



**SRMUN Atlanta 2024**  
**November 21-23, 2024**  
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Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Atlanta 2024 and the Commission on Population and Development (CPD)! My name is Joanne Kim, and I have the pleasure and honor of serving as your Director for CPD. This will be my second time as an SRMUN Atlanta staff member, having previously served as the Assistant Director of the United Nations Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) at SRMUN Atlanta 2023. I am a first-year graduate student pursuing my Master's degree in International Affairs. Our committee's Assistant Director will be Lilly Slipher. This will be Lilly's third time as a staff member, having previously served as Assistant Director for the General Assembly Plenary at SRMUN Atlanta 2023 and Assistant Director for the Peacebuilding Commission at SRMUN Charlotte 2024. Lilly recently graduated in May 2024 with her Bachelor's degree in International Studies.

The Commission on Population and Development's mission is to monitor, review, and implement programs designed to execute the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) *Programme of Action*. The Commission works with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and other UN bodies to ensure that Member States adequately respond to changing population trends and challenges, from overpopulation to specialized issues affecting certain demographics like women, children, and migrants. Considering the impacts of population and development trends, this committee is equipped to address humanitarian challenges from a diverse perspective.

Focusing on the mission of CPD, we have developed the following topics for the delegates to discuss at the conference:

- I. Addressing the Challenges and Needs within Declining Populations
- II. Promoting Sustainable Urban Development in Response to Rapid Population Growth

This background guide will serve as the foundation for your research, but it should not be all of the research. Preparation is given to each topic to help guide delegates in their initial research, and to serve as a starting place for more in-depth studies. It is expected that delegates go beyond this background guide in preparation for their position paper and to better prepare themselves for contribution to the committee in November. Further, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. Position papers should be no longer than two pages in-length (single-spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each topic. For more detailed information about formatting and how to write position papers, delegates can visit [srmun.org](http://srmun.org). **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, November 1st, by 11:59 pm EST via the SRMUN website to be eligible for Outstanding Position Paper Awards.**

Lilly and I are excited about the opportunity to serve as your dais for the Commission on Population and Development and wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation! I look forward to meeting and working with you at SRMUN Atlanta 2024. If you have any questions while preparing for this conference, please do not hesitate to contact Lilly, myself, or our Deputy Director-General Michael Bovi.

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## The History of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development

The United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established a commission on population in October 1946 under Resolution E/RES/3 (III).<sup>1</sup> This commission, entitled “A Population Commission”, was tasked with the purpose of monitoring and implementing the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and met bi- or triennially from 1946 to 1994.<sup>2</sup> The UN General Assembly passed A/RES/49/128 in December 1994, altering the renamed commission to the “Commission on Population and Development” and updating its mandate.<sup>3</sup>

The General Assembly’s A/RES/49/128 modified the mandate of the CPD by reassigning the primary function of the body to conducting studies and advising ECOSOC on population issues and trends, integration of population and development strategies, policies and programs concerning population, and related developmental issues.<sup>4</sup> A/RES/49/128 further assigned the CPD the duties to provide suggestions on population assistance to developing Member States and Member States with economies in transition temporarily, as well as providing advice to other UN agencies or bodies about population and development questions.<sup>5</sup> The CPD carries on the mandate of the original commission by working to monitor, review, and assess the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action on the national, regional, and global levels to identify reasons for success and failure.<sup>6</sup> This information is utilized to provide recommendations to ECOSOC via the integration of general population and development studies with the implementation of the ICPD.<sup>7</sup> The Commission also now meets once a year.<sup>8</sup>

The CPD is a subsidiary body under ECOSOC as a functional commission for the population division.<sup>9</sup> E/RES/5975 established the rules of procedure and functional commissions for the body.<sup>10</sup> The Commission is composed of 47 Member States elected by ECOSOC based on geographic distribution for four-year terms.<sup>11</sup> Each session is composed of 12 African Member States, 11 Asia-Pacific Member States, 5 Eastern European Member States, 9 Latin American and Caribbean Member States, and 10 Western European and Other Member States.<sup>12</sup> Representatives are professional and academic experts on population and development issues.<sup>13</sup> The CPD adopts resolutions via majority voting rules with one vote per Member State.<sup>14</sup> The CPD is funded via requests to the UN ECOSOC that are either rejected or fulfilled utilizing UN ECOSOC funding.<sup>15</sup>

Written in 1994, the ICPD’s Programme of Action had a 20-year implementation goal.<sup>16</sup> As the 20-year deadline approached, the General Assembly realized the objectives remained relevant and many Member States had not met

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<sup>1</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/CPD>, (accessed February 7, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>3</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>4</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>5</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>6</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>7</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>8</sup> “Commission on Population and Development,” *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>9</sup> “ECOSOC Subsidiary Bodies,” United Nations Economic and Social Council, <https://ecosoc.un.org/en/about-us/ecosoc-subsidiary-bodies>, (accessed February 10, 2024).

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/RES/5975/REV.1.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/RES/5975/REV.1.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/RES/5975/REV.1.

<sup>13</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/RES/5975/REV.1.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/RES/5975/REV.1.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, E/RES/5975/REV.1.

<sup>16</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014*, A/RES/65/234, April 5, 2011,

the goals set by the Programme of Action.<sup>17</sup> In 2011, the General Assembly passed A/RES/65/234, extending the deadline for implementation indefinitely.<sup>18</sup> In 2022, ECOSOC decided the CPD would revert to its five-year cycle for review of the ICPD Programme of Action, adding the importance of the Programme of Action's goals contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) currently set by the UN.<sup>19</sup>

Reports such as *World Population Ageing 2023: Challenges and opportunities of population ageing in the least developed countries* demonstrate the work of the CPD in its efforts to address various population issues Member States are facing while doing research in region-specific areas to ensure the implementation of policies are attainable.<sup>20</sup> Research such as this provides the UN, Member States, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) knowledge to enable well-informed action and policy making.<sup>21</sup>

Today, the CPD continues to make resolutions pertinent to population and development issues facing Member States.<sup>22</sup> During its fifty-fifth session in April 2022, the CPD passed E/CN.9/2022/L.6 or *Population and Sustainable Development, in particular, sustained and inclusive economic growth*.<sup>23</sup> E/CN.9/2022/L.6 urged Member States to implement further actions outlined in the ICPD Programme of Action, especially as implementation would enable Member States to reach the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>24</sup> The next session of the CPD will convene in New York at the UN Headquarters in April of 2025.<sup>25</sup>

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[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_65\\_234.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_65_234.pdf), (accessed February 9, 2024).

<sup>17</sup> United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/65/234.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations General Assembly, A/RES/65/234.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council, *Commission on Population and Development Report on the fifty-fifth session*, E/2022/25-E/CN.9/2022/7, April 29, 2022, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n22/348/99/pdf/n2234899.pdf?token=o4CqsOOhfKf8T77Yrg&fe=true>, (accessed February 9, 2024).

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Ageing 2023: Challenges and opportunities of population ageing in the least developed countries*, UN DESA/POP/2023/ TR/NO.5, 2023, [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa\\_pd\\_2024\\_wpa2023-report.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2024_wpa2023-report.pdf), (accessed February 10, 2024).

<sup>21</sup> "Commission on Population and Development," *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>22</sup> "Commission on Population and Development," *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Commission on Population and Development, *Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth*, E/CN.9/2022/L.6, April 27, 2022, <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=E%2FCN%209%20L.6>.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Commission on Population and Development, E/CN.9/2022/L.6.

<sup>25</sup> "Commission on Population and Development," *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division*.

## I. Addressing the Challenges and Needs within Declining Populations

### *Introduction*

As of 2023, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFP) reported eight billion people on Earth.<sup>26</sup> The population is important to individual Member States, as the number of people within a Member State can affect its economy, the environment, and social issues.<sup>27</sup> Although the global population is increasing significantly, some Member States are facing a population decline.<sup>28</sup> A declining population, also known as depopulation, is a decrease in an area's population represented by a negative population change.<sup>29</sup> This change can be due to various factors, from emigration to low fertility rates.<sup>30</sup> The United Nations Population Division (UNDP) forecasts most Member States will face significant declines in population growth in the 21st century.<sup>31</sup> A decline in population growth could lead to an eventual population decline.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the same UNDP forecast shared that 55 percent of Member States will face depopulation by 2090.<sup>33</sup> A population decline can be seen in the demographic transition model, which explains the period of rapid population growth and then a population decline leading to various challenges for a Member State.<sup>34</sup> These challenges can impact a Member State's economy, labor force, and social programs, leading to an aging crisis if not addressed correctly.<sup>35</sup> The international community must work to address the challenges and needs of declining populations while examining the causes and their impact<sup>36</sup>

### *History*

Population growth has historically been a measure of the strength and success of a society or community.<sup>37</sup> States measured their relative power based on the number of people under their title.<sup>38</sup> To encourage productivity, hard and soft power, and economic growth, states encouraged population growth by any means, such as conquest and limiting emigrations.<sup>39</sup> As such, population trends impact competition and cooperation between Member States, shaping how geopolitics work in various regions.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> "State of the World Population 2023," *The United Nations Population Fund*, 2023, accessed July 9, 2024.

<https://www.unfpa.org/swp2023/8-billion-strong#:~:text=SWP%20Report%202023%3A%208%20Billion%20Strong%20%7C%20United%20Nations%20Population%20Fund>.

<sup>27</sup> "Human Population," *The Britannica*, accessed July 9, 2024.

<https://www.britannica.com/explore/savingearth/population#:~:text=Such%20factors%20affect%20economic%20prosperity,touched%20upon%20by%20population%20trends>.

<sup>28</sup> Julien Viry, "Depopulation trends in Europe: what do we know about it?," *Population Europe*, last modified October 12, 2021, <https://population-europe.eu/research/policy-insights/depopulation-trends-europe-what-do-we-know-about-it>.

