

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Voter Registration

INTRODUCTION

This paper briefs Members on the key statistics relating to the 2014 Final Register (“FR”) of electors and the checking measures taken in the 2014 voter registration (“VR”) cycle, as well as the preparation for the 2015 VR cycle.

2014 VOTER REGISTRATION CYCLE

2. For the 2014 VR cycle, the statutory deadlines for new registration and updating of registration particulars fell on 16 May and 29 June 2014 respectively. The Registration and Electoral Office (“REO”) subsequently published the 2014 FR on 25 July. The key statistics are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

(I) Geographical Constituencies (“GCs”)

Newly registered electors

3. About 3.5 million registered electors are contained in the 2014 FR of electors for GCs, representing a registration rate of 73.5%. Amongst these electors, about 77 000 are newly registered. About 41 000 electors have been deleted from the 2013 FR, of whom about 27 000 electors have passed away and about 14 000 electors have failed to update or confirm their residential addresses in response to the REO’s inquiry process. The figure in the 2014 cycle represents a net increase of more than 36 000 electors when compared with the 2013 FR.

4. The registration rate in respect of the 2014 FR is comparable with the rates in 2013 (73.2%) and 2012 (73.6%). According to past experience, the overall registration rate in a non-election year is usually slightly lower than that in an election year. As 2015 is a District Council election year, it is expected that the registration rate in the 2015 VR cycle will rise.

Registration rates of different age groups

5. In addition to the traditional publicity channels to encourage eligible persons to register as electors, the REO continued to disseminate the VR message to the public through social media to appeal to young people to register as electors. As a result of the publicity efforts over the years, the registration rate of eligible young people aged 18-30 has risen steadily from 50.7% in 2007 (District Council election year) to about 59.7% in the 2014 cycle. The average registration rate of electors of other age groups is over 75% and relatively stable. Further details of the age and sex profile of registered electors of different age groups by Legislative Council GCs and Districts in 2014 are set out in the tables at **Annex 1**.

Updating of registration particulars

6. Similar to the case of new registration, usually fewer applications for updating registered particulars are received in a non-election year when compared to a cycle with a major election. In the 2014 cycle, the REO processed about 121 000 applications for updating registration particulars from electors. The figure is slightly higher than the number of updating cases of about 116 000 in 2013. As 2015 is an election year, we expect the number of cases of updating of registration particulars will increase.

7. To address registered electors failing to update their particulars after moving their residence, the REO will continue to strengthen its publicity efforts to encourage and remind registered electors to update their registration particulars in a timely manner in order to enhance the accuracy of the voter registers.

(II) Functional Constituencies (“FCs”)

Traditional FCs

8. For the 2014 FR for traditional FCs, the number of registered electors is about 232 700, of whom about 600 are newly registered. On the other hand, about 3 200 electors have changed to register under the District Council (second) FC and another about 2 700 electors have been deleted. The number of traditional FC electors in the 2014 FR represents a decrease of about 5 300 electors compared with the 2013 FR.

District Council (second) FC

9. The number of registered electors of the District Council (second) FC in the 2014 FR is about 3.25 million, representing an increase by around 31 000 electors when compared with the 2013 FR. Among these 3.25 million electors, about 73 700 are newly registered electors, including about 1 100 GC electors in the 2013 FR, some 3 200 electors who have switched from other FCs and the remaining 69 400 electors who are newly registered GC electors. Separately, in the 2014 FR, there are also about 39 700 electors who have been deleted (mainly electors who have passed away or GC electors who have been deleted under the inquiry process), about 2 400 electors who have decided not to be registered as electors in District Council (second) FC again and some 200 electors switching to other FCs.

10. A table showing the distribution of registered electors by FCs (other than District Council (second) FC) in 2014 is at **Annex 2**. Other statistical information is available at the VR website (www.voterregistration.gov.hk).

