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Featured articles

Child Adoption: Trends and Policies

Notwithstanding the celebrity child adoptions from abroad and disturbing reports about children being trafficked for the purpose of adoption, adoption remains a statistically rare event. Globally, 260,000 children are adopted annually, either domestically or internationally. This number is small compared to the estimated 16 million children that have lost both parents. However, adopted children are not necessarily orphans. A significant number are adopted by step-parents as a result of remarriage. These and other findings are presented in a report entitled *Child Adoption: Trends and Policies*, a forthcoming publication of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Most child adoptions are concentrated in a few countries (figure 1). The United States of America, with over 127,000 adoptions in 2001, accounts for nearly half of the total number of adoptions worldwide, and most of the adoptions occurring in the United States are domestic. Large numbers of adoptions also take place in China (almost 46,000 in 2001) and in the Russian Federation (more than 23,000 in 2001).

Despite the large number of adoptable children worldwide, the path to adoption—as many would-be parents have discovered—is convoluted and uncertain. In Italy, there are 15 couples vying for every eligible locally adoptable child. The demand for adoptable children also exceeds the supply of those children in Argentina, France,

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Singapore and the United States. The gap between adoption applications and the number of adoptions granted is particularly large in developing countries. In Fiji, the Gambia and Guyana, less than one quarter of the adoption requests filed in recent years have been approved.

Domestic adoptions constitute at least 70 per cent of all adoptions in countries recording the largest numbers of adoptions, namely, the United States, China and the Russian Federation, in order of importance.

The dwindling supply of children available for domestic adoption may explain, at least partly, the increasing number of international adoptions. However, almost 85 per cent of all adoptions are by residents and citizens of the same country as the adopted child. Moreover, domestic adoptions constitute at least 70 per cent of all adoptions in countries recording the largest numbers of adoptions, namely, the United States, China and the Russian Federation, in order of importance. The number of domestic adoptions has been falling since the 1980s in several countries, including Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Because the demand for child adoption far outnumbers the supply in most developed countries, many potential

parents look abroad to adopt a child. As a result, the number of international adoptions has climbed from 20,000 a year in the 1980s to about 40,000 in recent years. The United States accounts for about half of all international adoptions worldwide followed by France and Spain, with about 4,000 each.

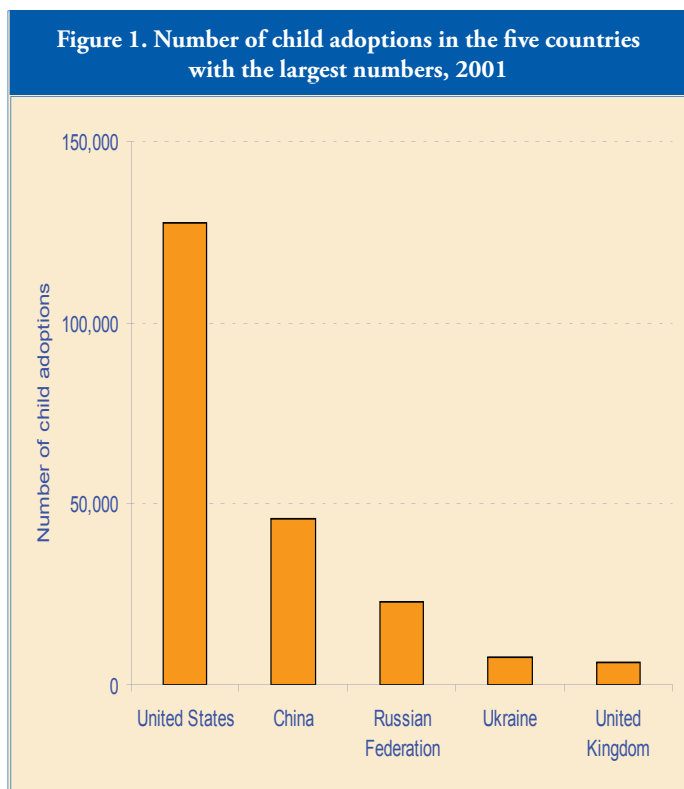
Most countries have laws and guidelines regulating the adoption process. Approximately 100 countries impose minimum or maximum age limits for potential adoptive parents. In addition, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, place of residence, income and religious affiliation are often taken into account when approving adoptions, especially in cases involving international adoption.

With regard to the characteristics of adopting families, paucity of data prevent generalization. In Australia, Finland and Ireland, international adoptions are more common among families with no biological children. However, when considering adoptions by relatives or step-parents, the number of such adoptions is higher among families that already have one or more biological children.

In some countries, arrangements other than formal adoption exist. For instance, Islamic countries generally do not permit child adoption, allowing instead guardianship and the fostering of children (Kafalah).

The major countries of origin for international adoptions are China, the Russian Federation, Guatemala, the Ukraine and the Republic of Korea, in order of importance. These five countries now account for more than half of the annual number of international adoptions. In order to ensure the well-being of the adopted child, some of these countries have recently adopted more stringent eligibility requirements for the adopting parents.

In order to provide adoptive parents to all the orphans who need homes, the current annual number of adoptions would have to be multiplied by 60. Paradoxically, the regions with the largest numbers of orphans have the fewest adoptions. Thus, it would take nearly 2000 times



Given the large gap between the number of annual adoptions (260,000) and the number of orphaned children (16 million) in the world, it would be desirable to increase the number of child adoptions, particularly by expediting the adoption process.

more domestic adoptions than occur currently to place the estimated 7.7 million orphans in Africa who have lost both parents, 60 per cent of whom have been orphaned by AIDS. It would take 150 times the current number of

domestic adoptions in Asia to place the 7.9 million orphans in the region who lack a family.

Over 30 years ago, the World Population Plan of Action recommended that Governments facilitate child adoption so that all couples may be permitted to achieve their desired number of children when they cannot have children of their own. Given the large gap between the number of annual adoptions (260,000) and the number of orphaned children (16 million) in the world, it would be desirable to increase the number of child adoptions, particularly by expediting the adoption process. ■

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision

Since 1988, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has been issuing, every two years, revised and updated estimates and projections of the urban and rural populations of all countries in the world and of their major urban agglomerations. *The 2007 Revision*, released in February 2008, presents estimates and projections of the total, urban and rural populations of the world for the period 1950-2050 and of the population of urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2007 for the period 1950-2025.

The 2007 Revision corroborates that the world population reached a landmark in 2008: for the first time in history, urban areas housed half of the world population. From 2008 onwards, the world population will be urban in its majority. This event is a consequence of the continuous urbanization of the less developed regions. By 2050, the world population is expected to be 70 per cent urban. Nevertheless, major parts of the world remain largely rural: in Africa and Asia, still today six out of every ten persons live in rural areas.

Between 2007 and 2050, the world population is expected to increase by 2.5 billion, passing from 6.7 billion to 9.2 billion. At the same time, the population living

Population growth is becoming largely an urban phenomenon concentrated in the developing world.

in urban areas is projected to increase from 3.3 billion to 6.4 billion in 2050, a gain of 3.1 billion over 2007. Thus, the urban areas of the world will absorb all the population growth expected over the next four decades while at the same time drawing in some of the rural population.

Furthermore, most of the population growth expected in urban areas will be concentrated in the cities and towns of the less developed regions, whose population is projected to increase from 2.4 billion in 2007 to 5.3 billion in 2050 (figure 2). With an urban population gain of 1.8 billion, Asia, is projected to absorb most of the increase. Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean will see less sizable increases in their urban populations (0.9 billion and 0.2 billion, respectively). Between 2007 and 2050, the population of the urban areas of the less developed regions will increase by more than 60 million people every year (figure 3) or by more than the current population of France annually. In contrast, the overall increase in the urban population of the more developed regions is projected to be modest: from 0.9 billion in 2007 to 1.1 billion in 2050.

