



Analysis: Separating WNBA contenders, pretenders

SPORTS, 1B

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ANALYSIS

Demographic dynamics upending the world



A street vendor carries bouquets of flowers for sale in Hanoi, Vietnam, on Oct. 22. Countries with “demographic dividends” such as Vietnam, with 70% of the population ages 15-64, have the opportunity for impressive growth rates. NHAC NGUYEN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

‘Youth bulges,’ graying societies shift economic, political balance

John Rennie Short
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
THE CONVERSATION

Government-shaking protests in Bangladesh, Iran, Nepal and Sri Lanka – to name a few – have all in recent years been linked to what demographers call a “youth bulge.” Meanwhile, the economic slowdown in China and ballooning public debt in the United States are in part due to the two powers’ aging populations. In contrast, recent economic growth in Brazil, India and Vietnam reflects a “demographic dividend” of the economically active.

Demographic trends are fueling some of the events reshaping the world. But what exactly are these age-related phenomena, and why are they having such an impact now? I explored these issues in depth in my 2024 book “Demography and the Making of the Modern World.”

Below is a rundown on some of the main demographic dynamics that are changing the world.

Young populations

Having a high proportion of a population age 14 and under is something generally found in poorer countries, and it usually means a huge demographic drag on economic performance.

We see this in Angola, Niger and Somalia, all of which have between 45% and 50% in that age group – compared to around 17% in the United States.

Having such a large proportion of so-



In Bangladesh, which saw its government toppled by mass protests in 2024, 53% of the population is under age 30. Research has found that countries with more than 60% of their population under 30 are four times more likely to experience outbreaks of civil conflict. MEHEDI HASAN/MIDDLE EAST IMAGES/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

ciety in their early childhood means fewer workers are supporting a vast number of citizens not in the workforce – and that leads to reduced savings rates and slower economic growth.

Countries still at this early stage of the demographic transition from high to low birth rates often have limited economic opportunities.

The youth bulge

Baby booms, the result of high fertility rates, are inevitably followed by a “youth bulge.” This is defined as a country with a larger than average proportion of people ages 15 to 29.

See **DEMOGRAPHIC**, Page 1A

COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL

‘Surprise’ motion starts conversation on binding arbitration

Charles Dunlap
Columbia Daily Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Columbia City Council had a “surprise” at the end of its meeting Monday night, May 4.

Ward 2 council member Vera Ellwood made a motion to establish a public hearing on a proposed ordinance she presented on binding arbitration. What was provided to council members without prior warning is an ordinance that could eventually amend the city’s code on binding arbitration.



Ellwood

“It is based on other municipalities who have successfully had this process in place for many years, serving both the city and its employees,” Ellwood said.

Ellwood said she crafted the proposal in concert with local labor unions and worker organizations in Columbia, along with an attorney

See **COUNCIL**, Page 2A

MISSOURI SENATE

Committee vote kills video lottery proposal

Rudi Keller
Missouri Independent

A bill to authorize video lottery games in gas stations and other locations suffered a decisive defeat Wednesday, May 6 in a Missouri Senate committee, ending for another year hopes of vendors hoping to replace unregulated games.

With no discussion, the Senate Select Committee on Gaming voted unanimously against the House-passed bill. The committee was set up by Senate President Pro Tem Cindy O’Laughlin to consider the bill, and she made herself the chair.

O’Laughlin, a Republican from Shelbina, has been a long-time opponent of video lottery games and said nothing she’s heard has changed her position.

“My problem is it’s horrible for all the communities, and if we want to expand gaming, we can put it on the ballot,” O’Laughlin said.

See **LOTTERY**, Page 2A

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