

Demography driven resilient societies:
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH, SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION

3rd Forum of the OECD Crete Centre on Population Dynamics

Title: Demography driven resilient societies: sustainable growth, social and territorial cohesion

The demographic transition has wide-ranging ramifications for economies and societies, as population ageing, shifting fertility patterns, increasing longevity, and uneven regional population dynamics interact in complex ways. These trends reshape labour markets by influencing workforce size and productivity, while also contributing to evolving intergenerational inequalities in income, wealth, and opportunities, with implications for social cohesion. They place increasing pressure on housing systems and amplify spatial disparities, as some regions face ageing and depopulation. At the same time, migration is recognised as an immediate solution against demographic challenges, calling for the reconciliation of public perception with demographic reality. Together, these developments highlight the intricate links between demographic shifts, economic sustainability, and social and territorial cohesion. Bringing these perspectives together, the conference provides a platform for policymakers, academics, and experts to exchange insights and reflect on policy responses that support sustainable and inclusive development.

DRAFT AGENDA

Dates: 9-10 November 2026

DAY 1

11.00 – 11.30	**Registration and snacks**
11.30 – 11.45	**Welcome remarks** • **Antigone Zorbas,** Delphi Economic Forum • **Aris Alexopoulos,** Head of the Crete Centre on Population Dynamics • **Panagiotis Simandirakis**, Mayor of Chania • **Sevi Voloudaki**, Deputy Minister of Migration, Hellenic Republic • **Stavros Arnaoutakis**, Governor of Crete
11.45 – 12.45	**Opening Session: Rethinking Economic and Social Cohesion through Demographic Resilience** **Keynote address: Mathias Cormann**, OECD Secretary General (recorded video message) **Opening remarks: Asa Johansson,** Director, Policy and Research Branch, Economics Department, OECD **Keynote speeches:** • **Claudia Serrano,** Former Minister of Labour, Chile • **Subu Subramanian,** Professor of Population Health and Geography, Harvard University

12.45 – 13:00	**Coffee break**
13.00 – 14.00	**Session 1: What is driving the birth deficit, and can policy fix it?** *Fertility rates have fallen across the OECD since 1970 when the Total Fertility Rate was 2.8 per woman to an average of 1.5 in 2022 across the OECD countries, well below the replacement rate. This fuels concerns about long-term demographics, economic and fiscal implications, such as a rapid ageing of society, shrinking labour force participation and pressure on public finances. OECD analyses illustrate that factors affecting fertility trends include both macro and micro factors, such as labour market conditions, housing costs, tax/benefits systems and family policies, but also changing gender roles and attitudes towards family formation. This panel will discuss the drivers of fertility decisions and policies to address this challenge.* **Setting the Scene: Sandrine Cazes,** Senior Economist, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social affairs, OECD **Chair: Maria Gavouneli,** Professor of International Law, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, President of the Greek National Commission for Human Rights **Panellists:** ● **Kyung Taek Bae,** Director General of Presidential Committee on Population Policy (online participation) ● **Konstantinos Gloumis-Atsalakis**, Secretary General for Demographic and Housing Policy, Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family, Hellenic Republic (online participation) ● **Letizia Mencarini,** Professor of Demography, Bocconi University, Department of Social and Political Sciences ● **Serdar Polat,** Senior Economist, Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Türkiye
14.00 – 14.30	**Coffee break/ Light lunch**
14.30 – 15.30	**Session 2: Population Ageing and Housing Markets: Accessibility, Market Pressures and Policy Implications** *The session examines how population ageing is reshaping housing demand across OECD countries, shifting the type, location and quality of housing needed, as older households increasingly require accessible, service-connected homes to age in place. These shifts carry implications for housing affordability, residential mobility, housing wealth, investment and aggregate demand, making it essential to factor ageing to broader policy design going forward. Key policy levers include adapting the existing housing stock, expanding the supply of age-appropriate housing, improving housing finance options for older households and closely connecting provided infrastructure and public services to support ageing in place.* **Setting the Scene: Vivian Koutsogeorgopoulou,** Senior Economist, Structural Policy and Research Division, Crete Centre, Economics Department, OECD **Keynote speaker**: **Akis Skertsos,** Minister of State Responsible for the Coordination of Government Policies, Hellenic Republic **Chair: Sofia Tsellou,** Economic Advisor at Council of Economic Advisors, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Hellenic Republic. **Panellists:** ● **Dimitris Georgarakos**, Senior Lead Economist, European Central Bank (online participation) ● **Caroline Knebel-Seitz**, Researcher in the Pensions and Sustainable Financial Markets research unit at the ZEW Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research ● **Dimitris Malliaropoulos,** Professor of Finance at the Department of Banking and Financial Management, University of Piraeus; Economic Advisor, Bank of Greece (online participation) ● **Filiz Ünsal,** Deputy Director, Policy and Research Branch, Economics Department, OECD (online participation)
15.30 -15.45	**Closing of the first day**



