

## **URBANISATION : CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS**

### **Urbanisation**

When an increasing proportion of the population live in towns and cities

Two main causes of urbanisation

### **Natural population growth**

### **Rural to urban migration**

### **Push factors for rural-urban migration**

Rural areas have young age profiles. Young adults (15-40) migrate. These migrants are in their fertile years and so the rates of natural increase are higher in cities than rural increase

Negative things which cause people to move away:

Civil conflict - flee war

Lack of jobs

Population growth causing over-cultivation, soil erosion, low yields

Agricultural problems - desertification

Natural disasters - floods, tropical storms, earthquakes

Inadequate services - medical, educational

### **Pull factors for rural to urban migration**

Employment - in factories and service industries, better paid than in rural areas

Better quality of life - better education, Health care, entertainment and tourism

Earning money from informal sector - selling goods on the street, taxi driver

### **Impacts of urbanisation**

Urban sprawl

Housing shortage

Unemployment

Transport issues

## **Urban sprawl as a consequence of urbanisation**

Urban areas spread into surrounding countryside in an unplanned and uncontrolled fashion. Bad because:

- requires more roads and infrastructure -> more impermeable surfaces -> risk of flooding
- main cause of wildlife habitat loss
- causes more commuting from suburbs to city -> more fuel consumption and traffic congestion
- homogenisation - cities become indistinct from each other

Housing shortage in low income countries as a consequence of urbanisation

High population in urban areas leads to areas of informal and inadequate housing:

- on the edge of the city
- at risk of natural hazards, lots of pollution
- limited access to basic infrastructure and services e.g. Favelas in Rio de Janeiro

## **Strategies for improving slums**

Eradicate slums

Self-help schemes - people improve their own homes with materials provided by government

Site and service schemes

Slum upgrading programmes

## **Shortage of housing in higher-income countries caused by urbanisation**

Rising demand for accommodation has led to dramatic increase in house prices and rental costs

E.G. London experienced a 50% rise in average house prices between 2013 and 2015

## **Unemployment & underemployment as a consequence of urban sprawl**

Unemployment rates are high and many migrants find employment in informal work such as street hawking.

Underemployment is when a person is not doing work which makes full use of their skills and abilities, may occur when migrants move to a city

## **Transport issues as a consequence of urban sprawl**

Increased traffic has led to more congestion and pollution, damaging human health and wasting money in lost productivity. Spread of houses to the suburbs mean more commuters

## **Suburbanisation**

The movement of people from the inner city to the outer edges, spreading out the urban area and swallowing up surrounding villages and rural areas

### **Causes of Suburbanisation (timeline)**

- People wanted to escape from the decline, pollution and stress of the inner city
- facilitated by the growth of public transport, new roads and increased car ownership which allowed people to commute to work
- 1930's: not many planning controls so urban growth occurred along main roads, called Ribbon Development
- 1940's: growth caused concern which led to protected areas called Green Belts around cities to control further development
- 1950's onwards: suburbanisation increased but was more planned
- 1950/1960's: large scale construction of council housing in suburbs on Greenfield Sites
- 1970's: increasing home ownership of private housing estates on Greenfield Sites in suburbs
- 1980's onwards: housing estates built with shopping parades, retail parks, leisure parks & schools.

### **Social segregation as a negative impact of Suburbanisation**

The wealthy move to the suburbs and the poorer remain in inner city. Particular issue in USA

Funding diverted from inner cities as a negative impact on Suburbanisation

Diverted to suburbs to pay for new infrastructure and services

## **Counter-urbanisation**

Movement of people from urban areas to rural areas, leap-frogging the rural-urban fringe. Difference between rural and urban is reduced

### **Causes of counter-urbanisation**

- people want to escape, pollution & crime of urban areas
- want the pleasant, quiet & clean countryside with cheaper land & house prices
- car ownership & wealth allows people to commute to work
- employers move out of city
- new technology allows freedom of location for work

### **Affects of counter-urbanisation on rural settlements**

- modern housing estates built
- industrial estates built along main roads
- open green spaces built on
- old properties converted and modernised
- tension and conflict between newcomers and locals

### **The rural turnaround**

Outmigration of young, village-born adults, decline in elderly village-born.

In-migration of young couples with children

In-migration of wealthier people → increased house prices

### **Evidence for counter-urbanisation**

More commuters and public transport

Increased value of houses

More executive housing & new developments

Counter-urbanisation results in .....  
suburbanised villages

## **Urban resurgence**

The economic and structural regeneration of an urban area which has suffered decline, initiated by redevelopment schemes

## **Deindustrialisation**

The loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector, occurred in UK in 20th century

## **Decentralisation**

Movement of industry away from inner city

## **Causes of urban resurgence in UK**

- gentrification and regeneration schemes make city living more attractive, caused by deindustrialisation
- cities have reinvented themselves as cities of culture and commerce
- resulted in changing urban landscapes - run-down areas rebranded as fashionable 'quarters'
- driven by government schemes and major sporting events e.g, London 2012 olympics

## **Positive impact of urban resurgence**

Multiplier effect - redevelopment sets up further improvements and attracts greater investment

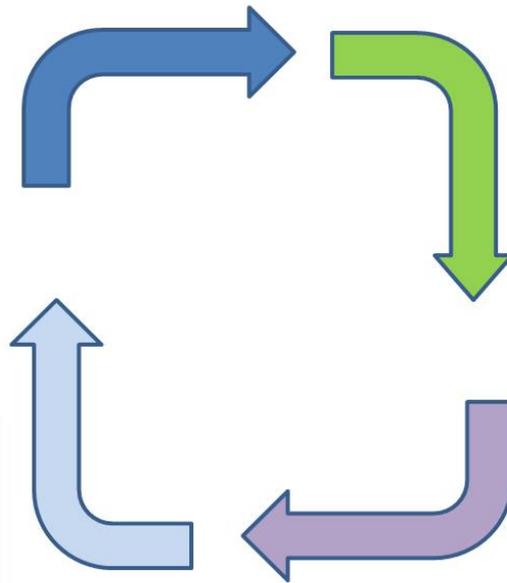
## **Negative impacts of urban resurgence**

- puts pressure on urban infrastructure so some residents may be displaced as house prices rise
- increases inequalities between rich and poor

# The Cycle of Urbanisation: UK example

**Re-urbanisation-** beginning in the 1990s people have begun to return to urban areas due to redevelopment, reduction in crime and new housing

**Counterurbanisation-** From 1960 onwards people have left urban areas to move to smaller settlements outside the city



**Urbanisation-** the increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities (industrial revolution 1800s)

**Suburbanisation (1860-1960)** Urban areas spread outwards as railway lines allowed people to live further away from work