

## Regional population projections EUROPOP2008: Most EU regions face older population profile in 2030

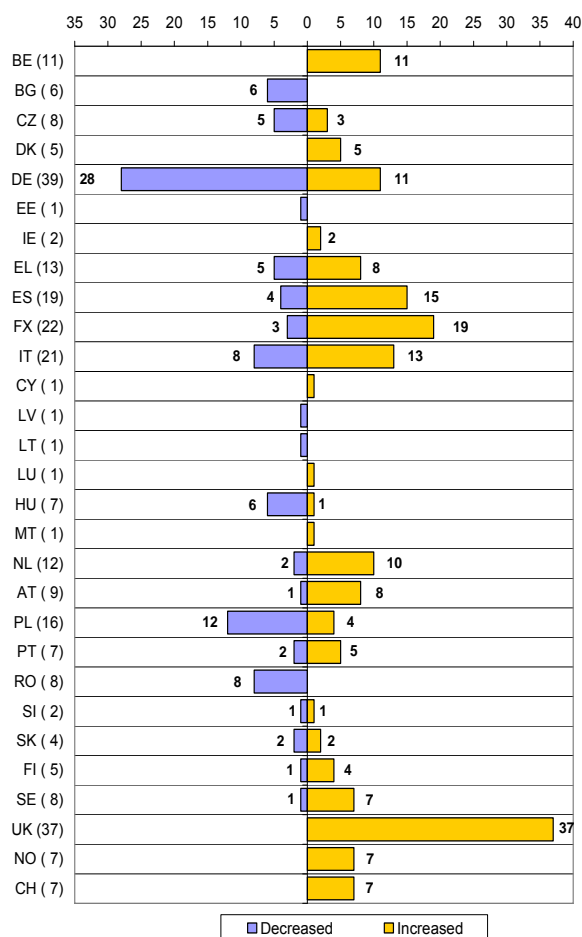
Population projections are ‘what-if’ scenarios that aim to provide information about the likely future size and structure of the population. As with Eurostat population projections at national level, EUROPOP2008 regional population projections present one of several possible population change scenarios at NUTS level 2 based on assumptions for fertility, mortality and migration for the period 2008-2030.

The current regional scenario complements the demographic profile suggested by population projections produced by other statistical institutes or other international organisations, which draw alternative paths for the possible evolution of the population.

### Highlights

- The 2008-based regional population projections EUROPOP2008 show that population may increase in two out of three regions between 2008 and 2030.
- However, in 2030, slightly more than half of the regions are projected to continue to increase their population.
- The median age of the regions’ population in 2030 is projected to be between 34.2 years and 57.0 years, while in 2008 the range was between 32.9 years and 47.8 years.
- Similarly, in 2030, the share of the population aged 65 years or over is expected to range between 10.4 % and 37.3 %. In 2008, the range was between 9.1 % and 26.8 %.

**Figure 1: Number of regions with decreased / increased population between 2008 and 2030**



CY, EE, LV, LT, LU, MT: NUTS level 2 coincides with the country level; FX: Metropolitan France;  
 Total number of regions for the respective countries in parenthesis  
 Source: Eurostat, regional EUROPOP2008

## A majority of the European regions are projected to have a larger population in 2030

While the EU population is projected to rise by 5 % between 2008 and 2030, there is considerable variation between the 281 regions in the Member States, Norway and Switzerland.

In fact, as shown in Figure 1, population may increase in Cyprus, Luxembourg and Malta and in all regions in Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Norway and Switzerland by 2030. Similarly, the most heavily populated regions of Austria, the Czech Republic, Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and Slovenia are projected to increase in population over the period.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the majority of regions in Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia are expected to have a lower population by 2030.

