
Outside the Large Cities

The demographic importance of small urban centres and large villages in Africa, Asia and Latin America

David Satterthwaite

Human Settlements Discussion Paper - Urban Change 3

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Satterthwaite is a Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and also on the teaching staff of the London School of Economics and University College London. He is Editor of the international journal *Environment and Urbanization*, and has written or edited various books on urban issues, including *Squatter Citizen: Life in the Urban Third World* (with Jorge E Hardoy), *The Earthscan Reader in Sustainable Cities, Environmental Problems in an Urbanizing World* (with Jorge E Hardoy and Diana Mitlin) and *Empowering Squatter Citizen: Local Government, Civil Society and Urban Poverty Reduction* (with Diana Mitlin), which are published by Earthscan, London. He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Hull and in 2004 was one of the recipients of the Volvo Environment Prize.

Address: IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H ODD, UK

E-mail: david@iied.org

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Summary


A quarter of the world's population (and half its urban population) lives in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants. Of the 1.5 billion people living in these 'small urban centres', nearly three-quarters live in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Several hundred million more live in these same regions in 'large villages' that have urban characteristics and that could be classified as urban centres. These 'small urban centres' and 'large villages' are also likely to absorb a large part of the growth in the world's population up to 2025 and beyond.

This paper draws on recent census data for some 70 nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to examine the proportion of national populations living in 'large villages' and in urban centres in different population-size categories. This highlights their demographic importance in virtually all nations. Some nations have more than half their national populations living in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants in their most recent census – for instance Venezuela, Chile and Brazil – and many more have more than a third – for instance Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, Iran, Malaysia and Turkey.

Such urban centres also have considerable economic, social or political importance within almost all nations; in many nations, they contain a sizeable part of all economic activities and include almost all the service centres and local government centres for rural populations and for agriculture.

In most nations, at least a quarter of the population lives in settlements that could be classified as 'urban' or as 'rural' or as 'large villages' or 'small urban centres' – see Figure S1. **Thus, the size of any nation's urban population and its urbanization level (the percentage of its population living in urban centres) is much influenced by what proportion of this population of 'small urban centres and large villages' is classified as either urban or rural.**

Figure S1: The continuum of settlements from rural to urban

RURAL	AMBIGUOUS	URBAN
Unambiguously rural settlements with most of the inhabitants deriving a living from farming and/or forestry	'Large villages', 'small towns' and 'small urban centres'. Depending on each nation's definition of 'urban', varying proportions of these are classified as rural and as urban	Unambiguously urban centres with much of the economically active population deriving their living from manufacturing or services
Populations of rural settlements range from farmsteads to a few hundred inhabitants	Populations range from a few hundred to 20,000 inhabitants	In virtually all nations, these include settlements with 20,000+ inhabitants; in most they include many settlements with far fewer than 20,000 inhabitants
 <p>Increasing population size Increasing importance of non-agricultural economic activities</p>		

It might be assumed that the definition of 'urban centres' is a technical issue. But one of the dominant debates in development over the last four decades has been on the relative priority that should be given to 'rural' and 'urban' development. Within this debate, both rural and urban proponents try to establish how much 'poverty' there is in rural and urban areas, to bolster their claims for more attention to 'rural' or 'urban' development. This debate rarely acknowledges that a significant proportion of the population lives in settlements that could be termed either small urban centres (and thus urban) or large villages (and thus rural).

Many 'predominantly rural' nations would become less rural or even predominantly urban if their 'large villages' were reclassified as 'small urban centres'. In Europe, almost all settlements with 5,000 or more inhabitants are counted as part of the urban population but not in many African and Asian nations. For example:

- Mauritius would become predominantly urban if its district capitals with between 5,000 and 20,000 inhabitants were classified as urban areas.

- Egypt would be more than two-thirds urban if settlements with between 10,000 and 20,000 inhabitants were classified as urban.
- India would be far more urbanized if its 'large villages' with more than 5,000 inhabitants were considered 'urban'.
- China is predominantly urban or predominantly rural, depending on whether the pre-1982, the 1982 or the 1990 'urban definition' is applied.
- The proportion of Pakistan's population living in urban areas would rise from a third to a half if 'rural settlements' with more than 5,000 inhabitants were reclassified as urban centres.

The demographic importance of small urban centres

Many nations have more than a fifth of their population living in urban centres with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants, and many nations have more than 10 per cent of their population living in urban centres with between 50,000 and 199,999 inhabitants. For more urbanized nations, urban centres in the latter size-category also have considerable economic importance. For large-population nations, urban centres of between 50,000 and 199,000 inhabitants can also be very numerous – for instance there are more than 750 in China (according to 1990 census data), more than 600 in India (2001), more than 300 in Brazil (2000), 147 in Indonesia (1990) and 100 in Turkey (2000). Urban centres of this size category also contain significant proportions of the population in most high-income nations.

Urban centres with between 200,000 and 499,999 inhabitants have considerable importance in many relatively urbanized nations with relatively large populations – for instance they have more than 10 per cent of the population in Chile, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, South Korea and Argentina. Some low-income and relatively un-urbanized nations also have several urban centres in this size category that are important regional centres, including some that may have increasing economic and demographic importance if their economies grow. Large-population nations can have many urban centres in this size category – for instance China with 125 (1990), India with 100 (2001), Brazil with 70, Mexico with 26, Indonesia with 25 and the Philippines with 24.

The economic importance of small urban centres is often overlooked or under-estimated. This includes their economic importance as 'market towns', concentrating markets and services for local agricultural producers and retail and service outlets for rural populations. Among the many other economic underpinnings of small urban centres are mining enterprises, tourism, border posts, river ports (or 'land ports' in the sense of being key nodes linking local settlements to larger markets), education centres (for instance, having one or more secondary schools or a higher education institution), agricultural processing, retirement centres (sometimes with foreign retirees being an important economic underpinning) and centres for the armed services. Economic trends in small urban centres in any nation will also vary – usually from among the most dynamic to among the least dynamic.

There is no clear line between 'rural' and 'urban' settlements. Dividing a nation's population into 'rural' and 'urban' and assuming that these have particular characteristics in terms of the settlements they live in and the sectors in which they obtain their livelihoods misses the extent to which (poor and non-poor) rural households rely on urban income sources (through remittances from family members, commuting, or producing for urban markets) while many urban households in low-income nations rely on rural resources and reciprocal relationships with rural households. Most small urban centres, in which so many people live, in low- and middle-income nations actually exhibit a mix of urban and rural characteristics. However, most rural specialists choose not to recognize the importance of small urban centres within 'rural development', and most urban specialists fail to recognize the importance of prosperous agriculture and a prosperous agricultural population for urban development. Recognition of the demographic, economic, social and political importance of small urban centres might help to shift such biases.

Outside the Large Cities: The demographic importance of small urban centres and large villages in Africa, Asia and Latin America

David Satterthwaite

Introduction

The world's urban population today is around 3 billion people¹ – the same size as the world's total population in 1960. During the 20th century, the urban population increased more than ten-fold; around 50 per cent of the world's population now lives in urban centres, compared to fewer than 15 per cent in 1900.² The urban population of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean is now nearly three times the size of the urban population of the rest of the world.³ UN projections suggest that urban populations are growing so much faster than rural populations that 85 per cent of the growth in the world's population between 2000 and 2010 will be in urban areas, and nearly all this growth will be in Africa, Asia and Latin America.⁴

Although concerns regarding this rapid urbanization tend to focus on large cities, half the world's urban population (and a quarter of its total population) lives in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants. The increasing number of 'mega-cities' with 10 million or more inhabitants may seem to be a cause for concern but there are relatively few of them; in 2000 there were 18, together accounting for 4.1 per cent of the world's population, and they were heavily concentrated in the world's largest economies.⁵ Far more of the world's growing urban population will live and work in urban centres with fewer than half a million people than in mega-cities.⁶

This paper examines the proportions of national populations and of national urban populations that live in small urban centres in Africa, Asia and Latin America, drawing on the most recent census data available for each nation. It also has an interest in the proportions of national populations that live in 'large villages' having urban characteristics but which national governments choose to continue classifying as 'rural' – because these also house a considerable proportion of the world's rural (and total) population.

How many people live in small urban centres?

If small urban centres are taken to mean all settlements defined by governments as 'urban' with fewer than half a million inhabitants, then by 2000 around 1.5 billion people lived in small urban centres, including more than a billion in low- and middle-income nations.⁷

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the statistics for global and regional populations are drawn from United Nations (2004), *World Urbanization Prospects: the 2003 Revision*, Population Division, Department for Economic and Social Affairs, ESA/P/WP.190, New York, 323 pages.

² Graumann, John V, (1977), 'Orders of magnitude of the world's urban and rural population in history', *United Nations Population Bulletin* 8, United Nations, New York, pages 16–33.

³ In reviewing broad regional and global changes in urban populations, this paper chooses to focus on geographic regions rather than the conventional distinction between 'developed' and 'developing' countries or 'more developed' and 'less developed' regions – in part because of the inappropriateness of these terms, and in part because of the diversity in urban trends between these regions which raises questions about the validity of any generalizations for such groupings. Thus, 'high-income' nations in Asia are included in statistics for 'Asia'.

