

## Chapter 2

# The Urban Context

**Abstract** Urbanisation is not a new phenomenon, although its impacts have recently been paid increased attention. During Malthus' times, England witnessed significant growth in industry, which cumulated in what was to become the industrial revolution. The development of industry triggered a need for cheap labour and hence resulted in huge migration flows into the cities. In the 20th century, the urbanisation process accelerated rapidly and emerged as a major phenomenon with a significant impact on food and water security. Similarly to the historical context, the geneses of more recent urbanisation are not uniform and differ depending on regional and country-specific circumstances. This chapter analyses the trends and dynamics of urban growth during the Malthusian era and the origins of urbanisation using selected country examples. Finally, the chapter proposes a novel definition and typology of urbanisation, and discusses the differences in the national classification of urban areas.

**Keywords** Urban growth • Urbanisation • Historical urbanisation • Urban areas • Typologies of urbanisation

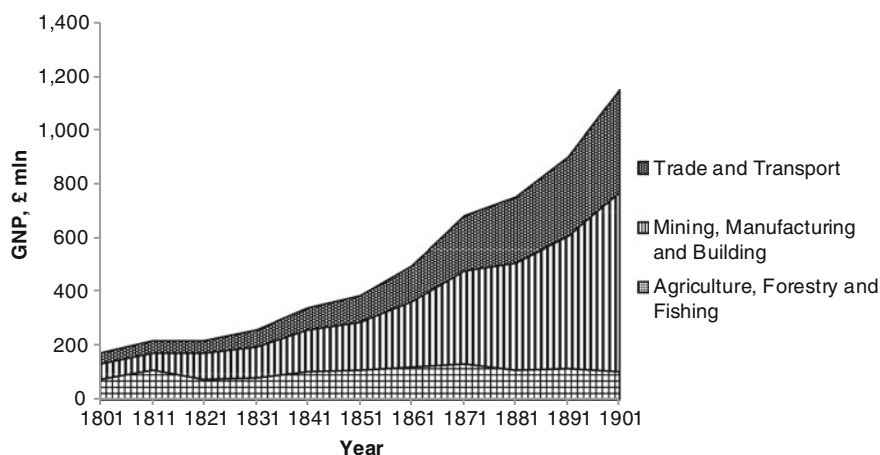
### 2.1 Urbanisation in the Age of Malthus

In order to understand both the background behind the Malthusian theory as well as the motivation for this book, it is important to provide the relevant historical perspective. The historical context of interest refers in particular to demographic and urban developments occurring in the Malthusian era. During Malthus' lifetime, overall population in England and Wales grew considerably: from around 6.5 million in 1760 to almost 14 million in 1830, according to the records from the 1831 census. At the same time, poverty dominated the lower strata of society and the increase in food prices made it difficult for the poor to afford food. Growing towns had become home for many new residents, including those with little income, and

thus swarmed with homeless families, the sick and individuals with disabilities. During this time, other countries across the globe witnessed hunger and famines. India suffered from the Bengal famine (1770), Chalisa famine (1783–84) and Doji bara famine (1789–92), and China followed with famines in 1810 and 1811. Throughout Europe, countries such as Germany, Sweden, Iceland and the Czech Republic all witnessed famines in the 18th century. Tunisia and Egypt both suffered from widespread famines towards the end of the 18th century. This situation provided Malthus with excellent arguments to support his claim in the repeatedly revised editions of the *Essay on the Principle of Population*. In his analysis of the potential impact of population growth on means of subsistence, Malthus so fiercely defended his argument about the causal effect of human fertility on food that he neglected to analyse the power of industrialisation and urbanisation on the availability of and access to natural resources.

Although historians dispute the exact dates of the industrial revolution, it is broadly agreed that it involved a process of economic change from agriculture to manufacture, which took place between 1760 and 1840. The data regarding the occupational structure of the population during this time period provide further insights. While in 1759, 24.6 % of families in England and Wales worked in agriculture, by 1801–3 the proportion of families employed in agriculture had dropped to 14.6 (Mitchell 1988). These numbers exclude labourers, whose proportion increased throughout the late 18th century and amounted to 6.3 % in 1759 and 15.5 % in 1801/03 (Mitchell 1988). When analysed jointly, the proportion of people working on land remained at similar levels. However, the changing trends in terms of agricultural workers versus labourers were likely a result of evolving property rights and land enclosures. In the 19th century, the proportion of families working in agriculture decreased considerably. Based on the census information, which distinguishes between three occupational categories (agriculture; trade, commerce and handicraft; others) the decline in agricultural employment in Great Britain dropped from 35 to 28 % between 1811 and 1831 (Mitchell 1988). Alongside the increasing process of industrialisation and urbanisation of the country during the same period, this decline continued throughout the 19th century. Similar trends can be observed when looking at the composition of National Accounts in the 19th century (Fig. 2.1). While the factor cost from agriculture remained at comparable levels throughout the century, the income from trade and transport, as well as mining, manufacturing and building, continued to grow. These evolving trends in occupational patterns and income distribution accompanied an increasingly important urbanisation process.

