

## LCQ16: Provision of support and services for the ethnic minorities

Following is a question by the Hon Claudia Mo and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, in the Legislative Council today (July 4):

Question:

The Government announced in this year's Budget that it would set up a steering committee to take charge of the co-ordination, review and monitoring of the work of supporting ethnic minorities (EMs). Also, the Government would earmark \$500 million to strengthen the support for EMs. Regarding the provision of support and services for EMs, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as it is learnt that the authorities held a sharing session earlier to collect views on the work of the aforesaid steering committee, of the details of the views collected and the list of organisations and individuals who attended the sharing session; whether interpretation services are among the items for which support will be strengthened; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) given that the authorities promulgated the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality (the Guidelines) in as early as 2010, but it is learnt that only 23 government departments have currently formulated relevant measures in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines, whether the authorities will encourage more government departments to adopt the Guidelines; if so, of the details and timetables of the work; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) of the number of occasions in each of the past three years on which the relevant policy bureaux/government departments (B/Ds) arranged interpretation services for EMs in accordance with the requirements of the Guidelines, and the names of the organisations which provided the interpretation services, with a breakdown of the relevant information by B/D;

(4) of the number of occasions in each of the past three years on which each B/D engaged the interpretation services provided by the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents operated by the Hong Kong Christian Service, with a breakdown by (i) category of services (i.e. telephone interpretation service, on-sight interpretation service, on-site (escort) interpretation service, simultaneous interpretation service, translation service and proofreading service) and (ii) EM language;

(5) given that from the 2014-2015 school year onwards, the Education Bureau (EDB) has introduced the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework (Learning Framework) to further address the need for learning Chinese by non-Chinese speaking students, and has undertaken to review the

Learning Framework at a three-year interval, of the progress of the relevant review; whether there is any review that has yet to be conducted; the expected time for EDB to report the review results to this Council;

(6) given that some civic organisations have advocated the formulation of an Independent Curriculum on Learning Chinese as a Second Language by EDB to replace the Learning Framework, whether EDB will consider launching that curriculum in primary schools in the form of a pilot project; if EDB will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(7) whether the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) will consider implementing the following proposals: (i) to extend in phases the "Employment Services Ambassador Programme for Ethnic Minorities" to cover more job centres, (ii) to study the launching of a trial scheme on EM job centres for the provision of one-stop employment support services, and (iii) to consolidate the resources of LWB and the Labour Department for the establishment of an EM employment division to take charge of the formulation of strategies that are effective in assisting EMs in seeking employment; if LWB will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government attaches great importance to efforts for supporting the ethnic minorities (EMs). We have all along been taking measures to provide them with equal opportunities and facilitate their integration into our community. Some of the EMs have encountered difficulties in adaptation and social integration due to language barriers and cultural differences. The Government has earmarked \$500 million in the 2018-19 Budget to strengthen the relevant support services.

After consulting the relevant responsible departments, the consolidated reply to the question raised by Hon Claudia Mo is as follows:

(1) To enhance collaboration within the Government on support for EMs, the Chief Secretary for Administration chairs a cross-bureau steering committee to coordinate, review and monitor the work in this area.

Two focus group meetings were held on May 26 and June 4, 2018 to gather views on the enhancement of services for EMs from EM representatives and service providers. The Chief Secretary for Administration personally chaired the meetings. The organisations which attended the meetings and made written submissions are set out in Annex 1.

The views gathered at the focus group meetings cover various areas and the major views are set out at Annex 2.

(2) In 2010, the HKSAR Government issued the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality (the Guidelines) to provide general guidance to relevant Government bureaux and departments and public authorities (hereafter referred to as "relevant authorities") to promote racial equality and ensure

equal access by EMs to public services in key areas concerned, and to take this into account in their formulation, implementation and review of relevant policies and measures. The Guidelines cover the key public service areas which are particularly relevant to meeting the needs of EMs and facilitating their integration into the community, namely, medical, education, vocational training, employment and major community services, etc. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau has all along been actively coordinating with various Government bureaux and departments to adopt and implement the Guidelines. The number of departments that have adopted the Guidelines has extended from 14 to 23 (note 1). The Government will continue to review the public service areas and departments covered by the Guidelines.

