



Migration Patterns within Urban Areas

This Factsheet describes the ways in which people move within cities and how these movements differ between MEDCs and LEDCs.

Introduction

The structure and characteristics of cities vary greatly from one part of the world to another. In MEDCs, towns and cities are usually the result of a long period of urban growth, often closely linked to economic development and industrialisation of the country. In LEDCs, many cities have undergone rapid, recent urban growth. The housing patterns of the two types of city are thus very different.

Cities in MEDCs have roughly concentric residential zones with older, poorer housing near to the CBD and more expensive newer housing further out. In LEDCs housing is near to the centre and, in more environmentally favoured areas such as along coasts, tends to be owned by the wealthier groups. Housing in less desirable central areas, such as along railway lines, roads, and river banks and in marshy areas, tends to be where the poorer classes live. They also occupy large shantytown developments on the edges of the cities. Because of these considerable differences, the two types of urban areas will be considered separately.

Cities in MEDCs:

During the late 1800s, as industrialisation took place, there was a large-scale movement of people from the rural areas to the towns, known as **urbanisation**. The newcomers settled in newly built terraced housing near to the factories and close to the city centres. During the 1920s and 1930s, as public transport, especially buses, became more widely available, people were able to live further from the work place. They moved away from the inner city areas to larger houses which were often detached or semi-detached and had gardens. The process of **suburbanisation** had begun. The increased use of the car from the 1970s onwards continued this tendency to move outwards and caused the growth of cities and towns. Since the 1980s, this outwards migration has been taken one step further as people have moved into villages and cities beyond the Green Belt, known as **counterurbanisation**. Also in the last twenty years, there has been a process of **reurbanisation** as some people have returned to live in the inner city areas. Recently, as in Manchester, reurbanisation has involved people returning to new **brown-field** developments in city centres.

Fig 1. Migration patterns affecting urban areas.

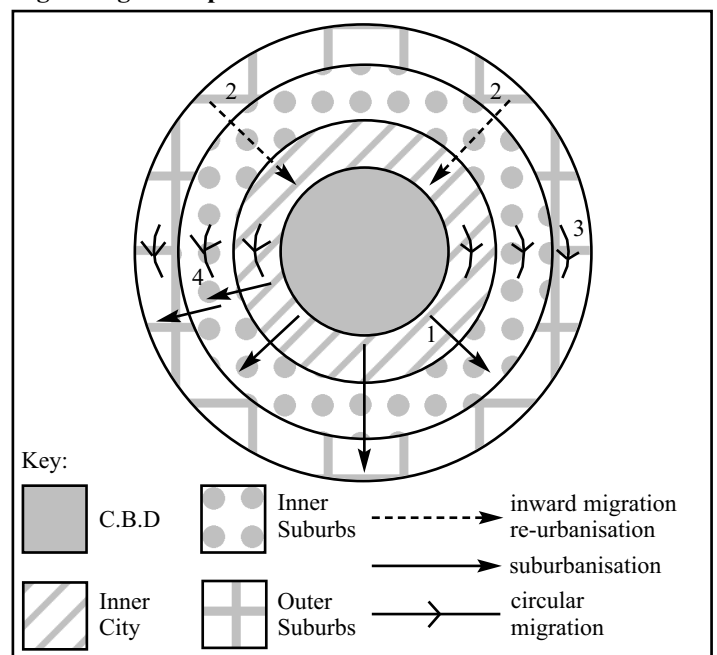
Process	Dates	Moved from	Moved to
Urbanisation	From early 1800s	Countryside	Towns & cities
Suburbanisation	From early 1900s	Inner city areas	Suburban areas
Counter-urbanisation	From late 1970s	Urban areas	Rural settlements
Reurbanisation	From 1980s	Suburbs & villages	Inner city areas of gentrification & redevelopment

Exam Hint: It is vital that you know the meanings of all these terms. In particular make sure that you know the difference between suburbanisation and counterurbanisation.

This Factsheet considers the major migration patterns within cities (Fig 2) so counterurbanisation is not included.

