



# Urbanisation

## Introduction

- **About:**

- **Urbanization** refers to the **population shift from rural to urban areas**, the corresponding decrease in the proportion of people living in rural areas, and **the ways in which societies adapt to this change.**

- **Causes of Urbanisation:**

- **Natural increase of population:** It occurs when the number of births exceeds the number of deaths.
- **Rural to urban migration:** It is driven by **pull factors** (that attract people to urban areas) and **push factors** (that drive people away from the rural areas).
  - Employment opportunities, educational institutions and urban lifestyle are the main **pull factors.**
  - Poor living conditions, lack of educational and economic opportunities and poor health care facilities are the main **push factors.**

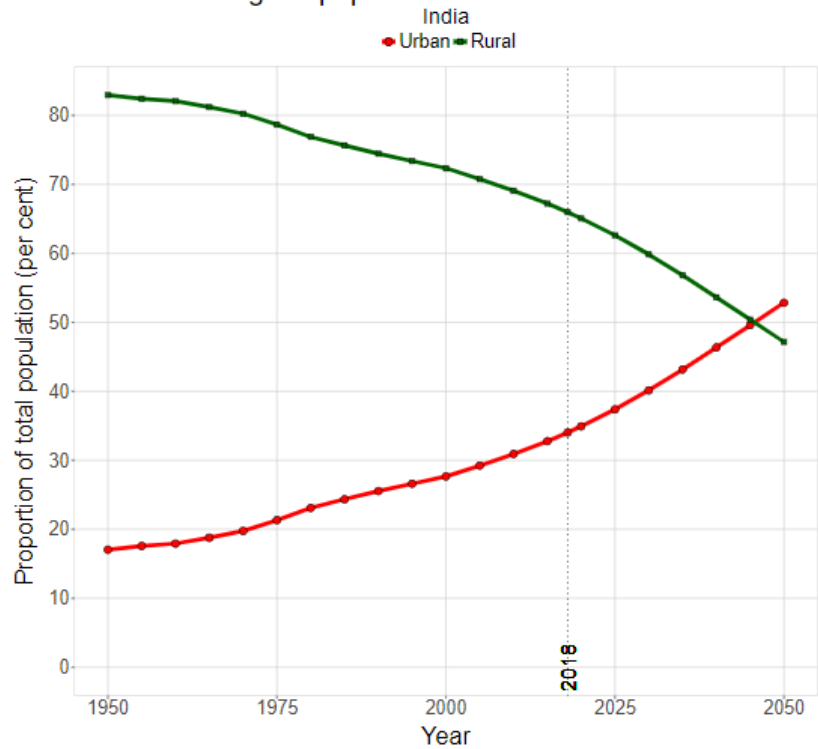
- **Global Urbanisation:**

- The most urbanized regions include **Northern America** (with 82% of its population living in urban areas (as of 2018)), Latin America and the Caribbean (81%), Europe (74%) and Oceania (68%).
- The level of **urbanization in Asia is now approximately 50%.**
- Africa remains mostly rural, with 43% of its population living in urban areas.

## Urbanisation in India

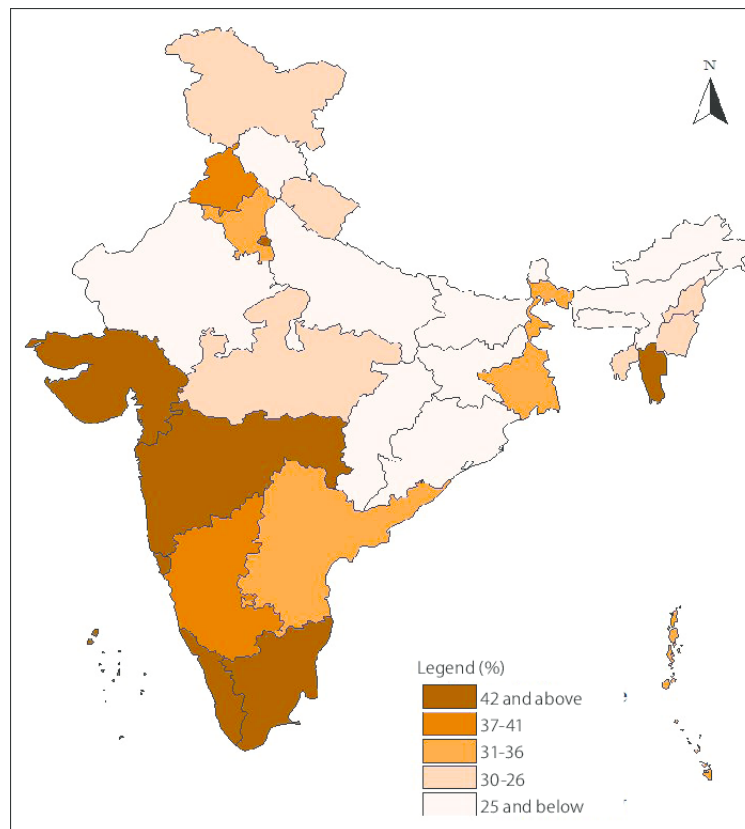
- **Urbanization Prospects:** [//](#)

Percentage of population in urban and rural areas



- The [World Urbanization Prospects, 2018](#) report produced by the [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(UN DESA\)](#) notes that future increases in the size of the world's urban population are expected to be highly concentrated in just a few countries.
- Together, **India, China and Nigeria will account for 35% of the projected growth of the world's urban population** between 2018 and 2050.
  - By 2050, it is projected that **India will have added 416 million urban dwellers.**
- Currently, India's population stood at **1210 million in 2011**, with an urbanisation level of **31.1%** ([Census of India 2011](#)).

