

# Statistics Singapore Newsletter

ISSN 0218-6810

[www.singstat.gov.sg](http://www.singstat.gov.sg)

March 2014

## Household Living Arrangement in Singapore, 1990 - 2010

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### Introduction

With the ageing of the population, delay in life events such as marriage and child-bearing, as well as the reduction in family sizes, the characteristics and composition of households<sup>1</sup> in Singapore have changed over the years.

As household members go through the different stages of the life cycle, households may transit from one living arrangement to another.

For example, a new household is formed when a couple marries and moves away from their parental homes to live together in a new home. This would often be followed by the couple entering the parenthood phase.

On the other hand, the parental home may be characterised by a declining number of children, and the passing away of the older parents.

This article highlights the changing profile of resident households in Singapore in terms of household living arrangement between 1990 and 2010 based on data from the Singapore Censuses of Population (for 1990, 2000 and 2010) and General Household Surveys (for 1995 and 2005) conducted by the Singapore Department of Statistics.

For statistical purposes, households are broadly classified into the following household living arrangement categories shown in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> A household refers to a group of two or more persons living together in the same house and sharing common food or other arrangements for essential living. It also includes a person living alone or a person living with others but having his own food arrangements. Although persons may be living in the same house, they may not be members of the same household. A resident household refers to a household headed by a resident (i.e. Singapore citizen or permanent resident).

TABLE 1: HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENT CATEGORIES

Category	Definition
Couple-based	Refers to households with a married head and spouse. This category is further split into those living with children and without children.
Lone Parent	Refers to households whose head is never-married/widowed/divorced/separated and living with children aged below 16 years or never-married children.
Living Alone	Refers to one-person households. This includes ever-married persons who are living alone as their children have grown up and moved out from the parental home.
Other Households with Family Nucleus <sup>2</sup>	Refers to other types of households with a family nucleus, for example, a divorced household head living with elderly parents only, or a widowed household head living with the son and daughter-in-law.
Other Households without Family Nucleus	Refers to other types of households without a family nucleus, for example, a never-married household head living with never-married siblings, or a household head living with unrelated persons only.

### Age Profile of Resident Household Heads

The effect of the ageing population can be observed from the shift in the age structure of resident household heads.

Households headed by younger persons aged below 35 years declined from 23 per cent in 1990 to 11 per cent in 2010 (Chart 1).

In contrast, the share of older heads aged 50 years and over increased from 35 per cent in 1990 to 50 per cent in 2010.

### Household Living Arrangement

Household living arrangements have evolved in tandem with changes in the age

structure as well as marriage and family formation preferences of the population.

While couple-based households with children remained the most common living arrangement, the proportion of such households declined from 66 per cent in 1990 to 56 per cent in 2010 (Chart 2).

In contrast, there were increases in the proportions of couple-based households without children (from 8.4 per cent in 1990 to 14 per cent in 2010) and those living alone (from 5.2 per cent in 1990 to 12 per cent in 2010).

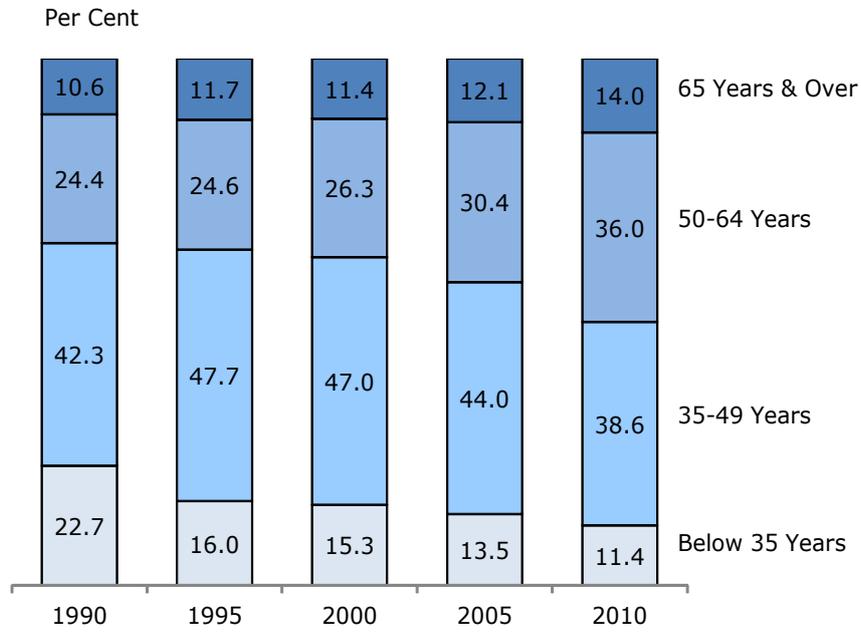
The share of lone parent households remained relatively stable at about 7 to 9 per cent over the same period.

