

# Cities in Europe



PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency

### Facts and figures on cities and urban areas



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# Preface

Cities are economic powerhouses, places of social interaction and fora that enable us to exchange ideas. Cities, however, are also the places where some of our biggest challenges manifest themselves. In this 'urban age' cities are becoming increasingly aware of their responsibilities as well as their capacities to play their part in addressing issues like poverty, segregation, and climate change adaptation. Some cities aim to take the lead by setting ambitious targets and by experimenting with innovative approaches that can be shared across borders. Additionally, the European Union and its Member States increasingly look to cities to put their policies into practice.

Given the complexities of the challenges facing us, we need to explore the opportunities for cross-border collaboration and multi-level

coordination. Exploration of new strategies, plans and practices requires, among other things, high-quality data, thorough analysis and clear communication. Visualising information can play a vital part in creating and sharing knowledge. In Cities in Europe, PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency presents data on European cities and the urban dimension of a number of key challenges featuring prominently on both the Urban Agenda for the EU and the Dutch national Agenda Stad. Well-established facts, new findings and counter-intuitive connections are presented in a visually attractive way, in a series of infographics. In this era of networked knowledge production, bringing statistics to life is indispensable for effective policy-making and informing and involving stakeholders and the public at large, in cities, countries and Europe as a whole.

> Hans Mommaas **Director-General**

# Cities in Europe

- 08 Urban Agenda for the EU The European urban landscape 10 Most Europeans live in urban areas 12 Cities, towns and suburbs 14 16 Different types of urban regions
- 18
- Metropolitan economies grew stronger in eastern Europe 20
- Stronger job growth in urban areas 22
- Towards greener cities 24
- 26 Cycling the city
- 28 Risk of urban poverty persists
- Migrants move to cities 30
- Quality of life in cities 32

Growth and decline in metropolitan areas

# Introduction

European cities are vital to the future of Europe. As stated in the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities (European Union, 2007), cities 'possess unique cultural and architectural qualities, strong forces of social inclusion and exceptional possibilities for economic development'. Moreover, cities are centres of power, knowledge, innovation and integration. It is also in cities developments in the context of the Europe that great strides towards sustainability can be made, as their density allows for more energy-efficient forms of housing, transport and service provision. Many cities in Europe show serious ambitions and efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, however, these same cities often lack affordable housing and suffer from concentrations of

unemployment and poverty. Furthermore, many cities have difficulties in dealing with traffic congestion, poor air quality and the effects of climate change (e.g. heat and heavy rainfall).

Cities in Europe contains 13 infographics that show facts and figures on recent urban 2020 strategy and the Urban Agenda for the EU, which aims to strengthen the urban dimension in the European Union. Based on the harmonised definition of urban areas by Eurostat and the OECD, European cities are compared with each other and migration, risk of urban poverty and urbanrural divergence in employment growth.

Furthermore, the following questions are being explored: which cities have shown strong growth in population, GDP and employment? Are the growth rates related to the size of the agglomerations? In which cities is the population showing high levels of satisfaction about quality of life? And which cities are falling behind? What types of territorial patterns can be distinguished?

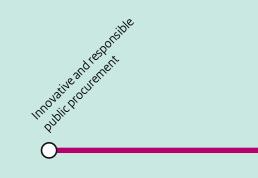
This publication consists of two parts. In this part, Cities in Europe, we look at cities in a European context. The other part, Cities in the Netherlands, describes in the context of the Dutch Agenda Stad, the national urban agenda for the Netherlands.

### Towards smart, green and inclusive cities

## Urban Agenda for the EU

Cities are expected to play a key role in delivering the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, green and inclusive growth (European Union, 2015). Therefore, the EU's cohesion policy for the 2014–2020 period seeks to support towns and cities through a range of European investment priorities, such as urban mobility, economic and social regeneration, the digital agenda, improvements in research and innovation capacity, and the low-carbon economy. In the past years, the European Commission, EU Member States and European cities have collaborated to develop an Urban Agenda for the EU. The core objective of the Urban Agenda for the EU is to involve cities in the design of EU policy, to mobilise cities for the implementation of EU policies, and to strengthen the urban dimension in these policies. Under the 2016 Dutch EU Presidency, the Urban Agenda for the EU aims to strengthen the urban dimension in EU policies by: (1) improving the development, implementation and evaluation of EU legislation ('better regulation'); (2) ensuring better access to and utilisation of European funds; and (3) by improving the EU urban knowledge base and stimulating the sharing of best practices and cooperation between cities.

In 2016, the Urban Agenda for the EU is focussing on 12 priority themes (see infographic), as well as aiming to promote stronger cooperation between the European Commission, EU Member States and cities in order to stimulate smart, green and inclusive growth in the cities of Europe.







### Smart growth

The Europe 2020 strategy envisions the transition towards smart growth through the development of an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation. Concerning smart growth, cities are at the forefront of innovation. Moreover, the physical concentration of people and capital means that cities are more productive than other places.



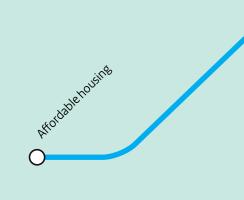
### **Green growth**

The green growth objective relates to the promotion of more resource-efficient, greener and competitive markets. Healthy, compact and energy-efficient cities are key to green growth in Europe. Many European cities are currently developing or expanding their networks for sustainable transport, waste management, district heating and green infrastructures.