<sup>29</sup> Anna Majdzinska, "Depopulating Areas In Europe in the Second Decade of the 21st Century," *University of Lodz*, last modified January 12, 2021,

[https://www.oeaw.ac.at/fileadmin/subsites/Institute/VID/PDF/Conferences/2021/Posters/A3\\_poster\\_Majdzinska.pdf](https://www.oeaw.ac.at/fileadmin/subsites/Institute/VID/PDF/Conferences/2021/Posters/A3_poster_Majdzinska.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Anna Majdzinska, "Depopulating Areas In Europe in the Second Decade of the 21st Century."

<sup>31</sup> Julien Viry, "Depopulation trends in Europe: what do we know about it."

<sup>32</sup> Luke Rogers & Peter Borsella, "Growth or Decline: Understanding How Populations Change," *United States Census Bureau*, last modified 2016, [https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/newsroom/releases/2016/cb16-cn43\\_blog.pdf](https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/newsroom/releases/2016/cb16-cn43_blog.pdf).

<sup>33</sup> Julien Viry, "Depopulation trends in Europe: what do we know about it."

<sup>34</sup> Max Roser, "Demographic Transition: Why is Rapid Population Growth a Temporary Phenomenon," *Our World in Data*, last modified June 1, 2019, <https://ourworldindata.org/demographic-transition>.

<sup>35</sup> David E. Bloom and Leo M. Zucker, "Aging is the Real Population Bomb," *International Monetary Fund*, June 2023, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/Series/Analytical-Series/aging-is-the-real-population-bomb-bloom-zucker>.

<sup>36</sup> Elise VanDyke, "Population Shrinkage: Where is it happening and what is the impact," *Global Edge*, last modified September 21, 2021, <https://globaledge.msu.edu/blog/post/57025/population-shrinkage-where-is-it-happeni>.

<sup>37</sup> David Coleman and Robert Rowthorn, "Who's Afraid of Population Decline? A Critical Examination of Its Consequences," *Population and Development Review* 37, no. s1 (January 2011): 217–48, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2011.00385.x>.

<sup>38</sup> David Coleman and Robert Rowthorn, "Who's Afraid of Population Decline? A Critical Examination of Its Consequences."

<sup>39</sup> David Coleman and Robert Rowthorn, "Who's Afraid of Population Decline? A Critical Examination of Its Consequences."

<sup>40</sup> Nicholas Eberstadt, "With Great Demographics Comes Great Power," *Global Coalition on Aging*, last modified June 17, 2019, <https://globalcoalitiononaging.com/2019/06/17/with-great-demographics-comes-great-power/>.

However, over time, states have experienced various events that have led to population decreases, such as disease.<sup>41</sup> In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Bubonic Plague led to the death of roughly 30 percent of Europe's total population, disrupting political and economic dynamics between the European states through loss of labor and the erosion of the feudal institutions that governed much of Europe at the time.<sup>42</sup> Economic consequences after the Bubonic Plague included a pause in commercial activity like trade and the loss of knowledge and competencies due to a high death toll.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, rivalries and open hostilities during the Bubonic Plague amplified the competition and conflicts of the time by rearranging the population of each state.<sup>44</sup>

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, states began to experience volatile population growth and decline following World War I (WWI).<sup>45</sup> Fertility rates collapsed as military casualties rose, not nearing the replacement levels needed to sustain population growth, particularly among European states.<sup>46</sup> Generations who reached the age of their 20s during WWI had fewer children compared to previous generations.<sup>47</sup> Despite postponing births until the war was over, the wartime adult generation was not able to match the number of deaths.<sup>48</sup> Member States also faced a population decline during World War II (WWII).<sup>49</sup> The number of WWII casualties, including death, is estimated from 35 million to 60 million, representing a significant population decline.<sup>50</sup> Following WWII, the global population saw a huge rise in birth rates.<sup>51</sup> The Baby Boom of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century saw an increase in marriage, fertility, and birth rates across the world.<sup>52</sup> Member States' populations held increased confidence about economic prospects, lack of war and war casualties, and medical progress.<sup>53</sup>

By the 1970s, the Baby Boom population growth began to decrease.<sup>54</sup> The gradual decline in fertility rates coincided with a rise in female employment in the developed Member States, as post-war economic advantages waned and increased incomes were needed to support the family unit.<sup>55</sup> By the turn of the century, women had higher education levels than the past half-century and were taking part in more health-adverse activities, such as excessive alcohol consumption.<sup>56</sup> Another cause of the decline in fertility rates was due to an increase in access to birth control and other forms of maternal healthcare.<sup>57</sup> Family planning and maternal healthcare have a greater impact on fertility

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<sup>41</sup> David Coleman and Robert Rowthorn, "Who's Afraid of Population Decline? A Critical Examination of Its Consequences," *Population and Development Review* 37, no. s1 (January 2011): 217–48, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2011.00385.x>.

<sup>42</sup> Luis Bosshart and Jeremiah Dittmar, "Pandemic shock and economic divergence: political economy before and after the black death," *Centre for Economic Performance*, No.1805, October 2021, <https://cepr.org/system/files/2022-10/dp1805.pdf>.

<sup>43</sup> Guido Alfani, "The economic consequences of plague: lessons for the age of COVID-19," *History & Policy*, June 29, 2020, <https://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/the-economic-consequences-of-plague-lessons-for-the-age-of-covid-19>.

<sup>44</sup> Guido Alfani, "The economic consequences of plague: lessons for the age of COVID-19."

<sup>45</sup> Guillaume Vandenbroucke, "On a demographic consequence of the First World War," *Centre for Economic Policy Research*, August 21, 2012, accessed May 25, 2024, <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/demographic-consequence-first-world-war>.

<sup>46</sup> Guillaume Vandenbroucke, "On a demographic consequence of the First World War."

<sup>47</sup> Guillaume Vandenbroucke, "On a demographic consequence of the First World War."

<sup>48</sup> Guillaume Vandenbroucke, "On a demographic consequence of the First World War."

<sup>49</sup> "How many people died during World War II," *The Britannica*, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/question/How-many-people-died-during-World-War-II>.

<sup>50</sup> "How many people died during World War II."

<sup>51</sup> "Baby Boomers," *History.com*, last updated June 7, 2019, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.history.com/topics/1960s/baby-boomers-1>.

<sup>52</sup> Jan Van Bavel and David S. Reher, "The Baby Boom and Its Causes: What We Know and What We Need to Know,"

*Population and Development Review* 39, no. 2 (June 2013): 257–88, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2013.00591.x>.

<sup>53</sup> "The Baby Boom," *Khan Academy*, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/postwarera/postwar-era/a/the-baby-boom#:~:text=A%20combination%20of%20factors%20produced,made%20raising%20a%20family%20possible>.

<sup>54</sup> Namkee Ahn & Pedro Mira, "A note on the changing relationship between fertility and female employment rates in developed countries," *Journal of Population Economics* 15, 667–682 (2002), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s001480100078>.

<sup>55</sup> Namkee Ahn & Pedro Mira, "A note on the changing relationship between fertility and female employment rates in developed countries."

<sup>56</sup> Lone Schmidt, Johanne Sundby, and Berit Schei, "Has fertility declined from mid-1990s to mid-2000s?" *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica* 92, Issue 11, 1284–1289 (July 22, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1111/aogs.12224>.

<sup>57</sup> Kim Eckart, "How birth control, girl's education can slow population growth," *University of Washington*, September 8, 2020, <https://www.washington.edu/news/2020/09/08/how-birth-control-girls-education-can-slow-population->

rates than educational opportunities.<sup>58</sup> Education gives women more financial opportunities as alternatives to having large families, while family planning provides women the ability to delay their family growth.<sup>59</sup> These factors created a decrease in birthrates over time.<sup>60</sup> As such, since the Baby Boom, population growth rates have slowed from annual rates of two percent in the late 1960s to around one percent today.<sup>61</sup> Population growth rates have slowed due to a decrease in global fertility rates and an increase in migration patterns.<sup>62</sup> The decreased global fertility rates are a result of increased access to birth control, like birth control and abortion, and women's increased participation in the economy.<sup>63</sup> As a result, the decline in fertility rate led to migration patterns having a significant role in population trends.<sup>64</sup>

### ***Current Situation***

Although there appears to be a trend of rapid global population growth, the reality of a declining population trend has emerged in recent years.<sup>65</sup> Over the past few years, the number of Member States facing a decrease in population rose.<sup>66</sup> A 2022 press release by the United Nations (UN) reported the population in about 61 Member States is expected to decrease by 2050.<sup>67</sup> More developed Member States, like the United States and Japan, are expected to see their population peak and shrink by 2040.<sup>68</sup> The European Union noted its first natural population decline in 2015 and the EU has faced gaps in social services, transportation, economic, and educational opportunities as a result.<sup>69</sup> This population decline impacts the working population in the European Member States.<sup>70</sup> This requires higher inclusion of people into the labor markets to sustain or increase economic growth in a Member State.<sup>71</sup> Also, higher demand for welfare services brings long-term budgeting challenges for the governments of these Member States.<sup>72</sup>

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[growth/#:~:text=New%20University%20of%20Washington%20research%20analyzes%20global.long%20been%20tied%20to%20lower%20fertility%20trends.](#)

<sup>58</sup> Kim Eckart, "How birth control, girl's education can slow population growth," *University of Washington*, September 8, 2020, <https://www.washington.edu/news/2020/09/08/how-birth-control-girls-education-can-slow-population-growth/#:~:text=New%20University%20of%20Washington%20research%20analyzes%20global.long%20been%20tied%20to%20lower%20fertility%20trends>

<sup>59</sup> Kim Eckart, "How birth control, girl's education can slow population growth."

