

URBAN SETTLEMENTS

Urban settlements refer to human habitation and structure that are different in character and function from rural settlements. The essential nature of the physical form of an urban settlement relate to the density and type of structures.

Definitions, types and characteristics of Urban settlement

There are different definitions of urban areas adopted by different countries, so it lacks universal definition. The United Nation (1959) has made an attempt to classify various definitions used by the member countries. Thus, the definition were categorised into 5 categories

Category I - It consists of those countries where urban settlement is defined on the basis of historical, political and administrative status like shi, municipalities, district and communes.

Category II - It consists of those countries which uses a statistical criterion, mostly minimum size of population to grant urban status. But the minimum number varies from country to country.

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Category III - It consists of those countries where urban status is granted to settlements if these settlements have some form of local self government like municipality, borough, chartered town etc.

Category IV - It consists of those countries which grant urban status on the basis of physical layout and availability of amenities.

Category V - It consists of those settlements which is classified on the basis of function i.e. a specific proportion of population engaged in non-agricultural sector.

Definition of Urban Area by Census of India

Census of India has changed its criteria from time to time to define urban areas. Recent and most prevalent Census of India, 1981 defined urban area with following criterion.

- i) Any place with a municipality, corporation or cantonment or notified town area.

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ii) Any place which satisfied the following criteria

- a) A minimum population of 5000.
- b) At least 75% of the male working population non-agricultural and,
- c) A population density of at least 400 per square kilometers.

Settlements having a population of more than 5000 may therefore be defined as urban. The urban settlements were further defined according to population size, in the following manner.

Town class	Population
Class I	> 1,00,000
Class II	50,000 - 1,00,000
Class III	20,000 - 50,000
Class IV	10,000 - 20,000
Class V	5,000 - 10,000

Class I town are really the cities and 'metropolitan area' is designated by a population of more than 1 million