

SPECIAL REVIEW

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE 1981 POPULATION CENSUS

This article presents the broad findings of the 1981 Population Census.

SPECIAL REVIEW

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE 1981 POPULATION CENSUS

INTRODUCTION

A population census is a primary source of basic data on the size, distribution and composition of population. Post-war, two full censuses were held in Hong Kong in 1961 and 1971, and two sample censuses in 1966 and 1976. To obtain up-to-date information on major characteristics of the population, a full census was again carried out in March 1981.

A new feature of the 1981 Census as against previous full-scale censuses was that 100 per cent enumeration was not used for all questions. Instead, a two-phase operation was employed. All households were asked simple questions on age, sex and relationship to head of household for every member. More detailed questions on the social, economic and demographic characteristics of the population were only asked of marine households and 20 per cent of land households.

This two-phase procedure, besides making the census cheaper, also meant that it could be more quickly processed. This article gives the preliminary results of the 1981 Census; comparison of its findings with those of the 1971 Census and the 1976 By-Census is made where this is possible.

BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Size and growth of population

The 1981 Census enumerated a total resident population as at 9 March of 4 986 560. The figure excludes transients and Vietnamese refugees (which together amount to 34 506) and 123 252 residents who were away from Hong Kong on the reference date.

TABLE 1 TOTAL POPULATION FROM CENSUSES SINCE 1961

Year	Total population (excluding transients etc.)	Average annual growth
		%
1961	3 129 648	
1971	3 936 630	2.3
1976	4 402 990	2.1
1981	4 986 560	2.8

Table 1 shows the enumerated resident population from censuses since 1961. The figure of 4 986 560 represents an increase of 1.05 million people or 26.7% over the 1971 Census count, giving an average annual growth rate of 2.4%. During the years 1978–80, there was large-scale immigration from China. The average annual growth rate over the period 1976–81 was therefore higher than the rate over the period 1971–76, 2.8% as compared with 2.1%. It is worth noting that the rate of natural increase dropped steadily from 15 per thousand in 1971 to 12 per thousand in 1980.

Population distribution

Table 2 compares the geographical distribution of the population in 1971, 1976 and 1981. Over the past ten years, there has been a redistribution of the population from the main old urban areas (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Kowloon) to the new towns in the New Territories. The largest concentration of people was still in New Kowloon, but the proportion in the New Territories rose markedly from 17.2% in 1971 to 26.1% in 1981. There was a significant gain of population in the new towns in Tsuen Wan (+147 000), Sha Tin (+70 000) and Tuen Mun (+56 000) between 1976 and 1981.

The population in Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Kowloon grew at an average annual rate of 1.5% over the period 1976–81, as against the overall rate of 2.8% for the same period. As a result of people moving out of the older urban areas, there was a loss of population in Kowloon City and Wong Tai Sin (–47 000), Kwun Tong (–17 000) and Cheung Sha Wan (–7 000). The decline was particularly remarkable in view of the large increase in the overall population during this period.

The marine population continued to decrease during the past ten years. Its number in 1981 was less than two-thirds of that in 1971. The average rate of decrease was 4.6% per annum.

TABLE 2 DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY CENSUS AREA 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Census area	1971	Enumerated population 1976	1981	1971	% 1976	1981
Hong Kong Island	996 183	1 026 870	1 183 621	25.3	23.3	23.7
Kowloon	716 272	749 600	799 123	18.2	17.0	16.0
New Kowloon	1 468 699	1 617 260	1 651 064	37.3	36.8	33.2
New Territories	675 582	950 060	1 303 005	17.2	21.6	26.1
Marine	79 894	59 200	49 747	2.0	1.3	1.0

Population density

With the development of land by reclamation, the area of Hong Kong increased slightly from 1 027 square kilometers in 1971 to 1 037 square kilometers in 1981 (an increase of 1%). However, the population in this period rose by 27%; as a result, the overall density of population increased from 3 754 people per square kilometer in 1971 to 4 760 in 1981.

There were wide variations in density between individual areas. The density for the main urban areas of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, New Kowloon and Tsuen Wan was 28 479 people per square kilometer; but for the New Territories it was 792 per square kilometer.

In 1981, 30.8% of the population were found in tertiary planning units¹ with a density per square kilometer of over 100 000. According to the findings, the most densely populated districts, in order of their population density, are Sham Shui Po (165 445 people per square kilometer), Mong Kok (161 041) and Hung Hom (119 837).

Age and sex structure

The sex composition of the population was found to be 1 093 males per 1 000 females, as compared with 1 033 for 1971 and 1 046 for 1976. The significant increase in the proportion of males over females during the period 1976–81 is a result of the large influx of illegal immigrants, who were predominantly young and male.

