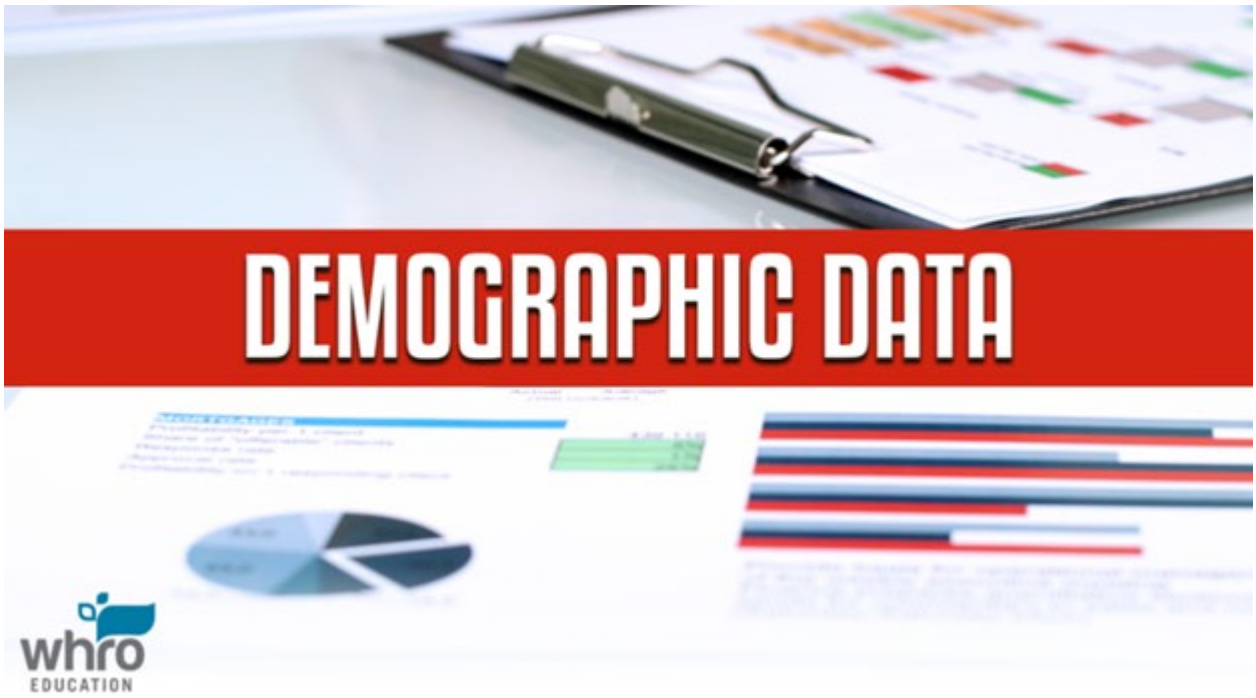
Module: Cultural Geography
Topic Content: Demographic Data

Demographic Data



Click next to begin.

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Introduction

Demographic data is a term used to describe the characteristics of human populations. Geographers use demographic data to identify trends and observe changes in human populations over time. Click each of the buttons to learn about different types of demographic data.

