

# For healthy ageing in Vietnam, the way forward...

*Nguyen Van Tien, MD, PhD*

- *Former vice Chair of Parliamentary committee for Social Affairs, Vietnam*
- *Vice chair of Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Pop & Dev. (AFPPD)*
  - *Short-term consultancy for USAID on health financial in Vietnam*

# **Main issues**

**1 - Current ageing in Vietnam;**

**2 – Challenges/related issues in  
ageing society;**

**3 – Lesson to learnt for health ageing**

# **Vietnam data profile, 2018**

<b>Area</b>	<b>330,957 Km2</b>
<b>Population:</b>	<b>94,67 million</b>
<b>Urban population</b>	<b>38.3%</b>
<b>Expectation of live at birth</b>	<b>74 years</b>
<b>GDP per capita</b>	<b>2590 USD</b>
<b>Main export:</b>	
	<b>Electronic, Garment, Crude oil</b>
	<b>Marine and agricultural production.</b>

## Economic and Financial indicator 2018

**GDP:** **5,542 thousand billion VN Dong**

**Sharing GDP:** - *14.68% Agriculture,*  
- *34.23% Industries*  
- *41.12% Service*

**Consume price index:** - *3.54%*

**Budget deficit:** - *3.46% GDP*

**Public debt** - *58.42% GDP*

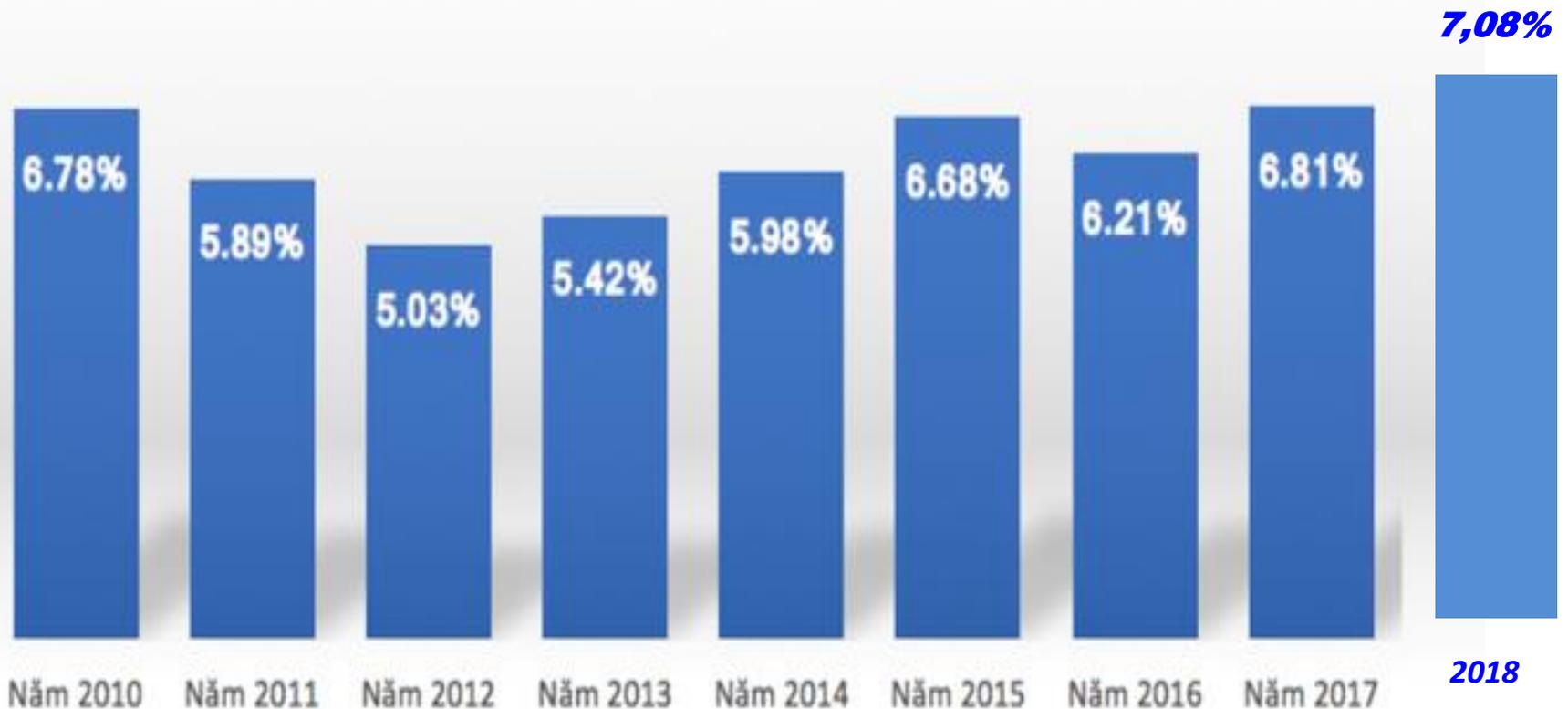
# GDP growth in Vietnam 2010-2018

In 2018; GDP per capita: 2590 USD

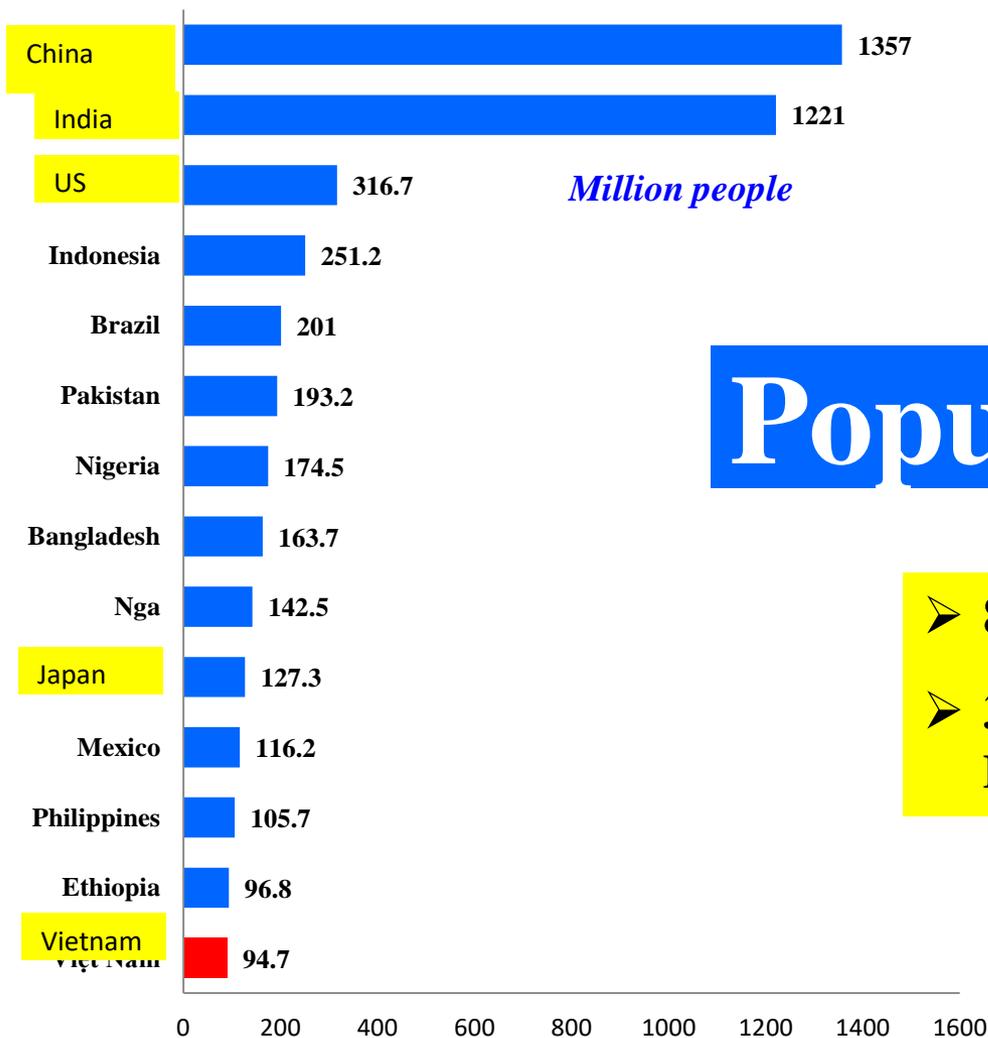
(increase 201 USD from 2017);

