

# **DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LABOUR MOBILITY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

by  
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## **Outline of Presentation**

- **Introduction**
- **The Demographic Situation in Asia**
- **Some Theoretical Considerations – The Demographic Dividend**
- **Growth of the Migration Age Population in Asia and the Pacific**
- **Implications for International Migration**
- **Benefiting from the Demographic Dividend**
- **Conclusion**

'In the contemporary world, the principal forces that are driving international migration are due to the '3Ds': differences in development, demography and democracy ... because the differentials are widening, the number of people seeking to migrate will continue to increase in the future'.

(Global Commission on International Migration, 2005, 12)

'A key driver in the demand for international migration over the next 20 years will be slowing growth, then decline, of the labour force in high income countries. The age group that supplies the bulk of the labour force (15-65 year old) is expected to peak near 500 million in 2010 and then fall to around 474 million by 2025'.

(World Bank, 2006, 29)

## ESCAP Region<sup>1</sup>: Major Demographic Changes, 1970-2007

Source: UNESCAP, 1984, 2007

Demographic Variable	1970	2007	Percent Change 1970-2007
Total Population (m)	2,041.2	4,077	+99.7
Percent of World Population	55.2	61.5	-11.4
Annual Growth Rate <sup>3</sup>	2.2	1.1	-50.0
Percent Urban <sup>3</sup>	24	42	+75.0
Percent Aged 0-14 <sup>3</sup>	40	27	-32.5
Percent Aged 65+ <sup>3</sup>	4	6	+50.0
Dependency Ratio <sup>3</sup>	80	49	-38.8
Total Fertility Rate <sup>2,3</sup>	5.4	2.3	-57.4
Expectancy of Life at Birth – Males <sup>3</sup>	52	67	+28.8
Expectancy of Life at Birth – Females <sup>3</sup>	54	71	+31.5

<sup>1</sup> The data exclude the countries of Central Asia which were not part of the ESCAP region in 1970 and 1980.

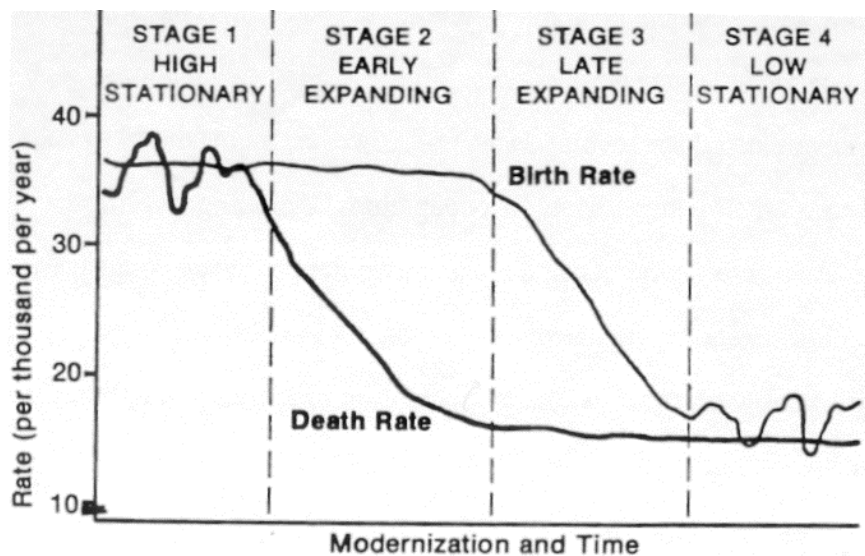
<sup>2</sup> TFR and Life Expectancies refer to the average of the five years prior to 1970.

<sup>3</sup> Includes Central Asia in 2007.

