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**Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta: A  
Study of Employment Opportunities  
and the Possibilities of Attracting  
Young Talent**

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# **Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta: A Study of Employment Opportunities and the Possibilities of Attracting Young Talent**

## **Summary Report**

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The Chinese State Council's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) released The Outline of the Plan for the Reform and Development of the Pearl River Delta (2008-2020) (the Outline) in January 2009. The Outline is a landmark document which points the way forward for the Pearl River Delta's development in the next decade. It also provides guidance for the long term development in the Pearl River Delta (PRD), Hong Kong and Macau.

The Outline focuses on nine cities including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Jiangmen, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Huizhou, and Zhaoqing. Meanwhile, the outline sets the aim, content and framework of cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau. It helps to provide the policy basis for further collaboration in these three regions and represents a milestone for regional development.

It is anticipated that the opportunity for economic development will greatly increase in line with closer economic ties between Hong Kong and the PRD. Thus, employment opportunities for the people of Hong Kong and the interflow of human resources will be increased in the next decade. This Study asked questions about young people's views on the implications of the Outline for Hong Kong's competitiveness and talent, and about their attitudes to working in the Mainland and educational opportunities.

With the rapid economic development in the PRD, Hong Kong particularly needs to keep its competitive edge in human resources. It cannot only help to promote economic activities in the region, but also should serve as bridge connecting the PRD to the world and enhance the interaction and exchange of talent. In the 2007-08 policy address, the chief executive set a target of optimizing the demographic structure and attracting talent. An educational reform has been introduced to attract good students to study in Hong Kong to strengthen its pool of talent. This shows the effort the government is putting in to gather talent.

Data from the Census and Statistics Department showed that the number of Hong Kong people working on the Mainland has increased to 218,200 in 2008. 88% (87.8%) of the respondents said that they had worked or are working in the PRD. Moreover, the import and export trading between Guangdong province and Hong Kong amounted to US\$1,400 billion in 2008. Also, by the end of 2008, there were over 104,000 registered Hong Kong-invested enterprises in Guangdong province.

On the other hand, as of October 2008, 66 Guangdong enterprises were listed in Hong Kong with a market value of over HK\$220 billion. In 2008, more than 220 Mainland companies, a number of which came from Guangdong, have set up regional headquarters and regional offices in Hong Kong. Also, in 2007, more than 33,000 talented people from the Mainland and overseas came to live and work in Hong Kong.

To implement the Outline policy thoroughly, the demand on human resources will be significant and substantial. Indeed, the interflow of talents and human resources is one of the key drivers for the long-term development of the economic links between the Mainland and Hong Kong.

In 2001, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (the federation) conducted a study entitled A Study on the Trends of Hong Kong Young People Seeking a Career on the Mainland to examine youth's attitude towards working on the Mainland. With the growth of the regional economy, the federation conducted two surveys to examine youth's attitudes towards seeking all round development in the Pearl River Delta (PRD) and Yangtze River Delta (YRD) in 2003 and 2004 respectively. This Study now focuses on the views of young people on this issue and concentrates on three particular areas. Firstly, the implication of the Outline on the employment opportunities for Hong Kong young people, secondly, their perceptions on the trend of interflow of human resources between PRD and Hong Kong; and thirdly, the importance of attracting and nurturing talents for the development of Hong Kong and PRD.

This study is conducted through a territory wide opinion survey, interviews with scholars and experts; coupled with in-depth interviews and focussed group discussions. It is hoped that this study will provide a clearer picture of the issues and will result in recommendations which could be suggested to the authorities concerned.

The telephone survey was conducted between the 5th and 18th of May, 2009. By random sampling, 524 Hong Kong youth aged between 15 and 29 were successfully polled, yielding a response rate of 64.7%, with a standard error within  $\pm 2.2\%$ .

The case studies were conducted between May and July 2009. We successfully interviewed 20 young people with 11 males and 9 females. 10 were from Hong Kong and 10 from the PRD. Those participants interviewed aged between 15 and 29 had achieved a higher level of educational attainment. The Hong Kong youth had experience of work, study or exchange programmes in the PRD. The PRD youth were either working or studying in Hong Kong when interviewed.

Meanwhile two focus group discussions with Hong Kong youth and one focus group discussion with PRD youth were also conducted. A total of 14 youths were interviewed with 9 males and 5 females.

