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Projections of the Resident Population in Portugal 2008-2060

According to the results of the recent set of population projections, Portugal possibly will keep its population around 10 millions of residents on the next 50 years. Simultaneously the demographic ageing process will continue, either in the total population or the working age population.

Statistics Portugal releases a new set of "Projections of the Resident Population in Portugal, 2008-2060" on its website (www.ine.pt). The current set of resident population projections were produced using the cohort-component method, allowing the elaboration of different demographic scenarios, based in alternative assumptions, for the evolution of fertility, mortality and migration. The results have a conditional character, since this is a method based on a "if ... then..." scenario. The launch population for the current set of projections is the estimated resident population in Portugal on 1 January 2008, by age and sex. The results are presented according to four scenarios: the *central scenario*, which combines a set of assumptions considered as the most plausible in view of recent demographic developments, the *low scenario*, the *high scenario* and the *no migration scenario*, the latter being adopted only for comparative purposes.

According to the results, the resident population in Portugal, which was estimated at circa 10.6 million individuals on 1 January 2008, may reach a number between 8.9 million, in the *low scenario*, and 12 million, in the *high scenario*, by 2060. In the *central scenario* the population will stabilize, reaching a value of approximately 10 million inhabitants by 2060. The value for the *no migration scenario* in 2060 is of 8.2 million.

The results regarding the demographic structures confirm that the ageing process will continue. This occurs as a consequence of the decreasing proportion of the young population and the increasing proportion of the older one. An increase of the ageing index (the number of persons aged 65 years old or over per hundred persons under age 15) and a decrease of the potential support ratio (number of people aged 15-64 per one older person aged 65 or older) may be anticipated. The results also highlight a possible decrease of the working age population, particularly at its younger ages, contributing to the ageing of the working age population.

Positive net migration will not be enough to offset the demographic ageing, either in the total population or the working age population. However, the combination of positive net migration and higher fertility levels, as admitted in the *high scenario* (which also posits a higher life expectancy), contributes to a slower demographic ageing. At the same time, it allows some compensation for the low numbers expected in the potential support ratio.