

Part 5

Enhance Social Well-being and Refine the Social Protection Framework

5.1 The ultimate objective of governance lies in enhancing social well-being. In the meantime, enhanced livelihood will stimulate market demand in society, energising market activities, propelling economic development. We will enhance our population strategies, with a view to promoting high-quality population development. To actively address the challenges arising from demographic changes, such as ageing population and declining birth rate, we will continue to pursue enhancements in various policy areas, including education and training, housing supply, labour and welfare, healthcare services, youth development, and child care support, etc. Coordinated efforts will be made to advance institutional improvement and service enhancement, so as to continuously strengthen the sense of fulfilment, happiness, and security in our community.

Chapter 18 Advance Quality Education

Section 1 Strengthen Future-ready Education System

5.2 We will holistically enhance students' AI literacy while strengthening teachers' professional capacity. To nurture students' innovation capabilities, we will systematically drive comprehensive educational innovation and promote the progressive integration of AI into learning, teaching, and assessment across various Key Learning Areas (including Physical Education, and Arts Education, etc.) and cross-disciplinary domains (such as STEAM education¹⁸). We will also advance school curriculum development to keep pace with the times, fostering students' spirit of "Technology for Good" with humanistic qualities.

18 That is Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics education.

5.3 We will foster cross-sectoral collaboration to forge a digital education ecosystem. By promoting digital education in primary and secondary schools, we will strengthen students' learning in mathematics, science, and technology, laying a solid foundation for their further studies in I&T, thereby nurturing innovative talent for the future. We will promote the digitalisation in kindergarten education administration, enhance the overall effectiveness of schools in leveraging I&T (such as AI), and create more space for teachers to cultivate children's curiosity, creativity, and exploratory spirit. We will enhance the compilation of teaching materials and the review mechanism for textbooks, and adopt digital technologies to strengthen support for learning and teaching.

5.4 We will deepen patriotic education, national education, national security education, and values education, and integrate them into daily teaching, with a view to nurturing a new generation with both virtue and ability, an affection for our country and Hong Kong, cultural confidence, proper values, and a global perspective. We will strengthen biliterate and trilingual education and the learning of other languages to promote cross-cultural exchanges, supporting Hong Kong's role as an East-meets-West centre for international arts and cultural exchange and a base for fostering cultural exchanges between our country and the rest of the world. We will make full use of the resources in the Mainland to advance patriotic education for young people and take forward the establishment of Patriotic Education Bases for Hong Kong and Macao Youth in an orderly manner. We will strengthen values education and ground students in Chinese culture, guiding them to take an interest in the well-being of mankind as a whole, with a view to cultivating among them a stronger sense of mission and responsibility towards "building a community with a shared future for mankind".

5.5 We will broaden the international horizons of Hong Kong students by driving post-secondary institutions to actively organise more exchange activities, and making good use of various measures, such as the Funding Scheme for Chinese Mainland and Global Engagement and Student Learning Experience, to broaden the international horizons of Hong Kong students, enhance cross-cultural exchange on campus, and foster a diverse and inclusive international learning environment, while encouraging students to explore development opportunities both at home and abroad.

Section 2 Enhance the Allocation of Education Resources

5.6 We will enhance the allocation mechanism for education resources to tie in with demographic changes, enhance the dynamic adjustment of resources for basic education and their re-allocation to address surpluses and shortfalls, and facilitate further expansion and development of quality primary and secondary schools. We will also step up efforts to encourage and support school sponsoring bodies to merge quality primary and secondary schools with potential, and expedite resource consolidation for schools of a smaller scale, resulting in schools of larger scale, higher quality, and higher efficiency as their respective strengths and missions aggregate, thus achieving synergy.

5.7 We will strengthen the cultivation of teachers' morality and ethics, refine the training framework for teachers, enhance their professionalism and competencies, and promote the spirit of outstanding educators. We will enhance the teacher registration mechanism and set out specific training requirements and targets. In the meantime, we will also broaden the scope of the training mechanism and training modes while deepening cooperation with the Mainland.

5.8 We will promote capacity expansion and quality enhancement of Hong Kong's post-secondary education, so as to continuously consolidate and develop the unique advantages of Hong Kong's highly internationalised and diversified education system under "One Country, Two Systems", advancing the high-quality development of education. In line with the strategy of invigorating the country through science and education, we will step up efforts in developing basic and emerging disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary studies, and nurturing top-notch talent. We will deepen international exchanges and cooperation, promote collaboration between Hong Kong's institutions and academic and research institutions in the Mainland and overseas, as well as encourage local institutions to organise large-scale international events in Hong Kong, so as to consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's status in the international education arena. We will foster the mutual empowerment between I&T and talent cultivation to promote the integrated development of education, technology, and talent, with a view to better serving our country's endeavour to develop into a leading country in education.

Section 3 Nurture Cross-functional and Multi-skilled Talent

5.9 We will build a platform for the integration of industry and education to advance the high-quality development of vocational and professional education and training. We will foster global exchanges and collaboration across the industry and academia sectors by encouraging institutions to upgrade into universities of applied sciences, and substantially increasing the provision of applied degree programmes. By encouraging universities of applied sciences to offer programmes and conduct research projects in collaboration with the institutions in the Mainland and overseas, and adopting advanced modes of teaching for vocational and professional education and training, we will enhance the overall quality and recognition of our universities of applied sciences.

