

12th Global Conference on Ageing Health, Security and Community

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Ageing and Social Policies in Times of Crises

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IRSES – International Research Staff Exchange Scheme

RESCuE – Patterns of Resilience During Socioeconomic Crises Among
Households in Europe

Hyderabad, 10-13 June 2014

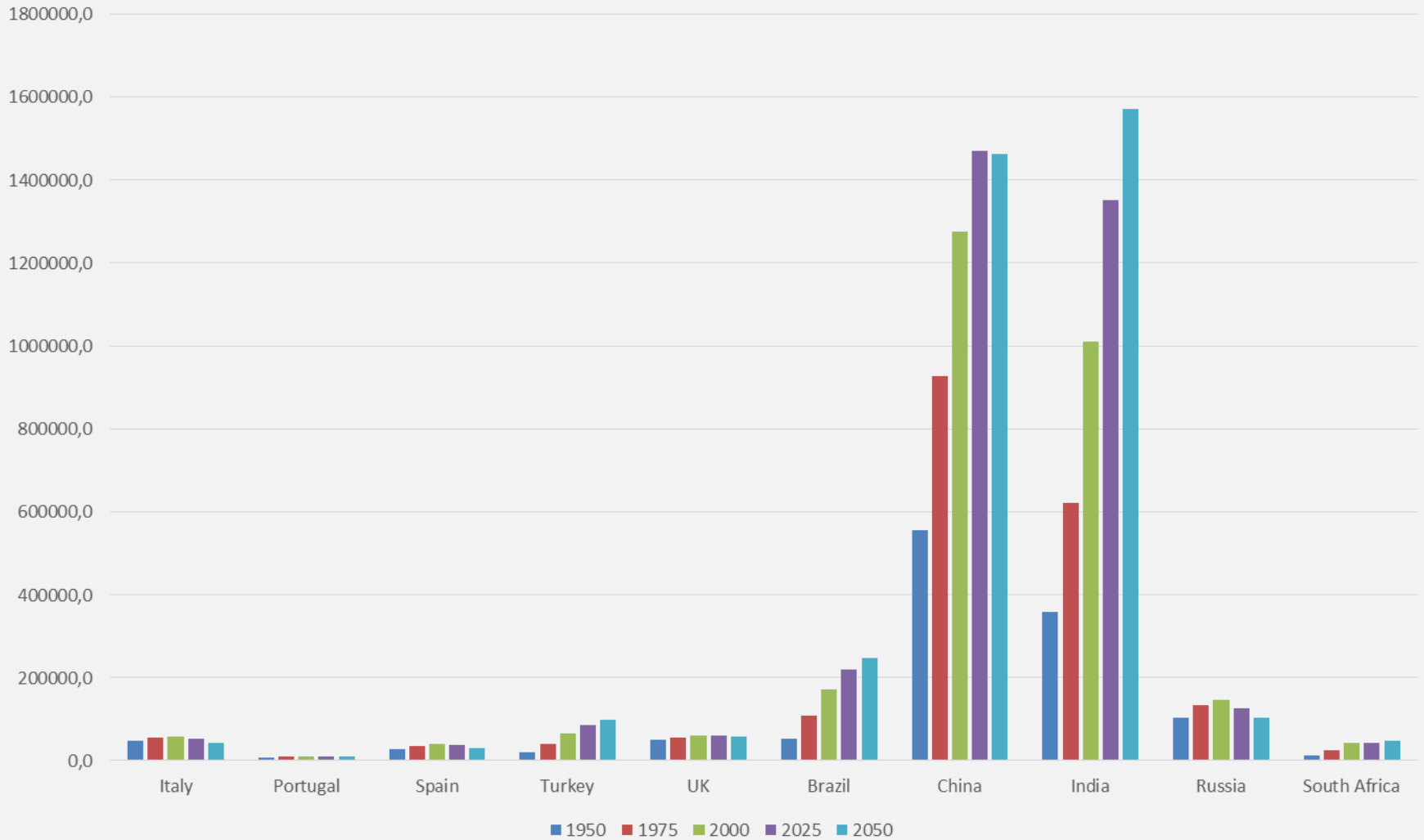
Luís Capucha,
University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL)

