

# Revitalizing caring functions of family: building solidarity among generations

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# Outline

1. Changes of family and old age support over time
2. At the cross roads - becoming asymmetrical
3. Is rebuilding family possible? What & for whose family?
4. Surrogates of family: building intergeneration solidarity in our community

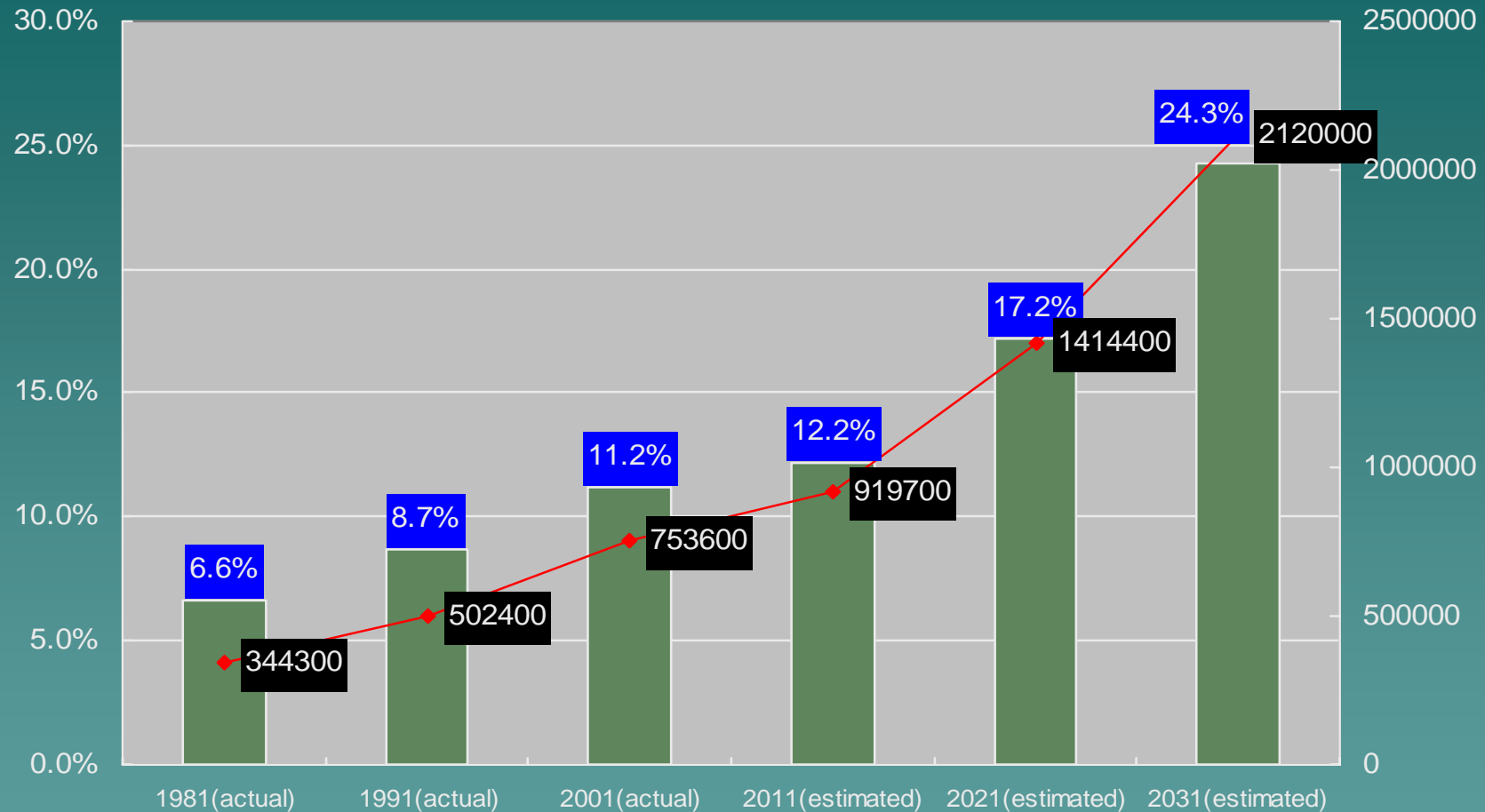
# Changes of Family & Support Over Time

Economic Mode	Hunting	Agrarian-Feudal	Waged Labour Capitalistic	Services-Knowledge Based
Family types, structure (normative)	Primitive	Agrarian, Clans * extended	Nuclear	Asymmetrical, many types
Key support functions (Blood-tied)	* For common survival	* For patriarch or matrilineal continuation  * Family hierarchy sustained, collective fames and values  * Cash + values transmission (down wards)	* For economic growth, profit-driven behaviours (market)  * Cash & value transmission (both ways)  * Shared responsibilities e.g. education, cash support	* For individual choices  * Liberal ideologies  * Utilitarian – contractual  * egoistic

## Demographics showing lower family cohesion

- ◆ longevity (especially women, many generations)