- Suburbanisation:** an outwards movement within the city e.g. from the inner city to the inner suburbs, from the inner city to the outer suburbs or from the inner suburbs to the outer suburbs.
- Circular movement:** from one part of the inner city or suburbs to another.
- Reurbanisation:** an inwards movement from the suburbs to inner city areas.
- Filtering:** movement from poorer, usually inner city areas to outer more attractive areas, by upwardly mobile groups with increasing incomes, that is a selective movement.

Fig 2. Migration patterns within cities.



1. Suburbanisation:

The process of suburbanisation, which started in the 1920s and 1930s, continues to the present day. As more modern housing areas are built on the outskirts of the city there seems to be a continuing outward migratory process. Some of the original migrants to the inner suburbs then moved further from the city centres to even better housing areas in the outer suburbs. In fact there seems to be a general pattern of migration for young married couples and families. They set up home in the inner city or inner suburbs, where the property is within their initial price bracket, and then move further out during their working lives as their disposable incomes increase, into bigger and better houses. This is called **filtering**.

As with any migration there are several **push factors** which encourage people to migrate from the inner city and also **pull factors** which attract them to the new housing areas.

Push factors:

- Housing: poorly built, terraced houses which lacked basic amenities.
- Environmental problems: air pollution from the factories and traffic, a lack of open space and large amounts of derelict land.
- Unemployment: the decline of heavy industry resulted in a lack of jobs in these areas.
- Social problems: some inner city areas became connected with crime, drugs and vandalism.
- Redevelopment: for either retail, residential or industrial use forced people to move from some inner city areas.

Pull factors:

- Housing: newly built properties had modern amenities such as central heating, double-glazing and garages. 'Housing' the cars is a priority.
- Environment: there was more open space, these areas were closer to the open countryside and many of the houses had gardens. The expensive ones were lower densities.
- Lifestyle: these areas were perceived as safer places to live with less traffic and crime.

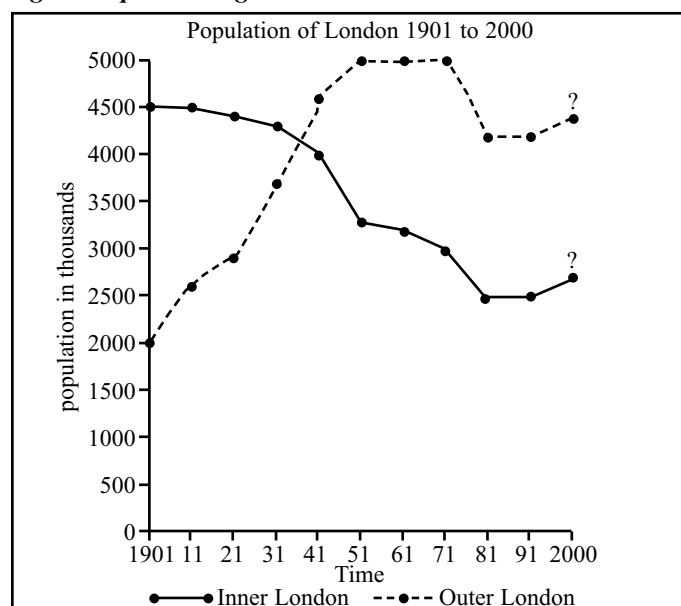
- Employment: jobs were available on the peripheral industrial estates and more recently in the retail and business parks found there.
- Education: schools were better as was the general social environment in which to raise a family.
- Access: fast road networks or suburban railways to allow commuting to a wide range of locations. There are of course disadvantages to such house-moves as people may be further from their work and the central retail area. There is also often less community spirit in such areas. Children have to go to new school and make new friends. New suburban estates also use up valuable green land and increase air pollution and traffic due to increased travelling distances. This is the spreading menace of urban sprawl.

Exam Hint: Always make sure when writing about push and pull factors that you do write about the same factor in both lists e.g. Push: no jobs in the country; Pull: plenty of jobs in the city. However, you need to be more specific to gain credit so you might write 'limited employment opportunities in the countryside other than farming where mechanisation has led to a fall in demand for workers.'

Case study 1: London.

