

Concentration of the elderly and children in regions

In most OECD countries, the population is ageing. Due to higher life expectancy and low fertility rates, the elderly population (those aged 65 years and over) accounted for 15% of the OECD population in 2012. The proportion of elderly population is remarkably lower in the emerging economies (Brazil, China, and South Africa), and in Mexico and Turkey (Figure 4.6).

On a yearly average, the elderly population in OECD countries has increased almost four times faster than the rest of the population between 1995 and 2012. In most countries, the process of ageing is rather uniform with some exceptions in Mexico, Brazil, the Russian Federation and Canada (Figure 4.7).

The ratio of the elderly to the working age population, i.e. the elderly dependency rate, is steadily growing in OECD countries. The elderly dependency rate gives an indication of the balance between the economically active and the retired population. In 2012, this ratio was around 23% in OECD countries, with substantial differences between countries (38% in Japan versus 10% in Mexico). Differences among regions within the same countries were also large. The higher the regional elderly dependency rate, the higher the challenges faced by regions in generating wealth and sufficient resources to provide for the needs of the population. Concerns may arise on the financial self-sufficiency of these regions to generate taxes to pay for these services (Figure 4.8).

Definition

The regional elderly population is the regional population of 65 years of age and over.

The elderly dependency rate is defined as the ratio between the elderly population and the working age (15-64 years) population.

The child-to-woman ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of children aged 0-4 years and the number of females aged 15-49. This ratio is expressed for 1 000 women.

In 2012, the elderly dependency rate across OECD regions was generally higher in intermediate and rural regions than in urban ones. This general pattern was more pronounced in certain countries such as Portugal, Korea, Japan, France and the United Kingdom; while Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic were exceptions (Figure 4.8).

The child-to-woman ratio is a measure of fertility, and at regional level it may also reveal specific needs in health and personal services. In Mexico, Turkey, Canada, Israel, the Russian Federation and Chile, the range of the children-to-woman ratio among regions is high, notably due to regions with high fertility compared with the country average (Figure 4.9).

Source

OECD (2013), *OECD Regional Statistics* (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

See Annexes A and B for definitions, data sources and country-related metadata.

Reference years and territorial level

1995-2012; TL3.

TL2 regions in Brazil, China, the Russian Federation and South Africa.

Further information

Territorial grids and regional typology (Annex A). www.oecd.org/gov/regional/statisticsindicators.

Interactive graphs and maps: <http://rag.oecd.org>.

Figure notes

4.6-4.9: Latest available year: 2011 for Australia, the United States, China and South Africa. First available year: Australia 1996, China 1998, Denmark 2008, the Slovak Republic 2012.

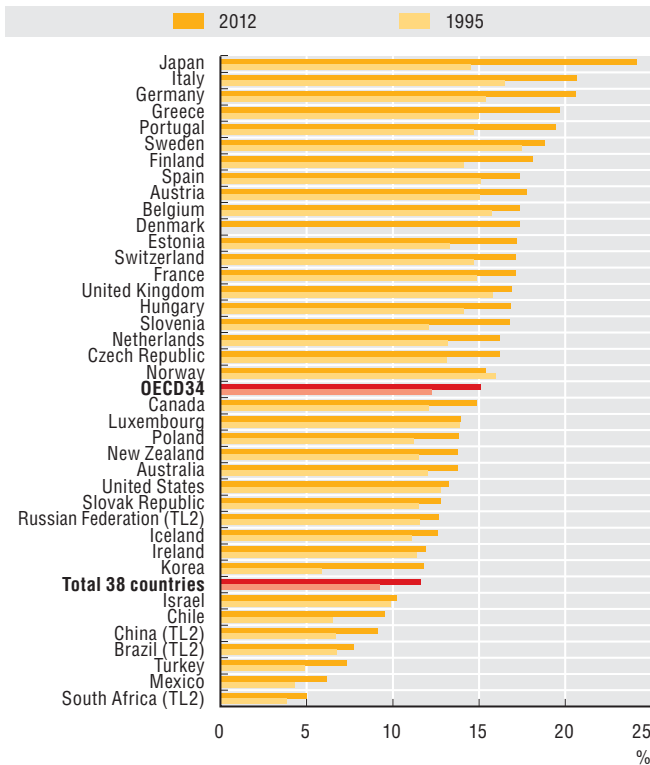
4.8: No rural regions in the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

