

Beat: Politics

Seven out of ten Europeans living in cities have jobs

24.4% are at risk of poverty

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USPA NEWS - Home to a large share of the population aged 20 to 64 in the European Union (EU), cities can be viewed as both the source of and solution to many of today's economic, social and environmental challenges. Among EU city dwellers aged 20-64, 70% were in employment.

The risk of poverty or social exclusion affected around 24% of all city dwellers. Monday the EU ministers for urban affairs meet to endorse the Pact of Amsterdam, which will establish an Urban Agenda for the EU. On this occasion, Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, issues data on population, employment and risk of poverty in cities. In 2015 in the EU, around 124 million people aged 20 to 64, or 41% of the population of this age group, were city dwellers. At Member State level more than half of the population aged 20-64 lived in cities in the United Kingdom (60%) and Cyprus (54%). At the opposite end of the scale, around 1 in 5 persons aged 20 to 64 lived in cities in Slovakia (19%), Slovenia (20%) and Luxembourg (21%).

Employment rate tends to be higher in cities than in rural areas

On average in the EU, 70.0% of city dwellers aged 20 to 64 were employed in 2015, with employment rates ranging from 79.8% in Sweden to 53.0% in Greece. In the majority of Member States, cities recorded higher employment rates than rural areas, in particular in Bulgaria (with a 16.7 percentage point difference) and Lithuania (10.5 pp). In contrast, in eleven Member States, the employment rate was lower in cities than in rural areas, most markedly in Belgium (9.1 pp), Austria (8.7 pp), Germany (6.0 pp), Greece and France (both 5.6 pp), the Netherlands (5.5 pp) and the United Kingdom (4.2 pp).

In 2014 in the EU, around 50 million city dwellers (or 24.4% of the population living in cities) were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. At Member State level the highest shares of city dwellers at risk of poverty or social exclusion were observed in Greece (34.1%), Bulgaria (30.0%), Belgium (28.6%), Austria (28.3%), Romania (28.3%) and Italy (27.8%), the lowest in the Czech Republic (13.9%), Slovakia (15.0%), Luxembourg (16.1%) and Finland (16.6%).

In the majority of Member States, city dwellers were less at risk of poverty or social exclusion than rural dwellers, in particular in Romania (with a 22.4 percentage point difference) and Bulgaria (21.4 pp). In contrast, in seven Member States the risk of poverty or social exclusion was higher in cities than in rural areas: Austria (with a 14.2 pp difference), Denmark (9.4 pp), Belgium (7.5 pp), the United Kingdom (6.6 pp), Germany (5.3 pp), France (3.3 pp) and the Netherlands (3.1 pp).

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