

Public consultation on Legislative Council General Election geographical constituency boundaries and names starts today

The following is issued on behalf of the Electoral Affairs Commission:

The Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) today (May 8) released for public consultation its provisional recommendations on the boundaries and names of geographical constituencies for the 2020 Legislative Council (LegCo) General Election. The public consultation period will last for 30 days until June 6.

The Commission's Chairman, Mr Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, said at a press conference today, "The 2020 LegCo General Election will be held in the third quarter of next year. The Commission recommends adopting the existing boundaries of the five geographical constituencies and allocating the 35 seats of LegCo according to the projected population in each of the constituencies.

"The Commission proposes to allocate six seats each for Hong Kong Island and Kowloon West, five seats for Kowloon East, and nine seats each for New Territories West and New Territories East, the same as for the 2016 LegCo General Election."

The provisional recommendations were drawn up by the EAC in accordance with the provisions of the Legislative Council Ordinance and the criteria under the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance, as well as a set of established working principles.

According to the Legislative Council Ordinance, the number of geographical constituencies for the 2020 LegCo General Election is five. It also stipulates that a total of 35 Members are to be returned for the five geographical constituencies and the number of Members to be returned for each geographical constituency is to be a number which is not less than five nor greater than nine.

According to the population projections made by an inter-departmental Ad Hoc Subgroup set up in the Planning Department, Hong Kong will have a total population of 7 558 100 on June 30, 2020. Accordingly, on average, in terms of population, each geographical constituency seat will correspond to 215 946 people (known as the "population quota").

The Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance provides that the population in each geographical constituency should not exceed or fall short by more than 15 per cent of the "resulting number", which is obtained by multiplying the "population quota" with the number of seats in that geographical

constituency.

Having strictly adhered to the statutory requirement on the number of Members to be returned for each geographical constituency, the calculation result was that the percentage deviations of the populations from the resulting number for the existing five geographical constituencies are all within the statutory permissible range. Therefore, adjustment to their existing boundaries will not be necessary in principle.

Mr Justice Fung said, "Notwithstanding that, the Commission has also examined other options for adjusting the existing geographical constituency boundaries. Some options will yield a smaller percentage deviation of population from the resulting number for individual geographical constituencies than that adopting the existing five geographical constituency boundaries. However, these options will either split up Lantau Island into different geographical constituencies or involve the transfer of an administrative district in the New Territories to the Hong Kong Island geographical constituency or geographical constituency in Kowloon, deviating from the EAC's working principle of treating Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories separately as far as possible having regard to the statutory criteria under the Electoral Affairs Commission Ordinance (see attachment).

"From the experience in past delineation exercises, especially the delineation of constituencies for the 2019 District Council Ordinary Election, the public has prevalently advocated maintenance of the status quo of District Council constituency boundaries as far as possible. The EAC also notes that the existing geographical constituency boundaries have been adopted since the first term of LegCo in 1998. The EAC considers that adjusting the existing boundaries simply for the sake of reducing the percentage deviations of the population among the five geographical constituencies where the population does fall within the statutory permissible range does not accord with the EAC's working principle, and would alter the accustomed geographical constituency boundaries for members of the public. Having carefully weighed the pros and cons, the EAC proposes the adoption of the boundaries of the existing five geographical constituencies."

Members of the public are welcome to send in written representations on the provisional recommendations to the Commission's Secretariat by post at 10/F, Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Submissions by fax (2511 1682) or email (eaceng@eac.hk) are also welcome. All representations must reach the Commission by June 6. Late representations will not be considered.

To gather views on the provisional recommendations, the Commission will hold a public forum from 7pm to 9pm on May 16 (Thursday) at Lai Chi Kok Community Hall, 863 Lai Chi Kok Road, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon.

Maps showing the proposed boundaries and names of geographical constituencies can be viewed from the Commission's website (www.eac.hk), or

inspected at the Home Affairs Enquiry Centres of all district offices, the Registration and Electoral Office, Philatelic Offices of Hongkong Post, management offices of public housing estates, and major and district public libraries.

For enquiries, please call 2827 1269.