

Premature mortality, measured in terms of potential years of life lost (PYLL), is often interpreted as a measure of preventable deaths. This indicator places the emphasis on deaths among younger people, in particular infant mortality and deaths due to illnesses and accidents suffered by children and young adults. Advances in medical technology, together with prevention and control, can reduce such deaths.

Many of the main causes of premature mortality in the developed world are non-medical or involve risk-taking behaviour (accidents, smoking, alcohol, drugs) but also diseases such as cancer.

### Premature mortality is high in eastern Europe

Throughout the OECD area, premature deaths are more common among men than women. The OECD countries with the highest rates of premature mortality are in Central and Eastern Europe, in particular Hungary, where the number of potential years of life lost per 100 000 population is almost twice the OECD average for men and 1.6 times the OECD average for women (Figure 29.1). For Hungarian men, high mortality appears to stem from an unhealthy diet linked to the consumption of alcohol and tobacco.

Switzerland and Italy fall at the other end of the scale for women, and Sweden and Iceland for men. These countries display the least premature mortality and are among the countries with the smallest regional disparities.

### One region is responsible for regional disparities in Canada...

On average, premature mortality in Canadian regions is lower than the OECD average. However, in the region of Nunavut premature mortality reaches 2.5 times the national average. For this reason, of the 23 countries for which this indicator can be calculated, regional disparities in Canada are considerably greater than in other countries (Figure 29.2). The region of Nunavut and, to a lesser extent, the Northwest Territories are the two regions with the highest level of premature deaths. The PYLL indicator for Nunavut is 15 072 years per 100 000 men and 7 478 per 100 000 women. These figures are much higher than the national figures for Hungary but also for the Hungarian region with the highest values for this indicator. One explanation for the disparities in Canada may be the number of premature deaths in the native population, many due to suicide and risk-taking behaviour stemming from social problems.

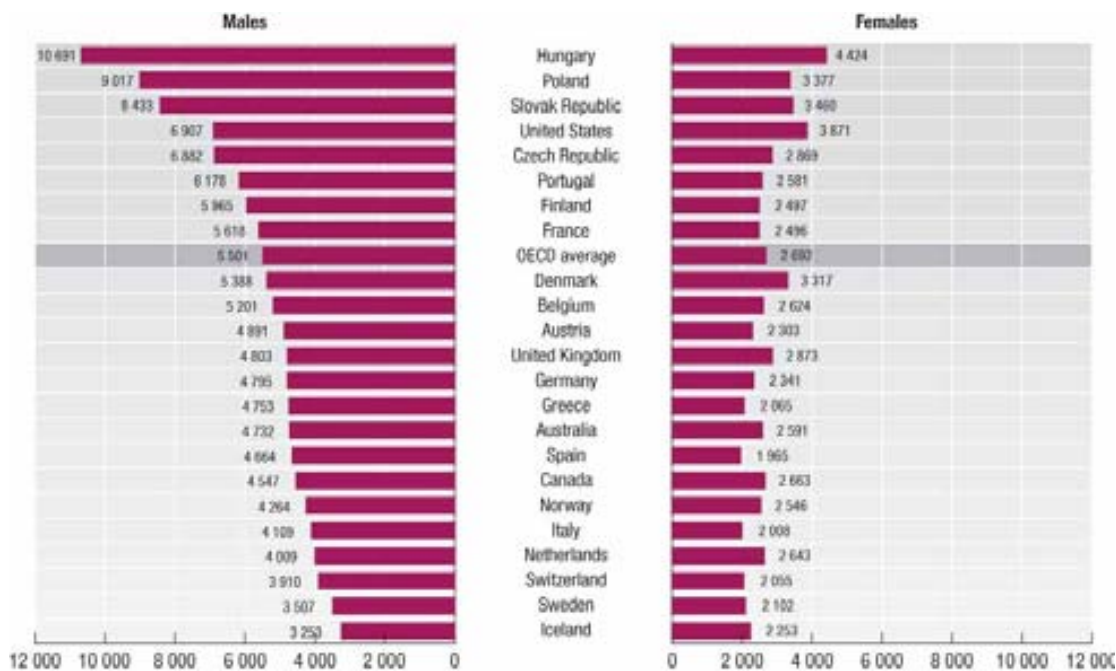
### ... while disparities are more frequent among regions in Europe

In European countries, a few regions in Portugal, France and Germany are characterised by higher premature mortality among men. In France, excessive alcohol consumption, a factor in several diseases (cancer, digestive disorders and cardiovascular disease, as well as road accidents), has been suggested as one explanation for such disparities, for instance in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region.

