



There are now over 700 million motor vehicles in the world -

and the number is increasing by more than 40 million each year.

The average distance driven by car users is growing too - from 8 km a day per person in western Europe in 1965 to 25 km a day in 1995.

This dependence on motor vehicles has given rise to major problems, including environmental pollution, depletion of oil resources, traffic congestion and safety.

While emissions from new cars are far less harmful than they used to be, city streets and motorways are becoming more crowded than ever, and often with older trucks, buses and taxis, which emit excessive levels of smoke and fumes.

This concentration of vehicles makes air quality in urban areas unpleasant and sometimes dangerous to breathe.

Example: Moscow has joined the list of capitals afflicted by congestion and traffic fumes.

In Mexico City, vehicle pollution is a major health hazard.