



International
Longevity Centre UK



Longevity and the economic value of healthy ageing

Longevity 18
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Professor Les Mayhew Bayes Business School

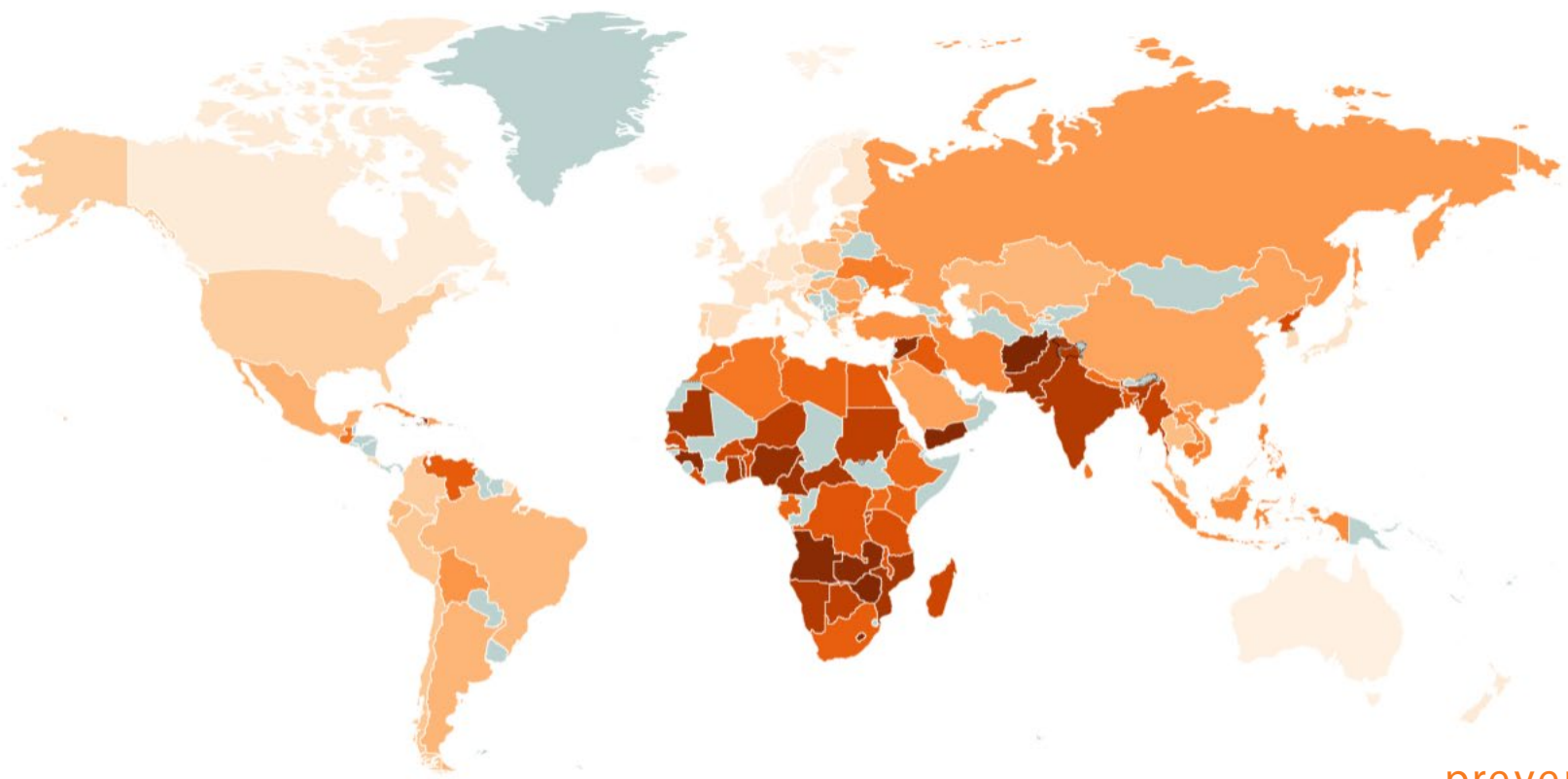
Healthy Ageing and Prevention Index

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METRIC: **Global rank** [Life span](#) [Health span](#) [Work span](#) [Income](#) [Environmental performance](#) [Happiness](#)