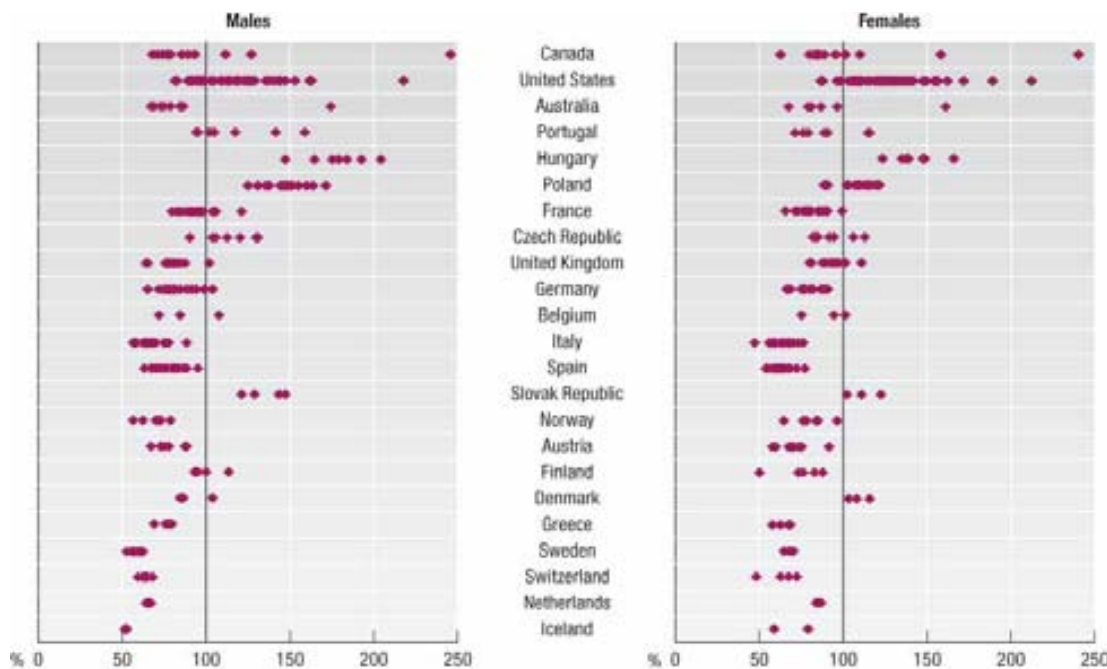
#### Definition

Premature mortality is measured in potential years of life lost (PYLL). The calculation of PYLL involves summing up deaths occurring at each age and multiplying this figure by the number of years remaining to live to a selected age limit (70 years).

