Cambridge AS & A Level · Geography 9696 · Notes

Settlement dynamics AS

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Read first: **Population**, **Migration**

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What you need to know

By the end of this topic you should be able to:

1. **Explain the issues facing rural settlements today** in LICs, MICs and HICs, such as **depopulation** and **service provision**, including the impacts of **internal migration** and the **consequences of urban growth** for rural places.
2. **Know a case study of a rural settlement** (a village or hamlet) **or a rural area**: the issues of its development and growth (or decline), and an **evaluation of the responses** to them.
3. **Explain urban growth and the process of urbanisation**: its causes and consequences in LICs, MICs and HICs, including **counter-urbanisation**, **re-urbanisation**, **competition for land** and **urban renewal**.
4. **Explain the concept of a world city**, the causes of the growth of world cities, and the **hierarchy of world cities**.
5. **Explain the social, economic, environmental and political factors** (including **planning**) that affect where activities locate within urban areas, and how the locations of **retailing**, **services** and **manufacturing** change over time.
6. **Describe and explain the changing central business district (CBD).**
7. **Explain competition for space** (spatial competition), the concept of **bid rent**, and **functional zonation**.
8. **Explain residential segregation**: its causes (**income** and **race/ethnicity**) and processes (the **housing market**, **family and friends**, **culture** and **planning**).
9. **Know two urban case studies**, each showing the challenges and an evaluation of the attempted solutions: **a shanty town (squatter settlement) in an LIC or MIC**, and **providing infrastructure (power or transport) for a city**.

It is examined in Paper 2: a compulsory 10-mark data question (Question 3 in 2021–2025) and an optional 30-mark structured question (Question 6). Read the notes on population and migration first: most changes in settlements are driven by births, deaths and people moving.

Understand it

Settlements, hierarchy and primacy

A **settlement** is any place where people live: a **hamlet** (a few houses), a **village**, a **town**, a **city**, a **conurbation** (towns that have grown together) or a **megacity** (over 10 million people). Ranked by size and by the number of services they offer, they form a **settlement hierarchy**: few large places at the top, many small ones at the bottom. Larger places have more **high-order** services (specialist hospitals, department stores, universities), because these need a large **threshold population** (the minimum number of customers needed to keep a service going).

A **primate city** is a country's largest city when it is many times bigger than the second city and dominates the country's economy and politics. The **primacy ratio** compares them:

$$\text{primacy ratio} = \frac{\text{population of the largest city}}{\text{population of the second-largest city}}$$

Lima holds nearly a third of Peru's people and is about ten times the size of Arequipa, the second city. Nigeria, by contrast, has a **hierarchy** of many large cities (Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Abuja and others), so no single city dominates. **Why one dominant city is a disadvantage** for a country:

- investment, jobs and infrastructure go to the core, so the **periphery** falls behind and regional **inequality** grows (**backwash**);
- young adults migrate to the capital, draining the rest of the country of workers and skills (brain and brawn drain), while the city struggles to house and serve them;
- power is held by a small group in one place, which can feed corruption and resentment in remote regions;
- the whole economy is exposed if the one city is hit by a disaster, conflict or attack.

Governments sometimes respond by building a new capital inland, as Nigeria did when it moved its capital from coastal Lagos to Abuja in 1991, to spread development and unite the country.

Urbanisation and urban growth

Urbanisation is an increase in the **proportion** of a country's population living in urban areas. **Urban growth** is an increase in the **number** of people (or the area) of a town or city. A city can grow without urbanisation happening, if the rural population grows just as fast.

$$\text{percentage urban} = \frac{\text{urban population}}{\text{total population}} \times 100$$

The world's urban population overtook its rural population in about 2007. About 55% of people lived in urban areas in 2018, and the United Nations expects about 68% by 2050, with almost all the growth in Asia and Africa. In 2018 there were 33 megacities, led by Tokyo with about 37 million people, and 43 are expected by 2030.

Causes of urbanisation in LICs and MICs:

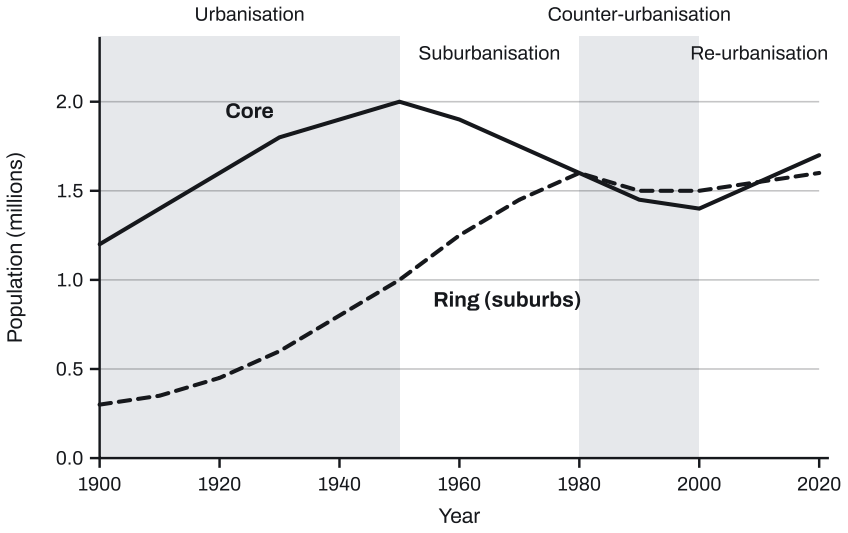
- **rural–urban migration**: the push of rural poverty, mechanisation, land shortage and poor services, and the pull of jobs (formal and informal), schools, hospitals and city life (see the migration note);
- **natural increase** in cities: migrants are mostly young adults, so birth rates are high and death rates low;
- **industrialisation** and foreign investment in factories and services, which concentrate in the largest cities;
- **reclassification**: villages are absorbed or redrawn as urban as cities spread.

Consequences in LICs and MICs: fast growth outruns the supply of formal housing, jobs and services, so **shanty towns** (squatter settlements) and the **informal sector** grow; water, sanitation, power and transport are overloaded; traffic and air pollution worsen; the city sprawls onto farmland; but cities also bring higher incomes, better access to education and health care, and drive national economic growth.

In HICs, most people already live in urban areas (over 80% in the UK, the USA and Japan), so change is mostly about people moving **within** and **between** urban areas.

The cycle of urbanisation: suburbanisation, counter-urbanisation and re-urbanisation

As countries develop, cities tend to pass through four stages.



1. **Urbanisation**: people move from the countryside into the city, and the core grows fastest.
2. **Suburbanisation**: people, shops and offices move out to the edge of the city, helped by cars, trains and cheap land; the suburbs grow while the core loses people.
3. **Counter-urbanisation**: people move out of the city altogether, to small towns, villages and rural areas beyond it, and the whole urban area can lose population.
4. **Re-urbanisation**: people move back into the city, usually into renewed inner areas and the CBD.

Counter-urbanisation (urban–rural migration) is the movement of people from large urban areas to smaller towns, villages and rural areas. It is common in HICs: people leave for cheaper, larger houses, a cleaner and quieter environment and lower crime, and they can do so because of car ownership, better roads and rail, and **broadband**, which lets people work from home. Retirees and families with young children are typical movers.

Problems for the urban area left behind: the **tax base** shrinks as better-off residents leave, so councils have less to spend; empty and rented properties increase and some inner areas decline; shops and services lose customers; those who remain are, on average, poorer and older or less mobile; and many movers still commute in, so traffic and congestion rise. Detroit, USA, fell from about 1.85 million people in 1950 to about 640 000 in 2020, leaving thousands of empty homes.

Re-urbanisation is the movement of people back into city centres and inner areas after a period of decline. Causes:

- **urban renewal** and redevelopment create attractive flats, offices and leisure space on old docks, rail yards and factory sites (**brownfield** land);
- **jobs** in finance, media, universities and other services concentrate in the centre;
- **young adults**, students and couples without children want to live near work, nightlife and culture, and to avoid long commutes;
- **government policy**: rules that new homes go on brownfield land, green belts that stop outward spread, and investment in public transport;
- smaller households (more people living alone) need smaller homes, which central flats provide.

