

A newsletter from East View highlighting census data from around the world

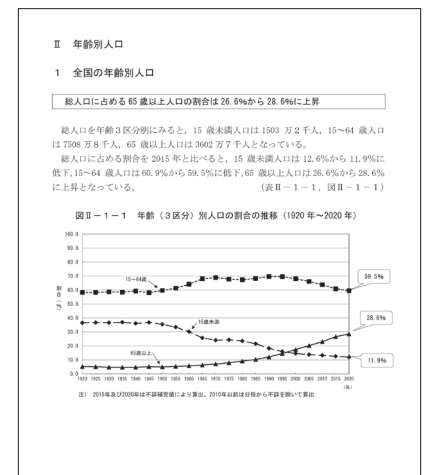
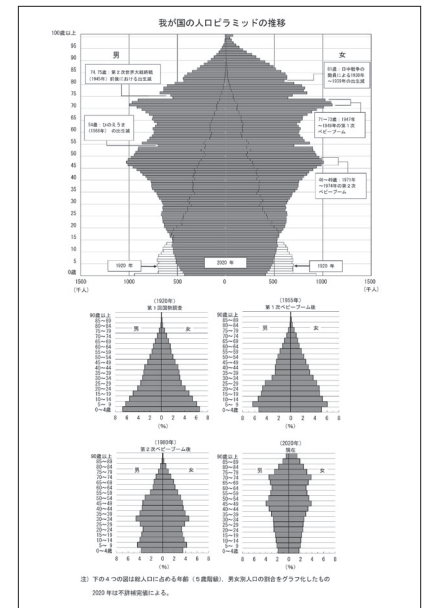
AGING ACROSS THE GLOBE: WHAT THE WORLD'S CENSUSES CAN TELL US

According to a report published by the U.S. Census Bureau, there are more adults aged 65 or older than there are children 5 or under for the first time in human history. This means that senior citizens make up roughly 11% of the world's population. The same report also projects that trajectory of aging will continue and adults aged 65 or older will make up 20% world population by 2060. Many researchers and policy makers believe that an aging global population will define the social and economic challenges of the coming decades.

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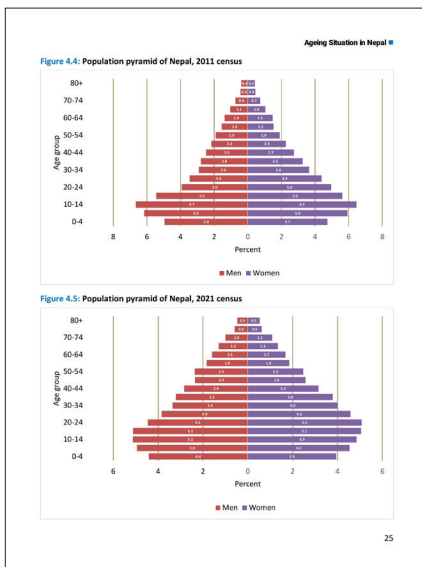
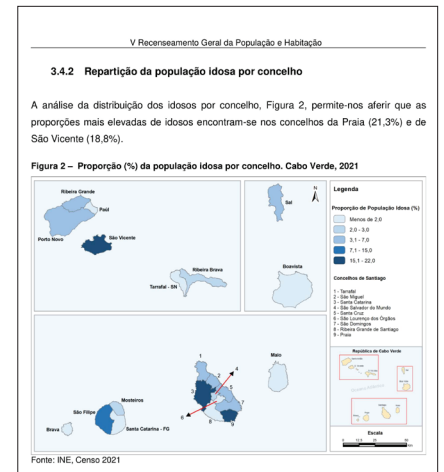
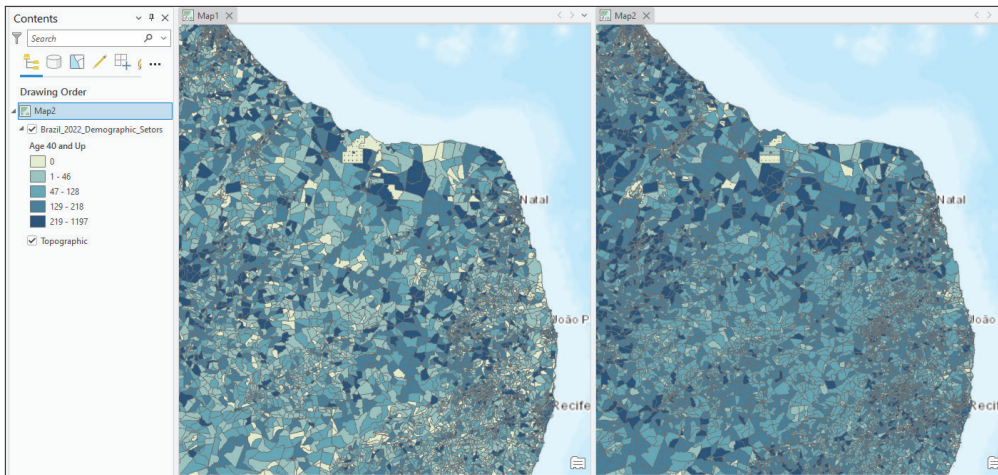
Japan offers perhaps the clearest example of what an aging society looks like. Its 2020 Population Census counted approximately 36 million people aged 65 and older, representing 28.6% of the population. At the same time, children under 15 accounted for just 11.9%. But the national percentage tells only part of the story. Japan's census data allow researchers to examine differences among prefectures and municipalities, where population decline and aging can be much more pronounced than the national figures suggest. In 2020, for example, the population declined in 1,419 of Japan's 1,719 municipalities.