A Big Change in the Age Structure of the World Population

To start with some (well known) facts and trends

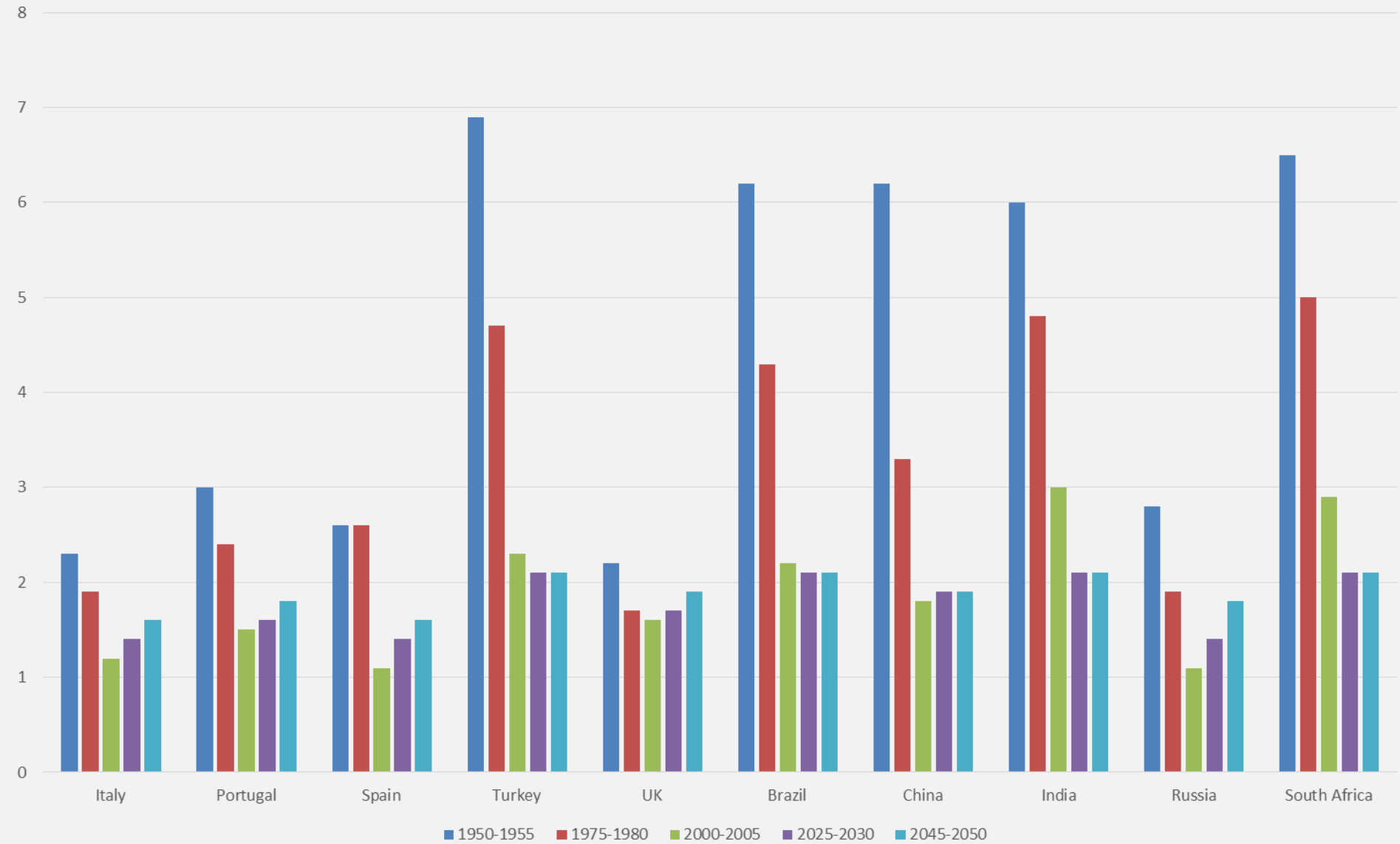
- ✓ The world is getting more crowded and older.
- ✓ But not all the world in the same way. Demography shows an evident contrast between Europe – including Russia – and the “big” countries like Brazil, India, China, South Africa and Turkey, in terms of absolute numbers.
- ✓ But the main trends are similar. Ageing is indeed a global phenomena.

