

Ageing Populations



Population ageing is a global phenomenon and the twenty first century will experience even more rapid ageing than the last one

Population ageing is pervasive but countries around the world are at different stages of the process

- In LEDCs the population aged over 60 is expected to quadruple between 2000 and 2050, from 8% of the total population to 20%
- Europe is the 'oldest' region globally, with 20% of its population over the age of 60 in 2000, projected to rise to 35% by 2050
- The over 80's are expected to number 100 million in India and 50 million in China by 2050

Population ageing has profound implications and in future the following challenges will include:

- Inadequate financial, housing and health resources
- Deteriorating traditional support mechanisms
- Continued decline in fertility and increasing global dependency ratios
- Retirement age raised in MEDCs plus an increased tax burden to pay for pensions and social care
- Likely slow-down in economic growth
- Increased population imbalance between the sexes

The challenge for the future is 'to ensure that people everywhere will be enabled to age with security and dignity and continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights'

And at the same time 'the rights of older persons should not be incompatible with those of other age groups'
(United Nations 2001)

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