

Cohesion and ageing society in the EU

SUMMARY

A rising median age, a declining fertility rate, a shrinking working age population and decreasing population growth – not being offset by migration – are currently the main demographic trends in the EU. One in three people live in a region that has seen a decline in its population over the past decade, while Eurostat data show that ageing is unevenly distributed among the EU's regions.

The growing share of elderly people in the population is generating concerns over the sustainability of the social and economic model in many EU Member States and regions. An ageing society has consequences for several aspects, including welfare, labour markets and their productivity, public debt and electoral behaviour. Ageing can be both the result and the driver of a process of depopulation.

Some EU actors have taken initiatives to tackle issues related to demographic change, including ageing societies. The European Commission launched the debate on ageing with a green paper, has presented a European care strategy and has launched a 'talent booster' mechanism in the framework of the 2023 European Year of Skills. Other EU institutions – including the European Parliament – and advisory bodies have expressed their positions on demographic change in the EU, including in its regions.

An ageing population can often present a complex challenge at regional and local level. It is also difficult to influence demographic processes in the short term, as they develop over the long term. Adaptation measures require going beyond a sectoral approach and involve a complex system of interactions, including economic, social, political and environmental aspects. This requires cooperation between all levels of government, business entities and non-governmental organisations.

Meanwhile, an ageing society can also offer opportunities. It does not necessarily mean a shrinking economy, as older adults have specific needs in terms of housing, mobility, care and more. Support for the silver economy sector could therefore contribute to economic and employment growth.



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Some regions are ageing faster

An ageing population and urbanisation represent two [major demographic transitions](#) in the world today. As the [eighth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion](#) noted, while the EU has not yet started to shrink, already one in three people live in a region whose population has declined over the past decade.

EPRS's [Demographic Outlook for the European Union 2022](#) refers to an increasing [median age](#), a declining [fertility rate](#), a shrinking working age population and decreasing population growth (which is not being offset by migration) as characterising the demographic tendency in the EU. With the exception of a temporary drop during the COVID-19 pandemic's most acute phase,¹ life expectancy has been increasing.

According to the European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) report on [The Demographic Landscape of EU Territories](#), despite a general trend of convergence across all EU macro-regions, the process of ageing differs significantly at territorial level. The report underlines the need to look at territorial characteristics in order to assess the implications of ageing. It also suggests going beyond the traditional units of analysis – such as administrative units and rurality – and considering processes like depopulation, remoteness, accessibility to services and lack of economic opportunities.

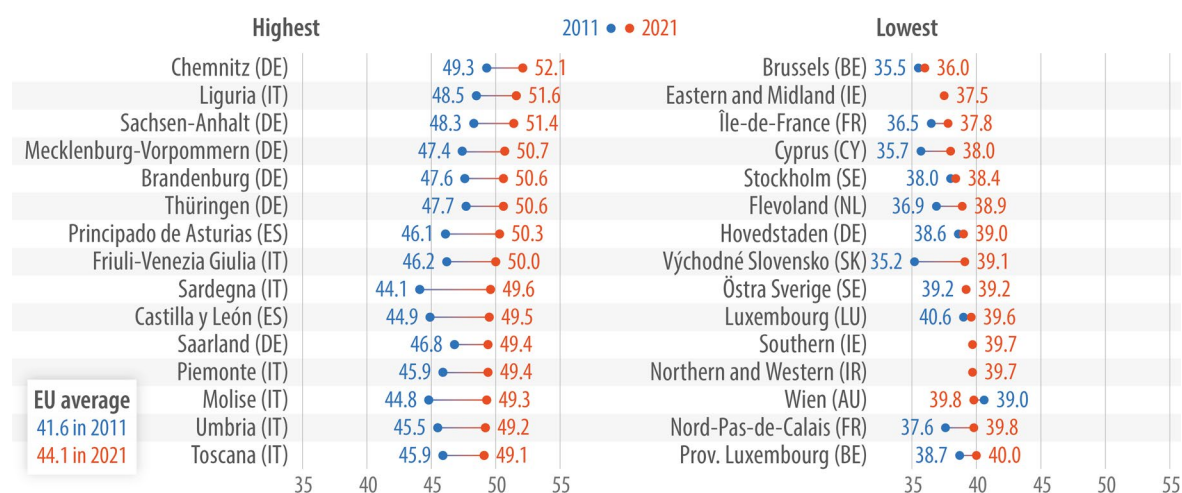
Looking at the consequences of migration, on the one hand it can accelerate the ageing process in rural EU regions in correlation with a decline in the labour force supply; on the other, it can balance the loss of working-age population due to cohort turnover, this effect being more pronounced in urban areas.

