



**National Institute of Population
and Social Security Research**

Addressing Social Needs of Urban Poor in Japan

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A homeless man in K City (around 1998)

A typical “Old Poverty”. Left rural sector in his youth looking for job, could not get any more manual labour job because of his old age and the recession.



HAKEN-MURA (Contract-Worker Village) 2009

Contract workers who are laid off before the New-Year Holidays lined up to get a make-shift shelter in Hibiya Park (right next to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).

The Ministry was forced to open its auditorium to shelter these people.

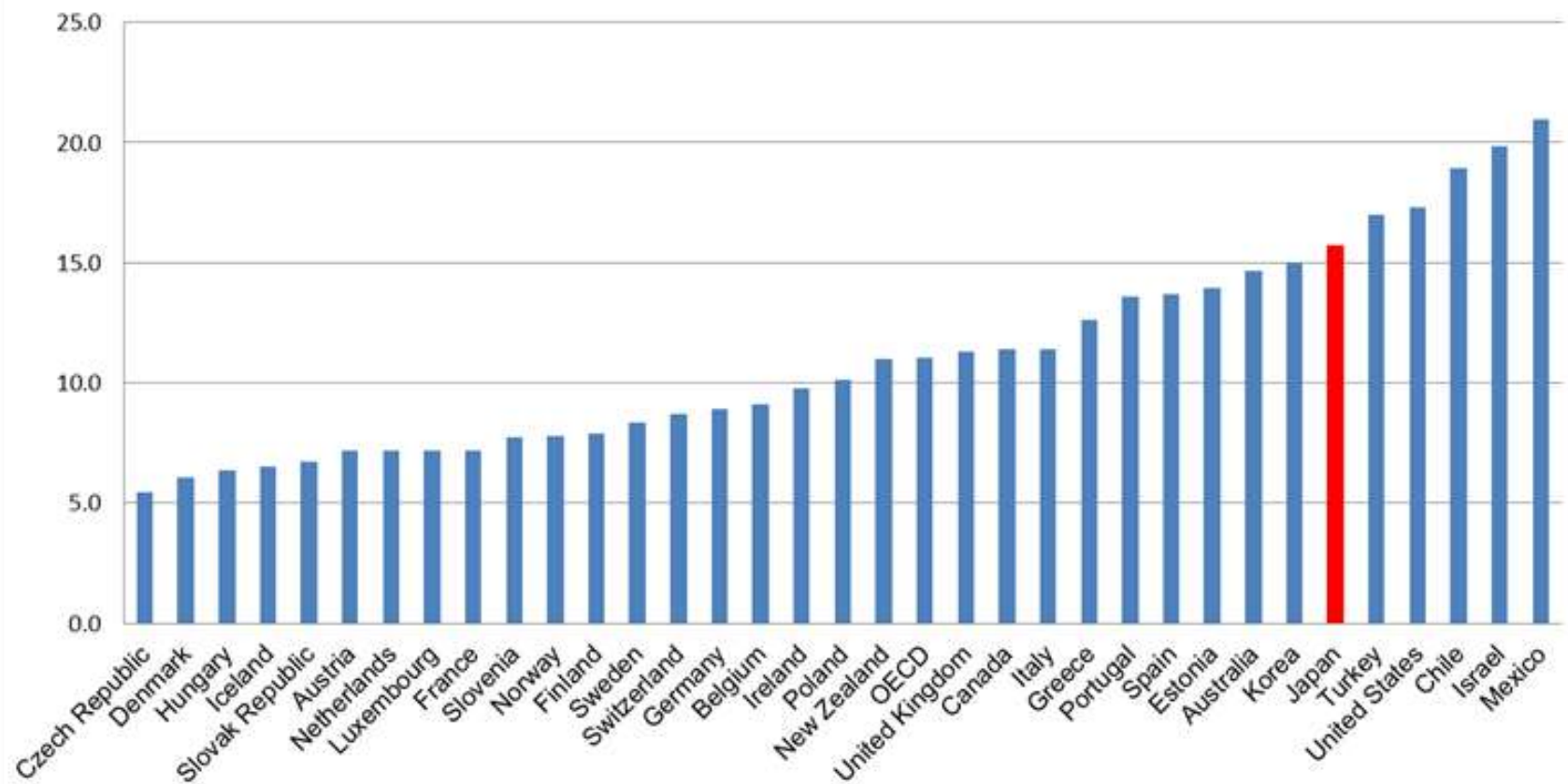




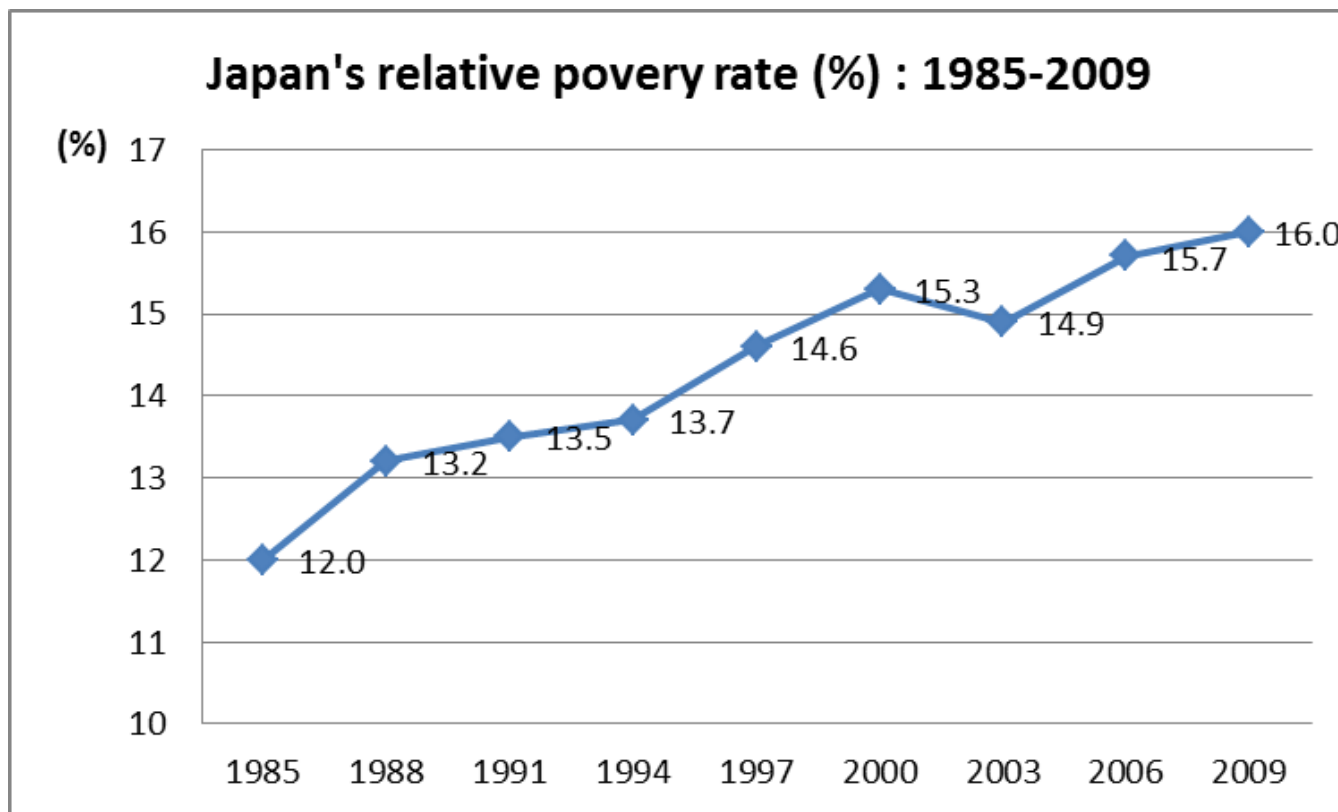
Demonstration calling for Child Poverty Act in Tokyo (May 2013) The Bill passed the Lower House and is expected to pass the Upper House in June.