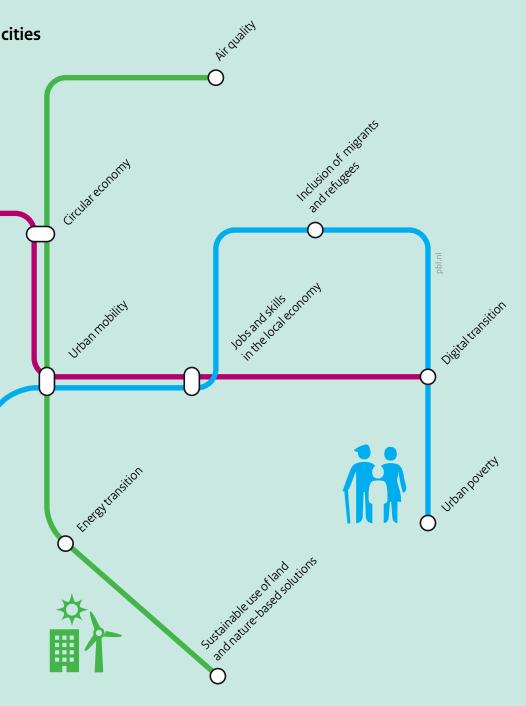


### Inclusive growth

The inclusive growth priority of the Europe 2020 strategy encompasses policies aimed at fostering job creation and poverty reduction. Cities can contribute to inclusive growth by combating social polarisation and poverty, by providing affordable housing and by integrating refugees and migrants into urban society.







## The European urban landscape

The urban landscape of Europe is characterised by a large diversity of small, medium-sized and large cities. Compared to other parts of the world, many urban regions in Europe have a polycentric structure where multiple towns and cities are in close proximity to one another. In other cases, a single large city – typically a nation's capital – dominates its surrounding region, resulting in a more monocentric pattern. In a few regions, a linear urbanisation pattern can be discerned, such as in areas bordering the Mediterranean Sea and Italy's Adriatic coast.

Europe's urban structure is the result of many underlying factors. Some settlements date back to the Roman Empire, where they functioned as administrative centres. Other towns and cities developed during the Middle Ages as regional marketplaces at strategic locations along trade routes, often close to a river or harbour. As a result of political, demographic and economic developments, towns and cities flourished (and therefore expanded) in some periods, whereas other periods were characterised by decline (Benevolo, 1995; Rutte and Abrahamse, 2016). Over the course of the 20th century, cities spilled over into their surrounding regions. Several countries built so-called new towns. Milton Keynes in the United Kingdom, Almere in the Netherlands and Nowa Huta in Poland are examples of

these. This injected new and highly planned urban and suburban centres into the historical European urban structure.

Looking back, Europe's urban landscape is clearly not a static phenomenon. Even today, some towns and cities grow, while others shrink. Currently, there are over 800 cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants in the European Union. The majority of these, almost 700, are small and medium-sized cities (between 50,000 and 250,000 inhabitants).

Lisbon (529,000) -

Madrid (1,409,000) -

### Population density 2014

On a grid of 10x10 kilometres Source: LandScan, adaptation by PBL

London (1,094,00

Paris (1,857,000

Athens (1.247.000)

City name (number of inhabitants in the most densely populated 10x10km grid cell)

### Most Europeans live in **urban areas**

### Degree of urbanisation

Cities

Towns and Suburbs

Data not available

**Rural Areas** 

Based on population grid from 2006 and Local Administrative Units (LAU2) 2011 Source: Eurostat, JRC, EFGS, Regio-GIS, adaptation by PBL

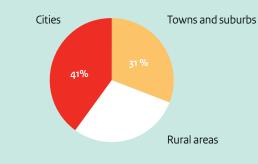
According to the harmonised definition by Eurostat and the OECD, urban areas — defined as cities, towns and suburbs — provide a home to 72% of the EU-28's population; 41% live cities and 31% in towns and suburbs. Over the past 50 years, the urban population has continued to grow. However, the strongest growth took place in towns and suburbs. Many people have settled in the newly developed residential areas surrounding the existing cities. In contrast to the urban growth rates, the rural population showed a steady decline throughout the past decade. The share of people living in rural areas has decreased from 35% in 1960 to 28% in 2010.

### What is the degree of urbanisation?

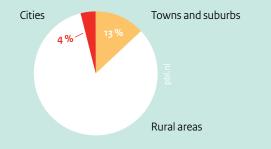
The degree of urbanisation is a densitybased classification originally introduced in 1991 to distinguish densely populated areas with more than 50,000 inhabitants (cities), intermediate urbanised areas (towns and suburbs) and thinly populated areas (rural areas). In 2011, work carried out by the European Commission, Eurostat and the OECD resulted in a harmonised definition of the degree of urbanisation which is based on more precise population datadata (see appendix).

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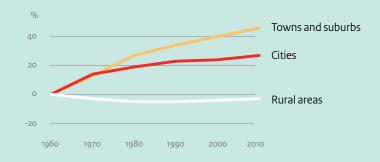
### 72% of the EU population lives in urban areas...

