

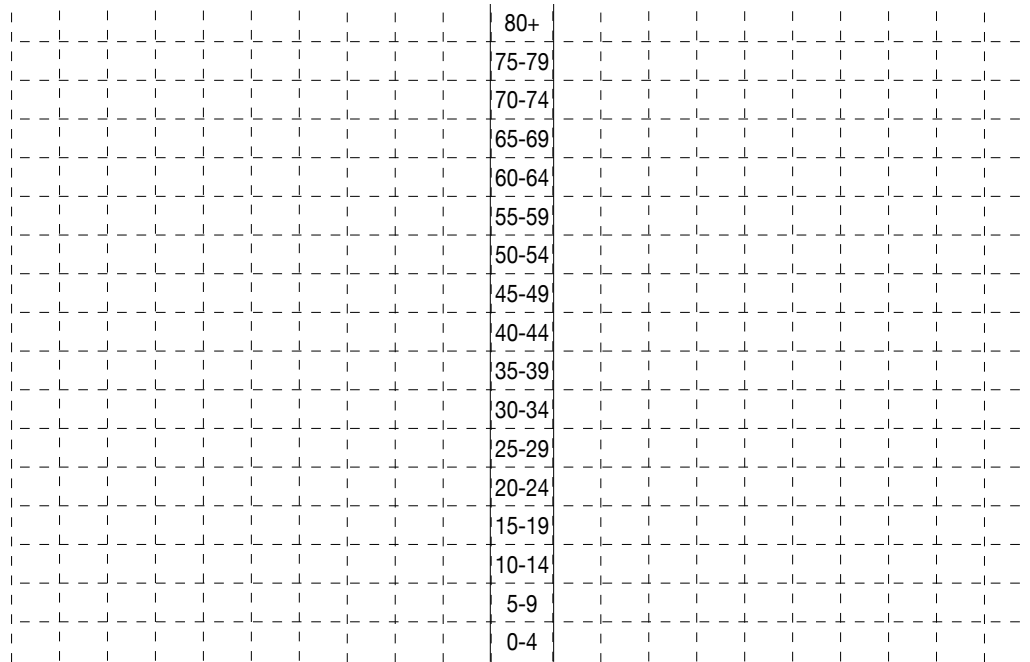
What are population pyramids?

They are bar charts which show the structure of the population by sex and age at a given moment.

The vertical axis represents the age groups in five-year bands.

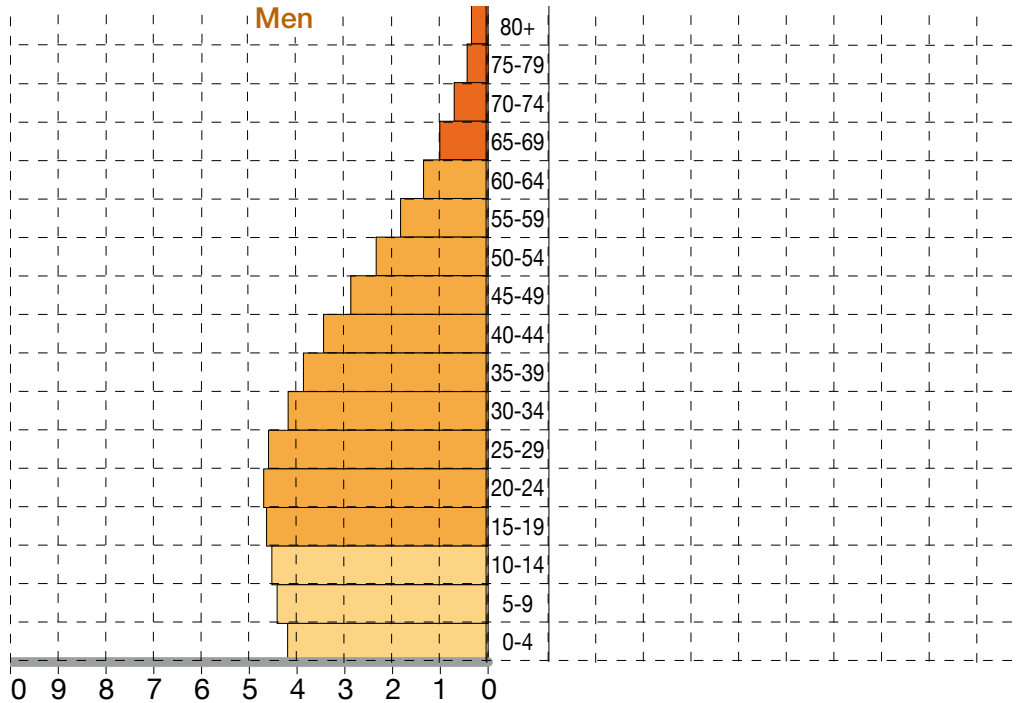
	80+	
	75-79	
	70-74	
	65-69	
	60-64	
	55-59	
	50-54	
	45-49	
	40-44	
	35-39	
	30-34	
	25-29	
	20-24	
	15-19	
	10-14	
	5-9	
	0-4	

