



HelpAge

International

Country profile:

# The rights and wellbeing of older persons in Morocco

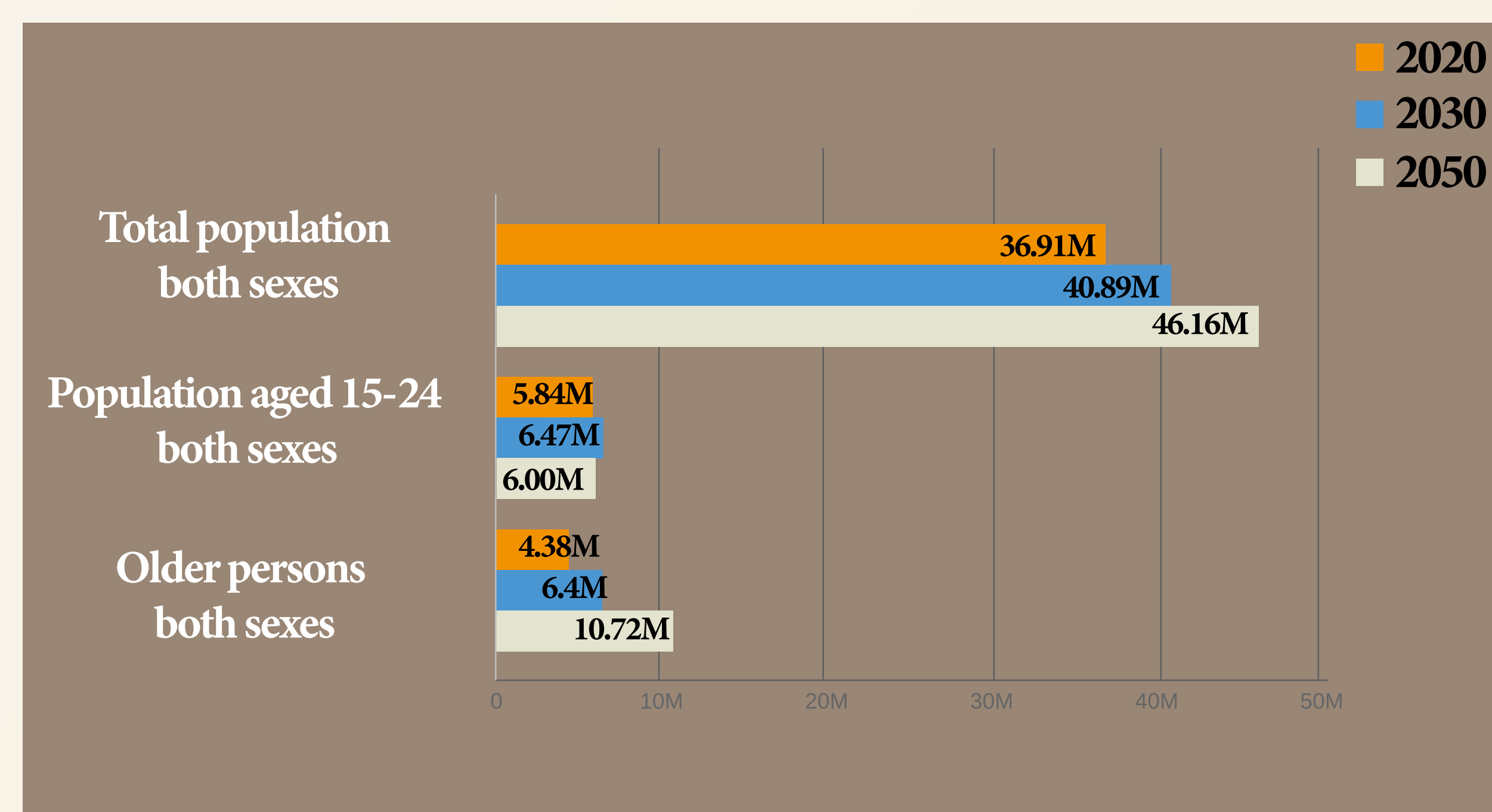
This infographic is part of the set of country profiles on ageing across the Arab region. Drawing on the latest openly available data from 2015 - 2020, it highlights the situation of older women and men<sup>1</sup> in relation to income, health, education, autonomy and safety, and how national systems 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</sup>

Morocco is going through a demographic shift as the number of persons aged 60+ is expected to more than double between 2020 - 2050 from 4.3 million (11.9 % of the total population) to 10.7 million (23.2%).