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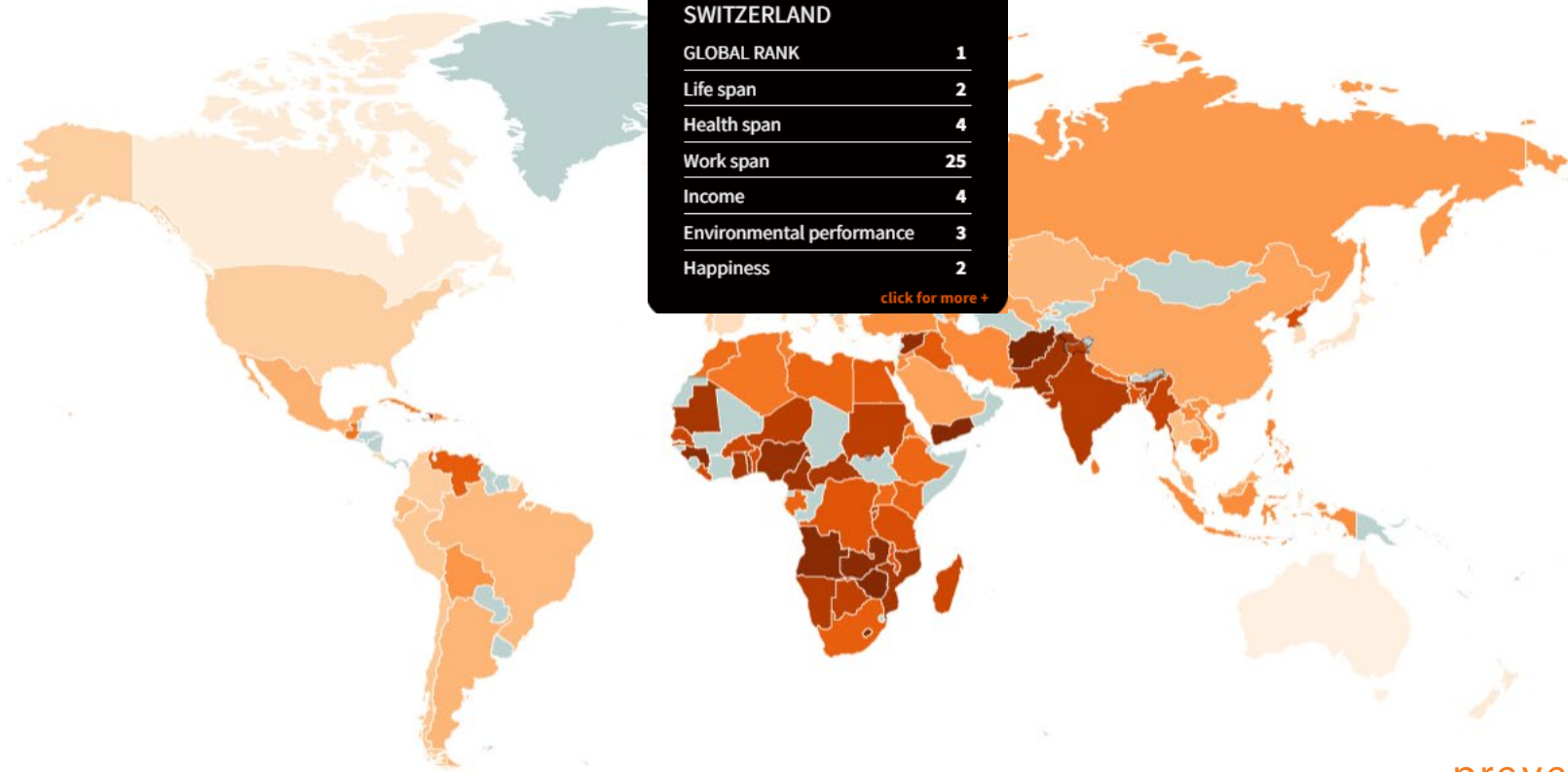
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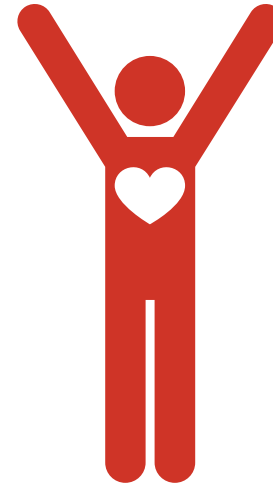
Our analysis finds that there are significant inequalities between countries based on rank

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There is a **24-year gap in life span** (life expectancy) between the **top 10 and bottom 10 countries.**



There is a **21-year gap in health span** (healthy life expectancy) between the **top and bottom 10 countries.**



There is a **23-year gap in work span** (working life expectancy) between the **top and bottom countries.**

The top 50 countries on the Index

1. Switzerland
2. Iceland
3. Norway
4. Sweden
5. Singapore
6. Australia
6. Luxembourg
6. Netherlands
9. Denmark
10. Ireland
11. Canada
11. New Zealand
13. Israel
14. Finland
15. Austria
16. United Kingdom
17. Germany
17. Japan
19. France
20. Malta
21. Spain
22. Cyprus
23. South Korea
24. Italy
25. Belgium
26. Slovenia
27. Costa Rica
28. Portugal
29. Czech Republic
30. Estonia
31. United States of America
32. Colombia
33. Slovakia
34. Peru
35. Chile
36. Greece
37. Poland
38. Lithuania
39. Thailand
40. Ecuador
41. Brazil
42. Kazakhstan
43. Argentina
44. Hungary
45. Mexico
46. Latvia
47. Malaysia
48. Romania
49. Croatia
50. China

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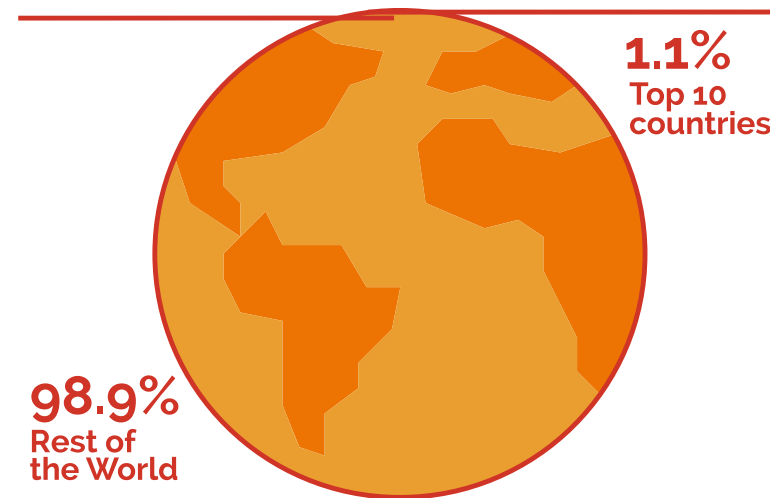
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There are global inequalities between those at the top of the Index versus those at the bottom.