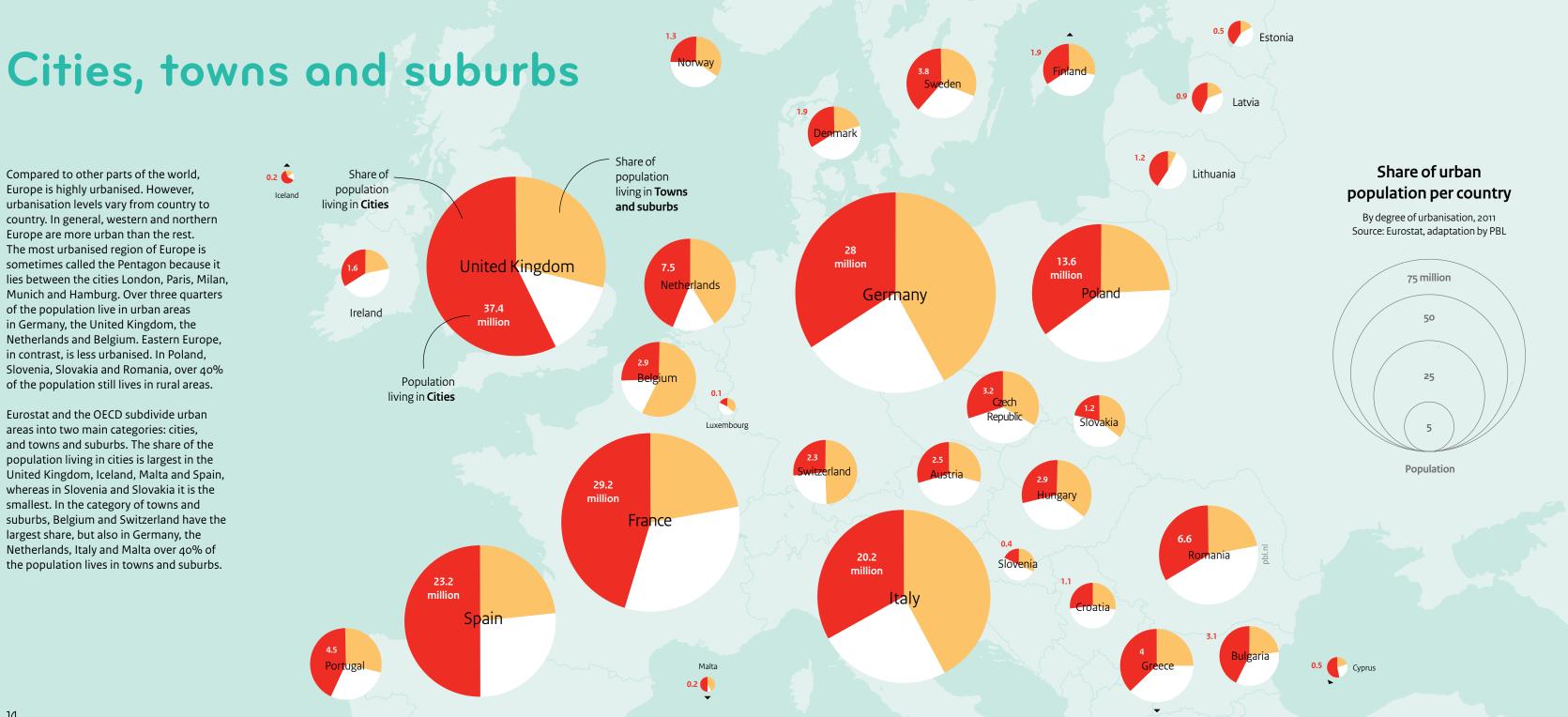


### ...on 17% of the land area.



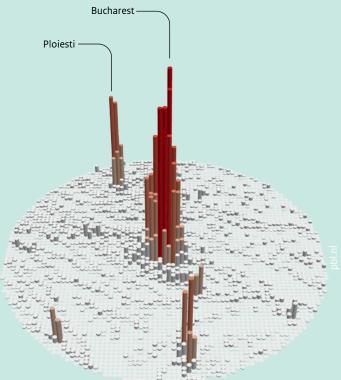
### The urban population is growing.





## Different types of **urban regions**

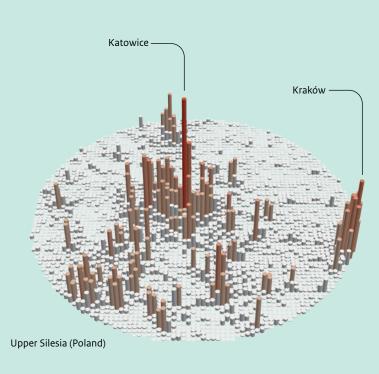
Population density 2014 On a grid of 2x2 kilometres Source: LandScan, adaptation by PBL



Bucharest (Romania)

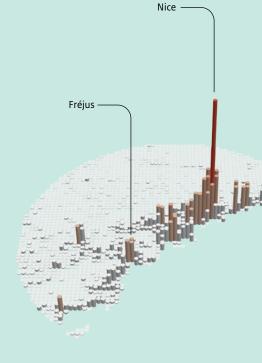
### Monocentric urban region

Regions with monocentric urban structures can be found in France, Spain, Portugal and countries in the northern and eastern parts of Europe, where cities are distributed over relatively wide areas.



### Dispersed urban region

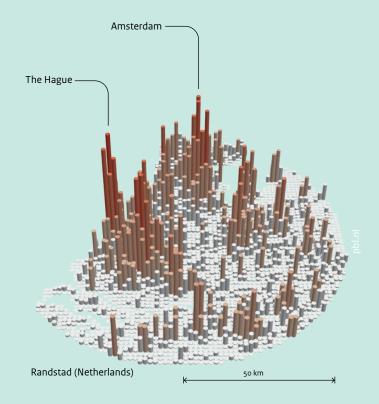
Dispersed urban patterns are formed by scattered or sprawling cities, towns and suburbs with relatively low densities. Examples can be found in parts of Belgium, in northern Italy and in the south of Poland.



Côte d'Azur (France)

### Linear urban region

Regions with linear forms of agglomeration have emerged along some of Europe's coastlines, for instance in Portugal, in the southern parts of Spain and France, and in the east of Italy. Linear urban regions are also present in mountain valleys in Switzerland and Austria. Urban areas in Europe come in all shapes and sizes. In general, four different morphological types can be distinguished: monocentric, dispersed, linear and polycentric urban regions.



