

# Overview of population megatrends since Cairo and prospects for the next 30 years

Expert Group Meeting on Assessing the Status of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and  
its Contribution to the Follow-up and Review of the 2030 Agenda  
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# Outline

## Selected topics

Population growth (global/regional)

Changes in age distribution

Human capital

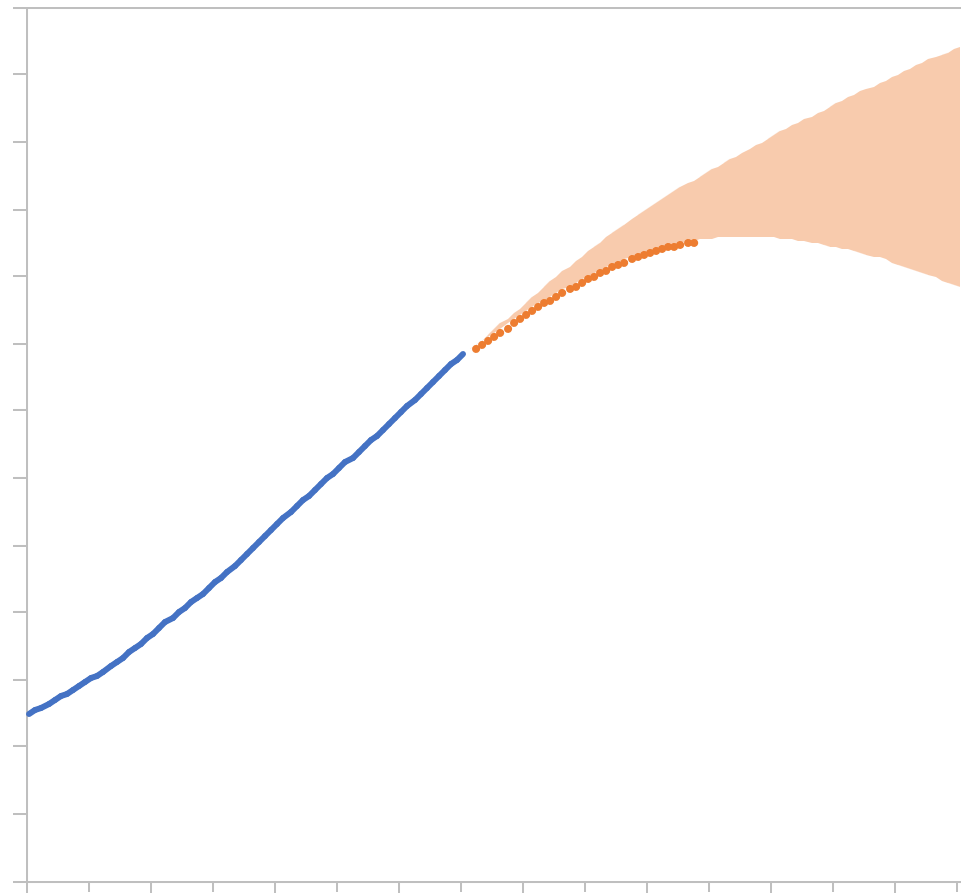
International migration

Urbanization

Poverty

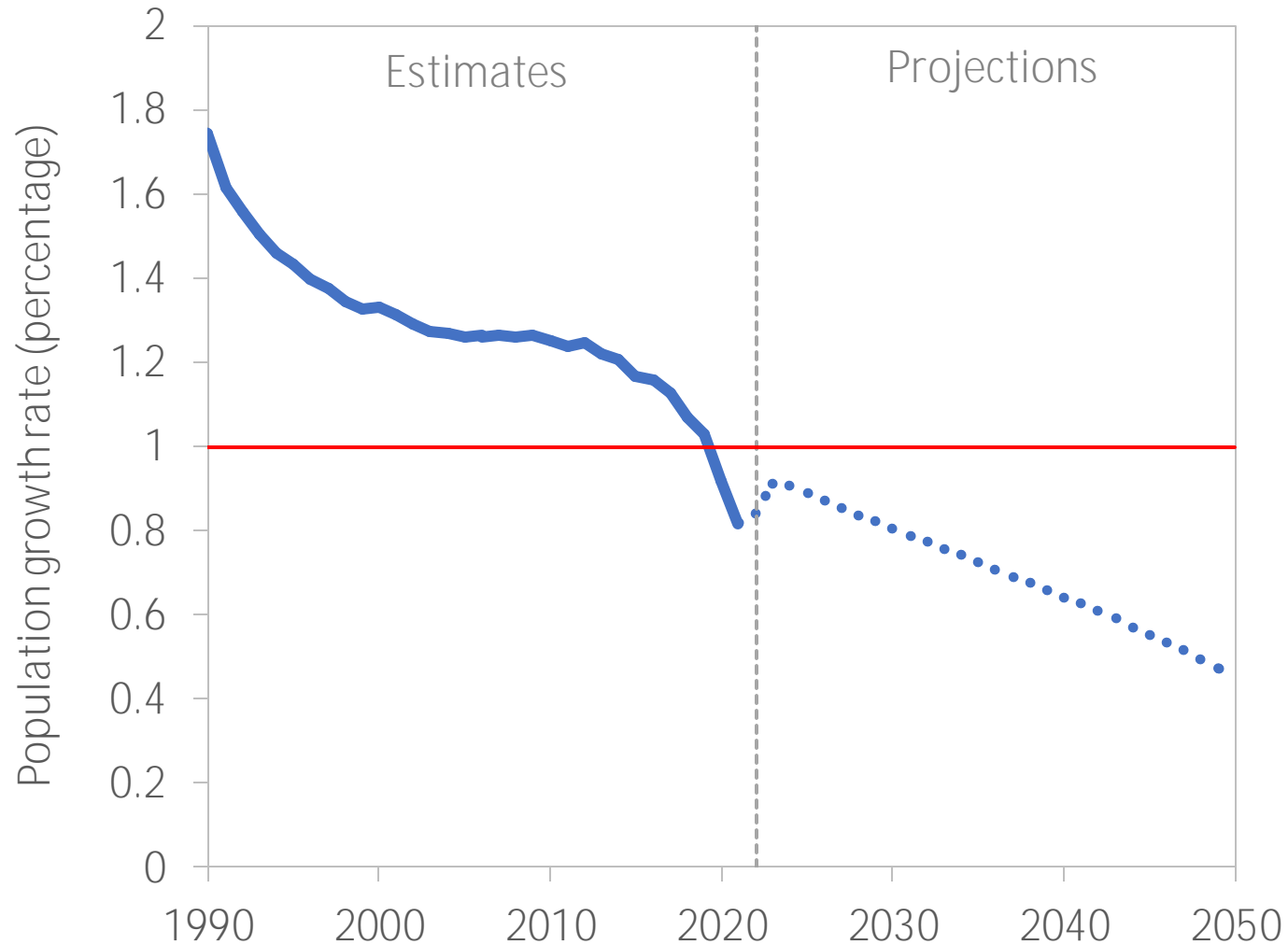
Gender equality

