BLACK BOX

YouKnowAnot

Singapore's Leading Monthly Public Survey

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

Those who say they are satisfied with the way things are going in Singapore

Dec | 73

Nov | 77

Community Satisfaction down four points

PERSONAL FINANCES

Those who rate their personal finances as Excellent/Good

Dec | 68

Nov | 68

Personal Finances remained the same

NATIONAL ECONOMY

Those who rate current economic conditions in Singapore as Excellent/Good

Dec | 72

Nov | 74

National Economy down two points

Singapore's Top 5 News Stories of the Month

1 MRT collision resulting in no train service between Joo Koon and Tuas Link

93%
39%

2 SMRT fires eight employees over falsification of maintenance records which caused tunnel flooding

89%
27%

3 PM and other ministers raise prospect of tax increases in 2018

87%
32%

4 Minister: Singaporeans may have to pay tax on goods and services bought online

84%
29%

5 Couple jailed for abusing flatmate until her death

84%
25%

% Who Followed the News
% Who Paid Close Attention

"Wah Lau Eh, Liddat How Can?":

What Captured our Attention in 2017

2017 in Review:
News Headlines Ranked

2017 was a year of surprises for Singaporeans with several local stories grabbing headlines, some for days on end.

The Oxley Road saga which saw PM Lee Hsien Loong and his two siblings embroiled in a highly public dispute was seen as the year's top local story (21%) whilst SMRT received significant attention for several high-profile incidents (20%), including a train collision and flooding in an MRT tunnel. As we gear up for 2018 Singapore Budget due to be announced in February, Singaporeans are also keeping a close eye on the prospect of tax hikes (19%).

1 Oxley Road house dispute amongst members of PM Lee's family
21%

2 Numerous SMRT incidents resulting in train service disruption (e.g. faulty signaling system, Bishan tunnel flooding, train collision between Joo Koon and Tuas Link)
20%

3 Govt likely to raise taxes as spending on economy, infrastructure and social safety nets expected to increase
19%

4 Young couple caught on camera bullying old man over seat at Toa Payoh hawker centre
11%

5 Halimah Yacob sworn in as Singapore's 8th President after a non-contested Reserved Presidency election
11%

6 Several people arrested under the Internal Security Act for radicalization
5%

7 Director of control operations at SMRT Train fined $55,000 for failing to ensure the safety of its employees resulting in a fatal track accident last year
5%

8 US warship collides with oil tanker near Singapore with 10 sailors killed
4%

9 8 junior colleges among 28 schools to be merged
3%

10 Government releases Committee for the Future Economy report
2%

2017 in Review:
News Personalities of the Year

Who We Loved …and Who We Loved to Hate

President and former Speaker of Parliament Halimah Yacob was voted as the 'stylo milo' favourite Singaporean news personality of the year (17%), ahead of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (13%).

Low Thia Kiang, leader of the key opposition party, the Workers' Party ranked third with 10% of the votes.

Amongst Singaporeans aged 15-24 however, Xiao Ming, the face and founding member of SGAG, a social media content site was the most popular (15%).
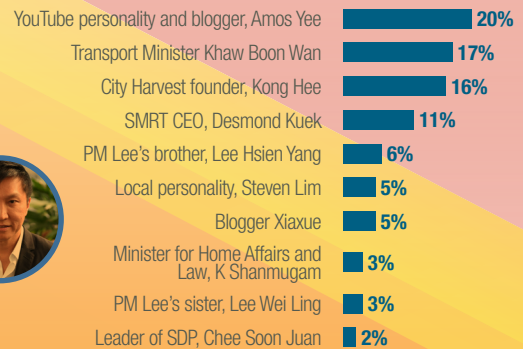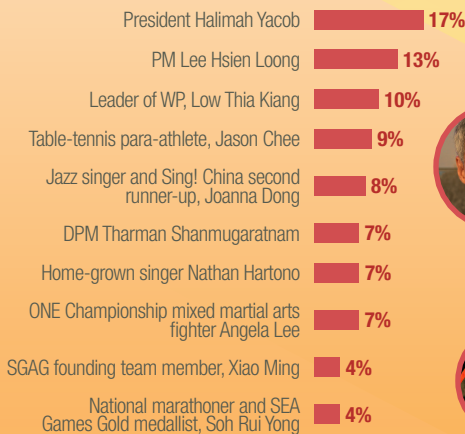
Teen blogger and YouTube personality Amos Yee who has successfully sought asylum in the United States came in top as the newsmaker most Singaporeans love to hate (20%).

With a portfolio plagued with SMRT woes, Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan ranked second at 17% and SMRT CEO Desmond Kuek coming in fourth at 11%.

Ahead of Kuek, in third place was City Harvest Church founder Kong Hee who is currently serving a 3.5 years jail term for the misappropriation of funds.

One of the key protagonists in the Oxley Road affair, PM Lee's younger brother Lee Hsien Yang ranked fifth as our favourite villain at 6%.

