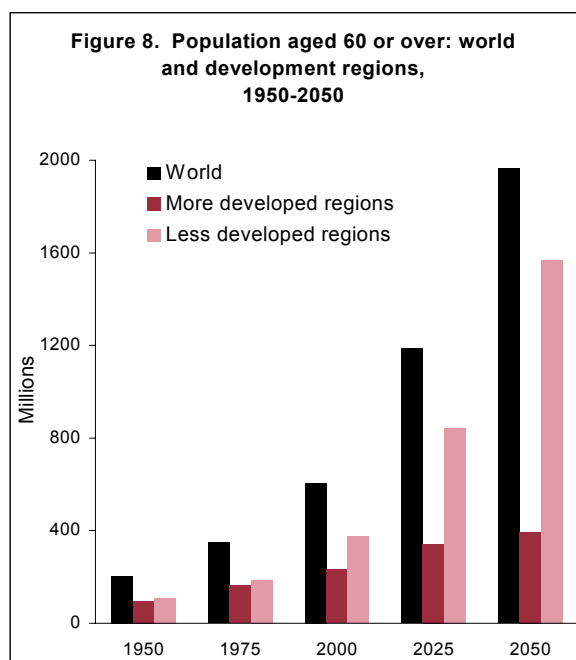


II. MAGNITUDE AND SPEED OF POPULATION AGEING

The number of older persons has tripled over the last 50 years; it will more than triple again over the next 50 years

In 1950, there were 205 million persons aged 60 or over throughout the world (figure 8). At that time, only 3 countries had more than 10 million people 60 or older: China (42 million), India (20 million), and the United States of America (20 million). Fifty years later, the number of persons aged 60 or over increased about three times to 606 million. In 2000, the number of countries with more than 10 million people aged 60 or over increased to 12, including 5 with more than 20 million older people: China (129 million), India (77 million), the United States of America (46 million), Japan (30 million) and the Russian Federation (27 million). Over the first half of the current century, the global population 60 or over is projected to expand by more than three times to reach nearly 2 billion in 2050 (figure 8).

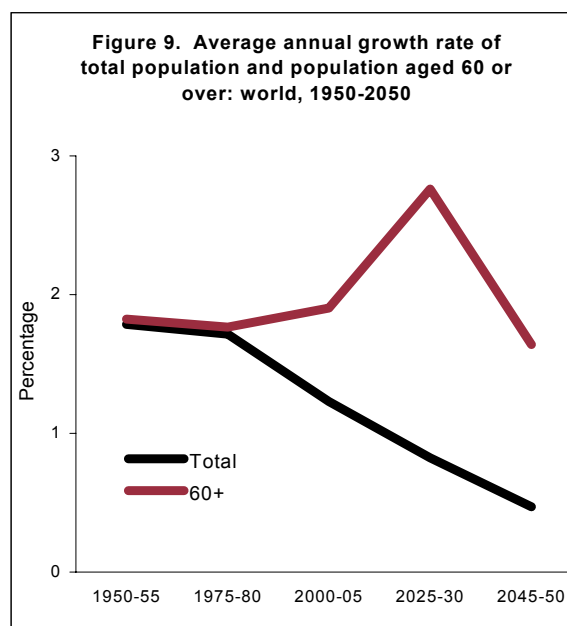


By then, 33 countries are expected to have more than 10 million people 60 or over, including 5 countries with more than 50 million older people: China (437 million), India (324 million),

the United States of America (107 million), Indonesia (70 million) and Brazil (58 million).

The older population is growing faster than the total population in practically all regions of the world—and the difference in growth rates is increasing

In the period 1950-1955, the global average annual rate of increase in the number of persons aged 60 years or over was only slightly higher than the rate for the total population (both around 1.8 per cent) (figure 9).