5.10 We will strengthen continuing vocational skills training to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of our workforce. We will enhance the depth and breadth of local continuing vocational skills training, and seek capacity expansion and quality enhancement in light of future trends in the application of skills and I&T, with a view to developing a high-quality, progressively-paced, and personalised skill-based training system for local workers. The Employees Retraining Board will be upgraded and become the “Upskill Hong Kong”, which will foster closer communication and stronger ties with enterprises, thus facilitating its timely apprehension of and response to prevailing and future trends in skills demand and manpower requirements of various sectors amid social developments, providing multi-level opportunities of upskilling and continuous education through diversified channels for the entire workforce.

Chapter 19 Foster the Development of Young People, Women, Families, and a Harmonious Society

Section 1 Enhance Youth Development Opportunities

5.11 We will develop diversified platforms for exchange and practical experience to broaden the horizons of young people. Building on the Youth Development Blueprint, we will step up our focus on young people's education, employment, entrepreneurship, and home ownership. We will strive to help them overcome practical difficulties while providing them with broader platforms and more opportunities to grow and thrive. We will strive to nurture a new generation of young people with an affection for our country and Hong Kong, empowering them with a global perspective as well as an ambitious and positive mindset. Leveraging Mainland resources, we will organise a wide variety of in-depth youth exchange activities to the Mainland, passing on the spirit of loving our country and Hong Kong. We will support young people in better seizing opportunities arising from national development, with a focus on nurturing talent who can serve the needs of our country and leverage the strengths of Hong Kong. We will develop the Youth Development Summit as a flagship event to advance international youth exchange and collaboration, harnessing the power of young people to tell good stories of our country and Hong Kong.

5.12 We will strive to create a conducive environment for young people to fully realise their talents. We will widen the scope of the Young Talent Training Programme to more industry sectors, aiming to nurture quality young talent for more key areas under the development plans of our country and Hong Kong. Through a wide array of youth programmes and activities, we endeavour to holistically cultivate the diverse talents of young people, and offer them more opportunities to explore, including participation in exchanges regarding public affairs, science, arts, and sports, thereby unleashing their potential and enhancing the effectiveness of talent development.

Section 2 Support Young People in Pursuing Their Dreams

5.13 We strive to foster better development for our young people through strengthening collaboration among the Government, the business sector, and the community. We will provide young people with more internship and exchange opportunities to sharpen their competitive edge in both local and international job markets. We will also enhance the education and employment prospects for young people of ethnic minority through internship opportunities, language education, and support at district-level.

5.14 We will foster youth entrepreneurship with support measures such as funding and incubation services, with a view to transforming youth innovation and creativity into new impetus for economic development. We will better leverage the one-stop platform that is the Alliance of Hong Kong Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurial Bases in the Greater Bay Area to provide holistic support for our young people's entrepreneurial endeavours.

5.15 We will strengthen support for youth employment. We will enhance youth employment support services, monitor the impact of technology application on the labour market for young people, and assist young people (fresh graduates in particular) in securing on-the-job training opportunities and work experience, thereby enhancing their employability.

Section 3 Empower Women to Realise Their Potential

5.16 We are committed to creating an environment conducive to driving women's development, protecting their rights, and promoting their well-being. We strive to empower women across all roles, social positions, and life stages so that they can realise their multifaceted potential amid Hong Kong's high-quality development.

Section 4 Foster Family Harmony and a Culture of Social Cohesion

5.17 We will advocate good family virtues, strengthen family bonds, education, and traditions, and promote good family values, thereby consolidating the family as the cornerstone of social harmony.

5.18 We will facilitate communication and development with and among the rural communities. We will reinforce the role of Heung Yee Kuk and clansmen associations as a key force dedicated to the country and Hong Kong and promote the spirit of loving the hometown, with a view to fostering mainstream values which are characterised by patriotism as well as affection for Hong Kong and in conformity with the principle of "One Country, Two Systems".

5.19 We encourage religious communities in Hong Kong to sustain their efforts in fostering social harmony and inclusion, and take part in the provision of educational, medical, and welfare services. With the concerted efforts of all walks of life, we will strive to create an equal and caring society characterised by diversity and inclusiveness. We will enhance the support for ethnic minorities with a view to increasing their understanding of the development of our country and striving for the betterment of Hong Kong together.

Chapter 20 Deepen Healthcare System Reform

Section 1 Advance the High-quality Development of Primary Healthcare

5.20 We will develop a sustainable governance system for primary healthcare¹⁹. To strengthen legal protection in the healthcare sector, we will empower the Primary Healthcare Commission through legislation to establish multi-disciplinary, evidence-based, coordinated, and coherent service and referral standards. We will also set up a statutory register of primary healthcare service providers to enhance service quality.

5.21 We will develop the Primary Healthcare Co-care Network and the District Health Network in a coordinated manner, expanding service coverage to the elderly, women, and newborn infants, strengthening multi-disciplinary collaboration, and connecting primary healthcare with secondary²⁰ and tertiary²¹ healthcare services. We will strive to substantially complete the establishment of District Health Centres in all 18 districts across Hong Kong within five years, and strengthen community support for mental health and psychological well-being. By leveraging the District Health Network, we will promote personalised Life Course Preventive Care Plan built on a family medicine model, providing citizens across different life stages with screening for chronic diseases and cancers as well as health advice, with a view to actualising early prevention, early identification, and early management.

Table 32 Enhancing Primary Healthcare Services

1. Enhancing the accessibility of primary healthcare services

- Within five years, further enhance the accessibility of primary healthcare service, bringing the cumulative membership of District Health Centres to one million, including 700 000 members receiving services under the Primary Healthcare Co-care Network.

