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Press Release

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UN projects world population to peak within this century

One in four people globally live in a country whose population has already peaked in size

New York, 11 July—According to the *World Population Prospects 2024: Summary of Results* published today, it is expected that the world's population will peak in the mid-2080s, growing over the next sixty years from 8.2 billion people in 2024 to around 10.3 billion in the mid-2080s, and then will return to around 10.2 billion by the end of the century. The size of the world's population in 2100 is now expected to be six per cent lower—or 700 million fewer—than anticipated a decade ago.

"The demographic landscape has evolved greatly in recent years," said Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. "In some countries, the birth rate is now even lower than previously anticipated, and we are also seeing slightly faster declines in some high-fertility regions. The earlier and lower peak is a hopeful sign. This could mean reduced environmental pressures from human impacts due to lower aggregate consumption. However, slower population growth will not eliminate the need to reduce the average impact attributable to the activities of each individual person."

The earlier population peak is due to several factors, including lower levels of fertility in some of the world's largest countries, especially China. Globally, women are having one child fewer, on average, than they did around 1990. In more than half of all countries and areas, the average number of live births per woman is below 2.1—the level required for a population to maintain a constant size over the long term without migration—and nearly a fifth of all countries and areas, including China, Italy, the Republic of Korea and Spain, now have "ultra-low" fertility, with fewer than 1.4 live births per woman over a lifetime.

As of 2024, population size has peaked in 63 countries and areas, including China, Germany, Japan and the Russian Federation, and the total population of this group is projected to decline by 14 per cent over the next thirty years. For another 48 countries and areas, including Brazil, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Türkiye and Viet Nam, the population is projected to peak between 2025 and 2054. In the remaining 126 countries, including India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the United States of America, the population is expected to increase through 2054 and, potentially, to peak in the second half of the century or later. In nine countries of this last group, including Angola, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger

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and Somalia, very rapid growth is projected, with their total population doubling between 2024 and 2054.

Early pregnancies remain a challenge, particularly in low-income countries. In 2024, 4.7 million babies, or about 3.5 per cent of the total worldwide, were born to mothers under age 18. Of these, some 340,000 were born to children under age 15, with serious consequences for the health and well-being of both the young mothers and their children.

The report finds that investing in the education of young people, especially girls, and increasing the ages of marriage and first childbearing in countries where these have an early onset will have positive outcomes for women's health, educational attainment and labour force participation. These efforts will also contribute to slowing population growth and reducing the scale of the investments required to achieve sustainable development while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Over the past three decades, mortality rates have decreased and life expectancy has increased significantly. After a brief decline during the COVID-19 pandemic, global life expectancy at birth is rising again, reaching 73.3 years in 2024, up from 70.9 years during the pandemic. By the late 2050s, more than half of all global deaths will occur at age 80 or higher, a substantial increase from 17 per cent in 1995.

By the late 2070s, the number of persons aged 65 years or older is projected to surpass the number of children (under age 18), while the number of persons at ages 80 and higher is projected to be larger than the number of infants (under age 1) already by the mid-2030s. Even in countries that are still growing rapidly and have relatively youthful populations, the number of persons aged 65 or older is expected to rise over the next 30 years.

All materials related to the World Population Prospects 2024, including the summary report and the complete dataset, are available at population.un.org.

Hashtag: **#UNPopulation**, **#PeopleOfTomorrow** and **#GlobalGoals**

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