## Variation Between Countries

- **Contrast in size of nations**
- **Contrast in demographic situations between countries**
- **Very dynamic situation**
- **Complexity of region**

## Simplified Model of the Demographic Transition



**Asia-Pacific nations can be seen as being located at various points along the Demographic Transition and this shapes their levels of population and workforce growth and age structure**

## **The Asian Youth Bulge** (Westley and Choe, 2002, 57)

**... 'is the result of a transition from high to low fertility about 15 years earlier. The youth bulge consists of large numbers of adolescents and young adults who were born when fertility was high followed by declining numbers of children born after fertility declined'.**

### **Asian Population Aged 15-24, 1960-2000 and Projected 2020 and 2040**

Source: United Nations, 2003a

Year	Population Aged 15-24		Annual Percentage Growth
	Number ('000)	Percent	Per Annum
1960	283,539	17.34	
1980	489,013	19.43	2.76
1985	565,195	20.52	2.94
1990	610,458	20.25	1.55
2000	615,201	17.64	0.08
2020	669,315	15.60	0.42
2040	653,518	13.79	-0.12

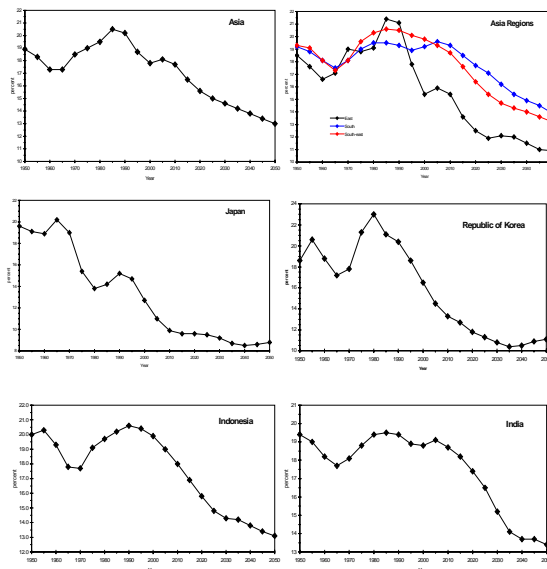
Note: Excludes Western Asia

## Population Aged 15-24 ('000)

	1950	1970	2000	2010	2030
China	101,339	158,205	198,946	218,699	183,918
India	69,278	100,363	190,217	218,177	214,426
Indonesia	15,941	21,255	42,268	42,703	40,532
Japan	16,396	19,831	16,098	12,636	11,133
Philippines	3,583	7,193	15,377	18,165	18,095
Pakistan	7,467	11,162	27,186	36,114	53,511

### Selected Asian Countries: Proportion of the Population Aged 15-24, 1950-2000 (Actual) 2010-2040 (Projected)

Source: United Nations, 2003



## **The Demographic Dividend**

**The passage of the youth bulge into the working ages produce a demographic dividend of economic growth because it increases the proportion of the national population in the working ages. Provided there is a favourable policy environment**

**“... assuming that policies to take advantage of this are in place. In fact the combined effect of this large working age population and health, family, labour, financial and human capital policies can effect virtuous cycles of wealth creation”  
(Bloom, Canning and Sevilla, 2003, xi).**

### **The Demographic Dividend is Delivered Through:**

- **Labour supply** – the numbers available to work are larger. Also women are more likely to enter the workforce as family size decreases, hence, since the Asian youth bulge is associated with low fertility, female workforce participation is likely to be high while the young and the old consume more than they produce.
- **Savings** – working age people tend to have a higher level of output and also a higher level of savings.
- **Human capital investments** – with smaller numbers of children and cultural changes there will be greater investment in education, health, etc. Hence, primary and secondary enrolment ratios are increased.

**However the demographic dividend also implies that a very high proportion of the population is in the high mobility age groups**

