

Hong Kong Social Problems – The Ageing Population

Explanatory Notes for Teachers

Level: S2

Supporting Teaching Materials: Students' worksheet

Students' Prior Knowledge

Before this ELA unit, students have learnt about the population of Hong Kong and facts about population trends, as well as other terms relating to this unit, through the medium of Chinese.

Aims and Objectives

I. Content Objectives

After completing the ELA activities, students should be able to use English to:

1. understand population trends and their impact on the future social and economic development of Hong Kong;
2. comment on the effectiveness of existing policies related to the ageing population; and
3. evaluate initiatives from NGOs and put forward to government consideration

II. Language Objectives

After completing the ELA activities, students should be able to

1. understand and use the English terms related to this topic (e.g., *the population structure, pyramid, statistical diagram, census, sex structure, age structure, aged people, ageing trend*),
2. understand and use the English expressions for discussing the recent changes in the population structure in Hong Kong by studying the population pyramid, e.g.,
 - *The population pyramid is a statistical diagram that shows the data collected by census.*
 - *By studying the population pyramid, we can get to know more about the sex structure – the balance of men and women - and the age structure – the numbers of children, working adults and elderly people.*
 - *There were fewer aged people in 1981 than in 2001.*
 - *The numbers of people aged between 15 and 60 years has been decreasing since 1981.*
 - *There were fewer children in 2001 than in 1981.*
 - *The population is expected to remain on an ageing trend. The population of those aged 65 and over is predicted to increase from 12% in 2006 to 26% in 2036.*
3. respond to data on the social and economic background of the elderly in Hong Kong, and transform the data into descriptive text, e.g.,
 - *56% of the elderly were retired and 13.7% were economically active.*
 - *19% of the elderly had retirement protection, such as retirement fund or pension.*
4. understand and use English expressions for discussing the suggestions for the provision of social services to the elderly, e.g.,

- *If we have more elderly people in Hong Kong, what social services will be in greater demand?*
- *There is a need to revise the provision of social services for the elderly (e.g., residential homes, health care, employment and allowance) because of the changes in the population structure in Hong Kong.*

Procedure:

1. Activity 1 – **Change of population structure in Hong Kong.** Students read the population pyramids that describe the population composition in Hong Kong. The activity requires students to understand statistical information.
2. Activity 2 – **The needs of the aged population.** Students read various sources about Hong Kong population trends and statistical data about the aged population. The activity involves students in critically reviewing existing social policies related to the aged population and evaluating the suitability of the policies to current elderly needs.
3. Activity 3 - **“Ageing Well, Living Well” – Let’s build an age-friendly city!** This is a THINK-PAIR-SHARE activity. Students study the 8 topic areas of building an age-friendly city suggested by World Health Organization (WHO). They select 3 areas and justify how their selections are appropriate to Hong Kong ageing issues.
4. Activity 4 – In this activity, students should make independent enquiries into the elderly services / views towards local elderly policies by government or local non-government bodies. They should review how the services or policies benefit Hong Kong’s elderly and meet the futures needs of Hong Kong’s elderly population.

Hong Kong Social Problems – The Ageing Population

Ageing Well, Living Well

Activity 1 Changes of the population structure in Hong Kong

Do you know?

