

Remarks by SLW on talent attraction and importation of labour

Following is the remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, on talent attraction and importation of labour at a media session after attending a radio programme this morning (August 31) :

Reporter: For the Top Talent Pass Scheme (TTPS), it seems that a lot of them are from the Mainland instead of attracting international talent. Do you think it has actually defeated the purpose of the scheme?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: I don't think so. Speaking of international talent, I think it is more important for us to look at their ability and perspective rather than just their nationality. I can give you an example. Category C of TTPS refers to fresh graduates of eligible universities in the past five years with less than three years of work experience after graduation. If you look at where they are graduating from, the biggest category is those graduating from universities in the United States. While they may be Mainlanders, they received their higher education in America. Obviously they have a more international perspective. With these people in Hong Kong, I am sure they are going to bring benefits and add value to our economy.

Reporter: How about the Bureau's future planning in recruiting more talent? Could you give any details on the direction of the review of the scheme, and why is the Bureau eyeing talent from Malaysia?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: Now that the TTPS has been put in place for around one and a half years, with the set up of Hong Kong Talent Engage, we have the manpower to conduct more overseas promotion. Having done a desk research, we believe the first stop we should go to is obviously Southeast Asia. Among Southeast Asian countries, we believe Malaysia is the most appropriate place that we should go for, because there are lots of ethnic Chinese in Malaysia. Most of them are trilingual as they can speak fluent English, Putonghua as well as Cantonese. We believe by attracting more Malaysian, in particular Malaysian Chinese, to Hong Kong, it is going to bring benefit to Hong Kong and they are more likely to assimilate into Hong Kong much more easily.

Reporter: Lastly, could you give an update on importation of labour? How many applications have the Bureau received since rolling out the scheme? How many of them are expected to arrive by the end of this year?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: Up to this moment, under the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme, the number of imported workers we have approved is around 21 000. Once we have granted these applications, employers have to apply the visas for their imported labour within six months. The exact moment of their arrival depends on whether or not the employers are going to make use of the quota allocated when they are allowed to import labour into Hong

Kong. Thank you.

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