European Handbook for SDG Voluntary Local Reviews

Methods and indicators for the local monitoring of the SDGs

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Data challenges for local authorities

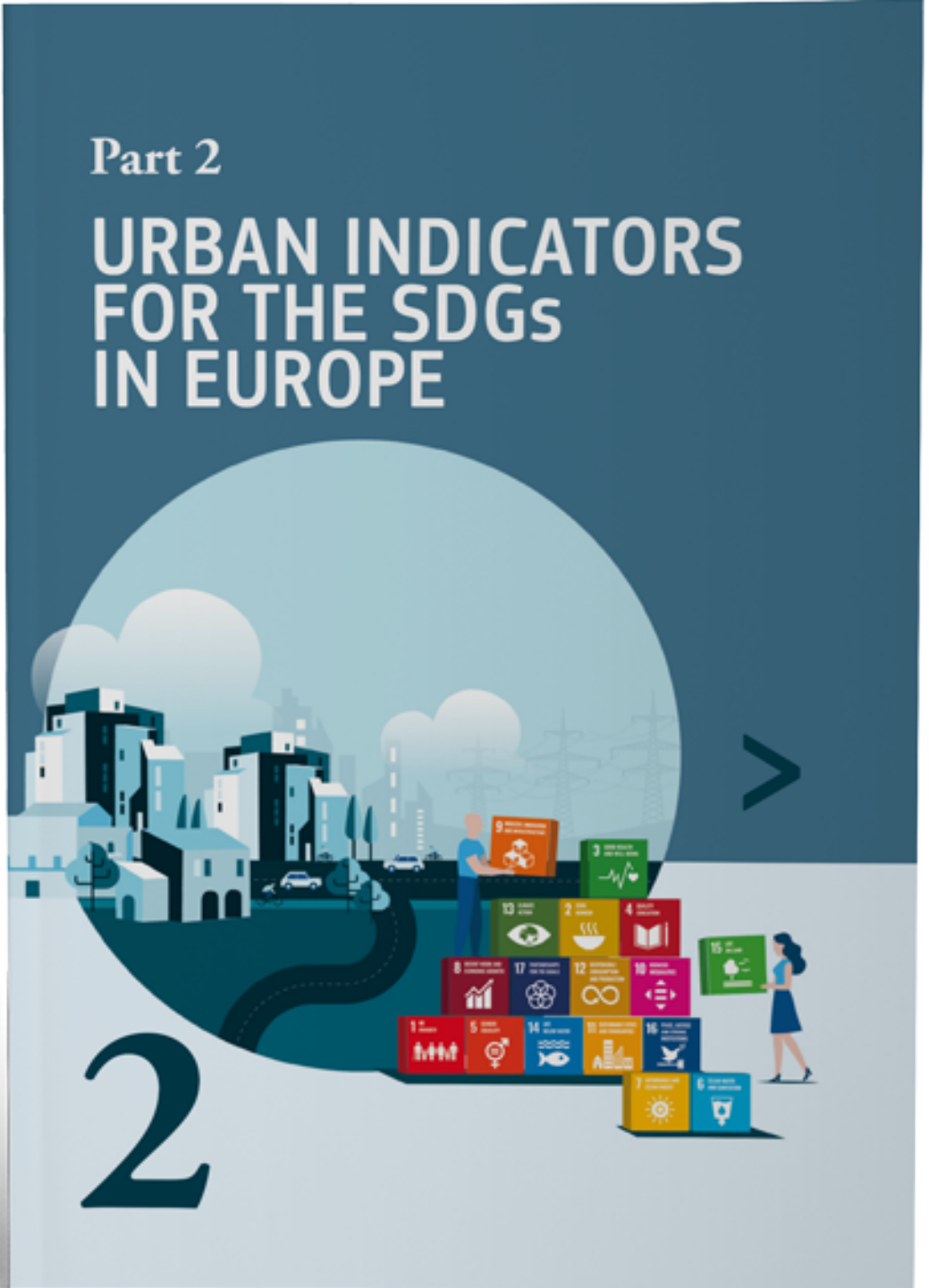
- Data in **different departments** of the local administration
- Lack of adequate **financial resources**
- Lack of **capacity** or **trained staff**
- Balance **comparable data** and data describing **specific local situations**
- Priviledge **available data** or the creation of **new data**

