**Central Place Theory**

* + **This theory is based on the work of Walter Christaller in his book entitled *The Central Places in Southern Germany* (1933).**
  + **Central place theory is a geographical theory that seeks to explain the number, size and location of human settlements in an urban system. The theory was created by the German geographer Walter Christaller, who asserted that settlements simply functioned as 'central places' providing services to surrounding areas.**
* **Christaller’s results included the following:**
* The landscape is divided into noncompeting market areas known as **complementary regions.**
* Each individual urban center and its merchants have a sale monopoly.
* Market areas form a series of **hexagons** that cover the area.
* All areas are served.
* There is no area with equal service from two centers.
* The central place is at the center of each hexagon.
* The central place will supply all the goods and services to consumers in that area.
* **The size of the market area of a central place is based on the number of goods and services offered.**
* **The larger the number of goods and services, the larger the market area.**
* Within each hexagon, or around its edges, lie smaller hexagons with **central places** that serve smaller areas.
* The nesting of small hexagons within larger ones creates a hierarchy of **central places.**
* **Small centers** may provide goods with low thresholds (e.g. foodstuffs).
* **Larger centers** provide more expensive items, like cars or farm machinery.

**Christaller came to two important conclusions regarding settlement patterns.**

* **Christaller’s first conclusion:**
  + **Towns** of the same size are evenly spaced because they are in the centers of like-sized market areas.
  + Larger towns are farther apart than smaller towns because their market areas are larger.
* **Christaller’s second conclusion:**
  + Towns are part of an **interdependent** system.
  + If a central place is eliminated, the entire system readjusts, **altering the spatial pattern** to meet the needs and demands of the inhabitants.
* In areas where cities are multi-functional, the model is less applicable.