

Population Division  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat

# The World at Six Billion



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## NOTE

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The designations “developed” and “developing” countries and “more developed” and “less developed” regions are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

The term “country” as used in the text of this publication also refers, as appropriate to territories or areas.



## PREFACE

The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at the United Nations Secretariat is responsible for providing the international community with up-to-date and scientifically objective information on population and development. The Population Division provides guidance to the United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Population and Development on population and development issues and undertakes regular studies on population levels and trends, population estimates and projections, population policies and population and development interrelationships.

In particular, the Population Division is concerned with the following substantive areas: patterns of mortality, fertility and international and internal migration, including levels and trends, their causes and consequences, and socio-economic, geographic and gender differentials; spatial distribution of population between urban and rural areas and among cities; estimates and projections of population size, age and sex structure, spatial distribution and demographic indicators for all countries of the world; population and development policies at the national and international levels; and the relationship between socio-economic development and population change.

The work of the Population Division is published in a variety of formats, including electronically, in order to meet the needs of diverse audiences. These publications and materials used by Governments, national and international organisations, research institutions and individuals engaged in social and economic planning, research and training, and by the general public.

According to United Nations estimates, world population reaches the six billion mark on 12 October 1999. *The World at Six Billion* was prepared in response to the widespread global attention to this historic milestone. *The World at Six Billion* provides in tabular and graphic form salient characteristics of past, current and future world population growth. The publication is based largely on the publications and databases of the Population Division, including the official United Nations world population estimates and projections, prepared and biennially updated by the Population Division for the United Nations system. These publications are greatly facilitated by the cooperation that the Population Division receives from the regional commissions, specialized agencies and other bodies within the United Nations system. The Population Division is particularly grateful to the Statistical Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The set of references used when compiling this publication is given in the Bibliography section at the end of the volume.

*The World at Six Billion*, as well as other population information, may also be accessed on the Population Division POPIN World Wide Web site at [www.popin.org](http://www.popin.org). To discuss this publication, or population issues in general, please contact Mr. Joseph Chamie, Director, Population Division, United Nations, New York 10017, USA, at telephone (212) 963-3179, fax (212) 963-2147, or e-mail to [population@un.org](mailto:population@un.org).