<sup>2</sup> For statistical purposes, a family nucleus in a household can be formed by:

- (a) a married couple without children;
- (b) a married couple with never-married child(ren); or
- (c) one parent with never-married child(ren).

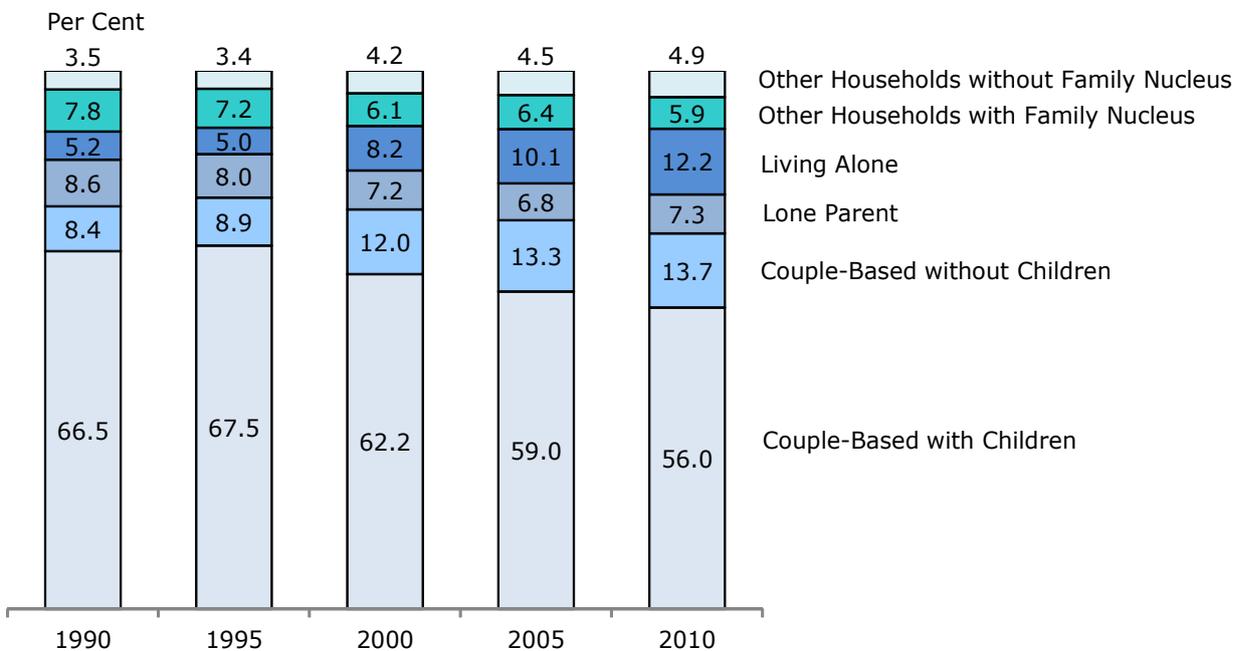
A household can have one family nucleus, multiple family nuclei or none. Each nucleus comprises one or more generations.

CHART 1 RESIDENT HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE GROUP OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS, 1990-2010



Note: The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

CHART 2 RESIDENT HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENT, 1990-2010



Note: The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

### Households Headed by Persons Aged Below 35 Years

Among households headed by persons aged below 35 years, the proportion of couple-based households decreased from 76 per cent in 1990 to 63 per cent in 2010 (Chart 3).

Conversely, the proportion of those living alone more than doubled from 7.2 per cent in 1990 to 19 per cent in 2010. This reflects the delay in marriage and family formation among the younger population.

### Households Headed by Persons Aged 35-49 Years

Among households headed by persons aged 35-49 years, the proportion of couple-based households with children decreased from 77 per cent in 1990 to 65 per cent in 2010 (Chart 4).

Correspondingly, the shares of couple-based households without children and those living alone increased, with each constituting around 10 per cent in 2010, up from about 4 or 5 per cent two decades earlier.

### Households Headed by Persons Aged 50-64 Years

Similarly, among households headed by persons aged 50-64 years, the proportion of couple-based households with children decreased, albeit by fewer percentage points, from 67 per cent in 1990 to 62 per cent in 2010 (Chart 5).

