



Population ageing and birth control policy in China

HUANG, Chenxi, Ph.D.



My information

- Academic visiting research fellow
- BWPI, SED, UOM
- Social assistance
- Chen-xi.huang
@manchester.ac.uk
- Associate Prof. and vice-director
- Population Research Institute (PRI)
- East China Normal University (ECNU), Shanghai, China
- Social policy, population migration in China
- cxhuang@re.ecnu.edu.cn



Population policy debates in current China

- Quantity control & structural readjustment?
- Structural readjustment & relax of birth control policy?





Population ageing in China

- The largest number of aged population
 - 2010 China: 60+, 178 m. (13.26%); 65+, 119 million (8.87%)
 - About one-fifth of total aged population of the world; exceed the total number of aged population in Europe
- High speed of ageing
- Heavy social and economic burden

Developed Countries



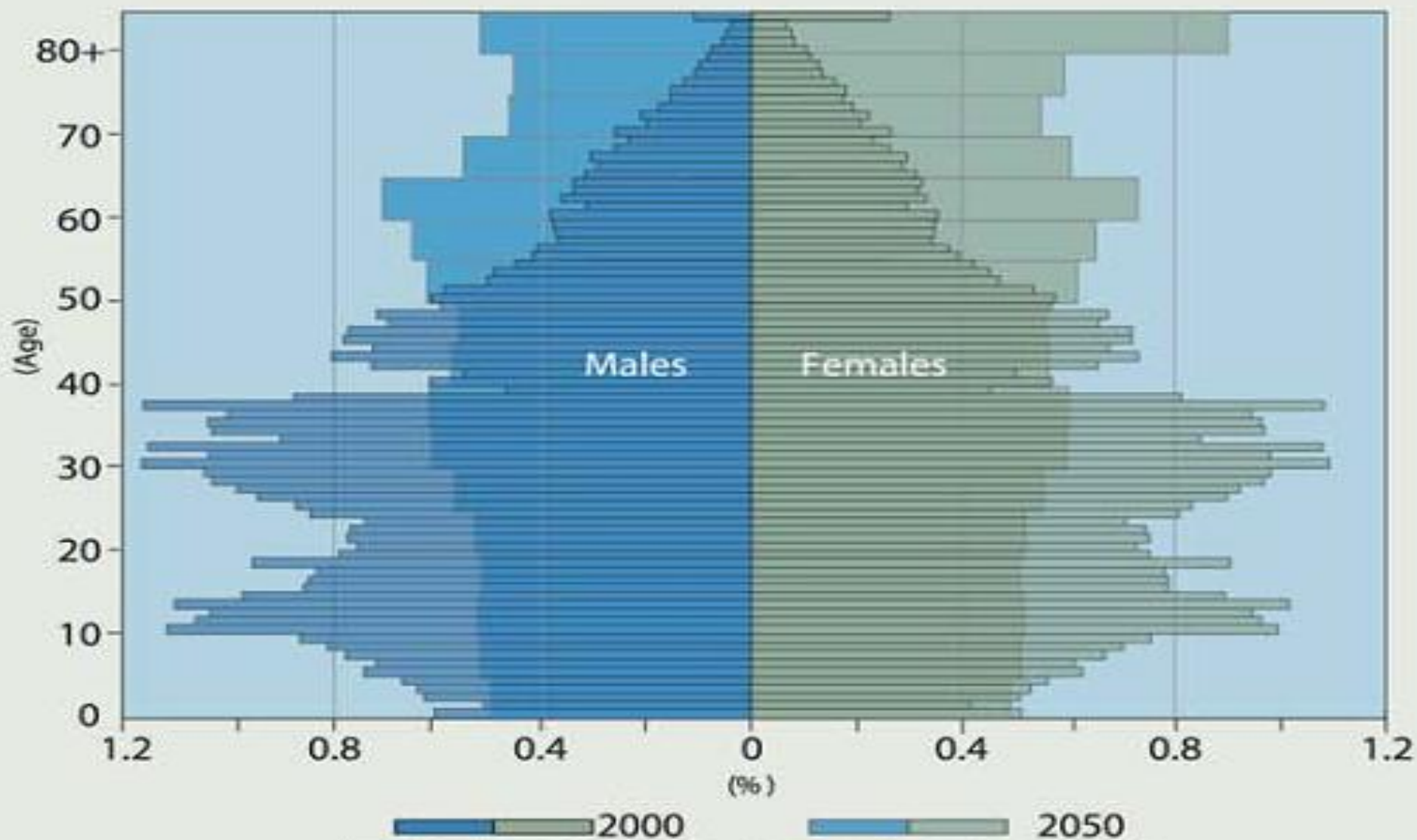
Developing Countries



Number of years for population age 65+ to increase from 7% to 14%
(Kinsella.K,.Gist.Y, 1995; .U S .Census.Bureau,2007)

