



State of World Population Report: UNFPA

For Prelims: UNFPA, Fertility Rate, Demographic Dividend, SDG, ECOSOC.

For Mains: State of World Population Report.

Why in News?

Recently, the [United Nations Population Fund \(UNFPA\)](#) has released the **State of World Population report 2023**, which states that India will overtake China to become the **world's most populous country by the middle of 2023**.

- The State of World Population is **published annually which covers and analyses developments and trends in world population** and demographics, as well as shedding a light on specific regions, countries and population groups and the unique challenges they face.

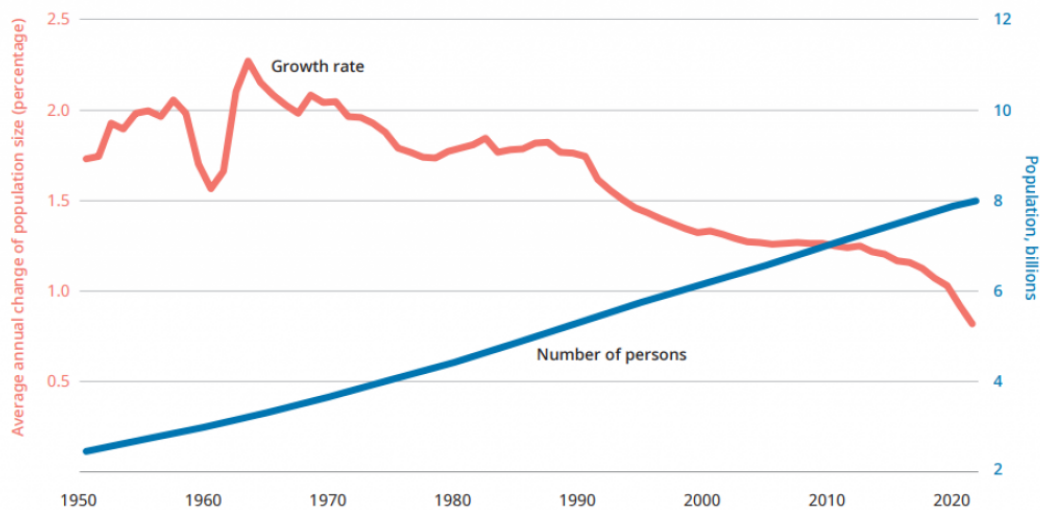
DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

	Population	15-64 years	65+	TFR	Life expectancy
India	1,428.6 mn	68%	7%	2.0	72.5 yrs
China	1,425.7 mn	69%	14%	1.2	79 yrs
World	8,045 mn	65%	10%	2.3	73.5 yrs

UNFPA's State of World Population Report 2023

What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- **Population Estimation:**
 - India's population is pegged to reach 142.86 crore against China's 142.57 crore by July 2023.
 - **25%** of India's population is in the age group of **0-14 years**, **18% in the 10-19 age group**, **26%** in the age bracket of 10-24 years, **68% in the 15-64 years age group**, and 7% above 65 years.
 - India will have 29 lakhs more people than its Asian neighbour.
 - The **United States** is a third populated country, with a population of 340 million.
- **Slowing Population:**
 - Population growth in both India and China has been slowing, despite accounting for more than one-third of the estimated global population.



▪ **Fertility Rate:**

- India's total **Fertility Rate**, was estimated at 2, lower than the world average of 2.3.
- Developed regions projected a fertility rate of 1.5, less developed regions 2.4 and less developed countries 3.9.

▪ **Life Expectancy:**

- The average life expectancy for an **Indian male** was projected as 71 and 74 for females.
- On average, the life expectancy for males **globally** was projected to be 71 and 76 for females.
- For **developed regions**, the average life expectancy for males was projected at 77 and 83 for females — the highest of all.
- For **less developed regions**, the ages are 70 for males and 74 for females, while for least developed countries, it is 63 for males and 68 for females.

▪ **Gender Rights:**

- Violence by an intimate partner in the last 12 months was reported by 18% of women, while 66% of women had decision-making on sexual and reproductive **health and reproductive rights in India**.
- A little over 80% of women had some say in decision-making regarding their own healthcare.

▪ **Population Growth Concentrations:**

- More than half of the projected increase in global **population up to 2050** will be **concentrated in eight countries** — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania.

