

V. THE URBAN HIERARCHY

Over the past two centuries, a major change has been taking place in the distribution of the world population in the form of increasing concentration of people in highly urbanized areas known as urban agglomerations. During the twentieth century, the population of urban agglomerations grew to levels unprecedented in human history. It is estimated that by 2000 a total of 18 urban agglomerations had at least 10 million inhabitants, surpassing by themselves the population of many countries, such as Senegal, Sweden or Tunisia. Such large urban agglomerations have come to be known as mega-cities. Yet, despite their size and importance, mega-cities still account for only a small share of the world's urban population and of course of the world's total population. In 2000 the total population in the 18 mega-cities constituted 4.1 per cent of the world population and 8.8 per cent of the world's urban population (tables V.1 and V.2). Although the number of mega-cities is expected to rise to 22 by 2015, they will still jointly account for only 5.0 per cent of the world population and 9.3 per cent of the world's urban population.

A. THE URBAN HIERARCHY OF LESS DEVELOPED REGIONS AND MORE DEVELOPED REGIONS

Between 1975 and 2000, the urban population of the world grew at an annual rate of 2.5 per cent, while that of mega-cities rose at more than double that rate, at 5.4 per cent, rising from 65 million to 251 million (table V.1). Most of this increase resulted from the addition of new urban agglomerations that had less than 10 million inhabitants in 1975 but crossed that threshold during 1975-2000. Thus, the number of mega-cities increased from 4 to 18, mostly in less developed regions where the number rose from 2 to 13, and the population living in those mega-cities of less developed regions rose from 22 million to 165 million (tables V.1 and V.3). In the more developed regions, the number of mega-cities increased from 2 to 5, and the population living in them rose from 42 million to 85 million. The percentage of the population of less developed regions living in mega-cities rose from 0.7 to

3.4 between 1975 and 2000, while the corresponding figures for more developed regions are 4.1 and 7.2.

Over the next 15 years, the number of mega-cities in the more developed regions will rise by one (Paris), and three additional mega-cities are expected to emerge in the less developed regions (table V.3). The new mega-cities in the less developed regions include two in Asia (Istanbul and Metro Manila) and one in Africa (Lagos). The population living in the mega-cities of less developed regions is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2.9 per cent per year during 2000-2015, reaching 257 million persons by the end of the period. In comparison, the growth rate in 1975-2000 was much higher, reaching on average a striking 8 per cent per year, though as mentioned above, most of this growth was due to new cities entering the group of mega-cities rather than the population growth of those cities. Meanwhile, the number of persons living in the mega-cities of the more developed regions will rise from 85 million in 2000 to 101 million in 2015. By that time, the share of the population of more developed regions living in mega-cities will rise to 8.2 per cent, or nearly twice the share of less developed regions living in such cities, which is expected to be 4.3 per cent (table V.1).

In addition, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of people living in large cities which are not mega-cities (those with 5 million to 10 million inhabitants), particularly in the less developed regions (table V.1). Between 1975 and 2000 that number almost doubled, from 69 million to 119 million. As a consequence, their share of the total population of the less developed regions rose slightly from 2.3 per cent to 2.4 per cent between 1975 and 2000, but this share will likely rise faster in the future, reaching 3.5 per cent by 2015, but continuing to be below the corresponding share in the more developed regions (4 per cent in 2000 and 5 per cent in 2015). This convergence represents a major change since 1975 when the large cities of the developed world accounted for 5.9 per cent of the population in the more de-

TABLE V.1. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORLD AND DEVELOPMENT GROUPS, BY AREA OF RESIDENCE AND SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975, 2000 AND 2015

Development group	Area of residence and size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)	Population (millions)			Percentage distribution			Average annual rate of change (per cent)	
		1975	2000	2015	1975	2000	2015	1975-2000	2000-2015
World	Total.....	4 068	6 071	7 197	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.60	1.13
	Urban area.....	1 516	2 857	3 856	37.3	47.1	53.6	2.53	2.00
	10 million or more.....	65	251	358	1.6	4.1	5.0	5.42	2.38
	5 million to 10 million.....	131	167	269	3.2	2.7	3.7	0.96	3.17
	1 million to 5 million.....	333	659	914	8.2	10.9	12.7	2.73	2.18
	500,000 to 1 million.....	179	291	358	4.4	4.8	5.0	1.93	1.38
	Fewer than 500,000.....	808	1 489	1 957	19.9	24.5	27.2	2.45	1.82
	Rural area.....	2 552	3 214	3 341	62.7	52.9	46.4	0.92	0.26
More developed regions	Total.....	1 047	1 194	1 230	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.52	0.20
	Urban area.....	704	882	952	67.2	73.9	77.3	0.91	0.50
	10 million or more.....	42	85	101	4.1	7.2	8.2	2.79	1.13
	5 million to 10 million.....	62	48	62	5.9	4.0	5.0	-1.04	1.77
	1 million to 5 million.....	147	208	218	14.1	17.5	17.7	1.39	0.30
	500,000 to 1 million.....	71	78	83	6.8	6.5	6.8	0.33	0.47
	Fewer than 500,000.....	381	463	487	36.4	38.8	39.6	0.79	0.33
	Rural area.....	344	311	279	32.8	26.1	22.7	-0.40	-0.74
Less developed regions	Total.....	3 021	4 877	5 967	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.92	1.34
	Urban area.....	813	1 974	2 904	26.9	40.5	48.7	3.55	2.57
	10 million or more.....	22	165	257	0.7	3.4	4.3	8.05	2.94
	5 million to 10 million.....	69	119	207	2.3	2.4	3.5	2.16	3.66
	1 million to 5 million.....	186	451	696	6.2	9.2	11.7	3.54	2.89
	500,000 to 1 million.....	108	213	275	3.6	4.4	4.6	2.72	1.68
	Fewer than 500,000.....	427	1 026	1 470	14.1	21.0	24.6	3.50	2.40
	Rural area.....	2 208	2 902	3 063	73.1	59.5	51.3	1.09	0.36
Least developed countries	Total.....	354	668	942	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.54	2.29
	Urban area.....	52	168	315	14.7	25.2	33.4	4.68	4.18
	10 million or more.....	—	10	18	—	1.5	1.9	..	3.78
	5 million to 10 million.....	—	—	31	—	—	3.3	..	..
	1 million to 5 million.....	6	41	61	1.7	6.1	6.5	7.63	2.68
	500,000 to 1 million.....	7	13	27	1.9	2.0	2.8	2.73	4.68
	Fewer than 500,000.....	39	104	178	11.1	15.5	18.9	3.87	3.59
	Rural area.....	302	500	627	85.3	74.8	66.6	2.02	1.51

veloped regions, 2.6 times the proportion accounted for by large cities in the less developed regions (2.3 per cent).

Despite the growth in both the number of large cities and mega-cities and in their populations, an analysis of the distribution of the world population by type of settlement indicates that rural areas

are still the home for the majority of the world population (table V.1). In 2000, 53 per cent of the world population lived in rural areas and, although it is expected that less than half of the world population will be rural after 2007, rural settlements will continue to be home for 46 per cent of the total world population in 2015, as well as over half the population in the less developed regions.

TABLE V.2. DISTRIBUTION OF THE URBAN POPULATION OF THE WORLD AND DEVELOPMENT GROUPS
BY SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975, 2000 AND 2015

Development group	Size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)	Percentage distribution		
		1975	2000	2015
World	10 million or more	4.3	8.8	9.3
	5 million to 10 million	8.7	5.8	7.0
	1 million to 5 million	22.0	23.1	23.7
	500,000 to 1 million.....	11.8	10.2	9.3
	Fewer than 500,000	53.3	52.1	50.8
More developed regions	10 million or more	6.0	9.7	10.6
	5 million to 10 million	8.8	5.4	6.5
	1 million to 5 million	20.9	23.6	22.9
	500,000 to 1 million.....	10.1	8.8	8.7
	Fewer than 500,000	54.1	52.5	51.2
Less developed regions	10 million or more	2.7	8.4	8.9
	5 million to 10 million	8.6	6.0	7.1
	1 million to 5 million	22.9	22.8	24.0
	500,000 to 1 million.....	13.3	10.8	9.5
	Fewer than 500,000	52.6	51.9	50.6
Least developed countries	10 million or more	—	6.0	5.7
	5 million to 10 million	—	—	9.9
	1 million to 5 million	11.6	24.3	19.4
	500,000 to 1 million.....	12.8	7.8	8.5
	Fewer than 500,000	75.6	61.8	56.6

In addition, small towns and cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants have been and will continue to be the type of urban settlement in which the largest share of the world's urban population resides. In both the more developed and the less developed regions, the percentage of the population residing in such urban settlements has been rising, reaching 39 per cent in the more developed regions and nearly half that level (21 per cent) in the less developed regions in 2000. By 2015 the percentage of the world population residing in urban settlements with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants will inch up from 25 per cent to 27 per cent, while the shares living in more and less developed regions will rise to 40 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively (table V.1).

