



Hantavirus-hit ship part of Antarctic tourism boom

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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.”

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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

Health community preps for World Cup

Airborne diseases, OD’s among experts’ concerns

Jack Perry

Providence Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Infectious diseases spreading through the population. Bioterrorism. Unique illnesses. Rabies. Injuries from violence. Heatstroke. Drug overdoses. Trauma cases due to an increase in car crashes.

With soccer fans from different parts of the world visiting the United States

for World Cup games in June and July, medical professionals are trying to anticipate and prepare for all potential public health problems while navigating language and cultural differences.

“It’s prepare for the worst and hope for the best,” said Dr. Leonard Mermel, a doctor of osteopathic medicine and the medical director of the department of epidemiology and infection control for Brown University Health.

What concerns doctors?

Medical professionals want to be ready for any possibility. They want to

make sure they can treat any potential illnesses or injuries, contain any potential outbreaks, get patients where they need to go, and have enough medicine and personal protective equipment on hand.

“These people are going to be coming from different parts of the world, where they have some similar and some unique infectious agents, and you’re obviously not going to know who may be in the incubation period of one of these transmissible infections,” Mermel said. Some hospitals have had group

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USPS sees quarterly loss of \$2B

Mail volume declines by an additional 6.3%

David Shepardson
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Postal Service on May 8 reported a net quarterly loss of \$2 billion as it faces a growing financial crisis and has warned it could run out of cash as soon as February.

USPS said mail volumes fell an additional 6.3% in the three months ending March 31 as operating revenue rose 2.3% to \$20.2 billion over the same quarter last year.

USPS last month said it would temporarily suspend employer payments for a federal pension program to conserve cash and plans to raise the price of first-class mail stamps to 82 cents from 78 cents, effective July 12.

USPS has reported total net losses of \$120 billion since 2007 as first-class mail, its most profitable product, has fallen to its lowest volume since the late 1960s.

“We are in a cash crisis, and we are now taking serious and appropriate steps to conserve funds to operate,” Postmaster General David Steiner said. “To avoid disruption and to sustain our role supporting American commerce and the public, we require urgent congressional action to expand our borrowing authority and to address outdated constraints on the organization.”

USPS’s suspension of employee pension contributions will conserve \$200 million in cash every two weeks, or \$2.5 billion through Sept. 30, it said.

In April, USPS won approval from the Postal Regulatory Commission for a temporary 8% price hike for priority mail and package deliveries to deal with rising transportation and fuel costs. USPS plans for the surcharge to be in effect through Jan. 17, 2027.

Reuters also reported that USPS struck a deal with Amazon in which the retailer will use the Postal Service for at least 1 billion packages a year, or 80% of its volume last year. Steiner said on May 8 that developments with major customers including Amazon and DHL were encouraging.

In March, Steiner said the Postal Service was hiring restructuring advisers to help address its mounting financial troubles.



Medical professionals say they want to be ready for any possibility during the World Cup.

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