Some Population Data for the Southern Cone Countries

F701 "South America's Southern Cone"

OLLI at George Mason University

E. O. Pederson, Ph.D.
Winter 2009

Some Population Data for the
Southern Cone Countries

Population Pyramids:

Demography is a data intensive field, and there are a number of population measures important in the analysis of countries and their future prospects. One of the most important is the population pyramid, a view of the distribution of population by age and gender. In the present world there are two extreme forms of that data distribution, one, usually found in countries that are already rich where birth rates and death rates are both low (see example of Germany below) and one for countries, usually poor, where birth rates remain high even after death rates fall and thus the number of people in younger age groups is much greater than the number in older groups. Most countries in the Americas fall between those extremes, though the population pyramids of Paraguay and Bolivia are ones characteristic of poor countries.
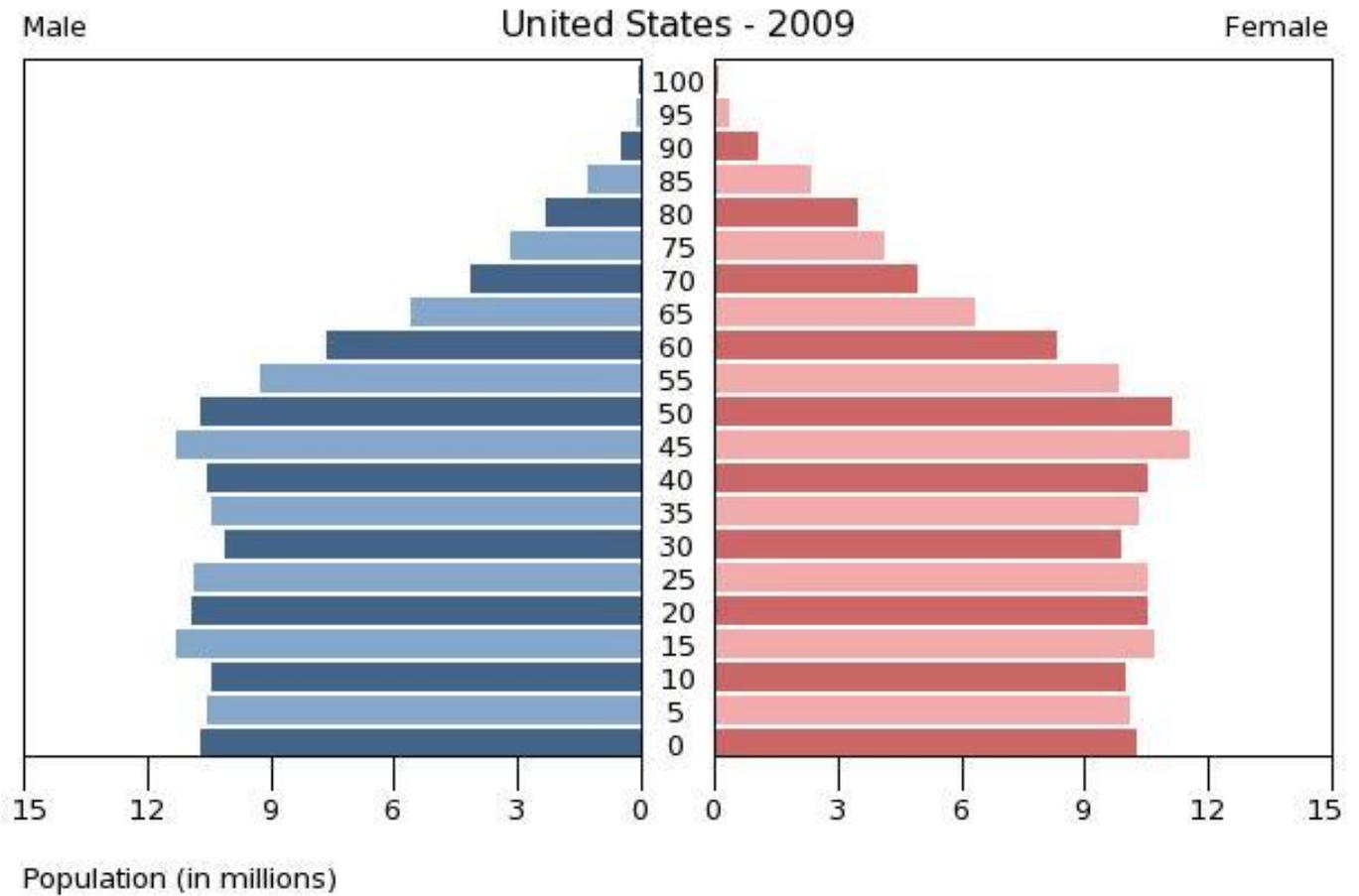
Population Pyramids and Demographic Stages:

- characteristic shapes of 'pyramids'

    - wide base (true pyramid): Lots of young people, high dependency ratios, great potential for future population growth, Bolivia and Paraguay are examples.

    - wide middle (bulge), somewhat wider base: Declining birth rates, likelihood of slowing in population growth, characteristic of middle-income countries, though the US is somewhat in this category.

    - urn- or bottle-shaped: Low population growth, stagnant or declining population.

    - reversed pyramid: Rapid population decline likely in the near future. No country yet completely matches the model, but Germany comes close

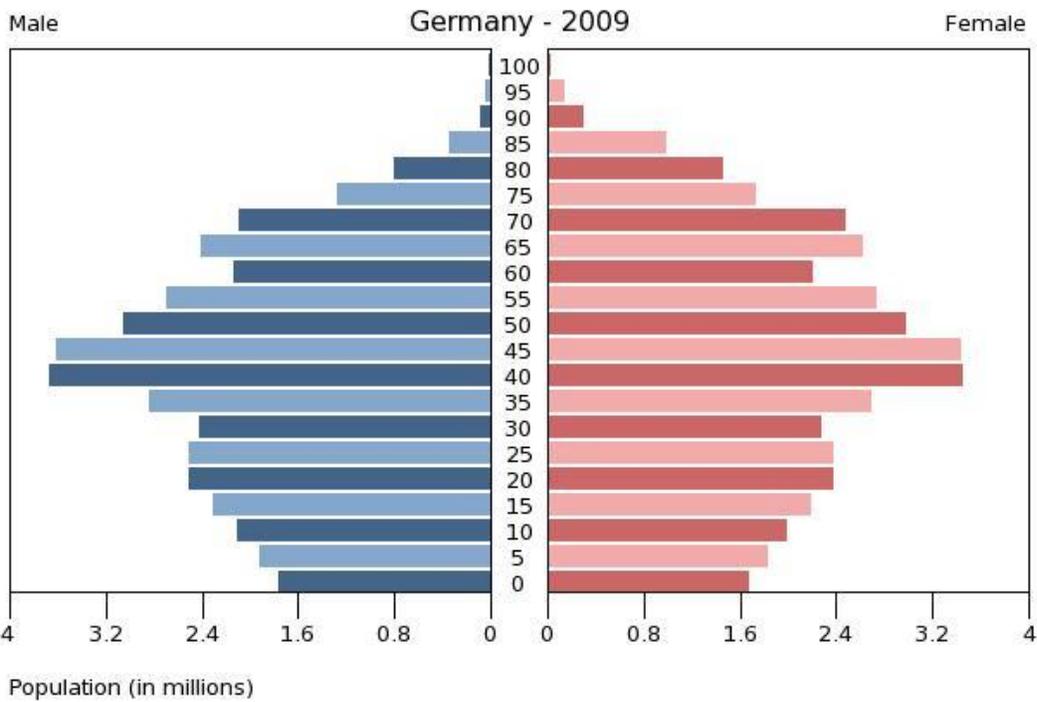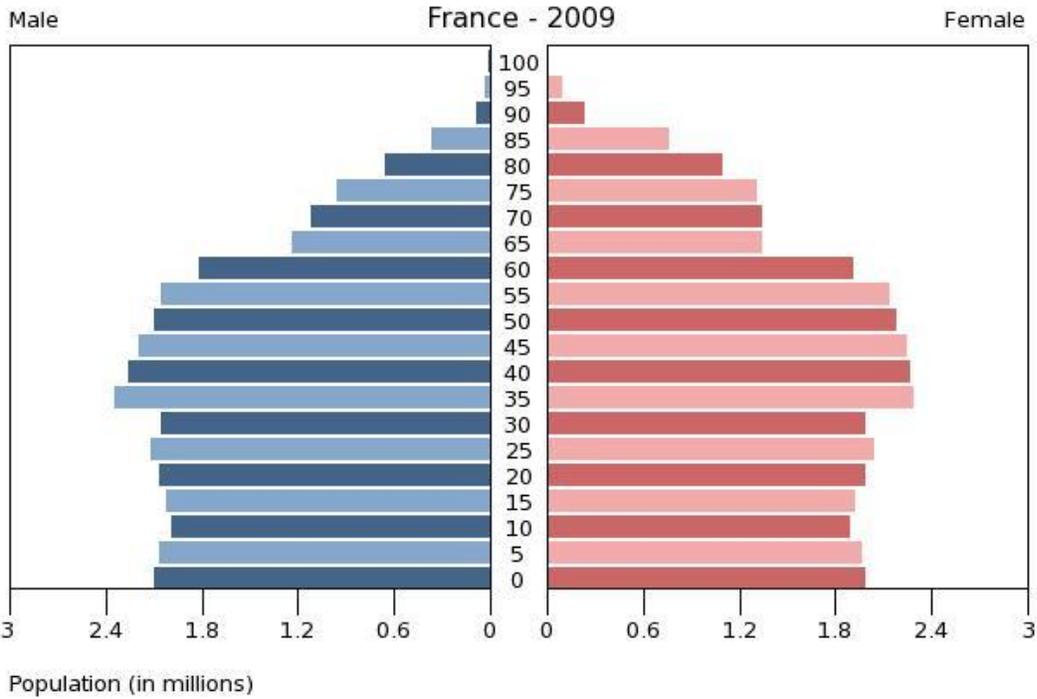   - different shapes--different dynamics