President Halimah Yacob	17%
PM Lee Hsien Loong	13%
Leader of WP, Low Thia Kiang	10%
Table-tennis para-athlete, Jason Chee	9%
Jazz singer and Sing! China second runner-up, Joanna Dong	8%
DPM Tharman Shanmugaratnam	7%
Home-grown singer Nathan Hartono	7%
ONE Championship mixed martial arts fighter Angela Lee	7%
SGAG founding team member, Xiao Ming	4%
National marathoner and SEA Games Gold medallist, Soh Rui Yong	4%

YouTube personality and blogger, Amos Yee	20%
Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan	17%
City Harvest founder, Kong Hee	16%
SMRT CEO, Desmond Kuek	11%
PM Lee's brother, Lee Hsien Yang	6%
Local personality, Steven Lim	5%
Blogger Xiaxue	5%
Minister for Home Affairs and Law, K Shanmugam	3%
PM Lee's sister, Lee Wei Ling	3%
Leader of SDP, Chee Soon Juan	2%

Pre-Budget Speculation: Will We See Tax Hikes?

Raising GST Most Painful for Two in Five Singaporeans

Speculation has been brewing that taxes will be raised following February's Budget given PM Lee's earlier announcement in November 2017 that tax hikes are inevitable as government expenditure increases.

There are various ways the Government could increase tax revenue, with GST the odds on favourite which given it was the second-highest contributor to tax collection in 2016.
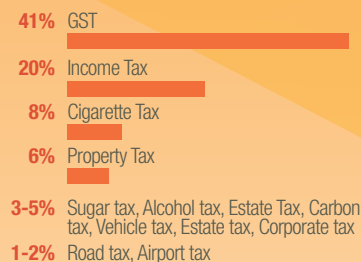
More than two in five Singaporeans (41%) however, would feel the most pain personally if GST was to increase. The introduction of new taxes such as e-commerce tax (4%), sugar tax (4%), carbon tax (3%), and estate tax (re-introduction, 3%) are seen as less painful.

Singaporeans feel that amongst the various groups that can be taxed, it would be 'very acceptable to raise taxes' amongst high income earners (41%), polluters (40%) and international companies (33%). Only 7% feel that all income earners ought to be subjected to tax raises.
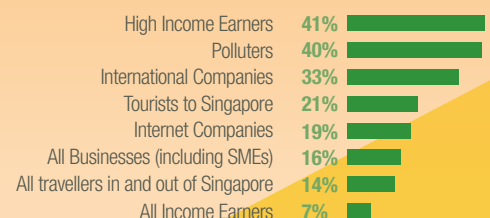
Pain but No Gain

Q: In which of the following areas would a tax increase or the introduction of new taxes cause you the most pain personally?

41%	GST
20%	Income Tax
8%	Cigarette Tax
6%	Property Tax
3-5%	Sugar tax, Alcohol tax, Estate Tax, Carbon tax, Vehicle tax, Estate tax, Corporate tax
1-2%	Road tax, Airport tax

Who Should be Taxed More?

Q. Assuming that the Government needs more money for key areas such as healthcare, education and infrastructure etc., how acceptable would new or higher taxes on the following be?

High Income Earners	41%
Polluters	40%
International Companies	33%
Tourists to Singapore	21%
Internet Companies	19%
All Businesses (including SMEs)	16%
All travellers in and out of Singapore	14%
All Income Earners	7%

Government Satisfaction Index

Monthly Index

79 GSI

Monthly Trend

-1

Government satisfaction fell by one point to 79 points in December, with most areas remaining relatively stable.

Looking at January-December results, the GSI improved by 2 points over the year.

Observing the gains and losses for the year the Government did well on level of salaries and wages (+12), COE prices (+12) and population management (+10) but lost 9 points on public transport and 8 points on cost of living.

Rank	Issue	Satisfaction with Government	Change since last month	Change over last 12 months
1	Crime levels	95	0	2
2	Defence/ national security	95	0	2
3	The environment	93	0	2
4	Racial relations/ integration	91	-1	2
5	Education system	91	1	4
6	Care for the Elderly	88	0	1
7	Moral standards	86	-1	-1
8	Health insurance/protection	85	0	2
9	Management of the economy	84	-1	2
10	Jobs and unemployment	79	2	8
11	CPF/pensions	78	2	4
12	Taxes	76	-2	-1
13	Government accountability	76	0	-3
14	Level of salaries and wages	76	-1	12
15	Civil rights/ liberties/ free speech	74	-1	-2
16	Population management	71	1	10
17	Housing affordability	68	1	3
18	Public transport	67	-2	-9
19	Gap between rich and poor	67	-2	9
20	Motor vehicle prices/ COE	62	1	12
21	Cost of living	60	0	-8
	Overall Government Satisfaction Index	**79**	**-1**	**2**

About the Results

Each month Blackbox conducts interviews with a representative sample of 1,000 Singaporeans. We use a geographically stratified online sample. Our methodology also applies quota controls to ensure representative demographic coverage of the population. If you would like to purchase customised questions for your organisation or want to dig into our historical general community data/demographic information, please contact yuling@blackbox.com.sg for assistance.

Who We Are

Blackbox Research is an award-winning Singapore based agency specialising in communications insights. We provide advanced research, analytics and digital intelligence services for both public sector and commercial clients. Our team has expertise covering market research, strategic communications and messaging, advertising and public policy.
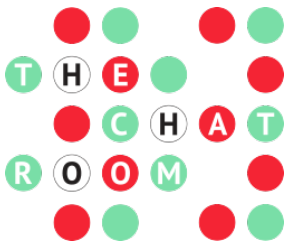
You Know Anot

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