# Global population will continue to grow for several more decades...



# ... but at declining annual rates

Projected to stay below 1 per cent per year

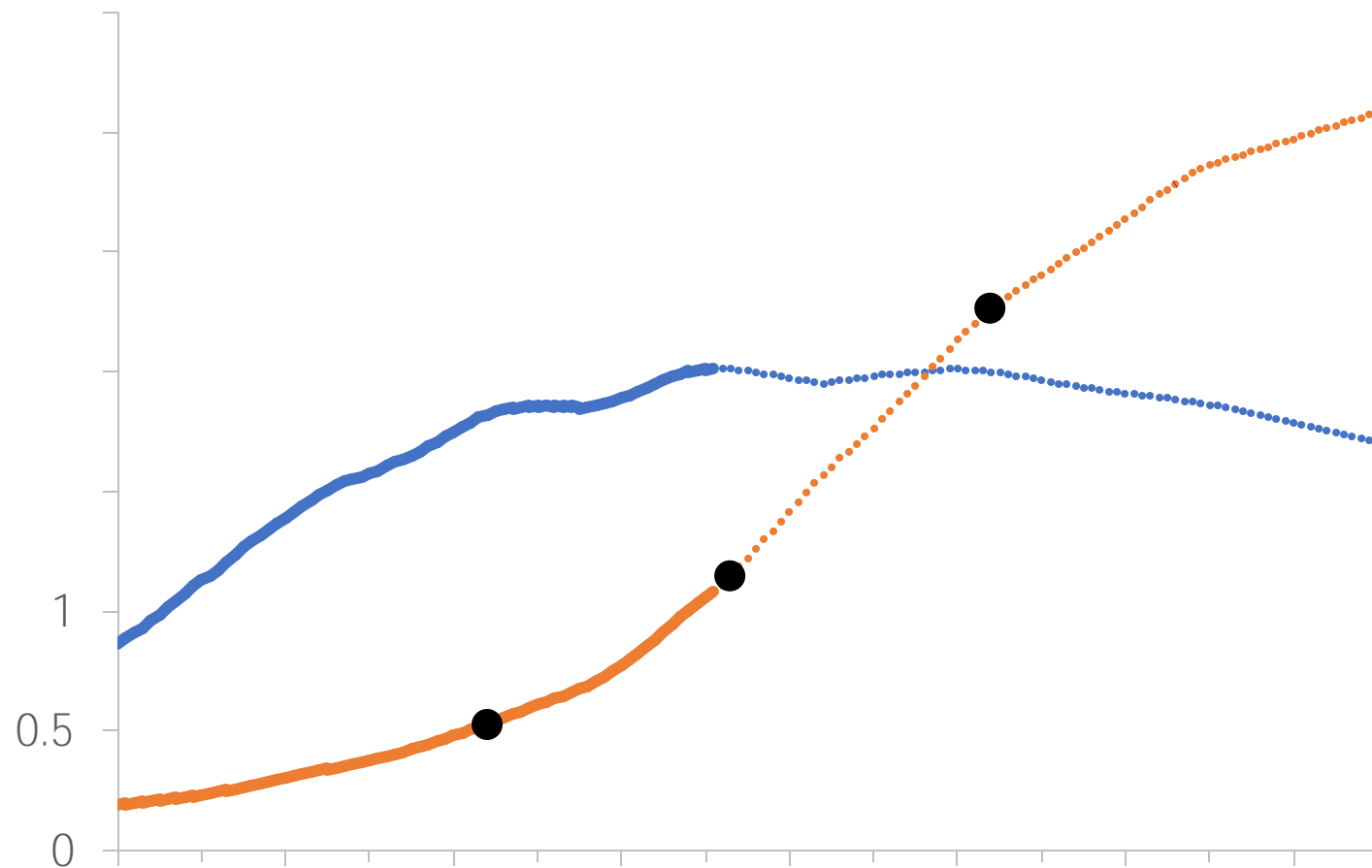


Population growth rate in early 2050s is expected to remain positive, but only about 1/4 of the growth rate of the early 1990s

