

Module: Economic Geography
Topic Content: Urban Influence

Urban Influence



Click next to begin.

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Positive Impact of Urban Areas



The size and permanent nature of cities and urban areas can greatly influence the regions and countries in which they are located. Click each of the buttons to learn more about the positive impact of urban growth.

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Corporate Headquarters



Corporate headquarters and regional offices are located in urban areas, because these locations can provide the human and capital resources needed to support a major business. As the largest city and capital of Argentina, Buenos Aires is able to accommodate corporate offices for many Argentine and international companies. In fact, the economy of Buenos Aires makes up one-fourth of the country's economy.

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Diversity and Creativity

Diversity and Creativity

- Urban areas tend to have diverse populations
- Interaction of different groups encourages creativity
- Toronto is one of the most diverse cities in the world
- There are many artists, musicians, etc. in Toronto
- Toronto holds an international film festival

Monument to Multiculturalism, Toronto, Canada

Urban areas tend to have diverse populations that consist of a variety of people from different backgrounds. The interaction of different cultural groups leads to cultural diffusion, which encourages creativity in the arts.

Toronto, Canada is one of the most diverse cities in the world, with a foreign-born population that accounts for roughly half of its residents. The city is also a creative hotspot, producing many artists, musicians, singers, dancers, actors, chefs, and authors. Toronto is also home to one of the world's largest film festivals, the Toronto International Film Festival.

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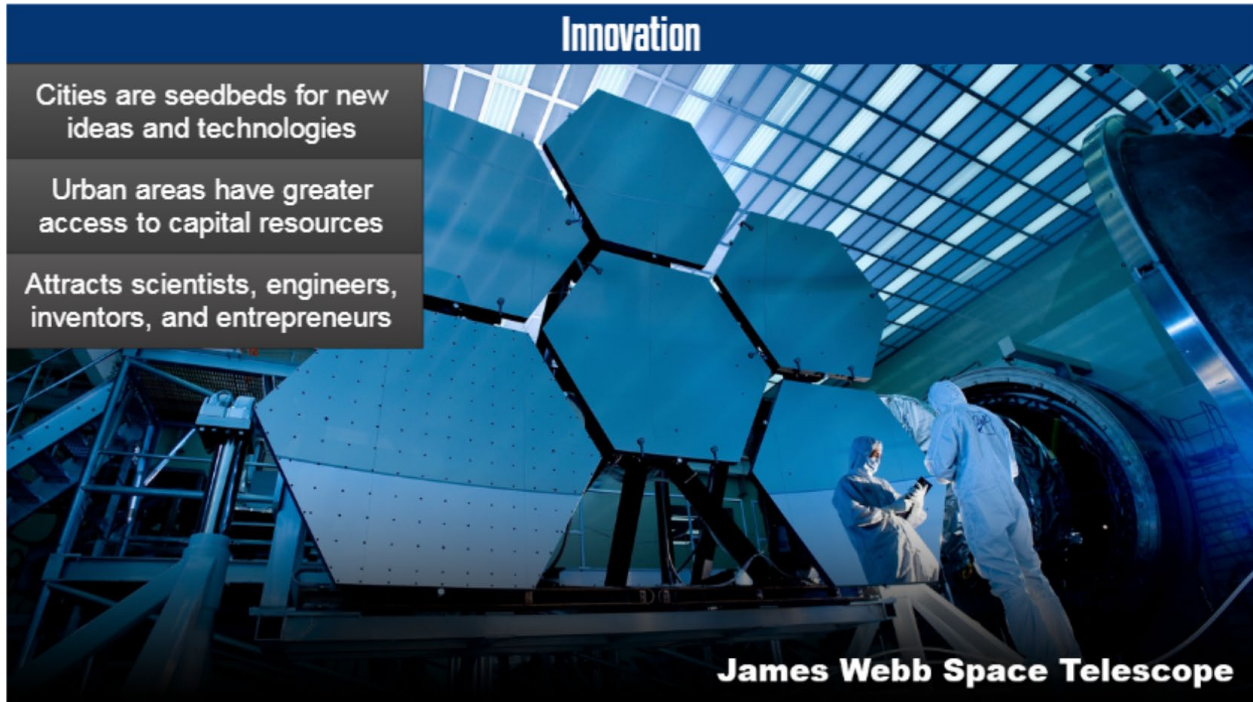
Educational Opportunities



