

# Higher Education for Older Adults: What Is Happening Around the World, and What Reforms Are Needed

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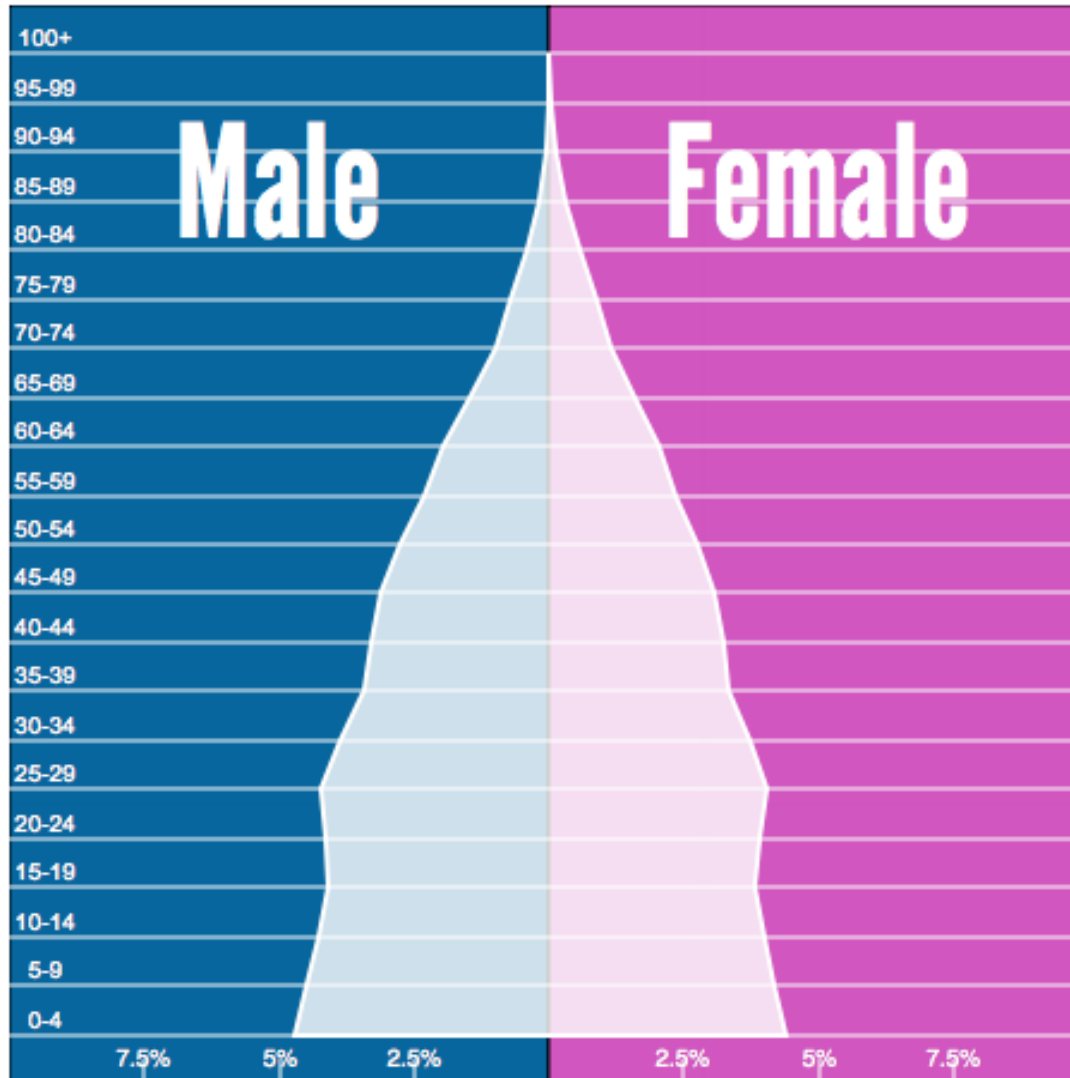
Higher Education Reform Workshop  
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# The context: Ageing of population in a number of countries

- Mostly developed countries are affected (“demographic deficit”)
  - Many less developed countries still undergoing rapid expansion of population (“demographic dividend”)
- Japan and parts of Europe – ageing population, **low** immigration
- Canada, Australia, and the USA – ageing population, **high** immigration
- The next few slides show information taken from <https://populationpyramid.net/>

