

# Population Aging and the Future of the U.S.-Japanese Alliance

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# Two key questions:

- Is population aging likely to increase the need for the United States and Japan to combine their military power *even if the security threats they confront remain largely the same?*
- Is population aging likely to increase the shared threats that the United States and Japan face?

# Population Aging and the Need to Combine Military Capabilities

- Aging will tend to have three major effects on states' military spending, all of which will negatively impact their ability to project power:
  - slowing economic growth;
  - massive new governmental expenditures for elderly welfare;
  - incentives to shift within military budgets more money to personnel costs compared to weapons.

# Predicted Public Benefits to Elderly as a Percent of GDP

Country	Increase in Public Elderly Care Spending, 2010-2040	Total Public Commitments, 2040
Russia	2.7	10.9
UK	5.0	18.9
France	5.7	24.3
Japan	5.8	20.9
Germany	6.3	24.3
USA	7.4	18.5
China	7.6	11.0

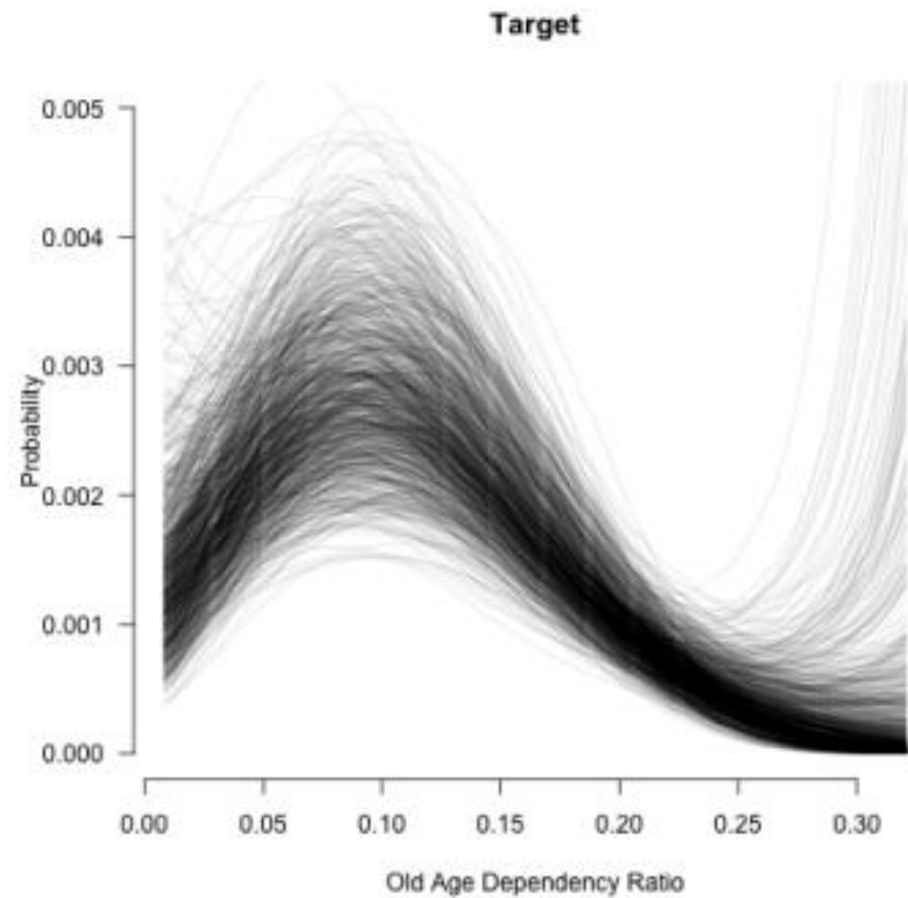
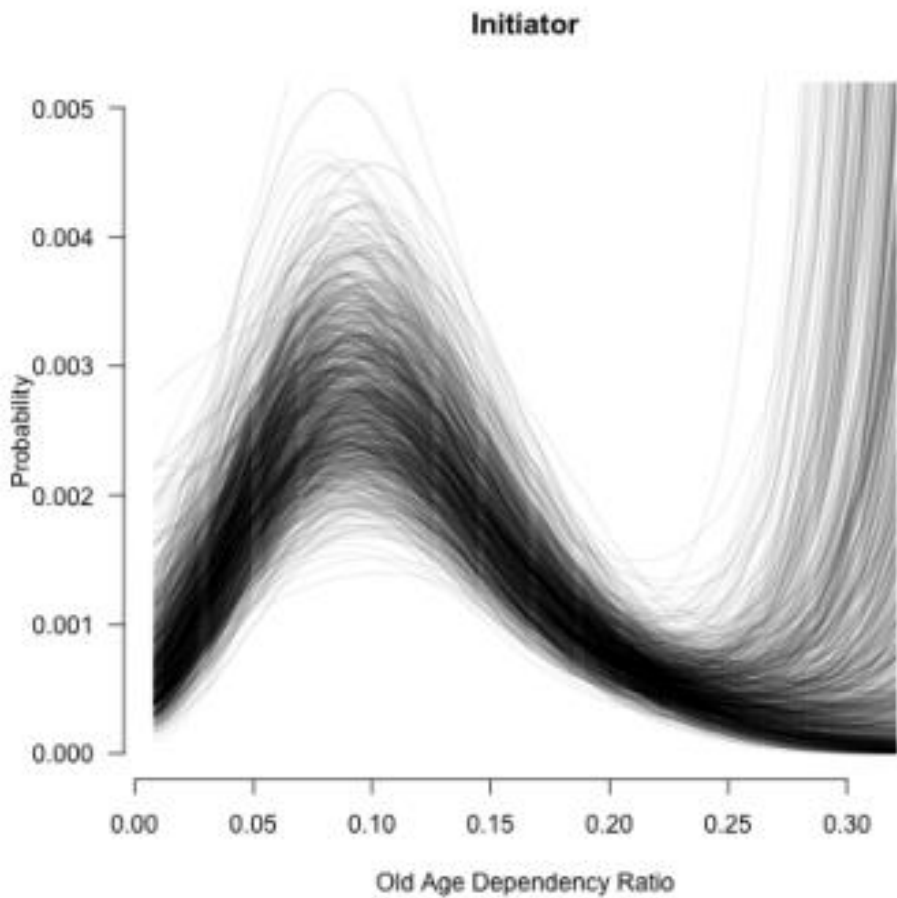
*Source: Global Aging Preparedness Index (2013)*

