



Urban and Rural Areas 2007

Country or area	Population (thousands)									Average annual rate of change (per cent)		Population of the largest urban agglomeration				
	Urban			Rural			Percentage urban					Urban	Rural	Agglomeration*	Population of urban (thousands)	As percentage of urban population
	2007	2025	2050	2007	2025	2050	2007	2025	2050							
	2007	2025	2050	2007	2025	2050	2007	2025	2050	2005-2010	2010-2015				2007	2007
World	3 283 944	4 584 233	6 388 291	3 377 283	3 426 276	2 792 995	48.4	57.2	68.6	2.0	0.4					
More developed regions ¹	909 975	994 720	1 071 393	313 029	264 250	173 854	74.4	79.0	86.0	0.5	-0.5					
Less developed regions ²	2 383 969	3 589 513	5 326 899	3 064 254	3 162 026	2 619 141	43.8	53.2	67.0	2.5	0.5					
Least developed countries ³	224 743	452 444	966 884	579 707	734 473	775 074	27.9	38.1	55.5	4.1	1.7					
Other less developed countries ⁴	2 159 226	3 137 070	4 360 014	2 484 547	2 427 554	1 844 067	46.5	56.4	70.3	2.4	0.2					
Less developed regions, excluding China	1 815 031	2 758 464	4 290 101	2 296 875	2 538 454	2 237 589	44.1	52.1	65.7	2.5	0.9					
Sub-Saharan Africa ⁵	289 938	539 458	1 064 736	517 488	654 124	695 989	35.9	45.2	60.5	3.7	1.7					
Africa	373 372	657 833	1 233 971	591 601	736 039	763 963	38.7	47.2	61.8	3.3	1.6					
Eastern Africa	70 000	142 603	330 141	237 860	322 791	362 801	22.7	30.6	47.6	3.9	2.1					
Burundi	858	2 577	9 443	7 650	12 463	18 872	10.1	17.1	33.3	6.8	3.6	Bujumbura	429	49.9		
Comoros ¹	234	405	869	605	812	845	27.9	33.3	50.7	2.7	2.4	Moroni	46	19.7		
Djibouti	725	1 017	1 394	108	97	85	87.0	91.3	94.2	2.2	-1.4	Djibouti	583	80.5		
Eritrea	980	2 368	5 744	3 870	5 316	5 720	20.2	30.8	50.1	5.4	2.7	Asmara	601	61.3		
Ethiopia	13 813	30 293	77 228	69 286	94 703	106 177	16.6	24.2	42.1	4.3	2.2	Addis Ababa	3 100	22.4		
Kenya	7 982	16 952	40 798	29 556	40 224	43 959	21.3	29.6	48.1	4.0	2.3	Nairobi	3 010	37.7		
Madagascar	5 733	11 350	24 927	13 950	18 603	19 526	29.1	37.9	56.1	3.8	2.2	Antananarivo	1 697	29.6		
Malawi	2 545	6 158	15 484	11 380	15 194	16 460	18.3	28.8	48.5	5.2	2.0	Lilongwe	732	28.8		
Mauritius ²	534	674	917	728	732	529	42.3	47.9	63.4	0.9	0.7	Port Louis	150	28.2		
Mozambique	7 718	14 493	26 359	13 679	14 461	12 757	36.1	50.1	67.4	4.1	0.7	Maputo	1 446	18.7		
