

香港大學民意研究計劃

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME (POP)**

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**基本法第二十三條意見調查  
*Public Opinion Survey on BL23***

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思匯政策研究所贊助

基本法第二十三條關注組委託

SPONSORED BY CIVIC EXCHANGE  
FOR CONCERN GROUP ON ARTICLE 23 OF THE BASIC LAW

調查報告

**SURVEY REPORT**

鍾庭耀、彭嘉麗

及林武俊聯合撰寫

Compiled by Chung Ting-Yiu Robert, Pang Ka-Lai Karie  
and Lam Mo-Chun Calvin

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THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

PUBLIC OPINION PROGRAMME

# Public Opinion Survey on BL23

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

## SURVEY REPORT

JUNE 2003

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### *Research Team Members*

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Project Director : CHUNG Ting-Yiu Robert  
Project Manager : PANG Ka-Lai Karie  
Research Executive : LAM Mo-Chun Calvin  
Data Analyst : TSOI Pui-Shing Tony  
Copy Editor : CHUNG Sin-Yan Yennice

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Date of survey : 23-25 June 2003  
Survey method : Telephone survey with interviewers  
Target population : Cantonese-speaking population of Hong Kong aged 18 or above  
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 age and gender distributions of the Hong Kong population as reported in the 2001 Population Census.  
Sample size : 1,032 successful cases  
Response rate : 65.2%  
Std. sampling error : Less than 1.6%

## **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 organizations 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, and to reserve the right to release the findings for public consumption.
- 1.2 In June 2003, Civic Exchange sponsored the Concern Group on Article 23 of the Basic Law to commission the POP Team to conduct a survey on Hong Kong's people opinion towards the legislation of Article 23 under the Basic Law. The main areas of the investigation were:
- i. Public opinion on the legislation of Article 23 in principle;
  - ii. Public opinion on specific government proposals on Article 23;
  - iii. Public opinion on the government legislation process.
- 1.3 Notwithstanding the client's position towards the subject matter, the POP Team was given full autonomy in designing and conducting this study. The questionnaire was designed in consultation with the client, but the entire study was conducted by the Team independently without any interference from the client, which might impede the impartiality of the survey in any way.

## 2. Research Method

- 2.1 This was a random telephone survey conducted by telephone interviewers under close supervision. 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. 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 Telephone interviews were conducted during the period of 23 to 25 June 2003. A total of 1,032 Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong citizens aged 18 or above were successfully interviewed. As shown from the calculation below, the overall response rate of this survey was 65.2% (Table 1), and the standard sampling error for percentages based on this sample was less than 1.6 percentage points. In other words, the sampling error for all percentages was less than plus/minus 3.2 percentage points at 95% confidence level.

Table 1 Calculation of response rate

Response rate
= $\frac{\text{Successful cases}}{\text{Successful cases} + \text{Incomplete cases}^* + \text{Refusal cases by eligible respondents}^\wedge}$
= $\frac{1,032}{1,032 + 529 + 23}$
= 65.2%

\* Including "partial interview" and "interview terminated before the screening question"

^ Including "household-level refusal" and "known respondent refusal"

- 2.4 As shown in Table 2, among the 5,833 telephone numbers sampled for the survey, 1,776 were confirmed to be ineligible, among them 328 were fax or data lines, 1,001 were invalid telephone numbers, 33 were call-forwarding numbers, while another 226 were non-residential numbers. Besides, 92 of them were invalidated due to special technological reasons, while 96 cases were voided because target respondents were unavailable at the numbers provided.
- 2.5 Meanwhile, a total of 1,731 telephone numbers were invalidated before the research team could confirm their eligibility. Among them 71 were busy lines and 952 were no-answer calls after making a maximum of 5 times' recalls. Twenty-six cases were diverted to answering devices while another 31 were blocked. Moreover, 121 cases were treated as unsuccessful because of language problems, while 435 interviews were terminated before the screening question. Ninety-five cases were voided for other problems.
- 2.6 On the other hand, 1,294 cases failed to complete the interview. Among them 8 were rejected at the household level, another 15 rejected the interview immediately after their eligibility was confirmed, 1,039 were unfinished cases with appointment dates beyond the end of fieldwork period. Besides, 94 cases were incomplete due to unexpected termination of interviews, 138 were classified as miscellaneous due to other non-contact problems, and the remaining 1,032 were successful cases (Table 2).