In comparison, the shares of couple-based households without children and those living alone grew over the same period.

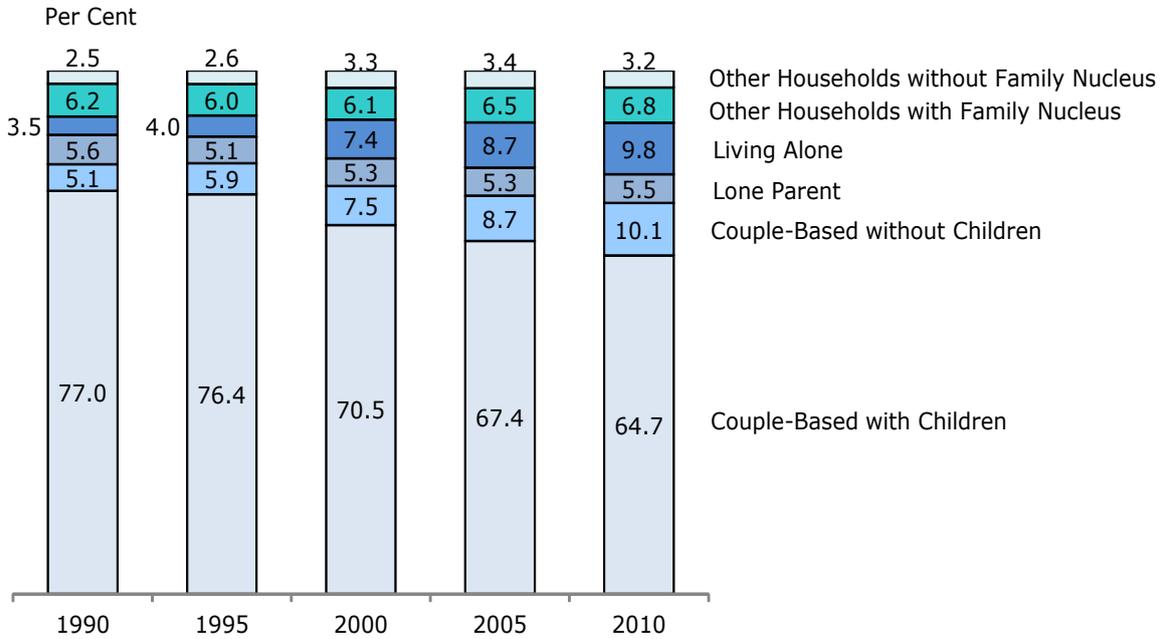
In contrast, the proportion of lone parent households fell from 15 per cent in 1990 to 8.3 per cent in 2010.

CHART 3 HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENT OF RESIDENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH HEADS AGED BELOW 35 YEARS, 1990-2010



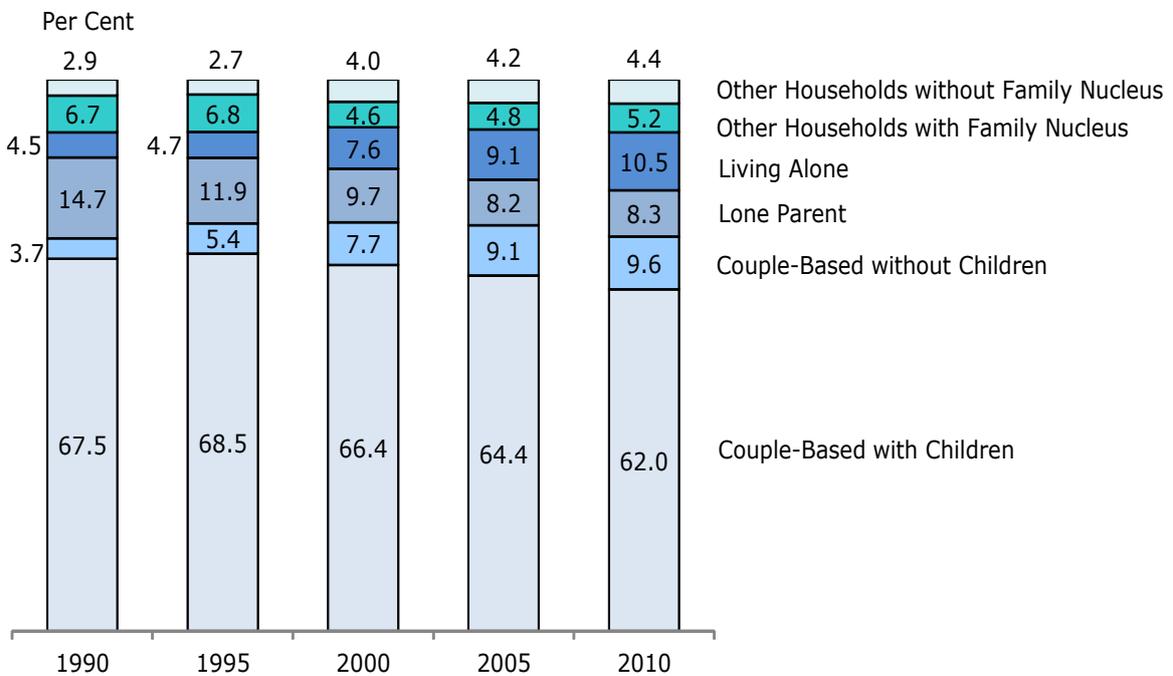
Note: The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

