



HYBRID

LABOUR MARKET

# 2025 WINTER FORUM ON DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITIONS

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC TRANSITIONS  
ON THE WORLD OF WORK

2 – 4 DECEMBER 2025

*Information Note*

**How** do demographic transitions impact the world of work and why do they demand immediate policy attention?

**How** are changing demographics reshaping global labour markets?

**What** is the impact of demographic transitions on labour markets, sustainable business models, labour migration, and social security

**How** are governments, businesses, workers and social partners preparing for the change?

## ABOUT THE EVENT

The *Winter Forum on Demographic Transitions* is a **three-day international learning event** organized by ITCILO and the ILO, with the support of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of the Government of Italy, as a follow-up to the World of Work Dialogues: Unveiling the Colours of the Economy organized in October 2024.

Set to take place in **hybrid format (both as a face-to-face event and online)** in December 2025, it is conceived as a platform for in-depth exploration of how demographic transitions - ageing populations, youth surges, shifting labour force participation - are reshaping the world of work.

This event will gather ILO constituents—Governments, Employers' and Workers' Organizations—as well as development partners, researchers, and practitioners from around the globe. Together, they will explore a **wide range of challenges and opportunities emerging from these demographic shifts**. The goal is to foster a deeper understanding of complex transitions, uncover new thematic connections, and stimulate systemic thinking that can inform institutional action, technical cooperation, and ITCILO's future training offerings.

The Winter Forum on Demographic Transitions is neither a foresight exercise nor a conventional training course. It is a content-rich, collaborative learning space that combines regional experiences, evidence-based analysis, and policy experimentation welcoming the participation of both **experienced leaders and young change-makers**. It provides an opportunity to reframe demographic change not as a crisis, but as a **catalyst for innovation, solidarity, and inclusive labour market transformation**.

In line with ITCILO's mandate, **the Forum will support participants in adopting a "demographic lens"** in their own work and institutions. This means strengthening the capacity of governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and other actors to integrate demographic considerations into policy, training, and institutional strategies. The Forum will further serve as a laboratory to assess and collect participants' capacity-building needs, ensuring that ITCILO can shape future training and advisory services that are relevant and demand-driven.

## WHY THIS, WHY NOW?

All regions of the world are currently undergoing demographic change—but in highly divergent ways. Some countries are grappling with rapidly ageing societies, facing labour shortages, social protection strains, and increased care demands. Others are contending with youth bulges, struggling to absorb growing working-age populations into decent and sustainable employment.

At the ILO Governing Body (March 2025), demographic change was identified as a possible general discussion item for the International Labour Conference after 2028, with a strong focus on **intergenerational solidarity and decent work for older workers**. This signals the increasing centrality of the issue to the ILO's mandate and the need to start building policy-relevant knowledge and partnerships now.

At the same time, the **United Nations Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on Ageing** has highlighted serious normative gaps in the protection of older persons' rights, calling for new international legal instruments and frameworks to address **ageism, access to services, participation, and social inclusion**. These developments situate demographic transitions not only as labour market and policy challenges, but also as questions of **human rights, social contracts, and intergenerational justice**.

The new demographic reality of an inverted age pyramid is **steadily moving to the forefront of the policy agenda**. In some countries, the shift is drastic and current, compelling policymakers to find solutions in real time to ease the impact.

As underlined in the ILO's statement to the Doha Declaration on Social Justice and Fair Globalization, "Demographic transitions, including the challenges of ageing societies and youth surges, are reshaping labour markets worldwide and require forward-looking, rights-based and inclusive policy responses." Likewise, the UN Pact for the Future (2024) calls for **strengthening "intergenerational partnerships and solidarity among generations"** by promoting opportunities for voluntary, constructive and regular interaction between young and older persons in their families, workplaces and in society at large." Both commitments underscore that **demographic change** must be addressed **not only as a labour market issue**, but as a **central pillar of renewed social contracts and sustainable development**.

What's often missing in the global conversation is a **shared, systemic view** that connects these trends **across borders, sectors and generations**. **Ageing and youthfulness** are not opposing conditions - they are intertwined, often **within the same society**, and **increasingly across regions** through economic ties, migration flows, and digital systems.

The Winter Forum on Demographic Transitions aims to address this gap. It will frame demographic transitions as **a global challenge with interconnected dimensions**—from social protection and care systems to gender equity, labour migration, enterprise development, and lifelong learning. It will also explore how these transitions open up **new opportunities: for individuals and workers** through job creation and reshaping, **for businesses** through service innovation, and **for governments** through forward-looking policy design.

## OBJECTIVES

- **Identify and unpack the interconnected dimensions** of demographic transitions and their impacts on labour markets and employment systems;
- **Stimulate systemic thinking** across regions, institutions, and sectors to generate integrated responses;
- **Highlight policy and institutional gaps**, and **exchange knowledge on emerging solutions**;
- Strengthen the foundation for **future training and technical cooperation activities**;
- Foster **strategic dialogue among ILO constituents, youth and international actors** to support inclusive, evidence-based approaches to demographic change.
- Collect and assess the capacity-building needs of participants, creating a basis for a future ITCILO's **training and advisory services offering, based on the adoption of a "demographic lens"** across regions and sectors.

