

## Settlement System

The settlement pattern of Ukraine has evolved over a long period of time under distinct physico-geographical, political, cultural and economic conditions, and due to the expansive size of the country it shows marked regional differences. On the eve of the 2001 census, Ukraine's settlement system comprised of 454 cities and towns, 889 settlements of urban type and 28,619 rural settlements (*Figure 44*). The corresponding figures for January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007: 458 cities and towns, 886 settlements of an urban type and 28,540 villages, the data showing a slight decrease in the number of rural settlements with the simultaneous stagnation of town development. A majority of the population ( $\approx 68\%$ ) were urban dwellers on both dates. The unexpectedly high urban ratio is the outcome of urbanisation having taken place during the Socialist era, mainly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Before World War I, the overwhelming majority of Ukraine's population lived in villages. The share of the urban populace was a mere 13% in 1913, which increased gradually to 34% by the eve of World War II. Due to large scale industrial development and subsequent rural-urban migration in the 1950s, the ratio of the urban population had already reached 50% by 1963. However, the real peak of urban development was during the 1960s and 1970s when the number of urban inhabitants grew by half a million people annually. The population of Kyiv doubled between 1959 and 1979, and this was the period when several cities reached the one million inhabitant threshold (Odesa, Donetsk, Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovs'k). The total number of urban inhabitants reached its historical peak with 34.8 million at the time of the 1989 census, and since then it has been decreasing. In 2001 the number of urban population was less by 2.3 million than in 1989. Despite this massive decline, the urban/rural ratio of the country did not change considerably between the last two censuses, because the simultaneous population decrease in rural settlements was even greater, due to natural loss and permanent outward migration.

**Historical development.** The first city-states on the present-day territory of Ukraine

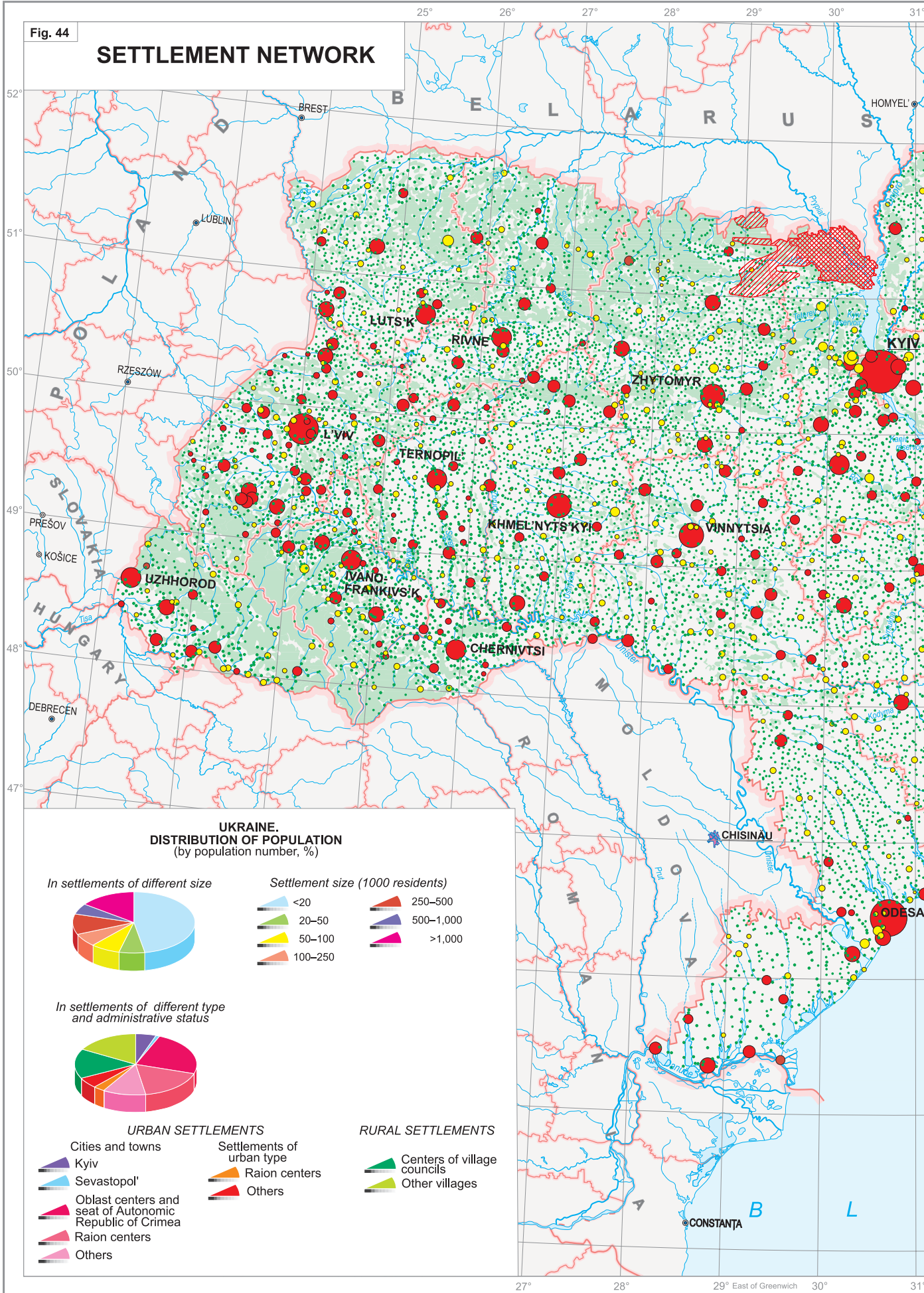
were founded by the Greeks on the northern coast of the Black Sea in the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. These were ancient city-states: Tyras on the Dnister river, Olbia on the Buh, Chersonesus next to present-day Sevastopol', and Panticapaeum (later it became seat of the Bosporan Kingdom) where Kerch is now located. Their inhabitants were Greeks and people from local tribes: Scythians, Sarmatians and Taurians.

