

2017

# World Population Ageing



United Nations

[highlights]



Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# World Population Ageing 2017

## Highlights



United Nations  
New York, 2017

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Suggested citation:

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *World Population Ageing 2017 - Highlights* (ST/ESA/SER.A/397).

Official symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with numbers, as illustrated in the above citation.

This publication has been issued without formal editing.

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Published by the United Nations

Sales No. E.17.XIII.3

ISBN 978-92-1-151551-0

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## Key trends in population ageing and the living arrangements of older persons

- The global population aged 60 years or over numbered 962 million in 2017, more than twice as large as in 1980 when there were 382 million older persons worldwide. The number of older persons is expected to double again by 2050, when it is projected to reach nearly 2.1 billion.
- In 2030, older persons are expected to outnumber children under age 10 (1.41 billion versus 1.35 billion); in 2050, projections indicate that there will be more older persons aged 60 or over than adolescents and youth at ages 10-24 (2.1 billion versus 2.0 billion).
- Globally, the number of persons aged 80 years or over is projected to increase more than threefold between 2017 and 2050, rising from 137 million to 425 million.
- Two thirds of the world's older persons live in the developing regions, where their numbers are growing faster than in the developed regions. In 2050, it is expected that nearly 8 in 10 of the world's older persons will be living in the developing regions.
- Population ageing—the inevitable increase in the share of older persons that results from the decline in fertility and improvement in survival that characterize the demographic transition—is occurring throughout the world. Each of the 201 countries or areas with at least 90,000 inhabitants in 2017 is projected to see an increase in the proportion of persons aged 60 or over between 2017 and 2050.
- Although the process of population ageing is most advanced in Europe and in Northern America, where more than one person in five was aged 60 or over in 2017, the populations of other regions are growing older as well. In 2050, older persons are expected to account for 35 per cent of the population in Europe, 28 per cent in Northern America, 25 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 24 per cent in Asia, 23 per cent in Oceania and 9 per cent in Africa.
- Across 143 countries or areas with available data, the proportion of persons aged 60 or over who live “independently” —alone or with a spouse only—varied widely, ranging from a low of 2.3 per cent in Afghanistan to a high of 93.4 per cent in the Netherlands.
- In Asia, in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean, well over half of persons aged 60 or over co-resided with a child circa 2010; by contrast, in Europe and in Northern America only around 20 per cent of older persons co-resided with their children.
- In general, older women are more likely than older men to live alone. Both in Africa and in Europe, older women were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to be living alone.
- Data for 67 countries indicate that older persons have become more likely in recent decades to live independently (around 37 per cent circa 2010 compared to 24 per cent circa 1990), whereas co-residence with children has become less common (53 per cent circa 2010 compared to 65 per cent circa 1990).
- As the average age of populations continues to rise, Governments should implement policies to address the needs and interests of older persons, including those related to housing, employment, health care, social protection, and other forms of intergenerational solidarity. By anticipating this demographic shift, countries can proactively enact policies to adapt to an ageing population, which will be essential to fulfil the pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that “no one will be left behind”.

## Population ageing and sustainable development

The world's population is ageing: older persons are increasing in number and make up a growing share of the population in virtually every country, with implications for nearly all sectors of society, including labour and financial markets, the demand for goods and services such as housing, transportation and social protection, as well as family structures and inter-generational ties. Preparing for the economic and social shifts associated with an ageing population is thus essential to fulfil the pledge of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that “no one will be left behind”. Trends in population ageing are particularly relevant for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to poverty eradication, the promotion of health, gender equality, employment and sustainable human settlements, as well as those on reducing inequality within and across countries and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies.

The 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), adopted during the Second World Assembly on Ageing, recognized the many benefits of greater longevity to individuals, families and society. Families benefit from the contributions of older generations through their financial support, assistance with household maintenance, or participation in childcare. Societies benefit also from the experience of older persons and from their contributions to the labour force, as well as from their volunteerism, philanthropy and civic engagement. MIPAA also highlighted the need to consider older persons in development planning, emphasizing that older persons should be able to participate in and benefit equitably from the fruits of development to advance their health and well-being, and that societies should provide enabling environments for them to do so.

As populations grow older, it is more important than ever that Governments design innovative policies and public services specifically targeted to older persons, including policies addressing housing, employment, health care, infrastructure and social protection, among others.

The growing sense of urgency associated with the challenges and opportunities posed by population ageing is evident in the recent proliferation of ageing-related policy initiatives across a wide range of sectors (United Nations, 2015). For example, many Governments are seeking to increase the coverage and improve the benefits provided through pension systems, with close attention to gender equity and long-term fiscal sustainability. Some Governments are seeking to increase the statutory retirement ages, eliminate age barriers in the formal labour market and promote the recruitment of, and flexible employment opportunities for, older workers. Investments in education and life-long learning opportunities, including for older persons, are increasingly recognized as beneficial in helping people to acquire the skills they need to remain active in a changing labour market and to maintain cognitive function, as well as physical and mental health, into old age. Health care systems around the world are working to promote healthy ageing, to prevent and treat non-communicable diseases and chronic conditions, as well as to expand access to quality long-term and palliative care.



Accurate, timely demographic data, disaggregated by age, sex and other relevant characteristics, are critical to enable Governments to anticipate demographic shifts and proactively implement the policies and programmes needed to respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population. The United Nations is committed to supporting Governments in their efforts to collect, disseminate and analyse demographic data, including data on population ageing and the situation of older persons.

This publication presents the highlights of the *World Population Ageing 2017* report. It summarizes the key trends in population ageing drawn from the latest estimates and projections of population by age and sex, as published in *World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision*. The present *Highlights* includes a special focus on trends in the household living arrangements of older persons—whether alone, with a spouse or with own children—reflecting newly compiled estimates from the *United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017*. The annex table provides data on the estimated and projected number and share of older persons, median age of the population and life expectancies at birth and at age 60 for the 201 countries or areas with 90,000 inhabitants or more in 2017, as well as on the household living arrangements of older persons for 143 countries or areas.

The electronic version of this *Highlights* is available on the website of the Population Division: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/theme/ageing/WPA2017.shtml>. The forthcoming full report on *World Population Ageing 2017* and supplementary *Profiles of Ageing* database, as well as the database and report on the living arrangements of older persons will be available at the same location later in 2017.

UN Photo/F. Charton



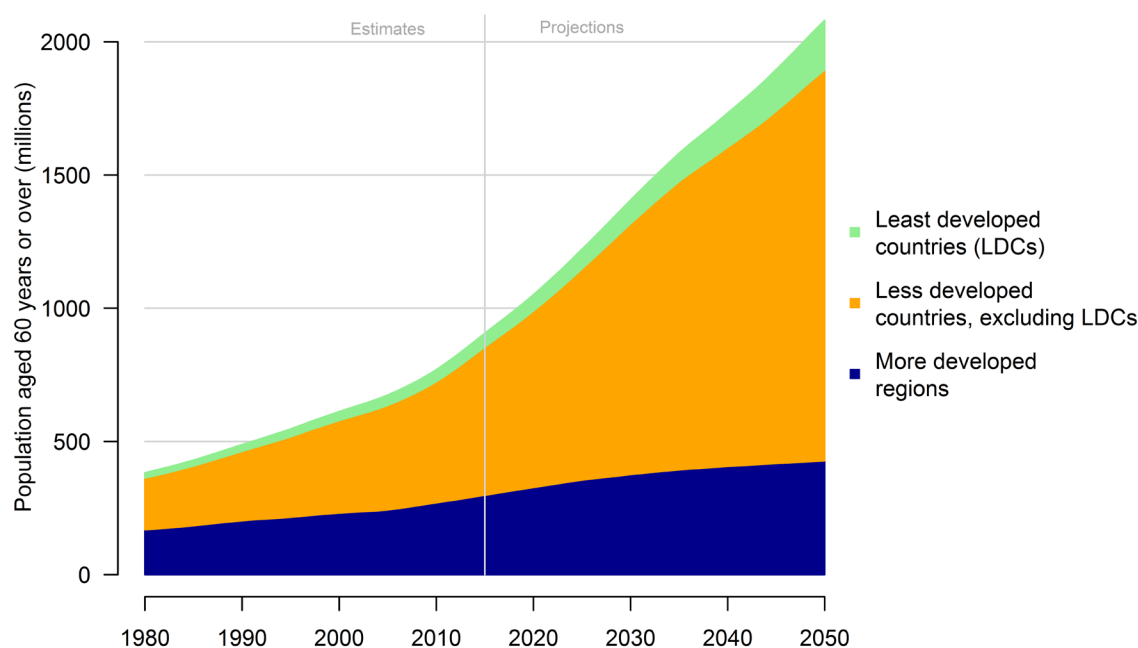
## Global and regional trends in population ageing

The global population aged 60 years or over numbered 962 million in 2017, more than twice as large as in 1980 when there were 382 million older persons worldwide. The number of older persons is expected to double again by 2050, when it is projected to reach nearly 2.1 billion.

The older population of the developing regions is growing much faster than in the developed regions.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the developing regions are home to a growing share of the world's older population (figure 1). In 1980, the developing regions were home to 56 per cent of persons aged 60 years or over. In 2017, over two thirds of the world's older persons lived in the developing regions. Between 2017 and 2050, the number of persons aged 60 years or over in the developing regions is expected to increase more than twofold, from 652 million to 1.7 billion, whereas the more developed regions are projected to see a 38 per cent increase in the number of older persons over that period, from 310 million persons aged 60 years or over in 2017 to 427 million in 2050. Projections indicate that in 2050, 79 per cent of the world's population aged 60 or over will be living in the developing regions.

**Figure 1.**

**Number of persons aged 60 years or over by development group,<sup>1</sup> from 1980 to 2050**



Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

<sup>1</sup> Following common practice, the “developed regions” include Europe and Northern America plus Australia, New Zealand and Japan, while the “developing regions” include all other parts of the world. The use of these terms in the present report does not imply any judgement as to the current developmental stage of a particular country or region.



Over the coming decades, the number of older persons is expected to grow fastest in Africa, where the population aged 60 or over is projected to increase more than threefold between 2017 and 2050, from 69 to 226 million. Africa is followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, where the older population is projected to increase more than twofold between 2017 and 2050, from 76 to 198 million. Asia also is expected to experience a twofold increase in the number of older persons, with the population aged 60 or over projected to increase from 549 million in 2017 to nearly 1.3 billion in 2050. Of the six major geographic regions, the older population is expected to grow most slowly in Europe, with a projected increase of 35 per cent between 2017 and 2050 (table 1).

**Table 1.**

**Number and distribution of persons aged 60 years or over by region, in 2017 and 2050**

	<i>Number of persons aged 60 years or older in 2017 (millions)</i>	<i>Number of persons aged 60 years or over in 2050 (mil- lions)</i>	<i>Percent- age change between 2017 and 2050</i>	<i>Distribution of older per- sons in 2017 (percentage)</i>	<i>Distribution of older per- sons in 2050 (percentage)</i>
World	962.3	2080.5	116.2	100.0	100.0
Africa	68.7	225.8	228.5	7.1	10.9
Asia	549.2	1273.2	131.8	57.1	61.2
Europe	183.0	247.2	35.1	19.0	11.9
Northern America	78.4	122.8	56.7	8.1	5.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	76.0	198.2	160.7	7.9	9.5
Oceania	6.9	13.3	92.6	0.7	0.6

*Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.*

Growth in the number of older persons is a global phenomenon: it is expected that between 2017 and 2050, virtually every country in the world will experience a substantial increase in the size of the population aged 60 years or over. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of heterogeneity in the growth rates of the older population within regions and income groups (figure 2).

Each of the 31 low-income countries, most of which are located in sub-Saharan Africa, is projected to see its older population grow more than twofold between 2017 and 2050. In 25 of them, the population aged 60 years or over is expected to increase more than threefold over that period, and in four low-income countries—Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe—the number of older persons is projected to quadruple by 2050.

Many middle-income countries also are anticipating rapid growth in the number of older persons between 2017 and 2050. Of the 103 middle-income countries with at least 90,000 inhabitants, 78 per cent are projected to see the number of older persons increase more than twofold and the number of persons aged 60 years or over is expected to triple by 2050 in 42 per cent of middle-income countries.

