

In Fig 1.3 the growth of the world's population is shown for each of the six inhabited continents, the smallest being the Pacific, which includes Australia and nearly all the Pacific island territories. Note the colouring used for each continent, which I have employed fairly consistently throughout this book.

The area of each circle is proportionate to the population. Most of the diagrams and statistics I have used cover the 20th Century, with projections to the middle of the 21st.

The minimal growth in Europe is a contrast to every other continent. The populations of the Americas and the Pacific are growing as a result of both birth rate and considerable immigration. Africa and Asia's growth is almost entirely down to birth rate.

The world maps in Fig 1.5 show the population changes by country over the 20th Century with projections to 2050. Note that here, and throughout the book, country borders that were valid in 2000 are used for the whole period 1900–2050, so that comparisons can be made. This period has seen the most dramatic growth in population in the history of the world. In this, the 20th Century is likely to prove unique in terms of both population growth and mass migrations across continents. By 2050 we shall probably be nearing an equilibrium, but massive population movements will continue. Compare the situation at the 50-year markers in Fig 1.5.

**1900:** There were two major concentrations of population: Europe, and E and S Asia. Europe then had 25% of the global population, but people of European origin dominated 95% of the world's land mass, most of its industrial power and a huge proportion of its wealth and trade. Europe's growth spurt came with the Industrial Revolution in the 19th Century. In 1900, Europe and Asia accounted for 84% of the world's total population, while the Pacific, the Americas and Africa had just 16% between them.

**1950:** The population began to explode in Asia, Latin America and Africa, where urbanization became a major factor. Population growth peaked in Latin America and E Asia in the 1990s, but accelerated into the 21st Century in sub-Saharan Africa and in Muslim and Hindu Asia—the very areas that can least sustain larger populations—having poor governance and inadequate infrastructure. Poverty and lack of education for women lead to population growth rate increases even as infant mortality increases.

**2000:** The highest population densities were then in three major areas: S and E Asia, Europe and the Middle East, and C America. Unsustainably large increases in the Muslim Middle East and S and SW Asia will affect global stability.

**2050:** The rapid growth will be mainly in E and W Africa wherever AIDS does not decimate populations (as it will in the south and centre of the continent). Generally speaking, Africa has seen the lowest economic development despite being resource-rich. Corruption, tribalism, the distorting effects of aid dependence and lack of investment in education and infrastructure are to blame. The future is bleak without political, social and economic improvements. In 2050, Europe's population will have dropped to a mere 7% (and the West's to 12.6%) of the world's population—for a definition of 'the West' see page xiii.

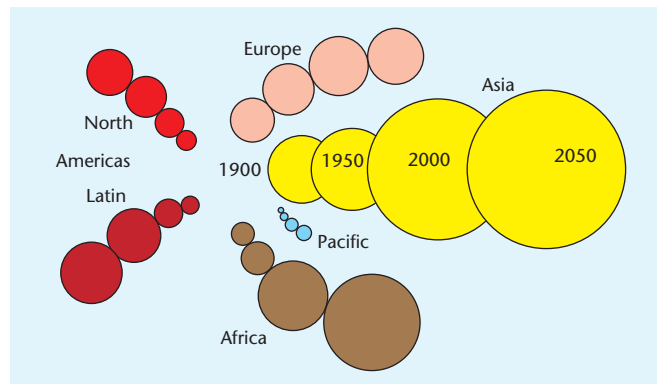


Fig 1.3 Population growth by continent, 1900–2050

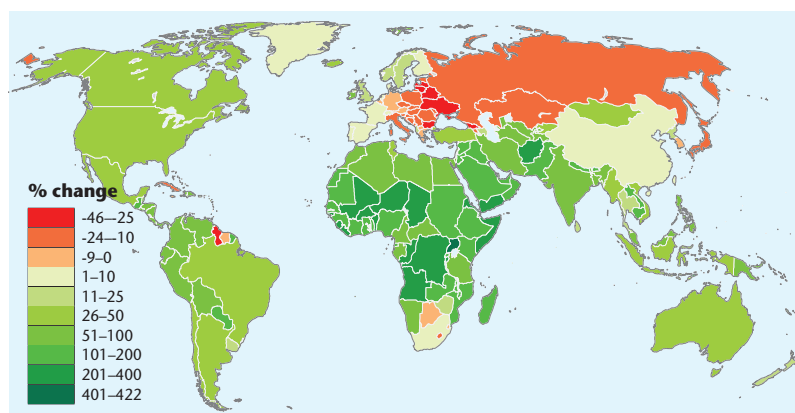


Fig 1.4 Population change projection, 2000–50

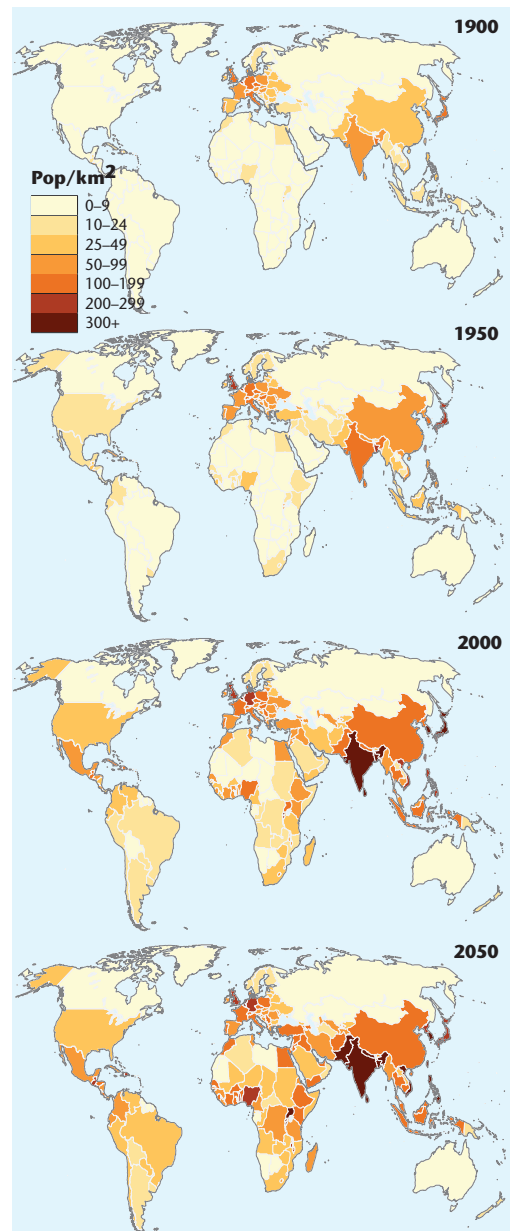


Fig 1.5 Changing population densities, 1900–2050