Figure 2. Urban and rural populations of the more developed and the less developed regions, 1950-2050

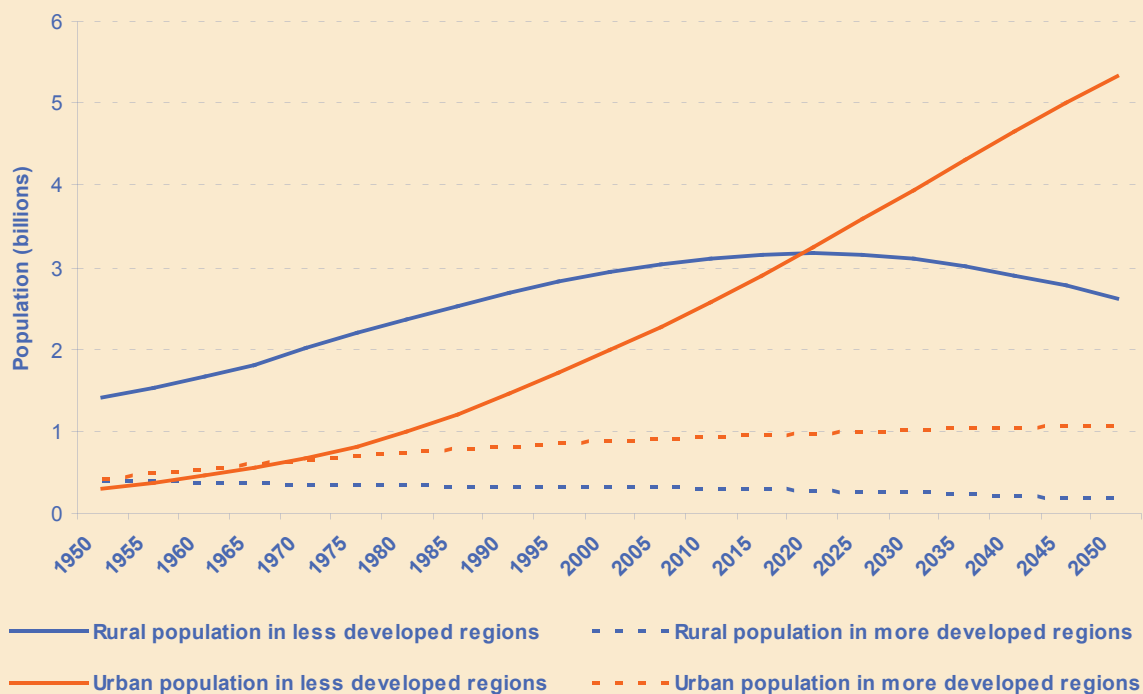
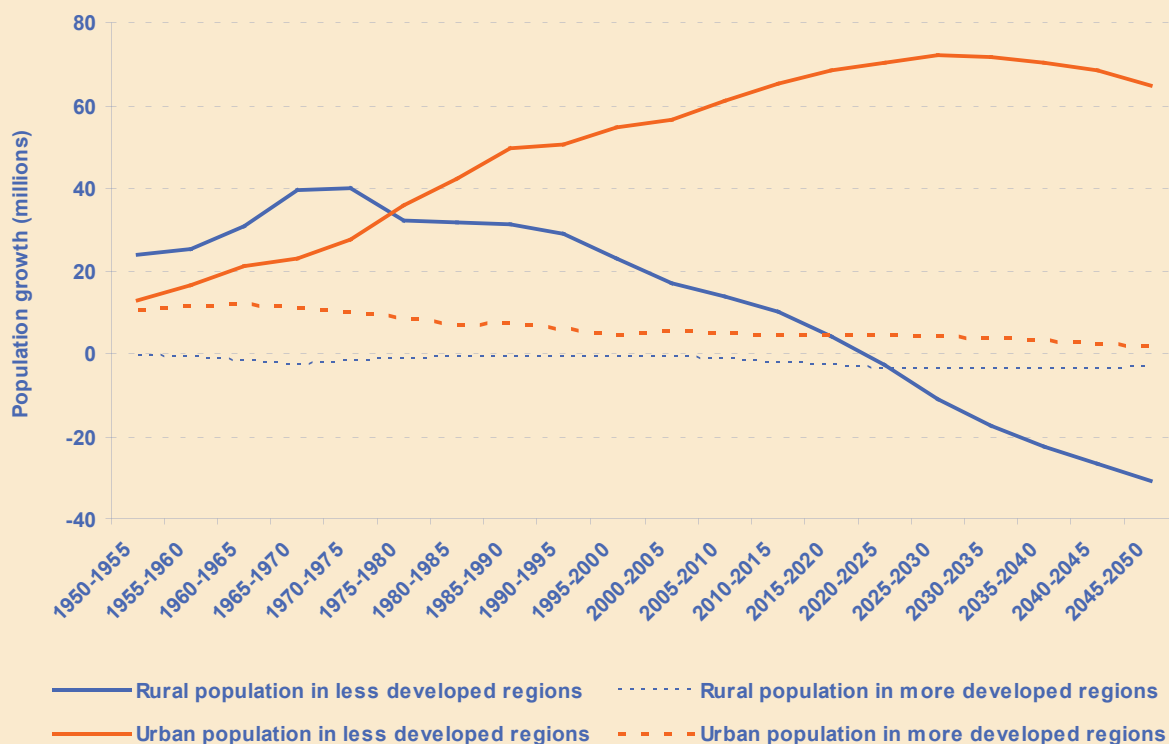


Figure 3. Annual growth of the urban and rural populations of the more developed and the less developed regions, 1950-2050



The rural population of the world is expected to reach a maximum of 3.5 billion in 2019 and then decline slowly to reach 2.8 billion in 2050. These global trends are driven mostly by the dynamics of rural population growth in the less developed regions, which are today home to 90 per cent of the world rural population. Whereas the rural population of the more developed regions has been declining steadily at least since 1950 and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future, the rural population of the less developed regions more than doubled since 1950 and will likely continue to grow until 2021 before a long-term decline sets in (figures 2 and 3).

Whereas in the more developed regions, more than half of the population was living in urban areas in 1950, in the less developed regions this 50 per cent threshold is projected to be reached only in 2019.

There is significant diversity in the urbanization levels reached by different regions and countries. Historically, the process of rapid urbanization started first in today's more developed regions. In 2007, Australia, New Zealand and Northern America had already reached very high levels of urbanization, surpassing 80 per cent. Europe, with 72 per cent of its population living in urban areas, was the least urbanized major area in the developed world (figure 4). By 2050, Australia, New Zealand and Northern America are all expected to be over 90 per cent urban while Europe's level of urbanization is projected to be lower, at 84 per cent.

Among the less developed regions, Latin America and the Caribbean has an exceptionally high level of urbanization (78 per cent), higher than that of Europe. Africa and Asia, in contrast, remain mostly rural, with 38 per cent and 41 per cent, respectively, of their populations living in urban areas. Over the coming decades, the level of urbanization is expected to increase in all major areas of the developing world, with Africa and Asia urbanizing more rapidly than the rest. Nevertheless, by mid-century, Africa and Asia are expected still to be less urbanized than

the more developed regions or Latin America and the Caribbean (figure 4).

The urban population of the world is highly concentrated in a few countries. In 2007, three-quarters of the 3.3 billion urban dwellers on Earth lived in 25 countries, whose urban populations ranged from 29 million in South Africa to 561 million in China. Most of the 25 countries with the largest urban populations are highly urbanized, but seven have levels of urbanization ranging from 27 per cent to just over 50 per cent and they include some of the most populous countries in the world: Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria and Pakistan.