2. Strengthening public-private collaboration

- In line with the Primary Healthcare Blueprint, enhance the family doctor system across both the public and private sectors, expand the list of primary healthcare service providers, reinforce the bi-directional referral mechanism, and enhance the coordination between community-based primary healthcare and hospital services.

19 Primary healthcare is the first tier of the healthcare system, serving as the first point of contact for individuals and families in continuing healthcare process.

20 Secondary healthcare services include acute and convalescent in-patient care, day surgery, specialist out-patient, and Accident and Emergency services.

21 Tertiary healthcare refers to highly complex and costly hospital care, usually with the application of advanced technology and multi-disciplinary specialised expertise. Tertiary healthcare services are usually required by patients with complicated but relatively less common diseases, or those suffering from catastrophic injuries or illnesses.

Table 32 Enhancing Primary Healthcare Services (Cont'd.)

3. Increasing resource allocation

- Steadily increase government resource allocation to primary healthcare programmes, with an estimated rise of about 30% from the current level by 2030-31, to promote systematic preventive care through a life-course approach.

Section 2 Enhance the Resilience of Hong Kong's Healthcare Services

5.22 We will deepen public healthcare reform. In the interest of the public, we will reform the subsidisation structure of public healthcare services with greater efforts, as well as to enhance the protection for “poor, acute, serious, critical” patients on all fronts. We will strive to make the healthcare system more sustainable to better cope with an ageing society, the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, and the development of innovative drugs and medical devices, thereby strengthening the role of the public healthcare system as a safety net for all. Under the principles of “the Government’s overall commitment will not be lessened” and sustainability of subsidisation, we will continue to implement the healthcare service reform.

5.23 We will enhance the quality and efficiency of private healthcare services. We will implement the statutory premises-based regulatory regime under the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance to ensure the facility safety and service quality of private hospitals, day procedure centres and clinics as well as to enhance their price transparency, thereby protecting patients’ safety and rights. We will also promote the integration of private healthcare data, the standardisation of the scope of healthcare services and chargeable items, and the development of evidence-based clinical guidelines as well as quality and efficiency standards, with a view to enhancing overall service quality and efficiency.

5.24 We will promote comprehensive, high-quality, and high-standard development of Chinese medicine. By inheriting the wisdom of Chinese medicine and leveraging our country’s development experience and resources, we will make good use of Chinese medicine to provide Hong Kong citizens with higher quality and more comprehensive healthcare services for better health outcomes.

5.25 We will advance the development of healthcare infrastructure. The public hospital development plan has been rolled out progressively to raise the overall healthcare capacity and quality. We will press full steam ahead with the works projects²² under the First Hospital Development Plan, which upon completion will increase the total number of public hospital beds under the Hospital Authority to about 35 000 in 2031, and that of operating theatres to about 360. We are taking forward the eHealth+ development plan to develop a digital health network that covers the whole city and connects with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. We will develop new functions and expand the scope of services, integrate all government-subsidised health programmes, and transform the eHealth App into an integrated health tool for citizens.

5.26 We will advance the development of smart hospitals. Following the two major strategic directions of “Provide Smart Care” and “Develop Smart Hospitals”, we will leverage digitalisation, the use of data, and AI to holistically advance the digital transformation of public hospitals in five key areas, namely “smart care”, “smart hospital management”, “smart hospital support”, “smart staff”, and “smart facilities and infrastructure”.

5.27 We will enhance the development of healthcare professionals. Through the systematic projection of healthcare manpower, we will strive to strengthen the training of local healthcare professionals and the strategies for talent attraction, and actively advance the relevant infrastructure development. We will promote exchanges between local and Mainland healthcare professionals and facilitate the alignment of healthcare professionals training in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area with international standards, thereby further fostering the interactions and development of healthcare professionals in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

22 Projects expected to be completed between 2026 and 2030 include the redevelopment of Kwai Chung Hospital, the new Kai Tak Hospital, the redevelopment of Grantham Hospital (phase 1), the redevelopment of Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital, the expansion of Lai King Building in Princess Margaret Hospital, the redevelopment of Prince of Wales Hospital, phase 2 (stage 1), the expansion of United Christian Hospital, the redevelopment of Kwong Wah Hospital, and the redevelopment of Shek Kip Mei Health Centre. Two other projects, namely the expansion of North District Hospital and the development of Health Integrated Building at On Sau Road, Kwun Tong, are expected to be completed in 2031 and 2032 respectively.

Section 3 Concerted Efforts to Build a Healthy and Vibrant Hong Kong

5.28 We will strengthen our disease prevention and control system and smart anti-epidemic measures. We will comprehensively enhance the multi-point triggered monitoring and early warning system for communicable diseases as well as our emergency response capacity, while continuously optimising the disease prevention and control system to prevent the importation of cases. We will also strengthen manpower training and the review of our vaccination strategy, alongside the establishment of a scientific, precise, and holistic disease prevention and control system, so as to consolidate frontline defence against communicable diseases. We will participate actively in the World Health Organization's laboratory networks in promoting R&D as well as clinical trial of vaccines, supporting the translation of R&D outcomes. In the meantime, we will advance the digital intelligence transformation of the communicable disease prevention and control system, focusing on building an "integrated epidemic management system" with an emergency response function to enable accurate risk assessment. Before proceeding with the planned long-term development of Hetao, we will continue to fully utilise the temporary structures and facilities of the Central Government-Aided Emergency Hospital to provide day-to-day healthcare services.

