

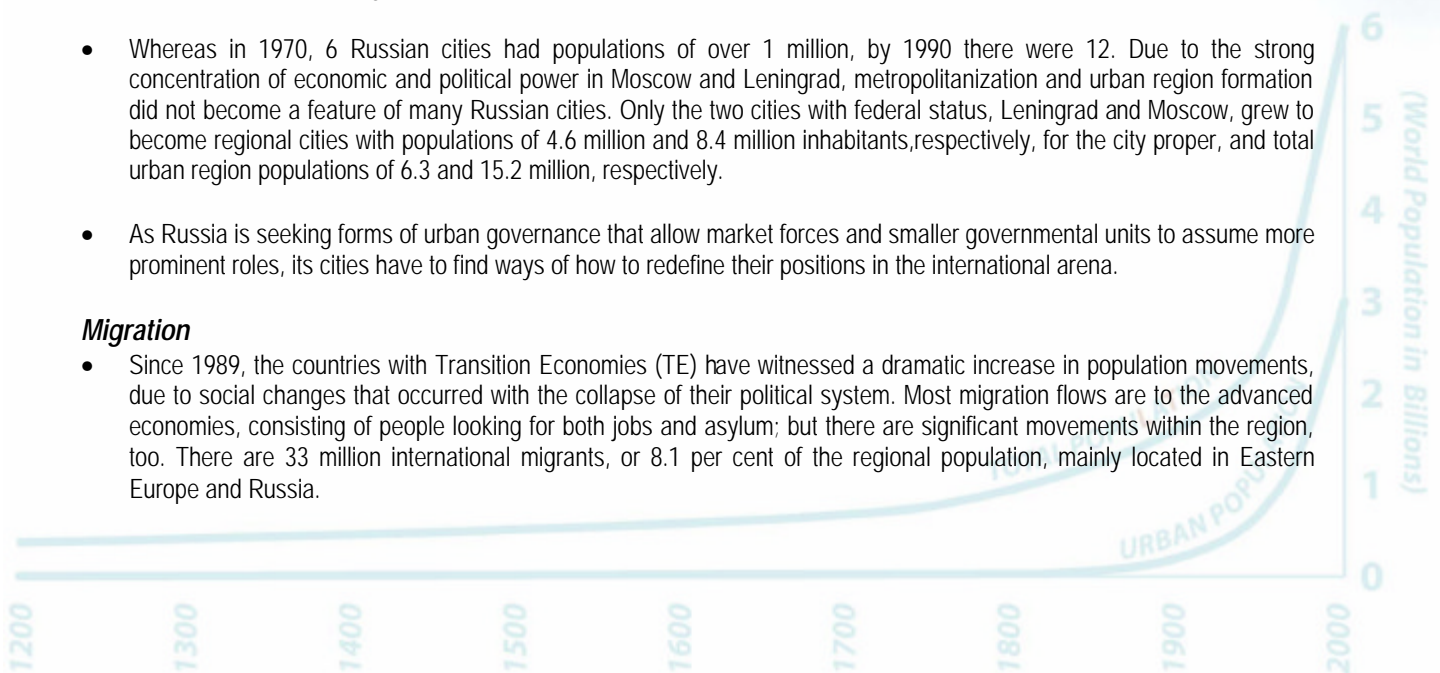
State of the World's Cities: Trends in Transition Economies

