

India's population to peak in 2048 at 1.6 bn, to decline to 1.09 bn in 2100: The Lancet

India is also expected to surpass China's workforce population in the mid 2020s, where the working-age population is estimated to decline from 950 million in 2017 to 357 million in 2100.



Written by [Anuradha Mascarenhas](#) | Pune | Published: July 15, 2020 6:32:53 am



According to the study, India in 2100 will be the world's most populous country. (File Photo)

India's population is forecasted to peak in 2048 at around 1.6 billion, up from 1.38 billion in 2017, which will be followed by a 32 per cent decline to around 1.09 billion in 2100, according to an analysis set to be published online in The Lancet on Wednesday.

Using novel methods for forecasting mortality, fertility and migration, researchers from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine, using data from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017, estimate that by 2100, a total of 183 out of 195 countries will have total fertility rates (which represent the average number of children a woman delivers over her lifetime) below replacement level of 2.1 births per woman.

According to the study, India in 2100 will be the world's most populous country. It has predicted dramatic declines in working-age populations in countries such as India and China, which will hamper economic growth and lead to shifts in global powers. According to the study, the number of working age adults aged 20-64 in India is projected to fall from around 762 million in 2017 to around 578 million in 2100. However, India has been forecasted to have the largest working age population in the world by 2100.

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From 2017 to 2100 India is projected to rise up the rankings of countries with the largest total gross domestic product (GDP) globally from 7th to 3rd. The country's total fertility rate (TFR) declined to below 2.1 in 2019, and is projected to have a continued steep fertility decline until about 2040, reaching a TFR of 1.29 in 2100.

India is also forecasted to have the second largest net immigration in 2100, with an estimated half a million more people immigrating to India in 2100 than emigrating out.

Meanwhile, the world population is forecasted to peak at around 9.7 billion people in 2064, and fall to 8.8 billion by the century's end, with 23 countries seeing populations shrink by more than 50 per cent, including Japan, Thailand, Italy and Spain. The global TFR is predicted to steadily decline from 2.37 in 2017 to 1.66 in 2100 — well below the minimum rate of 2.1.

IHME director Dr Christopher Murray, who led the research, said that the new population forecasts are in contrast with projects of "continuing" global growth by

support systems of an ageing population. The new study also predicts huge shifts in the global age structure, with an estimated 2.37 billion individuals over 65 years globally in 2100 compared with 1.7 billion under 20 years.

When contacted, Prof Usha Ram from the Department of Public Health and Mortality Studies at the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai told *The Indian Express* that as countries move toward prioritising development, fertility reduction is inevitable. At the same time, improved survival at all ages, especially at the older ages, would lead to the rapid aging of the population.

"Migration, rather liberal migration policies... could be a solution but not permanent. However, what is more important is to look to invest in technological advancements that can compensate for the human shortages. For example, Japan has managed the needs of its greying population with virtually no emphasis on migration," Ram said.

She said the effect of fertility decline on women's reproductive health rights has to be accompanied by greater economic independence. "This would allow women to negotiate with the system on their own terms and for better support services as well," Ram said.

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