitted to Hong Kong under the various talent admission schemes in the past three years are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) Category A	No. of applications received	16 849	17 323	12 502
	No. of applications approved	12 567	11 528	9 470
	No. of applications refused	1 538	1 052	1 429
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	11 713	11 478	8 811
TTPS Category B	No. of applications received	28 611	22 354	11 932
	No. of applications approved	27 856	19 179	10 953
	No. of applications refused	1 162	731	442
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	24 679	18 707	10 954
TTPS Category C	No. of applications received	10 102	9 765	7 175
	No. of applications approved	9 008	8 241	6 617
	No. of applications refused	444	424	312
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	8 474	6 900	5 443
General Employment Policy (GEP)^	No. of applications received	30 849	36 636	29 696
	No. of applications approved	28 354	34 243	27 798
	No. of applications refused	486	486	396
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong*	8 640	5 810	7 256
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)^	No. of applications received	24 727	28 635	28 850
	No. of applications approved	21 875	25 447	25 028
	No. of applications refused	256	389	1 089
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong*	11 658	11 942	10 744

Talent admission scheme		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)	No. of applications received	25 758	27 553	27 393
	No. of applications approved	24 512	26 110	26 430
	No. of applications refused	17	28	20
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	23 997	23 614	24 331
Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)	No. of applications received	142	143	169
	No. of applications approved	125	119	153
	No. of applications refused	-	-	-
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	129	123	148
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS) <sup>®</sup>	No. of applications received	83 587	51 531	14 998
	No. of applications approved	13 631	10 004	6 909
	No. of applications refused	9 811	96 921	7 794
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	13 193	9 633	7 583
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)	No. of applications received	140	146	115
	No. of applications approved	92	81	66
	No. of applications refused	1	1	11
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	86	75	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>220 765</b>	<b>194 086</b>	<b>132 830</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>138 020</b>	<b>134 952</b>	<b>113 424</b>
	<b>No. of applications refused</b>	<b>13 715</b>	<b>100 032</b>	<b>11 493</b>
	<b>No. of arrivals in Hong Kong</b>	<b>102 569</b>	<b>88 282</b>	<b>75 324</b>

Note: Applications approved/refused and arrivals in a year may not all be received in the same year. The same applies to the tables below.

\* The numbers of talents admitted to Hong Kong do not include cases of short-term employment.

^ Including the GEP and ASMTP (Technical Professionals Stream) launched on 30 June 2025. The same applies to the tables below.

@ The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise. The same applies to the tables below.

2. The breakdowns of the numbers of approved applicants under the various talent admission schemes by industry/sector in the past three years are tabulated below:

GEP

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Recreation and sports	1 215	1 799	5 107
Arts/Culture	2 416	2 401	3 087
Academic research and education	2 788	2 651	2 368
Financial services	1 864	2 119	2 225
Commerce and trade	2 463	1 686	1 352
Engineering and construction	1 545	1 362	1 004
Tourism	1 861	2 063	786
Catering services	512	530	418
Information technology	514	315	363
Medical and healthcare services	335	357	324
Legal services	173	111	122
Manufacturing industries	100	129	73
Telecommunications	80	124	63
Architecture/Surveying	24	180	20
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	1	17
Biotechnology	12	13	5
Others	12 452	18 402	10 464
<b>Total</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

ASMTF

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Commerce and trade	3 511	4 405	3 830
Academic research and education	4 028	4 280	3 715
Engineering and construction	2 537	2 832	3 555
Arts/Culture	3 906	3 940	3 253
Financial services	3 004	2 356	2 543
Information technology	1 183	1 200	1 337
Recreation and sports	936	3 203	971
Medical and healthcare services	165	220	534
Tourism	159	298	139
Telecommunications	188	198	133
Legal services	121	100	126
Catering services	105	159	118
Manufacturing industries	164	194	92
Biotechnology	60	63	63
Architecture/Surveying	152	49	21
Traditional Chinese medicine	4	9	4
Others	1 652	1 941	4 594
<b>Total</b>	<b>21 875</b>	<b>25 447</b>	<b>25 028</b>

TechTAS

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Artificial intelligence	36	40	74
Biotechnology	24	11	28
Integrated circuit design	3	6	11
Cybersecurity	5	10	9
Microelectronics	4	8	8
Material science	5	7	7
Data analytics	15	8	4
Green technology	8	6	4
Robotics	7	5	3
Quantum technology	-	-	2
Financial technologies	8	9	1
The Internet-of-Things	4	1	1
Advanced communication technologies	1	6	1
Digital entertainment	5	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

## QMAS

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Financial and accounting services	4 354	2 815	2 496
Information technology and telecommunications	3 296	2 204	1 890
Commerce and trade	960	1 019	535
Manufacturing industries	794	683	320
Business support and human resources	984	784	276
Academic research and education	504	345	218
Human health and veterinary services	538	406	201
Architecture, surveying, engineering and construction	626	427	194
Logistics and transportation	171	150	153
Legal services	498	347	70
Sports	40	68	55
Arts and culture	106	51	48
Broadcasting and entertainment	126	106	32
Catering and tourism	61	75	31
Others	573	524	390
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 631</b>	<b>10 004</b>	<b>6 909</b>

## IANG

At present, over 90% of those coming to or staying in Hong Kong under the IANG are fresh graduates. They are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have taken up employment in Hong Kong. The Immigration Department (ImmD) does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

## ASSG

Applicants under the ASSG are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

### TTPS

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an initial stay of two or three years to explore opportunities without other conditions of stay upon entry. During the validity of the first visas, the talents are not required to inform the ImmD when they are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to provide the ImmD with concrete supporting information and documents to prove that they have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong so that an extension of stay can be granted.

3. The breakdowns of the numbers of applications approved under the various talent admission schemes by region in the past three years are tabulated below:

### TTPS

Region	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	46 753	37 015	25 350
Canada	541	383	308
The United States	549	278	293
Australia	347	229	162
Singapore	183	122	111
Others	1 058	921	816
<b>Total</b>	<b>49 431</b>	<b>38 948</b>	<b>27 040</b>

### GEP

Region	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
South Korea	3 310	4 708	5 391
Japan	2 651	3 605	3 350
Taiwan, China	2 525	3 443	2 271
The United Kingdom	2 274	2 578	2 075
The United States	1 908	2 219	1 787
India	1 758	1 934	1 386
France	1 093	1 330	1 034
The Philippines	1 644	1 085	885
Malaysia	907	1 034	674
Thailand	1 373	1 874	609
Others	8 911	10 433	8 336
<b>Total</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

### ASMTTP

ASMTTP is applicable to Mainland residents only. Therefore, all applicants are Mainland residents.

### IANG

Region	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	23 090	24 927	25 209
South Korea	209	176	159
India	194	114	115
Taiwan, China	110	98	76
Malaysia	98	64	71
Macao SAR	63	54	68
Pakistan	51	58	50
The United States	33	24	27
Canada	38	22	23
France	7	11	17
Others	619	562	615
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 512</b>	<b>26 110</b>	<b>26 430</b>

### TechTAS

Region	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	115	104	137
The United States	2	3	5
Canada	-	-	4
India	1	-	2
Italy	-	-	1
Singapore	-	1	1
South Korea	-	-	1
Others	7	11	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

QMAS

Region	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	13 427	9 800	6 691
Canada	42	39	57
Australia	41	47	43
The United States	38	36	27
Others	83	82	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 631</b>	<b>10 004</b>	<b>6 909</b>

ASSG

Region	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
The United Kingdom	16	23	19
The United States	23	16	17
Canada	21	24	15
Australia	9	3	7
The Netherlands	3	2	2
Singapore	2	2	2
The Philippines	4	-	-
Others	14	11	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>66</b>

4. The numbers of applications for extension of stay received and approved under the various talent admission schemes in the past three years are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
TTPS	No. of applications received	Not Applicable	3 135	23 373
	No. of applications approved	Not Applicable	2 038	21 882
GEP	No. of applications received	14 781	14 992	12 237
	No. of applications approved	14 688	14 713	11 807
ASMTTP	No. of applications received	7 859	13 512	11 653
	No. of applications approved	7 430	12 567	10 933
IANG	No. of applications received	11 741	7 125	12 274
	No. of applications approved	11 239	6 717	11 643
TechTAS	No. of applications received	77	89	59
	No. of applications approved	67	85	56
QMAS	No. of applications received	1 398	3 526	9 799
	No. of applications approved	1 362	3 093	9 799
ASSG	No. of applications received	64	48	55
	No. of applications approved	60	42	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>35 920</b>	<b>42 427</b>	<b>69 450</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>34 846</b>	<b>39 255</b>	<b>66 166</b>

\* The first batch of visas under the TTPS only began expiring since end-December 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)082**

**(Question Serial No. 2555)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 174 of the Budget Speech that “The Hong Kong Talent Engage will continue stepping up its efforts to attract talents from the Mainland and overseas, and expanding its network of working partners to help incoming talents and their families settle in Hong Kong.” In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. for talent admission schemes under which applications can be made for eligible dependent spouses and children to come to Hong Kong in 2023-24 to 2025-26, the numbers of such dependant applicants, successful dependant applicants, rejected dependant applicants and dependant arrivals in Hong Kong, with a breakdown by year;
2. of the aforementioned dependant children, the number of children who have switched to applying for a student visa/entry permit;
3. whether the Government has conducted relevant assessments to gauge the impact of these talents along with their spouses and children on the local labour market as well as their specific contributions to economic and industrial development of Hong Kong; and
4. As mentioned in paragraph 30 of the Budget Speech, the Recommendations for Formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan give explicit support to Hong Kong in developing into an international innovation and technology centre and an international hub for high-calibre talents. Meanwhile, the local economy, labour market, and manpower demands keep evolving. In this regard, will the Government review the eligibility criteria for various talent admission schemes to ensure that they align with the development of Hong Kong's industries without undermining employment opportunities for local talents?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ye, Grace (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

1.&2.

The numbers of dependant visa/entry permit applications received, approved and refused as well as the number of dependants admitted to Hong Kong under the various talent admission schemes, broken down by the relationship between the dependant and the principal applicant, in the past three years are tabulated below:

Relationship between the dependant and the principal applicant		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Unmarried dependant children under the age of 18	No. of applications received	107 746	140 439	74 012
	No. of applications approved	59 506	55 207	40 674
	No. of applications refused	11 157	95 371	14 865
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	54 160	52 220	38 267
Spouse <sup>^</sup>	No. of applications received	72 522	88 165	46 189
	No. of applications approved	41 790	36 439	27 066
	No. of applications refused	6 860	59 848	8 522
	No. of arrivals in Hong Kong	38 403	34 244	26 772
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>180 268</b>	<b>228 604</b>	<b>120 201</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>101 296</b>	<b>91 646</b>	<b>67 740</b>
	<b>No. of applications refused</b>	<b>18 017</b>	<b>155 219</b>	<b>23 387</b>
	<b>No. of arrivals in Hong Kong</b>	<b>92 563</b>	<b>86 464</b>	<b>65 039</b>

Note: Applications approved/refused and arrivals in a year may not all be received in the same year.

<sup>^</sup> Including applicants who have entered into a same-sex civil partnership, same-sex civil union, “same-sex marriage”, opposite-sex civil partnership or opposite-sex civil union outside Hong Kong with the sponsor in accordance with the local law in force of the place of celebration.

The Immigration Department does not maintain the other statistics mentioned in the question.

3.&4.

According to the Manpower Projection published by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) in November 2024, despite the impact of the existing measures on admission of outside talents and labour importation, the supply of local manpower would still fall short to fill vacancies across sectors by 2028, resulting in a widening gap of manpower shortage. Outside talents who have arrived in Hong Kong are typically employed in high-skilled occupations such as managers, professionals and associate professionals. According to the latest labour force statistics for the period from December 2025 to February 2026, i.e. more than three years since the implementation of talent attraction measures, the unemployment rate for such occupations remained at around 2.4%, which is significantly lower than the overall seasonally

adjusted unemployment rate of 3.8% for the same period and broadly comparable to the respective average over the past 10 years. The above data illustrates that although the admission of non-local talents has helped supplement and support the development of Hong Kong's core industries, the manpower demand for mid- to higher-skilled labour, as well as from major industries remains persistent.

Outside talents coming to Hong Kong for development can help alleviate manpower shortage, enrich the local talent pool and spur industry development, thereby making contribution to the economy of Hong Kong. Among the talent admission schemes, the GEP and the ASMTP are employment-based schemes under which admitted talents will join the local employment market and bring economic contributions upon arrival in Hong Kong. Besides, the application rate for extension of stay under the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) is over 50%, with an approval rate of around 94%, i.e. about 50% of the admitted TTPS talents are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. According to follow-up surveys, nearly 30% of the interviewed talents' dependent spouses have secured employment in Hong Kong, with a median monthly salary of about \$30,000. Based on the statistics of applications for extension of stay and the findings of follow-up surveys, it is projected that the TTPS can contribute directly to Hong Kong's economy by an amount of some \$34 billion per annum, which is equivalent to about 1.2% of the local Gross Domestic Product.

The LWB has been keeping in view the settlement of incoming talents in Hong Kong through various channels, including maintaining close contact with incoming talents through its Hong Kong Talent Engage to understand and keep track of their development and needs in Hong Kong through both online and offline channels, and provide support. The LWB will continue to monitor the implementation of various talent admission schemes. It will also continue to dynamically monitor manpower changes in Hong Kong through the Manpower Projection and the follow-up surveys and, in light of such actual circumstances as the demand for talents, continue to refine the details of the talent admission schemes, in order to attract talents to Hong Kong and encourage suitable individuals to remain in Hong Kong for long-term development.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)083**

**(Question Serial No. 1891)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026-27 that the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) will attract global talents and professionals to Hong Kong. With regard to the arrangements announced by the Government last year for the admission of professionals of specified skilled trades, which allow outside individuals to apply for entry into Hong Kong to join 8 skilled trades facing acute manpower shortage, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide a breakdown by the 8 skilled trades of the respective numbers of applications received and approved since the implementation of the new arrangements. Have any applications been rejected? If yes, what are the specific reasons?
2. Please provide a breakdown by the 8 skilled trades of the average age and average salaries of the professionals of skilled trades whose applications were approved.
3. As there are views that such arrangements overlap with the existing Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme and sector-specific labour importation schemes and may affect the local employment market, does the Government have any plans to conduct regular surveys to understand the impact of the arrangements on the local labour market, and to carry out periodic reviews to grasp up-to-date developments and manpower needs of the trades based on the latest manpower projection, enabling timely adjustments to the arrangements?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

To address the acute manpower shortage in local skilled trades, the Government has introduced a new channel under the General Employment Policy (GEP) and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTTP) from 30 June 2025 to allow eligible non-degree professionals to apply for entry into Hong Kong to join eight skilled trades facing acute manpower shortage. The new channel under the two schemes targets young and experienced non-degree mid-level technical professionals in specified trades. An applicant must be aged between 18 and 40, and meet the requirements specified for the specific skilled trade on the Technical Professional (TP) List, including academic qualifications, work experience, professional skills (such as registration or licence to practise),

etc. This new arrangement will last for three years with an overall application quota of 10 000. The application quota for each skilled trade is limited to 3 000 to prevent occupations with larger industry scales from exhausting the quotas.

1. Since the launch of the TP Stream under the GEP and the ASMTP up to 28 February 2026, the numbers of applications received, approved and refused for each skilled trade on the TP List are tabulated as follows:

Skilled trade	Total number of applications received#	Number of applications approved	Number of applications refused
New industrialisation technicians	49	-	19
Nurses	174	149	-
Aircraft maintenance technicians	357	340	-
Marine services technicians (local vessels)	20	16	1
Information technology technicians	24	1	12
Lift/escalator technicians	70	31	1
Building Information Modelling coordinators	4	1	-
Electrical technicians	17	7	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>33</b>

# The total number of applications received includes applications approved, refused, being processed, withdrawn by applicants or with no further action to be taken.

In general, the reasons for refusal of applications for entry visas included that the duties associated with the relevant job vacancies fell outside the scope of the specific skilled trade on the TP List, or the applicants did not meet the requirements for the specific skilled trade set out on the TP List, including academic qualifications, work experience, professional skills (such as registration or licence to practise), etc.

2. As at 28 February 2026, the breakdowns of the numbers of approved applications under the eight skilled trades of the TP Stream by the age of the applicants and their monthly remuneration are tabulated below:

Skilled trade	Age of applicant			
	18 - 25	26 - 30	31 - 35	36 - 40
New industrialisation technicians	-	-	-	-
Nurses	18	55	46	30
Aircraft maintenance technicians	85	151	77	27
Marine services technicians (local vessels)	-	2	6	8
Information technology technicians	-	1	-	-
Lift/escalator technicians	-	4	11	16
Building Information Modelling coordinators	-	1	-	-
Electrical technicians	-	-	6	1
<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>82</b>

Skilled trade	Monthly remuneration		
	\$20,000 - \$29,999	\$30,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 or above
New industrialisation technicians	-	-	-
Nurses	128	21	0
Aircraft maintenance technicians	327	12	1
Marine services technicians (local vessels)	15	1	-
Information technology technicians	1	-	-
Lift/escalator technicians	30	1	-
Building Information Modelling coordinators	-	1	-
Electrical technicians	4	3	-
<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>

The Immigration Department does not maintain the other statistics mentioned in the question.

3. According to the 2023 Manpower Projection published in 2024 by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, Hong Kong is expected to face an overall manpower shortage of 180 000 by 2028, over one-third of which are “skilled technical workers”. In fact, Hong Kong is facing an ageing workforce and a lack of new entrants to skilled trades. It is expected that there will be serious shortage of technical workers in various industries. The new channel targets qualified and experienced non-degree mid-level technical professionals in skilled trades facing acute manpower shortages under designated industries. Our objective is to attract them for settlement in Hong Kong in the long run, which is by nature distinct and does not overlap with the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme or the Sector-specific Labour Importation Schemes.

The Government has been closely monitoring the implementation of the new arrangement and plans to conduct a review after the first year of implementation. The relevant bureaux will maintain close liaison with industry stakeholders to follow up the implementation of the arrangement and stay abreast of the latest developments and manpower needs of the industries. At the same time, the Government will continue to strengthen the training for local technical professionals in order to build a more robust manpower foundation.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)084**

**(Question Serial No. 2734)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In connection with the training courses offered by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), would the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) in 2025-26, of the following information in respect of training courses offered by training bodies as commissioned by the ERB: (i)(a) the number of courses approved, and (b) the number of enrolments; and (ii) the funding granted for the purpose of offering such courses;
- (2) in the past 3 years, of the respective numbers of training courses, training places and enrolments for placement-tied courses, skills upgrading courses, generic skills courses, courses for specific service targets and youth training courses offered by the ERB, with a breakdown by course type; and
- (3) since the ERB's lifting of restrictions on educational attainment of trainees in January 2025, of the following information in respect of its advanced courses and "future skills" courses: (i) course names, (ii) co-organising training bodies, (iii) subject areas, (iv) numbers of training places, (v) numbers of applicants, and (vi) actual numbers of enrolments.

Asked by: Hon CHAU Siu-chung (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

- (1) As at 28 February 2026, the number of training courses offered by each training body and approved by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), the number of intakes and the amount of course funding allocated in 2025-26 are tabulated below:

	Training Body	Number of Training Courses Approved	Number of Intakes	Funding (\$'000) <sup>[Note 1]</sup>
1	Association for Engineering and Medical Volunteer Services	1	4	26
2	Yan Oi Tong Limited	195	9 345	70,274
3	Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Hospital Authority	2	96	2,773
4	Li Fai Centre of Wushu	2	90	678
5	YMCA College of Careers	54	868	11,001
6	Star Chef Management School operated by Star Chef Management School Company Limited	16	252	928
7	Royal International College	17	676	6,828
8	Heung To College of Professional Studies	99	3 405	26,355
9	Hong Kong Manpower Development Centre Limited	21	1 203	16,868
10	Hong Kong Workers' Health Centre Limited	3	14	320
11	The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions	462	10 918	44,251
12	The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong	6	88	532
13	Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Limited	63	1 388	4,019
14	Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood	199	7 085	44,789
15	UOW College Hong Kong	27	361	821
16	Caritas - Hong Kong	215	4 443	26,471
17	The Hong Kong Society for the Blind	7	85	456
18	The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	21	34	15
19	School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong	61	1 023	20,162
20	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong <sup>[Note 2]</sup>	4	-	-
21	Hong Kong Institute of Technology	6	50	50

	Training Body	Number of Training Courses Approved	Number of Intakes	Funding (\$'000) <sup>[Note 1]</sup>
22	Hong Kong Red Cross	8	379	5,867
23	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	150	4 029	37,072
24	The Young Men's Christian Association of Hong Kong	83	2 642	13,383
25	Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres Limited	156	7 091	46,107
26	Research Centre for Gerontology and Family Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	2	59	271
27	The Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong	53	1 713	11,982
28	Hong Kong Rehabilitation Power	16	110	551
29	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation	23	292	3,843
30	Xianggang Putonghua Yanxishe	4	432	1,324
31	The Scout Association of Hong Kong - The Friends of Scouting	37	2 095	7,911
32	Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth	10	106	564
33	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre	153	3 178	19,050
34	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	18	187	1,276
35	Hong Kong St. John Ambulance	3	318	1,455
36	Hong Kong Ballroom Dancing Council Limited	4	205	990
37	The Hong Kong School of Motoring Limited	6	45	102
38	TCHK	13	360	2,657
39	Hong Kong Electrical & Mechanical College (Evening School)	28	818	2,257
40	Hong Kong Employment Development Service Limited	171	2 671	22,345
41	Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service	176	3 829	28,892
42	The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hongkong	135	7 895	72,094
43	Christian Action	206	10 432	75,819
44	Haven of Hope Christian Service	1	17	183
45	Methodist Centre	241	7 614	30,318
46	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service	13	232	1,446
47	Hong Kong and Kowloon Gold	6	363	1,116

	Training Body	Number of Training Courses Approved	Number of Intakes	Funding (\$'000) <sup>[Note 1]</sup>
	Ornaments and Jewellery Trade Workers' Union			
48	The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions	218	9 693	62,889
49	Hong Kong and Kowloon Electrical Engineering and Appliances Trade Workers Union	10	295	5,545
50	HKCT Group Limited	303	13 162	107,668
51	Vassar International Chinese Medical Society Limited	58	1 572	8,233
52	Neighbourhood & Worker's Service Centre	145	4 303	28,201
53	New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association	4	35	21
54	New Territories Association Retraining Centre Limited	156	5 019	26,697
55	New Home Association Limited	3	11	25
56	S.K.H. Holy Carpenter Church Community Centre	97	1 673	9,456
57	St. James' Settlement	135	5 358	45,358
58	KCRA Community Education Enhancement Center Limited	190	4 353	20,326
59	Kwai Chung Hospital - Hospital Authority	3	115	3,032
60	Youth Centre of The True Word Lutheran Church operated by The True Word Lutheran Church Limited	14	20	27
61	Princess Margaret Hospital	2	68	1,913
62	Clothing Industry Training Authority	13	398	976
63	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	8	18	75
64	The Association of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited	49	1 948	17,319
65	Vocational Training Council	226	6 890	71,038
66	Hospital & Clinic Nurses Association	4	89	144
67	OIWA Limited	45	1 028	3,713

Note 1: Actual figures as at December 2025.

Note 2: The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong became an ERB training body in 2025-26.

- (2) The ERB provides training courses for the general public and specific service targets (including young people). These courses cover 3 major categories: placement-tied, skills upgrading and generic skills. The number of training courses offered by training bodies and approved by the ERB, and the number of intakes in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Course Category (Note)	Number of Training Courses		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Placement-tied	213	212	228
Skills Upgrading	438	469	521
Generic Skills	109	111	132
<b>Total</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>881</b>

Note: Figures related to the training courses for specific service targets (including young people) are covered.

Course Category (Note)	Number of Intakes		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Placement-tied	56 903	62 344	60 746
Skills Upgrading	73 353	74 160	75 073
Generic Skills	16 083	17 587	18 769
<b>Total</b>	<b>146 339</b>	<b>154 091</b>	<b>154 588</b>

Note: Figures related to the training courses for specific service targets (including young people) are covered.

During the same periods, the ERB offered 169, 170 and 196 training courses for specific service targets (including young people) respectively. The number of dedicated youth programmes offered by training bodies and approved by the ERB, and the number of intakes are tabulated as follows:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2028)
Number of dedicated youth programmes	38	38	39
Number of intakes	488	627	932

In 2025-26, the ERB provided a total of 165 000 training places, including 1 500 places for dedicated youth programmes and 5 100 places for other dedicated courses for specific service targets. The ERB will closely monitor the market demand and flexibly reallocate the training places.

- (3) In response to the latest developments in the employment market, and following the lifting of the restriction on the educational attainment of trainees, the ERB has developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses. Between January 2025 and February 2026, these courses recorded about 1 870 eligible enrolments, with trainees to be admitted progressively. The training places involved have been incorporated into the ERB's overall training places for the respective years, and no separate breakdown is

available. The names of the relevant courses, their industry categories and the training bodies offering the courses are tabulated below:

	Industry Category	Name of Course	Training Body Approved to Offer Courses in 2025-26
1	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Advanced AI-Powered Game Design and Optimised Godot Interactive Development (Part-time)	To be offered in 2026-27
2	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Godot Game Development and AI-Assisted Creation (Part-time)	To be offered in 2026-27
3	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Kotlin Application Development (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
4	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Swift Application Development (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
5	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Application of Large Language Model (LLM) (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
6	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Information Security Management (Part-time)	HKCT Group Limited
7	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Information Security Professional (Part-time)	HKCT Group Limited
8	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Application of Computer Vision Technology (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
9	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Blender 3D Modeling Applications (Part-time)	UOW College Hong Kong
10	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Advanced Blender 3D Modeling and Animation (Part-time)	UOW College Hong Kong
11	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Blender and AI Creative Media Integration (Part-time)	UOW College Hong Kong
12	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Applications for Artificial Intelligence Automation Tools (Part-time)	UOW College Hong Kong
13	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in AI-enhanced Social Media Content Creation in Marketing (Part-time)	Christian Action

	Industry Category	Name of Course	Training Body Approved to Offer Courses in 2025-26
14	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Business Applications of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Part-time)	School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong
15	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Application of Generative Artificial Intelligence Image and Video Creation Skills (English Medium) (Part-time)	Christian Action
16	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) Design and Application (Part-time)	School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong
17	Information & Communications Technology	Certificate in Cantonese NLP & AI Customer Service (Part-time)	To be offered in 2026-27
18	Transportation & Support Services	Certificate in Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Repair Assistant	Vocational Training Council
19	Printing & Publishing	Certificate in the Use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Image and Video Design (Part-time)	1. Methodist Centre 2. HKCT Group Limited
20	Wearing Apparel & Textile	Certificate in 3D Virtual Fashion (Display) II (Part-time)	Clothing Industry Training Authority
21	Property Management & Security	Certificate in Conflict Handling Skills in Property Management and Security Industry (Part-time)	1. YMCA College of Careers 2. The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions 3. Methodist Centre
22	Financial Services	Certificate in Financial Services (Know Your Customer [KYC]) (Part-time)	1. Christian Action 2. Vocational Training Council
23	Financial Services	Certificate in Financial Services (Virtual Assets) (Part-time)	1. Christian Action 2. Vocational Training Council
24	Financial Services	Certificate in Financial Services (Analysis of Environmental, Social and Governance [ESG] Report) (Part-time)	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
25	Financial Services	Certificate in Financial Technology (Artificial Intelligence-Aided Fraud Detection) (Part-time)	UOW College Hong Kong
26	Financial Services	Certificate in Financial Technology (Applications of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Financial Analysis) (Part-time)	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

	Industry Category	Name of Course	Training Body Approved to Offer Courses in 2025-26
27	Beauty Therapy	Certificate in Customer Services Skills for Beauty Consultant (Part-time)	The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
28	Tourism	Certificate in Customer Services in Tourism Industry (Complaints Handling) (Part-time)	The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
29	Tourism	Certificate in Customer Service in Tourism Industry (Communication Skills of Online Customer Service) (Part-time)	The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions
30	Tourism	Certificate in Travel Consultant Training	1. The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions 2. HKCT Group Limited
31	Healthcare Services	Certificate in Community Care and Health Management (Part-time)	Hong Kong Institute of Technology
32	Healthcare Services	Certificate in Sustainable Development and 'Environmental, Social and Governance' (ESG) Knowledge for Health Care Industry (Part-time)	Hong Kong Employment Development Service Limited
33	Healthcare Services	Certificate in Gerontechnology (Part-time)	1. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre 2. HKCT Group Limited
34	Business	Certificate in Human Resources Management (Recruitment Practices) (Part-time)	To be offered in 2026-27
35	Business	Certificate in Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Human Resources I (English Medium) (Part-time)	Christian Action
36	Business	Certificate in Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Human Resources II (English Medium) (Part-time)	Christian Action
37	Business	Certificate in Enterprise Management (Effective Communication) (Part-time)	To be offered in 2026-27
38	Business	Certificate in Digital Marketing (Artificial Intelligence Applications) (Part-time)	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
39	Design	Certificate in New Era AI Digital Media Designer Training	HKCT Group Limited

	Industry Category	Name of Course	Training Body Approved to Offer Courses in 2025-26
40	Import & Export	Certificate in Practical Knowledge of E-commerce Transactions (Part-time)	1. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong 2. Christian Action
41	Catering	Certificate in ESG Practices and Brand Value Enhancement for Catering Industry (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
42	Catering	Certificate in Technology Application and Digital Operations in Catering Industry (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
43	Catering	Certificate in Quality Customer Service in Catering Industry (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
44	Entertainment & Performing Arts	Certificate in Video Editing Skills III (Artificial Intelligence Applications) (Part-time)	Vocational Training Council
45	Entertainment & Performing Arts	Certificate in Virtual Production (Development Skills of Virtual Scene Animation) (Part-time)	HKCT Group Limited
46	Entertainment & Performing Arts	Certificate in Screenwriting Skills for TV Micro-drama (Artificial Intelligence Applications) (Part-time)	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong
47	Environmental Services	Certificate in Integrated Tree Climbing Practical Skills (Part-Time)	Tree Climbing Hong Kong
48	Workplace Languages	Certificate in Workplace English (Writing Skills for Digital Communication) (Part-time)	1. School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong 2. Vocational Training Council

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)085**

**(Question Serial No. 1603)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As mentioned in the 2026-27 Budget, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) will continue stepping up its efforts to attract talents from the Mainland and overseas, and expanding its network of working partners to help incoming talents and their families settle in Hong Kong. In 2026-27, HKTE will continue to leverage the 6 social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, WeChat, Xiaohongshu and YouTube) and news platforms to timely feature positive news and posts, interesting stories of incoming talents, photos and videos to tell good stories of Hong Kong, and interviews with industry and opinion leaders to provide authoritative information and insights to talents. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the total estimate for promotion on social media and news platforms in 2026-27? Please provide a breakdown of major types of expenditure, and elaborate on the changes as compared to those in 2025-26 and the reasons for such changes;
2. What were the volume of content published on the mentioned platforms, the audience reached, the engagement metrics and conversion effectiveness over the past year? What was the total actual expenditure? How would the rate on investment return be assessed?
3. What are the specific targets for promotion on social media platforms in 2026-27, including the expected volume of content to be published, target markets, growth targets for follower size/engagement/traffic, and whether the use of paid advertisement and other new content formats will be increased? What is the estimate for the related additional expenditure?
4. How will HKTE co-ordinate the promotional efforts and monitor their effectiveness and expenditure, including adopting any co-ordination mechanisms with other departments regarding content and making any arrangements for third-party assessment, and whether reports on the expenditure breakdown and KPIs will be submitted to the Legislative Council on a regular basis?

Asked by: Hon CHEN Chung-nin, Rock (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- (1) In 2026-27, the estimated expenditure of the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) for promotion via social media and news platforms is about \$10 million, which is comparable to the expenditure in 2025-26.

- (2) In 2025, HKTE published over 500 promotional posts across its online platform (www.hkengage.gov.hk) and social media channels, accumulating over 48.6 million impressions and driving more than 6.5 million visits to its website. These achieved satisfactory results, with year-on-year growth recorded across all performance indicators for both the online and social media platforms.
- (3) In 2026-27, HKTE will continue to leverage social media and news platforms to disseminate positive news and posts in a timely manner. It will produce and share interesting stories of incoming talents, photos and videos. The office will also strengthen its promotional efforts in attracting talents from the Mainland as well as the Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and North America regions, and provide incoming talents with timely information about settling in Hong Kong. In 2026, HKTE's performance indicators for social media followers, post impressions and webpage views are expected to grow year-on-year by around 36%, 107% and 14% respectively.
- (4) The work of HKTE mainly includes formulating targeted recruitment and publicity strategies for different talent groups, and proactively driving outreach publicity to promote Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract international talents of diverse backgrounds to the city. It also collaborates with partners from different sectors to provide incoming talents with comprehensive one-stop support services, facilitating their long-term career development in Hong Kong.

HKTE maintains close liaison and forms a strong Hong Kong Team with, among others, the Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in the Mainland Offices and overseas Economic and Trade Offices, the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, Invest Hong Kong, and the Belt and Road Office. The collaboration leverages the unique strengths of each party without duplication of efforts, achieving synergy in promoting Hong Kong's strengths and opportunities to attract enterprises to establish a presence and talents to settle in the city.

HKTE's performance indicators related to promotion and publicity are as follows:

Performance indicators	2024 (Actual)	2025 (Actual)	2026 (Estimate)
<b>Awareness and Brand Building</b>			
• Number of www.hkengage.gov.hk page views	5 927 495	6 507 047	7 400 000 φ
• Number of social media platforms	6	6	—¶
• Number of social media post impressions Δ	74 217 148	48 234 363μ	100 000 000 φ
• Number of social media followers (as at end of the year)	78 577	158 330	215 000 φ
• Number of media coverage@	N.A.	363	640 φ

φ	The estimated increase in the number of page views, social media post impressions, social media followers and media coverage is based on the annual
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	projection, after taking into account the publicity efforts relating to the Global Talent Summit Week in March 2026.
¶	Indicator to be removed as from 2026 after HKTE has achieved the indicator by setting up official accounts on six high-reach social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, WeChat, Xiaohongshu and YouTube) by end 2024.
Δ	The number of social media post impressions of the official account of HKTE has been counted on LinkedIn from 28 December 2022; WeChat from 8 May 2023; Instagram, YouTube and Facebook from 5 April 2024; as well as Xiaohongshu from 6 November 2024.
μ	The decrease in the number of social media post impressions is due to the netting-out effects of the Global Talent Summit • Hong Kong in 2024.
@	New indicator as from 2025.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)086**

**(Question Serial No. 1604)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the 2026-27 Budget that the Hong Kong Talent Engage will strengthen the network of working partners to cover eight key areas for the development of Hong Kong, and collaborate with the Economic and Trade Offices in the Mainland and overseas, Invest Hong Kong, and so on to participate in job fairs and stage fora.

1. What are the total estimate and breakdowns of the major items for carrying out the relevant activities and expanding the network in 2026-27?
2. What is expected growth in the number of working partners? How many events will be joined/held? What is the target number for talents reached?
3. What will be done to ensure cross-departmental co-ordination and avoid duplication of resources? Will reports on event lists, expenditure involved and effectiveness of talent admission be submitted on a regular basis?

Asked by: Hon CHEN Chung-nin, Rock (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

- (1) In 2026-27, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) will continue to strengthen its working partner network and step up the implementation of related activities with an estimated expenditure of about \$4 million. This expenditure covers, inter alia, 12 online and offline job fairs to be co-organised with industry and employer organisations, and activities for incoming talents to be conducted in collaboration with its partners across various sectors.
- (2) To attract talents to Hong Kong and facilitate their integration into the local community, HKTE has proactively established a diverse working partner network. Through this network of companies, representatives, chambers of commerce and trade associations across various industries, HKTE collaborates with its partners to host activities covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, including accommodation, job seeking, banking and insurance, taxation, and children's education, etc. to provide incoming talents with comprehensive support services.

In 2026, HKTE will continue to expand its network of working partners with a target of increasing the number of partners to 100. During the year, HKTE will organise at least 55 online and offline themed seminars on living and working in Hong Kong, job fairs, workshops (including Cantonese learning classes) and social integration activities (including the Talent+ Volunteer Programme). HKTE will collaborate with volunteer groups to encourage incoming talents to actively participate in volunteer services so as to strengthen their ties with the local community and facilitate their integration into the local community. Since its establishment on 30 October 2023, HKTE has participated in and organised a variety of online and offline activities, achieving a total reach of over 800 000.