Source: The population pyramids are from the United States Bureau of the Census. General access to the international population database from which these population pyramids have been excerpted and along with many other international population data, is available at:
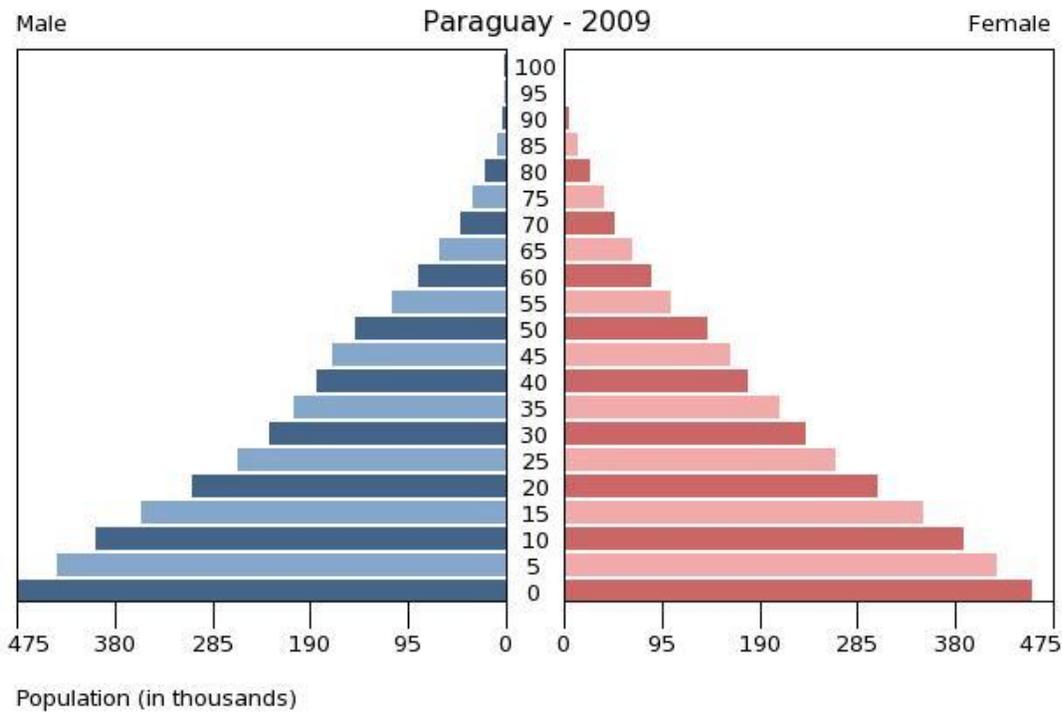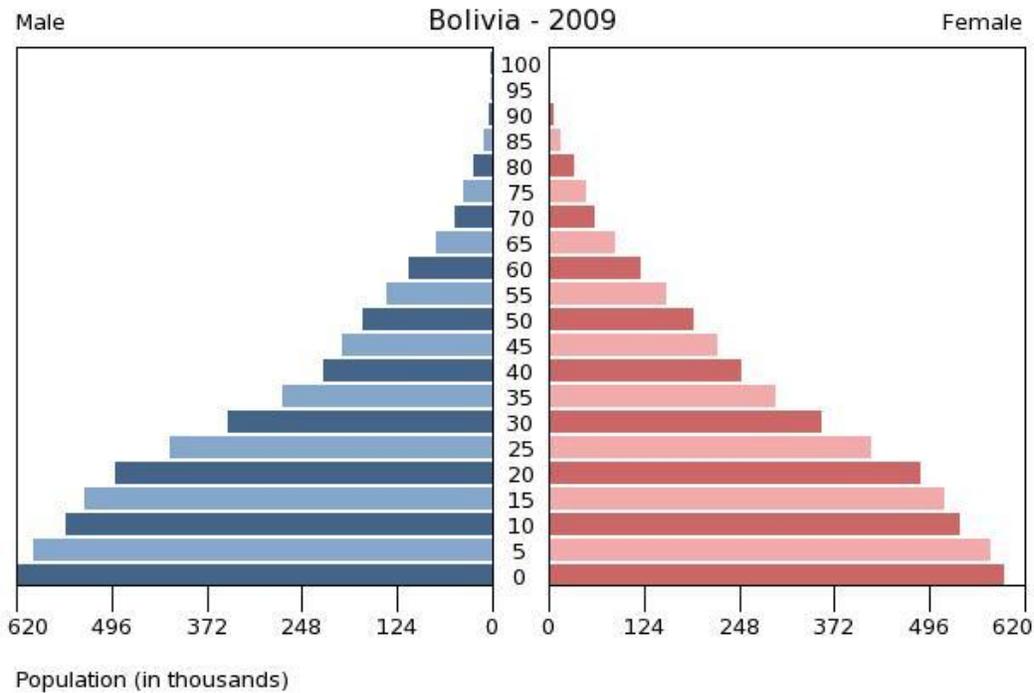
http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/