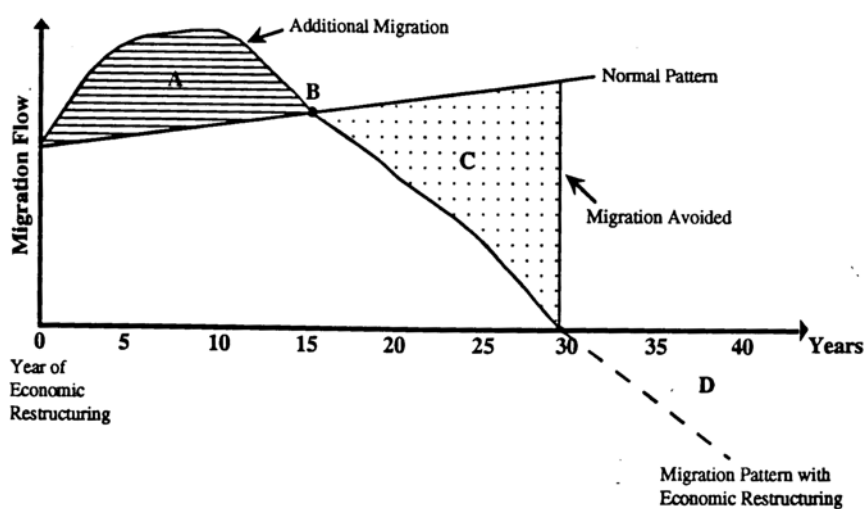


## Linking Demographic Change to Migration

- Zelinsky 1971 – The Mobility Transition
- ‘Great Shaking Loose of Migrants’ in rapid growth phases of transition
- Rural-urban and international migration

### Model of the International Migration Transition

Source: Martin, 1993

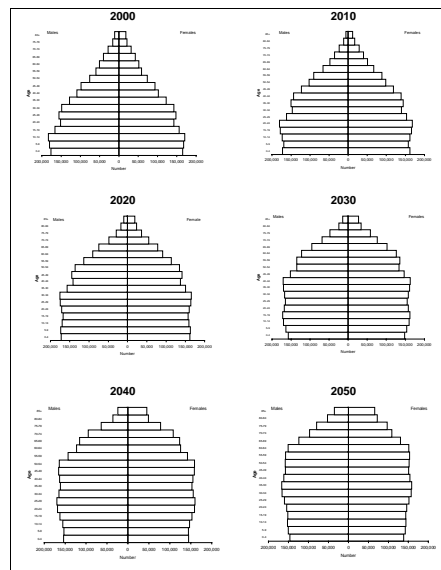


## Martin's Stages of the Migration Transition

- A - This is the migration associated with the early stages of economic restructuring and demographic growth which is above that considered normal in a Less Developed Country. As will be seen later, in Asia this has taken a number of forms.
- B - With economic growth and reduced population growth, however, the outmigration returns to pre take-off levels.
- C - With continued development, emigration is reduced because increased home-based opportunities obviate the need to go overseas to gain work.
- D - Finally, with reduced population growth in the stable low fertility stage of the Demographic Transition and continued economic growth, there is a switchover whereby the country shifts from being a net exporter of labour to one importing labour.

## Asia: Age-Sex Structure of Projected Population, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2030, 2040 and 2050

Source: United Nations 2005



## World Regions: Population Aged 15-64, 2005-2030

Source: United Nations, 2005

World Region	2005		2010		2020		2030		% Growth per Annum		
	Number '000	%	Number '000	%	Number '000	%	Number '000	%	2005-10	2010-20	2020-30
Africa	499590	11.99	563679	12.58	708272	14.28	883048	16.53	2.44	2.31	2.23
Asia	2436660	58.46	2625524	58.58	2885939	58.18	3053783	57.17	1.50	0.95	0.57
Middle East	132126	3.17	148826	3.32	181961	3.67	211707	3.96	2.41	2.03	1.53
Europe	497154	11.93	497285	11.10	471192	9.50	437147	8.18	0.01	-0.54	-0.75
Latin America & the Caribbean	358934	8.61	390083	8.70	443176	8.94	479182	8.97	1.68	1.28	0.78
North America	221993	5.33	233322	5.21	244066	4.92	250040	4.68	1.00	0.45	0.24
Oceania	21529	0.52	23113	0.52	25347	0.51	26893	0.50	1.43	0.93	0.59
World	4167986	100.00	4481833	100.00	4959952	100.00	5341800	100.00	1.46	1.02	0.74

