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Urban growth and mobility in Latin America

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Abstract

Latin America (LA) is the most urbanized region in developing world. This is not due to a statistical fiction, but to an actual agglomeration of its population in cities, many of them very large (1 million or more inhabitants). This feature has at least two consequences. On the one hand, many indicators of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) provide a greater degree of progress in comparison with other regions in developing world. Considering the nature of these goals, concentration in cities facilitates the achievement of the MDG´s. On the other hand, for LA countries, it is in big cities or metropolitan agglomerations where social problems are more complex, and also where we can find the largest concentrations of poverty. Despite some empirical hypotheses of demographic and economic decentralization from large urban agglomerations, these areas still remain the arena of the greatest challenges facing our societies. Accordingly, monitoring MDGs indicators in the region should be segmented by area of residence (rural and urban) and city size. Thus, further analysis taking into account differences within metropolitan agglomerations, for instance between municipalities or neighborhoods, must be considered. Historically, migration has had a central role on the demographic growth of LA cities; therefore, an understanding of changes in trends of the spatial distribution of the population must include a detailed analysis of migration. In the past three decades, migration dynamic has changed significantly in terms of spatial patterns - such as the predominance of movement between cities, great diversity of patterns of displacement, redefinition of places of attraction and rejection - determinants, consequences, selectivity of migrants, in addition, to means and possibilities of migrants´ integration in the destination areas. By studying migration processes it is possible to understand, at least in part, the consequences of the intense process of urbanization in LA countries. Indeed, the phenomena of metropolitanization (or demetropolitanization as suggested by some authors) to some extent, is a reflection of migration dynamics. The same can be said regarding to internal problems of the metropolitan areas. Hence, based on censuses data for some key Latin America countries, this paper will provide evidence on several of these issues and draw attention to the challenges of measurement, analysis, and public policies involved.

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INTRODUCTION

The urbanization process in Latin America (LA) - or at least in a significant part of the region- was accelerated in the early 1950´s. The impulse came from transformations in both society and economy resulting from an industrialization strategy promoted by the governments from most LA countries. This strategy was named "internal development" or "import substitution", although most recently a newer - in our opinion a more acute term has been developed "*State led industrialization*"[1] (Ocampo, 2001). This strategy promoted urban activities (industry and services) and favored "modernization" of countryside investments. Both changes involved a dynamic economic growth in cities and the creation of a large workforce surplus in rural areas of countries.

This urbanization process has different characteristics from those achieved in the current developed countries, in which urbanization, industrialization and economic development were concomitant and synergistic. Although, industrialization has contributed to Latin America´s modernization and has facilitated social achievements that positioned the region in compliance with most of the MDG's requirements, its progress was detached, at least partially, from an economic, social and institutional progress such as the one experimented by the current developed countries. In turn, this minor development involved a cumulative deficit in infrastructure, resources and regulations that caused the urbanization and Latin American cities' functionalities be marked by poverty, precariousness, informality and anomy. The 1980's were particularly hard to cities in the region, since adverse effects of "structural adjustment" policies carried out during this period in response to the "debt crisis", were concentrated on them. The adjustment impact was such that, by the end of that decade and the beginning of 1990's that the levels of urban poverty had increased considerably and a number of cities faced critical conditions (Rodriguez, 2002, Cunha, 2002). However, the past 15 years have been less severe to cities, dismissing the catastrophic projections made at the beginning of the 1990's (urban and metropolitan "apocalypse"), even though these cities still record a complex accumulation of problems and weaknesses.

One of the factors that contributed to attenuate the pressure on cities and metropolises was the demographic change. In fact, until the 1980's, accelerated metropolitan growth seemed unstoppable. However, from the beginning of the 1990´s doubts emerged on its continuity. Furthermore, some researchers suggested that the reduction of the pace of spatial concentration of the population and economic production be sustained, but without a significant loss of the importance of metropolises (Rodriguez y Martine, 2008; Cunha, 2002; Rodriguez 2002).

The changes in migration patterns, in particular internal migration, were fundamental to this moderation of the process of metropolitan growth. On the one hand, there was a strong reduction – although not reversal, since net migration from the countryside persists – of rural to urban migration. On the other hand, and perhaps most importantly, internal migration no longer predominantly operates at the level of large regions (or, from here on forward referred as, MAD: Major Administrative Divisions), but instead primarily consists of the exchange between municipalities (referred to in this article as MIAD: Minor Administrative Divisions) within the same

[1] Ocampo, 2001, p. 8 (www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/5/19295/lcg2135e_Ocampo.pdf).

MAD. Likewise, it seems that the crisis that ravaged Latin American metropolis in the 80´s and 90´s also led to an increase in the relevance of return migration.

The data analysis presented in this study suggests that in terms of urban population share, the most populated regions or the most influential in Latin American countries – in general, the regions where the national capitals are located - have experimented losses, but it is difficult to support that Latin American cities system are facing a significant demographic decentralization process. Regardless, this study demonstrates that important changes do exist and a more complex city system is emerging as well as a more diverse migration pattern.

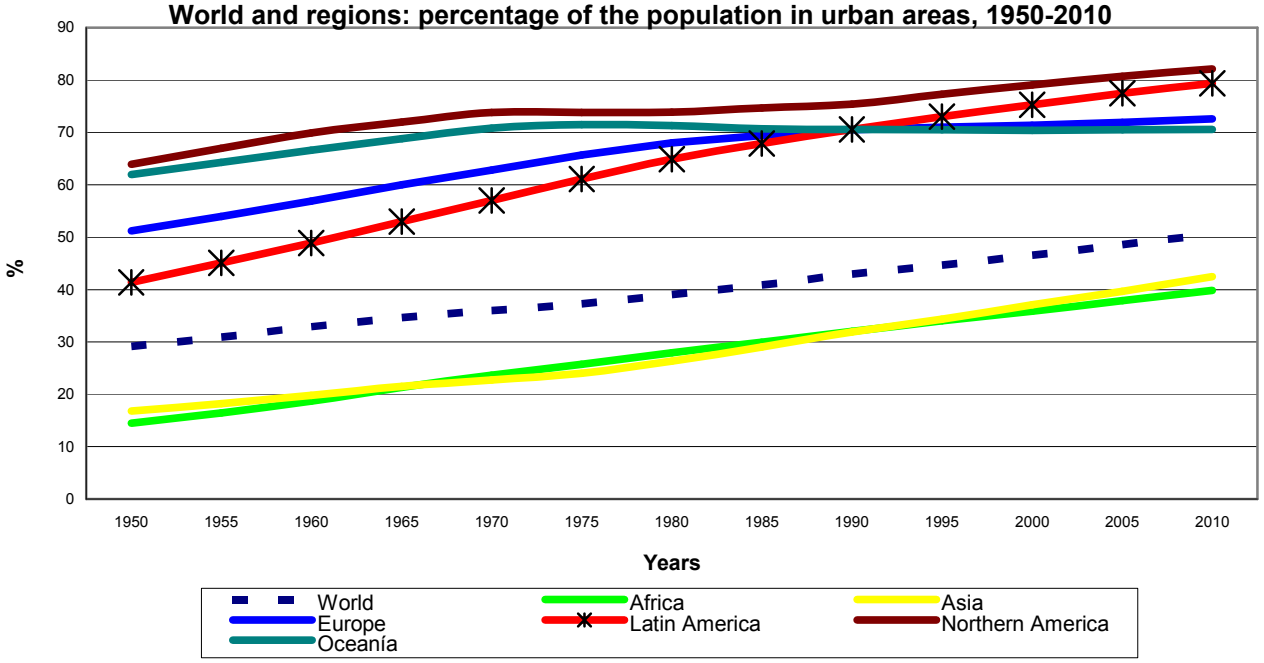
I. URBANIZATION AND ITS DEMOGRAPHIC REALITY

Latin America and the Caribbean[2] is the world's most urbanized developing region. This is due to a real migration revolution that occurred during the last seven decades of the 20th century. In fact, 1950´s levels of urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean were lower than those registered in developed regions (North America, Europe and Oceania). In less than 40 years, the region reached urban levels of Europe and Oceania, thanks to rural exodus which generated an explosive urban growth. Subsequently, in the past 20 years, urban growth slowed down due to demographic transition and the reduction of emigration from de countryside. Nevertheless, rural exodus has continued, and so has urbanization. Currently, 80% of the region's population is urbanized, a level surpassed only by Northern America, as cab be seen in figure 1.

Expressions such as over-urbanization and hyper-urbanization have been used to describe the region´s high levels of urbanization without accompanying the level of economic and social development typical of industrialized countries (Rodriguez and Martine, 2008). Although it cannot be questioned that the region is quite below the developed regions in terms of per capita income, productivity and poverty, the over-population hypothesis can lead to an erroneously negative evaluation of the Latin American urbanization. In fact, the region demonstrates a positive relationship between urbanization and development, as illustrated in figure 2. Indeed this figure shows that, on average, the most urbanized Latin American countries tend to present higher levels of human development.

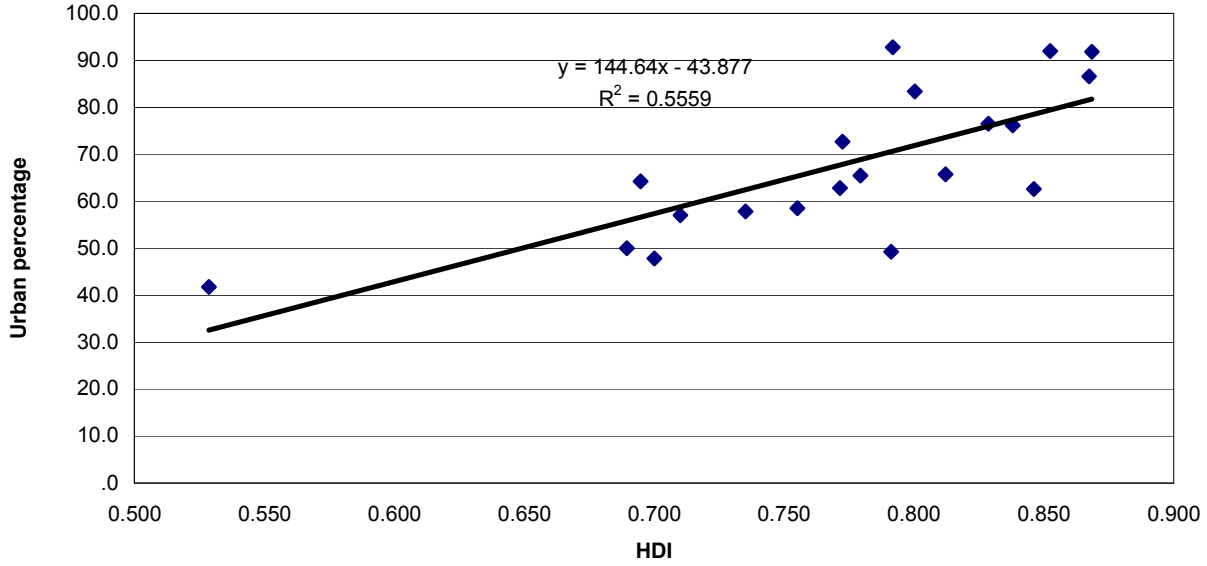
[2] The term Latin America and the Caribbean refers to the 42 countries and territories identified by LACDC as comprising the region. The term Latin America refers to the 20 countries identified by LACDC as making up the subregion (17 on the mainland and three Caribbean island territories: Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti). For further information, see LACDC (2005a) or Guzmán et al. (2006).

Figure 1
World and regions: percentage of the population in urban areas, 1950-2010



Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision, http://esa.un.org/unup

Figure2
Latin America (20 countries): HDI and Urban percentage, 2005



Source: own author's calculations, based on estimations from LACDC (www.cepal.org/celade) and UNDP (www.undp.org)

On the other hand, the lack of an official definition of "urban" in the region (Cohen, 2006) raises some doubts as to the validity of this high urbanization level, since this high urbanization level may be the result of a "statistical fiction". However, in purely demographic terms, Latin American urbanization is undeniable. The evidence for this comes from data monitoring the diversity of national definitions of "urban", which identify undeniable urban localities in order to avoid problems of consistency in comparisons (Montgomery et al., 2004). Calculations for a group of **18 countries** in the region with data from 2000 round of censuses,[3] indicates that 62% of the region´s total population and 81% of urban population were living in cities with 20,000 or more inhabitants (CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC, 2007).

