

LCQ2: Top Talent Pass Scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Carmen Kan and a reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (January 31):

Question:

Last year, a total of about 65 000 applications were received under the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), and about 51 000 of them were approved. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) among the applications approved under the TTPS, of the numbers of applicants and their dependants who have entered Hong Kong and obtained Hong Kong Identity Cards, together with a breakdown by application category (i.e. Categories A, B and C), and the respective proportions of the numbers of such applicants in the numbers of successful applicants of the relevant categories; whether it has conducted surveys on successful applicants' major factors for consideration in choosing to come to Hong Kong or not; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) in respect of taking up employment and starting up business by top talents, how the authorities will step up efforts in assisting them in giving full play to their strengths, staying in Hong Kong for development and contributing to Hong Kong; and

(3) of the number of school-age children who had come to Hong Kong in the capacity as the dependants of successful applicants under the TTPS as at the end of last year, and whether it has assessed if the number of places in public and private schools as well as complementary educational resources are adequate; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

To relieve the prevailing tight local labour market situation, the Government has since end-2022 implemented a series of talent attraction measures including the newly launched Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) which targets talent with high income and academic qualifications. An eligible outside talent is not required to have secured an offer of employment in Hong Kong before application for a two-year visa through the TTPS to explore opportunities in Hong Kong.

To assist incoming talent in adapting to the new environment more quickly and settling down in Hong Kong, Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE), following its launch of the online platform in end-December 2022, has its physical office established in end-October last year and commenced its work immediately. HKTE is dedicated to providing comprehensive one-stop support services for incoming talent, formulating talent attraction strategies, and following up talent's development and needs after arrival.

Our reply, in consultation with the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Education Bureau (EDB) and the Immigration Department (ImmD), to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) and (2) As at end-December last year, among the approximately 51 000 approved applications under the TTPS, around 36 000 of them arrived in Hong Kong, accounting for around 70 per cent of the approved applications. In addition, more than 51 000 dependants were approved to come to Hong Kong under the TTPS, and nearly 36 000 of them arrived in Hong Kong. A detailed breakdown by category of applications is at Annex.

According to the Registration of Persons Regulations (Cap. 177A), newly arrived persons aged 11 or above who are permitted to stay in Hong Kong for more than 180 days must register for an identity card within 30 days after arrival. We believe that talent and their dependants who come to Hong Kong under the TTPS would apply for identity cards within the specified time limit in accordance with the law. The ImmD does not separately maintain relevant statistics.

To assist talent who have planned to come to Hong Kong or have just arrived to settle, adapt to the living in Hong Kong and integrate into the local community as soon as possible, HKTE, which was established last year, strives to offer them with comprehensive one-stop support services through a variety of online and offline activities in collaboration with many working partners, to provide information on job seeking, accommodation, education, employment, setting up of businesses, etc. Specifically, in terms of employment support, HKTE has engaged more than 10 human resources consultants as working partners. These working partners will provide personalised job matching and career support services based on the background and specific needs of job seekers. As at the end of last year, the partners' online platform processed nearly 1 400 job-seeking referrals. In addition, HKTE will co-organise online and offline job fairs with different industry sectors and stakeholders to enable outside talent to have a better understanding of the outlook and opportunities in various industries in Hong Kong, with a view to addressing the talent shortage in relevant industries. HKTE will also hold briefing sessions at target universities in various places to proactively reach out to talent there and attract them to work and live in Hong Kong. Separately, for incoming talent requiring assistance in starting businesses in Hong Kong, HKTE will provide them with advice and necessary information on business operation. If incoming talent are interested in setting up or expanding businesses in Hong Kong, Invest Hong Kong will proactively provide assistance and suitable support services.

At the same time, the Government is conducting follow-up surveys with the approved applicants under the TTPS to understand the situation or their plans of settling in Hong Kong, including employment, accommodation and children's education in Hong Kong, as well as their considerations for choosing Hong Kong for development, so as to understand their needs for provision of better support services. An analysis into the findings will be available shortly. The Labour and Welfare Bureau will share relevant findings with other bureaux and departments to facilitate their review of relevant support and ancillary services.

(3) As at end-December last year, nearly 21 000 unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 arrived in Hong Kong under the TTPS. Talent coming to Hong Kong can choose to arrange their school-age children to study in private schools or publicly-funded schools. According to the EDB, there are at present sufficient secondary and primary school places in Hong Kong.

The EDB provides support services for newly-arrived children to help them adapt to the learning environment in Hong Kong and integrate into the local community. It also provides subsidies to publicly-funded schools admitting newly-arrived children to provide school-based support services. HKTE will also provide information including children's education to talent who intend to come to Hong Kong or have just arrived, and will refer related enquiries to relevant bureaux or departments for follow-up actions.