

# Essay on human population and the environment

[Parts of the World](#), [Europe](#)



Understanding the process through which such cities as New York came into being is not the easiest of things. However, explaining the various factors that contributed to the cropping up and growth of towns can be done almost effortlessly. The process through which populations moved from the rural areas to the cosmopolitan areas leading to the development of ancient civilizations and modern day towns and cities is known as urbanization (Demina, 2006). Urbanization was a gradual process in the olden days but is a rapid revolutionary process in the contemporary world. The speed at which the urbanization is taking place in the modern times is higher than the ancient times for life in the world today is more competitive in every aspect. The rush for resources and advancement in technology exaggerates the rate at which modern day urban centers are cropping up. This paper seeks to explain the various benefits and challenges associated urbanization. Before focusing on the benefits and challenges associated with urbanization, it is indispensable to understand the causative factors of the phenomenon. The idea of urbanization can be traced back to the agrarian revolution. The earliest urban centers were established in Mesopotamia which is the present day Iran (Moomaw, 1986). The major cause of urbanization in this region was agriculture which increased food production. Food was a necessity and still is today. As such people from various areas in Asia moved into Mesopotamia and established settlements. It is in these urban centers that trade began as well as other social institutions like religious establishment. Later on industrialization became the major factor behind the urbanization in Europe and other Eurasian countries. Other factors leading to urbanization include

concentration of resources, proximity to water, proximity to infrastructure and favorable climates.

Among the most prominent benefits of urbanization is the idea of availability of employment opportunities. The urban centers are usually the centers of commerce, industry, social institutions and administration (Smith, 2005). All these sectors are tremendous sources of employment opportunities. They all require human resources that are skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled.

Residents of the urban centers stand a chance of securing a job within the town. Being employed implies higher standards of living due to better income levels and access to social amenities. Urban centers are associated with institutions of higher learning. Such institutions prepare people for employment. For instance, New York, which began as a center for trade is today the city that has the highest proportion of employed people.

Another benefit worth mentioning is the fact that urbanization is associated with efficiency and convenience. Where the urban centers are located, everything goes on conveniently. Perhaps one of the best ways of illustrating this is the Golden Gate hanging bridge of San Francisco. The bridge was built to make transport and communication more efficient and effective. The construction, which is considered one of the greatest modern wonders in the world of engineering could not have come into being had it not been in the city and its populations. The infrastructure in urban areas is well developed so as to eliminate such inconveniences as traffic jams (Reimer, 2005). Such convenience may be considered wishful thinking in the rural country where less activity takes place.

The third benefit of urbanization is the enhanced access to resources and

infrastructure. Talking about resources, what would immediately come into mind are such things as schools and hospitals. In the urban centers, capital required for setting up such institutions as schools and hospitals are fairly easily available (Smith, 2005). As such the best institutions of higher learning are found in the urban regions; take for example, London. London is arguably the oldest of all large cities in Europe. The number of universities and colleges established in Europe has enhanced literacy and professionalism. The city is associated with better resources and capacity to improve. It is no puzzle then, why it is a home to the best educational institutions.

Much as urbanization is associated with a number of advantages, it comes with a number of setbacks and pitfalls. Perhaps the most conspicuous pitfall of urbanization is the high crime rates. Almost all cities face the menace of criminality. Criminals are bred in the downtown areas of any city. The violence and crimes are perpetrated by those individuals that have not found the place in the economically stable society (Smith, 2005). For instance research carried out across Europe indicated that most criminals in the urban areas were those people that had lacked employment opportunities.

The second challenge of urbanization is the rate at which social evils are taking root. Such social evils are associated with illegal ways of making money and include such evils as prostitution and peddling of prohibited drugs. The people that conduct such business deals are considered a menace to society. The above mentioned evils are rampant in the downtown areas of almost all cities in the world especially the developing nations.

Another challenge worth mentioning is that of congestion and pollution. The rate of pollution in the urban areas is high and can be attributed to such

factors as high population density, poor garbage disposal of the municipal authorities and the lack of accountability and responsibility among the residents of the towns (Reimer, 2005). The best event that can shed light on this point is the establishment of the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), an agency of the United Nations organization to take care of pollution in major cities across the globe.

## **References**

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