"Only what gets measured gets done"

Ursula Von Der Leyen

President of the European Commission

European Commission



An inspirational framework for

- City officials
- Researchers
- Professionals

To prepare the data backbone of the VLRs

European Commission

The rationale for the selection

ELEMENTS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

- **The SDGs**
- European **context**
- **Relevance** to cities

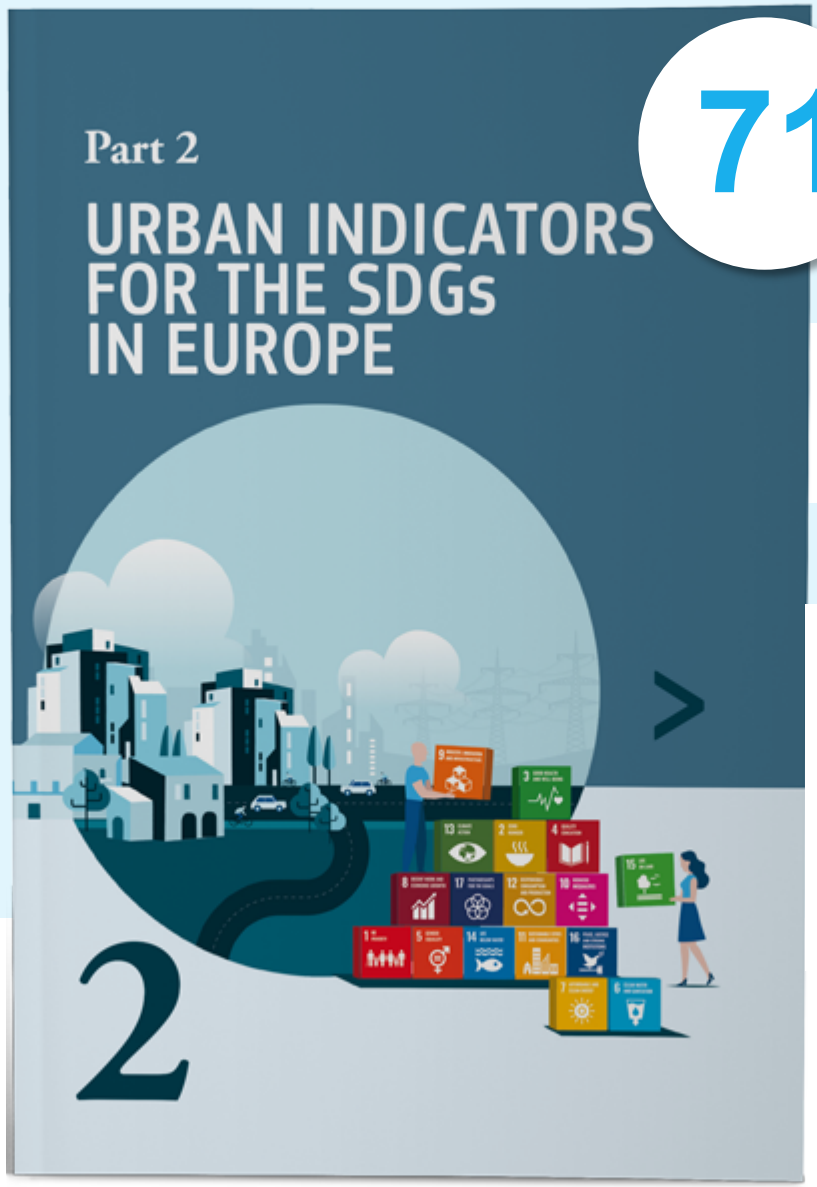
CHOICE OF INDICATORS

PRIORITY

1. **Harmonized official**
2. **Not harmonized official**
3. **Harmonized experimental**
4. **Not harmonized experimental**