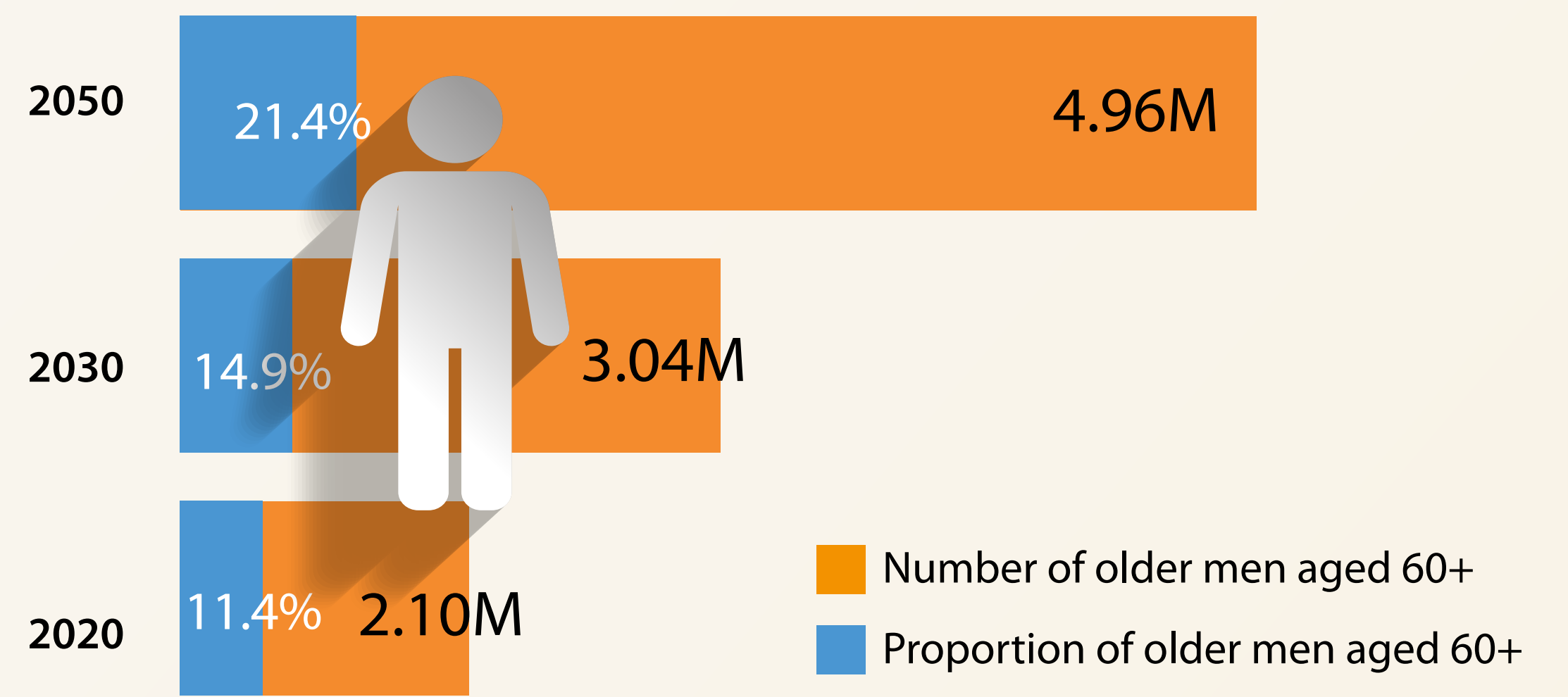
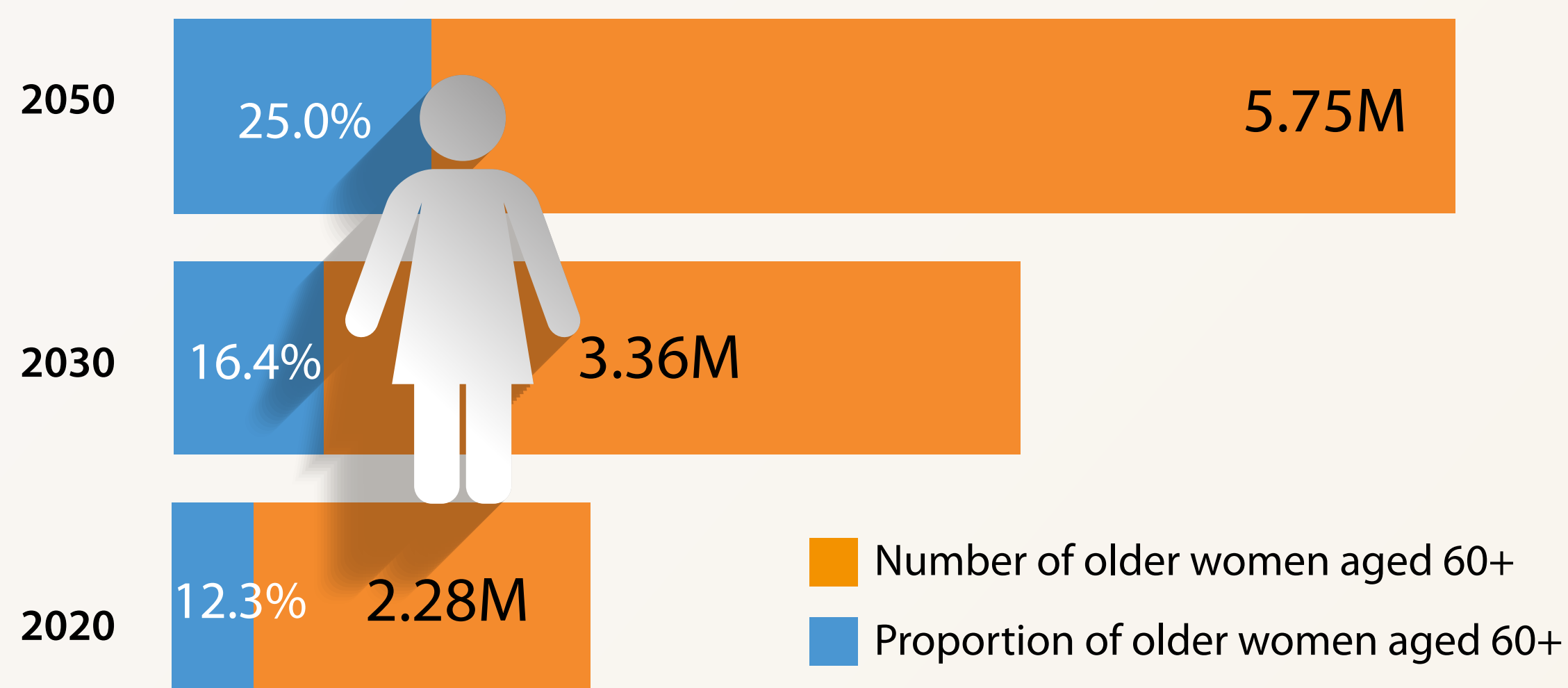
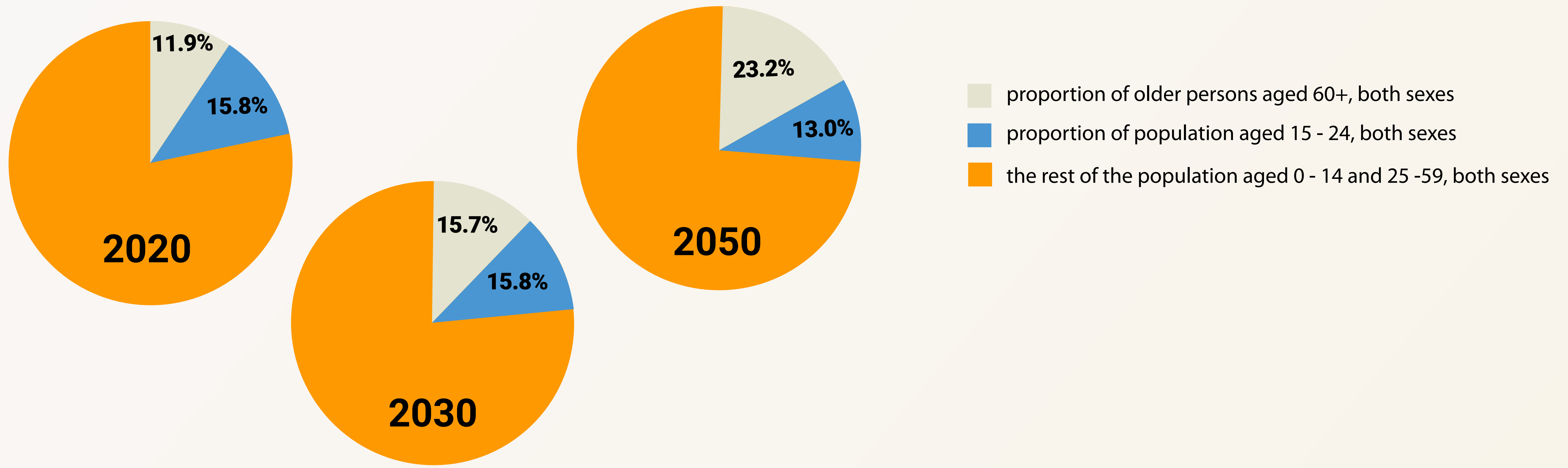
Over the same period, the number of persons aged 15 - 24 will increase by 2.6 percent.

<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.