## 29.1. Potential years of life lost at the national level in the OECD area, 2004



## 29.2. Regional disparities in premature mortality, 2004

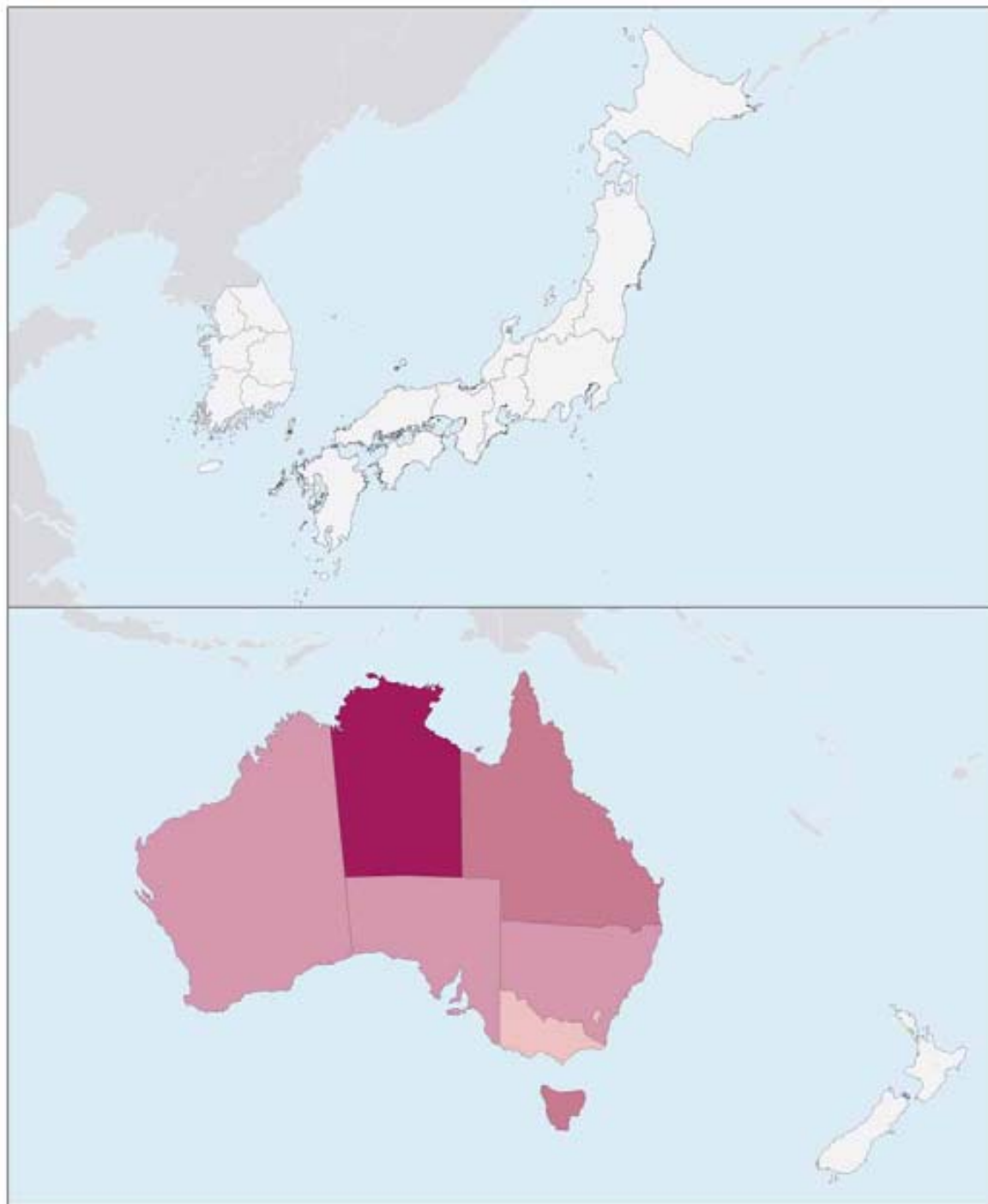
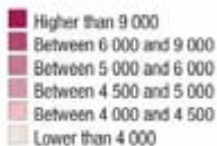



Regional variation (TL2), percentage of OECD average (23).

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29.3. Premature mortality for males: Asia and Oceania