# CORE THEMATIC AREAS

## **1. Intergenerational Solidarity and a Life Course Approach to transform public policies and institutions within Shifting Labour Markets**

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Workforces are evolving in both size and composition. Countries are seeing growing female participation, shrinking youth cohorts, and rising demand for mid- and late-career workers. Responding to these changes requires the transformation of both public policies and labour market institutions. Employment services, collective bargaining frameworks, skills systems, and social dialogue mechanisms must adapt to ensure that opportunities and protections are accessible at every stage of life. This includes stronger attention to active ageing—through rights-based and needs-based approaches such as reskilling, adaptable work environments, and age-friendly regulations. A life course approach with public policies anchored in a renewed institutional framework can help prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty, inequality, and exclusion, while fostering fairness and resilience. The focus will be on how labour market policies and institutions can balance supply and demand across age groups, and how intergenerational solidarity can become a structural principle of governance, enterprise practices, and workers' representation.

## **2. Demography Beyond Borders**

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Demographic change is not isolated to ageing societies or youth-bulging countries—it is a shared global condition that requires cross-border cooperation. Hyper-ageing societies in parts of Asia and Europe increasingly rely on younger workforces abroad, while many African countries face the opposite challenge of absorbing youth into decent jobs, while at the same time experiencing rapid ageing in their own rural areas. This theme explores how international labour mobility and shared investments in lifelong learning systems and active labour market policies can help rebalance demographic asymmetries and unlock mutually beneficial solutions. Such policies should be data-driven and crafted to effectively engage and persuade policymakers, despite operating within a context increasingly shaped by geopolitical shifts, the rise of populism, anti-migrant sentiment, and increase of discriminations.

## **3. Care, Health, and Social Services**

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Demographic change is increasing the demand for care and health services, putting pressure on both formal systems and informal caregivers. This area will examine how countries are responding through professionalisation of care work, investment and business opportunities in long-term care infrastructure, and gender-sensitive approaches to the “sandwich generation”—those supporting both ageing parents and young children. Drawing on the UN OEWG, it will also integrate rights-based perspectives, including the right to health, access to housing and transport, and participation in community life.

## **4. Social Protection and Economic Models**

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The move from productive to financialized capitalism and the rise of digital technologies, automation, and artificial intelligence, together with demographic change, could erode the foundations of social protection. Traditional contributory models of social protection are under strain in both ageing and informal economies. To ensure that all firms pay their fair share, policymakers must rethink the composition and structure of contributions. Instead of being determined solely by wages (and thus,

labor stock), employers' contributions to these systems could be determined partly by their capital intensity. This could be calculated as a portion of a firm's profits, sales, or investment in labor-replacing technologies. This theme explores emerging ideas and reforms—including solidarity-based mechanisms, universal systems, and hybrid financing models—that can sustain coverage and equity in the face of changing population structures and labour patterns, with the aim to combat inequalities, informality, and gender disparities.

## 5. Digitalisation and Automation

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Technological transformation is both a challenge and an enabler in ageing contexts. Countries like Japan, Singapore, and South Korea are pioneering the use of automation and robotics in elder care and public services to address labour shortages and enhance efficiency. Yet, the impact of digitalisation reaches beyond care. In sectors like information and communication technologies and leisure, automation is reshaping jobs—introducing new forms of work, altering skills demand, and enabling older adults to remain engaged through flexible, tech-supported roles. These shifts call for greater investment in lifelong learning, inclusive digital design, and human-machine collaboration models. This theme will explore how to make technology part of the solution to demographic challenges—through equitable innovation, targeted digital upskilling, and sector-specific strategies that reduce exclusion and maximize participation across generations.

# STRUCTURE AND AUDIENCE

The Winter Forum will be delivered in a **hybrid format, with interactive participation in person and online**. It will combine policy dialogues, evidence presentations, moderated labs, and regional roundtables to stimulate deep and comparative learning. Sessions will be built around **real-world experiences and case studies**, ensuring relevance to policy and practice.

**Participants** will include:

- Representatives of Government and public institutions operating in the world of work;
- Leaders and staff of Workers' and Employers' and Business Membership Organizations;
- Regional and local government actors;
- Young leaders, early-career professionals, and youth networks;
- Experts in migration, skills, social protection, gender and care;
- Researchers, development partners, and innovation practitioners.

By connecting these diverse actors, the event will foster **interdisciplinary and inter-regional collaboration**, creating a foundation for joint solutions and future partnerships.

In line with ITCILO's mission, the Forum will use **participatory methods to help participants internalize a demographic lens and apply it to their own institutional contexts**. Alongside dialogue and knowledge exchange, the event will gather insights on training and advisory priorities, enabling ITCILO to continuously adapt its portfolio to the evolving needs of constituents and partners.

# EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Winter Forum aims to produce:

- A clearer and shared **understanding of the systemic impact of demographic change** on the world of work;
- A set of **insights and models** that can feed into ITCILO's training offer and ILO programming;
- A portfolio of **regional experiences and case examples** to inspire technical and South-South and Triangular cooperation;
- Greater **visibility of youth perspectives** and roles in shaping equitable demographic transitions;
- A **network of actors** committed to shaping new narratives and policies for intergenerational, gender-equitable, and opportunity-driven transitions.
- **Enhanced capacity of participants to adopt a “demographic lens”** in their own institutions, policies, and programmes;
- A **mapping of participants' training and advisory needs** to inform ITCILO's future capacity-building offer.

Demographic transitions are not abstract trends—they are active forces shaping how we work, care, and govern. The Winter Forum on Demographic Transitions offers a timely, global space to **explore these transitions as interconnected challenges and opportunities for inclusive development**. By connecting evidence, policy dialogue, and systemic thinking, it will help build a stronger, more responsive global labour ecosystem.

## DRAFT AGENDA • TURIN AND ONLINE

### Day 1, December 2 – Building Common Ground

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#### MORNING

- **Official Welcome**
- **Opening Keynote – “Demographic Transitions: Intersecting Mega-Trends”**  
Beyond population dynamics, how demography compounds with climate change, digitalisation, migration, gender, inequalities, fiscal policies and geopolitics to reshape the world of work.
- **Panel – “What’s in it for me?” Perspectives from Workers, Employers, Governments**  
Looking at direct incentives, risks, and opportunities.
- **Interactive Lab – “Connecting the Dots”**  
Facilitated group exercise where participants map how demographic change touches their work, organisation, or community.

## AFTERNOON

- **The Gender dimensions of Demographic Transitions**  
Discussion on how gender demographics are affecting the world of work.
- **Parallel Lab 1 – Technology & Demography: Digitalisation and Automation across Generations**  
Group work on scenarios of human-machine collaboration, care robotics, tech for demographic projections and digital inclusion.
- **Parallel Lab 2 – Migration, Skills and Opportunity: Demography Beyond Borders**  
Group work on policies and practices to match skills supply and demand across ageing and youthful regions.
- **Parallel Lab 3 – Informality and Inequality in Demographic Transitions**  
Group work on how ageing in rural areas, youth bulges in cities, and gender gaps in care and employment can perpetuate informality, and what innovative policy, institutional, and business responses could reverse exclusionary dynamics.
- **Study Visit & Networking Dinner**  
Site visit in Turin followed directly by the Forum Dinner.

## Day 2, December 3 – Cross-cutting Themes and Systemic Insights

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### MORNING

- **Keynote Dialogue – “Intergenerational Solidarity as a New Social Contract”**  
A provocative input followed by a moderated discussion.
- **Parallel Lab 4 – Social Protection reimaged: Financing and solidarity models**  
Group work exploring hybrid and solidarity financing models, linking pensions, contributions, and fiscal space.
- **Parallel Lab 5 – Care, Health and Dignity: Rethinking service ecosystems**  
Group work on long-term care, “sandwich generation”, and business opportunities in care economies
- **Parallel Lab 6 – Company Transformation: Demography and the Future of Enterprises**  
Group work on how demographic transitions affect business continuity and transformation, including intergenerational succession planning, the legacy and renewal of companies, youth and silver entrepreneurship strategies.

### AFTERNOON

- **Plenary Cross-Cutting Panel – “From Data to Action: Demography and the Mega-Trends”**  
How evidence anticipates challenges; combining foresight (demography in 2040), statistics, simulation tools on labour market and fiscal dynamics (including integration of medium-term fiscal frameworks and debt sustainability analyses) and programmatic practice.
- **Testimonies Carousel – “Stories from the Field”**  
Short testimonies from countries with diverse experiences, delivered in parallel carousel format.



## Day 3, December 4 – From Reflection to Collective Insights

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### MORNING

- **Plenary Dialogue – “Life Course Labour Market Policies and Institutions: What does age-sensitivity concretely mean?”**

Exploration of evidence-based age-sensitive policies (rethinking ALMPs, retirement, business development reskilling, job design, fiscal policies) and needed transformation of labour market institutions.

- **Interactive Session – “Intergenerational Learning in Practice”**

Building on the ITCILO Innovation Lab’s Intergenerational Learning Experiment, this session will immerse participants in methods of intergenerational foresight to reflect on how such approaches can be adapted in policy, education, and community practice to reframe demographic transitions as opportunities for solidarity and innovation.

### AFTERNOON

- **Interactive Design Sprint – “Reimagining policies and narratives”**

Mixed groups design prototypes: policy recommendations, new narratives, and practical initiatives. Special focus on identifying capacity-building needs and opportunities that ITCILO could address in future training and advisory services.

- **Gallery walk & peer exchange**

Group results displayed and enriched through peer feedback.

- **Closing Reflections – “Towards a Global Demographic Compact for the World of Work”**

Reflections from representatives of governments, EBMOs and workers’ organizations.

- **Concluding remarks**

## LANGUAGE

The event will be run in English.

## REGISTRATION

Reserve your seat for the event in Turin: <https://oarf2.itcilo.org/CST/E9019243/en>

## CONTACT

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# INFO

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