Reunion	751	927	1 043	55	38	28	93.1	96.0	97.3	1.6	-3.5	Saint-Denis	143	19.0		
Rwanda	1 753	3 831	9 714	7 972	11 389	12 913	18.0	25.2	42.9	4.2	2.4	Kigali	860	49.1		
Seychelles	47	60	76	40	34	24	53.8	63.9	76.2	1.4	-0.6	Victoria	26	54.9		
Somalia	3 136	6 353	13 403	5 563	7 359	7 654	36.0	46.3	63.7	4.2	2.2	Mogadishu (Mogadishu)	1 100	35.1		
Uganda	3 955	9 713	31 153	26 929	44 298	61 782	12.8	18.0	33.5	4.4	3.1	Kampala	1 420	35.9		
United Republic of Tanzania	10 128	21 029	45 946	30 326	38 959	39 131	25.0	35.1	54.0	4.2	1.9	Dar es Salaam	2 930	28.9		
Zambia	4 198	6 862	13 345	7 724	9 677	9 523	35.2	41.5	58.4	2.3	1.7	Lusaka	1 328	31.6		
Zimbabwe	4 911	7 539	12 297	8 438	8 431	6 814	36.8	47.2	64.3	2.2	0.2	Harare	1 572	32.0		
Middle Africa	48 927	99 949	210 769	70 169	91 377	101 902	41.1	52.2	67.4	4.3	1.8					
Angola	9 505	18 862	35 893	7 519	8 462	8 673	55.8	69.0	80.5	4.4	0.7	Luanda	4 000	42.1		
Cameroon	10 381	17 194	26 474	8 168	7 942	6 670	56.0	68.4	79.9	3.5	0.1	Douala	1 906	18.4		
Central African Republic	1 665	2 634	4 687	2 677	3 197	2 922	38.4	45.2	61.6	2.3	1.5	Bangui	672	40.4		
Chad	2 819	6 566	16 679	7 962	10 938	12 716	26.1	37.5	56.7	4.7	2.2	N'Djaména	989	35.1		
Congo	2 296	3 678	5 972	1 472	1 685	1 588	60.9	68.6	79.0	2.7	1.1	Brazzaville	1 355	59.0		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	20 841	48 980	118 137	41 795	58 502	68 700	33.3	45.6	63.2	5.1	2.3	Kinshasa	7 943	37.6		
Equatorial Guinea	199	357	738	309	416	445	39.2	46.1	62.2	2.8	2.1	Malabo	96	48.2		
Gabon	1 127	1 524	1 946	204	174	135	84.7	89.7	93.5	2.1	-1.7	Libreville	576	51.2		
Sao Tome and Principe	94	155	243	63	61	53	59.8	71.7	82.1	3.0	-0.5	São Tomé	58	61.0		
Northern Africa	99 855	149 296	223 281	96 253	105 261	86 958	50.9	58.6	72.0	2.4	1.0					
Algeria	21 883	31 778	41 425	11 974	11 103	8 185	64.6	74.1	83.5	2.5	-0.3	El Djazair (Algiers)	3 354	15.3		
Egypt	32 193	46 435	75 623	43 305	52 078	45 596	42.6	47.1	62.4	1.8	1.7	Al-Qahirah (Cairo)	11 893	36.9		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	4 764	6 600	8 446	1 387	1 486	1 237	77.3	81.6	87.2	2.2	1.2	Tarabulus (Tripoli)	2 189	45.9		
Morocco	17 377	23 994	32 093	13 848	13 870	10 490	55.7	63.4	75.4	1.8	0.4	Dar-el-Beida (Casablanca)	3 181	18.3		