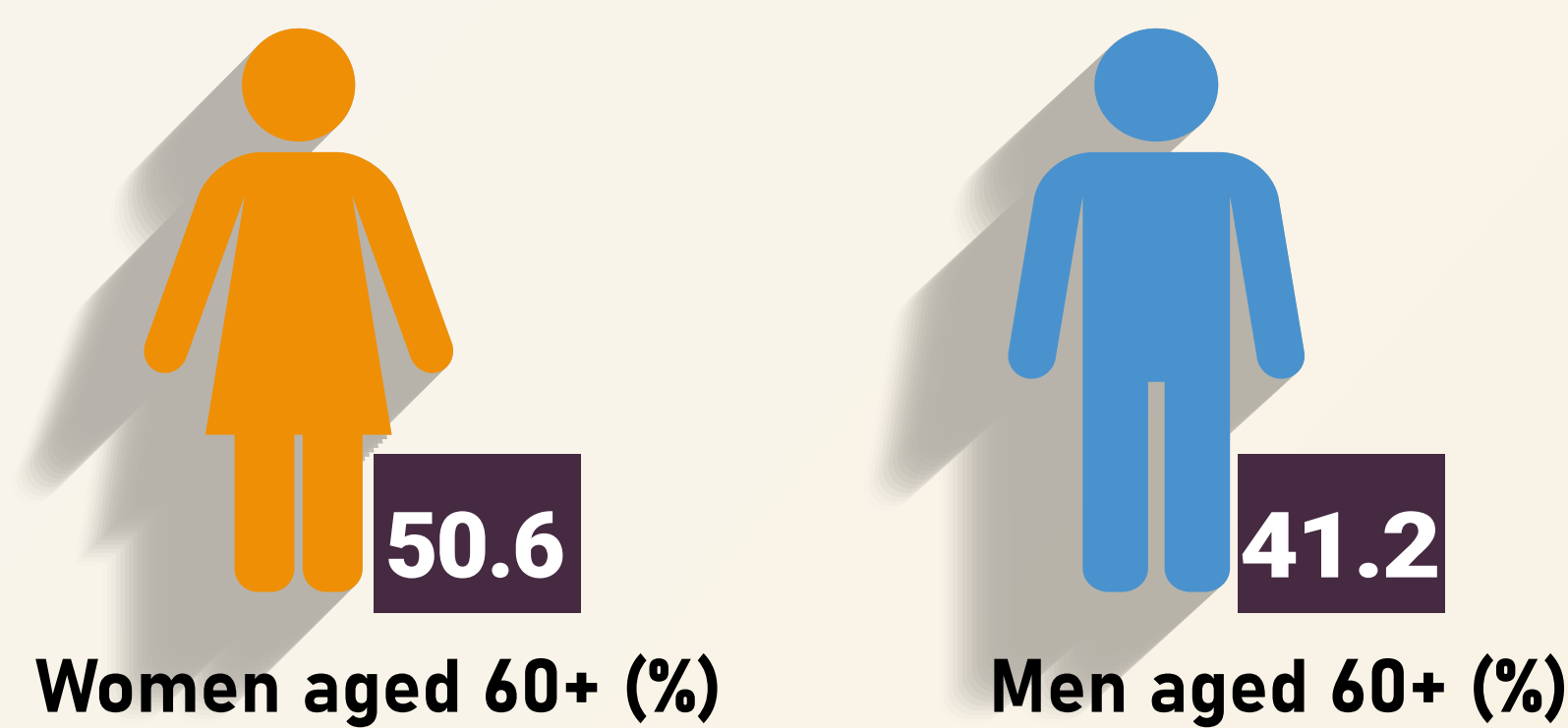




Older women are more likely to have functional difficulties than older men, as 50.6% of women aged 60+ have a disability compared with 41.2% of older men of the same age.

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>. To assess the policy response, the profile examines the Integrated public policy for the advancement of the situation of older persons by the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development.

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



Existence of national strategy on ageing<sup>iii</sup> **YES**

Existence of national legislation and enforcement strategy against age - based discrimination **N.I.<sup>6</sup>**

<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/>

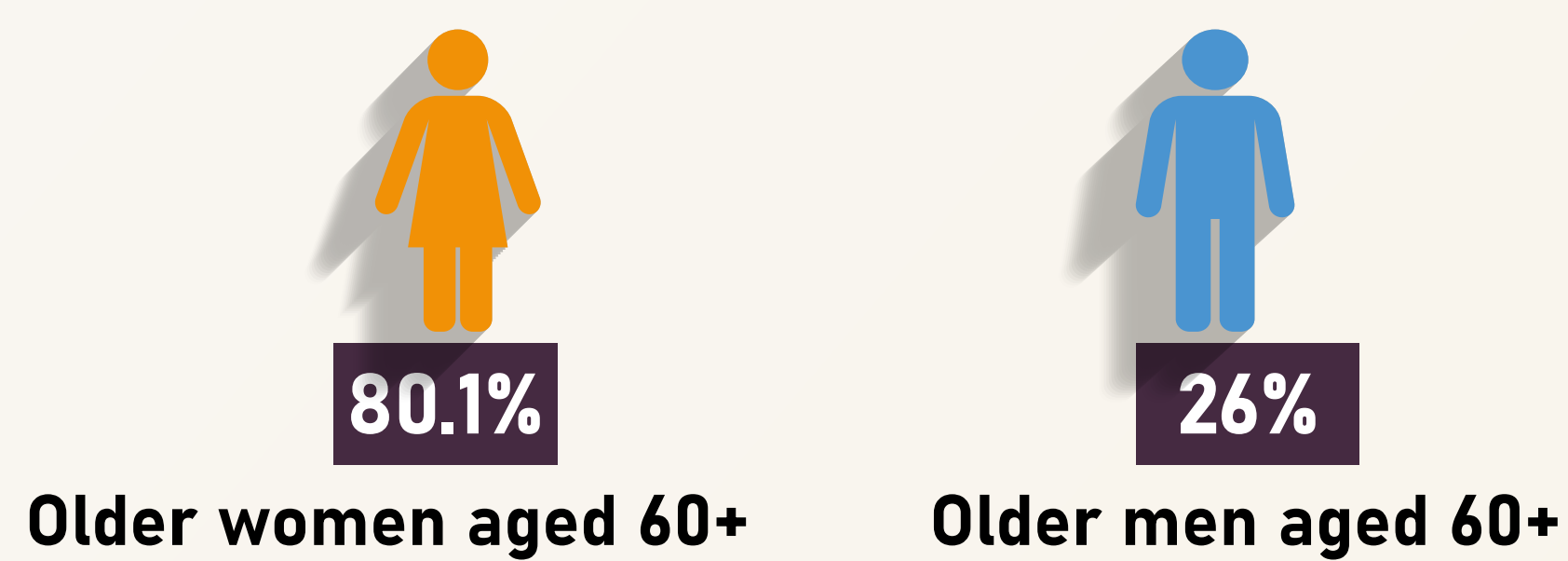
<sup>6</sup> n.i. - data or information is not available.