- (3) The work of HKTE mainly includes formulating targeted recruitment and publicity strategies for different talent groups, and proactively driving outreach publicity to promote Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract international talents of diverse backgrounds to the city. It also collaborates with partners from different sectors to provide incoming talents with comprehensive one-stop support services to facilitate their long-term career development in Hong Kong. HKTE will maintain close liaison and form a strong Hong Kong Team with, among others, the Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in the Mainland Offices and overseas Economic and Trade Offices, the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, Invest Hong Kong, and the Belt and Road Office. The collaboration leverages the unique strengths of each party without duplication of efforts, achieving synergy in promoting Hong Kong's strengths and opportunities to attract enterprises to establish a presence and talents to settle in the city.

HKTE will continue to review and enhance its talent attraction and support initiatives to ensure optimal use of resources.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)087**

**(Question Serial No. 2486)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the 2026-27 Budget Speech that “The Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) will continue stepping up its efforts to attract talents from the Mainland and overseas, and expanding its network of working partners to help incoming talents and their families settle in Hong Kong.” Moreover, HKTE, which is under the Labour and Welfare Bureau, will continue to promote the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), the TTPS (extended) and other talent admission measures. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) What is the total estimated expenditure for HKTE in 2026-27 for attracting talents from the Mainland and overseas, expanding its network of working partners, and assisting incoming talents and their families to settle in Hong Kong? Please provide a breakdown by major expenditure category, along with the rate of change compared to 2025-26 and the reasons for such changes.
- (2) What specific activities did HKTE launch last year to attract talents from the Mainland and overseas, and what were their outcomes? Please include the number of overseas job fairs/exhibitions hosted or attended, the key regions covered, the number of talents reached or invited, and the actual number of talents issued with visas/permits. What was the utilisation of support services for incoming talents and their families to settle in Hong Kong, and what were the total actual expenditure and its breakdown?
- (3) How will HKTE expand its partner network? What are the current number and categories of these partners? What are the target number of new partners to be engaged in 2026-27, and what is the budget for these expansion activities? How will the Government ensure that these partners deliver results in attracting talents to settle here?
- (4) How will the talent admission measures be co-ordinated across different departments in a holistic manner?

Asked by: Hon CHEN Chung-nin, Rock (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- (1) The total estimated expenditure of the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) for 2026-27 is \$89.1 million, which is 2.6% higher than the revised estimate for 2025-26. This estimated expenditure includes staff costs and operating expenses for, inter alia, local and overseas publicity and promotion, organisation of various talent attraction activities, provision of support services for talents, etc.
- (2) HKTE formulates targeted recruitment and publicity strategies for different talent groups, proactively drives outreach publicity to promote Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract international talents of diverse backgrounds to the city. It also collaborates with partners from different sectors to provide incoming talents with comprehensive one-stop support services, facilitating their long-term career development in Hong Kong. In 2025, HKTE hosted over 140 talent promotion events during 46 outreach visits to major Mainland cities and overseas countries, such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, etc. It established direct contact with over 41 000 talents worldwide through overseas visits, including participating in local career expos, exhibitions and conventions, as well as organising themed seminars, workshops, and integration activities, etc. in the cities visited. It has also engaged and served over 260 000 talents through online initiatives, such as organising online job fairs globally and themed webinars, etc.

Since the launch of a series of talent attraction measures by the current-term Government in late 2022, over 270 000 talents have arrived under various talent admission schemes as of end-February 2026. This reflects Hong Kong's strong appeal to international talents. HKTE has been maintaining close and direct liaison with talents and analysing their enquiries and requests for supporting services, which have been received by HKTE or designated working partners on the online platform to understand and follow up their development and needs in Hong Kong, as well as to assist them and their families to settle in for long-term development. To address the needs of incoming talents, HKTE organised 58 online and offline workshops, themed seminars and job fairs in 2025, covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, such as job seeking, business start-up, children's education, etc. These included 12 online and offline job fairs co-organised with industry and employer organisations to directly match job-seeking talents with employers.

The revised estimate for HKTE in 2025-26 for Mainland and overseas publicity and promotion, support services and the expansion of its partner network is about \$11 million.

- (3) To attract talents to Hong Kong and facilitate their integration into the local community, HKTE has proactively established a diversified network with working partners, covering companies, representatives, chambers of commerce and associations from various industries. In collaboration with these partners, HKTE offers comprehensive support services by organising activities covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, such as accommodation, job seeking, banking and insurance, taxation, and children's education, etc. In 2026, HKTE will continue to expand the network of working partners, with a target of increasing the number of partners to 100, to provide talents with more diverse and comprehensive support services for facilitating their long-term development in Hong Kong.

In 2026, HKTE will organise at least 55 online and offline themed seminars on living and working in Hong Kong, job fairs, workshops (including Cantonese learning classes) and social integration activities (including the Talent+ Volunteer Programme). HKTE will collaborate with volunteer groups to encourage incoming talents to actively participate in volunteer services so as to strengthen their ties with the local community and facilitate their integration into Hong Kong. Since its establishment on 30 October 2023, HKTE has participated in and organised a variety of online and offline activities, achieving a total reach of over 800 000. In 2026-27, HKTE will continue to strengthen its working partner network and step up the implementation of related activities with an estimated expenditure of about \$4 million.

- (4) The work of HKTE mainly includes formulating targeted recruitment and publicity strategies for different talent groups, and proactively driving outreach publicity to promote Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract international talents of diverse backgrounds to the city. It also collaborates with partners from different sectors to provide incoming talents with comprehensive one-stop support services to facilitate their long-term career development in Hong Kong. HKTE will maintain close liaison and form a strong Hong Kong Team with, among others, the Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in the Mainland Offices and overseas Economic and Trade Offices, the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, Invest Hong Kong, and the Belt and Road Office. The collaboration leverages the unique strengths of each party without duplication of efforts, achieving synergy in promoting Hong Kong's strengths and opportunities to attract enterprises to establish a presence and talents to settle in the city. In addition, HKTE will invite the Immigration Department to conduct regular sharing sessions on visa renewal to help talents better understand the relevant requirements. It will also liaise with the Education Bureau to assist with enquiries regarding children's education.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)088**

**(Question Serial No. 2487)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the 2026-27 Budget that the Vocational Training Council will continue to support the pilot Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme, the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” examination fee subsidies and the Apprenticeship Scheme, as well as develop relevant training programmes. In this connection, please advise on:

- (1) the total estimated expenditure for the above 4 measures for 2026-27 with a breakdown of the major estimate for each measure;
- (2) the number of actual participants, the total amount of subsidies disbursed and the effectiveness of each measure in the past year;
- (3) the estimated target number of participants and performance indicators for 2026-27, and whether the Government will regularly submit expenditure and effectiveness reports to the Legislative Council.

Asked by: Hon CHEN Chung-nin, Rock (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- (1)-(3) The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) provides subvention to the Vocational Training Council (VTC) to provide vocational training, including services such as in-service short courses, the Apprenticeship Scheme, the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS), and provide the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” (OEMC) examination fee subsidies.

The amount of subsidies and number of beneficiaries for the above four services in 2025-26, as well as the estimated expenditure and target number of beneficiaries for 2026-27, are tabulated below:

	Item	2025-26		2026-27	
		Amount of subsidies (\$million)	Number of beneficiaries (as at end-February 2026)	Estimated expenditure (\$million)	Target number of beneficiaries
1.	In-service Training Short Courses (Note 1)	47.6	17 347	46.2	16 500
2.	Apprenticeship Scheme	35	3 017	34	3 100
3.	VPAS	7.7	N/A (Note 2)	5.2	N/A (Note 3)
4.	OEMC examination fee subsidies	0.18 (Note 4)	7	0.05	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>90.48</b>	<b>20 371</b>	<b>85.45</b>	<b>19 620</b>

Note 1: The number of beneficiaries under this item is calculated with reference to the 2025/26 and 2026/27 academic years.

Note 2: The initial cohort of non-local students eligible for VPAS will graduate by mid-2026, at which time VPAS will be open for application.

Note 3: Whether eligible non-local students will stay in Hong Kong upon graduation depends on a number of factors, including their personal choices and whether or not they obtain relevant employment opportunities. The Government has not set a target number of beneficiaries in this regard.

Note 4: The amount of subsidies covered expenditure on promoting the OEMC arrangement and publicising the examination fee subsidy arrangement.

The Vocational Training Council Ordinance stipulates that the VTC shall, within the period of 7 months after the close of each financial year, submit to the Chief Executive a programme of its activities setting out its work in various areas during the year, including performance indicators and resource utilisation, etc., together with a statement of income and expenditure, balance sheet and auditor's report for that year. The above documents are tabled at the Legislative Council meeting every year. The LWB and the VTC also report on the progress of the above work to the relevant panels from time to time.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)089**

**(Question Serial No. 1266)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As mentioned in Programme (3) Manpower Development under the Estimates for Head 141 Labour and Welfare Bureau, the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) aims to encourage lifelong learning among citizens. With the increase in the CEF subsidy ceiling, in order to ensure proper use of public fund in genuinely enhancing the competitiveness of Hong Kong's working population, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the number of applications approved for CEF subsidy and the total amount of subsidy actually reimbursed in each of the past 3 financial years; (Please list the top 3 most popular course categories);
- (2) the percentage of applications submitted via online platform following the Government's ongoing digitalisation of public services; what is the current average processing time (in days) for an application from submission to actual reimbursement of subsidy?
- (3) the number of recognised courses related to emerging industries (such as artificial intelligence, ESG, and innovation and technology) incorporated into the CEF reimbursable course list over the past 3 years to facilitate Hong Kong's economic transformation; are there any mechanisms for encouraging training providers to actively develop courses that suit the market's latest manpower needs?

Asked by: Hon CHUANG Ka-pun, Albert (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

- (1) The number of successful applications for reimbursement and the total amount of reimbursement claims under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows -

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)
<b>Number of successful applications for reimbursement</b> <sup>Note</sup>	49 613	51 493	56 105
<b>Total amount of reimbursement claims (\$ million)</b>	473.8	448.1	496.4

Note: An application may involve reimbursement claims for 1 or more CEF courses.

During the same period, the top 3 areas of study under the CEF with the highest number of successful applications for reimbursement, by number of subsidy recipients <sup>(Note (i))</sup>, are set out below -

Year	Top 3 areas of study <sup>(Note (ii))</sup> under the CEF with the highest number of successful applications for reimbursement
2023-24	1. A03 - Business and Management 2. Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based <sup>(Note (iii))</sup> 3. Languages <sup>(Note (iv))</sup>
2024-25	1. A03 - Business and Management 2. SCS-based <sup>(Note (iii))</sup> 3. A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)	1. A03 - Business and Management 2. SCS-based <sup>(Note (iii))</sup> 3. A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Note (i) A person may claim for reimbursement of 1 or more CEF courses.

Note (ii) Since 1 April 2019, applications have been accepted for registration under the CEF in respect of all courses registered under the Qualifications Register, including SCS-based courses; Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies-based (SGC-based) courses; and non SCS/SGC-based courses which are divided into 14 classified areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14).

Note (iii) The scopes of SCS-based industries under the Qualifications Framework include Arboriculture and Horticulture, Automotive, Banking, Beauty and Hairdressing, Catering, Electrical and Mechanical Services, Elderly Care Service, Fashion, Human Resource Management, Import and Export, Information and Communications Technology, Insurance, Jewellery, Logistics, Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals and Plastics), Printing and Publishing, Property Management, Retail, Security Services, Testing, Inspection and Certification, Travel as well as Watch and Clock.

Note (iv) Since 1 April 2023, all CEF courses previously registered under the 8 specified domains have expired and should be registered under the 14 areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14) under the Qualifications Register instead. For applicants who have enrolled in the CEF courses which were previously registered under the 8 specified domains and commenced on or before 31 March 2023, they may submit applications for fee reimbursement within 1 year upon the successful completion of the courses (according to the course completion date or the date of the specified language benchmark test/examination (if applicable), whichever is later).

- (2) The Office of the Continuing Education Fund (OCEF) under the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency is responsible for vetting applications for reimbursement under the CEF. In 2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026), there were more than 59 000 reimbursement applications under the CEF, of which about 67% were made online.

In general, the processing time of application for reimbursement claim for existing account holders, and account opening together with first reimbursement claim for new

applicants under the CEF, is 6 weeks and 8 weeks respectively. The processing time of individual applications is subject to the submission of complete supporting documents by the applicant. The OCEF does not maintain statistics on the average processing time for each application.

- (3) The Government has been encouraging course providers to design and offer new courses and apply for registration under the CEF to meet market development and needs. In recent years, many newly-added CEF courses are relevant to emerging industries and innovation and technology (I&T). As at 31 January 2026, about 130 CEF course carried titles related to such I&T areas as artificial intelligence, big data analytics and smart cities. These areas saw an increase of about 70 courses over the past 3 years.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)090**

**(Question Serial No. 3243)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As mentioned in paragraph 45 of the Budget Speech, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing various types of skill-based training courses, including AI application, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the local workforce. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the expenditure details of the ERB in the past 3 years? Please provide a breakdown by funding provision, administrative and training course expenditures, manpower expenditure, trainee allowance, publicity cost, trainee attendance and allocation across major training categories, and how will these figures compare with those of the upgraded Upskill Hong Kong;
2. Given Upskill Hong Kong's role to serve the local workforce, please state the financial commitment and resource planning in relation to this objective over the next 3 years, including the projected scale of additional expenditures, the allocation directions for major areas such as AI application training, certificate courses and skills progression ladders, and the measures in place to ensure that the funding can support universal AI training and enhance the competitiveness of the local workforce in a sustainable and effective manner;
3. How will the Government review and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the upgraded Upskill Hong Kong? Please specify the key performance indicators to be established (such as training participation rate, skill certification completion rate, employment or income enhancement ratio, economic contribution or AI application conversion rate), and the monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure that the reform measures align effectively with Hong Kong's high-level positioning as an international innovation and technology centre, while meeting the resource optimisation requirements under fiscal consolidation.

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1&2. The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) is funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF). The ERF's expenditure in the past 3 years is tabulated below:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (Actual expenditure as at December 2025)
Training course expenses (\$ million)	1,115.2	1,285.1	1,081.6
Retraining allowance expenses (\$ million)	271.2	426.1	330.4
Public relations and promotion expenses (\$ million)	10.6	14.3	5.8
Administrative and operating expenses (including staff costs) (\$ million)	120	126.1	103.9
Other expenses (\$ million)	48.4	50.9	39
Total expenditure (\$ million)	1,565.4	1,902.6	1,560.6

The ERB currently provides over 800 training courses straddling across 28 industries and generic skills. These courses are mainly employment-related and cover 3 categories: placement-tied, skills upgrading and generic skills. The number of intakes in the past 3 years is tabulated below:

Course Category	Number of Intakes		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Placement-tied	56 903	62 344	60 746
Skills Upgrading	73 353	74 160	75 073
Generic Skills	16 083	17 587	18 769
Total	146 339	154 091	154 588

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. It has formulated an implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong and will take forward various medium- to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of the ERB was funded by the ERF before reform and will continue to be so thereafter. In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the ERB's preliminary estimate, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform).

Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will formulate an appropriate skills-based training framework in the light of the current and future gaps in skills and course offerings. Training bodies of Upskill Hong Kong will develop skills-based courses according to the above framework in the future. In 2026-27, the ERB plans to provide 165 000

training places and launch the first phase of the skills-based training framework targeting grassroots workers. It will also strengthen the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum to equip the broader workforce with this essential emerging skill. The relevant reform is progressing in an orderly manner. Details such as the number of training places and the estimated intakes of various types of skills-based training courses are not available at this stage.

The ERB will strengthen the integration of AI knowledge and practical applications into courses across various sectors. A breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available. Separately, the ERB's estimated expenditure on courses relating to "Information and Communications Technology" and "Information Technology Applications" will increase by about 20% in 2026-27 compared with that of the previous year.

3. Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will establish corresponding performance indicators for different services, including reviewing and optimising the 5 existing performance indicators (i.e. capacity utilisation rate, attendance rate, graduation rate, satisfaction rate and placement rate), in order to enable a more comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness in upskilling the workforce, promoting personal career planning and development, and supporting development of the industries. The full Board of the ERB and its Quality Assurance and Review Committee are responsible for monitoring the performance indicators and overall performance level of training courses, and undertaking reviews when necessary.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)091**

**(Question Serial No. 0324)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Government once indicated that it would continue to take forward a number of sector-specific talent training programmes to enrich the local talent pool. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee on the following:

- (1) What talent training programmes and funds have been launched (including completed and ongoing ones) by various government departments in the past 5 years? Please provide relevant information in table form, and set out the financial and manpower provisions as well as the number of participants of the programmes.
- (2) In the previous Budgets, 5 sectors have been highlighted under the section "Nurturing Local Talent", namely innovation and technology (I&T), healthcare, maritime and aviation, patent and international legal sectors. What is the implementation progress of the talent training programmes and funds launched for these 5 sectors over the past year? Will the Government introduce and actively implement talent training programmes for other sectors in the future to meet manpower needs of such sectors or professions?

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

- (1) The Government will keep up the efforts in nurturing local talent. Different policy bureaux have all along closely liaised with their industries, and formulate corresponding measures in response to the latest industry development and manpower situation, including continuing to take forward sector-specific talent training programmes to enrich the local human resources.

In consultation with various policy bureaux, examples of sector-specific talent training programmes and funds launched by various government departments in the past 5 years (2021-22 to 2025-26), the financial and manpower provisions and the number of participants are set out at **Annex**. Some policy bureaux need time to process the information on the financial and manpower provisions and the number of participants

of the relevant programmes or funds. Therefore, the annex has not set out all sector-specific talent training programmes and funds launched (including completed and ongoing ones) by government departments.

- (2) Sector-specific talent training programmes for innovation and technology (I&T), healthcare, maritime and aviation, patents and international legal sectors are overseen by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), the Health Bureau (HHB), the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB), the Intellectual Property Department (IPD) and the Department of Justice (DoJ) respectively.

For I&T, the ITIB and the Innovation and Technology Commission have all along been making use of various means to expand the local I&T talent pool through a multi-pronged approach, including the support for enterprise and research institutions to nurture technology talents through relevant funding schemes and initiatives, such as the Research Talent Hub, New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme and the STEM Internship Scheme, so as to promote I&T development. Besides, the ITIB launched the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” programme and the “Knowing More About IT” programme in school year 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively for all publicly-funded primary and secondary schools to organise IT-related extra-curricular activities. As at February 2026, more than 1 000 primary and secondary schools have participated in the aforesaid two programmes, representing approximately 98% of eligible primary and secondary schools.

For healthcare, with a view to nurturing more outstanding medical practitioners to support the local healthcare system in providing quality services, while at the same time promoting the development of Hong Kong into an international medical training, research and innovation hub, the Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government supports the establishment of the third medical school by a local university. The Government has given approval-in-principle for the new medical school to be established by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, which shall aim to admit the first cohort of 50 students in the 2028/29 academic year.

In addition, the HHB will continue to conduct regular healthcare manpower projections and, with reference to the results, review strategies to meet the demand for healthcare professions. The Government will continue to enhance healthcare-related teaching facilities accordingly.

In terms of promoting Chinese medicine (CM) talent training, the Government provides subsidies through the Chinese Medicine Development Fund (CMDf) to support practising Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) and Chinese medicines (CMs) personnel in continuous education, supports programme providers to design and organise innovative training projects, and pursues the Hong Kong Chinese Medicine Talent Training Programme jointly organised by the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (NATCM) and the HHB.

For maritime and aviation, the TLB provides assistance and encourages students and industry practitioners to pursue education and training in the aviation, maritime and logistics industries through the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund (MATF) which aims to enhance the overall competitiveness and professionalism of these industries.

The MATF comprises various training and incentive schemes covering diverse facets of the aviation, maritime and logistics industries. The Government will take into account the views of industry stakeholders and enhance the relevant training, incentive, and promotional schemes under the MATF, where necessary, to ensure that they effectively support the sustainable development of the maritime, aviation, and logistics industries and attract more local talent to join these industries. The Government has expanded the scope of the “Maritime Promotion Project Funding” under the MATF since June 2025, which covers local general promotion activities, and knowledge-sharing promotion activities as well as visits and professional exchange activities outside Hong Kong, in order to give more impetus to the maritime industry. Moreover, the “Maritime Services Traineeship Scheme – Marine Insurance” was launched in November 2025 with a view to incentivising insurance companies and insurance brokerage firms with marine insurance to provide internship opportunities to individuals aspiring for a career in marine insurance.

For patents, the IPD launched the IP Manager Scheme for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in 2015 with a view to enhancing their IP manpower capacity and boosting competitiveness through IP management and commercialisation. To meet the business development needs of enterprises, the IPD launched the IP Manager Scheme PLUS in October 2020 to provide more comprehensive and in-depth IP training courses and practical workshops, the content of which covers patent protection and strategies of patent asset management, transformation and commercialisation, management and strategies of technology transfer, etc., for enrolment by practitioners in different sectors engaging in IP trading. The participants of these training programmes were from different sectors, including I&T, legal service, IP service providers, academia, manufacturing, business services, accounting, financing, insurance, real estate, import and export trading, etc. The IPD will continue to enhance the above Scheme and training courses and also, together with the Vocational Training Council, roll out a 2-year pilot programme and establish the Intellectual Property Academy to provide on-the-job training linked to the Qualifications Framework, which is targeted to commence at the end of this year. It is expected that the training courses and practical workshops will continue to attract more than 1 000 participants in the 2026-27 financial year.

For the international legal sector, leveraging Hong Kong’s unique advantages as the country’s only common law jurisdiction under the “One Country, Two Systems” framework and “being backed by the motherland and connected to the world”, the DoJ officially launched the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy (the Academy) on 8 November 2024, to serve as a capacity-building, as well as knowledge and experience-sharing platform for legal professionals in Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland and other jurisdictions, in particular those along the “Belt and Road”, by capitalising on Hong Kong’s bilingual common law system and its unique status as an international open city.

Since its launch, the Academy has collaborated with over 20 international legal organisations, national authorities and local professional bodies to deliver capacity-building projects in Hong Kong and overseas for local, Chinese Mainland and regions along the “Belt and Road”. The topics included international law, Hong Kong common law, international arbitration and Mainland law, etc., providing training for more than 2 000 people worldwide, contributing to the cultivation of international legal

professionals. Looking ahead, the Academy will actively collaborate with more international organisations, legal institutions, countries, and legal professional bodies to tailor practical projects for various legal topics. It will also regularly organise courses open to legal professionals from different jurisdictions, particularly those along the “Belt and Road”, promoting international legal talents exchange. For example, in July 2026, the Academy will co-organise the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of “Belt and Road” Visit for Hong Kong Young International Legal Talents with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China in the HKSAR, visiting relevant government departments, legal institutions and organisations, businesses, and chambers of commerce in Yunnan Province, China, and Laos for exchanges. Also, with the support of Indonesia, South Korea, and Singapore, and with the approval of the APEC Economic Committee, the Academy will collaborate with the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the Hague Conference on Private International Law to organise the Workshop on Use of International Legal Instruments in Cross-Border Commercial Disputes and in Digital Economy during the Third APEC Senior Officials’ Meeting in 2026.

With specific regard to the pillar and priority industries of Hong Kong, relevant policy bureaux will continue to implement different measures to attract, train and retain talents to meet Hong Kong’s economic and social development needs.

**Examples of sector-specific talent training programmes and funds launched by various government departments in the past 5 years (2021-22 to 2025-26), the financial and manpower provisions and the number of participants**

(1) Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

IP Manager Scheme

Year	Financial provision	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2021-22	As the programme is part of the overall work of the IPD, it is difficult to quantify the resources involved separately.		1 238
2022-23			1 618
2023-24			1 551
2024-25			1 916
2025-26			2 561

(2) Department of Justice

The capacity building events organised or supported by the DoJ on training international legal talents in the past 5 years include:

Year	Event
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Working Group III Inter-sessional Meeting</li><li>• Webinars on related topics hosted in Hong Kong in collaboration with the Asian Academy of International Law with the agreement of the Hague Academy of International Law</li><li>• 2021/22 Investment Law &amp; Investor-State Mediator Training – the Investment Law Module</li></ul>
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The 1st Asia-Pacific Private International Law Summit</li><li>• Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH) Conventions Supporting Transnational Litigation in Civil or Commercial Matters: A Workshop to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</li><li>• Vision 2030 for Rule of Law International Symposium</li><li>• 2021/22 Investment Law &amp; Investor-State Mediator Training – the Investor-State Mediation Module</li></ul>
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The HCCH Asia Pacific Week 2023</li><li>• The Judicial Conference and Judicial Roundtable of the 5th UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Judicial Summit</li><li>• The Legal Forum on Interconnectivity and Development</li><li>• The 3rd Asian-African Legal Consultative Organisation (AALCO) Annual Arbitration Forum</li><li>• The Hague Academy of International Law’s Advanced Course in Hong Kong</li></ul>

2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The China-AALCO Exchange and Research Programme on International Law</li> <li>• The Asia-Pacific International Private Law Summit</li> <li>• The 2nd edition of the Hague Academy of International Law’s Advanced Course in Hong Kong</li> <li>• The Lecture on Foreign Related Rule of Law Education co-organised by the DoJ and the East China University of Political Science and Law pursuant to the Arrangement on Legal Exchange and Co-operation between the Department of Justice of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the East China University of Political Science and Law</li> <li>• The 2nd Legal Forum on Interconnectivity and Development</li> <li>• 2024 Investment Law &amp; Investor-State Mediator Training</li> <li>• The 3rd International Chamber of Commerce International Commercial Mediation Competition – Hong Kong</li> </ul>
2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 3rd Legal Forum on Interconnectivity and Development</li> <li>• Conference on Climate Change and International Trade Law</li> <li>• Panel Discussion on “Capacity Building for International Legal Co-operation” during the World Law Congress 2025</li> <li>• The 8th Training Session of China-AALCO Exchange and Research Program on International Law</li> <li>• Seminar on “Hong Kong as a Gateway to the Asia-Pacific”</li> <li>• Workshop on Use of International Instruments to Legally Enable End-to-End Digitalisation of Trade</li> <li>• Training Programme on Common Law and International Arbitration</li> <li>• Conference on International Criminal Justice in the Contemporary Asia-Pacific Region</li> <li>• Seminar on Trends in Combating Money Laundering and Corruption</li> <li>• The Hague Academy of International Law’s Advanced Course in Hong Kong – 3rd Edition</li> <li>• 6th UNCITRAL Asia Pacific Judicial Summit 2025</li> <li>• A Symposium of the HCCH Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific on Private International Law</li> </ul>

The overall expenditures on the above measures and the manpower required are absorbed by the existing resources of the DoJ and cannot be separately identified.

### (3) Environment and Ecology Bureau

In the past 5 years, details regarding the Environmental Engineering Graduate Training Scheme and Student Summer Internship Programme organised by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) are as follows:

Year	Financial provision (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of participants
2021-22	4.53	Provided by the overall resources of the EPD. A	97
2022-23	4.43		87
2023-24	4.44		70

2024-25	3.72	breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	63
2025-26	3.91 (revised estimate)		43

In the past 5 years, details of the Technician Training Scheme of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) are as follows:

Year	Expenditure <sup>Notes 1 &amp; 2</sup> (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of participants <sup>Note 2</sup>
2021-22	131	Provided by the overall resources of the EMSD. A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	726
2022-23	132		708
2023-24	131		637
2024-25	126		554
2025-26	136 (revised estimate)		601

Note 1: The expenditure of the “Technician Training Scheme” was paid for by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Trading Fund.

Note 2: The figures include the expenditure and number of participants of the “Pilot Cooperative Apprentice Training Scheme”, which was conducted between 2021-22 and 2024-25.

#### (4) Transport and Logistics Bureau

The Government established the MATF in 2014 to implement training, incentive and promotion schemes aimed at cultivating talents in the maritime, aviation, and logistics industries, supporting industry manpower demands, and enhancing overall competitiveness and professional standards.

##### (a) Maritime

Year	Provision/expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of Beneficiaries
2021-22	15.332	Provided by the overall resources of the TLB. A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	11 691
2022-23	18.602		16 931
2023-24	18.48		15 727
2024-25	21.385		11 957
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	20.904		7 621

(b) Aviation

Year	Provision/expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of Beneficiaries
2021-22	7.466	Provided by the overall resources of the TLB. A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	830
2022-23	10.091		1 083
2023-24	8.955		1 029
2024-24	11.704		2 604
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	8.218		1 490

(c) Logistics

Year	Provision/expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of Beneficiaries
2021-22	0	Provided by the overall resources of the TLB. A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	0
2022-23	0		0
2023-24	0.964		60
2024-25	5.05		631
2025-26 (as at February 2026)	3.666		2 023

(5) Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

STEM Internship Scheme

Year	Provision/ Expenditure <sup>Note 1</sup> (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of participating interns
2021-22	75.4	Since the relevant officers are responsible for administering multiple Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) measures, a breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	3 038
2022-23	88.2		3 518
2023-24	100.5		3 843
2024-25	104.0		4 052
2025-26 (as at end-January 2026)	91.1		3 587

Note 1: Including administrative overheads of implementation agencies such as universities.

### Research Talent Hub

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Funding Granted</b> Note 2 <b>(\$ million)</b>	<b>Manpower</b>	<b>Number of funded research talents</b>
2021-22	940	Since the relevant officers are responsible for administering multiple ITC measures, a breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	3 830
2022-23	1,020		4 378
2023-24	1,310		4 613
2024-25	1,550		4 539
2025-26 (Projected Expenditure as at March 2026)	1,130		4 782

Note 2: The figures represent the total amounts granted in the years concerned. Subject to the engagement period of the research talents, the relevant amounts may be spread over more than 1 year.

### New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP)

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Provision/expenditure</b> <b>(\$ million)</b>	<b>Manpower</b>	<b>Number of trainings</b>
2021-22	62	ITC appointed the Vocational Training Council as the NITTP Secretariat. The manpower expenditure for the Secretariat has been included in the NITTP expenditure.  Since the relevant officers are responsible for administering multiple ITC measures, a breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	About 8 000
2022-23	200		About 16 000
2023-24	320		About 17 600
2024-25	57		About 2 600
2025-26 (Projected Expenditure as at March 2026) <sup>Note 3</sup>	41		About 3 300

Note 3: The expenditure is the projected expenditure for the 2025-26 financial year, and the actual expenditure would be finalised by the audited account to be completed in mid-2026.

IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme and Knowing More About IT Programme

School Year	Approved Amount (\$ million)	Manpower	Number of Students Benefited
2021/22	198	The Digital Policy Office implements this by deploying existing manpower.	About 123 000
2022/23	234		About 168 000
2023/24	156		About 124 000
2024/25	171		About 133 000
2025/26 (as at end- February 2026)	271		About 216 000

(6) Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau

The Government funds the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) for providing higher education in the field of performing arts, with a view to training students to pursue full-time careers in various performing arts and related fields. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) and West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) also offer talent-nurturing and internship schemes in the arts and culture fields, including the Arts Talents Internship Matching Programme, Emerging Artists Development Grant, Museum Trainees (Conservation) Programme, and Arts Tech Trainee Programme, etc. The total expenditure and number of beneficiaries from 2021-22 to 2025-26<sup>Note 1</sup> are tabulated below:

	Expenditure (including staff costs) (\$ million)	Number of Beneficiaries
HKAPA	1,897.659 <sup>Note 2</sup>	5 180
Talent nurturing and internship schemes of LCSD, HKADC, WKCDA	244.464 <sup>Note 3</sup>	1 243

Note 1: Revised estimates for 2025-26.

Note 2: Funding of HKAPA to train students for the financial year concerned.

Note 3: As some projects have not yet been completed, part of the expenditure is estimated expenditure.

(7) Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau

(a) Pilot Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Asset and Wealth Management Sector

The programme provides subsidy for tertiary student internships and professional training for practitioners, and promotes the employment opportunities and career prospects of the asset and wealth management sector.

Year	Financial provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2021-22	8.23	The programme is coordinated by the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (FSTB) with existing manpower, and implemented by the Hong Kong Securities and Investment Institute.	832
2022-23	3.00		666
2023-24	7.80		446
2024-25	8.533		621
2025-26 (as at end-February 2026)	9.269		1 038

(b) Talent Development Activities of the Financial Services Development Council

In the past 5 years, the Financial Services Development Council (FSDC) has organised, co-organised and participated in a total of 61 activities to cultivate talents, targeting students, practitioners and people who are interested in joining the financial services industry. The latest trends and employment opportunities in the financial services industry were shared by industry professionals.

Year	Financial provision (\$)	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2021-22	500,000	The programme is coordinated by FSTB with existing manpower, and implemented by the FSDC.	689
2022-23	600,000		973
2023-24	900,000		948
2024-25	200,000		1 325
2025-26 (as at end-February 2026)	400,000		2 515

(c) Future Banking Bridging Programme

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) has been running the “Future Banking Bridging Programme” since 2021-22 to provide university students with banking knowledge and skills to help them prepare for a career in the banking industry.

Year	Financial Provision	Manpower provision	Number of participants
From 2021-22 to 2025-26	Handled by the HKMA with its existing manpower and resources.		Around 1 400 university students in total.

(d) Banking Graduate Trainee Programme (Only held in 2022-23 and was successfully completed)

The HKMA conducted the “Banking Graduate Trainee Programme” in 2022-23 to provide university graduates with jobs and training to help them prepare for a career in the banking industry.

Year	Financial Provision	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2022-23	Handled by the HKMA with its existing manpower and resources.		Over 80 undergraduates in total.

(e) Pilot Green and Sustainable Finance Capacity Building Support Scheme

The Pilot Green and Sustainable Finance Capacity Building Support Scheme provides funding support for local eligible market practitioners and related professionals as well as students and graduates of relevant disciplines to participate in training related to green and sustainable finance in response to the new trend of developing low-carbon and sustainable economy.

Year	Financial provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of applications approved
2022	The Pilot Scheme was launched in December 2022 and the first batch of applications was vetted the following year.	The Pilot Scheme is administered by the Centre for Green and Sustainable Finance, a public-private collaboration	The Pilot Scheme was launched in December 2022 and the first batch of applications was vetted the following year.
2023	5.81	platform launched	565
2024	20.98	under the Green and	3 607
2025	29.47	Sustainable Finance	4 965
2026	3.75	Cross-Agency Steering Group	607

Year	Financial provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of applications approved
(as at early March 2026)		(formed by relevant Government Bureaux, financial regulators and the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited). The Financial Services Branch handles the policy coordination work concerned with existing manpower.	

(f) Pilot Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Insurance Sector

To attract more talents and enhance the quality of the insurance industry with a view to facilitating the industry development, the Government launched in August 2016 the “Pilot Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Insurance Sector” to provide subsidies for tertiary student internships and professional training for practitioners, and promote the employment opportunities and career prospects of the industry through different channels. Details are as follows:

Year	Financial provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2021-22	4.27	The programme is coordinated by the FSTB with existing manpower, and implemented by the Vocational Training Council.	Funded internships for about 680 tertiary students; over 22 200 insurance practitioners attended the subsidised professional training courses <sup>Note 1</sup>
2022-23	1.20		
2023-24	4.98		
2024-25	7.50		
2025-26 (as at end-February 2026)	7.82		

Note 1: The number of participants in the relevant courses of each round of the professional training subsidy scheme is not calculated on financial year basis.

(g) Pilot Scheme on Training Subsidy for Fintech Practitioners

In September 2022, the Government launched the “Pilot Scheme on Training Subsidy for Fintech Practitioners” to provide practitioners having attained fintech professional qualifications with funding support for training, with a view to promoting the professional development of fintech talents.

Year	Financial Provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2022-23	6.45	Provided by the overall resources of the FSTB (Financial Services Branch). A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	289
2023-24	12.78		64
2024-25	0.78		266
2025-26 (as at end-February 2026)	0		167

(h) Set Sail for GBA - Scheme for Financial Leaders of Tomorrow (Only held in 2021-22 and 2023-24 and was successfully completed)

The Government launched the “Set Sail for GBA - Scheme for Financial Leaders of Tomorrow” in November 2021 and June 2023 respectively, which helped more than 150 young people in Hong Kong to learn about the opportunities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), including providing opportunities such as job-shadowing and internship at financial institutions in the GBA, etc., to prepare them for future career development.

Year	Financial Provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2021-22	1.000	Provided by the overall resources of the FSTB and the Greater Bay Area Homeland Youth Community Foundation. A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	120
2023-24	0.918	Provided by the overall resources of the FSTB, the Shenzhen Municipal Financial Regulatory Bureau and the Greater Bay Area Homeland Youth Community Foundation. A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	33

(i) GBA Fintech Two-way Internship Scheme for Post-secondary Students

Drawing on the successful experience of the “Set Sail for GBA – Scheme for Financial Leaders of Tomorrow”, the Government launched the “GBA Fintech Two-way Internship Scheme for Post-secondary Students” in October 2023 to subsidise students from the Mainland and Hong Kong to participate in short-term internships at fintech enterprises, with a view to enhancing talent exchange and enlarging the fintech talent pool.

