

Issued on 24 Oct 2020

[UPDATED] MEDIA FACT SHEET

**SINGAPORE TOGETHER EMERGING STRONGER CONVERSATIONS –
MORE THAN 10 SESSIONS TO BE HELD FROM NOW TO FEB 2021**

Since the Singapore Together Emerging Stronger Conversations (ESC) commenced in June 2020, more than 1,600 Singaporeans and community partners have participated in various ESCs¹. They have given us access to fruitful insights on the challenges and opportunities facing Singapore in a post-COVID-19 world, and offered suggestions on how we can emerge stronger from this crisis. In the spirit of Singapore Together, Singaporeans have also kept the momentum of conversations and partnerships to build a better future going during this period. As we work towards recovering from this pandemic, this spirit will help Singaporeans to chart a new path and emerge stronger from the crisis.

(i) Singapore Together Emerging Stronger Conversations (ESCs) and Mother Tongue Language ESCs

2 We have undergone a shared experience which will shape the attitudes and worldview of an entire generation. Through the ESCs, we want to draw this out and use these reflections as core elements on which to build an even stronger society.

3 **[Update]** At least 20 Emerging Stronger Conversations will be organised including sessions in Mother Tongue Languages between June 2020 and February 2021. The Mandarin ESC is held on 24 October 2020. This is in the spirit of Singapore Together; we would like the ESCs to be inclusive and accessible so more Singaporeans who might not be fluent in the English language and across diverse backgrounds, can still participate in the ESCs. (Please see [Annex A](#) for a snapshot of the participants at the ESC in Mandarin on 24 October 2020.)

4 These Conversations will be conducted digitally by default, until the situation allows for face-to-face gatherings to take place safely. Each Conversation will involve some 40 to 50 participants from diverse backgrounds and hosted by a political office-holder. Over 2 hours of discussion, participants will, in their facilitated breakout groups, share their reflections about the Covid-19 crisis, their hopes for Singapore, and what actions we can take to reach the desired outcome together.

5 These Conversations are open for public sign-up. Those who are interested can still register their interest for one of the forthcoming Conversations taking place, at

¹ The number includes the ESC surveys conducted earlier between Sep – Oct 2020 on two apps – LifeSG and OneService.

<https://go.gov.sg/ESconversations>. (Please see Annex B for the list of public Conversations.)



QR code to the Emerging Stronger Conversations Registration

(ii) Other Platforms

6 The government is committed to engaging widely across different stakeholders and will also invite partners to convene their own Conversations, to enable more to participate, and multiply the potential for action. Outside of these Conversations, Singaporeans can also share their reflections and aspirations at www.singaporetogether.gov.sg/reflect.

7 Stories and ideas shared by participants of across these channels will be shared on Our SG social platforms and on the Singapore Together website for interested members of the public to catch up on the perspectives of other Singaporeans.

(iii) Emerging Aspirations from the ESC

8 In the first few Conversations, participants shared their experiences and candid thoughts on a wide range of issues including supporting the vulnerable, equipping both younger and mid-career workers with necessary skills and digital tools, and having greater civic participation across all segments of society. Through these Conversations, there was a common thread of aspiring towards a more caring, resilient and cohesive Singapore, and the belief that by working together, and pooling together our experiences, expertise and efforts, we can emerge stronger as a society and country. (Please see Annex C for a snapshot of the topics discussed at recent SG Together Emerging Stronger Conversations)

(iv) Singapore Together Action Networks

9 These Conversations are in their early days. More will take place in the coming months. As key issues emerge from the Singapore Together Emerging Stronger Conversations, we will form the Singapore Together Action Networks (“Action Networks”) to work on them and give effect to the aspirations shared by participants.

10 The Action Networks will bring together a diverse group of people from different sectors – Government, community, businesses – to co-create, and co-deliver ideas and solutions. They will be important drivers to mobilise our collective energies and expertise and exemplify the Singapore Together governance approach of working in partnership, towards Singapore’s recovery and future. The number and composition of Networks will be determined by the issues surfaced through the Emerging Stronger Conversations, and the actions needed.

11 **[Update]** There are currently four Action Networks – UPLIFT, Youth Mental Well-being Network, SG Cares, and most recently, the Beyond Covid-19 Taskforce (Please see [Annex D](#) for more information on the SG Together Action Networks). Partnerships between Government and Singaporeans are important to build the society we want to become. During this period, we continue to see partnership efforts; for instance, two citizen workgroups have been convened to look into sustainability topics.

12 We encourage all Singaporeans to play a part in the Singapore Together efforts. We can stay united amidst the challenges ahead and emerge stronger together.