(3) Relevant authorities have been providing services to meet the needs of EMs under their respective policy areas, with a view to facilitating the EMs integrate into the society. Relevant authorities will provide suitable assistance to the EM service users according to these users' practical needs, including interpretation services, thereby ensuring their equal access to public services. Since the interpretation needs of EMs vary depending on what public services they are accessing to, relevant authorities will consider the actual situation and adopt appropriate procedures to provide interpretation services to EMs in need. The number of interpretation services arranged by the relevant authorities for EMs over the past three years and the related service providers are set out in Annex 3.

(4) The CHEER Support Service Centre for Ethnic Minorities (CHEER Centre) is operated by the Hong Kong Christian Service commissioned by the Home Affairs Department. In addition to its basic services (note 2), the CHEER Centre also provides interpretation and translation services between English and seven other EM languages (note 3) in non-specialised areas, which may be used by bureaux/departments and EMs. Interpretation services include mainly telephone interpretation and enquiry services. Depending on the availability of resources, other interpretation and translation services can also be arranged.

The breakdown of the use of the CHEER Centre's interpretation and translation services by bureaux/departments and EMs as well as by EM languages in the past three years are set out in Annex 4 and Annex 5 respectively.

(5) The Education Bureau (EDB) has, starting from the 2014/15 school year, allocated about \$200 million per year to step up the education support for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students in learning the Chinese language through, among others, the implementation of the "Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework" (Learning Framework) in primary and secondary schools. The EDB has been reviewing the implementation of the "Learning Framework" and further enhancing the related teaching strategies, assessment tools and supporting resources for schools as appropriate in a timely manner in the light of the views of various stakeholders and school practices on learning and teaching. With respect to the curriculum, we will review the entire "Learning Framework" and fine-tune the learning objectives and details of each Key Stage (i.e. Primary 1-3, Primary 4-6 and Secondary 1-3) having due regard to the overall performance of students where appropriate at an

interval of three years. We are now in the active process of analysing data regarding learning, teaching and assessment since the implementation of the "Learning Framework" to inform the enhancement of the "Learning Framework", the "Chinese Language Assessment Tools for NCS Students" and the supporting resources accordingly. The findings will be reported to the Legislative Council upon completion of the related work.

(6) In view of the diversified linguistic backgrounds and years of learning Chinese among NCS students (notably EM students), distinct differences exist in the starting points of learning Chinese and their learning progress. If a uniformed standard of second language curriculum with structured learning objectives by stages is required of all NCS students in Hong Kong, it will not only fail to address the realistic learning circumstances of NCS students, but will also be ineffective in catering for their learning diversity. The flexibility of the "Learning Framework" allows teachers to set specific learning targets, learning progress and expected learning outcomes, as well as adapt and develop teaching materials for their NCS students with different starting points in learning Chinese and varying abilities to help NCS students with diversified learning needs learn Chinese progressively.

It involves a complex professional decision for embarking on which curriculum mode in facilitating NCS students' effective learning of Chinese. The "Learning Framework" has been implemented for only three years and the first cohort of NCS students that started learning Chinese Language under the "Learning Framework" in Primary 1 are now studying Primary 4. The support measures need time to take root and create a sustainable impact on the NCS students. The EDB will collect more data for in-depth analysis according to NCS students' learning pace and refine the "Learning Framework" as necessary. We have no plan to introduce other policies or projects in addition to the current policy.