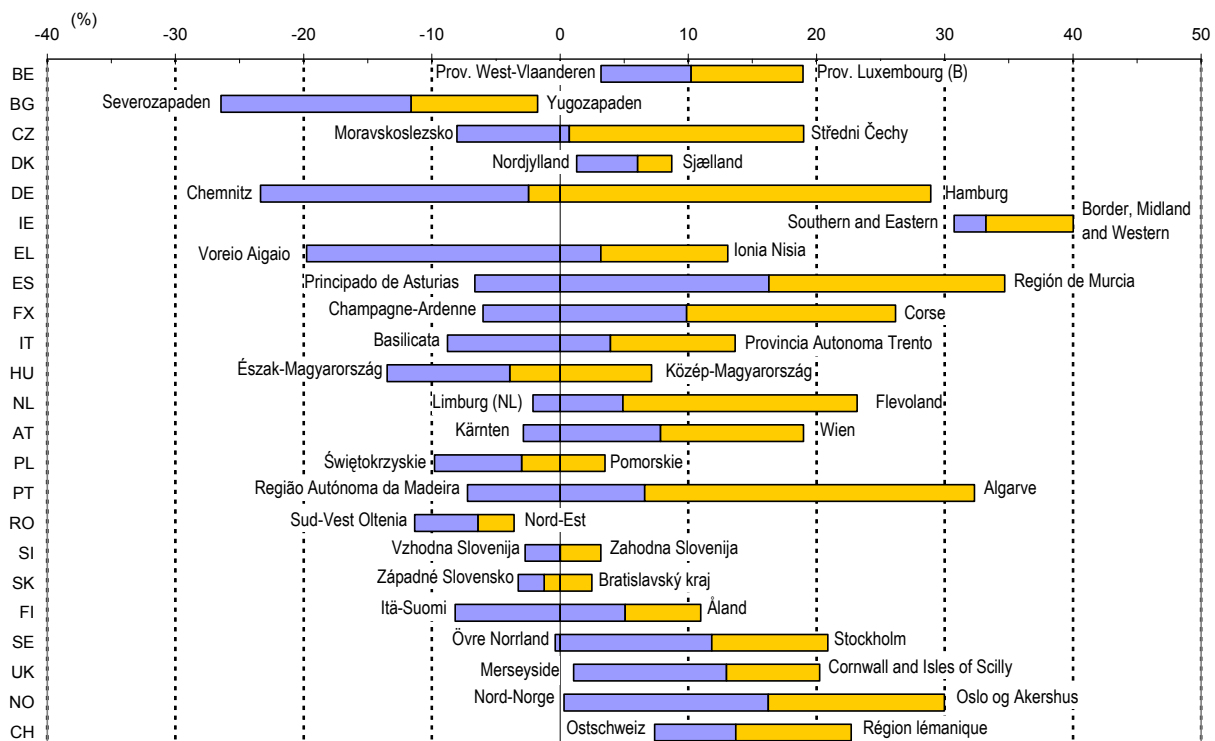
Figure 2 shows the range of the regions' relative population change between 2008 and 2030 for each country. Additionally, between the highest and lowest values the bars illustrate the national figure.

Different shading is used for the range above and below the countries' relative population change. For example, in the Czech Republic, the regions of Moravskoslezsko and Střední Čechy are projected to have a relative population change of -8.0 % and +19.0 % respectively, while the national figure is +0.7 %.

The regions with the highest population increase, more than 30 % over the period 2008-2030 are the two regions in Ireland (the Border, Midland and Western region; and the Southern and Eastern region); the two Spanish coastal regions bordering the Mediterranean – the Región de Murcia and the Comunidad Valenciana; the Algarve in the southern part of Portugal; Cyprus; and the capital city region of Oslo og Akershus in Norway.