Urbanization has continued to advance even though the development model changed to one that has granted more economic leadership to rural areas. In effect, the latter is the *locus* of primary product production for world exports, precisely the engine of the model of openness and deregulation imposed in the 1980´s. In spite of this, rural population has been shrinking in absolute terms since 1990. Given this population´s natural growth, there seems to be a significant net rural emigration (specific evidence on the scale of net migration from the countryside will be provided in a subsequent session). It is therefore possible to conclude that the new development model has not increased the population's growth rate in rural areas. This should come as no surprise, as the region had already experienced agricultural modernization processes that resulted in migratory outflows between 1940 and 1980 (Alberts and Villa, 1980). Although there has been an agricultural revival since mid- 1980s- expressed in a slight increase in added value from agricultural production within total GDP (ECLA, 2005) and a steady share of the total GDP between 1990 and 2008 (ECLAC, 2009, BADECON link http://www.cepal.org/estadisticas/bases/) This has mainly been based on large farms and forestry industry that tend to push out traditional farming. Furthermore, the labor demand of these industries is highly seasonal, and is therefore, often met by urban workers (LACDC, 2005b).

Thus, there are no signs of counter-urbanization in the region, or does this seems likely to be triggered by productive activities. As in Europe, if counter-urbanization were to occur, it would be the result of housing related forces promoted by technological progress, improved infrastructure and connectivity, and changes in population's structure and people´s purchasing power (Gans, 2007;Ferras, 2007). In other words, an eventual return to the countryside would not represent a return to agriculture, but rather a decision to combine the quality of life in rural settings with the employment, education and leisure opportunities in nearby urban areas. Moreover, it is difficult to conceive of a high quality life in the region´s rural areas, as long as social indicators remain below those of urban settings (LACDC, 2007 and 2005b)

In summary, the argument on the validity of the level of urbanization in Latin America is unnecessary from the demographic point of view; however, the discussion on the form of this process is totally valid, particularly the structure of the city system and the configuration of its metropolises (inside and its surroundings). Both topics will be discussed in the following sections.

[3] Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Uruguay, which combined represent 95% of the region's current population.

Notwithstanding, to accept the urbanization process as an irreversible feature in the region, does not imply that rural areas should be forgotten. In particular in some Southern American and in most of Meso-American and Caribbean countries, this areas area still socioeconomically and demographically very relevant. Additionally, there is an extensive amount of literature produced in relation to new forms and characteristics of rural social and economic systems; as well as the increasing interconnection between urban and rural areas.[4] Although there is an intense debate related to this topic, there is consensus (some of which is not recent) between those who highlight the existence of a rural - urban gradient and not a dichotomy, the emerging urban life in rural environments due to higher residential density and built landscape, and the formation of complex habitats that integrate rural and urban environments; similarly, the current Latin American countryside vision significantly differs from that of the past (associated with traditionalism and neglect) even though it´s quality of life indicators are inferior to those in cities.

II. (DE) CONCENTRATION, (DE) METROPOLITANIZATION, CONCENTRATED DECONCENTRATION: WHAT IS LATIN AMERICA´S SITUATION?

II.1 Background

In general, globalization and productive restructuring trigger changes in the distribution of productive activities in geographical areas producing significant effects on the pattern of population settlement and migration flows. This topic has been considered by several researchers, although from different perspectives, such as the following: Sassen (2007 and 1991); Wong-Gonzales (1990); Harvey (1993), Benko (1996); Castell (1999); Yusuf, Evenett and Wu (2000).

This research does not aim to provide a detaileded debate on the impact of productive deconcentration itself. However, it is important to highlight some of the important points of this discussion. A study on Latin American urban characteristics showed that there is a broad and complex discussion on the existence of a deconcentration process in the region (Cunha, 2002). The same analysis pointed out that although some studies and evidence existed on the impact of globalization and productive restructuring on the decentralization process of economic activity and the spatial distribution of the population in countries such as Mexico, Chile and Brazil, there also existed some indications to the contrary. Although it is true that “globalization reinforces the regional specialization strategy” (Pacheco, 1998, p-257), it cannot be denied that, as Mills (2000. p. 69) indicates, “globalization reinforces the benefits of large urban areas”.

According to Benko (1996) “the different stages of the production process are located in spatial differential modes, implying its technological characteristics and the level of qualification they require. Highly technical complex activities and the executive functions are reserved to central

[4] The “new rurality” debate and its relation to urbanism is an open discussion and has been the subject of many researchers. Please refer to: Ruiz y Delgado, 2008, Hugo et al. (2001), Hayami, (2000), Silva (1997 y 1999), Cunha y Rodrígues (2001)

regions, while repetitive tasks, less qualified, that requires considerable workforce, are relegated to the periphery" (p.52, free translation).

In other words, when we refer to this question, it seems that we need to consider Won-Gonzales (1990)´s warning that "dispersion tendencies or the concentration of, cannot be generalized" once that, "they vary from one productive sector to another… and also within the different productive segments from the same sector…" (p.21). Furthermore, the author emphasizes that dispersion/concentration patterns can also vary from time to time, which demonstrates the difficulty to establish a unique pattern of the territorial impact of globalization.

What does the data tell us in this question? Has there been a demographic deconcentration in Latin America, particularly in the metropolises? Are there any indications, from the demographic point of view, of the existence of such a process? This is the point of discussion in next section.

II.2 Strengthening deconcentration

The urbanization process in Latin America has been historically linked to the formation of large urban and metropolitan agglomerations, generally, established in the main city, usually the country´s capital. Nowadays, from the point of view of the evolution of the relative distribution of the population between major administrative divisions (MAD), the fact is that there is no clear evidence of a sustained process of demographic deconcentration in Latin American countries, except for a few.

According to the systematized information taken from DEPUALC database (Spatial Distribution of Population and Urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean) created and maintained by LACDC (www.cepal.org/celade/depualc/) in countries like Argentina, Chile, Panama and Uruguay, over 40% of the population live in metropolitan MADs, (where the main city and/or capital is located), while in other countries of the region (like Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Venezuela (Bol. Rep.)) this concentrated pattern was neither. As it is shown further on, for many Latin America countries, the city network is much more complex and involves much more of the national territory.

It is also evident that trends of population concentration taking place in different metropolitan MADs differ. Data from Table 1 show that, between 1980 and 2000, in Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic, an increase of the relative participation of corresponding MAD was registered in national population. In the rest of countries included on table 1, there is stability in the concentration process or a slight reduction of metropolitan density.

Table 1

Latin America and the Caribbean: Distribution of the population according to Metropolitan MADs and the rest of the country; and the average growth rate per year of the national population, Metropolitan MADs and the rest of the country, 1980-2000

Country Province/State/Region	Census round			*Annual growth rate (per cent)*		
Region Metropolitan/Region/City	1980	1990	2000	1970-1980 (*)	1980-1990	1990-2000 (**)
Argentina	100,0	100,0	100,0	1,8	1,6	1,1
Province Buenos Aires + Federal Capital	49,3	47,7	45,8	1,6	1,2	0,7
Federal Capital	10,5	9,1	7,6	-0,2	0,1	-0,7
Rest of the country	50,7	52,3	54,2	2,0	1,9	1,4
Bolívia	100,0	100,0	100,0	1,6	2,1	2,9
La Paz Province	29,6	28,4	28,4	1,7	1,6	2,4
La Paz	17,4	17,2	17,2	3,2	2,7	2,7
Rest of the country	70,4	71,6	71,6	1,6	2,3	3,1
Brazil	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,5	1,9	1,6
State of São Paulo	21,0	21,5	21,8	3,5	2,1	1,8
MR de São Paulo	10,2	10,1	10,1	4,7	1,8	1,5
Rest of the country	79,0	78,5	78,2	2,2	1,9	1,6
Chile	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,0	1,6	1,2
Metropolitan Region of Santiago	38,1	39,4	40,1	2,6	2,0	1,4
Santiago	34,9	35,8	35,7	3,4	1,9	1,3
Rest of the country	61,9	60,6	59,9	1,7	1,4	1,1
Colombia	100,0	100,0	100,0	1,6	2,2	1,9
Depto de Cundinamarca + Special District of Santa Fé de Bogotá	19,3	19,9	21,7	2,4	2,6	2,6
Bogotá	14,8	15,8	17,5	3,0	3,0	2,8
Rest of the country	80,7	80,1	78,3	1,4	2,1	1,7
Costa Rica	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,4		2,9
San José Province	36,8	35,3	35,3	2,3		2,6
San José	25,1	27,1	27,1	3,7		3,4
Rest of the country	63,2	64,7	64,7	2,4		3,0
Ecuador	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,8	1,5	2,0
Pichincha Province	17,0	18,1	19,8	4,3	2,0	2,8
Quito	10,6	11,4	11,6	4,7	2,0	2,2
Rest of the country	83,0	81,9	80,2	2,5	1,4	1,8
El Salvador	100,0	100,0	100,0		1,7	0,8
Depto de San Salvador	20,6	29,5	27,3		3,3	0,2
San Salvador	20,6	29,5	27,3		3,3	0,2
Rest of the country	79,4	70,5	72,7		1,1	1,0

Guatemala	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,0	2,5	3,8
Depto de Guatemala	21,7	21,8	22,6	2,1	2,5	4,3
Guatemala	19,3	19,0	19,1	1,8	2,4	3,9
Rest of the country	78,3	78,2	77,4	2,0	2,5	3,7
Honduras	100,0	100,0	100,0		4,4	2,9
Depto Francisco Morazán	17,1	18,4	18,1		5,1	2,8
Tegucigalpa	10,3	12,7	12,5		6,4	2,8
Rest of the country	82,9	81,6	81,9		4,2	2,9
México	100,0	100,0	100,0	3,3	2,0	1,8
Federal District and the State of México	24,5	22,2	22,3	4,4	1,0	1,9
México City	21,0	18,6	18,0	4,5	0,8	1,5
Rest of the country	75,5	77,8	77,7	3,0	2,3	1,8
Nicaragua	100,0	100,0	100,0		3,6	1,7
Depto de Managua	25,1	24,6	24,6		3,4	1,4
Managua	19,8	19,2	19,2		3,4	1,4
Rest of the country	74,9	75,4	75,4		3,6	1,7
Panamá	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,4	2,6	2,0
Panama Province	44,8	46,0	48,9	3,4	2,9	2,6
Panamá	33,8	36,3	43,0	3,0	3,3	3,7
Rest of the country	55,2	54,0	51,1	1,6	2,4	1,4
Paraguay	100,0	100,0	100,0	2,4	3,2	2,2
Depto Central (including the District Capital de Asunción)	31,4	32,9	36,3	3,1	3,7	3,2
Gran Asunción	27,1	28,3	31,0	3,3	3,7	3,1
Rest of the country	68,6	67,1	63,7	2,1	3,0	1,7
Dominican Republic	100,0	100,0	100,0	3,1	2,2	1,8
National District	27,6	30,1	31,9	6,0	2,9	2,5
Santo Domingo	23,4	22,1	25,1	6,3	1,7	3,3
Rest of the country	72,4	69,9	68,1	2,2	1,9	1,5
Uruguay	100,0	100,0	100,0	0,6	0,6	0,3
Depto Montevideo-Canelones	56,7	56,5	55,9	0,7	0,6	0,2
Montevideo	51,1	50,3	47,4	0,8	0,5	-0,4
Rest of the country	43,3	43,5	44,1	0,4	0,7	0,5
Venezuela (Bol. Rep.)	100,0	100,0	100,0	3,1	2,5	2,2
Federal-Miranda District	24,1	22,0	19,4	2,5	1,4	1,1
Caracas	18,2	15,3	12,5	1,9	0,5	0,3
Rest of the country	75,9	78,0	80,6	3,3	2,8	2,5

Source: LACDC, DEPUALC

(*) For Bolivia, Honduras and Nicaragua, the data period is 1970/90 considering that the 1980 census was not carried out.

(**) For Costa Rica, the data period is 1980/2000 considering that the 1990 census was not carried out.

As Cunha (2002) stated, it is in fact “premature to claim that demographic concentration that has taken place in the region, in the past 40 years is suffering a conclusive reversion of significant proportions”. This same research underlined that “in the majority of Latin American countries, the metropolitan region (or the region’s capital when MADs were not constituted yet) still presented an equal or even larger increase than the country’s, at least up to the 80’s”. Indeed, this trend can be observed in Table 1.

It is also important to consider that even in countries where the main metropolitan region has grown slower than the national population, which is the case of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), it does not mean that the metropolitan agglomeration phenomenon has stopped or simply disappeared. Data from DEPUALC reveals that in many countries in spite of the reduction of total increase, there are large agglomerations expanding faster than national average. For example: Cordoba, San Miguel de Tucuman and Mendoza in Argentina; Belo Horizonte, Curitiba, Brazilia, Fortaleza and Salvador in Brazil; Temuco, Puerto Montt and Antofagasta in Chile; Cali and Bucaramanga in Colombia; Guayaquil in Ecuador; Monterrey, Guadalajara, Puebla, Juarez City in Mexico; Trujillo and Arequipa in Peru; Maracay, Maracaibo, Valencia and Barquisemento in Venezuela (Bol. Rep.) (Cunha, 2002).