(7) The Employment Services Division (ESD) of the Labour Department (LD) has all along been providing comprehensive and dedicated employment services for EM job seekers at each of its 13 job centres across the territory to facilitate the use of free employment services by EMs living in various districts. EM job seekers may receive job referral service and employment information through special counters and resource corners at any job centre and attend tailor-made employment briefings to better understand the latest labour market situation and improve their job search skills. EM job seekers may also meet employment officers to obtain personalised employment advisory service. Experienced employment officers who are familiar with the local employment market and proficient in English will provide EM job seekers with job search advice and employment information in accordance with their individual needs and preferences, and match them to suitable jobs. ESD has also made arrangements with non-governmental organisations to provide interpretation services for EM job seekers who speak neither Chinese nor English. Moreover, since May 2017, ESD has engaged two employment assistants proficient in EM languages at the Kowloon West Job Centre in Sham Shui Po and the Employment in One-stop in Tin Shui Wai on a pilot basis to strengthen employment support for EM job seekers (especially those of South Asian origins).

Since September 2014, LD has implemented the Employment Services Ambassador (ESA) Programme for Ethnic Minorities, under which trainees of the Youth Employment and Training Programme who can communicate in EM languages are employed as ESAs at job centres, recruitment centres and job fairs to help EM job seekers make use of various job search facilities and services. There is no pre-set quota on the number of ESAs for EMs, and LD will continue to engage them to work at job centres, recruitment centres and job fairs subject to the recruitment situation and service demand.

ESD will continue to provide employment services suited to the needs of EM job seekers and keep its strategies in view from time to time for enhancing the relevant services. We consider strengthening the dedicated employment support to EM job seekers provided through the existing job centres in different districts under the coordination of ESD will be more efficient and convenient to users than setting up a designated division or job centre(s) for them.

Note 1: The 23 B/Ds and public authorities are the Education Bureau, Social Welfare Department, Labour Department, Home Affairs Department, Employees Retraining Board, Vocational Training Council, Food and Health Bureau, Department of Health, Hospital Authority, Construction Industry Council, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, Innovation and Technology Commission, Office of the Communications Authority, Housing Department, Hong Kong Observatory, Hongkong Post, Legal Aid Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Correctional Services Department, Customs and Excise Department, Immigration Department, Fire Services Department and Registration and Electoral Office.

Note 2: The CHEER Centre's basic services include Cantonese and English classes, dedicated learning classes, counselling service and other integration programmes.

Note 3: The seven EM languages are Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Tagalog, Thai and Urdu.

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## **LCQ19: Trial operations of Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link**

Following is a question by the Hon Leung Che-cheung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (July 4):

Question:

Some residents near the alignment of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) in Yuen Long District have relayed that since the commencement of XRL trial operations by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), they feel vibrations and noise whenever XRL trains pass by. They also suspect that the cracks which have appeared on the floor and walls inside and outside their residential units recently might have been caused by such vibrations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows if the MTRCL had, before carrying out the XRL trial operations, made projections of the vibrations and noise which would be generated as well as the damages which would be caused to nearby buildings by XRL trains in motion, and devised solutions accordingly; if the MTRCL had, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) of the number of complaints about the XRL trial operations received by the Government and the MTRCL so far, with a breakdown by type of complaints and district involved; the means and timetable for handling such complaints; whether they will offer compensation to the affected residents;

(3) whether a mechanism is currently in place for tackling immediately the problems relating to such complaints; if so, of the details; and

(4) how it ensures that such complaints will be satisfactorily resolved before the commissioning of XRL?

Reply:

President,

My consolidated reply to the Hon Leung Che-cheung's question is as follows:

To complement the commissioning target of the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) in September 2018, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) commenced trial operations from April 1, 2018 so as to ensure safety and reliability of various systems, as well as to train staff to familiarise themselves with the various operation systems and operating environment through the simulation of actual operating environment that further tests train operations and relevant station systems.

