



14 December, 2005

The Hon. Donald TSANG Yam-kuen  
Chief Executive  
5/F, Main Wing, Central Government Offices,  
Lower Albert Road, Central.

Dear Mr. Tsang,

**Re: Civic Exchange's latest publication –  
*Hong Kong Constitutional Reform: What do the People Want?***

Civic Exchange commissioned the Hong Kong Transition Project to conduct a public opinion survey on Hong Kong people's attitudes towards Hong Kong's constitutional reform in November 2005. A briefing session was organised yesterday to formally release the survey results.

Entitled "**Hong Kong Constitutional Reform: What do the People Want?**", the survey report details the results of the two rounds of survey. Below is a summary of the findings:

1. Support for directly electing the Chief Executive continues strong. The dispute over the reform package appears to have moved about one in five toward a "neutral" or "don't know" response. Opposition to the principle of direct CE election has not increased during the dispute above about 1 in 10 though support for direct CE election has diminished marginally from 8 in 10 to 7 in 10 when the question is posed in principle. Finding 7 below shows that when exposed to various other options, 78 percent prefer direct universal suffrage election of the CE, though when forced to choose the option they support most, 68 percent choose direct election. The range of support under all conditions for direct CE election is thus between 68 percent and 78 percent. Opposition in principle to direct CE election is concentrated among those born in Hong Kong aged 60 and up, less educated, and retired from the workforce.
2. In contrast to opposition to directly electing the CE, opposition to directly electing all members of LegCo has grown over the past two years, from 14 percent in November 2003 to 22 percent in November 2005.
3. In the November 2005 survey, 57 percent supported both direct CE elections and direct LegCo elections in principle. 8 percent of the sample opposed both in principle. 35 percent of those polled supported one type of direct election while opposing the other, or responded neutral or don't know on one or both principles. Those who support both reforms are 59 percent of all men in the sample and 55 percent of women, while opponents of both are 9 percent of the men sampled and 6 percent of women.
4. Of demographic variables examined, all breakdowns showed a majority supporting both principles of CE and all direct LegCo elections except: those aged 70 and up; those with a primary grade 6 or less education; those professing to be Buddhists or Taoists, those with approximate family monthly incomes below \$9,999; and those who lived in mainland China at least a year of their lives (most came to Hong Kong as adults).
5. A clear majority of 68 percent support a timetable being given for the direct election of all members of LegCo while one in five oppose a timeline.
6. A majority appear willing to accept the government's reform proposals, even while most desire various changes in them and even while large majorities support full direct universal suffrage elections of the CE and LegCo.

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7. Only 39 percent support rejecting the government's expansion proposal for the CE Election Committee and retaining the present size and voting arrangements. No option for change secures a majority of support except universal suffrage direct election by all Hong Kong voters, which 78 percent support. Asked which of five options they most prefer, 68 percent choose direct CE election by all Hong Kong voters.

8. The plan as proposed to expand LegCo to 70 with District Councils returning 5 new functional constituency seats has most support of all options with two thirds in favour. Expanding as proposed but abolishing corporate voting has 51 percent in favour. All the other options fail to get a majority of support, including making no changes and keeping LegCo as it is now.

9. Support for proposals to separate the functional constituencies from the geographic or directly elected constituencies into separate houses (like the US Senate from the House) has risen from 47 to to 51 percent support from a year ago. Opposition has grown from 22 percent to 27 percent.

10. There may be indications that strong support for full direct election of all members of LegCo and for direct elections in principle has eroded support for expanding functional constituency (FC) franchises. Whereas a year ago 78 percent supported expanding FC franchises, only 51 percent do so now. Opposition to expansion has more than doubled, from 14 percent in December 2004 to 33 percent now.

11. Comparing dissatisfaction before the 2000 LegCo election and before the 2004 LegCo election to today shows that only the Democratic Party, the Frontier and Article 45 show rises in dissatisfaction from the August 2004 level. In contrast to September 2004 when all the top three in dissatisfaction were pro-government parties led by the DAB, today the Democratic party is number one in dissatisfaction followed by a much improved DAB and then by the Frontier. Clearly the pro-democracy parties' hardline confrontative stance is having some effect on their standing with the public even prior to the vote on 21 December.

12. In sum, a definite majority of Hong Kongers support direct elections for both the Chief Executive and LegCo, want those elections to take place by 2012, and will blame Donald Tsang, Beijing and the democrats if steps forward toward full democracy fail to be made in 2007-08.

A copy of the survey report is enclosed for you. We hope you find it useful.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

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Researcher and Project Manager  
Encl.

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# Hong Kong Constitutional Reform: What do the People Want?

A public opinion survey on Hong Kong people's attitudes towards Hong Kong's constitutional reform.

Commissioned by Civic Exchange



Conducted by

 1982-2007 The Hong Kong Transition Project

December 2005

## Summary of findings

### 2005 Constitutional Reform Survey

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12. In sum, a definite majority of Hong Kongers support direct elections for both the Chief Executive and Legco, want those elections to take place by 2012, and will blame Donald Tsang, Beijing and the democrats if steps forward toward full democracy fail to be made in 2007-08.

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