

POPULATION AGEING:
IMPLICATIONS OF AN AGEING SOCIETY
&
WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

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WEDNESDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2022



WHAT IS POPULATION AGEING

Population is considered:

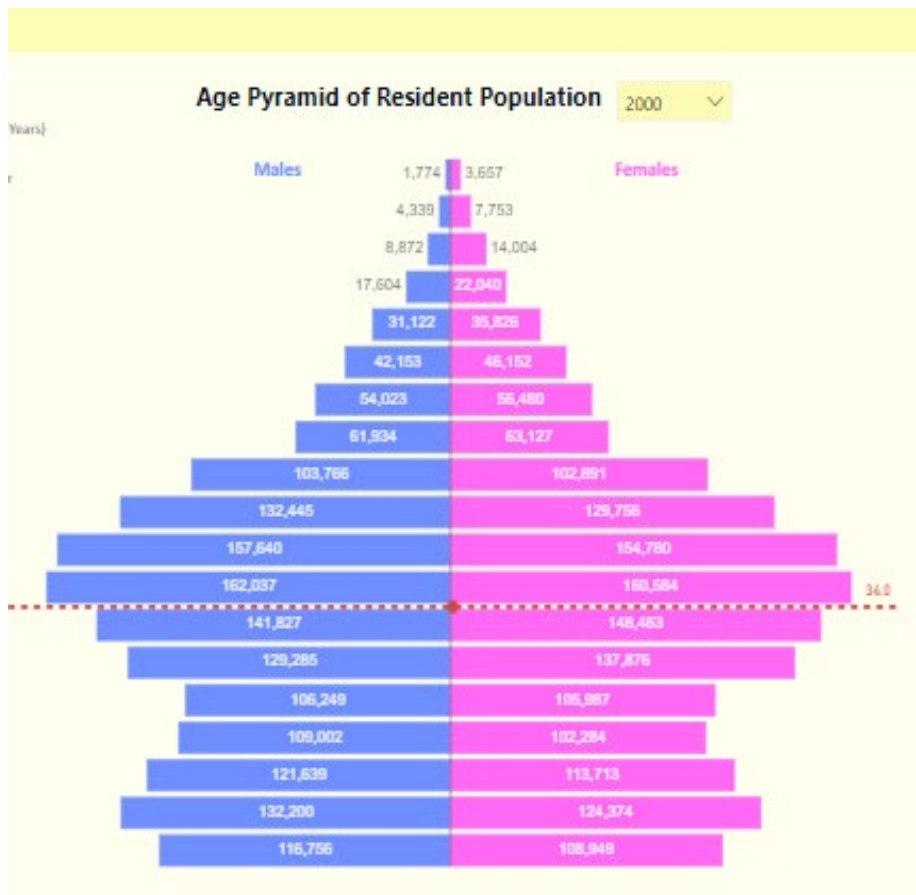
- An ageing population when proportion of older people >65 years is increasing and is greater than 7% of the total population
- An aged population when 14% or older

Causes:

- Increasing longevity
- Falling fertility
- Lower inward migration

THE GREYING OF SINGAPORE – 2000-2022

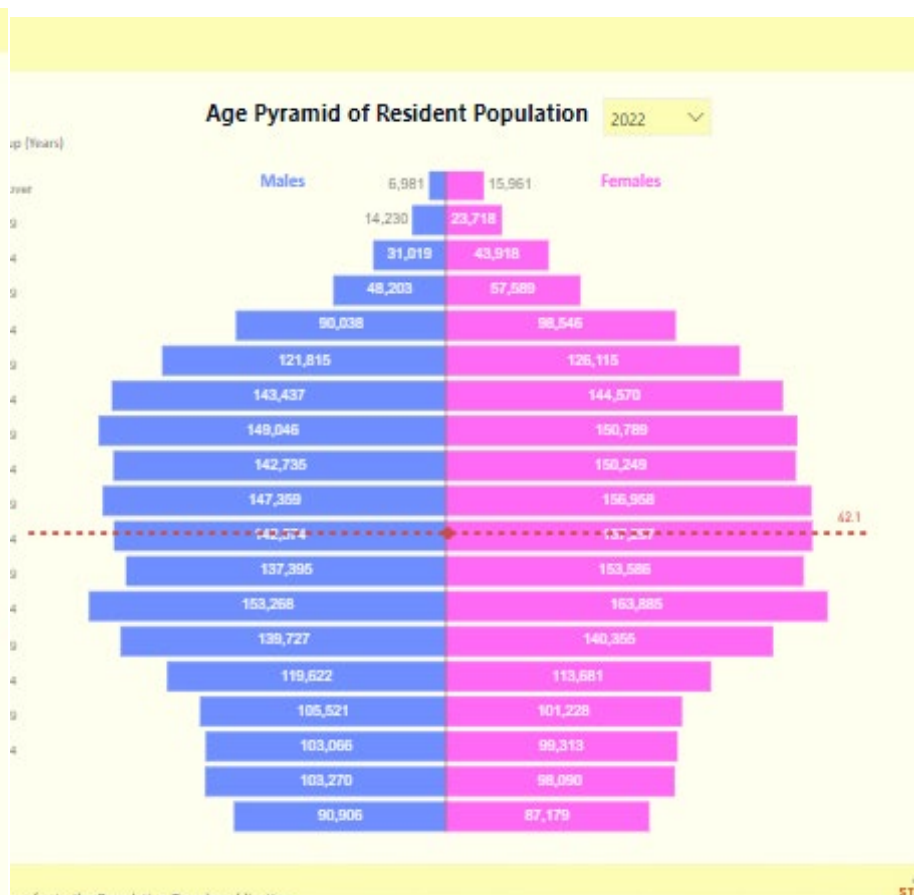
SINGAPORE HAS BEEN AN AGED SOCIETY SINCE 2019