Regional distribution of population will change significantly in coming decades



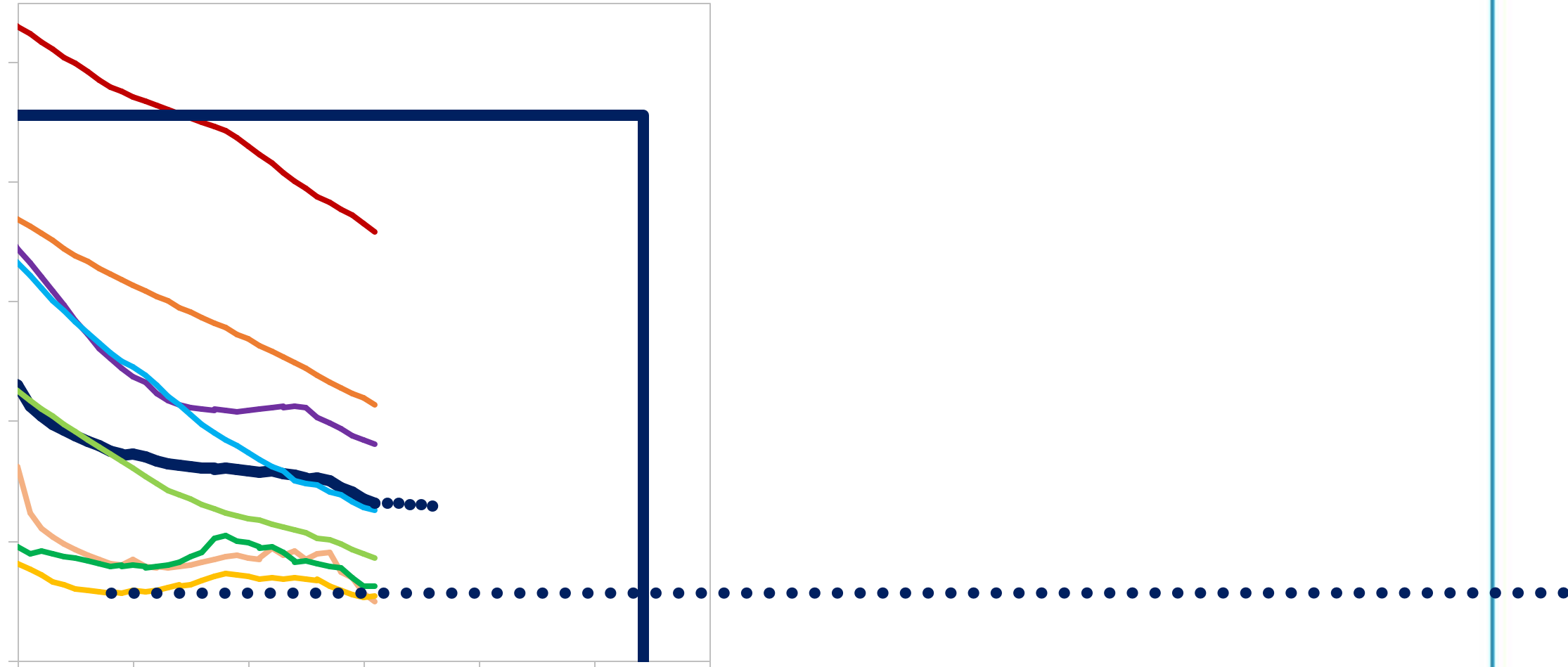
# The world's population is facing continued and