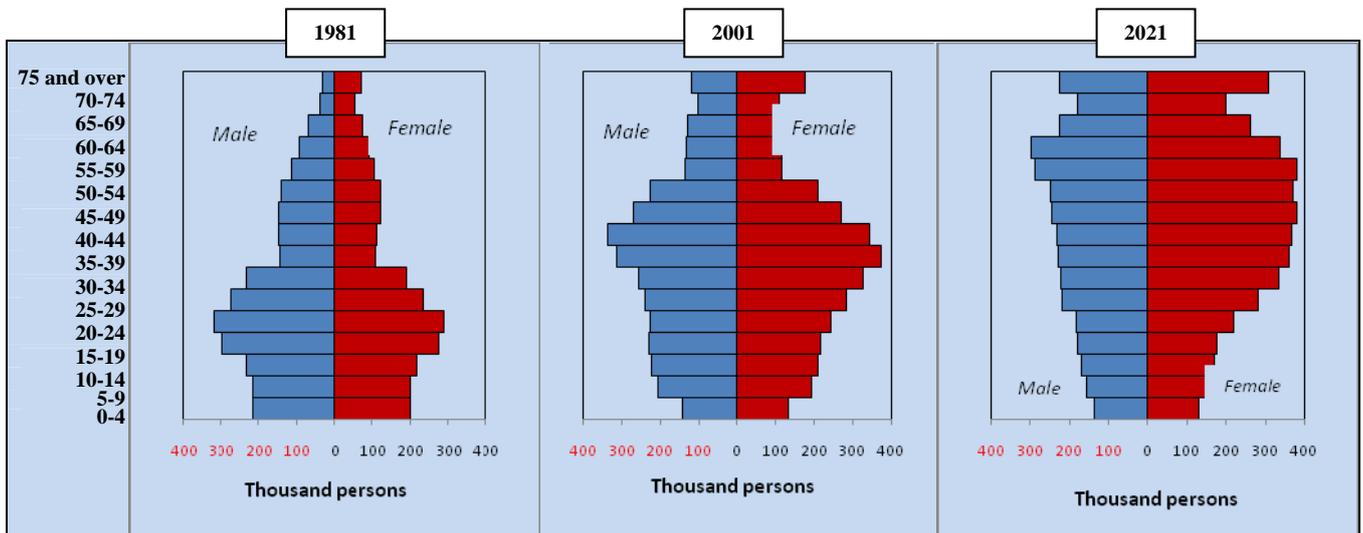


The population pyramid is a statistical diagram that shows the data collected by census. By studying the population pyramid, we can get to know more about the sex structure – the balance of men and women - and the age structure – the numbers of children, working adults and elderly people.



Children: 0 – 14 years old
Aged: 60 years or above.

Source A Population Pyramids 1981, 2001, 2021



Source Census and Statistics Department

Study the population pyramids.

1. Which age group does the top of the pyramid refer to?
 - A. Children
 - B. The working population
 - C. The aged population

2. Compare the population pyramids in 1981 and 2001; choose the best words to complete the statements.
 - A. There are more / fewer aged people in 1981 than in 2001.
 - B. The numbers of people aged between 15 and 60 years has been growing / decreasing since 1981.
 - C. There were more / fewer children in 2001 than there were in 1981.

3. The population pyramid of 2021 projects the trend in the Hong Kong population. Do you think the aged population will continue to grow?

