Comparative Urban Statistics
The European Framework and Recent Experiences

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Structure of my talk

Very brief: the role of Eurostat

Urban Audit pilot phase

preparations for Urban Audit II

- The variables
- selection of cities
- spatial unit

Next steps
Objectives today:

- URBAN STATISTICS:
  Present the *achievements* reached so far in the European Union

- The challenge of the next steps ahead
Chapter 1

The Role of Eurostat
Who is Eurostat?

- is the **statistical office** of the European Union
- is part of the “**Commission**”
- is sited in Luxembourg
- employs around 600 people
- nearly all **data collection** in National Statistical Offices, not Eurostat
Our mission

- produce **reliable**, **comparable** and **relevant** statistics
- provide European institutions and the public at large with data for **Community policies**
- support the development of **statistical systems** in Member States and other countries
- Harmonise methodology
Content of the REGIO database
(based on the NUTS classification)

- Population, migration
- Regional Accounts
- Unemployment
- Tourism
- Education
- Transport and Energy
- Health
- Agriculture
- Business statistics
- Labour Force Survey
- Science & Technology
- Environment
### Territorial Nomenclature NUTS

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<th>Territorial Unit</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>After Regulation</th>
<th>No of regions</th>
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<td>Municipalities</td>
<td>5</td>
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Publications

- **Statistics in Focus**
  - 12 pages for the media

- **Regional Yearbook**
  - Includes maps, commentaries, a CD-ROM

- **Classifications**
  - In PDF format, free of charge

- **Portrait of the Regions**
  - Including all candidate countries

- **Reference Guide**
  - Explains the database, FAQ
A new Challenge!

Urban Statistics

- so far no data compilation for urban agglomerations at EU level
- mandatory: comparable across countries and across time
- growing demand at EU, national and local level
Chapter 2

Urban Audit pilot phase
1998: a new survey?

- High costs of new surveys
  - in money terms
  - burden on surveyed institutions

- no specific legal base exists at Community level
  - currently no friendly climate for new legislation

- Hence: the Urban Audit pilot phase
  - Use existing data sets
  - Only for a selection of cities
  - Test feasibility within 1 year
### The 58 cities (excluding London and Paris)

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Geographical Area

3 Levels:

- the administrative city
  - = core spatial unit

- the “Wider Territorial Unit”
  - to catch phenomena in the urban agglomeration including “hinterland”

- the sub-city level
  - to measure inner urban disparities
Fields covered

- Population and nationality
- Household structure
- Labour market (incl. unemployment)
- Income and poverty
- Housing
- Health
- Crime
- Civic involvement
- Education and training
- Air and water quality
- Waste management
- Travel patterns
- Energy use
- Recreation and culture
The collected data set

- Nearly 500 basic variables collected, more than 100 indicators calculated


  - **Problem**: boundary changes over time affect validity

  - **Problem**: definition of surveyed variables may change over time
Chapter 3

The Urban Audit follow-up
The challenge:

Improvement of all **Quality** Aspects

- **Relevance:** closer to users
- **Accuracy:** check the results of pilot project
- **Comparability:** harmonised definitions & involvement of NSOs
- **Timeliness:** data no more than 3 years old
- **Clarity:** more stringent definition of variables
- **Coherence:** definitions close to international standards
Evaluation of the pilot project

- Creation of a proper **statistical database**
- Thorough **analysis** of the variables of the pilot phase
  - New **classification** of variables
  - Decision on the **new variable list** with considerably fewer variables (300)
The new Structure (classification)

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<th>1. DEMOGRAPHY</th>
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<td>3. ECONOMIC ASPECTS</td>
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<td>3.3 Income, Disparities and</td>
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<td>4.2 Local Administration</td>
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<td>5. TRAINING AND EDUCATION</td>
<td>8. INFORMATION SOCIETY</td>
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<td>9.2 Tourism</td>
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Variables: decision criteria

- Keep important information
- Increase comparability
- Substantially reduce response burden
  - i.e. Shorten the list
- Response rate sufficient?
Variable xyz