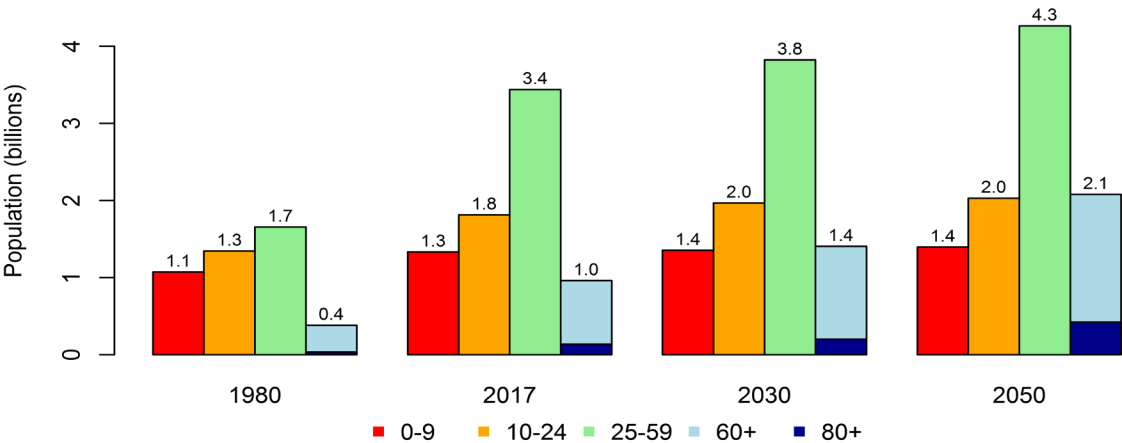
Projected growth rates tend to be slower, on average, for the older populations of high-income countries. Among the 61 high-income countries with at least 90,000 inhabitants, just one third are expected to see a doubling in the older population between 2017 and 2050, whereas the projected growth is less than 40 per cent in another one third of countries.

**Figure 2.**  
Projected change from 2017 to 2050 in the number of persons aged 60 years or over versus gross national income per capita in 2016



Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision and World Bank (2017). World Development Indicators, GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US\$).

**Figure 3.**  
Global population by broad age group, in 1980, 2017, 2030 and 2050



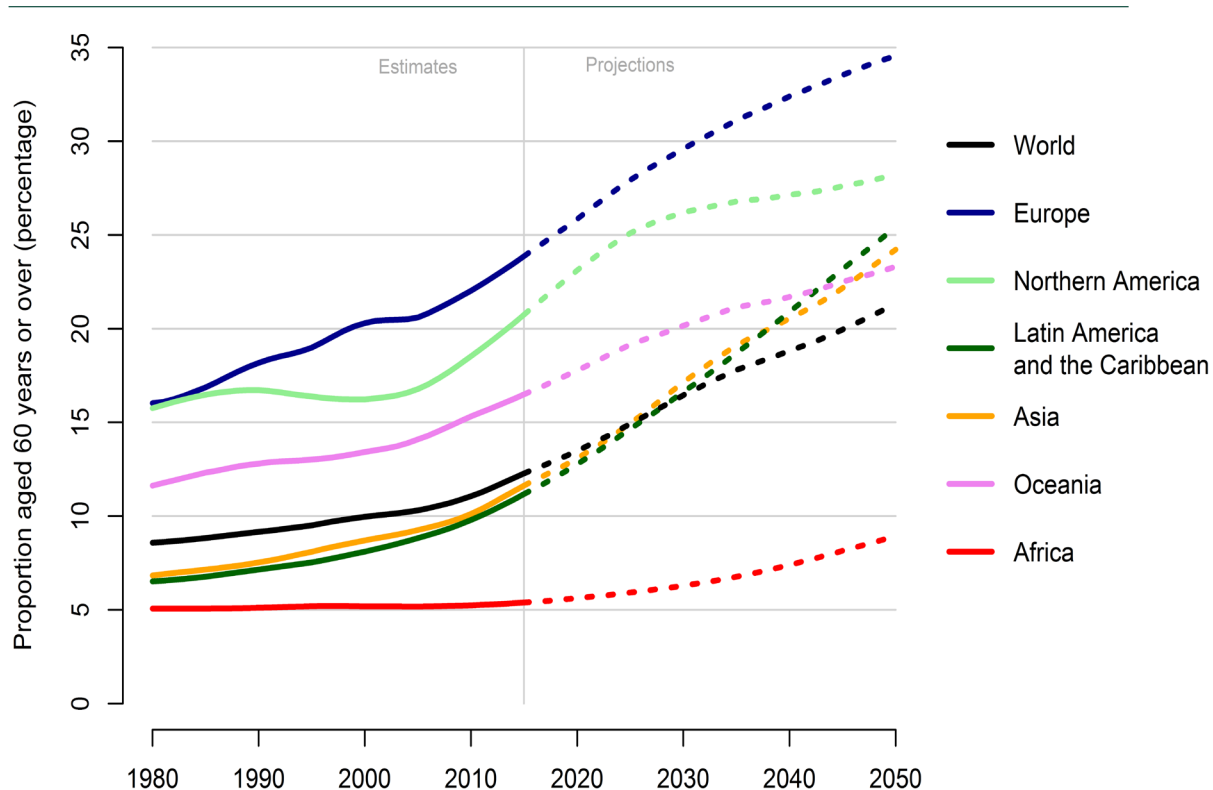
Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

Globally, the number of older persons is growing faster than the number of people in all younger age groups. In 1980, children aged 0-9 years substantially outnumbered persons aged 60 years or over (1.1 billion versus 0.4 billion), but by 2030 the global population of older persons is expected to have surpassed that of children under age 10 (1.41 billion versus 1.35 billion) (figure 3). The projections also indicate that in 2050 there will be more older persons aged 60 or over than adolescents and youth at ages 10-24 years (2.1 billion versus 2.0 billion). The number of people at very advanced ages is increasing too: the global population aged 80 years or over is projected to triple between 2017 and 2050, increasing from 137 million to 425 million.

In most countries, the growth in the absolute number of older persons will occur in a context of low or declining fertility, leading to increasing shares of older persons in the population. In 2017, one in eight people worldwide was aged 60 or over. In 2050, older persons are projected to account for one in five people globally. Although the process of population ageing is most advanced in Europe and Northern America, where more than one in five persons was aged 60 or over in 2017, the populations of other regions are growing older as well. In 2050, older persons are expected to account for 35 per cent of the population in Europe, 28 per cent in Northern America, 25 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 24 per cent in Asia, 23 per cent in Oceania and 9 per cent in Africa (figure 4).

**Figure 4.**

**Percentage of population aged 60 years or over by region, from 1980 to 2050**



Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

In 1980, each of the world's ten most aged populations were located in Europe and the share of the population aged 60 years or over had not yet reached 25 per cent in any country or area (table 2). In 2017, the share of older persons exceeded 25 per cent in all ten of the most aged countries and, in 2050, older persons will comprise more than 39 per cent of the population in each of the ten most aged countries or areas. Japan was the world's most aged population in 2017 (33 per cent aged 60 or over) and it is projected to remain so through 2050 (42 per cent aged 60 or over). Europe is expected to account for 5 of the 10 most aged countries or areas in 2050.

### Box 1

#### Reconsidering population ageing and dependency

To describe trends in the population age structure, demographers construct metrics that compare the sizes of different age groups. An example is the old-age dependency ratio (OADR), which reflects the number of persons aged 65 years or over in a population relative to the number of persons aged 20-64 years. But chronological age alone is often a poor proxy for the level of dependency experienced in a population since: 1) older persons are quite diverse with respect to both economic activity, including labour force participation, and functional capacity, two factors that determine dependency; and 2) not all persons in the traditional working ages are active in the labour force, and some are economically dependent.

Several alternative measures have been proposed to improve upon the traditional demographic measures of population ageing by accounting for the diversity of capacities and dependencies across age. One such measure is the "prospective old-age dependency ratio" (POADR), calculated as the number of persons above the age at which the remaining life expectancy is 15 years relative to the number of persons between age 20 and that age (Sanderson and Scherbov, 2005, 2010, 2015). By considering years of life remaining as a proxy for dependency rather than years of life already past (chronological age), the POADR is consistent with the notion that the onset of dependency may be delayed as life expectancy increases. Trends in the POADR suggest slower increases or even declines in dependency in many countries with substantial older populations compared to the projections of the traditional old-age dependency ratio (Sanderson, Scherbov and Gerland, 2017). In Europe, for example, the OADR increased sharply between 1990 and 2015, whereas the POADR declined over that period, reflecting increases in the life expectancy at older ages (figure 5). The projected POADRs point to coming increases in ageing-related dependency in all regions except Africa, but at a much slower pace than is implied by the traditional OADR.

\* Apart from the prospective-old age dependency ratio, there are several other notable alternative measures of population ageing. The economic dependency and support ratios, for example, describe the ratio of effective workers to effective consumers in a population, taking into account labour and consumption activities at different ages according to evidence compiled in the National Transfer Accounts project ([ntaccounts.org](http://ntaccounts.org)) (Mason and others, 2017). The "cognition-adjusted dependency ratio" considers the age profile of cognitive functioning (Skirbekk, Loichinger and Weber, 2012).



Table 2.

Ten countries or areas with the largest share of persons aged 60 years or over\*, in 1980, 2017 and 2050

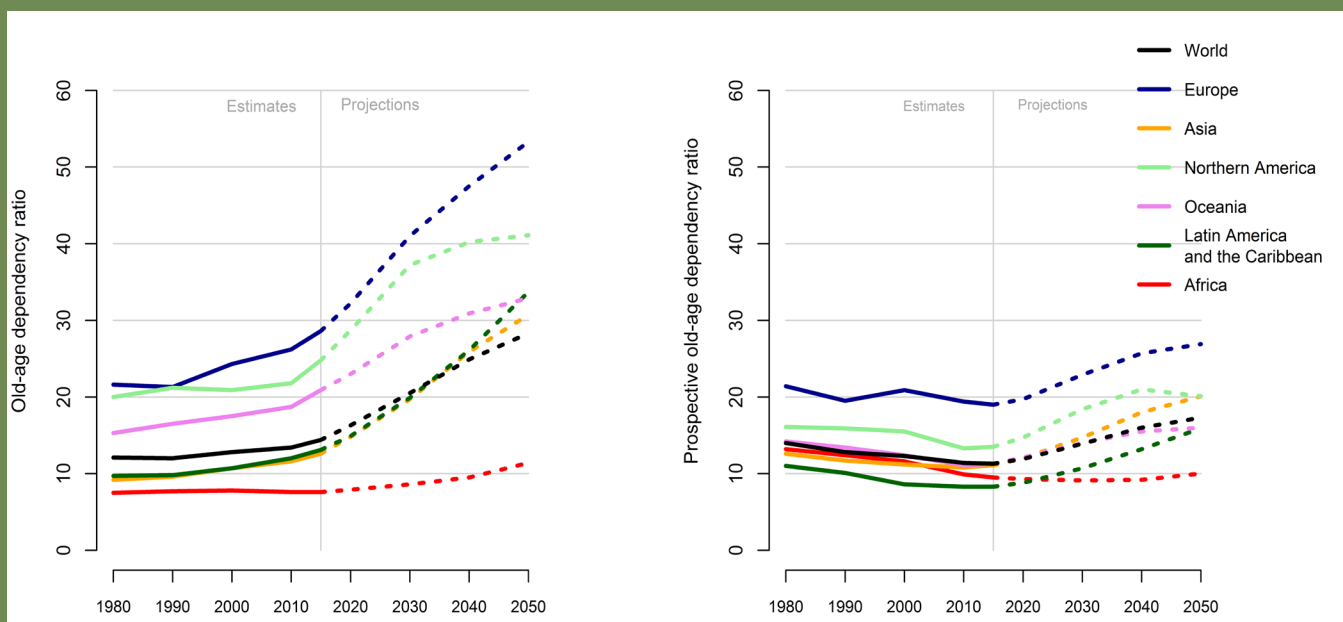
1980			2017		2050	
Rank	Country or area	Percentage aged 60 years or over	Country or area	Percentage aged 60 years or over	Country or area	Percentage aged 60 years or over
1	Sweden	22.0	Japan	33.4	Japan	42.4
2	Norway	20.2	Italy	29.4	Spain	41.9
3	Channel Islands	20.1	Germany	28.0	Portugal	41.7
4	United Kingdom	20.0	Portugal	27.9	Greece	41.6
5	Denmark	19.5	Finland	27.8	Republic of Korea	41.6
6	Germany	19.3	Bulgaria	27.7	China, Taiwan Province of China	41.3
7	Austria	19.0	Croatia	26.8	China, Hong Kong SAR	40.6
8	Belgium	18.4	Greece	26.5	Italy	40.3
9	Switzerland	18.2	Slovenia	26.3	Singapore	40.1
10	Luxembourg	17.8	Latvia	26.2	Poland	39.5

Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

\* Of 201 countries or areas with at least 90,000 inhabitants in 2017.

