



Population Ageing and Development 2012

Number of persons aged 60 years or over There are approximately 810 million persons aged 60 years or over in the world in 2012 and by 2050, it is projected to grow to 2 billion by 2050. At that point, older persons will outnumber the population of children (0-14 years) for the first time in human history. Asia has more than half (55 per cent) of the world's older persons, followed by Europe, which accounts for 21 per cent of the total.

Proportion of the total population aged 60 years or over One out of every nine persons in the world is aged 60 years or over. By 2050, one out of every five persons is projected to be in that age group. The proportion of the total population that is 60 years or older is much higher in the more developed regions than in the less developed regions: one in five persons in Europe; one in nine persons in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean; and one in 16 persons in Africa. Although ageing is evolving fast in the more developed regions, the less developed regions will experience faster ageing over a much shorter period of time.

Share of persons aged 80 years or over The older population is itself ageing. Currently, the oldest old population (aged 80 years or over) accounts for 14 per cent of the population aged 60 years or over. The oldest old is the fastest growing age segment of the older population. By 2050, 20 per cent of the older population will be aged 80 years or over. The number of centenarians (aged 100 years or over) is growing even faster, and is projected to increase tenfold, from approximately 343,000 in 2012 to 3.2 million by 2050.

Sex ratio of older persons The majority of older persons are women and the sex ratio (number of men per 100 women) is lower the older the age group. In 2012, at the world level, there are 84 men per 100 women among older persons, and only 61 men for every 100 women among the oldest old. The ratio of men to women at older ages is lower in the more developed regions (89 men per 100 women) than in the less developed regions (men per 100 women) because women outlive men by a wider margin in the more developed regions.

Life expectancy at age 60 The world has experienced large improvements in longevity, while the gap across development regions has narrowed. In 1950-1955, life expectancy at birth was 66 years in the more developed regions compared with only 42 years in the less developed regions. By 2010-2015, it will reach 78 years and 67 years, respectively. On average, of those surviving to age 60 in 2010-2015, men can expect to live an additional 18 years and women an additional 22 years. Life expectancy at age 60 varies significantly across development regions. Men reaching age 60 can expect to live only 18 more years in the less developed regions compared to 21 more years in the more developed regions. Women reaching age 60 can expect to live an additional 20 years in the less developed regions compared with an additional 25 years in the more developed regions.

Proportion of older persons who are currently married Older men are more likely to be married than older women. At the world level, 81 per cent of older men are currently married, compared to only 50 per cent of older women. Sex differences in the proportion married are largest in least developed countries (85 per cent for men compared to 38 per cent for women), where the age

difference between spouses is higher and widowers are more likely to remarry. Most older unmarried persons are widowed. Women are more likely to outlive their spouses because they live longer and are, on average, younger than their husbands.

Proportion of older persons who are living independently Living independently, that is, either living alone or only with one's spouse, is rare among older persons in developing countries, but is the dominant living arrangement in developed countries. An estimated 40 per cent of the world's older persons live independently, with no discernible difference by sex. The gap in the proportion living independently between the more developed regions and the rest of the world is remarkable. Almost three quarters of all older persons in the more developed regions either live alone or only with their spouse compared with only a quarter in the less developed regions, and just over 10 per cent in the least developed countries. The predominance of independent living among older persons is likely to increase as the world's population continues to age.

Old-age support ratio The old-age support ratio, that is, the number of persons aged 15 to 64 years per person aged 65 years or over, is an indicator of demographic ageing and of the degree of dependency of older persons on potential workers. Since 1950, the world old-age support ratio has been continuously declining, which means that there are less "workers" to support every person aged 65 years or over. The ratio fell from 12 to 8 working-age persons for each older person between 1950 and 2012, and is projected to further decrease to 4 by 2050. In 2012, the old-age support ratio was much higher in the less developed regions (11 working-age persons per older person) than in