5.29 We will deepen joint prevention and control. We will consolidate the cooperation mechanism for epidemic notification and joint prevention and control between Hong Kong and the Mainland (in particular other Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area cities) and make it a normal practice. We will also deepen information sharing, technological collaboration, and talent training with Mainland and overseas disease control institutions. All these will improve the quality of collective efforts in early warning and risk assessment.

5.30 We will strive to raise public health awareness and build a smoke-free city. We will fully implement the Life-course Health Promotion Strategy and the Action Plan on Weight Management while commencing a new round of territory-wide Health Behaviour Survey in parallel to improve the life-course health monitoring system. By leveraging big data integration and analytics, we aim to deliver evidence-driven insights to inform healthcare policy formulation and resource allocation so as to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases at source. We will bring home the messages on healthy eating, regular physical activity, and mental health to the education and work environment to guide the public towards a healthy lifestyle. We will also strengthen tobacco control measures to build a smoke-free city.

5.31 We will participate actively in international healthcare affairs. We will advance international cooperation on the health front through active participation in international healthcare conferences, as well as the deliberation and formulation of international standards and specifications, etc., while making ongoing efforts to deepen health exchange and cooperation with various regions. We will host major international healthcare events such as the Asia Summit on Global Health, building a high-level international exchange platform to play a more important role in global health governance and make positive contribution to enhancing the health and well-being of mankind.

Chapter 21 Enhance and Diversify the Housing System

Section 1 Strive to Resolve the Housing Issue

5.32 We will eradicate substandard subdivided units in an orderly manner to safeguard the basic housing needs of the grassroots. By implementing systematic housing policies and significantly increasing public housing supply through continuously enhancing quantity, speed, efficiency, and quality (including the completion of approximately 30 000 Light Public Housing units), we will have laid down a solid foundation for expediting public housing allocation to the grassroots, such that they may be caught by the public housing safety net the soonest. We are pressing ahead with the Basic Housing Unit regime to ensure that subdivided units in residential buildings are in compliance with the statutory requirements on safety, fire protection, and hygiene, etc.

Table 33 Eradicating Substandard Subdivided Units in an Orderly Manner
Resolving the issue of substandard subdivided units • Target to resolve the issue of substandard subdivided units in residential buildings by 2030, safeguarding the life and property of residents.

5.33 We will substantially increase public housing supply and take forward the Long Term Housing Strategy on all fronts. We will update the long term housing demand projection annually and formulate a rolling 10-year housing supply target in light of social, economic, and market changes. In the next decade, housing supply will be planned with a distribution of 40% for public rental housing (PRH) units, 30% for subsidised sale flats, and 30% for private residential properties. We remain committed to refining policy arrangements along three key directions, namely adhering to the “supply-led” principle, ensuring the rational use of PRH resources while encouraging upward mobility, and enhancing the housing ladder to promote home ownership among young people. Through these efforts, we strive to establish a new paradigm of sustainable, multi-strata housing supply.

5.34 We will continue to take forward the Light Public Housing initiative in an orderly manner as a groundbreaking and innovative type of temporary housing to address the pressing needs of residents, improving their living environment and quality. Through the extensive use of the Modular Integrated Construction approach and the adoption of innovative construction technologies to expedite construction, as well as the conversion of school premises, the remaining small number of units will be completed in 2027 to achieve the target of providing 30 000 Light Public Housing units, such that grassroots families waiting for traditional PRH can move into Light Public Housing with an improved living environment at a lower rent than that of traditional PRH, moving out of inadequate housing the soonest.

Table 34 Substantially Increasing Public Housing Supply

1. Increasing Public Housing Production

- Taking into account Light Public Housing, the total public housing production in Hong Kong will reach around 196 000 units in the coming five years (i.e. from 2026-27 to 2030-31).

2. Shortening the composite waiting time

- With the persistent increase in the total public housing production, the Composite Waiting Time for Subsidised Rental Housing will reduce to 4.5 years in 2026-27, and is expected to further reduce to less than four years in 2030-31.

5.35 We will continue to enhance the housing ladder to enable those of different income groups to achieve home ownership. We will continue to increase the supply of subsidised sale flats while refining sale and resale arrangements. We will also continue to pursue policy innovation and optimisation in relation to the housing ladder, so as to establish a multi-layered and diversified housing supply system. These measures will assist young people in achieving home ownership, support PRH residents and subsidised sale flat owners in moving up the housing ladder, and expedite the turnover of housing resources, thereby fundamentally strengthening Hong Kong's housing system and housing ladder.

5.36 In planning public housing units for completion over the next decade, the internal floor area of these units will be progressively enhanced and the proportion of larger units for newly-built subsidised sale flats will also be increased. In the meantime, the design of subsidised sale flats will be reviewed so as to cater for the lifestyle of the younger generation.

5.37 We will drive the development and application of construction technologies to enhance the speed and quality in housing production. We will actively promote the application of smart construction technologies such as Modular Integrated Construction with a view to advancing by two years the adoption of Modular Integrated Construction in not less than half of the public housing projects scheduled for completion in the five-year period of 2026-27 to 2030-31. In the long run, the second generation of Modular Integrated Construction or its further refined and developed new versions will be adopted at the planning and design stage in all new Modular Integrated Construction public housing projects to further boost the efficiency of housing production. We will strengthen collaboration among the Government, the industry, academia, and research institutions, so as to enhance the construction technology innovation platform, with a view to transforming public housing projects into a “housing innovation and technology incubation hub”. We will also promote integration into the innovation and industry chains of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and drive the synergised development of areas such as innovative housing technologies, smart construction, resource conservation, low carbon and emission reduction, and housing safety, etc.