Consequently, empirical evidence suggests that the decreasing importance of main cities or metropolitan regions of countries cannot only be substantiated on demetropolitanization, demographic deconcentration; or the so called counter-urbanization as defined by developed countries. Gradual loss of importance of the greatest metropolises within the national population is not such a relevant phenomenon; however, the most interesting fact has happened in other agglomerations of smaller size, which have undergone a considerable population increase.

Although this topic deserves more profound research, this first look shows that there are not clear signs of the counter-urbanization phenomenon as in Europe and the United States as the (Champion, 1998). Although in the last decades some countries like Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), experienced a slight degree of demographic deconcentration towards other regions, the metropolitan phenomenon is still alive and predominant in the regional scenario.

In summary, Latin American countries tend to present a characteristic concentration of population in big cities, as it will be discussed further on; therefore, this feature is not likely to suffer any noteworthy modification whatsoever.

II.3 Demographic primacy in the big cities

Historically speaking, urbanization in Latin America has been concentrated in large cities characterized by a population growth above national average and a disorderly physical expansion (Guzmán et al., 2006). Indeed, until 1970's, urbanization and concentration in the largest city (or in the two largest cities like in Brazil, Ecuador and Honduras) used to be overlapping phenomena in most countries of the region. As in the case of urbanization, the internal development and overinvestment models centered in the main city were held responsible for the fact that Latin American urbanization accumulated in only one or two cities (Alberts & Villa, 1980).

Meanwhile, the change of the development model generated expectations of deconcentration (Cunha, 2002). This came across with several other processes taking place since the 1980's, namely decentralization, industrial reallocation, downsizing of public apparatus (concentrated in the main city), signs of crises in major cities and a series of public policies aimed at promoting such deconcentration (LACDC, 2005a; Dupont et al., 2002).

The evidence available suggests that these factors have had an impact, as the trend for higher demographic dynamism in the main city is on the wane. Although it is not yet clear, whether large cities account for a smaller proportion of the total population; they are definitely losing significance in terms of urban areas. The primacy ratio[5], from the last census period, indicates an increase in only two countries and a decline in the majority of cases, sometimes significantly; and in some other cases, it switches the historic upward trend of the main city's power of attraction (figure 3). Nevertheless, this fact does not end the discussion, since a few researchers have claimed that the drop of the demographic growth in big cities is the result of the expansion influences towards urbanization. Whereas, this feature is not recognized by the traditional geographic definitions of big cities – which have remained obsolete not applying new large-scale interactive patterns of meganapolises and millionaire cities – the reduction of the primacy ratio, could be a statistical fiction then. Furthermore in this research, this issue will be discussed and analyzed with the hypothesis of "concentrated deconcentration".

The traditional pattern of urbanization concentrated in one or two major cities has made permanent effect in the region; in addition to, worldwide scale impact of the high primacy ratio present in the majority of these countries. Among the resulting consequences are the extensive number of megalopolises that are now located here[6], and the large proportion of the population living in cities with over one million inhabitants. This will be examined in detailed in the next chapter.

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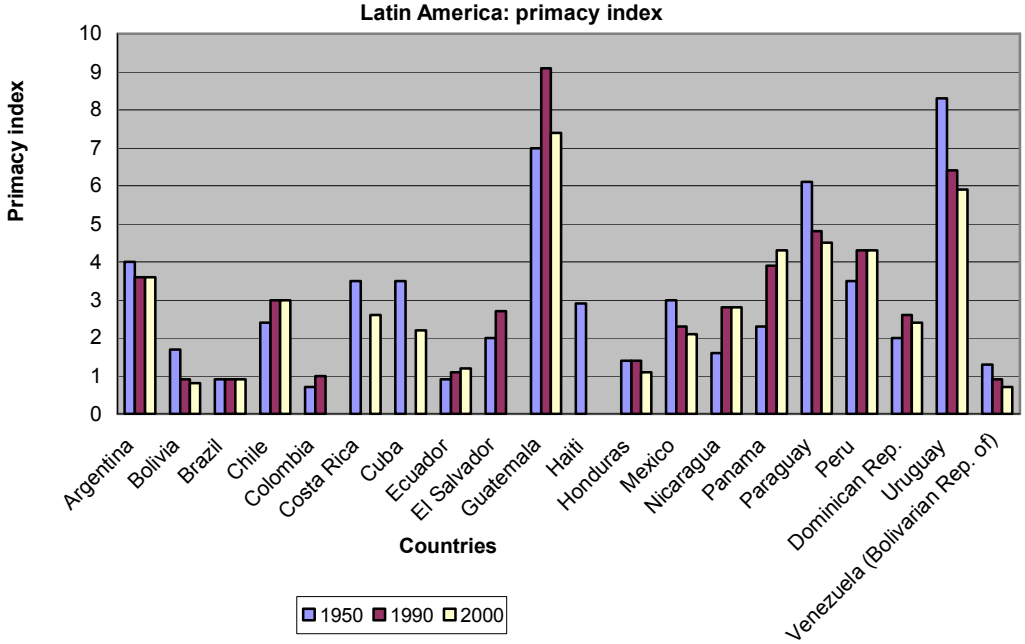
[5] The ratio of the population of the largest city over the population of the next three largest cities combined

[6] Megalopolises are cities of 10 million or more inhabitants. In 2005, while the regional population represented 8.6% of the world population, it accounted for almost 30% of the world's megalopolises (United Nations, 2006).

Figure 3
Latin America: primacy index



Source: Author's calculations based on DEPUALC database. (www.cepal.org/celade/depualc/)

The data on table 2 indirectly show that most countries have a network of large-sized cities that cover a significant part of the nation's total population. In fact, it is perceived that cities with 500 thousand inhabitants or more represent, in percentage, more than a third of the countries involved. As previously pointed out, in large countries like Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), places where the MAD continuously lose significance – the largest amounts of the population live in the big cities.

The table also reveals, that cities with population over 500 thousand reduce their relative importance in only a few countries. It is a fact, the cities' network in Latin American countries exhibit increasing complexity as intermediary cities gain more importance; however, it is unlikely that big cities are losing their leadership in the demographic, socio-economic and political fields.

Table 2
Percentage evolution of the relative weight of big cities Latin America, selected countries1980-2000

Country	One million or more		500 to 999 thousands		500 thousand and more	
	% in 2000	Evolution 1980/2000(*)	% in 2000	Evolution 1980/2000(*)	% in 2000	Evolution 1980/2000(*)
Argentina	40,2	-2,5	7,8	-0,9	47,9	-3,5
Bolivia	30,6	9,3	6,2	1,8	36,9	11,1
Brazil	33,6	1,8	3,5	1,1	37,1	2,9
Chile	35,7	0,8	9,8	-0,1	45,5	0,6
Costa Rica	27,1	5,3	-	-	27,1	5,3
Ecuador	29,5	3,5	-	-	29,5	3,5
Guatemala	19,1	-0,2	-	-	19,1	-0,2
Honduras	12,5	2,2	11,3	3,8	23,8	6,0
Mexico	30,1	-1,1	8,8	1,7	38,9	0,6
Nicaragua	19,2	-1,3	2,7	-0,2	21,9	-1,5
Panama	43,0	9,1	-	-	43,0	9,1
Paraguay	31,0	3,9	-	-	31,0	3,9
Dominican Republic	25,1	1,7	5,9	1,3	31,0	3,0
Uruguay	47,4	-3,8	-	-	47,4	-3,8
Venezuela (Bol. Rep.)	26,5	-3,5	13,3	0,9	39,8	-2,6

Source: ECLAC (CELADE), DEPUALC database

(*) Periods vary according to countries. For Bolivia, Honduras and Nicaragua the period refers to the 70's and 2000's.

III. CITY SYSTEM AND ITS STRUCTURE ACCORDING TO THE CATEGORIES OF POPULATION SIZE

In order to study the regional system of human settlement in detail, several size categories were created. (See Table 3 and figures 4 and 5).[7] Cities with 20 thousand or more inhabitants are counted individually.[8] Smaller urban areas are added together rather than counted individually. The population in places with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants or dispersed populations are counted as residual.

[7] The categories are: (a) "millionaire" cities (1 million or more inhabitants); (b) large intermediate cities (between 500,000 and 1 million inhabitants); (c) medium-sized intermediate cities (between 50,000 and 500,000 inhabitants); (d) small intermediate cities (between 20,000 and 50,000 inhabitants; and (e) small urban areas (with between 2,000 and 20,000 inhabitants).

[8] These cities can therefore be identified and monitored over time using longitudinal analyses. Although this type of analysis has been carried out for specific countries (CELADE, 2007), this will not be done here as such a regionwide vision goes beyond the scope of this document.

This information was used to create table 3, which shows the number of areas over 20 thousand inhabitants by census and size category. Regional urbanization has clearly involved a striking expansion and diversification of the city system, as between 1950 and 2000 the region moved from 314 to 1,851 cities with more than 20 thousand inhabitants.[9] This more complex urban network forms a social and territorial basis that is more conductive to regional development, given the long-term disadvantages associated with top-heavy urban systems (Davis & Henderson, 2003). Although the number of "millionaire" cities also increased (sevenfold between 1950 and 2000), expansion has suffered a slowdown in the 1990's. Furthermore, the limited number of cities in the following inferior category suggests that no major increase be expected in the present decade. Medium-sized intermediate cities (50,000 to 500,000 inhabitants) and smaller intermediate cities (20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants) are growing fast in terms of number of nodes, which confirms the trend towards a more robust and complex urban system.

Table 3
Latin America and the Caribbean: number of cities in each size category, census rounds 1950 to 2000

Size category	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1,000,000 and above	5	11	19	26	37	45
500,000 to 1,000,000	6	13	17	25	32	40
100,000 to 500,000	51	75	132	191	224	276
50,000 to 100,000	62	111	154	197	294	378
20,000 to 50,000	190	307	446	627	831	1,112
Total cities with 20,000 and above	314	517	768	1,066	1,418	1,851

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of the online database on Spatial Distribution of the Population and Urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean (DEPUALC).
Note: Countries included in the table by Census round:

Census round 1950: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haití, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Dominican Republic, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.).
Excluded: Uruguay (There was not census in this round).
Census round 1960: Argentina , Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Dominican Republic, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), Uruguay.
Excluded: Bolivia and Haiti (There was not census in this round).
Census round 1970: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haití, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Dominican Republic, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), Uruguay.
Census round 1980: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haití, Honduras, México, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Dominican Republic, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), Uruguay.
Excluded: Bolivia, El Salvador, Nicaragua (There was not census in this round).
Census round 1990: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Dominican Republic, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), Uruguay.
Excluded: Costa Rica, Cuba, Haití, Honduras (There was not census in this round).

[9] Figures shown in table 3 are not fully comparable since the year of available censuses differs country to country.

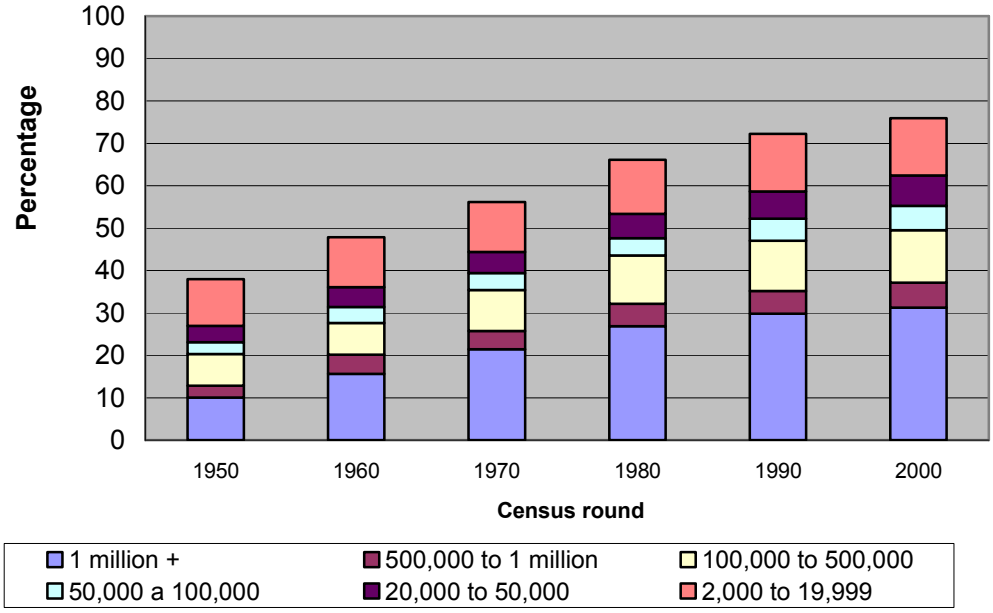
Census round 2000: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haití, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Venezuela (Bol. Rep.), Uruguay.
Excluded: El Salvador (data unprocessed yet), Peru (data unprocessed yet).