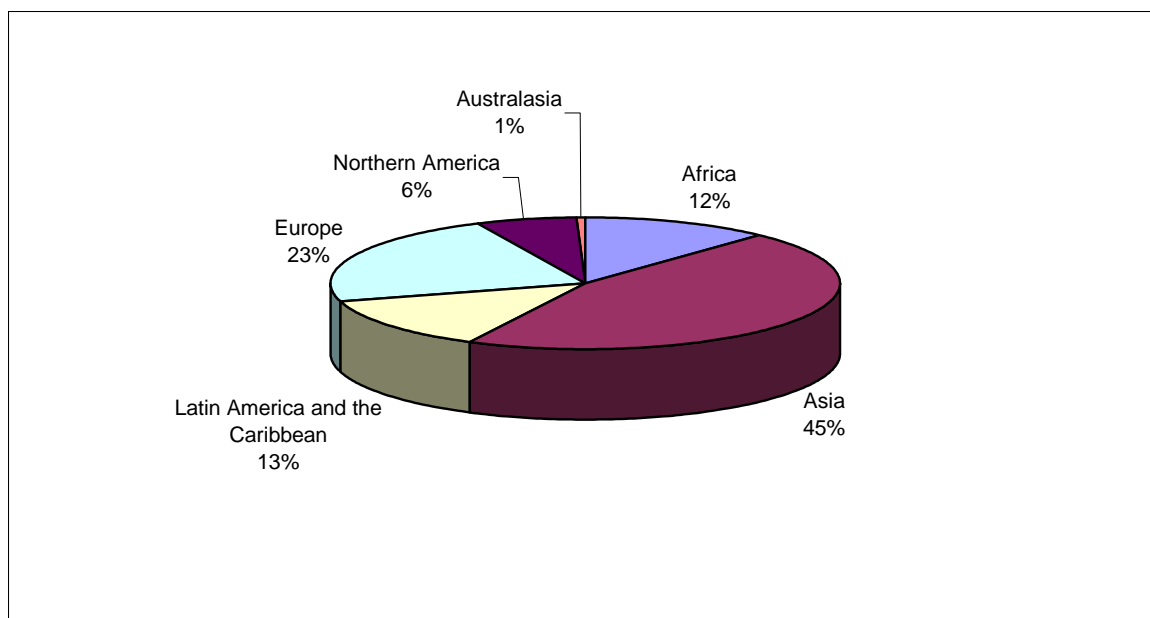
⁴ United Nations (2004), *op. cit.*

⁵ Satterthwaite, David (2005), *The Scale of Urban Change Worldwide 1950–2000 and its Underpinnings*, Human Settlements Discussion Paper, IIED, London, 43 pages. This can be downloaded at no charge, at www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/9531IIED.pdf.

⁶ The reasons for this are discussed in more detail in Satterthwaite (2005), *op. cit.*

⁷ Derived from statistics in United Nations (2004), *op. cit.*

Figure 1: The regional distribution of the population living in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants in 2000



SOURCE: United Nations (2004), *World Urbanization Prospects: the 2003 Revision*, Population Division, Department for Economic and Social Affairs, ESA/P/WP.190, New York, 323 pages.

However, taking ‘small urban centres’ to be those settlements defined as urban by their government with fewer than half a million inhabitants is an inadequate definition – for reasons discussed in more detail below. But there are statistics covering all the world’s regions and nations for this, and these will be presented and discussed, followed by a more detailed discussion of what constitutes a small urban centre and the proportions of people that live in small urban centres.

In 2000, a quarter of the world’s population lived in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants. Nearly half of this group lived in Asia, and nearly a quarter lived in Europe (Figure 1). Although Africa is seen by most people as a predominantly rural continent (even if two-fifths of its population now lives in urban areas), it is worth noting that Africa had twice as big a proportion of its people living in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants as did Northern America. There are also good reasons for suggesting that the scale of Asia’s ‘small urban centre’ population is underestimated by these figures – as discussed in more detail below. Table 1 is also a reminder of how small is the proportion of the population living in very large cities in all regions, and this includes the ‘mega-cities’ with at least ten million inhabitants. However, care is needed in interpreting these statistics since, as the note below the table explains, differences in how nations define urban centres and urban boundaries limit the validity of these cross-regional comparisons – and of the cross-national comparisons made later in this chapter.

Some nations had half or more of their national populations in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants in their most recent census – for instance Venezuela, Chile and Brazil – and many more have more than a third – for instance Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, Iran, Malaysia and Turkey. Some nations with relatively small populations also have a large proportion of their national population in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants because they are relatively urbanized and have no urban centre of more than half a million inhabitants – for instance Central African Republic in its 1988 census and Botswana in its 2001 census.

Table 1: Population distribution between different size categories of urban centres and rural areas in 2000


Nations and regions	Percentage of the total population in:				
	Rural areas	Urban areas with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants	Urban areas with 0.500–4.999 million inhabitants	Urban areas with 5.000–9.999 million inhabitants	‘Mega-cities’ with over 10 million inhabitants
Africa	62.9	22.3	12.4	1.1	1.3
Asia	62.9	18.4	12.4	2.5	3.9
Europe	27.3	46.1	20.5	4.7	1.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	24.5	37.1	23.4	3.7	11.3
Northern America	20.9	29.8	35.6	4.3	9.4
Oceania	27.3	31.7	41.0	–	–
World	52.9	24.5	15.7	2.7	4.1

SOURCE AND NOTES: Derived from statistics in United Nations (2004), *World Urbanization Prospects: the 2003 Revision*, Population Division, Department for Economic and Social Affairs, ESA/P/WP.190, New York, 323 pages. These statistics need to be interpreted with caution. Obviously, the proportion of the population in ‘rural areas’ and ‘urban centres with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants’ is influenced by how urban areas are defined. And obviously, the proportion of the population in larger cities is influenced by how these cities’ boundaries are defined.

Seeking a more precise definition of small urban centre

The statistics in Table 1 demonstrate that a sizeable proportion of the world’s population lives in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants. But this does not fully capture the proportion in ‘small urban centres.’ To ascertain how many people live in small urban centres requires a more precise definition of ‘a small urban centre’ – in terms of both a lower threshold (when a rural settlement or village become a small urban centre) and the upper threshold (when an urban centre is too big to be called small). Neither threshold is easily defined. And to set a specific population size that is applied to all nations – for instance that an urban centre stops being ‘small’ when its population exceeds 500,000 – would exclude some urban centres that are ‘small’ within their national context, especially in nations such as India and China, which have large populations, and in some relatively urbanized nations with larger populations in Latin America.

Figure 2: The continuum of settlements from rural to urban

RURAL	AMBIGUOUS	URBAN
Unambiguously rural settlements with most of the inhabitants deriving a living from farming and/or forestry	‘Large villages’, ‘small towns’ and ‘small urban centres’. Depending on each nation’s definition of ‘urban’, varying proportions of these are classified as rural and as urban	Unambiguously urban centres with much of the economically active population deriving their living from manufacturing or services
Populations of rural settlements range from farmsteads to a few hundred inhabitants	Populations range from a few hundred to 20,000 inhabitants	In virtually all nations, these include settlements with 20,000+ inhabitants; ⁸ in most they include many settlements with far fewer than 20,000 inhabitants
 <p>Increasing population size Increasing importance of non-agricultural economic activities</p>		

⁸ One exception to this: the figure for the proportion of the population living in urban areas in South Korea is sometimes based on the proportion living in places with 50,000 or more inhabitants.

Figure 2 highlights the ambiguity – and this ambiguity is important because 20–40 per cent of the population in many nations lives in settlements that could be considered to be either rural or urban – large villages or small urban centres.

Where any government chooses to draw the line between ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ has great significance for the proportion of the population in ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ areas. One of the dominant debates in development for some four decades has been over the relative priority that should be given to ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ development. Within this debate, both rural and urban proponents try to establish how much ‘poverty’ there is in rural and urban areas, to bolster their claims for more attention to ‘rural’ or ‘urban’. This debate rarely acknowledges that a large proportion of the population lives in settlements that could be termed either small urban centres (and thus urban) or large villages (and thus rural). Many ‘predominantly rural’ nations would become less rural or even predominantly urban if their ‘large villages’ were reclassified as ‘small urban centres’. For example:

- In Mauritius, in the 2000 census, around a quarter of the population lived in settlements with between 5000 and 20,000 inhabitants. These settlements included various district capitals that were nevertheless not classified as urban areas.⁹ If they had been classified as urban centres, Mauritius’s population would have been more than two-thirds urban in 2000, rather than less than half urban.
- Egypt is still seen as predominantly rural, yet in its 1996 census nearly a fifth of its population lived in settlements with between 10,000 and 20,000 inhabitants, most of which have strong urban characteristics – and if these had been reclassified as urban, Egypt would have had nearly two-thirds of its population in urban areas in 1996.¹⁰
- In India, in the 1991 census, there were 13,376 villages with populations of 5,000 or more; if the total 113 million inhabitants of these centres were classified as urban, the level of urbanization would have risen from 25.7 to 39.1 per cent.¹¹ If those who lived in ‘rural’ areas but worked in urban areas were classified as urban, this would also raise the proportion of India’s population living in urban areas by a few percentage points (see Box 2 for more details).¹²
- In Pakistan, the 1998 census showed that 90 per cent of the rural population lived in settlements with more than 1,000 inhabitants, including many in settlements with more than 5,000 inhabitants. There were more than 3,500 ‘rural’ settlements that had more than 5,000 inhabitants. If these had been classified as urban centres, it would have increased the number of urban centres from 501 to over 4,000 and around half the nation’s population would have been living in urban areas – instead of the official figure of 32.5 per cent.¹³
- Mexico can be said to be 74.4 or 67.3 per cent urban in 2000, depending on whether urban centres are all settlements with 2,500 or more inhabitants or all settlements with 15,000 or more inhabitants.¹⁴

However, there are also cases of nations whose urban population may be over-stated. For instance, in Ethiopia, in 1994, nearly half the urban population lived in some 881 urban centres with fewer than

⁹ <http://www.clgf.org.uk/2005updates/Mauritius.pdf>; <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

¹⁰ Bayat, Asef and Eric Denis (2000), ‘Who is afraid of Ashwaiyyat: urban change and politics in Egypt’, *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol 12, No 2, pages 185–199.

¹¹ Visaria, P (1997), ‘Urbanization in India: an Overview’, in Jones, G and P Visaria (editors), *Urbanization in Large Developing Countries*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pages 266–288.

¹² Dyson, Tim and Pravin Visaria (2005), ‘Migration and urbanization; retrospect and prospects’, in Dyson, Tim, Robert Cassen and Leela Visaria (editors), *Twenty-First Century India: Population, Economy, Human Development and the Environment*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pages 108–129.

¹³ Hasan, Arif and Mansoor Raza (2002), *Urban Change in Pakistan*, Urban Change Working Paper 6, IIED, London.

¹⁴ See Garza, Gustavo (2004), ‘The transformation of the urban system in Mexico’, in Tony Champion and Graeme Hugo (editors), *New Forms of Urbanization: Beyond the Urban-Rural Dichotomy*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pages 153–170 for a detailed discussion of how different urban definitions influence urbanization levels.

20,000 inhabitants and these centres included many with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants.¹⁵ It could be argued that some of these would be better classified as rural.

