

## Press Releases

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LCQ19: Support service centres for ethnic minorities

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Following is question by the Hon Starry Lee Wai-king and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Stephen Lam, in the Legislative Council today (April 14):

Question:

In 2009, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau allocated funds to non-governmental organisations to set up and operate four centres in Kwun Tong, Wan Chai, Tuen Mun and Yuen Long to provide support services for ethnic minorities so as to help them integrate into the community. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) of the number of attendances of ethnic minorities participating in activities or receiving services of each centre since its establishment, together with a breakdown by district of residence, race and age; and

(b) whether it has planned to increase the number of such centres; if it has, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(a) The four support service centres for ethnic minorities came into operation progressively from May to September 2009. As at end of March 2010, the number of attendances of ethnic minorities participating in various courses and integration activities or receiving services is at Annex 1.

The above figures reflect the situation at the introductory stage of the service. The number of service users has been increasing progressively since the centres commenced their services. All centres continue to reach out actively to ethnic minority communities in different districts, and collaborate with non-governmental at organisations (NGOs) and relevant Government bureaux and departments to promote their services to ethnic minorities.

As for the figures on the distribution of district, race and age of their users, the mechanism of collection of information differs across the various centres in accordance with their operational situation, and also depending on whether it is feasible or appropriate to collect the relevant information for the programmes or services concerned (e.g. relevant information is not collected for mass programmes or telephone interpretation service), and whether individual persons are willing to provide the information. In the circumstances, the breakdowns below by district, race and age (up to end of February / March 2010) only reflect the profile of users who have provided the relevant information.

Statistics on users participating in activities or receiving services by district of residence is at Annex 2. Statistics on users participating in activities or receiving services by race is at Annex 3. Statistics on users participating in activities or receiving services by age is at Annex 4.

(b) The four centres just came into operation last year, and are promoting their support services to ethnic minorities in all

districts in Hong Kong through different means including cooperation with other service providers and units.

We will monitor the usage situation of the centres closely, and keep under review the support services and consider necessary adjustments in the light of the operational experience and the needs of ethnic minority communities, in order to provide more suitable services for ethnic minorities. For example, we have provided additional sponsorship for three of the centres to operate tutorial classes for ethnic minority students in various districts. In addition, we continue to sponsor other NGOs to operate other support services in different districts. These include language classes and Community Support Teams. In the circumstances, we have no plan at this stage to increase the number of centres.

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