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DAY 2

09.15 – 09.30	**Welcome coffee**
09.30 – 10.30	**Session 1. Labour Shortages, Longevity Readiness and Technological Change** *Despite progress in past decades, employment rates start to decline from the age of 50, dropping sharply after the age of 60. Technological progress is also changing the world of work, sometimes leading to labour shortages. There are fewer physically demanding jobs, and more roles reward experience, offering workers greater opportunities to remain productive for longer. To take advantage of these opportunities, it is crucial to support older workers in maintaining and adapting their skills. The OECD Longevity Readiness Tool helps firms implement targeted actions to improve retention, productivity and long-term resilience. This session will explore how population ageing and technological progress affect labour markets, and how the resulting challenges can be addressed.* **Setting the Scene: Maciej Lis,** Social Policy Economist, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social affairs, OECD **Chair: George Pagoulatos**, Ambassador of Greece to the OECD **Niki Kerameus**, Minister of Employment, Hellenic Republic (recorded message) **Panellists:** • **Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak,** Vice-Rector for Research and Director of the Institute of Statistics and Demography, SGH Warsaw School of Economics • **Evangelos Dioikitopoulos**, Associate Professor of Economics & Director of the Research Centre, Athens University of Economics and Business • **Mette Kierkgaard**, former Minister for Senior Citizens, Denmark • **Pedro Martins,** Professor at Nova School of Business and Economics & Director of the Economics for Policy Knowledge Centre, Carcavelos, Portugal (online participation)
10.30 – 11.30	**Session 2: Population Ageing and Depopulation: Implications for Regional Cohesion** *Many OECD countries are experiencing ageing and population decline, with significant differences across regions. These trends contribute to labour shortages, weaken growth capacity, and place pressure on public services, exacerbating existing disparities between regions. If left unaddressed, they can create a vicious cycle in which population loss leads to weaker services and reduced investment, further accelerating decline and undermining social cohesion. This panel will explore the implications of ageing and depopulation for regional development and cohesion, and discuss policy responses that can support sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities.* **Setting the scene: Nadim Ahmad,** Deputy Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, OECD **Chair: Aris Alexopoulos,** Head of the Crete Centre on Population Dynamics **Panellists:** • **Thanasis Kontogeorgis**, Deputy Minister to the Prime Minister, Presidency of the Government, Hellenic Republic (online participation)

	• **Themis Christophidou**, Director-General of the European Commission's Regional and Urban Policy • **Ismini Papakirillou**, Chief Executive Officer of Hellenic Development Bank • **Panayotis Simandirakis**, Mayor of Chania
11.30 – 11.45	**Coffee break**
11.45 – 12.45	**Session 3. Migration Policies in Ageing Societies: Bridging Demographic Reality and Public Perception** *Migration plays a critical role in the demographic dynamics of most OECD countries. In the EU natural change of the population is negative since 2012, meaning that positive net migration is the main engine for population growth. In a context of rapidly declining youth cohorts and increasing duration of studies the phenomenon is even more marked when it comes to labour force growth. International migration is however a hotly debated issue in most OECD countries and the role it will play in addressing future labour and skills shortages should be considered in the broader context of life-long learning and activation policies. This panel will explore recent trends and policy options linking labour needs, international migration and social cohesion.* **Setting the Scene: Cem Ozguzel**, Economist, Structural Policy and Research Division, Crete Centre, Economics Department, OECD **Chair: Jean-Christophe Dumont,** Head, International Migration Division, Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD **Sevi Voloudaki**, Deputy Minister of Migration, Hellenic Republic (recorded message) **Panellists:** • **Ambassador Abdelmohsen Elshafei**, Deputy Assistant Minister for Labour Migration, Egypt • **Gunilla Fincke**, Director-General at the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; OECD WPM Chair (online participation) • **Dimitris Keridis**, Member of the Parliament, Former Minister of Migration, Hellenic Republic (online participation) • **Natalia Popova,** Labour Economist, Labour Migration Branch, International Labour Organization
12.45	**Concluding remarks and closing of the conference**