Social, **environmental** and **economic** dimensions

European Commission



71 INDICATORS

TYPE OF INDICATORS

45 official

26 experimental

ALIGNMENT

6 indicators match both the EU set and the UN Global Framework

4 indicators match the UN's Global Indicator Framework

10 indicators match the EU SDGs Indicator Set 2019

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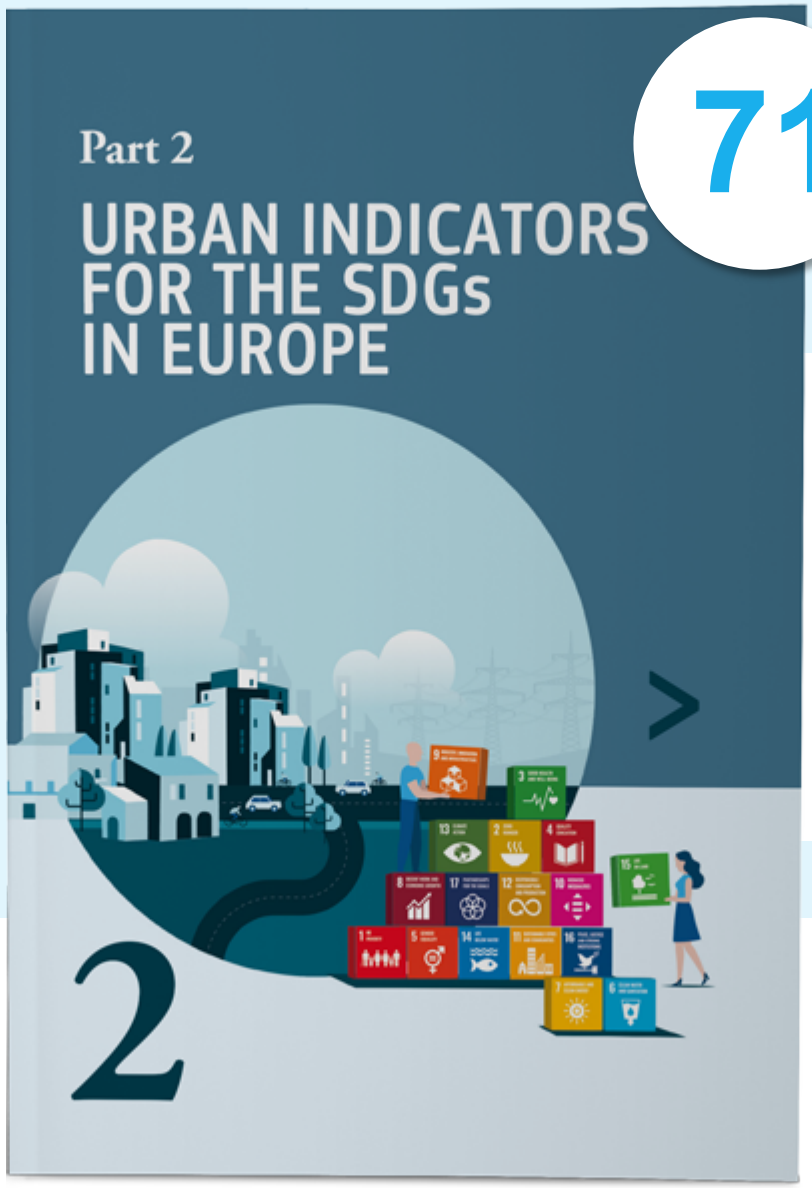

71 INDICATORS

MAIN SOURCES

11 indicators from the JRC
10 indicators from Eurostat
3 indicators from OECD
3 indicators from EEA
2 indicators from DG REGIO

OTHER SOURCES

National Statistical Systems (NSS), Local administrations, NGOs, Universities

European Commission

1 NO POVERTY

GOAL 1

END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

Description of the Goal

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is recognised as the greatest challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. For instance, poverty limits people's opportunities to achieve their full potential, with consequences both in terms of social cohesion and sustainable growth. Poverty is a multidimensional concept and relates to economic, social, environmental, cultural and political aspects.

Targets of this goal focus on: eradicating extreme poverty, eventually counteracting the existence of poverty traps *(Kraay and McKenzie 2014; Duflo and Banerjee 2011)*; halving poverty in all its forms; ensuring all people enjoy a basic standard of living and social protection benefits; and building the resilience of the poor, also in the face of natural disasters *(Hallegatte et al. 2017)*.