## Asia and the Pacific: Projected Growth of the Population Aged 15-64, 2005-10, 2010-20 and 2020-30

Source: United Nations, 2005

	2005-2010		2010-2020		2020-2030	
	Country	% Growth pa	Country	% Growth pa	Country	% Growth pa
Declining	Japan	-0.70	Japan	-0.90	Republic of Korea	-1.11
			China, Macao SAR	-0.16	Singapore	-1.09
			Kazakhstan	-0.10	China, Macao SAR	-1.05
			Republic of Korea	-0.07	China	-0.61
					Japan	-0.59
					China, Hong Kong SAR	-0.49
					Kazakhstan	-0.46
					Samoa	-0.25
					Tonga	-0.15
					Dem People's Rep of Korea	-0.10
Growth 0-0.99%pa	Republic of Korea	0.56	China	0.14	Sri Lanka	0.03
	Kazakhstan	0.56	Singapore	0.20	Australia	0.30
	Dem People's Rep of Korea	0.73	China, Hong Kong SAR	0.29	Fiji	0.35
	New Zealand	0.85	New Zealand	0.31	Polynesia	0.39
	China	0.93	Thailand	0.47	Myanmar	0.48
	Thailand	0.96	Tonga	0.47	Indonesia	0.61
			Sri Lanka	0.51	French Polynesia	0.65
			Australia	0.52	Kyrgyzstan	0.67
			Dem People's Rep of Korea	0.63	Viet Nam	0.69
			Fiji	0.77	Guam	0.71
					Mongolia	0.80
					Turkmenistan	0.87
					New Caledonia	0.95
					Micronesia	0.99

	2005-2010		2010-2020		2020-2030	
	Country	% Growth pa	Country	% Growth pa	Country	% Growth pa
Growth 1.00-1.99%pa	Tonga	1.00	Myanmar	1.03	Malaysia	1.00
	Sri Lanka	1.01	Iran	1.13	Uzbekistan	1.04
	Australia	1.12	Indonesia	1.17	India	1.05
	Fiji	1.15	Kyrgyzstan	1.21	Iran	1.11
	Samoa	1.16	Polynesia	1.21	Philippines	1.25
	China, Hong Kong SAR	1.24	French Polynesia	1.22	Brunei	1.34
	Indonesia	1.45	Viet Nam	1.30	Tajikistan	1.45
	Polynesia	1.46	Samoa	1.32	Bangladesh	1.50
	French Polynesia	1.46	Turkmenistan	1.39	Papua New Guinea	1.65
	China, Macao SAR	1.50	Guam	1.43	Vanuatu	1.74
	Guam	1.79	Micronesia	1.50	Cambodia	1.83
	Myanmar	1.80	Mongolia	1.51	Nepal	1.85
	Singapore	1.84	India	1.55	Pakistan	1.93
	Micronesia	1.89	New Caledonia	1.57		
	Mongolia	1.93	Uzbekistan	1.62		
	India	1.96	Malaysia	1.66		
	New Caledonia	1.97	Philippines	1.86		
			Brunei	1.89		
			Cambodia	1.96		
			Bangladesh	1.98		
Growth 2.00-2.99%pa	Kyrgyzstan	2.19	Tajikistan	2.23	Solomon Islands	2.11
	Viet Nam	2.27	Vanuatu	2.26	Bhutan	2.13
	Philippines	2.36	Pakistan	2.34	Laos	2.13
	Iran	2.39	Nepal	2.36	Maldives	2.26
	Malaysia	2.41	Bhutan	2.40		
	Bangladesh	2.47	Papua New Guinea	2.42		
	Vanuatu	2.53	Laos	2.57		
	Turkmenistan	2.58	East Timor	2.70		
	Cambodia	2.59	Solomon Islands	2.80		
	Brunei	2.65	Maldives	2.82		
	Uzbekistan	2.69				
	Tajikistan	2.76				
	Nepal	2.82				
	Solomon Islands	2.91				
	Papua New Guinea	2.91				
	Pakistan	2.92				
	Laos	2.94				
	Bhutan	2.98				
Growth 3.00%pa+	Maldives	3.45	Afghanistan	3.30	Afghanistan	3.22
	Afghanistan	3.87			East Timor	3.75
	East Timor	4.82				

## World Regions: Population Aged 15-34, 2005-30

Source: United Nations, 2005

World Region	2005		2010		2020		2030		% Growth per Annum		
	Number '000	%	Number '000	%	Number '000	%	Number '000	%	2005-10	2010-20	2020-30
Africa	317,032	14.71	357,962	15.97	436,954	18.51	522,386	21.68	2.46	2.01	1.80
Asia	1259013	58.42	1294250	57.73	1334690	56.54	1303335	54.09	0.55	0.31	-0.24
Middle East	76725	3.56	83266	3.71	94306	3.99	103263	4.29	1.65	1.25	0.91
Europe	204532	9.49	194752	8.69	168268	7.13	150692	6.25	-0.98	-1.45	-1.10
Latin America & the Ca	196505	9.12	204993	9.14	213653	9.05	215184	8.93	0.85	0.41	0.07
North America	91394	4.24	96239	4.29	101570	4.30	103336	4.29	1.04	0.54	0.17
Oceania	9817	0.46	10406	0.46	11261	0.48	11392	0.47	1.17	0.79	0.12
World	2,155,019	100.00	2,241,870	100.00	2,360,699	100.00	2,409,588	100.00	0.79	0.52	0.21