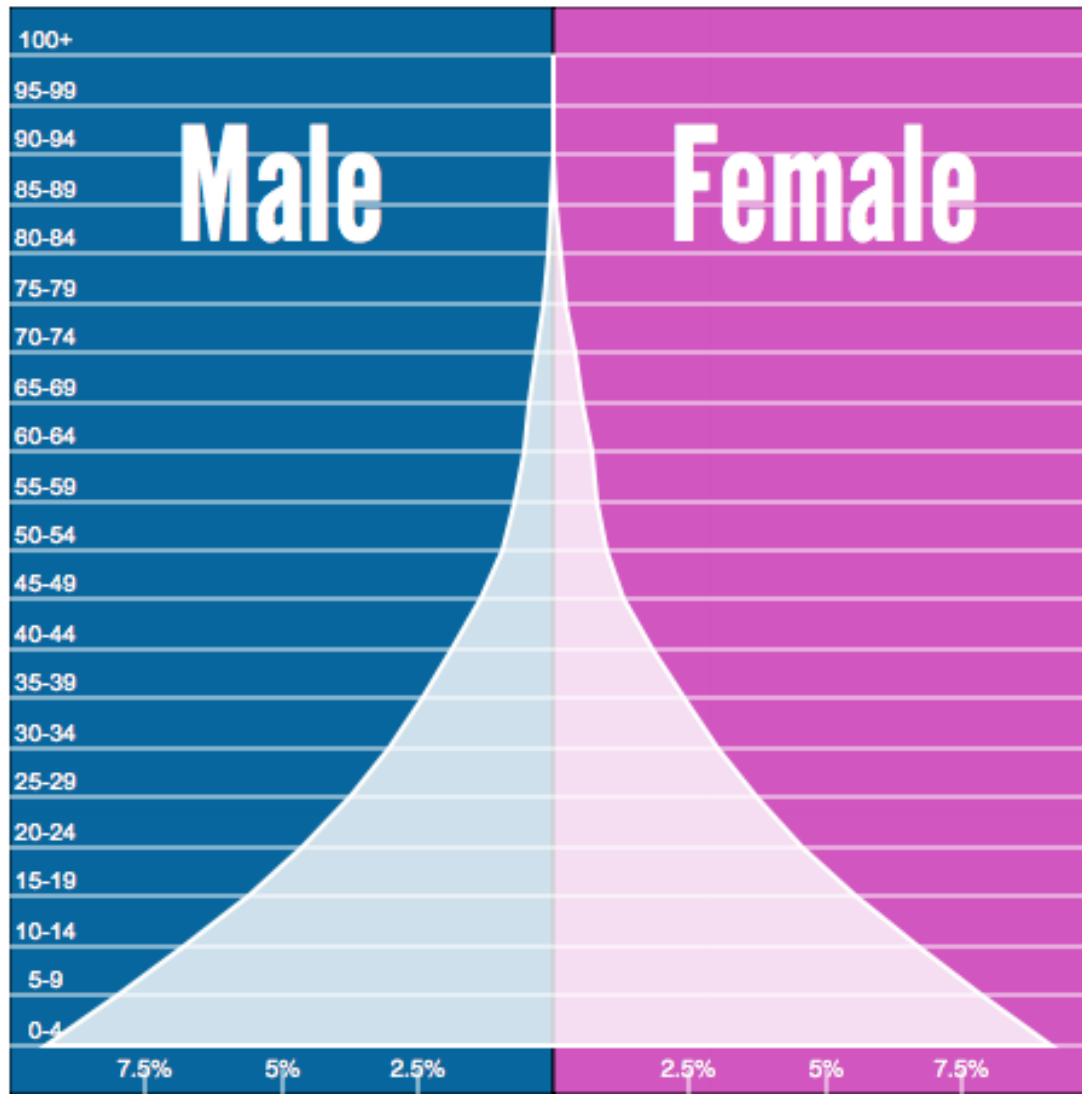
# WORLD 2016

Population: **7.432.663.000**



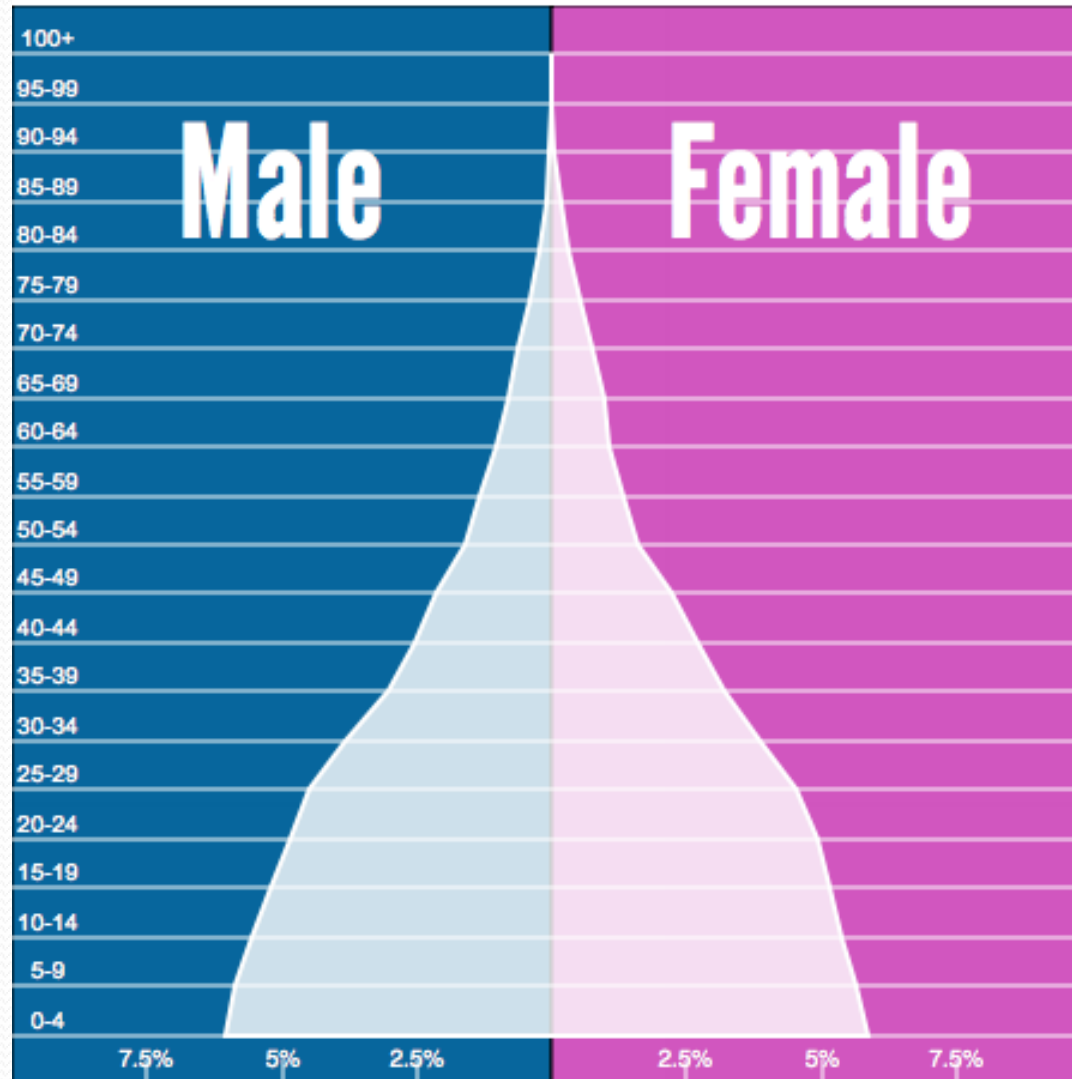
# Uganda 2016

Population: **40.322.000**



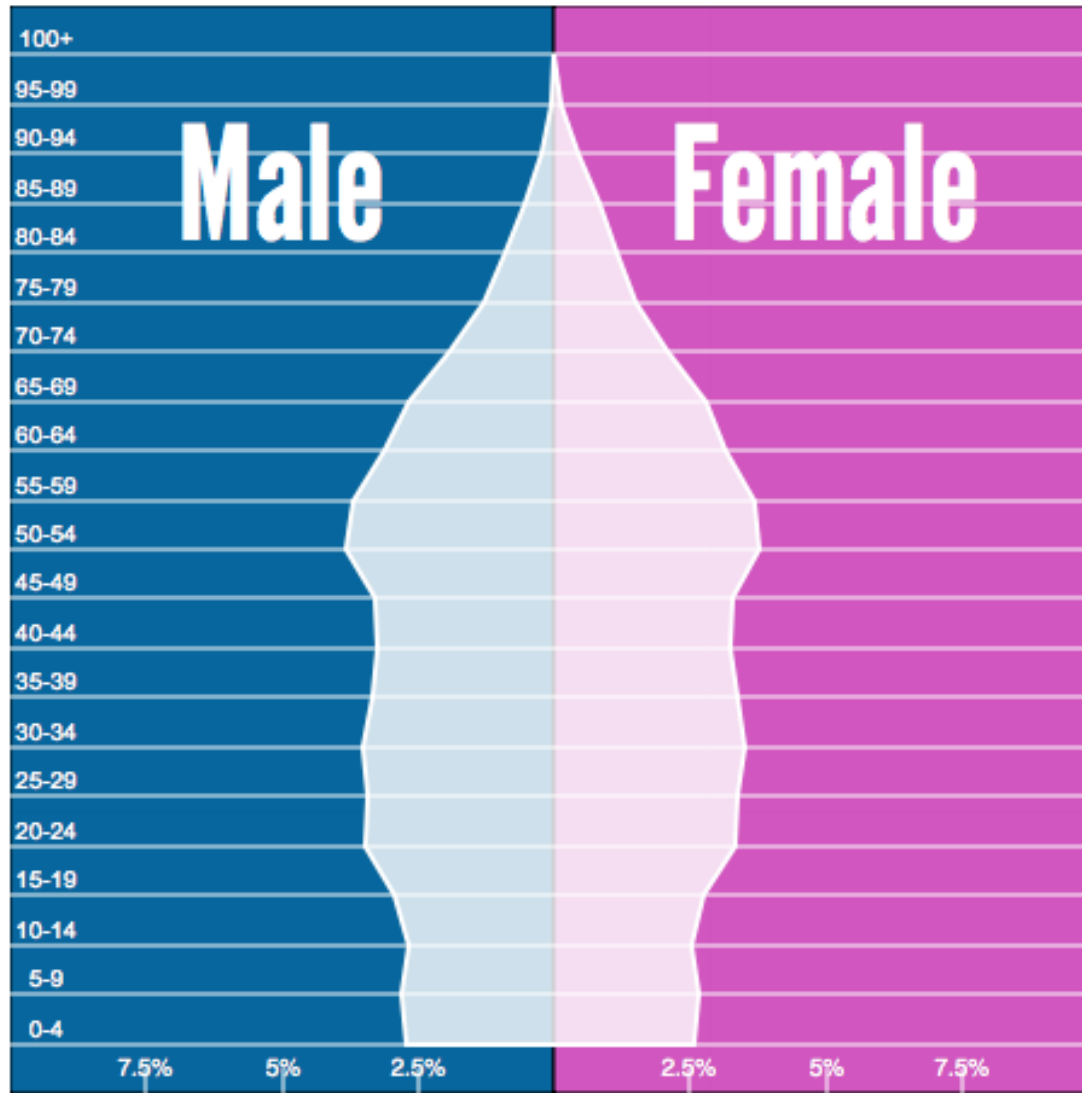
# Mexico 2000

Population: **102.808.000**



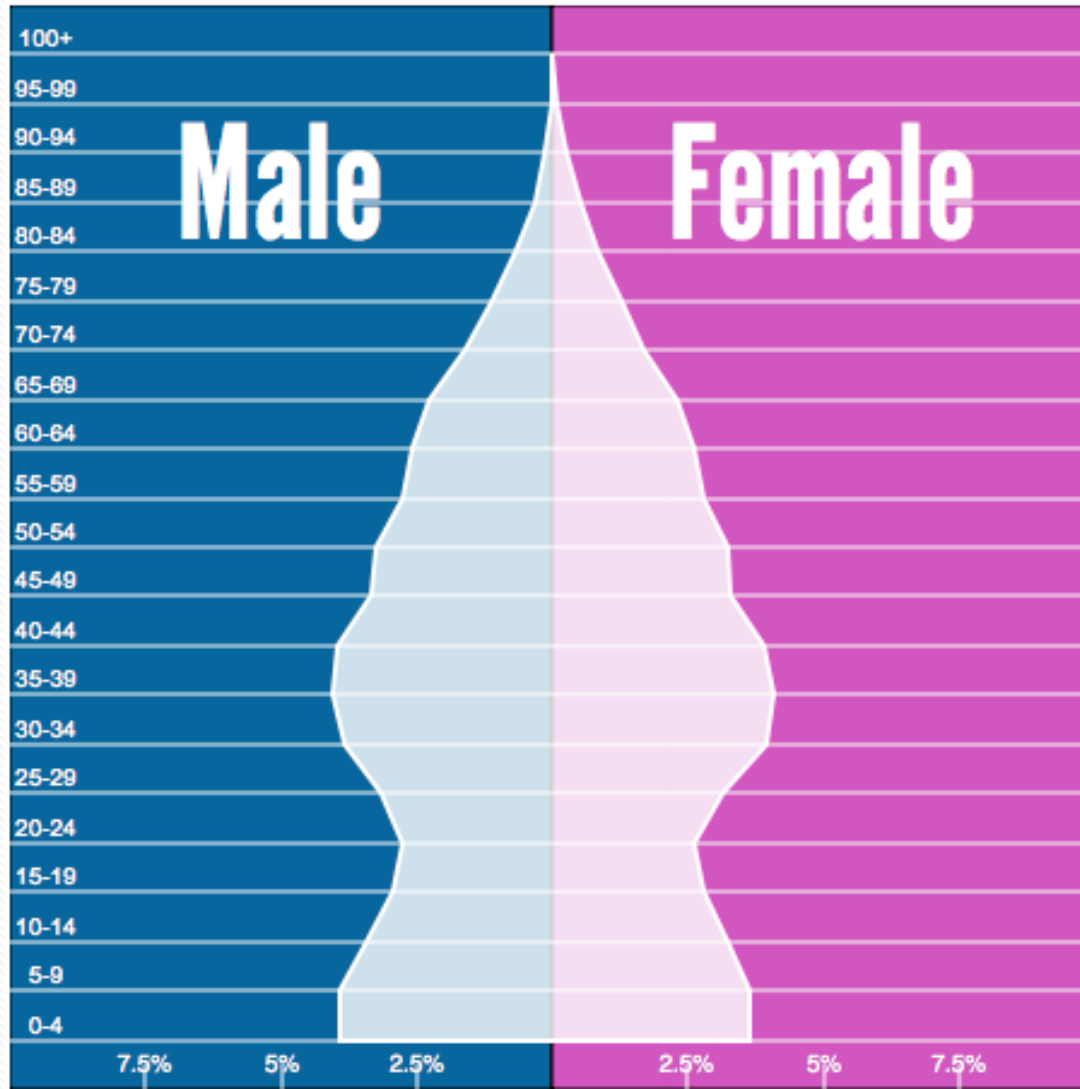
# Canada 2016

Population: **36.286.000**



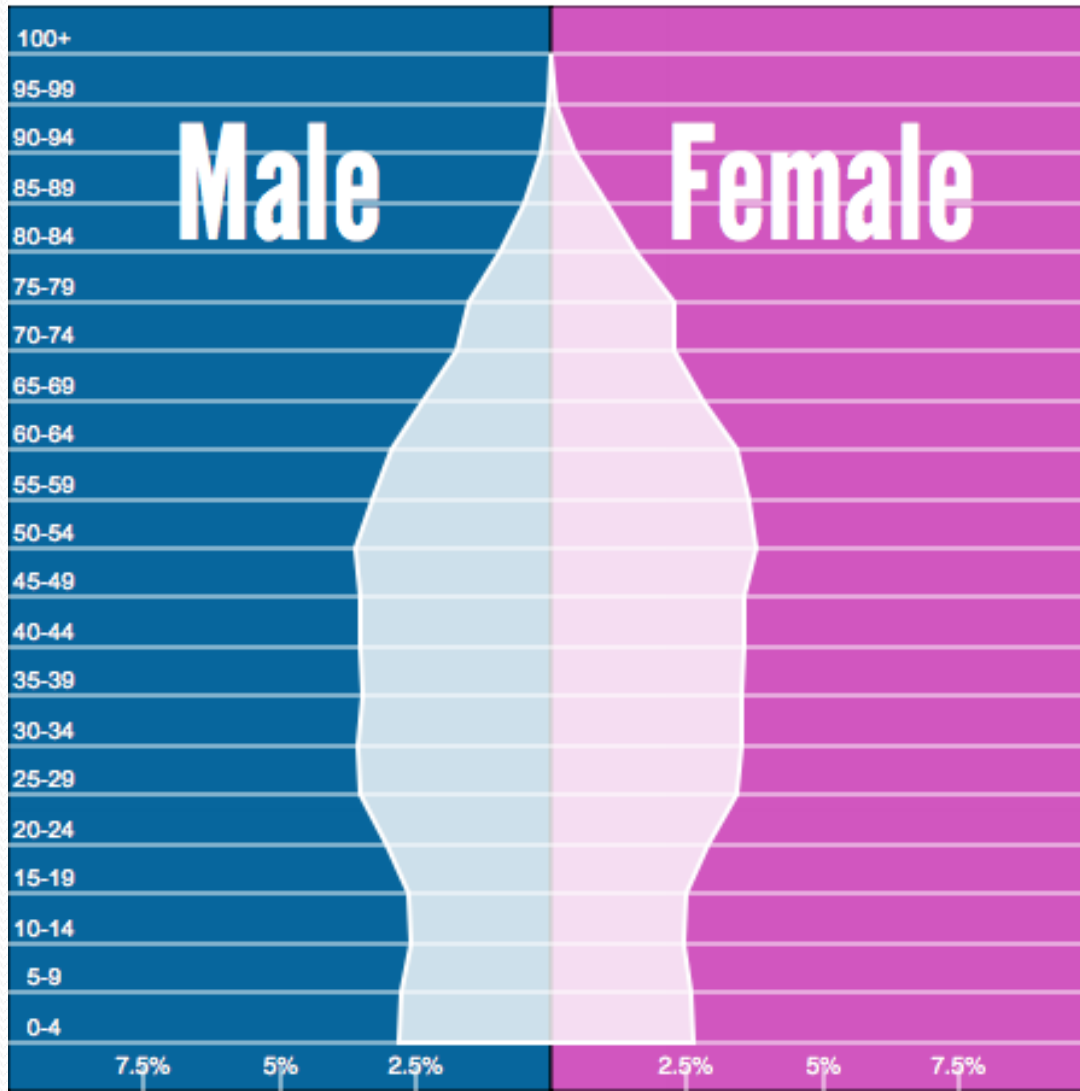
# Ireland 2015

Population: **4.688.000**



# EUROPE 2015

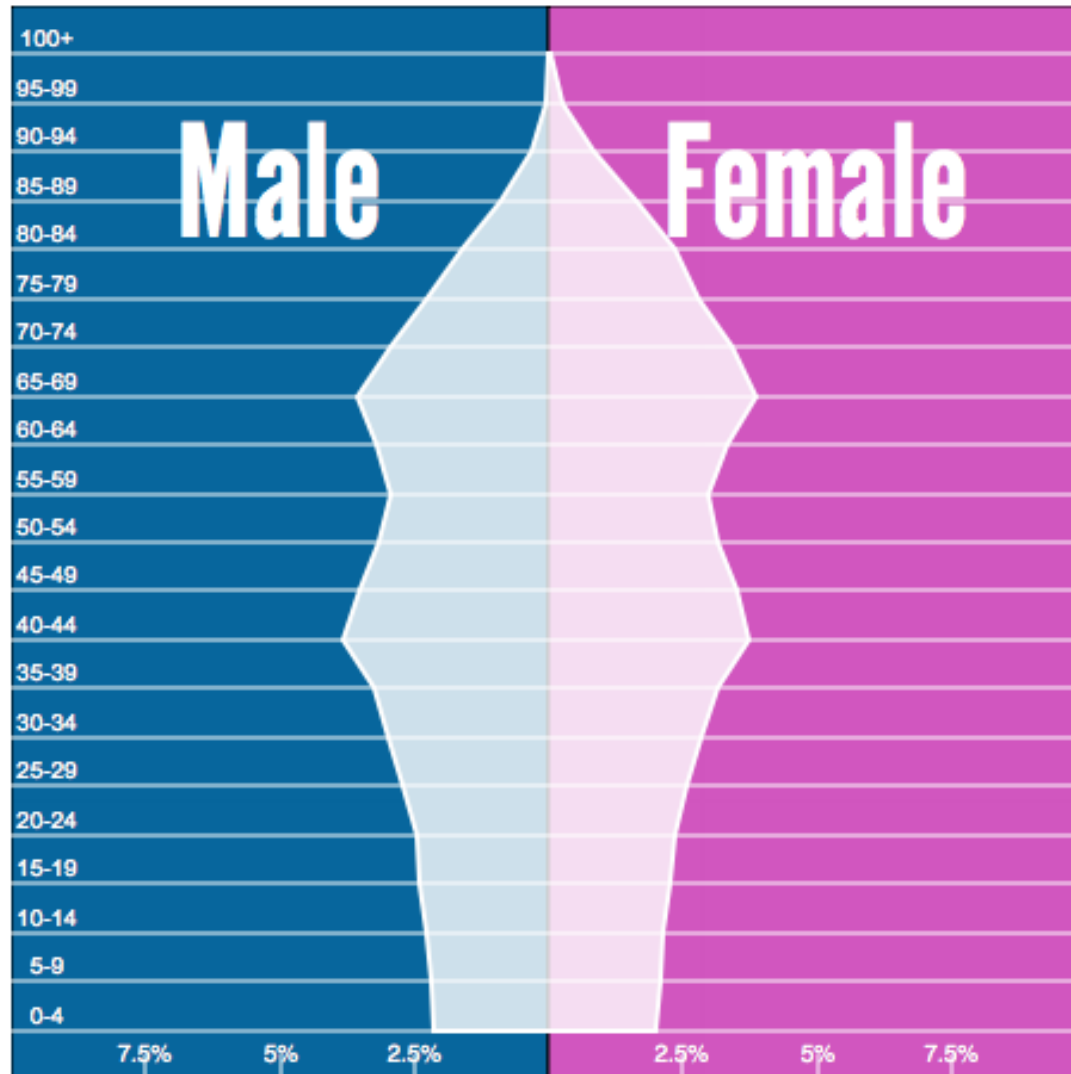
Population: **738.442.000**





# Japan 2016

Population: **126.323.000**



# Education programs for older adults

- Variety of terms used
  - Adult education (generally excludes higher education)
  - Lifelong learning (this term used in N. America)
    - Logically should include everything between prenatal and postmortem education, but generally means informal and non-formal education that continues on from where the person exits the formal education system
  - University of the Third Age (U3A)
    - Original French model (connected to a university) 1972
    - Original British model (not connected to a university) 1981
    - Other models developed elsewhere

# Origins of the University of the Third Age (French Model)

- 1968 universities mandated to provide for LLL
