CROSS-BORDER POPULATION FLOWS AND POLICIES IN NORTHEAST ASIA*+[1]

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Introduction

Human population flows within and across national borders in Northeast Asia affect the balance of the region's populations, economies, cultures and resources. "Human flows" include international and intrastate migrants who have more or less permanently settled in new locations. They also include short-term migrants—workers, traders, tourists, businesspersons, educators, students, "entertainers" (including sex workers), refugees, and internally displaced persons.

We consider how cross-border population flows affect state security, human welfare and international relations in Northeast Asia. First, how are the histories of conflicts and changes in population stocks and flows in Northeast Asia here linked to current population stocks, flows and policies? Second, how do current cross-border flows respond to or affect other population changes in Northeast Asia? Third, what are the current experiences of Northeast Asian states with cross border flows? Fourth, what cross-border policy frameworks might enhance state and human security in the region? Finally, are the growing cross-border human flows contributing to regional integration or creating new obstacles to improved international relations?

Cross-border flows are important for state security and human welfare alike. As these flows involve the citizens of states, Northeast Asian governments are concerned with the cohesion of the social fabric, the security of their borders, and their relations with other states. Population changes, however, result from both individual and collective actions. Accordingly, the security of the state is affected by the welfare of its citizens. State security and human welfare are intertwined, sometimes complementary, but one does not guarantee the other.

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The ultimate (root) causes of disharmonies between state security, human welfare, and states result from failures of the social contracts that bind states and populations together in cooperative activity. Proximate causes of this discord apply to specific situations, and can include both changes in *population stocks* (size, composition, and distribution) and *population flows* (births and deaths, and international and intrastate migration). The links between population dynamics, state security, human welfare, and international relations are indirect and reciprocal. Population policies and dynamics tend to affect proximate rather than ultimate determinants of security and welfare, and international relations.[2]

The size of Northeast Asian states and their economies magnifies the global consequences of the region's population dynamics. Figure 1 indicates that the Northeast Asia states—China, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), the Macao SAR, Japan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (the DPRK or North Korea), the Republic of Korea (the ROK or South Korea), Mongolia, and the Russian Federation (Russia)-were homelands of approximately 1,627,000,000 people in 2000, or 27 percent of the earth's population.[3] According to United Nations medium variant population projections, the Northeast Asian states and East Asian states (the Northeast Asian states minus the Russian Federation) will each have larger populations than any non-Asian continent until approximately 2040, when they will be overtaken by Africa.[4]

Population characteristics of Northeast Asian states circa 2003 are summarized in Table 1. Approximately 312 million persons, or one-twentieth of the earth's population, then lived within the Northeast Asian region, defined here to include Northeast China (Heilongjiang, Liaoning, and Jilin Provinces), the Russian Far East (Primorsky Krai, Khabarovsky Krai, Amurskaya Oblast, Jewish Autonomous Oblast, Sakhalinskaya Oblast, Republic of Sakha [Yakutia], Chukhotsky Autonomous Okrug, Magadanskaya Oblast, Kamchatskaya Oblast (including Koryaksky Autonomous Okrug), and the entirety of other Northeast Asian states.

Northeast Asia has lagged global migration trends, but cross-border movements of peoples are fast becoming an important element of international relations in the region. Cross-border flows now present a number of issues regarding state security, human welfare and international relations. Flows from China to the Russian Far East have led to nationalist fears and security concerns in Russia.[5] The new presence of Russians in northern Japan has resulted in unfavorable reactions by Japanese citizens, which could hamper closer relations between Japan and Russia, and further postpone the resolution of the Japan–Russia sovereignty dispute over the Northern Territories/Southern Kurile Islands.[6] The importing of Chinese labor into Japan raises issues regarding the lack of assimilation of Chinese in Japan that can negatively affect bilateral relations between Japan and China.[7] The historically sensitive relationship in Japan between Korean residents and Japanese, the manner of Korean assimilation, and their failure to gain full legal protection continue to cast doubt on Japan's ability to meet international human rights standards as well as the need to deal effectively with its aging population and labor shortage by accommodating newer foreign arrivals.[8] The passive migration policies of the ROK government have been detrimental to the welfare of overseas Koreans and

foreign migrants to Korea, and may lead to tensions with Russia, China, and Japan.[9] Incidents involving DPRK migrants and asylum seekers in Northeast China—some of whom seek to migrate to ROK, China, and elsewhere—pose serious legal, economic, and humanitarian issues for Northeast Asian nations.[10] In Mongolia, recent cross-border flows, combined with a lingering Russian presence and upsurge in Chinese influence, are a matter of concern.[11]

Historical Background

Past conflicts

Current population transitions within Northeast Asia reflect past conflicts in the region, and cross-border flows are no exception.[12] "Civilizational" conflicts between Russia and China reflect migratory activity in border regions beginning with indigenous tribes and continuing with Mongols, Russians, Koreans, Han Chinese, Europeans, Americans, Japanese, and Manchus. Russians began settling the Russian-Chinese border regions under the umbrella of the 1689 Treaty of Nerchinsk. A majority of the Mongol population was subsequently incorporated into the Chinese and Russian empires. The Russian empire expanded after the Sino-Russian treaties of 1858 and 1860, which extended Russian territory to the north bank of the Amur River and to the Sea of Japan (known as the "East Sea" in Korea). Russia then obtained territory equal in size to one-third that of the United States. The Qing Dynasty was decimated in the nineteenth century by British victories during the opium wars of 1832-1842 and 1856-1860, and by other European and United States invasions and occupations. Civilizational conflicts between Russia and Japan included the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, after which Russia surrendered claims to Korea, Port Arthur, and South Sakhalin. The Soviet annexation of then Japanese-controlled Sakhalin and Kurile Islands at the end of World War II and the failure of Moscow and Tokyo to resolve their sovereignty dispute over the southern Kuriles (known as the "Northern Territories" in Japan) prolong the inter-state conflict between Russia and Japan.[13]

The past displacement of populations by demographic engineering (forced relocation policies) and by past conflicts can be proximate causes of current conflicts, especially if displaced populations define and exert a "right of return." Stalinist demographic engineering in the Russian Far East increased the size of the total and ethnically Russian populations, but also led to the expulsion of ethnic Chinese to China and the relocation of Koreans to Central Asia. The forced migration of Koreans by Imperial Japan to Japan, northeast China, and Sakhalin in the early decades of the 20th century, World War II, nationalist conflicts between China and Japan, and Korea and Japan, the state-to-state conflict between the DPRK and the ROK, and changing borders left Chinese, Japanese, Mongolian, and Korean populations and their descendents stranded outside of their traditional homelands. The 1950-1953 state-to-state conflict between the DPRK and the ROK, which expanded to include China, the United States and other nations, divided Koreans between the DPRK and the ROK. Northeast Asian policy-makers' views regarding relations with their neighbors and the treatment of

foreign resident communities and more recent migrants are affected by this history of conflicts and demographic engineering.

Recent stocks and flows

During the past half-century changes in population stocks and flows in Northeast Asian states have been associated with a series of population transitions linked to modernization.[14] Decreases in fertility and mortality rates as illustrated in Figure 2 have been followed by increases in ratios of labor force to total population. Population aging, as illustrated in Figure 3, has led to the aging of native labor forces, labor shortages, the shift from youth dependency to old-age dependency, the importing of labor, and the outsourcing of production.[15] Urbanization and population diversification have occurred as more people have moved from rural areas to cities. Urbanization has included the extension of the world cities network to Northeast Asia.[16] The Tokyo-Seoul-Pyongyang-Beijing urban corridor links most Northeast Asian states and small trans-border towns provide new links between China and Russia. Finally, intrastate and international migration has increased. The sequence of these transitions has varied among Northeast Asian states.[17] Their effects will continue throughout the twentieth-first century.