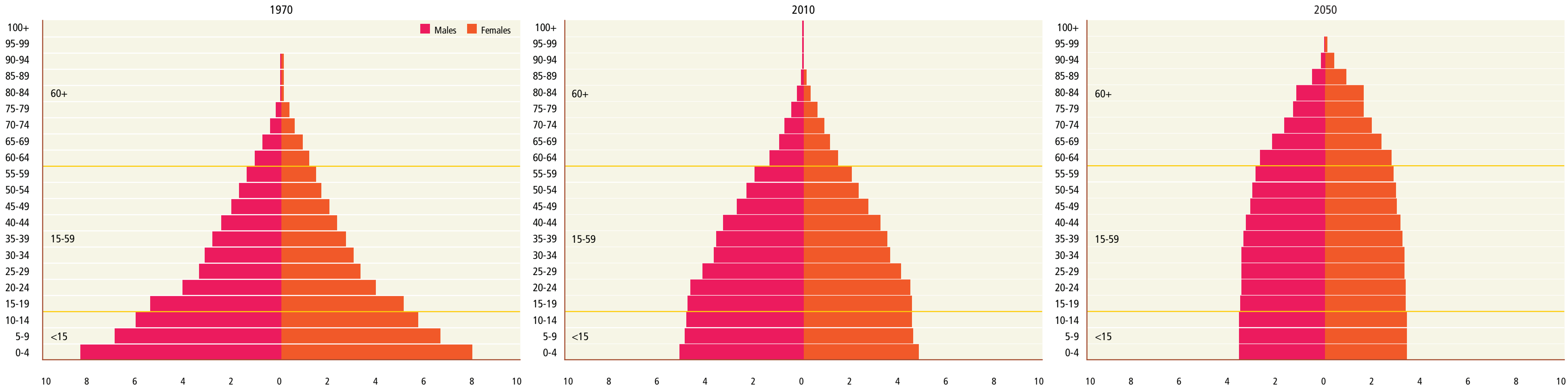
the more developed regions (4 working-age persons per older person). The old-age support ratio has important implications for the solvency of social security systems (pensions and public health), as well as for the demand of private transfers from the working-age population to older family members.

Proportion of the older population in the labour force Labour force participation among older persons varies by development region and gender. In 2012, the proportion of older persons who are economically active is much higher in the less developed regions (50 per cent among men and 22 per cent among women) than in the more developed regions (26 per cent among men and 15 per cent among women). Older persons in the less developed regions work until more advanced ages owing mainly to the limited coverage of social security schemes, as well as the relatively low value of the pensions received by those who are covered.

Statutory retirement age The statutory retirement age, which is defined as the minimum age at which people can qualify for full pension benefits, tends to be higher in developed countries than in developing countries. Also, in all countries of the world, the retirement age for women is the same as or lower than that for men—generally by five years. In most developed countries, men and women become eligible for full pension benefits at age 65 years or over, while in developing countries, they often become eligible between 55 and 60 years. The lower statutory retirement ages common in developing countries is a reflection of their more incipient social security systems, their lower life expectancies and their higher old-age support ratios.

