

2026 APEC Population Policy Forum (보도)
'26. 8. 24.(Mon) 09:00-15:30
Dalian International Convention Center, Dalian, China

Opening Remarks

2026. 8. 24.

Presidential Committee on Ageing
Society and Population Policy
Vice Chair, Kim Jin Oh

1 Welcome and Acknowledgement

Ms. Nam Bihn TRAN, Deputy Director-General of APEC
2027 National Secretariat of Vietnam,
Mr. Qinghai Liu, Deputy Director-General of National
Health Commission of China,
Distinguished delegates from APEC member economies,
ladies, and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to the
2026 APEC Population Policy Forum.

First, I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Korea for hosting this Forum, and express
my appreciation to China for its support as the host
economy of APEC 2026, China. My gratitude also goes
to the APEC Secretariat and all member economies for
their participation.

2 Korea's Response to Low Birth Rates and Population Ageing

Korea is facing a low fertility rate and one of the
fastest rates of population ageing in the world.

For low fertility, we have focused on two areas:
stronger policy support and cultural change.

We have strengthened work-family balance, childcare support, and housing support for young families.

At the same time, we are working to build a more positive culture around marriage and parenthood, especially among younger generations.

These efforts are beginning to show encouraging signs. For the first time in nine years, both the fertility rate and the number of births have increased.

For population ageing, our priorities include Aging in Place, longer working lives, and stronger income security in old age.

We are integrating healthcare and long-term care, expanding age-friendly housing, and supporting continued employment and pension reform.

Beyond these policy efforts, Korea is increasingly turning to technology to respond to demographic change.

We are promoting AgeTech, including digital health, AI-powered care robots, AI-based medical devices, and smart home care, to reduce care and household burdens, improve health and care services, and help more people remain economically active.

These technologies can also help older people live healthier and more independent lives, improve productivity, and create new industries and markets.

3 The Need for APEC Cooperation

Looking beyond Korea, demographic changes present common structural challenges across the Asia-Pacific, including labor shortages, fiscal pressures, and slowing growth. However, under our forum theme, “Harnessing Technology for Demographic Change”, we must turn these challenges into new drivers for productivity, market expansion, and broader economic participation.

No single economy can achieve this alone. Building on Korea’s leadership last year in endorsing the APEC Collaborative Framework for Demographic Changes in Gyeongju, today’s forum serves as a vital foundation for turning our shared commitments into concrete action.

Korea also contributed to the establishment of the Sub-Fund on Prosperity of Future Generations, which will support future research and policy cooperation across APEC.

4 Three Models for APEC Cooperation

To address these challenges together, I propose three practical paths for APEC cooperation.

First, connect the APEC working groups more closely. Health, jobs, skills, care and digital technology are all connected to demographic change. APEC working groups in these areas can share their plans, identify common priorities, and work together on joining projects.

Second, expand evidence-based joint research and policy exchange across APEC economies to develop technology solutions in areas such as AI-powered care robots, AI-based medical devices, and smart home care. APEC economies can share data, policy experiences and good practices. We can also test new ideas through joint pilot projects and share the results across the region.

Third, bring governments, businesses, and researchers together. By working together, we can develop practical solutions such as digital healthcare, care robots, smart home cares, and technologies that help people stay healthy and active for longer.

5 **Closing**

Distinguished delegates,
ladies and gentlemen,

The great challenge of demographic change cannot be addressed by any one economy acting alone.

But within the strong framework of APEC cooperation, we can work together.

If we combine effective government policies with private-sector innovation, and if we openly share our experience and knowledge, we can turn this challenge into a new opportunity for growth and progress.

Korea remains fully committed to facilitating ongoing policy dialogue within APEC to ensure our joint efforts deliver tangible results for the entire region.

Once again, thank you all for joining us today.

I wish you a meaningful and productive discussion.

Thank you.