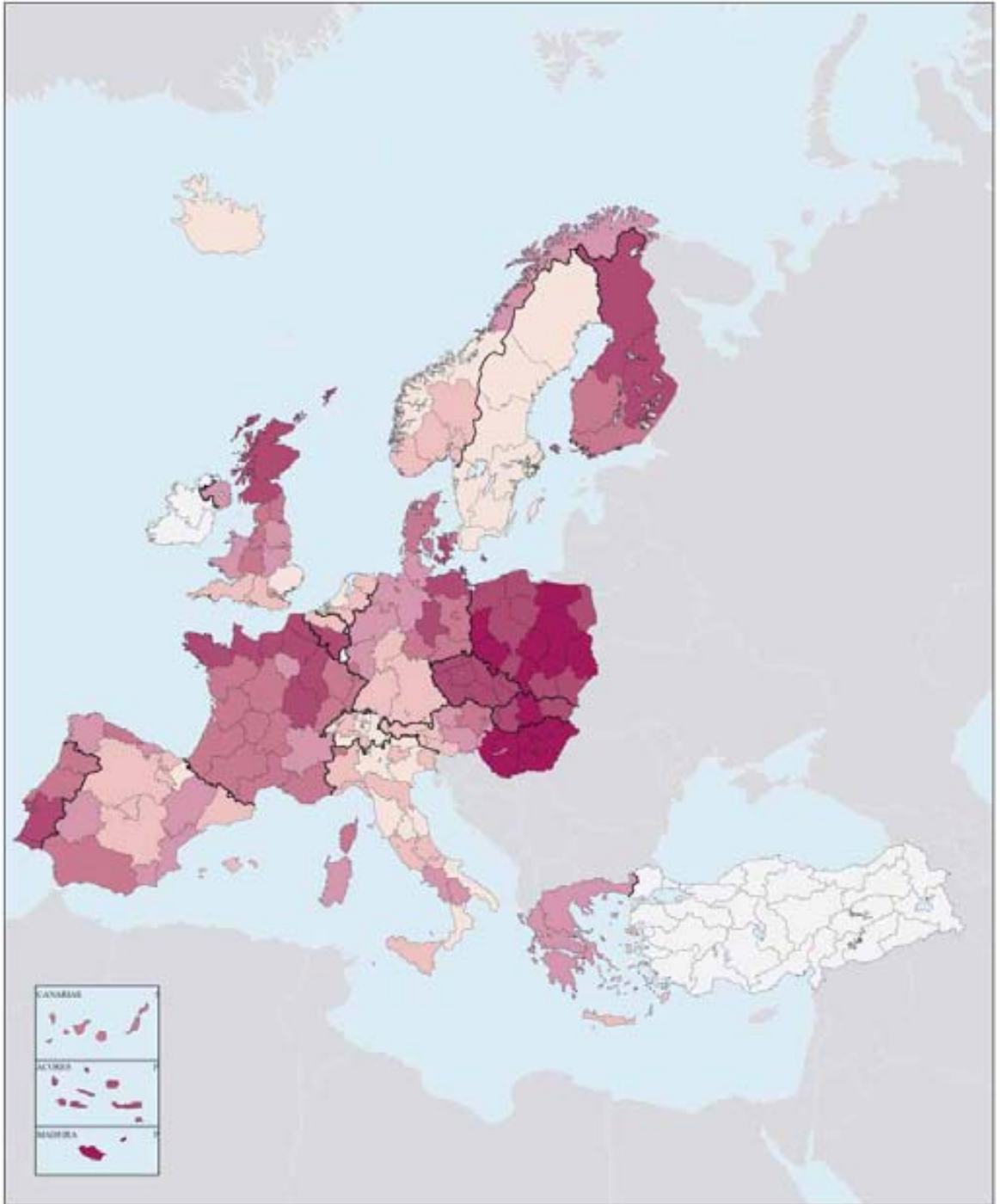
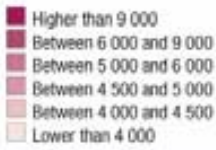
Potential Years of Life Lost (PYLL) per 100 000 population, 2004



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### 29.4. Premature mortality for males: Europe

