



Measuring household and living arrangements of older persons around the world: *The United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019*

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Abstract

The household living arrangements of older persons – whether living alone, with a spouse or partner, with their children or in multi-generational households – are associated with the older persons' economic well-being, physical and psychosocial health, life satisfaction and mortality. Understanding the patterns and trends in older persons' living arrangements is particularly relevant to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development related to poverty eradication (SDG 1), the promotion of healthy lives and well-being at all ages (SDG 3), and the promotion of gender equality (SDG 5). The *United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019* presents evidence drawn from 738 unique data sources including both tabulated data and household roster micro-data from censuses and surveys. The resulting database describes older persons' households across 155 countries or areas, representing approximately 97 per cent of persons aged 65 or over globally.

Keywords: Household size and composition, living arrangements, older persons, intergenerational households

Sustainable Development Goals: 1, 3 and 5

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The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs provides the international community with timely and accessible population data and analysis of population trends and development outcomes. The Division undertakes studies of population size and characteristics and of the three components of population change (fertility, mortality and migration).

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PREFACE

The household living arrangements of older persons can have important implications for their health, economic status and well-being. While some older persons live alone, others reside with a spouse or a partner, or with their children or grandchildren in intergenerational households. Understanding patterns and trends in their living arrangements is relevant for global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular for Goal 1 on poverty, Goal 3 on health and Goal 5 on gender equality. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted in 2002, identified older persons' living arrangements as a topic requiring more research and attention.¹

The *United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019* (hereafter referred to as “the database”) presents a global compilation of indicators to describe the household size, composition and living arrangements of persons aged 60 years or over. The database is the only dataset that provides harmonized and comparable data on patterns and trends in the household size, composition and the living arrangements of older persons at the global level, across regions and countries, and over time. The database builds on work carried out by the United Nations more than a decade ago (United Nations, 2005) and updated in 2017. The 2017 database provided the estimates for four categories of older persons' living arrangements: living alone, with a spouse only, with their children, and other household arrangements. While the majority of older persons lived in a household of the first three types, the “other” category comprised a substantial share of older persons, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean (United Nations, 2017).

In 2018, a new database released by United Nations Population Division, entitled *The United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2018*, expanded the 2017 Database by including indicators of household size, composition and types of living arrangements. In 2019, the database was updated to include more data sources, countries and time periods. The current database was developed by Sara Hertog, Yumiko Kamiya, Mun Sim Lai, Camille Dorion and Ivan Prlncevic of the Population Division.

Interactive country profiles that present the estimates compiled in the database are accessible on the website of the Population Division available from www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data/living-arrangements-older-persons.

¹ The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (United Nations, 2002). Chap. I, resolution 1, annex II

INTRODUCTION

Population ageing is occurring everywhere: nearly every country in the world is experiencing a substantial increase in the size and the proportion of the population aged 65 years or over. There were approximately 727 million persons aged 65 years or over in the world in 2020 and their number is projected to double to 1.5 billion in 2050. Globally, the share of the population aged 65 years or over is projected to increase from 9 per cent in 2020 to 16 per cent by 2050, so that one in six people in the world will be aged 65 years or over (United Nations, 2019).

Population ageing is occurring along with broader social and economic changes that are taking place around the world. Decline in fertility, changes in patterns of marriage, cohabitation and divorce, increased levels of education among the younger generations, urbanization and migration in tandem with rapid economic development reshape the context in which older persons live, including the size and composition of their households and their living arrangements. Many of these changes raise concerns about a possible weakening of the traditional family, which, historically, has been the foundation of economic security and social support for older persons in many parts of the world. In countries for which historical data are available (primarily those located in Western Europe and Northern America), intergenerational co-residence has declined dramatically and most older persons currently live either in single-person households or in households consisting of a couple only or a couple and their unmarried children (Ruggles, 2007, 2009; Ruggles and Heggeness, 2008). Available data indicate that many countries in less developed regions are also experiencing a slow shift in family and household composition away from multi-generational households towards the nuclear family households that are more prevalent in Western Europe and in the United States.

While family and household structures change rather slowly, external shocks, such as economic or health crises, often call on families to quickly react to provide the support needed to their kin. The impact of the 2008 financial crisis and austerity policies in Greece, Italy and Spain led adult children with families to move back in with their older parents (Alvarez-Galvez, 2019). In the United States, social and economic crises such as the crack and opioid epidemics, mass incarceration, and child welfare policies that separate children from their parents have contributed to a rising number of skip generation households, especially among African American families (Keene and Batson, 2010). In some sub-Saharan African, Latin American and Caribbean countries increasing numbers of older people are becoming heads of households and primary carers for family members and children, whose parents are absent as a result of the HIV/AIDS epidemic or labour migration (Zachary and Teachman, 2009). Armed conflict, social and ethnic tensions along with public health care emergencies, economic crises, as well as environmental disasters impact directly and indirectly the sustainability of social, community and family support networks of older persons in many parts of the world. Each of these transformations is reshaping the contexts in which older persons live.

Living arrangements of older persons are an important determinant of their physical well-being as well as their morbidity and mortality. The living arrangements of older persons have been associated with their economic well-being, physical and psychosocial health and life satisfaction (Ong and others, 2016; Zimmer and Das, 2014; Smith and others, 2018). Household size and living arrangements of older persons can also have important macroeconomic implications by influencing the demand for housing, social services, energy, fuel, water and other resources (Bradbury and others, 2014; Kowsari and Zerriffi, 2011; United Nations, 2005).

Globally, the majority of older persons in Northern America and Europe live independently, i.e., alone or with their spouse only. Research has pointed out that most of the older persons in these countries prefer to live independently as long as their health is good enough to do so (Reher and Requena, 2018). In this context, living independently is a matter of preference as privacy is usually considered a normal good (Schwartz and others, 1984). However, living independently does not necessarily indicate an absence of family support. Often, older parents and adult children maintain households nearby and help each other by exchanging financial support, informal care, and other forms of assistance even when they live apart (Brandt and others, 2009; Isengard and Szydluk, 2016). In the United States, for example, nearly a quarter of older parents lived within 1 mile of a child, and 60 per cent had at least one child located within 10 miles, according to data from the 1987–1988 National Survey of Families and Households (Lin and Rogerson, 1995). Data from the U.S. Health and Retirement Study (HRS) showed that unmarried mothers and their adult children tended to live in close proximity, with about one third residing within 10 miles of each other (Bianchi and others, 2010). As some persons living alone are never married and childless, they are more likely to rely on other relatives (siblings and other kin) as well as nonkin (friends, neighbors) for contact and support (Victor and others, 2000).

Likewise, older persons in less developed countries who do not co-reside with their adult children also tend to live near their children's households. According to the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) baseline survey, among those individuals aged 60 or over with at least one adult child, 41 per cent co-reside with their adult child, 34 per cent live in the same immediate neighborhood as the adult child and 14 per cent live in the same county. Only 5 per cent do not have an adult child at least within the same county (Lei and others, 2015).

In most of the less developed countries, the majority of older persons live with their children or with extended family members. In many of these countries, the absence of comprehensive social protection programs and declining labor market prospects of adult children, co-residence of older parents with children is an important element of the flow of financial, emotional and care support between family members.

The *United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019* is the only dataset that provides harmonized and comparable data on patterns and trends in the household size and composition and the living arrangements of older persons at the global level, across regions and countries, and over time. Although the database cannot provide the networks, pathways and direction of support between older persons and their kin, this database is a unique data source of estimates from 155 countries or areas, representing more than 97 per cent of persons aged 60 or over globally, with reference dates ranging from 1960 to 2018. It provides estimates of the global patterns and trends of household size, composition and the living arrangements of the older persons. The dataset distinguishes co-residence according to the age of children, i.e., older persons living with children under age 20 and those living with adult children 20 years or over, an important distinction to better understand the co-residence with children as part of the life course of older persons. Because most of the data sources accessed relied on information about households, older persons residing in institutions such as nursing facilities, prisons, religious institutions or dormitories are not represented in the data. The estimates should thus be interpreted as referring to the household population only. The analyses in this report refers to older persons aged 65 or over and includes one recent observation for 153 of the countries with reference dates ranging from 2000 to 2018, representing 97 per cent of persons aged 65 or over globally.

The present report documents the methodology used in compiling the database and summarizes some of the key patterns and trends in the household composition and living arrangements of older persons. Section 2 describes the concepts, definitions and measures used to estimate the household composition and

living arrangements of older persons. Section 3 describes some of the general patterns revealed by the estimates across countries and regions, including average household size, those related to sex differences in the older persons' living arrangements and household composition. Section 4 offers some suggestions for future priorities for data and research that could help to advance the work of the United Nations in this area.

I. Data, definitions and methods

A. Data Sources

The *United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons* presents a compilation of indicators on the household living arrangements of persons aged 60 or over, estimated using both tabulated data and micro-data from censuses and household surveys. The database estimates are based on 738 unique data sources from 155 countries or areas, with reference dates ranging from 1960 to 2018. Most of the estimates in the database are based on micro-level data obtained from three main primary sources:

1. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)

ICF. 2004-2019. Demographic and Health Surveys (various) [Datasets]. Funded by USAID. Rockville, Maryland: ICF [Distributor]. <https://dhsprogram.com/>

Indicators were estimated from 274 DHS household rosters, representing 74 countries or areas and with reference years ranging from 1985 to 2018. Household members are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors.

2. IPUMS-International

Minnesota Population Center. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, International: Version 7.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019. <http://doi.org/10.18128/D020.V7.0>.

Indicators were estimated from the household rosters of 298 IPUMS-I samples, representing 98 countries or areas and with reference years ranging from 1960 to 2015. As with the DHS, household members identified in IPUMS-I samples are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors. Group quarters or other non-household arrangements and their residents are not considered.

3. Labour Force Surveys (LFS) of the European Union, Eurostat

(<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-labour-force-survey>)

The microdata from the collection of European Union Labour Force Surveys were processed for the *United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons in 2017*, which included fewer indicators than the extended 2018 release. The subset of living arrangement indicators from the LFS, published in the 2017 database, are reproduced here as well, but no estimates for the extended set of indicators presented in the most recent version of the database, have been produced. The database includes estimates from 47 LFS, representing 24 countries and with reference years between 2001 and 2011.

Estimates obtained from primary sources were supplemented with information reported by some countries to the Demographic Yearbook of the United Nations:

4. Demographic Yearbook (DYB) of the United Nations

(https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb_Household/dyb_household.htm)

The *Demographic Yearbook* compiles data on households reported to the United Nations by national statistical offices. The living arrangements of older persons were estimated based on data contained in Table 7: Population in households by type of household, age and sex, 1995-2016. The percentage of older persons living “alone” was calculated as the number of older persons residing in “one-person” households as a percentage of the total number of older persons in households of any size. The percentage of older persons living “with spouse only” was calculated as the number of older persons residing in “couple without children” households as a percentage of the total number of older persons in households of any size. Data compiled in the DYB did not permit estimation of the percentage of older persons co-residing with their children or living in the various inter-generational household types. Estimates based on DYB records for 74 countries or areas are included in the database with reference years ranging from 1995 to 2016.

B. Definitions and methods

The *United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*² defines a *household* based on the arrangements made by persons, individually or in groups, for providing themselves with food and other essentials for living. A household can be classified in one of two categories: a) a one-person household, in which one person makes provision for his or her own food or other essentials for living without combining with any other person; or b) a multi-person household of two or more persons living together who make common provision for food or other essentials for living. Persons in a multi-person household may pool their incomes and have a common budget to a greater or lesser extent; they may be related or unrelated persons or a combination of persons both related and unrelated. The *Principles and Recommendations* note that an alternative definition used in many countries exemplifies the so-called household-dwelling concept, wherein a household consists of all persons living together in a housing unit. By both definitions, households are distinguishable from families in that: a) a household may consist of only one person, but a family must contain at least two members; and b) the members of a multi-person household need not be related to each other, while the members of a family must be related. Thus, a household may contain more than one family or no families at all, as in one-person households and households consisting of unrelated members.

Where guidance is offered in the *Principles and Recommendations*, the indicators selected for this database are defined accordingly. The indicators in the database: 1) describe the composition of older persons’ households; and 2) identify key relationships between older persons’ and co-resident household members, including spouses and children.

The methods used to classify households by size and composition are described in: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *Patterns and trends in household size and composition: Evidence from a United Nations dataset* (ST/ESA/SER.A/433).

https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/household_size_and_composition_technical_report.pdf

² https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesM/Series_M67rev3en.pdf

The set of indicators that describe the size and composition of older person's **households** for a country in a given year include:

Average household size, the average number of usual residents (household members) in households where older persons live. The value of this indicator less one can be interpreted as the average number of persons with whom older persons co-reside.

Distribution of older persons by household size, the percentage of older persons living in households of various sizes, described in four size classes: 1 member, 2-3 members, 4-5 members and 6 or more members.

Resides in a female-headed household, the percentage of older persons living in a household with a female head.

Older persons by age of the head of household

Under 20 years, the percentage of older persons living in households with a household head under age 20 years.

Aged 20-64 years, the percentage of older persons living in households with a household head aged 20-64 years (the "working ages", as commonly defined).

Aged 60 years or over, the percentage of older persons living in households with a household head aged 60 years or over.

Aged 65 years or over, the percentage of older persons living in households with a household head aged 65 years or over.

Percentage of older persons co-residing with a child or young person

Under 15 years, the percentage of older persons living in households with at least one member under age 15 years.

Under 20 years, the percentage of older persons living in households with at least one member under age 20 years.

Distribution of older persons by household type is the percentage of older persons living in distinct household configurations, described in seven mutually exclusive categories:

One-person households comprised of only one member.

Couple only households comprised of a married or in-partnership couple and no one else.

Couple with children households³ comprised of a married or in-partnership couple and their children (biological, step, and adopted/foster children), irrespective of children's ages, and no one else.

Single parent with children households comprised of a single parent and his or her children (biological, step, and adopted/foster children), irrespective of children's ages, and no one else.

Couple only, couple with children and single parent with children households, taken together, constitute nuclear households (see below);

³ In most of these households the older person is a parent living with a spouse and children and no one else. However, older persons living with their parent(s) or parent(s)-in law are also included in this category as long as any other household members are also the children of the parent(s).

