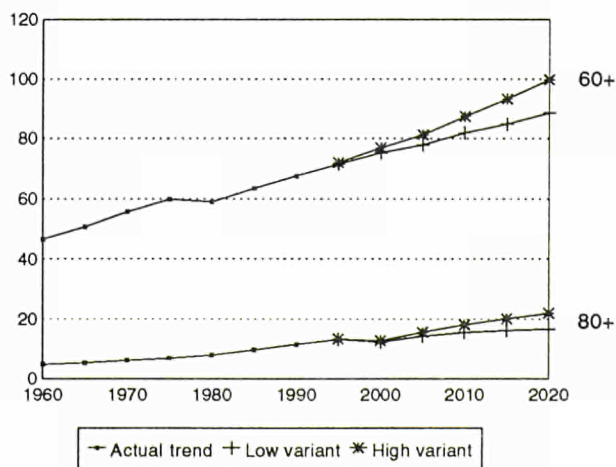


OLDER PEOPLE IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT



This first Rapid Report on older people in the European Community provides comparable and harmonized statistics on population and employment with the aim of showing the heterogeneity of this group. The topics treated include "age and sex structure", "life expectancy", "marital status", "exit from the labour market" and "employment situation of older people".

Diagram 1 : Numbers of older people in the European Community - EUR12 (millions)



Source: Demographic Statistics Yearbook

General trends

Over the past three decades, the number of older people (60 years of age and over) in the European Community has risen from 46.5 to 68.6 million, an increase of almost 50%. All the signs are that this trend will continue in the future, and that in 2020 there will be approximately twice as many older people in the Community as there were in 1960. Depending on the life expectancy assumptions on which the projections are based, it is likely that between 89 and 100 million older people will be living in the present territory of the Community in 2020, 17 to 22 million of them aged 80 or over.

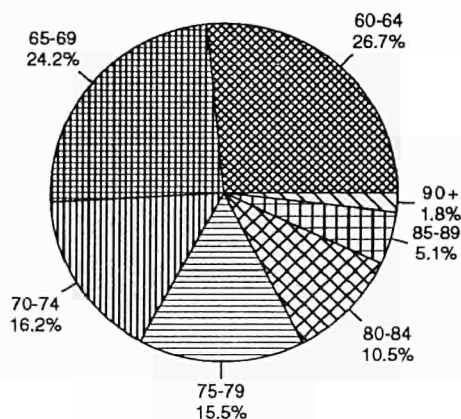
In view of the demands which this structural change will make on our society, in particular as regards the financing of pensions and health care, the Community has set up its first three-year programme for older people. The aim of the programme is to increase awareness of the situation and problems of older people and to foster a feeling of solidarity between generations. The highlight of this programme is expected to be the "European Year" 1993 of older people and solidarity between generations.

Table 1 : Number of older people in the Member States - 1.1.1991

	60 years and over		80 years and over	
	1000	%	1000	%
EUR 12	68576	19.9	11936	3.5
B	2062	20.7	353	3.5
DK	1046	20.3	192	3.7
D	16264	20.4	3011	3.8
GR	2049	20.2	323	3.2
E	7362	18.9	1125	2.9
F	10953	19.3	2151	3.8
IRL	538	15.3	79	2.2
I	11888	20.6	1878	3.3
L	73	19.1	12	3.1
NL	2611	17.4	437	2.9
P	1798	18.2	247	2.5
UK	11931	20.7	2128	3.7

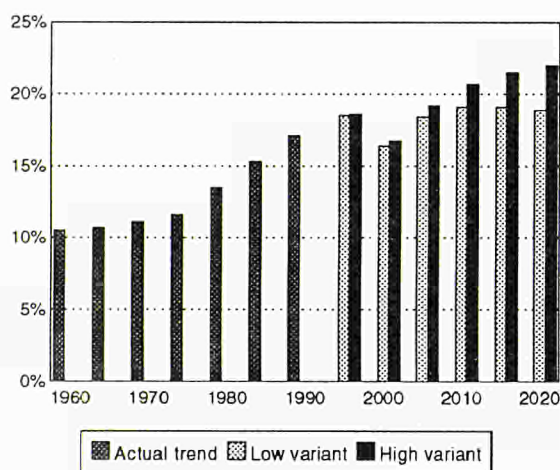
Source : Demographic Statistics Yearbook

Diagram 2 : Older people by age group - EUR 12 - 1.1.1991



Source : Demographic Statistics Yearbook

Diagram 3 : Percentage of older people (60 years and over) who are aged 80 years and over - EUR 12



Source : Demographic Statistics Yearbook

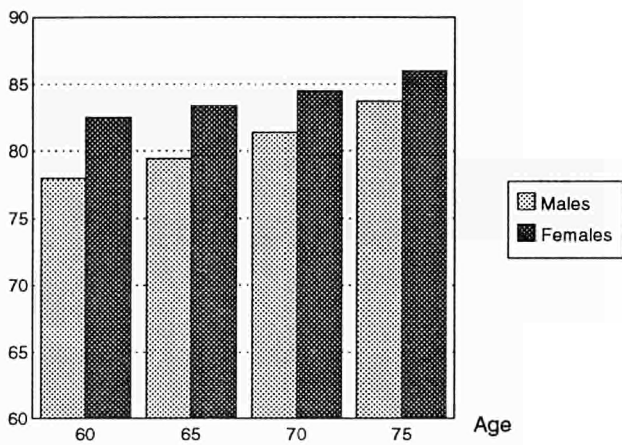
Composition by age

The 68.6 million older people living in the European Community in 1991 are in no way a uniform group.

Diversity within the group begins with actual age figures: roughly half of all older people are between 60 and 69 years old, almost one-third are between 70 and 79 and the remaining 17.4% - 11.9 million people - are over 80.

