

Singapore's marriage and fertility trends

Tan Poh Lin

Assistant Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, NUS

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Deep dive into
the statistics

Asking the
question
“Why?”

The road
ahead

Fewer marriages, births in S'pore last year due to pandemic; nuptial figures fall to lowest since 1986



Justin Ong
Political Correspondent

PUBLISHED 28 SEPT 2021, 4:00 PM SGT



SINGAPORE - Fewer marital unions and births took place in Singapore last year as some Singaporeans postponed their marriage and parenthood plans due to the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the Government's annual Population in Brief report released on Tuesday (Sept 28).

**Year after year,
the same story?**

BUSINESS TRAVEL 2012年8月31日 / 4:56 午後 / UPDATED 10年前

Tiny Singapore risks economic gloom without big baby boom

By John O'Callaghan

9 MIN READ



SINGAPORE (Reuters) - History suggests Singapore will enjoy a welcome baby boom in this Year of the Dragon, the most auspicious for births in the Chinese zodiac.

FOCUS

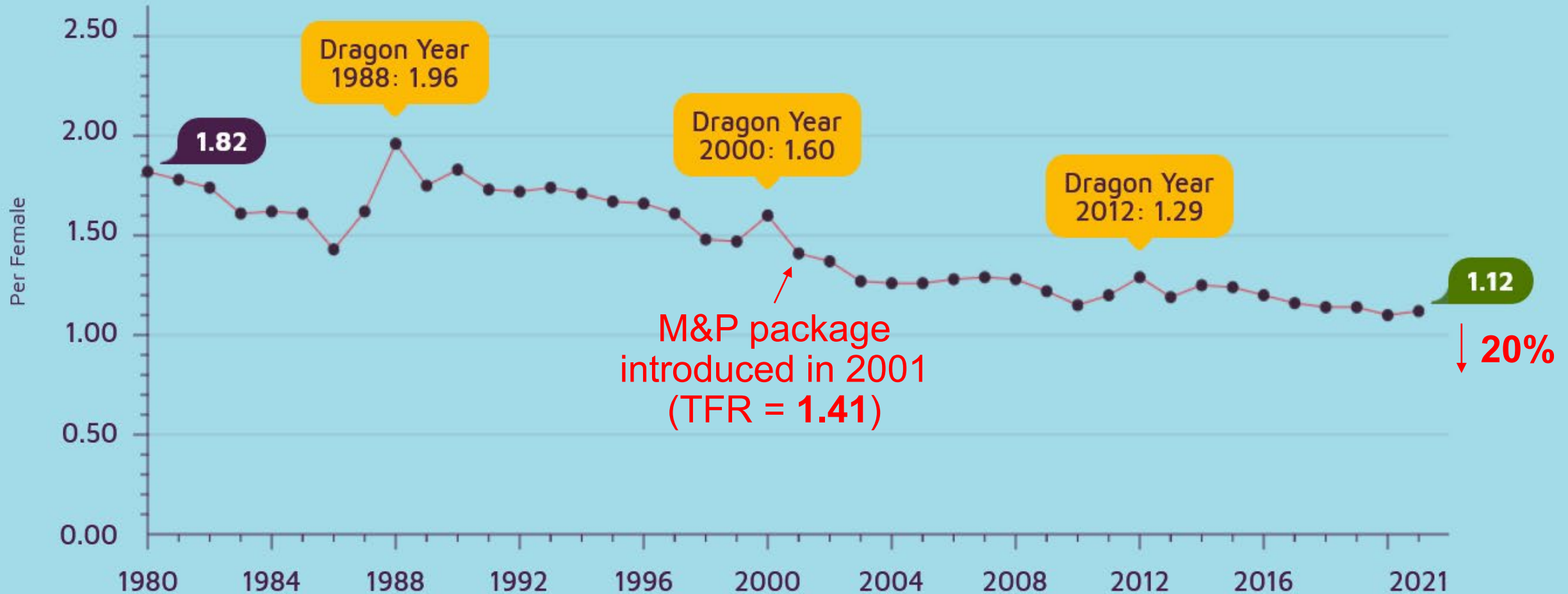
Singapore's plea to its people: Won't you please have more children?

As Singapore goes all out to reverse its ultralow fertility rate, many nations facing tough economic and social problems as the ranks of young people dwindle watch closely for lessons.

