

## Age limits barrier for job seekers, says survey

By Antoine So

MORE than 90 per cent of employers discriminate against aged applicants for jobs — and 60 per cent rejected applicants older than 30, according to a recent survey by the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU).

The survey, in the first week of November, found that 53 — or 42 per cent — out of the selected 125 vacancies advertised in major newspapers stated age requirement as below 30 years old.

The survey targeted industries ranging from retailing to services, restaurants and hotels. Of the 53 companies which stated below 30 age requirement, 29 were retailers, 19 services, three restaurants and two hotels.

More than 90 per cent of the companies surveyed set age limits. Six companies had set age requirements at 22, the survey found.

HKCTU spokesman Lee Cheuk-yan said age limits had become a major obstacle for job-seekers, especially workers in the manufacturing industry. "Very often, they are the group of people who frequently change jobs. The age limit can mean great difficulty for them," he said.

"The government should prepare legislation prohibiting age discrimination as such." As a penalty, Lee suggested that companies which set age limits should be deprived of labour importation quota.

The government should take the lead in abolishing age requirements in all its departments and subvented groups, he said.