- 1973 first courses offered at University of Toulouse to good success
- By 1979 over 100 campuses in Europe involved in U3A
- Characteristics: University based, university facilities, university faculty, focused topics on OA, combined formats of lecture, debates, field trips, and recreational and social activities

# British Model of the U3A

- UTA changed when reached Cambridge in 1981 – became known as U3A to reflect a different approach.
- British model adopted an approach with little distinction between teachers and learners (Laslett, 1989) - and, where possible, members should engage in research activities.
- By 2009 over 700 UTAs
- Characteristics: Not university based but self-help, independent, voluntary, small group structures

# USA Model – Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI)

- Approximately 120, university-based Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes across USA
- Funded by Bernard Osher Foundation – on application initially with start-up grant then endowment
- Requirements set out by Osher Foundation and national office to provide resources and support, including an annual conference; published a journal from 2006-2011
- Characteristics: University-based, designated university facilities and administrative staff, part of university budget process, membership driven in terms of participation in courses and program planning, expected fund raising activities, combined pedagogy

# Canadian Model

- Less formalized nationally with some provincial networks of U3A (e.g. Ontario) and up until recently a national organization CATALYST and/or TAN
- Characterized by features of the French, British and USA models; a continuum - University-based programs, U3A organizations affiliated with universities, fully independent U3A organizations; most a mix of expert, typically university faculty, and peer-based instruction
- Continuum - Non-affiliated (Creative Retirement Manitoba) - British (McGill) – French (Ryerson) – USA (URegina)

# Canadian University Commitment to Older Adult Education (OAE)

- 100% respondents agreed the development of OAE programs is encouraged by their university
- 90% respondents ranked mandate of CE 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> as reason why university offers OAE
- 55% respondents ranked commitment of university 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup> as reason why university offers OAE
- 55% respondents ranked serve growing demographic 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> as reason why university offers OAE

# OAE – Participation Characteristics

- Who attends
  - Average age range 59-77; median/mode average age 70
  - Majority female 60-75<sup>0</sup>%; male 25-40<sup>0</sup>%
  - Vast majority retired average median/mode 80<sup>0</sup>%; few employed 5-10<sup>0</sup>%
- How many attend
  - Small to large programs – with range 120-2,500



# OAE – Participation Characteristics

- Revenue generated
  - Range \$0 (free) to \$650,000 – most typical (median) \$130,000
- Why attends (ranking)
  - 1) 91% learning sake
  - 2) 75% socialize
  - 3) 57% seek specific goal
- Barriers to participation (ranking)
  - 1) 38% insufficient time
  - 2) 56% limited money; 44% transportation
  - 3) 38% physical disability; 38% insufficient time

# OAE – Participation Characteristics

- Types of programs
  - 100% indicated non-degree - personal interest
  - Short courses combined with semester length – 50% less than one day; 33% one day; 48% full term/semester
  - Lecture popular 100%
  - Group discussion 50%
  - Online courses single mention – virtually none (1 course)
- Who teaches
  - University faculty 100%
  - Community-based experts 50%
  - Volunteers – peer lead 33%
  - Other – grad students 33%

