

Edexcel A Geography GCSE

Topic 4 - Changing Cities

Detailed Notes

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What is an Urban Area?

The world can be divided into **rural** and **urban** areas:



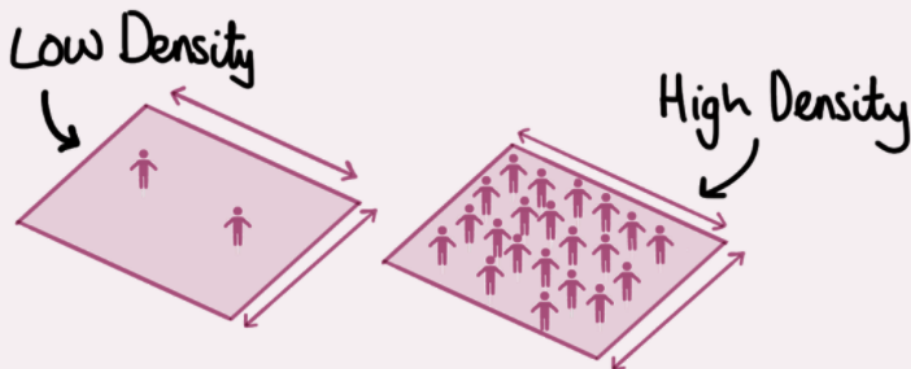
Rural areas tend to have a **small population density** and a large proportion of open, green spaces. Rural people may work in agriculture, tourism or running shops in the local village.



Urban areas tend to be towns and cities, with **large population density** and limited open, green spaces. Urban residents tend to work in offices, factories or running services in the city.

Topic Recap: Population Density

Population density is a measure of how spread out the population is. For example, for the same square of land, how many people live in each region?



Both low density and high density areas face their own problems. Regions with high population density are at more risk from disease and the large number of people living there can cause a greater pressure on resources such as internet, electricity and water. Think about how your internet speed becomes slower with more people in the house - this is the same for water supplies, food and electricity! Areas with low population densities can face similar issues with resources but the problems they face are usually due to access and the difficulty providing the resources to remote locations.



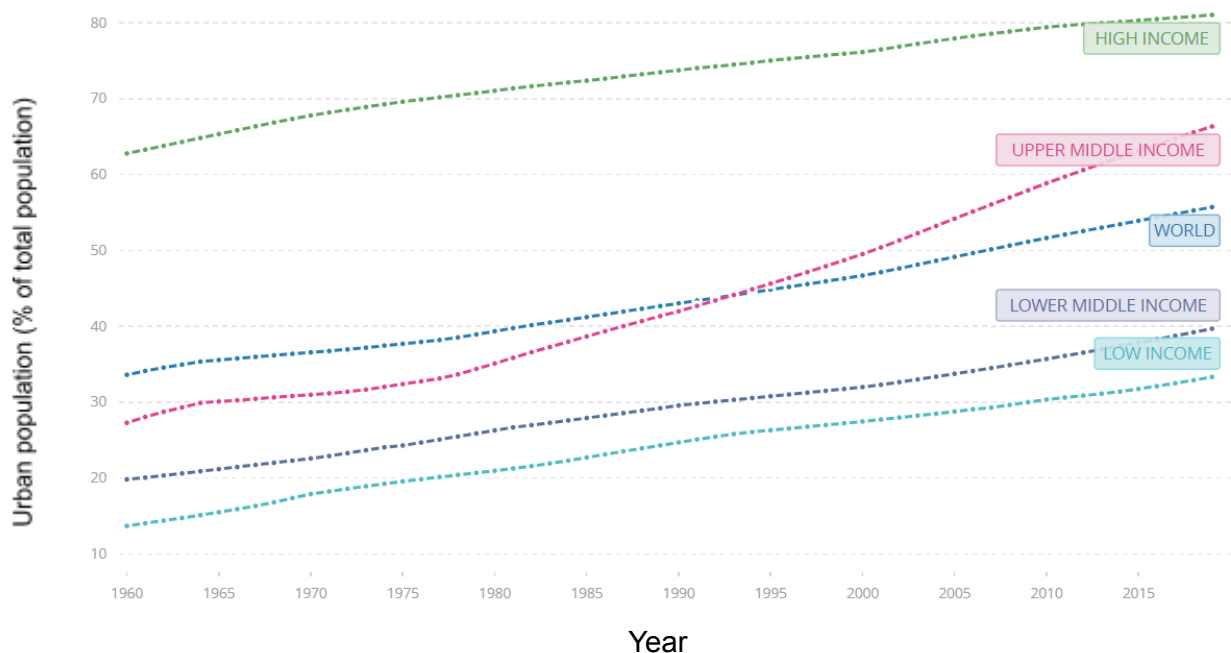
Global Trends in Urbanisation

Urbanisation is defined as the **increase of the proportion of people moving to urban areas**.