4. If we have more elderly people in Hong Kong, what social services will be in greater demand?

Activity 2 The needs of the aged population

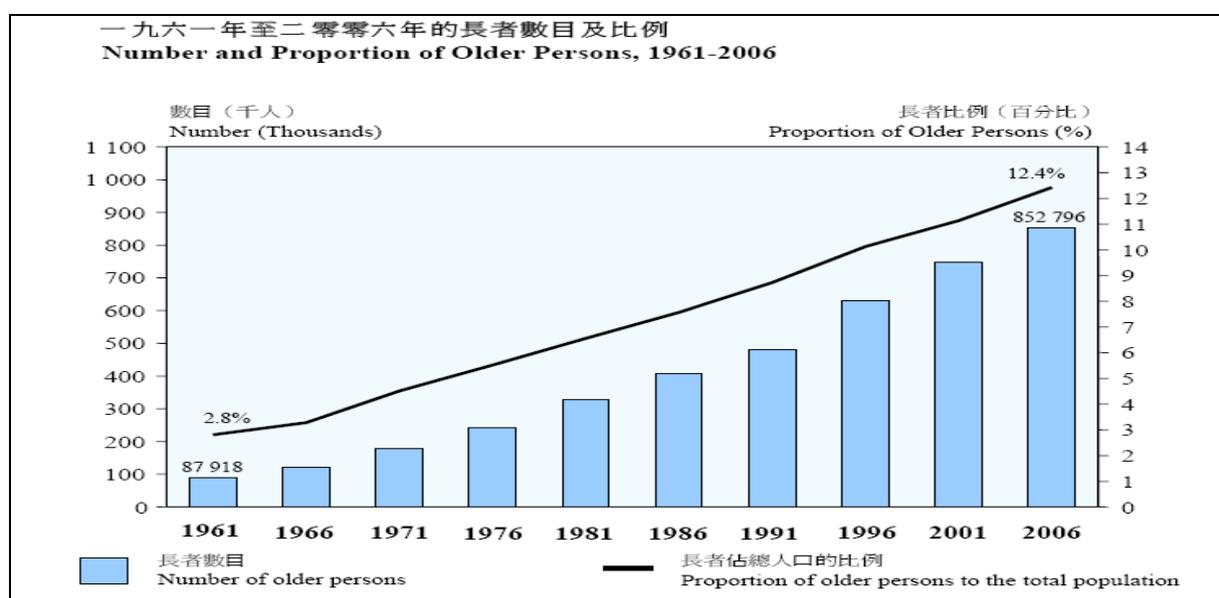
Study the sources below and answer the questions.

Source A HK Population to hit 8.57m in 2036

Adapted from news.gov.hk July 16, 2007

The population of Hong Kong is expected to reach 8.57 million in 30 years, according to the Census & Statistics Department's updated population projection. The population trends show that there is a need to revise the provision of social services.

The population is expected to remain on an ageing trend. The population of those aged 65 and over is predicted to increase from 12% in 2006 to 26% in 2036. In 2006, the life expectancy was 79.5 years for men and 85.6% years for women. Over the next 30 years, it is expected that the life expectancy of men and women would be 82.7 years and 88.3% respectively.



Source from A Profile of Older Persons published by Hong Kong Census and Statistic Department 2006

Source B The Social and economic background of Hong Kong's elderly

Total Number of Elderly: 1,129,900 % of elderly in the total population: 16.2%

<p>Living arrangements</p> <p>78.4% lived with family</p> <p>11.6% living alone</p> <p>10% living in home for the aged</p>	<p>Elderly employment and income</p> <p>56% were retired and 13.7% were economically active</p> <p>19% had retirement protection (e.g. retirement fund / pension)</p>
<p>Education Background</p> <p>26.6% pre-primary</p> <p>37.7% primary</p> <p>26.6% secondary</p> <p>6.9% post-secondary</p>	<p>Health Condition</p> <p>70.4% chronic diseases</p> <p>41.1% had consulted a doctor in the past month</p>

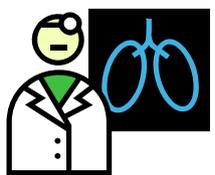
Source adapted from Socio-demographic Profile, Health Status and Self-care Capability of Older Persons, Hong Kong Census and Statistic Department 2009

In source A, it is mentioned that “there is a need to revise the provision of social services”. Which of the following social services need to be revised if there are more aged people in the population in future?

Social Services	In what ways will these services have to change?
A. residential homes for elderly	
B. healthcare	
C. employment of elderly	
D. Old Age Allowance	

Why do you think so?

Use the information in Source B and from the previous activities to help you explain your views.

	<p>Did you know?</p> <p>Hong Kong faces a shortage of labourers and experienced staff. In fact, tax payers aged between 60 -79 have generated nearly HK\$13 billions of tax revenue. Sarah Harper of Oxford University urged for a review of early retirement schemes as elderly taxpayers will be an important source of government income in 10 years.</p> <p><i>Source from Golden Age Magazine</i></p>
	<p>Did you know?</p> <p>Over 100 elderly people protested against the government and called for “concessionary medical subsidies for old persons”. The representatives of the Democratic Party, the organizers of the protest, estimated that HK\$4 billion of Government expenditure benefits nearly 60 million aged citizens in the form of the 50% concessionary charges on public medical services. The old people also requested an increase in Old Age Allowance because of inflation.</p>

Activity 3

“Ageing Well, Living Well” – Let’s build an age-friendly city!



