



香港科技大學
THE HONG KONG
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY

‘Rapid population ageing: a global call to action’

HelpAge International Webinar,
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The reality

Certainly some truth

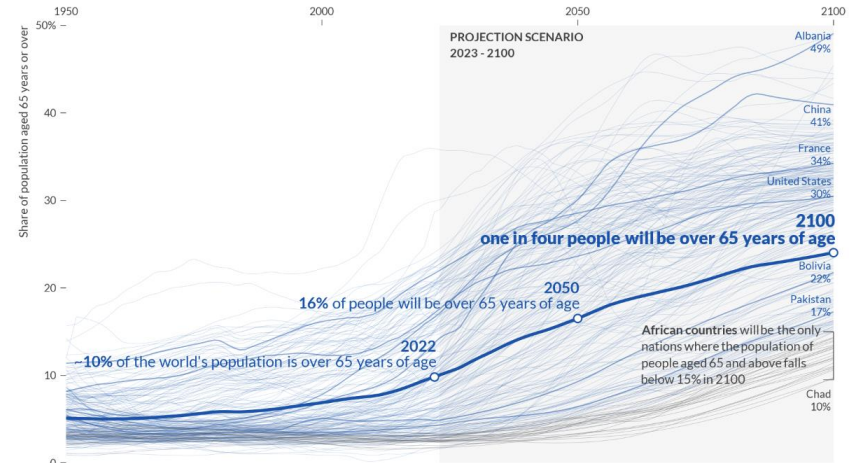
Relative ageing; babies; pensions

‘Frail’? Just a fraction of over-60s

A global phenomenon

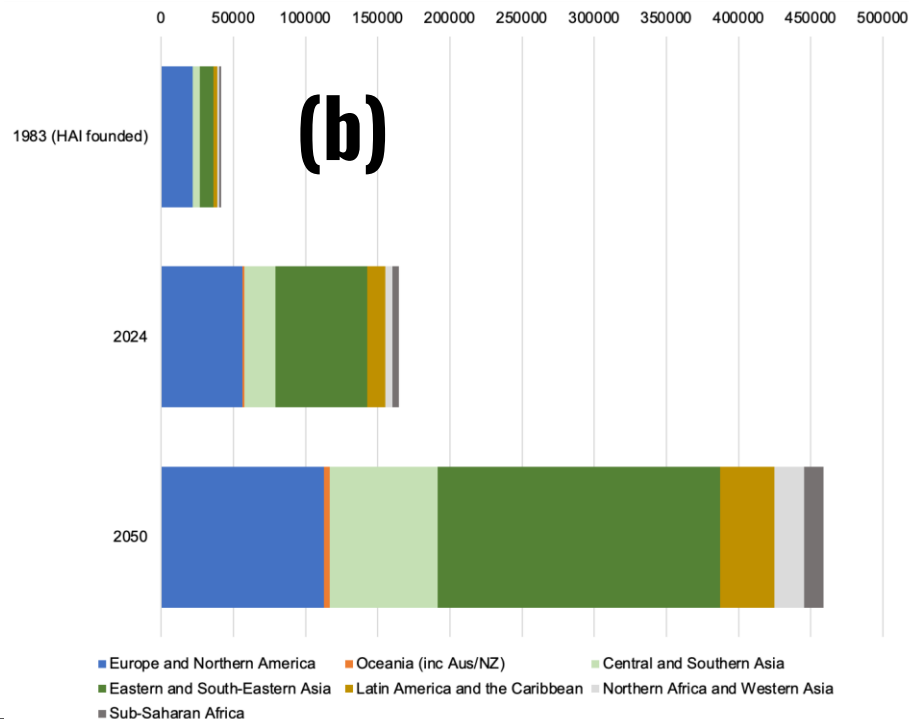
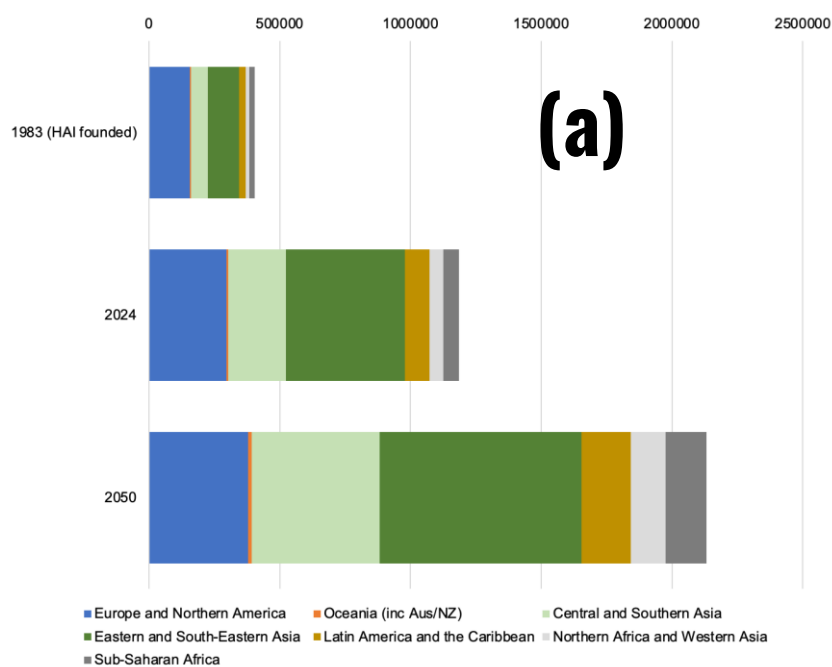
The world's population is aging

