INTRODUCTION

This issue of the *Population and Vital Statistics Report* presents data for countries or areas[1] on population size (total, male, and female) from the latest available census, estimated total population size for 2023 or 2024 (the later available year), and the number and rate of vital events (live births, deaths, and infant deaths) for the latest available year within the past 15 years (2010-2024). These data are presented as reported by national statistical authorities to the *Demographic Yearbook* of the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.[2] This issue also presents population estimates for 2023 and 2024 of the world and its major areas and regions[1]. These estimates were prepared by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.[3] The data described in this paragraph are presented in three tables:

Table 1. Estimated mid-year population by major area and region, 2023 and 2024
Table 2. Population, latest available census and estimates for 2023 or 2024
Table 3. Live births, deaths, and infant deaths, latest available year within the past 15 years (2010-2024)

TECHNICAL NOTES

A. Population

Population estimates for 2023 and 2024 for the world and its major areas and regions (table 1) refer to 1 July of the given year, and are produced by the United Nations Population Division.[3]

Latest population census figures for countries or areas (table 2) refer to the given date, and are presented as reported by national statistical authorities to the *Demographic Yearbook* of the United Nations Statistics Division. The data are from national population and housing censuses. These censuses use different methods of enumeration: traditional, based on administrative/population registers, or a combination of methods that may include a sample survey.[4] The censuses are conducted on either a *de facto* or a *de jure* basis, as indicated in the column "Code." The *de facto* population consists of all persons who are physically present in the country or area at the reference date, whether or not they are usual residents. The *de jure* population consists of all usual residents, whether or not they are present at the time of the enumeration. Population census data are presented for 240 countries or areas that conducted a census during the period 1960-2025.

Mid-year population estimates for 2023 or 2024 for countries or areas (table 2) refer to 1 July of the given year unless otherwise stated, and are presented as reported by national statistical authorities to the *Demographic Yearbook* of the United Nations Statistics Division. They are also coded as either *de jure* or *de facto*, since for some countries or areas the code is not the same as for the census figure.

B. Vital statistics

Table 3 presents data for countries or areas on live births, deaths, and infant deaths (excluding foetal deaths) for the latest available year within the last 15 years (2010-2024). The data usually refer to vital events that *occurred* in the specified year, even if some were registered later. In some countries or areas, however, they refer to events that were *registered* in the specified year, and, therefore, include some events that occurred previously, and exclude some events that occurred in the specified year but that were or will be registered later. In this case, the symbol "+" is displayed in the column "Code."

Most of the vital statistics data presented in table 3 are from national civil registration systems. These systems differ markedly in the completeness of the data that they produce. If the country or area reports to the *Demographic Yearbook* its own estimate of the completeness of its civil registration data, then this estimate is classified in the column "Code" as follows: "C" indicates virtually complete data (that is, representing 90 per cent or more of the events occurring in the specified year);

[1] In table 1 of this report "countries or areas" are grouped geographically into 21 "regions" (for example, Central America), which are then grouped into six "major areas" (for example, Latin America and the Caribbean). In tables 2 and 3 they are listed by six continents (Africa; America, North; America, South; Asia; Europe; Oceania).

[2] Data on these and many other demographic statistics are maintained and continuously updated in the *Demographic Yearbook* database. A small selection of demographic statistics are published annually as the *Population and Vital Statistics Report*, and a much larger selection of data, including complementary technical notes, are published annually as the *Demographic Yearbook*. The *Demographic Yearbook* is also available online, at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/default.htm.

[3] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2024). *World Population Prospects 2024.*

[4] If the census method of enumeration is not traditional, the type of method is indicated in a footnote to the census date in the table.

and “U” indicates incomplete data (that is, less than 90 per cent of the events). Data not derived from civil registration - usually official estimates from censuses, sample surveys or demographic analyses - that are assumed reliable are indicated by “|”.

The table shows both the number of vital events and the rates at which they occur. *Crude birth and death rates* are the number of live births and (total) deaths, respectively, per thousand persons in the same year. The denominators of these rates are the estimates of mid-year population as reported by national statistical authorities to the *Demographic Yearbook*. The *infant mortality rate* is the number of deaths of persons less than one year of age per thousand live births in the same year. Unless otherwise stated, the rates shown were computed by the United Nations Statistics Division. Rates were only computed when the numerator - the number of vital events - is at least 30 and when the denominator (mid-year population or the number of live births) is available for the same year. Furthermore, rates were computed only if the code for vital events (see the previous paragraph) is “C” or “|”.

C. Symbols

The following symbols and notations are used:

...	Data or information not available/rates not computed
-	Magnitude zero
*	Provisional figure
+	Data tabulated by year of registration rather than occurrence
C	Civil registration, estimated 90 per cent or more complete
U	Civil registration, estimated less than 90 per cent complete
|	Source other than civil registration, estimated reliable
DF	Population de facto
DJ	Population de jure
SSDF	Sample survey, population de facto
SSDJ	Sample survey, population de jure

D. Highlights

1. Population censuses

One goal of this report is to present the most recent data for total, male, and female population collected by a national population census. In the majority of cases, national population censuses are carried out once every ten years, that is, once every census round. A census round, as defined and implemented by the United Nations, encompasses ten years starting with the fifth year of a decade and ending in the fourth year of the next decade. The 2020 census round started on 1 January 2015 and will end on 31 December 2024, whereas the 2010 census round started on 1 January 2005 and ended on 31 December 2014. Detailed information on planned or conducted national population censuses is collected by the United Nations Statistics Division and presented at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census

The latest available census figures for total population (for 1960-2025) are given in this publication for 240 countries or areas, whenever available disaggregated by sex. Of these figures, 2 (1 pe cent) refers to the current 2030 round (2025-2034), 179 (75 per cent) refer to the 2020 round (2015-2024), 47 (19 per cent) refer to the 2010 census rounds (2005-2014), 5 (2 per cent) refer to the 2000 census round (1995-2004), 2 (1 per cent) refer to the 1990 census round (1985-1994), and 5 (2 per cent) refer to the 1980 or previous census rounds.

2. Vital statistics

The main source of vital statistics is civil registration. “Civil registration is defined as the continuous, permanent, compulsory and universal recording of the occurrence and characteristics of vital events pertaining to the population, as provided through decree or regulation in accordance with the legal requirements in each country.”[5] The availability of detailed vital statistics for a country or area illustrates national capacity in the compilation of these statistics from civil registration systems. This report aims to present the most recent data for the period 2010-2024 on live births, deaths, and infant deaths reported to the *United Nations Demographic Yearbook*.

[5] *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 3*, Sales No.E.13.XVII.10, United Nations, New York, 2014.

Out of 240 countries or areas, the latest available figure for live births refers to year 2015 or later for 199 countries or areas (83 per cent); to years 2010-2014 for 12 countries or areas (5 per cent) and no data for live births are available for 29 countries or areas (or 12 per cent) for the period 2010-2024. The availability of data on (total) deaths is similar. However, recent data on infant deaths are somewhat less available: Data of 165 countries or areas (or 69 per cent) refer to years 2015 or later, 15 (or 6 per cent) to 2010-2014, and 60 countries or areas (or 25 per cent) did not report data on infant deaths for the period 2010-2024.