Cities and urban areas offer greater access to universities and other educational opportunities. For example, in Tokyo, Japan, there are more than one hundred universities and vocational schools, offering an education in a variety of fields like aeronautical safety, dentistry, and fine arts. The educational opportunities provided by these institutions have encouraged Japan's advanced economic growth.

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Innovation

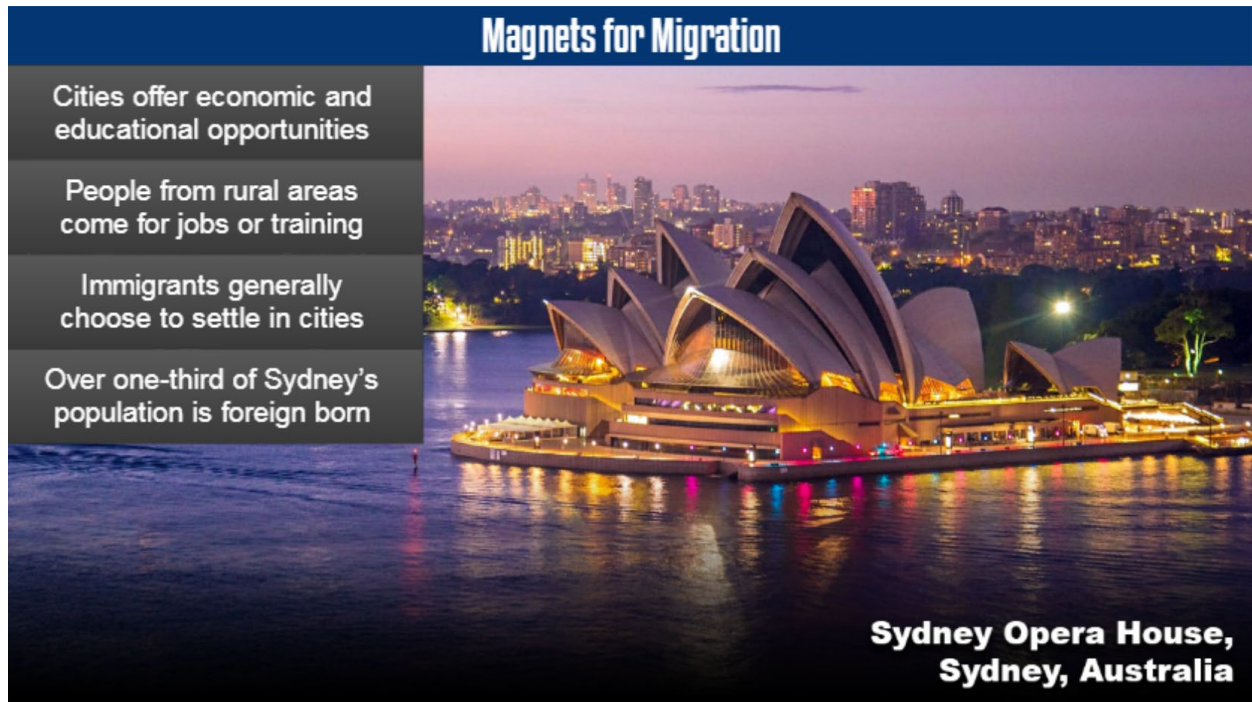


Cities and urban areas are seedbeds for new ideas and technologies, because these locations offer greater access to the equipment, facilities, and other capital resources needed for research and development, which attracts scientists, engineers, inventors, and entrepreneurs.

