

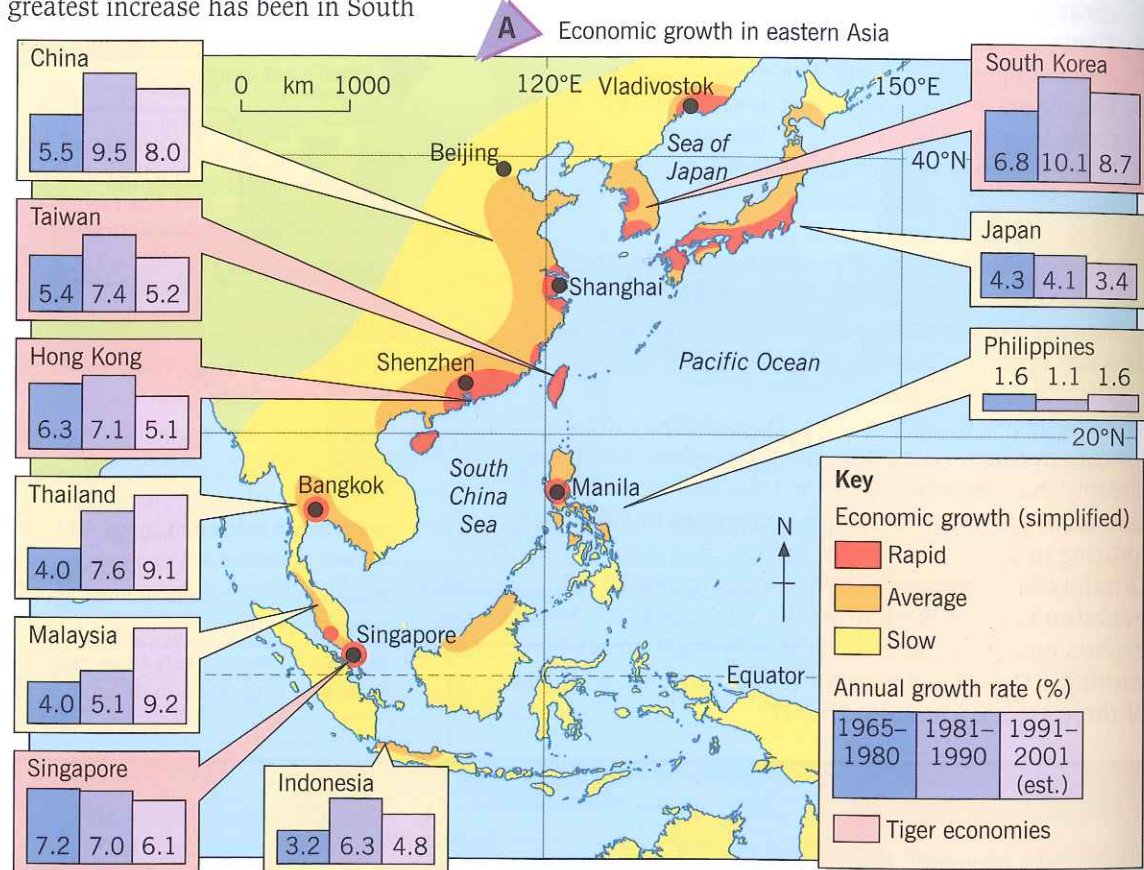
What are newly industrialised countries?

In the past, most of the world's industries were located in Europe and North America. The situation now is very different, as many developing countries have started to catch up and even overtake the large industrialised nations. Countries like Japan, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia have all rapidly developed a large manufacturing industry, and as a result have seen their economies grow and their countries become richer. Countries that have undergone rapid and successful industrialisation are called **newly industrialised countries** or **NICs**.

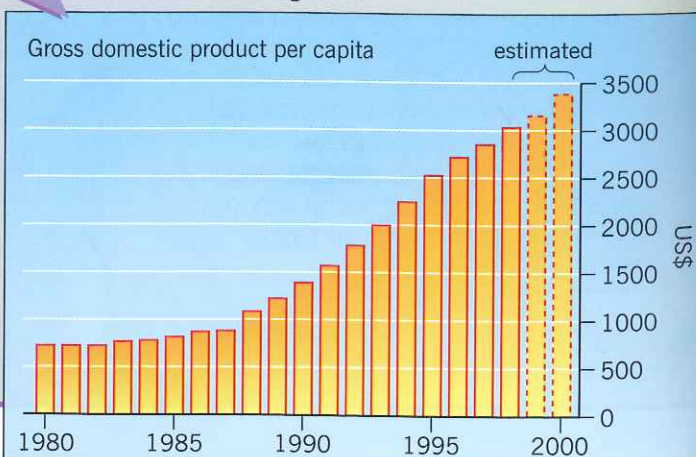
The countries of eastern Asia have enjoyed the most spectacular growth. The greatest increase has been in South

Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, which became known as the three 'Tigers'. Hong Kong was known as the fourth Tiger, but is now part of China and no longer independent.

