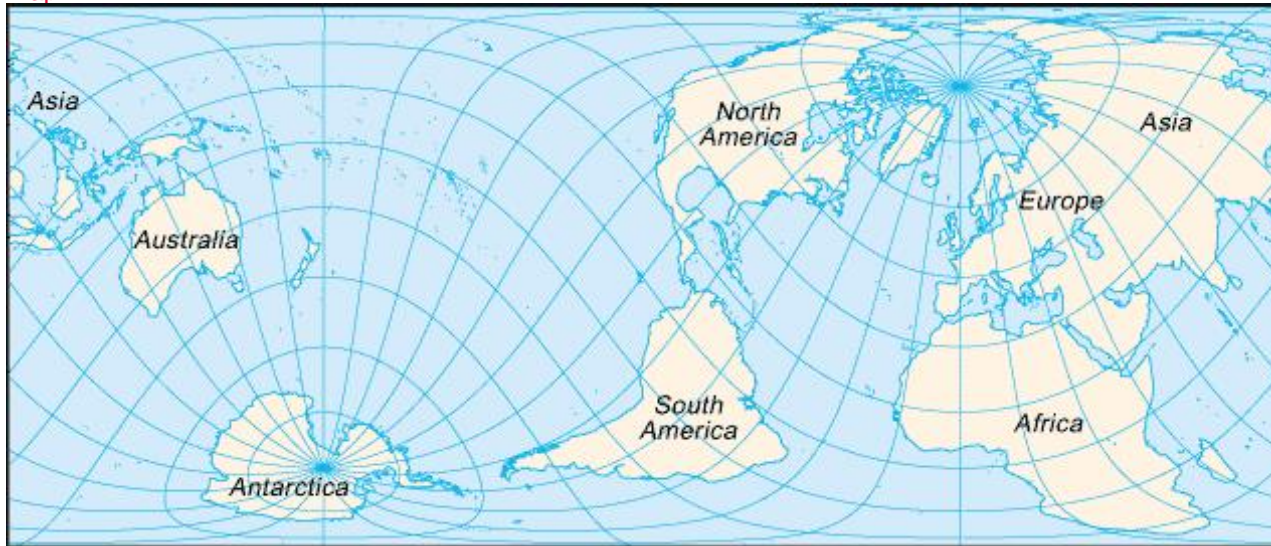


## World

Map:



**Background:** Globally, the 20th century was marked by: (a) two devastating world wars; (b) the Great Depression of the 1930s; (c) the end of vast colonial empires; (d) rapid advances in science and technology, from the first airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina (US) to the landing on the moon; (e) the Cold War between the Western alliance and the Warsaw Pact nations; (f) a sharp rise in living standards in North America, Europe, and Japan; (g) increased concerns about the environment, including loss of forests, shortages of energy and water, the decline in biological diversity, and air pollution; (h) the onset of the AIDS epidemic; and (i) the ultimate emergence of the US as the only world superpower. The planet's population continues to explode: from 1 billion in 1820, to 2 billion in 1930, 3 billion in 1960, 4 billion in 1974, 5 billion in 1988, and 6 billion in 2000. For the 21st century, the continued exponential growth in science and technology raises both hopes (e.g., advances in medicine) and fears (e.g., development of even more lethal weapons of war).

### Geography and Environmental

**Area Total:** 510.072 million sq km

**Area Land:** 148.94 million sq km

**Area Water:** 361.132 million sq km

**Area Note:** 70.8% of the world's surface is water, 29.2% is land

**Area Comparative:** land area about 16 times the size of the US

**Land Boundaries Note:** 44 nations and other areas are landlocked, these include: [Afghanistan](#), [Andorra](#), [Armenia](#), [Austria](#), [Azerbaijan](#), [Belarus](#), [Bhutan](#), [Bolivia](#), [Botswana](#), [Burkina Faso](#), [Burundi](#), [Central African Republic](#), [Chad](#), [Czech Republic](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Holy See \(Vatican City\)](#), [Hungary](#), [Kazakhstan](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Laos](#), [Lesotho](#), [Liechtenstein](#), [Luxembourg](#), [Macedonia](#), [Malawi](#), [Mali](#), [Moldova](#), [Mongolia](#), [Nepal](#), [Niger](#), [Paraguay](#), [Rwanda](#), [San Marino](#), [Serbia](#), [Slovakia](#), [Swaziland](#), [Switzerland](#), [Tajikistan](#), [Turkmenistan](#), [Uganda](#), [Uzbekistan](#), [West Bank](#), [Zambia](#), [Zimbabwe](#); two of these, [Liechtenstein](#) and [Uzbekistan](#), are doubly landlocked

