

Asia-Pacific development 2012

Did you know?

People

More than 4.2 billion people lived in the Asia-Pacific region in 2011, constituting 60% of the world's population...

The region includes the only two countries in the world that have populations exceeding 1 billion: China and India.

Fertility rates have declined in the region; in 2011, the region-wide fertility rate was equal to the "replacement rate" (2.1 births per woman)...

East and North-East Asia and North and Central Asia have the lowest fertility rates in the region, 1.6 and 1.8 live births per woman, respectively. The highest rates are found in South and South-West Asia, at 2.6, and the Pacific island developing economies, at 3.6.

Among female adolescents (women aged 15-19 years) in the Asia-Pacific region, during the period 2005-2010, the fertility rate was 45.2 live births per 1,000 women — less than half the rate in Africa and almost triple the rate in Europe. Afghanistan and Nepal were the only two countries in the region whose adolescent fertility rate exceeded 100.

The Asia-Pacific region has the highest ratio of boys to girls in the world...

In Asia and the Pacific, the child sex ratio (boys per 100 girls aged 0-14) was 110 in 2011, much higher than the sex ratio under natural conditions (105). The population sex ratio in the region was 104 (men per 100 women) in 2011. The child sex ratio and the population sex ratio are higher than in any other region of the world. In 2011, China had the highest child sex ratio (121) and population sex ratio (108) in the region.

The elderly numbered 301 million in the Asia-Pacific region in 2011...

The proportion of the elderly (aged 65 and above) in Asia and the Pacific increased from 5.3% in 1990 to 7.1% in 2011, representing a 36% increase in their share of the total population. By subregion, the share of the elderly increased by 51% in East and North-East Asia, 42% in South-East Asia, 31% in South and South-West Asia, 20% in North and Central Asia, and 19% in the Pacific.

Over the last decade, the life expectancy for both women and men increased in every country in the Asia-Pacific region (with available data); the largest increase was seen in Nepal, where the life expectancy for women increased by 4.1 years, and for men by 3.7 years.

Urbanization in the Asia-Pacific region is increasing, along with the rest of the world...

Between 2005 and 2010, the urban proportion of the world's population overtook the rural proportion. That tendency continued in 2011, rising from 49% in 2005 to 51% in 2011. In Asia and the Pacific (the second least urbanized region in the world) the proportion of the urban population increased from 33% in 1990 to 43% in 2011. Between 2005 and 2011, the proportion of the urban slum population in the region decreased from 35% to 31%.

In 2010, the Asia-Pacific region was host to 53 million international migrants...

Migrants living in the region comprised 25% of the world's total migrant population in 2010. The proportion of migrants in the total Asia-Pacific population was 1.3%.

In 2011, 2.4 million infants and 3.0 million children under 5 died in the Asia-Pacific region — representing a 4% reduction from 2010 mortality rates.

During the period 1990-2011, the under-five mortality rate decreased by 50%, from 83 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 42 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2011. The infant mortality rate dropped from 61 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 33 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2011. As of 2011, Afghanistan still had the highest under-five mortality rate (101), followed by Pakistan (72), Tajikistan (63) and Myanmar (62).

In 2011, the lowest under-five mortality rate in the region was registered in both Japan and Singapore, each with 3 deaths per 1,000 live births.

The maternal mortality ratio in the Asia-Pacific region declined by more than 50% during the past two decades, from 379 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 146 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2010.

In 2012, regionally, and when compared to 1990 levels, the lives of over 200,000 women were saved. Nevertheless, over 100,000 maternal deaths in the region occurred in 2012, which accounted for 37% of the world's total maternal deaths. The difference in the maternal mortality ratios between low-income and high-income countries was extreme: 260 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in low-income countries; 8 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in high-income countries. Maternal mortality is closely linked with antenatal care. In 2010, approximately 14 million women in the region did not have a single pregnancy-related antenatal care visit, and 22 million births were not attended by skilled health personnel (19 million of these births occurred in South and South-West Asia).

In 2010, in the Asia-Pacific region, 191,066 people living with HIV had access to antiretroviral therapy (ART), an increase from 2009...

In 2009, there were 14,400 additional deaths from AIDS than in 2005. However, given that between 2000 and 2005 there were 66,200 additional deaths from AIDS, this was “progress”.

Malaria affected 10.6 million people in the Asia-Pacific region in 2010...

In Asia and the Pacific, the number of reported cases of malaria declined during the period 2005-2010, down by 575 thousand annual reported cases. Despite this decline, 3,310 people in Asia and the Pacific died due to malaria in 2010. Papua New Guinea had the highest malaria incidence in 2010, with 18,287 cases per 100,000 population, followed by Solomon Islands (13,660), Timor-Leste (10,590) and Vanuatu (7,023).