CHART 4 HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENT OF RESIDENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH HEADS AGED 35-49 YEARS, 1990-2010



Note: The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

CHART 5 HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENT OF RESIDENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH HEADS AGED 50-64 YEARS, 1990-2010



Note: The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

### Households Headed by Persons Aged 65 Years and Over

Among households headed by elderly persons (i.e. those aged 65 years and over), the proportion of couple-based households with children declined gradually from 44 per cent in 1990 to 33 per cent in 2010 (Chart 6).

A drop was also observed in the share of lone parent households, whose proportion decreased from 20 per cent to 14 per cent across the same period.

In contrast, the proportion of couple-based households without children almost tripled from 8.4 per cent to 23 per cent.

The share of elderly heads living alone also nearly doubled from 9.4 per cent to 17 per cent over the same period. This trend corresponds to the life cycle stage where grown-up children had left their parental homes.

It is also the result of one spouse passing away, leaving the other behind.

The majority of the elderly who lived alone were females (54 per cent in 1990 and 66 per cent in 2010), reflecting the higher life expectancy of women compared to men.

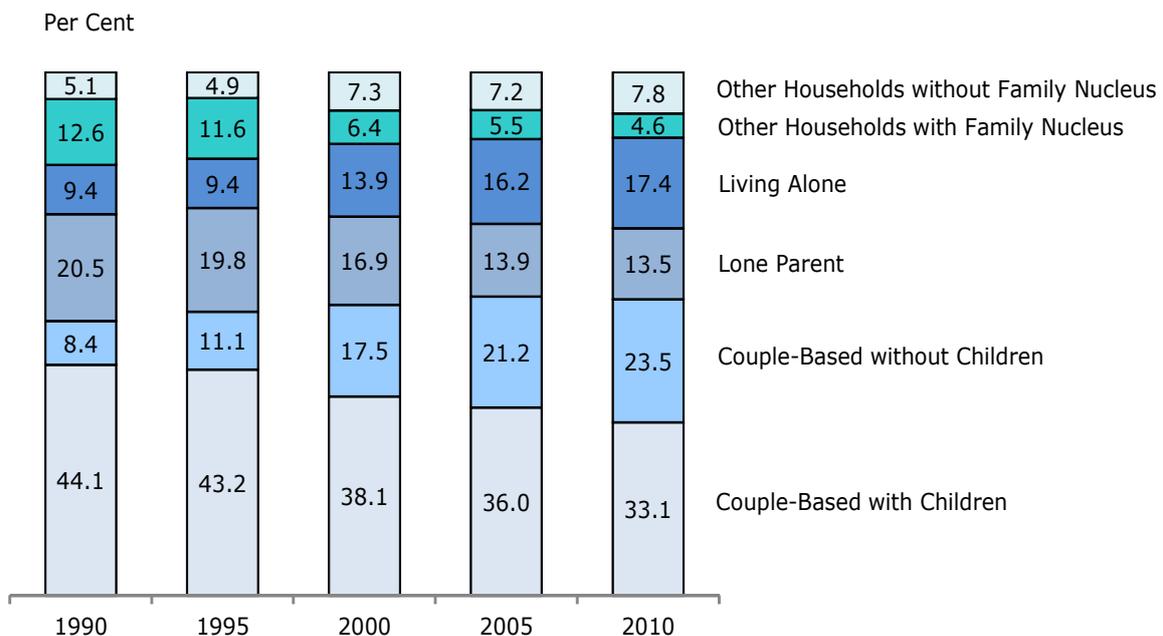
### Concluding Remarks

While couple-based households with children remained the most common living arrangement between 1990 and 2010, the proportion of such households was on the decline. In contrast, the shares of couple-based households without children as well as one-person households were growing.