Extended family households that include one or more members outside of the nuclear family unit (see below), and no members who are not related to each other.

Household with non-relative that include two or more members who are not related to each other.

Unknown household types that include one or more members whose relationship to the head is unknown or not reported.

Percentage of older persons living in intergenerational households by type

Nuclear household, comprising those living in a couple only household, couple with children household, or single parent with children household.

Multigeneration household that includes two or more generations of related members aged 20 years or over.

Three generation household that includes three or more generations of related members, irrespective of age.

Skip generation household consisting of grandparents and their grandchildren, but none of the parents of the grandchildren.

The set of indicators that identify key relationships between older persons' and co-resident household members, in particular their spouses and children, are described below:

Percentage of older persons living

with their **spouse** or partner, irrespective of the number or relationships of other household members;

with children under 20 years of age, where children include sons, daughters, children-in-law, step-children, adopted children and foster children, wherein the oldest co-resident child is aged 0 to 19 years;

with children aged 20 years or over, where children include sons, daughters, children-in-law, step-children, adopted children and foster children, wherein the oldest co-resident child is aged 20 years or over;

The relationship between members of a household is derived from household rosters collected in censuses and household surveys, which describe each household member's relationship to a single reference person identified as the focal member for the entire household. The criteria for identification of the reference person among the household members can differ across different data collection instruments, but very often this person is described as the head of household, householder, or household reference person.

The notion of head of household assumes that most households are family households (that consist entirely, except possibly for domestic servants, of persons related by blood, marriage or adoption) and that one person in such family households has primary authority and responsibility for household affairs and is, in the majority of cases, its chief economic support. This person is then designated as the head of household. (United Nations, 1998). This particular concept of household headship may not be appropriate for all contexts, such as where spouses share equally the responsibility for household affairs and economic support or where the person who takes primary responsibility for household affairs is not the same person who provides the bulk of the economic support. The Principles and Recommendations further recognize that

gender stereotypes can lead enumerators and respondents to identify a male member as head of household, even in instances where a female household member is primarily responsible for household affairs and/or economic support.

The database estimates are based on micro-level data obtained from three main primary sources as aforementioned. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) are harmonized survey program that uses a highly standardized set of relationship codes for household rosters that varies only slightly across countries and over time (see box 1).

Box 1. Relationship to head of household codes from the household rosters of Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)

- 1 Head
- 2 Wife or husband
- 3 Son/daughter
- 4 Son/daughter-in-law
- 5 Grandchild
- 6 Parent
- 7 Parent-in-law
- 8 Brother/sister
- 9 Co-spouse (nearly always women whose co-wife is the head of household and husband is not present)
- 10 Other relative
- 11 Adopted/foster child
- 12 Not related
- 13 Niece/nephew by blood*
- 14 Niece/nephew by marriage*
- 15 Sister-in-law or Brother-in-law*
- 16 In-house maid*
- 17 Related to house maid*
- 18 Tenant*

* relationship code appears in only a small number of household rosters

These relationship categories encompass the head (code 1), household members related to the head (codes 2-11 and 13-15) and household members not related to the head (codes 12 and 16-18).

For each member of the household, whether they are co-residing with a spouse or partner, is coded as “Yes”, “No”, or “Uncertain” according to criteria that vary according to that household member’s relationship to the head of household:

- a. Head of household: “Y” if spouse of head is present; “N” otherwise
- b. Spouse of head: “Y” if head is present; “N” otherwise
- c. Co-spouse of head: Y if head lives with spouse (unusual – usually these homes have a female head and no spouse of head present); “N” otherwise

- d. Mother of head: “Y” if father of head is present; “N” otherwise
- e. Father of head: “Y” if mother of head is present; “N” otherwise
- f. Mother-in-law of head: “Y” if father-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- g. Father-in-law of head: “Y” if mother-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise

For household members with relationships to the head that are not listed in “a” through “g” above, additional criteria were applied to determine co-residence with a spouse or partner. Roughly half of DHS collected marital status information for each household member listed on the household roster. For these, co-residence with a spouse or partner was coded as:

- h. “N” if marital status indicates not married and not living together
- i. Married daughter of head: “Y” if married son-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- j. Married son of head: “Y” if married daughter-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- k. Married daughter-in-law of head: “Y” if married son of head is present; “N” otherwise
- l. Married son-in-law of head: “Y” if married daughter of head is present; “N” otherwise
- m. Married grandchild of head: “U” if married opposite sex “other relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise
- n. Married “other relative” of head: “U” if married opposite sex “other relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise
- o. Married “non-relative” of head: “U” if married opposite sex “non-relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise

For surveys that have a relationship code for sibling-in-law (not many)

- i. Married sister of head: “Y” if married brother-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- ii. Married brother of head: “Y” if married sister-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- iii. Married sister-in-law of head: “Y” if married brother of head is present; “N” otherwise
- iv. Married brother-in-law of head: “Y” if married sister of head is present; “N” otherwise

For surveys that do not have a relationship code for sibling-in-law (most)

- v. Married sister of head: “U” if married male “other relative” of head is present. “N” otherwise
- vi. Married brother of head: “U” if married female “other relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise

For those surveys without current marital status on the HH roster

- p. Daughter of head age 15 or over: “U” if son-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- q. Son of head age 15 or over: “U” if daughter-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- r. Daughter-in-law of head: “U” if son of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- s. Son-in-law of head: “U” if daughter of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For surveys that have a relationship code for sibling-in-law (not many)

- i. Sister of head age 15 or over: “U” if brother-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- ii. Brother of head age 15 or over: “U” if sister-in-law of age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- iii. Sister-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if brother of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- iv. Brother-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if sister of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For surveys that do not have a relationship code for sibling-in-law (most)

- v. Sister of head age 15 or over: “U” if male “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- vi. Brother of head age 15 or over: “U” if female “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- t. Grandchild of head age 15 or over: “U” if opposite sex “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- u. Other relative of head age 15 or over: “U” if opposite sex sibling, grandchild or other relative of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- v. Non-relative of head age 15 or over: “U” if opposite sex non-relative of head o age 15 or over is present: “N” otherwise

The children (including biological, step, adopted, foster, and children in law) of each household member are similarly identified through criteria that are specific to each household member’s relationship to the head of household. Members’ co-residence with one or more of their children is coded as “Yes”, “No”, or “Uncertain”:

- a. Head of household or spouse of head or co-spouse of head: “Y” if own or adopted child or child in law is present; “N” otherwise
- b. Parent or parent-in-law of head: “Y” if head or spouse of head or sibling of head is present; “N” otherwise
- c. Child or child-in-law of head: “U” if there is a grandchild of head more than 15 years younger than the child or child-in-law of the head; “N” otherwise
- d. Grandchild of head: “U” if “other relative” at least 15 years younger is present; “N” otherwise
- e. Sibling of head: “U” if there is a niece or nephew or other relative at least 15 years younger present; “N” otherwise
- f. Other relative: “U” if there is a parent-in-law of head, sibling of head or other relative of head at least 15 years younger; “N” otherwise
- g. Non-relative: “U” if there is a non-relative at least 15 years younger present; “N” otherwise

IPUMS-I samples are drawn from the microdata of country-specific censuses and surveys and thus are not as highly standardized with respect to the codes used to describe each household member’s relationship to the head of household. As with the DHS, household members identified in IPUMS-I samples are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors. Group quarters or other non-household arrangements and their residents are not considered.

To process the IPUMS-I samples in a manner that yields estimates that are comparable to those obtained from the DHS, the relationship codes from those IPUMS-I samples were mapped to codes that mirror the standard relationship codes of the DHS shown above in box 1.

Box 2 lists each of the relationship-to-head codes that appear in one or more IPUMS-I samples, with the result of the mapping to DHS relationship codes in parentheses. As with the DHS, household members identified in IPUMS-I samples are restricted to usual residents of the household, excluding visitors. Group quarters or other non-household arrangements and their residents are not considered.

Box 2. IPUMS-I relationship to head codes [mapped to DHS code]	
Head [1] Spouse [2] Unmarried Partner [2] Same-Sex Spouse/Partner [2] Spouse/Partner [2] Child [3] Biological Child [3] Stepchild [3] Child of Unmarried Partner [3] Child/Child-in-Law [3.9*] Child/Child-in-Law/Grandchild [3.9*] Child-in-Law [4] Daughter-In-Law [4] Son-In-Law [4] Spouse/Partner of Child [4] Unmarried Partner of Child [4] Grandchild [5] Grandchild or Great Grandchild [5] Great Grandchild [5] Great-Great Grandchild [5] Parent [6] Parent/Grandparent/Ascendant [6]** Stepparent [6] Parent/Parent-in-Law [6.9*] Parent-in-Law [7] Sibling [8] Stepsibling [8] Sibling/Sibling-In-Law [8.9] Sibling-In-Law [15] Sibling of Spouse/Partner [15] Spouse/Partner of Sibling [15] Other Relative [10] Other Relative, Not Elsewhere Classified [10] Grandparent [10] Great Grandparent [10] Aunt/Uncle [10] Other Specified Relative [10] Cousin [10] Sibling of Sibling-In-Law [10] Other Relative with Same Family Name [10]	Other Relative with Different Family Name [10] Other Relative, Not Specified (Secondary Family) [10] Adopted Child [11] Foster Child [11] Non-Relative [12] Friend/Guest/Visitor/Partner [12] Partner/Friend [12] Friend [12] Partner/Roommate [12] Housemate/Roommate [12] Visitor [12] Ex-Spouse [12] Godparent [12] Godchild [12] Employee [12] Domestic Employee [12] Relative of Employee, N.S [12] Spouse of Servant [12] Child of Servant [12] Other Relative of Servant [12] Roomer/Boarder/Lodger/Foster Child [12] Boarder [12] Boarder or Guest [12] Lodger [12] Tutored/Foster Child [12] Tutored Child [12] Employee, Boarder or Guest [12] Other Specified Non-Relative [12] Domestic Employee [12] Non-Relative, N.E.C [12] Other Relative or Non-Relative [12]*** Nephew/Niece [13]
	* The basic and intergenerational household typologies could not be estimated for samples that used codes that combined children with children-in-law or parents with parents-in-law. ** the intergenerational household typologies could not be estimated for samples that used the "parent/grandparent/ascendant" code. *** the extended-family household and non-relative household typologies could not be estimated for samples that used the "other relative or non-relative" code

As for the DHS, for each member of the household represented on the IPUMS household roster, whether they are co-residing with a spouse or partner is coded as “Yes”, “No”, or “Uncertain” according to criteria that vary according to that household member’s relationship to the head of household. The specific criteria are similar to those used for the DHS, with some variation according to the specific relationship codes available on each IPUMS roster:

- a. Head of household: “Y” if spouse of head is present; “N” otherwise
- b. Spouse of head: “Y” if head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that distinguish parents and parents-in-law of the head

- c. Mother of head: “Y” if father of head is present; “N” otherwise
- d. Father of head: “Y” if mother of head is present; “N” otherwise
- e. Mother-in-law of head: “Y” if father-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- f. Father-in-law of head: “Y” if mother-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that group parents and parents-in-law of the head together

- g. Mother/mother-in-law of head: “U” if father/father-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- h. Father/father-in-law of head: “U” if mother/mother-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with marital status variable populated

- i. “N” if not married and not living together
- j. Married grandchild of head: “U” if married opposite sex “other relative” of the head is present; “N” otherwise
- k. Married “other relative” of head: “U” if married opposite sex grandchild, sibling or “other relative” of the head is present; “N” otherwise
- l. Married non-relative of head: “U” if married opposite sex non-relative is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that distinguish between child of head and child-in-law of head

- i. Married daughter of head: “Y” if married son-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- ii. Married son of head: “Y” if married daughter-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- iii. Married daughter-in-law of head: “Y” if married son of head is present; “N” otherwise
- iv. Married son-in-law of head: “Y” if married daughter of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that group child of head and child-in-law of head together

- v. Married daughter/daughter-in-law of head: “U” if married son/son-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- vi. Married son/son-in-law of head: “U” if married daughter/daughter-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples without a child-in-law relationship code where these are instead grouped in the “other relative” category

- vii. Married daughter of head: “U” if married male “other relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise
- viii. Married son of head: “U” if married female “other relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that distinguish siblings of head and siblings-in-law of head

- ix. Married sister of head: “Y” if married brother-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- x. Married brother of head: “Y” if married sister-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- xi. Married sister-in-law of head: “Y” if married brother of head is present; “N” otherwise
- xii. Married brother-in-law of head: “Y” if married sister of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that group siblings of head and siblings-in-law of head together

- xiii. Married sister/sister-in-law of head: “U” if married brother/brother-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise
- xiv. Married brother/brother-in-law of head: “U” if married sister/sister-in-law of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples without a sibling-in-law relationship code where these are instead grouped in the “other relative” category

- xv. Married sister of head: “U” if married male “other relative” of head is present. “N” otherwise
- xvi. Married brother of head: “U” if married female “other relative” of head is present; “N” otherwise

For samples without marital status variable populated

- m. “N” if under age 15
- n. Grandchild of head age 15 or over: “U” if opposite sex “other relative” of the head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- o. “Other relative” of head age 15 or over: “U” if opposite sex grandchild, sibling or “other relative” of the head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- p. Non-relative of head age 15 or over: “U” if married opposite sex non-relative of the head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that distinguish between child of head and child-in-law of head

- i. Daughter of head age 15 or over: “U” if son-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- ii. Son of head age 15 or over: “U” if daughter-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- iii. Daughter-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if son of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- iv. Son-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if daughter of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that group child of head and child-in-law of head together

- v. Daughter/daughter-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if son/son-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- vi. Son/son-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if married daughter/daughter-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For samples without a child-in-law relationship code where these are instead grouped in the “other relative” category

- vii. Daughter of head age 15 or over: “U” if male “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- viii. Son of head age 15 or over: “U” if female “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that distinguish siblings of head and siblings-in-law of head

- ix. Sister of head age 15 or over: “U” if brother-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- x. Brother of head age 15 or over “U” if sister-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- xi. Sister-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if brother of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- xii. Brother-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if sister of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with relationship codes that group siblings of head and siblings-in-law of head together