Annexes

- A. **[New]** Snapshot of the participants at the ESC in Mandarin held on 24 October 2020
- B. **[Update]** Singapore Together ESC Public Sessions
- C. **[Update]** Infographics - Snapshot of the topics discussed at recently held SG Together Emerging Stronger Conversations
- D. **[Update]** SG Together Action Networks

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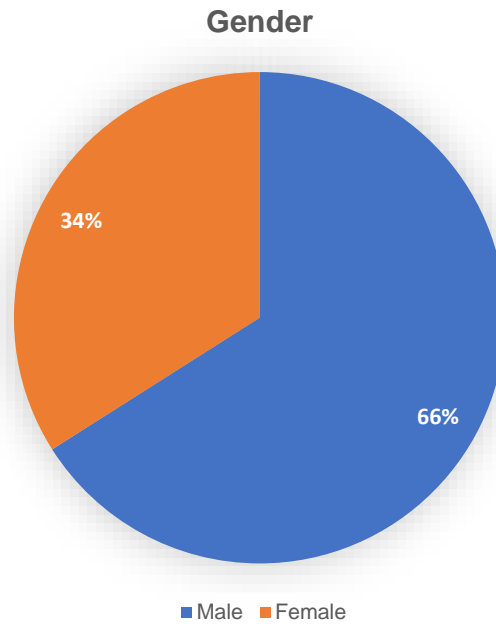


About Singapore Together

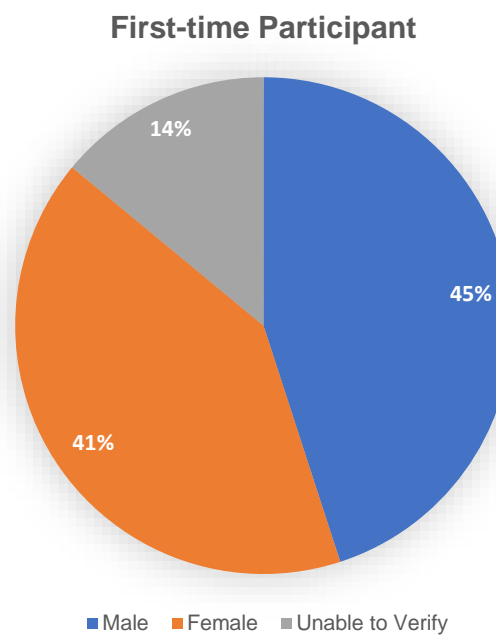
Singapore Together is about the Government working with Singaporeans, and Singaporeans working with one another, to build our future Singapore. The Government will open up more partnership opportunities for Singaporeans to participate. The Government also hopes to support more citizen-led efforts. Whatever our background or interests, we can each step forward to contribute in areas that we care about. By working together, we can turn diversity into strength and transform challenges into opportunities, to build a Singapore that present and future generations of Singaporeans will be proud of. For more information, visit www.singaporetogether.gov.sg.

**[NEW] SNAPSHOT OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE SINGAPORE TOGETHER
EMERGING STRONGER CONVERSATION IN MANDARIN HELD ON 24 OCTOBER
2020**