### Polycentric urban region

In polycentric urban regions, multiple cities lie in close proximity to one another. These kinds of regions can be found in the Netherlands, the western part of Germany and the southern half of the United Kingdom.

### Growth and decline in metropolitan areas

- 10 million

4 million

- 1 million

Changes in the size of the population in cities are the result of natural processes (births and deaths) and migration. In most European metropolitan areas, the population is growing. Cities in Europe are also becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse, as a result of the free movement of citizens within the European Union and the influx of migrants and asylum seekers from non-EU countries. Most EU cities saw an increase in the share of non-national inhabitants in recent decades.

In the 2000–2010 period, the strongest population growth took place in London, Madrid and Paris. But also Dublin, Toulouse, Oslo and metropolitan areas in Spain gained in population. However, not all metropolitan areas have been growing. In the same period, population numbers in Athens, Tallinn, Genova and a number of cities in Poland and Germany declined.

### How are metropolitan areas defined?

The OECD database contains detailed data on 114 metropolitan areas in Europe. According to the OECD definition, metropolitan areas are urban areas with more than 500,000 inhabitants. The OECD, in cooperation with the European Commission and Eurostat, has developed a harmonised definition of urban areas that overcomes previous limitations linked to administrative definitions (OECD, 2012). According to this definition, an urban area is a functional economic unit characterised by densely inhabited 'cities' with more than 50,000 inhabitants and 'commuting zones' whose labour market is highly integrated with nearby cities.





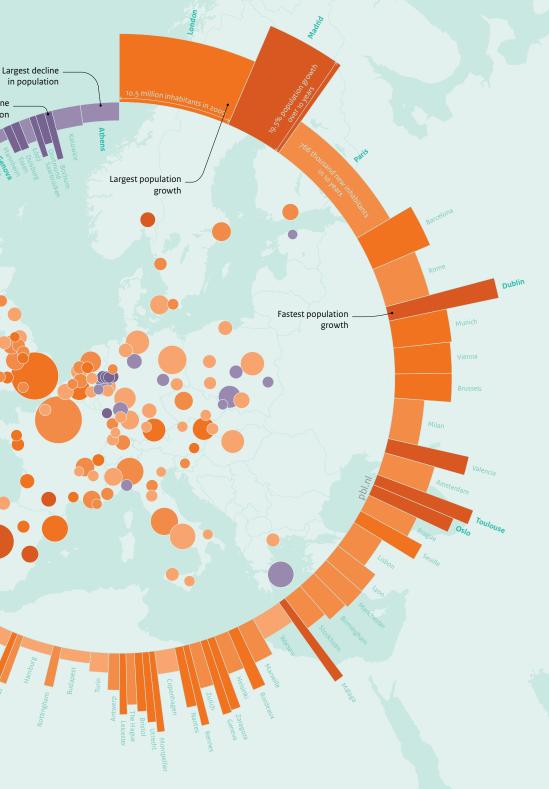


10-year period

Population change for the 114 metropolitan areas in Europe, 2000–2010 Source: OECD Metropolitan Explorer, adaptation by PBL

Fastest decline

in population

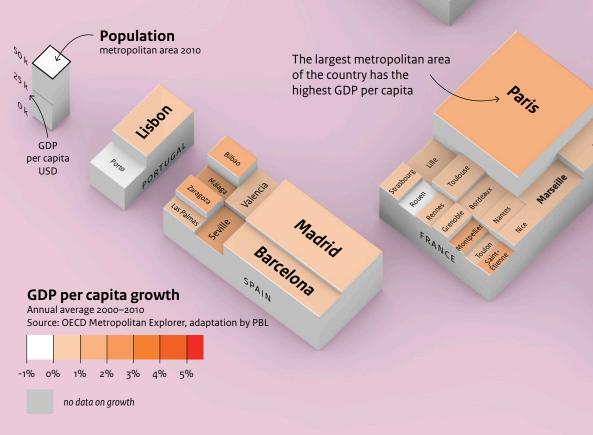


### Metropolitan economies...

Cities are the engines of the economy. Metropolitan regions contain 59% of the EU population, but they hold 62% of its jobs and represent 67% of GDP (European Commission, 2014). The concentration of people, capital and business opportunities means that cities are more productive than other places. It is therefore not surprising that cities figure prominently in the EU strategy for jobs and growth. The Urban Agenda for the EU, in particular, aims to ensure maximum utilisation of the growth potential of cities.

Many of Europe's largest cities are also its most affluent. The megacities of Paris and London rank among those with the highest GDP per capita ratios of the EU, such as Munich, Stockholm and Frankfurt. Still, there is not a clear linear relationship; Helsinki is smaller than Naples, but shows a higher GDP per capita and a stronger economic growth rate. Bigger is therefore not always better. There is much more at stake, such as the national economy of the country in which they are situated. To a large extent, the geographical distribution of GDP per capita of cities reflects that of regions and countries in Europe.

Cities also differ in growth rate; just as real engines, they are running at different speeds. Again, size not necessarily matters – although Paris and London appear to perform above average – as much as geographical location. In the 2000–2010 period, a north–south divide could be seen, with northern cities generally outperforming those in the south. The most significant growth, however, occurred in central and eastern European cities, particularly in Poland. Some of this difference can be attributed to a lower starting point, but also to the EU's Cohesion Policy, under which especially new recipients are eligible to receive high European subsidies.



