

Japan women world's longest-lived as male lifespan tops 80

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Japanese men's life expectancy rose above 80 for the first time in 2013, but was still several years below that of their female counterparts, whose lifespan was the world's longest, figures released Thursday showed.

A Japanese boy born in 2013 can now expect to live 80.21 years, up from 79.94 years in 2012, the health ministry said.

The average [lifespan](#) of Japanese women rose to 86.61 years in 2013, up from 86.41 the previous year, making them the world's longest-lived females for the second year running.

In second place were women in Hong Kong, whose life expectancy hit 86.57 last year.

Japanese men ranked fourth on the longevity list of the world's 50 major countries and regions behind Hong Kong, Iceland and Switzerland, the health ministry said. Hong Kong's average male lifespan was 80.87.

"There is still a room for growth in the lifespan if medical technology advances," a health ministry official said.

However, Japan's ageing population is a headache for policymakers who are faced with trying to ensure an ever-dwindling pool of workers can pay for the growing number of pensioners.

Government data released in April showed Japan's population shrank for

the third year running, with the elderly making up a quarter of the total for the first time.

The proportion of people aged 65 or over is forecast to reach nearly 40 percent of the population in 2060, the government has warned.

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