Age Pyramid of China, 2000 and 2050

中国人口金字塔 (2000年, 2050年)

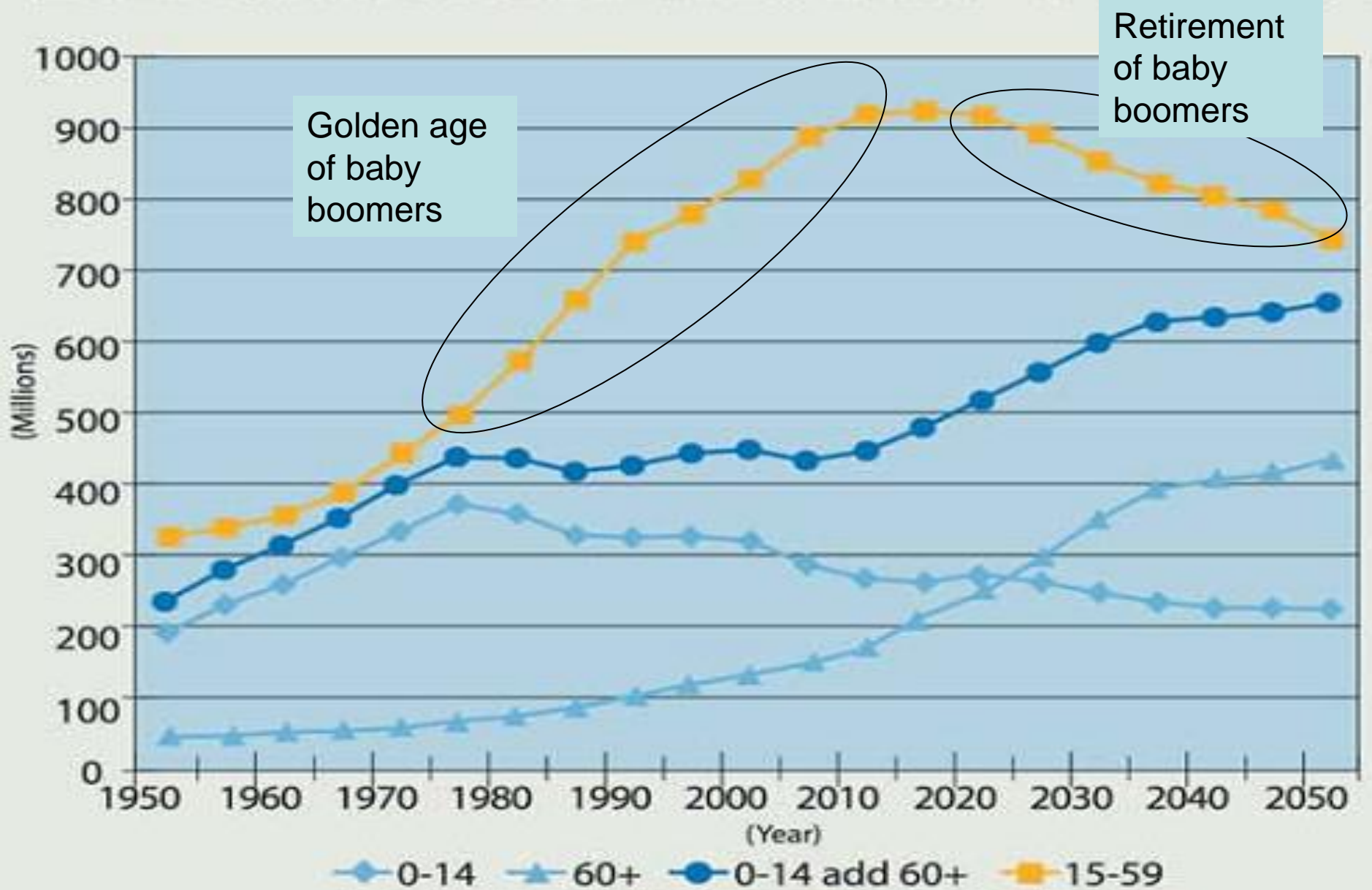


Source: Data for 2000 are from China Population Census, 2000

Data for 2050 are based on 5-year average from UNDESA, World Population Prospects: 2004 Revision

Working/Non-working Age Population, China, 1950-2050

中国工作年龄人口和非工作年龄人口构成(1950年-2050年)