Greater London's population fell from about 8.6 million in 1939 to about 6.8 million in 1981, then grew back to about 8.8 million by 2021, much of it in renewed inner areas such as the Docklands and King's Cross.

Problems of re-urbanisation for an urban area: rising house prices and rents; **gentrification**, as better-off newcomers buy and renovate homes in poorer areas and push long-standing residents out; tension between newcomers and existing residents; a changing social and ethnic mix; more demand for schools, clinics and transport; more traffic and pollution in the centre.

Counter-urbanisation and re-urbanisation compared

	Counter-urbanisation	Re-urbanisation
Direction	Out of large urban areas, to smaller settlements and rural areas	Back into city centres and inner urban areas
Who moves	Families with children, retirees, home-workers, the better-off with cars	Young adults, students, young professionals, couples without children
Main causes	Cheaper, larger housing; a better environment; car ownership, roads and broadband	Urban renewal; central service jobs; nightlife and culture; brownfield and transport policy
Effect on the city	Loss of population and tax base; inner-area decline; more commuting	Population growth in the centre; renewal; gentrification; higher house prices

	Counter-urbanisation	Re-urbanisation
Both	Movements of people that change population size and structure; driven by stages of life and by wealth; strongest in HICs; can happen at the same time in different parts of one urban area	

Competition for land and urban renewal

Competition for land happens wherever many users want the same limited space: offices, shops, housing, industry, roads, parks and farming. In a growing city the competition is strongest at the centre and on the urban fringe, where housing, retail parks and roads compete with farmland and green space. Fast population growth makes it fiercer: more demand for a fixed supply of land raises land values and rents, pushes the poor to cheaper, more dangerous sites, and leads to building **upwards** (tall buildings) and **outwards** (sprawl).

Urban renewal is the improvement of run-down urban areas. It can mean **regeneration** (refurbishing existing buildings and streets) or **redevelopment** (clearing an area and rebuilding it). **Why urban renewal happens**:

- to upgrade **old, decaying** housing, factories, docks and infrastructure (sewers, roads) that no longer meet modern needs;
- to improve living conditions and health for local people;
- to attract **investment**, businesses and jobs, raising tax revenue and starting a positive **multiplier**;
- to improve the **image** of an area, often for tourists or a major event (Barcelona rebuilt its run-down waterfront for the 1992 Olympic Games);
- to rebuild after **destruction** by war, fire or earthquake;
- to bring residents back to the centre (re-urbanisation) and use brownfield land instead of green fields.

Disadvantages for the inhabitants of a renewed area: noise, dust and disruption during the works; loss of homes and forced moves; rising rents and property prices that long-standing residents cannot afford (**gentrification**); new shops and cafés that serve wealthier newcomers rather than the original community; loss of the area's character and community ties; more visitors, noise and traffic. In London's Docklands, renewed from 1981, new offices and expensive flats brought jobs and transport (the Docklands Light Railway and Canary Wharf), but many of the jobs went to commuters with skills that dockers did not have.

World cities

A **world city** (global city) is a city that plays a leading part in the **global** economy and in global politics and culture: a **command and control** centre for flows of money, information, people and decisions around the world. Being big is not enough: Dhaka is a megacity of around 20 million people but has little global influence, while Geneva and Zürich are small cities of under half a million that are global centres of diplomacy and finance.

Characteristics of world cities:

- **finance**: a major stock exchange, international banks and insurers, a huge share of global capital flows;

- **advanced producer services**: clusters of global law, accountancy, advertising and consultancy firms;
- **headquarters** of many transnational corporations (TNCs);
- **connectivity**: hub airports, ports, high-speed rail and internet links;
- **political** influence: headquarters of international organisations (the United Nations in New York and Geneva, the European Union in Brussels), embassies and summits;
- **culture and knowledge**: world-famous universities, museums, media, fashion (Paris, Milan) and sport;
- a large, diverse, highly skilled population drawn from around the world.

Causes of the growth of world cities:

- **globalisation**: as trade, investment and TNCs spread worldwide, they need a few places to manage and finance them;
- **financial deregulation**: London's "Big Bang" of 1986 opened its markets to foreign banks and electronic trading;
- **agglomeration**: firms cluster to meet clients face to face, share skilled workers and ideas, so success attracts more success (**cumulative causation**);
- **transport and communications**: hub airports such as Dubai's, and fast data links;
- **government policy**: Singapore and Dubai attracted firms with low taxes, free zones, stable government and world-class infrastructure;
- **skilled migration**: talented people from around the world move to where the best jobs are.

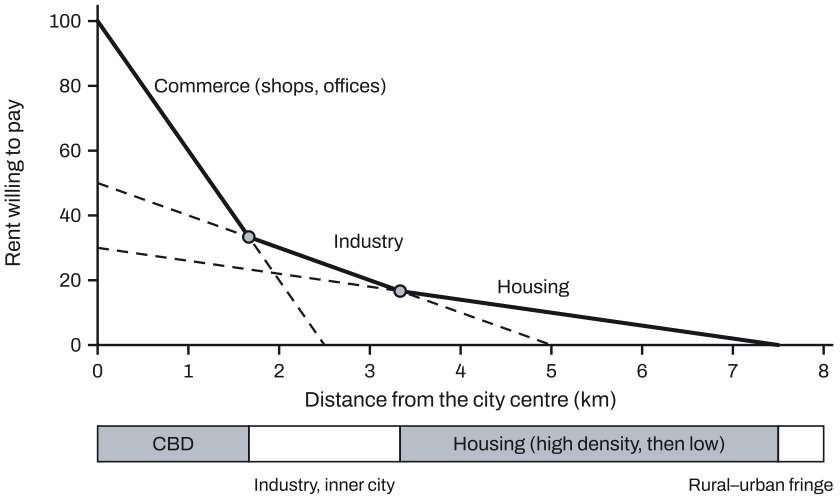
The hierarchy of world cities. Researchers rank cities by how strongly they are connected through global service firms. The best-known ranking, by the Globalization and World Cities (GaWC) research network at Loughborough University, sorts them into levels:

Level	What it means	Examples (GaWC 2020)
Alpha++	Far more connected than any other city; linked to the whole world economy	London, New York
Alpha+	Very highly connected; leading centres of their world regions	Hong Kong, Singapore, Shanghai, Beijing, Dubai, Paris, Tokyo
Alpha and **Alpha–**	Major cities linking large economic regions to the world	Sydney, Mumbai, São Paulo
Beta	Important cities linking a country or region to the world economy	Many national capitals
Gamma	Smaller world cities, or larger cities with fewer global links	Many regional centres

Other indexes add more criteria, such as business activity, human capital, information exchange, cultural experience and political engagement. The hierarchy **changes**: Shanghai, Beijing and Dubai have risen fast since 2000 with their countries' economies, while some older industrial cities have fallen.

Bid rent, competition for space and functional zonation

Every land user would like the most **accessible** site, and in most cities that is the centre, where transport routes meet and the most customers and workers can reach. Because central land is scarce, users **compete** for it and the price is bid up. **Bid rent** is the amount a land user is willing to pay for a site; the **bid rent theory** says that each user's bid falls with distance from the centre, and each site goes to the **highest bidder**.

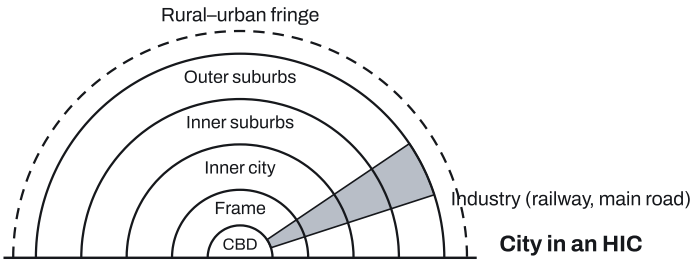


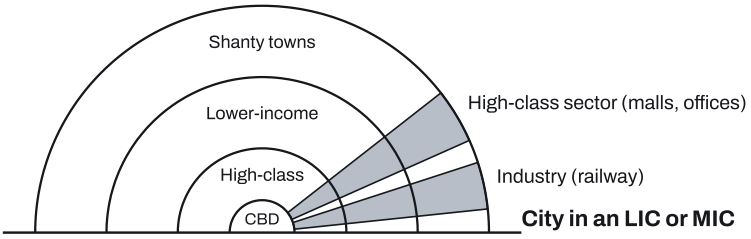
- **Commerce** (shops, offices, banks) bids most at the centre because its profit depends on customers and clients reaching it; its bid **falls steeply**, because a site a short way off has far fewer passers-by.
- **Industry** cannot pay central prices, but values accessibility to workers and transport, so it outbids housing in the next zone; its bid falls less steeply.
- **Housing** bids least but its bid falls most gently, since homes need space more than passing trade; **high-density** housing (flats, terraces) is nearer the centre and **low-density** housing (detached houses with gardens) further out, where land is cheap.
- The point of highest land value is the **peak land value intersection (PLVI)**, usually where the main shopping streets meet. Smaller peaks occur where main roads cross or around suburban centres, ring roads and stations.