Section 2 Enhance the Use of Housing Resources

5.38 We will sustain efforts to create land and build up the land reserve. To meet the socio-economic development needs of society, we will take the lead in supplying land. The 10-year formation forecast of “spade-ready sites” will be updated annually to enhance predictability and transparency in land supply. Through the annual Land Sale List and coordinating land supply sources such as railway property developments and the Urban Renewal Authority’s projects, land will be disposed in an orderly manner to facilitate the steady and healthy development of the property market. We will continue to introduce innovative land development models to further incentivise development and channel private capital to participate actively in strategic land and comprehensive community development projects, thereby driving the coordinated development of industries and high-quality residential neighbourhoods.

Table 35 Sustained Efforts in Land Creation
Sustained efforts in land creation, building up the land reserve • In the next 10 years (i.e. 2027-28 to 2036-37), the estimated output of “spade-ready sites” is about 2 500 hectares, among which about 1 400 hectares would be ready in the next five years (i.e. 2027-28 to 2031-32).

5.39 We will regenerate old districts with a new mindset. We will use land in new development areas to support the redevelopment of old districts to overcome the bottleneck of saturated infrastructure capacity that makes redeveloping old districts difficult, including reserving sites in the NDAs of the Northern Metropolis such that the Urban Renewal Authority can offer a new “Flat-for-Flat” arrangement. We will ease restrictions for the Urban Renewal Authority to take on redevelopment projects and review the “Seven-year Rule” compensation arrangement. In the next five years, the Urban Renewal Authority will commit at least around \$40 billion for urban renewal initiatives. To encourage the market to participate actively in the regeneration of old districts, we will introduce policy innovations by suitably increasing the plot ratio of private redevelopment projects on a pilot basis and implementing cross-district transfer of plot ratio. When implementing redevelopment projects, the regeneration of old districts will be integrated with environmental enhancement and regional development instead of following the “demolish and rebuild” approach for standalone building blocks, which will in turn reshape urban spaces, enhance community functions, improve transport connectivity, and enhance greening and public spaces (including waterfront areas), thereby transforming old districts into new communities that are smart and green, meeting modern living standards.

5.40 We will enhance the safeguarding mechanisms and monitoring practices for PRH to ensure the efficient use of public housing resources. Multi-pronged measures, such as optimising allocation of PRH and facilitating transition to subsidised home ownership, etc., will be implemented to encourage upward mobility and home ownership of PRH residents who have the means, thereby increasing the turnover rate of units, benefiting more families in need. We will apply information technology and data analysis to enhance detection of and combating abuses of PRH, with a view to expediting flat recovery for allocation to those who have been waiting.

Chapter 22 Strengthen the Protection for People's Livelihood

Section 1 Strengthen the Support for Disadvantaged Communities

5.41 We will continue to provide and enhance inclusive public services, including social welfare, healthcare, education and housing, etc., to offer basic protection to our citizens, with a view to relieving their family burden and improving their quality of life. We will progressively put in place multi-tiered social security to ensure the provision of an appropriate and dignified safety net for disadvantaged communities. In the meantime, we will empower those who can help themselves to encourage self-reliance and continuous striving.

5.42 We will stay committed to the “people-oriented” principle, under which we will step up our targeted poverty alleviation efforts and forge ahead in two key directions. First, an integration of macro-level statistics and micro-level care to provide different disadvantaged groups with focused support and responses that address their unique needs. Second, a shift from relying on the Government’s sole effort in poverty alleviation towards promoting tripartite collaboration among the Government, the business sector, and the community to consolidate diverse forces for a more steady and sustainable progress in targeted poverty alleviation.

Section 2 Targeted Response to Specific Needs

5.43 We will provide targeted support for persons with disabilities as well as their carers. We will promote the application of technology, including the continued implementation of the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care, to enhance the quality of life of frail elderly persons and persons with disabilities while alleviating the pressure on care personnel and carers. Building on the existing care service and support systems, we will actively enhance capacity building on all fronts, including the provision of residential care homes, rehabilitation services, selective placement, and carer support, etc. We will also step up the promotion of a friendly workplace culture to encourage and support employment of persons with disabilities and their carers, thereby building a thriving disability-inclusive society.

5.44 We will expand the School-based After School Care Service Scheme launched by the Commission on Poverty (now renamed as the Commission on Targeted Poverty Alleviation) so as to unleash parents’ employment potential and enhance their household income. We will also set up additional Community Living Rooms to provide subdivided unit households with various facilities, along with referrals to other social welfare services, etc., to raise their living standard, broaden their interpersonal networks, and strengthen their sense of belonging to the community.

Section 3 Effective Consolidation of Resources

5.45 We will promote data-driven proactive support and champion a shift in approach in the social welfare sector from “reactive response” towards “proactive identification and targeted support”. Subject to privacy protection, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and public confidence, we will explore the establishment of a “welfare information sharing e-platform” to progressively consolidate relevant data scattered across different systems in various fields such as social welfare, healthcare, education, housing, and transportation, etc., so as to analyse and identify risk signals while expanding screening and outreach networks for timely detection of risk factors and support needs among individuals and families. The aim is to enhance the effectiveness of our proactive identification, outreach, and intervention efforts regarding high-risk cases, and strengthen our demand forecasting capabilities and resource deployment efficiency, thereby advancing the provision of services to the preventive stage as far as practicable to forestall accumulation of risks.

