

AGEING IN MAURITIUS

EDUCATION, TRAINING, LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The following report deals with a normative input about “Ageing” in Mauritius concerning the subitems “Education, Training, Life-long Learning and Capacity Building” in regards to the Open-ended Working Group “Tenth working session” of the UN (New York, 15–18 April 2019).

The population density in Mauritius is still increasing since the data collection in 1950 (0,4% natural population growth/year = approx. 5,158 people) (Mauritius Population: 2019). Nevertheless, the positive value has declined sharply over the last years (e.g: 1954: 3,06%/year) - also Mauritius is estimated to be affected by the demographic change in the future. In the beginning of 2019 the population of 65 and older was about 7,5% which are approx. 96,416 people of a total of 1,291.398 people (Mauritius Population, age structure: 2019). According to statistics and estimates, there will be a population increase until about 2025, and then it will decrease continuously (table in Appendix), which simultaneously requires, that the older part of the population – which will soon be more than the younger - needs more attention, assistance and protection.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights mentioned in the previous **tenth session** in April 2019 (New York) “[...] that everyone has the right to education that is directed to the full development of the human personality [...]”. Furthermore, the Delegations of **the UN Open-ended Working Group** highlighted in this regard, “[...] that older persons can make a significant contribution to the social, economic and sustainable development of their societies, if an enabling environment and adequate guarantees are in place.” (Report of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing on its tenth working session: 2019, p.11/16).

In their ninth working session (23-26 July 2018) on the concepts of autonomy and independence, the UN Open-ended Working Group already stressed the importance of changing perceptions of 'ageing' and striving to encourage old people's participation as active agents in society. They stressed the need to provide them with an enabling environment, without discrimination, in order to achieve their social integration (Report of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing on its ninth working session: 2018, p.10/16).

The Protection of Elderly Persons Act 2005 (Act No. 16 of 2005) is the law to set up a legal and administrative framework for greater protection and assistance to elderly persons **in Mauritius**. This law includes the general policies to:

- „(a) ensure, promote and sustain the physical, psychological, emotional, social and economic protection of elderly persons;
- (b) ensure, promote and sustain the well-being of elderly persons so that they are able to play a meaningful part in society”(The Protection of Elderly Persons Act 2005, Point 3.3).

This Act states, that older people have a right of support to general protection and security, but it has not been modified since 2005. The law does not say specifically and in detail what is to be understood by the individual protection methods

Compared to the tenth session of the Open-ended Working group, there is a need to legislate or amend legislation to support elderly people in their autonomy and independence, because the law only covers the dependence and neediness of the elderly on other people.

Among others, the Mauritius Council of Social Service lists a number of NGOs that support older people in many different ways, but there is no government regulation yet.

YUVA's mission. YUVA does not only stand for helping young people in the moment of help, but much more on focusing on making a long-term impact and stabilising the whole Mauritian community. In their program about 'Moral, Civic and Sex Education', YUVA wants to encourage younger generations' attitude about older people in the society and prepare them to self-confident handling with the demographic challenge in the future. Since the start of the program in April 2018, nearly 200 students successfully joined this workshop. Furthermore, the YUVA Academy wants to empower young people to respect diversity, human rights and culture to ultimately support innovators that develop lasting solutions to the root causes of Mauritius' problems.

YUVA's programs seek to transform Mauritius by developing a powerful network of young leaders who will work together to address Mauritius' greatest challenges (e.g demographic change), achieve extraordinary social impact, and accelerate the country's growth trajectory. YUVA embodies the belief of having also old people involved in this journey: "Even a 70-year old person can be young. Being young in spirit means being dynamic, lively and adaptive to change."

YUVA's education programs support the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. No. 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote **lifelong learning** opportunities for all." (YUVA: 2019).

REFERENCES

- **(UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs** (2019): *Population Division, Mauritius Population* [internet]
<https://countrymeters.info/en/Mauritius>
[Accessed: 28 August 2019]
- **(UN) General Assembly** (2018): *Report of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing on its ninth working session* [internet]
<https://undocs.org/A/AC.278/2018/2>
[Accessed: 21 August 2019]
- **(UN) General Assembly** (2019): *Report of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing on its tenth working session* [internet]
<https://undocs.org/en/A/AC.278/2019/2>
[Accessed: 29 August 2019]
- **YUVA Programs** (2019): *YUVACTIVISM → Ongoing Projects → Education* [internet]
<https://yuvamauritius.com/activism/projects/education/>
<https://yuvamauritius.com/about/>
[Accessed: 20 August 2019]
- **Legal Supplement to the Government Gazette of Mauritius No. 44 of 7 May 2005** (2005): *The Protection of Elderly Persons ACT 2005* [internet]
<https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/72338/73420/F1014005012/MUS72338.pdf>
[Accessed: 28 August 2019]

APPENDIX

- **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2019): *Population Division, Population projection (2020-2100)*** [internet]
<https://countrymeters.info/en/Mauritius>
[Accessed: 20 August 2019]

Year	Population	Growth Rate
2020	1,274,108	N/A %
2025	1,283,273	0.72 %
2030	1,286,931	0.29 %
2035	1,282,704	-0.33 %
2040	1,269,197	-1.05 %
2045	1,247,602	-1.70 %
2050	1,221,033	-2.13 %
2055	1,193,209	-2.28 %
2060	1,165,665	-2.31 %
2065	1,138,008	-2.37 %
2070	1,109,333	-2.52 %
2075	1,078,970	-2.74 %
2080	1,047,259	-2.94 %
2085	1,015,515	-3.03 %
2090	984,927	-3.01 %
2095	956,640	-2.87 %
2100	931,657	-2.61 %