



Photo courtesy: Envato

Facts and Figures Healthy Ageing



Democratic People's Republic of Korea

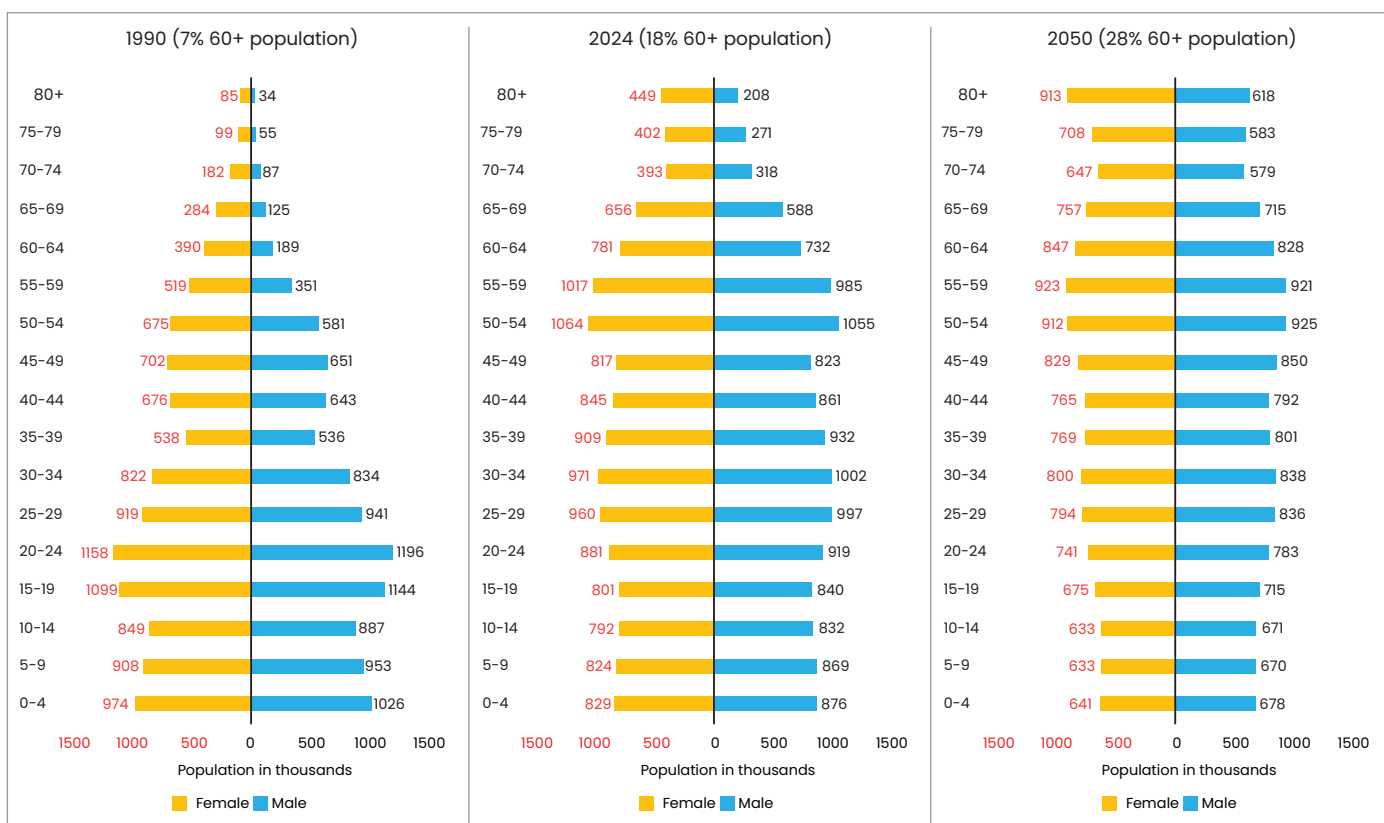


Demographic profile, 2024

	Total	Female	Male
Total population	26 499 000	13 390 000 (51%)	13 109 000 (49%)
Total 60+ years population	4 799 000 (18%)	2 681 000 (20%)	2 118 000 (16%)
Total 80+ years population	657 000 (2.5%)	449 000 (3.4%)	208 000 (1.6%)