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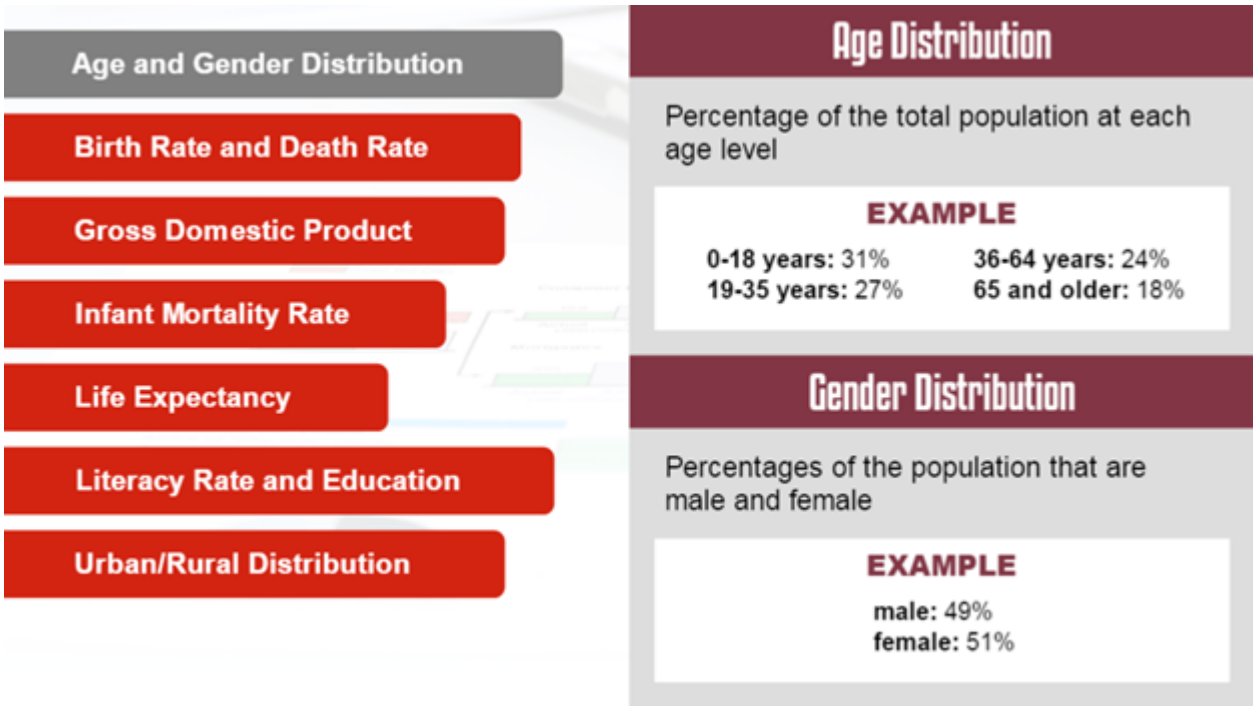
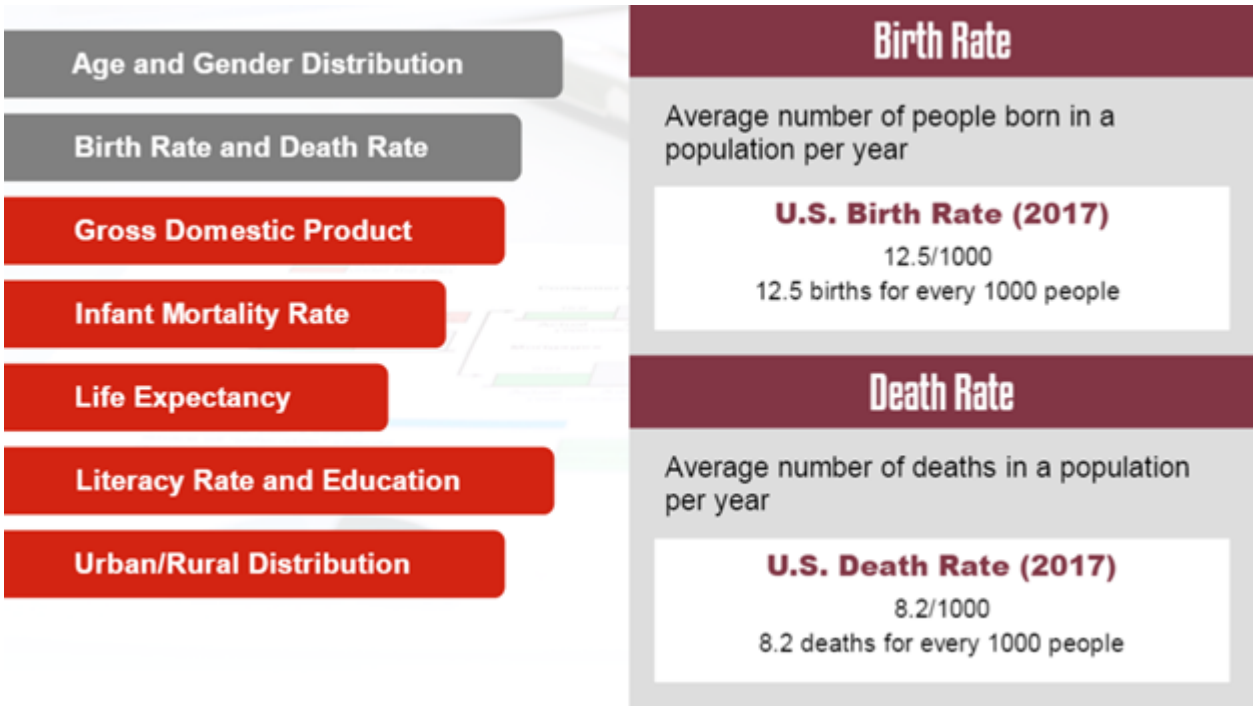
Age and Gender Distribution



Age distribution is the percentage of the total population at each age level. This statistic is generally broken down into ranges, such as 0-18 years, or 65 and older. Gender distribution refers to the percentages of the population that are male and female. Age and gender distribution can be considered separately, or analyzed together.