There are several modern towns with ancient roots: Feodosiia and Yevpatoriia (founded in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.), Kerch (4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) and Sudak (2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.). Old centres, which emerged between the 5–9<sup>th</sup> centuries are Kiev (Kyiv), Chernihiv and Zhytomyr. In the 9–10<sup>th</sup> centuries there were 24 urban settlements in Kievan Rus'. By the 10–12<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the development of Kievan Rus' 200 urban settlements had emerged. Some of them were fortresses and seats of principalities: Bila Tserkva, Bohuslav, Vasyly'kyv, Vyshhorod, Hlukhiv, Kaniv, Korosten', Korsun', Nizhyn, Novhorod-Sivers'kyi, Ovruch, Pereiaslav, Putyvl', Lubny, Poltava, Pryluky, Radomyshl', Romny, Chornobyl', etc. At the same time some of them (Kyiv, Chernihiv, Pereiaslav, Volodymyr-Volyns'kyi, etc.) became large political and economic centres of that state.

There was intense urban construction during the period when the Principality of Galych-Volhynia was flourishing. In Galych; L'viv, Kremenets' and Sambir were established at that time and developed rapidly, whilst the same occurred in Transcarpathia (before 1919, part of north-east Hungary) with Mukacheve and Khust. The foundation of towns during the Lithuanian period (mid-14<sup>th</sup> – late 15<sup>th</sup> centuries) served the dual purposes of defence and the colonisation of Ukrainian lands. Fortified towns were built everywhere, down to the Black Sea coast, and fortresses were erected in many urban settlements of Galych, Volhynia, Podillia and Transcarpathia (north-east Hungary). In the period between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Ukraine experienced frequent assaults and attacks from Crimean Tartars and Turks, resulting in little urban construction

Fig. 44

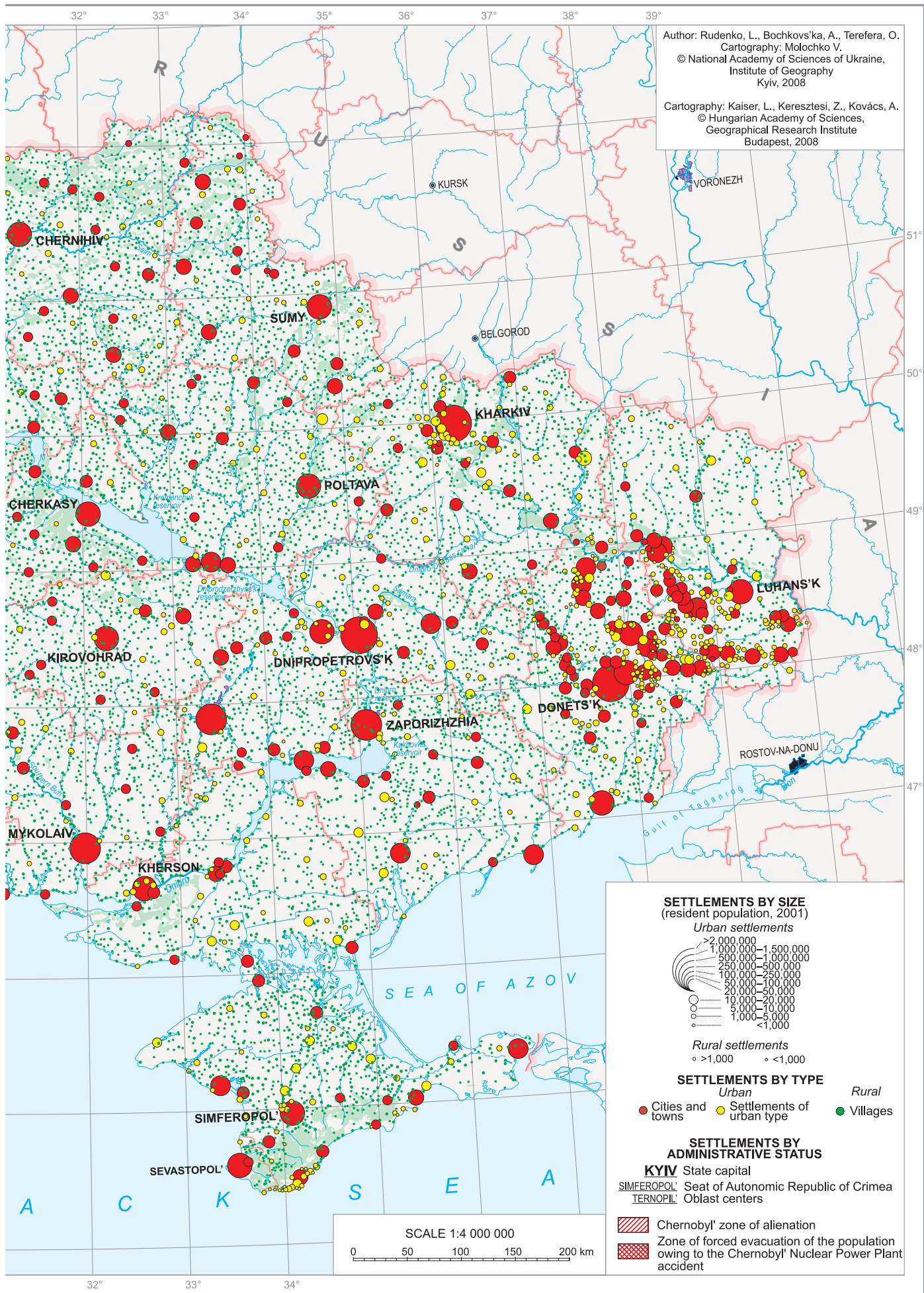
# SETTLEMENT NETWORK





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**SETTLEMENTS BY SIZE**  
 (resident population, 2001)