Advanced urbanization and the rise in the number of nodes in each size category of the urban system have increased the relative proportion of all categories within the total population (figure 4). “Millionaire” cities doubled their share to reach extraordinary proportions on a worldwide scale: almost one out of three inhabitants of the region lives in such cities. Therefore, figure 4 shows that, the increase significantly slowed in these cities in the 1990’s, growing at a slightly higher rate than the total population’s growth rate. In contrast, the current situation shows a wider representation of intermediate cities, which substantiates the hypothesis of diversification (more population than urban centers). Finally, the smallest category of the urban hierarchy is also highly relevant, with an abundance of areas with 2,000 and 20,000 inhabitants, often resembling the countryside rather than the rest of the city system.

The main finding of the study of the urban system’s internal structure (see figure 5) was the fast growth of intermediate cities, especially in the past 30 years. Indeed, the proportion of the urban system represented by “millionaire” cities has remained stable at 40% since 1970, while the share of small locations (fewer than 20,000 inhabitants) has fallen from 22% to around 19%, following two decades of decline (such places represented almost 30% of the urban population in 1950). This means that 40% of the urban population lives nowadays in intermediate cities (subdivided into large-intermediate, medium-intermediate and small-intermediate).

In summary, although urbanization in the region is naturally concentrated in cities, the form of concentration is diversifying. This is because intermediate cities are growing faster than “millionaire” cities. That inconsistency may well be due to a difference in natural growth or migratory growth, which is decisive for the purpose of analysis and policymaking. This point will be addressed in more detail further on, to provide a definitive answer on the migratory attraction of countries with largest cities, and particularly megalopolises.

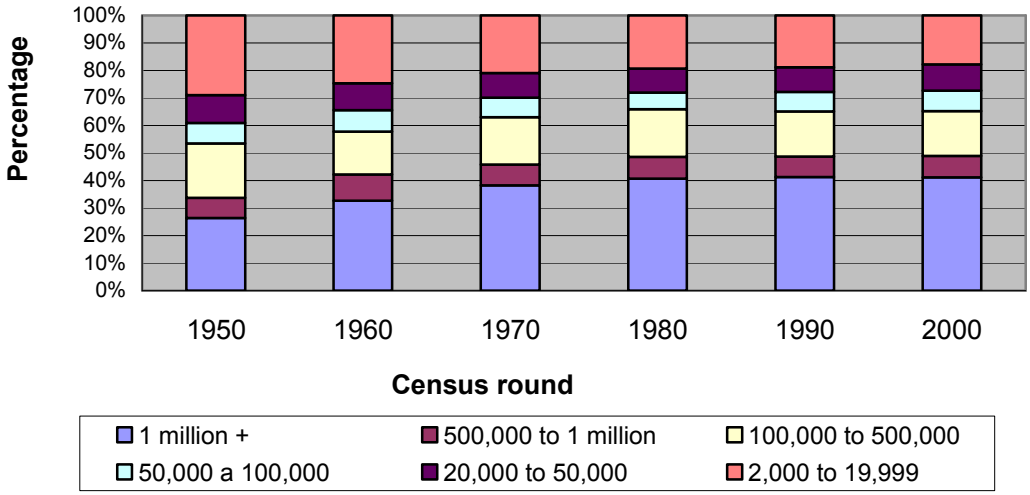
Figure 4 - Latin America and the Caribbean (selected countries): percentage of total population, by size of locality



Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the online database on Spatial Distribution of the Population and Urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean (DEPUALC).

Note: The list of countries included in each census round is found in table 3

Figure 5 - Latin America and the Caribbean (selected countries): percentage of urban population by size of locality



Source: Prepared by the author on the basis of the online database on Spatial Distribution of the Population and Urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean

Note: The list of countries included in each census is found in table 3

The preceding discussion is not aimed at denying the existence of a tendency – which is still restrained – towards the deconcentration of the population from the big metropolitan areas, and above all, from the big Latin American cities. It is true that growth of metropolises has suffered a decline beyond the effects of demographic transition, what might suggest a drop in migration. Along these lines, economic transformations taking place in these countries and their subsequent effects have strongly contributed to the reallocation of both productive activities and jobs. Although such changes have not seriously affected the dynamics and socio-economic leadership of the main metropolis and its *hinterland*[10] (i.e. big cities are still receiving large migration flows from the rest of the country) they have indeed seriously reduced their ability to retain population, triggering a significant increase of emigration and a boost return migration[11].

However, what is reinforced in this text is the relative and limited character of this process. The information obtained from some of the countries suggests that this is not a process towards a significant "demetropolitanization", "internalization", or "deconcentration" of population; instead, it is a process towards a regional redistribution of the less-concentrated population. This assertion seems to be correct in Mexico (Chavez and Guadarrama, 2007; Pimentel, 2000) and Brazil (Baeninger, 2000 and 1997) where trends and regional increases, beyond the major metropolises, are observed; however, a significant demographic concentration level is maintained in intermediate and large cities, particularly in urban agglomerates of larger size.

IV. MIGRATION AND MAJOR CITIES

In this section we carry out a preliminary analysis of the three largest cities in 10 selected countries of the region. For value-added analysis, substantial distinctions are made to identify specific migratory patterns for each group between age-groups.

The results in table 4 demonstrate that the top of the urban system remains attractive, as most cities continue to register net immigration. In countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama and Paraguay (almost all of them have an urban percentage below the regional average) the most populated city (or the two most populated) are still major hubs of attraction and therefore remain macrocephalous or bicephalous.[12] However, one in every three cities, registers net emigration, which suggests that this situation (never heard of in the region before the late 1980's) might be spreading among the main cities of the region.

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[10] Lencioni (1996) discussing the industrial unconcentration thesis in the São Paulo MR case, clearly asserts "*the metropolis of São Paulo deconcentrates as denial of the mechanisms of concentration and affirms its centrality ... it is a process of centralization of capital that consolidates the hegemony of big business ... and uses spatial dispersion mechanisms—instead of concentration mechani as a way of structuring space, no longer concentration*"(p.207). For Chile, de Mattos (2001) finds a trend towards reconcentration around the MR of Santiago.

[11] With regard to return migration, see: Lattes, 1995 for the Buenos Aires case; Negrete, 1999 for Mexico City and Cunha & Baeninger, 2000 for São Paulo.

[12] In the last two cases, the primacy ratio may be falling (see figure 3), while the concentration of the urban system in the two main cities may be rising.

Most of the region's post-net emigration metropolises (cities with 5 million or more inhabitants) date from the 1980's (Rodríguez, 2004). This turnaround is due to diseconomies of scale and the shift of urban investment into other areas (UNFPA, 2007; Montgomery, 2004). Other factors include difficulties of governance and the proliferation of urban problems such as: lack of public safety, traffic congestion and pollution. Overall, these cities continue to receive strong inflows of immigrants even though, their ability to retain population has significantly decreased.

The above is directly related to the hypothesis of "concentrated deconcentration" (whereby people migrate to nearby zones, cities or regional sprawls as part of a process of suburbanization (Diniz, 2007)); thus these flows were subdivided into the following two categories: nearby-migration or faraway-migration (table 4). The main conclusion reached is that "concentrated deconcentration" seems to be operating only in the metropolises of Brazil, as net emigration from Greater São Paulo and Greater Rio de Janeiro was indeed exclusively due to exchanges of people with other municipalities within the same state, while both agglomerations continued to gain population from migratory exchanges with other states. In all other countries, large cities posted net emigration in terms of nearby or faraway-migration or just the latter, which suggests an effective but unclear deconcentration. In several cities that remain hubs of attraction, the pattern of migratory exchange fits with the hypothesis of concentrated deconcentration, and matches the processes of suburbanization. This is the case of Guatemala City, Quito, San Pedro Sula and Heredia.

The current situation of a few capitals is remarkable, such as La Paz and Mexico City, where despite of their net out-migration with other regions in the country, they remain attractive to nearby migrants.

Two key conclusions arise from Table 4. The first is that there is significant variability both among and within countries with regard to the levels and indicators of net migration in big cities and the composition of the latter according to nearby and faraway balances. The second is that total net migration (derived from migratory exchange between the city and the rest of the country) does not necessarily indicate the real attraction of cities, since for some of them, there seems to be "concentrated deconcentration" processes taking place, which we shall refer to further on.

Another way to show the diversity of migratory behavior of main cities is the analysis of the Migration Effectiveness Ratio (MER) [13], which, as the name suggests, it attempts to capture the phenomenon's dimension, beyond volume and intensity; it aims at determining the efficiency level an area obtains in its migratory process. The figure 6 shows this ratio applied both to total migration and to nearby and faraway migration for regions with gross migration figures (the sum of immigration and emigration) above one hundred thousand migrants. It is worth pointing out, that all countries considered in the Table 4, are represented.

[13] The Migration effectiveness ratio is calculated upon the quotient resulting from net and gross migration. Its values vary from -1 (no efficiency) and + 1 (highly efficient). The índex allows to evaluate how efficient an area is with regard to the migratory process involved. Therefore, it should not be interpreted as an indicator of attraction or rejection level. Values approaching 0, might imply the existence of significant migratory circulation; in other words, despite of low migratory balances, these areas would present large number of exchanges of people: immigrants or emigrants. That is the case of the central municipalities of the metropolitan regions.

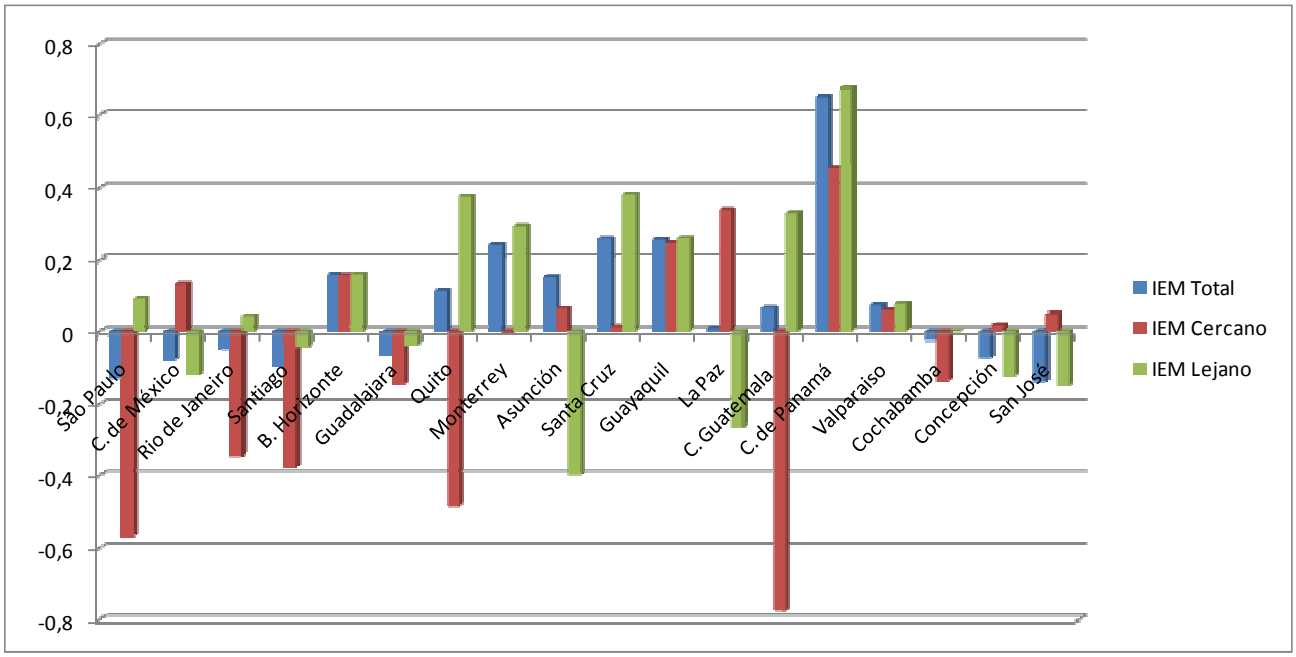
Table 4
Selected countries of Latin America (10): Immigrants, emigrants, and net migration according to migration proximity