Measuring population ageing

In this briefing, in order to measure population ageing, we give priority to [median age](#): the age that divides a population into two groups that are numerically equivalent. However, [Eurostat](#) warns that: 'Care should be taken when interpreting this information, since a high median age may reflect not only greater life expectancy, but also migratory patterns (young people leaving a region or old people moving to it) or low birth rates.'

Alternative ways to measure population ageing include the share of selected age groups in the total population (e.g. the proportion of old people – 65 years and over) or the age dependency ratio (e.g. the [old-age dependency ratio](#): the ratio of the number of elderly people at an age when they are generally economically inactive – i.e. aged 65 and over – compared to the number of people of working age, i.e. 15-64 years old).

Figure 1 – Median age of population, 15 highest and 15 lowest NUTS 2 regions in the continental EU, 2021

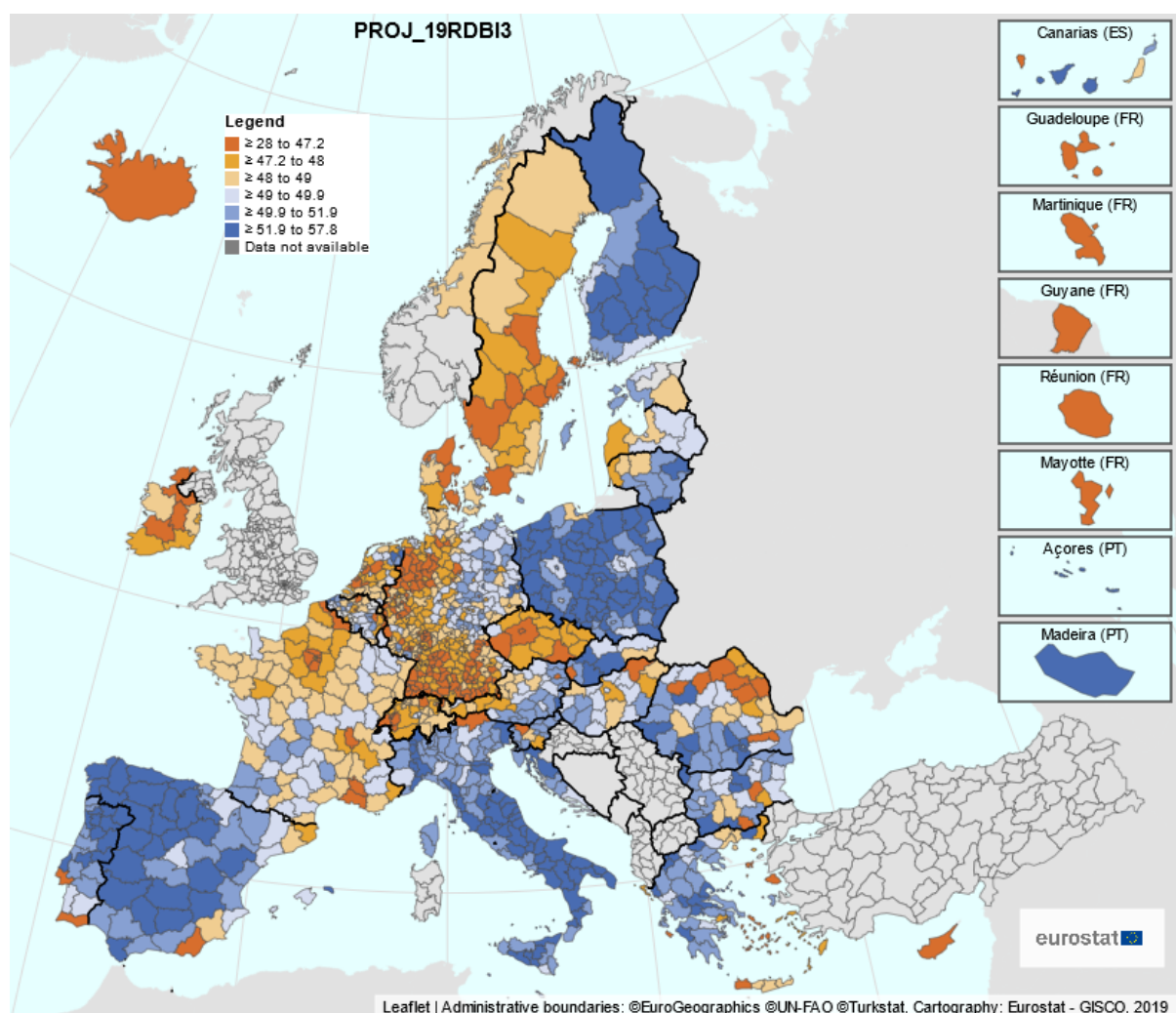


Source: [Eurostat, Regions in Europe – 2022 interactive edition](#).

The January 2023 European Commission staff working document on [The impact of demographic change – in a changing environment](#) underlines how these demographic trends do not affect EU Member States and regions equally. In general, the population in rural areas is already older than the population in urban areas. Some regions in eastern and southern EU Member States have to face the double challenge of natural declines in population combined with a net movement away from rural regions. Some regions attract younger and more qualified generations to move there much more than others; also, young people tend to move from rural to urban regions, while the elderly population tends to be concentrated far from city centres and in areas with lower population density. However, the JRC report argues that this trend has not resulted in a general increase in the difference in population age structures between urban and rural regions at [NUTS 2](#) level. It also associates the increase in the share of the elderly with depopulation rather than with the [urban-rural](#) typology.

