

20. ACCESSIBILITY: DISTANCE FROM THE CLOSEST URBAN CENTRE

The well-being of a region's inhabitants depends on their ability to access resources and services that are often available only in large urban centres. The travelling time necessary to reach the closest agglomeration gives a measure of a region's ability to quickly access resources and services.

Variations in accessibility are significant

Travelling times vary widely among regions (Figure 20.1). Sparsely populated countries, such as Australia, the United States and Canada, have the largest variations in travelling times (about 34, 30 and 25 hours, respectively). Regional variations are also significant in Greece (about 21 hours), Mexico and Norway (about 20 hours in both countries).

In most European countries differences in travelling times are narrower. In Belgium Switzerland

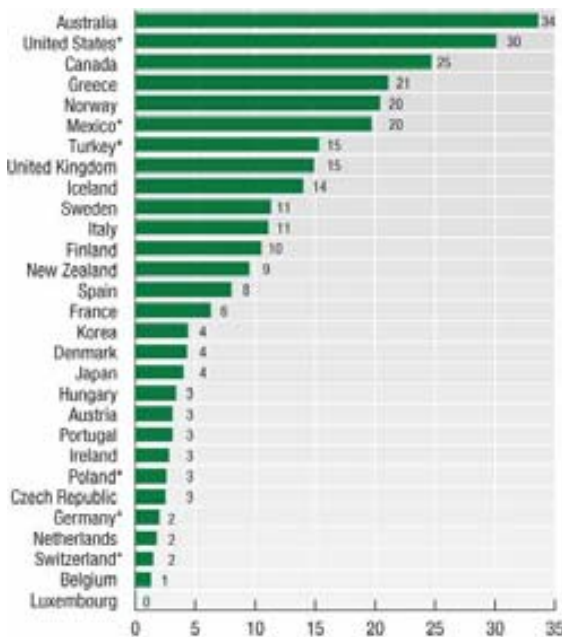
and the Netherlands, all regions are located within 2 hours or less of the closest centre. Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom are exceptions to this pattern, as travelling times from the most remote regions are much higher.

Rural populations face the longest journeys

Not surprisingly, accessibility tends to be lower for rural regions (Figure 20.2). On average, travelling times are more than 3.5 hours for rural regions, about 2 hours for intermediate regions, and just 37 minutes for urban regions. In Australia, even intermediate regions face limited accessibility: the average travelling time to the closest centre is longer (by about one hour) from intermediate regions than from rural ones.

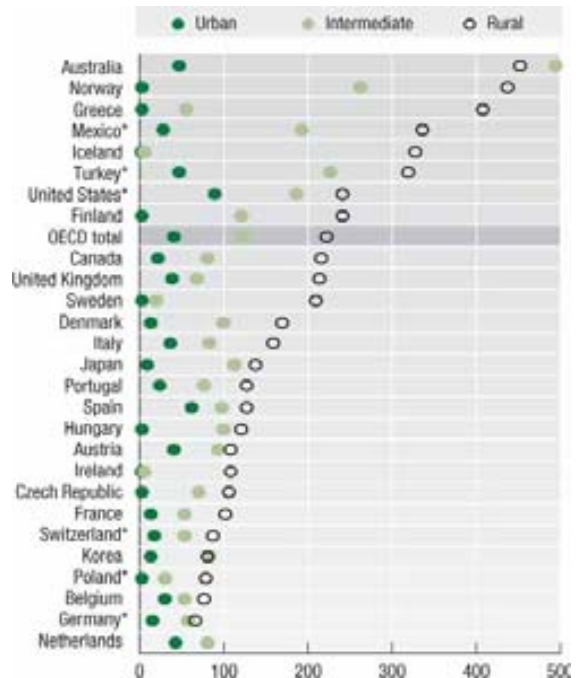
20.1. Sparsely populated countries have the largest travelling times to reach the closest centre

Regional variation in travelling time (hours) to reach the closest centre, 2001 (TL3)



20.2. On average travelling times are more than 3.5 hours for rural regions across OECD countries

Average time (minutes) to be travelled to reach the closest centre, by type of region, 2001 (TL3)



