



## **Highlights**

# HIGHLIGHTS

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## Education Profile

- 1 The education profile of Singapore's resident population improved significantly in the last decade. Some 57 per cent of the non-student population aged 15 years and over in 2000 had secondary or higher qualifications, up from 42 per cent in 1990.
- 2 There were more university and polytechnic graduates in 2000 than before. The proportion of university graduates in the non-student population more than doubled from 4.5 per cent in 1990 to 12 per cent in 2000. The proportion of polytechnic graduates also increased from 3.5 per cent to 6.2 per cent.
- 3 All ethnic groups among the resident population improved their education profile in the last ten years. The proportion with secondary or higher qualifications increased from 43 per cent to 58 per cent among the Chinese, from 36 per cent to 50 per cent among the Malays and from 41 per cent to 62 per cent among the Indians.
- 4 The majority of younger Singapore residents had attained secondary or higher qualifications. In 2000, about 4 in 5 residents aged 25–34 years had obtained at least secondary qualifications. The proportions of university and polytechnic graduates among this group improved significantly over the decade – from 7 per cent to 24 per cent for university graduates and from 5 per cent to 11 per cent for polytechnic graduates.

## Educational Upgrading

- 5 Educational upgrading had become more prevalent among the non-graduate population with below polytechnic level of qualifications. In 2000, 13 per cent of the non-graduates had acquired technical,

commercial or vocational qualifications after leaving school, compared with less than 10 per cent in 1995.

- 6 The likelihood of educational upgrading appeared stronger amongst secondary school leavers. Among both males and females with secondary and upper secondary qualifications in 2000, more than 20 per cent had acquired technical, commercial or vocational qualifications.

## **Literacy and Language**

- 7 Literacy had improved, in tandem with the upgrading of the educational level of Singapore residents. In 2000, 93 per cent of the resident population aged 15 years and over were literate, up from 89 per cent in 1990.
- 8 As a result of the bilingual education policy, more Singapore residents had become literate in multiple languages. The proportion literate in two or more languages increased from 45 per cent in 1990 to 56 per cent in 2000.
- 9 Singapore residents had improved their literacy in English. A high proportion of 71 per cent was literate in English in 2000, compared with 63 per cent ten years ago.
- 10 Concurrent with the rise in the level of English literacy, the usage of English had become more prevalent at home. In 1990, English was the language most frequently spoken at home for 19 per cent of residents aged 5 years and over. By 2000, the proportion speaking English had risen to 23 per cent.
- 11 The use of dialects among the Chinese residents had dropped, and more were speaking Mandarin at home. This reflected the influence of the bilingual education in the schools and the government's encouragement to speak Mandarin instead of dialects.

## Religion

- 12 The religious composition of Singapore residents remained relatively stable over the last ten years. Buddhism and Taoism jointly accounted for 51 per cent of the resident population aged 15 years and over in 2000 compared with 54 per cent in 1990. The proportion of Muslims and Hindus remained relatively unchanged at 15 per cent and 4 per cent respectively.
- 13 The increase in the proportion of Christians was gradual – from 13 per cent in 1990 to 15 per cent in 2000. This shift was mainly associated with the increase in the better-educated Chinese who were more inclined towards Christianity.
- 14 Persons without religious affiliation constituted about 15 per cent of the population in 2000. In 1990, they constituted 14 per cent of the population. The level of religious affiliations was much higher for the Malays and Indians than the Chinese.

Fuller analyses of the trends in education, literacy and language, and religion are available in the Department of Statistics' Home Page ([www.singstat.gov.sg](http://www.singstat.gov.sg)).

- Advance Data Release No. 1: Changing Education Profile
- Advance Data Release No. 2: Religion
- Advance Data Release No. 3: Literacy and Language