



## Over 100 thousand elderly women in Region XII to benefit from the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010

An estimated 111,000 elderly women in Region XII aged 60 years old and over are expected to benefit from Republic Act No. 9994 otherwise known as The Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010 which was signed into law last February 15, 2010.

**Table 1. Projected Population of Senior Citizens SOCCSKSARGEN, 2010-2025**

Population	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025
All Ages	3,245,800	4,080,400	4,524,000	4,961,900	5,383,100
Male	1,654,000	2,069,700	2,290,400	2,507,600	2,716,000
Female	1,591,800	2,010,700	2,233,600	2,454,300	2,667,100
60 & Over	150,500	219,000	278,000	355,200	448,400
Male	75,600	108,100	136,100	172,000	214,500
Female	74,900	111,000	141,900	183,200	233,900

Source: 2000 Census-based National, Regional and Provincial Population Projections, NSO

In 2010, women aged 60 years old and over account for 50.7 percent of the projected 219,000 senior citizens in the region. From 74,900 in 2000, elderly women in Region XII was projected to increase by 36,100 to 111,000 ten years later. The number of elderly men, on the other hand, was estimated to go up to 108,100 in 2010 from 75,600 ten years ago.

The proportion of elderly women to the total female population in Region XII was estimated at 5.5 percent in 2010 from 4.7 percent in 2000. From 4.6 percent in 2000, elderly men account for 5.2 percent of the total male population ten years after. The population of elderly women in Region XII grew annually by 4.0 percent for the last ten years compared to 3.6 percent among elderly men.

**Table 2. Life Expectancy, Total Fertility and Crude Death Rates SOCCSKSARGEN, 2000-2015**

Indicators	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015
Life Expectancy at birth (in years)			
Male	63.9	65.9	67.4
Female	68.8	70.8	72.3
Total Fertility Rate (number of children per woman)	4.0	3.8	3.5
Crude Death Rate (per 1,000 population)	6.5	5.9	5.5

Source: 2000 Census-based National, Regional and Provincial Population Projections, NSO

The steady increase in the number and proportion of the elderly can be attributed to the continued increase in life expectancy, fertility reduction and a drop in crude death rates. Average life expectancy rate among female population for 2010-2015 in Region XII was estimated to be 72.3 years, about five years higher than the males at 67.4 years with both sexes estimated to live 3.5 more years longer compared to the 2000 projections. Total fertility rate went down from 4.0 children per woman to 3.5 children. Crude death rate declined from 6.5 deaths per 1,000 population in 2000 to 5.5 deaths in 2010.

The leading causes of mortality for age group 60 years and above in the Philippines in 2000 include diseases of the heart, diseases of the vascular system, and cancer. Other common health-related ailments affecting senior citizens are difficulty in walking and chewing, hearing and visual impairment, osteoporosis, arthritis and incontinence.

**Table 3. Leading Causes of Mortality For Persons 60 Years and Over, Philippines, 2000**

Leading Causes	Total Deaths	Death Rate per 100,000 old people
Cardio vascular disease, All Forms	71,874	1,547.35
Pneumonia	21,069	453.59
Malignant neoplasm, All Forms	17,898	385.32
Tuberculosis, All Forms	14,081	303.14
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	11,268	242.58
Diabetes mellitus	5,587	120.28
Gastric, duodenal, peptic and gastroje-junal ulcers and other digestive system diseases	5,280	76.73
Accidents and injuries	3,972	85.51
Nephritis, nephritic syndrome and nepro-sis	3,774	81.25
Septicemia	1,795	38.64

Source: Department of Health

### Policy Implications

It is undeniable that within the next 25 years, the population of senior citizens in Region XII will continue to increase. It is however uncertain whether they will age in good health or be weighed down with debilitating diseases. The government should therefore prepare for the consequences of an ageing population by focusing on policies that would contribute to increase healthy life years of ageing people in the country. Increasing healthy life years is one way of curtailing rising cost of health care for the ageing population.

### Republic Act No. 9942

Senior citizens in the country, defined as any resident citizens of the Philippines aged 60 and above, will get the following:

- A 20-percent discount and exemption from the value-added tax on the sale of goods and services (medicines, medical and dental fees, transport fares, services in hotels and restaurants, admission fees in theaters and other places of leisure);
- Mandatory PhilHealth coverage - Free medical and dental service, diagnostic and laboratory fees in all government facilities;
- A monthly stipend of P500 ; For indigents, a P1,500-monthly stipend and free vaccination against the influenza virus and pneumococcal disease;
- A five-percent discount on water bills (if consumption is less than 30 cubic meters a month) and electric bills (if consumption is less than 100 kilowatt-hours) if registered in the name of the senior citizen; and
- A P2000 benefit assistance to the nearest kin of the deceased indigent senior citizen; among others.