Older people make up an increasingly large percentage of our population. Not only are numbers rising steadily in terms of percentage of the total population but also the "elderly" group is becoming older (cf. Diagram 3). Whilst only around 10% of older people were aged 80 or over in 1960, almost 17% of them were in 1990. This increase is likely to continue until 2020, when the forecast is for between 19% and 22% of older people to be aged 80 or over. The graph dips in 2000 because of the fall in the number of births during the First World War, not because of any trend reversal.

Diagram 4 : Entire lifespan expected at the age of 60, 65, 70 and 75, by sex - EUR 12* - 1988



Source: Demographic Statistics Yearbook

Life expectancy

The steady rise in life expectancy resulting from progress in medical science and living conditions is responsible for the large - and increasing - numbers of older people in the European Community. In 1988, 60-year-olds could expect to live approximately 20 more years - women longer than men: whereas, for example, 60-year-old men could expect to reach their 78th birthday, the average life expectancy for 60-year-old women in Europe was 82.5 years, i.e. four-and-a-half years higher.

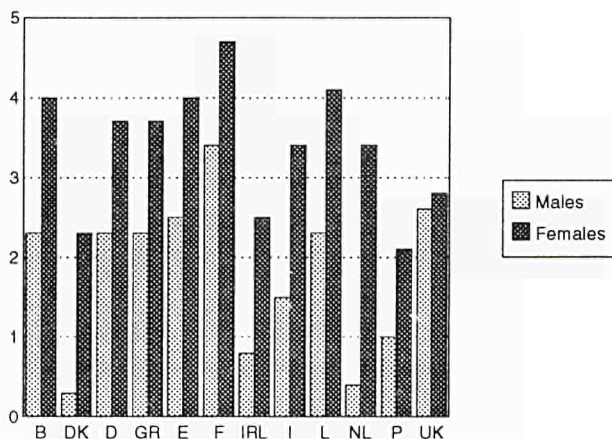
Female life expectancy exceeds male in all Member States, although the actual level varies considerably from one to another, as can be seen in Table 2. Whilst in 1990 60-year-old Greek men have the highest life expectancy of all older men in the Community - 79.2 years - 60-year-old Irish men can expect to live to only 76.6 years. There are even greater differences for 60-year-old women, with a life expectancy of 80.6 years for Irish women and 84.2 years for French.

Table 2 : Entire lifespan expected at the age of 60, by sex

1990*	EUR12	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Males	78.0	77.8	77.4	77.8	79.2	79.0	79.0	76.6	78.2	77.8	78.1	77.2	77.6
Females	82.5	82.7	81.6	82.2	82.3	83.2	84.2	80.6	82.7	82.4	83.1	81.2	81.7
D, GR: 1989 EUR12, E, I: 1988													
1960	EUR12	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Males	..	75.5	77.1	75.5	76.9	76.5	75.6	75.8	76.7	75.5	77.7	76.2	75.0
Females	..	78.7	79.3	78.5	78.6	79.2	79.5	78.1	79.3	78.3	79.7	79.1	78.9
D, IRL: 1960-62 DK: 1961-62 L: 1961-63													

Source : Demographic Statistics Yearbook

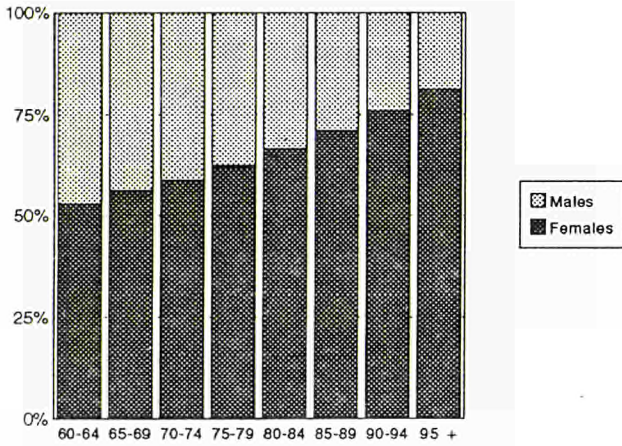
Diagram 5 : Increase in life expectancy at the age of 60 between 1960 and 1990



Source : Demographic Statistics Yearbook

It is generally true that the past 30 years have not led to a levelling out of life expectancy between either men and women or between one Member State and another. Diagram 5 shows that for 60-year-old women it has risen more sharply in the past 30 years than it has for men of the same age, although it was already higher in 1960. There are also obvious differences in life expectancy from one Member State to another, particularly for women: the increase for 60-year-old women over the past 30 years has been highest in France at 4.7 years, despite the fact that even in 1960 French women had the second-highest life expectancy of older women in the Community.

