

With funding from The Wellcome Trust, a consortium of Asian population studies centers and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) have established a largely Internet-based "MetaCentre" for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis. A key component of the MetaCentre is an Asian Population Network, currently being developed. The three principal investigators are Brenda Yeoh (Director, Centre for Advanced Studies, National University of Singapore), Vipan Ruffolo (Director, College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand), and Wolfgang Lutz (Leader, Population Project, IIASA, Austria). The MetaCentre is headquartered at the Centre for Advanced Studies at the National University of Singapore. The Asian Population Network is co-sponsored by the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP). During the MetaCentre's first two-year period (2000–2001), a scientific infrastructure will be established and a series of seminars and training workshops will be held in several Asian countries. In-depth case studies, comparative regional studies, and, possibly, academic training in international population studies will follow.

Table of Contents

Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis	1
Activities of the Asian MetaCentre	2
The National University of Singapore	3
The College of Population Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand	4
China's Unfolding Educational Revolution	5



Announcing the Establishment of a New

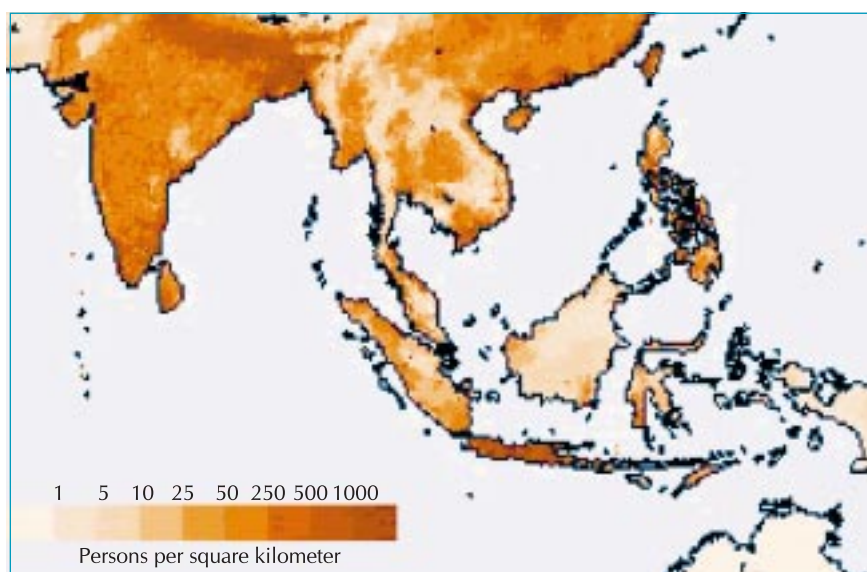
Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis

With Funding from The Wellcome Trust and Headquarters in Singapore

Asia is home to more than half of the world's population but has only 24% of the world's land surface (excluding Siberia) and only 14% of the world's demographers (as measured by IUSSP membership). Many of the hot spots of rapid economic growth, urban air pollution, ecosystem destruction, and dramatic changes in population age structure, as well as social structure in general, are concentrated in Asia. These are ample reasons to begin a major scientific initiative on the analysis of population–development–environment interactions and the resulting longer-term challenges in Asia.

This initiative will have several components including capacity building, networking among Asian population experts, advancement of research methodologies, and in-depth population–environment case studies. Additional research topics will include family demography and migration. These different activities are all orientated toward anticipating likely future trends and population-related challenges in Asia. This "futures perspective" will be approached using different methods, ranging from qualitative analysis to dynamic computer simulation.

Information about the work plan for the first two years is given on page 2 of this issue of *POPNET*. As of August, more information will be available on the MetaCentre's Web site: www.populationasia.org. All researchers interested in Asian population matters are invited to join the network.



Asia population density, 1995. Source: CIESIN.



Principal investigators (left to right) Brenda Yeoh, Vipan Ruffolo, and Wolfgang Lutz.

Call for Papers

Age Structural Transitions and Policy Implications

Phuket, Thailand
8–10 November 2000

Organized by the Asian Population Network (APN) and the IUSSP Committee on Population Age Structure and Public Policy

The conference will include both invited and submitted papers. A selection of papers is expected to be published in a book with Oxford University Press. Detailed abstracts or full-length papers should be sent to Shripad Tuljapurkar (tulja@mvr.org) with a copy to iussp@iussp.org and popnasia@nus.edu.sg. **The deadline is 15 August 2000.** For more information, see www.iussp.org.

