

### Country profile:

# The rights and wellbeing of older persons in Egypt

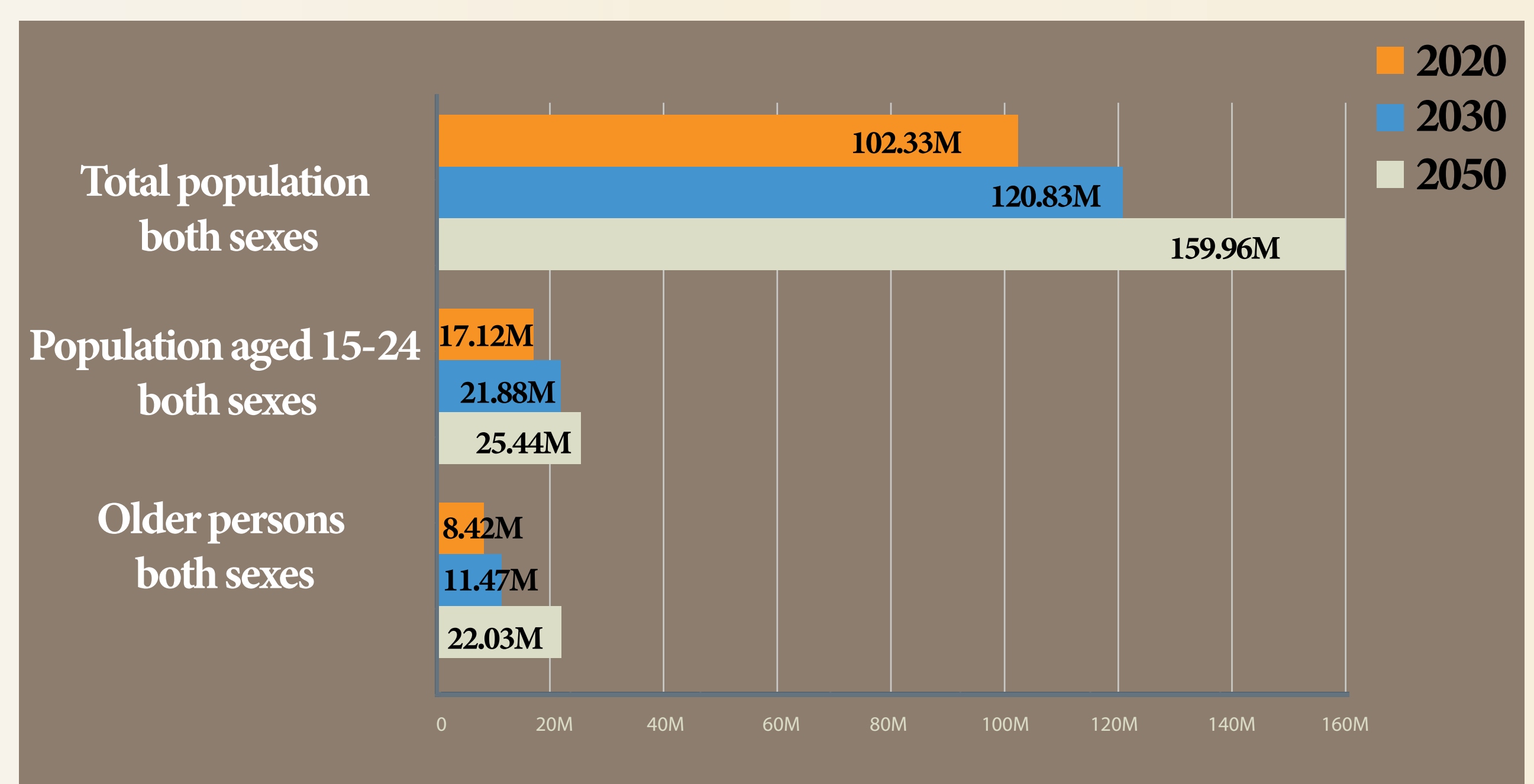
This infographic is part of the set of country profiles on ageing across the Arab region. Drawing on the latest openly available data from 2015 - 2020, it highlights the situation of older women and men<sup>1</sup> in relation to income, health, education, autonomy and safety, and how national systems and national strategies on ageing address their needs and their rights in these areas. These country profiles aim to help examine the progress towards older persons' inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as to identify opportunities to strengthen national strategies and data.<sup>2</sup>



