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# Exploring 'Age-Friendly Rural Communities' in the Super-Aged Society in Korea



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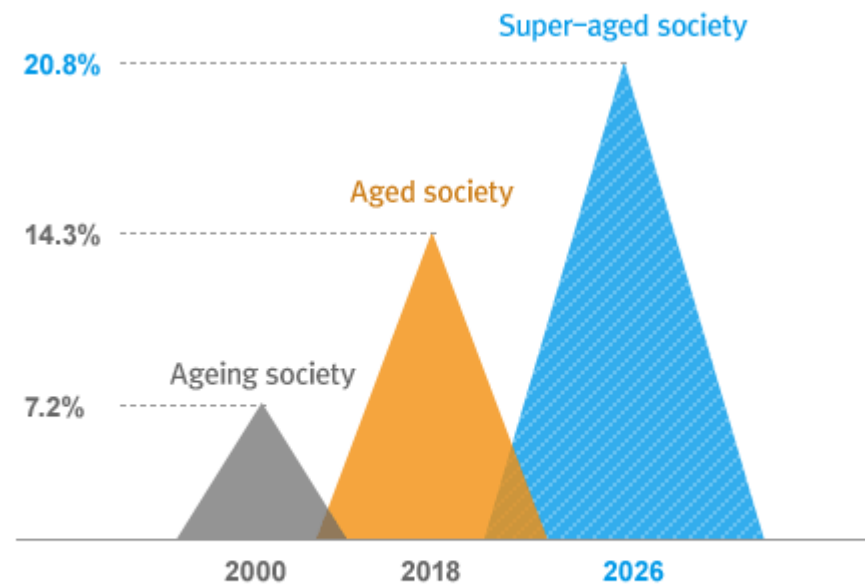
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# Super-Aged Society

# Super-Aged Society

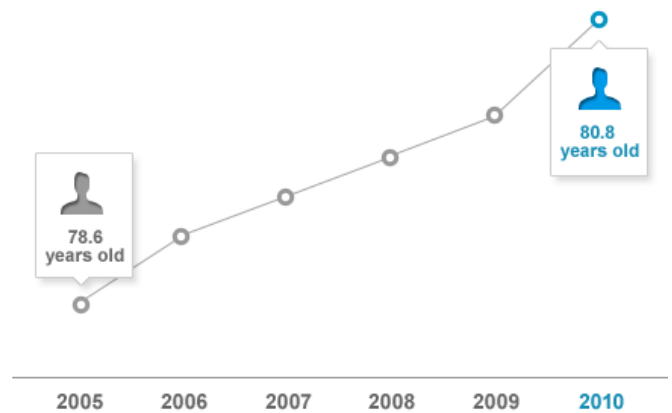
## DEFINITION

- The proportion of individuals aged 65 years and older in its population reaches about 21 percent (over 20% of the population is 65 and older)



South Korea's elderly population trends

- \* Entry into Super-Aged Society in 2026 (the ratio reaches 20.8%)



South Koreans' average life span (Source: Statistics Korea)

# Super-Aged Society

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## Aging in S.K.

- The lowest-low fertility
    - Total fertility rate(TFR) : below 1.3 in 2002  $\Rightarrow$  0.71 in 2023
  - Korea's life expectancy at birth is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> among 183 countries in 2019(OCED)
- $\Rightarrow$  Aging : a social problem in Korea (Rapid decline in population  $\rightarrow$  **Korean sustainability**)