## Asia and the Pacific: Projected Growth of the Population Aged 15-34, 2005-10, 2010-20, 2020-30

Source: United Nations, 2005

	2005-2010		2010-2020		2020-2030	
Declining	Japan	-2.45	Republic of Korea	-1.58	China, Macao SAR	-3.26
	Republic of Korea	-1.18	Japan	-1.49	Singapore	-2.07
	China	-0.95	Kazakhstan	-1.31	Republic of Korea	-2.03
	China, Hong Kong SAR	-0.57	Iran	-1.25	Kazakhstan	-1.85
	Tonga	-0.56	China, Macao SAR	-1.21	Tonga	-1.24
	Dem People's Rep of Korea	-0.23	China, Hong Kong SAR	-1.03	Dem People's Rep of Korea	-1.06
	Kazakhstan	-0.20	Sri Lanka	-0.87	Myanmar	-1.06
			China	-0.79	China	-0.95
			Thailand	-0.48	Iran	-0.87
			Tonga	-0.29	Viet Nam	-0.78
			Fiji	-0.23	Samoa	-0.76
			Myanmar	-0.17	Mongolia	-0.66
			Viet Nam	-0.13	Turkmenistan	-0.66
			Indonesia	-0.06	Sri Lanka	-0.61
			Mongolia	-0.05	Japan	-0.55
					New Zealand	-0.54
					Kyrgyzstan	-0.53
					Thailand	-0.51
					China, Hong Kong SAR	-0.42
					Uzbekistan	-0.41
				French Polynesia	-0.31	
				Fiji	-0.27	
				Indonesia	-0.11	
				Australia	-0.11	
				Tajikistan	-0.02	
Growth 0-0.99%pa	Samoa	0.00	Turkmenistan	0.21	Cambodia	0.10
	Sri Lanka	0.01	Australia	0.22	India	0.19
	Thailand	0.05	Micronesia	0.26	Philippines	0.20
	Indonesia	0.32	Kyrgyzstan	0.30	Micronesia	0.25
	Micronesia	0.53	Dem People's Rep of Korea	0.30	Malaysia	0.27
	French Polynesia	0.67	Singapore	0.41	New Caledonia	0.44
	Australia	0.72	New Zealand	0.46	Brunei	0.56
	Fiji	0.73	Uzbekistan	0.54	Bangladesh	0.66
	New Zealand	0.75	French Polynesia	0.74	Papua New Guinea	0.73
	Mongolia	0.78	India	0.98	Guam	0.76
	China, Macao SAR	0.83			Vanuatu	0.79
					Pakistan	0.87
					Nepal	0.90

	2005-2010		2010-2020		2020-2030		
Growth 1.00-1.99%pa	Myanmar	1.00	New Caledonia	1.06	Bhutan	1.09	
	New Caledonia	1.02	Philippines	1.09	Maldives	1.11	
	Guam	1.15	Malaysia	1.10	Solomon Islands	1.37	
	Singapore	1.33	Brunei	1.10	Laos	1.38	
	Viet Nam	1.35	Bangladesh	1.21			
	Kyrgyzstan	1.43	Cambodia	1.42			
	India	1.47	Pakistan	1.69			
	Iran	1.83	Bhutan	1.69			
	Philippines	1.84	Tajikistan	1.71			
	Brunei	1.91	Guam	1.71			
	Bangladesh	1.92	Samoa	1.78			
			Vanuatu	1.80			
			Nepal	1.93			
	Growth 2.00-2.99%pa	Malaysia	2.00	Solomon Islands	2.10		
		Turkmenistan	2.02	Papua New Guinea	2.14		
Solomon Islands		2.07	Maldives	2.17			
Uzbekistan		2.09	East Timor	2.17			
Vanuatu		2.35	Laos	2.18			
Papua New Guinea		2.56					
Tajikistan		2.60					
Laos		2.69					
Cambodia		2.76					
Nepal		2.80					
Pakistan	2.96						
Growth 3.00%pa+	Maldives	3.01	Afghanistan	3.32	Afghanistan	3.00	
	Bhutan	3.05			East Timor	4.00	
	Afghanistan	3.41					
	East Timor	5.62					

