

# Population ageing and development: Ten years after Madrid

Population ageing, the shift towards an increased proportion of older persons in the population, is a global phenomenon resulting from rapid declines in fertility rates coupled with reductions in mortality and increased longevity. In 2012, there were 810 million people aged 60 years or over in the world, 178 million more than in 2002, when the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) was adopted at the Second World Assembly on Ageing. The MIPAA set a new international agenda that guides Governments, non-governmental organizations, and other actors to change the ways in which older citizens are perceived, integrated, and cared for, in order to achieve “a society of all ages”.

## 1. Population ageing is taking place almost everywhere in the world.

x The age composition of the population is transitioning to an older structure in all regions of the world. In 1970, the age pyramids had the triangular shape of a youthful population in both the less and more developed regions, although the base was much wider in the less developed regions (figure 1). In 2010, the age pyramid of the more developed regions had transitioned to one that ~~had~~ <sup>peaked</sup> at the working ages, denoting a population where ageing was already under way. The pyramid was still triangular in the less developed regions, with a base that had started to narrow. In 2050, the age pyramids are projected to have a more rectangular, or older, shape in both the less and more developed ~~regions~~ <sup>regions</sup>, a sign of a more advanced stage of ageing.

x The older population (aged 60 years or over) is growing at an accelerated rate. In 2012, older persons accounted for 11 per cent of the world's

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the source of the data in this Population Facts are Population Ageing and Development 2012 (United Nations Publication, [Wachart](#), Sales No. E.12.XIII.6), on the basis of data from World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision (CD-ROM Edition-Extended Dataset (United Nations Publication, Sales No.11.XIII.7)).

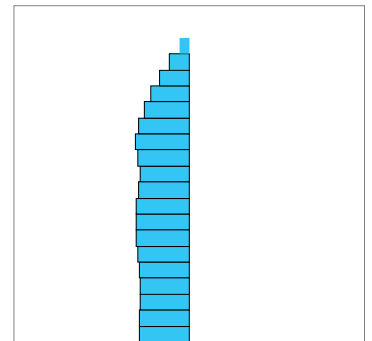
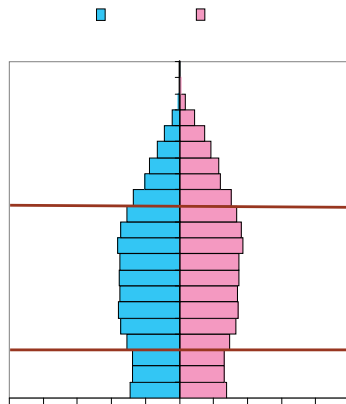
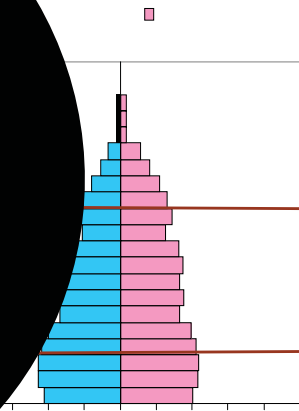
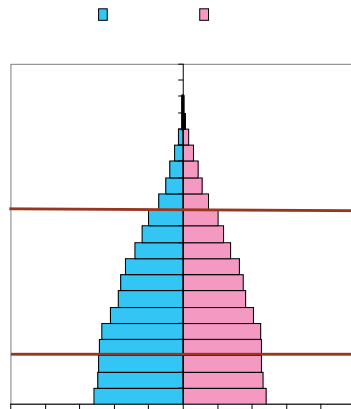
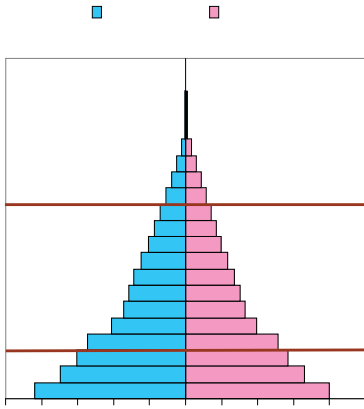
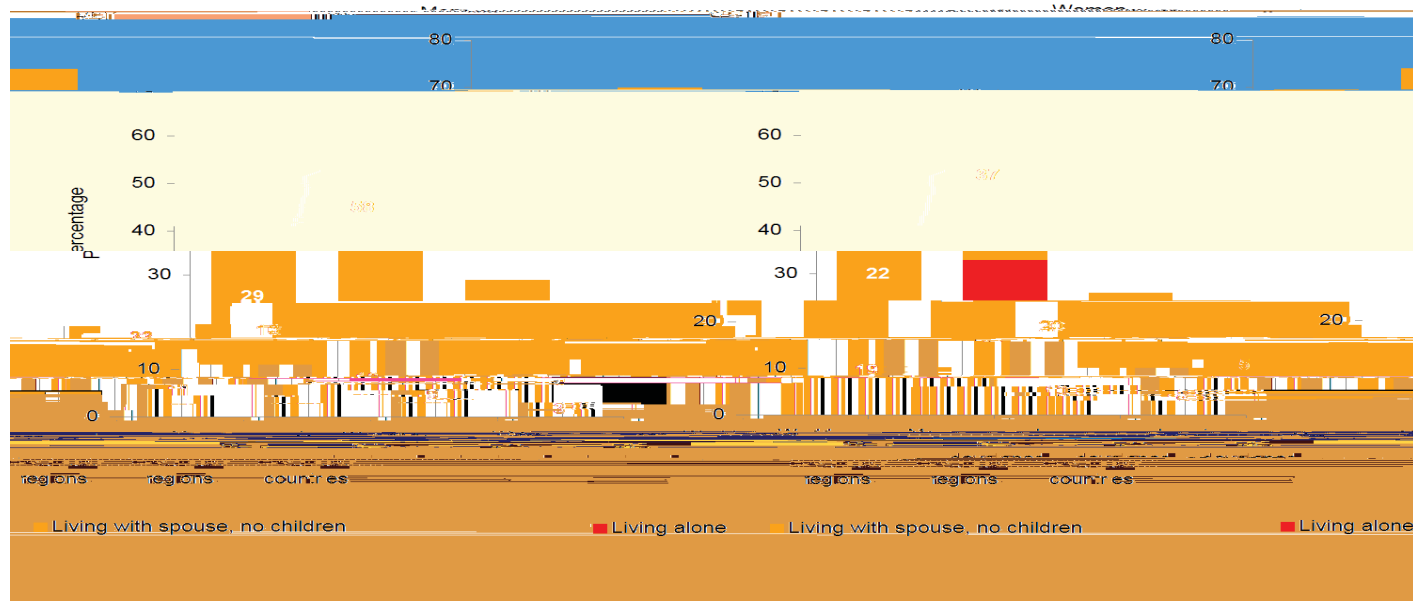




Figure 3: Proportion living independently (alone or with spouse only) among persons aged 60 years or over by sex: world and development regions, circa 2015



### 3. Population ageing reinforces the need for social protection for older persons

x Fewer working-age adults are supporting an increasing number of older persons. Working-age adults provide the bulk of the contributions to finance social security programmes and familial transfers for the older population. The “old-age support ratio”, the number of persons aged 15 to 64 years per person aged 65 years or over, has been falling in tandem with population ageing. Some developed countries are facing extremely low old-age support ratios, for instance, Germany, Italy, Japan and Sweden have only