

MIGRATION, HUMAN SECURITY, AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA

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Introduction

Northeast Asia (NEA) is contained within the national boundaries of China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation. The region is defined by the Helongjiang, Liaoning, and Jilin provinces of China, the Russian Far East, and the entirety of the other nations of the area. The NEA nations, including the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions (S.A.R.s), and Taiwan (R.O.C.), comprise East Asia, and had a mid-2000 population of approximately 1,647 million persons, or 26 percent of the world's total population (Table 1). The NEA region itself had a mid-2000 population of approximately 298 million.¹

International migration and other cross border flows are increasing in NEA, surpassing fertility as a topic of regional concern, and are leading to debates regarding the nature of the nation-state, citizenship, ethnicity, and state and human security. NEA states have recently transitioned from lower to higher levels of intrastate and international migration, from higher to lower fertility and mortality rates, from younger to older age structures, and from lower to higher urbanization (Figure 1).

The security task for NEA is to achieve harmony between populations, economies, and resources.² Traditional concepts of security emphasize the survival and prosperity of the nation-state, which are assumed to guarantee the security of populations. Human security concepts emphasize the protection of populations from economic, environmental, health, physical, political, and social hazards, and the freedom of peoples to lead their lives to the fullest extent.³ State security and human security are intertwined and sometimes complementary, but one does not guarantee the other.

We describe how migration contributes to human and state security in NEA. "Ultimate (root) causes" of insecurity are failures of the social contracts that bind nations and populations together in cooperative activity.⁴ "Proximate causes" of insecurity, which apply to specific situations, can include changes in the size, composition, and distribution of populations, including intrastate and international migration. The links between migration, migration policies, and security are indirect and reciprocal, migration affects access to resources, and implementing migration policies can alleviate or engender conflict.⁵

We consider four questions concerning how migration and other cross-border flows affect human and state security in NEA. First, how can we explain migration and other population flows in NEA? Second, what are the major migration trends and policies for the region? Third, what are the major trends for NEA states? Fourth, what migration-related policies might enhance state and human security in the region? As we shall see, migration and security issues are compounded by population aging, Chinese rural-urban migration, depopulation of the Russian Far East, and prospects for a NEA common market.

Explaining Migration

Definitions

The stock of a population includes its size and composition, classified by such characteristics as age, sex, labor force, dependency, ethnicity, and location. Population flows represent entries into or exits out of a population, and include fertility, mortality and migration. Migration is but one of a number of geographic flows that include capital, communication, goods, and services. Migration is linked to these other geographic flows, and may be a cause and/or a consequence of changes in population stock.

The term *migration* refers to a change of usual or *de jure* place of residence, which can be across city, county, provincial, state or international boundary lines. *International migration* refers to a change of usual residence between nations. *Internal migration* or *intranational migration* refers to such a change within a nation. *Immigration* refers to a flow of persons establishing a usual place of residence in a given nation and whose usual place of residence was formerly in another nation. *Emigration* refers to a flow leaving a nation for a place of residence elsewhere. *Net migration* refers to the numerical balance of immigrants and emigrants to and from a given nation, according to the direction of balance. Migratory events normally take place in *migration streams* from areas of origin to destination, and in *counterstreams* of migrants returning home.⁶ *Free migration* is governed largely by the will of the migrant, *impelled migration* is influenced largely by the will of others, and *forced migration* is completely governed by the will of others.⁷ *Refugee migration*, and *internal population displacement* (intrastate displacement) are forms of impelled or forced migration.

Most persons crossing international borders are not migrants, but are circulating travelers or tourists. Reasons for admission of migrants to states include education and training, employment, family formation, settlement, and humanitarian reasons (e.g., refugees, asylum-seekers, persons granted temporary protected status, etc.).⁸ Major international migration flows today include labor migration, family reunification, refugee and asylee flows, and illegal migration.⁹

Migration Perspectives

Knowledge failures as well as policy failures inhibit migration management. There are no universal laws of migration; models, judged as useful or not useful for a specific purpose, are best used to guide migration research and policymaking.¹⁰ Independent variables accounting for migration vary according to whether the migratory behavior explained is that of national populations or smaller groupings of persons.

Most migrants seek economic security; economic explanations dominate the migration field. Migration decisions of individuals and households have been analyzed in terms of cost-benefit considerations by economic actors seeking to minimize risks by diversifying allocations of resources between household members at origin and destination.¹¹ Determinants of the propensity to migrate include (1) the price of migration, (2) destination preferences, and (3) resources (social and financial capital) available for migration goals compared with other goals.¹²

Sociological explanations of migration include descriptions of migration fields that include “push” and “pull” factors at origins and destinations, intervening obstacles, and characteristics of migrants that impede or facilitate their movement through migration streams. Some migration rules are (1) many migrants go near, few go far, (2) migration occurs in stages, (3) the volume and rate of migration increase in absence of severe checks, and (4) increases in

technology generate more migration.¹³ Chains of migrants link family, tribal, ethnic, and national migration networks. In addition to increasing economic ties between sending and receiving countries, international migration is facilitated by increasing levels of knowledge and experience at destination, ties between families and friends at origin and destination, and pressures for family reunification.¹⁴