## GENERAL CONTEXT

### Number and proportion of older and younger persons, 2020 - 2050<sup>3 i</sup>

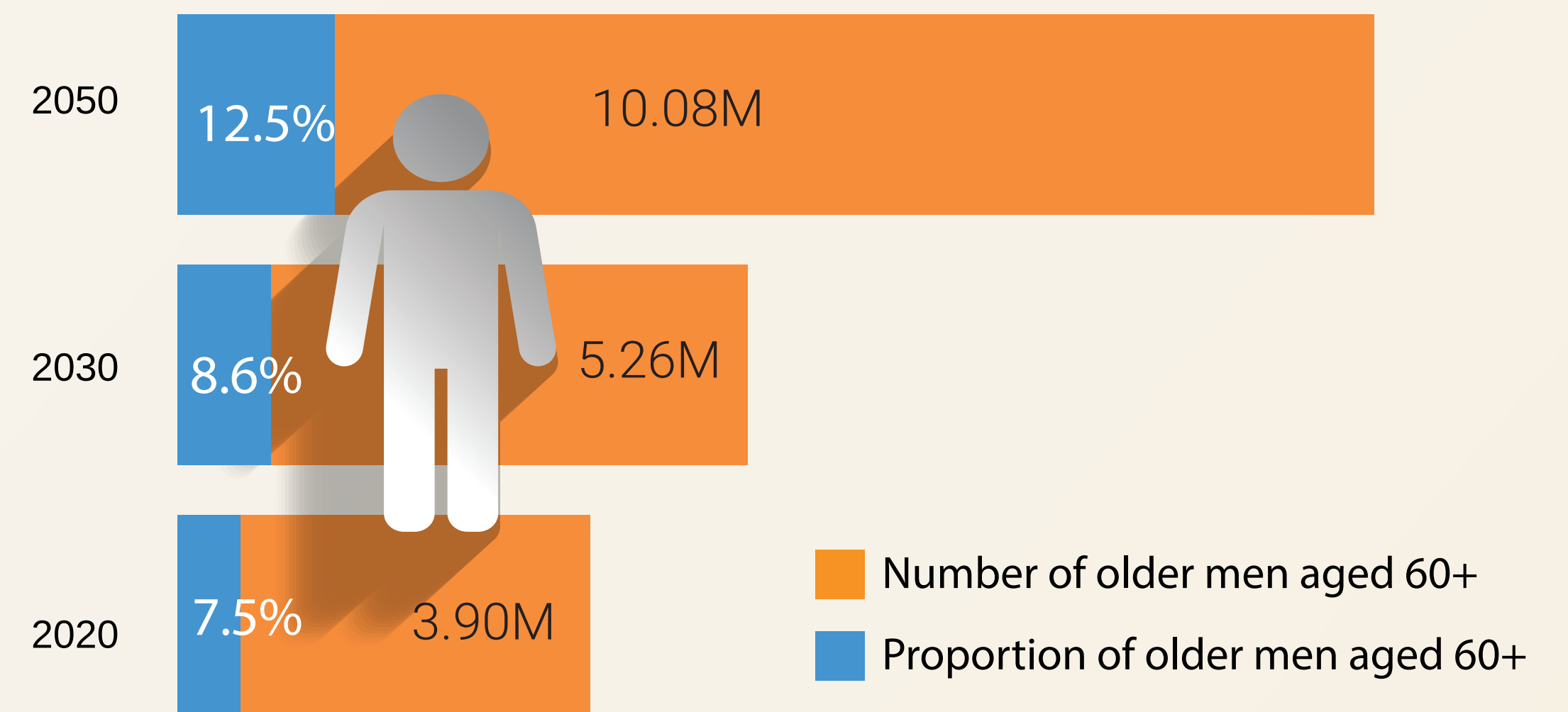
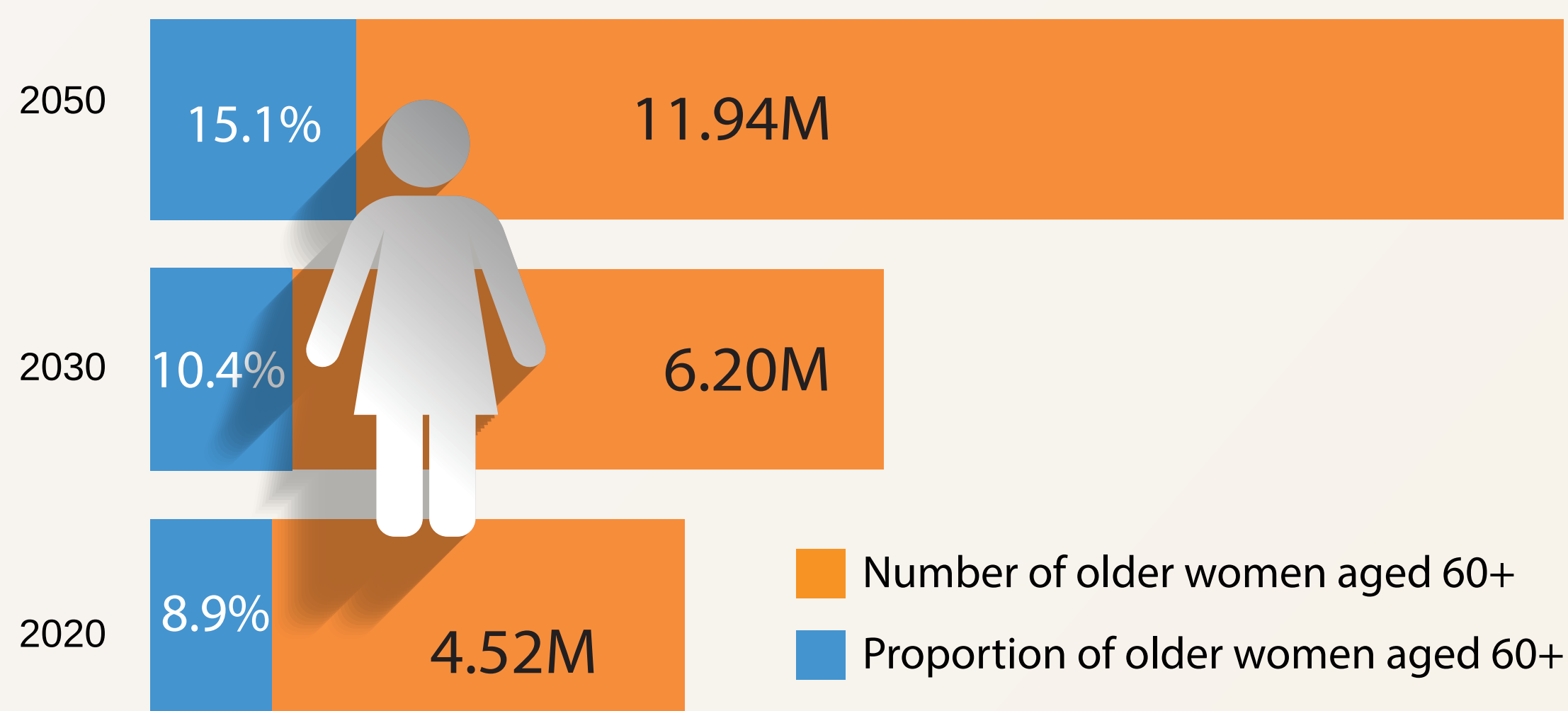
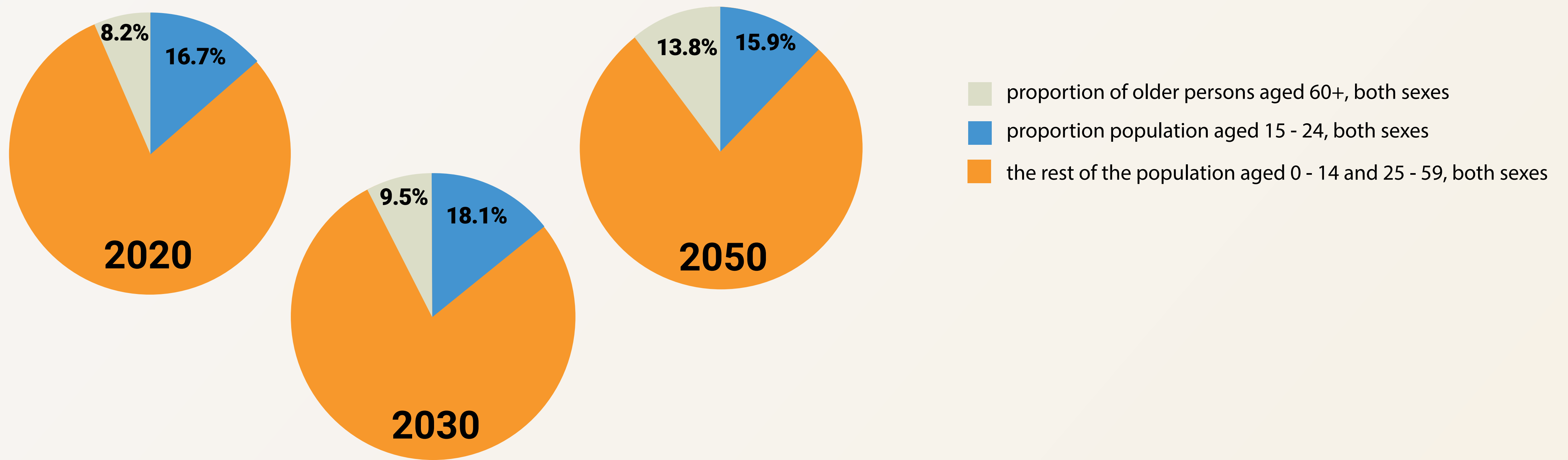
Egypt is going through a demographic transition as the number of persons aged 60+ is expected to more than double between 2020 - 2050 from 8.4 million (8% of the total population) to 22 million (14%). Over the same period, the number of persons aged 15 - 24 will increase 1.5 times.



