

ASSIGNMENT 4

This assignment focuses on migration and settlement structure. Ideally we would look at internal and external migration flows in conjunction with settlement structure. Unfortunately the available data sources do not permit that level of analysis. Instead you will look at structural aspects of the settlement system (layout, relative population distribution, and primacy) and characteristics of the rural and urban sectors.

I. Age structure of the population

1. Go to the U.S. Census Bureau's international database website at www.census.gov/ipc/www/idbpyr.html . Create population pyramids for your study country, Italy, and the United States for the years 1985, 1990, and 2000. Print the pyramids. Discuss differences in the shapes of the pyramids for the three countries and what the shapes might imply in terms of development or environment outcomes.

II. Settlement structure

2. Go to the UNCDB website and collect data for your country for the series numbered 14720 (cities population). What proportion of the your country's total population resides in the principle cities listed in series 14720? Plot the populations and ranks on a double-log scale (log of population on the y-axis and log of the rank on the x-axis) and then print the resulting figure. Does your country's settlement structure exhibit primacy?

III. Urban and rural growth paths and development

Download the spreadsheet for assignment 4 from the course web page.

3. Plot the urbanization trajectory for your country using the page labeled 'percent urban.' Compare your country to the evolution of all the sample countries listed on the same spreadsheet page.
4. Use the page labeled 'GDP,urban' to study the link between urbanization and wealth (a proxy for development). As in the previous assignment, find your country in each of the three scatterplots and change the symbol size and color. How does your country compare to the others?
5. In the first section of this assignment you explored the age structure. For several of the study countries data is available on both urban and rural age structures. Download the urban-rural age pyramid zip file. If your country is listed among the files then open it to access your country's data. Next open the pop_pyr.xls file and transfer your country data to it to make the population pyramids.

IV. Reporting

6. Organize all of your graphs and notes from questions 1-4 in your three-ring binder. Make sure that all of the graphs are clearly labeled. As with the last report, use the information from the questions 1-5 to structure your thoughts about population composition and distribution in your study country. Try to locate other secondary sources that also speak to the same issues. The written report should be a synthesis of your perspective on population composition and distribution that incorporates the analysis from questions 1-5. Turn in three things: (1) the written report, (2) the figures, and (3) your activity log.