*Export/Import 243/236 \$, surplus: 6.8\$ billion*

*(70% export from FDI)*



**In 4/2019, its population is 96.2 million;  
Vietnam, 15<sup>th</sup> populous in the world..**

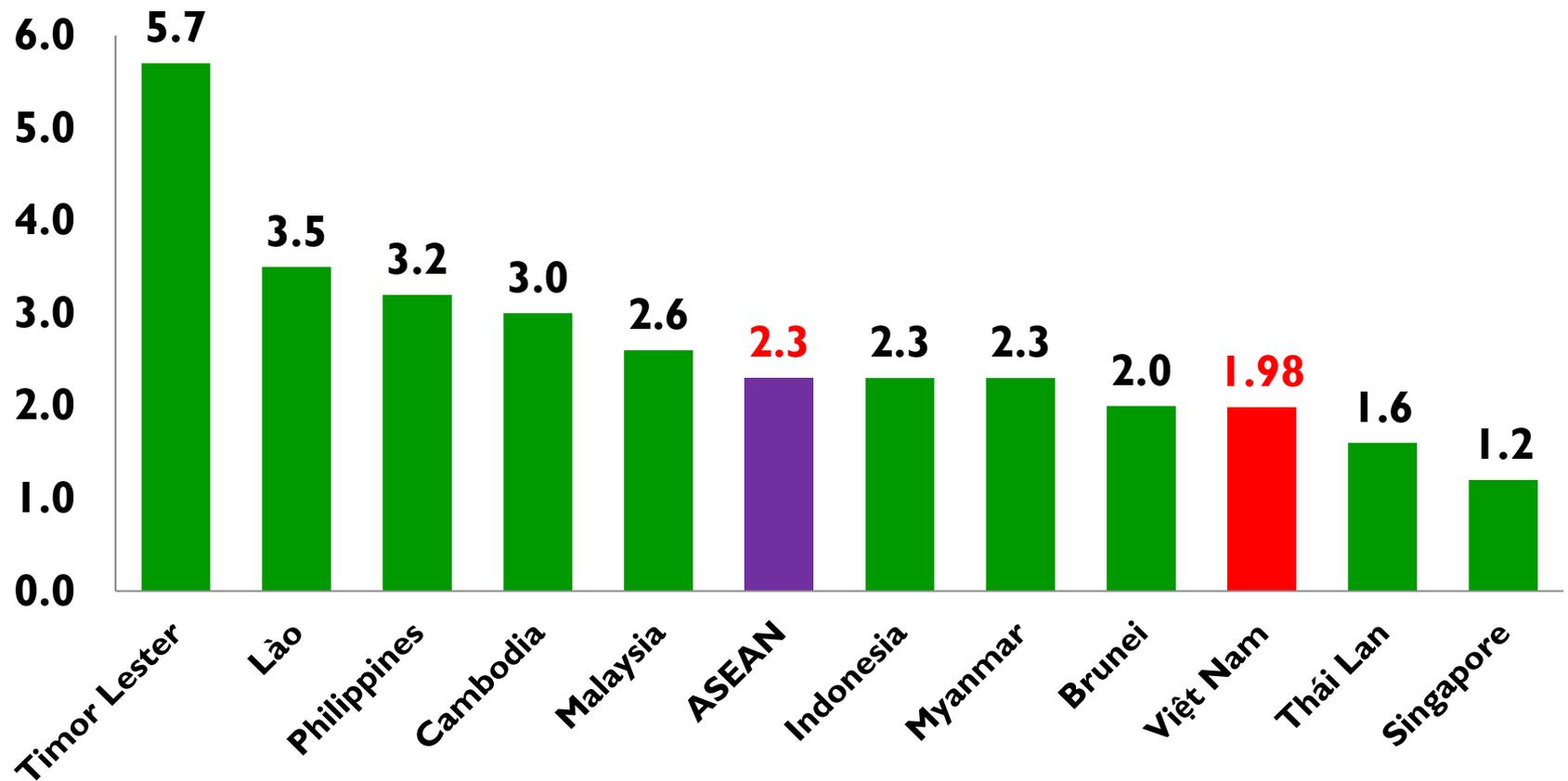


## Population size

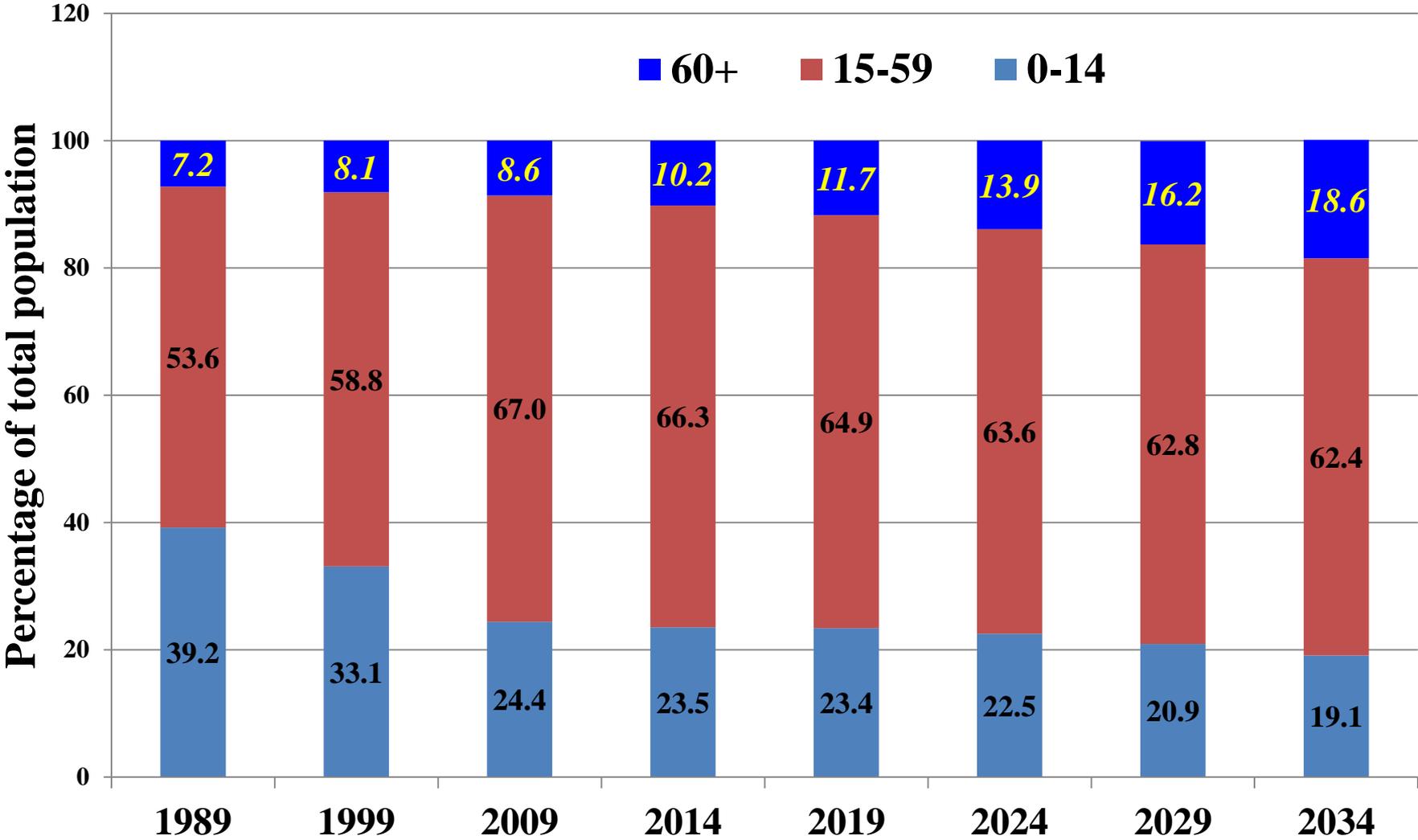
- **8<sup>th</sup> in the Asia;**
- **3<sup>rd</sup> in South east Asia (Indonesia, Philippines)**