# Future OAE @ Canadian Universities

- Opinions from survey
  - 100% positive future for OAE at university – mainly attribute to growing demographic and resulting demand plus various other specific factors
- UM age-friendly campus
  - To encourage the participation of older adults in all the core activities of the university, including educational and research program
  - To promote personal and career development in the second half of life and to support those who wish to pursue “second careers”
  - To recognize the range of educational needs of older adults
  - To promote intergenerational learning to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages
  - To widen access to online educational opportunities for older adults to ensure a diversity of routes to participation
  - Plus 5 other principles

# Future OAE @ Canadian Universities

- Ratsoy proposal (Ratsoy, G., 2016)
  - Independence of older adult education organizations will continue
  - Encourages Canadian universities to reach out and form partnerships with non-profit, high impact, third-age learning organizations – provide administrative and facilities support
  - Partnerships can enhance quality of life of both campuses and communities
  - Civic duty of universities to maximize the benefits of education for seniors for mutual benefit and greater public good

# OAE in Canada: Issues

- Individual well-being versus community benefit
- Lack of Diversity – narrow (WASP) versus diverse participation
- Class-based – haves (informed and affluent) versus have nots (traditionally non-participants in education)
- Ability-based – healthy (mobile/access) versus restricted (physically/mentally challenged)
- Changing demographic - more heterogeneous OA population than in past – different wants and interests
- Offered by CE Units – cost recovery driven versus linked to engagement mandate of universities

# Linking OAE to Engagement – What's the Potential?

Socially responsible research in education in general, ... must adhere to stated basic principles while at the same time address problems that detract from the quality of life for individuals and groups in society, especially those problems related to learning and human development. (Reeves et al., 2005, p. 100)

- Can transform some of the learning fostered by U3As from a personal good to a social good
- For HEIs with attached U3As, working with their U3A could be one way of fostering community engaged learning, and helping to improve their communities

# Engagement and OAE: Canadian Examples

- Canadian examples of engagement-type initiatives within OAE programs
  - University of Regina
    - Volunteer and community programs
    - Aboriginal Grandmothers Caring for Grandchildren – support network (monthly meeting)
    - Intercultural Grandmothers Uniting
    - Speakers bureau provides speakers on a range of topics such as reducing social isolation, elder abuse, age-friendly communities
  - Ryerson University
    - Caring Clowns – a program is for older adults who want to make a difference by bringing joy, laughter, and fun into the lives of long-term care residents
    - Community Engagement
      - Elder Abuse Awareness Project - a multi-phase initiative benefitting seniors and their families.
      - Conversational Connections - gives multilingual Ryerson University students an opportunity to practice conversational English in informal settings