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Magnets for Migration



Cities and urban areas are magnets for migration because these locations offer economic and educational opportunities. People looking for jobs or training are pulled to cities from rural areas, and immigrants from other countries generally choose to settle in cities.

In Sydney, Australia, more than one-third of the population was born outside of the country. With a strong economy, advanced infrastructure, and rich cultural institutions, Sydney attracts immigrants from around the world.

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Media Centers

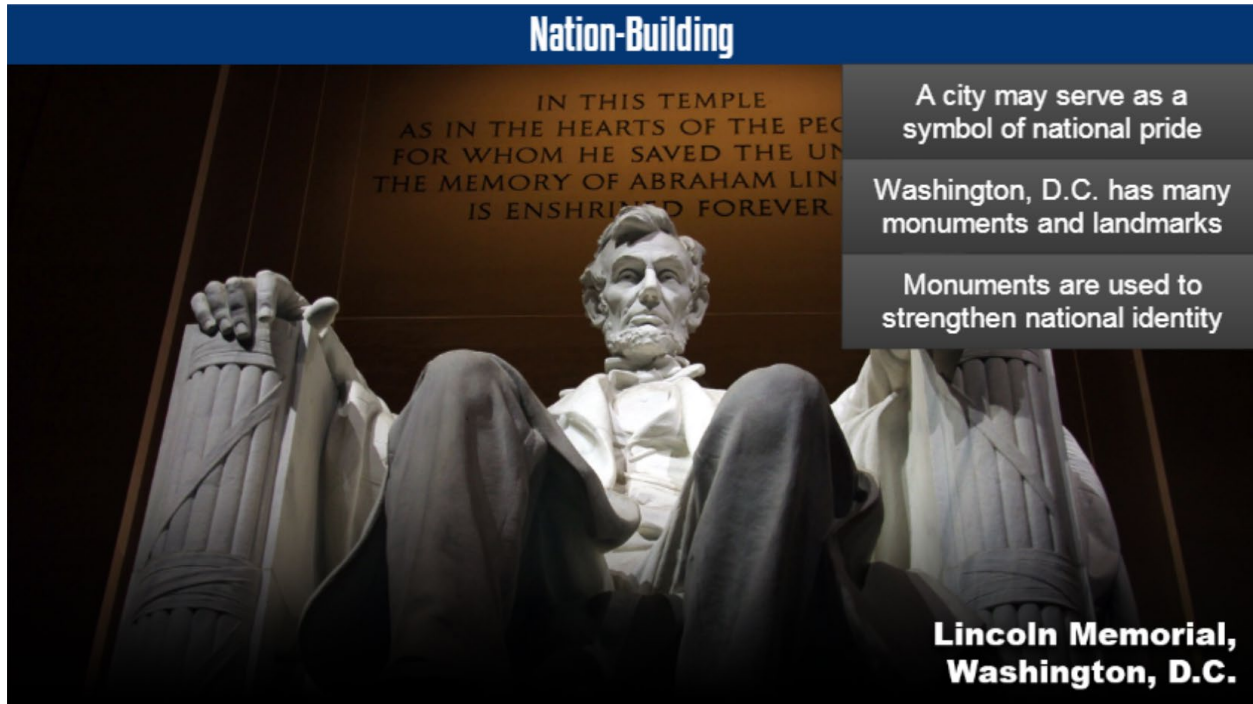


Large cities with efficient communication networks are able to support media centers that produce news or entertainment. In the United Arab Emirates, the city of Dubai hosts a tax-free zone called Dubai Media City. The city attracts international and regional media outlets by offering advanced infrastructure, like fiber optic cables, and specialized visas and laws for the media industry. More than seventy broadcasting and online production companies are housed in this location, making it one of Southwest Asia's primary media centers.

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Nation-Building



Nation-Building

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER.