Year	Financial Provision (\$ million)	Manpower provision	Number of participants
2023-24	7	Provided by the overall resources of the FSTB (Financial Services Branch). A breakdown of the manpower involved is not available.	30
2024-25	0		51
2025-26 (as at end-February 2026)	0		37

(8) Health Bureau

The NATCM and the HHB have jointly launched the Hong Kong CM Talent Training Programme since November 2023. With the funding support from the CMDF, Hong Kong registered CMPs and CMs professionals have received high-quality and advanced training at the training institutions under the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences. So far, 4 editions of short-term training programmes and 2 editions of medium-term training programmes have been completed, involving a total of 195 attendances. Feedback from the trainees has been positive, with the majority of them agreeing that the training was helpful in enhancing their professional capabilities. The NATCM and the HHB will continue to organise one edition of short-term training programme and one edition of medium-term training programme in mid-2026, with an expected intake of 70 trainees. A certain number of places will be reserved for suitable candidates nominated by The Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong (CMHHK). The 2026 training programmes, optimised in response to trainees’ feedback, will include new training themes covering, among others, Geriatric Diseases in CM, Dermatology in CM, Traditional CMs Processing Techniques and Clinical Practice of CMs. These enhancements aim to better match with the service development needs of CMHHK and reserve high-level CM professionals for Hong Kong comprehensively. As of the end of February 2026, the total expenditure incurred under the Hong Kong CM Talent Training Programme amounted to approximately \$5 million.

Furthermore, as the first dedicated fund set up to support CM development and having regard to the diverse needs of stakeholders, the CMDF has launched various support programmes in a wide range of areas to support CM talent cultivation in Hong Kong.

Among these, the Chinese Medicine Personnel Training Funding Scheme (A1-1, A1-2 and A1-3 Scheme) has subsidised nearly 4 000 CMPs and CMs professionals to attend CM professional training programmes for continuously upskilling their professional knowledge and ability. The Chinese Medicine Industry Training Funding Scheme (B1-1 Scheme) has also supported programme providers to design and organise innovative training projects,

benefiting nearly 48 000 CMPs, CM professionals and relevant healthcare professionals. As of the end of February 2026, the total subsidy amount for the above schemes amounted to approximately \$130 million.

To meet the talent needs of the CMHHK, the CMDF has launched the Talent Training Programmes for the Developmental Needs of Chinese Medicine Hospital (C1 Scheme) since 2024, inviting organisations to formulate and conduct large-scale training on a way of commissioning basis, with training themes covering CM clinical practice to hospital administration management. These programmes have been rolled out progressively since mid-2025. As of the end of February 2026, the total subsidy amount for the C1 Scheme amounted to approximately \$24 million.

In future, the Government will continue to foster innovation and transformation in CM professional training and development models, strengthen in-depth talents exchange and co-operation with the Mainland, with the aim of building a high-quality CM talent pool and propelling continuous advancement of the profession.

#### (9) Labour and Welfare Bureau

Since 2012, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has implemented a training sponsorship scheme to provide funding support to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating subsidised elderly services or rehabilitation services. The purpose is to fully sponsor the tuition fees of students admitted to and completed designated programmes in occupational therapy and physiotherapy, thereby encouraging them to join the social welfare sector. The Government will continue to implement the scheme to sponsor an additional 750 students to enrol in the above 2 designated programmes in the next 5 years starting from 2023-24, involving an expenditure of about \$447 million. Sponsored students are required to work in NGOs operating subsidised welfare services for at least 2 to 3 years after graduation. As at the end of December 2025, a total of 574 graduates who participated in the scheme have joined the social welfare sector, with 297 in occupational therapy and 277 in physiotherapy.

The SWD has implemented the Enrolled Nurse (General) Training Programme (Training Programme) for the Welfare Sector since the 2017/18 academic year to alleviate the shortage of nurses in the social welfare sector and meet the demand for nurses in residential care homes. Students are required to work as Enrolled Nurses (General) in welfare service organisations recognised by SWD for a minimum of 2 or 3 consecutive years after completing the Training Programme. Details of expenditure, manpower involved and subsidised places are as follows:

Academic year	Actual expenditure (\$ million)	Manpower involved	Number of subsidised places for the Training Programme
2021-22	24.3	The SWD implements the Training Programme by deploying existing manpower.	200
2022-23	17.2		200
2023-24	91.5		427
2024-25	71.8		427
2025-26	103.1 <sup>Note</sup>		427

Note: Revised estimate for 2025-26.

The Employees Retraining Board provides over 800 market-oriented training courses straddling across 28 industries and generic skills for eligible persons, currently providing more than 100 000 training places each year. It has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025 to enhance its role and positioning, transforming into assisting the entire workforce from all backgrounds and educational attainments to continuously enhance their skills and competitiveness. Besides, the Labour and Welfare Bureau provides subvention to the Vocational Training Council for the provision of vocational training including in-service short courses, the Apprenticeship Scheme and the Engineering Graduate Training Scheme, as well as services such as trade and skills testing and certification.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)092**

**(Question Serial No. 0682)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the vocational training services provided by the Vocational Training Council, would the Government advise this Committee on the following:

- (1) for each academic year since the launch of the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme: the number of eligible programmes included in the scheme, the skilled trades covered by the programmes, and the numbers of students and proportions of non-local students in the eligible programmes broken down by skilled trade; and
- (2) the distribution of non-local students referred to in item (1) by place or country of origin.

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) offers around 100 full-time vocational Higher Diploma (HD) programmes each year, covering such areas as business, childcare, elderly and community services, design, engineering, hospitality and tourism, and information technology, etc. Some of these vocational programmes have not been able to enrol and train sufficient local graduates to meet the manpower demand of the relevant trades. With an ageing workforce and a lack of new entrants to vocational trades, the Government announced in the 2023 Policy Address the pilot implementation of the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS), allowing non-local students enrolled in eligible full-time HD programmes (eligible programmes) offered by VTC in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years to apply to stay in Hong Kong for one year after graduation to seek jobs relevant to their disciplines. VPAS, since its announcement, has attracted many non-local students to enrol in the HD programmes of relevant trades, helping to recruit more entrants to these trades in the long term. Considering this, the Government has decided to extend the pilot arrangement for 2 years to cover non-local students enrolling in eligible programmes in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years. The initial cohort of students admitted in the 2024/25 academic year will graduate by mid-2026, at which time VPAS will be open for application.

The occupations in the trades covered by the eligible programmes are facing acute local manpower shortage, and such occupations can only be filled by technicians with appropriate vocational and professional training or by licensed technicians in the relevant fields. In the 2024/25 academic year, 27 HD programmes offered by VTC were included as eligible programmes under VPAS, covering 5 professional trades, namely aviation; transport and logistics; innovation and technology; electrical and mechanical services; building, civil engineering and built environment; and maritime services. In the 2025/26 academic year, the number of eligible programmes increased to 34, adding 7 professional trades, namely environmental conservation; healthcare; life and health technology; laboratory service; e-commerce; property management; and automobile engineering. Following consolidation, the number of eligible programmes will remain at 34 in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years, while the number of trades covered will increase from 12 in the 2025/26 academic year to 13, with the addition of the hotel and tourism sector.

The numbers of students admitted in eligible HD programmes for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years, broken down by professional trades, as well as the proportion of non-local students and their places of origin, are tabulated below:

Professional trade	2024/25 academic year				2025/26 academic year			
	Number of students admitted	Number of non-local students admitted			Number of students admitted	Number of non-local students admitted		
		Mainland, Macao and Taiwan	Overseas countries/regions	Total (Proportion %)		Mainland, Macao and Taiwan	Overseas countries /regions	Total (Proportion %)
Innovation and technology	1 400	174	9	183 (13%)	1 192	154	1	158 (13%)
Electrical and mechanical services	390	48	0	48 (12%)	399	55	-	55 (14%)
Building, civil engineering and built environment	985	55	3	58 (6%)	891	65	-	66 (7%)
Aviation, transport and logistics	553	304	7	311 (56%)	503	235	5	240 (48%)
Maritime services	26	-	-	-	26	2	-	2 (8%)
Environmental conservation	N/A (Note)				67	10	-	10 (15%)
Laboratory service					112	11	-	11 (10%)
Life and health technology					133	16	1	17 (13%)
E-commerce					108	93	-	93 (86%)
Property management					117	84	-	84 (72%)
Automobile engineering					49	5	1	6 (12%)

Healthcare					230	57	-	57 (25%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 354</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>600 (18%)</b>	<b>3 827</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>799 (21%)</b>

Note: These professional trades were not included as eligible programmes in the 2024/25 academic year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)093**

**(Question Serial No. 0684)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Apprenticeship Ordinance (the Ordinance) (Cap. 47), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the number of registered apprentices engaged in designated trades specified under the Ordinance in each of the past 3 years and this year to date, with a breakdown by trade;
- (2) the frequencies of various support services provided by the Office of the Director of Apprenticeship under the Vocational Training Council (i.e. regular visit, dispute resolution, job matching and progress evaluation) in each of the past 3 years and this year to date; and
- (3) the existing staff establishment of the Office of the Director of Apprenticeship responsible for handling apprentice cases and providing support services, the payroll cost involved and the average number of apprentice cases handled by each officer.

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (1) In the past 3 years and 2025-26 to date, the numbers of registered apprentices under the Apprenticeship Scheme (the Scheme) (by designated trades) are as follows:

Designated trades		Number of Apprentices#			
		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at end of February 2026)
1	Bricklayer/Plasterer/Tiler	3	1	1	-
2	Building Services Mechanic	53	31	18	7
3	Cable Jointer (Power)	10	10	6	5

Designated trades		Number of Apprentices#			
		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at end of February 2026)
4	Carpenter/Joiner	9	5	2	-
5	Construction Plant Mechanic	8	6	1	1
6	Electrical Appliances Service Mechanic	16	12	7	1
7	Electrical Fitter	14	5	2	3
8	Electrician	166	69	23	11
9	Gas Utilisation Fitter	35	31	37	35
10	Lift Electrician	560	451	427	422
11	Mould and Die Maker and Repairer	2	-	-	-
12	Painter/Decorator/Sign Writer	8	3	2	-
13	Plumber	27	6	7	8
14	Refrigeration/Air- Conditioning Mechanic	153	59	17	4
15	Vehicle Body Repairer/Builder	27	10	5	2
16	Vehicle Electrician	12	6	-	-
17	Vehicle Mechanic	129	80	44	20
18	Vehicle Painter	15	15	9	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1 247</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>526</b>

# The number of apprentices refers to the number of registered apprentices under the Scheme as at the end of the respective year. As the duration of an apprenticeship normally lasts for 2 to 4 years, the registration of an apprentice can span over more than a year.

- (2) The Office of the Director of Apprenticeship (the Office) of the Vocational Training Council conducts compliance inspections under the Apprenticeship Ordinance (the Ordinance) (Cap. 47) to ensure that the training arrangements for apprentices aged 14 to 18 employed in “designated trades” are in compliance with the statutory requirements. The Office conducts visits to ensure that all registered apprentices (including those who are required to register under the Ordinance and those who register voluntarily) have received appropriate training. In addition, the Office provides one-stop employment counselling, support services (including dispute resolution) and progress evaluation for apprentices. The Office does not have a breakdown of the statistics on regular visits, dispute resolution, job matching and progress evaluation. The numbers of inspections and visits made by the Office in the past 3 years and 2025-26 to date are as follows:

Financial Year	Number of Inspections and Visits
2022-23	22 053
2023-24	21 429
2024-25	20 303
2025-26 (as at 28 February)	20 927

- (3) The Office has a staffing establishment of 35 Senior Apprenticeship Officers/Apprenticeship Officers and an existing strength of 33 staff members. On average, each officer handles about 100 apprentices (including registered apprentices of designated trades and non-designated trades). The payroll costs involved in 2025-26 was about \$20 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)094**

**(Question Serial No. 2477)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the implementation of various talent admission schemes, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the respective numbers of applications received, approved and rejected as well as the respective numbers of talents who have arrived in Hong Kong under various talent admission schemes, including the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), the General Employment Policy (GEP), the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTTP), the GEP and ASMTTP (Technical Professionals Stream), the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents and the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme, in each year since 2023;
- (2) the number of unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 who were permitted to come to Hong Kong as dependants and the number of dependants aged 18 or above under various talent admission schemes in each year since 2023;
- (3) the following information regarding the extension of stay under the TTPS: (i) the number of cases having reached the time for extension of stay, (ii) the number of applications for extension of stay received, (iii) the number of applications for extension of stay approved, (iv) the number of applications for extension of stay rejected, with breakdowns by Categories A, B and C;
- (4) among the approved cases in (3)(iii), the distributions of the applicants' industry or sector and monthly income, with breakdowns by Categories A, B and C; and
- (5) the number of cases involving the use of false information by applicants applying for entry to Hong Kong under various talent admission schemes, as well as the number of convicted cases and the sentences imposed by the court, in each year since 2023?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

- (1) The numbers of applications received, approved and refused as well as the number of talents admitted to Hong Kong under the various talent admission schemes from 2023 to February 2026 are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme		2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)	
Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS)	No. of applications received	62 873	51 223	35 705	6 271	
	No. of applications approved	49 737	41 057	31 508	4 640	
	No. of applications refused	3 017	2 364	2 357	381	
	No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong	35 583	39 918	29 932	4 694	
General Employment Policy (GEP)	General	No. of applications received	28 363	37 448	33 267	4 591
		No. of applications approved	26 270	35 058	31 139	4 105
		No. of applications refused	454	485	439	61
		No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong ^	7 953	5 627	8 358	1 240
	Technical Professionals Stream (TP Stream)#	No. of applications received	N/A		212	76
		No. of applications approved			139	125
		No. of applications refused			1	-
		No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong			45	72
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)	General	No. of applications received	22 411	28 398	30 242	4 555
		No. of applications approved	19 757	25 344	26 535	3 909
		No. of applications refused	212	343	885	312
		No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong^	11 705	11 887	11 498	1 706
	TP Stream#	No. of applications received	N/A		304	123
		No. of applications approved			179	102
		No. of applications refused			29	3
		No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong			137	67
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)	No. of applications received	27 295	26 973	28 710	2 722	
	No. of applications approved	26 089	25 475	27 630	2 603	
	No. of applications refused	16	24	18	11	
	No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong	23 905	23 017	25 408	2 652	

Talent admission scheme		2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)	No. of applications received	145	138	178	24
	No. of applications approved	130	118	161	20
	No. of applications refused	-	-	-	-
	No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong	128	117	158	22
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme <sup>@</sup> (QMAS)	No. of applications received	80 207	63 471	18 707	1 940
	No. of applications approved	12 969	11 848	7 101	699
	No. of applications refused	5 178	63 379	45 962	674
	No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong	12 276	9 981	8 459	1 730
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)	No. of applications received	146	138	129	23
	No. of applications approved	97	80	68	16
	No. of applications refused	2	-	12	-
	No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong	81	80	58	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>221 440</b>	<b>207 789</b>	<b>147 454</b>	<b>20 325</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>135 049</b>	<b>138 980</b>	<b>124 460</b>	<b>16 219</b>
	<b>No. of applications refused</b>	<b>8 879</b>	<b>66 595</b>	<b>49 703</b>	<b>1 442</b>
	<b>No. of talents admitted to Hong Kong</b>	<b>91 631</b>	<b>90 627</b>	<b>84 053</b>	<b>12 195</b>

Note: Applications approved/refused and arrivals in a year may not all be received in the same year.

^ The numbers of talents admitted to Hong Kong do not include cases of short-term employment.

# The TP Stream under the GEP and ASMTTP was introduced on 30 June 2025.

@ The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

As for the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme, it will only begin to accept applications from mid-2026 onwards upon graduation of the first batch of eligible non-local students.

- (2) The statistics of persons approved to come to Hong Kong as dependants under the various talent admission schemes from 2023 to February 2026 are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme	2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
TTPS	51 029 (29 730)	51 108 (31 122)	37 864 (23 231)	5 093 (3 077)
GEP	6 381 (3 273)	6 027 (2 977)	5 740 (2 837)	719 (354)
ASMTP	10 461 (6 122)	9 851 (5 872)	10 023 (6 086)	1 582 (951)
IANG	4 702 (2 627)	6 600 (4 112)	10 533 (6 555)	1 172 (719)
TechTAS	108 (63)	113 (64)	150 (86)	14 (8)
QMAS	25 546 (15 292)	18 309 (11 111)	13 743 (8 192)	1 505 (879)
ASSG	10 (5)	5 (3)	3 (2)	- (-)
<b>Total</b>	<b>98 237</b> <b>(57 112)</b>	<b>92 013</b> <b>(55 261)</b>	<b>78 056</b> <b>(46 989)</b>	<b>10 085</b> <b>(5 988)</b>

Note: Figures in brackets refer to unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 at the time of application.

- (3) The first batch of visas under the TTPS began expiring since end-December 2024. As at end-February 2026, the extension status of the visas/entry permits expired is tabulated below:

Application category	Number of visas/entry permits expired before the cut-off date	Number of applications for extension of stay
Category A	11 295	8 721
Category B	24 064	11 047
Category C	8 620	2 967
<b>Total</b>	<b>43 979</b>	<b>22 735</b>

Coupled with the TTPS talents whose limit of stay was set to expire within the next three months and applied for extension of stay ahead of time, the processing status of all applications for extension of stay under the TTPS received by the Immigration Department (ImmD) is tabulated below:

Application category	No. of applications for extension of stay	No. of applications processed	No. of applications for extension of stay approved	No. of applications for extension of stay refused
Category A	10 130	9 764	9 375	8
Category B	12 962	12 430	11 459	166
Category C	3 416	3 322	3 067	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>26 508<sup>#</sup></b>	<b>25 516</b>	<b>23 901</b>	<b>230</b>

# The number of applications for extension of stay (26 508) include applications for extension of stay submitted by applicants whose limit of stay expired as of 28 February 2026 (22 735 cases; detailed in the table above) and those submitted ahead of time by applicants whose limit of stay will expire in the next three months (3 773 cases).

- (4) Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS must have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong upon expiry of their first visas so that an extension of stay can be granted. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. These TTPS talents are gradually integrating into the local society, and injecting sustainable impetus into local economic and social development.
- (5) The ImmD has put in place mechanisms for examining each visa, entry permit and extension of stay application under the talent admission schemes in a rigorous manner to ensure that only applicants meeting the eligibility criteria and relevant immigration policies will be permitted to stay in Hong Kong.

Applicants under the various talent admission schemes are required to provide accurate, complete and true information in their applications, including making declaration according to the eligibility criteria of their income, academic qualifications and/or work experience as well as any criminal conviction records, with relevant supporting documents. Moreover, the ImmD requires all applicants of Categories B and C under the TTPS and the QMAS to submit verification proof of academic qualifications issued by designated third-party credential verification organisations or the awarding institutions. The ImmD has the power to conduct random checks and verifications on the information and documents submitted by applicants, including verifying the applicants' status with the organisations issuing the documents.

Any person who knowingly and wilfully makes a statement or gives information that he/she knows to be false or does not believe to be true when applying for entry into Hong Kong commits an offence. If such cases are detected, apart from refusing such

applications, the ImmD will also initiate criminal investigations into the cases concerned. Offenders are liable on conviction to a maximum fine of HK\$150,000 and imprisonment for 14 years. In addition, should any person be found to have illegally obtained his/her visa or entry permit, the visa or entry permit granted will be invalidated according to the laws of Hong Kong, and the person concerned will be subject to removal back to his/her place of origin. Even if the person has obtained the right of abode in Hong Kong, it will be declared invalid according to the law, and he/she will be subject to removal back to his/her place of origin.

The ImmD does not maintain the statistical breakdowns mentioned in the question.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)095**

**(Question Serial No. 0770)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS), will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) for programmes relating to (a) automobile engineering, (b) aviation, transport and logistics, (c) electrical and mechanical services and (d) maritime under VPAS: (i) the numbers of places, (ii) the numbers of applicants and (iii) the numbers of enrolments (broken down by local and non-local students) in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years;
- (2) promotional channels adopted by the Government since the launch of VPAS, the expenditures involved, the effectiveness, and measures taken to enhance promotion; and
- (3) whether the Government will consider establishing performance indicators in respect of the number of non-local new students enrolled in designated VPAS programmes and the number of non-local students remaining in Hong Kong for employment upon graduation per year.

Asked by: Hon LAM Ming-fung, Lothair (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) offers around 100 full-time vocational Higher Diploma (HD) programmes each year, covering areas such as business, childcare, elderly and community services, design, engineering, hospitality and tourism, and information technology, etc. Some of these vocational programmes have not been able to enrol and train sufficient local graduates to meet the manpower demand of the relevant trades. With an ageing workforce and a lack of new entrants to vocational trades, the Government announced in the 2023 Policy Address the pilot implementation of the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS), allowing non-local students enrolled in eligible full-time HD programmes (eligible programmes) offered by VTC in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years to apply to stay in Hong Kong for one year after graduation to seek jobs relevant to their disciplines. VPAS, since its announcement, has attracted many non-local students to enrol in the HD programmes of relevant trades, helping to recruit more entrants to these trades in the long term. Considering this, the Government has decided to extend the pilot arrangement

for 2 years to cover non-local students enrolling in eligible programmes in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years.

- (1) The occupations in the trades covered by the eligible programmes are facing acute local manpower shortage and such occupations can only be filled by technicians with appropriate vocational and professional training or by licensed technicians in the relevant fields. In the 2024/25 academic year, 27 HD programmes offered by VTC were included as eligible programmes under VPAS, covering 5 professional trades, namely aviation, transport and logistics; innovation and technology; electrical and mechanical services; building, civil engineering and built environment; and maritime services. In the 2025/26 academic year, the number of eligible programmes has increased to 34, adding 7 professional trades, namely environmental conservation; healthcare; life and health technology; laboratory service; e-commerce; property management; and automobile engineering.

The HDs of the eligible programmes of the 4 professional trades mentioned in the question and the numbers of places, applicants and enrolments in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years are tabulated in the **Annex**.

- (2) Apart from promoting its vocational programmes (including the HDs of the eligible programmes) through its usual channels to recruit students, VTC also made use of the subvention from the Labour and Welfare Bureau to promote the VPAS in the Mainland and other regions through various online and offline channels. These efforts included around 180 campus events, promotional talks, education fairs, as well as talks/seminars co-organised with the industries, reaching a total attendance of around 180 000. For online promotions, VTC leveraged social media and online advertisements, attracting approximately 7.8 million views. The expenditures involved in 2024-25 and 2025-26 are about \$1.9 million and \$3.2 million respectively. In 2026-27, VTC will focus on strengthening on-campus promotion, proactively reaching out to target student groups, and deepening the co-operation with enterprises. In addition, VTC's operation centre in Shenzhen will continue to collaborate with the industries to organise thematic seminars.
- (3) The initial cohort of non-local students eligible for VPAS will graduate by mid-2026, at which time VPAS will be open for application. VTC is rolling out its promotion work for the 2026/27 academic year. It is expected that at least 1 000 non-local students will be attracted to enrol in the eligible programmes in each of the academic years from 2026/27 to 2027/28.

The Government has provided VTC with additional resources to offer application guidance to eligible students under VPAS. To attract non-local students to apply under VPAS upon graduation, VTC will promote the scheme to them and provide appropriate support, including arranging workplace internships during the study period for them to learn about the local working conditions and environment, and to acquire practical work skills and experience. VTC will also mobilise its industry network and reach out to enterprises to organise regular recruitment talks, career consultation and job matching to provide employment support. These will enable students to understand the local employment market and assist them in seeking jobs relevant to their disciplines after graduation. Whether non-local students will stay in Hong Kong upon graduation

depends on a number of factors, including their personal choices and whether or not they obtain relevant employment opportunities. Therefore, the Government has not established any rigid performance indicator in this regard.

**The Numbers of Places, Applicants and Enrolments  
for the Eligible HD Programmes in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Academic Years**

	Professional trade	Eligible programme	2024/25 academic year					2025/26 academic year				
			No. of places	No. of enrolments	No. of local students admitted	No. of non-local students admitted	Total no. of students admitted	No. of places	No. of enrolments	No. of local students admitted	No. of non-local students admitted	Total no. of students admitted
1.	Electrical and mechanical services	HD in Mechanical Engineering	145	320	137	16	153	130	318	121	19	140
2.		HD in Electrical Engineering	255	561	205	32	237	215	611	223	36	259
3.	Aviation, transport and logistics	HD in Aviation Inflight and Passenger Services	90	113	32	11	43	60	123	27	6	33
4.		HD in Aviation Services and Transport Studies	140	170	18	58	76	110	178	6	37	43
5.		HD in Aviation and Logistics	155	427	18	173	191	215	425	32	120	152
6.		HD in Airport Operations Management	180	431	97	39	136	105	612	105	45	150
7.		HD in Aviation Systems and Operations	85	139	31	24	55	50	169	38	24	62
8.		HD in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering	75	272	46	6	52	60	312	55	8	63
9.	Maritime	HD in Maritime Studies	85	70	26	-	26	40	65	24	2	26
10.	Automobile engineering (Note)	HD in Automotive Engineering	(Note)					70	164	43	6	49
<b>Total</b>			<b><u>1 210</u></b>	<b><u>2 503</u></b>	<b><u>610</u></b>	<b><u>359</u></b>	<b><u>969</u></b>	<b><u>1 055</u></b>	<b><u>2 977</u></b>	<b><u>674</u></b>	<b><u>303</u></b>	<b><u>977</u></b>

Note: This professional trade was not included as eligible programme in the 2024/25 academic year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)096**

**(Question Serial No. 3258)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the admission of talents in the transportation and logistics industries, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) as it is learnt that the various talent admission schemes have attracted over 270 000 talented individuals to Hong Kong from the end of 2022 to the end of January this year, whether the Government has compiled statistics on the respective numbers of these individuals engaged in the transportation industry (including shipping and aviation) and the logistics industry; if so, the details, including a breakdown by trade covered under these industries;
- (2) as it is learnt that the segment of Aviation and Shipping on the Talent List covers 6 professions (including (a) shipping commercial professionals, (b) marine superintendents, (c) naval architects, (d) ship surveyors, (e) professionals in green shipping and (f) aircraft maintenance engineers), the numbers of applications regarding these trades received, approved and rejected in each of the past 3 years and this year to date, the main reasons for rejection and the average processing time for each approved application;
- (3) as it is learnt that the General Employment Policy and Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (Technical Professionals Stream) allows the admission of (a) aircraft maintenance technicians and (b) marine services technicians (local vessels), the respective numbers of applications involving these trades received, approved and rejected since the launch of the scheme, the main reasons for rejection and the average processing time for each application; and
- (4) whether the Government will step up publicity and promotion to attract more talented individuals in the transportation and logistics industries to Hong Kong, so as to help narrow the talent gaps of these industries?

Asked by: Hon LAM Ming-fung, Lothair (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (1) The breakdowns of the numbers of approved applicants under the various talent admission schemes by industry/sector in the past five years are tabulated below:

**General Employment Policy (GEP)**

Industry/Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Recreation and sports	882	1 451	1 869	4 517	1 025
Financial services	2 458	2 001	2 005	2 343	396
Academic research and education	2 124	2 770	2 551	2 670	309
Commerce and trade	1 530	2 440	1 811	1 499	266
Arts/Culture	235	2 748	2 672	3 364	158
Engineering and construction	1 241	1 559	1 432	1 180	145
Catering services	372	536	481	474	92
Tourism	186	1 066	2 710	988	81
Information technology	540	576	316	416	49
Medical and healthcare services	144	310	369	350	46
Legal services	143	168	120	125	23
Manufacturing industries	67	96	91	120	13
Telecommunications	91	52	150	72	2
Architecture/ Surveying	48	24	175	31	1
Biotechnology	7	15	10	8	1
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	-	1	17	-
Others	3 427	10 458	18 295	13 104	1 498
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 495</b>	<b>26 270</b>	<b>35 058</b>	<b>31 278</b>	4 105

Note: Applications approved in a year may not all be received in the same year. The same applies to the tables below.

Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)

Industry/Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Academic research and education	2 199	3 842	4 255	3 962	618
Arts/Culture	285	2 496	4 618	3 556	585
Engineering and construction	1 291	2 379	2 779	3 631	543
Commerce and trade	1 489	3 279	4 209	4 382	538
Financial services	2 413	3 223	2 458	2 624	420
Information technology	866	1 200	1 235	1 366	212
Medical and healthcare services	1 954	201	208	485	82
Recreation and sports	73	859	2 904	1 358	71
Catering services	30	89	151	136	24
Telecommunications	263	218	196	153	20
Legal services	105	132	86	147	14
Manufacturing industries	87	144	167	142	13
Tourism	8	148	246	202	8
Biotechnology	322	59	65	68	8
Architecture/ Surveying	27	65	139	22	3
Traditional Chinese medicine	1	5	9	3	1
Others	355	1 418	1 619	4 477	851
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 768</b>	<b>19 757</b>	<b>25 344</b>	<b>26 714</b>	<b>4 011</b>

### Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)

Industry/Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Artificial intelligence	11	28	33	82	8
Biotechnology	11	32	12	24	6
Green technology	1	9	7	2	2
Integrated circuit design	-	2	5	13	1
Cybersecurity	2	3	9	11	1
Microelectronics	-	3	9	7	1
Robotics	3	5	7	2	1
Material science	13	7	5	9	-
Data analytics	5	14	9	5	-
Financial technologies	11	13	13	1	-
The Internet-of-Things	-	5	1	1	-
Advanced communication technologies <sup>^</sup>	-	1	5	2	-
Digital entertainment	3	8	3	-	-
Quantum technology <sup>^</sup>	-	-	-	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>20</b>

<sup>^</sup> The Government expanded the coverage of the TechTAS in December 2022 to include one new technology area (i.e. quantum technology) and renamed 5G communications as advanced communication technologies.

### Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS)

Industry/Sector	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Financial and accounting services	883	4 162	3 426	2 524	263
Information technology and telecommunications	817	2 974	2 688	1 864	190
Commerce and trade	138	879	1 128	558	55
Manufacturing industries	163	752	812	334	31
Academic research and education	150	635	366	224	28
Architecture, surveying, engineering and construction	186	563	547	196	27
Business support and human resources	117	968	842	374	18
Human health and veterinary services	102	526	494	204	18
Sports	11	35	75	47	10
Logistics and transportation*	39	167	177	159	9
Legal services	104	513	425	79	4
Arts and culture	23	95	66	55	3
Broadcasting and entertainment	26	129	113	43	2
Catering and tourism	16	41	85	44	1
Others	70	530	604	396	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 845</b>	<b>12 969</b>	<b>11 848</b>	<b>7 101</b>	<b>699</b>

Note: The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

\* Industries/sectors related to transportation and logistics.

### Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)

At present, over 90% of those coming to or staying in Hong Kong under the IANG are fresh graduates. They are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have taken up employment in Hong Kong. The Immigration Department (ImmD) does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

### Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)

Applicants under the ASSG are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

### Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS)

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an initial stay of two or three years to explore opportunities without other conditions of stay upon entry. During the validity of the first visas, the talents are not required to inform the ImmD when they are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to provide the ImmD with concrete supporting information and documents to prove that they have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong so that an extension of stay can be granted.

The ImmD does not maintain the statistics by industry/trade.

- (2) The Talent List has been applied to the QMAS since its first promulgation in 2018 and has been extended to the GEP and the ASMTP since end-2022.

The numbers of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List and the numbers of approved applications under the above three talent admission schemes in the past 3 years and this year (up to February), broken down by the six professions of the industry segment of “Aviation and Shipping”, are tabulated below:

Profession on the List under the industry segment of Aviation and Shipping		2023	2024	2025	2026 (as at February)
Shipping commercial professionals*	Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List	2	7	9	4
	Number of applications approved	2	7	9	4
Marine superintendents	Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List	11	17	24	5
	Number of applications approved	11	17	24	5
Naval architects	Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List	2	4	3	-
	Number of applications approved	1	5	3	-
Ship surveyors^	Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List	Not applicable		5	-
	Number of applications approved			5	-
Professionals in green shipping^	Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List			-	-
	Number of applications approved			-	-
Aircraft maintenance engineers^	Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List			10	1
	Number of applications approved			10	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>Number of applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>Number of applications approved</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>10</b>

Note: Applications approved in a year may not all be received in the same year

\* The profession was incorporated into the Talent List subsequent to a review in May 2023.

^ The professions were incorporated into the Talent List subsequent to a review in March 2025.

As at February 2026, none of the applications that met the eligibility criteria under the Talent List in the above six professions has been refused.

Assessments on the applications for visas/entry permits submitted under the GEP and the ASMTTP can normally be completed within four weeks upon applicants' submission of all the required information and supporting documents. The processing of applications under the QMAS involves consultation with the Advisory Committee on Admission of Quality Migrants and Professionals or the Government's Assessment Panel, etc., thus the processing time will be slightly longer and vary depending on individual circumstances.

- (3) Since the launch of the Technical Professionals Stream under the GEP and the ASMTTP on 30 June 2025 up to February 2026, the numbers of applications received, approved and refused for "aircraft maintenance technicians" and "marine services technicians (local vessels)" on the Technical Professional List (TP List) are tabulated below:

Skilled trade	Number of applications received	Number of applications approved	Number of applications refused
Aircraft maintenance technicians	357	340	-
Marine services technicians (local vessels)	20	16	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>1</b>

# The total number of applications received includes applications approved, refused, being processed, withdrawn by applicants or with no further action to be taken.

In general, the reasons for refusal of applications for entry visas included that the duties associated with the relevant job vacancies fell outside the scope of the specific skilled trade on the TP List, or the applicants did not meet the requirements for the specific skilled trade set out on the TP List, including academic qualifications, work experience, professional skills (such as registration or licence to practise), etc.

In general, assessments on this type of applications can be completed within four weeks upon applicants' submission of all the required information and supporting documents.

- (4) According to the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB), it has been maintaining communication with the industry and stakeholders to exchange views on issues such as manpower demand and training. In addition to regular meetings, the TLB would also encourage the industry on various occasions to leverage the Talent List to draw in suitable talents to meet their development needs. Apart from promoting the Talent List, the Government will continue to step up publicity, both locally and abroad, on the development opportunities in Hong Kong's transportation and logistics industry through a range of promotional and talent nurturing measures, with a view to attracting more talents to Hong Kong to support the industry's manpower needs and long-term development.

Furthermore, the TLB has put in place promotion funding schemes for the maritime, aviation and logistics industries under the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund for encouraging relevant industry associations and professional bodies to organise various industry promotion events so as to attract more talents (including overseas talents) to

join the related industries. Taking the logistics industry as an example, the TLB provided funding support to the Smart Logistics Datathon organised by the Asian Institute of Supply Chains and Logistics of the Chinese University of Hong Kong for two consecutive years. The competition attracted participation from university students worldwide and secondary school students locally. The TLB also, for two consecutive years, funded the Hong Kong's NextGen Logistician Awards organised collaboratively by the logistics industry. By commending young logistics talents and sharing their success stories, the event aimed to attract more young people to join Hong Kong's logistics industry.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)097**

**(Question Serial No. 0878)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing various types of skill-based training courses, including AI application, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the local workforce. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the specific differences between the Upskill Hong Kong and the former ERB in terms of functions, service targets and positioning of courses;
- (2) the specific differences in the estimated expenditures, including the manpower expenditure, the number of courses (especially those on AI application) and the amount of subvention before and after the upgrade; and
- (3) the quantitative indicators established for assessing effectiveness after the upgrade, for example, job choices following course completion or enhancement in the competitiveness of the local workforce.

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

- (1) The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has been primarily focusing on providing “employment-related” training for grassroots workers. Upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, apart from continuing to provide training for grassroots workers and people with lower skills or employability, it will take on the duties of promoting continuous learning and upskilling for all, and devising skills-based training programmes of different levels and strategies for the entire workforce, so as to enhance the competitiveness of the local workforce and support Hong Kong’s economic development.
- (2) The Government has accepted the reform roadmap and timetable set out in the ERB’s implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong. The ERB will take forward various medium- to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of the ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter.

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), 2024-25 and 2025-26 (i.e. the first full financial year since the commencement of the reform), the total expenditure of the ERF (including manpower and related expenditure, and the expenditure on retraining allowance) is tabulated below:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (Revised estimate)
Manpower and related expenditure (\$ million)	110	120	140
Expenditure on retraining allowance (\$ million)	270	430	450
Total expenditure (\$ million)	1,570	1,900	2,790

In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the preliminary projection of the ERB, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24, including a 33.2% increase in manpower and related expenditure, and 38% increase in the expenditure on retraining allowance as compared with 2023-24.