## Asian and Pacific Countries: Actual and Projected Population Aged 20-34 Years (in Thousands), 1990-2020

Source: United Nations Projections

Year	Males	Females	Total	Percent Growth
<b>Asia</b>				
1990	374,124	350,788	724,912	
2000	427,133	403,832	830,965	14.6
2010	456,755	428,718	885,473	6.5
2020	493,429	461,284	954,713	7.8
<b>East Asia</b>				
1990	172,834	165,470	338,304	
2000	187,805	178,627	366,432	8.3
2010	171,729	159,346	331,075	-9.6
2020	171,069	155,972	327,041	-1.2
<b>South-Central Asia</b>				
1990	141,940	129,454	271,394	
2000	171,087	157,341	328,428	21.0
2010	207,132	192,530	399,662	21.7
2020	240,515	225,098	465,613	16.5
<b>Southeast Asia</b>				
1990	56,349	55,863	112,212	
2000	68,241	67,866	136,107	21.3
2010	77,895	76,842	154,737	13.7
2020	81,847	80,212	162,059	4.7
<b>Pacific</b>				
1990	3,313	3,253	6,567	
2000	3,411	3,466	6,878	4.7
2010	3,899	3,735	7,632	11.0
2020	4,377	4,164	8,541	11.9

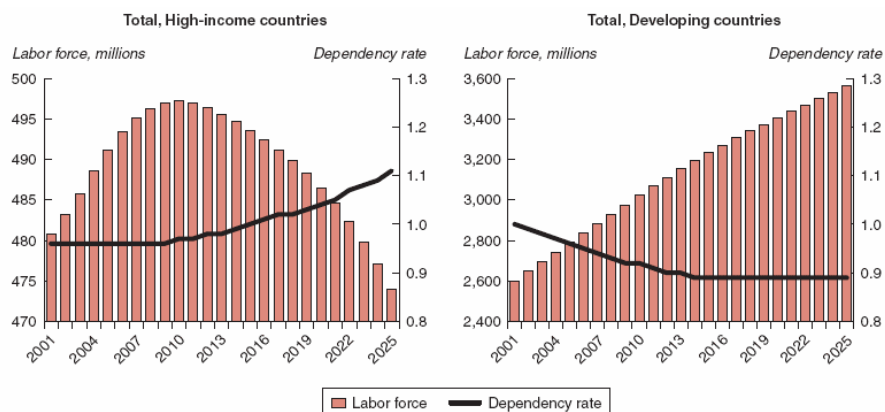
## Summary

- **The workforce age population in Asia and the Pacific is currently growing at around 1.5 percent per annum – slightly above the world average.**
- **However its rate of growth will decrease sharply over the next two decades and the growth rate will have fallen by two thirds by the late 2020s.**
- **The pattern is even more dramatic for the migration prone 15-34 age groups which are currently growing at less than half the rate of the workforce as a whole and will begin to decline in the 2020s, albeit at a very slow rate.**
- **There are massive differences between countries with respect to growth of both the total workforce and migration prone age groups with fastest growth being in the South Asian and Melanesian and a small number of Southeast Asian countries.**

**‘Over the next couple of decades  
nothing will impact OECD  
economies more profoundly than  
demographic trends and, chief  
among them, ageing’  
(Jean-Philippe Cotis, Chief  
Economist, OECD, March 2005).**

## Labour Force Age Groups and Dependency Rates

Source: World Bank, 2006



**However the new cohort of Asia-Pacific people entering the migration prone age groups is not only different to earlier generations in size. It also differs from them in characteristics.**