Source: UNDESA, World Population Prospects: 2004 Revision

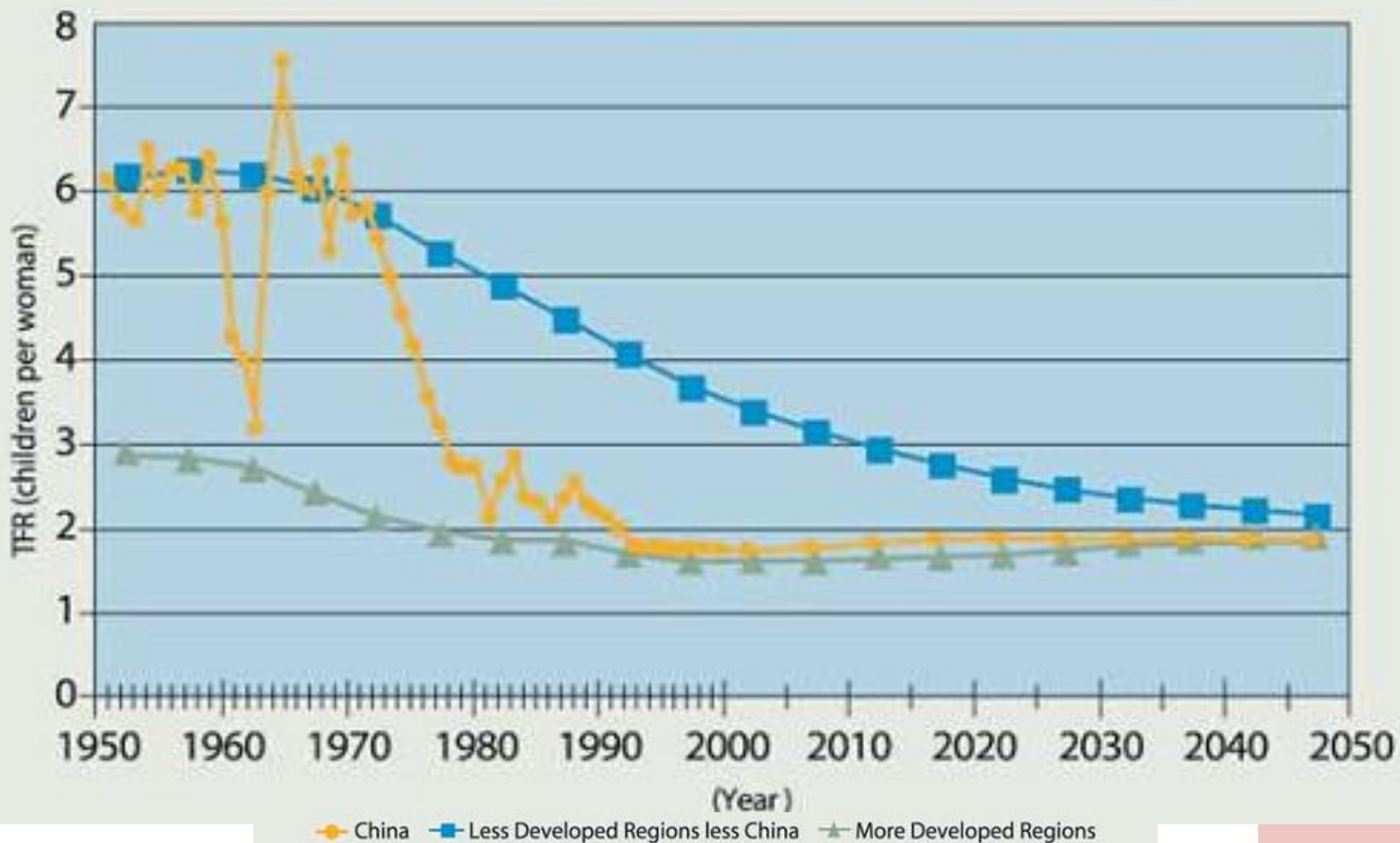


Determinants of population ageing

- Population transition
- Fertility decline
- Mortality decline/lengthening life expectancy