By **Michael Holtz**, Staff writer

January 29, 2017 | **SINGAPORE**

Resident Total Fertility Rate



Source: <https://www.singstat.gov.sg/modules/infographics/total-fertility-rate>



Fertility

Births and Fertility Rate

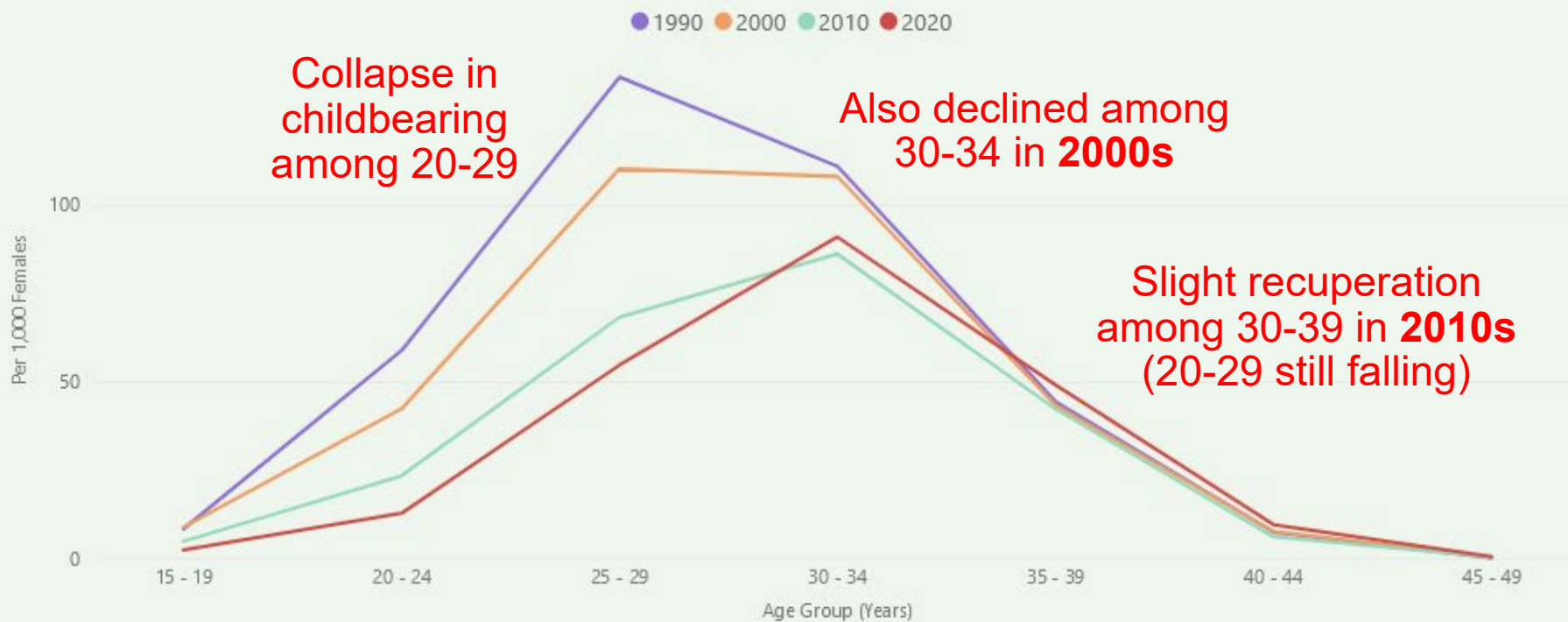
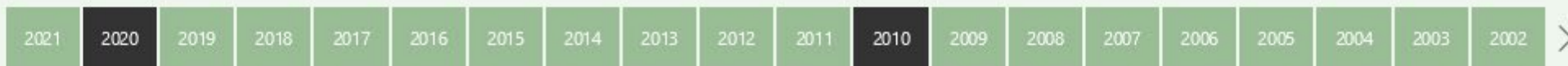
Ethnic Differentials in Fertility

