

Optimising Our Population for the Future



- Hong Kong faces the challenges of an ageing population. By 2041, one in three Hong Kong people will be 65 or above. Labour force is expected to decline from 2018 onward. Dependency ratio will worsen rapidly from 371 child and elderly dependents per 1 000 working age persons in 2014 to 712 dependents in 2041. In an ageing society, elderly-related public expenditure will increase, while economic growth may slow down due to a shrinking workforce. In November 2014, the Steering Committee on Population Policy (SCPP) completed its study and formulated wide-ranging measures to deal with these demographic challenges.
- Announced in January 2015 that the recommendations of the SCPP have been accepted, and a range of measures will be implemented to strengthen Hong Kong's competitiveness and enhance our capacity in responding to the challenges of an ageing population and shrinking workforce.
- Introduced a pilot scheme in May 2015 to facilitate the second generation of Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents who have emigrated overseas to return to Hong Kong, and implemented other enhancement measures to attract talent, professionals and entrepreneurs to Hong Kong for complementing the local workforce and supporting our economic development.
- Raised the retirement age of new recruits joining the Civil Service on or

after 1 June 2015 to 65 in respect of the civilian grades and 60 in respect of the disciplined services grades (regardless of their ranks), while formulating implementation details for the relevant initiatives for extending the service of serving civil servants. This package of initiatives would enable the Government, as an employer, to better 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.

- Commenced the feasibility study on drawing up a talent list for attracting high-quality talents with reference to overseas experience, so as to support Hong Kong's development as a diversified and high value-added economy in a more effective and focused manner.
- Devised further enhancement measures to the Supplementary Labour Scheme having regard to the unique operational characteristics of the construction industry to increase the flexibility in deployment of imported skilled workers in public sector works contracts with a view to utilising their productivity more effectively. The relevant measures were rolled out in May 2015. The Government will continue to closely liaise with the industry and review the effectiveness of the measures in a timely manner to address the needs of economic and social development of Hong Kong.

- Secured support of the LegCo Panel on Development for providing \$100 million to the Construction Industry Council (CIC) to launch new measures under a pilot scheme for training semi-skilled workers to become skilled workers so as to meet the manpower demand of the construction industry. The pilot scheme, scheduled to be rolled out in the second half of 2015, will also help trainees build their competence, enhance their employability and encourage them to stay in the industry for career development. In the long run, the scheme will help build up a core team of local quality workforce with multi-skills for the sustainable development of the construction industry. The Government will continue to liaise with CIC and the industry to launch other suitable measures in a timely manner to develop the career pathways of construction skilled workers.

- The Labour Department is preparing for the establishment of the Construction Industry Recruitment Centre which will assist local construction workers in job search and employers of the industry in recruiting local workers. The Centre is expected to open in around early 2016.
- With reference to the findings of extensive public consultation and a comprehensive working hours survey, the Standard Working Hours Committee is further exploring the directions of a working hours policy applicable to Hong Kong, with a view to building community consensus and identifying appropriate and feasible working hours policy options. The Committee aims to submit its report to the Government in the first quarter of 2016.