Sudan	16 420	30 921	54 046	22 140	23 346	18 983	42.6	57.0	74.0	4.3	0.7	Al-Khartum (Khartoum)	4 754	20.9		
Tunisia	6 828	8 909	10 810	3 499	3 261	2 368	66.1	73.2	82.0	1.7	-0.1	Tunis	745	10.9		
Western Sahara	390	658	839	90	117	99	81.2	84.9	89.4	4.0	2.6	El Aaiun	200	51.3		
Southern Africa	31 902	40 158	50 487	23 779	20 419	14 563	57.3	66.3	77.6	1.5	-0.6					
Botswana	1 108	1 591	2 191	773	673	512	58.9	70.3	81.1	2.5	-0.6	Gaborone	224	20.2		
Lesotho	496	850	1 368	1 512	1 360	988	24.7	38.5	58.1	3.5	-0.3	Maseru	210	42.5		
Namibia	751	1 226	1 987	1 323	1 333	1 054	36.2	47.9	65.3	2.9	0.4	Windhoek	313	41.7		
South Africa	29 266	36 073	44 235	19 310	16 227	11 355	60.2	69.0	79.6	1.4	-0.7	Johannesburg	3 435	11.7		
Swaziland	281	417	706	861	825	654	24.6	33.6	51.9	1.7	0.3	Mbabane	78	27.8		
Western Africa	122 688	225 828	419 293	163 539	196 190	197 740	42.9	53.5	68.0	3.8	1.4					
Benin	3 684	7 286	14 979	5 349	7 175	7 527	40.8	50.4	66.6	4.0	2.3	Cotonou	762	20.7		
Burkina Faso	2 827	6 899	18 137	11 957	16 830	19 366	19.1	29.1	48.8	5.0	2.4	Ouagadougou	1 149	40.6		
Cape Verde	313	526	810	218	224	192	58.9	70.1	80.8	3.5	0.4	Praia	125	40.1		
Côte d'Ivoire	9 277	15 677	25 965	9 985	10 557	9 139	48.2	59.8	73.7	3.2	0.6	Abidjan	3 802	41.0		
Gambia	951	1 726	2 954	758	808	695	55.7	68.1	81.0	4.2	0.7	Banjul	406	42.7		
Ghana	11 566	19 713	31 678	11 913	12 280	10 203	49.3	61.6	75.6	3.5	0.5	Accra	2 121	18.3		
Guinea	3 176	6 548	14 292	6 195	7 999	8 420	33.9	45.0	62.9	3.5	1.4	Conakry	1 494	47.1		
Guinea-Bissau	503	1 030	2 808	1 192	1 883	2 516	29.7	35.4	52.7	3.2	2.9	Bissau	330	65.6		
Liberia	2 232	4 800	10 351	1 519	1 972	2 109	59.5	70.9	83.1	5.6	2.8	Monrovia	1 041	46.7		
Mali	3 896	8 987	21 333	8 441	11 603	12 898	31.6	43.6	62.3	4.8	2.2	Bamako	1 494	38.3		
Mauritania	1 273	2 203	4 097	1 851	2 345	2 267	40.7	48.4	64.4	3.0	2.2	Nouakchott	673	52.9		
Niger	2 331	5 503	19 704	11 894	20 746	35 459	16.4	21.0	37.1	4.0	3.4	Niamey	915	39.3		
Nigeria	70 539	126 634	217 726	77 554	83 495	70 970	47.6	60.3	75.4	3.8	0.9	Lagos	9 466	13.4		
Saint Helena ³	3	4	5	4	4	3	39.1	46.6	62.4	1.5	1.0	Half Tree Hollow	1	45.8		
Senegal	5 203	8 992	16 996	7 176	9 007	8 661	42.0	50.0	65.7	3.1	2.0	Dakar	2 604	50.1		
Sierra Leone	2 194	3 949	8 444	3 672	4 690	5 079	37.4	45.7	62.4	2.9	1.5	Freetown	827	37.7		
Togo	2 722															



