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## Chapter 6

# Education, Population and Human Resources

## Preamble

People are our most precious resource, providing the impetus for the continued social and economic development of Hong Kong. The Steering Committee on Population Policy, led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, has adopted the following objective for our population policy after a four-month public engagement exercise: “To develop and nurture a population that will continuously support and drive Hong Kong’s socio-economic development as Asia’s world city, and to engender a socially inclusive and cohesive society that allows individuals to realise their potential, with a view to attaining quality life for all residents and families”. Building on existing policies, a series of initiatives have been formulated to take forward this policy objective and meet the challenges brought about by the changing demographic structure.

The issue of manpower is one of quantity and quality. We will give priority to nurture local talent, which starts with education. The Committee on Free Kindergarten Education is studying the practicable way of achieving the objective of implementing free kindergarten education. The Committee is expected to make its recommendations in 2015. Primary and secondary education is an important stage for students to accumulate knowledge, develop personal character and equip themselves for challenges ahead. We will enhance the support

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for secondary schools to provide life planning and career guidance services to help young people better understand themselves and plan for their future. At the same time, we will provide flexible and diversified study and articulation pathways with multiple entry and exit points, and promote continuing learning so as to equip young people in pursuing their dreams and strengthening their confidence in the future. We will provide more opportunities for young people to enrol on quality post-secondary programmes, and further develop and promote vocational education and training to cater for their diversified interests.

Apart from the school, support and nurturing from the family is pivotal to the development of young people. Therefore, we must strengthen the family and make it one of the core values of the community. We will collaborate with various sectors in the community to create a family friendly culture and enhance the functions of families. We will also promote family-friendly employment practices to help employees achieve a balance between work and family life, and implement the newly enacted legislation that provides paternity leave for eligible male employees.

Promoting employment of local workers and protecting workers' rights and benefits have always been our priority. We will continue providing recruitment and employment services for job seekers with different employment needs. We accept the recommendation made by the Minimum Wage Commission to increase the Statutory Minimum Wage rate by 8.3% from \$30 per hour to \$32.5 per hour. Subject to the approval of LegCo, the proposal will be implemented from 1 May 2015. We take rigorous enforcement actions against violation of labour laws and will continue to facilitate informed and in-depth discussion on the way forward for the working hours policy.

## New Initiatives

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### **Population Policy**

#### (a) Adhering to a Direction of Sustainable Development

- Align with the objectives of our population policy from the perspectives of creating capacity for better quality of life, enhancing economic competitiveness and developing in a sustainable manner when updating the HK2030 Study (published in 2007) and examining the strategy and possible options for the development of Hong Kong beyond 2030. (DEVB)
- Develop high value-added industries to broaden our economic base and provide new areas of economic growth. This will also give the young generation a wide variety of job opportunities with good prospects. (All relevant bureaux)

#### (b) Extending Working Life

- In mid-2015, raise the retirement age for new recruits to the civilian grades to 65 and that for the disciplined services grades to 60, and formulate flexible measures for extending the service of serving civil servants so as to enable the Government, as an employer, to take early actions to address the challenges arising from an ageing population and provide flexibility for meeting the manpower needs of departments taking into account their different operational and succession needs. (CSB)

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- In line with the Government's arrangement of extending the retirement age of civil service new recruits, encourage other employers, in particular public and subvented organisations, to implement appropriate measures according to their own circumstances to extend the working life of their employees. We will also review the existing welfare arrangements to see if they have the effect of disincentives for older persons to continue working. (All relevant bureaux)
  - Propose to suitably relax the upper age limit for Category B Security Personnel Permits (now at 65) after a review of the age restrictions set out in the permit issuing criteria issued under the Security and Guarding Services Ordinance. (SB)
  - Under the Education Ordinance, the retirement age of aided school teachers and principals within the approved establishment is 60 unless special permission is given. Following the extension of retirement age of newly recruited civil servants, including the government school teachers, we shall discuss with relevant educational bodies whether and if so how this revised policy should be extended to aided schools with a view to meeting the manpower needs of Hong Kong and the education sector. (EDB)

