

INTRODUCTION

The General Household Survey (GHS) provides comprehensive data on Singapore's population and households in between the population censuses which are conducted once in ten years. It covers a wide range of topics to provide information on the profile of population and households in Singapore. 2015 marks the third in the series of mid-decade GHS, which was first conducted in 1995.

Concept and Coverage

Similar to the Census of Population 2010, the GHS 2015 adopted the de jure concept for Singapore's population estimates based on a person's place of usual residence. Under the de jure concept of "usual residence", Singapore residents (citizens and permanent residents) with valid local addresses and who were not away from Singapore for a continuous period of 12 months or longer were included in the total population count. Non-residents comprising foreigners who were working, studying or living in Singapore but not granted permanent residence were also included in the total population. The transient population, such as tourists and short-term visitors, was excluded.

Register-Based Approach

In the previous GHS 2005, the Singapore Department of Statistics (DOS) adopted a register-based approach, supplemented with a large-scale sample survey covering some 90,000 dwelling units.

For GHS 2015, DOS continued to adopt the register-based approach where basic population statistics were compiled using administrative records from multiple sources. The merged administrative records provide the basic population count and characteristics such as age, sex, ethnic group, type of dwelling and geographic distribution in Singapore. Basic data on population count and profile from the register-based GHS were first released in the Population Trends 2015 report published in September 2015.

Sample Survey

Additional information not available from administrative sources were collected from a sample survey. These included marital status and fertility, religion, education and literacy, home language, mode of transport, elderly profile, as well as housing and household characteristics.

The sample survey for the GHS 2015 was conducted as part of the 2015 Comprehensive Household Survey (CHS), which also incorporated the Comprehensive Labour Force Survey (CLFS) conducted annually by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM). This approach of having one CHS to provide information for the GHS and the CLFS reduced the overall response burden and cost of having separate sample surveys for the GHS and the CLFS.

The field operation of CHS 2015 was carried out by MOM from May to July 2015. Of the 33,000 housing units selected in the initial sample, 1,196 households were excluded from the survey as they were unoccupied, non-residential or demolished. A total of 27,804 households responded to the survey, achieving an overall response rate of 87.4 per cent.