

Describing places The language of trends IELTS Writing Part One map and line graph tasks

*What are the trends in the things below in this city, area or country? Choose one and talk about its **past**, **present** and **future**, especially any changes. You can also compare that thing to other places if you know about it. **To what extent** does your partner agree with your ideas?*

- abandoned buildings
- abandoned villages
- amount of woodland
- average age in small towns/ villages
- border disputes
- building of bypasses
- building of housing estates/ council estates
- building of new towns
- building of seawalls
- caving
- cleanliness of rivers/ lakes/ seas
- cliff erosion/ coastal erosion
- commercial property occupancy rates
- commercial property rents
- commuting
- concrete on the coastline
- condition of parks
- construction
- conversion/ repurposing of old buildings
- deforestation
- deindustrialisation
- demolition
- depopulation
- development of brownfield sites (= former industrial areas)
- developments of town squares
- disappearance of historic buildings/ historic areas
- earthquake reinforcement
- fountains
- gentrification
- green spaces
- high-rise buildings
- home buying
- homelessness/ sleeping rough
- importance of regional capitals
- importance of the capital
- importance of the financial district
- land reclamation
- mortgages
- mountaineering/ hiking in the mountains
- overcrowding

- pavements (= sidewalks)
- pedestrian bridges
- pedestrianisation/ traffic-free zones
- popularity of farming
- popularity of housing estates/ council estates
- popularity of living in small towns/ villages
- popularity of new towns
- popularity of regional capitals
- popularity of the suburb(s)
- popularity of/ wealth of/ development of the north/ northeast/ east/ southeast/ south/ southwest/ west/ northwest/ north-northwest/ centre
- popularity of/ wealth of/ development of the northernmost parts/ the southernmost parts/ the easternmost parts/ the westernmost parts
- population of small towns/ villages
- position of the outskirts
- power lines
- protected areas
- protected buildings
- public housing
- redevelop
- restoration of historic buildings/ historic areas
- rundown areas/ slums
- shopping in the city centre/ town centre/ main street/ high street
- shrinking communities
- size of farms
- size of national parks/ number of national parks
- size of/ development of/ popularity of the surrounding area
- skyscrapers
- spending on sewers/ work on sewers/ development of the sewage system
- squatting
- toll roads
- tolls
- trams
- transport connections to (small) islands
- transport links/ transport connections
- use of chemicals on farms
- use of country roads/ country lanes/ B roads
- use of public transport
- use of riverbanks/ canal-sides
- use of roundabouts
- use of town squares
- wind farms/ wind power/ offshore wind farms

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Choose one of the descriptions of trends below that you agree with and read it out to your partner, adding language to show the strength (or not) of your feelings, explaining why you feel that way. They should agree or disagree in the same way.

The popularity of council estates *dropped* a couple of decades ago.
Most small towns have *shrunk*.
Use of canals has *declined*.
The popularity of the majority of regional capitals has *fallen*.

The importance of the financial district has *increased sharply*.
Spending on earthquake reinforcement has *risen dramatically*.
The number of traffic free zones will *grow rapidly*.
The popularity of new towns *took off* in the late 1980s.
Redevelopment *rocketed* soon after the Second World War (= soon after WWII).
The importance of the capital has *soared*.

Land reclamation has *plummeted*.
The popularity of living in small towns has *dived*.
The popularity of the suburbs *took off* in the early 20th century.
The development of brownfield sites *crashed* after the Lehman Brothers shock.
The number of protected buildings will *rocket*.
Restoration of historic buildings will *soar*.

The rate of depopulation will *remain constant* for the next couple of decades.
The importance of regional capitals will *stay the same*.
The popularity of hiking in the mountains will *remain steady*.
The size of farms will be *stable*.
The number of toll roads has *not varied* recently.
The popularity of the Northeast will *stay flat*.

The outskirts have been *growing*.
Protected areas will be further *expanded*.
Use of country roads will *shrink*.

Local governments often *boost* spending on pavements to spend their budgets.
The national government is trying to *raise* incomes in the North.
With depopulation governments will need to *slash* spending on new transport connections.
It's easy for governments to *cut* spending on sewers because the public don't know or care what is happening beneath their feet.
Increasing the number of pedestrian bridges is a good way to cater to tourists.

The number of historic buildings has more than *halved* in the last half a century.
The population of rural areas will *drop by a third* by the middle of this century.
Deindustrialisation will lead to a *doubling* of the number of service jobs.
The number of town squares needs to *triple* or *increase fourfold*.
The wealth of the West has been *fluctuating*.

The building of bypasses should *pick up*.
The building of new towns *peaked* many years ago.
The development of national parks *dipped* but has *recovered*.
The Northeast's economy should *regain lost ground*.
The economy of the southernmost part is *unstable*.
After decades of decline, the use of canals will probably *bounce back*.

Transport connections to small islands have *deteriorated*.
The use of chemicals on farms has *worsened*.
After an improvement, wind power has *slumped*.
The number of trams *collapsed* in the 60s.
Demolishment of historic *escalated* in the bubble years.
The building of new towns rapidly rose then *crashed*.

The condition of historic buildings has *bounced back*.
The appearance of the city has been *enhanced*.
Some shrinking communities have *recovered*.
Shopping on high streets has *regained lost ground*.
Most rundown areas will soon *improve*.

The use of town squares has not *varied*.
There has been no *movement* in the use of roundabouts.
There has been no *change* in the number of abandoned buildings.
There has been a *blip* in road tolls.

The number of young people in villages has *plunged*.
The economy in the capital is *buoyant*.
The building of public housing has *dipped*.
The popularity of farming has *dived*.

The economy of the southwest has *plateaued*.
Border disputes have been *climbing* recently.
The cleanliness of rivers *peaked* many years ago.

The amount of woodland has been *dropping steadily*.
The building of seawalls is *continuing its steady progress*.
Coastal erosion is *continuing at the same rate*.

The number of power lines is still rising, but *less rapidly* than before.
The repurposing of old buildings is growing *at a slower rate* than in other (developed) countries but is likely to *accelerate* in the future.
Deforestation is *slowing down*.

Commuting times rose for many years but have *flattened out*.
The number of beaches without concrete has *bottomed out*.
Construction dropped after 2008 but has since *leveled off*.

Match these descriptions to the sections above, writing a brief note next to each thing above to remind you. Some fit in more than one place, but there is only one way to match all of them.

- Although they have obvious differences, all of them could refer to an upward or a downward trend, meaning you only know which one from the context.
- Despite their differences, all of them mean “fall very quickly”.
- The main similarity between them is meaning “become flat”.
- The most apparent similarity between them is a connection to mountains.
- The most obvious similarity between them is that they mean “go down”.
- The sole similarity between them is negative connotations, namely being the opposite of “get better”.
- They are similar in terms of all meaning straight diagonal lines on a graph.
- They are similar when you look at the shape of the line, which in these cases are curved.
- Their chief similarity between them is prepositions/ adverbs which mean “in the end”.
- They have something in common, being a connection to water.
- They resemble each other in that they refer to going both up and down.
- They share a connection with flying.
- They share one feature, which is meaning “not change”.
- They share positive connotations, meaning “getting better”.
- What links them is being actions that people etc. can do to change things.
- What they have in common is meaning “go up quickly”.
- What they most have in common is including numbers.
- What ties them together is a connection with physical size.

Compare your answers as a class but without looking at this page (to make you use the useful phrases).