(c) Enhancing Employment Support for Elderly People

- Promote the employment of elderly persons by enhancing the employment support services for elderly job seekers and encouraging employers to build an elderly-friendly working environment through publicity. (LWB)

- Continue to provide on-the-job training allowance of \$3,000 per month for employers for a period of three to six months under the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged, so as to give employers financial incentive to employ elderly persons. We will extend the programme to cover part-time jobs in the second half of 2015. (LWB)
- Explain the points-to-note of taking out employees' compensation insurance policies (EC insurance, or commonly known as "labour insurance policies") to employers to allay their concern over difficulties in taking out such policies for elderly employees. We will also promote the Employees' Compensation Insurance Residual Scheme as a market of last resort to employers having difficulties in securing EC insurance. (FSTB/LWB)
- Amongst other target groups, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) will focus on providing training for the elderly in the future, and help elderly people rejoin the job market. The ERB will conduct a market research on elderly or retired persons and employers to understand elders' views on continuing employment as well as employers' opinions on hiring elderly or retired persons. The ERB will also explore suitable types of work for these people and launch training courses on a pilot basis. (LWB)

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(d) Supporting Women in Fulfilling Work and Family Commitments

- Provide in phases about 5 000 additional places of Extended Hours Service at aided child care centres and kindergarten-cum-child care centres in districts with high demand from 2015-16 onwards so that more pre-primary children in need (aged below six) can continue to receive extended hours of service in the same service units being attended by them, with a view to alleviating the pressure on their working parents. (LWB)
- Provide in 2017-18 about 100 additional aided long full-day child care places for children aged below three. (LWB)
- Invite NGOs to establish work-based child care centres through the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses. Two NGOs have responded positively, proposing that a total of about 100 self-financing places to be provided. Besides, the Government will explore the feasibility of providing in the proposed Government Complex in Tseung Kwan O, on a pilot basis, 100 NGO-operated child care places for staff members. (LWB)
- Provide resources for aided standalone child care centres and units providing Occasional Child Care Service and Extended Hours Service, so as to enhance supervisory and administrative support. (LWB)

- Consider actively ways to encourage kindergartens to offer more whole-day services to support working parents and explore the feasibility of providing additional subsidies for families in need through the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education of the Education Bureau. (EDB)
- Commission a consultancy study in 2015-16 to advise on the long-term development of child care services. (LWB)
- Launch a pilot project to help grandparents become well-trained child carers in a home setting, with a view to reinforcing support for nuclear families. (LWB)
- The ERB will enhance the training and employment services for women to help them rejoin the job market. (LWB)
- Keep updating the Women Employment website, which was launched in October 2014, to provide information on employment services, child and elderly care support services and training programmes for working women and women who are ready to join the job market. (LWB)
- Step up the promotion of family-friendly employment practices in the community through the Family Council. The Labour Department (LD) will also enhance publicity and education efforts to encourage employers to adopt such practices so as to help employees achieve a balance between work and family life. (HAB/LWB)

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- Set an example on the part of the Government as a good employer by implementing more family-friendly employment practices for other employers to follow. Apart from considering to offer more part-time positions on non-civil service contract terms, the Government, subject to exigencies of the service and sufficient personal grounds, will also continue with the existing arrangements of giving priority and sympathetic consideration to leave applications, including unpaid leave, on family care grounds. (CSB)
- (e) Providing Better Support for Young People to Start a Family
- Review the child allowance under salaries tax in the coming Budget. (FSTB)
  - Meet the housing needs of the public, including young married couples, by providing more PRH and subsidised sale flats, and maintaining the steady development of the private property market. On PRH, we will encourage young married couples to live with or near their elderly parents through the Harmonious Families Priority Scheme, with a view to promoting mutual care among family members, including the elders' assistance in taking care of young children. (THB)
  - Study practicable ways to implement 15-year free education through the Committee on Free Kindergarten Education. The Committee is going to submit a report on its study to the Government in May this year. Implementing the policy concerned will help alleviate the financial burden on young couples. (EDB)