Northeast Asian migrations in the 19th and 20th centuries reflect the historical penetration of European capitalist markets and the flows of Europeans from the "older (European) core" to the "world periphery (including Northeast Asia)." These flows were followed by migrations of Northeast Asians to "older" and "newer" core areas, including newer core areas in Northeast Asia and East Asia.[18]

Migration and development tier areas currently relevant to Northeast Asia have been defined by Skeldon as follows: (1) the "new core" for economic activity and migrants (Japan, ROK, and Taiwan), (2) "core extensions and potential cores" (coastal China, the Hong Kong SAR, the Macao SAR, and the more settled coastal areas of the Russian Far East), (3) the "labor frontier" migrant source (e.g., the populous near-interior of East China, and the DPRK), and (4) the "resource niche" (e.g., Mongolia, the remainder of China including West China and Tibet, and the rest of the Russian Far East). The Northeast Asian labor frontier contains a reservoir of potential migrants who migrate to extract resources from the resource niche and to engage in manufacturing and service activities in Northeast Asian core extensions and potential cores.[19] The Northeast Asian new core, core extensions, and potential cores are now experiencing increasing migration pressures from lower income Asian countries. [20]

Figure 4 outlines estimates of migrant stock for East Asian and Northeast Asian states from 1960-2000, and 1990-2000. Table 2 details these estimates for East Asian and Northeast Asian states from 1990-2000. Figure 4 indicates that prior to the breakup of the Former USSR in 1989, the migrant stock of the Former USSR dominated that of Northeast Asia (here defined to include the Former USSR). Extensive migration was then generated within and from the Former USSR, including to and within the Russian Federation. Migrant stock in the Former USSR is estimated to have increased from 3,251,000 in 1980 to 30,323,000 in 1990, and then to have decreased to 29,469,000 in 2000. Migrant stock in the Russian Federation is estimated to have increased from

11,689,000 in 1990 to 13,259,000 in 2000.[21] (Data for migrant stock in the Russian Federation prior to 1990 are not available from the sources cited.)[22]

Table 2 shows that migrant stock is estimated to have increased in each Northeast Asian state from 1990 to 2000. While Northeast Asian states held approximately 27 percent of the world's population in 2000, they had less than 12 percent of the world's migrant stock, and excluding Russia, only about 3.4 percent of this migrant stock.[23] In 2000, Russia's migrant stock was exceeded in the world only by the United States (34,988,000). Russia's migrant stock was then about 68 percent of the total for Northeast Asian states, and comprised 9 percent of Russia's population, largely due to the recent return of former residents of the former USSR. The size of Russia's migrant stock in 2000 was followed by that of the Hong Kong SAR (2,701,000), Japan (1,620,000), the ROK (597,000), China (513,000) the DPRK (37,000), the Macao SAR (16,000) and Mongolia (8,000).

Northeast Asian governments have restrictive migration policies that limit the numbers of persons who can legally enter their states. The public and private sectors in Northeast Asia share in migration management; policymakers favor the circulation of unskilled and highly skilled workers, restrict permanent settlement, and reject government recruiting of migrants due to perceived threats to cultural homogeneity.[24] There are lessening demands outside of the region for unskilled labor from Northeast Asia, yet migration pressures within the region have increased, expanding legal and illegal cross-border flows. China is the most important labor exporter in Northeast Asia. The growing development gap between regions in China is a source of emigration as well as internal migration.

The combination of potential migration pressures and the relatively strict immigration and emigration policies of Northeast Asian governments points to a prospective growth in illegal migration in the region, including human trafficking and exploitation of migrant labor. Migration policies of Northeast Asian countries give low priority to the human security of migrants. China and Japan do not favor the integration of foreign nationals, and Japan does not encourage the return of its nationals. Table 2 indicates there are relatively few refugees in Northeast Asia. Excluding refugee agreements and bilateral consultations between China and the Russian Federation, there are no significant governance regimes in place to regulate cross-border movement. China, Japan, South Korea and the Russian Federation have ratified the 1951 Convention Regarding the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Regarding the Status of Refugees, but no NEA nations have ratified the 1990 Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Family Members, the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking of Persons, or the 2000 Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants.[25] If migration policies are liberalized in Northeast Asia, there will be room for expanded migration.

Current Cross Border Flows

China

China's sheer numbers have a great influence on Northeast Asian population stocks and flows (Figure 1). China is the most important source of human flows in the region. Post-1978 New Economic Reform led to development gaps and growing disparities in levels of living between China's regions. A combination of redundant farm labor, rural poverty, rural environmental stress, and higher wages in economically booming urban areas has generated massive rural-urban migration in China, particularly from the labor frontier of the near interior of East China to the core extensions and potential cores in coastal China, as well as substantial emigration and temporary visits to neighboring countries, including to Russia and Mongolia.[26] Massive unemployment in rural China, including in the northeastern provinces of Heilongjiang and Liaoning, is also creating waves of human flows to Japan, South Korea, and other countries. In 1990 China was estimated to have sent 381,000 more migrants abroad than it recruited from other states, and the same export-import gap was estimated for 2000.

Since the advent of New Economic Reform, rural-urban migrants in China have challenged the household registration (*hukou*) system, which had historically tied internal migrants to their natal place. Barred from moving to the cities, internal migrants were ineligible for work, denied educational opportunities, and had restricted access to health care.[27] China's government then turned internal migration into a modernization vehicle and eased the plight of migrant workers.[28] Excluding Beijing and Shanghai, the Chinese government relaxed *hukou* registration on October 1, 2001, leaving undisturbed many of the "floating population" of 130 million migrants then estimated to be living outside their place of registration, creating new opportunities for China's population.[29] Many urban migrants now circulate between cities and villages, helping to decrease urban-rural economic and cultural differences.[30] Nevertheless the economic divide between rural and urban areas remains.[31]

Minority ethnic affiliation and trans-border ethnic contacts among minorities are increasing in China.[32] The Chinese government has encouraged internal migration to modernize the economy and build up underdeveloped provinces. The Han population has recently increased in peripheral areas, particularly in Heilongjiang Province in the northeast, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Xingjiang Province in the northwest, and the Tibetan Autonomous Region.[33] In the trans-border northeast regions such as Amurskaya Oblast in the Russian Far East and the Tumen River Basin near the DPRK, the Han presence and migration threaten to have a negative impact on China's relations with its neighbors.[34]

China is now a key global participant in international migration, with as may as 33 million ethnic Chinese living abroad. Economic growth has resulted in attempts by China to attract skilled foreign workers and Chinese students who have been educated abroad. There is also more undocumented migration (largely from Vietnam and the DPRK), and more international travel by Chinese.[35] The Chinese government is developing policies to further manage immigration and emigration, and is increasingly able to engage in international dialogues regarding migration.[36] These changes will improve the welfare of Chinese migrants.

