



Life expectancy at birth

Abbreviated name	Life expectancy at birth
Indicator name	Life expectancy at birth
Domain	Health status
Subdomain	General
Associated terms	Mortality by age and sex
Definition	The average number of years that a newborn could expect to live if he or she were to pass through life exposed to the sex- and age-specific death rates prevailing at the time of his or her birth, for a specific year, in a given country, territory or geographical area.
Numerator	(from life tables)
Denominator	(from life tables)
Disaggregation/ additional dimension	Place of residence, sex, socioeconomic status
Method of measurement	Life expectancy at birth is derived from life tables and is based on sex- and age-specific death rates. United Nations values for life expectancy at birth correspond to mid-year estimates, consistent with the corresponding United Nations fertility medium-variant quinquennial population projections.
Method of estimation	<p>Procedures used to estimate WHO life tables for Member States vary according to the data available to assess child and adult mortality.</p> <p>Three basic methods have been used for this revision. In all three cases, the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN-IGME) estimates of neonatal, infant and under-five mortality rates were used. WHO has developed a model life table using a modified logit system based on some 1800 life tables from vital registration judged to be of good quality to project life tables and to estimate life tables using a limited number of parameters as input.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When mortality data from civil registration are available, their quality is assessed; they are adjusted for the level of completeness of registration if necessary and they are directly used to construct the life tables. 2. When mortality data from civil registration for the latest year are not available, the life tables are projected from available years from 1985 onwards. Estimated under-five mortality rates and adult mortality rates, or under-five mortality rates only, are applied using a modified logit model to which a global standard (defined as the average of all the 1800 life tables). 3. When no useable data from civil registration are available, the latest life table analyses of the United Nations Population Division were used. <p>Predominant type of statistics: predicted.</p>
Measurement frequency	Annual if based on preferred data source; otherwise less frequent
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Impact
Preferred data sources	Civil registration with high coverage
Other possible data sources	Household surveys and population census, sample registration system
Further information and related links	<p>United Nations demographic yearbook. New York (NY): United Nations; 2013 (http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2.htm, accessed 29 March 2015).</p> <p>World population prospects. New York (NY): United Nations; 2012 (http://esa.un.org/wpp/, accessed 29 March 2015).</p>