On a global scale, there are more people living in **urban** areas than **rural** areas.

- **55% of people live in urban areas** which is a 25% increase from 1950.
- Urban populations are expected to increase even more by 2050 to 68%.
- Since 1950, the world's **urban population** has increased from **750 million people to 4.2 billion**. More urbanisation statistics and information can be explored [here](https://population.un.org/wup/) (<https://population.un.org/wup/>)
- Usually, the proportion of those living in urban areas is higher in HICs than LICs.

Urban population in different countries

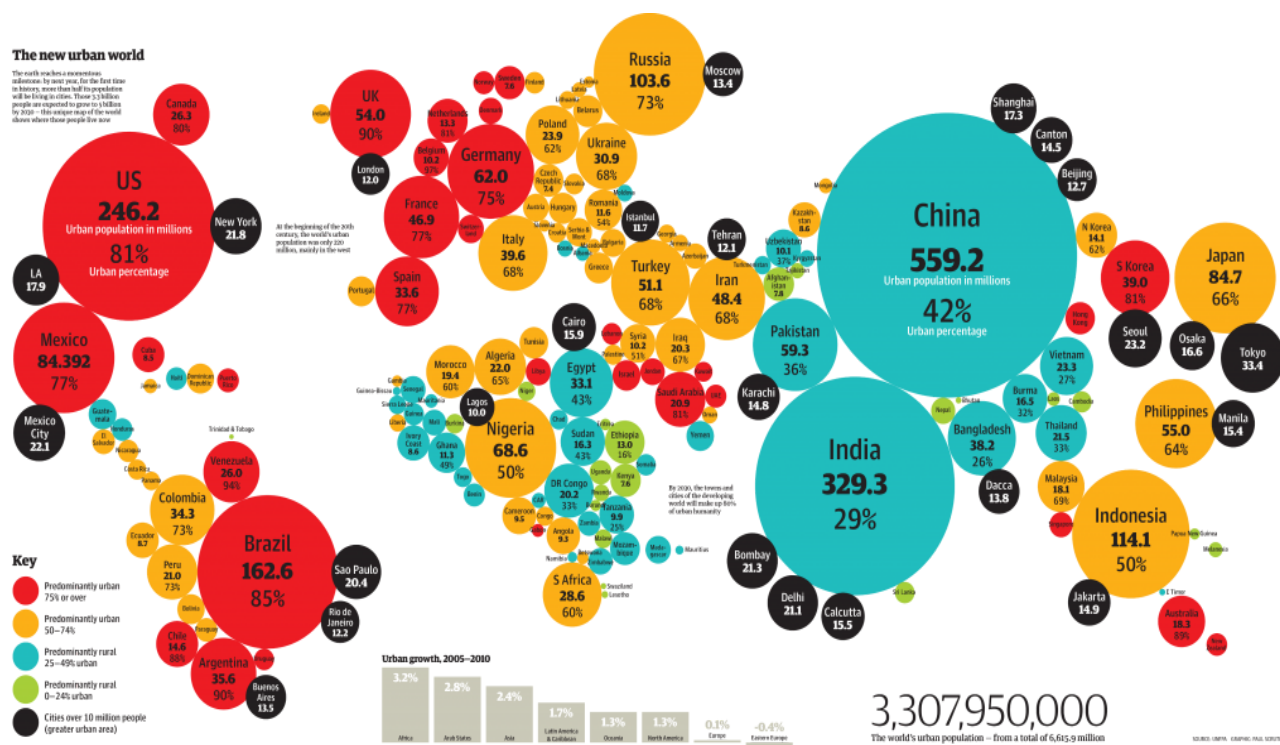


The following trends are clear from the graph above:

- All major economic groups are experiencing an increase in urbanisation
- Urban populations are higher in High Income Countries (HICs)
- The rate of urbanisation is bigger in middle income countries (MICs)
- Low income countries (LICs) have the lowest urban population proportion



More of the world's population is living in urban areas - cities are **expanding** and the urban population is growing. The **infographic** (a diagram which represents statistics) below shows each country's **urban population**, in millions, and the **percentage** of their entire population that live in urban rather than rural.



