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Key Drivers and Headwinds for Future Cities in South Asia, East Asia and Southeast Asia: Clusters of Future Studies: Environmental Futures; Technological Trends

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Abstract

Future cities in Asia are at the forefront of urban transformation, combining advanced technologies, sustainable practices, and innovative planning to address the challenges of rapid urbanisation. Asia is experiencing a digital transformation, creating a platform for developing innovative urban areas. Technology and sensors that collect or transfer data, among other technology, are fully integrated in these modern towns. This chapter elaborates on the comprehensive situation of future cities in the context of South Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. Focus has been given to the key drivers and headwinds (forces and challenges) that are faced by the countries. The factors that drive future city

development have been counted in terms of physical, social, and economic aspects while also focusing on the community, technology and policies. The outcome of these drivers and headwinds will link productivity, sustainability, accessibility, well-being, liveability, and governance for the expected future cities in Asia. This exploration also shows that the urban futures do not reside solely in technological systems but also involve the flexibility and coherence of other systems and how those systems ensure safety and opportunity for all. © The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2026.

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Engineering main heading

Urban growth

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