Decrease in GDP per capita

Milan

Brussels

Rome



Highest GDP per capita of all European regions but little growth

Warsaw

Largest GDP

growth of all

metropolitan

areas

Beilin

Vienna

Athens

### Low GPD per capita but strong growth

### Europe 2020 targets for smart growth

The 2020 strategy aims to stimulate the transition towards an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation by:

- Increasing combined public and private investment in R&D to 3% of GDP
- Reducing school dropout rates to less than 10% and increasing the share of the population aged 30 to 34 who have completed their tertiary education to at least 40%

### ...grew stronger in eastern Europe

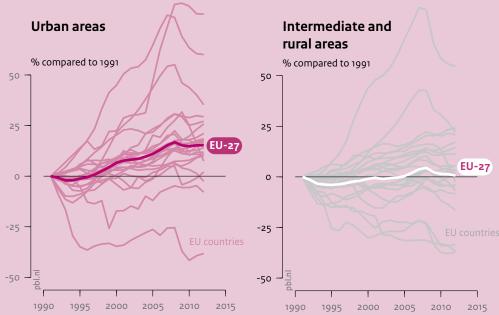
## Stronger job growth in urban areas

For centuries, people have migrated to cities to find work, and this trend continued into the 21st century. In the first decade of this millennium, European cities, on balance, outperformed rural areas in terms of job growth. The gap between urban and rural areas is widening; the difference in job growth in the 1990–2012 period in both area types across Europe (EU-27) was almost 15% (PBL, 2016).

Monitoring this trend is important in the context of both the European Union's smart growth and inclusive growth agendas. With these agendas the EU aims, among other things, to raise Europe's employment rate (75% employment rate for people aged 20 to 64, by 2020). This requires not only the creation of more jobs, especially for women, young people and older and low-skilled workers, but also a modernisation of labour markets, and investment in education and skills training.

As 'engines' of the European economy, cities have a key role to play in translating EU and national smart and inclusive growth policy objectives into concrete action. In terms of job growth, different European urban areas show different developments. Geography and differences in the structure of national economies matter. In the 1990–2012 period,

### Change in the number of jobs in the EU-27



job growth in rural and urban regions virtually went hand in hand in Ireland, Portugal, Austria and the United Kingdom. At the other end of the spectrum, urban regions in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Lithuania performed far better than their rural counterparts over the same time period. Romanian and

Lithuanian rural regions, for instance, lost over 30% of their jobs. The Netherlands follows the EU average, albeit somewhat less pronounced in its divergence and at a higher overall growth rate. The only country which seems to defy the trend is Belgium; here, rural job growth outperformed that of the cities.





Source: Cambridge Econometrics, adaptation by PBL

# Towards greener cities

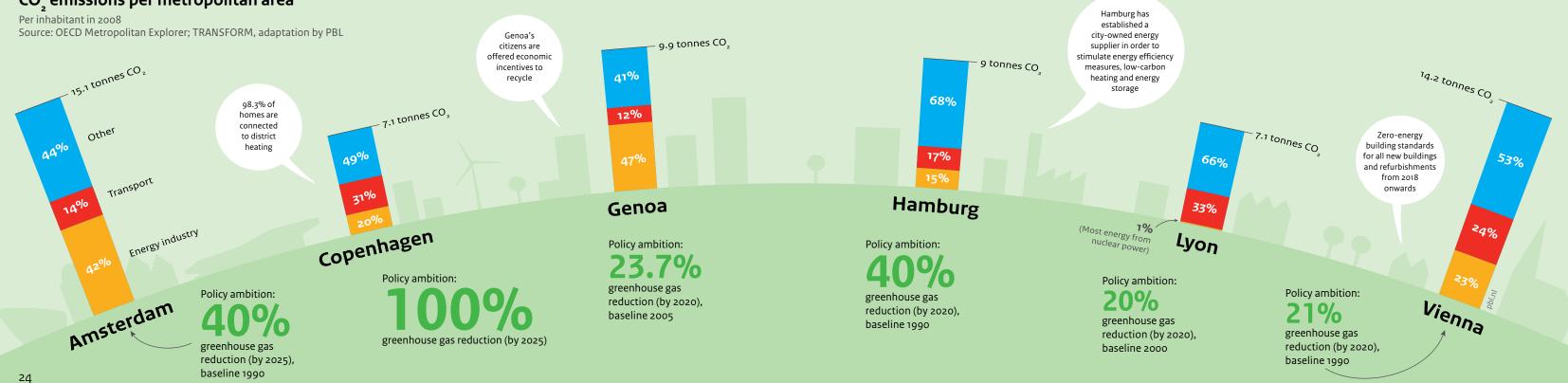
With the growing awareness of the consequences of climate change, the EU has committed itself to limiting greenhouse gas emissions and reducing the consumption of fossil fuels (European Union, 2015b). The Europe 2020 strategy has renewed the EU's commitment to become a 'low-carbon' economy where, by 2050, greenhouse gas emissions will be 80% to 90% lower than they were in 1990. Among other initiatives, European

Cohesion Policy funding is being reallocated to support the production of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency. Cities can be instrumental in the transition towards a low-carbon economy. They are significantly more efficient in terms of energy use and land use than other areas (European Commission, 2014). Household energy consumption in cities tends to be lower because a larger proportion of people

live in apartments or terraced housing, both of which are more efficient in terms of heating than freestanding houses. Cities are also more energy efficient as regards transportation. Due to the shorter distances, walking and cycling are more attractive options in towns and cities than in other areas. There is also a higher demand for public transport which makes it more cost-effective to offer high-quality services, such as

underground rail. A growing number of European cities and urban regions are already making serious efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions; for example, by implementing more renewable energy or expanding their district heating networks. Despite the lofty ambitions of Europe's cities to become greener, simply reducing emissions in urban areas will not be sufficient to stop global warming.

