

Measuring Population Ageing Using Prospective Instead of Chronological Age

This factsheet explores the ageing of the populations of Middle Eastern and North African countries using *prospective age* instead of chronological age (Sanderson and Scherbov, 2008). Using prospective age is akin to adjusting for inflation when comparing prices. It acknowledges the fact that a particular chronological age—e.g. the age of 65—means something very different in populations with low life expectancy than it does in a population with high life expectancy.

Instead of defining old age as being over 65, we define it as being over an *old-age threshold*: the age where the remaining life expectancy is 15 years or less ( $RLE^{15}$ )

We use population pyramids to outline current and future (2050) age structures in each country, and the horizontal lines allow you to compare the prospective old-age thresholds (in purple) with the more common definition of old age as 65 years old (dashed horizontal line).

