



United Nations · Population Division · Department of Economic and Social Affairs

POPULATION AGEING·2002



Number of persons aged 60 years or older

The number of persons aged 60 years or older is estimated to be 629 million in 2002 and is projected to grow to almost 2 billion by 2050, at which time the population of older persons will be larger than the population of children (0-14 years) for the first time in human history. The majority of the world's older persons reside in Asia (54 per cent), while Europe has the next largest share (24 per cent).

Percentage of population aged 60 years or older

One of every 10 persons is now aged 60 years or older; by 2050, the United Nations projects that 1 person of every 5 and, by 2050, 1 of every 3 will be aged 60 years or older. The percentage is currently much higher in the more developed than in the less

developed regions, but the pace of ageing in developing countries is more rapid, and their transition from a young to an old age structure will be more compressed in time.

The oldest old

The older population is itself ageing. Currently, the oldest old (80 years or older) make up 12 per cent of the population aged 60 years or older. The oldest old are the fastest-growing segment of the older population and, by 2050, 19 per cent of the older population will be aged 80 years or older. The number of centenarians (aged 100 years or older) is projected to increase 15-fold, from approximately 210,000 in 2002 to 3.2 million people by 2050.

Life expectancy at age 60

The world has experienced dramatic improvements in longevity. Life expectancy at birth has climbed about

20 years since 1950, to its current level of 66 years. Of those surviving to age 60, men can expect to live another 17 years and women an additional 20 years. However, there are still large differences in mortality levels between countries. In the least developed countries, men reaching age 60 can expect only 15 more years of life and women, 16 years, while in the more developed regions, life expectancy at age 60 is 18 years for men and 23 years for women.

Sex ratio

The majority of older persons are women. Because female life expectancy is greater than male life expectancy, among older persons there are 81 men per 100 women in 2002. Among the oldest old, there are only 53 men for every 100 women. The ratio of men to women at older ages is lower in the more developed regions (71 men per 100 women) than in the less developed regions (68 men per 100 women),

since there are larger differences in life expectancy between the sexes in the more developed regions.

Percentage of older population currently married

Older men are much more likely than older women to be currently married. While 78 per cent of older men are currently married, the corresponding figure for older women is 44 per cent. Most older persons without a spouse have been widowed. Women are more likely to outlive their spouses, because they live longer and, on average, are younger than their husbands.

Statutory retirement age

In more developed regions, men become eligible for full pension benefits at age 65 or older in more than half of countries, while the most common standard retirement age for women is between 55 and 59 years. The standard retirement age in less developed regions is often lower than in more developed regions, most commonly between 60 and 64 years for men. For women, the standard retirement age is 64 years or

lower in less developed countries. The differential between more and less developed regions probably reflects differences in life expectancy, which is lower in less developed regions.

Percentage of older population in the labour force

Countries with high per capita incomes tend to have lower participation rates of older workers. In more developed regions 21 per cent of men aged 60 years or older are economically active, compared with 50 per cent of men in less developed regions. In more developed regions, 10 per cent of older women are economically active, compared with 19 per cent in less developed regions. Older persons participate to a greater extent in labour markets in less developed regions, largely owing to the limited coverage of retirement schemes and the relatively small incomes when provided.