Age-Specific Fertility Rate

Births by Birth Order

Number of Children Born

Resident Age-Specific Fertility Rate





Marital Status, Family Formation and Dissolution

Marital Status

Marriages and Marital Dissolutions

Age-Specific Marriage and Divorce Rate

Inter-Ethnic Marriages

Median Age at Marriage and Divorce

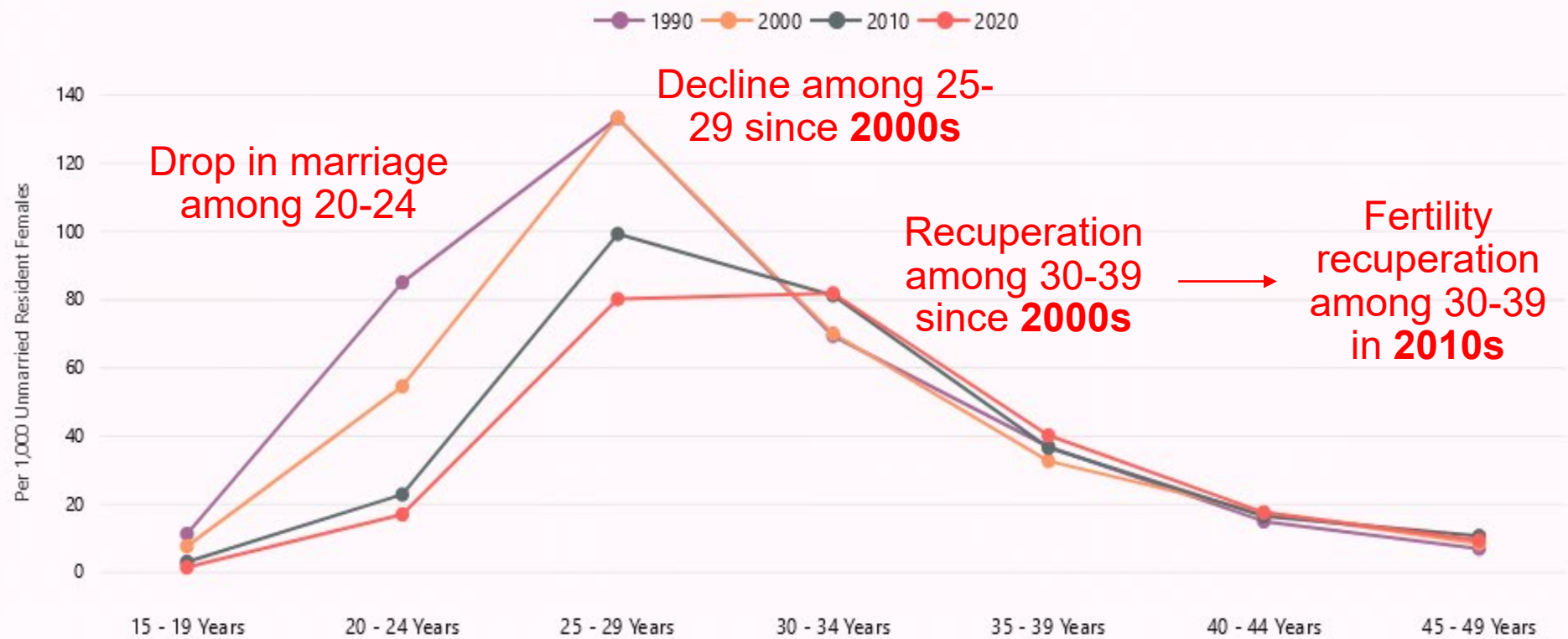
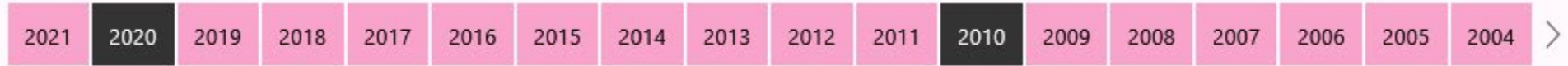
Divorces by Duration of Marriage

Age-Specific Marriage Rate

Age-Specific Divorce Rate

Age-Specific Marriage Rate for

Females



Total fertility rate (TFR) refers to the average number of live-births each female would have during her reproductive years if she were subject to the prevailing ASFRs in the population in the given year. Mathematically, it is 5 times the sum of the ASFRs by 5-yearly age groups, over the female reproductive ages for the reference period.

Illustration for computation of 2021 TFR using ASFRs


Age Group (Years)	Per Thousand Females
15-19	2.2
20-24	11.7
25-29	53.4
30-34	92.9
35-39	53.6
40-44	10.2
45-49	0.3

TFR is a
“hypothetical cohort”
measure!