Only **top 1%** of world population is **best adapted to longer, healthier lives.**



With an average population of only 8.4 million, **the top 10 countries** account for only **1.1%** of the world's population.

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Political and economic bloc rankings

The Index ranks political and economic country blocs, such as the G20, EU and OECD to demand action on sustainable longevity at the global level. Scandinavia, G7 and the EU are the top three performing blocs.

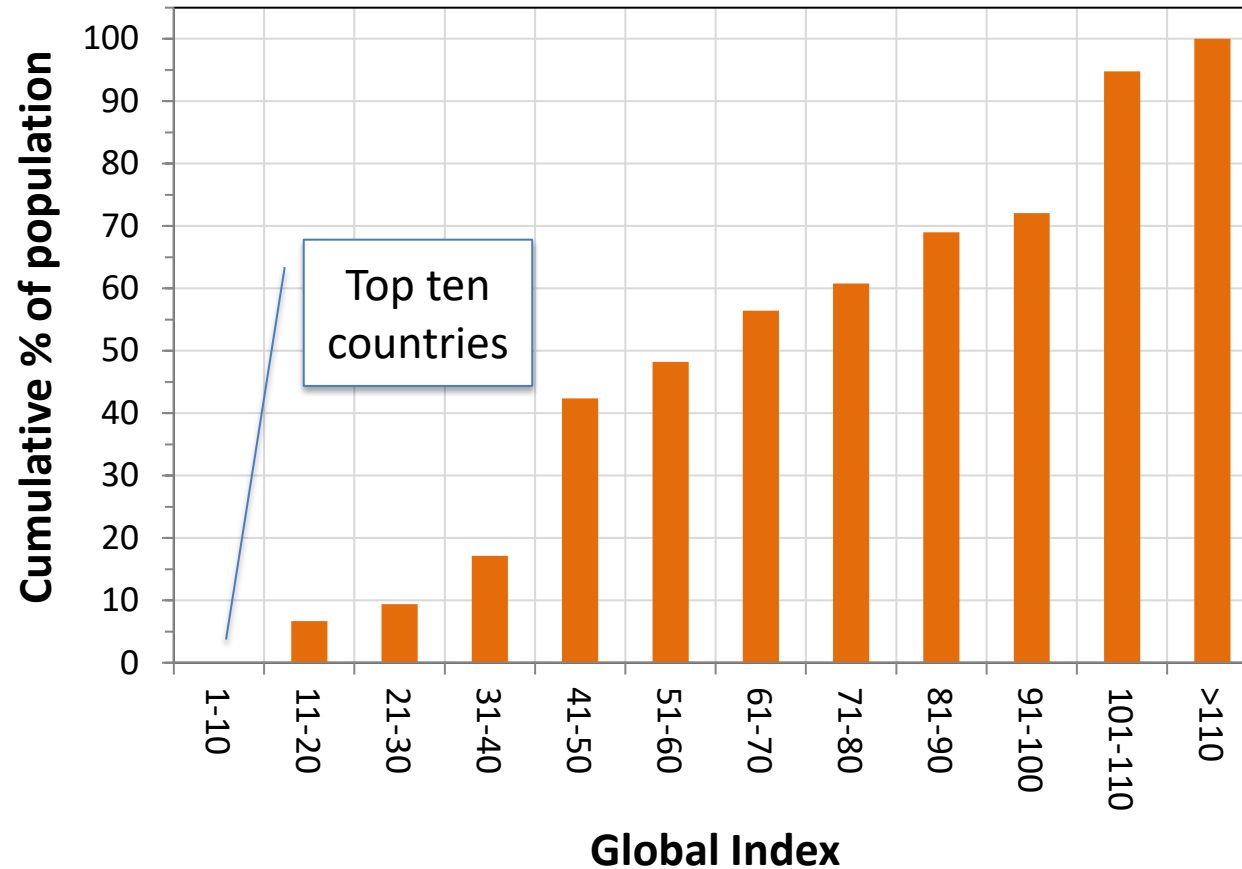
Country	Life span (years)	Health span (years)	Work span (years)	Income GDP/head ppp (\$ 000s)	Environmental performance (0-100)	Happiness (0-10)	Global rank
Scandinavia	82.0	71.4	31.5	58.1	79.3	7.5	1
G7	80.9	69.5	30.5	55.3	64.7	6.7	2
European Union	81.2	70.7	28.6	46.5	72.8	6.6	3
OECD ^a	80.4	69.4	30.4	46.3	63.0	6.5	4
Americas	77.2	66.3	31.3	34.0	50.6	6.4	5
APEC ^b	76.9	67.4	33.2	24.9	43.5	5.6	6
ASEAN ^c	72.2	63.6	33.4	12.8	37.6	5.5	7
G20	75.4	65.4	30.1	21.4	41.4	5.0	8
African Union	66.2	57.6	29.5	5.2	34.3	4.2	9

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Highest ranked countries ranging from 1 to 10 only account for 1.1% of the global population. Around 50% of the global population are in the top half of the table and 50% on the bottom half.