Taken together, the shares of these two groups increased steadily from 14 per cent in 1990 to 26 per cent in 2010.

These trends may be seen as a reflection of the ageing population, the delay in family formation and reduction in family sizes.

CHART 6 HOUSEHOLD LIVING ARRANGEMENT OF RESIDENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH HEADS AGED 65 AND OVER, 1990-2010



Note: The figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

# SingStat Table Builder Unveiled

**Launched in August 2013, this free interactive application allows users to build customised data tables, export data tables and plot graphs and charts.**

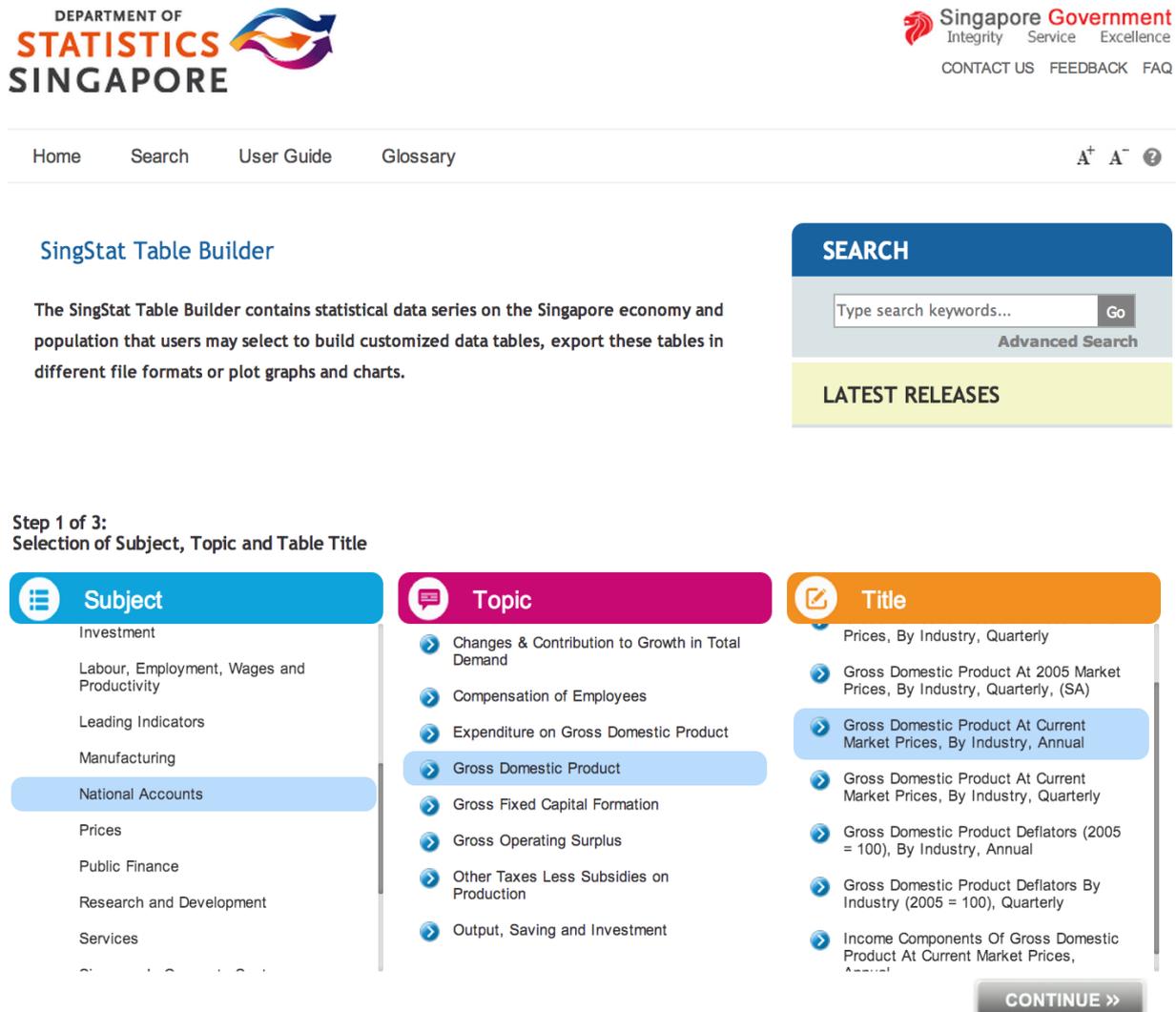
The SingStat Table Builder is a web-based application developed by the Singapore Department of Statistics to meet the needs of data users using statistics on Singapore’s economy and population.