Functional zonation is the result: each **function** (land use) clusters in its own part of the city, in zones, with other functions under-represented or missing there. Similar uses also cluster because they benefit from being together (banks near banks, car showrooms along one road). **Tall buildings** are typical of the CBD because land is so expensive that building upwards spreads the cost of the site over many floors, makes the most of a small plot, and gives prestige to the firms that occupy them.

Limits of bid rent theory: it assumes one centre on a flat plain, with equal access in every direction; in reality, rivers, hills, transport routes, planning rules, history and government ownership all distort the pattern, and cities have several centres.

Models of urban structure show functional zonation in simplified form.





- In **HIC cities**, the wealthy tend to live towards the edge, where land is cheaper and there is space and a cleaner environment, while older, denser housing and industry lie near the centre.
- In many **LIC and MIC cities**, the wealthy often live **near the centre** or along a main road, close to jobs and secure services, while the poorest live in **shanty towns** on the edge, or on unwanted land near the centre (steep slopes, floodplains, rail lines).

What decides where activities locate in urban areas

Answers must link a factor to a **named activity**: shops, offices, industry, housing of different kinds, parks, transport.

Factor	How it affects location	Example
Economic	Land value and rent (bid rent); accessibility to customers, workers and transport; the need for space; clustering with similar firms	Banks in London's City; car factories on cheap, flat edge-of-city land near motorways
Social	Income and status decide who can afford which area; people cluster by ethnicity, religion and life stage; services follow their customers	Wealthy suburbs and gated estates; ethnic shopping streets
Environmental	**Relief** (slopes, views, flood risk), rivers and coasts, prevailing winds, microclimate, pollution	In La Paz, Bolivia, the wealthy live lower down in the warmer Zona Sur, while the poorer city of El Alto sits on the cold plateau above 4000 m; in British cities, industry was often placed on the downwind east side

Factor	How it affects location	Example
Political (and **planning**)	Zoning that keeps industry and housing apart; planning permission; height limits; **green belts**; government land, investment and incentives; slum clearance; new capitals and enterprise zones	Paris keeps tall towers out of its historic centre, so its high-rise business district, La Défense, grew just outside the city boundary from 1958

The role of planning. City and national governments steer land uses into chosen places: they grant or refuse permission to build, set rules for each zone, and lay the roads, pipes and power lines that development then follows. Planning:

- **separates** uses (industrial estates away from housing, to cut noise and pollution);
- **restricts** spread (London's green belt pushes development onto brownfield sites inside the city);
- **directs** activities with incentives (enterprise zones, special economic zones, industrial parks with roads and power);
- **controls** building height, density and design, and protects historic areas and views;
- **regenerates** old areas for new uses (pedestrianised shopping streets, offices or flats on old docks);
- plans **transport routes**, which then attract activities along them.

The strength of planning varies: tightly planned states such as Singapore decide almost every use of land, while in fast-growing cities in many LICs most building happens **informally**, outside the plan.

How the locations of retailing, services and manufacturing change

Retailing

1. **CBD high street**: the traditional centre of shopping, with department stores and high-order shops at the PLVI, and **corner shops** in residential streets.
2. **Decentralisation** (from the 1960s–1970s in the USA, the 1980s in the UK): supermarkets, retail parks and huge **out-of-town shopping centres** at motorway junctions on the edge, with free parking and space to expand. Meadowhall in Sheffield, UK, opened in 1990 on the site of a closed steelworks.
3. **Online retailing**: since 2000, and sharply since the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020–2021, about a quarter of UK retail sales are made online. Big warehouses (distribution centres) on cheap edge-of-city land near motorways replace many shops; empty units appear on high streets and in malls.
4. **Responses in the centre**: shopping malls and covered precincts, pedestrianisation (Copenhagen pedestrianised its main shopping street, Strøget, in 1962), more cafés, restaurants and leisure, and flats above shops.
5. In **LIC and MIC cities**, modern **malls** spread to wealthy suburbs and along new roads (Lekki in Lagos, Nigeria), while **informal** street traders and markets stay in the centre and near transport stops.

Services

- **Offices** move from the CBD to cheaper **business parks** on the edge, near motorways and airports, or to new office centres (Canary Wharf in London's Docklands). Routine "back-office" work moves to cheaper cities or abroad (call centres in Bengaluru, India, or Manila).
- **Remote and hybrid working** since 2020 have cut the demand for office space in many CBDs.
- **Public services** follow people: hospitals, universities and schools build new campuses on the edge, where land is available; in fast-growing LIC cities, private hospitals and schools follow the wealthy to new suburbs.
- **Leisure services** (entertainment, restaurants, hotels) grow in CBDs as shops close, and in renewed areas.

Manufacturing

1. **Inner-city locations** (19th and early 20th centuries): factories next to canals, railways, docks and housing for workers.
2. **Decline and closure** in HIC inner cities from the 1960s: old, cramped, multi-storey sites with poor road access; global competition; congestion; high land values. Many sites became **derelict brownfield land**.
3. **Edge-of-city industrial estates** and **science parks** (Cambridge Science Park, UK, from 1970): large single-storey buildings on cheap, flat land, near motorways and airports, with space for parking and expansion and a pleasant environment for skilled workers.
4. **Brownfield redevelopment**: old industrial land reused for flats, offices and leisure (Docklands).
5. In **LIC and MIC cities**, new factories cluster in **special economic zones** and **export processing zones** on the edge of cities (Shenzhen, China, was made a special economic zone in 1980), while **informal** workshops thrive inside shanty towns.

Why some manufacturing stays put (industrial inertia): the cost of moving machines and buildings; a skilled local workforce; links with nearby suppliers and customers; a large local market; and the firm's reputation tied to its place.

The changing central business district (CBD)

Characteristics of the CBD:

- the **highest land values** and rents in the city (the PLVI), so the **tallest buildings** and the highest density of buildings;
- **commercial** land uses: department stores, high-order and specialist shops, international brands, offices, banks, hotels, restaurants, theatres and clubs;
- very few **residents** (homes cannot afford central rents), but a large daytime population of workers, shoppers and visitors, and high **pedestrian flows** ("footfall");
- the **focus of transport**: main railway and bus stations, with traffic congestion and parking problems, and often pedestrian zones and traffic calming;
- **government** and **cultural** buildings: town hall, courts, cathedral, museums, historic core;
- **vertical zoning**: shops at street level, offices above, sometimes flats at the top;

- **horizontal zoning**: districts of one function (a financial district, a shopping district, a theatre district: in London, the City for finance and the West End for shops and theatres);
- a **core** (shops and offices) and a **frame** around it (car parks, wholesale, older offices, transport depots), with a **zone of assimilation** where the CBD is expanding into new buildings and a **zone of discard** where it is declining.

Why tall buildings, why services locate in the CBD: the CBD is the most accessible place in the city, so shops reach the most customers and offices the most workers and clients; related firms (banks, lawyers, accountants) cluster to meet face to face and share ideas; high land values make building upwards worthwhile. (Never say the CBD has a high **resident** population: it doesn't.)