<sup>1</sup> For statistical purposes, 'older person' is defined as an individual aged 60 and over.

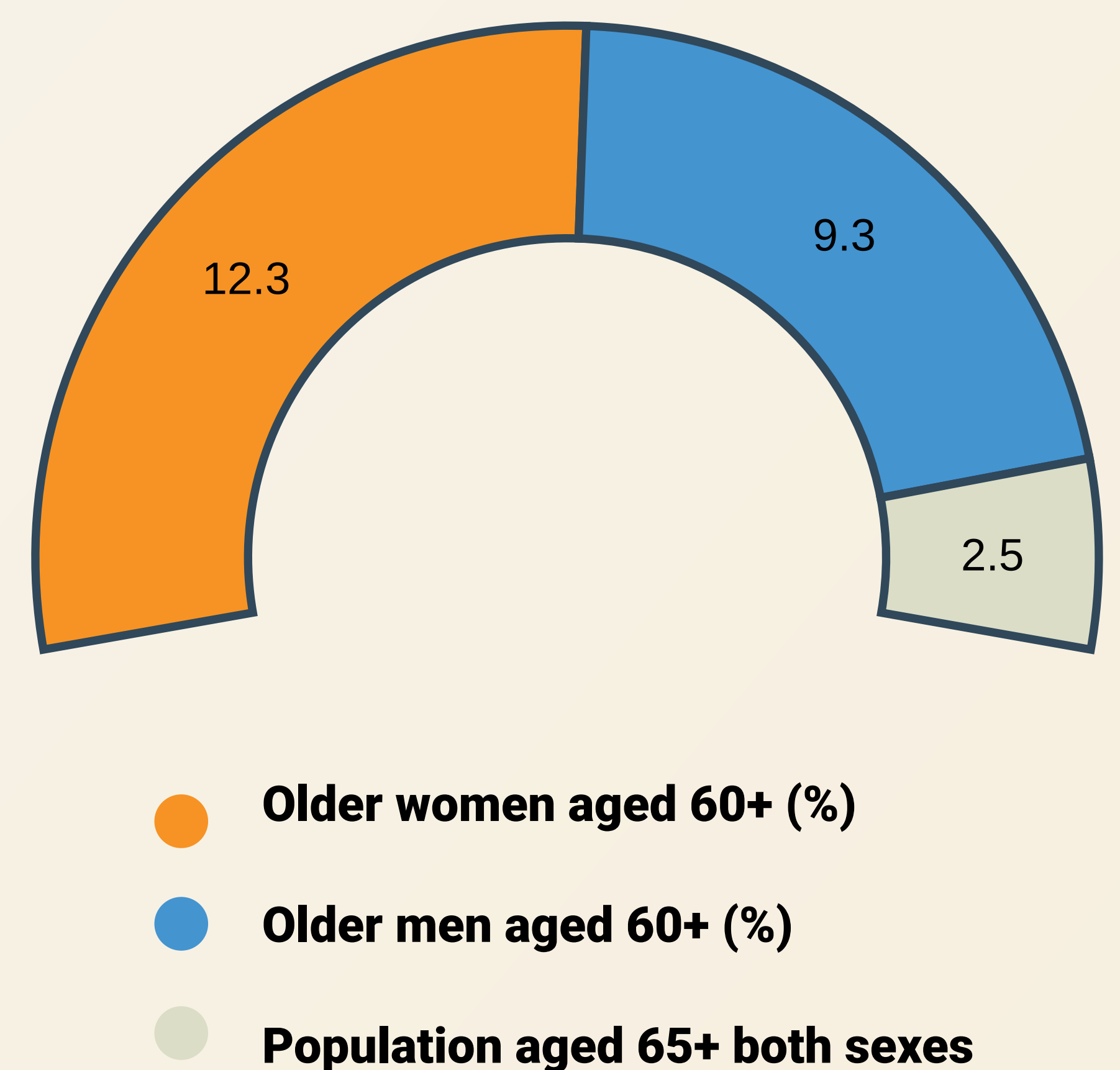
<sup>2</sup> The profiles were prepared by HelpAge International. The profiles do not reflect the views of UNFPA and any errors are attributed to the researchers.

<sup>3</sup> Proportion of older women (men) is defined as the percentage of women (men) aged 60 and over of the women (men) of all ages. Throughout the profile some of the indicators are expressed as 'proportion of older persons/women/men'. Such indicators should be interpreted as a percentage of persons/women/men aged 60 and over of the respected population group, unless expressed otherwise. For example, '9.3% of older men have a disability' means that of all men aged 60 and over 9.3 per cent have a disability.



## Proportion of older persons with disabilities<sup>ii</sup>

Disability rates increase with age as 12% of women and 9% of men aged 60 and over have limited functional ability compared with 3% of the population aged 5 and older. To ensure every person is able to lead an independent and dignified life at any age, and their communities benefit from the demographic dividend,<sup>4</sup> national policies and systems across all sectors must address the wellbeing and rights of individuals across the life course.<sup>5</sup>



Existence of national strategy on ageing <sup>iii</sup> **YES**  
 Existence of national legislation and enforcement strategy against age-based discrimination <sup>iv</sup> **NO**

<sup>4</sup> The demographic dividend is the economic growth resulting from the number of persons in employment exceeding the number of persons outside of the labour market. Demographic dividend, <https://arabstates.unfpa.org/en/topics/demographic-dividend-6>

<sup>5</sup> Life course approach to policy recognises that individuals' roles, abilities, and needs are shaped by positive and negative experiences, and as we age these experiences accumulate. To mitigate immediate and long-term impacts of disadvantages, policies must consider how intersecting identities and varying forms of discrimination experienced across the life course can lead to individual 'being left behind'. Life course approach to ageing, <https://www.helpage.org/what-we-do/life-course-approach-to-ageing/>

