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## **ECLAC CARIBBEAN**







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Posted Dec 14

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Persons aged 60+ in the Caribbean subregion will increase from 1.1 million to 2 million. More on ageing in the Caribbean

here: http://vrb.al/ageing-advisory



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#### **ECLAC Caribbean**

Posted Nov 27

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# AGEING IN THE CARIBBEAN

Population ageing has long been recognised as a demographic trend which will shape Caribbean societies in the 21st century. Until now, the Caribbean population has aged relatively slowly and for many countries ageing has been seen as something on the horizon but not an immediate concern. This is no longer the case given the imminence of the challenges associated with population ageing that the entire subregion will face in the coming years. These challenges were part of the issues addressed at the 3rd Caribbean Conference on Ageing, Elder Abuse and the Rights of Older Persons, that was recently co-organized by ECLAC Caribbean. This article takes a brief look at the issues discussed during this major event.

Photo 'Blessing the Parade' courtesy Doug / CC BY.







he Caribbean will experience the most rapid period of population ageing between now and 2035. Although the population will continue to age beyond this period, the pace of demographic change will gradually slow. Essentially, the Caribbean population will look very different in the next two decades from what it is today.

demographic transition implications for many facets of life and the 3rd Caribbean Coonference on Ageing, Elder Abuse and the Rights of Older Persons was convened in Dominica on 30 November - 1 December, organized by ECLAC Caribbean in collaboration with the Dominica Council on Ageing; the Ministry of Social Services, Family and Gender Affairs of Dominica, and the Association for the Promotion and Integration of Older Persons of Martinique (AMDOR). Attention was drawn to a range of issues that will attend the ageing of Caribbean peoples: health and disability, economic and social welfare, isolation and loneliness.

ECLAC Caribbean Director, Diane Quarless, led the ECLAC team at the meeting, along with Population Affairs Officer Francis Jones, who spoke on issues affecting the elderly population in the Caribbean. The event was attended by government officials and persons responsible for crafting policy for the elderly, as well as nongovernmental organizations and civil society representatives, all of whom are set to benefit from the recommendations for action that emerged during the discussions. The basis for these discussions was ECLAC Caribbean's latest report, entitled 'Ageing in the Caribbean and the human rights of older persons'. The report puts the spotlight on the issue of ageing and its implications for Caribbean populations, including the human rights of older persons, and considers the implications for public policy in this regard.



Over the next 20 years, the Caribbean will see a rapid and dramatic ageing of its population. During this period, the number of older persons will double: persons aged 60 and over will increase from 1.1 million (13 per cent of the population) in 2015 to two million (22 per cent) in 2035. Those aged 70 and over will increase from half a million (6 per cent) to one million (11 per cent).

The ageing of the population will change the demographic structure of many Caribbean countries, resulting in a progressive increase in the old age dependency ratio (the number of persons aged 65 and over per hundred people aged

meet the needs of the present generation of older persons. With a rapid increase in the number of older persons on the horizon, there is an urgent need for governments to strengthen social protection against a wide range of risks associated with ageing, including loss of income, ill health, disability, loss of independence and isolation.

A critical aspect of the society's response to population ageing must be the promotion of healthy living from an *early age*. without discrimination. Adequate safeguards should also be provided to prevent the financial abuse of older persons and to address it when it occurs.

A critical aspect of the society's response to population ageing must be the promotion of healthy living from an early age. In addition to ensuring a better quality of life for the elderly, healthy ageing has the potential to significantly reduce future health expenditure while improving the productivity of the workforce. ECLAC Caribbean is currently advocating the creation of an inter-agency group including regional organizations, academia and the United Nations

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