- Urban settlements**
- >2,000,000
  - 1,000,000-1,500,000
  - 500,000-1,000,000
  - 250,000-500,000
  - 100,000-250,000
  - 50,000-100,000
  - 20,000-50,000
  - 10,000-20,000
  - 5,000-10,000
  - 1,000-5,000
  - <1,000

- Rural settlements**
- o >1,000
  - o <1,000

- SETTLEMENTS BY TYPE**
- Urban
  - Rural
  - Cities and towns
  - Settlements of urban type
  - Villages

- SETTLEMENTS BY ADMINISTRATIVE STATUS**
- KYIV** State capital
  - SIMFEROPOL** Seat of Autonomous Republic of Crimea
  - TERNOPIL** Oblast centers

- Chernobyl' zone of alienation
- Zone of forced evacuation of the population owing to the Chernobyl' Nuclear Power Plant accident

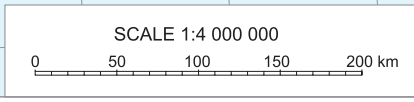
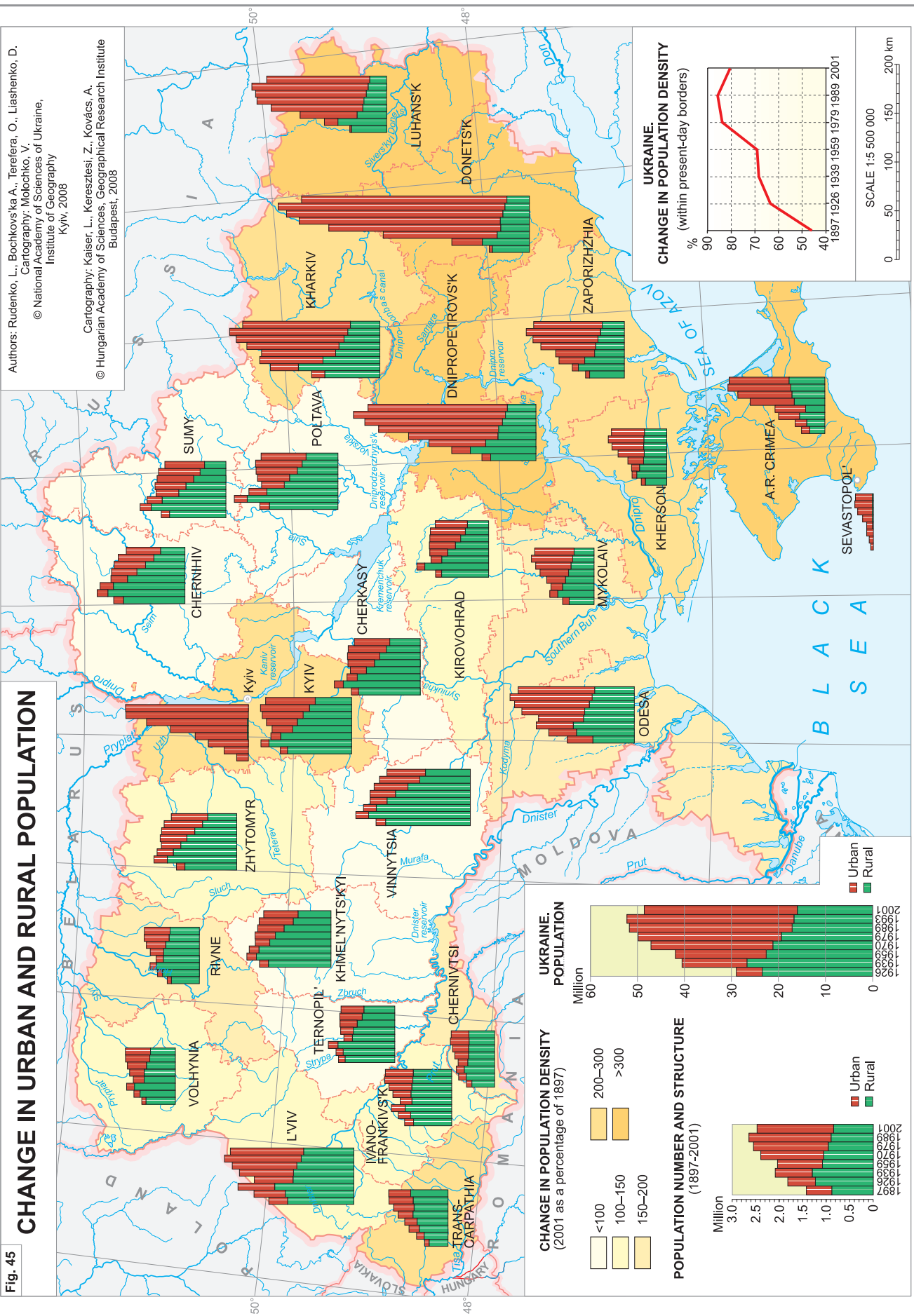


Fig. 45

# CHANGE IN URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION

Authors: Rudenko, L., Bochkovska A., Terferka, O., Liashenko, D.  
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taking place. A revival came with the period of Cossack Hetmanate, when towns became the hubs of economic, cultural and religious life. By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century there were about 1,000 urban settlements of varying size in the present-day territory of Ukraine. The majority of them, predominantly those in the western lands, had Magdeburg rights.

