Revolution 1: Population

How many people can our planet handle?

RESOURCES

Sample discussion questions

- What difficulties—from retiring baby boomers in the United States to a graying China, to the massive overhang of Europe's elderly—can private corporations, governments, and other sectors expect as the aging revolution unfolds across the globe? How will changing demographics affect workforce composition? Retirement age? Pension outlays? Taxation? Immigration? Economic growth? How can governments, corporations, and nongovernmental organizations work together to address these issues?

- Immigration already accounts for over 60% of population growth in developed countries. Do you believe that governments in developed countries are ready to deal with the massive immigration that will accompany, in many cases, a sharply decreasing number of citizens? What recent world events encourage pessimism or optimism in this regard?

- According to the United Nations Population Division, by 2050 the four most-populous countries will be India, China, the United States, and Pakistan. What will this mean for the geopolitical balance of power? Pakistan is a prime example of the overarching global trend of the highest population growth occurring in countries with the lowest prospects for economic development, the most dire resource scarcities, the most daunting public health challenges, and the least transparent and effective systems of governance. What will be the impact of this population growth in terms of global stability and security?

* From, Educating Globally Competent Citizens A Tool Kit for Teaching Seven Revolutions
Web Resources

The United Nations Population Division remains the standard of reference for global population figures, as well as analysis of trends. The Population Reference Bureau (PRB) provides detailed articles, datasheets, and reports on key population issues including mortality rates, gender, race/ethnicity, and fertility. PRB also offers specific country data. CSIS Global Aging Initiative provides information about the international economic, financial, political, and security implications of aging and depopulation. CIA: World FactBook and CIA regional maps: great country-by-country statistics and maps. World Health Organization Worldmapper: provides images of the globe based on statistical information.

Videos

Population Growth
Hans Rosling shows the best stats you've ever seen
Hans Rosling on global population growth
Hans Rosling: Let my dataset change your mindset
Minature-Earth
Global Aging Preparedness with Richard Jackson

Further Reading

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) publications