Regarding training courses, in 2023-24 and 2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026), the ERB provided 760 and 881 training courses respectively. Among them, the number of training courses related to artificial intelligence (AI) and the number of intakes are tabulated below:

	2023-24	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
No. of AI-related courses	15	39
No. of intakes	258	2 432

- (3) Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will establish corresponding performance indicators for different services, including reviewing and optimising the 5 existing performance indicators (i.e. capacity utilisation rate, attendance rate, graduation rate, satisfaction rate and placement rate), in order to enable a more comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness in upskilling the workforce, promoting individuals' career planning and development, and supporting industrial development after the reform.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)098**

**(Question Serial No. 0952)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Working Group on Promoting Silver Economy led by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration is responsible for co-ordinating efforts of relevant bureaux to implement measures for developing silver economy in 5 areas. The Employees Retraining Board has, inter alia, introduced more dedicated Post-50 training courses for persons aged 50 or above, targeting industries with keen manpower demand. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the enrolment status of these training courses. How much retraining allowance has the Government disbursed to support these courses? How many of these silver productive forces have re-entered the workforce after participating in the Post-50 "Training x Workplace" Navigation Programme? How is the effectiveness of this programme evaluated?

Asked by: Hon LAMPORT, Jonathan Stuart (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

To tie in with the Government's policy to develop silver economy, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) launched 2 new training courses dedicated for persons aged 50 or above in 2025, namely, Foundation Certificate in Workplace Re-entry (Catering Industry) and Foundation Certificate for Welfare Workers (House Parents or Instructors) in Residential Child Care Services. As at December 2025, the above 2 courses had a total of 36 enrolments. The training costs and retraining allowances involved were around \$180,000, which were absorbed by the Employees Retraining Fund. In addition, persons aged 50 or above can, according to their aspirations and qualifications, enrol in 2 other existing dedicated courses of the ERB, namely, Foundation Certificate in Survey Interviewer Training and Foundation Certificate in Organic Farming Assistant Training, as well as the other 800 courses open for the general public to enhance their employability. In 2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026), the enrolments of persons aged 50 or above in ERB courses exceeded 98 000, which accounted for 64% of the total enrolments of the same period.

Moreover, the ERB launched the "Post-50 Training x Workplace Navigation Programme" in November 2025, covering experiential activities such as company visits and new skills workshops, to help persons aged 50 or above understand industry trends and experience skills

training. The activities of the Programme had a total of around 360 attendances and over 85% of the participants were satisfied with the content of the experiential activities.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)099**

**(Question Serial No. 0901)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

What is the Government's plan for allocating examination fee subsidies to Hong Kong residents under the "One Examination, Multiple Certification" arrangement, including the specific types of examinations covered, the estimated amount of subsidy per type and the total budget ceiling? Has any standard been set regarding the eligibility for receiving the subsidies?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The Labour and Welfare Bureau provides subvention to the Vocational Training Council to provide various vocational training and related services, including the implementation of the One Examination, Multiple Certification (OEMC) arrangement. The arrangement covers two industries, namely beauty and hairdressing, with two levels for each. Hong Kong residents who pass any level of the OEMC examinations in these two industries may apply for an examination fee subsidy of \$1,000 for that level. Based on the assumption of 20 candidates passing the examinations in each of the two industries, the estimated amount of subsidies in 2026-27 will be about \$40,000.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)100**

**(Question Serial No. 1135)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 174 of the Budget Speech that the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) will continue stepping up its efforts to attract talents from the Mainland and overseas, and expanding its network of working partners to help incoming talents and their families settle in Hong Kong. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

- 1) of the staff establishment and total expenditure of HKTE in each of the past 3 years (from 2023-24 to 2025-26);
- 2) of the staff establishment and estimated expenditure of HKTE in 2026-27;
- 3) of the numbers of enquiries and referrals handled by HKTE in each of the years since its establishment by nature of support services in tabular form;
- 4) whether HKTE has formulated tailored recruitment strategies and settling-in support schemes for talents from different industries (such as innovation and technology, finance, and cultural and creative industries)? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
- 5) of the types of working partners targeted for and the goal of HKTE's "expansion of network of working partners"; and
- 6) of any measures to be taken by HKTE on further enhancing the support for incoming talents and their dependents to settle in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ka-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1) and 2)

The Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) was established on 30 October 2023. It had maintained a staff establishment of 38 positions in the past 3 years, including 8 civil service posts. A breakdown of its expenditure by year is as follows:

(\$'000)	2023-24 Actual (30 October 2023 to 31 March 2024)	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Revised
Salary	15,500	36,900	40,800
Operating expenditure	12,200	39,400	46,000
Total	27,700	76,300	86,800

The operating expenditure is for local and overseas publicity and promotion, organisation of various talent attraction activities, provision of support services for talents, etc.

3) The numbers of enquiries handled and referrals for support service requests made by HKTE since its establishment are tabulated below:

Category	2023-24 (30 October 2023 to 31 March 2024)		2024-25		2025-26 (as at February 2026)	
	Enquiries received	Referrals for support services	Enquiries received	Referrals for support services	Enquiries received	Referrals for support services
Talent admission schemes and visa	5 862	Not applicable	7 205	Not applicable	6 147	Not applicable
Employment	8 507	2 506	10 939	4 371	9 792	2 239
Children's education	52	298	106	337	209	32
Accommodation	10	562	15	712	0	269
Others	1 323	622	5 107	2 194	3 707	777
Total	15 754	3 988	23 372	7 614	19 855	3 317

4) To support the development of the “eight centres” in Hong Kong, HKTE has conducted data analyses and researches based on the Talent List to deliver targeted promotion by region and industry. In early 2025, HKTE visited Canada and Australia, and had in-depth exchanges with local talents in legal services, innovation and technology (I&T), finance and trade sectors to promote Hong Kong’s development opportunities and talent attraction measures. In April 2025, it visited Malaysia and hosted a number of talent development showcases and corporate career fairs, focusing on attracting professionals in information technology and Islamic finance sectors. In early October 2025, HKTE, together with Hong Kong professionals from the engineering, finance and accounting sectors, visited the United Kingdom. During the visit, they met with representatives from four of the world’s top 100 universities in the country, while organising three talent activities to showcase Hong Kong’s advantages and development opportunities. Regarding support schemes, HKTE held four online job fairs in 2025, enabling direct matching between global talents and local enterprises without geographical or time zone constraints. To achieve targeted matching across various industries, the online job

fairs were sector-specific, covering financial services, I&T, e-commerce, culture, maritime, professional services, etc., ensuring that talents from all sectors were able to find suitable development opportunities. Moreover, HKTE provides one-stop support services, including online enquiry, themed seminars, workshops, etc., to facilitate the smooth settlement of diverse professionals in Hong Kong.

- 5) To attract talents and facilitate their early integration into the local community, HKTE has actively established a diversified network with working partners, covering companies, industry representatives, chambers of commerce and associations from various sectors. In collaboration with these partners, HKTE offers comprehensive support services by organising activities covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, such as accommodation, job seeking, banking and insurance, taxation, and children's education, etc. In 2026, HKTE will continue to expand the network of working partners, with a target of increasing the number of partners to 100, to provide talents with more diverse and comprehensive support services for facilitating their long-term development in Hong Kong.
- 6) HKTE has been maintaining close and direct liaison with talents and analysing their enquiries and requests for supporting services, which have been received by HKTE or designated working partners on the online platform, to understand and follow up their development and needs in Hong Kong, as well as to assist them and their families to settle in for long-term development. To address the needs of incoming talents, HKTE organised 58 online and offline workshops, themed seminars and job fairs in 2025, covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, such as job seeking, business start-up, children's education, etc. These included 12 online and offline job fairs co-organised with the industries and employer organisations to directly match job-seeking talents with employers. On children's education, HKTE will continue to collaborate with school sponsoring bodies or school associations to organise seminars to provide more comprehensive information on local education. In 2026, HKTE will organise at least 55 online and offline themed seminars on living and working in Hong Kong, job fairs, workshops (including Cantonese learning classes) and social integration activities (including the Talent<sup>+</sup> Volunteer Programme). HKTE will collaborate with volunteer groups to encourage incoming talents to actively participate in volunteer services so as to strengthen the connection and exchange between talents and the local community. Such work helps facilitate the early integration of incoming talents and their families into the local community as well as their settlement in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)101**

**(Question Serial No. 1136)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 165 of the Budget Speech that the Government will continue nurturing local talents, attracting talents globally and developing an international education hub to achieve the integrated development of "Education, Technology and Talent". In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

- 1) the staffing establishment and the total amount of expenditure allocated by the Government to advance the integrated development of "Education, Technology and Talent" in 2025-26 (presented in tabular form by department);
- 2) the proposed staffing establishment and estimated expenditure to be allocated by the Government to advance the integrated development of "Education, Technology and Talent" in 2026-27 (presented in tabular form by department);
- 3) the proposed number of meetings and specific work plans of the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents (CETT), chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, in 2026-27;
- 4) the achievements of the CETT in advancing the integrated development of "Education, Technology and Talent" since its establishment, the recommendations made, and the number and proportion of those accepted; and
- 5) the way to further encourage more enterprises to engage in nurturing young technology talents in Hong Kong and providing them with more quality employment and development opportunities?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ka-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1 and 2) The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address the establishment of the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents (CETT). Chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, the committee will co-ordinate and drive the integrated development of education, technology and talents, expand connections, attract and cultivate talents, foster the development of technologies, and also promote Hong Kong as an international hub for high-calibre talents. Members of the CETT include the Secretary for Education, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, and the permanent secretaries of these 3 policy

bureaux. The CETT will invite other relevant bureau secretaries or their representatives to participate in its work, and seek advice from experts and stakeholders from outside the Government on a need basis. In accordance with the macro policy directions formulated by the CETT, the participating bureaux will deploy existing resources to advance the integrated development of education, technology and talents, and hence, there is no separate breakdown of the manpower and relevant expenditure involved for this area of work.

- 3) The CETT meetings are held approximately quarterly, with additional meetings convened as needed. To enhance communication with stakeholders, the CETT has set up a Panel of Advisors to serve as a high-level exchange platform comprising members from various sectors of society, including community leaders and professionals from different fields. In addition, relevant policy bureaux will maintain communication with stakeholders from various sectors through different platforms and occasions, pooling wisdom and ideas to strengthen collaboration and advance the work on promoting the integrated development of education, technology and talents.

In 2026-27, the CETT will continue to co-ordinate cross-bureau efforts in taking forward measures for the integrated development of education, technology and talents. It will also provide policy guidance on building an international education hub, attracting high-quality innovation and technology (I&T) talents, enhancing the talent admission schemes and talent services, etc., and co-ordinate cross-bureau and cross-department collaboration.

- 4) Since its establishment, the CETT has put emphasis on achieving breakthroughs with reform and innovation, formulating macro policy directions, and driving technological innovation, industrial innovation and the co-ordinated development of human resource supply and demand. Under the steer of the CETT, relevant policy bureaux and departments have taken forward the integrated development of education, technology and talents, and reported the work progress and outcomes to the CETT on a regular basis. Some of the announced and ongoing measures include: the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched further enhancement measures to the Technology Talent Admission Scheme in late 2025, which include streamlining application procedures, lifting the requirement of engaging in designated technology areas, and launching a new dedicated application channel for the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park. These measures enable eligible companies to expedite the admission of I&T talents from around the world, thereby enlarging the I&T talent pool in Hong Kong. The ITC also launched a \$3 billion Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme in September 2025 to provide funding support, on a matching basis, to the 8 universities funded by the University Grants Committee in recruiting international top-notch researchers to Hong Kong and procuring facilities to conduct basic research projects in frontier technology fields, with a view to expanding Hong Kong's research capacities, promoting the integrated development of education, technology and talents, as well as dovetailing with the country's strategic planning of frontier technologies. The CETT has also endorsed a groundbreaking arrangement under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme to proactively invite top-notch and leading talents to come to Hong Kong, actively persuading targeted top-notch talents to settle

in Hong Kong for development in light of various development needs of the country and Hong Kong. Furthermore, under the steer of the CETT, the Labour and Welfare Bureau introduced a new channel in late June 2025 for admitting professionals of specified skilled trades to Hong Kong to join skilled trades facing acute manpower shortage.

- 5) The STEM Internship Scheme, launched by the ITC, subsidises full-time undergraduates and postgraduates enrolling in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)-related programmes to take up short-term internships, so that they could gain I&T-related work experience and cultivate their early interest in pursuing a career in I&T after graduation. The Research Talent Hub, also launched by the ITC, provides funding support for organisations or companies undertaking research and development (R&D) activities in Hong Kong, enabling them to engage research talents to undertake R&D work. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to leverage these schemes to provide quality employment and development opportunities for young technology talents, thereby enlarging the local I&T talent pool.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)102**

**(Question Serial No. 1137)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As mentioned in paragraph 173 of the Budget Speech, the various talent admission schemes have attracted over 270 000 talented individuals from around the world. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- 1) the staff establishment and total expenditure involved in taking forward various talent admission schemes in the past 5 years (from 2021-22 to 2025-26) (in tabular form by admission scheme);
- 2) the numbers of applications received, approved and refused under various talent admission schemes in the past 5 years (from 2021-22 to 2025-26) (in tabular form by admission scheme and the talents' place of origin); and the reasons for refusal;
- 3) the staff establishment and estimated expenditure involved in taking forward the various talent admission schemes in 2026-27 (in tabular form by admission scheme);
- 4) the percentages of talents admitted to Hong Kong under various talent admission schemes who are in employment and have started their own businesses with a breakdown by occupation and industry involved; and
- 5) whether consideration will be given to establishing a database of incoming talents for continuous tracking of their status in respect of employment, home ownership, and children's education, etc., after their arrival in Hong Kong? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ka-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1) and 3)

The staff establishment and salary costs of the Immigration Department (ImmD) in processing applications under the various talent admission schemes this year and in the past four years are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme		2022-23 (Actual)	2023-24 (Actual)	2024-25 (Actual)	2025-26 (Revised estimate)	2026-27 (Estimate)
Top Talent Pass Scheme# (TTPS)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	10	10	15	15	15
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	1.93	7.92	12.38	12.75	12.75
General Employment Policy (GEP)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	28	28	28	31	30
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	19.80	20.30	21.15	24.32	24.07
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	24	24	23	29	29
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	14.93	15.31	15.74	21.17	21.17
Immigration Arrangements for Nonlocal Graduates (IANG)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	11	14	14	13	13
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	6.11	8.76	9.15	9.18	9.18
Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	3	3	3	3	3
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	2.44	2.50	2.60	2.68	2.68
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	25	30	114	114	114
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	17.21	21.61	88.71	91.37	91.37
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)	Staff establishment (No. of posts)	12	12	9	9	9
	Salary costs* (\$ million)	6.20	6.36	5.93	6.10	6.10

# The TTPS was launched on 28 December 2022. Officers handling the TTPS in 2022-23 were arranged by the ImmD through internal deployment, and the salary costs of the manpower involved were calculated on a pro-rata basis. The newly established posts for the TTPS were created in 2023-24.

\* Calculated based on the notional annual mid-point salary.

The above costs have been reflected in the estimates of expenditure under Head (70) of the ImmD.

- 2) The numbers of applications received, approved and refused under the various talent admission schemes in the past five years are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As at February 2026)
TTPS#	No. of applications received	Not Applicable	21 406	55 562	49 442	31 609
	No. of applications approved		12 398	49 431	38 948	27 040
	No. of applications refused		632	3 144	2 207	2 183
GEP^	No. of applications received	14 479	19 102	30 849	36 636	29 696
	No. of applications approved	13 097	17 501	28 354	34 243	27 798
	No. of applications refused	744	330	486	486	396
ASMTTP^	No. of applications received	11 462	13 282	24 727	28 635	28 850
	No. of applications approved	10 168	11 841	21 875	25 447	25 028
	No. of applications refused	268	153	256	389	1 089
IANG	No. of applications received	7 668	14 906	25 758	27 553	27 393
	No. of applications approved	7 156	14 189	24 512	26 110	26 430
	No. of applications refused	22	21	17	28	20
TechTAS	No. of applications received	54	87	142	143	169
	No. of applications approved	53	82	125	119	153
	No. of applications refused	-	-	-	-	-
QMAS®	No. of applications received	6 218	28 732	83 587	51 531	14 998
	No. of applications approved	1 980	4 478	13 631	10 004	6 909
	No. of applications refused	3 956	3 034	9 811	96 921	7 794
ASSG	No. of applications received	65	115	140	146	115
	No. of applications approved	40	70	92	81	66
	No. of applications refused	3	2	1	1	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>39 946</b>	<b>97 630</b>	<b>220 765</b>	<b>194 086</b>	<b>132 830</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>32 494</b>	<b>60 559</b>	<b>138 020</b>	<b>134 952</b>	<b>113 424</b>

Talent admission scheme		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As at February 2026)
	<b>No. of applications refused</b>	<b>4 993</b>	<b>4 172</b>	<b>13 715</b>	<b>100 032</b>	<b>11 493</b>

Note: Applications approved/refused in a year may not all be received in the same year. The same applies to the tables below.

The number of applications received includes applications approved, refused, being processed, withdrawn by applicants or with no further action to be taken.

The same applies to the tables below.

# The TTPS has been launched from 28 December 2022.

^ Including the GEP and ASMTP (Technical Professionals Stream) launched on 30 June 2025. The same applies to the tables below.

@ The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

The breakdowns of the numbers of applications received and approved under the various talent admission schemes by region in the past five years are tabulated below:

#### TTPS

Region		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	No. of applications received	20 215	52 298	46 493	29 235
	No. of applications approved	11 729	46 753	37 015	25 350
The United States	No. of applications received	198	628	433	426
	No. of applications approved	104	549	278	293
Canada	No. of applications received	199	605	527	389
	No. of applications approved	128	541	383	308
Australia	No. of applications received	167	400	319	233
	No. of applications approved	105	347	229	162
Singapore	No. of applications received	103	210	190	152
	No. of applications approved	57	183	122	111
Others	No. of applications received	524	1 421	1 480	1 174
	No. of applications approved	275	1 058	921	816
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>21 406</b>	<b>55 562</b>	<b>49 442</b>	<b>31 609</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>12 398</b>	<b>49 431</b>	<b>38 948</b>	<b>27 040</b>

Note: The TTPS has been launched from 28 December 2022.

GEP

Region		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
South Korea	No. of applications received	861	1 374	3 436	4 893	5 444
	No. of applications approved	788	1 317	3 310	4 708	5 391
Japan	No. of applications received	1 326	1 527	2 808	3 686	3 515
	No. of applications approved	1 276	1 488	2 651	3 605	3 350
Taiwan, China	No. of applications received	520	1 426	2 828	3 770	2 484
	No. of applications approved	423	1 272	2 525	3 443	2 271
The United Kingdom	No. of applications received	1 366	1 486	2 389	2 728	2 159
	No. of applications approved	1 292	1 437	2 274	2 578	2 075
The United States	No. of applications received	1 139	1 254	2 041	2 317	1 835
	No. of applications approved	1 046	1 199	1 908	2 219	1 787
India	No. of applications received	1 174	1 562	2 049	2 139	1 534
	No. of applications approved	1 037	1 377	1 758	1 934	1 386
France	No. of applications received	940	936	1 125	1 438	1 085
	No. of applications approved	884	895	1 093	1 330	1 034
The Philippines	No. of applications received	457	1 053	1 801	1 203	983
	No. of applications approved	389	951	1 644	1 085	885
Malaysia	No. of applications received	551	658	985	1 100	713
	No. of applications approved	513	606	907	1 034	674
Thailand	No. of applications received	191	331	1 516	1 873	637
	No. of applications approved	141	287	1 373	1 874	609
Others	No. of applications received	5 954	7 495	9 871	11 489	9 307
	No. of applications approved	5 308	6 672	8 911	10 433	8 336
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>14 479</b>	<b>19 102</b>	<b>30 849</b>	<b>36 636</b>	<b>29 696</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>13 097</b>	<b>17 501</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

ASMTP

The ASMTP is applicable to Mainland residents only. Therefore, all applicants are Mainland residents.

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Region		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	No. of applications received	6 439	13 566	24 285	26 311	26 128
	No. of applications approved	5 995	12 892	23 090	24 927	25 209
South Korea	No. of applications received	136	169	198	191	162
	No. of applications approved	129	166	209	176	159
India	No. of applications received	194	190	200	117	122
	No. of applications approved	185	186	194	114	115
Taiwan, China	No. of applications received	124	106	141	100	78
	No. of applications approved	118	100	110	98	76
Malaysia	No. of applications received	110	85	103	67	73
	No. of applications approved	104	83	98	64	71
Macao SAR	No. of applications received	41	51	65	59	72
	No. of applications approved	39	47	63	54	68
Pakistan	No. of applications received	49	63	54	60	49
	No. of applications approved	48	61	51	58	50
The United States	No. of applications received	37	38	37	26	27
	No. of applications approved	33	37	33	24	27
Canada	No. of applications received	33	46	34	26	24
	No. of applications approved	27	39	38	22	23
France	No. of applications received	14	18	7	13	18
	No. of applications approved	13	17	7	11	17
Others	No. of applications received	491	574	634	583	640
	No. of applications approved	465	561	619	562	615
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>7 668</b>	<b>14 906</b>	<b>25 758</b>	<b>27 553</b>	<b>27 393</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>7 156</b>	<b>14 189</b>	<b>24 512</b>	<b>26 110</b>	<b>26 430</b>

TechTAS

Region		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	No. of applications received	38	68	133	124	151
	No. of applications approved	35	64	115	104	137
The United States	No. of applications received	6	2	2	3	7
	No. of applications approved	7	2	2	3	5
Canada	No. of applications received	-	-	-	-	4
	No. of applications approved	-	-	-	-	4
India	No. of applications received	1	-	1	1	2
	No. of applications approved	1	-	1	-	2
Singapore	No. of applications received	-	1	-	1	1
	No. of applications approved	-	1	-	1	1
South Korea	No. of applications received	3	1	-	-	1
	No. of applications approved	5	1	-	-	1
Italy	No. of applications received	1	-	-	-	1
	No. of applications approved	1	-	-	-	1
Others	No. of applications received	5	15	6	14	2
	No. of applications approved	4	14	7	11	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>169</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

QMAS

Region		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As at February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	No. of applications received	5 692	27 784	81 829	50 278	14 376
	No. of applications approved	1 840	4 303	13 427	9 800	6 691
The United States	No. of applications received	46	98	191	128	81
	No. of applications approved	25	28	38	36	27
Canada	No. of applications received	69	110	263	196	78
	No. of applications approved	31	44	42	39	57
Australia	No. of applications received	51	102	221	152	77
	No. of applications approved	26	38	41	47	43
Others	No. of applications received	360	638	1 083	777	386
	No. of applications approved	58	65	83	82	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>6 218</b>	<b>28 732</b>	<b>83 587</b>	<b>51 531</b>	<b>14 998</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>1 980</b>	<b>4 478</b>	<b>13 631</b>	<b>10 004</b>	<b>6 909</b>

Note: The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

ASSG

Region		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As at February 2026)
The United States	No. of applications received	20	20	33	33	24
	No. of applications approved	11	13	23	16	17
The United Kingdom	No. of applications received	10	26	25	34	24
	No. of applications approved	8	16	16	23	19
Canada	No. of applications received	11	27	25	35	20
	No. of applications approved	8	18	21	24	15
Australia	No. of applications received	7	9	10	7	8
	No. of applications approved	4	6	9	3	7
The Philippines	No. of applications received	-	7	9	7	7
	No. of applications approved	-	3	4	-	-
The Netherlands	No. of applications received	3	3	3	5	5
	No. of applications approved	1	4	3	2	2
Singapore	No. of applications received	3	7	-	4	4
	No. of applications approved	3	5	2	2	2
Others	No. of applications received	11	16	35	21	23
	No. of applications approved	5	5	14	11	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>No. of applications received</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>115</b>
	<b>No. of applications approved</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>66</b>

The ImmD does not maintain other statistical breakdowns mentioned in the question.

In general, the main reasons for refusal of applications for entry visas included that the applicants did not meet the eligibility criteria of individual admission schemes. The ImmD does not maintain statistical breakdowns of the reasons for refusal of applications.

- 4) The breakdowns of the numbers of approved applicants under the various talent admission schemes by industry/sector in the past five years are tabulated below:

GEP

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Recreation and sports	920	1 524	1 215	1 799	5 107
Arts/Culture	118	1 252	2 416	2 401	3 087
Academic research and education	1 879	2 353	2 788	2 651	2 368
Financial services	2 542	2 517	1 864	2 119	2 225
Commerce and trade	2 028	1 651	2 463	1 686	1 352
Engineering and construction	1 300	1 368	1 545	1 362	1 004
Tourism	162	300	1 861	2 063	786
Catering services	354	403	512	530	418
Information technology	549	580	514	315	363
Medical and healthcare services	165	173	335	357	324
Legal services	185	137	173	111	122
Manufacturing industries	94	66	100	129	73
Telecommunications	42	89	80	124	63
Architecture/Surveying	44	45	24	180	20
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	-	-	1	17
Biotechnology	10	10	12	13	5
Others	2 705	5 033	12 452	18 402	10 464
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 097</b>	<b>17 501</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

ASMTF

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Commerce and trade	1 011	1 902	3 511	4 405	3 830
Academic research and education	2 126	2 522	4 028	4 280	3 715
Engineering and construction	1 304	1 396	2 537	2 832	3 555
Arts/Culture	192	399	3 906	3 940	3 253
Financial services	2 179	2 812	3 004	2 356	2 543
Information technology	579	1 024	1 183	1 200	1 337
Recreation and sports	119	128	936	3 203	971
Medical and healthcare services	1 689	527	165	220	534
Tourism	10	16	159	298	139
Telecommunications	149	289	188	198	133
Legal services	109	115	121	100	126
Catering services	31	41	105	159	118
Manufacturing industries	72	84	164	194	92
Biotechnology	302	78	60	63	63
Architecture/Surveying	37	28	152	49	21
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	2	4	9	4
Others	259	478	1 652	1 941	4 594
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 168</b>	<b>11 841</b>	<b>21 875</b>	<b>25 447</b>	<b>25 028</b>

## TechTAS

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Artificial intelligence	17	11	36	40	74
Biotechnology	8	21	24	11	28
Integrated circuit design	3	1	3	6	11
Cybersecurity	1	1	5	10	9
Microelectronics	-	-	4	8	8
Material science	5	14	5	7	7
Data analytics	6	5	15	8	4
Green technology	2	3	8	6	4
Robotics	3	-	7	5	3
Quantum technology <sup>^</sup>	Not Applicable	-	-	-	2
Financial technologies	3	18	8	9	1
The Internet-of-Things	1	1	4	1	1
Advanced communication technologies <sup>^</sup>	4	-	1	6	1
Digital entertainment	-	7	5	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

<sup>^</sup> The Government expanded the coverage of the TechTAS in December 2022 to include one new technology area (i.e. quantum technologies) and renamed 5G communication as advanced communication technologies.

## QMAS

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Financial and accounting services	539	1 446	4 354	2 815	2 496
Information technology and telecommunications	557	1 018	3 296	2 204	1 890
Commerce and trade	100	232	960	1 019	535
Manufacturing industries	112	279	794	683	320
Business support and human resources	87	250	984	784	276
Academic research and education	136	311	504	345	218
Human health and veterinary services	81	175	538	406	201
Architecture, surveying, engineering and construction	166	246	626	427	194
Logistics and transportation	28	69	171	150	153
Legal services	72	191	498	347	70
Sports	8	13	40	68	55
Arts and culture	18	36	106	51	48
Broadcasting and entertainment	18	46	126	106	32
Catering and tourism	6	19	61	75	31
Others	52	147	573	524	390
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 980</b>	<b>4 478</b>	<b>13 631</b>	<b>10 004</b>	<b>6 909</b>

Note: The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

## IANG

At present, over 90% of those coming to or staying in Hong Kong under the IANG are fresh graduates. They are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have taken up employment in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

## ASSG

Applicants under the ASSG are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

## TTPS

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an initial stay of two or three years to explore opportunities without other conditions of stay upon entry. During the validity of the first visas, the talents are not required to inform the ImmD when they are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to provide the ImmD with concrete supporting information and documents to prove that they have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong so that an extension of stay can be granted.

The ImmD does not maintain the other statistics mentioned in the question.

- 5) The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) has been keeping in view the settlement of incoming talents in Hong Kong through various channels, including maintaining close contact with incoming talents through its Hong Kong Talent Engage to understand and keep track of their development and needs in Hong Kong through both online and offline channels, and provide support. The LWB will continue to monitor the implementation of the various talent admission schemes to keep enhancing the talent admission policies and support services.

Taking the TTPS as an example, the LWB keeps abreast of talents' employment and development situations in Hong Kong through the process of application for extension of stay and follow-up surveys. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. Follow-up surveys also revealed that the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved live in rented properties, and around 10% live in self-owned properties. Besides, around 30% of their dependent children are already studying in Hong Kong, while more than half of them plan to do so. These TTPS talents and their families are gradually integrating into the local society, and injecting sustainable impetus into local economic and social development.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)103**

**(Question Serial No. 0490)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice Lau)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 45 of the Budget Speech that the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing various types of skilled-based training courses, including AI application, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the local workforce. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What specific contents will be covered in the various types of training courses planned to be provided on AI application? Will there be introductory courses teaching trainees the utilisation of readily available AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT), and advanced courses on more in-depth technological development involving coding, model debugging, etc.?
- (b) Given that there are views suggesting a pressing demand for training on AI technology due to its rapid development, what is the total amount of estimated expenditure to be used on AI application training courses in 2026-27? Please explain in details the allocation of the resources.
- (c) What is the specific timetable or progress regarding the launch of AI application training courses?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kwong-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- (a) & (c) The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025 to enhance its role and positioning, transforming into assisting the entire workforce from all backgrounds and educational attainments to continuously enhance their skills and competitiveness. With the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) across industries, AI proficiency has become a generic skill across all industries. Since early last year, the ERB has enhanced its services and developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses, covering such areas of skills as AI and technology applications. These courses offer a wide range of contents such as demonstrations and foundational operations of readily available AI tools, practical AI application scenarios in workplaces, and Python programming. Upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, it will further provide various types of skills-based training

courses, including AI application, and integrate AI knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum.

In 2026-27, the ERB plans to gradually roll out various training courses related to AI, and will continuously review the course contents to help trainees acquire the essential skills required for the development of industries. The courses to be launched cover areas such as digital literacy and skills, smart customer service and game development. The ERB will also enhance the contents of placement-tied courses by incorporating AI-related elements or tools, for example, using generative AI to refine resumes and application letters, simulate interview scenarios, conduct research on industry information and analyse career pathways to improve trainees' effectiveness in job search and career planning capabilities.

- (b) The ERB will strengthen the integration of AI knowledge and practical applications into courses across various sectors. A breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available. Separately, the ERB's estimated expenditure on courses relating to "Information and Communications Technology" and "Information Technology Applications" will increase by about 20% in 2026-27 compared with that of the previous year. The estimate is dedicated mainly for training courses and programme expenses.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)104**

**(Question Serial No. 0947)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development  
(4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the staff establishment, salary and administrative expenditure involved in approving applications each year since the launch of the TTPS;
2. the numbers of applications (i) received; (ii) approved; and (iii) rejected each year since the launch of the TTPS with a breakdown by categories A, B and C;
3. according to the information, a total of 20 800 top talents submitted renewal applications under the TTPS as at end-January 2026 and approximately 94% were approved. Please set out the industries engaged by top talents granted visa renewal and the respective proportions; and
4. the distribution of monthly employment earnings of top talents who have been granted an extension of stay (i.e. with a monthly salary below \$20,000, between \$20,000 and below \$30,000, between 30,000 and below \$40,000, between \$40,000 and below \$50,000, and of \$50,000 or above). Please provide the number of top talents in each income group and the respective proportions.

Asked by: Hon LEE Kwong-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The staff establishment and salary costs of the Immigration Department (ImmD) in processing applications under the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) since its launch are tabulated below:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Staff establishment (Number of posts)	10	10	15	15
Salary costs* (\$'000)	1,930	7,920	12,380	12,750

Note: The TTPS was launched on 28 December 2022. Officers handling the TTPS in 2022-23 were arranged by the ImmD through internal deployment, and the salary costs of the manpower involved were calculated on a pro-rata basis. The newly established posts for the TTPS were created in 2023-24.

\* Calculated based on the notional annual mid-point salary.

The above costs have been reflected in the estimates of expenditure under Head (70) of the ImmD.

2. The numbers of applications received, approved and refused since the launch of the TTPS on 28 December 2022 up to 28 February 2026, broken down by category, are tabulated below:

		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Category A	Number of applications received	4 706	16 849	17 323	12 502
	Number of applications approved	2 015	12 567	11 528	9 470
	Number of applications refused	60	1 538	1 052	1 429
Category B	Number of applications received	11 082	28 611	22 354	11 932
	Number of applications approved	6 271	27 856	19 179	10 953
	Number of applications refused	287	1 162	731	442
Category C	Number of applications received	5 618	10 102	9 765	7 175
	Number of applications approved	4 112	9 008	8 241	6 617
	Number of applications refused	285	444	424	312
<b>Total</b>	<b>Number of applications received</b>	<b>21 406</b>	<b>55 562</b>	<b>49 442</b>	<b>31 609</b>
	<b>Number of applications approved</b>	<b>12 398</b>	<b>49 431</b>	<b>38 948</b>	<b>27 040</b>
	<b>Number of applications refused</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>3 144</b>	<b>2 207</b>	<b>2 183</b>

Notes:

Category A refers to persons with annual income reaching HK\$2.5 million or above in the year immediately preceding the date of application.

Category B refers to full-time bachelor's degree graduates of the universities/institutions prescribed in the aggregate list of eligible universities (eligible universities/institutions) with at least three years of work experience over the past five years immediately preceding the date of application.

Category C refers to full-time bachelor's degree graduates of eligible universities/institutions in the past five years immediately preceding the date of application with less than three years of work experience.

3. and 4.

The first batch of visas under the TTPS began expiring since end-December 2024. As at end-February this year, the limit of stay for a total of 43 979 TTPS talents has expired. Among them, 22 735 have submitted their applications for extension of stay, representing an application rate of over 50%. Coupled with the TTPS talents whose limit of stay was set to expire within the next three months and applied for extension of stay ahead of time, the ImmD received a total of 26 508 applications for extension of stay under the TTPS during the period. Of these, 25 516 were processed, with 23 901 approved and 230 refused. The approval rate is about 94%.

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS must have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong upon expiry of their first visas so that an extension of stay can be granted. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. These TTPS talents are gradually integrating into the local society, and injecting sustainable impetus into local economic and social development.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)105**

**(Question Serial No. 2537)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE), would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the annual expenditure and staff establishment of HKTE since its inception;
2. on the job affairs co-organised by HKTE with industry and employer organisations that provide direct job matching for job-seeking talents, broken down by year since HKTE's inception, (i) the expenditure and staff establishment involved, (ii) the number of such fairs held, (iii) the number of employer groups, and (iv) the attendance of talents;
3. on HKTE's outreach visits to the Mainland and overseas countries with promotion activities held to attract global talents, broken down by year since HKTE's inception, (i) the expenditure and staffing involved, (ii) the number of such visits, and (iii) the number of successful cases in attracting global talents to work in Hong Kong;
4. on the themed seminars/workshops and integration activities hosted by HKTE to help incoming talents settle in Hong Kong, broken down by year since HKTE's inception, (i) the expenditure and staffing involved, (ii) the number of such events held, and (iii) the attendance of talents; and the top 5 most-attended events listed by theme?

Asked by: Hon LEE Kwong-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

1. Established on 30 October 2023, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) had maintained an establishment of 38 positions over the past 3 years, including 8 civil service posts. The breakdown of annual expenditure is as follows:

(\$'000)	2023-24 Actual (30 October 2023 to 31 March 2024)	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Revised
Salary	15,500	36,900	40,800
Operating expenditure	12,200	39,400	46,000
Total	27,700	76,300	86,800

The operating expenditure is for local and overseas publicity and promotion, organisation of various talent attraction activities, provision of support services for talents, etc.

2. Job fairs co-organised by HKTE with industry and employer organisations over the past 3 years (2023 to 2025) are tabulated below:

	2023	2024	2025
Number of job fairs	1	5	12
Number of participating employers/employer groups	11	Around 700	Over 1 000
Online and offline participation	Over 40 000	Over 200 000	Over 200 000
Expenditure	\$200,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
Staffing (Note)	4	4	4

Note: HKTE staff responsible for organising job fairs also handle other duties.