Political approaches to migration focus on the roles of nation-states in generating economic migrants and refugees.¹⁵ Gender-linked explanations of migration emphasize that males and females may utilize different migration streams, participate in different migration networks, and make different contributions to the economies and communities at their areas of origin and destination.¹⁶ Further, migration expands the roles of women, through increased economic activity at destination, and by dampening fertility rates.¹⁷

The aforementioned migration perspectives have been incorporated into systems descriptions of migration, with a global sweep and long time frames that emphasize the history of migration of Europeans from the “European core” to the “world periphery,” and subsequent migration of non-Europeans from the periphery towards core areas.¹⁸ Massey and Massey et al. describe globalization as resulting in the penetration of capitalist markets from developed “core” countries in Europe and North America into peripheral nonmarket and premarket countries, including those in NEA. Displaced workers in peripheral countries are then pushed to migrate and to sell labor in emerging markets, in order to manage family risk and overcome the impact of local market failures.¹⁹ Labor markets at destination are often segmented, resulting in short-term labor shortages and surpluses, and a secondary labor market that generates a further demand for migrant labor.

State-mediated migration within NEA is being replaced by demand-driven migration serviced by labor contractors who have facilitated labor deployment to Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea.²⁰ Nevertheless the state is still relevant, state policies that prevent integration of foreign workers and their dependents give labor contractors influence over migration policies, facilitate exploitation of migrant workers, encourage deregulation of labor markets, and subsidize marginal jobs at destination.²¹

Migration and development tiers relevant to systems explanations of migration within NEA have been defined by Skeldon as (1) the “old core” (Europe, North America, and Australasia), (2) the “new core” (Japan and global financial center Tokyo, South Korea, and Taiwan (R.O.C.)), (3) “core extensions and potential cores” (coastal China, the Hong Kong S.A.R., the Macao S.A.R., and the more settled coastal areas of the Russian Far East), (4) the “labor frontier” (the near interior of Eastern China and potentially North Korea), and (5) the “resource niche” (Mongolia, the remainder of China, and the remainder of the Russian Far East) (Figure 2). The NEA labor frontier is a source of migrants for extracting resources from the resource niche, and for manufacturing and service activities in NEA core extensions and potential cores.²²

Increasing numbers of skilled migrants in NEA, including intra-company transferees, individual service providers and specialists on specific assignments, short-term or business visitors, and diplomatic or international personnel, are now providing specialized cross-border services, based on demands for services rather than labor.²³ These border-crossing activities are linked to the development of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the subsequent increases in proportion of trade in services, particularly in Japan, South Korea, the Hong Kong S.A.R., and Taiwan (R.O.C.).

Migration and Other Transitions in NEA

Modernization in NEA and elsewhere has produced a multi-stage vital rates and epidemiologic transition, and aging, urbanization, and migration transitions (Figure 1).²⁴ These interlinked transitions, which are associated with changes from high to low fertility and mortality (the vital rates and epidemiologic transition), from younger to older populations (the aging [and labor force] transition), from rural to urban residence (the urbanization transition) and from low to higher levels of migration (the migration transition),²⁵ provide policy makers and NGOs with opportunities to influence human security and national security.

Vital rates and epidemiologic transition. During this transition, and in the absence of migration, population growth occurs through natural increase, or an excess of births over deaths; and as birth and death rates decrease, a new balance of low birth rates and low death rates may occur.²⁶ Stage 1 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition, “The Age of Pestilence and Famine,” describes traditional societies, with constant population size, and high birth and high death rates that tend to cancel out natural increase (Figure 1). During Stage 2, “The Age of Receding Pandemics,” death rates decline, birth rates remain high, proportionately more women live through the childbearing years and bear children, and population growth is rapid. During Stage 3, “The Age of Degenerative and Man-Made Diseases,” birth rates decline, death rates bottom out and population growth begins to level off. Finally, Stage 4 is characterized by low and fluctuating birth and death rates of approximately equal magnitude, population size is again constant, and higher life expectancies may result from lifestyle-related changes and medical advances.²⁷ A new Stage 5 (not shown) may reflect increases in death rates from new or re-emerging infectious and parasitic diseases, and increased populations with compromised immune systems (including older persons and HIV/AIDS victims).²⁸

The vital rates and epidemiologic transition appears to be complete in Japan, the Hong Kong S.A.R., the Macao S.A.R., and Taiwan (R.O.C.) (Stage 4), approaching completion in South Korea (Stage 3), not as far advanced in most of China (Stage 3), and less advanced in North Korea and in Mongolia (Stage 2–3) (Figure 1 and Table 1). The current vital rates situation is less clear in North Korea, where a famine-induced mortality crisis is occurring,²⁹ and in the Russian Federation, which has recently experienced decreasing life expectancy.

