

Land Registry releases statistics for March

The Land Registry today (April 2) released its statistics for March 2025.

Land registration

- * The number of sale and purchase agreements for all building units received for registration in March was 6 661 (+54.7 per cent compared with February 2025 and +32.9 per cent compared with March 2024)
- * The 12-month moving average for March was 5 940 (2.4 per cent above the 12-month moving average for February 2025 and 38.0 per cent above that for March 2024)
- * The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements of building units in March was \$45.6 billion (+61.4 per cent compared with February 2025 and +22.1 per cent compared with March 2024)
- * Among the sale and purchase agreements, 5 367 were for residential units (+67.7 per cent compared with February 2025 and +35.2 per cent compared with March 2024)
- * The total consideration for sale and purchase agreements in respect of residential units was \$38.8 billion (+68.7 per cent compared with February 2025 and +29.1 per cent compared with March 2024)

Statistics on sales of residential units do not include sale and purchase agreements relating to sales of units under the Home Ownership Scheme, the Private Sector Participation Scheme, the Tenants Purchase Scheme, etc, unless the premium of the unit concerned has been paid after the sale restriction period.

Figures on sale and purchase agreements received for the past 12 months, the year-on-year rate of change and breakdown figures on residential sales have also been released.

As deeds may not be lodged with the Land Registry until up to 30 days after the transaction, these statistics generally relate to land transactions in the previous month.

Land search

- * The number of searches of land registers made by the public in March was 393 010 (+16.3 per cent compared with February 2025 and +7.0 per cent compared with March 2024)

The statistics cover searches made at the counter, through the self-service terminals and via the Integrated Registration Information System

LCQ4: Education and talent development planning

Following is a question by Professor the Hon Lau Chi-pang and a reply by the Under Secretary for Education, Dr Sze Chun-fai, in the Legislative Council today (April 2):

Question:

It has been reported that the director of the film Ne Zha 2 chose to abandon a career in pharmacy in order to pursue his passion for animation production, ultimately achieving remarkable success. There are views that his story offers profound insights for education and talent development planning in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as it is learnt that many university students currently choose to pursue careers in fields unrelated to their major, whether the Government will consider providing students with more macro and comprehensive information at the stage of subject selection in secondary schools and in life planning education, so as to deepen students' understanding of relevant disciplines and professions and help them explore their interests and give play to their strengths; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) as there are views that a large creative team and talent pool are important factors contributing to the success of the aforesaid film, whether the Government will further strengthen the training and guidance on creative thinking for students in the curricula of primary and secondary schools; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as there are views pointing out that Hong Kong's current education system places too much emphasis on assessment and examination preparation, which is not conducive to the development of students' creative thinking, whether the Government has plans to make improvements; if so, of the specific plans; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Quality education is the key to nurturing talent, and is essential for the continuous development of the society. In the face of a complicated and ever-changing global environment, fostering creativity in students is crucial for their future development. As such, through kindergarten, primary and secondary education curricula, the Education Bureau (EDB) has continuously

integrated elements that nurture creative thinking, facilitating students' holistic development and enabling those with diverse interests, abilities and backgrounds to fully unleash their potential.

Regarding the question raised by Professor the Hon Lau Chi-pang, I will respond in four aspects including school curricula, student activities and competitions, latest developments in the modes of assessment, and life planning education (LPE):

(1) to (3) Nurturing creativity throughout the primary and secondary curricula

The school curriculum developed by the EDB in collaboration with the Curriculum Development Council consists of components including knowledge, generic skills, values and attitudes. Creativity is one of the generic skills which emphasises students' demonstration of creative thinking in new ideas or products grounded on a solid knowledge foundation. Students are required to integrate knowledge, discern details from observation, synthesise and apply knowledge, be eager to explore, display perseverance and commitment in the face of difficulties, and solve problems with creative thinking.

To dovetail with the national strategy of invigorating the country through science and education, the EDB is proactively promoting STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) and innovation and technology (I&T) education in primary and secondary schools. By integrating and applying knowledge and skills in science, mathematics and technology, students develop their capabilities of innovation and problem-solving through the process of knowledge creation and I&T inventions.

At the same time, the EDB has reformed Science Education by introducing Primary Science and updating the junior secondary Science curriculum. A programme on artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted teaching has also been launched in junior secondary Science to foster pedagogical innovation. Moreover, we actively promote I&T education at the upper primary and junior secondary levels, such as teaching programming and AI learning to strengthen the cultivation of students' innovative and problem-solving skills so that they can adapt to the ever-changing world.