### CO, emissions per metropolitan area





Cities provide fertile ground for innovation and creativity (UNEP, 2013), but because large-scale energy infrastructures are interconnected and government and governance structures are interdependent, coordinated multi-level innovation strategies are needed so that lessons can be shared with other metropolitan regions and across national borders.

### Europe 2020 targets for green growth

The Europe 2020 strategy sets three objectives for climate and energy policy, to be reached by 2020:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% compared with 1990 levels
- Increasing the share of renewable energy in final energy consumption to 20%
- Moving towards a 20% increase in energy efficiency

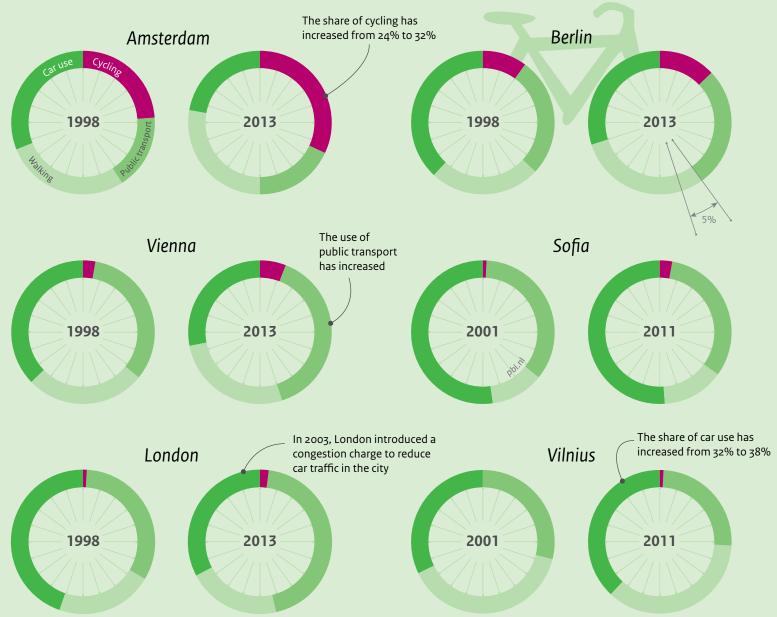
## Cycling the city

Most trips begin and end in cities. Increasing demand for travel has led to severe congestion, poor air quality, undesirable levels of noise pollution and high levels of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, in many European cities. The European Commission has pledged its support to cities to promote sustainable modes of transport, such as cycling, walking and public transport, as well as clean

and energy-efficient vehicles (European Commission, 2013). In recent years, bicycle use has increased in many European cities. For short distances, bicycles tend to be the fastest mode of transport. Cycling can help relieve traffic congestion, car parking problems and air pollution, while providing social benefits such as health and liveability. Moreover, it is an inexpensive solution;

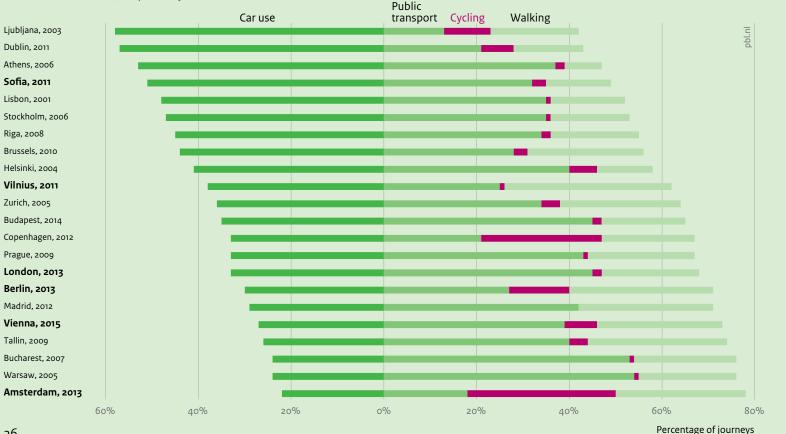
bicycles are relatively inexpensive to buy and large parts of the infrastructure are already in place. Considering the fact that about half of all private car journeys and over half of all lorry trips in European cities are under five kilometres, there is significant room to improve the share of cycling (European Union, 2015c).

### Changes over time differ between cities



### The cycling capitals of Europe are easy to spot

Source: EPOMM and DIVV, adaptation by PBL





Source: EPOMM and DIVV, adaptation by PBL



- population aged 20 to 64 to at least 75%
- Lifting at least 20 million people out of the