The aging transition. Countries in Stages 3 and 4 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition experience increases in relative numbers of working age adults followed by increases in the relative numbers of the elderly.³⁰ The demographic and epidemiologic transition in Japan facilitated economic growth by a “massive one-time boost in economic development as rapid labor force growth occurred in the absence of burgeoning youth dependency.”³¹ NEA countries (particularly Japan and South Korea) are moving from isosceles triangle shaped population pyramids with wide bases denoting relatively many children and narrow apexes denoting relatively few older persons, towards “mushroom” pyramids, whose caps denote high proportions of older populations (Figure 2). In Japan, South Korea, Taiwan [R.O.C.], the Hong Kong S.A.R. and the Macao S.A.R., population aging underlies a shift from youth dependency to old age dependency, the aging of the native labor force, and subsequent labor shortages, the importing of migrant labor, and sometimes the outsourcing of production to lower income countries.³² Increases in economically disadvantaged populations of labor force age in China, North Korea, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh, India and other Asian countries,

will increase reservoirs of potential migrants.³³ It is not feasible that Japan and South Korea could import enough workers to maintain current (2000) support ratios of the working age population (15-64 years of age) to the old age population (65 years of age and older), but support ratios could possibly be enhanced by increasing retirement ages, to perhaps 75 years.³⁴

The urbanization transition. Urbanization makes possible the economies of scale necessary for the modernization of economies. The percentages of populations termed urban (typically defined as living in cities and towns with populations of 2,000 or more) in NEA countries now range from 36 in China to 81 in Japan, 99 in the Macao S.A.R. and 100 in the Hong Kong S.A.R. (Table 1). Rural-urban migration in NEA has increased ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity, and also increased the potential for ethnic conflicts.

The migration transition. The idea of a migration transition in NEA is useful for categorizing migration and other flows, but it does not explain migration, and migration does not always follow from or lead the demographic and epidemiological transition in one specific manner. Migration streams in NEA appear to be increasing in number. Zilensky argued that migration regularities accompany modernization, and that different forms of migration (i.e., “international,” “frontier-ward,” “rural-urban,” “urban-urban” and “intra-urban,” and “circulation”) come into prominence at different times, that some potential migration could be absorbed by circulation, and that some potential circulation could be absorbed by communication systems.³⁵

A migration transition linking adjacent states can enhance the development of *transborder urban systems* (TBSs), consisting of adjacent urban aggregations on or near national borders, that have extensive cross-border economic and social integration, diverse populations, organized transactions between nations, and are driving engines for migration and are cultural and political bridges between adjacent states.³⁶ An NEA example is the Hong Kong S.A.R., Macao S.A.R., Guangzhou (China), TBS.

Migration Trends and Policies

Regional Trends

International migration systems are defined by flows between groupings of nations. These systems include Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, North America, West Asia, Latin America, and Asia.³⁷ A NEA subsystem includes migration from countries with labor surpluses and of professionals from outside NEA to Japan and South Korea, and outflows to other regions, particularly to North America. Major migration streams originating in NEA are from China, and flow to the United States and Canada.³⁸ Minor streams originate in China, the Philippines, and South America and focus on Japan. Smaller streams flow to South Korea. The Russian Federation and Hong Kong are the most important NEA destinations, ranking fourth and twenty-third, respectively, in terms of the world’s total reported net migrants (in-migrants minus out-migrants) from 1990 to 1995.³⁹

More restrictive migration policies of industrialized states outside of NEA are lessening demands for NEA unskilled labor, yet migration pressures within NEA have increased, expanding undocumented migration to and within NEA, and heightening international security concerns.⁴⁰ With the exception of the many ethnic Russians who have returned to the Russian Federation from former South-Central and West Asian republics of the USSR, and North

Koreans who have crossed into northeast China, there are now relatively few refugees in NEA countries.⁴¹

Regional Policies

Governments use migration policies to facilitate development, avoid uncontrolled migration, and increase national identity. In 1976 only 13 percent of all governments reported policies to raise or lower immigration, and 17 percent reported policies to influence emigration. By 1998, the percentages were 24 and 24, respectively. The percentage of countries of origin closing the emigration safety valves increased from 13 in 1976 to 19 in 1998.⁴² Closing doors to immigrants may increase asylum, refugee, and illegal immigration. In recent decades, third-country refugee resettlement in NEA has given way to refugee exclusion, or restrictive refugee camps, e.g., Hong Kong prior to 1997.⁴³