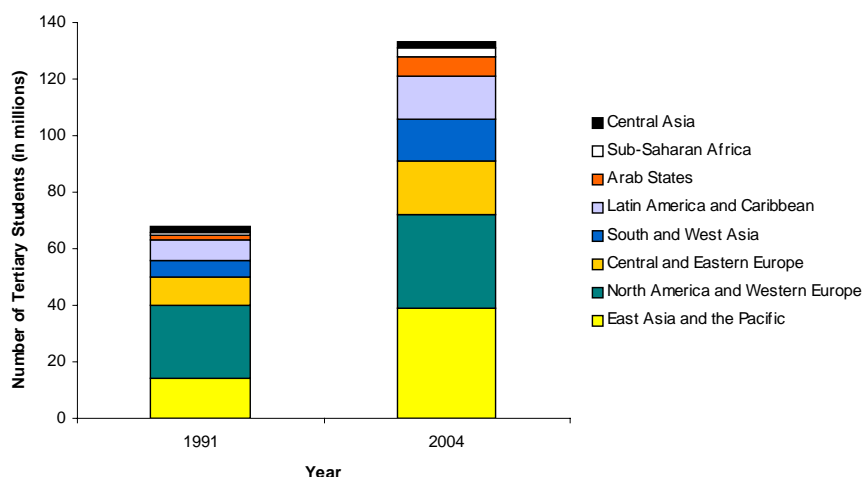
### **Characteristics of New Asia-Pacific Young Adult Generation**

- **Most educated**
- **First to grow up in age of globalisation, mass media, electronic age**
- **Strongly urban based**
- **More informed about opportunities in different places**



## Number of Tertiary Students Worldwide, 1991 and 2004 (millions)

Source: UNESCO 2006, p. 21



## Asia: Number of Enrolments in Tertiary Education by Country, 1999-2006

Source: UNESCO

Country	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Asia</b>								
Bangladesh	709224	726701	878537	855339	877335	821364	911600	...
China	6365625	7364111	9398581	12143723	15186217	...	...	23360535
India	...	9404460	9834046	10576653	11295041	10009137	11777296	...
Indonesia	...	...	3017887	3175833	3441429	3551092	3660270	...
Japan	3940756	3982069	3972468	3966667	3984400	4031604	4038302	...
Malaysia	473357	549205	557118	632309	725865	731077	...	...
Pakistan	...	...	...	385506	401056	520666	782621	...
Republic of Korea	2636388	2837880	3003498	3129899	3210142	3223431	3224875	3210184

## Change in Enrolments, School-Age Populations and Gross Enrolment Ratios in Tertiary Education, 1991 to 2004 – Average Annual Growth, by Year and Region

Source: UNESCO 2006, p. 23

Region	Average Annual Growth							
	Tertiary Enrolment			Tertiary School-Age Population		Tertiary GER		
	1991-1996	1999-2004	1991-2004	1991-1996	1999-2004	1991	1999	2004
Arab States	8.9	3.4	7.9	2.4	2.8	11	19	21
Central & Eastern Europe	0.7	7.1**	5.0	1.1	0.8	33	39**	54
Central Asia	-3.4	8.1**	0.4	0.9	2.5	29	19**	25
East Asia and the Pacific	7.1	11.8	8.1	-1.8	0.5	7	13	23
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.6	5.5	5.1	1.6	0.9	17	21	28**
North America and Western Europe	2.2	3.0	1.9	-1.0	0.5	52	61	70
South and West Asia *	4.3	6.0	6.8	1.3	2.1	6	-	11
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.5	8.9	7.2	2.7	3.2	3	4	5
<b>World</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>17.9**</b>	<b>23.7</b>

Notes: \*\* UIS estimation

\* Data refer to 2000 instead of 1999

The tertiary school-age population represents a five-year cohort which is derived on a country by country basis. It converts five years after the theoretical/typical age of secondary education completion.

