

Researcher: Iran should develop strategies to tackle sluggish population growth

Social Desk

Iran is grappling with declining birth rate and population ageing which could pose big challenges to the society in the following years.

Many demographers believe the age pyramid in Iran is tilting toward ageing. They say the phenomenon stems from a rise in life expectancy and sluggish population growth.

The findings of Iran's National Population and Housing Census showed between 2011 and 2016, average life expectancy at birth for Iranian men and women improved by 1 and 1.5 years respectively. The findings indicated that Iranian men had an average life expectancy of 72.5 and women a life expectancy of 75.5 years.

Besides, reports by Iran University of Medical Science showed that the country's population growth rate in 1986 stood at 3.9 percent while it lowered to 0.6 percent in 2021. Low birth rate has played a significant role in this regard.

Saleh Ghasemi, a demographic researcher, said Iran's population growth rate is expected to fall to zero in 2036. He said this will adversely affect the country's economic infrastructure which includes trade, insurance funds and the production sector.

He said the speed of population ageing in Iran is very high.

"Population ageing occurs in all countries across the world. But



▲ Saleh Ghasemi, a demographic researcher, says Iran's population growth rate could fall to zero in 2036. fararu.com

this phenomenon in Iran has turned into a crisis for three reasons. "The first reason is that in other countries the process of turning from a young country to an ageing country took more than a century. But Iran has gone through this process in 30 years."

Ghasemi said the high speed of population ageing has dealt blows to planning and management systems in the country.

He added that the second reason is that

countries that face with population ageing are developed ones, but Iran is grappling with the phenomenon while it is a developing country.

"This means that we will become an ageing country before turning into an industrial country without high economic growth which will increase the challenges posed by population ageing," the researcher warned.

Ghasemi said the third reason is that Iran will be the only ageing

country in the region in the next decades. He called for formulating economic and cultural strategies to reverse a decline in birth rate.

"Economic strategies mean granting privileges and removing obstacles in the way of young couples. Cultural strategies amount to introducing comprehensive plans to convince the society to change its social and cultural approaches," the researcher said.

Other experts have

forecast that Iran will host around 20 million elderly individuals in less than 30 years, which will comprise a quarter of the country's population.

The ageing of the population brings concerns about the speed of economic growth of the country, increasing health system costs, the quality performance of the healthcare system, the financial resilience of the pension system, and the wellbeing and quality of life of older people.

To overcome such challenges, policy makers need to carry out evidence-informed policy interventions. Targeted measures are needed, such as setting healthy ageing as a priority for the government and developing a healthcare delivery model for the ageing population.

It is necessary to strengthen the performance and funding of day-care centers and retirement homes for older people, provide long-term healthcare

insurance plans tailored to the needs of older people, invest in palliative care, and increase awareness of health-promoting behaviors of self-care and healthy nutrition for older people.

Population ageing refers to changes in the age composition of a population such that there is an increase in the proportion of older persons.

An older person is defined by the United Nations as a person who is over 60 years of age.

Climate crisis makes insects run for the hills



● Paul Tansley/Observer Design.

In the Alps and Apennines of southern Europe, nearly all the longhorn beetles are moving uphill, and way up at the peaks, the isolation of a brown butterfly with orange-tipped wings is pushing it towards extinction. This is a snapshot of a global trend. With temperatures rising and pressure on biodiversity growing, insects vital to our ecosystems are not only moving north and south, but up, The Guardian wrote.

Research shows many animals are making similar moves, but insects' high levels of mobility and short generation times allow them to respond quickly to change, meaning the uphill momentum can be rapid. Bumblebees in the Pyrenees have moved upwards on average by more than a meter a year, with some species making significantly greater journeys. Moths on Borneo's Mount Kinabalu have followed suit.

All of this makes them a useful indicator of the speed of global heating and ecological impacts at higher altitudes – often biodiversity hotspots and havens for endemic species. To try to grasp the implications, scientists are filling their backpacks and lacing up their walking boots.

"If you want to track climate change on a mountain, you go a few meters. To do that with latitude, but on a flat basis, you have to move many kilometers," says Prof Jane Hill from York University, who has spent years studying insects at elevation in the UK and the tropics.

While the broader altitude shift is disquieting in itself, studies have also shown that reproduction and development can be hit as insects move upwards. Other possible effects are simply unknown. What is undoubtedly true is that they are not uniformly distributed, and in general, the greatest existential threat does not face those making initial forays up from the lowlands.

For species long adapted to the cooler air of higher slopes, there are fixed limits to how far they can move to find conditions conducive to survival. And yet well over half of the mountain-dwelling insects that have been studied are shifting upwards.

Tehran mayor: Studies underway to set up LRT lines



● TASNIM

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The Tehran Municipality is studying plans to establish a light rail transit (LRT) system in the Iranian capital, the mayor of the metropolis said.

Light rail or light rail transit (LRT) is a form of urban rail public transportation that generally has a lower capacity and lower speed than heavy rail and metro systems. However, it has higher capacity and speed than traditional street-running tram systems. The LRT is usually powered by overhead electrical wires and used for medium-capacity local transportation in metropolitan areas. "This project (LRT) is being studied. But no practical measures have been taken yet," Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani told Mehr News Agency.

Zakani added that studies have been carried out with regard to

launching tramway projects.

Experts have frequently blamed Tehran's suffocating traffic as well as the worsening air pollution partly on the city's old and inefficient public transportation system. This has pushed Municipality officials to explore ways to revamp the city's transport system. The officials have said expanding public transport and other essential urban infrastructure in Tehran is a top priority for the Municipality.

Currently, the most used intra-city transport means in Tehran are Metro and bus rapid transit (BRT).

All transit service involves a trade-off between speed and frequency of stops. Services that stop frequently have lower overall speed and are therefore less attractive for longer trips but are more likely to go where the user wants.