DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

NPC LEVELS ON TOTAL POPULATION

A demographic analysis of level and population in the nations of Mystara

(And why Alphatia doesn't make any sense)

INTRODUCTION

It is sometimes necessary to determine the maximum level of the NPCs that are living in a particular area, may it be a village, a dominion, a kingdom or a continent. It is not always easy to do so by keeping things balanced, therefore I decided to put on a practical guide to determine this data without getting too far.

This method is just based on three factors:

1 - Population of the higher levels is less than the population of the lowers ones.

2 - Characters of higher levels have higher chances to survive to monsters and adventures.

3 - Common sense.

COLLECTING DATA

The first thing I did was to check on every gazetteer and every other source I could find what was the actual population of that nation and what was the highest level of any NPC described in the volume. The proportion between total population of the nation and highest level quoted was almost always the same. Only Alphatia presented exaggerated discrepancies with the other nations.

In general, it was clearly understood that at least half of the population is not adventure-level, which I interpreted as being Normal Persons or characters of level 1.

ALPHATIA

The feeling I always had towards Alphatia is that it was introduced in the game initially only as a far away menace, something that was not meant to be really developed.

When they published *Dawn of the Emperors* it was quite clear to me that they had to reduce their take on the big Empire, to make it playable. The basic assumption that Alphatia has a parliament of 1.000 magic-users of 36th level implies that there are at least another 500 out of the parliament (because not everyone sits in the Parliament upon reaching that level), plus Clerics, Thieves, Fighters, Mystics, which altogether must be at least another 2.000, plus elves, dwarfs and halflings of the highest level, it makes up for at least 5.000 characters of the last level only, in a population of 12.5 millions, considering the whole Alphatian Empire, including Norwold, Esterhold, islands and Bellissaria. It is one character of level 36 for every 2.500 people. To get a proportion, the Principalities of Glantri, with a population around 790.000 people have as their highest level character a 35th level one.

Another great fault in Alphatia is that, if the Parliament has been made of 1.000 36th level Magic-Users for 2.000 years, it is quite weird that they only have a handful of Immortals protecting th Empire. How is it possible that among the thousands and thousands of Magic-Users between level 30 and 36 that lived in Alphatia in 2.000 years only a few have become Immortals?

Long story short, in my campaign, I reduced the minimum level required to be part of the Alphatian Parliament to 21st (which is, when you can cast 9th level spells), and the number of members to 250 (1.000 representatives for 12.500.000 people is far too many). Then, I still used the method I describe here to calculate the levels of the NPCs.

TABLE HIGHLIGHTS

First, remember that this method to count the population is based on statistics, and you may alter whatever you want to fit the setting you need. The table gives generic proportions that are better suited to nations or dominions. The smaller the region becomes, the easier it is to find differences between the numbers in the table and the real ones.

Then, keep in mind that some levels (especially when the percentage of people making them up is lower than one actual person) may be completely skipped. There is no need for a character of 10th level to be in town, if there is one of 11th.

As you can see, half of the population is split between Normal Persons and 1st level characters. Obviously, in demi-humans settlements these would all be 1st level.

Characters above level 9 are less than 10% of the total, while characters thatget over level 15 are less than 1%.

The characters of level 30 or higher, which may actually pursue Immortality, are justa a 0,0012%, and not all of them will start their search, and of them, many will fail.

NPC LEVELS IN RELATION TO THEIR LEVEL, ON ONE MILLION POPULATION.						
LEVEL	NUMBER OF NPCs	LEVEL	NUMBER OF NPCs	LEVEL	NUMBER OF NPCs
NP	250.000 (25%)				
1	250.000 (25%)	13	15.000 (1,5%)	25	30 (0,003%)
2	100.000 (10%)	14	8.000 (0,8%)	26	12 (0,0012%)
3	70.000 (7%)	15	5.000 (0,5%)	27	7 (0,0007%)
4	50.000 (5%)	16	2.500 (0,25%)	28	5 (0,0005%)
5	50.000 (5%)	17	1.600 (0,16%)	29	4 (0,0004%)
6	40.000 (4%)	18	1.100 (0,11%)	30	3 (0,0003%)
7	40.000 (4%)	19	700 (0,07%)	31	2 (0,0002%)
8	30.000 (3%)	20	500 (0,05%)	32	2 (0,0002%)
9	30.000 (3%)	21	250 (0,025%)	33	2 (0,0002%)
10	20.000 (2%)	22	125 (0,0125%)	34	1 (0,0001%)
11	20.000 (2%)	23	95 (0,0095%)	35	1 (0,0001%)
12	15.000 (1,5%)	24	60 (0,006%)	36	1 (0,0001%)