



Summary

"Cities in Europe and in the World"

SCORUS conference in Brussels on 16 -17 June 2015

Session 1: Demography

Chair: Lewis Dijkstra

Carlo Lavalle from the European Commission Joint Research Centre presented the LUISA modelling platform. This platform can project population at the grid level. This in turn allows a reapplication of the degree of urbanisation. As a result, one can project not only the population of existing cities, but even can project where cities may emerge in the future. In addition, the platform provides a wide range of indicators on urban functions. The next steps focus on a feedback loop between economic projections and the population allocation module.

Alexandra Muth showed the different possibilities of providing high resolution data for the city of Manheim. She demonstrated the use of neighbourhood, grid, block and block sides data. The availability of geo-coded addresses in combination with register information allows a very flexible data output. The grid provides benefits in terms of simple, uniformly shaped and sized units of analysis, but it has the drawback of a lower level of recognition among policy makers and the wider audience. One important element is confidentiality. At very high levels of spatial resolution, confidentiality implies that one has to be careful when providing information about small sub-populations.

Session 2: Economy

Chair: Gunter Schäfer

Leena Hietaniemi from the City of Helsinki Urban Facts, presented the Helsinki Region Trends –www.helsinkitrends.fi – is both an online-service system and a printed publication. It provides quarterly information on the development of the Helsinki Region (14 municipalities). On the website one can browse the Helsinki Region Trends by theme: regional economy, housing and business premise markets, welfare, traffic & transport and environment, labour market and population. The information is provided as short texts with charts that also show the long-term trend. When you click on a chart, a copyable version will appear, as well as the time series behind the material, in both html and excel format. The publication is also printed in Finnish four times a year and once a year in English. On the website all the material of every second quarter also appears in English (Helsinki Region Trends) and in Swedish (Trender i Helsingforsregionen).

Volker Schmidt-Seiwert from the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development, Research Official (BBSR) showed how the BBSR maintains the Spatial Monitoring System of Germany and its neighboring regions. Dealing with cross-border data requires in most cases a change of perspective – moving from the national level to the European level. Due to the regional setting, the use of NUTS regions seems to be an obvious choice, however, the differences in size and functional representation of NUTS regions across the border limit the comparability. The presentation also introduced the action programme "Demonstration Projects of Spatial Planning" (MORO) of the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure. The project supports practical trials and implementations of innovative action approaches and instruments for spatial planning using the experiences, knowledge and ideas of 8 regions to formulate the needs and specifics of the implementation of a permanent spatial observation of Germany and the neighboring regions.

Teodora Brandmuller from Eurostat showed different spatial distribution patterns by looking at the GDP of metropolitan regions in Europe, extending a recent analysis published by The Economist magazine. The United Kingdom is one of the most centralised and economically unbalanced countries in the EU. The gap between London and the other metropolitan regions in the UK are gaping. Similar patterns were observed in France. In Germany and in Italy by contrast we can observe a more balanced pattern. However, the size of a metropolitan region in terms of total GDP is not necessarily a guarantee for high GDP per capita figures. Several, in absolute terms small metropolitan regions outperform the capital regions.

Session 3: Transport and environment

Chair: Klaus Trutzel

Opening the session, the Chair pointed out that sustainability comprises a very wide range of aspects; sustainability in Europe might even be related to as distant aspects as the migration flows from Africa to be reduced by more sustainable foreign policies at home.

John Dagevos, managing director of Telos Institute at Tilburg University, Netherlands, presented a concept of measuring sustainability on the local level. Commissioned by the Dutch government, the institute looks at the environmental quality of life in all 403 Dutch municipalities. The measures relate to three "capitals", the ecological, socio-cultural and economic capital and the long-term normative goals for them, of the individual municipality and of the national government. They are based on about 100 indicators that the institute has calculated for each municipality, thus describing the strengths and weaknesses as the environmental balance of each municipality in a comparable way. The strength of the concept lies in the transparent and yet comprehensible way in which the results are produced and presented. The concept supports a discussion of policies focusing on simple aggregate goals, but shows at the same time through the values reached by the attributed indicators where concrete policy measures might be most effective. Comparisons in time per city and a typology of cities lead to meaningful results. The author stresses the importance of the appropriate geographical level for specific comparisons and points out that the Dutch government intends to extend the comparison to include other European cities. - In the discussion, the question was raised, if data for municipalities in their administrative boundaries might not produce misleading results. This risk, however, was minimised by including all municipalities, thus also showing the environmental balance in the surrounding territories.