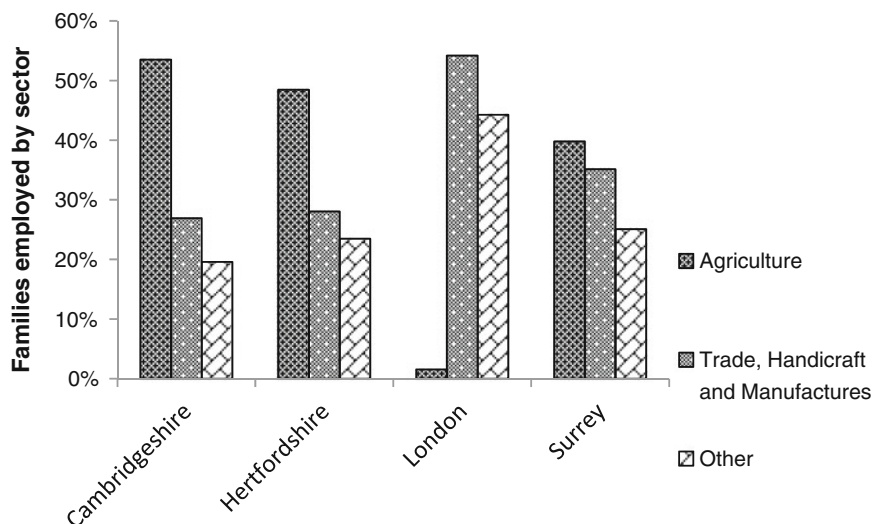
Although the phenomenon of rapid urbanisation is not new, the terminology(ies) describing the process became popular only in the 20th century. When screening through historical statistics, the word “industrial” appears frequently, whereas it is impossible to find any mention of “urban”, let alone “urbanisation” (Mitchell and Deane 1962; Mitchell et al. 1971; Mitchell 1988). Mitchell quotes the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, which states that “urbanise was first used in 1884 [well after the death of Malthus] in the sense of ‘to make of an urban character; to convert into city’” (Mitchell 1969). However, it remains a historical fact that during



**Fig. 2.1** GNP at factor cost—Great Britain 1801–1901 (in £ million). *Data source* Mitchell [1988](#)

Malthus' times England, and in fact Europe, witnessed significant growth in industry, which cumulated in what was to become the industrial revolution. The development of industry triggered a need for cheap labour and hence produced huge migration flows into the cities. Immigration into cities was the primary cause of urban growth in England in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Williamson [1988](#)). When compared with other European countries, there is evidence that the British population was much more mobile. This may be partly explained by the fact that the benefits received under the Poor Laws could be claimed in places other than one's native area (Wrigley [2004](#)). It is therefore surprising that, in the context of his theory on population growth and food, Malthus made limited references to urbanisation and population distribution. It was during the Malthusian era that in England the urban share of the population increased tremendously: from 25.9 % in 1776 to 65.2 % in 1871 (Williamson [1988](#)).

In addition, regional data from South England confirm shifting patterns in the occupational structure of the population, which was one of the characteristics of increasing urbanisation in 19th century England. Figure [2.2](#) shows data points for the four geographical areas with which Malthus was particularly familiar—Surrey, Cambridgeshire, London and Herefordshire. As can be observed from the chart, in 1831, the percentages of families working in trade, handicraft and manufactures were above 25 % for all four regions. London, not surprisingly, accounted for 54 % of such families, followed by Surrey with 35 %. The growing demand for food, resulting from rapid urbanisation accompanied by poor harvests and war with France, led to price hikes in food products, which in turn resulted in greater poverty (Turner [1986](#)). At the same time, the rich landed classes were able to make a profit and, through capital spending, contribute to the country's agricultural and industrial production (Cannadine [1986](#)). This multifaceted reality provided Malthus with



**Fig. 2.2** Percentage of families working in agriculture, trade, handicraft and manufactures and other occupations in four English regions (1831 census). *Data source* Population census 1831

inspiration for establishing his theoretical foundations. The Malthusian theory will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter, but first we turn to other key issues pertaining to urbanisation: its geneses, definitional challenges and current trends.

