

7 billion

The shape of the world's population

By **MAX RUST** | Tribune Newspapers Graphics

1804: 1 billion

1927: 2 billion

1959: 3 billion

1974: 4 billion

1987: 5 billion

1999: 6 billion

Monday, Oct. 31,

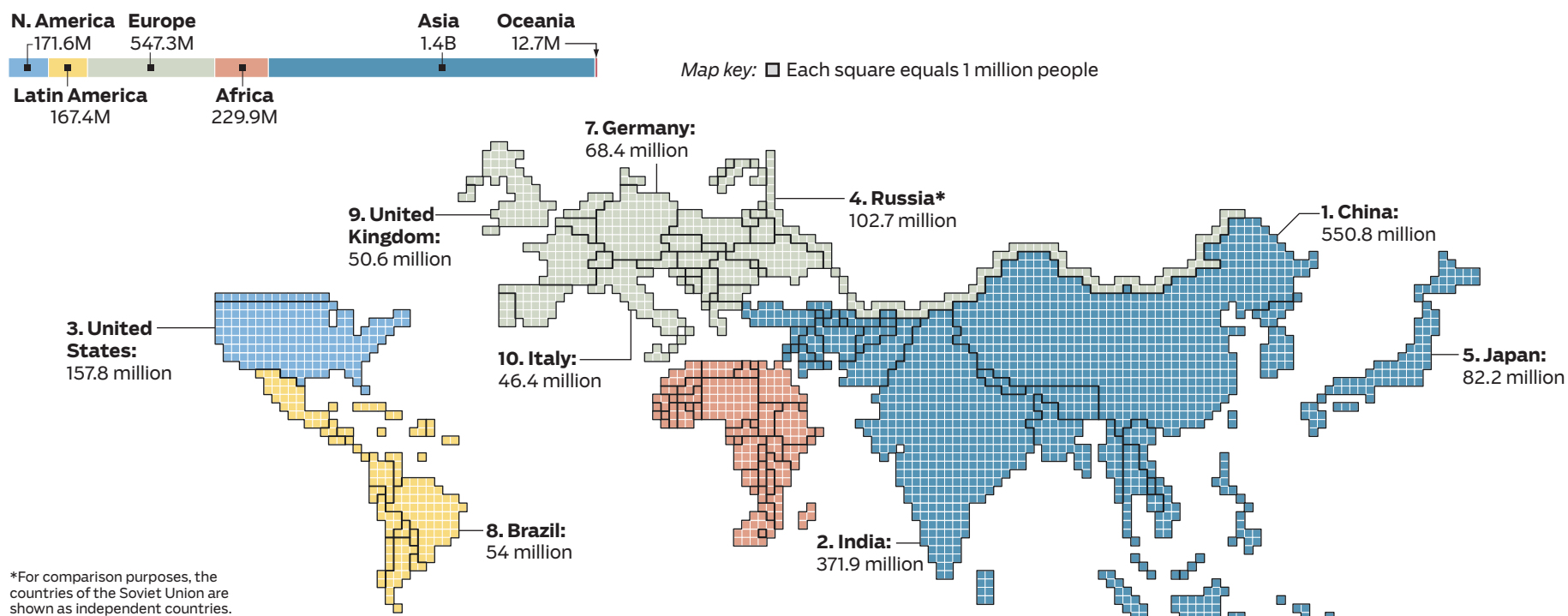
marks a milestone in the world's population when, according to U.N. demographers, the 7 billionth person on the planet will be born. Whoever this individual is and wherever he or she is born, that person will enter a population that has experienced fundamental geographic shifts from just 60 years ago, when the world was less than half its current number.

Where the world has grown

In 1950 the world's population had a much different face. Europe boasted eight of the world's 25 largest countries, a figure that would be cut in half in 60 years. During the same 60 years, Africa would become the world's second most populous region, more than tripling its head count. In the Western Hemisphere, Latin America surpassed its regional neighbor to the north. Asia, already in 1950 the world's most populous region, got even bigger.

