Australian Urban Observatory

Year 9 Geography of Interconnection

To access the Australian Urban Observatory, go to auo.org.au

This resource is a geographic information system which has collated data on Australia's 21 largest cities.

- In this activity you will focus on how a sense of connectivity can occur within your local community by looking at a range of **indicators**.
- Click on the link **"What we measure"** to understand the data collected by the AUO.

1. In your own words, define the term **'indicator'**. Discuss how indictors provide us with information to better understand the characteristics of places.

2. Explain how the **indicators** listed on the AUO website are interconnected.

Connectivity can often be classified as a physical and emotional connection.

Physical connectivity refers to how well you are connected to your community through infrastructure such as public transport, shops, food outlets, health services, community centres, libraries, sporting groups, schools, parks and playgrounds.

Emotional connectivity refers to your own sense of place, connectedness and belonging that you feel about the place where you live. Often the physical infrastructure and culture helps to build that emotional connectivity within people. Sometimes people recall travelling to a place and feeling a strong sense of place and emotional connectivity, perhaps more so than their own place of residence.

Indicator: A measure to monitor and track progress on an issue over time and used to understand if a situation is improving, staying the same or getting worse over time .

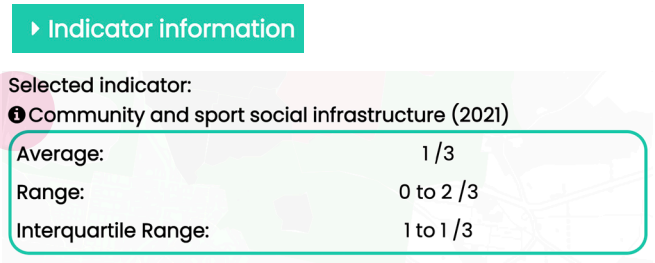
Decile: Divides the data into ten equal intervals. In the AUO the lower 5 deciles are shaded pink (less liveable representing 0-50%) and the upper 5 deciles are shaded green (more liveable representing 50-100%).

3. In what ways do you have a sense of place about the area where you live?

Physical Connection	Emotional Connection

Interconnection through Social Infrastructure

- Watch this video to understand the site: https://auo.org.au/using-the-indicators/
- To explore the map, you will need to create a login. Click on Sign up
- Select Melbourne as the city and choose the *Social Infrastructure Index*. The map is shaded according to **decile** values.
- To find out what each **indicator** measures click on the green tab on the right-hand side labelled **"Indicator information"** and click on the **'i'** to see a pop-up box with definition.

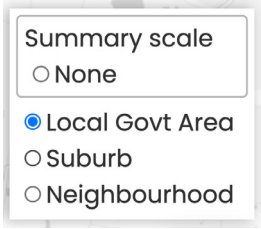


1. Use the information box to explain how social infrastructure enhances emotional connectivity and a sense of place.

2. What pattern do you observe on this map of Melbourne, based on the shading used?

3. Change the summary scale between Local Government Area, Suburb and Neighbourhood located on the right hand side of the map.

Does the pattern stay the same? Describe what you see.



4. Choose the suburb scale and perform a search using the magnifying glass in the top left corner. The percentile results can be changed by clicking on the blue layers icon on the right hand side menu. Complete the table below by looking at the indicator information that appears under the green tab on the right-hand side of the website:

Suburb	**Colour**	**Decile Range**	**City Percentile**	**Average score**	**Does this suburb fit the general pattern or is it an exception?**
Waterways					
Melton					
Fitzroy					
Craigieburn					
Koo Wee Rup					

5. Keep the map at the suburb scale and describe the distribution of the *Social Infrastructure index* for Melbourne, using the PQE method.

- **Pattern:** You have already identified the overall pattern above.
- **Quantification:** Use the average scores or city percentiles to add some quantitative examples to your answer.

  Try to provide three examples of different shades to help support your pattern.
- **Exceptions:** You have spotted some exceptions in the table above, or include some new ones.

6. Remain on the suburb map scale and look at the suburb and surrounding suburbs where you live. Complete the table below by exploring various **indicator** maps and ranking six of your neighbouring suburbs in your local area.

The suburb I live in is: _____

Suburb	**Culture and Leisure Infrastructure**			**Community and sport social infrastructure**		
	Shade	**Decile**	**Rank**	**Shade**	**Decile**	**Rank**

7. Based on these two **indicators** which suburb in your local area appears most connected socially and which seems least connected?
WW

8. Which of these findings do you agree with and which do you find surprising? Give some reasons for your answer.

9. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted how people connected with other people and community spaces.

a. During COVID-19 lockdowns in Melbourne, how and where did people come together (albeit socially distanced) when social infrastructure was closed?

b. Discuss how the reduced access to shops impacted people in the local community (consider both positive and negative social, economic and political impacts)..

	Positive Impacts	**Negative Impacts**
Social		
Political		
Economic		

c. Research how trade (at various scales) was impacted during the 2020-2021 COVID-19 restrictions. Suggest how peoples' interconnection with other places through trade and purchasing of goods was altered during this time. Have these temporary restrictions had long term impacts on local connectivity and liveability? Can you give some examples?

Interconnection through Public Open Space

Choose the map for **Average distance to closest public open space** and set the scale to Local Government Area. Read the information box for this indicator.

10. Provide an example of some 'open space' in your suburb. How is it used by the community?

11. What pattern do you observe on this map of Melbourne, based on the shading used?

Switch between a few of the maps showing various measures of open space to answer these questions.