# Higher Education for Older Adults in Japan



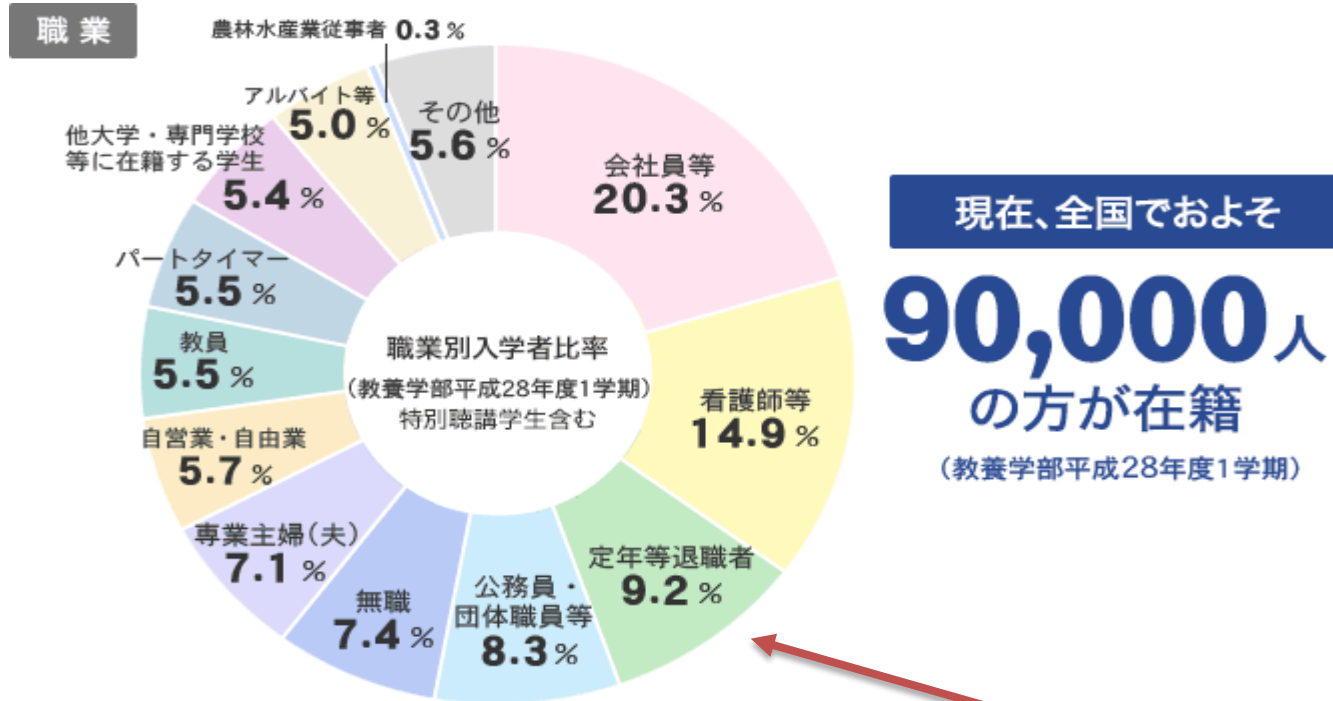
A Panel for HER Dublin, 2016

Shinichi Yamamoto

Professor, J. F. Oberlin University

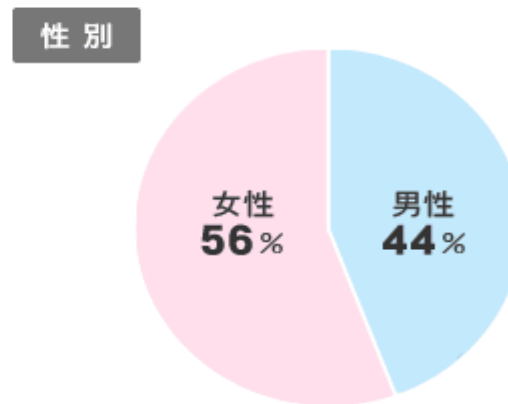
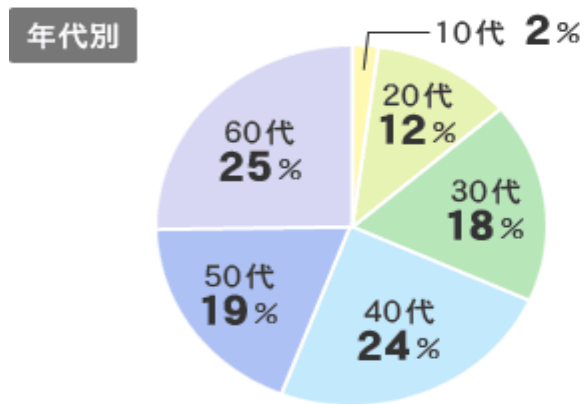


# The Open University of Japan (Since 1985)

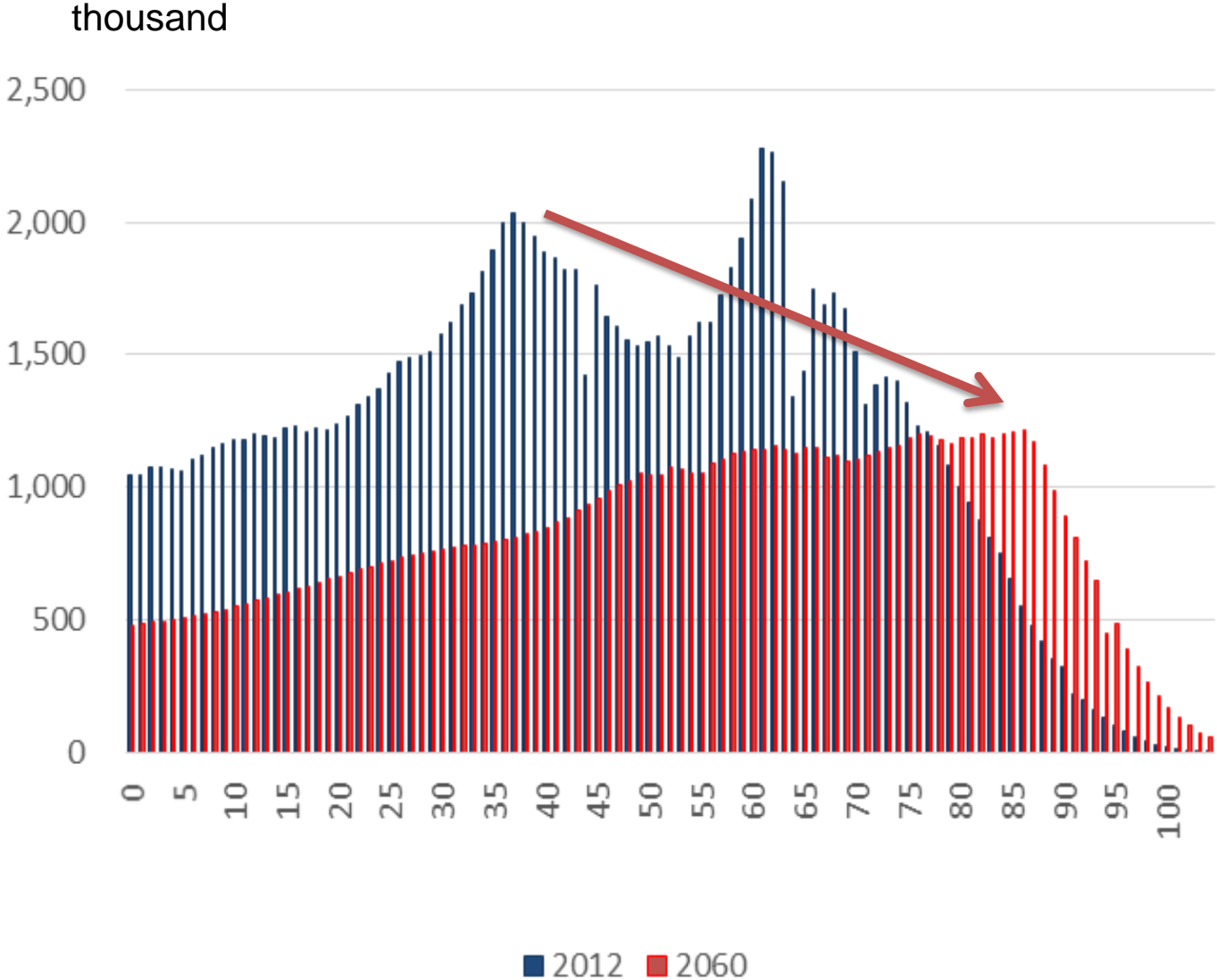


現在、全国でおよそ  
**90,000人**  
の方が在籍  
(教養学部平成28年度1学期)

Retired People



# Population in Japan by Ages, 2012 and 2060



# A Lot of Problems for Older Adults

1. University Education as A Pleasure, not as An Investment
2. Problems for Living
  - Pension
  - Medical Care
  - Family
  - Housing
  - and Others
3. Population of Older Adults will Decrease as well as Younger Generations

On which do you put higher priority?



Study vs. Others

# NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN, BUT...

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# TOO OLD TO TEACH

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# MEXICAN DEMOGRAPHICS

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- ✘ Overall increase of the older population (> 25)
- ✘ A debt with the past: population with an higher education degree
- ✘ Emigration remains an issue, particularly for people with higher education
- ✘ Possibly: increase in demand from older students during next two decades

# WHAT ARE OLDER PEOPLE INTERESTED IN?

The five assumptions underlying andragogy describe the adult learner as someone who:

- ✘ Has an independent self-concept and who can direct his or her own learning
- ✘ Has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that is a rich resource for learning
- ✘ Has learning needs closely related to changing social roles
- ✘ Is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge
- ✘ Is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors

(Merriam, S. B. (2001). Andragogy and self-directed learning: Pillars of adult learning theory. *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education*, v. 89, p. 5.)