TFR per Woman, China and World, 1950-2050

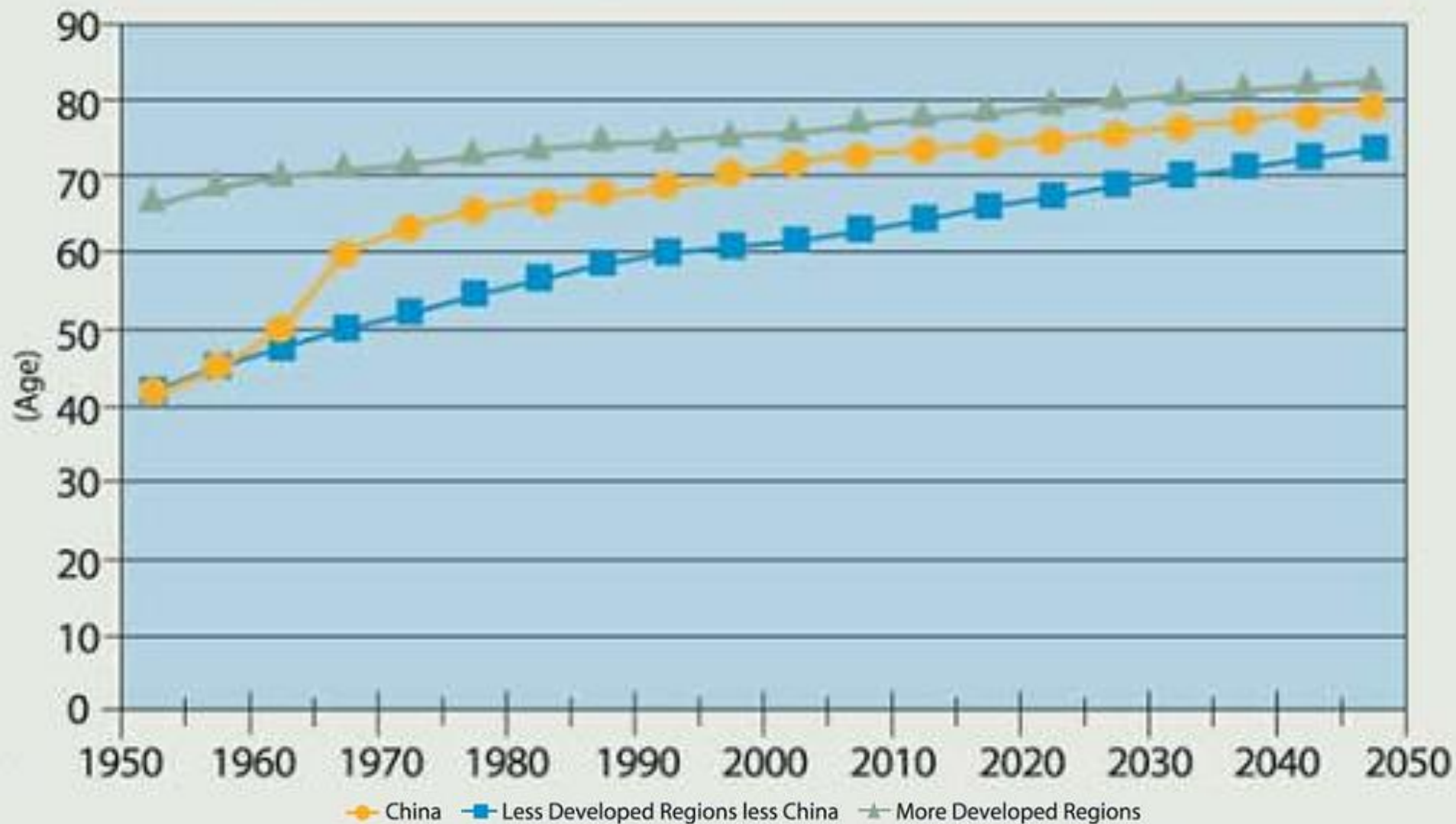
中国与世界妇女总和生育率(1950年-2050年)



Source: UNDESA, World Population Prospects: 2004 Revision, Data on TFR by year for China (1950-2000) are from Du, 2006

Life Expectancy, China and World, 1950-2050

中国与世界人口预期寿命(1950年-2050年)



Source: UNDESA, World Population Prospects: 2004 Revision, Data on TFR by year for China (1950-2000) are from Du, 2006



Comparison with other countries

- Similarities
 - Result of population transition
 - Fertility decline and mortality decline
- Differences
 - Artificial intervention on fertility leads to rapid decrease of TFR
 - Getting old before getting rich(未富先老)



Birth control policy adjustment or NOT?



