

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Between 24th October 2013 and 23rd February 2014, the Steering Committee on Population Policy of The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“The Government”) launched a public engagement (“PE”) process on population policy, entitled “*Thoughts for Hong Kong*”. The Social Sciences Research Centre of The University of Hong Kong (“HKUSSRC”), an analysis and reporting consultant with strong experience in research and public surveys, has been appointed by The Government to collect, compile, analyse and report views of various stakeholder groups, including those of the general public, expressed during the PE.

1.2 Team

The team is led by Professor John Bacon-Shone, with assistance from Ms. Linda Cho, processing and analysis by Ms. Rachel Lui, Mr. Danny Chan, Mr. Dicky Yip, Ms. Lee Hiu Ling and Mr. Thomas Lo, and logistics support from all the staff of HKUSSRC.

1.3 Analysis of Feedback

The PE started on 24th October 2013, with all feedback collected by 21st March 2014 included in the analysis, unless excluded for the reasons noted below.

All comments received during the PE were divided into eleven channels as described below:

1. Public Forum (PF): 3 summaries from 3 Public Fora during the PE - public fora are distinguished from other events because they were widely advertised as open to all participants, whereas some of the other events were provided to dedicated bodies: 202 comments were received from the participants of public fora (Annex A);
2. Public consultative platforms (PCP): 2 summaries of 2 Legislative Council Special House Committee meetings, 30 summaries from the 18 District Councils

or their subcommittees and 12 Advisory and Statutory Bodies during the PE: 947 comments were received through PCPs (Annex B);

3. Focus groups and events (FGE): the HKUSSRC was invited to attend 8 focus groups and 3 events (Annex C1) for recordings and note taking and the views from the stakeholders were summarized by the HKUSSRC. There were another 3 events (Annex C2) that HKUSSRC was not invited to attend but recordings or meeting notes were provided by government for summarize the views of the stakeholders. However, there were another 21 focus groups or events (Annex C3) that the HKUSSRC was not invited to attend and no recordings or meeting notes were provided for analysis, so they have not been included in the analysis.

Therefore, a total of 14 summaries from 8 focus group meetings and 6 events including conferences, round tables, seminars and briefings other than PFs or PCPs held during the PE were included in the qualitative analysis (Annex C): 671 comments were received from these events.

4. Written submission (WSL): a total of 126 written submissions, either by soft or hard copies, with an organization or company letterhead with contact details were received during the PE. All these written submissions were sent by letter, fax or email to the Government with explicit corporate or association identification. Among the submissions received, 27 were identified as duplicate or irrelevant submissions and were excluded from analysis. Thus, only 99 written submissions with an organization or company letterhead with contact details were included in the qualitative analysis (Annex D): 1,448 comments were received in this manner;

5. Written submission (WSNL): a total of 700 written submissions, either by soft or hard copies, without an organization or company letterhead were received during the PE. All these written submissions were sent by letter, fax or email to the Government without explicit corporate or association identification. Among the submissions received, 301 were identified as duplicate or irrelevant submissions, and 1 submission had an attachment file that could not be opened, so they were excluded from analysis. Thus, only 398 written submissions without an organization or company letterhead were included in the qualitative analysis (Annex E): 3,181 comments were received in this manner;
6. Media (M): comments from 987 summaries from newspaper articles/columns and broadcasting (Annex F) (excluding 3 which only reported official presentations) during the PE: only 427 summaries were usable in the analysis as the other media coverage reported factual information rather than public views, yielding 1,810 comments for analysis;
7. Signature Campaign/Petition (SCP): a total of 2 signature campaigns¹ with 3,106 valid signatures sent by emails and total 5 petitions² with 352 submissions (sent by 126 webforms and 226 emails) were received during the PE (Annex G). The 11,307 SCP comments are all counted based on the number of verifiable supporters as there is no clear distinction between signature campaigns, petition letters and any other form of letter or email;
8. Opinion Survey (OS): 8 survey results³ received during the PE are included as single submissions as verification of the participants was not possible (Annex H). The 34 comments are coded on the basis of any view expressed by a simple majority (more than 50%);

¹ One from the Population Policy Group about the One-Way Permit Scheme and the other from the Federation of Hong Kong & Kowloon Labour Unions about importation of low-skilled workers

² One petition is about the One-Way Permit Scheme and the other four are primarily about the civil service retirement age

³ The surveys were from Hong Kong Construction Association (self-conducted), The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions Women Affairs Committee (self-conducted), The Association for Hong Kong Catering Services Management Ltd (self-conducted), Community Business (self-conducted), The Salvation Army Chai Wan Integrated Service for Young People (self-conducted), two from Department of Child Education and Community Services, Institute of Vocation Education (Shatin), VTC (conducted by two students), The Concern group for the rights of mild mental retardation (conducted by The Hong Kong Institute of Education)

9. Telephone Hotline (TH): a total of 236 submissions were received via the telephone hotline (3142 2041 and 1823) during the PE. Among the submissions received, 63 were identified as duplicate or irrelevant submissions, and were excluded from analysis. Thus, only 173 submissions were included in qualitative analysis (Annex E3): 391 comments were received in this manner;
10. Webform (WF): a total of 1282 submissions were received via the online form during the PE. Among the submissions received, 54 were identified as duplicate or irrelevant submissions, and were excluded from analysis. Thus, only 1228 submissions were included in qualitative analysis (Annex E2): 3,844 comments were received in this manner;
11. Internet and Social Media (IM): 220 topics in non-government web forums, 11 comments from Government web forums, 50 posts from the “Thoughts for Hong Kong” Facebook page and 554 online news articles - they are included if they were covered by WiseNews during the PE as this is a reputable indexing method for Internet activity in Hong Kong (Annex I): 1,423 comments were usable in this analysis.

The qualitative analysis used the nVivo software and is based on a framework in Annex J that was developed by the HKUSSRC to reflect all the issues covered in the consultation document, and then extended to cover all the other issues raised in the qualitative materials collected during the consultation.

A table of counts for comments received on each issue is provided for each section in this chapter, broken down by the eleven channels noted above. Comments submitted by different people are counted each time, even if the comments were identical, regardless of the channel of submission, on the grounds that this reflects the number of people or organizations who wish to make that specific comment. As individual identities were not cross-referenced across channels, comments submitted through multiple channels are counted separately through each channel, unless they could be matched because of identical content, in which case they were only included once under a single channel. No distinction, other than for written submissions with and without letterhead, is made between people and organizations, as it is often unclear whether a comment represents a personal or institutional perspective. All counts are

comment-based, where a comment is defined as a specific idea that could be coded as a distinct issue.

Discussion is provided for any issue with at least 50 comments provided, including a quote from a typical comment submitted and also, where appropriate, the numbers of comments that agree and disagree are highlighted, even if the number of comments is less than 50. The discussion starts by listing issues with counts of at least 50 at the highest level of analysis, then breaks down the analysis at the next level of analysis until there are no issues with counts of at least 50. The quotes are provided at the lowest level of analysis with a count of at least 50 to ensure that the quotes are as specific as possible to the issue. For the counts of at least 50, whenever at least a quarter of the comments about an issue came through a single channel, the count in the table is highlighted in bold, while if at least half of the comments came through a single channel, the count is also highlighted in red and the channel is mentioned in the text.