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**

• Privileging **available data** or the creation of **new data**
"Only what gets measured gets done"

Ursula Von Der Leyen

President of the European Commission
Part 2

URBAN INDICATORS FOR THE SDGs IN EUROPE

An inspirational framework for

- City officials
- Researchers
- Professionals

To prepare the data backbone of the VLRs
The rationale for the selection

**CHOICE OF INDICATORS**

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

**ELEMENTS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT**

- The SDGs
- European context
- Relevance to cities

**PRIORITIES**

Social, environmental and economic dimensions
Part 2

URBAN INDICATORS FOR THE SDGs IN EUROPE

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
Part 2

URBAN INDICATORS FOR THE SDGs IN EUROPE

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
GOAL 1
END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

European Dimension

- Extreme poverty is less relevant in the EU context than in other world regions, one of the five general targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy is to reduce poverty by lifting at least 65 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, material deprivation.
- The 2020 target remains an important challenge even after the 2013 peak in poverty; there has been a persistent downward trend for people affected by at least one form of poverty or social exclusion.
- The EU has established the Urban Agenda for EU Partnership on Urban Poverty (EPC 2018; I) has highlighted four priorities of action: child poverty, against neighbourhoods and urban regeneration, food and housing, and vulnerability of elderly people (Urban Poverty Partnership [UPP], 2018), whereas the European pillar of social rights focuses 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 how to improve populations like homeless (Conroy & 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 government levels.
- In particular, local authorities can confront poverty acting on two typologies of constraints to the development of individuals: external constraints like institutional or governmental failures (Althusser, 1969), and internal constraints, such as behavioural and educational issues (Elofsson, Gersick, & Mian, 2016; Atilano, 2004).
- Municipalities can target both these determinants of poverty, providing that people remain poor for much or all of their lives in which case their children also become more likely to experience poverty.
PEOPLE AT RISK OF INCOME POVERTY AFTER SOCIAL TRANSFERS

Definition of indicator:
The indicator is defined as the percentage of the population experiencing income poverty that is eliminated by social transfers.

Calculation:
Income poverty is defined as having an equivalised disposable income below 60% of the median equivalised disposable income in the reference year. The equivalised disposable income is calculated as the household disposable income divided by the square root of the household size.

Data sources:
- Eurostat, Harmonised Household Budget Survey
- National statistical institutes
- National accounts

Methodology:

- Sensitivity analysis: The sensitivity of the indicator is assessed by varying the poverty threshold and the calculation of the effect of social transfers on poverty.

- Comparison with other similar indicators:

  - Income poverty: This indicator is similar to the income poverty indicator, but it includes the effect of social transfers.
  - Household poverty: This indicator is different from the income poverty indicator, as it includes both income and non-income components.

Limitations:

- The indicator is based on self-reported data and may be subject to underreporting.
- The indicator does not take into account the impact of non-monetary benefits.
- The indicator is sensitive to changes in poverty thresholds.

Meta data:

- Source: Eurostat, City Statistics database
- Methodology: Harmonised Household Budget Survey
- Availability: All European countries
- Level of aggregation: Cities and greater cities
- Time coverage: 2000-2019
A selection of indicators from the European Handbook
ADOLESCENT BIRTHS

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 5.7 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, contrary 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 (UNICEF, 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 obstruct 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 (UNICEF, 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.

Data source: Eurostat, City Statistics Database (data collected from national statistics table urb_charm, variable U20_19V)

Availability and geographical coverage: more than 500 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.

Source: Eurostat, City statistics database.
NON-NATIVE-SPEAKING STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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 2018-2022. 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 (EU-ROCER 2018).

Comments / Limitations
- These are constraints regarding 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.
PERCEPTION ABOUT THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

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 it is 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 85 (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 Prague (Czech Republic) where 72% of respondents agree that it is easy to find a job, to Palermo (Italy) where just 39% 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.
> The 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 the 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 69 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 (Cordone, Loviglio, & Plamondon, 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.
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 second population. This indicator is calculated considering an easy walking distance considering approximately 10 minutes of walking time.

For this indicator, the most recent updated working paper (Pfoehlman 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-level data sources were used, such as the complete set of Copernicus urban atlas level use data and census-based population figures at the highest spatial resolution available. This indicator addresses aspects of Target 11.7 (public spaces) of the UN SDGs.

European context
Green areas in cities, like parks, public gardens and nearby forests fulfill 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 need to be spatially distributed in a suitable way to fulfill 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, Toronto, 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 Pfoehlman 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 2016].

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
BATHING SITES WITH EXCELLENT WATER QUALITY

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 to 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 2015).

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

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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: Individual sites.

Time coverage and frequency: 2006 - 2016. Data is collected every year.
VOTER TURNOUT IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Description of the Indicator
This indicator gives the share of people who vote in a municipal election over the total eligible population (i.e., 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 2030.

European context
The European election database collects information on voting in all European countries. Besides 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 most 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 affect, to some degree, the trust people have in the political system (Greece 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 (Kaluza et al. 2012; Boschma 2005).

Metadata
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

GOAL 16
PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

GOAL 10
PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
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
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
Thank you

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