TABLE 3 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY AGE, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Age group	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
Under 15	35.8	30.1	24.8
15–64	59.7	64.4	68.6
65 and over	4.5	5.5	6.6
Dependency ratio (per 1 000) ²	674	553	457
Median age	21.7	23.9	26.0

Table 3 shows the percentage distribution of the population by age. With the large number of people born in the late 1950s now reaching adulthood, and a steady decline in fertility over the past decade, Hong Kong's population has become older. Its median age increased significantly from 21.7 in 1971 to 26.0 in 1981. Compared with 1971, there was a smaller proportion of the population aged below 15 (24.8%), and a larger proportion aged 65 and over (6.6%). As a result of these changes, the proportion of the population of working age (those aged 15 to 64) has increased from 59.7% to 68.6%, so that there is a greater potentially productive population available to support children or those who have retired. The dependency ratio dropped from 674 per thousand in 1971 to 457 per thousand in 1981.

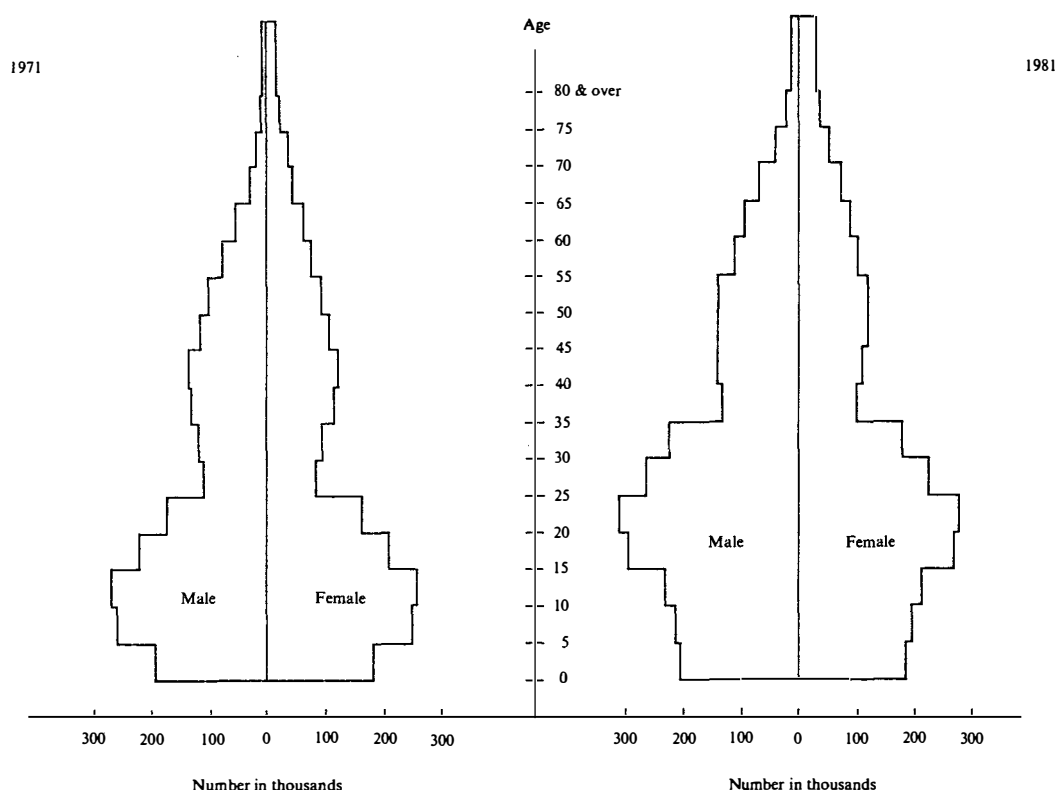
Chart 1 compares the 1971 and 1981 population pyramids. As can be seen, the main features of the 1981 pyramid were:

- (a) a marked indentation in the age group 35–39 corresponding to the cohorts of population born in the war years;
- (b) a noticeable bulge in the age group 15–24 due to high fertility in the late 1950s and early 1960s;
- (c) an indentation at the bottom of the pyramid (age group 0–14) due to declining fertility in the past 15 years or so.

¹ A geographical division for town planning purpose. There are in total 270 such tertiary planning units.

² The ratio of the number of people below age 15 and people aged 65 and over to those in the 15 to 64 age group.

CHART 1 POPULATION PYRAMIDS, 1971 AND 1981



Place of birth and place of origin

The proportion of the population born in Hong Kong only increased from 56% to 57% during the past ten years. The increase would have been more significant had there not been the large influx of immigrants in the late 1970s. About two-fifths of the population were born in China, and 3.2% were born elsewhere.