Hong Kong SAR

The economic integration of Hong Kong with the rest of China, as well as border and immigration controls in the Hong Kong-Guangzhou trans-border system (TBS) similar to those in other TBS's, is facilitating development of the Greater China economic bloc (China-Hong Kong SAR, Macao SAR-Taiwan [ROC]), and increasing China's global interdependence.[37] Illegal migration in Hong Kong is now relieved by the creation of special economic zones near the city, which attract residents from mainland China. Many Hong Kong citizens have established residences on the mainland. Immigration issues concern the rights of some mainland Chinese, especially those born to Hong Kong residents, to live in Hong Kong, as well as migration pressures in Shenzhen, a site of extensive economic activity across the border from Hong Kong.[38]

Macao SAR

Macao's economy is based largely on tourism, gambling, and apparel export.[39] China is undertaking infrastructure development in order to integrate Macao into its 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 reliance on outside labor, the Macao government is giving hiring preference to locals and reducing the number of outside workers.[40] Nevertheless, Macao's low fertility rate suggests that hiring only residents of Macao will not solve the labor shortage.

Taiwan (ROC)

Urbanization in Taiwan is increasing and the economy is moving from labor-intensive to capital and technology-intensive industries.[41] Taiwan is a large investor in other Asian economies, including mainland China and the Hong Kong SAR. Labor shortages have led to the importing of illegal as well as legal foreign workers, but in 1998 the government halted labor imports because of rising unemployment.[42] There is more interchange of Taiwan and mainland Chinese populations; according to one source, "800,000 of Taiwan's 22 million people lived full-time or part-time on the Mainland in 2002."[43]

Japan

Japan is beginning to experience population decline due to low fertility and population aging. The dependency burdens on the labor force are increasing as more resources are focused on support of the increasing older population.[44] These burdens suggest a need for Japan to import foreign labor in numbers that would be culturally and politically untenable, due to the high value placed on ethnic homogeneity.[45]

During the 1980s and 1990s, Japan became a labor-importing nation, officially allowing only skilled workers to work in the country but in fact letting less-skilled laborers to find employment either illegally or as industrial trainees. Japan's net immigration grew from 37,000 in 1990 to 56,000 in 2000, as the state's migrant stock nearly doubled from 877,000 to 1,620,000. As well as female "entertainers," Japan has also attracted illegal migrants, particularly for the "3-K" (*Kitanai*, *Kiken*, and *Kitsui*) or dirty, dangerous, and demeaning jobs."[46]

Japan has further experienced large increases in circulating travelers, including Russians in such urban areas as Tokyo and Saitama, as well as in provincial areas, including Hokkaido and Niigata. Some of the foreign travelers came to stay.[47] These Russians in contemporary Japan represent a new and different phenomenon than the "old-comers" – the Koreans and Chinese who were forced to move to Imperial Japan in the 1910s through the 1940s. Surveys of Russian residents and local Japanese in the northern-most island of Hokkaido, Niigata, and elsewhere in Japan have uncovered generally unfavorable stereotypes of Russians.[48] Further, discrimination against and loss of ethnic identity among younger generations of Koreans in Japan concerns older members of the Korean community in Japan.[49] These experiences, as well those of the old-comers, are raising new questions about the well-being and assimilation of migrants in Japan.[50] Japan discourages the assimilation of foreign nationals and has yet to resolve questions of national identity. Migration issues can jeopardize Japan's relations and economic ties with other Northeast Asian nations.

Japan can ameliorate the problems arising from its declining population by (1) encouraging higher fertility, (2) increasing labor force participation on the part of women and the older population, (3) continuing to invest in increasing labor productivity and developing more production abroad. A migration option is to continue to recruit foreign workers (sometimes illegally) through private contractors.[51] Domestic NGOs in Japan are now assisting foreign workers and advocate for their rights and welfare, regardless of whether the foreign workers are highly-skilled European professionals or Asian laborers.[52] Japanese immigration policies may now be moving toward being more accommodating to the needs of foreign nationals, but not at the expense of tighter oversight to address national security concerns.[53] Japanese immigration and law enforcement authorities are increasingly concerned with abuses of overstayers and illegal foreign workers by employers.[54]

There are some signs of change in Japan's immigration policy. The government is now considering allowing unskilled workers to enter the labor market. It has also decided to crack down on the widespread abuse by criminal elements and other contract agents of the "entertainment visa" category to bring unqualified foreigners, mostly women, from Asia and elsewhere as sex workers.

DPRK

North Korean migration to China, motivated largely by the failures of the North Korean economy, poses serious political, humanitarian, and economic problems for Northeast Asian nations. Famine resulted in 500,000-1,000,000 excess deaths in the 1990s.[55] While the DPRK has strict emigration controls, a worsening political or economic situation and civil strife could result in state implosion and/or massive refugee migration to the ROK and China.[56] With no official statistics available on the number of North Koreans living in China, speculations have varied widely, from the unrealistic figure of 200,000 to more realistic estimates in the 50,000-60,000 range. There are also unknown numbers of North Koreans who travel back and forth between North Korea and China.[57] Some North Koreans have found their way to South Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia, creating diplomatic problems for the countries concerned. In 2003, an estimated 10,000 North Koreans were reported to be working in the Russian Far East, living in segregated facilities under harsh working conditions and the surveillance of North Korean security agents.[58]

A rural market economy has taken root on the DPRK-Chinese border.[59] Some recent DPRK migrants to Northeast China have been treated as economic migrants, but others have become asylum seekers, and sought refuge in foreign embassies and consulates in China.[60] Authorities in northeast China have refused these migrants access to UNHCR representatives since 1999.[61] Bilateral treaties between China and North Korea enable Chinese authorities to seek out and repatriate North Koreans to the DPRK where they may be subject to persecution by the authorities.[62] The welfare of North Koreans in China affects the international relations of all Northeast Asian states.

ROK

The ROK is now a major labor importer and declining labor exporter. Growing migration has reduced its net migration loss—from 23,000 in 1990 to 18,000 in 20000, and the state's migrant stock has increased from 572,000 to 597,000 during the same period. "Irregular migration" has been the norm in the ROK; imported labor was formerly unacceptable to Korean unions.[63] The ROK government has recently decided to admit migrant workers from China, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Mongolia, and the Philippines to replace undocumented workers and make up for labor shortfalls.[64] Undocumented workers are acknowledged to have helped prevent a crisis in the nation's labor market but will nevertheless be extradited if they do not leave voluntarily.[65] Abuses of visa overstayers and illegal foreign workers are of increasing concern to immigration and law enforcement authorities in Korea.[66] Labor unions supported the protests by Korean-Chinese workers in the spring of 2004. Although mandatory health insurance for foreign workers came into effect in August 2004,[67] other rights are lacking, in particular education and other benefits for the workers as well as their dependents.

Ethnic Korean migration to the ROK, from China and the DPRK, also raises international questions.[68] The Emigration and Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans Bill in January 2000 allows ethnic Koreans to stay in Korea for two years with the possibility of extending their visas and integrating into the ROK society. In contrast to the more accepting legal environment they find in the ROK, ethnic Koreans in either China or Japan, whose ancestors left Korea before and during the Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsula (1910–1945), may find it almost impossible to preserve their Korean identity. The ROK no longer directly accepts North Koreans who have migrated into China, and instead negotiates with foreign embassies in Beijing to accept these asylum seekers, who are later redirected to Seoul.[69]

On the Korean peninsula, more than in other Northeast Asian areas, economic development is strongly linked to the prevention of massive refugee movement. Economic ventures between the two Koreas include the construction of a trans-peninsula railway that will eventually connect with the Trans-Siberian railway.[70] The development of the Kaesong Industrial Complex north of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) may further boost cross-border economic trade, and population flows. However, the persistent nuclear threat that looms over the peninsula deters the ROK from investing more heavily in the DPRK, especially in the northeast (whose collapsed industrial base is the main source of refugees). Continued tension surrounding the nuclear question can further aggravate the DPRK economic conditions, generating refugee flows.[71] A collapse of the regime in Pyongyang or a military

conflagration on the Korean peninsula would be certain to cause huge refugee outflows and create a humanitarian catastrophe.

