United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

World Urbanization Prospects 2018

Highlights

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Population Division

World Urbanization Prospects 2018

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The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint courses of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs provides the international community with timely and accessible population data and analysis of population trends and development outcomes for all countries and areas of the world. To this end, the Division undertakes regular studies of population size and characteristics and of all three components of population change (fertility, mortality and migration). Founded in 1946, the Population Division provides substantive support on population and development issues to the United Nations General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Population and Development. It also leads or participates in various interagency coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system. The work of the Division also contributes to strengthening the capacity of Member States to monitor population trends and to address current and emerging population issues.

Notes

What Is Urbanization?

Urbanization is a complex socio-economic process that transforms the built environment, converting formerly rural into urban settlements, while also shifting the spatial distribution of a population from rural to urban areas. It includes changes in dominant occupations, lifestyle, culture and behaviour, and thus alters the demographic and social structure of both urban and rural areas. A major consequence of urbanization is a rise in the number, land area and population size of urban settlements and in the number and share of urban residents compared to rural dwellers.

Urbanization is shaped by spatial and urban planning as well as by public and private investments in buildings and infrastructure. An increasing share of economic activity and innovation becomes concentrated in cities, and cities develop as hubs for the flow of transport, trade and information. Cities also become places where public and private services of the highest quality are available and where basic services are often more accessible than in rural areas.

The degree or level of urbanization is typically expressed as the percentage of population residing in urban areas, defined according to criteria used by national governments for distinguishing between urban and rural areas (see box 3 for the definitions used in this report). In practice, urbanization refers both to the increase in the percentage of population residing in urban areas and to the associated growth in the number of urban dwellers, in the size of cities and in the total area occupied by urban settlements.

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Key Facts

• Urban growth is closely related to the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic, and environmental. Well-managed urbanization, informed by an understanding of population trends over the long run, can help to maximize the benefits of high levels of density while minimizing environmental degradation and other potential adverse impacts of a growing number of city dwellers.

• To ensure that the benefits of urbanization are shared and that no one is left behind, policies to manage urban growth need to ensure access to infrastructure and social services for all, focusing on the needs of the urban poor and other vulnerable groups for housing, education, health care, decent work and a safe environment.

• Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas, with 55 per cent of the world's population residing in urban areas in 2018. In 1950, 30 per cent of the world's population was urban, and by 2050, 68 per cent of the world's population is projected to be urban.

• Today, the most urbanized regions include Northern America (with 82 per cent of its population living in urban areas in 2018), Latin America and the Caribbean (81 per cent), Europe (74 per cent) and Oceania (68 per cent). The level of urbanization in Asia is now approximating 50 per cent. Meanwhile, Africa remains mostly rural, with 43 per cent of its population living in urban areas.

• The rural population of the world has grown slowly since 1950 and is expected to reach its peak in a few years. The global rural population is now close to 3.4 billion and is expected to rise slightly and then decline to around 3.1 billion in 2050. Africa and Asia are home to nearly 90 per cent of the world's rural population. India has the largest rural population (893 million), followed by China (578 million).

• The urban population of the world has grown rapidly since 1950, having increased from 751 million to 4.2 billion in 2018. Asia, despite being less urbanized than most other regions today, is home to 54 per cent of the world's urban population, followed by Europe and Africa (13 per cent each).

• Growth in the urban population is driven by an overall population increase and by the upward shift in the percentage living in urban areas. Together, these two factors are projected to add 2.5 billion to the world's urban population by 2050, with almost 90 per cent of this growth happening in Asia and Africa.

• Just three countries – India, China and Nigeria –are expected to account for 35 per cent of the growth in the world's urban population between 2018 and 2050. India is projected to add 416 million urban dwellers, China 255 million and Nigeria 189 million.

• Close to half of the world's urban dwellers reside in settlements with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, while around one in eight live in 33 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants. By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities, most of them in developing regions.

• Tokyo is the world's largest city with an agglomeration of 37 million inhabitants, followed by Delhi with 29 million, Shanghai with 26 million, and Mexico City and São Paulo, each with around 22 million inhabitants. Cairo, Mumbai, Beijing and Dhaka all have close to 20 million inhabitants.

• Some cities have experienced population decline in recent years. Most of these are located in the low-fertility countries of Asia and Europe where overall population sizes are stagnant or declining. Also, economic contraction and natural disasters have contributed to population losses in some cities.

• As the world continues to urbanize, sustainable development depends increasingly on the successful management of urban growth, especially in low-income and lower-middle-income countries where the most rapid urbanization is expected between now and 2050. Integrated policies to improve the lives of both urban and rural dwellers are needed, strengthening the linkages between urban and rural areas and building on their existing economic, social and environmental ties.

Box 1. Data and methods*

In preparing estimates and projections of the urban population, the United Nations mostly relies on data from national sources, including data reported to the UN Demographic Yearbook, reflecting varying definitions and criteria established by national authorities both for the level of urbanization, expressed as the percentage urban, and for the population size of cities. United Nations estimates and projections of the urban population of a country are based on officially reported trends of the proportion of the population living in urban areas. The quality of the resulting data depends on the quality of the information used as inputs. Such information normally consists of complete counts of both the total population residing in a country and the population living in urban areas. Censuses or population registers are the most common sources of such counts.

The future trend in the proportion urban is derived from a projection of the urban-rural growth differential. It is assumed that the most recently observed urban-rural growth difference for a given country (between two consecutive censuses) will follow a linear trend in the future, until it reaches an expected global urban-rural growth difference over a period of 25 years.

The method used for projecting city populations is similar. A city's growth rate between the two most recent censuses is assumed to change linearly until reaching an expected value determined by the city's current population size and the growth rate of the urban population for the country as a whole.

For all countries and areas, the proportion of the population living in urban areas was estimated and projected in single-year intervals for the period from 1950 to 2050. The size of the urban population for each year was obtained by multiplying the estimated proportion urban at the national level by an estimate or projection of the total population of the country or area as contained in World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision (United Nations, 2017). Estimates and projections for countries and areas were aggregated to obtain corresponding figures for geographic regions and subregions, and for the world as a whole.

* For additional details, please see United Nations (2018b).

Introduction and Policy Implications

The future of the world's population is urban.[1] With more than half of the world's people living in urban areas, urbanization determines the spatial distribution of the world's population and is one of the four demographic mega-trends, with the growth of the global population, population ageing, and international migration. Estimates and projections of urbanization introduced in this report indicate that the future growth of the human population can be accounted for almost entirely by a growing number of city dwellers. By mid-century, roughly two thirds of the world's population will be living in urban areas. In many regions, the share of population living in cities, as well as the number and size of cities, will continue to grow, driven by a combination of factors, including a surplus of births over deaths in urban areas, migration from rural to urban areas and from abroad as well as the urbanization of formerly rural areas. Urbanization is also transforming the lives of those living in the rural areas around cities. Cities are major gateways and destinations for internal and international migrants and migration needs to be integrated into the strategic planning and management of cities and urban systems.

Urbanization is closely related to the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Well-managed urbanization (among other factors), informed by an understanding of population trends over the long run, can help to maximize the benefits of agglomeration while minimizing environmental degradation and other potential adverse impacts of a growing number of city dwellers, especially in low-income and lower-middle-income countries where the most rapid urbanization is expected between now and 2050. Unplanned or inadequately managed urban expansion, in combination with unsustainable production and consumption patterns and a lack of capacity of public institutions to manage urbanization, can impair sustainability due to urban sprawl, pollution and environmental degradation. In recognition of their economic, social and environmental interdependence, the linkages that cities and small towns establish with surrounding rural areas should be strengthened. They can facilitate sustainable development in both urban and rural areas by delivering services and infrastructure improvements and expanding opportunities for off-farm employment to rural dwellers.[2] Planning for the delivery of services to urban and rural dwellers should include consideration of different scenarios for the future growth of urban centres and surrounding rural settlements.

Urbanization has generally been a positive force for economic growth, poverty reduction and human development. Cities are places where entrepreneurship and technological innovation can thrive, thanks to a diverse and well-educated labour force and a high concentration of businesses. Urban areas also serve as hubs for development, where the proximity of commerce, government and transportation provide the infrastructure necessary for sharing knowledge and information. Urban dwellers are often younger, more literate and more highly educated, are more likely to have access to decent work, adequate housing and social services, and can enjoy enhanced opportunities for cultural and political participation as well as gender equality. Economies of scale in urban areas and technological innovation can facilitate the sustainable provision of infrastructure such as roads, piped water and electricity, as well as basic services such as education

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1. The Commission on Population and Development addressed urbanization in its 51st session and took note of the report of the Secretary General on World Demographic Trends (E/CN.9/2018/5). The thematic report of the Secretary General on Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility and International Migration (E/CN.9/2018/2) contains further policy recommendations.

2. See also the New Urban Agenda, adopted in October 2016 at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and endorsed by the General Assembly in December 2016 (A/RES/71/256*). The 2018 World Urban Forum (WUF9) organized by UN-Habitat in Kuala Lumpur, in February 2018, focused on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and mobilized urban actors in national governments, subnational and local governments, civil society, private sector and academia to share knowledge and solutions for sustainable urban development; facilitate stakeholders' inputs to monitoring and reporting on the New Urban Agenda and facilitate strong multi-stakeholder partnerships.

and health care, all of which are essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations 2015).

Government policies for planning and managing sustainable urban growth can help ensure that the benefits of urbanization are shared equitably. Sustainable Development Goal 11 is a commitment to making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, and participatory planning can play an important role in the implementation. Policies that aim to restrict rural-to-urban migration are generally ineffective at forestalling city growth and can even result in economic, social and environmental harm. Sustainable urbanization requires that cities generate adequate income and decent employment opportunities; provide the necessary infrastructure for water and sanitation, energy, transportation and communication; ensure equitable access to housing and services; minimize the number of people living in slums; and preserve a healthy environment within the city and surrounding areas. To ensure that the benefits of urbanization are shared and that no one is left behind, policies to manage the urban growth need to consider the needs of women, including for equal access to services, property rights and political participation; youth, including policies to provide education and employment; older persons, including policies to promote healthy ageing; persons with disabilities, including policies and laws on accessible housing, public infrastructure, and transport; and focus on the urban poor and other vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples. Fulfilling their needs allows them to play a positive economic, social, cultural role, etc. in urbanization and is a powerful tool to manage sustainable urbanization.

Data on global trends in urbanization and city growth are critical for evidence-based policy making and planning.[3] The availability of high quality, accessible, timely and reliable demographic data is essential for planning and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Improvements in civil registration and health

information systems, alternative sources of information such as "big data", the use of remote-sensing and satellite imagery and georeferencing as a standard practice of data collection, and broad participation in the 2020 round of censuses are essential elements to broaden evidence on urbanization. Assessing current and future needs with respect to urban growth and for setting policy priorities to promote inclusive and equitable urban and rural development should be based on up-to-date and coherent population estimates and projections. In order to systematically track levels and trends in urbanization around the world, contributing to the evidence base on urbanization, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations has issued for several decades revised and updated estimates and projections of the urban and rural populations of all countries in the world and of their major urban settlements.

This report presents the highlights of the 2018 revision of *World Urbanization Prospects*.[4] The dataset of the *World Urbanization Prospects* contains the latest estimates of the urban and rural populations of 233 countries or areas from 1950 to 2018 and projections to 2050, as well as estimates of population size from 1950 to 2018 and projections to 2035 for all urban settlements with 300,000 inhabitants or more in 2018. The annex tables in these Highlights provide data on the estimated and projected urban and rural populations, the percentage of the population that lives in urban areas and the average annual rate of change of the percentage urban for 233 countries or areas of the world. The tables also show the rank and annual growth rate of urban agglomerations with 5 million inhabitants or more in 2018, while focussing on the time-frame 1990-2030.

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3.   See also the report of the Secretary General on Actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development: monitoring of population programmes, focusing on sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration (E/CN.9/2018/3).

4.   The full report, descriptions of the data, methodology, and complete data tables representing all countries and areas, geographic regions and subregions, income groups, development groups, and periods are available at https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/.

