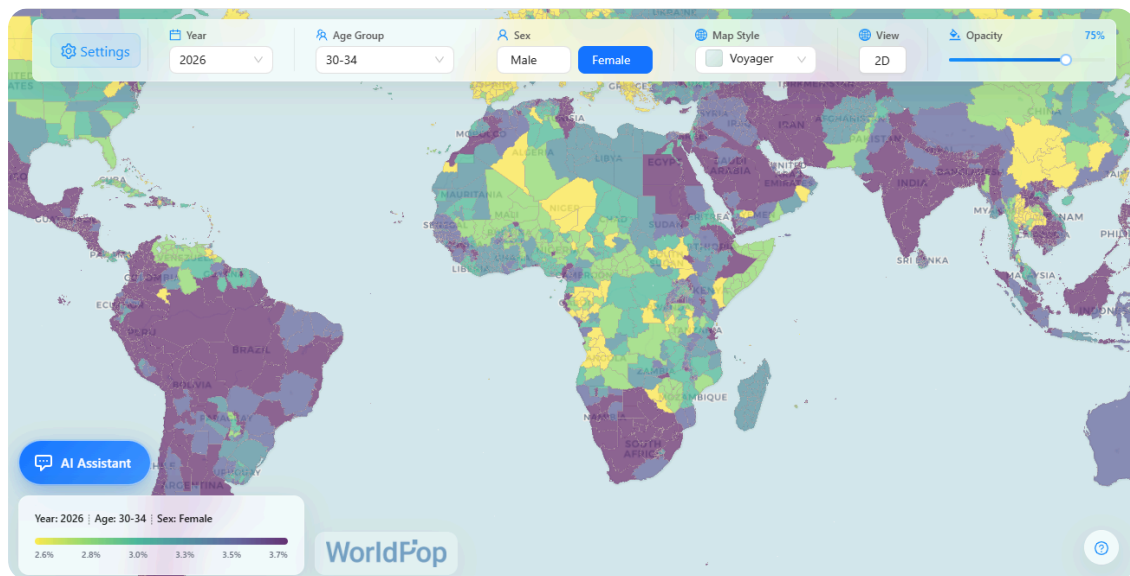


WorldPop

September 2026

Your update on population data and insights.



Our new AI-powered demographic portal

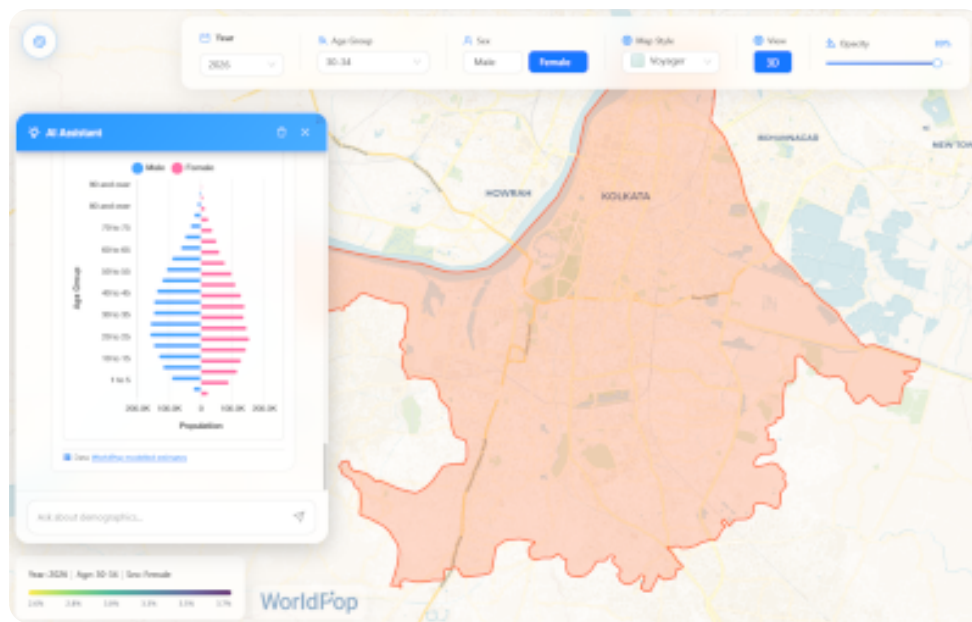
Making decisions count everyone, everywhere

Welcome to our September 2026 newsletter. We're very pleased to be back with an update on what's happening in our innovative, open, geospatial, demographic [research programme](#).