Urbanization & Metropolitanization

- By 2000, the geographical region of the former USSR and its satellite states was 68.3 per cent urbanized – up from about 17 per cent a century earlier. However, this average urbanization figure hides considerable intra-regional variations and strongly lopsided population distributions among and within the transition economies. Of the transition economies' 31 cities with over 1 million inhabitants in 2000, 25 are located in Europe.
- Although the urban transition of the past century is generally expected to continue, leading to an anticipated 75 per cent average urbanization level around 2030, recent developments in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) warrant a closer look at this projection.
- In 2000, seven cities exceeded 2 million people: Bucharest (2 million) Tashkent (2.2 million), Warsaw (2.3 million), Kiev (2.5 million), Katowice (3.5 million), St Petersburg (4.6 million) and Moscow (8.4 million).
- The two large Russian cities display the most distinct city region formation. The size of Moscow and St Petersburg relative to the other major cities reflects the long history of Russia as a centralized state.
- Moscow hosts half of Russia's banking activities, more than one fifth of its retail and one third of the national wholesale trade. But, with a mere 5.8 per cent of Russia's total population as of 2000, Moscow – although unquestionably a large city – is a primate city in economic rather than in relative population terms.
- Between the 1970s and early 1980s, the growth of Russia's biggest cities proceeded largely unchecked. Faced with chronic urban housing shortages, pollution and escalating traffic congestion, authorities *did* attempt to control migration to the major cities while simultaneously encouraging development of small- and medium-sized cities. Nevertheless, the scope and tempo of big-city growth continued with combinations of natural growth and considerable illegal and undocumented labour migration.
- Whereas in 1970, 6 Russian cities had populations of over 1 million, by 1990 there were 12. Due to the strong concentration of economic and political power in Moscow and Leningrad, metropolitanization and urban region formation did not become a feature of many Russian cities. Only the two cities with federal status, Leningrad and Moscow, grew to become regional cities with populations of 4.6 million and 8.4 million inhabitants, respectively, for the city proper, and total urban region populations of 6.3 and 15.2 million, respectively.
- As Russia is seeking forms of urban governance that allow market forces and smaller governmental units to assume more prominent roles, its cities have to find ways of how to redefine their positions in the international arena.

Migration

- Since 1989, the countries with Transition Economies (TE) have witnessed a dramatic increase in population movements, due to social changes that occurred with the collapse of their political system. Most migration flows are to the advanced economies, consisting of people looking for both jobs and asylum; but there are significant movements within the region, too. There are 33 million international migrants, or 8.1 per cent of the regional population, mainly located in Eastern Europe and Russia.



- In terms of migratory flows, Russia remains by far the most important destination country in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with more than 13 million immigrants (about 9 per cent of its population), followed by Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus.
- The Baltic republics have the highest percentage of foreign population (in Estonia, 26 per cent; in Latvia, 25 per cent; and in Lithuania, 9 per cent). Most of them live in the main cities (with an increasing number of illegal immigrants).
- The first major flow of both migrants and refugees into Russia occurred in 1988 and 1989, when Azerbaijanis and Armenians (mainly the latter) fled the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and when people fled Uzbekistan following a massacre in 1989. During the same period, a significant return migration of Russian people was reported from the Baltic republics, particularly to St Petersburg. These flows found Russian cities unprepared: in 1992, the national government established its first agency for dealing with such conditions, the Federal Migration Service.
- Since a few decades ago, Eastern European cities have become points on two main transit routes of illegal migrants coming from the Balkans, Russia or Asia, which pass through Poland. It is estimated that up to 15,000 people illegally cross the territory of Poland every year. The first route is the 'Balkan trail', used by Romanians, Bulgarians and citizens from former Yugoslavia who enter legally because regulations allow a one-month stay without a visa. Then they try to cross into Germany illegally. The second emigration trail via Poland runs from the Lithuanian border to Germany.
- Over the last decade, Poland has seen a wave of Turkish immigrants, which exemplifies a specific pattern of chain migration. Unlike in Germany, Turkish migrants coming to Poland have not had access to jobs as low-skilled industrial workers, but have had to actively look for an economic niche for themselves. They started as small traders and wholesalers; today, they have become successful businessmen and investors who bring from Turkey potential partners or engineers, not just poor family members. The majority of them live in Warsaw or in the vicinity; but small communities of Turks are reported in Poznan, Gdansk and Lodz.