- xiii. Sister/sister-in-law of head age 15 or over: “U” if brother/brother-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise
- xiv. Brother/brother-in-law of head: “U” if sister/sister-in-law of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For samples without a sibling-in-law relationship code where these are instead grouped in the “other relative” category

- xv. Sister of head age 15 or over: “U” if male “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present. “N” otherwise
- xvi. Brother of head age 15 or over: “U” if female “other relative” of head age 15 or over is present; “N” otherwise

For each IPUMS-I sample, the children (including biological, step, adopted, foster, and children in law) of each household member are similarly identified through criteria specific to each household member’s relationship to the head of household. Members’ co-residence with one or more of their children is coded as “Yes”, “No”, or “Uncertain”:

- a. Head of household or spouse of head: “Y” if own or adopted child or child in law is present; “N” otherwise
- b. Parent or parent-in-law of head: “Y” if head or spouse of head or sibling of head is present; “N” otherwise
- c. Grandchild of head: “U” if “other relative” at least 15 years younger is present; “N” otherwise
- d. Sibling or sibling-in-law of head: “U” if there is a niece or nephew or other relative at least 15 years younger present; “N” otherwise
- e. Other relative: “U” if there is a parent-in-law of head, sibling of head or other relative of head at least 15 years younger; “N” otherwise
- f. Non-relative: “U” if there is a non-relative at least 15 years younger present; “N” otherwise

For samples without a child-in-law relationship code where these are instead grouped in the “other relative” category

- g. Head of household or spouse of head: “U” if other relative of head at least 15 years younger is present; “N” otherwise

For samples with a relationship code that identifies grandchildren of the head

- w. Child or child-in-law of head: “U” if there is a grandchild of head more than 15 years younger; “N” otherwise

For samples without a grandchild relationship code where these are instead grouped in the “other relative” category

- x. Child or child-in-law of head: “U” if there is an “other relative” of head more than 15 years younger; “N” otherwise

Box 3. Distribution of “uncertain” codes on the following indicators: living with spouse, living with children aged 20 years or over and living with children under 20 years of age

As described above, for some of the DHS and IPUMS-I samples, the details of the household relationship codes was insufficient to identify the full set of household types as well as to identify definitively whether the older person lives with his/her spouse/partner or with their children. Thus, the estimation of these indicators is a conservative estimation and should be interpreted as minimum values.

The percentage of “uncertain” code for **older persons living with their spouse or partner** irrespective of the number or relationships of other household members was estimated for 117 countries based on the most recent available data. For 100 countries of the 117 countries the percentage of older persons for which co-residence with a spouse was “uncertain” was less than 2 per cent. For example, based on the 2010 IPUMS-I sample for Argentina, 48 per cent of older persons lived with their spouse or partner while 1.9 per cent was coded as uncertain. However, for 7 countries co-residence with spouse was uncertain for a higher percentage of older persons. Based on the 2009 IPUMS-I sample for India, for example, 47 per cent of older persons lived with their spouse and co-residence with spouse was coded as uncertain for 8 per cent.

The percentage of **older persons for which living with children aged 20 years or over** was coded as “uncertain” was less than 2 per cent for 84 countries out of 107 countries based on the most recent available data. For example, based on the 2015 IPUMS-I sample for the United States, 17 per cent of older persons lived with children aged 20 years or over while for 0.3 per cent it was coded as ‘uncertain’. In contrast, this living arrangement was coded as “uncertain” for more than 6 per cent of older persons in Senegal, Zimbabwe, Gambia, South Sudan, Papua New Guinea and Togo, where household sizes tend to be larger, compositions more complex, and thus specific relationships between members can be more difficult to discern via the household roster.

The percentage of **older persons for whom living with children under 20 years of age** was coded as “uncertain” was less than 2 per cent for a majority of countries (101 countries out of 107 countries). For six countries the percentage uncertain was above 2 per cent: Cameroon, Liberia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Papua New Guinea and Togo. For example, based on the 2012 IPUMS-I sample for Zimbabwe, 8 per cent of older persons were coded as living with children under age 20 years of age while 4 per cent were coded as “uncertain”.

The identification of intergenerational household types, namely multi-generation, three-generation and skipped generation households, is more complex than that of the basic household types described above and is described in: United Nations (2019c). Therefore, the percentage of older persons identified as living in these households should be interpreted as a minimum estimate because it was not possible to identify with certainty all potential multi-generation, three-generation and skip-generation households.

II. Key Findings

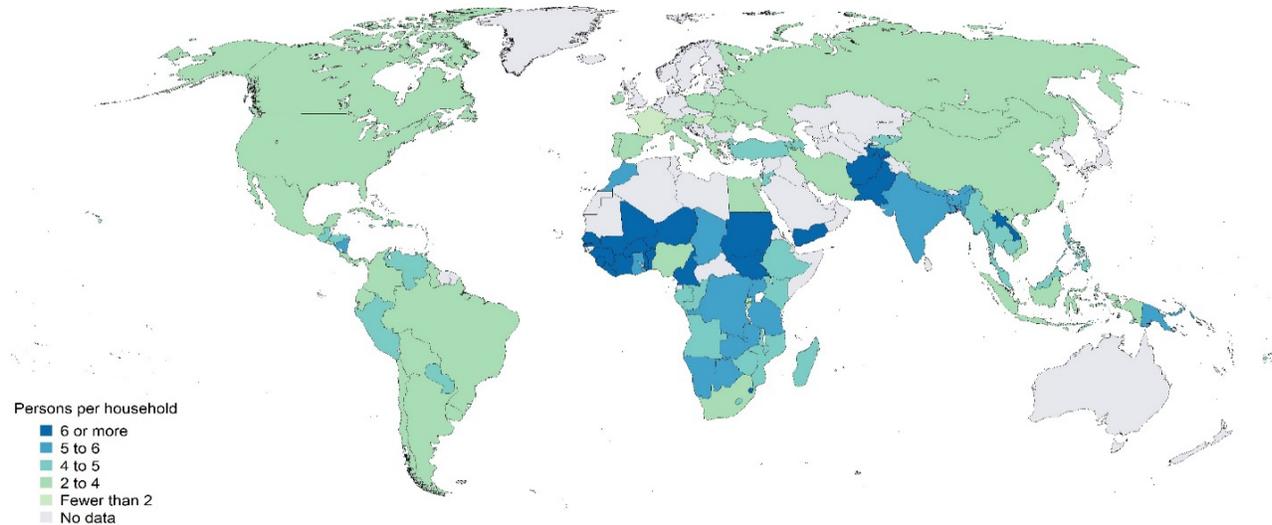
A. Patterns and trends in older persons' household size

The average household size is influenced by patterns of marriage and fertility, home-leaving among young people, norms surrounding intergenerational support, and patterns of employment and housing costs, among other factors.

Across 123 countries or areas with recent data available, among older persons aged 65 years, the average household size ranges from 2 to 12 persons per household. In most countries of Europe and Northern America, older persons tend to live in relatively small households of fewer than three persons per household. For example, the average size of the households where older persons live was 1.9 persons in France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and 2.1 in the United States of America. Most of Eastern Asia and Latin American and Caribbean countries lie in an intermediate range, with older persons' households consisting of between three and four persons on average, although some countries in those regions had small numbers as well: in South Korea and Argentina, older persons' households had just 2.4 persons on average (figure 1).

By contrast, across much of Central and Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, older persons' households included more than six persons on average. The largest average size of older persons' households was observed in Senegal and the Gambia, averaging 12.1 and 12.6 persons respectively, followed by Afghanistan and Pakistan with 9.4 and 8.1 persons per household, respectively.

Figure 1. Average size of households with older persons aged 65 years or over, most recent estimates available



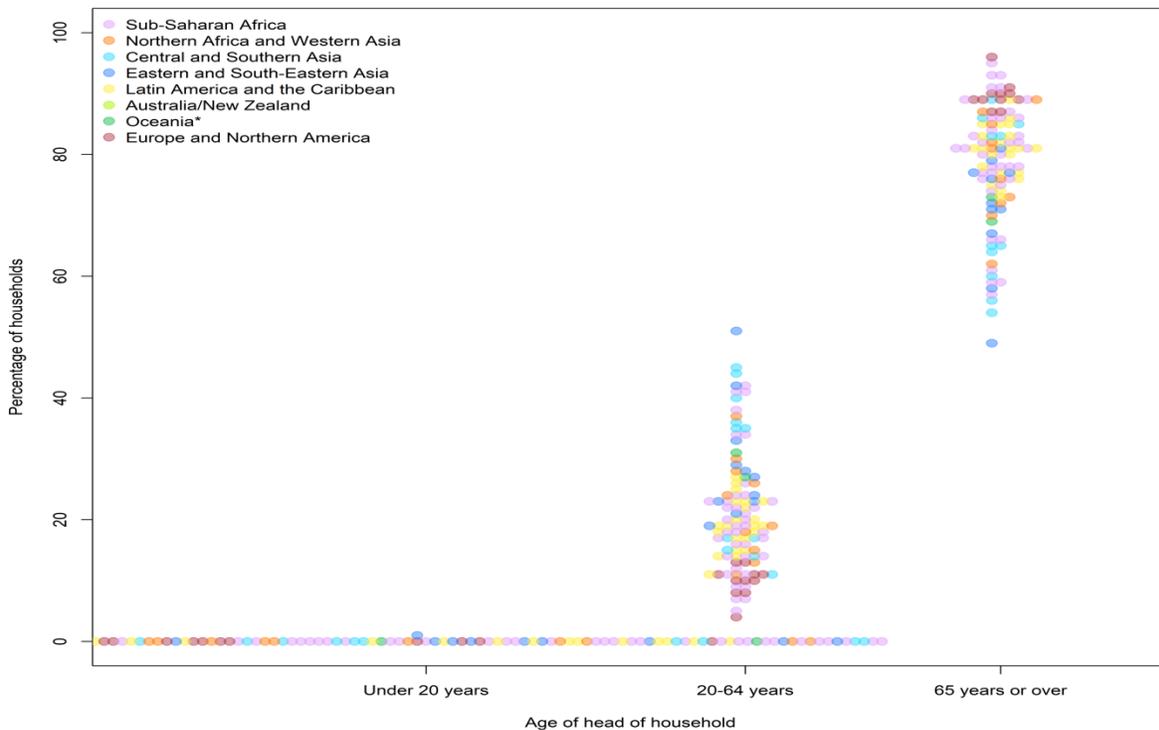
United Nations Database on Household Composition and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.
NOTE: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

B. Patterns in the age of head of older persons' households

Less than one per cent of older persons lived in households with a head under 20 years of age in any of the 121 countries or areas with recent data (figure 2). The proportion of older persons in households with heads of household that are of “working-age” (that is, aged 20-64 years) ranged from 51 percent in Lao People’s Democratic Republic to 4 per cent in Italy and France. In India and Pakistan, 44 per cent of older persons lived in households whose head is aged between 20-64 years; the remaining 56 per cent of older persons live in households headed by an older person (aged 65 years or over). In China, the corresponding shares were 42 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively.

The majority of older persons live in households headed by an older person: that proportion ranged from 96 per cent in Italy to 49 percent in Lao People’s Democratic Republic. The 10 countries with the highest such proportions are: France (96 percent), Rwanda (95 per cent), the United Kingdom (94 percent), Burundi (93 per cent), Canada (92 per cent), Ireland (91 per cent), Sao Tome and Principe (90 per cent), Ukraine (90 per cent), Belarus (90 per cent), and Portugal (90 per cent). Across regions, older persons in Europe and Northern America are most likely to live in households headed by an older person. This corresponds to the high prevalence of older persons living alone or with their spouse only in these regions. Although the majority of older persons in sub-Saharan Africa co-reside with their children and live in multigenerational households, the literature has pointed out that a large proportion of older men are often the household heads while older women may live in households headed by their sons (Schatz and others, 2014).

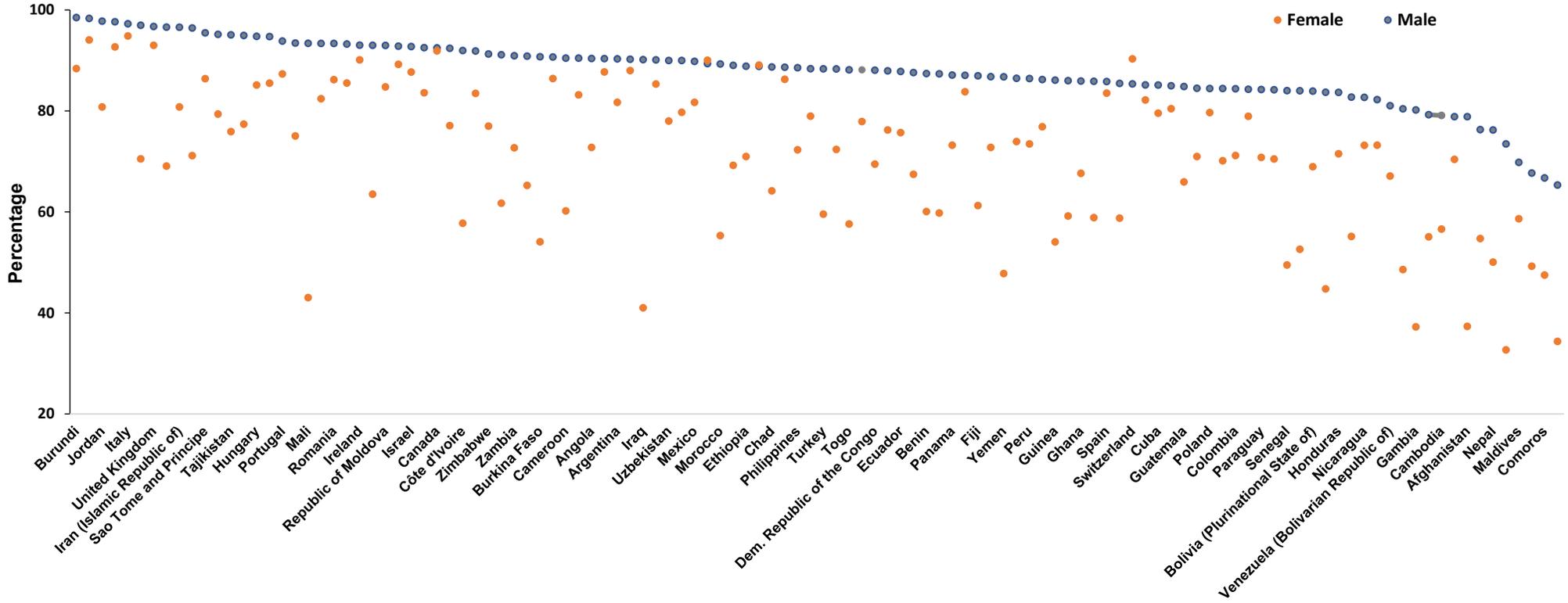
Figure 2. Distribution in the age of head of older persons' households, recent estimates available



Source: United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.