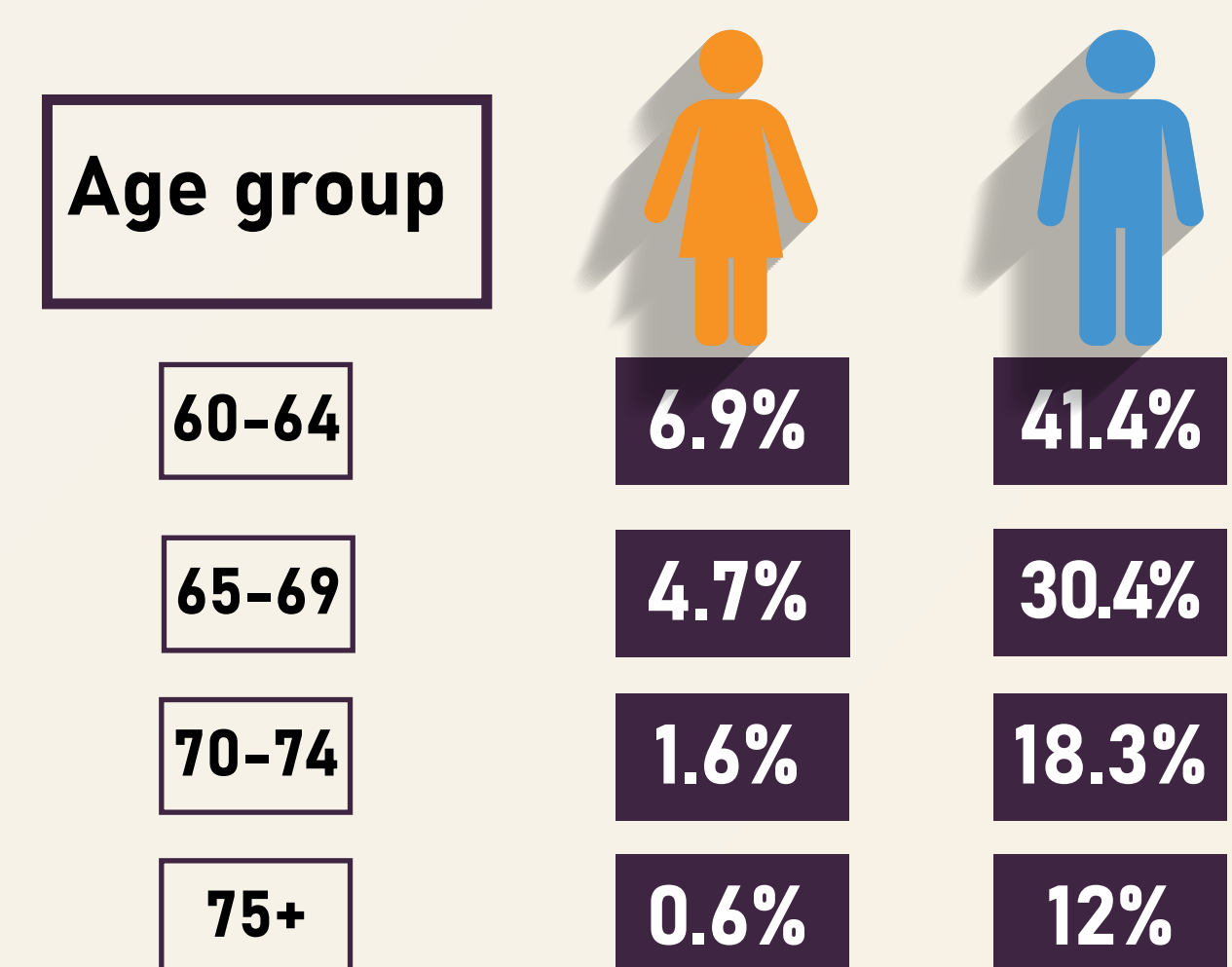
# THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL PROTECTION, SOCIAL SECURITY, AND WORK

17% of older women and 18% of older men live in poverty, and older persons, primarily men, continue to work past the retirement age into their late seventies. The Constitution (Article 83) and the National Strategy on Ageing 2015 recognise an older person's right to social protection and pension so they can lead independent and dignified lives on an equal basis with others. However, only 38% of older adults have a pension, and the National Strategy does not acknowledge older persons' right to work when in receipt of a pension.

## How many older persons live in poverty?<sup>v</sup>



## Who works in older age?<sup>vi</sup>



## How national systems and policies address the needs and the rights of older persons

### Pension systems provide income security for all older persons<sup>vii</sup>



### National strategy on ageing addresses<sup>viii</sup>

- Social protection and social security systems which provide universal coverage **YES**
- Social protection and social security measures that are of a high enough value, quantity and quality, and for the full period of life<sup>ix</sup> **Partial (does not define what a 'suitable' income is for)**
- Freedom from discrimination on the basis of age and other grounds in all matters related to employment<sup>x</sup> **NO**
- Right to work when receiving a pension **NO**

<sup>6</sup> N.i. - data or information is not available

## THE RIGHT TO AUTONOMY, EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Persons aged 65 and older are twice as likely to feel they have no control over their lives than the general population. This data should be considered with caution due to the small sample size. The National Strategy on Ageing 2015 does not address the right of older women and men to autonomy and legal capacity to make decisions over all aspects of their lives.

How much freedom of choice and control do older persons feel they have over their life?<sup>xi</sup>