# TFR in Vietnam is 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in South East Asia

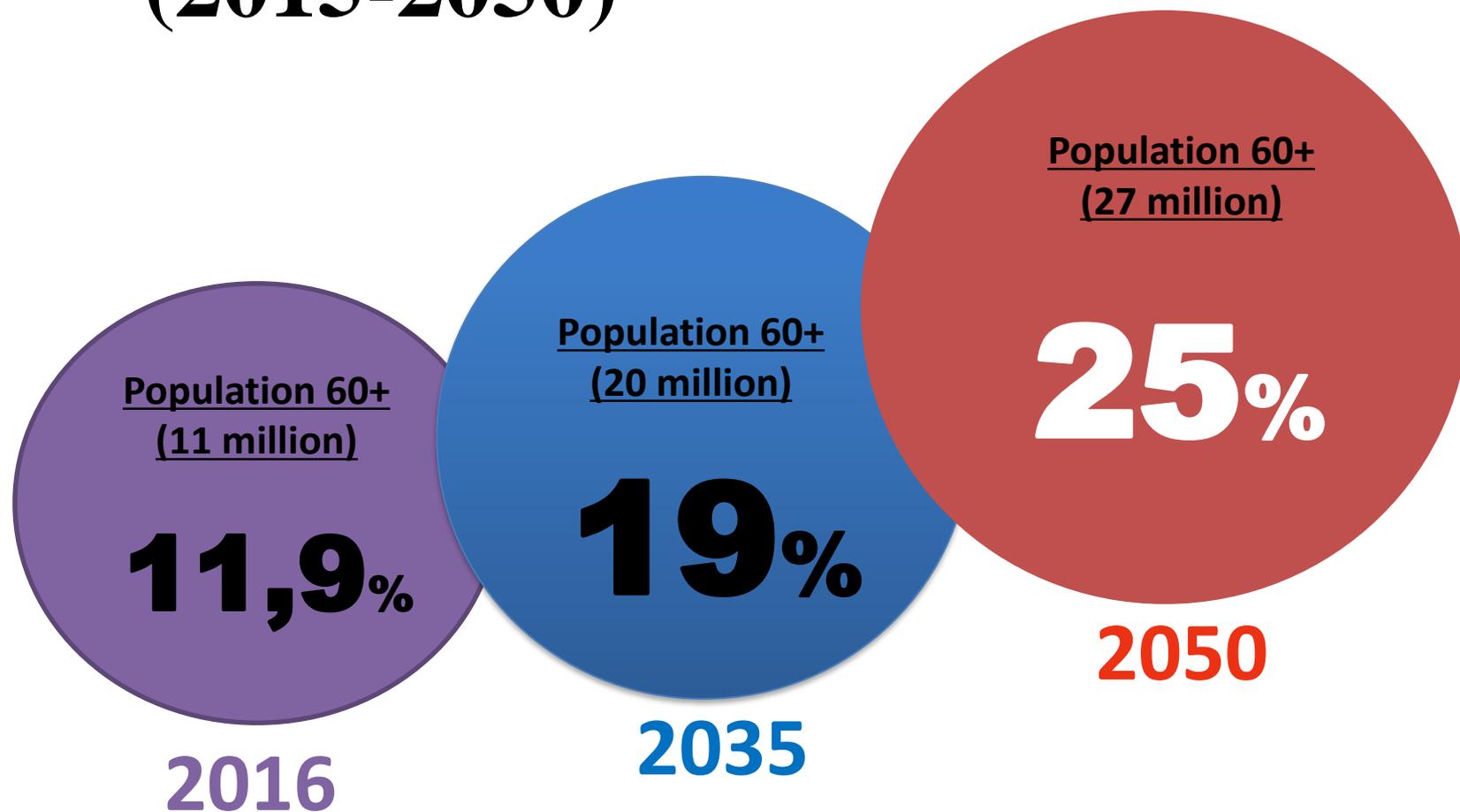
(TFR is number of children during women reproductive life)



# Progress of Population Ageing in Vietnam



# % older person 60+ in Vietnam (2015-2050)



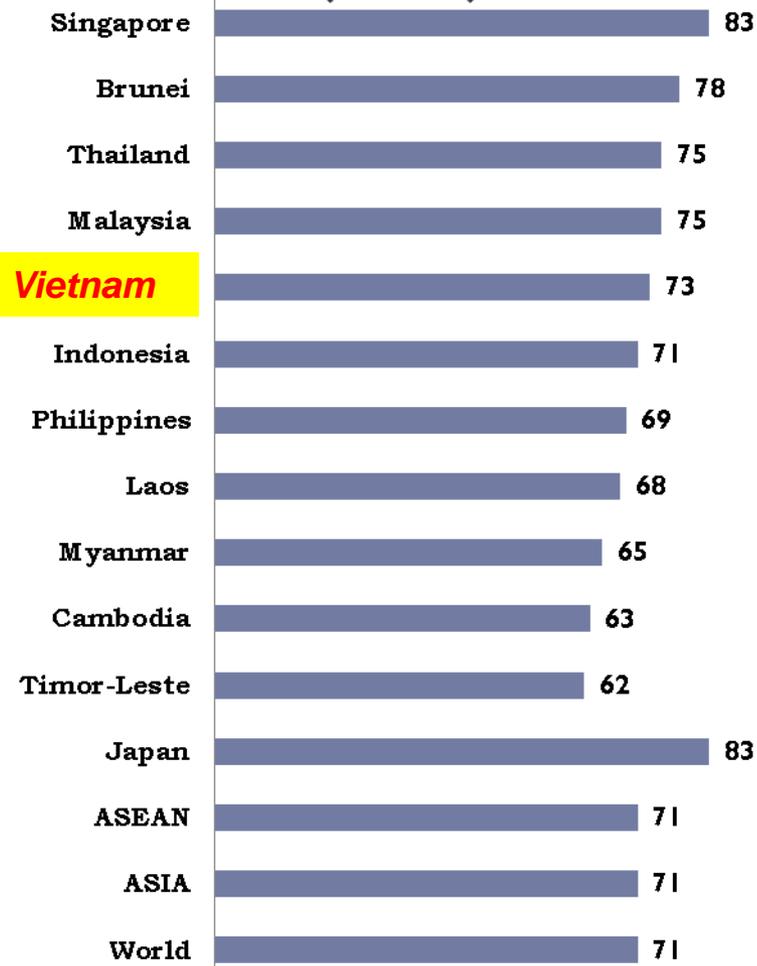
- Source: Midterm population survey, 2014, 2016, GSO