Country and year	Metropolitan agglomeration	Inmigration			Out-migration			Net migration		
		Nearby	Faraway	Total	Nearby	Faraway	Total	Nearby	Faraway	Total
Bolivia, 2001	La Paz	51,783	34,358	86,141	25,591	59,094	84,685	26,192	-24,736	1,456
	Santa Cruz	29,369	81,164	110,533	28,619	36,485	65,104	750	44,679	45,429
	Cochabamba	8,256	45,151	53,407	10,840	45,255	56,095	-2,584	-104	-2,688
Brazil, 2000	São Paulo	129,298	654,994	784,292	471,321	543,906	1,015,226	-342,022	111,088	-230,934
	Rio de Janeiro	47,353	240,349	287,703	97,251	219,463	316,715	-49,898	20,886	-29,012
	B. Horizonte	159,925	71,304	231,229	116,799	51,768	168,567	43,126	19,536	62,662
Chile, 2002	Santiago	26,359	200,933	227,292	58,251	218,758	277,009	-31,892	-17,825	-49,717
	Valparaiso	12,487	54,053	66,540	11,102	46,280	57,382	1,385	7,773	9,158
	Concepción	19,037	30,303	49,340	18,372	38,793	57,165	665	-8,490	-7,825
Costa Rica 2000	San José	3,082	40,008	43,090	2,795	54,247	57,042	287	-14,239	-13,952
	Heredia	3,461	17,337	20,798	5,717	10,605	16,322	-2,256	6,732	4,476
	Cartago	3,969	5,782	9,751	3,256	3,523	6,779	713	2,259	2,972
Ecua-dor 2001	Quito	15,695	97,133	112,828	45,444	44,181	89,625	-29,749	52,952	23,203
	Guayaquil	29,449	78,739	108,188	17,809	46,243	64,052	11,640	32,496	44,136
	Cuenca	7,606	18,002	25,608	4,491	9,081	13,572	3,115	8,921	12,036
Guate-mala 2002	C. Guatemala	4,574	85,931	90,505	36,061	43,289	79,350	-31,487	42,642	11,155
	Quetzalten.	4,077	3,373	7,450	3,180	3,165	6,345	897	208	1,105
	Escuintla	2,024	2,198	4,222	2,594	4,336	6,930	-570	-2,138	-2,708
Hon-duras 2001	Tegucigalpa	5,704	29,672	35,376	4,518	19,406	23,924	1,186	10,266	11,452
	S. Pedro Sula	5,122	31,874	36,996	16,603	13,504	30,107	-11,481	18,370	6,889
	La Ceiba	1,533	7,595	9,128	1,340	6,441	7,781	193	1,154	1,347
Mexico, 2000	C. de México	81,668	344,476	426,144	62,695	436,427	499,122	18,973	-91,951	-72,978
	Guadalajara	24,933	78,094	103,027	33,412	84,232	117,644	-8,479	-6,138	-14,617
	Monterrey	15,352	98,476	113,828	15,492	54,048	69,540	-140	44,428	44,288
Panamá, 2000	C. de Panamá	9,840	94,421	104,261	3,700	18,240	21,940	6,140	76,181	82,321
	Colón	2,659	7,574	10,233	546	7,918	8,464	2,113	-344	1,769
	David	9,788	4,428	14,216	4,099	9,200	13,299	5,689	-4,772	917
Para-guay, 2002	Asunción	8,694	88,618	97,312	20,214	65,349	85,563	-11,520	-24,736	11,749
	C.del Este	5,056	19,922	24,978	6,906	20,241	27,147	-1,850	44,679	-2,169
	Encarnación	4,619	3,892	8,511	5,834	6,265	12,099	-1,215	-104	-3,588

Source: Rodríguez, 2009 special processing of the census database

The situation is completely diverse making it feasible to indentify situations where big cities prove little efficiency (they lose much more population than gain) with nearby exchanges, as is the case of Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, Quito and the city of Guatemala. There are opposite cases like La Paz and Panama City, which gain more than lose through nearby migration. With regard to the MIE calculated on faraway migration, it is perceived that these areas present more efficiency; the most outstanding cases are Quito, Monterrey, Santa Cruz, Guatemala City and Panama. The two big exceptions would be Asuncion and La Paz, which lose fairly more population to other parts of the country than they gain.

Figure 6
Migration effectiveness ratio according to type of migration.
Selected metropolitan areas, Census 2000 round



Source: Authors' calculations based on Table 4

Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe that the majority of the MRs present MIEs very close to zero, bringing into light one of the most appealing features of our metropolitan regions: even the MIEs showing either net losses of population or little inflow are high-circulation areas of population. This proves, in our opinion, the need to revitalize the discussion about concentration/ deconcentration, or more specifically metropolitanization or demetropolitanization.

Notwithstanding, we cannot assure that there is a unique trend in Latin America related to the concentration or deconcentration of population, especially with regard to the role of the metropolitan regions.

If we consider the age distribution (figures 7.A to 7.D), an expected but never empirically documented pattern emerges. As a matter of fact, it is only possible now to process the census' microdata in a fluent and flexible way, necessary to build the database of the graphics. The graphics are eloquent: the attraction to main cities differs according to age group, especially in the past few years. Young people (between ages of 15 and 24) have remained attracted, and the expulsion of population predominates in the other age groups. That is why the disparity between graphics 7.A and 7.B is notable and significant: only the minority of the examined cities losses young population through migration (in almost all the cases the 25-29 age group), meanwhile, the

majority of these cities expulse children, the young and elderly[14]. In the 1990's censuses, the disparity was not so marked, since there were fewer expulsive cities.

In any case, the results of figures 7.A-7.D highlight the fact that young people of the region have a special relation with main cities, considering that almost none of them registers net youth emigration, opposing the net emigration rates of population from other age groups (and the total figure). Some of these cities lose young population through the process of population exchange in the region (nearby migration) or with the rest of the country (faraway migration). Despite this, the migratory attraction level remains low. Sao Paulo and Santiago de Chile are examples of cities losing attractions for young people within the regional context (the rest of Sao Paulo State and the rest of the Metropolitan Region, respectively); however, they remain fairly attractive to young people from other states and regions of the country. On the contrary, Concepcion in Chile remains attractive to young people in the region, but loses young population in the exchange process with other regions of the country.

The attraction of cities to young population depends on a range of factors, including major education infrastructure, a labor marketplace open to young workers and a wider range of housing alternatives. A detailed analysis of the 'economic' activity of youngsters immigrating and emigrating from cities suggests that the key factor depends on each city. The counterpoint between Sao Paulo and Concepcion (Chile) is illustrative. In the first case, young immigrants have a student ratio lower than young emigrants and non-migrants, therefore, their labor participation ratios are higher. In the other case, young immigrants have a student ratio much higher than young emigrants and non-migrants. For that reason, the range of attraction factors are configured according the characteristics of each city, such as the labor market for young immigrants of Sao Paulo, and the presence of an advanced educational infrastructure for young immigrants[15] in Concepcion.

[14] This suggests family movements, supporting the previous research on emigration in large metropolitan centers, especially migration heading to the outskirts or the frontier areas (Rodriguez, 2009; Cunha, 1995, 2000 and 2006).

[15] The figures are not presented in this text due to space; however, the figures available cover the three main cities of more than 10 countries of the region (census round 2000).

Figure 7 .A.
Latin America, 10 countries, three main cities: Net internal migration rates (per thousand) according to age groups (under15 years, 30-59 and 60 and more). Census 2000.

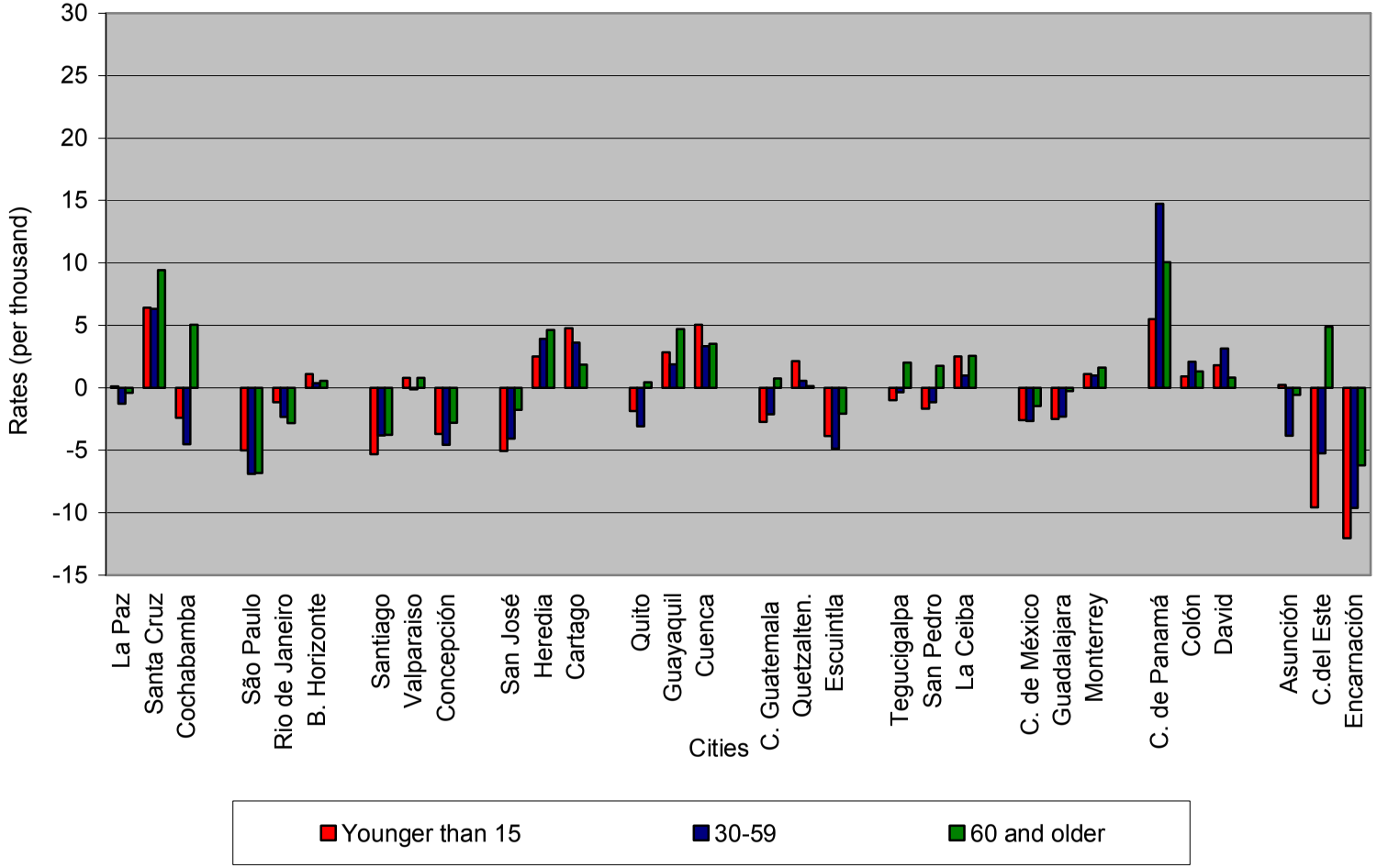


Figure 7.B.
Latin America 10 countries, three main cities: Net internal migration rates (per thousand) according to selected age groups
(15-19, 20-24 and 25-29). Census 2000.

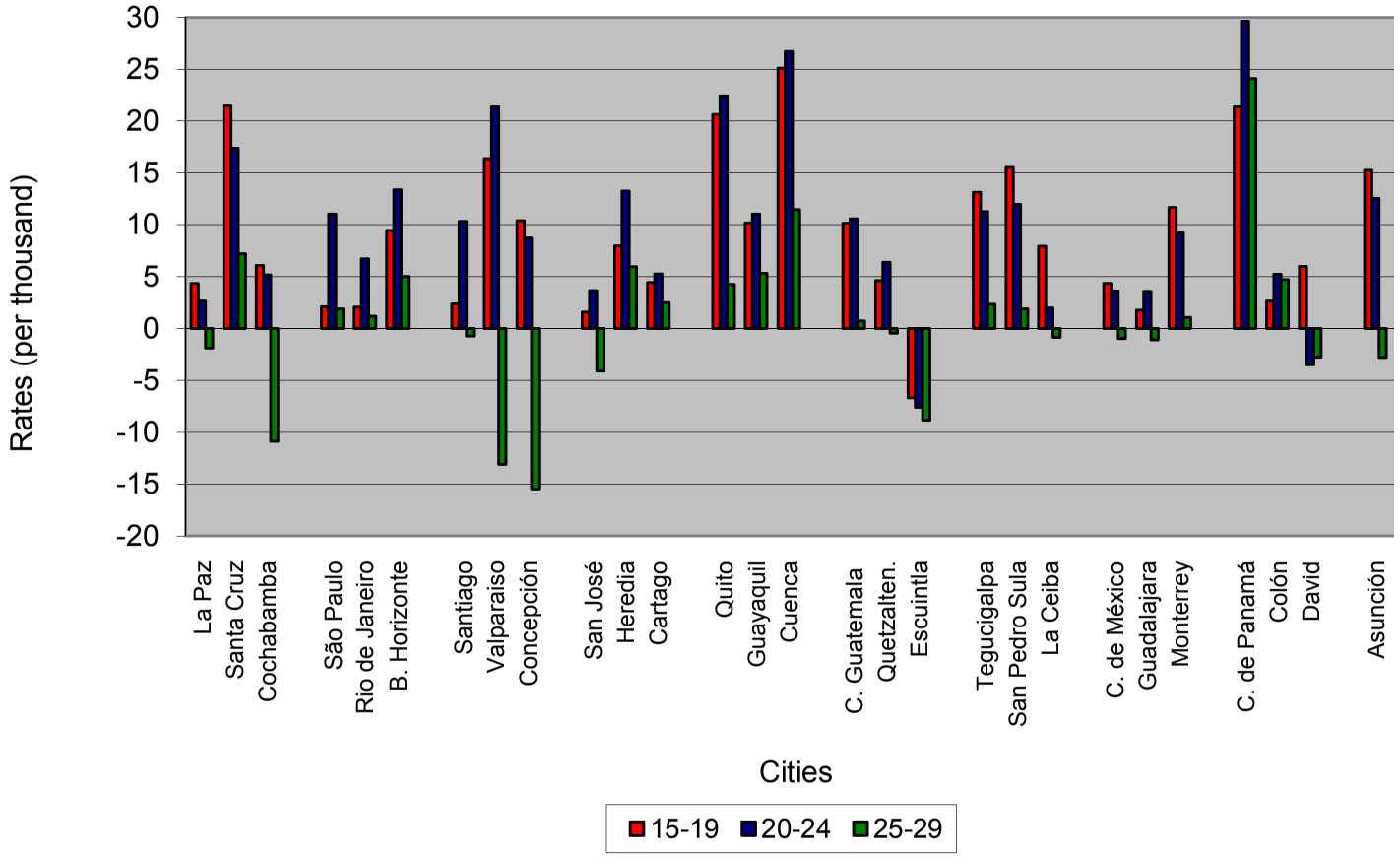


Gráfico 7.C.
Latin America, 10 countries, three main citiees: Net internal migration rates (thousands) according to age groups (under 15 years, 30-59 and 60 and más años). Censos ronda 1990

