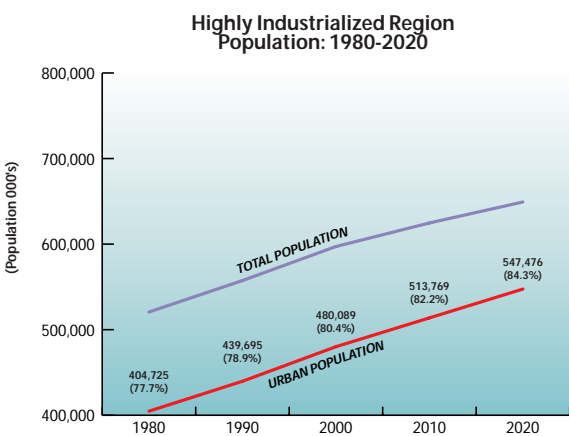


The urban population in the Highly Industrialized Countries (HIC) is projected to be 547 million, or 84 percent of its total population of 649 million, by 2020. Today, urban areas account for 80 percent of the total population of 597 million. On average, municipalities receive about US\$2,906 per capita in revenue per year.

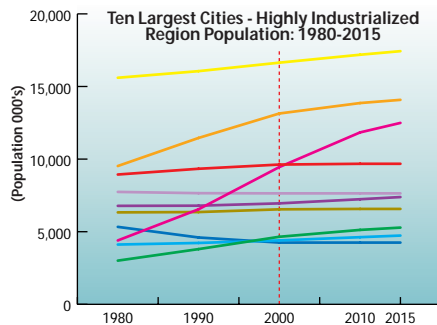
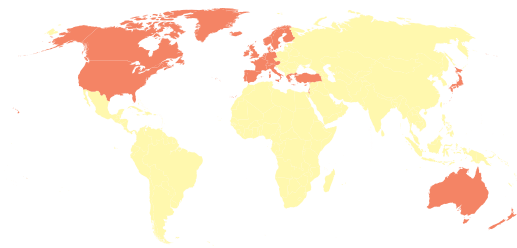
In most highly industrialized countries, the urban transformation has nearly stabilized. Therefore, cities no longer deal with the effects of rapid urbanization, but rather with a combination of other demographic issues and the impacts of global trends: increasing internationalization of metropolitan regions; changes in the distribution of responsibilities



Source: UN, World Urbanization Prospects, 1999

between the public and the private sectors; a generally stronger role for a few major cities within each country; ageing populations and the related problems of access to health care and pensions; international migration; and the highly detrimental impacts of social and economic polarization. In several industrialized countries these trends are compounded by the movement of jobs to newly industrializing regions and by rising urban poverty among vulnerable groups, further fuelling polarization trends.

In nearly all industrial countries, rural populations are still decreasing; a trend expected to continue over the coming decades. In the past half-century, cities have changed from fairly concentrated and identifiable entities into amorphous areas, sprawling into their hinterlands without visible borders between town and country. The automobile may be the facilitator, but causes of this dispersal include consumption-driven capitalism, the desire for more modern and spacious housing in open landscapes, the architectural and planning ideals of modernists and the developers' preference for cheap greenfield sites. Currently, half the urban population of Europe lives in small towns of 10-50,000 people, a quarter in medium sized towns and cities of 50-250,000, and a quarter in cities with more than 250,000 people.⁴ Projections for 2020 do not indicate much change in the pattern of population distribution over city-size



- Milan - Italy
- Philadelphia - United States of America
- Toronto - Canada
- Essen - Germany
- Chicago - United States of America
- London - United Kingdom
- Istanbul - Turkey
- Paris - France
- Los Angeles - United States of America
- New York - United States of America

Source: UN, World Urbanization Prospects, 1999

classes. In 2020, there will be five urban agglomerations larger than 5 million inhabitants in Europe: Paris, Moscow, London, Essen/Ruhrgebiet and St. Petersburg. In North America, cities of more than 5 million will be New York, Los Angeles and Chicago.

For the past two decades, the industrialized countries committed themselves to economic policies aimed at encouraging macroeconomic stabilization, structural adjustment and the globalization of production and distribution. Although these policies have in general been effective in promoting short-term economic growth, low inflation, and lower current-account imbalances, negative longer-term societal implications are now emerging as major political and socio-economic dilemmas. Growing political disenchantment arising from widening income gaps, declining political participation, and wide-spread social exclusion is manifesting itself in cities across North America and Europe alike. Social exclusion, urban segregation and violence have become phenomena common to many cities and, in the United States, the National League of Cities says racial tension is the number one issue facing cities.⁵

West European and North American cities are wealthy with generally well-educated populations. In 1998, the industrialized countries were among those with the highest GDP per capita - more than three times the world average. Nonetheless, persistent pockets of destitution continue to exist in cities throughout the entire region and poverty certainly has not yet been overcome. Around 17 percent of all urban households in the highly industrialized countries are income poor. But access of women to employment, literacy rates and school enrolment have all increased in Western Europe and North America.