# % Elderly (65+) and Life Expectancy at Birth

## % Elderly 65+, 2014



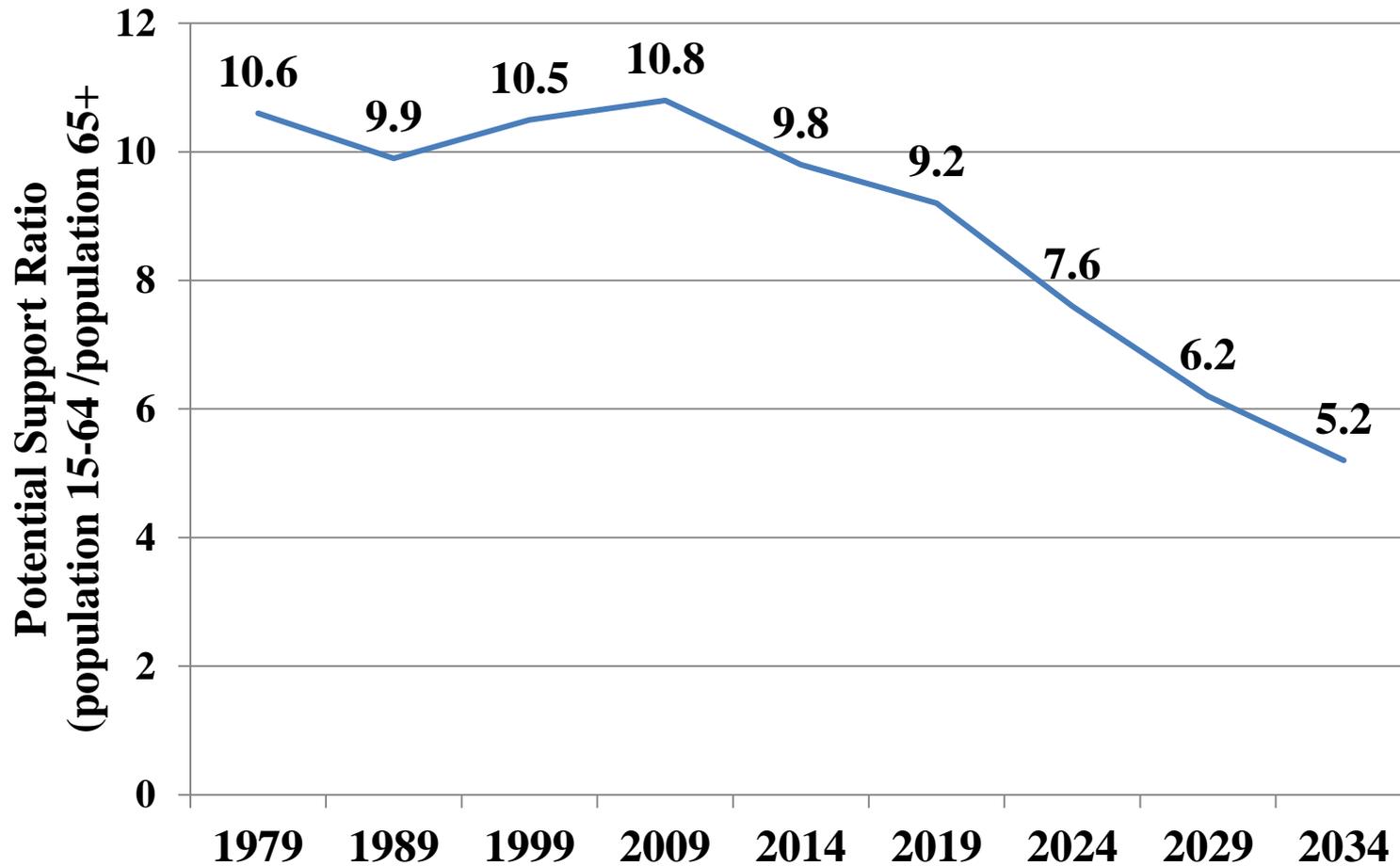
## Life expectancy at birth, 2013



# Increasing Significance of Older Population

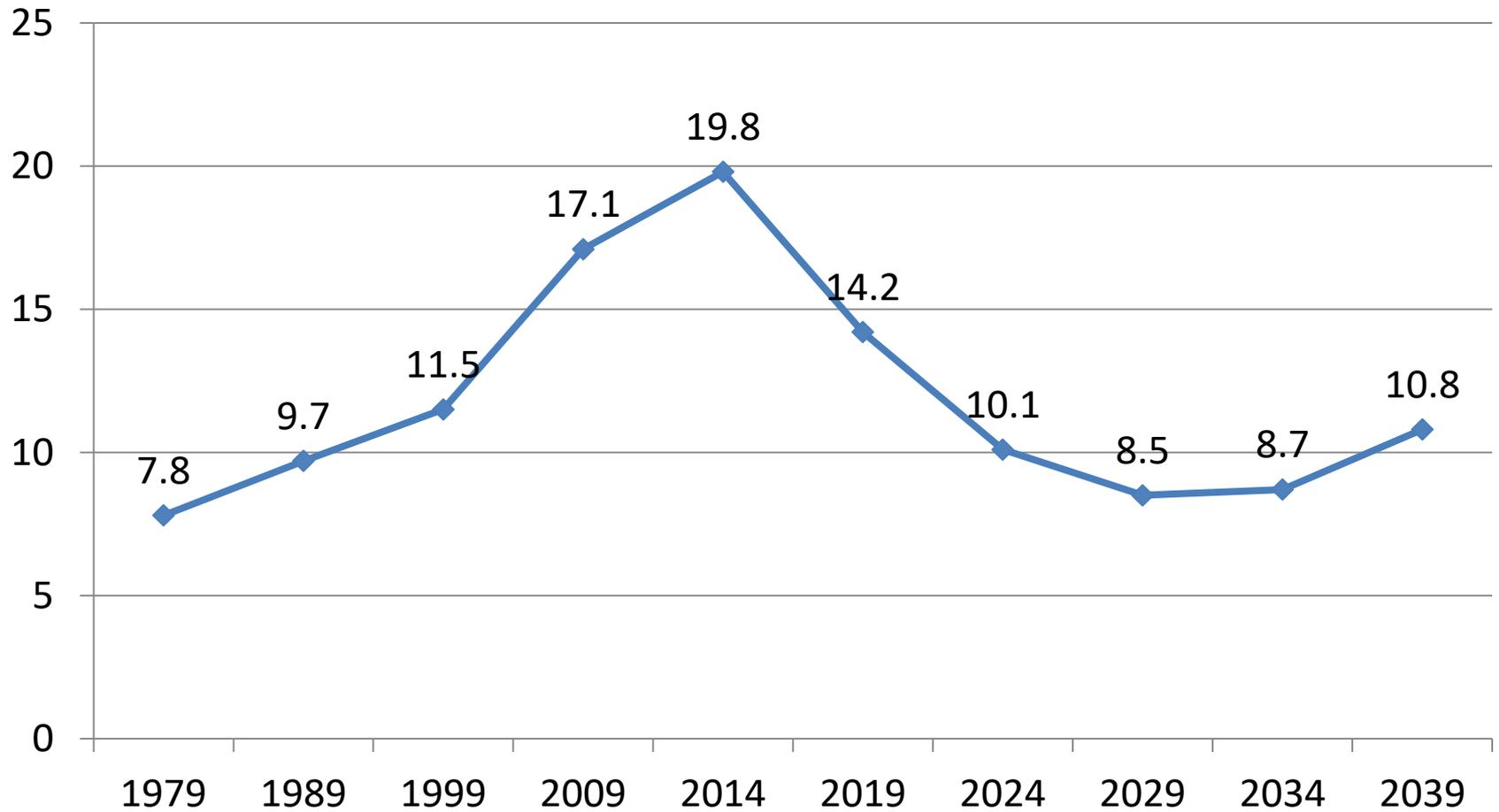
Period	Average annual increase in number of OP	% of OP in population increase
<b>1979-89</b>	93,000	8.7
<b>1989-99</b>	155,000	12.9
<b>1999-09</b>	126,000	13.3
<b>2009-14</b>	348,000	37.4
<b>2014-19</b>	387,000	39.6
<i>2019-24</i>	<i>536,000</i>	<i>68.3</i>
<i>2024-29</i>	<i>564,000</i>	<i>93.6</i>
<i>2029-34</i>	<i>565,000</i>	<i>115.4</i>