accelerated ageing





# Broad convergence in fertility levels

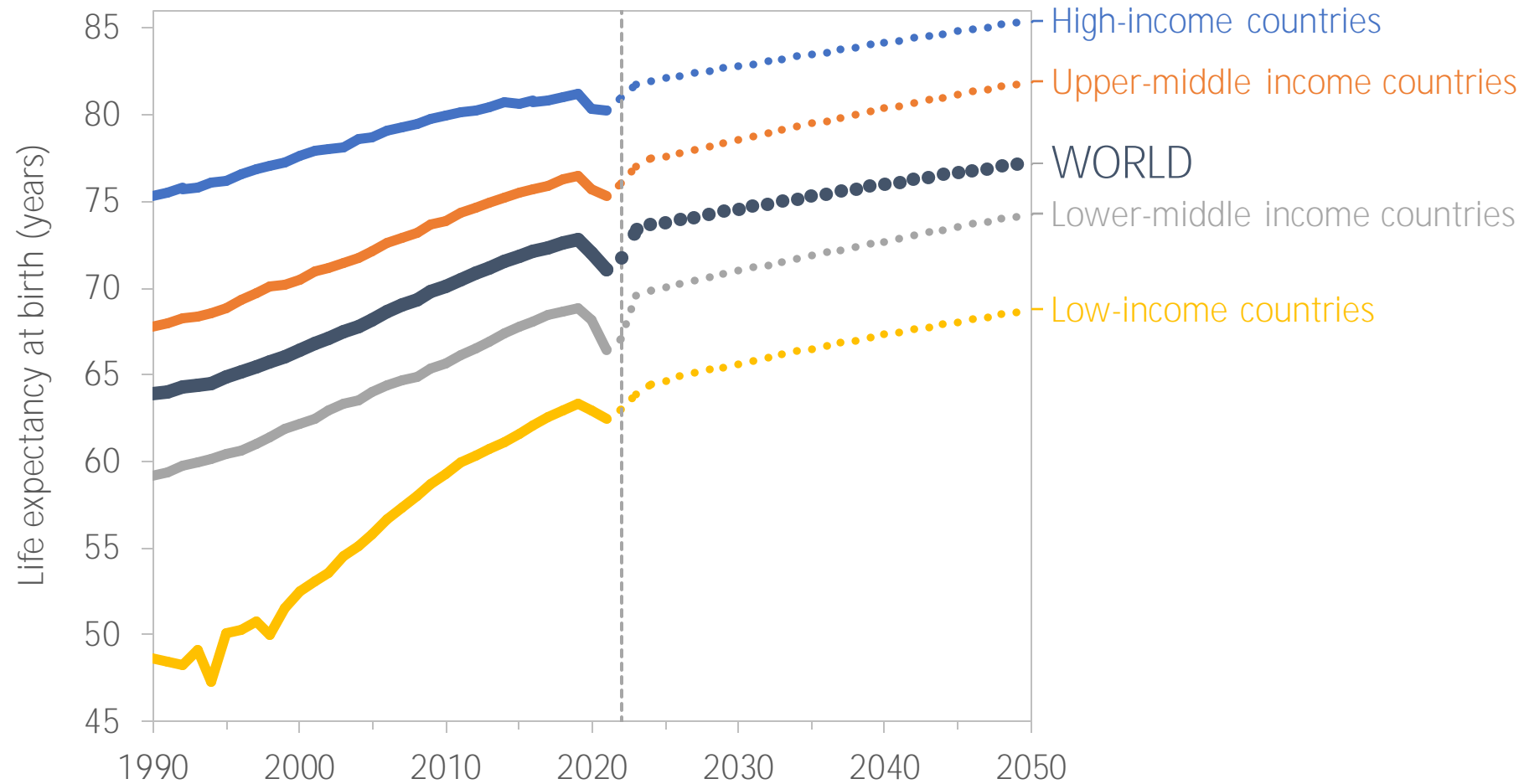
with high fertility still a challenge in some countries and regions