Table 2 Detailed breakdown of contact information of the survey

	Frequency	Percentage
Respondents' ineligibility confirmed	<b>1,776</b>	<b>30.5</b>
<i>Fax/ data line</i>	328	5.6
<b>Invalid number</b>	1,001	17.2
<i>Call-forwarding/ mobile/ pager number</i>	33	0.6
<i>Non-residential number</i>	226	3.9
<i>Special technological difficulties</i>	92	1.6
<b>No eligible respondents</b>	96	1.6
Respondents' eligibility not confirmed	<b>1,731</b>	<b>29.6</b>
<i>Line busy</i>	71	1.2
<b>No answer</b>	952	16.3
<i>Answering device</i>	26	0.4
<i>Call-blocking</i>	31	0.5
<i>Language problem</i>	121	2.1
<b>Interview terminated before the screening question</b>	435	7.5
<b>Others</b>	95	1.6
Respondents' eligibility confirmed, but failed to complete the interview	<b>1,294</b>	<b>22.2</b>
<b>Household-level refusal</b>	8	0.1
<b>Known respondent refusal</b>	15	0.3
<b>Appointment date beyond the fieldwork period</b>	1,039	17.8
<b>Partial interview</b>	94	1.6
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	138	2.4
Successful cases	<b>1,032</b>	<b>17.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,833</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3. Summary of Findings

3.1 Results of this survey showed that 55% (55.3%) of the respondents interviewed opposed to SARG introducing the legislation to implement Article 23 of the Basic Law in principle, 16% (16.4%) supported, and 12% (12.2%) opted for “half-half” (Table 3). Regarding their inclination towards the government’s original proposals, 49% (49.0%) of the respondents opposed them, 13% (13.2%) showed support, and 10% (9.7%) said “half-half” (Table 4). Besides, it is found that 45% (45.4%) of the respondents opposed the government’s current proposals in the “National Security Bill”, 19% (19.1%) supported them, 9% (8.7%) said “half-half”, and 27% (26.7%) did not give a definite answer (Table 5).

Table 3

[Q1] Generally speaking, do you in principle support or oppose SARG introducing legislation to implement Article 23 of the Basic Law? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	68 )	6.7 )
Quite supportive	98 ) 166	9.7 ) 16.4
Half-half	123	12.2
Quite opposed	256 )	25.3 )
Very opposed	303 ) 559	30.0 ) 55.3
Don't know / hard to say	161	16.0
Total	1,010	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	22	

Table 4

[Q2] Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the government's original proposals? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	54 )	5.3 )
Quite supportive	81 ) 135	7.9 ) 13.2
Half-half	98	9.7
Quite opposed	261 )	25.6 )
Very opposed	239 ) 500	23.4 ) 49.0
Don't know / hard to say	287	28.2
Total	1,020	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	12	

Table 5

[Q3] Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the government's current proposals in the "National Security Bill"? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	60 )	5.8 )
Quite supportive	136 ) 196	13.3 ) 19.1
Half-half	89	8.7
Quite opposed	240 )	23.5 )
Very opposed	223 ) 463	21.9 ) 45.4
Don't know / hard to say	272	26.7
Total	1,018	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	14	

3.2 Results also revealed that 71% (71.3%) of the respondents believed that the SARG, during the legislation process of Article 23, was paying more attention to the opinion of the Beijing Central Government than that of the Hong Kong people, as contrast to 12% (12.4%) who thought the opposite, 6% (5.7%) said they carried equal weight (Table 6).

Table 6

[Q4] In introducing legislation to implement Article 23, do you think that the government is paying more attention to the opinion of the people of Hong Kong or the Beijing Central Government? (Interviewers did not read out answers)		
	Frequency	Percentage
More to opinion of the HK people	126	12.4
More to opinion of central government	728	71.3
Same	58	5.7
Don't know / hard to say	109	10.7
Total	1,021	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	11	

3.3 Regarding the 9th July deadline set by the government to pass the Article 23 legislation, 64% (64.2%) opposed this arrangement, 17% (17.1%) supported, while 7% (7.2%) took a neutral stand (Table 7).