Relative Poverty Rate of OECD Countries

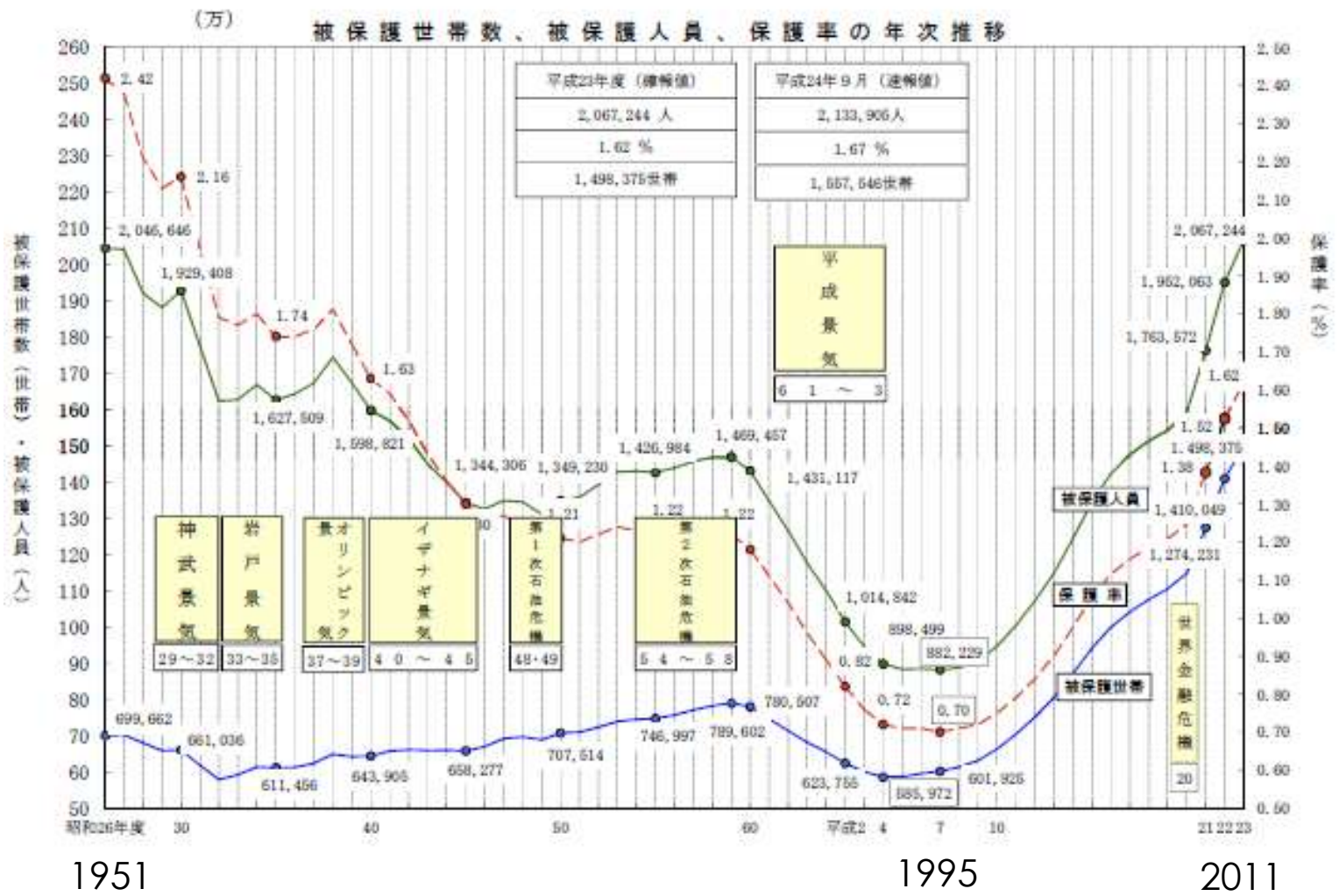
Relative Poverty Rate (%) : OECD Countries



