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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
POPULATION DIVISION

# **WORLD POPULATION AGEING: 1950-2050**



**United Nations New York, 2001**

## NOTE

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## PREFACE

As the proportion of the world's population in the older ages continues to increase, the need for improved information and analysis of demographic ageing increases. Knowledge is essential to assist policy makers define, formulate and evaluate goals and programmes, and to raise public awareness and support for needed policy changes.

The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations has long experience in the analysis of population ageing. In addition to preparing national estimates and projections of older populations, the Population Division has contributed to the analysis of the determinants and consequences of population ageing. The Population Division is the organizational unit of the Secretariat charged with monitoring progress towards the achievement of the goals set out in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994. The Programme of Action enunciated objectives and recommended actions concerning population ageing and older persons (United Nations, 1995).

The Population Division has also organized expert meetings on various aspects of population ageing. In 1997, for example, the Division convened a meeting on below-replacement fertility (United Nations, 2000); in 2000, two meetings on population ageing were organized: the first on the living arrangements of older persons (United Nations, 2001b), and the second on policy responses to population ageing and

population decline (United Nations, forthcoming). In 1999, the Population Division issued the first United Nations wallchart on population ageing as a contribution to the International Year of Older Persons (United Nations, 1999c).

In 1982, the United Nations adopted the International Plan of Action on Ageing at the first World Assembly on Ageing (United Nations, 1982). Then, in 1999 in its resolution 54/262, the General Assembly decided to convene the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002. The Second World Assembly is to be dedicated to the overall review of the outcome of the First World Assembly, and to the adoption of a new international strategy for action on ageing.

The present report was prepared by the Population Division as a contribution to the 2002 World Assembly on Ageing and its follow-up. The report provides a description of global trends in population ageing and includes a series of indicators of the ageing process by development regions, major areas, regions and countries.

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