

TRENDS IN URBANISATION IN INDIA

BEYOND 2011 CENSUS

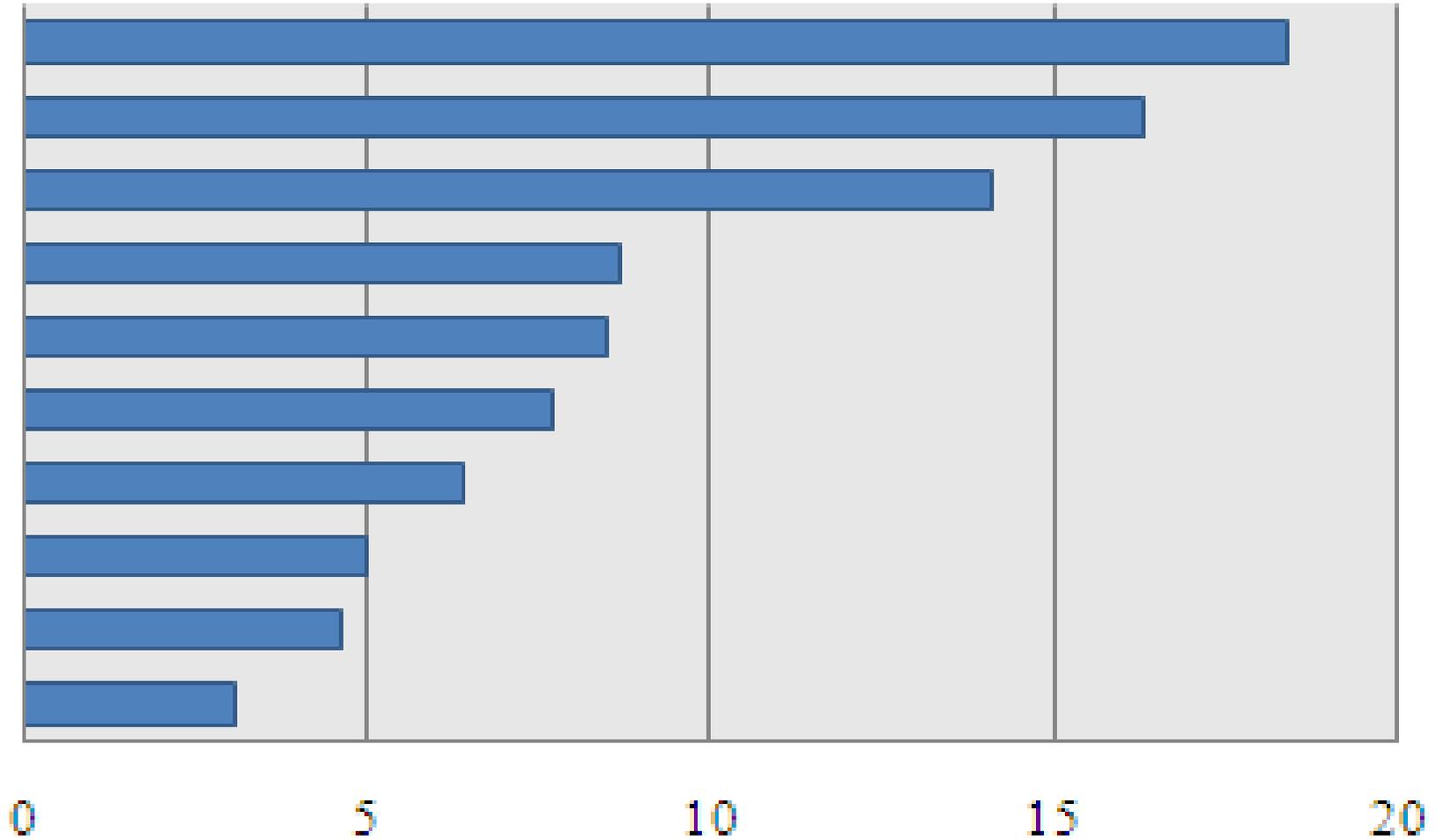
- The 2011 Census of India was the fifteenth Census of India since the year 1872.
- An interesting aspect of the 2011 Census was that for the first time since India's independence, the absolute increase in surveyed population was found to be more in urban areas than in rural areas
- The Level of Urbanisation in India, which is also regarded as an index of economic development increased from 27.81% in 2001 to 31.16% in the 2011 Census.
- Census of India 2011 revealed that there are a total of 7,935 towns in the country.