Additional patterns by gender can be observed when examining the prevalence of household headship among older men and women in 116 countries with recent available data. In general, older women are more likely than older men to live in households headed by their spouses or their adult children, while older men are more likely to head the households where they live (figure 3). For example, in Mali, 93 per cent of older men lived in a household headed by an older person versus 43 per cent of older women. In Iraq, 90 per cent of older men lived in a household headed by an older person versus 41 per cent of older women.

Figure 3. Proportion of older men and women living in households with heads aged 65 years or over, recent estimates



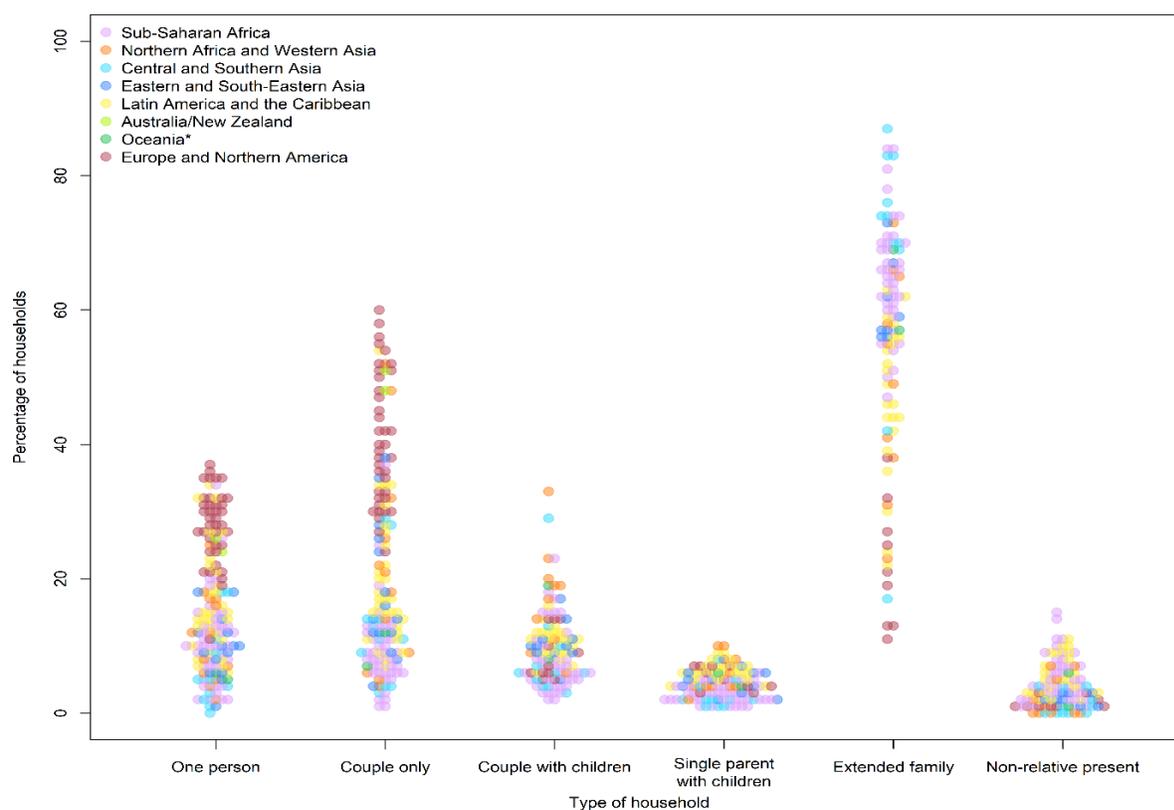
C. Basic household types

The distribution of older persons by basic household type shows great diversity across countries and regions reflecting differences in family size and personal behaviors that are influenced by economic resources as well as social and cultural norms.

In Europe and Northern America, Australia and New Zealand, older persons most commonly lived with a spouse and no one else (i.e., in a couple only household), followed by living in one person households (living alone). In contrast, in Africa, Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean, older persons most commonly lived with their spouse and child(ren) (in couple with children households) or in extended family households (figure 4). Across all countries or areas, a relatively small fraction of older persons lived in single parent with child(ren) households. This household composition was most prevalent for older persons in Jordan and Morocco (10 per cent of older persons), Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago (9 per cent), Bolivia, Puerto Rico and the State of Palestine (8 per cent).

Only a small fraction of older persons lived in households with a non-relative member. The highest percentage of older persons living in this type of household is found in the United Republic of Tanzania (19 per cent), South Sudan (15), Côte d'Ivoire (15), and Colombia, Comoros and Honduras (11 per cent).

Figure 4. Percentage of older persons by basic household type, recent estimates available



Source: United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.

D. Living arrangements

The living arrangements of older persons reflect choices made by older people and their family based on individual preferences and available resources, as well as the social, economic and health constraints that people face as they grow older. Social and cultural norms also affect their living arrangements (Lestheghe, 1983). In addition, the provision of the social welfare programs such as public pension, universal health care, public housing programs, and social care services also influence the living arrangements choice of the older persons especially in the later stage of their life (Daly, 2010). These welfare programs are usually associated with economic development. It is not surprising that in general economic development is associated with older persons living alone or with a spouse only and negatively associated with living with their adult children or with extended family.⁴

(1) Living alone and living with spouse only

Living independently, i.e., either to live alone or to live with a spouse only, provides more privacy and control over household decisions, but also less companionship and lower economy of scale. However, the experience of living alone or with a spouse differs considerably depending whether the older persons live in more developed or in less developed countries.

Research has pointed out that the majority of older persons in the more developed countries prefer to live independently as privacy is usually considered a normal good.⁵ In contrast, older persons living alone in less developed countries are often in vulnerable conditions: they often have higher rates of poverty, worse health outcomes and worse quality of life compared to older persons who live with their adult children or extended family. This is because in many developing countries adult children and other kin bear primary responsibility for providing support for older family members.

Across the 153 countries or areas with recent data available,⁶ the proportion of older persons living alone ranged from a high of 37 per cent in Estonia to a low of 0.3 per cent in Afghanistan (figure 5). In general, the highest proportions⁷ of older persons living alone were found in Europe, Northern America and in Australia and New Zealand. Older persons were most likely to live alone in descending order, in Finland and the United Kingdom (36 per cent), the Netherlands (35.4), Switzerland (35.2), Norway (34.7) and in Belarus and Hungary (34.6). Within Europe, living arrangements of older persons differed markedly between Southern Europe and Northern/Western Europe. For example, one in five older persons lived alone in Greece, Portugal, and Spain, while the ratio was about one in three in Austria, Denmark, France, Sweden and the United Kingdom. These differences might be a reflection of the assumption that Northern and Western European countries are more individualistic societies with generous welfare states while Southern

⁴ It is noted that although Japan has high levels of economic development, it is still a familistic society where the proportion of older persons living alone is lower than in other countries with similar levels of development.

⁵ In economics, normal goods are those for which demand increases when income increases. Normal goods have a positive correlation between income and demand. Examples of normal good are food staples, clothing and household appliances, but also goods such as independence and privacy. Consequently, it is assumed that with increasing income and/or social security older persons can afford an independent lifestyle without the need for support from children or other family members.

⁶ The most recent estimates refer to the year 2010 or later for the majority of the countries and for the remaining countries between 2000 and 2009.

⁷ Countries are classified as 'low', 'intermediate' and 'high' based on percentiles, as follows: below the 25th percentile, countries were classified as 'low', countries below the 5th percentile were classified as 'extremely low'. Countries between the 25th and 75th percentile were classified as 'intermediate', and above the 75th percentile, countries were classified as 'high'.

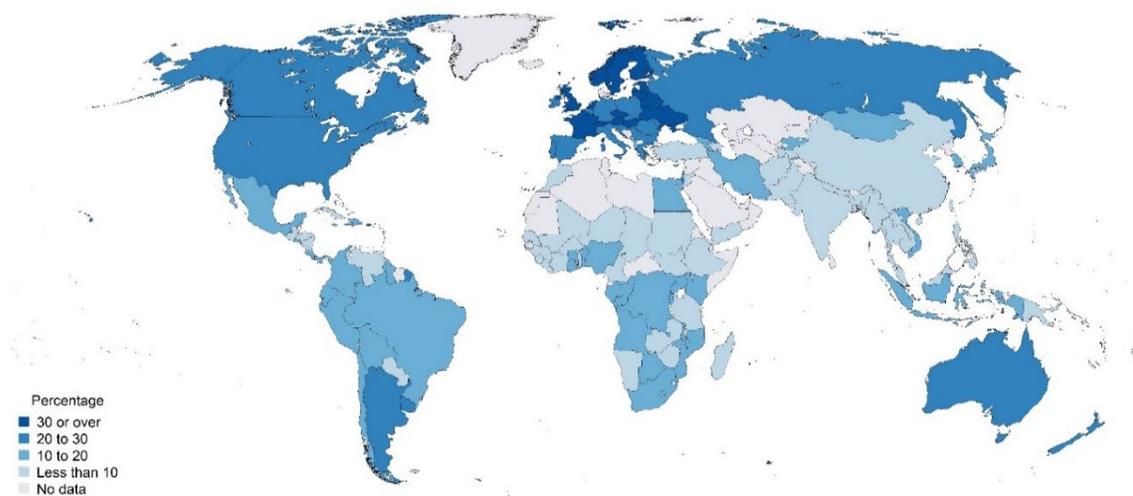
and Eastern European countries are more famililistic countries with less generous public welfare provisions (Djundeve, 2019).

Living alone by older persons was also common in many Caribbean countries and territories. About 34 per cent of older persons in Guadeloupe and Martinique and 32 per cent Saint Martin lived alone. Sao Tome and Principe (34.4) was the only country in Africa with such a large share of older persons living alone.

Most Latin American countries fell in an intermediate position, except for Argentina and Uruguay, which had as many as 21.2 per cent of older persons in Argentina and 26.7 per cent in Uruguay living alone. More typical values for that region are 14.6 per cent of older persons living alone in Brazil, 14.4 in Ecuador, 14.6 in Peru and 12.6 per in Mexico.

The proportions of older persons living alone in Africa and Asia, ranked among the lowest in the world; with, in ascending order, Afghanistan (0.3 per cent), Pakistan (0.9), Lao People’s Democratic Republic (1.4), Senegal (1.6), Guinea (1.8) and Iraq (1.9). Some African and Asian countries with intermediate proportions of living alone were Egypt (16.7), Iran (18.1) and Angola (18.7 per cent).

Figure 5. Percentage of older persons living alone, recent estimates available



United Nations Database on Household Composition and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.
 NOTE: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

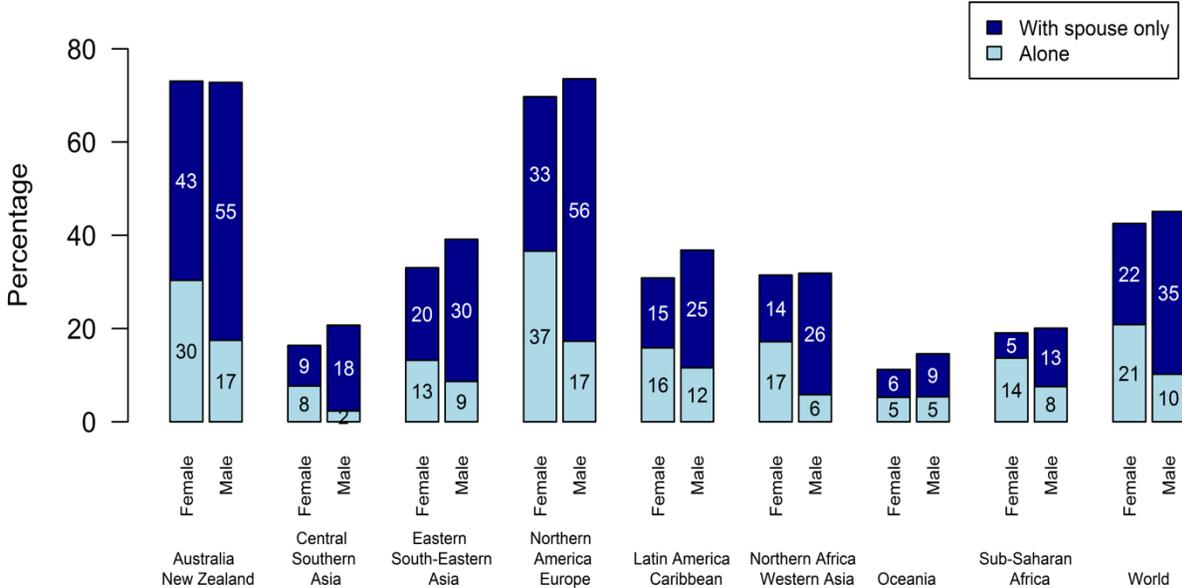
In 153 countries with recent available data, the proportion of older persons living with their spouse/partner only ranged from 1 per cent in Gambia to 62 per cent in the Netherlands. One in two older persons lived with their spouse or partner and no one else in Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Norway, Saint-Barthélemy and Switzerland. In contrast, less than 3 per cent of older persons lived only with their spouse in Afghanistan, Gambia, Sierra Leone and South Sudan.