The lower threshold, to establish at what point a growing rural settlement should be classified as urban, is not easily defined. Within most nations, there are many settlements with concentrations of shops and services and some manufacturing (indicative of urban economies) with 1,000 to 2,000 inhabitants, while within many low-income nations there are other larger settlements with several thousand inhabitants that have few shops and services and with most of the population engaged in farming (indicative of a rural settlement).

This difficulty in establishing a clear typology of settlements also illustrates the difficulties in drawing a distinction between 'rural' and 'urban' since the line between the two can be based on settlement size or administrative importance or economic structure. Even when settlement size is chosen as the sole or main criterion for distinguishing rural from urban settlements, there are the ambiguities as to where settlement boundaries should be drawn. There are also forms of 'urban' settlement for which boundaries are not easily drawn – for instance where 'urban' activities are clustered along each side of a road for considerable distances. There is also the inertia in government systems which often means that settlements' official boundaries are much smaller than their built-up area, as they have not been adjusted to reflect population growth and growth in the built-up area. There are also many urban centres whose boundaries encompass large tracts of rural land and significant numbers of farmers.¹⁶

The smallest urban centres and large villages

In most nations, many of the settlements with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants (for instance all those with more than 2,500 or more than 5,000 inhabitants) are considered urban centres; in a few, all settlements with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants are regarded as rural. For nations that have urban definitions including all settlements with more than 2,000 or 2,500 inhabitants as urban, up to a quarter of their national population can live in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants. Table 2 shows the proportion of national populations living in urban centres with under 20,000 inhabitants, although this needs to be interpreted with caution because, for each nation, this proportion is heavily influenced by how urban centres are defined. The nations with the highest proportion of their national populations in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants tend to be relatively urbanized nations that also have urban definitions that include most settlements with a few thousand inhabitants as 'urban'. For instance, Guatemala with more than a quarter of its national population in urban centres with under 20,000 inhabitants in 2002 has an urban definition that encompasses most settlements with 2,000 or more inhabitants¹⁷ while for Cuba it includes all settlements with 2,000 or more inhabitants and some others with urban characteristics;¹⁸ Venezuela classifies places of 2,500 inhabitants or more as urban centres while for Costa Rica, urban areas are administrative centres of cantons, including adjacent areas with clear urban characteristics such as streets, urban services and electricity.¹⁹

¹⁵ For a discussion of this, see Golini, Antonio Mohammed Said, Oliviero Casacchia, Cecilia Reynaud, Sara Basso, Lorenzo Cassata and Massimiliano Crisci (2001), *Migration and Urbanization in Ethiopia, with Special Reference to Addis Ababa*, Central Statistical Authority, Addis Ababa and Institute for Population Research, National Research Council (Irp-Cnr), Rome, Addis Ababa and Rome; accessed at <http://www.irpps.cnr.it/etiopia/sito/progetto3.htm>.

¹⁶ Satterthwaite (2005), op. cit.

¹⁷ In the 2002 census, urban areas were defined as cities, towns and settlements (pueblos) (capitals of departments and municipalities) and some other populated places that were in the category colonia or condominium and that had more than 2000 inhabitants (http://www.ine.gob.gt/content/consul_2/pob/censo2002.pdf).

¹⁸ For Cuba, urban centres are places with 2,000 inhabitants or more, and places with fewer inhabitants but having paved streets, street lighting, piped water, sewage, a medical centre and educational facilities (United Nations, 2004, op. cit.).

¹⁹ United Nations (2004), op. cit.

Table 2: Percentage of the national population in urban centres with under 20,000 inhabitants

Nation (and date of census used)	Percentage of national population in urban centres with under 20,000 inhabitants
Costa Rica (2000)	27.5
Guatemala (2002)	25.8
Cuba (2002)	21.4
Venezuela (2001)	19.4
Brazil (2001)	15.0
Colombia (2003)	14.8
Peru (1993)	14.7
Ghana (2000)	14.7
Chile (2002)	14.3
Honduras (2001)	13.0
Paraguay (2002)	12.3
Argentina (2001)	11.4
Dominican Republic (2002)	11.3
Mexico (2000)	9.6
Namibia (1991)	9.0
Morocco (2004)	8.9
Mauritania (2000)	8.1
Yemen (1994)	7.7
Tanzania (2002)	7.4
Bolivia (2001)	7.4
Botswana (2001)	7.3
Thailand (2000)	7.2
Central African Republic (1988)	7.2
Indonesia (1990)	6.9
Malaysia (2000)	6.9
Chad (1993)	6.7
Ethiopia (1994)	6.0
South Africa (1996)	5.9

SOURCES AND NOTE: Census data; see Table 3. The figures in this table depend heavily on how urban centres are defined. For the nations with low proportions of national population in urban centres of under 20,000 inhabitants (and the many nations with much lower proportions that are not included in this table – see Table 4), changing their urban definition could increase the proportion considerably.²⁰

Many censuses do not publish figures for the populations of all the smaller urban centres or give details of their numbers and the people they include. In regard to some that do:

- Mozambique had 68 towns (*vilas*), each with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants in the 1997 census.²¹
- Indonesia had over 1,000 urban centres with fewer than 30,000 inhabitants in 1990.²²
- Mexico had 234 urban centres with between 15,000 and 50,000 inhabitants in 2000 (with a total population of around 6 million) and around 7 million in hundreds of urban centres with between 2,500 and 15,000 inhabitants.²³
- Ghana had 298 urban centres with 5,000–20,000 inhabitants in 2000 and a total population of 2.7 million.²⁴

²⁰ For instance, see Jones, Gavin W. (2004), "Urbanization trends in Asia: the conceptual and definitional challenges", in Tony Champion and Graeme Hugo (editors), *New Forms of Urbanization: Beyond the Urban-Rural Dichotomy*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pages 113-150 for a discussion of this, in regard to Thailand. .

²¹ See Annexe for sources.

²² See Annexe for sources.

²³ Garza (2002), op. cit.

²⁴ Owusu, George (2005), 'Small towns in Ghana: justifications for their promotion under Ghana's decentralisation programme', *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol 8, Issue 2, pages 48-68.

- In 1991, 19.4 per cent of Bangladesh's urban population lived in settlements with fewer than 25,000 inhabitants, including 6.3 per cent living in centres with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants.²⁵
- Algeria had over 100 municipalities with between 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants in its 1998 census, with a total population of around 4 million.²⁶

Settlements with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants can have strong and obvious urban characteristics – for instance, economies and employment structures dominated by industry, services or large, diverse concentrations of retail stores.²⁷ They can include some settlements considered as cities – usually urban centres important historically but not successful in recent decades. They also include millions of settlements in which much of the population works in agriculture, forestry or fishing.

One way to get more clarity in regard to whether a settlement is rural or urban is to define urban centres based not only on population thresholds but also on the extent of non-agricultural economic activities or the proportion of the economically active population working in non-agricultural activities. But this is problematic because many very small settlements have most of their workforce in non-agricultural activities (for instance small mining centres, tourist centres or small river ports) while some much larger settlements can have much of their workforce still involved in agriculture. In addition, many rural and urban households have both 'rural' and 'urban' components to their livelihoods so it is difficult to classify them as either 'rural' or 'urban'.²⁸ For instance, is a rural household that derives most of its income from family members who commute daily to an urban centre 'rural' or 'urban'? Is an urban household that draws most of its income from farming 'rural' or 'urban'? And an urban centre may have most of its workforce engaged in activities classified as non-agricultural but with a high proportion based on processing local crops or providing goods and services to local farmers and local rural populations.²⁹

For any settlement, being classified as 'urban' often brings some potential advantages if it means that there is a local government there with capacity to contribute to the provision of basic services. Being designated as an urban centre can mean more scope for local revenue-generation too – but it may also bring changes feared by local elites, which may oppose their settlement being classified as 'urban'.

Box 1: Are these large villages or small urban centres?

BENIN: Bérubouay with 5,000 inhabitants, and So-Zounko, a lakeside settlement of 8,750 inhabitants dependent on fishing and trade, are both considered villages.³⁰

PAKISTAN: In 1998, a very considerable proportion of the rural population lived in over 1,000 settlements with more than 5,000 inhabitants which in most nations would have been classified as urban centres – including many that were considered urban in the 1972 census. In the 1981 and 1998 censuses, such settlements were not considered as urban centres unless they had a municipal

²⁵ Afsar, R (2002) *Urban Change in Bangladesh*, Urban Change Working Paper 1, IIED, London.

²⁶ See Annexe for sources.

²⁷ For many examples: see Hardoy, Jorge E and David Satterthwaite (editors) (1986), *Small and Intermediate Urban Centres: their Role in National and Regional Development in the Third World*, Hodder and Stoughton (UK) and Westview (USA); Blitzer, Silvia, Julio Davila, Jorge E Hardoy and David Satterthwaite (1988), *Outside the Large Cities: Annotated Bibliography and Guide to the Literature on Small and Intermediate Urban Centres in the Third World*, Human Settlements Programme, IIED, London, 168 pages; and Tacoli, Cecilia and David Satterthwaite (2003), *The Urban Part of Rural Development: the Role of Small and Intermediate Urban Centres in Rural and Regional Development and Poverty Reduction*, Rural–Urban Working Paper 9, IIED, London, 64 pages.

²⁸ Tacoli, Cecilia (1998), 'Rural–urban interactions: a guide to the literature', *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol 10, No 1, pages 147–166; Tacoli, Cecilia (1998), *Bridging the Divide: Rural-Urban Interactions and Livelihood Strategies*, Gatekeeper Series 77, IIED Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods Programme, London, 17 pages.

²⁹ See many empirical studies summarized and discussed in Hardoy and Satterthwaite (editors) (1986), op. cit., especially chapters 2–7.

³⁰ Etienne, Janique (1998) 'Formes de la demande et modes de gestion des services d'eau potable en Afrique subsaharienne: spécificité des 'milieux semi-urbains'', ENPC, Paris, 299 pages plus annexes (PhD thesis).

government. This changed the status of 1,483 settlements with more than 5,000 inhabitants, which, in the 1972 census, had been classed as urban centres.³¹

KERALA: Most of the population of the state of Kerala in India (which has more than 32 million inhabitants) lives in 'villages' with populations exceeding 10,000;³² in most nations, these would be classified as urban centres.