European Dimension

Although extreme poverty is less relevant in the EU context than in other world regions, one of the five headline targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy is to reduce poverty by lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020 (compared with the 2008). This includes people affected by at least one of the following forms of poverty: income poverty, low work intensity and material deprivation.

The 2020 target remains an important challenge although, after the 2012 peak in poverty, there has been a continuous downward trend. For instance, in 2018 about 22% of the EU population was still at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

To tackle these challenges the Urban Agenda for the EU Partnership on Urban Poverty *(EC 2018)* has established four priorities of action: child poverty, deprived neighbourhoods and urban regeneration, homelessness, and vulnerability of Roma people *(Urban Poverty Partnership (UPP) 2018)*, whereas the European pillar of social rights focuses, among other priorities, on the prevention of the misuse of precarious employment relationships.

Local dimension

Local authorities are the most appropriate actors to identify vulnerable groups, especially for what concerns hard-to-measure populations like homeless *(James D. Wright 1992)*. For this reason, the municipal level could also be the most informed to alleviate the condition of poverty experienced by individuals, with the coordination and support of higher governance levels.

In particular, local authorities can counteract poverty acting on two typologies of constraints to the development of individuals: external constraints like institutional or governmental failures *(Bardhan 1997)*, and internal constraints, such as behavioural and aspirational biases *(Dalton, Ghosal, & Mani, 2016; Walto, 2004)*.

Municipalities can target both these determinants of poverty avoiding that people remain poor for much or all of their lives in which case their children also become more likely to experience poverty.

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Every **indicator fiche** is compose by **3 main parts**:

A

Side bookmark

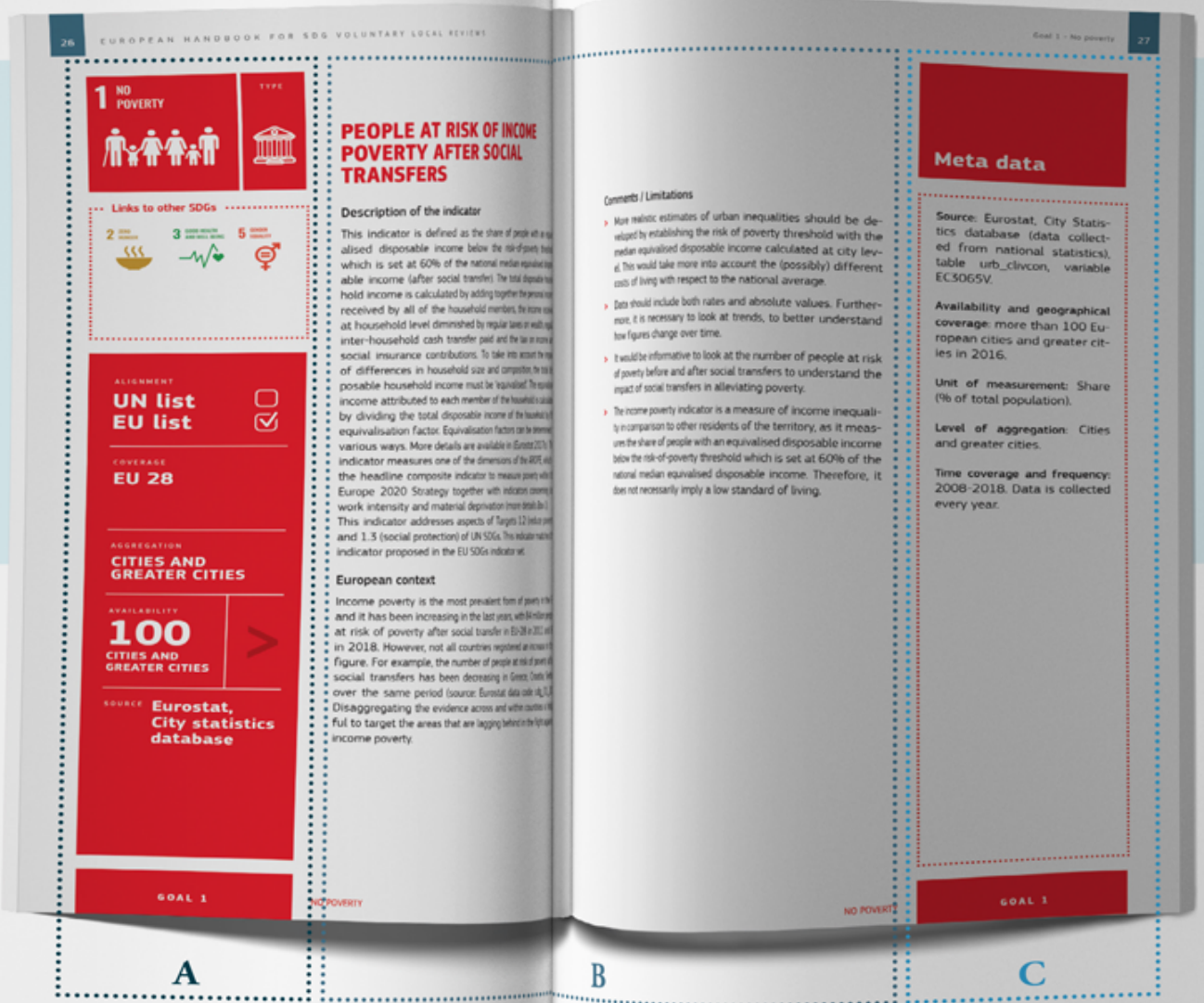
B

Main information on the indicator and potential use and interpretation

C

Key Metadata

OVERVIEW >



European Commission

A selection of indicators from the European Handbook

European Commission

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

TYPE

ADOLESCENT BIRTHS

Links to other SDGs

1 NO POVERTY
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

ALIGNMENT
UN list ☑
EU list ☐

COVERAGE
EU-28

AGGREGATION
CITIES AND GREATER CITIES

AVAILABILITY
300
CITIES AND GREATER CITIES
>

SOURCE Eurostat, City statistics database

Description of the indicator

The adolescent birth rate is the number of live births per women aged 10-19.

This indicator addresses aspects of Target 3.7 of the UN SDGs (family planning).

European context

In the EU-28 the fertility rate by mother's age group, for the under 20 age group, has been continuously decreasing in the 2001-2017 period, contrarily to the fertility rate in the 30-34, 35-39 and over 40 cohort groups, that have been increasing over the same period (*EUROSTAT, Fertility statistics*).

Reducing adolescent pregnancies and adolescent birth rates is an important priority for many governments *(UNDESA 2013; United Nations 1995)* because adolescent childbearing is associated with a wide range of risks for young mothers and their newborns.

Apart from health risks, adolescent pregnancy might obstacle the socio-economic development of girls, because of the interruption of their education path, at least temporarily, a more difficult inclusion in the labour market, and possible social and political exclusion *(UNDESA 2013)*.

Comments / Limitations

- Adolescent birth rates can decline for several reasons: a reduction in the number of sexually active adolescents, an increase in the use of contraception, or an increase in abortions (voluntary or not). This suggests that relying solely on tracking adolescent birth rates is not sufficient for a complete assessment of the issue.
- The disaggregation of adolescent birth rates by neighbourhood might be useful for targeted policy making.

Metadata

Data source: Eurostat, City Statistics Database (data collected from national statistics), table urb_cfermor, variable, SA2010V

Availability and geographical coverage: more than 300 European cities and greater cities in 2017.

Unit of measurement: Number of adolescent births. Calculating the variation over time is recommended.

Level of aggregation: Cities and greater cities

Time coverage and frequency: 2011-2018. Data is collected every year.

European Commission

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

TYPE

NON-NATIVE-SPEAKING STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Links to other SDGs

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

ALIGNMENT
UN list ☐
EU list ☐

COVERAGE
HELSINKI

AGGREGATION
MUNICIPALITIES

AVAILABILITY
1 >

SOURCE Helsinki Region Infoshare

Description of the indicator

This indicator gives the share of non-native-speaking students who graduate from upper secondary school over the total number of graduates. Since no consistent data is available Europe-wide at the local level, the case of Helsinki is illustrated here as an example.