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

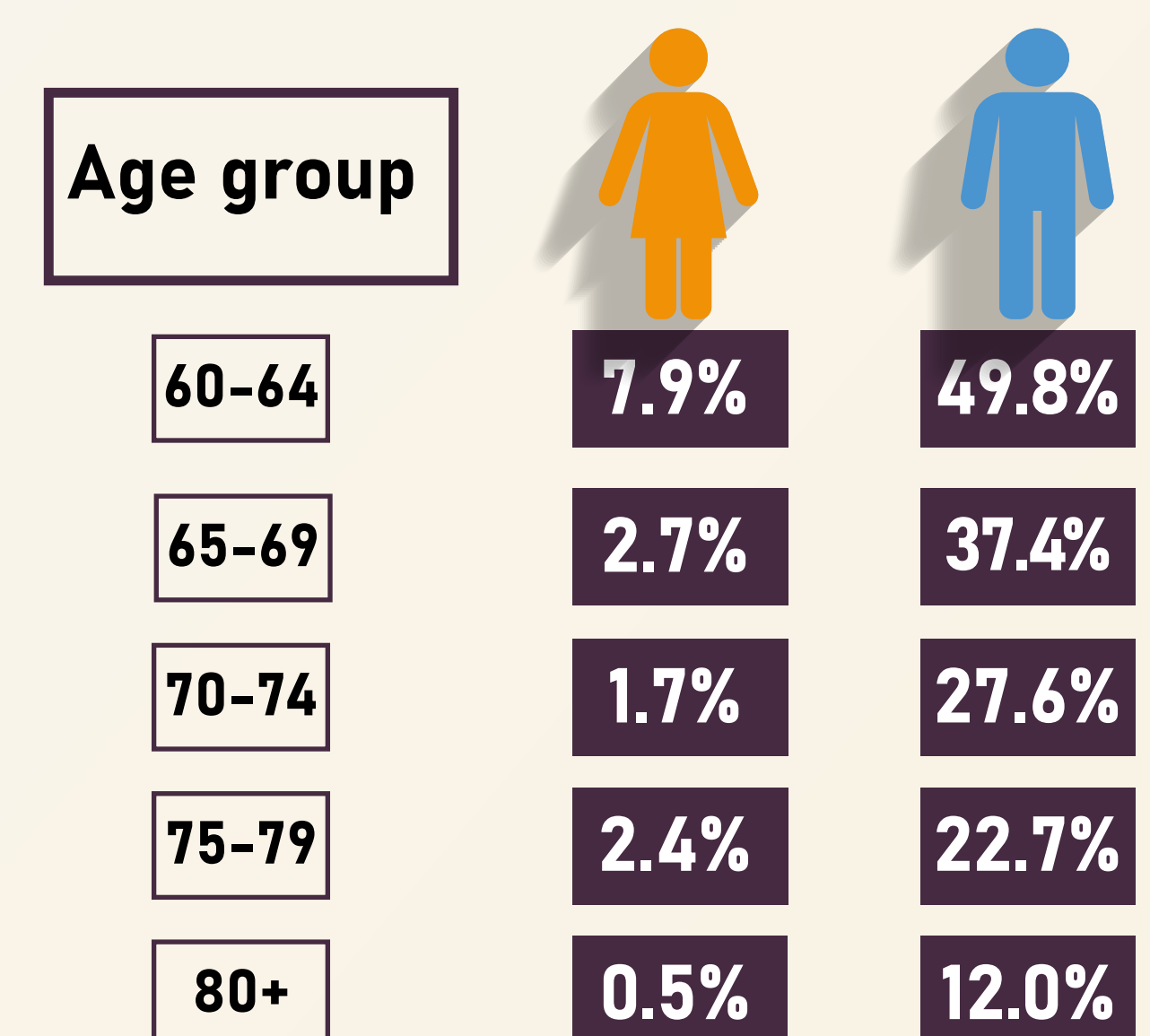
The poverty rate among older women is significantly higher than older men, as 80.1% of women aged 60+ have no income compared with 26% of men of the same age. It is estimated that only 2.1% of older women and 3% of older men received a pension in 2016. Older persons continue to work past the retirement age, as 49.8% of men and 7.9% of women aged 60 - 64 are in employment. The employment rate declines with age to 12% and 0.5% among men and women aged 80+ respectively.

The National Strategy addresses an older persons' right to social protection and sets a strategic objective for the Government to establish comprehensive and fair social protection coverage so older persons can lead independent and dignified lives on an equal basis with others. The four strategic objectives of the National Strategy focus on the poverty reduction and securing a continuous income for older persons, strengthening social assistance, provision of a minimum income for all older persons, and enabling older persons to remain in employment after retirement.

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

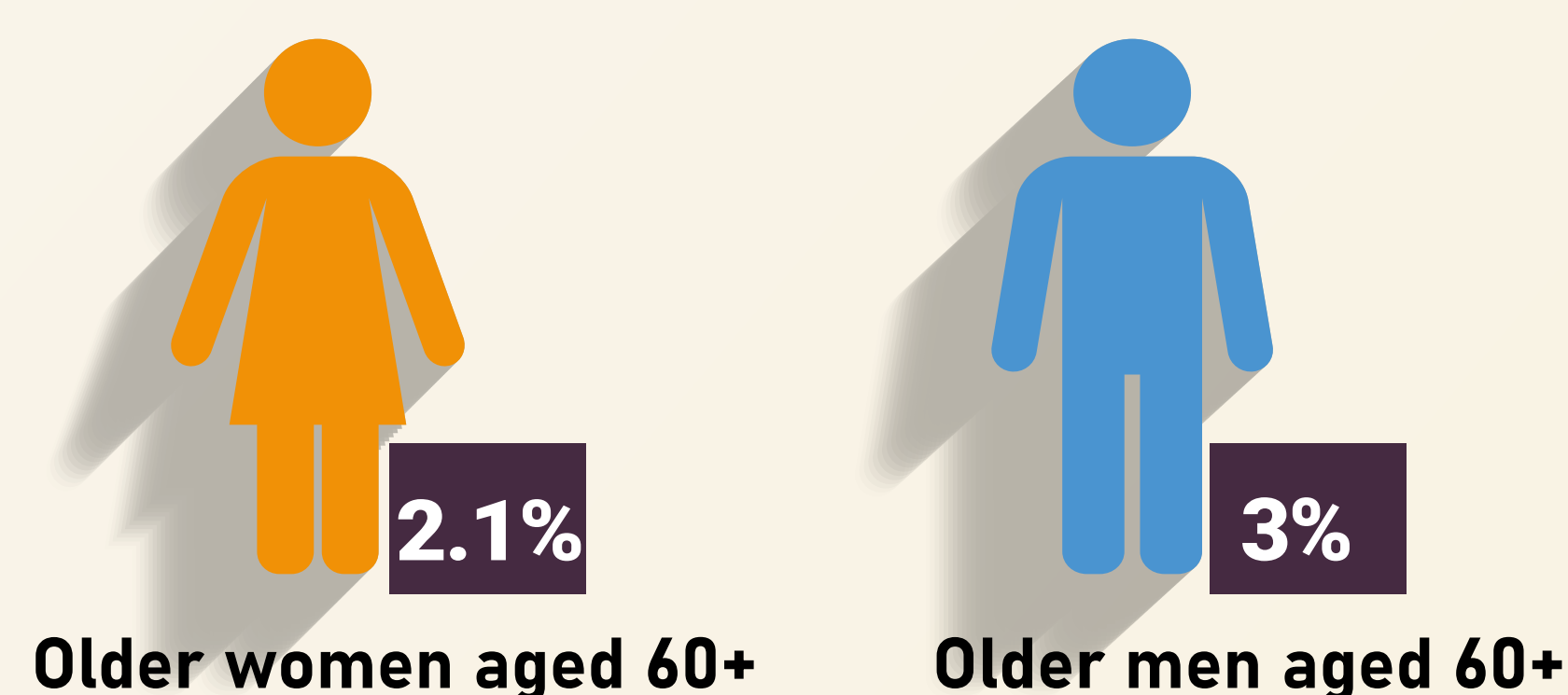


## Who works in older age?<sup>V</sup>



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

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





## National Strategy on ageing addresses:

- 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 **YES**
- Freedom from discrimination on the basis of age and other grounds in all matters related to employment **YES**
- Right to work when receiving a pension **YES**

