

Utilization of Census Results for Population and Social Policies: China's Practice

The purpose of the population census is to fulfill the different kinds of needs for development planning, decision making in government departments, public community, business sectors and etc. To meet the various needs multiplying at a fast rate in the new era more effectively, the population census office under the State Council and census offices at local levels had made detailed plans for census data dissemination and utilization.

Better dissemination of census data is crucial for wide and effective utilization of population census data. To ensure easy and broad access, the census data has been published in different ways. The population census offices at different level compiled and published a series books with detailed tabulations of the 2000 population census in both paper and electronic media. Internet services are provided in the websites of the National Bureau of Statistics and Statistical Bureau at provincial level. The population census office under the State Council also drew different sample data sets from the census individual records for research projects conducted by research institutes and universities.

China is the most populous country in the world. To control the growth and to improve the quality of China's population has been taken as the basic national policy since 1970's. The results of 2000 population census has provided essential information to assess the implementation the 9th five-year population plan and to formulate the 10th five-year population plan and population projection in first half of the 21st century.

Population census data has also been used by many other government departments for various decision-makings. The Ministry of Education used information of population by age and sex to carry out the program of compulsory education, especially in the west region of China. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security used the census results to estimate the number of labor force newly increased in the cities and towns and to make plans for promoting employment. Census data are also used to compute rates of various social-economic indicators combined with other sources by different government departments.

To provide information and suggestions focusing on topics concerned by the State Council and the Center Commission of Communist Party is the obligation of the population census office. Many brief analytical reports based on results of population census have been finished and reported to the leaders in time

To promote in-depth analysis on the census data, the population census office under the State Council organized a series research projects, more than 33 research groups from academic units all around the country were selected to take on the research projects on different topics and most projects have been finished up to now.

The population census office under State Council also carried out cooperative research programs with international organizations such as WHO and World Bank to study disease burden and poverty mapping and relief based on the population census results combined with other social-economic information.

For better utilization of the census results, the geographic area frame of the 2000 population census has been well defined and digital maps down to township level areas have been constructed. This provides a sound base to use GIS techniques to do spatial analysis on census data.