

Inclusive, Sustainable, Prosperous and Resilient Health Systems in Asia and the Pacific INSPIRE Health Forum

7-11 July 2025 • A Hybrid Event



PARALLEL SESSION

Healthy Aging and Long-term Care

1:15-2:30 pm Manila time
9 July 2025 (Day 3)
Auditorium 1 2 3 4/ Multi-function Hall 1 2 3

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Shaping the Future of Care: Building a Sustainable LTC Economy for an Aging Thailand

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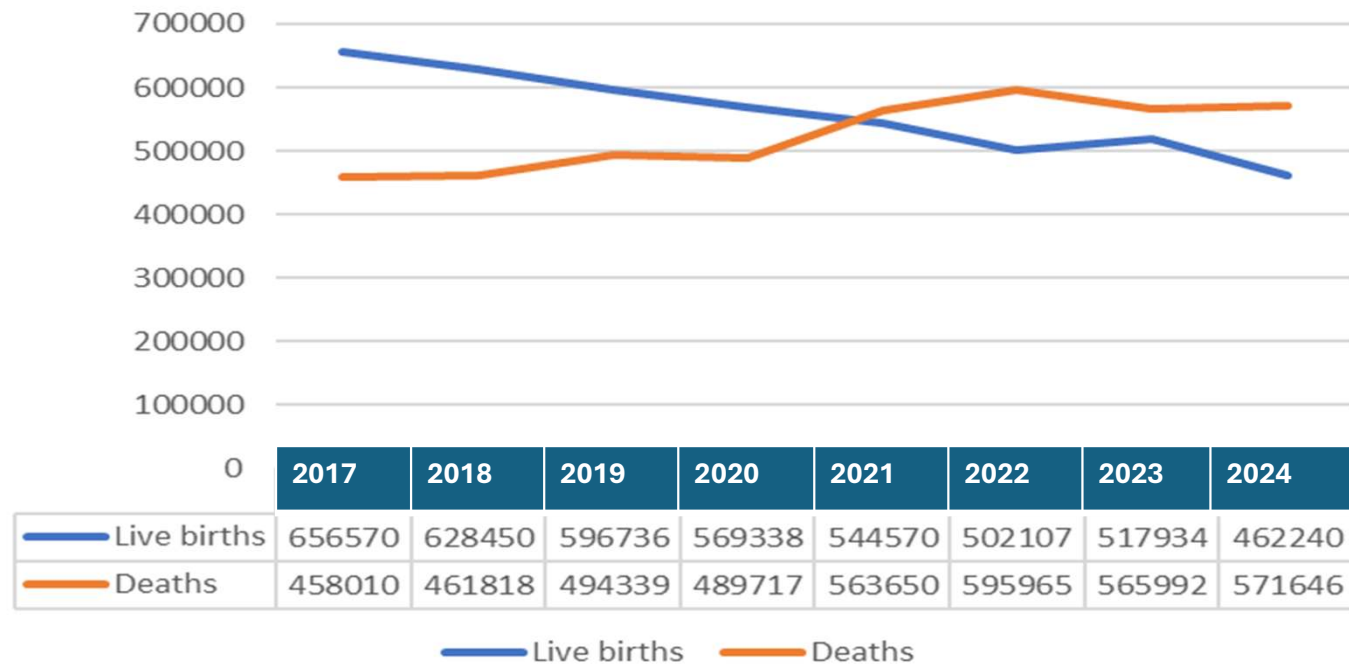
The Demographic Challenge: An Aging Thailand

- Thailand is one of the most rapidly aging countries in Southeast Asia. This demographic shift presents both challenges and opportunities for the country's long-term care (LTC) system.
- Building a sustainable LTC economy is crucial to ensure the well-being and quality of life for its older population.