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

Data on the ability of older women and men to make their own decisions about their finances, health, family life and other aspects of their lives is not available. While the National Strategy recognises the independence of older persons as one of its guiding principles, it does not explicitly mention their right to autonomy over all aspects of their lives or the legal capacity to make decisions.

### How much freedom of choice and control do older persons feel they have over their life?

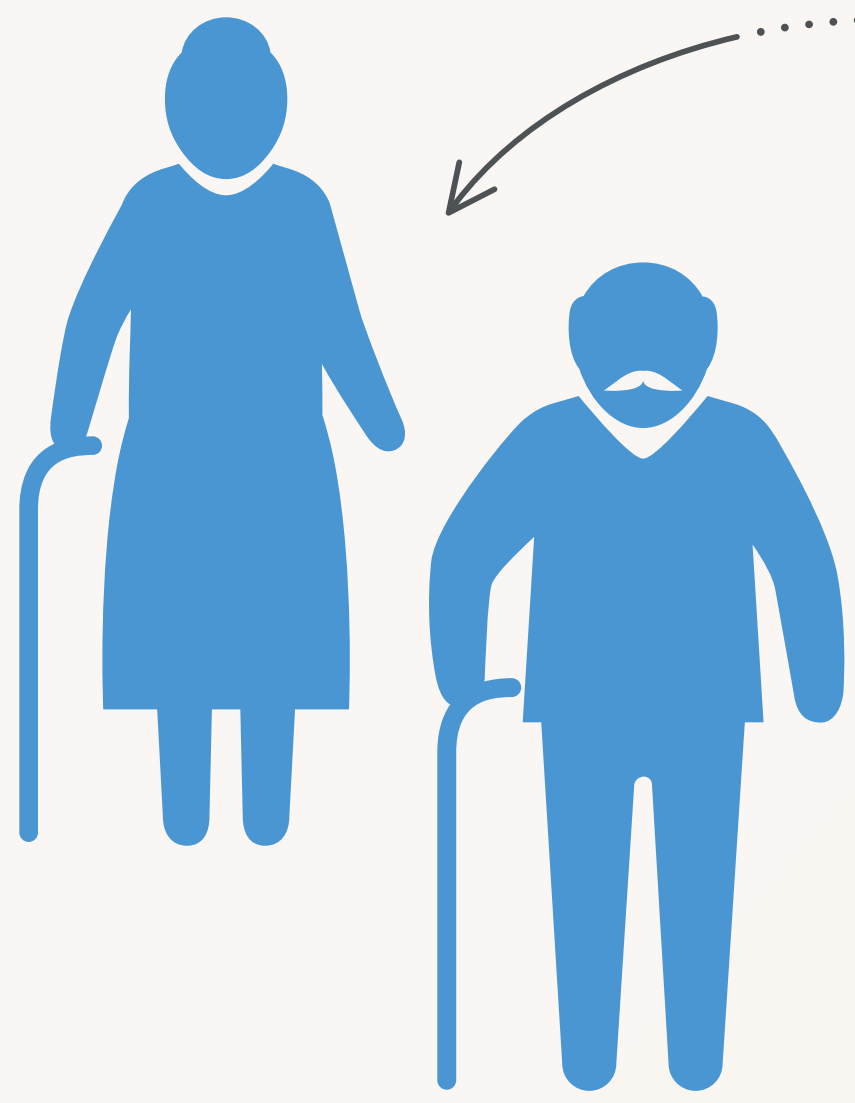


### How national systems and policies address the needs and rights of older persons

#### 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**

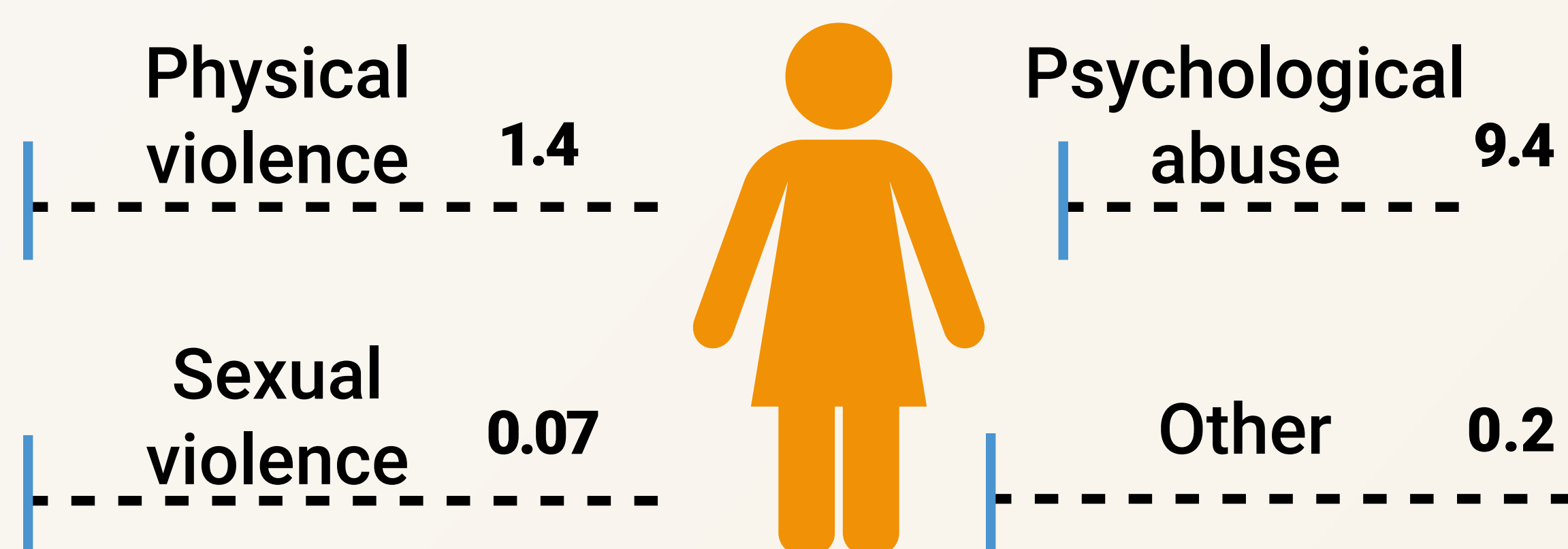
# THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND NEGLECT