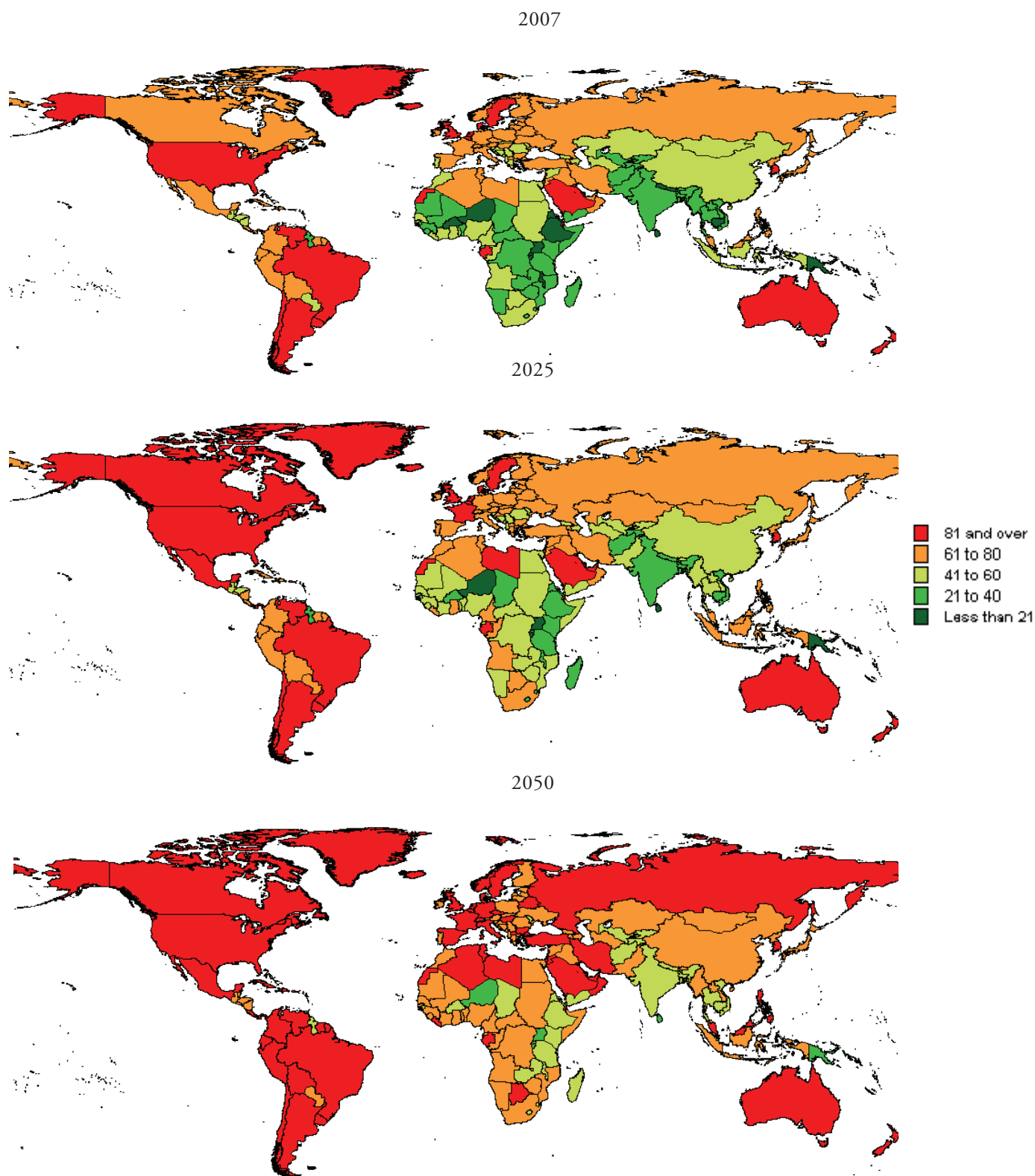
The rural population is even more highly concentrated in a few countries than the urban population. In 2007, 18 countries accounted for 75 per cent of the rural population of the world and all but three—Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States—are located in Africa or Asia.

Over half of the urban population lives in small urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants.

Today's 3.4 billion urban dwellers are distributed unevenly among urban settlements of different size. In discussing urbanization, the focus is usually on very big cities, whose populations are larger than those of many countries. Megacities are urban agglomerations with a population of at least 10 million. In 2007, 19 urban agglomerations qualified as megacities. With nearly 36 million inhabitants in 2007, Tokyo is by far the most populous megacity in the world. The next largest megacities are New York-Newark, Ciudad de México, Mumbai and São Paulo, each with about 19 million inhabitants. Despite their visibility and dynamism, megacities account for a small though increasing proportion of the world urban population: nearly 9 per cent in 2007 and an expected 10 per cent in 2025.

Large cities are urban agglomerations with population sizes ranging from 5 million to just under 10 million. In 2007, there were 30 large cities and their number is ex-

Figure 4. Percentage of the population in urban areas, 2007, 2025 and 2050



pected to reach 48 in 2025. However, large cities account for just 7 per cent of the urban population of the world. Three-quarters of these “megacities in waiting” are located in developing countries.

Medium-sized cities, with more than a million inhabitants but fewer than 5 million, are also numerous (382 in 2007 and projected to rise in number to 524 in 2025) and they account for 23 per cent of the urban population. Cities in the next size class, whose population sizes range from 500,000 to one million, are numerous as well (460 in 2007 and 551 in 2025), but they account for just 10 per cent of the overall urban population. Consequently, over half of the urban population lives and will continue to live in small urban centres with fewer than half a million inhabitants.

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP/205) may be downloaded from the Population Division’s website at www.unpopulation.org.

A database containing the results presented in *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision* can be accessed on the United Nations Population Division’s website at www.unpopulation.org. The data in digital form can also be purchased on CD-ROM. Additional information and pricing are available on the United Nations Population Division’s website. ■

Intergovernmental activities

The Forty-First Session of the Commission on Population and Development

The forty-first session of the Commission on Population and Development was held at United Nations Headquarters from 7 to 11 April 2008. The special theme for the session was “Population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development”.

A report entitled *World Population Monitoring on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development* was a key document considered by the Commission. The report highlighted the finding that, in 2008, the number of urban dwellers—3.4 billion in 2008—would equal for the first time in history the number of rural dwellers. In future, the vast majority of the population increase expected in the world would occur mostly in the urban areas of developing countries. However, natural increase, rather than rural to urban migration or

the reclassification of localities from rural to urban, made the major contribution to the rise in the urban population, often accounting for 60 per cent or more of the urban growth experienced by different developing countries. The report underscored that higher levels of urbanization were associated with positive social and economic outcomes and indicated how growing urbanization could contribute to the reduction of poverty, inequality and environmental degradation provided it was properly managed and was accompanied by measures that capitalized on the opportunities that urbanization produced. These findings were supported by a second report, entitled *Monitoring of Population Programmes, Focusing on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development*, which provided examples of national programmes that leveraged the opportunities that urbanization generated or assisted in addressing the challenges it posed.

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A third report on the *Flow of Financial Resources* for Assisting in the *Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development* showed that donor assistance for the implementation of the costed parts of the Programme of Action had been growing, reaching US\$ 7.4 billion in 2005. However, the resources mobilized did not adequately address current needs because the increase in funding had been absorbed mostly by programmes aimed at preventing or treating HIV/AIDS. As a result, funding for other components of the Programme of Action had stagnated or decreased. Funding for family planning, in particular, had been decreasing steadily and had not reached the suggested target of US\$ 11.5 billion in 2005.

The general debate that followed the presentation of the reports indicated that Governments had divided views about the benefits of the urbanization process and about internal migration. Thus, the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China noted that the reports presented “force us to consider the notion that urban population growth should be seen as a positive factor contributing to better development rather than the prevailing belief that population growth has harmful social and environmental consequences and should be slowed down at all costs. The Group of 77 and China believes that this latest viewpoint should be the subject of greater debate.” The statement further noted “the position that increased urban growth is more often a result of natural increase [...] rather than a consequence of migration. Nevertheless, unemployment, poverty and hunger are some other causes of accelerated migration from rural to urban areas in developing countries, which could affect the economic and social stability of many countries and regions.”