In the highly urbanized regions of the more developed world, such small towns and cities have accounted for the largest proportion of the total population since 1975, surpassing the proportion living in rural areas. As mentioned above, by

2000, small towns and cities accounted for 39 per cent of the population, close to 50 per cent more than rural areas (26 per cent). Since they are expected to continue to grow faster in the future, by 2015 almost twice as many people are projected to live in small towns and cities as in rural areas of the developed world (487 million versus 279 million). In contrast, in the less developed regions, rural areas will likely remain the main type of settlement for the population until 2015, accounting for 60 per cent of the total population in 2000 and 51 per cent in 2015. Thus, rural areas comprised 2.9 billion people in the less developed regions in 2000, or close to three times the population living in urban settlements with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants (1.0 billion). By 2015, however, the ratio will be reduced from 3-to-2, as the respective populations will likely be 3.1 and 1.5 billions.

There have been important differences in the rates of population growth of the various types of urban settlements by major development group

TABLE V.3. NUMBER OF LARGE URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS IN THE WORLD AND DEVELOPMENT GROUPS, BY SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975, 2000 AND 2015

<i>Size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)</i>	<i>Development group</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2015</i>
10 million or more	World.....	4	18	22
	More developed regions	2	5	6
	Less developed regions.....	2	13	16
	Least developed countries.....	—	1	1
5 million to 10 million	World.....	17	24	39
	More developed regions	8	7	10
	Less developed regions.....	9	17	29
	Least developed countries.....	—	—	5
1 million to 5 million	World.....	174	345	480
	More developed regions	75	103	109
	Less developed regions.....	99	242	371
	Least developed countries.....	3	20	32
500,000 to 1 million	World.....	252	419	510
	More developed regions	99	111	119
	Less developed regions.....	153	308	391
	Least developed countries.....	9	20	37

during 1975-2015 (table V.1). For the world as a whole, the highest annual rate of population growth during 1975-2000 was recorded among the mega-cities, at 5.4 per cent, followed by that of medium-sized cities of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants (2.7 per cent). In contrast, large cities with 5 million to 10 million inhabitants recorded the lowest population growth rate among all types of urban settlements, at less than one per cent. However, it is important to note that the high growth of mega-cities and the slow growth of large cities are linked to each other. During 1975-2000, the latter group lost several members as they crossed the 10 million threshold, the number of mega-cities rising from 4 to 18 while the number of large cities rose only from 17 to 24. During 2000-2015, population growth rates are expected to be more similar for the two groups of cities, with the large cities growing slightly faster than the mega-cities (3.2 per cent versus 2.4 per cent); but again, this is linked to the greater growth in such cities, from 24 to 39, while the number of mega-cities rises only to 22.

In both the more developed regions and the less developed regions, mega-cities displayed the

highest annual rates of population growth in 1975-2000, at 2.8 and 8 per cent, respectively. Meanwhile, large cities of 5 to 10 million inhabitants had the lowest population growth rates among all types of urban settlements in both regions (table V.1). In the more developed regions the slow growth of the population of large cities was due to the reduction in the number of cities from 8 in 1975 to 7 in 2000 (table V.3). Between 2000 and 2015 the number of large cities in the more developed regions is expected to rise to 10, while the number of mega-cities rises by one.

Between 1975 and 2000, the population of mega-cities in the less developed regions grew the fastest, at 8 per cent per year, because the number of mega-cities rose from 2 to 13 over that period. Meanwhile, the number of large cities in the less developed regions, which rose from 9 to 17 in 1975-2000, is anticipated to continue to increase significantly, from 17 in 2000 to 29 in 2015, while the number of mega-cities rises only from 13 to 16. Due to these different changes in numbers of cities, the rate of growth of the population of large cities in less developed regions in 2000-2015 will be the highest of all the categories, at 3.7 per cent

per year, compared to 2.9 for mega-cities and medium cities, 1.7 for cities of half a million to a million, and 2.4 per cent for those with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants.

Because of the higher level of urbanization in more developed regions, the proportions of their population living in urban settlements of any size class are larger than the equivalent proportions in the less developed regions (table V.1). Consequently, to compare the population distributions of the two types of regions across the urban hierarchy, it is better to consider the urban population by itself (table V.2). There one can see that in the world as a whole as well as in the more developed and less developed regions, the majority of the urban population has been residing and will continue to live in urban settlements with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants. At the world level, the percentage of the urban population living in small towns and cities has been slowly declining, from 53 per cent in 1975 to 52 per cent in 2000, and is projected to be 51 per cent in 2015. In contrast, the proportion of the urban population living in the two largest size classes of cities together (that is, those with 5 million inhabitants or more) has risen from 13 per cent in 1975 to 15 per cent in 2000, and is projected to reach 16 per cent in 2015. Most of this increase is attributable to the rise in the share of the urban population of cities of more than 5 million persons in the less developed regions, which has increased from 11 per cent in 1975 to 14 per cent in 2000 and will likely rise to 16 per cent by 2015. Therefore, there is a discernible trend towards a greater concentration of the urban population of the less developed regions in the largest cities, a trend that is not so apparent in the more developed regions where the proportion of the urban population living in cities of 5 million or more has inched up from 14.8 in 1975 to 15.1 in 2000; it is expected to reach 17 per cent in 2015, a similar proportion to that of the less developed regions.

Overall, in both development groups and at the world level, there is a continuing process of concentration of the urban population in cities with more than 1 million inhabitants. In 1975, 35 per cent of the urban population of the world lived in cities with over 1 million inhabitants and the equivalent proportions were similar in the more

developed and the less developed regions (36 per cent and 34 per cent). In 2000, there was evidence of further concentration in both development groups, as corresponding proportions increased to 39 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively. By 2015, both development groups are expected to have about 40 per cent of their urban population residing within cities of 1 million inhabitants or more (table V.2). Thus at that time, when over half the world's population is urban, 2 out of 5 of those urban dwellers will be residing in cities over 1 million.

The case of the least developed countries, which are a subset of the less developed regions, illustrates in a more striking way the shifting distribution of the urban population across the urban hierarchy that the process of urbanization and development involves. In 1975, all the urban population of the least developed countries lived in cities with fewer than 5 million inhabitants, and only 12 per cent lived in cities of more than 1 million inhabitants. By 2000 the shift to higher size classes was clear: 30 per cent lived in urban agglomerations of 5 million or more, and by 2015 that share is expected to reach 35 per cent, or not much below the shares of the other two groups.

In considering the redistribution of the population across the urban hierarchy, it is necessary to bear in mind that the number of urban agglomerations with large populations is fairly small, so their passage from one size class to another causes important discontinuities in the data on population by city size class. Such discontinuities affect all country groupings. Table V.3 shows the numbers of mega-cities, urban agglomerations of 5 million to 10 million inhabitants, and those with 1 million to 5 million at different points in time. It indicates that those numbers have risen substantially at the world level and for the more and less developed regions. Given the less advanced stage of urbanization in the less developed regions, changes have been greater and are expected to continue to be more marked in the future. Thus, the number of urban agglomerations with 5 million to 10 million inhabitants in the less developed regions will likely increase from 17 in 2000 to 29 in 2015. Similarly, the number of cities with populations of 1 million to 5 million in the less developed regions, which increased from 99 in 1975 to 242 in

2000, is expected to reach 371 by 2015, an increase of 53 per cent with respect to the 2000 figure.