## Other Things Being Equal We Can Expect More Migration in Asia-Pacific Nations ...

- **More people in migration prone ages**
- **More educated**
- **More informed about alternative opportunities**
- **Demographic and economic gradients between nations steeper than ever before**

## **Influences Shaping Migration Response to South-North Demographic Gradients**

- **Slowdown in Growth of Migration Prone Age Groups Over Next Two Decades**
- **Limits to Availability of *Skilled* Migrants**
- **Increased Opportunity Within the Asia-Pacific Region**
- **Changes in Nexus Between Student Migration and Skilled Migration**
- **Changing Position of Women**
- **Generational Changes**
- **Extension of Migration Networks**
- **Increasing Regional Cooperation on Regional Issues**

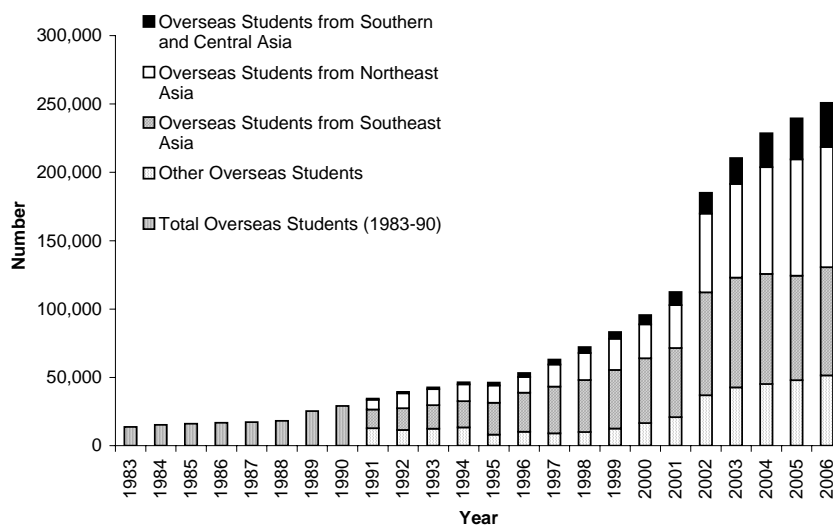
## **Increasing Competition Being Felt in North Countries**

- **Asian countries experiencing rapid economic growth and structural change toward more high-level economies will be able to offer their nationals comparable positions at home that they could only previously aspire to if they emigrated.**
- **Equally, the nationals of those countries who are already abroad will be tempted to return. Indeed this pattern has already been observed in Taiwan (Tsai 1988), Korea (Lucas 2005) and increasingly in China (Zweig, Changgui and Rosen 2004).**

- **Skilled workers from Asian countries that are not experiencing as rapid an increase in demand for skill and whose economies are less developed will be faced with a choice of moving to another Asian country or to an OECD country. There is some evidence that other Asian economies may have some attractiveness because of proximity and cultural factors.**
- **Asian economies will become increasingly attractive to native skilled workers from OECD nations and be able to bid for their services. Again Table 9 shows the significant numbers of Australian native workers (who are overwhelmingly skilled) moving to Asian countries.**

### Overseas Students in Australian Universities, 1983-2006

Source: DEST *Students: Selected Higher Education Statistics*, various issues



## **The Increasing Nexus Between Student Migration and Skilled Migration**

- **Concept of ‘designer’ migrants**
- **In Australia in 2005-6, 16,296 Asia-Pacific people on student visas took out permanent residency**
- **81 percent of Asia-Pacific settlers had an Australian qualification**

## **Benefiting from the Demographic Dividend**

- **Several empirical studies have shown economic growth in countries like Japan, South Korea and Thailand has benefited significantly from the demographic dividend**
- **In China 15-20 percent of economic growth has been due to demographic dividend in last 15 years**
- **Not just due to improvement in the dependency ratio – also higher productivity due to education**
- **However, demographic dividend delivered by same age group most prone to international migration**

## **Influence of Migration on the Demographic Dividend in Origin Countries**

- **Other things being equal would dampen impact in origin and contribute economic growth in destination**
- **However evidence in literature of migrants being able to contribute to economic growth in origin through**
  - **Remittances**
  - **Investment**
  - **Knowledge transfer**
  - **Return**
- **Policy is obviously crucially significant as to whether migrants have a positive impact on development in origin areas**

## **Conclusion**

- **Window of opportunity for the demographic dividend across the region although the peak has passed for many**
- **High numbers in migration prone ages but they will begin to decline in the next two decades**
- **Variation across the region**
- **Potential not only for south-north migration but also intra-regional migration**
- **Need for a 'conceptual leap' in migration policy to take advantage of potential**