

# Demographic transformation in the EU:

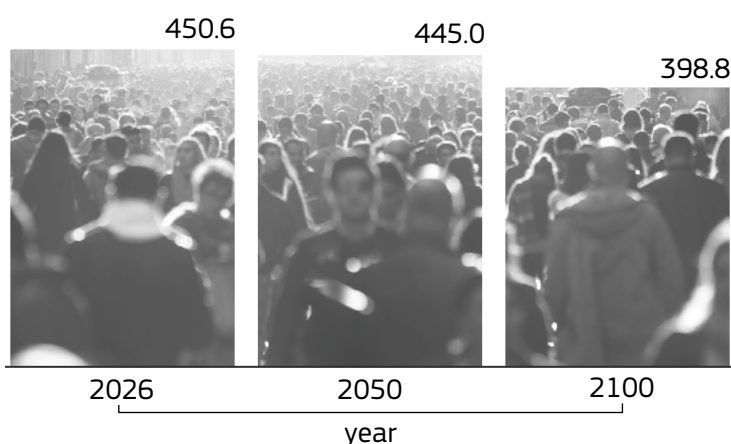
## Understanding the change to build a stronger future

July 2026

The EU population currently stands at 450.6 million. Europeans are living longer than ever before - life expectancy at birth reached 81.5 years in 2024 - reflecting progress in healthcare, living standards and social conditions.

### A CHANGING EU POPULATION

EU population (millions)



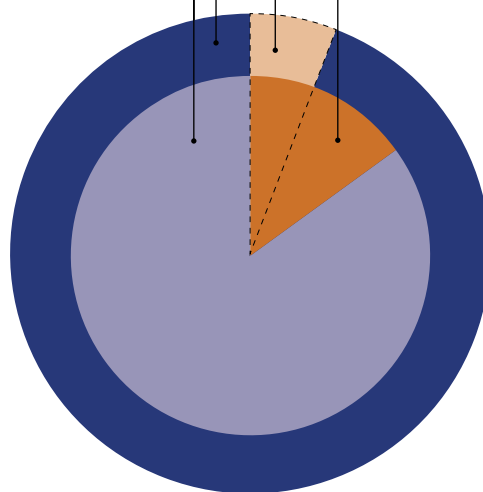
- The median age is projected to **increase by around 6.6 years between 2025 and 2100.**
- **By 2050, nearly 1/3 of the EU population is projected to be 65+.**

EU population in 2026: approximately 450.6 million

in 2100 the EU population will decrease by 11.7% compared to 2026

Today 6% is in their 80s and over

this percentage is expected to rise to 15% by 2100



### FROM LONGEVITY TO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

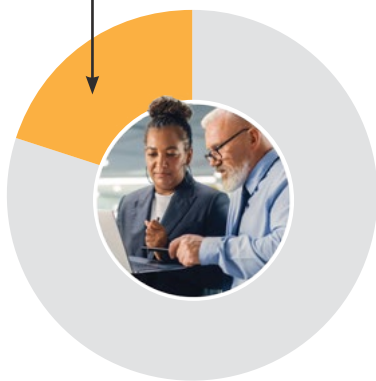
Longer, healthier lives expand the potential for personal fulfilment, civic engagement and continued contribution to society well beyond traditional retirement ages, giving rise to the silver economy – a rapidly growing market for products and services tailored to the needs and aspirations of older citizens.

## IMPACT ON LABOUR MARKET

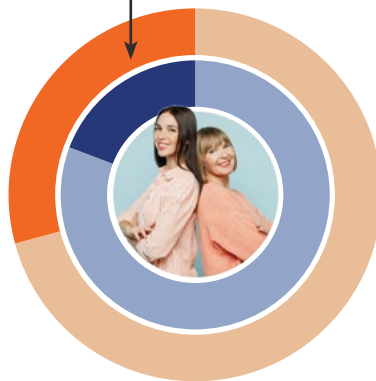
Helping inactive population groups back into work can reduce the economic impact of demographic change.

Around **20%** of the EU working-age population **is not in work**.

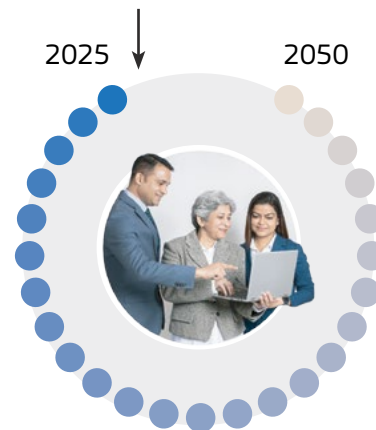
\* **8 million** young people are not in work.



Around **37.9 million women** of working age (20–64) were either **unemployed or inactive in 2024**.



The working-age population (15–64) **is expected to shrink by 1.2 million per year (2025–2050)**.



55–64 year olds in work:  
Women: +13.5 pp (2016–2025)  
Men: +12.2 pp (2016–2025)

Women: 70.8% employed  
Men: 80.8% employed

1 year = ↓ 1.2 million

Closing the gender employment gap, equipping young people with skills and enabling older workers to remain active if they choose can sustain economic growth and social prosperity.

**Source:** 2026 Demography Report **Data source:** Eurostat demographic projections

## EU policy response

**Demography Toolbox:** structured support to help Member States mainstream demography into their policies. Some of these include:

### European Affordable Housing Plan

Supporting young people and vulnerable households in accessing quality, sustainable homes.

### Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness

Strengthening solidarity between generations.

### EU Anti-Poverty Strategy

Aims to prevent and protect against poverty across age groups.

### Union of Skills

To strengthen competitiveness, promote life-long learning, education and training.

### European Care Strategy

Ensuring quality and affordable care services in the EU.

### Harnessing Talent in Europe

Supporting EU regions affected by the accelerated decline of working age population.

Visit the website: <https://link.europa.eu/bRGnwK>