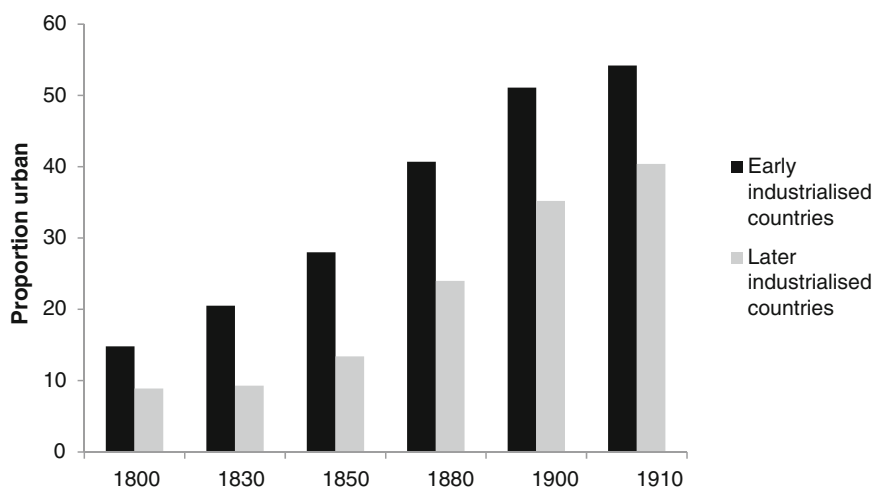
## 2.2 Geneses of Urbanisation

The geneses of urbanisation are not uniform; they differ depending on regional or country-specific circumstances. Urban origins are also closely linked to other historical factors, such as geographical environment, trade and colonial expansion. While cities existed in the pre-industrial era, it was only in the 20th century that urbanisation became a globally widespread phenomenon. In Europe, the fastest urbanisation occurred in the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. In 1914, the developed world counted 281 cities of over 100,000 inhabitants; by 1980, this number had grown to 1,006 cities (Bairoch and Goertz 1986).

More specifically, when analysing the geneses of pre-industrial urbanisation in Europe, several factors need to be highlighted. One key factor was the role of commercial activities, which resulted in the transformation of landscape and centres of power. Not surprisingly, the countries that were most active in geographical exploration, such as the Netherlands, Portugal and Italy, developed trade links that prompted the growth and importance of cities in their settlement systems. At the same time other nations, particularly Russia and Scandinavian countries, remained relatively non-urbanised. This can be explained by the fact that the Neolithic

revolution in these countries occurred comparatively late. The Neolithic revolution not only changed the process of agricultural production but also contributed to establishing more sedentary societies. In addition, it is argued that some Northern countries experienced relatively late urbanisation because of the cold climate, which entailed a need for combustibles and lower agricultural production (Bairoch and Goertz 1986). The differences in the pace of urbanisation between early industrialised countries and late industrialised countries are illustrated in Fig. 2.3.

Another factor contributing to European urbanisation involved changing property rights related to land ownership. In England, the enclosure movement started in the 16th century (World Bank 2009) and gradually intensified. The enclosure process was dictated by the agricultural progress and the related profitability of the land. During this time, many peasants were dispossessed of their land and worked for feudal estates (Ciriacywantrup and Bishop 1975). This in turn caused peasant displacement, resulting in greater migration to cities. By 1800, England had achieved a level of urbanisation that was not attained by any other country until half a century later (Kingsley 1955). In England, and subsequently in other European countries, urban expansion progressed quickly following the process of industrialisation and the emergence of industrial capitalism. In this context, the interdependency theory allows geographers to argue that urbanisation can be explained as a spatial product of capitalism (Clark 1998). Industrialisation, which created the factory system of manufacturing, entailed unprecedented labour migration to the cities and contributed to further urban growth.



**Fig. 2.3** Proportion of urban population in early industrialised and later industrialised European countries (1800–1910). *Notes* Early industrialised nations include Belgium, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, while later industrialised countries include Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Netherlands. *Data source* Bairoch and Goertz (1986)

When analysing societal and demographic changes in industrialising England, researchers have focused on explaining the causes of modern population growth. While McKeown's hypothesis states that the decrease in mortality in 19th century England should primarily be attributed to raising living standards, including nutrition (McKeown 1976; Colgrove 2002; Harris 2004), his critics highlight the importance and negative impact of urban processes on human survival during this period. Research has shown that during this time, urban dwellers suffered from lower life expectancy than their rural counterparts and that spatial inequalities existed in terms of access to food and health services (Szreter 1998; Szreter and Mooney 1998). In particular, studies investigating improvements in urban mortality have highlighted the role of sanitation and personal hygiene as key contributors to population growth (Szreter and Mooney 1998; Harris 2004). This discussion will be further referenced in Chap. 5, which focuses on contemporary intra-urban inequalities in developing countries.

The origins of urbanisation in North America have been attributed to large-scale migration from the European continent, as well as a propitious property rights system and rapidly developing transportation links. For example, Dutt et al. (1994, p. 383) stressed that in the 19th century, America acted as a "safety valve" for Europe, absorbing European surplus population as the colonies offered extra job opportunities. However, immigration alone cannot be considered the primary factor accounting for American urbanisation. More plausibly, the impact of technology—in particular transportation, but also industrial energy—became a crucial pillar that enabled greater trade and contributed to the establishment of cities. Borchert argued that these technological innovations, together with the resource base of the hinterland, constituted key elements enabling further economic growth and geographical diversification of the United States (Borchert 1967; Pacione 2009). Thus, despite the fact that there were no urban settlements in pre-Columbian America, urbanisation of the USA progressed rapidly in the 19th and early 20th centuries (Bairoch and Goertz 1986; Pacione 2009). While in 1800 the urban population had amounted to 5.3 %, by 1900 the number had reached 35.9 % (Bairoch and Goertz 1986).