Fig 3 illustrates the process of suburbanisation which has occurred in London. In 1901, the population of Inner London was over twice that of Outer London. During the 1930s, the population of Outer London had grown sufficiently to overtake that of the Inner area and continued to increase until 1970 when the process of counter-urbanisation can be seen. The population of Inner London continued to fall until 1981. Since that time both areas seem to have had a slight increase in their populations reflecting a tendency for people to return to living in the city.

Fig 3. Graph showing suburbanisation in London.



Exam hint: Read the text on London. Annotate the graph to show the reasons for the changes. Add the two populations to work out total population trends.

Figures 4 shows the population figures, over a period of 25 years, for ten London boroughs along a west to east transect. It can be seen that for most boroughs there was a decrease in population in between 1971 and 1981. This trend was reversed for 6 of the boroughs between 1981 and 1991 and for the remaining 4 between 1990 and 1996.

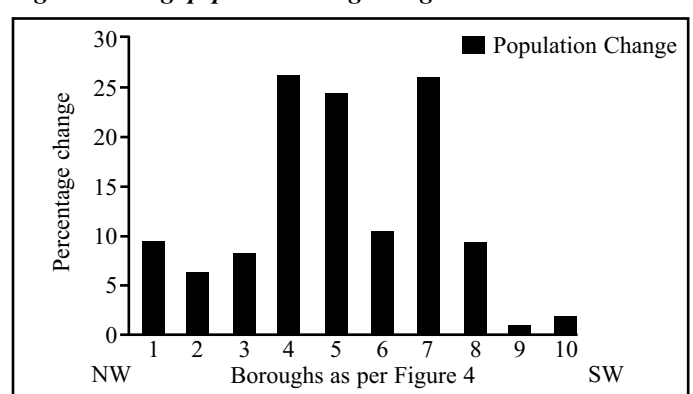
Fig 4. Population data for selected boroughs of London.

BOROUGH	1971 Population	1981 Population	1991 Population	1996 Population Estimate
1. Hillingdon	232	226	231	248
2. Ealing	300	279	275	297
3. Hammersmith & Fulham	184	145	149	158
4. Kensington & Chelsea	177	126	139	159
5. Westminster	213	164	175	204
6. City of London	4	5	4	5
7. Tower Hamlets	164	140	161	177
8. Newham	234	209	212	228
9. Greenwich	214	210	208	212
10. Bexley	215	214	216	219

Note all figures are in thousands

Figure 5 shows the change from 1981 to 1996 for the same ten boroughs. It can be seen that apart from the City of London, which has only a relatively small population, increase tends to be greater in central areas. This shows that some people are now moving back into these areas, i.e. reurbanisation.

Fig 5. Percentage population change along a transect across London.



Some of this reurbanisation was linked to planned urban development such as that of the London Docklands Development Corporation. The LDDC began in 1981 and affected the boroughs of Newham and Tower Hamlets. Old warehouses and dockside buildings were turned into "yuppie" apartments. Many of the inner boroughs of London were gentrified. Islington was one of the first areas to be affected. Other areas include Notting Hill and parts of Battersea and Chelsea.

2. Reurbanisation:

During the last 20 years or so there has been a reversal in the trend of outwards migration and more people are returning to live in the Inner City areas. The reasons for this are:

- Housing in rundown inner-city areas is often relatively inexpensive.
- People want to live near to the retail/entertainment facilities of the CBD.
- There is reduced journey to work time and less stress from the daily commuter.
- People prefer to live in these busy, multicultural areas. Younger people like the 'buzz'.

This process is known as **gentrification**. Young professional people, such as the 'yuppies' of the 1980s, have moved into the inner city, buying old houses and renovating them. The whole character of the local area is eventually changed into a more middle-class environment with improved housing and housing such as wine bars and delicatessens to cater for the new residents. In some cases, old warehouses and factories are gentrified into new luxury flats as London's Docklands. The latest thinking on the future of cities is to promote reurbanisation on brown-field sites at the expense of further sprawl into green-field areas.

Exam Hint: Gentrification is quite a popular topic on most exams. Make sure that you know exactly what the term means and can quote named areas. Note that there are also disadvantages as gentrification can lead to 'rocketing' house prices.