Total Population (Thousands)



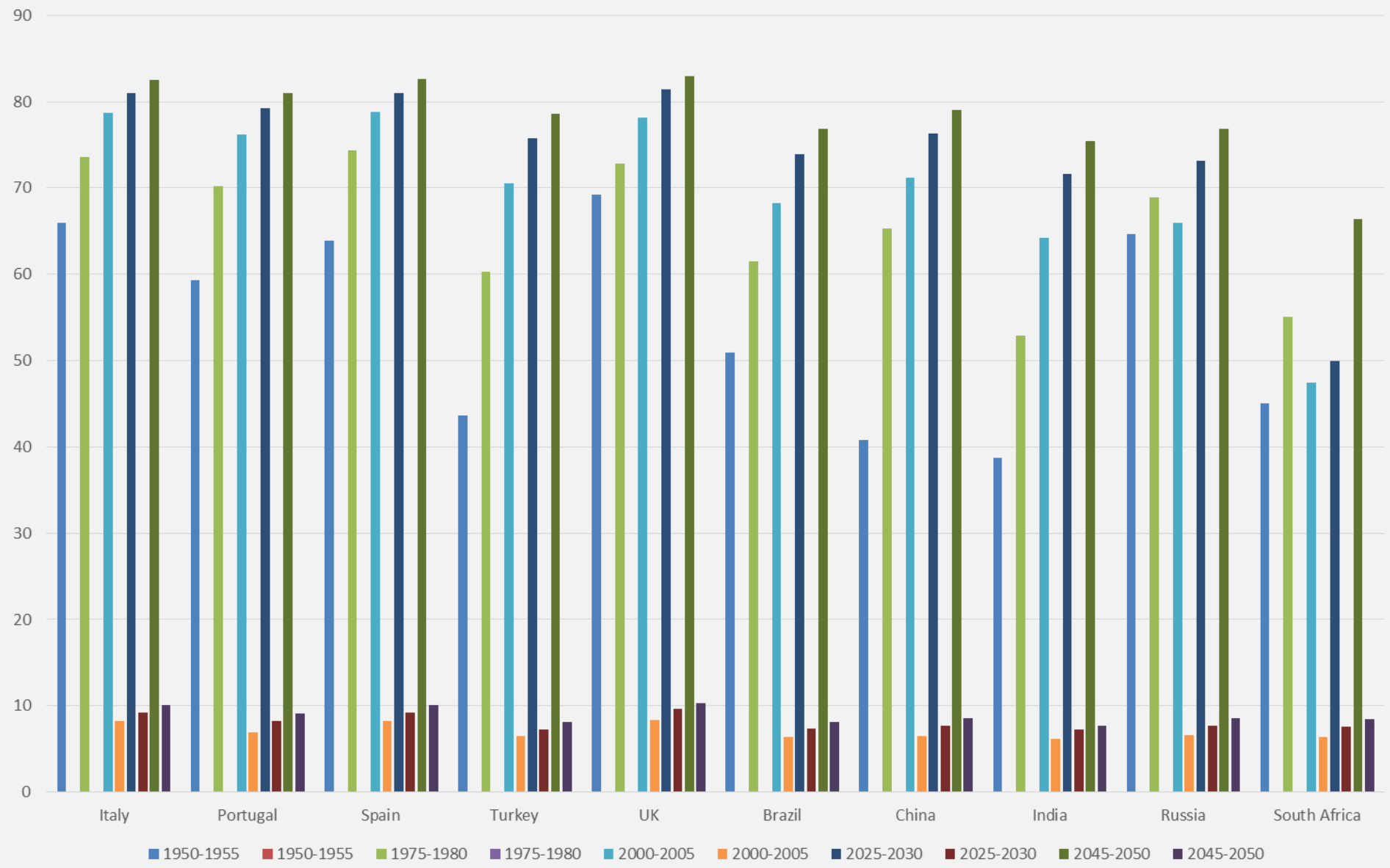
Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Fertility Rate



