

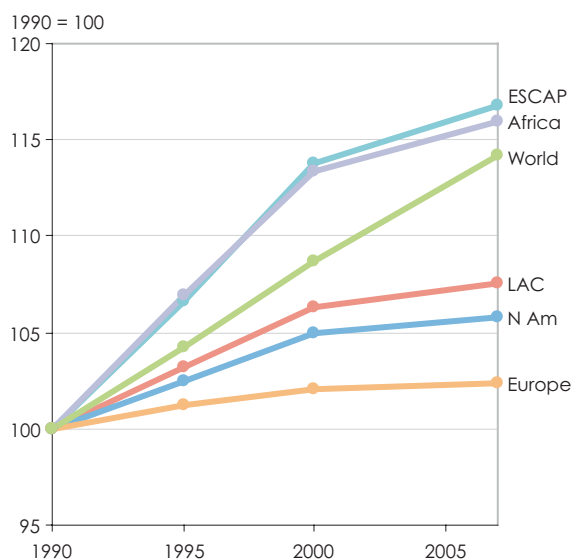
2. Urbanization

This year represents a turning point in human geography. For the first time in history, there are more people living in cities than in rural areas.

Rural-urban migration is directly linked to the development process of countries. The significant social, economic and political consequences of population changes make it vital to understand how the distribution of people between rural and urban areas evolves over time.

Although the Asian and the Pacific region, along with Africa, is still one of the least urbanized regions of the world, its urban population has been growing at the fastest pace during the last decade and a half. In 1990, 33 per cent of the population of Asia lived in urban areas, compared with 41 per cent today. The fastest influx of people from rural areas to cities has occurred in ASEAN countries, where the urbanization rate rose from 32 per cent in 1990 to 45 per cent in 2006.

Figure 2.1 Index of change in the urbanization rate in the regions of the world, 1990-2006



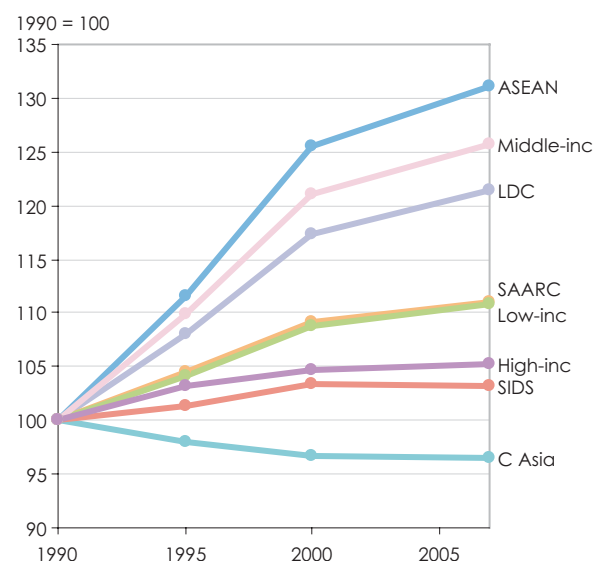
Urbanization has been an integral part of the rapid economic growth experienced by Asia and the Pacific in recent decades. Rural-urban migration in middle-income countries increased by 12 percentage points over the last decade and a half, mobilizing the labour force needed in these expanding economies.

In 1990, just under half the population of ASEAN member countries Malaysia and the Philippines lived in urban areas; by 2006, that number had reached about two thirds. Over the same period, the proportion of Indonesians living in cities increased from less than one third to almost

half. The urbanization rate also increased considerably in China, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, among others.

The Central Asian countries and the landlocked developing countries were the only subgroups that experienced a decline in the urban population, by 2 percentage points between 1990 and 2006. The fall in the urbanization rate of the Central Asian countries is partly due to international migration, which is covered in the next section.

Figure 2.2 Index of change in the urbanization rate in selected Asian and Pacific country groupings, 1990-2006



Although urbanization has contributed to economic growth, it has also driven up urban poverty. This phenomenon is particularly evident in heavily populated slums characterized by substandard housing and poor access to basic services.