The European Union stated that “urbanization is a sign of modernization, industrialization and migration to large cities. It is a process by which a large number of people become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities. [...] Urbanization has been driven by the concentration of investment and employment opportunities. All over the world, urbanization is an integral part of economic and social development, [but] if rapid and unregulated, it can have adverse consequences for populations by straining the existing urban infrastructure and services and consequently [leading] to higher rates of urban poverty and environmental degradation.” Noting that urban growth stemmed mostly from natural increase, the European Union concluded that it was necessary for Governments to ensure long-term investments in sexual and reproductive health, family planning and the empowerment of women and girls. The urbanization of the world could neither be prevented nor stopped. Therefore, proactive urban governance that not only took care of current needs but also anticipated future city growth was necessary. In particular, migration to urban centres should not be prevented because, as current and historical evidence showed, urbanization could, in the long-run, contribute to reducing poverty. To do so, the challenges posed by urbanization could not be addressed in isolation from rural development. Just as the G77 and China, the European Union considered that rural poverty in developing countries needed to be effectively addressed.

The United States agreed that there were many benefits to be derived from urbanization and that urbanization was a critical element of economic growth. Nevertheless, Governments needed to create enabling environments where pro-poor and pro-growth policies allowed urbanization to raise the standards of living of city-dwellers. The United States shared the view that urbanization had to be

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addressed as an issue affecting both urban and rural areas. It supported working with local institutions to enhance their capacity to address urban and spatial issues, and to forge urban-rural linkages that would improve the lives of both the urban and the rural poor. It also shared the view that continued urbanization without sufficient planning by local, regional and national institutions was unlikely to lead to sustainable development. Accordingly, the United States did not believe that faster urbanization should be encouraged nor that urbanization should be hindered. Instead, Governments were well advised to generate options for dealing with growing urbanization rather than merely reacting to its occurrence. In that regard, the private sector could play a key role in up-scaling promising interventions.

The Commission heard four keynote addresses on different aspects of urbanization, population distribution, internal migration and development. The first keynote speaker was David Satterthwaite, Senior Fellow at the Human Settlements Programme of the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, who spoke on urbanization and internal migration and their relevance for sustainable development. The second speaker was Mark Montgomery, Senior Associate at the Policy Research Division of Population Council in New York and Professor of Economics at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, who spoke about the health of urban populations in low- and middle-income countries. The third speaker was Helen Zille, Mayor of Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, who talked about urban governance, lessons learned and challenges ahead, based mostly on the case of Cape Town. The last speaker was Eduardo Moreno, Chief of the Global Urban Observatory of the Monitoring System Branch of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) in Nairobi, whose keynote address focused on improving the lives of urban slum dwellers.

In its consideration of follow-up actions to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Commission decided that the theme of its forty-third session, to be held in 2010, would be "Health, morbidity, mortality and development". The

Commission also adopted a resolution on population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development which included directions for action at the national, regional and international levels. In that resolution, the Commission recognized that the world population was undergoing a historic and unprecedented transformation from being mostly rural to being predominantly urban, with major disparities in the level of urbanization remaining among regions and countries. With the number of urban dwellers in developing countries growing significantly, future population growth would be concentrated primarily in the urban areas of developing countries, particularly in small and medium-sized cities. The Commission further recognized that natural increase, internal migration and the reclassification of rural areas as urban contributed to urban population growth, and that poverty, unemployment, hunger and malnutrition were some of the major causes of rural to urban migration in many developing countries. The Commission also recognized that even if the levels of poverty were highest in rural areas, they were increasing in the urban areas of some developing countries and that the urban poor were especially vulnerable and often had no other option but to live in slums. The Commission considered that the rapid urbanization of the world's population required integrated and participatory approaches to spatial management, including through coordinated action between national Governments and local authorities, with the support of the international community. In this regard, the resolution urged Governments to promote linkages between urban and rural areas in recognition of their economic, social and environmental interdependence. In the same resolution, the Commission called upon Governments to address the challenges and opportunities of urban growth and internal migration by taking prompt, forward-looking and sustained action to ensure that those phenomena would have a positive impact on economic growth, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability and, in doing so, to enable the participation and representation of all relevant stakeholders in planning for an urban future. The resolution called upon the international community to support the efforts of developing countries in this regard, including through building capacities to respond to these challenges and opportunities.

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The Commission heard a statement by the President of the Economic and Social Council on the new functions of the Council (relating to the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum) and the opportunities arising from those new functions for further

interaction between the Council and the Commission on Population and Development. The Commission also approved the draft provisional agenda for its forty-second session and adopted the report of its forty-first session. The full text of the resolution on population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development as well as the decisions adopted by the forty-first session of the Commission are available on the website of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations at www.unpopulation.org. Also available on the website are the statements made by government representatives and all the official documentation considered by the Commission. ■

Meetings

United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, International Migration and Development

The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations Secretariat convened an Expert Group Meeting on "Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development" from 21 to 23 January 2008 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The objective of the meeting was to evaluate the implications of the historic transformation of the world's population from mostly rural to increasingly urban.

The meeting brought together 57 specialists working on various aspects of the urbanization process to present and discuss the patterns, causes and implications of the changing spatial distribution of the population in different parts of the world. The participants included 18 experts from academic and research institutions; 13 representatives of the United Nations system (agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions); three representatives

of Governments; eight representatives of other relevant international, governmental and non-governmental organizations; and 15 staff members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations Secretariat.

The meeting was organized around six sessions entitled: (1) Urbanization: A global perspective; (2) Urban growth and internal migration: Policy dimensions; (3) Rural and urban development: Linkages and disparities; (4) Urban infrastructure, health and poverty; (5) Urban planning and economic growth, and (6) Spatial distribution of the population and climate change.

The meeting highlighted the implications of increasing world urbanization, noting that in 2008, for the first time in history, half of the population of the world lived in settlements classified as urban. It also documented how

urbanization had had and could continue to have positive impacts on social and economic development as well as on environmental sustainability provided it was supported by adequate policies and management practices.

The first session provided a global overview of urbanization trends. *The 2007 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects*, prepared by the Population Division/DESA, presented for the first time projected levels of urbanization until 2050 and corroborated that, at the world level, the population had become slightly more urban than rural in 2008. Nevertheless, levels of urbanization still varied considerably among world regions and countries, with Africa and Asia still being mostly rural and the other major areas being highly urbanized. Almost all of the population growth expected to occur up to 2050 would be absorbed by the urban areas of developing countries and 80 per cent of the expected urban growth would be concentrated in the urban settlements of Africa and Asia.

Assessments of the components of urban growth indicated that, in most developing countries, urban population growth was still fuelled mainly by natural increase (i.e., the difference of births over deaths) rather than by internal migration or the reclassification of rural localities as urban. A notable exception to this generalization was China where rises in urbanization over the past two decades were associated both with the reclassification of large localities from rural to urban and with increases in rural-to-urban migration spurred by the rapid economic growth that the country had been experiencing.

Studies on internal migration showed that in many countries, rural-to-urban migration did not constitute the most important type of internal migration. In highly urbanized countries, urban-to-urban migration tended to dominate, whereas rural-to-rural population movements were very common in countries that were still mostly rural.

Despite the attention paid to large cities, especially the megacities that concentrate at least 10 million people, about half of the world's urban population lived in cities with fewer than half a million inhabitants and the popula-

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tions of those small cities had been growing faster than those of more populous cities.

In developing countries, analysis carried out by the World Bank indicated that poverty was more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas but, at the same time, the number of poor people was increasing faster in urban areas, especially in regions that were highly urbanized.