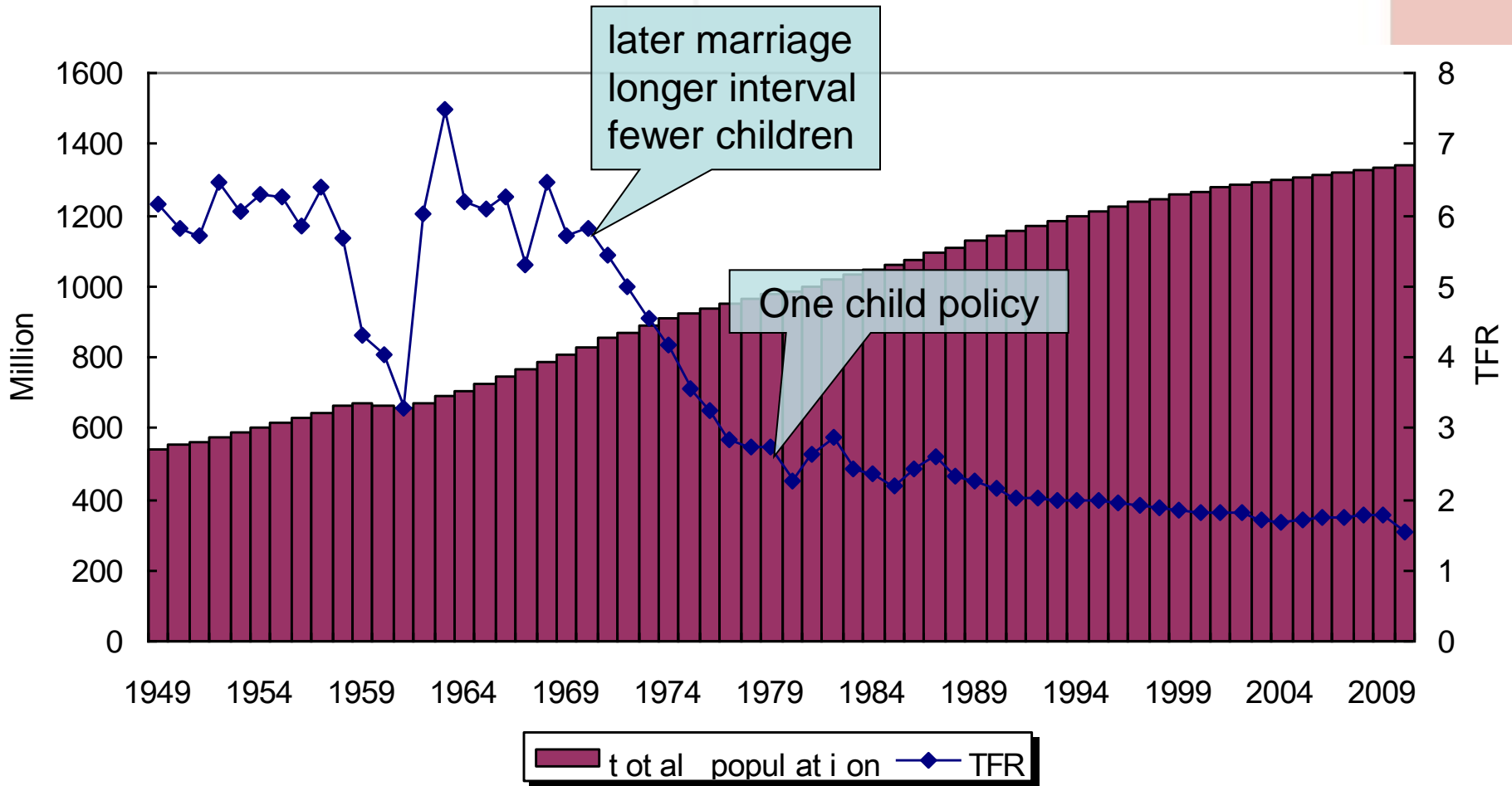
70,000,000,000th in the
world, 2011

13,000,000,000th
in China, 2005





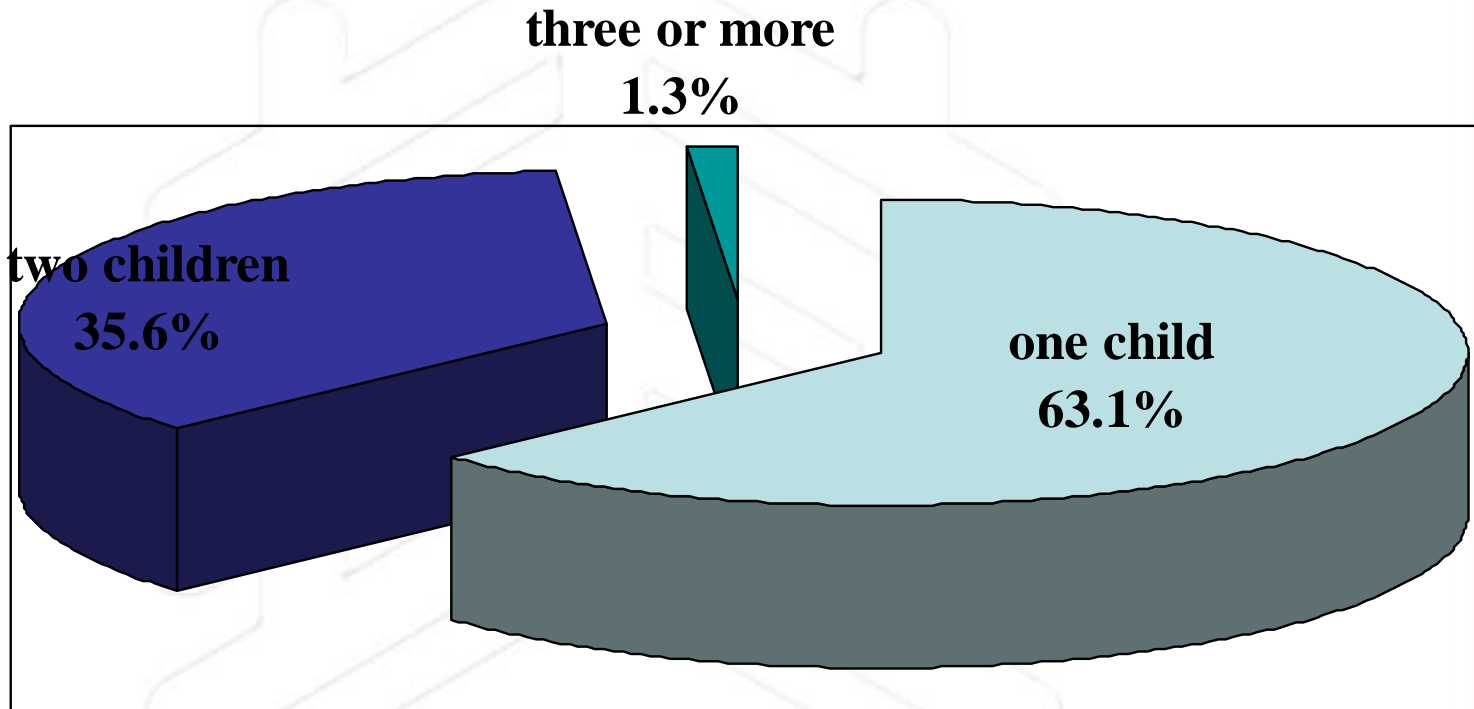
Birth control in China



Source: SBS, 2010



Number of children a couple can bear under current policy



Source: Guo et al., 2003



Arguments for NO adjustment

- Ageing is the inevitable result of population transition and worldwide trend, as a result of social and economic development, not birth control (Jiang, 2006; Yuan, 2007; Wu, 2007)
- Relax of birth control is not so helpful for ease of ageing; Distant water can't put out a nearby fire. (Liu, 2000; Wu, 2007)
- The current population size remains a major problem, policy adjustment is still premature (Yu, 2000, 2001; Wang, 2000).



Arguments for adjustment

- Birth control policy accelerates the speed of ageing (Li, 2000; Yang, 2007; Chen, 2008), and adjustment of fertility policy (i.e. “soft landing”) can help to decrease the ageing level in the future.
- Characteristics of reproduction make policy adjustments imminent, since the decline of fertility is irreversible (Li, 1997; Chen, 2007; Yang, 2007) .