Interviews with experts and academics were conducted in the period between May and June 2009. 11 persons were interviewed, among them academics, council members, and representatives from the Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management, Bauhinia Foundation Research Centre, Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, Hong Kong HRExchange Centre and Hong Kong Association of Mainland Graduates. Their observations and opinions regarding nurturing talents for Hong Kong and PRD were sought.

This chapter summarized the major findings and analyses of the survey, related discussions and recommendations for reference.

## Discussion

- 1. The PRD has provided the young people of Hong Kong with a chance for career development. However, working there is not their first choice, although they have a stronger intention now when compared with that in the past. Solving their worries about working in the PRD can help to give them room for career development.**

The open door policy adopted in China for over 30 years has given young people in Hong Kong job opportunities and chances to develop their careers. The implementation of the Outline will facilitate further economic integration and provide more job opportunities for them in the PRD. This Study shows young people in Hong Kong have a stronger intention of working in the PRD, though it is still, not their first choice.

From the telephone poll, of the 524 young people aged between 15 and 29 interviewed, 34.6% of respondents said they would consider seeking a career in the PRD and the figure represented a double increase compared to the related result in a similar survey conducted by the Federation in 2003, which was 15.5%. Moreover, 68% of the respondents agreed that working in the PRD would become a major trend, while 59.6% are of the view that they would consider working in the PRD only given that they could not find a job in Hong Kong. The results showed that most respondents regard Hong Kong as their base for development.

From the youth group discussion, young people in Hong Kong in the discussion who have never worked in the PRD said they have worries about developing their careers there. Their concerns can be summarized in the following three aspects: (1) They do not understand the prospects of working in the PRD. For example, they do not know the development of the industries, the demand for human resources or the work practices, which make them hesitate to work there. (2) Their personal expectations cannot be fulfilled. The difference in wage level and the unsatisfactory work situation may cause problems. As a result, they put their priorities on developing a career in Hong Kong. (3) They have little knowledge about the PRD on the whole. In the poll, 62.8% and 10.1% of Hong Kong respondents admitted that they knew nothing about the Outline and the PRD respectively, which may influence their career choice. The above three factors have made young people in Hong Kong reluctant to work in the PRD.

Although young people in Hong Kong agree that the PRD has potential for development, they generally regard Hong Kong as their primary base for career development. Working in the PRD becomes a lower priority. However, the economic integration of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau will narrow the economic, social and cultural differences between Hong Kong and the PRD. In the wake of this, the difference in salary and living standard may also be narrowed. Moreover, it will help to solve the worries about working on the mainland if more information about the development of the PRD can be provided to increase their

understanding of the real work situations and work practices there.

Furthermore, figures showed that there is a correlation between respondents' knowledge about the Outline and the PRD and whether they will choose to work there. The Outline is an important document concerning the future development of Hong Kong and the PRD. The government of Hong Kong has carried continuous discussions with the nine municipalities on how to implement the Outline. However, the plan has drawn little attention from the young people of Hong Kong up to the present. In fact, how much they know about the Outline and the PRD can influence their perceptions on the development there.

To solve the worries of the young people of Hong Kong, it may be necessary to let them know about the development trend of the PRD and the Outline, which can make them realize the relationship between the Outline and their personal career development. In this way, they can have wider career choices. The young people of Hong Kong can have even more room for career development if they can take a long term perspective, instead of focussing on their present environment or benefits.

**1. Young people in Hong Kong lack a national vision and are limited by their regional mindset. If the media can keep giving them knowledge about developments in the Mainland and make further explorations in this aspect, it can help them to better plan their personal careers.**

Hong Kong has become a special administrative region after the resuming of sovereignty in 1997. The principles of "one country, two systems" and "Hong Kong people rule Hong Kong" were then adopted. The interactions between Hong Kong and Mainland have also become more frequent. However, experts interviewed said that young people in Hong Kong lacked a national vision and were limited by their regional mindset, which hinders their personal development. Enriching their knowledge about the Mainland and letting them have an updated concept about national development can expand their career plans.

The poll shows that 56.3% of respondents said they wanted to have more information about the development in the PRD. Since the media is a channel that young people often come into contact with, if it can produce more programmes about national development and the situation of young people of Hong Kong working or studying in the Mainland, it will help the young people of Hong Kong broaden their

national vision.

