

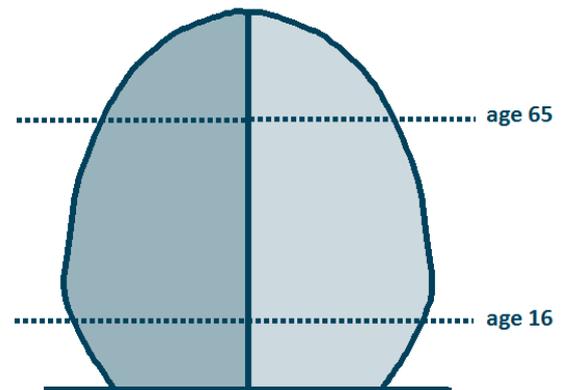
# Ageing Populations

## Definition

An ageing population occurs when the median age of a country increases, often a result of decreasing death and birth rates.

## Characteristics

- The population pyramid of an ageing population has a narrowing base caused by a decreased birth rate.
- There are more people aged 16-65 than under 16, causing a straighter shaped pyramid.
- The large numbers of over 65s are shown by a wider top, and the pyramids are often taller showing a higher life expectancy.
- Ageing populations often occur in developed countries, where better standards of healthcare and diet can significantly increase life expectancy.



## Impacts



Older people can be particularly employable in some areas and they may continue to work rather than retire.



The money that older people spend (the 'grey pound') in their leisure time is an important part of the economy.



Over 65s are more likely to use their free time to volunteer in a range of educational and community services.



Over 65s who are grandparents often carry out childcare roles for working parents.



It is expensive to provide social and geriatric health care and these services can come under strain.



Providing state pensions for more retired people who are living longer can put a financial strain on public and pension funds.



With fewer people working and more entering retirement a lower tax base may result reducing the funds available to support public services.

## Management

Some policies could reduce the impact of an ageing population:

- The age of retirement could be increased to delay the time at which people would draw on the state pension, increasing tax revenue at the same time. Equally private pensions for older people could be made mandatory.
- There could be recruitment and training drives to ensure there are sufficient numbers of carers for older people.
- Inward migration could result in the entry of more younger workers into the economy increasing tax revenues.

## The Dependency Ratio

This is the ratio of dependant (non-working age) to independent (working age) people in a population.

**Dependency Ratio =**

$$\frac{\text{Number of dependents}}{\text{Number of independents}} \times 100$$