- It is interesting to note that the number of towns has increased by 2,774 since the last Census (of 2011).
- What is even more interesting to note is the fact that out of the total 7,936 towns, 6,166 are part of the urban frame of the country by being clustered together as urban agglomerations of variable sizes
- Only 1,770 towns in India are independent of any urban clustering
- The total number of towns/cities in India with population above 1,00,000 (One Lakh or 0.1 million) is **468**.
- These are also known as Class I Cities/Towns.

- According to 2001 census, the urban population of the country was 286.11 million, living in 5161 towns, which constitutes 27.81% of the total country's population.
- However, the same as per 2011 census has risen to 377.16 million viz. 32.16% of the total country's population and at the same time number of towns has gone up to 7935.
- The rate of urban growth in the country is very high as compared to developed countries, and the large cities are becoming larger mostly due to continuous migration of population to these cities.
- India's current urban population exceeds the whole population of the United States, the world's third largest country.
- By 2050, over half of India's population is expected to be urban dwellers. This creates enormous pressure on existing urban infrastructure.

Top 10 Most Populated Urban Centres in India

1. Greater Mumbai
2. Delhi
3. Kolkata
4. Chennai
5. Bengaluru
6. Hyderabad
7. Ahmadabad
8. Pune
9. Surat
10. Jaipur



Population (in millions). (Source: Census of India, 2011)

- It needs to be noted here that Jaipur, in Fig. 1 above, is a municipal town/city while the rest of the urban centres are categorized as Urban Agglomerations (UA) by the Census of India (2011).
- Further, it needs to be noted that out of the total 468 Class I Cities/ Towns, there are **53** Towns/ Cities which have a total population of 1 million or above (Table 1).
- Any urban renewal mission or scheme should therefore first focus on these 53 urban centres, most of which are presently facing the challenges of urban growth and development.

