

TABLE 7.2 Population Characteristics of the 20 Most Populous Countries, 2008

Country	Current Population (Millions)	Births per 1000 Individuals	Deaths per 1000 Individuals	Infant Mortality Rate (Deaths per 1000 Live Births)	Total Fertility Rate (Children per Woman per Lifetime)	% Married Women Using Birth Control	Rate of Natural Increase (Annual %)	Projected Population Changes 2008–50 (%)
World	6705	21	8	49	2.6	62	1.2	39
Russia	141.9	12	15	9	1.4	67	(−0.3)	(−22)
Germany	82.2	8	10	3.9	1.3	75	(−0.2)	(−13)
Japan	127.7	9	9	2.8	1.3	52	0.0	(−25)
China	1324.7	12	7	23	1.6	90	0.5	8
Thailand	66.1	13	8	16	1.6	72	0.5	4
United States	304.5	14	8	6.6	2.1	73	0.6	44
Vietnam	86.2	17	5	16	2.1	78	1.2	31
Turkey	74.8	19	6	23	2.2	71	1.2	19
Brazil	195.1	20	6	24	2.3	76	1.3	33
Iran	72.2	20	5	32	2.1	79	1.4	39
Indonesia	239.9	21	6	34	2.6	61	1.5	43
India	1149.3	24	8	57	2.8	31	1.6	53
Mexico	107.7	20	5	19	2.3	71	1.6	22
Bangladesh	147.8	24	7	52	2.7	56	1.7	46
Egypt	74.9	27	6	33	3.1	59	2.0	57
Philippines	90.5	26	5	25	3.3	51	2.1	66
Pakistan	172.8	31	8	75	4.1	30	2.2	71
Nigeria	148.1	43	18	100	5.9	12	2.5	91
Ethiopia	79.1	40	15	77	5.3	15	2.5	87
Democratic Republic of Congo	66.5	44	13	92	6.5	21	3.1	185

Source: Population Reference Bureau, 2008 Population Data Sheet.

death rates—with birthrates greatly exceeding the death rates—will grow rapidly (Nigeria and Ethiopia). Such countries usually have an extremely high mortality rate among children because of disease and malnutrition; but because the birthrate still greatly exceeds the death rate, the populations will grow rapidly.

Some countries have high birthrates and low death rates and will grow rapidly (Mexico and Indonesia). Infant mortality rates are moderately high in these countries. Other countries have low birthrates and death rates that closely match the birthrates; they will grow slowly (Japan and the United States). These and other more-developed countries typically have very low infant mortality rates. The disruption caused by the political upheaval in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has resulted in several countries (e.g., Russia and Germany) having death rates that are equal to or exceed birthrates, causing their populations to decline. Because of these countries and the generally low rates of growth in the rest of Europe, the European region as a whole has a declining population.

Total Fertility Rate

The most important determinant of the rate at which human populations grow is related to how many women in the population are

having children and the number of children each woman will have. The **total fertility rate** of a population is the number of children born per woman in her lifetime. A total fertility rate of 2.1 is known as **replacement fertility**, since parents produce 2 children who will replace the parents when they die. Eventually, if the total fertility rate is maintained at 2.1, population growth will stabilize. A rate of 2.1 is used rather than 2.0 because some children do not live very long after birth and therefore will not contribute to the population for very long. When a population is not growing, and the number of births equals the number of deaths, it is said to exhibit **zero population growth**.

For several reasons, however, a total fertility rate of 2.1 will not necessarily immediately result in a stable population with zero growth. First, the death rate may fall as living conditions improve and people live longer. If the death rate falls faster than the birthrate, there will still be an increase in the population even though it is reproducing at the replacement rate.

Age Distribution

The **age distribution**, the number of people of each age in the population, also has a great deal to do with the rate of population