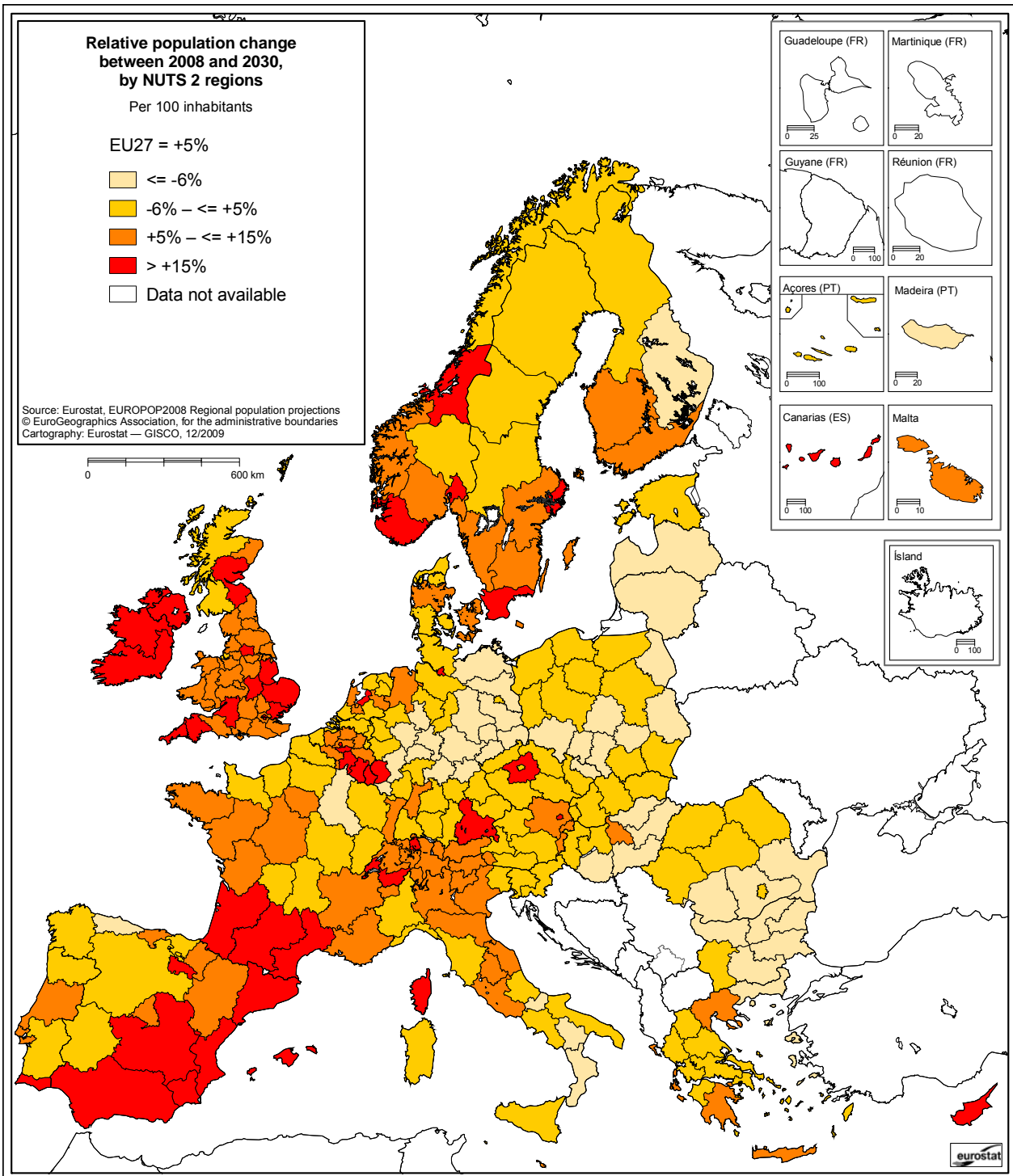
The regions with a projected population decrease of more than 20 % are Severozapaden in Bulgaria and Chemnitz, Sachsen-Anhalt, Dresden and Thüringen in Germany.

