

## IELTS Speaking topic – Modern problems

This is a sample response for IELTS Speaking Part 2 and 3. In addition to the model answer there are highlighted words and phrases. **Teal** is for vocabulary relating to this topic, **yellow** is for generally useful words and phrases.

## IELTS Speaking Part 2

Talk about a problem your town or city faced

You should say:

- what the problem was
- what was done to solve it
- if the solution was effective

and say what else could be done to solve it

### Model answer

*Over the past twenty or so years my city has been suffering from increasing **smog** levels. Mist and fog would mix with **exhaust fumes** produced by the many cars and form a thick, greyish blanket enveloping the city, especially in the morning hours. Concerned about emotional and physical well-being of citizens, the local government decided to introduce a number of measures to **battle** the issue.*

*The first measure was to discourage using cars with just the driver in it and **incentivize carpooling**. They installed cameras that would record the amount of people in the vehicle and **charge** empty cars a small **fee**. Conversely, cars with multiple people in them were allowed to use dedicated carpooling lanes. Unfortunately, both measures were met with lack of enthusiasm. People were **reluctant** to share their commute with others.*

*Another attempt to tackle the problem was stricter vehicle inspection. As it turned out, the procedure had been rather **lenient** and **perfunctory** - nobody would bother to check if cars were roadworthy. The more thorough inspection found out that as much as 70% of road-going vehicles failed to meet modern **emission standards**. Naturally, the new requirement upset the drivers, but the regulation was non-negotiable, so they had to oblige. As a result, the city air became considerably cleaner.*

*I think I would've approached it in a less **punitive** way. Instead of charging people money, the government could educate people on the other ways of commuting such as bicycles or even walking. After all, an angry commuter is less productive at work.*

## IELTS Speaking Part 3

### Globalisation and population

**The world around us grows increasingly globalised. Is it a good or a bad thing?**

*There is no straightforward answer to that. On one hand people grow more **alike** and therefore become more understanding of one another. The **cultural borders** slowly disappear and become one. They say that the **multitude of** languages we have now will be reduced to a handful of English dialects and Chinese. Therefore, communication will become almost effortless. On the other hand, the variety of cultures, habits and views that we still have will be probably gone as well. Sure enough, we will learn whether a **homogeneous world** is a good thing or not, even during our lifetimes.*

## IELTS Speaking topic – Modern problems

### How will growing population affect our lives?

We can already see one **alarming** trend - that is, **soaring** housing prices. Very few people can afford a **down payment** on a place of their own, which **has almost never been the case** in the past. As land prices go through the roof, we are likely to see more block of flats type of buildings and fewer single-family houses. One more likely change associated with population growth is likely **shortage of** meat. At the current rate the amount of produced meat products is **unsustainable** which will mean that meat **substitutes** are likely to replace genuine meat. In the future soy, synthetically-grown meat, **algae** and even insects could be the main protein source for most of us.

## Man and the environment

### In what ways does humanity affect the environment?

Well, there are too many to name all of them. Deforestation, hunting for game or food, oil spills and industrial waste, cars and other **emission**-generating vehicles. The latter destroy the ozone layer and as a result heat from the sun gets trapped in the atmosphere, creating the **dreaded** **greenhouse effect**. This in turn leads to climate change that tips the intricate balance maintained in the biosphere and leads to animal migration, many **species** eventually dying out. Forest fires are on the rise partially because of this reason too. It's all a big **domino effect** situation.

### Should humanity prioritise colonising other planets or preserving Earth?

Colonising another planet is not realistic in the near future. The technology is simply not there - we have no **means** to transport people to another celestial object **en masse**. We have no way to terraform the surface of, say, Mars. We can't **haul** enough construction materials to create **self-sustaining** infrastructure there. And we will not be able to do any of the above in the next fifty years or so. It is very likely however that an environmental catastrophe of huge scale will happen in the same time scope. Therefore, taking care of our mother world is of **utmost** importance.

### What recent development is likely to reduce human impact on the environment?

The biggest change that is coming in the next decade is overall shift from petrol and diesel engines to electric ones. The **legislation** is already there to gradually **oust** **obsolete** technology in favour of the new, better and greener one. It is uncertain how welcomed this change is going to be, but as we all know producing electricity on industrial scale is much less damaging to nature than billions of small, **inefficient** and poorly-maintained gas cars.

## Modern problems vocabulary

**Smog** (n) - a thick, mist-like phenomenon, a mixture of exhaust gases and fog

**Exhaust fumes** - gases produced by cars and other vehicles

**Carpooling** (n) - the practice of sharing your car with friends or colleagues who have the same commute route

**Emission standards** - regulations on how toxic exhaust fumes can get

**Cultural borders** - differences between different cultures and nationalities

**Homogeneous world** - a world that is uniform, i.e. more or less the same wherever you go

**Alarming** (adj) - worrying or concerning

**Shortage of** - insufficient amount of something

**Unsustainable** (adj) - impossible to continue for long period of time. Unsustainable lifestyle is the one you will not be able to lead or afford for a long time.

**Emissions** (n) - (here) harmful gases produced as a part of working process, e.g. cars

**Greenhouse effect** - a situation when sunlight is trapped inside the atmosphere of the planet unable to escape which leads to rising temperatures

**Species** (n) - biological class of animals or other living things.

## IELTS Speaking topic – Modern problems

**Self-sustaining** (adj) - able to support one's life

**Legislation** (n) - the process or situation of making and upholding laws

**Oust** (v) - to replace something that is outdated or obsolete

## General vocabulary

**Alike** (adj) - similar, like one another

**Multitude** (n) - variety, difference between

**Soaring** (adj) - increasing quickly and considerably

**Down payment** - an initial payment on a loan that you have to take in addition to monthly payments (or installments)

**To be the case** - to be like so. *All of my friends have found jobs already but that is not the case for me*

**Substitute** (n) - replacements for something

**Algae** (n) - seaweed that grows underwater and can be used as food

**Dreaded** (adj) - feared or hated

**Domino effect** - a situation when one event triggers another and creates a chain reaction

**Means to** - resources, materials or ways to do something

**En masse** - (French) together or at the same time

**Haul** (v) - to transport goods or cargo

**Utmost** (adv) - great or extreme

**Obsolete** (adj) - out of date, archaic

**Inefficient** (adj) - not used or functioning in the best way possible