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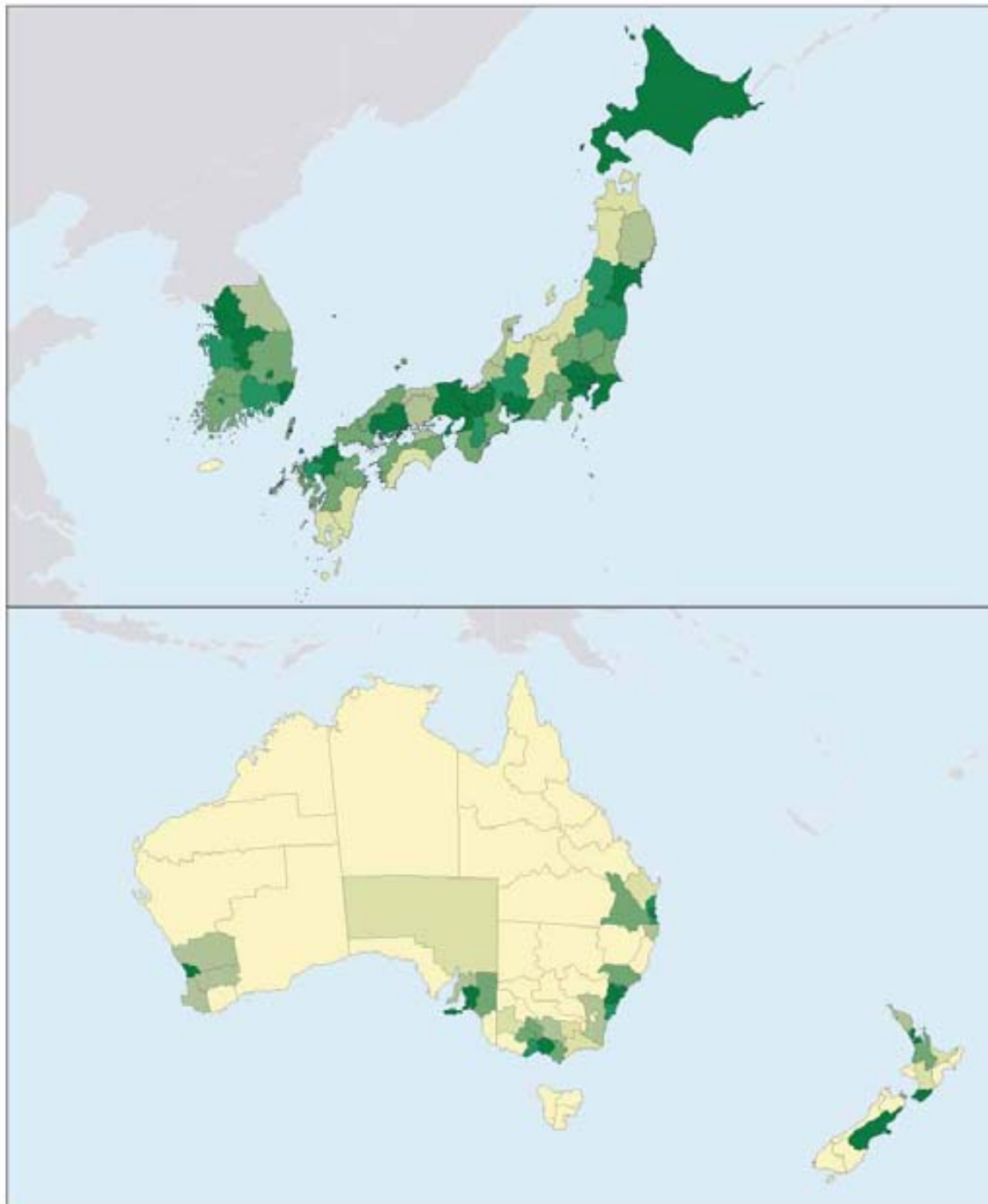
Definition


Accessibility is defined as the travelling time to reach the closest urban centre. Centres are defined as either a city with no less than 300 000 inhabitants or an urban agglomeration with no less than 500 000. Cities and urban agglomerations are defined according to UN Principles and recommendations for Population and Housing Census.

