

5 October 2020

Written Reply to Parliamentary Question on the Number of Voters Allocated to Each Polling Station Across the Last Three General Elections

Question:

Ms He Ting Ru: To ask the Prime Minister across the last three general elections (a) how many voters are allocated to each polling station on average; (b) how many polling stations have had the number of allocated voters exceed 25%, 50% and 100% of the average; and (c) what is the respective maximum number of voters allocated to a given polling station.

For GE 2020, the Elections Department (ELD) had split polling stations with larger numbers of voters at HDB void decks and pavilions, to allow for safe distancing measures. As a result, there was a larger number of polling stations with fewer voters than the previous two general elections. The percentage of polling stations with 2,000 and below voters, increased from 5.2% in GE 2011 to 9.3% in GE 2015 to 38.7% in GE 2020. Table 1 shows the distribution of voters across polling stations of different sizes.

Table 1: Distribution of Voters across Polling Stations

No. of Voters	No. of Polling Stations		
	GE2011	GE2015	GE2020
2,000 and below	38	77	424
2,001 to 3,000	307	335	416
3,001 to 4,000	357	378	210
More than 4,000	30	42	47
Total	732	832	1,097

Correspondingly, the average number of voters per polling station dropped from 3,021 in GE 2011, to 2,960 in GE 2015, and to 2,417 in GE 2020. As the average number of voters per polling station varied across the GEs, it would not be meaningful to compare the number of polling stations exceeding the average using different baselines.

For GE 2020, there were three large polling stations with more than 5,000 voters, which were not split. They were located in schools and community

centres/clubs, and had been used as polling stations in previous elections without problems. Nonetheless, as ELD had noted in its findings on why some polling stations saw long queues in GE 2020, larger polling stations should have been better resourced. For future elections, ELD will split large polling stations where possible. If it is not feasible to do so (e.g. due to a lack of alternative premises in the area), ELD will ensure that these large polling stations are better resourced, including by providing additional manpower and equipment.