

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME (POP)

CIVIC EXCHANGE

JOINTLY CONDUCT

2004 Legislative Council Direct Election: Survey on Individual Constituency 【New Territories East】

SURVEY REPORT

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JULY 2004

CONTACT INFORMATION

Date of survey	: 24 – 27 June 2004
Survey method	: Telephone survey with interviewers.
Target population	: Cantonese-speaking population of Hong Kong aged 18 or above, and currently residing in New Territories East
Sampling method	: Standard POP telephone sampling method was used. Telephone numbers were selected randomly from residential telephone directories and mixed with additional numbers generated by the computer. If more than one subject had been available, the one who had his/her birthday next was selected.
Weighting method	: The data reported have been adjusted according to the gender, age and living district distributions of the Hong Kong population as reported in the 2001 Population Census.
Sample size	: 507 successful cases
Response Rate	: 71.6%
Std sampling error	: Less than 2.2%

Everything in this publication is the work of individual researchers, and does not represent the stand of the University of Hong Kong. CHUNG Ting-yiu Robert is responsible for the work of the Public Opinion Programme (POP) of the University of Hong Kong.

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The Public Opinion Programme (POP) was established in June 1991 to collect and study public opinion on topics that could be of interest to academics, journalists, policy-makers, and the general public. POP was at first under the Social Sciences Research Centre, a unit under the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, and was transferred to the Journalism and Media Studies Centre in the University of Hong Kong in May 2000. In January 2002, it was transferred back to the Faculty of Social Sciences in the University of Hong Kong. Since its establishment, POP has been conducting opinion researches on various social and political issues and providing quality survey services to a wide range of public and subvented bodies provided that they agreed to publicizing the findings to the general public, as well as allowing the research team to design and conduct the research independently, including the sampling method, questionnaire design, fieldwork supervision, data analysis, and report writing.
- 1.2 In May 2004, Civic Exchange commissioned the POP Team to conduct a series of public opinion surveys on the 2004 Legislative Council direct election. Results of the first geographical constituency survey, i.e. Hong Kong Island, have already been released earlier. As the second round of survey, Kowloon West and New Territories East Constituencies were studied in late June, but only the results of the latter will be discussed in this report. Same as other geographical constituencies, the main areas of investigation of this survey are as follows:
- i. New Territories East residents' voting inclination;
 - ii. New Territories East voters' voting behaviour and propensity to vote;
 - iii. New Territories East residents' participation in political activities.
- 1.3 The questionnaire was designed independently by the POP Team after consultation with the client, whilst fieldwork operations and data analysis were also conducted independently by the POP Team. In order to maintain neutrality, the POP Team did not provide advisory or consultative services of any kind apart from data interpretations and analyses.

2. Research Method

- 2.1 Random telephone survey with interviewers under strict supervision was adopted. To minimize sampling bias, telephone numbers were first drawn randomly from the residential telephone directories as "seed numbers", from which another set of numbers was generated using the "plus/minus one/two" method, in order to capture the unlisted numbers. Duplicated numbers were then filtered, and the remaining numbers were mixed in random order to produce the final telephone sample.
- 2.2 The target population of this survey was Cantonese-speaking population of Hong Kong aged 18 or above, who was currently residing in New Territories East. When telephone contact was successfully established with a target household, one person aged 18 or above was selected. If more than one subject had been available, selection was made using the "next birthday rule" which selected the person who had his/her birthday next from all those present.
- 2.3 To achieve higher operation efficiency, during the course of this survey fieldwork, the research team had combined the questionnaires for two different geographical constituencies, i.e. Kowloon West and New Territories East, and apportioned respondents qualified for either part upon confirmation of their living district. Needless to say, only the relevant set of questions would be asked for each respondent. Theoretically, such arrangement could help reduce the wastage rate as compared to using two separate instruments, with each targeting at residents of one constituency only. Hence, the contact information described below was based on the combined sample for both constituencies.
- 2.4 Telephone interviews were conducted from 24 – 27 June 2004. A total of 1,009 qualified respondents were successfully interviewed, while the valid sample size for New Territories East was 507. The overall response rate of this survey was 71.6% (Table 1 Appendix II), and the standard sampling error based on this sample was less than 2.2 percentage points. In other words, the sampling error for all percentages was less than plus/minus 4 percentage points at 95% confidence level.

- 2.5 As shown in Table 2, among the 5,769 telephone numbers sampled for the survey, 2,078 were confirmed ineligible, among them 113 were fax or data lines, 852 were invalid telephone numbers, 26 were call-forwarding numbers, while another 175 were non-residential numbers. Besides, 254 of them were invalidated due to special technological reasons, while 658 cases were voided because target respondents were unavailable at the numbers provided, i.e. residents of the other three geographical constituencies and/or non-adults.
- 2.6 Meanwhile, a total of 1,846 telephone numbers were invalidated since the research team could not confirm their eligibility. Among them 92 were busy lines and 915 were no-answer calls after making a maximum of 5 times' recalls. Twenty-one cases were diverted to answering devices while another 128 were blocked. Moreover, 124 cases were treated as unsuccessful because of language problems, while 562 interviews were terminated before the screening question. Four cases were voided for other problems of the line.
- 2.7 On the other hand, 836 cases were qualified, yet failed to complete the interview. Among them 4 were rejected at the household level, another 8 rejected the interview immediately after their eligibility was confirmed, 767 were unfinished cases with appointment dates beyond the end of fieldwork period. Besides, 42 cases were incomplete due to unexpected termination of interviews, 15 were classified as miscellaneous due to other non-contact problems. And the remaining 1,009 were successful cases (Table 2 in Appendix II).

3. Key Findings

(Please refer to Appendix II for cross-reference of the tables cited.)