Mongolia

Approximately 85 percent of Mongolia's 25 million residents in 2004 (Table 1.1) were Mongol Khalkha. Perhaps 4,800,000 Mongol citizens of China are concentrated in Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, Jilin, Hebei, Heilongjiang, and Xinjiang.[72] Approximately one-half million Mongols are also found in the Lake Baikal area and the lower Volga of the Russian Federation.[73] The government has relaxed foreign travel for Mongolians to the point that large numbers of Mongolian citizens of Kazakh ethnicity have returned to Kazakhstan.[74]

During the 20th century Mongolia changed from a feudal pastoral society to a Russian-Soviet influenced agricultural-industrial society and then, in the 1990s, to a democratic-capitalist system with a continued focus on social welfare.[75] Urbanization was rapid and well controlled from the 1950s through the 1980s.[76] Recent internal migration from the western and central regions to Ulaanbaatar, Darkhan, and Erdenet has been driven by harsh winters, poor harvests and droughts, poverty, and by a lack of rural employment opportunities.[77] Migrants often settle with their livestock in crowded urban and suburban areas, burdening the environmental and socio-economic infrastructures (health services, education, housing, and jobs), and inhibiting economic growth.[78]

Modernization is increasing pressures for both immigration and emigration, with their attendant hazards and benefits. Mongols in Mongolia have long-standing concerns about the assimilation of ethnic Chinese, but Russian immigrants have been more readily accepted. If migration into Mongolia increases significantly, it will be largely from China and particularly from Inner Mongolia.[79] "Brain drain" is also an issue of concern to Mongolia as some of the most skilled and best educated citizens leave the country in search of opportunities abroad, although their remittances represent an important benefit for the local economy.[80] There are also concerns about Mongolian women being lured into the sex trade by criminal elements in the country and in destination countries, such as China, Japan, and South Korea.

The Russian Federation

The population of the Russian Federation in 2000 was the second largest among Northeast Asian nations, but regionally, the Russian Far East population is the smallest in the various geographic areas comprising Northeast Asia. Revolution, wars, famine, demographic engineering, and political changes in the 20th century are reported to "have already cost Russia about a half of its possible population in 2000," and continued low levels of reproduction could lead to a further halving of the population.[81] Russia's population issues are amplified in the sparsely populated Russian Far East, where even at its population peak of 8.1 million in 1991, only 5 percent of the overall national population lived in a region that comprised 35 percent of total national surface area.

Demographic engineering by the government of the Soviet Union increased the population of the Russian Far East from 1.6 million to 8.1 million between 1926 and 1991, which consisted primarily of ethnic Russians.[82] After the Russian Far East population peaked in 1991, economic depression, as well as the ending of state subsidies, served as a

stimulus for many to begin leaving the region. Between 1992 and 2002, the population in the Russian Far East declined from 8.1 million to 6.7 million (Figure 1.1).[83] Population decline was more severe in the northern part of the Russian Far East than in the southern territories.[84]

It is in the context of these broader demographic trends that Russian concerns about Chinese immigration to Russia—in particular the Russian Far East—have emerged over the last decade. Reactions among Russians to the ostensibly increasing Chinese presence vary from fear of invasion (an outcry of "yellow peril") to considering possibilities for economic development.

Inconsistencies and weaknesses in Russian immigration policy, legislation, and enforcement over the past decade are associated with these concerns. Normalization of relations between the Soviet Union and China in the late 1980s, followed by the adoption of visa-free exchange between the two countries in 1992, led to unanticipated mass movement across the Russia-China border in the Russian Far East.[85] The Russian Far East economy grew dependent upon illegal migrants as well as legal Chinese shuttle traders, and the number of illegal aliens increased.[86] This dependence became a source of irritation for local populations whose sense of vulnerability has been aroused by the economic stagnation and depopulation they have been experiencing in recent years.[87]

Competing political and juridical objectives of the central government in Moscow and the regional governments resulted in negative economic consequences for the Russian Far East. In a region of less than 7 million citizens, the liberal estimate of 200,000 migrants (only 3 percent) in the Russian Far East created a perception of uncontrolled cross-border crime and illegal migration. Growing tension among the populace prompted the governments of Russia and China in May 2003 to create joint working groups to curb uncontrolled movement of people across the common border.[88] Moscow's recent decision to tighten requirements for Chinese contract workers in Russia has increased the financial burden on both Russian employers and Chinese employees. Tightened border regulations to control illegal shuttle trade have been largely ineffective as many Chinese have opted to travel to Russia as tourists but engage in border trade.

Russian authorities have attempted to improve both migration reporting and control mechanisms. In 2002, the Duma passed a new citizenship law that adds additional requirements without any clear mechanism for implementation.[89] The law effectively prevents about 4 million potential repatriate Russians living in the Commonwealth of Independent States after the fall of the USSR from receiving Russian citizenship.[90]

The Policy Environment

Will Northeast Asian policy makers be able to deal with population aging and labor shortages, absorb sustained unemployment in China and Mongolia, adjust to shrinking populations in the Russian Far East, and link changes in population stocks and internal and cross-border flows in ways that will enhance security?

The following approaches to migration would appear to enhance population welfare and state security in Northeast Asia: (1) promote trade, investment, and human rights for both native and migrant populations, (2) facilitate migrants' integration into labor forces and social life at destination, (3) help to maintain stability at home with workers' remittances, (4) provide ways for migrants to return home and contribute to the

development of their countries of origin, and (5) enhance relations between areas of origin and destination.[91] An integrated approach to population, migration, and economic development policies is needed, as well as enforcement measures. Key to this task is the development of migration management systems, which also take into account the different interests of origin, transit, and destination nations with reference to the issues discussed below.

Sources of the problems

Demographic sources include population decline in the Russian Far East and population concentrations in northeast and rural China, compounded by the slow responses of Northeast Asian governments to these issues. Northeast Asian governments are still dealing with the aftermath of civilizational, cultural, and state-to-state conflicts, particularly in the form of popular nationalism and, in some areas, xenophobia. The dire economic situation in North Korea encourages economic migration to China and the fear of political persecution upon forced repatriation drives some of them to seek asylum in ROK.

Human security of foreign nationals

For the governments of China, Japan, North and South Korea, Russia, and Mongolia, migration is a key issue. For China, problems are how to utilize its huge pool of internal migrants to improve its economy without sacrificing its control over their movement, and how to deal with Russia's negative responses to Chinese residents and visitors in the Russian Far East.[92] The human security of migrants from China and Russia in Mongolia could also be of concern to China and Russia. China is also concerned about the illegal entry of North Koreans and their attempt to find safe passage to South Korea and elsewhere. Beijing views North Korean "defectors" as "economic migrants" but international human rights groups demand that China and the international community treat them as refugees.

For Japan, migration is also tied to economic performance. The barrier for Japan is: how to reconcile the growing presence of foreigners in a country that prides itself on its unique Japanese-ness and social order based on cultural homogeneity.

ROK shares with Japan the problems of reconciling the presence of migrants with cultural uniqueness. In addition, ROK has to maintain political dialogue with North Korea regarding migration and other issues. Despite the rhetoric of both North Korea and South Korea, a rapprochement between the two Koreas can continue. ROK and China have not found a mutually acceptable solution to the legal status of Chinese citizens of Korean ancestry who want to migrate to ROK. Seoul wants to encourage them to come there, but Beijing does not want to see them lose their Chinese citizenship and loyalty to China.

