

## National Population Policy

Mauritius though being a middle income country is concerned about low fertility and ageing just as developed countries. The total fertility rate is well below replacement level of 2.1 children per couple. In fact in 2017 the total fertility rate was 1.4 that is 100 couples had only 140 children instead of 210 children to be able to replace themselves. We are currently at a cross road where the number of births has reduced considerably and in a few years from now at around 2021 the number of deaths will outnumber the number of births leading to negative population growth rate. Projections show that by the year 2050 the total population of Mauritius will be below around 965,000 compared to 1.2 million at present.

Mauritius is experiencing an ageing population due to demographic transition. The age structure of the population is changing from a young to an ageing one. The proportion of the elderly population age 60 years and above was 16.3% of the total population in Mauritius in 2017 compared to 5.4% in 1962. In forty years time that is by year 2057 this proportion is projected to be 35.7%. The ageing process can also be seen by studying the trends in mean and median age. The mean age of the population will increase from 37.1 years in 2017 to 47.9 years in 2057 and the Median age will increase from 36.4 to 51.2 years during the same period that is between 2017 and 2057. **Mauritius has been found to be the oldest country in Africa in terms of the age of its population. Half of our population is below 37 years of age and half is above 37 years old. The digit for most of African countries is below 20.**

Such trends will transform our society: potentially reducing our economic growth and adding increasing stress to our public pension systems. With fewer workers and more retirees, the active work force will face an increased burden to sustain social programs. The challenge is to address the ramifications of an imminent lopsided society where the number of elderly will increasingly exceed the number of young people.

One of the main objectives of the Government is to ensure a stable population for the socio- economic development of the country. In this context, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life is seeking proposals from all stakeholders to review the National Population Policy to ensure a stable population in the long run for the socio-economic development of the country.

In view of the above this Ministry is presently drafting a National Population Policy in collaboration with all related stakeholders to provide a framework and guidelines for the integration of population variables in the development process.

The public is hereby invited to submit your views and comments on the formulation of a National Population Policy at latest by 21 December 2018 to the address below:

**The Senior Chief Executive  
(Attention Mr J. Sunkur, Chief Demographer)  
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