**Figure 2: Range of the regions' relative population change between 2008 and 2030**



CY, EE, LV, LT, LU, MT: NUTS level 2 coincides with the country level;  
 CY: +34.9 %, EE: -5.3 %, LV: -10.4 %, LT: -8.4 %, LU: +25.8 % and MT: +5.1 %;  
 FX: Metropolitan France  
 Source: Eurostat, regional EUROPOP2008

**Map 1: Relative population change between 2008 and 2030, by NUTS 2 regions**



For Norway and Switzerland level 2 statistical regions  
Source: Eurostat, regional EUROPOP2008

## Migration sustains population growth over the period 2008 - 2030

Population growth is the result of two components: (N) natural change (births minus deaths) and (M) total net migration (international and internal migration). Regions can be divided into six groups according to the results of combining natural change and migration.

### Regions with positive population growth

- **$N+$ ,  $M+$** : Positive natural change and positive net migration
- **$N- < M+$** : Negative natural change and positive net migration; migration compensates for the negative natural change
- **$N+ > M-$** : Positive natural change and negative net migration; natural increase compensates for the negative migration

### Regions with negative population growth

- **$N-, M-$** : Negative natural change and negative net migration
- **$N- > M+$** : Negative natural change and positive net migration; migration does not compensate for the negative natural change
- **$N+ < M-$** : Positive natural change and negative net migration; natural increase does not compensate for the negative migration

Below, we discuss the population growth components first for the whole period 2008-2030 (Table 1) and then for the year 2030 (Table 2).

Table 1 shows the number of NUTS 2 regions for each country in each of the six groups over the whole projection period, taking into account the cumulative births and deaths and the total net migration over the period 2008-2030.

Table 2 shows the effects of the natural change and the total net migration on the positive or negative population growth in 2030. It presents the number of the NUTS 2 regions in each country only for the last year of the projection period, taking into account the natural change and the total net migration in 2030.

For example, while Table 1 shows eight Austrian regions increasing in population and one decreasing over the period 2008-2030, in Table 2 only five Austrian regions are projected still to have a growing population in 2030 and hence on a trajectory of positive population growth.

As shown in Table 1, for the majority of the regions projected to have positive growth over the period 2008-2030 (the three first groups), positive migration is an important factor, either combined with positive natural change (92) or compensating for negative natural change (75).

Conversely, for more than half of the regions (50 out of the 98 regions) in which population is projected to decline over the period 2008-2030, positive migration may not compensate for negative natural change.

**Table 1: Population growth components for the period 2008-2030 (number of regions)**

2008-2030 Country	Positive growth			Negative growth			Number of regions
	$N+, M+$	$N- < M+$	$N+ > M-$	$N-, M-$	$N- > M+$	$N+ < M-$	
BE	9	2	-	-	-	-	11
BG	-	-	-	5	1	-	6
CZ	-	3	-	1	4	-	8
DK	2	2	1	-	-	-	5
DE	2	9	-	11	17	-	39
EE	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
IE	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
EL	3	5	-	2	3	-	13
ES	8	5	2	-	4	-	19
FX	8	7	4	-	-	3	22
IT	1	11	1	2	6	-	21
CY	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
LV	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
LT	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
LU	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
HU	-	1	-	2	4	-	7
MT	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
NL	8	1	1	-	2	-	12
AT	4	4	-	-	1	-	9
PL	1	3	-	12	-	-	16
PT	-	5	-	1	-	1	7
RO	-	-	-	4	4	-	8
SI	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
SK	-	1	1	-	2	-	4
FI	3	-	1	1	-	-	5
SE	4	3	-	-	1	-	8
UK	24	9	4	-	-	-	37
NO	5	1	1	-	-	-	7
CH	6	1	-	-	-	-	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>281</b>