Country or area	Population aged 60 years or over										Proportion currently married, 60 years or over, 2015 ^{1,3}	Proportion living independently, 60 years or over, 2015 ^{1,4}	Old-age support ratio	Proportion in labour force, 60 years or over, 2015 (percentage)	Statutory retirement age						
	Number (thousands)		Proportion of total population (percentage)		Share of persons aged 80 years or over (percentage)		Sex ratio, 2012 (men per 100 women)		Life expectancy at age 60, 2010-2015												
	2012 (1)	2050 (2)	2012 (3)	2050 (4)	2012 (5)	2050 (6)	2012 (7)	2050 (8)	Men (9)	Women (10)						Men (11)	Women (12)	Men (13)	Women (14)	Men (15)	Women (16)
WORLD	809 743	2 031 337	11	22	14	20	84	61	18	22	81	50	19	20	8	4	12	20	..	..	
More developed regions ^a	279 287	418 326	22	32	20	29	75	52	21	25	78	47	75	73	4	2	26	15	..	..	
Less developed regions ^b	530 455	1 613 011	9	20	11	17	89	71	18	20	82	50	28	25	11	4	50	22	..	..	
Least developed countries ^c	46 396	181 568	5	11	8	10	86	81	16	17	85	38	12	13	16	9	68	43	60	55	
AFRICA	59 782	215 249	6	10	8	10	84	70	16	18	82	50	19	20	16	10	60	39	..	..	
Eastern Africa	16 632	63 796	5	8	9	9	83	73	16	18	83	34	16	17	17	12	79	61	..	..	
Burundi	412	1 707	5	12	8	8	69	55	15	16	79	21	B	..	21	9	75	72	60	60	
Comoros	33	148	4	9	8	8	86	66	15	17	85	41	B,7	6	4	B	20	11	78	26	..
Djibouti	51	202	6	12	6	8	84	65	15	16	87	33	B	..	18	8	31	7	73	75	..
Eritrea	228	1 199	4	10	7	6	84	64	14	13	17	..	..	..	22	10	75	45	..	..	
Ethiopia	4 633	17 695	5	12	8	8	67	64	15	16	87	33	B	7	13	A	16	9	82	47	60
Kenya	1 829	8 435	4	9	10	8	84	79	17	18	86	40	A	21	21	A	20	11	71	59	60
Madagascar	1 061	4 888	5	9	10	12	90	91	18	19	75	33	A	19	19	A	17	10	82	67	60
Malawi	776	2 555	5	5	7	8	83	75	16	18	86	43	A	21	21	A	16	17	96	89	..
Mauritius	156	400	12	29	12	24	78	54	17	21	80	33	B	..	10	3	28	11	60	60	
Mayotte	7	58	3	12	13	17	112	108	22	24	..	..	..	..	26	7	..	..	..	..	
Mozambique	1 263	3 606	5	7	8	11	77	64	16	17	86	32	A	28	34	A	16	13	89	81	..
Rwanda	1 086	2 276	12	26	17	29	82	68	22	24	71	39	B	..	8	3	11	7	..	..	
Rwanda	496	2 247	4	9	8	8	84	66	16	17	83	31	A	12	12	A	20	11	73	65	55
Somalia	433	1 637	4	6	7	9	85	73	15	16	..	..	..	..	19	15	48	16	..	..	
Uganda	1 379	5 420	4	6	9	8	82	73	16	17	75	36	B	21	17	B	20	16	78	68	55
United Republic of Tanzania	2 331	8 858	5	6	8	10	82	72	17	18	81	36	B	18	14	B	16	14	82	72	60
Zambia	646	1 882	5	8	8	8	81	71	16	17	83	31	A	20	21	A	16	20	81	73	55
Zimbabwe	785	2 556	6	12	11	7	75	71	17	19	83	32	A	12	9	A	14	9	79	71	60
Middle Africa	6 042	21 799	5	8	8	8	83	67	15	16	81	30	12	9	18	13	74	59	..	..	
Angola	802	3 338	4	8	7	8	83	68	15	16	81	44	B	17	19	A	21	13	63	46	..
Cameroon	1 111	3 638	5	9	9	9	85	73	16	17	79	28	B	19	18	B	16	10	78	51	60
Central African Republic	272	823	6	10	9	8	80	66	15	16	74	37	B	27	26	B	14	11	82	72	60
Chad	534	1 878	5	7	7	7	84	66	14	16	85	16	B	15	16	B	18	14	84	58	60
Congo	235	814	6	9	10	10	86	76	16	18	75	26	A	27	20	A	15	10	59	55	60
Dem. Republic of the Congo	2 942	10 771	4	7	7	7	81	64	16	16	83	29	A	15	19	A	10	75	65	55	60
Equatorial Guinea	24	136	5	9	10	13	111	78	15	16	77	29	B	..	21	11	71	63	60	60	