<sup>60</sup> Lone Schmidt, Johanne Sundby, and Berit Schei, "Has fertility declined from mid-1990s to mid-2000s?" *Acta Obstetrica et Gynecologica Scandinavica* 92, Issue 11, 1284-1289 (July 22, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1111/aogs.12224>.

<sup>61</sup> Hannah Ritchie, Lucas Rodes-Guirao, Edouard Mathieu, Marcel Gerber, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, Joe Hasell, and Max Roser, "Demographic Transition: Why is Rapid Population Growth a Temporary Phenomenon," *Our World in Data*, last modified 2023, <https://ourworldindata.org/population-growth?insight=population-growth-is-no-longer-exponential-it-peaked-decades-ago#key-insights>.

<sup>62</sup> "Global Population Growth is Slowing Down," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 2, 2023, <https://education.cfr.org/learn/reading/global-population-growth-slowing-down>.

<sup>63</sup> "Global Population Growth is Slowing Down," Council on Foreign Relations.

<sup>64</sup> "Global Population Growth is Slowing Down," Council on Foreign Relations.

<sup>65</sup> "State of the World Population 2023," *The United Nations Population Fund*, 2023, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.unfpa.org/swp2023/8-billion-strong#:~:text=SWP%20Report%202023%3A%208%20Billion%20Strong%20%7C%20United%20Nations%20Population%20Fund>.

[ation%20Fund.](#)

<sup>66</sup> "State of the World Population 2023," *The United Nations Population Fund*, 2023.

<sup>67</sup> "Global Issues Population," United Nations, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/population#:~:text=In%20sharp%20contrast%2C%20the%20populations.at%20least%20ten%20per%20cent>.

<sup>68</sup> "Global Trends 2040: Demographics and Human Development," Office of the Director of National Intelligence, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/gt2040-home/gt2040-structural-forces/demographics-and-human-development#:~:text=SLOWING%20POPULATION%20GROWTH%2C%20AGING%20POPULATIONS&text=Although%20India%27s%20population%20growth%20is.in%20infrastructure%2C%20education%2C%20and%20healthcare>.

<sup>69</sup> "How to tackle population decline in Europe's regions?," *European Parliament*, updated May 19, 2021, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20210414STO02006/what-solutions-to-population-decline-in-europe-s-regions>.

<sup>70</sup> "The impact of demographic changes in Europe," *European Parliament*, accessed July 28, 2024, [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/impact-demographic-change-europe\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/impact-demographic-change-europe_en).

<sup>71</sup> "The impact of demographic changes in Europe," *European Parliament*.

<sup>72</sup> "The impact of demographic changes in Europe," *European Parliament*.

Decreasing fertility rates influence the challenges and needs of a declining population.<sup>73</sup> The UNFP's 2023 edition of the State of World Population reported many Member States are facing lower fertility numbers.<sup>74</sup> The fertility rate is the number of children born to women.<sup>75</sup> Fertility rates can impact a Member State's population along with progress or challenges toward their social and economic development.<sup>76</sup> The 2022 World Population Prospects reported global fertility is predicted to fall from 2.3 children per woman in 2021 to 2.1 by 2050.<sup>77</sup> By decreasing the fertility rate, Member States face an aging population or an inverted population pyramid, with more older people than younger in a population.<sup>78</sup> This creates challenges such as increased pressure on the working population to support those collecting pensions which can lead to an economic slowdown.<sup>79</sup>

The increased rate of emigration is another cause behind decreased populations in certain Member States.<sup>80</sup> Emigration is defined as an individual leaving their home Member State.<sup>81</sup> Some may leave their Member State of origin to search for economic opportunities, join family in another Member State, or pursue educational opportunities.<sup>82</sup> However, others emigrate to escape conflict, persecution, or other severe human rights violations.<sup>83</sup> Migration patterns like immigration and emigration have direct and indirect consequences on population trends.<sup>84</sup> Emigration can contribute to a population decline as it can result in Member States struggling with aging populations, a decreased workforce, and a higher demand for social services.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, migration patterns can cause political and social tensions as people vocalize concerns over jobs and cultural identity as a Member State.<sup>86</sup>

There are several interconnected financial implications of a declining population.<sup>87</sup> A population decline can lead to a strain on the labor market, as a declining population leads to a smaller pool of individuals entering and in the

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<sup>73</sup> Global Issues Population," United Nations, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/population#:~:text=In%20sharp%20contrast%2C%20the%20populations.at%20least%20ten%20per%20cent.>

<sup>74</sup> "State of the World Population 2023," *The United Nations Population Fund*, 2023, accessed July 9, 2024.

<https://www.unfpa.org/swp2023/8-billion-strong#:~:text=SWP%20Report%202023%3A%208%20Billion%20Strong%20%7C%20United%20Nations%20Population%20Fund.>

<sup>75</sup> Natalie Smoak, "Fertility Rate," *The Britannica*, last modified December 4, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/fertility-rate>.

<sup>76</sup> "Fertility Rates," Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://data.oecd.org/pop/fertility-rates.htm>.

<sup>77</sup> "Global Issues Population," United Nations.

<sup>78</sup> Christopher J.L. Murray, "Global Population Reaches 8 Billion," *Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation*, November 17, 2022, <https://www.healthdata.org/news-events/insights-blog/global-health-insights/global-population-reaches-8-billion>.

<sup>79</sup> Pablo Alvarez, "What Does the Global Decline of the Fertility Rate Look Like," *World Economic Forum*, June 17, 2022, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/global-decline-of-fertility-rates-visualised#:~:text=The%20Societal%20Impact.it's%20been%20on%20the%20decline.>

<sup>80</sup> Aaron O'Neill, "The 20 Countries with the Highest Population Decline Rate in 2023," *Statista*, last modified April 3, 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264689/countries-with-the-highest-population-decline-rate/>.

<sup>81</sup> "The Lasting Effects of Emigration," *Council on Foreign Relations*, last modified April 19, 2023, <https://world101.cfr.org/global-era-issues/migration/lasting-effects-emigration>.

<sup>82</sup> "Global Issues International Migration," United Nations, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/migration#:~:text=Some%20people%20move%20in%20search,large%2Dscale%20human%20rights%20violations.>

<sup>83</sup> "Global Issues International Migration," United Nations.

<sup>84</sup> "Migration," *The Britannica*, accessed July 28, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/science/population-biology-and-anthropology/Natural-increase-and-population-growth>.

<sup>85</sup> Stephanie Kramer, "In some countries, immigration accounted for all population growth between 2000 and 2020," *Pew Research Center*, last modified July 8, 2024, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/07/08/in-some-countries-immigration-accounted-for-all-population-growth-between-2000-and-2020#:~:text=What%20they%20tend%20to%20have,immigration%20staved%20off%20population%20losses.>

<sup>86</sup> Michael Dimock, "Global Migration's Rapid Rise," *Trusts*, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/trend/archive/summer-2016/global-migrations-rapid-rise#:~:text=And%20today%2C%20many%20more%20people.center%20on%20these%20inherent%20tensions.>

<sup>87</sup> Elise VanDyke, "Population Shrinkage: Where is it happening and what is the impact," *Global Edge*, last modified September 21, 2021, <https://globaledge.msu.edu/blog/post/57025/population-shrinkage-where-is-it-happeni>.

workforce as more people retire.<sup>88</sup> Smaller labor markets can create imbalances in the domestic economy.<sup>89</sup> For example, government revenues, like taxes, decrease while spending on retirees increases resulting in younger individuals leaving that Member State.<sup>90</sup> Declining populations also impact certain industries, such as housing with increased mortgage rates and healthcare for walk-in services with cheaper medications.<sup>91</sup> One significant consequence of a declining population is an aging crisis.<sup>92</sup> Member States not hitting replacement rate targets can face impacts on their economic and social sustainability.<sup>93</sup> For example, as financial self-sustainability decreases, questions around social aspects like pensions, health care, and long-term care costs increase.<sup>94</sup> Furthermore, a population decline results in decreased ideas and innovation which contributes to a stagnation in knowledge which can negatively impact markets in a Member State.<sup>95</sup> There are also international financial consequences, as a population decline in Member States can affect trade with each other.<sup>96</sup> Member States that rely on trade with a Member State facing a population decline could experience slower economic growth.<sup>97</sup>

Due to both domestic and international financial consequences, a population decline can negatively impact various aspects of society.<sup>98</sup> Some examples include cuts to public transportation, as fewer people are utilizing the method of travel, and a decrease in educational institutions due to fewer students.<sup>99</sup> The UNDP has stated that “depopulation is a multi-faceted development challenge” to address ranging from the absence of meaningful opportunities to a lack of quality healthcare and education.<sup>100</sup> This presents numerous challenges such as tensions over social welfare resources like Social Security.<sup>101</sup>

### ***Actions Taken by the United Nations***

The UN has a continued, vested interest in population issues.<sup>102</sup> In 1974, the UN hosted the World Population Conference, recognizing the interlink between population and economic development.<sup>103</sup> The Third World Conference in Bucharest developed the World Population Plan of Action.<sup>104</sup> The World Population Plan of Action

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<sup>88</sup> Elise VanDyke, “Population Shrinkage: Where is it happening and what is the impact,” Global Edge, last modified September 21, 2021, <https://globaledge.msu.edu/blog/post/57025/population-shrinkage-where-is-it-happeni>.

<sup>89</sup> Jared Franz, “How population decline could upend the global economy,” *Capital Group*, March 14, 2024, <https://www.capitalgroup.com/advisor/insights/articles/population-decline-upend-global-economy.html>.

<sup>90</sup> Jared Franz, “How population decline could upend the global economy.”

<sup>91</sup> Jared Franz, “How population decline could upend the global economy.”