Starting with the mid-17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the first towns appeared in Slobozhanshina ("Free Ukraine"), the Russian-Ukrainian borderland. Kharkiv, Okhtyrka, Sumy and Iziur emerged as garrison settlements. Following the Russian annexation of the Black Sea coast and Crimea (1774–1791), at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century port cities were established along the Black Sea which became the main hubs of the Russian Black Sea Fleet – e.g. Mariupol' (1776), Sevastopol' (1784) and Odessa (1795). Despite the first major wave of urbanisation having taken place, the number of towns in the inner part of present-day Ukraine (i.e. the steppe zone) remained relatively low. This belt was predominantly characterised by the fortified settlements of the Cossacks, which were in fact large villages (*stanica*) with a regular street layout, resembling the Roman *castrum*. This pattern did not change until industrialisation and thus, modern urbanisation only began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (*Figure 45*).

A considerable amount of urban settlements (ca 150) appeared in the 18–19<sup>th</sup> centuries, emerged with the colonisation of the southern and eastern steppes or were associated with the early industrial development of these areas. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the imposed Soviet regime intervened in the development of the settlement system particularly strongly. Settlement development was subordinated to industrial policy and cities were considered to be the only places suitable for industrial development. A large number of new socialist (Soviet) cities were developed from the 1930s but, in particular following World War II, and they were designated for particular industrial activities. The larger ones were based on iron and steel (Dniprodzerzhyns'k, Horlivka, Makiivka and Alchevs'k) and non-ferrous metal production (Kostyantynivka), or machinery industry (Kramators'k). The smaller ones were built to act as housing estates adjacent to industrial plants, for instance next to power stations (Enerhodar, Yuzhnoukrains'k) or coal mines (Krasnyi Luch, Antratsyt) in the Donetsk

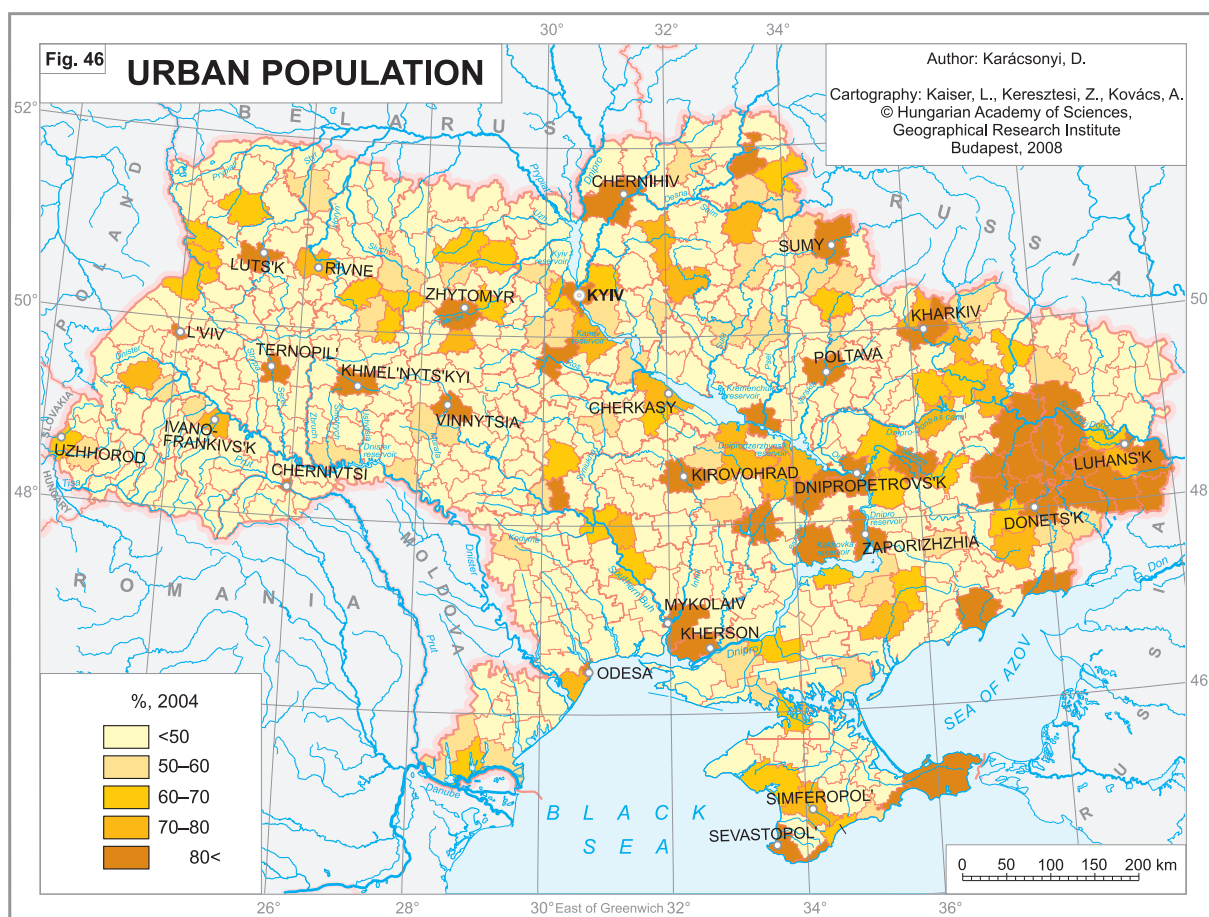
Basin. As a consequence of state policy intervention, 160 settlements were awarded an urban status after World War II, most of them being the product of socialist industrialisation.