The population of people aged 65 and above is rising in every country, and will continue to do so in the future



Visualization: Pablo Alvarez | Source: United Nations World Population Prospects (2022) (via OurWorldInData.org)

Population aged (a) 60+ and (b) 80+, world regions



An incomplete transformation

Rights, tackling ageism

Changing image

More positive view

Triumph of humanity

But...

Never too old
to follow your
passion

durham.ca/agefriendly
#agefriendlydurham





INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

F&D FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT

AGING IS THE REAL POPULATION
BOMB

The Observer
**Ageing planet: the new demographic
timebomb**

TIME BOMB

*How population aging will transform our world
and why we must act before it's too late*

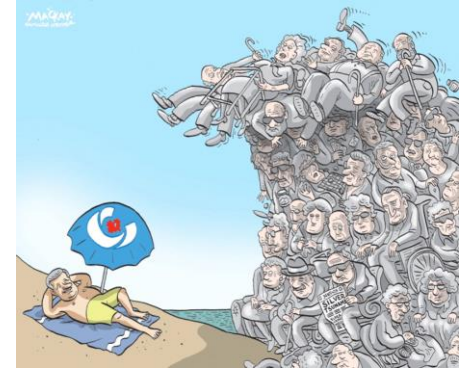


MARK ADLER

Forbes

FORBES > BUSINESS > MANUFACTURING

Bracing For The Silver Tsunami



Tackling the negativity around population ageing

Preventing the liberation of older people

‘A demographic solution’?

Holistic, joined-up, all-of-age, life-course, systemic

Paradigm shifts

20c: rapid pop. growth; cheap labour;
modernism and industrial growth

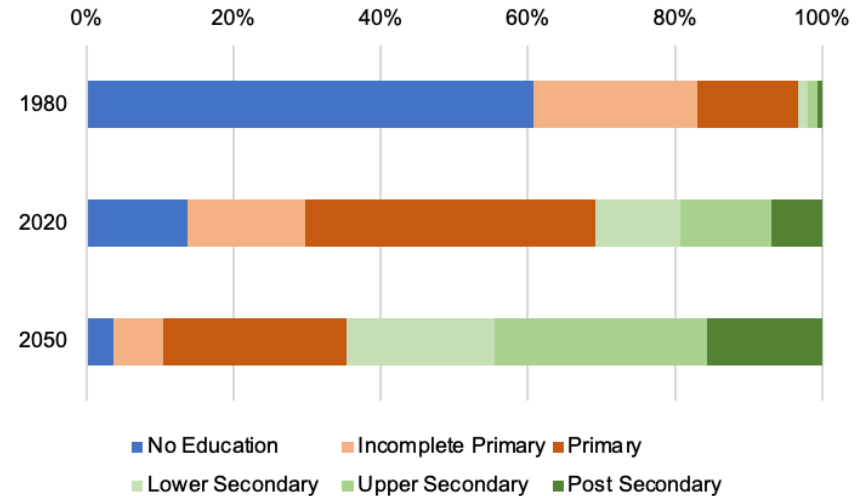
21c: different worlds (slow and fast
growth/ageing)

