

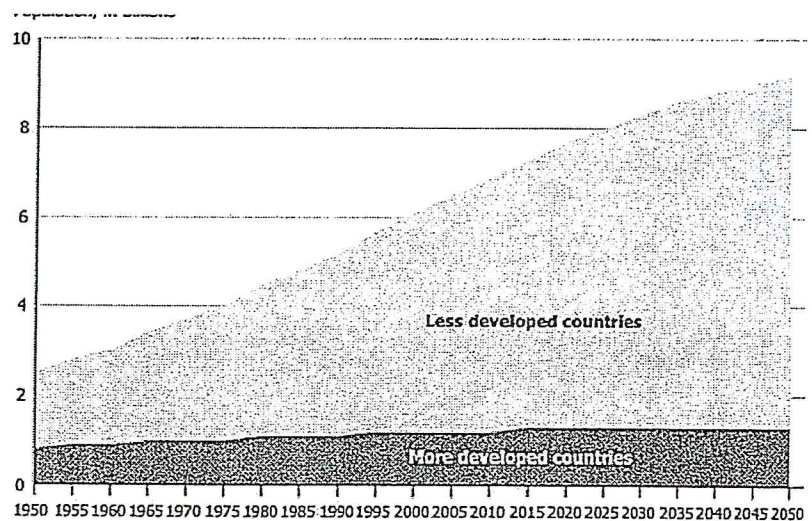
expectancy. Due to these factors, less developed countries tend to have higher death rates than more developed countries

Calculating Population Growth

For a country's population to grow, the birth rate has to exceed the death rate. As seen in Figure 7 below, population growth rates are higher in less developed countries than they are in more developed countries. Less developed countries tend to have birth rates that are considerably higher than their death rates. Thus, the poorest countries tend to experience the most population growth.

To determine how fast a country's population is growing, demographers calculate what is known as the rate of natural increase. The rate of natural increase is calculated by subtracting the number of deaths (e.g., death rate) from the number of births (e.g., birth rate). The rate of natural increase is expressed as a percentage. In the United States, the rate of natural increase is about 0.5 percent.

Figure 7: World Population Growth
Source: <http://envs470-module3-globalsustainabilitysolutions.wikispaces.com/Eliminate+Poverty+and+Stabilize+Population>



The following video helps visualize the world population growth over time: <http://www.npr.org/2011/10/31/141816460/visualizing-how-a-population-grows-to-7-billion>.

Migration

Although birth rates and death rates are the major factors that contribute to population growth, the movement of people also plays a role. Migration refers to the semi-permanent movement of people. Sociologists classify the causes of the movement of people into two categories: push factors and pull factors. Mass migrations can affect the overall population of a region. Mass migrations tend to occur in response to natural disasters, conflict, or a lack of resources in a region.