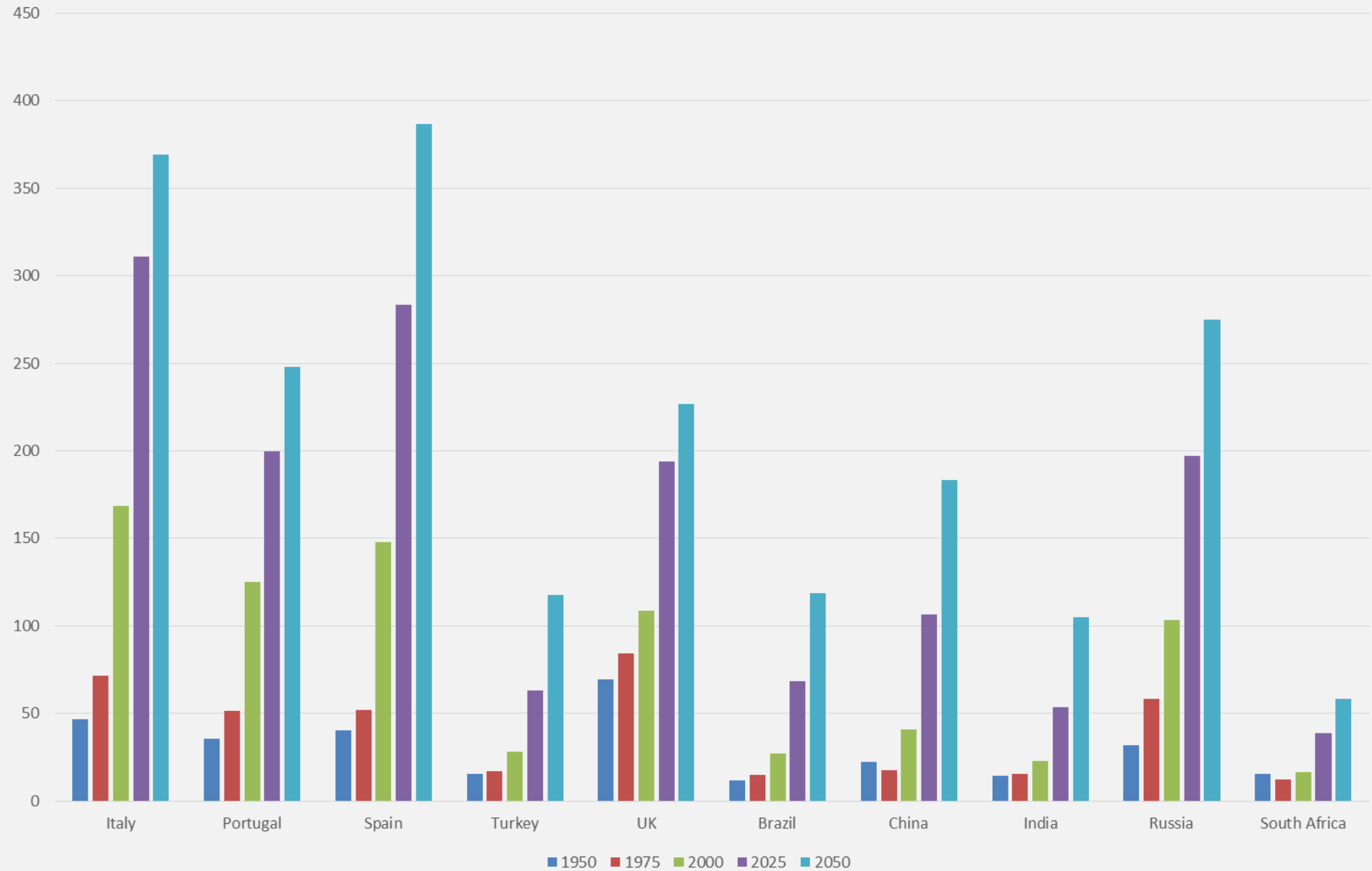
Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Life Expectancy