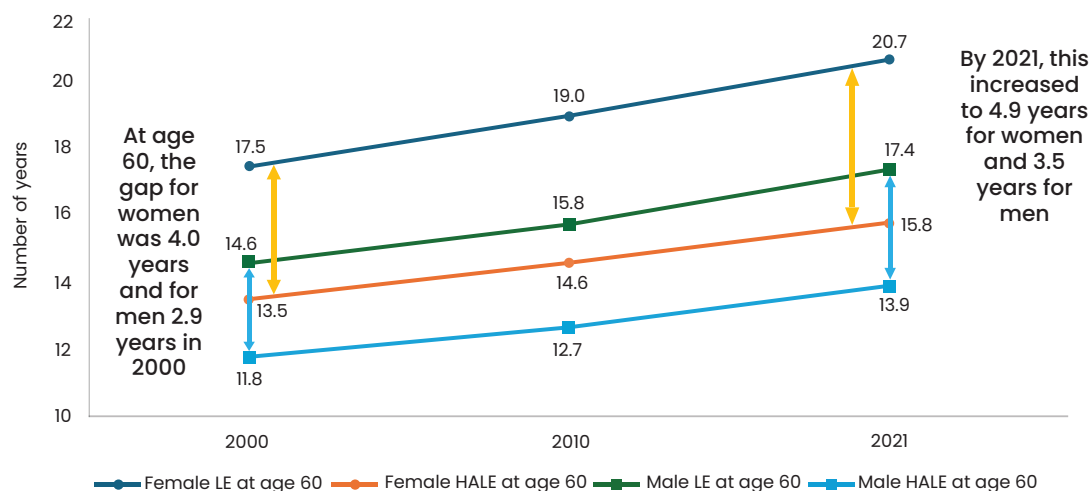
Demographic shift:

Share of people aged 60 years and above expected to increase from 18% in 2024 to 28% in 2050



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2024). World Population Prospects 2024, Online Edition (accessed on 1 August 2025)

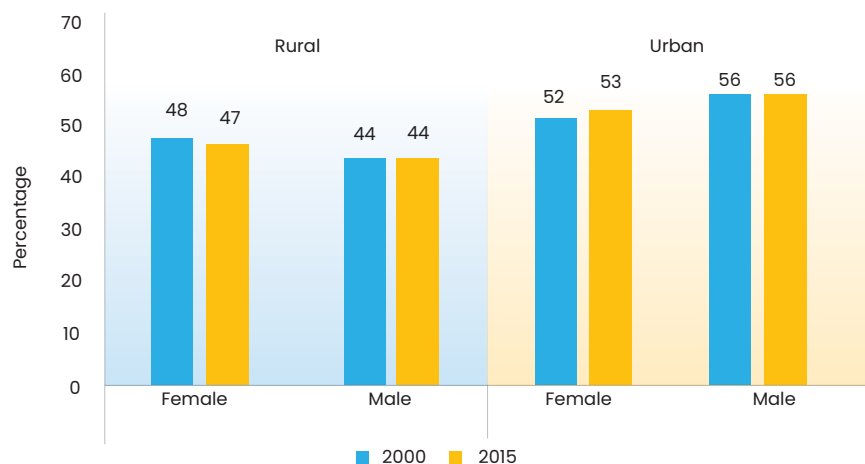
Gap between life expectancy and health life expectancy at age 60 years, 2000–2021



Older women live longer than men but spend more years in poor health, with the LE-HALE gap at 4.9 years for women and 3.5 years for men in 2021

Source: Global Health Observatory-World Health Organization (accessed on 1st August 2025)