In China, several hundred million people live in urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants – but it is difficult to get precise statistics. Official sources give different figures for the total urban population, in large part because of different definitions of what constitutes the 'urban' population (Box 2). For instance, statistics from China's Ministry of Construction state that by the end of 2002 there were 660 cities and 20,600 administrative towns in China with a total population of 502 million.³³ Another report by the Ministry of Construction suggested an urban population of 338 million at the end of 2003³⁴ – although this may be the figure for the population in 'cities' and so does not count the population in administrative towns. China's 'small urban centre' population would include many of its 'cities' as well as its administrative towns. It was reported that in 2005, more than half of the 660 cities on the mainland had populations of between 200,000 and half a million people.³⁵

Box 2: How urban are China and India?

In China, the criteria for urban designation have changed dramatically in response to changing urbanization policies and economic development strategies. For example, it has been estimated that the urbanization level in China in 1999 would have been 24 per cent according to the pre-1982 urban definition, 73 per cent according to the 1982 definition, and 31 per cent according to the 1990 definition.³⁶ Much of the differences between these values relates to how the residents of small urban centres and peri-urban areas are counted. Two different classification systems have been used, one registering a segment of the population as urban and the other designating a selection of places as urban. Until the late 1970s, there was a reasonable degree of consistency between the two; people in urban places had urban registration. From the 1980s onwards, there was an extremely rapid growth in the number and area of (urban) designated towns and cities. After new criteria for town designation were issued in 1984, the number of designated towns jumped from 2,781 at the beginning of 1984 to 6,211 by the end of that year, and continuously increased to over 20,000 by the end of 2000.³⁷ Urbanization policies encouraged townships to apply for town designation, and promoted spatial expansion of designated towns and cities.³⁸ Especially for migrants, however, the conversion of rural to urban residence (*hukou*) continued to be tightly restricted. Thus on the one hand many designated towns and cities extended over large and often agricultural areas with low population densities, and on the other hand many people with rural (agricultural) registration lived in high-density areas and worked in non-agricultural employment.

The 2001 census in India suggested that 27.8 per cent of the population was urban – that is, that nearly three-quarters of the population lived in rural areas. But much of the rural population lives in settlements

³¹ Hasan, A and M Raza (2002) *Urban Change in Pakistan*, Urban Change Working Paper 6, IIED, London.

³² Visaria (1997), op. cit.

³³ http://english.people.com.cn/200405/19/eng20040519_143708.html.

³⁴ <http://houston.china-consulate.org/eng/nv/t140010.htm>.

³⁵ Xinli, Zheng, Deputy Director of the Policy Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (http://english.people.com.cn/200512/17/eng20051217_228778.html).

³⁶ Liu, Shenghe, Xiubin Li, and Ming Zhang (2003), *Scenario Analysis on Urbanization and Rural–Urban Migration in China*, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Vienna; see also Zhu, Yu (2004), "Changing urbanization processes and in situ rural-urban transformation: reflections on China's settlement definitions", in Tony Champion and Graeme Hugo (editors), *New Forms of Urbanization: Beyond the Urban-Rural Dichotomy*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pages 205-228.

³⁷ Chan, Kam Wing and Ying Hu (2003), 'Urbanization in China in the 1990s: new definition, different series, and revised trends', *The China Review*, Vol 3, No 2, pages 49–71; Liu et al. (2003), op. cit.

³⁸ Ma, Laurence J C (2004), 'Economic reforms, urban spatial restructuring, and planning in China', *Progress in Planning*, Vol 61, No 3, pages 237–260; Ma, Laurence J C (forthcoming), 'Urban administrative restructuring, changing scale relations and local economic development in China', *Political Geography*, in press (corrected proof).

which would be classified as 'urban' if India chose to adopt the urban definitions used in most European nations – and most of the rural population would live in urban areas if India adopted the urban definition used in Sweden or Peru. In Sweden, all settlements with built-up areas with at least 200 inhabitants and with houses at most 200 metres from each other are considered urban, while, in Peru, urban centres are populated settlements with 100 or more dwellings grouped contiguously, and administrative centres of districts.³⁹

If India became reclassified as a predominantly urban nation, it would change the perspective of both the government and international agencies. The idea of India as a predominantly rural nation is also questionable given that, by 2001, 76 per cent of value added within India's GDP came from industry and services,⁴⁰ most of which are located in urban areas. This is not to suggest that India's urban definition is 'wrong' – and to apply Sweden's urban definition in India would clearly be very misleading in terms of how 'urban' India's population would become and how this would define as 'urban' tens of thousands of settlements underpinned by agriculture. But it does highlight how a considerable proportion of the population in India and in most other nations lives in settlements that could be considered as either urban or rural.

In 1991, there were 13,376 villages in India with populations of 5,000 or more. If the total 113 million inhabitants of these settlements were classified as urban, the level of urbanization in 1991 would have risen from 25.7 to 39.1 per cent.⁴¹ In 1987/8, 4 per cent of the urban workforce consisted of rural-based commuters and this proportion has probably increased since then.⁴² The populations of many settlements in India that have urban characteristics prefer to retain their rural status, partly because of concerns about paying higher taxes.⁴³

This issue of the lower threshold used to determine when a settlement becomes urban can be politically charged in that both governments and international agencies make decisions about resource allocations between rural and urban areas depending on the proportions of the population living in them. They also have 'rural' and 'urban' programmes which may be applicable only in areas designated as 'rural' or 'urban' so the possibilities of getting government funding may depend on a settlement being reclassified as 'urban' or on avoiding such a reclassification, long after the settlement has developed a strong non-agricultural economic and employment base. There are also some anomalies – for instance 'small town' programmes that are for rural areas or implemented within rural programmes and even statements claiming that small towns are not urban areas.

In one sense, it may not matter that a settlement with a significant concentration of people and non-agricultural economic activities remains 'rural' – and this may be advantageous for particular groups if it enables support from 'rural' development programmes. However, one worry is that if such a settlement is seen as 'rural' by government agencies, it may inhibit the development there of infrastructure and services that would have strong economic and social benefits and perhaps inhibit the development of a local government through which lower-income groups might get more voice and accountability. Increasing concentrations of people and non-agricultural economic activities usually implies a greater need for water and wastewater/sanitation management and often for solid-waste management – regardless of whether this concentration is in a settlement classified as a village, town or urban centre. There will be economies of scale and proximity in most of these settlements, which can lower unit costs for better provision for these. There may be important synergies between demand from households and from enterprises (including many household enterprises). This link between economic activities and domestic needs may also span rural–urban definitions, as demand for water for livestock and crops can help to fund improved provision for water serving both these and also domestic needs. In many such settlements, there may also be sufficient demand for electricity, and economies of scale and proximity,

³⁹ For summaries of how each nation defines urban centres, see United Nations (2004), *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ Drawn from statistics in the annexe of World Bank (2003), *Making Services Work for Poor People: World Development Report 2004*, World Bank and Oxford University Press, Washington DC, 271 pages.

⁴¹ Visaria (1997), *op. cit.* drawing on the Indian government's National Sample Survey data.

⁴² Dyson and Visaria (2005), *op. cit.*

⁴³ Dyson and Visaria (2005), *op. cit.*

which make its provision economically feasible – and this brings obvious advantages with regard to power for local economic activities and for water pumping.

As the interest in small urban centres or other categories of settlements such as secondary cities or intermediate cities has begun to grow, certain myths about them have become more common (Box 3).

Box 3: Common myths about small urban centres

Myth 1: Small urban centres are growing faster than large cities. An analysis of population growth rates for all urban centres for the most recent inter-census period for 70 nations (and for many other nations for other inter-census periods) showed that there is great diversity among small urban centres within each nation with regard to their inter-census population growth rates; also great diversity in the extent of in-migration and out-migration. It is not possible to generalize about demographic trends in small urban centres. A review of population growth rates between censuses for all urban centres in a nation usually shows great diversity – including a group of small urban centres that grew very rapidly and a group that grew very slowly (and often some that did not grow or even some that had declining populations). Certainly, some small urban centres will have grown faster than the largest cities, but this can be misleading in that adding 1 million people to a city of 10 million in a decade appears as a slower population growth rate than adding 600 people to an urban centre of 5,000 inhabitants in that same decade. Analysing why there are such large differentials in the population growth rates of different urban centres, and what underpinned any rapid growth, is more useful for policy purposes than any attempt to find relationships between the size of settlements and their population growth rates. The potential of small urban centres to grow and develop more prosperous economic bases depends not so much on their current size but, rather, on their location, on the competence and capacity of their government, on their links with other urban centres, and on the scale and nature of economic change in their region and nation. Generally, there is also considerable diversity between large cities in terms of growth rates, although many of the largest cities experienced considerable slow-downs in their population-growth rates during the 1980s and/or the 1990s, and proved to be much smaller in 2000 than had been anticipated.⁴⁴

Myth 2: There are valid generalizations about small urban centres' economic base or employment structure. Again, there is generally too much diversity in regard to the economic or employment base of small urban centres to allow generalizations, although agriculture-related goods and services and local government services and employees are generally important for the employment base of most small urban centres.

Myth 3: Governments can push new investments to small urban centres to control the growth of large cities. The record of governments in successfully doing this is very poor; they often push investment into unsuitable locations, or the choice of where public investment is concentrated is determined by political considerations not economic potential. More dispersed patterns of urban development (in which various small urban centres become increasingly important and some grow to become large urban centres) are likely to develop, without economic losses, if national economies grow and through effective decentralization (especially increasing the competence, capacity and accountability of local governments in small urban centres).