Global population by rank



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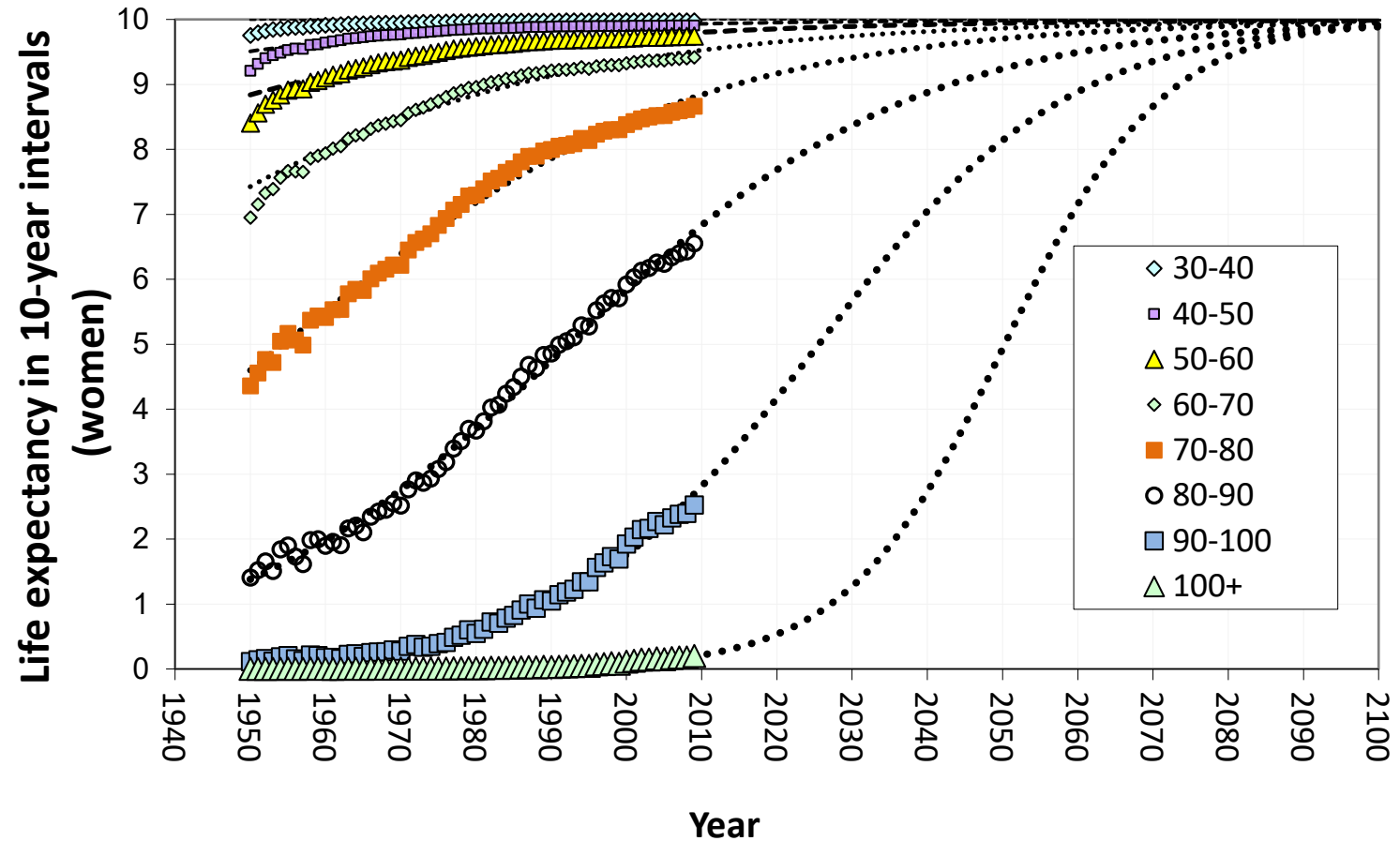
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Ageing is an incremental process which ripples through societies as they become more prosperous. Initially in younger age groups and then at later ages

This example is based on Japanese females but does not yet reflect the perturbations caused as a result of the pandemic

How populations age



Source: Mayhew and Smith 2014, Population Studies
(Data source HMD)