High Importance

Low importance or superfluous

High Comparability

Low Comparability

High Coverage

Low Coverage

Definition change

Kept

Task Force

Changed

Discontinued
Variables: recommended approach

- Kept: 24%
- Modified: 22%
- Discontinued: 6%
- Added: 48%
Selection of cities

- Specific focus on *medium-sized cities* (50,000 to 250,000 inhabitants)
- Enlarge slightly the choice of large agglomerations
  - increase representativity across countries
- **Candidate countries** are invited to participate on a voluntary basis
  - Data for cities of the candidate countries (especially their capitals) will enhance the representativeness
- Fine-tuning in bilateral negotiations
Medium-sized cities

62 million people (more than 17% of the EU population) live in medium-sized cities.
The central **spatial unit:**
The administrative city

- Administrative unit
  - Commune / Municipality / Ward / Gemeinde
  - In many countries equivalent to NUTS level 5 (LAU2) regions
  - **D:** NUTS level 3; **IRL, P, UK:** NUTS level 4 (LAU1)
- Corresponds to the empowerment of the city administration
- Corresponds to spatial availability of data
- No change in Urban Audit II
The importance of measuring the urban agglomeration

→ **Industrial development**
  - Logistical needs / infrastructure
  - Property prices
  - Environmental impacts

→ **Commuting**
  - Development of new residential areas
  - Work, education, specialised services

→ **Regional co-operation**
An ‘ideal’ definition of the urban agglomeration ...

**Functional Urban Regions (FUR)**

- Already in use in several Member States
- Functional definition:
  - An integrated *labour market*
  - An integrated *housing market*
  - A *business location area*
  - A common regional *traffic system*
  - Common *regional services*
  - Regional cooperation
- Currently no harmonised definition
... and a pragmatic solution

- **NUTS level 3 regions**
  - Created for statistical purposes
  - Generally based on administrative units
  - Therefore, data availability good
  - Reflect the urban regions relatively well

- **NUTS level 4 (L AU1) regions**
  - Can be a better approximation than NUTS 3
  - Only defined in six Member States
The need for information on sub-city areas

From Commission documents:

- “… information on intra city disparities indispensable for further political action”
- “… enable city authorities to gather precise information on possible ‘pockets of concern’ ”
- “… pinpoint major disparities in terms of social cohesion”
Sub-city districts

Pilot phase
- average size 100,000 inhabitants
- only for half of the 58 Urban Audit cities
- very limited number of variables
- ‘poor’ and ‘prosperous’ district selected

Urban Audit II
- average size 20,000 inhabitants
- for all selected cities
- very limited number of variables
- publication for all districts
Chapter 4

Next steps
Urgent task

Classify the variables into three categories (for each country)

- variable is **at hand** and can be transmitted
- variable is **not available**, but similar quantitative data is at hand, so that the variable can be **estimated**
- The required variable is **not available** and cannot be estimated. Hence, a **fresh survey** is necessary in order to obtain this variable
The challenge of co-operation

- Many partners involved
  - DG REGIO
  - Eurostat, incl. possibly a contractor
  - National Statistical Offices
  - the cities

- Quality is best fostered by intensive co-operation and partnership relations
Several levels of organisation

- European ➔ central co-ordinator
- National ➔ national co-ordinator
- City ➔ (depends on local set-up)
Choice of national partners

- First choice: national statistical office as expert co-ordinator
  - Subvention contracts

- For those countries where national statistical office does not want to be the network partner: open call for tender
  - Excludes national statistical office
Task of national partner

The national co-ordinator of the Urban Audit should:

- have a constant exchange of information with the Urban Audit II cities
- remind the cities to send data
- organise the data flow within the country
- ensure the comparability of the supplied data
- give methodological advice to the cities
- transmit all the data to Eurostat
Conclusion

- Urban statistics are a growing priority for Commission policy
- Data are required for early 2003 for EU cohesion report
- Integration into next regional fund program is currently discussed
Thanks for listening!

Any Questions?

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