- Step up the effort to promote the family core values of “Love and Care”, “Respect and Responsibility” and “Communication and Harmony” as well as the positive messages and values on family formation through the Family Council, including commissioning a study on “Parenting Practices in Hong Kong” to identify the impact of different parenting practices on family life and the introduction of family education package for families with newborn babies. (HAB)
  - Consider enhancing collaboration among hospitals in various clusters through the Hospital Authority to improve the waiting time for assisted reproductive technology services. (FHB)
  - Strengthen the promotion of breastfeeding and encourage the provision of more breastfeeding facilities in the community through the Committee on Promotion of Breastfeeding under the Food and Health Bureau, with a view to enhancing sustained breastfeeding and promoting breastfeeding as a norm widely accepted by the general public for baby care. (FHB)
- (f) Building an Inclusive Society
- Keep in view the implementation of the One-Way Permit Scheme and maintain effective communication with the Mainland authorities for the orderly entry of eligible Mainland residents into Hong Kong for family union. (SB)
  - The ERB will help different social groups seek employment and integrate into the community through offering new courses and support services geared towards their needs. The specific measures include –

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- organising skills training courses (such as physiotherapy courses) to attract enrolment of new arrivals with higher academic qualifications or professional experience; (LWB)
  - conducting courses in the support centres for EMs under the Home Affairs Department on a pilot basis to facilitate attendance of EMs; (LWB)
  - organising courses on self-employment and food and beverage production, etc. for persons with disabilities; (LWB) and
  - providing more in-demand programmes under the Modular Certificates Accumulation System to enable trainees to obtain full-time course certificates upon completion of a number of specified half-day or evening courses. This will allow trainees who are unable to pursue full-time courses due to work or family commitments to make flexible arrangement for further studies and acquire recognised qualifications. (LWB)
- Accept the Social Enterprise Advisory Committee's recommendation for implementing a new scheme to provide subsidies for social enterprises and NGOs, which will offer a total of about 2 000 to 3 000 on-site training places for persons with disabilities and other groups in need, including the elderly and EMs, to enhance their employment prospect. We will also strengthen the support platforms for social enterprises and step up publicity and public education. (HAB)

- Improve the employment opportunities of persons with disabilities through –
  - enhancing the follow-up service provided by the LD for job seekers with disabilities after placement by extending the service period from three to six months so as to strengthen the support for employers and help employees with disabilities adapt to their work. It is estimated that over 2 000 persons with disabilities will benefit from this measure each year; (LWB) and
  - exploring the implementation of a pilot project under the Lotteries Fund for trained ex-mentally ill persons to serve as peer supporters to provide support and encouragement for other persons in rehabilitation through sharing their recovery experience. (LWB)
- Earmark \$223 million for extending the Integrated Employment Assistance Programme for Self-reliance for two years and engage NGOs to provide employment assistance services for employable able-bodied CSSA recipients. This will enhance their employability, and help and encourage them to secure employment and achieve self-reliance. (LWB)
- Implement a pilot project to engage EM trainees of the Youth Employment and Training Programme as Employment Services Ambassadors in the Job Centres and job fairs of LD to help provide employment services for EM job seekers. The LD will review the pilot project and consider future arrangements. (LWB)

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(g) Attracting Overseas Talent