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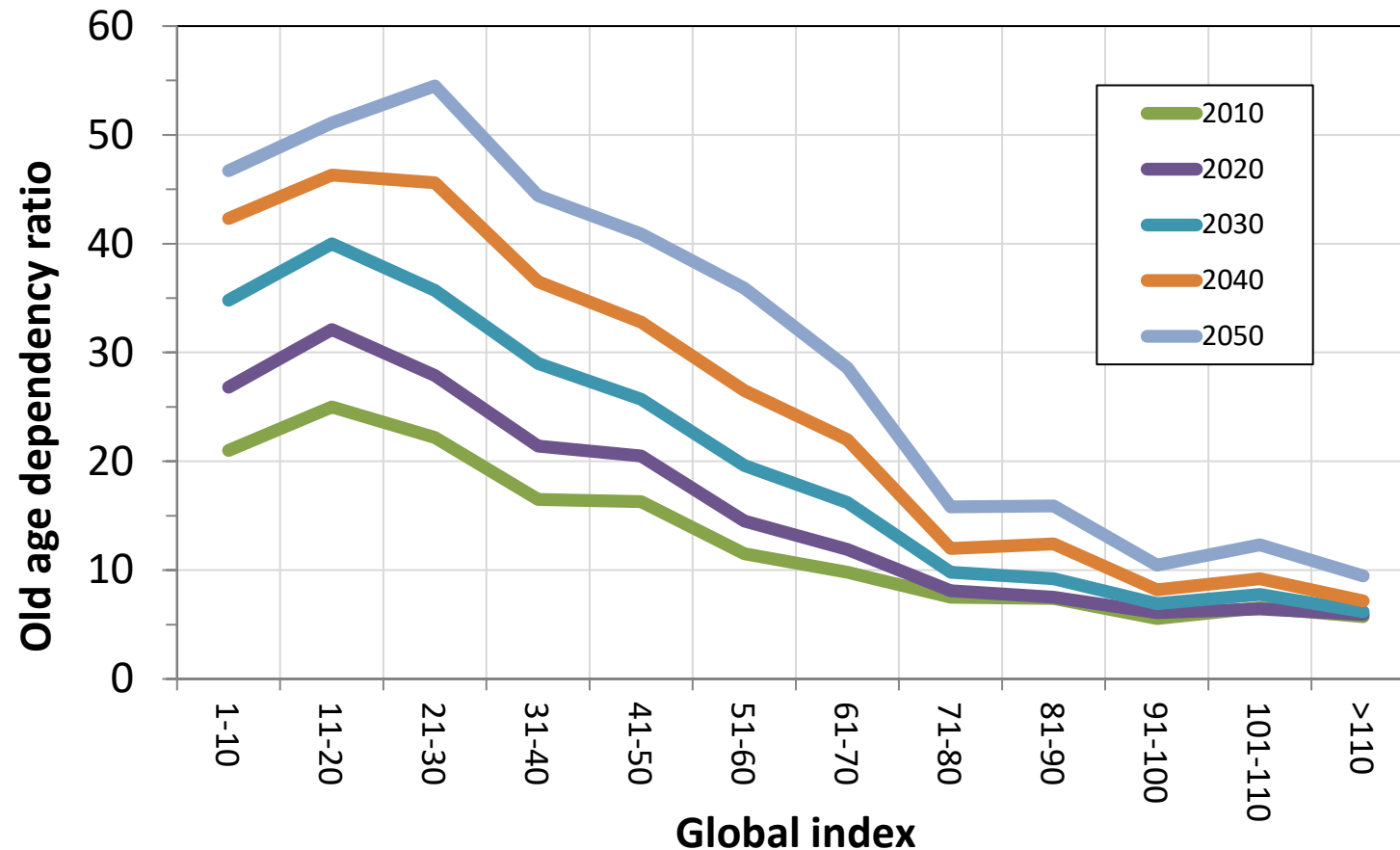
The dependency ratio measures the percentage of the adult population aged 65+. This chart shows high ranking countries are ageing the most and low-ranking countries the least and so the gap is set to widen.

A 'super ageing society' is one with 20% of more persons aged 65+, of which there were 29 in 2020, e.g. UK 23%.

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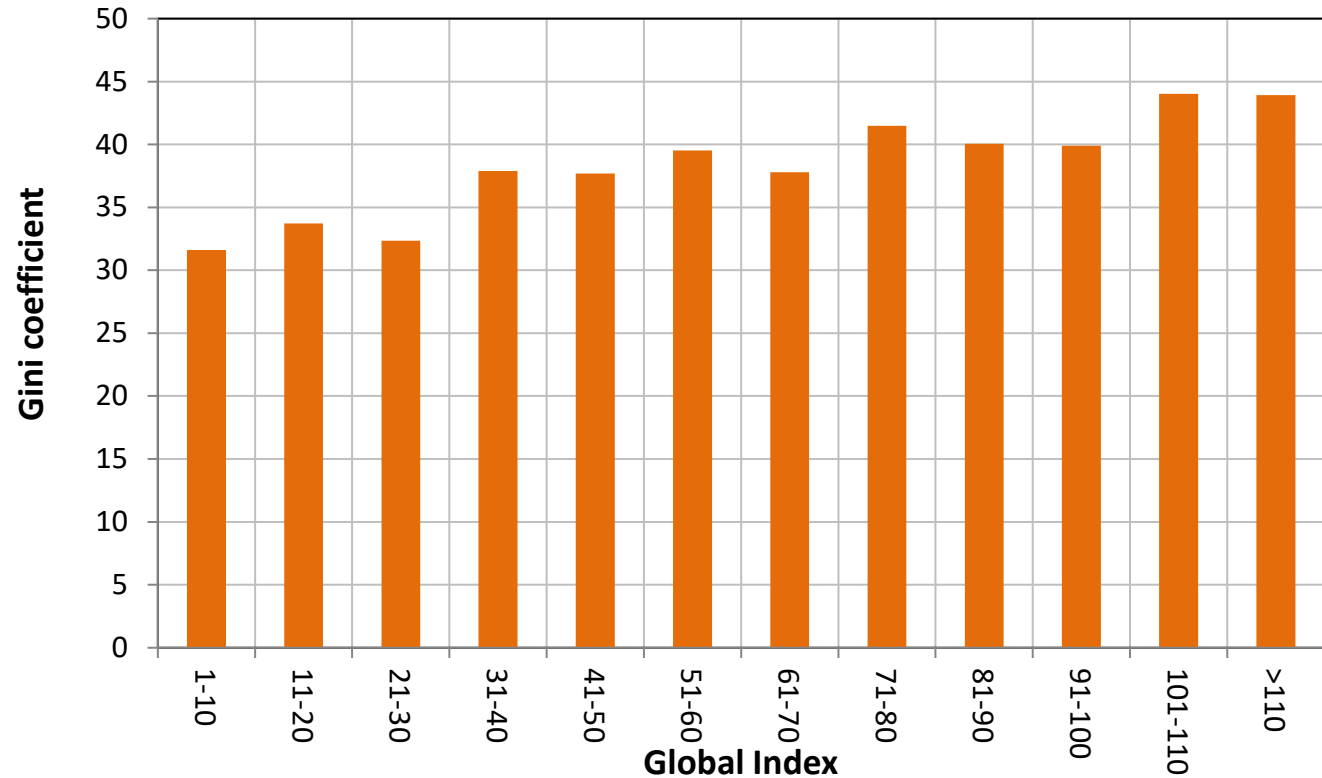
Old age dependency ratio by global rank