Figure 5.

Old-age dependency ratio and prospective old-age dependency ratio, from 1980 to 2050



Data sources: OADR are from United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision. POADR are special tabulations provided to the United Nations by Warren Sanderson and Sergei Scherbov based on the methods outlined in Sanderson and Scherbov (2005, 2010, 2015) and consistent with the population estimates and projections published in the 2017 *Revision of World Population Prospects*.

## Demographic drivers of population ageing

Population ageing is driven by the reductions in fertility and improvements in survival that occur during the demographic transition.<sup>2</sup> Europe was the first region to enter the transition, having begun the shift to lower fertility and increased longevity by the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries in almost all areas. Consequently, many of the countries in the region are among the world's most aged. In Germany, for example, which ranked third with respect to the percentage of the population aged 60 or over in 2017 (table 2), the total fertility rate had fallen to the replacement level of 2.1 live births per woman in 1950 and continued to decline to 1.5 in 2017. The share of older persons nearly doubled over that period, from just under 15 per cent in 1950 to 28 per cent in 2017. Fertility rates in Germany are expected to remain below the replacement level over the coming decades, and in 2050, the percentage aged 60 years or over is projected to reach 38 per cent (figure 6).

The demographic transition began later in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean; as a result, their populations are youthful compared to those in Europe and in Northern America. In Mexico in 1950, fertility stood at 6.7 live births per woman and 5 per cent of the population was aged 60 or over. But starting around 1970, fertility declined rapidly in Mexico, reaching 2.2 live births per woman in 2017 and it is projected to remain below the replacement level at least through 2050. Fertility decline has occurred much faster in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean than in the more developed regions and therefore, the populations of Asia and of Latin America and the Caribbean are ageing more rapidly. The share of Mexico's population aged 60 years or over is projected to increase more than twofold from 10 per cent in 2017 to 25 per cent in 2050.

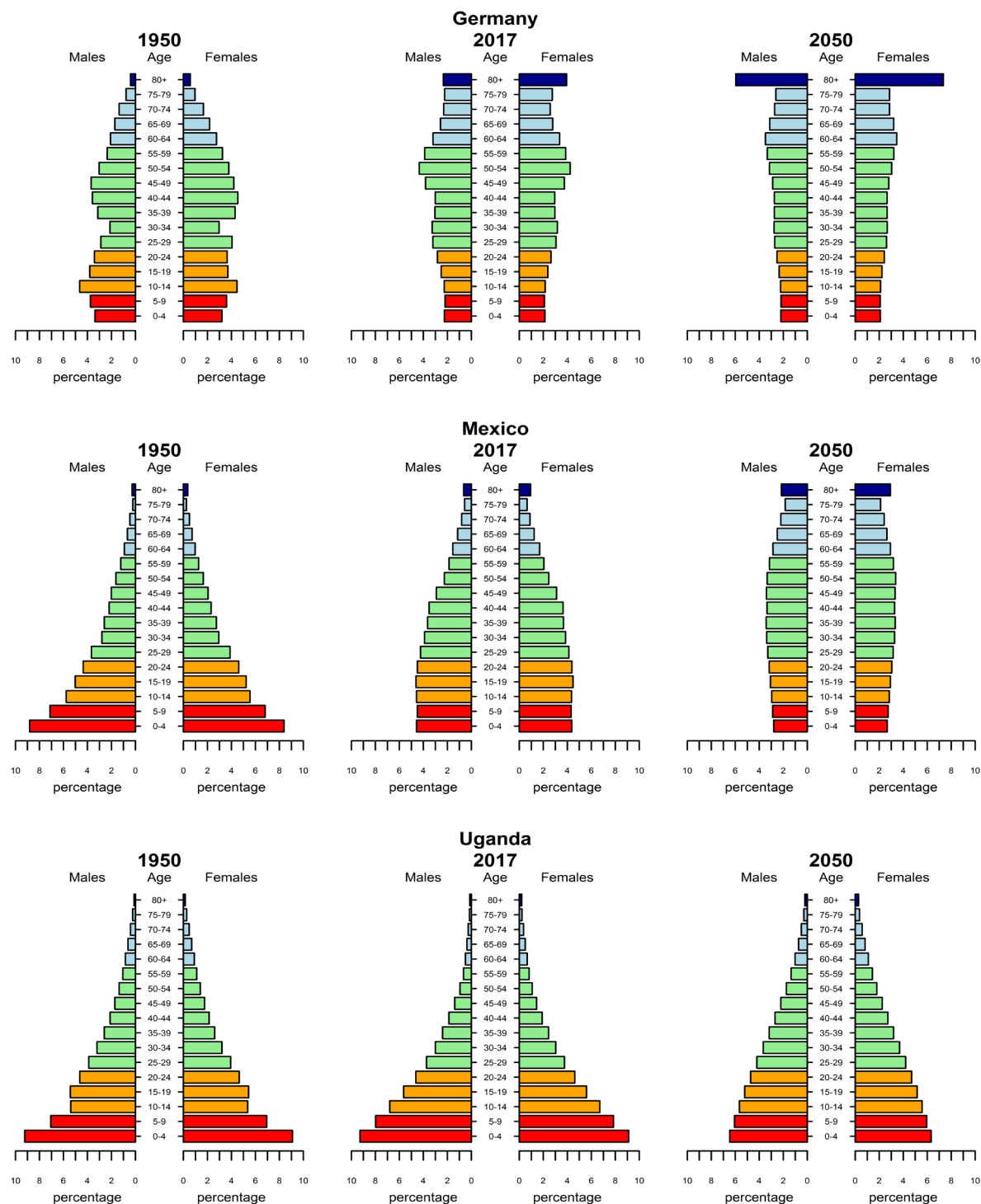
Many countries in Africa remain in the early stages of the demographic transition: some have begun to see reductions in fertility only recently, while others have yet to see a significant decline in fertility. Thus, while the number of older persons has grown, their share of the overall population has remained small. In Uganda, for example, total fertility in 2017, at 5.5 live births per woman, was still comparatively high, although it had fallen from 6.9 live births per woman in 1950. Consequently, there has been little change in the proportion of older people in Uganda: it decreased slightly, from 4.7 per cent in 1950 to 3.3 per cent in 2017 due in part to the excess mortality caused by HIV/AIDS that emerged during the 1990s. Fertility in Uganda is projected to continue to decline slowly towards 3.2 live births per woman in 2050 and the percentage of the population aged 60 or over is projected to rise gradually, reaching 6 per cent by the mid-century.

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<sup>2</sup> International migration also affects changes in the age structure in some countries with very large net migration flows. See Box 2.

Figure 6.

Distribution (percentage) of population by sex and age group in Germany, Mexico and Uganda, in 1950, 2017 and 2050



Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

**Box 2****Population ageing and international migration**

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While declining fertility and increasing longevity are the key drivers of population ageing globally, international migration has also contributed to changing the population age structure in some countries and regions. In countries that are experiencing large immigration flows, international migration can slow the ageing process, at least temporarily, since migrants tend to be concentrated in the working ages.

There is evidence to suggest that some countries are turning to international migration as a policy response to population ageing. The number of countries with policies to increase rates of immigration rose from 8 in 1996 to 24 in 2015 and 20 of those 24 countries (83 per cent) also identified population ageing as a “major concern” in 2015 (United Nations, 2015).

However, immigration would need to occur and be sustained at levels much higher than observed in the past in order for international migration to offset expected changes in the population age structure resulting from long-term trends in fertility and mortality. Therefore, migration alone is unlikely to be an effective policy response to population ageing in the vast majority of countries (United Nations, 2001).

Conversely, the emigration of young workers has accelerated population ageing in some countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, where increasing access to European Union labour markets as well as the economic crisis that began in 2008 have contributed to large outflows of persons at the working ages (OECD, 2013). In response, some of these countries have enacted policies to slow rates of emigration or to encourage the return of their citizens (United Nations, 2016).

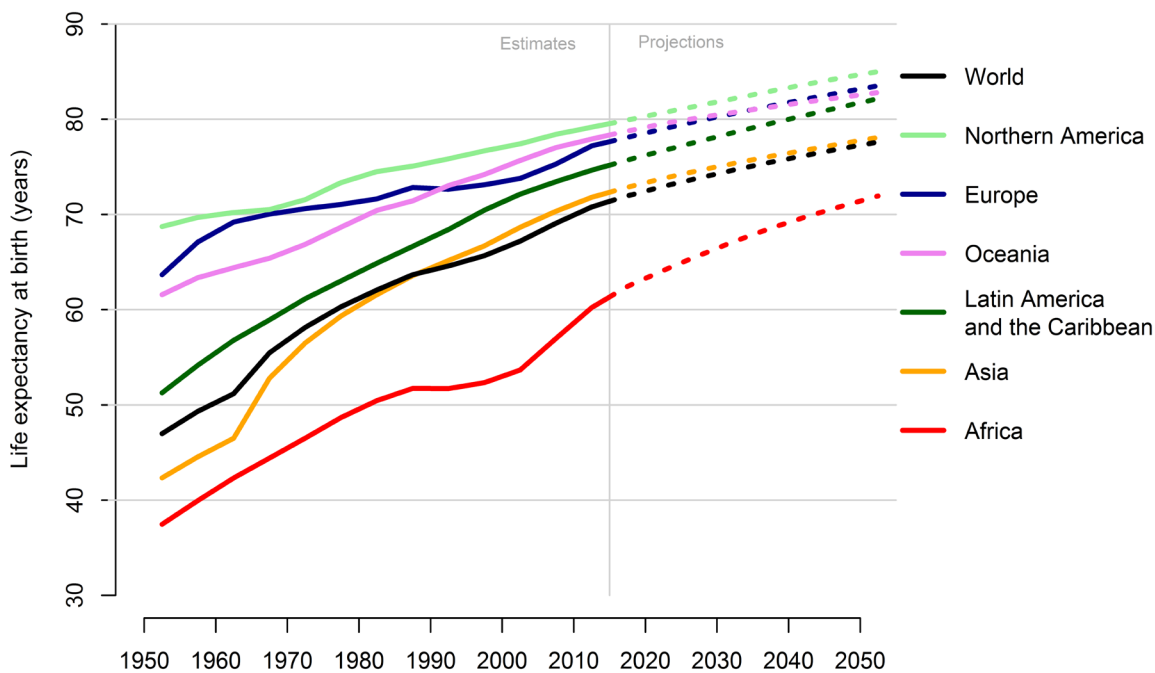
For the foreseeable future, international migration is expected to have only small effects on the pace of population ageing in most countries. However, in some countries receiving large numbers of migrants, such as the oil-producing countries of the Persian Gulf as well as several state members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, international migration is expected to slow the process of population ageing noticeably in the coming decades. Conversely, trends in migration are projected to accelerate the upward shift in the age distribution of countries sending large numbers of migrants abroad, including several in the Caribbean.