<sup>92</sup> Christopher J.L. Murray, “Global Population Reaches 8 Billion,” *Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation*, November 17, 2022, <https://www.healthdata.org/news-events/insights-blog/global-health-insights/global-population-reaches-8-billion>.

<sup>93</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023: Leaving no One Behind in an Ageing World*, UNDESA, ST/ESA/379, 2023, <https://desapublications.un.org/file/1087/download>.

<sup>94</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023*.

<sup>95</sup> Dave Gilson, “Baby Bust: Could Population Decline Spell the End of Economic Growth,” *Stanford Graduate School of Business*, December 9, 2022, accessed July 28, 2024, <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/baby-bust-could-population-decline-spell-end-economic-growth>.

<sup>96</sup> Jared Franz, “How population decline could upend the global economy,” *Capital Group*, March 14, 2024, <https://www.capitalgroup.com/advisor/insights/articles/population-decline-upend-global-economy.html>.

<sup>97</sup> Jared Franz, “How population decline could upend the global economy.”

<sup>98</sup> “Causes and effects of population decline in the Netherlands,” Government of the Netherlands, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.government.nl/topics/population-decline/causes-and-effects-of-population-decline>.

<sup>99</sup> “Causes and effects of population decline in the Netherlands,” Government of the Netherlands.

<sup>100</sup> “How to reverse a shrinking population,” United Nations SDG Integration, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://sdgintegration.undp.org/how-reverse-shrinking-population#:~:text=Because%20it's%20mainly%20young%20people,a%20multi%2Dfaceted%20development%20challenge>.

<sup>101</sup> Elise VanDyke, “Population Shrinkage: Where is it happening and what is the impact.”

<sup>102</sup> “World Population Day 11 July,” United Nations, accessed July 5, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/observances/world-population-day#:~:text=To%20more%20sustainably%20address%20the,people%20will%20come%20after%20them>.

<sup>103</sup> “World Population Conference, August 19-30 1974, Bucharest, Romania,” *Conferences*, United Nations, accessed July 5, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/population/bucharest1974>.

<sup>104</sup> “Population Conferences,” United Nations, accessed July 26, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/population>.



aimed to coordinate population trends along with trends of economic and social development.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, the World Population Plan of Action encourages Member States to develop domestic policies to improve national population and development planning.<sup>106</sup>

In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) adopted the Programme of Action.<sup>107</sup> The Programme of Action recognized that key population issues, like family planning and immigration, were interconnected with sustainable development.<sup>108</sup> The Programme explains no population topics - including population declines - can be addressed by themselves due to their interconnected nature.<sup>109</sup> The Commission on Population and Development's (CPD) mandate allows the committee to review and study population trends that can contribute to a decline in population and provide recommendations to ECOSOC.<sup>110</sup> After the 32nd session of CPD, the CPD passed the decision on E/1999/10, also known as Population Growth, Structure, and Distribution.<sup>111</sup> E/1999/10 requested the Population Division in the UN continue its research on population growth and understand the issues of a changing demographic while calling Member States to facilitate the work of the Population Division.<sup>112</sup>

Furthermore, agencies within the UN collaborate on various initiatives and conferences to address declining populations. One prominent example is the World Population Conference.<sup>113</sup> In 1954, the first World Population Conference was originally organized to exchange information on demographic trends, including their causes and impact.<sup>114</sup> However, the 2019 Conference on Population and Development + 25 in Nairobi, Kenya addressed family planning, maternal deaths, and sexual plus gender-based violence along with urging Member States to implement the Programme of Action.<sup>115</sup> Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohammed, committed to a series of goals including intensifying systematic efforts to eliminate all preventable maternal and child mortality and morbidities, to support Member States in the full and rapid implementation of the ICPD agenda, and to ensure timely and coordinated production and dissemination of disaggregated data.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, donor Member States have pledged around \$1 billion to help programs supporting sexual and reproductive health along with gender equality and around \$8 billion in new pledges to achieve goals like zero preventable maternal deaths by 2030.<sup>117</sup>

Prominently, population declines are a result of the intersection of lowered fertility rates and aging populations.<sup>118</sup> As the population replacement rate slows with decreasing fertility rates, the UN has created multiple studies on the effects the Member States experience with an aging population.<sup>119</sup> The 2023 UN *World Social Report* noted population aging is inevitable, as people are living longer and having smaller family units.<sup>120</sup> The Report warns

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<sup>105</sup> "World Population Plan of Action," adoption August 30, 1974, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/E\\_CONF.60\\_19\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/E_CONF.60_19_Plan.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> "World Population Conference, August 19-30 1974, Bucharest, Romania," *Conferences*, United Nations.

<sup>107</sup> "CPD Factsheet," Choice for Youth and Sexuality, 2024, accessed August 11, 2024, <https://www.choiceforyouth.org/assets/CHOICE-CPD-Factsheet-1.pdf>.

<sup>108</sup> "CPD Factsheet," Choice for Youth and Sexuality.

<sup>109</sup> "CPD Factsheet," Choice for Youth and Sexuality.

<sup>110</sup> "Commission on Population and Development," United Nations Population Division, 2024, accessed August 11, 2024, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/CPD>.

<sup>111</sup> "Resolutions and Decisions of the Commission on Population and Development," United Nations Population Division, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/resolutions-and-decisions-commission-population-and-development>.

<sup>112</sup> Commission on Population and Development resolution 10, *Population growth, structure, and distribution*, E/1999/INF/2/ADD.2, (July 26, 1999), [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/32/ECOSOC\\_Res1999-10.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/32/ECOSOC_Res1999-10.pdf).

<sup>113</sup> "Conferences Population," United Nations, 2024, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/population>.

<sup>114</sup> "Conferences Population," United Nations.

<sup>115</sup> "Conferences Population," United Nations.

<sup>116</sup> "Nairobi Summit (ICPD+25), 12-14 November 2019, Nairobi, Kenya," United Nations, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/population/nairobi2019>.

<sup>117</sup> "Nairobi Summit (ICPD+25), 12-14 November 2019, Nairobi, Kenya," United Nations.

<sup>118</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023: Leaving no One Behind in an Ageing World*, UNDESA, ST/ESA/379, 2023, <https://desapublications.un.org/file/1087/download>.

<sup>119</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023...*

<sup>120</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023...*

about the lack of critical measures taken by Member States to manage the challenges and potential opportunities of an aging population.<sup>121</sup> The Report encourages Member States to find state-specific ways to measure population aging and age-related dependencies better.<sup>122</sup> Notably, while more developed Member States are in the demographic transition, least developed Member States have yet to experience what the UN has described as an inevitable population shift.<sup>123</sup> The UN's *World Population Ageing 2023* discusses the challenges that least developed Member States face as populations age.<sup>124</sup> The report focuses on the opportunities for least developed Member States to proactively create policies on social protection and healthcare systems in anticipation of future population steady and eventual decline.<sup>125</sup> The report recommends population support policies based on the current issues developed and developing Member States are experiencing now.<sup>126</sup>

## Case Study

### *The Japanese Population Crisis*

Japan's population experienced a sharp increase following World War II, due to the vast expansion of the Japanese economy and standard of living.<sup>127</sup> Between 1945 and the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Japan's population increased 65 percent.<sup>128</sup> However, population growth slowed in the 1980s, with Japan's population peaking in 2008 at 128 million.<sup>129</sup> In recent years, Japan has been facing a rapid decline in its population and an aging crisis.<sup>130</sup> In October 2023, Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications estimated the total population to be a drop of 595,000 people, or 0.48 percent from 2022.<sup>131</sup> This would reportedly be Japan's thirteenth consecutive year facing a population decline.<sup>132</sup> This poses economic and social concerns leading to the Japanese Prime Minister stating the declining population is Japan's "gravest crisis."<sup>133</sup> One significant cause of the decline in Japan's population is that favorable attitudes towards marriage and fertility have decreased.<sup>134</sup> In 2021, the Japanese government published the sixteenth Japanese Fertility Survey to track attitudes on marriage and fertility to understand population trends.<sup>135</sup> One cause of the decrease in marriage in Japan is low and unstable incomes, as men and women are unable to find

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<sup>121</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023: Leaving no One Behind in an Ageing World*, UNDESA, ST/ESA/379, 2023, <https://desapublications.un.org/file/1087/download>.

<sup>122</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Social Report 2023...*

<sup>123</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Ageing 2023: Challenges and opportunities of population ageing in the least developed countries*, UN DESA, POP/2023/TR/NO.5. (2023), [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa\\_pd\\_2024\\_wpa2023-report.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2024_wpa2023-report.pdf).

<sup>124</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Ageing 2023: Challenges and opportunities of population ageing in the least developed countries*.

<sup>125</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Ageing 2023: Challenges and opportunities of population ageing in the least developed countries*.

<sup>126</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Ageing 2023: Challenges and opportunities of population ageing in the least developed countries*.

<sup>127</sup> Aaron O'Neill, "Population of Japan from 1800 to 2020," Statista, February 2, 2024, accessed May 25, 2024, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1066956/population-japan-historical/#:~:text=As%20living%20standards%20rose%2C%20the,oldest%20populations%20in%20the%20world>.

<sup>128</sup> Aaron O'Neill, "Population of Japan from 1800 to 2020."

<sup>129</sup> Aaron O'Neill, "Population of Japan from 1800 to 2020."

<sup>130</sup> Thisanka Siripala, "Japan's Population Crisis Nears Point of No Return," *The Diplomat*, January 28, 2023, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/01/japans-population-crisis-nears-point-of-no-return/>.

<sup>131</sup> "Japan's Population Declines Again: Seniors 75 and Over Top 20 Million for the First Time," Nippon, Last Updated April 24, 2024, accessed May 25, 2024, <https://www.nippon.com/en/japan-data/h01967/#:~:text=An%20estimate%20published%20by%20Japan%27s,%25>.