This indicator is highly relevant for the city, where the Education Division approved the Development Plan for Immigrant Education 2018-2021.

Education is one of the main tools to promote integration and support disadvantaged groups in improving their economic situation: ad-hoc programs to improve it should be a key element of city strategies.

This indicator addresses aspects of Target 4.5 (access to education) of the UN SDGs.

European context

Young people with a migrant background - those born either outside the country or with foreign-born parents - face more difficulties in schooling than native students, as demonstrated by the Early Leavers from Education and Training Statistics (ELET).

In 2018, the share of early school leavers at EU level was twice as high for people born outside the EU than for people studying in their country of birth. Foreign-born men are the most at risk, with an ELET rate of 22.8% in 2018.

Young people from a migrant background also have a higher risk of underperforming at school.

In almost all EU Member States, the difference in the share of low achievers between first-generation immigrant students and their non-immigrant counterparts was substantial in 2015 - amounting to as much as 25 to 33 percentage points in some countries *(EUROSTAT 2019)*.

Comments / Limitations

- There are constraints regarding of comparability with other cities and the limited availability of data over time. It is recommended to collect time series of at least 10 years and compare data according to the increment of non-native-speaking students enrolled in the school system.

Metadata

Source: Helsinki Region Infoshare, local data *https://hri.fi/data/en_GB/dataset/helsinki-koulutus*

Availability and geographical coverage: city of Helsinki

Unit of Measurement: Share (% of total graduates)

Level of aggregation: Municipal

Time series and frequency: Available for 2017 and 2018

European Commission

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

TYPE

PERCEPTION ABOUT THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

Links to other SDGs

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

ALIGNMENT
UN list ☐
EU list ☐

COVERAGE
EU-28

AGGREGATION
CITIES

AVAILABILITY
83
CITIES

SOURCE **DG REGIO and EUROSTAT, Eurobarometer**

Description of the indicator

This indicator measures the share of people with a negative perception of their city labour market. It refers to the survey question: "In this city is it easy to find a good job?" which was included in the Flash Eurobarometer, 'Quality of life in European cities' *(DG REGIO 2016)*. Possible answers to this question are: "do not know", "strongly disagree", "somewhat disagree", "somewhat agree", "strongly agree". The indicator is calculated as the share of respondents that answered "strongly disagree" and "somewhat disagree" over the total respondents.

This indicator addresses aspects of Target 8.5 (productive employment) of the UN SDGs. It also relates to the indicators "Employment rate" and "Long-term unemployment rate" proposed in the EU SDGs indicator set.

European context

In most cities, a majority of respondents thinks that it is not easy to find a job. However, there are significant differences among cities, ranging from Praha (Czech Republic) where 72% of respondents agree that it is easy to find a job, to Palermo (Italy) where just 3% share this view.

Compared to 2012, the proportion of respondents agreeing that it is easy to find a job in their city has increased in several Irish cities and decreased in cities like Helsinki, Oslo and Lille (*DG REGIO 2016*).

Comments / Limitations

- The survey was conducted in more than 79 European cities. This survey included all capital cities of the countries concerned (except for Switzerland), together with between one and six more cities in the larger countries. In each city, around 500 citizens were interviewed. The TNS Political & Social network carried out this survey in the 28 Member States of the European Union, as well as Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. In June 2015, around 41,000 respondents from different social and demographic groups were interviewed.
- The number of surveyed cities varies over time for the Eurobarometer. The year for which the information is available for most of the cities is 2015 (more than 100 cities and greater cities).
- The framework developed by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) identifies 68 indicators to define employment quality from the perspective of the employed person *(UNECE, 2015)*.
- From the point of view of an unemployed person, a pessimistic view of the labour market lowers the perceived bargaining power and reservation wage *(Cardoso, Loviglio, & Piemontese, 2016)*. The 'bargaining power' is the power that someone has to reach an agreement with somebody else, that is to their own advantage. The 'reservation wage' is the lowest wage at which an individual is willing to work.