Median age : 34.8
 % people >65 : 7.2%

YEAR 2000

Source: DOS, 2022

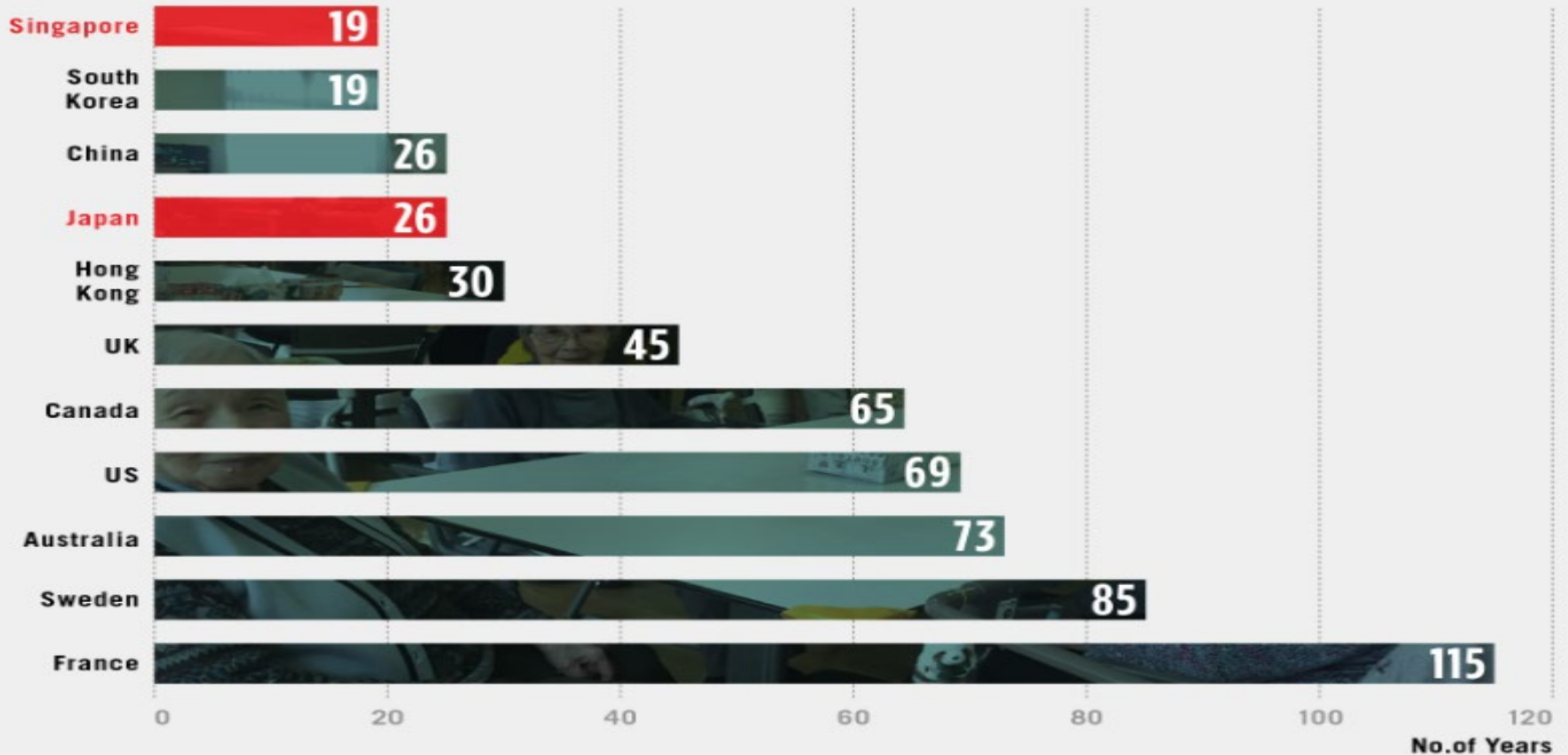


Median age : 42.1
 % people >65 : 18.4% in 2022

YEAR 2022

SINGAPORE IS ONE OF THE FASTEST AGEING COUNTRIES

NUMBER OF YEARS TO TRANSIT FROM 'AGEING' TO 'AGED'*

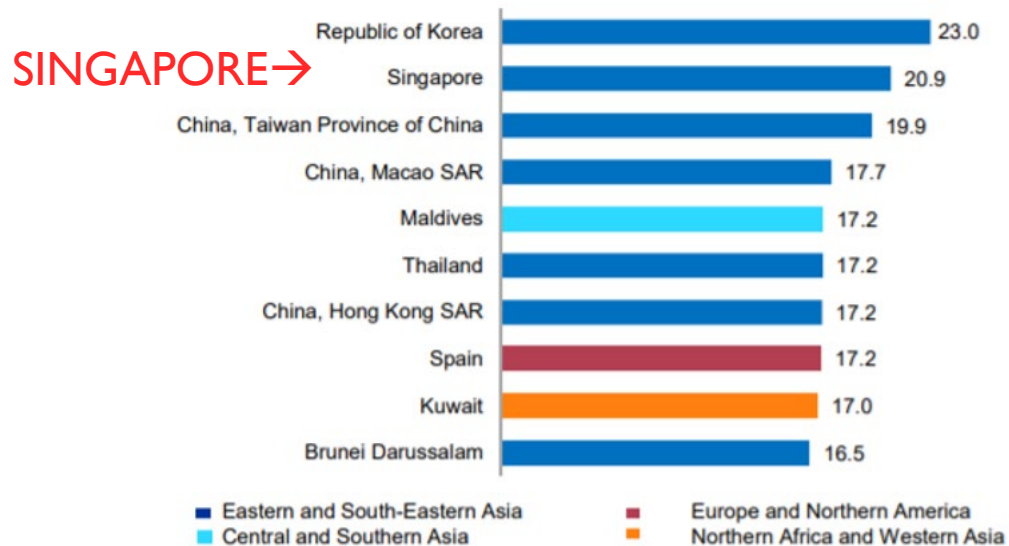


Source: population.sg, National Population and Talent Division, Strategy Group, Prime Minister's Office.

