# Ch. 13 Urban Patterns

Key Issue 1: Where have urban areas grown?

*Urbanization- the process by which the population of cities grows; by an increase in the number of people living in cities and/or an increase in the percentage of people living in the cities.*

A large percentage of people living in urban areas is a measure of a country’s development. In MDC’s approx ¾ of pop live in urban areas, compared to 2/5 for LDC’s. The increase in service sector jobs pull people to the cities, while the need for fewer farm workers has pushed them out of the rural areas.

Although MDC’s generally have a higher percentage of people living in the cities, LDC’s have most of the world’s largest cities. About half the growth results from people emigrating from the countryside to the city, even without the prospect of available jobs. The other half of growth occurs because of high NIR in the LDC cities.

Defining where urban areas end and rural areas begin is becoming increasingly difficult, especially in areas dominated by urban sprawl, like the U.S. Louis Wirth argued that an urban resident follows a different way of life from a rural dweller. Thus, Wirth socially defined the city as having these three characteristics:

 -Large size

 -High density

 -Social heterogeneity

Physically designating a “city” is even more difficult. Various methods are used, sometimes interchangeably, sometimes overlapping.

 -Legal definition of a city. The area of urban settlement that has been legally incorporated into an independent, self-governing unit.\

 -*Urbanized area- In the U.S, the central city and the surrounding built-up suburbs.*

 *-Metropolitan Statistical Area*- *the U.S. Census official method of measuring the functional area of a city. It includes:*

 *-*An urbanized area with a pop of at least 50,000.

 *-*The county within which the city is located.

 *-*Adjacent counties w/a high pop density and large % of residents working in the central city’s county.

 -*Micropolitan statistical areas- same as MSA only designed for smaller urban areas.*

Sometimes the MSA of cities will overlap resulting in a mega city commonly referred to as a megalopolis, such as the Boswash corridor. (The “continuous” city of Boston, Washington D.C., and New York City)

Key Issue 2: Where are people distributed within urban areas?

Three main models exist that attempt to at least generalize the various trends and patterns that a city shows when developing. The models of urban structure are:

*Concentric zone model- created in 1923 by E.W. Burgess, it shows the city as growing outward in concentric rings. Though the ring size may vary betwixt cities, the same order is always evident: CBD; zone of transition (industry and slums); working class zone; middle-class family zone; commuter zone. This model displays that wealth is what designs the city, as one moves out from the CBD, the residences in each zone are progressively nicer, and the people are progressively richer.*

*Sector model- created in 1939 by Homer Hoyt, it is essentially a modification of the concentric zone model. Rather than rings however, this model uses sectors that lead out from the CBD generally in a radial pattern, with transportation and industry sector running alongside the CBD. As in the concentric zone model, wealth increases as one moves out from the CBD. This model is especially helpful in showing the clustering of ethnicities along certain sectors.*

*Multiple nuclei model- created in 1945 by C.D. Harris and E.L. Ullman, it says that the pattern of urban development is that there is no pattern and a city is a complex structure that includes more than one center around which activities revolve.*

No model is truly better than another. Normally one can argue any of the three to fit any city. The three models are used primarily to help in the understanding of where people with different social characteristics tend to live within an urban area.

*Census tract- urban areas that contain approx. 5,000 residents and try to correspond to neighborhood boundaries.*

European and less developed cities typically follow the same models, only the direction of increasing wealth is reversed. The rich cluster downtown and the poor are banished to the outskirts. Many LDC cities show this trend because they were founded by European colonists who simply imposed their urban planning upon whatever city they chose.

*Squatter settlements- the outskirts of many LDC cities where the poor are clustered. These settlements often lack running water, schools, electricity, mass transit, or any other service that one would expect in a city.*

Key Issue 3: Why do inner cities have distinctive problems?

*Filtering- the process of subdividing homes by successive waves of increasingly lower income people.*

*Redlining- the practice of some banks of drawing lines on a map to identify areas in which they will refuse to loan money.*

*Urban renewal- the process in which cities identify blighted inner-city neighborhoods,*

*acquire the property from private owner, “relocate” the residents, clear the site, build new infrastructure, and develop it into a new business district or park area; effectively developing it so well that the property value is too high for the original tenants to stay, and they must move to another area.*

*Public housing- government supported housing in which the low-income tenants must pay ~30% of their income for rent with the government covering the other costs not paid for by rent. Accounts for 2% of all dwellings in the U.S; the numbers differ in Europe.*

*Gentrification- the process by which middle-class people move into deteriorated innercity neighborhoods and renovate the housing. These people are often attracted by the cheap housing, proximity to CBD, and availability of city amenities. This process also results in the raising of property values beyond the range of many of the low-income residents who are required to move out.*

*Underclass- common term referring to inner-city residents because they are trapped in an unending cycle of economic and social problems.*

*Annexation- the process of legally adding land area to a city.*

Many low-income inner-city residents lack job skills because they never completed high school, and few low-skilled jobs remain downtown, most having moved out to their customers in the suburbs. About 3 million Americans are homeless, most roaming through the cities. Because some inner-city residents are unable to escape the cycle of poverty, they turn to crime, drugs, and/or other illegal behavior to make ends meet.

The concentration of low-income residents in the inner-city, with most of the middle and upper classes in the suburbs, has left city governments with extreme financial problems. Without a strong tax base, many governments are unable to fund schools or other social programs that would help end the underclass cycle, thus the problem continues. Cities are less able to annex compared to the past. Suburbanites wish to have their own services and have jurisdictions independent of the city. Suburbs wish to remain close to the city to enjoy its amenities, but not become part of it and have to join in its problems.

Key Issue 4: Why do suburbs have distinctive problems?

*Peripheral model- developed by C.D. Harris, it suggests that an urban area consists of an inner city surrounded by large suburban residential and business areas tied together by a beltway or ring road. Peripheral areas lack the problems of many inner-cities, but often result in a large amount of inefficient urban sprawl.*

*Edge cities- areas that develop along the ring road that are nodes of consumer and business services.*

*Density gradient- the density change as one leaves the inner city. Typically drops from extremely high in the CBD, to low in the rural surroundings. However, in recent years, fewer people are living in the center thus creating a “hole” in the density gradient with the highest pop density surrounding this hole. Also, as suburbs “fill in”, the density differences are softened as one moves in a given direction.*

*Sprawl- the progressive spread of development over the landscape.*

The most important cause of sprawl is the automobile. More than any other invention, it has increased the daily range of people, and thanks to highways, people can live many miles from their job, and commute everyday in their private vehicle, causing extreme congestion of roadways and accelerated levels of pollution. Cities must also devote an enormous amount of land to parking everyone’s vehicles. Mass transit is popular in many American cities, and in other MDC’s. However, the availability of public transportation is limited at best for all but a select few cities in the U.S, compared to near universal usage throughout Europe. As resource crises loom on the horizon, many governments are researching new and improved forms of mass transit.

*Greenbelt- rings of open space found within European cities.*

*Zoning ordinances- laws developed in Europe and N. America in the early 20th century that encourage spatial separation by congregating people of similar background and economic state.*

*Council of government- a cooperative agency consisting of representatives of the various local governments in the region.*

*Smart growth- legislation and regulations to limit suburban sprawl and preserve farmland.*