Table 4 shows the percentage distribution of the population by place of origin as opposed to place of birth. As in 1971, some 98% of the population can be described as Chinese on the basis of place of origin. Most of these people originated from Guangdong Province in China. Of the non-Chinese population, 28 637 were from countries in South East Asia, 25 703 from the United Kingdom, 11 867 from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka, 9 715 from the United States, Australia and New Zealand and 6 740 from Japan.

TABLE 4 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY PLACE OF ORIGIN, 1971 AND 1981

Place of origin	1971	1981
	%	%
Hong Kong	4.7	2.5
Guangzhou, Macao and adjacent places	52.7	49.3
Siyi	17.4	16.3
Chaozhou	9.9	11.4
Elsewhere in Guangdong Province	6.4	9.4
Elsewhere in China	7.2	9.1
Other countries	1.7	2.0

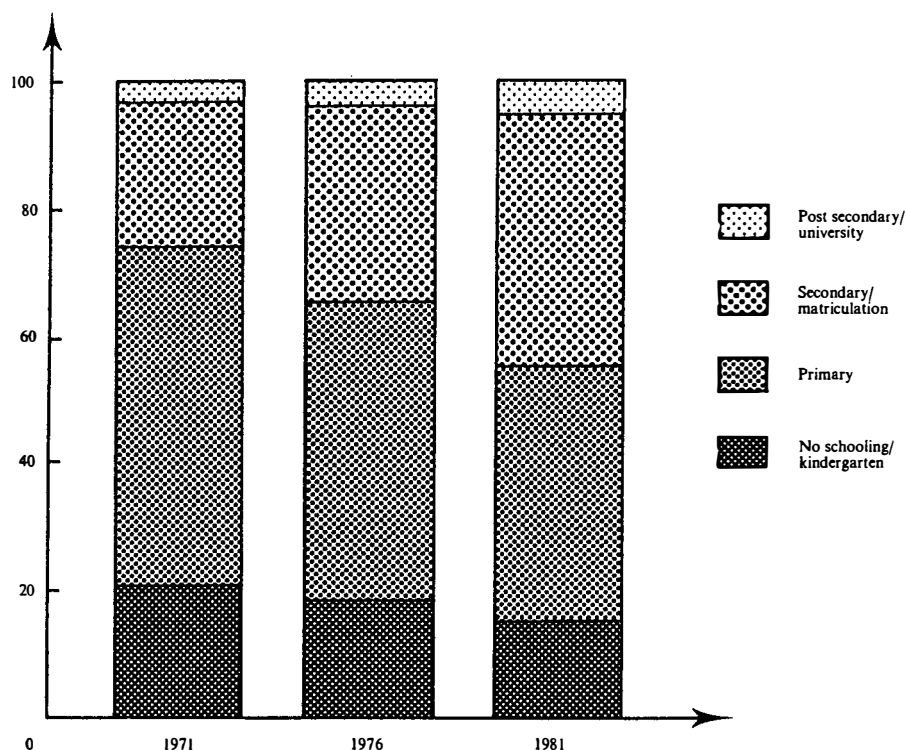
EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Educational attainment

The educational attainment of the population has improved markedly during the past decade. Table 5 and Chart 2 show the percentage distribution of the population aged 5 and over by educational attainment. The proportion of the population with no schooling or only primary education dropped from 74% in 1971 to 55.3% in 1981, while the proportion with secondary education or above increased from 26.0% to 44.7% during the same period.

TABLE 5 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AGED 5 AND OVER BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Educational attainment	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
No schooling/kindergarten	21.0	18.5	15.5
Primary	53.0	47.0	39.8
Secondary/matriculation	22.9	30.8	39.2
Post-secondary/university	3.1	3.7	5.5

CHART 2 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 1971, 1976 AND 1981**Professional/technical/vocational education**

Over a quarter of a million people, or 6.9% of the population aged 15 and over, had undertaken or were undertaking study in post-secondary colleges and universities, the Polytechnic, Technical Institutes, Colleges of Education, the school of Nursing, and the Technical Teachers' College. Almost three-quarters (186 385) of them had taken vocational courses, and the majority of these were in the fields of business studies, engineering, education, and medical and health related studies.