- Expand our pool of talent by encouraging talent and entrepreneurs to come and stay in Hong Kong by relaxing the stay arrangements under the General Employment Policy, the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, and the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme. (SB)
- Adjust the General Points Test under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme to attract a larger pool of talent with excellent educational background or international work experience to come to Hong Kong. (SB)
- Study the feasibility of drawing up a talent list in the light of overseas practices so that we can attract people with exceptional quality in a more effective and focused manner to complement Hong Kong's development into a high value-added and diversified economy. (LWB)
- List out clearly the factors for consideration when processing applications to enter Hong Kong for investment under the General Employment Policy to attract more entrepreneurs from overseas to run their business in Hong Kong, and suspend the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme. (SB)
- Implement a pilot scheme to attract the second generation of Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents who have emigrated overseas to return to Hong Kong. (SB)
- Step up the promotion of the above-mentioned admission schemes by the overseas Economic and Trade Offices and Mainland offices of the Government. (CEDB/CMAB)

- Make good use of overseas talent to cope with the rising demand for healthcare manpower associated with an ageing population, and continue to discuss with the Medical Council of Hong Kong to refine the arrangements for the licensing examination for medical practitioners. In addition to increasing the number of examination sittings, consideration will be given to introducing more flexibility into the internship arrangements to encourage qualified overseas doctors to practise in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, we will consider increasing the number of publicly-funded degree places in medicine, dentistry and other health disciplines in the next funding cycle for universities. (FHB)
- (h) Importation of Labour
- Optimise the use and development of local workforce through training and retraining. We will continue to organise large-scale, district-based and thematic job fairs regularly in collaboration with employers from different sectors and through the two recruitment centres specific for the retail and catering sectors. Job seekers can submit job applications and attend interviews on the spot. Meanwhile, we will import labour on an appropriate, limited and targeted basis to relieve the manpower shortage of these sectors while giving priority to locals in employment. (LWB)
  - Expedite the processing of applications of the construction industry for labour importation for public works projects under the mechanism for which we have consulted the Labour Advisory Board earlier, and strengthen the monitoring of the approved Supplementary Labour Scheme applications through targeted inspections. (LWB)

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(i) Active Ageing

- Extend the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities to green minibuses in phases starting from the first quarter of 2015 to help build a caring and inclusive society by encouraging the elderly to participate more in community activities. (LWB)
- Enhance support for elder academies in terms of finance, curriculum development, training for trainers and district network, so that these academies can provide the elderly with diversified courses on an on-going basis for the promotion of life-long learning and cross-sectoral harmony. (LWB)
- Plan to merge the Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project with the Opportunities for the Elderly Project in 2016 for better use of resources in encouraging elderly people to actively take part in community affairs, and to continue contributing to society and lead a fruitful elderly life by joining elderly volunteer service as well as activities relating to community education and intergenerational harmony. (LWB)
- Provide choices of service for the elderly and at the same time promote the development of the silver hair market through the Senior Citizen Residences Scheme and the Reverse Mortgage Programme which are operated by the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited respectively. (THB/FSTB)

(j) Implementation and Progress Monitoring

- Monitor regularly the implementation of the above initiatives through the Steering Committee on Population Policy led by the Chief Secretary for Administration. Since December 2014, the membership of steering committee just comprised of official members. To incorporate views of experts, academics, service organisations and other stakeholders into the work relating to population policy, the steering committee conducts seminars where appropriate to disseminate the effectiveness of the population policy initiatives and seeks participants' comments on the enhancement of various initiatives having regard to latest developments. (CSO)

## **Secondary and Primary School Education**

- Renew and enrich the curricula of the Key Learning Areas of Science, Technology and Mathematics Education, learning and teaching activities, as well as integrative learning activities, and also foster curriculum leadership and professional development training for teachers, so as to enhance students' interest in learning, innovation and problem-solving skills, while developing in them a solid and integrative knowledge base. This will help nurture versatile talents in the science and technology fields and enhance the international competitiveness of Hong Kong. (EDB)
- Renew the curriculum of humanities subjects like Chinese History and World History, and provide rich learning experiences by enlivening classroom learning and teaching so as to enhance students' interest in and understanding of Chinese history and culture, and broaden their global outlook. (EDB)