**Urban system.** Today over two-thirds of the population of Ukraine lives in an urban environment. However the national urban ratio (68.2%) betrays huge regional differences in urbanisation (*Figure 46*). Across the country, the level of urbanisation, the density of cities, as well as the ratio of the urban population are entirely different. The highest levels of urbanisation can be found in Donetsk (90%), Luhans'k (86%) and Dnipropetrovs'k (83%) oblasts. Three quarters of the most urbanised (80% and higher) raions are located in the south-east. Nearly all of them are dominated by large centres of heavy industry or major sea ports (such as Odesa, Kherson, Mykolaiv or Mariupol'). In the north-western part of the country, highly urbanised raions are almost exclusively found in the southern part of Polissia (including the agglomeration of Kyiv), and at the edge of the Carpathians.

From a geographical point of view, north-western Ukraine reflects the urban ratios found in south-east Europe (e.g. Romania and Serbia), whereas south-eastern Ukraine highly resembles the particularly urbanised countries of western Europe. This duality in the pattern of urbanisation is the outcome of 20<sup>th</sup> century industrialisation, and the spatial distribution of industry within the country.

According to legal definitions, urban localities include towns and settlements of urban type. In 2001 there were 454 towns in Ukraine and the urban stock varies greatly with the size and administrative function of cities. Kyiv, as the national capital and Sevastopol' as the country's most important naval base enjoy the same administrative status as an oblast. Another 174 urban centres had raion status in 2001 (by 2007 this had reached 179), predominantly the most populous ones, and there are a further 490 ordinary urban settlements.

These days the largest Ukrainian urban centres (with more than 500 thousand inhabitants) are multi-functional hubs with political, cultural and administrative functions, are economically well developed and have an extensive industrial and social infrastructure (*Table 11*). Although only 9 cities in total fall into this category, 31% of the urban population resides in these cities. The overwhelming majority



*Table 11. Distribution of urban settlements according to size (2001)*

Urban settlements	Number of settlements	Distribution by population number (thousand persons)								
		< 3	3-5	5-10	10-20	20-50	50-100	100-500	500-1,000	1,000 <
Settlements of urban type	889	336	209	284	58	2	-	-	-	-
Towns and cities	454	5	88	667	158	113	56	37	4	-

Source: Census 2001

of large cities are located in the highly urbanised south-eastern part of the country (exceptions are Kyiv and L'viv). A typical feature from the last two decades has been a population decline in large cities, mainly owing to outward migration and a natural decrease, which began to affect the whole country after 1991 (Table 12). The only exception has been the city of Kyiv, which has experienced a modest population increase, even after the 2001 census. The city recorded 2,721,000 inhabitants as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. This growth has been mainly due to new trends of internal migration within the country.

Cities with inhabitants of between 100 and 500 thousand concentrate 26% of Ukraine's

urban population. Their number (37) slightly decreased between 1989 and 2001. Typically more than half of them are oblast seats, with strong administrative functions, whereas the rest are multifunctional centres, generally with industry as the main profile. Urban settlements of between 50 to 100 thousand inhabitants as a rule are administrative seats of districts, with mono-functional profiles in e.g. industry, transport or tourism. 11% of the country's urban population are residents of this type of town.

The most numerous are the cluster of small towns (up to 50 thousand inhabitants), where 19% of the urban population resides. These towns play an important role in shaping



Table 12. *Largest urban centres of Ukraine (1959, 1989, 2001)*

Cities 1959	Thousand inhabitants	Cities 1989	Thousand inhabitants	Cities 2001	Thousand inhabitants
Kyiv	1,102	Kyiv	2,595	Kyiv	2,611
Kharkiv	953	Kharkiv	1,610	Kharkiv	1,470
Stalino (Donets'k)	701	Dnipropetrovs'k	1,178	Dnipropetrovs'k	1,065
Odesa	667	Odesa	1,115	Odesa	1,029
Dnipropetrovs'k	661	Donets'k	1,113	Donets'k	1,016
Zaporizhzhia	435	Zaporizhzhia	884	Zaporizhzhia	814
L'viv	411	L'viv	791	L'viv	733
Kryvyi Rih	386	Kryvyi Rih	726	Kryvyi Rih	669
Makiivka	358	Mariupol'	509	Mykolaiv	514
Horlivka	293	Mykolaiv	524	Mariupol'	492
Zhdanov (Mariupol')	284	Luhans'k	497	Luhans'k	463
Luhans'k	274	Makiivka	425	Makiivka	390
Mykolaiv	224	Vinnytsia	374	Vinnytsia	357
Dniprodzerzhyns'k	194	Sevastopol'	356	Simferopol'	343
Simferopol'	189	Kherson	355	Sevastopol'	342
Kherson	157	Simferopol'	344	Kherson	328
Sevastopol'	148	Horlivka	338	Poltava	318
Chernivtsi	145	Poltava	315	Chernihiv	305
Poltava	141	Chernihiv	296	Cherkasy	295
Kirovohrad	127	Zhytomyr	292	Sumy	293
Kadiivka (Stakhanov)	123	Sumy	291	Horlivka	292
Vinnytsia	121	Cherkasy	290	Zhytomyr	284
Kramators'k	115	Dniprodzerzhyns'k	282	Dniprodzerzhyns'k	256
Zhytomyr	105	Kirovohrad	270	Khmel'nyts'kyi	254
Lysychans'k	104	Chernivtsi	257	Kirovohrad	254