Table 7

[Q5] Do you support or oppose the government's setting the 9th July deadline for the Article 23 legislation to be passed? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	63 )	6.2 )
Quite supportive	111 ) 174	10.9 ) 17.1
Half-half	73	7.2
Quite opposed	304 )	30.0 )
Very opposed	347 ) 651	34.2 ) 64.2
Don't know / hard to say	118	11.6
Total	1,015	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	17	

3.4 On the other hand, 73% (73.0%) of the respondents thought that current opposition voices would not have any effect on the legislation process. Seventeen percent (17.2%) thought that they would be prompted government action (Table 8).

Table 8

[Q6] Do you think current opposition voices will have any effect on the process and content of the legislation?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	177	17.2
No	750	73.0
Don't know / hard to say	101	9.8
Total	1,028	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	4	

- 3.5 With regard to whether the offence of sedition could be applied to mere speech or writing without causing any consequences, 58% (58.1%) said no, 12% (12.4%) said yes, while 6% (5.7%) chose “half-half”. The remaining 24% (23.9%) did not provide a definite answer (Table 9).

Table 9

[Q7] Do you support or oppose an offence of sedition which can be based on mere speech or writing without any consequences? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	28 )	2.8 )
Quite supportive	97 ) 125	9.6 ) 12.4
Half-half	58	5.7
Quite opposed	285 )	28.1 )
Very opposed	305 ) 590	30.0 ) 58.1
Don't know / hard to say	243	23.9
Total	1,017	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	15	

- 3.6 As shown from Table 10, 60% (60.3%) of the respondents supported the introduction of the defence of “public interest” against charges of national security. Eighteen percent (18.1%) opposed, and 5% (5.0%) opted for “half-half” (Table 10).

Table 10

[Q8] Do you support or oppose to the introduction of the defence of “public interest” against charges of national security? Meaning that it would be legal to deliver a speech or writing in “public interest”. (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	187 )	19.8 )
Quite supportive	381 ) 568	40.5 ) 60.3
Half-half	47	5.0
Quite opposed	105 )	11.1 )
Very opposed	66 ) 171	7.0 ) 18.1
Don't know / hard to say	156	16.6
Total	941	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	91 ^	

^ The missing value for this question included a few cases which were dropped because at the very early stage of the survey, the wordings of “Meaning that it would be legal to deliver a speech or writing in ‘public interest’” were not included.

3.7 Results also showed that as high as 85% (84.7%) of the overall sample objected to the police powers to enter their home without a court warrant, including 51% (51.2%) who said “very opposed”, whilst only 7% (7.2%) of the respondents supported it (Table 11).

Table 11

[Q9] Do you support or oppose the police powers to enter your home without a court warrant? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	20)	2.0)
Quite supportive	53) 73	5.2) 7.2
Half-half	31	3.0
Quite opposed	342)	33.5)
Very opposed	524) 866	51.2) 84.7
Don't know / hard to say	54	5.2
Total	1,023	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	9	

3.8 Finally, this survey found that 45% (45.4%) of the respondents opposed Hong Kong creating the new offence of 'proscription', whereby local organizations could be banned because they were subordinate to some mainland organizations considered by the mainland government as endangering national security, when such an offence was not required by Article 23 of the Basic Law. Another 28% (27.5%) supported this proposal, 6% (5.5%) opted for "half-half", and 24% (23.5%) did not give a definite answer (Table 12). In case any such local organization was banned, 63% (62.5%) did not believe that mere association with such an organization could be harmful to national security. Nine percent (9.4%) were, on the other hand, supported the idea, 7% (6.7%) said "half-half" and 21% (21.3%) did not give a definite answer (Table 13).