The horizontal axis shows the population numbers in percentages or in absolute figures:

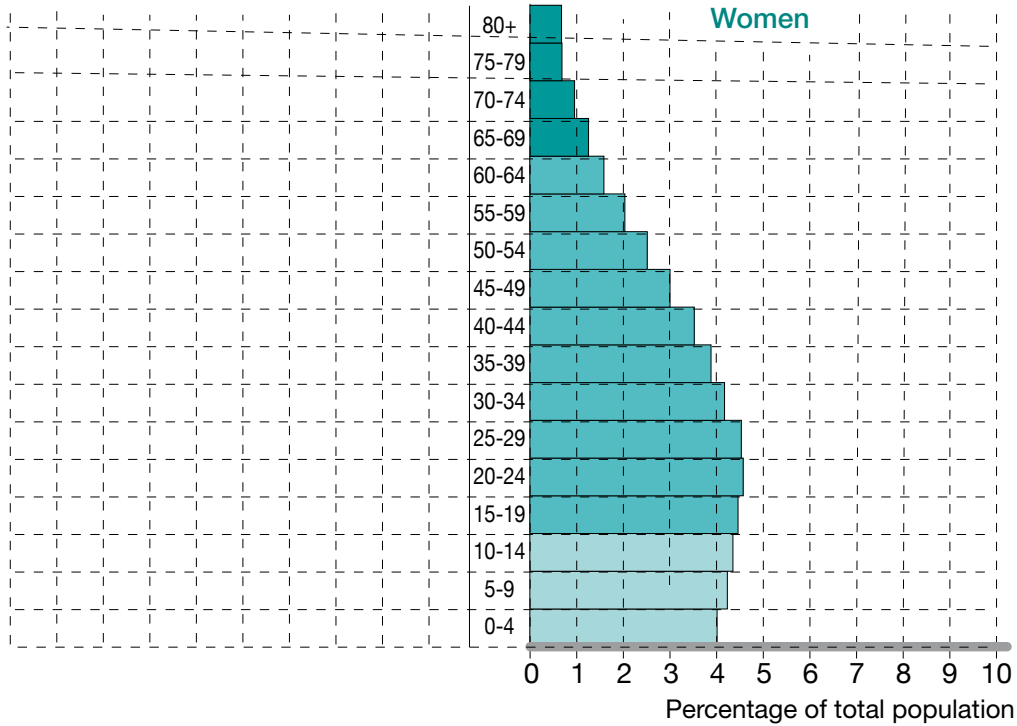


Percentage of total population

The men on the left:



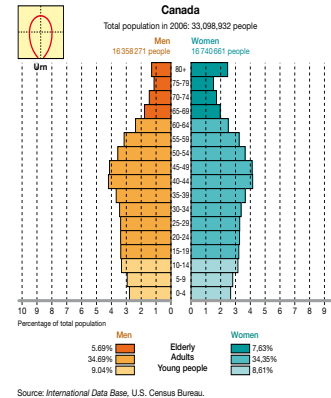
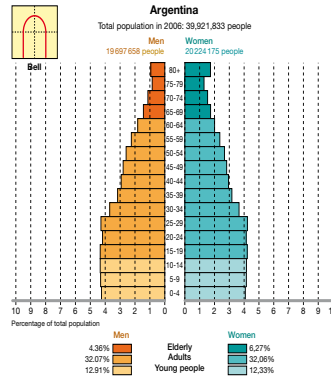
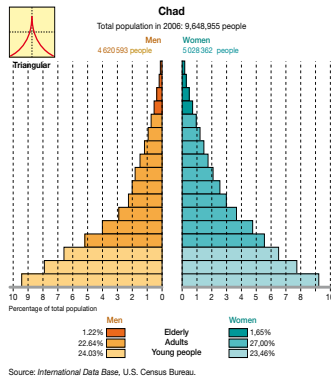
The women on the right:



The shapes of the pyramids

The shape of the pyramid reflects the population type.

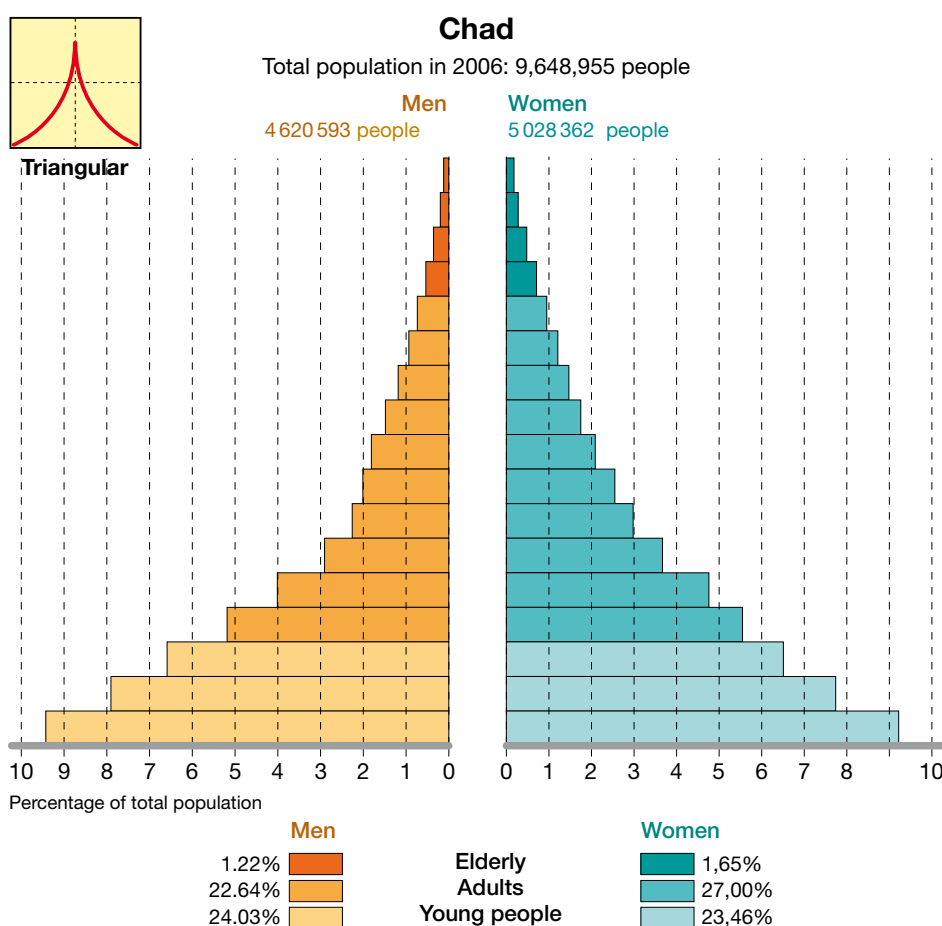
We can distinguish a triangular shape, which reflects a young population type; a bell shape, which represents an adult population type; and an urn shape, which indicates an ageing population.