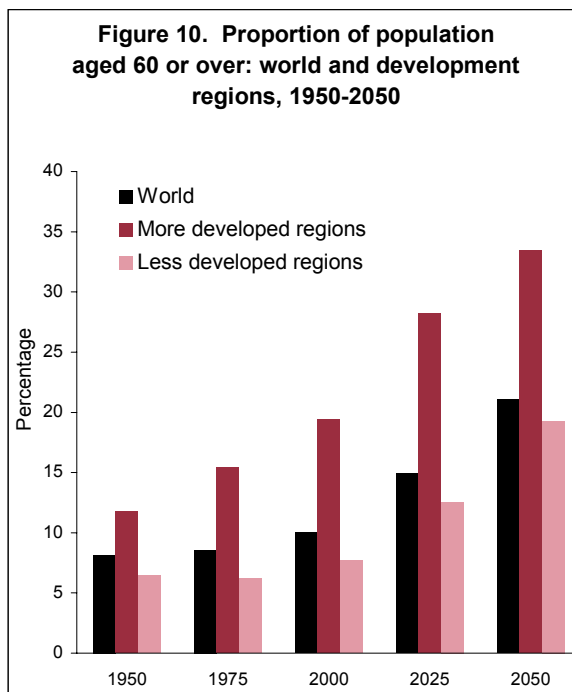


Currently, the growth rate of the older population (1.9 per cent) is significantly higher than that of the total population (1.2 per cent). In the near future, the difference between the two rates is expected to become even larger as the baby boom generation starts reaching older ages in several parts of the world. By 2025-2030, projections indicate that the population over 60 will be growing 3.5 times as rapidly as the total population (2.8 per cent compared to 0.8 per cent) (figure 9). Even though the growth rate of the 60 or over age group is expected to decline to 1.6 per cent in 2045-2050, it still will be more than 3 times the growth rate of the total population (0.5

population (0.5 per cent) by the end of the second quarter of this century.

The proportion of older persons is projected to more than double worldwide over the next half century

As the older population has grown faster than the total population, the proportion of older persons relative to the rest of the population has increased considerably. At the global level, 1 in every 12 individuals was at least 60 years of age in 1950 (figure 10), and 1 in every 20 was at least 65. By the year 2000, those ratios had increased to 1 in every 10 aged 60 years or older and 1 in every 14 aged 65 or older. By the year 2050, more than 1 in every 5 persons throughout the world is projected to be aged 60 or over, while nearly 1 in every 6 is projected to be at least 65 years old.



More developed regions have relatively high proportions of older persons

The more developed countries are in general in a more advanced stage of the demographic transition; thus, the proportions of older persons there are projected to remain significantly higher than the proportions in the less developed regions

well into the twenty-first century. Almost one fifth of the population in the more developed regions, but only 8 per cent in the less developed regions, was aged 60 or older in 2000, up from 12 per cent and 6 per cent respectively in 1950 (figure 10). Although the regional differences in the percentage of older people are expected to decrease over the next 50 years, the difference will remain large through mid-century. By 2050, 1 in every 3 persons living in the more developed regions is likely to be 60 or older (figure 10), and about 1 in every 4 is projected to be 65 or older. In the less developed regions, nearly 1 in every 5 is projected to be over 60, while 1 in every 7 is projected to be over 65.

High proportions of older persons in Europe; low proportions in Africa

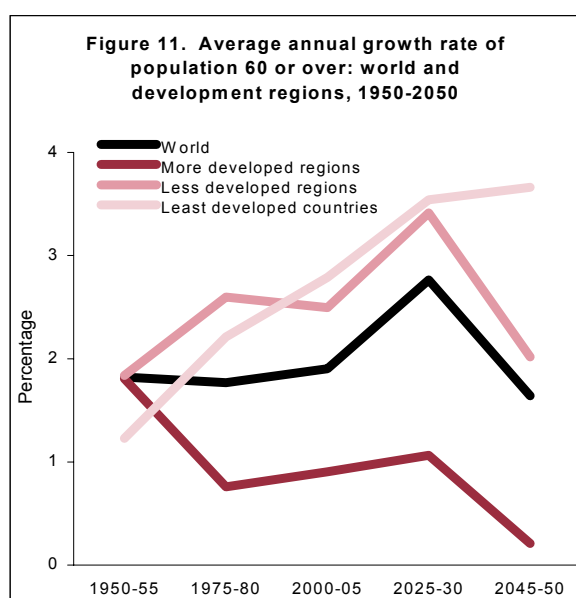
Europe is currently the world's major area with the highest proportions of older persons and is projected to remain so for at least the next 50 years. About 37 per cent of the European population is projected to be 60 or over in 2050, up from 20 per cent in 2000. Almost 30 per cent is projected to be 65 or over, up from 15 per cent in 2000. In contrast, only 10 per cent of the population of Africa is projected to be over 60 in 2050, up from 5 per cent in 2000. The proportion 65 or over is projected to rise from 3 per cent in 2000 to 7 per cent in 2050.