Table 12

[Q10] Do you support or oppose Hong Kong creating the new offence of 'proscription' even though it is not required under Article 23, whereby some local organizations are banned because they are subordinate to some mainland organizations which are considered by the mainland government as endangering national security? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)

	Frequency	Percentage
Very supportive	67	6.6
Quite supportive	211	20.9
Half-half	55	5.5
Quite opposed	238	23.5
Very opposed	222	21.9
Don't know / hard to say	218	21.5
Total	1,011	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	21	

Table 13

	Frequency	Percentage
[Q11] Shall any such local organization be banned, do you support or oppose the idea that mere association with such an organization can be harmful to national security? (Interviewers probed strength of opinion)		
Very supportive	23	2.2
Quite supportive	73	7.2
Half-half	68	6.7
Quite opposed	340	33.8
Very opposed	290	28.7
Don't know / hard to say	215	21.3
Total	1,008	100.0
Base	1,032	
Missing case (s)	24	

Table 14 Summary table

	In support of gov't stand	Half-half	Opposed to gov't stand	Don't know / Hard to say	Sample base
<b>General Inclination:</b>					
1. The legislation of Article 23 in principle	16.4	12.2	55.3	16.0	1,010
2. Government's original proposals	13.2	9.7	49.0	28.2	1,020
3. Current proposals in the "National Security Bill"	19.1	8.7	45.4	26.7	1,018
4. Setting the 9th July deadline for passing the legislation	17.1	7.2	64.2	11.6	1,015
<b>Specific proposal:</b>					
5. Offence of sedition based on mere speech or writing without any consequences	12.4	5.7	58.1	23.9	1,017
6. Defence of "public interest" against charges of national security	18.1	5.0	60.3	16.6	941
7. Police entering home without court warrant	7.2	3.0	84.7	5.2	1,023
8. New offence of 'proscription' to ban local organizations subordinate to some mainland bodies considered as endangering national security	27.5	5.5	45.4	21.5	1,011
9. Mere association with such an organization considered harmful to national security	9.4	6.7	62.5	21.3	1,008

## **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 This survey has shown that, between 23 and 25 June 2003, the people of Hong Kong was, on the whole, opposed to Article 23 legislation, both in principle and on practical terms. Results showed that 55% opposed it in principle, 49% opposed the government's original proposal, 45% opposed the "National Security Bill", and 64% opposed to setting the 9th July deadline for passing the legislation.
- 4.2 Nevertheless, people were not expecting the government to change its course of legislation, because almost three-quarters of the population believed that the government cared more about the opinion of the Beijing Central Government than that of Hong Kong people.
- 4.3 With respect to specific proposals, among the list of items tested, opposition was strongest against the police entering peoples' homes without court warrants, as many as 85% opposed it. Forty-five percent opposed the introduction of the new offence of 'proscription', whereby local organizations could be banned because they were subordinate to some mainland organizations, considered by the mainland government as endangering national security, when this was not required by Article 23 of the Basic Law. There was also little support for the government over other items tested in this survey, including the idea of sedition, the defence of "public interest", and association with "proscribed" organizations.

## Appendix 1

## Standard Demographic Profile of Respondents

	<u>Raw Sample</u>		<u>Weighted Sample</u>	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	515	49.9	498	48.3
Female	517	50.1	534	51.7
Total	1,032	100.0	1,032	100.0
<b>Age</b>				
18 - 20	82	8.8	49	5.2
21 - 29	172	18.5	157	16.9
30 - 39	202	21.7	221	23.8
40 - 49	253	27.2	211	22.6
50 - 59	136	14.6	118	12.7
60 or above	86	9.2	175	18.8
Total	931	100.0	931	100.0
Missing case (s)	101		101	
<b>Occupation</b>				
Professionals and semi-professionals	199	20.1	189	19.1
Clerk and service workers	239	24.1	223	22.5
Production workers	136	13.7	125	12.7
Students	75	7.6	49	5.0
Production workers	169	17.1	173	17.5
Others	172	17.4	229	23.2
Total	990	100.0	988	100.0
Missing case (s)	42		44	
<b>Education</b>				
Primary or below	158	15.6	194	19.2
Secondary	605	59.5	570	56.3
Tertiary or above	253	24.9	248	24.5
Total	1,016	100.0	1,012	100.0
Missing case (s)	16		20	

## Appendix 2

### ***Public Opinion Survey on BL23*** ***Survey Questionnaire***

#### ***Section I Self Introduction***

Good evening, I am an interviewer from the Public Opinion Programme of The University of Hong Kong. We would like to ask for your opinion regarding the BL23. It would take you a couple of minutes and the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Should you have any doubts about the authenticity of this survey, you may contact our supervisor at the hotline 2857 8335, or call 2859 2988 in office hours.