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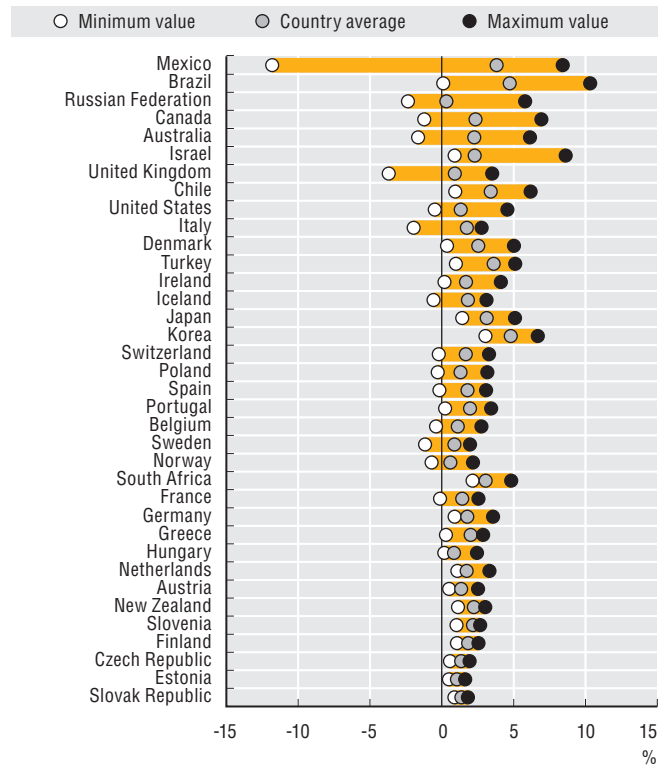
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4.6. Elderly population as a % of the total population, 1995 and 2012



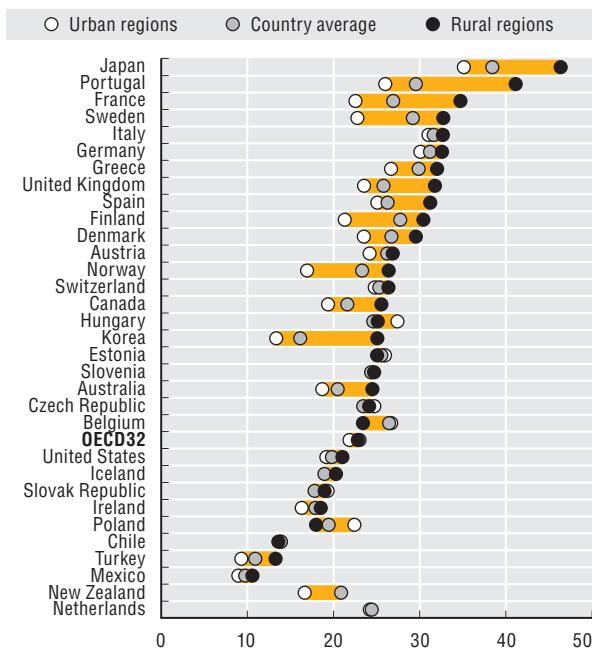
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914235>

4.7. Yearly growth of regional elderly population, 1995-2012



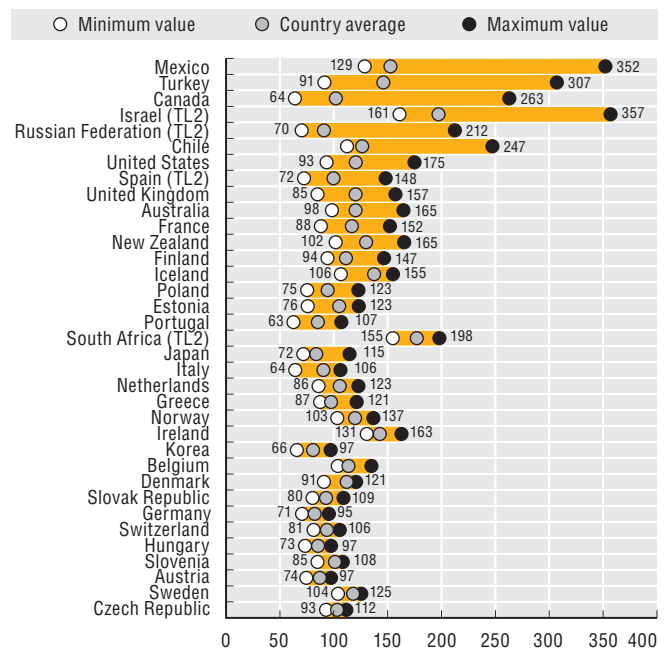
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914254>

4.8. Elderly dependency rate for countries, predominantly urban and predominantly rural regions, 2012



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914273>

4.9. Child-to-woman ratio ranked by size of TL3 regional difference, children per 1 000 women, 2012



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914292>



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