It contains 35 subjects that are broadly categorised under Population and

Economy, covering more than 100 topics and 350 data tables.

Users may choose their required data table through the selection panel on the SingStat Table Builder homepage by clicking on the relevant Subject, Topic and Title, as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 SINGSTAT TABLE BUILDER HOMEPAGE



Once the data table is selected, users may transform the data and customise the data presentation through the various tools available in the SingStat Table Builder to help them in their analyses.

Display tools available in the Table Builder include Partial Display and Pivot, while tools for computation include basic arithmetic functions like Summation and Subtraction as well as a tool to convert data into percentages.

For instance, Figure 3 shows a new variable 'Manufacturing + Construction', created from the sum of two existing variables through engaging the 'Compute > Summation' function.

Users who wish to explore the period-on-period percentage growth of data variables may do so through the function 'Compute > Compute Percentage Change' (Figure 4).

FIGURE 2 SELECTED TABLE ON GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT CURRENT MARKET PRICES, BY INDUSTRY, ANNUAL



Home Search User Guide Glossary A+ A- 🚗 📧 ?

Step 3 of 3:  
Table Customisation and Chart Plotting

Export

Display

Compute

Chart

Reset

**Subject** : National Accounts  
**Topic** : Gross Domestic Product  
**Title** : M013461 - Gross Domestic Product At Current Market Prices, By Industry, Annual

Million Dollars

Variables	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gross Domestic Product At Current Market Prices	268,654.6	269,273.5	276,596.9	318,096	342,512.6	355,281.2	370,064.5
Goods Producing Industries	73,003.9	67,819	71,655.6	81,939.1	83,686.2	87,326.5	85,336.6
Manufacturing	61,102	52,477	53,994.2	64,457.2	65,431.2	67,759.9	64,623.6
Construction	7,872.7	11,257	13,581.5	12,583.2	13,126.5	14,191.4	15,245.2
Utilities	3,918.5	3,977.2	3,970.6	4,780.3	5,006.7	5,256.2	5,348.5
Other Goods Industries	110.7	107.8	109.3	118.4	121.8	119	119.3
Services Producing Industries	172,003.9	176,843.1	180,382	206,611.6	224,679.2	231,078.7	245,526.4
Wholesale & Retail Trade	48,844.4	45,128.3	50,103	57,227.9	65,329.3	61,840.3	63,437.1
Transportation & Storage	24,754.2	25,517	21,567.7	25,515.3	22,396.3	23,713.1	24,321.3
Accommodation & Food Services	5,317	5,912.2	5,464.7	6,617.5	7,758.4	8,219	8,594.5
Information & Communications	8,989.1	9,608.6	10,469.7	11,223.5	12,237.4	13,283.2	13,823.1
Finance & Insurance	30,379.2	30,673.1	31,361.3	33,477.5	36,100.1	37,984.3	42,347.5
Business Services	30,235.3	35,157.3	35,715	41,333.7	46,001.5	50,027.7	54,349.9
Other Services Industries	23,484.7	24,846.6	25,700.6	31,216.2	34,856.2	36,011.1	38,653
Ownership Of Dwellings	8,127	10,379.4	10,617.7	11,612.2	14,260.8	15,830.5	17,142.8
Gross Value Added At Basic Prices	253,134.8	255,041.5	262,655.3	300,162.9	322,626.2	334,235.7	348,005.8
Add: Taxes On Products	15,519.8	14,232	13,941.6	17,933.1	19,886.4	21,045.5	22,058.7

Decimal places: Select

FIGURE 3 CREATING A NEW VARIABLE USING THE SUMMATION FUNCTION

Step 3 of 3:

Table Customisation and Chart Plotting



**Subject** : National Accounts  
**Topic** : Gross Domestic Product  
**Title** : M013461 - Gross Domestic Product At Current Market Prices, By Industry, Annual

Million Dollars

Variables	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gross Domestic Product At Current Market Prices	268,654.6	269,273.5	276,596.9	318,096	342,512.6	355,281.2	370,064.5
Goods Producing Industries	73,003.9	67,819	71,655.6	81,939.1	83,686.2	87,326.5	85,336.6
Manufacturing	61,102	52,477	53,994.2	64,457.2	65,431.2	67,759.9	64,623.6
Construction	7,872.7	11,257	13,581.5	12,583.2	13,126.5	14,191.4	15,245.2
Manufacturing + Construction	68,974.7	63,734	67,575.7	77,040.4	78,557.7	81,951.3	79,868.8