Factors causing change in CBDs:

- **Decentralisation**: competition from out-of-town retail parks and business parks with free parking and cheaper land.
- **Online shopping and remote working**: fewer shoppers and office workers; empty units. Large chains have closed (the Arcadia group, owner of Topshop, collapsed in 2020).
- **Congestion, pollution and parking costs**, which put shoppers and firms off; charges such as London's congestion charge (from 2003) and Singapore's electronic road pricing (from 1998).
- **High rents and business rates**, and ageing, unsuitable buildings.
- **Planning and investment**: pedestrianisation, renewal, flagship projects (new shopping centres, conference centres, stadiums), conversion of empty offices into flats, student housing and universities in the centre.
- **Changing tastes**: more spending on leisure, eating out and experiences, so the "night-time economy" grows.
- **Political and social issues**: crime and fear of crime, terror attacks, homelessness.
- In **LIC and MIC cities**, CBDs are often **growing** and rising upwards with foreign investment (Eko Atlantic, a new business district on land reclaimed from the sea next to Victoria Island in Lagos), while informal traders crowd the streets.

Is the CBD in decline? It depends what is measured (shops, offices, footfall, land values, residents), and where: retail has declined in many HIC CBDs, but leisure, education, culture and city-centre living have grown, so many CBDs are **changing** rather than dying.

Residential segregation

Residential segregation is the separation of different groups of people into different neighbourhoods, by **income**, **race/ethnicity**, religion or stage of life.

Causes:

- **Income**: people can only live where they can afford, so neighbourhoods sort by wealth. In Johannesburg, South Africa, the wealthy business district and suburbs of Sandton lie right next to the crowded township of Alexandra.

- **Race and ethnicity**: groups cluster for support, culture and safety, or are kept apart by discrimination. In Tower Hamlets in east London, about a third of residents are of Bangladeshi origin.

Processes (how segregation is made and kept):

- **The housing market**: house prices and rents, set by supply and demand, decide who lives where; mortgages and loans go more easily to some groups than others; **filtering**: as housing ages, the better-off move to new homes on the edge, and older homes "filter down" to poorer households; **gentrification** reverses this in some inner areas.
- **Discrimination**: estate agents, landlords and lenders treating groups differently; in the USA in the 1930s, government maps marked mainly black neighbourhoods as risky for loans ("redlining"), and the effects are still visible.
- **Family and friends**: newcomers follow relatives and friends to the same streets (**chain migration**), where they find housing, work and support.
- **Culture**: places of worship, shops, schools and associations of a group attract more of that group; a shared language helps newcomers.
- **Planning and government**: where social housing is built, slum clearance, and at the extreme, laws that forced groups apart (under South Africa's apartheid Group Areas Act of 1950, forced removals pushed Black residents out of mixed areas into separate townships such as Soweto); **gated communities** for the wealthy (Alphaville near São Paulo).
- **Choice**: some groups choose to stay together, for defence against hostility, or to keep their culture.

Rural settlements: issues and change

Rural settlements are changing fast in every part of the world, mostly because of **internal migration** and **urban growth**.

Rural issues in HICs

- **Depopulation** of remote areas: young people leave for jobs, higher education, services and marriage partners in cities; the population **ages**, births fall, and deaths outnumber births. Large parts of inland Spain now have fewer than 10 people per km² ("empty Spain").
- **Service provision**: shops, post offices, banks, schools, clinics and bus routes close when the population falls below their **threshold**. Costs per person are high where people are few and far apart, staff are hard to recruit, and the elderly, who need services most, are least able to travel. This sets off a **negative multiplier**: as services close, more people leave, and more services close.
- **Counter-urbanisation** into villages **within reach of cities**: commuters, home-workers and retirees push up house prices, so young local people are priced out; **second homes** stand empty for much of the year; **dormitory villages** lose shops because commuters shop in town; newcomers and established residents may clash; but newcomers also renovate old buildings, start businesses and keep schools open.
- **Farming change**: mechanisation and larger farms mean far fewer farm jobs.
- **Broadband and mobile coverage**: gaps in remote areas hold back businesses and home-working.

Rural issues in LICs and MICs

- **Out-migration** of young adults, mostly men in many places, to cities, leaving the elderly, women and children to farm; China has tens of millions of "left-behind children" whose parents work in distant cities.
- **Remittances** sent home pay for food, schooling, better houses, seed and machinery, but villages can become dependent on them.
- **Lack of services**: long distances to clinics, secondary schools and markets; few paved roads, little electricity or clean water. New ideas help: since 2016, drones have flown blood supplies to rural clinics in Rwanda.
- **Rural poverty, land shortage, drought and debt**; India's rural employment scheme of 2005 guarantees each rural household up to 100 days of paid work a year, to reduce distress migration.

Consequences of urban growth for rural settlements

Negative	Positive
Urban sprawl swallows farmland and villages on the edge of the city; land speculation drives farmers off (villages south of Delhi absorbed into the office city of Gurugram)	Cities are **markets** for farm produce, so farmers near the city can sell vegetables, milk and fruit
Loss of young workers and skills to the city; ageing, fewer births, farms short of labour	**Remittances** from relatives in the city
Competition for water with the city; water and air **pollution** from urban industry and waste	**Jobs** in the city within commuting distance; new roads and transport links
Traditional culture and community change; higher house prices near the city	Better access to urban hospitals, schools and colleges; new ideas and technology

Whether the effects are mostly negative depends on **distance** from the city (the fringe is transformed, remote areas lose people), the **speed** of growth, and **planning** (green belts, protected farmland).

Case study: a rural area, the Isle of Eigg, Scotland

Eigg is a small island of about 30 km² in the Inner Hebrides, off the west coast of Scotland, reached by a ferry of more than an hour from Mallaig on the mainland.

Issues of its development and decline: for much of the 20th century the island was owned by a series of private landlords who lived elsewhere and invested little; tenants had no security, housing was poor, and the population fell to about 60. There was **no mains electricity**: homes relied on noisy, expensive diesel generators. Jobs were few (crofting, a little tourism), there was no secondary school (older pupils board on the mainland during the week), and young people left. The island depends on the ferry, which bad weather can cancel.

Responses:

1. **Community buyout (1997)**: residents, with the Highland Council and the Scottish Wildlife Trust, raised about £1.5 million, much of it from a public appeal, and bought the island, run since by the Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust. Decisions are now made on the island.

2. **Eigg Electric (2008)**: a community-owned grid powered by hydro, wind and solar energy with batteries, supplying almost all of the island's electricity from renewables. Each home has a power cap, so supply stays within what the island generates.
3. **Housing and jobs**: new and renovated homes for rent, new crofts, a shop, tearoom, bunkhouses and other small businesses, community broadband, and tourism built on the island's wildlife and its green reputation.

Evaluation: the buyout reversed decline: the population rose to over 100 by the early 2020s, with young families and new businesses. The electricity scheme cut fuel costs and carbon emissions and became a model visited from around the world. But affordable **housing** is still short, so some who want to move there cannot; jobs are seasonal and depend on tourism; the ferry link and the lack of a secondary school remain; and the island still needs grants for big projects. Success is greatest for long-term residents and the environment, and less for people who want to settle. A bottom-up response worked here because the community is small and shared one goal; it would be harder to copy in a large, divided rural area.

Case study: a shanty town, Dharavi, Mumbai, India

A **shanty town** (squatter settlement, informal settlement) is an area of homes built, often illegally, by their residents on land they do not own, usually without planning, proper services or secure tenure.

Characteristics of Dharavi:

- **Location**: in the centre of Mumbai, between the city's two main railway lines and beside the Mithi River and Mahim Creek, on former marshland. It is next to the Bandra-Kurla Complex, a new business district, so the land is now extremely valuable.
- **Size and density**: estimates of 700 000 to 1 million people on about 2.1 km^2, a density of roughly 330 000 to 480 000 people per km^2, among the highest in the world.
- **Housing**: a mix of single-storey shacks of corrugated iron and plastic and two- or three-storey brick and concrete buildings that residents have improved over decades; many families live in one room of about 10 m^2, often used as a workshop too; narrow lanes that vehicles cannot enter.
- **Services**: piped water for only a few hours a day; shared toilets, in places one seat for over a thousand people; open drains; flooding in the monsoon.
- **Economy**: a busy **informal economy** of thousands of small workshops: leather goods, pottery, clothing, food and the recycling of much of Mumbai's plastic, metal and paper waste; many residents also work in the formal city.
- **Community**: people from every part of India and every religion; strong community groups; many families have lived there for generations and have identity papers and votes.