5.46 We will promote an institutionalised model of tripartite collaboration among the Government, the business sector, and the community in poverty alleviation. The Government will adopt a policy-led approach and set up an efficient matching platform through which the business sector’s goodwill will be pooled together and matched with the community’s creativity to enable the delivery of more targeted support projects for groups in need. Under this model, the Government will identify targets for assistance and set up the regime; the business sector will provide resources in terms of funding, venues, talent, experience, technologies, etc.; while the community and welfare organisations will design innovative services and take charge of the actual implementation drawing on both their frontline insights and practical experience. Such joint efforts will progressively develop into steady, sustainable and scalable forces, thereby promoting the innovation and development of social welfare services.

Section 4 Safeguard Children’s Well-being

5.47 To continue to strengthen the child protection system, we will continuously enhance the handling and reporting mechanism for suspected child abuse cases to facilitate early identification and intervention while enhancing deterrence. We will also continue to strengthen professional support for child abuse victims and their families through Child Protection Support Service Teams. In the meantime, we will review in a timely manner and continuously enhance support and supervision for child care and related services, while also strengthening child protection-related promotion, education, and training, to safeguard the well-being of children through a multi-pronged approach, thereby weaving a comprehensive and effective safety net for children.

5.48 We will strengthen family support services. In line with the “family-focused” and “carer-centric” principles, we will strive to bolster the support for working families in childbearing and expand community child care and after-school care services. We will also promote the long-term strategy of gradually transitioning family support services from “crisis response” towards “prevention and fostering family resilience”.

5.49 To strengthen child care services, we will continue to substantially increase the number of child care service places, while continuously reviewing and enhancing various child care services. In the meantime, through the School-based After School Care Service Scheme, we will help alleviate the child care pressure on grassroots parents (in particular single parents), thereby fostering better parent-child relationship.

Table 36 Strengthening Child Care Services

Increasing child care service places

- Set up additional aided standalone child care centres, with the target of gradually increasing 1 800 child care service places, i.e. from about 1 500 service places in 2025 to about 3 300 places in 2030.

Section 5 Deepen Collaboration and Exchange in Social Services with Mainland Counterparts

5.50 We will strengthen our collaboration with the Mainland. We will advance the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Social Service Co-operation Projects, thereby deepening the integrated and concerted development of quality social welfare services in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. We will also support talent exchange and training between the social service sectors of the Mainland and Hong Kong (including Hong Kong social welfare organisations making effective use of the Dedicated Fund provided by the Government to arrange Mainland study visits for their staff) to promote professional exchange, practice-based research, and experience sharing across various social welfare areas between Hong Kong and the Mainland. In the meantime, we will support social welfare organisations in Hong Kong to introduce from the Mainland new technologies as well as smart equipment applicable to social service settings while assisting our country’s products and services in going global.

Chapter 23 Enhance Labour Protection

Section 1 Increase Labour Supply

5.51 To harness I&T to enhance employment services, we will deploy tools such as AI to strengthen job matching, enhance push notification for employment information, and provide more personalised recommendations regarding job vacancies and vocational training. We will also organise thematic job fairs of varying scales and types to expedite the dissemination of employment information and improve the effectiveness of job matching. In the meantime, we will render support to key groups, including youths, women, older and middle-aged persons, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities, etc., to reduce employment barriers, thereby promoting employment and unleashing the potential labour force.

5.52 We will import labour on an appropriate scale alongside efforts to unleash the local labour force. On the premise of protecting local workers, we will import labour in an orderly manner and on an appropriate scale in response to actual social and economic needs. We will closely monitor the changes in labour supply and demand, and dynamically adjust the type and number of workers to be imported. While maintaining stable cooperation with existing source countries of foreign domestic helpers, we will actively seek expansion of source countries, and admit foreign domestic carers with better elderly care skills, with a view to addressing the challenges posed by an ageing population and meeting the home care needs of the elderly.

Section 2 Enhance Labour Rights Protection

5.53 We will protect employment rights and foster harmonious labour relations. In response to socio-economic development level and the needs arising therefrom, we will systematically review and enhance the labour legislation to align with the policy directions on population and encouraging childbirth, etc. in a timely manner. We will improve the legal framework by exploring and enacting new legislation applicable to new forms of employment to continuously strengthen labour protection. We will also follow the mechanism to review the statutory minimum wage rate annually to ensure that the pay rise for low-paid workers can keep pace with inflation, so that they may share the fruits of economic growth when the economy performs well. We will enhance the consultation mechanism among employees, employers, and the Government to facilitate effective tripartite communication and forge consensus on labour-related issues of common concern. In the meantime, we will promote an “employee-oriented” culture in human resource management, fostering labour relations built on mutual trust and understanding.

5.54 We will deepen the culture of occupational safety and health by making better use of new technology. Through proactive application of new technology, we strive to enhance the effectiveness of management and regulation of occupational safety and health by exploring the use of AI to facilitate inspection and law enforcement. We will also promote smart handling of occupational safety and health information by introducing a smart management system to enhance the separation of enquiries and complaints, so as to accord priority to high-risk cases. Meanwhile, we will leverage data analytics to support risk-based inspection and policy formulation. We will establish a one-stop industry-based occupational safety and health information platform to facilitate inter-departmental collaboration and information sharing, thereby further deepening awareness and culture of occupational safety and health in society. Also, we will provide professional advice from the regulatory perspective regarding the R&D of technology products related to occupational safety and health, facilitating the introduction of such products with a view to improving the safety performance of the industry.