The dependency ratio is the percentage of the population aged 65+ relative to those aged 15 to 64 . Source: Wittgenstein centre Vienna, Austria

The highest ranked countries also have the fewest inequalities as measured by income. However, both the level of inequality and the gap between countries remains broadly unchanged since 2000

Income inequality



Note: A Gini coefficient of 0 reflects perfect equality, where all income or wealth values are the same, while a Gini coefficient of 1 (or 100%) reflects maximum inequality among values.
(source: World Bank)

We live in an unequal world but there is some cause for optimism with gaps narrowing in some areas such as inequalities but widening in others such as the rate of population ageing

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What have we learnt?

- Highest ranked countries only account for a small fraction of the global population
- Of the top 50% only 18 are non-European with Scandinavia, the G7 and EU as the best of the blocs
- Population ageing will continue at a faster rate in high-ranking countries exacerbating existing differences
- Income inequalities are least in the highest ranked countries and greatest in the lowest ranked
- Inequalities on most dimensions persist but signs of progress in areas such as education and Universal Health Coverage

The disparities in health span is concerning. The reasons for it are addressable by upscaling health services and tackling public health issues which are chiefly responsible

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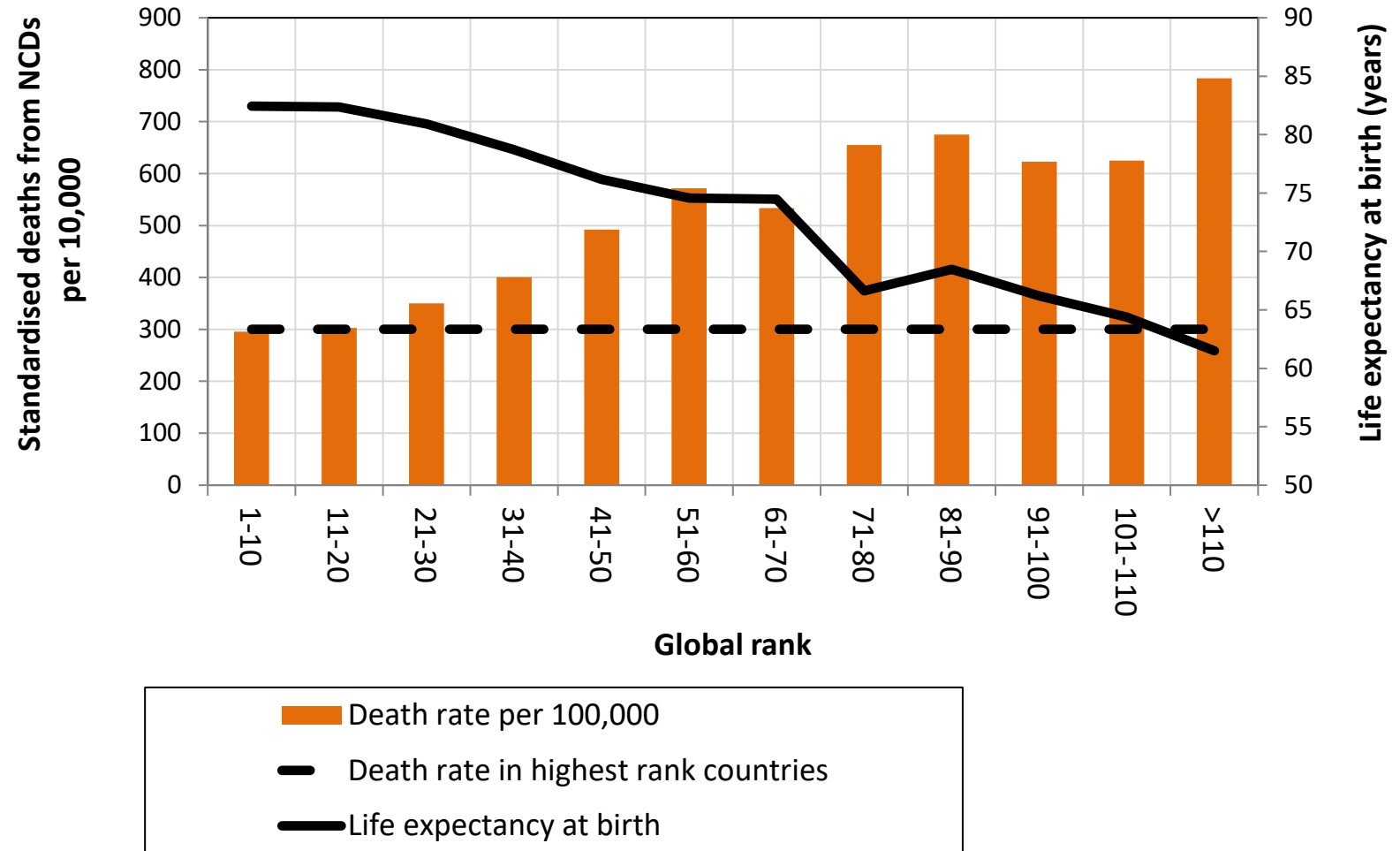
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Health – the next frontier?