* Countries make the transition from "ageing" to "aged" when the proportion of people aged 65 and older increases from 7 to 14 per cent.

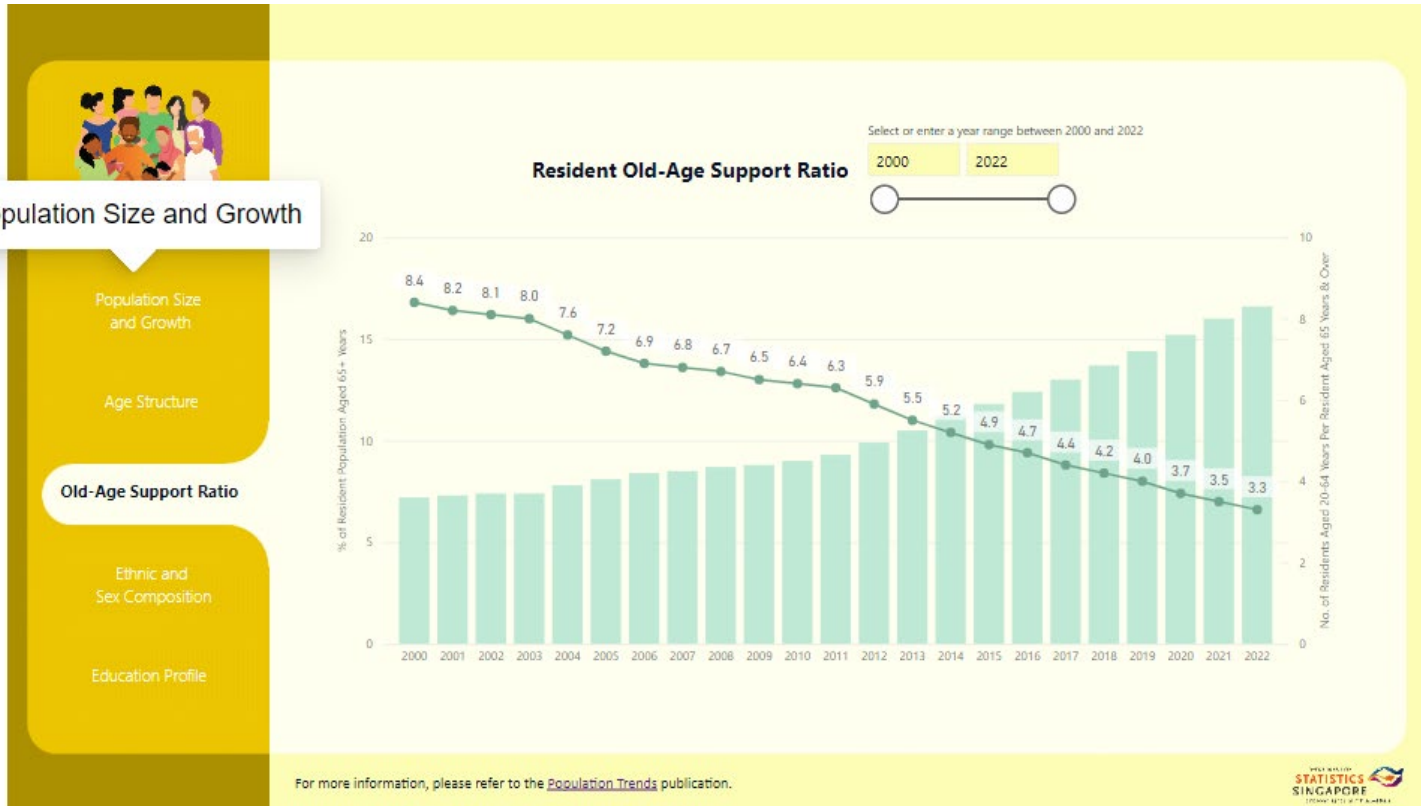
ECONOMIES WITH THE LARGEST INCREASE IN OLDER PERSONS – 2019- 2050

MOST ARE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *World Population Prospects 2019*.