Trends in Urbanization
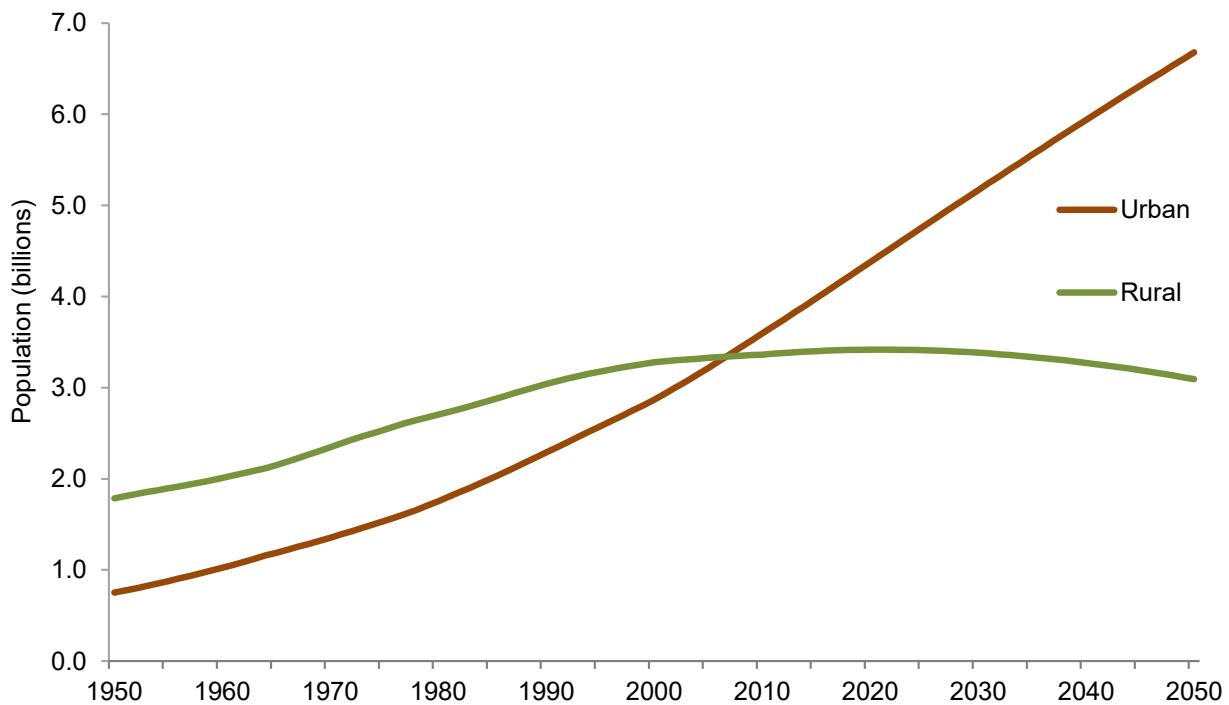
Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas today. In 2018, 55 per cent of the world's population resided in urban areas. Overall, 4.2 billion people resided in urban settlements compared to 3.4 billion in rural areas.

The world's population has gone through a process of rapid urbanization since 1950. In 1950, more than two thirds (70 per cent) of people worldwide lived in rural settlements. In 2007, for the first time in history, the global urban population exceeded the global rural population, and since then the number of the world's city dwellers has continued to grow faster than the rural population (figure 1). Towards the end of the Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2030, the share of the world's population living in urban areas is expected to reach 60 per cent. It is projected that by 2050, the world will be more than two thirds urban (68 per cent), roughly the reverse
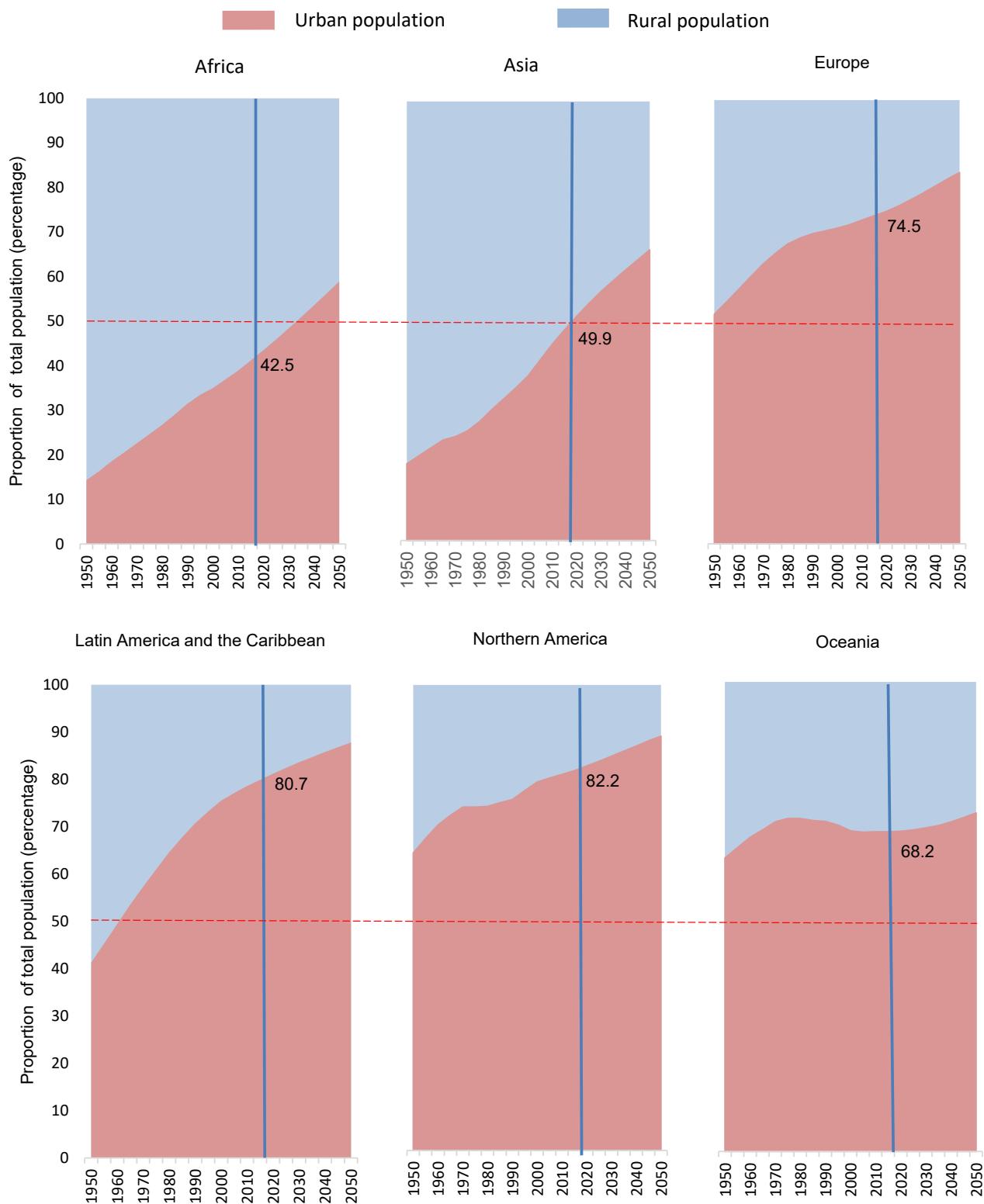
of the global rural-urban population distribution of the mid-twentieth century (also see annex table I).

Over the coming decades, the level of urbanization is expected to increase in all regions, but with considerable variation. Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern America have been highly urbanized, with over 80 per cent of their population estimated to be urban in 2018 and a projected percentage of nearly 90 per cent in 2050. Europe, with nearly three quarters of its population living in urban areas in 2018, is expected to reach 80 per cent urban in 2040 and nearly 85 per cent by 2050 (figure 2). Meanwhile, Oceania is expected to have an almost stable percentage urban, rising from nearly 70 per cent today to slightly over 70 per cent in 2050.

Figure 1. Urban and rural populations of the world, 1950-2050

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Figure 2. Urban and rural population as proportion of total population, by geographic region, 1950-2050

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Africa, in contrast, remains mostly rural, with just over 40 per cent of its population living in urban areas in 2018, while Asia is now approximating 50 per cent. The percentages urban for Africa and Asia are projected to reach 59 and 66 per cent urban by mid-century, respectively.
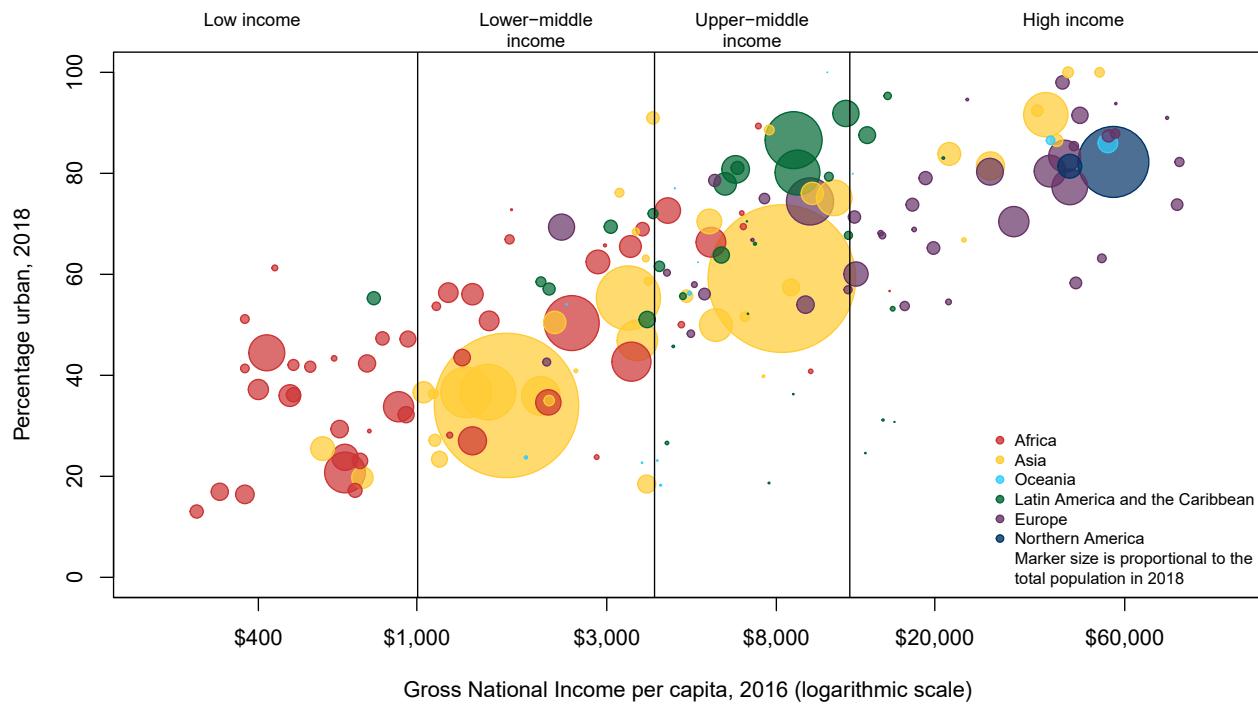
Africa and Asia are urbanizing more rapidly than other regions of the world. The rate of urbanization, measured as the average annual rate of change of the percentage urban, is the highest in Asia and Africa. These two regions are urbanizing faster with the proportion urban increasing by 1.3 and 1.1 per cent annually between 2015 and 2020, respectively, while regions that already have relatively high levels of urbanization are urbanizing at a slower pace, at less than 0.3 per cent annually during the same period (see annex table II).

Both the levels and paces of urbanization differ considerably across income groups. Most high-income countries of today have relatively high levels of urbanization, such as Australia, Canada, Japan, the United States of America, and most countries in Europe (figure 3). Many upper-middle-income countries, such as Brazil, China, Iran and Mexico, have experienced both rapid urbanization and rapid growth of gross national income, with levels of urbanization close to those in high-income countries. These countries have gained hundreds of millions of people living in urban areas across the world during recent decades, together with many lower-middle-income countries, such as India, Indonesia and Ethiopia, at lower levels of urbanization. On the other hand, a significant number of low-income countries in Africa still have low levels of urbanization.