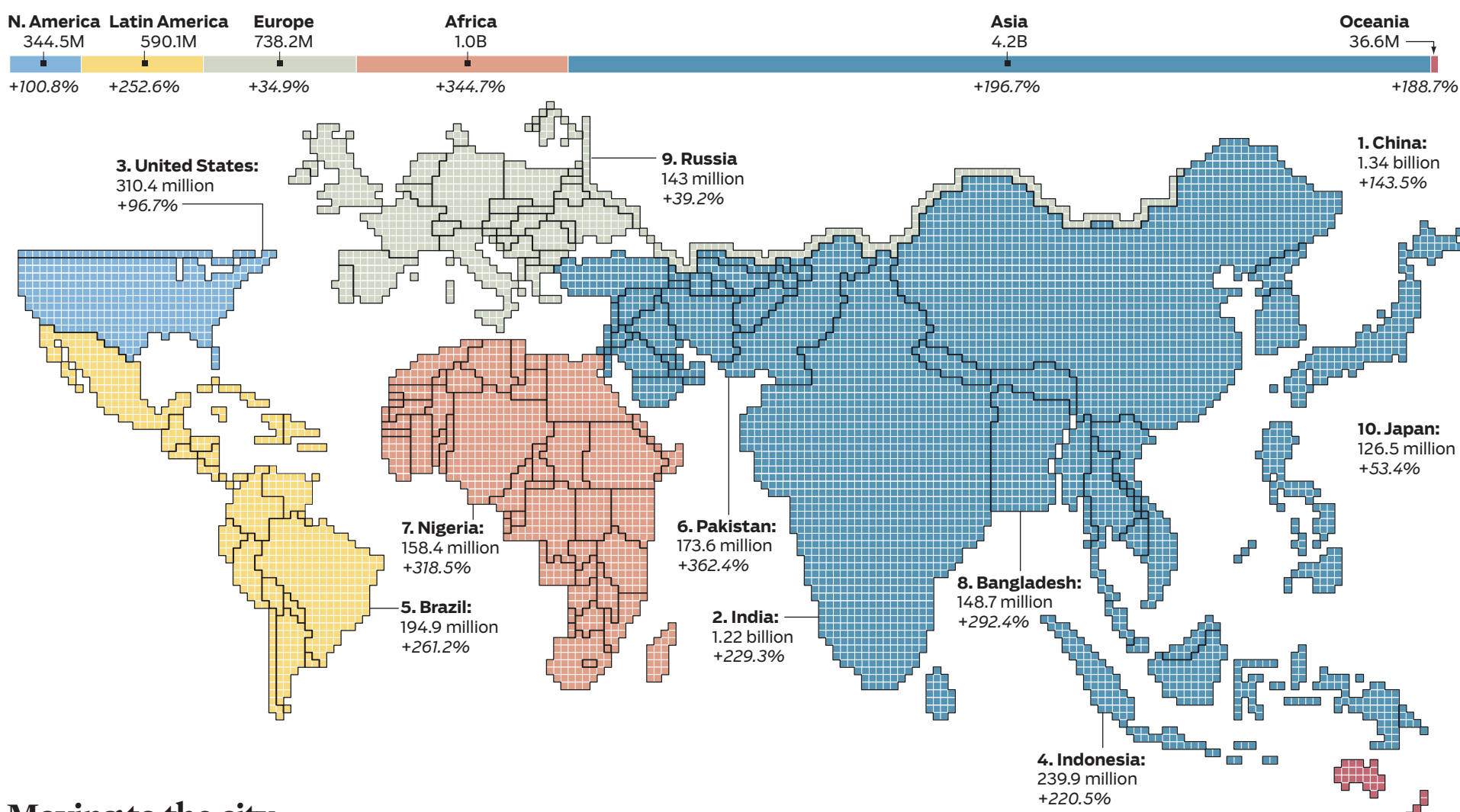
Global population in 1950 ...

