Placed at the core of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles City (LA) is located along the southern coast of the State of California, United States. The area makes for an interesting case study considering the surrounding county is one of USA's most diverse regions in terms of its employment base, its population, and the types of communities that constitute it. The metropolitan area benefits from the continuous exchange with other 88 cities in vicinity. Due to such connectivity and local industries, its fast urban growth and development have been constant.

### Figures 1
- **Area (sq m)**: 468
- **Population (million)**: 3,792,600
- **Density (sq m)**: 8,092.30
- **Number of districts**: 15

### Extra figures 2
- **White persons, 2010**: 49.8%
- **Colored persons, 2010**: 9.6%
- **American Indian and Alaska Native persons, 2010**: 0.7%
- **Asian persons, 2010**: 11.3%
- **Language other than English spoken at home, age 5+, 2006-2010**: 59.7%
- **High school graduates, 25+, 2006-2010**: 73.7%
- **Bachelor’s degree or higher, persons age 25+, 2006-2010**: 30.2%
- **Homeownership rate, 2006-2010**: 38.9%
- **Private nonfarm establishments, 2009**: 245,523
- **Private nonfarm employment, 2009**: 3,703,233
- **Private nonfarm employment, 2000-2009**: -4.2%
- **Nonemployer establishments, 2009**: 821,177
LA, conflictual patterns of development
LA is traditionally a city of polycentric development and not of suburbanization, lacking a traditional center inspiring development. It has gone through a process of re-centralizing in the last 30 years, which uncovered a diverse set of problems still shadowing the success of this effort.

As it has been argued, it “makes possible the production of individual and distinct districts” capable of supporting not only the most basic functions of living, working, and shopping, but also of sustaining critical, identity-giving public realms. However, as the same author points out, the downside was reached in a relative short span of time, leading to a “de-prioritization” of involvement and lack of investment. Local governments have to react enough to the social difficulties created by such processes. The “indifference” towards an overview of urban development policies led to inequality in services, creating a city “increasingly polarized along class, income, racial, and ethnic lines...[where] the disadvantaged classes are overwhelmingly people of color”. Some authors also discuss the issue of self-segregation in the context in which few citizens can in fact access regional power. Moreover, since metropolitan Los Angeles is governed not only by five counties but also by 177 cities and more than 1,100 special districts, almost 90 percent of the region’s residents live inside cities, but some 1.6 million people live in unincorporated county territory. It is worth mentioning counties serve as “regional” governments in some respects because they are responsible for welfare, indigent health care, and criminal justice services, and because in metropolitan Los Angeles the counties are extremely large by national standards.

Social clustering, accentuated by spatial polycentrism
The recession reshaped the geography of the region’s jobs in recent years. Good-paying middle-class jobs vanished from southern L.A. County (and, to a lesser extent, northern Orange County as well). To the extent they were replaced in these locations, they were replaced with low-paying manufacturing and service jobs. High-paying jobs were created in other areas—largely in the entertainment sector, which focused on Hollywood, the Westside, and Burbank and Glendale and in the high-technology sector, which focused on mature, high-amenity suburbs such as Thousand Oaks and Irvine.
In terms of governance however, it is arguable Los Angeles promotes a polycentric development pattern. The government of Los Angeles is comprised of elective and appointive offices, including commissions, departments and agencies. The city runs its day-to-day operations using business-like principles characteristic of large organizations. It is concerned with public goods: safety, the quality of life, and the proper planning, location and safety of the buildings being constructed in the city. In short, we see the creation of community level governance institutions intended to connect neighbourhood level concerns within governance processes at the city level. These institutions are developing largely from the grass roots, with some regulation and minimal support on the part of the city. Although Los Angeles makes for a complex urban example in terms of past and current developments,

CITIES considers the city shows how, despite a fluctuating urban sprawl, the administration makes consistent efforts to keep up with private initiatives and to create new legislative frameworks for their emergence. These initiatives manage at their turn to ease the fears regarding a spatial distribution of various social groups, since bottom-up initiatives carry this concern into legislative practice.

More info
1  www.wikipedia.org,
2  US census bureau
3  Clark, Terry Glamour and Urban Development, 2003
4  Degoutin Stephane, Los Angeles and the logic of private urban system, 2004
5  Sprawl hits the wall, The Southern California Studies Centre, 2001
7  Structure of a city government, League of Women Voters of Los Angeles, 2006
8  A Socio-Economic Profile: Los Angeles County, EPS, 2009
9  Structure of a city government, League of Women Voters of Los Angeles, 2006