B. THE URBAN HIERARCHY BY MAJOR AREA

Differences in the distribution of the population across the urban hierarchy in the more developed and the less developed regions are accentuated when changing the focus to major areas. As table V.4 shows, a major area such as Oceania, where the populations of most countries or areas are small, is far less likely to have large urban agglomerations than a major area such as Asia, which comprises the majority of the most populous countries in the world. In addition, most of the population in Africa and Asia is still rural, in contrast to Europe or Northern America. Nevertheless, there are now more mega-cities in the less urbanized major areas of the world than in the

most highly urbanized major areas. While in 1950 both of the world's mega-cities were in the more developed regions and in 1975 both the more developed regions and less developed regions had two mega-cities each, by 2000 thirteen of the 18 were in the less developed regions (see table V.3).

Looking at the data for the major areas (table V.4), in 1975 Asia had two mega-cities while Latin America and the Caribbean and Northern America had one each. Asia had the largest number of inhabitants living in mega-cities of any major area (38 million in two mega-cities—see table V.5). In 2000, Asia again had more mega-cities and the largest population living in mega-cities (142 million in 10 mega-cities). At that time, Latin America and the Caribbean had four mega-cities while Northern America had two; neither major areas is expected to experience any change in its number of mega-cities by 2015. However,

TABLE V.4. NUMBER OF LARGE URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS IN EACH MAJOR AREA, BY SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975, 2000 AND 2015

<i>Size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)</i>	<i>Major area</i>	<i>1975</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2015</i>
10 million or more	Asia.....	2	10	12
	Latin America and the Caribbean	1	4	4
	Northern America.....	1	2	2
	Africa.....	—	1	2
	Europe	—	1	2
5 million to 10 million	Asia.....	6	13	23
	Europe	5	5	4
	Latin America and the Caribbean	3	3	4
	Northern America.....	2	2	6
	Africa.....	1	1	2
1 million to 5 million	Asia.....	78	171	253
	Europe	42	56	54
	Latin America and the Caribbean	17	42	65
	Northern America.....	28	37	43
	Africa.....	7	33	59
	Oceania.....	2	6	6
500,000 to 1 million	Asia.....	112	216	269
	Europe	64	69	72
	Latin America and the Caribbean	25	53	56
	Africa.....	19	42	67
	Northern America.....	28	39	44
	Oceania.....	4	—	2

NOTE : Major areas are ordered according to the number of urban agglomerations in 2000.

TABLE V.5. POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF MAJOR AREAS, BY AREA OF RESIDENCE
AND SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975, 2000 AND 2015

Major area	Area of residence and size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)	Population (millions)			Percentage distribution			Average annual rate of change (per cent)	
		1975	2000	2015	1975	2000	2015	1975-2000	2000-2015
Africa	Total	408	796	1 085	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.67	2.06
	Urban area.....	103	295	489	25.3	37.1	45.1	4.21	3.36
	10 million or more	—	10	30	—	1.3	2.8	..	7.10
	5 million to 10 million	6	9	14	1.6	1.1	1.3	1.19	3.35
	1 million to 5 million	12	70	126	2.9	8.8	11.6	7.04	3.96
	500,000 to 1 million.....	14	29	47	3.5	3.7	4.3	2.91	3.15
	Fewer than 500,000.....	71	177	272	17.3	22.3	25.0	3.68	2.84
Rural area.....	305	500	595	74.7	62.9	54.9	1.98	1.16	
Asia	Total	2 398	3 680	4 371	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.71	1.15
	Urban area.....	575	1 367	1 990	24.0	37.1	45.5	3.47	2.50
	10 million or more	38	142	207	1.6	3.9	4.7	5.27	2.51
	5 million to 10 million	47	91	161	1.9	2.5	3.7	2.68	3.81
	1 million to 5 million	148	307	446	6.2	8.3	10.2	2.91	2.50
	500,000 to 1 million.....	79	149	189	3.3	4.0	4.3	2.54	1.59
	Fewer than 500,000.....	263	678	986	11.0	18.4	22.6	3.79	2.50
Rural area.....	1 823	2 313	2 380	76.0	62.9	54.5	0.95	0.19	
Europe	Total	676	728	713	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.30	-0.13
	Urban area.....	446	529	537	66.0	72.7	75.3	0.68	0.10
	10 million or more	—	10	21	—	1.4	2.9	..	4.86
	5 million to 10 million	36	34	25	5.3	4.7	3.5	-0.19	-2.16
	1 million to 5 million	82	101	99	12.1	13.9	13.9	0.84	-0.15
	500,000 to 1 million.....	47	48	51	7.0	6.6	7.1	0.03	0.42
	Fewer than 500,000.....	281	336	342	41.6	46.1	47.9	0.72	0.11
Rural area.....	230	199	176	34.0	27.3	24.7	-0.57	-0.80	
Latin America and the Caribbean	Total	322	520	628	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.92	1.26
	Urban area.....	197	393	508	61.2	75.5	80.9	2.76	1.71
	10 million or more	11	59	68	3.3	11.3	10.7	6.80	0.95
	5 million to 10 million	26	19	31	8.2	3.7	4.9	-1.20	3.06
	1 million to 5 million	31	84	135	9.8	16.1	21.5	3.93	3.17
	500,000 to 1 million.....	17	38	39	5.4	7.3	6.3	3.14	0.28
	Fewer than 500,000.....	111	193	235	34.6	37.1	37.5	2.20	1.32
Rural area.....	125	127	120	38.8	24.5	19.1	0.08	-0.39	
Northern America	Total	243	316	364	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.04	0.94
	Urban area.....	180	250	304	73.8	79.1	83.6	1.32	1.31
	10 million or more	16	30	33	6.5	9.4	9.0	2.50	0.63
	5 million to 10 million	16	13	37	6.6	4.3	10.3	-0.70	6.80
	1 million to 5 million	54	85	92	22.1	27.0	25.3	1.83	0.52
	500,000 to 1 million.....	19	27	31	7.6	8.7	8.4	1.54	0.74
	Fewer than 500,000.....	75	94	112	30.9	29.8	30.6	0.90	1.12
Rural area.....	64	66	60	26.2	20.9	16.4	0.14	-0.67	

TABLE V.5 (continued)

Major area	Area of residence and size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)	Population (millions)			Percentage distribution			Average annual rate of change (per cent)	
		1975	2000	2015	1975	2000	2015	1975-2000	2000-2015
Oceania	Total	22	31	37	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.46	1.09
	Urban area.....	15	23	27	71.7	72.7	74.0	1.51	1.21
	10 million or more .....	—	—	—	—	—	—	..	..
	5 million to 10 million .....	—	—	—	—	—	—	..	..
	1 million to 5 million	6	13	15	25.6	41.0	40.9	3.34	1.08
	500,000 to 1 million.....	3	—	1	15.3	0.0	3.3	..	..
	Fewer than 500,000.....	7	10	11	30.7	31.7	29.8	1.58	0.67
	Rural area.....	6	8	10	28.3	27.3	26.0	1.31	0.76

Asia is expected to gain two more by 2015, and to have 12 of the world's 22 mega-cities at that time. Meanwhile, Africa and Europe, each of which had its first mega-city by 2000, are each projected to have an additional one by 2015. Still, because of its enormous population, the relative concentration of population in mega-cities is and will continue to be lower in Asia than in two other major areas: 3.9 per cent of the population of Asia is estimated to live in mega-cities in 2000 compared to 11.3 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean and 9.4 per cent in Northern America (table V.5).