The first APN Seminar on **Methods of Population–Environment Analysis** was held in Penang (Malaysia), 10–12 April 2000. It attempted to provide a state-of-the-art survey of different approaches and methods for studying the complex interactions between human populations and the natural environment. It brought together some of the leading Western scholars in the field with Asian scholars who have either been studying these issues or plan to do so in the future. Several of the contributions to the seminar will form a special issue of *Population and Development Review*, entitled “Population and Environment: Methods of Analysis.”

All information about the activities of the MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis can be found on the MetaCentre’s Web site (as of August 2000):

www.populationasia.org

Queries can also be sent to popnasia@nus.edu.sg.

Activities of the Asian MetaCentre

The first two years will focus on establishing the Asian Population Network (APN) of individual scholars, strengthening collaboration among existing population studies centers in the region, building up the headquarters in Singapore, and preparing proposals for future in-depth studies. Activities will be structured around five APN seminars and three high-level training workshops:

APN Seminars

Methods of Population–Environment Analysis, Penang (Malaysia), 10–12 April 2000 (see box below for more information).

Age Structural Transitions and Policy Implications, Phuket (Thailand), 8–10 November 2000, in collaboration with the IUSSP Committee on Age Structure and Public Policy. Deadline for submissions is 15 August (see *Call for Papers*).

Population–Development–Environment Case Studies, Singapore, January/February 2001.

Asian Families in Transition, Singapore, April/May 2001.

Prospects of Fertility Decline and Sub-Replacement Fertility in Asia, to be held in late 2001, location to be determined.

High-Level Training Workshops

Methods of Systems Analysis for Studying and Forecasting Population–Environment Interactions, Bangkok (Thailand), 13–25 November 2000. Leader: Prof. Warren Sanderson (IIASA). Participants: Experienced scientists interested in systems modeling in the

field of population–environment; could lead to a separate proposal for an in-depth case study to be submitted to The Wellcome Trust.

New Approaches and Methods of Population Forecasting, Singapore, 8–20 January 2001. Leaders: Dr. Sergei Scherbov, Dr. Aris Ananta. Participants: Asian experts on population projections (from academia or statistical offices) interested in new methods in this field; special emphasis on multi-state population projections, probabilistic population projections, and the solicitation of expert views and arguments for making necessary assumptions.

Migration and Families: Different Approaches and Methods of Analysis, Singapore, April/May 2001. Leader: Assoc. Prof. Brenda Yeoh. Participants: Social scientists interested in different approaches to studying the way migration impacts family welfare and household structures, and the way families draw on migration and mobility as adaptive strategies. A range of analytical techniques including both quantitative and qualitative methods will be examined.

Persons interested in attending these APN seminars or training workshops should send an abstract for their proposed contribution (for seminars) or a curriculum vitae (for training workshops) to the MetaCentre headquarters in Singapore (popnasia@nus.edu.sg).

For successful applicants, participation will be free of charge, all travel expenses will be paid, and per diem will be provided.





Founded in 1905

The National University of Singapore

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Achievements and Mission

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences was one of the first faculties to be established at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and had its origins in the founding of Raffles College, which began classes in 1928. It is the largest faculty at NUS, with 11 departments and 2 programs. In the 1999–2000 academic year, the Faculty had a student population of more than 5,500 undergraduate students and about 1,000 postgraduate students. It has over 380 academic staff and over 150 nonacademic staff. Two of the Faculty staff are members of parliament, one of whom is a minister of state. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore is a graduate of the Faculty.

The Faculty offers a wide range of academic subjects encompassing traditional disciplines and multi-disciplinary programs. The established “humanities” subjects include geography, history, languages, literature, and philosophy; the social science disciplines consist of economics, political science, sociology, and social work and psychology. Reflecting national concerns, there are also departments dealing with Chinese studies and Malay studies, as well as English and Japanese studies. The Faculty also conducts programs in European studies, Southeast Asian studies, and South Asian studies.

The Faculty emphasizes the development and strengthening of the skills of critical enquiry, reasoned judgment, and independent thinking.

The Faculty’s mission is

- to cultivate the highest standards of teaching and scholarship in the humanities and social sciences,
- to devote ourselves to the study of the world we live in and the traditions we have inherited,

striving for excellence and integrity in research,

- to nurture in our graduates the spirit of critical thinking and lifelong learning,
- and thereby to serve the needs of our society and to enhance its intellectual life, contributing to the development of Singapore.