Gabon	104	363	7	13	12	12	92	72	18	19	76	41	B	27	19	B	14	7	49	48	55
Sao Tome and Principe	9	38	5	13	13	9	76	71	17	17	18	52	29	B	..	15	8	47	15	62	57
Northern Africa	16 668	62 483	8	19	9	14	87	71	17	20	89	43	21	26	13	5	37	9	..	..	
Algeria	2 631	12 200	7	26	11	14	84	65	18	20	94	51	B	..	15	3	18	2	60	55	
Egypt	7 034	24 884	8	20	9	14	85	68	17	20	87	35	A	31	40	A	12	5	29	6	60
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	447	2 018	7	23	19	16	98	74	18	24	92	46	B	..	14	4	39	7	73	65	60
Morocco	2 806	9 503	9	24	10	15	88	74	17	20	91	41	B	9	10	B	12	4	37	20	60
Sudan ^d	2 613	10 018	6	11	7	10	89	77	16	18	89	56	A	8	10	A	15	9	77	14	60
Tunisia	1 112	3 652	10	29	12	16	93	87	18	21	90	48	B	12	11	B	10	3	32	7	60
Western Sahara	25	207	4	23	7	11	129	103	16	18	84	54	B	..	28	4	44	14	..	..	
Southern Africa	4 444	9 603	8	14	8	14	69	43	14	18	76	37	30	19	14	7	25	12	..	..	
Botswana	135	326	7	13	8	10	78	55	16	18	77	39	B	17	19	A	15	8	66	37	65
Lesotho	140	254	6	11	8	8	67	64	15	17	78	31	B	..	12	6	31	7	65	60	
Namibia	139	482	6	13	9	12	76	64	17	19	77	33	A	17	11	A	16	8	44	30	60
South Africa	3 964	8 401	8	15	8	14	68	41	14	18	76	37	A	31	19	A	13	7	21	9	60
Swaziland	66	140	5	8	8	9	76	56	15	17	78	35	A	17	9	A	17	15	54	27	50
Western Asia	15 996	57 568	8	7	8	79	77	15	16	16	86	39	17	19	17	12	69	43	..	..	
Benin	435	1 764	5	8	8	9	71	55	16	17	86	39	A	17	20	A	18	12	76	53	60
Burkina Faso	648	3 131	4	7	5	7	68	60	15	15	91	50	B	11	11	B	23	14	80	44	56
Cape Verde	37	147	7	23	19	16	65	59	17	22	79	43	B	..	11	4	51	14	65	60	
Côte d'Ivoire	1 237	4 016	6	10	8	9	117	101	16	17	80	34	B	9	7	A	14	10	76	44	55
Gambia	64	328	4	8	4	6	110	110	13	14	92	62	B	..	25	13	89	65	60	60	
Ghana	1 530	5 865	6	12	9	12	94	83	18	19	76	29	A	25	20	A	15	8	70	56	60
Guinea	534	1 924	5	8	8	9	86	71	16	17	87	39	B	8	11	A	16	12	63	47	55
Guinea-Bissau	87	265	6	8	7	7	86	70	15	16	..	..	..	..	17	12	64	50	..	..	
Liberia	186	757	4	8	7	7	82	68	15	16	79	31	A	15	6	A	19	12	65	46	60
Mali	569	2 599	3	6	5	6	70	60	13	14	92	48	B	14	20	A	23	16	47	17	58
Mauritania	163	714	5	10	5	7	76	67	14	15	91	47	B	14	15	B	18	6	60	55	60
Niger	640	2 718	4	5	5	7	94	90	14	15	70	49	B	9	8	A	22	18	75	33	60
Nigeria	800	2 899	5	7	8	9	89	76	15	17	88	38	A	21	24	A	16	12	68	50	50
Senegal	507	2 360	4	8	4	5	87	92	13	14	95	59	B	2	2	B	23	12	66	51	55
Sierra Leone	222	831	4	7	2	4	97	153	11	11	84	45	B	7	4	B	28	15	64	38	60
Togo	335	1 298	5	12	9	9	85	72	16	18	80	35	B	13	12	B	17	9	67	59	60
ASIA	416 474	1 252 538	13	24	12	19	50	69	18	21	72	51	29	25	10	4	43	20	..	..	
China ^e	227 560	521 945	15	24	14	24	41	64	18	21	79	61	A	20	24	A	8	2	43	16	60
China, Hong Kong SAR ^f	1 398	3 477	19	37	20	35	90	66	23	28	82	52	B	..	..	6	2	23	8	65	65
China, Macao SAR ^f	70	314	12	38	15	26	109	56	22	25	84	49	B	..	..	10	2	37	15	..	..
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	3 321	6 128	14	23	9	18	63	21	14	24	19	..	..	15	12	B	7	4	65	43	..
Japan	39 967	45 005	32	41	22	35	79	53	23	24	84	55	B	..	..	3	1	42	23	65	65
Mongolia	172	837	6	20	12	14	76	53	16	20	70	33	B	20	18	B	17	5	24	13	..
Republic of Korea	4 123	18 320	17	39	10	14	32	73	43	21	26	87	44	B	..	6	2	51	27	60	60
South-East Asia	136 278	473 859	19</																		