Although today the countries in the Gulf region are classified as highly developed, their socio-economic development path has been distinct from that of the Western countries. As such, the urbanisation processes and trends in the Gulf region differed from those discussed above. This previously nomad region experienced very rapid urbanisation in the second half of the 20th century. The urbanisation process was triggered by an economic boom that followed the discovery of oil and gas and the creation of the petroleum industry in the region. This new sector created job opportunities and thus attracted foreign labour, resulting in urban population growth and increased consumption. While the urbanisation process in the Gulf has primarily been influenced by economic factors, hydraulic theory claims that because of water scarcity in the Middle East, cities were created to enable central management of precious water resources, which was key to agricultural production (Pacione 2009). Today, desalination, centralised management systems, highly developed infrastructure and concentrated settlements allow more efficient resource

distribution. In addition, human capital accumulation that occurred in the urban centres has further contributed to effective spatial planning in this region.

In most developing countries, the origins of urbanisation were still different (and not uniform throughout the group). Dissimilarities between developed and developing countries played out in terms of the overall social and economic environments in which urban processes accelerated. For example, the rates of natural increase have been much higher in the rapidly urbanising developing world. In addition, “natural endowments” and “higher absolute levels of development” were greater in Europe and North America at the times of their urbanisation (Kasarda and Crenshaw 1991). Dutt et al. (1994) offer a comparative analysis of the origins of urban growth in the West and in Asia. While in Western societies, urbanisation was primarily triggered by rural-urban migration (a result of industrialisation and division of labour), in the 20th century, Asian cities had to absorb large surpluses of rural population through a “rural push” process. On the other hand, research suggests that the rapid urbanisation of South Asia was triggered by post-colonial industrialisation processes resulting in turn from increasing globalisation (Hackenberg 1980; McGee 2009). Following this logic, the rural-urban migration was a consequence of an increased demand for labour triggered by the global economy.

Finally, when considering the African experience, the literature suggests that the seeds of urbanisation were planted during the process of the expansion of coastal settlements and administrative centres that took place in the colonial period. In her study on urbanisation in Africa, Coquery-Vidrovitch (1991) claims that this approach does not reflect the reality. She points out that although in some cases new settlements were indeed created, most often existing towns or villages were used and adapted by the colonisers. As Coquery-Vidrovitch (1991, p. 36) explains, “The change was not so much an emergence of cities, but an alteration of the previous urban networks and hierarchies between small trading centres and new selected metropolises, most of them located along the coast, since colonisation aimed at generalizing an outward-oriented market economy”. Similarly, Tettey (2005) points out that both urban bias theory and modernisation theory fail to explain pre-colonial urbanisation in Africa. At the same time, however, it is hard to refute the arguments that colonisation did, at least to some extent, contribute to the increasing urbanisation of Africa, which progressed rapidly in the post-colonial era. In the latter period, migration from rural to urban areas caused by income disparities and natural increase were the primary reasons for rapid urbanisation. The phenomenon of internal migration was complemented by governmental policies, which favoured centralisation of investments and therefore attracted the workforce to the cities. As a result, over the last few decades, Africa has witnessed an unprecedented rate of urbanisation and city growth. A summary of urban origins is provided in Table 2.1. The next section offers a typology of contemporary urbanisation.

**Table 2.1** Summary of global urban origins

Urban origins	
Indirect	Direct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Industrialisation</li><li>• Globalisation</li><li>• Labour markets and labour demand</li><li>• Expected labour demand</li><li>• Colonialism</li><li>• Overall population growth</li><li>• Human capital and technological advancements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural-urban migration</li><li>• Urban population growth (natural increase)</li><li>• Reclassification of areas of residence</li></ul>

**2.3 Definition and Typology of Urbanisation**

Before undertaking analysis pertaining to urbanisation, it is important to define what “urbanisation” and “urban” mean as well as to acknowledge measurement challenges related to urbanisation. Both the concept of urbanisation and the division between urban and rural have often been subject to academic and policy debates. Half a century ago, Kingsley Davis provided a simple yet convincing definition of urbanisation as “the proportion of the total population concentrated in urban settlements, or else to a rise in this proportion” (Davis 1965, p. 41). Following the UN guidelines, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines urbanisation as “(1) increase in the proportion of a population living in urban areas; (2) process by which a large number of people becomes permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities” (OECD 2012a, b). While the first aspect of this definition implies that urbanisation is a direct result of demographic processes, the second part conceptualises urbanisation as a broader phenomenon. To complement the above definitions, another social (and aspatial) aspect of urbanisation should also be highlighted. Bhatta (2010), for example, referred to urbanisation as “a social process, which refers to the changes of behaviour and social relationships that occur in social dimensions as a result of people living in towns and cities”. This definition of urbanisation is particularly interesting to both sociologists and demographers, as it implies that people’s behaviour, norms, and family patterns change through the process of urbanisation.