Although fertility has been the most influential factor in shaping trends in the number and proportion of older persons in the world's population over the long term, improvements in survival to older ages have contributed to population ageing as well (Lee and Zhou, 2017; Murphy, 2017; Preston and Stokes, 2012). Since 1950-1955, life expectancy at birth has risen by more than 10 years in Northern America, Europe and Oceania, and by close to 25 years in Latin America and the Caribbean (figure 7). In each of these four regions, life expectancy is projected to surpass 80 years in the coming decades. Asia has achieved the largest gains in survival, adding nearly 30 years to life expectancy at birth since 1950-1955. The region is projected to continue to make improvements, with life expectancy projected to increase from 72 years in 2010-2015 to 78 years in 2045-2050. Africa has lower levels of life expectancy, owing largely to persistently high child and maternal mortality risks in many countries, as well as excess mortality caused by HIV/AIDS and political conflicts over the past quarter century. Nonetheless, Africa added 23 years to life expectancy at birth since 1950-1955 and is projected to see further improvements from 60 years in 2010-2015 to 71 years in 2045-2050.

**Figure 7.**

**Life expectancy at birth by region, both sexes combined, from 1950 to 2050**



Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

Regional disparities in life expectancy at age 60 reflect the persistence of long-standing differences in the probability of surviving to advanced ages.<sup>3</sup> In 2010-2015, 60-year-old persons globally could expect to live an additional 20 years on average (table 3). Across the six regions, the life expectancy at age 60 was highest in Northern America and Oceania, at 24 years, and lowest in Africa, at 17 years.

Women tend to live longer than men: at the global level in 2010-2015, women's life expectancy at birth exceeded that of men by 4.6 years. The female advantage in average longevity was largest in Europe (7.0 years) and in Latin America and the Caribbean (6.6 years), and lowest in Africa (3.3 years) and Asia (3.9 years). The female survival advantage persists at older ages. Globally, in 2010-2015, 60-year-old women could expect to outlive 60-year-old men by an average of 2.9 years and as with life expectancy at birth, the female survival advantage at age 60 was greatest in Europe (4.0 years) and smallest in Africa (1.6 years).

A consequence of women's greater longevity is an older population that is predominately female: in 2017, women accounted for 54 per cent of the global population aged 60 years or over and 61 per cent of those aged 80 years or over (figure 8). The sex balance of the older population is projected to remain relatively unchanged at the global level in the coming decades. Projections indicate that in 2050, women will comprise 53 per cent of the world's population aged 60 years or over. Since average survival of males is projected to gradually move closer to that of females, the sex balance among persons aged 80 years or over will become more even. The proportion of women aged 80 years or over is projected to decline slightly to 58 per cent in 2050.

**Table 3.**

**Life expectancy at birth and at age 60, by sex, for the world and regions, between 2010 and 2015**

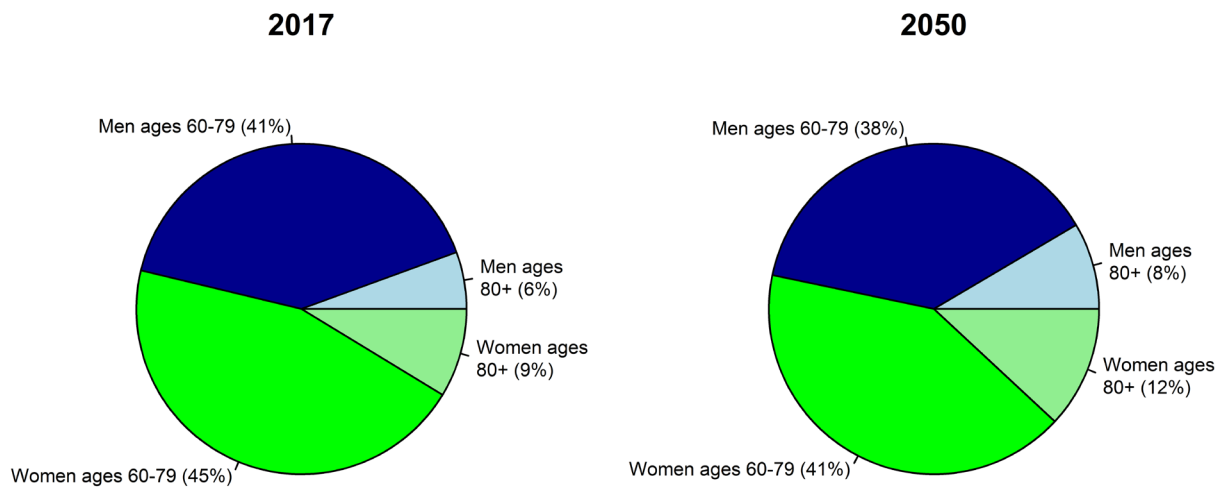
	Life expectancy at birth				Life expectancy at age 60			
	Both sexes	Female	Male	Sex difference (female-male)	Both sexes	Female	Male	Sex difference (female-male)
World	70.8	73.1	68.6	4.6	20.3	21.6	18.8	2.9
Africa	60.2	61.9	58.6	3.3	16.8	17.5	16.0	1.6
Asia	71.8	73.8	69.9	3.9	19.5	20.7	18.2	2.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	74.7	78.0	71.4	6.6	21.8	23.4	20.1	3.3
Europe	77.2	80.7	73.7	7.0	22.1	23.9	19.9	4.0
Oceania	77.9	80.2	75.7	4.5	23.9	25.4	22.3	3.1
Northern America	79.2	81.5	76.8	4.7	23.5	24.9	21.9	3.0

*Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.*

<sup>3</sup> Life expectancy at age 60 is the number of additional years a 60-year-old person would be expected to live if exposed throughout the remainder of life to the prevailing age-specific mortality rates of a given period.

**Figure 8.**

Distribution of the world's older population by age group and sex, in 2017 and 2050



Data source: United Nations (2017). World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision.

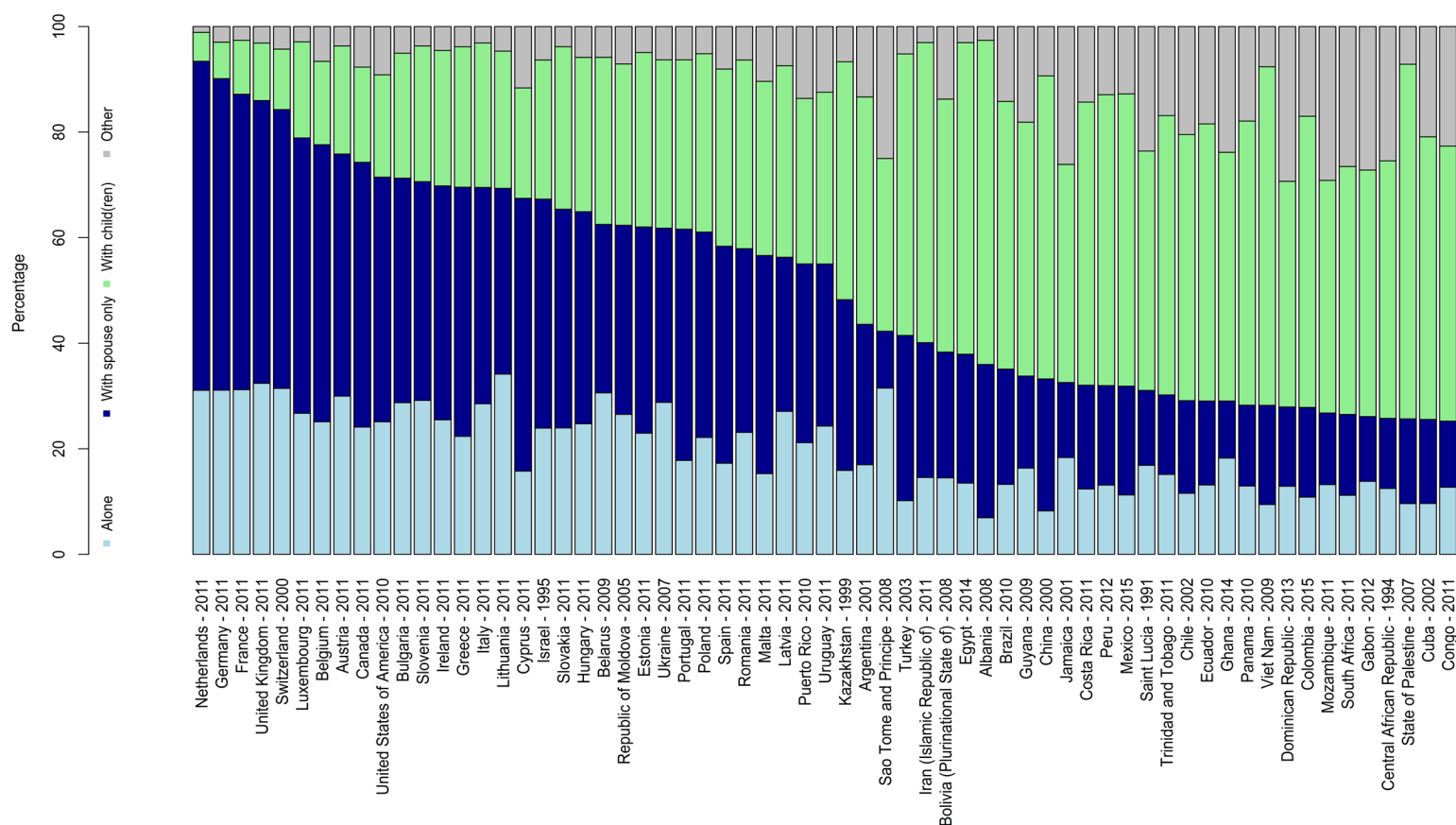
## Living arrangements of older persons

The household living arrangements of older persons differ markedly across countries and regions, reflecting differences in family size as well as in the social and cultural norms that surround intergenerational co-residence. Moreover, economic conditions, support systems available to older persons, and the health status of individuals influence the degree of independence that can be maintained into advanced ages.

A new United Nations database compiles information on the household living arrangements<sup>4</sup> of persons aged 60 or over, estimated from the household membership recorded in key data sources, including the microdata samples from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples—International project at the University of Minnesota (IPUMS-I), the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and the Labour Force Surveys (LFS) of the European Union, as well as census tabulations of household membership reported to the United Nations and published in the Demographic Yearbook (DYB).

Figure 9.

Distribution (percentage) of population aged 60 years or over by type of household arrangement, for countries and areas (most recent



