United Nations ESCAP Asian Symposium on Building Sustainable Ageing Societies 4-5 July 2012, Changchun, China

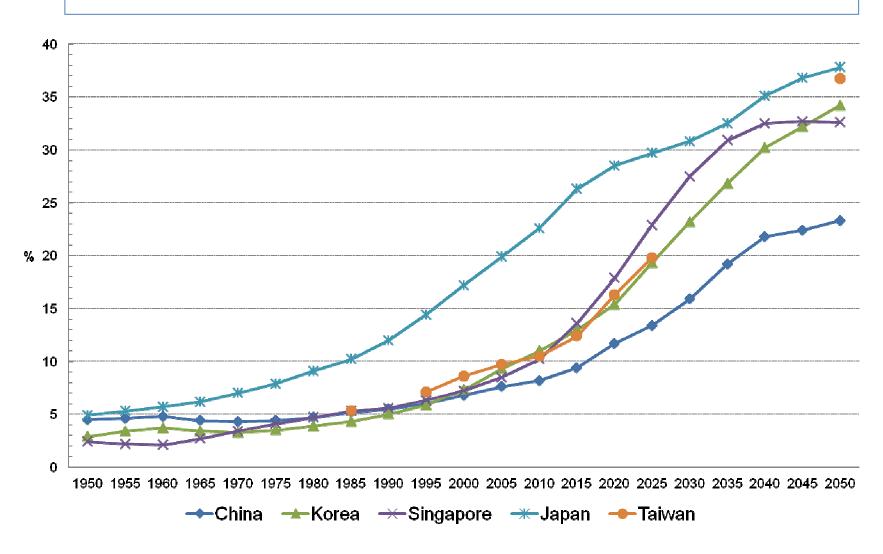
Population Aging and Its Impact on Economy and Society: The Case of Asian Countries

Hanam Phang, Ph. D. Korea Labor Institute phang@kli.re.kr

I. Introduction: Dimensions of Population Ageing

Figure 1: Asia Ageing: 1950-2050

Percent of the Population Aged 65+



1. Two Dimensions of Population Ageing

- Two Forces of Demographics: (1) Increasing Life expectancy,
 (2) Declining Fertility
- Increasing Life-Expectancy: + effect on labor supply; effect on social security thru. Increasing old-age dependency
- Declining Fertility: factor for labor force growth; effect on productivity (if age productivity correlates negatively)
- Population Ageing is an outcome of the Two Forces -> the Net impact is open, undetermined
 - Which force is dominating?

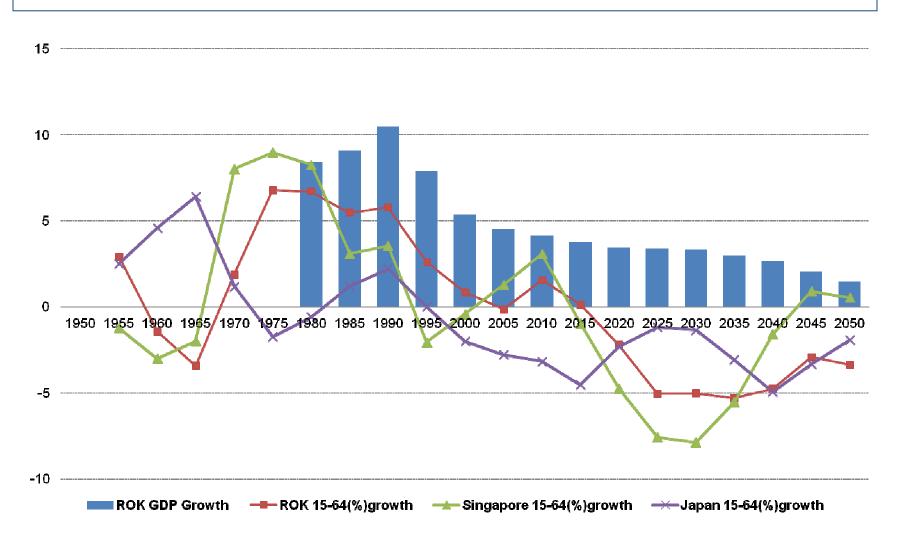
2. Definition of the 'Old-aged': who are the 'old-aged' anyway?

- Varies by country and between population and labor statistics
- 65+ in most population statistics
- 50+ or 55+ in labor statistics of many countries
- As the human life-expectancy ever increasing, we may need to redefine 'the old-aged' in the near future
 - Many European countries: plan to raise up their pensionable age (65 -> 67 -> 70?)
 - Improvement of health => biological age becoming younger
 - Social recognition of 'being old' => 70+ in social surveys

3. Population Decrease: Size or Rate?

- Population ageing could proceed without a significant decrease in the absolute size of the population and the labor force
- Ex: ROK => would become 'aged society' by around 2020, while her population and labor force will be still growing by then (Taiwan, about the same)
- More critical is Rate!
 - decreasing rate of growth (population or labor force), more closely related to economic growth
 - Esp. the proportion of the economically active population (15-64)

Figure 2. Growth Rate of Population (15-64) and GDP: Trends and Prospects in Asian Countries



ation Ageing and its Impact on Economy and Society