WorldPop produces estimates of populations with age/sex breakdowns for each 100m x 100m grid square on the planet. These are used as open access demographic datasets by international agencies and companies, such as UNHCR, ESRI and Google, to support and plan humanitarian and development interventions, and help governments fill census gaps.

In this edition we highlight a new article by Professor Andy Tatem, and our new AI-powered demographic data portal. We focus on [new projects](#), our recent [co-development and capacity strengthening](#) work, our [free online training](#), and significant [academic journal articles](#) produced by our team.

One Question. Billions of People. Instant Answers.



Population data can answer urgent questions, but finding and interpreting it often requires specialist skills. Launching this month, our new Demographic Portal changes that. It combines detailed global population estimates with an interactive map and a multilingual AI Assistant, allowing users to ask natural-language questions and receive written answers, charts, comparisons and population pyramids instantly. Explore 246 countries and territories, track changes from 2015 to 2030, and drill down to approximately 100-metre grid cells. Designed for researchers, policymakers, humanitarian organisations, health practitioners, planners and the wider public, the portal turns complex demographic data into accessible insights that support better understanding and decision-making.

[Explore the portal...](#)

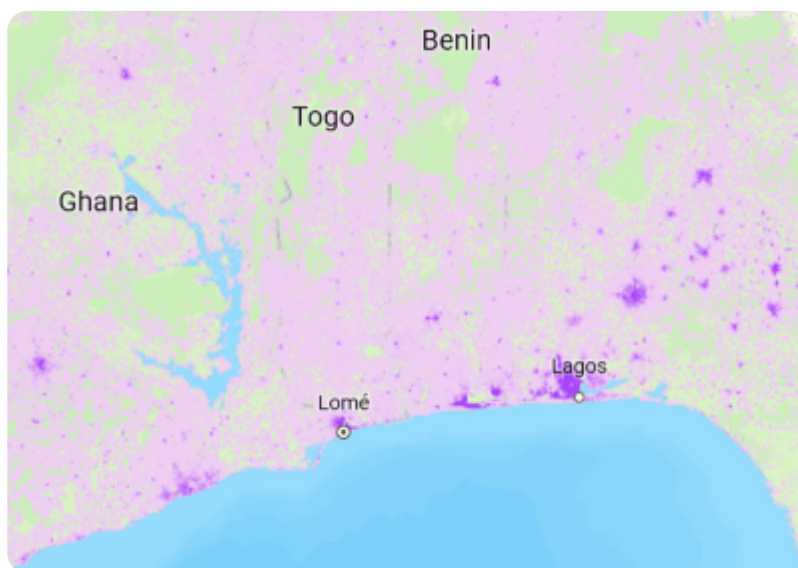
Why Place Matters in Population Trends



Global headlines often describe population change through national averages, but new WorldPop research shows that demographic trends vary dramatically within countries. Using detailed subnational population data for nearly a million administrative units worldwide, the study reveals striking local differences in age structure, migration, and population growth. Cities and districts can have very different needs for schools, healthcare, housing, jobs, and climate adaptation, even when national statistics suggest a single story. Professor Andy Tatem argues that better local population data and stronger census systems are essential for effective planning, helping governments and organisations direct resources where they are needed most.

[Read more...](#)

Global 2 Data now in ArcGIS Living Atlas



Selected demographic variables from WorldPop Global 2 are now available through ArcGIS Living Atlas, giving GIS users direct access to high-resolution population data. The integration strengthens evidence-based planning across health, humanitarian response, infrastructure, and climate adaptation through more accessible, authoritative demographic insights.

[Read more...](#)

New projects

HDSS Ghana

In Ghana's Upper East Region, WorldPop and the Navrongo Health and Demographic Surveillance System are combining demographic, health and geospatial data to create high-resolution population and malaria vaccine coverage maps, supporting more targeted and equitable health planning.

[Read more...](#)



Health Map Senegal

WorldPop is developing high-resolution population data, machine learning and vaccination models to map spatial health inequalities. It identifies zero-dose children, measures access to health facilities, and integrates demographic and socioeconomic data to help health authorities target resources.

[Read more...](#)

MalarAI

AI, mobility data and advanced modelling are being developed to help malaria programmes identify hidden transmission, track how infections spread and predict emerging resistance. Developed in Zanzibar, the project aims to make malaria elimination more targeted and effective.