Although the incidence rate of tuberculosis declined during the last two decades in the Asia-Pacific region, 5.9 million new cases were reported in 2010...

In Asia and the Pacific there were 142 new cases of tuberculosis diagnosed per 100,000 population in 2010, and a total of 8.7 million people were living with tuberculosis.

In the Asia-Pacific region smoking prevalence is higher among men than women...

In 2009, 42% of the men in Asia and the Pacific were smoking (compared to 37% of all men globally); 5% of the women in Asia and the Pacific were smoking (compared to 9% of all women globally).

In the last two decades, in the Asia-Pacific region, female participation in the labour force declined overall, but increased in the non-agricultural sectors...

Female participation in the Asian and Pacific labour force declined from 65 employed women per 100 employed men in 1991 to 62 employed women per 100 employed men in 2010. During the same period, female participation in the labour force increased in non-agricultural sectors, from 49 women per 100 employed men in 1991 to 54 women per 100 employed men in 2010.

In Asia and the Pacific, 45% of employed women were engaged in the agricultural sector in 2009, compared with 37% of men. The proportion of women employed in industry and services has remained relatively constant in the last 20 years, from 17% in 1991 to 19% in 2009 in industry, and from 22% in 1991 to 36% in 2009 in services.

Women's access to land and property remains "very limited" in some countries in the Asia-Pacific region...

Women's access to land was classified (by OECD) as "very limited" in seven countries in South and South-West Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), two countries in South-East Asia (Lao People's Democratic Republic and Timor-Leste), two countries in the Pacific (Fiji and Papua New Guinea) and one country in East and North-East Asia (Mongolia).

In almost all countries in the Asia-Pacific region, women remain underrepresented in national and local politics...

In terms of parliamentary representation, in 2011, women occupied slightly more than 30% of the seats in their national parliaments in only two countries in Asia and Pacific: Nepal (33%) and New Zealand (34%).

The number of people living in extreme poverty in the Asia-Pacific region declined from about 1.7 billion in 1990 to 0.8 billion in 2010...

Based on the available data, in 2010 the proportion of people living in extreme poverty (those living on less than PPP\$1.25 per day) was highest in Bangladesh (43%), followed by India (33%). In 2010, 57% of the world population living in extreme poverty lived in Asia and the Pacific, down from 71% in 1990.

In 2010, in the Asia-Pacific region, 380 million people lacked access to improved water sources and 1.74 billion lacked access to improved sanitation...

Region-wide access to improved water sources increased from 73% of the total population in 1990 to 91% in 2010. In 2010, 97% of the urban population and 86% of the rural population had improved water sources. Access to improved sanitation increased from 36% to 58% of the total population during the same period. Rural access to improved sanitation grew from 22% to 46% between 1990 and 2010, while urban access grew from 65% to 75%.

Environment

The Asia-Pacific region accounted for 50% (up from 38% in 1990) of the world's total CO₂ emissions in 2009...

In 2006, the total CO₂ emissions in Asia and the Pacific stood at 14.5 billion tons. The annual growth rate was, however, decreasing. In 2009, total CO₂ emissions grew in the region by 2.6%, down from 4.1% in 2008.

In 2009, China was the single largest emitter of greenhouse gases worldwide, emitting 6.8 billion tons of CO₂, which was 1.1 billion tons more CO₂ than from all of North America. However, as of 2009, on a per capita basis, the North American rate of emissions was 3.3 times higher than that of China.

The subregion with the highest carbon intensity in 2009 was North and Central Asia, with 824 grams of CO₂ emissions per 1 dollar of GDP (2005 PPP); South-East Asia was the subregion with the lowest carbon intensity, with 391 grams of CO₂ per 1 dollar of GDP (2005 PPP).

In 2009, the Asia-Pacific region produced more energy than any other region in the world, accounting for 46% of total global production...

Within Asia and the Pacific, the subregion with highest energy production in 2009 was East and North-East Asia, with 2.3 billion tons of oil equivalent; the Pacific was the subregion with the lowest production of energy, with 326 million tons of oil equivalent.

In per capita terms, in 2009, the total primary energy supply (TPES) in Asia and the Pacific was 1,367 kgs of oil equivalent, which was 24% below the world's average.

Between 2000 and 2009, electricity production in Asia and the Pacific grew by an average of 5.3% per year, and its share of world electricity production increased from 34% to 44%.