Before the commencement of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL project, the MTRCL conducted an Environmental Impact Assessment Study for the works in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap 499). The assessment results indicate that the impact of the vibrations and noise created by movement of the high speed trains on the environment and structures in the vicinity are minimal. During trial operations, the MTRCL also monitored and collected data of the vibrations and noise at locations along the alignment as approved by the Environmental Protection Department. Monitoring data from April 1 to the present indicates that the standards under the Environmental Impact Assessment Report are conformed with.

The MTRCL has all along been maintaining close liaison with the community, and has, through multiple communication channels, exchanged views with District Councils, Rural Committees, owners' committees, Village Representatives and residents. Upon receipt of suggestions from individual residents on the operation of high speed trains, the MTRCL further exchanged views with residents to understand the situation at three Yuen Long San Tin district resident forums on May 2, May 26 and June 29, 2018. The number of complaints received by the MTRCL from Yuen Long district residents regarding the trial operations of high speed trains are at the Annex. For the nine cases under which residents allege that structures are damaged by vibrations caused by movement of high speed trains, the MTRCL has, in accordance with established procedures, referred the cases to loss adjusters for independent investigation after seeking consent from the owners concerned.

Further, in response to requests from residents, the MTRCL has arranged to monitor and collect data of vibrations and noise at various locations in Yuen Long San Tin district since mid-May. The monitoring work is still underway and will continue after commissioning of the Hong Kong Section of the XRL. Once sufficient data is gathered, the MTRCL will conduct assessment and explore appropriate related measures.

The Highways Department together with its Monitoring and Verification Consultant will continue to monitor the MTRCL's work to ensure that the Hong Kong Section of the XRL project conforms with relevant specifications and standards.

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## [S for S speaks on Court of Final Appeal's judgment on dependant immigration policy](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, at a media briefing after attending the Legislative Council meeting this afternoon (July 4):

Reporter: Any need for laws to be amended?

Secretary for Security: The Hong Kong Government respects the decision of the Court. Colleagues from the Immigration Department and the Department of Justice will be studying the judgment in detail. We will follow up the issues involved.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## LCQ13: Driving Improvement Course

Following is a question by the Hon Hon Frankie Yick and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (July 4):

Question:

The Transport Department (TD) introduced the Driver Improvement Scheme (DIS) in 2002 with an aim to improve the driving attitude of the participants, thereby reducing traffic accidents. From February 2009 onwards, persons falling within the following categories are required under the law to attend driving improvement courses offered by designated driving improvement schools: (a) persons who have been convicted of serious traffic offences, and (b) persons who have accumulated 10 or more Driving-offence Points (DOPs) within two years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) in each of the past three years, of (i) the respective numbers of persons of the aforesaid two categories who attended driving improvement courses, (ii) the number of persons who, upon completion of such courses, had three DOPs deducted from their total number of DOPs incurred, and (iii) the respective numbers of persons who, within six months, one year and two years after having three DOPs deducted upon completion of the courses, incurred DOPs again or were disqualified from obtaining or holding a driving licence for having incurred 15 or more DOPs, with a breakdown by the type of vehicle they drove;

(2) as some members of the public have pointed out that DIS has been implemented for 16 years, and the contents of the driving improvement courses have remained the same and are outdated, whether the authorities will review and improve the course arrangements (e.g. adding new modes of training like road tests, developing different improvement courses for participants driving various types of vehicles, as well as offering courses with enhanced contents or increased training hours for participants who have repeatedly committed the same type of traffic offences) in order to enhance the effectiveness of DIS; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) given that according to the TD's information, the major factors involving drivers which contributed to the traffic accidents in recent year are (i) driving inattentively, (ii) driving too close to the vehicle in front and (iii) careless lane changing, whether the authorities will examine implementing measures to encourage drivers to attend on their own initiative driving improvement courses on a regular basis, so as to improve their driving attitude; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Transport Department (TD) launched the Driving Improvement Course (DIC) in September 2002 with a view to enhancing motorists' awareness of road safety and cultivating good driving behaviour. Motorists may attend the course voluntarily. Under the Road Traffic Ordinance (Cap 374), the court may also, at its discretion, order motorists who have committed specified traffic offences to attend a DIC so as to improve their driving behaviour. To further enhance road safety, the TD introduced the scheme of obligatory attendance of the DIC with effect from February 2009. Under the Road Traffic Ordinance, save for special reasons, the court shall order motorists convicted of serious traffic offences (e.g. dangerous driving and drink driving) to attend a DIC. Furthermore, under the Road Traffic (Driving-offence Points) Ordinance (Cap 375), motorists who have accumulated 10 Driving-offence Points (DOPs) incurred for traffic offences committed during a period of two years shall also attend a DIC.