WORLD URBANIZATION PROSPECTS: THE 2007 REVISION

KEY FINDINGS

1. The 2007 Revision corroborates that the world population will reach a landmark in 2008: for the first time in history the urban population will equal the rural population of the world and, from then on, the majority of the world population will be urban. The world population is expected to be 70 per cent urban in 2050.
2. Between 2007 and 2050, the population living in urban areas is projected to gain 3.1 billion, passing from 3.3 billion in 2007 to 6.4 billion 2050. By mid-century the world urban population will likely be the same size as the world's total population in 2004. The urban areas of the world are expected to absorb all the population growth anticipated over the next four decades. Furthermore, most of the population growth expected in urban areas will be concentrated in the cities and towns of the less developed regions. Asia, in particular, is projected to see its urban population increase by 1.8 billion, Africa by 0.9 billion, and Latin America and the Caribbean by 0.2 billion. Population growth is therefore becoming largely an urban phenomenon concentrated in the developing world.
3. Historically, the process of rapid urbanization first started in today's more developed regions. In 1920, just under 30 per cent of their populations was urban, and by 1950, more than half of their populations was living in urban areas. In 2007, high levels of urbanization, surpassing 80 per cent, characterized Australia, New Zealand and Northern America. Europe, with 72 per cent of its population living in urban areas, was the least urbanized major area in the developed world. By 2050, Australia, New Zealand and Northern America are all expected to be over 90 per cent urban, while Europe's level of urbanization is projected to be lower, at 84 per cent.
4. Among the less developed regions, Latin America and the Caribbean has an exceptionally high level of urbanization (78 per cent), higher than that of Europe. Africa and Asia, in contrast, remain mostly rural, with 38 per cent and 41 per cent, respectively, of their populations living in urban areas. Over the coming decades, the level of urbanization is expected to increase in all major areas of the developing world, with Africa and Asia urbanizing more rapidly than the rest. Nevertheless, by mid-century, Africa and Asia are expected still to have lower levels of urbanization

than the more developed regions or Latin America and the Caribbean.

5. Despite its low level of urbanization, in 2007 Asia was home to about half of the urban population in the world. Europe had the second highest share, at 16 per cent. Over the next four decades, Africa and Asia will experience a marked increase in their urban populations. In Africa the urban population is likely to treble, and in Asia it will more than double. By mid-century, most of the urban population of the world will be concentrated in Asia (54 per cent) and Africa (19 per cent).
6. The world rural population is expected to reach a maximum of 3.5 billion in 2018 or 2019 and to decline slowly thereafter, to reach 2.8 billion in 2050. With the exception of Africa and Oceania, all major areas are expected to have smaller rural populations in 2050 than today. Africa's rural population may start to decline before the mid-century. Today, the majority of rural-dwellers live in Asia (71 per cent) and Africa (18 per cent) and the concentration of the world rural population in these two major areas combined is expected to increase, so that by 2050, 64 per cent of all rural inhabitants are projected to live in Asia and 27 per cent in Africa.
7. The world urban population is highly concentrated in a few countries. In 2007, three quarters of the 3.3 billion urban-dwellers on Earth lived in 25 countries. China, India and the United States of America accounted for 35 per cent of the world urban population. Most of the 25 countries with the largest urban populations are highly urbanized, but seven have levels of urbanization ranging from 27 per cent to just over 50 per cent and they include some of the most populous countries in the world: Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan.
8. Most countries have small urban populations. In 2007, two thirds of the 229 countries or areas considered had fewer than 5 million urban-dwellers and they accounted for 6 per cent of the world urban population.
9. Similarly, the increases in the world urban population are concentrated in a few countries, with China and India projected to account together for about a third of the increase in the urban population in the

coming decades. Between 2007 and 2025, the urban areas of the world are expected to gain 1.3 billion people, including 261 million in China and 197 million in India, which account together for 35 per cent of the total increase. Nine additional countries are projected to contribute 29 per cent of the urban increment, with increases ranging from 20 million to 62 million. The countries involved are: Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Africa; Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines in Asia; Brazil and Mexico in Latin America; and the United States of America.

10. A further urban increment of 1.8 billion people is expected globally during 2025-2050, with India being the major contributor (377 million), followed by China (205 million). Together, the two most populous countries on Earth are expected to account for 32 per cent of urban growth during 2025-2050. In 2050, China will still have the largest urban population (1 billion), followed by India (0.9 billion).

11. In a few developed countries, the urban population will decrease. Despite the projected increases in the level of urbanization, overall population decline in several countries will lead to a reduction in the number of urban-dwellers. Between 2007 and 2025, the urban population of the Russian Federation and that of Ukraine are projected to decline by 8 million and 3 million, respectively. Between 2025 and 2050, more countries will experience reductions in the urban population. Those with the largest drops include Japan (a reduction of 4 million), the Republic of Korea (4 million), the Russian Federation (7 million) and Ukraine (4 million).

