



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **HKIHRM Welcomes the Chief Executive's Policy Address 2025 Calling for Talent Development to Meet Economic Transformation Needs**

The Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management (HKIHRM) welcomes the Policy Address delivered today by Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu. Overall, the report outlines the future development of Hong Kong's human resources, including workforce upskilling through artificial intelligence (AI) and nurturing young talent. These policies can help promote Hong Kong's economy and enhance the workforce needed for future economic development.

**HKIHRM President Ian Choy** stated: "The Policy Address responds to the pressing issues of human resources and the workforce transformation under the macroeconomic development. The Institute supports the accelerated development of the Northern Metropolis to create more high-income quality jobs and enhance productivity. The development of the Northern Metropolis University Town will promote the establishment of leading universities or research centres from Mainland China and internationally, helping Hong Kong maintain its role as an international talent hub."

President Choy added: "The Institute welcomes the Government's initiative to promote artificial intelligence and the establishment of the AI Efficacy Enhancement Team, which conveys an important message to all businesses, creating a ripple effect and is an important step towards transformation. However, the Institute notes that most Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) do not have sufficient funds and knowledge to adopt artificial intelligence and related training; therefore, the Institute calls on the Government to provide additional support for SMEs to cope with this period of workforce transformation."

The Institute also welcomes the Policy Address for introducing immediate measures to ensure the employment priority of local workers and combat the abuse of the Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS).

The Policy Address also responds to our recommendations for youth employment programmes, with the Young Talent Training Programme providing more internship opportunities for young



people. We call on the Government to provide more funding to support businesses in providing more internship opportunities for young people.

The following are the Institute's responses to various measures in the Policy Address:

### **1. Economic Transformation Development Measures to Create High-Value Employment Opportunities**

- The Institute supports the accelerated development of the Northern Metropolis and the establishment of the Committee on Development of the Northern Metropolis to create more high-income quality jobs and enhance productivity.
- The development of the North Metropolis University Town will promote the establishment of leading universities or research centres from Mainland China and internationally, helping Hong Kong maintain its role as an international talent hub.
- The Institute hopes to learn more about the details of the development plans, such as land use and job creation in different areas. We call for the new committee to collaborate with various sectors and professions to review the manpower needs of the Northern Metropolis development and projects.
- We are also pleased to learn that the Government is actively nurturing emerging industries to create more quality employment opportunities, increase personnel income, and enhance economic benefits, creating more high-value employment opportunities.

### **2. Developing Hong Kong as a Global Hub for AI Development and Establishing the “AI Efficacy Enhancement Team”**

- We welcome the Government's establishment of the “AI Efficacy Enhancement Team” to coordinate and guide various Government departments in effectively applying artificial intelligence (AI) technology to drive technological innovation.
- As Hong Kong's largest employer, the Government leading the promotion of AI skills enhancement conveys an important message to all businesses, creating a ripple effect and is an important step towards transformation.
- The Government's increased promotion of AI as a core industry for Hong Kong's future development will create a high demand for AI talent. The Institute recommends that the Government implement flexible and efficient skills enhancement training and provide additional funding for SMEs to adopt artificial intelligence and train employees, which should include comprehensive workplace digitalisation training to improve efficiency and competitiveness.



- The Government should allow employees greater flexibility in utilising the Continuous Education Fund, including the option for family members to share the fund.
- Promoting micro-credentials can also enhance the accessibility, up-to-date knowledge, and flexibility of learning.
- The Government needs to consider how to enhance the skills of workers affected by economic transformation in long-term planning, providing support for skills retraining, career transitions, and psychological support networks.

### **3. Youth Talent Development and Talent Programmes**

- The Institute welcomes a series of measures regarding youth employment, and we are pleased to learn that the Government has launched the “Youth Talent Training Programme,” providing more opportunities for internships with international organisations and participation in international conferences. This is a measure we have always advocated for, and we call on the Government to provide more funding to support businesses in providing more internship opportunities for young people.
- The Institute supports the various talent programmes implemented by the Government to address labour shortages and suggests that the Government establish clear evaluation metrics for existing talent introduction policies to ensure that the policies effectively address skill shortages without displacing local workers.
- Evaluations should consider the contributions of these policies to Hong Kong’s strategic development priorities, particularly focusing on the “Eight Centres” and the “Talent List.”
- The Government should improve the transparency of relevant data to help employers better match talent with their vacant positions.
- Additionally, the Government should also refer to Mainland talent housing plans to attract more talent.

### **4. Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS) to Ensure Local Workers Are Prioritised**

- The policy of importing foreign labour can alleviate labour shortages in certain key industries in the short term, thus supporting the sustained development of Hong Kong’s economy.
- The Institute welcomes the Policy Address for introducing immediate measures to improve the “Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme (ESLS)” to ensure local workers are prioritised and to combat abuse.



- The Institute recommends that the Government increase manpower resources to strengthen the enforcement of the foreign labour importation policy, ensuring compliance by employers and eliminating abuse.

## **5. Employees Retraining Board Reformed to Advance Local Skills Training**

- The Institute has consistently advocated for flexible and lifelong learning; therefore, we welcome the Employees Retraining Board's establishment of a skills-based training framework and collaboration with higher education institutions to guide other training bodies.
- The Employees Retraining Board should also strengthen its connections with various industries to understand their human resources and training needs.
- These initiatives will respond to the needs of Hong Kong's economic and industrial development, assisting labour populations of various levels and educational backgrounds to continuously enhance their skills and competitiveness.
- In the long term, micro-credential courses will provide learners with more flexible learning options.

## **6. Increasing the Quota for Non-local self-financing Students and Increasing Student Accommodation Supply**

- The Institute welcomes the measure in the Policy Address to raise the enrolment ceiling for self-financing non-local students of each funded post-secondary institution from the level currently equivalent to 40% of local student places to 50%; this will help internationalise Hong Kong's higher education system and provide students with a broader international perspective.
- The Institute looks forward to Hong Kong attracting more students from Belt and Road countries to study here.
- Local students will gain a deeper understanding of Islamic culture and religious practices through exchanges.
- Such a multicultural environment will help pave the way for the new economy and assist Hong Kong in establishing connections with Islamic countries.
- We welcome the measures to increase the supply of student accommodation, which will help both local and overseas students, providing them with better living conditions.



## 7. Enhancing the Workers' Compensation Mechanism for Platform Workers

- The Government will improve the work injury compensation mechanism for digital platform workers through legislation and continue to make good use of the Tripartite Committee for the Digital Platform Industry to discuss issues of concern to the stakeholders.
- We appreciate this move to protect gig and platform workers; in the long term, the Government should clearly define the identity of gig and platform workers, as this will help enhance workers' rights and promote a more stable labour market.

Hong Kong's workforce is at a critical juncture, facing challenges of talent shortages and transformation. In submitting the 2025 Policy Address recommendations, the Institute calls on the Government to provide additional funding to assist employers in creating more internship opportunities, nurturing young talent, and fully leveraging the labour potential of various groups, particularly women, young retirees, and individuals with disabilities.

For details, please refer to the Institute's [submission](#) to the Policy Address.

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### Media Enquiry

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### About Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management

As the most representative HR professional body in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management (HKIHRM) has a membership close to 5,000, of which around 500 are corporate members. Founded in 1977, the HKIHRM aims at enhancing HR professional standards, and increasing the HR profession's influence. Serving HR practitioners, corporations and SMEs, the Institute organises a wide range of professional programmes, including annual conference, seminars, awards programme, and multi-level training. It also provides various membership services, surveys, and an online journal. The HKIHRM is a member of the Asia Pacific Federation of Human Resource Management.

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