In Asia and the Pacific, two out of five urban dwellers live in slums, compared with three out of five in Africa. Still, the share of the urban population living in such conditions, at 44 per cent, is notably higher than the 33 per cent prevailing in Latin America and the Caribbean.

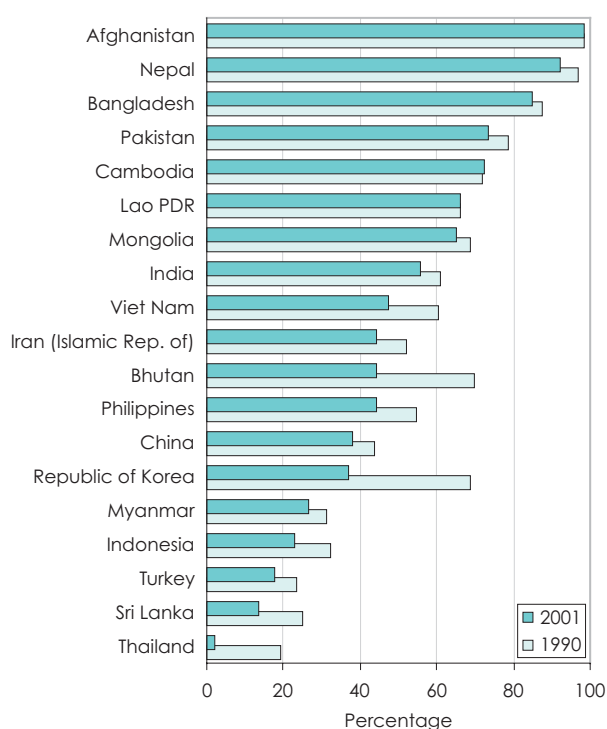
The share of the urban population living in slums in ASEAN countries has decreased by 10 percentage points in just over a decade, faster than anywhere else in the Asian and the Pacific region. In Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, however, the proportion of urban dwellers living in slums has remained constant, in contrast with the other ASEAN countries.

Riding on the strength of economies that boomed for most of the 1990s, the Republic of

Korea and Thailand are two countries that have achieved impressive reductions in the number of urban slum-dwellers. Other countries in the region, however, have fared quite differently.

In least developed countries that are members of SAARC, there are continuously large numbers of people living in slums. In Afghanistan, 99 per cent of the urban population lives in slums, and Nepal and Bangladesh continue to have high proportions — 92 and 85 per cent, respectively — of the urban population living in slums, although they have had some success in containing the problem.

Figure 2.3 Share of slum population in urban areas in selected Asian and Pacific countries, 1990 and 2001



Whether they are a consequence or a cause of high population density, large slum settlements in Bangladesh make the country one of the 10 most densely populated countries in the world.

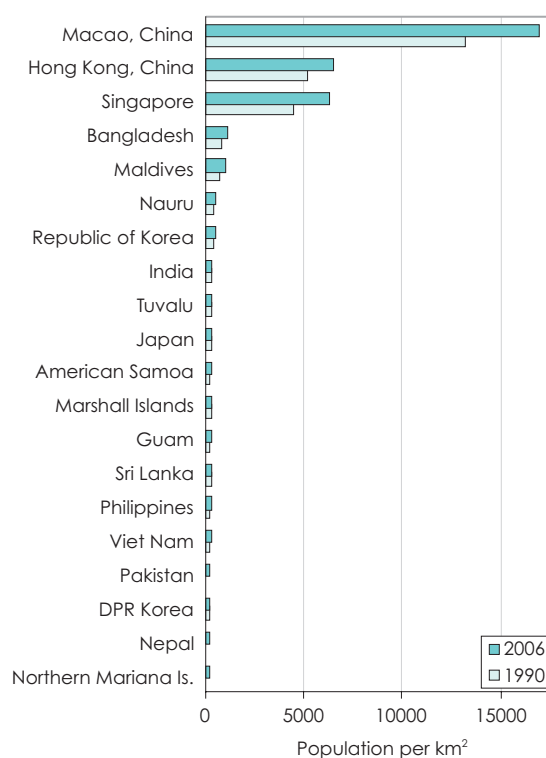
The Asian and Pacific region has the second highest population density in the world after Europe. It is more than twice the level of Africa and

close to three times that of Latin America and the Caribbean. Population density in Africa, however, increased by over 48 per cent between 1990 and 2005, a much faster pace than the 23 per cent increase registered in Asia and the Pacific.