This book proposes a revised definition of urbanisation as “a process of population concentration, which has important demographic, social and environmental ramifications”. By using this modified definition, the stress is placed on both the process and the impact of urbanisation. As highlighted in the previous section, urban origins may vary depending on regional and country-specific historical circumstances and contemporary dynamics (Davis 1955; Coquery-Vidrovitch 1991). These include direct demographic causes, such as rural-urban migration and natural increase in urban populations associated primarily with high fertility rates. This global urbanisation process has been accompanied by an increasing reduction in available land, including agricultural land. Importantly, urbanisation is closely



linked to demographic transition (Dyson 2011). Historically, it has been observed that the process of urbanisation continues until the percentage of urban population in the country is relatively high. On the other hand, once urban residence becomes predominant, as is the case in most European nations, de-urbanisation trends can follow.

Traditionally, cities have become the core of business and politics, and thus often represent the centre of power and distribution of state welfare when applicable. At the same time, it is important to highlight that urban spaces are far from homogeneous; they comprise large cities, including megacities, as well as a vast net of smaller towns and cities and their respective peripheries. In the absence of clear administrative divisions, it is hard to distinguish boundaries between urban and rural areas. Importantly, when the proportion of urban dwellers grows, so does the diversification of this group and inequalities of access to basic means of subsistence. Diversification of urban areas encompasses the size and density of urban centres as well as the social class and social capabilities of urban dwellers. In developed countries, urban groups tend to be more homogeneous, partly due to the governmental provision of social welfare; meanwhile, in developing countries, large rural-urban inequalities and increasing intra-urban inequalities persist. Spatial inequalities relating to the place of residence often exacerbate inequalities resulting from households' financial situations (income-based), size (demographic) or both. The discussion of inequalities will be the focus of Chap. 5, which will examine the case of rapidly urbanising LDCs.

Finally, it is crucial to highlight the difference between the impacts of urbanisation as an ongoing process and its effects once the process of rapid urban growth has ended. In this context, urban processes are most likely to have an impact in developing countries. Rapid urban growth, when uncontrolled, can result in large informal settlements (e.g. slums) that often lack access to basic amenities. In these circumstances, fundamental human rights, such as schooling for children or access to safe drinking water, are frequently compromised. In addition, due to challenges related to access to clean water and sanitation, slum dwellers tend to be at high risk of ill health. On the other hand, developing countries are more likely to be affected by direct and indirect outcomes of urbanisation rather than the consequences of urban growth. Obesity constitutes an excellent example. As an outcome of urbanisation, individuals invest less in physical activity, which, coupled with changing dietary patterns, can have dramatic effects on human health.

Table 2.2 provides a summary overview of the differentiated impact of urbanisation in the form of a typology. A distinction is made between two separate but complementary aspects of urbanisation. These include quality and quantity of urban process; quality can be evaluated based on the impact on households' livelihoods, while quantity is measured by traditional indicators of urbanisation such as proportion of urban population, urban growth rate and percentage of urban population in slums. Both aspects of urbanisation can translate into either a negative or a positive outcome. The outcomes encompass demographic, social and ecological phenomena, including the effect of urbanisation on fertility rates, population age

Table 2.2 Typology of urbanisation

Aspect of urbanisation	Assessment/measurement		Mitigating/confounding factors	Negative impact	Positive impact
Quality	Qualitative	Impact on households livelihoods	<b>Macro</b> human development context, including country's welfare policies	Environmental: ecological degradation	Environmental: infrastructure
			<b>Micro</b> socio-economic characteristics	Social: social ties, care support	Human capital (HC): potential for HC development
Quantity	Quantitative	Rate of urban growth and pace of urbanisation	<b>Macro</b> indicators of human development	Demographic: population structure, including aging	Demographic: fertility
				Rapid/unplanned urban growth	Slow-moderate
		Proportion urban	<b>Micro</b> socio-economic indicators	Can vary—limited relevance	Can vary—limited relevance
		Urban population in slums		Large proportion of urban population in slums	No slums

structure and social relationships. Environmental outcomes can be as varied as a potential reduction of fish stock caused by rapid urbanisation and improvements in infrastructure that facilitate the distribution of food and water.

The differentiated impact of urbanisation will be further discussed in Chap. 3 in the context of the analysis of interlinkages between urbanisation and food insecurity. The next section focuses on key definitional and measurement issues related to urbanisation.