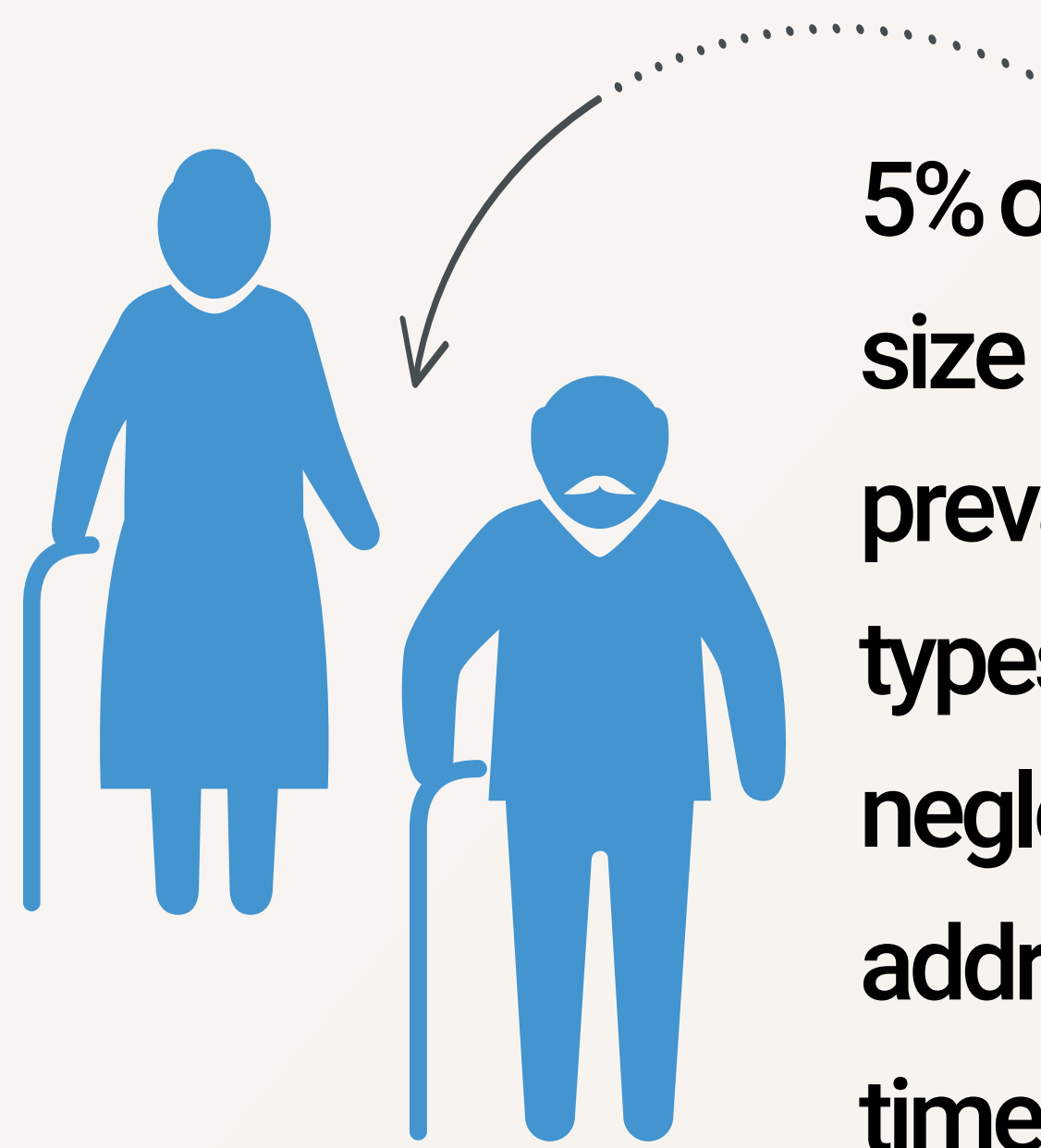
	Older persons, both sexes (%)	Population aged 16+ both sexes (%)
	+65	+16
None at all	7.5	3.8
Limited	7.5	11.5
Moderate	47.5	48.1
High	35.0	34.7
Don't know	2.5	1.8

How national systems and policies address the needs and the rights of older persons

National strategy on ageing addresses:

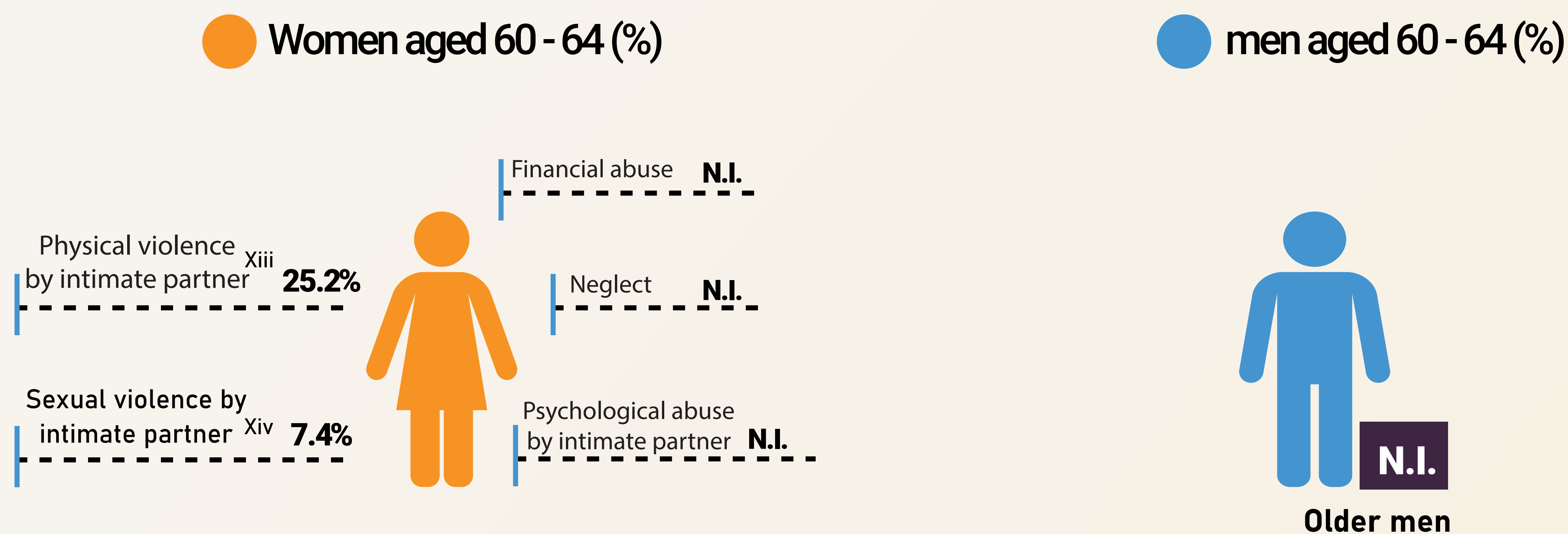
- Older persons' autonomy and independence over all aspects of their lives **NO**
- Enjoyment of legal capacity to make decisions, to determine life plans and to lead autonomous and independent lives **NO**

# THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND NEGLECT



5% of older persons have been a victim of crime<sup>xii</sup>. This evidence is based on the small sample size and should be treated with caution. In private settings, psychological abuse is the most prevalent type of abuse, registered in 34% of women aged 60 - 64 in 2015. Evidence on other types of abuses, e.g. financial and neglect, as well as experiences of violence, abuse and neglect by older men is not available. The National Strategy on Ageing 2015 does not address all forms of violence, abuse and neglect, and production and dissemination of timely and disaggregated statistics on this topic.