The **triangular** pyramid is representative of a young population. Its base is wide, due to the high birth rates. The percentage of young people exceeds 35%.

The population rapidly falls towards the top, due to a low or medium life expectancy, so there are relatively few elderly people: less than 5% of the population.

This pyramid, which characterised all countries in the first demographic phase, is now typical of the most underdeveloped countries of Africa and Asia.

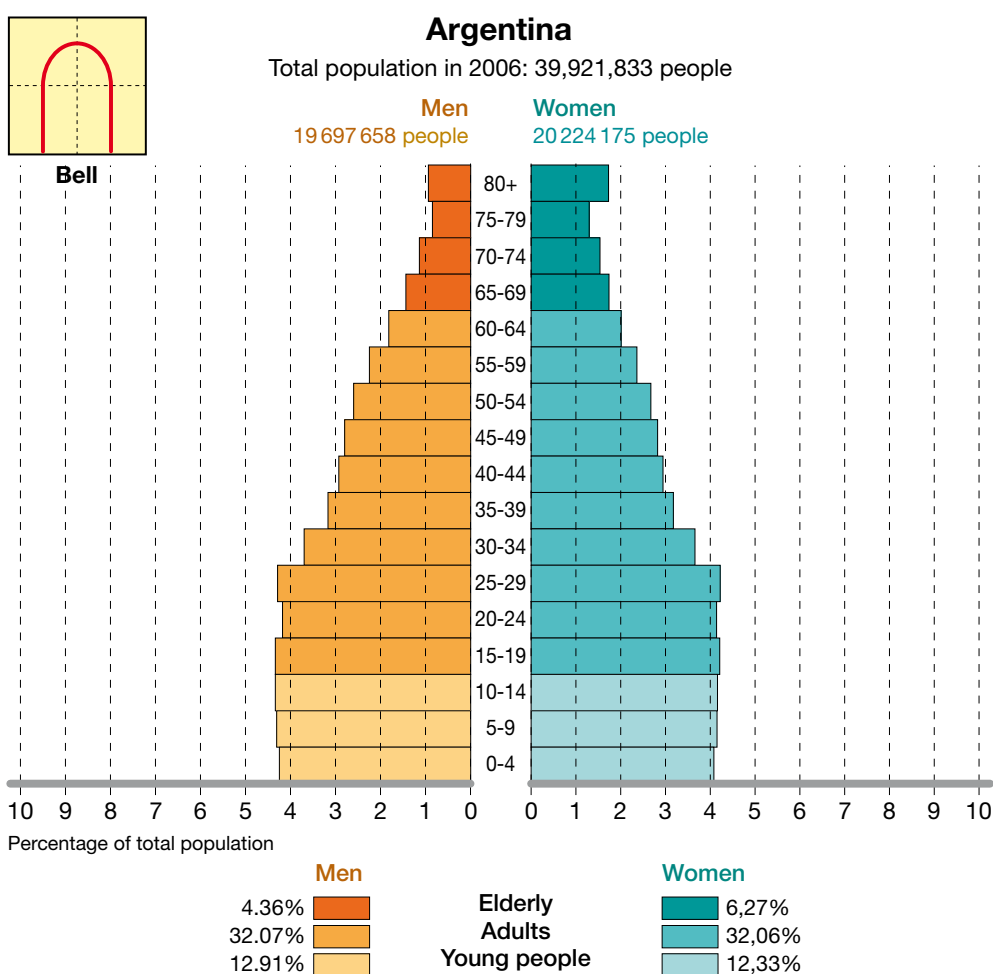


Source: *International Data Base*, U.S. Census Bureau.