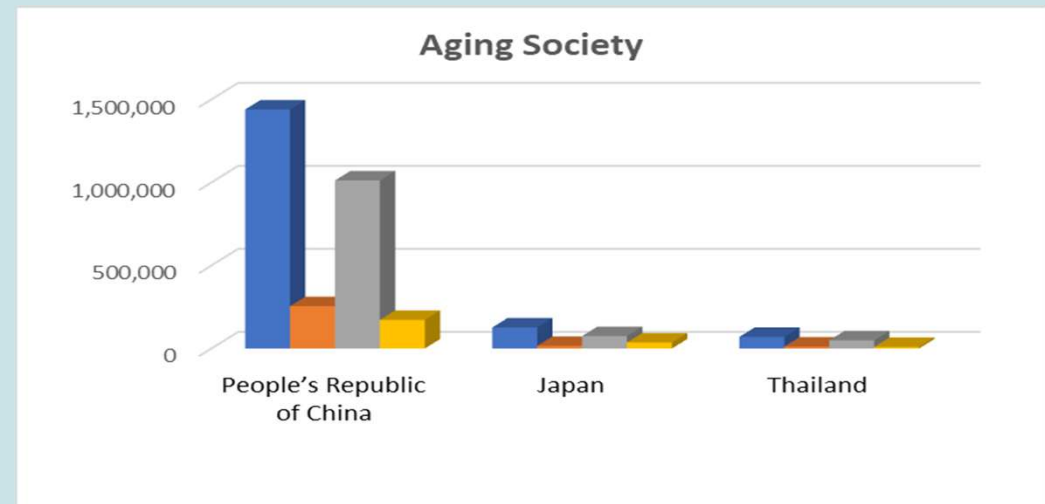
The Demographic Challenge: An Aging Thailand

- The country is transitioning to an aging society, where a significant portion of the population is over 65 years old.
- Middle-Income Trap: This demographic shift is occurring while Thailand remains a middle-income country. This means the population is aging before the country has fully developed its economic and social systems to support an aging population.

Thailand's population has been declining^{1ST} **INSPIRE** HEALTH FORUM



- The IMF emphasizes that the countries facing the most significant challenges in Asia over the next 30 years are China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand, due to the following conditions:
 1. The working-age population is not only decreasing as a proportion of the total population but is also declining in absolute numbers.
 2. The proportion of the population dependent on the working-age population is increasing rapidly.
- The IMF forecasts that Asia's overall population will stop growing by 2050.



How aging impacts the economy

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- Impact on Household Consumption
- Impact on Private Investment
- Impact on Government Spending

Regarding the impact on Asia's economy, the IMF estimates that over the next 30 years, population aging will cause Japan's GDP growth to decrease by about 1% annually. The GDP growth of China, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Thailand is expected to decline by 0.5-0.75% per year. Domestic purchasing power will grow more slowly, leading to a corresponding decline in domestic investment.

The Current State of Long-Term Care (LTC) in Thailand

Existing Systems: Thailand has been developing its LTC system, with various forms of care being established or integrated into the existing health and social care systems. Community-integrated care initiatives are emerging to support older adults within their communities.

Challenges:

- **Financial Sustainability:** Ensuring the financial viability of the LTC system is a major challenge.
- **Workforce Stability:** The LTC sector requires the development and maintenance of a skilled and stable workforce.
- **System Adequacy:** The current health and social systems are not yet fully equipped to address the evolving needs of the aging population.

The Path Forward: Building a Sustainable LTC Economy

To create a sustainable LTC economy, Thailand is exploring various strategies:

- **Policy and Planning:** The government and various organizations are actively engaged in policy discussions and planning for the future of care. The "Ageing Asia Policy Roundtable" is an example of such an initiative, focusing on shaping Thailand's path to becoming an age-ready community.
- **Community-Based Care:** There is a focus on strengthening community-based LTC programs. The ADB has studied Thailand's national community-based LTC program for older persons, highlighting its potential lessons for the region.
- **Multi-disciplinary Collaboration:** Addressing the challenges of an aging society requires collaboration among various sectors, including healthcare, social services, finance, and technology.