In fact, it will be the 13th year since the handover in 1997. Many surveys showed that the percentage of young people of Hong Kong recognizing their national identity has been increasing. However, their knowledge of the nation is still limited. It is time to think about ways of letting them know more about the development, the policy and the culture of the nation, as well as whether the media can act as a catalyst bringing about more concerns and discussions on national development.

**2. The Outline specifies the industrial advantages in the PRD and the way forward. Experienced and professional talent can help to implement the measures concerning these industries. Hong Kong needs to be aware of the development trend in the human resources market in the PRD so as to make adjustments and offer support.**

Talents are indispensable for development plans to be carried out in the PRD. The Outline sets out the blueprint for the future development of the PRD, which will provide job opportunities for the young people of Hong Kong. As the PRD will put its best efforts in upgrading production services and building up high value-added industries, it needs professional people from different aspects to assist its development and cater to the demands created by economic restructuring.

Many respondents from the poll said what the PRD needed most was professional people involved in Commercial and Financial Services such as lawyers, accountants, auditors etc. in order to develop the regional economy of the PRD.

Experts interviewed pointed out that, under economic restructuring, the high value-added industries like finance, exhibition, logistics, information technology, cultural innovations and tourism which are in focus in the Outline will need a lot of talent with high educational and professional knowledge. Also, some scholars interviewed noted that the PRD needs talent that can expand markets, communicate with clients and have management skills.

According to various surveys conducted by the Census and Statistics Department over the past ten years, the percentage of people in Hong Kong with a degree level of education working on the Mainland increased from 22.2% in 1998 to 34.8% in 2008. Moreover, the percentage of administrators, managers,

professionals and associate professionals working on the Mainland also increased from 40.8% and 35.0% in 1998 to 44.2% and 42.3% in 2008 respectively.

Yet some Hong Kong respondents said they did not know much about the future industrial development and demand on manpower in the PRD. In fact, they could not tell what the competitive industries in the PRD were or specify what professional people would be in demand. They did not think about whether they were suitable for working in the PRD either. The survey shows that although the young people of Hong Kong are inclined to contribute to the future construction of the PRD, they do not know how to make preparations for it. As a result, they are likely to miss the chance.

Some scholars interviewed said the rapid economic development in the PRD makes it necessary to review and assess its demand for human resources and know exactly what talent the region needs so that Hong Kong can be a source of talent support to cater to her future development.

The Outline is a blueprint for the future of the PRD, including industrial enhancements and reforms, and the development of competitive industries. That means people with high educational and professional knowledge will be of higher demand in the PRD. To better assess the human resources available, Hong Kong can consider conducting studies on manpower demands with the PRD region. It can help to build up a foundation for talent development to supply human resources for the PRD to support its economic construction.

**3. The PRD has the advantage of attracting talent, but the law and order is not well developed. It also lacks social services. These have become the main disincentives for the young people of Hong Kong to go to work there.**

What are the incentives and disincentives for highly-skilled people working in the PRD? In telephone surveys and interviews, many Hong Kong respondents said the PRD can offer opportunities to expand their careers and set up businesses on the Mainland, which is an attractive factor for them. On the other hand, the law and order is not well developed and coupled with the lack of social services, they have become key factors that discouraged the people of Hong Kong from working in the PRD.



The PRD has a competitive edge in attracting talent from Hong Kong. Many respondents polled said the PRD was a stepping-stone for a mainland career (48.3%), the PRD's proximity to Hong Kong (43.5%) and PRD being one of the major economic zones under the government's plan (43.0%) were the incentives to attract the people of Hong Kong.

Furthermore, Hong Kong respondents in case studies and group discussions said that they have been attracted to work in the PRD because: it has a wider variety of industrial development, thereby providing more career choices; it is one of the major economic zones of the nation and has more room for development. The economic integration of Hong Kong and the PRD will make people with work experience in these two regions and knowledge of the two cultures more competitive, so they went to the PRD to gain work experience at an early stage.

On the other hand, the PRD has its disadvantages in attracting talent from Hong Kong. Many said the poor social order (56.1%), the inadequacy of social services (52.9%), and the legal system not bridging up to the requirements of the international community (41.3%) would discourage the people of Hong Kong from working there.

To further increase the attraction of the PRD, it is important to let the young people of Hong Kong know that the PRD has wider career choices and development opportunities. Thus, a well-established law and order and provision of social services may increase their confidence to work there.

#### **4. Hong Kong has the advantage of attracting talent but the poor air quality and high living pressure may discourage them.**

To implement the measures of the Outline, human resources play an integral part. The future development of Hong Kong and the PRD absolutely needs the support of highly-skilled people and Hong Kong has a strong advantage to attract them.