In the 141 countries with data available by sex, women were more likely to live alone than men. The reasons for the higher proportion of women living alone are: 1) the universal pattern of men marrying younger women warrants that most men are married into their older years while woman are more often

widowed 2) men are more likely to remarry after divorce or widowhood; and 3) differences in life expectancy explain the fact that the older population is predominantly female (United Nations, 2005). The largest gender gaps in living alone were found in Europe. Twenty countries in Europe had differences of more than 20 percentage points in the proportion of women aged 65 years or older living alone compared to men in the same age group. The countries with the largest differences were Serbia (44.8 percentage points higher for women), Austria (29), Switzerland (28), France (25.6), the Netherlands (25.6) and Hungary (25.3). These countries had a lower ratio of men to women in the older population and a higher prevalence of widowhood among older women compared to other developed countries. Contrary to the typical findings, in about 22 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and Central America, living alone was more common among older men than among older women. The largest shares of men living alone were found in Sao Tome and Principe (38.5 per cent), Jamaica (21.7), Guyana (19.5), Panama (16.6), Botswana (16.2), the Dominican Republic (13.8), Ghana (12.2), Haiti (11.5) and Namibia (9.0).

At the global level around the year 2010, women and men aged 65 years or over were about equally likely to live independently: 43 per cent of older women vs. 45 per cent older men (figure 6). However, there was a large gender gap in the proportion residing alone: 21 per cent of older women lived alone compared to 10 per cent of older men. Older women were more likely than older men to live alone in all regions except for Oceania. The gender gap was especially wide in Northern Africa and Western Asia and Northern America and Europe, where older women were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to live alone. In contrast, older men were more likely to live with a spouse in these parts of the World. Worldwide, 35 per cent of older men lived with their spouse compared with 22 per cent of older women, as older men were more likely to be married or in partnerships than older women. Europe and Northern America was the region with the largest gender differences, 23 percentage points.

Figure 6. Percentage of older men and women aged 65 years or over living alone or with spouse only by SDG region, recent estimates available, circa 2010



Source: United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.

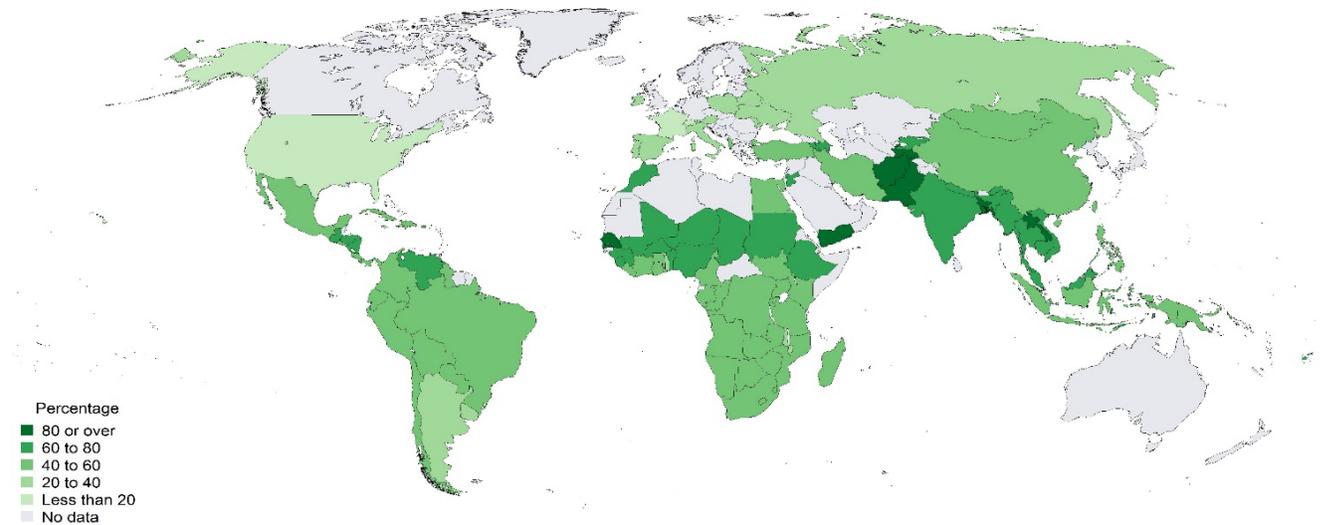
(2) Co-residence with children

Co-residence can be an efficient way for family members to help each other as joint residence permits to combine household resources. Although Western industrial countries with available historical data shows that intergenerational co-residence has declined dramatically among older persons (Ruggles, 2007), studies have pointed out that the proportion of older persons living with children in multigenerational households has grown over the recent decades in the United States and in Europe particularly since the Great Recession of 2007 to 2009 (Alvarez-Galvez and others, 2019; Caputo, 2019; Shailen and Selwyn, 2011).

Researchers indicated that co-residence with children may take place when 1) children remain in or rejoin to the parental household due to economic uncertainties or necessity (Ogg & Renaut, 2006)) and/or life events such as divorce or widowhood. In this case, the adult children benefit from living with their older parents in more than just financial terms, since older parents also often provide care and support to their grandchildren (Wang and Marcotte, 2007); or 2) older persons moving in with their adult child(ren) due to the decline of their physical health or cognitive function. In this this context, it may reflect the older parents' own needs for social and financial support (Caputo, 2019; United Nations, 2005).

Across the 105 countries with recent data available, there is great diversity across countries and regions in the share of older people co-residing with their children (figure 7). The proportion of older persons living with at least one of their children ranged from a high of 94 per cent in Afghanistan to a low of 9.6 per cent in Switzerland (figure 10).

Figure 7. Percentage of older persons living with their children, recent estimates available, circa 2010



United Nations Database on Household Composition and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.

NOTE: The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

The countries or areas with the highest prevalence of this type of co-residence were located in Asia and Africa. In 13 countries, more than 75 per cent of older persons lived with their children: Afghanistan, the Gambia, Guinea, India, Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Senegal, Yemen and Tajikistan.

Co-residence with children was comparatively rare for older persons in most of the countries in Europe and the United States. Most Latin American and Caribbean countries fell in an intermediate position, except for Argentina and Uruguay, which had, as many as 38 per cent of their older population living with children in Argentina and 30 per cent in Uruguay.

In the 105 countries with data that allowed to identify the age of the children who co-reside with older persons, the share of older persons who lived with children younger than 20 years ranged from less than 1 per cent in all European countries and the United States, to more than 10 per cent in most African countries. In many instances co-residence with children can be associated with large family sizes and high fertility levels in this region as compared with other regions with lower fertility and generally smaller family sizes.

Globally, older men were more likely to live with children under age 20 (figure 8), while older women were more likely to live with children over that age (figure 9). These differences by sex can be explained to a large extent by the typical age difference between spouses and by the shorter reproductive life span of women. Since childbearing is rare for women over age 45, it is uncommon to observe women over age 65 to live with children under age 20. Conversely, since husbands are on average older than their wives and they can father children until older ages, they are more likely to co-reside with children under age 20.

The percentage of older persons co-residing with children under age 20 was highest in African countries with significantly higher values for men than for women. For example, the percentage of older women coresiding with children under age 20 was 7.7 per cent versus 39.9 per cent for older men in Niger, 5.4 versus 34.9 per cent in Chad, and 3.6 versus 29.4 per cent in Ethiopia. The proportion of older persons living with children over age 20 ranged from 9.1 per cent in Switzerland to more than 75 per cent in Afghanistan, Maldives, Morocco, Pakistan, Senegal, Tajikistan and Yemen. Older women were more likely than older men to live with children over age 20 in 82 out of the 98 countries with the pertinent data. The percentage of older persons co-residing with children over age 20 was 39.5 per cent for women versus 23 per cent for men in Angola, 57.5 versus 44.7 per cent in Panama, and 58.2 versus 46.8 per cent in Colombia.

Figure 8. Percentage of older men and women co-residing with their own children under than 20 years, recent estimates available

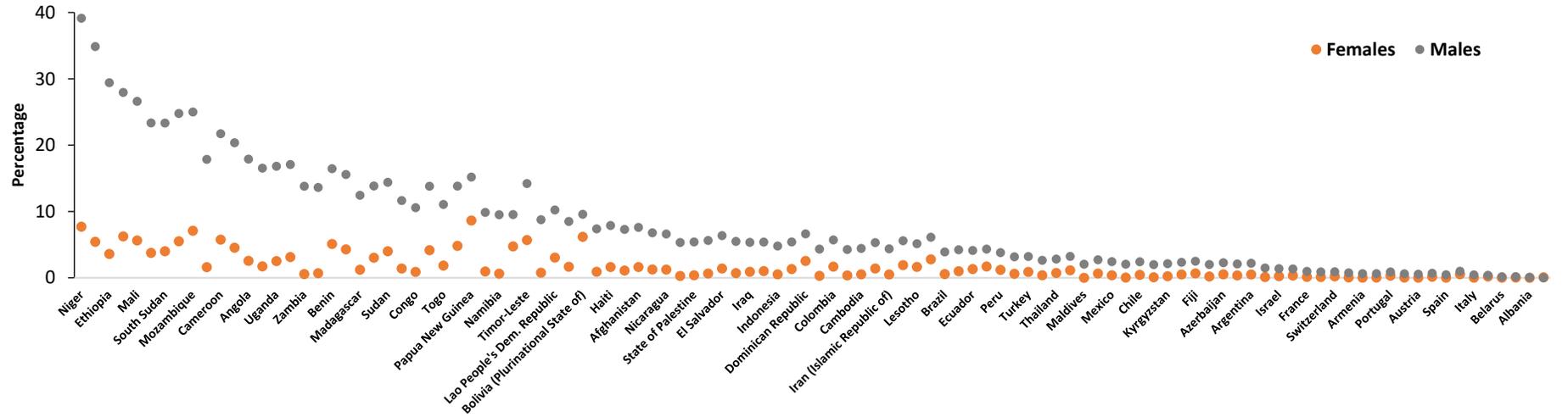
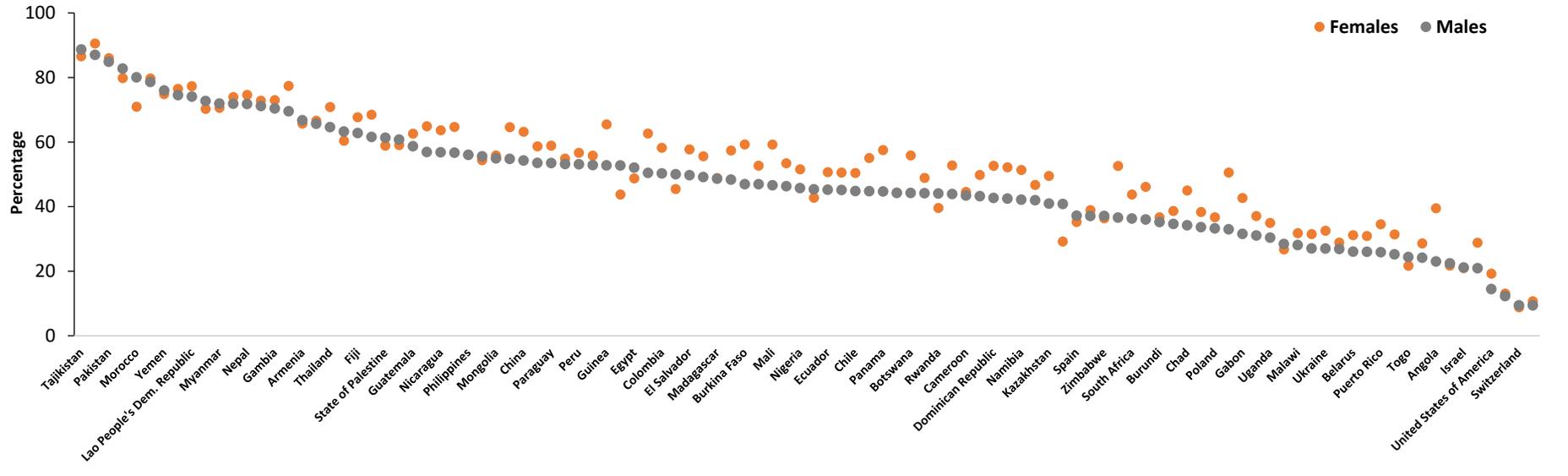


Figure 9. Percentage of older men and women co-residing with children over than 20 years, recent estimates available



3) Trends over time in the composition of older persons' households focusing on one-person, nuclear, extended-family and skip-generation households

An examination of the trends of living arrangements in households by basic type reveals substantial variation around the world. Figure 10 illustrates trends in the proportions of one-person households, nuclear households (households consisting of a couple only, a couple with children, or a single parent with children), extended-family households (households that include one or more members from outside the nuclear family unit, and no members who are not related to each other) and a subset of the extended household called skip-generation households (households consisting of grandparents and their grandchildren) in the 57 countries or areas with at least four different points in time, grouped by region.