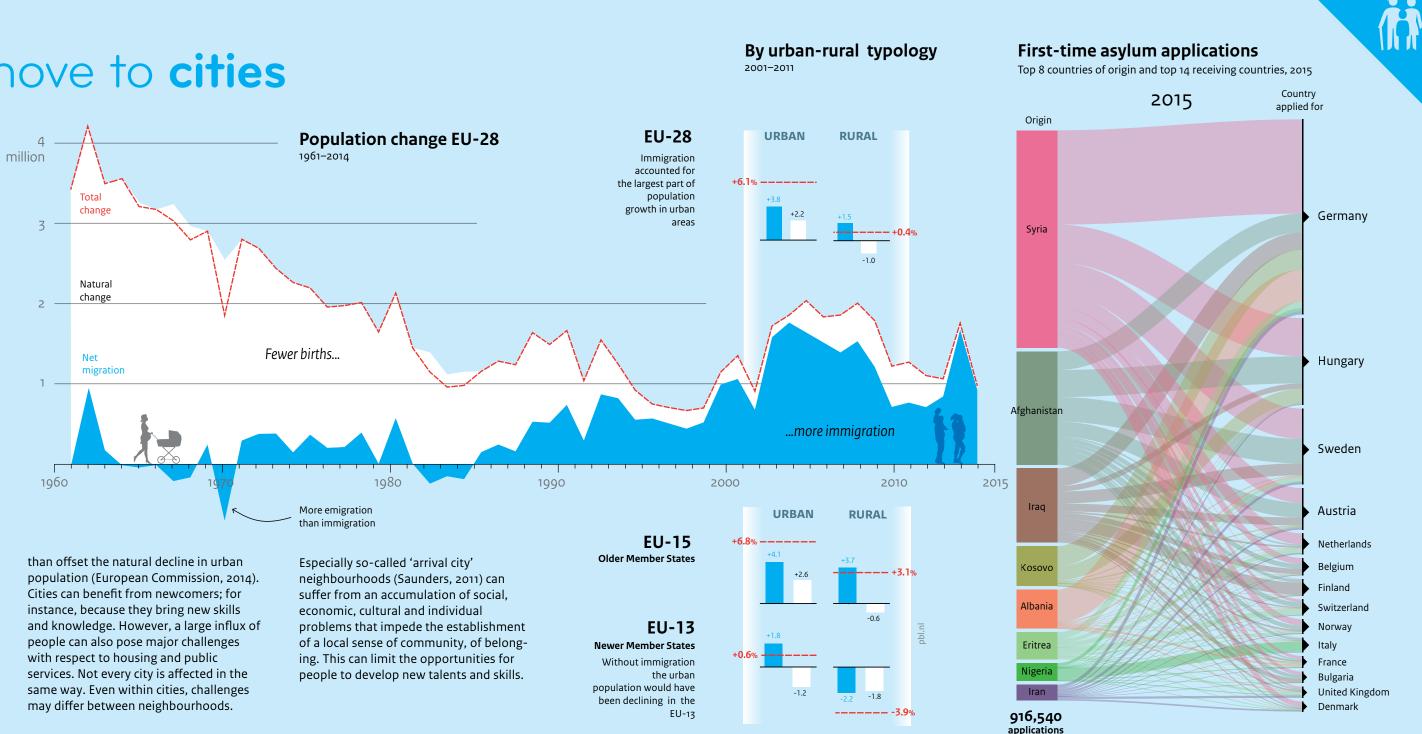
\* Not in EU-27

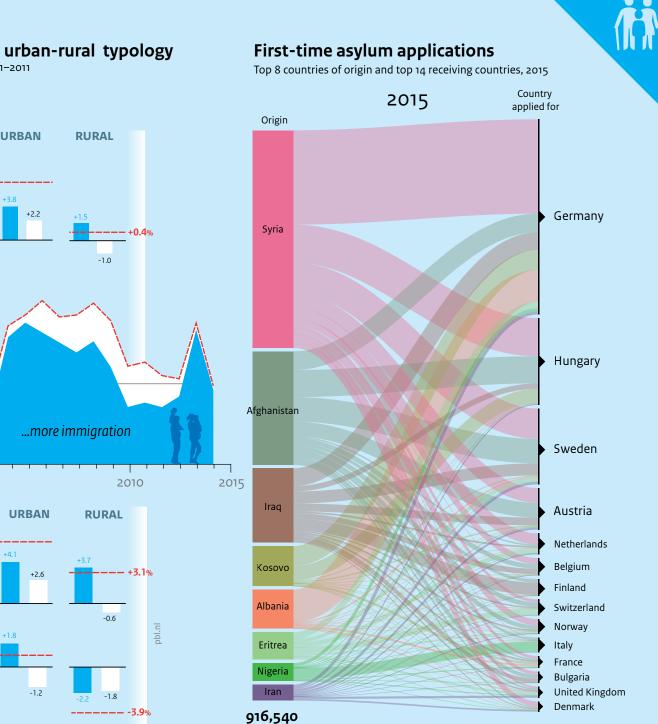
## Migrants move to cities

Europe's population is growing, not only as a result of natural processes (more births than deaths), but also because of immigration (from outside Europe). Over the last few years, Europe has experienced a large influx of people. As a consequence of the geopolitical instability in the Middle East and Africa, immigration and refugee flows into Europe have increased, and this has had a significant impact on European countries and cities. People also migrate within the EU. For example, because of disparities in employment and income levels, inhabitants of central and eastern Member States have moved to those in the west (Espon, 2015; European Commission, 2014).

Migration, in general, and the current refugee flows into Europe, in particular, have clear territorial and urban dimensions. The main cause of the EU's population growth is net immigration. Between 2001 and 2011, the EU's total population (EU-28) increased by 3.8%. with net immigration accounting for 3% of this. Natural population change was only 0.7% (European Commission, 2014).