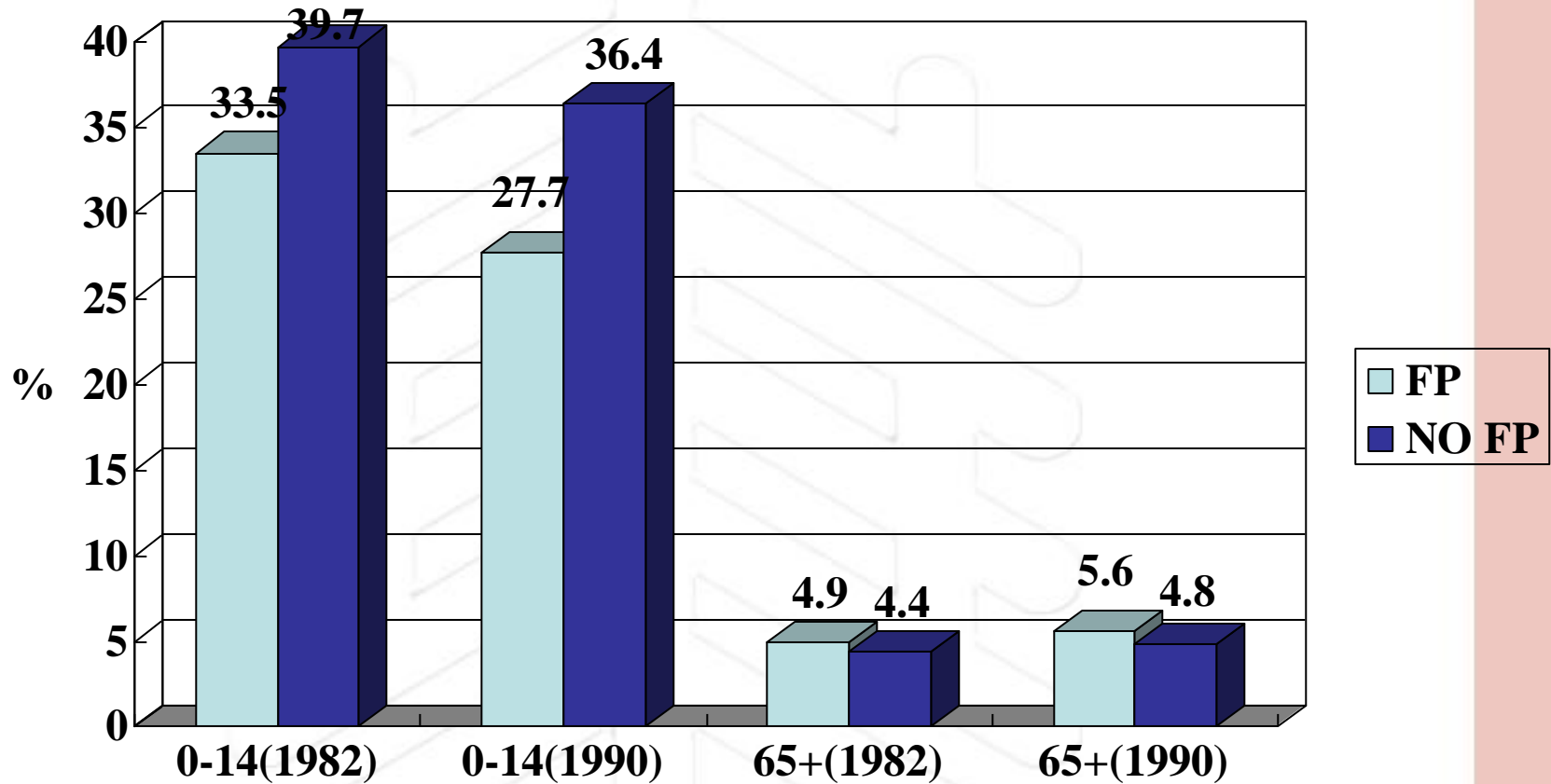


Source: *Sanlian Life Week*, 10

OCT, 2011



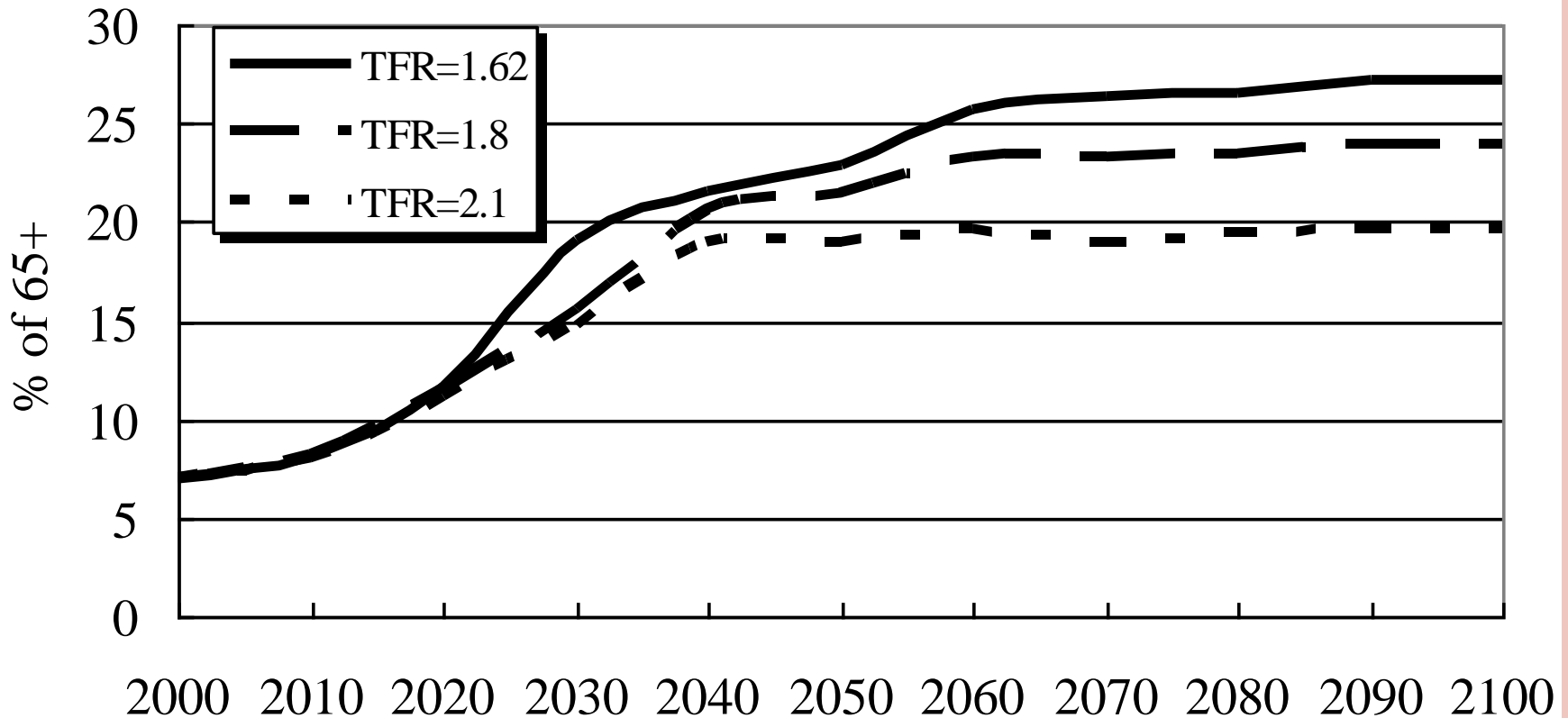
Impacts of birth control on age structure