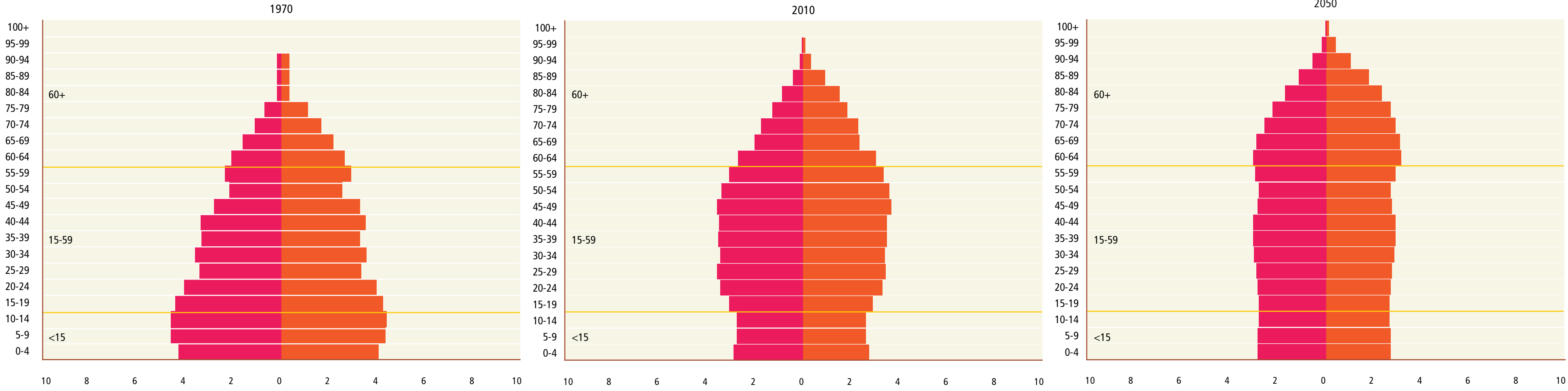
A. Less developed regions



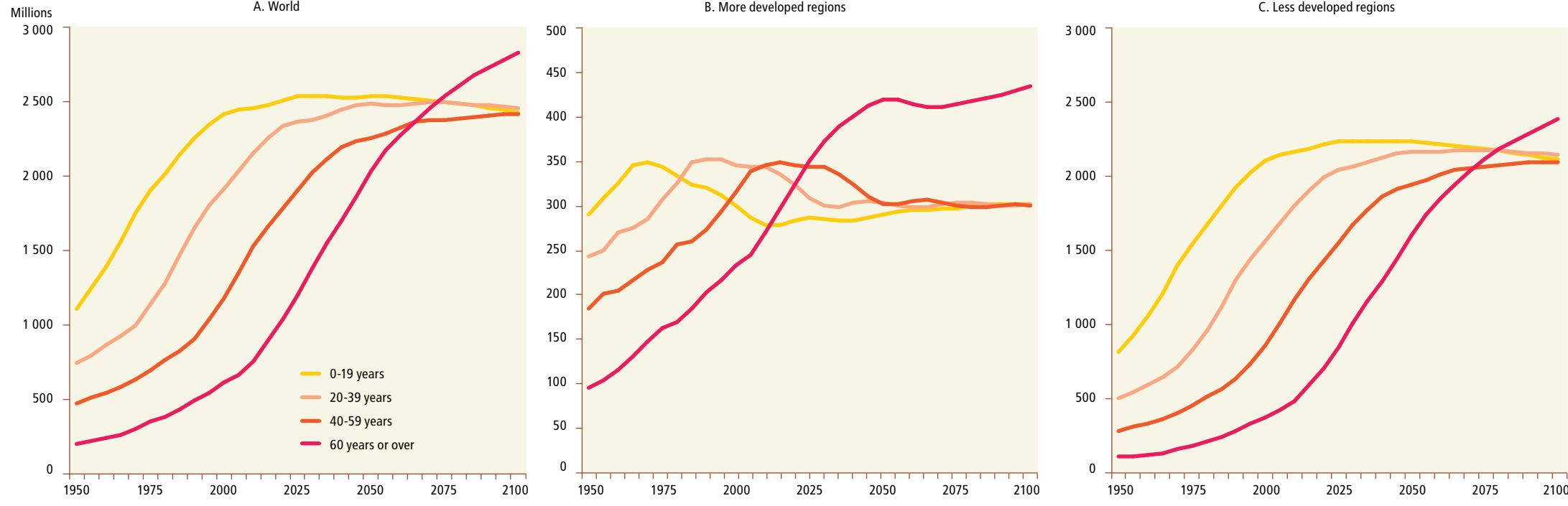
The population of the world is changing dramatically in both size and age composition

The population pyramids for the less developed regions are transitioning from a triangular, wide-based shape (associated with a youthful age structure) to a more rectangular shape (associated with an older age structure). The age