Macro population policies, including migration policies for NEA countries in 1998, have been described by the United Nations Population Division (Table 2). China then viewed its population growth rate (0.9 percent/year), about the median for NEA countries, as too high and reported a policy to lower growth. The Russian Federation perceived its annual population growth (-0.2 percent/year) as too low and reported a policy to raise growth. Growth was seen as satisfactory by the remaining NEA governments, which stated they did not intervene to raise or lower growth. All NEA governments except the Russian Federation viewed their level of immigration as satisfactory and planned to maintain their immigration policies. The Russian Federation reported its level of immigration as too high (contradicting its negative population growth rate and its policy of raising immigration). All NEA countries viewed their levels of emigration as satisfactory, and sought to either maintain the current emigration policy or not intervene.⁴⁴

Massey suggests, “[W]hile the global economy unleashes powerful forces to produce larger and more diverse flows of migrants from developing countries, it simultaneously creates conditions within developed countries that promote the implementation of restrictive policies.” He indicates that (1) labor migration policies are generally formulated bureaucratically outside of public arenas for industry-related clients, (2) refugee policies are based on negotiations between executive branches of governments and NGOs with humanitarian concerns, and (3) permanent migration policies are formulated in public arenas.⁴⁵ Asian migration policies now appear to favor the circulation of highly skilled personnel, control labor migration, and restrict permanent settlement.⁴⁶

Massey also notes that while migration policies are becoming more restrictive, the global economy generates migration that is beyond national control. Liberal industrial democracies find it hard to restrict migration by judicial processes because the “convergence of markets and rights” hinders regulation, and then opt for symbolic rather than realistic migration control. State capacity to implement migration appears to depend on strength of bureaucracies, demand for entry, strength of constitutional protections, independence of judiciary and traditions of immigration.⁴⁷ Reactions of liberal democracies to rising international tensions may now temporarily inhibit some forms of migration.

National Cases

China

China has 1.273 billion people, 78 percent of the population of NEA nations, and approximately one-third of the population of the more narrowly defined NEA region. China is at

Stage 3 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition, has a natural increase rate of 0.9 percent/year, a total fertility rate of 1.8, and life expectancy of 71 years (Table 1). China is experiencing rapid population aging and extensive rural-urban migration. The country is exerting pressures to the north, south, east and west, assimilating the Hong Kong and Macao S.A.R.s, and exporting significant population.⁴⁸

Aging. China's birth control policies have led to a rapidly aging population, a trend now affecting national discourse on China's economic future.⁴⁹ By 2050, old-age population (65 years of age and older) will comprise almost 14 percent of China's population.⁵⁰ The support ratio of working-age to old-age population is declining, affecting pensions and health care, and requiring infusions of working-age population to fund social services, a demographic assignment that rural-urban migrants may be insufficient in number to undertake.⁵¹

Rural-urban migration. A combination of redundant farm labor, higher wages in urban areas experiencing economic booms, and rural environmental stress has generated extensive rural-urban migration from China's rural population reservoir, which may then lead to more international migration.⁵² Internal migrants comprising a "floating population" that numbers at least 80 million⁵³ are challenging the household registration (*hukou*) system. There are two systems of internal migration within China—highly skilled, highly educated and government-sanctioned registered *hukou* migrants, and free-market governed non-*hukou* migrants. The *hukou* system, which traditionally ties a person to a natal place by an urban-rural bifurcation that restricts geographic movement and work eligibility, contains requirements to dissuade citizens from relocating domiciles, but economic reform and the lure of ensuing benefits continue to encourage rural-urban migration.

Ethnic minorities and trans-border regions. Concomitant with non-*hukou* rural-urban migration is internal migration now sanctioned by the government to modernize the Chinese economy, build up its underdeveloped provinces, utilize resources, and redistribute Han population to peripheral areas,⁵⁴ particularly to Xinjiang Province in the northwest, the autonomous region of inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang Province in northeast China, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Ethnic, religious, and political tensions are escalating in some regions targeted for development because the majority of the citizens are not Han Chinese (e.g., Xinjiang Province).⁵⁵ In the trans-border northeast regions, such as the Amur Region, in Russia's Far East, and the Tumen River Basin near North Korea, Han presence and migration favor China's relations with its neighbors.⁵⁶

Hong Kong S.A.R. The transformation of the global economy since the 1970s has resulted in the rapid economic development of Hong Kong, which appears to be in Stage 4 of the demographic and epidemiologic transition. The rate of natural increase is 0.3 percent/year, the total fertility rate is 1.0, and life expectancy is 80 years (Table 1). Hong Kong's rise in the 1960s was grounded on cheap labor for labor-intensive manufacturing largely supplied by refugees, the spatial dispersion and economic integration of populations, and the coordination of capital accumulation, industry, labor flows, and migration.⁵⁷ Since 1997 the new Hong Kong is a separate system from the remainder of China, with close links based on economic ties, but with different governments, and a border and immigration control similar to other TBSs.⁵⁸ The economic integration of Hong Kong and the rest of China will facilitate development of the Greater China economic bloc (China-Hong Kong S.A.R.-Taiwan [R.O.C.]) and increase China's interdependence with the global system.⁵⁹ Borders between Hong Kong and mainland China are freely crossed by Hong Kong residents, but not by mainland Chinese. Pressures of illegal

migration to Hong Kong have been relieved by the development of special economic zones near the city, which are attracting residents from mainland China.

