Geography · GS - I

Why do large cities tend to attract more migrants than smaller towns? Discuss in the light of conditions in developing countries.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2024	GS - I	Geography

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

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Answer Hint

Agglomeration economies, employment, wages, infrastructure, education, healthcare, urban services, social networks, informal sector, rural distress, aspirational migration, regional inequality

Model Answer

Introduction

Large cities act as economic and social magnets because they concentrate employment, infrastructure, institutions and opportunities. This attraction is particularly strong in developing countries marked by regional disparities.

Reasons for Greater Attraction

1. **Employment opportunities:** Metropolitan economies offer diverse jobs in manufacturing, construction, services, IT and informal activities.
2. **Higher expected incomes:** Wage differentials and greater economic mobility encourage migration.
3. **Agglomeration economies:** Concentration of firms, markets, skilled labour and infrastructure creates further employment opportunities.

4. **Better services:** Large cities generally provide wider access to higher education, specialised healthcare, transport and financial services.
5. **Social networks:** Existing migrant communities reduce the cost and risk of migration by providing information, accommodation and employment links.
6. **Aspirational factors:** Urban lifestyles, education and perceived social mobility attract young migrants.

Developing-Country Context

Rural distress caused by low agricultural productivity, land fragmentation, unemployment and climate-related shocks can operate as push factors. However, migrants often face informal employment, insecure housing, congestion and inadequate urban infrastructure.

Conclusion

Large-city migration reflects both the concentration of opportunities and unequal regional development. Balanced regional growth, stronger small towns and improved rural livelihoods are therefore essential for more sustainable urbanisation.

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