composition of the more developed regions is also in a transitional state, from the somewhat more rectangular shape of 1970, which also shows the demographic scars of the Second World War, to the even more rectangular structure in 2050.

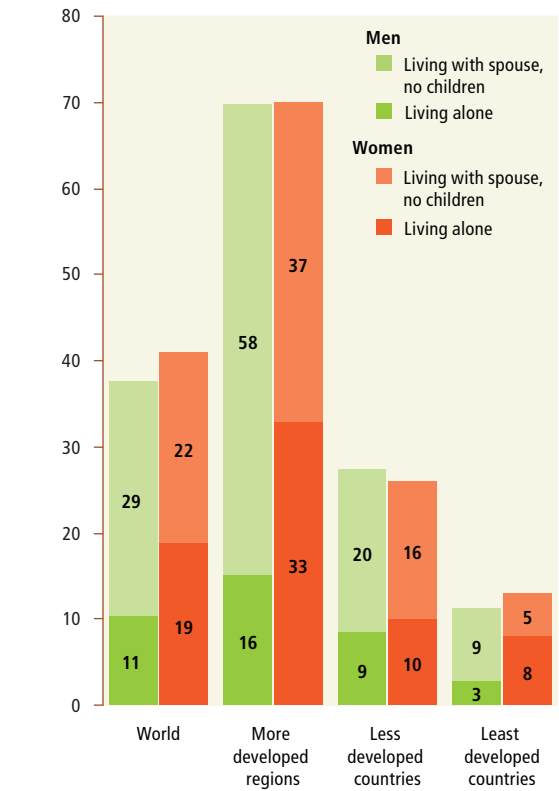
B. More developed regions



Population by broad age groups



Percentage of population aged 60 or over living independently (latest available data)



