

Metropolitan economies...

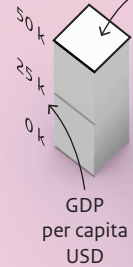
Cities are the engines of the economy. Metropolitan regions contain 59% of the EU population, but they hold 62% of its jobs and represent 67% of GDP (European Commission, 2014). The concentration of people, capital and business opportunities means that cities are more productive than other places. It is therefore not surprising that cities figure prominently in the EU strategy for jobs and growth. The Urban Agenda for the EU, in particular, aims to ensure maximum utilisation of the growth potential of cities.

2000–2010 period, a north–south divide could be seen, with northern cities generally outperforming those in the south. The most significant growth, however, occurred in central and eastern European cities, particularly in Poland. Some of this difference can be attributed to a lower starting point, but also to the EU's Cohesion Policy, under which especially new recipients are eligible to receive high European subsidies.

Many of Europe's largest cities are also its most affluent. The megacities of Paris and London rank among those with the highest GDP per capita ratios of the EU, such as Munich, Stockholm and Frankfurt. Still, there is not a clear linear relationship; Helsinki is smaller than Naples, but shows a higher GDP per capita and a stronger economic growth rate. Bigger is therefore not always better. There is much more at stake, such as the national economy of the country in which they are situated. To a large extent, the geographical distribution of GDP per capita of cities reflects that of regions and countries in Europe.

Cities also differ in growth rate; just as real engines, they are running at different speeds. Again, size not necessarily matters – although Paris and London appear to perform above average – as much as geographical location. In the

Population
metropolitan area 2010

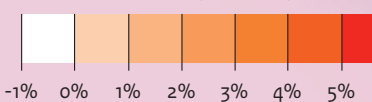


GDP per capita USD

GDP per capita growth

Annual average 2000–2010

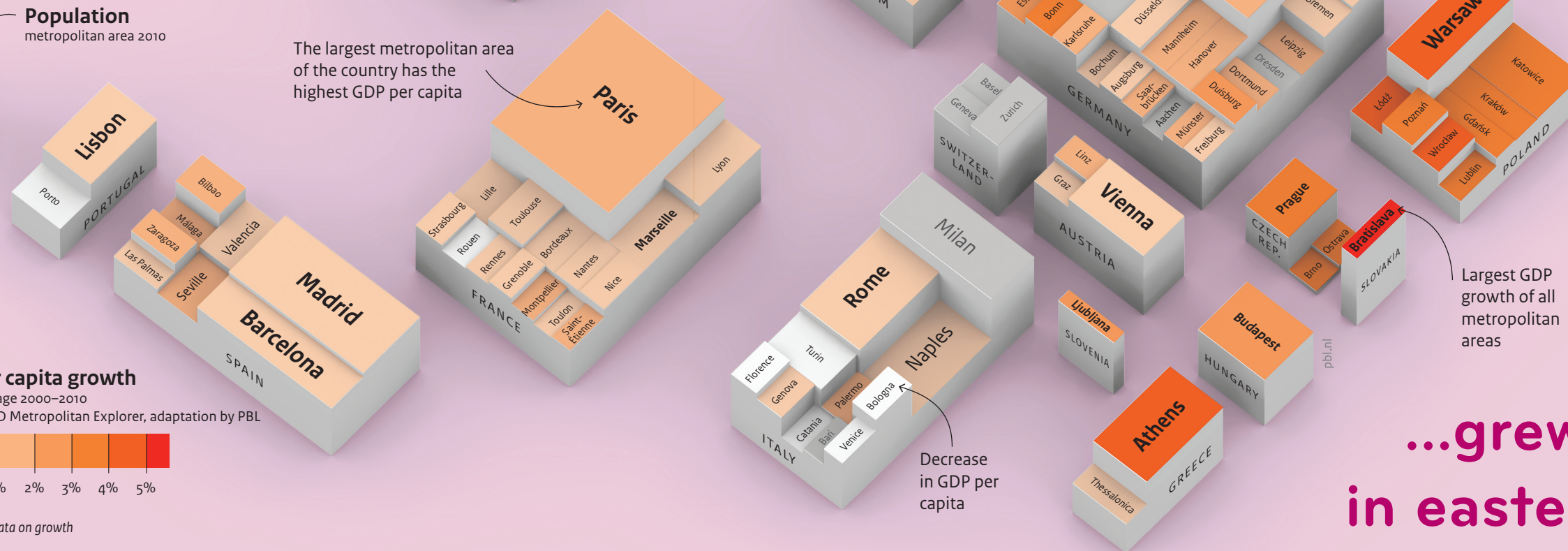
Source: OECD Metropolitan Explorer, adaptation by PBL



no data on growth



The largest metropolitan area of the country has the highest GDP per capita



Europe 2020 targets for smart growth
The 2020 strategy aims to stimulate the transition towards an economy based on knowledge, research and innovation by:

- Increasing combined public and private investment in R&D to 3% of GDP
- Reducing school dropout rates to less than 10% and increasing the share of the population aged 30 to 34 who have completed their tertiary education to at least 40%

...grew stronger in eastern Europe