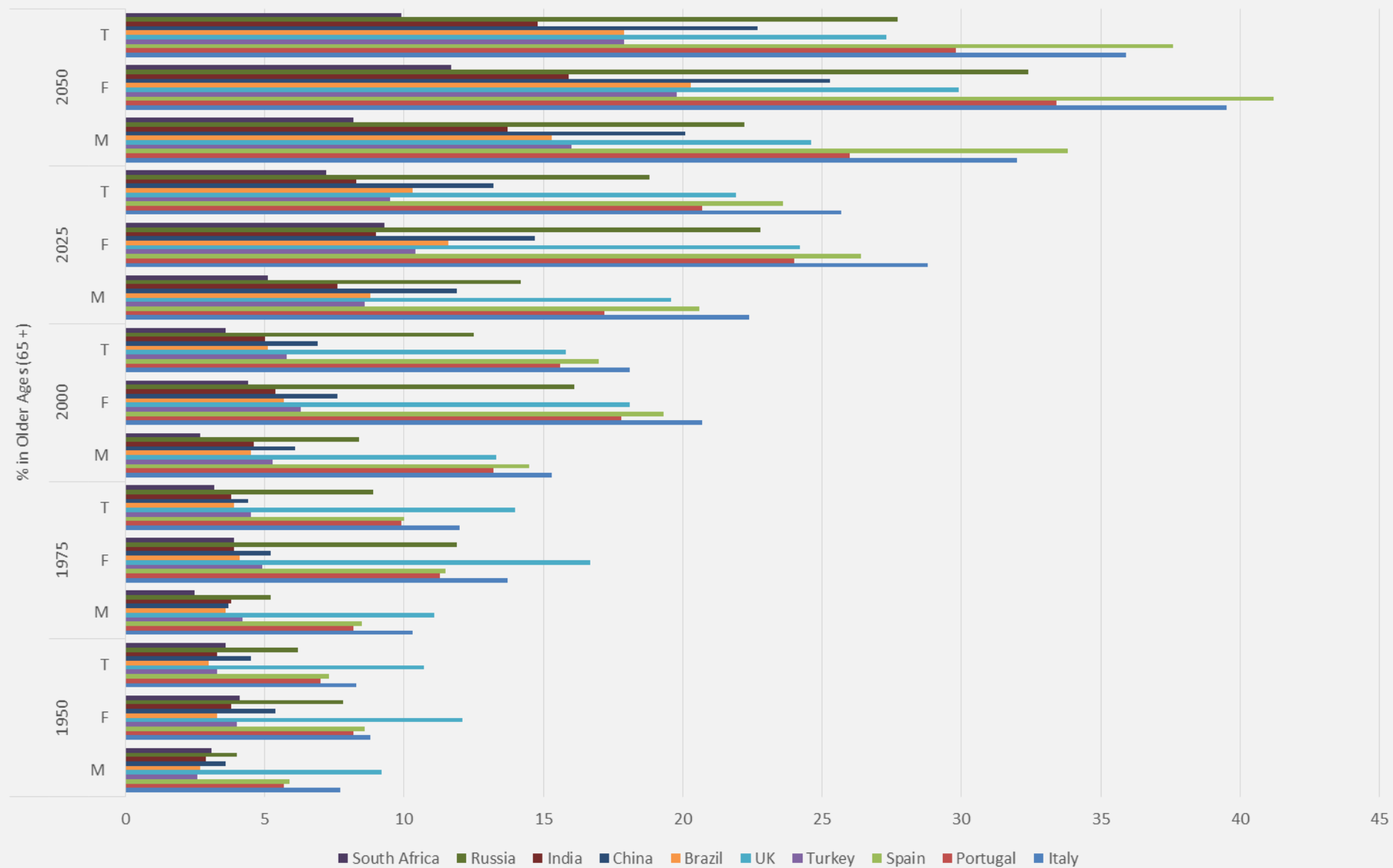
Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Ageing Index