Macao, China, has the highest population density not only in the region, but in the entire world, at 16,934 persons per square kilometre. In the region, it is followed by Hong Kong, China, and Singapore, which both have over 6,500 persons per square kilometre.

In Asia and the Pacific, the SAARC member countries and the least developed countries especially have become more densely populated; as groups, they have the highest population densities in the world. The SAARC region has a density of 300 people per square kilometre, compared with 126 in the ASEAN region, and 18 in the Central Asian countries — equivalent to the population density of North America.

Figure 2.4 Population density in selected Asian and Pacific countries, 1990 and 2006



Urbanization rate (percentage of total population):

Population living in areas classified as urban according to the administrative criteria used by each country or area, as a percentage of the total population. *Aggregates:* Averages are calculated using total population as weight. *Source:* World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database (online database, accessed in July 2007).

Average annual urban population growth rate (percentage):

The rate of change of the urban population. Reported for five-year periods starting and ending in the middle of the indicated years. *Aggregates:* Averages are calculated using urban population as weight. *Source:* Calculated by ESCAP using data from World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database (online database, accessed in July 2007).

Slum population (percentage of urban population):

Number of people in households living in slum dwellings. Reported as a share of the urban population. A slum household is a group of individuals living under the same roof who lack one or more (in some cities, two or more) of the following conditions: security of tenure, structural quality and durability of dwellings, access to safe water, access to sanitation facilities and sufficient living area. *Aggregates:* Averages are calculated using the urban population as weight. *Source:* United Nations Millennium Development Goals Indicators (online database, accessed in September 2007).

Population density (population per km²):

Number of people per square kilometre of the surface area. Total surface area comprises total land area, inland and tidal water area. *Aggregates:* Averages are calculated as total population divided by total surface area. *Source:* Calculated by ESCAP using data from *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision* Population Database (online database, accessed in July 2007) and United Nations Common database (online database, accessed in September 2007).