***Cannot afford to squander human
capital***

Multidimensional change

Demographic metabolism (Lutz)

SE Asia, 60+, Edu attainment (WIC 2018)



Some 'easy' wins (if not always politically easy)

Better measures and more careful language

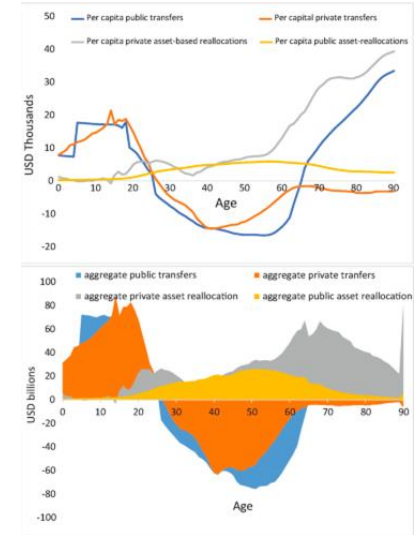
Prospective ageing; NTAs (inc. time); Dependency

Reforming existing stretched health and welfare systems

Sustainability; equitable?

Gerontechnology

Active ageing; age-friendly cities; anti-ageism



Work and health

Not just working/living longer; **working/living better**

Age discrimination; recognising (unpaid) work in older age

More flexible older work opportunities; (reverse) mentoring

Lifelong learning to counter skills obsolescence

Work, health and active-ageing in a virtuous cycle

Technology to adapt; match

Second Demographic Dividend

China's Aging Population Is a Major Threat to Its Future



Li An Xiao, 85, and his wife swim with friends on Hainan Island, known as China's Florida. Sim Chi Yin—Magnum Photos for

Ageing as an intergenerational, life-course process

Not just better work (and health) for older persons

Younger/middle-aged: older persons of tomorrow

Life-course/cycle approach to ageing; early investment

But also supporting the systems of **today**

Maximising opportunities and releasing potential at *all* ages

For own life-course

For intra- and inter-generational redistribution

A fantasy?

Ageing as a driver of growth (?)

(Second Demographic Dividend)

First Demographic Dividend

Favourable pop. characteristics

Automatic? Human capital, job rich

growth

Can be squandered entirely

Window of opportunity: widen, lengthen

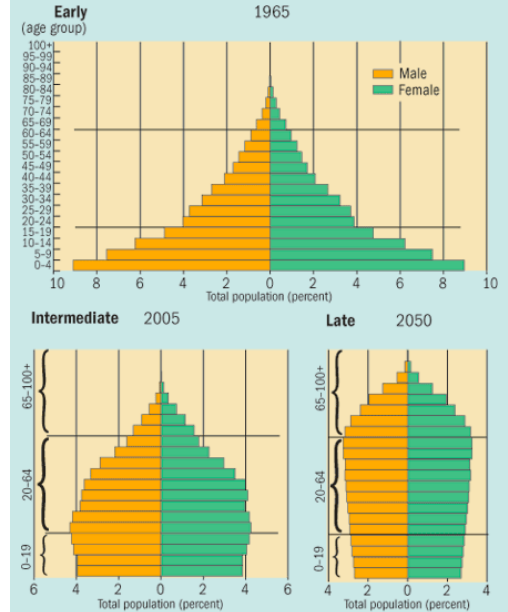
Learn from mistakes (equity, inclusivity etc)

Get old before get rich? Alternative paradigm

Chart 1

Thailand's demographic transition

Thailand has just begun the intermediate stage, its chance to seize the demographic dividend.



Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2004 revision.

A call to action

Ageing is becoming an ever greater global issue
Self-fulfilling apocalyptic prophecy?

