

## **IPS survey shows increased demand for political participation, involvement**

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There has been an increased demand amongst Singaporeans for political participation and involvement over the last 10 years, according to findings in a survey by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS).

Singaporeans want a greater say in the way the country is run, according to the survey of some 2,000 Singapore citizens living in the country.

Eight in 10 respondents (85 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that voting gave citizens the most meaningful way to tell the government how to run the country, up from seven in 10 (72 per cent) in 1998.

Ninety-seven per cent wanted the government to take the time to listen to citizens, even when quick decisions are needed.

One in two said they would join and serve in Town Councils, the Community Development Councils and grassroots bodies related to the People's Association.

IPS said the results suggest that active citizenship is fairly well embedded in Singaporeans, and that there is also a strong expectation for the government to engage the citizens.

On the issue of foreigners, respondents were asked if the policy to attract more foreign talent into the country would weaken Singaporeans' feeling as one nation.

Six in 10 (63 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that national unity would be affected, up from four in 10 (38 per cent) in 1998.

But at the same time, 66 per cent agreed that the government is right to increase the number of foreigners working here if the economy needed it.

IPS concluded that acceptance of foreigners was higher when viewed from the perspective of boosting the economy.

The issue of national pride was also covered in the IPS survey.

Nine in 10 (93 per cent) of respondents said Singapore is a better country than most other countries, while almost nine in 10 (83 per cent) would rather be a citizen of Singapore than any other country in the world.

Seven in 10 (67 per cent) believe the world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the citizens of Singapore.

Two in 10 (19 per cent) said that people from low to high income should benefit from subsidies, while 29 to 31 per cent preferred receiving government subsidies, even if it means more taxes.

The survey also had one-third of respondents saying that subsidy levels should be the same for all.