Percentage of older people aged 60 years and above living in rural and urban areas



Between 2000 and 2015, the share of older females slightly declined in rural areas, while the older males showed stable presence both in rural and urban areas

Source: Ageing Data Portal - World Health Organization (accessed on 1 August 2025)

Household living arrangements (60+ years) data is not available for DPR Korea

Source: Ageing Data Portal - World Health Organization (accessed on 1 August 2025)

Labour force participation rate by older people (65+ years) and proportion of persons above retirement age receiving a pension data is not available for DPR Korea

Source: ILOSTAT (accessed on 1 August 2025)



Mortality profile

Top five causes of mortality in older people

	60+ older population				85+ older population			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
Rank	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021
1	Stroke	Stroke	Tuberculosis	Stroke	Protein-energy malnutrition	Stroke	Protein-energy malnutrition	Stroke
2	Protein-energy malnutrition	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Stroke	Ischaemic heart disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
3	Tuberculosis	Ischaemic heart disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Stroke	Ischaemic heart disease	Stroke	Ischaemic heart disease
4	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Tuberculosis	Protein-energy malnutrition	Tuberculosis	Ischaemic heart disease	Alzheimer disease and other dementias	Tuberculosis	Tuberculosis
5	Ischaemic heart disease	Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers	Ischaemic heart disease	Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers	Alzheimer disease and other dementias	Hypertensive heart disease	Ischaemic heart disease	Lower respiratory infections

Source: World Health Organization - Global Health Estimates (accessed on 1 August 2025)

Suicide mortality rate (per 100 000 population) among older people, 2021 data is not available for DPR Korea

Source: World Health Organization-Global Health Estimates (accessed on 7 October 2025)



Morbidity profile

Top five causes of years of healthy life lost due to disability (YLD)

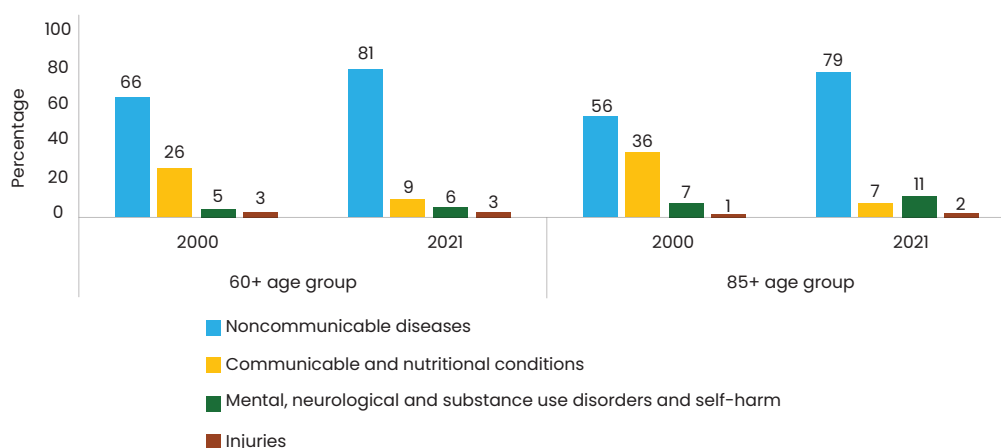
Rank	60+ older population				85+ older population			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021
1	Back and neck pain	Back and neck pain	Back and neck pain	Back and neck pain	Alzheimer disease and other dementias	Alzheimer disease and other dementias	Other hearing loss	Other hearing loss
2	Other hearing loss	Other hearing loss	Other hearing loss	Other hearing loss	Other hearing loss	Other hearing loss	Alzheimer disease and other dementias	Alzheimer disease and other dementias
3	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Diabetes mellitus	Stroke	Diabetes mellitus	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Stroke	Stroke
4	Stroke	Stroke	Diabetes mellitus	Stroke	Back and neck pain	Back and neck pain	Back and neck pain	Back and neck pain
5	Depressive disorders	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Stroke	Stroke	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Source: World Health Organization - Global Health Estimates (accessed on 1 August 2025)



