Exercise walk-through

Aging Populations ▪ 2.9

eXercise

You must be able to

- explain why populations age (low fertility, longer life)
- define the elderly **dependency ratio 老年抚养比**
- state the economic challenges of an aging population
- give one policy response to aging

Method — Why populations age

Populations age when **fertility falls** (fewer young) and **life expectancy rises** (more elderly), enlarging the older share of the population.

Method — Elderly dependency

The **elderly dependency ratio** compares people over 64 to the working-age population. A high ratio means fewer workers support each retiree.

Method — Challenges and responses

Aging strains **pensions and health care** and shrinks the workforce. Responses include raising the retirement age, encouraging immigration, or pro-natalist policies.

Practice 2.1 ▪ 2 marks

State two reasons a population ages.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

falling fertility / fewer children **B1**; rising life expectancy / people living longer **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ▪ 2 marks

Explain one economic challenge of an aging population.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

fewer workers support more retirees **B1**; higher pension and health-care costs / labour shortage **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ▪ 1 mark

A country's over-65 share is rising fast.
(a) Name the ratio that captures this burden.
(b) State one government policy to ease it.

Solution 2.3

Method: Elderly dependency

Worked steps

(a) the elderly dependency ratio **B1**. (b) raise retirement age / encourage immigration / pro-natalist incentives **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ▪ 1 mark

An aging population is caused mainly by

- **A** high fertility and high mortality
- **B** low fertility and rising life expectancy
- **C** rapid immigration of youth
- **D** a high infant mortality rate

Solution 3.1

- **A** high fertility and high mortality
- **B** low fertility and rising life expectancy ✓
- **C** rapid immigration of youth
- **D** a high infant mortality rate

Worked steps

B. fewer births plus longer lives age a population.

Exam-style 3.2 ▪ 1 mark

A policy directly aimed at offsetting a shrinking workforce is

- **A** banning immigration
- **B** encouraging youth immigration
- **C** lowering the retirement age
- **D** raising infant mortality

Solution 3.2

A banning immigration

B encouraging youth immigration ✓

C lowering the retirement age

D raising infant mortality

Worked steps

B. youth immigration adds workers to a shrinking labour force.

Exam-style 3.3 ▪ 1 mark

An aging country debates raising its retirement age.
(a) Explain how this helps with the dependency ratio.
(b) State one drawback of the policy.

Solution 3.3

Method: Challenges and responses

Worked steps

(a) it keeps more people in the workforce, lowering the dependency ratio **B1**. (b) older workers may be unable to work / it is politically unpopular **B1**.