- Population aging is likely to push militaries to spend more on personnel and less on other areas, including weapons development and procurement.

# Population Aging and Increasing Security Threats

- Population aging is likely to increase the level of shared security dangers confronting the United States and Japan for three primary reasons:
  - Creating windows of opportunity for aggression
  - Encouraging nationalistic foreign policies
  - Increasing ideological polarization

# Relationship between Old-Age Dependency Ratios and the Probability of Onset of MIDs



Source: Brooks, Brooks, Greenhill, and Haas

# Old Age Dependency Ratios

Ages > 65 / Ages 15 -64

	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
China	0.10	0.11	0.17	0.24	0.35	0.39
North Korea (DPRK)	0.09	0.13	0.13	0.18	0.28	0.29
Russia	0.18	0.18	0.22	0.28	0.28	0.33
South Korea (ROK)	0.10	0.15	0.22	0.37	0.54	0.66
USA	0.19	0.20	0.26	0.33	0.35	0.36
Japan	0.25	0.36	0.49	0.54	0.65	0.72

*Source: UN World Population Prospects (2012 Revision)*



- A second way in which the costs created by population aging could increase the security threats confronting the United States and Japan is by fueling nationalistic policies.
- Population aging could very well result in the kind of domestic stresses that make diversionary conflicts likely.
  - The effects of aging both create domestic challenges **and** make it more difficult for states to deal with existing stresses.

- A final way in which the effects of population aging are likely to increase the shared security threats confronting the United States and Japan is by increasing ideological polarization in east Asia.
  - Leaders' ideological identities are most likely to play a central role in choices of allies and enemies when these identities are under threat, and population aging is likely to produce major stresses that endanger domestic interests.