[Read more...](#)

Co-development and Capacity strengthening

Over the past 3 months our co-development and capacity strengthening work has continued to grow. In addition to online engagement, we delivered in-person workshops to national statistics offices, ministries of health, and UN agencies in low- and middle-income countries.

July

Dr Sarchil Qader joined international experts in Jordan to help develop the roadmap for the 2027 Palestine Population and Housing Census. The workshop explored how satellite imagery, geospatial technologies and population data can support census planning in difficult-to-access areas, helping ensure future recovery and humanitarian efforts are guided by accurate, inclusive evidence..



[Read more...](#)



Experts from UN agencies and leading universities come together at the University of Southampton to advance ethical, data-driven approaches for mapping forced displacement. Our workshop explored AI, geospatial analytics and data integration to improve humanitarian decision-making and better support vulnerable communities

affected by conflict, instability and climate change.

[Read more...](#)

August

A five-day workshop in Istanbul marked a key step in strengthening Syria's national data infrastructure. WorldPop experts trained Syrian and UNICEF teams to manage and update the country's first nationally approved digital household sampling system, covering digital mapping, survey design and location-based data. By building local expertise, the workshop helps ensure the system can be sustained and used to generate more reliable population data for public services, recovery planning and future censuses.

[Read more...](#)



Conferences and meetings

June

At the Global Data Festival in Nairobi WorldPop researchers highlighted how AI, geospatial mapping and population intelligence are modernising census systems and supporting climate, health and humanitarian decision-making.

[Read more...](#)



WorldPop researchers showcased how geospatial mapping and machine learning are advancing global health, from targeting Guinea worm surveillance and understanding dengue risks to identifying barriers to childhood vaccination at GEOMED 2026. Our research supports more precise, equitable public health

interventions in low- and middle-income countries.

[Read more...](#)

At the DHIS2 Annual Conference 2026, we showcased how our high-resolution Global 2 population data are integrated into DHIS2, enabling more accurate health planning, vaccination targeting, and humanitarian response. The partnership is helping countries make better, data-driven decisions to improve public health outcomes.

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July

Dr Qianwen Duan helped shape new international standards for correcting bias in digital mobility data at the DEBIAS 2026 workshop. Her work aims to make mobile phone and digital platform data more representative, transparent and reliable, improving the evidence used to support humanitarian response, public



policy and sustainable development worldwide.

[Read more...](#)

Director named among top global scientists



Our Director, Professor Andy Tatem has been named Research.com's 2026 Environmental Sciences Leader, ranking 10th in the UK and 176th globally. The award recognises his influential research and leadership in producing high-resolution population data that supports humanitarian action, global health, and sustainable development worldwide.

[Read more...](#)

WorldPop at the British Science Festival

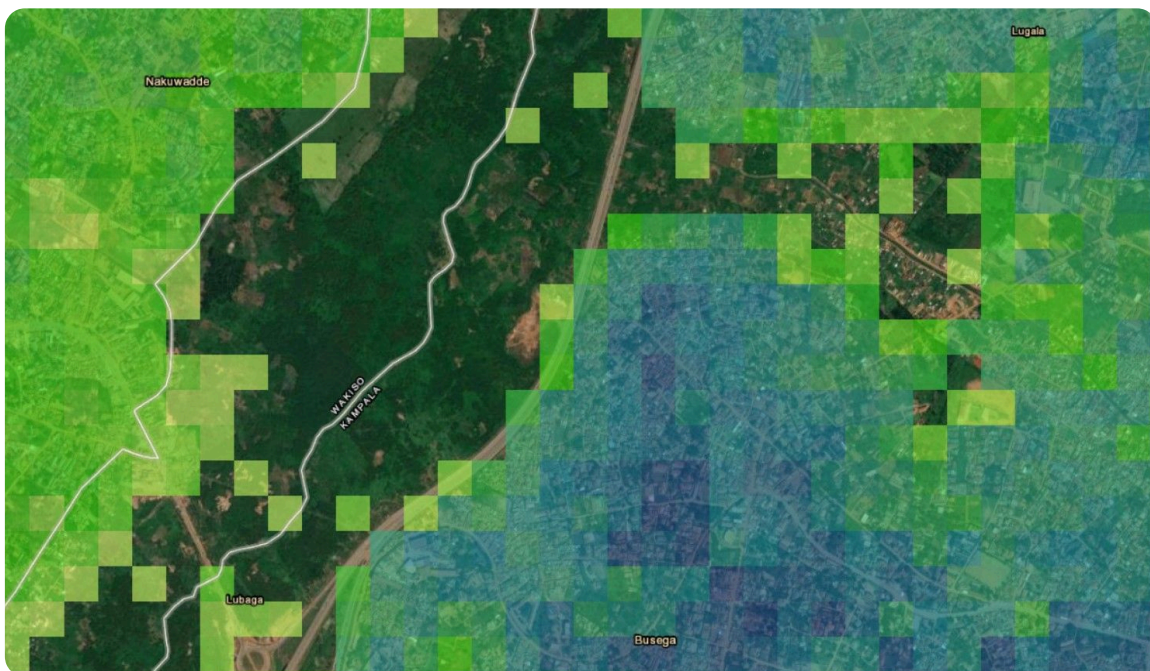
We're excited to be taking part in the British Science Festival at the University of Southampton on 17 September 2026, where we will bring population data to life through an engaging public event, *Mapping the Human Story*. Visitors will explore giant interactive maps, build a unique population map of Southampton using origami cubes, and chat with our AI-powered demographic assistant.