Chapter 24 Concerted Efforts to Build a Thriving Age-friendly Society

Section 1 Foster a Sense of Security among the Elderly

5.55 To enhance elderly care service capacity, we will build more government-funded community and residential care facilities for the elderly and progressively increase the number of vouchers under both the “Community Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly” and the “Residential Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly” in order to steadily raise the proportion of vouchers in the overall subsidised care services. In the meantime, we will, on a pilot basis, provide government-built elderly welfare premises for self-financed operation by the sector, while continuing to implement the Incentive Scheme to Encourage Provision of Residential Care Home for the Elderly Premises in New Private Developments. We will strive to promote the development of the elderly care services market and enhance the overall elderly care service capacity through public-private collaboration.

Table 37 Enhancing Elderly Care Service Capacity
Additional places for subsidised long-term care services for the elderly • Provide 8 000 additional places for subsidised long-term care services for the elderly, bringing the number of service places from around 69 500 in end-2025 to around 77 500 in end-2030.

5.56 We will promote cross-boundary elderly care. Seizing the development opportunities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, we will further enhance the support measures for cross-boundary elderly care to provide elderly people of Hong Kong with more choices and greater convenience in living and receiving care across the boundary, thereby fostering social and livelihood integration between the two places as well as the development of the elderly care industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. To this end, we will strengthen cooperation with Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in identifying more quality residential care homes for the elderly for joining the “Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong”, so as to expand the care facility network and service capacity of the scheme. We will make good use of Mainland’s facilitation policy measures for Hong Kong residents, and subsidise Hong Kong elderly people participating in the scheme to purchase the local “Basic Medical Insurance for Urban and Rural Residents” and the “Commercial Medical Insurance”, and disburse portable cash assistance to the elderly retiring across the boundary directly through remittance using Mainland banking network. To deepen exchanges and cooperation in elderly care, Guangdong and Hong Kong will leverage respective strengths to jointly advance personnel training, service enhancement, and market development.

5.57 We will strengthen the promotion of active ageing. To this end, we will consolidate existing resources and networks, step up the promotion of retirement planning, raise the awareness of healthy ageing, and promote the elderly's invaluable contribution to society.

Section 2 Promote a Sense of Worthiness among the Elderly

5.58 We will promote the social integration of the elderly into the community. By encouraging the elderly to participate in social affairs, establishing mutual support networks and exchange platforms for the "young-olds", and forming elderly volunteer teams in the community, we will strive to promote mutual help and a sense of worthiness among the elderly so that they can achieve self-fulfilment and play an active role in society.

5.59 We will support elderly employment by providing vocational training services specific to the needs of older persons, so as to enhance their employability in response to the needs of the labour market. In the meantime, through dedicated employment services and programmes for older and middle-aged persons, we will encourage employers to provide on-the-job training and adopt elderly-friendly employment practices to boost the employment of the healthy elderly.

5.60 We will strengthen and scale up the silver industry. We will encourage the introduction of more silver consumer products and development of more application scenarios in domestic, community, and institutional settings, while stimulating diverse consumer demands for silver tourism, leisure and culture. We will also promote the professional development and branding of the silver economy to foster quality silver consumption locally and facilitate overseas expansion of the sales network.

5.61 We will improve the standards of silver services. Through strengthening exchanges and collaboration between certification institutions in Hong Kong and those in our country, we will foster mutual recognition of qualifications and the "one inspection, two certificates" arrangement, thereby enabling silver products and services to access the Mainland market more easily while also tapping into overseas markets. We will strive to upgrade the existing certification standards to national standards, with a view to enhancing market competitiveness.

Chapter 25 Build a Green and Liveable City

Section 1 Realise Green Transformation

5.62 We will promote continuous optimisation of the energy mix and maintain the stability of electricity tariffs. Through efficient utilisation of clean energy transmission pathways and the country's clean, low-carbon, safe, and efficient new energy system, we will progressively increase the share of zero-carbon energy in the local fuel mix of electricity generation to achieve the goal of ceasing the use of coal for daily electricity generation by 2035 and increase the share of zero-carbon energy in the fuel mix of electricity generation to about 60% to 70%. With these efforts, we strive to strengthen energy security, help lower energy generation costs, and stabilise fluctuations in electricity tariffs, thereby supporting the sustainable and high-quality development of our city.

5.63 To continuously improve the energy efficiency of major energy users such as buildings, we will enhance the regime of energy efficiency standards for buildings and electrical products, and promote green, energy-saving, and carbon-reduction retrofits for new and existing buildings. Our goal is to reduce the electricity consumption of commercial buildings by 30% to 40% and that of residential buildings by 20% to 30% from the 2015 level by 2050, and to achieve half of the above targets by 2035.

5.64 We will promote the use of green transport. We will steadily promote vehicle electrification and the trial and application of new energy transport while developing safe and efficient supporting networks for charging and hydrogen filling, etc., thereby creating conditions for achieving zero vehicular emissions before 2050. We will also introduce Smart and Green Mass Transit Systems, with construction works of such systems in Kai Tak, East Kowloon, HSK, and the South Island Line (West) commencing from 2027 progressively. These systems can overcome previous technical constraints in constructing heavy rail, providing cost-effective and convenient public transport systems with low carbon emissions.