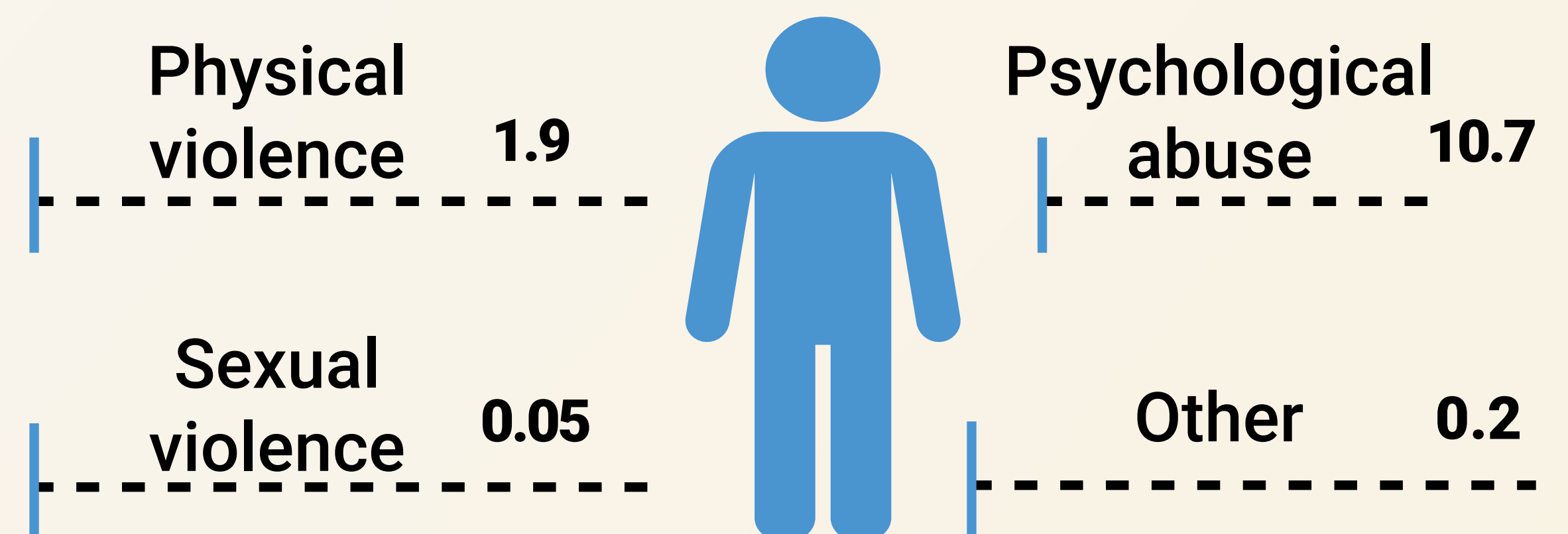
Psychological abuse is the most prevalent type of violence experienced by older persons as 9.4% of women and 10.7% of men aged 60+ reported it. The National Strategy makes a commitment to combat all forms of violence and mistreatment of older persons. While the Fifth Axis of the Strategy aims to develop and enhance information on the situation of older persons through quantitative and qualitative surveys and regular publication of thematic reports, it does not explicitly address the need for production and dissemination of timely and disaggregated statistics on violence, abuse and neglect.

## How many older persons have experienced violence, abuse or neglect? <sup>VII</sup>

women aged 60+ (%)



men aged 60+ (%)



## 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 **YES**
- Regular collection, analysis, utilisation and public dissemination of disaggregated information and statistics on all forms of violence, abuse and neglect **NO**



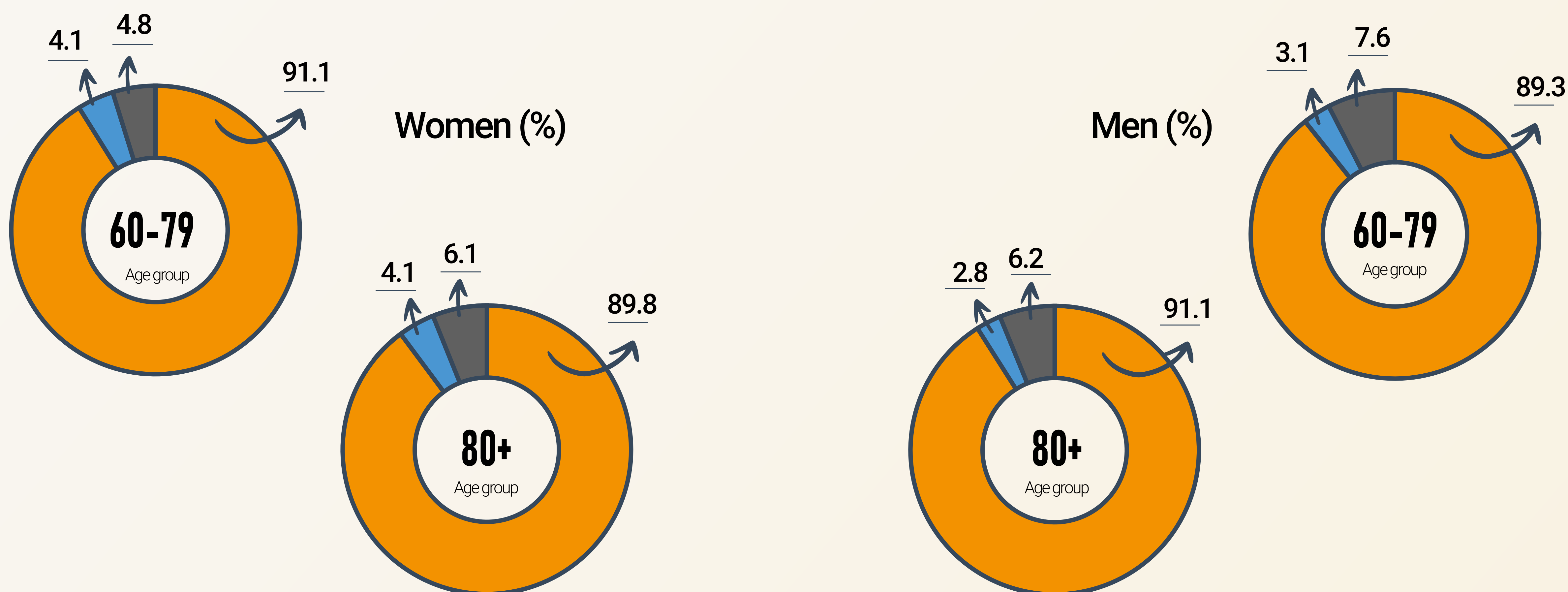
# THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

Non-communicable diseases account for more than 89% of years lived with disabilities among older persons. Diabetes and kidney diseases, and sense organ diseases are leading causes of disability for both older women and men. National data shows that older women across all age groups are more likely to have diabetes and hypertension than older men. 26.6% of women aged 60 - 69 have diabetes compared with 20% of men of the same age, while 72.9% of women aged 70+ and 64.9% of men have high blood pressure.