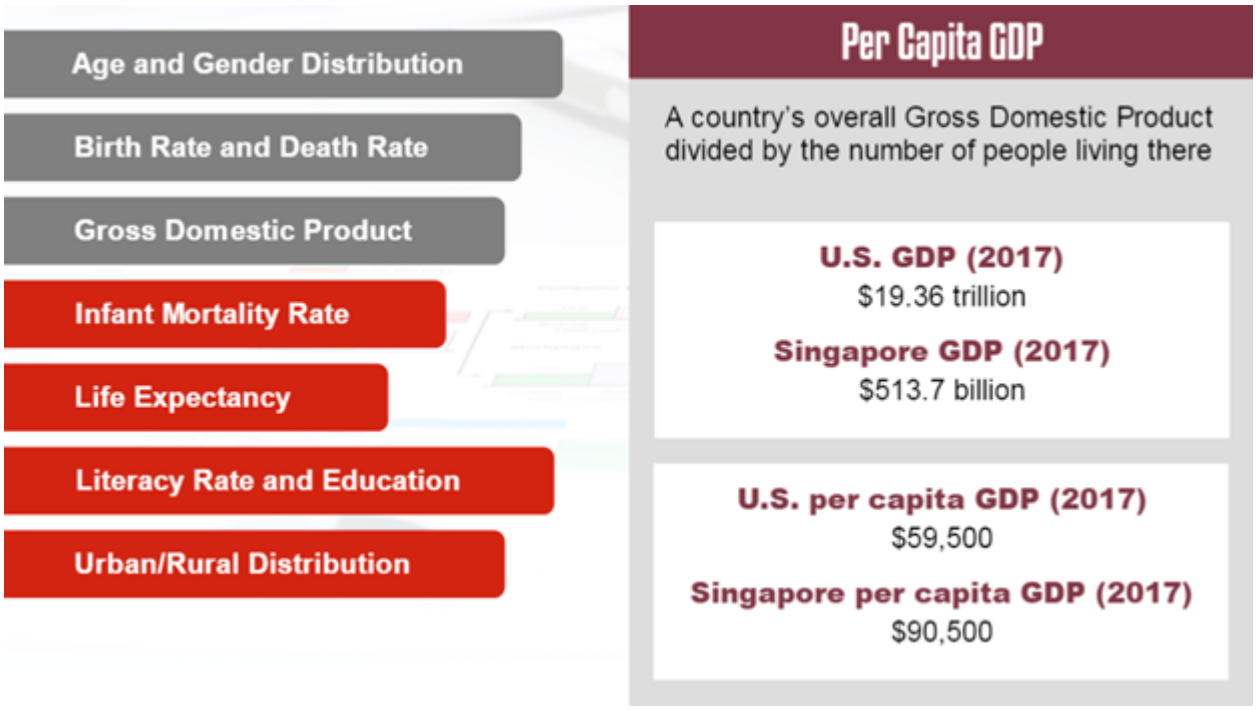
Birth Rate and Death Rate



The birth rate is the average number of people born in a population per year. It is usually represented as a number per 1,000 people. For example, according to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the estimated birth rate in the United States in 2017 was 12.5 births per 1,000 people. This means that for every 1,000 people living in the United States in 2017, there were approximately 12.5 babies born.

The death rate is the average number of deaths in a population per year. This number is represented as a number per 1,000 people. For instance, in the United States, the estimated death rate in 2017 was 8.2 out of 1,000, which means that for every 1,000 people in the U.S. population, approximately 8.2 people died. Factors such as war, disease, and migration can have a significant impact on both the birth rate and death rate of a region.