Many **HICs** have large urban populations; **81%** of the US's population live in urban towns and cities, whereas **90%** of the UK's population live in urban areas. In comparison, in **LICs** and **developing countries** over half of the population live in urban areas; for example, Turkey has **68%** of its population living in urban areas. This is less than in MICs, but these urban populations are rapidly growing.

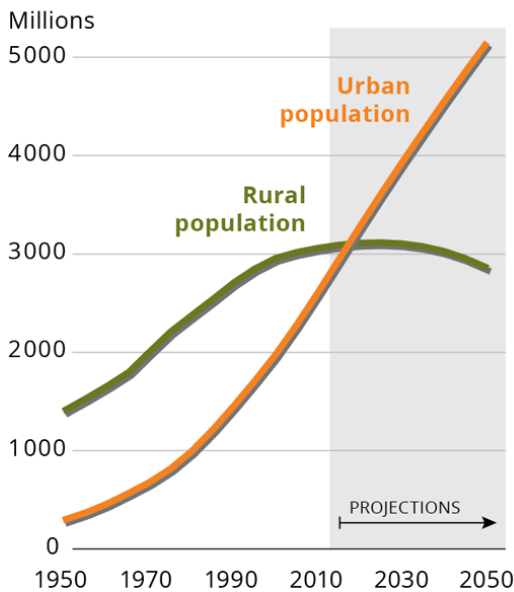
However, just because a country has a small proportion of people living in urban areas doesn't mean their population is small. Have a look at **India** - only **29%** of India's population live in urban towns and cities, however India has two **megacities** that each have a population of 21 million - which is the same as Sri Lanka's entire population!



Rates of Urbanisation

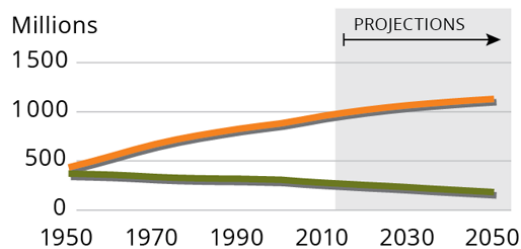
Less developed regions

Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.



More developed regions

Europe, Northern America, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.

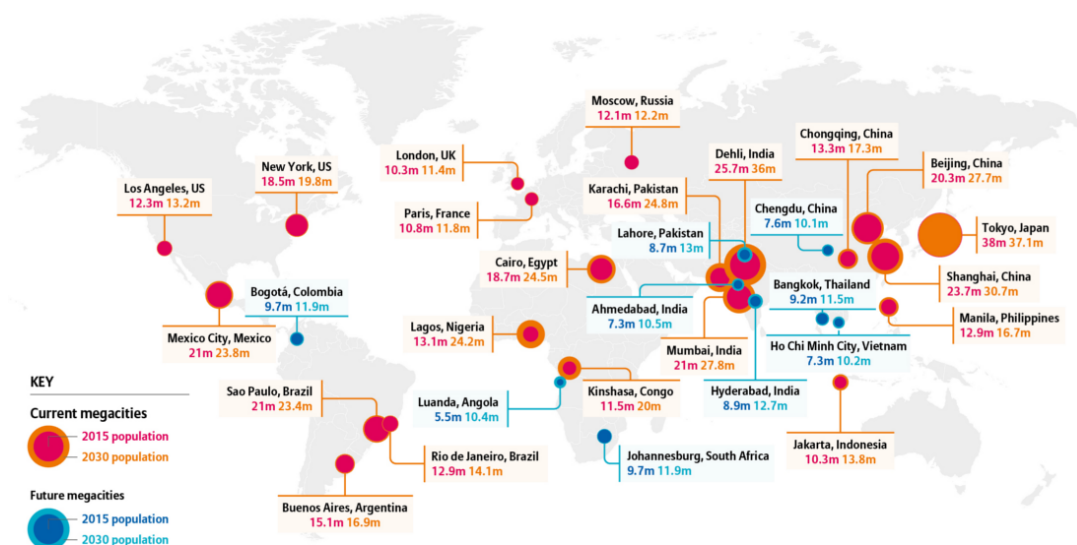


The world's **urban population** is **growing**, and will continue to grow in the future. Urban cities will grow at an **accelerated rate** in developing countries, whereas the urban population in developed cities will grow more **gradually**.