# IMPLICATIONS

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Adult learners are motivated by the opportunity to:

- ✘ Gain new skills, knowledge, and attitudes to improve their work performance
- ✘ Improve family life and health, enjoy the arts and physical recreation, participate in a hobby, or simply increase their intellectual capital (OECD)

(OECD (2013), How's Life? 2013: Measuring Well-being, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264201392-en>.)

Thus:

- ✘ Action learning
- ✘ Experiential learning
- ✘ Project based learning
- ✘ Self directed learning



# WHAT ARE INSTITUTIONS DOING?

Different institutional philosophy:

- ✘ Age friendly universities
- ✘ Reforms of administration and management

Special programs

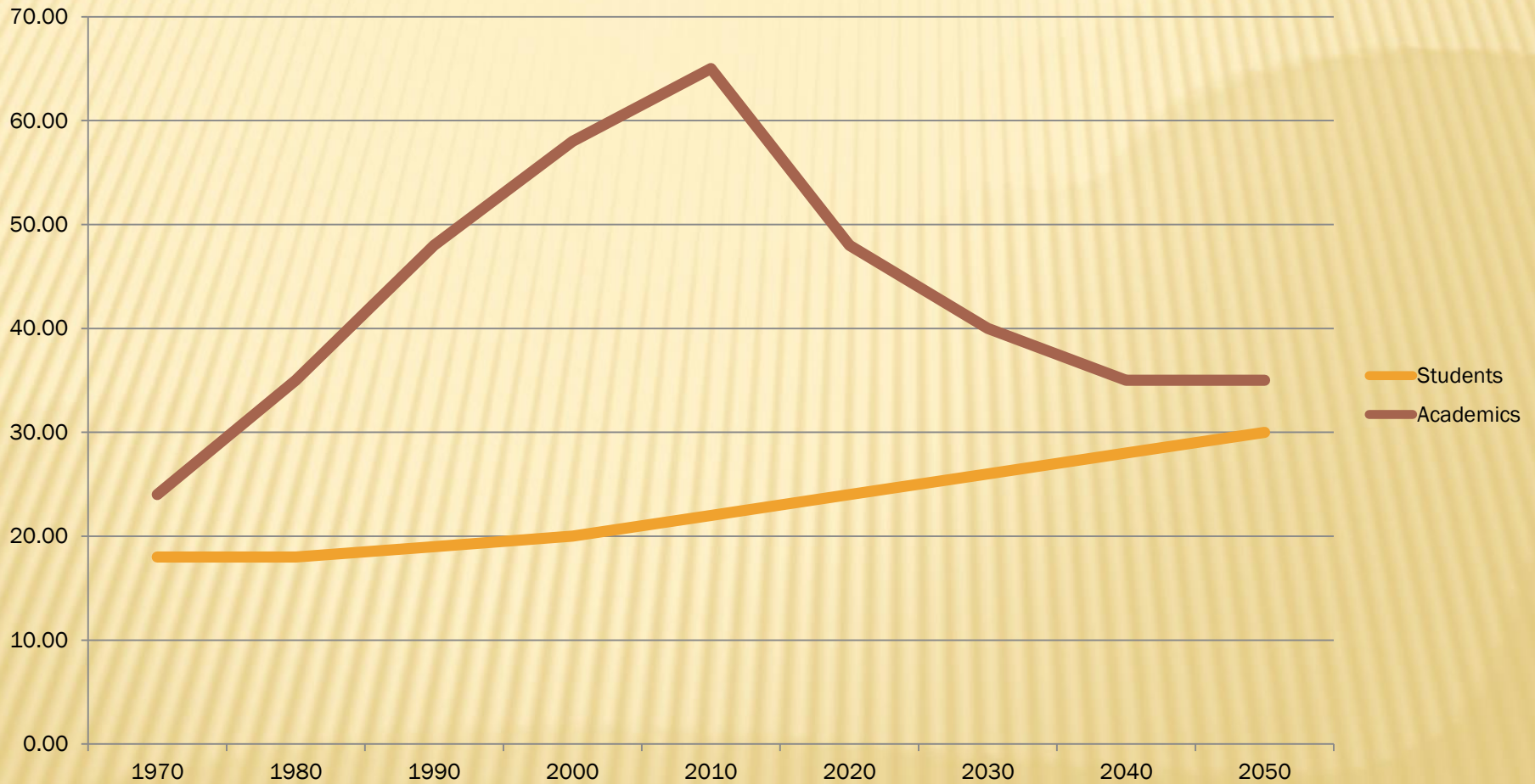
- ✘ Short courses
- ✘ New pedagogical approaches

Special facilities

# BUT WHAT ABOUT HUMAN RESOURCES?

- ✘ Rapid hiring in the 1970s – 1980s
- ✘ Much slower growth in the 1990s-2000s (mainly by the private sector)
- ✘ Virtual paralysis of the labor market 2000- to date
- ✘ Policies aimed at improving the existent faculty (merit pay, tenure, full-time contracts)
- ✘ Problems with basic salaries and pension funds, halting retirement
- ✘ Available in the market place: 30-years old graduates (in between generation is missing)

# AVERAGE AGE, STUDENTS AND FACULTY



# CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW FACULTY

- ✘ Young, no working experience inside or outside higher education
- ✘ Conditioned by reward systems, publish or perish
- ✘ Contracts: part-time, no tenure, low payment
- ✘ Evaluation criteria: research, graduates' success in labor market, retention and graduate rates
- ✘ Teaching methods: big groups, undergraduate students, basic knowledge 101, standardized exams, use of ICT

# CONCLUSIONS

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- ✘ Are young academics willing and able to teach the old and attend their specific needs? Can the old learn something from the young? "Don't teach your grandmother to suck eggs."
- ✘ Can you be age friendly with students, but age unfriendly with academics?
- ✘ Does it make sense to be told you are never too old to learn, while at the same time you are considered too old to teach?

Thank you