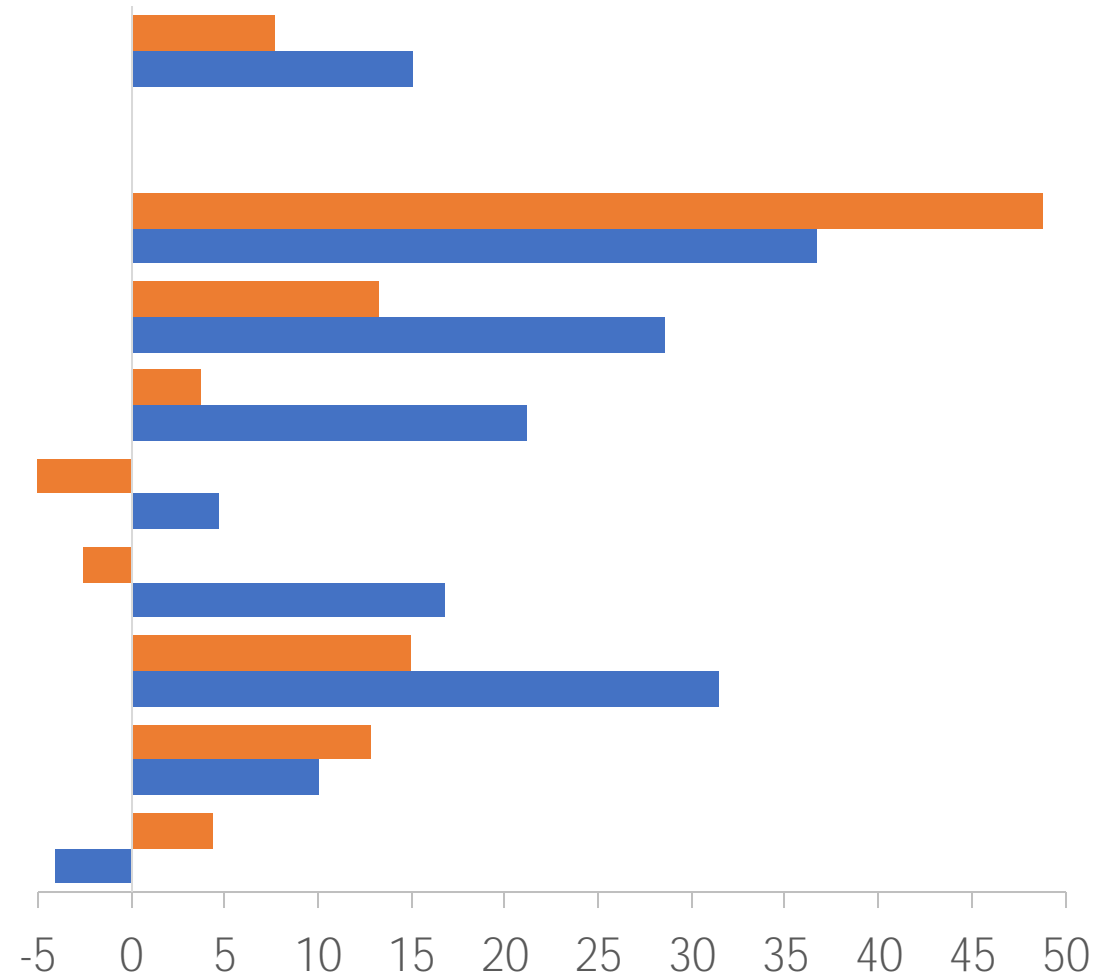
# Broad convergence also in mortality

With reduced but still significant gaps between high and low-income countries



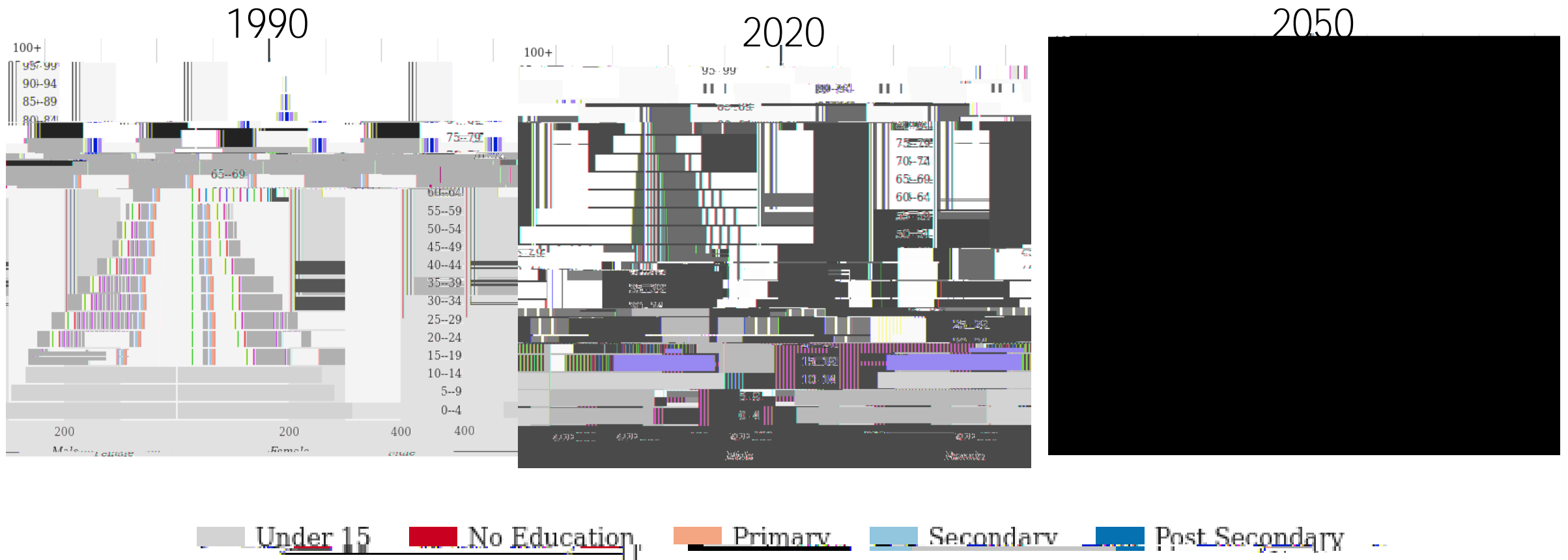
# Inevitable future population growth

## Role of