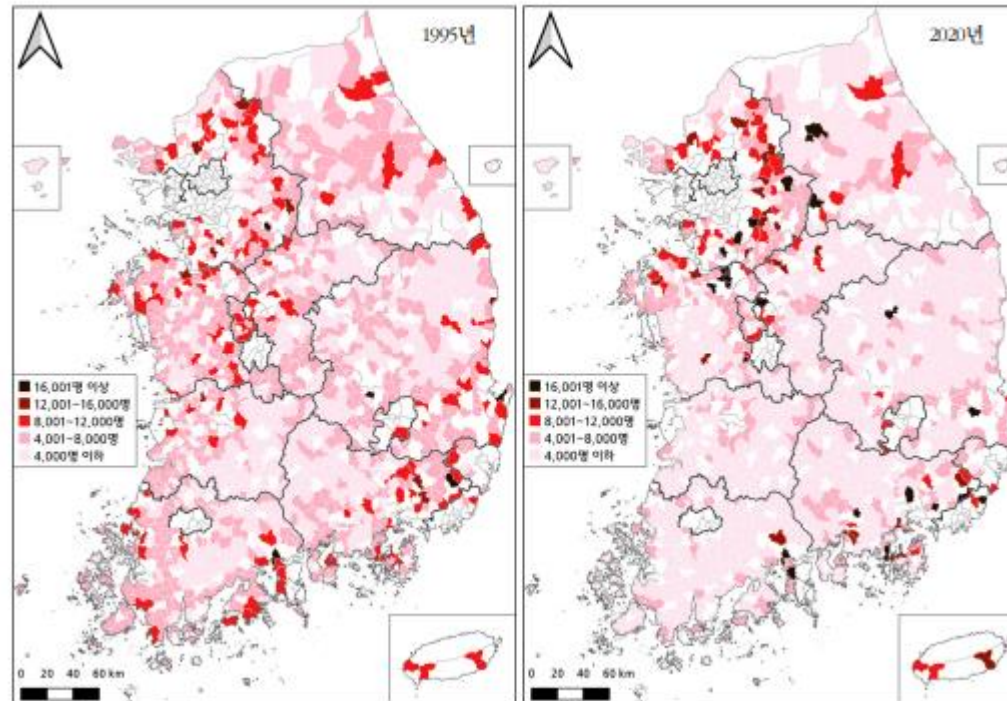
**Aging in rural areas?**

# Super-Aged Society

## Aging in S.K.

### Aging in Rural Areas(1995~2020: Son & Lee, 2021)

- Analyzed 'changes in population size from 1995 to 2020, targeting rural areas



- The area w/ a population over 12,000 people → located the industrial cities in the capital region and Busan
- The population of most villages remained below 4,000 people. (excluding villages in the capital region and Busan, the adjacent areas of Chungnam, Chungbuk, and part of Gyeongnam)

# Super-Aged Society

## Aging in S.K.

### Aging in Jeonbuk's rural areas

(단위 : %)



출처 : 행정안전부(각 년도). 주민등록인구현황.

- The elderly population ratio : over 14% in 2015(17.8%) → over 20% in 2019(20.4%, entry into a super-aged society)





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# Age-Friendly Community

# Age-Friendly Community

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## Age-Friendly Environment

### Age-Friendly Environments

- To age safely, be free from poverty, continue to develop personality, contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy, health, and dignity)
- “Age-friendly environments” ⇒ fostering healthy and active ageing by building and maintaining intrinsic capability across life course and enabling greater functional ability in someone with a given level of capability
- The WHO Age-Friendly Cities Framework
- **8 interconnected domains** that can health to identify and address barriers to the well-being and participation of older people

# Age-Friendly Community

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## Age-Friendly Environment

### The WHO Age-Friendly Cities Framework

- **8 interconnected domains** that can help to identify and address barriers to the well-being and participation of older people
- 8 interconnected domains of **urban life**
  - **Community and health care** : an appropriate supply of aged care services conveniently located to where older people live and trained health and social workers to provide these services
  - **Transportation** : Accessible and affordable public transport (be able to actively and remain engaged with their community, with access to health and social facilities)

# Age-Friendly Community

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## Age-Friendly Environment

### The WHO Age-Friendly Cities Framework

- 8 interconnected domains of **urban life**
  - **Housing** : appropriate housing design and its proximity to community and social services(live comfortably and safely)
  - **Social participation** : a range of accessible and affordable activities, encouraging participation and intergenerational integration
  - **Outdoor spaces and buildings** : a pleasant and clean environment with green spaces, age-friendly buildings/pavement/walkways/safe pedestrian crossings/adequate rest areas, a secure environment
  - **Respect and social inclusion** : Respect for seniors, social and economic inclusion

