

Population geographies

[Science](#), [Geography](#)



Urbanization and Emergence of Global Cities The modern world is currently experiencing an unprecedented urban growth. The movement of people or goods is the major characteristic of the present globalized world.

Researchers point out that in 2008, more than half of the total world's population resided in cities and towns. However, this figure will swell to about 5 billion people. Urbanization is mostly concentrated in Asia and Africa. As such, this paper will analyze urbanization and the emergence of global cities.

Population shift movement from one locality area to another has been a major element in the spread of knowledge, technology and culture. This movement is often termed as migration. Population movement is categorized under the micro and macro levels. Macro migration refers to the movement of people from one country to another while micro refers to people moving from one region or area to another. A population movement is as a result of the pull (voluntary) and pushes (non-voluntary) factors. While major cities are a focal point of public attention, urbanization will be concentrated in the smaller cities, which have inadequate resources to cater for the needs of the new urban population. In most countries, the total number of urban dwellers continues to swell at a higher rate than the cities' or towns' capacities to provide water, jobs, sanitation, houses, and other essential services.

The UN states that the unemployment rate of immigrants in urban areas is higher than in rural areas. It is only about 40% of the immigrants who have access to good jobs. Consequently, many people are forced to fend for themselves by entering the informal sector, or turning to crime and prostitution. Due to high unemployment levels, some of the urban dwellers

are forced to build their houses since they cannot afford to pay rent. These shanties give rise to slums within the urban environment. Slums lack sewerage, waste disposal and water facilities.

Accessibility of clean water in the urban areas is a necessity everywhere. Unlike in developed countries where the urban population has access to clean water, third world countries lack this basic need or commodity. In Africa, 26 % of the urban population has access to clean water. 29% of the Asian urban population has access to clean water whereas, in South America, only a paltry 12% have access to clean water.

The movement of people from rural to urban areas (mostly in developing countries) is among the most common visible trends today. According to the United Nations data, 60% of the world's population will be urbanized by the year 2025. This will result in the creation of mega cities or towns with a huge population of more than ten million people. These movements can be caused by pull factors. For example, urban areas offer a more conducive environment for resolving or tackling both environmental and social problems. Unlike rural areas, cities and towns offer good education and healthcare services. These pull factors contribute to the urbanization trend. The pace of urbanization will only be reduced by empowering women, lowering poverty and providing quality services to the rural population (McCarthy, 2005). As a result of urbanization, cities have turned to be interconnected. These cities have transformed from isolated towns or areas to an integrated community, ruled by cultural, ecological and economic interdependencies. Global cities have been fuelled by technological networking, global communication and the ever expanding transport routes

and systems. The transformation of cities into global cities has impacted the urban population mostly positively. The UNFPA is tasked with designing policies that can address various needs of different demographic groups in towns and cities especially in developing countries.

Work Cited

McCarthy, Linda Mary, and Paul Leslie Knox. *Urbanization: An introduction to urban geography*. Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005. Print.