- Access to health care is massively unequal and inversely correlated with the index
- Health outcomes are better in high-ranking countries with fewer deaths from communicable disease and lower infant mortality
- Spend on prevention is proportionately higher in low ranked countries but nominally less than in those higher ranked
- Transitioning countries are following in the footsteps of richer countries by adopting unhealthy lifestyles
- Obesity is overtaking smoking as the number one health threat high to middle ranked countries
- Undernourishment persists in the rest

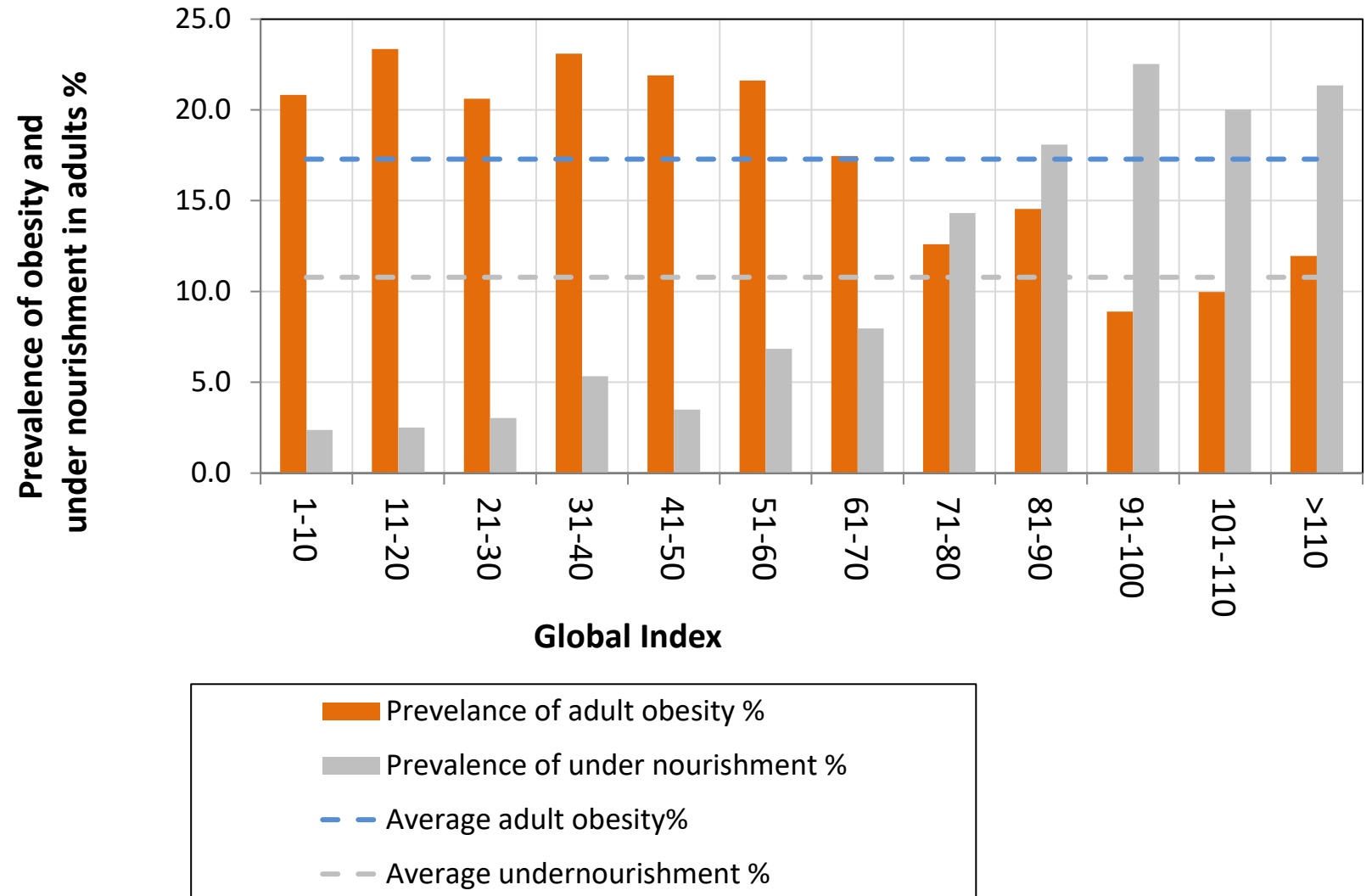
This chart shows higher mortality from non-communicable diseases and lower life expectancy in lower ranked countries. Mortality rates are twice as high as in the best performing countries.

