

The State of European Cities 2016

Cities leading the way to a better future



European
Commission

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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This report was published as a Commission Staff Working Document with the agreement of UN-Habitat. It can be consulted online at: <http://ec.europa.eu/cities-report>. The indicators in the report can also be accessed through: <http://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

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HS Number: HS/053/16E | ISBN Number:(Volume) 978-92-1-132717-5

Cover image:

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Design and Layout by
PFD Media Group | London, UK

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Foreword



It gives me great pleasure to introduce this first *State of European Cities* report which is the outcome of close cooperation between the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) of the European Commission and the United Nations Human Settlements

This publication sheds light on Europe's unfolding demographic, economic, mobility, societal and environmental trends and the associated challenges faced by the region, its governments, the business sector and civil society.

It further shows how the countries of the EU-13 group (the eastern and central European nations that had embarked on a major transition to democratic and market-based societies) have made tremendous progress, even though there still remains much to be done before their full unification is achieved.

Many of the challenges ahead have policy sensitive aspects; whether that be Europe's demographic ageing or the still significant north-south and east-west differences within the Union in terms of productivity, unemployment and well-being.

The current report further introduces an entirely new methodology for more accurately measuring nations' degree of urbanisation. Although still experimental, it hints at a new and better approach to defining, quantifying and comparing degrees of urbanisation worldwide than currently exists.

The above issues and many others are explored in-depth in the present report, whose production was facilitated by commendable cooperation between DG REGIO of the European Commission and UN-Habitat.

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