Diagram 6 : Older people by sex and age group - EUR 12 - 1.1.1991

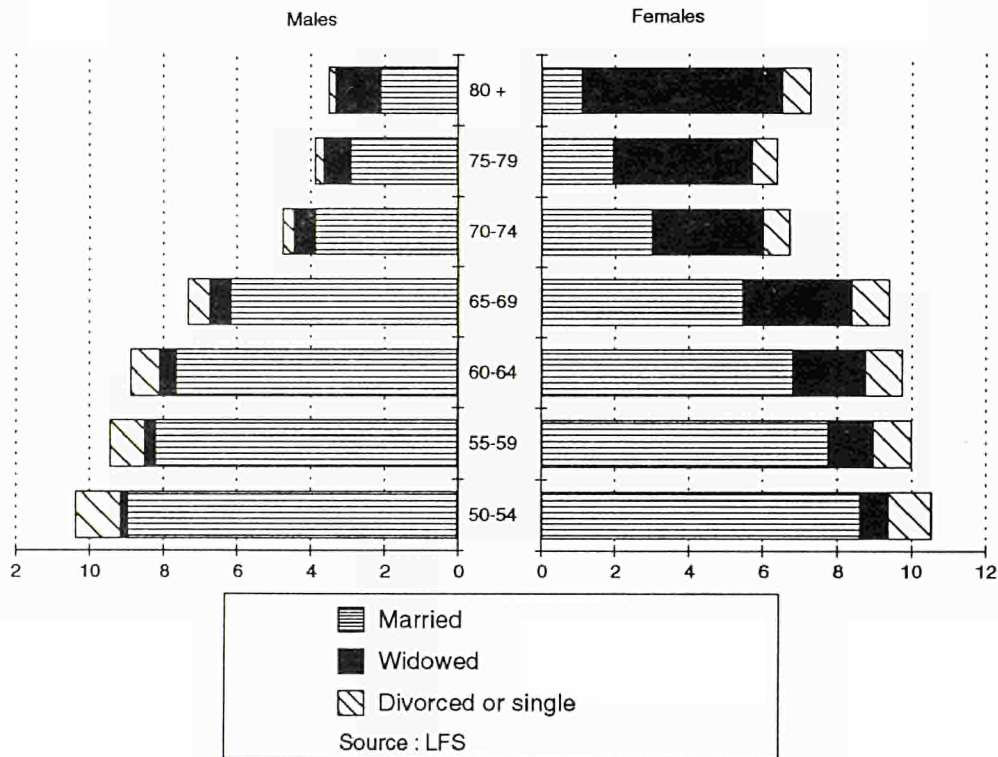


Source: Demographic Statistics Yearbook

Composition by sex and family situation

The varying male and female life expectancies in the European Community have considerable consequences for older people. Diagram 6 shows that the composition by sex becomes more unbalanced as age increases. Whereas in the 60- to 64-year-old group there are roughly the same numbers of men and women, in the 80- to 84-year-old group there are two women to every man and in the 90- to 94-year-old group the ratio is three to one.

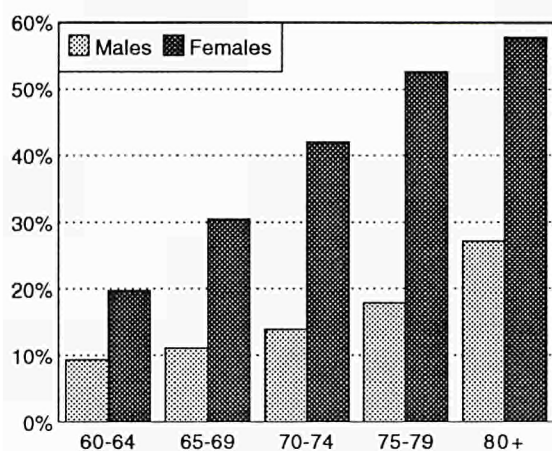
Diagram 7 : Older people by sex, age group and family situation - EUR 12 - 1991 (millions)



This unequal distribution by sex in the higher age groups also makes the differences between men and women as regards family situation more acute: since the majority of men are married to younger women and the female life expectancy is substantially higher than the male, there are considerable differences between the sexes in the ratio of those who are married and those who are not in each age group, with the scales tending to tilt more with advancing years: in the 80-year-old and over age group, there are in absolute terms almost twice as many married men as women, which in relative terms means that 60% of the men in this age group are married, whereas only 15% of the women are.

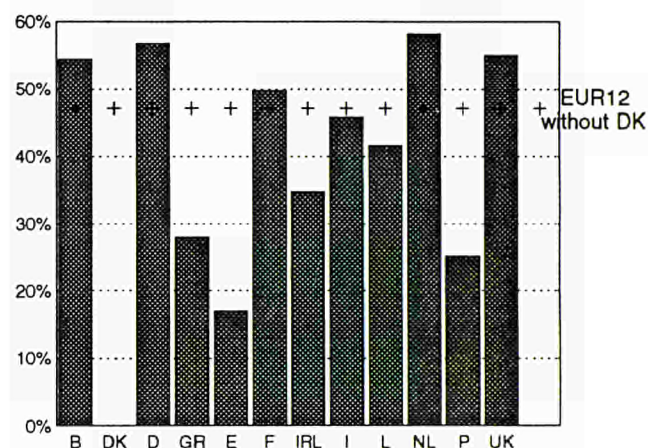
Looked at the other way, the majority of older women, especially those over the age of 75, are widows. More than half of women aged between 75 and 79, and three-quarters of those aged 80 and over, are widowed, and thus half of the over-80s (total men and women) are widows.

Diagram 8 : Percentage of older people living alone among all older people, by sex and age group - EUR12* - 1991



Source : LFS

Diagram 9 : Percentage of older people living alone among all persons aged 80 and over - 1991



Source : LFS

Due to a difference in definitions, comparable data for Denmark is not available.

Households

The imbalances in family situation are also reflected in the composition of the private households of older people, which will be described below. Account should be taken, however, of the fact that the analysis covers only the estimated 95% of older people living in private households, since the situation of those in old people's and nursing homes and in other collective households cannot be included for lack of data.

Older people living on their own are of particular interest from the social policy point of view. The share of the total private household population accounted for by older people living alone shows a marked increase with age. Diagram 8 indicates that the percentage accounted for by the 80-year-olds and over is almost double that of the 60- to 64-year age group in the case of both men and women. In each age group, however, the percentage of older women living alone is at least twice as high as that of men, owing, in particular, to the differences in the life expectancy and family situation of older men and women. Thus more than half of the women in the 75- to 79-year age group live alone, as against fewer than 20% of the men.