In 1950, nearly 60 per cent of the population in high-income countries already lived in urban areas, and this share is expected to rise further, from 80 per cent today to nearly 90 per cent in 2050. By contrast, in the upper-middle-income countries of today, the percentage of population living in urban areas was just over 20 per cent in 1950. However, upper-middle-income countries have experienced a relatively fast pace of urbanization since 1950, and the share of urban population is expected to rise from two thirds today to over 80 per cent urban by 2050. Therefore, the gap between high-income and upper-middle income countries in the percentage urban has been closed significantly and it is projected that the difference between both groups of countries will continue to decline till 2050 (figure 4). In the lower-middle-income and low-income countries, the increase in the percentage urban has been lower in the past than in the upper-middle income countries. The respective shares of their populations living in urban areas are 41 and 32 per cent in 2018. Nevertheless, both groups of countries are expected to experience a higher pace of urbanization than others in the coming decades. By 2050, lower-middle and low-income countries are expected to have, on average, just under 60 per cent and over 50 per cent of their population residing in urban areas, respectively.
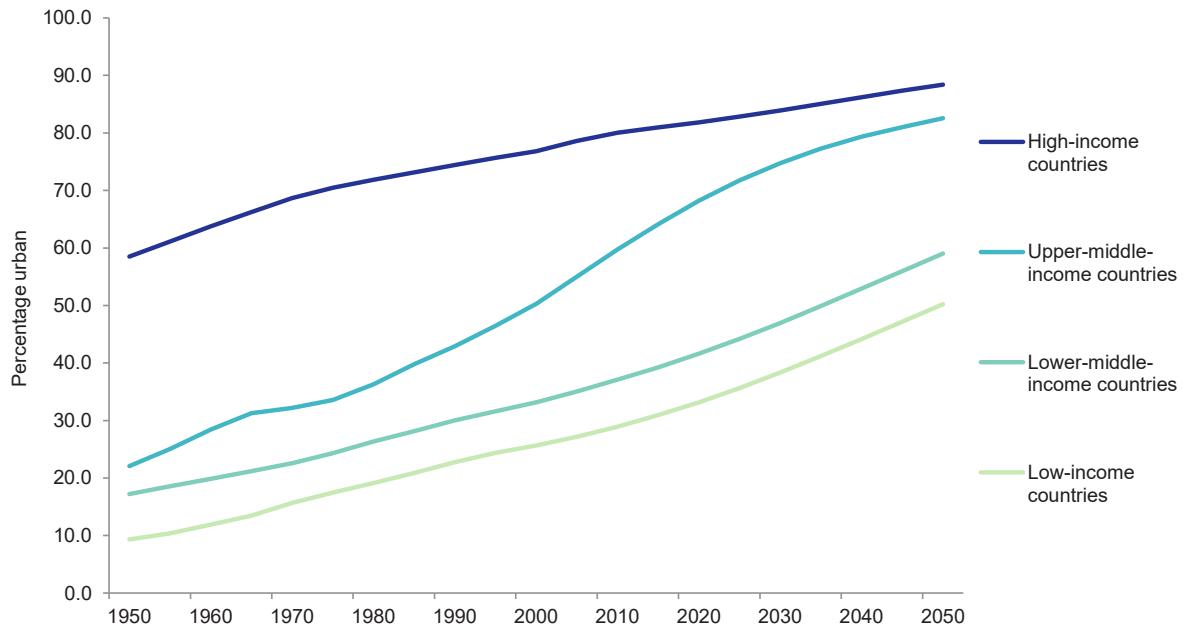
Urbanization also differs considerably between countries. In 2018, fourteen countries or areas still have low levels of urbanization, with less than 20 per cent of their population residing in urban areas. The largest among them, with a population of 10 million inhabitants or more, include Burundi, Malawi, Niger, Rwanda and South Sudan in Africa, Nepal and Sri Lanka in Asia, and Papua New Guinea in Oceania (see map 1). By 2050, these countries are expected to become significantly more urbanized, with some countries more than doubling their respective shares of urban population in 2018. In contrast, the proportion urban is already above 80 per cent in 65 countries. Among those with a population of at least 10 million inhabitants, the most highly urbanized countries are Belgium (98 per cent), Japan, Argentina and the Netherlands (all 92 per cent). By 2050, 101 countries are expected to have more than 80 per cent of their population reside in urban areas. The largest differences in the levels of urbanization today are found between countries in Africa and Asia. When interpreting the differences in levels of urbanization across countries, it is important to keep in mind the heterogeneity of the urban definition across countries. Differences across regions also apply to the spatial distribution of megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants in 2018. Today, most megacities are located in Asia (20), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (6) and two or three in each of the remaining regions (see also section on cities).

Figure 3. Percentage of population residing in urban areas by income group and country, 2018
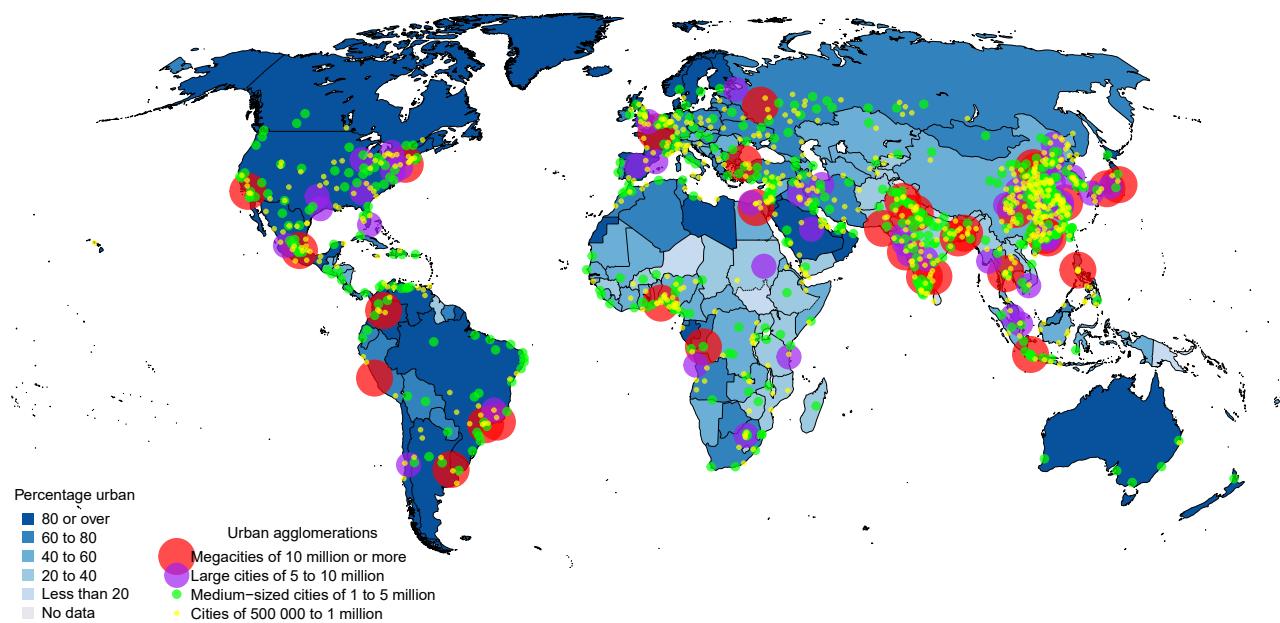
Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Note: The country classification by income level is based on 2016 GNI per capita from the World Bank.

Figure 4. Percentage of population residing in urban areas by income group, 1950-2050

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Note: The country classification by income level is based on 2016 GNI per capita from the World Bank.

Map 1. Percentage urban and urban agglomerations with 500,000 inhabitants or more, 2018

Percentage urban
- 80 or over
- 60 to 80
- 40 to 60
- 20 to 40
- Less than 20
- No data

Urban agglomerations
- Megacities of 10 million or more
- Large cities of 5 to 10 million
- Medium−sized cities of 1 to 5 million
- Cities of 500 000 to 1 million

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).
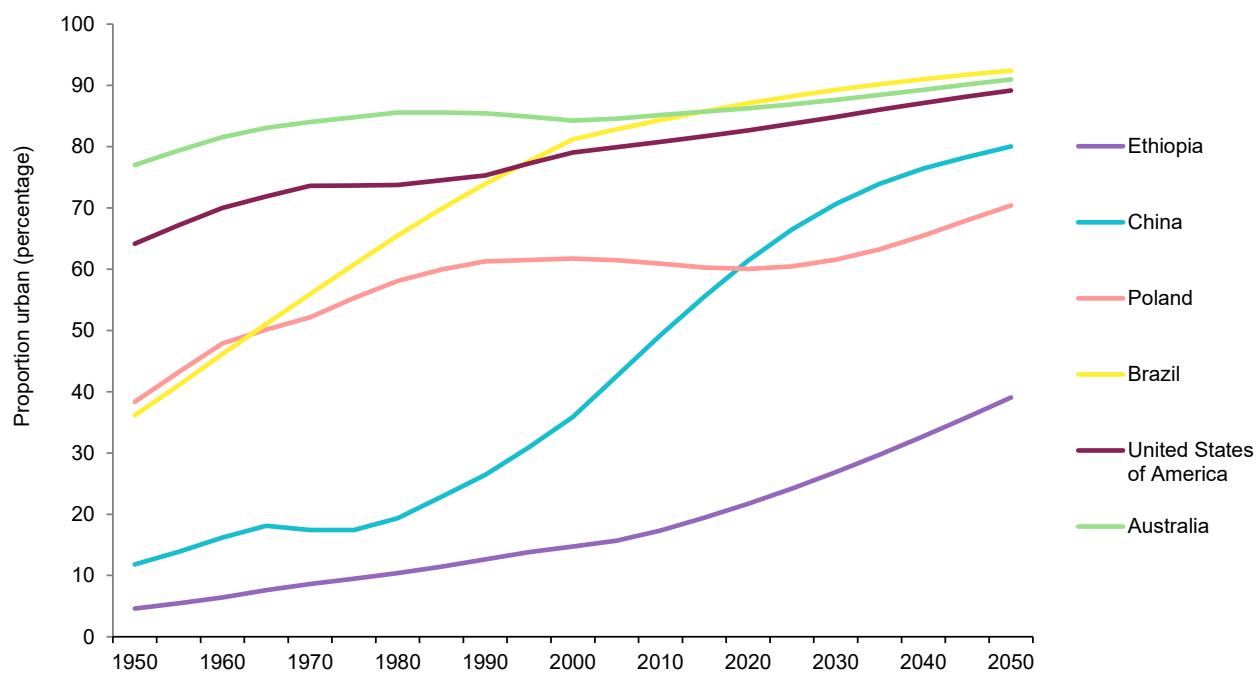
In Asia, China has experienced rapid urbanization since the late 1970s. In 1980, its proportion of urban population was about one fifth, lower than the average levels of Asia (just over one quarter). However, this percentage has increased rapidly to nearly 60 per cent in 2018 and is projected to rise to over 70 per cent in 2030 and further to 80 per cent by mid-century. In Africa, the level of urbanization in Ethiopia has been very low until now, with its proportion urban just over one fifth in 2018. Nonetheless, in the coming decades, its share of the population living in urban settlements is projected to almost double, to just under 40 per cent in 2050 (figure 5). For already highly urbanized countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America, Europe and Oceania, the pace of urbanization has slowed down in recent years. For example, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have over 80 per cent