The second session focused on how rural-urban migration contributed to the redistribution of population and the growth of cities and on its role as a means of improving the living conditions of migrants and contributing to development. The role of Government policies and other measures in shaping internal migration and urban growth was discussed. The cases of Brazil, China and specific cities in Asia showed that it is virtually impossible for Governments to stop migration to the cities, especially when the latter provide the educational and job opportunities that migrants seek. Therefore, policies that restrict the movement of people generally fail even as they produce undue burdens for migrants. Instead of pursuing such policies, Governments would do well to plan for the population growth expected in cities and ensure that their growing populations, including migrants and the urban poor, have access to adequate basic services.

The third session dealt with diverse aspects of urban dynamics and its relationships to rural areas, especially in

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regard to the relationship between internal migration and economic development. It documented the well-known fact that income differentials between origin and destination were an important reason for migrating and showed that remittances from urban to rural households could help reduce income gaps between the two. In Africa, the migration of household members was shown to be a household strategy to diversify sources of income, just as it did in Latin America according to the extensive literature on rural household survival strategies in that region.

The fourth session examined the rural and urban differences in levels and trends in health and mortality in developing countries. Whereas child mortality had continued to decline in most developing countries over the past two decades, it had stalled or even increased in some countries of sub-Saharan Africa in the past decade or so. Indicators of malnutrition among children and levels of child mortality were higher in slums than in other parts of urban settlements but were usually not as high as in rural areas. These results pointed to the urgency of addressing the health needs of the poorer and most vulnerable segments of society, whether they lived in urban or rural areas.

The fifth session focused on the impact of globalization on urban development in the Asia and the Pacific, with a specific focus on the Pearl River Delta of China. Cities in Asia had played a major role in global urbanization. Currently, 66 of the 100 fastest growing cities in the world were in Asia. Many Asian countries were more highly urbanized than the United States had been at an equivalent level of development (measured by GDP per capita). In addition, many cities in Asia had higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions than cities of similar sizes in other parts of the world, largely because of their rapid industrialization and development. But changes were occurring fast. In China, for instance, the move away from coal was taking place at a lower level of per capita income than in United States in the past. Also, Asian countries had lower emission levels per mile of transport than the United States had at the same level of per capita income.

The last session focused on the effects of climate change for urban populations and on the impact of demographic

factors on violent conflict. Despite claims to the contrary, there was little empirical support for the hypothesis that population growth or population density led to armed conflict or violence in developing countries. Regarding the likely effects of climate change, they would exacerbate the problems faced by some urban areas, particularly those lacking adequate infrastructure or having large numbers of poor people living under conditions of marginalization. Even without the prospect of climate change, it was urgent to address the deficits in infrastructure affecting cities in both the developed and the developing world. It was also important to develop strategies to cope with the anticipated increase in extreme weather events, particularly those affecting coastal areas. It was suggested that, compiling data on the past effects of extreme weather events on coastal cities would facilitate planning to mitigate those effects. In some circumstances, the relocation of populations to safer areas might need to be contemplated.

Even without the prospect of climate change, it is urgent to address the deficits in infrastructure affecting cities in both the developed and the developing world.

It was also crucial to mitigate the effect of development and urbanization on the climate. Cities were better placed than rural areas to enforce good practices regarding energy use and the use of other resources and to disseminate information and promote behavioural change to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Except for tropical deforestation and the breeding of cattle, the major sources of greenhouse house emissions were in or close to cities, including industry, transportation and energy production. Therefore cities were likely to play a key role in controlling those emissions.

The Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population Distribution, Urbanization, Internal Migration and Development (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP.206) may be downloaded from the Population Division's website at www.unpopulation.org. ■

Wall charts

World Contraceptive Use 2007

The wall chart on *World Contraceptive Use 2007*, issued in 2008, presents estimates of two of the indicators of reproductive health required to monitor the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, namely, contraceptive prevalence and unmet need for family planning for 170 countries or areas. The estimates presented refer to the most recent data collected since 1985 by surveys based on nationally representative samples of women of reproductive age (usually between the ages of 15 and 49).

Contraceptive prevalence is defined as the percentage of women currently using contraception among those of reproductive age who are married or in union, where a union involves a man and a woman regularly cohabiting in a marriage-like relationship. Prevalence levels are reported for countries and country aggregates. For countries with sufficient data, the wall chart also includes an indicator of recent trends in contraceptive use, estimated as the annual change in contraceptive prevalence between 1997 and 2007.

Women with unmet need for family planning are those who were fecund but not using contraception at the time of the survey and yet reported not wanting any more children or wanting to delay their next birth. Information on unmet need for family planning is provided for all countries having the required data.

Worldwide, contraceptive prevalence reached 63 per cent in 2007.

Worldwide, 63 per cent or 716 million of the more than one billion women of reproductive age who were married or in union were using contraception in 2007. However, this contraceptive prevalence level varied mark-

edly across regions. On average, contraceptive prevalence was high in Asia (68 per cent), Europe (68 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (71 per cent), Northern Africa (60 per cent), Northern America (73 per cent) and Australia/New Zealand (68 per cent). By contrast, the levels of contraceptive use were still below 30 per cent in Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia (27 per cent) and in sub-Saharan Africa (22 per cent).

Contraceptive use has continued to increase in the less developed regions as a whole.

In 44 per cent of the developing countries with data, contraceptive prevalence has increased by more than one percentage point per year since 1997. However, in 32 per cent of all developing countries, the increase in contraceptive prevalence has been below half a percentage point per year. Most least developed countries in sub-Saharan Africa are in this group and still have contraceptive prevalence levels below 20 per cent. In developed countries, contraceptive prevalence has been high for decades and its levels have changed little since 1997.

Universal access to reproductive health is still far from being attained.

Despite the increase in contraceptive prevalence, universal access to reproductive health is still far from being achieved. In Africa, in almost half of the 42 countries with the required data between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of women of reproductive age who were married or in union had an unmet need for family planning, and in another quarter of those 42 countries, the unmet need surpassed 30 per cent. In Asia and Latin America and the

Caribbean, countries having the required data had levels of unmet need below 20 per cent. Only in developed countries were the levels of unmet need mostly below 10 per cent. Generally, the levels of unmet need for family planning were lowest where contraceptive prevalence surpassed 60 per cent.

Nine out of every 10 contraceptive users in the world rely on modern methods.

Nine out of every 10 contraceptive users in the world relied on modern methods. At the world level, 56 per cent of women of reproductive age who were married or in union used a modern method of contraception in 2007. Female sterilization was the most commonly used modern method of contraception, with a prevalence of 20 per cent. Intra-uterine devices or IUDs (16 per cent), the pill (9 per cent) and the male condom (6 per cent) followed in order of prevalence. Short-acting and reversible methods were

more popular in developed than in developing countries, whereas longer-acting and highly effective clinical methods were used more frequently in developing countries than in developed countries. Thus, in the more developed regions, use of the pill (17 per cent) and the male condom (14 per cent) had the highest prevalence. In the less developed regions, by contrast, female sterilization (22 per cent) and IUDs (17 per cent) scored the highest prevalence. Traditional methods, which are less effective in preventing pregnancy, are still commonly used in Middle Africa, Western Africa and Eastern Europe, where 76 per cent, 37 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively, of married women using a contraceptive relied on a traditional method.

The wall chart on World Contraceptive Use 2007 (United Nations publication Sales No. E.08.XIII.6) is available for US\$ 10.00 from United Nations Publications, Two UN Plaza, Room DC2-853, Dept. PRES, New York, NY 10017 USA; Tel.: 1-800-253-9646 or 1-212-963-8302, Fax: 1-212-963-3489, E-mail: publications@un.org. ■

Data on CD-ROM

Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1950-2005: CD-ROM Edition

Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1950-2005 is a CD-ROM presenting in Excel format a new set of estimates produced by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat on the urban and rural populations by five-year age group and sex. The estimates refer to every year that is multiple of five during the period 1950-2005 and cover all the major areas, regions and countries of the world (the 175 countries or areas with more than 300,000 inhabitants in 2005). They address the need for detailed and systematic data on urban and rural populations and should be of value for research and policy analysis on changes in age structure related to the spatial distribution of the population.