Centre for Advanced Studies

The University Senate approved the proposal to establish the Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS) in January 1982 to promote research and international networking in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. CAS promotes high-quality research and contributes to the University’s vision of achieving world-class standing by cultivating a supportive research milieu within the Faculty. CAS focuses on key research themes of particular relevance to Singapore, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. In so doing, the Centre aims to become an important research base for developing cutting-edge scholarship on Singapore and the region.

To achieve these aims, CAS coordinates and draws together different facets of the research process. These include

- spearheading multi- and cross-disciplinary research projects,
- developing a range of high-quality research publications,

- facilitating and hosting multi-disciplinary conferences, workshops, and seminars,
- hosting visiting scholars and Meyer Fellows,
- Facilitating contact and collaboration with other research institutions within and outside Singapore.

Research synergies are created around a number of distinct themes, which are generally developed in the context of the complex and rapidly changing social, economic, and political canvas of the Asia–Pacific region. These focus areas include

- migration and transboundary flows,
- tourism and leisure,
- family and gender studies,
- urban studies,
- cultural contact: traditions and transformations.

There are two study groups specifically on population-related issues: the Study Group on the Family and Life Cycle Changes and the Study Group on Migration and Diaspora.

All inquiries, correspondence, and comments should be sent to:

The Director
 Centre for Advanced Studies
 National University of Singapore
 Shaw Foundation Building
 5 Arts Link
 Singapore 117570
 Tel: (65) 874 3810
 Fax: (65) 779 1428
 E-mail: cassec@nus.edu.sg
 Web: www.fas.nus.edu.sg/cas





The College of Population Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Chulalongkorn University, Thailand's premier institution of higher learning, has played a leading role in population research and policy development. The first Population Research and Training Center in Thailand was established at Chulalongkorn University in early 1966. It was founded in recognition of the crucial relationship between population and socioeconomic development, and the need for greater knowledge of the Thai population situation and for more qualified personnel to conduct research and planning related to population issues. In 1970, the Center was upgraded by royal decree to become the Institute of Population Studies. In 1998, the Institute of Population Studies was once again upgraded by royal decree to become the College of Population Studies (CPS) in order to highlight the initiation of its Ph.D. program in demography and a broader range of master's degree programs. Along with the change in status, CPS has expanded its role in basic and applied research to include more interdisciplinary aspects and to better serve as a source of demographic information for Thailand and the world community. With more than three decades of service, the College is proud of its history of helping to determine the nation's population policy, including its key role in encouraging the government to declare the first national population policy in 1970. CPS is determined to continue its important role with three missions:

- To promote public and official awareness, interest, and knowledge concerning population matters in Thailand
- To train personnel in Thailand to conduct demographic research and to utilize demographic materials in both applied and scientific spheres

- To provide consultative and information services to the public, the scientific community, and government officials and agencies

These missions have been achieved by conducting and reporting the results of research projects; training graduate students and placing them in key government and private agencies; providing population information and consultative services to government and private organizations; and publishing population newsletters, journals, research reports, and related articles and distributing them to the public.

In terms of research, CPS has been collecting and analyzing data related to Thailand's population situation. It has conducted over 200 small- and large-scale projects, which have been used to improve the body of knowledge about the Thai population and to formulate national policies. One example of such a project is the Potharam Study of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice of Women toward Family Planning. Results of this study have laid the groundwork for the national family planning program established in 1970. The program is considered highly successful and has served as a model for many developing countries around the world.

The College's research has steadily progressed in accordance with Thailand's demographic, economic, and social situation. At present, research projects at CPS stress the implications of age structure change as a result of the rapid fertility decline in Thailand. The College has a long record of research on various aspects of aging issues, including the well-being and familial and community supports of the elderly, as well as policy issues. Among other topics, CPS has also focused on concerns regarding

human resources development, reproductive health, and AIDS and the population groups at risk. There is also an emphasis on multidisciplinary research and the relationship between a population's quality of life and sustainable development. Therefore, recent topics of study include health, human resources development, environment, and migration.

During the past decade, CPS has broadened its objectives and network by collaborating with research and teaching institutes in developed countries to train specialists from throughout Asia. CPS has recently joined with the Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS) at the National University of Singapore and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Austria in forming a MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis with support from The Wellcome Trust. This project expands the College's missions to serve the needs of the region in the areas of training and research.

All inquiries, correspondence, and comments should be sent to:

College of Population Studies
Visid Prachuabmoh Building
Chulalongkorn University
Bangkok 10330, Thailand