▪ **State-wise Scenario:**



- **Number of Persons Living in Urban Areas:**

- Over 75% of the urban population of the country is in 10 States: Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Kerala.
- Maharashtra leads with 50.8 million persons (13.5% of the total urban population of the country).
- Uttar Pradesh accounts for about 44.4 million, followed by Tamil Nadu at 34.9 million.
- **High-Scoring States: Goa is the most urbanised State** with 62.2% urban population.
  - Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Gujarat have attained over 40% urbanisation.
  - Among the North-Eastern States, Mizoram is the most urbanised with 51.5% urban population.
- **Low-Scoring States: Bihar, Odisha, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh** continue to be at a lower level of urbanisation than the national average.
- **Union Territories: The NCT of Delhi and the UT of Chandigarh are most urbanized** with 97.5% and 97.25% urban population respectively, **followed by Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep** (both above 75% urbanisation).

- **India's Global Commitments regarding Urban Development:**

- The [SDGs Goal 11](#) promotes urban planning as one of the recommended methods for achieving sustainable development.
- The [UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda](#) was adopted at Habitat III in 2016.
  - It puts forth principles for the planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas.
- The [UN-Habitat \(2020\)](#) suggests that the spatial conditions of a city can enhance its power to generate social, economic and environmental value and well-being.
- [Paris Agreement](#): India's [National Determined Contributions \(NDCs\)](#) includes the goals to reduce the emission intensity of the country's GDP by 33 to 35% by 2030 from 2005 level.

- **India's Initiatives for Urbanisation:**

- **Schemes/Programmes Related to Urban Development:**

- [Smart Cities](#)
- [AMRUT Mission](#)
- [Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban](#)
- [HRIDAY](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban](#)

- **Government Initiatives for [Slum Dwellers/Urban Poor](#):**

- [Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana](#)
- [Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan \(self-reliant India\)](#)

## Significance of Urban Living

- **Easier Access to Facilities:** Urban living is linked with **higher levels of literacy** and education, **better health, longer life expectancy, greater access to social services** and enhanced **opportunities for cultural and political participation**.
  - Urbanisation is associated with **easier access to hospitals**, clinics and health services in general.
    - Living in proximity to these services results in improved emergency care and general health.
- **Access to Information:** There are also benefits from **easier access to sources of information** such as radio and television which may be used to communicate information about health to the general public.
  - For instance, **women living in towns and cities are more likely to be informed about family planning** which results in reduction in family size and less frequent childbirth.
- **Individualism:** Multiplicity of opportunities, social diversity, lack of familial and social control over decision making leads to **more self interest and facilitates decision-making by an individual** and choosing one's career and actions by oneself.

## Issues Associated to Urbanisation

- **Excessive Population Pressure:** On the one hand, the rural-urban migration accelerates the pace of urbanisation, on the other, it creates **excessive population pressure on the existing public utilities**.
  - Consequently, the cities suffer from the problems of slums, crime, unemployment, urban poverty, pollution, congestion, ill-health and several deviant social activities.
- **Overflowing Slums:** There are about 13.7 million slum households in the country sheltering a population of 65.49 million people across the country.
  - As much as 65% of Indian cities have adjoining slums where people live in small houses adjacent to each other.
- **Inadequate Housing:** Among the numerous social problems of urbanisation, the problem of housing is the most distressing.
  - A vast majority of urban population live under **conditions of poor shelter and in highly congested spaces**.
  - In India, more than half of the urban households occupy a single room, with an **average occupancy per room of 4.4 persons**.
- **Unplanned Development:** The model of building a developed city comprises unplanned development, which only **bolsters the dichotomy prevailing in urban cities** between the rich and the poor.
- **Pandemic-Induced Problems:** The [Covid-19 pandemic](#) has exacerbated the misery of urban poor or slum dwellers.

- The sudden implementation of complete Covid lockdown **severely affected the ability of slum dwellers to earn their living.**
- **Non-Inclusive Welfare Schemes:** The benefits of welfare schemes for urban poor often reach only a small part of the intended beneficiaries.
  - **Most relief funds and benefits do not reach slum dwellers,** mainly because these settlements are **not officially recognised by the government.**

## Way Forward

- **Sustainable Urbanization for Successful Development:** As the world continues to urbanize, sustainable development depends increasingly on the **successful management of urban growth**, especially **in low-income and lower-middle-income countries** where the pace of urbanization is projected to be the fastest.
  - **Integrated policies** to improve the lives of both urban and rural dwellers are needed, while **strengthening the linkages between urban and rural areas**, building on their existing economic, social and environmental ties.
- **Improving Access to Health Facilities & Welfare Schemes:** Accelerating efficiency of welfare and relief schemes along with **ensuring access to free vaccines, food security and adequate shelter** in the slums.
  - Improving **sanitation and transportation facilities in slums** and establishing clinics and healthcare facilities.
  - **Aiding nonprofits and local support bodies** who have better reach to these marginalised communities.
- **New Approaches for Urbanisation:** New approaches to urban planning and effective governance are the need of the hour.
  - Necessary actions should be taken to **build sustainable, robust and inclusive infrastructure.**
  - Instead of a top-down approach, a **bottom-up approach shall be adopted** to better understand unique challenges faced by the urban poor.

**Sustainable urbanization means better:**



Housing



Productivity



Opportunity



Education



Health care

World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision

• #UNPopulation

