



PART 3

Read the text below and answer questions 27–40.

MIGRATION, URBANISATION, AND FUTURE SOCIAL FABRIC

Migration and urbanisation are frequently treated as parallel phenomena, yet the contemporary world suggests a more entangled relationship: a theoretical nexus in which human mobility and the spatial concentration of life mutually condition one another. Migration is not simply the crossing of borders; it is also the reallocation of people within national territories, from peripheral agrarian regions to urban cores, from secondary towns to global metropolitan corridors. Urbanisation, in turn, is not merely the growth of cities, but the reorganisation of social relations around density, proximity, and institutional reach. Together, these forces reshape how societies allocate labour, reproduce family life, and narrate belonging, shifting the very grammar through which membership in a community is understood.

The economic appeal of cities derives from agglomeration economies: the clustering of firms, workers, and institutions that lowers transaction costs, accelerates innovation, and deepens labour-market matching. Universities, specialised healthcare, cultural industries, and social networks congregate in a way that rural localities rarely replicate. For migrants, the city can therefore appear as a rational solution to scarcity and constraint, offering both anonymity and the promise of upward mobility. Yet the same density that multiplies opportunity can also generate diseconomies of scale. Housing markets tighten, land values rise, and basic services become congested. When population growth outpaces infrastructure, the result is not simply inconvenience but the material production of inequality: informal settlements, overstretched public services, and a spatial hierarchy in which access to security and dignity becomes unevenly distributed.

This paradox is especially visible in labour-market dynamics. Migrants often enter sectors characterised by high turnover and weak bargaining power—construction, caregiving, logistics, hospitality—where demand is persistent yet protection can be thin. Urban economies benefit from such labour inputs, and migrants may also contribute entrepreneurship and specialised capabilities that diversify local production. However, the distribution of gains is contested. Migration's wage effects are disputed partly because outcomes vary by locality: the impact depends on whether new arrivals complement existing workers by filling gaps in skills and tasks, or substitute for them in similar roles, thereby intensifying competition. Moreover, legal status and structural barriers may channel migrants into precarious employment, limiting their ability to negotiate wages, change employers, or access formal dispute mechanisms. The same city that absorbs



labour can, under certain conditions, institutionalise segmentation between protected and unprotected workers.

Economic incorporation, however, is only one dimension of urban life. The deeper question concerns the social fabric: whether diversity becomes a routine feature of everyday interaction or a symbol onto which anxieties are projected. Social cohesion depends on the extent to which newcomers are incorporated into common institutions—education, fair policing, language provision, and avenues for civic participation. Where such pathways exist, migrants can become residents in the full sense, not merely temporary “flows.” Where they do not, spatial segregation can harden. Housing markets may push migrants into concentrated districts; discrimination can restrict mobility; and neighbourhood patterns can become self-reinforcing. Over time, these patterns shape trust, the likelihood of intergroup contact, intermarriage, and the psychological boundaries of who is imagined as “us.” In this way, the geography of a city becomes a moral map, delimiting belonging through everyday encounters—or the lack of them.

Demography adds a further layer of complexity, especially in societies facing a demographic deficit. Ageing populations generate an “ageing trap”: a shrinking workforce supports a growing retired population, while welfare systems reliant on contributions confront mounting fiscal stress. Migration can slow workforce decline and help fund pensions, at least temporarily, by adding working-age residents and broadening the tax base. Yet replacement migration has limits. It cannot fully offset low fertility everywhere, and it is not a permanent demographic fix, not least because migrants themselves age within destination societies. The long-term implication is that migration policy intersects with healthcare provision and retirement planning, requiring states to think beyond short-term labour demand toward the full life-course needs of populations whose mobility has become part of national social reality.

Technology increasingly mediates these processes, not merely as a tool but as an architecture of migration. Digital platforms shape recruitment pathways, remittance systems, and everyday communication, enabling what scholars describe as digital transnationalism: sustained social participation across distance through messaging, video calls, and online communities. Such connectivity can support wellbeing by reducing isolation and providing informational resources, yet it can also complicate assimilation trajectories. If migrants rely mainly on home-language networks online, language acquisition in the destination may slow, and social integration may remain partial. Moreover, the digital sphere can amplify vulnerability: misinformation about jobs, legal routes, and documentation can circulate rapidly, increasing the risk of exploitation. In this



sense, technology can both extend agency and deepen precarity, depending on how power and information are distributed.