The **bell-shaped** pyramid indicates an adult population. Its base is moderate, as birth control has begun. The percentage of young people is between 25% and 35%.

The population falls slowly towards the top, due to a high life expectancy, so the percentage of elderly people is moderate: between 5% and 12%.

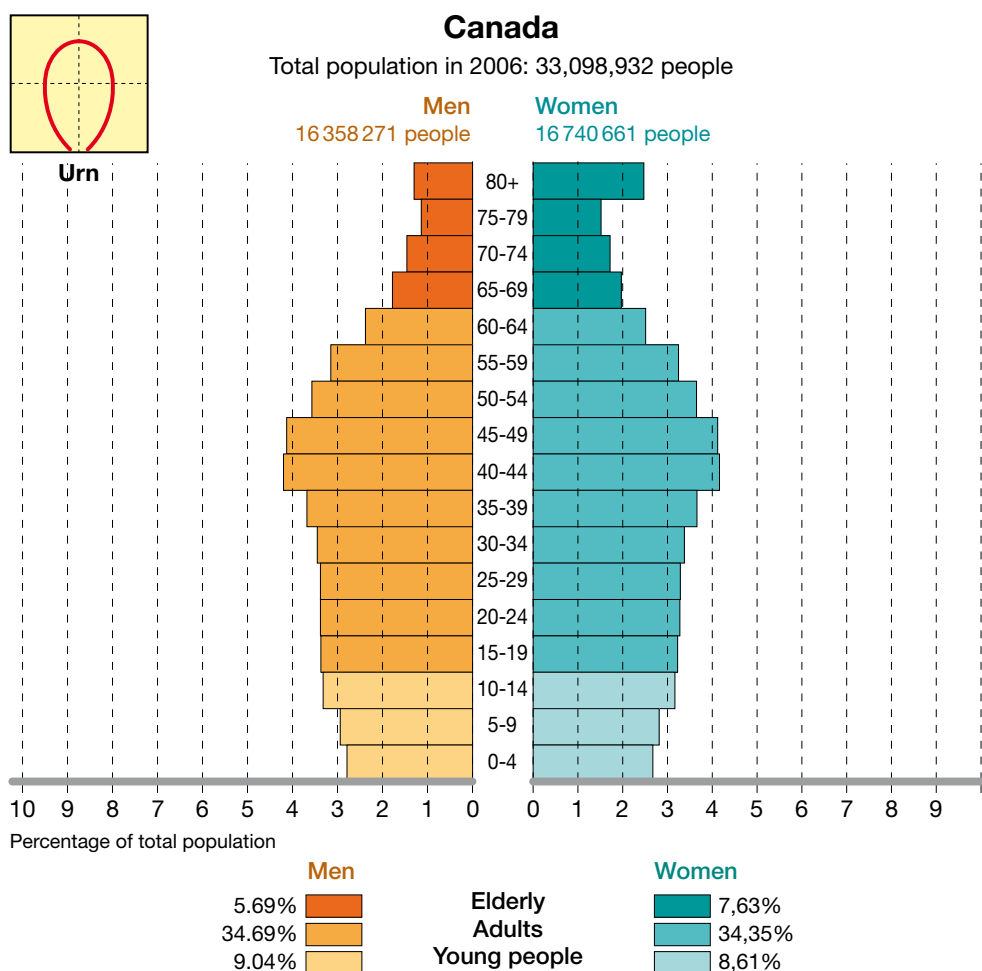
Today, this pyramid is typical of developing countries in Central and South America, Asia and the Middle East.



The **urn- or bulb-shaped** pyramid is characteristic of an ageing population. It has a narrow base due to a low, and falling, birth rate. The percentage of young people is lower than 25%.

The population falls very slowly towards the top, due to a very high life expectancy. The percentage of elderly people is high: over 12%.

This pyramid is typical of developed countries in North America, Europe, Asia (Japan) and Oceania.



Source: *International Data Base*. U.S. Census Bureau.