

World Population Day
July 11 2014

Resident population in Portugal with a decreasing and aging trend

On the occasion of the World Population Day (July 11) Statistics Portugal presents a brief analysis of the evolution and structure of population in Portugal over the last years, as well as of population projections for future years.

Recent demographic trends are characterized by a continuous increase in life expectancy, a decrease in infant mortality, increased emigration, the sharp decline in fertility and the resulting population aging. In addition to the progression of population decline, the changes in the population age structure is expected to accentuate over the coming years, as a result of the combined effect of the decrease in the young population and the increase in the elderly population, and consequently a sharp aggravation of population aging.

According to the most recent Resident Population Estimates, there were 10,427,301 people residing in Portugal on December 31, 2013 – of whom 4,958,020 were men and 5,469,281 were women.

Considering the results in the *central scenario* of projections of resident population for 2012-2060 Portugal will lose population by 2060, going from the current 10.4 to 8.6 million residents.

In order to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues in the context of overall development plans and programmes and the need to find solutions for these issues, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme recommended, in 1989, that July 11 should be observed by the international community as World Population Day. This decision comes as a corollary of the commemoration of July 11, 1987, when the world population reached 5 billion, and is intended to draw attention to the importance of demographic change.

In accordance with information from the United Nations Population Division published in the "*World Population Prospects: the 2012 Revision*", the world population has reached 7.2 billion in 2013. The most likely projection scenario made by the United Nations Population Division indicates that the world population could increase nearly one billion in the next 12 years, reaching 8.1 billion in 2025 and arriving at 9.6 billion by 2050.

However, as a result of the sharp and persistent decline in fertility, and despite the steady increase in longevity, there is a growing number of countries where the population has declined in recent years and the aging population escalated. Portugal falls in this group of countries.

Resident population has increased between the 2001 and the 2011 population census but has been decreasing since 2010

The resident population in Portugal at the last census date (21 March 2011) was 10,562,178 persons, 5,046,600 men and 5,515,578 women. The population growth of 2% (206,061 persons) between 2001 and 2011 was due primarily to a positive net migration of 188,652 since the intercensal natural increase was only 17,409.

However, since 2010 there has been a decreasing trend in population. In the last three years resident population in Portugal has decreased around 145,000 persons, as a result of both accumulated negative natural increase and net migration: natural increase of – 47,505 persons and net migration of – 97,915 persons.

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Resident population will tend to decrease over the next years

According to the results obtained in the *central scenario* of projections of resident population for 2012-2060, Portugal will lose population by 2060, going from the current 10.4 to 8.6 million residents. This population decrease trend is observed in all the projection scenarios considered in the exercise.

Accentuated demographic aging

The proportion of youth (population under 15 years) decreased to 15% and the elderly (people aged 65 and over) increased to 19% between the 2001 and the 2011 census. In 2011, the population aging index was 128, meaning that for every 100 persons under 15 years there were 128 elderly persons (102 in 2001).

Resident Population Estimates for recent years confirm the double demographic aging: increase in the number of elderly, decrease in the number of young people and in the number of people aged between 15 and 64 years (working age population). In 2013, the population aging index was 136 elderly persons for every 100 young, under 15 years old.

The population under 15 years old residing in Portugal will decrease by 2060. This decreasing trend is observed in all the projection scenarios considered in the exercise, reaching, in 2060, 1,165 thousand in the *high scenario* (13% of the total population), 993 thousand in the *central scenario* (12%) and 588 thousand in the *low scenario* (9%).

The population aged 65 years and older will increase by 2060, reaching 3,344 thousand in the *high scenario* (36%), 3,043 thousand in the *central scenario* (35%) and 2,729 thousand in the *low scenario* (43%). The steepest increase in the elderly population occurs in the *high scenario* as a result of a greater increase in life expectancy projected in this scenario.

The population aging index may reach 307 elderly persons for every 100 young under 14 years old in the *central scenario*, 464 elderly persons for every 100 young in the *low scenario*, or increase, albeit less sharply, to 287 elderly persons for every 100 young people in the *high scenario*.