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- Build on the experience of implementing various Mainland exchange programmes and provide more opportunities for students to pursue life-wide learning and exchanges that serve to complement the curricula and the learning elements in different areas, and align with their articulation and employment prospects as well as major cultural and economic events of our country. To this end, the EDB will further collaborate with schools, government departments concerned and NGOs, and adopt a variety of strategies. Apart from reinforcing and consolidating their knowledge acquired in classrooms, the exchanges can enable students, as Chinese nationals, to gain first-hand experience of our country's development in aspects of history, culture, economics, technology and infrastructural construction. We expect to subsidise every student to join at least one Mainland exchange programme in both the primary and secondary stages. (EDB)
  - Enhance the breadth and depth of co-operation between local and Mainland primary and secondary schools as a means to further promote their professional exchanges in areas such as school management, lesson demonstration, lesson evaluation and video conferencing by consolidating their experiences as sister schools. Such exchanges will serve the purposes of experience sharing and enhancing teaching effectiveness. (EDB)



- Strengthen partnership between schools and business organisations in the triennium from the 2015/16 school year with a view to enhancing students' understanding of different trades and preparing them for employment in the future through activities such as mentorship and career exploration programmes. To facilitate life planning for students, we will review and consolidate key elements of effective practices to facilitate the setting up of a platform to showcase exemplars of business-school partnership, thereby attracting participation of more schools and businesses. (EDB)

### **Manpower Development for the Construction Industry**

- Earmark \$100 million for answering the calls of the construction industry and stakeholders to support the Construction Industry Council in introducing new training initiatives to upgrade the skills of semi-skilled workers to the level of skilled workers. (DEVB)
- Set up a dedicated Construction Industry Recruitment Centre to provide job-counselling service, hold on-the-spot interviews and stage job fairs to facilitate job matching and dissemination of vacancy information for local construction workers. (LWB/DEVB)

### **Women**

- Raise the gender benchmark for appointing women as members of advisory and statutory bodies from the current 30% to 35% to enhance women's participation in the work of these bodies. (LWB)

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- Institutionalise gender mainstreaming in major policies and initiatives across the board to ensure that women and men can equally enjoy and benefit from the resources and opportunities in our society. (LWB)

## **Employment Support and Employee's Welfare**

- Organise large-scale job fairs including employment and vacancy information on the Mainland so as to help job seekers, in particular, young people, better understand the employment opportunities on the Mainland and find suitable jobs. (LWB)
- Prepare for the implementation of the revised Statutory Minimum Wage rate. (LWB)
- Adopt measures to enhance the protection of foreign domestic helpers and their employers, including drawing up a code of practice to regulate activities of local employment agencies which are involved in the placement of the foreign domestic helpers. (LWB)

## On-going Initiatives

*We are:*

### **Population Policy**

- (a) Development Strategy for a Diversified Economy
  - Developing policy and support measures necessary for the further development of four clusters of sectors (namely transportation; convention and exhibition industries and tourism; manufacturing industries, innovative technology, and cultural and creative industries; and professional services) through the Economic Development Commission and its four working groups with a view to diversifying our economy and creating more employment opportunities. (CEDB/ DEVB/THB)
- (b) Supporting Women in Fulfilling Work and Family Commitments
  - Making an annual provision of around \$240 million to support students in need in participating in after-school activities including after-school support on learning through schools and NGOs. A \$200 million matching fund is provided through the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged to encourage the business sector and organisations to work with schools to launch more after-school learning and support programmes for primary and secondary school students from grassroots families. (EDB/LWB)

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(c) Providing Better Support for Young People to Start a Family

- Implementing the newly enacted legislation on paternity leave which provides that eligible working fathers can enjoy three days of paternity leave with pay within a specified period around the time of birth of their newborn children. (LWB)

(d) Attracting Overseas Talent

- Continuing to improve air quality and increase the provision of international school places as necessary with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's attractiveness to overseas talent. (ENB/EDB)