# Shrinking Support Base for Older Population



# Ageing of the Older Population

% group 80+ / all older person



# Feminization of Ageing

Age Group	2009	2014	2019	2024	2029	2034
	<i>(% of females in population)</i>					
<b>60+</b>	58.8	59.0	58.3	56.4	55.2	54.5
<b>60-64</b>	54.8	55.7	53.6	52.5	51.9	51.7
<b>65-69</b>	57.1	55.8	55.8	54.5	53.4	52.8
<b>70-74</b>	59.0	59.0	59.8	56.9	55.7	54.6
<b>75-79</b>	61.3	61.4	62.4	61.5	58.6	57.4
<b>80+</b>	68.3	65.7	69.2	68.5	67.3	64.4

# Ageing in ASEAN Countries

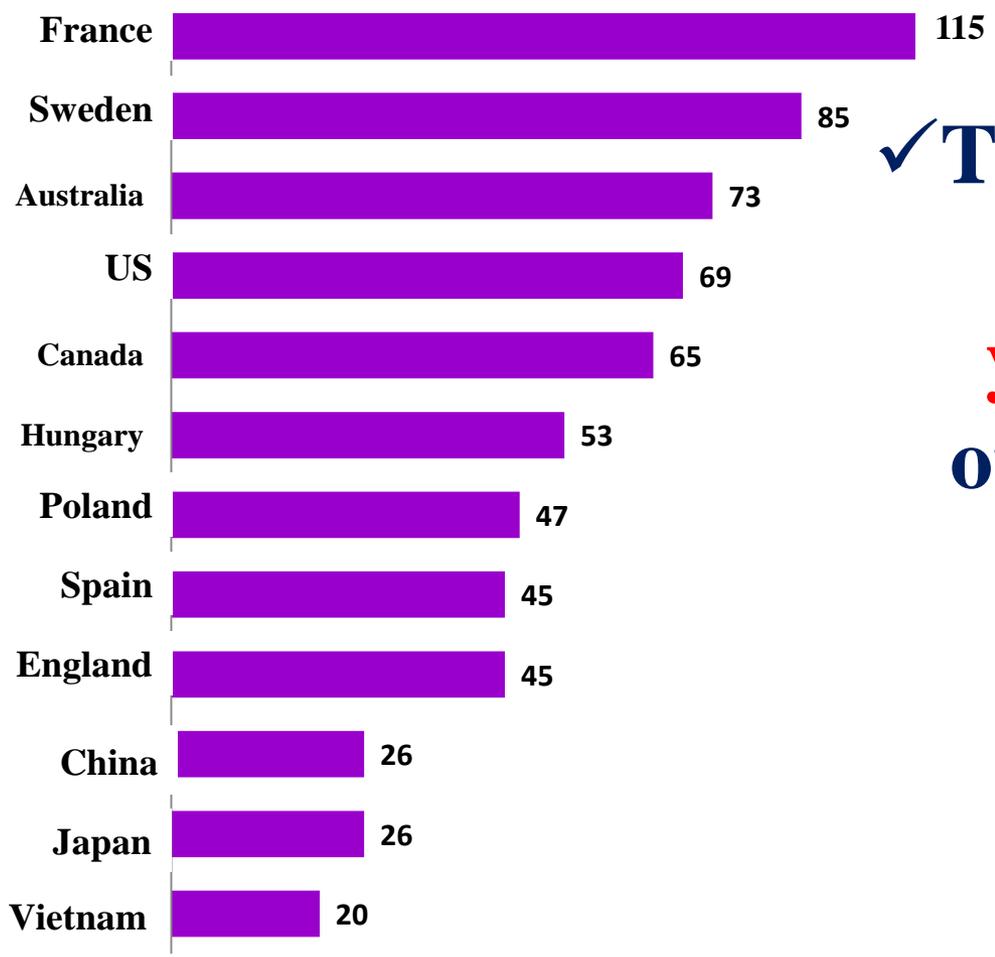
COUNTRY	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2035
	<i>% population 60 +</i>						
Brunei D' Salam	4.3	4.0	3.9	5.4	9.6	15.8	19.3
Cambodia	4.7	4.8	4.9	5.9	7.6	10.2	11.3
Indonesia	5.6	6.1	7.4	7.4	9.5	12.9	14.7
Laos	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.6	6.7	8.6	10.0
Malaysia	5.6	5.7	6.3	7.9	10.7	13.8	15.4
Myanmar	6.4	6.8	7.0	7.5	10.3	13.1	14.6
Philippines	4.9	4.7	5.1	6.5	8.2	10.3	11.2
Singapore	7.2	8.4	10.8	14.1	22.3	30.6	34.1
Thailand	5.6	7.2	9.9	12.9	19.1	26.8	30.2
Viet Nam	7.8	8.2	8.6	8.9	12.5	17.5	20.2

# Feminization of Ageing in ASEAN Countries

Country	Percentage of females in population of:									
	Older Persons (aged 60+)					Oldest Old (aged 80+)				
	2000	2010	2020	2030	2035	2000	2010	2020	2030	2035
<b>Brunei D'salam</b>	50.5	51.4	50.7	50.6	50.8	53.0	51.1	58.6	58.1	57.0
<b>Cambodia</b>	55.9	58.8	60.9	58.7	58.0	63.2	61.8	62.0	64.7	66.2
<b>Indonesia</b>	54.8	54.1	53.0	53.9	54.3	61.5	59.7	62.3	62.7	61.1
<b>Lao PDR</b>	54.9	55.5	54.6	54.5	54.8	61.3	60.5	59.7	61.1	60.4
<b>Malaysia</b>	50.9	50.7	51.0	51.6	51.8	53.8	55.0	54.3	55.0	55.3
<b>Myanmar</b>	56.0	56.0	56.2	56.3	56.2	62.1	61.9	62.3	61.9	62.8
<b>Philippines</b>	56.0	55.6	55.4	56.0	56.4	62.9	64.7	63.0	63.5	63.8
<b>Singapore</b>	53.6	53.9	52.4	52.3	52.7	62.7	63.3	60.1	57.6	56.8
<b>Thailand</b>	54.3	54.8	55.3	55.6	55.9	60.1	58.2	60.5	61.5	61.5
<b>Viet Nam</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>58.7</b>	<b>56.9</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>69.5</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>66.8</b>

# SHORT TRANSITION PERIOD FROM “POPULATION AGING” TO “AGED POPULATION”

Transition from “population aging ” to “aged population” of Viet Nam and some countries (in years)



✓ Time for transition in Vietnam is **17-20 years**, shorter than other countries, even those with better development level

