

Re-thinking Technology for older persons

by Gustavo Sugahara

INTRODUCTION:

1. THIS IS NOT A MANUAL
2. Universal Design vs Age-Friendly

OBJECTIVES: "Discuss the importance of political / ideological / ethical implications present on technology design"

[The case of population ageing]

Notes:

SPECIFIC

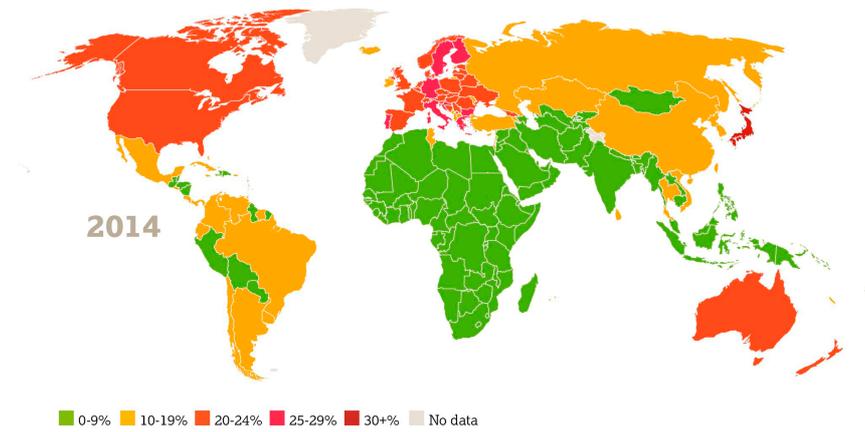
- 1.** Provide a general overview on population ageing.
- 2.** Debate the concept of ageing and its implications.
- 3.** Outline the challenges and opportunities for the reconciliation of technology and population ageing

Notes:

The World is getting older...

Notes:

Proportion of population aged 60+|2014

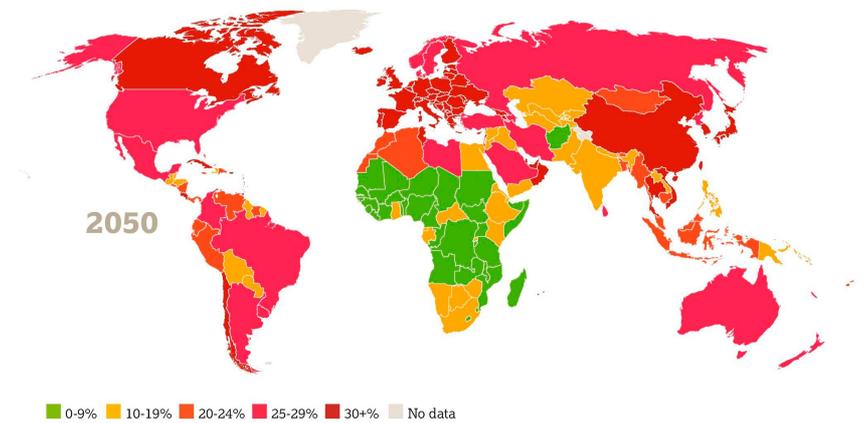


Source: UNDESA Population Division, *World population prospects: the 2012 revision*, DVD edition, 2013

Note: The boundaries shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

Notes:

Proportion of population aged 60+|2050

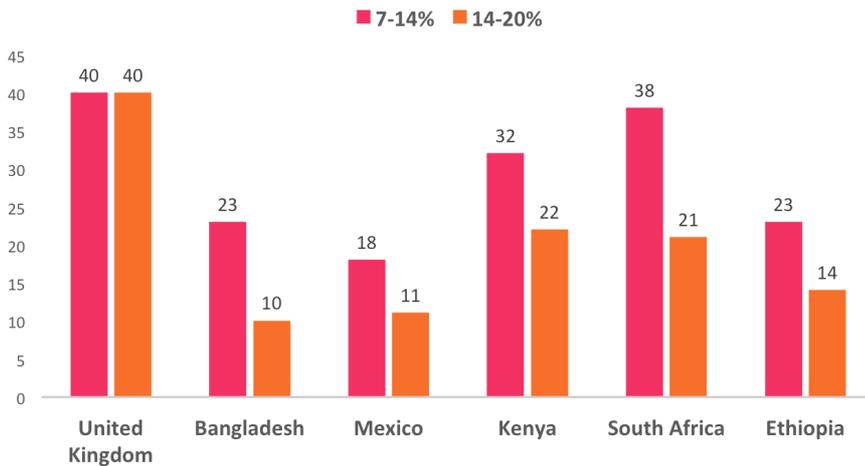


Source: UNDESA Population Division, *World population prospects: the 2012 revision*, DVD edition, 2013

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Rapid Ageing:

"Time taken to increase the proportion of older people from 7% to 20%"



Source: UNDESA

We are getting older in cities...

2007 for the first time in history more than half of the World is living in cities.

Within OECD metropolitan areas, the older population is growing faster than the total population.

The proportion of the older adult population residing in cities in developed countries matches that of younger age groups at about 80%, and will rise at the same pace.

In developing countries, however, the share of older people in urban communities will multiply 16 times from about 56 million in 1998 to over 908 million in 2050.

1/4

Of the total urban population in less developed countries

What does it mean to grow old?

Age is a critical element in the social organization of individuals:

+ Important tool for understanding, assessing and defining policies, such as the allocation of certain social benefits and the focus on specific needs
+ Very important (and flexible?) tool for research iv.

HOW OLD IS OLDER? There is **no international standard** to define old age.

The **UN** uses 60 years and above in most of the reference documentation.

60!? 65!? 70!?...

The risk of segregation

"Chronological age channels individuals in the three core segments into different social institutions and social arenas and consequently to a separation in terms of space, culture, and institutions".
Hagestad and Uhlenberg, 2006

Ageism

"Process of systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this for skin colour and gender".
Robert Butler

Active Ageing

"The process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age".
WHO

Ageism Ex.: Henry Matisse



Henry Matisse: Diagnosed with abdominal cancer in 1941, Matisse underwent surgery that left him chair and bed bound.... Painting and sculpture had become physical challenges, so he turned to paper collages “Drawing with scissors”...

Some critics did not like it and suggesting it was a sign of his SENILITY!?!?!?!?

Disability played an important role as a new “source” of creativity.

Critical appraisal influenced by a stereotype | Prejudice can hinder innovation

AGEISM AND TECH DESIGN:

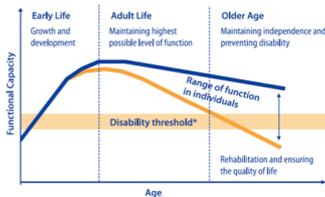
In a consumption based society:
NEW vs OLD



WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE?



Will turn 60 in October /15 Will turn 65 in August /15 Would turn 60 in Feb/15



Universal Design?
Age-Friendly Design?
Intergenerational Design?

Suggested starting point

The Life-course perspective:

"It is conceptualized as a sequence of age-linked transitions that are embedded in social institutions and time' (Bengston et al. in Johnson, 2005, p. 493), this sequence of activities and life situations from birth to death is defined as lifecourse.

1. Individual complexity increases with old-age.
2. Social and historical context have huge influence on individual lives.
3. Experiences do not only have immediate effects.
4. Ageing and human development are life-long processes.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Technology vs Workers?
2. New opportunities in a "neutral environment". Ex.: Online training, avatars, assisted environments
3. "Old Tech" can still produce huge impact - Inclusion does not need to be expensive anymore
4. Technology as a public good (should the state support proprietary technology?)
5. Internet of Things, Big Data, wearables AI, privacy and the transparency dilemmas:

Ex. Movies: Metropolis (27), Blade Runner (82), Terminator (84), Gattaca (97), Her (14).

THANK YOU!



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