URBANIZATION AND ITS IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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Big cities have always been likened to "global leaders" and always have innovative policies that are increasingly transcending national boundaries and shaping domestic trends. and international. More than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas; and by 2050, this number could increase to more than six billion (Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center, 2014). From there, we can see that the process of urbanization is taking place more and more rapidly, and then leading to disorganized urbanization.

Spontaneous urbanization is a very dangerous, alarming thing and has a very negative effect on people, society, especially the environment in general. It is estimated that nearly 40% of the world's urban sprawl may be in slums, exacerbating economic disparities and unsanitary conditions. Many cities located in coastal areas or on riverbanks can also be vulnerable to natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes and floods. Likewise, poor urban infrastructure - such as a dangerous, unsafe, tangled electrical system; congested roads, poor public transport; The lack of schools... has reduced people's ability to live and develop comprehensively (Thangavel Palanivel, 2017). Among the negative effects of disorganized urbanization on people, and more deeply on the environment, in this essay we focus on analyzing the spontaneous, unplanned urbanization process in Vietnam. Latin America - greatly affects the environment and nature.

Fig 1. Caracas Slum in Venezuela. Source: Taxi to Caracas
[Taxi to Caracas - Slums](#)

Indeed, Latin America is by far the most urbanized of the developed world, with 75% of the population living in urban areas, almost three times that of Africa and Asia. Reports indicate that by 2025, about 82% of the Latin American population will live in urban areas. That means that then, Latin America's population living in urban areas will be more than twice that of Asia and Africa (Ruel, 2016).

Fig 2. Percentage of the population lives in urban areas through each area (1975- 2025).
 Source (Ruel, 2016)

According to research by the BBAV Group, Latin America has seen the fastest urban growth rate in history. Both the rate of natural increase and the rate of rural-urban migration are very high. Latin American countries have moved from being predominantly rural to being predominantly urban within a few decades, with high urban population densities in cities: more than one million inhabitants (UNCHS, 1996). For example, urbanization in Brazil has increased from 36% in 1950; reached an even balance between rural and urban populations in the 1970s; and up to 82% of the country's current level of urbanization (Joana Xavier Barros, 2004). However, about 25% of the population living in urban areas – more than 160 million people – actually live in slums (Robert Muggah, 2018). In addition, Mexico and Brazil have more than 12 cities with more than 1 billion inhabitants (Manuel Rado Quirós, 2018). The impact of this disaster was that millions of people had to live in slums (Robert Muggah, 2018). It also causes environmental pollution, resource depletion and many new diseases... (more than 77% of Latin Americans lack sanitation and only 28% of the region's wastewater collected from sewers is treated...) (Robert Muggah, 2018)

Fig 3. Percentage of the total population and the average rate of urbanization development of Latin America compared to the world. Source (BBVA, 2017)

It can be seen that the main cause of this phenomenon is the massive immigration that creates a mechanical increase in population. Waves of migrants from rural areas to big cities to make a living or natural disasters that forced them to move broke out. One of the reasons for migration from rural to urban areas is the difference in living standards, facilities, etc. in rural-urban areas. "The megacities and major cities are the richest and have much better networks of essential public services than elsewhere; Smaller cities, sub-cities and suburbs are slightly poorer, with the countryside being the poorest." (Ngân Hàng Thế Giới và Quỹ Tiền Tệ Quốc Tế (IMF), 2013).

Besides, due to incomplete land reform and weak and loose management of the government, many people have migrated to urban areas massively and difficult to control. (Kuddus et al., 2020).

Several Latin American governments have implemented policies to promote housing. Public housing programs such as in Brazil, Chile, Argentina (Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center, 2014)... However, the projects are limited to the periphery of the city and do not integrate with public transport and services.

At times, unplanned urban development (Inostroza, 2016) and adjacent vulnerable coastal environments, such as bays, estuaries, coral reefs and mangroves, can be degraded and fragmented cut (Barragán and de Andrés, 2016)... (de Andrés et al., 2018)

Disorganized urbanization has caused environmental damage. Spontaneous urbanization is completely without any rational planning, it is not suitable for the development of industrialization, leading to unequal population distribution between regions (Usama Bilal, 2021). And this has made the living standards of people difficult to improve, adversely affecting the environment. The environment is polluted more and more seriously, especially the environment of air, water, and daily-life waste which has a very large volume every day and is thrown at the wrong place (UIA, 2020).