TABLE 6 POPULATION WITH PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BY FIELD, 1981

Field of education	Persons	%
Arts and social science	55 619	21.6
Pure sciences	18 564	7.2
Education	29 305	11.4
Business, commercial and computer studies	49 893	19.3
Medical and health related studies	23 400	9.1
Architecture and construction engineering	21 521	8.3
Mechanical, electrical, electronic and marine engineering	36 396	14.1
Textile, design and other industrial technology	8 610	3.3
Transport and other vocational studies (including social work and law)	14 588	5.7
Total	257 896	100.0

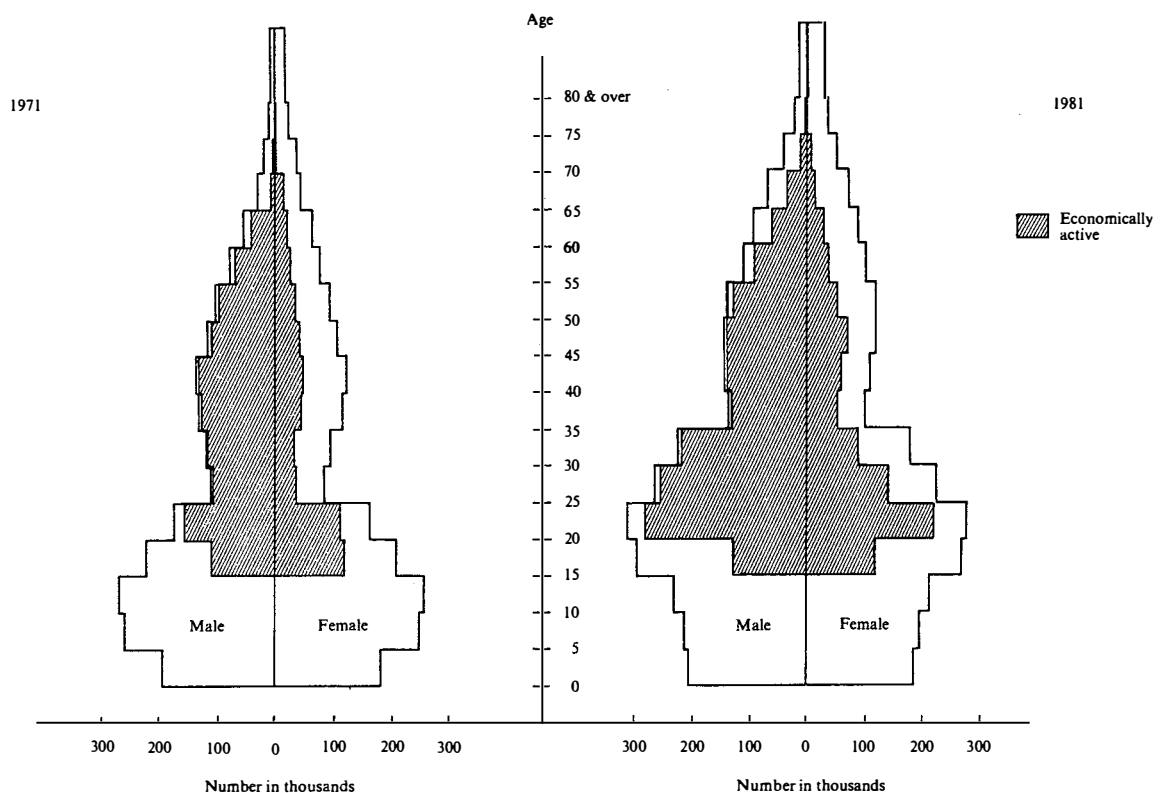
SPECIAL REVIEW

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Labour force

The total economically active population (or the labour force) aged 15 and over was 1 618 982 in 1971 and 2 503 804 in 1981. Thus the size of the labour force grew at an average annual rate of 4.5% during the period 1971–81. On the other hand, the population aged 15 and over increased at a lower rate of 4.0%. The higher rate of increase of the labour force was indicative of changes both in the age-sex structure of the population and in the levels of labour participation over the period.