<sup>132</sup> "Japan's Population Declines Again: Seniors 75 and Over Top 20 Million for the First Time," Nippon.

<sup>133</sup> "Japan's Population Declines Again: Seniors 75 and Over Top 20 Million for the First Time," Nippon.

<sup>134</sup> "Marriage Process and Fertility of Married Couples and Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles," *National Institute of Population and Social Security Research*, February 2024, accessed June 30, 2024, [https://www.ipss.go.jp/ps-doukou/e/doukou16/Nfs16R\\_summary\\_eng.pdf](https://www.ipss.go.jp/ps-doukou/e/doukou16/Nfs16R_summary_eng.pdf)

<sup>135</sup> "Marriage Process and Fertility of Married Couples and Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles," *National Institute of Population and Social Security Research*.

suitable partners.<sup>136</sup> Furthermore, unstable employment among young adults and a decline in income cause uncertainty for those who wish to marry.<sup>137</sup> Another thing to consider is Japan has been reported not to pursue immigration as a solution to the population decline.<sup>138</sup> Since the 1990s, Japan mandated that only skilled foreigners can have employment and living conditions for unskilled workers are poor despite a demand for these kinds of workers.<sup>139</sup>

There are various consequences that Japan faces due to a population decline and an aging population.<sup>140</sup> One impact that Japan faces is significant differences in national security policy.<sup>141</sup> For Japan, an aging population means military forces will struggle to maintain manpower for defensive operations due to fewer recruits for service.<sup>142</sup> Another impact is a strain on public finances.<sup>143</sup> Age-related spending, like healthcare and pensions, will increase while the tax base shrinks due to a working population decline.<sup>144</sup> Japan's gross domestic product (GDP) is most likely to decrease over the next few years unless there is a large increase in productivity.<sup>145</sup> Additional challenges include social impacts like education.<sup>146</sup> In 2018, more than 200 elementary schools and junior high schools closed in Japan due to a shrinking population.<sup>147</sup> Higher education systems are also facing negative consequences of a declining population as the student enrollment rate is lower than the quota the government set over the past few years.<sup>148</sup> The decline in the youth population has also decreased competition among the youth and children as they navigate the education system, especially since they do not engage in competition-oriented learning until they realize the competitiveness on a global scale.<sup>149</sup> In June 2023, Prime Minister Kishida's administration formulated the 'Direction on Strategy for Children's Future' intending to address the declining population in Japan.<sup>150</sup> This had a variety of initiatives and policy proposals from an increase in the child allowance to improving the quality of nurseries.<sup>151</sup> However, funding these initiatives is challenging in the face of government debt.<sup>152</sup> Although the Japanese government has made attempts to boost birthrates, these attempts were not as successful as they hoped.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Naohiro Yashiro, "Japan's Marriage Market Needs to Break from Tradition," East Asia Forum, November 11, 2022, (accessed May 25, 2024, <https://eastasiaforum.org/2022/11/11/japans-marriage-market-needs-to-break-from-tradition/#:~:text=Low%20and%20unstable%20incomes%20makes.to%20meet%20a%20suitable%20person.>

<sup>137</sup> Masaki Ishihara, "Japan heads for 'marriage ice age' with lowest numbers in 90 years," Nikkei Asia, February 17, 2024, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Society/Japan-heads-for-marriage-ice-age-with-lowest-number-in-90-years2>.

<sup>138</sup> Robin LeBlanc, Leonard Schoppa, Keiko Yamanaka, & Jennifer Robertson, "Japan's Declining Population: Clearly a Problem, But What's the Solution," The Wilson Center, last modified April 24, 2008, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/japans-declining-population-clearly-problem-whats-the-solution>.

<sup>139</sup> Tomoko Otake, "Prejudice against immigrants explained in numbers," The University of Tokyo, last modified June 16, 2021, [https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/focus/en/features/z0508\\_00213.html](https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/focus/en/features/z0508_00213.html).

<sup>140</sup> Noriko Tsuya, "The Impacts of Population Decline in Japan: Demographic Prospects and Policy Implications," Reexamining Japan in Global Context, accessed July 26, 2024, [https://www.suntory.com/sfnd/jgc/forum/005/pdf/005\\_tsuya.pdf](https://www.suntory.com/sfnd/jgc/forum/005/pdf/005_tsuya.pdf).

<sup>141</sup> Sarosh Nagar, "The Setting Sun: What an Aging Japan Means for the Balance of Power in East Asia," Harvard International Review, April 19, 2023, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://hir.harvard.edu/the-setting-sun-what-an-aging-japan-means-for-the-balance-of-power-in-east-asia/>.

<sup>142</sup> Sarosh Nagar, "The Setting Sun: What an Aging Japan Means for the Balance of Power in East Asia."

<sup>143</sup> Charlotte Edmond and Madeleine North, "More than 1 in 10 people in Japan are aged 80 or over. Here's how its aging population is reshaping the country," World Economic Forum, September 28, 2023, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/09/elderly-oldest-population-world-japan/>.

<sup>144</sup> Charlotte Edmond and Madeleine North, "More than 1 in 10 people in Japan are aged 80 or over. Here's how its aging population is reshaping the country."

<sup>145</sup> Shujiro Urata, "Combating depopulation in Japan," *East Asia Forum*, March 5, 2024, accessed May 25, 2024, <https://eastasiaforum.org/2024/03/05/combating-depopulation-in-japan/>.

<sup>146</sup> Enrico D'Ambrogio, "Japan's ageing society," *European Parliament*, December 2020, accessed June 30, 2024, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/659419/EPRS\\_BRI\(2020\)659419\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/659419/EPRS_BRI(2020)659419_EN.pdf).

<sup>147</sup> Enrico D'Ambrogio, "Japan's ageing society."

<sup>148</sup> Harada Kazuyoshi, "Universities Struggle to Cope with Shrinking Population and Globalization" *Nippon*, March 16, 2015, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.nippon.com/en/features/h00095/>.

<sup>149</sup> Akiyoshi Yonezawa, "Challenges of the Japanese Higher Education amidst Population Decline and Globalization," *Taylor & Francis* vol. 18 2020, (December 2019): 43-52, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14767724.2019.1690085>.

<sup>150</sup> Shujiro Urata, "Combating depopulation in Japan."

<sup>151</sup> Shujiro Urata, "Combating depopulation in Japan."

<sup>152</sup> Shujiro Urata, "Combating depopulation in Japan."

<sup>153</sup> Masaki Ishihara, "Japan heads for 'marriage ice age' with lowest numbers in 90 years."

## ***Conclusion***

Population trends have presented various challenges and needs worldwide, making it a focus for CPD.<sup>154</sup> However, population decline is an important trend for Member States to navigate and consider.<sup>155</sup> From decreased birth rates to increased emigration, there have been many causes impacting a Member State's population trend.<sup>156</sup> If left unaddressed, a population decline can lead to negative consequences like a strained workforce, an aging crisis, and decreased quality in other services like education.<sup>157</sup> Member States have attempted to address these challenges through policy and initiatives, such as Japan's 'Direction on Strategy for Children's Future.'<sup>158</sup> Due to the complex nature of population trends ranging from sustainable development to its impact on national security, this brings many challenges for Member States.<sup>159</sup> Although the United Nations and CPD tried to address these concerns and needs, the challenge of a rapidly declining population still affects Member States today.<sup>160</sup>

## ***Committee Directive***

Based on population trends of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, population declines are currently affecting or will affect all Member States in the coming future. During the debate, delegates must consider the implication of declining populations on Member States currently in decline, while also setting ideas to mitigate the effects of declining populations in the future. Delegates should acknowledge the economic and social implications of population decline and ways to mitigate the adverse consequences of a declining population. Delegates should discuss ways to provide and sustain resources addressing declining populations. Delegates should acknowledge the many pre-existing initiatives and policies – both domestic and international - along with potential drawbacks. In doing so, delegates should ask: How can Member States collaborate with other agencies on initiatives addressing declining populations among the UN Member States? How can Member States equitably address the concerns of declining population among all development levels of Member States: from developed to least developed? In considering the preventative aspects of population decline, delegates should also ask: How can CPD work to alleviate the impacts of a population decline early on? Finally, delegates should consider this issue from a multi-dimensional perspective instead of a single direction, ranging from the policy implications of the proposed solutions to the economic concerns.

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<sup>154</sup> "Commission on Population and Development," United Nations Population Division, accessed July 9, 2024, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/CPD>.

<sup>155</sup> Jose M. Guzman, "CPD 2024 Past and Future Demographic Trends: Fears, Facts, and Policy Implications," Commission on Population and Development, accessed July 9, 2024, [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa\\_pd\\_2024\\_cpd57\\_guzman\\_keynote.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2024_cpd57_guzman_keynote.pdf).

<sup>156</sup> Jose M. Guzman, "CPD 2024 Past and Future Demographic Trends: Fears, Facts, and Policy Implications."

<sup>157</sup> Causes and effects of population decline in the Netherlands," Government of the Netherlands, accessed June 30, 2024, <https://www.government.nl/topics/population-decline/causes-and-effects-of-population-decline>.

<sup>158</sup> Shujiro Urata, "Combating depopulation in Japan," *East Asia Forum*, March 5, 2024, accessed May 25, 2024, <https://eastasiaforum.org/2024/03/05/combating-depopulation-in-japan/>.

<sup>159</sup> "Global Population Growth is Slowing Down," Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 2, 2023, <https://education.cfr.org/learn/reading/global-population-growth-slowing-down>.

<sup>160</sup> Jose M. Guzman, "CPD 2024 Past and Future Demographic Trends: Fears, Facts, and Policy Implications."