By world region and country, with largest countries highlighted, countries with populations fewer than 1 million not shown



... and in 2010

With percentage change from 1950

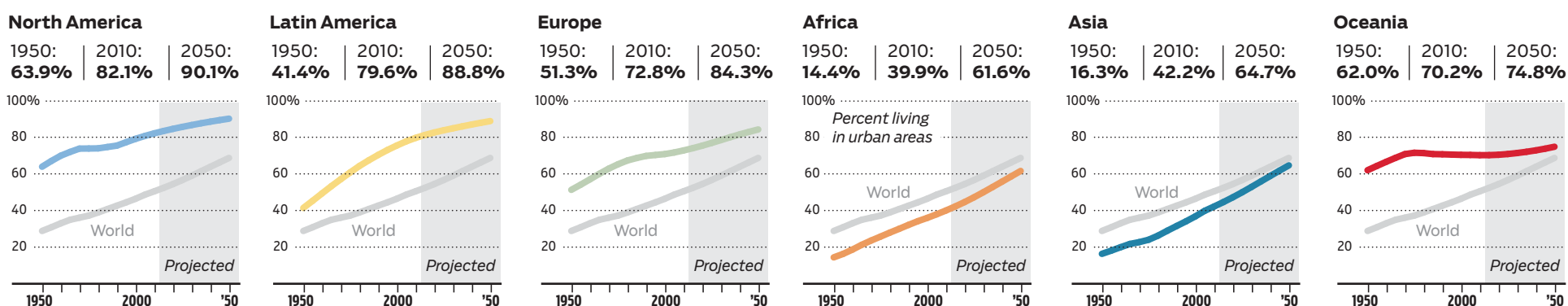
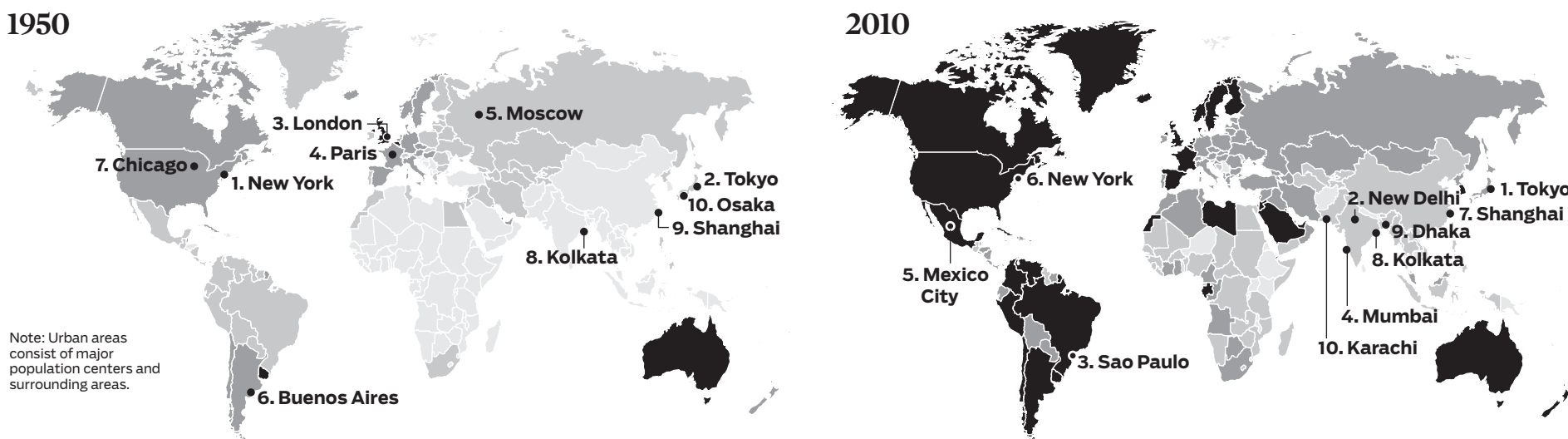


Moving to the city

In addition to increased fertility in some parts of the world and longer life spans, another factor contributing to the world population's shape-shifting is urbanization. Since 1950, more and more people have migrated to the world's cities, increasing population centers. Projections show this trend continuing in many parts of the world.

Percentage of the population living in urban areas KEY: 25% or less, 25.1%-50%, 50.1%-75%, 75.1%-100%

With 10 largest urban areas in the world



SOURCE: United Nations Population Fund

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