Climate change is expected to intensify mobility, adding a structural driver that is less optional than economic aspiration. Drought, heat stress, sea-level rise, and crop failure can undermine livelihoods, pushing people from rural regions into cities or across borders. Most movement is likely to be internal rather than international, and internal displacement can strain urban systems by increasing demand for shelter, water, transport, and health services. Adaptation investments—water management, resilient housing, and livelihood diversification—may mitigate forced migration and reduce the severity of shocks. Yet adaptation cannot prevent all movement. Some places will become less habitable, and some livelihoods will become less viable, rendering displacement not a policy failure but a foreseeable response to environmental transformation.

The decisive variable, therefore, is governance: the capacity of institutions to translate mobility into cohesion rather than polarisation. Cities that invest in affordable housing, integrated transport, and inclusive public spaces can reduce spatial segregation and make everyday contact more likely. National policies on visas, rights, and anti-discrimination enforcement influence whether migrants are treated as expendable labour or as future citizens-in-practice. When governance fails, resentment can rise, and political entrepreneurs may exploit fear, framing migration as a threat rather than a manageable transition. Ultimately, the future social fabric will depend on balancing mobility with belonging—recognising migrants as residents whose rights and contributions shape long-term stability, and designing urban systems that distribute opportunity without manufacturing exclusion.

Questions 27–30

Select the correct answer.

27 What is the main idea of the passage?

- A** Migration is reshaping cities mainly because it is driven by climate change rather than by economic motives.
- B** Migration and urbanisation increasingly interact, influencing how societies organise work, family life and belonging.
- C** Urbanisation has reduced the importance of migration as most movement now takes place within cities.
- D** The effects of migration on cities are determined largely by technology and social media.

28 Why does the passage suggest urban growth can intensify inequality?



- A** Because city labour markets usually exclude newcomers from formal employment.
- B** Because migrants tend to settle permanently in areas with the lowest rents.
- C** Because infrastructure and public provision may not keep pace with rapid population increase.
- D** Because city governments typically prioritise universities over housing investment.

29 What does the passage say about the wage impact of migration?

- A** It is generally negative because migrants mainly compete with local workers in the same occupations.
- B** It is generally positive because migrants bring new skills and start businesses.
- C** It is minimal because legal status determines employment more than labour demand does.
- D** It is disputed, and outcomes vary with local conditions and whether migrants complement or compete with other workers.

30 According to the passage, what influences whether diversity is viewed as normal or threatening?

- A** How fully newcomers are included in shared institutions
- B** The level of anonymity available to migrants in large cities
- C** The speed at which migrants gain access to professional employment
- D** The extent to which migrants maintain ties with their origin communities

Questions 31–36

Choose **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information given in the text, choose **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the information, or choose **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

- 31** The passage suggests that cities may offer migrants anonymity and opportunity, but can also involve high housing costs.
- 32** The passage states that migrants are often channelled into low-wage sectors because they lack formal qualifications.
- 33** The passage indicates that migration can slow workforce decline in ageing societies, but it cannot fully offset low fertility everywhere.
- 34** The passage suggests that relying mainly on home-language networks online may slow language acquisition.
- 35** The passage suggests that adaptation investments can prevent all climate-related movement.



36 The passage states that policies on visas, rights and anti-discrimination enforcement influence whether mobility strengthens social cohesion.

Questions 37–40

Complete the summary below. Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

How migration reshapes urban society

Cities attract migrants partly because the clustering of firms, workers and institutions creates **37** However, rapid growth may outpace infrastructure and lead to informal settlements and stretched **38** The passage notes that even **39** can strain urban systems. It concludes that long-term cohesion depends heavily on effective **40** and inclusive planning.

Answer Key

27. B

28. C

29. D

30. A

31. TRUE

32. NOT GIVEN

33. TRUE

34. TRUE

35. FALSE

36. TRUE

37. agglomeration economies

38. public services

39. internal displacement

40. governance