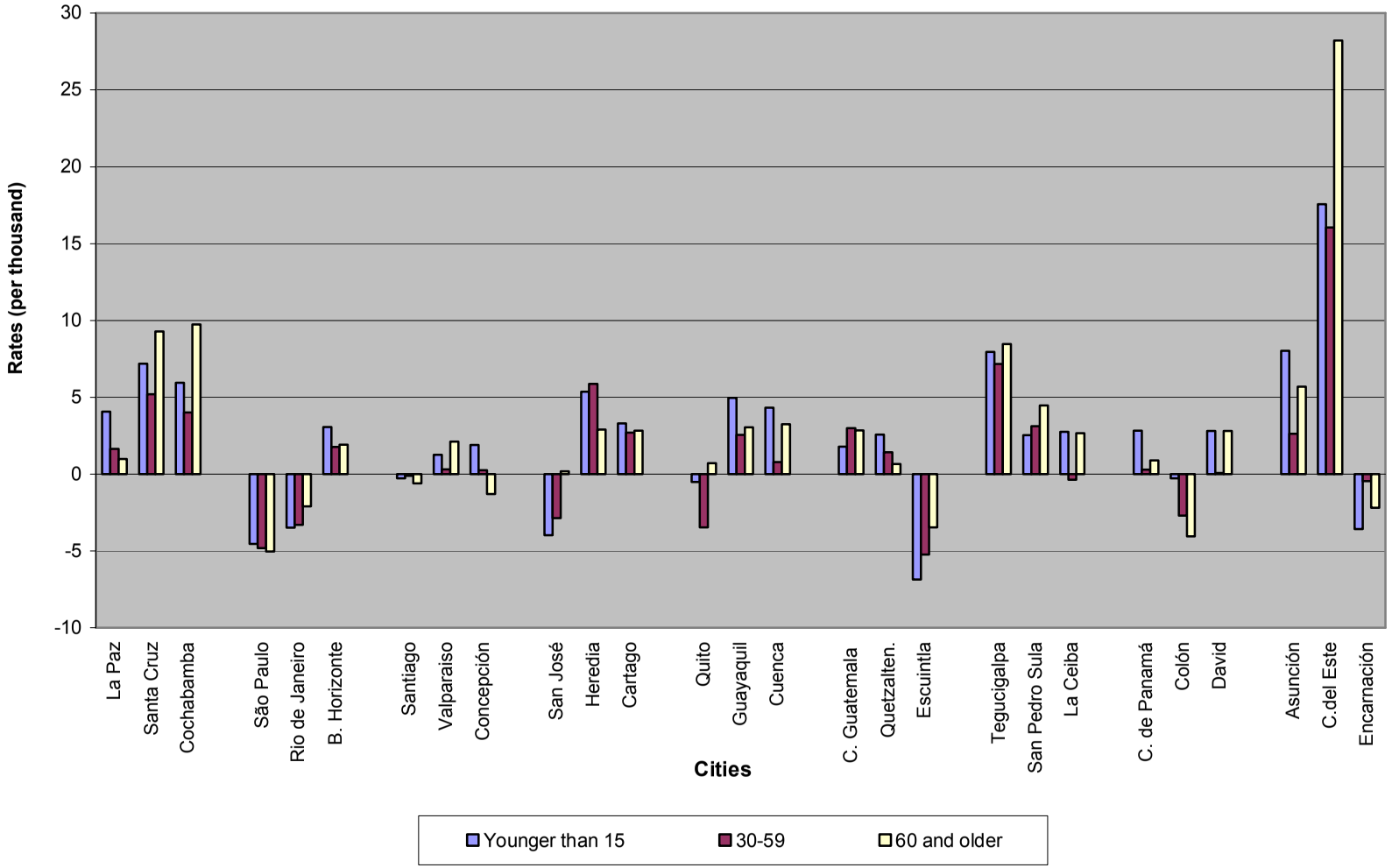
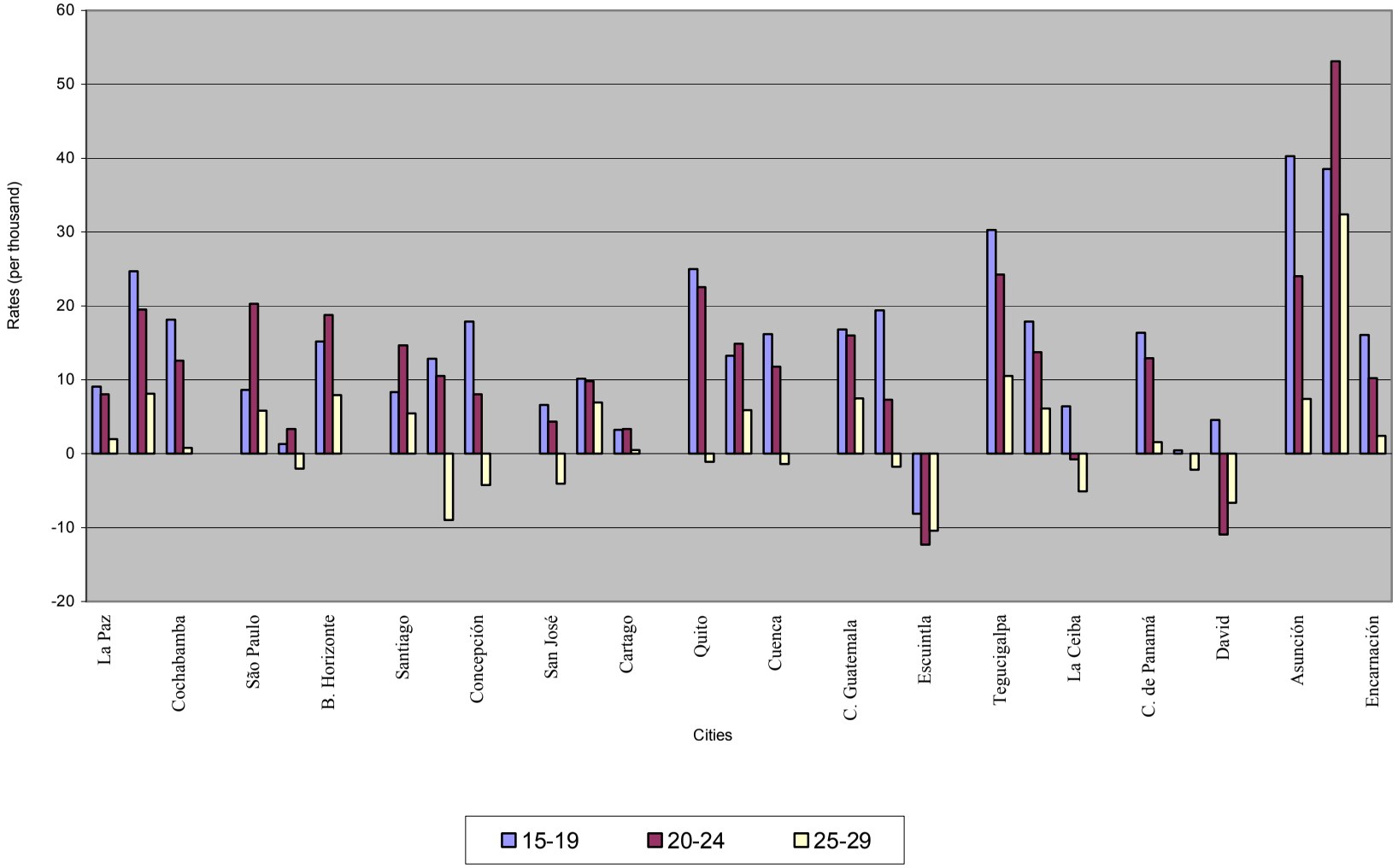


Figure 7.D.
Latin America, 10 countries, three main cities : Net internal migration rate (thousands) according to age groups (15-19, 20-24 and 25-29), Census 1990.



V. EXPANSION OF THE PERIPHERY AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION ACCORDING TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS IN THE LATIN AMERICAN METROPOLISES

Another feature of Latin American urbanization is the faster growth of metropolitan peripheries than city proper: in all metropolitan areas or large agglomerations of Latin American countries, the largest population increase is registered in the peripheral areas. On the other hand, the population growth rate of the city proper is fairly reduced, and even negative in a few cases (Rodriguez and Villa, 1998, United Nations, 1993 and 1991, Garza and Schteingart, 1984, Cunha, 2000). Since vegetative growth of the city proper continues to be positive, this pattern of peripheral expansion demonstrates the relevance of net in-migration in peripheral areas.

As we consider the level of demographic concentration reached by big cities, the process of reallocation and territorial expansion seems to be an inevitable phenomenon due to a variety of factors. In the first place, the ways of using and distributing land, which depend on the relationships (very often uneasy) established between the real estate sector, the state and society (Gottdiener, 1993) involving changes in land prices and modifications of built areas, which lead demographic occupation. In this regard, public power (sometimes by omission of actions) is a relevant player in this process because it selectively supports real estate projects, promotes its own vision of a metropolitan future, carries out public housing policies – for instance: massive construction of social residences in peripheral areas of the Chilean cities is a key figure of this aspect – or puts in practice some regulations (and excludes others) with regards to the occupation of certain areas.

One important element to understand the expansion of large urban agglomerations is the reallocation of productive activities, which impact not only the employment sector, but also residential localization. Notwithstanding this process of productive reallocation, there is a debate in the region: although some activities have proved to be dispersed – particularly commercial activities following the typical United States patterns of shopping centers or Malls –, other activities, such as finances and services, oriented to serve businessess and individuals, have not yet shown any sign of dispersion. In addition, in some places like Santiago de Chile, a sustained existence of economic activity historically concentrated in the traditional city center now extends east, where most of the high income population of the city live (Rodríguez, 2008).

V.1 Metropolises' remodeling and the interurban residential displacements

Two major processes of metropolitan reconfiguration have brought into light the residential segregation by socioeconomic status (SRS) in the region.[16] On the one side, is the persistent peripheral expansion of Latin American metropolises. As can be inferred from the

[16] SRS denotes unequal distribution in the metropolitan territory of socio-economic groups. Within the metropolis' context marked by socio-economic inequalities that could be expressed, either combined or isolated, in: (i) long physical distance between these groups; (b) constitution of socio-economically homogeneous and asymptotic groups (possibly distant) among them; (c) absence or lack of social interaction among the members of the different socio-economic groups.

previous paragraph, this expansion is no longer due to waves of inmigrants or vegetative population growth. In fact, centrifugal forces have operated for many decades through the movement of poor people towards the outskirts of the city. More recently physical displacements of affluent families to specific areas in the periphery, some of them within the elite historical niche, others away from it, and some others located in historically poor or semirural areas. The latter movement has been nominated as "rur-urbanization" which has brought Latin American cities closer to upper and middle class typical suburbs of the United States.

