

Speech by DPM Teo Chee Hean at the Media Conference on Population White Paper

Thank you for joining us here today.

We are releasing the Population White Paper “A Sustainable Population for a Dynamic Singapore”, which we have been working on since March 2012.

As we worked on this White Paper, we placed Singaporeans at the centre:-

How to have enough young Singaporeans to sustain our population and provide for our seniors?
How to create good jobs for increasingly better educated Singaporeans?
How to maintain a high quality living environment for Singaporeans?

These are issues that involve many ministries – ranging from infrastructure to integration.

The ministers here today are:

Minister Khaw Boon Wan (MND), Minister Yaacob Ibrahim (MCI and Min-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs), Minister Iswaran (MTI), Minister Grace Fu (NPTD), Minister Lui Tuck Yew (MOT), Minister Tan Chuan Jin (MOM).

As we worked through these issues, the Government engaged Singaporeans from different walks of life and age groups through consultation and dialogue sessions, as well as through the Internet and email.

We received close to 2,500 pieces of feedback directly, and engaged over 2,200 individuals and representatives from various groups and organisations.

There was a diverse range of views, concerns and aspirations, some pulling in opposite directions.

This White Paper is the **first time** the Government has set out a comprehensive population roadmap to strike the best balance in our population policies.

I would like to emphasise three points.

First, Strengthening the **Singaporean Core**.

- This is our starting point.

- Encouraging Singaporeans to marry **and start families** is central to our population policy, regardless of whatever else we do.

- However, to prevent our Singaporean population from ageing and shrinking, we will take in immigrants, but at a measured pace.

Second, **Creating Good Jobs** for our increasingly better educated Singaporeans.

- Two thirds of Singaporeans are projected to be in **PMET** jobs by 2030.

- To create good jobs for Singaporeans, we need a dynamic, outward-oriented economy, where our Singaporean core in the workforce is complemented by suitable foreigners with the appropriate skills and experiences.

- We will also need to supplement our workforce to meet **our social and infrastructure needs** as our population ages.

Compared to the last three decades, our workforce and **total population** are projected to **grow much more slowly up to 2030**.

Third, Ensuring a **High Quality Living Environment**.

- We are **planning ahead** so that there is enough land and infrastructure for our possible population trajectories.

- This will ensure that we continue to have a high quality living environment, and continue to be a good home for Singaporeans of all ages.

Our population challenge is a **defining issue** not just for the current generation of Singaporeans, but also our children and theirs.

I am seeking Parliament's endorsement next week for this White Paper as the population policy roadmap to address Singapore's demographic challenge.

We thank everyone who has provided feedback and contributions that have helped to shape this White Paper.

CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you.

Let me just close with some final comments.

Our demographic challenge is complex and multi-faceted.
There are no simple solutions.

We need to plan ahead and make decisions that strike the best balance for Singapore, to build the best home for Singaporeans, both current and future.

To summarise:

What we want, is

(1) to have a strong, cohesive and sustainable Singaporean population, with a good balance across the ages,

(2) to create good jobs for Singaporeans, by ensuring a vibrant and dynamic economy, and

(3) to maintain a high quality living environment for Singaporeans, young and old.

I look forward to a constructive debate in Parliament next week.