In the telephone survey and interviews, respondents in the two regions said that Hong Kong is an international city and has a well-established legal and judicial system, which attracts talented individuals to come to Hong Kong. However, they said problems like the high cost of living and poor air quality may discourage them.

Many respondents in the survey said Hong Kong has attractive factors to

encourage talented people, such as its status as an international city (47.0%), a well-established legal and judicial system (44.0%) and advanced information technology (38.6%). On the other hand, the shortcomings pinpointed by respondents included its poor air quality (51.1%), high living costs (43.7%) and limited chances to develop one's career (29.0%).

Moreover, in case interviews and group discussions, both Hong Kong and the PRD respondents agreed that Hong Kong has the necessary advantages to attract talent, including a well-established legal and judicial system, well-developed transport facilities and cross-border infrastructure, a good mix of Chinese and Western culture, a free flow of information and civically responsibly citizens.

Nevertheless, they also said that Hong Kong has the following shortcomings: too much focus on the service industry; poor air quality, crowded living environment and a lifestyle that is quite highly stressed.

The competitiveness of a region depends on whether it can attract and keep talent. Working opportunities and a good living environment are both important considerations for talent. Hong Kong, as an international city, has its attractions for overseas talent like a well-established legal and judicial system and free flow of information. Yet with the global competition for talent, Hong Kong needs to create a talent-friendly environment and improve its problems concerning, for example, the air quality and daily facilities, in order to gather talent and strengthen the talent pool.

**5. The talents in Hong Kong and the PRD have their own strengths and can make up for the shortcomings of each other. It is necessary to enhance the exchange of human resources in the two regions to benefit both sides.**

Talent plays a positive and crucial part in the competitiveness of a region. Since the open door policy was implemented in China, talents in Hong Kong and the PRD have different levels of interflow, which have contributed to the economic development in the two regions. The Outline released manifests that there will be further economic integration of Hong Kong and the PRD, a greater interflow of people is to be expected. The future development of Hong Kong and the PRD needs the utmost support of human resources.

To upgrade the regional competitiveness and the quality of human resources,

the SAR government has adopted measures to attract mainland talent such as the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme as well as the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates. According to the recent figures of the Immigration Department, there are 3,617 applications for Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates from May of 2008 to June of 2009. 97% of these applications were made by Mainland students, which shows the measure was well-received by them. Yet the number of applications for Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals was only 2,936 in the first half of 2009, which is a considerable decrease by 15% compared with that in the same period in 2008. As for the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the department received 1,358 applications in 2008, which is an increase from the 627 applications in 2007.

However, an expert interviewed pointed out that policies attracting talent are strict and with high thresholds. The complicated and time-consuming application procedures of the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals may dampen the incentive of the applicants. As for the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, it was imposed in May 2008 and it allows Mainland students to find a job in Hong Kong within a year. The policy has received the general support of Mainland students as it can help them find work in Hong Kong. Also, the expert said increasing the places for Mainland students in public-funded universities and the amount of scholarship can attract high quality Mainland students and help the exchange of talent of both sides.

Moreover, since the open door policy was implemented in China, Hong Kong has been the window to the Mainland and her channel to import talent. The rapid development with the internationalisation of the Mainland economy means the nation needs talent with international vision, knowledge about the world and foreign language abilities. This has created a chance for the people of Hong Kong to work in China, help Mainland enterprises to grow and fill the positions for talent.

After the 1997 handover, the number of people from Hong Kong working or studying on the Mainland has increased steadily. In 2008, there were around 191,600 people from Hong Kong working and 6,761 studying in Guangdong province, which shows the close relationship between the development in Guangdong and Hong Kong.

In the survey, however, some respondents said they were worried that the

exchange of human resources in the two regions could affect their chances to find jobs or further their studies. 81.3% of respondents agreed that the interflow of Mainland and Hong Kong talent should be strengthened to facilitate the economic growth in the two regions. Also, 45.1% said they supported the new Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals in which restrictions had been relaxed. On the other hand, 42.8% said a greater interflow of talents in the two regions will threaten the job opportunities of Hong Kong people. And 40.4% said they opposed the increase in the admission quotas of Mainland students at local tertiary institutions. The findings show Hong Kong young people have ambivalent feelings about the interflow of talent in the two regions. On one hand, they agree that the interflow can bring economic benefits. On the other hand, they fear that job and study opportunities will be threatened.