(e) Active Ageing

- Installing barrier-free facilities such as lifts at the existing PRH estates and public walkways maintained by the Highways Department. This will allow people in need, including the elderly, to move around in the community with greater ease. Moreover, the barrier-free facilities at over 3 000 government premises and facilities as well as properties of the Hong Kong Housing Authority will be upgraded. (THB)
- Upgrading the physical setting, facilities and equipment of some 230 elderly centres under the Improvement Programme on Elderly Centres. (LWB)

## Kindergarten Education

- Implementing the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme and the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme to provide support for parents with children attending eligible kindergartens. (EDB)
- Increasing the voucher value of the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme by \$2,500 per year in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school years with a view to alleviating the financial burden of kindergarten education on parents and relieving the pressure on kindergartens to meet expenses such as teachers' salary, staffing and operating expenditure (including rental). The fee remission ceiling will also be lifted to offer greater assistance to needy families. (EDB)

## Primary and Secondary Education

- Implementing targeted relief measures to facilitate the sustainable development of secondary schools and stabilise the teaching force, in view of the temporary decline of Secondary One student population in the coming few years. (EDB)
- Monitoring the demand of cross-boundary students for public sector primary school places and implementing measures to cope with the upsurge in demand, including –
  - adopting diversified and flexible arrangements to increase the supply of school places, including temporarily expanding the size of each class to cope with transient demand; and

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- diverting cross-boundary students through the revised arrangements for the central allocation under the Primary One Admission System, and utilising fully the handling capacities of the existing boundary control points to make smooth transportation arrangements for cross-boundary students of tender age through proper management of traffic and security measures at the boundary areas. (EDB)
  - Monitoring the impact of demographic changes on the long-term planning for the provision of public sector school places, including the transient impact on primary and secondary education caused by babies born to Mainland women in Hong Kong whose fathers are not Hong Kong permanent residents (Type II babies). (EDB)
  - Monitoring the supply and demand of international school places, and facilitating the development of international schools mainly through allocating vacant school premises and greenfield sites as well as supporting in-situ expansion of existing international schools to meet the demand, especially that of overseas families. (EDB)
  - Keeping under review the curriculum reform in basic education and senior secondary education under the New Academic Structure as well as related assessment initiatives to secure continuous enhancement of school curricula and the effectiveness of learning and teaching, including catering for learner diversity. (EDB)

- Consolidating more experience and evidence on effective practices to strengthen the internal management of public sector schools and reduce administrative work of teachers through pilot projects. (EDB)
- Providing principals and teachers with structured training on curriculum and management, keeping them abreast of the latest development of the New Academic Structure. (EDB)
- Implementing in phases the measures under the fourth IT in education strategy in the light of the consultation results. The main measures include providing all public sector schools with Wi-Fi coverage to enhance learning through the use of mobile computing devices. In phase 1, 100 schools have already set up Wi-Fi infrastructure in their campuses in the 2014/15 school year, and about 900 remaining schools will complete the set-up progressively on or before the 2017/18 school year according to their school-based needs. Principals and teachers are provided with related training in professional development to pave the way for a more extensive and optimal use of e-learning in schools, including how pedagogy may be adapted to better harness the potential of e-learning. (EDB)
- Creating a motivating and conducive language learning environment through the continued efforts of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research. The aim is to promote bi-literacy and tri-lingualism and enhance the language standards of our students to meet the changing needs of the community. (EDB)

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- Providing secondary schools with recurrent cash grant and support to promote life planning education and strengthen career guidance services, and deepening our co-operation with the business sector and related organisations to help secondary students better understand the world of work and make informed decisions on their studies and career development in the future. (EDB)