A city may serve as a symbol of national pride

Washington, D.C. has many monuments and landmarks

Monuments are used to strengthen national identity

**Lincoln Memorial,
Washington, D.C.**

Many cities, especially capital cities, are symbols of national pride. Washington, D.C. is home to many iconic monuments and landmarks, like the U.S. Capitol Building, the Washington Monument, and the Lincoln Memorial. These monuments and landmarks act as symbols of U.S. history, and are meant to strengthen national identity. This type of nationalism occurs in countries across the world.

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Transportation/Communication Hubs



Large cities are transportation and communication hubs, operating at the center of much larger networks. For instance, Beijing is the capital of China and home to more than twenty million people. In addition to the Beijing Capital International Airport, which is the second busiest airport in the world, this massive city supports a variety of transportation methods, including subway, rail, and bus systems. The city also uses a complex system of ring roads, which are connected to many of the country's highways.

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Problems with Urban Areas

The graphic features a dark red header with the title "Problems with Urban Areas" in white. Below the header, a light gray bar contains the text "Click each of the buttons below to learn more". The main content area is a photograph of a densely populated urban area with a mix of modern and informal structures. Overlaid on this image are six dark red buttons with white text, arranged in two columns. The buttons are: "Access to Services", "Pollution", "Class Segregation", "Transportation Problems", "National Identity", and "Urban Sprawl".

Cities and urban areas may also create issues related to human mobility, social structure, and the environment. Click on each of the buttons to learn more about problems associated with increased urbanization.

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Access to Services



In order to thrive, people require certain essential services, like fresh water, sewage disposal, electricity, schools, and clinics. Providing these essential services to a huge population in an urban environment can prove difficult, particularly in developing nations.

For instance, Dhaka, Bangladesh has approximately 19 million people living in the city's greater urban area, many of whom lack access to clean water due to complications like flooding, pollution, and poor sanitation systems. Or, consider the nation of Liberia, where more than half of the population lives in urban areas, but only an estimated 17% of those in urban areas have access to electricity. Without reliable access to power, hospitals, schools, and water treatment facilities these cities are unable to operate properly.

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Class Segregation



Many cities are organized so that poor neighborhoods and rich neighborhoods exist in different areas, completely isolated from each other. While wealthier residents can afford to live in neighborhoods that are more developed, low-income residents may be forced to live in parts of the city that suffer from high crime, poor economic development, and limited community services. The division between rich and poor is apparent in cities like Mumbai, India, where luxury high-rise apartments overlook densely-populated slums.

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National Identity



In a developing country, a major city may be more connected to regions located outside the country than to rural communities located inside the country. This can lead to discrepancies between the needs of city residents, who live in the economic and political center of the country, and the needs of rural residents.

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Pollution



The large numbers of people and industries associated with cities and urban areas increase air, water, and noise pollution. Mexico City, Mexico is the country's capital and its largest city. The population of the city grew steadily throughout the twentieth century, and as of 2018, the population of the greater urban area is more than 20 million people. The huge population and numerous vehicles have generated extreme air pollution in the city.

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Transportation Problems



Transportation problems are quite common in cities and urban areas, especially as automobile travel increases. Even with careful planning and access to public transportation systems, traffic can be a major issue for people living in these locations.

Founded in 1886, the city of Johannesburg, South Africa has gradually expanded, outgrowing its original transportation system. Public transportation in the city is badly in need of an upgrade, and residents regularly sit in traffic for hours. These issues may worsen as the city's population continues to grow.

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Urban Sprawl



As the size of a city increases, the greater urban area around a city increases, converting agricultural land to urban use. This type of expansion, known as urban sprawl, is typically planned poorly. Sprawl is characterized by low-density housing, and a reliance on automobiles for transportation. This is a particularly significant issue in North America.

As the city of Los Angeles, California grew, it slowly incorporated adjacent cities and neighborhoods. This has resulted in a sprawling city with a relatively low population density compared to other urban areas. Residents of Los Angeles are also extremely dependent on cars for travel throughout the city, increasing traffic and air pollution.