East and North-East Asia produced 5,262 billion kWh of electricity in 2009, almost 60% of the Asia-Pacific total, with China and Japan collectively accounting for 4,744 billion kWh.

Between 2000 and 2009, the household electricity consumption grew on average 6.8% each year in South and South-West Asia, while it decreased 1.2% in North and Central Asia. However, in 2009, South and South-West Asia was still the subregion with the lowest household electricity consumption in the region, with 169 kWh per capita. The highest household electricity consumption was in Pacific subregion, with 2,752 kWh per capita, mainly due to the performance of Australia and New Zealand.

In 2009, the Asia-Pacific region accounted for 30% of the world's primary forest and 54% of the world's planted forest...

During the last decade, the total forest area in Asia and the Pacific increased by 89,291 square kilometres, but there were huge differences between subregions. South-East Asia lost about 332,000 square kilometres of forest, an area roughly equal to the size of Viet Nam. In contrast, East and North-East Asia increased its amount of forest area by 454,284 square kilometres, an area larger than Uzbekistan.

Natural disasters killed (on average) more than 70,000 people every year during the past decade in the Asia-Pacific region, and in 2011 the mortality from natural disasters was particularly high for East and North-East Asia...

In 2011, the Asian and Pacific region paid a huge human toll as a result of natural disasters. In East and North-East Asia almost 21 thousand people died due to natural disasters. In 2011, more than 170 million people in Asia and the Pacific were affected by natural disasters. South-East Asia was particularly hard hit by natural disasters. In 2011 alone, 14.3 million people in South-East Asia were impacted by natural disasters.

Of the world's total, in 2011, Asia and the Pacific included 83% of those affected by natural disasters, 81% of deaths due to natural disasters, and 80% of economic damage from natural disasters.

In 2011, East and North-East Asia was the subregion with highest economic damages from natural disasters, with Japan accounting for 74% of the economic damages in the entire region.

Economy

Defying the ongoing world financial crisis, the Asia-Pacific region maintained positive GDP growth in 2010...

GDP growth in Asia and the Pacific was positive in 2010, at 6.6%. The low and lower-middle income countries showed average GDP growth rates of 6.1% and 9.4%, respectively. Growth in upper-middle and high income countries was 5.5% and 4.5%, respectively, almost similar to growth rates for the world.

The gross domestic investment rate in Asia and the Pacific increased in 2010 to 3.9%, up from its negative rate in 2009. In 2010, the regional average investment rate was 31% of GDP.

Monetary effects of the ongoing global financial crisis are also apparent in the Asia-Pacific region...

Inflation in Asia and the Pacific increased from 2.6% in 2009 to 3.8% in 2010. Japan was the only country in the region that experienced deflation in 2010. In 2011, the central bank discount rate was lowered in 5 of the 26 Asia-Pacific countries for which data were available — 12 were heightened and 9 stayed constant. In Asia and the Pacific, 13 currencies depreciated vis-à-vis the United States dollar, 26 currencies appreciated and 24 currencies appreciated by 2.0% or more.

In 2010, compared to other regions, the Asia-Pacific region had the lowest unemployment rate at 4.6%...

Unemployment rates in all other regions of the world (Africa, 8.1%; Europe, 9.7%; Latin America and Caribbean, 7.2%; North America, 9.5%) were higher than that in Asia and the Pacific in 2010. Of those employed in Asia and the Pacific, 39% were in the agricultural sector, 37% in services and 24% in industry.

Employment is higher for men than women...

Male employment-to-population ratio in the region was 76, while the female ratio was 48. Notably, 6 of the 10 countries in South and South-West Asia had a male employment-to-population ratio of more than double the female ratio.

In 2011, with 36% of total merchandise exports, the Asia-Pacific region surpassed Europe to become the top exporter of merchandise...

In 2011, the share of total world merchandise exports in Asia and the Pacific (36.3%) was higher than that in Europe (36.1%). The total share of world merchandise imports in the region, in 2011, was 34.7%, well below Europe's share of 36.1%.

In the past decade, the share of export and imports of merchandise from the Asia-Pacific region has shown the largest gains, increasing from 28.4% and 25.1% in 2002 to 36.3% and 34.7% in 2011. In contrast, the shares of Europe and North America in world merchandise exports for the period 2002-2011 dropped from 43.6% to 36.1% and 14.6% to 10.6%, while the share of imports declined from 41.1% to 36.1% and 21.2% to 14.9% respectively.

Trade dependence in the Asia-Pacific region has more than doubled since 1990...

