

Newsletter Culturaging



Fonds National de la
Recherche Luxembourg

Summary

We already know how aging affects pension systems and the economies as a whole. What we have not studies yet is how aging affects societies. Are aging societies more fair towards all its member, young and old? How do aging societies decide about how to spend public money? Are aging societies more or less willing to accept immigrants in order to sustain the public finances? How are aging societies voting? Do they go more for the extremes as the old and the young have different needs? Or they target for consensus? Are aging societies more willing to encourage women to participate more in the labor market? And if so, does this imply a change in how people view women? These are some of the question our research project aims to address. Our aim is to reflect over these research questions, to make assumptions as to potential answers and to come up with quantifiable answers to each of them. Having a clear answer is essential as it will allow policy makers to expand their choice of policies beyond the field of the economy to society as a whole and start considering social actions targeting specific groups such as women or immigrants

CULTURAGING, a research initiative backed by the Luxembourg National Research Fund, is dedicated to advancing knowledge in the intersection of aging and culture. The program not only conducts cutting-edge research but also provides a platform for sharing research results, data, publications, and hosting collaborative workshops.

Population Ageing, Economic Growth and the Composition of Government Expenditure

This paper examines the impact of population ageing on economic growth through its effect on the composition of government expenditure. We develop and test a theoretical model where population ageing gives rise to an older median voter. Under majority voting, this affects the composition of government expenditure: spending on the elderly increases whereas productive expenditure remains unchanged. The former crowds out private investments and reduces the economy's growth rate. The empirical analysis supports the key predictions of the model. We exploit data from the OECD over the 2007-2018 period and establish using OLS and IV regression analyses that population ageing has a positive and significant effect on elderly spending categories like "old age" and "hospital services." In line with the model, it has no sizable impact on productive spending categories such as "tertiary education", "transport", "mining, manufacturing and construction" and "R&D General public services." For a larger baseline sample of 178 countries we employ GMM analyses and find a negative and significant effect of elderly spending on economic growth.

Population Ageing and the Environment: A Comparative Study of Nature-Concerning and Action-Requiring Outcomes

In this paper we study an under-explored implication of population ageing, i. e., its effect on environmental outcomes and environment-related individual attitudes. In doing so we propose a novel classification of environmental variables, namely action-requiring and nature-concerning. The borderline difference between those two types lies in the level of civil engagement required to fulfill them. Using data on a panel of countries over the 1995-2018 period, our findings reveal that whilst population ageing has a pro-ecological impact on nature-concerning environmental outcomes, it has no clear effect on action-requiring counterparts. Similarly, employing survey data from 2005 to 2016, we also demonstrate that there is a negative and statistically significant relationship between population ageing and respondents' engagement for the environment. Furthermore, we find that subjective importance of the environment is positively associated with individual ageing.

Research Papers

Population Aging and the Rise of Populism in Europe

This paper establishes population aging as a driving force of populism in a multilevel regression analysis of individuals living in European countries over the period 2002-2019. The focus is on the effect of "aggregate" population aging as opposed to individual aging. Populism expressed as populist attitudes is measured with individual-level data of nine consecutive rounds of the European Social Survey. We use data on voting for populist parties, political trust, and attitudes towards immigration. Our findings suggest an association of population aging with a declining electoral turnout, a higher support for populist parties, lower trust in political institutions, and a rise in anti-immigrant hostility. These effects are observed across both young and elderly voters.

Societal Aging and Attitudes towards Women in the Labor Market: Evidence from European Countries

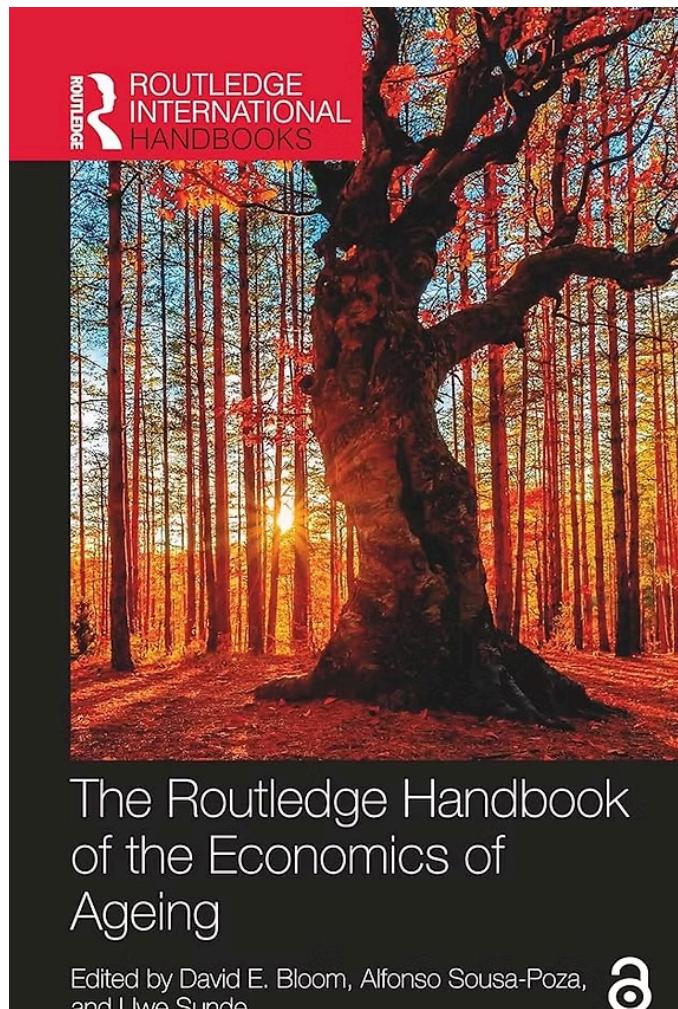
This paper examines the relationship between societal aging and attitudes toward women in the labor market. We hypothesize that, up to a certain point, these attitudes are more favorable as societies grow "older". In these societies, people may better recognize that an increase in female labor force participation can help mitigate the challenges that societal aging imposes on the welfare state. To test this hypothesis, we conduct a multilevel analysis of individuals from 25 European OECD countries between 2004 and 2017, using the Old Age Dependency Ratio (OADR) as a proxy for societal aging and gender-related questions from the European Social Survey (ESS). Our findings reveal a hump-shaped relationship between societal aging and attitudes towards women in the labor market. In the early stages of demographic change, particularly in countries with rising OADR, positive attitudes can be attributed to the recognition that an aging population necessitates a larger working-age population, making women a logical resource for expansion, thus fostering more favorable norms. However, as societal aging progresses further, conservative views associated with older populations begin to dominate, leading to a deterioration in gender norms.

