

The current situation:

- Just over 60 % of the population of the EU live in urban areas with more than 50,000 inhabitants.

The cities of Europe face major challenges:

- With an unemployment rate among young people under 25 years of age of 18.6 % (2006), there are enormous fluctuations in cities. In many cities in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the figures are way above the EU average.
- Well over 20,000 km² (an area corresponding to the Federal State of Saxony-Anhalt) in the EU is derelict land. These sites are to be found primarily in cities.¹
- Almost all (97 %) of Europe's city dwellers are exposed to air pollution that exceeds the EU limit values (quality targets) for particulate matter.²

But:

- The cities of Europe are attractive and are growing. Small and medium-sized towns, in particular, exhibit great dynamism (6 percent growth between 1990 and 2006). Two thirds of these towns grew over the aforementioned period.³
- The cities of Europe offer cultural diversity (more than 350 opera houses and 1,500 theatres, 1,500 cultural festivals).⁴
- Over 2,500 institutions of higher education, such as universities, technical colleges and academies of art and music, conduct research and teaching.⁵
- Cities are centres of entrepreneurial decision-making. Europe's 500 largest companies listed on the stock exchange, with a workforce of over 25 million and a turnover of almost 7 trillion euros, are controlled from 215 cities.⁶
- Europe's cities are attractive locations for trade fairs. 29 of the 43 largest trade fair sites are in the EU.⁷

¹ Source: CLARINET and CARBERNET network, figures only available for some Member States.

² Source: European Commission, "Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment", p. 15

³ Source: Ongoing spatial observation in Europe by the Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning, own calculations

⁴ Source: PAYE, Performing Arts Yearbook for Europe 2006

⁵ Source: UNESCO, World Higher Education Database (WHED)

⁶ Handelsblatt, The 500 largest companies in Europe

⁷ Trade fair sites with more than 100,000 m² hall space. Source: AUMA

Renaissance der Städte



Informelles Ministertreffen Leipzig am 24. und 25. Mai 2007

Cities as growth engines:

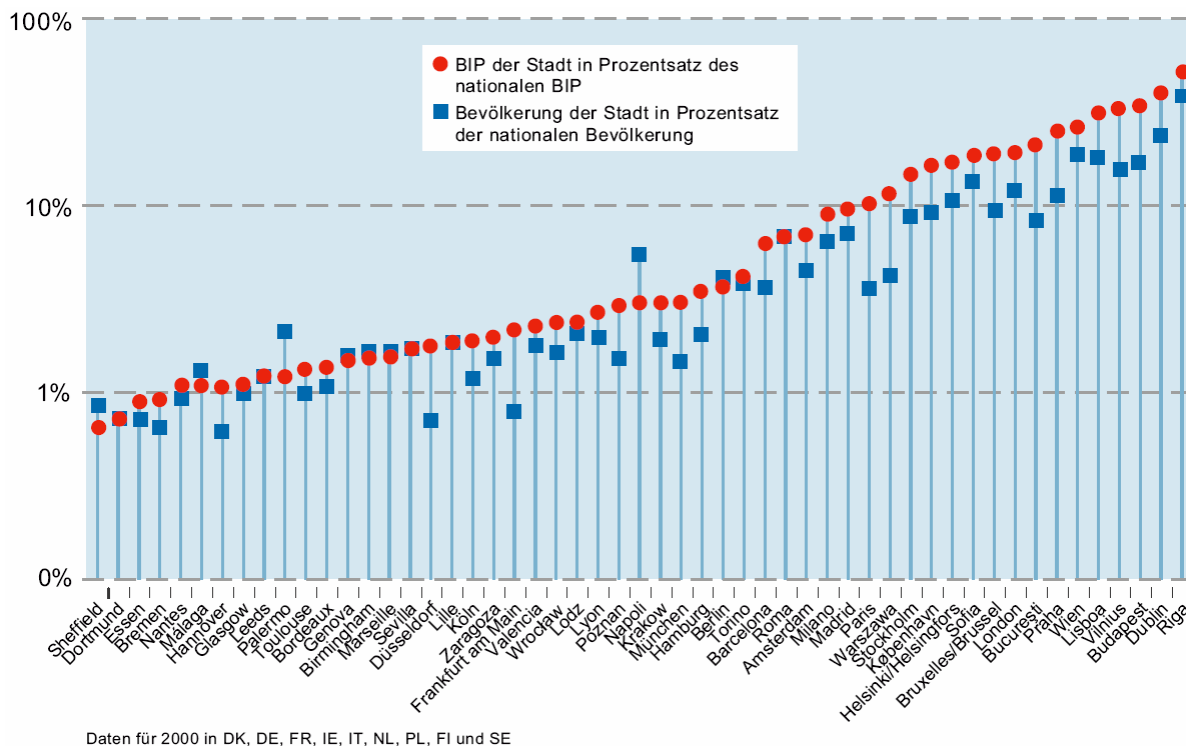


Figure 1: GDP and population share of cities in 2001 (Urban Audit). Source: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities (2006): Regions: Statistical Yearbook 2006. Data 2000-2004. Luxembourg, p. 86.

Cities and social exclusion:

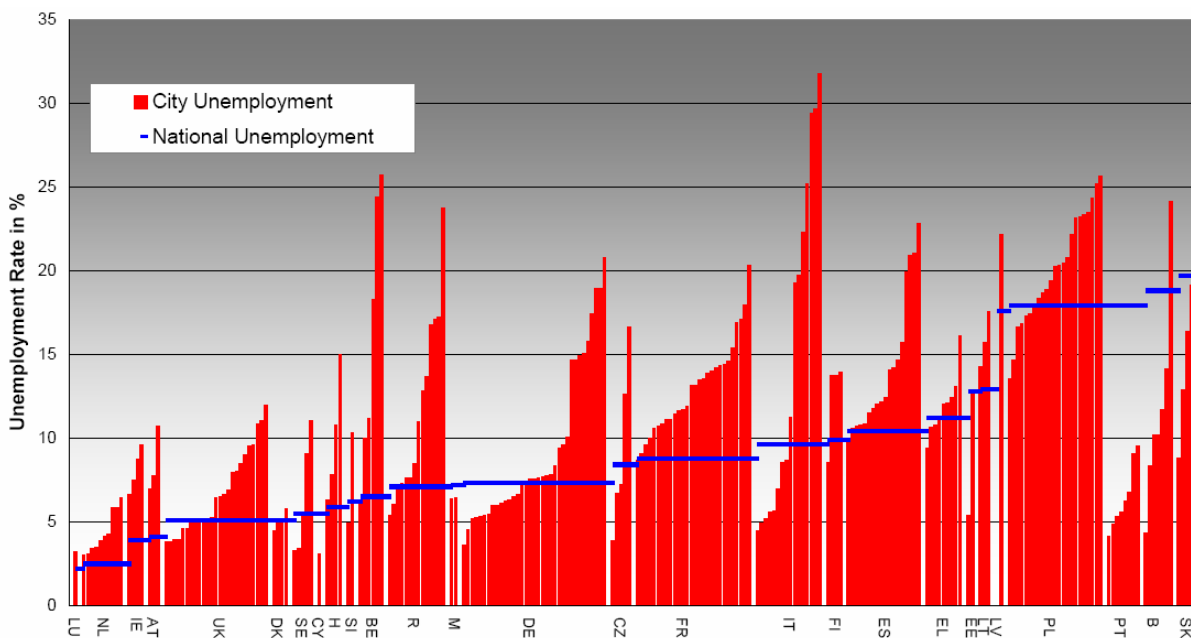


Figure 2: Unemployment rates at urban and national level, 2001 (Urban Audit). Source: European Commission (2006): Cities and the Lisbon Agenda: Assessing the Performance of Cities. Brussels, p. 18.