Eurostat's [Regions in Europe – 2022 interactive edition](#) shows that the NUTS 2 regions with the highest median age in the EU are in Germany (Chemnitz) and in Italy (Liguria). The youngest population in the EU by far is in two outermost regions of France – Mayotte and Guyane – followed by Spain's Melilla (Figure 1 only features the continental EU). Meanwhile, many capital regions are characterised by a relatively young population structure. Looking at developments between 2021 and 2050, the median age is projected to increase in 95.0 % of all NUTS level 2 regions.

Figure 2 – Median age of population, by NUTS 3 regions, 2019



Source: [Eurostat](#), 2021. The EU average in 2019 was [43.7](#) years.

Some of the highest increases in median ages are expected across Poland (with a gain of 10 years projected in seven different Polish regions). However, the largest projected increase is for Romania's capital region Bucureşti-Ilfov. The projected developments through to 2050 put two Spanish regions (Asturias and Castilla y León) and another Italian region (Sardegna) as having the highest median age, while Mayotte, Guyane and Melilla will remain the youngest in the EU.

Some consequences of an ageing society

While the fact that people today live longer and healthier lives is a great achievement for society, the [increase of the share of elderly people](#) in the population raises concerns over the sustainability of the social and economic model in many EU Member States and regions. Welfare is at stake: pension systems, social care and healthcare, and public personal transfers towards the elderly may suffer from the increase in the proportion of the elderly dependent population. The JRC report points out that a key challenge for ageing territories is access to local services in cities, which may have to adapt their infrastructures while keeping them affordable at the same time. This may include an increasing demand for social and health services, investment in public transport, removal of architectural barriers, and also changes in structures of families and consumption. All these represent challenges for local governments, businesses and non-governmental organisations.