The proportion of people living in small urban centres

Small urban centres probably house far more people than do cities, with more than a million cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, but it is difficult to get accurate measures of the proportion of people in them because many are still classified within the rural population, as described above. Census reports rarely give details of the proportion of the population living in different settlement categories according to their population size. Table 3 shows the proportion of national populations living in different size categories. This table draws only on census data – and was constructed from data tables that included figures for the populations of all urban centres. Only nations for which such data tables were available could be included, so it is an incomplete list. As noted above, the figures for each nation for the proportion of the national population in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants will be strongly

⁴⁴ Satterthwaite (2005), op. cit.

influenced by how urban centres are defined. For the other urban categories, the figures can be compared between nations.⁴⁵

Table 3: The division of national populations between rural areas and urban centres of different sizes

Nation and date of census	Proportion of the population in urban centres with (number of inhabitants):								
	Rural areas	Under 20,000	20,000–49,999	50,000–199,999	200,000–499,999	0.5–1.99 million	2–4.99 million	5 million +	
Africa									
Benin (1992)	77.0	3.0	6.3	5.8	–	7.9	–	–	
Botswana (2001)	47.6	7.3	18.4	10.0	16.8	–	–	–	
Burkina Faso (1996)	83.0	2.7	3.2	1.2	3.0	6.9	–	–	
Central African R (1988)	64.2	7.2	10.3	–	18.3	–	–	–	
Cameroon (2001)	57.1	0.9	4.0	12.9	7.5	17.4	–	–	
Chad (1993)	78.9	6.7	2.3	3.7	–	8.5	–	–	
Cote d'Ivoire (1988)	61.0	3.0	7.8	7.2	3.1	17.9	–	–	
Egypt (1996)	57.4	1.6	3.0	8.4	7.4	1.5	9.4	11.4	
Ethiopia (1994)	86.3	6.0	1.8	2.0	–	–	4.0	–	
Ghana (2000)	56.2	14.7	6.5	6.9	1.1	15.0	–	–	
Guinea (1996)	69.0	3.5	4.3	8.0	–	15.3	–	–	
Kenya (1999)	80.6	1.6	2.3	3.9	1.9	2.3	7.5	–	
Mali (1987)	83.6	1.4	2.0	4.5	8.6	–	–	–	
Mauritania (2000)	50.6	8.1	16.2	2.9	–	22.3	–	–	
Mauritius (2000)		57.3		42.7	–	–	–	–	
Malawi (1998)	86.4	1.5	1.0	1.5	4.4	5.1	–	–	
Morocco (2004)	42.0	8.9	5.9	10.7	4.6	17.9	10.0	–	
Mozambique (1997)	71.5	3.6	2.3	9.2	7.3	6.1	–	–	
Namibia (1991)	73.2	11.6	4.7	10.4	–	–	–	–	
Niger (2001)	84.6	2.2	2.0	5.0	–	6.3	–	–	
Nigeria (1991)		64.0		6.1	9.0	4.7	7.9	2.4	5.8
Rwanda (2002)	83.2	0.1	2.6	6.6	–	7.4	–	–	
Senegal (2002)	60.3	3.2	2.6	11.6	2.4	19.4	–	–	
South Africa (1996)	46.3	5.9	2.0	6.9	3.7	5.1	12.1	17.9	
Tanzania (2002)	77.0	7.4	1.4	4.2	3.3	–	6.8	–	
Uganda (2002)	87.7	1.6	2.8	2.7	–	4.9	–	–	
Zambia (2000)	63.0	6.6	2.8	9.2	7.5	11.0	–	–	
Zimbabwe (1992)	69.4	3.3	2.9	4.4	2.6	17.4	–	–	

⁴⁵ However, there are at least two possible sources of error for cross-country comparisons in these size categories. The first is the differences between nations in the ways that the boundaries of urban centres are defined – for instance, in some nations, defined ‘too small’ in relation to urban expansion, in other nations defined ‘too large’ as they include significant numbers of rural populations. The second is whether the populations of local government units within or close to major cities have been incorporated into the population of these large cities as metropolitan areas or urban agglomerations or reported as distinct urban centres in their own right. See the notes to Table 3 for more details.

		Proportion of the population in urban centres with (number of inhabitants):						
Nation and date of census	Rural areas	Under 20,000	20,000–49,999	50,000–199,999	200,000–499,999	0.5–1.99 million	2–4.99 million	5 million +
Asia								
Bangladesh (1991)	79.9	4.2	3.1	2.6	1.0	1.3	1.9	6.1
Cambodia (1998)	84.3	–	3.4	3.1	–	9.4	–	–
India (2001)	72.2	6.0		5.6	3.0	5.3	2.0	5.8
Indonesia (1990)	69.4	6.9	1.4	6.6	4.2	4.5	2.5	4.6
Iran (1996)	38.7	12.1		14.3	9.3	14.3	–	11.3
Jordan (1994)	24.4	1.0	2.8	16.0	9.2	46.6	–	–
Korea, Rep. of (2000)	n.a.	n.a.	2.6	9.1	11.2	20.1	18.5	21.4
Kyrgyzstan (1999)	65.4	4.5	6.2	4.0	4.3	15.6	–	–
Malaysia (2000)	38.2	6.9	7.3	16.8	17.4	13.5	–	–
Philippines (2000)	52.0	9.8		13.0	9.2	3.2	–	12.9
Saudi Arabia (2004)	24.3		5.8	10.3	13.8	15.3	30.4	–
Sri Lanka (2001)	84.4	2.2	2.9	4.8	1.1	3.4	–	–
Thailand (2000)	69.0	7.2	5.3	6.3	1.8	–	–	10.5
Turkey (2000)	35.3	5.5	8.6	12.9	7.7	9.1	8.0	13.0
Yemen	76.5	7.7	2.6	2.5	4.2	6.5	–	–
Latin America								
Argentina (2001)	11.6	11.4	7.7	11.1	10.3	14.8	–	33.2
Bolivia (2001)	37.6	7.4	2.3	9.0	2.4	41.3	–	–
Brazil (2000)	19.1	15.0	9.3	17.3	12.6	13.5	4.0	9.2
Chile (2002)	13.2	14.3	6.9	17.4	18.5	–	29.6	–
Colombia (2003)	23.6	14.8	4.6	6.9	9.8	11.6	12.0	16.7
Costa Rica (2000)	41.0	27.5	17.2	2.9	11.5	–	–	–
Cuba (2002)	24.1	21.4	10.4	11.8	12.6	–	19.7	–
Dominican Rep (2002)	36.4	11.3	5.8	18.5	–	28.0	–	–
Ecuador (2001)	39.0	7.3	6.8	15.0	4.0	27.8	–	–
Guatemala (2002)	53.9	25.8	4.8	4.7	2.5	8.4	–	–
Honduras (2001)	55.2	13.0	6.5	6.8	6.7	11.8	–	–
Mexico (2000)	25.3	9.6	4.9	5.6	8.7	20.9	7.0	18.4
Paraguay (2002)	43.3	12.3	3.0	3.6	6.5	31.4	–	–
Peru (1993)	29.9	14.7	5.1	8.6	7.9	5.1	–	28.7
Venezuela (2001)	13.0	19.4	5.0	23.5	12.8	26.4	–	–

SOURCES: These figures are derived from census data – from lists of urban centres and their populations (for virtually all nations listed here, these come from www.citypopulation.de/) and from figures for national urban and rural populations, drawn mostly from government websites. The Annexe below contains more details of the sources for each nation.

Notes and cautions regarding the interpretation of figures in Table 3: Getting the data for any nation for a table such as this depends on having population figures for a complete list of all urban centres. Inter-country comparisons of the proportion of the population in rural areas and in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants are not valid because of the differences between nations in how urban populations are defined. Inter-country comparisons of the proportion of the population in large cities only have limited validity because of the differences in the ways that governments set boundaries for large cities. Three points need emphasizing:

1. The size of 'large cities', and thus the proportion of the population in 'large cities', is much influenced by the way in which governments define large cities' boundaries. For many large cities, their total population is overstated because the city boundaries encompass large areas that are rural and also villages and small urban centres that are at some distance from the city's built-up area. This helps to explain why significant proportions of the workforce in many large Chinese or Bangladeshi cities work in agriculture. By contrast, the total population of some large cities is greatly understated, as boundaries have not expanded to reflect the large numbers of people and

enterprises that have spilled over the official boundaries.⁴⁶ For nations with large cities, it is possible to create two different tables showing the population distribution in different-size urban centres: one based on the population of cities, the other based on the population of metropolitan areas or urban agglomerations (where the population of the metropolitan areas or the largest urban agglomerations are made up of several and often many different cities). Where there were data on both, the populations in metropolitan areas and urban agglomerations were used for this table – for instance for Mexico, South Africa and Bangladesh. For Brazil, only population figures for cities and municipalities were found for the 2000 census, not figures for metropolitan areas and urban agglomerations – so for the figures for Brazil, the cities or municipalities around major cities that are within the these cities’ metropolitan areas are counted as independent cities. This will have considerably elevated the population in some categories of small urban centres and considerably decreased the population in the large-city categories. For instance, for Sao Paulo, instead of a metropolitan population of around 18 million inhabitants in 2000, it has a population (for the city) of 9.8 million, with the 38 municipalities that surround it that as part of the metropolitan area counted as 38 independent urban centres. By contrast, the analysis for South Africa was based on urban agglomerations and metropolitan areas, so Johannesburg had 7.2 million inhabitants in 1996 whereas Johannesburg city had 1.5 million; if cities had been used as the basis for the analysis for South Africa, the distribution of population between different size classes would have been very different. For Sri Lanka, the population figure used for Colombo was for the city, not for the metropolitan agglomeration.

2. The distribution of population between rural areas and urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants is much influenced by the census definition of what constitutes an urban area. Thus, in Peru, where the urban definition includes small settlements (populated settlements with 100 or more dwellings grouped contiguously, and administrative centres of districts), the proportion in ‘urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants’ is high, and the proportion in rural areas low. In some nations, complete lists of all urban centres were not available so part or all of the population in ‘urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants’ was derived from subtracting the population of all urban centres with 20,000 or more inhabitants from the rural population. For most nations where this was done, some verification for the validity of the figure could be obtained from the national definition of ‘urban’.

3. Some censuses understate total urban populations because of the difficulties in defining urban centres or applying the definition to census data. For instance, the statistics on Sri Lanka suggest that 14.6 per cent of Sri Lanka’s population was urban in 2001, but the government census office suggests that this will increase to around 30 per cent, when a more refined analysis is applied to the proportion of the population living in urban areas.

NB: For Indonesia and the Republic of Korea, the figure for the proportion of the population in urban centres of 20,000–49,999 inhabitants is only for the population in urban centres with 30,000–49,999 inhabitants; for Indonesia, the population in urban centres ‘under 20,000’ is for urban centres ‘under 30,000’. For South Africa, the figure for the proportion of the population in the 20,000–49,999 category is for urban centres with 25,000–49,999 inhabitants, which means that the proportion of the population in this category is understated and the proportion in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants is overstated.