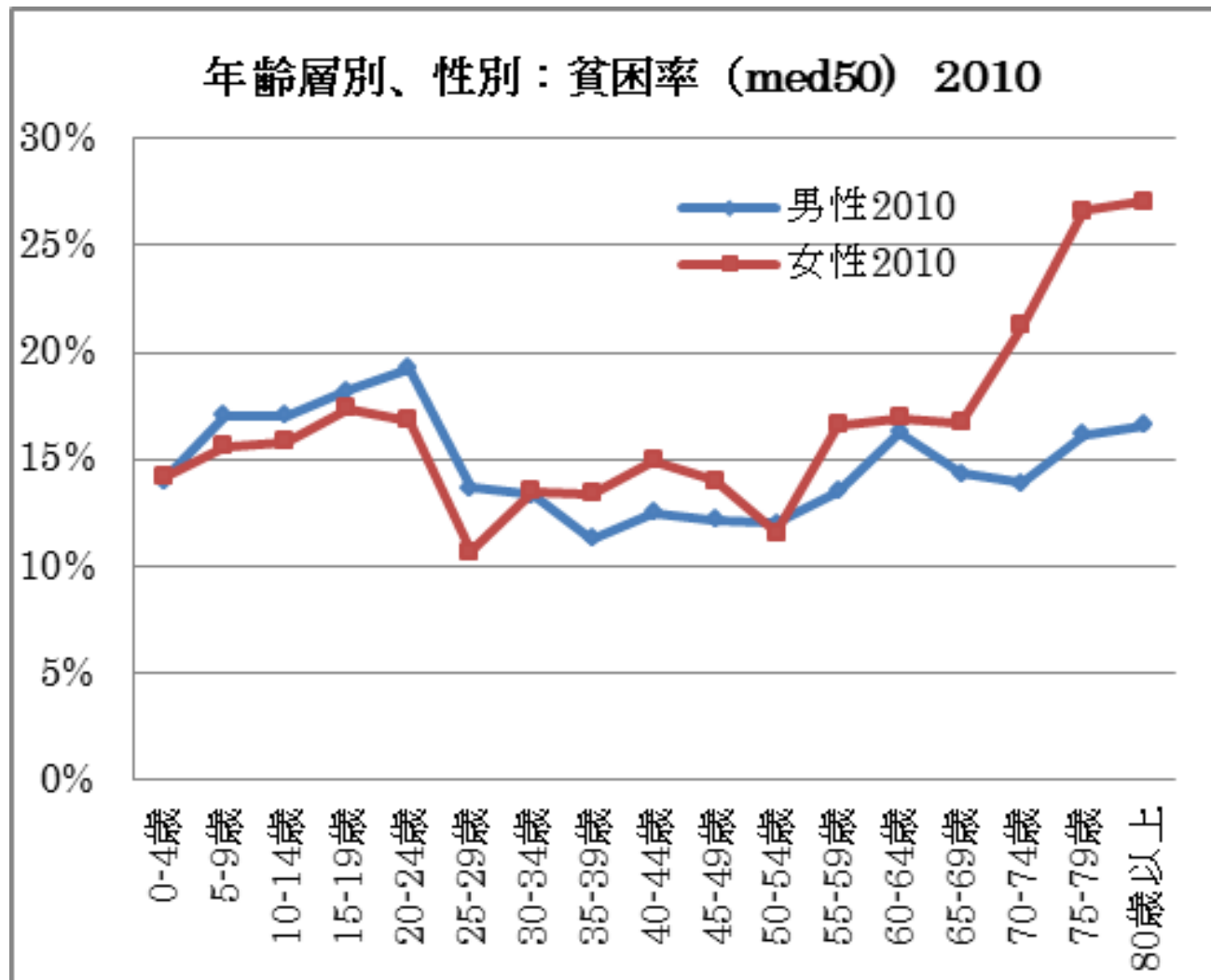
Japan's Relative Poverty Rate : 1985-2009