Also, as the Commission's staff working document noted, a shrinking working-age population puts pressure on labour markets, increases the old-age dependency ratio, and raises the per-capita burden of public debt. The JRC report argues that changes in age structure have an impact on territories' macro-economic performance, either in terms of GDP (gross domestic product) per capita, or in terms of labour productivity per capita. The increase in the older segment of the population may have a negative effect in terms of productivity; on the contrary, both GDP per capita and productivity peak in connection with high proportions of middle-aged populations (35-54 years old).

The report also noted that, in general, regions whose population is growing are mostly urban ones attracting migrants and younger segments of the population, and therefore benefiting from the positive economic effects of a younger population structure. On the contrary, regions with a declining population and classified as rural face the more negative effect on economic growth of an increasingly aged population. In research conducted in Italian municipalities, Cecilia Reynaud and Sara Miccoli point to a [connection between depopulation and population ageing](#) and to the possibility of ageing being both the result and the driver of a process of depopulation. Also, political attitudes and electoral behaviour are influenced by changes in age structure: for instance, people in urban and older cohorts show higher levels of interest in politics and increasing turnout.

Initiatives addressing ageing in EU regions

Some EU actors have taken initiatives to tackle issues related to demographic change, including ageing societies.

Regions for all ages

The [Regions for All Ages](#) programme was first created by Age Concern – a UK-wide federation of charitable organisations – in 2002, then extended to EU level in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in 2005. The initiative aimed to increase efforts to adapt regions to progressive demographic changes. The programme built a regional dialogue forum on ageing, agreed on principles for cooperation between public authorities and businesses, and established tools to assist in the development of regional strategies. Discussions were held with the Regional Studies Association (RSA), the European Commission and [AGE Platform Europe](#)² – (a European network of non-profit organisations of and for people aged 50+). The programme's organisers identified three main groups of challenges that regional policymakers focused on ageing have to face:

- policy objectives: in particular, how to define 'old people';

- methods for policy design: what levels of social structures need to be taken into account, and whether strategies should be included in existing documents, or be separate;
- ways of implementing policies: to what extent the regional level is to be considered in the redistribution of resources, the choice of policy instruments and mechanisms for delivery; how to measure the strategy's success; how initiatives can mobilise stakeholders with a view to further dissemination of good practices for active ageing.

SEN@ER – Silver Economy Network of European Regions

The [SEN@ER – Silver Economy Network of European Regions](#) was created in 2005 on the initiative of the government of North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany). It is a Europe-wide network of regions promoting the development and marketing of innovative products and services for the [silver economy](#). The SEN@ER does not look at ageing society as a problem, but rather as an opportunity for regional economic growth, job creation and improving Europe's competitiveness. To achieve its goals, it promotes cooperation with partners from industry, the social sector and public authorities; Extremadura (Spain), Limburg and Gelderland (Netherlands), Limousin (France), Mid-East Region (Ireland) and North West Region (UK) are its leading regions. During the first conference on the silver economy in Europe, held in Bonn in February 2005, the leading regions signed the [agreement](#) establishing the network and adopted the [Bonn Declaration](#) for the silver economy. A joint secretariat coordinating the activities and liaising with the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions was also created. The SEN@ER runs the EU database of documents relating to silver economy issues, a knowledge base of best practices.

EU institutions

European Commission initiatives

Ageing has become increasingly prominent on the EU agenda as a cross-cutting theme for policy. At the end of the [2012 European Year for Active Ageing](#) and Solidarity between Generations, the European Commission, together with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna, launched the [Active Ageing Index](#) (AAI) to measure the untapped potential of seniors across the EU in terms of employment, participation in social and cultural life, and independent living.

Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

When referring to reducing disparities between regions, Article 174.3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) says: 'Among the regions concerned, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions.'

The Commission adopted its first-ever [report on the impact of demographic change](#) in June 2020. The report highlights that the EU working-age population is shrinking, people live longer and therefore need more care services, demographic trends do not affect every country and region in the same way, and the EU's share of the global population is set to continue falling and therefore is set to impact its position in the world.

Following the report, in January 2021 the Commission published the [green paper on ageing](#). The paper launches a debate on one of the defining demographic transformations in Europe. It highlights the importance of healthy and active ageing and lifelong learning as the two concepts that can enable a thriving ageing society. In September 2021, a [staff working document](#) summarising the outcome of the public consultation on the green paper was published.

In September 2022, the Commission presented the [European care strategy](#) to ensure quality, affordable and accessible care services across the EU and to improve the situation for both care receivers and the people caring for them – professionally or informally.

The talent booster mechanism

In January 2023, the Commission launched the 'talent booster' mechanism through the communication [Harnessing talent in Europe's regions](#). This is the first key initiative contributing to the 2023 [European Year of Skills](#). It aims to support the regions most affected by the ongoing demographic transition and its side-effects and to prevent the emergence of new and increased territorial disparities in the EU. The communication acknowledges the quick decline of the working age population in the EU: 3.5 million people between 2015 and 2020, and a forecast of a further 35 million people by 2050. In particular, 82 regions in 16 Member States, accounting for almost 30 % of the EU population, are severely affected by this decline of the working age population, to which must be added a low share of university and higher-education graduates and negative mobility of their population aged 15-39. These regions need to address specific structural challenges to reverse a talent development trap and to attract more skilled workers. The mechanism has eight pillars:

- a new pilot project to be launched in 2023 to support regions developing strategies aiming to reverse the talent development trap and identifying projects to attract and retain skilled workers;
- a new initiative on 'smart adaptation of regions to demographic transition' to be launched in 2023 to help regions with higher rates of departure of their young people to invest in talent development through tailored place-based policies;
- the [Technical Support Instrument](#) (TSI) will support Member States with reforms at national and regional level, in order to address the shrinking of the working-age population and the lack of skills, and respond to local market needs;
- cohesion policy programmes and the [Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument](#) should stimulate innovation and opportunities for highly skilled jobs, helping to improve possibilities to retain and attract talent in these regions;
- in the framework of the [European Urban Initiative](#), a call for innovative actions will be launched to test place-based solutions led by shrinking cities addressing the challenges of attracting skilled workers;
- a dedicated webpage will provide easy access to information on EU initiatives supporting the development of talent;
- regions will set up thematic and regional working groups to facilitate the exchange of good practices;
- the expertise required to support evidence-based policies on regional development and migration will be further developed.

In line with the [new European innovation agenda](#) adopted in July 2022, the EU already funds the [Deep Tech Talent Initiative](#), a pioneering programme that aims to train one million people in deep technology fields by 2025.

The European Parliament will adopt a [resolution](#) on 'Harnessing talent in Europe's regions' at the end of 2023 (rapporteur: Cristina Maestre Martín de Almagro, S&D, Spain). In a [debate](#) held in March 2023 at the CoR, members welcomed the communication, while arguing that its measures need to be supported by tailor-made approaches steered by a reinforced cohesion policy, with a particular focus on rural areas whose future depends on retaining and attracting young talent.