Source: Kinsella and Gist, 1995; Census Bureau, 2005; Vietnam GSO, 2010

# **10 rising ageing related issues**

# Financial security

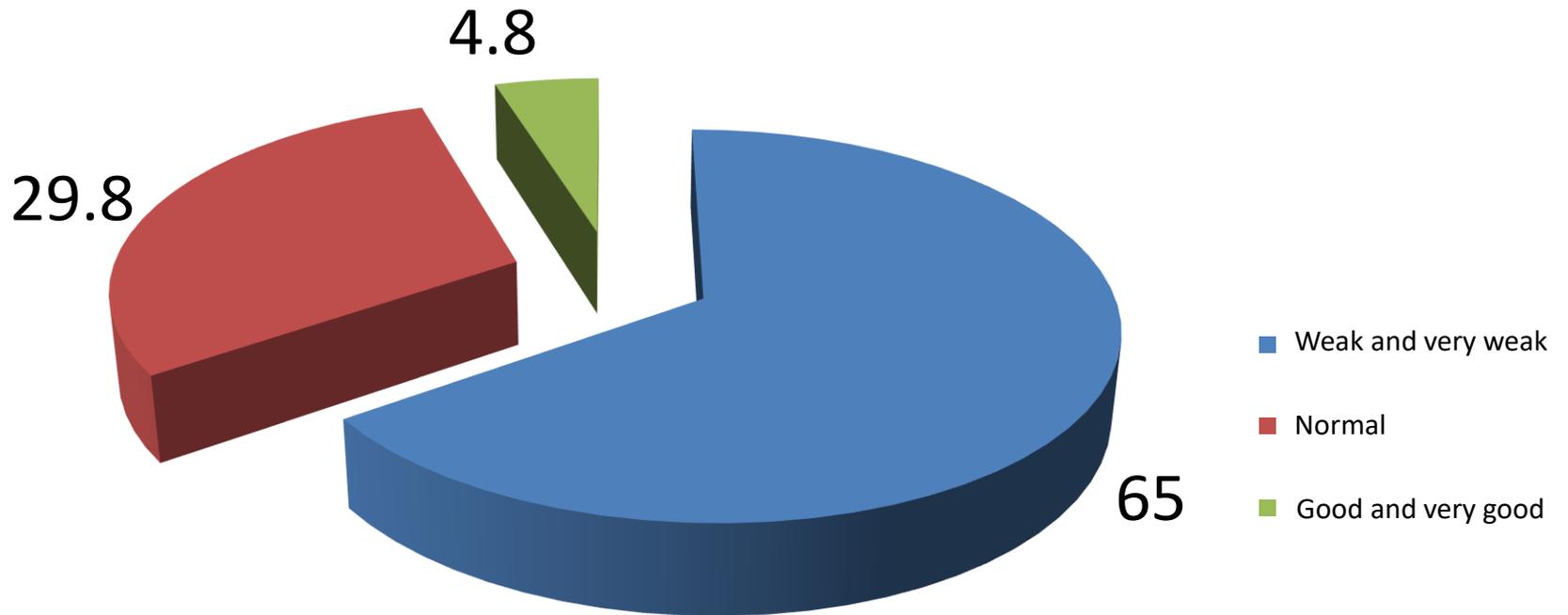
## 1 - 70% OP receive no social pension;

Only 3% receive allowance for war contribution;  
5,7% receive war disability..

2 - 59% OP retired continue to work for more than 5 years (64% for male; 36% female); and 70% want to work for 5 years more.

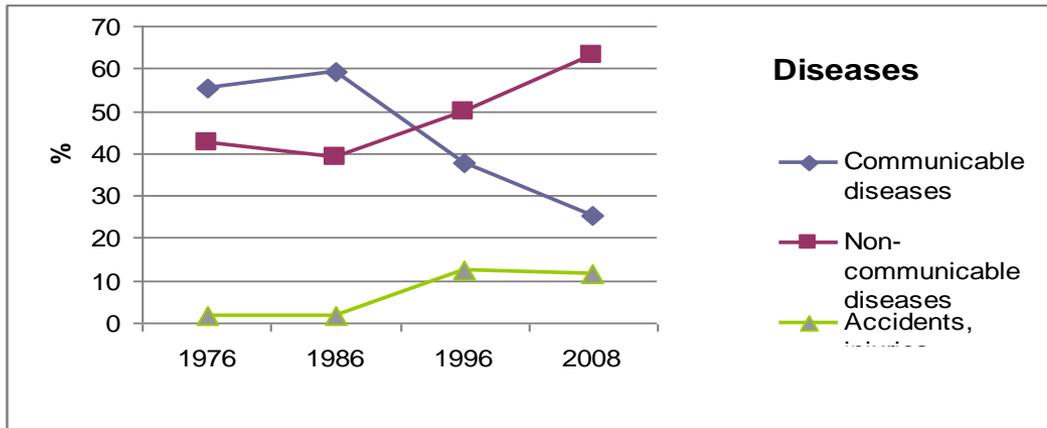
- Most important source for OP is their children (32%).
- Income from employment (29%), pension (16%).
- Monthly assistance from the government (9%).
- Saving and friends' support (14%)

## 2. Health and care



**Sources:** VNAS 2011

# Provision of preventive services for NCD

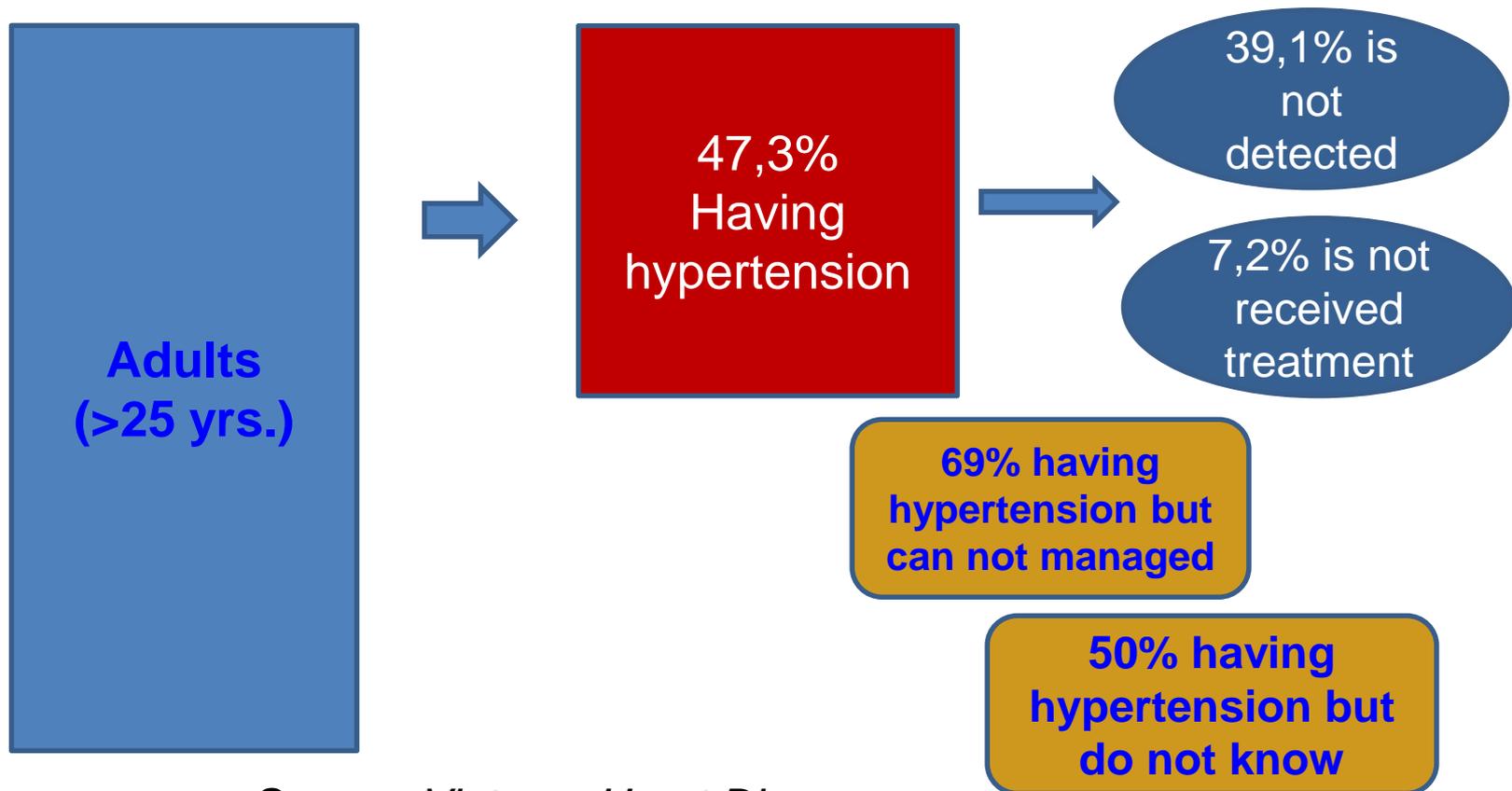


- 73% causes of death due to NCDs  
- 70% total BOD is NCDs

## NCD program does not meet health needs yet

- NCD prevention is still limited: not focus on health promotion, risk factors, screening for early detection
- Health system is more focused on treatment;
- Disease management is not implemented