The World Health Organization (WHO) suggested 8 topic areas for discussion related to the needs of the elderly in a community as well as action plans for cities to consider.

Choose 3 topic areas from those below and say why you think they are important to the elderly in Hong Kong. Then compare your choices with those of your classmates.

Topics Areas	I think it is important to elderly in Hong Kong
1. Outdoor spaces and buildings <i>Does the natural and built environment help older persons get around easily and safely in the community and encourage active community participation?</i>	
2. Transportation <i>Can older persons travel wherever they want to go in the community, conveniently and safely?</i>	
3. Housing <i>Do older persons have housing that is safe and affordable and which allows them to stay independent as their needs change?</i>	
4. Respect and Social Inclusion <i>Are public services, media, commercial services, faith communities and civil society respectful of the diversity of needs among seniors and willing to accommodate seniors in all aspects of society?</i>	
5. Social Participation <i>Do seniors have opportunities for developing and maintaining meaningful social networks in their neighbourhoods?</i> <i>Are the needs and preferences of seniors considered in planning by a diverse range of agencies and institutions?</i>	
6. Communication and Information <i>Are seniors aware of the diverse range of programmes and services available within their community?</i> <i>Is information readily available, appropriately designed and delivered to meet the needs of seniors?</i>	
7. Civic Participation and Employment <i>Do older persons have opportunities to participate in community decision making? Do older persons have opportunities to contribute their experience and skills to the community in paid or unpaid work?</i>	
8. Community Support and Health Service <i>Do older persons have access to social and health services they need to stay healthy and independent?</i>	

Activity 4 What can we do to prepare for the continuous increase in the aged population in Hong Kong?

Do you know what has been done in Hong Kong?

Do you know if any organization (government or a non-governmental body) is responsible for elderly policy?

Try to search for an organization from the Internet and share the information with your classmates.

What is the name of the organization?

Is it a government organization or a non-government body?

What do they say about the elderly policy in Hong Kong?

Do you think their suggestions meet the needs of the elderly?

Write an email to the Chief Executive or to a local non-government organization for elderly services to express your views about the Elderly Policy in Hong Kong.

In your email, you should state:

1. Who you are
2. Why you care about elderly care in Hong Kong
3. Which elderly issue you care about the most
4. What you know about the Hong Kong or international elderly policy
5. Your suggestion(s) to improve the elderly services in Hong Kong.

Dear

Activity 1 Changes of the population structure in Hong Kong

Do you know?