**Coastline:** 356,000 km

**note:** 98 nations and other entities are islands that border no other countries, they include: American [Samoa](#), [Anguilla](#), [Antigua and Barbuda](#), [Aruba](#), [Ashmore and Cartier Islands](#), The Bahamas, [Bahrain](#), [Baker Island](#), [Barbados](#), [Bassas da India](#), [Bermuda](#), [Bouvet Island](#), British [Indian Ocean Territory](#), British [Virgin Islands](#), [Cape Verde](#), [Cayman Islands](#), [Christmas Island](#), [Clipperton Island](#), [Cocos \(Keeling\) Islands](#), [Comoros](#), [Cook Islands](#), [Coral Sea Islands](#), [Cuba](#), [Cyprus](#), [Dominica](#), [Europa Island](#), [Falkland Islands \(Islas Malvinas\)](#), [Faroe Islands](#), [Fiji](#), [French Polynesia](#), [French Southern and Antarctic Lands](#), [Glorioso Islands](#), [Greenland](#), [Grenada](#), [Guam](#), [Guernsey](#), [Heard Island and McDonald Islands](#), [Howland Island](#), [Iceland](#), [Isle of Man](#), [Jamaica](#), [Jan Mayen](#), [Japan](#), [Jarvis Island](#), [Jersey](#), [Johnston Atoll](#), [Juan de Nova Island](#), [Kingman Reef](#), [Kiribati](#), [Madagascar](#), [Maldives](#), [Malta](#), [Marshall Islands](#), [Martinique](#), [Mauritius](#), [Mayotte](#), [Federated States of Micronesia](#), [Midway Islands](#), [Montserrat](#), [Nauru](#), [Navassa Island](#), [New Caledonia](#), [New Zealand](#), [Niue](#), [Norfolk Island](#), [Northern Mariana Islands](#), [Palau](#), [Palmyra Atoll](#), [Paracel Islands](#), [Philippines](#), [Pitcairn Islands](#), [Puerto Rico](#), [Reunion](#), [Saint Helena](#), [Saint Kitts and Nevis](#), [Saint Lucia](#), [Saint Pierre and Miquelon](#), [Saint Vincent and the Grenadines](#), [Samoa](#), [Sao Tome and Principe](#), [Seychelles](#), [Singapore](#), [Solomon Islands](#), [South Georgia](#) and the South Sandwich Islands, [Spratly Islands](#), [Sri Lanka](#), [Svalbard](#), [Tokelau](#), [Tonga](#), [Trinidad and Tobago](#), [Tromelin Island](#), [Turks and Caicos Islands](#), [Tuvalu](#), [Vanuatu](#), [Virgin Islands](#), [Wake Island](#), [Wallis and Futuna](#), [Taiwan](#)

**Climate:** a wide equatorial band of hot and humid tropical climates – bordered north and south by subtropical temperate zones - that separate two large areas of cold and dry polar climates

**Terrain**the greatest ocean depth is the Mariana Trench at 10,924 m in the Pacific Ocean

**Elevation Extremes Lowest Point**Bentley Subglacial Trench -2,540 m

**Elevation Extremes Note**in the oceanic realm, Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench is the lowest point, lying -10,924 m below the surface of the Pacific Ocean

**Elevation Extremes Highest Point**Mount Everest 8,850 m

**Natural Resources**the rapid depletion of nonrenewable mineral resources, the depletion of forest areas and wetlands, the extinction of animal and plant species, and the deterioration in air and water quality (especially in Eastern Europe, the former USSR, and China) pose serious long-term problems that governments and peoples are only beginning to address

**Land Use Arable Land**:13.31%

**Land Use Permanent Crops**4.71%

**Land Use Other**:81.98% (2005)

**Irrigated Land**2,770,980 sq km (2003)

**Natural Hazards**large areas subject to severe weather (tropical cyclones), natural disasters (earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions)