Re-emergence of poverty in Japan

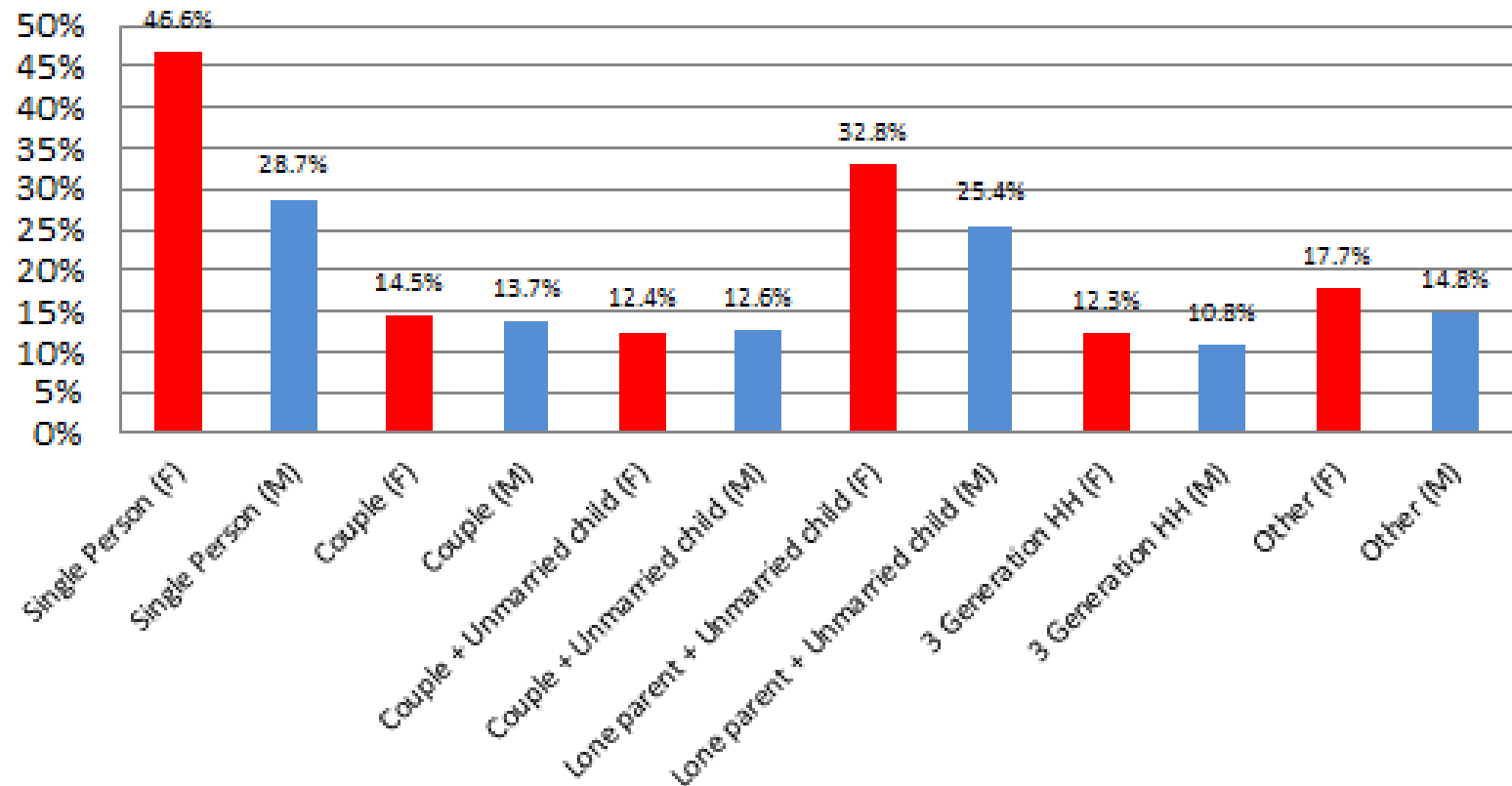


Poverty Rates by Age, Sex

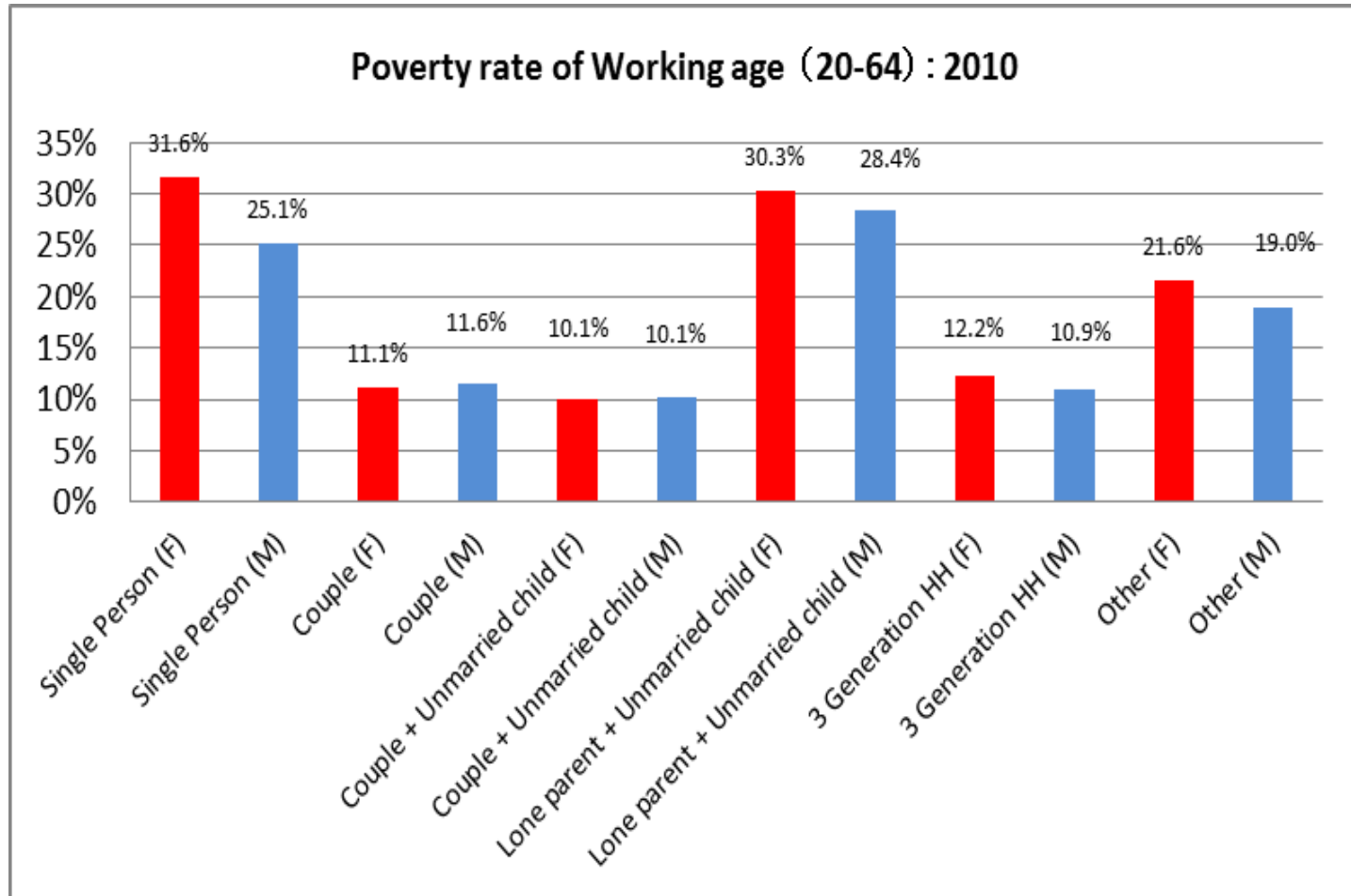


Poverty Rate of Elderly

Poverty rate of Elderly (65+): 2010



Poverty rate of working age



What is “Urban Poverty” problem in Japan?

- “Old poverty” of old age.
 - Especially among single and widowed women
 - Urban population increase is expected to be the largest in cities from now.
- “New poverty” of young and job-less
 - Increase of poverty rate among men under 30
 - Part-time job and job-less
 - Poverty associated with social isolation and depression,
 - Increase of child poverty – especially single-mother households

How did Japan come to this?

Economic Success after WWII was assumed to solve all “poverty” issues, thus, Social Security System was never equipped to solve “new poverty”.

- Failed attempt to eradicate elderly poverty by public pension
- Old and Inflexible (and quite small) Public Assistance
- Reliance on “family” and “Employment” both of which started to erode very rapidly.

Failure of “Universal public pension”

- Shift from Employment Pension to National Pension
- National Pension amount is not meant to be sole income source to support livelihood in old age. It was meant to supplement earned income and family support. → Both of them eroded.
- Poverty rate of elderly, especially women, did not decrease as expected.
- Young people’s default rate (of paying premiums) is increasing rapidly.

Poverty of Elderly in Urban Sector

- Until recently, the ageing of population was most severe in rural sector, but from now on, it is estimated to get severe in Urban sector.
- Poor elderly's :
 - Livelihood
 - Housing
 - Care
 - Social Isolation (especially men)

Old and Inflexible (and quite small) Public Assistance

- Never updated to deal with the “new poverty”
- Assumes poverty is that of “joblessness”, yet the new poverty is mainly “working poor”.
- Inadequate in providing job training and other means to lift people out of poverty
- Very Inflexible – has to be complete “destitute” to qualify

Japan's assistance in the area of Elderly Care in China



- There are 9 JICA projects related to aging .
- Most of them are capacity building of nursing care and rehabilitation.
- 35 JICA youth volunteers (EX: physical therapist) has been dispatched to rehabilitation hospitals in China.