FIGURE 4 CALCULATING YEAR-ON-YEAR PERCENTAGE CHANGE USING THE COMPUTE PERCENTAGE CHANGE FUCTION

Step 3 of 3:

Table Customisation and Chart Plotting



**Subject** : National Accounts  
**Topic** : Gross Domestic Product  
**Title** : M013461 - Gross Domestic Product At Current Market Prices, By Industry, Annual (Year on Year)

Show Original Value

**Year on Year Percentage Change**

%

Variables	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gross Domestic Product At Current Market Prices	0.2	2.7	15.0	7.7	3.7	4.2
Goods Producing Industries	-7.1	5.7	14.4	2.1	4.3	-2.3
Manufacturing	-14.1	2.9	19.4	1.5	3.6	-4.6
Construction	43.0	20.6	-7.4	4.3	8.1	7.4
Utilities	1.5	-0.2	20.4	4.7	5.0	1.8
Other Goods Industries	-2.6	1.4	8.3	2.9	-2.3	0.3
Services Producing Industries	2.8	2.0	14.5	8.7	2.8	6.3
Wholesale & Retail Trade	-7.6	11.0	14.2	14.2	-5.3	2.6
Transportation & Storage	3.1	-15.5	18.3	-12.2	5.9	2.6
Accommodation & Food Services	11.2	-7.6	21.1	17.2	5.9	4.6
Information & Communications	6.9	9.0	7.2	9.0	8.5	4.1
Finance & Insurance	1.0	2.2	6.7	7.8	5.2	11.5
Business Services	16.3	1.6	15.7	11.3	8.8	8.6
Other Services Industries	5.8	3.4	21.5	11.7	3.3	7.3
Ownership Of Dwellings	27.7	2.3	9.4	22.8	11.0	8.3
Gross Value Added At Basic Prices	0.8	3.0	14.3	7.5	3.6	4.1
Add: Taxes On Products	-8.3	-2.0	28.6	10.9	5.8	4.8

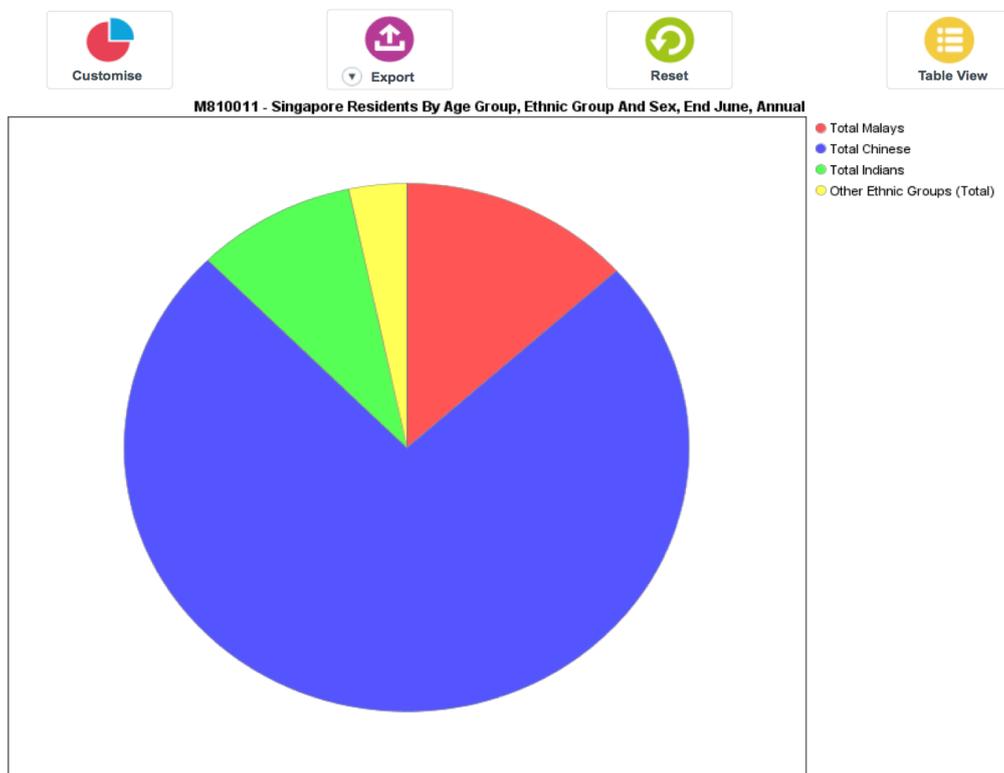
Besides arithmetic functions, the SingStat Table Builder also offers a Chart tool, which allows users to translate selected data into various graphs and charts for data visualisation.