The second presentation referred to environmental policy on the local level. **Ana Rita Neves** of the Joint Research Centre JRC of the European Commission explained the Covenant of Mayors Initiative in which a growing number of municipal mayors commit themselves to a substantial reduction of CO2 emissions in their cities. Following the EU action plan for

energy efficiency in 2006, the Covenant of Mayors initiative was launched leading to the Creation of the Covenant in 2009. After signing the Covenant, the mayors submit their sustainable energy action plans and present their implementation report. Looking at energy demand and supply, the cities make a baseline emission inventory, compose a comprehensive action plan and agree on a vision, objectives and targets for a reduction of CO2 emissions by 2020. They cooperate with regional energy agencies, territorial and national coordinators and look for associated partners on all levels of government. More than 6000 cities have meanwhile signed the Covenant submitting more than 4500 Sustainable Energy Action Plans. A monitoring system reports on relevant indicators for the achieved reductions. - In the short discussion, several participants confirm that their cities have joined this local initiative showing what a great share of European development policy depends on an active cooperation with the local level.

Gaining knowledge about the local situation was also the topic of **Lewis Dijkstra's** presentation on "how the science of cities can help European policy makers" He demonstrated new analyses and perspectives of DG Regional and Urban Policy referring to the new definition of cities and the methods applied for it. This new insight can a. o. be linked to the urban sustainable development goal indicators on density, land use changes, access to green space and public transport and is made possible by the use of more micro data, geo-coded data, remote sensing data and will, in future, also include big data. As an example, the author showed the enormous progress made from CORINE Land Cover to Copernicus Urban Atlas. What makes a city, is not only determined by buildings, people, density and size, but also by the intensity of socio-economic exchange, specialised functions, the labour market and commuting zones. Access to public transport can be measured by the location of stops and the frequency of departures leading to a typology between very high and null access within walking distance. Similarly, access to green space and public space can be measured and the results can be compared with the targets of European development policy. – The discussion focused on the strengths and weaknesses of grid cells of different size versus natural building blocks as shown by a previous presentation and led to the common understanding that geo-referencing of statistical data is essential for any progress in this field.

Session 4: Quality of life

Chair: Jagdev Singh Virdee

This session included three presentations: from the City of Stuttgart , from Eurostat and from the OECD.

The Stuttgart presentation, by **Anke Schöb**, described analysis of the Coordinated German Perception Survey carried out in 2012 for German cities, consistent with the Eurostat Urban Audit Perception Survey. The presentation described the methodology and some results. Perceptions of issues such as satisfaction with jobs, housing and air quality varied greatly between cities, and these were presented in charts and maps. Confidence intervals were also presented to show the effect of small sample sizes on some results and to aid their interpretation.

Gorja Bartsch of Eurostat presented results published in a new Eurostat flagship publication, "Quality of Life: Facts and Views". The main data source for this work is the European Survey of Incomes and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), and the analysis includes the "Degree of Urbanisation Classification". The topics covered in the analysis included happiness, risk of poverty and social exclusion, overall life satisfaction, satisfaction with financial situation, accommodation, commuting time, health, violence or vandalism, pollution and environmental problems, trust in the political and legal systems and the police.

The conclusions drawn were that the differences in quality of life are often more pronounced between countries than between cities and rural areas. The highest urban-rural differences observed were in Bulgaria, Croatia and the United Kingdom. People living in cities tend to report better health but lower satisfaction with accommodation. Crime, violence and environmental exposure to pollution and grime is also higher in cities.

Daniel Sanchez-Serra presented OECD's ongoing work on measuring growth, including results published in their publication "How's Life in Your Region". In particular, the OECD is studying how to make growth inclusive in regions and cities, and how their Metropolitan Database can be developed further to help such analysis. The multidimensional aspect of measuring growth was emphasized, covering both "Material" aspects such as GDP, employment, unemployment and housing, and "Quality of Life" indicators such as those measuring environmental factors, social issues, health and access to services. The need to develop more indicators for metropolitan areas was discussed, using a mixture of traditional and new sources and methodologies.

There was much interest in all the presentations, recognizing the increasing interest in measuring quality of life in the widest sense, moving away from just focusing on traditional economic growth measures.

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