of their population living in urban areas in 2018. Their respective urban shares are projected to experience only slight increases between 2018 and 2050. Brazil, on the other hand, at a similar level of urbanization today, has experienced a different trend, with a rapid urbanization process during the past decades that has slowed down in recent years. Like other highly urbanized countries, Brazil is projected to experience only slight increases in the percentage urban. Some countries in Eastern Europe, partly due to a combination of low fertility and emigration, are projected to experience a fairly slow urbanization process. For example, the percentage of the population living in urban areas in Poland, which had reached 60 per cent in 1990, is still 60 per cent today, and is expected to increase to just over 70 per cent by 2050.
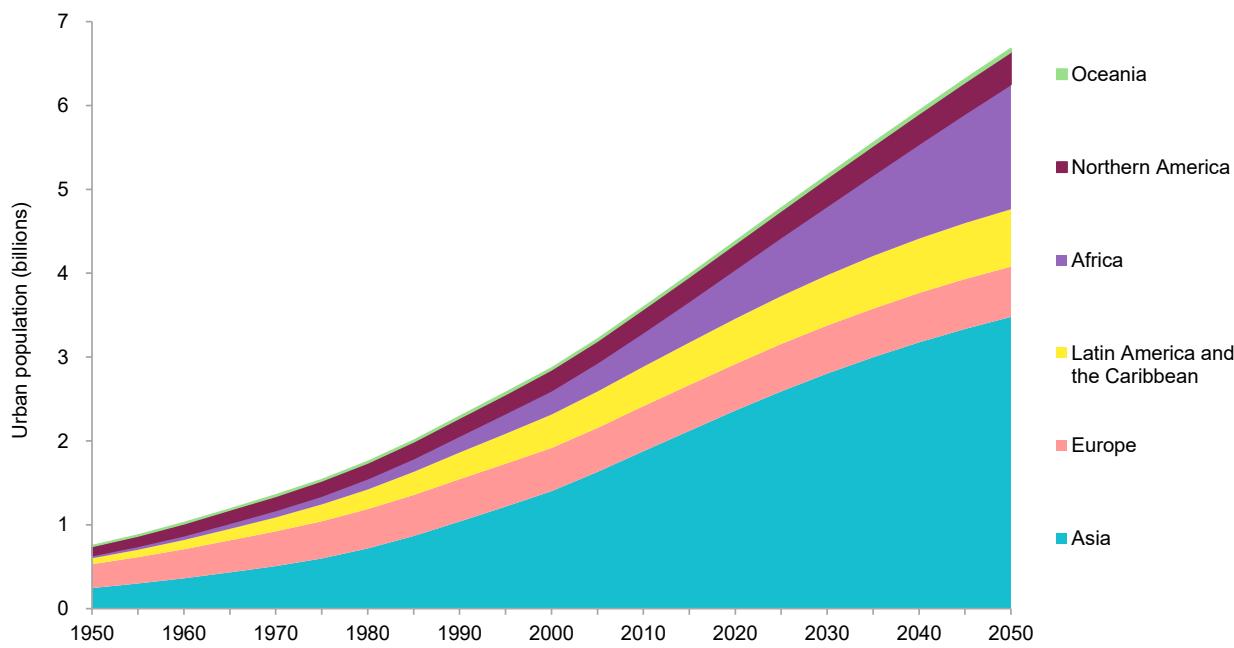
The continuing urbanization and overall growth of the world's population is projected to add 2.5 billion people to the urban population by 2050, with almost 90 per cent of this growth happening in Asia and Africa (figure 6a). Asia will continue to host over half of the world's urban population, while Africa's share is projected to increase by over 70 per cent (from about 13 per cent in 2018 to 22 per cent in 2050). The world's urban population is now close to 4.2 billion and is expected to reach 6.7 billion in 2050. Asia, despite its lower level of urbanization, is today home to about 54 per cent of the urban population in the world. Europe, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean all have similar shares of the world's urban population, with about 12 or 13 per cent each (figure 6b). Over the next three decades, Africa and Asia will experience a marked increase in their urban populations. By mid-century, the urban population of Africa is likely to almost triple and that of Asia to increase by more than half. As a consequence, most of the urban population of the world will be concentrated in Asia (52 per cent) and Africa (22 per cent) in 2050.
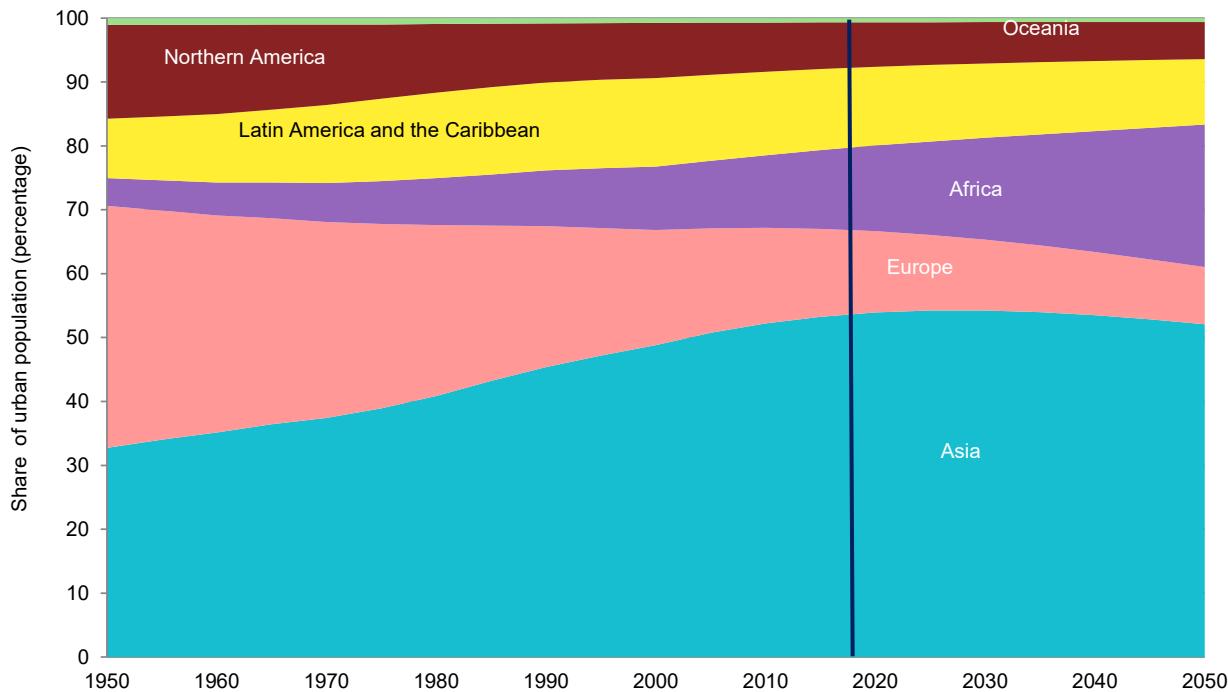
**Figure 5. Percentage of population residing in urban areas for selected countries, 1950-2050**

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018.*

Figures 6a. Urban population of the world by geographic region, 1950-2050

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Figures 6b. Share of urban population of the world by geographic region, 1950-2050
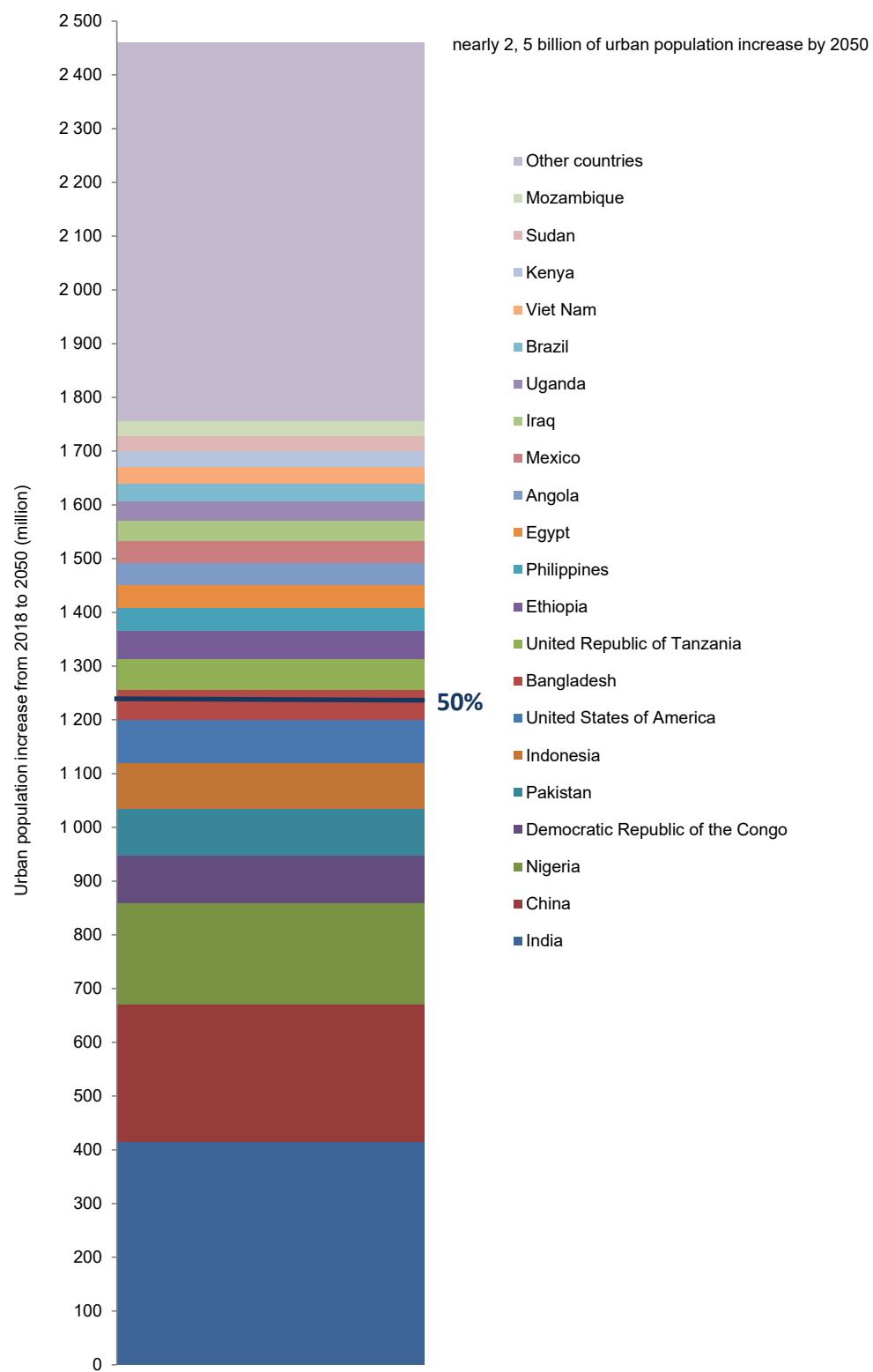
Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Just a few countries are home to half of the world's urban population. China has the largest urban population (837 million), followed by India (461 million). These two countries account for 30 per cent of the world's urban population and, with another five countries, the United States of America (269 million), Brazil (183 million), Indonesia (148 million), Japan (117 million) and the Russian Federation (107 million), account for half of the world's urban population.

Future increases in the world's urban population are expected to be highly concentrated in just a few countries. Taken together, China, India and Nigeria are projected to account for just over one third of the projected increase of nearly 2.5 billion people in the urban population by 2050 (figure 7). Between 2018 and 2050, the urban areas are expected to grow by 416 million people in India, 255 million in China and 189 million in Nigeria. Five other countries, Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Pakistan and the United States of America, are projected to contribute more than 50 million each to the urban increment. Together, the eight countries will account for half of the total increase in urban population between 2018 and 2050. In a few countries, the urban population will decrease, despite projected increases in the level of urbanization. The largest declines between 2018 and 2050 are projected for Japan, with a decline of 13.5 million in their urban population and for Ukraine, which is expected to see a decline of nearly 2 million urban dwellers.

The rural population of the world has grown slowly since 1950 and is expected to reach its peak in a few years. Approximately 3.4 billion people currently live in rural areas around the world. That number is expected to remain relatively constant in the coming years. However, sometime after 2020, the world's rural population will start to decline and is expected to reach about 3.1 billion in 2050. This global trend is driven mostly by the dynamics of rural population change in Africa and Asia, which is home today to nearly 90 per cent of the world's rural population. The majority of the rural population of the world resides in a relatively small number of countries. India has the largest rural population (893 million), followed by China (578 million). Together, these two countries account for nearly 45 per cent of the world's rural population. Bangladesh, Indonesia and Pakistan follow, each with over 100 million rural inhabitants. In Africa, the largest rural populations are located in Nigeria (97 million) and Ethiopia (85 million).

Between 2018 and 2050, the rural population is expected to increase in just over one quarter of the countries of the world. The largest increases will be registered in Ethiopia and Niger (both adding over 30 million rural population), Nigeria and Uganda (both adding just over 25 million). The majority of the countries in the world are expected to have stable or declining rural populations. The largest declines are expected in China, with a decline of 305 million, equivalent to more than one half of their rural population in 2018, and in India, where the number of rural residents is expected to decline by 111 million.