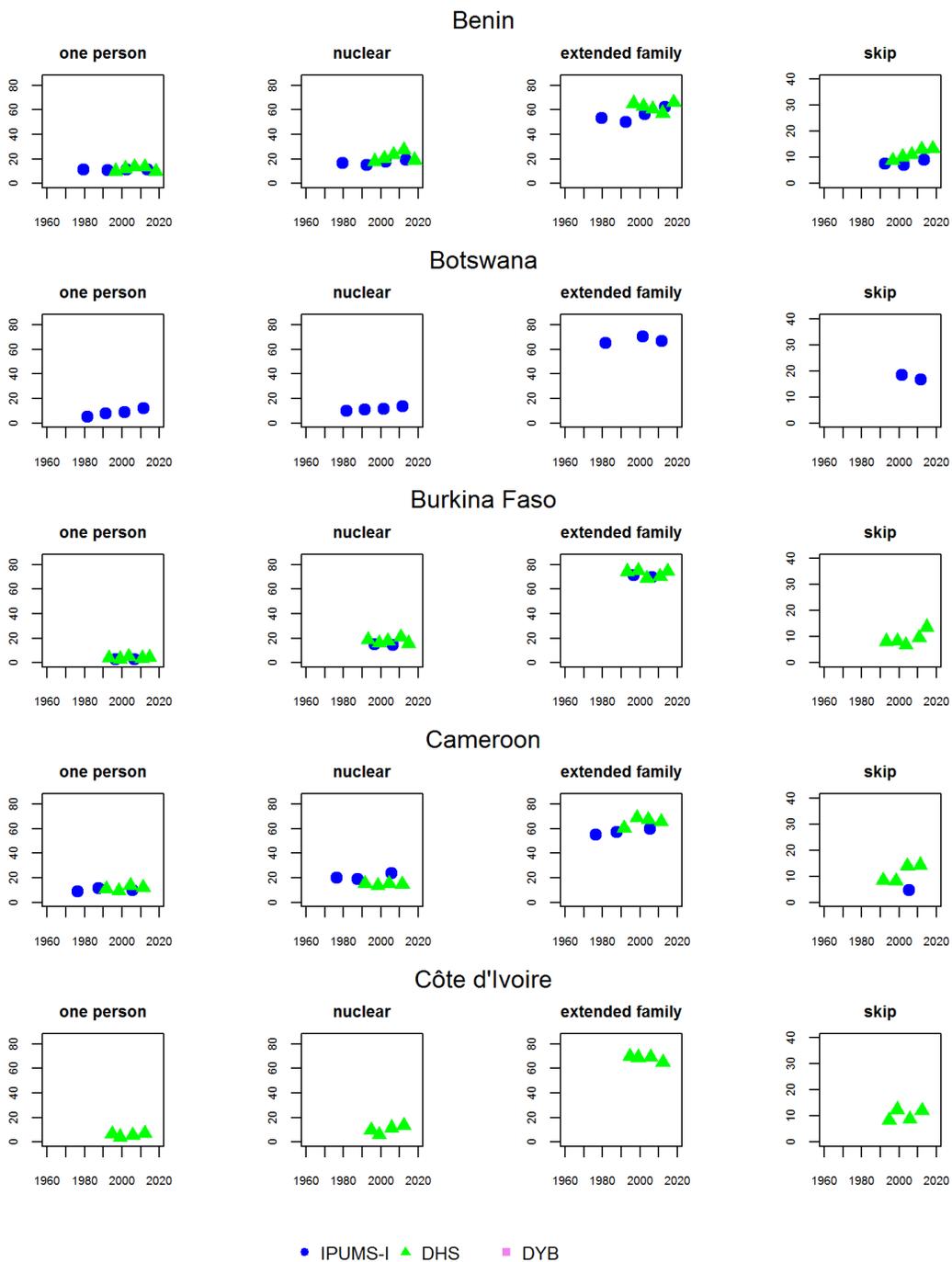
Across 23 countries in Africa, there was no clear trend or very little change in one person and nuclear households with the exception of Botswana, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco and Namibia, where the prevalence of living in one person and in nuclear households has decreased at the same time that the prevalence of living in extended-family households among older persons appears to have declined. Older persons living in skip-generation households, were highly prevalent in sub-Saharan African countries. This type of household is most common in countries where migrating parents leave their children behind or in contexts where high adult mortality related to AIDS, civil conflict or war result in children being left in the care of grandparents (Zimmer and Teachman, 2009). All the countries in the upper quartile of the distribution (12 per cent or more) are in Africa. In Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia, about 30 per cent of older persons lived in skip-generation households. These countries also had a high prevalence of children orphaned by AIDS and other causes (UNICEF, 2015). Fourteen out of 24 countries in Africa experienced an increase in the prevalence of skipped-generation households. Some countries, notably Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe, saw an increase of more than 10 percentage points over the period of 2000 to 2018.

The five countries in Asia for which sufficient trend data are available have diverse trajectories for the proportion of older persons living in various household types. In Bangladesh and India, the prevalence of older persons living in nuclear households appears to have increased while living in extended family households has declined slightly. Living in skip-generation households is less frequent in these countries with the exceptions of Indonesia (6 per cent) and the Philippines (9 per cent).

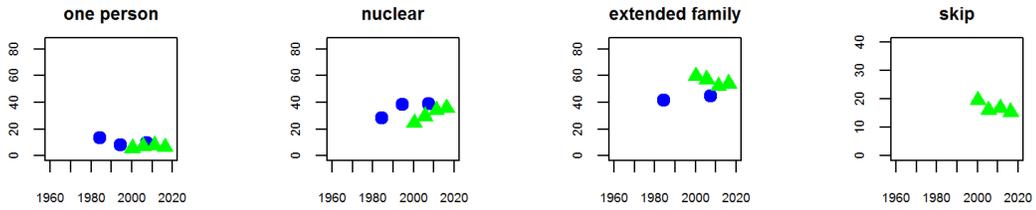
Across 15 countries with appropriate time series in Latin America and the Caribbean, the prevalence of older persons living in one person and nuclear family households has increased, while living in extended family households has declined over time in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay. Living in skip-generations households was most common in the Caribbean and in Central America, with prevalence in recent years ranging from 3.1 per cent in Uruguay to 11 per cent in the Dominican Republic. Living in skip-generation households has remained fairly constant or with no clear time trend, with the exceptions of Haiti and Panama for which this type of living arrangement has increased overtime.

Across five countries of Europe and Northern America with pertinent data, the most common trend was the increase in the share of older persons living in one person and nuclear households in tandem with the decline of the share of older persons living in extended family households. Although the prevalence of skip-generation households in the United States of America is lower than that of other countries, it has increased from 1.3 per cent in 1970 to 2 per cent of older persons in 2015.

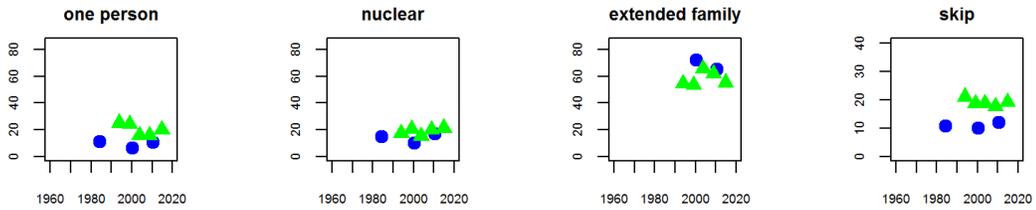
Figure 10. Trends in the proportion of older persons living in one person, nuclear households, extended family households and skip-generation households, grouped by region



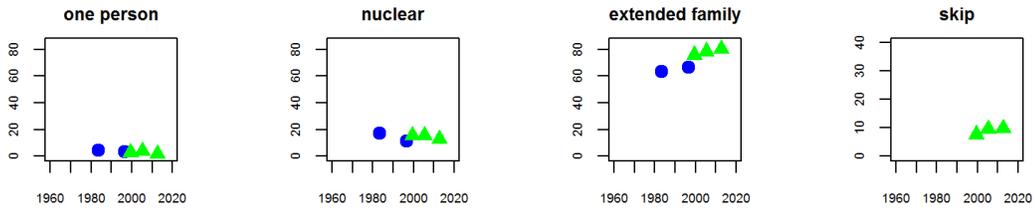
Ethiopia



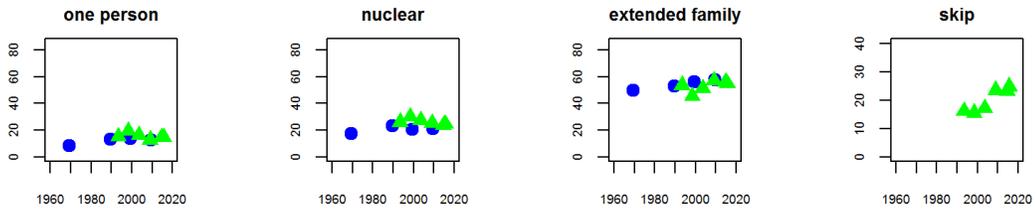
Ghana



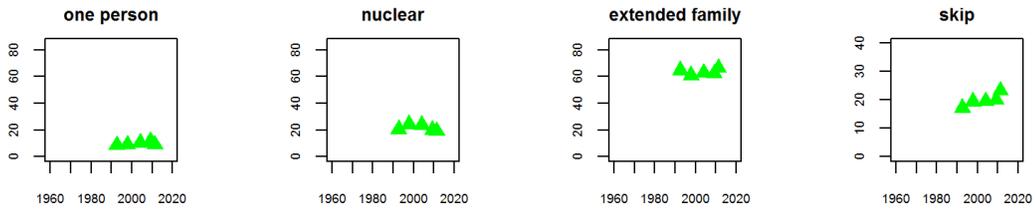
Guinea



Kenya

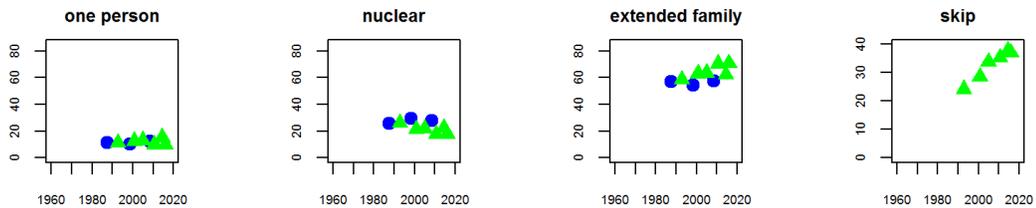


Madagascar

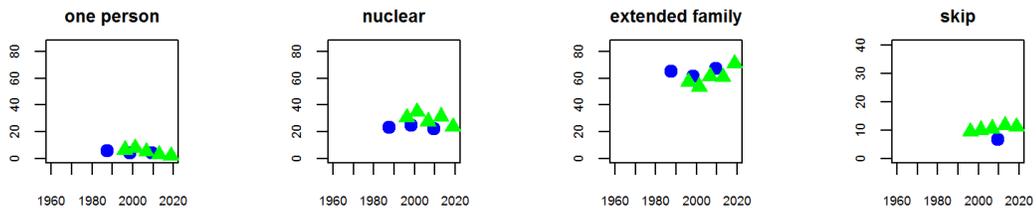


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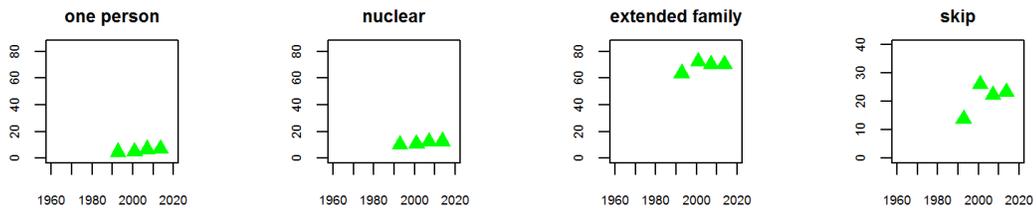
Malawi



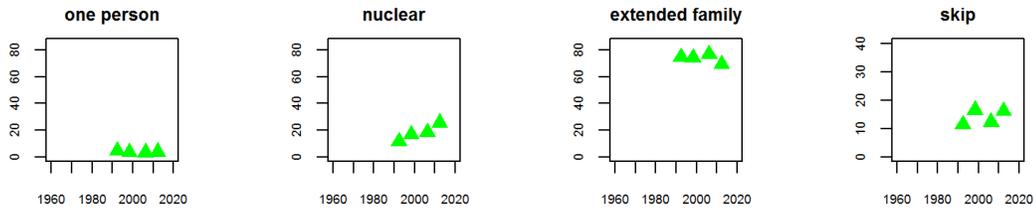
Mali



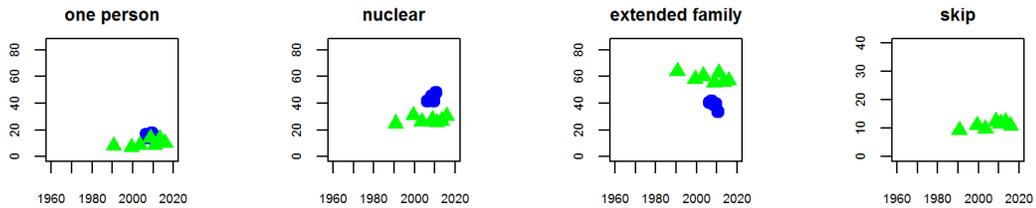
Namibia



Niger

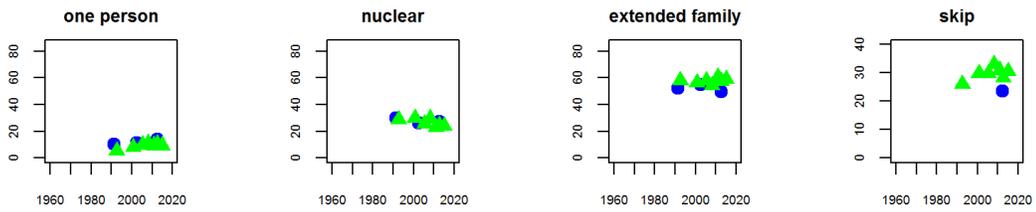


Nigeria

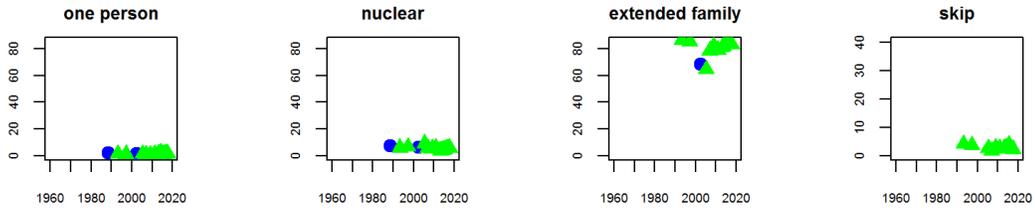


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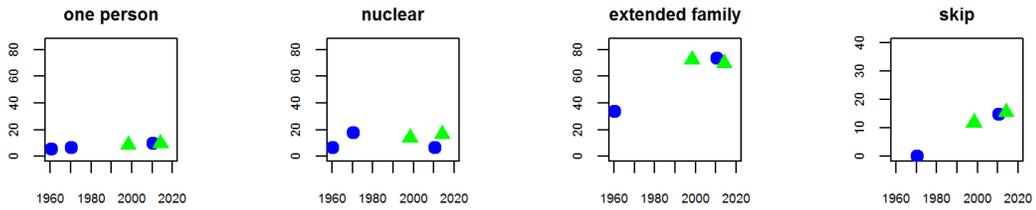
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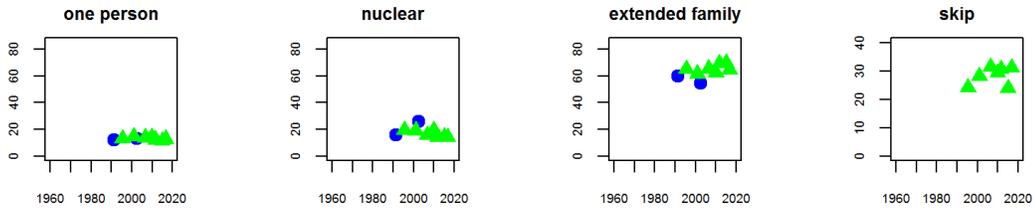
Senegal