## 2.4 National Classifications of Urban Areas

Finally, when it comes to national definitions of “urban”, the United Nations’ Department of Social and Economic Affairs (DESA) acknowledges that different countries have their own definitions of urban and rural areas. While supranational efforts exist to provide a certain degree of standardisation, with the best known examples probably being the EU and OECD, at the national level countries tend to have their own distinct classifications. Given that it is impossible to discuss each and every country in detail, this section provides several relevant examples. The purpose of this discussion is to acknowledge that international comparisons are not based on a uniform set of standards, but rather on best adapted practices often resulting from a variety of compromises. In order to ensure a broad geographical overview, this section first discusses selected highly urbanised European countries, then large emerging economies, and finally a number of African nations.

According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS), in England and Wales the definition of urban/rural is based on settlement approach, with settlements of 10,000 or more being classified as urban (Malik et al. 2013). Hectare grid squares are used as the minimum classification areas. These are then combined into larger geographical entities, including Output Areas (OA), Wards and Super Output Areas (SOA). Overall, at the smallest level of OA a settlement can be classified as (1) urban, (2) town and fringe, (3) village or (4) hamlet and dispersed. Within each category, further classification relates to the criterion of sparseness. Thus, a settlement can be sparse or less sparse depending on the number of households in the relevant hectare grid squares. The details of the method are spelled out in a joint report by the Countryside Agency, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the ONS and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Webb and Rogers 2003).

In Norway, the country by which Malthus was particularly impressed (Malthus and James 2009; Drake 1966), urban settlements are defined as agglomerations of houses with more than 200 residents (OECD 2007). In addition to this condition, the distance between houses in urban settlements should not exceed 50 m. As a comparison, in other Nordic countries such as Denmark and Sweden, the cut-off distance is set to 200 m (OECD 2007). Based on these criteria, in 2011, Norway was almost 79 % urban compared to around 20 % in 1865 (OECD 2007; UN 2014).

The southeastern part of the country is the most urbanised, with Oslo being the only city exceeding 500,000 inhabitants.

In large economies, such as Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICs), the urban-rural classifications are different again. In China, a country that experienced rapid urbanisation, urbanisation is usually defined “as the convergence process of population to urban areas” (Liu et al. 2003), which is measured by the ratio of urban population to total population of the country. Urban areas are officially designated by the government as well as at the provincial level. However, the criteria for designation of these areas are complex and have changed over time. In 1955, for instance, places “with seats of county level and above state government agencies or with a clustered population of 2000 of which 50 % or more are non-agricultural population” (Liu et al. 2003) could acquire the status of designated towns. The current system takes into account a number of factors, such as size of population including non-agricultural population, income and infrastructure of an area.

Chang and Brada (2006) reported that after 2000, migrants who had been urban residents for at least six months were also counted amongst urban population. In addition, at that time the density criterion for urban areas was specified at 1500 persons/km<sup>2</sup> (Chang and Brada 2006). Moreover, it has been observed that in practice two parallel systems of defining “urban” exist—one based on spatial distribution and another parallel system based on inhabitants’ personal registration (Hussain 2003). This latter system is known as 户口 or *hu kou*, using the pin ying transcript. Individuals with non-urban *hu kou* but residing in a city are not considered to be legitimate residents of that urban area and are therefore unlikely to be counted as part of urban population. In addition to introducing bias in the classification system, the *hu kou* issue creates far-reaching challenges, including underestimation of urban poverty. Finally, because of the dynamic nature of China’s urbanisation and the resulting changes in the classification of urban areas (Zhou et al. 2004), caution is needed when referring to urban and rural categories.

India, meanwhile, classifies an area as urban if it fulfils one of the following conditions: (1) a place that hosts a municipality town area committee, corporation or cantonment board, or (2) a place with a population of at least 5,000 inhabitants, a population density that amounts to at least 400 persons/km<sup>2</sup> or more, and at least 75 % of the area’s working male population employed in non-agricultural sectors (Government of India 2011). According to the Indian Government, settlements that fulfil the first condition are designated as Statutory Towns (ST), whereas places satisfying the three criteria under point 2 are classified as Census Towns (CT). In addition to these two categories, there exist urban agglomerations (UA) and out-growth areas (OG), which are settlements such as ports, railway colonies, campuses or any other areas with identifiable boundaries. According to the 2011 census, India counted 7,935 towns; this was an increase of 35 % from the previous census, conducted in 2001. Comparatively, in Brazil, defining urban areas lies in the competency of each municipality (IBGE 2011). Thus, at the national level, “urban” refers to any urban or sub-urban area as defined by respective municipal authorities (UN DESA 2012a, b). Similar to India and China, Brazil experienced a rapid urban

transition, with its urban proportion of the population increasing from 36 % in 1950 to 84 % in 2010 (UN 2014).