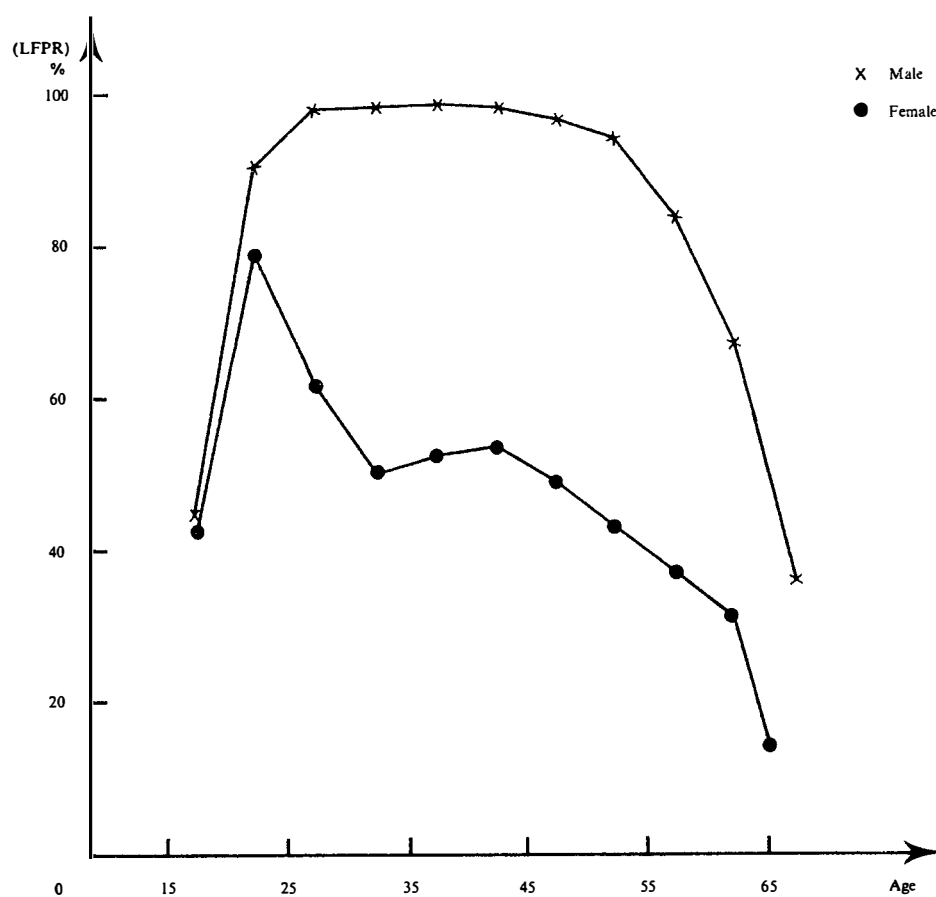
CHART 3 AGE-SEX PYRAMIDS OF POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE, 1971 AND 1981



As shown in Chart 3, there was a significantly larger proportion of the population in the prime working age group 20–34 in 1981 than in 1971. Thus there were proportionately more young people in the labour force. The median age of the labour force was 31, compared with 35 ten years ago. There was also a larger proportion of females in the labour force in 1981 than in 1971 – a decline in the sex ratio by about a tenth from 2 028 to 1 828 males per 1 000 females.

Chart 4 shows the age-sex-specific labour force participation rates of the population aged 15 and over. As can be seen, labour participation differed significantly at each age for both males and females. For males, the labour force participation rate increased from a low level of 45.2% in the age group 15–19 to a maximum of over 98% in the age group 35–44 and remained at that level till about the age of 50, thereafter decreasing rapidly with age. For females, the highest participation rate, 79.7%, was in the age group 20–24. In general, the labour force participation rate for males was substantially higher than that for females at all ages. The overall labour force participation rates for males and females in March 1981 were 82.5% and 49.5% respectively.

CHART 4 AGE-SPECIFIC LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES (LFPR) BY SEX, 1981



Of the total labour force in March 1981, 86.5% were employees (including outworkers), 5.9% were self-employed and 3.6% were employers. Unemployment was 4.0%. The most significant change in the activity status of the labour force over the past decade was a decline in the proportion of the self-employed (from 8.0% to 5.9%); the proportion of employees rose slightly, by 1.5% points.

Occupation and industry

Table 7 shows the percentage distribution of the working population by occupation. Over the past decade, there was a significant increase in the proportion of professional, technical and clerical workers. The proportion of service workers showed a small increase, and sales workers a small decrease, over the period 1976–81. Half of the working population were production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers, which is a slightly lower proportion than in 1971.

TABLE 7 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING POPULATION BY OCCUPATION, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Occupation	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
Professional, technical and related workers	5.2	5.5	6.0
Administrative and managerial workers	2.4	2.2	2.7
Clerical and related workers	8.3	9.7	12.2
Sales workers	10.6	11.5	10.3
Services workers	14.8	14.9	15.6
Agricultural workers and fisherfolk	3.8	2.7	2.1
Production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers	52.3	52.1	50.4
Armed forces and unclassifiable	2.6	1.4	0.7

SPECIAL REVIEW

Table 8 shows the percentage distribution of the working population by industry. The major trends over the 10-year period have been a significant decrease in the proportion of the working population in the manufacturing sector and an overall increase in respect of construction, wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, and financing and business service.

TABLE 8 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING POPULATION BY INDUSTRY, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Industry	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
Manufacturing	47.0	44.8	41.2
Agriculture and fishing	3.9	2.6	2.0
Construction	5.4	5.6	7.7
Wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels	16.2	19.5	19.2
Transport, storage and communication	7.4	7.4	7.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and business services	2.7	3.4	4.8
Services	15.0	15.4	15.6
Others and unclassifiable	2.4	1.3	2.0

Income from employment

Table 9 shows the percentage distribution of the working population by income from main employment. The overall median income from main employment was \$1,516, compared with \$738 five years ago. Discounting the increase in consumer prices between 1976 and 1981, real earnings have increased by 37%, at an average annual rate of 7.1%.