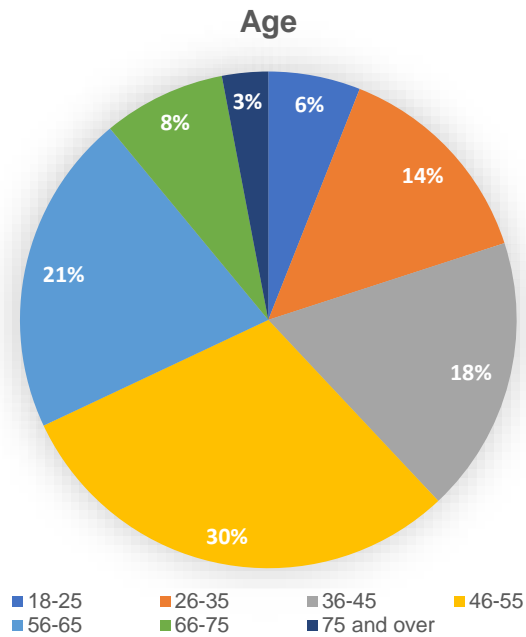
Gender	
Male	66%
Female	34%



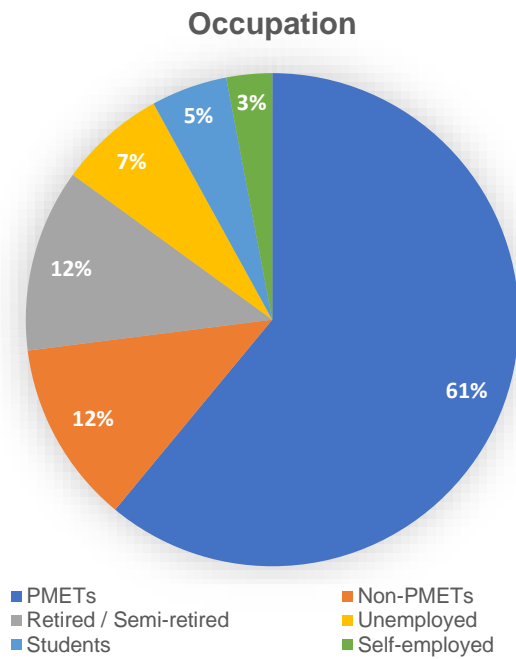
First-time Participant	
Yes	45%
No	41%
Unable to Verify	14%



Age	
18-25	6%
26-35	14%
36-45	18%
46-55	30%
56-65	21%
66-75	8%
Above 75	3%



Occupation	
PMETs	61%
Non-PMETs	12%
Retired / Semi-retired	12%
Unemployed	7%
Students	5%
Self-employed	3%



ANNEX B

[UPDATE] SINGAPORE TOGETHER EMERGING STRONGER CONVERSATIONS – PUBLIC SESSIONS

Emerging Stronger Conversation Sessions	Date	Time	Remarks
Session 1	16 Jun 2020 (Tue)	3.30pm – 5.30 pm	Completed
Session 2	1 Aug 2020 (Sat)	9.30 am – 12.00 pm	Completed
Session 3	5 Aug 2020 (Wed)	7.00 pm – 9.30 pm	Completed
Session 4	12 Aug 2020 (Wed)	7.00pm – 9.30pm	Completed
Session 5	15 Aug 2020 (Sat)	9.30am – 12.00pm	Completed
Session 6	22 Aug 2020 (Sat)	9.30am – 12.00pm	Completed
Session 7	5 Sep 2020 (Sat)	9.30am – 12.00pm	Completed
Session 8	9 Sep 2020 (Wed)	7.00pm – 9.30pm	Completed
Session 9	12 Sep 2020 (Sat)	9.30am – 12.00pm	Completed
Session 10	23 Sep 2020 (Wed)	7.00pm – 9.30pm	Completed
Session 11	26 Sep 2020 (Sat)	9.30am – 12.00pm	Completed
Session 12	24 Oct 2020 (Sat)	9.00am – 11.30am	<i>*to be held today</i>
Session 13	31 Oct 2020 (Sat)	10.00am – 12.30pm	<i>Upcoming – Youth ESC</i>
Session 14	28 Nov 2020 (Sat)	3.00pm – 5.00pm	<i>Upcoming - Tamil-English ESC</i>
Session 15	TBC	TBC	<i>Upcoming – Malay ESC</i>

**Interested members of the public can visit the SG Together website to sign up for upcoming sessions.*

[UPDATE] INFOGRAPHICS - SNAPSHOT OF THE TOPICS DISCUSSED AT RECENTLY HELD SG TOGETHER EMERGING STRONGER CONVERSATIONS



EMERGING STRONGER CONVERSATIONS

A series of conversations for Singaporeans to come together to reflect on their experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, and garner ideas on helping Singapore emerge stronger from the crisis. As part of the Singapore Together movement, we aim to turn these insights and ideas into action and partnerships.

SINGAPOREANS WHO PARTICIPATED TO DATE: 623 (As of 18 September 2020. Cumulative since June 2020)

5 KEY ISSUES RAISED

SOCIAL SUPPORT



- Concerned that social inequality and mobility will worsen as COVID-19 continues. Increased support from ground-up movements, corporates, and promotion of the social sector is needed.
- Feel the need to hear from those who are harder to reach e.g. the elderly, and offer timely help.
- Care about mental health and wellness (among caregivers, elderly living alone and youths), in view of the increased domestic violence and mental health issues during the circuit breaker period.

PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENTS



- Agree with the government's shift towards engagement and co-creation, but more can be done to create platforms for people to talk to one another.
- The government could facilitate constructive discourse and partner the community in implementing solutions.
- Want more safe spaces to hold face-to-face conversations on difficult/uncomfortable topics.
- Hope that migrant workers would be better cared for through a multi-stakeholder approach.

NATIONAL IDENTITY & SHARED VALUES



- Hope that society can be more empathetic, and that Singaporeans can put themselves in others' shoes before judging or making online comments.
- Hope for more Singaporeans to show care and look out for one another, and policymakers to have greater human touch in their work.
- Feel that we should strengthen our belief in meritocracy and ensure it is done strictly and fairly for everyone.