2.1 Urbanization

	Urbanization rate					Average annual urban population growth rate				Slum population	
	% of total population					Percentage				% of urban population	
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	90-95	95-00	00-05	2006	1990	2001
East and North-East Asia											
China	27.4	31.4	35.8	40.4	41.3	3.9	3.6	3.2	2.9	43.6	37.8
DPR Korea	58.4	59.1	60.2	61.6	61.9	1.8	1.5	1.0	0.9		
Hong Kong, China	99.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.8	1.4	1.2	1.1		
Macao, China	99.8	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.1	1.4	1.4	0.9		
Mongolia	57.0	56.8	56.6	56.7	56.8	1.4	0.6	0.9	1.1	68.5	64.9
Republic of Korea	73.8	78.2	79.6	80.8	81.0	2.2	1.1	0.8	0.7	68.5	37.0
South-East Asia											
Brunei Darussalam	65.8	68.6	71.1	73.5	74.0	3.7	3.2	3.0	2.8		
Cambodia	12.6	14.2	16.9	19.7	20.3	5.7	6.0	5.0	4.8	71.7	72.2
Indonesia	30.6	35.6	42.0	48.1	49.3	4.6	4.8	4.1	3.7	32.2	23.1
Lao PDR	15.4	17.2	18.9	20.6	21.0	5.1	4.1	3.5	3.5	66.1	66.1
Malaysia	49.8	55.6	61.8	67.3	68.3	4.9	4.7	3.7	3.3		
Myanmar	24.9	26.1	28.0	30.6	31.3	2.4	2.7	2.7	2.9	31.1	26.4
Philippines	48.8	54.0	58.5	62.7	63.5	4.4	3.8	3.5	3.3	54.9	44.1
Singapore	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.9	2.9	1.5	1.3		
Thailand	29.4	30.3	31.1	32.3	32.6	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.6	19.5	2.0
Timor-Leste	20.8	22.7	24.5	26.5	26.9	4.5	0.8	7.1	6.0		
Viet Nam	20.3	22.2	24.3	26.4	26.9	4.0	3.4	3.2	3.2	60.5	47.4
South and South-West Asia											
Afghanistan	18.3	19.7	21.3	22.9	23.3	9.2	4.1	5.4	5.7	98.5	98.5
Bangladesh	19.8	21.5	23.2	25.1	25.5	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.5	87.3	84.7
Bhutan	7.2	8.3	9.6	11.1	11.4	1.4	5.0	5.7	4.8	70.0	44.1
India	25.5	26.6	27.7	28.7	29.0	2.9	2.7	2.4	2.4	60.8	55.5
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	56.3	60.2	64.2	66.9	67.5	3.3	2.5	1.8	2.0	51.9	44.2
Maldives	25.8	25.6	27.5	29.6	30.1	2.7	3.4	3.1	3.3		
Nepal	8.9	10.9	13.4	15.8	16.2	6.9	6.8	5.4	5.1	96.9	92.4
Pakistan	30.6	31.8	33.1	34.9	35.2	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.0	78.7	73.6
Sri Lanka	17.2	16.4	15.7	15.1	15.1	0.2	-0.2	-0.3	0.1	24.8	13.6
Turkey	59.2	62.1	64.7	67.3	67.8	2.8	2.5	2.2	2.0	23.3	17.9
North and Central Asia											
Armenia	67.5	66.3	65.1	64.1	63.9	-2.2	-1.3	-0.7	-0.5		
Azerbaijan	53.7	52.2	50.9	51.5	51.5	1.0	0.4	0.7	0.7		
Georgia	55.2	54.0	52.7	52.2	52.3	-2.1	-1.7	-1.2	-0.8		
Kazakhstan	56.3	55.9	56.3	57.3	57.6	-0.9	-1.1	0.7	1.1		
Kyrgyzstan	37.8	36.3	35.4	35.8	35.9	0.1	1.0	1.2	1.4		
Russian Federation	73.4	73.4	73.4	73.0	72.9	0.1	-0.2	-0.6	-0.7		
Tajikistan	31.5	28.0	25.9	24.7	24.5	-0.7	-0.2	0.2	0.7		
Turkmenistan	45.1	44.7	45.1	46.2	46.6	2.6	1.6	1.9	2.1		
Uzbekistan	40.1	38.4	37.3	36.7	36.7	1.4	0.9	1.2	1.4		
Pacific											
American Samoa											
Cook Islands											
Fiji	41.6	45.5	48.3	50.8	51.3	3.0	2.1	1.7	1.6		
French Polynesia	55.9	53.5	52.4	51.7	51.6	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.3		
Guam	90.8	92.1	93.2	94.0	94.2	2.0	1.5	1.9	1.6		
Kiribati											
Marshall Islands											
Micronesia (F.S.)	25.8	25.1	22.3	22.3	22.4	1.6	-2.3	0.5	0.6		
Nauru											
New Caledonia	59.6	60.3	61.9	63.7	64.0	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.2		
Niue											
Northern Mariana Is.											
Palau											
Papua New Guinea	13.1	13.2	13.2	13.4	13.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8		
Samoa	21.2	21.5	21.9	22.4	22.6	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.5		
Solomon Islands	13.7	14.7	15.7	17.0	17.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2		
Tonga	22.7	22.9	23.2	24.0	24.2	0.7	0.4	0.9	1.4		
Tuvalu											
Vanuatu	18.7	20.2	21.7	23.5	23.8	4.4	3.5	4.2	4.2		
ESCAP Developed Economies											
Australia	85.4	86.1	87.2	88.2	88.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3		
Japan	63.1	64.6	65.2	65.8	66.0	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.3		
New Zealand	84.7	85.3	85.7	86.2	86.3	1.6	1.0	1.4	1.2		
ESCAP	33.3	35.5	37.9	40.4	40.9	2.8	2.7	2.4	2.3	50.9	43.5
LLDC	34.8	33.3	32.8	33.0	33.1	1.4	1.1	1.9	2.2		
LDC	19.2	20.7	22.5	24.5	25.0	4.1	3.7	3.7	3.7	72.9	72.2
SIDS	44.9	45.5	46.4	46.0	46.0	2.9	2.7	1.9	1.8		
ASEAN	31.6	35.3	39.7	44.0	44.9	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.3	39.4	29.5
SAARC	25.0	26.1	27.3	28.5	28.8	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.6	65.2	60.8
Central Asia	56.8	55.7	55.0	54.8	54.8	0.0	-0.1	0.7	1.0		
Low-income	25.6	26.6	27.8	29.1	29.4	3.0	2.8	2.6	2.6	64.3	59.5
Middle-income	35.0	38.4	42.4	46.4	47.2	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.4	41.2	34.4
High-income	69.4	71.7	72.7	73.6	73.8	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.6		
Africa	32.0	34.2	36.3	38.4	38.8	4.0	3.7	3.5	3.5	62.9	61.4
Latin America & Carib.	70.9	73.2	75.4	77.4	77.8	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.7	37.0	33.3
North America	75.4	77.3	79.1	80.7	81.0	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.4		
Europe	70.2	71.0	71.6	72.4	72.5	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.4		
Other Asia-Pacific	63.1	63.8	64.2	64.6	64.7	3.4	3.0	2.7	2.6	36.1	37.2
World	43.0	44.8	46.7	48.7	49.1	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.0		

