

Student tasks

1. The table below shows the 12 largest cities in the world. Use an atlas to complete the country column.

Rank	City	Population	Population density per km ²	Country
1	Shanghai	24,256,800	3,826	China
2	Karachi	23,500,000	6,663	Pakistan
3	Beijing	21,516,000	1,311	
4	Delhi	16,787,941	11,320	
5	Lagos	16,060,303	18,206	
6	Tianjin	15,200,000	1,293	
7	Istanbul	14,160,467	2,593	
8	Tokyo	13,297,629	6,075	
9	Guangzhou	13,080,500	1,759	
10	Mumbai	12,478,447	20,680	
11	Moscow	12,197,596	4,859	
12	São Paulo	11,895,893	7,821	

2. Give two reasons why the population data could be inaccurate. The table is adapted from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_proper_by_population.

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The world's 12 biggest cities

3. Use this blank world map and an atlas to plot the locations of these cities.



This map has been borrowed from Tombola (Nelson, 1992) by kind permission of the authors, John Palim, Paul Power and Phyllis Vannuffel.

4. Do the 12 largest cities of the world appear to be concentrated in a particular continent of the world?

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5. What similarity can you see about their location?

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6. How might the rank order of this list change in the future?

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Suggested answers

1. Countries

Rank	City	Population	Population density per km ²	Country
1	Shanghai	24,256,800	3,826	China
2	Karachi	23,500,000	6,663	Pakistan
3	Beijing	21,516,000	1,311	China
4	Delhi	16,787,941	11,320	India
5	Lagos	16,060,303	18,206	Nigeria
6	Tianjin	15,200,000	1,293	China
7	Istanbul	14,160,467	2,593	Turkey
8	Tokyo	13,297,629	6,075	Japan
9	Guangzhou	13,080,500	1,759	China
10	Mumbai	12,478,447	20,680	India
11	Moscow	12,197,596	4,859	Russia
12	São Paulo	11,895,893	7,821	Brazil

2. Suggested answers:

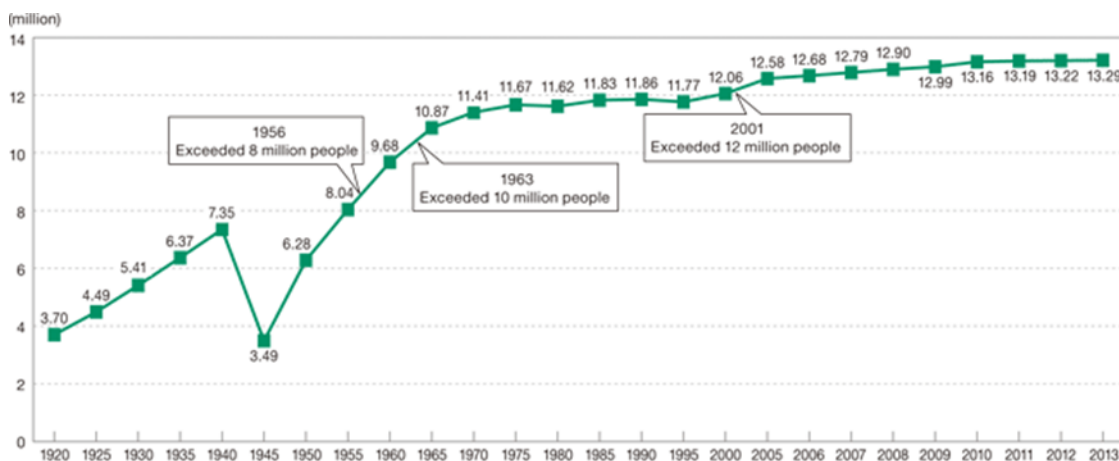
- The population numbers will be in a constant state of natural change.
- The majority of these 12 cities are in LDCs or NICs and will be experiencing a considerable amount of migratory change.
- It is impossible to obtain population data accurate to one person, in real time.
- The Wikipedia data source could be inaccurate / out of date. Data is from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_proper_by_population.
- The Wikipedia data may have not been typed correctly.

4. Nine of the 12 cities are found in Asia. Istanbul is located in both Europe and Asia. Although Russia is also in both the continents of Asia and Europe, Moscow is west of the Urals so is located in Europe.

The world's 12 biggest cities

Rank	City	Country	Continent
1	Shanghai	China	Asia
2	Karachi	Pakistan	Asia
3	Beijing	China	Asia
4	Delhi	India	Asia
5	Lagos	Nigeria	Africa
6	Tianjin	China	Asia
7	Istanbul	Turkey	Europe/Asia
8	Tokyo	Japan	Asia
9	Guangzhou	China	Asia
10	Mumbai	India	Asia
11	Moscow	Russia	Europe
12	São Paulo	Brazil	South America

- The majority of the 12 cities are located on the coast.
- The rank order is difficult to predict. Tokyo is the only city in a HIC and its urban growth has slowed in the last 40 years. Urban growth rates remain high in LICs and NEEs.



Tokyo historical population since 1920

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commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tokyo_historical_population.gif