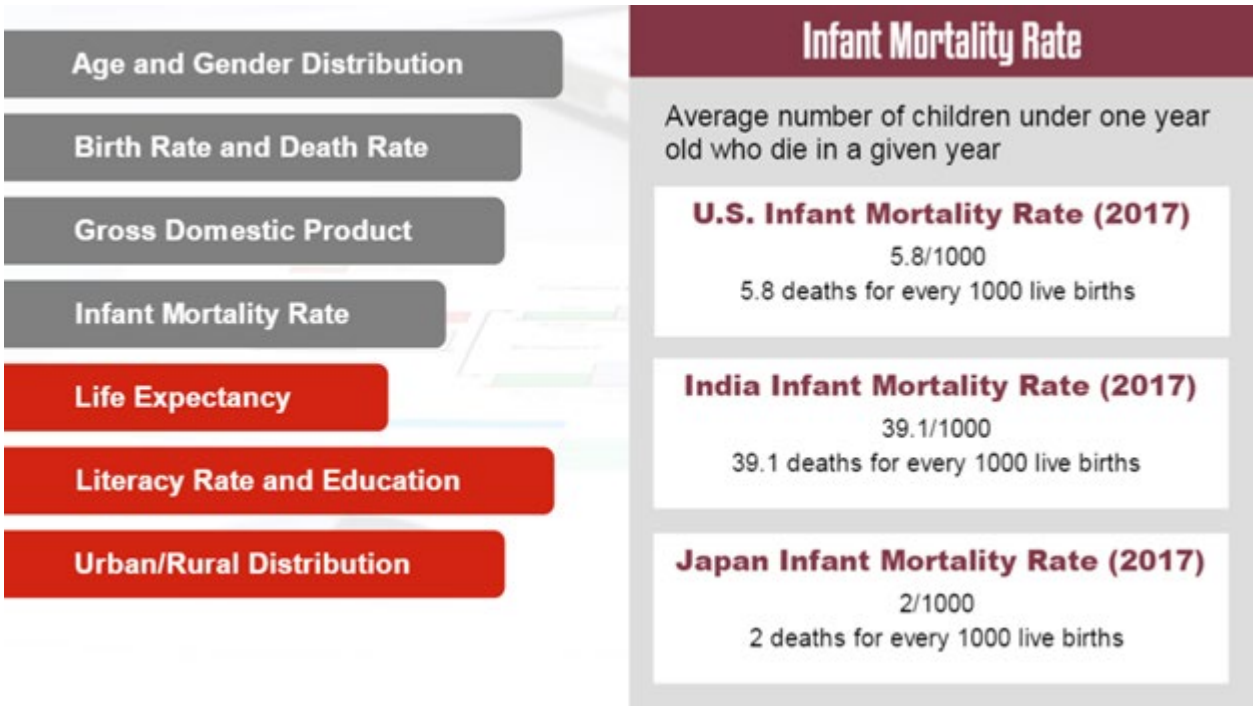
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)



Gross Domestic Product, or GDP, is an estimation of the monetary value of all the goods and services produced by a country during a given period of time. GDP does not account for unpaid work, like parents who stay at home as caregivers, or for services that are paid for in cash, like mowing lawns or babysitting. GDP is an indicator of economic health, meaning when a country has a high GDP, it has a strong economy.