12.Does the distribution of larger open spaces across the LGAs surprise you? Justify your answer.

13. Why may certain areas have less open space or require greater distances to reach?

14. Evaluate to what extent the size of the open space matters in terms of building a sense of emotional connectivity. You may include your own personal examples.

Interconnection through Public Transport

Access to public transport is vital to connect people. Switch between the various maps classed under Transport to see the trends across Melbourne. Read the information box as well.

15. Outline 2 reasons why public transport is important to social and economic interconnection within a community.

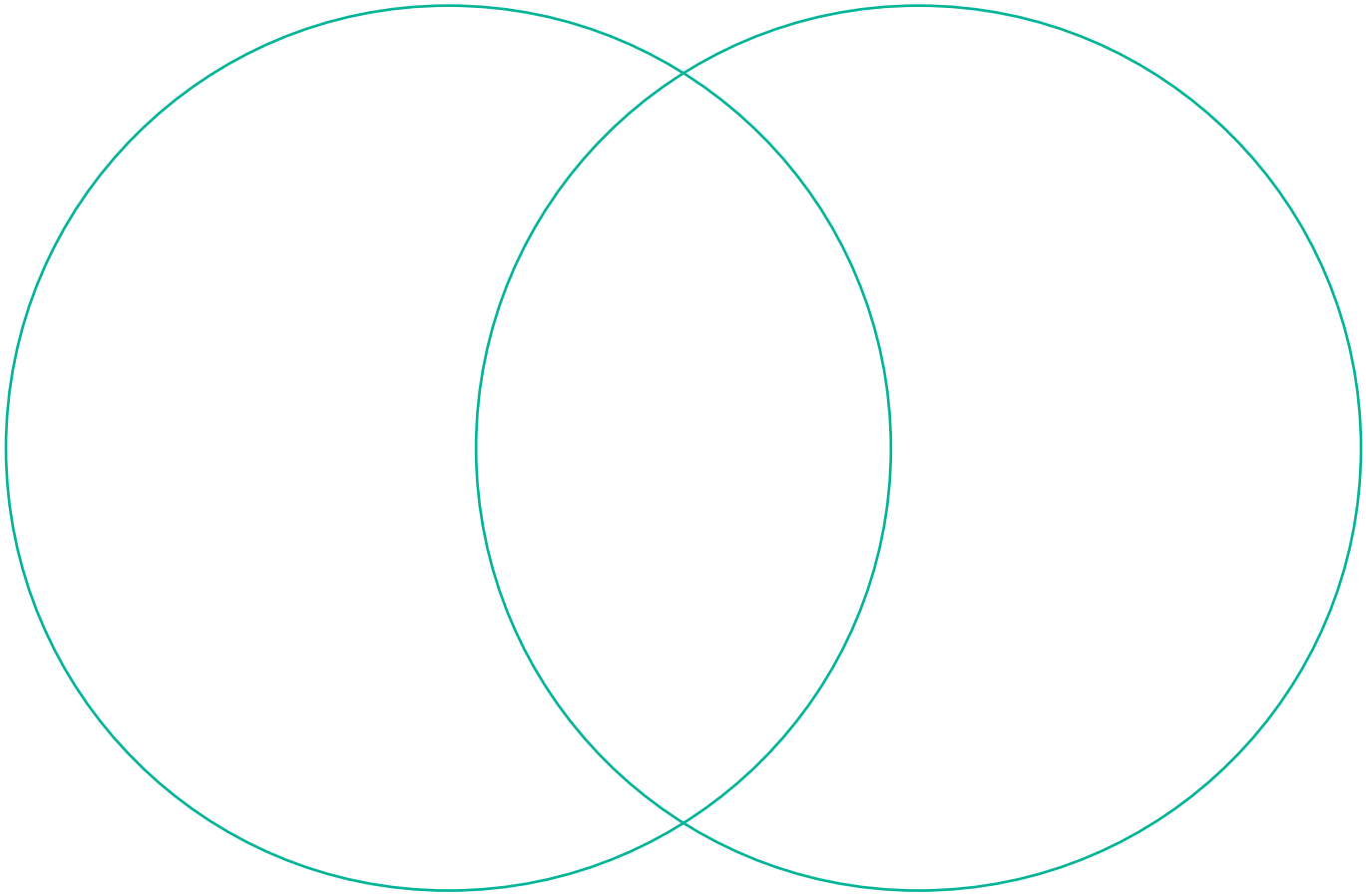
1.

2.

16. What are considered the upper limits in terms of distance to public transport and frequency of service to deem it a convenient option for residents?

17.Complete the Venn diagram comparing the LGA where you live to another LGA in Melbourne using the various map indicators and data represented under Transport.

LGA: **LGA:**



Conclusive Summary

18. Explain the links between emotional and physical connectivity.

19. Summarise in a paragraph the interconnections that exist between proximity to infrastructure (both social and transport), access to open space and building a sense of place.

Extension

Research a Neighbourhood Activity Centre.

- Define 'Neighbourhood Activity Centre' and explain their purpose.
- Locate your nearest Neighbourhood Activity Centre.
- Assess its strengths and weaknesses in fulfilling your sense of place and connectivity.
- Look for the Victorian government map of these centres and discuss their spatial association with railway lines.
- Explore the boundaries of an activity centre.
- Explain why it is important to establish land use precincts within an activity centre to improve interconnection.
- Finally, explain how the AUO website could assist with the future placement and design of a new Neighbourhood Activity Centre.