Most Chinese (and Vietnamese and North Koreans, as well) in the Russian Far East provide inexpensive labor and transport and the Chinese sell inexpensive Chinese consumer goods to the region. The overarching human security concerns of the Chinese in the Russian Far East involve abuses in the realm of labor standards. The conditions for longer-term migrants are no better.

Human security of host communities

For China, Japan and South Korea, migration and foreign workers pose short-term problems because most of the stresses have to do with how the governments handle the shocks that come in the form of perceived threats to established political control and social order. Mongolians fear Chinese traders' dominance of the local economic scene. Chinese migration to the Russian Far East poses problems of "Chinese territorial expansion" and adds tension to the social fabric, but the most significant impact will be economic. Japanese are increasingly wary of what they perceive to be the growing wave of criminal acts by Chinese and other foreigners in their country. Language barriers and cultural differences limit genuine communication between the locals and the foreigners whom they regard as "outsiders" even when many "foreigners" have established long-term residence.

Impacts on bilateral relations between origin and destination countries

Chinese migration to the Russian Far East is a significant sticking point in bilateral relations between China and Russia. It is unlikely that Chinese migration to the Russian Far East threatens regional security in Northeast Asia but failure to resolve this issue is impeding the integration of the Russian Far East in the region. Although foreign workers in Japan come from many countries, the large number of Chinese poses problems for Tokyo and Beijing policymakers. Problems related to the Korean presence in Japan are tied to Japan's concept of its racial purity. The "defection" of North Koreans into China and international attention to their plight poses a difficult dilemma for Beijing, which wants to maintain its influence in North Korea but also wants to avoid diplomatic problems with South Korea, Japan, and the United States over the North Koreans' human rights.

Impact on the regional security environment in Northeast Asia

Market forces are gradually integrating the region's economies and deepening labor and capital flows by encouraging freer movement of workers and factors of production. Nevertheless, growing contacts between peoples of different ethnicities and nationalities are generating varying degrees of tension in host communities and challenges for government authorities in all Northeast Asian countries.

Policies in place

The governments of China, Japan and ROK are creating and implementing national (i.e., unilateral) policies to deal with migration/foreign workers. Japan and ROK are under pressure to liberalize migration policies in order to provide employment opportunities from labor surplus countries such as China and some Southeast Asian countries. The slowness of change is due to lingering political hesitancy to lose control over population movement/immigration. However, economic necessity is forcing these governments to re-think past policies. The government of Russia has focused on the enforcement of migration rather than first developing long-term plans for the role of

migration in Russia's development. Mongolia has maintained its restrictive migration policy as far as in-migration is concerned, while generally liberalizing out-migration.

Policies that can be developed

China can grant internal migrants freedom to move to areas where they can find jobs and provide them with social protection. Japan and South Korea can loosen even more their foreign worker laws, but how fast they can do this will likely depend on the global economy. South Korea has the additional task of trying to live with North Korea. It can also balance its policy of promoting the cultural solidarity with Chinese citizens of Korean ethnicity among other overseas Koreans on the one hand and its diplomatic relations with China on the other. Increasing emphasis on trade and economic integration—including well-managed non-coercive labor flows between the DPRK and the ROK, and the DPRK and the Russian Federation—could enhance DPRK development and regional stability. China is attempting to promote peace on the Korean Peninsula, which may augur more active policies in the future, including coordination with South Korea over the issue of North Korean migrants/refugees. China and Russia can develop emerging cross-border cities, and all Northeast Asian countries can take advantage of the Tokyo-Beijing urban corridor. The Russian government can develop strategic migration policies rather than reactive enforcement policies in order to effectively manage its large migrant stock. Each country of the region can also integrate population, migration, and economic development policies.

Finally, the Northeast Asian countries can also develop a multilateral forum for discussion of migration issues in line with the global movement to promote the rights of migrants, eliminate human trafficking, and enhance migrant workers' contribution to economic development in the countries of origin and destination.

Obstacles to developing such policies or measures

Root obstacles to state and human welfare posed by migration and foreign workers are the suspicion-laden bilateral relations overall, absence of any multilateral institution for policy cooperation, and fixed political positions held by the governments of Northeast Asia regarding migration. Political controls are gradually loosening, however. Internal migrants in China are granted more and more rights, and China and Russia have begun bilateral mechanisms for discussing cross-border migration issues. The question is whether these changes are occurring rapidly enough to adapt to increasing migration/foreign worker issues. Proximate obstacles include the low level of economic development in Mongolia and the Russian Far East, population aging, HIV/AIDS, SARS, the tendency of short-term migrants to over-stay their visas, and the involvement of criminal organizations in labor export and import and human trafficking. Guiding cross-border flows requires coordinating the increasing numbers of public and private sector migration relevant institutions that are developing multilateral governance frameworks.

Conclusions: Implications for Northeast Asian Regionalism

What is the potential impact of the growing international migration in Northeast Asia on the development of regionalism? There are economic, political, institutional, social, cultural, and security dimensions to this question.[93]

Market forces are gradually integrating the region's economies.[94] Excluding the United States, nearly 45 percent of the Northeast Asian countries' international trade takes place within this region. The relaxation of state regulation of international trade and investment transactions over the last decade has facilitated the growth of trans-border market linkages. There is no common strategy for economic integration in Northeast Asia, but discussions are underway between Japan, South Korea, and China about the possibility of a bilateral or a trilateral free-trade agreement.

Will international migration become a facilitator of regional integration, rather than a consequence of deepening integration? There is no question that economic integration will continue and migration will grow as a result. However, as we noted above, the growing contacts between people of different ethnicities and nationalities are generating various degrees of tension. So far, we have seen no summitry among the national leaders of the region to deal with international migration issues in Northeast Asia. Nor is there any serious discussion about the establishment of institutional mechanisms for multilateral coordination of migration and related policies. Virtually all policy changes in the migration sector have occurred through domestic (i.e., unilateral) processes.

Is cross-border migration contributing to the development of a regional identity among the peoples of Northeast Asia? To the extent that individual migrants help develop networks between communities in their home and host countries, they can potentially contribute to the sharing of cultural values across national boundaries. However, our analysis of national situations indicates that ethnic, cultural, and national identities remain strong in Northeast Asia and that the influx of foreign migrants and visitors into local communities is reinforcing those identities. There is no sign that the contemporary cross-border migration is eroding people's identities based on their ethnicity or nationality.[95]

As we have shown, the economic needs of each Northeast Asian country require labor inputs from the neighboring countries and ongoing social changes are pushing and pulling short-term and long-term migrant flows across national borders. The realities surrounding cross-border migration are slowly changing the economic, social, and cultural landscape of Northeast Asian countries. While they hold integrative potentials, they have also generated counter-integrative sentiments among the nationalist and insular segments of the Northeast Asian populations. It remains to be seen if the political leaders and economic decision-makers in the countries of the region recognize not only the potential economic benefits of international migration in each country but also the integrative effects of cross-border human flows for the region as a whole.