Megacities

Megacities are defined as cities with populations over **10 million people**. This is larger than some countries' entire population: Greece, Sweden, Israel, New Zealand, etc.

Figure 1 Selected current and future megacities 2015 to 2030



Source: World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision



Megacities can be found across the world but are especially concentrated in **South Asia**. Some megacities **steadily grow**, so their infrastructure - water supplies, food, doctors, schools - can cope with the population growth and there is **little inequality**. This is the case for Tokyo and Los Angeles.



Tokyo, Source: Architectural Digest



Los Angeles, Source: Business Insider

However, some megacities have **rapidly expanded**. Sometimes, this means that not all the residents can be looked after and the infrastructure is under **high pressure**. This leads to **inequalities**, where some residents live in luxury apartments whereas others live in **squatter settlements**. For example, Mumbai and Mexico City are rapidly growing megacities.



Mexico City, Source: Thousand Wonders



Mumbai, Source: Money Control



Urban Economies

Economies in cities and towns can be the driving factor for change; declining economies need government **intervention** whereas growing economies attract attention, **migration** and investment.

Developing and developed countries have different **characteristics** to their economies, these characteristics are based upon the kind of work their population does. For instance, **developed countries** tend to have a large proportion of **formal workers**, where workers have contracts. Whereas **developing countries** have a large proportion of **informal workers**, who find their own work or are self-employed. There are pros and cons to formal and informal work:

Formal Work

Workers agree to a **contract** with their employer, which in most instances ensures a **regular wage** and **safe working conditions**. Formal work includes:

- Teachers
- Doctors and Dentists
- Office workers (IT, Managers, etc)

In the UK, for example, employers are **responsible** for the safety and welfare of their workers. Employees should receive **PPE** and training to do their job safely. Due to **unions** and the advent of workers' rights, employees are guaranteed certain levels of pay, contracts, holiday and sick pay, flexible working and parental rights.

However, formal work is **competitive** and often requires the correct **qualifications** for the job. Therefore, workers who don't have a degree/formal qualification or the appropriate experience won't get the job. In addition, formal work often doesn't give **flexibility** with hours and time off for holidays is limited.

Informal Work

Informal work includes any job that is **temporary**, with **limited regulations** or **self-employed** jobs. Informal work includes:

- Street Sellers
- House Help and Cleaners
- Rag Picker

Whatever an informal worker earns, they get to keep. So the amount of hours they work will reflect how much they earn. However, their wage isn't **guaranteed** and so they could have days where they don't earn a penny. There is **no contract**, so workers are vulnerable to **exploitation**: businesses don't protect their workers' health, **overwork** them or send them more dangerous work. Informal workers don't pay the correct amount of **tax**, if any, so the government cannot benefit from their work.



Urbanisation across the World

Different cities across the world are changing at **different rates**, depending on:

- The country's level of **development**
- The **economy & employment** opportunities
- The **reputation** of the city - do people want to live here locally or internationally?

Let's take a look at three cities:

Developed City London, UK	Emerging City New Delhi, India	Developing City Port-au-Prince, Haiti
 <p align="center"><i>Source: World For Travel</i></p>	 <p align="center"><i>Source: Luxury Launches</i></p>	 <p align="center"><i>Source: Nationalpedia.com</i></p>
London is home to 8.1 million people, but the population has been in decline since 1941.	The city's size has doubled within twenty years, with growth continuing to this day!	The city has steady growth rates (2-5%) so the city hasn't taken off rapidly.
Reasons for Urbanisation		
<p>Due to the UK's links with the Commonwealth and European Union, many migrants move to work in London.</p> <p>The city centre has limited space (due to historic landmarks) and heavy congestion.</p> <p>However, the cost of living is high in comparison to the rest of the country.</p>	<p>Highest income per person in India, attracting many migrants for work opportunities</p> <p>However, environmental pollution due to the growing population is making living in the city unpleasant.</p> <p>Three quarters of agricultural land has been built upon, turning the land infertile.</p>	<p>Over 50% of Haiti's population live in cities.</p> <p>However, Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere and Haiti's government is highly corrupt.</p> <p>In addition, Port-au-Prince has been devastated by earthquakes, cholera outbreaks and hurricanes. This has left infrastructure and buildings damaged.</p>

