

**Module: Cultural Geography**  
**Topic Content: Population Growth**

**Population Growth**

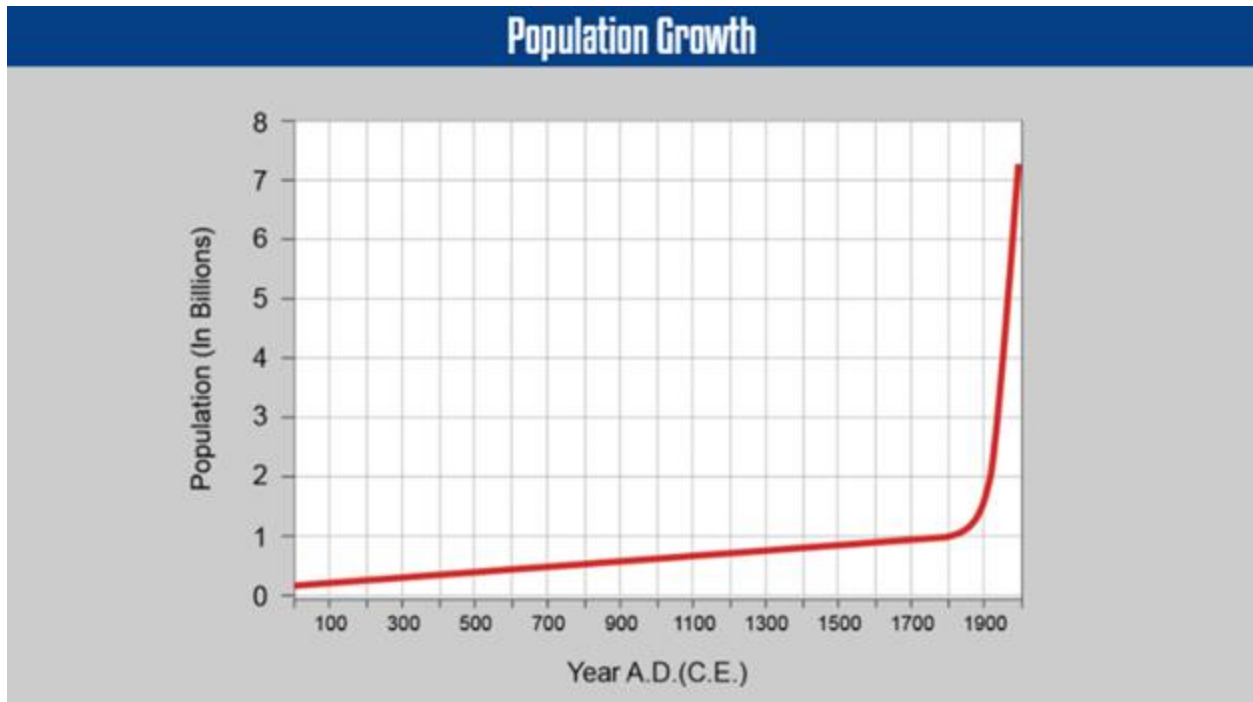


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# Module: Cultural Geography

## Topic Content: Population Growth

### Introduction



To determine population growth, geographers use birth rate and death rate statistics. By subtracting the number of deaths from the number of births, geographers can determine how much a population has increased or decreased in a given year. This figure is known as the natural increase. As of 2018, the current rate of growth for the world population is roughly 1.1%. This graph illustrates human population growth over the last 2,000 years. It is important to note that this graph shows the human population for the entire planet. When you examine countries individually, you find that some experience growth, some are stable, and some have populations in decline.

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### Menu



There are several factors that can influence a nation's population growth rate. Click each of the images to learn more.

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#### Medicine and Hygiene



Modern medicine and hygiene practices have helped increase population growth. This is because sterile medical environments, immunizations, and prenatal and postnatal care have helped lower the global infant mortality rate. Worldwide life expectancy has also increased due to advancements in medical technology, surgical practices, and medication. Furthermore, modern public sanitation prevents the spread of disease by providing clean drinking water and proper sewage treatment.

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#### Education



Analysis shows that societies with greater access to quality education have a lower population growth rate. This is particularly true regarding the female population, as educated women are more likely to wait until later in life to have children, and therefore have fewer children overall. Women with a formal education are also more likely to know about available community and healthcare resources.

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### Industrialization/Urbanization



Industrialization creates jobs and other economic opportunities, attracting people and causing urbanization. Urbanization occurs when large groups of people move to cities from rural areas. Cities typically offer greater access to education, healthcare, and public resources than rural areas. This causes a decrease in infant mortality, and an increase in life expectancy. People living in urban areas also have fewer children than those living in rural areas.

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#### Economic Development



As regions become more developed economically, the rate of population growth tends to slow. This is because people living in an economically developed country tend to focus on their education and career, waiting until later in life to have children. Additionally, the cost of raising a child in a developed country is usually higher, which often leads to smaller families. In contrast, large families are a source of labor in countries that are less developed; more children means more people are able to contribute.

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#### Government Policy



A nation's government can enact policies that influence the rate of population growth. In countries with rapid growth, like China, the government discourages people from having multiple children by providing incentives to families who have one or no children. In countries like Japan or Italy, which are experiencing negative population growth, the government may offer financial incentives for having children.



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#### Role of Women



Perhaps the most important factor to consider when measuring the population growth rate of a region is the role of women in society. Depending on the country, a woman may not have control over when she gets married or when she has children. Women in these types of societies also lack access to education and economic opportunities. A woman's ability to pursue an education or career coincides with a decrease in population growth.