Deaths from non-communicable disease



Obesity is a negative health issue in the top ranking 50% of countries and under nourishment in the bottom 50%. Within countries obesity is uneven. In the UK bottom deprivation deciles are especially affected with an obesity prevalence of over 30%

Over-nourishment versus under-nourishment



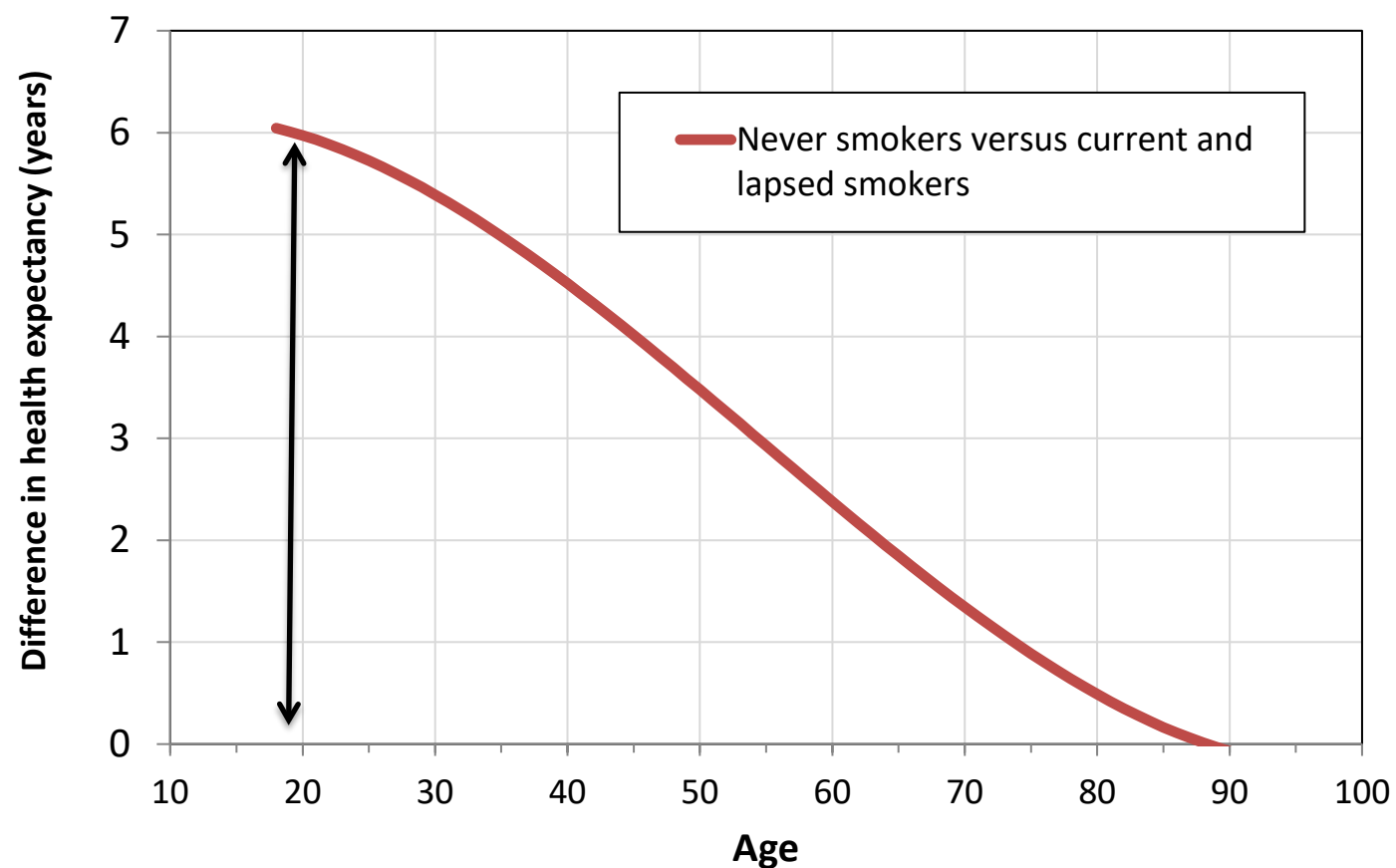
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The difference in life expectancy between smokers and non-smokers is about 10 years. Here we are interested in the impact of smoking on health expectancy using never smokers and current and lapsed smokers as our comparators.

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The great tobacco challenge



Source: ONS and own calculations

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It is important focus on things that make a difference. HAPI helps point the way by highlighting systemic problems that prevent countries from improving their global ranking and a metric for measuring progress

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Summing up

- For greater prosperity increases in life expectancy need to be balanced by improvements in health and working life expectancy
- Higher productivity is an antidote to population ageing but as older workers are less productive this cannot be guaranteed
- Whilst a growing population increases GDP it may not translate into improved GDP per capita, and so living standards can fall
- Health improvement as well as technical progress is a great enabler and expect countries to focus on policies that deliver health for all
- However, while there is theoretical scope to increase health expectancy it will be challenging, and it could easily go into reverse