Like Japan, these Tiger economies lacked basic raw materials but each had a strong government and a highly motivated workforce. The workforce were initially willing to work long hours for little pay. This helped their companies produce cheap goods and slowly take over world markets. Since the late 1970s, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia have begun to join the list of NICs. The next to emerge, and certainly the largest, is likely to be China.



B Thailand's economic growth



Activities

- What is meant by the term *newly industrialised country (NIC)*?
 - Using the 1991–2001 figures on map A, list the NICs in order of growth. Give the highest first.
- From graph B, give Thailand's GDP per capita in 1980, 1985, 1990 and 2000.
 - Describe the pattern of growth shown by the graph.
 - During which period was growth greatest?

Thailand – a newly industrialised country

Thailand is one of the world's fastest-growing economies. In less than 30 years it has changed from an economy based on agriculture to one dominated by manufactured goods. This has resulted in a huge improvement in living standards and the development of the country's capital, Bangkok, as a prosperous industrial region.

Change began in the 1970s when industries such as oil refining, motor vehicle assembly, steelmaking and chemicals were developed. This was followed in the 1980s and early 1990s by the rapid expansion of the electronics industry when foreign companies were invited to open factories in Thailand. Japanese and US firms moved in, attracted by low wages and a strong government. In the mid-1990s the government further speeded up development by moving towards high-tech industries producing high-value, high-profit goods.

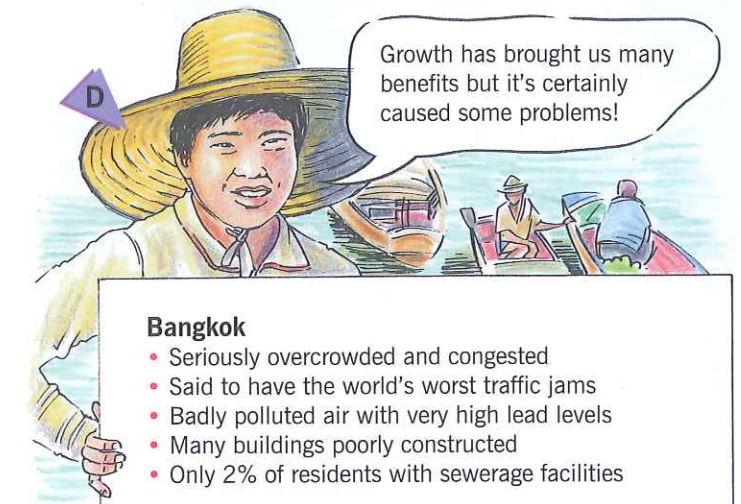
Thailand's rapid growth has brought many benefits:

- The country's GDP (wealth) has tripled in 20 years.
- There are more jobs available.
- Average wages have increased rapidly.
- More people now own TVs, hi-fi's, refrigerators, etc.
- Education and training has been improved.
- New hospitals have been built.
- Improvements have been made to roads and railways.
- Improvements in Bangkok include a modern international airport and new rapid transit system with a Skytrain and underground rail network.

Rapid growth has brought problems, however. Many people are concerned that growth has been centred on Bangkok, whilst the rest of the country has gained little benefit. Wages, for example, are ten times higher in Bangkok than they are in the rural north-east of the country. Some other problems are shown in diagram D.



C Bangkok's air-conditioned Skytrain



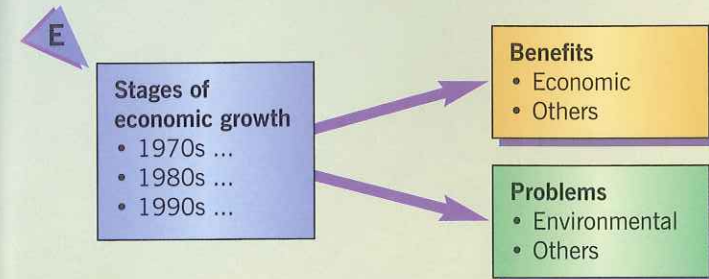
Bangkok

- Seriously overcrowded and congested
- Said to have the world's worst traffic jams
- Badly polluted air with very high lead levels
- Many buildings poorly constructed
- Only 2% of residents with sewerage facilities

Countrywide

- Rapid rural–urban migration (page 144) has left both cities and rural areas with big problems.
- Working conditions in some factories are very poor, with long working hours and very low pay.
- The sea and many rivers and canals have become polluted with industrial waste.

- Describe Thailand's emergence as a newly industrialised country, using the headings in diagram E.
- Thailand has been described as one of 'the Young Tigers of Asia'. Suggest reasons for this.



Summary

Many countries in eastern Asia have seen dramatic levels of industrialisation and economic growth in the last few decades. They are now called 'newly industrialised countries' or NICs.