Macao S.A.R. The Macao S.A.R., which reverted to Chinese administration in 1999, has a population of approximately 450,000, is 99 percent urban, and appears to be at Stage 4 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition. Natural increase is 0.6 percent/year, the total fertility rate is 1.2, and life expectancy is 77 years (Table 1). The economy is based largely on tourism (accounting for approximately 25 percent of gross domestic product [GDP], and gambling [accounting for an additional 40 percent of GDP]).⁶⁰

China is undertaking extensive infrastructure development in order to integrate Macao into its southern economy. Foreign labor is used in lieu of mainland Chinese labor because laws now restrict the flow of mainland Chinese to the area. Macao Chinese are free to enter and exit the mainland. To decrease its reliance on foreign labor, the Macao government has implemented a nationalization policy, giving preference to locals and reducing the number of foreign workers by 30 percent in 2000.⁶¹ Nevertheless, Macao's low fertility rate suggests that nationalizing jobs will not solve the labor shortage.

Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Taiwan (R.O.C.) appears to be at Stage 4 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition. The natural increase is 0.8 percent/year, the total fertility rate is 1.7 and life expectancy is 75 years (Table 1). The population is aging, as a result of low fertility, and the government is now promoting higher fertility. Urbanization is increasing in an already densely populated setting, and new urban areas have sprouted around the official limits of major cities.⁶² Taiwan (R.O.C.) has a successful economy with movement from labor to capital and technology-intensive industries, and has become a large investor in other Asian economies, including China. Labor shortages have led to importing of illegal as well as legal foreign workers. There were perhaps 250,000 foreign workers employed in Taiwan (R.O.C.) in June 1998, including 120,000 from Thailand, 100,000 from the Philippines, and 15,000 from Indonesia, but the government has recently (1998) halted labor imports because of rising unemployment.⁶³

Japan

Compared to China, Japan has a small population, but within the NEA region, its population is relatively large. Since World War II Japan has transformed itself by economic recovery, and by rapid transition from high to low fertility and mortality. As a Stage 4 country in the vital rates and epidemiologic transition, Japan's rate of natural increase is 0.2 percent/year, its total fertility rate is 1.3 children per woman (the lowest in NEA, with the exception of the Russian Federation [1.2]), and it has NEA's highest life expectancy (81 years) (Table 1).

With birth rates falling below replacement rate and delayed marriage of Japanese women, Japan's population and potential labor force will be inadequate to support sustained economic performance. Japan faces increased dependency burdens on the labor force, more focusing of resources on the support of the older population, increasing labor migration, reduced trade surpluses, increasing unemployment, and decreasing levels of living.⁶⁴ Labor force burdens may entail a need for Japan to import foreign labor in numbers that would prove to be impossible.⁶⁵

During the 1980s and 1990s the reported aversion of young Japanese to the "3-K" (*Kitanai*, *Kiken*, and *Kitsui*) or dirty, dangerous, and demanding jobs and Japan's failures, despite low fertility rates, to fully integrate women into the labor force, aggravated labor shortages and made Japan a labor-importing nation focusing on less-skilled workers.⁶⁶ Illegal immigration

increased rapidly in the 1980s and early 1990s, particularly with respect to the 3-K jobs, and jobs for female “entertainers.”⁶⁷ Japan has also experienced large increases in circulating travelers, some of them coming to stay.⁶⁸ Japanese immigration laws failed to resolve immigration issues, partially because of *de facto* immigration policies such as “side-door” government-controlled entry, which has hampered immigration control.⁶⁹ The Japanese government may wish to continue to focus on *de facto* immigration policies, to avoid an open debate on the question of whether Japan should remain bound to the principle of Japanese ethnicity.⁷⁰ Options to deal with population decline may include policies to encourage higher fertility, increasing women’s labor force participation, increasing the labor force participation of older populations, investing to increase labor productivity, developing more production abroad, and continuing to recruit foreign workers (sometimes illegally) through private contractors.⁷¹

Recognizing that a dwindling pool of able-body workers will severely limit public contributions to its pension plans (as well as hampering funding of other projects such as the proposed expansion of its military), the Japanese government is also attempting to shift the responsibility back to families.⁷² Such transfers of financial burdens will likely meet resistance from modern Japanese households, in which women increasingly have to choose between working and taking care of their elderly, and from workers who have looked forward to their retirement, but most continue to work.