My reply to the various parts of the Hon Frankie Yick's question is as follows:

(1) In the past three years, the number of participants who completed a DIC either upon accumulating 10 DOPs incurred over a period of two years or upon a court order, as well as those among which had 3 DOPs deducted upon completion of the course, with a breakdown by vehicle class they are entitled to drive, are set out in Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively.

Moreover, in 2015 and 2016, among the participants who had 3 DOPs deducted after completion of a DIC, the number of those who incurred DOPs again within six months, one year and two years, as well as those who were disqualified from driving for having incurred 15 or more DOPs, with a breakdown by vehicle class they are entitled to drive, are set out in Annex 3. As regards the information of 2017, since the periods of six months, one year and two years following completion of the course have not yet ended, the TD is unable to provide the relevant data.

(2) The main cause for many traffic accidents are often related to driving attitude. The DIC aims to address such situation and seeks to effectively instill in motorists a stronger sense of road safety and good driving behaviour through classroom teaching. The DIC covers the topics of Driving-offence Points System, safe driving concepts and prevention of traffic accidents, legislation and regulations on drink driving and drug driving, good driving attitude, etc. Course participants learn the subjects through, among others, classroom teaching, video demonstration and discussions. The course also covers cases of traffic accidents involving different classes of vehicles. The instructors will analyse the causes and consequences of accidents through discussion with participants. The content is designed to meet the main objectives of the course and the needs of participants.

The TD will review and revise the course content from time to time in the light of the trends of traffic accidents and relevant legislative amendments. For example, the TD enhanced the content relating to cycling in November 2017, including how the motorists should stay alert for cyclists on

a road and the road safety matters that cyclists should take note of. The TD will also review the overall course coverage with a view to adding suitable content targeting different classes of vehicles (such as large commercial vehicles reversing and travelling down slopes) to cater for the needs of different categories of motorists. At present, driving tests for applicants of driving licences are stringent and included road tests (except for taxis). These tests are effective in ensuring that successful applicants of driving licences have the competence and driving skills for driving the respective classes of vehicles. As such, we do not consider it necessary to include road tests in the DIC.

For motorists who have committed traffic offences repeatedly, they will be required to attend a DIC for every 10 DOPs accumulated within a period of two years; if they are convicted of traffic offence, they may also be ordered by the court to attend the DIC. Repeated offenders are thus required to attend the course again without any exemption, incurring additional time and money for the course in the process, so as to correct their improper driving attitude.

(3) To encourage motorists to enroll on the DIC voluntarily, participants who complete the course and satisfy certain conditions (Note) may have 3 points deducted from their total number of DOPs incurred. Moreover, the Government has been promoting through publicity and education the safety awareness of motorists when using the roads. The TD will continue to collaborate with the Road Safety Council and the Police to launch various publicity and education campaigns by means of announcements in the public interest, promotional flyers, carnivals, etc. to promote road safety and proper driving attitude among motorists.

Note: The conditions include the participant's satisfactory performance in the course (including fulfilling the required attendance, paying attention during the course, participating actively during in-class and group discussions, as well as passing written and practical assignments of the course). Moreover, the participant must neither have no DOPs or accumulated 15 or more DOPs on the date of completion of the course, nor have been deducted DOPs within the past two years.