Reimagine population ageing:

New population paradigm

Simply a reality of the 21st century

Can respond in different ways

Has to be all-of-society, all-of-age



How do we do that in practice?

Population ageing is not (only) about older people

Proactively change language and narrative

Need to convince economists, politicians

Talk their language

Growth, opportunity, productivity...

But admit that systematic, holistic, intergenerational change is needed

Requires working across generations for all to succeed

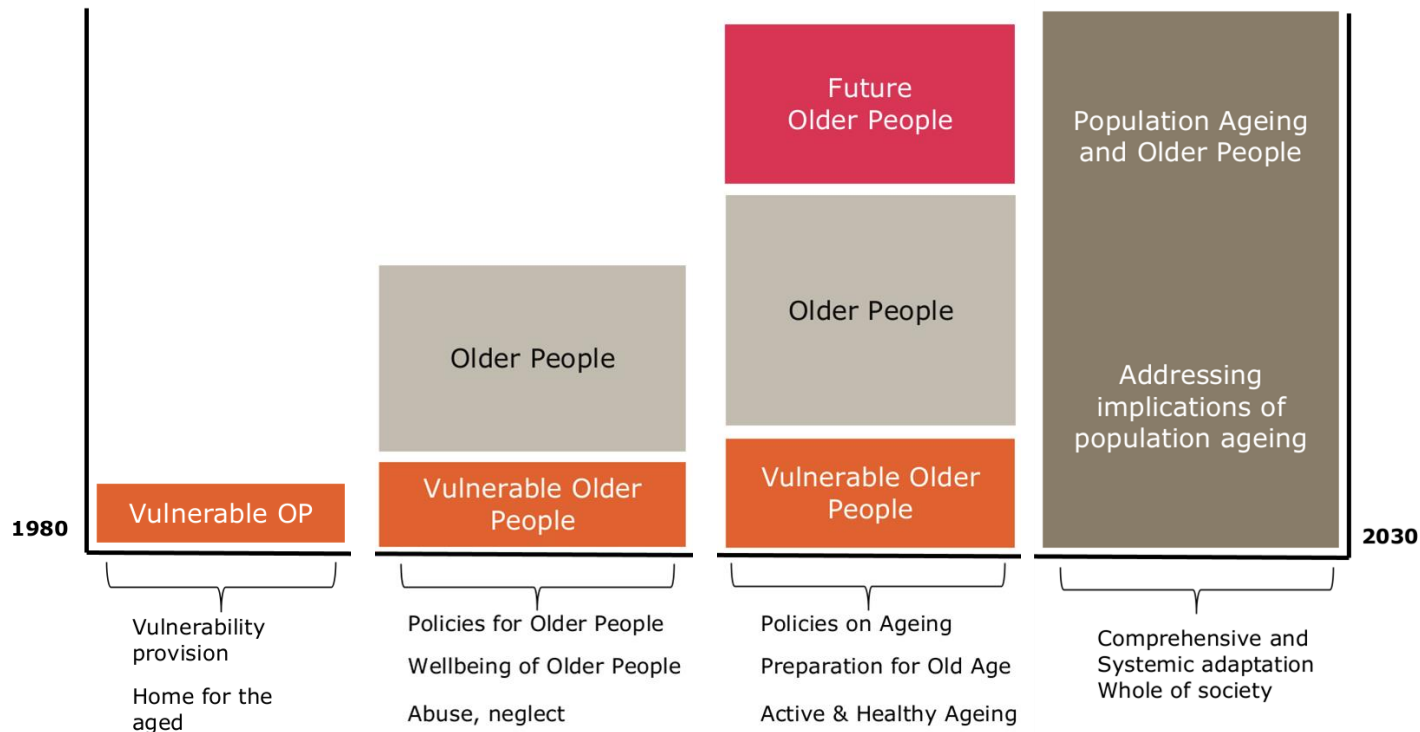
Bridging the generational 'divide'

Crisis in youth work, voice,
mental health around the
world

Counterintuitive for groups
such as HelpAge to engage in
this?

No! Intergenerational
activities long in existence





*Opportunity
to become
the global
lead in this
area of
redefining
population
ageing*