The Retrospect and Future of Regional and Urban Statistics in China

Huang Langhui
Director-General
International Statistical Information Center (ISIC)
National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
People’s Republic of China
30 August 2006, Wroclaw, Poland
I. Congratulation and Acknowledgement
I-1 Warm congratulations on the fiftieth anniversary of SCORUS Conference.

I-2 The fiftieth anniversary adds to joyous atmosphere and special meaning of this 25th conference.
I-3 Close association between urban development and regional development

- Modern city--a fruitage of high development of socio-economy and history.
• Modern city, a center of regional developments.
  - Society
  - Economy
  - Scientific innovation
  - Culture
  - Education
I-4 Important role of the SCORUS
• Impelling and supporting government’s statistics and research.
• Supplying basis for government policy-making on regional and urban development.
• Promoting coordinated and sustained development, of urban area and region.
I-5 Benefit for Regional and Urban statistics in China gained from SCORUS.

• strengthened association with SCORUS.
• promoted domestic academic research and statistical practice.
II. Regional and Urban Development Statistics in China
II-1 China’s Regional and Urban Development in Recent 50 Years

1. In 1956
   - about 160 cities
   - urbanization rate was only about 7%
   - far behind of the world level
2. In 2004

- 661 cities: 287 prefectural and superior cities and 387 county-level cities.
- small towns more than 20,000.
3. Obvions Changes

• Total number of cities had increased by 3 times.

• Urbanization rate in 2004 was 41.8%, which had increased by 5 times.
II-2 Important Effect of Urbanization to the Development of Regional and National Economy

1. In 1956
   - urbanization rate was only 7%.
   - lower level of GDP in the World.
2. In 2004

- urbanization rate had increased to 41.8%.
- total GDP was about 2,000 billion USD, ranking the 6th place in the world.
4. Urbanization--an unavoidable developing trend in China’s modernization progress.

- an important platform in current construction of Xiaokang Society and harmonious society in China.
III. Regional and Urban Statistics and Research in China
1. The first urban survey in 1962: collected basic data of 39 main cities among nearly 200 cities.

2. In 1972: investigation of basic information on all about 180 cities.

3. In 1979: improved so that nationwide urban statistics system had taken initial shape.
4. Improve the system of urban statistics indicators.

- totally 220 indicators in five categories.
- formally incorporated in national statistics system.
- The urban survey organizations and statisticians in National Bureau of Statistics and 31 provinces as well as 200 large and medium cities.
5. Publish *Urban Statistical Yearbook* and *Statistical Yearbook for Yangtse Delta, Pearl River Delta and Hong Kong and Macau SAR* on a yearly basis.
6. Conduct statistical research and economic analysis on a big scale

- Organize *Forum on Delta Economic Development*.

- Research on statistics and analysis for China’s east, central and west parts.
A. East Part (10): Beijing, Tianjin, Liaoning, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shandong, Guangdong and Hainan.

B. Central Part (9): Jilin, Heilongjiang, Hebei, Shanxi, Anhui, Jiangxi, Henan, Hubei and Hunan.

C. West Part (12): Inner Mongolia, Chongqing, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Tibet, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, Xinjiang and Guangxi.
• Comparison of comprehensive strength among 280 prefectural and superior cities are organized in terms of 52 main indicators of the 5 categories,

• Attracted great attention of Central Government and local governments at all levels.

• In recent years, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has conducted research on competitiveness of 200 cities and published research results, which have been popularly concerned.
• Lots of social academic organizations relating to correlative regional and urban economic statistics were set up from the Central Government to the local governments.

• Economic Analysis, e.g.:
  - Chinese Urban Development Report (Annual),
  - Comparison on Economic Development in East, Central and West Parts of China,
  - Comparison on Urban Development of East, Central and West Parts of China,
  - Urbanization Research,
  - Research on Urban Poverty,
  - Research on Urban Floating People,
  - Comparison on Urbanization Progress between Home and Abroad.

Many research results have been adopted as proofs for governmental decisions.
IV. Opportunities, Challenges and Prospects
IV-1 Opportunities

1. *11th Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development constituted by Central Government ensures an excellent policy environment.*

1-1 Quicken urbanization progress, comprehensively promote flourishing rural economy and integration of urban and rural development as a whole.

1-2 Gradually enhance urbanization level and insist on harmonious development of varies scopes of large, medium and small cities as well as small towns along the road of urbanization with Chinese characteristics.
1-3 Advance harmonious development on regional economy.

- Implement the strategy of West Development and strengthen supporting to the western regions.
- Promote the adjustment and reconstruction of old industrial bases like northeastern region.
• Accelerate the progress of industrialization and urbanization of central parts for earlier grown up.
• Encourage east developed regions to develop first and achieve modernization in advance
• Strengthen economic exchanges and cooperation among east, central, and west parts so as to form a number of distinctive economic zones and belts.
2. The development of China’s urbanization has a wide developing prospect. Urbanization rates in developed countries are over 80% and the average rate of urbanization all over the world is nearly 50%.

3. Regional and urban statistics of more than 40 years has set a solid basis.
IV-2 Challenges

1. Economic globalization, industrialization, informationalization and urbanization: how to confirm the ideal mode of future urban development.

2. No unified definition on division of urban and rural area in the world.

3. Statistics on population floating from rural area into urban area.

4. Inconvenience to collect urban statistics information of main international cities in the world.
IV-3 Innovation and Development

1. Further strengthen the research on the definition of division for urban and rural areas, and ratify and perfect current scheme on progress.

2. Enrich and perfect currently existing urban statistics system.

3. Strengthen statistical research on east, central and west areas and different economic zones and belts.
5. Scientific symposium on regional and urban statistics and researches.
6. Strengthen links, communications and co-operations with SCORUS and colleagues all over the world.
V. Suggestions to SCORUS
1. Suggest UNSD to organize experts to research and establish global urban statistical system (including urban and rural definition standard and indicators system) and statistical data reporting system, promulgate data and strengthen analytical research.

2. Establish statistical data transferring system among international metropolis first, especially among capitals of different countries.
• The worldwide broad market for Regional and Urban Statistics and Research.

• Developing eowr tries are eager to benefit from Urbanization.

• The bright future of The SCORUS.