12. The rural population is even more highly concentrated in a few countries than the urban population. In 2007, 18 countries accounted for 75 per cent of the rural population and all but three (Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States) are located in Africa or Asia. India has the largest rural population (828 million), followed by China (767 million). Together, they account for 47 per cent of the world rural population.

13. As in the case of the urban population, most countries have small rural populations. In 2007, 69 per cent of the 229 countries or areas considered had at most 5 million rural inhabitants and accounted for 5 per cent of the world rural population. In three

quarters of them, the rural population is projected to decrease during 2007-2050.

14. The 3.3 billion urban-dwellers in 2007 were distributed unevenly among urban settlements of different sizes. Over half of the world urban population (52 per cent) lived in cities or towns with fewer than half a million inhabitants. Between 2007 and 2025, small urban centres are expected to absorb nearly half of the expected increase in the urban population.

15. Cities in the next size class, whose populations range from 500,000 to 1 million inhabitants, are numerous (460 in 2007, rising to 551 in 2025), but they account for just 10 per cent of the overall urban population. Medium-sized cities, with more than a million inhabitants but fewer than 5 million, are also numerous (382 in 2007, increasing to 524 in 2025), and they account for 23 per cent of the urban population.

16. Large cities, whose populations range from 5 million to just under 10 million, numbered 30 in 2007 and are expected to number 48 in 2025, but accounted for just 7 per cent of the urban population. Three quarters of these "mega-cities in waiting" are located in developing countries.

17. Mega-cities are urban agglomerations with at least 10 million inhabitants. There are today 19 mega-cities on Earth and their number is expected to increase to 27 in 2025. The proportion of people living in mega-cities is small. In 2007, 9 per cent of the world urban population resided in mega-cities, and by 2025 that share is expected to rise to almost 10 per cent. In relation to the entire world population, mega-cities account today for 4 per cent of the population, meaning that just 1 in 25 people on Earth live in mega-cities.

18. The distribution of the urban population by city size class varies among the major areas. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for instance, urban-dwellers are more concentrated in the mega-cities than in the world as a whole: 14 per cent live in mega-cities. Relatively high concentrations of urban-dwellers in mega-cities are also found in Northern America (11 per cent) and Asia (10 per cent). In contrast, 58 per cent of urban-dwellers in Africa live in small urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants and 68 per cent of those in Europe do the same.

19. Asia has 11 mega-cities; Latin America has 4; Northern America, 2; and Africa and Europe have 1 each. Eleven of these mega-cities are capitals of their countries. By 2025, when the number of mega-cities rises to 27, Asia would have increased its number by 5, Africa by 2 and Europe by 1.

20. Large urban agglomerations are not necessarily experiencing fast population growth. Among the 19 mega-cities in 2007, 7 mega-cities are expected to have annual population growth in the period 2005-2010 below 1 per cent and just 3 above 2 per cent: Dhaka in Bangladesh (3.3 per cent per year), Delhi in India (2.5 per cent) and Karachi in Pakistan (2.4 per cent).

21. Faced with the numerous opportunities and challenges associated with urbanization, many Governments have consistently considered their population's spatial distribution as a concern. According to *World Population Policies 2007* (United Nations, 2008), as of 2007, 85 per cent of Governments expressed concern about their pattern of population distribution, a percentage that has changed little since the 1970s.

22. As the world becomes increasingly urban, decisions taken today in cities across the world will shape the economic, social and environmental future of humankind. Properly managed, urbanization can help in combating poverty, inequality and environmental degradation, but action to capitalize on the opportunities it presents and to address the challenges it raises must be prompt and sustained.

In addition to this wallchart, the results and analysis of the 2007 Revision will be issued in a working paper, in a report and on CD-ROM. A population database containing the results is available on the United Nations Population Division website at www.unpopulation.org

Enquiries and comments should be addressed to the Office of the Director, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA; fax number: 1 212 963 2147.



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Data on CD-ROM may be purchased from:

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