Macintosh HD:Users:camillai:Desktop:Screen Shot 2017-09-01 at 16.07.06.png**Under embargo until 00:01 on Thursday 30th November 2017**

**TECH SAVVY ‘SILVER SINGLES’ SET TO TRANSFORM ONLINE DATING BY 2050, PREDICTS FUTURE OF DATING REPORT**

*New report by some of the future’s brightest minds from Imperial College Business School and eharmony experts explores how dating will evolve over coming decades*

* *Come 2050, a new wave of super-fit ‘silver singles’ (aged 65-85) will enter the online dating market*
* *The average age of those looking for love online will also increase by a decade to 47 years old*
* *More than four in five (82%) singles expected to find love digitally come 2050*

By 2050 the average age of an online dater will reach 47, up from 38 in the present day, due to shifting attitudes to relationships and technology, and a new wave of super-fit ‘silver singles’ joining services.

This is according to the *Future of Dating: 2050* [report](https://www.eharmony.co.uk/dating-advice/dating/future-of-dating-2050), which unveils predictions on what online dating and relationships will be like in 2050 based on the analysis of decades of data looking at society, health and demographics. The study – the fourth annual iteration – was commissioned by the experts at eharmony and compiled by MSc Management students at Imperial College Business School.

A key factor in the rising average age of an online dater will be increased life expectancies, which mean that **nearly a quarter of the population will be over 60 compared to around 15% today.** What’s more, an incredible 8.1 million people will be within the 80-100+ bracket[[1]](#endnote-1).

**The biggest *increase* in online dating will therefore come from those aged 65 to 85** – up from 12% today to 78% by 2050. This is largely because, having grown up with technology, the silver daters of the future will be far more experienced with online dating than previous generations.

What’s more, as medical care heads towards seemingly sci-fi operations like medical 3D printing and a range of new applications of genomics[[2]](#endnote-2), many over 65s will also be fitter and healthier than ever before.

Meanwhile, more liberal social norms mean the singles of the future are expected to **have four key relationships** in an 87-year lifetime (ONS 2015) as opposed to one or two marriages as commonly seen today. Additionally, non-traditional or polyamorous relationships may become slightly more commonplace, to ‘give oxygen’ to monogamous relationships. Sociologists argue this could reduce the pressures of binding commitment.

According to the report, **singles aged 35 to 65** will remain the most prolific group of online daters overall – with 86% searching for love online compared with 24% today.

What’s more, advances in fertility technology indicate 13% of all new mothers will be 40+ come 2050[[3]](#endnote-3), compared to 4% in the present day.

Interestingly enough, the report suggests the most *challenged* demographic when it comes to dating and relationships will be the youngest (**18 to 35 year-olds)**. Whereas today 42% of all online daters fit into this age bracket, this could decrease to 30% by 2050.

This is primarily due to economic pressures impacting on lifestyles. For instance, nearly one in three 18 to 30 year-olds will live with their parents in 2050, compared with a quarter today, due to wage stagnation and the increased cost of living[[4]](#endnote-4).

This means younger singles will have less financial independence and less opportunity to develop more intimate relationships.

As a result, this generation could look to Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality dating experiences to supplement face-to-face dating and relationships.

However, having grown up in a world where AI and VR are the norm, there will inevitably be key psychological challenges for younger generations graduating to innately human relationships. This means more premium dating platforms such as eharmony could start offering specialist coaching to improve their romantic confidence and relationship skills.

On the plus side, across *all* generations, we’re likely to see a more integrated, inclusive country than ever before. The **mixed-ethnicity population** in the UK is projected to almost triple from 1.3m to 3.4m in 2050[[5]](#endnote-5).

Furthermore, continuing shifts in morality mean that as much as 70% of the population is set to be non-religious come 2050, suggesting the opportunity for more shared spiritual values.

**eharmony Managing Director, Romain Bertrand, comments**: *“With increased life expectancy, more cohabitation and emerging tech providing new opportunities for innovation, our fourth Future of Dating report with Imperial College Business School shows the accelerating rate of societal change in the next three decades. With the number of singles set to surpass married people by 2042, including an extra 33% in the 35-65 age bracket, the online dating industry will need to be responsive to the unique challenges they will encounter.*

*“Ultimately, the most important thing is thinking about how love will endure and how the way we find relationships and build human intimacy in an increasingly tech-driven environment will change. We know that regardless of how society changes, people will want to meet people who share their beliefs, core values and key personality characteristics and at eharmony we very much intend to continue leading the way.”*

