

EDITORIAL EXCERPTS

The Economist

On a long time-scale, exponential [population] shrinkage looks astonishingly fast. However, during the initial phase, which is when societies must grapple with the problem, the speed of change ought to be manageable.

[...] In a 41-country sample, a 70-year-old in 2022 had the same cognitive abilities as a 53-year-old had in 2000. Perhaps such progress will end. But as long as it continues, it will slow the shrinkage of labor forces, giving societies crucial extra decades to adapt. Countries that waste human capital may find ways to waste less of it, by feeding and educating young minds better, and removing barriers to women working.

[...]

Governments have a role in making life easier for families, but trying to pay people to have more children than they otherwise would is either staggeringly expensive or does not work. [...]

Shrinking, and thus aging, populations will eventually require big economic and social adjustments. The very old will need caring for (even if they are no costlier than the young, who often spend two decades needing support). The old are more likely to vote, so their views will shape politics. That could make it harder to raise pension ages in line with life expectancy, but sooner or later governments will have to.

Adapting to an emptier planet will not be easy, but it will be doable. None of the predictions of demographic disaster seems plausible this century, and 2100 is so far away that forecasts beyond it seem pointless. [...]

– September 11, 2025

Chicago Tribune

A new NBC News Decision Desk poll found a stark partisan divide between men and women ages 18 to 29.

[...]

Gen Z men are increasingly conservative, while Gen Z women are becoming more progressive. This growing divide has fueled an interesting narrative. The worry follows: If this gap persists, could it strain not only politics — but personal relationships, too? Fears of a complete population collapse abound in some corners of the internet.

We say: Let's wait and see. The members of this board were once 20-somethings, too, navigating ambition, identity, and external pressures. These impulses shape us all, and versions of this generational tension have appeared across the decades. And the gender gap isn't novel.

The ebb and flow of public opinion often coincides with major life changes: entering the workforce, starting families, managing bills. These forces can realign priorities and soften ideological extremes. So let's not rush to despair over the future when our history shows generational or gender gaps often converge over time.

Mars and Venus have coexisted — sometimes awkwardly, sometimes harmoniously — for generations. If history is any guide, they'll find a way on this one too.

– September 10, 2025