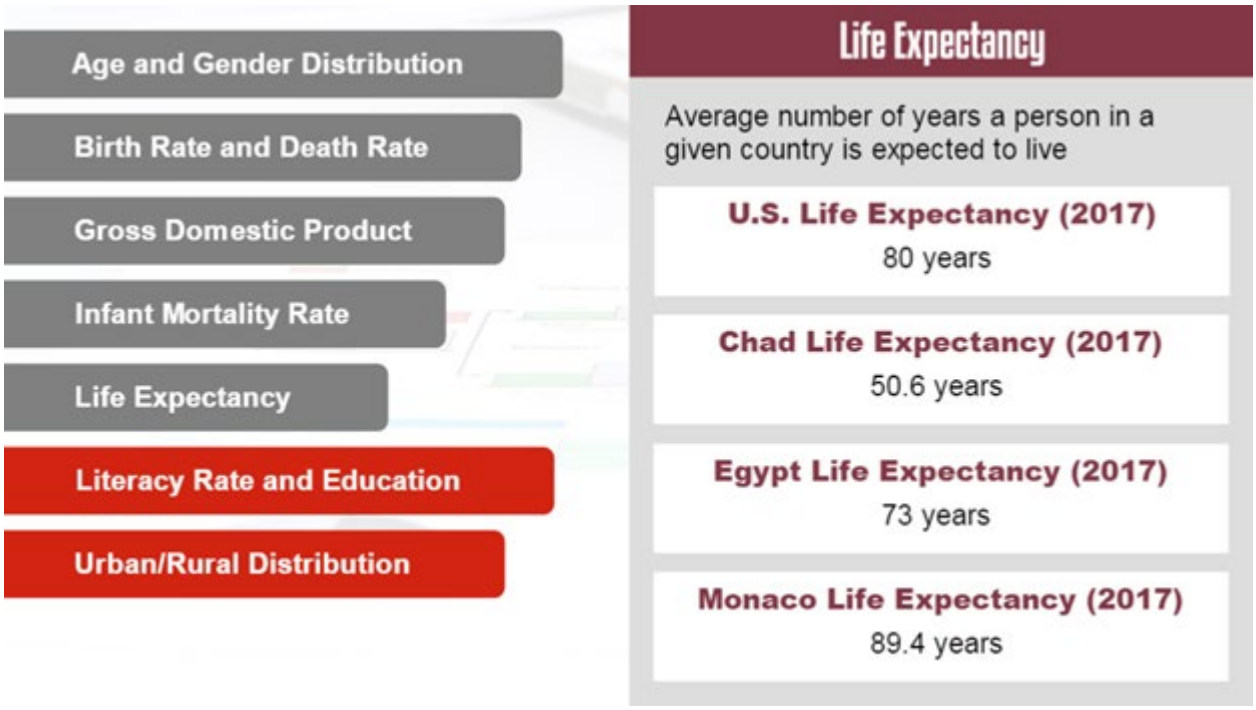
The CIA estimates the United States had a GDP of $19.36 trillion in 2017. Compared to Singapore, whose 2017 GDP was $513.7 billion, the U.S. appears to have a much stronger economy; however, these figures fail to account for the fact that the U.S. is much larger than Singapore. This is why geographers also use "per capita GDP," which essentially means "GDP per person." To find the per capita GDP, a country's overall GDP is divided by the number of people living there. This gives an estimate of the total value each person contributed to the economy. Once you take population into account, you can see that the per capita GDP in the U.S. was $59,500 in 2017, while Singapore's was $90,500. The United States produced more economic value overall, but Singapore contributed more per person.

Infant Mortality Rate



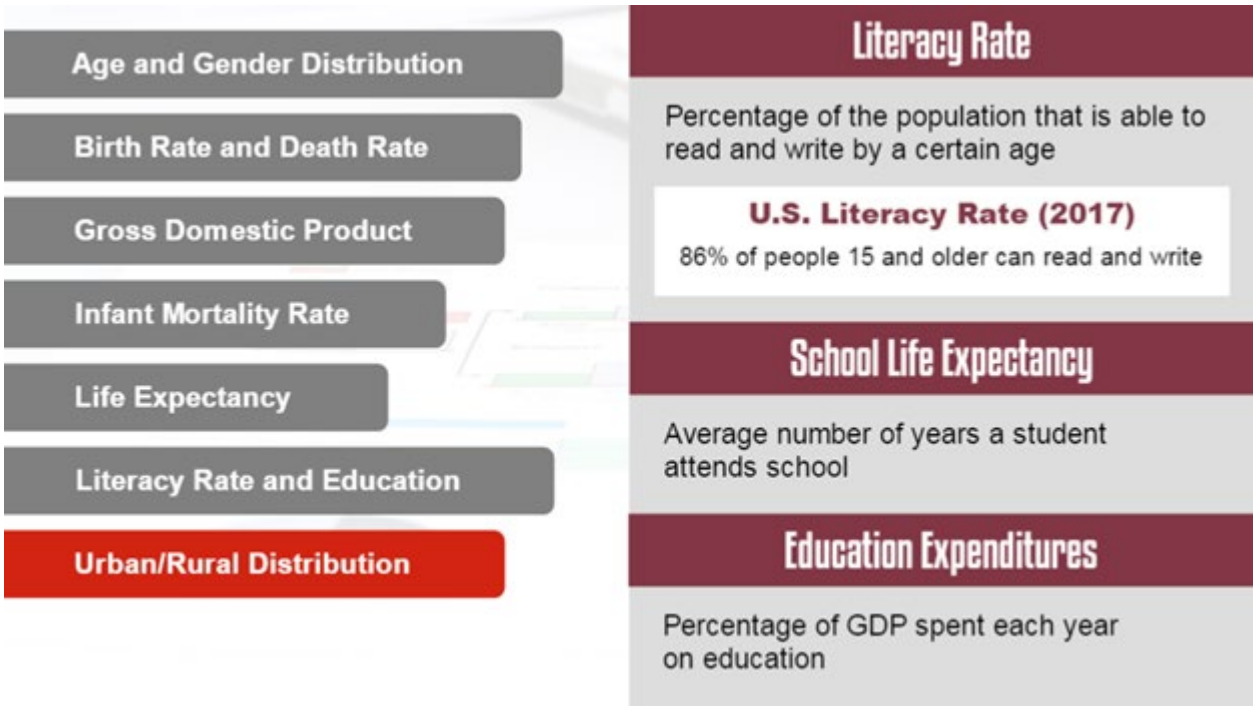
The infant mortality rate is the average number of children under one year old who die in a given year. This statistic is represented by the number of deaths per 1,000 live births. In 2017, the U.S. infant mortality rate was estimated to be 5.8 deaths per 1,000 live births. That means for every 1,000 babies born in the United States in 2017, 5.8 died before they turned one year old. This statistic is generally used to determine the health of a country. Compare the U.S. infant mortality rate to those of India and Japan.