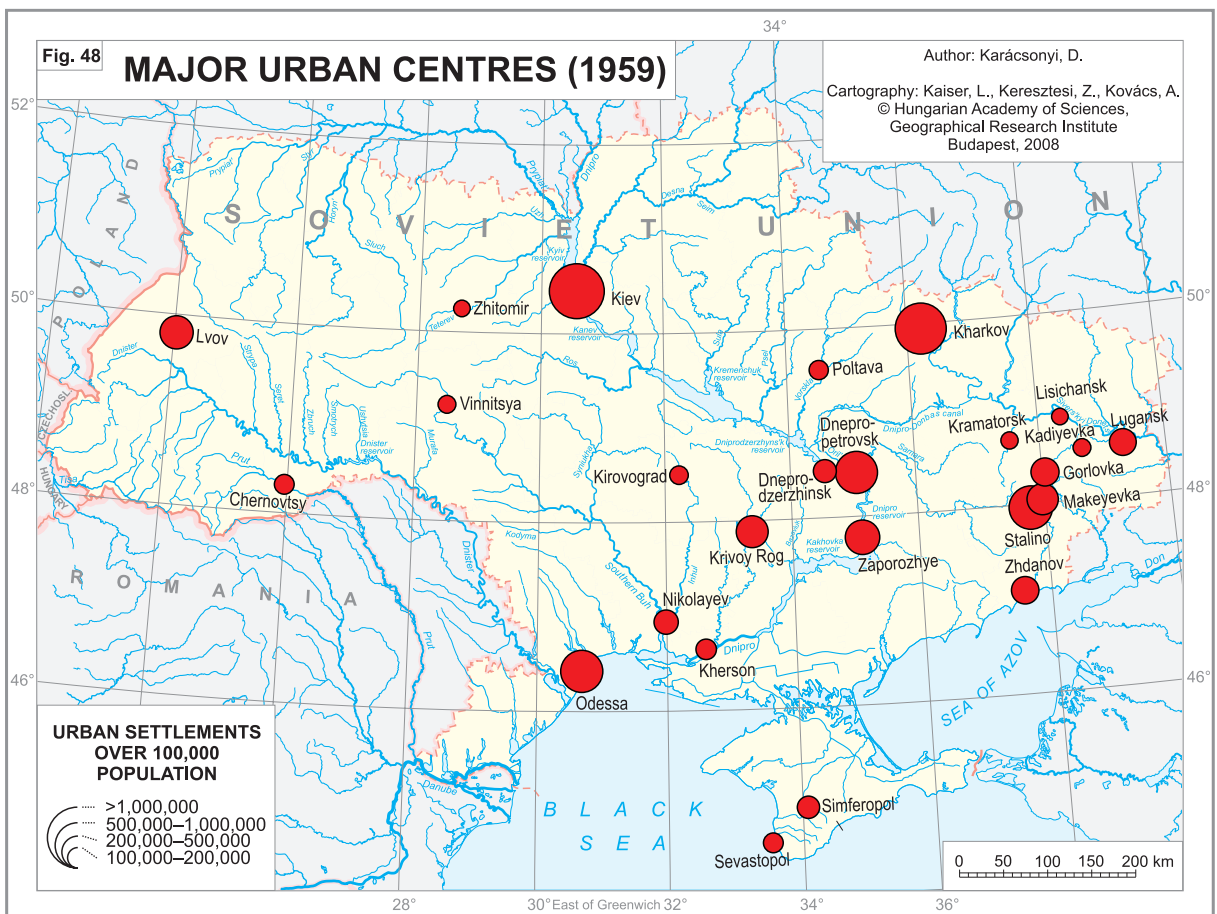
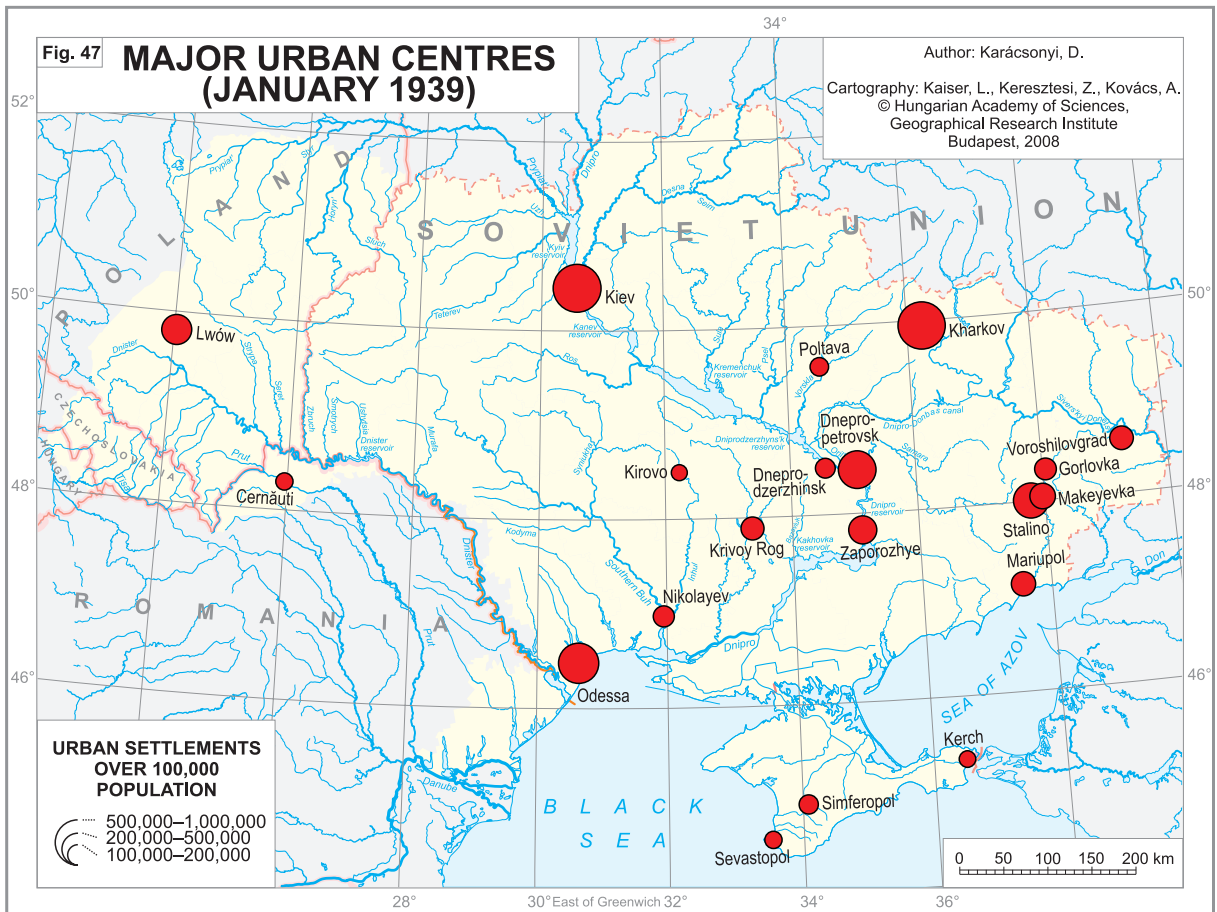
Source: Census data 1959, 1989, 2001  
www.ukrcensus.gov.ua.