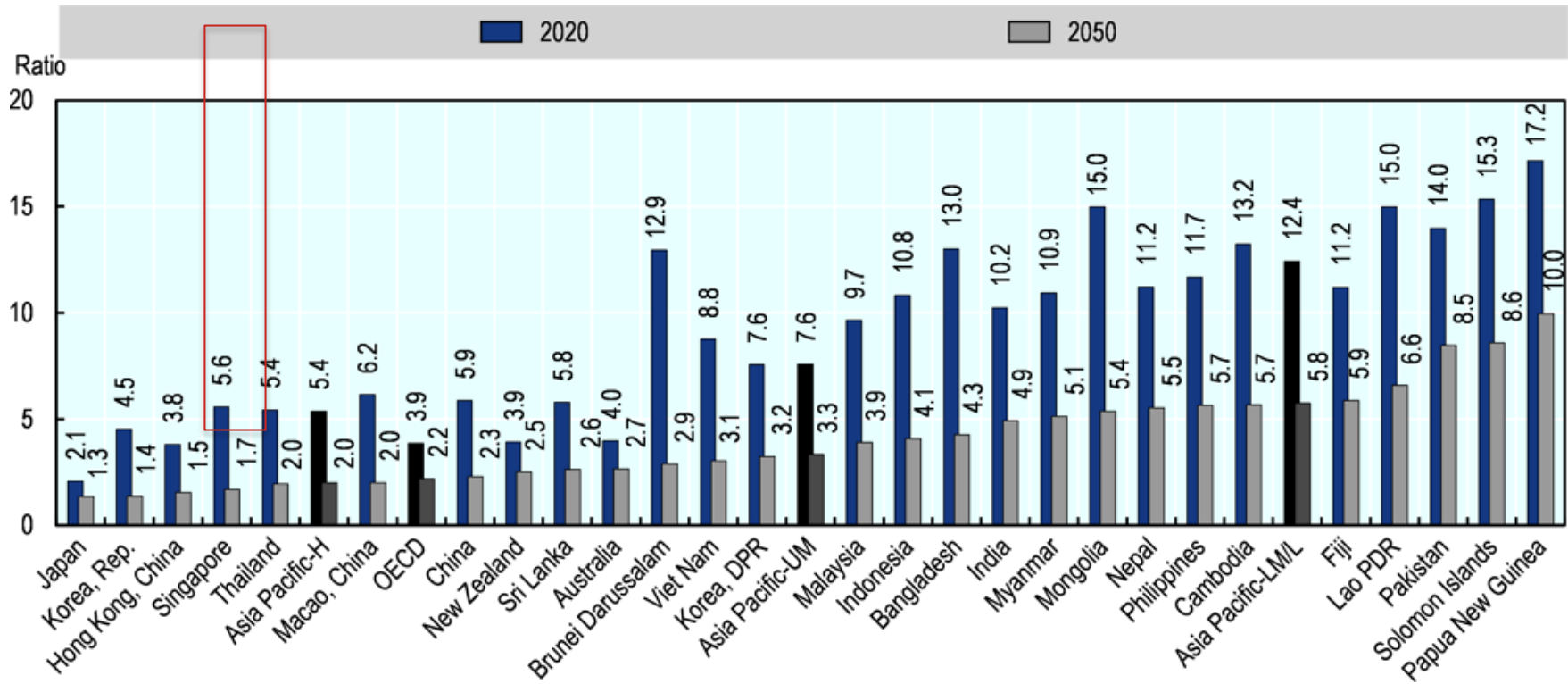
DECLINING OLD-AGE SUPPORT RATIO FROM 8.4 TO 3.3 BETWEEN 2000 AND 2022