3. Circulation (within similar urban areas)

A certain number of migrations occur within one of the concentric areas of housing shown in Fig 2. There could be several reasons for this:

- * People do not wish to live further out from the CBD but would like to move house, perhaps from a council-owned property to a private one, or from a house to a bungalow for health reasons etc.
- * People are forced to move as a result of local authority redevelopment schemes.
- * People may wish to be nearer to a new job or relatives.
- * People see housing as an investment and look out for 'hot neighbourhoods' where prices are tipped to rise. They may buy a rundown property and improve it.

Cities in LEDCs

During the last thirty years cities in LEDCs have grown rapidly as a result of natural increase of population combined with large-scale rural to urban migration.

The result has been massive urban growth combined with urban sprawl. Therefore, LEDC cities such as Beijing or Bangkok do show the development of suburbs, but there is no widespread process of inner-city out-migration to suburbs – the suburbanisation process as in MEDC cities. Nevertheless, some government policies such as building new towns (in Bangkok, Mumbai or Cairo) or new government housing, as in Sao Paulo, do involve mass migrations out from the inner parts of the cities to the outer suburbs.

Any study of migration movements in LEDC cities is complicated because there are few statistics available on migration, and there is limited finance for data collection. It is also more difficult to develop a general model for LEDC cities, as there is great diversity between Latin American, Africa or Asian cities.

Most LEDC cities have a rich sector; for example in many African or Asian cities it was the former colonial area. As a middle class develops people move from other areas to this sector. For example, in **Bogota** or **Capetown**, it is possible to see filtering but on a far smaller scale than in MEDC cities. However the main high-class areas, usually near the CBD, have remained largely unchanged except for limited extensions. It is the

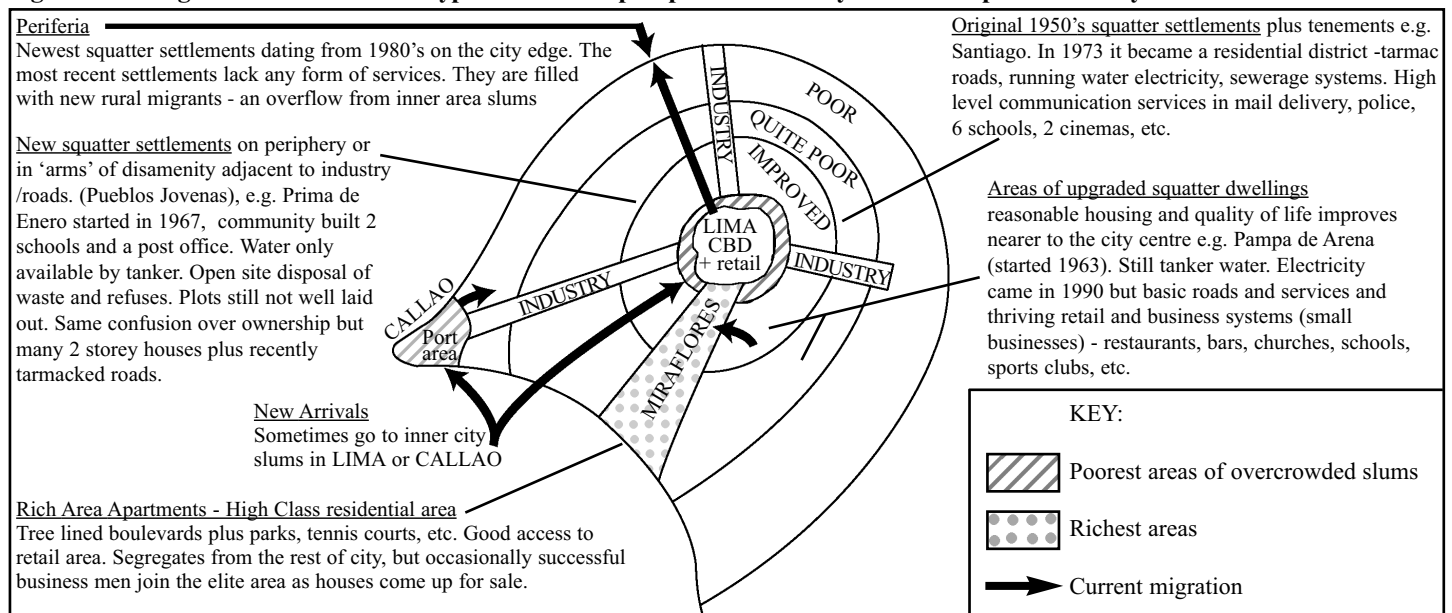
poorer rural migrants who seem to move, but the actual movements are quite limited and irregular. Many of the movements are **involuntary**, that is caused by authorities causing people to move on from so-called 'illegal' squatter settlements as the land is required for development, or richer residents object to living near to areas of urban squalor. Other illegal squatters may be made or encouraged to become part of site and service schemes where people are helped to build self-help housing.