Figure 7. Increase in the projected urban population between 2018 and 2050 by country



Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018.*

Note: The countries identified by name on the chart are those that cumulatively account for 70 per cent of the projected global urban increment between 2018 and 2050.

Box 2. Sources of urban growth

Urban growth has three components: natural increase, migration and reclassification. Their respective contributions to urban growth differ depending, inter alia, on the demographic changes taking place in a country and the size of a given settlement, on spatial planning policies and national definitions of urban space, and on the physical environment and other country-specific or local circumstances.

Natural increase of urban populations results from an excess of births over deaths in urban areas. The balance depends on levels of fertility (affecting the number of births) and life expectancy at birth (affecting the number of deaths), and on the distribution of the population by age (other things being equal, older populations tend to experience fewer births and more deaths). Women living in urban areas typically have greater access to education and modern methods of family planning; as a result, their fertility is often lower compared to that of women living in rural areas. However, despite a lower level of fertility, there is often an excess of births over deaths in urban areas due to a lower level of mortality and a younger age distribution.

Migration to cities from rural areas or from abroad contributes to urban growth whenever the number of in-migrants exceeds the number of out-migrants. Migrants are often younger, on average, compared to the populations living in areas of origin or destination. Therefore, migration tends to have an impact on the age distributions of both the sending and receiving populations. Since most migrants to urban areas are adults in the working ages or their children, migrant populations tend to be younger than average. Therefore, migration tends to increase the average age of the population in areas of origin of migration while lowering the average age in areas of destination.

Reclassification contributes to urban growth by enlarging the size of urban areas. When cities grow in area, they incorporate neighbouring settlements and their populations, which were formerly classified as rural. Population growth in rural areas may result in reclassification of settlements from rural to urban, thus accelerating the pace of urbanization.
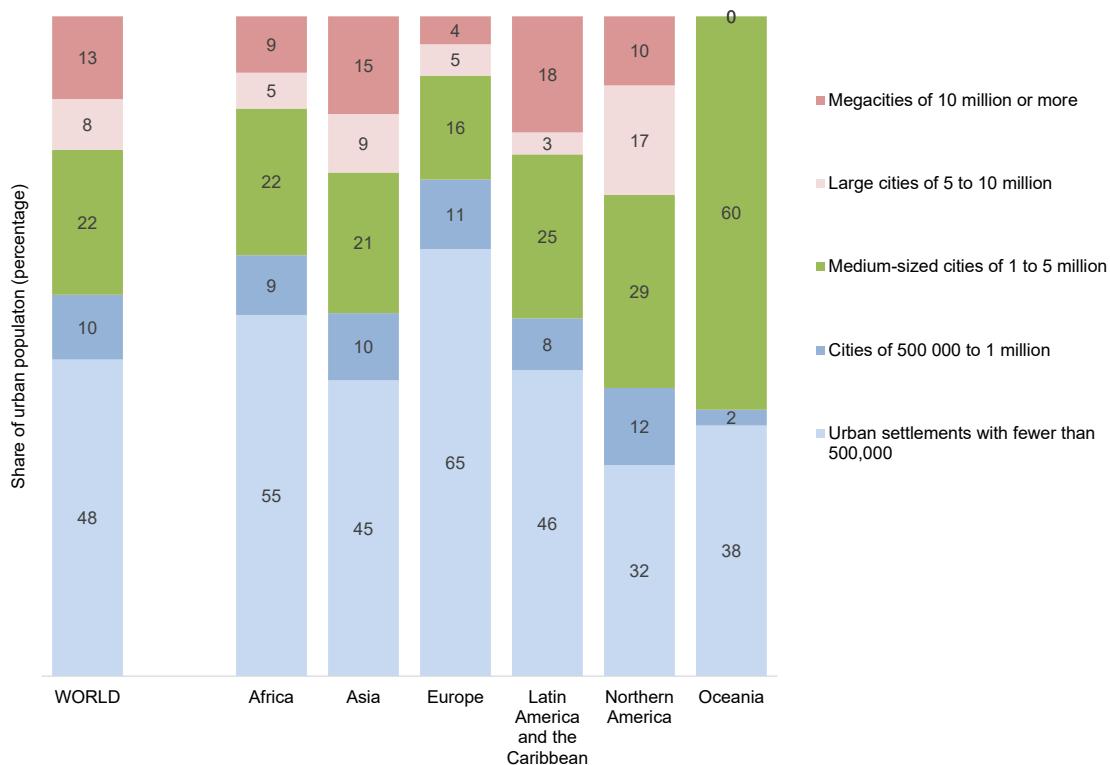
Cities

Most of the urban population of the world lives in urban settlements with fewer than 1 million inhabitants. In 2018, 2 billion people or close to one half of the world's urban population lives in settlements with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, and another 400 million or 10 per cent lives in settlements between 500,000 and 1 million, summing up to 58 per cent of the urban population (figure 8 and 9, two bottom bars). While close to 1 billion persons will be added to today's urban population by 2030, more than half of the world's urban dwellers will still be living in urban settlements with fewer than 1 million inhabitants, growing from 2.4 to 2.8 billion people. The number of people living in cities with 500,000 to 1 million inhabitants is expected to grow at a similar pace, increasing from 415 million in 2018 to 494 million in 2030. Compared to larger cities, the urban settlements with fewer than 1 million inhabitants are the most prevalent type in all the geographic regions of the world except for Oceania, where most urban residents live in larger cities of between 1 and 5 million people.
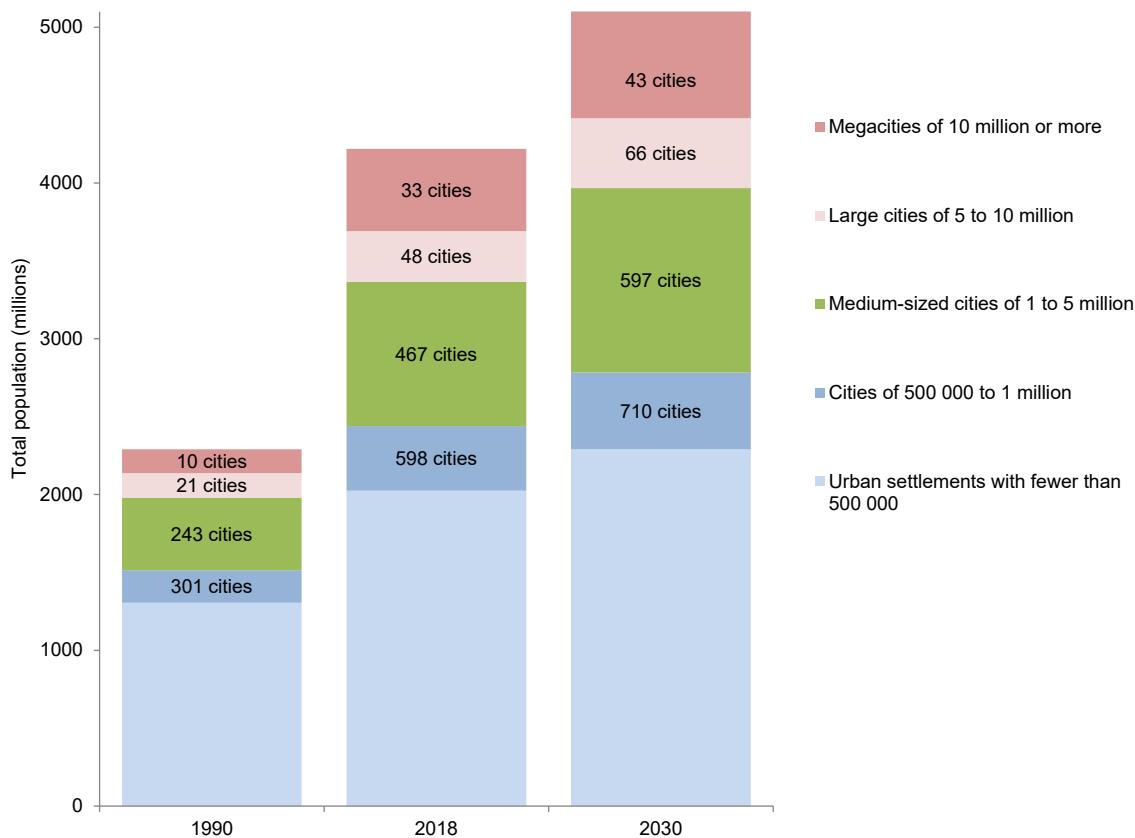
One in five urban dwellers worldwide lives in a medium-sized city with 1 to 5 million inhabitants. While considered medium-sized by global standards, these cities are, in fact, the largest cities in 85 countries or areas. Examples include Australia, with five cities in this category (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide), Italy with four (Rome, Milan, Naples and Turin), Ghana with two (Kumasi and Accra), Morocco with four (Casablanca, Rabat, Fès, and Tanger), and Ukraine with three (Kiev, Kharkiv and Odesa). The global population living in medium-sized cities nearly doubled between 1990 and 2018 and is expected to increase by another 28 per cent between 2018 and 2030, growing from 926 million to 1.2 billion.

Figure 8. Share of urban population of the world and geographic regions, by size class of urban settlement, 2018

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Figure 9. Population and number of urban agglomerations of the world by size class of urban settlement, 1990, 2018 and 2030

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Box 3. Definitions of cities and urban areas*

Definitions and criteria to delimit cities and urban areas vary across countries.** Population data on urban residence for a given country may include geographic areas that would not fall within the urbanized territory according to standards applied by other countries. For example, the "city proper", defined by administrative boundaries, may not include suburban areas where a substantial portion of the population working or studying in the central city resides. Furthermore, in some cases, although governed by different local authorities, two or more adjacent cities may form a single urbanized area. For this report two supplementary concepts have been used to improve the comparability of information about city populations across countries and over time. "Urban agglomeration" refers to a contiguous territory inhabited at urban levels of residential density, while "metropolitan area" comprises an urban agglomeration and surrounding areas at a lower settlement density but with strong economic and social linkages to the central city.

* For additional details, please see United Nations (2018a).
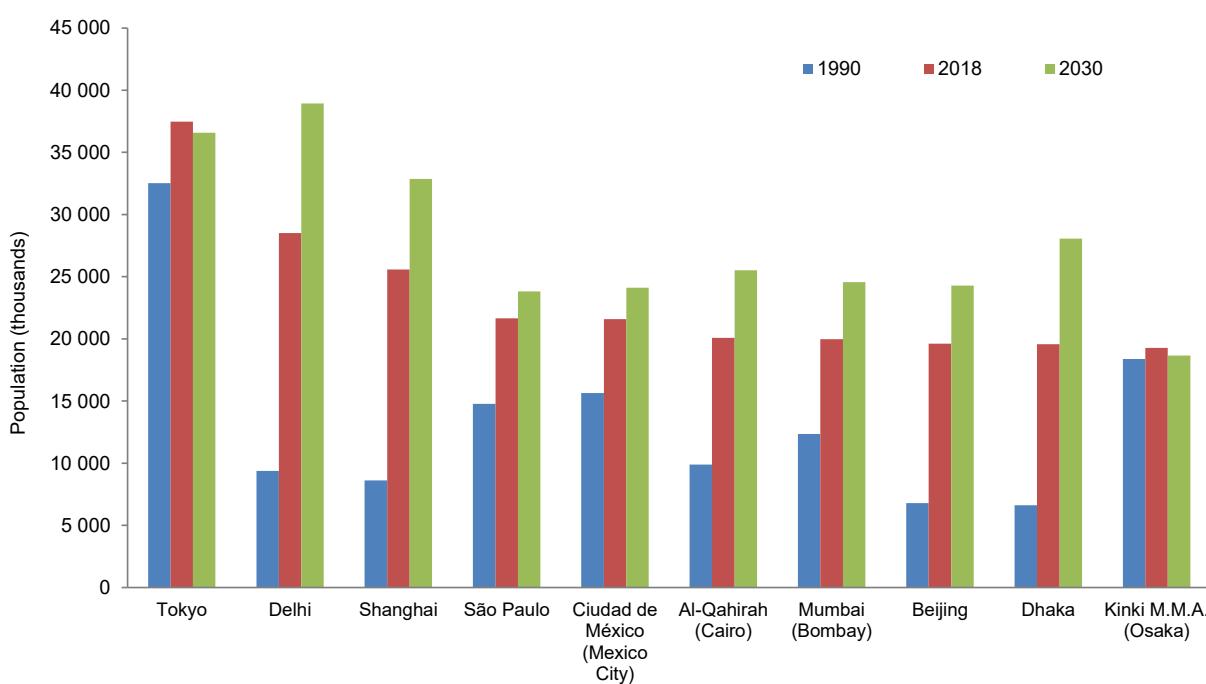
** In the analytical parts of this report the expressions "urban areas" and "cities" are used interchangeably.