Challenges for managing it:

- **Density and access**: no space for new roads, drains or pipes without demolishing homes; emergency vehicles cannot get in.
- **Land and tenure**: much of the land belongs to the government; residents fear eviction, and only those who can prove they lived there before a cut-off date (2000) qualify for free rehousing.

- **Livelihoods**: tower blocks do not suit workshops, kilns and recycling yards, so rehousing can destroy jobs.
- **Trust and politics**: residents distrust **top-down** plans drawn up by the government and developers; disputes between agencies, developers and political parties; developers are driven by profit on the valuable land.
- **Cost and scale**: rehousing so many people costs billions; and the population keeps growing as new migrants arrive.
- **Health**: crowding spreads disease (Dharavi controlled COVID-19 in 2020 by testing house to house, and was praised by the World Health Organization).

Responses and their evaluation:

1. **Slum rehabilitation (from 1995)**: private developers rehouse eligible residents free of charge in new flats, and pay for it by selling extra flats on the open market. Some families gained secure, clean homes with toilets and water; but many towers were poorly built and badly maintained, crowded close together with little light, workshops were lost, and those who arrived later got nothing.
2. **The Dharavi Redevelopment Project**: first planned in 2004, stalled for nearly two decades, and awarded in 2022 to the Adani group. Eligible residents are to get free flats in new buildings within Dharavi, with others offered homes elsewhere. It could transform conditions and free valuable land, but residents fear that many will be moved out of the area, that businesses will not survive, and that the developer, not residents, will gain most.
3. **Bottom-up projects**: Indian NGOs (SPARC, the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan, a network of women's savings groups) helped residents map and count their own homes, save, and design and run community toilet blocks. These are cheap, trusted and well maintained, but small in scale and depend on government land and permission.
4. **Basic services by the city**: water standpipes, paving, drains, public toilets and clinics; quick and visible, but never enough for the numbers.

Overall: short-term, small-scale and bottom-up schemes have improved daily life most reliably; large top-down schemes promise more but have delivered slowly, and success differs between groups: owners of homes from before the cut-off gain, while tenants, later arrivals and workshop owners may lose. Other cities show the same: Rio de Janeiro's Favela-Bairro programme (from 1994) paved paths, added drains and created public spaces in hundreds of favelas without moving people, while Villa El Salvador in Lima began in 1971 as a planned site where the government provided plots and residents built their own homes; it is now a district of several hundred thousand people.

Case study: transport infrastructure for Delhi, India

Why transport needed improving:

- **Rapid growth**: the urban area has around 30 million people and has sprawled into neighbouring states (Gurugram and Noida), so journeys are long.
- **Congestion**: car and motorbike ownership grew very fast, roads were jammed, and buses were old, crowded and unreliable.

- **Air pollution**: Delhi is often among the most polluted capital cities in the world, partly from vehicle exhausts.
- **Economic need**: businesses needed workers to reach jobs across the city; the 2010 Commonwealth Games added a deadline.

Strategies and their evaluation:

1. **Delhi Metro** (first line opened in December 2002): built in phases by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, with large loans from Japan, it had more than 350 km of line and about 290 stations by 2024, carrying millions of passengers a day. It is fast, reliable, air-conditioned, with a women-only coach on every train; it takes cars off the roads, and was the first metro to be registered for UN carbon credits. But it cost billions of dollars, fare rises in 2017 cut passenger numbers for a time, many stations are hard to reach on foot ("last-mile" problem), so cars still grew, and congestion remains.
2. **CNG for public transport**: in 1998 India's Supreme Court ordered Delhi's buses, taxis and auto-rickshaws to switch from diesel and petrol to compressed natural gas (CNG); the switch was complete by about 2002–2003. Air quality improved at first, but the gains were wiped out as private vehicles kept multiplying.
3. **Bus rapid transit (BRT)**: a 5.8 km corridor with lanes for buses only opened in 2008, but drivers in the remaining lanes faced worse jams, the design caused accidents and confusion at junctions, there was strong opposition from car users and the courts, and it was **dismantled in 2016**: a clear failure, unlike BRT in Bogotá or Curitiba.
4. **Road rationing** ("odd–even": cars with odd and even number plates allowed on alternate days, tried in 2016 and 2019): short-term falls in traffic, but exemptions and second cars limited the effect.

Challenges of improving it: the **cost** (and paying back loans); **acquiring land** in a crowded city and moving residents and traders; **disruption** during construction (noise, dust, road closures; a section under construction collapsed in 2009, killing six workers); **heritage** sites near routes in Old Delhi; **technical** expertise for tunnelling; and **coordination** between the Delhi government, the national government and neighbouring states.

Judgement: the Metro is the most successful strategy, transforming travel for millions, but on its own it could not keep pace with vehicle growth; the cheaper road-based schemes were weaker or failed; and the benefits are uneven: those living near stations gain most, while the poorest still rely on buses, cycles and walking.

Key facts and formulas

There is no formula list in Paper 2, so learn all of these.

Formula	Status
Percentage urban = urban population ÷ total population × 100	Learn it
Percentage change = (new – old) ÷ old × 100 (negative for a fall)	Learn it
Mean yearly change = (new – old) ÷ number of years	Learn it
Population density = population ÷ area (people per km^2)	Learn it

Formula	Status
Primacy ratio $= \frac{\text{population of the largest city}}{\text{population of the second-largest city}}$	Learn it

Term and meaning	Status
Urbanisation: an increase in the proportion of a country's population living in urban areas	Learn it
Urban growth: an increase in the number of people or the area of an urban settlement	Learn it
Suburbanisation: the outward movement of people and activities from the inner city to the suburbs	Learn it
Counter-urbanisation: the movement of people from large urban areas to smaller towns, villages and rural areas	Learn it
Re-urbanisation: the movement of people back into city centres and inner urban areas after a period of decline	Learn it
Urban renewal: the improvement of run-down urban areas by refurbishing buildings (regeneration) or clearing and rebuilding (redevelopment)	Learn it
Gentrification: better-off people move into a poorer area and renovate homes, raising prices and displacing poorer residents	Learn it
Megacity: an urban area with over 10 million people	Learn it
World city: a city with a leading role in the global economy, politics and culture, a command and control centre for global flows	Learn it
Primate city: a country's largest city when it is many times larger than the next and dominates the country	Learn it
Threshold population: the minimum number of people needed to keep a service in business	Learn it
Bid rent: the rent a land user is willing to pay for a site, which falls with distance from the most accessible point	Learn it
Peak land value intersection (PLVI): the point of highest land value in a city, usually at the heart of the CBD	Learn it
Functional zonation: the clustering of similar land uses (functions) into distinct zones of an urban area	Learn it
Central business district (CBD): the commercial heart of a city, with the highest land values, tallest buildings and most accessible location	Learn it
Residential segregation: the separation of groups into different neighbourhoods by income, ethnicity, religion or age	Learn it

Term and meaning	Status
Filtering: older housing passes down to poorer groups as the better-off move to newer homes	Learn it
Shanty town (squatter settlement): housing built by residents, often illegally, on land they do not own, without planning, services or secure tenure	Learn it
Brownfield site: previously developed land, often derelict, available for reuse; a **greenfield site** has not been built on	Learn it
Green belt: a protected ring of open land around a city where building is restricted	Learn it
Rural depopulation: a fall in the number of people living in a rural area, mainly through out-migration	Learn it
Industrial inertia: an industry stays in its location after the original reasons for it have gone	Learn it

How to do it

We have tagged 60 questions for this topic (2021–2025, all from Paper 2), 54 different (Papers 22 and 23 were the same in June 2022, 2023 and 2024). Every one is a multi-part Question 3 or Question 6; 55 of them mix types (the other 5 are whole case-study questions), so the counts add up to 151.

Question type	Questions
Explain a settlement process or issue in a short answer	30
Essay (15 marks): assess a claim about settlements	21
Describe or outline a settlement feature, change or process	20
Explain with examples (8 marks)	20
Read a map, graph or table	17
Suggest reasons, problems or benefits	16
Use a photograph as evidence	13
Named case study	10
Define a term or compare two processes	4

Short parts (2–5 marks) give 1 mark for a simple point and 2 for a developed one (with detail or an example); "suggest two" parts give 1 mark each. The 7-mark (a) parts give 1–2 marks a point, up to 7. The 8-mark (b) parts are marked in three levels (Level 3, 6–8 marks), with a maximum of 4 without valid examples, and the 15-mark (c) essays in four (Level 4, 12–15 marks), with a maximum of 6 without examples.