Source: DOS, 2022

SINGAPORE: ONE OF THE LOWEST DEPENDENCY RATIOS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

**RATIO OF PEOPLE AGED 15-64 TO PEOPLE AGED OVER 65 YEARS,
2020 AND 2050**



GROWING RANKS OF GREY



YEAR	Age 65+	Age 75+
2005	280,000	102,000
2010	352,000	134,000
2016	488,000	186,000
2017	517,000	195,000
2022	653,000	234,000
2030* (Projected)	960,000	N.A.

FALLING FERTILITY

40-PLUS YRS OF >2 CHILDREN



Meanwhile, the total fertility rate – or the average number of children born to a woman of child-bearing age – has plunged to one of the lowest in the world

Replacement rate is 2.1

1957: Six births

1965: **4.6 births**

1977: **2.1 births**

1986: 1.4 births

2015: 1.2 births

2017: **1.16 births**

2022: 1.2 births

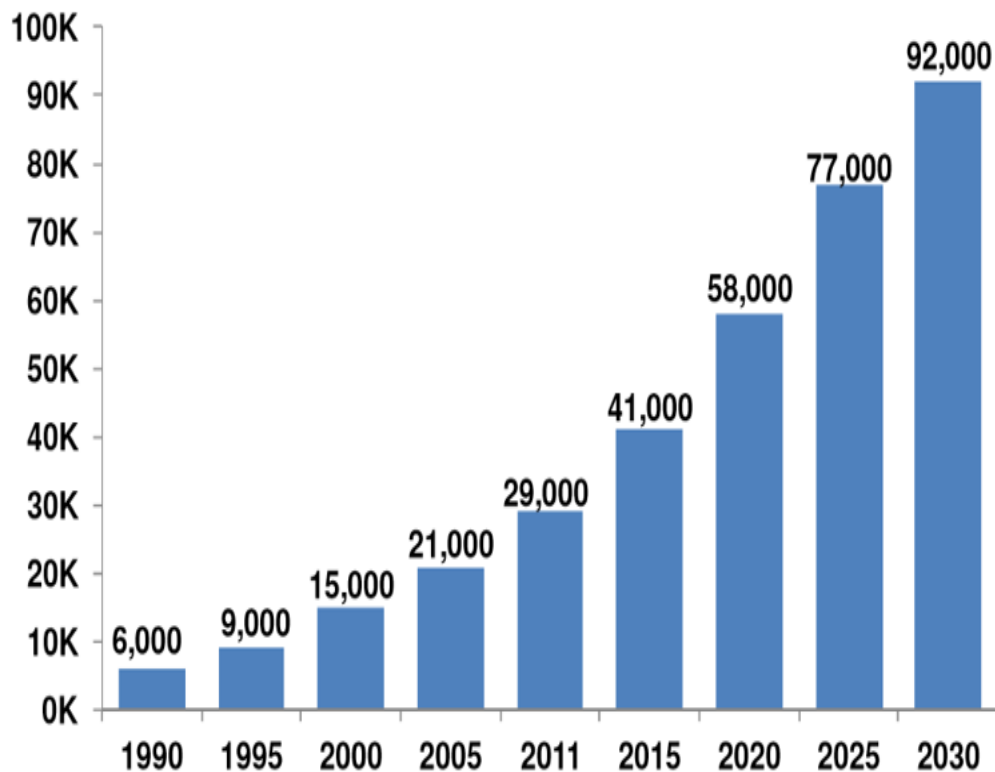
Source: DOS, 2022

MORE SENIORS LIVING ALONE



Source: DOS, 2022

Chart 3: Number of citizen elderly (aged 65 years and above) living alone³



ce: DOS

LIVING LONGER – BURDEN OR OPPORTUNITY

BOX 1-1 Myths About Aging

Myth 1: “Old age begins at 65 years.”