Poverty & Slums

- The contraction of state-sector employment without commensurate growth of private-sector employment has led to a decline in real wages, pensions and social transfers within a general context of high inflation. The break-up of the former Soviet Union generated severe disruptions in the old trading and monetary regimes, which resulted in catastrophic declines in GDP of about 45 per cent during the 1990–1996 period.
- The region saw subsequent rising income inequalities. Open poverty and unemployment also increased significantly. It has been observed that the failure of rapid privatization in Russia, for instance, 'was not an accident, but a predictable consequence' of the absence of competition policies and the institutional and legal infrastructure needed to support successful reform efforts.
- Today the dream for a better life seems to have vanished in the face of the millions of new poor exposed to living conditions that can be similar to those living in least developed nations. Across Eastern Europe and Central Asia, household poverty has increased fivefold during the last 12 years and its social by-products are discernible everywhere: sharp increases in alcoholism – especially among men – suicide and mortality, as well as a decline in marriage and a rise in divorce rates. In 2002, about 46 per cent of residents of the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries had less than US\$4 per day, compared to 10 per cent in Western Europe. 53 per cent of the Russian population, 23 per cent in Romania, 28 per cent in Latvia, 62 per cent in Kazakhstan and 88 per cent in Kyrgyzstan have to survive on even less.
- Recent research on poverty in six countries indicates that the incidence and depth of poverty is lower in urban areas than in rural areas. It also indicates that the capital cities, Moscow, Sofia, Warsaw, Tallin and Bishkek, have fewer poor than other cities, with respective rates of 20, 3, 7, 11 and 15 per cent.
- De-population has also become an important issue in the region as mortality rates are increasing, and fertility rates are below replacement levels. Out flows of migrants contribute further to national population declines in many countries. Adding to that, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is spreading at catastrophic rates in both Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

- The region's poor housing conditions are reflected in recent slum estimates which reveal that in transition economies about one tenth of the urban population live in slum conditions, without adequate access to basic services and/or in crowded housing units.
- In the Central Asian republics, more than half of all urban dwellers live in slum conditions (56 per cent in Tajikistan, 51.8 per cent in Kyrgyzstan and 50.7 per cent in Uzbekistan). Elsewhere in the region, the urban slum rates are lower: 31 per cent in Moldova, 30 per cent in Kazakhstan and 19 per cent in Romania. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and former Macedonia have even lower rates of about 8 per cent.
- These proportions probably do not yet reflect the effects of wars, as about 1 million dwellings have been destroyed or badly damaged in this sub-region. Other Eastern European countries have much lower rates: about 5 per cent in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Slovenia.
- **The Roma community:** Many Roma in transitional societies are trapped into long-term poverty and are increasingly living in spatially segregated areas. During the past, a number of Roma were provided with housing, along with employment, as part of government-organized integration or assimilation campaigns. During the transition period, as many state enterprises closed or were restructured and collective farms were broken up, many of the inhabitants lost their jobs. Many of these areas now have highly concentrated impoverishment. Poverty levels for Roma now range between four and ten times that of non-Roma in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania, with nearly 40 per cent of Roma in Romania and Bulgaria living on less than US\$2.15 per day. More than 60 per cent of Romania's Gypsies are said to live below the poverty line and 80 per cent have no formal qualifications.

