

## POPULATION EXPLOSION

**World population** today exceeds 7 billion people. Nowadays, while 95% of the increase takes place in underdeveloped countries, population in industrialised countries is growing very slowly.

The term **Birth rate** refers to the number of births in a given place. It is low in developed countries, but it is relatively high in underdeveloped countries.

The term **Fertility rate** indicates the average number of children per woman in a given place.

The term **Mortality** refers to the number of deaths in a given place. Today the mortality has decreased in the world, but there are still great inequalities. Developed countries have a higher life expectancy and lower infant mortality than underdeveloped countries.

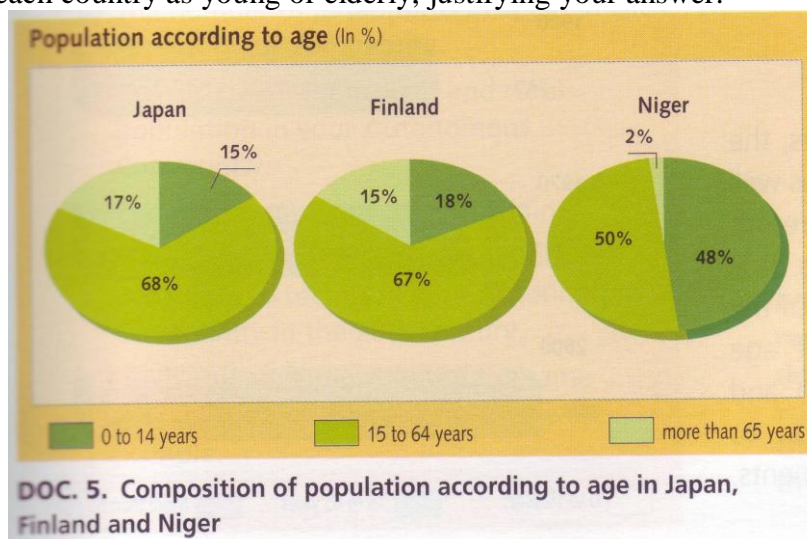
**Life expectancy** is the estimated number of years a new born will live.

**Natural growth** is the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths. There are many spatial contrasts in the distribution of natural growth: the less industrialised regions have a higher growth rate than the average.

**The population is different by sex and by age:** The number of men is higher the number of women, and there are three main age groups: Young population (from birth to the age of 14), Adult population (from 15 to 64) and Elderly population (people over 65).

### Exercises:

1. Where is the birth rate higher, in a young or an elderly population?
2. What is the population age in underdeveloped countries?
3. Which regions and countries have an elderly population?
4. Where is the death rate higher? Why?
5. What is life expectancy in the world like? Describe the contrasts.
6. What are the advantages and the problems of the countries with a young population and countries with an elderly population?
7. How is the population classified according to age?
8. Classify each country as young or elderly, justifying your answer.



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### Exercises:

#### 1. Where is the birth rate higher, in a young or an elderly population?

The birth rate is higher in a young population.

#### 2. What is the population age in underdeveloped countries?

Underdeveloped countries are usually young countries. Africa is the youngest continent, followed by Latin America, Asia and Oceania.

#### 3. Which regions and countries have an elderly population?

Europe and North America are elderly areas. Industrialised countries have an elderly population.

#### 4. Where is the death rate higher? Why?

The underdeveloped countries have higher the death rate because there are famine, wars, diseases, unemployment, low quality of life, working exploitation, child labour...

### 5. What is life expectancy in the world like? Describe the contrasts.

Developed countries have a higher life expectancy and lower infant mortality than underdeveloped countries. While the life expectancy in underdeveloped countries is 55 years, in developed countries is 78.

### 6. What are the advantages and the problems of the countries with a young population and countries with an elderly population?

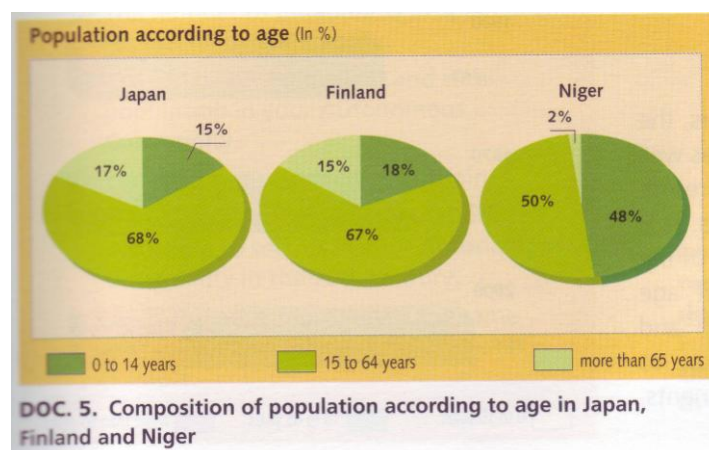
The countries with a young population have advantages as there are a lot of people for working, looking for their old grandparents, but have problems as there aren't resources and job for all people, the young people have to emigrate for finding a job.

