Population, Distribution & Density

Underpopulation

- **Underpopulation** = population too SMALL to fully utilise the area's available resources
- Usually caused by: rising **death rate** (floods, earthquakes), falling **birth rate**, and mass **emigration**
- Underpopulated regions: Prairies of N. America, Canada, Equatorial Congo, parts of Australia & New Zealand, Russia, Namibia
- **Positives**: enough resources for all; little or no congestion; ample jobs; usually high income & living standards
- **Negatives**: resources underutilised; low production due to manpower shortage; high cost of hiring labour

Distribution of Population

- **Distribution** = how members of a population are dispersed physically in an area
- Unevenly spread: **~90%** of people live on **~10%** of the world's land
- Top **10 populous countries = ~60%** of world population; 6 of them in Asia
- **Population explosion**: 1 bn (1800) → 8 bn (2022); 2nd billion took 130 yrs, 5th only 13 yrs
- Africa ~18%, Europe ~9.3% of world; **Mauritius** = densest African country

Overpopulation

- **Overpopulation** = population exceeds what the available natural resources can support; caused by rising birth rates, falling death rates, medical breakthroughs & migration into an area
- **Optimum population** = balance between people & resources; enough jobs, high standards of living
- Pressure on cultivable land, fresh water, fossil fuels, minerals → shortage of food, shelter, healthcare, education
- More jobseekers than jobs → **unemployment, poverty, crime**; forests cleared for settlement → habitat loss & extinction
- Rising use of coal, petroleum, natural gas → greenhouse gases → **global warming & climate change**
- Overcrowded slums, poor healthcare → TB, malaria, dysentery; demand > supply → **cost of living** rises

Population Basics

- **Population** = total number of people inhabiting an area, region or country; **Population Dynamics** = study of changes in population size & age composition, and why they occur
- People = **human resource**: use resources, produce goods & services, develop the economy
- **5 key properties**: spatial distribution, size & density, age structure, birth rate, death rate
- Global population reached **8 billion** (Nov 2022); India overtook China as world's most populous (Apr 2023)
- **Asia** = most populated continent (~4.7 bn); **Bangladesh** has highest density in Asia

Population Density

- **Density** = number of people living per square kilometre
- **Density = Population ÷ Area**
- World average **~50/km²**; **Monaco** densest (26,105/km²); **Mongolia** least dense
- Densely populated (**>200/km²**): NE USA, NW Europe, South/SE/East Asia
- Sparsely populated (**<1/km²**): Poles, hot & cold deserts, high-rainfall zones near Equator

Factors Influencing Density

- **Relief**: plains & gentle slopes favoured (farming, housing, industry); **Ganga Plains** dense, Himalayas sparse
- **Climate**: moderate (Mediterranean) attracts settlement; extreme (Mongolian Steppes, Australian outbacks, Iceland) repels
- **Soil & water**: fertile loamy soils & river valleys dense; poor soils thin; water needed for drinking, farming, industry
- **Natural resources**: minerals & power sources draw industries → jobs (e.g. **Kobe-Osaka**, Japan)
- **Urbanisation**: cities pull rural migrants (jobs, education, healthcare, transport) — esp. in developing countries
- **Political / social / cultural**: stable govt → dense; unrest → move away; religious & historical sites attract

Population Change & Composition

Rural–Urban Composition

- Division based on the **location of people** (where they live)
- Rural vs urban **criteria vary** from country to country
- Lifestyles differ in **livelihood, social conditions, age-sex structure, density, development**
- **Rural** = primary activities (farming); **urban** = non-primary (industry, services)
- West (Canada, Finland): mechanised farming remains largely male, so women migrate to urban jobs; India / Nepal / Pakistan: opposite — male migration makes urban areas more male-dominated

Birth Rate & Death Rate

- **Population change** = change in inhabitants of an area over a specific period
- **Crude Birth Rate (CBR)** = live births per 1000 people per year = (annual live births ÷ mid-year population) × 1000
- **Crude Death Rate (CDR)** = deaths per 1000 people per year = (annual deaths ÷ mid-year population) × 1000
- Considering births & deaths alone: **birth rate > death rate** → population INCREASES

Population Pyramid

- **Population Pyramid** = graphical representation of the age–sex structure of a population
- **X-axis = population size**; **Y-axis = age groups** (0–80, 5-yr intervals); **males LEFT, females RIGHT**
- **Underdeveloped** (Mozambique, Somalia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh): broad base (high birth rate), tapering top (low life expectancy, many infant deaths)
- **Developing** (India): less-broad base, less steep narrowing (falling death rate), slightly broader top (rising life expectancy)
- **Developed** (Japan, USA, Germany): narrow base (low birth rate), straight sides (low death rate), broader top (high life expectancy)
- **Uses**: birth/death rates & life expectancy; working vs dependent shares; future prospects (economy, sustainability of society)

Sex Ratio

- **Sex Ratio** = number of females per **1000 males** in the population
- Sex Ratio = (Female Population ÷ Male Population) × 1000
- India (2011 Census): **940** females / 1000 males; Kerala & Puducherry: women > men; **Haryana lowest at 877**
- Indicator of **status of women** & gender equality; an unfavourable ratio can indicate gender discrimination (female foeticide, infanticide, violence against women)
- India's first Census in **1872**, first complete Census in **1881**; held every 10 years; latest in **2011**

Age Composition

- **Age Composition** = number of people in different age groups in a country
- **3 categories**: Children (<15 yrs), Adults (15–59 yrs), Aged (>59 yrs)
- **Children + aged** are grouped as the **dependent population** (economically unproductive); low share in developed countries
- World has **1.8 billion youth** aged 10–24; **9 of 10** live in less developed countries
- India: **356 M** aged 10–24 (28%) — world's largest youth population; two-thirds of Indians are <35 yrs

Migration

- **Migration** = movement of people across regions & territories
- **Internal** migration = within a country (redistributes, doesn't change size)
- **International** migration = between countries (changes national population)
- **Place of Origin** loses population; **Place of Destination** gains
- **Immigrants** move IN, **emigrants** move OUT — the same people are both, seen from each side
- **Why people emigrate**: no jobs, poor living conditions, political turmoil, harsh climate, natural disasters (drought), epidemics

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