What are the Recommendations?

- With almost half the population under 25 years of age, India has a time-bound opportunity to benefit from the **Demographic Dividend**. The focus should be **on giving women more power to control when and how they have children**.
- Ensuring gender equality, empowerment and **advancing greater bodily autonomy for women and girls—is one of the key determinants** of a sustainable future.
- Thriving and inclusive societies can be built, regardless of population size, if countries are **prepared to radically rethink how we talk about**, and plan for, population change.
- In high-fertility countries, empowerment through education and family planning, is known to yield enormous dividends in the form of economic growth and human capital development.
- All governments should **uphold human rights, strengthen pension and healthcare systems, promote active and healthy aging**, protect migrants' rights, and seek to mitigate the damaging impact of climate change.

What are the Opportunities and Drawbacks for India?

▪ **Opportunities:**

- **Demographic Dividend:**

- India's population offers a significant advantage in terms of a large workforce, which can help drive economic growth.
- **India's 68 % population are in the 15 to 64 years age group**, providing a significant contribution to the working or able-to-work population.
- It certainly looks like a demographic dividend when a lot of advanced countries in the world struggle due to their population **growing old thus reducing the number of those who could work.**
- **Attracting Businesses and Innovation:**
 - With a large population, India represents a vast and growing consumer market, which can attract investments and spur domestic production.
 - India can leverage its demographic dividend to attract big businesses from Western countries which had chosen China for manufacturing.
 - A large and diverse population **can be a source of innovation, as it brings together different perspectives, ideas, and approaches.**
- **Permanent Member at Security Council:**
 - With India's growing population, India will likely claim more power and **influence on the global stage.**
 - India can claim to be a Permanent Member at [United Nations Security Council \(UNSC\)](#).
- **Leader of Global South:**
 - The status of the most populous country will also help India claim **leadership of the [global south](#)** for which it has been striving after assuming the G20 leadership in 2022.
- **Drawbacks:**
 - **Unemployment and Social Problems:**
 - High unemployment is a very big challenge for **India's young population**, which is compounded by the **limited availability of productive and remunerative jobs.**
 - For instance, in the civil services sector, nearly 6.5 lakh candidates compete for only 700 positions, while in the railways, thousands of youths vie for a few hundred low-ranking jobs.
 - Unemployment not only leads to economic stress but also exacerbates social problems, especially when a significant portion of the working-age population is **unable to find suitable employment.**
 - **Poor Labour Force Participation:**
 - India's huge population is poor labour force participation, especially of women.
 - India's female labor force participation rate in 2021 was 19%, lower than the world average at 25.1%, and has been declining for a long.
 - Prime Minister of India aims at 50% female workforce by 2047.
 - **Poverty:**
 - India's population includes a significant number of people living in poverty, which can exacerbate issues such as inequality, crime, and social unrest.

What is the UNFPA?

- **About:**
 - It is a subsidiary organ of the [UN General Assembly](#) and works as a sexual and reproductive health agency.
 - The [UN Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#) establishes its mandate.
- **Establishment:**
 - It was established as a trust fund in 1967 and began operations in 1969.
 - In 1987, it was officially renamed the United Nations Population Fund but the original abbreviation, 'UNFPA' for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities was retained.
- **Objective:**
 - UNFPA works directly to tackle [Sustainable Development Goals](#) on health (SDG3), education (SDG4) and gender equality (SDG5).
- **Fund:**
 - UNFPA is not supported by the UN budget, instead, it is entirely supported by voluntary contributions of donor governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector,

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q1. In the context of any country, which one of the following would be considered as part of its social capital? (2019)

- (a) The proportion of literates in the population
- (b) The stock of its buildings, other infrastructure and machines
- (c) The size of population in the working age group
- (d) The level of mutual trust and harmony in the society

Ans: (d)

Q2. India is regarded as a country with “Demographic Dividend”. This is due to (2011)

- (a) Its high population in the age group below 15 years
- (b) Its high population in the age group of 15-64 year
- (c) Its high population in the age group above 65 years
- (d) Its high total population

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q1. Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail. (2021)

Q2. “Empowering women is the key to control the population growth.” Discuss. (2019)

Q3. Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty or poverty is the main cause of population increase in India. (2015)

Source: DTE