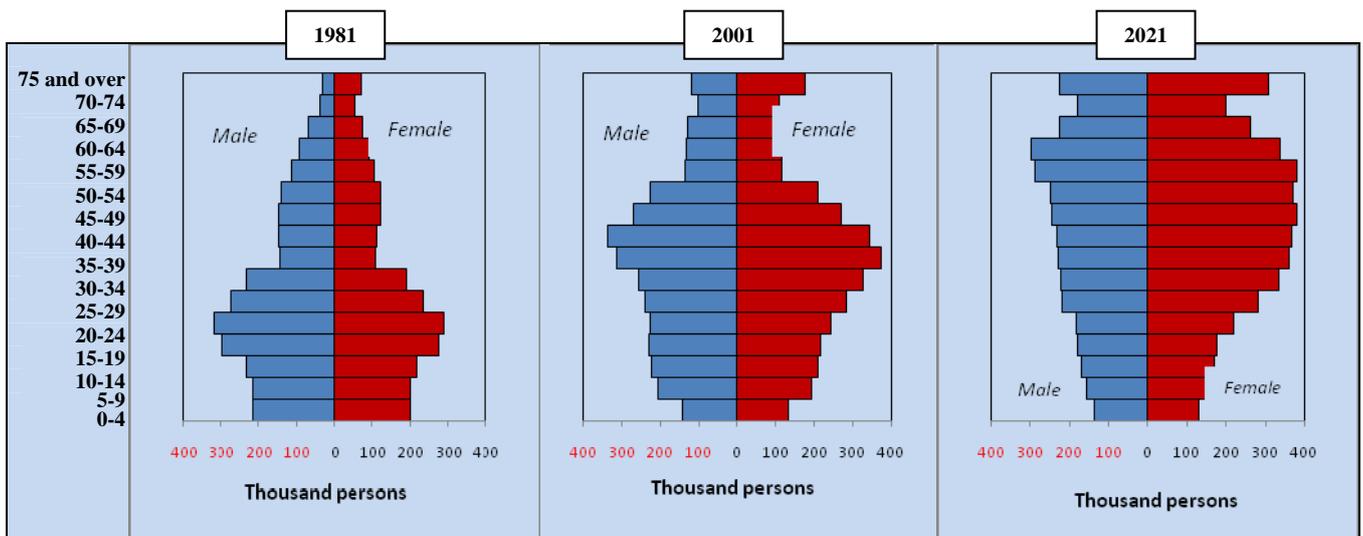


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3. The population pyramid of 2021 projects the trend in Hong Kong population. Do you think the aged population will continue to grow?

Yes, the aged population will continue to grow.

4. If we have more elderly people in Hong Kong, what social services will be in greater demand?

If we have more elderly people in Hong Kong, medical and community support services and elderly centres will be in greater demand.

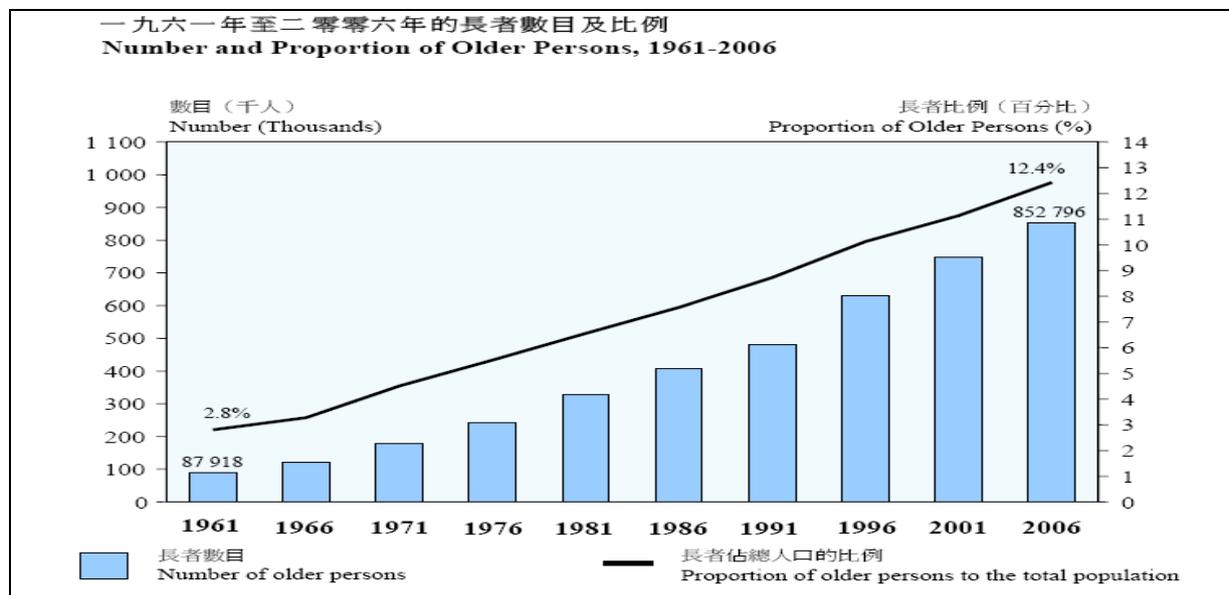
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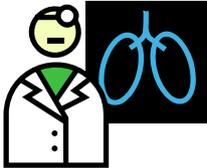
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In source A, it is mentioned that “there is a need to revise the provision of social services”. Which of the following social services need to be revised if there are more aged people in the population in future?