Sum of ASFRs by
5-Yearly Age Groups
= **224.3**

$$\times 5 \div 1,000 =$$

1.12
Per Female



It is **unweighted** by
population age distribution

Note: Dividing by 1,000 is required since the ASFRs are expressed as per thousand females while the TFR is expressed as per female.

Source: <https://www.singstat.gov.sg/modules/infographics/total-fertility-rate>



Total

Click to select an ethnic group

Chinese

Malays

Indians

Others



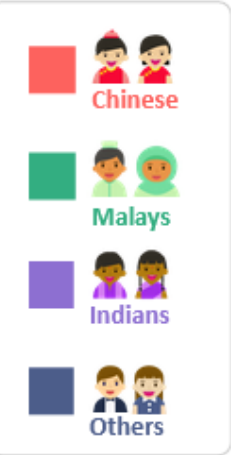
Download the datacube [here](#).



For more information, please refer to the [Population Trends](#) publication.

As at June 2022, the number of resident population was **4.07mil**

Resident Population by Ethnic Group, Age Group & Sex



Prime childbearing groups today

But in 20 years' time?

For more visualisations, please refer to the interactive dashboard on [Population](#).

What the statistics show

- Fertility and marriage rates have declined among women aged 20-29
- (Weak) recuperation more recently among women aged 30-39
- Even if rates recover, the population base has eroded

Why?

Various theoretical models emphasise different factors

- Rational choice theory (benefits VS costs)
- Risk aversion theory (value of children)
- Post-materialist values theory (self-actualisation and expression)
- Gender equity theory (incoherence in economic/social institutions)

Only 40% of married S'poreans feel mothers should care for children full-time, but women still doing more at home: Survey



BY TAUFIQ ZALIZAN

Published October 10, 2022

Updated October 11, 2022

SINGAPORE — Fewer people feel that mothers should be the ones to take care of children full-time, but in reality, women still spend more time on childcare duties, almost double the hours put in by men on weekdays, a survey has found.

The 2021 Marriage and Parenthood Survey also found that financial cost was among the top concerns for why people were not wanting children at all or not wanting another child.

Rational choice?
Gender equity?

Value change?

Singapore

'I don't think I will regret it': Why more married couples are remaining childless



Cheryl Lin

@CherylLinCNA

02 Jul 2021 01:39PM

(Updated: 02 Jul 2021 04:36PM)

Singaporeans Face Working Longer to Afford Retirement

Pension savings are dwindling as inflation runs near decade-high, putting savers at risk as costs surge in the city.

By Natalie Choy

13 December 2022 at 7:00 am SGT

Children no longer
viewed as insurance

Why?

Other factors:

- Stressful, exhausting work culture, with high job insecurity
- Wishful thinking about “flexible fertility”

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MISCONCEPTION REGARDING ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

In the 2021 survey, among the married respondents, 73 per cent agreed to a statement that assisted reproduction technology such as in-vitro fertilisation have very high success rates for women above age 40.

Among singles, 72 per cent agreed to this statement.

Given that the majority of respondents chose this response, the National Population and Talent Division said that this was a "misconception" that people had.

Many people were not aware that "reproduction technology cannot compensate for age-related decline in fertility", it added.

[yahoo/news](#) | Yahoo News Singapore

40% of married Singaporean couples 'not happy' with progress in trying for a baby: survey



Wong Casandra · Senior Reporter

5 July 2019

Singapore's married women have less sex than desired: Study

Stress, fatigue among reasons; findings have significant bearing on Singapore's fertility rate

[Theresa Tan](#) and [Melissa Heng](#)

UPDATED 10 JAN 2020, 11:30 AM SGT



Married women in their peak childbearing age here have a lot less sex than they desire, thwarted by stress and fatigue, a new study has found.

This has significant bearing on the length of time they take to get pregnant, contributing to [Singapore's dismal fertility rate](#).

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with EasyGo
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The road ahead

"I cannot solve the problem, and I have given up. I have given the job to another generation of leaders. Hopefully, they or their successors will eventually find a way out." (Lee Kuan Yew, quoted in Straits Times, 2013)

- Gender equity (fixing the incoherence between spheres)
- Flexible work arrangements (for women and men)
- Reproductive health (social egg freezing; informational gaps)

The road ahead

What about:

- Loosening the “life script” of study -> date -> marry?
- Helping 20-29 overcome obstacles of young marriage/parenthood?
- Collective investment in children as a future shared resource?
- Broader definitions of success: not only personal achievement, but also family life and service to others