Myth 2: “A person’s chronological age tells you a lot about him or her.”

Myth 3: “Older people can’t learn anything new.”

Myth 4: “Older employees are less productive.”

Myth 5: “Older people don’t want to have anything to do with modern technology.”

Myth 6: “Older people are taking jobs away from young people.”

Myth 7: “Economies with an aging population are doomed to zero growth.”

Myth 8: “Older employees have to be protected by special regulations.”

Myth 9: “Higher average life expectancy means more sickness and more need for care.”

Myth 10: “Prevention and rehabilitation are useless in old age.”

Myth 11: “Aging reduces mobility.”

Myth 12: “Older people are a burden to their relatives.”

Myth 13: “A clash of generations is imminent.”

Myth 14: “Our society has to adapt to demographic change by establishing policies for seniors.”

Myth 15: “Aging societies are incapable of reform.”

SOURCE: Backes-Gellner et al., 2010.

LIVING LONGER – BURDEN OR OPPORTUNITY?

Concerns:

- Rising health care cost
- Sufficient old age financial security
- Shrinking workforce, older workers, decreasing productivity, negative impact on the economy
- Strain on family for care giving
- Fracture of intergenerational solidarity
- Social isolation and loneliness

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Good news based on recent international study
is that healthy longevity is achievable, and
outlook of population ageing is optimistic, but
needs actions now

LIVING LONGER – BURDEN OR OPPORTUNITY?

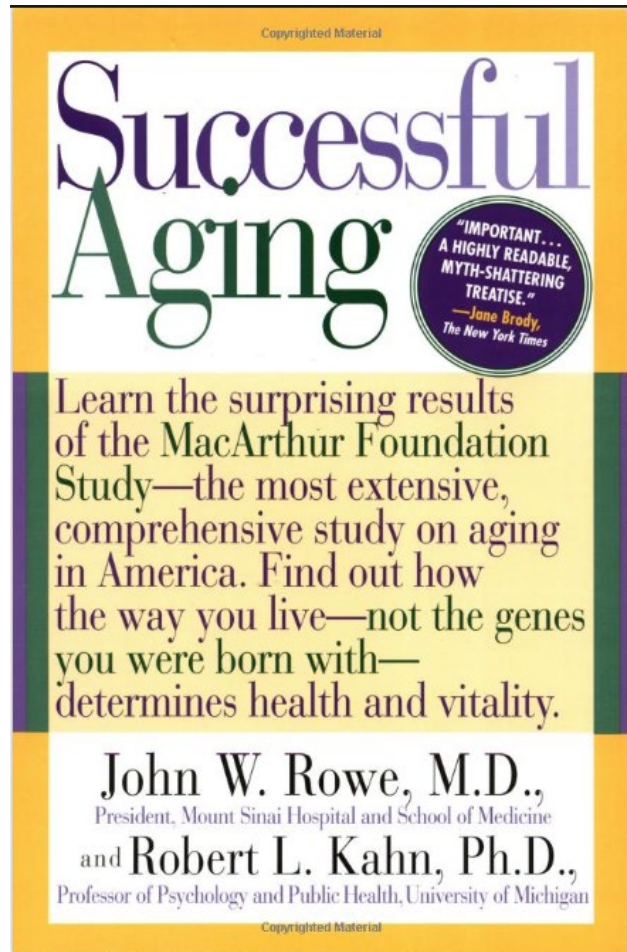
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Opportunities:

- Avoid disease and disability
- Strengthen social security at policy and individual levels
- Working beyond 65 and innovating job design and use of technology at workplaces
- Strengthen services to enable optimal independence and ageing in place and support family caregiving/caregivers
- Promote social networks and engagement across generations
- Activate community civic actions

PREPARING FOR LONGEVITY THE FUTURE IS HOW WE MAKE IT



- Avoiding Disease and Disability
- Maintaining Mental Fitness
- Maintaining Physical Fitness
- Having Strong Social Networks and Healthy Relationships
- Be Financially Prepared

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL AGEING

I. Avoiding Disease and Disability



Genetics less important than **behavior** as one grows older

- Healthy lifestyle
- Regular health checks for early detection of health issues and early interventions
- Immunizations!