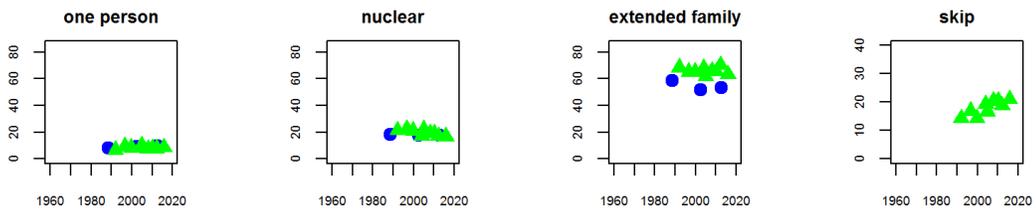
Togo



Uganda

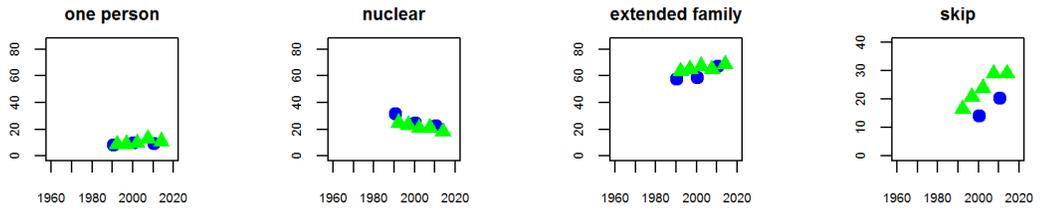


United Republic of Tanzania

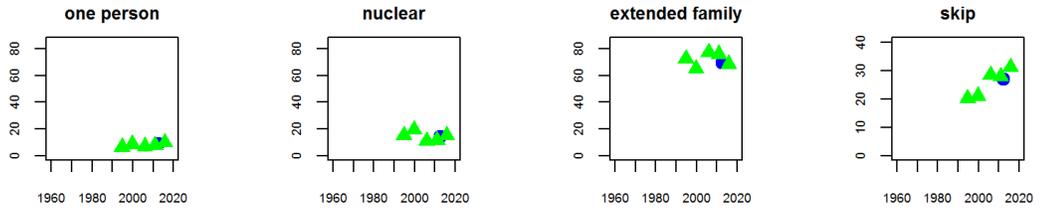


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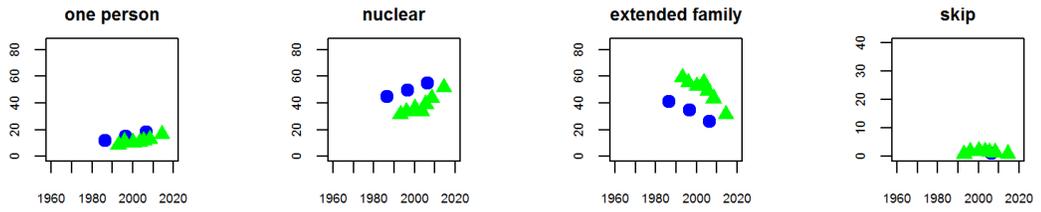
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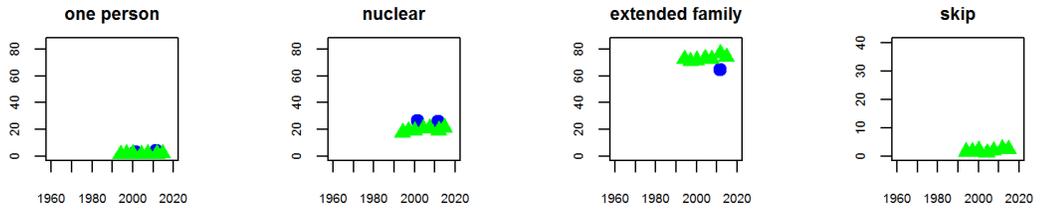
Zimbabwe



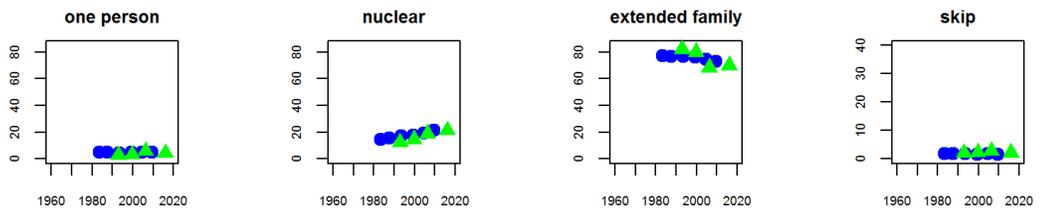
Egypt



Bangladesh

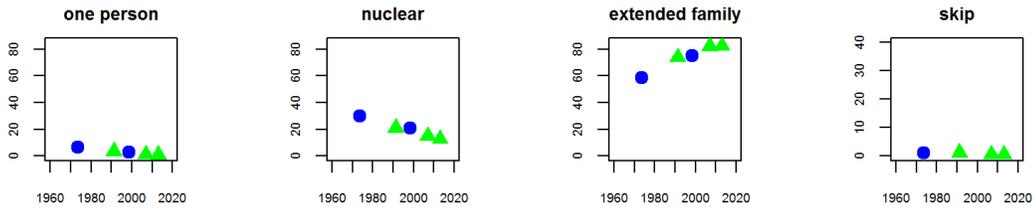


India

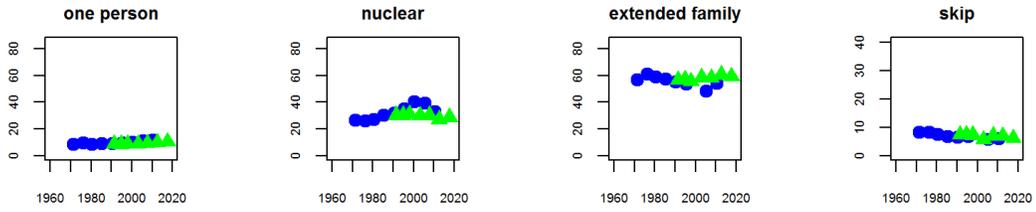


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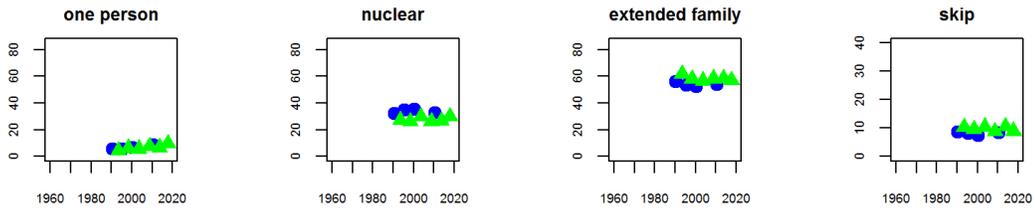
Pakistan



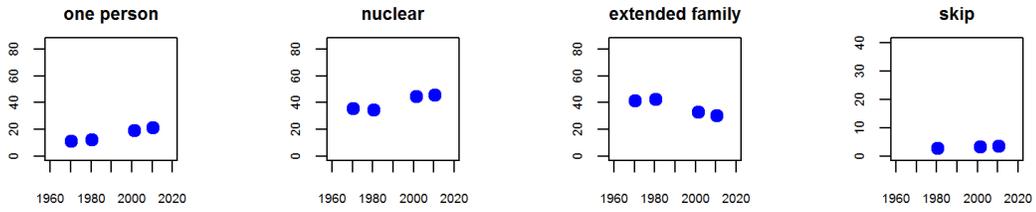
Indonesia



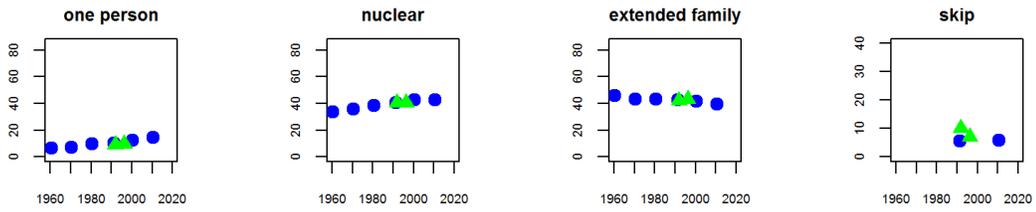
Philippines



Argentina

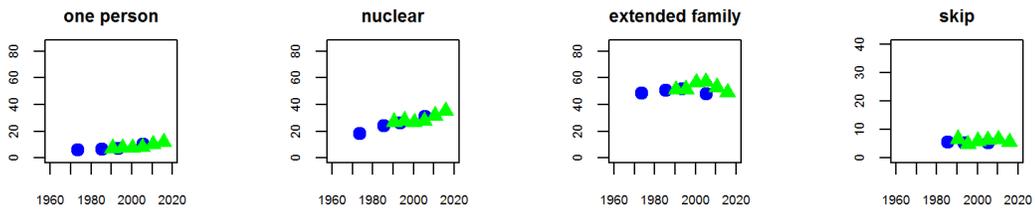


Brazil

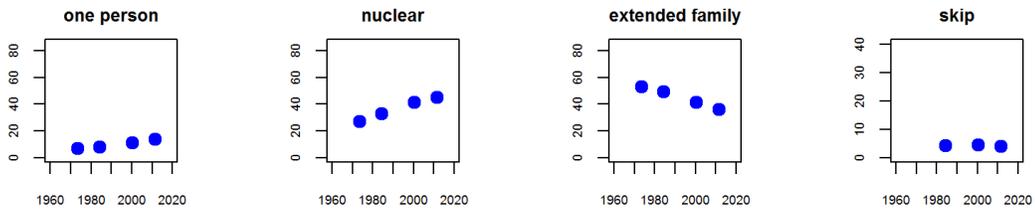


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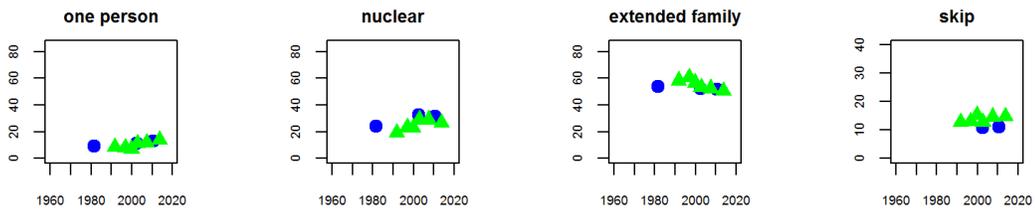
Colombia



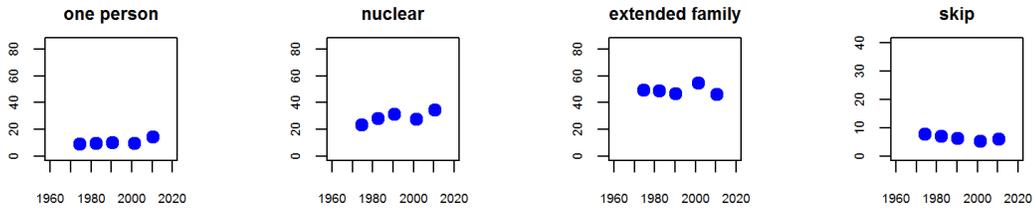
Costa Rica



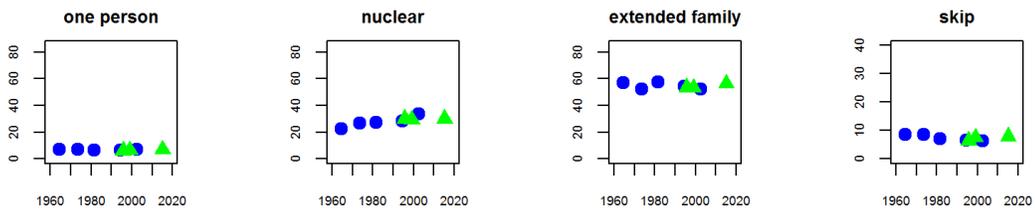
Dominican Republic



Ecuador

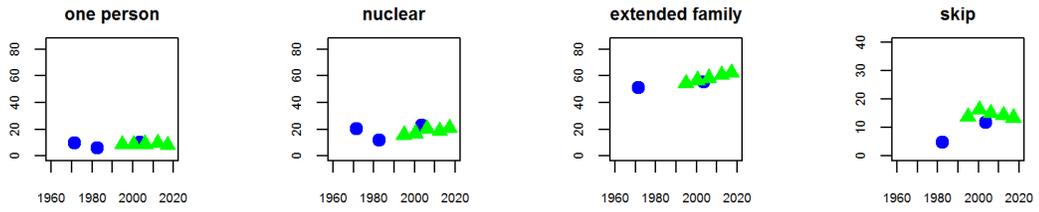


Guatemala

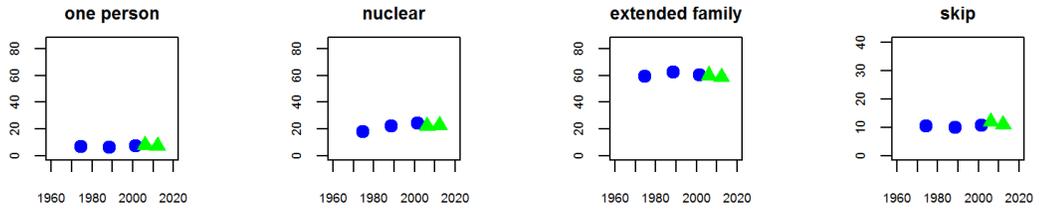


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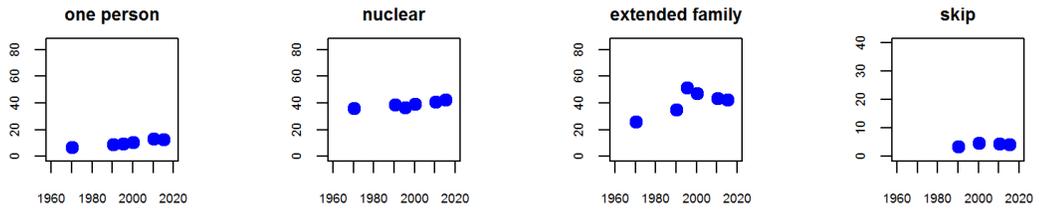
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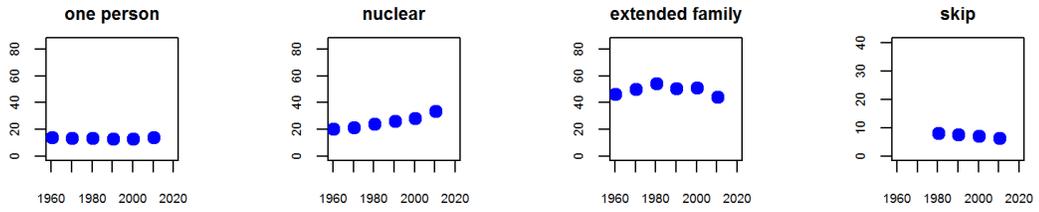
Honduras