The National Strategy has three strategic objectives to strengthen prevention and early diagnosis of diseases, provision and development of therapeutic services, and achievement of universal health coverage. However, the National Strategy does not include provisions for integrated health and social care or palliative care. Additionally, it is estimated that only 42.2% of older women and 46.9% of older men are protected by health insurance.

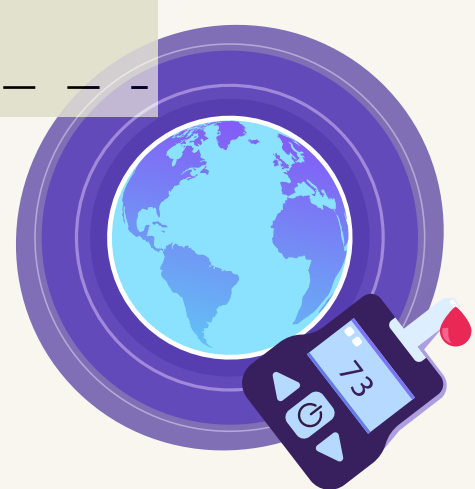
## What are the key causes of disability in older age?<sup>VIII</sup>

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



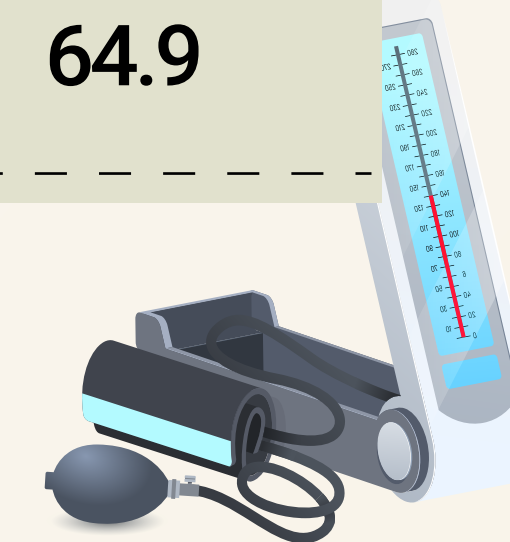
## How many older women and men have diabetes?<sup>ix</sup>

| Age group | Older women (%) | Older men (%) |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| 60 - 69   | 26.6            | 20.0          |
| 70+       | 22.7            | 20.1          |



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

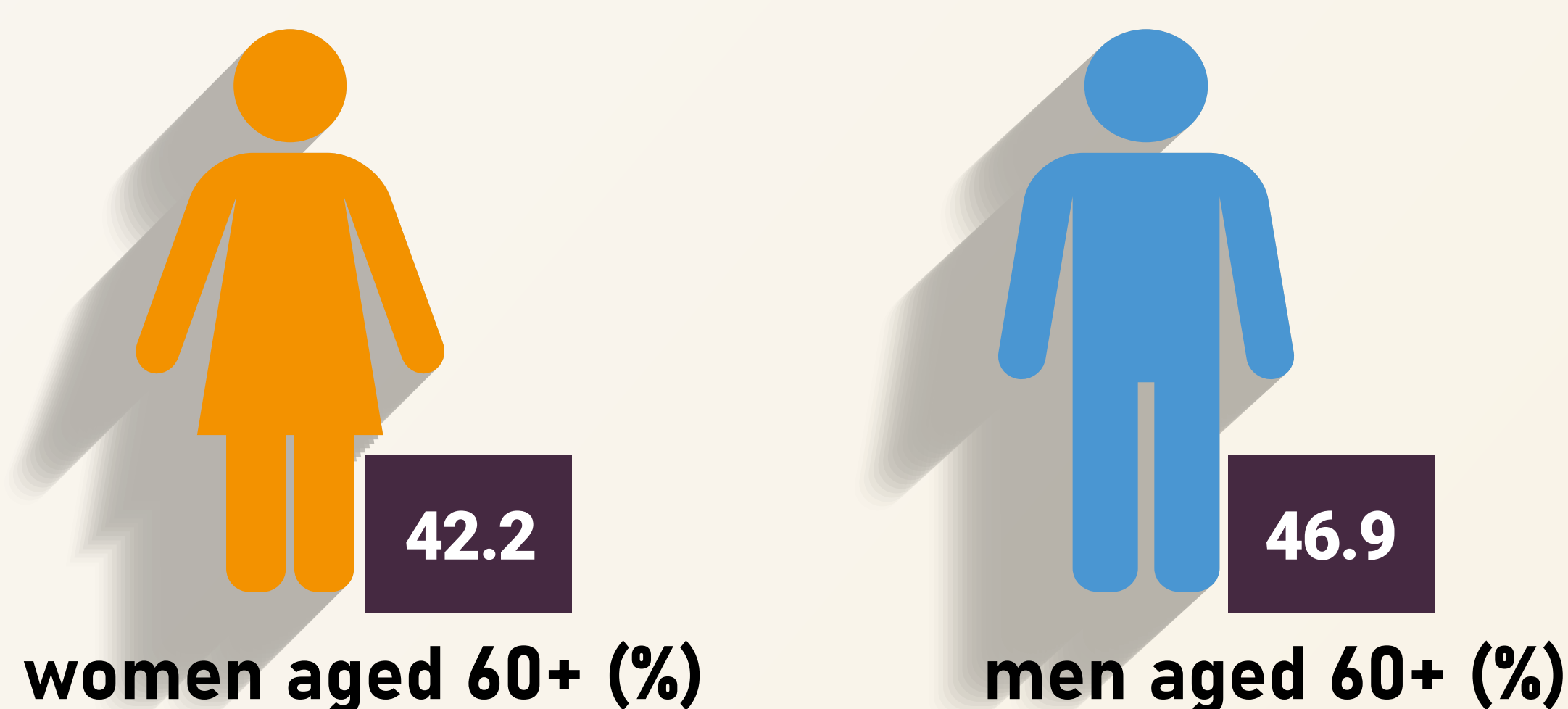
| Age group | Older women (%) | Older men (%) |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| 60 - 69   | 67.0            | 59.7          |
| 70+       | 72.9            | 64.9          |



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

### Health protection covers all older persons<sup>xi</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 **NO**
- Holistic palliative care, including access to essential drugs and controlled medicines **NO**