1. Explain a settlement process or issue in a short answer (30 questions)

Every Question 3 ends with one (4 or 5 marks). Themes, most common first: competition for space, land values, bid rent, tall buildings and why services choose the CBD; population change in parts of cities (CBDs and HIC cities losing people, outer areas of LIC and MIC cities growing); the effects of counter-urbanisation; world cities; why shanty towns are hard to manage or improve; urban renewal; decline of remote rural settlements and the effects of urban growth on rural places; primacy; infrastructure for large cities; why manufacturing stays in a city.

1. **Find the focus**: the process (bid rent, counter-urbanisation, re-urbanisation), the place (CBD, outer areas, rural settlements, a country) and the context (HICs or LICs/MICs). Many answers lose marks by writing about the wrong place or context.
2. **Make two developed points** for 4 marks (or one more simple point for 5): a point, then **how or why** it happens, with a detail or example. "Offices can afford the highest rents **(1)** because the CBD is the most accessible point, so they reach the most clients and workers, and they build upwards to spread the cost of the land **(1)**."
3. Use the theory where it fits: bid rent and the PLVI for land values; thresholds and the negative multiplier for rural services; agglomeration for CBDs and world cities.

Variants:

- **Explain the concept of bid rent**: users compete for the most accessible land; the highest bidder wins; retail bids most but falls fastest, then industry, then housing; so zones form. An annotated bid rent diagram is credited.
- **Why the CBD's population is falling** (or why HIC cities lose people): housing is outbid by offices and shops; homes are expensive; congestion, noise, pollution and crime; jobs and services moving out; home-working; the pull of suburbs and rural areas; redevelopment replacing housing; low birth rates.
- **Why outer areas of LIC/MIC cities are growing**: migrants can afford only cheap or free land on the edge, so shanty towns grow there; young migrants have children; new roads, factories and planned housing schemes on the edge.
- **How a city becomes a world city** or **causes of world-city growth**: global finance, TNC headquarters, connectivity, political and cultural influence. Population size alone does **not** make a world city, and examiners report this mistake every year.
- **Why governments find shanty towns hard to improve**: use the challenges in the Dharavi case study (density, access, tenure, trust, cost, scale, constant growth, gangs, steep or flood-prone sites, success attracting more migrants).
- **Why an urban area suffers long-term environmental decline**: **deindustrialisation** closes factories and leaves **derelict land**; **disinvestment**, as firms, banks and councils stop spending there; **filtering**, as ageing housing passes to poorer households who cannot afford repairs; and the **better-off moving out** to the suburbs, taking their spending and taxes with them; so buildings, streets and services decay in a downward spiral that usually only renewal reverses.

- **Counter-urbanisation and competition for space in rural settlements**: newcomers compete with locals for limited **housing** (prices rise), and new homes, roads and services compete with **farmland** and green space; the focus is competition, not general impacts.

2. Essay (15 marks): assess a claim about settlements (21 questions)

Every Question 6 ends with one. Claims that recur:

- **World cities**: a globalised financial sector (or population size) is the most important factor in defining one.
- **Residential segregation**: the housing market (or economic factors, competition for space, internal migration) is its main cause.
- **Urban structure**: political, environmental or economic factors, or planning controls, matter most in where activities locate; activities are constantly changing location; the CBD is in decline.
- **Management**: governments can (or cannot) manage urban areas; urban renewal is the best solution to urban problems.
- **Growth**: there is a limit to how large a city can grow; cities shrink as countries develop; very large cities harm their countries; urban growth mostly harms rural settlements; urban issues differ between LICs and HICs.

1. **Introduction**: define the key terms (world city, residential segregation, urban renewal) and name the factors you will weigh.
2. **The case for**, with explained points and **named, detailed examples** (places, numbers, dates).
3. **The case against**: the **other factors** (for a world city: TNC headquarters, connectivity, political and cultural influence, innovation, against finance; for segregation: discrimination, culture, family and friends, planning, against the housing market), or the counter-evidence.
4. **"It depends"**: on **time** (a factor that mattered most in the past may not now), **scale** (one street or the whole city), **place** (HIC against LIC/MIC cities), and **links** between factors (the housing market works through income, but discrimination and planning shape the market itself). This lifts an answer into Level 4.
5. **Conclusion**: a clear judgement on "how far", which follows from the argument. "I agree" alone is not a judgement.

For "activities are constantly changing location", look at several activities (retail, offices, manufacturing, housing, parks) and ask what "constantly" means: some move often (shops), some barely move (government buildings, historic cores, parks protected by planning). For "there is a limit to city size", weigh diseconomies of scale (congestion, pollution, costs, management) and physical limits (relief, coast, rivers) against growing upwards, better technology and transport, megacities and **megalopolis** regions that keep growing. For the CBD in decline, ask what declines (retail, offices) and what grows (leisure, universities, flats).

3. Describe or outline a settlement feature, change or process (20 questions)

Seven-mark (a) parts: the characteristics of CBDs and how they change; how bid rent or competition for space leads to functional zonation (and what zonation looks like in HIC cities); how the locations of retailing, services or manufacturing change; how environmental or political factors affect where activities locate; the causes of

re-urbanisation; the processes of residential segregation; recent urban trends in HICs; problems of rural decline, issues from urban growth, or why some rural areas gain people.

1. **Describe, don't explain** unless asked: the examiners report that many answers to "describe" parts explain instead and lose time. "Describe how bid rent results in zonation" means describe the process step by step.
2. **Seven marks = about four points**, three developed with a detail or example (1 + 1 for each developed point).
3. **Use the lists in "Understand it"**: CBD characteristics (land value, height, land uses, low resident population, footfall, transport focus, vertical and horizontal zoning, core and frame), the stages of retail and manufacturing change, the processes of segregation (housing market, filtering, discrimination, family and friends, culture, planning).
4. **Link factors to activities** for "how environmental (or political) factors affect location": environmental means physical features (relief, rivers, flood risk, coast, wind, climate), not human impact on the environment; activities means land uses (housing, industry, shops, ports), not sports.
5. **Add a labelled diagram** where it helps (bid rent, an urban model).

"Recent urban trends in HICs": suburbanisation slowing, counter-urbanisation, re-urbanisation and gentrification, decline of retail and offices in CBDs, brownfield redevelopment, smaller households, ageing populations, shrinking cities (Detroit).

4. Explain with examples (8 marks) (20 questions)

Eight-mark (b) parts: the role of planning in where activities or manufacturing locate; the causes of and challenges for CBD change; why urban renewal happens; why providing services in rural settlements is an issue; the causes of functional zonation; why rural populations decline; why retail, services or manufacturing have moved; the consequences of re-urbanisation; why land values vary.

1. **Plan three or four reasons**, covering a range (economic, social, political, environmental), each **explained**: what happens, why, and with what result.
2. **Weave in located examples**: name the place and give a detail (Meadowhall, Sheffield, opened 1990 on a steelworks site; Paris and La Défense; London's congestion charge from 2003). Without valid examples the maximum is 4, and an example in name only ("e.g. London") earns little.
3. **Answer the exact question**: "why provision of services is an **issue**" needs why it matters (for users who are old, poor or without a car, and for providers who cannot cover costs), not only why it is difficult; "the role of planning" needs **how** planning moves activities (zoning, green belts, incentives, height limits, regeneration), with a city each time.
4. **HIC or LIC/MIC**: if the question sets a context, keep to it; if not, a contrast between the two lifts the answer.

5. Read a map, graph or table (17 questions)

Choropleth and city maps (urban housing conditions, the largest cities of a region, land values, building-height zones, the growth of a city), graphs (rural settlement populations, two cities' growth, world urban and rural population, city growth rates) and tables (the largest cities, inner-city data).

