

Urbanisation

Urbanisation is the movement of an increasing percentage of the population into the urban areas.

Causes of urbanisation

- Rural to urban migration: People move from the countryside to the cities due to population pressure and a lack of resources in rural areas.
- In LEDC's infrastructure of cities is expanding faster than in the rural areas, thus attracting industrial investment and people seeking employment.
- Population increase is often higher in cities due to better health care facilities (lower death rates) and a younger population in cities.
- More people work in secondary and tertiary industries, which are often found in urban areas

Counter-urbanisation

Counter-urbanisation is the movement out of cities into rural areas. It is most common in MEDC's.

Reasons for counter-urbanisation

- Less crowded housing and larger availability of land, cheaper housing
- Less traffic congestion and exhaust fumes (air pollution)
- Scenic beauty and increased tranquillity
- Lower crime rates/higher safety
- Increased mobility allows people to commute for work

Effects of counter urbanisation

- Increase in housing prices due to high demand
- Car ownership reduces public transport, isolating the youth and the elderly
- Traffic congestion due to high car ownership and commuting
- More dormitory villages as people commute to work in the city

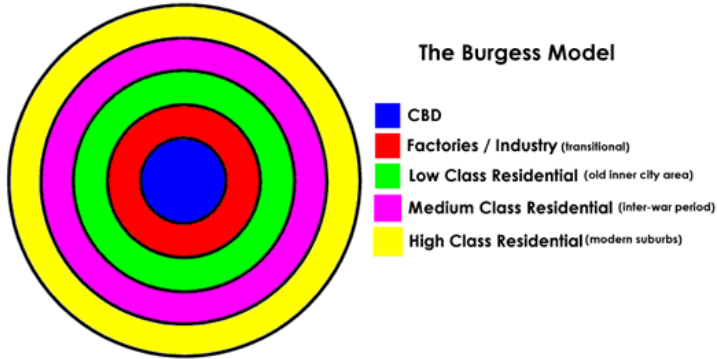
Urban land use patterns of LEDC's and MEDC's

Urban land use models attempt to portray common patterns of how the land is used in cities. These models split cities into different functional zones, such as :

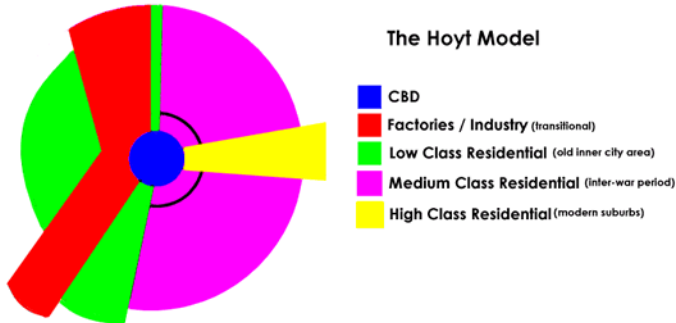
- The CBD (or central business district): the commercial centre of the city that features shops and offices, tall buildings, little housing
- Inner city: areas used for light manufacturing, poor quality housing, lower class residential area
- Outer city: better quality housing, middle class residential area

- Suburbs: best quality housing, high class residential

There are two main land use models:



Burgess Concentric Zone Model



Hoyt Sector Model

In both MEDC's and LEDC's:

- the CBD is located centrally and there are distinct zones of different quality housing
- industry is close to transport links

In LEDC's:

- Higher cost housing tends to be closer to the CBD than in MEDC's
- Low quality housing tends to be further from the CBD than in MEDC's
- There may be squatter settlements

Problems of urban areas

Decline of the CBD of cities in MEDC's due to congestion and poor accessibility, including a lack of parking spaces. Also, retailers may leave the CBD due to high rents, leading to empty derelict buildings. Furthermore, companies and administration may decentralise to the outskirts or suburbs.

Solutions:

Increase pedestrianisation to reduce air and noise pollution from vehicles.

Improve transport facilities such as underground railways to reduce congestion.

Incentivise the development of shopping malls to prevent retailers from moving to greenfield or brownfield sites.



Housing issues

The following housing issues may occur in urban areas:

- **Housing shortages:** not enough housing available to meet demand
- **Low-quality housing:** poor living conditions, such as lack of access to clean water, sanitation, electricity and space. Old properties in the city centre may also need to be renewed.
- **Affordability of housing:** housing may be hard to get by and local residents may not earn enough to pay high rents or purchase their own dwelling (e.g. due to excessive property prices and high demand thanks to immigration)

Solutions:

- Replace old housing by blocks of flats or houses in the suburbs
- Construct new towns where land is available.

Decline of the transition zone (twilight zone) in MEDC's due to derelict land, high rates of crime and social issues.

Solutions:

City governments can encourage redevelopment

Traffic congestion

Traffic congestion often occurs in old city centres or areas not designed for mass (public) transport. It can be caused by the increased use of private cars, a large increase in commuters, and people passing through the city on their way to other places, as well as people visiting the CBD for tourism and entertainment.

Congestion may result in delays for work and delivery of products, which may increase transport costs and cause companies to lose profits. Also, congestion can increase air pollution from exhaust fumes, thus contributing to global warming and the likelihood of acid rain. Photochemical smog may reduce visibility and cause breathing problems, especially for asthmatics.

Solutions:

- Improve public transport facilities by constructing underground railways and creating designated bus lanes

- Construct ring roads and roundabouts to reduce congestion from traffic lights
- Encourage park and ride schemes
- Make suburban services better to reduce the need to commute into city centres
- Encourage working from home to reduce commuter traffic

Lack of Security in MEDC's and LEDC's may lead to high crime rates and graffiti.

Solutions:

Increase patrols by police or private security firms

Install closed circuit TV to scare away pick pockets and shop lifters

Police patrols to increase security in urban areas

Crime and racial conflicts in MEDC's and LEDC's due to high levels of poverty, inner city ghettos (MEDC's) or informal settlements (LEDC's).

Solutions:

Provide social facilities such as sports clubs

Encourage job creation schemes to provide employment

Provide language lessons to immigrants



Squatter settlements

Squatter settlements are a type of slum housing often located in the outer city areas of less developed countries (LEDCs). Squatter settlements can face the following issues:

- Residents typically do not have a legal right to occupy the land, so could be evicted any time
- Houses may not be weatherproof
- Lack of sanitation and quality water supply -> this can lead to disease outbreak (e.g. cholera)
- No refuse collection
- Poverty and unemployment
- Extreme overcrowding
- Long commuting times into the city centre, worsened by lack of public transport

Possible solutions:

- Low-cost housing schemes, including flexible loans and subsidies for home building
- Provision of water, electricity and sewerage systems
- Construction of health and educational services

- Support for the informal sector and local businesses

Conflicts over land use change

Land use in urban areas may change over time. For example, old industrial zones may be converted into a residential areas, or commercial activities may displace housing.

Land use change may occur thanks to:

- **Urban planning:** the city council introduces new policies to change how land should be used and which activities are permitted in different zones throughout the city
- **Competitive demand/market factors:** Commercial activities may displace lower-income residents from increasingly desirable locations if they can afford and are willing to pay more for owning and/or using the land.
- **Redevelopment:** Attempts may be made to use old, run-down urban areas more effectively than before, for example by investing in new transport infrastructure and local services and facilities.

Land use changes can lead to conflicts when one type of land use negatively impacts another, or when disagreement over land use policies arises.

For example, residents may complain about the noise and gases from nearby factories, or the fact that the construction of a new main road has led to increasing traffic congestion and air pollution.

In suburban areas, primarily on the outskirts of a city, complaints about noise and odour from agricultural activities are also common.