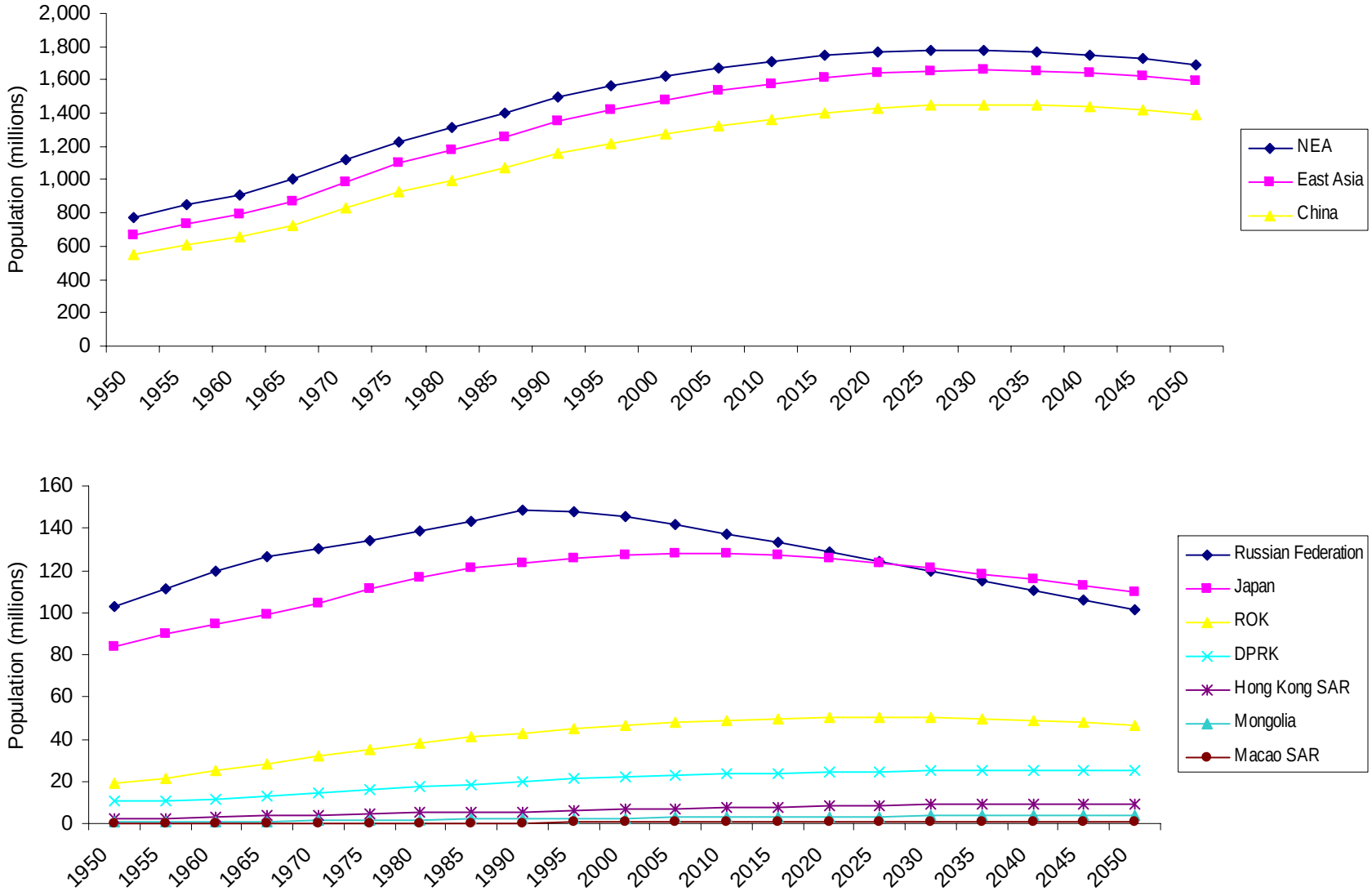

Figure 1 Population size, all East Asian and Northeast Asian states: estimates and projections, 1950-2050 (*Source:* From *World Population Prospects, The 2002 Revision, Vol. 1*, by Population Division, © 2003 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher).

Table 1 Recent population data for Northeast Asian states and East Asian states[a,b]

	Population Mid-2004 (millions)	Natural Increase (Annual, %)	Projected Population 2025	Infant Mortality Rate	Total Fertility Rate	% Population		Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	Percent Urban	GNI PPI Per Capita 2002 (US$)
						<15	65+			
Northeast Asian states	1,675.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
East Asian states	1,531.0	0.6	1,709.0	30	1.6	21	9	72	46	6,790
Northeast Asia (NEA) areas (NEA China provinces, Japan, DPRK, ROK , Mongolia, and Russian Federation)	312.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
China	1,300.1	0.6	1,476.0	32	1.7	22	7	71	41	4,520
NEA Provinces[c]	104.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Liaoning	41.8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Jilin	26.8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Heilongjiang	36.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
China, Hong Kong SAR	6.8	0.1	8.4	2.4	0.9	15	12	81	100	27,490
China, Macao SAR	0.4	0.4	0.5	3.0	0.8	20	8	77	99	21,910
Taiwan	22.8	0.4	24.4	6.0	1.2	20	9	76	78	--
Japan	127.6	0.1	121.1	3.0	1.3	14	19	82	78	27,380
DPRK	22.8	0.7	24.7	45	2.0	27	6	63	60	--
ROK	48.2	0.5	50.6	8	1.2	20	8	77	80	16,960
Mongolia	2.5	1.2	3.4	30	2.7	36	5	65	57	1,710
Russian Federation	144.1	-0.6	136.9	13	1.4	16	13	65	73	8,080
Russian Far East[d]	7.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

[a]*Major source:* Population Reference Bureau, 2004 World Population Data Sheet, Population Reference Bureau, Washington, D.C. 2004.
Definitions: Mid 2004 Population: Estimates are based on a recent census, official national data, or UN and U.S. Census Bureau projections.
Rate of Natural Increase: Birth rate minus the death rate, implying the annual rate of population growth without regard for migration. Expressed as a percentage.
Projected Population 2025: Based on official country projections, series issued by the UN, U.S. Census Bureau or Population Reference Bureau projections.
Infant Mortality Rate: The annual number of deaths of infants under age 1 year per 1,000 live births.
Total Fertility Rate: The average number of children a woman would have assuming that current age-specific birth rates will remain constant throughout her childbearing years (usually considered to be ages 15–49).
% Population <15 and 65+ in their age, often considered to be the "dependent ages."
Life Expectancy at Birth: The average number of years a newborn infant can expect to live under *current* mortality levels.
Urban Population: Percentage of the total population living in areas termed urban by that country.
GNI PPP Per Capital: 2002: Gross national income in purchasing power parity (PPP) by midyear population, based on value of goods and services in U.S. which can be purchased in referenced country with U.S. dollars.
[b]Do not reproduce without permission from Population Reference Bureau, Inc.
[c]November 1, 2000 Census enumerated population, *Tabulation of the 2000 Population Census of the Peoples Republic of China:* Complied by the Population Census Office of the State Council Department of Population, Social, Science and Technology Statistics, National Review of Statistics of China, 2002, Beijing
[d]Mid 2002, "Russian Statistics Yearbook 1999-2002," Russian Federation National Statistics; Economic Research, Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA), Niigata, Japan
http://www.erina.or.jp/En/Asia/Bask 2002/Bask2002.htm -- Data unavailable or inapplicable.