In all Member States, age and sex have a major impact on the percentage of older people in private households who are living alone, with considerable differences between the Member States. Diagram 9 illustrates these differences, using 80-year-olds and over as an example: whereas the percentage of all people aged 80 and over living in private households who also live alone is above the Community average in Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, the figures are below average in Greece, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal, by far the lowest figure - 17.0% - being in Spain. There are no doubt many reasons for this, in particular the different nature of family ties but also the availability of out-patient services.

Table 3 : General statutory pensionable age for employees - 1991

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Males	60	67	65	65	65	60	65	60	65	65	65	65
Females	60	67	65	60	65	60	65	55	65	65	62	60

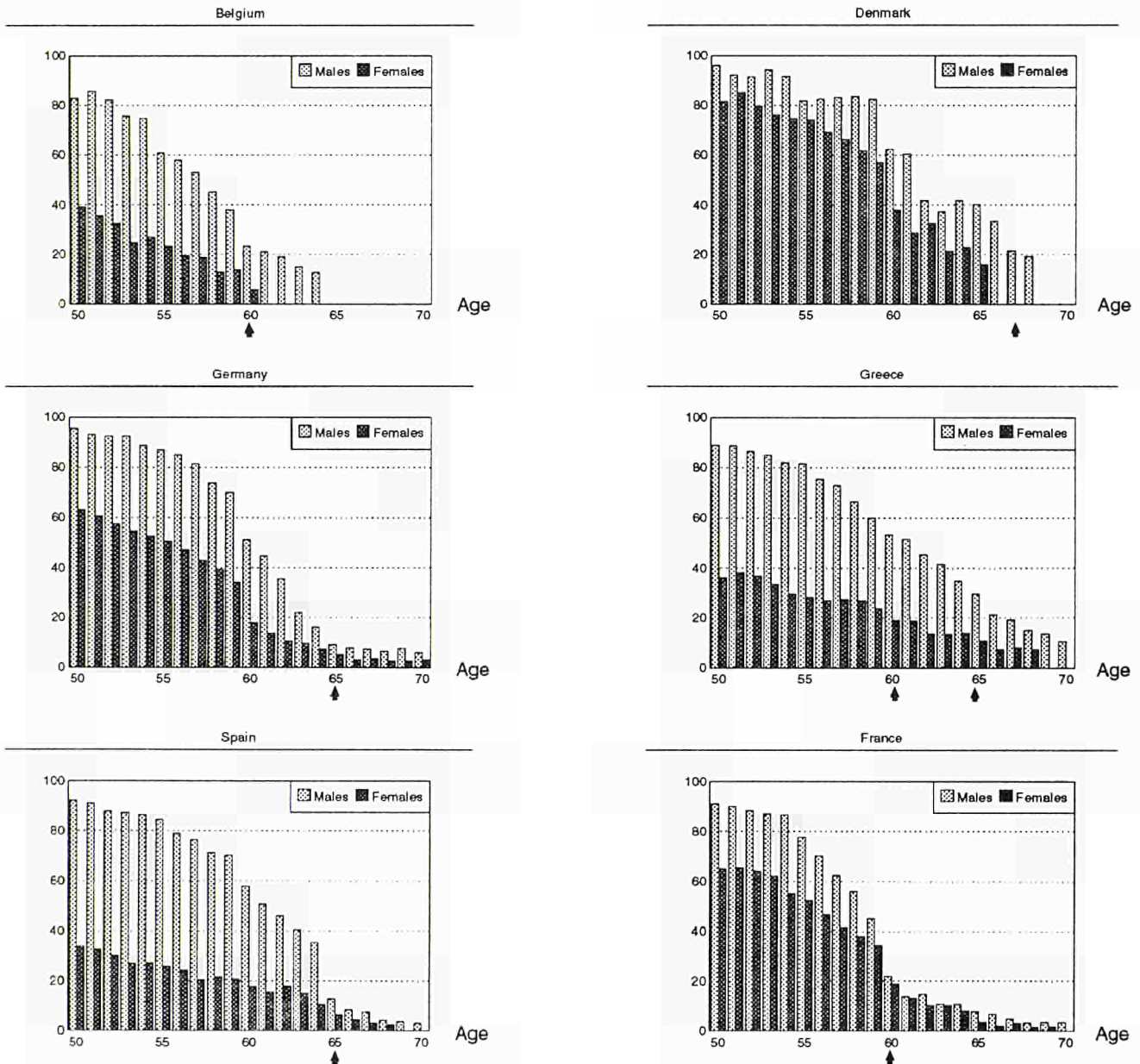
Source : SEC(92) 2288 final

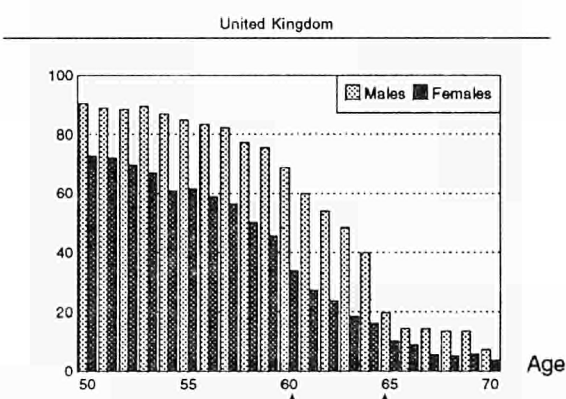
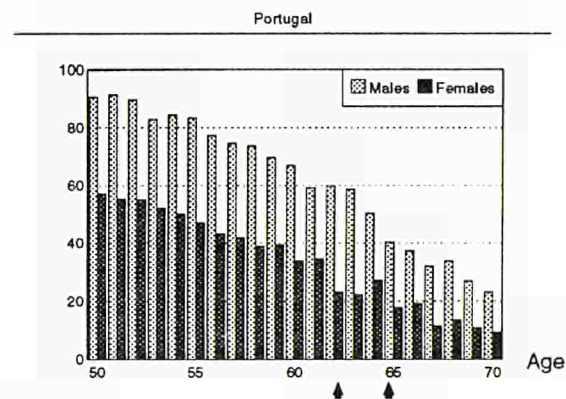
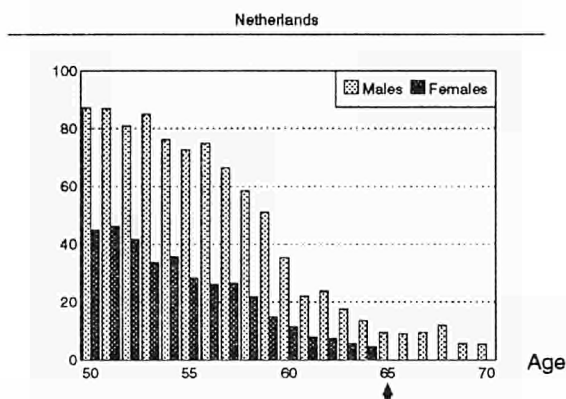
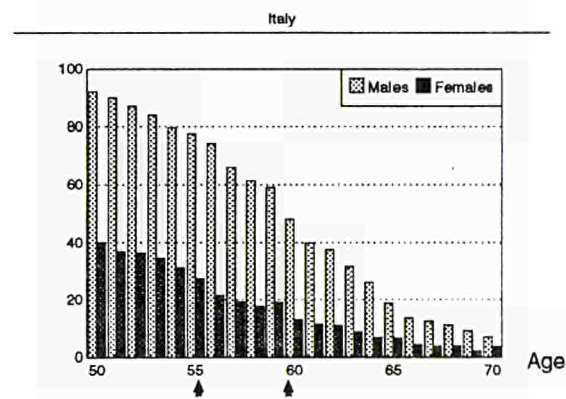
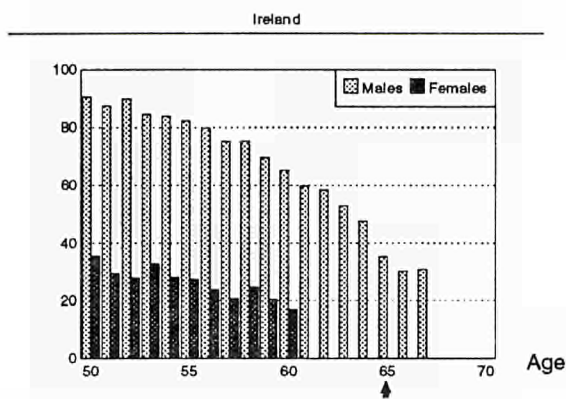
Labour force participation rate

In 1991, the general statutory retirement age for employees was the same for men and women in almost all Member States, the exceptions being Greece, Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom. In Italy, the legislation is currently being revised, this is also the case in Greece in respect of new entrants to the insurance system. In the UK, a review is currently under way of options for equalizing the pension age.

As Table 3 illustrates, the general statutory pensionable age for employees varies considerably from one Member State to another. But too much should not be read into this table, since in each Member State there are provisions for shifting actual pensionable age forwards or backwards for different categories of employees. Important arrangements in this respect are redundancy benefits