**Table 2: Population growth components in 2030 (number of regions)**

2030 Country	Positive growth			Negative growth			Number of regions
	$N+, M+$	$N- < M+$	$N+ > M-$	$N-, M-$	$N- > M+$	$N+ < M-$	
BE	6	4	1	-	-	-	11
BG	-	-	-	5	1	-	6
CZ	-	1	-	1	6	-	8
DK	1	3	1	-	-	-	5
DE	2	6	-	5	26	-	39
EE	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
IE	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
EL	2	2	1	-	8	-	13
ES	2	10	2	1	4	-	19
FX	6	8	3	2	1	2	22
IT	-	11	-	2	8	-	21
CY	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
LV	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
LT	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
LU	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
HU	-	-	-	2	5	-	7
MT	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
NL	4	3	1	1	3	-	12
AT	1	4	-	-	4	-	9
PL	-	-	-	12	4	-	16
PT	-	5	-	2	-	-	7
RO	-	-	-	5	3	-	8
SI	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
SK	-	-	-	1	3	-	4
FI	-	3	-	-	1	1	5
SE	3	2	-	-	3	-	8
UK	20	13	4	-	-	-	37
NO	4	2	-	1	-	-	7
CH	3	4	-	-	-	-	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>281</b>

Overall, as shown in Table 2, slightly more than half of the regions (152) are projected to be on a trajectory of positive population growth in 2030 (the three first groups). For these, the number of regions for which positive migration may compensate for the negative natural change (81) remains almost the same as in Table 1 (75).

However, fewer regions (58 compared to 92 in Table 1) may be on a trajectory of positive population growth with both components positive.

As a result of below replacement fertility, smaller cohorts of women reaching the reproductive age result in fewer births than in the past.

At the same time the number of deaths is projected to rise. Consequently, as Table 2 shows, over all six groups, 3 out of 4 regions (207) are projected to have more deaths than births (N-) in 2030, compared with less than 2 out of 4 (131) in 2008.

## Widespread population ageing in almost all regions

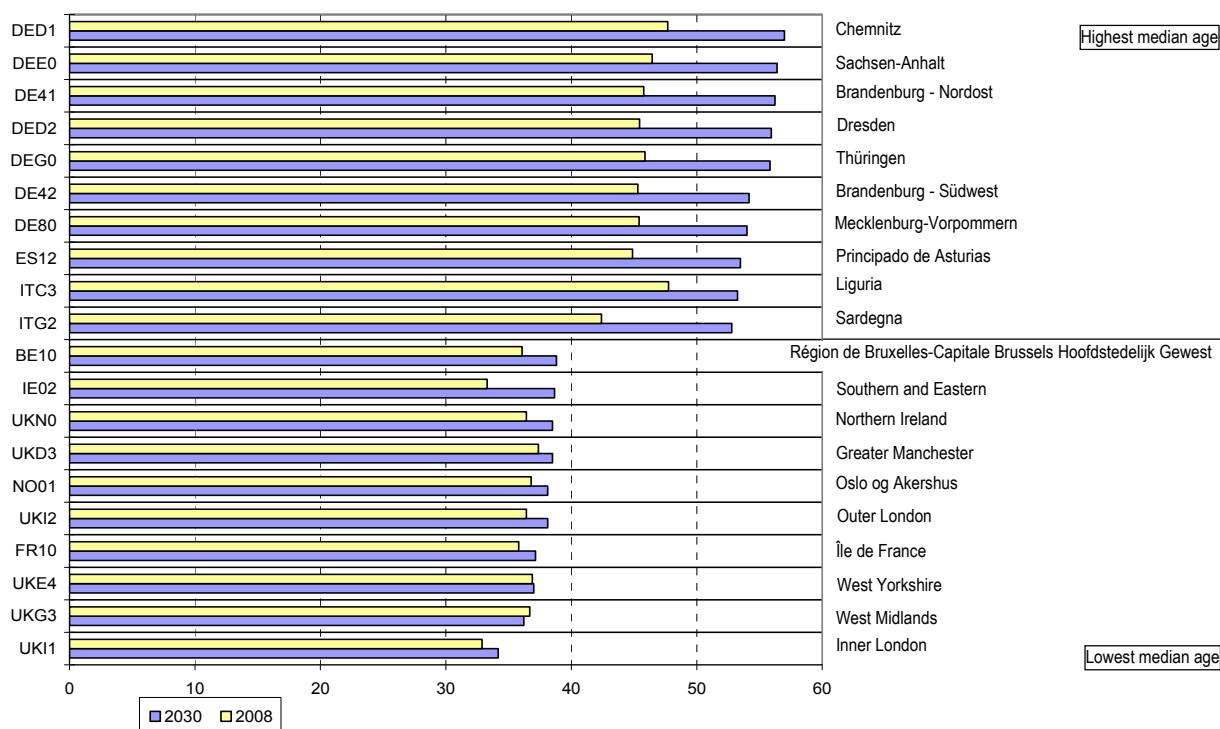
The population profile is projected to become older in almost all regions. The combined effect of three factors – the existing population structure, fertility lower than replacement levels, and steadily rising numbers of people living longer – is likely to increase the median age in all but seven regions out of the 281.