The interflow of talent of the two regions can no doubt promote economic development and upgrade the quality of human resources. However, it is necessary to consider the impact and dispute caused by the admission of talent in society. For example, the admission of mainland talent may hamper the job market, and more places for non-local university students may affect the number of places for local ones. How a balance can be struck is worth further looking into.

## **6. Hong Kong needs to increase the participation rate of the local higher education talent and lay a foundation for talent development.**

The competitiveness of a place relies much on its talent pool. Besides attracting talent, Hong Kong needs to actively nurture local talent. According to the territory-wide poll, half of the respondents (50.2%) agreed to raise the annual limit of 14,500 places for publicly-funded first-year, first-degree programmes in Hong Kong in order to upgrade the education of local youth.

Talent is imperative to maintaining a place's competitiveness. For the case interview, Hong Kong respondents said an educational resource is indispensable for nurturing the talented. They also agreed to increase the participation rate of young people receiving local tertiary education so as to provide local students with more chances to pursue tertiary education. Actually, the number of places for publicly-funded first-year, first-degree programmes accounts for only 18% of students of those 17-20 age cohort, which is low compared with our neighbouring regions<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the official record of proceedings of Legislative Council dated on 9 April 2008, the tertiary

There is presently a keen demand for quality talents to match the development of a knowledge-based economy in Hong Kong.

An expert interviewed stated that, as an international city, Hong Kong should have a broad regional vision. As it has universities that have highly internationalised teaching staff, good quality curriculum as well as first class educational facilities and environment, the tertiary education in Hong Kong should be for the whole country, to provide the best talent training for the nation as well as the nearby region, and to promote talent flow. Another expert said that talent cultivating should start with basic education. The expert suggested that Hong Kong should give Mainland students access to certain schools, such as private schools, direct subsidy scheme schools, etc, so that mainland students can receive education in Hong Kong and lay the foundation for talent development in the PRD at an early stage.

**7. With the global competition for talent, experts and scholars interviewed urged the young people in Hong Kong to be well prepared by improving their personal planning and continuously upgrading themselves.**

How do young people in Hong Kong assess their own advantages and preparations if they need to work in the PRD? Many respondents in the survey said a good command of English is the greatest strength (17.3%). Coming next is the ability to speak Cantonese, Mandarin as well as English and to write in English as well as Chinese (13.6%). However, 12% said they have no strengths at all. Moreover, 37% said they needed to brush up their Mandarin to prepare for working in the PRD. Coming next is professional knowledge or enhancement of qualifications (13.5%).

A scholar interviewed pointed out that young people in Hong Kong seeking a career in the PRD, especially those fresh graduates, should be prepared to face certain challenges. Some other scholars interviewed stated that as long as young people from Hong Kong lowered their expectations and coped with the trials and

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education rate of Singapore stands at 23.5%, the admission rates of other developed countries, such as Australia, Britain and the United States, have even reached 82%, 51% and 64% respectively. But the Secretary for Education remarked that the rates pertaining to other places often take private universities into account. Therefore, when comparing all such rates, it must consider the fact that the economic conditions, education policies, manpower demand and development needs of different places are all different. Source of information: Legislation Council (9 April 2008) Website: <http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0409-translate-e.pdf>

teething problems, they would definitely sharpen their competitive edge for future development.

Facing the competition for talents on the Mainland, experts and scholars interviewed gave the following three suggestions to young people in Hong Kong: (a) be aware of global crisis and understand the keen competition in the manpower market; (b) be persevering and brave to overcome adversities; and (c) keep equipping yourselves, especially with language skills and creative abilities.

Youth respondents from both Hong Kong and the PRD agreed that the competition among highly-skilled people was a global trend. In the context of the current global competition for talent, all respondents in general felt that they could improve in the following five areas: (a) embracing new information and technology; (b) improving language abilities; (c) increasing analytical powers; (d) understanding different cultures; and (e) having a balanced national and international perspective.

Chances will always be given to those who have made good preparations. The interflow of talent will become more frequent when the economies of Hong Kong and the PRD further integrate. The keen talent competition will mean that young people in Hong Kong should be fully prepared to grasp the chances for their further development.

## **Recommendations**

The release of the Outline and the further economic integration of Hong Kong and the PRD will give young people in Hong Kong more job opportunities and chances to expand their careers. However, this Study shows that the young people of Hong Kong know little about the Outline or the PRD. Moreover, they lack a national vision, which limits their career choices.