TABLE 9 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING POPULATION (EXCLUDING UNPAID WORKERS) BY MONTHLY INCOME FROM MAIN EMPLOYMENT, 1976 AND 1981

Income from main employment (HK\$)	1976	1981
	%	%
Under \$1,000	71.8	18.7
\$1,000 – \$1,999	21.0	49.6
\$2,000 – \$2,999	3.8	18.2
\$3,000 – \$4,999	3.4	9.2
\$5,000 and over		4.3
Median monthly income	\$738	\$1,516

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Number of households

In 1981, a total of 1 244 738 domestic households were enumerated. This figure represents an increase of 220 058 households or 21.5% over 1976, giving an average annual growth rate of 4.3%. The number of households grew at a lower rate of 3.3% during the period 1971–76.

Household size

Table 10 shows the percentage distribution of domestic households by household size. The general trend over the past ten years has been for the proportion of households with less than 6 persons to increase and for the proportion of those with 6 or more persons to decrease. As a result of these changes, the average household size has decreased steadily from 4.5 to 3.9.

TABLE 10 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Household size	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
1	14.7	14.7	15.2
2 – 3	25.0	27.6	30.8
4 – 5	25.4	28.6	31.5
6 – 7	20.8	19.5	16.1
8 – 9	10.2	7.3	4.8
10 and over	3.9	2.3	1.6
Average household size	4.5	4.2	3.9

Household composition

Table 11 shows the percentage distribution of domestic households by household composition. Simple nuclear families – a couple with or without unmarried children or a single parent with unmarried children – were most common, comprising 54.4% of all domestic households, which is a lower proportion than in 1976. Vertically extended nuclear families – nuclear families living with a single parent of one of the spouses – have become more prevalent since 1976. Their proportion increased from 9.4% to 13.6% during this period.

TABLE 11 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, 1976 AND 1981

Household composition	1976	1981
	%	%
One person	14.8	15.2
One unextended nuclear family	60.2	54.4
One vertically extended nuclear family	9.4	13.6
One horizontally extended nuclear family	2.0	2.4
Two or more nuclear families	6.0	6.3
Non-family nuclear households	7.6	8.1

Household income

Table 12 shows the percentage distribution of domestic households by household income. The overall median monthly household income increased 3.2 times during the past ten years. Discounting the increase in consumer prices between 1971 and 1981, real household income has increased by 84.7%, at an average annual rate of 6.3%; and between 1976 and 1981, by 38.6%, at an average annual rate of 7.4%.

TABLE 12 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Household income (HK\$)	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
Under \$1,000	70.3	29.1	9.5
\$ 1,000 – \$1,999	21.5	40.5	19.0
\$ 2,000 – \$2,999	8.2	16.2	22.3
\$ 3,000 – \$4,999		14.2	26.2
\$ 5,000 – \$6,999			11.2
\$ 7,000 – \$9,999			6.4
\$10,000 and over			5.4
Median monthly household income	\$708	\$1,425	\$2,955
(at 1971 prices)	\$708	\$944	\$1,308

SPECIAL REVIEW

Some 28.5% of domestic households were receiving incomes under \$2,000 a month, and less than a quarter were receiving incomes over \$5,000. Nearly half of all domestic households fell within the medium income bracket of \$2,000–\$5,000.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Type of housing and accommodation

Table 13 shows the percentage distribution of the population by type of housing. A greater proportion of the population were in public and aided housing in 1981 than in 1971, 38.5% as against 37.8%. The increase, however, was less significant than it would have been without the large influx of immigrants from 1978 to 1980; this was evidenced by a 2.8% points increase over the period 1971–76 when the number of immigrants was relatively small. Over half of the population were in private housing, which is a slightly lower proportion than in 1971. For temporary housing, the proportion has remained effectively unchanged during the past ten years.

TABLE 13 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LAND-BASED POPULATION BY TYPE OF HOUSING 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Type of housing	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
Public and aided	37.8	40.6	38.5
Housing Authority Home Ownership estates	—	—	0.6
Private	53.7†	48.8	51.4
Institutions		1.1	0.9
Temporary		9.5‡	8.6

Table 14 shows the percentage distribution of domestic households by type of living quarter and accommodation. Nearly three-quarters of all domestic households in public and aided housing were accommodated in self-contained Housing Authority rental blocks or Housing Society rental blocks. Of those households in private housing, half were occupying a flat in self-contained private blocks, a house or a modern village house; and one-third were living in rooms/cubicles. Of the 114 663 domestic households in temporary housing, one-fifth were accommodated in Housing Authority temporary huts; less than one-tenth were found in roof-top structures.

