

LCQ13: Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Tan Yueheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

To foster career development of young persons and the exchange of talents in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region launched the pilot Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme (the Scheme) in 2021, regularised the Scheme in 2023, and introduced an enhancement measure of relaxing the eligibility criteria for young persons this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the total number of applications received since the launch of the Scheme; the number of enterprises participating in the Scheme, and the number of young persons employed who have contributed to these enterprises' success in allowance applications;

(2) of the amount of allowance granted in each year since the launch of the Scheme;

(3) whether the authorities hold information on the employment trends of those young persons participating in the Scheme, both during and after the completion of the 18-month subsidy period under the Scheme, including whether they have worked in Mainland cities for the full period of 18 months, and whether they have continued to work in Mainland cities after the completion of the subsidy period of the Scheme; if the authorities hold such information, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) whether the authorities have conducted separate surveys and studies on young persons and enterprises participating in the Scheme, so as to gather data and views for evaluation of the effectiveness of the Scheme; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government launched the pilot Greater Bay Area (GBA) Youth Employment Scheme (the pilot scheme) in 2021 and has regularised the scheme (the regularised scheme) since 2023, encouraging enterprises to employ Hong Kong young people and station them to work in the Mainland cities of the GBA. Under the pilot scheme and the regularised scheme for 2023 and 2024, an allowance of HK\$10,000 per month per young person was disbursed to

enterprises for up to 18 months. Starting from January 2025, the allowance limit of the regularised scheme has increased to HK\$12,000 per month per young person, or 60 per cent of the young person's monthly salary, whichever is lower. The eligibility requirements for joining the scheme were also relaxed to include young people aged 29 or below with sub-degree or higher qualifications.

My reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Tan Yueheng is as follows:

(1) As at February 2025, the pilot scheme and the regularised scheme recorded a total of 1 076 enterprises offering job vacancies and 2 262 young people have been employed. The scheme allows enterprises to recruit eligible young people directly through various channels. Hence, the Government does not have information on the number of young people who have applied for the vacancies under the scheme.

(2) As at February 2025, the pilot scheme disbursed HK\$117.91 million of allowance to enterprises. In 2023-24 and 2024-25 (as at February 2025), the regularised scheme respectively disbursed HK\$15.07 million and HK\$49.99 million of allowance to enterprises.

(3) Of the 1 091 young people who were employed under the pilot scheme, 632 completed the 18-month on-the-job training. Amongst those who completed the 18-month on-the-job training, 464 continued to be employed by the enterprises. The reasons for young people not continuing with their employment included the young people leaving employment pre-maturely, employers not offering employment or the young people declining the job offers. Enterprises can flexibly deploy young people who have completed on-the-job training to work in Hong Kong or in the Mainland cities according to their business development and needs.

As some young people employed under the regularised scheme for 2023 and 2024 are still undergoing on-the-job training, the Labour Department (LD) will compile the relevant data in due course.

(4) The LD has commissioned a consultant to conduct a 3-year "longitudinal study" on the regularised scheme. The study conducts follow-up surveys on the participating enterprises and young people with a view to understanding the employment situation of young people, and collecting opinions from enterprises and young people on the scheme. The study commenced in March 2024. The consultant will submit an interim report of the study to the LD in the second quarter of 2025. The LD will review in detail the effectiveness of the scheme upon completion of the "longitudinal study".