Compiling Planning Data for a Dynamic City: The Case of Hong Kong

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Purpose of Strategic Planning in HK

To formulate a long-term land use-transport-environmental planning strategy to guide future development and the provision of strategic infrastructure in Hong Kong.

To contribute to achieving HK’s vision – Asia’s world city.
Socio-economic Interactions between HK and the Mainland

- Hong Kong is an integral part of the Greater Pearl River Delta Region, one of the biggest mega city-regions in the world.
Socio-economic Interactions between HK and the Mainland

• **Intensifying interactions brought about by:**
  - enhanced transport network
  - improved facilities and services at control points
  - the “Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement” (CEPA)
  - regional co-operation on various fronts

• **Making Hong Kong more dynamic than ever:**
  - Hot topics: cross-boundary families, students, workers, travel, living, infrastructure, etc,
Statistical Data for Strategic Planning

To support strategic planning, we require robust planning data on:

- Overall HK population
- HK people living and working in the Mainland
- Cross-boundary travel between HK and the Mainland
Sources of Planning Data

- **Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region of China, is administered under “One country Two Systems”**
  - Planning data have all along been compiled by authorities of the two places separately

- **Multi-pronged approach in compiling planning data of HK:**
  - Develop projection models
  - Undertake surveys
  - Analyse movement records
  - Collaborate with the counterparts in the Mainland
HK Population Projections

- Census and Statistics Department of HK (C&SD) compiles the population projections for overall HK based on “component” method at intervals of 2 to 3 years.

- The latest set of projections covering the 30-year period from 2010 to 2039 was released in July 2010.
Challenge to Population Projections

• Rapid growth in babies born in Hong Kong to Mainland women
  
  ➢ Accounting for 45% of total births in HK in 2009
  ➢ Both parents being Chinese nationals but not HK residents.
  ➢ Their babies born in HK are entitled to the right of abode in HK.
  ➢ Although many of them are taken back to their parents’ home in the Mainland soon after birth, they can choose to reside in HK at any time.
Challenge to Population Projections

• 2-step approach to project the babies born in HK to Mainland women who eventually settle in HK

  ➢ **Step 1**: To estimate the total no. of such babies born based on past trend and taking into account some other factors (e.g. capacity of hospitals, measures on obstetric services arrangement and complementary immigration measures)

  ➢ **Step 2**: To estimate the proportion that eventually settle in HK based on “Survey on babies born in HK to Mainland women” at the Birth Registries – to probe into the intentions of parents bringing their babies back to the Mainland / returning to HK for living.
Challenge to Population Projections

• Volatility in the number of mobile residents

  ➢ Mobile residents: HK Permanent Residents staying in HK for at least 1 month but less than 3 months in the preceding 6 months or in the coming 6 months.

  ➢ Project based on historical data on the net movement of HK Permanent Residents.

  ➢ Accounting for about 3% of total population in 2036 (2009-based population projections), but about 5% in 2006-based population projections.
Challenge to Population Projections

• Volatility in the number of mobile residents
  
  ➢ Interplay between a host of push and pull factors, such as

  1. continuous economic integration between HK and the Mainland, in particular Pearl River Delta region

  2. the ease and cost of cross-boundary commuting

  3. availability of employment opportunities in the Mainland

  4. narrowing difference in living standard and cost of living between HK and the Mainland
Data on HK People Living and Working in the Mainland

• **Difficult to obtain information about them due to:**
  - their high mobility
  - their relatively small in number in the Mainland
  - no complete and accurate list of them through administrative records

• **Thematic surveys to collect information**
  - household surveys in HK
  - surveys in the Mainland in cooperation with the Mainland statistical agencies
Data on HK People Living and Working in the Mainland

- Thematic surveys conducted in HK

  - Topics covered:
    1. HK residents working in the Mainland
    2. HK residents’ experience of and aspiration for taking up residence in the Mainland
    3. Characteristics of HK residents having resided/having stayed substantially in the Mainland

  - Limitations of such surveys: Could not capture those HK residents who usually staying in HK for only a short period of time (less than 1 month in a 6-month period) and did not have a usual home base in HK as they fall outside the coverage of HK Resident Population.
Data on HK People Living and Working in the Mainland

- Thematic surveys conducted in the Mainland in collaboration with the Mainland statistical agencies

  - “Survey of HK people living in Shenzhen” in Sep 2008: A household survey jointly commissioned by the Planning Department (PlanD) of HK and the Shenzhen Statistics Bureau for the first time

  - Limitations: Households without any HK adult member (e.g. children born in HK but their parents are Mainland residents) might not be captured → Underestimate of HK people (infants and young children in particular) living in Shenzhen
Data on Cross-boundary Travel

- PlanD needs data on cross-boundary travel for planning of cross-boundary transport infrastructure, community and tourism-related facilities.

- PlanD launched a series of Cross-boundary Travel Surveys regularly since 1999 to collect information on characteristics of cross-boundary trips and trip makers.
Challenge to Data on Cross-boundary Travel

- Cross-boundary travel is very much influenced by socio-economic developments as well as Government policies of both sides.

- Both the growth and pattern of cross-boundary travel are still in a dynamic state and call for continuous monitoring through regular surveys.
Ways to Improve

• **Central repository of population related surveys conducted and data kept by different departments**
  
  ➢ Merits include: (1) better alignment of definitions; (2) combine surveys of similar scope; (3) facilitate selection and retrieval of the most representative data for a specified purpose; and (4) validate similar findings more easily.
  
  ➢ Better co-ordination among government departments and consolidation of databases for shared use is also conducive to more effective utilization of government manpower and financial resources.
Ways to Improve

• Comprehensive information

- China’s 2010 Population Census will cover HK residents living in the Mainland for the first time.

- Their basic information would then be available for filling the unknowns, validating the estimated figures, and identifying the geographical concentration of HK people.

- This information is useful for planning future surveys and providing benchmark data for statistical estimation, hence enhancing the reliability of the survey findings.
Ways to Improve

• **Collaboration with the authorities of China**
  
  - Collaboration with the Mainland authorities in data collection provides a quantitative and objective basis for understanding the social phenomenon.
  
  - PlanD of HK is taking lead to develop a transport database with three neighbouring cities, namely Shenzhen, Macao and Zhuhai.
  
  - This heralds the co-operation in building up a shared database for planning purpose. Also merits in further expanding the shared database and aligning the terms and definitions as far as possible.
Ways to Improve

• **Sensitivity test**

  ➢ Dynamism and uncertainty necessitate a high degree of flexibility in the planning process, and sometimes the carrying out of sensitivity tests to test the robustness of the planning proposal.

  ➢ Sensitivity test is most useful when a long time horizon spanning a few decades is involved. This is a tool to cope with less predictable or volatile situation, and should be vigorously employed.
Conclusion

• For a dynamic city like Hong Kong, changes are perpetual and the pace of change is increasing. We are planning in a highly volatile context.

• Compiling high-quality data is the cornerstone in the quest for understanding dynamism. Exploring innovative, effective and efficient way to compile data for coping with ever changing times is indeed a continuous process.
Thank you