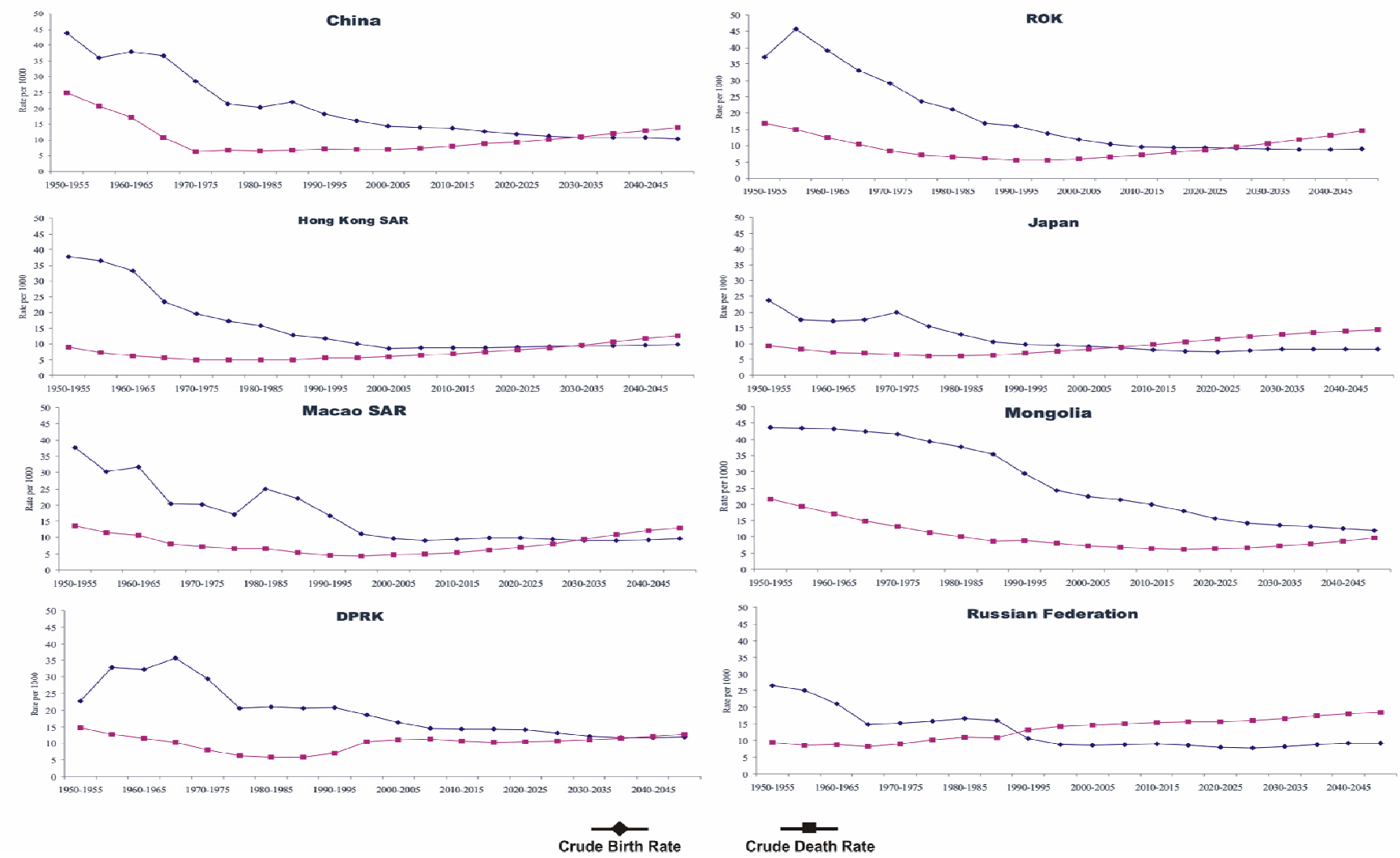

Figure 2 Vital rates and epidemiologic transition, Northeast Asian states: estimates and projections, 1950-2050 (*Source:* From *World Population Prospects*, The 2002 Revision, Vol. 1, by Population Division, © 2003 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher).

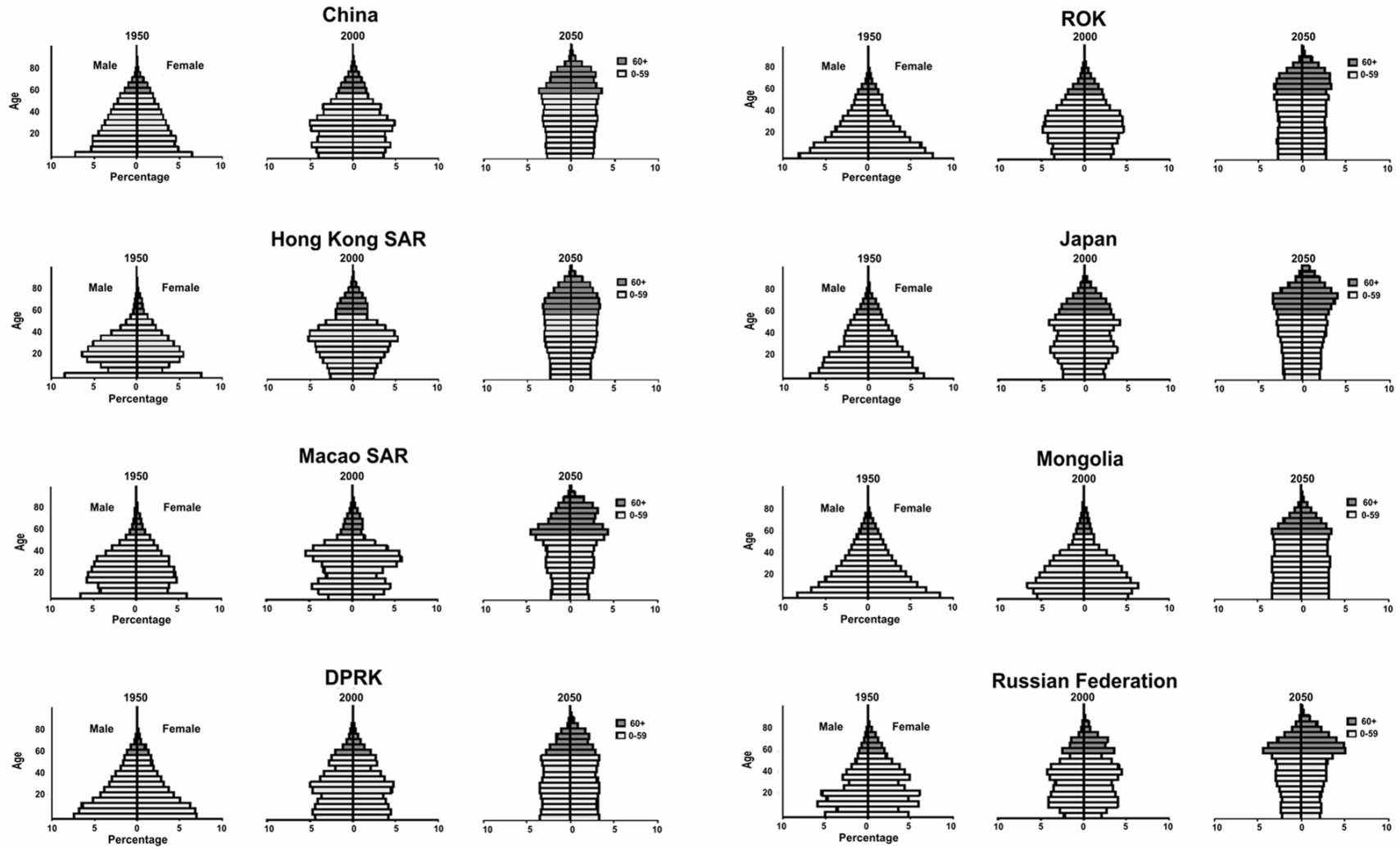

Figure 3 Population Pyramids, Northeast Asian states: estimates and projections, 1950-2050 (*Source:* From *World Population Ageing*, 1950-2050, by Population Division, ©2002 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher).