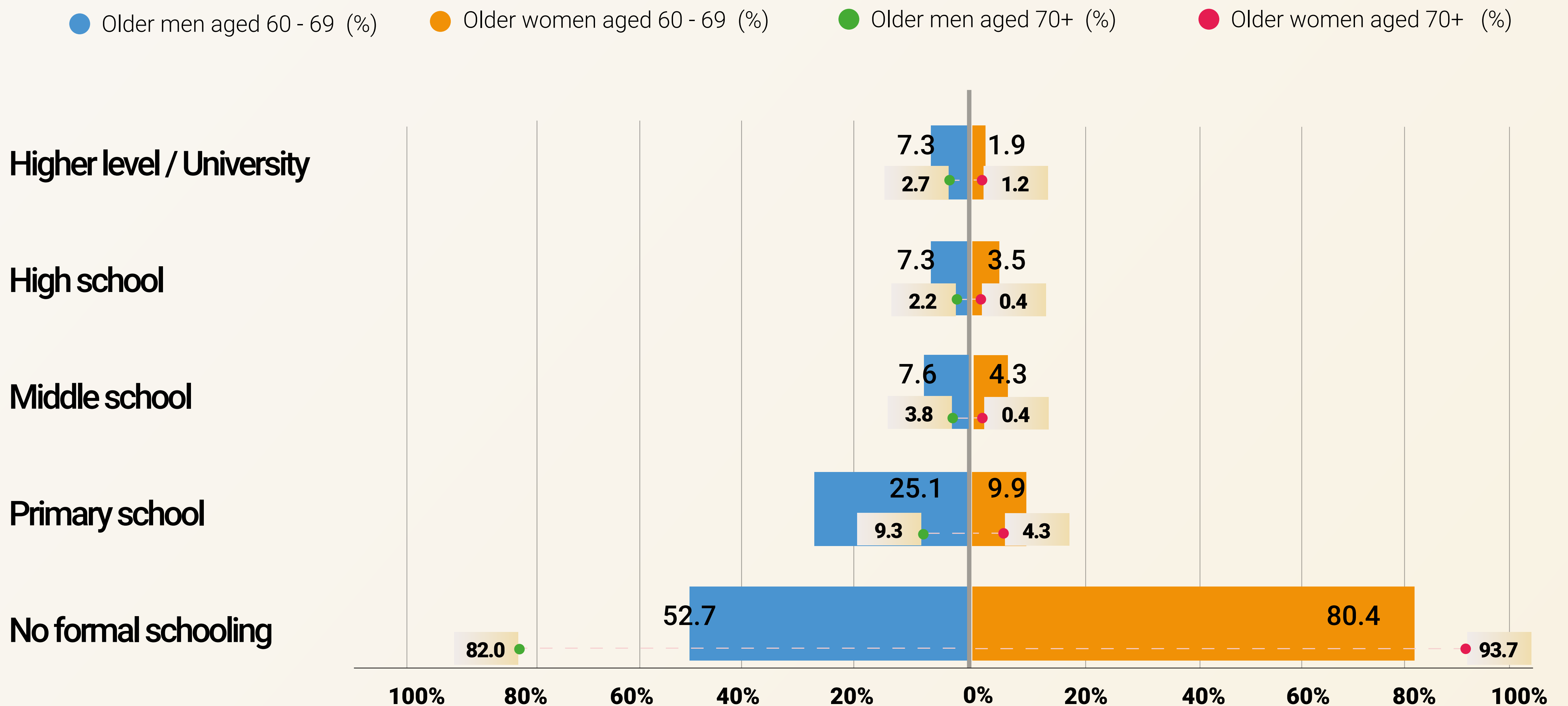


# THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Gender and age inequality is observed across all levels of education. Persons aged 70+ are more likely to have no formal schooling than individuals aged 60 - 69. 93.7% of women aged 70+ and 80% men aged 70+ have no education compared with 80% of women and 52.7% of men aged 60 - 69. The National Strategy recognises the right of older persons to lifelong learning as the First Axis aims to strengthen the political, social and cultural participation of older persons by supporting programs for learning and literacy. However the National Strategy offers limited considerations for different types of education and lifelong learning opportunities, e.g. self, informal recreational and vocational training, digital and new technology-based education. Additionally, it does not explicitly address affordability and accessibility of these learning opportunities.

## How many older persons have an education?

Educational attainment of older persons by the highest level of education completed <sup>xii</sup>





## 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>xiii</sup> **Partial**
- Learning opportunities adapted to the specific needs of older persons **Partial**
- Lifelong learning, education and skills-building opportunities that are affordable and financially accessible **Partial**

The review of statistics published during 2015 - 2021 by the High Commission for the Planning of Morocco, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development as well as UN agencies shows that data on older women and men is collected across a variety of socio-economic indicators with very few gaps. The Integrated National Program for the advancement of the situation of older persons 2021 - 2030 makes an explicit commitment to regularly publish progress reports on the situation of older women and men, including those in institutional care and prisons. Additionally, it aims to conduct qualitative and quantitative studies to build more in-depth and comprehensive evidence on ageing and the situation of older persons in Morocco.



## 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://bit.ly/347nTkl> Accessed 6 November 2021
- ii Ministry of Health, National Population and Family Health survey 2018, Table 17 - 5 Distribution of people aged 60+ who face difficulty limiting their daily activity according to the type of difficulty, p.212. <https://bit.ly/3uiWG8Q>
- iii The profile covers information in the Integrated public policy for the advancement of the situation of older persons, the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, Directorate of Protection of the Family, Childhood and Elderly Persons, Department of Family and Elderly Persons. Not publicly available.
- iv Ministry of Health, National Population and Family Health survey 2018, Figure 16 - 1 Relative distribution of people aged 60+ according to whether they have income or not, and other characteristics, p. 202. <https://bit.ly/3uiWG8Q>
- v Ibid., Table 3 - 6: ratio of individuals age 15 and above who were working when the survey was conducted according to sex and other characteristics, p. 23
- vi Author calculation based on the Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development, First annual report on older persons 218, Table 4: Population aged 60+ receiving old-age pension and survivor's pension, 2016, p.28. <https://bit.ly/3KW1qaB>, and United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition. Rev. 1. Excel files used: Annual male population by five-year age group, and annual female population by five-year age group. <https://bit.ly/347nTkl> Accessed 8 January 2022
- vii Author calculation based on the Ministry of Health, National Population and Family Health survey 2018, Table (12 - 9): ratio of older people age 60 and above who were subjected to violence after the age of 60 according to type of violence, p. 143. <https://bit.ly/3uiWG8Q>
- viii 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 6 November 2021
- ix World Health Organisation, 2017 - 2018 STEPwise Approach to NCD Risk Factor Surveillance (STEPS) country report Morocco, Percentage of respondents with raised blood glucose or currently on medication for diabetes, p.275. <https://bit.ly/3Goz9Wy>
- x World Health Organisation, 2017 - 2018 STEP wise Approach to NCD Risk Factor Surveillance (STEPS) country report Morocco, Percentage of respondents with raised blood pressure or currently on medication for raised blood pressure, p. 267. <https://bit.ly/3Goz9Wy>



- xi Ministry of Health, National Population and Family Health survey 2018, Table 17 - 18 ratio of older people (60+) according to their requests related to services provided to them, p. 222.  
<https://bit.ly/3uiWG8Q>
- xii World Health Organisation, 2017 - 2018 STEP wise Approach to NCD Risk Factor Surveillance (STEPS) country report Morocco, Highest level of education achieved by the survey respondents, p. 184.  
<https://bit.ly/3Goz9Wy>
- xiii 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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