3. As of February 2026, HKTE has conducted over 80 outreach visits since its establishment. These visits spanned major Mainland cities and overseas countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, etc., during which over 230 talent promotion events were held. Over the past 2 years, HKTE had established direct contact with over 60 000 talents worldwide through overseas visits, including participating in local career expos, exhibitions and conventions, as well as organising themed seminars, workshops and integration activities, etc. in the cities visited. It had also engaged and served over 600 000 through online initiatives, such as organising online job fairs globally and themed webinars, etc. The annual expenditure for HKTE's outreach visits, publicity and promotion events is tabulated below:

2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Revised	2026-27 Estimated
\$3,000,000	\$5,400,000	\$7,700,000

Since the launch of a series of the talent attraction measures by the current-term Government in late 2022, over 270 000 talents have arrived under various talent admission schemes as of end-February 2026. This reflects Hong Kong's strong appeal to international talents.

4. As of February 2026, the number of online and offline themed seminars, workshops and integration activities organised by HKTE since its establishment along with their respective attendance/viewership figures are tabulated below:

	2023-24 (30 October 2023 to 31 March 2024)		2024-25		2025-26 (As at February 2026)	
Event	Number of events	Number of attendance	Number of events	Number of attendance/ viewership#	Number of events	Number of attendance/ viewership#
Themed seminars	2	121	26	71 668	24	79 355
Workshops	-	-	25	435	13	253
Integration activities	-	-	2	90	3	82
Total	2	121	53	72 193	40	79 690

# HKTE has offered live streaming and online replay services for themed seminars since April 2024.

The top 5 most-attended activities were themed seminars on job seeking, education, financial management, innovation and technology, and essential living in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)106**

**(Question Serial No. 2464)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The 2026-27 Budget proposes that the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong to provide various types of skill-based training courses, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) application. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the timetable for upgrading the ERB as Upskill Hong Kong and the expenditure involved; whether any changes will be made to the organisational structure and staff establishment of the upgraded Upskill Hong Kong; if so, the specific changes;
- (2) the number of courses and professional certification courses provided by the ERB covering AI, technology applications and related areas, the number of training places, the actual number of trainees enrolled and the relevant expenditure in each of the past 3 financial years (2023-24 to 2025-26);
- (3) the projected number of AI application-related training courses to be provided by Upskill Hong Kong, the number of training places and the relevant expenditure for 2026-27?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. The Government has accepted the reform roadmap and timetable set out in the Employees Retraining Board (ERB)'s implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong. The ERB will take forward various medium- to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter.

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), 2024-25 and 2025-26 (i.e. the first full financial year since the commencement of the reform), the total

expenditure of the ERF was approximately \$1.57 billion, \$1.9 billion and \$2.79 billion (revised estimate) respectively.

In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the ERB’s preliminary estimate, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24. The ERB will also review its organisational structure and make adjustments as necessary.

2&3. The number of training courses, the number of intakes, and expenditures on courses related to “Information and Communications Technology” and “Information Technology Applications” of the ERB in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (As of December 2025)
Number of courses	48	51	63
Number of intakes	9 719	12 991	11 382
Expenditures (\$ million)	47.8	111.8	93

The ERB will strengthen the integration of AI knowledge and practical applications into courses across various sectors. A breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available. Separately, the ERB’s estimated expenditure on courses relating to “Information and Communications Technology” and “Information Technology Applications” will increase by about 20% in 2026-27 compared with that of the previous year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)107**

**(Question Serial No. 0822)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

According to paragraph 28 of the Budget Speech, the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) has drawn over 100 000 global elites to Hong Kong. In this connection, would this Committee be informed of the following:

- i. What are the numbers of Category A, Category B and Category C applications received and approved each year since the introduction of the TTPS?
- ii. What are the types of occupation undertaken in Hong Kong by individuals admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS and the percentage of each type of occupation?
- iii. What are the ranges of income of individuals admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS and the percentage distribution of each income range?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- i. The numbers of applications received and approved since the launch of the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) on 28 December 2022 up to 28 February 2026, broken down by category, are tabulated below:

		2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Category A	Number of applications received	4 706	16 849	17 323	12 502
	Number of applications approved	2 015	12 567	11 528	9 470
Category B	Number of applications received	11 082	28 611	22 354	11 932
	Number of applications approved	6 271	27 856	19 179	10 953
Category C	Number of applications received	5 618	10 102	9 765	7 175
	Number of applications approved	4 112	9 008	8 241	6 617
<b>Total</b>	<b>Number of applications received</b>	<b>21 406</b>	<b>55 562</b>	<b>49 442</b>	<b>31 609</b>
	<b>Number of applications approved</b>	<b>12 398</b>	<b>49 431</b>	<b>38 948</b>	<b>27 040</b>

Notes:

Category A refers to persons with annual income reaching HK\$2.5 million or above in the year immediately preceding the date of application.

Category B refers to full-time bachelor's degree graduates of the universities/institutions prescribed in the aggregate list of eligible universities (eligible universities/institutions) with at least three years of work experience over the past five years immediately preceding the date of application.

Category C refers to full-time bachelor's degree graduates of eligible universities/institutions in the past five years immediately preceding the date of application with less than three years of work experience.

- ii. and iii.

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an initial stay of two or three years to explore opportunities without other conditions of stay upon entry. During the validity period of the first visas, the talents are not required to inform the Immigration Department (ImmD) when they are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to provide the ImmD with concrete supporting information and documents to prove that they have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong so that an extension of stay can be granted.

TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning

more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. These TTPS talents are gradually integrating into the local society, and injecting sustainable impetus into local economic and social development.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)108**

**(Question Serial No. 2571)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2026-27, the Hong Kong Talent Engage will continue to co-organise job fairs with the industry and employer organisations to directly match job-seeking talents with employers. In this connection, would the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) the progress of the relevant work in the past year, including the respective numbers of job fairs organised, participating employer organisations and participants, successful job matches and occupations involved, in particular the number of positions in the catering industry; and
- 2) the plan and expenditure involved in the relevant work for 2026-27.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Chun, Jonathan (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

- 1) In 2025, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) co-organised 12 online and offline job fairs with the industry and employer organisations, facilitating direct job matching between employers and job-seeking talents. These 12 fairs recorded a total of over 200 000 attendances, with the participation of more than 1 000 employer organisations. The positions offered at the fairs covered various industry segments, including hotel management and fine dining, etc.

Of the 12 job fairs mentioned above, four were conducted online, enabling global talents to engage directly with local enterprises without geographical and time-zone constraints, understand Hong Kong's job market and explore development opportunities in the city. The four online job fairs achieved satisfactory results, with a total of over 16 000 curriculum vitae received and over 21 000 dialogue sessions recorded during direct exchanges between employers and talents. While online recruitment provides an opportunity for global talents and local employers to establish initial connections, successful matching hinges on the subsequent recruitment procedures between employers and talents. HKTE does not maintain relevant information on the successful matches.

- 2) HKTE's estimated expenditure for organising online and offline job fairs in 2026-27 is approximately \$2 million. In 2026, HKTE plans to organise 12 online and offline job fairs to provide a matching platform for employers and job-seeking talents, thereby helping talents settle and develop in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)109**

**(Question Serial No. 0899)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It has been over 3 years since the launch of the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS). In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) the total numbers of approved applications and arrivals in Hong Kong (including dependants) since the launch of the TTPS by categories A, B and C;
- (2) whether the Government has identified any applicants furnishing false information since the launch of the TTPS; if so, the number of cases and the details;
- (3) among those whose visas have expired, the number of applicants whose applications for extension of stay have been approved, the average length of stay newly granted; the percentage of successful applications, and the common reasons for refusal of applications; and
- (4) whether the Government has compiled any statistics on the employment status of the applicants in Hong Kong; if so, the occupations and income distribution.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- (1) Since the launch of the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) from 28 December 2022 up to 28 February 2026, the numbers of applications approved for applicants and their dependants under the TTPS, as well as the numbers of arrivals in Hong Kong, are tabulated below:

		Category A	Category B	Category C	<b>Total</b>
Applicants	Number of applications approved	35 580	64 259	27 978	<b>127 817</b>
	Number of arrivals in Hong Kong	32 597	56 051	21 480	<b>110 128</b>
Dependants	Number of applications approved	67 678	76 204	1 354	<b>145 236</b>
	Number of arrivals in Hong Kong	61 147	65 679	1 131	<b>127 957</b>

Notes:

Category A refers to persons with annual income reaching HK\$2.5 million or above in the year immediately preceding the date of application.

Category B refers to full-time bachelor's degree graduates of the universities/institutions prescribed in the aggregate list of eligible universities (eligible universities/institutions) with at least three years of work experience over the past five years immediately preceding the date of application.

Category C refers to full-time bachelor's degree graduates of eligible universities/institutions in the past five years immediately preceding the date of application with less than three years of work experience.

- (2) The Immigration Department (ImmD) has put in place mechanisms for examining each visa, entry permit and extension of stay application under the TTPS in a rigorous manner to ensure that only applicants meeting the eligibility criteria and relevant immigration policies will be permitted to stay in Hong Kong.

Applicants under the TTPS are required to provide accurate, complete and true information in their applications, including making declaration according to the eligibility criteria of their income, academic qualifications and/or work experience as well as any criminal conviction records, with relevant supporting documents. Since June 2024, the ImmD requires all applicants of Categories B and C under the TTPS to submit verification proof of academic qualifications issued by designated third-party credential verification organisations or the awarding institutions. The ImmD has the power to conduct random checks and verifications on the information and documents submitted by applicants, including verifying the applicants' status with the organisations issuing the documents.

Any person who knowingly and wilfully makes a statement or gives information that he/she knows to be false or does not believe to be true when applying for entry into Hong Kong commits an offence. If such cases are detected, apart from refusing such

applications, the ImmD will also initiate criminal investigations into the cases concerned. In addition, should any person be found to have illegally obtained his/her visa or entry permit, the visa or entry permit granted will be invalidated according to the laws of Hong Kong, and the person concerned will be subject to removal back to his/her place of origin. Even if the person has obtained the right of abode in Hong Kong, it will be declared invalid according to the law, and he/she will be subject to removal back to his/her place of origin.

The ImmD does not maintain the statistical breakdowns mentioned in the question.

- (3) The first batch of visas under the TTPS began expiring since end-December 2024. As at end-February this year, the limit of stay for a total of 43 979 TTPS talents have expired. Among them, 22 735 have submitted their applications for extension of stay, representing an application rate of over 50%, while the approval rate is about 94%. The progress of applications for extension of stay under the TTPS is satisfactory and in line with the Government's expectations.

A person admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an extension of stay for not more than three years, or until the expiry of his/her employment contract in Hong Kong, whichever is shorter. For one having established or joined in a business in Hong Kong, the ImmD will consider the operating conditions of the relevant business in determining the length of extension of stay to be granted.

In general, for applications for extension of stay that were not approved, the major reasons were incomplete information and failure by applicants to provide the required documents as requested by the ImmD.

- (4) Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS must have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong upon expiry of their first visas so that an extension of stay can be granted. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. These TTPS talents are gradually integrating into the local society, and injecting sustainable impetus into local economic and social development.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)110**

**(Question Serial No. 2434)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 45 of the Budget Speech that the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing various types of skill-based training courses, including AI application, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the local workforce. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the expenditure on upgrading the ERB to Upskill Hong Kong; and
2. whether the various skills-based training courses in AI application incorporate modules on AI ethics, AI laws and so on. What are the specific training programmes?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. The Government has accepted the reform roadmap and timetable set out in the Employees Retraining Board (ERB)'s implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong. The ERB will take forward the various medium-to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter.

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), 2024-25 and 2025-26 (i.e. the first full financial year since the commencement of the reform), the total expenditure of the ERF was approximately \$1.57 billion, \$1.9 billion and \$2.79 billion (revised estimate) respectively.

In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the preliminary projection of the ERB, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24.

2. With the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) across industries, AI proficiency has become a generic skill across all industries. Since early last year, the ERB has enhanced its services and developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses, covering such areas of skills as AI and technology applications. These courses offer a wide range of contents such as demonstrations and foundational operations of readily available AI tools, practical AI application scenarios in workplaces, and Python programming. Upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, it will further provide various types of skills-based training courses, including AI application, and integrate AI knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum.

In 2026-27, the ERB plans to gradually roll out various training courses related to AI, and will continuously review the course contents to include more AI-related topics, covering such areas as cybersecurity, AI ethics and related risk management, with a view to helping trainees acquire the essential skills required for the development of the industries while enhancing their abilities in personal privacy and data protection.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)111**

**(Question Serial No. 2483)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong. Would the Government inform this committee of the following:

1. The number of training courses offered by each training body and approved by the ERB, the number of intakes and the amount of funding allocated in 2025-26;
2. The amount of funding and staff establishment allocated by the Government to reform the ERB in 2026-27;
3. Please set out the names of the various types of skill-based training courses offered by Upskill Hong Kong, the number of training places and the estimated number of intakes;
4. How will the Government oversee Upskill Hong Kong to ensure that its funding is primarily allocated to training efforts?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

1. As at 28 February 2026, the number of training courses offered by each training body and approved by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), the number of intakes and the amount of funding allocated in 2025-26 are set out at Annex.
2. The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. It has formulated an implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong and will take forward various medium-to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of the ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), the total expenditure of the ERF was approximately \$1.57 billion. In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the preliminary projection of the ERB, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24. Currently, the Executive Office of the ERB has a staff

establishment of around 220 full-time staff members. Upskill Hong Kong will recruit additional staff when necessary in the future.

3. The ERB currently provides over 800 training courses straddling across 28 industries and generic skills. These courses are mainly employment-related. Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will formulate an appropriate skills-based training framework in the light of the current and future gaps in skills and course offerings. Training bodies of Upskill Hong Kong will develop skills-based courses according to the above framework in the future.

Since 1 January 2025, the ERB lifted the restriction on the educational attainment of trainees and expanded the service targets to the entire local workforce aged 15 or above. In 2026-27, the ERB plans to provide 165 000 training places and launch the first phase of the skills-based training framework targeting grassroots workers. It will also strengthen the integration of artificial intelligence knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum to equip the broader workforce with this essential emerging skill. The relevant reform is progressing in an orderly manner. Details such as the names of various types of skill-based training courses, the number of training places and the estimated number of intakes are not available at this stage.

4. The ERB was established under the Employees Retraining Ordinance (Cap. 423) in 1992, with the statutory responsibility of administering the ERF according to its founding objectives. The Secretary for Labour and Welfare is to ensure that the ERB's activities accord with the Government's relevant policies and priorities, and that the activities are properly and effectively planned, delivered and evaluated. The ERB is required to submit annually its annual plan and financial estimates for the following year to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval and to submit annually a report on the activities and affairs (including the administration of the ERF) to the Chief Executive. The report will also be laid on the table of the Legislative Council.

The above mechanism has been effective throughout the years and will continue to apply to Upskill Hong Kong in the future.

**The number of training courses offered by each training body  
and approved by the ERB, the number of intakes and  
the amount of funding allocated in 2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)**

	Training Body	Number of Training Courses Approved	Number of Intakes	Funding (\$'000) <sup>[Note 1]</sup>
1	Association for Engineering and Medical Volunteer Services	1	4	26
2	Yan Oi Tong Limited	195	9 345	70,274
3	Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Hospital Authority	2	96	2,773
4	Li Fai Centre of Wushu	2	90	678
5	YMCA College of Careers	54	868	11,001
6	Star Chef Management School operated by Star Chef Management School Company Limited	16	252	928
7	Royal International College	17	676	6,828
8	Heung To College of Professional Studies	99	3 405	26,355
9	Hong Kong Manpower Development Centre Limited	21	1 203	16,868
10	Hong Kong Workers' Health Centre Limited	3	14	320
11	The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions	462	10 918	44,251
12	The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong	6	88	532
13	Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Limited	63	1 388	4,019
14	Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood	199	7 085	44,789
15	UOW College Hong Kong	27	361	821
16	Caritas - Hong Kong	215	4 443	26,471
17	The Hong Kong Society for the Blind	7	85	456
18	The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	21	34	15
19	School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong	61	1 023	20,162
20	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong <sup>[Note 2]</sup>	4	-	-
21	Hong Kong Institute of Technology	6	50	50

	Training Body	Number of Training Courses Approved	Number of Intakes	Funding (\$'000) <sup>[Note 1]</sup>
22	Hong Kong Red Cross	8	379	5,867
23	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	150	4 029	37,072
24	The Young Men's Christian Association of Hong Kong	83	2 642	13,383
25	Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres Limited	156	7 091	46,107
26	Research Centre for Gerontology and Family Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	2	59	271
27	The Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong	53	1 713	11,982
28	Hong Kong Rehabilitation Power	16	110	551
29	The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation	23	292	3,843
30	Xianggang Putonghua Yanxishe	4	432	1,324
31	The Scout Association of Hong Kong - The Friends of Scouting	37	2 095	7,911
32	Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth	10	106	564
33	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre	153	3 178	19,050
34	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	18	187	1,276
35	Hong Kong St. John Ambulance	3	318	1,455
36	Hong Kong Ballroom Dancing Council Limited	4	205	990
37	The Hong Kong School of Motoring Limited	6	45	102
38	TCHK	13	360	2,657
39	Hong Kong Electrical & Mechanical College (Evening School)	28	818	2,257
40	Hong Kong Employment Development Service Limited	171	2 671	22,345
41	Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service	176	3 829	28,892
42	The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hongkong	135	7 895	72,094
43	Christian Action	206	10 432	75,819
44	Haven of Hope Christian Service	1	17	183
45	Methodist Centre	241	7 614	30,318
46	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service	13	232	1,446

	Training Body	Number of Training Courses Approved	Number of Intakes	Funding (\$'000) <sup>[Note 1]</sup>
47	Hong Kong and Kowloon Gold Ornaments and Jewellery Trade Workers' Union	6	363	1,116
48	The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions	218	9 693	62,889
49	Hong Kong and Kowloon Electrical Engineering and Appliances Trade Workers Union	10	295	5,545
50	HKCT Group Limited	303	13 162	107,668
51	Vassar International Chinese Medical Society Limited	58	1 572	8,233
52	Neighbourhood & Worker's Service Centre	145	4 303	28,201
53	New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association	4	35	21
54	New Territories Association Retraining Centre Limited	156	5 019	26,697
55	New Home Association Limited	3	11	25
56	S.K.H. Holy Carpenter Church Community Centre	97	1 673	9,456
57	St. James' Settlement	135	5 358	45,358
58	KCRA Community Education Enhancement Center Limited	190	4 353	20,326
59	Kwai Chung Hospital - Hospital Authority	3	115	3,032
60	Youth Centre of The True Word Lutheran Church operated by The True Word Lutheran Church Limited	14	20	27
61	Princess Margaret Hospital	2	68	1,913
62	Clothing Industry Training Authority	13	398	976
63	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	8	18	75
64	The Association of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (Hong Kong) Limited	49	1 948	17,319
65	Vocational Training Council	226	6 890	71,038
66	Hospital & Clinic Nurses Association	4	89	144
67	OIWA Limited	45	1 028	3,713

Note 1: Actual figures as at December 2025.

Note 2: The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong became an ERB training body in 2025-26.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)112**

**(Question Serial No. 2530)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong to enhance the competitiveness of the local workforce. In this connection, would the Government inform this committee of the following:

1. the estimated expenditure involved in the entire upgrading process;
2. whether it has formulated a promotional plan to publicise the differences after the upgrade to the public; if so, the details.

Asked by: Hon MAN Wing-ye, Ginny (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. The Government has accepted the reform roadmap and timetable set out in the Employees Retraining Board (ERB)'s implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong. The ERB will take forward various medium-to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter.

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), 2024-25 and 2025-26 (i.e. the first full financial year since the commencement of the reform), the total expenditure of the ERF was approximately \$1.57 billion, \$1.9 billion and \$2.79 billion (revised estimate) respectively.

In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the preliminary projection of the ERB, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24.

2. Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will establish a new branding and launch thematic publicity through integrated channels to further promote its new positioning and development of skills-based training services to stakeholders and the public.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)113**

**(Question Serial No. 3141)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

- (1) What are the number of outreach visits made by the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) in the Mainland and overseas countries to organise promotional activities to attract global talents in the past 2 years? What places have been visited and how many talents have been approached? What are the industry backgrounds of the talents concerned? Have assessments been made to the actual effectiveness of these outreach visits? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons? What are the estimated total number, locations and themes of outreach visits planned for 2026?
- (2) With regard to the key performance indicators under "Talent Engagement and Support", the estimated percentage of online and in-person enquiry services to be responded within 48 hours in 2026 is 95, reflecting a decrease compared to the actual percentage of 99 in 2024 and 97 in 2025. What are the reasons?
- (3) It is mentioned under the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026-27 that "(HKTE will) continue to host themed seminars/workshops and integration activities like Cantonese classes and co-ordination of volunteer work to help incoming talents settle in Hong Kong". Please provide the details of the relevant activities held in 2025-26, the number of service users and their countries or places of origin; and the details of activities to be held in 2026-27, along with the projected number of service users and their countries or places of origin.

Asked by: Hon TAM Chun-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

- (1) As of February 2026, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) has conducted over 80 outreach visits since its establishment on 30 October 2023. These visits spanned major Mainland cities and overseas countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, etc., during which over 230 talent promotion events were held. Over the past 2 years, HKTE had established direct contact with over 60 000 talents worldwide through outreach visits, including participating in local career expos, exhibitions and conventions, as well as organising themed seminars, workshops and integration activities, etc. in the cities visited. It had

also engaged and served over 600 000 through online initiatives, such as organising online job fairs globally and themed seminars, etc.

While the decision to relocate to Hong Kong is based on personal circumstances and various other considerations, over 270 000 talents have arrived under various talent admission schemes as of end-February 2026 since the launch of a series of talent attraction measures by the current-term Government in late 2022. This reflects Hong Kong's strong appeal to international talents. HKTE will continue to step up its efforts in promoting Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract more global talents to the city.

In 2026-27, HKTE's overseas visit plan will cover the Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America regions, focusing on attracting talents in the fields of finance, trade and commerce, innovation and information technology, arts and culture, and aviation and maritime. During these visits, HKTE will meet with representatives from eligible universities under the Top Talent Pass Scheme, chambers of commerce and trade associations. It will participate in key job fairs, exhibitions and conventions, as well as organise events and forums locally to build a close and well-connected network for promoting Hong Kong's development opportunities and talent attraction measures. It will also precisely disseminate the latest talent insights to specific target groups to actively attract international talents from diverse professional backgrounds, thereby injecting new impetus into Hong Kong's economic development.

- (2) Over the past 2 years, HKTE set a target of 95% for its performance indicator, "percentage of online and in-person enquiries to be responded to within 48 hours". The actual performance achieved for both years exceeded the indicator, reaching 99% and 97% respectively. With reference to the figures for the past 2 years, HKTE handled over 22 000 online and in-person enquiries annually. These enquires were not only substantial in volume, but also increasingly complex in nature. Some cases even required follow-up assistance from other government departments or industry partners through liaison and referrals, necessitating a longer processing time. Therefore, HKTE considers it appropriate to maintain the indicator at a high level of 95% in the 2026 estimates. HKTE will continue to strive for greater service efficiency through, inter alia, the newly introduced chatbot function on its online platform to provide instant responses to general enquiries on talent admission schemes and settlement in Hong Kong.
- (3) HKTE has been maintaining close and direct liaison with talents and analysing their enquiries and requests for supporting services which have been received by HKTE or designated working partners on the online platform, to understand and follow up their development and needs in Hong Kong, as well as to assist them and their families to settle in for long-term development. To address the needs of incoming talents, HKTE organised 58 online and offline workshops, themed seminars and job fairs in 2025, covering a wide range of topics about living in Hong Kong, such as job seeking, business start-up, children's education, etc. These included 12 online and offline job fairs co-organised with industry and employer organisations to directly match job-seeking talents with employers; 19 Cantonese learning classes to enhance the Cantonese conversational skills of incoming talents; and 4 integration activities in collaboration with volunteer groups.

In 2026, HKTE will organise at least 55 online and offline themed seminars on living and working in Hong Kong, job fairs, workshops (including Cantonese learning classes) and integration activities (including the Talent<sup>+</sup> Volunteer Programme). HKTE will collaborate with volunteer groups to encourage incoming talents to actively participate in volunteer services so as to strengthen the connection and exchange between talents and the local community. Such work helps facilitate the early integration of incoming talents and their families into the local community as well as their settlement in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)114**

**(Question Serial No. 1903)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development, (4) Talent Engagement and Support,  
(7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 165 of the Budget Speech that the Government will continue nurturing local talents, attracting talents globally and developing an international education hub to achieve the integrated development of “Education, Technology and Talent”. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong to introduce more skill-based training courses. With the reduction in provision under Programme (3), what are the staff establishment, funding and indicators for the related work?
2. There is a view that certain existing talent admission schemes are mismatched with the development needs of Hong Kong's society. As with last year, there is only one indicator under Programme (3), namely the number of approved applications for visa extension under various talent admission schemes, with the target set at 5 000. The indicator fails to include local talents and falls short of the Government's aim. Will the Government review and update the indicator to meet its aim? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
3. There is a view that the lack of effective mutual recognition for non-degree qualifications (including those of vocational programmes) dampens the incentive for such students to come here for employment and settlement. Will the Government enhance the liaison and collaboration with the Education Bureau (EB) to remedy the existing shortcomings so as to effectively resolve the concerns of non-local technical talents and provide better support to the pilot Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme under Programme (7) in a more targeted approach?
4. Hong Kong is a “safe haven” not only for capital, but also for talent. Will the Government enhance the liaison and collaboration with the Development Bureau and the EB, and task the Hong Kong Talent Engage to redouble its efforts in proactively and precisely “trawling for” talents from world-renowned institutions and high-calibre talent teams essential to Hong Kong's growth, with a view to leveraging the opportunities

presented by the complex and volatile global landscape as well as the development of the Northern Metropolis University Town to achieve a truly integrated development of “Education, Technology and Talent”?

Asked by: Hon Sunny TAN (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

- 1) The Government has accepted the reform roadmap and timetable set out in the Employees Retraining Board’s (ERB) implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong. The ERB will take forward various medium- to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of the ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter, without involving the expenditures under Programme (3) of Head 141 of the 2026-27 Budget.

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. The total expenditure of the ERF, in 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), 2024-25 and 2025-26 (i.e. the first full financial year since the commencement of the reform), is \$1.57 billion, \$1.9 billion, and \$2.79 billion (Revised Estimate), respectively.

In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare (SLW) for approval. According to the preliminary estimate of the ERB, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24. Currently, the Executive Office of the ERB has a staff establishment of around 220 full-time staff members. The ERB will review the organisational structure of its offices and adjust when necessary.

Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will establish corresponding performance indicators for different services, including reviewing and optimising the 5 existing performance indicators (i.e. capacity utilisation rate, attendance rate, graduation rate, satisfaction rate and placement rate), in order to enable a more comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness in upskilling the workforce, promoting personal career planning and development, and supporting industrial development after the reform.

- 2) At the start of the current-term Government, the target set for programme (3) was to attract 35 000 talents annually. This indicator was achieved ahead of schedule between 2023 and 2024. Therefore, starting in 2025, the Government has adopted a new indicator of approving at least 50 000 applications for visa extension under various talent admission schemes annually. This new indicator not only reflects the Government’s progress in talent-related initiatives but also underscores our emphasis not only on attracting talent but also on retaining them, so as to provide impetus for Hong Kong’s economic and sustainable development. The new indicator has only been adopted for one calendar year so far. We will monitor the effectiveness of talent attraction and retention efforts, and make adjustments and updates as necessary.

- 3) The Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme is an immigration facilitation measure which aims at attracting eligible non-local graduates of local higher diploma programmes to apply for staying in Hong Kong to seek and take up jobs relevant to their disciplines upon graduation. This differs from the policy objective of the mutual recognition of academic qualifications between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The Education Bureau has been actively exploring with the relevant Mainland authorities in facilitating cross-boundary job seeking and the pursuit of further studies by graduates of vocational and professional programmes. Where cross-bureau/inter-departmental collaboration is required in taking forward the relevant work, existing coordination mechanisms will be fully utilised, including the “Committee on Education, Technology and Talent” (CETT) chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS), to promote the integrated development of education, technology and talents.
  
- 4) The 2025 Policy Address announced the establishment of the “Committee on Development of the Northern Metropolis”, chaired by the Chief Executive. Three working groups were set up under this Committee, including the “Working Group on Planning and Construction of the University Town” (WG) led by CS, which studies the development mode for the Northern Metropolis University Town. Besides, the CETT, also chaired by CS, coordinates and drives the integrated development of education, technology and talents. The Secretary for Education (SED), the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (SITI), SLW, and the permanent secretaries of the aforementioned policy bureaux are all members of the CETT; while SED and SITI are also members of the WG. The Labour and Welfare Bureau will continue, under the guidance of the CETT, to implement and, where appropriate, refine various talent admission schemes to meet the development needs of Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Talent Engage will also continue to attract high-caliber talent from around the world to Hong Kong, and provide them with diversified one-stop support services to help them adapt to life in Hong Kong and enter the workplace.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)115**

**(Question Serial No. 1423)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Rapid popularisation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology might expose the middle class to the risk of downward social mobility. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. whether any resources have been allocated in the estimates of expenditure for 2026-27 to assess the specific impact of AI on white-collar classes or middle-class jobs in Hong Kong; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
2. as the existing employment services are mainly targeted at grassroots workers or the long-term unemployed, whether consideration will be given to making provisions for providing dedicated services to highly educated people who face skills obsolescence due to technological changes to fill the service gap; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
3. to address the development of “K-shaped economy” and facilitate the upward social mobility of the middle class, whether the Government will review the mode of subsidy adopted by the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) to encourage the middle class to pursue high-value upskilling?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

1. The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) published the “Report on 2023 Manpower Projection” (the Report) in November 2024, with 2023 as the base year to provide a detailed analysis of the manpower situation, occupations in demand and essential skills in 17 selected industries. In view of economic restructuring and technological advancement such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Report projected that some traditional positions (such as clerical and administrative roles) may gradually be replaced by AI, while the demand for new roles related to AI and digitalised operations (such as AI specialists, data analysts and information technology experts) is expected to increase.

The LWB has commenced a mid-term update of the manpower projection with the latest situation in 2025 as the base year to update the projection on the manpower situation for 2028. The mid-term update will focus on analysing the impact of the recent global and local developments (including the changes in the economic environment, and the rapid adoption of AI and digitalisation in business operations, etc.) on future manpower prospects. The findings are expected to be released in the fourth quarter of 2026.

The costs of the mid-term update will be absorbed by the existing resources of the LWB, without incurring additional expenditure.

2. The relevant bureaux and departments will provide corresponding local talent training programmes in response to the latest development and manpower requirements across various industries. Moreover, the Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing training, upskilling and re-training for the entire local workforce aged 15 or above under the skills-based training framework to promote continuous learning for all, without restriction on educational attainment. With the widespread adoption of AI across industries, AI proficiency has become a generic skill across all industries. Upskill Hong Kong will strengthen the integration of AI knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum, providing a wide range of courses from AI foundational knowledge to more advanced levels to help the workforce adapt to the changes in the demand for skills in the workplace through training.
3. As at 31 January 2026, there were about 980 000 accounts under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF), of which about 12 000 account holders have fully used up the subsidy of \$25,000, representing approximately 1.2% of the total number of accounts. About 84% of the accounts under the CEF had an unused balance of \$15,000 or above, enabling the taking of around two CEF courses given the current median CEF course fee of \$8,175. The Government considers that the current subsidy ceiling and co-payment ratio could satisfy the demand. The Government will continue to keep in view the operation of the CEF and the views of stakeholders, and consider the need to review the existing arrangements as appropriate.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)116**

**(Question Serial No. 2510)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With the rapid popularisation of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, the labour market in Hong Kong is undergoing a structural transformation. Many “entry-level jobs”, which have traditionally served as stepping stones for young people entering the workforce, are gradually being replaced by AI automation. This trend may deprive young people of the opportunity to accumulate work experience, leading to a “K-shaped” development of the labour market. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

Given that the Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, what is its estimated expenditure in 2026-27 for enhancing young people’s AI literacy and data literacy?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

At present, apart from offering over 800 training courses for the general public, the Employees Retraining Board also provides dedicated youth programmes for young people aged 15 to 29, enabling them to receive vocational skills training and placement follow-up services. Upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, it will provide training, upskilling and re-training for the entire local workforce aged 15 or above under the skills-based training framework to promote continuous learning for all, without restriction on educational attainment. In 2026-27, it plans to gradually roll out various training courses related to artificial intelligence (AI) (including dedicated youth programmes and courses open for the general public), and will continuously review the course contents to help trainees acquire the essential skills required for the development of the industries. The expenditure involved in providing AI-related training programmes for young people has been absorbed within its 2026-27 estimated recurrent expenditure. A breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)117**

**(Question Serial No. 2588)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Government has stated that it will monitor the admission of talents through the enhanced talent admission regime and review the Talent List from time to time based on the demand for talents. In this connection, please advise on:

1. the number of talents arrived in Hong Kong under various talent admission schemes in the past 3 years and the statistical breakdown of the relevant approved cases by industry/sector of the applicants; and
2. whether the Government has assessed in details the impact of the said talent arrivals on the local employment market and their contributions to the promotion of local economic development. If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ming-sum, Michelle (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

1. The numbers of talents admitted to Hong Kong under the various talent admission schemes in the past three years are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS)	44 866	37 085	25 208
General Employment Policy (GEP)#^	8 640	5 810	7 256
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)#^	11 658	11 942	10 744
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)	23 997	23 614	24 331
Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)	129	123	148
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS)	13 193	9 633	7 583
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)	86	75	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>102 569</b>	<b>88 282</b>	<b>75 324</b>

# The numbers do not include cases of short-term employment.

^ Including the GEP/ASMTP (Technical Professionals Stream) launched on 30 June 2025.

The breakdowns of the numbers of approved applicants under the various talent admission schemes by industry/sector in the past three years are tabulated below:

GEP

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Recreation and sports	1 215	1 799	5 107
Arts/Culture	2 416	2 401	3 087
Academic research and education	2 788	2 651	2 368
Financial services	1 864	2 119	2 225
Commerce and trade	2 463	1 686	1 352
Engineering and construction	1 545	1 362	1 004
Tourism	1 861	2 063	786
Catering services	512	530	418
Information technology	514	315	363
Medical and healthcare services	335	357	324
Legal services	173	111	122
Manufacturing industries	100	129	73
Telecommunications	80	124	63
Architecture/Surveying	24	180	20
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	1	17
Biotechnology	12	13	5
Others	12 452	18 402	10 464
<b>Total</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

Note: Applications approved in a year may not all be received in the same year. The same applies to the tables below.

ASMTF

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Commerce and trade	3 511	4 405	3 830
Academic research and education	4 028	4 280	3 715
Engineering and construction	2 537	2 832	3 555
Arts/Culture	3 906	3 940	3 253
Financial services	3 004	2 356	2 543
Information technology	1 183	1 200	1 337
Recreation and sports	936	3 203	971
Medical and healthcare services	165	220	534
Tourism	159	298	139
Telecommunications	188	198	133
Legal services	121	100	126
Catering services	105	159	118
Manufacturing industries	164	194	92
Biotechnology	60	63	63
Architecture/Surveying	152	49	21
Traditional Chinese medicine	4	9	4
Others	1 652	1 941	4 594
<b>Total</b>	<b>21 875</b>	<b>25 447</b>	<b>25 028</b>

TechTAS

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Artificial intelligence	36	40	74
Biotechnology	24	11	28
Integrated circuit design	3	6	11
Cybersecurity	5	10	9
Microelectronics	4	8	8
Material science	5	7	7
Data analytics	15	8	4
Green technology	8	6	4
Robotics	7	5	3
Quantum technology	-	-	2
Financial technologies	8	9	1
The Internet-of-Things	4	1	1
Advanced communication technologies	1	6	1
Digital entertainment	5	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

## QMAS

Industry/Sector	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Financial and accounting services	4 354	2 815	2 496
Information technology and telecommunications	3 296	2 204	1 890
Commerce and trade	960	1 019	535
Manufacturing industries	794	683	320
Business support and human resources	984	784	276
Academic research and education	504	345	218
Human health and veterinary services	538	406	201
Architecture, surveying, engineering and construction	626	427	194
Logistics and transportation	171	150	153
Legal services	498	347	70
Sports	40	68	55
Arts and culture	106	51	48
Broadcasting and entertainment	126	106	32
Catering and tourism	61	75	31
Others	573	524	390
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 631</b>	<b>10 004</b>	<b>6 909</b>

Note: The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

## IANG

At present, over 90% of those coming to or staying in Hong Kong under the IANG are fresh graduates. They are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have taken up employment in Hong Kong. The Immigration Department (ImmD) does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

## ASSG

Applicants under the ASSG are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

## TTPS

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an initial stay of two or three years to explore opportunities without other conditions of stay upon entry. During the validity of the first visas, the talents are not required to inform the ImmD when they are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to provide the ImmD with concrete supporting information and documents to prove that they have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong so that an extension of stay can be granted.