For Europe, Northern America, Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean, the proportion of the total population living in small towns and cities is higher than that living in rural areas. In 2000, 46 per cent of the population of Europe lived in small towns and cities, compared to 37 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 32 per cent in Oceania, and 30 per cent in Northern America (table V.5). Given the large rural populations encountered in Africa and Asia, the percentages of the total population living in any size class of urban settlement tend to be low. Hence, the proportions of the total population living in small towns and cities of Africa and Asia are also low, being 22 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively. By 2015 these percentages are projected to inch upward slightly in most major areas, with the biggest increases in Africa and Asia (to 25 and 23 per cent, respectively), linked to the declines in the shares of the rural population by eight percentage points in each area during 2000-2015. Nevertheless, concentrations of population

in cities and towns under 500,000 in Asia and Africa will continue to be low despite the expected rapid rates of growth of the population in small towns and cities, projected at 2.5 per cent annually in Asia and 2.8 per cent per year in Africa. In both Africa and Asia, the population living in rural areas will continue to be more than double that of small towns and cities through 2015. Such a situation contrasts sharply with that of other major areas, where the population of small towns and cities is expected to surpass by wide margins that of rural areas, being in fact about double in the other major areas of the world (except Oceania).

In all major areas, small towns and cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants have been the residence of the highest proportion of urban dwellers (table V.6), with just over two-thirds of all urban dwellers living in such places in 1975 in Africa and almost two-thirds in Europe, followed by 57 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 46 per cent in Asia, and 42-43 per cent in Oceania and Northern America. Between 1975 and 2000 the proportion of the urban population living in small towns and cities declined in Africa and the Americas, rose in Asia, and remained essentially the same in Europe and Oceania. Between 2000 and 2015, these trends are generally expected to continue. Of all major areas, Europe will have by then the largest share of its urban population residing within small towns and cities (64 per cent), followed by Africa and Asia. The other three major areas are expected to have less than half of their urban population within such urban settlements, with Northern America showing the lowest proportion at 37 per cent. The con-

TABLE V.6. DISTRIBUTION OF THE URBAN POPULATION OF MAJOR AREAS
BY SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975, 2000 AND 2015

Major area	Size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)	Percentage distribution		
		1975	2000	2015
Africa	10 million or more.....	—	3.5	6.2
	5 million to 10 million.....	6.2	2.9	2.9
	1 million to 5 million.....	11.6	23.6	25.8
	500,000 to 1 million	13.7	9.9	9.6
	Fewer than 500,000	68.5	60.1	55.5
Asia	10 million or more.....	6.6	10.4	10.4
	5 million to 10 million.....	8.1	6.7	8.1
	1 million to 5 million.....	25.8	22.4	22.4
	500,000 to 1 million	13.7	10.9	9.5
	Fewer than 500,000	45.8	49.6	49.6
Europe	10 million or more.....	—	1.9	3.9
	5 million to 10 million.....	8.0	6.4	4.6
	1 million to 5 million.....	18.4	19.1	18.4
	500,000 to 1 million	10.6	9.0	9.5
	Fewer than 500,000	63.0	63.5	63.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	10 million or more.....	5.4	14.9	13.3
	5 million to 10 million.....	13.4	5.0	6.1
	1 million to 5 million.....	15.9	21.4	26.6
	500,000 to 1 million	8.7	9.6	7.8
	Fewer than 500,000	56.5	49.2	46.3
Northern America	10 million or more.....	8.8	11.9	10.7
	5 million to 10 million.....	8.9	5.4	12.3
	1 million to 5 million.....	30.0	34.1	30.3
	500,000 to 1 million	10.3	10.9	10.0
	Fewer than 500,000	41.9	37.7	36.6
Oceania	10 million or more.....	—	—	—
	5 million to 10 million.....	—	—	—
	1 million to 5 million.....	35.7	56.4	55.2
	500,000 to 1 million	21.4	0.0	4.5
	Fewer than 500,000	42.9	43.6	40.3

trast between Europe and North America is notable, as they are similar in levels of development and urbanization, but Europe is much more characterized by a population living in small towns and cities, in contrast to Northern America where the urban population is more concentrated in very large cities of over 5 million (17 per cent in Northern America versus 8 per cent in Europe, in 2000).

The distribution of the urban population by size class of urban settlement shows the varied profiles and trends experienced by the different major areas (table V.6). Among the most urbanized major areas, as noted above, Europe is characterized by an urban structure in which nearly two-thirds of its urban population lives in small towns and cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, a proportion which is remarkably stable between 1975 and

2015. The total number of large urban agglomerations (with more than 5 million inhabitants) in Europe is expected to remain at 6 in 2015, while the total number of cities over one million declines slightly, and that of cities under 500,000 grows from 69 to 72 (see table V.4).

In contrast to Europe, both Northern America and Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced a reduction in the proportion of the urban population living in small towns and cities. In the period 1975-2000, this was accompanied by a higher concentration in medium-sized cities of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants in both areas, though this trend is expected to be reversed by 2015 in Northern America as cities cross the threshold of the 5 million to 10 million category. The share of the urban population of such large cities is expected to increase from 5 per cent in 2000 to 12 per cent in 2015 (table V.6) while the number of cities triples, rising from 2 to 6 (see table V.4).

Asia has been experiencing a modest redistribution of its urban population towards large urban agglomerations and mega-cities. Thus, the proportion of its urban population living in such cities (5 million or more inhabitants) rose from 15 per cent in 1975 to 17 per cent in 2000 and is expected to reach 19 per cent in 2015 (table V.6). At the same time, the share living in cities of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants has been declining slightly. Both of these trends are interrelated, and due largely to the shift of several cities from the smaller to the larger size category.

In Africa the trend toward increasing concentration of the urban population in larger cities is more noticeable, and begins with a much smaller urban base, that is, with only a few cities with over a million inhabitants in 1975 – only one with over 5 million residents and 7 with 1 million to 5 million inhabitants. By 2000 the picture has changed dramatically, with one mega-city, one large urban agglomeration (5 million to 10 million inhabitants), and 33 cities with 1 million to 5 million inhabitants. These numbers are projected to continue to rise quickly, reaching 2 mega-cities, 2 large cities, and 59 other cities with over a million by 2015 (see table V.4). By that time, there will be more cities over a million inhabitants in

Africa than in Europe or North America. Meanwhile, the proportion of the urban population in cities with more than 5 million inhabitants is increasing gradually, from 6.2 per cent in 1975 to 6.5 per cent in 2000 and expected to reach 9.1 per cent in 2015. However, the main growth in the city population of Africa is within urban agglomerations of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants, which doubled from 12 per cent in 1975 to 24 per cent in 2000. It is expected to reach 26 per cent in 2015. These increases have been counterbalanced by a reduction of the proportion of the urban population living in cities with less than 1 million inhabitants, which has dropped from 82 per cent in 1975 to 70 per cent in 2000 and will likely fall further to 65 per cent by 2015 (table V.6).

For Oceania, the main change observed in the time period was a large increase in the number of cities with 1 million to 5 million inhabitants, from 2 to 6 during 1975-2000 (table V.4), due entirely to four cities in the under 1 million category crossing that threshold. Correspondingly, the proportion of the urban population living in cities with 1 million to 5 million inhabitants rose markedly between 1975 and 2000, from 36 per cent to 56 per cent, as four cities with 500,000 to 1 million inhabitants crossed the 1 million threshold. Over the next 15 years two new cities are expected to cross the half million threshold. The concentration of over half the urban population of Oceania in cities over 1 million in 2000 as well as in 2015 indicates a considerably greater concentration of the urban population in larger urban settlements in Oceania than in any of the other regions (it is followed by Northern America at 53 per cent, with Europe lowest in the world, at 27 per cent, in 2015).

