

Worldwide population is ageing, a process that will continue apace in the coming years. By 2030, 1 in 6 people in the world will be aged 60 years or over. By 2050, the world's population of people aged 60 years and older will double (2.1 billion), from which two-thirds will live in **low-and middle-income countries**[1]. This demographic shift has important implications for sustainable development and affects **policies over the life-cycle** – from birth to older age. To fulfill the 2030 Agenda's promise of 'leaving no one behind', it is pivotal to design policies distinguishing population in different age cohorts. Policies related to healthcare systems, education, labour market and financial sustainability should be adapted to **pursue the opportunities of population ageing**, while addressing the rights and preferences of every individual and household throughout their lifecycle, acknowledging the importance of early transitions for later experiences and events.

Driven by data

SUSTAINWELL produces specific data (National Transfers Accounts, NTA) including **private transfers, consumption and production**. It allows us to measure the **impact of changes in population age structures**, assess the impact of past financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic on the **age pattern** of production, consumption, transfers, and savings. The data will be key to inform **inclusive policies and programmes** and formulate solutions to improve **the lives of present and future generations**. The combination of both NTA and NTTA (National Time Transfer Accounts) methodologies allows us to compare gender differences in the market and non-market production and consumption, and in the distribution of transfers over the life cycle. Implementing this accounting logic into a **dynamic microsimulation model** enable us to simulate the lifecycle and consider not only **inter-**, but **intragenerational income redistribution** on welfare state policies.

1 NO POVERTY



SDG1 End poverty across all age cohorts and ensure social protection for all

Despite increasing efforts and commitments to expand social protection programmes, only 28.2% of children aged 0 to 15 globally received child cash benefits in 2023, up from 22.1% in 2015[2]. Governments should increase social investment in childhood care and education and its quality which matters for subsequent life chances. In response to the increase in life expectancy, most countries are raising their statutory retirement age. From a life-course perspective, in a similar way as education and employment, pensions are determined by these earlier events – how long individuals have worked and how much they have been paid.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



SDG3 Enable healthy lives and promote wellbeing at all ages

Being healthy is the most important determinant of our wellbeing, and health differences in adult and old age might be determined by circumstances earlier in life. So, to improve the quality over the course of our increasingly longer lives, government should work towards universal health coverage and increase spending on healthcare and long-term care services that respond to the needs of an ageing population, while encouraging a healthier individual behavioral change and reducing socioeconomic and other inequalities[3].

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



SDG4 Investing in education and learning for a long life

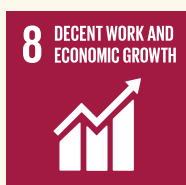
We now know that the education we receive when we are young can have a huge impact on our adult life. This is especially important for children brought up in disadvantaged families. That is why governments should consider the lifecycle perspective when analysing public provision of education. Providing high-quality care to children's early years is paramount to produce an educated labour force which will also enhance the ability to learn in their adult life. This is particularly important in an era of longer working lives and fast-changing economy and technology that impact the nature of jobs which increases the importance of human capital and more need for lifelong learning. Education systems should be more flexible, equitable and adapted to the need of adult learners that can improve both personal development and labour force productivity.





SDG5 Achieve gender equality

In many countries, women continue to bear most of the burden of unpaid care and domestic work. According to the ILO[4], around 708 million women worldwide are outside the labour force because of unpaid care responsibilities. This is amplified in lower-income households, contributing to poverty and limiting their opportunities to participate in the labour-market. Investing in the care economy (i.e., universal childcare and long-term services) leads to stronger female participation in the labour market and combating social exclusion. At the same time, it can help narrow the age dependency ratio and reduce associated fiscal pressures in those countries. Affordable care should be accompanied by better work-life balance policies adjusted to women's preferences over their lifetime.



SDG8 Promote productive employment and decent work for people of all ages

Today, many countries are facing huge demographic asymmetries with shrinking working-age populations. EU's old-age dependency ratio reached 33.4% in 2023 and is projected to almost double from 33.4 % in 2023 to 59.7 % by 2100[5]. This poses challenges on the future of labour productivity. Workforce is also more diverse with flexible working arrangements. People no longer expect to be doing the same work all their lives and their circumstances also vary during their lifetime. Healthy, flexible work and work-life balance policies should be able to capture the dynamics of people's own life projects while providing social protection for all. These policies could also extend the demographic dividend. To maximise the productivity of younger cohorts, further efforts should be made in tackling unemployment among young adults. In 2023, 11.2 % of 15–29-year-olds in the EU were neither in employment nor in education and training[6].



SDG10 Reduce inequalities and discrimination

Many inequalities are determined by accumulated adverse events over the years that have a negative impact on people's life. From the level of education that we attained, health patterns or the opportunities of insertion into the labour market, and as longevity increases, so do the risks of severe disabilities which implies the need for adequate caring services. Under conditions of heightened global uncertainty, governments should give policy priority to the most vulnerable individuals and households. A life-cycle approach must be implemented from the quality of children's experiences in their early years, education, good-quality employment, having sufficient income to lead a healthy life along with public health measures that strengthen prevention and reduce inequalities over.



Target 16.7 Promote inclusive and participatory decision-making

To maximize SUSTAINWELL impact, a participatory process and co-development activities shape the project's implementation from the outset to develop better, more creative, and more relevant outcomes for society. We have engaged with a targeted and diverse groups of stakeholders and public consultations will be launched to gather feedback and receive input contributions in key research topics linked to labour markets, welfare and social preferences. We intend to involve citizens in these public consultations to obtain a closer knowledge of their own needs.



SOURCES

- [1] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ageing-and-health>
- [2] The Sustainable Developments Goals Report 2024
- [3] <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4151898/>
- [4] <https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/unpaid-care-work-prevents-708-million-women-participating-labour-market>
- [5] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Population_structure_and_ageing
- [6] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Statistics_on_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_or_training