Life Expectancy



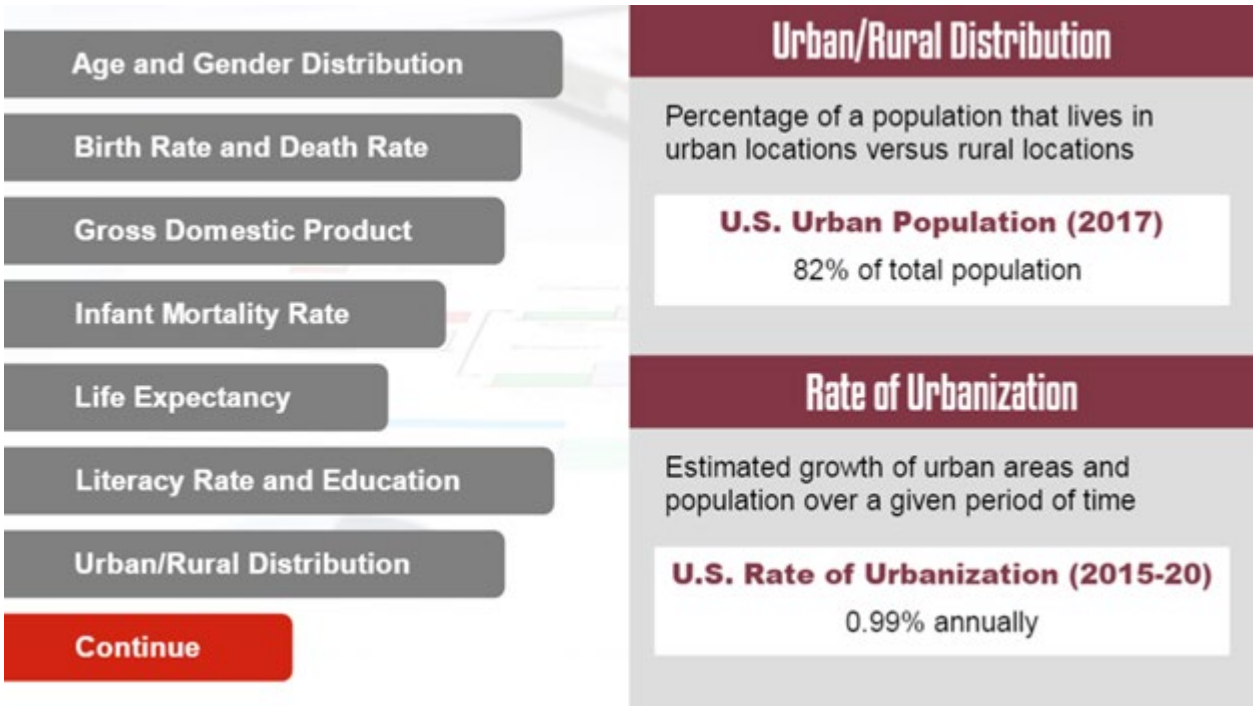
Life expectancy is the average number of years a person in a given country is expected to live. Life expectancy can be given as the average of the total population, or as separate averages for men and women. Remember that these figures are averages. Some of the population will live longer and some will die younger. Compare the life expectancy of the U.S. with those of Chad, Egypt, and Monaco.