Table V.4 shows that the number of urban agglomerations with populations of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants increased considerably in all major areas between 1975 and 2000, though to a lesser extent in Europe and Northern America. With the exception of Oceania, all major areas had by 2000 a substantial number of cities within that category; Asia had the largest number, 171, followed by 56 in Europe, 42 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 37 in Northern America and 33 in Africa. By 2015, Asia is expected to have 253 cities with 1 million to 5 million inhabitants

and Africa will almost have its number double in this short period of time, reaching 59. The only other major area anticipated to have a significant increase is Latin America and the Caribbean, from 42 to 65. The generality of the increase in the number of medium-sized cities across major areas, in the period 1975-2015 as a whole, contrasts with the increasing concentration of large cities in Asia. Thus among the 21 urban agglomerations with 5 million inhabitants or more that the world had in 1975, eight were in Asia, followed by five in Europe and four in Latin America and the Caribbean. But by 2000 Asia had 23 of the 42 biggest cities in the world, followed by Latin America with seven and Europe with six. By 2015, the total number of cities surpassing 5 million inhabitants is expected to rise to 61, 35 of which will be in Asia and eight each in Northern America and Latin America and the Caribbean. At that time, 12 of the world's 22 mega-cities will be in Asia. No other major area will experience a similar growth in the number of large cities and mega-cities, despite the tendency for the urban population to become more concentrated in larger urban agglomerations. Consequently, as tables V.2 and V.6 show medium-sized cities of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants account for considerably higher proportions of the urban population than agglomerations with over 5 million inhabitants. Even as the mega-cities grow in the future, this is not expected to change. Consequently, both today and in the near future, the dominant groups in the urban hierarchy are small towns and cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants and medium-sized cities with populations of 1 to 5 million inhabitants.

C. THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE URBAN INCREMENT BY CITY SIZE

Further proof of the importance of these two groups of urban settlements, namely, cities with fewer than 500,000 and those with 1 million to 5 million inhabitants, is evident in the distribution of the average annual increment of the urban population among cities or urban agglomerations grouped by size class. Table V.7 shows the average annual increment of the total and urban populations of the world, the more developed regions, and the less developed regions. Also shown is the distribution or allocation of the annual increments

in the urban population by size of urban settlement. Two types of distributions are presented. The first, as shown in the third and fourth columns, is the distribution of the urban increment for the world and for each development group (i.e., the percentages add to 100 for each development group). The second, as depicted in the fifth and sixth columns, is the distribution of the world urban increment among the urban agglomerations of the more developed regions and less developed regions by size of urban settlement. Both distributions show the same overall traits at the world level, where small towns and cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants have accounted for the largest share of the annual increment of the world's urban population in the past—51 per cent in 1975-2000—a figure that is expected to decline to 47 per cent in 2000-2015. This group is followed by that of cities of 1 million to 5 million, which accounts for about a quarter of the growth of the world urban population in both periods. Mega-cities only accounted for 14 per cent in 1975-2000, and will have an even smaller share in the 2000-2015 period, 11 per cent.

Since the vast majority of the urban increment is accounted for by the growth of urban centres in the less developed regions, a similar pattern to that of the world can be observed in these regions. There, small towns and cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants accounted for 52 per cent of the urban increment in 1975-2000, which is anticipated to fall to 48 per cent in 2000-2015. Meanwhile, cities of 1 million to 5 million inhabitants accounted for 23 per cent and 26 per cent of the past and future growth, respectively, which is more than the shares attributable to mega-cities and large cities combined. In the more developed regions, the distribution of increments across size class of urban settlements varies more between 1975-2000 and 2000-2030. For instance, the shares of cities with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants and with 1 million to 5 million are expected to decline from 46 per cent to 34 per cent and from 34 per cent to 14 per cent, respectively. This substantial reduction, especially in the latter group, is linked to an important increase in the share of the upper adjacent city size class. On the other hand, the share of mega-cities is expected to remain at about the same relatively high level of 23-24 per cent. Thus, there is a substantially

TABLE V.7. DISTRIBUTION OF THE ANNUAL INCREMENT OF THE URBAN POPULATION OF THE WORLD AND DEVELOPMENT GROUPS,
BY SIZE CLASS OF URBAN SETTLEMENT: 1975-2000 AND 2000-2015

<i>Development group</i>	<i>Size class of urban settlement (number of inhabitants)</i>	<i>Annual population increment (millions)</i>		<i>Percentage of urban increment by development group</i>		<i>Percentage of overall urban increment</i>	
		<i>1975-2000</i>	<i>2000-2015</i>	<i>1975-2000</i>	<i>2000-2015</i>	<i>1975-2000</i>	<i>2000-2015</i>
World	Total.....	80.1	75.1	..	..	..	..
	Urban area.....	53.6	66.6	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Cities of 10 million or more.....	7.4	7.2	13.9	10.8	13.9	10.8
	Cities of 5 million to 10 million.....	1.4	6.8	2.7	10.2	2.7	10.2
	Cities of 1 million to 5 million.....	13.1	17.0	24.3	25.5	24.3	25.5
	Cities of 500,000 to 1 million	4.5	4.5	8.3	6.7	8.3	6.7
	Cities with fewer than 500,000	27.2	31.2	50.8	46.9	50.8	46.9
More developed regions	Total.....	5.9	2.4	..	..	..	..
	Urban area.....	7.2	4.6	100.0	100.0	13.3	6.9
	Cities of 10 million or more.....	1.7	1.1	24.0	22.8	3.2	1.6
	Cities of 5 million to 10 million.....	-0.6	1.0	-7.9	20.9	-1.1	1.4
	Cities of 1 million to 5 million.....	2.5	0.6	34.3	13.7	4.6	1.0
	Cities of 500,000 to 1 million	0.2	0.4	3.4	8.2	0.5	0.6
	Cities with fewer than 500,000	3.3	1.6	46.2	34.4	6.2	2.4
Less developed regions	Total.....	74.2	72.7	..	..	..	..
	Urban area.....	46.5	62.0	100.0	100.0	86.7	93.1
	Cities of 10 million or more.....	5.7	6.1	12.3	9.9	10.7	9.2
	Cities of 5 million to 10 million.....	2.0	5.8	4.3	9.4	3.7	8.7
	Cities of 1 million to 5 million.....	10.6	16.3	22.8	26.3	19.8	24.5
	Cities of 500,000 to 1 million	4.2	4.1	9.1	6.6	7.9	6.1
	Cities with fewer than 500,000	23.9	29.6	51.5	47.8	44.6	44.5

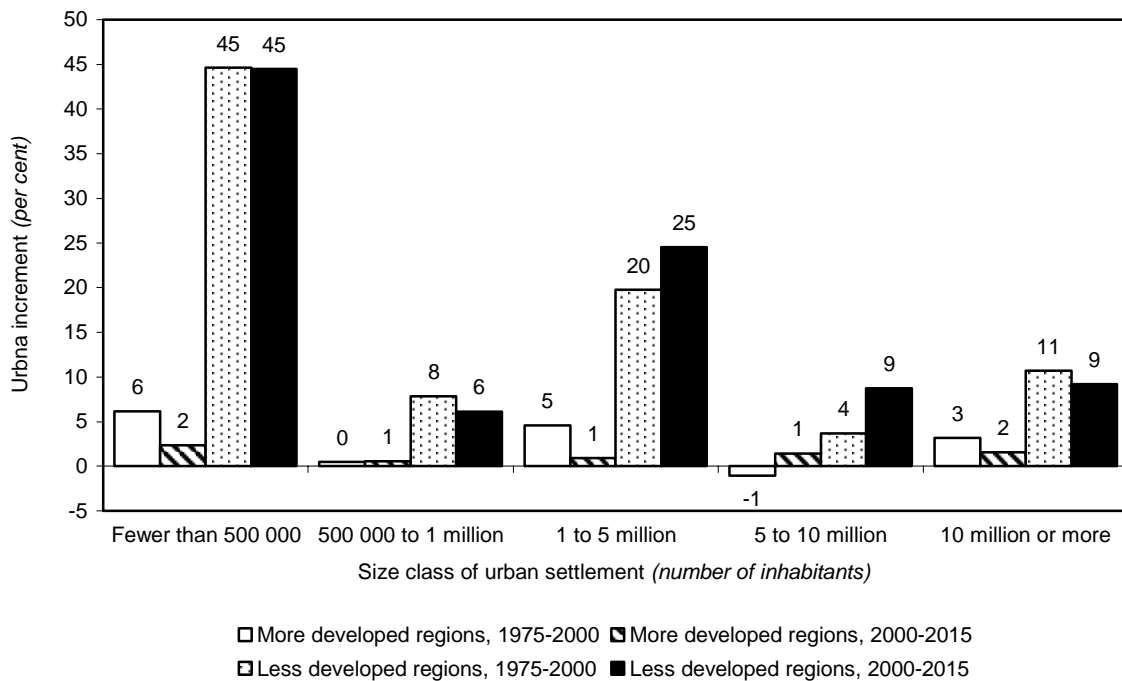
growing concentration of the future urban population in the more developed regions in large cities of 5 million to 10 million inhabitants.