Users may choose from the list of charts available, including bar charts, pie chart and line graph. Figure 5 shows an example of a pie chart of the data on Singapore Residents by Ethnic Group, End June, 2013.

FIGURE 5 PIE CHART ON SINGAPORE RESIDENTS BY ETHNIC GROUP, END JUNE, 2013

**Step 3 of 3:**  
**Table Customisation and Chart Plotting**

**Subject :** Population and Population Structure  
**Topic :** Population  
**Title :** M810011 - Singapore Residents By Age Group, Ethnic Group And Sex, End June, Annual



DATA FOR 1970 AND FROM 1980 ONWARDS REFER TO SINGAPORE RESIDENTS (CITIZENS AND PERMANENT RESIDENTS). DATA PRIOR TO 1980 (EXCEPT 1970) REFER TO TOTAL POPULATION. DATA FOR 1970 AND 1980 REFER TO ALL RESIDENTS PRESENT IN SINGAPORE ON CENSUS DAY. DATA FROM 2000 ONWARDS ARE BASED ON THE REGISTER-BASED APPROACH. DATA FROM 2003 ONWARDS EXCLUDE RESIDENTS WHO ARE OVERSEAS FOR A CONTINUOUS PERIOD OF 12 MONTHS OR LONGER AS AT THE REFERENCE PERIOD.

TOTAL INDIANS - FROM 1970, INDIANS INCLUDE SRI LANKANS (CEYLONESE) WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY CLASSIFIED UNDER 'OTHERS'.

Lastly, when the customisation of the data table or chart is complete, users may save the results through the Export function for offline usage.

Discover data patterns and trends through the free-play of the SingStat Table Builder.

Visit [www.singstat.gov.sg/tablebuilder](http://www.singstat.gov.sg/tablebuilder) today!



# 2013 in Brief



## Singapore's population

... reached 5.40 million in end-June 2013.



## Singapore's economy

... grew 4.1 per cent.



## Mean years of schooling

... was 11.0 years for male resident non-students aged 25 years and over and 10.0 years for female resident non-students aged 25 years and over.



## Home ownership rate

... was 90.5 per cent.



## Per capita gross national income

... increased to S\$66,928.



## Gross national saving

... was S\$165.2 billion.



## Official foreign reserves

... increased to S\$344.7 billion.



## Labour force participation rate

... was 75.8 per cent among males and 58.1 per cent among females.



## Resident unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)

... was 2.9 per cent.



## Inflation rate

... declined to 2.4 per cent.



## Value added for the manufacturing sector

... amounted to S\$57.7 billion.



## Investment commitments in manufacturing and services

... reached S\$12.1 billion in fixed asset investments.



## Total trade

... was S\$980.2 billion.



## International visitor arrivals

... reached 15,466 thousand.



## Sea cargo handled

... reached 561 million tonnes.



## Air cargo handled

... was 1,850 thousand tonnes.



## Mobile phone subscriptions

... reached 1,560 per 1,000 population.



## Residential wired broadband household penetration rate

... was 106.0 per cent.



## Wireless broadband population penetration rate

... was 171.5 per cent.



## Crime rate

... declined to 549 per 100,000 population.

## Overseas Visitors

The Singapore Department of Statistics welcomed visitors from Oman and Taiwan over the last six months. The visits provided an excellent platform for professional exchanges and sharing.

Topics discussed included the compilation of Singapore's gross domestic product, balance of payments and input-output tables, as well as the conduct of household surveys.

### Oman

*Oman National Center for Statistics and Information*

- H.E. Dr Khalifa Abdullah Hamed Al Barwani  
Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Sulaiman Abdulrahim Alzadjali  
Director General  
Information and Publication Center
- Mr Hassan Alawi Ahmed Alghazali  
Director General  
General Directorate of National Spatial  
Data Infrastructure

### Taiwan

*Taipei City Government Department of Budget, Accounting and Statistics*

- Mr Chang Chy-Chung  
Deputy Commissioner (Statistics)
- Ms Lin En-Ju  
Sub-Division Chief
- Ms Wu Wen-Hui  
Assistant

*Taipei City Police Department*

- Ms Huang Su-Jung  
Director (Statistics Office)

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It also serves as a vehicle to inform readers of the latest statistical activities in the Singapore statistical service.

Contributions and comments from readers are welcomed.

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