

# Gerontology and Geriatrics

## GERONTOLOGY: STUDY OF OLD AGE

- **Geriatrics:** Branch of medical science dealing with clinical problems of old age
- **Ageing:** Variable process with some elderly having little changes in physiological and psychological variables over time while others such as 80 years plus show functional and mobility impairment

## SUBJECTS BEING DISCUSSED

- Demographic Changes
- Physiological Changes In Relation to Age
- Immobility
- Intellectual Impairment
- Continence
- Rehabilitation
- Institutional Care (Long Term Care)

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

- **Demography** is the science which deals with the size, geographic distribution, structure and composition of human population. It also deals with the principal factors that account for the changes in population size and composition such as births, deaths and migration.

## DETERMINANTS

- Birth Rate
- Mortality Rate
- Migration

## DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITION

- Three – stage process whereby a population moves from high fertility and high mortality to low fertility and low mortality.
- Consequently changes the population structure from a low proportion to a high proportion of older persons.

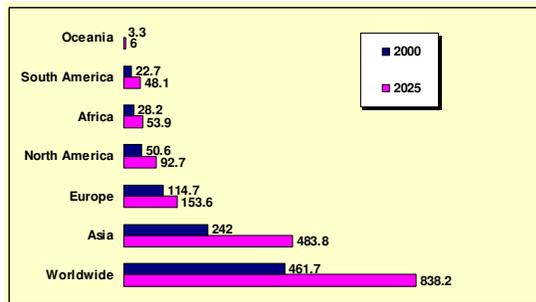
## LIFE EXPECTANCY

- Average numbers of years of life remaining to persons of a given age on the basis of current age and specific mortality rates.
- Male's life expectancy is in the region of 79 years
- Female's life expectancy is approximately 82 years.

## Elderly Population

- The world is going through a dramatic demographic revolution – a rapid increase in the number of older persons in the world. This trend is true both in developed and developing countries.
- To give a picture of how dramatic these demographic changes will be, it is predicted that the number of elderly will nearly double in the next 20 years, and the percentage of the elderly in the total population will increase from 7% to 10%. These changes will be most pronounced in the developing world.

## POPULATION 65+ (IN MILLIONS)

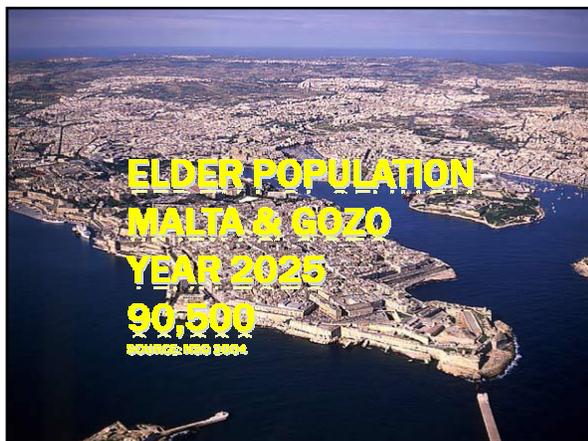


Source: Statistical Abstract, 2004, MASHAV

## POPULATION 65+ AND 80+ IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 2000-2025 (PERCENTAGE)

		65+		80+	
		2000	2025	2000	2025
More Developed Countries	Sweden	17.4	25.4	5.1	7.5
	Canada	12.6	20.7	3.0	4.7
	Australia	12.3	18.6	2.9	4.4
	Japan	17.2	28.9	3.8	10.4
Less Developed Countries	South Africa	3.6	5.1	0.4	1.3
	Argentina	9.7	12.3	1.7	2.8
	India	5.0	8.3	0.6	1.3

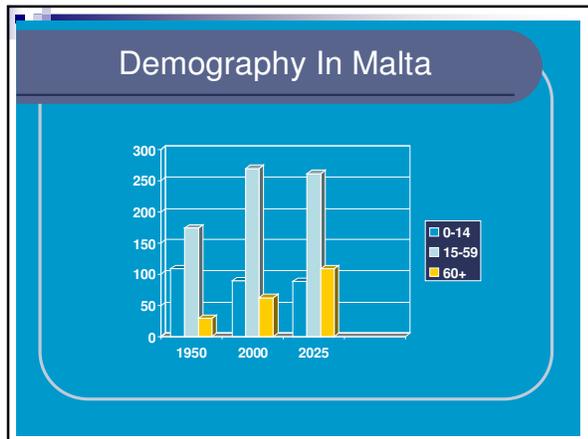
Source: World Population Ageing 1950-2050, U.N. 2002



## Demographic Changes in Malta

- Reduced fertility rate
- Reduction in age - specific mortality (longevity)
- Immigration

As a result, we have an increase in the old population



- ### CONTRIBUTORS TO LIFE EXPECTANCY
- Medical advances and awareness
  - Improved standards of living
  - Control of communicable diseases
  - Improvements in nutrition
  - Socio – economic conditions

- ### CONSEQUENCES
- **Increased** life expectancy and **reduced** birth rate
  - Population Ageing: One of the most significant phenomena of this century. This is so called **Ageing Society**.
  - **Socially**: majority of women are widowed and become lonely
  - **Economically** such as pension
  - **Health** prone to diseases and impairment

- ### Culture of Ageing
- **Growing old is generally feared**
  - **Elderly are not often respected nor revered**
  - **Nuclear families do not include the elderly**
  - **Ageism at times is practiced**
  - **Elderly often seen as sick, senile, and useless**
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- ### IMPLICATIONS
- Without preventive measures
    - Increased need for health care, social services, income security and long term care
    - Increased pressures on families, communities, governments and NGOs to care for the elderly

- ### IMPLICATIONS
- With preventive measures
    - Longer healthy life expectancy
    - Less burden on families, communities, governments and NGOs to care for the elderly
    - Better quality of life and satisfaction
    - Lower financial expenditures

## Healthy Lifestyle



Staying  
Active +  
Involved



Preventing  
Illness +  
Disability



Early  
Identificati  
on +  
Treatment

## THE FAMILY

### From Extended Family to Nuclear Family



- The family in Malta has changed within the last twenty years.
- From an extended family to a nuclear family

### Other African & Far Eastern Countries

- Devotion to extended family
- Elderly have tremendous influence over family decisions



- Welfare State - Vienna International Plan of Action 1982
- Welfare Society - Madrid International Plan of Action 2002

### NEEDS OF OLD PERSONS

- More health care than younger groups
- Frail and at risk
- Can become dependent
- Facing loss such as status partner, friends, health stimulation and independence
- Can become isolated in the community (segregated)

➤ **What Are the Ideal Conditions for Healthy Life Expectancy?**

■ **From a Welfare State to A Society of Ageing**



**Staying Active and Involved**

- A design for an Ageing Society
- Health care professionals share their expertise which will improve the quality of life of older Adults.  
(IFA Montreal 2008).



**FIVE FACTORS OF SUCCESSFUL AGING**

- **LIFE SATISFACTION:** rewarding, few regrets, positive attitude about past and future
- **SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM:** network of family and friends
- **GOOD PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH**
- **FINANCIAL SECURITY**
- **PERSONAL CONTROL OVER ONE'S LIFE:** independence, dignity, and self-worth