Among those aged 60+ years, back and neck pain and hearing loss are the leading causes of disabilities, with a growing impact from diabetes, while in the 85+ age group, dementia is the top cause of disability among females, and hearing loss among males, alongside burdens from COPD, back and neck pain, and stroke

Distribution of Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) among older people



Between 2000 and 2021, the burden of DALYs in older people remained dominated by noncommunicable diseases, while the share from communicable and nutritional conditions declined significantly and mental, neurological, and substance use disorders increased, especially in the 85+ age group

Source: World Health Organization - Global Health Estimates (accessed on 1 August 2025)

Incidence and prevalence of common health conditions

Age group	Tuberculosis* 2021		Acute hepatitis B* 2021		Falls* 2021		Hearing impairments** 2021		Vision impairments** 2019		Anaemia** 2021		Lower back pain** 2021	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
60–64	41 053	83 237	135 230	189 237	687	651	62	63	38	32	18	20	20	12
65–69	53 284	106 585	122 919	175 710	715	596	72	71	48	40	19	22	22	13
70–74	54 977	101 695	112 123	157 961	669	585	79	76	57	46	22	26	24	14
75–79	51 217	97 654	98 805	140 830	1127	777	82	76	64	52	26	30	26	15
80–84	57 769	129 069	88 743	127 204	1789	1038	84	79	70	57	31	36	26	16
85–89	64 188	158 317	79 528	115 219	2128	1170	87	84	74	62	33	48	25	17
90–94	70 609	186 117	69 853	99 840	2509	1323	88	86	78	67	55	86	21	17
95+	77 625	212 939	61 915	86 835	2892	1429	88	87	83	73	78	94	19	16

Source: Global Burden of Disease (accessed on 1 August 2025)

*Incidence rate per 100 000 population **Prevalence

The health burden in older age is shaped by a dual challenge of infectious diseases and chronic/functional impairments



Tuberculosis

Increases with age, with men consistently showing higher incidence than women



Acute hepatitis B

Declines with age, but women have double the rates compared to men



Falls

Incidence rises sharply in advanced age, especially among women



Hearing impairments

Prevalence increases steadily with age, slightly higher among women



Vision impairments

Prevalence grows with age, with women are more affected than men



Anaemia

Becomes more common with age, disproportionately affecting men

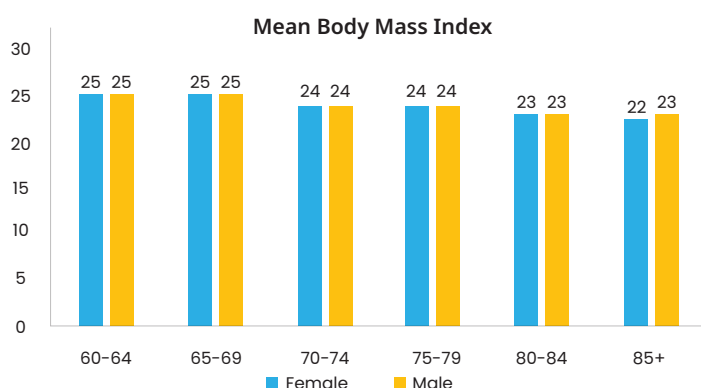


Lower back pain

Higher prevalence among women than men



Mean Body Mass Index (based on measured height and weight) and Prevalence of insufficient physical activity in older people aged 70 years or above, 2016



Source: Global Health Observatory-World Health Organization (accessed on 1 August 2025)

Prevalence of insufficient physical activity in older people aged 70 years or above data is not available for DPR Korea



UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030)

DPR Korea did not report on 10 national indicators, on integrated care for older people, and on availability of human and financial resources to address the UN Decade strategic priorities in year 2020 and 2023

Together for
Health, care and dignity
of older population