# Hypertension disease management



*Source: Vietnam Heart Diseases Association, 2015*

### **3. Social care for OP**

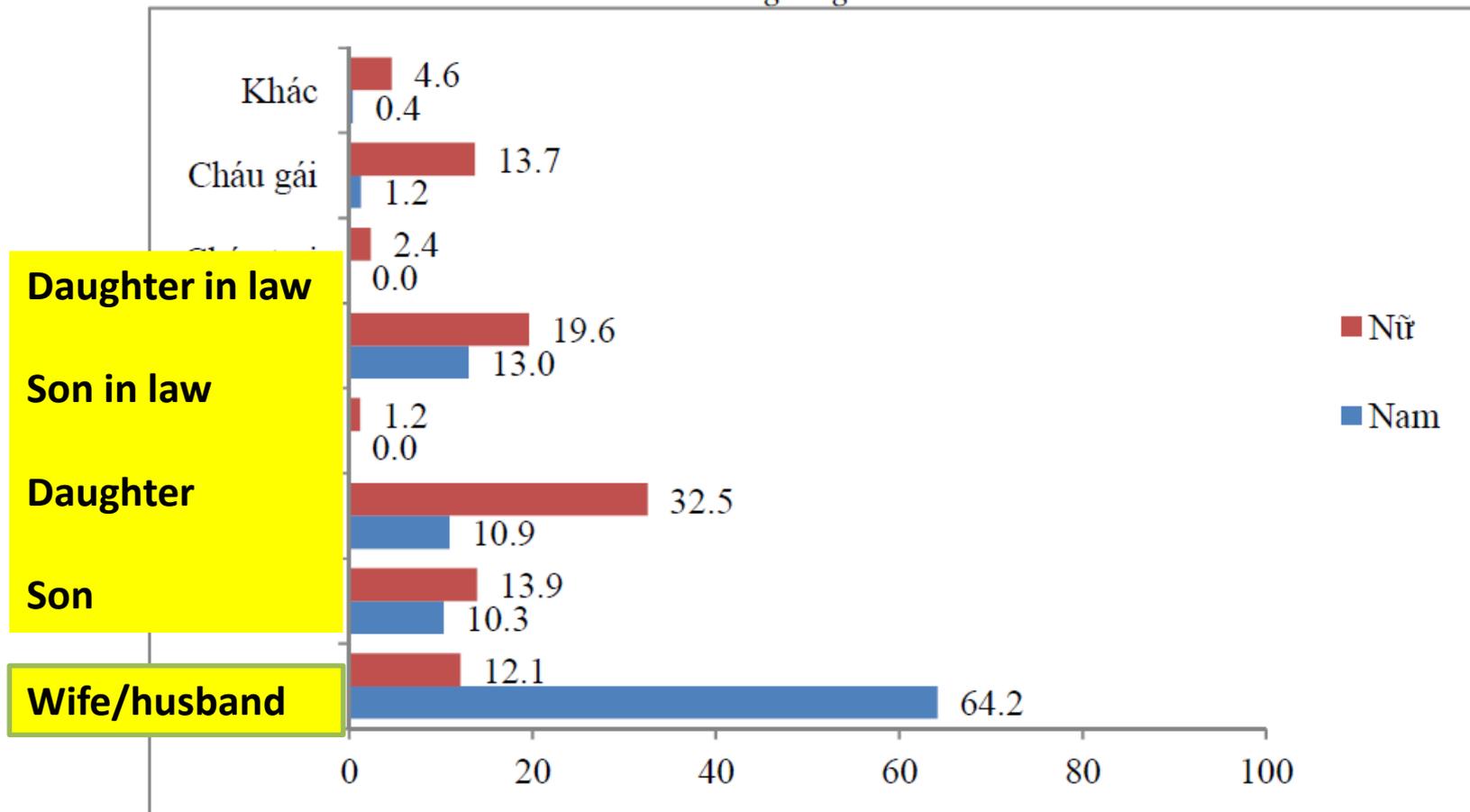
- In 2011, about 1.5 million OP (60+) need to support daily activities;**
- The forecast for 2019 is 4 million; and 2049 is nearly 10 million; while small family model;**
- Results of research 610 OP 80+ in Hanoi:**
- 6.9 diseases; 33.6% widowed; 8.2% lonely. 28% of the OP need basic living support (cleaning, brushing ...);**
- 90% needed help in the necessary activities (buying, selling, cooking, cleaning clothes ...)**

### 3. Social care for OP

- Only Social Care service for OP alone in the Center of social protection, nursing home (417 establishments);
- Intergenerational Club: Social Volunteers volunteer for OP only 2-3 times a week;
- In the community, hospital, mainly caregivers agreed by the private supply;
- Has trained social workers, not profession code; Unpaid service, no funded by insurance ...
- Demand for aging, more need for social care..

# Who support for elderly in their daily life

% trong tổng số NCT



Source: National survey on elderly in 2011

## **4 - Appropriate living arrangements**

- Older persons are living in the families, where members take care of each other, OP help young for take care, teaching their children, doing housework...**
- Young group take care their OP in families..**
- % OP living with children, 79% (1992) to 62% (2008).**
- % OP not living with their children increased from 9.5% (1992) to 21.5% (2008).**
- % OP living alone, from 3.5% (1992) to 6.1% (2008).**
- Only 4.5% of OP want to live in a nursing house..**

# 5. Enabling environment

A friendly environment facilitates older persons to participate in physical and social activities:

- Physical activities includes walking, friend or neighbor visiting, access to public environment and transport system.
- Physical activities include respect attitude towards older persons which facilitates their participation into voluntary activities and elimination of age group discrimination as well as encourage them to participate social activities and contribute to community development decisions.

# Ageism in media

Seen enough old bags?



**Mass media on OP some time provided  
inappropriate pictures...**

## 6-Loneliness and isolation in old age

- Alone OP 3,4% 1999 increasing to 5,6% /2006;
- 80% alone OP is female, 80% living in rural
- Husband died 50,7% is 3.6 time for wife died (14%)
- 6.8% increasing 7.1% (2010-2012); family have only grandfather/mother and children.. Due to migration
- 52% OP fell very happy; 36% happy; 17% unpleasant and loneness (actually only 6% OP said their children make bad treatment..) but still fell loneness...
- 18% OP said having bad social relation,
- 30% no best friend..

# 7 - Abuse and violence against older persons

- A survey conducted in 2012 by the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, the most popular forms of older persons abuse which are clearly recognized by interviewees as follows:
  - Insulting and mix (38%); bad words (23%);
  - Intimidation (17.0%); Forced to asset distribution (9%);
  - Financial and emotional neglects (4%); illegal use of a part of income/saving (3%); No money and isolation (2%).
  - Especially, 23% of interviewees experienced physical abuse and 17% experienced intimidation.

## 8. Attention to older persons in emergency situations

**Older persons are prone to vulnerability in emergency, due to of weak health status, lack of adequate care from society.**

- As a result of Hurricane Katrina in the United States in 2005, 75% of the dead were OP.
- In 2011, the tsunami deaths in Japan were 56% as OP 65+, although the OP 65 + only 23%;
- 70% of deaths from floods in Japan in July 2018 is OP 60+.
- Hai Yen storm in the Philippines, 40% of deaths are OP, (% OP is only 8% of the population).

# 9. Intergenerational relations

- In Vietnam, around 30% of family is intergenerational one. This means that old parents are living with their children.
- The Law on the Elderly speculates responsibilities of family, specifically son / daughter, to care for their parents and grandparents.
- Currently, these responsibilities are primarily based on moral values and governed by public opinion, by the “court of conscience”.