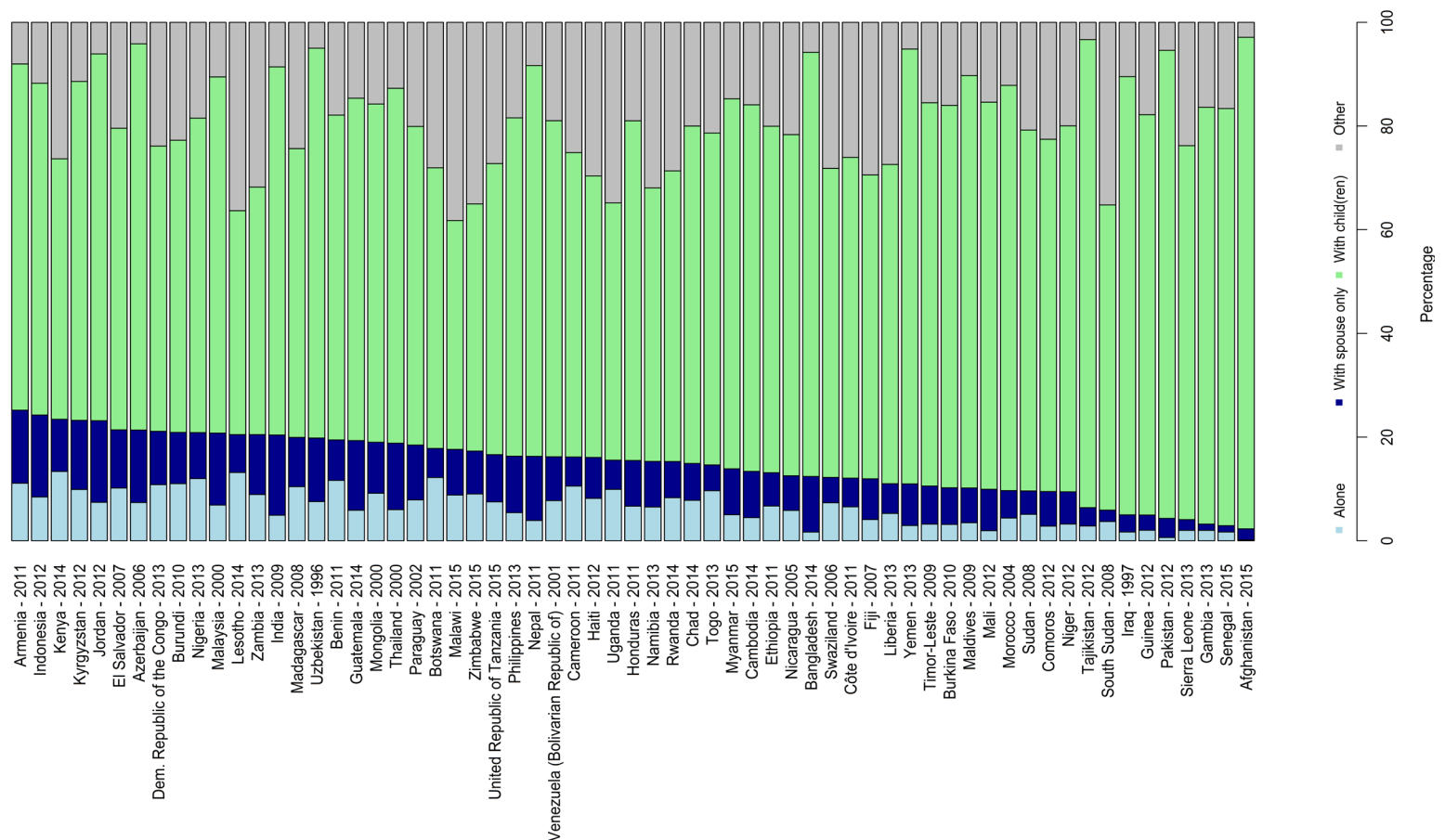


Across the 126 countries or areas with data that permit estimation of all four types of household living arrangement—alone, with spouse only, with children, and other—the proportion of persons aged 60 or over living independently—alone or with a spouse only—ranged from a low of 2.3 per cent in Afghanistan to a high of 93.4 per cent in the Netherlands (figure 9). Older persons were most likely to be living alone in Lithuania (34 per cent) and Finland (33 per cent), whereas less than 1 per cent of older persons lived alone in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan, more than 90 per cent of persons aged 60 years or over co-resided with their children, but such arrangements were comparatively rare in both Germany and the Netherlands, where less than 10 per cent of persons aged 60 or over co-resided with a child.

<sup>4</sup> Excludes group living quarters, such as nursing facilities, dormitories or prisons.

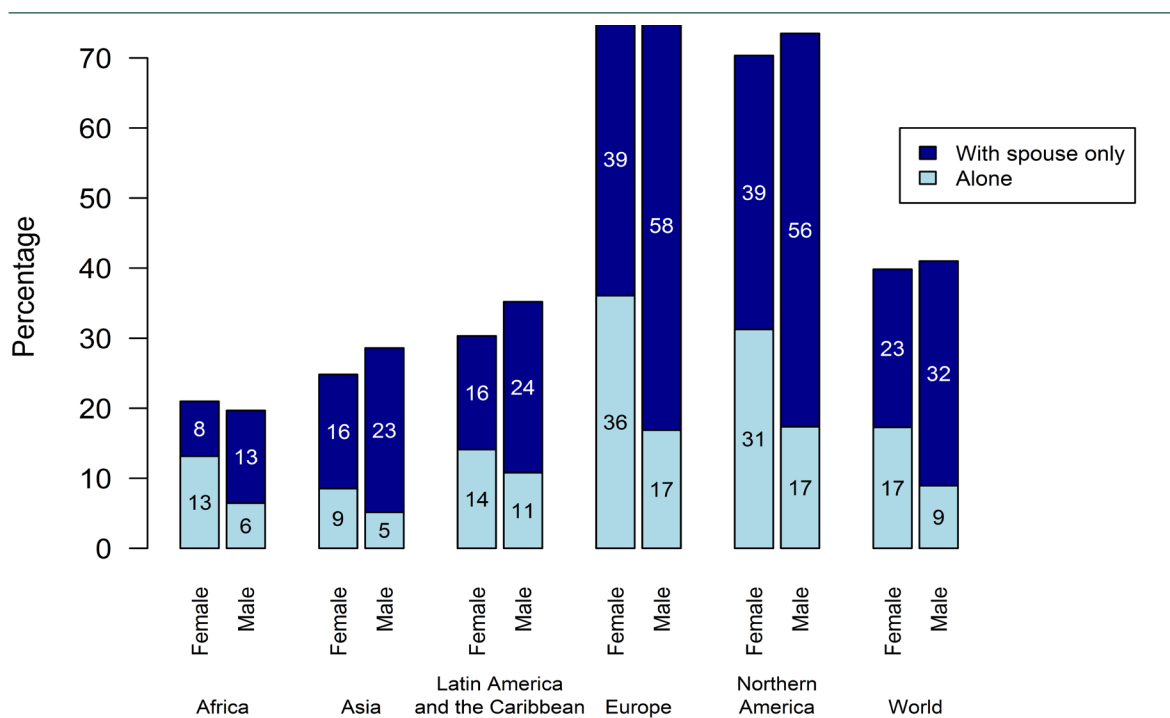
<sup>5</sup> For each country or area, the estimates of living arrangements presented in figure 9 and in the annex table of this report reflect the most recent data source included in the *United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017*. The most recent source refers to the year 2010 or later for 74 per cent of countries or areas and to the year 2000 or later for 96 per cent of countries or areas.

estimates available<sup>5</sup>)



**Figure 10.**

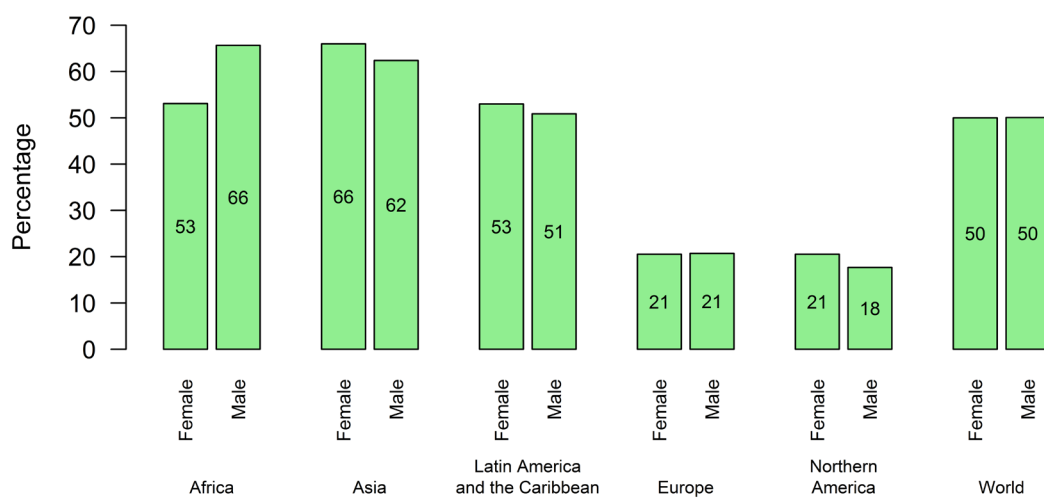
Percentage of men and women aged 60 years or over living independently (alone or with spouse only), by region, circa 2010



Data source: United Nations (forthcoming). Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017.

**Figure 11.**

Percentage of men and women aged 60 years or over living with their children, by region, circa 2010



Data source: United Nations (forthcoming). Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017.

Country-level estimates are aggregated to give estimates of the prevalence of different household living arrangements for older persons globally and across regions and groups of countries classified by development group or national income.<sup>6</sup> These estimates suggest that globally, in the period circa 2010, approximately 40 per cent of persons aged 60 years or over lived independently, but stark differences in the prevalence of independent living were observed across regions. More than 70 per cent of older persons in Europe and in Northern America lived independently circa 2010, compared to 33 per cent of those in Latin America and the Caribbean, 27 per cent in Asia and just 20 per cent in Africa.

The proportions living independently after age 60 were often similar for women and men: globally, 40 per cent of older women and 41 per cent of older men lived independently circa 2010 (figure 10). Large gender gaps, however, were evident in the proportions of older persons residing alone. Worldwide, approximately 17 per cent of women aged 60 or over lived alone, compared to 9 per cent of men in that age group. In both Africa and Europe, older women were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to live alone.

At the global level, half of men and women aged 60 years or over co-resided with at least one of their children (figure 11). In Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, well over half of older persons co-resided with a child circa 2010; by contrast, in Europe and Northern America, less than one in four older persons co-resided with a child. In Africa, circa 2010, older men were more likely than older women to co-reside with a child (66 per cent compared to 53 per cent), whereas in the other regions, co-residence with children was as common or slightly more common for older women compared to older men.

A dearth of globally representative historical data on the living arrangements of older persons challenges efforts to evaluate trends over time. However, for 67 countries or areas, representing 71 per cent of the global population aged 60 years or over in 2010, available data allow for comparisons between the period circa 1990 and the period circa 2010. Weighted averages across all 67 countries (figure 12) indicate that older persons have become more likely to live independently (around 37 per cent circa 2010 compared to 24 per cent circa 1990), while co-residence with children has become less common (53 per cent circa 2010 compared to 65 per cent circa 1990).

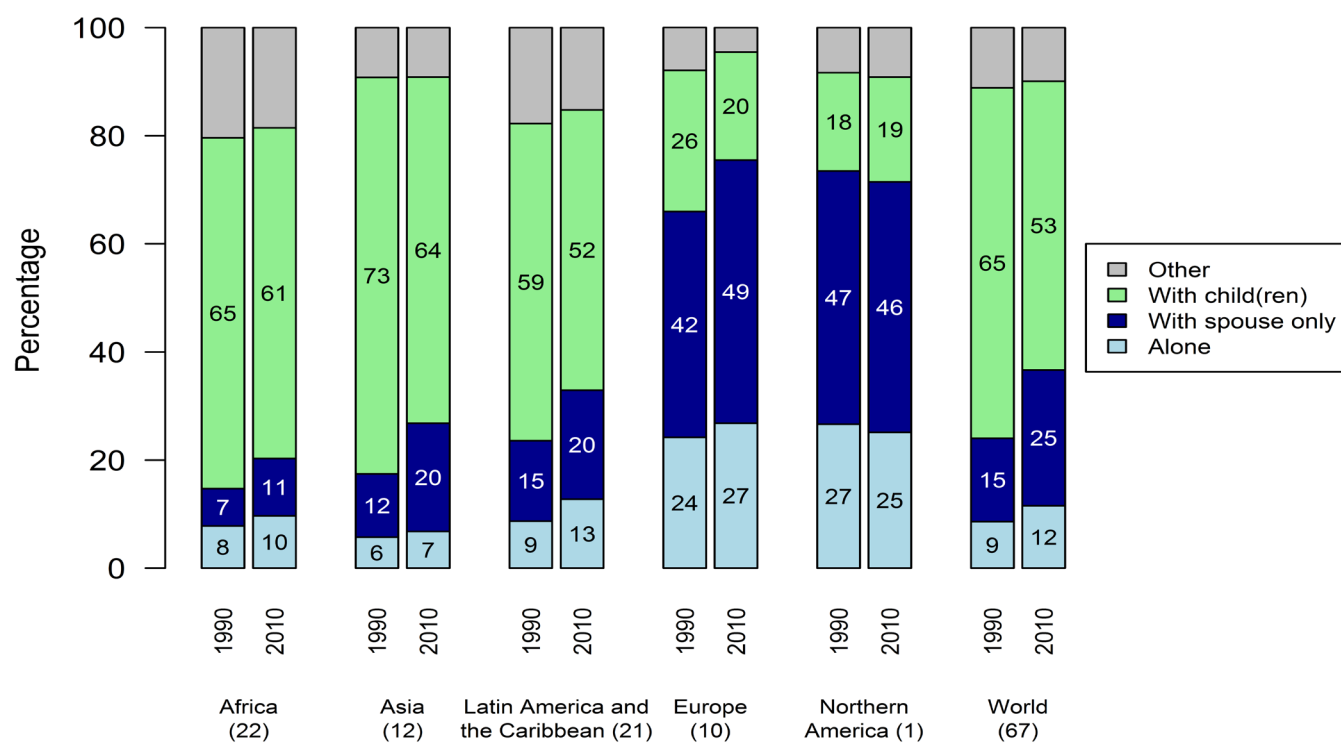
Substantial changes in the living arrangements of older persons have taken place in several regions. In Asia, the proportion living independently increased by 9 percentage points, from 18 per cent circa 1990 to 27 per cent circa 2010, while the proportion co-residing with children decreased by the same amount, from 73 to 64 per cent. Latin America and the Caribbean saw the largest increase in the proportion of older persons living alone, from 9 per cent circa 1990 to 13 per cent circa 2010, while the proportion residing with spouse only also increased from 15 to 20 per cent and the proportion residing with their children declined from 59 to 52 per cent. The prevalence of independent living also increased markedly among the older population of Europe, from 66 per cent circa 1990 to 76 per cent circa 2010, driven mostly by a sizable jump in the proportion residing with spouse only, which rose from 42 to 49 per cent.