The inhabitants of shanty towns where up to 60% of the of some LEDC cities live, e.g. Lima, remain static and gradually develop their houses by buying bricks and developing community services. The early arrivals called bridgeheaders settled nearest to the city centre and then houses are often storeyed with a good quality of services, developed over 4 years.

The pattern of migration for a LEDC city such as Lima is shown below. Note that apart from the initial migration, often to slums in the city centre to seek work, once the migrants have settled in the shanty towns there is little subsequent migration. The differences in quality of life reflect the age of the initial settlements. The latest most recent shanty towns have a very poor quality of life.

Exam Hint: When writing on urban migration do not stray on to a descriptive account of shanty towns. Try to learn a diagram like Fig 6. It could be used to show urban migration or variations in quality of life.

Fig 6. Urban migration in Lima. This is typical of the complex pattern of shanty town development in many Latin American cities.



Case study 2: Harare.

When Harare was first established in 1890 the white settlers planned:

- an area of low density housing area to the north for themselves
- a zone of poorer, low-density housing in the south for African /Asian groups and low-income white people for e.g. railway employees.

Since the late 1970s the city has undergone the typical large-scale urban growth associated with LEDCs. At present the total population is around 2 million and the city is growing at a rate of 6.8% per year, (nearly 400 people each DAY). The newcomers move into empty lands within the inner city areas or into peripheral shanty developments. Housing provision is very limited and people have to prove that they earn enough money to be able to pay for accommodation, which most

of them cannot do. Squatting is illegal in Zimbabwe and the only form of housing the poor can get without prosecution is to "lodge in someone's back yard". People who are evicted from any illegal settlements are moved to 'holding camps', in the outer parts of the city, where conditions are often extremely poor, to await relocation. This may take several years. Eventually it is hoped they will be re-housed in official areas on the outskirts such as **Chitungwiza**. There have also been migrations within the inner city areas as higher income black householders have moved across the city into the cheaper housing areas of the lower density original 'white' zone.

This case study emphasises how the pattern of urban migration has been very closely influenced by politics and history. The current patterns are very different from those in the colonial period.

Fig 7 Harare.