Social Services	In what ways will these services have to change?
A. residential homes for elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The provision of subsidized residential and subsidized community care places must increase.</u> • <u>Additional higher-quality residential care places will be needed.</u> • <u>The support for demented elders will be enhanced by providing or increasing relevant supplements for subsidized residential care homes for the elderly and day care centres/units for the elderly.</u>
B. healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Financial/material assistance will increase e.g. waiving of medical charges, application for trust fund, referral for social security benefits, and purchase of medical appliances, etc.;</u>
C. employment of elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The Middle-aged employment programme should be encouraged and supported.</u>
D. Old Age Allowance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The amount of the Old Age Allowance subsidized by the government should be increased greatly.</u>

Why do you think so?

Use the information in Source B and from the previous activities to help you explain your views.

	<p>Did you know?</p> <p>Hong Kong faces a shortage of labourers and experienced staff. In fact, tax payers aged between 60 -79 have generated nearly HK\$13 billions of tax revenue. Sarah Harper of Oxford University urged for a review of early retirement schemes as elderly taxpayers will be an important source of government income in 10 years.</p> <p><i>Source from Golden Age Magazine</i></p>
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<p>1. Outdoor spaces and buildings <i>Does the natural and built environment help older persons get around easily and safely in the community and encourage active community participation?</i></p>	<u>(students' free responses)</u>
<p>2. Transportation <i>Can older persons travel wherever they want to go in the community, conveniently and safely?</i></p>	<u>(students' free responses)</u>
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What is the name of the organization?

(students' free responses)

Is it a government organization or a non-government body?

(students' free responses)

What do they say about the elderly policy in Hong Kong?

(students' free responses)

Do you think their suggestions meet the needs of the elderly?

(students' free responses)

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In your email, you should state:

1. Who you are
2. Why you care about elderly care in Hong Kong
3. Which elderly issue you care about the most
4. What you know about the Hong Kong or international elderly policy
5. Your suggestion(s) to improve the elderly services in Hong Kong.

Dear

(students' free responses)

Reference:

HK's ageing population trend continues

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-02/23/content_812508.htm

HK trend: Fewer babies, more elderly

http://www.straitstimes.com/print/Free/Story/STIStory_139783.html

Hong Kong Population Projections 2004-2033

<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200406/30/0630094.htm>

Greece plans to ban early retirement

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8506142.stm?ad=1>

Statistics

The Hong Kong population situation and its development trend

http://www.censtatd.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_248/the_hong_kong_population_situation_and_its_development_trend.pdf

A Profile of Old Persons from 2006 Population by-census

http://www.bycensus2006.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_962/fa_06bc_op.pdf

Thematic Report: Older Persons from 2006 Population by-census

http://www.bycensus2006.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_962/06bc_op.pdf

2009-2010 Policy Address

<http://www.policyaddress.gov.hk/09-10/eng/p102.html>

Senior Citizen Residence Scheme

http://www.hkhs.com/sen_20040903/eng/cheerful_court/news/news_tko.htm

Golden Age Magazine

<http://www.goldenage.hk/b5/home/home.php>

CADENZA Community Project – Elderly-friendly Employment Practice

<http://www.sage.org.hk/elderlyemployment/en/useful/useful.html>

Committees & Boards, Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee Ongoing Projects, [District of Saanich](#)

<http://www.saanich.ca/living/mayor/boards/hsacprojects.html#global>

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, Standing Committee on Service Development & Liaison, Progress Report (March to April 2009)

http://www.hkcss.org.hk/cb2/Progress_Report/2009/PR_Mar09Apr.pdf

<http://www.hkcss.org.hk/IRN/events0708/report-back/8IAGG/CHAN.pdf>

<http://www.hkcss.org.hk/el/scd2009/en/index.asp>