2. According to the Manpower Projection published by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) in November 2024, despite the impact of the existing measures on admission of outside talents and labour importation, the supply of local manpower would still fall short to fill vacancies across sectors by 2028, resulting in a widening gap of manpower shortage. Outside talents who have arrived in Hong Kong are typically employed in high-skilled occupations such as managers, professionals and associate professionals. According to the latest labour force statistics for the period from December 2025 to February 2026, i.e. more than three years since the implementation of talent attraction measures, the unemployment rate for such occupations remained at around 2.4%, which is significantly lower than the overall seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 3.8% for the same period and broadly comparable to the respective average over the past 10 years. The above data illustrates that although the admission of non-local talents has helped supplement and support the development of Hong Kong's core industries, the manpower demand for mid- to higher-skilled labour, as well as from major industries remains persistent.

Outside talents coming to Hong Kong for development can help alleviate manpower shortage, enrich the local talent pool and spur industry development, thereby making contribution to the economy of Hong Kong. Among the talent admission schemes, the GEP and the ASMTP are employment-based schemes under which admitted talents will join the local employment market and bring economic contributions upon arrival in Hong Kong. Besides, the application rate for extension of stay under the TTPS is over 50%, with an approval rate of around 94%, i.e. about 50% of the admitted TTPS talents are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved generally demonstrate strong market competitiveness and have considerable salary levels. Their median monthly salary is approximately \$40,000, with around a quarter of them earning more than \$80,000 per month. On industry distribution, the majority of TTPS talents whose applications for extension of stay were approved are employed in commerce and trade (25%), innovation and technology (18%) and financial services (16%), all of which are key industries of Hong Kong. Based on the statistics of applications for extension of stay and the findings of follow-up surveys, it is projected that the TTPS can contribute directly to Hong Kong's economy by an amount of some \$34 billion per annum, which is equivalent to about 1.2% of the local Gross Domestic Product. The LWB will continuously monitor the settlement of incoming talents and their employment status in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)118**

**(Question Serial No. 2120)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To encourage citizens to enhance their knowledge and acquire advanced skills, the Labour and Welfare Bureau has launched the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) to promote continuous learning and training among the public. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) What were the number of new accounts opened, the number of claims for reimbursement and the total amount reimbursed under the CEF in the past 2 years?
- (b) Will the Government review the subsidy amounts for courses under the CEF in the future, so as to align with the talent development needs of Hong Kong's "8 centres", particularly in areas such as new industrialisation and artificial intelligence?
- (c) Will the Government consider expanding the scope for subsidies under the CEF to cover all types of certificate courses? If so, what are the specific considerations and arrangements? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- (a) The number of newly opened accounts, the number of reimbursement applications and the total amount of reimbursement claims under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) in the past 2 years are tabulated as follows -

	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)</b>
<b>Number of newly opened CEF accounts</b>	34 907	36 355
<b>Number of reimbursement applications</b> <sup>Note</sup>	60 141	59 986
<b>Total amount of reimbursement claims (\$ million)</b>	448.1	496.4

Note: An application may involve reimbursement claims for 1 or more CEF courses.

- (b) & (c) All courses registered under the Qualifications Register are eligible for registration under the CEF. As at 31 January 2026, over 130 course providers offered over 4 700 CEF courses, which covered 14 areas of study and training, giving learners a wide range of choices for continuing education. The Government will continue to encourage existing and other course providers to design and offer new courses to meet market development and needs, and to apply for registration under the CEF. As regards the manpower supply and needs of individual industries, relevant policy bureaux, industry stakeholders or course providers will conduct relevant research and develop industry-based manpower strategies and specific training courses as needed. In recent years, many newly-added CEF courses are relevant to the business and contents of Hong Kong's positioning as the "eight centres" as outlined in the 14th Five-Year Plan, such as business and management, arts, design and performing arts, computer science and information technology.

As at 31 January 2026, there were about 980 000 accounts under the CEF, of which about 12 000 account holders have fully used up the subsidy of \$25,000, representing approximately 1.2% of the total number of accounts. About 84% of the accounts under the CEF had an unused balance of \$15,000 or above, enabling the taking of around 2 CEF courses given the current median CEF course fee of \$8,175. The Government considers that the current subsidy ceiling and co-payment ratio could satisfy the demand. The Government will continue to keep in view the operation of the CEF and the views of stakeholders, and consider the need to review the existing arrangements as appropriate.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)119**

**(Question Serial No. 2121)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development, (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the dependants arrived in Hong Kong under various talent admission schemes, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) How many children under the age of 18 were permitted to come to Hong Kong for the first time as dependants under various talent admission schemes in the past 3 years and the current year to date? Please provide a breakdown by:
  - (i) age group (0-2 years old, 3-5 years old, 6-8 years old, 9-11 years old, 12-14 years old and 15-17 years old);
  - (ii) type of talent admission scheme.
- (b) How many education-related enquiries were received by the "Supporting Services" of the Hong Kong Talent Engage website in each month over the past 2 years? Please provide a breakdown by nature of enquiry.
- (c) Has the Labour and Welfare Bureau established a data-sharing mechanism with the Education Bureau to assess the impact of dependants on the demand for school places in each district? If so, will the anticipated supply of school places in each district be sufficient to meet the demand in 2026-27 academic year?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

- (a) The numbers of unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 who were approved to come to Hong Kong as dependents under the various talent admission schemes in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

Talent admission schemes	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Top Talent Pass Scheme	33 457	29 486	19 441
General Employment Policy <sup>^</sup>	3 106	2 952	2 530
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals <sup>^</sup>	6 212	5 883	5 634
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates	2 737	4 294	6 466
Technology Talent Admission Scheme	65	53	84
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme	13 922	12 536	6 517
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents	7	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>59 506</b>	<b>55 207</b>	<b>40 674</b>

<sup>^</sup> Including the General Employment Policy and Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (Technical Professionals Stream) launched on 30 June 2025.

The Immigration Department (ImmD) does not maintain other statistical breakdowns mentioned in the question.

- (b) The numbers of education-related enquiries received by the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) in each month over the past 2 years are tabulated below:

Year/month		Number of education-related enquiries
2024	April	4
	May	4
	June	2
	July	9
	August	7
	September	10
	October	16
	November	19
	December	12
2025	January	9
	February	11
	March	3
	April	65
	May	52
	June	16
	July	11
	August	3
	September	4
	October	4
	November	9
	December	2
2026	January	34
	February	9
<b>Total</b>		<b>315</b>

The HKTE does not maintain statistical breakdown of the above enquiries by nature.

- (c) Under the prevailing arrangements, persons who are permitted to reside in Hong Kong as dependants (including dependants of successful applicants under the various talent admission schemes) are not required to obtain prior permission from the Director of Immigration for receiving education in Hong Kong, while secondary and primary schools do not need to report to the relevant policy bureau for admitting such dependants. Hence, the Government does not have statistics on the number of

dependants studying in Hong Kong. The ImmD has been sharing statistical data on the various talent admission schemes with the relevant policy bureau from time to time to assist them in formulating and implementing different policy measures.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)120**

**(Question Serial No. 1985)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Vocational Training Council provides an examination fee subsidy of \$1,000 each to Hong Kong residents who pass the “One Examination, Multiple Certification” (OEMC) examinations of the beauty and hairdressing industries. Would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of candidates who passed the OEMC examinations of Beauty and Body Care Level II and Level III as well as Hairdressing Techniques Level II and Level III in 2025-26, and the total amount of examination fees disbursed;
2. the methods and expenditure for publicising the OEMC examination fee subsidy in 2025-26; whether publicity efforts would be enhanced in 2026-27, and if so, the relevant methods and estimated expenditure; and
3. whether the extension of OEMC and examination fee subsidy to cover more industries has been promoted, and if so, the progress made?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (1) The Labour and Welfare Bureau provides subvention to the Vocational Training Council (VTC) to provide various vocational training and related services, including the implementation of the One Examination, Multiple Certification (OEMC) arrangement. The arrangement covers two industries, namely beauty and hairdressing, with two levels for each. Hong Kong residents who pass any level of the OEMC examinations in these two industries may apply for an examination fee subsidy of \$1,000 for that level. The numbers of candidates who passed the OEMC examinations of the beauty and hairdressing industries in 2025-26 (as at February 2026) and the total amount of examination fee subsidies released are tabulated below:

	<b>Assessment items under the OEMC examinations</b>	<b>Number of Hong Kong residents who passed the examinations</b>	<b>Amount of examination fee subsidies (\$)</b>
Beauty Care	Beauty and Body Care (Level II)	-	-
	Beauty and Body Care (Level III)	7	7,000
Hairdressing	Hairdressing Techniques (Level II)	-	-
	Hairdressing Techniques (Level III)	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7,000</b>

- (2) In 2025-26, the VTC has enhanced its promotion of the OEMC arrangement and the above subsidy scheme through various channels, such as social media platforms, newspapers, magazines and physical publicity activities (e.g. trade exhibitions and distribution of publicity leaflets to practitioners). The expenditure incurred on publicity for the year amounted to \$176,000. To avoid duplication of efforts, in 2026-27, the VTC will disseminate information about the OEMC arrangement and the above subsidy scheme to practitioners through industry networks, including relevant business associations, trade unions and organisations. The estimated expenditure on publicity is about \$10,000.
- (3) Policy bureaux responsible for respective industries will take forward the recognition of professional qualifications among Hong Kong, the Mainland and Macao, and will continue to further explore with Mainland authorities to expand the coverage of the OEMC arrangement to additional trades and industries, thereby facilitating the flow of talent in the Greater Bay Area.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)121**

**(Question Serial No. 2506)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development, (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding manpower development and talent support, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. since the introduction of various enhanced talent admission schemes at end-2022, of the respective numbers of applications received and approved under each scheme, as well as the actual numbers of incoming talents and their dependants admitted to Hong Kong;
2. among the over 1 200 renewal applications rejected under the Top Talent Pass Scheme, of a breakdown of the figures by reason involved (such as failure to provide proof of academic qualifications); and
3. of the reasons for the decline in the percentage of online and in-person enquiries responded to within 48 hours by the Hong Kong Talent Engage, from 99% in 2024 to 97% in 2025, and a projected further decrease to 95% in 2026?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. Since the implementation of a series of talent attraction measures on 28 December 2022, the numbers of applications received and approved, as well as the number of talents and dependants admitted to Hong Kong, under the various talent admission schemes as at 28 February 2026 are tabulated below:

Talent admission scheme	Total number of applications received	Number of applications approved	Number of talents admitted to Hong Kong*	Number of dependants admitted to Hong Kong*
Top Talent Pass Scheme	158 019	127 817	110 127	127 957
General Employment Policy (GEP)^	104 213	97 029	23 295	16 933
Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)^	86 225	75 942	37 000	30 312
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates	85 939	81 997	74 982	22 330
Technology Talent Admission Scheme	486	431	425	10 365
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme@	164 325	32 617	32 446	56 110
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents	444	262	231	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>599 651</b>	<b>416 095</b>	<b>278 506</b>	<b>254 021</b>

Note: Applications approved and arrivals in a period may not all be received in the same period.

\* As the Immigration Department (ImmD) has been keeping the statistics of talents and dependants arriving in Hong Kong under the various admission schemes since 2023, the figures of arrivals in the table cover the period from 1 January 2023 to 28 February 2026. The numbers of talents and dependants admitted to Hong Kong do not include cases of short-term employment.

^ Including the GEP and ASMTP (Technical Professionals Stream) launched on 30 June 2025.

@ These figures cover the period from 1 January 2023 to 28 February 2026. The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

2. In general, for applications for extension of stay that were not approved, the major reasons were incomplete information and failure by applicants to provide the required documents as requested by the ImmD. The ImmD does not maintain statistical breakdowns of the reasons for applications not being approved.

3. Over the past two years (2024 and 2025), the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) has set a performance indicator of 95% for responding to online and in-person enquiries within 48 hours. The actual performance for both years exceeded the indicator, reaching 99% and 97% respectively. With reference to the past two years, the HKTE handled over 22 000 online and in-person enquiries annually, which were not only substantial in volume, but also increasingly complex in nature. Some cases even required follow-up assistance from other government departments or industry partners through liaison and referrals, necessitating a longer processing time. Therefore, the HKTE considers it appropriate to maintain the indicator at the high level of 95% in the 2026 estimates. The HKTE will continue to strive for greater service efficiency through various measures, including introducing a chatbot function on its online platform to provide instant responses to general enquiries on talent admission schemes and settlement in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)122**

**(Question Serial No. 2061)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 173 of the Budget Speech that the Top Talent Pass Scheme has drawn over 100 000 global elites to Hong Kong, and in paragraph 45 that the Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong to provide skill-based training courses. There is concern among the industrial sector that the incoming talents are unable to fill the gap of mid-level engineering and technical professionals with practical experience. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

- (a) of the employment data and median salaries of the talents admitted to Hong Kong by industry (in particular those engaged in advanced manufacturing and engineering technology);
- (b) whether the Government will consider conducting a quantitative assessment of the technical manpower gaps in new industrial sectors (e.g. microelectronics). If so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon WONG Wing-wai, Ray (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

- (a) The breakdowns of the numbers of approved applicants under the various talent admission schemes by industry/sector and their monthly remuneration in the past five years are tabulated below:

General Employment Policy (GEP)

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Recreation and sports	920	1 524	1 215	1 799	5 107
Arts/Culture	118	1 252	2 416	2 401	3 087
Academic research and education	1 879	2 353	2 788	2 651	2 368
Financial services	2 542	2 517	1 864	2 119	2 225
Commerce and trade	2 028	1 651	2 463	1 686	1 352
Engineering and construction*	1 300	1 368	1 545	1 362	1 004
Tourism	162	300	1 861	2 063	786
Catering services	354	403	512	530	418
Information technology	549	580	514	315	363
Medical and healthcare services	165	173	335	357	324
Legal services	185	137	173	111	122
Manufacturing industries*	94	66	100	129	73
Telecommunications	42	89	80	124	63
Architecture/ Surveying	44	45	24	180	20
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	-	-	1	17
Biotechnology	10	10	12	13	5
Others	2 705	5 033	12 452	18 402	10 464
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 097</b>	<b>17 501</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

Note: Applications approved in a year may not all be received in the same year. The same applies to the tables below.

\* Industries/sectors related to manufacturing and engineering. The same applies to the tables below.

Monthly remuneration	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Below \$20,000	1 477	4 863	14 142	17 253	12 999
\$20,000 - \$39,999	4 891	5 896	7 783	9 026	7 403
\$40,000 - \$79,999	3 885	4 107	3 831	4 519	4 288
\$80,000 or above	2 844	2 635	2 598	3 445	3 108
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 097</b>	<b>17 501</b>	<b>28 354</b>	<b>34 243</b>	<b>27 798</b>

Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTF)

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Commerce and trade	1 011	1 902	3 511	4 405	3 830
Academic research and education	2 126	2 522	4 028	4 280	3 715
Engineering and construction*	1 304	1 396	2 537	2 832	3 555
Arts/Culture	192	399	3 906	3 940	3 253
Financial services	2 179	2 812	3 004	2 356	2 543
Information technology	579	1 024	1 183	1 200	1 337
Recreation and sports	119	128	936	3 203	971
Medical and healthcare services	1 689	527	165	220	534
Tourism	10	16	159	298	139
Telecommunications	149	289	188	198	133
Legal services	109	115	121	100	126
Catering services	31	41	105	159	118
Manufacturing industries*	72	84	164	194	92
Biotechnology	302	78	60	63	63
Architecture/ Surveying	37	28	152	49	21
Traditional Chinese medicine	-	2	4	9	4
Others	259	478	1 652	1 941	4 594
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 168</b>	<b>11 841</b>	<b>21 875</b>	<b>25 447</b>	<b>25 028</b>

Monthly remuneration	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Below \$20,000	2 664	2 491	7 379	10 592	9 645
\$20,000 - \$39,999	4 206	4 748	8 230	9 008	9 151
\$40,000 - \$79,999	2 232	3 082	4 693	4 487	4 830
\$80,000 or above	1 066	1 520	1 573	1 360	1 402
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 168</b>	<b>11 841</b>	<b>21 875</b>	<b>25 447</b>	<b>25 028</b>

Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Artificial intelligence*	17	11	36	40	74
Biotechnology*	8	21	24	11	28
Integrated circuit design*	3	1	3	6	11
Cybersecurity	1	1	5	10	9
Microelectronics*	-	-	4	8	8
Material science*	5	14	5	7	7
Data analytics	6	5	15	8	4
Green technology*	2	3	8	6	4
Robotics*	3	-	7	5	3
Quantum technology* <sup>^</sup>	N/A	-	-	-	2
Financial technologies	3	18	8	9	1
The Internet-of-Things*	1	1	4	1	1
Advanced communication technologies* <sup>^</sup>	4	-	1	6	1
Digital entertainment	-	7	5	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

<sup>^</sup> The Government expanded the coverage of the TechTAS in December 2022 to include one new technology area (i.e. quantum technology) and renamed 5G communications as advanced communication technologies.

Monthly remuneration	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Below \$20,000	1	-	2	-	-
\$20,000 - \$39,999	26	44	73	63	71
\$40,000 - \$79,999	19	27	38	46	66
\$80,000 or above	7	11	12	10	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>153</b>

### Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS)

Industry/Sector	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Financial and accounting services	539	1 446	4 354	2 815	2 496
Information technology and telecommunications	557	1 018	3 296	2 204	1 890
Commerce and trade	100	232	960	1 019	535
Manufacturing industries*	112	279	794	683	320
Business support and human resources	87	250	984	784	276
Academic research and education	136	311	504	345	218
Human health and veterinary services	81	175	538	406	201
Architecture, surveying, engineering and construction*	166	246	626	427	194
Logistics and transportation	28	69	171	150	153
Legal services	72	191	498	347	70
Sports	8	13	40	68	55
Arts and culture	18	36	106	51	48
Broadcasting and entertainment	18	46	126	106	32
Catering and tourism	6	19	61	75	31
Others	52	147	573	524	390
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 980</b>	<b>4 478</b>	<b>13 631</b>	<b>10 004</b>	<b>6 909</b>

Note: The number of approved applications refers to the number of successful cases passing the selection exercise.

Successful applicants under the QMAS are not required to have secured offers of employment before coming to Hong Kong. The Immigration Department (ImmD) therefore does not maintain statistics on the remuneration of the successful applicants.

### Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)

At present, over 90% of those coming to or staying in Hong Kong under the IANG are fresh graduates. They are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have taken up employment in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants and their remuneration when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

### Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)

Applicants under the ASSG are not required to have secured offers of employment in Hong Kong upon application. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the industries engaged by successful applicants and their remuneration when they first arrived in Hong Kong.

### Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS)

Persons admitted to Hong Kong under the TTPS will normally be granted an initial stay of two or three years to explore opportunities without other conditions of stay upon entry. During the validity of the first visas, the talents are not required to inform the ImmD when they are employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong. However, when applying for extension of stay, they are required to provide the ImmD with concrete supporting information and documents to prove that they have been employed or have established/joined in business in Hong Kong so that an extension of stay can be granted.

The ImmD does not maintain the other statistics mentioned in the question.

- (b) According to the 2023 Manpower Projection published in 2024 by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB), Hong Kong is expected to face an overall manpower shortage of 180 000 by 2028, over one-third of which are “skilled technical workers”. In fact, Hong Kong is facing an ageing workforce and a lack of new entrants to skilled trades. It is expected that there will be serious shortage of technical workers in various industries. To address the acute manpower shortage in local skilled trades, the Government has introduced a new channel under the GEP and the ASMTF on 30 June 2025 to allow qualified and experienced non-degree mid-level technical professionals to apply for entry into Hong Kong to join the eight skilled trades facing acute manpower shortage, including new industrialisation technicians.

The Government has been closely monitoring the development of the local manpower market. The LWB has already commenced a mid-term update of the manpower projection with the latest situation of 2025 as the basis, focusing on the analysis of global and local development impacts (including factors such as changes in economic landscape and prevalence of artificial intelligence and business digitalisation) on the manpower outlook in 2028. For this, the LWB will adopt the domain of economic activities comprising manufacturing and new industrialisation-related industries as announced in 2025 by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau in the projection update so as to understand the manpower demands and gaps of such industries. The findings of the mid-term update are expected to be announced in the fourth quarter of 2026.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)123**

**(Question Serial No. 2064)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

A provision of \$50 million is proposed in the Budget to support the organisation of artificial intelligence (AI) application courses and competitions by technology enterprises and institutions. However, many government-funded training courses in AI applications or new industries (e.g. the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP)) are often in the favour of persons with relevant technological background or engineering experience, deterring non-skilled workers and enterprises that intend to undergo transformation. In this connection, would the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the numbers of courses related to AI and machine learning that are covered by the NITTP in the past 3 years? How many enterprises have applied to enrol their employees for the said courses during this period, and what are the total number of participants with grant approved and the amount involved?
- (b) Among the said participants with grant approved, what is the proportion of participants originally engaged in non-skilled, non-engineering or non-research and development (e.g. administration, clerical and sales) positions? Has the Government evaluated whether the current approval threshold will hinder the transition of employees in traditional service industry or clerical positions to digital position through the programme; and
- (c) In view of the employment impact of AI on traditional clerical jobs, will the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau join hands with the Labour and Welfare Bureau (including the Employees Retraining Board and the Continuing Education Fund under it) to conduct inter-departmental discussions for the provision of additional “dedicated bridging course in AI transformation” for persons with no relevant technological background? Besides, will the Government consider relaxing the application threshold of relevant technology training subsidy schemes to broaden the spectrum of beneficiaries and enlarge the talent pool of common technologies in Hong Kong? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Wing-wai, Ray (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

- (a) & (b) According to the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) implements the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP) which subsidises local enterprises on a 1(Government):1(enterprise) matching basis for them to arrange training for their staff in advanced technologies, including training related to artificial intelligence (AI). In the past 3 years (i.e. 2023 to 2025), the NITTP approved about 280 courses covering AI and machine learning as well as 2 638 training grant applications from 894 enterprises, providing technology training for about 4 871 staff, which involved a total funding amount of around \$65 million. The ITC does not maintain a breakdown of participants by their original positions in terms of non-skilled, non-engineering or non-research and development positions.
- (c) The ITIB pointed out that the 2026-27 Budget proposed a series of measures to promote “AI training for all”, such as allocating \$50 million primarily to enhance students, youth and the public’s understanding and application capabilities of AI, fostering AI literacy and a culture of responsible AI use. The ITIB is in discussion with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks, Cyberport, and the Hong Kong Productivity Council and will soon invite these 3 institutions to submit proposals. Together with technology companies and academic institutions, they will organise courses and competitions that are diverse, engaging and closely aligned with the needs of the target groups. Additionally, the ITIB plans to organise a series of easily understood AI popularisation classes/lectures, to be presented by experts and industry leaders, with the aim to enhance public understanding of AI safety applications, future trends, and opportunities. The implementation details of these measures are being drawn up and the measures are expected to be rolled out in phases as early as from the second quarter of this year.

Regarding the NITTP, the ITIB indicated that it will closely monitor technology development and industry needs as well as review the NITTP arrangements in a timely manner.

In addition, employees can receive training related to AI through various channels, for example, training courses across different areas, including AI, provided by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB). The ERB is undertaking a reform and, upon its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong, will provide more skill-based training courses, including AI application, to assist the local workforce to continuously enhance their skills and competitiveness. The Government will continue to encourage course providers of the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) to design and offer new courses and apply for registration as CEF reimbursable course to meet market development and needs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)124**

**(Question Serial No. 0138)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026-27 that, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) will strengthen the network of working partners to cover those from industries relating to the eight key areas for the development of Hong Kong, and collaborate with them, together with Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in the Mainland Offices and overseas Economic and Trade Offices, Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, Invest Hong Kong and Belt and Road Office, to proactively reach out to talents by participating in key Mainland and overseas job fairs, exhibitions and conventions as well as staging standalone events and fora in priority target markets so as to attract global talents and professionals to build Hong Kong into an international high-calibre talent hub. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the overall staffing establishment and estimates of expenditure for HKTE in 2026-27? Compared to 2025-26, what is the expansion rate in establishment? Which target markets (for example, ASEAN, Middle East, Europe and America) will the additional manpower resources primarily be deployed to?
2. In line with the development of "eight centres" in Hong Kong, which overseas markets and types of professionals will be targeted in 2026-27? Please provide a breakdown of the planned recruitment activities by industry and target market.
3. In the past year, among the talents admitted to Hong Kong through HKTE, how many were from the Belt and Road countries? What was their percentage share?
4. What new measures does the Government have in place to ensure that talents are "attracted and retained"? For example, will there be enhanced facilitation and support for their family members (including spouse's employment and children's education)?

Asked by: Hon YAO Cho-fai, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

1. In 2026-27, the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) has an establishment of 37 positions including 7 civil service posts, representing a decrease of one post when compared to 2025-26. The estimated expenditure for 2026-27 is approximately \$89 million. During the year, HKTE will continue deploying existing resources to proactively

conduct outreach publicity and promotional activities, as well as visits to priority markets in the Mainland and overseas to attract international talents.

2. To support the development of the “eight centres” in Hong Kong, HKTE has conducted data analyses and researches based on the Talent List to deliver targeted promotion by region and industry. In 2026-27, its overseas visit plan will cover the Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America regions, focusing on attracting talents in the fields of finance, trade and commerce, innovation and technology, arts and culture, and aviation and maritime. During the visits, HKTE will meet with representatives of eligible universities or institutions under the Top Talent Pass Scheme, chambers of commerce and trade associations of the cities visited. It will participate in key job fairs, exhibitions and conventions as well as organise events and forums in these places to build an extensive and well-connected network for promoting Hong Kong’s development opportunities and talent attraction measures. It will also precisely disseminate the latest talent insights to specific target groups to actively attract international talents from diverse professional backgrounds, thereby injecting new impetus into the development of the “eight centres”.
3. A breakdown of approved applications under various talent admission schemes by region of applicants over the past year is tabulated below:

Top Talent Pass Scheme

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	25 350
Canada	308
The United States	293
Australia	162
Singapore	111
Others	816
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 040</b>

Note: Approved applications may not necessarily correspond to the applications received within the same year. The Immigration Department does not maintain a statistical breakdown by country/region for approved applications under the “Others” category. The same applies hereafter.

General Employment Policy

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
South Korea	5 391

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
Japan	3 350
Taiwan, China	2 271
The United States	1 787
The United Kingdom	2 075
India	1 386
France	1 034
The Philippines	885
Malaysia	674
Thailand	609
Others	8 336
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 798</b>

Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals

The scheme is only applicable to Mainland residents; hence, all applicants are Mainland residents.

Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	25 209
South Korea	159
India	115
Taiwan, China	76
Malaysia	71
Macao Special Administrative Region	68
Pakistan	50
The United States	27

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
Canada	23
France	17
Others	615
<b>Total</b>	<b>26 430</b>

Technology Talent Admission Scheme

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	137
The United States	5
Canada	4
India	2
Italy	1
Singapore	1
South Korea	1
Others	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>

Quality Migrant Admission Scheme

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
Chinese Mainland	6 691
Canada	57
Australia	43
The United States	27
Others	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 909</b>

Note: The number of approved applications refers to those that have successfully passed the vetting procedures.

Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents

Region	2025-26 (As of February 2026)
The United Kingdom	19
The United States	17
Canada	15
Australia	7
The Netherlands	2
Singapore	2
France	1
Others	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>

4. HKTE has been maintaining close and direct liaison with talents and analysing their enquiries and requests for supporting services, which have been received by HKTE or designated working partners on the online platform, to understand and follow up their development and needs in Hong Kong, as well as to assist them and their families to settle in for long-term development. To address the needs of incoming talents, HKTE organised 58 online and offline workshops, seminars and job fairs in 2025, covering a wide range of living topics such as job seeking, business start-up, children's education, etc. These included 12 online and offline job fairs co-organised with the industries and employer organisations to directly match job-seeking talents with employers. On children's education, HKTE will continue to collaborate with school sponsoring bodies or school associations to organise seminars to provide more comprehensive information on local education. In 2026, HKTE will organise at least 55 online and offline themed seminars on living and working in Hong Kong, job fairs, workshops (including Cantonese learning classes) and social integration activities (including Talent+ Volunteer Programme). HKTE will collaborate with volunteer groups to encourage incoming talents to actively participate in volunteer services so as to strengthen the connection and exchange between talents and the local community. Such work helps facilitate the early integration of incoming talents and their families into the local community as well as their settlement in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)125**

**(Question Serial No. 0144)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Talent Engagement and Support

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In 2026-27, the Hong Kong Talent Engage plans to continuously attract global talents to Hong Kong through seven strategies, such as stepping up online and offline promotion, enhancing website functions, expanding the network of working partners, organising job fairs and outreach visits, and strengthening collaboration with the Mainland. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the estimated expenditure for each of the above tasks? What is the difference in overall resource commitment compared to last year?
2. How many target talents does the Government expect to reach through the above series of publicity and promotional activities? Have specific performance indicators, such as number of newly registered job seekers or number of talents arrived in Hong Kong, been set to evaluate the effectiveness?

Asked by: Hon YAO Cho-fai, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. The total expenditure of the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) for 2025-26 and 2026-27, broken down by item, is as follows:

(\$'000)	2025-26 Revised	2026-27 Estimate
Salary	40,800	46,500
Operating expenditure	46,000	42,600
Total	86,800	89,100

The operating expenditure is for local and overseas publicity and promotion, organisation of various talent attraction activities, provision of support services for talents, etc.

2. HKTE formulates targeted recruitment and publicity strategies for different talent groups, thereby proactively driving outreach publicity to promote Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract international talents of diverse backgrounds to the city. It also collaborates with partners from different sectors to provide incoming talents with comprehensive one-stop support services, facilitating their long-term career development in Hong Kong. In 2025, HKTE established direct contact with over 41 000 talents worldwide through overseas visits, including participating in local career expos, exhibitions and conventions, as well as organising themed seminars, workshops, and integration activities, etc. It has also engaged and served over 260 000 talents through online initiatives, such as organising online job fairs globally and themed webinars, etc.

While the decision to relocate to Hong Kong is based on personal circumstances and various other considerations, over 270 000 talents have arrived under various talent admission schemes as of end-February 2026 since the launch of a series of talent attraction measures by the current-term Government in late 2022. This reflects Hong Kong's strong appeal to international talents. HKTE will continue to step up its efforts in promoting Hong Kong's strengths and talent attraction measures to attract more global talents to the city.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)126**

**(Question Serial No. 2545)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): ()  
Programme: (7) Subvention: Vocational Training Council (Vocational Training)  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) will continue to support the implementation of the pilot Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme to attract non-local VTC students to remain in Hong Kong for employment in the relevant trades upon graduation, thereby addressing the manpower needs of Hong Kong. The scheme has been implemented on a pilot basis for 2 years since the 2024/25 academic year. Would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of applicants and approved applicants since the implementation of the scheme;
2. a breakdown by trade of the numbers of approved applicants;
3. whether the Government has conducted a review on the effectiveness of the scheme, and whether improvement measures will be taken. If so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon YAO Cho-fai, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

- (1)-(2) With an ageing workforce and a lack of new entrants to trades, Hong Kong is expected to have a persistent shortage of technical workers across industries. The Government announced in the 2023 Policy Address the pilot implementation of the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS), allowing non-local students enrolled in eligible full-time Higher Diploma programmes (eligible programmes) offered by the Vocational Training Council in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years to apply to stay in Hong Kong for one year after graduation to seek jobs relevant to their disciplines. The initial cohort of students admitted in the 2024/25 academic year will graduate by mid-2026, at which time VPAS will be open for application. Relevant graduates must secure employment in a job relevant to their disciplines in Hong Kong before the expiry of their first visa in order to apply for an extension.

- (3) VPAS, since its announcement, has attracted many non-local students to enrol in the eligible programmes, helping to recruit more entrants to these relevant trades in the long term. Considering this, the Government has decided to extend the pilot arrangement for two years to cover non-local students enrolling in eligible programmes in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years. Various professional trades facing manpower shortage are covered by VPAS-eligible programmes. The Labour and Welfare Bureau will closely monitor the application rate of VPAS and the employment situation of approved applicants to assess the effectiveness of the Scheme.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)127**

**(Question Serial No. 1229)**

Head: (173) Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency

Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent

Programme: (1) Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer: Head, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency  
(Gilford LAW)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) under this Programme, will the Government inform this Committee of the respective numbers of reimbursable courses and subsidy recipients under the CEF in the past 3 financial years, with a breakdown by industry/skill category?

Asked by: Hon FAN Chun-wah, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

Breakdown of the numbers of courses with valid registration under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) and the numbers of subsidy recipients by area of study in the past 3 years are set out at the Annex.

**Numbers of CEF Courses with Valid Registration and  
Numbers of Subsidy Recipients by Area of Study**

2023-24

<b>Area of study (Note (i))</b>	<b>Number of courses with valid registration</b>	<b>Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))</b>
Business Services	-	4 949
Design		931
Financial Services		2 992
Languages		6 188
Logistics		573
Tourism		480
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		32
Creative Industries		912
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))	112	8 228
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	144	949
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	220	1 265
A03 - Business and Management	1 798	12 144
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	261	1 685
A05 - Education	83	1 786
A06 - Engineering and Technology	432	3 192
A07 - Humanities	143	998
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	282	1 841
A09 - Law	79	482
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	117	519
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	268	4 507
A12 - Sciences	137	865
A13 - Services	319	2 310
A14 - Social Sciences	300	2 537
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 695</b>	<b>60 365</b>

Area of study (Note (i))	Number of courses with valid registration	Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))
Business Services	-	727
Design		159
Financial Services		224
Languages		3 026
Logistics		166
Tourism		17
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		-
Creative Industries		207
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))		105
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	146	1 301
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	224	1 891
A03 - Business and Management	1 776	20 139
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	268	2 388
A05 - Education	88	1 807
A06 - Engineering and Technology	427	3 445
A07 - Humanities	111	980
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	252	2 913
A09 - Law	81	656
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	116	603
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	273	4 722
A12 - Sciences	139	997
A13 - Services	339	2 839
A14 - Social Sciences	245	2 630
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 590</b>	<b>62 104</b>

2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)

Area of study (Note (i))	Number of courses with valid registration	Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))
Business Services	-	75
Design		33
Financial Services		2
Languages		435
Logistics		7
Tourism		-
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		-
Creative Industries		2
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))		123
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	144	1 087
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	239	1 483
A03 - Business and Management	1 785	21 075
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	274	2 468
A05 - Education	94	1 591
A06 - Engineering and Technology	438	3 096
A07 - Humanities	124	903
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	251	4 415
A09 - Law	76	633
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	134	487
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	280	4 877
A12 - Sciences	145	1 001
A13 - Services	334	2 785
A14 - Social Sciences	286	2 753
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 727</b>	<b>62 740</b>

Note (i) Since 1 April 2019, applications have been accepted for registration under the CEF in respect of all courses registered under the Qualifications Register, including SCS-based courses; Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies-based (SGC-based) courses; and non SCS/SGC-based courses which are divided into 14 classified areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14).

Note (ii) A person may claim for reimbursement of 1 or more CEF courses.