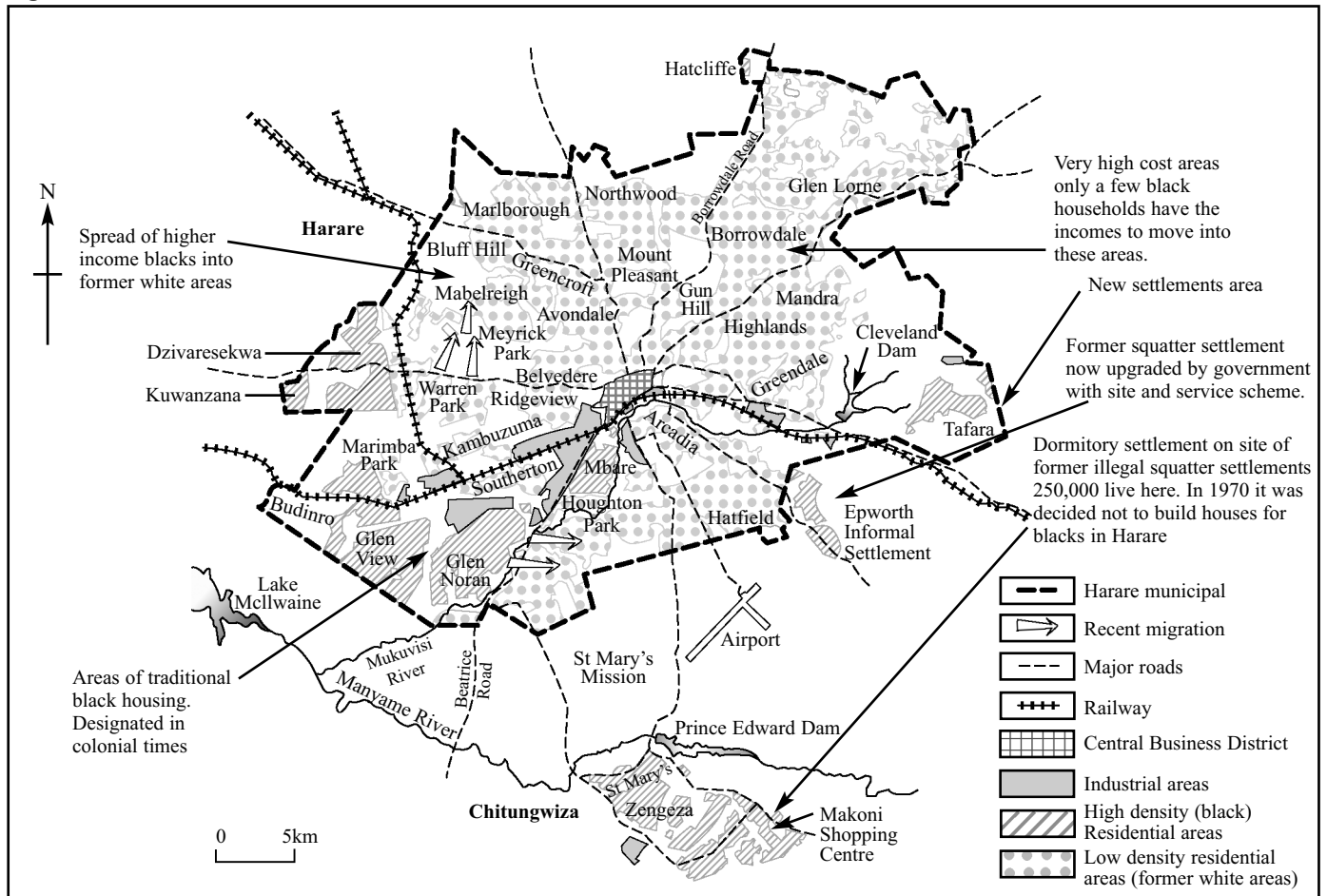
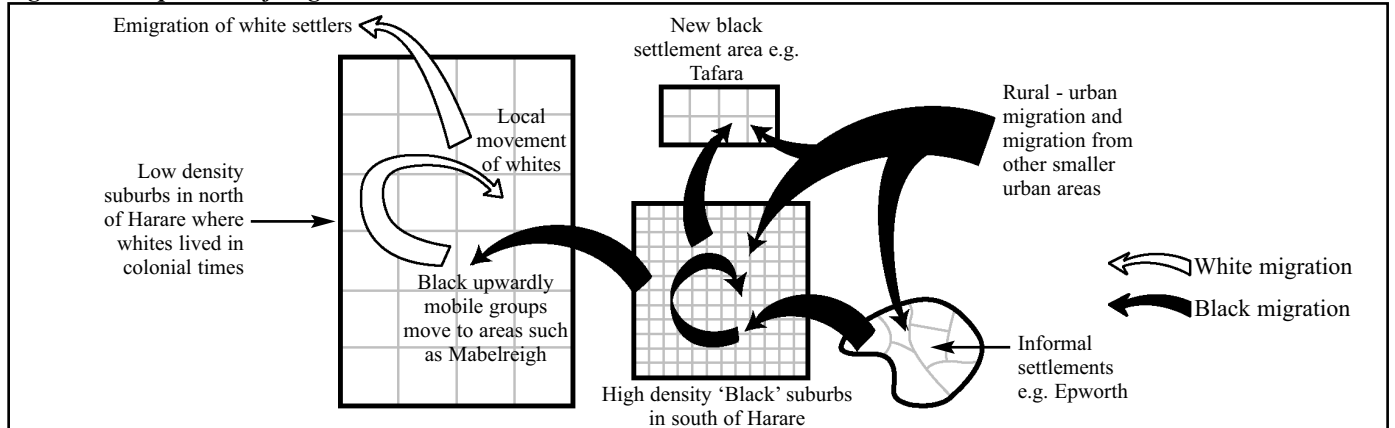


Fig 8 Current patterns of migration in Harare.