HEALTHY AGEING

- Major issue around “ageing as burden” is poor health and disability resulting from chronic diseases
- Chronic diseases (like high blood pressure and diabetes) and related conditions (like heart attack and stroke) are preventable by lifestyle and regular health care
- People also biologically age later and slower

SINGAPORE IS GETTING HEALTHIER! WE HAVE ONE OF THE HIGHEST HEALTH-ADJUSTED LIFE EXPECTANCY

2019

Singapore Life span of 84.9 and health span of 73.9
9 years of poorer health

Switzerland Life span of 84.0 and health span of 71.7
12 years of poorer health

Rank (in order of higher to lower 2019 HALE)	Country	LE at birth		HALE at birth	
		1990	2019	1990	2019
1	Singapore	75.6	84.9	66.6	73.9
2	Japan	79.4	84.8	69.3	73.3
3	South Korea	72.1	82.9	63.4	72.0
4	Iceland	78.1	84.1	67.7	71.9
5	Switzerland	77.9	84.0	66.7	71.7

Table 1: Country comparison of LE and HALE (in years), 1990 and 2019

Source: Global Burden of Disease Report, 2019, Ministry of Health, 2020

2. Maintaining Mental Fitness



- Importance of having meaning and purpose
- Guided Autobiography
- Life-long learning

FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL AGEING

3. Maintaining Physical Fitness



- Physical activities/exercise is one of the best investments we can make that have multiple benefits
- Best to include elements of stretching, strength training, balance and endurance (aerobic) in exercise routine
- Exercises - such as chi gong, baduanjing, yoga/chair yoga, pilates, aqua exercise – are good for seniors
- Depending on ability, 10,000 steps a day have proven to decrease mortality

https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Feldergym.com%2Fleg-exercises%2F&psig=AOvVawIHRgmE_BeDbD2OaswsRjx&ust=1670987215677000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CBEQjhxqFwoTCOCP8czO9fsCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAD

4. Having Strong Social Networks and Healthy Relationships



Harvard study – best predictor of longer, healthier and happier life in American men are those with strong positive social networks and relationships at age 55

FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL AGEING

5. Being Financially Prepared



Most older people
wish to work
beyond 65

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.channelnewsasia.com%2Fna-insider%2Fploughing-faces-and-insecurities-singapore-elderly-working-poor-1014426&psig=AOvVaw02PvXNshgT7jLzRzplCZ&ust=1670987362616000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CBEQjhqFwoTCPD3wjHP9fsCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAD>

RESOURCES

1. Red Panic Button App
2. Cara SG App
3. Outside App
4. Singpass
5. ActiveSG
6. Health Hub/Health Buddy
7. Vintage Radio App (Singapore)

<https://mpowered.sg/7-best-apps-for-seniors-in-singapore-2022/>

RESOURCES

C3A National Silver Academy

- Short courses, exam-free modules and ad-hoc learning programs for Singaporeans and PRs aged 50 and up.
- Up to 50% course subsidies
- Skillsfuture claimable
- M: [6478 5029](tel:64785029)
- E: nsa@c3a.org.sg

Learning Room @ ComSA

- Provides comprehensive life skills courses as well as longevity preparation and training to assist older adults in achieving mastery in self-care and successful ageing.
- M: 8733 0194 (SMS or Whatsapp only)
- E: learningroom_comsa@tsaofoundation.org

Thank You!