- Note (iii) Since 1 April 2023, all CEF courses previously registered under the 8 specified domains have expired, and should be registered under the 14 areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14) under the Qualifications Register instead. For applicants who have enrolled in the CEF courses which were previously registered under the 8 specified domains and commenced on or before 31 March 2023, they may submit applications for fee reimbursement within 1 year upon the successful completion of the courses (according to the course completion date or the date of the specified language benchmark test/examination (if applicable), whichever is later).
- Note (iv) The scopes of SCS-based industries under the Qualifications Framework include Arboriculture and Horticulture, Automotive, Banking, Beauty and Hairdressing, Catering, Electrical and Mechanical Services, Elderly Care Service, Fashion, Human Resource Management, Import and Export, Information and Communications Technology, Insurance, Jewellery, Logistics, Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals and Plastics), Printing and Publishing, Property Management, Retail, Security Services, Testing, Inspection and Certification, Travel as well as Watch and Clock.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)128**

**(Question Serial No. 0869)**

Head: (173) Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency

Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent

Programme: (1) Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer: Head, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency  
(Gilford LAW)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Continuing Education Fund (CEF), will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the number of newly-opened CEF accounts in each of the past 2 years and in the current year to date;
- (2) the respective numbers of CEF accounts which have received a subsidy of \$5,000 to \$9,999, \$10,000 to \$14,999, \$15,000 to \$19,999, \$20,000 to \$24,999 and \$25,000 since the establishment of the CEF;
- (3) the median course fee of CEF courses as well as the highest and lowest course fees for any single course at present; and
- (4) breakdown of the numbers of courses with valid registration under the CEF, the numbers of subsidy recipients and the average amounts of reimbursement by area of study in each of the past 2 years and in the current year to date?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

- (1) The numbers of newly-opened accounts under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)</b>
29 877	34 907	36 355

- (2) As at 31 January 2026, the numbers of accounts which have received subsidy of \$5,000 or above since the establishment of CEF are tabulated below:

<b>Amount of subsidy received</b>	<b>Number of CEF accounts</b>
\$5,000-\$9,999	174 076
\$10,000-\$14,999	359 829
\$15,000-\$19,999	37 598
\$20,000-\$24,999	33 322
\$25,000 (subsidy ceiling)	12 378

- (3) The current subsidy ceiling under the CEF is \$25,000. The co-payment ratios by learners for the first \$10,000 subsidy is 20% of the course fee and that for the remaining \$15,000 subsidy is 40% of the course fee. As at 31 January 2026, the median course fee of CEF courses was \$8,175. The highest course fee for a single course was \$750,000, while the lowest was \$480.
- (4) Breakdown of the numbers of courses with valid registration under the CEF, the numbers of subsidy recipients and the average amounts of reimbursement by area of study in the past 3 years are set out at the Annex.

## Numbers of CEF Courses with Valid Registration, Numbers of Subsidy Recipients and Average Amounts of Reimbursement by Area of Study

2023-24

Area of study (Note (i))	Number of courses with valid registration	Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))	Average amount of reimbursement (\$)
Business Services	-	4 949	7,126
Design		931	7,009
Financial Services		2 992	6,501
Languages		6 188	8,033
Logistics		573	9,941
Tourism		480	5,855
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		32	8,164
Creative Industries		912	12,257
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))		112	8 228
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	144	949	9,019
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	220	1 265	9,744
A03 - Business and Management	1 798	12 144	9,160
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	261	1 685	6,582
A05 - Education	83	1 786	10,364
A06 - Engineering and Technology	432	3 192	7,706
A07 - Humanities	143	998	10,142
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	282	1 841	9,622
A09 - Law	79	482	9,012
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	117	519	5,064
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	268	4 507	7,553
A12 - Sciences	137	865	7,351
A13 - Services	319	2 310	8,628
A14 - Social Sciences	300	2 537	8,249
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 695</b>	<b>60 365</b>	-

Area of study (Note (i))	Number of courses with valid registration	Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))	Average amount of reimbursement (\$)
Business Services	-	727	9,907
Design		159	14,488
Financial Services		224	4,385
Languages		3 026	7,201
Logistics		166	10,705
Tourism		17	3,958
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		-	-
Creative Industries		207	15,741
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))		105	10 267
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	146	1 301	8,062
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	224	1 891	9,098
A03 - Business and Management	1 776	20 139	8,465
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	268	2 388	5,912
A05 - Education	88	1 807	9,175
A06 - Engineering and Technology	427	3 445	6,631
A07 - Humanities	111	980	8,499
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	252	2 913	8,320
A09 - Law	81	656	9,572
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	116	603	4,861
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	273	4 722	7,316
A12 - Sciences	139	997	6,258
A13 - Services	339	2 839	8,323
A14 - Social Sciences	245	2 630	7,656
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 590</b>	<b>62 104</b>	-

2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)

Area of study (Note (i))	Number of courses with valid registration	Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))	Average amount of reimbursement (\$)
Business Services	-	75	21,045
Design		33	22,675
Financial Services		2	10,056
Languages		435	9,040
Logistics		7	17,536
Tourism		-	-
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		-	-
Creative Industries		2	7,487
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))		123	13 532
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	144	1 087	10,006
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	239	1 483	11,417
A03 - Business and Management	1 785	21 075	10,128
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	274	2 468	6,832
A05 - Education	94	1 591	10,034
A06 - Engineering and Technology	438	3 096	7,731
A07 - Humanities	124	903	8,709
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	251	4 415	9,762
A09 - Law	76	633	11,174
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	134	487	6,265
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	280	4 877	8,446
A12 - Sciences	145	1 001	6,797
A13 - Services	334	2 785	9,748
A14 - Social Sciences	286	2 753	8,764
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 727</b>	<b>62 740</b>	-

Note (i) Since 1 April 2019, applications have been accepted for registration under the CEF in respect of all courses registered under the Qualifications Register, including SCS-based courses; Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies-based (SGC-based) courses; and non SCS/SGC-based courses which are divided into 14 classified areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14).

Note (ii) A person may claim for reimbursement of 1 or more CEF courses.

- Note (iii) Since 1 April 2023, all CEF courses previously registered under the 8 specified domains have expired and should be registered under the 14 areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14) under the Qualifications Register instead. For applicants who have enrolled in the CEF courses which were previously registered under the 8 specified domains and commenced on or before 31 March 2023, they may submit applications for fee reimbursement within 1 year upon the successful completion of the courses (according to the course completion date or the date of the specified language benchmark test/examination (if applicable), whichever is later).
- Note (iv) The scopes of SCS-based industries under the Qualifications Framework include Arboriculture and Horticulture, Automotive, Banking, Beauty and Hairdressing, Catering, Electrical and Mechanical Services, Elderly Care Service, Fashion, Human Resource Management, Import and Export, Information and Communications Technology, Insurance, Jewellery, Logistics, Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals and Plastics), Printing and Publishing, Property Management, Retail, Security Services, Testing, Inspection and Certification, Travel as well as Watch and Clock.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)129**

**(Question Serial No. 1497)**

Head: (173) Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency

Subhead (No. & title): (700) General non-recurrent

Programme: (1) Student Assistance Scheme

Controlling Officer: Head, Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency (Gilford LAW)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It has been 24 years since the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) was established in 2002, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the expenditure involved in CEF reimbursement claims in each of the past 5 years;
- (2) the number and proportion of accounts that have used 100%, over 75%, over 50%, over 25% and none of their CEF subsidy balance in tabular form;
- (3) breakdown of the number of courses with valid registration under the CEF, including courses involving Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications, and the numbers of subsidy recipients by area of study over the past 2 years; and
- (4) the details regarding the channels adopted and the estimated expenditure involved for the promotion of CEF courses over the past year, as well as the promotion plan for the upcoming year?

Asked by: Hon TAM Chun-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (1) The total amounts of reimbursement under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) in the past 5 years are tabulated below:

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)</b>
<b>Total amount of reimbursement (\$ million)</b>	452.2	467.4	473.8	448.1	496.4

- (2) The current subsidy ceiling for each eligible applicant is \$25,000. As at 31 January 2026, the numbers of accounts which have received subsidy of \$5,000 or above are tabulated below. The Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency (WFSFAA) does not maintain a breakdown by percentage as mentioned in the question.

<b>Amount of subsidy received</b>	<b>Number of CEF accounts (%)</b>
\$5,000-\$9,999	174 076 (17.7%)
\$10,000-\$14,999	359 829 (36.6%)
\$15,000-\$19,999	37 598 (3.8%)
\$20,000-\$24,999	33 322 (3.4%)
\$25,000 (subsidy ceiling)	12 378 (1.3%)

As at the same date, there were about 980 000 accounts under the CEF, among which about 249 000 account holders have not used any subsidy, representing around 25% of the total number of accounts.

- (3) Break down of the numbers of courses with valid registration under the CEF and the numbers of subsidy recipients in the past 2 years by area of study are set out at the Annex. As at end March 2025 and January 2026, the number of CEF courses carried titles related to the area of artificial intelligence were about 30 and 60 respectively, and the numbers of subsidy recipients enrolled in such courses were about 140 and 280 respectively.
- (4) The Office of the CEF under the WFSFAA has all along been promoting the CEF and the way to claim the subsidy through various channels, such as website, electronic platforms and promotional leaflets. A course search engine is also available on the website for public access to CEF course information. Furthermore, CEF course providers have assisted in promoting the CEF and encouraging learners to submit claims. Under the CEF Terms and Conditions, the promotional materials of CEF courses prepared by the course providers must state clearly that these courses are on the list of CEF courses and depict the Qualifications Register registration numbers and validity periods, etc. Since promoting the CEF and monitoring course providers' compliance with the above requirements are part of the regular duties of the WFSFAA, a breakdown of the estimated expenditure involved is not available.

**Numbers of CEF Courses with Valid Registration and  
Numbers of Subsidy Recipients by Area of Study**

2024-25

<b>Area of study (Note (i))</b>	<b>Number of courses with valid registration</b>	<b>Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))</b>
Business Services	-	727
Design		159
Financial Services		224
Languages		3 026
Logistics		166
Tourism		17
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		-
Creative Industries		207
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))	105	10 267
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	146	1 301
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	224	1 891
A03 - Business and Management	1 776	20 139
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	268	2 388
A05 - Education	88	1 807
A06 - Engineering and Technology	427	3 445
A07 - Humanities	111	980
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	252	2 913
A09 - Law	81	656
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	116	603
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	273	4 722
A12 - Sciences	139	997
A13 - Services	339	2 839
A14 - Social Sciences	245	2 630
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 590</b>	<b>62 104</b>

2025-26 (as at 31 January 2026)

<b>Area of study (Note (i))</b>	<b>Number of courses with valid registration</b>	<b>Number of subsidy recipients (Note (ii))</b>
Business Services	-	75
Design		33
Financial Services		2
Languages		435
Logistics		7
Tourism		-
Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills for the Workplace		-
Creative Industries		2
Specification of Competency Standards (SCS)-based (Note (iv))		123
A01 - Architecture and Town Planning	144	1 087
A02 - Arts, Design and Performing Arts	239	1 483
A03 - Business and Management	1 785	21 075
A04 - Computer Science and Information Technology	274	2 468
A05 - Education	94	1 591
A06 - Engineering and Technology	438	3 096
A07 - Humanities	124	903
A08 - Languages and Related Studies	251	4 415
A09 - Law	76	633
A10 - Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations	134	487
A11 - Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences	280	4 877
A12 - Sciences	145	1 001
A13 - Services	334	2 785
A14 - Social Sciences	286	2 753
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 727</b>	<b>62 740</b>

Note (i) Since 1 April 2019, applications have been accepted for registration under the CEF in respect of all courses registered under the Qualifications Register, including SCS-based courses; Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies-based (SGC-based) courses; and non SCS/SGC-based courses which are divided into 14 classified areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14).

Note (ii) A person may claim for reimbursement of 1 or more CEF courses.

- Note (iii) Since 1 April 2023, all CEF courses previously registered under the 8 specified domains have expired, and should be registered under the 14 areas of study and training (i.e. A01 - A14) under the Qualifications Register instead. For applicants who have enrolled in the CEF courses which were previously registered under the 8 specified domains and commenced on or before 31 March 2023, they may submit applications for fee reimbursement within 1 year upon the successful completion of the courses (according to the course completion date or the date of the specified language benchmark test/examination (if applicable), whichever is later).
- Note (iv) The scopes of SCS-based industries under the Qualifications Framework include Arboriculture and Horticulture, Automotive, Banking, Beauty and Hairdressing, Catering, Electrical and Mechanical Services, Elderly Care Service, Fashion, Human Resource Management, Import and Export, Information and Communications Technology, Insurance, Jewellery, Logistics, Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals and Plastics), Printing and Publishing, Property Management, Retail, Security Services, Testing, Inspection and Certification, Travel as well as Watch and Clock.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)130**

**(Question Serial No. 3688)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 239 of the Budget Speech that the Working Group on Promoting Silver Economy announced 30 measures last year, most of which have achieved positive outcomes. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following information in the past 2 years:

- (a) Regarding the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM):
  - (i) the number of applications received;
  - (ii) the amount of allowance granted; and
  - (iii) the respective year-on-year rates of increase or decrease (set out by age of the employees engaged and by industry);
- (b) The number of EPEM applications rejected and the reasons for rejection;
- (c) Please set out in detail the following items in respect of EPEM:
  - (i) all on-the-job training (OJT) courses provided;
  - (ii) the expenditure involved in organising OJT; and
  - (iii) the staff establishment;
- (d) Please set out in detail the following items in respect of the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme):
  - (i) the number of applications received;
  - (ii) the amount of allowance granted, set out by the following 3 categories:
    - (1) part-time employment;
    - (2) completion of full-time employment for 6 consecutive months; and
    - (3) completion of full-time employment for 12 consecutive months;
  - (iii) the expenditure involved; and
  - (iv) the staff establishment; and
- (e) The number of cases in which applicants under the REA Scheme were not granted allowance due to failure to meet the requirement of completing full-time employment for 6 consecutive months, and the main reasons for their failure to meet this requirement.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire job seekers aged 40 or above, and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each job seeker aged 60 or above who is unemployed or has left the workforce will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 6 to 12 months; and engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 to 59 will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$4,000 per month for 3 to 6 months.

In 2024 and 2025, there were respectively 4 443 and 4 491 eligible placements under EPEM each year. During the period, LD respectively received 2 556 and 2 980 preliminary applications for OJT allowance each year (some of which were approved in the next year), representing year-on-year increases of 29% and 17% respectively. In 2024 and 2025, there were respectively 1 832 and 2 083 placements granted with OJT allowance each year, involving OJT allowance of \$33.62 million and \$44.59 million. Breakdowns of preliminary applications for OJT allowance by age of employees and industry are set out at Annex.

- (b) LD rejected 4 and 6 applications for OJT allowance under EPEM in 2024 and 2025 respectively. The reasons for rejection included employers' failure to provide the required information and submit applications within the specified timeframe, etc.
- (c) Employers under EPEM are required to provide employees with OJT, which includes understanding the company structure and personnel policies, products and services, workflows, occupational safety and health; and to assign mentors to the employees concerned, etc. The training is arranged and provided by employers, and thus no resources from LD are involved.
- (d) LD launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. As at February 2026, the REA Scheme recorded 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements. During the period, LD received 28 867 applications for re-employment allowance (REA) and approved 24 591 applications with \$237 million of REA disbursed. Of these, the amounts of REA approved for participants who have worked part-time, full-time for 6 consecutive months and full-time for 12 consecutive months were \$7.7 million, \$154 million and \$66.7 million respectively.

As at February 2026, the total expenditure of the REA Scheme was \$256 million. The REA Scheme is managed and implemented by LD through deployment of internal resources. As the staff concerned also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the staff establishment for implementing the REA Scheme cannot be separately identified.

- (e) As at February 2026, LD received 20 166 and 8 701 applications for REA submitted by participants of the REA Scheme who completed 6 months and 12 months of work

respectively. Participants of the REA Scheme are required to seek employment themselves and, upon securing employment, apply to LD for REA after completion of at least 6 consecutive months of work. LD does not keep figures on the participants who have not yet secured employment or who have failed to complete the employment periods required for REA or the reasons for such cases.

**Breakdown of preliminary applications  
for OJT allowance under EPEM  
by age of employees and industry  
in 2024 and 2025**

## (i) By age

Age	Preliminary applications for OJT allowance	
	2024	2025
40 - 59	1 452	1 762
60 or above	1 104	1 218
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 556</b>	<b>2 980</b>

## (ii) By industry

Industry	Preliminary applications for OJT allowance	
	2024	2025
Real estate and business services	959	1 200
Community, social and personal services	401	259
Manufacturing	153	110
Wholesale and retail trades	245	194
Import and export trades	154	522
Restaurants and hotels	173	197
Construction	124	149
Transport, storage and communications	173	115
Others	174	234
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 556</b>	<b>2 980</b>

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)131**

**(Question Serial No. 3566)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department regularly reviews the amounts of compensation payable under the Pneumoconiosis and Mesothelioma (Compensation) Ordinance. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please set out the numbers of new cases of pneumoconiosis (including silicosis, asbestosis and mesothelioma) in the past 3 years;
- (b) Please set out the amounts of compensation disbursed to persons suffering from pneumoconiosis by the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund (PCF) in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by type of compensation;
- (c) How much accumulated surplus is in PCF at the moment?
- (d) How much balance will remain in PCF as expected by the Government after 1 year after calculation of the levy imposed on construction operations and deduction of the compensations?
- (e) The Government has started to consolidate funds established outside the Government's accounts in recent years, with some being brought back to the Government's accounts. Given that PCF is financially healthy, has the Government considered bringing back part of the fund to the Government's accounts in future? Alternatively, will the Government enable the use of PCF in other construction industry related health funding schemes through legislative amendments? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- (a) A breakdown of new cases of pneumoconiosis (including silicosis and asbestosis) and mesothelioma as determined according to the Pneumoconiosis and Mesothelioma (Compensation) Ordinance (PMCO) from 2023 to 2025 is at Annex 1.

- (b) A breakdown of the amounts of compensation disbursed to eligible persons suffering from pneumoconiosis and mesothelioma or their family members by the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund (PCF) from 2023 to 2025 by compensation item is at Annex 2.
- (c) As at January 2026, the accumulated balance in PCF is \$3.78 billion (the figure is subject to final auditing).
- (d) After budgeting for the projected income and expenditure in 2026, the Pneumoconiosis Compensation Fund Board (PCFB) estimates that the accumulated balance in PCF will be \$3.73 billion at the end of 2026.
- (e) PMCO provides for the imposition of levy in respect of construction operations carried out in Hong Kong as well as quarry products extracted or produced so as to disburse various expenses prescribed in PMCO. PCFB is responsible for administering PCF which is established under PCMO and vested in PCFB. As the income of PCF does not come from government injections, the Government currently has no plan to transfer part of the PCF balance to the Government's accounts.

In accordance with the purposes prescribed in PMCO, PCFB provides compensation to persons suffering from pneumoconiosis and mesothelioma; conducts and finances educational, publicity, research and other programmes to prevent pneumoconiosis and mesothelioma; and conducts and finances programmes for the rehabilitation of persons suffering from these diseases, etc. PCFB is required to ensure that the use of PCF is in compliance with the purposes prescribed in PMCO. The Government currently has no plan to amend PMCO so as to authorise PCF to be used for purposes outside the scope of the above uses.

**Number of new cases of pneumoconiosis and mesothelioma  
as determined according to PMCO from 2023 to 2025**

	No. of cases		
	2023	2024	2025
Silicosis	78	79	89
Asbestosis	3	3	9
Mesothelioma	17	8	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>

**Breakdown of amounts of compensation disbursed to eligible persons suffering from pneumoconiosis and mesothelioma or their family members by PCF from 2023 to 2025 by compensation item**

Compensation item	2023	2024	2025*
	Amount (\$'000)		
Compensation for death resulting from pneumoconiosis and/or mesothelioma	29,424	41,714	32,287
Compensation for bereavement	1,737	1,406	1,665
Monthly compensation for incapacity, pain, suffering and loss of amenities	173,427	181,108	245,932
Compensation for incapacity prior to date of diagnosis	4,375	4,047	5,489
Compensation for care and attention	830	1,540	1,633
Funeral expenses	6,534	6,440	5,442
Medical expenses	3,906	4,741	4,944
Expenses for medical appliances	976	1,349	1,764
<b>Total amount<sup>#</sup></b>	<b>220,982</b>	<b>242,346</b>	<b>299,155</b>

\* The figures are subject to final auditing.

# Individual figures of compensation do not add up to the total owing to reversal of provision and rounding.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)132**

**(Question Serial No. 3307)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

The Labour Department is very concerned about the occupational safety of workers in workplaces. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please set out in table form the number of work injury accidents involving all government works contractors in the past year.
- (b) What penalties has the Government imposed on contractors for failing to provide proper occupational safety protection? Please set out in table form the type and number of such penalties, as well as the average staff establishment and expenditure for handling work related to such penalties.
- (c) Please provide a list of government contractors who were ordered to suspend from undertaking government works due to work injury accidents arising from negligence in occupational safety.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

- (a) Industrial accident statistics are released on a quarterly basis. In the first 3 quarters of 2025, a total of 80 industrial accidents (including 1 fatal case) involving public works were recorded based on the number of casualties. (The industrial accident statistics for the full year of 2025 will be released in late April 2026.) It is inappropriate for the Labour Department (LD) to disclose the names of the works contractors involved in the cases, as this would prejudice the chance of a fair trial of works contractors who are facing or may face legal proceedings.
- (b) During inspections of public works, law enforcement officers of the Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions under the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of LD, having regard to individual circumstances of breaches of occupational safety and health legislation, will take corresponding enforcement actions, including issuing improvement

notices and suspension notices as well as initiating prosecutions. In 2025, LD issued a total of 385 improvement notices, 29 suspension notices and initiated 319 prosecutions in relation to public works.

Taking enforcement against public works is part of Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions' regular duties. As the relevant staff also have to undertake other duties at the same time, the staff establishment involved and the relevant expenditure cannot be separately identified.

- (c) In 2025, a total of 36 contractors on the Development Bureau (DEVB)'s approved list were suspended from tendering for public works contracts due to their involvement in serious site safety incidents (regardless of whether they happened on public works sites or those of other public or private sector organisations). The list of DEVB approved contractors who are currently suspended from tendering for public works contracts is available on the website of DEVB ([https://www.devb.gov.hk/en/construction\\_sector\\_matters/contractors/index.html](https://www.devb.gov.hk/en/construction_sector_matters/contractors/index.html)).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)133**

**(Question Serial No. 3556)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

- (a) What is the dedicated estimated expenditure earmarked for promoting “silver employment” in 2026-27 in the above financial provision? Please set out in table form, broken down by:
- (i) on-the-job training allowance disbursed to employers;
  - (ii) expenditure on organising and publicising thematic job fairs targeting older persons; and
  - (iii) staff establishment as well as administrative and salary expenditures for implementing the related measures.
- (b) Regarding the modest increase of 0.3%, how will the Labour Department (LD) allocate resources to support “further” incentive measures? Have any provisions been made for exploring the establishment of a “Silver Employment Pilot Scheme” targeting specific industry sectors with manpower shortage (e.g. retail, catering or property management sectors)? If yes, what are the relevant budget arrangements and the estimated number of beneficiaries?
- (c) What key performance indicators (KPIs) has LD set to assess the financial performance of measures encouraging silver employment? Please provide:
- (i) the sustained employment rate after participation in the relevant schemes over the past year; and
  - (ii) the average unit administrative cost for the Government to place a silver-age job seeker into employment, for assessing whether the provision meets the principle of value for money?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Fu-yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Labour Department (LD) provides diversified employment services and implements employment programmes to assist job seekers (including older persons) in securing employment.

LD launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market. Each eligible participant who has worked for 12 consecutive months may receive a re-employment allowance (REA) of up to \$20,000. The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 68 934 participants and 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. Of which, 23% of participants and 24% of placements are persons aged 60 or above.

In tandem, LD implements the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) to encourage employers to hire older and middle-aged persons and provide them with on-the-job training (OJT). Employers engaging each unemployed job seeker aged 40 or above will receive a maximum OJT allowance of \$5,000 per month for 3 to 12 months. There were 4 491 eligible placements in 2025, of which 35% involved employees aged 60 or above.

In addition, LD organises various types of job fairs to provide job seekers (including older persons) and employers with effective and convenient employment and recruitment services. In 2025, LD held a total of 72 large-scale or district-based thematic job fairs suitable for older and middle-aged persons, more than doubled that of 2024.

In 2026-27, the estimated expenditures for disbursing allowance under the above scheme/ programme, organising large-scale thematic job fairs for older and middle-aged job seekers and employing contract staff to assist in implementing the REA Scheme are at Annex. The manpower and administrative expenses for administering and implementing the REA Scheme and EPEM as well as organising district-based thematic job fairs have been absorbed within the recurrent operational expenses of LD and cannot be separately identified.

LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme, along with EPEM, to explore measures for promoting employment of older and middle-aged persons.

- (c) LD conducts surveys regularly to find out the retention status of placed employees under EPEM. According to the surveys conducted up to December 2025, 83% of the employees had stayed in employment for 4 months or more, and 70% for 6 months or longer.

Since its launch, the REA Scheme received 28 867 applications for REA as at February 2026, of which 70% and 30% of participants completed 6 months of work and 12 months of work respectively.

As the staff of LD implementing the REA Scheme and EPEM also undertake other work related to employment services, the unit administrative cost per placement cannot be identified.

The numbers of placements are subject to factors such as the economy, labour market conditions and the personal circumstances of job seekers, it is not

appropriate to set key performance indicators for measures encouraging employment of older and middle-aged persons.

**Estimated expenditures in 2026-27 for  
disbursing allowance under the REA Scheme and EPDM,  
organising large-scale thematic job fairs for older and middle-aged job seekers,  
and employing contract staff to assist  
in implementing the REA Scheme**

<b>2026-27</b>	<b>Estimated expenditure (\$million)</b>
(i) REA disbursed to eligible participants under the REA Scheme	222
(ii) OJT allowance disbursed to eligible employers under EPDM	40
(iii) Organising large-scale thematic job fairs for older and middle-aged job seekers	2.19
(iv) Employing contract staff to assist in implementing the REA Scheme	8

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)134**

**(Question Serial No. 3306)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 245 of the Budget Speech that the Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) has been well received. Please set out the numbers of applications received by applicants' mode of employment (i.e. full-time and part-time employment), successful and unsuccessful applications, and applications being processed since the launch of the Scheme. What are the staff establishment and expenditure involved in processing applications of the Scheme last year and this year? Will the Government consider extending the Scheme or even regularising it? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons? What are the latest details of enhancing the REA Scheme? What are the staff establishment and expenditure involved in enhancing the Scheme this year?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 530)

Reply:

The Labour Department (LD) launched the three-year Re-employment Allowance Pilot Scheme (REA Scheme) on 15 July 2024 to encourage persons aged 40 or above who have not been in paid work for 3 consecutive months or more to join the employment market.

The response to the REA Scheme since its launch is very favourable, with 40 629 placements recorded as at February 2026. During the period, LD received 28 867 applications for re-employment allowance (REA) and approved 24 591 applications with \$237 million of REA disbursed, while 1 321 applications were rejected. The participants with REA approved are involved in 24 833 full-time placements and 2 416 part-time placements (a participant can be involved in more than 1 placement).

Since the REA Scheme is managed and reviewed by LD through deployment of internal resources, the related staff establishment and expenditure have been absorbed within the recurrent operational expenses of LD and cannot be separately identified. Besides, LD has employed contract staff to assist in implementing the REA Scheme since 2025-26. In 2025-26 (as at February), the expenditure on employing the relevant contract staff was around \$8 million. The relevant estimated expenditure for 2026-27 is \$8 million.

LD is conducting a mid-term review of the REA Scheme to collect and consolidate relevant details of participants and placements for analysis, along with the Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged, so as to explore measures for promoting the employment of older and middle-aged persons.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)135**

**(Question Serial No. 3655)**

Head: (90) Labour Department

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, the labour market of Hong Kong is experiencing structural transformation. Many entry-level jobs, which are conventionally the pathways for young entrants to engage in industries, are being gradually replaced by AI automation. Young people may lose the opportunities to accumulate work experiences under this trend, leading to a “K-shaped” development of the labour market. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) How many course modules under the existing and future training courses of the Youth Employment and Training Programme have included elements of generative AI operation and application to ensure that trainees' skills match market demand?
- (b) Will the Labour Department consider collaborating with the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau to launch a targeted AI internship programme for young people within the budget year, with a view to facilitating early progression of young people to high-value-added jobs and preventing them from being caught in the predicament of engaging in low-skill work due to their outdated skills?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

- (a)&(b) The Youth Employment and Training Programme (YETP) provides free and dedicated training and employment support services to young people aged 15 to 29 with an educational attainment at sub-degree level or below. Since April 2023, the Labour Department (LD) has strengthened its collaboration with the Employees Retraining Board (ERB). ERB offers diversified courses to YETP trainees, such as the Youth Training Programme specifically designed for young people, and training courses with generative artificial intelligence (AI) elements, covering industry sectors such as printing and publishing, real estate agency, wearing apparel and textile, financial services, business, design, catering, entertainment and performing arts, watch and jewellery, as well as information and communications technology.

LD will adjust and enhance youth employment services in a timely manner with regard to Hong Kong's economic situation and the condition of the youth employment market, including exploring with stakeholders on ways to enhance young people's skills and expand their AI-related knowledge and application, thereby strengthening their competitiveness in employment.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)136**

**(Question Serial No. 3455)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (3) Safety and Health at Work  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding work safety and health inspections of sites, would the Government provide the following information:

- (a) A breakdown by year of the numbers of the following inspections conducted by the Labour Department (LD) in the past 3 years
  - (i) surprise inspections and
  - (ii) regular inspections.
- (b) A breakdown by area of inspection (including but not limited to new construction works, renovation works and maintenance works) of the numbers of non-compliance cases identified by LD in the past 3 years; and a further breakdown by the consequence of non-compliance, including the numbers of written warnings, improvement notices and suspension notices issued, the number of prosecutions taken out and the number of convicted cases.
- (c) The staff establishment and relevant expenditure involved in occupational safety and health inspections in the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- (a) All the occupational safety inspections of construction sites conducted by the Labour Department (LD) are surprise inspections. The numbers of inspections of construction sites conducted by LD from 2023 to 2025 are tabulated as follows:

Year	2023	2024	2025
No. of inspections	71 235	74 410	76 429

- (b) The relevant figures on the enforcement actions taken by LD in relation to the inspections on new construction works as well as repair, maintenance, alteration and addition (RMAA) works from 2023 to 2025 are tabulated as follows:

<b>New construction works</b>	2023	2024	2025
No. of written warnings	7 186	7 933	7 353
No. of improvement notices	2 985	2 999	2 795
No. of suspension notices	131	112	104
No. of prosecutions	1 494	1 549	1 211
No. of summonses convicted <sup>#</sup>	1 001	892	930

<b>RMAA works</b>	2023	2024	2025
No. of written warnings	8 776	8 477	8 614
No. of improvement notices	1 158	1 258	1 388
No. of suspension notices	157	196	221
No. of prosecutions	828	782	878
No. of summonses convicted <sup>#</sup>	710	631	688

Note:

<sup>#</sup> The hearing proceedings involved in the prosecution summonses taken out each year may not be completed in the same year. As a result, the number of convicted summonses within the year does not correspond to the number of prosecutions in the same year.

- (c) The staff establishment of Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions under the Occupational Safety and Health Branch of LD for inspections of construction sites from 2023 to 2025 is tabulated as follows:

Rank	2023	2024	2025
Divisional Occupational Safety Officer	37	37	37
Occupational Safety Officer I	78	78	78
Occupational Safety Officer II	98	99	99
Total	213	214	214

As the staff of Occupational Safety - Operations Divisions of LD are also required to undertake other duties, the relevant expenditure cannot be separately identified.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)137**

**(Question Serial No. 3456)**

Head: (90) Labour Department  
Subhead (No. & title): ( )  
Programme: (2) Employment Services  
Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Labour (Sam HUI)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) launched by the Government on 4 September 2023, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (a) The staff establishment and expenditure for vetting applications since the launch of ESLS;
- (b) Please set out the following information since the launch of ESLS by the top 10 job categories with the highest number of applicants approved:
  - (i) the number of applications received;
  - (ii) the number of applications approved;
  - (iii) the number of applications rejected;
  - (iv) the number of imported workers approved;
  - (v) the actual number of workers who have arrived in Hong Kong;
- (c) Has the Government conducted any statistical surveys to assess the specific impacts of mass labour importation on the median salaries and employment rates of local employees in the relevant industry sectors? If yes, what are the findings? If no, will funding be earmarked for these studies?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (a) The Labour Department (LD) has implemented the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) since 4 September 2023 to suspend the general exclusion of the 26 job categories as well as unskilled or low-skilled posts from labour importation under the previous Supplementary Labour Scheme (SLS). ESLS is mainly administered by the Supplementary Labour Division (SLD) of LD.

The expenditure for SLD in 2023-24 was \$50.60 million (including staff cost and the expenditure for implementing SLS prior to the launch of ESLS). The expenditure for SLD in 2024-25 was \$80.71 million (including staff cost).

In 2025-26, the revised estimated expenditure for SLD is \$112 million (including staff cost). Its staff establishment comprises 57 Labour Officer Grade posts, 14 Clerical Grade posts and 1 Workman II post (excluding staff temporarily deployed by LD). SLD also employs about 80 non-civil service contract staff and post-retirement service contract staff to assist in implementing ESLS. As some of the staff responsible for vetting ESLS applications also undertake other duties, the manpower and expenditure involved cannot be separately identified.

- (b) As at February 2026, ESLS received a total of 24 072 applications for importing 181 989 workers. During the period, 16 096 applications involving 102 141 imported workers were approved while 91 applications involving 426 imported workers were rejected. A breakdown of the numbers of imported workers applied for, approved, and rejected by job category is set out at Annex 1.

As at February 2026, there were 48 569 imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS. A breakdown of the number of imported workers working in Hong Kong by job category is set out at Annex 2.

- (c) The Government has been dynamically monitoring the employment market situation and making reference to various statistical data on employment and income of local employees, and relevant statistical analyses regularly published by the Census and Statistics Department. In response to the latest labour market situation, the Government adopts a flexible approach to adjust the implementation arrangements of ESLS, including regularly updating the median wages applicable to the posts applied for, striving to ensure employment priority for local workers.

LD is reviewing ESLS, including its coverage, operation and implementation arrangements, measures to promote and ensure employment priority for local workers, etc. To facilitate the completion of the review on ESLS in the first half of 2026, priority will be given to analysing data from industry sectors with higher proportion of imported workers in the mid-term update of the Manpower Projection currently undertaken by the Labour and Welfare Bureau, so that the results of these analyses can be made available earlier for reference.

**Numbers of imported workers applied for, approved and rejected  
under ESLS from 4 September 2023 to 28 February 2026:  
a breakdown by job category**

<b>Job category<sup>@</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers applied for<sup>*</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers approved<sup>*</sup></b>	<b>No. of imported workers rejected<sup>*</sup></b>
1. Waiter/Waitress <sup>#</sup>	22 203	14 065	33
2. Junior Cook <sup>#</sup>	18 390	10 430	43
3. Cleaner <sup>^</sup>	17 804	7 067	3
4. Security Guard <sup>^</sup>	14 847	5 575	-
5. Cook	13 001	8 112	41
6. Sales Assistant <sup>#</sup>	12 377	7 697	32
7. Dish Washer <sup>^</sup>	9 075	5 653	18
8. Warehouse Keeper <sup>#</sup>	9 025	5 025	3
9. Clerical Worker <sup>#</sup>	4 569	2 664	12
10. Others	60 698	35 853	241
<b>Total</b>	<b>181 989</b>	<b>102 141</b>	<b>426</b>

<sup>@</sup> The classification of job categories may be subject to revisions upon verification of information from employers.

<sup>\*</sup> LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The vetting of applications received may be completed after 28 February 2026, and hence the number of imported workers approved only reflects the results of some of the applications received during the same period. In addition, applications approved during the above period also include those submitted under SLS prior to the launch of ESLS. Therefore, the numbers of imported workers approved and rejected do not correspond to the number of imported workers applied for during the same period.

<sup>#</sup> Falling within the 26 job categories generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

<sup>^</sup> Falling within the unskilled or low-skilled posts generally excluded from labour importation under SLS.

**Number of imported workers working in Hong Kong under SLS/ESLS:  
a breakdown by job category  
(as at February 2026)**

Job category	No. of imported workers working in Hong Kong*
1. Waiter/Waitress	7 871
2. Junior Cook	6 196
3. Cook	4 222
4. Cleaner	2 984
5. Dish Washer	2 902
6. Warehouse Keeper	2 374
7. Sales Assistant	2 360
8. Security Guard	2 000
9. Food Processing Worker	1 457
10. Others	16 203
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 569</b>

\* LD has implemented ESLS since 4 September 2023. The above figures on imported workers working in Hong Kong include those workers approved to work in Hong Kong under SLS before 4 September 2023 and under ESLS thereafter.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)138**

**(Question Serial No. 3646)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour And Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

This year's Budget places significant emphasis on the promotion of artificial intelligence (AI) education. The enrolment of in-service personnel in AI courses can enhance their competitiveness while preserving and enriching Hong Kong's talent pool. Would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the total expenditure for subsidising in-service personnel to enrol in courses related to AI application through various channels, such as Continuing Education Fund and Employees Retraining Board courses, over the past 3 financial years?
2. In view of the Government's strenuous efforts in promoting the development of digital economy, will there be plans to increase the budget for subsidising in-service personnel to enrol in AI courses for the next 3 financial years? If so, what will be the increase? What is the expected growth in the number of beneficiaries?

