

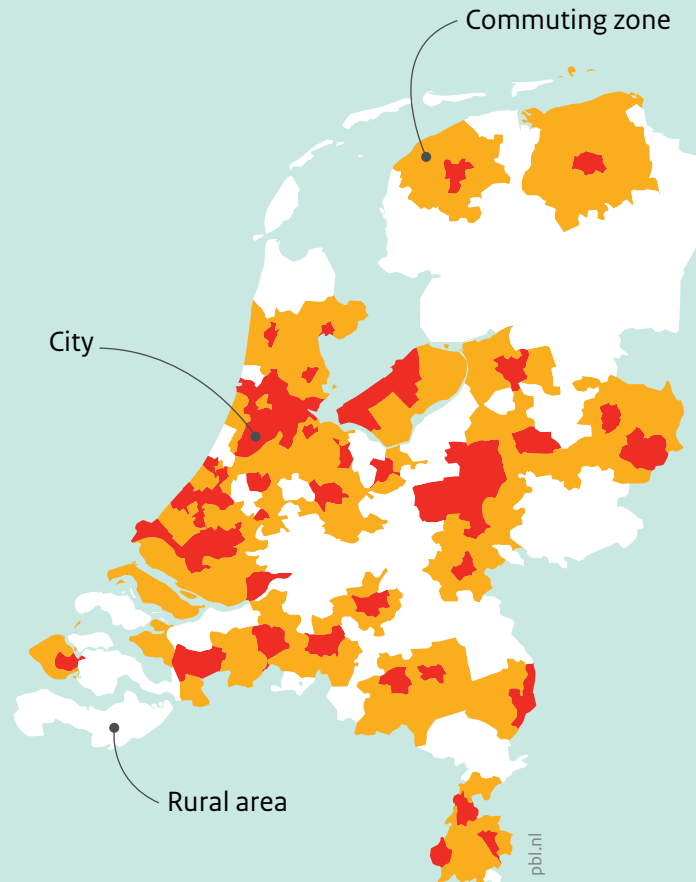
# An urban nation



In the past, it was easy to tell where the city ended and countryside began. In the course of the 20th century, the difference between urban and rural became increasingly blurred. Cities have transformed into urban regions with a wide variety of spaces and functions. People have also become much more mobile and have adopted much more complex lifestyles in their work and leisure time.

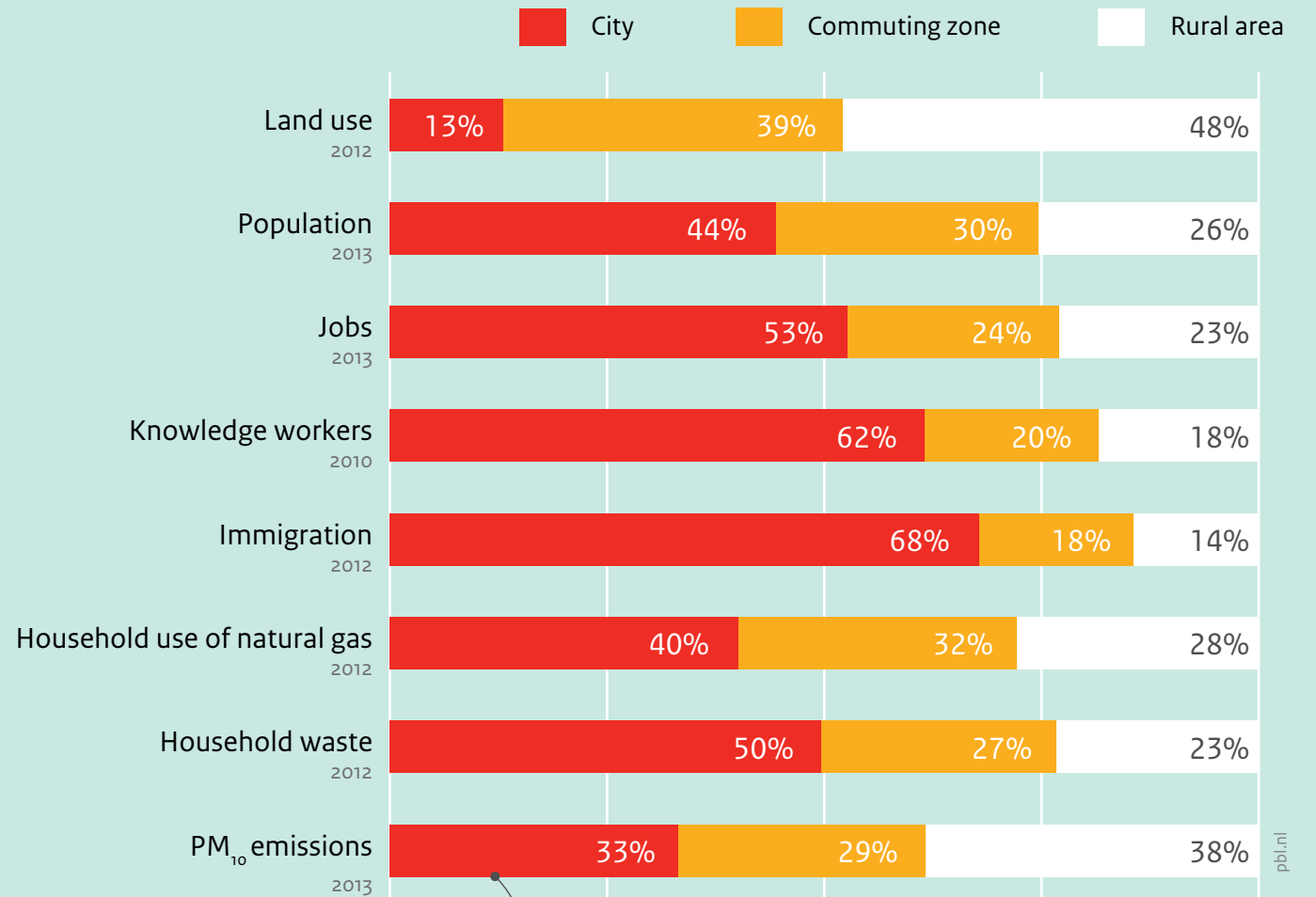
In order to define and delineate urban areas, Eurostat and the OECD use a harmonised definition that makes a distinction between 'cities' (municipalities of more than 50,000 residents) and 'commuting zones' (municipalities with a significant commuting relationship to the urban cores). Almost three quarters of the Dutch population live in urban areas, making the Netherlands one of the most urbanised countries in Europe.

Most of the jobs in the Netherlands can be found in the urban areas. These also have the highest share of knowledge workers and attract the most foreign immigrants. The high population density and concentration of human activity in cities has disadvantages as well, for example, in terms of air pollution and waste.



## Important characteristics of the city

Source: CBS, LISA and RIVM, adaptation by PBL



In relationship to the land area, PM<sub>10</sub> emission levels in cities are four times higher than in rural areas