Finally, African countries, which are amongst the least urbanised nations globally, have been experiencing unprecedented urban growth with annual growth rates as high as 6 % for Burkina Faso and Uganda (2005–2010). On average, between 2005 and 2010, the least developed countries, most of which are located in sub-Saharan Africa, had an annual urban growth of 3.7 % compared to 2.6 % for other developing countries (UN 2014). While overall the African continent is dynamically urbanising, considerable differences exist in terms of both the rate of urban growth and definitions of urban areas. For instance, Ghana, since gaining independence in 1957, has seen improvements in its infrastructure and information networks accompanied by a high rate of urbanisation. Ghana defines urban settlements as those with at least 5000 inhabitants (Owusu 2005; Obeng-Odoom 2010). Although the urban proportion of the population continues to grow, the definition of urban areas has remained constant since Ghana's independence. The proportion of urban population in Ghana increased from 15 % in 1950 to 51 % in 2010 (UN 2014). Accra and Kumasi are the largest urban centres in Ghana, with 34 % of urban dwellers residing in these cities (Obeng-Odoom 2010).

In Ethiopia, a country with one of the lowest rates of urban population, cities are defined as settlements of more than 2000 (Schmidt and Kedir 2009). Similarly, Liberia defines its conditions for urban areas as localities exceeding 2000 inhabitants (UN DESA 2012a, b). With these definitional differences, establishing joint standards remains a challenge for international and regional agencies as well as cross-national survey organisations. In order to allow comparisons, the UN statistics are based on the national classifications. At the same time, the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) Program has been using its own classification of types of residence, which comprises the following four categories: capitals and large cities (with more than one million inhabitants), small cities (between 50,000 and one million inhabitants), towns (other urban areas) and countryside. Both UN and DHS classifications will be used throughout this book.

## References

- Bairoch, P., and G. Goertz. 1986. Factors of urbanisation in the nineteenth century developed countries: A descriptive and econometric analysis. *Urban Studies* 23: 285–305.
- Cannadine, D. 1986. Conspicuous consumption by the landed classes. In *Malthus and his time*, ed. M. Turner, 1790–1830. UK: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Mitchell, C. 1969. Urbanization, de-tribalization, stabilization and urban commitment in South Africa. In *Urbanism, urbanization and change: Comparative perspectives*, ed. P. Meadows, and E.H. Mizruchi. USA: Addison Wesley Longman Publishing Co.
- Mitchell, B.R. 1988. *British historical statistics*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mitchell, B.R., and P. Deane. 1962. *Abstract of British historical statistics*. Cambridge: University Press.

- Mitchell, B.R., H.G. Jones, and B.R. Mitchell. 1971. *Second abstract of British historical statistics*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Turner, M. 1986. Corn crises in Britain in the age of Malthus. In *Malthus and his time*, ed. M. Turner. UK: Palgrave MacMillian.
- Williamson, J.G. 1988. Migrant selectivity, urbanization, and industrial revolutions. *Population and Development Review* 14(2): 287–314.
- Wrigley, E.A. 2004. *Poverty, progress, and population*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- World Bank. 2009. World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography.
- Bhatta, B. 2010. *Analysis of urban growth and sprawl from remote sensing data*. Berlin: Springer.
- Borchert, J.R. 1967. American metropolitan evolution. *Geographical Review* 57(3): 301–332.
- Chang, G.H., and J.C. Brada. 2006. The Paradox of China's Growing Under-Urbanization. *Economic Systems* 30(1): 24–40. Doi: [10.1016/j.ecosys.2005.07.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecosys.2005.07.002).
- Ciriacywantrup, S.V., and R.C. Bishop. 1975. Common property as a concept in natural-resources policy. *Natural Resources Journal* 15(4): 713–727.
- Clark, D. 1998. Interdependent urbanization in an urban world: an historical overview. *Geographical Journal* 164: 85–95.
- Colgrove, J. 2002. The McKeown thesis: A historical controversy and its enduring influence. *American Journal of Public Health* 92(5): 725–729.
- Coquery-Vidrovitch, C. 1991. The process of urbanization in Africa (from the origins to the beginning of independence). *African Studies Review* 34(1): 1–98.
- Davis, K. 1955. The origin and growth of urbanization in the world. *American Journal of Sociology* 60(5): 429–437.
- Davis, K. 1965. The urbanization of the human population. *Scientific American* 213(3): 40–53.
- Drake, M. 1966. Malthus on Norway. *Population Studies* 20(2): 175–196.
- Dutt, A.K., F.J. Costa, S. Aggarwal, and A.G. Noble. 1994. *The Asian City: Processes of Development, Characteristics, and Planning*. Berlin: Springer.
- Dyson, T. 2011. The role of the demographic transition in the process of urbanization. *Population and Development Review* 37: 34–54. Doi: [10.1111/j.1728-4457.2011.00377.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2011.00377.x).
- Government of India. 2011. Census of India 2011. Provisional population totals. Urban agglomerations and cities. Available: <http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov.../India2/1.%20Data%20Highlight.pdf>. Accessed: 29 March 2014.
- Hackenberg, R.A. 1980. New patterns of urbanization in Southeast-Asia—an assessment. *Population and Development Review* 6(3): 391–419.
- Harris, B. 2004. Public health, nutrition, and the decline of mortality: The McKeown thesis revisited. *Social History of Medicine* 17(3): 379–407. Doi: [10.1093/shm/17.3.379](https://doi.org/10.1093/shm/17.3.379).
- Hussain, A. 2003. Urban poverty in China: Measurement, patterns and policies. Geneva: International Labour Office (ILO). Available: <http://www.ilo.int/public/english/protection/ses/download/docs/china.pdf>. Accessed: 20 October 2015.
- IBGE. 2011. 2010 Census first final results: Brazil has a population of 190,755,799 residents. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). Available: [http://www.ibge.gov.br/english/presidencia/noticias/noticia\\_visualiza.php?id\\_noticia=1866](http://www.ibge.gov.br/english/presidencia/noticias/noticia_visualiza.php?id_noticia=1866). Accessed: 29 March 2013.
- Kasarda, J.D., and E.M. Crenshaw. 1991. Third-world urbanization—dimensions, theories, and determinants. *Annual Review of Sociology* 17: 467–501.
- Kingsley, D. 1955. The origin and growth of urbanization in the world. *American Journal of Sociology* 60(5): 429–437.
- Liu, S., Li, X. & Zhang, M. 2003. Scenario analysis on urbanization and rural-urban migration in China. IIASA. Available: <http://webarchive.iiasa.ac.at/Admin/PUB/Documents/IR-03-036.pdf>. Accessed: 20 October 2015.
- Malik, V.S., W.C. Willett, and F.B. Hu. 2013. Global obesity: Trends, risk factors and policy implications. *Nature Reviews Endocrinology* 9(1): 13–27.
- Malthus, T.R., James, P. 2009. *The Travel Diaries of Thomas Robert Malthus*, London, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Royal Economic Society.