(III) Checking Measures

11. The Government attaches great importance to maintaining the integrity, fairness and openness of the electoral system, and adopts various measures to ensure a high degree of transparency, the integrity and accuracy of the VR system. To enhance the accuracy and completeness of the registration particulars of electors, the REO continued to implement checking measures in the 2014 cycle including verification checks on electors' registered residential addresses through cross-matching of data with the Housing Department, the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Home Affairs Department; checks on multiple electors or multiple surnames of electors registered with the same residential address; random sample checks on electors contained in the 2013 FR; checks on addresses with incomplete information, commercial addresses or suspected non-residential addresses; follow-up action on undelivered poll cards arising from the District Council by-elections in 2013 and 2014; checks on addresses in buildings already demolished or to be demolished; and sample checks on new applications for VR. The number of GC electors covered by various measures is more or less the same as in the preceding cycle. After checking, the REO issued inquiry letters to about 24 000 electors according to the electoral laws and requested these electors to update or confirm their registered residential address. Subsequently, about 14 000 electors did not respond to the

REO's written inquiries. Their registration status was then removed and they were not included in the FR published on 25 July 2014.

2015 VOTER REGISTRATION CYCLE

12. On 10 July 2014, the Legislative Council passed the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2014 which included advancing the deadline for VR application for GCs, FCs and Election Committee Subsectors by 14 calendar days, in order to provide ten more calendar days to the public for inspecting the provisional register and the omissions list and making claims and objections, and four more calendar days to the Revising Officer for arranging hearings for claims and objections. The new deadlines have already taken effect in the 2015 VR cycle. Thus, according to the relevant existing electoral laws, eligible persons who would like to register as electors but have yet to do so must submit their applications on or before 2 July 2015 so that their registration particulars can be included in the FR to be published in September 2015. As for registered electors, if there is any change in their registration particulars, such as residential address, they should report the change to the REO on or before 25 August 2015. We plan to start the next VR publicity exercise in May 2015. The main features will include encouraging eligible persons who have yet to register as electors (particularly eligible young people) to make registration, reminding electors to fulfil their civic responsibility to notify the REO of any change in their residential addresses and reminding applicants/electors that they should provide accurate and true information for VR. An inter-departmental working group has been set up to coordinate the publicity exercise and the publicity plan is being reviewed and formulated.

13. Separately, to facilitate the public to check whether they are registered as electors and whether their VR particulars are accurate, the REO has launched the Online Voter Information Enquiry System (OVIES) on 1 September 2014. Electors may log in the system (www.voterinfo.gov.hk) any time to check whether they are registered as electors and their latest registration particulars including registered addresses and constituencies. In order to promote OVIES, from September to December 2014, a leaflet introducing this online system will be mailed to more than 2 million households along with water bills to encourage electors to make use of the new system. OVIES provides an extra, simple and convenient means for electors to check their registration particulars, and submit applications for change of particulars in a timely

manner where necessary, thereby enhancing the accuracy of voter registers. We shall consider further promoting the system when planning the publicity work of the 2015 VR campaign.

14. The REO will continue adopting the checking measures and implementing the inquiry process in the 2015 VR cycle to enhance the accuracy of particulars contained in the voter registers and ensure the integrity of the VR system. The REO will also continue reminding electors to fulfil their civic responsibility to update their registration particulars.

WAY FORWARD

15. We shall strengthen publicity efforts to encourage the public to register as electors and to update their registration particulars in a timely manner. The Administration will report the details of the 2015 VR campaign to this Panel early next year.

**Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
Registration and Electoral Office
October 2014**

2014 Final Register

Age and Sex Profile of Registered Electors by Legislative Council Constituencies

Age Range	Sex	Hong Kong Island	Kowloon West	Kowloon East	New Territories West	New Territories East	Grand Total
18-20	M	6,860	5,924	8,654	16,997	15,714	54,149
	F	6,587	5,701	8,317	16,488	15,078	52,171
18-20 Sub-total		13,447	11,625	16,971	33,485	30,792	106,320
21-25	M	17,075	13,928	20,856	42,048	38,432	132,339
	F	16,743	13,295	19,849	38,941	36,128	124,956
21-25 Sub-total		33,818	27,223	40,705	80,989	74,560	257,295
26-30	M	15,879	12,498	16,346	33,646	31,221	109,590
	F	16,127	12,171	15,481	32,365	30,774	106,918
26-30 Sub-total		32,006	24,669	31,827	66,011	61,995	216,508
31-35	M	19,274	14,824	18,371	38,392	35,206	126,067
	F	19,464	14,666	17,186	36,536	34,199	122,051
31-35 Sub-total		38,738	29,490	35,557	74,928	69,405	248,118
36-40	M	21,965	17,425	18,911	39,540	32,644	130,485
	F	22,693	17,621	18,377	38,316	32,540	129,547
36-40 Sub-total		44,658	35,046	37,288	77,856	65,184	260,032
41-45	M	23,388	18,819	20,385	38,604	31,511	132,707
	F	26,499	19,768	22,237	42,925	36,554	147,983
41-45 Sub-total		49,887	38,587	42,622	81,529	68,065	280,690
46-50	M	27,271	19,766	25,160	45,495	39,204	156,896
	F	31,120	21,311	27,735	52,933	47,359	180,458
46-50 Sub-total		58,391	41,077	52,895	98,428	86,563	337,354
51-55	M	34,561	23,321	32,124	61,537	55,508	207,051
	F	37,998	24,360	33,126	63,555	61,526	220,565
51-55 Sub-total		72,559	47,681	65,250	125,092	117,034	427,616
56-60	M	32,989	22,418	28,388	56,765	53,153	193,713
	F	34,875	23,387	29,840	56,752	53,797	198,651
56-60 Sub-total		67,864	45,805	58,228	113,517	106,950	392,364
61-65	M	29,121	20,169	23,267	44,631	40,387	157,575
	F	29,931	20,338	24,818	42,331	37,611	155,029
61-65 Sub-total		59,052	40,507	48,085	86,962	77,998	312,604
66-70	M	19,855	14,270	17,187	29,397	24,438	105,147
	F	20,062	15,008	18,325	26,331	21,159	100,885
66-70 Sub-total		39,917	29,278	35,512	55,728	45,597	206,032
71 or above	M	43,826	37,281	47,663	55,019	42,678	226,467
	F	47,959	38,737	53,674	52,108	43,908	236,386
71 or above Sub-total		91,785	76,018	101,337	107,127	86,586	462,853
Total	M	292,064	220,643	277,312	502,071	440,096	1,732,186
	F	310,058	226,363	288,965	499,581	450,633	1,775,600
Grand Total		602,122	447,006	566,277	1,001,652	890,729	3,507,786

**2014 Final Register for Functional Constituencies -
Breakdown of Number of Electors
(other than the District Council (Second) Functional Constituency)**

Functional Constituency		Number of registered electors		
		Bodies (i)	Individuals (ii)	Total (i)+(ii)
1	Heung Yee Kuk	---	146	146
2	Agriculture and Fisheries	158	---	158
3	Insurance	129	---	129
4	Transport	200	---	200
5	Education	---	89,704	89,704
6	Legal	---	6,440	6,440
7	Accountancy	---	25,092	25,092
8	Medical	---	10,764	10,764
9	Health Services	---	37,007	37,007
10	Engineering	---	9,078	9,078
11	Architectural, Surveying and Planning	---	6,804	6,804
12	Labour	644	---	644
13	Social Welfare	---	13,709	13,709
14	Real Estate and Construction	484	233	717
15	Tourism	1,313	---	1,313
16	Commercial (first)	884	---	884
17	Commercial (second)	627	984	1,611
18	Industrial (first)	545	0	545
19	Industrial (second)	774	---	774
20	Finance	124	---	124
21	Financial Services	573	---	573
22	Sports, Performing Arts, Culture and Publication	2,249	305	2,554
23	Import and Export	809	568	1,377
24	Textiles and Garment	2,774	55	2,829
25	Wholesale and Retail	1,778	5,200	6,978
26	Information Technology	363	5,458	5,821
27	Catering	790	5,501	6,291
28	District Council (first)	---	411	411
TOTAL		15,218	217,459	232,677