

## 40. Europe – population and settlements

Europe = large and rich continent, many European countries are amongst the wealthiest in the world with high standard of living compared to most other parts of the world ⇔ industrial growth and colonies (in Africa, America and Asia), >40 national countries => 2 world wars started here.

Europe = amongst the smallest continents but the third highest population =>

- *high population densities* (>100 inh./km<sup>2</sup>)
- *high rate of urbanisation* (>70%)

### Population distribution and density

>700 million Europeans live in area bit larger than Australia => European countries have some of the highest population densities in the world (world average = 41 inh./km<sup>2</sup>)

- e.g. Netherlands 460 inh./km<sup>2</sup>, Germany 235 inh./km<sup>2</sup>, Monaco 16,000 inh./km<sup>2</sup>

Europeans live mainly in coastal and fluvial lowlands ⇔ concentration of industries + communications (Po lowland, Costa Liguria, Ruhr region, Randstadt) => copying the Hot (Blue) banana region.

The lowest population density = Eastern Europe ⇔ large areas (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine) => West-East gradient of population density = the more to the east, the higher population density



### Population features

Populations are quite stable without any extensive increase/decrease.

*Low birth rates + high average life expectancy* – 75 yrs. => European population is relatively *elderly* (large proportion of people in age of > 65 yrs.).

### Cultural melting pot

Great variety of nations and cultures ⇔ immigrants from LDCs (former colonies) => ethnic minorities => *social and ethnic conflicts* (Muslims vs. natives, richer and poorer) mainly in large cities, e.g. Paris, Madrid, Lisboa, London, etc.

### Settlements

Majority of Europeans live in cities (urban areas), especially in the western part of Europe.

- e.g. Belgium 97%, Luxembourg 91%, UK 89%, Germany 88%

In eastern part, people live mainly in country (rural) areas.

*Conurbations* in the Hot banana region (1 city merges into another)

Largest cities in Europe:

- *Paris* → >9 million inhabitants
- *London* → >8 million inhabitants
- *Moscow* → >8 million inhabitants
- *Berlin, Madrid, Milan, Kyiv, etc.*

### Keywords

conurbation, stable population, west-east gradient