North Korea

Within the NEA region, North Korea has a medium level of natural resources and medium size population.⁷³ North Korea has been experiencing a slower vital rates transition than South Korea, and is moving from Stage 2 to Stage 3 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition. The total fertility rate is 2.3 children per woman, and natural increase (the difference between births and deaths) is 1.5 percent/year (Table 1). Famine resulted in from 500,000 to over one million deaths in the 1990s.⁷⁴ A worsening political or economic situation and civil strife in North Korea could result in state implosion and/or massive refugee migration to South Korea.⁷⁵ On the other hand, increasing emphasis on trade and economic integration, including well-managed labor flows between North Korea and South Korea, could enhance development and NEA stability. The Chong-Rajin-Sonbong and Pyong-Nampo regions are candidates to spearhead an economic turnaround and are currently attracting some foreign investments, as is the rural market economy taking root on the Chinese border.⁷⁶

South Korea

South Korea has the third largest population within the NEA region, a rapidly increasing level of technological development, and some resources. South Korea is at Stage 3 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition. Its natural increase rate is 0.9 percent/year, the total fertility rate is 1.5, and life expectancy is 74 years. (Table 1). The country is 79 percent urban, and educational levels are high.

South Korea is now a major labor importer and declining labor exporter.⁷⁷ “Irregular migration” is the norm in South Korea; imported labor is not acceptable to Korean unions.⁷⁸ Major labor sources are reported to be the Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal.⁷⁹ By 1996 131,000 foreign workers were reported, of which 63 percent were illegal workers.⁸⁰ South Korea has attempted to limit the settlement of foreign workers. The rate of growth of foreign nationals in South Korea has been historically low, but changed after

diplomatic relations with China were normalized in 1992, resulting in increased immigration of Chinese and ethnic Koreans from neighboring countries.⁸¹ The range of countries of origin for immigrants has increased, with workers from Vietnam and Bangladesh making increased contributions to the migrant population.

Ethnic Korean migration in South Korea, from China and North Korea, is also raising a number of international questions.⁸² The Emigration and Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans Bill in January 2000 allows ethnic Koreans permission to stay in Korea for two years with the possibility of extending their visa, and integrating into South Korean society.⁸³ Nevertheless, ethnic Koreans in either China or Japan whose ancestors left Korea before and during the Japanese occupation (1910–1945) may find it almost impossible to guarantee their Korean ethnicity.

Taking Germany as a model, Korean reunification would likely produce capital movements from South Korea to North Korea, and extensive labor migration would go from North Korea to South Korean cities, increasing demands on South Korean infrastructure.⁸⁴ Initially population movement might be large, but the two-way exchange, assuming no mass exodus of North Koreans to the south, and limited border controls, could eventually lead to real wage adjustment and less migration.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, South Korean barriers to mass migration from the north, such as the Demilitarized Zone, could be rendered ineffective either by a humanitarian crisis producing a tidal wave of refugees or pressuring Seoul to go around these mechanisms to offer assistance.⁸⁶

Mongolia

Mongolia has extensive natural resources, the smallest population of any NEA nation, and extensive land area, and is sandwiched between China and the Russian Federation. Mongolia is moving from Stage 2 to Stage 3 of the vital rates and epidemiologic transition. Its natural increase rate of 1.4 percent/year and total fertility rate of 2.2 are the second highest in NEA. Life expectancy in Mongolia (63 years) is the lowest in NEA, and infant mortality (37 deaths per 1,000 live births/year) is the highest (Table 2). The percentage of urban population (57) is the lowest in NEA, excluding China. Urbanization was rapid and well controlled from the 1950s through the 1980s. Approximately 85 percent of Mongolia's residents are Mongol Khalkha. Other ethnic categories include Turkic groups, primarily Kazakh (7 percent), the Tungusic (5 percent), and other, primarily Chinese and Russians (3 percent).⁸⁷

During the 1990s Mongolia transitioned from a Russian- and Soviet-influenced socialist country to a more market-oriented country, but with a continued focus on social welfare. The government is concerned about the geopolitical situation of Mongolia, and has not opted to lower population growth rates, and has liberal immigration policies. Restrictions on foreign travel for Mongolians have relaxed to the point that large numbers of Mongolian citizens of Kazakh ethnicity have returned to Kazakhstan.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, increasing population numbers could burden socio-economic infrastructures (health services, education, housing, and jobs), and negatively impact the country's economic growth.⁸⁹ Modernization in Mongolia is increasing pressures for both immigration and emigration, with attendant hazards and benefits. If migration into Mongolia increases significantly, flows from China and particularly from Inner Mongolia will play an important role.⁹⁰ There are long-standing Mongolian concerns about Chinese assimilation. Russian immigrants have been more accepted.

The Russian Federation

The Russian Federation has extensive natural resources, the next to the largest population of NEA nations, and a high level of technological development for the nation as a whole. Russia is in Stage 4 of the demographic and epidemiologic transition. Natural increase (decrease) is - 0.7 percent/year, and life expectancy is 67 years. The Russian Federation, which is in competition with the West, Turkey, and China for access to economic resources of the Commonwealth of Independent States,⁹¹ has experienced recent declines in production and income and increasing economic uncertainty.

