Abstract

This presentation will describe the population changes between 1991 and 2004 in European cities and their wider regions.

Europe witnessed major changes in this period of intensified European integration, with several barriers to movement disappearing. Several central and eastern European countries radically transformed their political and economic systems and joined the EU in 2004. Which cities grew during these years and which cities declined in terms of population?

In most cities of the former Soviet bloc, including the cities in East Germany, the population decreased between 1991 and 2004. The exception is Poland, where we find a combination of declining, stagnating and growing cities. The fastest-growing cities were in Scandinavia, France and Ireland.

To complement the information on administrative cities, growth rates on an additional spatial level – the "larger urban zone" – are also examined. The larger urban zone is an approximation of the functional urban area centred around the city. The interaction between the larger urban zone as a whole and the core city is also analysed. The larger urban zones tend to grow faster than the core cities due to such factors as means of transport, housing prices and preferences, demographic trends, the attractiveness of dense inner cities, etc.

The perceived quality of housing and job opportunities is one of the factors attracting people to a city. The presentation will also study to what extent this perceived quality influences population growth.

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