JOBS & ECONOMY



- Feel that Singapore needs new areas of growth to stay competitive in the tech space.
- Feel the need to rethink pre-employment training and skills upgrading to equip local workforce for the future economy.

DIGITALISATION & TECHNOLOGY



- Feel that COVID-19 steered us towards a new norm of digital savviness, e.g. Zoom helped many stay connected and enabled work efficiencies.
- Appreciate the government for helping seniors pick up new skills.
- Hope that digital access can be provided to more disadvantaged families.

OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY...



We need to identify entrepreneurs and leaders of community initiatives who acted during COVID-19 and empower these individuals. They have potential to become leaders of change."



My hopes are for more people to get out to help others, be it big or small. Teach others to use Zoom to communicate better during this crisis. Be kinder. Embrace ways to build 'digital' kampung spirit. Anyone could be connected easily be it young or old. Adopt technology transformation. Embrace change."

Note: This infographics represent the issues raised at the conversations held between 6th and 18th of September 2020.



singaporetogether.gov.sg

#SingaporeTogether #EmergingStronger
LEARN MORE ABOUT SINGAPORE TOGETHER. STAY CONNECTED.
singaporetogether.gov.sg OurSG @Our_SG

[UPDATE] SG TOGETHER ACTION NETWORKS**Beyond COVID-19 Taskforce**

The Beyond COVID-19 Taskforce was established in May 2020 by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) to guide and strengthen the resilience of the social service sector during and beyond COVID-19.

To strengthen social service agencies' resilience, the Taskforce will gather insights and feedback from multiple stakeholders, identify areas of focus as COVID-19 evolves, and propose ways for the sector to emerge stronger in the 'next normal'. Social service agencies can take reference from these dynamic recommendations and prepare to transit.

The Taskforce will focus on four main areas, including digitalisation for business continuity, innovation in service delivery, strengthening manpower and volunteer mobilisation, and enhancing leadership capabilities.

Lead agency: National Council of Social Service

UPLIFT (Uplifting Pupils in Life and Inspiring Families Taskforce)

Convened in September 2018, UPLIFT is an MOE-led inter-agency taskforce that aims to strengthen support for students from disadvantaged families. This could be enhanced learning, educational or motivational support for students, or wraparound social- and community-based support for their families.

To effectively tackle the multi-faceted issues faced by disadvantaged students and their families, UPLIFT established strong relationships with Self-Help Groups, Social Service Agencies, and several social enterprises and corporates, so that schools can leverage community efforts and resources to support students through initiatives such as befriending, mentoring and enrichment programmes.

Strong community partnerships were crucial in navigating the impact of COVID-19. For example, UPLIFT worked closely with community partners to support students with greater needs, providing them with meal subsidies and devices during the home-based learning period. UPLIFT also worked with community partners to set up a network of tele-befrienders to check in on vulnerable students' well-being and ensure families were coping.

Lead agency: Ministry of Education



SG Cares Community Network

Established in 2018, the SG Cares Community Network brings together stakeholders from 160 government and community help agencies to build local support networks in the community. Since then, 3,500 partners have come together through 21 networking sessions to collaborate and co-create initiatives that benefit the community.

To better support low-income and vulnerable individuals and families who may be affected by COVID-19, partners and volunteers from the SG Cares Community Network will start by proactively reaching out to 50,000 households living in rental housing from June 2020. Partners and volunteers will call households that do not have familiar touchpoints (e.g. Family Service Centres and Social Service Offices) they can readily reach out to for help, check in on their well-being and connect them to further support if necessary. SMSes and posters within the community will also inform households of hotlines and the help available.

With a better understanding of ground needs, the SG Cares Community Network can then serve as a rallying point for ground-up initiatives and donors to coordinate efforts and channel resources to areas of need.

Lead agencies: Ministry of Social and Family Development, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth

Youth Mental Well-being Network

Mental well-being is an area of interest among the youth. There has also been a rising prevalence of mental health conditions among the young. This led to the formation of the Youth Mental Well-being Network in February 2020, after many Singaporeans responded to an open call to come connect with us to enhance youth mental well-being. Since then, over 1,000 youths, mental health professionals, practitioners and parents have stepped forward. The Network was formed to bring together their diverse perspectives and views on youth mental well-being. Members of the Network will build on the good work done by many agencies, community partners and the government to see what more can be done to better support the mental well-being of youths.

On 20 June 2020, Minister Desmond Lee met with some members of the Network who had indicated they were keen to help facilitate the larger group in deciding the areas of opportunity they wanted to work on. Conversations with the other Network members will take place from July 2020.

Lead agencies: Ministry of Social and Family Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health