20.3. Travelling time to the closest urban centre: Asia and Oceania

2001

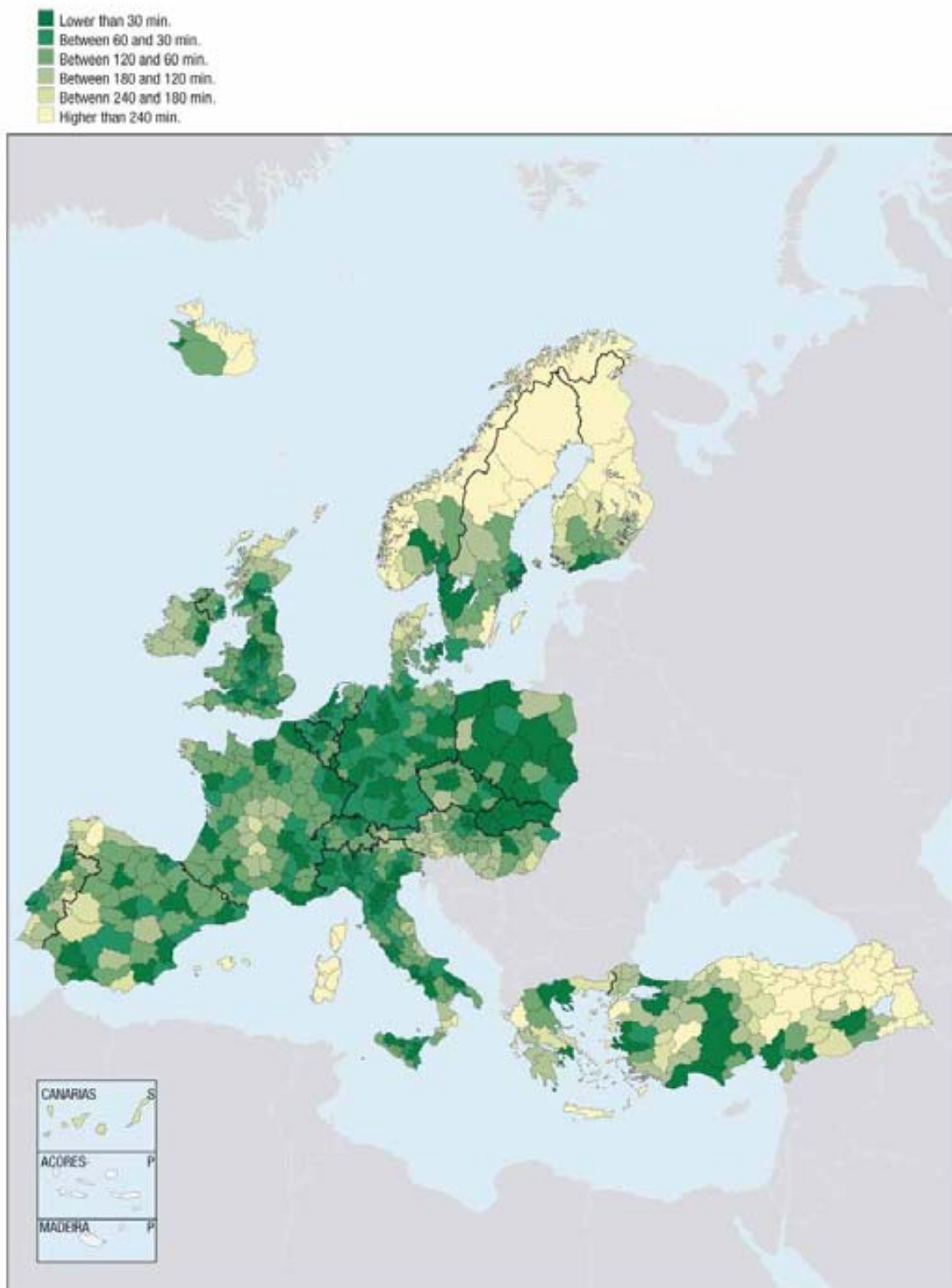
- Lower than 30 min.
- Between 30 and 60 min.
- Between 60 and 120 min.
- Between 120 and 180 min.
- Between 180 and 240 min.
- Higher than 240 min.




