Online Resource

Bayesian Probabilistic Projections of Life Expectancy for All Countries

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Here we provide updated probabilistic projections of life expectancy at birth for both males and females for all 158 countries considered in the main text of our paper, using the methodology described there. The projections given here are based on the estimates in the 2010 revision of the World Population Prospects, updating the illustrative results in the main text, which were based on the 2008 revision. There was one additional area included in the 2010 revision, namely Taiwan (Province of China), and so we used 159 countries/areas for estimation.

We also added historical data for 30 countries prior to 1950, provided to us by the UN Population Division. When they were available, we included data back as far as 1870–1875. For a few countries, mostly in Europe, data earlier than 1870 were available, but they showed a different pattern than the later data, with more fluctuations and a less clear upward trend, and so they seemed less relevant to projecting current trends.

In the main text of the paper we gave results only for male life expectancy. Here we give results for female life expectancy also, using the same model, but with appropriately chosen prior distributions, chosen based on the same considerations as those for males.

We reestimated the model using the updated data. We modified the prior specification slightly. For females we used the prior parameters $(a_1, \ldots, a_6) = (13.22, 41.07, 9.24, 17.60, 2.84, 0.38)$, equal to the parameters of the UN medium variant for females. For projecting both sexes, we set $(\delta_1^2, \ldots, \delta_6^2)$ equal to the variance of the UN variants for females, namely (14.78, 16.28, 133.13, 31.80, 0.81, 0.16). We broadened the prior slightly by allowing Δ_3 and Δ_3^c to take negative values, truncating them to the interval [-20, 100] for females and [-40, 100] for males. The lower limits were chosen so that the prior distributions cover the range of the UN variants.

The quantities $\sum_{i=1}^4 \Delta_i$ and $\sum_{i=1}^4 \Delta_i^c$ correspond roughly to the average and country-specific ages at which the expected increase in life expectancy becomes approximately constant at its asymptote, z^c . We therefore restricted them to lie within the range of life expectancies that have either been historically observed or are plausible before 2100, taken to be [30,110]. This eliminated a small number of implausible trajectories but did not noticeably change the results.

The projections were produced using the R package bayesLife, version 0.3-2 (Ševčíková and Raftery 2011).

Reference

Ševčíková, H. and Raftery, A. E. (2011). bayesLife: Bayesian Projection of Life Expectancy. R package version 0.3-2. Available at http://CRAN.R-project.org/package=bayesLife.









































































