# Age-Friendly Community

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## Age-Friendly Environment

### The WHO Age-Friendly Cities Framework

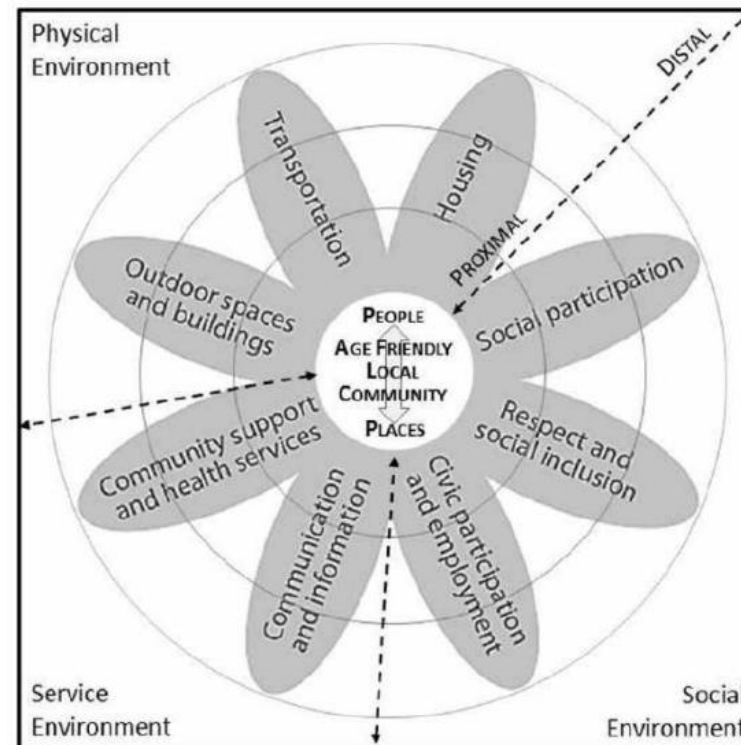
- 8 interconnected domains of **urban life**
  - **Civic participation and employment** : volunteerism and employment opportunities, encouraging civic participation
  - **Communication and information** : appropriate and age-friendly distribution of information

# Age-Friendly Community

## Age-Friendly Environment

### John & Gunter's engAGE in Community

- Organized the 8 WHO domains into three collaborative environmental categories (physical, social, service environments)



# Age-Friendly Community

## Age-Friendly Environment

### Seoul Age-Friendly City

- Announced 2020 Aging Society Master Plan in 2010
  - Vision : Healthy and vibrant city for 100-year-olders, Seoul
- In 2011, established the 'Basic Ordinance on Elderly Welfare for the Implementation of an Age-Friendly City in Seoul'
- In June 2013, received certification as the 139<sup>th</sup> age-friendly city in the world and the first in Korea



# Age-Friendly Community

## Age-Friendly Environment

### Seoul Age-Friendly City

- Elderly-friendly Stores(2017)
  - Published an Elderly-friendly Store Guide
  - Included detailed information and examples of services/information for Seniors(respecting elderly customers, ensuring customer safety, providing customer convenience, addressing visual impairment, addressing hearing impairment...)





# Age-Friendly Community

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## Age-Friendly Environment

### Gyeonggi Carnation Village

- Promoted the carnation village project to create an elderly-friendly community ⇒ encouraging continuous social participation for seniors
- Involved job creation, activation of talent donation, community organization, and improvement of welfare environment
- Key components
  - Resident organization : formation of a culture of respect for the elderly, activation of a happy community atmosphere, promotion of talent donation, organization of carnation village signage ceremonies
  - Elderly job activation : operation of senior job centers, a second branch of 'Mom's hand taste', and a collaborative workshop
  - Elderly convenience facilities expansion : improvement of residential areas, installation of facilities for the convenience of the elderly, establishment of priority parking spaces for the elderly