These are the regions of Hamburg and Trier in Germany, Sterea Ellada and Peloponnisos in Greece, Wien in Austria, and West Midlands and North Eastern Scotland in the United Kingdom whose median age is projected to be between 36.2 and 42.1 years in 2030.

In the EU27 as a whole, the median age of the population was 40.4 in 2008. This is projected to increase to 45.4 in 2030 and almost one in four regions may have a median age of the population higher than 48 years.

As shown in Figure 3, in 2030, the 10 regions with the highest median age of the total projected population – above 52.8 years – are the eastern regions of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Brandenburg-Südwest, Brandenburg-Nordost, Thüringen, Dresden, Sachsen-Anhalt and Chemnitz in Germany, the coastal region of Principado de Asturias in north-west Spain and Liguria and Sardegna in Italy.

**Figure 3: The ten regions with the highest / lowest median age in 2030 and 2008**



Source: Eurostat, regional EUROPOP2008

In contrast, the 10 regions with the lowest median age of the total projected population – below 38.8 years – include six capital city regions, namely the region of Île de France in France, Oslo

og Akershus in Norway, the Southern and Eastern region in Ireland, the Région de Bruxelles-Capitale in Belgium, and Inner London and Outer London in the United Kingdom. It should be noted that in

these capital city regions, positive population growth over the period 2008-2030 is expected to be due mainly to significant positive natural change.