To implement the measures in the Outline, both Hong Kong and the PRD need to readjust their internal economy and plan their future development strategies to meet the needs of the new economic trend. The two regions inevitably need to adopt broad economic development strategies to bring about continuous economic growth in the two areas among regional competition and cooperation. Human resources serve as a crucial factor supporting industrial policies and a highly efficient economy. This factor is especially important in Hong Kong, as an adequate supply

of human resources can fulfill the demand for talent and contribute to the future development in both the areas.

To summarize the Study, we would like to raise the following six suggestions for reference:

**1. Upgrade the quality of human resources in Hong Kong and increase the participation rate of publicly-funded university places.**

The number of places for publicly-funded first-year, first-degree programmes accounts for only 18% of students in the 17-20 age cohort, which is low compared with other advanced economies. The government has now developed other paths for local tertiary education like associate degree courses and vocational training. Nevertheless, human resources play a crucial part in the long-term development of Hong Kong. We support the SAR government further investing in education and increasing the participation rate of publicly-funded university places so as to provide more opportunities for local young people in the appropriate age group to attend universities.

**2. Explore the possibility of allowing Mainland primary and secondary students to study in Hong Kong, so as to build up an early foundation for talent nourishment.**

There are keen competitions for talent worldwide. Some experts and scholars in the interview said the government should support a certain number of private schools or direct subsidy schools available for Mainland students, thus building an early foundation for talent nourishment. Therefore, the SAR government should plan accordingly and make due adjustments for basic education by strengthening its cooperation with the PRD. They should also agree to explore the possibility of allowing Mainland primary and secondary students to study in Hong Kong, as well as enabling the development of Hong Kong's human resources to better tie in with the needs of the region.

**3. Step up efforts to promote internship programmes for the youth of Hong Kong to obtain working experience as well as to increase their understanding of the development of the related industries in the PRD region.**

The SAR government launched the Internship Programme for University Graduates in August 2009 and let university graduates work as interns in enterprises on the Mainland. Through the programme, they will know about the operation of Mainland enterprises and national development. We support this programme and suggest that the government should step up efforts in promoting internship programmes for the youth of Hong Kong to obtain working experience in the PRD. Also, it can help to increase their understanding of the development of the related industries such as finance, services, infrastructure and town planning, innovation and technology. The Mainland internship will be an invaluable experience to help them build career paths.

**4. Consider conducting a thorough assessment or study on the demand of manpower needed in both Hong Kong and the PRD so as to facilitate long term planning on education and vocational training.**

The Outline is the blueprint for the future development in the PRD, including plans to upgrade and reform industries as well as to develop industries which will have advantages within the region. That means the PRD will need to have more talents with high educational and professional knowledge to implement the development targets. To cater to the future development of the PRD, it is necessary to have a greater assessment on human resources' needs. The government can consider conducting a thorough assessment or study on the demand of manpower needed in both Hong Kong and the PRD so as to facilitate long term planning on education and vocational training.

**5. Encourage the young people of Hong Kong to broaden their horizons and take a proactive attitude in understanding the prospects and employment opportunities in the PRD region.**

The Outline marks a blueprint for the reform and development in the PRD, and sets a guideline for the long-term development of Hong Kong and the PRD. The economic integration of Hong Kong and the PRD will provide more job opportunities for the young people of Hong Kong. However, the Study shows that the young people of Hong Kong agree that the PRD has potential for career development, but it is not their first choice. We believe that the career growth of the young people of Hong Kong should not be limited by their present environment. Therefore we



suggest that they should be more farsighted and put their priority on long-term career development. They are encouraged to broaden their horizons and take a proactive attitude in understanding the prospects and employment opportunities in the PRD region.

**6. Hong Kong young people should prepare well for their career and upgrade their qualities.**

With the global competition for talent being so keen, the young people of Hong Kong should prepare well and equip themselves continuously. Some experts and scholars interviewed gave the following three suggestions to the young people of Hong Kong: (a) be aware of global crisis and understand the keen competition in the manpower market; (b) be persevering and brave to overcome adversities; and (c) keep equipping yourselves, especially with language skills and creative abilities. We suggest the young people of Hong Kong should prepare well and plan ahead for their career growth. It is only through continuous sharpening of their skills that they can survive the talent competition.