Source: XIAO, 1994



Ageing level under different fertility policy options



TFR=1.62 strict one-child policy

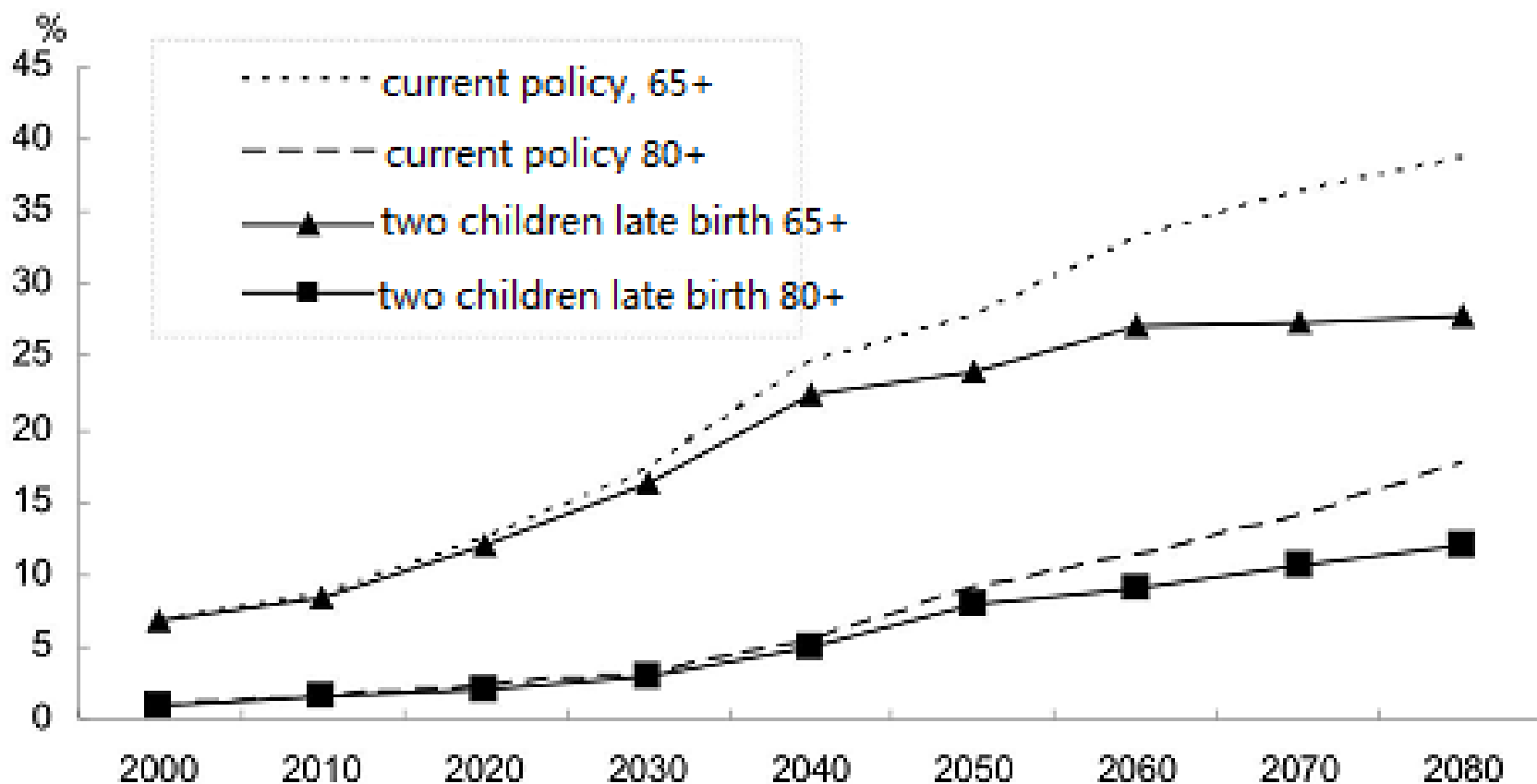
TFR=1.8 TFR in late 1990s

TFR=2.1 two-child policy

Source: LIU, 2000



Effects of a soft landing of fertility policy on ageing



Source: ZENG, 2006



Remarks and reflections

- Both sides have strong supporters yet lacking solid foundation that can convince opponents
- Birth control policy is changing, but slowly and gradually.
 - Couples of both single child can have two
 - The policy that couples that either is single child can have two is under way
 - Two child policy can be expected but be patient.



Remarks and reflections

- Demographic analysis has three dimensions: size, structure and time
 - The making of population policy should look ahead into the future and back into the past (瞻前顾后), since each policy which affects a cohort may affect the society for the whole lifespan of the cohort.



Thanks!