About 8 per cent of urban dwellers live in large cities of between 5 and 10 million inhabitants, most of which are in Asia. The proportion of the urban population concentrated in large cities in 2018 varies widely across geographic regions, from 0 per cent in Oceania to 10 per cent in Northern America. Although large cities with 5 to 10 million inhabitants account for a small proportion of the global urban population, their number more than doubled, from 21 in 1990 to 48 in 2018, and they host today just over 325 million people. By 2030, the number of large cities is expected to grow to 66 and house almost 450 million people, representing close to 9 per cent of the global urban population.

Megacities are notable for their size and concentration of economic activity though they are home to only about one in eight of the world's urban dwellers. In 1990 there were 10 cities with more than 10 million inhabitants, hosting 153 million people, which represents less than 7 per cent of the global urban population. Today, the number of megacities has tripled to 33, and most of them are in Asia, including 5 that have recently joined the group:

Bangalore, Bangkok, Jakarta, Lahore and Madras. Globally, the population of megacities has grown to 529 million, and they now account for 13 per cent of the world's urban dwellers. Tokyo is the world's largest city with an agglomeration of 37 million inhabitants, followed by Delhi with 29 million, Shanghai with 26 million, São Paulo and Mexico City with 22 million each (figure 10). As they have surpassed the 20 million inhabitants, the largest megacities may also be referred to as "meta" or "hyper" cities. Furthermore, Cairo, Mumbai, Beijing and Dhaka all have close to 20 million inhabitants. By 2020, Tokyo's population is projected to begin to decline and Delhi is projected to become the most populous city in the world in 2028 (data not shown). Dhaka will move up in the position rank, and by 2030 will become the fourth largest city after Delhi, Tokyo and Shanghai. On the other hand, Osaka (Kinki Major Metropolitan Area) and New York-Newark were the world's second and third largest cities in 1990, but by 2030 they are projected to fall in rank to the 15th and 13th positions, respectively (annex table II).

Figure 10. Population of the world's ten largest urban agglomerations in 2018, with estimates and projections for 1990 and 2030

Data source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018a). *World Urbanization Prospects 2018*.

Megacities are concentrated in only 20 countries. China alone has 6 megacities and 10 cities with populations between 5 and 10 million in 2018, and it will add 2 more megacities and 6 more large cities by 2030. India has 5 megacities today, adding 2 more by 2030 (Ahmadabad and Hyderabad). The 2 megacities of Brazil are expected to remain the only megacities in the country, as is the case in Japan, Pakistan, and the United States of America. Cairo, Kinshasa and Lagos are the only megacities in Africa in 2018, but 2 more are expected to emerge by 2030, as Dar es Salaam and Luanda are each projected to grow beyond 10 million inhabitants. The number of large cities with populations between 5 and 10 million in Africa is also expected to increase, from 5 in 2018 to 13 in 2030. In Latin America, Bogotá and Lima have recently reached 10 million, joining the four pre-existing megacities of the region: Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo. In all, 10 more cities are expected to join the group of megacities between 2018 and 2030; 2 in Africa, 7 in Asia, and 1 in Europe.

Some cities have experienced population decline in recent years. Most of these are located in the low-fertility countries of Asia and Europe where overall population sizes are stagnant or declining. Economic contraction and natural disasters have contributed to population losses in some cities as well. A few cities in Japan and the Republic of Korea (for example, Nagasaki and Busan) have experienced population decline between 2000 and 2018. Several cities in European countries such as Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine have lost population since 2000 as well. In addition to low fertility, emigration has also contributed to smaller population sizes in some of these cities. Globally, fewer cities are projected to see their populations decline from today to 2030, as compared to the last two decades.

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Annex Tables

Table I

Urban and rural population, proportion urban and average annual rate of change of the proportion urban

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	2018	2030	2050	1990	2018	2030	2050	2015-2020
WORLD	2 290 231	4 219 810	5 167 193	6 679 687	43	55	60	68	1.9
More developed regions[a]	829 877	993 837	1 049 699	1 123 972	72	79	81	87	0.5
Less developed regions[b]	1 460 355	3 225 973	4 117 493	5 555 715	35	51	57	66	2.3
Least developed countries[c]	109 838	344 291	538 529	1 005 762	22	34	40	52	3.9
Less developed regions, excluding least developed countries[d]	1 350 516	2 881 682	3 578 964	4 549 953	37	54	60	69	2.2
Less developed regions, excluding China	1 130 775	2 362 372	3 071 011	4 434 721	38	48	53	63	2.3
High-income countries[e]	744 353	975 461	1 048 879	1 138 336	74	81	84	88	0.7
Middle-income countries[e]	1 470 900	3 017 635	3 756 522	4 828 355	37	53	59	68	2.1
Upper-middle-income countries[e]	892 370	1 759 111	2 068 760	2 303 853	43	67	75	83	1.9
Lower-middle-income countries[e]	578 530	1 258 524	1 687 762	2 524 502	30	41	47	59	2.5
Low-income countries[e]	73 457	224 131	358 848	709 517	23	32	38	50	4.0
Sub-Saharan Africa[f]	135 537	423 958	666 165	1 258 336	27	40	47	58	4.0
AFRICA	200 111	547 602	824 014	1 488 920	32	43	48	59	3.6
Eastern Africa	35 851	121 316	202 579	418 217	18	28	34	47	4.4
Burundi	340	1 462	2 780	7 183	6	13	18	28	5.7
Comoros	115	241	345	599	28	29	33	41	2.9
Djibouti	448	756	906	1 107	76	78	80	85	1.7
Eritrea	589	2 079	3 210	5 776	19	40	48	60	3.9
Ethiopia	6 069	22 328	37 496	74 537	13	21	27	39	4.6
Kenya	3 919	13 772	22 383	44 185	17	27	33	46	4.2
Madagascar	2 733	9 767	16 102	31 158	24	37	45	58	4.5
Malawi	1 091	3 246	5 551	13 360	12	17	21	32	4.2
Mauritius[1]	464	517	539	604	44	41	42	49	0.1
Mayotte	34	120	157	264	36	46	46	53	2.0
Mozambique	3 312	10 987	18 195	37 473	25	36	43	55	4.4
Réunion	496	879	956	1 013	81	100	100	100	0.8
Rwanda	392	2 152	3 144	6 483	5	17	20	30	2.9
Seychelles	35	54	61	67	49	57	62	70	1.3
Somalia	2 194	6 827	11 229	22 865	30	45	52	64	4.2
South Sudan	766	2 534	4 164	9 132	13	20	24	36	4.1
Uganda	1 932	10 525	19 914	46 664	11	24	31	44	5.7
United Republic of Tanzania[2]	4 808	19 959	35 529	76 542	19	34	42	55	5.2
Zambia	3 163	7 664	12 549	25 577	39	44	50	62	4.2
Zimbabwe	2 952	5 448	7 370	13 627	29	32	34	46	2.2

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	2018	2030	2050	1990	2018	2030	2050	2015-2020
Middle Africa	24 275	83 484	133 728	257 254	34	50	56	67	4.2
Angola	4 521	20 162	32 437	61 132	37	66	73	80	4.3
Cameroon	4 646	13 912	20 857	36 415	40	56	63	73	3.6
Central African Republic	1 083	1 960	2 918	5 329	37	41	48	60	2.5
Chad	1 240	3 540	5 819	13 220	21	23	27	39	3.9
Congo	1 326	3 613	5 290	9 208	54	67	72	80	3.3
Democratic Republic of the Congo	10 603	37 349	62 343	125 931	31	44	52	64	4.5
Equatorial Guinea	148	948	1 445	2 356	35	72	77	83	4.3
Gabon	658	1 848	2 403	3 339	69	89	93	95	2.6
Sao Tome and Principe	50	152	215	324	44	73	80	85	3.3
Northern Africa	64 574	123 644	157 849	230 584	46	52	55	64	2.2
Algeria	13 497	30 510	38 232	48 531	52	73	78	84	2.5
Egypt	24 962	42 438	53 613	85 321	43	43	45	56	1.9
Libya	3 360	5 183	6 140	7 184	76	80	84	88	1.7
Morocco	12 039	22 603	28 069	35 258	48	62	69	77	2.1
Sudan	5 764	14 380	21 775	42 261	29	35	40	53	3.2
Tunisia	4 771	8 038	9 372	11 139	58	69	73	80	1.5
Western Sahara	183	492	647	890	84	87	88	91	2.6
Southern Africa	20 912	41 970	51 909	66 231	49	64	69	77	2.1
Botswana	578	1 620	2 151	2 871	42	69	77	84	2.9
Lesotho	224	637	887	1 485	14	28	34	46	2.8
Namibia	391	1 295	1 972	3 116	28	50	61	72	4.2
South Africa	19 545	38 087	46 457	58 057	52	66	72	80	2.0
Eswatini	174	331	442	703	20	24	27	34	2.5
Western Africa	54 499	177 189	277 949	516 635	30	46	54	64	4.0
Benin	1 717	5 434	8 461	15 661	34	47	54	65	3.9
Burkina Faso	1 217	5 799	10 163	21 677	14	29	37	50	5.0
Cabo Verde	151	364	450	569	44	66	71	77	2.0
Côte d'Ivoire	4 827	12 647	18 912	34 646	39	51	57	67	3.4
Gambia	351	1 326	2 055	3 523	38	61	68	77	4.1
Ghana	5 331	16 517	23 641	37 518	36	56	63	73	3.3
Guinea	1 693	4 717	7 300	14 400	28	36	41	54	3.5
Guinea-Bissau	312	827	1 209	2 062	31	43	48	57	3.4
Liberia	1 162	2 483	3 722	6 689	55	51	57	68	3.4
Mali	1 974	8 093	13 850	27 825	23	42	51	63	4.9
Mauritania	798	2 437	3 808	6 532	39	54	63	73	4.3
Niger	1 231	3 665	6 542	19 464	15	16	19	28	4.3
Nigeria	28 276	98 611	156 300	287 130	30	50	59	70	4.2
Saint Helena[3]	2	2	2	2	43	40	43	51	0.7
Senegal	2 939	7 690	11 778	21 943	39	47	53	64	3.7
Sierra Leone	1 434	3 247	4 651	7 725	33	42	48	60	3.1
Togo	1 083	3 332	5 106	9 267	29	42	49	61	3.8