Council's position

In June 2020, the Council adopted [conclusions](#) on 'Demographic Challenges – the Way Ahead'. The Council invited the Member States to promote skills acquisition in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to address demographic challenges in the face of a shrinking working-age population. It suggested raising awareness of the importance of including underrepresented groups like elderly workers, improving labour market participation across all ages and groups to help mitigate the effects of demographic ageing on the sustainability of social protection systems, and promoting equality. The Council emphasised the importance of solidarity between generations,

and of promoting active and healthy ageing and secure access to the necessary support for the ageing population and their families, including adaptability of living spaces, e-health and artificial intelligence, given their impact on addressing the challenges of ageing and loss of autonomy. Member States were invited to strengthen awareness within the population of the rights of older persons to an autonomous, dignified and self-determined life, and the right to social participation, promoting healthy and active ageing, investing in social protection and paying attention in all respects to the positive treatment of the elderly. The Council also recommended fostering the rights of elderly persons with disabilities, ensuring decent living conditions and full participation in community life. Member States were invited to take advantage of the opportunities resulting from rising demand for long-term care due to ageing and to explore how digitalisation and welfare technology can be better integrated into care services.

The Council also invited the Member States and the Commission to raise awareness of the importance of the silver economy and its opportunities; to stimulate innovative solutions facilitating and giving added value to the participation of the elderly in society and in the labour market, and encouraging and supporting healthy and active ageing across all policies; and to promote the rights of older persons with disabilities. The Commission was invited to launch a comprehensive reflection on population ageing and its full implications, including its long-term effects on the EU's economy and society, followed by concrete initiatives that aim to turn this challenge into new opportunities. The Council also asked to ensure that investments through EU funds make a tangible contribution to addressing demographic challenges at national and regional level.

The views of the advisory bodies of the EU

The Committee of the Regions 2017 [opinion](#) on 'The demographic challenges facing the EU' suggested that the EU response to the demographic challenge is poorly developed and limited, as it focuses almost exclusively on ageing. Cohesion policy should play a more vigorous role in tackling demographic challenges, in accordance with the explicit mandate of Article 174 TFEU. The CoR considers that the contribution made by migration is only a short-term solution and will not be enough to resolve the problem of the falling birth rate and the general ageing of the population. It encourages European regions and cities to seize the opportunities associated with demographic change, such as those related to the silver economy. The CoR stresses the importance of guaranteeing access to services to those remaining in regions with a shrinking population, often older people. It also underlines that the ageing of the population is a major concern in rural areas, which is why the common agricultural policy (CAP) is promoting generational renewal and women's employment.

In its [opinion](#) on 'Active and healthy ageing', adopted in October 2019, the CoR calls for a strong public health programme and for the budgetary prioritisation of health promotion, disease prevention and reduction of health inequalities in the EU's post-2020 research programme. The challenges of demographic change will require research and for European industry to be active in order to modernise, design and produce innovative solutions for an ageing population: this could be an opportunity for the EU to position itself as a market leader in the silver economy.

In December 2020, the CoR adopted an [opinion](#), prepared by a [report](#), on 'Demographic change: proposals on measuring and tackling its negative effects in the EU regions'. The CoR draws attention to the significantly different growth trends of the population across EU Member States and regions and advocates the need to reduce the fertility gap (the difference between the actual and the

The European Covenant on Demographic Change

In its 2020 opinion, the CoR recalled its support for the European Covenant on Demographic Change. Launched in December 2015 at the CoR in Brussels, and meeting during the CoR Open Days, it gathers European public authorities at local, regional and national level that are committed to developing and implementing an action plan on age-friendly environments based on the [WHO Age-Friendly Cities' Guide](#) and in the spirit of the 2013 [Dublin Declaration](#) on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe.

desired number of children) as a priority versus incentivising migration. The CoR intends to develop the role of elderly people as resources for the community, not just recipients of care, by encouraging them to become active in society. It also proposed to reduce the health and caring costs of an ageing society by encouraging active and healthy ageing, to invest in new forms of independent living (new concepts of housing) and to promote the social economy. The CoR recalls the similarity of positions with the European Parliament on several issues, including, in the framework of negotiations on the Structural Funds regulations for 2021-2027, the need to strengthen the reference to demographic change, and to make the application of these funds more flexible in the areas and regions that have been disproportionately affected by the phenomenon.