Crime & Safety

- On average, less than 25 per cent of the Central and Eastern Europe population surveyed by UNICRI's 1996 International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) reported being satisfied with the police, while almost 50 per cent reported being dissatisfied. Perhaps surprisingly, rates of citizen satisfaction and reporting crime to the police did not improve between 1991 and 1996, when many of these countries' police forces began to reorganize their role and the new regimes were establishing better relations between state and citizens
- Far fewer crimes continue to be reported to police in Central and Eastern Europe than in industrialized regions. On average, reporting rates in urban centres that were already low in 1996 further decreased between 1996 and 2000 for all types of crime, except attempted burglary and robbery, which remained quite stable.
- When individual cities are compared, the greatest increases in reporting between 1997 and 2000 were for robbery, burglary and attempted burglary in Ljubljana (Slovenia), Minsk (Belarus), Sofia (Bulgaria), Warsaw (Poland) and Zagreb (Croatia). The greatest decreases were in Vilnius (Lithuania), Prague (Czech Republic) and Tirana (Albania).
- The Russian Federation's already high murder rate in 1990 (9.4 per 100,000 population) soared to 21.9 per 100,000 population by 2000. Furthermore, the Russian Federation, along with Hungary, reported the highest rate of youth sentencing (1.5 per cent of juveniles).
- Theft of personal property (22.2 per cent of all crimes) and theft from cars (20.7 per cent of all crimes) were the most common crimes in cities surveyed by the 2000 ICVS. Car vandalism (15.3 per cent) and assault and threat (10.3 per cent) were also relatively common. Burglary (7.5 per cent), attempted burglary (7.0 per cent) and robbery (6.2 per cent) made up another 20 per cent of all crimes in 2000. The proportion of all of these crimes changed very little between 1996 and 2000.
- On average, 9 of the 11 crimes measured by the ICVS decreased between 1996 and 2000. The largest decreases were for theft of personal property (-1.5 per cent), car vandalism (-1.4 per cent) and assault and threat (-1.0 per cent). Riga, Latvia (+0.8 per cent), had the largest increase in assaults with force between 1996 and 2000.

- The extent of decrease in assaults with force was more remarkable in cities such as Bucharest, Warsaw, Sofia, Prague and Zagreb. In 2000, assaults with force were most common in Tallinn, Estonia (experienced by 3.4 per cent of ICVS respondents), Riga, Latvia (1.9 per cent), and Vilnius, Lithuania (1.4 per cent), closely followed by Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Minsk, Belarus (1.3 per cent each).
- Trafficking and smuggling of human beings operated by organized crime networks in countries whose economies are in transition has become of particular concern to national governments and the international community. Although Asian countries have been the primary suppliers of women to the sex trade for decades, the collapse of the Soviet Union has made former Soviet republics such as Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia and Russia major source countries of women into prostitution.
- According to a 1999 report, women and children from Russia, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary and Poland are often preyed upon by traffickers, in addition to those from Asian countries and, to a lesser extent, Latin American countries such as Brazil and Honduras. Ukraine has become one of the largest global suppliers of women for prostitution.
- It is estimated that 500,000 Ukrainian women were trafficked to the West between 1991 and 1998. Main countries of destination include Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, The Netherlands, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the US and the former Yugoslavia, as well as Korea, particularly for prostitution around military bases.
- Trafficked women from this region are delivered into prostitution throughout the world, and there are estimated to be 0.5 million women from Central and Eastern Europe working in prostitution in the EU alone.

Governance & Transparency

- As surveyed by UNICRI's International Crime Victim Survey, police and civil servant corruption remained very high in countries in transition between 1991 and 1996, reinforcing the perception that the role of the police was to protect state interests alone.
- Police officers were also the public officials reported to be most often involved in corruption in countries in transition. This did not help to change public perception of the police's role to one that maintains law and order in citizens' interest. Furthermore, police and media tended to concentrate more on repression of crime, such as organized crime and money laundering, rather than on promoting public order and preventing crime for the service of citizens.
- The 2003 CPI rated the level of corruption in 24 of the region's countries. Slovenia, Estonia, Hungary and Lithuania (ranked 29, 33, 40 and 41, respectively) led the region, while there were ten countries grouped at the very lowest ranges of 100 or below. In general, the rating of the region as a group has not improved over the past several years.
- In Romania, cities have increased transparency through the establishment of citizen information centres (CICs). The first CICs of the late 1990s quickly became popular and spread. An association of CICs now provides assistance to new cities wishing to establish their own, and more than 50 centres have been created and are generally considered a success.

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