## How many older persons have experienced violence, abuse or neglect?



## How national systems and policies address the needs and rights of older persons

### National strategy on ageing addresses:

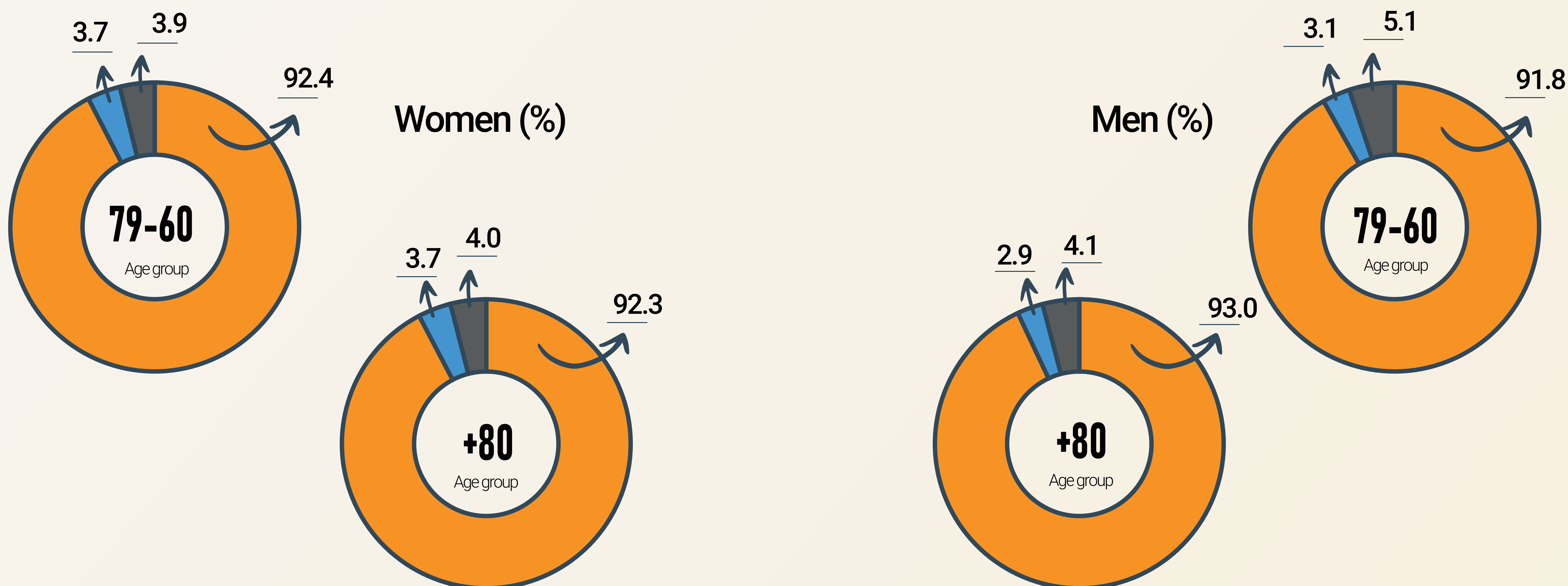
- All forms of violence, abuse and neglect in public and private settings **NO**
- Regular collection, analysis, utilisation and public dissemination of disaggregated information and statistics on all forms of violence, abuse and neglect **NO**

# THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

Non-communicable diseases account for more than 90% of years lived with disabilities among older adults. Musculoskeletal disorders, diabetes and kidney diseases, and sense organ diseases are leading causes of disability for both older women and men. The prevalence of diabetes among older persons is at least four times higher than the population average. The national health system and policies are struggling to realise older persons' right to affordable and accessible essential care, as only 16 per cent of women aged 60 - 64 have any type of health insurance, and data on health coverage among women aged 65+ or older men is not available. The National Strategy on Ageing 2015 does not include provisions for integrated health and social care or palliative care.

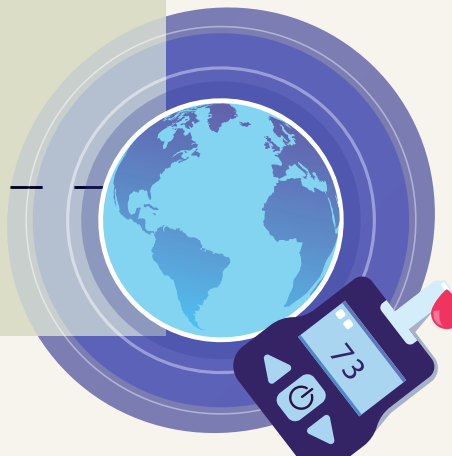
## What are the key causes of disability in older age?<sup>xv</sup>

● Non-communicable diseases    ● Communicable, maternal, neonatal, and nutritional diseases    ● Injuries



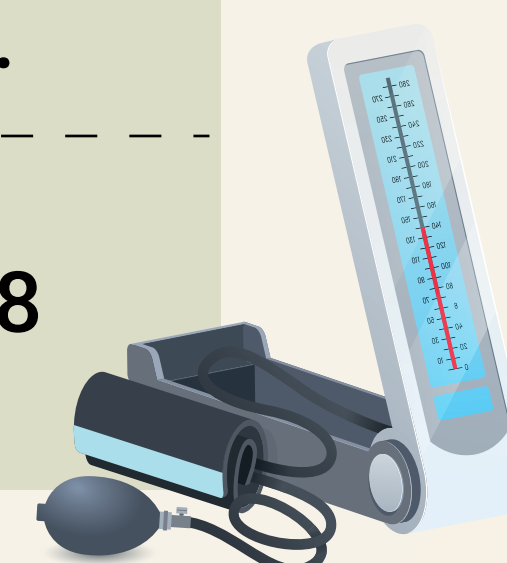
## How many older women and men have diabetes? <sup>xvi</sup>