Compiled by E. O. Pederson, Ph.D.

Examples of wealthy countries: note the narrow base and in the US the bulge between ages 35 and 55, a consequence of the post WWII baby boom. France offers a characteristic pyramid of a country likely to see little population growth, while Germany illustrates a case of a country enroute to an outright population decline. If nothing changes, there will be fewer people in Germany in 2050 than in 2010!

United States - 2009

Population (in millions)

France - 2009

Male   Female

Population (in millions)

Germany - 2009

Male   Female

Population (in millions)

Examples of lower income countries, wide base:

Bolivia - 2009

Paraguay - 2009

Both Bolivia and Paraguay have population pyramids characteristic of poorer countries.

Intermediate Income countries:

Male   Argentina - 2009   Female

Population (in millions)

Male   Chile - 2009   Female

Population (in thousands)

Uruguay - 2009

Male

Female

Population (in thousands)
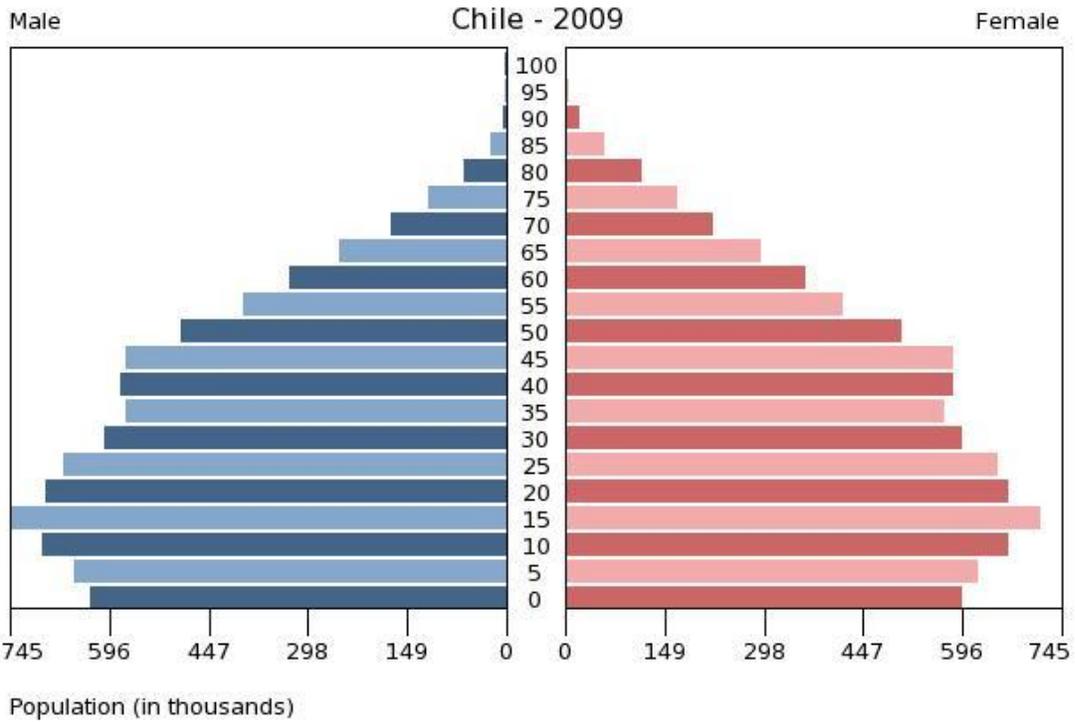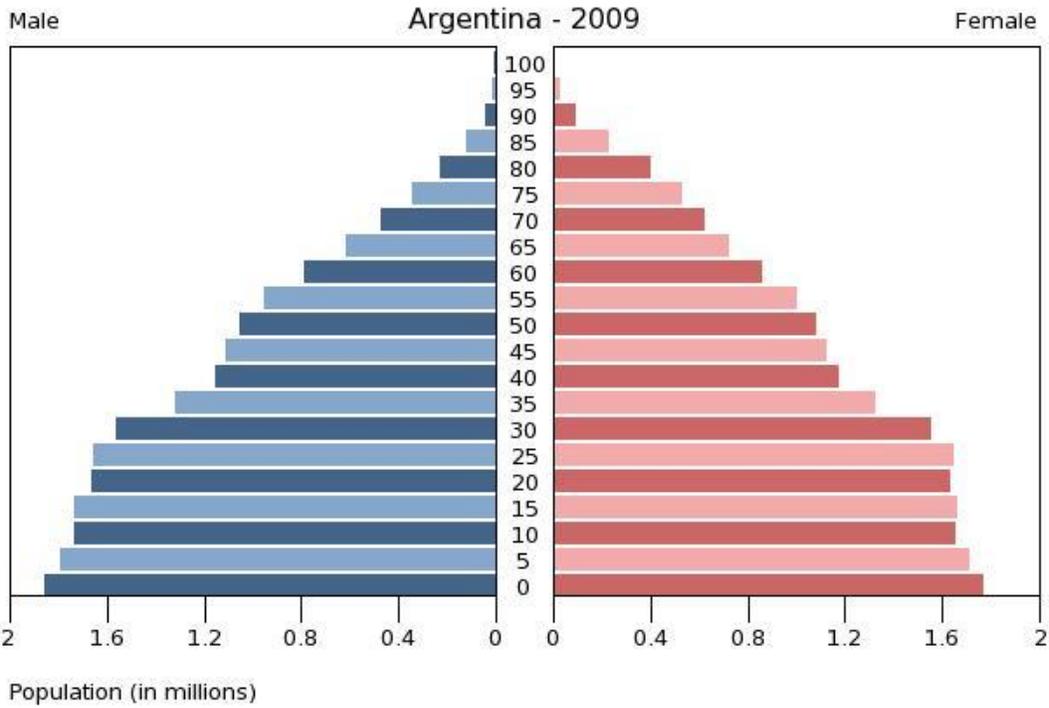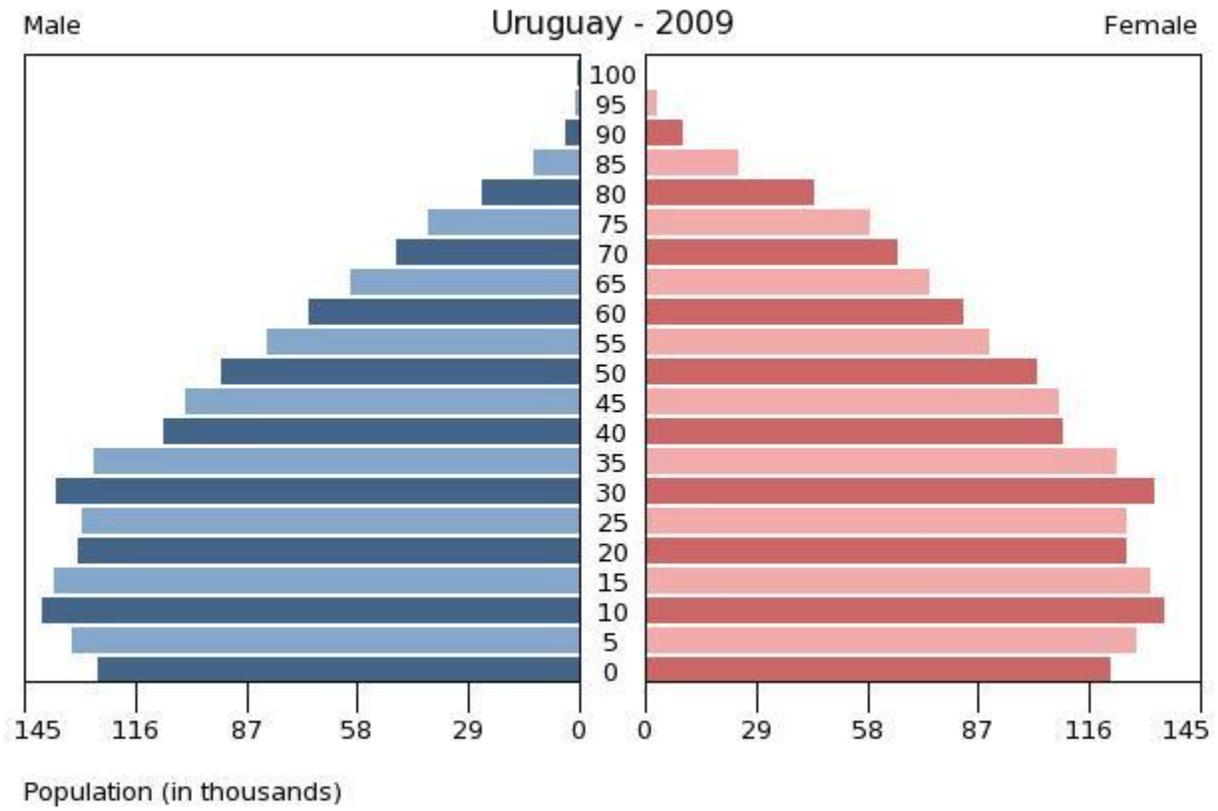
Some Basic Population Data