## II. Promoting Sustainable Urban Development in Response to Rapid Population Growth

### *Introduction*

Urban areas have become increasingly favored as a place to reside.<sup>161</sup> The increased economic and social opportunities that urban areas have offered have caused cities to grow larger in both population and geographical area.<sup>162</sup> According to the United Nations (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in 2000, there were a reported 371 cities with one million inhabitants or more worldwide; by 2018, that number had risen to 548 cities.<sup>163</sup> As more people migrate to cities, urbanization has become prevalent.<sup>164</sup> Urbanization is a socio-economic process that transforms the environment, converting rural areas into urban while also shifting the population demographics.<sup>165</sup> Rapid urbanization combined with unsustainable development has caused issues within urban areas, decreasing the quality of life of those living in the city and damaging the environment.<sup>166</sup> Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>167</sup> The Commission on Population and Development's (CPD) mandate outlines that the CPD advises the UN Economic and Social Council on aspects of population and development policies such as policies concerning urbanization.<sup>168</sup> The CPD recognizes unsustainable urban development in response to rapid population growth is increasingly becoming an important issue that requires the attention of Member States to address because of its effects on quality of life and the environment.<sup>169</sup>

### *History*

Before the 1800s, only three percent of the global population resided in urban areas.<sup>170</sup> During this time frame, there was significant economic advantages to living in rural areas due to their agrarian way of life.<sup>171</sup> Economies shifted by the 1840s due to the Industrial Revolution, which caused rural, agrarian-based economies to evolve into more urban, industrial-based economies.<sup>172</sup> The Industrial Revolution encouraged people to begin migrating to cities, as cities offered increased job opportunities, a centralized market, increased wealth, and an overall increase in quality of life.<sup>173</sup> This migration to urban areas marked the beginning of urbanization.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, "Addressing the Sustainable Urbanization Challenge," *United Nations Chronicle*, June 2012, accessed April 12, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/addressing-sustainable-urbanization-challenge>.

<sup>162</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. *The World's Cities in 2018*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2018.

<sup>163</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. *The World's Cities in 2018*.

<sup>164</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*. New York, NY: UN Headquarters, 2018.

<sup>165</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

<sup>166</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy UNDP's Support to Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Cities in the Developing World," UNDP, 2016, accessed April 10, 2024. <https://www.undp.org/publications/sustainable-urbanization-strategy#:~:text=This%20Sustainable%20Urbanization%20Strategy%20outlines.and%20current%20work%20on%20urbanization>.

<sup>167</sup> United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals, "The Sustainable Development Agenda," The United Nations, Accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda-retired/#:~:text=%E2%97%8F,future%20for%20people%20and%20planet>.

<sup>168</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development, "Commission on Population and Development," The United Nations Population Division, Accessed June 21, 2024. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/content/CPD>.

<sup>169</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*. International Conference on Population and Development: Cairo, Egypt, 1994.

<sup>170</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity." 2024, accessed August 7, 2024, <https://worldpopulationhistory.org/urbanization-and-the-megacity/#:~:text=The%20Urban%20shift%20over%20time,from%20alone%20in%20their%20size>.

<sup>171</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity."

<sup>172</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity."

<sup>173</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity."

<sup>174</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity."

The Industrial Revolution was characterized by three major waves, each evolving society and further encouraging urbanization.<sup>175</sup> While the first wave of the Industrial Revolution began the transition from agrarian to industrial, the second wave of the Industrial Revolution transpired as a result of evolutions within science and production during the late 1800s and early 1900s, furthering urbanization and rapid, unsustainable development.<sup>176</sup> World War II brought stronger industries, as major cities were the location of wartime manufacturing.<sup>177</sup> The wartime manufacturing industry encouraged many in rural areas to flock to cities for more economic opportunities while also being motivated for patriotic reasons.<sup>178</sup> As a result, urban areas were more likely to be targets of bombings because they held a dense population of civilians and valuable industry.<sup>179</sup> As European cities faced mass destruction, there was major reconstruction which offered more housing and an increase in economic growth in post-war society that further encouraged migration to large cities.<sup>180</sup> Urbanization as a result of the third wave of the Industrial Revolution transpired in the late 1900s and was characterized by the transition from, human-automated to computer-automated.<sup>181</sup> Waves of population growth and urbanization began to manifest problems that Member States are currently facing.<sup>182</sup> In the mid-1990s, around half of the Member States within the CPD expressed concerns about managing rapid population growth sustainably.<sup>183</sup>

The rapid increase in population in urban areas translated into the creation of megacities, which are cities with populations of 10 million or more.<sup>184</sup> New York City and Tokyo both emerged as the first megacities, reaching the 10 million threshold in the 1950s.<sup>185</sup> The introduction of megacities provided the economic, social, and environmental benefits of a city, but the continued growth posed challenges for Member States that were already struggling with sustainable development.<sup>186</sup> Sustainable development in response to population growth is not a topic only troubling history, but it troubles Member States today as by 2008, the global population living in urban areas had increased to 50 percent.<sup>187</sup>

### ***Current Situation***

Today, 56 percent of the world's population live in cities, which generate over 80 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>188</sup> Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, so unsustainable development can present as short-term solutions to long-term problems that negatively affect the future.<sup>189</sup> Rapid population growth and lack of sustainable development have caused a myriad of issues currently plaguing Members States such as, but not limited to, negative impacts on the environment, health, access to resources, and socio-economic needs of people.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom" *Dominican University of California*, 2022, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.33015/dominican.edu/2022.HIST.3003.01>.

<sup>176</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom."

<sup>177</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom."

<sup>178</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom."

<sup>179</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom."

<sup>180</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom."

<sup>181</sup> Alison McNeal, "The Process of Urbanization and Modernization that is Evolving Manchester, United Kingdom."

<sup>182</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*. International Conference on Population and Development: Cairo, Egypt, 1994.

<sup>183</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>184</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity." 2024, accessed August 7, 2024, <https://worldpopulationhistory.org/urbanization-and-the-megacity/#:~:text=The%20urban%20shift%20over%20time,from%20alone%20in%20their%20size>.

<sup>185</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity."

<sup>186</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>187</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity."

<sup>188</sup> United Nations World Trade Organization, "Urban Development," World Trade Organization, April 3, 2023, accessed April 10, 2024. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview#:~:text=Today%2C%20some%2056%25%20of%20the,people%20will%20live%20in%20cities>.

<sup>189</sup> United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals, "The Sustainable Development Agenda," The United Nations, Accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda-retired/#:~:text=%E2%97%8F,future%20for%20people%20and%20planet>.

<sup>190</sup> <sup>190</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy UNDP's Support to Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Cities in the Developing World," UNDP, 2016, accessed April 10, 2024.

Unsustainable development and rapid urbanization have significant impacts on the environment in urban areas through water & air pollution, climate change, and the use of non-renewable energy sources.<sup>191</sup> According to UN Water, “As populations grow and natural environments become degraded, ensuring everyone has safe and sufficient water supplies is becoming increasingly challenging.”<sup>192</sup> Water pollution in rapidly, unsustainably developing cities can damage the environment, specifically waterways near cities.<sup>193</sup> In urban areas lacking adequate infrastructure human waste, toxic chemicals, and medical waste are often discharged into the closest body of water, making it unsafe.<sup>194</sup> Air pollution has become prevalent in cities due to heavy usage of coal-fired power plants, vehicle emissions, and industrial furnaces which has both an effect, like water pollution, on the environment and human health.<sup>195</sup> A study done by the World Health Organization (WHO) found urban air pollution is continuing to rise at a concerning rate which is caused by unsustainable urbanization.<sup>196</sup> Air pollution has been closely linked with climate change because of their shared common sources and impact on the release of greenhouse gases.<sup>197</sup> Cities are also responsible for 70 percent of the globe's carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions.<sup>198</sup> Since many cities are located near economic centers such as coastal areas and river banks, they are more vulnerable to extreme weather caused by climate change.<sup>199</sup> Extreme weather can displace populations residing in cities with poor infrastructure.<sup>200</sup> Natural disasters within urban areas due to climate change affect poor populations disproportionately.<sup>201</sup> Those who live in the slums, oftentimes near riverbanks, are at a higher risk of death due to flooding and other natural disasters.<sup>202</sup> Those living in slums tend to have limited or no access to basic infrastructure and social services making the quality of life post-natural disaster worse.<sup>203</sup>

The environmental impacts of unsustainability and overcrowded cities influence the health and well-being of urban populations.<sup>204</sup> According to the WHO, 80 percent of people living in urban areas are subjected to air quality levels that exceed safe limits.<sup>205</sup> Exposure to air pollution poses a health concern for those living in major cities by increasing their risk for stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and chronic and acute respiratory diseases such as asthma.<sup>206</sup> Water pollution has been shown to pose health risks as well.<sup>207</sup> As stated earlier, untreated wastewater is often dumped into the closest body of water which exposes populations near the waterways of cities to pollution

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<https://www.undp.org/publications/sustainable-urbanization-strategy#:~:text=This%20Sustainable%20Urbanization%20Strategy%20outlines,and%20current%20work%20on%20urbanization>.

<sup>191</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy UNDP's Support to Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Cities in the Developing World,” UNDP, 2016, accessed April 10, 2024.

<https://www.undp.org/publications/sustainable-urbanization-strategy#:~:text=This%20Sustainable%20Urbanization%20Strategy%20outlines,and%20current%20work%20on%20urbanization>.

<sup>192</sup> United Nations Water, “Water Quality and Wastewater,” UN Water, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/water-quality-and-wastewater>.

<sup>193</sup> United Nations Water, “Water Quality and Wastewater.”

<sup>194</sup> United Nations Water, “Water Quality and Wastewater.”

<sup>195</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, “Why Does Air Matter?” UN Environment Programme, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.unep.org/topics/air/why-does-air-matter>.