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20.4. Travelling time to the closest urban centre: Europe

2001

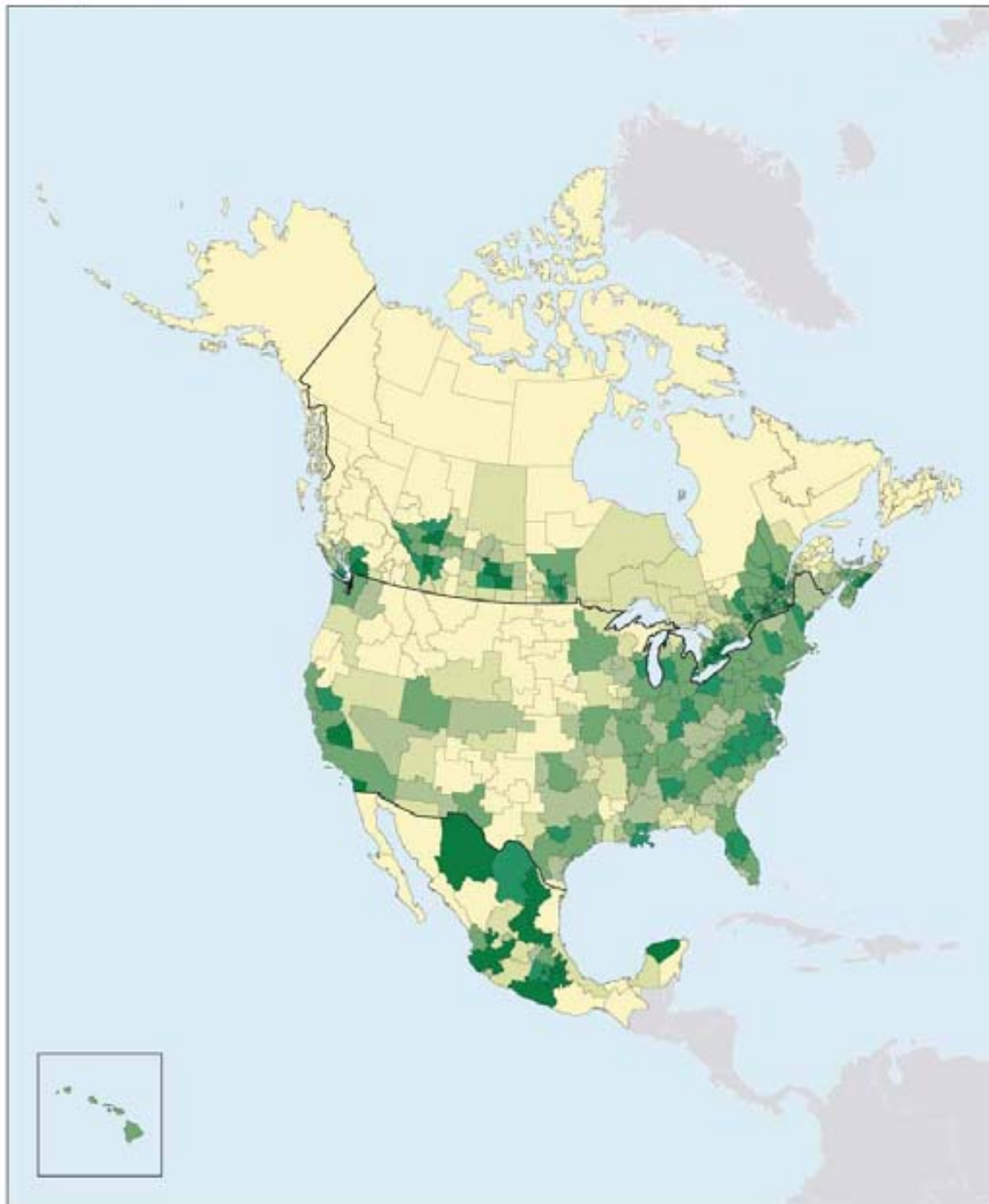



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20.5. Travelling time to the closest urban centre: North America

2001

- Lower than 30 min.
- Between 30 and 60 min.
- Between 60 and 120 min.
- Between 120 and 180 min.
- Between 180 and 240 min.
- Higher than 240 min.



StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/032250487377>

Symbols and Abbreviations

OECD (25) average	Unweighted average of 25 OECD countries.
OECD (25) total	Sum over all regions of 25 OECD countries.
OECD (25)	Range of variation over all regions of 25 OECD countries.
TL2	Territorial Level 2.
TL3	Territorial Level 3
NOG	Non Official Grid
*	Differences in the definition of data or regions. Please check the “Sources and Methodology” section.
PU	Predominantly Urban
IN	Intermediate
PR	Predominantly Rural
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
USD	United States Dollar





I. REGIONS AS ACTORS OF NATIONAL GROWTH

1. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF POPULATION
2. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF THE ELDERLY POPULATION
3. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF GDP
4. REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO GROWTH IN NATIONAL GDP
5. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF INDUSTRIES
6. REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT
7. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF PATENTS

Table of Contents

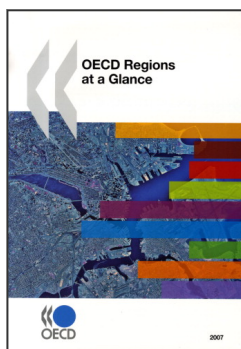
Executive Summary	7
Symbols and abbreviations	11
I. Regions as Actors of National Growth	
1. Geographic concentration of population	14
2. Geographic concentration of the elderly population	20
3. Geographic concentration of GDP	26
4. Regional contributions to growth in national GDP	32
5. Geographic concentration of industries	38
6. Regional contributions to changes in employment	44
7. Geographic concentration of patents	50
II. Making the Best of Local Assets	
8. Regional disparities in GDP per capita	58
9. Regional disparities in labour productivity	64
10. Regional disparities in specialisation	70
11. Regional disparities in tertiary education attainment	76
12. Regional disparities in unemployment rates	82
13. Regional disparities in participation rates	88
The Key Drivers of Regional Growth	
14. The factors behind regional performance	96
15. Regional growth in the OECD	98
16. National factors and regional performances	102
17. Regional factors: GDP per capita and population	106
18. Regional factors: productivity and specialisation	110
19. Regional factors: employment, participation and ageing	114
III. Competing on the Basis of Regional Well-being	
20. Accessibility: distance from the closest urban centre	120
21. Education: student enrolments in tertiary education	124
22. Voter turnout in national elections	128
23. Safety: reported crimes against property	132
24. Safety: reported murders	136
25. Home ownership	140
26. Environment: private vehicle ownership	144
27. Environment: municipal waste	148

IV. Regional Focus on Health

28. Health: age-adjusted mortality rate	154
29. Health status: premature mortality	160
30. Health status: incidence of cancer	166
31. Health resources: number of physicians	172
32. Health resources: density of practising nurses	178
33. Health resources: hospital beds	182
34. Health resources: medical technology	188
35. Non-medical determinants of health: prevalence of smoking	194
36. Non-medical determinants of health: prevalence of obesity	198

Source and Methodology

Territorial Grids and Regional Typology	205
Regional grids	205
Regional typology	205
Population – Chapters: 1, 8, 17, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36	214
Population by age and sex – Chapters: 2, 11, 13, 19, 28	215
Gross domestic product – Chapters: 3, 4, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19	217
Employment by industry – Chapters: 5, 10, 18	219
Labour force, employment, unemployment and long-term unemployment – Chapters: 6, 9, 12, 13, 18, 19	220
Employment at place of work – Chapter 9	222
Patent applications – Chapter 7	223
Educational attainments – Chapter 11	224
Time distance from the closest urban centre – Chapter 20	226
Student enrolment in tertiary education – Chapter 21	228
Voter turnout in national elections – Chapter 22	229
Crimes against property – Chapter 23	230
Number of murders – Chapter 24	232
Number of dwellings inhabited by the owner; total number of occupied dwellings – Chapter 25	234
Number of private vehicles – Chapter 26	235
Volume of produced waste – Chapter 27	236
Death by age and sex: Chapters 28, 29	237
Number of new cases of cancer – Chapter 30	239
Number of physicians – Chapter 31	240
Number of nurses – Chapter 32	242
Number of hospital beds – Chapter 33	244
Number of CT scanners and MRI units – Chapter 34	246
Number of smokers aged 15 and over – Chapter 35	247
Number of people suffering from obesity – Chapter 36	248
Indexes and Formulas	249
The drivers of regional growth	251



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