

Ageing in an Aged Society: Experiences and Attitudes of Catholic Order Members towards Population Ageing and Older People

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Abstract

Population ageing occurs in almost all industrialized societies and is the demographic phenomenon with the currently highest interest from scientists, policy-makers and the general public. Its consequences raise questions not only with regard to possible solution strategies but also to the intergenerational solidarity. This paper deals with the attitudes towards population ageing and older people among the extremely aged population of Catholic orders members. The study is based on the 'Population Policy Acceptance Study' and compares the attitudes of Bavarian nuns and monks to those of the German general population. The results reveal that worldly and monastic populations show the same basic pattern of a positive attitude towards older people while at the same time considering population ageing as a worrisome development. However, order members evaluate abilities and societal role of elderly more positive implying that in an aged population younger and older generations can build a well functioning society.

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