In an [exploratory opinion](#) at the request of the Croatian Presidency adopted in May 2020, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) argues that the EU's demographic situation requires a holistic approach embracing several social and economic policies. The EU needs to make combating unemployment a priority; the implementation of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) is a very important factor in improving the EU's demographic situation; and the best answer to the labour drain related to internal migration is the social and economic upward convergence of Member States. Immigration alone might not be the solution to Europe's demographic challenge: it can, however, help to address it, provided that it is accompanied by fair and sustainable integration policies to help newcomers become established and avoid integration difficulties.

European Parliament's position

In its [resolution](#) on 'Deployment of cohesion policy instruments by regions to address demographic change' adopted in November 2017, the European Parliament considers that demographic change should be tackled in a coordinated manner through the action of all European, national, regional and local authorities and by pursuing adaptation strategies reflecting local and regional realities and delivering effective multi-level governance both in the architecture of these specific policies targeted at particular regions and in their implementation. MEPs called for greater coordination of EU instruments to ensure a more comprehensive approach to demographic change, highlighting the importance of the EU incorporating demographic considerations throughout the policy spectrum. They suggested a revision of existing policies on demographic imbalances and called on the Commission to propose a strategy on demographic change. The Parliament considers that cohesion policy should play a more prominent role to support regions and provide flexibility in adapting to demographic change and called for the establishment of a legal framework within the future Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) to recognise regions facing severe and permanent demographic challenges.

In addition, the [resolution](#) on 'Reversing demographic trends in EU regions using cohesion policy instruments', adopted in May 2021, calls on the Commission to propose a strategy on demographic change. Member States should propose measures for addressing demographic change, particularly in the most vulnerable areas, in their national recovery and resilience plans and in the programming and implementation of the 2021-2027 cohesion policy. MEPs recall that one of the main objectives stipulated in the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund regulation for the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework is to support urban and rural areas with geographical or demographic handicaps. The Parliament calls for accessible and affordable opportunities to acquire digital skills in a way that is adapted to the needs of the elderly.

Outlook

The European Parliament's 2008 [study](#) on 'Shrinking Regions: a Paradigm Shift in Demography and Territorial Development' argues it is impossible to take a sectoral approach to demographic decline and ageing, as this forms a complex system of interactions involving economic, social, political and environmental aspects. In a 2006 [report](#), the European Policies Research Centre at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow points to four factors contributing to effective implementation of regional interventions for an ageing population:

- political will and democratic legitimacy: leaders elected in general elections are better at implementing strategies for population ageing;
- preparing the ground and establishing a database: creating and implementing the strategy require in-depth research on the demographic condition of the region and its problems;
- financial autonomy of local governments, as its absence may limit the independence of the action and the choice of instruments and resources to implement the strategy;
- agreement to evaluation: a detailed assessment of the effects of implementing the strategy may allow further work to improve and increase the credibility of public authorities to stakeholders.

The Parliament's study argues that giving a response to the problem of demographic regional change implies recognising that the local and regional impact of demographic change is totally different from that which might be perceived at state level. At regional level, a key question is to know whether the regional policy for reorganising the spatial framework for the local population and the provision of facilities would be better directed by giving priority to economic efficiency or by seeking to protect social equity and sustainable development. The study advocates the need to put in place a 'multiscalar system of governance' involving several levels of intervention: supra-regional (EU and Member States), infra-regional (local authorities and conurbations) and trans-regional (cross-border zones and fringe areas).

