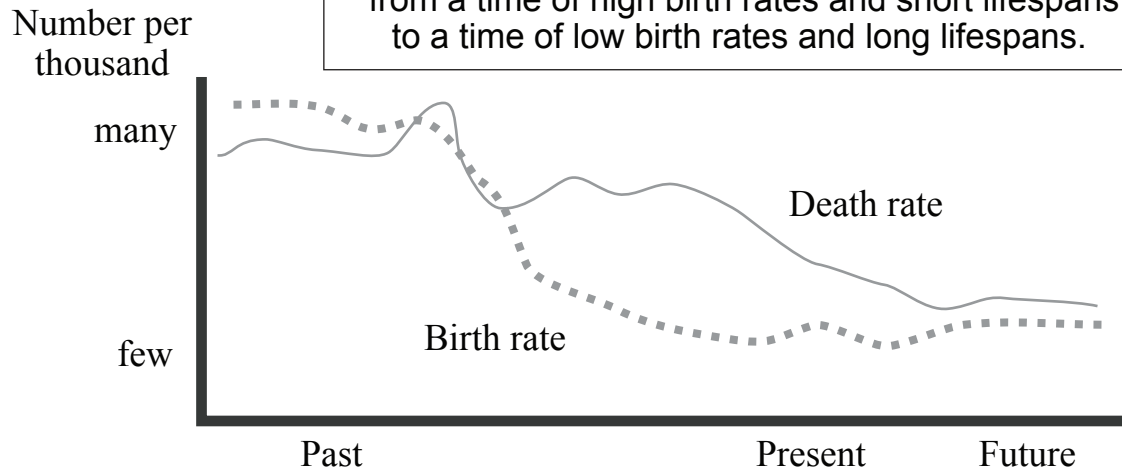


# China's Demographic Transition

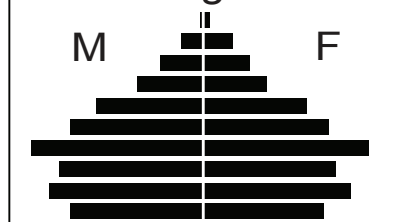
Definition: the demographic transition is a change from a time of high birth rates and short lifespans to a time of low birth rates and long lifespans.



The top half of China's population graph shows the classic pyramid shape of a rapidly growing country.

Forty years ago (four bars on this graph), in the 1970s, Chinese leaders decided that the country could not afford to keep growing. They started the "policy of birth planning," popularly known as the "one-child policy."

## China's Age Profile



The goal of this policy was to speed up the demographic transition by drastically reducing the birth rate. Basically, the government made it illegal for most couples to have more than one child. The birth rate went way down, and population growth slowed dramatically.

That brought a big bonus: people had fewer children to feed, but they had the same (or even more) income.

- People could afford to buy tools, televisions, and even cars.
- Thousands traveled to other countries, often to go to college.
- Many communities invested in new factories, roads, and powerplants.

The economy boomed.

Now, however, the "bonus time" is coming to an end.

- Death rates are lower, and people live longer.
- The percentage of the population of working age (15-65) will shrink.

As a result, there will be fewer workers to support a growing number of older people.

In short, the "golden middle" of the demographic transition is over.

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**Project:** Find a population graph for a country at <http://populationpyramid.net/China/2010/> or <http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/informationGateway.php>. Make a poster like this to describe where that country is in its demographic transition.