Diagram 10 : Activity rates by age and sex - 1991





Source : LFS

activity rates for men of statutory retirement age (29.4% in Greece, 35.1% in Ireland, 40.2% in Portugal and 47.8% in Italy).

This contrasts sharply with the pattern in Germany and the Netherlands, where there is a noticeable decline in the activity rate to well below 20% even before the statutory pensionable age is reached.

Spain, France and the United Kingdom hold the middle ground, with a relatively steady withdrawal from the labour market up to the statutory pensionable age followed by a sharp fall in the activity rate thereafter to less than half of the previous level.

The labour force participation rate for older people in Denmark is unique, with substantial losses staggered at the ages of 60, 62 and 67, and virtually constant rates thereafter.

Belgium is an exception as well, with a steeper downward slope than in the other Member States reflecting a steady retreat from the labour market with dips at the ages of 55 and 60.

The female participation rates are lower in all Member States than the male, with women leaving the labour market in a steadier trickle. There are sharp falls in the female activity rates in Denmark, Germany and France only, at the age of 60 in each case.

for older workers and early retirement pensions (for which an actuarial graded reduction may or may not be applied).

The preceding graphs of activity rates for men and women by age show when they withdraw from the labour market, with the statutory pensionable age for employees being indicated by one or two arrows. There are some gaps in the information where the sample was too small to provide reliable data, particularly in Luxembourg, but there are problems, too, with age groups with a low participation rate in some of the other Member States.

The graphs indicate that people actually retire from the labour market earlier than the general statutory pensionable age would suggest. Within this trend, there are five different patterns. The following description concentrates on men, whose situation is less influenced by cohort effects than that of women.