Conflict within the 12-member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) led to an estimated 700,000 refugees and 2.3 million internally displaced persons in 1991–1992, declining to an estimated 516,800 refugees and 1.3 million internally displaced persons by early 1996. Of the approximately 25 million ethnic Russians in non-Russian successor states perhaps two million have returned to the Russian Federation. Moreover, there has been extensive migration from the Russian Federation to market economy countries, estimated at 115,900 in 1997,⁹² but as market economy countries increase their migration restrictions, more migrants from developing countries may settle within the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation experienced severe demographic problems in the 1990s, including unusually high mortality from preventable causes (e.g., alcoholism), decreasing life expectancy, increased morbidity, extremely high induced abortion rates, and fertility rates that are among the lowest in the world. These problems have roots in the Soviet era. Life expectancy increases first stalled in the 1960s, the state-run health care system did not successfully adapt to new economic reform, past wars, civil wars, and famines made for unbalanced age structures, and the population has aged rapidly.⁹³ It has been suggested that stressors include the crisis of transformation of the social and economic systems, and dislocations in the labor market, family structure, geographic distribution, and inadequate policy action.⁹⁴

During the early 1990s there was increasing dispersion of levels of loss of life among inhabitants of geographic subdivisions in the Russian Federation. The Russian Far East (RFE) appears to have a higher level of years of life lost from all (combined) causes of death than the Russian Federation for the total male and female populations classified by total rural and urban residence for the years 1989 through 1994.⁹⁵

The instability of the Russian Federation is amplified within the sparsely settled RFE⁹⁶ due to out-migration of ethnic Russians, proximity of the Chinese population, high Chinese unemployment, growing dependence of the RFE on China, lack of state and private resources for the Russian Federation to resettle the RFE, and unresolved border disputes with China. The population of the RFE has shrunk from 8 million to 7 million since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. After 1991, migration to the RFE, which was responsible for 30 percent of population increase up to 1991, effectively ceased. Population declines in the RFE after the dissolution of the Soviet Union were greater in the north than in the south and in the urban more than the rural areas. The largest numerical loss was in the Magadan region, where the population declined by 36 percent between 1991 and 1997, while the smallest loss was in Primorsky kray (3 percent). Demographers project a continuing loss from the population of the RFE to other areas of Russia as well as to the countries of the “Near Abroad.” Reasons that émigrés give for leaving the RFE include harsh climate, difficult living conditions, distance from European Russia, and the deteriorating economy.⁹⁷

Economic problems of the RFE include (1) the reduction of Russian military forces and degrading of the military-industrial complex,⁹⁸ (2) cancellation of subsidies for electrical energy and infrastructure,⁹⁹ and (3) Moscow's presumption of regional income from duties on exports of oil, gas, and refinery products.¹⁰⁰ Energy development, food supply, transport, and social services in the RFE have stagnated due to lack of money. Trade between the RFE and the rest of Russia has decreased due to high transportation and energy costs, forcing up food prices and depriving the RFE of markets and supplies. Further, trans-border population imbalance with China and the increase in Chinese immigration to the RFE have spurred some alarmist and nationalistic sentiments, leading RFE officials to strengthen trans-border control measures.¹⁰¹

Increasing Security

Barriers to Security

Can NEA countries work together to develop and implement migration policies that will support human and state security? Policy makers in NEA are aware of the advantages of population stabilization and have been generally successful in facilitating an equilibrium of births and deaths. A question remains as to whether NEA will be able to link changes in population stocks and flows in ways that will enhance security.

Potential barriers to state and human security related to NEA migration are as follows: (1) China—rural population growth, population aging, rural-urban migration, ethnic conflicts, lateral pressures and clandestine migration to other NEA countries and countries further abroad; (2) Hong Kong S.A.R., Macao S.A.R., and Taiwan (R.O.C.)—failures of economies to continue to thrive, and lack of assimilation of new permanent migrants, (2) Japan—settlement of temporary migrants, an insufficient labor force, rapid population aging, social security system stresses, failure to fully use female human resources, unsolved questions of national identity, and increased international economic tensions; (3) North Korea—potential state failure and conflict with South Korea and mass movement of refugees to South Korea; (4) South Korea—potential conflict with North Korea, potential refugee migration from North Korea, irregular labor immigration, problems of temporary migrants, increased tensions with labor-supplying countries; (5) Mongolia—compression from populations of China; and (6) the Russian Federation—a mortality and morbidity crisis, depopulation, economic failures, rivalry with China for access to resources in Central Asia, and failures to attract sufficient population to stabilize the RFE.

