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Calls for Population Policy and population insights from our region

Demographers from Australia and Korea claim that their respective governments have failed to address key issues for the 21st Century by not having a population policy. How do we plan for the future if we don't plan for how the population will be configured? Clearly understanding the make-up of current and future generations is vital for planning for the labour market, for childcare, for aged care and for young people in the digital age.

Researchers identify the 'sandwich generation' as those sandwiched between the younger and older generations – caring for elderly parents at the same time as their young children. This is not new to Australia, where we have known of the ageing trend for our population for some time. However it is intriguing to see that South Korea is also undergoing a similar transformation, with its population ageing rapidly and labour force shrinking.

Research into social trends and policy issues such as workforce participation, childcare and welfare often uses comparative data from different countries to find out what works. In 2005, the Research Institute for Asia and the Pacific (RIAP) held a conference to discuss generational change between Australia and South Korea. It covered key issues such as the impact of new technology; links between workforce and childcare policies;

This week a new book from Sydney University Press builds on the papers presented at that conference. *Generational change and new policy challenges: Australia and South Korea* discusses contrasting social policy history and similarities in population and social trends between the two countries. It is the first time a book has been produced that places Australian and Korean social and demographic policy issues side-by-side utilising recent research by key people in a range of fields from both countries. All of the chapters in this book reflect critical expert insights into problems that many countries in the region face as well as offering a range of propositions for the future.

The book will be launched tonight by the Korean Ambassador to Australia, Mr Cho Chang-Beom. "The book focuses on the search for new ideas on how to address social policy and population issues" said Dr Ruth Phillips, the book's editor. "Young people and the Internet, intergenerational care, public health care and population ageing, are issues that all industrialised countries need to deal with. Both countries can benefit from examining how others have 'done it' and the relative success of policies enacted to effect change".



Generational change and new policy challenges: Australia and South Korea

Edited by Ruth Phillips

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Sydney University Press (SUP) was re-established in 2003 to offer print-on-demand works across all areas of scholarship and research. Books and CDs can be purchased through the website. <http://www.sup.usyd.edu.au/>

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