**Environment Current Issues**large areas subject to overpopulation, industrial disasters, pollution (air, water, acid rain, toxic substances), loss of vegetation (overgrazing, deforestation, desertification), loss of wildlife, soil degradation, soil depletion, erosion; global warming becoming a greater concern

**Geography Note**the world is now thought to be about 4.55 billion years old, just about one-third of the 13-billion-year age estimated for the universe

## Population

**Population**:6,602,224,175 (July 2007 est.)

**Age Structure 0 to 14 Years**:27.4% (male 931,551,498/female 875,646,416)

**Age Structure 15 to 64 Years**:65.1% (male 2,174,605,518/female 2,124,494,703)

**Age Structure 65 Years And Over**:7.5% (male 217,451,123/female 278,474,917) (2007 est.)

**Median Age Total**28 years

**Median Age Male**:27.4 years

**Median Age Female**:28.7 years (2007 est.)

**Population Growth Rate**:1.167% (2007 est.)

**Birth Rate**:20.09 births/1,000 population (2007 est.)

**Death Rate**:8.37 deaths/1,000 population (2007 est.)

**Sex Ratio At Birth**:1.07 male(s)/female

**Sex Ratio Under 15 Years**:1.064 male(s)/female

**Sex Ratio 15 to 64 Years**: 1.024 male(s)/female

**Sex Ratio 65 Years And Over**0.781 male(s)/female

**Sex Ratio Total Population**:1.014 male(s)/female (2007 est.)

**Infant Mortality Rate Total**43.52 deaths/1,000 live births

**Infant Mortality Rate Male**:46.32 deaths/1,000 live births

**Infant Mortality Rate Female**:40.52 deaths/1,000 live births (2007 est.)

**Life Expectancy At Birth**Total**Population**65.82 years

**Life Expectancy At Birth Male**:63.89 years

**Life Expectancy At Birth Female**:67.84 years (2007 est.)

**Total Fertility Rate**:2.59 children born/woman (2007 est.)

**HIV AIDS Adult Prevalence Rate**NA

**HIV AIDS People Living With HIV AIDS**NA

**HIV AIDS Deaths**:NA

**Religions**:[Christians](#) 33.03% (of which [Roman Catholics](#) 17.33%, [Protestants](#) 5.8%, Orthodox 3.42%, [Anglicans](#) 1.23%), [Muslims](#) 20.12%, [Hindus](#) 13.34%, [Buddhists](#) 5.89%, [Sikhs](#) 0.39%, [Jews](#) 0.23%, other religions 12.61%, non-religious 12.03%, [atheists](#) 2.36% (2004 est.)

**Languages:** Mandarin Chinese 13.69%, [Spanish](#) 5.05%, [English](#) 4.84%, [Hindi](#) 2.82%, [Portuguese](#) 2.77%, [Bengali](#) 2.68%, [Russian](#) 2.27%, [Japanese](#) 1.99%, Standard [German](#) 1.49%, Wu Chinese 1.21% (2004 est.)

*note:* percents are for "first language" speakers only and therefore do not add to 100%

**Literacy Definition:** age 15 and over can read and write

**Literacy Total Population:** 82%

**Literacy Male:** 87%

**Literacy Female:** 77%

**Literacy Note:** over two-thirds of the world's 785 million illiterate adults are found in only eight countries (India, China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Indonesia, and Egypt); of all the illiterate adults in the world, two-thirds are women; extremely low literacy rates are concentrated in three regions, South and West Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Arab states, where around one-third of the men and half of all women are illiterate (2005 est.)

**Administrative Divisions:** 268 nations, dependent areas, and other entities

**Legal System:** all members of the UN are parties to the statute that established the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or World Court