5.65 To deepen the reform of the municipal solid waste management system, we strive to move away from reliance on landfill disposal for municipal solid waste by 2035, with a view to achieving “Zero Landfill”. This will contribute to reducing carbon emission and promoting the development of a circular economy, including the development of high value-added precious and rare metal recovery and refining industries, thereby establishing a waste material refining hub in Asia. We will enhance our recycling and waste-to-energy system by leveraging technology to advance waste sorting and resource utilisation, and building a digital recycling network, with a view to achieving waste-to-resources transformation, waste reduction, and harmless disposal. We will also expand producer responsibility schemes to raise recycling rates for recyclables, such as retired electric vehicle batteries and plastic bottles, thereby turning waste into resources and reducing reliance on raw materials.

5.66 We will develop green technologies and new energy, and establish a carbon trading hub. Through the Green Tech Fund, we will support the development of green technologies and promote the commercialisation of R&D outcomes, thereby increasing the supply of green technologies. The Strategy of Hydrogen Development in Hong Kong will be implemented in an orderly manner to steadily promote a wider application of hydrogen in Hong Kong. In this regard, we will set out the lifecycle greenhouse gas emission values for green hydrogen and low-carbon hydrogen, and provide support for the planning and development of hydrogen projects, investments in relevant infrastructure, and green finance arrangements, in order to enhance the mutual recognition and competitiveness of Hong Kong’s green and low-carbon hydrogen in the global market. In the meantime, we will develop Hong Kong into a demonstration platform for green and low-carbon hydrogen technologies to facilitate the export of technologies and products developed in both the Mainland and Hong Kong, and provide financing and professional services for green hydrogen technologies and products. We will also assist the country in implementing Article 6 of the Paris Agreement on carbon credit and trading mechanism, and advancing the formulation of clear and strict international standards, thereby providing a reliable decarbonisation cooperation platform for overseas countries and enterprises.

Table 38 Proactive Decarbonisation and Green Transformation

1. Green transport

- Complete the construction of a ChaoJi charging demonstration station in Hong Kong in 2027. The number of fast chargers will increase to 4 000 in 2030 and is expected to further increase to around 10 000 in 2035, supporting around 500 000 electric vehicles.
- The target is to cease new registrations of fuel-propelled private cars, including hybrid vehicles, in 2035 or earlier.

2. New energy

- Establish a certification system for green hydrogen and low-carbon hydrogen standards that connects with the Mainland and the rest of the world in 2027 and promote its international application.

Section 2 Strengthen Ecological Protection

5.67 To continuously improve the quality of our ecological environment, we will carry on with our efforts to review and enhance management strategies of various ecological protected areas, covering key areas such as Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark, the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site designated under the Convention on Wetlands, country parks, as well as marine parks and marine reserves, etc., strengthening ecological conservation and enhancing biodiversity. We will also expand the network of terrestrial and marine protected areas in an orderly manner, and study the establishment of a coastal protection park at Tsim Bei Tsui, Lau Fau Shan, and Pak Nai to strengthen the conservation of the coastal ecosystem of Deep Bay.

5.68 To strengthen the protection of wild fauna and flora as well as endangered species, we will continue to enhance their protection and governance, rigorously implement the relevant international conventions, and regulate trade in endangered species. We will also review and enhance the relevant legislation to strengthen enforcement against smuggling and illegal trade in endangered species and protect cetaceans found in Hong Kong waters.

5.69 We will expand cooperation in ecological conservation. We will strengthen collaboration with relevant Mainland provinces and municipalities to jointly conserve cross-border ecology and migratory animals, including deepening ecological cooperation between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, establishing a collaborative platform for public participation in biodiversity protection in the two places, and taking forward the development of the Shenzhen Wutong Mountain-Hong Kong Robin's Nest ecological corridor, with a view to enhancing ecological integration between Shenzhen and Hong Kong. Through partnerships with the relevant Mainland provinces and municipalities, we will also enhance the protection of Chinese white dolphins in Guangdong and Hong Kong, strengthen the conservation of Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) wetlands, and advance coral conservation, while putting in place arrangements for rescue cooperation of large aquatic wild animals between Shenzhen and Hong Kong.

Table 39 Continuous Improvement in Ecological Environment Quality

Implementing a management system of ecological protection red lines

- By 2030, maintain at least 40% of the total terrestrial area as terrestrial protected areas.
- By 2030, maintain at least 20% of the total marine area as marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures²³.

5.70 We will strengthen environmental protection in key areas to contribute to building a Beautiful China. By establishing a smart environmental monitoring system, we will improve law enforcement efficiency and environmental risk prevention and control, so as to fully realise precise, scientific, and law-based pollution control, leading to reduction in both pollution and carbon emissions in a coordinated manner. We will continue to develop and introduce innovative technologies and facilities, such as AI and big data, etc., and further develop the Hong Kong Environmental Database, an online platform for environmental impact assessment and monitoring, so as to enhance pollution prevention and control as well as the effectiveness of environmental monitoring through more targeted efforts. The air quality monitoring network will be optimised to make it more targeted and to improve its real-time performance and coverage. We will vigorously pursue the "Beautiful Bays" initiative, strengthen nearshore pollution prevention and shoreline remediation, and continuously improve the water quality and marine ecological environment of Victoria Harbour and nearshore waters.

23 It refers to areas outside protected areas that are considered important for in-situ conservation of biodiversity.