Over the centuries, cities have received immigrants, both those with a residence permit as well as asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants. In the EU-15, net immigration accounted for the largest share of population growth in urban areas. In the EU-13, net immigration more





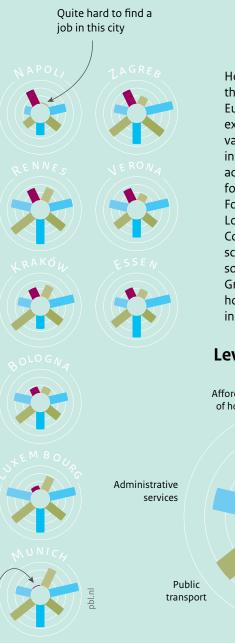
Source: Eurostat, adaptation by PBL

## Quality of life in cities



safest here

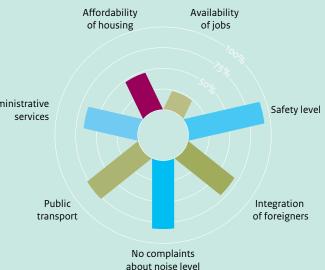
with public transport



High overall satisfaction, but difficult to find affordable housing

How do Europeans rate the quality of life in their city? To answer this question, the European Union regularly conducts an extensive survey of almost 80 cities of varying sizes (European Union, 2016). This infographic shows the level of satisfaction according to seven indicators. This allows for interesting comparisons between cities. For example, many capital cities, such as London, Paris, Vienna, Amsterdam and Copenhagen, offer a high quality of life, but score much lower on affordable housing. In some smaller cities, such as Aalborg, Braga, Groningen, Zagreb and Oulu, the score on housing prices is more in line with the other indicators.

### Level of satisfaction



# Appendix

All infographics in Cities in Europe have been created and edited by PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. The authors would like to thank the following people from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment (IenM) for their contribution to this publication: Svd Jordaan (BZK). Nathalie van den Heuvel (BZK), Pedro Campos Ponce (BZK) and Bernice den Brok (IenM).

Furthermore, many PBL colleagues have given valuable input and feedback. Special thanks go to: Hans van Amsterdam, Andries de Jong, Femke Daalhuizen, Ton Manders, Raymond de Niet, Hans Nijland, Jan Ritsema van Eck, Jacqueline Timmerhuis, Anet Weterings and Ries van der Wouden.

The following sources were used:

#### Page 10 European urban landscape

In this infographic, LandScan 2014 data was used to generate the spikes in population densities on a grid of 10x10 kilometres. More information about the definition and distribution of cities can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/Statistics\_on\_European\_ cities#Cities\_.28Urban\_Audit.29

### Page 12 Most Europeans live in cities

The definitions of cities, towns and suburbs and rural areas are based on the 'degree of urbanisation' typology by Eurostat and the OECD. Depending on the share of the population living in the various types of clusters, Local Administrative Units (LAU2) areas are classified into three degrees of urbanisation: In 'Cities' (densely populated areas with more than 50,000 inhabitants) at least 50% of the population lives in high-density clusters. In 'Towns and suburbs' (intermediate density areas) less than 50% of the population lives in rural grid cells and less than 50% lives in high-density clusters. In 'Rural areas' (thinly populated areas) more than 50% of the population lives in rural grid cells. The map of Europe showing the 'degree of urbanisation' is based on a 2006 density

grid and LAU2 2011 delineation. The map was kindly provided by Eurostat. JRC. EFGS and REGIO-GIS. More information about the 'degree of urbanisation' typology can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/ eurostat/web/degree-of-urbanisation/overview

#### Page 14 Cities, towns and suburbs

The definitions of cities, towns and suburbs and rural areas are based on the 'degree of urbanisation' typology by Eurostat and the OECD.

Page 16 Different types of urban regions In this infographic. LandScan 2014 was used to generate the spikes in population densities on a grid of 2x2 kilometres.

### Page 18 Growth and decline in

This infographic is based on data provided by the OECD Metropolitan Explorer (version January 2014). The Metropolitan Explorer offers an interactive visualisation of the 275 metropolitan areas in 29 OECD countries. For this study the 114 metropolitan areas in European countries have been selected. The OECD Metropolitan Explorer database contains comparable values of population, GDP, employment, quality of air and many other indicators. More information about the OECD Metropolitan Explorer can be found here: http://measuringurban.oecd.org/#

#### Page 20 Metropolitan economies grew stronger in eastern Europe

This infographic is based on data provided by the OECD Metropolitan Explorer (version January 2014).

#### Page 22 Stronger job growth in urban areas

This infographic is based on data from the European Regional Database by Cambridge Econometrics (version April 2015). The European Regional Database contains socioeconomic data for 27 European countries on regional scale (NUTS3) for the period 1980 to 2012.

The definitions of urban, intermediate and rural areas are based on the 'urban-rural typology' by Eurostat and the OECD. The data was aggregated on regional scales (NUTS2 and NUTS3). More information about the 'urban-rural typology' by Eurostat and the OECD can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/ index.php/Urban-rural\_typology

#### Page 24 Towards greener cities

This infographic is based on data provided by the OECD Metropolitan Explorer (version January 2014) and EU-funded research project TRANSFORM. More information about TRANSFORM can be found here: http://urbantransform.eu/about/smart-energy-city/

#### Page 26 Cycling the city

This infographic is based on the TEMS modal split database by the European Platform on Mobility Management (EPOMM). The modal split data for Amsterdam has been provided by Dienst Infrastructuur Verkeer en Vervoer (DIVV). Amsterdam. More information about the TEMS modal split database can be found here: http://www. epomm.eu/tems/index.phtml?Main\_ID=2928

#### Page 28 Risk of urban poverty persists

This infographic is based on data provided by Eurostat; 'People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by degree of urbanisation' (version January 2016). The graphic shows data on 'Cities' and 'Rural areas'. Data on 'Towns and suburbs' is not included in the graphic.

#### Page 30 Migrants move to cities

This infographic is based on data provided by Eurostat: 'Population change - Demographic balance and crude rates at national level' (version February 2016) and 'Asylum and first time asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Monthly data' (version March 2016).

#### Page 32 Ouality of life in cities

This infographic is based on data published by the European Union; 'Quality of life in European cities' (2016).

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