The other relevant process of metropolitan reconfiguration in the past years has been the recovering of deteriorated areas, most of them in central areas, referred to as gentrification.[17] This recovery, which does not necessarily mean redensification, is the result of real estate market and public programs (or a combination of both). It has caused opposing socio-urban effects, particularly, the dyad made by the revaluation of real state and expulsion of traditional poor dwellers. Despite the positive impact on the city, gentrification could, in some cases aggravate socio-spatial segregation, as this process could restrict the spaces allocated to low-income population even more.

Maps 1, 2 and 3 and table 5 illustrate the impact of metropolitan migration on metropolitan reconfiguration[18]. In these three cities there is a loss of population taking place in central[19] municipalities *vis a vis* a strong growth in peripheral municipalities, some of which have become more populated than the metropolitan areas (in particular the GSMA).

In the SPMR case, although the primacy of the central municipality is more distinguishable than the other two considered cases as a result of its territorial size (Sao Paulo municipality represents almost 59 % of the SPMR's population), this does not mean that the SPMR is left out of the peripheral expansion process. Although peripheral movement may apparently be less intense, in terms of spatial units's size of comparison, there is no doubt that such movement towards the periphery is as intense in Sao Paulo as it is in Santiago and Mexico.

It is perceived from Table 5 that the population's evolution is closely linked to intra-metropolitan migration, since the municipalities that are losing more population, coincide with those that have larger net intra-metropolitan emigration. The opposite occurs in municipalities which gain more population. Summarizing, in the 1990's, the simple correlation between inter-census growth rate of population and net intra-metropolitan migration reaches 0.96 of the GSMA, 0.82 in the AMSP and 0.60 in the MCMZ, the last of which drops due to two or three exceptionally fast growing peripheral municipalities – Zumpango, Texcoco and Teoloyucan – but, showing low intra-metropolitan migration rates.

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[17] "*The restoration and upgrading of deteriorated urban property by middle-class or affluent people, often resulting in displacement of lower-income people*" (www.thefreedictionary.com/gentrification).

[18] Due to limited space, only the maps of Greater Santiago Metropolitan Area, Mexico City Metropolitan Zone and the Sao Paulo Metropolitan Region can be shown. Also, the table shows the emblematic counties and municipalities in terms of intra-metropolitan population and migration growth.

[19] Sao Paulo is excluded due to the large size of its central municipality.

Table 5

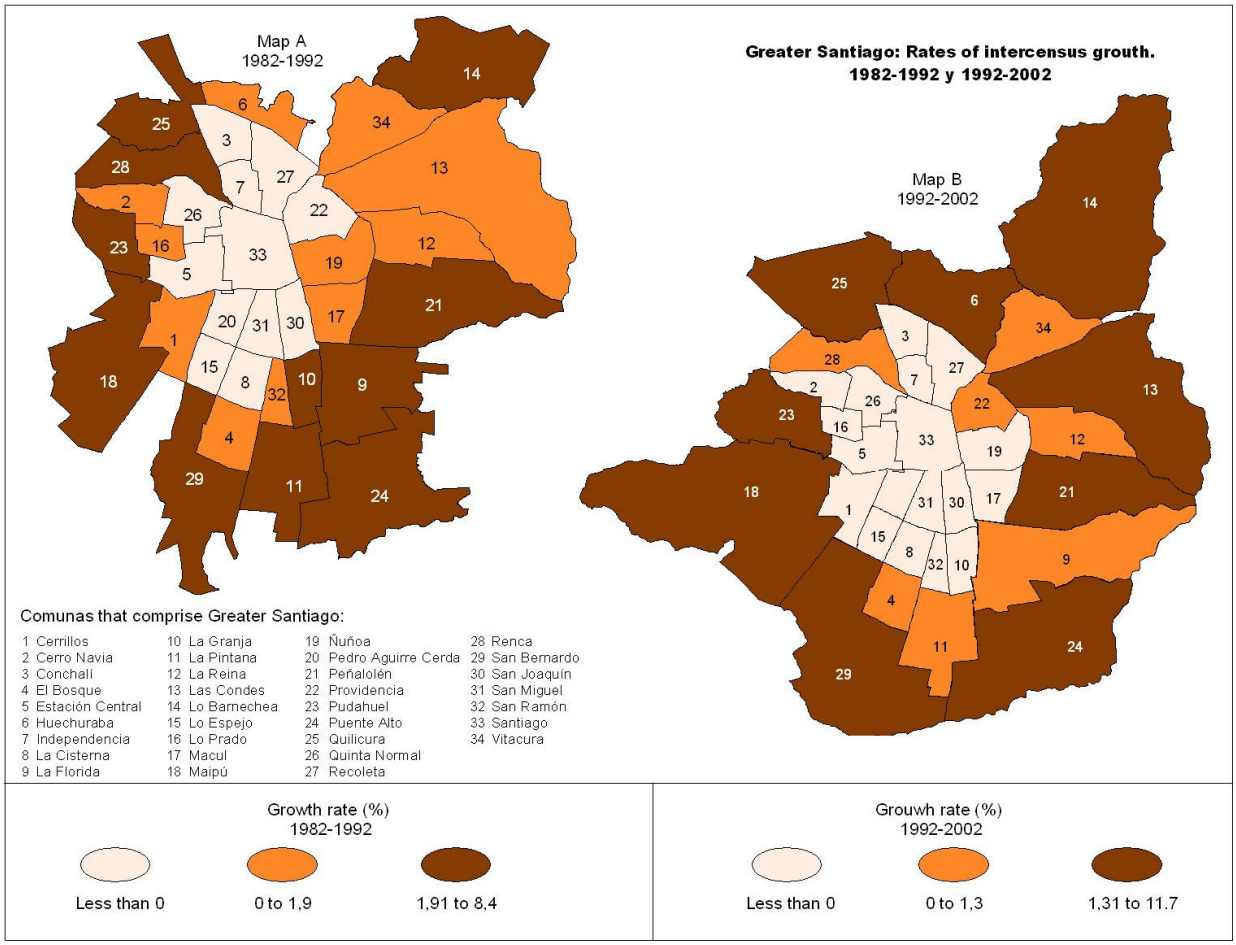
Greater Santiago Metropolitan Area (GSMA), Metropolitan Zone of Mexico City and Metropolitan Region of Sao Paulo, 1990's: Demographic growth rate, net migration and migration rate and net intra-metropolitan migration rate for municipalities according to its centrality condition (location)

Metropolitan Agglomeration	Type of municipality	Municipality	Population growth rate 1990's	Net intrametro-politan migration	Net intrametropolitan migration rate (per 1000)
GSMA	Central municipalities that lose population	Quinta Normal	-1.1	-9,095	-2.0
		Conchali	-1.4	-11,641	-2.0
		San Joaquin	-1.6	-8,036	-1.8
	Fast growing peripheral municipalities	Puente Alto	6.1	69,006	3.6
		Maipu	6.6	44,576	2.4
		Quilicura	11.7	33,674	7.6
MZMC	Central municipalities that lose population	Cuauhtemoc	-1.5	-30,078	-1.3
		Gustavo Madero	-0.4	-77,190	-1.4
		Miguel Hidalgo	-1.5	-25,842	-1.7
	Fast growing peripheral municipalities	Ixtapaluca	9.5	70,317	6.7
		Tultepec	6.8	12,904	3.5
		Tultitlan	5.7	47,688	2.8
SPMR	Central municipalities that lose population	São Paulo	0.9	-280,309	-0.5
		Osasco	1.6	-5,103	-0.2
		Santo Andre	0.6	-498	0.0
		São Caetano do Sul	-0.7	-3,272	-0.5
	Relative central municipalities (but with significant peripherical areas) that gain population	Guarulhos	3.5	44,538	0.8
		São Bernardo do Campo	2.4	23,627	0.7
	Fast growing peripheral municipalities	Ferraz de Vasconcelos	4.5	13,513	1.9
		Francisco Morato	5.3	9,854	1.5
		Itaquaquecetuba	5.8	28,371	2.1

Source: Demographic censuses of Chile, Mexico and Brazil (authors' own calculations)

Map 1

GSMA: Municipalities according to the inter-census demographic growth rate, 1982-1992 and 1992-2002

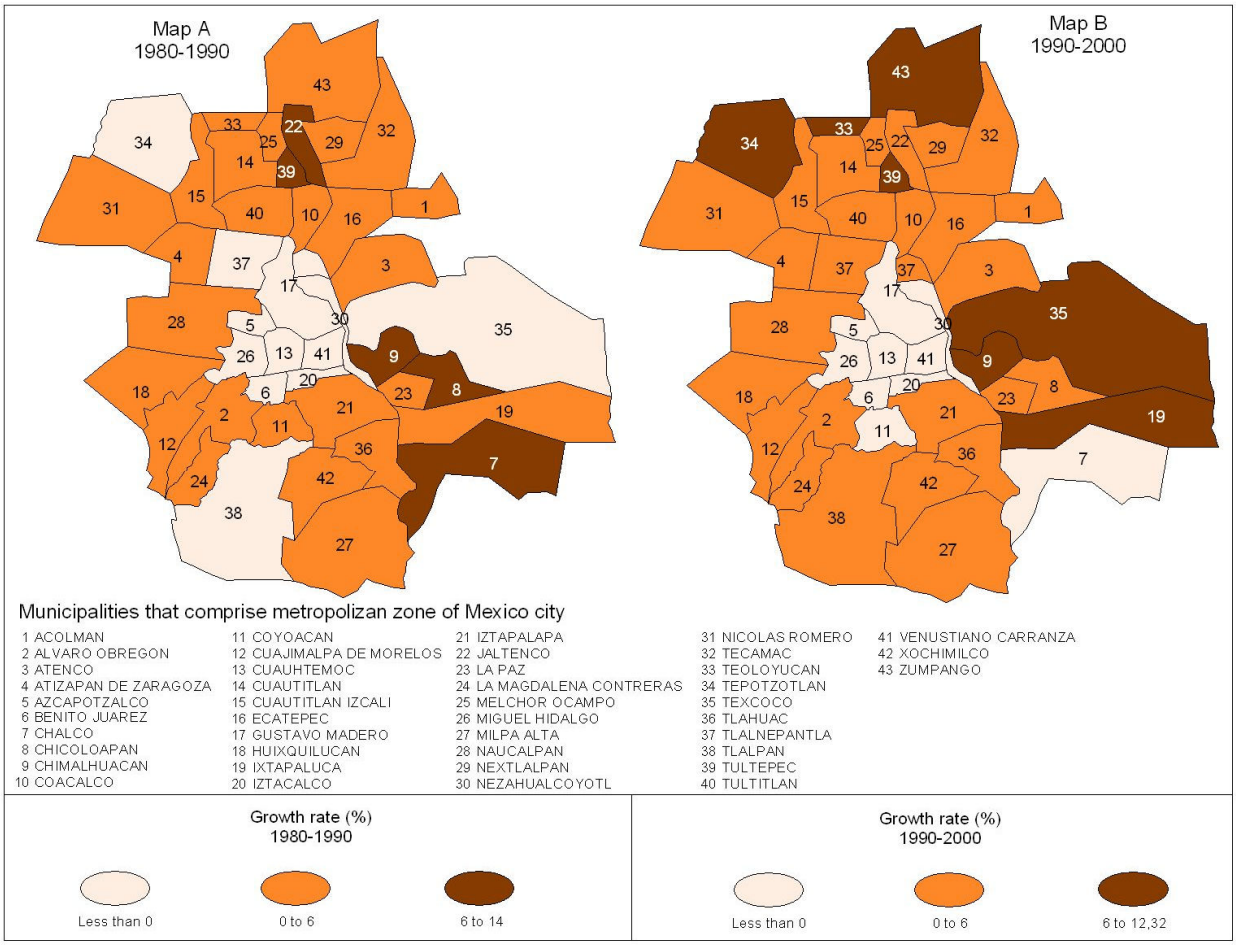


Source: The author's calculation based on the censuses published (Maps by Daniela Gonzalez).

Note: Changes in maps respond to the inclusion of census districts in 2002, which were excluded in 1992, for being 'rural' or for not having existed by that time.