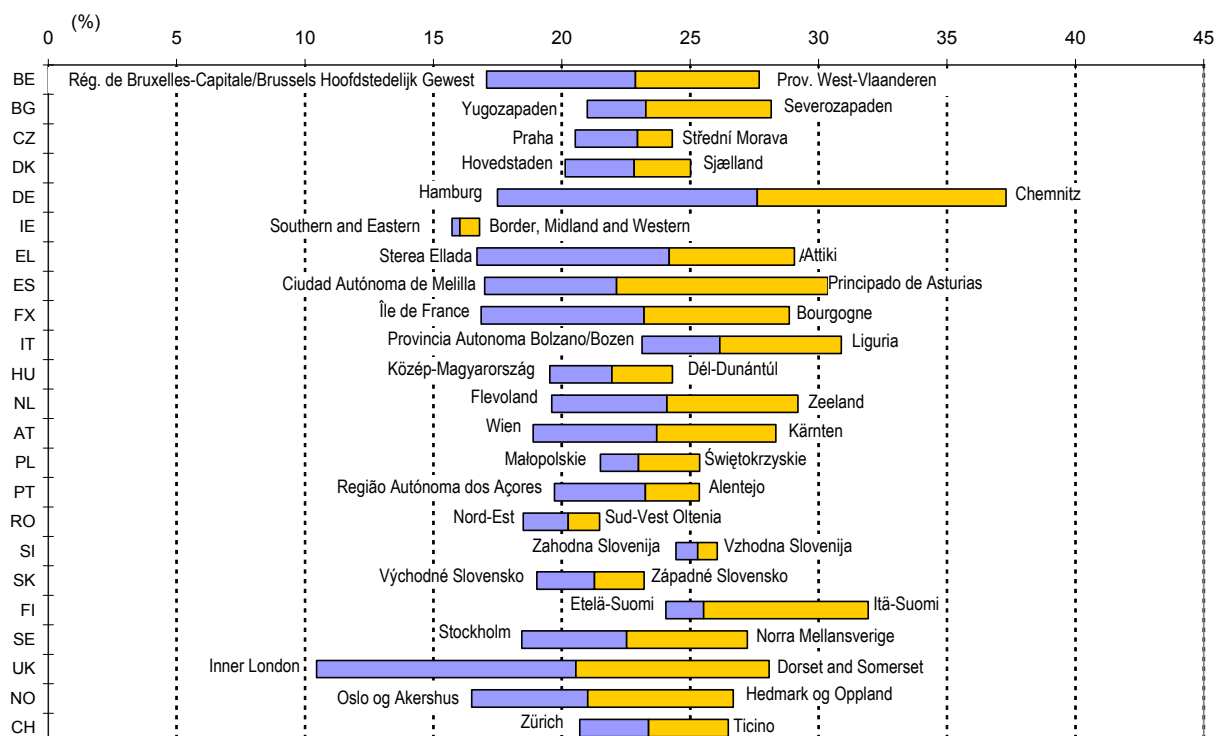
The other four regions are the region of Greater Manchester, Northern Ireland, West Yorkshire and West Midlands in the United Kingdom. For the latter four regions, positive population growth over the period 2008-2030 may also be boosted mainly by natural increase.

In the coming decades, the high number of ageing baby boomers will swell the number of elderly persons. Consequently, the proportion of the regions' population aged 65 or over is projected to increase considerably over the period 2008-2030.

In 2030, for the 281 regions, the proportion of the regions' population aged 65 or over is projected to range between 10.4 % in the capital city region of Inner London in the United Kingdom and 37.3 % in the German region of Chemnitz on the border with the Czech Republic. In 2008, the range was between 9.1 % in the region of Flevoland – the region with the youngest population among all regions – and 26.8 % in the coastal region of Liguria in north-west Italy.

For the EU27, the share of the total population aged 65 years or over is projected to increase to 23.5 % in 2030, from 17.1 % in 2008.

**Figure 4: NUTS level 2 regions with the highest / lowest proportion of people aged 65+ in the total population in 2030**



CY, EE, LV, LT, LU, MT: NUTS level 2 coincides with the country level,  
 CY: 17.9 %, EE: 21.7 %, LV: 22.2 %, LT: 22.1 %, LU: 19.6 % and MT: 24.2 %;  
 FX: Metropolitan France  
 Source: Eurostat, regional EUROPOP2008

The old age dependency ratio is used as an indicator of the extent to which the older population (65 years or over) must be supported by the population of working age (conventionally 15-64 years old).

In 2030, the combination of the increased proportion of the projected population aged 65 or over and the decrease in the working age population for the vast majority of the regions may push the old age dependency ratio much higher than it was in 2008.

For the EU27 the old age dependency ratio in 2030 is expected to rise to 38.0 % from 25.4 % in 2008. This means that where, in 2008, 100 persons of working age supported 25 persons aged 65 or over, in 2030 they are projected to support 38 persons.

The regions' old age dependency ratio is projected to be between 14.8 % and 70.2 % while in 2008 it ranged between 12.7 % and 43.3 %.

It is noted that in more than half of the 281 regions the old age dependency ratio is projected to increase by more than 13 percentage points over the period 2008-2030.



