## **Post-secondary Education**

- Increasing the number of first-year first-degree places in the institutions funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) to 15 000 per annum in the 2012/13 to 2014/15 triennium, as well as increasing progressively places of senior year intake to 5 000 per annum from the 2015/16 academic year and in the triennium that follows. (EDB)
- Supporting research in the higher education sector through the \$23 billion Research Endowment Fund and other funding sources of the UGC. (EDB)
- Supporting UGC's initiatives to enhance teaching and learning. The initiatives include sponsoring theme-based projects in areas covering blended learning, new pedagogies, curriculum development and development of massive open online courses. (EDB)
- Supporting UGC's initiatives to strengthen the internationalisation efforts of UGC-funded institutions, such as funding student-initiated projects that encourage multi-cultural integration. (EDB)



- Launching a pilot training and support scheme at the VTC to integrate structured apprenticeship training programmes and clear career progression for industries with keen demand for labour. (EDB in collaboration with relevant bureaux)
- Providing funding support for VTC's Industrial Attachment Programme for students so as to enhance their employability and prepare them for a smooth transition from study to work. (EDB)
- Examining and considering the report scheduled for submission in mid-2015 by the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational Education and the strategy and concrete proposals therein for the promotion of vocational education in the community. (EDB)
- Drawing up a strategic development plan by the steering committee set up under the VTC in July 2014 for its campuses to foster synergy and provide state-of-the-art facilities pivotal to enhancing the image and quality of vocational education. (EDB)
- Supporting the quality and sustainable development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector through a package of support measures. The measures which have been implemented so far are as follows –
  - 11 sites and six vacant school premises were allocated under the Land Grant Scheme. In 2013, the scheme was modified to cover self-financing institutions offering part-time locally-accredited post-secondary programmes and make available vacant government premises under the scheme to be leased out at nominal rent;

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- more than 30 loans amounting to about \$7 billion were granted under the Start-up Loan Scheme. The ambit of the scheme was expanded in 2012 to provide financial support for self-financing degree awarding institutions to develop student hostels; and
  - the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund, with total injections of \$3.52 billion, will continue to provide scholarships and awards and enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the sector. (EDB)
- Providing over 7 800 scholarships and awards for post-secondary students under the Government Scholarship Fund and the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund in the 2013/14 academic year. (EDB)
  - Implementing incremental steps to enhance the quality assurance mechanism of post-secondary education, and overseeing the implementation of periodic external quality audits of sub-degree operations of UGC-funded institutions by a newly formed working group. (EDB)
  - Implementing measures and making refinements to facilitate Hong Kong's development into a regional education hub to attract and retain non-local students. These include relaxing employment and immigration restrictions for non-local students of locally-accredited local programmes, as well as implementing the PhD Fellowship Scheme and Targeted Scholarship Scheme for outstanding local and non-local students. (EDB)

- Implementing a new subsidy scheme starting from the 2015/16 academic year to subsidise up to 1 000 students per cohort to pursue self-financing undergraduate programmes in selected disciplines to meet Hong Kong's manpower needs. The scheme will benefit three cohorts of students, and will then be subject to a review of its effectiveness. (EDB in collaboration with relevant bureaux)
- Implementing the Hong Kong Scholarship for Excellence Scheme to support up to 100 outstanding students per cohort to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies in renowned universities outside Hong Kong with effect from the 2015/16 academic year to help nurture a diversified pool of top talent to propel Hong Kong's development. Apart from receiving an annual scholarship of up to \$250,000, needy students will also receive a bursary of up to \$200,000 per year. The scheme will benefit three cohorts of students, and will then be subject to a review of its effectiveness. (EDB)
- Implementing the Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme with effect from the 2014/15 academic year, so that students in need pursuing studies under the Scheme for the Admission of Hong Kong Students to Mainland Higher Education Institutions may receive a grant of up to \$15,000 per year during their study period. The scheme is not subject to any quota. It will benefit three cohorts of students, and will then be subject to a review of its effectiveness. (EDB)

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## Qualifications Framework (QF)

