

## **Determinants of Changing Demographic Structure in Asia: Implications for Future**

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Unlike the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Europe, demographic transition in Asia has been compressed in a very short span because Asian countries have benefited from the transfer and diffusion of public health programmes, and medical technologies. These helped in quickly lowering infant and child mortality, increasing life expectancy and controlling several infectious diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis. Similarly, with a time lag the crude birth rate began to fall over all the Asian countries, regardless of the level of their economic development. Fertility declined much more rapidly and relatively early in East Asia than in Southeast or South Asia. Contraceptive use rates do vary between countries and in several Asian countries government intervention in promoting family planning has played a much more important role in lowering fertility rather than socio-economic determinants such as income and education.

In spite of a similar trajectory about decline in mortality followed with a time lag by fertility decline that Asian countries have followed, the timing of the demographic transition has led to divergent trends in population growth and age structure across Asia. In this presentation, one of the consequences of this variation will be highlighted with the support ratios or the ratio of the working-age population to the nonworking- age populations in the sub-regions of Asia. The implications of these for future will be examined in the sub-region context.