

LCQ18: Employment support and training programmes

Following is a question by the Hon Luk Chung-hung and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, in the Legislative Council today (October 27):

Question:

Regarding the employment support and training programmes provided by the Labour Department (LD), other government departments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of (i) the number of job seekers registered with the LD, and (ii) the number of cases in which the LD conducted proactive job matching for job seekers as well as their success rates, in each of the past three years;
- (2) of the number of job fairs organised by the LD in the past three years, and set out, by (i) type of job and (ii) mode of employment (i.e. full-time or part-time), a breakdown of (a) the number of job vacancies offered and (b) the number of placements recorded at those job fairs;
- (3) whether it has compiled statistics on the number of job seekers in the past three years who had been unemployed for a long time and unable to find a suitable job through the LD; whether the LD actively followed up the cases of such persons and provided them with specific support services (including job matching, training course recommendations and employment scheme referrals);
- (4) whether the LD conducted, from time to time in the past three years, comprehensive analyses and comparisons of the situations of the various industries and the qualifications of the job seekers, etc., with a view to more accurately grasping the situation of the labour market and properly utilising human resources; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (5) as there are comments that the various support services for the unemployed and the training programmes to promote employment currently operated by the various government departments and NGOs are separately administered and do not come under a single chain of command, and are thus unable to provide comprehensive employment support and related ancillary measures for the unemployed, of the improvement measures and plans put in place by the Government to strengthen the synergy and coordination of such services and programmes?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) In 2018, 2019 and 2020, there were respectively 38 567, 43 742 and 41 180 able-bodied job seekers registered with the Labour Department (LD) for employment services. The LD does not maintain statistics on cases of proactive job matching for job seekers.

(2) In 2018, 2019 and 2020, the LD staged respectively 958, 960 and 586 district-based job fairs as well as 666, 653 and 354 industry-based job fairs at its job centres and industry-based recruitment centres. Over the same period, the LD recorded 3 227, 3 323 and 1 873 placements for district-based job fairs, and 2 976, 2 839 and 1 039 placements for industry-based job fairs respectively.

In addition, the LD staged 19, 18 and five large-scale job fairs (including two on-line job fairs staged in 2020) in 2018, 2019 and 2020, and recorded 2 464, 1 647 and 537 placements respectively.

Breakdowns on job vacancies offered in the above job fairs by occupation and employment mode are at the Annex. The LD does not keep breakdowns on placements recorded in the above job fairs by occupation and mode of employment.

(3) Job seekers may be placed into employment either through the LD's referral service or by direct application to employers who advertise vacancies via the LD. Job seekers who are placed into employment through direct application are not required to report their employment status to the LD. Therefore, the LD does not have statistics of job seekers who are unemployed for a long period of time.

The LD's 13 job centres, three recruitment centres for the catering, retail and construction industries, a Telephone Employment Service Centre, the Interactive Employment Service (iES) website and its mobile application, etc., provide comprehensive and free employment services to job seekers. Apart from general employment services, job seekers in need may obtain personalised employment advisory services at job centres. Employment officers will help job seekers match and find suitable jobs by providing them with job search advice and information on the job market and training/retraining, conducting career aptitude assessment, etc., in accordance with their individual needs and preferences. The LD also implements and introduces timely enhancements to its employment programmes, in order to raise the employability of job seekers who have special employment needs or difficulties, and to provide incentives to encourage employers to hire them. The LD's employment officers will assist job seekers in joining employment programmes which cater to their needs.

(4) The LD closely monitors changes in the job markets. It constantly examines employment service statistics and feedback to its recruitment activities, as well as keeps abreast of the latest trends of the job markets through avenues such as the industry-based tripartite committees. In addition, the Vocational Training Council assesses the manpower demand for major industry sectors of Hong Kong on a regular basis. It collects information of employees count, income, education, etc. through manpower survey and conducts analyses, with an aim to facilitate the Government

(including the LD) and different stakeholders of industries for formulation of manpower and training plan.

(5) As explained in part (3) of the reply, the LD has been providing comprehensive and free employment services to job seekers with a view to assisting them in their job search. On the other hand, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) provides eligible employees with training courses and relevant services that are market-driven and employment-oriented, assisting them to join or re-join the labour market. Both under the aegis of the Labour and Welfare Bureau, the LD and the ERB closely communicate and collaborate with one another, and provide various employment support and training services to tie in with the Government's overall strategies in supporting the unemployed.