Table 3 shows how high a proportion of national populations can live in urban centres with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants – for instance around 45 per cent in Costa Rica, around 30 per cent in Guatemala, around a quarter of the population in Botswana, Mauritania, Brazil and Venezuela and around a fifth of the population in Ghana, Chile, Peru, Colombia and Egypt.⁴⁷ For most of the other nations shown in Table 3, the proportion was smaller but, for many nations, this is because the urban criteria their governments use do not classify most (or any) settlement with between 2,000 and 5,000 inhabitants as urban.⁴⁸

Several nations have more people in urban centres of fewer than 50,000 inhabitants than in urban centres with more than 200,000 inhabitants – for instance Costa Rica (2000), Guatemala (2002), Benin (1992), Botswana (2001), Ghana (2000), Ethiopia (1994), Mauritania (2000) and Thailand (2000). Namibia (1991) is also in this list, but because its largest urban centre had fewer than 200,000 in 1991.

Many nations have 10 per cent or more of their national populations in urban centres with between 50,000 and 199,999 inhabitants (Table 4). Obviously, for some nations with small populations, this is

⁴⁶ For more details, see Satterthwaite (2005), *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ This is the case in Egypt if settlements with 10,000–20,000 inhabitants are considered urban.

⁴⁸ The list of nations is restricted by the availability of census data that provide a list of all urban centres and their populations. The reader should also note the ‘notes and cautions’ listed at the foot of Table 3.

because they have no urban centre that is larger than 199,999 inhabitants – as in Mauritius. Most of the other nations in Table 4 with the highest proportion of their national populations in this size category are relatively urbanized nations – and it shows the importance of what might be termed ‘intermediate sized’ urban centres within their nation. Table 4 also shows how numerous these can be – for instance more than 750 urban centres in this size category in China in 1990⁴⁹ with more than 600 in India in 2001, more than 300 in Brazil in 2000, 147 in Indonesia in 1990 and 100 in Turkey in 2000; urban centres of this size category also contain significant proportions of the population in most high-income nations.⁵⁰ It is also worth noting the number of nations in Table 4 with 5–10 per cent of their national populations in this size category of urban centre, which are predominantly rural nations – for instance Mozambique, Nigeria, Benin and Niger.

Table 4: Number of urban centres with 50,000–199,999 inhabitants and the proportion of the national population they contain

Nation (and date of census used)	Proportion of the national population in urban centres with 50,000–199,999 inhabitants	Number of urban centres with 50,000–199,999 inhabitants
Mauritius (2000)	42.7	4
Venezuela (2001)	23.5	55
Chile (2002)	17.4	26
Brazil (2000)	17.3	312
Malaysia (2000)	16.8	36
Jordan (1994)	16.0	6
Iran (1996)	14.3	92
Philippines (2000)	13.0	88
Cameroon (2001)	12.9	21
Turkey (2000)	12.9	100
Cuba (2002)	11.8	13
Senegal (2002)	11.6	10
Argentina (2001)	11.1	45
Morocco (2004)	10.7	36
Saudi Arabia (2004)	10.3	24
Botswana (2001)	10.0	2
Mozambique (1997)	9.2	16
Korea, Rep. of (2000)	9.1	47
Nigeria (1991)	9.0	84
Peru (1993)	8.6	19
Egypt (1996)	8.4	63
Guinea (1996)	8.0	6
Cote d'Ivoire (1988)	7.2	9
South Africa (1996)	6.9	n.a.
Colombia (2003)	6.9	36
Ghana (2000)	6.9	14
Honduras (2001)	6.8	5
Indonesia (1990)	6.6	147
Thailand (2000)	6.3	41
China (1990)	6.0	755
Benin (1992)	5.8	4
Mexico (2000)	5.6	62
India (2001)	5.6	633

⁴⁹ 1990 was the latest year for which a complete set of population statistics for urban centres in China with 50,000+ inhabitants was found (see www.citypopulations.de).

⁵⁰ In 1999, France had 84 urban centres in this size class accounting for 12.7 per cent of the national population; in 2001, England had 86 urban centres in this size class accounting for 14.4 per cent of the national population. For both of these nations, lists of urban agglomerations were used, not cities.

Bangladesh had a low proportion of its national population in urban centres with 50,000–199,000 inhabitants in the 1991 census – but still had 34 such centres, with a total population of close to 3 million.

In regard to urban centres with between 200,000 and 499,999 inhabitants (Table 5), note should be made of the importance of this size class within the national populations of many, relatively urbanized nations with relatively large populations – for instance Chile, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, South Korea and Argentina.⁵¹ There is also a group of low-income nations within this table which are less urbanized but with several urban centres in this size category that are important regional centres, including some that may have increasing economic and demographic importance, if their economies grow – for instance in Cameroon and Tanzania. There is also a group of small-population nations that had no urban centre in this size category for the census year reported, because their largest urban centre had over 500,000 inhabitants, with the next-largest urban centres having fewer than 200,000 inhabitants – for instance Benin, Chad, Guinea, Rwanda and Uganda in Africa, and Dominican Republic in Latin America.

Large population nations can have many urban centres in this size category – for instance in China with 125 in 1990 and India with 100 in 2001 (even if these concentrate only a few per cent of their national populations), Brazil with 70, Mexico with 26, Indonesia with 25 and the Philippines with 24. A few small population nations also have a relatively high proportion of their population in urban centres in this size-class because their largest city falls into this category – as in Botswana in 2001, the Central African Republic in 1988 and Mali in 1987.

Table 5: Number of urban centres with 200,000–499,999 inhabitants and the proportion of the national population they contain

Nation (and date of census used)	Proportion of the national population in urban centres with 200,000–499,999 inhabitants	Number of urban centres with 200,000–499,999 inhabitants
Chile (2002)	18.5	10
Central African Rep. (1988)	18.3	1
Malaysia (2000)	17.4	13
Botswana (2001)	16.8	1
Saudi Arabia (2004)	13.8	11
Venezuela (2001)	12.8	10
Brazil (2000)	12.6	70
Cuba (2002)	12.6	5
Costa Rica (2000)	11.9	1
Korea, Rep. of (2000)	11.2	18
Argentina (2001)	10.3	11
Colombia (2003)	9.8	13
Iran (1996)	9.3	18
Philippines (2000)	9.2	24
Jordan (1994)	9.2	1
Mexico (2000)	8.7	26
Mali (1987)	8.6	1
Peru (1993)	7.9	6
Turkey (2000)	7.7	18
Cameroon (2001)	7.5	4
Egypt (1996)	7.4	14
Mozambique (1997)	7.3	3
Zimbabwe (1992)	6.9	1
Honduras (2001)	6.7	1

⁵¹ This size category of urban centres is also important in high-income nations; in England in 2001, there were 20 urban centres in this size category accounting for 10.7 per cent of the population; in France in 1999, there were also 20 urban centres in this size category accounting for 9.9 per cent of the population.

Paraguay (2002)	6.5	1
Nigeria (1991)	4.7	13
Morocco (2004)	4.6	4
Malawi (1998)	4.4	1
Indonesia (1990)	4.2	25
Yemen (1994)	4.2	2
South Africa (1996)	3.7	n.a.
Tanzania (2002)	3.3	5
China (1990)	3.3	125
Cote d'Ivoire (1988)	3.1	1
India (2001)	3.0	100

Small urban centres and the rural–urban continuum

Two conclusions can be drawn from the above. First, small urban centres have a high proportion of the urban population in most nations and a high proportion of the national population in most relatively urbanized nations. Second, the pattern of small urban centres and their relation to rural settlements and other urban centres defies simple categorization or description. The spatial distribution of any nation's urban population is best understood as the 'geography' of its non-agricultural economy and government system.⁵² Or, to put it another way, it is the map of where people whose main income source is not from agriculture or forestry make a living.⁵³ In general, as a nation's per capita income increases, so too does the concentration of its population in urban centres, because most new investment and income-earning opportunities are concentrated there. Most low-income nations and all middle-income nations have less than half of their GDP in agriculture, and all nations with growing economies have decreasing proportions of their GDP derived from agriculture and decreasing proportions of their labour force in agriculture.⁵⁴ These figures on the proportion of GDP or of the labour force in industry and services can be misleading in that a considerable part of the growth in industry in many low-income nations may be from forward and backward linkages with agriculture – for instance, the production and sale of agricultural machinery, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs, cold stores, and packaging and processing industries.⁵⁵ In addition, a considerable part of the growth in urban services can be to meet demand from agricultural producers and rural populations.⁵⁶

As noted above, it is difficult to generalize about the economic bases of small urban centres. In most nations, many will be 'market towns', concentrating markets and services for local agricultural producers and retail and service outlets for their populations and the surrounding populations (including entertainment and financial services). Many are 'administrative towns', in that a significant proportion of their populations directly or indirectly derive income from the concentration of government functions there – including the employees of the local district government and those who work for government-funded services (such as in health care, hospitals, schools, postal services, the police and courts). Obviously, many small urban centres both have market functions and concentrate government

⁵² See Satterthwaite (op. cit.), 2005. This often also reflects in part the nation's or region's agricultural economy, as the areas with the most prosperous agriculture often have among the most dynamic urban centres, which are markets and service centres for farmers and rural households.

⁵³ There are exceptions – for instance, urban growth in places where retired people choose to live or in tourist resorts but, even here, the growth is largely due to the growth in enterprises there to meet the demand for goods and services generated by retired people and/or tourists. Advanced telecommunication systems and the Internet also allow some spatial disconnect, as a proportion of those who work for city-based enterprises can work from locations outside the city (including working from homes that are outside the city); these may be growing in importance, but are unlikely to be significant in low-income and most middle-income nations. Most urban centres also have farmers and agricultural workers among their populations.

⁵⁴ See tables at the back of recent World Development Reports, published by the World Bank.

⁵⁵ In many nations, a significant proportion of the total value of agricultural production is within urban areas (from urban agriculture), but it may also be due in part to city boundaries encompassing large areas of agricultural land so that the produce grown in what are clearly agricultural areas (with no urban characteristics) is counted as urban.