## Economy

**Overview:** Global output rose by 5% in 2006, led by China (10.5%), India (8.5%), and Russia (6.6%). The 14 other successor nations of the USSR and the other old Warsaw Pact nations again experienced widely divergent growth rates; the three Baltic nations continued as strong performers, in the 7%-10% range of growth. Growth results posted by the major industrial countries varied from no gain for Italy to a strong gain by the United States (3.4%). The developing nations also varied in their growth results, with many countries facing population increases that erode gains in output. Externally, the nation-state, as a bedrock economic-political institution, is steadily losing control over international flows of people, goods, funds, and technology. Internally, the central government often finds its control over resources slipping as separatist regional movements - typically based on ethnicity - gain momentum, e.g., in many of the successor states of the former Soviet Union, in the former Yugoslavia, in India, in Iraq, in Indonesia, and in Canada. Externally, the central government is losing decisionmaking powers to international bodies, notably the EU. In Western Europe, governments face the difficult political problem of channeling resources away from welfare programs in order to increase investment and strengthen incentives to seek employment. The addition of 80 million people each year to an already overcrowded globe is exacerbating the problems of pollution, desertification, underemployment, epidemics, and famine. Because of their own internal problems and priorities, the industrialized countries devote insufficient resources to deal effectively with the poorer areas of the world, which, at least from an economic point of view, are becoming further marginalized. The introduction of the euro as the common currency of much of Western Europe in January 1999, while paving the way for an integrated economic powerhouse, poses economic risks because of varying levels of income and cultural and political differences among the participating nations. The terrorist attacks on the US on 11 September 2001 accentuated a further growing risk to global prosperity, illustrated, for example, by the reallocation of resources away from investment to anti-terrorist programs. The opening of war in March 2003 between a US-led coalition and Iraq added new uncertainties to global economic prospects. After the coalition victory, the complex political difficulties and the high economic cost of establishing domestic order in Iraq became major global problems that continued through 2006.

**GDP Purchasing Power Parity:** GWP (gross world product): \$65 trillion (2006 est.)

**GDP Real Growth Rate:** 5.1% (2006 est.)

**GDP Composition By Sector Agriculture:** 4%

**GDP Composition By Sector Industry:** 32%

**GDP Composition By Sector Services:** 64% (2004 est.)

**Labor Force:** 3.001 billion (2005 est.)

**Labor Force By Occupation:** *agriculture:* 40.7%

*industry:* 20.5%

*services:* 38.8% (2002 est.)

**Unemployment Rate:** 30% combined unemployment and underemployment in many non-industrialized countries; developed countries typically 4%-12% unemployment (2006 est.)

**Household Income Or Consumption By Percentage Share:** *lowest 10%:* 2.5%

*highest 10%:* 29.9% (2002 est.)

**Inflation Rate Consumer Prices:** developed countries 1% to 4% typically; developing countries 5% to 20% typically; national inflation rates vary widely in individual cases, from declining prices in Japan to hyperinflation in one Third World countries (Zimbabwe); inflation rates have declined for most countries for the last several years, held in check by increasing international competition from several low wage countries (2005 est.)

**Industries:** dominated by the onrush of technology, especially in computers, robotics, telecommunications, and medicines and medical equipment; most of these advances take place in OECD nations; only a small portion of non-OECD countries have succeeded in rapidly adjusting to these technological forces; the accelerated development of new industrial (and agricultural) technology is complicating already grim environmental problems

**Industrial Production Growth Rate** 3% (2003 est.)

## Energy

**Electricity Production:** 17.4 trillion kWh (2004 est.)

**Electricity Production By Source Fossil Fuel:** NA

**Electricity Production By Source Hydro:** NA

**Electricity Production By Source Nuclear:** NA

**Electricity Production By Source Other:** NA

**Electricity Consumption:** 16.33 trillion kWh (2004 est.)

**Electricity Exports:** 568.4 billion kWh (2004)

**Electricity Imports:** 582.2 billion kWh (2004)

**Oil Production:** 83 million bbl/day (2004 est.)

**Oil Consumption:** 82.59 million bbl/day (2004 est.)

**Oil Proved Reserves** 1.326 trillion bbl (1 January 2002 est.)

**Natural Gas Production:** 2.822 trillion cu m (2004 est.)

**Natural Gas Consumption** 2.819 trillion cu m (2004 est.)

**Natural Gas Exports:** 813.5 billion cu m (2004 est.)

**Natural Gas Imports:** 819.3 billion cu m (2004 est.)

**Natural Gas Proved Reserves** 172.8 trillion cu m (1 January 2005 est.)

**Exports:** \$12.44 trillion f.o.b. (2004 est.)

**Exports Commodities:** the whole range of industrial and agricultural goods and services

**Exports Partners:** US 15.6%, Germany 7.4%, China 5.7%, France 4.9%, UK 4.7%, Japan 4.5% (2005)

**Imports:** \$12.09 trillion f.o.b. (2004 est.)

**Imports Commodities:** the whole range of industrial and agricultural goods and services

**Imports Partners:** China 9.3%, Germany 9%, US 9%, Japan 6.1%, France 4.2% (2005)

**Debt External:** \$44.61 trillion

*note:* this figure is the sum total of all countries' external debt, both public and private (2004 est.)