Key Initiatives and Resources

Several reports and initiatives provide valuable insights into Thailand's efforts to build a sustainable LTC economy:

- Asian Development Bank (ADB) Studies
- National Health Security Office (NHSO): The NHSO's "Long-Term Care program" is a key part of Thailand's preparation for an aging society.
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In conclusion, Thailand is at a critical juncture in shaping the future of its long-term care system. By focusing on policy development, community-based care, and multi-disciplinary collaboration, the country is working towards building a sustainable LTC economy that can effectively support its aging population.

Policy Recommendations for Developing a Social Welfare System for Older Persons in Thailand

Overview and Challenges

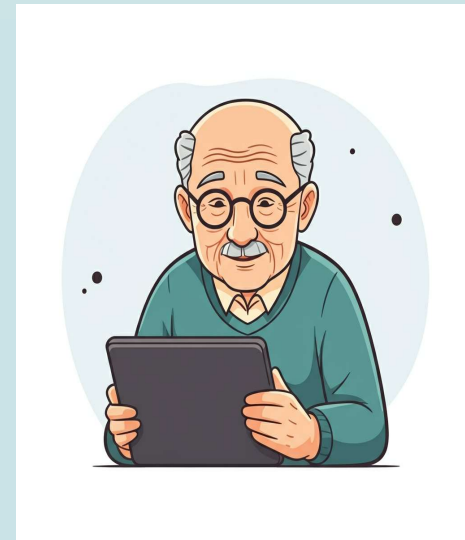
- Thailand is currently facing an aging society, which dampens the country's economic growth.
- Problems related to aging signify structural problems within the nation, requiring holistic quality-of-life solutions and a fundamental shift in policy perspectives.



Four Key Areas of Recommendations

1. Income Security and Self-Reliance

- Promote Savings: Develop financial instruments and products that encourage savings for retirement.
- Strengthen the Pension System: Develop a robust and comprehensive pension system.
- Develop a Universal Old-Age Allowance: Ensure the allowance is universal and sufficient to cover the cost of living.
- Promote Lifelong Learning: Offer retraining courses to enhance employment opportunities and support ongoing professional development.
- Consider extending the Retirement Age: Align the retirement age with the increasing health and capabilities of older persons.



2. Health and Innovative Care

- Enhance Public Health Insurance: Ensure the system provides access to quality medical care.
- Establish a Community-Based Care System: Enable older persons to receive care in their familiar environments.
- Harness 'Smart Living' Technologies: Utilize innovation to improve quality of life and provide convenience.
- Promote a Private Market for Long-Term Care (LTC): Support the private sector and develop insurance systems to meet the demand for long-term care.



3. Society, Family, and Housing

- Promote Fertility: Implement policies that encourage childbirth to address population structure issues.
- Create Incentives for Children to Care for Their Parents: Offer benefits such as tax incentives.
- Promote the Concept of a Reverse Mortgage: Enable older persons to convert assets (homes) into income.
- Expand Shared Living Spaces: Offer this as an option to reduce isolation and build community.



4. Macro-Level Strategies

- Increase Total Factor Productivity: Harness technology and innovation to improve productivity.
- Develop the Workforce's Skills: Maximize the potential and efficiency of the working-age population.
- Encourage Formal Sector Employment: Expand the tax base and enhance social security systems.



Conclusion

- Future Projections: By 2031-2033, the proportion of the elderly is projected to increase to 28%, marking a transition for Thailand into a "Super-Aged Society." This will place immense pressure on healthcare spending and long-term care needs.
- Preparing for an aging society is a national agenda, not merely an issue for the elderly. It requires a paradigm shift in policy and the adoption of holistic solutions that ensure income security, promote self-reliance, and enhance the health, well-being, and dignity of older persons.
- Ultimately, these structural changes are essential to secure a high quality of life for people of all ages."



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Q&A

THANK YOU