Age group	Women (%)	Men (%)
6079-	25.5	22.6
80+	28.1	23.8
All ages	4.5	4.8



## How many older women and men have hypertension? <sup>xvii</sup>

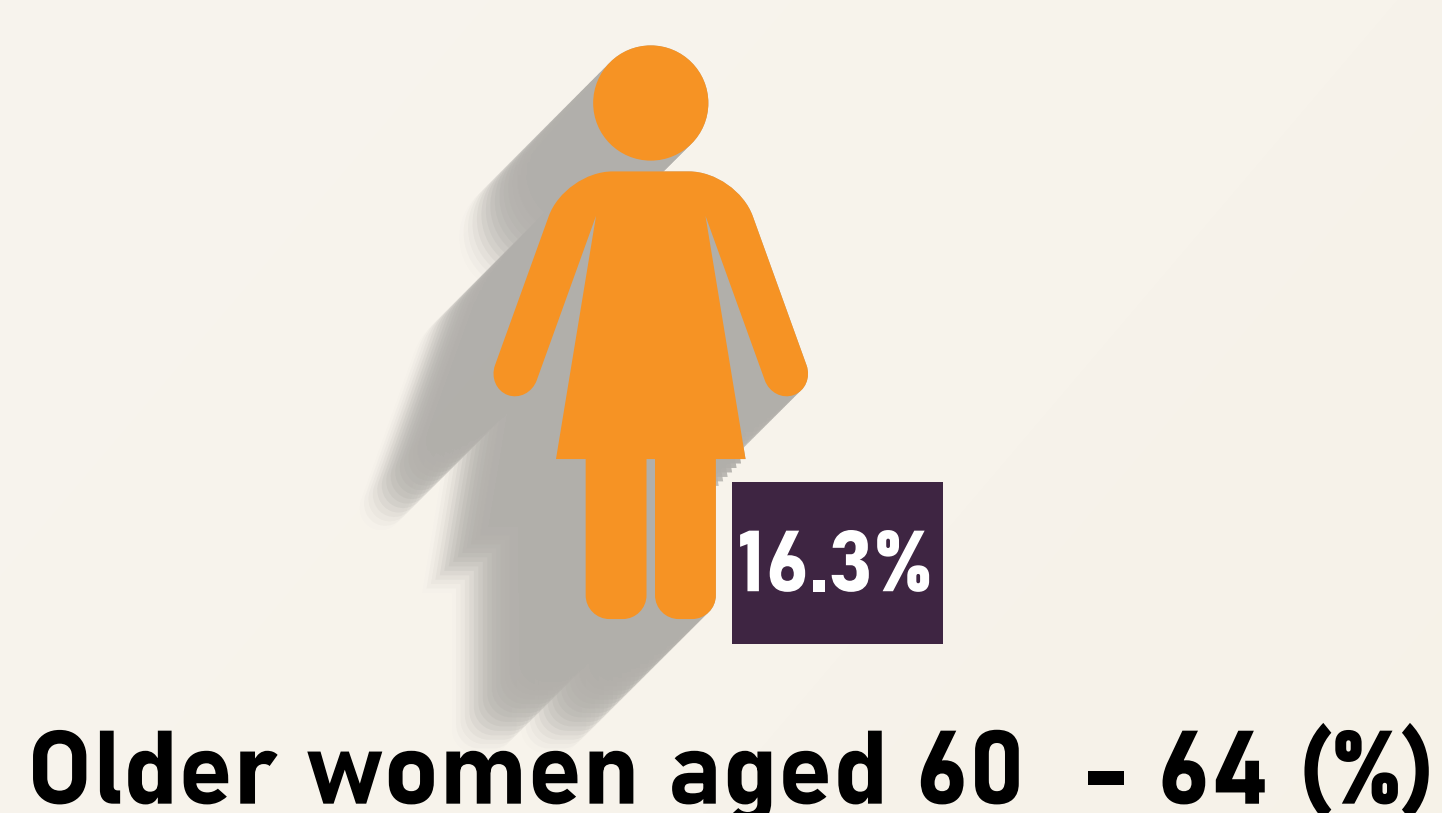
Age group	Women (%)	Men (%)
6069-	71.8	59.9
70+	n.i.	n.i.
1569-	29.2	29.8



## How national systems and policies address the needs and rights of older persons

### Health protection covers all older persons <sup>xviii</sup>

Proportion of older persons covered by any type of health insurance.



### National strategy on ageing addresses:

- Continuum of quality and appropriate physical, mental and cognitive health services available and accessible to older persons and which deliver primary, secondary and tertiary health care integrated with care and support, wherever they may reside

Partial (not include integration of health and social care)

- Holistic palliative care, including access to essential drugs and controlled medicines