Through these hands-on activities, we'll show how population data support healthcare, disaster response, urban planning, and international development. Organised by the British Science Association, the British Science Festival is Europe's longest-running science festival, showcasing free events that connect people with the ideas, stories, and discoveries shaping our world.

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Our latest publications



Our team have recently authored or co-authored significant papers on:

[Advances in small area population estimation in the absence of national census data](#) (PNAS)

[Accounting for a typology of travel behavior in modeling infectious disease transmission, detection, and community response](#)

[High-Resolution Mapping of DTP1–3 and MCV1 Immunization Coverage and Estimates of Zero-Dose and Under-Vaccination in the DRC](#)

[Strengthening international evidence-informed policy making: lessons from the Global South](#)

[A spatiotemporal dataset of multi-hazard early warnings in China](#)

[Where and why malaria persists in heterogeneous transmission settings: insights from routine health facility data](#)

[Responsible use of artificial intelligence and machine learning for food security early warning systems](#)

[Spatially Integrated Displacement Datasets](#)

[Intercity connectivity enhances urban mobility resilience to extreme rainfall](#)

[New Disease Mapping Identifies COVID-19 Hotspots in Dakar to Guide Public Health Interventions](#)

[Global subnational population estimates disaggregated by age and sex for 2010–2030](#)

[Mapping the risk of Guinea Worm Disease at a high resolution using geostatistical and machine learning approaches](#)

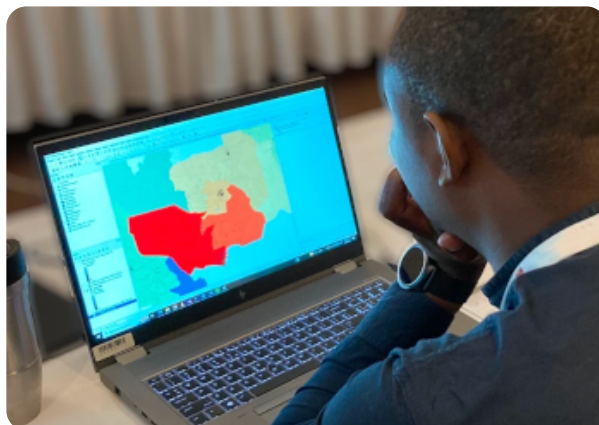
[Global divergence in urban demographic change and migration patterns](#)

See our [publications list](#) and search more than 300 highly cited papers published since 2004.

[Online training](#)

Build your expertise in population science with WorldPop's free, expert-designed resources. From the WorldPop Book of Methods - explaining how high-resolution population maps are created - to our Online Learning Portal with self-paced QGIS courses, certification, and community support, there's something for all levels. For practical skills, the Population Modelling Training Manual and step-by-step tutorials guide you from core concepts to real-world applications in planning, research, and decision-making worldwide.

[Read more...](#)



We hope you enjoyed our newsletter.

If you did, please share it with your friends and colleagues.

Our next edition will be published in December 2026.

Subscribe to our newsletter



The WorldPop research programme, based in the School of Geography and Environmental Science at the University of Southampton, is a multi-sectoral team of researchers, technicians and project specialists that produces data on population distributions and characteristics at high spatial resolution.



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