**Economic Aid Recipient:** ODA, \$154 billion (2004)

## Communications

**Telephones Main Lines In Use:** 1,263,367,600 (2005)

**Telephones Mobile Cellular:** 2,168,433,600 (2005)

**Telephone System General Assessment:** NA

**Telephone System Domestic:** NA

**Telephone System International:** NA

**Radio Broadcast Stations:** AM NA, FM NA, shortwave NA

**Radios:** NA

**Television Broadcast Stations:** NA

**Televisions:** NA

**Internet Service Providers-ISPs:** 10,350 (2000 est.)

**Internet Users:** 1,018,057,389 (2005)

## Transportation

**Railways Total:** 1,115,205 km

**Railways Broad Gauge:** 257,481 km

**Railways Standard Gauge:** 671,413 km

**Railways Narrow Gauge:** 186,311 km (2003)

**Waterways:** 671,886 km (2004)

**Airports:** 49,024 (2006)

**Military Expenditures Percent Of GDP:** roughly 2% of gross world product (2005 est.)

**Disputes International** stretching over 250,000 km, the world's 319 international land boundaries separate 193 independent states and 73 dependencies, areas of special sovereignty, and other miscellaneous entities; ethnicity, culture, race, religion, and language have divided states into separate political entities as much as history, physical terrain, political fiat, or conquest, resulting in sometimes arbitrary and imposed boundaries; most maritime states have claimed limits that include territorial seas and exclusive economic zones; overlapping limits due to adjacent or opposite coasts create the potential for 430 bilateral maritime boundaries of which 209 have agreements that include contiguous and non-contiguous segments; boundary, borderland/resource, and territorial disputes vary in intensity from managed or dormant to violent or militarized; undemarcated, indefinite, porous, and unmanaged boundaries tend to encourage illegal cross-border activities, uncontrolled migration, and confrontation; territorial disputes may evolve from historical and/or cultural claims, or they may be brought on by resource competition; ethnic and cultural clashes continue to be responsible for much of the territorial fragmentation and internal displacement of the estimated 6.6 million people and cross-border displacements of 8.6 million refugees around the world as of early 2006; just over one million refugees were repatriated in the same period; other sources of contention include access to water and mineral (especially hydrocarbon) resources, fisheries, and arable land; armed conflict prevails not so much between the uniformed armed forces of independent states as between stateless armed entities that detract from the sustenance and welfare of local populations, leaving the community of nations to cope with resultant refugees, hunger, disease, impoverishment, and environmental degradation

**Refugees And Internally Displaced Persons** the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that in December 2005 there was a global population of 8.4 million registered refugees, the lowest number in 26 years, and as many as 23.7 million IDPs in more than 50 countries; the actual global population of refugees is probably closer to 10 million given the estimated 1.5 million Iraqi refugees displaced throughout the Middle East (2006)

**Illicit Drugs:** *cocaine:* worldwide coca leaf cultivation in 2005 amounted to 208,500 hectares; Colombia produced slightly more than two-thirds of the worldwide crop, followed by Peru and Bolivia; potential pure cocaine production rose to 900 from 645 metric tons in 2005 - partially due to improved methodologies used to calculate levels of production; Colombia conducts aggressive coca eradication campaign, but both Peruvian and Bolivian Governments are hesitant to eradicate coca in key growing areas; 551 metric tons of export-quality cocaine (85% pure) is documented to have been seized or destroyed in 2005; US consumption of export quality cocaine is estimated to have been in excess of 380 metric tons *opiates:* worldwide illicit opium poppy cultivation reached 208,500 hectares in 2005; potential opium production of 4,990 metric tons was only a 9% decrease over 2004's highest total recorded since estimates began in mid-1980s; Afghanistan is world's primary opium producer, accounting for 90% of the global supply; Southeast Asia - responsible for 9% of global opium - saw marginal increases in production; Latin America produced 1% of global opium, but most was refined into heroin destined for the US market; if all potential opium was processed into pure heroin, the potential global production would be 577 metric tons of heroin in 2005