More than two in five persons will be 60 or over in some countries

People aged 60 or over currently constitute from one fifth to nearly one fourth of the population of Austria, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Japan, Slovenia and Spain. By 2050, more than two in every five persons are projected to be at least 60 years of age in those seven countries. Except for the Czech Republic, more than one in every three people in these countries is projected to be aged 65 or older in 2050. In addition to these countries, persons over 60 will constitute more than one third of the population in another 30 countries, including 6 from the less developed regions, while individuals 65 or over will constitute between one fourth and one third of the population of 39 additional countries, including 10 from the less developed regions.

The older population is growing at a faster rate in the less developed regions

In contrast with the slow process of population ageing experienced in the past by most countries in the more developed regions, the ageing process in most of the less developed regions is taking place in a much shorter period of time, and it is occurring on relatively larger population bases. In 1950-1955, the average annual growth rate of persons aged 60 years or over was practically the same in the more and in the less developed regions (near 1.8 per cent) (figure 11).

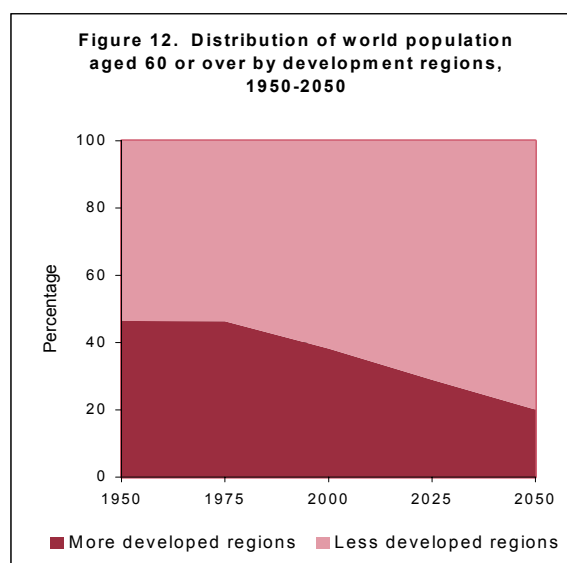


From that time on, the rates have tended to decline in the more developed regions and to increase in the less developed regions. Currently, the average annual growth rate of the population of persons 60 years or over in the less developed regions (2.5 per cent) is almost three times that of the more developed regions (0.9 per cent) (figure 11). Over the second quarter of this century, the growth rate of people over 60 is expected to decline in both more and less developed regions. Still, in 2045-2050, the growth rate in the less developed regions (2 per cent) is projected to be ten times as high as in the more developed regions (0.2 per cent). In the least developed countries, the growth rate of the older population is projected to continue increasing at least until the end of the coming half-century. In 2045-2050, the

population 60 years or older in this group of countries is projected to be growing at a rate (3.7 per cent) more than eighteen times as high as the corresponding age group in the more developed regions (0.2 per cent).

The older population will be increasingly concentrated in the less developed regions

Although the percentages of older persons are significantly greater in the more developed regions, the number of older people is increasingly larger in the less developed regions. Over the last half century, the number of people aged 60 or older increased globally by an average of 8 million persons every year. Of this increase, 66 per cent occurred in the less developed regions and 34 per cent in the more developed regions. As a result, the proportion of the world's population over 60 living in the less developed regions rose from slightly over half (54 per cent) in 1950 to 62 per cent in the year 2000 (figure 12).



Over the next half century, this trend will intensify. In the more developed regions the number of persons aged 60 or over will increase by about 70 per cent, from 231 million in 2000 to 395 million in 2050. In contrast, in the less developed regions the older population will more than quadruple during this same period, from 374 million to 1.6 billion. By 2050, nearly four fifths of the world's older population will be living in the less developed regions (figure 12).