



REACH MEDIA RELEASE

NDR 2017 Poll: Strong Support for Initiatives on Pre-School Education, Diabetes and Smart Nation

Singaporeans support Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong's National Day Rally which outlined the Government's initiatives to invest in Preschools, fight Diabetes and make Singapore a Smart Nation. Singaporeans were, however, more divided on the potential of Smart Nation to create jobs, and had mixed feelings about cashless payments.

2 These were the findings of REACH's National Day Rally (NDR) telephone poll¹ conducted to gauge Singaporeans' reactions to the announcements made during NDR 2017. A total of 1,710 Singapore residents aged 15 and above who had read or heard at least a little about the announcements in the NDR speech were polled. The sample was weighted to be demographically representative of the national population in terms of gender, age and race. The estimated margin of error is 2.4% at a 95% confidence level.

3 On the specific announcements made by PM Lee during the NDR speech, the poll reflected that:

Pre-school

- **64% of respondents** agreed that the addition of 40,000 more pre-school places over the next 5 years would be sufficient for Singaporeans' needs.
- **66% or 2 in 3 respondents** believed that the introduction of more MOE kindergartens would improve the quality of pre-school education.
- **72% of respondents** believed the setting up of the National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) would attract good teachers and raise the standard of the pre-school profession.
- **77% of respondents** were optimistic that efforts to improve the pre-school sector would ensure that all Singaporean children have the best possible start in life.

Diabetes

- **91% of respondents** agreed that diabetes was a serious issue that deserved national attention.

¹ The Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) poll on NDR 2017 was conducted from 22 to 31 August 2017.

- **86% of respondents** said that they would adopt PM Lee’s suggestions to prevent or manage diabetes.

Smart Nation

- **72% of respondents** largely identified with PM Lee’s vision of a Smart Nation² for Singapore.
- **85% of respondents** considered it acceptable for the Government to use data from sensor networks to detect and counter terrorist threats,
- **70% of respondents** were mostly convinced that Smart Nation would improve Singaporeans’ quality of life.

Divided views whether Smart Nation would create more jobs

4 Singaporeans polled were, however, divided on whether Smart Nation would create more jobs and opportunities for Singaporeans (only 53% agreed with this). They also had mixed feelings regarding the move towards a cashless society (only 48% of respondents supported moving towards a cashless society; 24% disagreed).

5 At REACH Listening Points³ (LPs) and public dialogues, some Singaporeans shared their concerns about whether Singapore’s transformation into a Smart Nation might inadvertently leave behind old Singaporeans among us who could not catch up.

6 Some at REACH LPs also had very limited understanding of what Smart Nation entails. On the idea of a cashless society, there was also resistance from some Singaporeans, who cited overspending, lack of confidence over digital modes of payment, and inability to acquire new technology due to age, as reasons for not adopting e-payment methods.

REACH Chairman’s quote on overall results of NDR Poll

7 Minister of State for the Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Manpower, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and REACH Chairman, Mr Sam Tan said, “The results of the poll showed that Singaporeans largely recognised that the initiatives and the announcements that were made during National Day Rally 2017 would be beneficial for them and for our future generations.”

8 “Like those who were polled, Singaporeans who gave their feedback on REACH engagement platforms⁴ felt that PM’s message on Diabetes really struck a chord with them. Many felt that it was timely that PM highlighted the seriousness of the issue, and felt encouraged to eat more healthily. They also agreed with the move to get soft drinks

² PM envisioned a Singapore which will leverage on IT to:

- create new jobs and new business opportunities;
- Make our economy more productive;
- Make our lives more convenient; and
- Make this an outstanding city in which to live, work and play

³ Listening Points are open concept feedback booths where Singaporeans may obtain information, and leave feedback on national policies and issues.

⁴ REACH platforms include the REACH Facebook page, Discussion Forum, emails, three WhatsApp Chats (English, Chinese and Malay), while engagement sessions include two public dialogues (English and Chinese), two radio talkshows (English and Chinese), 13 REACH Listening, two Facebook ‘Live’ Chat (English and Malay).

producers to reduce the sugar in their drinks sold in Singapore, with many parents supporting the move because of the worry that their children would develop a habit of consuming high levels of sugar from young.

9 “On the topic of Pre-school education, there was strong support for the initiatives to build up the preschool sector. Many felt that preschools served as the foundational phase when children build up their character and passion for learning. Many also agreed that it was important to give young children a good start and have the best chance to succeed in life.”

10 “We see that there is strong support for PM’s vision to make Singapore a Smart Nation. However, not every citizen may appreciate fully what Smart Nation is about. Therefore, society as a whole has a role to play to step in to educate Singaporeans on Smart Nation and supporting them, including our senior citizens, in embracing IT to ensure that no one is left behind.”

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About REACH

REACH (reaching everyone for active citizenry @ home) was launched in October 2006 when the Feedback Unit was restructured to move beyond gathering public feedback, to become the lead agency for engaging and connecting with citizens. This signifies its renewed commitment to encourage and promote an active citizenry through citizen participation and involvement. The three key roles of REACH are to: Gather and Gauge Ground Sentiments; Reach Out and Engage Citizens; and Promote Active Citizenry through Citizen Participation and Involvement.

