Your notes

GCSE Geography: revision notes

Urban issues and challenges

Contents

1. Urbanisation
2. Case study: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (an NEE)
3. Urban change in the UK: case study, Bristol
4. Sustainable urban living
5. Rural-urban links in the UK (Eduqas)
6. Key terms
7. Quick questions
8. What to do next

Urbanisation

- **Urbanisation** is the increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities. More than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas.
- It is fastest in low-income countries (LICs) and newly emerging economies (NEEs). It is caused by **rural–urban migration** and by **natural increase** (more births than deaths, because many migrants are young).
- **Push factors** drive people from the countryside (poverty, few services, drought, conflict). **Pull factors** draw them to cities (jobs, schools, healthcare and a hope of a better life).
- Megacities have more than 10 million people, such as Tokyo, Delhi, Lagos and São Paulo. Most are in LICs and NEEs.

Case study: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (an NEE)

- Rio is on the south-east coast of Brazil, and is its second-largest city. It is a major port and a centre for services, tourism (Copacabana beach and the Christ the Redeemer statue), offshore oil, and culture such as Carnival. It hosted the 2016 Olympic Games.
- It grew through **rural–urban migration**, especially from the poorer north-east of Brazil, and through **natural increase**.
- Opportunities: better access to healthcare, education, water and electricity, and jobs in manufacturing, services and tourism.
- Challenges: about one in five people live in **favelas** (informal settlements), such as Rocinha, with poor housing, a lack of clean water and sanitation, crime and drug gangs, and unemployment. There is also pollution, such as in Guanabara Bay, and traffic congestion.

- Urban planning: the **Favela** Bairro Project improved many **favelas** with paved roads, water supplies and sewerage, community centres and crèches, and gave residents legal ownership of their homes. Living conditions improved, but it was expensive, and problems such as crime remained.

Your notes

Urban change in the UK: case study, Bristol

- Bristol is in south-west England, on the River Avon, with about 470,000 people. It grew as a port, and today its big employers include aerospace (Airbus and Rolls-Royce at Filton), universities, media and finance.
- Migration from the rest of the UK and abroad has made Bristol a diverse, multicultural city.
- Opportunities: culture and entertainment (music, festivals and the Harbourside), jobs, integrated transport such as MetroBus, and green initiatives. Bristol was the European Green Capital in 2015.
- Challenges: big differences in income, health and life expectancy between areas; derelict old industrial land; a shortage of affordable housing; the choice between building on brownfield or **greenfield sites**; waste disposal; and **urban sprawl**.
- **Regeneration**: the Temple Quarter, around Temple Meads station, is being redeveloped with offices, homes and a university campus. The old docks at Harbourside were regenerated with museums, homes and restaurants.

Sustainable urban living

- Saving water (such as rainwater harvesting), saving energy (such as insulation and solar panels), recycling waste and creating green spaces.
- Sustainable transport: park-and-ride schemes, cycle lanes, bus lanes, congestion charges (such as London's) and trams or rapid bus systems.

Rural-urban links in the UK (Eduqas)

- Eduqas Component 1, Theme 2. The urban-rural continuum is the gradual change from city to countryside. A town's **sphere of influence** is the area whose people use its shops and services, such as a hospital.
- **Counter-urbanisation** is people moving from cities to the countryside, for space, quiet and cheaper or nicer homes, helped by cars, broadband and home working. It increases commuting and traffic and pushes up rural house prices.
- Remote rural areas lose services such as village shops, post offices, banks and buses, and some suffer depopulation and rural poverty.
- Challenges in UK towns and cities include an ageing population, migration and the need for new homes, built on **brownfield sites** (such as Cardiff Bay's waterfront) or **greenfield sites**.
- **Egan's wheel** lists eight parts of a sustainable community: governance, transport and connectivity, services, environment, economy, housing and the built environment, social and cultural life, and equity.

- Retailing has changed: out-of-town shopping centres and internet shopping have drawn customers away from high streets, leaving empty shops.
- Global cities: study one city in a low income or newly industrialised country and one in a high income country, including migration, ways of life, the **informal economy** (unofficial work) and how each city is connected to the world.

Your notes

Key terms

Urbanisation	An increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities.
Rural–urban migration	People moving from the countryside to towns and cities.
Push factor	Something that makes people want to leave a place.
Pull factor	Something that attracts people to a place.
Natural increase	When the birth rate is higher than the death rate.
Megacity	A city with more than 10 million people.
Favela	An informal settlement in a Brazilian city.
Regeneration	Improving a run-down area.
Brownfield site	Land that has been built on before.
Greenfield site	Land that has never been built on, usually countryside.
Urban sprawl	A town or city spreading out into the surrounding countryside.
Counter-urbanisation	People moving out of cities to live in the countryside. (Eduqas)
Sphere of influence	The area whose people use a town's shops and services. (Eduqas)
Egan's wheel	Eight things a sustainable community needs, from good transport to fairness for everyone. (Eduqas)
Informal economy	Unofficial, untaxed work, such as street selling. (Eduqas)

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is urbanisation?
2. Which of these is a push factor for rural–urban migration?
3. Which of these is a pull factor for rural–urban migration?
4. What is a megacity?
5. What is natural increase?
6. What is a favela?
7. What did the Favela Bairro Project do?
8. Which of these is a challenge in Rio de Janeiro?

Answers

1. An increase in the proportion of people living in towns and cities
2. A lack of jobs and services in the countryside
3. More jobs in the city
4. A city with more than 10 million people
5. When births are higher than deaths
6. An informal settlement in a Brazilian city
7. Improved favelas with services such as water, sewerage and paved roads
8. Crime and poor sanitation in favelas

What to do next

Practise 16 questions on this topic

Try 5 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

Free revision for GCSE and KS3 at lycolearn.co.uk. Some notes are for one exam board only, and say so in brackets.

Your notes