

Pakistan

The information on the ageing population in this country is presented under three sections: 1.) **Situation of older people**, 2.) **Key facts** and 3.) **Government policies related to older people**.

In addition, in 2015 HelpAge published **Global AgeWatch Index** that ranks countries by how well their ageing populations are faring. You can find data set of 96 countries, including country report card for Pakistan.

Situation of older people

As of 2019, almost 15 million people living in Pakistan are aged over 60 which is 7% of the country's total population. The proportion of older people is expected to double to 12% in 2050 with 40 million people aged over 60.

An ageing population increases the demand for health services. Older people suffer from both degenerative and communicable diseases due to the ageing of the body's immune system. The leading causes of morbidity are infections, while visual impairment, difficulty in walking, chewing, hearing, osteoporosis, arthritis and incontinence are other common health-related problems.

Pakistan is rated 150th out of 189 countries on the latest United Nations Human Development Index Ranking in 2018. Only 2.3% of the population older than the statutory pensionable age in Pakistan actually receive an old-age pension (contributory, noncontributory or both). As life expectancy is predicted to rise above 70, the issue of an ageing population is of increasing concern in Pakistan. Over time, there will be fewer and fewer working age people to provide economic support during old age.

Malnutrition and infectious disease is extremely prevalent amongst the poor in Pakistan, with higher levels of poverty leading to intergenerational support becoming less likely. Class holds a big impact on health of the elderly in Pakistan, and women have no advantage over men unlike most countries in the world.

Key facts

Below are the key statistics on Pakistan's population of older people:

	2019	2050
Population aged 60 and above (total)	14,885,000	40,572,000
Population aged 60 and above (% of total population)	6.7	12.0

Older women aged 60+ (% of total population)	3.32	6.10
Life expectancy (males)	66.11	70.03
Life expectancy (females)	68	73.56
Old-Age Dependency Ratio (Age 65+ / Age 15-64)	7.1	11.8
Rural older people (% of total population)	6.77	
Urban older people (% of total population)	6.38	
Older persons living alone aged 60 and above (% of total population aged 60+)	0.6	

Government policies related to older people

National Policy on older people

The Senior Citizens Welfare Council was established by the *Senior Citizens Act 2014*, which is responsible for the policy proposals and implementation of senior citizen safeguarding. The council aims to improve access to financial and healthcare resources for the elderly. By establishing senior citizen homes, encouraging senior citizen groups and creating a senior citizens card that provides free access to public spaces, separate access for medical treatment and financial support for those in need, the council prioritised elderly wellbeing and promoted an easy life for older persons.

Alongside the Senior Citizens Act of 2014, many provinces established individual welfare councils and programmes to protect the elderly community in the smaller provinces. Some examples of provincial laws regarding older persons are:

- Balochistan Senior Citizen Act** – Established in 2017 by the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, the Balochistan Senior Citizen Act aims to ensure the wellbeing and comfort of senior citizens in Balochistan and make provisions for the welfare of senior citizens. The act regards the welfare of all services relating to social, economic, boarding, lodging and legal protection of senior citizens. A council was established as an independent, non-profit body to perform the functions assigned to them. The established Senior Citizen Welfare Council will hold quarterly meetings and discuss policy proposals on aging, present research findings, arrange workshops for senior citizens about life changes and healthy living and mobilisation of financial services for the elderly. Senior Citizens will be allowed privileges with the basis of the senior citizen card, and additional measures are to be taken for protection of welfare of the elderly. Senior citizen homes to accommodate vulnerable, homeless and indigent aged persons will be set up, grants and budgets will be allocated to the senior citizens welfare fund, and recognition of senior citizens wherever possible within society will be prioritised.
- Sindh Senior Citizen Welfare Act** – In 2017, the Sindh Government formed a 16-member council to ensure welfare benefits to the elderly. Measures will be taken to install necessary services to improving wellbeing of the elderly and participation in society. Promoting involvement and participation of the elderly, by valuing the knowledge, skills and experience of older persons. Providing free geriatric, medical and health services with

medicines at a concessionary rate. Retired senior citizens will also receive support to obtain pensionary benefits, such as concessionary rates on transport, food and medicines that are considered essential commodities.

- **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Senior Citizens Welfare Act** – In 2014, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Senior Citizens Welfare Act was established to maintain the wellbeing, comfort and dignity of the senior citizens of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A welfare council was formed to represent the elderly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and was responsible to policy proposals regarding the elderly, creating facilities for elders to encourage better social interactions, promoting healthy life choices and creating senior citizens homes to ensure comfortable aging.

Health and care

The National Programme for the Health Care for the Elderly (NPHCE) was established by the Ministry of Health to increase the provision of preventative, curative and rehabilitative services for the elderly across the country. The Senior Citizens Act 2014 also delegated responsibility to the Senior Citizens Welfare Council to improve education amongst the elderly surrounding lifestyle choices to lead a healthy life, as well as creating a senior citizens card that provides access to separate facilities in hospitals.

Older people's associations

According to HelpAge Pakistan Country Office, there are over 170 established OPAs throughout the country. The Senior Citizens Welfare Council is held responsible by the Senior Citizens Act 2014 to encourage older people's participation and utilisation of the available resources, as well as provision of the senior citizens card that enables access to senior citizens groups.

References

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