- Mcgee, T. 2009. The spatiality of urbanization: The policy challenges of mega-urban and Desakota regions of Southeast Asia. Accessed: 10 February 2014.
- McKeown, T. 1976. *The Modern Rise of Population*. New York: Academic Press.
- Obeng-Odoom, F. 2010. An urban twist to politics in Ghana. *Habitat International* 34(4): 392–399. Doi: [10.1016/j.habitatint.2009.11.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.habitatint.2009.11.003).
- OECD. 2007. OECD Territorial reviews. Norway. Available: <http://browse.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/pdfs/product/0407101e.pdf>. Accessed: 21 May 2013.
- OECD. 2012a. Glossary of statistical terms. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Available: <http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/>. Accessed: 8 January 2013.
- OECD. 2012b. Obesity update 2012. Available: [www.oecd.org/health/49716427.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/health/49716427.pdf). Accessed: 11 January 2014.
- Owusu, G. 2005. Small towns in Ghana: Justifications for their promotion under Ghana's decentralisation programme. *African Studies Quarterly* 8(2): 48–69.
- Pacione, M. 2009. *Urban geography: A global perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Schmidt, E. and Kedir, M. 2009. Urbanization and spatial connectivity in Ethiopia: Urban growth analysis using GIS. Addis Ababa: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Available: <http://cdm15738.contentdm.oclc.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/31717/filename/31718.pdf>. Accessed: 20 October 2015.
- Szreter, S. 1998. Health and welfare during industrialisation. *Economic History Review* 51(2): 432–433.
- Szreter, S., and G. Mooney. 1998. Urbanization, mortality, and the standard of living debate: New estimates of the expectation of life at birth in nineteenth-century British cities. *Economic History Review* 51(1): 84–112.
- Tetty, C. 2005. *Urbanization in Africa in relation to socio-economic development: A multifaced quantitative analysis*. Doctor of Philosophy. Akron: University of Akron.
- UN DESA. 2012a. Population density and urbanization. Available: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/densurb/densurbmethods.htm>. Accessed: 4 November 2014.
- UN DESA. 2012b. United Nations Demographic Yearbook 2011. Available: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2011.htm>. Accessed: 20 October 2015.
- UN. 2014. World Urbanization Prospects, the 2014 Revision. Available: <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/DataQuery/>. Accessed: 26 May 2015.
- Webb, P. & Rogers, B. 2003. Addressing the “In” in food insecurity. USAID. Available: <http://www.fantaproject.org/focus-areas/food-security/addressing-in-food-insecurity-ffp-op1>. Accessed: 20 November 2015.
- Zhou, L., R.E. Dickinson, Y. Tian, J. Fang, Q. Li, R.K. Kaufmann, C.J. Tucker, and R.B. Myneni. 2004. Evidence for a significant urbanization effect on climate in China. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 101(26): 9540–9544.

Urbanisation and Inequalities in a Post-Malthusian  
Context

Challenges for the Sustainable Development Agenda

Szabo, S.

2016, XIII, 122 p. 27 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-26569-8