- District of residence
- Household size

#### ***Section II Selection of Respondent***

Are you aged 18 or above? If there is more than one available, may I speak to the one who will have his/her birthday next? (If the one who answers the phone is not 18 or above, then interviewer asks, "Is there any member of your family who is 18 or above?" If none, terminate the interview)

- Yes
- No (terminate)

### *Section III                      General Questions*

***Interviewer: We are an independent research team. You should simply report honestly what you feel regardless of the fact that we belong to The University of Hong Kong, otherwise, the information will be of no reference value.***

1. Generally speaking, do you in principle support or oppose SARG introducing legislation to implement Article 23 of the Basic Law? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

2. Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the government's original proposals? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

3. Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the government's current proposals in the "National Security Bill"? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

4. In introducing legislation to implement Article 23, do you think that the government is paying more attention to the opinion of the people of Hong Kong or the Central People's Government? (Interviewers do not read out answers)

More to opinion of the people

More to opinion of central government

Same

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

5. Do you support or oppose the government's setting the 9th July deadline for the Article 23 legislation to be passed? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

6. Do you think current opposition voices will have any effect on the process and content of the legislation?

Yes

No

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

7. Do you support or oppose an offence of sedition which can be based on mere speech or writing without any consequences? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

8. Do you support or oppose the introduction of the defence of “public interest” against charges of national security? Meaning that it would be legal to deliver a speech or writing in “public interest”. (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

9. Do you support or oppose the police powers to enter your home without a court warrant? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

10. Do you support or oppose Hong Kong creating the new offence of ‘proscription’ even though it is not required under Article 23, whereby some local organizations are banned because they are subordinate to some mainland organizations which are considered by the mainland government as endangering national security? (Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

11. Shall any such local organization be banned, do you support or oppose the idea that

mere association with such an organization can be harmful to national security?  
(Interviewers to probe strength of opinion)

Very supportive

Quite supportive

Half-half

Quite opposed

Very opposed

Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

## *Section IV      Personal Particulars*

*Interviewer: I'd like to know some of your personal particulars in order to facilitate our analysis.*

[D1] Gender

Male

Female

[D2] Age (exact number)

【99 = Refused to answer】

[D3] Education Attainment

Primary or below

Secondary

Matriculated

Tertiary, non-degree course

Tertiary, degree course

Postgraduate or above

Refused to answer

[D4] The type of ownership of your house is:

Self-purchased, or

Rent?

Refused to answer

[D5] House type

Public housing estate

Housing Authority subsidized sale flats

Housing Society subsidized sale flats

Private housing

Village: villas / bungalows / modern village houses

Village: simple stone structures / traditional village houses

Staff quarters  
Others  
Refused to answer

[D6] Occupation

Managers and administrators  
Professionals  
Associate professionals  
Clerks  
Service workers and shop sales workers  
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers  
Craft and related workers  
Plant and machine operators and assemblers  
Non-skilled workers  
Students  
Housewives  
Unclassified  
Others (unemployed, retired, etc.)  
Refused to answer

[D7] Which class do you consider your family belongs to?  
(Interviewer to read out the first 5 options)

Upper class  
Middle class  
Lower class or grassroots  
Don't know / hard to say  
Refused to answer

[D8] Household Income

Yes  
No: more than \$50,000  
No: less than \$25,000  
Don't know / hard to say  
Refused to answer

[D9] Is your family in negative equity?

Yes  
No  
Don't know / hard to say

Refused to answer

[D10] Are you a civil servant now or is your salary linked to their pay scale?

Yes: a civil servant

Yes: linked to the pay scale

Neither of them

Refused to answer

[D11] Birth Place

Hong Kong (Skip to D13)

China

Taiwan (Skip to D13)

Macau (Skip to D13)

South Asia (Skip to D13)

Canada (Skip to D13)

America (Skip to D13)

Australia (Skip to D13)

England (Skip to D13)

Others (Skip to D13)

Don't know (Skip to D13)

Refused to answer (Skip to D13)

[D12] **【 Only for those who were born in Mainland China 】**How long have you been living in Hong Kong?

**【 98 = Forgotten 】**

**【 99 = Refused to answer 】**