In addition, traffic is congested, public services are overloaded, creating great pressure on settlement of accommodation as well as jobs for immigrants, social evils easily arise, affecting order. such as theft, prostitution, especially backward poverty (UIA, 2020).

Fig 4. Traffic jams in Mexico City. Source: BNEWS

[Các thành phố ở Mỹ Latinh trong nhóm tắc đường nhất thế giới \(bnews.vn\)](https://bnews.vn/cac-thanh-pho-o-my-latinh-trong-nhom-tac-duong-nhat-the-gioi)

The flow of migrants from rural to urban areas who thought they would have a better life, but did not have a job, caused production in the countryside to stagnate and the urban area under great pressure on unemployment (Usama Bilal, 2021). The already limited land fund in urban areas has now added a large number of immigrants, so it is inevitable that the land will be crowded with people. This problem creates an overload for public services, and many slum areas will appear. Living in poor and miserable living conditions makes residents here for a long time will suffer from dangerous diseases such as cancer (Usama Bilal, 2021).

Fig 5. Disorganized urbanization, poverty in Haiti. Source : SOHA

[Những bức ảnh gây sốc về Haiti, đất nước có Tổng thống vừa bị ám sát tại nhà riêng \(soha.vn\)](https://soha.vn/nhung-buc-anh-gay-soc-ve-haiti-dat-nuoc-co-tong-thong-vua-bi-am-sat-tai-nha-rieng)

Planned urbanization brings many benefits to mankind, but disorganized urbanization is counterproductive. With the situation evolving rapidly and bringing negative impacts to both people and the environment in the world in general and in Latin America in particular, solutions to the problem of disorganized urbanization are essential. Realizing that, the government has put in place a number of measures to improve the negative conditions. The Latin American government has taken steps to promote pro-poor urban infrastructure, especially in relation to housing. Housing and public services built closer to the city center. In some cases, local authorities will also encourage rental housing (including tax incentives), migration from crowded places to neighboring areas. The authority makes some impressive progress when it comes to integrated public transport. The most widely acclaimed examples are the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) programs, which are established in [Curitiba](#) (Brazil) and [TransMilenio](#) in Bogota (Colombia), [integrated transportation program](#) in many cities also responded and effectively organized. Today, more than 42 major Latin American cities have public transport systems and another 327 have bike lanes. This helps to reduce traffic congestion in urban areas.

In addition, Latin America needs to thoroughly implement industrialization and modernization to improve the living standards of urban residents. Urbanization must be associated with industrialization and modernization for sustainable development and effective. In order to attract private finance for raising living standards in rural areas, avoiding urbanization and uneven population distribution, all levels of government will need to set out visions and plans for their city, lay out a clear strategy with clear, achievable goals. The city government will also need to develop a system such as public transport, housing, energy, water, waste and digital economy to improve the quality of life. Likewise, cities will need to standardize investment procedures, including reducing administrative procedures where possible. None of these solutions are new, but that doesn't make them any less important. The investment that Latin American cities make will need to be sustainable and pro-poor, and at the same time they must harness the potential of new technology. Support local authorities to build and distribute population density less densely and reduce unnecessary disparities; develop projects with reasonable benefits to attract and retain talented people. Ultimately, the most successful cities will be those that connect with many investors to plan for a stable future.

Fig 6. Rio de Janeiro city- Brazil. Source: MeinBezirk
[Samba De Janeiro - Wiener Neustadt \(meinbezirk.at\)](https://www.meinbezirk.at/samba-de-janeiro)

In summary, the urbanization rate in Latin American countries is currently about 80%, causing negative impacts on the environment of water, air, urban waste, etc. To solve this problem, the role of leaders is extremely important. Firstly, cities need to have a development vision and make commitments to overcome difficulties and solve environmental and economic problems. The importance of urban planning, building codes, environmental policies and the emphasis on property management and preservation has facilitated the maintenance of an efficient urban system, with a high quality of amenities and vibrancy. Secondly, cities need to focus on investing in science to find creative solutions and build an environmental culture (Khuc, 2022; Q. H. Vuong, 2018, 2021; Q. H. et al. Vuong, 2018) – from awareness to action for the environment of urban people. In particular, urbanization must also be actively associated with digitization in the future (Nguyễn Tổ Lăng, 2018)

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