The CD-ROM also contains a methodological note describing the method used to derive the estimates. The basic data used as input were obtained from population censuses or population registers and were compiled either by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and published in various issues of the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* or by the U.S. Census Bureau and presented in the online *International Data Base* maintained by that institution.

As the population pyramids for the urban and rural populations of the developed and the developing world show, whereas in developed countries in 2005 the age

distributions of the urban and rural populations are very similar, the same does not hold for developing countries. In the less developed regions of the world, the rural population is considerably younger than the urban population because fertility has fallen lower and faster in urban areas than in rural areas. Consequently, among the population of children in developing countries, the proportion living in rural areas is higher than the equivalent proportion for other age groups.

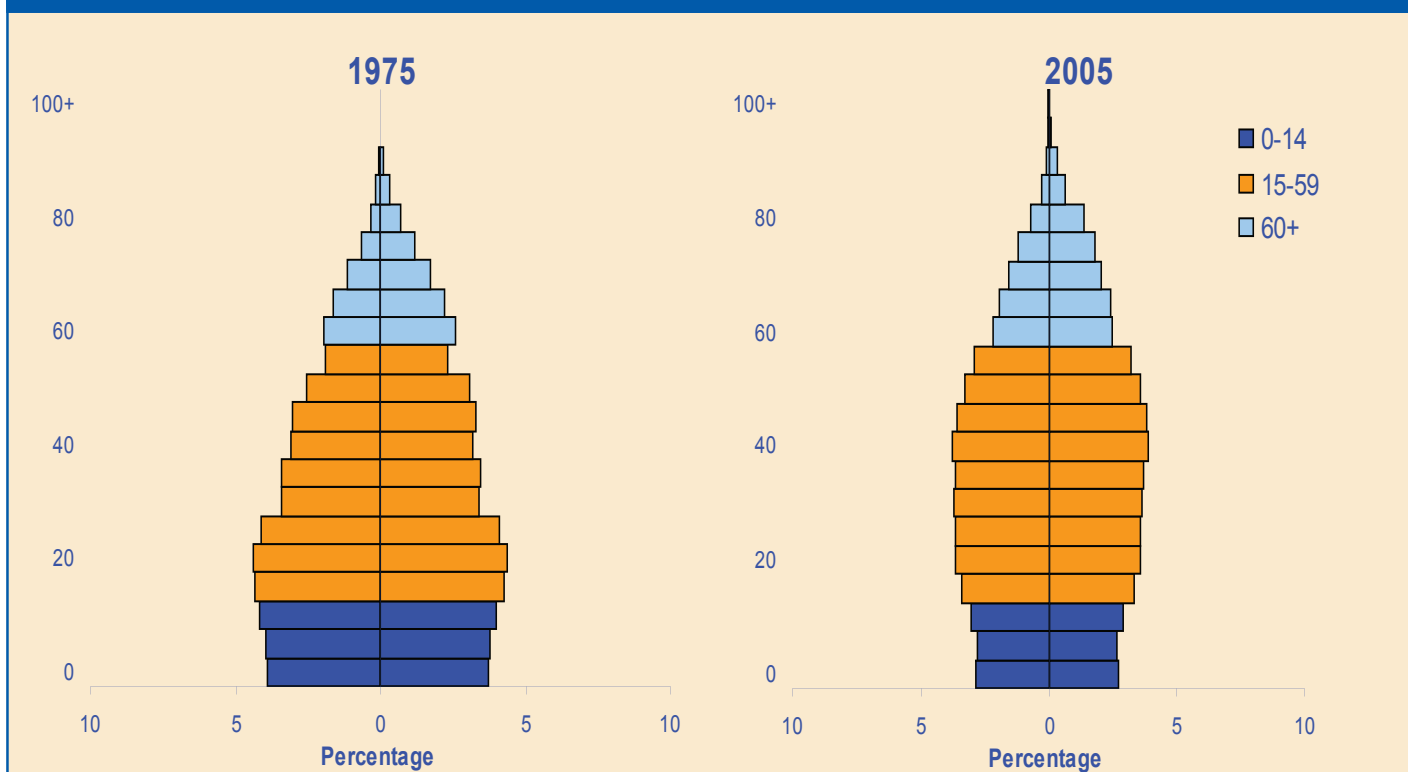
In developing countries, the population of working age (15 to 59) is more urbanized than that of children (under age 15), indicating that the process of urbanization leads to a higher concentration of working age people in urban centres. Furthermore, among persons of working age in

developing countries as a whole, men are more urbanized than women.

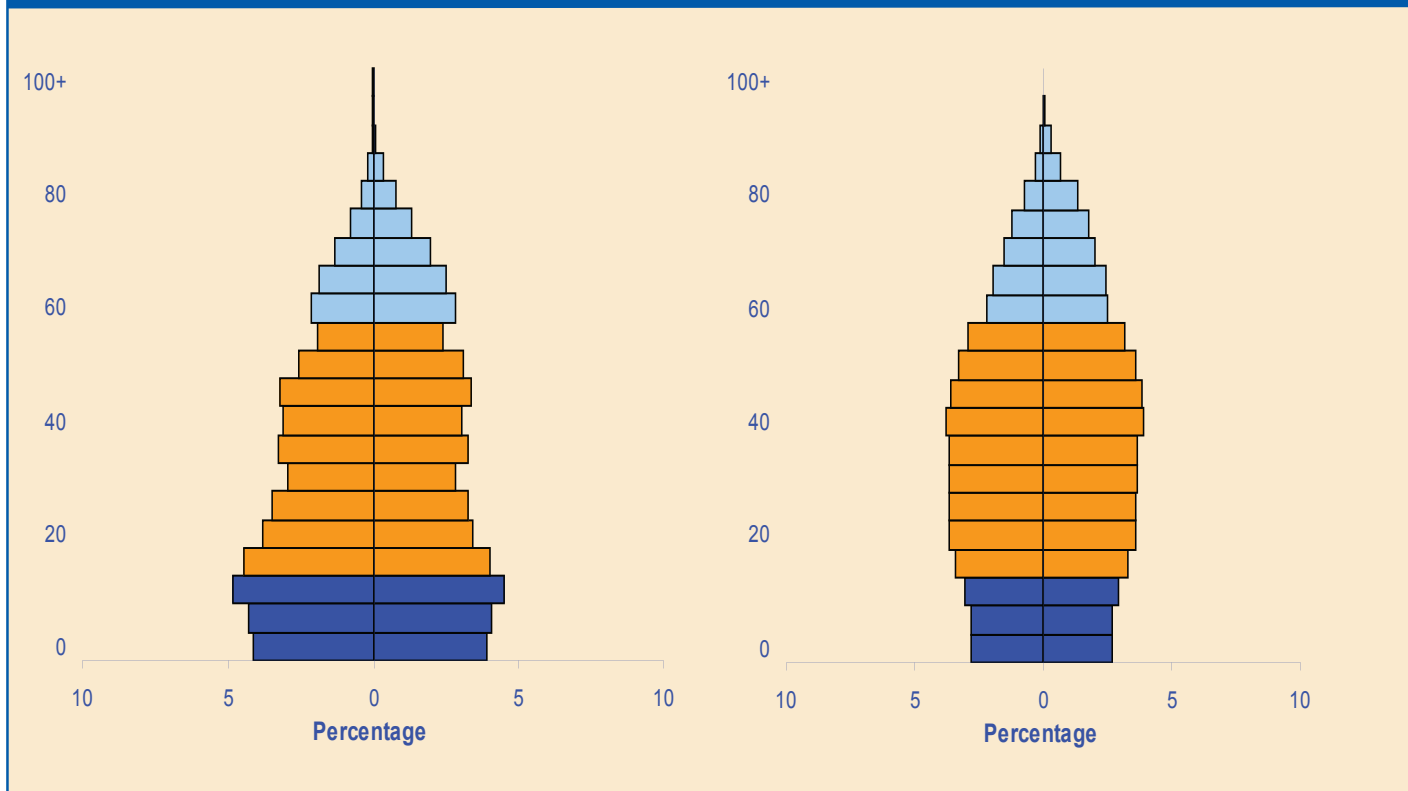
In the more developed regions, older women outnumber older men in both urban and rural areas. Thus, in urban areas there is one man aged 60 or over for every male child aged 0 to 14. The equivalent ratio among females is 1.5 women aged 60 or over for every female aged 0 to 14.