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	**2018**	**2030**	**2050**	**1990**	**2018**	**2030**	**2050**	**2015-2020**
ASIA	1 039 597	2 266 131	2 802 262	3 479 059	32	50	57	66	2.2
Eastern Asia	470 668	1 039 791	1 222 479	1 290 701	34	63	73	81	2.0
China[4]	310 022	837 022	1 017 847	1 091 948	26	59	71	80	2.4
China, Hong Kong SAR[5]	5 754	7 429	7 987	8 253	100	100	100	100	0.8
China, Macao SAR[6]	343	632	746	876	100	100	100	100	1.6
China, Taiwan Province of China	13 461	18 518	19 902	19 917	66	78	82	87	0.8
Dem. People's Republic of Korea	11 848	15 853	17 531	19 885	58	62	66	74	0.8
Japan	96 299	116 522	112 710	103 039	77	92	93	95	-0.1
Mongolia	1 246	2 137	2 514	3 167	57	68	71	78	1.6
Republic of Korea	31 696	41 678	43 241	43 616	74	81	82	86	0.3
South-Central Asia[7]	338 298	710 908	931 437	1 338 659	27	36	42	54	2.4
Central Asia	22 756	34 626	41 414	57 086	45	48	51	60	1.5
Kazakhstan	9 307	10 569	12 186	15 866	56	57	60	69	1.3
Kyrgyzstan	1 652	2 229	2 862	4 346	38	36	41	54	2.0
Tajikistan	1 673	2 471	3 444	6 243	32	27	31	43	2.6
Turkmenistan	1 661	3 019	3 917	5 433	45	52	58	69	2.5
Uzbekistan	8 464	16 337	19 005	25 198	41	50	52	62	1.3
Southern Asia	315 542	676 282	890 024	1 281 572	27	36	42	54	2.4
Afghanistan	2 594	9 273	13 818	25 499	21	25	30	41	3.4
Bangladesh	21 037	60 944	84 689	117 837	20	37	46	58	3.2
Bhutan	88	334	444	573	16	41	49	58	3.0
India	222 297	460 780	607 342	876 613	26	34	40	53	2.4
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	31 672	61 425	71 205	80 441	56	75	80	86	1.7
Maldives	58	177	231	311	26	40	45	54	2.9
Nepal	1 660	5 848	8 408	13 496	9	20	25	37	3.2
Pakistan	32 924	73 630	99 360	160 228	31	37	41	52	2.5
Sri Lanka	3 212	3 871	4 528	6 575	19	18	21	32	0.8
South-Eastern Asia	139 695	320 382	404 497	526 780	31	49	56	66	2.2
Brunei Darussalam	172	337	397	460	66	78	81	86	1.7
Cambodia	1 395	3 800	5 458	9 062	16	23	29	41	3.2
Indonesia	55 491	147 603	185 755	234 105	31	55	63	73	2.3
Lao People's Democratic Republic	657	2 437	3 452	5 102	15	35	43	56	3.3
Malaysia[8]	8 982	24 364	30 109	36 440	50	76	82	87	2.1
Myanmar	10 255	16 468	20 615	29 392	25	31	35	47	1.7
Philippines	29 106	49 962	63 844	93 465	47	47	51	62	2.0
Singapore	3 013	5 792	6 342	6 575	100	100	100	100	1.4
Thailand	16 649	34 556	40 676	45 410	29	50	58	69	1.7
Timor-Leste	157	405	600	1 059	21	31	35	44	3.3
Viet Nam	13 817	34 659	47 248	65 711	20	36	44	57	3.0
Western Asia	90 935	195 050	243 848	322 919	61	72	75	81	2.3
Armenia	2 385	1 853	1 906	2 005	67	63	66	74	0.2
Azerbaijan[9]	3 893	5 526	6 491	7 833	54	56	61	71	1.6

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	2018	2030	2050	1990	2018	2030	2050	2015-2020
Bahrain	437	1 399	1 828	2 169	88	89	91	93	4.4
Cyprus[10]	512	794	873	1 030	67	67	68	74	0.7
Georgia[11]	2 978	2 291	2 394	2 483	55	59	64	73	0.4
Iraq	12 177	27 724	39 208	65 560	70	70	74	80	3.1
Israel	4 067	7 812	9 337	11 997	90	92	94	95	1.6
Jordan	2 610	9 010	10 364	13 518	73	91	93	95	2.4
Kuwait	2 057	4 197	4 874	5 644	98	100	100	100	1.8
Lebanon	2 247	5 398	4 864	5 052	83	89	91	93	0.8
Oman	1 198	4 083	5 407	6 410	66	85	92	95	5.3
Qatar	442	2 672	3 217	3 762	93	99	100	100	2.4
Saudi Arabia	12 504	28 133	34 143	40 709	77	84	86	90	2.2
State of Palestine[12]	1 422	3 848	5 371	8 293	68	76	80	85	3.0
Syrian Arab Republic	6 090	9 903	16 423	24 475	49	54	62	72	1.4
Turkey	31 923	61 555	70 951	82 192	59	75	80	86	2.0
United Arab Emirates	1 470	8 256	9 865	12 158	79	87	89	92	1.7
Yemen	2 524	10 595	16 330	27 630	21	37	44	57	4.1
EUROPE	504 665	552 911	572 890	598 857	70	74	77	84	0.3
Eastern Europe	210 663	203 248	203 271	205 314	68	70	72	79	0.0
Belarus	6 741	7 429	7 631	7 566	66	79	83	88	0.4
Bulgaria	5 869	5 278	5 082	4 606	66	75	79	85	-0.2
Czechia	7 779	7 841	8 009	8 262	75	74	76	82	0.2
Hungary	6 832	6 913	6 940	6 774	66	71	75	82	0.1
Poland	23 255	22 885	22 533	22 799	61	60	62	70	-0.2
Republic of Moldova[13]	2 041	1 723	1 749	1 873	47	43	46	57	-0.1
Romania	12 500	10 573	10 456	10 932	53	54	57	67	-0.4
Russian Federation	108 303	107 157	108 337	110 605	73	74	77	83	0.2
Slovakia	2 988	2 928	2 998	3 261	56	54	56	66	0.0
Ukraine[14]	34 356	30 521	29 537	28 634	67	69	72	79	-0.3
Northern Europe	71 002	86 071	94 053	104 902	77	82	85	89	0.8
Channel Islands[15]	44	51	56	71	31	31	32	39	0.5
Denmark	4 362	5 057	5 389	5 829	85	88	89	92	0.5
Estonia	1 115	900	895	885	71	69	71	77	0.0
Faeroe Islands	15	21	23	29	31	42	45	53	0.7
Finland[16]	3 965	4 732	4 970	5 282	79	85	87	90	0.4
Iceland	231	317	345	374	91	94	94	96	0.8
Ireland	2 032	3 035	3 484	4 354	57	63	67	75	1.1
Isle of Man	35	45	50	62	52	53	55	63	0.9
Latvia	1 845	1 315	1 222	1 152	69	68	70	76	-0.9
Lithuania	2 498	1 947	1 920	1 880	68	68	71	78	-0.3
Norway[17]	3 056	4 403	5 130	6 138	72	82	86	90	1.4
Sweden	7 119	8 728	9 669	10 837	83	87	90	93	1.0
United Kingdom	44 683	55 521	60 899	68 008	78	83	86	90	0.9

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	2018	2030	2050	1990	2018	2030	2050	2015-2020
Southern Europe	92 904	108 606	112 280	115 021	65	72	75	82	0.3
Albania	1 195	1 770	2 038	2 083	36	60	69	78	1.7
Andorra	52	68	69	70	95	88	88	90	-0.3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 752	1 690	1 824	1 976	39	48	54	65	0.6
Croatia	2 438	2 372	2 394	2 468	51	57	61	71	-0.1
Gibraltar	29	35	36	37	100	100	100	100	0.4
Greece	7 324	8 809	8 926	8 753	71	79	83	88	0.2
Holy See[18]	1	1	1	1	100	100	100	100	0.0
Italy	38 119	41 763	43 161	44 671	67	70	74	81	0.3
Malta	329	409	420	405	90	95	95	97	0.4
Montenegro	295	420	443	454	48	67	71	77	0.5
Portugal	4 769	6 711	7 049	7 134	48	65	71	79	0.5
San Marino	22	33	34	34	90	97	98	99	0.7
Serbia[19]	4 796	4 915	4 953	5 121	50	56	59	69	-0.1
Slovenia	1 011	1 135	1 211	1 335	50	55	59	69	0.6
Spain[20]	29 618	37 267	38 420	39 073	75	80	83	88	0.3
TFYR Macedonia[21]	1 154	1 209	1 303	1 405	58	58	63	73	0.5
Western Europe	130 097	154 987	163 286	173 621	74	80	82	87	0.5
Austria	4 863	5 102	5 531	6 294	63	58	62	71	0.6
Belgium	9 644	11 269	11 811	12 349	96	98	98	99	0.6
France	42 183	52 476	56 789	62 374	74	80	84	88	0.7
Germany	57 850	63 622	64 871	66 826	73	77	79	84	0.3
Liechtenstein	5	5	6	9	17	14	15	21	0.8
Luxembourg	309	537	629	757	81	91	93	95	1.6
Monaco	29	39	41	46	100	100	100	100	0.5
Netherlands	10 279	15 631	16 671	16 928	69	91	95	97	0.7
Switzerland	4 934	6 305	6 937	8 038	74	74	75	81	0.9
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	315 343	526 050	600 416	685 001	71	81	84	88	1.3
Caribbean	20 402	31 493	35 729	39 824	60	71	76	83	1.2
Anguilla	8	15	16	16	100	100	100	100	0.9
Antigua and Barbuda	24	25	28	39	35	25	25	31	0.6
Aruba	31	46	50	58	50	43	46	55	0.7
Bahamas	205	332	373	420	80	83	85	88	1.1
Barbados	97	89	95	114	37	31	33	41	0.2
British Virgin Islands	6	15	19	23	38	48	53	61	2.4
Caribbean Netherlands[22]	10	19	21	24	78	75	77	82	1.4
Cayman Islands	25	62	71	81	100	100	100	100	1.3
Cuba	7 763	8 851	9 048	9 101	73	77	79	84	0.1
Curaçao	124	144	154	167	85	89	89	92	0.6
Dominica	45	52	58	61	63	70	74	80	0.9
Dominican Republic	3 967	8 823	10 618	12 209	55	81	88	92	2.1
Grenada	32	39	44	52	33	36	39	47	0.8

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	2018	2030	2050	1990	2018	2030	2050	2015-2020
Guadeloupe[23]	372	442	442	421	96	98	99	99	-0.1
Haiti	2 024	6 143	8 144	10 520	29	55	65	75	2.9
Jamaica	1 199	1 614	1 770	1 904	49	56	60	70	0.8
Martinique	309	343	344	329	86	89	90	93	0.0
Montserrat	1	0	1	1	13	9	10	14	0.6
Puerto Rico	3 270	3 424	3 376	3 139	93	94	94	96	-0.1
Saint Kitts and Nevis	14	17	20	26	35	31	32	40	0.9
Saint Lucia	41	34	38	49	29	19	20	27	0.8
Saint Vincent and the Grena-dines	45	58	64	72	41	52	57	66	1.0
Sint Maarten (Dutch part)	29	41	46	52	100	100	100	100	1.3
Trinidad and Tobago	661	730	753	812	54	53	55	63	0.2
Turks and Caicos Islands	9	33	40	46	74	93	95	97	1.8
United States Virgin Islands	91	100	99	87	88	96	97	98	0.1
Central America	**74 615**	**134 212**	**160 493**	**194 627**	**65**	**75**	**78**	**84**	**1.7**
Belize	89	175	230	338	47	46	49	57	2.3
Costa Rica	1 548	3 930	4 647	5 205	50	79	86	90	2.0
El Salvador	2 589	4 618	5 371	5 984	49	72	79	86	1.6
Guatemala	3 890	8 804	11 963	18 121	42	51	56	67	2.7
Honduras	2 005	5 377	7 169	9 793	40	57	64	74	2.8
Mexico	60 962	104 811	123 198	144 910	71	80	84	88	1.6
Nicaragua	2 200	3 678	4 387	5 624	53	59	62	71	1.5
Panama	1 332	2 818	3 528	4 652	54	68	72	80	2.1
South America	**220 326**	**360 346**	**404 193**	**450 550**	**74**	**84**	**87**	**90**	**1.2**
Argentina	28 470	41 049	45 929	52 496	87	92	93	95	1.1
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	3 811	7 786	9 700	12 844	56	69	74	81	2.0
Brazil	110 404	182 546	201 296	215 063	74	87	89	92	1.1
Chile	11 027	15 934	17 446	19 028	83	88	89	92	0.9
Colombia	23 812	39 956	44 804	48 629	69	81	84	89	1.2
Ecuador	5 629	10 762	13 049	17 174	55	64	67	75	1.7
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)[24]	1	2	2	2	74	78	82	87	0.8
French Guiana	86	247	334	493	75	85	88	91	2.8
Guyana	220	208	236	295	30	27	29	36	0.8
Paraguay	2 052	4 247	5 154	6 607	49	62	66	74	1.7
Peru	15 039	25 360	29 643	35 667	69	78	81	86	1.4
Suriname	268	375	417	480	66	66	68	74	0.9
Uruguay	2 767	3 308	3 461	3 567	89	95	96	97	0.5
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	16 740	28 563	32 722	38 204	84	88	89	92	1.3
NORTHERN AMERICA	**211 475**	**298 987**	**334 780**	**386 690**	**75**	**82**	**85**	**89**	**1.0**
Bermuda	61	61	59	53	100	100	100	100	-0.4
Canada	21 207	30 084	33 663	39 234	77	81	83	87	1.0
Greenland	44	49	51	50	80	87	89	92	0.4
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	6	6	6	7	89	90	91	93	0.4