Metadata

Source: DG REGIO and EUROSTAT, Eurobarometer, Perception survey results (Variables: PS2012V- PS2016V), *https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/cities/data/database*

Availability and geographical coverage: 83 cities

Unit of Measurement: Share (% of total population).

Level of aggregation: Cities.

Time coverage and frequency: 2004, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015.

European Commission

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

TYPE

Links to other SDGs

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 15 LIFE ON LAND

ALIGNMENT
UN list
EU list

COVERAGE
EU-28 PLUS OTHER

AGGREGATION
CITIES AND GREATER CITIES

AVAILABILITY
800
CITIES AND GREATER CITIES
>

SOURCE DG REGIO

POPULATION WITHOUT GREEN URBAN AREAS IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Description of the indicator

This indicator describes the share of total population of a city who does not have green urban areas in its neighbourhood. It is calculated by analysing the surface of green urban areas within walking distance, from people and the served population. This indicator is calculated considering an area of easy walking distance considering approximately 10 minutes of walking time.

For this indicator, the most recent updated working paper *(Poelman 2018)* presents a methodology that takes into account the spatial distribution of both population and green areas throughout the cities' territory, and produces also indicators about the proximity of the green areas to the urban population. To obtain comparable results for all cities, harmonised EU-wide data sources were used, such as the complete set of Copernicus Urban Atlas land use data and census-based population figures at the highest spatial resolution available. This indicator addresses aspects of Target 11.7 (public space) of the UN SDGs.

European context

Green areas in cities, like parks, public gardens and nearby forests fulfil a variety of functions, ranging from ecological value to recreational functions. They also provide aesthetic value and they play a role in promoting public health. In general, these areas contribute to a better quality of life of the inhabitants.

Based on the available data, covering almost all cities in the EU and in the EFTA countries, substantial variation in green urban areas' proximity can be observed, both in bigger and smaller cities. There is almost no relationship between this value and the city size. Amongst the capital cities with more than 1 million inhabitants, values vary between less than 12 hectares in cities such as Lisbon, Bucharest, Athens, Dublin, Paris, Budapest and Rome, to more than 50 hectares in Prague and Stockholm. Moreover, green urban areas also need to be spatially distributed in a suitable way to fulfil relevant functions.

The differences in the share of population having no green areas in their neighbourhood shed some light on the spatial distribution of these areas. In almost a quarter of the cities under review, less than 2% of population has no green areas within walking distance. Some of the outstanding bigger cities in this group are Madrid, Vienna, Torino, Stockholm, Prague and Glasgow.

On the other hand, in about 10% of cities, this percentage is higher than 20% (e.g. in several cities in Romania and Italy *(see Poelman 2018)*).

Comments / Limitations

- This indicator is calculated using data from 2012, but it could be updated using most recent input data.
- For more information on official UN SDG indicator on public space "Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities", see (*UN-Habitat 2018c*).

Metadata

Source: European Commission, DG REGIO *(DG REGIO 2018)*

Availability and geographical coverage: 830 EU-28 cities and greater cities and 800 urban centres for 2018.

Unit of measurement: share

Level of aggregation: cities and greater cities, urban centres and countries.

Time coverage and frequency: 2018

European Commission

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

TYPE

BATHING SITES WITH EXCELLENT WATER QUALITY

Links to other SDGs

6

ALIGNMENT

UN list ☐

EU list ☑

COVERAGE

EU-28 PLUS OTHER

AGGREGATION

MUNICIPALITIES

AVAILABILITY

22,000 COASTAL BEACHES AND INLAND SITES >

SOURCE European Environmental Agency

Description of the indicator

This indicator gives the total number of bathing sites classified as having 'excellent' water quality. Local authorities collect water samples at officially identified bathing sites (e.g. coastal, transitional, river and lake water bodies) throughout the bathing season (e.g. May - September). The samples are then analysed for two types of bacteria that indicate contamination from sewage or livestock according with EEA Methodological prescriptions. Depending on the levels of bacteria detected, the bathing water quality is classified as 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient' or 'poor'.

This indicator matches with the indicator "Bathing water with excellent water quality" proposed in the EU SDGs indicator set.