the settlement network, and accommodating the labour force of the country. Almost half of them are administrative, organisational-economic and cultural-commercial centres with a local importance. Around a quarter of them are monofunctional towns with agro-industrial or purely industrial profiles. Small and medium sized cities are characteristic elements of the settlement system of north-western Ukraine, whereas in the eastern and southern parts of the country, large cities of over 100 thousand inhabitants prevail (Figure 47, 48, 49). Until 1959 the overwhelming majority of large cities in Ukraine were concentrated almost exclusively in the south-eastern part of the country. Since then, the spatial distribution of these cities has become more even owing to fast population growth in some of the administrative centres in central Ukraine (e.g. Rivne, Luts'k, Khmel'nyts'kyi and Ternopil'). Despite this

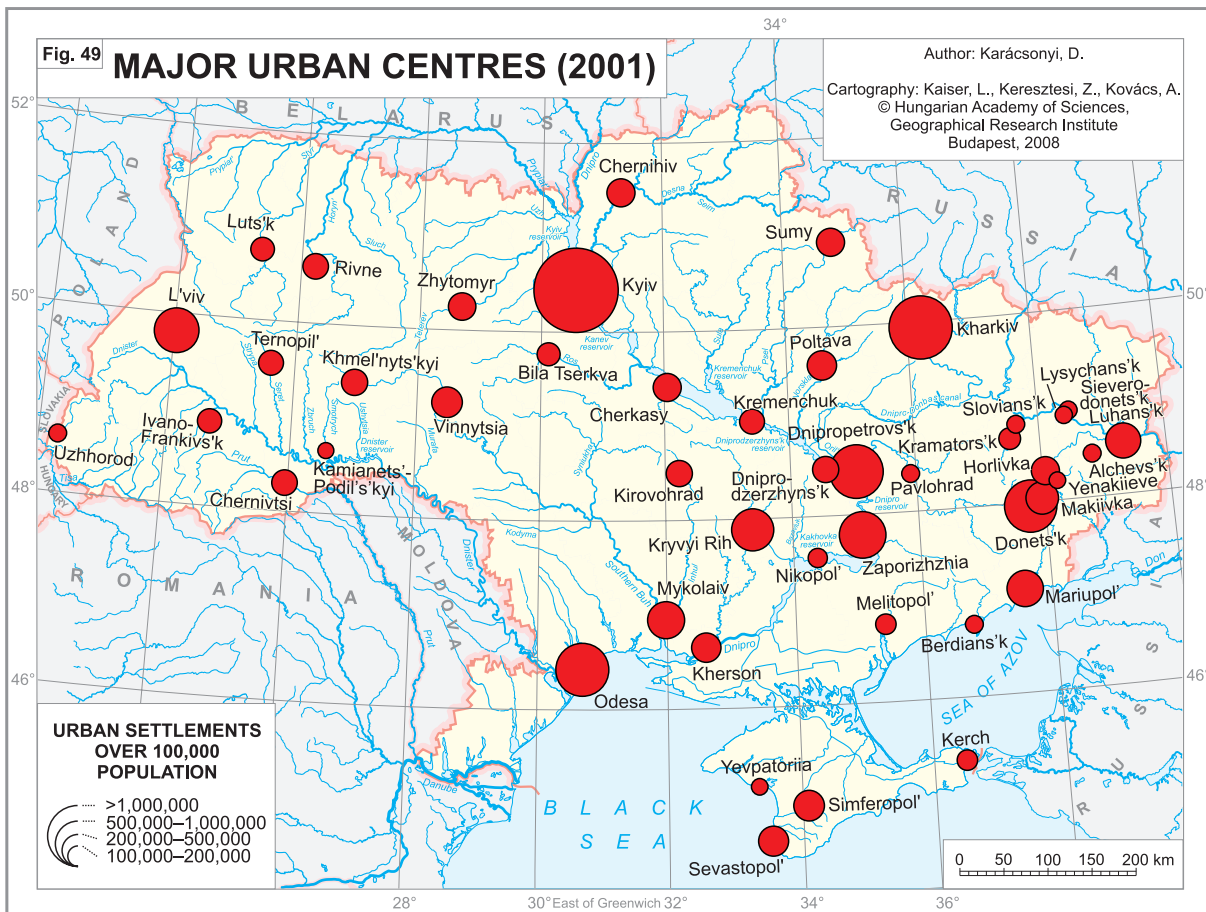
trend, the regional pattern of large urban centres has remained fairly stable over time.