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## [LCQ15: Median monthly salary of young people](#)

Following is a question by the Hon Luk Chung-hung and a written reply by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, in the Legislative Council today (July 4):

Question:

According to the consultation document on population policy released by the Steering Committee on Population Policy in 2013, the median monthly salary of young people aged between 20 and 29 in full-time employment basically hovered around \$10,000 in the past decade. As the cumulative inflation rate during the same period was more than 10 per cent, the monthly salaries of young people in the past decade dropped in real terms. Some young people have become discouraged by the lack of opportunities for upward mobility. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective annual averages of the (a) nominal and (b) real median monthly salaries of persons in full-time employment in various age groups (i.e. below 20, 20 to 29, 30 to 39, 40 to 49, 50 to 59, 60 to 69, and 70 or above) in each year from 2013 to 2017; and

(2) of the measures taken by the authorities in the past five years to improve the overall employment environment so as to enable young people to earn higher income, thereby increasing upward mobility opportunities for them?

Reply:

President,

Young people are Hong Kong's future. The current-term Government strives to do our best in youth development work by addressing their concerns about education, career pursuit and home ownership, and encouraging their participation in politics as well as public policy discussion and debate. In doing so, the Government aims at creating opportunities for upward mobility for young people and support them in fully realising their potential, thereby allowing the younger generation to see hope in future.

Our reply to the Hon Luk Chung-hung's question is as follows:

(1) Based on the data from the General Household Survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department, the median monthly employment earnings of full-time employees by age (excluding foreign domestic helpers) in 2013 – 2017 in (a) nominal term; and (b) real term (i.e. at the 2017 price level) are shown in Annex. The figures show that the median monthly employment earnings of full-time employees across all age groups had risen notably over the period.

(2) The Government attaches great importance to the career development of young people as well as creating ample opportunities for their upward mobility and greater room for their development. To achieve this objective, the Government has to maintain the competitiveness of the Hong Kong economy. In addition to consolidating pillar industries, the Government also explores new economic opportunities to enrich the local industry structure with a view to creating more high-quality employment opportunities and opening up more career choices for young people. In this connection, the Government is committed to developing a high value-added and diversified

economy as well as facilitating the development of emerging industries. In particular, the Government has made significant efforts to promote the development of three major high value-added industries, namely innovation and technology, creative industries and finance, with a view to creating new impetus and growth areas for our economy.

In fact, following Hong Kong's sustained economic development, the wages of young graduates have substantially increased in recent years. As shown from the results of the 2015 Study on Earnings Mobility carried out by the former Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit (now renamed as Office of the Government Economist) in collaboration with the Census and Statistics Department published in May 2016, notable upward earnings mobility was enjoyed by first degree graduates from the 2001/02 and 2006/07 cohorts. Specifically, for the 2001/02 cohort, based on the median figures, first degree graduates could rise by eight income categories within ten years (where each income category covers 1/20 of the overall income distribution). Also, graduates' upward earning mobility was closely related to the manpower demand brought by economic development. There was higher upward mobility amongst science and engineering graduates between 2003/04 and 2013/14, reflecting the growth of the related industries. The Government is currently preparing the results of the 2018 Study, so as to continue the monitoring of earnings mobility on an ongoing basis and explore measures conducive to youth upward mobility.

To help the younger generation seize development opportunities, the Government has continuously enhanced their access to high-quality education and training. In doing so, young people will be equipped with skills demanded by the market in order to unleash their potential in their future career. In this connection, the Government has introduced a series of measures, including:

(i) In terms of primary and secondary education, the Education Bureau (EDB) continuously renews the school curriculum to keep abreast of the latest development as well as focus on current and emerging development priorities. With a view to preparing students to succeed in a knowledge-based, technologically advanced, and increasing globalised world, the school curriculum focuses on promoting STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education as well as fostering students' entrepreneurial spirit. At the same time, the Government is committed to providing students with diversified life-wide learning experiences, including those for vocational and professional education and training (VPET). In this regard, the Vocational Training Council (VTC) has established the STEM Education Centre and arranged STEM-related outreach for primary and secondary schools.