- ◆ low total fertility (less than 2.1)
- ◆ High dependency ratio
- ◆ increasing N-family 1981: 54.4%; 1986: 59.2%; 1991: 61.6%; 1996: 63.6%; 2001 70%; 2005 ~75%
- ◆ single parents +90%
- ◆ increasing cohabitation
- ◆ more divorces  
(from 1996 N=59,000 to 2005 N=101,700)

# Ageing population: projections 2002-31



**Median age is expected to increase from 39 in 2006 to 46 in 2031**

*Source: Census and Statistics Department, HKSAR, Hong Kong population projections 2002-2031*

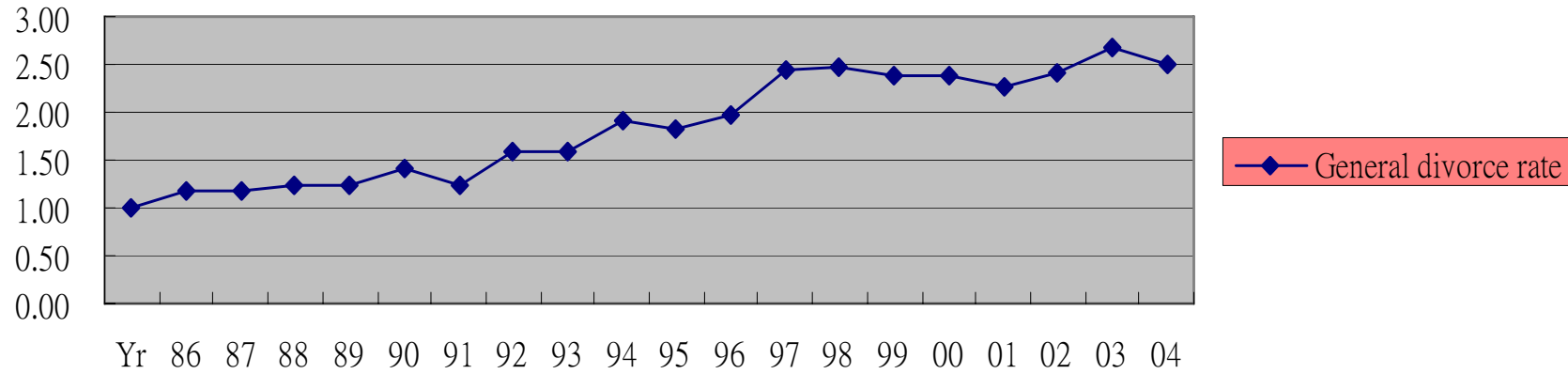
# Ageing Population: key facts

項目 item		2001		2031		升 / 降	
		男M	女F	男M	女F	男M	女F
1 長者總人口 (age 60+)		1,004,600 (佔總人口14.9%)		2,713,000 (佔總人口31.1%)		1,709,000 (與2001年比較)(170%)↑	
	60+	482,100 (48%)	522,400 (52%)	1,159,000 (42.7%) ↑	1,554,600 (57.3%) ↑	676,900 (140.4%) ↑	1,032,200 (197.6%) ↑
	60-74 歲	346,600 (36.3%)	347,000 (34.5%)	782,900 (28.8%) ↑	1,028,400 (37.9%) ↑	436,300 (126%)↑	681,400 (196.4%) ↑
	75+	117,500 (11.7%)	175,400 (17.5%)	376,100 (13.9%) ↑	526,200 (19.4%) ↑	258,600 (220.1%) ↑	350,800 (200%)↑
2 預期平均壽命LE (60歲起計可達)		81.4歲	86歲	84.6歲	89.1歲	3.4歲↑	3.1歲↑
3 撫養比率 (65歲或以上) Dependency ratio		155 (65歲人口數目及以人口每千名15-64歲人口相比)		380		225 (164.5%)↑	