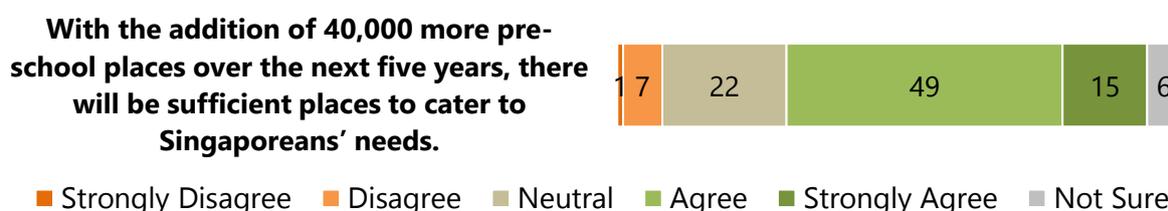
Findings of Poll on Sentiments towards National Day Rally 2017

Background and Survey Methodology

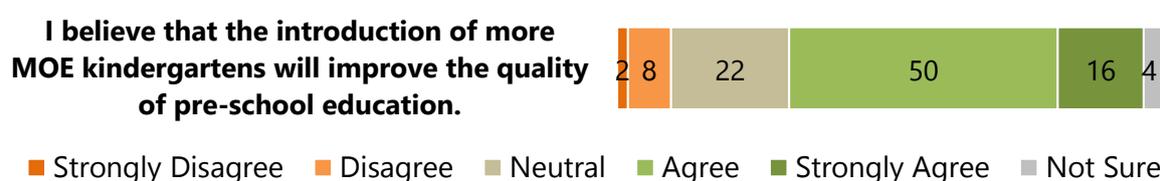
The National Day Rally (NDR) was held on 20 August 2017. A Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) was conducted from **22 to 31 August 2017**. This report is based on data collected from **1,710** Singapore residents aged 15 and above **who had read or heard at least a little about the announcements in the NDR speech**. The sample was weighted to be demographically representative of the national population in terms of gender, age, and race. The estimated margin of error was 2.4% at a 95% confidence level.

Pre-School

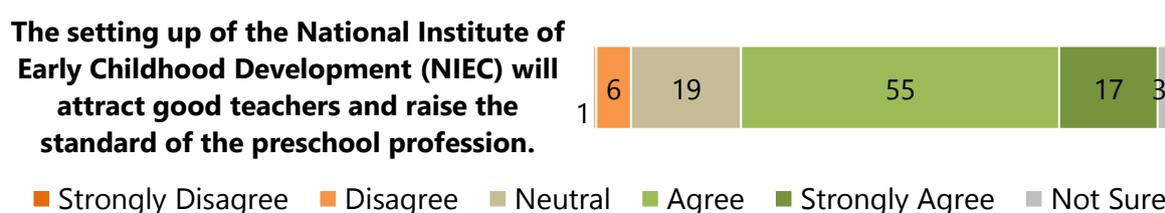
2. **64%** agreed that the addition of 40,000 more pre-school places over the next 5 years would be sufficient for Singaporeans' needs.



3. **2 in 3** Singaporeans believed that the introduction of more MOE kindergartens would improve the quality of pre-school education.



4. **72%** believed the setting up of the National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) would attract good teachers and raise the standard of the pre-school profession.



5. **77%** were optimistic that efforts to improve the pre-school sector would ensure that all Singaporean children have the best possible start in life.

The efforts to improve the pre-school sector will ensure that all Singaporean children have the best possible start in life.

1 6 14 57 20

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

Diabetes

6. **9 in 10** respondents agreed that diabetes was a serious issue that deserved national attention, and **86%** said that they would adopt PM Lee’s suggestions to prevent or manage diabetes.

Diabetes in Singapore is a serious issue that deserves national attention.

1 1 7 51 40 1

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

I will adopt PM’s suggestions to prevent the onset of diabetes, or to manage my existing diabetic condition.

1 2 11 54 32 0.4

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

Smart Nation

8. **72%** said they identified with PM Lee’s vision of a Smart Nation for Singapore.

I identify with PM’s vision of a Smart Nation for Singapore.

2 7 17 53 19 3

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

9. **85%** considered it acceptable for the Government to use data from sensor networks to detect and counter terrorist threats.

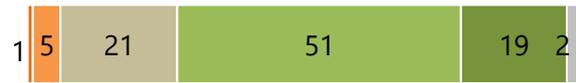
It is acceptable for the Government to use data from sensor networks to detect and counter terrorist threats.

1 3 10 50 35 1

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

10. **7 in 10** Singaporeans were convinced that Smart Nation would improve Singaporeans’ quality of life.

I believe that the Smart Nation effort will improve the quality of life for Singaporeans.



Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

11. **53%** agreed that Smart Nation would create more jobs and opportunities for Singaporeans. Almost 1 in 3 were neutral.

I believe that the Smart Nation effort will create more jobs and opportunities for Singaporeans.



Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure

12. **48%** of respondents supported moving towards a cashless society, while 24% had reservations about this.

I support moving towards a cashless society.



Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree Not Sure