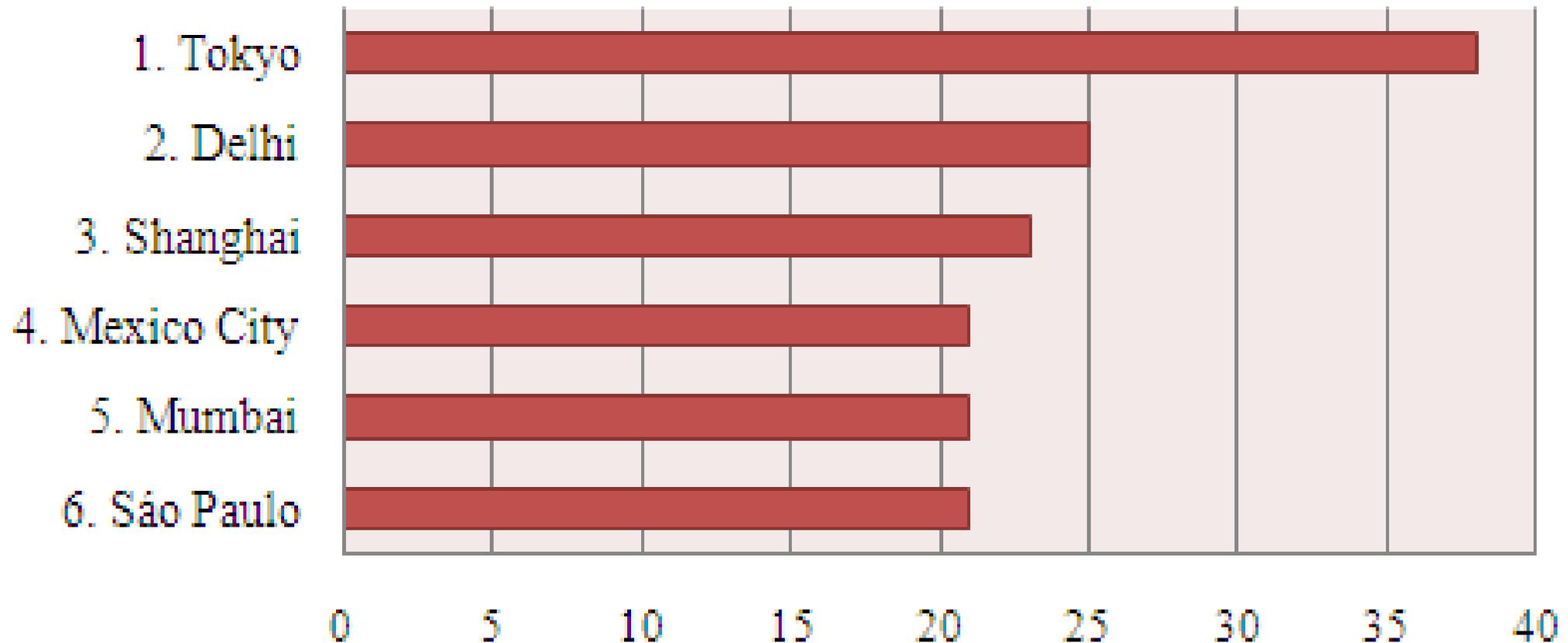
- **Table 1.**

- List of Cities/ UA in India with population greater than 1 million. (*Source: Census of India, 2011*)

1. Greater Mumbai	16. Coimbatore	31. Madurai	46. Ranchi
2. Delhi	17. Kochi	32. Varanasi	47. Raipur
3. Kolkata	18. Patna	33. Meerut	48. Kollam
4. Chennai	19. Kozhikode	34. Faridabad	49. Gwalior
5. Bengaluru	20. Bhopal	35. Rajkot	50. Durg-Bhilainagar
6. Hyderabad	21. Thrissur	36. Jamshedpur	51. Chandigarh
7. Ahmadabad	22. Vadodara	37. Srinagar	52. Tiruchirappalli
8. Pune	23. Agra	38. Jabalpur	53. Kota
9. Surat	24. Greater Vishakapatnam	39. Asansol	
10. Jaipur	25. Malappuram	40. Vasai Virar City	
11. Kanpur	26. Thiruvananthapuram	41. Allahabad	
12. Lucknow	27. Kannur	42. Dhanbad	
13. Nagpur	28. Ludhiana	43. Aurangabad	
14. Ghaziabad	29. Nashik	44. Amritsar	

- The top three most populated urban agglomerations (UA) in India, viz. Greater Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata, far exceed in population than the rest of the UAs in India. These three urban centres have therefore been given the title of **Mega Cities**.
- The three mega cities of Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata are facing considerable urban sustainability challenges which are unique to the respective mega city. It can be said with some certainty that ensuring urban renewal in the above mentioned 53 UAa will help check the ongoing large-scale migration of people to the three mega cities.
- Recent population data of the top six most populated urban agglomerations in the world indicates that the Delhi UA has now surpassed the Greater Mumbai UA in population
- Tokyo is noted to be the most populated UA in the world and four (Tokyo, Delhi, Shanghai and Mumbai) out of the top six most populated UAs in the world are found to be located in Asia. Interestingly, two (Delhi and Mumbai) out of the six most populated UAs in the world are located in India.

Top 6 Most Populated Urban Agglomerations in the World



Population (in millions). (Source: ESA-UN, 2014)

- Figure 2. Top six most populated urban agglomerations in the world.
- The continent of Asia seems to be the focus region in the ongoing Urban Era and India is certainly witnessing rapid urban growth and development.
- There is a great need to manage this urban growth in a sustainable manner while a simultaneous need exists for optimizing the urban ecosystems.
- Our cities need to be productive, smart and climate resilient and our urban policy needs to focus on inclusive growth.
- Urban centers in India will continue to grow at least till the middle of this century and our policies will determine if we concentrate growth in a few urban centers or create smart, livable cities in all parts of India. The latter seems to be the blueprint of sustainable urban development