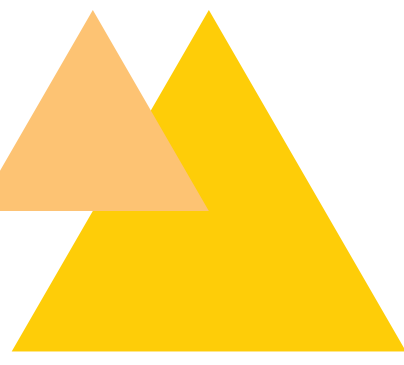
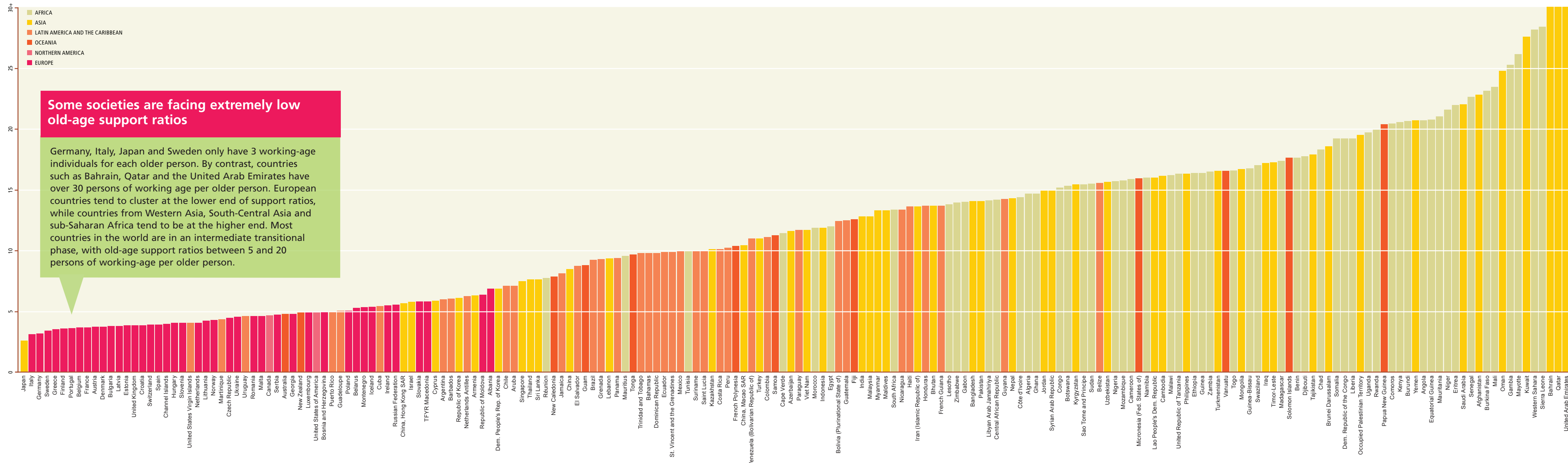
Older persons are more likely to live independently in developed countries

Living independently, that is, either alone or only with one's spouse is rare among older people in developing countries, but is the dominant living arrangement in developed countries. Older persons who live independently represent almost three quarters of all older persons in the more developed regions compared to only just over 10 per cent in

Cohort sizes will become balanced before the end of the twenty-first century

Historically, the population of older persons in the world was small compared to the population of younger adults or children. As a consequence of population ageing, by 2070, the group of older persons is projected to surpass the three younger 20-year age groups: children and adolescents under 20 years, young adults from 20 to 39 years, and middle-aged adults from 40 to 59 years. Moreover, older persons aged 60 years or over will outnumber children (persons under the age of 15) by 2050. Older persons already outnumber children in the more developed regions.

Old-age support ratio (persons aged 15-64 per person aged 65 or over)



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