1. **The overall pattern first**: concentrated or dispersed, coastal or inland, highest in the centre and falling outwards, linear along a river or road, mostly in one continent; then **detail**: the highest and lowest, named, with values from the key; **anomalies**.
2. **Use the scale and key**: give distances, directions and values ("the city spread 4 km to the north between 1990 and 2010"); don't say cities are "near a river" that the scale shows is 200 km away.
3. **Trends**: values at the start and end, the size or percentage of change, and any change of direction; with two lines, the year they cross.
4. **Compare**: link the two settlements, cities or lines in each sentence ("village X grew by 240 people, whereas village Y lost a few"); separate descriptions earn at most 1.
5. **State a value or item**: give exactly what is asked (a number, not the list of names), with its unit.
6. **Evidence of a hierarchy**: a hierarchy means a few large cities and more smaller ones; count cities in each size band from the key and say how the numbers increase down the sizes. If one city is many times the next, you can argue **primacy** instead, with figures.

Calculations help comparisons: percentage change (a village growing from 800 to 1000 has grown by $\frac{1000 - 800}{800} \times 100 = 25\%$), mean yearly change, percentage urban, density and the primacy ratio (Key facts). Always show the working and give the unit.

6. Suggest reasons, problems or benefits (16 questions)

Usually 2 marks, 1 for each reason: reasons for the pattern just described (coastal cities: ports, trade, colonial history, a better climate, an inhospitable interior; land values: accessibility, demand, transport routes, the river), reasons a rural settlement grew (new housing, counter-urbanisation, a new road or rail link, a business park, retirement, tourism, remote working), problems for shanty-town residents, environmental effects of sprawl on rural areas, benefits of megacities for services, why planners cap building heights (views of historic buildings, daylight, wind tunnels, earthquakes and fire safety, airport flight paths), why some cities shrink.

1. **One clear, different reason per mark**, linked to the resource where there is one; no long explanation is needed.
2. In **3- and 4-mark** versions, add a development or a detail from the figure for the second mark of each reason.
3. Stay on the item asked: "settlement A between 2011 and 2021" means growth reasons for that place and period only.

7. Use a photograph as evidence (13 questions)

Photographs of urban railways, shanty towns on hillsides, high-rise flats, renewed streets, suburban housing, new and abandoned factory sites, a wealthy area.

1. **Point to what you can see**: "the houses are built on a steep, bare slope, so landslides are a risk"; many schemes cap answers that don't use the photo at 1 or 2 marks.
2. **Match the request**: features or evidence (state only), advantages, problems, challenges or benefits; economic benefits must be economic.

3. **Think about the context**: in an HIC, tarmac roads and street lights do not show wealth; well-kept houses, large gardens, garages and expensive cars do.

For a **hillside shanty town**: problems (landslide risk on steep slopes, small self-built houses of poor materials, no paved roads or difficult access, little greenery, few visible services such as sewers or water pipes, distance from jobs) and advantages (cheap, self-built and extendable homes, space between houses, views, a sense of community, some visible services such as power cables or water pipes, a road or path giving access, signs of organised upgrading such as painted, uniform houses). For a **new urban railway**: advantages (faster journeys, less traffic and air pollution, access to jobs and services, little land used if elevated, attracts investors) and challenges (cost, disruption and demolition during building, crossing roads and rivers, fares too high for the poor, maintenance, safety at crossings).

8. Named case study (10 questions)

Three case studies are asked: a **shanty town** in an LIC or MIC, a **rural settlement or rural area**, and **power or transport infrastructure** for a named city. Typical set: (a) describe its characteristics, or why it needed improving [7]; (b) explain the challenges or issues [8]; (c) evaluate the success of the responses or strategies [15].

1. **Name and locate it**, with facts: area, population, dates, organisations (Dharavi; Eigg; Delhi).
2. **(a) Characteristics**: location, site, appearance, housing, services, economy, people; or the shortcomings that needed fixing (capacity, quality, growth, pollution, an event). Without examples the maximum is 3.
3. **(b) Challenges**: economic (cost), social (residents' opposition, crime, disease), political (agencies, tenure, trust), environmental (site, pollution, heritage), practical and technical. In shanty-town answers, keep linking each to **management**; the examiners report answers that repeat (a) instead.
4. **(c) Evaluate at least two responses**: say what each tried to do, then judge it: **short term against long term**, **who gained and who lost**, the **costs** (money, social), the economic, social and environmental results, and **top-down against bottom-up**. End with which worked best and why.

9. Define a term or compare two processes (4 questions)

1. **Define** with every element, 1 mark each: counter-urbanisation = large numbers of people **(1)** moving out of urban areas **(1)** to smaller settlements and rural areas **(1)**; urbanisation = an increase in the **proportion** of people **(1)** living in urban areas **(1)**, through rural–urban migration and natural increase **(1)**.
2. **Compare** counter-urbanisation with re-urbanisation, or re-urbanisation with urban renewal, point by point with "whereas" and "both": direction of movement, who moves, causes, scale, effects. Two separate descriptions earn at most 1.
3. **Re-urbanisation and urban renewal** are different things: re-urbanisation is a movement of **people**; urban renewal is a change to **buildings and places**. Renewal often causes re-urbanisation, but renewal can happen without people returning (offices, a stadium).

The rest of the part asks for problems of re-urbanisation or counter-urbanisation (Understand it), or reasons for urban growth in LICs/MICs (rural–urban migration and natural increase, each developed).

Worked examples

Example 1

The table shows the population of four districts of a city in an MIC (thousands).

District	Distance from the CBD (km)	2005	2025
Central	0–2	180	150
Inner	2–6	620	700
Outer	6–15	410	980
Fringe	15–25	90	460

(a) (i) Calculate the percentage change in the population of the Fringe district between 2005 and 2025. Show your working. **[2]** (ii) Describe how population change between 2005 and 2025 varies with distance from the CBD. **[2]**

(b) Suggest two reasons for the fall in the population of the Central district. **[2]**

(c) Explain two challenges for the city government of providing services to fast-growing districts on the edge of the city. **[4]**

(a)(i) $\frac{460 - 90}{90} \times 100$ **(1)** $= +411.1\%$ **(1)**.

(ii)

- Only the Central district lost people (from 180 to 150 thousand, −16.7%); every district further out grew **(1)**.
- The rate of growth rises with distance: the Inner district grew by 12.9%, the Outer by 139.0% and the Fringe by 411.1%, more than fivefold **(1)**.

(b)

- Offices, shops and hotels outbid housing for central land, so homes are demolished or converted as the CBD expands **(1)**.
- Congestion, noise, air pollution and high rents push families out to cheaper, more spacious land further from the centre **(1)**.

(c)

- Cost and scale of infrastructure: new districts spread quickly over a large area, so the city must lay many kilometres of water mains, sewers, roads and power lines **(1)**, and where homes are built informally before any plan, the pipes and roads have to be fitted around existing buildings, which raises the cost and slows the work **(1)**.

- Funding and information: many new residents are poor or work in the informal sector and pay little tax, so the city has little money to spend **(1)**; and the population grows faster than it can be counted, so schools, clinics and bus routes are planned for far fewer people than actually arrive, and they are overcrowded as soon as they open **(1)**.

Example 2

With the aid of examples, explain why some activities have been returning to the CBDs of cities in HICs. **[8]**

After decades of shops, offices and residents moving out, many CBDs have gained new activities, because of renewal, transport, changing tastes and planning.

First, **urban renewal** has created space and an attractive image. Old railway yards, warehouses and docks next to the centre have been rebuilt as offices, flats, shops and public squares. In London, the run-down railway lands behind King's Cross station were redeveloped from the late 2000s, and Google chose the area for its large new London headquarters, drawing other technology and media firms after it.

Second, **new transport links** have made the centre the most accessible place again. London's Elizabeth line, opened in 2022, brought about 1.5 million more people within 45 minutes of central London, and Birmingham's New Street station was rebuilt in 2015 with a shopping centre above it. Offices that need to draw skilled workers from the whole city region value this accessibility.

Third, **re-urbanisation** brings residents and their spending back. Young professionals and students want to live near work, universities and nightlife, so empty offices and upper floors are converted into flats and student housing. These residents support cafés, gyms and food shops in the evenings and at weekends.

Fourth, **leisure and experiences** are replacing shopping. As online sales take trade from shops, landlords fill empty units with restaurants, bars, cinemas, climbing walls and entertainment venues that cannot be delivered online, so the "night-time economy" grows.

