

Executive Summary - Population Glossary

Crude Birth and Death Rate: The annual number of births and deaths per 1,000 population. These rates are greatly affected by a population's age structure. For example, a developing country with a large number of young persons in its population and a relatively low life expectancy (e.g. 55-65 years) can have a lower crude death rate than an industrialized country (e.g. life expectancy of 70+ years) with a high proportion of persons over age 65 in its population.

Demographic Transition: A theory describing the transition from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates. Demographic transition is divided roughly into three stages. In the first stage, there is high growth potential because there are both high birth and high death rates. In the second stage, the death rate drops and then the birth rate begins to fall. During this period, there is rapid population growth. In the last stage, death rates are as low as they are likely to go; fertility may continue to decline, even to a point below replacement level. In developed countries, this transition has already occurred. In less developed countries, however, the demographic transition is not yet complete.

Dependency Ratio: The ratio of the dependent age population (ages 0-14 and 65+) to working age population (ages 15-64). The dependency ratio provides an indication of the burden (or lack thereof) that certain age structures place on a population. The higher the ratio is, the more people each worker supports. In addition, because not every person of working age actually works, high dependency ratios imply even heavier burdens on those who do work than the ratio suggests.

Infant Mortality Rate: The number of deaths during the first year of life per 1,000 live births. In the less developed nations, particularly in Africa, infant death rates can be very high. For example, Mozambique's infant mortality rate was 135 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2002. By contrast, Sweden's rate was one of the lowest, at 3.4 deaths per 1,000.

Life Expectancy: The average number of additional years a person can be expected to live, usually referring to life expectancy at birth. In 1860, an infant born in the U.S. could expect to live to age 40. In contrast, the same infant born in 2002 could expect to live to age 77. Life expectancies for inhabitants of less developed countries tend to be considerably lower than for those of developed ones. For example, average life expectancies at birth in 2002 in Haiti, Senegal and Indonesia were 49, 53 and 68, respectively, compared to those of the United Kingdom, Sweden and Japan, which were 78, 80, and 81, respectively.

Net Migration Rate: Shows the net effect of immigration and emigration on an area's population, and is expressed as increase or decrease per 1,000 population of the area in a given year. For instance, in an area with a population of 50,000, if 200 people come to the area (immigrate) and 100 people leave (emigrate) during the course of a year, there is a net increase of 2 persons per 1,000 population through migration. The net migration rate in the U.S. was 3.5 per 1,000 in 2002.

Population Doubling Time: The number of years in which the population would double, assuming a constant rate of growth. The doubling time provides a rough indicator of potential population growth. It is useful for making comparisons between countries and regions and for understanding the impact of a particular population growth rate. For example, Uganda, which is growing at a rate of 3.0%, would double its population in 23 years if it maintained that growth rate. In contrast, China, which is growing at 0.7% per year, would double in 99 years.

Population Growth Rate: The rate at which a particular population is growing each year. It is calculated relative to a base population size and reflects the net impact of births, deaths, and migration. The growth rate in the United States was approximately 0.6% per year in 2002.

Population Momentum (or momentum of population growth): The potential for future increases in population size. Even at the replacement level fertility rate in the U.S., the sheer number of Baby Boom women giving birth in the 1980s caused an increase in the number of annual births.

Rate of Natural Increase: The birth rate minus the death rate, which measures the annual rate of population growth excluding migration. Although Germany's rate of natural increase was -0.1% per year in 1992, the country's population continued to grow because of a large number of immigrants, 600,000 that year.

Replacement Level: The fertility level required for a population to replace itself over the course of a generation. In industrialized countries, for example, replacement level is usually reached with a TFR of 2.1. At this rate, each woman would bear two children -- to replace herself and her mate -- with an additional 0.1 births to offset female mortality. In the developing world, however, replacement usually requires a higher TFR, depending on female death rates.

Total Fertility Rate (TFR): An estimate of the average number of children a woman will bear during her reproductive lifetime (ages 15-49), assuming that current age-specific birth rates remain constant. TFR is calculated by summing the age-specific birth rates.

Contraceptive Prevalence: The percentage of married women of reproductive age (ages 15-49) that are using a method of contraception. Contraceptive methods are usually divided into two categories: modern, including the pill, IUD, implants, injectables, sponge, cervical cap, diaphragm, condom (male and female), and voluntary sterilization; and traditional, which includes periodic abstinence and withdrawal, among other methods. The relationship between fertility and contraception has been measured with increasing accuracy and frequency over the last 30 years by the World Fertility Surveys, the Contraceptive Prevalence Surveys, the Demographic and Health Surveys, and, in the United States, the National Survey of Family Growth.

This Executive Summary was updated by Becca Jones of the Population Resource Center in February, 2003. Sources include the [2002 World Population Data Sheet](#) by the [Population Reference Bureau](#) and [The CIA's World Factbook 2002](#). For further information, please contact the Center at (202) 467-5030, 1725 K Street, NW, Suite 1102, Washington, D.C. 20006, prc@prcdc.org, or at (609) 452-2822, 15 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540, prc@prcnj.org.