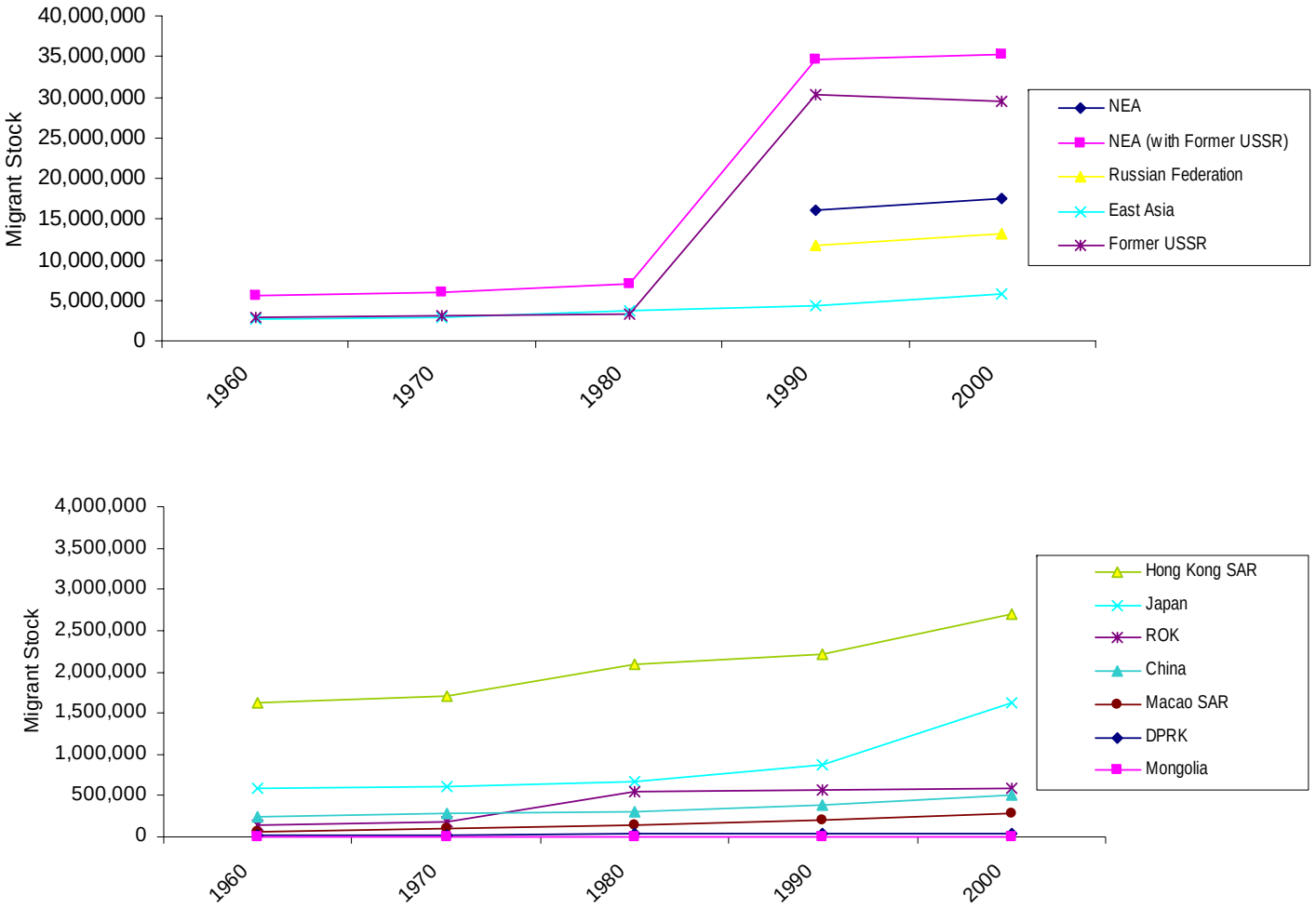

Figure 4 Estimates of total migrant stock, all East Asian and Northeast Asian states, 1960-2000. *Source*: From *Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2003 Revision*, by Population Division, © 2004 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.*

*Type of data: (1) Hong Kong SAR, Macao SAR, ROK, and Russian Federation—derived from data classified by place of birth, represents the foreign-born; (2) Japan, Mongolia—derived from data classified by citizenship, represents the foreign population, (3) China, DPRK, no data, imputed value, (4) Former USSR-derived from data classified by place of birth and from data by citizenship.

Table 2 Migration indicators, Northeast Asia states, 1990, 2000

Indicator	China		Hong Kong SAR		Macao SAR		Japan	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Population								
No. (000's)	1,155,305	1,275,133	5,705	6,860	372	444	123,537	127,096
Natural increase/1,000 population	11.1	9.3	5.8	4.8	12.3	6.5	2.8	2.1
Rate of growth/1,000 population	10.8	9.0	17.0	19.9	22.5	13.0	3.1	2.6
Migrant stock								
No. (000's)	380	513	2,218	2,701	204	294	877	1,620
% of population	--	--	38.9	39.4	54.9	66.1	0.7	1.3
Refugees								
No. (000's)	287.3	294.1	8.2	1.0	0.2	--	6.8	3.8
% of migrant stock	75.6	57.4	0.4	--	0.1	--	0.8	0.2
Net migration								
No. (000's)	-381	-381	66	99	4	3	37	56
Rate/1,000 population	-0.3	-0.3	11.1	15.1	10.1	6.5	0.3	0.4
No./100 births	-2	-2	98	147	60	60	3	5
Workers' remittances								
Total (millions of US dollars)	124	556	"	"	"	"	"	505
% of gross domestic product	--	0.1	"	"	"	"	"	--
Per capita (US dollars)	--	--	"	"	"	"	"	4
Projected population in 2050 (thousands)	1,462,058		9,648		527		109,220	
Projected population in 2050 (thousands)*	1,480,836		6,104		401		105,418	
*Assuming zero migration after 2000								
	DPRK		**ROK**		**Mongolia**		**Russian Federation**	
Population								
No. (000's)	19,956	22,268	42,869	46,740	2,216	2,533	148,292	145,491
Natural increase/1,000 population	13.7	8.2	10.0	8.2	20.5	16.2	-2.7	-5.6
Rate of growth/1,000 population	13.7	8.2	9.5	7.8	17.0	9.7	-0.2	-3.6
Migrant stock								
No. (000's)	34	37	572	597	7	8	11,689	13,259
% of population	0.2	0.2	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	7.9	9.1
Refugees								
No. (000's)	"	"	0.2	--	"	"	--	26.3
% of migrant stock	"	"	--	--	"	"	--	0.2
Net migration								
No. (000's)	--	--	-23	-18	-8	-16	372	287
Rate/1,000 population	--	--	-0.5	-0.4	-3.5	-6.5	2.5	2
No./100 births	--	--	-3	-3	-12	-27	24	22
Workers' remittances								
Total (millions of US dollars)	"	"	488	63	"	7c	"	"
% of gross domestic product	"	"	0.2	--	"	0.8	"	"
Per capita (US dollars)	"	"	11	1	"	3	"	"
Projected population in 2050 (thousands)	28,038		51,560		4,146		104,258	
Projected population in 2050 (thousands)[a]								
[a]Assuming zero migration after 2000	28,038		51,961		4,210		101,680	

Source: From *United Nations International Migration Report 2002*, by Population Division, © 2003 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

Notes

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[92] Russia refers to these Chinese as "migrants" but China refuses to use the same terminology, preferring instead to call them "residents "and "visitors".

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