3.1 New Territories East Residents' Voting Inclination

3.1.1 This survey revealed that, if the Legislative Council election were to be held tomorrow, and the respondents in New Territories East had the right to vote, of the 14 candidates or lists predetermined by the POP Team, the vote shares obtained by the first 6 candidates were highly comparable. Specifically, 13% and 12% of votes would go to Andrew Cheng of Democratic Party and James Tien of Liberal Party respectively, followed closely behind by Emily Lau of Frontier, with 10% of vote share. The next tier was formed by independent candidate Andrew Wong and Ronny Tong of Article 45 Concern Group, each attaining 9% of vote share. The 6th rank fell to Lau Kong Wah of Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong, with 8% of the respondents casting their vote on him. On the other hand, 13% of the respondents had not yet decided, while 3% claimed they would not vote. Due to the high sampling error, those obtained less than 5% of vote shares were not discussed here (Table 3a; for the vote shares obtained by each candidate or list after excluding those respondents who failed to give a concrete choice, please refer to Table 3b).

3.1.2 Table 4 shows the reallocations of hypothetical vote shares after teaming up any two of the candidates among the 14 candidates or lists. For instance, if Andrew Cheng teamed up with Nelson Wong, both from Democratic Party, their joint vote share would become 21% of those who had expressed their initial inclination towards a certain candidate or camp. Extra caution, however, should be taken when interpreting these figures as the calculation of the joint vote share was based on a mere summation of individual vote shares obtained by each candidate or list within a team. In real-life situations, some of the team-ups would be quite unlikely. Also, while people's voting behaviours are relatively not predictable, the summation of individual vote shares obtained by each candidate or list within a team might not accurately reflect the joint vote shares after teaming up.

3.1.3 Respondents were further asked for their best alternatives if their first choices dropped out from the competition. As shown in Table 5, the shaded area indicates the absence of that specific candidate, while the horizontal-axis and vertical-axis indicate the respondents' first choice and second choice respectively.

When interpreting vertically, the column figures represent the re-distribution of vote shares under each hypothetical drop-out scenario. For instance, the first column of Table 5 shows the vote shares obtained by other candidates if Andrew Cheng dropped out, i.e. Nelson Wong would obtain 6% of vote share (a 2-percentage-point increase from the first voting exercise, Table 3b) whereas Gary Fan would obtain 1% of vote share (virtually no change, Table 3b).

3.1.4 If respondents' first two choices did not run for the election, what would be the further changes in the vote shares? Table 6 to Table 17 reveal the distribution of votes if two candidates or lists dropped out from the competition, with the shaded area indicating the absence of that specific candidate. Again, figures should be interpreted vertically. To illustrate, the second column of Table 6 gives the vote shares obtained by other candidates if neither Andrew Cheng nor Nelson Wong ran for the New Territories East Constituency. In such case, Gary Fan would obtain 3% of vote share (a 2-percentage-point increase from the first voting exercise, Table 3b), and Emily Lau would obtain 19% (an increase of 6 percentage points, Table 3b), so on and so forth.

3.1.5 Put it in another way, if candidates from Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong, April Fifth Action, Democratic Party, Hong Kong Progressive Alliance, Frontier, Liberal Party, Article 45 Concern Group, Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, and some other independent candidates all took part in the election, 31% of the respondents in New Territories East stated that they would never support Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong, 14% would never support April Fifth Action and 13% would never support Democratic Party. Whilst the corresponding figures obtained by Hong Kong Progressive Alliance and Frontier were 11% and 10% respectively. It is worth noticing that one-third (34%) of the respondents had not yet decided which party or independent candidate they would never support at the interview time (Table 20).

3.1.6 Among the 264 respondents who claimed they would support the Democratic Party or the pro-democracy camp earlier, 57% (or 30% of total sample) of them indicated that if candidates from these two groups ran in the same list, they would still vote for such a list, while 17% (or 9% of total sample) would re-consider and 27% had not decided yet (or 14% of total sample; Table 21).

3.1.7 This survey also found that, in order to support the camp which appealed to them, 44% of these New Territories East respondents would go for the list of this camp,

no matter they liked or disliked the candidates on the list. Meanwhile, 52% would not (Table 22).

- 3.1.8 As regards the respondents' reaction to the vote-allocation instructions given out by the camp they supported (such as casting their votes to another list belonging to the same camp according to their ID card number or birthday), 76% of the respondents said that they would not follow such instructions, while 17% would (Table 23).

3.2 New Territories East Voters' Voting Behaviour and Propensity to Vote

- 3.2.1 Of the 424 registered voters captured in this survey(Table 24), 11% (or 9% of total sample) submitted their registration less than a year ago, while 26% (or 22% of total sample) registered at least four years ago. Besides, as high as 51% (or 42% of total sample) had forgotten when they registered (Table 25).

- 3.2.2 The survey also found that, 59% (or 49% of total sample) of these voters self-reported that they had voted in the District Council election last November, whilst 40% (or 34% of total sample; Table 26) had not. Besides, 82% (or 69% of total sample) of this sub-group claimed that they had voted in the past Council election in different tiers, 17% (or 14% of total sample) had not (Table 27).

- 3.2.3 As a snapshot taken two and a half months ahead of the Legislative Council election, the registered voters' propensity to vote was found to be 78% within the New Territories East Constituency (or 65% of total sample, Table 28). Nevertheless, this percentage should never be taken as a projection of the actual turnout rate because many people who claimed they would vote at this stage would eventually not vote.

3.3 New Territories East Residents' Participation in Political Activities

- 3.3.1 When being asked whether they had participated in the July 1 rally last year and the January 1 rally this year, 15% and 2% of the respondents in New Territories East said "yes" respectively (Table 29 and Table 30).