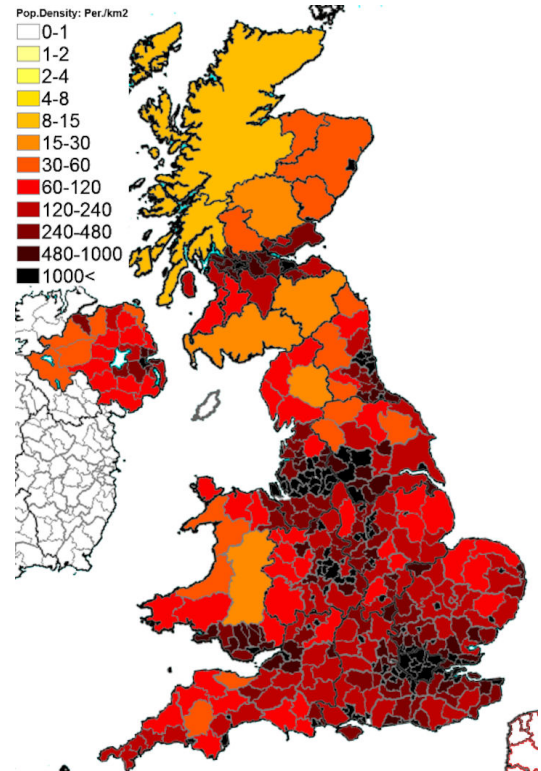


The UK's Cities

Here are some maps that show the **major cities** and **population density** across the UK.



Source: UK Map Blogspot



Source: Global Security



Source: Ansgroupglobal.com

In the UK, **81.5%** of the population live in the UK. However, the **population density** varies dramatically - the population is dense in city centres and extremely low in some rural areas. On a whole, the UK has **69 cities**, including:

England - London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Bristol

Scotland - Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen

Northern Ireland - Belfast

Wales - Cardiff, Swansea



The UK has an **official registration** of cities, but some very large-population towns aren't classified as cities (e.g. Milton Keynes, Northampton, Reading). Let's see four cities and what has shaped the UK urban landscape:

Manchester



Source: Manchester Evening News

Manchester was the centre of the **Industrial Revolution** and has been a hub for economic activity for the North of England.

Some feel that Manchester - and other Northern cities - don't benefit from **policy-making** and **funding** as much as Southern cities. This is called the **North-South divide**.

Manchester benefits from Liverpool's **docks** for international trade as well as **train connections** between London and Edinburgh.



Source: Highways Industry

Manchester is a growing city across 10 boroughs, but the city faces issues with:

- Shortage of **affordable social housing**
- **Traffic congestion** and overcrowded public transport
- New building constructions on **flood plains**

Glasgow



Source: Nomadic Matt

Glasgow has a **reputation** for unemployment and dereliction, due to the '**Slum Housing Crisis**'. To house the growing population during the 19th and 20th centuries, affordable housing **tenements** (towers of flats) were constructed. However, the tenements offered a low quality of life:

- Target for **crime** and razor gang violence
- Up to 30 residents for one toilet, increasing the risk of **disease**

However, recent **regeneration** projects are improving the city's image. The city hosted the **Commonwealth Games** in 2014 and also hosted the **UN 2020 Climate Change Summit**. International events are trying to improve Glasgow's reputation for business, migration and tourism.



Source: Standard.net



Belfast



Source: Visit Belfast

1.5 million overnight stays have been made in Belfast, both for tourism and business. Belfast has a **strong identity** and many local and international **tourists** come to experience Irish culture:

- St Patrick's Day
- Titanic Museum
- Game of Thrones' filming locations



Source: Belfast Live

However, Belfast is a relatively **small city** - ranking the 15th largest city in the UK.

Population growth has changed greatly over the last century; Belfast's population declined as families moved out of the city during the **political violence**.

Swansea



Source: Complete Leasing

Swansea is the second largest city in Wales. Swansea gained its reputation and economy due to the **city port**, offering international trade for materials such as: **copper, coal, iron & steel**.



Source: Cooper Handling

However, Swansea's economy and population declined when many Welsh mines and manufacturers closed. **Foreign competition** could make steel and copper cheaper, so the port ran out of business.

There have been many attempts to return business to Swansea but with mixed success:

- **Regeneration plans** for the city centre's shopping centre were cancelled.
- UK businesses tried to buy **Tata Steel** works to keep job opportunities in Port Talbot, Swansea