population momentum (2021-2050)



# Major progress in human capital since Cairo

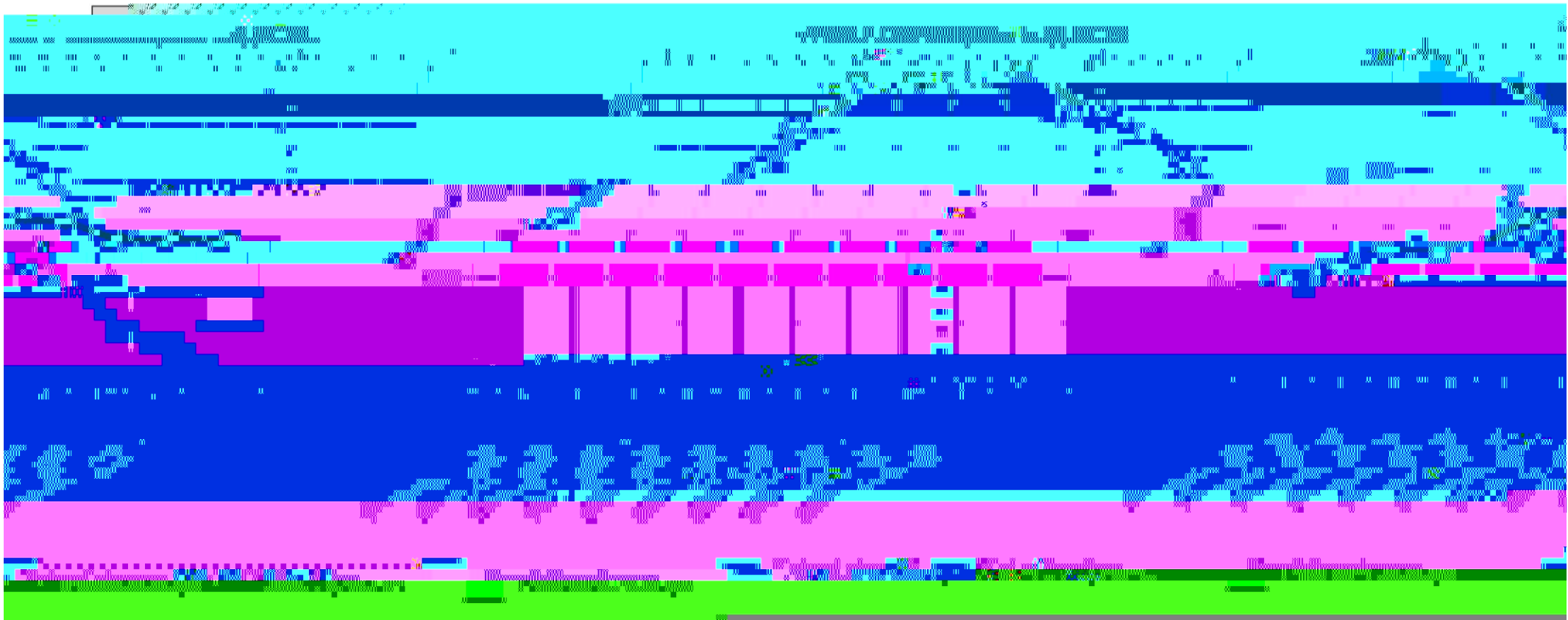
The share of the global population with less than secondary education will have gone\* from almost half to a small minority