As measured by the ratio of merchandise exports to GDP, the regional dependence on trade increased from 11% in 1990 to 31% in 2011.

In 2011, China was the top exporter and importer of services in the Asia-Pacific region...

Between 2000 and 2011, Japan's share of export of services fell from 22% to 12.5%, and import of services fell from 29% to 14%. China's share of export of services increased from 10% to 16%, and its share of import of services doubled from 10% to 20%, making it the country with the highest exporter and importer of services in the Asia and the Pacific, followed by India, whose share of export and import of services more than doubled, from 5% to 13% and 5% to 11% respectively.

In 2010, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow to the Asia-Pacific region increased by 23%...

FDI increased from US\$351 billion in 2009 to US\$431 billion in 2010. FDI as a proportion of GDP increased in three subregions: East and North-East Asia, 1.6%; South-East Asia, 5.0%; and the Pacific, 2.6%.

In 2010, the major sources of FDI outflow in the region were China, Japan, the Russian Federation, and Hong Kong, China. Collectively, in 2010, they provided almost one fifth of the world total FDI outflow.

Overseas worker's remittances contribute substantially to many countries in the Asia-Pacific region...

In 2010, remittances from overseas workers in Asia and the Pacific increased by 12%, from US\$125 billion in 2009 to US\$140 billion in 2010. Remittances were most significant, as a proportion of GDP, for Tajikistan (at 40%), Kyrgyzstan (27%), Nepal (21%), Samoa (20%), Bangladesh (11%) and the Philippines (8%).

Connectivity

The Asia-Pacific region accounted for more than 50% of the world's mobile-cellular population in 2008, and the number of subscribers continues to grow...

The total number of mobile-cellular subscribers in Asia and the Pacific grew from 52% in 2008 to 57% in 2011, and the rate of growth shows no sign of abating.

With over 1.1 billion users in 2011, the number of Internet users in the Asia-Pacific region represents about half (49.7%) of the world's total Internet user population (2.3 billion)...

During the period 2005-2010, the average annual growth rate in the Internet user population in the region was 20% — higher than the world average of 13%. However, the percentage of Internet users (per 100 people) in the region stood at 27% in 2011 — well below the world average of 33%.

In 2011, over 30 million fixed (wired) broadband subscribers were added in China alone, which accounted for 50% of the increase in the total number of subscribers worldwide (60 million)...

Despite the large increase in the number of fixed (wired) broadband subscribers in China, the Asia-Pacific region, with 6.7 broadband users per 100 people, remains well below the level of use in North America (29.1) and Europe (25.1).

In 2010, 20 of the world's top container ports (in terms of throughput) were in the Asia-Pacific region, including the top five...

The top five container ports in Asia and the Pacific were located in China; Japan; Republic of Korea; Singapore; and Hong Kong, China.

During the period 1995-2009, the overall demand for Asian and Pacific rail passenger transport services grew by 76%; freight transport grew by 89% to 2010...

In 1995 there were 1.2 trillion passenger-kilometres and 2.9 trillion ton-kilometres of freight transported by railways in Asia and the Pacific. In 2009 there were 2.2 trillion passenger-kilometres, and in 2010 there were 5.5 trillion ton-kilometres of freight.

The railways of China, India and Japan registered the highest number of passenger-kilometres in 2009. In 2010, China, India and the Russian Federation recorded the most freight (in tons-kilometres).

Half of the substandard roadways in the Asian Highway network were upgraded to the minimum standard between 2004 and 2010...

Approximately 17,000 kilometres of Asian Highway substandard roads were upgraded to the minimum standard (double bituminous-treated roads with two lanes) between 2004 and 2010, leaving only 8.0% of network roadways below the minimum standard.

In 2010, inbound tourist arrivals in the Asia-Pacific region totalled nearly 250 million (27% of the world's total number of tourist arrivals)...

The number of inbound tourist arrivals in the region totalled nearly 250 million in 2010, up 11% from 2009. With the exception of the Pacific, all of the subregions recorded double-digit percentage increases in inbound tourist arrivals. In the region, expenditures by inbound tourists rose to US\$350 billion in 2011, up from US\$310 billion the previous year. China, Malaysia and Turkey saw the most inbound tourism arrivals.

The Asia-Pacific region accounted for over 25% of the world's total CO₂ emissions from transport in 2009...

In 2009, the transport industry in Asia and the Pacific emitted 1,752 million tons of CO₂ (total world CO₂ emissions in 2009 was 6,544 million tons). Of those emissions, the road sector was responsible for 84% of the emissions, 12.6% came from aviation and 2.9% from rail.