# Age-Friendly Community

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## Age-Friendly Environment

### Busan Jeongdeun Village

- Undertook the ‘creating a beloved village project’ in 2021
- Discovering and promoting activities that facilitate intergenerational integration in each community(for the elderly, various age groups and generations)
- Geumsa Hwaidong-dong Jeongdeun Town(2021)
  - The urban generation New Deal project : creating elderly-friendly infrastructure
  - 60+ Jeongdeun Loves Village : a community programs combining health, care, leisure, and others
  - The intergenerational empathy programs : the Jeongdeun village cooking contest, memory enrichment companion training, creating alternative families for the elderly, learning simple senior exercises
  - Providing nutritional meals for elderly living alone, conducting dementia education for local residents

# Age-Friendly Community

## Age-Friendly Environment

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# Age-Friendly Rural Areas?

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## Age-Friendly Rural Areas

- **Age-friendly environment : approached from an urban context**
- Rural areas : be excluded from discussion on age-friendly environment  
⇒ **the rapid aging and depopulation in rural areas : need to focus on living environment in the lives of elderly individuals in rural areas**

### Age-Friendly Rural Areas

- Goal : creating a rural environment where the aging process is physically, socially, and service-wise not inconvenient, and where the elderly can spend their later years in a rural setting that is social and economically active, engaging in leisure and cultural activities while maintain both mental and physical health
- Concept : **an environment where elderly individuals in rural areas can lead vibrant and active lives without feeling physically, socially, or service-wise inconvenience as they age**

# Age-Friendly Rural Areas?

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## Age-Friendly Rural Areas

### Age-Friendly Rural Areas

- Domains and factors are structured based on John and Gunter's age-friendly environment model
  - Physical rural environment : outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing
  - Social rural environment : social participation, respect and social integration, civic participation and employment
  - Service environment : communication and information, community and health care

# Age-Friendly Rural Areas?

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## Age-Friendly Rural Areas

### Physical environment

- **Ensuring the mobility rights of rural elderly individuals**
  - Need rural-type public transportation system that allow rural elderly individuals quickly and easily to use public transportation and to acquire information about public transportation and use it at the desired times
  - Elderly individuals with various functional states : expiring no inconvenience when using facilities and institutions in the local community
- **Ensuring the safety rights of rural elderly individuals**
  - Deterioration of physical cognitive functions in the elderly (a threat to the safety) ⇒ establishing systems that allow them with disabilities to live safely within their houses
  - Over half of the elderly population is engaged in agriculture ⇒ Guaranteeing the safety rights of them in adapting to climate change

# Age-Friendly Rural Areas?

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## Age-Friendly Rural Areas

### Social environment

- **Diversification of economic and non-economic activities for elderly individuals in rural areas**
  - Predominantly focused on agriculture ⇒ the primary reason : livelihood sustenance
  - Participating in various economic activities that allow them to utilize their skills, knowledge, and expertise beyond agricultural activities ⇒ enhancing the self-esteem, contributing to improving their quality of life
- **Ensuring the right to participate in diverse economic and non-economic activities for elderly individuals in rural areas**
  - Division between agricultural busy and non-busy seasons, programs are concentrate in a community center in the winter ⇒ expressing a high interest in leisure and cultural activities, need to explore ways to expand the participation period and various spaces for non-economic activities



# Age-Friendly Rural Areas?

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# Age-Friendly Rural Areas?

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## Age-Friendly Rural Areas

### Service environment

- **Preventing the isolation and social exclusion of rural elderly individuals**
  - Increasing the ownership of digital devices among the elderly, but facing difficulties in quickly acquiring useful life information through these devices
  - Education are more concentrated in urban areas ⇒ the increasing use of information technology devices in rural areas, need various services and education for rural seniors
- **Ensuring the right to health for rural elderly individuals**
  - Vulnerable in terms of health compared to urban seniors due to their low income and the inadequate health and medical infrastructure in rural areas ⇒ need to design a strategy that focuses on creating an integrated environment or utilizes information technology for health, medical, and caregiving services

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# Q & A

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