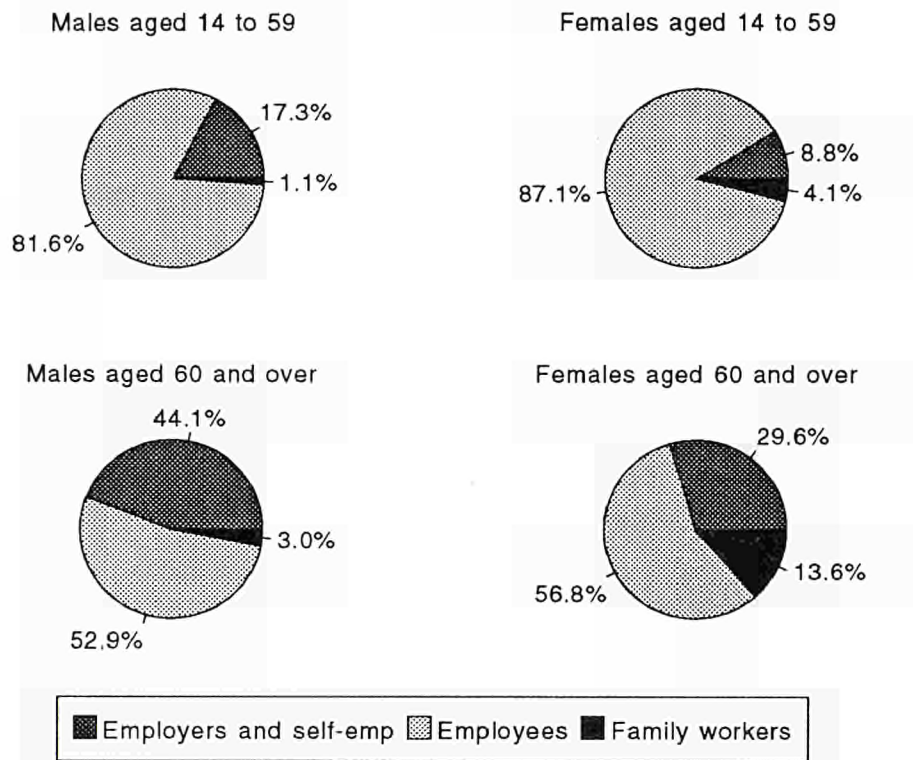
In Greece, Ireland, Italy and Portugal, there is a steady withdrawal from the labour market, with relatively high

Table 4 : Working population aged 60 and over - 1991 (thousands)

	EUR12	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Males	4316	59	91	853	218	562	291	61	826	2	114	285	953
Females	1958	15	48	361	86	225	233	15	280	1	39	163	491

Source : LFS

Diagram 11 : Persons in employment by professional status, sex and age group - EUR12 - 1991



Source : LFS

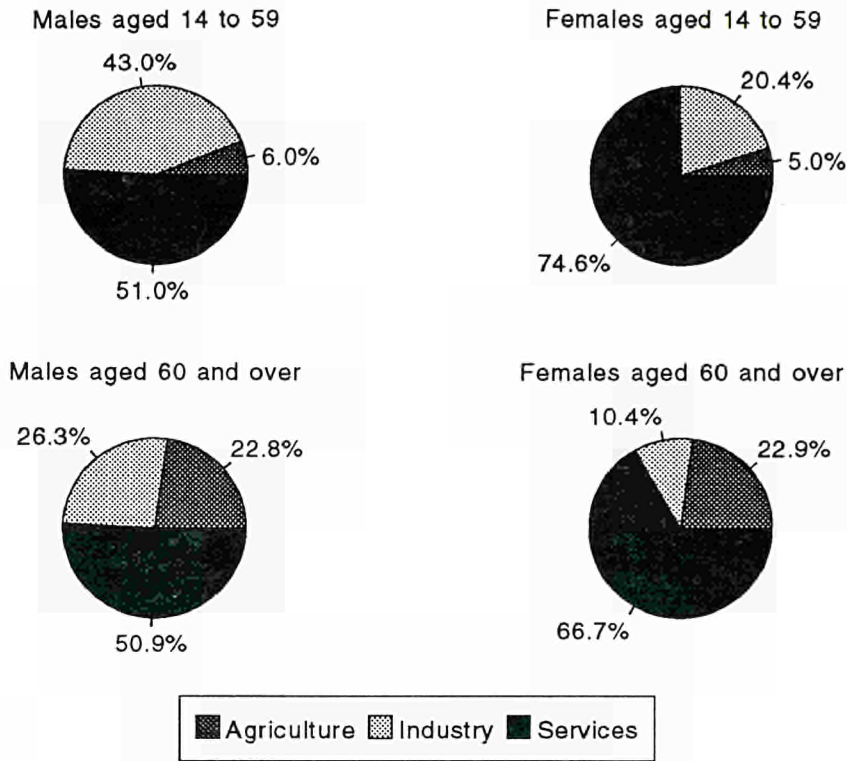
Employment

There are 4.3 million men and 2.0 million women aged 60 and over working in the European Community, or 10% of the total in this age group. A comparison with the 14-59-year-olds shows considerable differences as regards professional status, sector of activity and extent of part-time working.

It is immediately apparent that older people - both men and women - are less frequently employed by others than younger people are. Whereas 81.6% of men and 87.1% of women at the age of 14 to 59 are employees, in the age group 60 and over only about half of the total are (52.9% of men and 56.8% of women). Family workers, employers and the self-employed, who are not affected

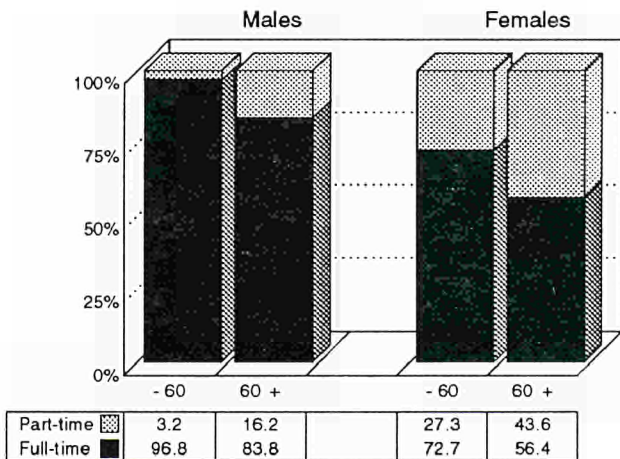
by the general statutory pensionable age for employees, continue working longer, and are therefore over-represented in the group of older people in employment.

