

Table 8 - Demographic Yearbook 2000

Table 8 presents population of capital cities and cities of 100 000 and more inhabitants for the latest available year.

Description of variables: Since the way in which cities are delimited differs from one country or area to another, efforts have been made to include in the table not only data for the so-called city proper but also those for the urban agglomeration, if such exists.

City proper is defined as a locality with legally fixed boundaries and an administratively recognized urban status that is usually characterized by some form of local government.

Urban agglomeration has been defined as comprising the city or town proper and also the suburban fringe or thickly settled territory lying outside of, but adjacent to, the city boundaries.

In addition, for some countries or areas, the data relate to entire administrative divisions known, for example, as shi or municipios which are composed of a populated centre and adjoining territory, some of which may contain other quite separate urban localities or be distinctively rural in character. For this group of countries or areas the type of civil division is given in a footnote, and the figures have been centered in the two columns as an indication that they refer to units which may extend beyond an integrated urban locality but which are not necessarily urban agglomerations.

Where possible the surface area of the city or urban agglomeration is shown at the end of the table.

City names are presented in the original language of the country or area in which the cities are located. In cases where the original names are not in the Roman alphabet, they have been romanized. Cities are listed in English alphabetical order.

Capital cities are shown in the table regardless of their population size. The names of the capital cities are printed in capital letters. The designation of any specific city as a capital city is done solely on the basis of the designation as reported by the country or area.

For other cities, the table covers those with a population of 100 000 and more. The 100 000 limit refers to the urban agglomeration, and not to the city proper, which may be smaller.

The reference date of each population figure appears in the stub of the table. Estimates based on results of sample surveys and city censuses as well as those derived from other sources are identified by footnote.

Reliability of data: Specific information is generally not available on the method of constructing population estimates on their reliability for cities or urban agglomerations presented in this table. Nevertheless, the principles used in determining the reliability of the data are the same as those used for the total population figures.

Data from population censuses, sample surveys and city censuses are considered to be reliable and, therefore, set in roman type. Other estimates are considered to be reliable or less reliable on the basis of the reliability of the 2000 estimate of the total mid-year population.

In brief, mid-year population estimates are considered reliable if they are based on a complete census (or a sample survey), and have been adjusted by a continuous population register or adjusted on the basis of the calculated balance of births, deaths, and migration.

Limitations: Statistics on the population of capital cities and cities of 100 000 and more inhabitants are subject to the same qualifications as have been set forth for population statistics in general as discussed in section 3 of the Technical Notes.

International comparability of data on city population is limited to a great extent by variations in national concepts. Although an effort is made to reduce the sources of non-comparability somewhat by presenting the data in the table in terms of both city proper and urban agglomeration, many serious problems of comparability remain.

Data presented in the "city proper" column for some countries represent an urban administrative area legally distinguished from surrounding rural territory, while for other countries these data represent a commune or similar small administrative unit. In still other countries such administrative units may be relatively extensive and thereby include considerable territory beyond the urban centre itself.

City data are also especially affected by whether the data are expressed in terms of the de facto or de jure population of the city as well as variations among countries in how each of these concepts is applied. With reference to the total population, the difference between the de facto and de jure population is discussed at length in section 3.1.1 of the Technical Notes.

Data on city populations based on intercensal estimates present even more problems than census data. Comparability is impaired by the different methods used in making the estimates and by the lack of precision possible in applying any given method. For example, it is far more difficult to apply the component method of estimating population growth to cities than it is to entire countries.

Births and deaths occurring in the cities do not all originate in the population present in or resident of that area. Therefore, the use of natural increase to estimate the probable size of the city population is a potential source of error. Internal migration is a second estimating component that cannot be measured with accuracy in many areas. Because of these factors, estimates in this table may be less valuable in general and in particular limited for purposes of international comparisons.

City data, even when set in roman type, are often not as reliable as estimates for the total population of the country or area. Furthermore, because the sources of these data include censuses (national or city), surveys and estimates, the years to which they refer vary widely. In addition, because city boundaries may alter over time, comparisons of data for different years should be carried out with caution.

Coverage: Cities are shown for 217 countries or areas. Of these 97 show the capital only while 120 show the capital and one or more cities which, according to the latest census or estimate, had a population of 100 000 or more.

Earlier data: Population of capital cities and cities with a population of 100 000 or more have been shown in previous issues of the Demographic Yearbook. For information on specific years covered, readers should consult the Index.