Strategies to Enhance Security

The following solutions have been suggested for state and human security problems raised by migration in NEA: (1) facilitate trade, investment, and human rights by bolstering successful population policies, (2) use migrant remittances to help maintain stability at home, and (3) facilitate migrant integration into labor forces and into social life at destination to enhance stability at destination and establish “special relations” between areas of origin and destination.¹⁰² Strategies for enhancing NEA security include migration policy components that can be linked to Inoguchi's five models for “waging peace,” as follows:¹⁰³

1. The “balancing realism” model assumes that “the more even the power balance the more permanent the peace.” From this perspective, security would appear to be enhanced by stable migration policies in Japan, China, the Russian Federation, and other Asian nations.
2. The “bandwagoning realism” model assumes that hegemony facilitates peace. Hegemony would be enhanced by economic and migration policies in Japan, China, and the Russian Federation, that would avoid United States retrenchment, Japanese

- economic failure, and Chinese mercantilism, and prevent further out-migration of Russian population from the RFE.
3. The “institutionalist” view suggests that peacemaking is facilitated by increasing the density and diversity of public- and private-sector migration-related institutions.
 4. The “interdependence” view, that open markets and shared interests facilitate peace, suggests that NEA trading partners could profitably coordinate labor force participation and migration policies, in order to avoid fully free markets that could upset the status quo.
 5. The “democratic” view, that democracy in NEA facilitates peace, would suggest that the promotion of women’s rights and the acceptance of expressions of cultural diversity, while preserving political unity, promote peace.

Key Issues

The following problems and predicaments will continue to characterize migration and security issues in NEA for some time to come.

Population aging and migration. NEA countries are experiencing rapid population aging, which will lead to labor force aging, shrinking labor forces, decreasing labor force support ratios for older populations, increasing longevity, and increasing pension costs. NEA countries will not be able to absorb sufficient labor migration to maintain current labor force support ratios for older populations.¹⁰⁴ McKeller notes that under such conditions, younger people pay higher taxes, older people work longer, pensions are smaller, and assets of workers have less value. Further, as NEA policymakers have learned, short-term migrants lead to increased levels of permanent migration. The natural increase of NEA migrants can then be expected to decrease to that of the native populations, further contributing to the “graying” of NEA. There is no escape. Aging, according to McKeller, “is a predicament, not a problem that can be solved.”¹⁰⁵ NEA nations will have to pick carefully their migration policies and migrants.

Chinese rural-urban migration. The sheer size of China’s floating population of at least 80 million internal migrants threatens the government’s use of the *hukou* system to limit internal population movement, and may enhance illegal migration to other countries. A revision of the *hukou* system would appear to be necessary for the government to uphold political legitimacy and maintain social cohesion and equitable economic development.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, by revising its *hukou* system China could ease political tensions in Northeast Asia, and assuage any fears that its neighbors may have that it cannot control a growing domestic concern.¹⁰⁷ Revision of the *hukou* system, especially changes that facilitate freer labor movement, might reduce some illegal emigration.¹⁰⁸

The Russian Far East. State and human security in the RFE would improve if population stabilized. Any solution would appear to require three components. First, a solid economic infrastructure must be put in place in order to reverse out-migration. Funds must be found to finance an industrial base and local business sector, including tax and customs systems, and attract foreign investors, especially in the raw material and extractive industries. Second, economic and social incentives can increase the population of the RFE through increased immigration of Russians from other parts of Russia as well as from the Newly Independent States. Third, there is need for an intra-regional trade network, which would facilitate investments in the RFE by wealthier nations of the region, i.e., Japan and South Korea. (Some industries in the RFE are labor intensive and could attract more immigrants.) The initiatives would be more likely to succeed if Russia and Japan negotiated a settlement over the disputed

Kurile Islands, and if Russia and China ensured that no further rancor about Russia's century-old rule over former Chinese territories is allowed to stand in the way of the regional initiative.

A common market. Trends in labor and capital flows among several Asian countries suggest movement towards a common market similar to the European Union. Japan has been encouraging a more flexible labor force featuring foreign workers, has been active in proposing regional trade arrangements, and uses other Asian sites for profits, cost-effectiveness, and global competitiveness.¹⁰⁹ South Korea, recognizing that foreign workers are an important component of its labor force, has enacted legislation regarding foreign workers.¹¹⁰ Taiwan (R.O.C.), in enacting foreign labor laws, has also acknowledged the economic importance of labor flows to its territory.¹¹¹ China is joining the World Trade Organization, and also attracting capital from Japan, South Korea and Taiwan (R.O.C.), thus integrating the regional economy even more.¹¹² A NEA common market (perhaps leading to closer political cooperation) similar to the EU could deepen labor and capital flows by encouraging freer movement of workers and factors of production.

In conclusion, aging, Chinese rural-urban migration, the lack of growth in the RFE, the prospects for a common market, and the tendency for "short-term" migrants to stay will influence state security, human security, and NEA migration policies for years to come. Policymakers must also deal with return ethnic migration and indirect impacts of migration. Managing population flows in NEA will require coordination of an increasing density of public and private sector institutions, including non-governmental organizations. Subsequent activities of our group may give us insights as to how this can be accomplished.

Acknowledgments

The assistance of Marian C. Van Arsdol, Pebble Beach, California, and Fern Price, Price Business Services, Monterey, California, is gratefully acknowledged.

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