

香港特別行政區政府
政務司司長私人辦公室
政策及項目統籌處



The Government of
The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Policy and Project Co-ordination Unit,
Chief Secretary for Administration's Private Office

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4 July 2014

Miss Flora TAI
Clerk to House Committee
Legislative Council Secretariat,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss Tai,

**Independent Analysis of Public Views Collected during
the Public Engagement Exercise on Population Policy**

As the Chairman of the Steering Committee on Population Policy, the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) attended the Special Meeting of the House Committee of the Legislative Council on 7 February 2014. In her briefing to Members on the key engagement activities conducted and the major views received during the public engagement exercise between October 2013 and February 2014, CS informed Members that the Social Science Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong was commissioned to conduct independent analysis on the views received, which was expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2014.

I am pleased to inform you that the analysis has now been completed. The report, together with the public submissions received for the engagement exercise, have been uploaded onto the thematic website for the engagement exercise (www.hkpopulation.gov.hk/public_engagement) for access by the public. Attached please find a copy of today's press release announcing the publication of the report.

Grateful if you would arrange to inform Members of the publication of the report.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Doris HO)

Head, Policy and Project Co-ordination Unit

Press Releases

Government releases report on views received
in public engagement exercise on population
policy

The Government today (July 4) released the independent analysis report on views received in the public engagement exercise on population policy compiled by the Social Sciences Research Centre (SSRC) of the University of Hong Kong.

The Steering Committee on Population Policy (SCPP), chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs Carrie Lam, held the public engagement exercise from October 24, 2013, to February 23, 2014, to gauge views extensively on various topics on population policy. The SSRC, which was commissioned by the Government, has completed the independent analysis report on the views received. The report and all the submissions have been uploaded to the thematic website of the public engagement exercise at www.hkpopulation.gov.hk/public_engagement/en.

During the public engagement exercise, three public forums as well as 11 focus groups and events were organised by the SCPP and its Secretariat. Moreover, consultation sessions were arranged in collaboration with 12 government advisory bodies and 24 consultation sessions or discussion forums were held for stakeholders, including business chambers, professional bodies, political parties, non-governmental organisations, concern groups, the school sector and the higher education/post-secondary education sector. Meetings of all the 18 District Councils or their committees were attended. The Chief Secretary for Administration attended two special meetings of the Legislative Council

(LegCo) House Committee to listen to the views of LegCo Members.

A total of 1 898 submissions were recorded by the SSRC, after discounting repeated and irrelevant submissions. Among these, there were 497 written submissions, 1 228 online forms and 173 calls to the hotline. The SSRC included into the analysis these submissions, the minutes of the related events and consultation forums, feedback from online and social media, and media materials (including news articles/columns and TV and radio programmes) published or broadcast during the public engagement exercise.

The major views presented by the report are summarised in the following 10 points:

1. There was a clear consensus to increase female participation in the labour force. Specific proposals included increasing government support for child care in the community and after-school care, adopting family-friendly practices more widely at the workplace, and providing more part-time jobs and improving retraining services.
2. Strong support was shown for increasing the retirement age in general, for allowing employees to choose their retirement age, for government departments providing job opportunities to the elderly first and for encouraging private sector employers to hire older members of the population. There was also concern about the adverse effect on the promotion prospects of younger workers. There was no clear consensus in favour of or objecting to an increased retirement age for civil servants.
3. Substantial feedback was received on new arrivals (especially through petitions by email). The main concerns were on the authority for approving One-way Permits, imposing screening criteria, reducing the

quota and retaining household registration in the Mainland for One-way Permit holders so that they could return to the Mainland if they cannot adapt. There were suggestions about stopping family reunions for future marriages. Concern was expressed about the seven-year residence requirement for entitlement to selected government welfare and services. There were also suggestions of training to help new arrivals integrate into the community.

4. Submissions supported initiatives to encourage employers to hire people with disabilities and to enhance support for ethnic minorities in the areas of Chinese-language training and employment.

5. Many comments were made about the need to improve provision of vocational education and ensure that post-secondary education matches the labour market and social needs. There were views on improving education and provision of more university places, as well as additional support for continuing education, the Qualifications Framework and sub-degree courses.

6. There were concerns that barriers such as limited school places hinder admission of talented people to Hong Kong. The Government needs to be more proactive and provide incentives to encourage non-local students to stay and work in Hong Kong, and also needs to prioritise specific industries in admitting talent. For Hong Kong people who have emigrated and their children, the most common themes were barriers they faced in returning to Hong Kong and the need for the Government to be more proactive to encourage them to return.

7. A lot of feedback was received on importation of labour, particularly through signature campaigns, with both positive and negative views, but there was no consensus.

Emphasis was put on the need to protect existing local low-skilled workers and to impose stringent requirements to approve working visas. There were suggestions that importation of labour should focus on the less attractive industries which experienced manpower shortage, for example the construction and care services industries.

8. Among the comments on family and fertility, many were in favour of enhanced support for families, including tax benefits and child subsidies and subsidised housing for families, as well as for fertility and pregnancy, including financial support for pregnancy, longer maternity leave and provision of paternity leave. There were many comments about the barriers for marriage and family, such as housing costs, access to education and the financial burdens of raising children.

9. Many suggestions supported active ageing, including promoting volunteer work by the elderly and building an elderly-friendly city. There were many comments about the need for enhanced support for the elderly, especially in the areas of financial support, residential care, medical care and the provision of elderly housing. There were relatively few comments about the "silver hair" market, and the main theme was the potential of this emerging market.

10. There were many concerns expressed about population growth (largely through petitions by email), about wanting population limits or not aiming to increase the population. There was also concern that the consultation focused too much on manpower and the economy and too little on quality of life.

Taking into account views received during the public consultation exercise and analysis in the report, the SCPP will in the latter half of this year start studying and discussing with the relevant bureaux on the

recommended measures so as to formulate an
action agenda covering concrete measures.
Major recommendations will be announced in the
Policy Address next year.

Ends/Friday, July 4, 2014
Issued at HKT 20:41

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