By examining the data presented in the two right-hand columns in table V.7, the distribution of the overall urban increment in the world by size of settlement for both the more developed and the less developed regions is clearly visible. The latter group accounts for most of the urban population growth of the world: 87 per cent in 1975-2000 and 93 per cent in 2000-2015. Almost half (45 per cent) of the total world urban population growth has been in and will continue to be in small urban settlements of the less developed regions (figure V.1). This is followed by cities of 1 million to 5 million persons in the less developed regions, whose share of the overall annual urban increment was 20 per cent in 1975-2000 and is expected to rise to 25 per cent in 2000-2015. Lastly, the mega-cities of the less developed regions account for the third largest share, amounting to 11 per cent in 1975-2000 and 9 per cent during 2000-2015.

Since urban areas of the more developed regions accounted altogether for only 13 per cent of world urban growth in 1975-2000 and are expected to account for only about half that (under 7 per cent) in 2000-2015, no category of cities accounts for much of urban population growth (the largest being for cities under 500,000, in both time periods, accounting for 6.2 and 2.4 per cent, respectively).

These projections indicate that for the world as a whole, it is both small towns and cities (with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants) and cities with populations of 1 million to 5 million persons from the less developed regions that are likely to account for most of the future growth in the urban population of the world (figure V.1), amounting to over two-thirds of the total during 2000-2015. This underscores the importance of fostering the development of sustainable economic activities in small and medium-sized urban settlements in the less developed regions of the world, which is often neglected with the focus of attention on mega-cities.

Figure V.1. Distribution of the overall annual urban increment by size class of urban settlement and development group: 1975-2000 and 2000-2015



D. CITY PRIMACY

In some countries, the urban population is highly concentrated in a single city or urban agglomeration. The most populous city of each country accounts for the highest proportion of the urban population in that country. In this section, that city will be considered to be the primate city and its degree of primacy will be measured by the proportion of the *urban* population living in that city. Capital cities are very often the primate cities of countries but primate cities are not always capital cities. In small countries or areas, it is easy for virtually all the urban population to be concentrated in a single city. In those cases, the primate city may account for close to 100 per cent of the urban population. Even in larger countries, primate cities sometimes account for more than half of the total urban population. It is worth mentioning that the primate city has changed between 1975 and 2000 in four countries.

Table V.8 provides a list of all countries in which primate cities accounted for at least 40 per cent of the urban population in 1975. Among the 39 countries and cities listed, only 15 cities had more than a million inhabitants in 1975 and, with the exceptions of Tokyo, Buenos Aires and Seoul, all had less than 4 million inhabitants. Tokyo, with 26.6 million persons, accounted for 42 per cent of the urban population of Japan; Buenos Aires, with 9.1 million inhabitants, for 43 per cent of that of Argentina; and Seoul with 6.8 million for 40 per cent of the urban population of the Republic of Korea. Two urban agglomerations, Hong Kong, Special Administrative Area of China (SAR), and Singapore, accounted for 100 per cent of the urban populations of their countries or areas. Other primate cities accounting for large proportions of the urban population in their country tended to belong to small but highly urbanized countries, such as Lebanon, Kuwait, Panama and Puerto Rico, or to small or medium-sized countries with low levels of urbanization, such as Guinea, Angola, Congo, Cambodia and Haiti. In each of these countries, the largest city accounted for over half the urban population.

By 2000, the number of countries whose primate city accounted for at least 40 per cent of its urban population had fallen to 30, as other cities

grew in many countries in addition to the capital or primate city. In contrast to 1975, most (22) of the 30 cities had at least a million inhabitants in 2000 (table V.9). However, just 11 had more than 2 million inhabitants, indicating that cities with a high degree of primacy still tended to be located in countries with small urban populations. Apart from the cities of Hong Kong SAR, and Singapore, other populous cities with a high degree of primacy were Santiago in Chile with 5.3 million inhabitants, Athens in Greece with 3.2 million and Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire with 3.1 million. Among these relatively large cities, the degree of primacy was high for Athens with 49 per cent of the urban population of Greece, while Abidjan had 44 per cent. According to table V.9, in 2000 there were two other countries or areas with degrees of primacy of 60 per cent or higher, namely, Port-au-Prince in Haiti and San Juan in Puerto Rico, and another eight with primacy of 50 per cent or more. All of these 10 cities (excluding Hong Kong SAR and Singapore) had populations well below 3 million in 2000.

Trends in the degree of primacy varied considerably among the cities that accounted for large proportions of the urban population in 2000. For 11 of the 28 cities (excluding Hong Kong SAR and Singapore), the degree of primacy increased between 1975 and 2000, and for 17 it declined. The increase in primacy was substantial (taken as 6 percentage points or more) in four cases, that is, for Kabul in Afghanistan (from 35 per cent to 54 per cent), Tel Aviv-Jaffa in Israel (from 41 per cent to 50 per cent), Port-au-Prince in Haiti (from 54 per cent to 62 per cent), and Bishkek in Kyrgyzstan (from 39 per cent to 45 per cent). On the other hand, substantial decreases in primacy occurred for cities in seven countries, namely Conakry in Guinea (from 84 per cent to 47 per cent), Beirut in Lebanon and Kuwait City (both from 81 per cent to 54 per cent), Panama City (from 62 per cent to 55 per cent), San José in Costa Rica and Montevideo in Uruguay (both from about 50 per cent to 43 per cent) and Athens in Greece (from 55 per cent to 48 per cent). Still, as of 2000 the degree of primacy in all these countries remained high.

A different trend is expected during 2000-2015, when most cities accounting for a high proportion

TABLE V.8. POPULATION OF URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF PRIMACY IN 1975

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Urban agglomeration</i>	<i>Population in 1975 (thousands)</i>	<i>Percentage of the urban population residing in the urban agglomeration in 1975</i>
1	China, Hong Kong SAR	Hong Kong	3 943	100.0
2	Singapore	Singapore	2 263	100.0
3	Guinea	Conakry	561	84.4
4	Lebanon	Beirut	1 500	80.9
5	Kuwait	Kuwait City	682	80.8
6	Panama	Panama City	528	62.5
7	Angola	Luanda	656	61.1
8	Congo	Brazzaville	317	59.1
9	Puerto Rico	San Juan	1 069	57.9
10	Greece	Athens	2 738	54.7
11	Cambodia	Phnom Penh	397	54.3
12	Haiti	Port-au-Prince	575	53.9
13	Paraguay	Asunción	551	53.2
14	Armenia	Yerevan	911	51.2
15	Mongolia	Ulaanbaatar	356	50.6
16	Costa Rica	San José	440	50.5
17	Uruguay	Montevideo	1 178	49.9
18	Mozambique	Maputo	456	49.5
19	Latvia	Riga	789	49.1
20	Ireland	Dublin	833	48.9
21	Azerbaijan	Baku	1 429	48.8
22	Senegal	Dakar	768	46.8
23	Portugal	Lisbon	1 168	46.4
24	Sierra Leone	Freetown	288	45.9
25	Jordan	Amman	500	44.6
26	Uganda	Kampala	399	44.4
27	Côte d'Ivoire	Abidjan	960	44.3
28	Dominican Republic	Santo Domingo	1 016	44.1
29	Zimbabwe	Harare	529	44.0
30	Argentina	Buenos Aires	9 143	43.3
31	Burkina Faso	Ouagadougou	165	42.7
32	Somalia	Mogadishu	444	42.1
33	Japan	Tokyo	26 615	42.0
34	Iraq	Baghdad	2 814	41.6
35	Israel	Tel Aviv-Jaffa	1 206	41.4
36	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Tripoli	611	41.0
37	Georgia	Tbilisi	992	40.8
38	Austria	Vienna	2 002	40.4
39	Republic of Korea	Seoul	6 808	40.2

NOTE: For urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2000.

