

WT21 – The impact of demographic change

Session 1

The Chinese vision

- Size of the population still an important issue : -With hypothesis 2.0 children per woman further increase of population -Target of the population policy: 1.8 children per woman. In that case, decrease from 2030
- Ageing becomes a big challenge : Old people : 65+ years -100 million today - 7% of population, 60+ years - 150 million - 11.4 % of population, today, Proportion of 31.3 % of 60+ in 2050
- China experienced Baby boom : -A first in the 1950's, - A second –the biggest- in 1972-1978 (with a peak of 7.5 children per woman in 1973), A third in the 1980's
- Demographic window : Advantage in terms of age structure: the weight of inactive people –dependency ratio- is decreasing in the period 1980-2020
- Measure of fertility : What is the right level of fertility? 2000 less than 1.8 or more ? Problem of estimation of the fertility of the floating population
- Population policy : in fact 4 population policies : -1 child policy, 1,5 child policy (if girl as first child, possibility to have a second child), -2 children policy (boy and girl both issued from one child family), - 3 children policy (minorities may have 3 or 4 children)
- Importance of diversity in China
- Floating population : About 150 millions (it is a minimum), Urbanisation rate : 43 %, Beijing 1/3 of population is floating population
- Female discrimination : Sex ratio at birth about 120 or more. Development doesn't necessary reduce female discrimination
- Employment : Urban old age participation rate is declining. Rural old age participation rate increase because young people the rural areas and migrate to towns.

- Relationship between environment and population growth is also an important issue

The European questions addressed to Chinese

- Mortality : What is the future of life expectancy ?
- Change in family behaviour : What about the propensity to marriage ? Divorce ? (proportion low, trend increasing), Cohabitation ? Less extended families (in relation with housing). One person household ? In cities old women (economic support but no aid in daily life)
- What happens with social networks ? State tries to create networks. Change in people ideas about care. Support of elderly (young may have no time, no means, severe competition for work)
- Adult population : Single household. How migrants live in cities? What about employment of young adults? (more problems for educated people)
- Residence system. Temporary residence Certificate for more than 3 days

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The European vision

- Employment : Lisbon strategy : increase employment rate of 55-64 age group to 50 % by 2010. But employers are reluctant to hire people at these ages
- Ageing : -of the population, -of the labour force (shrinking)
- Diversity inside Europe
- Institutional vs cultural components of behaviour : (education services and training programmes vs attitudes towards life long learning and human capital) :-Necessity to invest in human capital through education. -Necessity to change people's attitudes towards life long learning
- The social acceptance of reforms : Inside Europe people don't consider the same policies as acceptable
- Family changes : - demographic dimension : deinstitutionalisation of family (less marriage, more divorce, more cohabitation, etc.).
-economic dimension (status of female employment, distribution of family duties between men and women)
- Fertility and female employment : Relation between fertility and female employment in the context of changing institutional settings and gender relations. Negative correlation in the 1970s (lower fertility associated with higher female employment rates). Positive relationship in the 1990s

The Chinese questions addressed to Europeans

- Meaning of age : In the interpretation of changes, heterogeneity of ages has to be taken into account (different age groups have different values)

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Session 3

Similarities

- Need for data and more accurate information (definition of needs in a multidisciplinary way) : Human rights issues (for example identification of health problem for specific populations). Importance of vital registration system -registration of births and deaths by sex (associated with citizenship, improvement of health). - Accurate information on causes of death (for public health policies)
- Interest of information and analysis at a meso level :(sub-groups, ethnic groups). Sub-national levels in each European country have to be considered for policy implementation
- Migration statistics : Most of existing information concerns permanent migration . Need for information on internal and international migration (difference between internal and international migration has not to be overestimated). Consequences of inadequate migration statistics (e.g. the difficulty of employment figures). Illegal migrations (lack of statutory benefits and rights of elderly care workers and others).
- Promote Demographic Surveillance System as a context for combining qualitative and quantitative approaches : (local level registration of all events births, deaths, movements, family changes, ...)

Differences

- Completeness of data in China

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Session 4

How to enhance the dialogue between China and Europe ?

- A more unified system of collecting data is needed for more efficient comparison between countries (e.g. like Eurostat in Europe with a data base on population)
- More joint research
- Topics with high priority : family models (household perspective, housing, desire for children, inter-generational relationships and solidarities, ageing (family and social support, rate of ageing), social capital (networks in migration, linking local government and community organisations, etc, human capital (education and employment), living conditions of migrants (internal and international) and social integration (communities)
- Exchange of information on data available and results from research (“WT21” network)
- International Congress of Gerontology in Paris in 2009. Proposal of a session on comparison between Europe and China