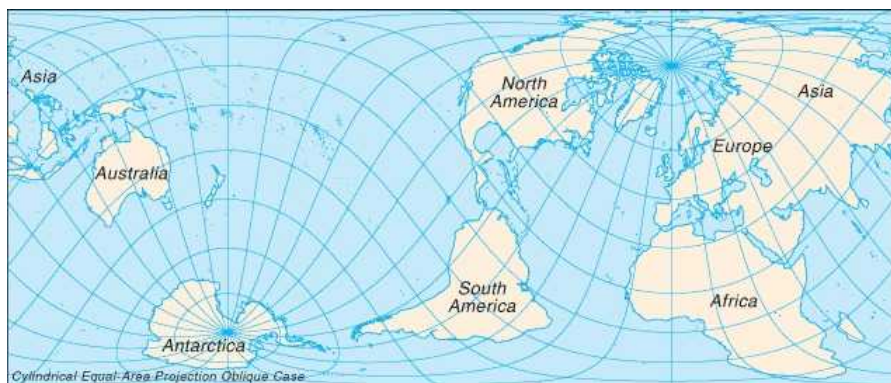


# World



**Background** Globally, the 20th century was marked by: (a) two devastating World Wars; (b) the Great Depression of the 1930s; (c) the end of vast colonial empires; (d) rapid advances in science and technology; (e) the Cold War between the Western alliance and the Warsaw Pact nations; (f) a sharp rise in living standards in North America, Europe, and Japan; (g) increased concerns about environmental degradation including deforestation, energy and water shortages, declining biological diversity, and air pollution; and (h) the ultimate emergence of the US as the only world superpower. The planet's population continues to expand at a fast rate: from 1 billion in 1820 to 2 billion in 1930, 3 billion in 1960, 4 billion in 1974, 5 billion in 1987, 6 billion in 1999, 7 billion in 2012, and 8 billion in 2022. For the 21st century, the continued exponential growth in science and technology raises both hopes (e.g., advances in medicine and agriculture) and fears (e.g., development of even more lethal weapons of war).

**Capital** time difference: there are 21 world entities (20 countries and 1 dependency) with multiple time zones: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, France, Greenland (part of the Danish Kingdom), Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Mexico, Micronesia, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Russia, Spain, United States

note 1: in some instances, the time zones pertain to portions of a country that lie overseas

note 2: in 1851, the British set their prime meridian (0° longitude) through the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, England; this meridian became the international standard in 1884 and thus the basis for the standard time zones of the world; today, GMT is officially known as Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) and is also referred to as "Zulu time"; UTC is the basis for all civil time, with the world divided into time zones expressed as positive or negative differences from UTC

note 3: each time zone is based on 15° starting from the prime meridian; in theory, there are 24 time zones based on the solar day, but there are now upward of 40 because of fractional hour offsets that adjust for various political and physical geographic realities; see the Standard Time Zones of the World map included with the World and Regional Maps

**Area** total : 510.072 million sq km  
land: 148.94 million sq km  
water: 361,899,999 sq km

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

**Population** total: 8,057,236,243 (2024 est.)

**Population growth rate** 1.03% (2021 est.)

**Religions** Christian 31.1%, Muslim 24.9%, Hindu 15.2%, Buddhist 6.6%, folk religions 5.6%, Jewish <1%, other <1%, unaffiliated 15.6% (2020 est.)

**Languages** most-spoken language: English 18.8%, Mandarin Chinese 13.8%, Hindi 7.5%, Spanish 6.9%, French 3.4%, Arabic 3.4%, Bengali 3.4%, Russian 3.2%, Portuguese 3.2%, Urdu 2.9% (2022 est.)

most-spoken first language: Mandarin Chinese 12.3%, Spanish 6%, English 5.1%, Arabic 5.1%, Hindi 3.5%, Bengali 3.3%, Portuguese 3%, Russian 2.1%, Japanese 1.7%, Punjabi, Western 1.3%, Javanese 1.1% (2018 est.)

<b>Executive branch</b>	<p>chief of state: there are 27 countries with royal families in the world: most are in Asia (13) and Europe (10), three are in Africa, and one in Oceania; monarchies by continent are as follows: Asia (Bahrain, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, United Arab Emirates); Europe (Belgium, Denmark, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom); Africa (Eswatini, Lesotho, Morocco); Oceania (Tonga)</p> <p>note 1: Andorra and the Holy See (Vatican) are also monarchies of a sort, but they are not ruled by royal houses; Andorra has two co-princes (the president of France and the bishop of Urgell) and the Holy See is ruled by an elected pope</p> <p>note 2: the UK sovereign is also the monarch for the 14 Commonwealth countries (including Australia, Canada, Jamaica, New Zealand)</p>
<b>Real GDP (purchasing power parity)</b>	<p>\$173.163 trillion (2024 est.)</p> <p>\$167.633 trillion (2023 est.)</p> <p>\$162.058 trillion (2022 est.)</p>
<b>Real GDP per capita</b>	<p>\$21,300 (2024 est.)</p> <p>\$20,800 (2023 est.)</p> <p>\$20,300 (2022 est.)</p>
<b>Exports</b>	<p>\$32.379 trillion (2024 est.)</p> <p>\$31.271 trillion (2023 est.)</p> <p>\$31.782 trillion (2022 est.)</p>
<b>Exports - commodities</b>	<p>the whole range of industrial and agricultural goods and services</p>
<b>Imports</b>	<p>top ten commodities by share of world trade: crude petroleum, cars, refined petroleum, integrated circuits, broadcasting equipment, gold, natural gas, garments, vehicle parts/accessories, packaged medicine (2022)</p> <p>\$31.244 trillion (2024 est.)</p> <p>\$30.334 trillion (2023 est.)</p> <p>\$30.871 trillion (2022 est.)</p>
<b>Imports - commodities</b>	<p>the whole range of industrial and agricultural goods and services</p> <p>top ten - share of world trade: see listing for exports</p>

Population Pyramid