# 9 - Intergenerational relations

- In Vietnam, around 30% of family is intergeneration
- There is a big psychological gap between old and younger. OD tend to live with their past while young ones like looking toward the future.
- OP want to live in an extended family because old and young, children can support each other as well as maintain family morality and good relationship with grandchildren.
- A research on family conducted in 2011 reveals that 37.5% of OP is always talking with their spouses. 24.8% is talking with their children and 12.5% with good friends and neighbors.
- But families is smaller and smaller.

# 10. Preparing younger persons for their old age

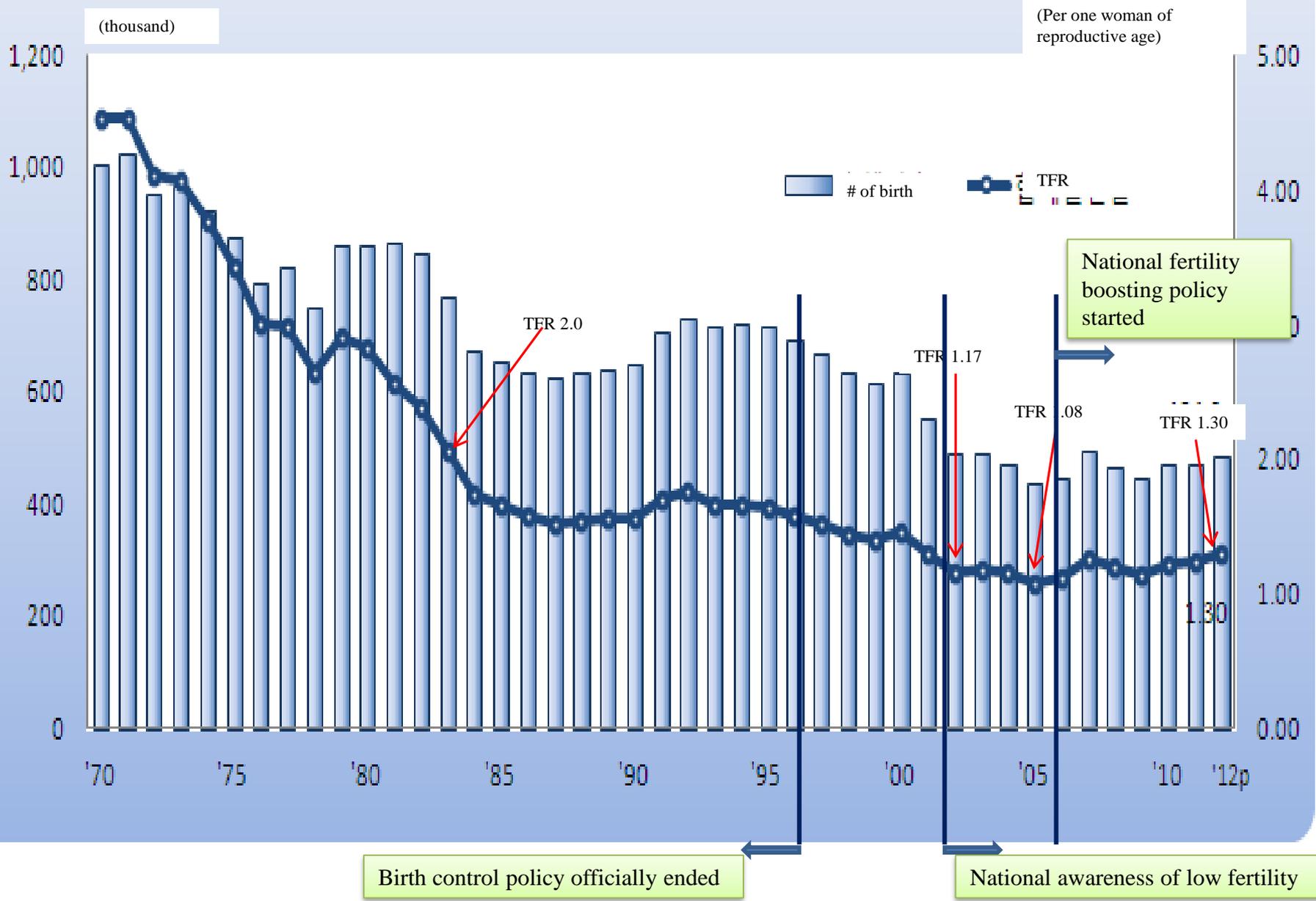
- Young should prepare for their old age, including financial and healthy life...
- The Ministry of Health surveyed 4,000 people in 2016, 70% of men and 11% of women drank alcohol or beer during the month (45% in both sexes and increase from 37% in 2010).
- It is unacceptable that half of all men drink alcohol at a health risk level.
- Only 57% of Vietnamese eat vegetables, fruits,
- Nearly 30% of the population is inactive, eating too much salt ... alarmed about the increase in NCD
- After 5 years, % physical activity of the Vietnamese people decreased from 30% to 26%

# **Lesson learnt, for ASEAN**

**\* Changing population policy in time,  
and Health system reform..**

**do not be to late**

**\* A comprehensive strategy on ageing is  
needed.**



# **Little social interest in population problems**

## **– Academia, Government, Civil Society**

- Almost new demographers**
- Shrinkage of the size of the Population Association of Korea**
- Little research on fertility issues**
- Very little media attention**
- No government office to take charge of population policies**

# Need: Healthcare system reform

- \* **SDG: Universal healthcare coverage for all age..**
- **To much hospital care base, over crowded and very costly...**
- **Must applied family medicine in grassroots level**
- **Need re-oriented to respond to an increase in NCDs and Aging..***(Most Asia countries base hospital health policy, have not established long-term care system, beyond hospitals and family (informal) care-giving...)*
- \* **Using ineffective Health insurance fund;**
- \* **Changing medical technologies; drug**
- \* **Social factor to personal health...**

# Policies on Ageing in ASEAN Countries

Country	Initiative on Older Persons or Ageing
<b>Cambodia</b>	National Policy for the Elderly (2003) <a href="#"><u>National Ageing Policy 2017-2035</u></a> (2017)
<b>Indonesia</b>	National Plan of Action for Older Person Welfare Guidelines 2003 National Plan of Action for Older Person 2009-2014 National Action Plan for Elderly 2016-2019
<b>Lao PDR</b>	National Policy for the Elderly (2004)
<b>Malaysia</b>	National Policy for the Elderly (1995-2005) (2010-2015)
<b>Myanmar</b>	National Plan of <a href="#"><u>Action on Ageing 2014</u></a>
<b>Philippines</b>	Philippines Plan of Action for Older Persons (1999-2004) National Action Plan on Senior Citizens (2006-2010) Philippines Plan of Action for Senior Citizens (2011-2016)
<b>Thailand</b>	First National Plan for Older Persons (1982-2001) Second National Long-term Plan for Older Persons (2002-2021)

# Examples of Policies from other Countries

- **China:** various sectorial policies coordinated by CNWCA
- **Japan:** coordinated sectorial policies
- **South Korea:** long-term focus on increasing fertility rates
- **Australia:** formulated National Ageing Strategy as ageing:
  - (a) *will touch all facets of social and community lives*
  - (b) *will have significant implications for all sectors*
  - (c) *needs a coordinated national response to address impact*
- **Canada:** in response to calls for a comprehensive strategy:
  - (a) *has created position of a Minister of Seniors*
  - (b) *started discussions on cohesive National Ageing Strategy*

# Who will be caregiver

- Health care and social care for OP is increasing..
- Training system for caregivers and vocational code must be developed...
- Long-term care, insurance law must develop to meet the increasing need care for OP;
- Care for OP at community model is priority, same time nursing home for those needed..
- Returned caregiver for OP will be meet the increasing need care for OP in Vietnam...

# **In conclusion**

- In time changing population policy, when ageing coming... Needed a comprehensive strategy on ageing**
- Health system reform, to make more effective health care policy while ageing..**
- Human right is for every one, including older persons;**
- For healthy ageing, 10 related issues should be taken care, not only health care...**
- Healthy, active ageing in place is priority**

*Thanks you*