Diagram 12 : Persons in employment by sector of activity, sex and age group - EUR12 - 1991



Source : LFS

Diagram 13 : Full-time and part-time employment - EUR12 - 1991

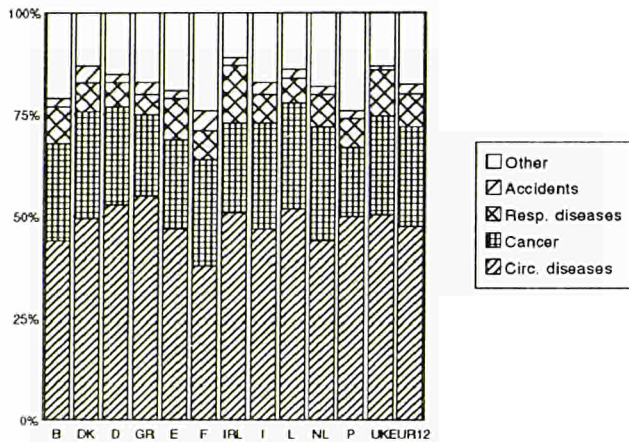


Source : LFS

This phenomenon is closely connected with the sector of activity in which older people work, as illustrated in Diagram 12. Almost one-quarter of older men and women work in agriculture, whereas this sector now employs very few younger men and women (6.0% and 5.0% respectively). The higher proportion of persons working in agriculture leads to a drastic reduction in the proportion of those working in industry (to almost half for both sexes) whilst the importance of the services sector is reduced as far as women are concerned.

With regard to working time, it is apparent that considerably more older people than younger work part-time, particularly men, 3.2% of the younger age group working part-time as against 16.2% in the older group. This also means, of course, that 83.8% of older men in employment are still working full-time.

Diagram 14 : Causes of death among persons aged 55 and over - 1988



Source : WHO

Causes of death

According to WHO statistics, almost half of those aged 55 and over in the European Community die nowadays as a result of circulatory diseases, and one-quarter of cancer-related illnesses. There are, however, consider-

able differences from one Member State to another: whereas circulatory diseases cause the deaths of 38% of older people in France, they are responsible for 55% of the deaths of older people in Greece. There are similarly large differences in the percentages of deaths from cancer among older people: whereas 17% of older people in Portugal die of cancer, in the Netherlands it is 28%.

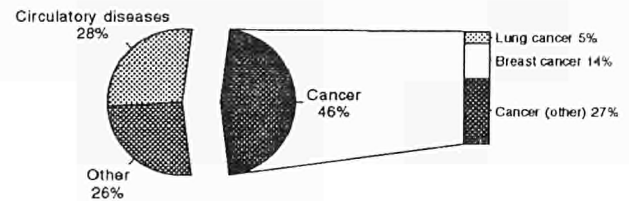
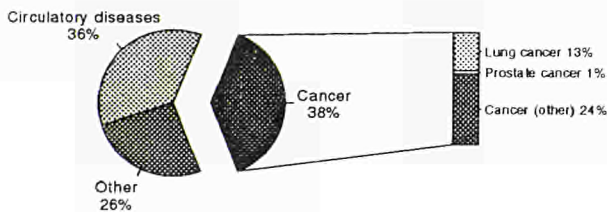
Diagram 15 shows that as age increases so does the importance of circulatory diseases as the cause of death in older people, whereas cancer-related deaths decline, particularly in the case of women. A comparison of women in the age group 55 to 64 years and those in the age group 75 years and over shows that the proportion of deaths due to circulatory diseases almost doubles, whilst the percentage of deaths attributable to cancer falls to one-third.

A comparison between men and women dying of different kinds of cancer shows that lung cancer kills many more older men than older women. For example, 13% of 55- to 64-year-old men die of lung cancer, but only 5% of women. The major fatal cancer for women in this age group is breast cancer, which is responsible for 14% of deaths.

Diagram 15 : Causes of death by sex and age group - EUR12* - 1988

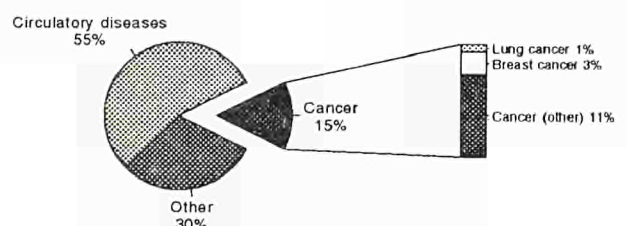
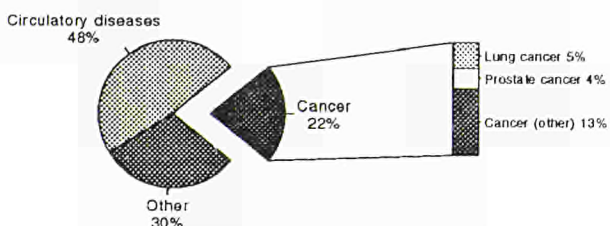
Males aged 55 to 64