<sup>196</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, “UN Health Agency Warns of Rise in Urban Air Pollution.” UN SDG, May 12, 2016, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/05/un-health-agency-warns-of-rise-in-urban-air-pollution-with-poorest-cities-most-at-risk/#:~:text=Some%2098%20per%20cent%20of,drops%20to%2056%20per%20cent>.

<sup>197</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, “Air Quality,” UN environment Programme, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.unep.org/topics/air>.

<sup>198</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, “Cities and Climate Change,” UN Environmental Programme, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/cities-and-climate-change>.

<sup>199</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>200</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>201</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>202</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>203</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy”

<sup>204</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>205</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, “UN Health Agency Warns of Rise in Urban Air Pollution.”

<sup>206</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, “UN Health Agency Warns of Rise in Urban Air Pollution.”

<sup>207</sup> United Nations World Health Organization, “Drinking Water,” WHO, September 13, 2023, accessed May 14, 2024. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/drinking-water>.

making the water unfit for human use, which leads to a lack of access to safe water.<sup>208</sup> Exposure, use, and consumption of polluted water have been linked to diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid, and polio.<sup>209</sup> Industrial wastewater often pollutes drinking water in cities which can expose urban populations to harsh chemicals such as arsenic.<sup>210</sup> In a year, 1.3 billion tons of waste are generated by urban residents, and non-comprehensive methods of disposing of municipal waste increase the likelihood of health hazards such as cholera outbreaks.<sup>211</sup> Not only is pollution a health risk of rapid and unsustainable population growth, but overcrowding in cities increases the chances for communicable disease outbreaks.<sup>212</sup> Overcrowding in cities also makes it more difficult to manage preventable and treatable diseases such as HIV/AIDS because of resource scarcity.<sup>213</sup>

Today, all major global regions except Oceania house megacities.<sup>214</sup> With most of the world's population now residing in urban areas, Member States are also having to compensate with sustainable energy production and usage for Member States' rapidly growing populations.<sup>215</sup> Unsustainable development of cities leads to irregular power supply, frequent blackouts, and poor electrical grids.<sup>216</sup> In response, people living in urban areas have tried to compensate for the lack of resources by utilizing unsustainable and unhealthy sources of energy such as coal and kerosene, causing indoor pollution and increased health and safety risks.<sup>217</sup> As the economies of cities continue to develop, the demand for energy also increases.<sup>218</sup> Since populations and economies are developing faster than Member States and accompany for, Member States have been turning to cheap, unsustainable, nonrenewable, and polluting sources of energy such as coal, natural gas, and oil.<sup>219</sup> These unsustainable practices include using coal or diesel power plants which have a higher total long-term cost both fiscally and environmentally.<sup>220</sup>

As urban poverty continues to rise, the World Bank estimates most of the world's populations in poverty will reside in urban areas.<sup>221</sup> This is caused by the population of cities growing faster than the city can accommodate, causing job scarcity and a lack of housing.<sup>222</sup> As populations of cities rise, so does the cost of living, further exacerbating the poverty crisis.<sup>223</sup> As the cost of living and the urban unemployment rates continue to increase, the chances of becoming impoverished increase, and affect marginalized groups more significantly.<sup>224</sup> The prevalent population growth of cities has created a housing crisis that not only makes housing unaffordable, but since cities are continuing

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<sup>208</sup> United Nations Water, "Water Quality and Wastewater," UN Water, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/water-quality-and-wastewater>.

<sup>209</sup> United Nations World Health Organization, "Drinking Water," WHO, September 13, 2023, accessed May 14, 2024. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/drinking-water>.

<sup>210</sup> United Nations World Health Organization, "Drinking Water."

<sup>211</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy UNDP's Support to Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Cities in the Developing World," UNDP, 2016, accessed April 10, 2024. <https://www.undp.org/publications/sustainable-urbanization-strategy#:~:text=This%20Sustainable%20Urbanization%20Strategy%20outlines.and%20current%20work%20on%20urbanization>

<sup>212</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development," UNESCO, 2021, accessed May 14, 2024. [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa\\_pd\\_2022\\_global\\_population\\_growth.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2022_global_population_growth.pdf).

<sup>213</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "Global Population Growth and Sustainable Development."

<sup>214</sup> World Population History, "Urbanization and the Megacity." 2024, accessed August 7, 2024, <https://worldpopulationhistory.org/urbanization-and-the-megacity/#:~:text=The%20urban%20shift%20over%20time,from%20alone%20in%20their%20size/>.

<sup>215</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>216</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>217</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>218</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>219</sup> United Nations Climate Action, "Generating Power," United Nations, accessed May 13, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/climate-solutions/cities-pollution>.

<sup>220</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>221</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>222</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>223</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."

<sup>224</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Sustainable Urbanization Strategy."



to develop unsustainably, housing is not sufficient.<sup>225</sup> Unsustainable housing and poverty combine to create slums.<sup>226</sup> In 2020, 1.1 billion urban residents were estimated to live in slums or slum-like conditions.<sup>227</sup> The issue of unsustainable urban development in response to rapid population growth extends to social stratification as well.<sup>228</sup> Inadequate infrastructures extend to public transportation which has historically aided those of lower socioeconomic status in increasing their quality of life.<sup>229</sup> As urban areas develop, the default choice of transportation becomes by car, further contributing to the environmental and socio-economic impacts of unsustainable urban development.<sup>230</sup> In attempts to compensate for the rapid increase and population and development, good governance can fall short by not providing resources to its citizens which can lead to higher rates of crime and violence.<sup>231</sup> Poor governance leaves behind marginalized groups leaving them neglected and more vulnerable to being victims of crime or committing crime.<sup>232</sup> The CPD has taken actions that attempt to combat unsustainable development in response to the rapid population growth of urban areas through resolutions and the creation of the Programme of Action.<sup>233</sup>

### *Actions Taken by the UN*

The CPD adopted a Programme of Action during the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt in 1994.<sup>234</sup> The Programme of Action was created to assist Member States in addressing key challenges that Member States face such as rapid population growth and unsustainable development.<sup>235</sup> The Programme included key actions such as Chapter 9 “Population, Distribution, Urbanization, and Internal Migration.”<sup>236</sup> The first section, *Population distribution and sustainable development*, formulated population distribution policies that are consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>237</sup> The Programme of Action analyzed population growth in large urban agglomerations and outlined actions such as financing needed infrastructure and services in a balanced manner that would benefit all Member States.<sup>238</sup> Encouraging the implementation of effective environmental management strategies for urban agglomerations was another suggested action that the Programme of Action detailed.<sup>239</sup> The Programme of Action encouraged consistent updates on the key actions outlined in the Programme of Action, which is demonstrated in reports such as E/CN.9/2018/2 which reported on sustainable cities, human mobility, and international migration.<sup>240</sup>

In April 2008, the CPD adopted E/CN.9/2008/8 discussing population distribution, urbanization, internal migration, and development.<sup>241</sup> Resolution E/CN.9/2008/8 reaffirmed the importance of the Programme of Action and gave

<sup>225</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy UNDP’s Support to Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Cities in the Developing World,” UNDP, 2016, accessed April 10, 2024. <https://www.undp.org/publications/sustainable-urbanization-strategy#:~:text=This%20Sustainable%20Urbanization%20Strategy%20outlines.and%20current%20work%20on%20urbanization>

<sup>226</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, “Goal 11: Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient, and Sustainable,” UNSDG, accessed May 14, 2024. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/cities/#:~:text=cent%20by%202050..Approximately%201.1%20billion%20people%20currently%20live%20in%20slums%20or%20slum.convenient%20access%20to%20public%20transportation.>

<sup>227</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, “Goal 11: Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient, and Sustainable.”

<sup>228</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>229</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>230</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>231</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>232</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy.”

<sup>233</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*. International Conference on Population and Development: Cairo, Egypt, 1994.

<sup>234</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>235</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>236</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>237</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>238</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>239</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

<sup>240</sup> Commission on Population and Development Report E/CN.9/2018/2, *Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration*, E/CN.9/2018/2, (January 26, 2018), <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n18/024/09/pdf/n1802409.pdf?token=qCbNSxUHMWqYyyxGC7&fe=true>.

<sup>241</sup> Commission on Population and Development Resolution E/CN.9/2008/8, *Population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development*, E/2008/25, (April 11, 2008), [/https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/41/CPD41\\_Res2008-1.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/41/CPD41_Res2008-1.pdf).

various further recommendations for Member States to implement.<sup>242</sup> Member States were encouraged to facilitate global partnerships with other bodies of the UN focused on financing and sustainable development.<sup>243</sup> E/2008/25 also urged Member States to support the urban poor who work in the informal sector to promote internal migrants from rural areas into urban areas to prevent poverty as cities develop.<sup>244</sup>

In April 2022, the CPD adopted E/CN.9/2022/L.6 discussing population sustainable development and inclusive economic growth.<sup>245</sup> E/CN.9/2022/L.6 encouraged the use of the Programme of Action as a tool for Member States to use to resolve issues that arise as a result of poor urban planning.<sup>246</sup> Member States were also called upon to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, another declaration from the UN, which emphasizes global efforts to eradicate poverty.<sup>247</sup> The CPD urged Member States to adopt gender-responsive and age-sensitive as well as productive employment as means of reducing poverty to help alleviate the problem of unsustainable development.<sup>248</sup> E/CN.9/2022/L.6 also included various clauses on quality education and health, combatting hunger and disease, gender equality, access to mental health support, and sustainable economic growth.<sup>249</sup>

## Conclusion

Sustainable urban development in the wake of population growth has proved to be an overwhelming challenge for Member States due to the multifaceted problems and solutions of the issue.<sup>250</sup> The total global urban population is projected to be around 66 percent by 2050 which will only worsen unsustainable development if action is not taken.<sup>251</sup> Member States have attempted to address the issue of rapid population growth in urban areas, as this problem affects the lives of over 56 percent of the global population, yielding little results.<sup>252</sup> As a result of industrialization, urbanization kick-started rapid population growth, which happened faster than Member States could accommodate.<sup>253</sup> Currently, Member States are facing the repercussions of rapid population growth, which have been exacerbated by poor development, leading to issues such as disease, pollution, and social stratification.<sup>254</sup> While the UN has passed resolutions and outlined actions for Member States to implement to alleviate the issues, unsustainable urban development in response to rapid population growth is still present.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Commission on Population and Development Resolution E/CN.9/2008/8, *Population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development*, E/2008/25, (April 11, 2008), [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/41/CPD41\\_Res2008-1.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/commission/pdf/41/CPD41_Res2008-1.pdf).