Conclusion

It can thus be seen that people are constantly moving within cities but that the reasons for, and scale of these migrations differ considerably between MEDCs and LEDCs. In MEDCS such migrations are voluntary and linked to economic, social and family reasons. They follow a distinct set of patterns. In LEDCs there are differences between the migrations of the rich, who seem merely to extend their residential areas, and the poor who make up the vast majority of the urban residents. The latter group seem to undergo a rather haphazard pattern of migratory movements.

Questions

- 1a. What is meant by the term sub-urbanisation? (5 marks)
- 1b. To what extent can this term be applied to MEDCs and LEDCs?(6 marks)
2. Give an explanatory account of Gentrification, using named examples that you have studied. (8 marks)
3. What processes have been responsible for the distribution of low-income housing areas in both the LEDCs and the MEDCs. (6 marks)
- 4a. Give a reasoned account of the main push and pull factors for large scale rural-urban migration in LEDCs. (8 marks)
- 4b. What problems may occur in both rural areas and cities in LEDCs as a result of large scale rural-urban migration? (6 marks)
5. Describe and explain some of the factors which affect the numbers of emigrants from a country and the numbers of immigrants into a country. (6 marks)

Answers

- 1a. A definition including the outwards direction of movement, the time-scale, factors such as transport developments etc. could be included here.
- 1b. The term is very relevant to MEDCs, perhaps an example could be quoted here. In LEDCs the term does not really have a great deal of relevance apart from the movements of poor people evicted from central areas.
2. This would include the reasons for gentrification as listed above; the changes made to the areas affected and some examples in the UK and elsewhere.
3. In LEDCs poor people live wherever they can find a place to set up home as a rule, or if lucky in some form of official housing area set up by the government. These areas can be anywhere in the city. In MEDCs they live in well-defined locations usually in the inner city areas, or increasingly in rundown areas of social housing (former council estates) where they have become areas of social exclusion.
- 4a. **Push factors:**
 - * Farming: lack of land to farm, too many people for the available land, more machinery is used now and so less workers are needed.
 - * Population: high birth rates, large families, too many people for the land to support
 - * Food: lack of food either due to overpopulation or to crop failures and natural disasters.
 - * Services: very poor health, education, water etc.
 - * Housing: very poor facilities etc.
- Pull factors:**
 - * Employment: jobs in factories owned by MNCs etc.
 - * Services and living conditions are better than in the countryside
 - * Food supply is more regular and reliable
- 4b. **Problems in rural areas:**
 - * Lack of young men to work in the fields and do other jobs, as it is they who tend to migrate.
 - * It is mainly the elderly who are left behind and it is difficult for them to cope.
 - * Gender imbalance

Problems in cities - many examples here:

- * Shanty towns: these develop to house the immigrants: any of their problems are relevant.
- * Pressure on services in towns such as health, water, education.
- * Poverty: many immigrants live on the streets as they cannot find jobs and have no money.

5. Factors affecting immigration and emigration into and from a country include:
 - * political troubles in a country which is or was linked to the UK and so its people take refuge in the UK.
 - * refugees from other troubled areas who are seeking asylum in the UK.
 - * economic / social difficulties in the source region so that people want to leave
 - * environmental problems: natural disasters such as cyclones, earthquakes etc. may cause homelessness and hardship and so people want to emigrate.

Further research

The internet has a wide range of information urban migration in places such as the New York, Glasgow and Prague.

For additional information on LEDC cities try:

<http://www.oneworld.org/patp/>

For additional data on many cities try:

<http://www.demographia.com>

Acknowledgements:

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