Females aged 55 to 64



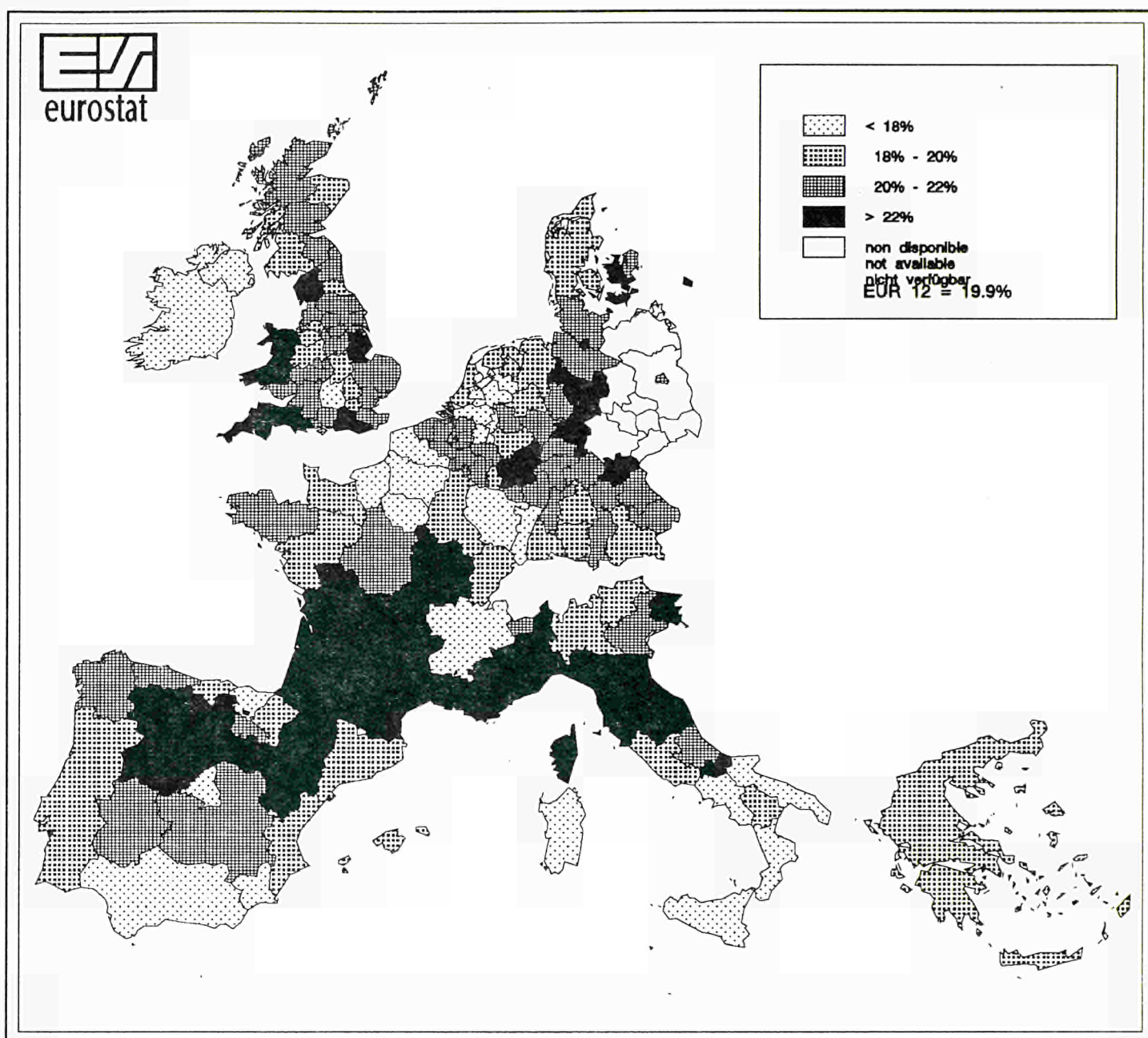
Males aged 75 and over

Females aged 75 and over



Source : WHO

Diagram 16 : Percentage of the total population accounted for by 60-year-olds and over, by region - 1.1.1990



Source : REGIO
 National data only for Greece and Portugal
 No data available for Guadeloupe, Martinique, Reunion and Guyana
 Canary Islands : 13%

The regional aspect

Less than 16% of the total population is made up of older people in the Spanish regions of Ceuta and Melilla and the Canary Islands, in the Ile de France (France), Ireland, Campania (Italy) and Flevoland and North Holland in the Netherlands; in contrast, in the Limousin region (France), in the regions of Liguria, Emilia-Romagna, Centre and Tuscany in Italy and in Surrey, Cornwall and Dorset in the United Kingdom, more than 25% of the population are aged 60 and over. Differences within one and the same country are particularly marked in Spain, where the proportion of older people varies between 13% in the Canary

Islands and 23% in Aragon and Castile-Leon, and in France (15% for the Ile de France and 27% for Limousin) and in Italy, where there are substantial differences between Campania (15%) and Liguria (28%).

These differences, which are of considerable importance for social policies at regional level and, in particular, for the provision of infrastructures, arise from a combination of widely varying factors. Along with purely demographic factors such as life expectancy and fertility rates, social factors play a major part. These include the level

of economic development in a given region, which affects the extent to which younger people feel it is in their interest to migrate to or from that region, and this in turn has an indirect effect on the proportion of older people. There are also regions which attract people of retirement age because they have a particularly favourable climate.

Explanatory notes

With the exception of the section on causes of death, this report uses the designation "**older people**" for those aged 60 or over. In the section on causes of death, this description refers to those aged 55 or over, for reasons of data availability. A third category is persons aged 80 or over.

With the exception of the sections on life expectancy and causes of death, the data for **Germany** refer to the Federal Republic of Germany as constituted from 3.10.1990.

An * indicates that the values are estimated.

The **Community Labour Force Survey** is carried out annually in the spring. The definitions used are the same in all Member States and are based on the international recommendations of the ILO. The survey covers the total population in private households, and excludes those living in collective households such as boarding houses, hospitals, old people's and nursing homes, religious institutions, etc.

Sources and further information

Eurostat Yearbooks

-Demographic statistics

-Community Labour Force Survey - Results (LFS)

Eurostat Databanks

-REGIO

-CRONOS

Other publications

-Human resources in Europe at the dawn of the 21st century - conference proceedings (Eurostat)

-SEC(92) 2288 final. Report from the Commission on the application in the Member States of the Council Recommendation 82/857/EEC of 10 December 1982 on the principles of a Community policy with regard to retirement age.

-World Health Statistics Annual (WHO)

INFORMATION

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