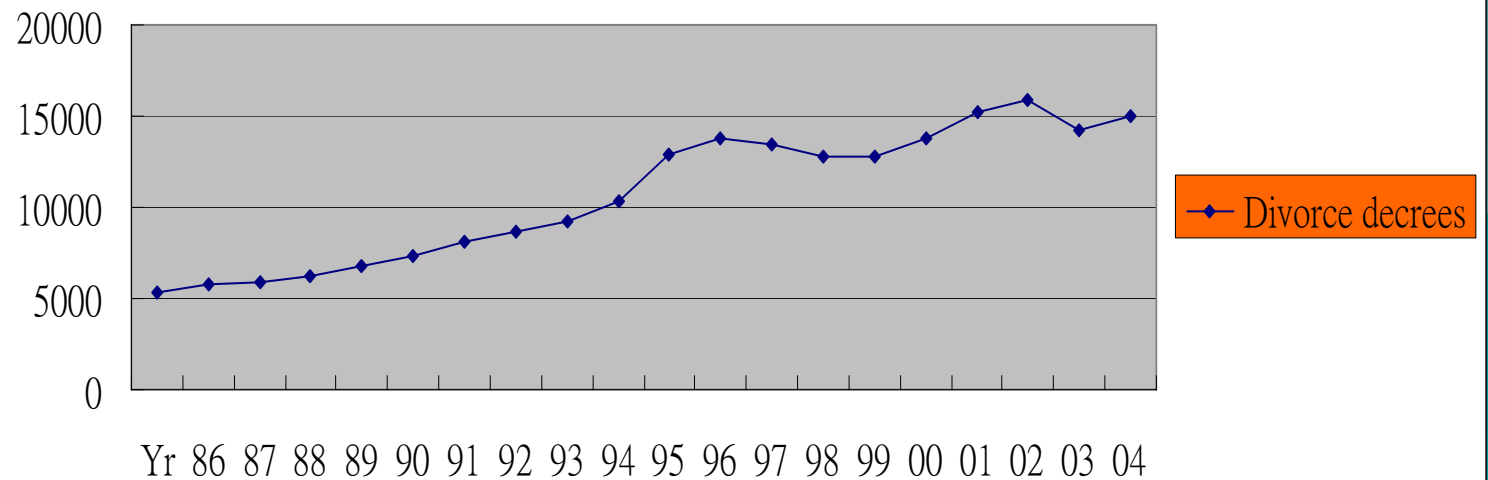
Old age support by family?

# Divorces 1986-2006

General divorce rate



Divorce decrees



## Key questions for us:

Is rebuilding family possible?

What and for whose family?

**Ans.** We want the supportive functions of extended family but not necessarily its structure

→ Sustaining old values

→ Developing new orders

## From blood-tied to network-tied: building solidarity among generations

- ◆ Maintain family network, building intergenerational links e.g. platforms for young-old interaction
- ◆ Extend neighbourhood & friendship network → brother/sis. from 4-seas, young and old
- ◆ For LTC, need new orders in society:
  - saving health and wealth when young
  - becoming volunteers, 'giving culture' (cross generation transfer)
  - life long learning for care giving



# Conclusion:

1. Family trends seem inevitable, family support declines as expected
2. Emerging society of pluralism: social unit is an individual rather than a family
3. Sustain what we have as good values/practices: family still carries support for emotions & low level material supply
4. Develop new social orders for LTC and high dependency services

This remains :  
a question of determination for our Government

# A Policy Framework for Ageing in Place

Well-being & preference of older person



**Ageing in place with  
dignity, comfort and happiness**

Government & societal directives for  
Family-oriented & care-giving culture

Cost at home <  
cost in institution