

UN: India to be world's most populous country by 2028

India looks set to overtake China as the world's most populous country from 2028, according to the United Nations

At that point, both nations will number 1.45 billion people each. Subsequently India's population will continue to grow until the middle of the century, while China's slowly declines. The UN also estimates that the current global population of 7.2 billion will reach 9.6 billion by 2050. That is a faster rate of growth than previously estimated. The population growth will be mainly in developing countries, particularly in Africa, the UN says.

The world's 49 least developed countries are projected to double in size from around 900 million people in 2013 to 1.8 billion in 2050, whereas the population of developed regions will remain largely unchanged. The UN said the reason for the increase in its projection is largely new information on fertility levels in certain high birth rate countries.

Large developing countries, such as China, India and Brazil, have seen a rapid fall in the average number of children per woman, but in other nations, such as Nigeria, Niger, Ethiopia and



India will surpass China as the world's most populous country of the world around 2028

Uganda, fertility levels remain high. Nigeria's population is expected to exceed that of the US by the middle of the century, and could start to rival China's by 2100. China's population is ex-

pected to start decreasing after 2030.

"Although population growth has slowed for the world as a whole, this report reminds us that some developing countries, especially

in Africa, are still growing rapidly," commented Wu Hongbo, the UN's Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. The United Nations publishes an assessment of past, current

and future population trends every two years, in a recurrent series known as the World Population Prospects. Researchers have used data for 233 countries and areas to produce the report.

New Schengen rules for improved free movement

EU should be a safe space against terrorism and organised crime, but cannot be a fortress against migrants



Control at border checkpoint

This is the spirit of the legislative packages for border control and asylum applications adopted by the European Parliament. MEPs have approved new rules that will allow countries in the free-travel Schengen area to reinstate border checks. Members of the European Parliament stressed they would only apply in major emergencies and cannot be used unilaterally. Increased migration flows are explicitly excluded. The Schen-

gen area is a passport-free travel zone made up of 22 EU countries and five non-EU members. Five EU nations have signed up, including the UK.

"I am totally in favour of fighting organised crime and fighting terrorism, but then migration should never be in fact related to this. Migration is a totally different phenomenon, it is about people that for various reasons leave their homeland and come to the EU," said

Liberal MEP from Romania Renate Weber. Lawmakers also backed a new Common Asylum System, which will bring in a standard six-month deadline to process an application, as left-wing Spanish MEP Antonio Masip Hidalgo explained.

"It is absolutely critical that, when an asylum seeker arrives for the first time in Europe, that he is not arrested and treated as a prisoner, that he is no longer treated as a common criminal, but treated with respect," Hidalgo said. The changes will also give police and member states access to a database containing asylum seekers' fingerprints in some cases.

"We are building with the European Parliament very strong checks and controls and embedded it with a lot of security to have under certain conditions a check whether a name is in or not, if that person is wanted for very serious crime or terrorism," said EU Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmstrom.

First test flight by Airbus A350

The newest aircraft from European planemaker Airbus has successfully completed its maiden test flight

The Airbus A350 is designed to be more fuel-efficient, and a direct competitor to US rival Boeing's 787 Dreamliner.

It is seen as vital to the future of Airbus, which competes with Boeing to supply the majority of the world's airlines with new planes. It took off from Blagnac airstrip in the French city of Toulouse, where the A350 is assembled, last Friday morning. The plane made a four-hour trip and landed back at Toulouse. Boeing's Dreamliner has proved popular since its first flight in 2009, despite recently being grounded by regulators over safety fears relating to its batteries.

Airlines are being squeezed by high fuel costs and falling passenger num-

bers, and are looking for more fuel-efficient aircraft. Airbus claims the A350, powered by Rolls-Royce Trent XWB engines, will use about 25 percent less fuel than previous generation wide-bodied aircraft. Like the Dreamliner, the A350 is made largely of advanced materials, particularly carbon composites, in order to save weight.

Airbus has already taken more than 600 orders for the new plane, whereas there have been 890



Dreamliner orders so far. The company hopes to start delivering the first A350s to customers by the end of 2014. Analysts say a successful test flight would be a major milestone for Airbus in the A350 project, with major aircraft manufacturing projects frequently beset by delays.

Greeks protest in Brussels over ERT shutdown

Protesters have gathered outside the Greek Embassy in Brussels to voice their anger at the Government's decision to pull the plug on state broadcaster ERT

Demonstrators said that it was another example of how Greece's sovereignty had been surrendered to its international creditors. "It's as if we are being colonised by an external power," said one protester. But Commission spokesman Olivier Bailly denied the EU executive forced Athens to shut down ERT. "The decision of the Greek authorities should be seen in the context of the major and necessary efforts that the authorities are taking to modernise the Greek economy, those include improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector," he said.

That explanation has been rejected by ERT journalists, who insist Brussels demanded the government close the channel. Vangelis Demiris, a Brussels-based ERT correspondent said, "The Commission, with the rest of the troika, called for the sackings."

Mobile phone roaming fees set to go

Roaming fees for mobile phones, including text messaging and data transmission, are set to be abolished from July 1st 2014

At the moment, these charges mean if you are in another EU state from where your operator is based, then you pay to receive calls. Now, EU Commissioners have voted to approve, and fast track, a series of laws which would mean roaming fees, within member states, would stop. The Union believes people will use their mobile devices when abroad more, especially to access the internet, thus negating any initial loss of revenue for the mobile companies.

Currently there are around a hundred operators across the EU, which the Commissioners believe is a barrier to investment. The legislation is not intended to create bigger companies, but if that does happen, Europe is relaxed about it. The Commission is also keen to push its telecoms reforms as evidence it is creating a single market. Detailed proposals are expected over the coming weeks.