<sup>243</sup> Commission on Population and Development, E/2008/25.

<sup>244</sup> Commission on Population and Development, E/2008/25.

<sup>245</sup> Commission on Population and Development Agenda Item 3 (b), *Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth*, E/CN.9/2022/L.6, (April 27, 2022), <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=E%2FCN.9%2F2022%2FL.6&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>.

<sup>246</sup> Commission on Population and Development, E/CN.9/2022/L.6.

<sup>247</sup> Commission on Population and Development, E/CN.9/2022/L.6.

<sup>248</sup> Commission on Population and Development Agenda Item 3 (b), *Population and sustainable development, in particular sustained and inclusive economic growth*, E/CN.9/2022/L.6, (April 27, 2022), <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=E%2FCN.9%2F2022%2FL.6&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>.

<sup>249</sup> Commission on Population and Development, E/CN.9/2022/L.6.

<sup>250</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*. International Conference on Population and Development: Cairo, Egypt, 1994.

<sup>251</sup> World Population History, “Urbanization and the Megacity.” 2024, accessed August 7, 2024, <https://worldpopulationhistory.org/urbanization-and-the-megacity/#:~:text=The%20urban%20shift%20over%20time,from%20alone%20in%20their%20size/>.

<sup>252</sup> United Nations World Trade Organization, “Urban Development,” World Trade Organization, April 3, 2023, accessed April 10, 2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview#:~:text=Today%2C%20some%2056%25%20of%20the,people%20will%20live%20in%20cities>.

<sup>253</sup> World Population History, “Urbanization and the Megacity.”

<sup>254</sup> United Nations Development Programme, “Sustainable Urbanization Strategy UNDP's Support to Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient Cities in the Developing World,” UNDP, 2016, accessed April 10, 2024, <https://www.undp.org/publications/sustainable-urbanization-strategy#:~:text=This%20Sustainable%20Urbanization%20Strategy%20outlines.and%20current%20work%20on%20urbanization>.

<sup>255</sup> United Nations, Commission on Population and Development. *Programme of Action*.

### *Committee Directives*

To understand the scope of the topic, delegates must analyze its many factors to understand the bigger picture of rapid population growth and unsustainable development. Delegates should develop their knowledge of what position their Member State is currently in. Delegates should consider a diverse approach to addressing rapid urbanization due to its multifaceted challenges. Delegates are encouraged to look at past frameworks as a basis for new solutions, especially actions that yield positive results in promoting sustainable urbanization. Delegates should ask: what are the most detrimental consequences that Member States will face if a solution is not found? How could the CPD create effective solutions while also bearing in mind the economic capabilities of Member States? Delegates should also consider the positions of other Member States as they affect Member States differently in making comprehensive and attainable solutions to address this topic. Overall, delegates should look at the topic as a whole and not specific situations.

## Annotated Bibliography

### I. Addressing the Challenges and Needs within Declining Populations

Andersson, Gunnar. "Family Policies and Fertility in Sweden." In *Fertility and Public Policy: How to Reverse the Trend of Declining Birth Rates*, 203-218. MIT Press, 2010. <https://direct.mit.edu/books/edited-volume/2895/chapter-abstract/78588/Family-Policies-and-Fertility-in-Sweden?redirectedFrom=PDF>

*Fertility and Public Policy: How to Reverse the Trend of Declining Birth Rates* is a collection of essays in which experts analyze the influence and effectiveness of various public policy measures on fertility rates. The chapter "Family Policies and Fertility in Sweden" completes an intensive case study on Swedish public policy that has enabled the Member State to maintain high levels of fertility. This article asserts that fertility rates remain high in Sweden due to policies emphasizing women's capabilities to engage with the labor market and promoting gender equity. This case study explores potential policy prescriptions to encourage higher rates of fertility.

Bloom, David E., David Canning, and Jaypee Sevilla. "Case Studies Of Population Change And Economic Growth." In *The Demographic Dividend: A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change*, 1st ed., 43-68. RAND Corporation, 2003. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mr1274wfhf-dlpf-rf-unpf.11>.

*The Demographic Dividend: A New Perspective on the Economic Consequences of Population Change* is a report examining how population-makeup change influences national economies. The chapter "Case Studies of Population Change and Economic Growth" examines the intersectionality between economic growth and population changes in various regions. Population decline is both a positive and negative of a Member State's economic growth. Member States can utilize the demographic dividend caused by decreased fertility for economic development. Additionally, Member States face the challenges of a decreased workforce and a higher ratio of elderly-identified individuals. The chapter provides relevant context to the economic consequences of population change by explaining causes and potential solutions for addressing the economic consequences of a declining population.

Carbonaro, Gianni, Eugenio Leanza, Philip McCann, and Francesca Medda. "Demographic Decline, Population Aging, and Modern Financial Approaches to Urban Policy." In *International Regional Science Review*, Vol. 41, Issue 2, 210-232. SAGE Publications, 2018.

*International Regional Science Review* is a journal discussing findings in regional science, an interdisciplinary field focusing on the locational aspect of human activities, behaviors, and politics. The article "Demographic Decline, Population Aging, and Modern Financial Approaches to Urban Policy" investigates the economic consequences of population change and potential investment approaches to combat detriments. The article asserts that urban investment may need to shift towards a "portfolio approach" where investments are diversified and central governments transfer increased resources to local entities. The article specifies the economic detriment of population change and explores potential solutions specific to its economic impacts.

Roos, Galjaard, Leo Van Wissen, and Kim Van Dam. "European Regional Population Decline and Policy Responses: Three Case Studies." In *Built Environment*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 293-302. Alexandrine Press, 2012. <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/alex/benv/2012/00000038/00000002/art00010>

*Neighbourhoods: Do They Still Matter?* is a quarterly journal covering subjects concerning human-made conditions that cross multiple disciplines. The chapter "European Regional Population Decline and Policy Responses: Three Case Studies" examines three European regions that have experienced population decline with varying regional and national contexts. The chapter asserts that successful policies are implemented at the national level. Although the policies have a significant effect on livability, they are less successful in directly addressing population decline. The chapter represents how policy implementation may succeed in their regions and States.

## II. Promoting Sustainable Urban Development in Response to Rapid Population Growth

Chatterjee, Soumen, et. al. “Chapter 27: Land use land cover dynamics with the outgrowth of Burdwan town (India): problems with sustainable solutions.” In *Land Reclamation and Restoration Strategies for Sustainable Development – Geospatial Technology Based Approach*, 603-626. Cham: Cambridge University Publishing, 2021.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/B9780128238950000324>

*Land Reclamation and Restoration Strategies for Sustainable Development – Geospatial Technology Based Approach* is a compilation of essays focused on mapping, modeling, and risk assessment for sustainable management and land usage. The chapter “Land use land cover dynamics with the outgrowth of Burdwan town (India): problems with sustainable solutions” covers a case study of India’s urbanization process in Burdwan town. Following comprehensive scientific examination, the article asserts urban growth is occurring along the periphery of the town and near highways. This growth directly interferes with agricultural land key to the region because urban developments are encroaching on arable lands. This case study demonstrates one potential avenue for rapid population growth to cause city sprawl and interfere with the natural environment.

Sinding, Steven W. “Population, poverty and economic development.” In *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 364 (1532), 3023-3030. National Library of Medicine, October 27, 2009.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2781831/>.

The *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* is a scientific journal that covers all topics that engage with the biological sciences. The article “Population, poverty and economic development” uncovers the relationship between lower birth rates, economic development, and the capacity to escape poverty. They assert that reducing fertility and the dependent: working age population ratio can serve as a mechanism for poverty reduction and increased economic development. This tie to economic development allows Member States to connect rapid population growth issues to their respective economic prospects, which contributes to their ability to service a green economy (and reduce environmental detriment).

Speidel, Joseph, et. al. “Population policies, programmes, and the environment.” In *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 364 (1532), 3049-3065. National Library of Medicine, October 27, 2009.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2781834/>.

The *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* is a scientific journal that covers all topics that engage with the biological sciences. The article “Population policies, programmes, and the environment” discusses how human engagement with the environment, especially population growth, contributes to environmental degradation. There are two models for economic progress depending on the current development status of the state to address unsustainable economic practices. Further, the article asserts the need for increased funding to various sectors of population development, especially those concerning fertility and pregnancy, to curb rapid population growth. This article provides a comprehensive look into rapid population growth’s impacts on the environment and current efforts to mitigate the effects.

The City Development Index, “Index,” *The City Development Index*, accessed March 12, 2024,  
<https://cdindex.net/world/map?world/map/>

The City Development Index is an index based out of Türkiye that culminates data from many large cities around the world and condenses them into readable and interactive reports. The City Development Index highlights specific cities and takes measurable factors concerning cultural, economic, and social dimensions with more specific factors including but not limited to water consumption, foreign direct investment, and quality of education. This index can help address population factors not previously considered while also showing urban development conditions of cities within specific Member