The data underlying these and other findings can be found in the CD-ROM entitled *Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1950-2005* (POP/DB/URPAS/2008), which is available for purchase. An order form may be downloaded from the Population Division's website at www.unpopulation.org. ■

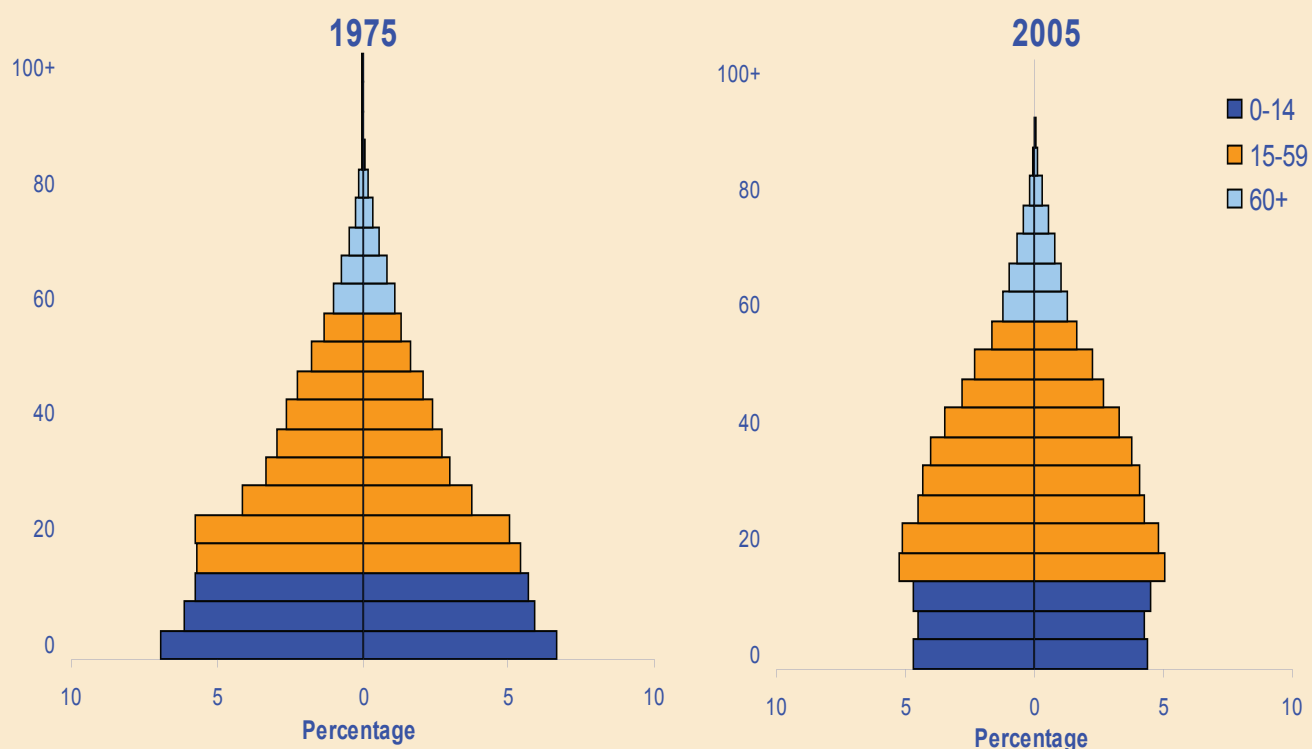
Urban population in the more developed regions



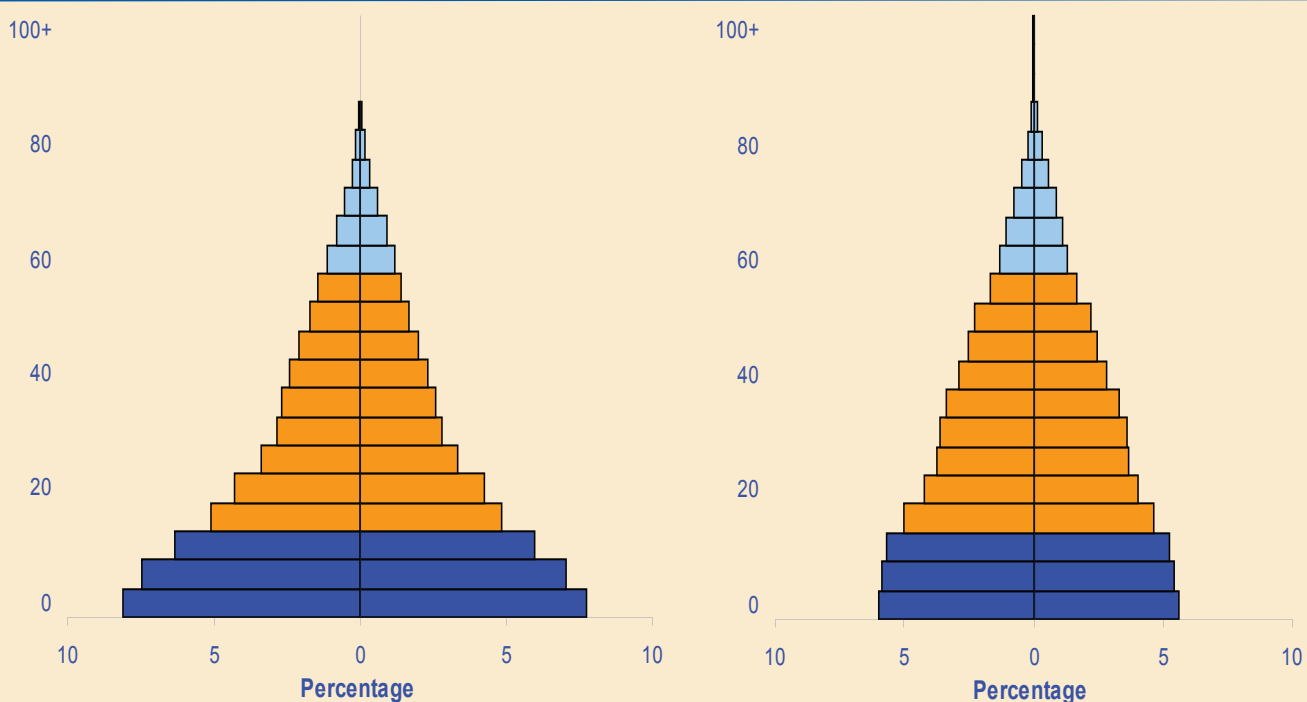
Rural population in the more developed regions



Urban population in the less developed regions



Rural population in the less developed regions



Resolutions

Resolution 2008/1 on Population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development. Adopted by the Commission on Population and Development during its forty-first session, 7-11 April 2008

The Commission on Population and Development,

Recalling the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,¹ in particular chapter IX, on population distribution, urbanization and internal migration, and the key actions for further implementation of the Programme of Action,² in particular section II.D, on internal migration, population distribution and urban agglomerations,

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration³ and the 2005 World Summit Outcome,⁴ as well as General Assembly resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006 on the follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals,