The implication for public administrations would be justified, according to Warsaw School of Economics sociologist [Andrzej Klimczuk](#), by the fact that the silver economy's new goods and services are created mostly in highly-developed regions with an affluent consumer market, and only in the later stages are products exported to external markets and to less affluent areas. Public administrations are best placed to make better use of knowledge and technology, creation of regional innovation systems and networks of cooperation between scientific institutions and economic experts. Meanwhile a key point is to associate business with this process: again, Klimczuk argues that the example of the 'SEN@ER' network shows that the easy access of small- and medium-sized enterprises to experts in the field of ageing is crucial to identify potential business partners and establishment of offers to older consumers, and to support and use the potential of older workers by implementing age management. Klimczuk also points to four obstacles to building a silver economy in some regions:

- absence of companies and organisations interested in areas with these concepts and of a supporting environment;
- reduction of silver economy offers to wealthy older people;
- unfavourable pattern/structure of consumption of goods and services by seniors;
- these regions are less attractive to older migrants.

At the same time, Krystian Heffner, from the University of Economics in Katowice, and others warn that it is extremely [difficult to influence demographic processes in the short term](#), as they rather develop over the long term. They advocate the adaptation of social and economic spheres and the use of specific opportunities resulting from these changes as a useful strategy for regional development policy. Thus, regarding demographic ageing, it would be necessary to promote complex, coherent and diversified measures to encourage the growth of professional activity by elderly people, support lifelong learning, and improve elderly people's living conditions, including the development of health infrastructure and integration in society. To this end, the JRC report adds that if, on the one hand, policy actions have a limited ability to affect demographic trends – and need time – on the other, policies can intervene to ensure that the effects of the demographic change the EU is undergoing do not have critical repercussions on its economies, productivity, social cohesion and democratic life. One of the examples of concrete policies in the framework of regional policy is to attract immigrant workers in the area of medical services for the elderly, especially in rural areas. The report also refers to a 2020 [OECD study on rural well-being](#), concluding that an ageing population does not necessarily mean a shrinking economy, as older adults have specific

needs in terms of housing, mobility, care and more, and therefore, support for the silver economy sector could contribute to economic and employment growth; actions such as creating opportunities for older people to actively return to the labour market as well as generating opportunities to attract and retain young, more qualified workers, could also be considered.

As underlined by Maria Gargano of the Egmont Institute in December 2022, there are still a few EU countries who have tried to exploit the [new potential](#) that the transition towards a digital and green Europe could create in terms of opportunities for the silver economy, regional post-industrial contexts, and several other potential beneficiaries of targeted policies. She gives the example of Spain, where a ministerial portfolio for [green transition and demographic challenge](#) brings together objectives related to the green and demographic transitions through funding initiatives, especially in regions undergoing depopulation. In August 2022, the Spanish government approved [€55 million in financing](#) to promote activities linked to, among other things, the bio-economy and sustainable tourism in areas subject to demographic decline. Gargano also underlines the need to promote lifelong learning, particularly on digital skills, as adopting digital technology will help people live healthier, longer and more independent lives. Meanwhile, it has been recognised that the [ecological footprint](#) of older people tends to be higher, especially in the case of lower-income families. Therefore, measures supporting the green transition will have to include specific dispositions for this socio-demographic group.

The current European Commission has acknowledged the relevance of demographic change: Vice-President [Dubravka Šuica](#) is the Commissioner for Democracy and Demography, and 'Supporting Europe through the demographic transition' is one of the [missions](#) she has been entrusted with by President Ursula von der Leyen. Friends of Europe's Giles Merritt thinks that Commissioner Šuica intends to set up an [EU agency](#) on demographic transition. The Commission has already presented a green paper on ageing, and has launched a 'talent booster' mechanism, designed to reverse the talent development trap. Considering the growing relevance of the topic, the group of high-level specialists on the [future of cohesion policy](#) – which will meet throughout 2023 – is expected to make its contribution in its strategic conclusions and recommendations, to be published in early 2024.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Further temporary phenomena that are having an impact on EU demography include the return of migrants from the UK following Brexit and the migration to the EU of almost four million Ukrainians – forced to leave because of Russia's war of aggression against their country.
- ² Ahead of the 2024 European elections, [AGE Platform Europe](#) will develop a manifesto and campaign material to get MEPs' support for its European strategy for age equality and for the work of its members at national level.

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