⁵⁶ Tacoli and Satterthwaite (2003), op. cit. For a detailed case study of this, see Manzanal, Mabel and Cesar Vapnarsky (1986), 'The development of the Upper Valley of Rio Negro and its periphery within the Comahue Region, Argentina', in Hardoy and Satterthwaite (1986), op. cit., pages 18–79.

employees. Among the many other economic underpinnings of small urban centres are mining enterprises, tourism, border posts, river ports (or ‘land ports’ in the sense of being key nodes linking local settlements to larger markets), education centres (for instance, with one or more secondary schools or a higher education institution), hotels/boarding houses for migrant/temporary workers, agricultural processing, retirement centres (sometimes with foreign retirees being an important economic underpinning for the urban centre) or centres for the armed services. Most urban centres will also have a proportion of their population working in agriculture. Economic trends in small urban centres will also vary – usually from among the most dynamic to among the least dynamic within each nation. Many urban centres close to large and prosperous cities may develop stronger economic bases as they attract new enterprises whose output largely serves demands in the large city or external demands organized by enterprises located in the large city. They may also develop into dormitory towns, or at least have their economy strengthened by having a proportion of their workforce commuting to the larger city.

With regard to comparing small urban centres’ economic and employment bases between different size categories, empirical studies have found no easily defined or clear dividing line although, in general, the larger the urban centre’s population, the smaller the proportion of the economically active population working in agriculture and the greater its importance within the government’s administrative hierarchy. In nations with effective decentralization, including democratic reforms, many municipal governments in small urban centres have become more successful in supporting economic growth and in improving infrastructure provision.⁵⁷

Dividing a nation’s population into ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ and assuming that these have particular characteristics in terms of the settlements they live in and the sector in which they earn a living misses the extent to which (poor and non-poor) rural households rely on urban income sources (through remittances from family members, commuting, or producing for urban markets) while many urban households in low-income nations rely on rural resources and reciprocal relationships with rural households.⁵⁸ Rural specialists may even talk at length about rural industrialization and ‘off-farm’ and ‘non-farm’ employment without mentioning ‘urban’, although much of the so-called ‘rural industrialization’ and much of the non-farm employment is actually in small urban centres.⁵⁹ Meanwhile, urban specialists almost never recognize the importance of prosperous agriculture and a prosperous agricultural population for urban development.

Less importance should be given to this rural–urban divide with more attention to seeing all settlements as being within a continuum with regard to both their population size and the extent of their non-agricultural economic base. Figure 3 illustrates this: key ‘rural characteristics’ are listed on the left and key ‘urban characteristics’ on the right. But the characteristics listed in each column form two ends of a continuum. As noted already, many rural settlements have households that rely on non-agricultural jobs, and non-agricultural employment opportunities may be very important for reducing rural poverty. Meanwhile, many urban areas exhibit some rural characteristics – such as the importance of urban agriculture for many low-income urban households. In addition, in the middle of this continuum between ‘rural characteristics’ and ‘urban characteristics’ there is a ‘rural–urban’ interface. Here,

⁵⁷ See, for instance, case studies of Manizales in Colombia and Ilo in Peru: Velasquez, Luz Stella (1998), ‘Agenda 21; a form of joint environmental management in Manizales, Colombia’, *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol 10, No 2, pages 9–36; Velásquez, Luz Stella (2005), ‘The Bioplan: decreasing poverty in Manizales, Colombia, through shared environmental management’, in Bass, Steve, Hannah Reid, David Satterthwaite and Paul Steele (Editors), *Reducing Poverty and Sustaining the Environment*, Earthscan Publications, London, pages 44–72; López Follegatti, Jose Luis (1999), ‘Ilo: a city in transformation’, *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol 11, No 2, pages 181–202. See also UN-Habitat (2006), *Meeting Development Goals in Small Urban Centres: Water and Sanitation in the World’s Cities 2006*, Earthscan Publications, London, for details of many small urban centres where provision for water and sanitation has improved significantly; see also Campbell, Tim (2003), *The Quiet Revolution: Decentralization and the Rise of Political Participation in Latin American Cities*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 208 pages; and Cabannes, Yves (2004), ‘Participatory budgeting: a significant contribution to participatory democracy’, *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol 16, No 1, pages 27–46.

⁵⁸ See *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol 10, No 1 (1998) and Vol 15, No 1 (2003), both on rural–urban linkages.

See also Tacoli (1998), *Bridging the Divide*, op. cit.

⁵⁹ See Tacoli and Satterthwaite (2003), op. cit.

Figure 3: The rural–urban continuum

RURAL	Rural–urban interface	URBAN
<p>Livelihoods drawn from crop cultivation, livestock, forestry or fishing (i.e. key for livelihood is access to natural capital)</p> <p>Access to land for housing and building materials not generally a problem</p> <p>More distant from government as regulator and provider of services</p> <p>Access to infrastructure and services limited (largely because of distance, low density and limited capacity to pay?)</p> <p>Fewer opportunities for earning cash, more for self-provisioning; greater reliance on favourable weather conditions</p> <p>Access to natural capital as the key asset and basis for livelihood</p>		<p>Livelihoods drawn from labour markets within non-agricultural production or making/selling goods or services</p> <p>Access to land for housing very difficult; housing and land markets highly commercialized</p> <p>More vulnerable to ‘bad’ (oppressive) government</p> <p>Access to infrastructure and services difficult for low-income groups because of high prices, illegal nature of their homes (for many) and poor governance</p> <p>Greater reliance on cash for access to food, water, sanitation, employment and garbage disposal.</p> <p>Greater reliance on house as an economic resource (space for production, access to income-earning opportunities; asset and income earner for owners – including <i>de facto</i> owners)</p>
<p>Urban characteristics in rural locations (e.g. prosperous tourist areas, mining areas, areas with high-value crops and many local multiplier links, rural areas with diverse non-agricultural production and strong links to cities)</p>	<p>Rural characteristics in urban locations (urban agriculture, ‘village’ enclaves, access to land for housing through non-monetary traditional forms.)</p>	

SOURCE: Tacoli, Cecilia and David Satterthwaite (2003), *The Urban Part of Rural Development: the Role of Small and Intermediate Urban Centres in Rural and Regional Development and Poverty Reduction*, Rural-urban working papers series, No 9, IIED, London, 64 pages.

rural and urban characteristics are mixed, and most small urban centres in low- and middle-income nations will have such a mix. So too will many peri-urban locations around cities, as proximity to the city brings changes in, among other things, land and labour markets and agricultural and non-agricultural production.

This suggests the need to consider changes to the long-established classification of all human settlements as ‘rural’ or ‘urban.’ This simple classification system adopted for the collection and dissemination of population data does not reflect “the blurring of rural and urban areas, the diversity of settlements within urban and rural contexts, the increasing scale and complexity of urban systems, and the new forms of urbanization that are emerging” in low- and middle-income nations, as well as high income nations.⁶⁰ It also tells us nothing of each settlement’s functional linkages with other settlements.⁶¹ Hopefully, new classification systems will help make apparent the social, economic, political and demographic importance of ‘small urban centres and large villages’ while also highlighting their diversity.

⁶⁰ Hugo, Graeme and Tony Champion (2004), “Conclusions and recommendations”, in Tony Champion and Graeme Hugo (editors), *New Forms of Urbanization: Beyond the Urban-Rural Dichotomy*, Ashgate, Aldershot, page 384. This book also discusses new classification systems.

⁶¹ Ibid.

ANNEXE: SOURCES FOR THE STATISTICS IN THIS PAPER

It is important for the reader to be aware of possible sources of error. For all nations in Tables 2–5, the calculations for the proportions of the national population in these different settlement-size categories were made from lists of all urban centres with their populations; virtually all of these were drawn from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. The proportion of national populations in urban centres with under 20,000 inhabitants was usually calculated by subtracting the total population in urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants (which was the sum of the population of all urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants) from the ‘total urban population’, although in some instances, the website source noted above had population figures for ‘all urban centres’, including those with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants.

This may produce false figures – for instance as the total urban population in a nation is not derived from the sum of all ‘urban centres’. However, for each nation, other data sources were consulted to check consistency with these figures, for instance through examining each nation’s urban criteria, to see if the figure for the proportion of the national population in urban centres with under 20,000 inhabitants was consistent with this and through reviewing other census data – for instance on the number of urban centres. Another factor that limits the validity of inter-country comparisons is different countries using different criteria for defining urban boundaries for each urban centre (or specifically for larger urban centres). Wherever there were two sets of figures for cities – one based on cities, one based on urban agglomerations (with large cities made up of more than one ‘city’) – the figures for urban agglomerations were used.

This paper also drew on United Nations (2004) (*World Urbanization Prospects: The 2003 Revision*, Population Division, Department for Economic and Social Affairs, ESA/P/WP.190, New York, 323 pages) for the statistics in Table 1, for each nation’s urban definition and for verification of the size of some nation’s national, urban and rural populations, although this was done only when this report was drawing on the same censuses used for Tables 2–5; this report lists all the censuses that are the source for its statistics.

Sources for the statistics in Tables 2–5

Algeria: Population of urban centres with 50,000+ inhabitants in 1998 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; total rural and urban populations from <http://www.ons.dz/English/statistics.htm>; population of all municipalities with 20,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.library.uu.nl/wesp/populstat/Africa/algeriat.htm>.

Argentina: Population of urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants in 2001 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Population in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants from subtracting this from total urban population. Urban definition: population centres with 2,000 inhabitants or more.

Bangladesh: Population of urban centres in 1991 from Afsar, Rita (2002), *Urban Change in Bangladesh*, Urban Change Working Paper 1, IIED; national, rural and urban populations in 1991 from http://www.bbsgov.org/ana_vol1/urbaniz.htm; this also had some updated (adjusted) population figures for individual urban centres which were used to update the table of urban centres and their populations. Both of the above sources reported that there were 522 urban centres in Bangladesh in 1991.

Benin: Population of urban centres with 10,000+ inhabitants in 1992 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Urban definition: localities with 10,000 inhabitants or more.

Bolivia: Population of urban centres with 10,000+ inhabitants in 2001 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; localities with 2,000 inhabitants or more. National population and percentage urban from http://www.unicef.org/bolivia/resources_2333.htm.

Botswana: Population of all urban centres in 2001 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Brazil: Population of all urban centres in 2001 with 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Definition: urban and suburban zones of administrative centres of *municipios* and districts.