Asked by: Hon CHU Lap-wai (LegCo internal reference no.: 104)

Reply:

1&2 At present, working individuals can receive subsidies for enrolling in courses related to artificial intelligence (AI) application through various channels.

A Hong Kong resident aged 18 or above may create an account under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF), and apply for reimbursement of course fees upon successful completion of a CEF reimbursable course. The reimbursement is capped at \$25,000. As at 31 January 2026, about 60 CEF courses carried titles related to AI. As AI-related topics have been integrated into courses across different fields, the Government does not maintain a breakdown of the funding amount for CEF courses related to AI application.

In addition, eligible Hong Kong employees aged 15 or above may enrol in courses offered by training bodies appointed by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), including AI-related courses. While trainees enrol in these courses at their own cost, eligible persons can apply for course fee waiver or reduction. The ERB will continue to strengthen relevant services upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong. The

Labour and Welfare Bureau will also continue to provide subsidies through the CEF to adults with learning aspirations to pursue continuing education and training, enabling trainees to receive various types of training, including those on AI.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)139**

**(Question Serial No. 3643)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) under the Programme, would the Government inform this Committee:

1. as Hong Kong is undergoing industrial transformation and developing emerging industries (such as digital economy, green economy, biotechnology) to better align with the 15th Five-Year Plan, whether the Government will conduct an overall review of the subsidy ceiling and the co-payment ratio between learners and the Government under the CEF, so that the courses can keep pace with the times and dovetail with the development positioning of the country and Hong Kong, China for nurturing more talents in a targeted manner; and
2. as for the key industries in the Hong Kong market currently facing manpower gaps and a need for talents to drive their development (such as high-end manufacturing, innovation and technology, and healthcare industries), of the number of relevant reimbursable courses, the number of subsidy recipients and the amount of fees reimbursed under the CEF at present, and whether the Government has any specific plans to increase the number of courses covered under the CEF for these industries, or launch special subsidy programmes (such as adjustments to the co-payment ratio by learners) in the future, so as to assist more aspiring individuals in enrolling in such courses and pursuing a career in these industries?

Asked by: Hon FAN Chun-wah, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1&2 As at 31 January 2026, there were about 980 000 accounts under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF), of which about 12 000 account holders have fully used up the subsidy of \$25,000, representing approximately 1.2% of the total number of accounts. About 84% of the accounts under the CEF had an unused balance of \$15,000 or above, enabling the taking of around 2 CEF courses given the current median CEF course fee of \$8,175. The Government considers that the current subsidy ceiling and co-payment

ratio could satisfy the demand. The Government will continue to keep in view the operation of the CEF and the views of stakeholders, and consider the need to review the existing arrangements as appropriate.

All courses registered under the Qualifications Register are eligible for registration under the CEF. As at 31 January 2026, over 130 course providers offered over 4 700 CEF courses, which covered 14 areas of study and training, giving learners a wide range of choices for continuing education. The Government will continue to encourage existing and other course providers to design and offer new courses to meet market development and needs, and to apply for registration under the CEF. As regards the manpower supply and needs of individual industries, relevant policy bureaux, industry stakeholders or course providers will conduct relevant research and develop industry-based manpower strategies and specific training courses as needed.

As CEF courses are categorised by the 14 areas of study and training under the Qualifications Framework, the Government does not maintain the other statistics mentioned in the question.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)140**

**(Question Serial No. 3601)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding local training, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) with regard to the (a) placement-tied courses, (b) skills upgrading courses, (c) generic skills courses, (d) youth training courses and (e) courses for special service targets offered by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), please provide the following information: (i) the number of courses conducted, (ii) the number of intakes (with a breakdown by age and educational attainment), (iii) the course expenditure and (iv) the allowance expenditure in each of the past 5 years;
- (2) given that the ERB has established performance indicators (e.g. graduation rate and placement rate) to evaluate the cost-effectiveness and resource efficiency of its training courses, whether the courses mentioned in (1) have met the relevant established indicators in the past 5 years and please provide the details;
- (3) given that the ERB launched the One-stop Training and Employment Scheme in February 2024, allowing employers in trades facing manpower shortage to arrange enterprise-based pre-employment training and assisting enterprises in recruitment, please provide the numbers of courses conducted and participating employers under the scheme, and set out for each course the following information: (i) the number of training places, (ii) the number of intakes (with a breakdown by age and academic qualification) and (iii) the retention situation;
- (4) given that the ERB has launched about 50 more advanced courses and future skills courses, covering areas such as artificial intelligence and technology applications, as well as professional certification courses, please set out for each course the following information: the numbers of training places and intakes (with a breakdown by age and educational qualification); and
- (5) given that one of the ERB's reform measures is to strengthen its capabilities to research on skills in demand, manpower needs and trends of various occupations and industries,

please provide details of such research work, including its major differences with similar research or manpower surveys in the community.

Asked by: Hon LAM Ming-fung, Lothair (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

- (1) The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) provides training courses for the general public and specific services targets (including young people). These courses cover 3 major categories: placement-tied, skills upgrading and generic skills. The number of training courses offered by the ERB, expenditures on courses, and expenditures on retraining allowances in the past 5 years are tabulated below:

Placement-tied courses

Year	Number of courses	Expenditure on courses (\$ million)	Expenditure on retraining allowance (\$ million)
2021-22	211	912.9	241.2
2022-23	202	909	236.8
2023-24	213	891	273.7
2024-25	212	1,038.7	409.9
2025-26	228	961.7 (as at December 2025)	349.6 (as at December 2025)

Skills upgrading courses

Year	Number of courses	Expenditure on courses (\$ million)	Expenditure on retraining allowance (\$ million)
2021-22	439	145.4	28.4 <sup>Note 1</sup>
2022-23	430	159.1	27.6 <sup>Note 1</sup>
2023-24	438	158.4	Not applicable
2024-25	469	171.4	
2025-26	521	159.7 (as at December 2025)	

Generic skills courses

Year	Number of courses	Expenditure on courses (\$ million)	Expenditure on retraining allowance (\$ million)
2021-22	129	69.1	12.1 <sup>Note 1</sup>
2022-23	124	56.7	8.1 <sup>Note 1</sup>
2023-24	109	45	Not applicable
2024-25	111	51.8	
2025-26	132	51.2 (as at December 2025)	

Of these, the number of dedicated training courses offered by the ERB to young people and other specific service targets (including new arrivals, persons with disabilities and persons recovered from work injuries, ethnic minorities, rehabilitated ex-drug abusers and ex-offenders), expenditures on courses, and expenditures on retraining allowances are tabulated as follows:

Dedicated youth programmes

Year	Number of courses	Expenditure on courses (\$ million)	Expenditure on retraining allowance (\$ million)
2021-22	31	11.48	1.69
2022-23	32	8.75	1.05
2023-24	38	12.20	1.49
2024-25	38	16.52	2.96
2025-26	39	20.89 (as at December 2025)	3.73 (as at December 2025)

Dedicated courses for other specific service targets

Year	Number of courses	Expenditure on courses (\$ million)	Expenditure on retraining allowance (\$ million)
2021-22	143	32.43	3.53
2022-23	130	31.36	3.26
2023-24	131	36.51	3.92
2024-25	132	44.56	6.07
2025-26	157	47.67 (as at December 2025)	6.09 (as at December 2025)

The breakdowns of the number of intakes in the 3 major categories of ERB courses in the past 5 years by age group and educational attainment are as follows:

Placement-tied courses

Age Group	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
15 - 19	870	758	1 101	1 335	1 397
20 - 29	5 815	4 905	4 232	4 310	5 136
30 - 39	8 936	8 092	6 876	7 026	6 719
40 - 49	13 596	13 202	11 869	12 332	11 319
50 - 59	17 813	17 511	14 940	16 133	15 797
60 or above	13 673	16 721	17 885	21 208	20 378
Total	60 703	61 189	56 903	62 344	60 746

Educational attainment	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Secondary 3 or lower	15 113	15 840	15 967	17 331	13 922
Secondary 4 to 7	31 654	32 104	32 828	34 696	30 756
Diploma to sub-degree	8 325	8 278	8 087	8 726	8 586
Above sub-degree <sup>Note 2</sup>	5 611	4 967	21 <sup>Note 3</sup>	1 591	7 482
Total	60 703	61 189	56 903	62 344	60 746

### Skills upgrading courses

Age Group	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
15 - 19	209	163	244	296	339
20 - 29	3 110	2 546	2 077	2 250	2 858
30 - 39	7 704	7 273	6 412	6 496	6 463
40 - 49	13 742	13 185	13 125	13 317	12 460
50 - 59	22 200	21 962	21 818	21 294	20 700
60 or above	21 517	26 142	29 677	30 507	32 253
Total	68 482	71 271	73 353	74 160	75 073

Educational attainment	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Secondary 3 or lower	19 532	20 146	21 184	20 015	17 307
Secondary 4 to 7	35 689	37 744	42 749	41 847	38 603
Diploma to sub-degree	8 677	8 814	9 420	10 213	10 049
Above sub-degree <sup>Note 2</sup>	4 584	4 567	-	2 085	9 114
Total	68 482	71 271	73 353	74 160	75 073

## Generic skills courses

Age Group	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
15 - 19	158	97	193	275	265
20 - 29	1 312	1 125	1 148	1 218	1 458
30 - 39	3 215	2 815	2 639	2 944	2 997
40 - 49	4 348	3 857	3 496	3 972	4 326
50 - 59	5 361	4 283	3 736	4 006	4 245
60 or above	6 118	5 688	4 871	5 172	5 478
<b>Total</b>	<b>20 512</b>	<b>17 865</b>	<b>16 083</b>	<b>17 587</b>	<b>18 769</b>

Educational attainment	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Secondary 3 or lower	6 483	5 461	4 699	4 499	3 709
Secondary 4 to 7	10 291	9 180	8 652	9 060	8 807
Diploma to sub-degree	2 632	2 415	2 730	2 996	3 079
Above sub-degree <sup>Note 2</sup>	1 106	809	2 <sup>Note 3</sup>	1 032	3 174
<b>Total</b>	<b>20 512</b>	<b>17 865</b>	<b>16 083</b>	<b>17 587</b>	<b>18 769</b>

Of these, the breakdowns of the number of intakes in the dedicated courses offered by the ERB to young people and other specific service targets by age group and educational attainment are as follows:

### Dedicated courses for young people

Age Group	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
15 – 19	333	241	361	491	566
20 - 29	105	86	127	136	366
<b>Total</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>932</b>

Educational attainment	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Secondary 3 or lower	269	210	253	336	380
Secondary 4 to 7	139	92	194	241	370
Diploma to sub-degree	24	19	41	44	112
Above sub-degree <sup>Note 2</sup>	6	6	-	6	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>932</b>

Dedicated courses for other specific service targets

Age Group	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
15 - 19	70	50	123	183	202
20 - 29	468	519	624	773	1 007
30 - 39	500	521	739	1 061	1 357
40 - 49	528	583	683	916	1 189
50 - 59	542	492	508	722	770
60 or above	493	497	565	713	680
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 601</b>	<b>2 662</b>	<b>3 242</b>	<b>4 368</b>	<b>5 205</b>

Educational attainment	Number of intakes				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at 28 February 2026)
Secondary 3 or lower	905	942	1 096	1 395	1 173
Secondary 4 to 7	1 052	1 129	1 464	1 933	1 961
Diploma to sub-degree	414	404	661	924	847
Above sub-degree <sup>Note 2</sup>	230	187	21 <sup>Note 3</sup>	116	1 224
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 601</b>	<b>2 662</b>	<b>3 242</b>	<b>4 368</b>	<b>5 205</b>

Notes:

1. The ERB launched the “Love Upgrading Special Scheme” from 2019-20 to 2022-23 to provide training and special allowances to employees affected by the economic downturn.
2. The ERB launched the “Love Upgrading Special Scheme” from 2019-20 to 2022-23 and the “Love IT • Upgrading Scheme” in 2024-25. All eligible persons could participate in the schemes irrespective of their educational attainment.
3. Prior to the ERB’s expansion of service targets in January 2025, its courses targeted persons aged 15 or above with educational attainment at sub-degree or below. Applicants with higher educational attainment with genuine difficulties in job seeking or job switching may apply for discretionary approval for admission to ERB courses. The figure is the number of cases granted discretionary approvals for admission.

- (2) The ERB has set performance indicators to evaluate the performance of training bodies, as well as the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of training courses. In the past 5 years, all of the performance indicators for ERB courses exceeded the target levels. Details are tabulated below:

Performance Indicator	Target Level	Performance Level				
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (as at February 2026)
Capacity utilisation rate Note 1	85%	86%	88%	91%	92%	93%
Attendance rate Note 2	80%	94%	92%	93%	94%	94%
Graduation rate Note 3	80%	96%	95%	96%	96%	96% (Including and up to courses completed by August 2025)
Satisfaction rate Note 4	80%	96%	97%	97%	97%	97%
Placement rate Note 5	70%	84%	85%	84%	85%	84%

Note:

- Capacity utilisation rate refers to the number of intakes as a percentage to the number of training places where courses are held.
- Attendance rate refers to the number of intakes who have completed the courses (i.e. with attendance rate of 80% or above) as a percentage to the number of intakes in the courses.
- Graduation rate refers to the number of graduates as a percentage to the number of intakes who have completed the courses.
- Satisfaction rate refers to the percentage of trainees expressing satisfaction with the course design and arrangement, teaching quality of instructors, facilities and services of training centres, etc. in trainees' opinion surveys.
- Placement rate refers to the number of intakes who have been placed into employment in the placement follow-up period as a percentage to the number of intakes who have completed placement-tied courses.

- (3) The ERB had implemented the two-year pilot “One-stop Training and Employment Scheme” (OTE Scheme) since February 2024, allowing employers to arrange enterprise-based pre-employment training with provision of retraining allowance, six-month placement follow-up services and skills training for trainees, to encourage and assist those unemployed, job-seeking or career-changing as well as the potential workforce to join industries with keen manpower demand. The OTE Scheme provided 1 000 training places. As at February 2026, the ERB has assisted 45 employers in arranging approximately 70 enterprise-based pre-employment training courses, with over 900 trainees admitted. Among these trainees, around 80% completed the trainings and took up employment with participating employers, while some chose to take up employment with other employers. Under the OTE Scheme, training bodies provide six-month follow-up services for trainees who completed pre-employment training courses and took up employment with the designated employers. As at February 2026, among the trainees who completed the follow-up services under the OTE Scheme, about 60% remained in employment with designated employers for 6 months and completed the

specified on-the-job training courses. The age group of participating trainees and their educational attainments are tabulated below:

Age Group	Number of participating trainees
15-29	115
30-39	119
40-49	237
50-59	307
60 or above	136

Educational Attainment	Number of participating trainees
Secondary 3 or lower	124
Secondary 4 to 7	520
Diploma to sub-degree	178
Above sub-degree	92

The ERB has completed a review of the OTE Scheme. Participating employers generally considered that the OTE Scheme could alleviate manpower shortage, while the provision of on-the-job training allowances could encourage trainees to pursue continuous upskilling and remain in employment, thereby bringing in manpower to trades facing labour shortage. The ERB regularises the OTE Scheme starting from April 2026 to support the training and employment needs of employers and the local workforce.

- (4) In response to the latest developments in the employment market, and following the lifting of the restriction on the educational attainment of trainees, the ERB has developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses, which are tabulated below:

	Name of Course
1	Certificate in Advanced AI-Powered Game Design and Optimised Godot Interactive Development (Part-time)
2	Certificate in Godot Game Development and AI-Assisted Creation (Part-time)
3	Certificate in Kotlin Application Development (Part-time)
4	Certificate in Swift Application Development (Part-time)
5	Certificate in Application of Large Language Model (LLM) (Part-time)
6	Certificate in Information Security Management (Part-time)
7	Certificate in Information Security Professional (Part-time)
8	Certificate in Application of Computer Vision Technology (Part-time)
9	Certificate in Blender 3D Modeling Applications (Part-time)
10	Certificate in Advanced Blender 3D Modeling and Animation (Part-time)
11	Certificate in Blender and AI Creative Media Integration (Part-time)
12	Certificate in Applications for Artificial Intelligence Automation Tools (Part-time)
13	Certificate in AI-enhanced Social Media Content Creation in Marketing (Part-time)

	Name of Course
14	Certificate in Business Applications of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Part-time)
15	Certificate in Application of Generative Artificial Intelligence Image and Video Creation Skills (English Medium) (Part-time)
16	Certificate in Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) Design and Application (Part-time)
17	Certificate in Cantonese NLP & AI Customer Service (Part-time)
18	Certificate in Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Repair Assistant
19	Certificate in the Use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) in Image and Video Design (Part-time)
20	Certificate in 3D Virtual Fashion (Display) II (Part-time)
21	Certificate in Conflict Handling Skills in Property Management and Security Industry (Part-time)
22	Certificate in Financial Services (Know Your Customer [KYC]) (Part-time)
23	Certificate in Financial Services (Virtual Assets) (Part-time)
24	Certificate in Financial Services (Analysis of Environmental, Social and Governance [ESG] Report) (Part-time)
25	Certificate in Financial Technology (Artificial Intelligence-Aided Fraud Detection) (Part-time)
26	Certificate in Financial Technology (Applications of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Financial Analysis) (Part-time)
27	Certificate in Customer Services Skills for Beauty Consultant (Part-time)
28	Certificate in Customer Services in Tourism Industry (Complaints Handling) (Part-time)
29	Certificate in Customer Service in Tourism Industry (Communication Skills of Online Customer Service) (Part-time)
30	Certificate in Travel Consultant Training
31	Certificate in Community Care and Health Management (Part-time)
32	Certificate in Sustainable Development and 'Environmental, Social and Governance' (ESG) Knowledge for Health Care Industry (Part-time)
33	Certificate in Gerontechnology (Part-time)
34	Certificate in Human Resources Management (Recruitment Practices) (Part-time)
35	Certificate in Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Human Resources I (English Medium) (Part-time)
36	Certificate in Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Human Resources II (English Medium) (Part-time)
37	Certificate in Enterprise Management (Effective Communication) (Part-time)
38	Certificate in Digital Marketing (Artificial Intelligence Applications) (Part-time)
39	Certificate in New Era AI Digital Media Designer Training
40	Certificate in Practical Knowledge of E-commerce Transactions (Part-time)

	Name of Course
41	Certificate in ESG Practices and Brand Value Enhancement for Catering Industry (Part-time)
42	Certificate in Technology Application and Digital Operations in Catering Industry (Part-time)
43	Certificate in Quality Customer Service in Catering Industry (Part-time)
44	Certificate in Video Editing Skills III (Artificial Intelligence Applications) (Part-time)
45	Certificate in Virtual Production (Development Skills of Virtual Scene Animation) (Part-time)
46	Certificate in Screenwriting Skills for TV Micro-drama (Artificial Intelligence Applications) (Part-time)
47	Certificate in Integrated Tree Climbing Practical Skills (Part-Time)
48	Certificate in Workplace English (Writing Skills for Digital Communication) (Part-time)

Between January 2025 and February 2026, these courses recorded about 1 870 eligible enrolments, with 1 013 trainees admitted as at February 2026. The breakdowns of the number of intakes by age group and educational attainment are as follows:

Age Group	Number of Intakes
15 - 19	4
20 - 29	58
30 - 39	179
40 - 49	243
50 - 59	338
60 or above	191

Educational Attainment	Number of Intakes
Secondary 3 or lower	13
Secondary 4 to 7	275
Diploma to sub-degree	214
Above sub-degree	511

- (5) Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will strengthen its research capabilities to apprehend the trends for prevailing and future skills demands and the manpower needs of different industries (including emerging sectors), thereby formulating an appropriate training framework to guide its training bodies to develop suitable courses. Along the direction of formulating a new “skills-based” training framework, Upskill Hong Kong will regularly collect information from the Government’s reports on manpower projection, surveys conducted by human resources management-related organisations, skills demand research reports, etc. while making reference to information on manpower training, labour market developments and employment situations in places outside Hong Kong in conducting analysis and research, so as to identify high-potential occupations

and develop relevant new courses as soon as possible. To this end, Upskill Hong Kong will strengthen its internal capabilities to research on skills in demand, manpower needs and trends of various occupations and industries, as well as identify timely the trends and needs for training of emerging skills in the employment market, with a view to ensuring that course design and training modes are closely aligned with market needs.

Distinguished from other manpower-related surveys in the market, research conducted by Upskill Hong Kong will focus on the prevailing and future skills of industries, with timely reviews and updates in response to market changes, so as to identify gaps in skills and course offerings and enable an appropriate training framework to be formulated for developing courses and progression ladders.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)141**

**(Question Serial No. 3648)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

- a) Regarding the Estimates for 2026-27, please provide the programme titles, total estimated funding, breakdown by major expenditure items (such as programme operations, instructors' remuneration and trainees' allowances) and the projected number of training places for the major vocational training programmes under the purview of the Labour and Welfare Bureau (including those of the Employees Retraining Board);
- b) Has the Government established standardised performance indicators for these programmes, such as completion rates, graduate employment rates, median salaries, and job match rates, and regularly published their results? If so, please provide the latest figures; if not, will the Government establish and announce a specific performance monitoring mechanism, including indicator definitions and a release schedule, within 2026-27?

Asked by: Hon NG Kam-wah, Webster (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- a) The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) currently provides over 800 training courses straddling across 28 industries and generic skills, assisting the local workforce to continuously enhance their competitiveness. The ERB will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing training, upskilling and re-training for the entire local workforce aged 15 and over under the skills-based training framework to promote continuous learning for all, without restriction on educational attainment.

The Government has accepted the reform roadmap and timetable set out in the ERB's implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong. The ERB will take forward various medium- to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter.

The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), the total expenditure of the ERF was \$1.57 billion. In accordance with the work plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the ERB's preliminary estimate, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of the 2023-24, primarily to cover expenses on courses, retraining allowances and training-related services. The ERB will flexibly deploy the estimates, and hence a breakdown of the expenses is not available.

In 2026-27, the ERB plans to provide 165 000 training places.

- b) The ERB has set performance indicators to evaluate the performance of training bodies, as well as the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of training courses. In 2025-26 (as at February 2026), all of the performance indicators for ERB courses exceeded the target levels. Details are tabulated below:

Performance Indicator	Target Level	Performance Level
		2025-26 (As at February 2026)
Capacity utilisation rate <sup>Note 1</sup>	85%	93%
Attendance rate <sup>Note 2</sup>	80%	94%
Graduation rate <sup>Note 3</sup>	80%	96% (Including and up to courses completed by August 2025)
Satisfaction rate <sup>Note 4</sup>	80%	97%
Placement rate <sup>Note 5</sup>	70%	84%

Note:

1. Capacity utilisation rate refers to the number of intakes as a percentage to the number of training places where courses are held.
2. Attendance rate refers to the number of intakes who have completed the courses (i.e. with attendance rate of 80% or above) as a percentage to the number of intakes in the courses.
3. Graduation rate refers to the number of graduates as a percentage to the number of intakes who have completed the courses.
4. Satisfaction rate refers to the percentage of trainees expressing satisfaction with the course design and arrangement, teaching quality of instructors, facilities and services of training centres, etc. in trainees' opinion surveys.
5. Placement rate refers to the number of intakes who have been placed into employment in the placement follow-up period as a percentage to the number of intakes who have completed placement-tied courses.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)142**

**(Question Serial No. 3664)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong. Will this establishment be provided with additional funding dedicated for AI training?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing various types of skills-based training courses, including artificial intelligence application, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the local workforce. The expenditure of the ERB will continue to be funded by the Employees Retraining Fund.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)143**

**(Question Serial No. 3631)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour And Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that various types of skill-based training courses, including AI application, will be provided. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the types and qualification levels of skill-based training expected to be provided;
2. in promoting AI skill training, how will the Government design targeted training pathways for trainees with different education backgrounds and skill levels, as well as those affected by industry transformation needs;
3. whether any dedicated funds or support measures will be introduced to encourage employed persons, persons in career transition and grassroots workers to participate in AI-related training?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) currently provides over 800 training courses straddling across 28 industries and generic skills. The Qualifications Framework (QF) levels or intended QF levels of these courses range from levels 1 to 4. As the ERB will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, it will strengthen its research capabilities to apprehend the trends for prevailing and future skills demands and the manpower needs of different industries (including emerging sectors), and identify the gaps in skills and course offerings, so as to formulate an appropriate training framework. Upskill Hong Kong will continue to provide training to grassroots workers with lower employability in accordance with the training framework. It will also promote continuous learning and upskilling, as well as develop more skill courses at QF levels 3 and 4 targeting working individuals with relatively higher educational attainment.

2. Since early last year, the ERB has enhanced its services and developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses, covering such areas of skills as artificial intelligence (AI) and technology applications. In response to emerging manpower demands driven by future economic and development of the industries, Upskill Hong Kong will align critical skills with training contents, providing various types of “skills-based” training courses (including AI application) while developing courses featuring emerging skills and those essential skills for business transformation. Upskill Hong Kong will also progressively develop skills learning pathways, which will align with the skills requirements for career advancement in industries and integrate with the industries’ training frameworks where applicable, in order to meet the training needs of different service targets and development of industries, thereby refining the skills learning pathways. In addition, Upskill Hong Kong will introduce “stackable” micro-credential courses centred on practical skills, featuring more targeted and flexible training modules, enabling trainees to customise their learning based on different professional development paths and individual capabilities. It will also develop serial courses that enable entry-level learners to progressively receive skills training.
3. At present, employees can receive AI-related training by utilising various local training resources. In this regard, the ERB, upon being upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, will offer more AI-related training courses to assist working individuals, career-changing and low-skilled workers to take part in AI-related training relevant to the respective industries. The Government plans to introduce legislative amendments to allow Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, greater flexibility in adopting different funding modes for training (such as providing different financial incentives to encourage target groups to pursue specific emerging skills training).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)144**

**(Question Serial No. 3457)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

- (a) Please set out the total number of training courses provided by the Employees Retraining Board, the number of intakes and the total expenditure in the past 3 years;
- (b) Please set out the average placement rate and retention rate of trainees who had completed training in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by major industry sector;
- (c) Will the Government consider expanding the talent training programmes to cover sectors currently facing manpower shortage? If so, please provide the specific arrangements and timelines; if not, please explain the reasons.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

- (a) The number of training courses provided by the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), the number of intakes and the total expenditure in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>2025-26</b> <b>(as at December 2025)</b>
Number of courses	760	792	873
Number of intakes	146 339	154 091	136 094
Total expenditure (\$ billion)	1.565	1.903	1.561

- (b) Training bodies appointed by the ERB provide 3- to 6-month placement follow-up services to all trainees who completed placement-tied courses (i.e. with an attendance rate of at least 80%) to help them enter the employment market. In the past 3 years (as at February 2026 for 2025-26), the overall placement rates of the placement-tied courses were above 80%.

The employment decisions or retention situation of trainees upon completion of courses are affected by multiple factors, such as the prevailing market situation, family factors

and personal plans. The ERB has conducted sample surveys to gauge the retention situation of graduates of the placement-tied courses. According to the surveys conducted in the past 3 years, about 60% of the surveyed trainees remained in employment 6 months after the placement follow-up period.

- (c) The Government will keep up the efforts in nurturing local talent. Different policy bureaux have all along closely liaised with their industries, and formulate corresponding measures in response to the latest development and manpower situation of the industries, including continuing to take forward a number of sector-specific talent training programmes to enrich the local human resources.

In addition, the ERB has been implementing the pilot One-stop Training and Employment Scheme (the Scheme) since February 2024, allowing employers to arrange enterprise-based pre-employment training, with provision of retraining allowance and 6-month placement follow-up services and continuous training arrangements to encourage and assist those unemployed, job-seeking or career changing as well as the potential workforce to join industries with keen manpower demand. The ERB has completed a review of the Scheme and will regularise it starting from April 2026 with a view to supporting employers and the local workforce in meeting the training and employment needs. The ERB will continue to liaise closely with relevant stakeholders and offer more courses with market demand in a timely manner, so as to address the manpower needs of various industries.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)145**

**(Question Serial No. 3464)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that Hong Kong's world class universities and internationalised environment are conducive to attracting and bringing in top global talents in various sectors, particularly leading experts in the scientific research field from around the world. The Government will keep nurturing local talents, aligning with the integrated development of "Education, Technology and Talent" of our country. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) To "keep nurturing local talents" as mentioned in the Budget Speech, please set out the details of the estimated expenditure for each relevant scheme for the next 3 years, broken down by category, namely "for young talents (e.g. internship)" and "for workforce upskilling (e.g. retraining, upskilling)";
- (b) Please provide a breakdown by industry of the estimated expenditure, expected numbers of training activities and participants for each scheme in 2026-27, and explain how such schemes complement the industry development strategies of other relevant government bureaux/departments.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 49)

Reply:

- (a) and (b) The relevant bureaux and departments provide corresponding local talent training programmes in response to the latest development and manpower requirements across various industries.

To nurture young talent, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) has been committed to providing young people with diverse internship opportunities in the Mainland and overseas through various internship schemes/programmes, including the HYAB Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland, the HYAB Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas, and the HYAB Thematic Youth Internship Programmes to the Mainland, etc. These schemes/programmes provide young people with first-

hand insight into the local workplace culture and career prospects, enabling them to set their future career goals, accumulate work experience, build interpersonal network and boost their employment advantage. The HYAB also partners with the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to launch the HYAB Youth Start-up Internship Programme. The programme provides young people internship opportunities at local start-ups, with a view to fostering their interest in pursuing careers in innovation and technology. The HYAB's various internship programmes benefitted approximately 5 200 young people over the past year, and the estimated expenditure for 2026-27 is about \$137 million. The relevant programmes are funded by the respective policy bureaux.

In addition, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing training for the entire local workforce aged 15 or above under the skills-based training framework to promote continuous learning for all, without restriction on educational attainment. The ERB has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025. It has formulated an implementation plan for its upgrading as Upskill Hong Kong and will take forward various medium- to long-term reform measures in an orderly manner. The expenditure of the ERB was funded by the Employees Retraining Fund (ERF) before reform and will continue to be so thereafter. In 2023-24 (i.e. the last financial year before the reform), the total expenditure of the ERF was approximately \$1.57 billion. In accordance with the implementation plan, the ERB will adjust the numbers of various courses, training places, support services and manpower in an orderly manner, and will prepare the 2026-27 estimates for submission to the Secretary for Labour and Welfare for approval. According to the ERB's preliminary estimate, the total estimated expenditure of the ERF for 2026-27 will increase by 30.6% compared with that of 2023-24. In 2026-27, the ERB plans to provide 165 000 training places and launch the first phase of the skills-based training framework targeting grassroots workers. It will also strengthen the integration of artificial intelligence knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum to equip the broader workforce with this essential emerging skill.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)146**

**(Question Serial No. 3465)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2026-27 that the Government will continue to oversee the implementation of the pilot Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS) to attract graduates of the eligible programmes of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) to stay and work in Hong Kong. In this connection, would the Bureau inform this Committee:

- (a) for non-local students currently enrolled in eligible programmes under the pilot VPAS, whether the Government will establish an ongoing tracking mechanism to understand their intentions to remain in Hong Kong for employment after graduation, actual difficulties encountered in seeking employment, and needs for relevant support services;
- (b) whether the Government will provide support services for these graduates to facilitate their employment in Hong Kong; if so, of the details and estimated expenditure; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-leung, Ken (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) offers around 100 full-time vocational Higher Diploma (HD) programmes each year, covering such areas as business, childcare, elderly and community services, design, engineering, hospitality and tourism, and information technology, etc. Some of these vocational programmes have not been able to enrol and train sufficient local graduates to meet the manpower demand of the relevant trades. With an ageing workforce and a lack of new entrants to vocational trades, the Government announced in the 2023 Policy Address the pilot implementation of the Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme (VPAS), allowing non-local students enrolled in eligible full-time HD programmes (eligible programmes) offered by the VTC in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years to apply to stay in Hong Kong for one year after graduation to seek jobs relevant to their disciplines. All the trades covered by the eligible programmes are facing acute local manpower shortage in specific occupations which can only be filled by technicians with appropriate vocational and professional training or by licensed technicians in the relevant

fields. VPAS, since its announcement, has attracted many non-local students to enrol in the HD programmes of relevant trades, helping to recruit more entrants to these trades in the long term. Considering this, the Government has decided to extend the pilot arrangement for two years to cover non-local students enrolling in eligible programmes in the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years. The initial cohort of students admitted in the 2024/25 academic year will graduate by mid-2026, at which time VPAS will be open for applications.

- (a) Eligible graduates may apply to stay in Hong Kong for one year under VPAS to seek jobs. If they successfully secure a job related to their disciplines before the visa expires, they may apply for an extension. To attract non-local students to join VPAS upon graduation, the VTC will promote the scheme to them and provide appropriate support, including arranging workplace internship opportunities during their course of study to help them learn about the local working conditions and environment, and to acquire practical work skills and experience. At the same time, the VTC, during the students' time at school, will also gauge their intentions to stay in Hong Kong for employment after graduation, so as to provide relevant information and support in a timely manner. The VTC will also mobilise its industry network and reach out to enterprises to organise regular recruitment talks, career consultation and job matching to provide employment support. These will enable students to understand the local employment market and assist them in seeking jobs relevant to their disciplines after graduation.

The Labour and Welfare Bureau has provided the VTC with additional resources for establishing a VPAS Secretariat to administer the scheme. Before submitting an extension application to the Immigration Department, graduates must submit proof of employment to the VPAS Secretariat under the VTC to confirm that the relevant employment meets the eligibility requirements for application for extension of stay under VPAS. While verifying graduates' eligibility for application, the Secretariat will record their employment situations and conduct continuous follow-ups. Besides, the VTC will conduct graduates surveys for its programmes (including HD programmes included as eligible programmes) for collecting data on graduate destinations, including employment situation, proportion of graduates pursuing further study, starting salary, feedback on programmes, etc.

- (b) The VTC provides support for all students (including local and non-local students/graduates) enrolled in its programmes, including mobilising its industry network to assist both local and non-local students in taking up internships, organising recruitment talks and offering career consultation services to support graduates in looking for job opportunities. Moreover, the VTC encourages enterprises through the enterprise subsidy scheme to provide students with internship placements, job offers and scholarships. Each year, the VTC arranges approximately 9 000 internship opportunities for students enrolled in the HD and Diploma of vocational education programmes. The VTC flexibly allocates the subvention from the Education Bureau for vocational and professional education and training to provide the various services mentioned above. Given the wide variety of services, the VTC does not maintain a breakdown of the figures requested in the question.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**LWB(L)147**

**(Question Serial No. 3663)**

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Manpower Development

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Alice LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

As stated in the Budget Speech, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will be upgraded as Upskill Hong Kong, providing various types of skill-based training courses, including artificial intelligence (AI) application, thereby enhancing the competitiveness of the local workforce. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee:

Following the ERB's upgrading to Upskill Hong Kong, please provide the course details, funding arrangements, and the associated 2026-27 estimated expenditure pertaining to practical AI skills training.

Asked by: Hon YIU Ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has been undertaking a comprehensive reform in phases starting from January 2025 to enhance its role and positioning, transforming into assisting the entire workforce from all backgrounds and educational attainments to continuously enhance their skills and competitiveness. With the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) across industries, AI proficiency has become a generic skill across all industries. Since early last year, the ERB has enhanced its services and developed around 50 higher-level and future skills courses, covering such areas of skills as AI and technology applications.

In 2026-27, the ERB plans to gradually roll out various training courses related to AI, and will continuously review the course contents to help trainees acquire the essential skills required for the development of industries. The courses to be launched cover areas such as digital literacy and skills, smart customer service and game development. The ERB will also enhance the contents of placement-tied courses by incorporating AI-related elements or tools, for example, using generative AI to refine resumes and application letters, simulate interview scenarios, conduct research on industry information and analyse career pathways to improve trainees' effectiveness in job search and career-planning capabilities. Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, will further provide various types of skills-based training courses,

including AI application, and integrate AI knowledge and practical applications into its curriculum.

Eligible persons enrolling in skills-upgrading courses, including AI-related training, are currently entitled to apply for course fee waiver or reduction. The Government plans to introduce legislative amendments to allow Upskill Hong Kong, as upgraded, greater flexibility in adopting different funding modes for training (such as providing different financial incentives to encourage target groups to pursue specific emerging skills training).

The ERB's estimated expenditure on courses relating to "Information and Communications Technology" and "Information Technology Applications" will increase by about 20% in 2026-27 compared with that of the previous year.

- End -