Recalling further the relevant provisions on population distribution, urbanization and internal migration and development contained, inter alia, in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,⁵ Agenda 21,⁶ the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,⁷ the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development⁸ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),⁹ the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and its Programme of Action,¹⁰ the Habitat Agenda¹¹ and the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium,¹² as well as the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of 2 June 2006,¹³ the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,¹⁴ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action¹⁵ and the Barbados Programme of Action,¹⁶

Recognizing that the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population

and Development and the key actions for its further implementation are integrally linked to global efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development and that the achievement of the goals of the Programme of Action is consistent with and makes an essential contribution to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing also that the world population is undergoing a historic and unprecedented transformation from being mostly rural to being predominantly urban, but that major disparities in the level of urbanization remain among regions and countries, with Africa and Asia still being mostly rural and other regions being highly urbanized, and therefore that this transformation requires integrated and participatory approaches to spatial management, including through coordinated action between national Governments and local authorities, with the support of the international community,

Recognizing further the negative impact of environmental degradation, including climate change, on population distribution, internal migration, urbanization and development, as well as the challenges that rural and urban transformations carry for environmental sustainability,

Noting that the number of urban dwellers in developing countries is growing significantly and that future population growth will be concentrated primarily in the urban areas of developing countries, particularly in small and medium-sized cities,

Recognizing that natural increase, internal migration and the reclassification of rural areas as urban contribute to urban population growth,

Recognizing also that the levels of poverty are highest in rural areas, that poverty levels are increasing in the urban areas of some developing countries and that the urban poor are especially vulnerable and often have no other option but to live in slums, which are characterized by overcrowded conditions, unsafe housing, crime and other social problems, and lack of access to improved water sources, sanitation and health services,

Recognizing further that in developing countries, there are differences among urban settings regarding access to social services,

Recalling the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal in strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General on world population monitoring¹⁷ and on the monitoring of population programmes,¹⁸ both of which focus on population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development, and taking note also of the report of the Secretary-General on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,¹⁹

Acknowledging that for developing countries that cannot generate sufficient resources, the lack of adequate funding remains the chief constraint to the full implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and urging the international community, including Governments of both donors and developing countries, to continue to mobilize the required resources for the full implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into consideration current needs,

Recognizing that poverty, unemployment, hunger and malnutrition are some of the major causes of migration from rural to urban areas in many developing countries,

Affirming that all States and all people should cooperate to eradicate poverty and attain sustainable development in order to decrease disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world,

1. *Reaffirms* the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development¹ and the key actions for its further implementation;²

2. *Calls* upon Governments, in formulating population distribution policies, to ensure that their objectives and goals are consistent with internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the eradication of poverty in both urban and rural areas, the promotion of gender equality, equity and empowerment of women and environmental sustainability;

3. *Reaffirms* the commitments to, and emphasizes the need to fully implement, the global partnership for development set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,³ the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development¹⁴ and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit for Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),⁹ and to enhance the momentum generated by the 2005 World Summit in order to operationalize and implement, at all levels, the commitments set out in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the 2005 World Summit, in the economic, social and related fields;

4. *Calls* upon Governments to address the challenges and opportunities of urban growth and internal migration by taking prompt, forward-looking and sustained action to ensure that those phenomena have a positive impact on economic growth, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability and, in doing so, to enable the participation

and representation of all relevant stakeholders in planning for an urban future, and calls upon the international community to support the efforts of developing countries in this regard, including through building capacities to respond to these challenges and opportunities;

5. *Urges* Governments to promote development that would encourage linkages between urban and rural areas in recognition of their economic, social and environmental interdependence;

6. *Emphasizes* the need to eradicate poverty in rural areas, including through strategies that, integrating a gender perspective, are aimed at promoting interactions between cities and rural localities, particularly by generating employment for rural residents, creating opportunities to market agricultural products in urban areas and facilitating access to credit, education, vocational training and health services for rural residents and rural-urban migrants;

7. *Also emphasizes*, in the context of population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development, and bearing in mind national priorities, the importance of establishing and funding active labour market policies devoted to the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including the full participation of women in all international and national development and poverty eradication strategies, the creation of more and better jobs for women, both urban and rural, and their inclusion in social protection and social dialogue;

8. *Urges* Governments to improve the plight of the urban poor, many of whom work in the informal sector of the economy, and to promote the integration of internal migrants from rural areas into urban areas by developing and improving their income-earning capability, with special attention to women, in particular female workers and female heads of households;

9. *Calls* upon Governments to take into account the impacts of population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development in the formulation of family-sensitive policies in the field of housing, work, health, social security and education;

10. *Also calls* upon Governments to increase the capacity and competence of city and municipal authorities to manage urban development to safeguard the environment, to respond to the need of all citizens, including young people and urban squatters, for personal safety, basic infrastructure and services, to eliminate health and social problems, including problems of drugs and criminality, and problems resulting from overcrowding and disasters, and to provide people with alternatives to living in areas prone to natural and man-made disasters;

11. *Urges* Governments to promote healthy living in both rural and urban areas in all spheres of health, including sexual and reproductive health, in particular the improvement of maternal, child and adolescent health, and efforts to reduce maternal and child mortality, in the light of the challenges and opportunities presented by population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development;

12. *Calls* upon Governments to develop and implement policies aimed at ensuring that all persons, irrespective of where they live, have adequate economic and social protection during old age;

13. *Recognizes* that the effective implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development requires an increased commitment of financial resources, both domestically and externally, and in this context calls upon developed countries to complement the national financial efforts of developing countries related to population and development and to intensify their efforts to transfer new and additional resources to the developing countries, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Programme of Action, in order to ensure that population and development objectives and goals are met;

14. *Notes* that recent increases in the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action have been primarily a result of the increased funding for HIV/AIDS activities, and expresses

concern that funding for family planning is far below the suggested targets;

15. *Encourages* Governments, in formulating and implementing policies, strategies and programmes on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and on other communicable diseases, to focus on the diverse and special needs of urban and rural populations and of migrant populations, including temporary migrants, and emphasizes the need to address the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic;

16. *Also encourages* Governments to promote the principles and practice of sustainable urbanization in order to address environmental issues, including climate change, thereby reducing the vulnerability of the low-income sectors of society to the risks posed by environmental impacts in a rapidly urbanizing world, and invites the international donor community to support the efforts of developing countries in this regard;

17. *Urges* Governments to set up or, where they already exist, to strengthen relevant institutions and mechanisms for spatially disaggregated data collection, demographic estimates and projections by age, sex and household composition linked to environmental, economic and social issues at the national and local levels in order to inform policy formulation, regional, urban and rural planning, the planning of service provision, investment decisions or advocacy in favour of vulnerable and marginalized groups, bearing in mind the gender perspective;

18. *Stresses* the need for technical and financial support for the activities associated with the preparation and conduct of the 2010 round of population censuses, which will provide important data on urban and rural development;

19. *Acknowledges* that the United Nations regional commissions play an important role in adapting the international population and development agenda to the regional contexts, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue relying on the regional commissions for the

implementation of the regional population and development agendas;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue, in the framework of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, his substantive work on population distribution, urbanization and internal migration, including integrating a gender perspective into its analyses and recommendations, in collaboration and coordination with relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other relevant international organizations, and to continue assessing the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives on population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development set out in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, giving due consideration to their implications for development.

NOTES

¹ *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

² See General Assembly resolution S-21/2, annex; *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first special session, Supplement No. 3* (A/S-21/5/Rev.1); and A/S-21/PV.9.

³ See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

⁴ See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

⁵ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex I.

⁶ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁷ General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

⁸ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁹ *Ibid.*, chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

¹⁰ *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

¹¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

¹² General Assembly resolution S-25/2, annex.

¹³ See General Assembly resolution 60/262, annex.

¹⁴ *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

¹⁵ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

¹⁶ *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

¹⁷ E/CN.9/2008/3 and Corr.1.

¹⁸ E/CN.9/2008/4.

¹⁹ E/CN.9/2008/5.



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