

LCQ21: Talent admission schemes

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Chun-ying and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (December 13):

Question:

In recent years, the Government has implemented various talent admission schemes to recruit talent from the Mainland and overseas. As at September 2023, some 160 000 applications had been received under the various talent admission schemes, with over 100 000 applications approved, and a total of over 50 000 applications had been received under the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), with about 39 000 applications approved. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the following information on the aforesaid various talent admission schemes in each of the past two years: (i) respective numbers of applications received and approved, (ii) number of talents who had come to Hong Kong upon visa approval, and (iii) number of talents who had never come to Hong Kong upon visa approval;

(2) as there are views that talent approved under the TTPS are those much sought after by many regional economies, of the measures put in place by the Government to increase the rate of such talent coming to Hong Kong;

(3) whether it has reviewed and adjusted the eligibility criteria for the various talent admission schemes in a timely manner; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) given that Hong Kong Talent Engage will provide incoming talent admitted under the various talent admission schemes with information on living and jobs or skills, and offer them pertinent support on accommodation, employment, children's education, etc., in order to help them integrate into the local community as early as possible, of the relevant specific details?

Reply:

President,

Our reply, in consultation with the Immigration Department (ImmD), to the Member's questions is as follows:

(1) and (3) In the Policy Address last year, the Government introduced an array of measures to proactively trawl for talent from around the world, including the launch of the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) targeting high-income talent and graduates from the world's top universities to come to Hong Kong for development, the enhancement of various existing talent admission schemes, and the update of the Talent List, which was expanded in mid-May this year to increase the coverage from 13 to 51 professions.

The Government's various measures to attract global talent have received positive responses since implementation at the end of last year. As at end-November this year, we received over 200 000 applications under various talent admission schemes, which is a nearly fourfold increase as compared to 2022. In the first 11 months this year, around 81 000 talents with visas approved under various talent admission schemes have arrived in Hong Kong, which has far exceeded our annual target of admitting at least 35 000 talents. The yearly statistics on applications received and approved under various talent admission schemes in the past two years, and the numbers of talent arrived in Hong Kong through various talent admission schemes in the first 11 months this year are at Annex. The ImmD does not maintain a breakdown of other statistics mentioned in the question.

This year's Policy Address, under the ongoing strategy of attracting and retaining talent, announced further measures including expanding the coverage of universities under the TTPS, relaxing the visa requirements for talent in certain countries, etc. The Government will closely monitor the implementation of various talent admission schemes, and make timely reviews and adjustments where necessary, with a view to meeting Hong Kong's development needs.

(2) and (4) Following the launch of the online platform for Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE) last year, this year's Policy Address announced the establishment of physical office of HKTE by end-October. HKTE has commenced its work immediately after establishment to provide support for incoming talent, formulate talent attraction strategies, follow up with talent's development and needs after arrival, and collaborate with organisations and stakeholders in various sectors to proactively attract global talent with diverse backgrounds to come and settle in Hong Kong. In October this year, HKTE and the Hong Kong Federation of Insurers co-hosted Hong Kong Insurance Industry Online Live Recruitment Event to enable Mainland talent who are interested in coming to Hong Kong for development, particularly those from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), to understand further the outlook and opportunities of the insurance industry in Hong Kong. In November and early December this year, HKTE also participated in the exhibition at the 2nd National Conference on the Development of Human Resources Services held in Shenzhen, as well as organised job fairs at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Sun Yat-sen University, to promote Hong Kong's role as the GBA's talent service hub.

Furthermore, this year's Policy Address announced that HKTE would organise a "Global Talent Summit cum Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA High-quality Talent Development Conference" in the second quarter of next year, so as to congregate political, academic and business leaders worldwide to explore the global trends of talent development, drive regional exchange and co-operation in talent attraction, and promote Hong Kong's dual roles as an international talent hub and national talent portal and our advantages. We will take this opportunity to showcase Hong Kong's distinctive edge of enjoying strong support of the motherland and being closely connected to the world under "one country, two systems", which attracts talent as well as facilitates talent exchanges and co-operation in the GBA.

HKTE will continue to be committed to providing comprehensive one-stop support services to talent interested in coming to Hong Kong and those who have just arrived through a variety of online and offline activities in collaboration with more working partners, to obtain the necessary information on jobs and children's education. Since the launch of HKTE online platform at the end of last year, we have proactively offered advice and necessary information to talent in areas like setting up businesses, employment, accommodation, education, healthcare, banking, insurance, taxation, and transportation, etc. so as to facilitate talent's adaptation to the life in Hong Kong. As at end-October this year, the online platform processed over 5 800 enquiries. We have also collaborated with various major online recruitment platforms to launch a dedicated webpage of Job Search in April this year which features about 10 000 real time quality job opportunities daily. Talent can apply for jobs directly through the platform, which is connected with over 30 designated partners to provide talent with advice and services in job seeking, accommodation, education, integrated settlement services and networking and community through electronic matching services. More than 920 referrals of service requests were made so far, with most concerning seeking employment and accommodation.

HKTE continues to reach out to and maintain contact with incoming talent to provide relevant support, expand the network of working partners in various sectors actively, strengthen collaboration with the Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in Economic and Trade Offices based in the Mainland and around the world, and proactively attract global talent with diverse backgrounds to settle and pursue career in Hong Kong, with a view to contributing to the long-term development of Hong Kong.