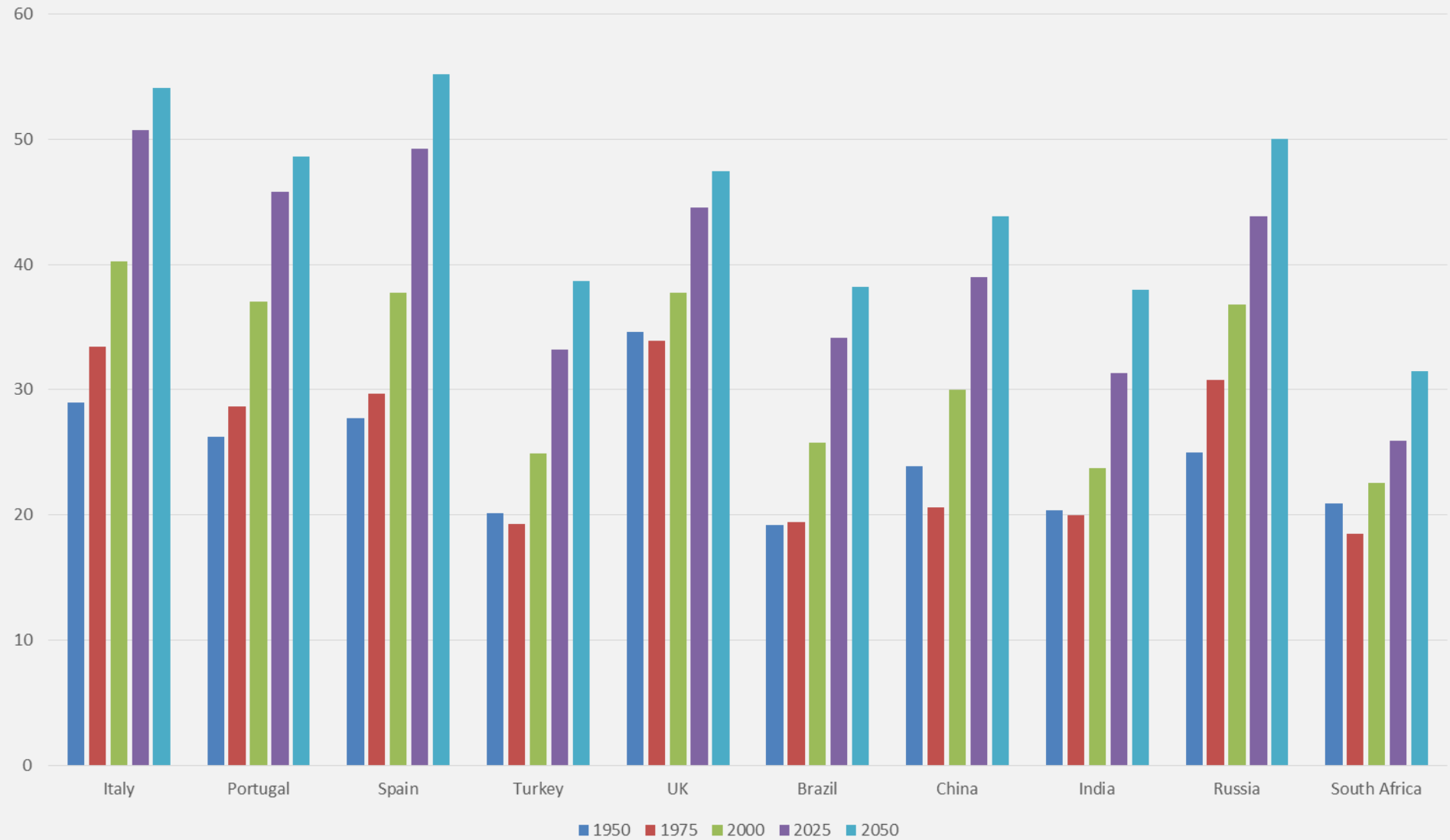
Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Percentage in Older Ages (65 +)