- Providing a steady source of income through the QF Fund established by the Government on 1 September 2014 with a financial commitment of \$1 billion to support the sustainable development and implementation of the QF, benefiting various stakeholders such as students, practitioners, employers, education and training providers as well as quality assurance bodies. (EDB)
- Supporting the development of the QF by –
  - working with the Industry Training Advisory Committees to implement new initiatives funded by the recurrent provision of \$10 million starting from the 2013-14 financial year;
  - implementing a credit accumulation and transfer system; and
  - fostering collaboration with other areas in respect of the QF. (EDB)

## Vocational Training and Manpower Development

### (a) On-the-job Training

- Funding the VTC to implement the traineeship scheme in services industries such as beauty care, hairdressing, retail and elderly care, aiming to provide young people aged 15 or above with in-service training and relevant vocational education. (LWB)
- Providing on-the-job training allowance for employers under the Youth Employment and Training Programme to encourage employers to employ young people and provide them with on-the-job training. (LWB)

- Providing on-the-job training allowance for employers under the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged to encourage employers to employ people aged 40 or above and provide them with on-the-job training. (LWB)

(b) International Culinary Institute

- Developing the International Culinary Institute under the VTC as a centre of excellence in international cuisine. The institute aims to enhance Hong Kong's status as Gourmets' Paradise and regional education hub, and improve education opportunities for young people. (EDB)

(c) Manpower Development for the Construction Industry

- Continuing to collaborate with the Construction Industry Council and other key stakeholders to monitor the manpower situation in the construction industry and implement measures to meet the industry's manpower demand in the future. (DEVB)
- Working closely with the Construction Industry Council to facilitate registration of construction workers and implementation of prohibition in phases in order to fully launch the construction workers registration scheme. (DEVB)

(d) Manpower Development for the Healthcare Sector

- Reviewing the manpower planning and professional development for healthcare professions to ensure healthy and sustainable development of the healthcare system in Hong Kong. (FHB)

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(e) Manpower Development for the Welfare Sector

- Training additional Enrolled Nurses and allied health professionals for the welfare sector. (LWB)

(f) Manpower Development for the Retail Industry

- Implementing a series of measures on vocational education and training, employment support, promotion, etc. with a view to supporting manpower development of the retail industry. (CEDB)

### **Supporting the Family**

- Working with the Family Council to ensure that family perspectives are duly considered in the policy making process. We will undertake studies to review the effectiveness of the assessment framework, and organise training and experience sharing activities for civil servants. (HAB)
- Working with the Family Council to –
  - advocate a pro-family environment and further promote family core values to encourage the community to attach importance to the family; and
  - foster a culture of loving families. (HAB)
- Introduce family education packages through the Family Council to –
  - address the needs of different types of families (including new arrivals); and

- further promote family education at the district level with collaboration among relevant bureaux/departments. (HAB)

## **Women's Interests**

- Providing support for the Women's Commission in promoting the interests and well-being of women through –
  - provision of an enabling environment;
  - empowerment of women, including implementing the Capacity Building Mileage Programme; and
  - public education. (LWB)
- Working with the Women's Commission to further promote gender mainstreaming. (LWB)
- Continuing to implement the Capacity Building Mileage Programme to encourage women to pursue life-long learning. (LWB)

## **Employee's Welfare**

- Continuing with the work of the Standard Working Hours Committee to conduct in-depth discussion on the working hours policy. The aim is to build consensus and identify the way forward. (LWB)
- Taking enforcement action against wage offences, including breaches of Statutory Minimum Wage provisions and offences of wilful defaults of Labour Tribunal or Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board awards. (LWB)

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- Adopting an intelligence-based and proactive strategy for combating illegal employment. (LWB)
  - Intensifying systemic preventive measures on publicity, education and enforcement to promote construction safety in anticipation of the increase in the number of new works projects and expected growth in building renovation and maintenance works. (LWB)
  - Launching safety enhancement initiatives and large-scale promotional programmes to raise the standard of occupational safety and health in the construction and catering industries and the awareness of stakeholders. (LWB)