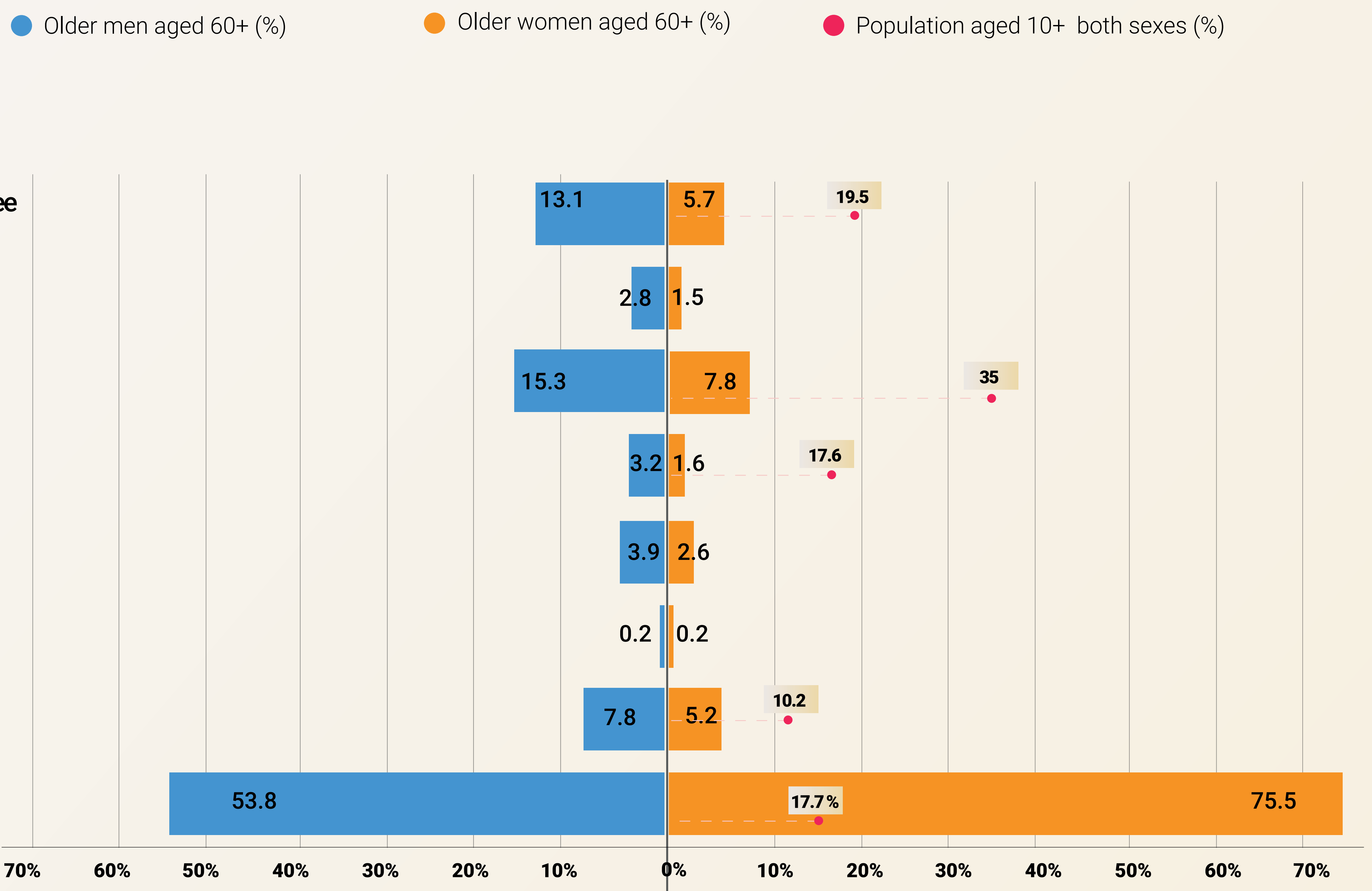
NO

# THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

76% of older women are illiterate compared with 54% of older men and 18% of the population aged 10 and older. The National Strategy on Ageing 2015 offers limited considerations on the right of these and other older women and men to education and lifelong learning opportunities, with specific gaps on adequacy, affordability and accessibility of learning opportunities.

## How many older persons have an education?<sup>xix</sup>

Educational attainment of older persons by the highest level of education completed



## How national systems and policies address the needs and rights of older persons

### National strategy on ageing addresses:

- All forms of lifelong learning, education and skill building<sup>xx</sup>

Partial (limited to preparing for retirement)

- Learning opportunities adapted to the specific needs of older persons

NO

- Lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities that are affordable and financially accessible

NO



The review of statistics published during 2015 - 2021 by the national statistical office (CAPMAS) and UN agencies shows that data on older women and men is collected across various socio-economic indicators. However, a number of barriers to better data on ageing limit our understanding of the diverse needs of older women and men, and hinders our ability to monitor progress on their rights.

- The most recent open data on health insurance coverage and educational attainment is from the 2014 Census.
- There are data gaps on violence, abuse and neglect of older women and men, old-age poverty, and the wellbeing of older persons with disabilities.
- Some surveys have upper age caps that exclude older persons from samples. For example, the survey on gender based violence excluded women aged 65 and older, while the survey on NCDs excluded women and men aged 70 and older.

In addition to concerted efforts to close data gaps, remove age caps, and provide consistent analysis and reporting of data by age, sex, and disability, there is a need for a specialised survey to build more in-depth and comprehensive evidence on ageing and the situation of older persons.

## NOTES

- i United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. Rev. 1. Excel files used: Population by broad age groups – male, population by broad age groups – female, percentage by broad age groups – male, percentage by broad age groups – female. <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/> Accessed 17 May 2021
- ii Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Population magazine 2019, results of the Census 2017. Table 10 Older people (aged 60+) with difficulties (from a lot of difficulty to cannot do at all) according to type of difficulty and age groups.
- iii The profile covers information in the National Care for Older Persons in Egypt Strategy and Action Plan until 2015. As of May 2021, the National Strategy on ageing 2020 - 2025 was drafted but not approved or readily available.
- iv The draft of the Elderly Rights Law was submitted to the Parliament on 7 March 2021. As of May 2021 the draft had not been adapted.
- v Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Report on the status of women and men in Egypt, 2017. Chapter 8, Figure 5: Percentage of people living in poverty by age. <https://censusinfo.capmas.gov.eg/Metadata-ar-v4.2/index.php/catalog/1229/download/4120> Accessed 18 May 2021
- vi Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Population magazine 2019, results of the Census 2017. Table 7 Employment rate of older people (aged 60+) by age and gender.
- vii UNDESA, the Global SDG Indicators Database, SDG 1.3.1, Proportion of population above statutory pensionable age receiving a pension, by sex (%), 2020. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/> Accessed 10 May 2021
- viii Information about the National Strategy on Ageing is from HelpAge International and UNFPA, 2020, The rights of older persons: a review of national ageing strategies in the Arab region. [https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/the\\_rights\\_of\\_older\\_persons\\_a\\_review\\_of\\_national\\_ageing\\_strategies\\_in\\_the\\_arab\\_region.pdf](https://arabstates.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/the_rights_of_older_persons_a_review_of_national_ageing_strategies_in_the_arab_region.pdf)
- ix In addition to the National Strategy on Ageing, Article 83 of the Constitution states that the State shall guarantee the health, economic, social, cultural and entertainment rights of the elderly people, and provide them with appropriate pensions to ensure decent living standards.
- x The 2014 Constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination, however age is not mentioned explicitly as a prohibited ground for discrimination.
- xi World Values Survey wave 7, 2019. Question 48. Percentage of respondents who rated their freedom of choice and control over their life on the scale 1-10, where 1 means “none at all” and 10 means “a great deal”. Authors grouped scores into the following categories: ‘Not at all’ -1; ‘Limited’ – 2, 3, 4; ‘Moderate’ – 5, 6, 7; ‘High’ – 8, 9, 10. Number of persons aged 65+ surveyed: 129. <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp> Accessed 20 April 2021
- xii World Values Survey wave 7, 2018. Q144: Have you been the victim of a crime during the past year? Sample size: persons aged 65+, both sexes = 40, <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp> Accessed 18 May 2021
- xiii Ibid.

xiv

Ibid.

xv

Global Burden of Disease Collaborative Network. Global Burden of Disease Study 2019 (GBD 2019) Results. Seattle, United States: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), 2020. Years lived with disabilities 2019. Available from <http://ghdx.healthdata.org/gbd-results-tool> Accessed 16 May 2021

xvi

Ibid. Prevalence of diabetes mellitus 2019

xvii

WHO, 2017, Egypt National STEPwise survey for noncommunicable diseases risk factors, Table 3.8.1.

xviii

UNFPA, the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, and the National Council for Women, 2016, The Egypt economic cost of gender-based violence survey (ECGBS) 2015, Table 4.4.

<https://egypt.unfpa.org/en/publications/economic-cost-gender-based-violence-survey-egypt-2015>

xix

Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Population magazine 2019. Results of the Census 2017. Table 5 Distribution of older people (aged 60+) by educational status, 2017. Table 6 Relative distribution of the population (10 years and older) according to educational status, gender and place of residence, 2017. Educational data for older people and total population might not be comparable due to differences in categories.

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This includes tertiary education, vocational training, digital and new technology-based education, adult education, self, informal recreational and community-based education, lifelong learning programmes, legal literacy, and skills training in literacy, numeracy and technological competences. HelpAge International and UNFPA (2020)

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