

Pilot survey for 2021 Population Census commences today

The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) commenced a pilot survey today (June 23) until August 4 to test the questionnaire design and operational arrangements for the 2021 Population Census to be conducted in mid-2021.

A spokesman for the C&SD said, "The population census is a large-scale and important statistical exercise. The pilot survey aims to test various aspects of the operation in advance so that any necessary enhancements can be introduced in good time before the census operation in 2021."

To fit in with the modern lifestyle of Hong Kong people, the pilot survey adopts a multi-modal data collection approach. Households of the selected quarters may provide the requested information by completing an online questionnaire (www.census2021.gov.hk) or calling the Census Service Centre hotline at 182021 for a telephone interview. Alternatively, households who have received a paper questionnaire may return the completed questionnaire by post.

In light of the evolving situation of COVID-19, the spokesman appealed to households to participate in the pilot survey by means of online questionnaires, telephone interviews or paper questionnaires in order to reduce face-to-face contact. The spokesman added, "Completing the online questionnaire is convenient and secure. It enables households to submit the requested information anytime and anywhere through the dedicated and secured website using their computers or mobile devices."

The pilot survey covers some 40 000 quarters in four selected District Council districts, namely Wan Chai, Sham Shui Po, Kwai Tsing and Sha Tin. All households and people staying in the selected quarters will be enumerated. About nine-tenths of the sampled quarters are subject to simple enumeration to provide basic demographic information through a "Short Form" questionnaire, while the remaining one-tenth are invited to complete a "Long Form" questionnaire about detailed socio-economic characteristics. Letters informing households in these sampled quarters are being sent out starting today.

From July 18 to August 4, census officers of the C&SD will visit households who have not completed the survey to collect the requested information by mobile tablets. Each census officer will carry a staff identity card and a certificate issued by the C&SD for conducting the survey. Households are reminded to check carefully the identity of census officers before allowing them to enter their premises for interview. In case of doubt, households may call the Census Service Centre hotline at 182021.

The spokesman reiterated that information collected in the pilot survey

regarding individuals and households will be kept in strict confidence and will not be released to any unauthorised parties, including government departments. All questionnaires will be destroyed within 12 months after the survey has been completed.

It is an established practice for Hong Kong to conduct a population census every 10 years. The next population census will be conducted in 2021. The aim is to obtain up-to-date benchmark information on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Hong Kong population and its geographical distribution. Such information is vital to the Government for planning and policy formulation, and to the private sector and academia for business and research purposes.

For more details about the Pilot Survey for the 2021 Population Census, please visit www.census2021.gov.hk.