***Dr Paolo Taticchi, Principal Teaching Fellow at Imperial College Business School said:***

*“In this project, our students have leveraged their understanding of business and technology, which is at the core of what we do at Imperial College Business School. The dating industry developed significantly in the dot com age and continues to evolve even further during the mobile one. Now, we see another revolution taking place in the industry, which is the one driven by social and economic changes and new technologies such as AI and robots.”*

To view the full report, visit [https://www.eharmony.co.uk/dating-advice/dating/**future-of-dating-2050**](https://www.eharmony.co.uk/dating-advice/?p=20401&preview=true)

**ENDS**

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**Methodology**

Compiled by MSc Management students at Imperial College Business School, the Future of Dating report postulates on what dating will look like in 2050, The report utilises a mixed methodology gathering both quantitative and qualitative data to deliver accurate projections on demographic, technological, and social shifts over the next 33 years in the UK. The historical data provided is a compilation of a century of demographic data on the UK population to ensure the accuracy of future projections. The primary literature includes interviews, press releases, and newspaper articles from relevant bodies in the UK, while the secondary data is based on peer-reviewed journals and industry reports from reputable sources.

**About eHarmony.co.uk**

eharmony launched in the UK in 2008 with a clear vision: to create more lasting love in the world. The experts behind eHarmony are committed to helping singles find the best possible partner, using science and psychology to determine key personality traits. Prior to launch, the brand invested in further extensive research into love and relationships, conducted in partnership with Oxford University’s Internet Institute to develop UK relationship-compatibility models. Today eharmony, fondly know as ‘the brains behind the butterflies’, proudly serves almost 60million members globally, and has amassed 5m registered users since launching in Britain. Find out more at <http://www.eharmony.co.uk/tour>.

**About Imperial College London**

Imperial College London is one of the world's leading universities. The College's 16,000 students and 8,000 staff are expanding the frontiers of knowledge in science, medicine, engineering and business, and translating their discoveries into benefits for society.

Founded in 1907, Imperial builds on a distinguished past - having pioneered penicillin, holography and fibre optics - to shape the future. Imperial researchers work across disciplines to improve health and wellbeing, understand the natural world, engineer novel solutions and lead the data revolution. This blend of academic excellence and its real-world application feeds into Imperial's exceptional learning environment, where students participate in research to push the limits of their degrees.

Imperial collaborates widely to achieve greater impact. It works with the NHS to improve healthcare in west London, is a leading partner in research and education within the European Union, and is the UK's number one research collaborator with China.

Imperial has nine London campuses, including its White City Campus: a research and innovation centre that is in its initial stages of development in west London. At White City, researchers, businesses and higher education partners will co-locate to create value from ideas on a global scale.

[www.imperial.ac.uk](http://www.imperial.ac.uk)

1. Projection adapted from *Office for National Statistics, Principal Projection – UK Population in Age Groups, 2015*. Raw data accessible [via ONS website](https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/tablea21principalprojectionukpopulationinagegroups/2014based/rft-table-a2-1-principal-projection---uk-population-in-age-groups.xls). [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. According to Bertalan Mesko: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20-medical-technology-advances-medicine-future-part-mesk%C3%B3-md-phd-1/ [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Projection based on historic data from *Office for National Statistics, Births in England and Wales: 2015, Figure 2: Age-specific fertility rates, 1981 to 2015*. Raw data accessible [via ONS website](https://www.ons.gov.uk/generator?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/birthsummarytablesenglandandwales/2015/ded529c9&format=xls) [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Projection based on historic data from *Office for National Statistics, Families and households in the UK: 2016, Figure 4: Young adults living with their parents, 1996 to 2016*. Raw data accessible [via ONS website](https://www.ons.gov.uk/generator?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2016/7bee8573&format=xls). Increases in proportion of young adults living with parents based partly on [predictions from Institute for Public Policy Research suggesting](https://www.ippr.org/files/publications/pdf/future-proof_Dec2016.pdf) ‘low growth, low interest rates, and heavy stagnation’ will continue to at least 2030. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. From [BSPS 2015](https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjvp9vWjN_XAhVC1BoKHdvZDIcQFggmMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ethpop.org%2FPresentations%2FNewETHPOP%2FBSPS2015%2FBSPS%20Ethnic%20Population%20Projections%20Phil%20Rees.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0In5eZbWkUd2VCz6BPBiok) presentation: *Ethnic Population Projections for the UK and Local Areas, 2011-2061* [↑](#endnote-ref-5)