2009 Estimates, US Bureau of the Census

Country	Total Population	%Growth Rate	Crude Birth Rate	Crude Death Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth	Infant Mortality/1000 Live Births
Argentina	40,914	1	18	7	77	11
Bolivia	9,775	2	26	7	67	45
Chile	16,602	0.9	15	6	77	8
Paraguay	6,996	2.4	28	4	76	25
Uruguay	3,494	0.5	14	9	76	11
Brasil	198,739	1.2	18	6	72	23
Mexico	111,212	1.1	20	5	76	18
United States	307,212	1	14	8	78	6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census International Data Base.

Definitions for the table above:

Growth rate: percentage annual population increase.

Crude birth rate: the number of live births/1000 people.

Crude death rate: the number of deaths/1000 people.

Life expectancy at birth: the projected average life span of babies born in a given year, in the case of the table in the year 2009.

Infant mortality: the number of infants who die at < 1 year of age of each 1000 live births. It does not include still-births.

There are numerous sources of population data, and on more than a few occasions the data will not be identical when comparing sources since different assumptions and counting techniques are employed. The Census Bureau source noted above is a comprehensive and quite reliable source for international population data. Another excellent source for international population data is the Population Reference Bureau, especially its annual **World Population Data Sheet** available as a free download.

EOP   2 December 2009