Burkina Faso: Population of all cities and towns with 15,000+ inhabitants and national population in 1996 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>

Cambodia: Urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban population from <http://www.nis.gov.kh/CENSUSES/Census1998/Brochure-Census98-English.PDF>. This is assuming that the urban population is the population in urban areas with 20,000+ inhabitants (which corresponds with the urban definition in United Nations, 2004 (op. cit.) of ‘Municipalities of Phnom Penh, Bokor and Kep and 13 additional urban centres’.

Cameroon: Population of all urban centres in 2001 with 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Central African Republic: Population of all urban centres in 1988 with 10,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Chad: Population of all urban centres in 1993 with 10,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban population from a document summarizing the preliminary findings of the 1993 census at <http://www4.worldbank.org/afr/poverty/pdf/docnav/01272.pdf>.

Chile: Population of all urban centres in 2002 with 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Urban definition: populated centres with definite urban characteristics, such as certain public and municipal services.

China: <http://www.citypopulation.de/> has tables with the populations of all cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants by province for 1990 and many of these tables have many cities listed with 20,000–49,999 inhabitants. This was not a complete list of all urban centres – but is likely to be relatively complete for urban centres with 50,000+ inhabitants.

Colombia: Population of all urban centres in 2003 with 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Urban definition: population living in a nucleus of 1,500 inhabitants or more.

Costa Rica: Population of all urban centres in 2000 with 10,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Total urban and rural populations from <http://www.inec.go.cr/>. Urban centres are administrative centres of cantons, including adjacent areas with clear urban characteristics such as streets, urban services and electricity.

Cote d’Ivoire: Population of all urban centres in 1988 with 10,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations in 1988 from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cdbdemo/cdb_years_on_top.asp?srID=14910&crID=384&yrID=1988.

Cuba: Population of all urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants in 2002 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations from <http://www.granma.cu/ingles/2005/noviembre/lun14/curso.html>.

Dominican Republic: Population of all cities in 2002 with 15,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; national and rural and urban populations from <http://www.one.gov.do/>.

Ecuador: Population of all cities in 2001 with 15,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations for 2001 from <http://www.inec.gov.ec/default.asp>.

Egypt: Population of all urban centres in 1996 with 30,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; urban and rural population for 1996 from <http://www.zohry.com/thesis/chapter2.pdf>.

Ethiopia: Population of all urban centres in 1994 with 11,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; population in rural and urban areas from <http://www.irpps.cnr.it/etiopia/pdf/MigrationChap2.PDF>. The definition for urban centres was reported as localities with 2,000 inhabitants or more but Golini et al. suggest that the urban population included “an enormous number of hundreds of small and very small centers. Of which 396 of them have fewer than 2000 inhabitants” (page 100) (Golini, Antonio, Mohammed Said, Oliviero Casacchia, Cecilia Reynaud, Sara Basso, Lorenzo Cassata and Massimiliano Crisci (2001), *Migration and Urbanization in Ethiopia, with Special Reference to Addis Ababa*, Central Statistical Authority, Addis Ababa and Institute for Population Research, National Research Council (Irp-Cnr), Rome, Addis Ababa and Rome; accessed at <http://www.irpps.cnr.it/etiopia/sito/progetto3.htm>.

Ghana: Population of all urban centres in 2000 with 18,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; urban and rural populations for 2000 from <http://www.gss.gov.gh/key.htm>.

Guatemala: Population of all urban centres in 2002 with 7,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations in 2002 from the official website of the government http://www.ine.gob.gt/content/consul_2/pob/censo2002.pdf.

Guinea: Population of all urban centres in 1996 with 10,000+ inhabitants and national population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Honduras: Population of all urban centres in 2001 (preliminary census data) with 20,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; total population and percentage urban from <http://ccp.ucr.ac.cr/bvp/censos/honduras/2001/poblacion.pdf>.

India: Population of all urban centres in 2001 with 50,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; total rural and urban populations from <http://www.censusindia.net/>.

Indonesia: Population of all urban centres in 1990 with 40,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; an ESCAP report suggested that there were 1,312 urban centres in Indonesia in 1990, 1,237 of them ‘small and others’. Total urban population of 54.7 million – quoting Central Bureau of Statistics. Although no definition was found as to what ‘small and others’ constituted, it is likely that all of these had fewer than 100,000 inhabitants and included over a thousand with fewer than 30,000 inhabitants. These also had 42.3 per cent of Indonesia’s urban population on this date. <http://www.unescap.org/huset/lgstudy/country/indonesia/indonesia.html>.

Iran: Population of all urban centres in 1996 with 50,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Jordan: Population of all urban centres in 1994 with 10,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Kenya: Population of urban centres with 10,000+ inhabitants in 1999 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; total urban population and number of urban centres from <http://www.cbs.go.ke/pdf/authority.pdf>. Urban areas – municipalities, town councils and other urban centres.

Korea, Republic of: Population of all urban centres in 2000 with 30,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. It is not clear whether the proportion of the national population living in urban areas is based on the proportion living in ‘dongs’ (the administrative divisions for urban

areas) or the proportion living in places with 50,000+ inhabitants – although the proportion of the national population living in these two different categories appears to be similar in 2000; see statistics from the National Statistical Office; http://kosis.nso.go.kr/cgi-bin/sws_888.cgi?ID=DT_1IN0001&IDTYPE=3&A_LANG=2&FPUB=4&SELITEM=0 and figures derived from the urban populations listed at <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. It was not certain what rural population figure would be correct, when using these statistics; the census figure for the rural population is based on administrative divisions (*myeons* and *eups*) and is not the same as the population living outside urban centres with 30,000+ inhabitants.

Kyrgyzstan: Population of all urban centres in 1999 with 10,000+ inhabitants and national population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Malawi: Population of all urban centres in 1998 with 10,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Malaysia: Population of all urban centres in 2000 with 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; this was for urban agglomerations.

Mali: Population of all urban centres in 1987 with 10,000+ inhabitants plus Banamba, Ménaka and Kidaland and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Mauritania: Population of all urban centres in 2000 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Mauritius: Population of all urban centres and other 'localities' in 2000 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; urban definition from <http://www.clgf.org.uk/2005updates/Mauritius.pdf>.

Mexico: Population of all urban centres (urban agglomerations) in 2000 with a population of 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; additional data drawn from Garza, Gustavo (2004), "The transformation of the urban system in Mexico", in Tony Champion and Graeme Hugo (editors), *New Forms of Urbanization: Beyond the Urban-Rural Dichotomy*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pages 153-170.

Morocco: Population of all urban centres in 2004 with a population of 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Mozambique: Population of all urban centres in 1997 with 20,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; urban population from <http://www.iiasa.ac.at/Research/POP/pde/briefs/mz-pop.html>.

Namibia: Population of all urban centres in 1991 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural population in 1991 from <http://www.iiasa.ac.at/Research/POP/pde/FigTabs/na-poppyr91.html>.

Niger: Population of all urban centres in 2001 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Nigeria: Population of all urban centres in 1991 with 40,000+ inhabitants and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Paraguay: Population of urban agglomerations in 2002 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations from http://www.dgeec.gov.py/Publicaciones/Biblioteca/Tripticos/Censo2002/indicadorecensototal.html?PH_PSESSID=dab90116aee90dc2c087568392185200.

Peru: Population of urban centres in 1993 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations in 1993 from <http://www.inei.gob.pe/web/resultadocenso.asp>.

Philippines: Population of urban agglomerations in 2000 with 30,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; rural and urban populations from <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/sectordata/2003/pr0382.htm>.

Rwanda: Population of all urban centres in 2002 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Total urban population confirmed at <http://www.gov.rw/government/nationalcensus2002.html>.

Saudi Arabia: Population of all urban centres in 2004 with 20,000 plus inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

Senegal: Population of all urban centres in 2002 with 10,000+ inhabitants from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; assumption that their sum is the total urban population (UN, 2004 (op. cit.), reporting that the definition for urban centre in Senegal is an agglomeration of 10,000+ inhabitants).

South Africa: Crankshaw, Owen and Susan Parnell (2002), *Urban Change in South Africa*, Urban Change Working Paper 4, IIED, London.

Sri Lanka: Population of all urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants in 2001 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; national and urban populations in 2001 from <http://www.statistics.gov.lk/census2001/index.html>.

Tanzania: Population of all urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants in 2002 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; total, urban and rural population from <http://www.tanzania.go.tz/census/censusdb/ageSexTanzaniaSingleYears.asp>.

Thailand: Population of all urban centres/municipalities with 20,000+ inhabitants in 2000 and total population from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Urban population from http://web.nso.go.th/pop2000/prelim_e.htm. Thailand's urban population in this census is the population in municipal areas; there were 1,131 municipal areas in 2000.

Turkey: Population of all urban centres with 30,000+ inhabitants in 2000 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; proportion urban from United Nations, 2004 (op. cit.) (which drew on the 2000 census). Note that the official Turkish government website <http://nkg.die.gov.tr/en/goster.asp?aile=1> gives a different proportion of the national population living in urban centres – 59.25 per cent rather than 64.7 per cent but this is based on the proportion of the population living in the localities which have population 20,001 and over that are defined as urban.

Uganda: Population of all urban centres with 10,000+ inhabitants in 2002 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; national and rural and urban population in 2002 from <http://www.ubos.org/>.

Venezuela: Population of all urban centres with 30,000+ inhabitants in 2001 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; total population in 2001 from <http://www.ine.gov.ve/>; proportion in urban areas from United Nations, 2004 (op. cit.).

Yemen: Population of urban centres in 1994 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>. Rural and urban population from <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FR94/01Chapter01.pdf>. The figure for the proportion of the population in urban centres with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants is calculated by subtracting the population in urban centres with 20,000+ inhabitants from the rural population.

Zambia: Population of all urban centres with 10,000+ inhabitants in 2000 from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>; national population from <http://www.geohive.com/cntry/zambia.php>; percentage urban from United Nations, 2004 (op. cit.).

Zimbabwe: Population of urban centres in 1992 from an unpublished study prepared for IIED by Mutambirwa, Chris and Lazarus Zanamwe in 2002 which drew on census data. This was supplemented and cross-checked with data from <http://www.citypopulation.de/>.

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