(ii) With regard to higher education, the Government has also implemented a series of measures to further increase subsidised post-secondary education opportunities, and is committed to promoting VPET, in a bid to provide school leavers with broader and more diversified articulation pathways and help young people grasp the opportunities for promotion in the workplace. The Government has been progressively increasing the number of University Grants Committee-funded senior year undergraduate intake places, so that 5 000

meritorious sub-degree graduates will be able to articulate to subsidised degree programmes each year by the 2018/19 academic year. In addition, the Government also implemented the Non-means-tested Subsidy Scheme for Self-financing Undergraduate Studies in Hong Kong (NMTSS) from the 2017/18 academic year. NMTSS provides an annual subsidy of about \$30,000 to eligible students pursuing about 300 eligible self-financing undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes. In the 2017/18 academic year, about 20 000 students benefited under NMTSS.

(iii) To encourage the self-financing post-secondary education sector to offer programmes in disciplines that meet Hong Kong's economic and social needs and nurture young people to join related disciplines, EDB has implemented the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP) from the 2015/16 academic year to subsidise about 1 000 students per cohort to pursue designated self-financing undergraduate programmes. SSSDP will be regularised from the 2018/19 academic year with an increase in the number of subsidised places to about 3 000 per cohort. The designated disciplines for the 2018/19 academic year include testing and certification, creative industries, computer science and financial technology, etc.

(iv) To promote the development of VPET and better equip young people to join trades and industries with great manpower demand, VTC has launched the Earn & Learn Scheme which integrates structured classroom learning with on-the-job training as well as provides a guaranteed level of salary and incentive allowance. The Scheme enables students to develop along a clear career progression pathway. Since the 2016/17 academic year, some 3 500 students have benefited from the Scheme.

(v) The Government injected \$1.2 billion into the Qualifications Framework (QF) Fund in March 2018 so as to further strengthen and drive the development of QF, enhance recognition of qualifications for different industries and provide youngsters with quality assured pathways for further studies and career development.

(vi) The Government also injected \$10 billion into the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) in May 2018 and will implement a series of enhancement measures, including raising the subsidy ceiling and expanding the scope of CEF courses to all courses registered under the Qualifications Register. Employees may make good use of CEF to pursue continuing education and skills upgrading, thereby moving upwards along the career ladder.

(vii) To enhance the employability of young people, the Labour Department (LD) implements the Youth Employment and Training Programme in collaboration with training bodies and employers to provide a full range of pre-employment and on-the-job training as well as career guidance and employment support services to young school leavers aged 15 to 24 with educational attainment at sub-degree level or below. Furthermore, LD operates two Youth Employment Resource Centres named Youth Employment Start to provide personalised advisory and support services on employment and self-employment to young people aged 15 to 29, so as to encourage them to make early career planning and assist those who aspire to self-employment in mapping out their career

path.

(viii) Providing young people with more diverse internship opportunities can broaden their horizon and enhance their employability. EDB provides 9 000 industrial attachment opportunities each year for students studying Higher Diploma and selected Diploma of Vocational Education. The Home Affairs Bureau also implement various youth internship schemes with an aim to enable young people to understand the work culture and career prospects in different places, establish interpersonal networks, broaden their horizon and facilitate their planning for future career. Relevant schemes include the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland as well as the Pilot Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas launched in March this year. In 2018/19, the Funding Scheme for Youth Internship in the Mainland subsidises a total of 135 youth internship programmes on the Mainland, expecting to benefit some 3 600 young people, whereas the Pilot Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas provides around 250 high quality internship places for young people on the Mainland and overseas.