As for other Key Learning Areas, Arts Education promotes arts technology and interdisciplinary learning, and Personal, Social and Humanities Education promotes "entrepreneurial spirit", both of which cover the qualities of creativity and innovativeness. At present, there are 55 Applied Learning courses offered at the senior secondary level, of which courses under the Areas of Studies "Creative Studies" and "Media and Communication" place particular emphasis on nurturing students' creativity. Courses such as Computer Game and Animation Design, and Film Production are specifically designed for students interested in creativity and the media. In the 2024/25 school year, a total of 3 932 students enrolled in the related courses under "Creative Studies" and "Media and Communication", reflecting that the courses are popular among students.

Unleashing students' innovative potential through diversified activities

In recent years, Hong Kong students have had outstanding performances beyond the classroom in various fields, such as science and technology, and creative thinking, etc. Much to our delight, they bring glory to Hong Kong with remarkable achievements in international or major competitions, such as the International Mathematical Science and Creativity Competition, Odyssey of the Mind World Finals.

The EDB also provides diversified activities to offer students with more opportunities to unleash their creativity. We also arrange for students with potential in STEAM to participate in systematic training and competitions of a considerable scale, and they have thrived and flourished on international stages time and again. The EDB also continues to collaborate with the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education to promote the effective use of the "school-based student talent pool", so as to identify students who are gifted in different areas. At the same time, we arrange for students to engage in exchanges with arts and cultural specialists from the Mainland, so that students can gain an understanding of the country's development and outstanding achievements.

Developing students' potential by integrating creativity into assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the curriculum and learning and teaching. Students' performance both within and beyond the classroom can reflect their learning progress and inform learning and teaching. The current assessment policy no longer relies solely on the conventional modes of assessment, but employs diversified formative assessments to promote student learning on all fronts and stimulate their learning motivation and curiosity. We have always recommended schools to adopt diversified assessment modes and assignment designs that allow students to demonstrate their learning outcomes and unleash their creativity in the forms of text, images, physical models and others.

The EDB continues to organise professional training activities for teachers and develop learning and teaching resources to support teachers in designing assessments and assignments. We also encourage schools to review and optimise their assessment policies, so as to enable students to participate in more inspiring learning activities and develop their potential.

Starting life planning early in age to understand aspirations

To help students understand early their own aspirations, interests and abilities, and develop a broader view of further studies, future careers and pathways, the EDB has strengthened LPE at primary and secondary levels.

Regarding information on subject choices, the EDB organises talks for parents annually and updates the website "One-stop Portal on Articulation to Multiple Pathways·Transition to Senior Secondary and Post-secondary Education" to disseminate the latest information on elective subjects and multiple pathways.

In addition, through the Life Planning Information website, the EDB

provides the latest career information of over 300 types of work from different industries, including director and stage designer, etc. On the website, there is also an online learning system, "My Life Planning Portfolio", for students to conduct career aptitude assessments.

The EDB also implements the Business-School Partnership Programme (BSPP) in collaboration with different business corporations, government departments and community organisations. Through the non-traditional learning platform provided by BSPP partners, students have been provided with diversified career exploration activities, with a view to equipping them with knowledge and information about different industries, including arts, culture and entertainment industries. In the 2022/23 school year, the EDB further promoted co-operation between the business sector and schools through launching the BSPP 2.0 with more business partners, covering more industries for widening students' exposure. Holiday Work Experience Programmes arranged under the BSPP 2.0 enable senior secondary students to gain first-hand experience and understand different industries, including animation production and performing arts industries. Study tours to workplaces under the "Greater Bay Area Career Exploration Tours" Programme also deepen students' understanding of the developments and talent needs of various industries in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area.

To conclude, the EDB will continue to optimise the curriculum and collaborate with different stakeholders to nurture students' creativity through diversified strategies, with a view to cultivating talent for our society.

Thank you, President.

LCQ5: Functions of Radio Television Hong Kong and the Information Services Department

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Junius Ho and a reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, in the Legislative Council today (April 2):

Radio Television Hong Kong and the Information Services Department are government departments under the purview of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau and the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau respectively. There are views that the aforesaid two departments, both being official media agencies, have overlapping functions. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the specific functions and staff establishment of the two departments;
- (2) whether it will, under the financial philosophy of keeping the expenditure within the limits of revenues while exploring new sources of income and managing costs, review how the structure of the two departments can be streamlined to reduce expenditure; and
- (3) whether it has explored ways to further enhance the compatibility of the two departments and the feasibility of their merger; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Information Services Department (ISD), our consolidated reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Junius Ho is as follows:

As a government department and the only public service broadcaster in Hong Kong, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) firmly implements the public purposes and mission under the Charter of RTHK, including promoting understanding of "one country, two systems", proactively assisting in strengthening the dissemination of government information, engendering a sense of citizenship and national identity, and promoting sports and culture and social inclusion. RTHK currently operates five digital television channels and eight AM/FM radio channels. Unlike commercial broadcasters, programmes produced and broadcast by RTHK have to cater for the needs of the mass audience as well as the minority groups including ethnic minorities and the non-Chinese speaking group etc. In this connection, apart from disseminating government information, the radio and television programmes of RTHK also cover various aspects including news, public affairs, national education, sports, culture, lifestyle and education programmes etc.

As for the ISD, it is responsible for the Government's public relations, news dissemination, publicity and publication matters, and serves as a communication link between the Government and mass media including newspapers, television, radio, and magazines. The ISD also makes good use of the Internet, disseminating government information to the public directly by multi-media content so as to enhance the public's understanding of and support for the Government's work. In addition, the ISD also provides professional public relations advice to the Government and promotes government policies and services through different communication platforms and means (including RTHK), with a view to projecting an accurate image of Hong Kong within and outside the city while telling the good stories of Hong Kong.

In view of the above, although RTHK and the ISD are both government departments and both carry the responsibility of disseminating government information, RTHK, as the public service broadcaster; and the ISD, being responsible for the Government's public relations, perform different duties.

There is no overlapping of their functions. As regards staff establishment, the establishment ceilings of RTHK and the ISD in 2024-25 are 762 and 451 posts respectively. Most of the civil service posts of RTHK belong to the Programme Officer grade while most of the civil service posts of the ISD belong to the Information Officer grade. The requirements for work nature, skills and experience of the two grades are different and hence merging the two departments with distinct functions may not be the most effective way to increase revenue and reduce expenditure in terms of overall operations. In addition, regardless of whether the merge would be implemented by having the Director of Information Services or the Director of Broadcasting to oversee both the ISD and RTHK, it would be difficult for the head of the merged department to manage the work of the two departments of which their missions, scopes of services and modes of operation are distinctly different. On the contrary, the merge may confuse the public with the role of RTHK as a public service broadcaster and the ISD in promoting the Government, which may be counterproductive to the Government's overall public relations works.

Notwithstanding the above, in response to the Productivity Enhancement Programme announced in the 2025-26 Budget, both RTHK and the ISD will comprehensively review their staffing and operation. In particular, RTHK will introduce appropriate measures including streamlining its structure and utilising technology for programme production etc to reduce manpower without affecting the quality of RTHK's programmes and services. At present, RTHK has been committed to deploying artificial intelligence (AI) in developing smart broadcasting. Last year, RTHK officially launched the AI Lab, streamlining production flow with AI technology, as well as adopting various AI-generated tools to enhance productivity. This will not only improve the quality of programmes but also result in a more cost-effective use of manpower. Besides, the ISD will continue to make effective use of existing platforms of the Government while keeping in view market developments and global trends to step up the Government's work in policy promotion and information dissemination. The ISD will also closely monitor the implementation of programmes under its purview and review their effectiveness regularly for the sake of more flexible and effective use of resources.

Despite the different roles of RTHK and the ISD, we agree that the two departments can co-operate with each other and leverage their strengths, to promote government's policies and disseminate government information more effectively. As such, both sides will continue to strengthen collaboration, for instance, the ISD is actively planning to work with RTHK on programme production under the theme of "Commemorating the 80th Anniversary of Victory in the War of Resistance" to promote patriotism through storytelling in a vivid manner. RTHK can leverage the ISD's strength in running a wide range of platforms and make use of those platforms to enhance the reach of its programmes, taking advantage of the synergy to tell good stories of the country and Hong Kong. Meanwhile, RTHK will continue to solidify its role as the public service broadcaster, including striving to strengthen its partnership with different broadcasters in the Mainland and other regions, continuing to produce different types of programmes on various themes in order to provide diversified radio and television programme choices for the public.

Update on postal services to Slovakia

Hongkong Post announced today (April 2) that, as advised by the postal administration of Slovakia, due to the impact of local control measures on an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, other than the areas with postcodes 93003, 93004, 93006 and 93007, mail delivery services to areas with postcode 90068 are also subject to delay.

Postal services to Botswana subject to delay

Hongkong Post announced today (April 2) that, as advised by the postal administration of Botswana, due to a cyber incident, mail delivery services to the country are subject to delay.