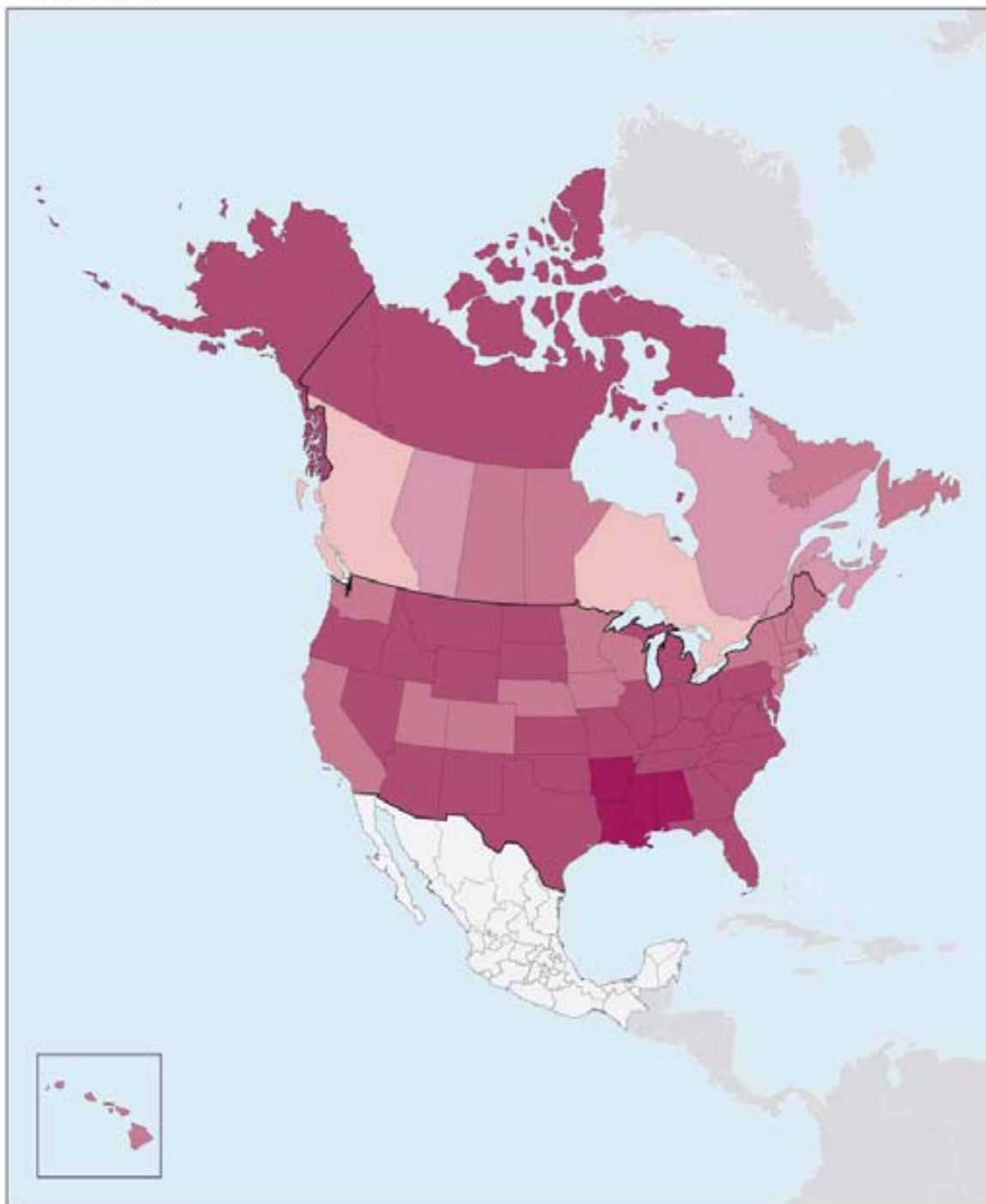
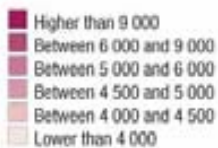
Potential Years of Life Lost (PYLL) per 100 000 population, 2004




StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/456753421474>

29.5. Premature mortality for males: North America

Potential Years of Life Lost (PYLL) per 100 000 population, 2004



StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/456753421474>

### Premature mortality affects OECD rural and urban areas differently, depending on gender

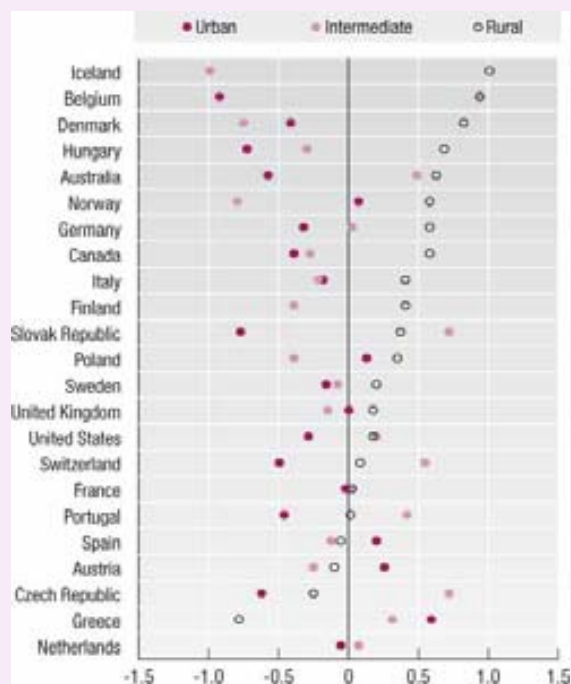
Premature deaths among men are more common in rural regions. In 19 out of 23 countries, the rate of premature mortality for males in rural regions is positively correlated with the share of population (Figure 29.6). The situation is quite the opposite for women in several countries, where premature deaths are more common in mostly urban or intermediate areas (Figure 29.7). A possible explanation for such disparities may be premature deaths due to road accidents which are more common among men and in rural areas.

Spain, Austria and Greece are the most noticeable exceptions to the preponderance of premature death among men in rural areas.

The smallest differences in premature mortality among types of regions are recorded in France and the Netherlands for men and in Sweden and the United Kingdom for women. In these countries, in fact, there seems to be no correlation between the distribution of regional population by type of region and premature mortality.

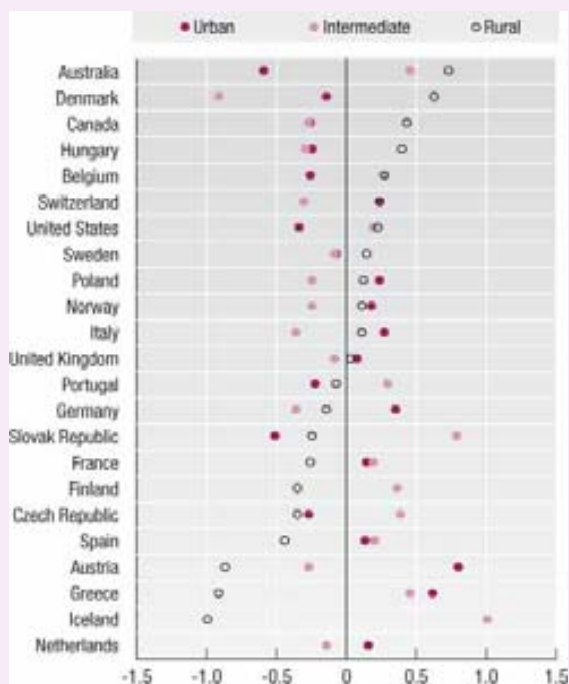
#### 29.6. Correlation between premature mortality among men and distribution of population by type of region

Spearman correlation coefficient, 2004 (TL2)



#### 29.7. Correlation between premature mortality among women and distribution of population by type of region

Spearman correlation coefficient, 2004 (TL2)



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/048468323417>

## Symbols and Abbreviations

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

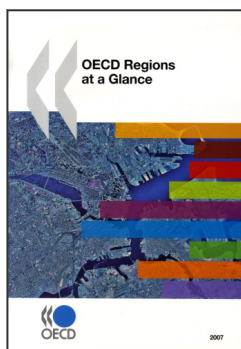
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	7
<b>Symbols and abbreviations</b> .....	11
<b>I. Regions as Actors of National Growth</b>	
1. <b>Geographic concentration of population</b> .....	14
2. <b>Geographic concentration of the elderly population</b> .....	20
3. <b>Geographic concentration of GDP</b> .....	26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

<b>Territorial Grids and Regional Typology</b> .....	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
<b>Indexes and Formulas</b> .....	249
The drivers of regional growth .....	251



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