TABLE 14 NUMBER OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE OF LIVING QUARTER AND ACCOMMODATION, 1981

Type of living quarter and accommodation	No. of households	%
Public and aided		
Housing Authority rental blocks		
Self-contained	282 783	22.8
Non-self-contained	104 310	8.4
Housing Society rental blocks	25 972	2.1
Housing Authority Home Ownership estates	7 176	0.6
Private		
Private housing blocks		
Self-contained	580 004	46.8
whole house/flat	(321 890)	(26.0)
room/cubicle	(229 310)	(18.5)
bedspace, cockloft, etc.	(28 804)	(2.3)
Non-self-contained	6 834	0.6
Modern houses/modern village houses	26 328	2.1
Simple stone structures	57 775	4.7
Other permanent housing	29 485	2.4
Institutions	2 313	0.2
Temporary		
Roof-top structures	9 552	0.8
Other private temporary housing	78 595	6.4
Housing Authority cottages	4 225	0.3
Housing Authority temporary huts	22 291	1.8
Total	1 237 643	100.0

† Including resettlement cottages.

‡ Including simple stone structures in Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Kowloon.

Degree of sharing

A smaller proportion of domestic households shared a living quarter with others in 1981 than in 1971, 24.6% as against 34.3%. Generally, the highest degree of sharing (as defined as the average number of domestic households in a living quarter) was in private housing, which showed a marked decrease over the 10-year period, from 1.56 to 1.35.

Tenure

Table 15 shows the percentage distribution of domestic households by tenure. Over the past ten years, there was a significant increase in the proportion of domestic households owning their accommodation (from 18.1% to 27.9%). For those renting accommodation, the proportion of sole-tenants and co-tenants remained unchanged over the period. On the other hand, the proportion of main tenants and sub-tenants was down by 10.5% points.

TABLE 15 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS BY TENURE, 1971, 1976 AND 1981

Tenure	1971	1976	1981
	%	%	%
Owner	18.1	23.2	27.9
Sole-tenant	45.5	46.3	44.0
Main tenant	5.9	4.3	3.9
Sub-tenant	20.2	14.5	11.7
Co-tenant	4.1	4.7	5.6
Rent free	6.2	3.5	2.5
Provided/subsidised by employer	†	3.5	4.4

Rent

Table 16 shows the percentage distribution of domestic households by household rent and type of housing. As many as 47.1% of domestic households in private housing paid no rent for their accommodation, the figure for temporary housing was 61.5%. For public and aided housing, it was 0.2%. Excluding those paying no rent, one-third of all domestic households in public and aided housing paid a monthly rent of under \$100, about two-thirds paid between \$100 and \$400. In private housing, the spread of rent ranged from under \$100 to over \$4,000. A great majority of households paid a monthly rent of under \$1,000.

TABLE 16 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD RENT AND TYPE OF HOUSING, 1981

Household rent (HK\$)	Public and aided	Private†	Temporary
	%	%	%
Under 100	32.3	9.8	68.3
100 – 199	34.6	13.4	14.9
200 – 399	31.6	23.2	10.6
400 – 599	1.4	17.2	3.6
600 – 999	0.1	19.4	2.3
1,000 – 3,999	—	15.7	0.3
4,000 and over	—	1.3	—
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The median monthly rent in public and aided housing increased from \$41 in 1971 to \$151 in 1981. The median rent in private housing showed a small increase (from \$152 to \$442) over the period; the majority of households paying less than the median rent were sharing accommodation with others. For temporary housing, the median rent was \$80, compared with \$44 ten years ago.

† Information is not separately available.

‡ Including Housing Authority Home Ownership estates and institutions.

SPECIAL REVIEW

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

The 1981 Census contained some findings on the social and economic condition of the immigrant population (those who came to Hong Kong from China during the period 1976–80). One fact that it established was that immigrants in general had a poorer standard of housing. About a quarter of them were found in temporary housing, as compared with the corresponding proportion of 7.5% for the local population. Though there were some 6% of immigrants in public housing, the majority of them were in private housing.

TABLE 17 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL POPULATION AND IMMIGRANT POPULATION BY TYPE OF HOUSING, 1981

Type of housing	Overall total	Local population	Sub-total	Immigrant population by year of arrival				
				1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Public and aided	38.9	40.9	6.3	10.8	9.2	5.3	5.3	6.8
Private†	52.6	51.6	69.0	64.1	67.2	69.1	67.7	71.7
Temporary	8.5	7.5	24.7	25.1	23.6	25.6	27.0	21.5

In the case of education, young immigrants have ample opportunities under the present system of nine-year compulsory education. The Census showed that school attendance ratios for immigrants aged 6 to 16 years varied according to the length of time they had been in Hong Kong, the longer the duration the higher the attendance ratios. In general, the proportion of young immigrants attending school was lower than that of the local population of the same age; the difference was especially substantial for those aged 15 to 16, 28% as compared with 76%.