The transformation is not limited to countries traditionally associated with older populations. Brazil's 2022 Census recorded approximately 22.2 million people aged 65 and older, or 10.9% of the population. That represented a 57.4% increase in the size of this age group since the 2010 Census. Over the same period, the proportion of children aged 0–14 declined from 24.1% to 19.8%. Brazil's median age rose from 29 to 35 between 2010 and 2022.



Top: Japan, 2020. Census Results Outline. Basic Population Aggregate Results p. 4. <https://gca.eastview.com/CENSUS-2662667B0.1.4>

Bottom: Japan, 2020. Census Results Outline. Basic Population Aggregate Results p. 21. <https://gca.eastview.com/CENSUS-2662667B0.1.21>



To understand why a population is aging, researchers need to be able to compare today's population with populations from decades earlier. The United Nations' World Population Prospects 2024 itself relies on demographic trends extending back decades. Its dataset provides estimates for 237 countries and areas from the 1950s to the present, demonstrating how much our understanding of demographic change depends on historical population records. East View's dynamic Global Census Archive brings historical and contemporary censuses from around the world together and makes it possible to study demographic change across countries, regions, cities, and generations from a single platform.

Top left: Aging trends with Brazil, 2010 GCA-GIS and Brazil, 2022 GCA-GIS datasets.

Top right: Cape Verde, 2021. Thematic Series. Elderly & Aging Population p. 41. <https://gca.eastview.com/CENSUS-249477880.1.41>

Bottom: Nepal, 2021. Thematic Report. v10. Ageing, p. 25. <https://gca.eastview.com/CENSUS-267945480.1.54>

Further reading on censuses and aging populations:

- "Ageing and Health," WHO: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ageing-and-health>
- "An Aging World: 2025," U.S. Census Bureau: <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2026/demo/p95-26-1.pdf>
- "The Rise of the Silver Economy: Global Implications of Population Aging," IMF: <https://www.imf.org/-/media/files/publications/weo/2025/april/english/ch2.pdf>



The East View **Global Census Archive**® (GCA) is an innovative program to collect official data and publications issued by the national census authorities of more than 200 countries, from the early 19th century to the present day, providing a key resource for scholars and analysts to find current and historical census data to support critical research into our changing world. GCA provides a single platform experience to explore the world's census publications: all countries and regions, the complete depth of published census materials, including original census publications in e-book form, as well as modern tabular data in Excel format and GIS files for advanced users.