2.2 Density

	Population density			
	Population per km ²			
	1990	2000	2005	2006
East and North-East Asia				
China	120	132	137	138
DPR Korea	167	190	196	197
Hong Kong, China	5 224	6 101	6 463	6 531
Macao, China	13 197	15 641	16 776	16 934
Mongolia	1	2	2	2
Republic of Korea	432	471	482	484
South-East Asia				
Brunei Darussalam	45	58	65	66
Cambodia	54	71	77	78
Indonesia	96	111	119	120
Lao PDR	17	22	24	24
Malaysia	55	71	78	79
Myanmar	59	68	71	72
Philippines	204	254	282	288
Singapore	4 436	5 908	6 191	6 269
Thailand	106	118	123	124
Timor-Leste	50	55	72	75
Viet Nam	201	240	258	262
South and South-West Asia				
Afghanistan	19	32	38	40
Bangladesh	785	968	1 064	1 083
Bhutan	12	12	14	14
India	262	318	345	350
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	34	40	42	43
Maldives	719	910	984	1 001
Nepal	130	166	184	188
Pakistan	142	181	199	202
Sri Lanka	261	285	291	293
Turkey	73	87	93	94
North and Central Asia				
Armenia	119	103	101	101
Azerbaijan	83	94	96	97
Georgia	78	68	64	64
Kazakhstan	6	5	6	6
Kyrgyzstan	22	25	26	26
Russian Federation	9	9	8	8
Tajikistan	37	43	46	47
Turkmenistan	8	9	10	10
Uzbekistan	46	55	59	60
Pacific				
American Samoa	236	285	320	327
Cook Islands	74	67	58	57
Fiji	40	44	45	46
French Polynesia	49	59	64	65
Guam	243	282	306	311
Kiribati	98	115	126	128
Marshall Islands	263	290	315	322
Micronesia (F.S.)	138	153	157	158
Nauru	458	502	506	507
New Caledonia	9	12	13	13
Niue	9	7	6	6
Northern Mariana Is.	92	145	168	172
Palau	32	42	44	44
Papua New Guinea	9	12	13	13
Samoa	57	62	65	65
Solomon Islands	11	14	16	17
Tonga	126	131	132	133
Tuvalu	314	340	348	350
Vanuatu	12	16	18	18
ESCAP Developed Economies				
Australia	2	2	3	3
Japan	327	336	338	339
New Zealand	13	14	15	15
ESCAP	61	70	74	75
LLDC	15	18	19	20
LDC	94	117	129	131
SIDS	18	23	26	26
ASEAN	98	116	124	126
SAARC	221	271	295	300
Central Asia	16	17	18	18
Low-income	137	168	183	185
Middle-income	50	55	58	58
High-income	23	25	25	25
Africa	21	27	31	31
Latin America & Carib.	22	26	27	28
North America	14	16	17	17
Europe	97	98	99	100
Other Asia-Pacific	21	28	32	33
World	40	46	49	49