TABLE 18 PROPORTION OF LOCAL POPULATION AND IMMIGRANT POPULATION STUDYING FULL-TIME BY BROAD AGE GROUP, 1981

Age group	Overall total	Local population	Sub-total	Immigrant population by year of arrival				
				1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
6 – 11	98.5	98.6	96.7	99.1	99.2	98.3	97.4	94.1
12 – 14	92.0	92.9	75.3	90.4	85.9	79.7	74.8	63.2
15 – 16	73.7	76.0	28.0	62.2	50.7	39.3	21.6	16.0

The 1981 Census also showed that a larger proportion of immigrants was in the labour force than was so for the local population at all ages. Thus, for example, there was a higher proportion of male immigrants aged 20 to 34 in the labour force (98.8%) than in the case of their local counterparts (95.0%). The difference was particularly marked among females; for the same age group 73.5% of female immigrants were in the labour force, as compared with 65.6% for the female local population.

TABLE 19 LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES OF LOCAL POPULATION AND IMMIGRANT POPULATION BY BROAD AGE GROUP BY SEX, 1981

Sex/Age group	Overall total	Local population	Sub-total	Immigrant population by year of arrival				
				1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male								
15–19	45.2	41.4	88.1	54.9	67.5	81.4	91.2	94.1
20–34	95.4	95.0	98.8	97.2	98.0	98.9	99.2	98.8
35–64	91.8	91.6	96.3	95.4	97.0	97.9	96.7	95.0
Female								
15–19	42.6	40.1	84.4	64.6	66.0	75.2	88.5	92.4
20–34	66.1	65.6	73.5	64.3	68.7	70.4	74.1	78.1
35–64	45.4	44.4	65.0	67.3	65.2	66.9	67.8	61.4

† Including Housing Authority Home Ownership estates and institutions.

Not only were there more immigrants participating in the labour force, there were also fewer immigrants unemployed. the Census recorded an unemployment rate of 3.4% for immigrants, which is significantly lower than the 4.0% recorded for the local population. This could be because immigrants were more willing than local workers to take up jobs requiring lower levels of skill. Indeed, 73.9% of immigrants were in production occupations; the corresponding proportion for the employed local population was 48.4%. There were relatively fewer immigrants than local workers in all other occupations; the gap was particularly marked for administrative and managerial occupations, followed by professional and technical occupations, and clerical and sales occupations.

TABLE 20 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED LOCAL POPULATION AND IMMIGRANT POPULATION BY OCCUPATION, 1981

Occupation	Overall total	Local population	Sub-total	Immigrant population by year of arrival				
				1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Professional, technical and related workers	6.0	6.3	2.3	6.2	3.8	2.3	2.0	1.9
Administrative and managerial workers	2.7	2.9	0.6	1.4	1.4	0.7	0.3	0.5
Clerical and related workers	12.2	13.0	3.2	5.0	4.9	3.2	2.7	3.3
Sales workers	10.3	10.7	5.5	5.8	7.3	5.3	5.4	5.3
Service workers	15.6	15.8	13.2	12.4	12.1	11.5	12.6	15.7
Production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers	50.4	48.4	73.9	67.1	69.6	75.8	75.8	71.8
Agricultural workers and fisherfolk	2.1	2.2	0.8	1.4	0.4	0.7	0.7	1.0
Others	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5

As shown in Table 20, there was a larger proportion of professional and technical workers, clerical workers, administrative and managerial workers, and a correspondingly smaller proportion of production workers among those immigrants who had been here for a longer period. This indicates that the difference in the occupational structure between immigrants and the local population was gradually disappearing, but it will still be some time before there is a comparable proportion of immigrants taking up jobs as administrators, managers and clerical workers.

Table 21 shows the percentage distribution of the employed local population and immigrants by industry. Manufacturing industry had the largest proportion of immigrant workers (57.0%), followed by construction (16.7%), and wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels (15.8%).

TABLE 21 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED LOCAL POPULATION AND IMMIGRANT POPULATION BY INDUSTRY, 1981

Industry	Overall total	Local population	Immigrant population
	%	%	%
Manufacturing	41.2	39.8	57.0
Construction	7.7	6.9	16.7
Wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels	19.2	19.5	15.8
Transport, storage and communication	7.5	8.0	2.8
Finance, insurance, real estates and business services	4.8	5.2	0.9
Services	15.6	16.6	4.7
Others	4.0	4.0	2.1