The countries with an elderly population have advantages as they haven't so much unemployment than young countries, so it is possible a higher economic and cultural level of a population, but they have problems as it is necessary to invest greatly in pensions and health for old people.

### 7. How is the population classified according to age?

There are three main age groups: Young population (from birth to the age of 14), Adult population (from 15 to 64) and Elderly population (people over 65).

### 8. Classify each country as young or elderly, justifying your answer.



Japan and Finland are elderly countries because the population older than 65 represents 15% of the inhabitants and when a country has more than 12% of people over 65 it is considered an elderly country. Besides, Japan and Finland are industrialised or developed countries and their life expectancies are higher.

However, Niger is an underdeveloped country of Africa, so Niger has a lot of young people (50% of young population), instead of it has only 2% over 65. Its life expectancy is very low.

## SOLUTIONS

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## Glossary

**Age structure.** The distribution of a population according to age, usually by 5-year age groups.

**Age-specific fertility rate.** The number of births during a year to women in a particular age group, usually per 1,000 women in a 5-year age group at midyear.

**Aging.** An increase in the proportion of the population in the older ages. May also be measured as an increase in the median age of the population.

**Births.** The number of live births occurring during a given calendar year.

**Birth rate.** The average annual number of births during a year per 1,000 population at midyear. Also known as the crude birth rate.

**Deaths.** The number of deaths occurring during a given calendar year.

**Death rate.** The average annual number of deaths during a year per 1,000 population at midyear. Also known as the crude death rate.

**Dependent age groups.** People under age 15 and people 65 years of age or older.

**Development category.** The classification of regions into “less developed” and “more developed” according to their general level of economic development. Countries are classified according to the grouping used by the United Nations. See references to these terms in the Glossary for details.

**Growth rate.** The average annual percent change in the population, resulting from a surplus (or deficit) of births over deaths and the balance of migrants entering and leaving a country. The rate may be positive or negative. Also known as population growth rate or average annual rate of growth.

**Infant mortality rate.** The number of deaths of infants under 1 year of age from a cohort of 1,000 live births. Denoted  $1q_0$  or IMR, it is the probability of dying between birth and exact age 1.

**Less developed countries.** The “less developed” countries include all of Africa, all of Asia except Japan, the Transcaucasian and Central Asian republics, all of Latin America and the Caribbean, and all of Oceania except Australia and New Zealand. This category matches the “less developed country” classification employed by the United Nations. “Less developed” countries are sometimes referred to as “developing” countries.

**Life expectancy at birth.** The average number of years a group of people born in the same year can be expected to live if mortality at each age remains constant in the future.

**Median age.** The midpoint age that separates the younger half of a population from the older half.

**Modern methods of contraception.** Condoms, IUD's, pills, vaginal methods (spermicides, diaphragms, or caps), injectables, and voluntary sterilization of a woman or her partner.

**More developed countries.** The “more developed” countries and areas include all of North America and Europe plus Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. This category matches the “more developed” classification employed by the United Nations.

**Natural increase.** The difference between the number of births and the number of deaths.

**Net migration rate.** The difference between the number of migrants entering and those leaving a country in a year, per 1,000 midyear population. May also be expressed in percent. A positive figure is known as a net immigration rate and a negative figure as a net emigration rate.

**Net number of migrants.** The difference between the number of migrants entering and those leaving a country in a year. A positive figure is known as net immigration and a negative figure as net emigration.

**Population pyramid.** A graphical representation of the age and sex distribution of a population. Numbers or proportions of males and females in each age group are plotted as horizontal bars with the males on the left and females on the right. Pyramids may be constructed to show single years of age or, as with the IDB pyramids, 5-year age groups.

**Rate of natural increase.** The difference between the crude birth rate and the crude death rate, but usually expressed as a percent rather than per 1,000 population.

**Total fertility rate.** The average number of children that would be born per woman if all women lived to the end of their childbearing years and bore children according to a given set of age-specific fertility rates.

**Vital events.** Births and deaths.