The Implications of Population Aging for Immigrant- and Gender-Related Attitudes

Ageing populations pose some of the foremost global challenges of this century. Drawing on an international pool of scholars, this cutting-edge Handbook surveys the micro, macro and institutional aspects of the economics of ageing.

Structured in seven parts, the volume addresses a broad range of themes, including health economics, labour economics, pensions and social security, generational accounting, wealth inequality and regional perspectives. Each chapter combines a succinct overview of the state of current research with a sketch of a promising future research agenda.

This Handbook will be an essential resource for advanced students, researchers and policymakers looking at the economics of ageing across the disciplines of economics, demography, public policy, public health and beyond.



1st DEM Workshop on Ageing, Culture and Comparative Development

On July 5-6, 2023, Professor Andreas Irmel from the Department of Economics and Management at the University of Luxembourg and Anastasia Litina, Assistant Professor at the Department of Economics at the University of Macedonia, organized an academic workshop on the role of ageing and culture for the comparative development of economies.

The workshop was funded by the [Luxembourg National Research Fund](#) (C20/SC/14770002).

The workshop took place on Kirchberg Campus at the University of Luxembourg and brought together a group of 22 international researchers. For two days, they presented and discussed their most recent findings that open new ways of understanding the differential performance of economies.

The event focused on the effects of population ageing as well as on the role of cultural aspects such as norms and values. The keynote lecture was delivered by Matthias Doepke, Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences.

The workshop was funded by the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) (C20/SC/14770002).

See more details [here](#).



2nd DEM Workshop on Ageing, Culture and Comparative Development

On 30 May – 1 June, 2024, [Professor Andreas Irmens](#) from the Department of Economics and Management at the University of Luxembourg and Anastasia Litina, Associate Professor at the Department of Economics at the University of Macedonia, organized an academic workshop on the role of ageing and culture for the comparative development of economies.

The workshop took place on our [Kirchberg Campus](#) and brought together a group of 16 international researchers. For two days, they presented and discussed their most recent findings that open new ways of understanding the differential performance of economies.

The event focused on the effects of population ageing as well as on the role of cultural aspects such as norms and values. The keynote lectures were delivered by Joerg Baten, Professor of Economics at Tübingen University, Axel Dreher, Professor of Economics at Heidelberg University, and Ruben Enikolopov, University Pompeu Fabra.

The workshop was funded by the [Luxembourg National Research Fund](#) (C20/SC/14770002).



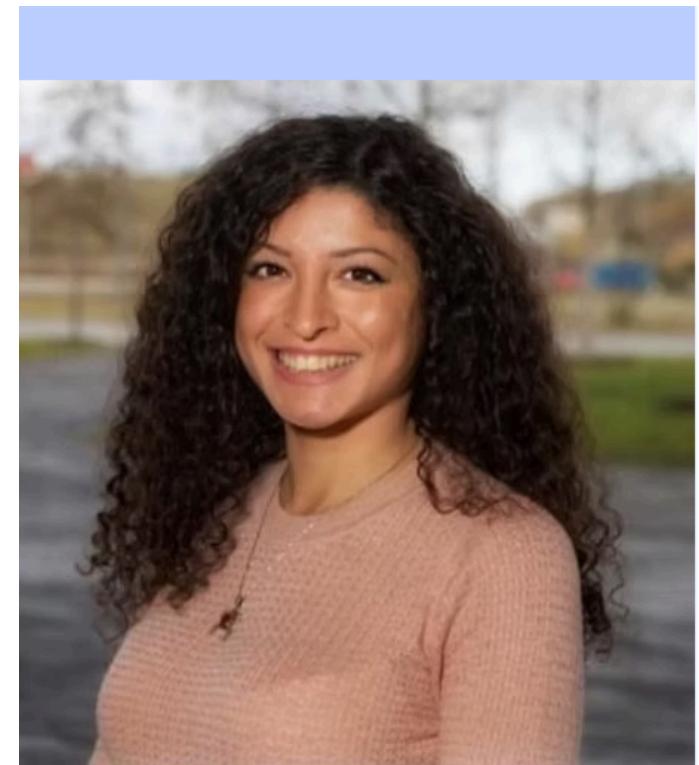
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 Thank you!