Finally, **planning policy** supports the centre: rules that favour town-centre sites over out-of-town ones, that new homes go on brownfield land, and that streets are pedestrianised make the CBD more attractive to investors and visitors.

So activities return to CBDs where renewal, transport and planning make the centre accessible and attractive again, though retail itself is still declining in many of them.

Level 3 (6–8 marks): several reasons clearly explained (renewal, transport, re-urbanisation, leisure, planning), each linked to activities returning, with located examples integrated.

Example 3

'The problems of shanty towns can be solved only by the residents themselves.' With the aid of examples, how far do you agree with this statement? **[15]**

Introduction. Shanty towns are self-built, often illegal, settlements without proper services or secure tenure. Their problems include overcrowding, poor housing, lack of water and sanitation, disease, hazards and insecure land rights. Solutions can be **bottom-up** (led by residents and NGOs) or **top-down** (led by governments and developers).

For. Residents know what they need, and self-help is cheap and trusted. In Dharavi, Mumbai, community groups supported by the NGO SPARC, the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan surveyed their own homes and designed and ran community toilet blocks that are better maintained than many government ones. In Lima, Villa El Salvador began in 1971 as a site where residents built their own homes on plots; over decades they improved them from straw mats to brick and concrete, and it is now a district of several hundred thousand people. Top-down schemes have often failed residents: in Mumbai, slum rehabilitation towers were often poorly built and crowded, and workshops were lost, while the Dharavi Redevelopment Project stalled for nearly two decades.

Against. Residents alone cannot provide **trunk infrastructure** (water mains, sewers, power, roads), secure **land titles**, or money on the scale needed for a settlement of up to a million people. Villa El Salvador succeeded partly because the government gave the land and laid out the streets. In Rio de Janeiro, the city's Favela-Bairro programme (from 1994) paved paths, built drains and improved hundreds of favelas without moving people, which residents could not have funded. Some problems need state power: crime and gangs need policing, and hazards such as landslides on steep slopes need engineering and, sometimes, relocation.

It depends. On the **problem**: residents can improve their own homes and run local services, but city-wide infrastructure and tenure need government. On the **scale and time**: self-help works best for small improvements over years; large redevelopment can change conditions fast but risks displacing people. On **governance**: the most successful schemes are **partnerships**, where governments provide land, infrastructure and tenure, and residents shape the design and do much of the work. On the **place**: in a well-funded city the state can do more, while in poorer countries self-help may be the only option.

Conclusion. Residents are essential to solving the problems of shanty towns, because schemes without their trust and knowledge often fail, but they cannot solve them alone: the best results come when governments and residents work together, so I largely disagree with the word "only".

Level 4 (12–15 marks): both sides weighed with detailed, located examples, variation by problem, scale, time and place, and a judgement that answers "how far".

Common mistakes

- **Treating population size as what makes a world city.** A megacity is defined by size; a world city by global economic, political and cultural influence.
- **Saying the CBD has a high resident population.** It has a high daytime population but few residents.
- **Getting bid rent backwards**: land and living costs are **highest** at the centre and fall outwards; retail bids most but its bid falls fastest.
- **Confusing re-urbanisation** with urban growth, rural–urban migration or urban renewal: it is people moving back into city centres.

- **Confusing urban renewal with any change in a city**: renewal improves run-down areas; link it to the problem it solves.
- **Misreading "activities" and "environmental factors"**: activities are land uses (shops, offices, industry, housing), not sports; environmental factors are physical features (relief, rivers, flood risk, wind), not human damage to the environment.
- **Explaining when asked to describe** (and describing when asked to explain), especially in 7-mark (a) parts.
- **Ignoring the context**: answering about HICs when the question says LICs/MICs, about rural areas when it says urban, about countries when it says cities, about the CBD when it says the inner city (London's Docklands are not the CBD).
- **Answering both options** in an "either power or transport" question, or explaining day-to-day problems instead of the challenges of **providing** the infrastructure.
- **Describing each city on a map** instead of the pattern, and ignoring the map's scale.
- **Repeating part (a) in part (b)** of a case study, and giving a textbook case study you cannot detail.
- **Cause and effect reversed**: residential segregation is caused by income, ethnicity and the housing market, not the other way round.
- **Examples in name only** ("e.g. London", "in LICs such as Africa"): Africa is a continent, not a country.
- **Vague words without detail**: "infrastructure", "technology", "resources", "quality of life".
- **Essays without a judgement**: weigh the claim and say how far you agree.

How to get the marks

- **Command words. Describe** = what something is like, or what the resource shows, with detail and data, no reasons. **Explain** = reasons and processes, linking cause and effect. **Suggest** = apply what you know to a resource or new situation. **Compare** = linked similarities and differences ("whereas", "both"). **Outline** = the main points briefly. **Define** = the precise meaning, with every element. **Assess**, **evaluate**, **how far**, **to what extent** = weigh both sides and reach a judgement.
- **Count the marks.** A 4-mark part needs two developed points or four simple ones; "suggest two" gets 1 mark each, so long explanations waste time, and extra answers beyond the number asked are not credited.
- **Develop each point** with how or why, a consequence, a detail or an example.
- **Use the resource**: quote values, units, names, directions and distances; base "suggest" answers on what the figure or photograph shows.
- **Examples.** 8-mark parts need located examples (a maximum of 4 without them); 15-mark essays need detailed ones built into the argument (a maximum of 6 without them). Places, dates and numbers beat names alone: "Meadowhall, opened in 1990 on a former steelworks by the M1" beats "e.g. Sheffield". Examples from your own country, if you know them well, are welcomed.
- **Diagrams earn credit**: an annotated bid rent graph, an urban model, a sketch of a CBD.
- **Case studies**: name and locate, give facts, explain challenges, then evaluate at least two responses by time, stakeholder, cost and outcome, and finish with a judgement.

- **Time**: the 15-mark essay is a quarter of the paper's marks; leave time for evaluation and a conclusion.

Quick check

1. A country's largest city has 9.6 million people and its second city 1.2 million. Calculate the primacy ratio, and state what it suggests.
2. A city grew from 2.5 million people in 2000 to 4.1 million in 2020. Calculate the percentage change and the mean increase in people per year.
3. A country has 36.0 million people, of whom 21.6 million live in urban areas. Calculate its percentage urban.
4. In the bid rent diagram, commerce bids $100 - 40d$, industry $50 - 10d$ and housing $30 - 4d$ (rent per m², d in km from the centre). Find the distance at which industry starts to outbid commerce, and the distance at which housing starts to outbid industry.
5. Explain the difference between re-urbanisation and urban renewal.

Answers

1. Primacy ratio $= 9.6 \div 1.2 = 8.0$. The largest city is eight times the size of the second, so it is a **primate city**: the country's people, jobs and investment are concentrated in one city.
2. Change $= 4.1 - 2.5 = 1.6$ million. Percentage change $= \dfrac{1.6}{2.5} \times 100 = +64\%$. Mean increase $= 1\,600\,000 \div 20 = 80\,000$ people per year.
3. Percentage urban $= \dfrac{21.6}{36.0} \times 100 = 60.0\%$.
4. Industry equals commerce where $100 - 40d = 50 - 10d$, so $30d = 50$ and $d = 1.7$ km (to 1 dp; the rent there is 33.3). Housing equals industry where $50 - 10d = 30 - 4d$, so $6d = 20$ and $d = 3.3$ km (rent 16.7). So commerce wins the CBD up to 1.7 km, industry from 1.7 to 3.3 km, and housing beyond.
5. Re-urbanisation is a movement of **people** back into city centres and inner areas after a period of decline. Urban renewal is the improvement of run-down **places**, by refurbishing or rebuilding. Renewal often causes re-urbanisation (new flats on old docks attract young adults), but renewal can happen without people returning, and people can return without renewal.

Past questions to try

- **9696/23/O/N/24 Q3**: land values in Richmond, USA, reasons for the pattern, and the concept of bid rent.
- **9696/23/M/J/24 Q6**: shanty town case study: characteristics, management challenges and an evaluation of responses.
- **9696/23/M/J/25 Q6**: counter-urbanisation and re-urbanisation compared, why urban renewal occurs, and an essay on managing urban areas.
- **9696/21/O/N/24 Q6**: bid rent and functional zonation, rural service provision, and an essay on urban growth and rural settlements.