

# Singapore Government

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Archives & Oral History Department

Singapore

17-6/81/06/26

JUL 1981

## CENSUS OF POPULATION, 1980 - RELEASE NO. 5

Acc No.

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The results of the Census of Population conducted in June 1980 are scheduled for periodic publication by different topics as and when such data become available. A total of nine periodic releases are planned. The first four releases, on general statistics of the population, demographic characteristics, literacy and education, and economic characteristics of the population were published as Release No. 1 to No. 4 between February and May 1981. This Release No. 5 publishes data on geographic distribution of population, houses and households by census division and census area. Census areas are combinations of contiguous census divisions delineated according to their relative distance and position from the city centre.

In 1980, about 900,000 persons or 37 per cent of the population were accommodated in the three census areas in the City Periphery. Census areas in the Suburb supported some 720,000 persons or 30 per cent while the Outlying Area accounted for 644,000 or 27 per cent. The remaining 150,000 persons or 6 per cent resided in the Central City Area.

Between 1970 and 1980, substantial numbers moved away from the congested Central City Area and Suburb - East to the Outlying Area and the other two census areas in the Suburb. It was the result of normal population growth and the rapid physical and economic development, urban redevelopment and resettlement. The population redistribution was enhanced by the building of large public housing estates further away from the city centre in the nineteen-seventies instead of confining them mostly in the City Periphery as in the sixties. Census areas registering substantial gain in population are Outlying Area - East, where large HDB estates of Chai Chee and Bedok New Town are located,

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Suburb - West where Clementi and Ayer Rajah estates in Bukit Timah Division stand and Suburb - North which contains Ang Mo Kio New Town - the largest HDB estate.

Singapore witnessed a rise in population density over the decade from 3,538 to 3,907 persons per sq km. However, the redistribution of population helped ease the congestion in the Central City Area where the density dropped from about 30,000 to 17,700 persons per sq km. The most congested census areas in 1980 were City Periphery - Northeast and City Periphery - West with densities of 23,400 and 22,700 persons per sq km respectively. Generally, areas with the largest proportion of HDB flats had the highest densities. Due to relatively large land area and the presence of low-rise houses, population densities were much lower in the Suburb and the Outlying Area with 5,690 and 1,474 persons per sq km respectively.

More than two-thirds of the Singapore's population were accommodated in public flats in 1980. Residents in public flats, mainly HDB flats, comprised 87.4 per cent of the population in the City Periphery where about half of the total number of public flats are located. Moderately high proportion of 58.3 per cent of the population in the Suburb and 53.7 per cent of those in the Outlying Area also resided in public flats reflecting the gradual spreading of public housing throughout the island.

Residents of bungalows and terrace houses accounted for 9.2 per cent and those of private flats 2.7 per cent of the population. Bungalows and terrace houses were mostly in the Suburb where they provided accommodation for about one-fifth of the population, ranging from 17.9 per cent in Suburb - West to 25.4 per cent in Suburb - East. City Periphery - North is the census area with the highest concentration of private flat residents who comprised 9.1 per cent of the total population in this census area. It has over 40 per cent of all private flats, mostly situated in Cairnhill and River Valley Divisions. Other census areas with substantial number of private flat residents were Suburb - East mainly in Katong and Suburb - West mainly in Pasir Panjang and Tanglin.

The rapid urban redevelopment in the seventies had drastically reduced the number of residents of shophouses. They accounted for

only 3.9 per cent of the total population in 1980 and were mainly concentrated in the Central City Area. About one-third of the population in the Central City Area lived in shophouses.

With the expansion of the housing programme in the seventies, many attap and zinc-roofed houses were replaced by HDB flats and other better types of housing. Only 15.1 per cent of the population resided in attap and zinc-roofed houses in 1980 compared with 38.5 per cent in 1970. Most of such residents were in the Outlying Area and the Suburb. Census areas with relatively high proportion of attap and zinc-roofed house residents were all in the Outlying Area, ranging from 26.5 per cent in Outlying Area - East to 49.7 per cent in Outlying Area - North. With improved public and private housing and continued economic development, attap and zinc-roofed house residents will further decline in number.

Of the four categories of census areas, the Central City Area stood out as distinctly different from the other areas. It was the area where the early migrants settled. Many of them were males who came to Singapore without their families. It was characterised by a relatively older population, less balanced sex ratio of 1,158 males per thousand females, higher proportion of population born outside Singapore, higher proportion of one-person households and small average household size.

The various census areas displayed different distributions of private households by type even though one-family nucleus households predominated in each of the areas. Such differences stemmed from the special historical character of the Central City Area, the differential economic and housing development and the resulting shift of population away from the city. The Central City Area had a disproportionately larger concentration of one-person and other no-family nucleus households. Most of the one-person households lived in shophouses in Kreta Ayer and Telok Ayer Census Divisions.

The proportion of one-person households was below 10 per cent in census areas outside Central City Area. All except Outlying Area - West had less than 4 per cent of other households without any family nucleus. The rather high proportion of 7.1 per cent of no-family nucleus households in Outlying Area - West reflected the large number

of non-resident workers employed by factories in Jurong Industrial Estate who shared accommodation and food arrangement with other fellow workers.

Suburb - East, Outlying Area - East and Outlying Area - North had proportionately more multi-family nucleus households reflecting their relatively more traditional population with the tendency to preserve the extended family system.

More detailed analyses on the geographic distribution of persons and households as well as statistical tables, charts and maps are presented in Release No. 5. Copies of this release as well as those published earlier can be purchased at the Singapore National Printers (Pte) Ltd, Publication Sales Division, Ground Floor, Fullerton Building, Singapore 0104. The price for Release No. 1, 2 and 3 is S\$4.00 per copy and that for Release No. 4 and 5 is S\$8.00 per copy.

DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS

26 JUNE 1981