The present-day classification of cities has a specific group called, 'settlements of urban type'. As is similar the case in other post-Soviet countries, they represent a transitory form of settlement in-between a village and a small town. In 2001 there were 889 settlements of an urban type in Ukraine, accommodating 13% of the total urban population. Their number has been continuously decreasing since 1989 when the same figure was 926. Most of them (ca. 30%) are concentrated in Donets'k and Luhans'k oblasts. The majority of the active workforce living in settlements in the vicinity of large urban centres commute into these big settlements on a daily basis.

Settlements of differing type and population size, together with large cities form specific groups, called urban agglomerations, of which







40% of the population are inhabitants. The most populous are those that have developed around Kyiv, Donets'k, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovs'k and Odesa, which have a particularly high density of different settlements and total population.

**Rural settlements.** Ukraine's present-day rural settlement network started to take shape in the 18–19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Until then, the population was scattered between fortified feudal estates, Cossack slobodas (landed holdings) and farmsteads. The network of scattered farmsteads and small villages gradually vanished from Ukraine as a consequence of multiple factors. First came the liquidation of the kulaks as a social class in the 1930s (relatively wealthy peasants using employed labour) and the subsequent famine, later the elimination of villages claimed to have become non-viable in the 1960–70s, parallel with extensive urbanisation.

According to the census of 2001, Ukrainian rural settlements included 28,619 villages of varying population size and functional type (Table 13). At that time 167 of them were uninhabited. By 2007 the number of villages had slightly decreased to 28,540, mostly due to un-

inhabited settlements being removed from the statistics. Classification by population number divides the villages of Ukraine into: small villages (up to 500 inhabitants), medium sized (500 to 1,000) and large (over 1,000 persons) ones. The average size of villages was 558 inhabitants in 2001. From 1989 the total population of large villages decreased, whereas that of the smallest settlements (below 100 inhabitants) increased. According to the first population census conducted in Ukraine as an independent state (in 2001) the most numerous group of villages were the so-called tiny villages; ca 20% of Ukrainian villages had less than 100 inhabitants at that time. Even there are around 3,600 villages in the country with less than 50 inhabitants. Altogether, 80 thousand people live in such tiny villages.

Regional disparities within the rural settlement network stem from history, natural factors and socio-economic conditions. In Polissia, with its mosaic pattern of farm holdings, and also in north-eastern and eastern urbanised areas, small sized villages prevail. In the forest steppe zone, with its high population density, villages tend to be of a medium size and the

Table 13. *Distribution of rural settlements according to size (2001)*

Total number of rural settlements	Distribution by population number										
	Uninhabited	< 26	26–50	51–100	101–200	201–500	501–1,000	1,001–2,000	2,001–3,000	3,001–5,000	5,000 <
28,619	167	1,867	1,693	2,795	4,185	7,421	6,034	3,194	759	410	94

Source: Census 2001

pattern also becomes denser, whilst in the steppe the network conversely becomes thinner. The largest villages can be found in the Carpathian and Transcarpathian regions where many are located in the mountain environment. There are 228 rural settlements in L'viv oblast, 272 in Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast and 79 in Chernivtsi oblast. The average density of the rural settlement pattern in Ukraine comes to ca 50 settlements per 10 thousand square km. A maximum density is reached in Podillia, whilst the minimum is recorded in the southern and eastern, more urbanised regions of the country.

The functional type of rural settlements is less variable than that of urban settlements.

Most of the villages retain a traditional agricultural profile, whilst some of them possess organisational and administrative functions (village councils, or "rada" are to be found in 10,279 rural settlements). Larger villages often accommodate farming centres belonging to large-scale agricultural businesses which are predominantly of local importance. Most villages have been badly affected by significant ageing of the population and outward migration. Different forms of suburbanisation (of population, services, etc.), specific urban–rural migration and a subsequent rejuvenation of villages (in particular around larger cities) are virtually unknown in Ukraine.