

## Macro Roundup Article

**Headline:** [Thoughts and Comments on Demographic Aging and Shrinking](#)

**Article Link:** <https://www.aei.org/research-products/journal-publication/thoughts-and-comments-on-demographic-aging-and-shrinking/>

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**Tweet:** Nicholas Eberstadt @AEIecon notes humans are social animals and global aging and population decline likely will be a threat to the family, the basic unit of human life.

**Summary:** And the heart of the problem here is that global aging and population decline are mainly driven by a withering away of the family—the basic unit of human life up to this point. And therein lies the problem. As an arithmetic matter, the greying of societies is driven much more by smaller families than longer lives. But longer lives also mean that middle aged and even elderly children will increasingly be responsible for ancient living parents. Consider the outlook for China. Demographic simulations by Ashton Verderly and myself suggest the dilemmas that may face middle aged people in China in less than a generation: By 2040 it is likely that Sixtysomething couples in China will have at least one living parent to look after; many will have two or three to think about. But those prospective elders are elders with descendants. With the rise in (voluntary) childlessness around the world, growing numbers of elders will have no relatives—or no close relatives—to count on.

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**Primary Topic:** Demographics

**Topics:** Demographics, Family/Marriage, Op-Ed/Blog Post, Workforce

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