LCQ9: Talent admission schemes

Following is a question by the Hon Kwok Wai-keung and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (July 12):

Question:

In recent years, the Government has implemented various talent admission schemes, including the General Employment Policy, Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents, Top Talent Pass Scheme and Technology Talent Admission Scheme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective numbers of rejected applications for the aforesaid schemes in each of the past five years, as well as the reasons for rejection; whether there were any cases in which the applicants were penalised for abusing the aforesaid schemes;

(2) of the following details of the talents admitted to Hong Kong via the aforesaid schemes who finally became Hong Kong permanent residents in the past five years: (i) their number, (ii) their average length of stay in Hong Kong, (iii) the industries in which they were engaged and (iv) their respective proportions of starting up businesses and taking up employment in Hong Kong; and

(3) whether it has conducted tracking studies on the talents admitted via the aforesaid schemes, with a view to assessing if they meet the talent needs of various industries, as well as their effectiveness in promoting local economic and social development; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Immigration Department (ImmD) and relevant bureaux, our reply to the Member's question is as follows:

(1) The numbers of rejected applications under various talent admission schemes in the past five years are tabulated as follows:

Talent admission scheme	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
General Employment Policy (GEP)	921	1 147	910	909	362

Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)	249	365	415	347	144
Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)	0	1	13	23	21
Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS)	985	1 861	2 482	4 417	3 117
Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents (ASSG)	0	0	1	2	4
Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) (Note 1)	0	0	0	0	0
Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS) (Note 2)	Not applicable				47

Note 1: The TechTAS was launched on June 25, 2018.
Note 2: The TTPS was launched on December 28, 2022.

        In processing each application, the ImmD will examine whether the applicant meets the specific eligibility criteria under the relevant admission scheme and normal immigration requirements, and will take into account the individual circumstances of each application. This is to ensure that only applicants meeting the relevant immigration policies will be admitted into Hong Kong for employment/stay. The main reasons for refusal of the applications under the above talent admission schemes included that the applicants did not meet the eligibility criteria of the relevant admission schemes, for instance, applicants' academic qualifications or experience not up to requirement; the remuneration package for the job offers in Hong Kong not commensurate with the prevailing market level; or doubtful purpose of application, etc.

        It is an offence for any persons to furnish false information or make false representation to the ImmD in their applications for visas or entry permits. If such cases are found, apart from rejecting such applications, the ImmD will also initiate criminal investigations into the cases concerned. Should any person be unveiled for obtaining his visa or entry permit to Hong Kong by illegal means, the visa or entry permit so obtained will become null and void according to the law, and the person concerned will be subject to removal back to his 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 will be subject to removal back to his place of origin.

        The ImmD does not maintain statistics on the number of cases in which applicants were punished for abusing the above-mentioned talent admission schemes.

(2) The statistics on entrants admitted to Hong Kong under various talent admission schemes who have eventually acquired the right of abode in the past five years are tabulated as follows:

Talent admission scheme	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
GEP	5 366	5 377	4 375	4 327	4 125
ASMTP	1 075	1 161	790	928	1 126
IANG	2 455	3 223	3 117	3 449	3 495
QMAS	148	157	110	139	146
ASSG (Note 3)	0	0	0	0	12
TechTAS (Note 1)	0	0	0	0	0
TTPS (Note 2)	Not applicable				0

Note 1: The TechTAS was launched on June 25, 2018.
Note 2: The TTPS was launched on December 28, 2022.
Note 3: The ASSG was launched on May 4, 2015.
Note 4: Breakdown by applicants' status in Hong Kong at the time of application for the right of abode.

Like other Hong Kong permanent residents, the ImmD does not maintain statistics on duration of stay in Hong Kong, occupation and the ratio of establishing business to being employed in respect of the entrants admitted under various talent admission schemes who have acquired the right of abode.

(3) Policy bureaux and departments have been maintaining communication with stakeholders in the industry to understand their views on manpower demand. In addition, the Government is making preparations for setting up the physical office of the Hong Kong Talent Engage (HKTE). Apart from external promotion on talent attraction, the HKTE's work also includes providing assistance to incoming talent in various aspects of living to help them settle down in Hong Kong. The HKTE will also maintain contact with the incoming talent to keep track of their development in Hong Kong and form a talent community, so as to contribute to the further development of Hong Kong. The HKTE, after being formally set up, will formulate plans for future operations based on the implementation situation and actual effectiveness of the relevant initiatives.