TABLE V.9. POPULATION OF URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF PRIMACY IN 2000
AND CHANGES IN THEIR DEGREE OF PRIMACY BETWEEN 1975 AND 2000

Rank	Country	Urban agglomeration	Population in 2000 (thousands)	Percentage of the urban population residing in the urban agglomeration in:		Difference between 2000 and 1975
				1975	2000	
1	China, Hong Kong SAR	Hong Kong	6 807	100.0	100.0	0.00
2	Singapore	Singapore	4 016	100.0	100.0	0.00
3	Haiti	Port-au-Prince	1 767	53.9	62.0	8.06
4	Puerto Rico	San Juan	2 237	57.9	62.0	4.02
5	Angola	Luanda	2 341	61.1	56.6	-4.50
6	Panama	Panama City	905	62.5	54.6	-7.96
7	Kuwait	Kuwait City	1 175	80.8	54.5	-26.37
8	Congo	Brazzaville	980	59.1	54.4	-4.62
9	Afghanistan	Kabul	2 549	35.4	54.4	19.07
10	Lebanon	Beirut	1 639	80.9	54.4	-26.54
11	Armenia	Yerevan	1 100	51.2	54.4	3.14
12	Mongolia	Ulaanbaatar	764	50.6	54.0	3.42
13	Cambodia	Phnom Penh	1 108	54.3	49.8	-4.46
14	Israel	Tel Aviv-Jaffa	2 752	41.4	49.8	8.35
15	Sierra Leone	Freetown	802	45.9	49.5	3.64
16	Greece	Athens	3 179	54.7	48.5	-6.20
17	Paraguay	Asunción	1 457	53.2	48.2	-5.03
18	Latvia	Riga	761	49.1	48.0	-1.15
19	Guinea	Conakry	1 234	84.4	46.6	-37.82
20	Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	769	39.2	45.5	6.25
21	Côte d'Ivoire	Abidjan	3 057	44.3	44.3	-0.02
22	Senegal	Dakar	1 968	46.8	44.2	-2.58
23	Ireland	Dublin	989	48.9	43.8	-5.13
24	Azerbaijan	Baku	1 798	48.8	43.6	-5.16
25	Uruguay	Montevideo	1 324	49.9	43.1	-6.83
26	Costa Rica	San José	998	50.5	43.1	-7.46
27	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Tripoli	1 877	41.0	42.0	1.02
28	Japan	Tokyo	34 450	42.0	41.6	-0.39
29	Austria	Vienna	2 158	40.4	40.5	0.07
30	Chile	Santiago	5 266	39.9	40.2	0.34

NOTE: For urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2000. Urban agglomerations are ordered according to the degree of primacy in 2015.

of the urban population in their country are expected to experience a reduction in the degree of primacy. According to table V.10, it is expected that a smaller number of countries or areas—28 compared to 30 in 2000 and 39 in 1975—will have their largest urban agglomeration account for at least 40 per cent of their urban population. Among the 26 where the degree of primacy changes between 2000 and 2015, 19 will experience a decline in urban primacy and seven an in-

crease. Most of the changes will be small in magnitude, that is, under 5 percentage points. The only exceptions are decreases for Kuwait City (from 54 per cent to 43 per cent), Luanda in Angola (from 57 per cent to 49 per cent), and Panama City again (from 55 per cent to 47 per cent). Therefore, the general pattern expected in the future is that smaller cities will tend to grow more than the largest ones in the vast majority of countries.

TABLE V.10. POPULATION OF THE URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF PRIMACY IN 2015 AND CHANGES IN THEIR DEGREE OF PRIMACY BETWEEN 2000 AND 2015

Rank	Country	Urban agglomeration	Population in 2015 (thousands)	Percentage of the urban population residing in the urban agglomeration in:		Difference between 2015 and 2000
				2000	2015	
1	China, Hong Kong SAR	Hong Kong	7 872	100.0	100.0	0.00
2	Singapore	Singapore	4 707	100.0	100.0	0.00
3	Haiti	Port-au-Prince	2 765	62.0	62.7	0.73
4	Puerto Rico	San Juan	2 398	62.0	59.9	-2.10
5	Lebanon	Beirut	2 174	54.4	57.4	2.98
6	Mongolia	Ulaanbaatar	997	54.0	54.9	0.91
7	Armenia	Yerevan	1 019	54.4	53.6	-0.77
8	Congo	Brazzaville	1 609	54.4	52.1	-2.39
9	Afghanistan	Kabul	5 362	54.4	49.5	-4.93
10	Angola	Luanda	4 271	56.6	49.4	-7.27
11	Israel	Tel Aviv-Jaffa	3 542	49.8	49.4	-0.44
12	Latvia	Riga	669	48.0	48.9	0.89
13	Panama	Panama City	1 109	54.6	47.4	-7.14
14	Greece	Athens	3 330	48.5	46.6	-1.88
15	Paraguay	Asunción	2 290	48.2	46.5	-1.65
16	Sierra Leone	Freetown	1 402	49.5	46.1	-3.47
17	Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	957	45.5	45.5	0.07
18	Côte d'Ivoire	Abidjan	4 432	44.3	43.8	-0.47
19	Guinea	Conakry	2 138	46.6	43.0	-3.59
20	Costa Rica	San José	1 441	43.1	42.9	-0.18
21	Kuwait	Kuwait City	1 388	54.5	42.7	-11.76
22	Japan	Tokyo	36 214	41.6	42.0	0.42
23	Senegal	Dakar	3 140	44.2	41.2	-2.94
24	Austria	Vienna	2 214	40.5	40.9	0.42
25	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Tripoli	2 497	42.0	40.8	-1.30
26	Uruguay	Montevideo	1 413	43.1	40.6	-2.46
27	Ireland	Dublin	1 137	43.8	40.6	-3.13
28	Azerbaijan	Baku	1 962	43.6	40.4	-3.18

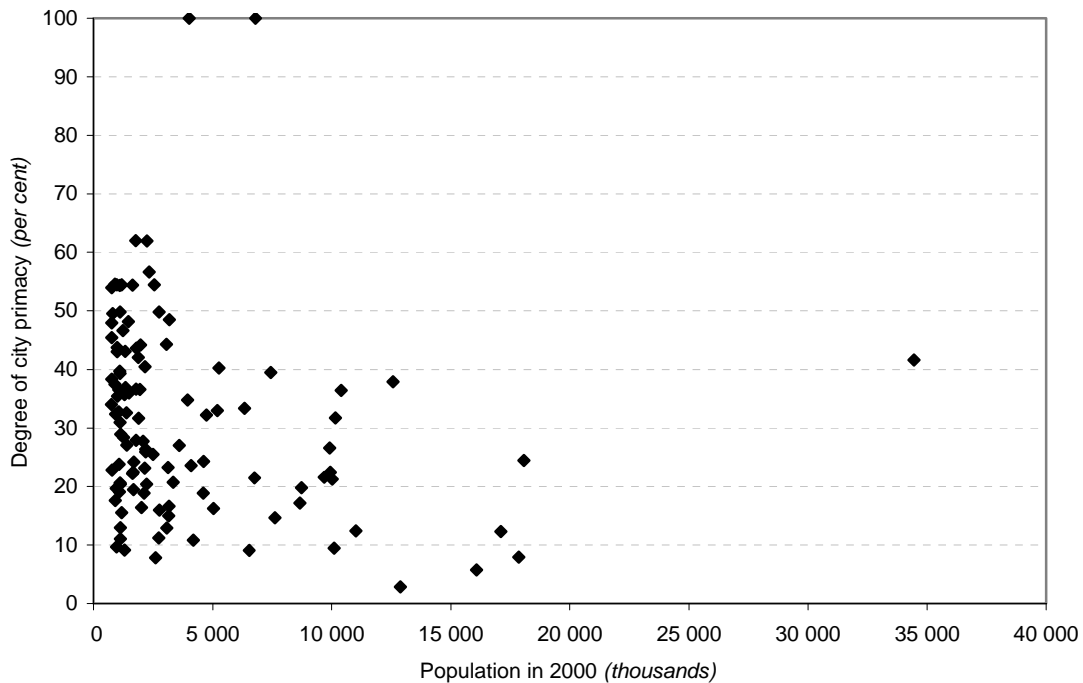
NOTE: For urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2000. Urban agglomerations are ordered according to the degree of primacy in 2015.