Major area, region, country or area	Urban Population (thousands)				Proportion urban (per cent)				Average annual rate of change (per cent)
	1990	2018	2030	2050	1990	2018	2030	2050	2015-2020
United States of America	190 156	268 787	301 001	347 346	75	82	85	89	0.9
OCEANIA	19 041	28 129	32 831	41 160	70	68	69	72	1.4
Australia/New Zealand	17 439	25 417	29 319	35 386	85	86	88	91	1.4
Australia[25]	14 559	21 307	24 740	30 186	85	86	88	91	1.4
New Zealand	2 880	4 110	4 579	5 200	85	87	88	91	1.0
Melanesia	1 121	2 039	2 757	4 878	20	19	21	29	2.3
Fiji	303	513	601	698	42	56	62	70	1.6
New Caledonia	101	198	242	306	60	71	75	81	1.9
Papua New Guinea	647	1 109	1 592	3 326	15	13	15	24	2.5
Solomon Islands	43	148	225	385	14	24	29	37	3.9
Vanuatu	27	71	97	163	19	25	27	34	2.5
Micronesia	257	366	421	495	62	69	71	76	1.2
Guam	118	157	173	187	91	95	96	97	0.9
Kiribati	25	64	88	126	35	54	62	71	3.2
Marshall Islands	31	41	45	56	65	77	81	86	0.6
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	25	24	29	41	26	23	25	32	1.0
Nauru	9	11	11	11	100	100	100	100	-0.1
Northern Mariana Islands	38	51	53	50	90	92	93	95	0.3
Palau	11	18	21	25	70	80	85	89	1.8
Polynesia	224	307	334	400	41	44	45	49	0.7
American Samoa	38	49	50	52	81	87	88	91	0.1
Cook Islands	11	13	14	15	58	75	78	83	0.4
French Polynesia	115	177	195	228	58	62	63	70	1.0
Niue	1	1	1	1	31	45	52	61	1.7
Samoa	35	36	37	52	21	18	17	22	-0.5
Tokelau	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Tonga	22	25	29	42	23	23	24	30	0.7
Tuvalu	4	7	9	11	41	62	70	78	2.3
Wallis and Futuna Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0

Notes

(a) More developed regions comprise Europe, Northern America, Australia/New Zealand and Japan.

(b) Less developed regions comprise all regions of Africa, Asia (except Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean plus Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

(c) The group of least developed countries, as defined by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolutions (59/209, 59/210, 60/33, 62/97, 64/L.55, 67/L.43, 64/295 and 68/18) included 47 countries in June 2017: 33 in Africa, 9 in Asia, 4 in Oceania and one in Latin America and the Caribbean.

(d) Other less developed countries comprise the less developed regions excluding the least developed countries.

(e) The country classification by income level is based on 2016 GNI per capita from the World Bank.

(f) Sub-Saharan Africa refers to all of Africa except Northern Africa.

(1) Including Agalega, Rodrigues, and Saint Brandon.

(2) Including Zanzibar.

(3) Including Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha.

(4) For statistical purposes, the data for China do not include Hong Kong and Macao, Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of China.

(5) As of 1 July 1997, Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China.

(6) As of 20 December 1999, Macao became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China.

(7) The regions Southern Asia and Central Asia are combined into South-Central Asia.

(8) Including Sabah and Sarawak.

(9) Including Nagorno-Karabakh.

(10) Refers to the whole country.

(11) Including Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

(12) Including East Jerusalem.

(13) Including Transnistria.

(14) Including Crimea.

(15) Refers to Guernsey, and Jersey.

(16) Including Åland Islands.

(17) Including Svalbard and Jan Mayen Islands.

(18) Refers to the Vatican City State.

(19) Including Kosovo.

(20) Including Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla.

(21) The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

(22) Refers to Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius.

(23) Including Saint-Barthélemy and Saint-Martin (French part).

(24) A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

(25) Including Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and Norfolk Island.

Table II

Population size and ranking of urban agglomerations with more than 5 million inhabitants as of 1 July 2018

Urban Agglomeration	Country or area	Population (thousands)			Rank			Average annual rate of change (per cent)
		1990	2018	2030	1990	2018	2030	2015-2020
Tokyo	Japan	32 530	37 468	36 574	1	1	2	0.07
Delhi	India	9 384	28 514	38 939	13	2	1	3.16
Shanghai	China	8 606	25 582	32 869	16	3	3	2.84
São Paulo	Brazil	14 776	21 650	23 824	5	4	9	1.08
Ciudad de México (Mexico City)	Mexico	15 642	21 581	24 111	4	5	8	0.41
Al-Qahirah (Cairo)	Egypt	9 892	20 076	25 517	11	6	5	2.10
Mumbai (Bombay)	India	12 355	19 980	24 572	6	7	6	1.10
Beijing	China	6 788	19 618	24 282	23	8	7	2.10
Dhaka	Bangladesh	6 621	19 578	28 076	24	9	4	3.54
Kinki M.M.A. (Osaka)	Japan	18 389	19 281	18 658	2	10	15	- 0.14
New York-Newark	United States of America	16 086	18 819	19 958	3	11	13	0.17
Karachi	Pakistan	7 147	15 400	20 432	21	12	12	2.38
Buenos Aires	Argentina	11 148	14 967	16 438	7	13	20	0.60
Chongqing	China	4 011	14 838	19 649	43	14	14	3.43
Istanbul	Turkey	6 552	14 751	17 124	25	15	17	1.45
Kolkata (Calcutta)	India	10 974	14 681	17 584	8	16	16	0.58
Manila	Philippines	7 973	13 482	16 841	19	17	19	1.59
Lagos	Nigeria	4 764	13 463	20 600	33	18	11	3.21
Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	9 697	13 293	14 408	12	19	25	0.78
Tianjin	China	4 558	13 215	15 745	37	20	23	1.65
Kinshasa	Democratic Republic of the Congo	3 683	13 171	21 914	51	21	10	4.25
Guangzhou, Guangdong	China	3 246	12 638	16 024	59	22	22	2.57
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana	United States of America	10 883	12 458	13 209	9	23	27	0.16
Moskva (Moscow)	Russian Federation	8 987	12 410	12 796	15	24	28	0.80
Shenzhen	China	875	11 908	14 537	315	25	24	1.83
Lahore	Pakistan	3 970	11 738	16 883	44	26	18	3.96
Bangalore	India	4 043	11 440	16 227	42	27	21	3.90
Paris	France	9 330	10 901	11 710	14	28	35	0.52
Bogotá	Colombia	4 740	10 574	12 343	34	29	31	2.46
Jakarta	Indonesia	8 175	10 517	12 687	18	30	30	1.14
Chennai (Madras)	India	5 332	10 456	13 814	30	31	26	2.51
Lima	Peru	5 837	10 391	12 266	28	32	32	1.77
Krung Thep (Bangkok)	Thailand	5 889	10 156	12 101	27	33	34	2.28
Seoul	Republic of Korea	10 518	9 963	10 163	10	34	42	0.13
Chukyo M.M.A. (Nagoya)	Japan	8 407	9 507	9 407	17	35	49	0.43
Hyderabad	India	4 193	9 482	12 714	39	36	29	2.80
London	United Kingdom	6 794	9 046	10 228	22	37	41	1.43
Tehran	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	6 365	8 896	10 240	26	38	40	1.31
Chicago	United States of America	7 374	8 864	9 424	20	39	48	0.22
Chengdu	China	2 955	8 813	10 728	72	40	39	1.77

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

Urban Agglomeration	Country or area	Population (thousands)			Rank			Average annual rate of change (per cent)
		1990	2018	2030	1990	2018	2030	2015-2020
Nanjing, Jiangsu	China	2 893	8 245	11 011	75	41	37	3.59
Wuhan	China	3 417	8 176	9 611	57	42	47	1.09
Thành Pho Ho Chí Minh (Ho Chi Minh City)	Viet Nam	3 038	8 145	11 054	66	43	36	3.15
Luanda	Angola	1 474	7 774	12 129	169	44	33	3.41
Ahmadabad	India	3 547	7 681	10 148	54	45	43	2.51
Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	2 098	7 564	9 805	109	46	45	3.09
Xi'an, Shaanxi	China	2 221	7 444	9 984	98	47	44	3.68
Hong Kong	China, Hong Kong SAR	5 754	7 429	7 987	29	48	59	0.82
Dongguan	China	552	7 360	8 279	529	49	57	0.22
Hangzhou	China	1 666	7 236	9 260	146	50	52	2.76
Foshan	China	1 008	7 196	8 350	270	51	56	0.84
Shenyang	China	3 771	6 921	8 569	48	52	53	2.11
Ar-Riyadh (Riyadh)	Saudi Arabia	2 325	6 907	8 547	93	53	54	3.02
Baghdad	Iraq	4 092	6 812	9 365	41	54	51	2.35
Santiago	Chile	4 616	6 680	7 243	36	55	63	0.73
Surat	India	1 466	6 564	9 711	171	56	46	4.73
Madrid	Spain	4 414	6 497	6 907	38	57	68	1.23
Suzhou, Jiangsu	China	1 067	6 339	9 389	253	58	50	5.63
Pune (Poona)	India	2 430	6 276	8 442	87	59	55	2.86
Haerbin	China	2 515	6 115	7 597	85	60	60	2.17
Houston	United States of America	2 922	6 115	7 254	73	61	62	2.37
Dallas-Fort Worth	United States of America	3 219	6 099	7 073	60	62	65	1.92
Toronto	Canada	3 807	6 082	6 793	46	63	70	1.09
Dar es Salaam	United Republic of Tanzania	1 474	6 048	10 789	168	64	38	5.40
Miami	United States of America	3 969	6 036	6 664	45	65	73	0.96
Belo Horizonte	Brazil	3 548	5 972	6 583	53	66	75	1.12
Singapore	Singapore	3 013	5 792	6 342	69	67	81	1.39
Philadelphia	United States of America	4 725	5 695	6 114	35	68	82	0.41
Atlanta	United States of America	2 184	5 572	6 602	102	69	74	2.34
Kitakyushu-Fukuoka M.M.A.	Japan	5 269	5 551	5 395	31	70	98	- 0.03
Al-Khartum (Khartoum)	Sudan	2 360	5 534	8 023	88	71	58	2.56
Barcelona	Spain	4 101	5 494	5 812	40	72	86	1.14
Johannesburg	South Africa	1 879	5 486	6 978	123	73	67	2.97
Sankt Peterburg (Saint Petersburg)	Russian Federation	4 989	5 383	5 630	32	74	90	1.08
Qingdao	China	2 165	5 381	6 684	103	75	71	2.17
Dalian	China	1 990	5 300	6 848	120	76	69	2.94
Washington, D.C.	United States of America	3 376	5 207	5 868	58	77	85	1.36
Yangon	Myanmar	2 914	5 157	6 389	74	78	79	1.89
Al-Iskandariyah (Alexandria)	Egypt	3 056	5 086	6 417	65	79	77	1.95
Ji'nan, Shandong	China	2 025	5 052	6 546	114	80	76	3.00
Guadalajara	Mexico	3 023	5 023	5 943	68	81	83	1.54

This report presents the highlights of the 2018 Revision of *World Urbanization Prospects*. The dataset of the *World Urbanization Prospects* contains the latest estimates of the urban and rural populations of 233 countries or areas from 1950 to 2018 and projections to 2050, as well as estimates of population size from 1950 to 2018 and projections to 2035 for all urban settlements with 300,000 inhabitants or more in 2018. The annex tables in these Highlights provide data on the estimated and projected urban and rural populations, the percentage of the population that lives in urban areas and the average annual rate of change of the percentage urban for 233 countries or areas of the world. The tables also show the rank and annual growth rate of urban agglomerations with 5 million inhabitants or more in 2018, while focussing on the time-frame 1990-2030.