

Announcement of Summary Results of the 2001 Population Census

**Speech by Mr. Frederick W H HO,
Commissioner for Census and Statistics
at the Press Conference at 3:00 p.m. on 26 October 2001**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. You may recall that the data collection operation of the 2001 Population Census was conducted during the 13-day period from 15 to 27 March this year. The results of the Population Census are now available in summary form. A statistical report presenting the summary results is published today.

Population size *[Slide 2]*

2. The 2001 Population Census results showed that the Hong Kong Resident Population in mid-March 2001 was 6 708 000. Of the total, 6 524 000 were Usual Residents and 184 000 were Mobile Residents.

Demographic characteristics *[Slides 3 and 4]*

3. The ageing trend in the population continued during the past ten years, with the median age rising from 31 in 1991 to 34 in 1996 and to 36 in 2001. This could be attributed to the continuing low fertility rate and mortality improvement over the period. Comparing the 1991 and 2001 population pyramids, it is noted that the base of the 2001 pyramid has shrunk owing to a reduction of the proportion of children aged below 15. The apex of the pyramid, however, grew bigger because of an increase in the proportion of people aged 65 and over.

4. The sex ratio was below parity. From 1 038 males per 1 000 females in 1991, the sex ratio dropped to 960 in 2001.

5. Nearly 95% of the population were ethnic Chinese. The major non-Chinese ethnic groups in Hong Kong were Filipino, Indonesian and British.

6. As regards marital status, the proportion of never-married persons

among the male population aged 15 and over decreased from 36.5% in 1991 to 34.2% in 1996 and 33.9% in 2001. For the females, the proportion was about 29% in both 1991 and 1996, rising to 30.1% in 2001.

7. Cantonese was the most commonly used language/dialect at home for 89% of the population aged five and over. Another 7% claimed that they could speak the dialect. Over one-third of the population claimed to speak Putonghua as the usual language or to be able to speak it.

Education *[Slide 5]*

8. The educational level of the population has improved. The proportion of population aged 15 and over with secondary or higher education increased from 62% in 1991 to 71% in 2001. In particular, the proportion of those with tertiary education in degree courses or above increased from 6% to 13%.

9. About 84% of the students studying full-time in schools or educational institutions in Hong Kong attended schools in the same area as that of their residence. Four in ten students walked to school.

Economic characteristics *[Slide 6]*

10. The labour force increased from 2.8 million in 1991 to 3.4 million in 2001, despite a drop in the overall labour force participation rate from 64% to 61% over the same period. This is mainly due to the increase in population size and the changes in the age-sex structure of the population.

11. In 2001 about 32% of the working population were managers, administrators, professionals and associate professionals, up from 23% in 1991. In contrast, the proportion of working population engaged as plant and machine operators and assemblers dropped from 13% in 1991 to 7% in 2001.

12. “Wholesale, retail and import/export trades, restaurants and hotels” was the largest economic sector, employing 26% of the working population. This was followed by “Community, social and personal services”, which employed 25% of the working population.

13. The median income from main employment of the working population was \$10,000 in 2001, representing an increase of 93% over the past ten years. In the same period, prices increased by 53%, as measured by the Composite

Consumer Price Index.

Households *[Slide 7]*

14. Over the last decade, the number of domestic households increased by 30% from 1.58 million to 2.05 million. As it increased at a faster rate than the population, the average household size decreased from 3.4 to 3.1.

15. The median monthly income of domestic households was \$18,700, an increase of 88% over that ten years ago.

Housing *[Slides 8, 9 and 10]*

16. Some 3.3 million persons lived in private permanent housing, 2.1 million in public rental housing and 1.1 million in subsidized sale flats. There were 1.04 million households who owned the quarters they lived in. Among these households, 48% did not need to pay mortgage payment and loan repayment. Owner-occupiers living in private permanent housing with mortgage payment or loan repayment incurred a median monthly payment of \$11,000, and the median mortgage payment and loan repayment to income ratio was 31%.

17. Domestic households renting whole private housing units paid a median monthly rent of \$6,500. Those living in public rental housing paid less, with a median monthly rent of \$1,297. The median rent to income ratio was 10.4%.

Geographical characteristics *[Slides 11 and 12]*

18. There was substantial internal migration of the population during the last decade. While ten years ago, Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories had respectively 22%, 36% and 42% of the population, by now the respective proportions were 20%, 30% and 50%.

19. Many districts in the New Territories like Sai Kung, Yuen Long and Islands recorded a marked population growth because of new towns development, whereas districts like Wan Chai, Sham Shui Po and Kowloon City experienced population decrease.

20. Among the District Council districts, Yuen Long had the largest proportion of young people aged below 15 in its population; whilst Wong Tai

Sin and Sham Shui Po had the largest proportion of people aged 65 and over.

21. Among the District Council districts, the Eastern District had the largest number of domestic households at 0.2 million. However, the most significant growth was found in Sai Kung, where the number of domestic households increased by nearly 200% from 34 000 in 1991 to 96 000 in 2001.

Concluding remarks

22. These and other summary findings of the 2001 Population Census are included in the report “Hong Kong 2001 Population Census Summary Results”. Detailed results of the 2001 Population Census will be released in stages between late October 2001 and mid-2002.

23. The Census results would be widely used for government planning and policy formulation, particularly in areas such as education, housing, transport, medical and social services. Business people and the public would also find the data useful.

24. With the full co-operation of the public, the data collection operation of the Census was very smooth. This was a reflection of the community’s awareness of the important role that quality statistics play in building Hong Kong’s future.

25. Thank you.

(Should you have any questions, please feel free to ask.)