

**THE CONSEQUENCES OF URBANIZATION POLICY
FOR PEDESTRIANS AND NON-CAR OWNERS IN THE USA**

Urbanization is the process of people moving from rural areas to cities, and it is a defining aspect of our time, according to recent reports by the United Nations. In the 20th century, the pace of urban population growth accelerated rapidly, and in 2014, 54 % of the world's population lived in urban areas. This is expected to increase to 72 % by 2050, and the number of cities with a population greater than 1 million has increased from 80 to 533 in the past 50 years.

Urbanization is driven by various factors such as industrialization, commercialization, employment opportunities, and social services. Countries like China and India are experiencing rapid urbanization due to the growth of their economies and investment in infrastructure. Migration is the voluntary movement of people to new locations due to economic and technological advancement.

People are driven to cities and towns from rural areas in developing countries due to the absence of basic amenities, limited government presence, and lack of commercial activities. Cities offer better employment opportunities, access to better schools, healthcare facilities, good road networks, and increased trade opportunities. Additionally, environmental changes, droughts, floods, lack of productive land, and other pressures on rural livelihoods can also drive people to migrate to urban areas.

The process of urbanization affects all sizes of settlements, leading to the growth of mega-cities. Rural settlements can gradually transform into urban settlements over time with the inputs of scientific and technological knowledge, incoming industries, and the availability of commercial goods and services, which can boost economic growth and provide more employment opportunities to the locals. Government policies and programs have a great impact on urbanization in individual countries, and, for example, Brazil has implemented policies to address the challenges of urbanization, such as the creation of social housing programs and the expansion of public transportation systems.

The process of urbanization in the USA has resulted in cities that reflect a dual view, with both positive and negative aspects. However, common problems affecting cities throughout the nation include fiscal difficulties, crowding, substandard housing, racial segregation, traffic congestion, pollution, and underfunded public education, indicating that the main problem in the process of urbanization in the USA is the infrastructure problem.

The design of modern US cities favors motor vehicles over pedestrians, leading to hazardous walking conditions. Despite efforts to make cities more bike

and pedestrian-friendly, piecemeal implementation of changes and a lack of understanding among drivers about sharing the road continue to pose challenges. Speed and distracted driving further exacerbate dangers for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Vision Zero strategy, which aims to create cities with no traffic fatalities or serious injuries, has been adopted by at least 18 U.S. cities and states. To achieve this, cities can employ various strategies such as reducing speed limits, implementing traffic calming measures, creating more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly infrastructure, and reimagining American cities as shared spaces with slower traffic.