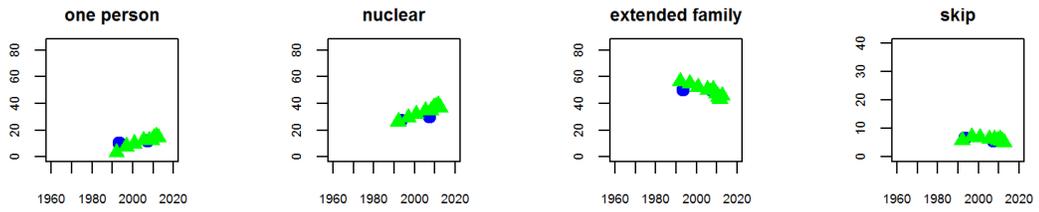
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Panama

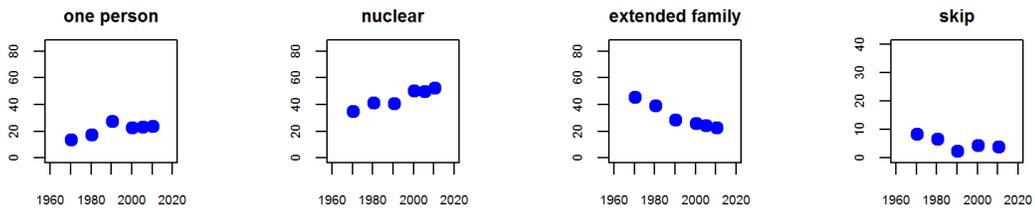


Peru

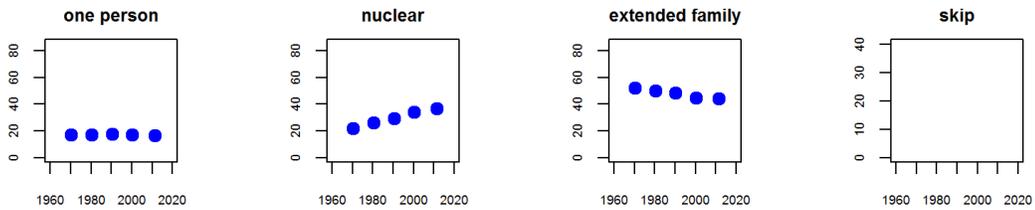


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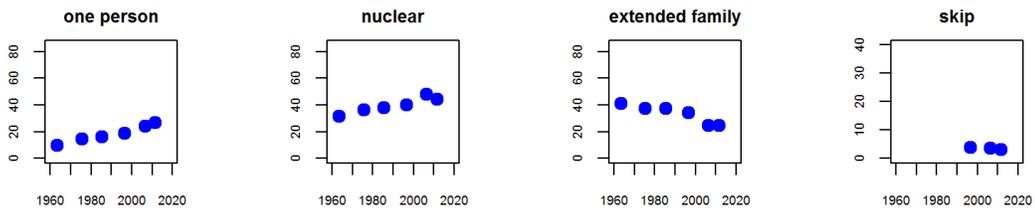
Puerto Rico



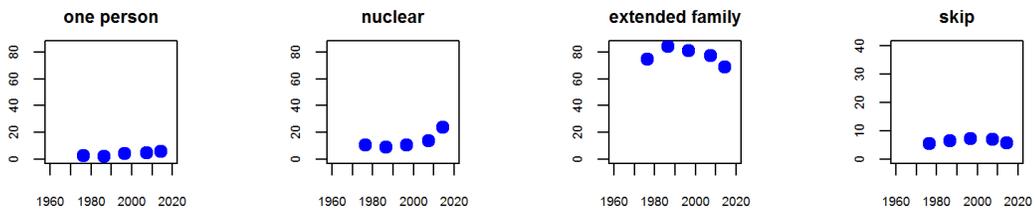
Trinidad and Tobago



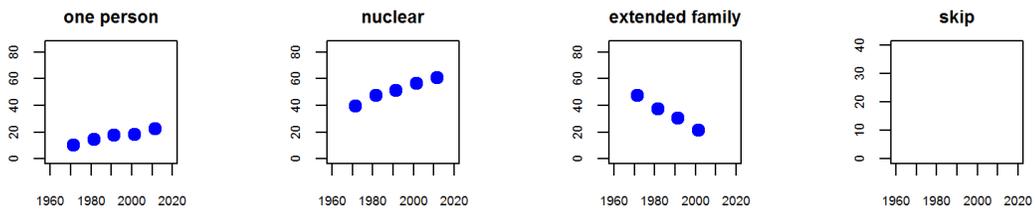
Uruguay



Fiji

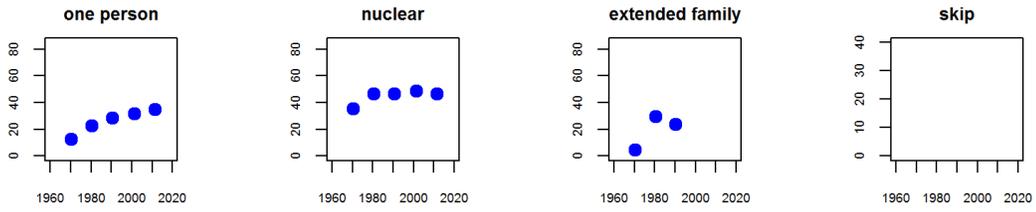


Greece

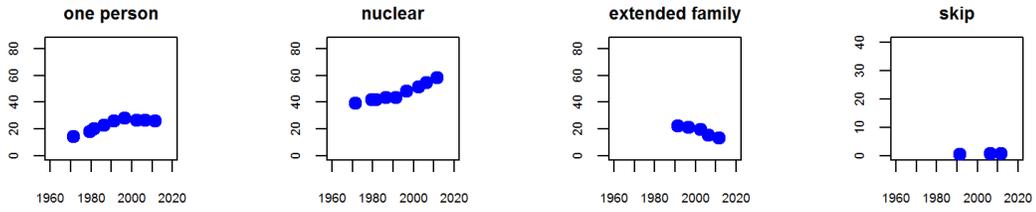


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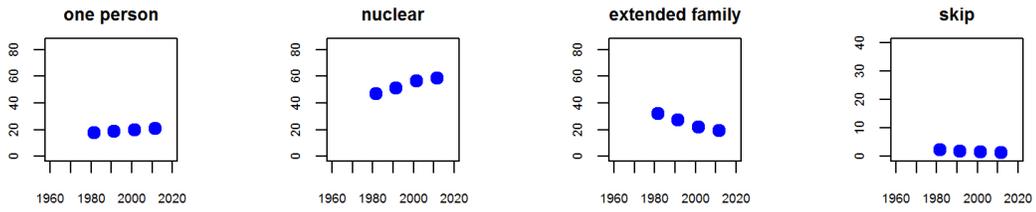
Hungary



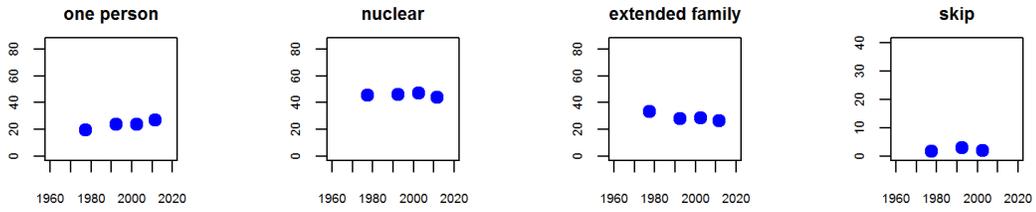
Ireland



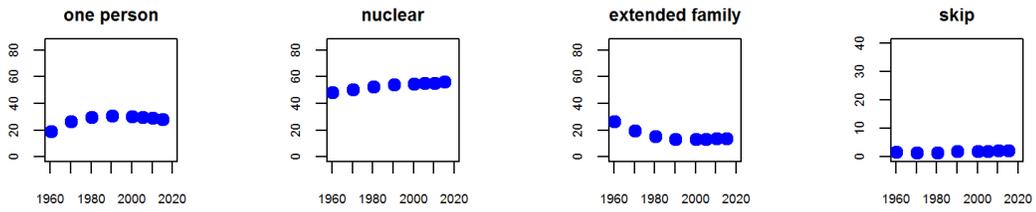
Portugal



Romania



United States of America



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Source: United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019.

III. Final remarks

This report describes the data, definition and methods made to estimate the indicators contained in the *United Nations Database on the Households and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2019*. This database is built upon on the previous work of the United Nations, *the 2005 United Nations Study on the Living Arrangements of the Older Persons* and *the United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2017*. These data sets served as the baseline or foundation for assessing the living arrangements of older persons around the world. The current database improves upon previous efforts in regard to: 1) specifying older persons' co-residence with children according to the children's age (United Nations, 2015; 2017); and 2) examining and disaggregating, whenever possible, the residual of "other" types of households where persons live (United Nations, 2017a) as this broad category⁸ comprised a substantial proportion of older persons, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In 2018, a new database on the living arrangements of older persons was developed by the United Nations including new indicators on household size, household headship by broad age group and sex, household composition and living arrangements. This database distinguished whether the older persons were co-residing with children under and over age 20 years and distinguishing the "other" category into "extended family households" and "non-relative households". Specific sub-categories of extended household such as multi-generational households and skip-generation households were also incorporated in the database. The 2019 database expanded the 2018 database by incorporating new empirical data sets from censuses and household surveys. However, it should be noted that some areas were not covered in the 2018 and 2019 dataset due to the limitations of the availability of the requisite information in the census or household surveys.

- **Prevalence of institutional living arrangements:** "Institutional" living arrangements (also called "collective" arrangements or "group quarters") can include persons living in arrangements other than old-age homes (or nursing homes) or health care facilities. The category generally also includes religious institutions, prisons, military barracks and dormitories of schools and universities. In some countries, boarding homes or hostels may be included. In general, the estimates indicate that in most countries or areas, only a minority of all older persons —less than 5 per cent lives in institutional arrangements⁹. While in most countries only a small fraction of older persons resided in institutional arrangements, the evidence indicates that institutional arrangements are common for persons aged 80 years or over in some developed countries. Future investigations of older persons living arrangements globally should attempt to incorporate information about the prevalence and trends in institutional arrangements (see more discussion on United Nations, 2017)
- **Homeless population.** Homelessness affect all age group including older persons. Older women are particularly vulnerable and face multiple forms of discrimination, including in property and

⁸ The United Nations Database on the Living Arrangements of Older Persons 2017 summarized the living arrangements into four mutually exclusive categories: alone, with spouse only, with children, and "other".

⁹ Analyses of data reported to the Demographic Yearbook (DYB) of the United Nations indicate that in most countries, only a small fraction of older persons resided in collective quarters: of 80 countries or areas with data available in the DYB, the percentage of persons aged 60 or over residing in collective quarters was less than one per cent in 33 countries and less than 2 per cent in 43 countries. The percentage of older persons in collective quarters exceeded 5 per cent in 13 countries or areas (Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Isle of Man, Israel, Japan, Qatar, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Switzerland). It exceeded 10 per cent in only two countries: Japan (18 per cent in 2005) and Qatar (21 per cent in 2010 which includes mostly labour barracks).

land inheritance rights.¹⁰ Since homelessness is not systematically accounted for in censuses and surveys, we do not include the homeless population in this database. Furthermore, counting the homeless population is extremely difficult because of the lack of internationally agreed definition of homelessness, the mobility of the population, and the cyclical nature of homelessness for many individuals. For example, the definition of homelessness is restricted to people living on the streets or public places, and/or living in shelters or emergency accommodations in Austria, Chile, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and the United States while some countries apply a broader definition which include people living in hotels and are doubled up with friends and families. This last category includes countries such as Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden (OECD, 2020). Some methods used to estimate the homeless population are: indirect estimation, single-contact censuses, administrative data (such as registries from shelters) and capture-recapture studies. In OECD countries, the prevalence of homelessness is less than one per cent of the population but it differs considerably according to the definition employed either strict or broad definition. Although homelessness is more common among adult males, homelessness among older people rose in England and New York city (OECD, 2020).

¹⁰ In many countries in Northern Africa and Western Asia, the law does not guarantee the same inheritance rights for men and women. In some countries in Southern Asia, South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa, the law guarantees the same inheritance rights, but some customary, traditional and religious practices discriminate the women (<https://genderstats.un.org/#/qindicators>).

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