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<sup>6</sup> Estimates of the living arrangements of persons aged 60 years or over for groups of countries, aggregated according to region, subregion, income, and development group, are averages across countries or areas with available data, weighted by the size of the sex-specific population aged 60 years or over in 2010, as estimated in the 2017 Revision of *World Population Prospects*. Estimates are presented in the text and annex table only when the available data on living arrangements for a given group or category represent at least two thirds of the population aged 60 years or over in 2010.

**Figure 12.**

**Distribution (percentage) of persons aged 60 years or over by type of household living arrangement, for regions, circa 1990 and circa 2010**



Data source: United Nations (forthcoming). Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017.

Note: Number in ( ) indicates the number of countries or areas represented.





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(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/97469566@N00/1545049802>), used under CC BY 2.0, cropped from original.

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## Annex table 1

Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
							Females	Males	Females	Males
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	2010-2015		2010-2015	
World	962 263	2 080 459	12.7	21.3	29.6	36.1	73.1	68.6	21.6	18.8
More developed regions	310 024	427 238	24.6	32.9	41.1	45.4	81.6	75.2	24.7	20.9
Less developed regions	652 240	1 653 221	10.4	19.5	27.8	34.8	71.1	67.2	20.1	17.9
Least developed countries	55 244	185 868	5.5	9.7	19.6	26.0	64.3	61.1	18.0	16.7
Other less developed countries	596 996	1 467 352	11.3	22.4	29.3	37.7	72.5	68.6	20.3	18.0
High-income countries	281 711	423 139	23.6	32.9	40.4	45.7	83.1	77.7	25.8	21.9
Upper-middle-income countries	386 950	844 062	14.7	30.2	33.9	43.8	76.8	72.0	21.3	18.5
Lower-middle-income countries	258 407	698 667	8.5	16.3	25.2	33.3	68.5	64.7	18.7	16.7
Low-income countries	34 763	113 668	5.1	8.0	18.3	24.4	62.3	58.9	17.7	16.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	49 271	165 473	4.8	7.6	18.3	23.8	59.5	56.2	16.8	15.4
Africa	68 721	225 754	5.5	8.9	19.4	24.8	61.9	58.6	17.5	16.0
Eastern Africa	19 651	72 979	4.7	8.2	18.0	24.8	63.4	59.5	18.3	16.8
Burundi	475	1 671	4.4	6.5	17.6	22.0	58.0	54.2	17.1	15.8
Comoros	40	133	4.9	9.1	19.7	26.3	64.5	61.2	17.0	15.3
Djibouti	61	203	6.4	15.6	23.7	34.6	63.2	60.0	18.1	16.9
Eritrea	268	916	5.3	9.5	18.9	26.6	65.6	61.4	16.9	15.2
Ethiopia	5 553	18 893	5.3	9.9	18.6	28.8	65.5	61.9	18.5	17.2
Kenya	2 117	10 134	4.3	10.6	19.0	27.4	67.8	63.0	19.0	17.6
Madagascar	1 225	4 552	4.8	8.5	18.7	24.9	66.0	63.0	17.5	16.2
Malawi	793	3 221	4.3	7.7	17.4	24.5	63.1	58.2	18.9	16.7
Mauritius	210	369	16.6	30.2	35.6	46.8	77.7	70.7	22.1	18.0
Mayotte	15	65	5.8	13.2	19.0	29.2	82.9	76.0	25.4	21.4
Mozambique	1 436	4 437	4.8	6.5	17.2	22.6	58.1	54.0	17.4	16.0
Réunion	144	298	16.4	29.4	34.5	42.8	82.9	76.0	25.4	21.4
Rwanda	593	2 535	4.9	11.6	19.4	28.7	67.1	63.1	18.8	17.4
Seychelles	13	28	13.3	28.8	34.6	40.1	77.9	68.7	21.9	16.9



Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	Females	Males	Females	Males
							2010-2015		2010-2015	
Somalia	642	1 883	4.4	5.3	16.5	20.7	56.5	53.3	16.6	15.5
South Sudan	646	1 916	5.1	7.6	18.6	24.5	56.0	54.1	16.9	15.9
Uganda	1 425	6 172	3.3	5.8	15.8	21.9	60.7	56.5	17.8	16.4
United Republic of Tanzania	2 666	9 933	4.7	7.2	17.3	22.3	64.8	60.8	18.6	17.3
Zambia	630	2 753	3.7	6.7	17.1	22.1	61.9	57.5	18.2	16.7
Zimbabwe	701	2 868	4.2	9.7	19.0	27.7	59.0	56.1	18.2	16.8
Middle Africa	7 440	25 461	4.6	6.6	17.1	22.4	59.1	55.8	17.2	16.0
Angola	1 195	4 638	4.0	6.1	16.4	21.1	63.0	57.4	17.8	16.2
Cameroon	1 146	3 974	4.8	8.0	18.3	24.4	57.7	55.1	17.2	16.1
Central African Republic	255	620	5.5	7.0	17.8	24.5	51.0	47.8	16.2	14.8
Chad	592	1 873	4.0	5.6	16.1	22.2	52.8	50.5	16.2	15.2
Congo	271	999	5.2	8.7	18.9	23.6	64.1	61.0	18.5	17.2
Dem. Republic of the Congo	3 785	12 669	4.7	6.4	16.8	22.1	59.5	56.7	17.1	16.0
Equatorial Guinea	56	189	4.4	6.6	22.2	26.6	58.4	55.5	17.3	16.1
Gabon	129	464	6.4	13.2	22.6	29.3	65.8	63.1	18.9	17.6
Sao Tome and Principe	9	34	4.3	9.0	18.1	24.7	68.2	64.1	18.8	17.5
Northern Africa	19 450	60 281	8.3	16.7	25.0	32.1	72.8	69.4	19.7	17.8
Algeria	3 869	13 222	9.4	23.0	27.5	37.0	76.5	74.1	22.1	21.0
Egypt	7 676	23 689	7.9	15.4	24.7	31.2	73.1	68.7	18.4	16.0
Libya	423	1 848	6.6	22.8	27.2	38.9	74.4	68.8	19.6	16.8
Morocco	3 807	10 977	10.7	24.0	27.9	38.9	76.0	73.7	21.0	19.2
Sudan	2 226	6 700	5.5	8.3	18.9	25.1	65.1	62.1	18.3	17.2
Tunisia	1 419	3 675	12.3	26.5	31.1	39.9	77.1	73.0	21.3	18.1
Western Sahara	30	170	5.4	17.3	26.8	36.0	70.3	66.9	18.1	16.3
Southern Africa	5 254	13 143	8.1	15.3	25.5	33.5	62.7	56.0	18.4	13.8
Botswana	146	579	6.4	16.9	24.4	34.6	66.1	59.8	18.3	15.9
Lesotho	150	302	6.7	9.4	21.3	28.7	54.7	50.1	16.4	14.3
Namibia	139	472	5.5	10.9	21.0	28.9	64.3	59.1	18.1	15.6
South Africa	4 753	11 584	8.4	15.9	26.1	34.1	63.0	56.1	18.6	13.6
Swaziland	66	205	4.8	9.9	20.4	29.2	58.2	51.6	17.0	14.5

Household living arrangements of older persons (percentage) from the UN Database of the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017									
Data source for living arrangements	Alone		With spouse only		Independently (alone or with spouse only)		With child(ren)		Country or area
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	
	Most recent estimate available								
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Somalia
2008 IPUMS	4.4	3.2	1.3	2.9	5.6	6.1	45.7	68.7	South Sudan
2011 DHS	9.1	11.0	4.0	7.7	13.0	18.7	45.4	54.9	Uganda
2015-2016 DHS	8.9	6.0	7.2	11.2	16.1	17.2	50.5	62.2	United Republic of Tanzania
2013-2014 DHS	12.3	5.3	8.4	15.0	20.7	20.3	42.1	53.8	Zambia
2015 DHS	9.2	8.8	5.7	11.6	14.9	20.4	44.7	51.5	Zimbabwe
Aggregate	14.4	7.1	6.0	12.4	20.3	19.5	49.4	63.2	Middle Africa
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Angola
2011 DHS	12.4	8.6	3.5	8.0	15.8	16.5	52.4	65.6	Cameroon
1994-1995 DHS	16.3	8.5	8.7	18.1	25.0	26.6	45.3	52.4	Central African Republic
2014 DHS	12.6	4.0	4.7	9.0	17.3	13.0	53.2	74.5	Chad
2011 DHS	14.6	10.3	7.8	18.4	22.4	28.8	51.4	53.0	Congo
2013-2014 DHS	15.1	6.6	6.7	13.8	21.8	20.4	47.9	62.0	Dem. Republic of the Congo
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Equatorial Guinea
2012 DHS	16.1	11.2	8.8	16.4	24.9	27.5	44.1	49.7	Gabon
2008-2009 DHS	27.6	36.1	8.2	13.8	35.8	49.9	31.9	33.7	Sao Tome and Principe
Aggregate	15.7	4.3	12.8	19.5	28.5	23.8	60.4	70.7	Northern Africa
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Algeria
2014 DHS	21.8	5.5	19.1	29.5	40.9	35.1	54.8	63.1	Egypt
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Libya
2004 IPUMS	6.5	2.1	4.1	6.6	10.6	8.7	72.6	84.2	Morocco
2008 IPUMS	7.4	3.3	3.1	5.6	10.5	8.9	62.2	75.6	Sudan
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Tunisia
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Western Sahara
Aggregate	11.0	11.2	10.4	20.6	21.4	31.9	48.6	45.4	Southern Africa
2011 IPUMS	8.5	17.4	3.7	8.3	12.2	25.7	57.9	48.8	Botswana
2014 DHS	12.0	15.0	4.9	11.0	17.0	26.0	41.7	45.5	Lesotho
2013 DHS	5.0	8.8	6.5	12.1	11.5	20.9	52.1	53.7	Namibia
2011 IPUMS	11.3	11.0	11.0	21.8	22.3	32.9	48.4	44.8	South Africa
2006-2007 DHS	6.4	8.9	2.9	8.0	9.3	16.8	57.7	62.5	Swaziland

Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	Females	Males	Females	Males
							2010-2015		2010-2015	
Western Africa	16 926	53 890	4.6	6.7	17.9	22.6	55.6	53.9	14.8	14.1
Benin	558	1 779	5.0	7.4	18.2	23.5	61.4	58.5	17.6	16.5
Burkina Faso	741	2 802	3.9	6.5	17.0	22.8	59.3	58.0	15.6	14.8
Cabo Verde	38	134	6.9	18.2	23.8	37.1	74.0	70.1	19.4	17.0
Côte d'Ivoire	1 163	3 245	4.8	6.3	18.3	22.5	53.2	50.4	14.4	13.8
Gambia	80	292	3.8	6.4	17.0	23.6	61.6	59.1	15.9	14.7
Ghana	1 533	5 013	5.3	9.8	20.4	26.9	62.6	60.7	16.1	15.1
Guinea	657	2 047	5.2	7.6	18.4	24.3	58.4	57.5	15.3	14.7
Guinea-Bissau	92	293	4.9	8.1	18.9	25.1	57.7	54.3	15.5	14.5
Liberia	232	806	4.9	8.2	18.6	24.5	61.6	59.8	15.9	15.0
Mali	735	2 468	4.0	5.6	16.0	21.6	56.9	55.6	15.3	15.1
Mauritania	222	789	5.0	8.8	19.7	25.2	64.1	61.2	17.0	15.8
Niger	894	2 773	4.2	4.1	14.9	18.1	59.5	57.6	16.5	15.4
Nigeria	8 568	26 407	4.5	6.4	17.9	22.4	52.6	51.2	13.9	13.4
Senegal	741	2 823	4.7	8.3	18.3	24.2	67.5	63.8	17.4	15.7
Sierra Leone	314	980	4.2	7.6	18.3	26.3	50.7	49.7	13.1	13.0
Togo	357	1 237	4.6	8.1	18.9	24.7	59.8	58.3	15.4	14.7
Asia	549 246	1 273 175	12.2	24.2	30.3	39.7	73.8	69.9	20.7	18.2
Eastern Asia	291 938	566 748	17.7	35.7	37.9	48.5	78.7	74.9	22.2	19.2
China	228 897	478 861	16.2	35.1	37.0	48.0	77.2	74.2	20.7	18.5
China, Hong Kong SAR	1 727	3 353	23.5	40.6	43.2	52.4	86.4	80.5	28.1	23.2
China, Macao SAR	100	317	16.1	36.2	37.6	48.6	86.2	80.3	27.5	23.0
China, Taiwan Province of China	4 763	9 410	20.2	41.3	39.6	53.7	82.3	76.4	24.9	21.7
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	3 436	6 963	13.5	26.0	34.0	42.1	74.1	67.2	19.9	14.3
Japan	42 548	46 109	33.4	42.4	46.3	53.2	86.4	80.0	28.4	23.0
Mongolia	203	764	6.6	18.8	27.1	34.2	72.7	64.5	18.8	15.1
Republic of Korea	10 264	20 971	20.1	41.6	40.8	53.9	84.4	77.9	26.4	21.5
South-Central Asia	171 213	466 403	8.8	18.8	26.1	36.8	69.5	66.5	18.7	17.2
Central Asia	5 850	17 039	8.3	18.0	26.4	34.7	73.3	66.3	19.4	15.6
Kazakhstan	2 022	4 418	11.1	19.2	29.3	34.6	73.9	64.3	19.2	14.4
Kyrgyzstan	459	1 355	7.6	16.7	25.3	32.5	74.3	66.4	19.6	15.4
Tajikistan	520	1 977	5.8	13.6	22.4	29.9	73.5	67.7	20.5	16.6
Turkmenistan	419	1 253	7.3	15.9	25.6	33.1	70.8	63.9	18.8	15.6

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Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
							Females	Males	Females	Males
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	2010-2015		2010-2015	
Uzbekistan	2 431	8 035	7.6	19.6	26.3	37.2	73.5	68.1	19.4	16.4
Southern Asia	165 363	449 363	8.8	18.9	26.1	36.9	69.4	66.5	18.6	17.2
Afghanistan	1 462	5 466	4.1	8.8	17.3	28.9	63.5	61.1	16.9	15.3
Bangladesh	12 036	44 501	7.3	22.0	25.6	40.0	72.9	69.8	20.3	18.2
Bhutan	59	235	7.3	23.7	26.3	40.9	68.9	68.6	20.1	20.2
India	125 693	316 759	9.4	19.1	26.7	37.5	69.1	66.2	18.5	17.0
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	7 148	30 053	8.8	32.1	29.5	45.2	76.2	74.0	19.7	19.1
Maldives	28	164	6.3	28.4	27.9	44.4	77.4	75.4	20.1	18.9
Nepal	2 569	6 510	8.8	18.0	23.2	39.0	70.5	67.4	18.1	16.4
Pakistan	13 259	39 692	6.7	12.9	22.5	30.9	66.8	65.0	18.0	17.5
Sri Lanka	3 109	5 984	14.9	28.8	32.3	42.6	78.0	71.2	21.6	19.1
South-Eastern Asia	63 973	167 877	9.9	21.0	28.5	37.5	73.4	67.7	20.0	16.9
Brunei Darussalam	34	154	8.0	28.7	30.0	43.6	78.4	75.1	21.7	19.3
Cambodia	1 129	3 730	7.1	16.9	24.0	34.3	69.6	65.5	17.7	16.3
Indonesia	22 743	61 729	8.6	19.2	28.0	36.6	70.7	66.6	17.8	15.2
Lao People's Dem. Republic	434	1 472	6.3	16.1	22.7	35.4	66.8	63.9	17.4	15.7
Malaysia	3 074	9 647	9.7	23.1	27.7	40.2	77.1	72.6	20.6	18.5
Myanmar	5 043	11 544	9.4	18.5	27.7	37.5	68.3	63.7	17.7	15.7
Philippines	8 023	21 417	7.6	14.2	24.1	31.8	72.1	65.4	18.7	15.5
Singapore	1 115	2 638	19.5	40.1	40.0	52.8	84.5	80.1	26.3	22.7
Thailand	11 691	22 954	16.9	35.1	37.8	49.2	78.4	70.8	23.1	20.0
Timor-Leste	71	162	5.4	6.7	17.4	23.4	69.5	66.1	17.7	16.1
Viet Nam	10 616	32 429	11.1	28.3	30.4	42.0	80.3	70.7	24.8	19.3
Western Asia	22 121	72 147	8.3	18.2	26.5	34.6	75.7	70.1	21.4	18.1
Armenia	496	854	16.9	31.6	33.9	45.5	77.0	70.6	20.7	17.2
Azerbaijan	992	2 731	10.1	24.7	30.3	40.0	74.6	68.6	19.9	16.6
Bahrain	69	405	4.6	17.4	31.2	39.8	77.5	75.6	20.0	18.9
Cyprus	218	452	18.5	32.7	34.9	47.4	82.2	77.7	23.8	20.4
Georgia	815	998	20.8	29.4	38.0	42.0	77.0	68.5	20.6	16.3



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Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	Females	Males	Females	Males
							2010-2015		2010-2015	
Iraq	1 920	7 454	5.0	9.1	19.4	24.7	71.4	67.0	18.6	16.2
Israel	1 342	2 715	16.1	21.6	30.2	35.1	83.7	80.0	25.6	23.1
Jordan	549	2 178	5.7	15.4	22.1	32.1	75.5	72.2	20.2	17.8
Kuwait	201	1 158	4.9	20.5	33.4	38.1	75.5	73.5	18.0	17.4
Lebanon	730	1 688	12.0	31.2	28.5	47.6	80.9	77.3	23.8	20.5
Oman	185	1 373	4.0	20.3	29.0	39.9	78.7	74.5	22.0	19.3
Qatar	74	689	2.8	18.2	31.3	40.5	79.4	76.9	21.6	20.1
Saudi Arabia	1 855	10 323	5.6	22.9	29.8	39.6	75.6	72.7	19.7	17.4
State of Palestine	227	1 022	4.6	10.5	19.3	27.6	74.8	71.1	19.8	17.3
Syrian Arab Republic	1 246	5 461	6.8	16.1	20.2	34.1	76.3	64.4	20.9	17.3
Turkey	9 686	25 428	12.0	26.6	29.9	41.8	78.1	71.5	22.7	18.6
United Arab Emirates	224	2 461	2.4	18.7	33.4	40.4	78.2	76.0	20.6	19.5
Yemen	1 292	4 758	4.6	9.8	19.2	29.3	65.6	62.8	17.1	15.4
Europe	182 982	247 227	24.7	34.5	41.6	46.6	80.7	73.7	23.9	19.9
Eastern Europe	65 746	84 745	22.5	32.8	39.6	44.6	77.1	67.3	21.4	16.4
Belarus	2 019	2 694	21.3	31.4	39.6	43.2	77.7	66.5	21.4	15.0
Bulgaria	1 961	1 976	27.7	36.4	43.5	48.1	77.8	70.8	21.4	17.1
Czechia	2 714	3 691	25.6	36.7	41.4	47.9	81.2	75.1	23.3	19.2
Hungary	2 524	2 876	26.0	34.7	41.7	48.5	78.9	71.7	22.1	17.3
Poland	9 152	12 809	24.0	39.5	39.7	52.2	81.0	72.9	23.7	18.7
Republic of Moldova	712	1 136	17.6	34.5	35.6	50.0	75.2	66.7	19.5	14.6
Romania	4 892	5 810	24.9	35.4	41.3	48.0	78.4	71.4	21.8	17.8
Russian Federation	30 328	39 712	21.1	29.9	38.7	41.4	75.9	64.7	21.0	15.5
Slovakia	1 189	1 797	21.8	36.2	39.2	49.0	79.8	72.7	22.6	17.9
Ukraine	10 254	12 245	23.2	33.6	40.3	45.4	76.0	66.1	20.5	15.4
Northern Europe	25 176	36 783	24.2	31.3	40.4	43.9	82.7	78.3	25.0	22.0
Channel Islands	41	63	24.5	35.1	42.7	48.2	82.4	78.7	24.9	21.5
Denmark	1 451	1 894	25.3	30.0	41.6	44.2	82.2	78.1	24.4	21.4
Estonia	339	419	25.9	36.6	41.6	47.2	81.2	71.9	24.0	18.0
Finland	1 535	1 862	27.8	31.7	42.5	44.7	83.7	77.7	25.8	21.6
Iceland	67	119	20.1	30.6	36.0	44.1	83.8	80.6	25.4	23.2

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Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
							Females	Males	Females	Males
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	2010-2015		2010-2015	
Ireland	909	1 789	19.1	30.8	36.9	42.6	83.0	78.7	25.1	22.1
Latvia	512	536	26.2	35.3	42.5	46.4	78.7	68.8	22.2	16.4
Lithuania	730	784	25.3	32.6	42.7	46.2	79.3	68.5	23.0	16.9
Norway	1 186	1 998	22.3	29.4	39.2	43.2	83.6	79.5	25.6	22.4
Sweden	2 525	3 535	25.5	30.4	40.9	43.2	83.7	80.0	25.6	22.7
United Kingdom	15 849	23 738	23.9	31.5	40.2	43.9	82.8	79.0	25.2	22.4
Southern Europe	40 899	56 186	26.9	40.1	43.9	51.3	83.7	78.4	25.8	21.8
Albania	558	909	19.0	34.1	36.2	49.5	79.9	75.6	23.1	19.9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	821	1 104	23.4	36.1	41.0	50.5	78.8	73.7	21.8	18.5
Croatia	1 122	1 282	26.8	37.1	42.6	49.8	80.4	73.6	22.7	18.2
Greece	2 957	4 153	26.5	41.6	43.3	52.8	83.3	78.0	25.3	21.9
Italy	17 427	22 197	29.4	40.3	45.9	51.4	84.7	79.9	26.5	22.6
Malta	112	154	26.1	36.8	40.9	50.2	82.0	78.6	23.9	21.5
Montenegro	134	189	21.3	32.1	37.7	46.4	78.8	74.0	21.6	18.5
Portugal	2 880	3 748	27.9	41.7	43.9	53.1	83.5	77.3	25.7	21.5
Serbia	2 153	2 390	24.5	32.1	40.0	46.4	77.5	71.8	20.8	17.3
Slovenia	546	759	26.3	39.1	43.0	49.6	83.3	77.3	25.2	20.9
Spain	11 750	18 603	25.3	41.9	43.2	52.3	85.3	79.6	27.1	22.7
TFYR Macedonia	405	638	19.5	33.0	37.4	47.3	77.2	73.2	20.1	17.6
Western Europe	51 161	69 513	26.4	34.8	43.5	47.3	83.7	78.4	25.9	22.0
Austria	2 189	3 307	25.1	37.3	43.2	49.9	83.5	78.4	25.5	21.8
Belgium	2 813	4 051	24.6	32.4	41.3	44.7	83.0	78.0	25.4	21.6
France	16 719	22 706	25.7	32.2	41.2	44.3	85.0	78.8	27.3	22.9
Germany	22 996	29 822	28.0	37.6	45.9	50.3	82.9	77.9	25.1	21.4
Luxembourg	115	229	19.6	28.8	39.3	42.8	83.5	78.8	25.6	21.9
Netherlands	4 264	5 908	25.0	33.7	42.1	46.8	83.1	79.4	25.4	22.0
Switzerland	2 044	3 460	24.1	35.0	42.2	47.5	84.8	80.5	26.6	23.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	76 010	198 159	11.8	25.4	29.2	41.1	78.0	71.4	23.4	20.1
Caribbean	6 066	12 240	13.8	25.4	30.3	40.1	75.2	69.8	23.3	20.3
Antigua and Barbuda	11	31	10.9	24.9	30.7	40.5	78.2	73.3	22.8	20.0
Aruba	21	30	19.7	27.7	40.1	44.0	77.8	72.9	21.6	18.0





Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
							Females	Males	Females	Males
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	2010-2015		2010-2015	
Bahamas	54	131	13.5	27.7	32.5	42.7	78.1	72.0	23.8	20.4
Barbados	60	87	21.0	31.0	38.5	43.4	77.7	72.9	21.1	17.8
Cuba	2 310	4 138	20.1	38.2	41.1	50.4	81.3	77.1	24.5	21.7
Curaçao	37	53	22.9	29.5	41.3	43.9	80.7	74.5	24.0	20.9
Dominican Republic	1 101	2 813	10.2	21.2	26.1	37.2	76.5	70.2	23.1	20.4
Grenada	11	27	10.5	25.1	27.2	40.0	75.6	70.8	19.9	17.5
Guadeloupe	106	139	23.6	32.8	41.5	46.6	84.0	76.8	26.6	22.2
Haiti	800	2 137	7.3	15.2	23.0	33.1	64.4	60.2	18.7	16.9
Jamaica	393	783	13.6	29.0	29.4	44.7	77.9	73.1	23.4	21.0
Martinique	99	131	25.7	36.9	43.7	47.4	84.4	77.8	26.8	22.4
Puerto Rico	747	1 142	20.4	34.8	36.4	49.4	83.2	75.2	25.9	21.1
Saint Lucia	25	58	13.7	32.0	32.6	48.9	77.6	72.2	22.9	19.2
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	13	28	11.7	25.7	29.8	42.2	74.9	70.7	20.8	18.9
Trinidad and Tobago	206	368	15.0	28.4	33.9	42.8	73.8	66.9	20.2	16.1
United States Virgin Islands	27	28	25.3	31.9	41.2	44.5	81.5	76.7	24.3	20.1
Central America	17 266	53 501	9.7	23.1	26.6	39.5	78.4	73.2	23.6	21.5
Belize	23	90	6.2	15.1	23.5	34.3	72.7	67.2	18.4	15.8
Costa Rica	669	1 759	13.6	30.5	31.4	45.4	81.7	76.7	25.0	22.2
El Salvador	738	1 548	11.6	22.1	25.8	39.6	77.1	67.9	22.6	20.1
Guatemala	1 163	4 109	6.9	15.2	21.3	33.1	75.6	69.2	22.6	20.5
Honduras	645	2 449	7.0	18.5	23.0	36.8	75.4	70.4	23.4	20.7
Mexico	13 042	40 384	10.1	24.6	27.5	40.8	78.9	74.0	23.7	21.6
Nicaragua	521	1 828	8.4	23.2	25.2	40.0	77.5	71.4	23.4	21.0
Panama	466	1 335	11.4	22.9	28.4	37.6	80.5	74.3	25.3	22.5
South America	52 678	132 418	12.4	26.5	30.1	42.0	78.1	71.0	23.3	19.6
Argentina	6 822	12 951	15.4	23.5	30.8	38.5	79.8	72.2	23.8	18.6
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	1 049	2 703	9.5	17.0	24.1	33.7	70.2	65.3	22.2	20.0
Brazil	26 465	68 871	12.6	29.6	31.3	45.1	78.4	71.0	23.4	19.7
Chile	2 894	6 338	16.0	30.6	33.7	45.1	81.3	76.2	24.6	21.0
Colombia	5 716	15 025	11.6	27.5	30.1	43.3	77.4	70.2	22.5	20.1
Ecuador	1 739	4 997	10.5	21.8	26.6	37.3	78.4	72.8	23.9	21.7

Household living arrangements of older persons (percentage) from the UN Database of the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017									
Data source for living arrangements	Alone		With spouse only		Independently (alone or with spouse only)		With child(ren)		Country or area
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	
	Most recent estimate available								
2010 DYB	13.1	14.9	..	..	..	..	..	..	Bahamas
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Barbados
2002 IPUMS	8.7	10.7	13.1	19.0	21.9	29.6	57.3	49.4	Cuba
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Curaçao
2013 DHS	12.0	13.8	13.0	17.3	25.0	31.1	40.4	45.2	Dominican Republic
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Grenada
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Guadeloupe
2012 DHS	6.7	9.9	6.5	9.5	13.1	19.3	54.0	54.6	Haiti
2011 DYB	16.3	27.0	12.8	16.3	29.0	43.4	..	..	Jamaica
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Martinique
2010 IPUMS	25.0	16.3	27.8	41.5	52.8	57.9	33.9	28.1	Puerto Rico
1991 IPUMS	16.5	17.4	12.0	17.0	28.4	34.3	44.9	45.8	Saint Lucia
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
2011 IPUMS	14.5	15.9	12.6	17.7	27.1	33.6	54.8	50.8	Trinidad and Tobago
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	United States Virgin Islands
Aggregate	11.3	9.8	15.5	22.3	26.8	32.1	57.9	55.5	Central America
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Belize
2011 IPUMS	13.0	11.7	16.6	23.1	29.6	34.8	55.3	51.7	Costa Rica
2007 IPUMS	9.7	10.8	8.7	14.4	18.4	25.2	59.0	57.0	El Salvador
2014-2015 DHS	6.3	5.4	11.8	15.2	18.1	20.6	65.5	66.7	Guatemala
2011 DHS	5.9	7.5	7.4	10.3	13.3	17.9	65.6	65.5	Honduras
2015 IPUMS	12.3	10.1	17.1	24.7	29.4	34.7	56.6	53.9	Mexico
2005 IPUMS	5.3	6.5	5.5	8.0	10.8	14.5	66.2	65.4	Nicaragua
2010 IPUMS	10.2	15.9	13.1	17.6	23.3	33.6	58.2	49.1	Panama
Aggregate	15.2	10.9	16.7	25.6	31.9	36.5	51.8	49.9	South America
2010 IPUMS	22.4	13.6	36.8	39.4	59.2	53.0	..	..	Argentina
2012 DYB	16.7	19.6	11.3	14.1	28.0	33.7	..	..	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
2010 IPUMS	15.5	10.4	17.3	27.6	32.8	38.0	51.5	49.6	Brazil
2002 IPUMS	12.5	10.4	14.6	21.3	27.1	31.7	51.6	48.9	Chile
2015 DHS	11.1	10.5	13.1	21.7	24.2	32.2	58.1	51.6	Colombia
2010 IPUMS	13.0	13.3	14.0	18.0	27.0	31.3	53.3	51.6	Ecuador

Demographic indicators related to population ageing from World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision										
Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over (thousands)		Percentage aged 60 years or over		Median age of the population (years)		Life expectancy at birth (years)		Life expectancy at age 60 (years)	
	2017	2050	2017	2050	2015	2050	Females	Males	Females	Males
							2010-2015		2010-2015	
French Guiana	24	92	8.4	16.9	24.5	32.0	82.6	76.1	25.0	19.7
Guyana	67	126	8.6	15.3	24.6	34.8	68.6	64.0	16.6	15.4
Paraguay	643	1 635	9.4	18.4	24.9	35.6	74.9	70.7	22.2	20.0
Peru	3 350	9 510	10.4	22.8	27.5	38.6	76.8	71.5	22.7	19.8
Suriname	58	133	10.4	20.5	28.4	37.4	74.2	67.8	20.1	16.7
Uruguay	675	1 009	19.5	27.5	34.9	42.5	80.4	73.3	24.5	19.0
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	3 175	9 029	9.9	21.7	27.4	37.9	78.2	69.9	22.6	18.6
Northern America	78 389	122 827	21.7	28.3	37.9	42.4	81.5	76.8	24.9	21.9
Canada	8 590	14 368	23.5	32.0	40.5	45.2	83.8	79.7	26.2	23.1
United States of America	69 774	108 425	21.5	27.8	37.6	42.0	81.3	76.5	24.7	21.7
Oceania	6 915	13 316	17.0	23.3	32.8	37.4	80.2	75.7	25.4	22.3
Australia/New Zealand	6 105	11 075	20.9	28.5	37.4	41.7	84.2	80.1	26.4	23.4
Australia	5 124	9 396	21.0	28.3	37.4	41.5	84.4	80.2	26.6	23.5
New Zealand	981	1 680	20.8	29.4	37.3	43.1	83.1	79.5	25.6	23.0
Melanesia	685	1 962	6.6	11.7	22.3	29.1	68.7	63.8	18.7	15.4
Fiji	90	189	9.9	18.9	27.6	35.2	72.9	66.9	18.8	15.3
New Caledonia	39	91	14.2	24.0	32.8	40.0	79.3	73.7	22.7	18.4
Papua New Guinea	505	1 497	6.1	10.8	21.7	28.5	67.5	62.6	18.4	15.1
Solomon Islands	33	119	5.4	11.5	19.9	28.1	71.1	68.3	18.3	16.6
Vanuatu	19	66	6.7	13.9	22.2	30.0	73.6	69.4	19.2	16.8
Micronesia	55	118	10.4	17.9	25.7	34.3	75.3	70.5	21.2	18.2
Guam	23	48	14.0	24.8	30.1	40.1	81.5	76.4	24.2	19.9
Kiribati	7	21	6.4	11.9	22.4	28.3	68.9	62.4	17.8	15.5
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	8	15	8.0	12.1	21.5	30.8	69.9	67.7	18.0	16.4
Polynesia	70	161	10.2	19.8	25.8	34.9	77.4	72.0	21.6	17.8
French Polynesia	34	88	11.9	27.0	30.9	42.2	78.6	74.0	21.7	18.9
Samoa	17	35	8.5	14.4	21.2	28.6	77.4	71.1	22.0	17.0
Tonga	9	18	8.5	12.7	21.3	28.3	75.6	69.6	21.0	16.2



### Table Notes

Only countries or areas with 90,000 persons or more in 2017 are considered.

#### Notes on data sources for living arrangements:

Aggregate: The estimates for groups of countries defined by region, development group, or income level reflect averages weighted according to the population aged 60 years or over in 2010. These estimates should be interpreted as approximations referring to the period around 2010. Aggregate estimates are shown only when the available data are representative of at least two thirds of older persons in a region or development or income group.

DHS: Demographic and Health Survey

DYB: Demographic Yearbook of the United Nations

IPUMS: Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples from Minnesota Population Center at the University of Minnesota

LFS: European Union Labour Force Survey

.. Indicates that the estimate is not available in the United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017.







Accurate, consistent and timely data on global trends in population age structure are critical for assessing current and future needs with respect to population ageing and for setting policy priorities to promote the well-being of the growing number and share of older persons in the population. This publication presents the highlights of the *World Population Ageing 2017* report, which summarizes the trends in population ageing drawn from the latest United Nations estimates and projections of population by age and sex, as published in *World Population Prospects: the 2017 Revision*. The present *Highlights* includes a special focus on trends in the household living arrangements of older persons—whether alone, with a spouse or with own children—reflecting newly compiled estimates from the *United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons, 2017*.

ISBN 9789211515510



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