European context

The EU "Bathing Waters Directive" *(EC 2006)* requires Member States to identify popular bathing places in fresh and coastal waters and monitor them for microbiological contamination (amongst other substances) throughout the bathing season.

Every year, the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA) publish a summary report on the quality of bathing water, based on the information provided by the Member States. The report tracks the water quality at more than 22,000 bathing sites across the EU, Switzerland and Albania.

In this way, the public can have access to high-quality information regarding bathing water quality. Bathing water information is made available to the public through the EEA website: users can access information regarding bathing water quality for more than 22 000 coastal beaches and inland sites across Europe. Users can check bathing water quality on an interactive map, download data and individual country reports and compare the water quality over time (*EEA 2015a*).

Comments / Limitations

- It is recommended to consider also the share of bathing sites with excellent quality over the total number of bathing sites.
- It is recommended to consider also the number and share of bathing sites classified with 'good', 'sufficient' or 'poor' quality and their trends over time.
- Countries run national or local websites with detailed information on each bathing water site. These websites usually include a map search function and allow the public to monitor the water status, both in real time and for previous seasons.

Metadata

Source: European Environmental Agency - EEA *https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/bathing-water-directive-status-of-bathing-water-11/bathing-water-directive-status/excel-format-zip*

Availability and geographical coverage: 22,000 coastal beaches and inland sites across Europe. Data has to be aggregated per municipality.

Unit of Measurement: Absolute value.

Level of aggregation: single coastal sites

Time coverage and frequency: 2008 - 2018. Data is collected every year.

European Commission

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

TYPE

VOTER TURNOUT IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Links to other SDGs

11

ALIGNMENT

UN list ☐

EU list ☐

COVERAGE

GREECE

AGGREGATION

MUNICIPALITIES

AVAILABILITY

ALL GREEK MUNICIPALITIES >

SOURCE Ministry of the Interior - Hellenic Republic

Description of the indicator

This indicator gives the share of people who vote in a municipal election over the total eligible population (eg. over 18 years of age, and holding citizenship). A municipal election represents a democratic moment in which people are called to contribute towards the day-to-day functioning of their community through the election of local representatives. Since there is no harmonised database on municipal voter turnout for all Member States, the case of Greece is given as an example.

This indicator addresses aspects of Target 16.7 (participatory and representative decision-making) of the UN SDGs.

European context

The European election database collects information on voting in all European countries. Beside that, the database is very informative on the political parties involved in elections and on official sources of data on European, national and local elections (usually up to maximum NUTS3 level) across countries.

Official data on voter turnout at the more detailed municipal level is available for each country from national statistical offices. Many EU countries also publish data on voter turnout at the neighbourhood scale.

Comments / Limitations

- Disaggregated data on voter turnout can be used to monitor the participation of specific minority groups.
- Voter turnout is often used as a proxy for democratic legitimacy. Considerable variations detected in voter turnout may reflect, to some degree, the trust people have in the political system (*Hooghe 2018*).
- Voter turnout is also a proxy of social capital: the higher the voter turnout, the higher the social capital. This is generally regarded as a positive element in civic involvement *(Akcomak and ter Weel 2012; Boschma 2005)*.

Metadata

Source: Ministry of the Interior - Hellenic Republic at https://www.ypes.gr/ekloges/ethnikes-ekloges/apoteles-mata-ethnikon-eklogon

Availability and geographical coverage: all Greek municipalities

Unit of Measurement: Share

Level of aggregation: Municipal level (LAU)

Time coverage and frequency: 1996-2019. Data collected for every election

European Commission

Improve the SDGs local monitoring

- Defining **priorities**
- Identifying **data gaps**
- Integrating official data with **non-traditional sources**
- **Disaggregating** data
- Considering **trends and distance to targets**
- Creating **partnerships** with universities, research centres, associations and institutions

European Commission

The JRC will continue supporting and fostering the knowledge on territories

- Identification of **new indicators and data**
- **Data production**
- **Scientific support**
- Making **knowledge available** in a user-friendly format

Knowledge Centre for Territorial Policies

https://ec.europa.eu/knowledge4policy/territorial_en

Urban Data Platform +

http://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu

European Commission

Thank you

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