Literacy Rate and Education



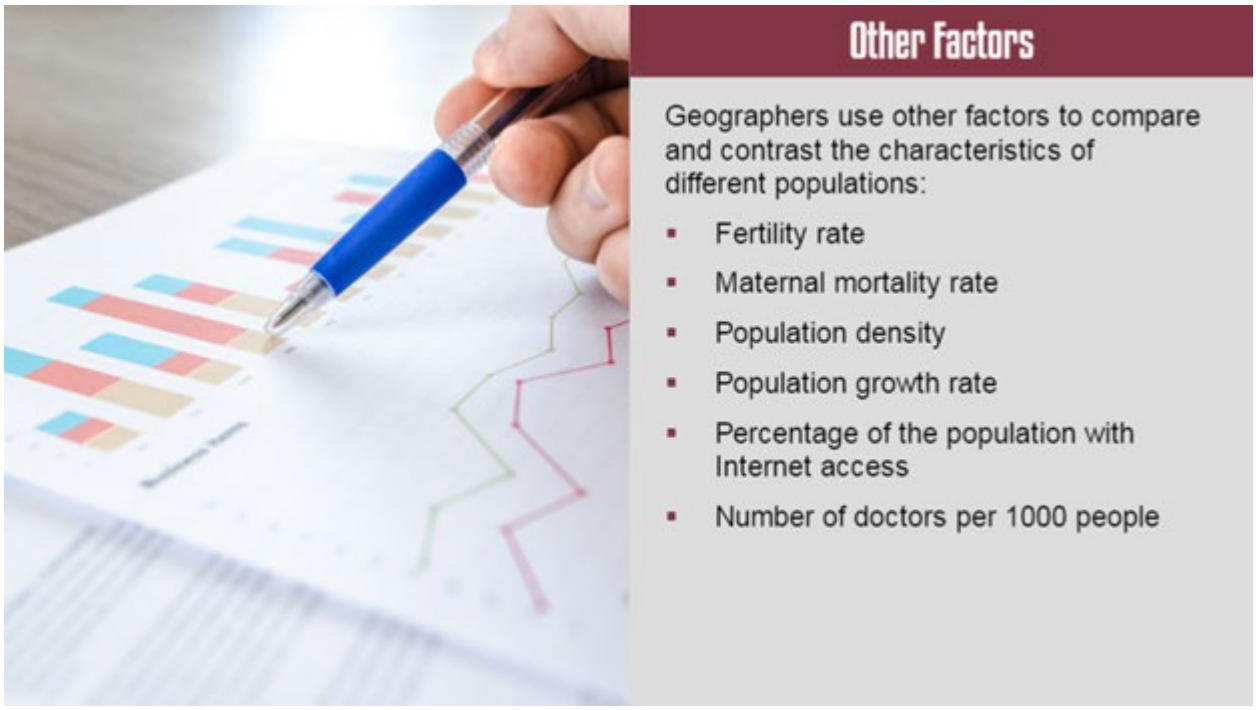
The literacy rate is the percentage of a population that is able to read and write by a certain age, usually fifteen years old. In the United States, the literacy rate is currently around 86%. This means that 86% of the population over fifteen years old is able to read and write. The literacy rate is used to determine the level of education in a country, along with other factors like school life expectancy, which is the average number of years a student attends school, and education expenditures, which is the percentage of GDP spent each year on education.

Urban/Rural Distribution



Urban/rural distribution, also called the urban-rural ratio, is the percentage of a population that lives in urban locations like cities and metropolitan areas, versus rural locations like the countryside and small towns. In 2017, approximately 82% of the U.S. population lived in urban areas. Geographers also study the rate of urbanization, which is the estimated growth of urban areas and population over a given period of time.

Other Factors



There are many other factors that geographers use to compare and contrast the characteristics of different populations. A few examples include fertility rate, maternal mortality rate, population density, population growth rate, the percentage of the population with Internet access, and the number of doctors per 1,000 people. Geographers can use just about any factor that can be measured to compare and contrast different populations.