

Chapter 11

Urban and Population Growth: A Comparative Approach to the Greek Cities of 3,000–10,000 Inhabitants, After 1950

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ABSTRACT

This study refers to cities of 3,000-10,000 residents and takes account of urban blots of cities according to aerial photos from 1940 until today. The population of each blot is matched with the population censuses every ten years, carried out by the Greek Statistical Authority. This chapter tries to answer the questions if the post-war housing development accompanied equally with the population development researching the similarity areas of the phenomenon, the classification, and the proportion of it in the Greek territory. The study demonstrates that the residential development in postwar Greece is positive fluctuating from minimum positive to extremely high. In contrast, the population in the corresponding urban footprint of the same chronologies seems to be large where there is high residential development but negative where cities presenting intermediate and low indicators.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of urban development appears in the twentieth century especially enlarged and that is why is particularly important. From the one hand, the development of the urban area is the result of quite complex social processes; from the other its results are crucial for modern societies, developed or not. The analysis of the phenomenon should be particularly careful. Which is the reality of this expansion in the Greek area notably in cities between 3000-10000 residents that form the field of changes of urban development? Which are they? What is their size? Where are they? Which are their measurement tools? And which ultimately is the image of these cities within the broader urban development? These are some of the questions attempted to answer here.

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The chapter tries to approach the measurement of urban development studying initially a specific way of measurement, urban blots. By adopting this methodology, is proceeding to measure one series of sampled cities. At a second level, the zone of cities of 3000-10000 residents since 1950 is approximated at the population level. In the final stage those two sizes are being studied comparative followed by the results analysis.

THE URBAN DATA

Questions about the current trends of urban development are of particular importance for the future. In the early 21st century, the capstone of two centuries of unprecedented urban expansion. The current urban environment has its own characteristics. Concepts like emerging city, the urban sprawl, the megapolis, the suburban space, require particularly sophisticated management tools. This development, which implemented through increasingly complex procedures, is directly related to population growth. The phenomenon of geographical spread is special. It appears that in many cases this spread is not proportional to the population. In France between 1982 and 2004 the structured surface is developed by 43% while at the same time demographic development did not exceed 11%. That means the occupation of the territory is much more rapid than the demographic (Agence Europeenne pour l'environnement, 2006).

THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK AND ITS MEASUREMENT

Among other things, a distinct issue in the process of urbanization employs urban geography. The urban concentration, in other words the urbanization of the very large cities has resulted in the relative decline of small and medium-sized cities. By data of the population and activities in urban areas it is obvious that the space-time framework can affect the results and the final interpretation of the observations. That is to say to a large extent, the determination of the city at the level of the living space seems particularly important.

Urban Blots: A Measuring Tool for the Spatial Spread

Many elements of the identity of a region required by the relevant government departments and agencies within the process of analyzing, planning and decision-making. Additional databases of land use for the needs of specific large range of applications. Particularly not just for planning, but for *monitoring*, also, an area. The specification of land cover data used most often at national level, such as Corine, is inappropriate for finer analysis at small scale.

Creating a reference tool such as urban footprint used especially in France, seems particularly useful to a large number of potential receivers. The geographic data addressed both in the general description of the local area and a more functional and thematic approaches to a specific user. The use of artificial patches can allow the creation of a history of growth in urbanization. With comparing data of cities and local communities, will reduce the abundance of quantitative data, for the benefit of an instantly understandable, quantitative data embedded reading of the development.

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