By 2015, Tokyo will continue as the only megacity with a high degree of urban primacy, with Hong Kong SAR and Kabul being the only two other cities very large cities also accounting for a high level of primacy.

The data in tables V.8 to V.10 indicate that high levels of primacy tend to occur in countries with small urban populations, and therefore that primate cities accounting for over 40 per cent of a country's population tend not to have very large populations. This is supported by consideration of the degree of primacy of all primate cit-

ies with at least 750,000 inhabitants in 2000. Figure V.2 shows a plot of the degree of primacy of each city in relation to its population size in 2000. Clearly, cities accounting for at least 40 per cent of the urban population of their respective countries tend to cluster at the lower (left) end of the horizontal axis representing population size, whereas cities with larger populations tend to account for smaller percentages of the total urban population in each country and must therefore be in more populous countries. The one outlier exception to this is Tokyo at the far right.

Figure V.2. Degree of city primacy in relation to city population in 2000



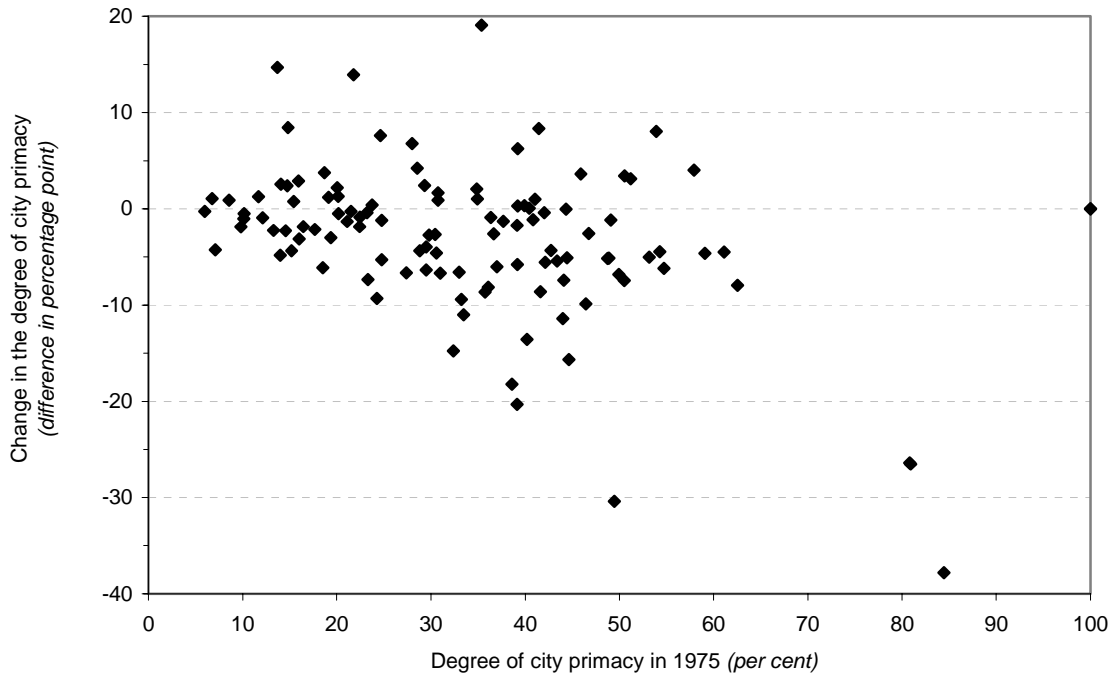
NOTE: For urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2000.

It is also of interest to explore changes in the degree of primacy over time with respect to all primate cities that had at least 750,000 inhabitants in 2000. Above it was shown that between 1975 and 2000 about 40 per cent (11 of 28) of the cities with high degrees of primacy in 2000 (excluding Hong Kong and Singapore) experienced an increase of their degree of primacy and the rest a decrease. When all primate cities are considered, and not merely those with levels of primacy above 40 per cent, the overall trend towards a decline in the level of primacy is clearer (figure V.3). Specifically, over two-thirds (77 of the 113 primate cities with a population of at least 750,000 inhabitants in 2000 experienced a *reduction* in the degree of primacy between 1975 and 2000. Declines were especially prevalent among primate cities that had high levels of primacy in 1975.

During 2000-2015, declines in primacy are expected to become more generalized, with more than three quarters of primate cities seeing their

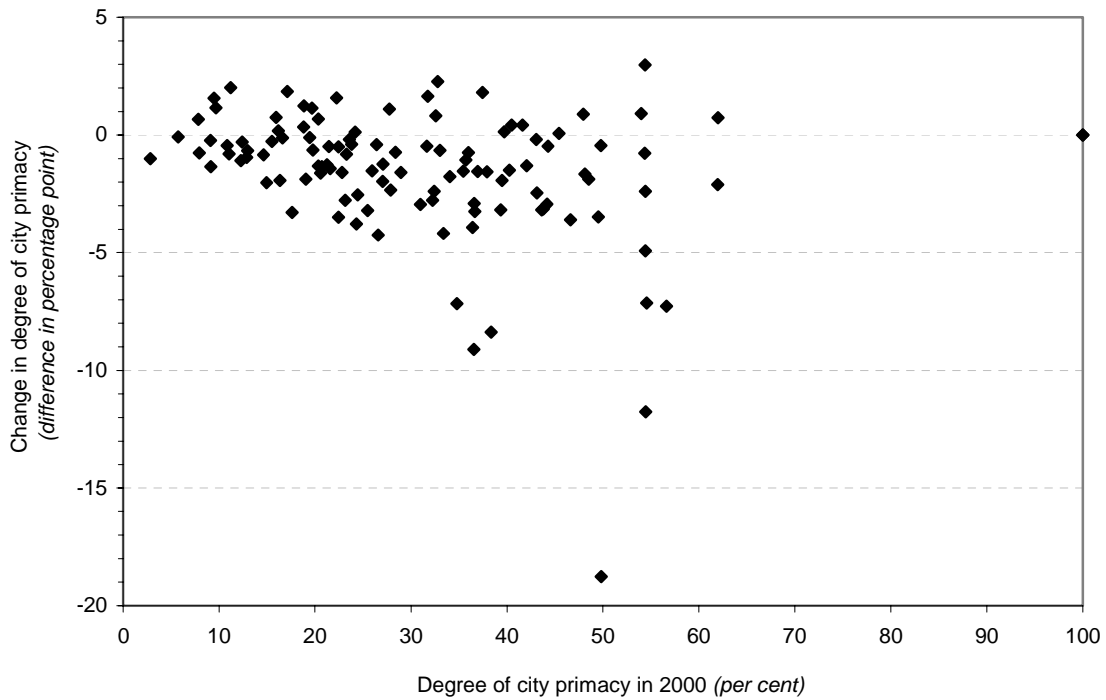
degree of primacy reduced (85 out of 113), although the reductions will be small, rarely surpassing 4 percentage points (figure V.4). That is, in comparison with the larger changes in primacy experienced by numerous primate cities during 1975-2000, the changes expected during the next fifteen years are minor. However, the declining level of primacy of most primate cities with populations of at least 750,000 persons indicates that, as the overall levels of urbanization of countries increase, there tends to be a greater diversification of the urban system, with the result that the largest cities tend to see their preponderance eroded by the growth of medium-sized and smaller urban centres. Finally, it is worth mentioning that in both figures V.3 and V.4, outliers are mainly cities from countries that have experienced civil conflicts, indicating some important migration flows to and from the main urban centres during and after the conflicts. In some cases, reclassification of rural settlements into urban settlements may also have contributed to the observed extreme values.

Figure V.3. Change in the degree of city primacy between 1975 and 2000 in relation to its value in 1975



NOTE: For urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2000.

Figure V.4. Change in the degree of city primacy between 2000 and 2015 in relation to its value in 2000



NOTE: For urban agglomerations with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2000.