Country or area	POPULATION AGED 60 YEARS OR OLDER										Statutory retirement age Men/Women (13)	Life expectancy at age 60 2002/2005 Men/Women (14)			
	Number 2002 (1)	2050 (2)	Percentage of total population 2002 (3)	2050 (4)	Percentage 80 years or older 2002 (5)	2050 (6)	Percentage currently married Men/Women (7)	Percentage 60 years or older 2002 (8)	Potential support ratio 2002 (9)	2002 (10)	Potential support ratio 2050 (11)	2050 (12)			
World total	628 874	1 963 767	10	21	12	19	78/44	40/15	81	53	9	4	-	17/20	
More developed regions	235 523	395 106	20	33	17	29	79/44	21/10	71	44	5	2	-	18/23	
Less developed regions	393 351	1 658 663	8	19	6	17	77/44	50/19	88	64	12	5	-	16/19	
Least developed countries	34 419	175 713	5	9	7	10	89/44	74/22	86	75	17	10	-	15/16	
Africa	42 221	204 776	5	10	8	11	86/40	66/33	83	69	17	9	-	15/17	
Eastern Africa	11 792	56 206	4	8	7	10	84/39	80/52	83	71	18	12	-	15/16	
Burundi	282	1 367	4	7	6	8	90/40	81/43	61	52	18	15	55/55	14/16	
Comoros	120	2 301	4	12	7	11	89/41	85/38	63	64	21	8	-	15/17	
Djibouti	38	62	6	6	4	11	85/41	85/38	66	61	16	20	-	14/16	
Eritrea	191	1 005	5	10	6	11	85/41	85/38	84	67	18	10	-	15/16	
Ethiopia	3 151	12 342	5	7	6	10	88/33	81/40	85	71	17	15	55/55	15/16	
Kenya	1 325	7 184	4	13	9	11	87/59	79/49	87	82	19	8	55/55	16/18	
Madagascar	799	4 395	5	9	8	9	82/41	76/32	84/52	86	74	11	11	60/55	15/16
Mali	2 047	5 049	5	7	6	10	89/33	81/37	79	70	15	15	55/55	15/16	
Mauritius	108	372	9	26	13	21	80/33	81/35	74	51	11	3	60/60	16/20	
Mozambique	976	3 043	5	8	8	8	88/33	86/76	81	66	16	14	55/55	14/15	
Réunion	76	265	10	26	12	23	74/37	72/40	65	41	9	3	-	17/23	
Rwanda	345	1 663	4	9	7	8	85/44	76/44	79	54	20	11	55/55	14/16	
Seychelles	304	2 328	4	6	8	8	64/43	77/41	85	71	21	16	-	15/16	
Somalia	364	1 111	6	22	10	14	85/43	87/43	85	64	16	15	55/55	15/16	
Uganda	925	5 775	4	6	7	8	71/33	81/57	83	73	20	17	55/55	14/16	
United Republic of Tanzania	1 504	9 141	4	11	6	10	82/41	87/67	83	68	21	9	55/55	15/16	
Zambia	494	2 302	5	8	8	8	74/26	82/35	82	74	17	13	50/50	15/16	
Zimbabwe	618	2 671	5	11	11	11	85/39	69/59	84	77	16	9	60/60	16/18	
Middle Africa	4 886	22 864	5	7	7	10	81/25	74/40	80	64	16	15	-	15/17	
Angola	619	2 760	4	5	6	8	81/44	75/48	82	67	17	18	-	14/15	
Cameroon	871	3 612	6	11	8	11	80/28	76/33	84	71	15	9	60/60	16/17	
Central African Republic	234	773	6	9	9	10	74/37	84/68	76	60	13	11	55/55	15/17	
Chad	404	1 892	5	7	7	9	66/35	82/67	86	67	16	15	55/55	14/15	
Congo	161	743	5	7	9	11	78/38	71/59	96	75	15	14	55/55	15/18	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2 451	12 651	5	6	6	10	80/24	74/38	77	60	17	16	60/60	16/16	
Equatorial Guinea	13	119	6	9	8	10	77/29	67/42	83	68	14	12	60/60	15/16	
Guinea-Bissau	70	259	6	8	7	9	66/34	76/46	73	60	15	13	60/60	14/15	
Liberia	143	664	4	7	7	8	62/34	70/46	70	59	16	15	60/60	15/16	
Mali	629	2 928	6	15	13	13	92/49	77/41	78	68	12	13	55/55	21/23	
Mauritania	133	525	5	9	8	10	88/27	83/39	81	69	17	11	60/65	15/16	
Niger	377	2 605	3	5	6	8	92/25	84/44	84	75	24	18	60/60	14/15	
Nigeria	5 751	28 783	5	10	8	10	89/43	79/33	88	76	17	10	60/60	16/17	
Saint Helena	416	2 491	4	11	3	7	66/39	70/36	67	56	21	10	55/55	13/14	
Senegal	416	2 491	4	11	3	7	67/36	67/23	80	62	18	15	60/60	13/14	
Sierra Leone	228	980	5	7	5	8	20	83/49	49/29	83	65	12	3	55/55	12/13
Togo	234	1 201</td													