Map 2

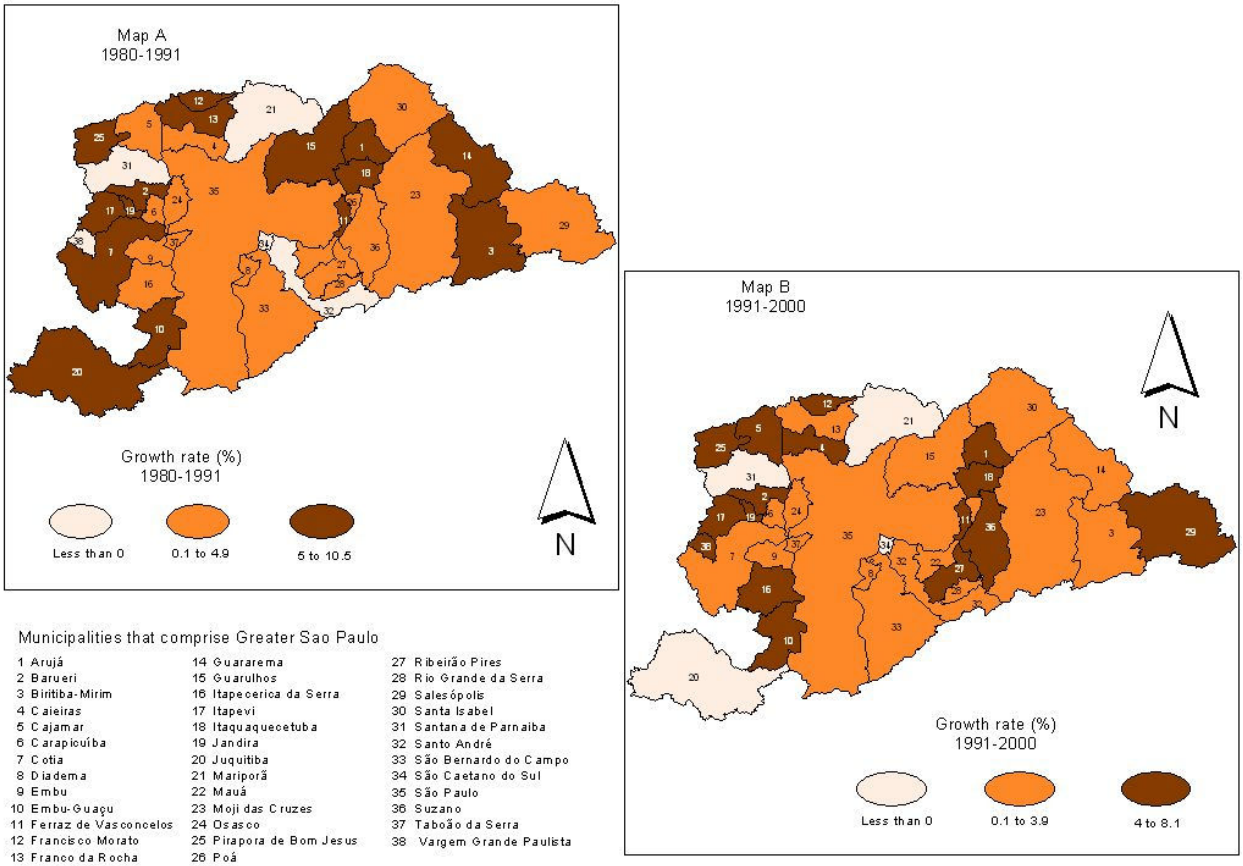
MCMZ: Municipalities according to the inter-census demographic growth rate: 1980-1990 and 1990-2000



Source: The author's calculation based on the censuses published (Maps by Daniela González).

Map 3

SPRM: Municipalities according to the inter-census demographic growth rate: 1980-1990 and 1990-2000



Source: authors' calculation based on published census data (Maps by Daniela González).

V.2 Metropolitan redesign and socioeconomic residential segregation

From these two transformation processes currently taking place in the region's metropolises, two opposing hypotheses emerge. One of them points towards the elite´s redistribution (by suburbanization, gentrification and the advance of a fractal city) and, accordingly, a reduction in the distance between different social strata in some city zones, which tends to reduce the SRS, or at least its scale. The other one points to metropolitan duality – between the part of the city where the dynamic economic activities are located as well as affluent groups live, and in the other, where lagged economic activities are located and poor people live.

There are several concerns in relation to SRS: it weakens the finances of poor municipalities, it affects residents in poor areas through "neighborhood effect" that could be adverse due to a deficit of infrastructure, services, social capital (contacts) or cultural capital (codes), or the relative absence of role models, or the stigma of residing in a poor neighborhood. This hinders social integration since it is associated lack of interaction between socioeconomic groups and it is linked with poor-governance and anomie in the "segregated" poor areas. Due to this, it is considered a mechanism that tends to reproduce poverty and inequalities, as well as erodes urban governance and metropolitan development. Such association leads to conviction that SRS is one of the factors that has contributed to social inequalities in the region's cities.[20]

Three determinants of SRS need to be theoretically distinguished and, if data permits, separately quantified: a) selective migration according to socioeconomic status; b) vegetative growth of the different social groups; and (c) structural[21] change. Part of the analysis on the trends in SRS's trends has concentrated on structural change; the latter is related to the principles of social mobility, which could alter the modality and intensity of SRS, with no geographic displacement involved.[22] In general, these analyses lead to the hypothesis of increasing SRS because both signal that elites remain isolated or closed from other social groups, and that mobility stagnates in lower and middle social strata. The other side of the analysis has underlined the role of the migratory flows, which can directly remodel the pattern of SRS´s[23] pattern. Several of these analyses give credit to the SRS reduction hypothesis, or at least to its scale, as a result of the emerging urban displacements, particularly the displacements of the elite from their residential area. It is relevant to identify and quantify the

[20] However, the division of social groups within the city could also be due to cultural affinity reasons (for example, national, ethnic or linguistic proximity) and in this case, the term segregation would be wrongly used.

[21] In theory, the change in the social composition of each subdivision within one city could be divided into these three sources making it possible to estimate the contribution of each. However, there are theoretical dilemmas and practical problems. Even the simplest calculation, the one presented in this document associated on selectivity migration involves assumptions with regard to the invariability of the analyzed attributes over time, and it is also subject to the known limitations of census´ migration questions; for example, the loss of intermediate movements (for more details, see Rodriguez 2009, 2007y 2004b). Furthermore, to estimate the vegetative growth of social groups requires information on births and deaths from each. Consequently, this can only be achieved with vital statistics, which tend to have omission or quality problems in Latin American countries. Finally, structural change corresponds to the modification of the attributes of those non-migrant individuals who survive along the period of analysis. Rigorously, it implies a follow-up and retrospective analysis, unlikely to happen in the region. The other possibility is to use the two subsequent censuses in order to do cohort follow-up (by age and specific characteristics) although in general such follow-up is affected by migration and mortality. Whatever the case, the last component could be obtained as a residual if the others are well calculated. In summary, breaking down the socioeconomic change of cities is an analytical and empirical challenge for which we lack reliable data sources.

[22] An extreme, but intuitive, example is that of the sudden process of income redistribution which significantly and simultaneously reduces extreme poverty and wealth. Any segregation measure over the extreme poor would be affected by this change without any physical movement of poor people within the city.

[23] SRS depends on the socioeconomic composition (selectivity) of the in and out flows, from and towards the metropolises regarding the origin and destination. If the selectivity of the intra-metropolitan migration operates on the principal of "affinity"—affluent people migrate to up-scale areas and poor people migrate to poorer areas— then intra-metropolitan migration would tend to worsen SRS; on the contrary, if it operated on a principle of "diversity", it would tend to attenuate it.

determinants of the trends of the SRS, both for the benefit of academic knowledge and for public policy design.

In fact, the intervention directed to influence SRS should act through proximate determinants, which, with the variable temporalities, redefine the levels and modalities of SRS. But such proximate determinants respond to a specific set of policies, programs, incentives or rules. In this sense, changing the selectivity of intra metropolitan migration (to impact SRS through this intermediate variable) requires different actions to those should the objective be to influence the SRS through the modification of the differential vegetative growth´s rates of the city´s different socioeconomic groups.

Thus, for many years there was only a little research on residential segregation, basically because detailed geographical information was needed. The access to census' micro-data and above all, the technological instruments to processing them, and the combination of data and geography through the GIS, has particularly started to modify this situation. For the past 10 years there has been an outburst of quantitative research on residential segregation. One of the most notable aspects of this research has been the discrepancy amongst them. Some have found a rather trend of decreasing SRS, measured through Duncan index of dissimilarity, in the GSMA, whereas, others have found a contrary trend in Sao Paulo and Campinas (Cunha & Jimenez, 2006) in Brazil, Mexico City and Montevideo (Rodriguez, 2008).

A recent work by Rodriguez (2008) discusses in detail the empirical trends of SRS in four major cities and examines the relationship between these tendencies and migration, particularly intra-metropolitan migration. Although the results involved only four of out of the 40 "millionaire" cities in the region, his conclusions suggest areas for future research and could also be applied to those used in this article. They are the following:

- The different SRS levels between cities questions the existence of a "regional pattern" in relation to SRS; notwithstanding, all cities share some characteristics such as the depopulation of the city center, rapid peripheral expansion and the precarious state of the latter;
- Dissimilar trends among cities prevents the formation of a "dominant regional path";
- The high sensibility of the estimates according to socioeconomic indicators and the measurement of SRS questions categorical statements or those based on only one attribute or procedure;
- The variable effects of migration on SRS – measured by new and elegant techniques – weakens general hypotheses on this relationship

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This research is aimed at evaluating the tendencies of urbanization and the structuring of city systems in Latin America, as well as analyzing the elements of one of its main components, the internal migration. The final goal is to update the perspectives on these matters, which sometimes rely on outdated evidence.

Relatively recent figures confirm - which are also useful for the comparison of countries - that high urbanization level is an unquestionable fact in the region, although the process takes place differently in each country, both in intensity and form. It is shown how in the last 40 years, Latin America has suffered huge transformations, not only in the spatial reallocation of the population between the country side and the city, but also between cities and regions. These transformations were expressed in the consolidation of metropolitization (one out of three Latin Americans live in a city of 1 million or more inhabitants) showing complexity and diversification of the urban network. As a result, the continuous pull of big cities is parallel to higher dynamism in intermediate cities, which explains the current reduction of primacy in most countries.

The process of urbanization and the diversification of the city systems led to the predominance of migration between cities (over the historical countryside to city flow), and to a growing heterogeneity of such processes, highlighting the flows coming from the big cities heading to suburbs, nearby places, or more distant cities.

The 1990's and 2000's have been underlined by important structural changes in LA, such as the incorporation of domestic economies to the world's economy and public programs aiming at reducing poverty level thus, improving infrastructure and economic recuperation compared to the tough 1980's. Although, recuperation has presented oscillations and has not yet reduced inequality, it has allowed for increase of investment levels, promoting a physical expansion of cities faster than its demographic growth. In light of such transformation, a lot of discussions on the deconcentration and demetropolitization hypoteses have taken place. The data analyzed show a moderate trend in this direction, more significant in some countries than others, where the main cities lose significance with regard to the other cities, not subject to the counter-urbanization process itself. Consequently, this deconcentration process strengthens the city system, although it is deemed to be partial and moderate. Thus, there are legitimate doubts on its sustainability, and according to our conclusions, it is far from becoming a threat to the protagonism of large urban agglomerations.

The data clearly confirms that, despite the reduced growth of metropolitan areas they still concentrated a significant fraction of the population in most of Latin American countries. That is why we also find a concentration of major social, economic and demographic problems (and challenges) of the region.

Due to the continuing relevance of metropolitan areas, some of their phenomena become priority matters. Among them, the following: their intense physical expansion; the socio-economic residential segregation, related to the acute and persistent social inequalities of the countries in the region; the processes of metropolitan restructuring; and certain public policies (housing for instance). Based on three examples of metropolitan areas in Chile, Mexico and Brazil, it is proved, that constant physical expansion (even higher than its moderate demographic growth) is the result of the outflow of mainly poor families coming from the central

or pseudo-central areas to the outskirts of cities. The key problem of this horizontal expansion seems far more serious than the experience obtained from the main cities' suburbs in the United States, because in Latin American cities it takes place in a context of inadequate infrastructure and poor finances. Hence, the demographic growth of faraway counties or municipalities, with less accessibility and infrastructure, aggravates the impacts of poverty in Latin American cities, which is predominantly peripheral.

Such effects, briefly covered in this paper, question the lack of an integrated vision in planning and governing cities. As clearly stated in the arguments, it is true that socioeconomic residential segregation has different features and distinctions from country to country; however, this phenomenon is found in all of them. As such it should be addressed not only with research that explore its causes and effects, but also, and most importantly, with concrete actions towards its reduction. To let the city be structured on market requirements (especially real estate market) would definitely not contribute to the achievement of more just, sustainable and productive cities. The action of the state, citizen participation, regulations aiming at reducing inequalities in living standard and the coordination of local authorities, are crucial components to the welfare of metropolitan population.

The study of urbanization of Latin America requires more than recognizing the diversity of situations, ranges and consequences of population concentration in the cities. We should also be aware that becoming a more urbanized region will make the upcoming challenges more complex for the cities, particularly in the labor market, public services and infrastructure. A vision based on updated and systematic evidence, as well as, rigorous and integrated analysis is needed to face these challenges. This is still not enough; political will is also needed, since the problems associated with governability, social and environmental precariousness, and metropolitan insecurity and segregation, requires integrated policies and programs, specific state interventions, coordination of local authorities, public-private association, and the citizen participation. Researchers can promote all of this, however, politicians and the civil society shall be held responsible to materialize it.

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