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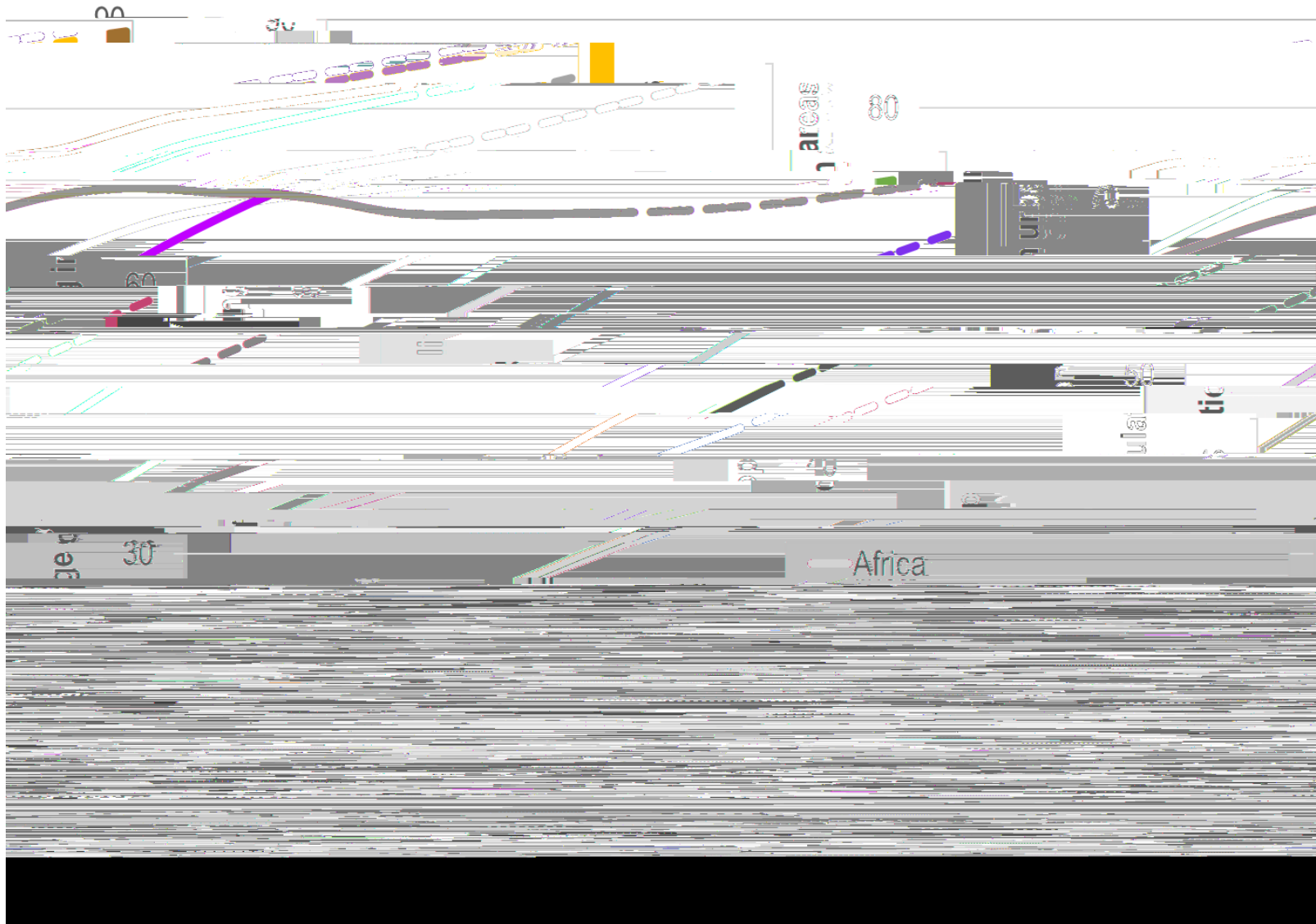
Population growth driven by *natural change* (births minus deaths) in the global South, but by *net migration* (immigration minus emigration) in the global North



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# Percentage urban by region, 1950-2050



Source: WUP2018

# Much global progress in poverty reduction, but more is needed

The world made major progress in reducing poverty since the Cairo Conference. The global poverty rate declined from 37.8% in 1990 to 11.7% in 2013, resulting in over a billion fewer people living in extreme poverty.

The pace of progress slowed since the mid-2010. Global poverty reached 8.3% in 2019 but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it rose to 9.2% in 2020, rewinding progress by about 3 years.

In developing countries, rapid population growth continue to pose challenges for poverty eradication, hunger and malnutrition, and for efforts to provide



# Much progress in poverty reduction, but more is needed

At the individual level, poverty, limited education, and gender inequality curtail people's opportunities and choices, hindering their ability to control their fertility

Conversely, developing countries that manage to expand access to education and healthcare, including reproductive health and family planning services, can break that vicious cycle, and accelerate their transition from high to low fertility rates

Success stories include China and India, where robust economic growth has been accompanied with reduced rates of extreme poverty, to virtually zero in China since December 2020, and to only 6% of the population of India in 2019

# Improvements in gender equality since Cairo must be expanded, and protected from reversals

Although both men and women of all ages have benefitted from better health and increased longevity since Cairo, women continue to outlive men almost everywhere. At the global level, in 2023, life expectancy was 76.0 years for females and 70.8 years for males

This female advantage, of about 5 years in life expectancy at birth at the time of the Cairo conference, has stayed fairly stable and is projected to remain around that level by the 2050s

Another area in which women have seen considerable improvements is in education. Women are achieving higher levels of education and tend to academically outperform men, especially among the post-Cairo generations

However, girls still lag behind boys in educational attainment in low-income countries, and where they do achieve higher levels of education, these have

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