Census of Population 2020

About the Census

Conducted once in ten years, the Census of Population is the largest national survey undertaken in Singapore. Census of Population 2020 (C2020) will be the sixth Census after Singapore's Independence and the 15th since the first Census taken in 1871.

Objective

The Census collects information on key characteristics of the population and households. The information is used by government agencies for policy formulation and review, and planning of programmes and services for the community. It is also used for research and understanding of the Singapore population by members of the public, academia and the international community.

Conduct of C2020

C2020 will adopt a register-based approach, similar to the Censuses conducted in 2000 and 2010, where the basic population count and characteristics such as age, sex and ethnicity will be compiled from administrative sources.

To collect the data on detailed socio-economic and household characteristics, a large-scale sample survey will be conducted. An improved sampling design has been adopted, which reduces sample size by 25%, from 200,000 household addresses in C2010 to 150,000 in C2020.

Survey information required from households relate to housing, socio-economic characteristics (including occupation, industry, income), education, language and literacy, transport, religion and difficulty in performing basic activities. Households can submit their survey returns through various modes viz. Internet, telephone or face-to-face interview.

Improvements

With the increased usage of mobile devices and growing demand from respondents to enumerate online, the C2020 will provide a mobile-friendly interface for online submission of survey returns. Respondents will use SingPass for login, and undergo two-factor authentication for added security.

Field interviewers will be using tablets in face-to-face interviews. Information collected from the online survey, telephone and face-to-face interviews can thus be updated directly in the backend server to allow a consistent set of the information provided through the different modes of submission.

CENSUS TIMELINE

First Census in Singapore

First Census After Independence
- Introduction of sample enumeration with main census
- Used computer for preparation of tables

Second Census After Independence
- Introduction of systematic computer editing and "cleaning" of data

Last Traditional Census
- Surveyed all households in Singapore
- Trialled the use of administrative records for basic particulars in Census
- Used paper-and-pen approach for data collection

1871   1970   1980   1990   2000   2010   2020

First Register-Based Census
- Used administrative data for basic population count and profile
- Enumerated 20% sample to supplement data not available from administrative sources
- Introduced tri-modal data collection strategy with Internet self-enumeration, telephone interviews via Call Centre, paper-and-pen approach for face-to-face interviews, and optical character recognition form scanning

Second Register-Based Census
- Used more administrative data for population profile
- Adopted tri-modal data collection strategy, with Internet self-enumeration, Call Centre interviews, and paperless Census
- Deployed ultra mobile personal computers for face-to-face interviews

Third Register-Based Census
- Use administrative data in a more integrated manner
- Improvements will be made on each mode of the tri-modal data collection strategy:
  - ✓ Mobile-friendly web-design
  - ✓ Tablets with secured wireless real-time data transmissions
  - ✓ Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted data processing