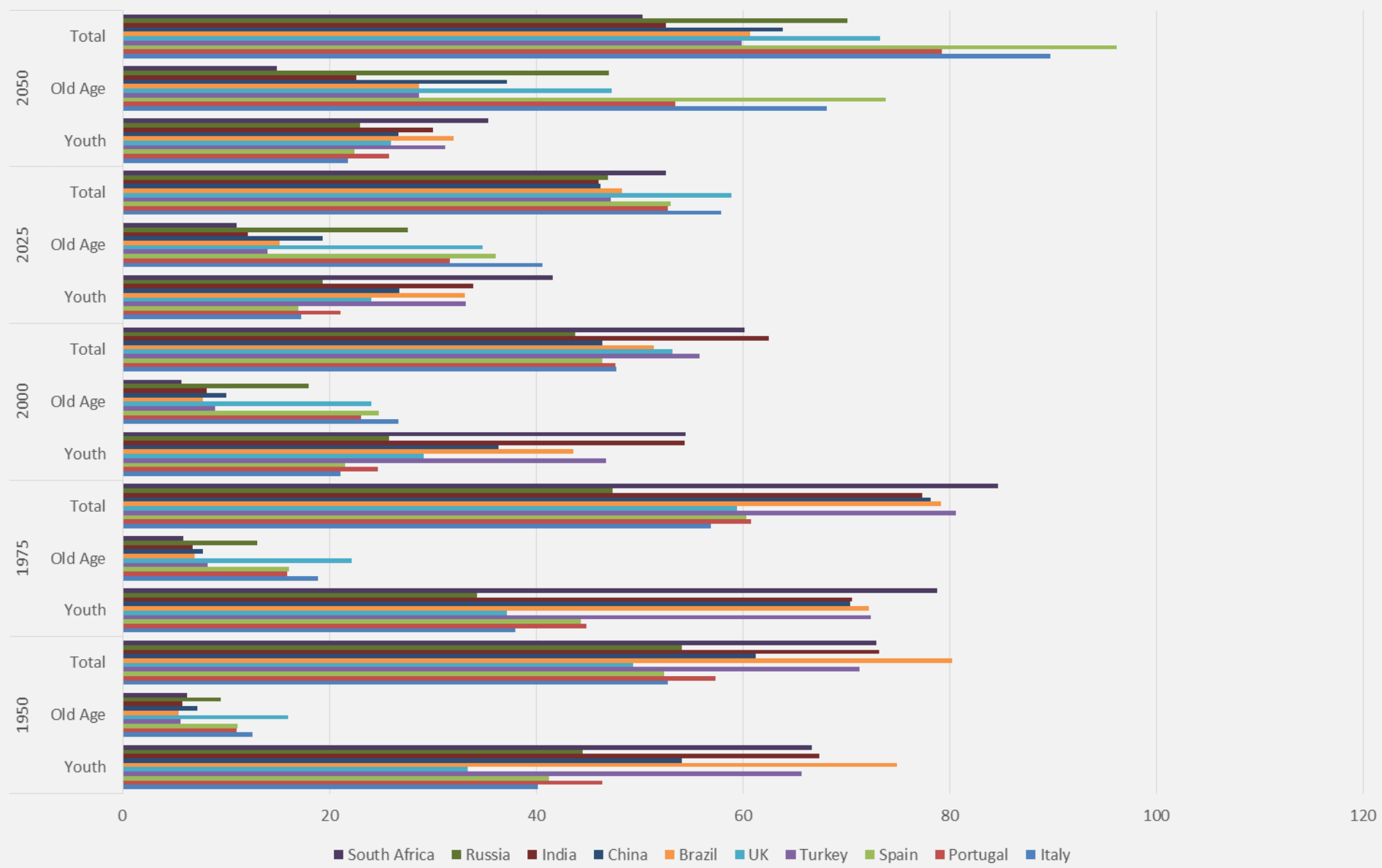
Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Median Age (Years)



Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Dependency Ratio



Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations

Two ways of looking at ageing

Nothing but a problem

- ✓ Dependence Ratio
- ✓ Social Care Spending
- ✓ Numbers of Poor people
- ✓ “A Burden” to support by Families and the Economy

A reference to evaluate the realization of human rights – Ageing as a result of

- ✓ Health programs
- ✓ Infrastructures, access to water and sanitation
- ✓ Reduction of poverty policies
- ✓ Social Policies (including pensions and minimum income) and social facilities
- ✓ Improved labour conditions
- ✓ Education

The Dynamics of Problem Solving – When a Problem is Solved, Other Challenges Appear

The problem is not about old people, the problem is about society and social structures

1. The previous problem: How can we make people's living conditions improve and make people live longer and longer



2. The new problem (in a progressive perspective): How can we ensure quality of life for the elderly (income, sense of utility, avoid isolation, emotional satisfaction, security, satisfying basic needs, autonomy)



3. How can we built a fair balance between economic efficiency and sound, good quality, social policies

The Main Threats

In Europe

- ✓ State retrenchment, cuts in pensions and other social benefits and rights, austerity programs prolonging the economic crises,
- ✓ The winners: Germany Industries and banking system; the 1% richest of the “international” upper class
- ✓ The losers: The poor and the middle classes; Economies and societies, that lose experience and knowledge
- ✓ Old people risking isolation, poor care facilities and services; impoverishment; losing power (being “non productive”, in a socio-economic system oriented towards competitiveness and productivity)

The Main Threats

In Turkey, Russia, China, South Africa, India and Brazil

- ✓ In the name of economic growth and competitiveness, slowing down social programs and the introduction of timid redistribution policies

- ✓ The winners: the same 1%, who do not know the expression “humanity”, human dignity, social rights, and that have no nationality

- ✓ The losers: the poor, the working classes

- ✓ Old people risking living in the poorest conditions, outside the markets, depending on (poor) family support, if any.

The Main Threats

Reducing everything to economics and finance represents a large step backwards in the quality of society, and does not seem to be able to promote the resolution of public debts, nor of private debts of banks, nor the growth of economies.

In the name of competitive economies, the winner will be capital accumulation in the era of speculation and unproductive enrichment, of the movement of capital to fiscal paradises and to regions where social dumping is the norm. For sure, this is not a way to overcome the crises

Paradoxically, the loser will be the whole world system, including market economy, and economic growth: there are no economic oases in social deserts. Economy is about people, or against people, with dangerous consequences.

We can built a better future for all

The same kind of policies that created ageing should be the driver for solving the challenges created by ageing. Social Policies that brought ageing are the key, not the lock.

Seeing the social policies as an investment, capacitating people to participate in the social and economic institutions.

The way forward is in direction of economic sustainable growth and improving citizens' well-being.

We can built a better future for all

The way forward is investing in human capital, and not sending workers into waste, jeopardizing their capacities and potential contributions, making of them old trash that can be dismissed.

The way forward is ensuring compromises with the market economy, which implies security, welfare, well-being, fairness and balance between contrasting interests

We can built a better future for all

Old people are much more then problem, or a burden we must carry.

Old people, most of whom refuse to be treated like “old” and waste, can be active citizens, experienced supporters of economic, social and ecological development

They are much more than just “retired consumers” and even less a burden to forget and abandon to their own responsibility.

It is not fair, it is not moral and it is political and economically a mistake.

The way we treat our oldest co-citizens is telling what kind of society we want for ourselves.

I want to get old, access my rights and go on contributing actively for my society, which is now the global world.

Thank You

luis.capucha@iscte.pt