

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CSTB199

(Question Serial No. 3011)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Recreation and Sports

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

Not only is participation in sport beneficial to the physical and psychological development of youth and children, it also provides a chance for youth with sports talent and potential from grassroots families to be engaged in the society and increase their social mobility. On identifying grassroots junior athletes, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of training programmes organised in the past 5 years (up to February 2023) to allow youth from grassroots families access to various sports and formal training;
2. the total amount of resources allocated by the Government in support of sports development for grassroots youth by secondary and primary schools and various organisations in the past 5 years (up to February 2023);
3. the amount of direct subvention by the Government to grassroots families in support of sports development for grassroots youth in the past 5 years (up to February 2023); and
4. the numbers of athletes with grassroots family backgrounds being selected into sports teams representing Hong Kong in the past 10 years, and the percentages of such athletes among all selected athletes in the same periods, in the form of a table.

Asked by: Hon HO King-hong, Adrian Pedro (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1. & 2. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) provides annual subvention to 62 "national sports associations" (NSAs) under the Sports Subvention Scheme (SSS) to support the promotion and development of sports in Hong Kong. Among the subvented programmes or schemes are the School Sports Programme which enables students of primary, secondary and special schools across Hong Kong to participate regularly in diverse sports activities during leisure time at campuses; the Primary/Young Athletes Training Scheme which aims to identify athletes with potential for further training through systematic and progressive training; and the District Sports Teams Training Scheme which intends to enhance the public's interest

in sports and promote a sense of belonging within local communities through systematic training and inter-district sports competitions. All of the above are open to young people of all age groups, including those from grassroots families. Since 2019, the LCSD has provided an additional subvention to the NSAs under the SSS, offering financial support for eligible^{Note} grassroots athletes to participate in overseas training or competitions. The financial support from the NSAs to eligible grassroots athletes with the use of the LCSD's subvention amounts to around \$2.26 million in total.

3. Since the 2013/14 school year, the Government has launched the Student Athlete Support Scheme (the Scheme) on a pilot basis, alongside the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation (HKSSF), to provide financial support to students from low-income families covering the purchase of personal sports equipment, transportation costs of attending HKSSF training and competitions, coach fees for school squad training, as well as course fees arising from the designated courses organised by the LCSD. The Scheme was regularised in the 2016/17 school year, with an increase in the maximum level of financial support to be provided for each school to \$15,000 per year from the 2021/22 school year onwards. The provision of financial support under the Scheme for each of the past 5 school years is tabulated below:

School Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Financial support provided under the Scheme (\$ million)	6.22	4.89	5.49	3.91	5.96

4. The LCSD does not have a breakdown for the numbers of athletes with grassroots family backgrounds being selected into each of various sports teams representing Hong Kong and their respective percentages.

Note

Those athletes selected by the NSAs to participate in overseas training or competitions may apply for additional financial support from the LCSD, provided that:

- (a) they are a recipient of the grant from Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme; or
- (b) they are a recipient of full or half grant from the Student Financial Assistance Schemes; or
- (c) they either come from single-parent families or face financial difficulties arising from family misfortunes.