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Foresight Project
Future of Cities

Sir Mark Walport, Chief Scientific Adviser to HM Government

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"…an immense laboratory of trial and error, failure and success…"

Jane Jacobs
The death and life of great American cities

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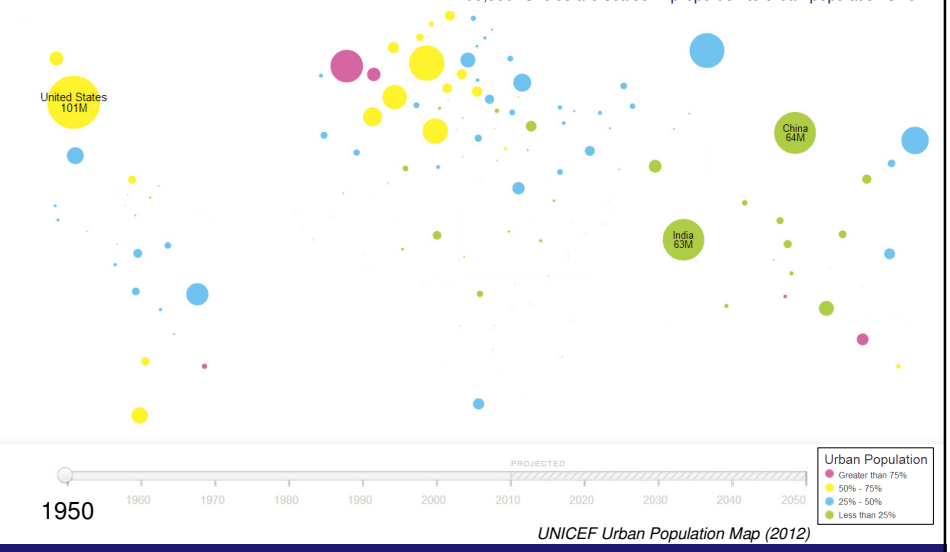
The Changing Urban World

This graphic depicts countries and territories with urban populations exceeding 100,000. Circles are scaled in proportion to urban population size.



UNICEF Urban Population Map (2012)

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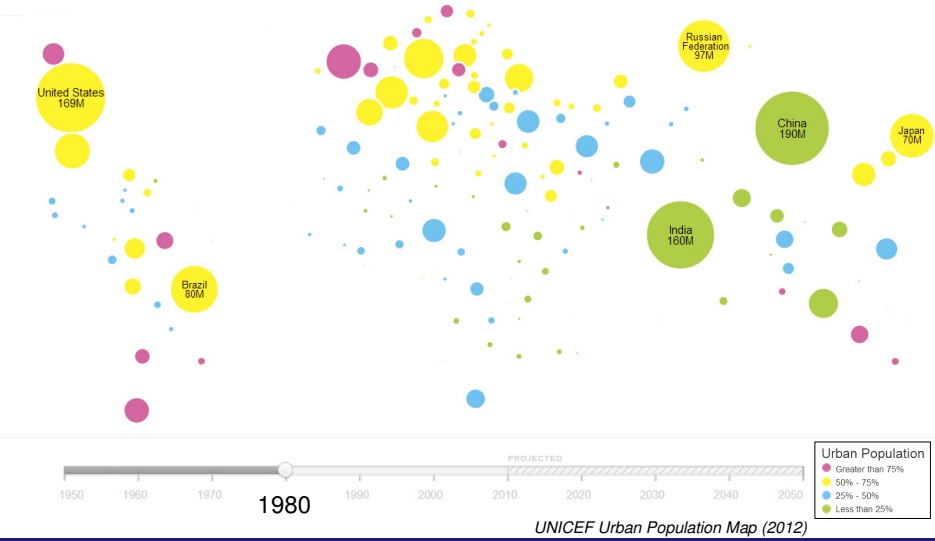

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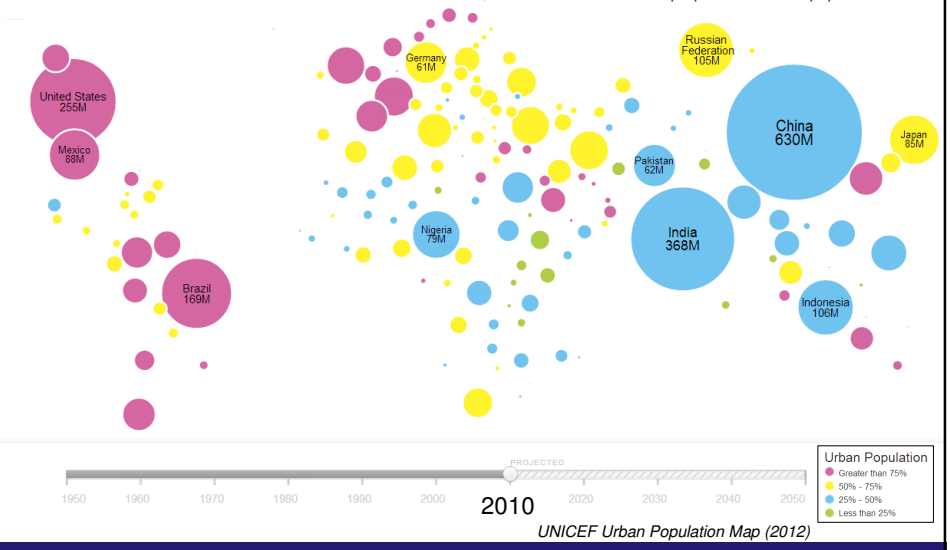

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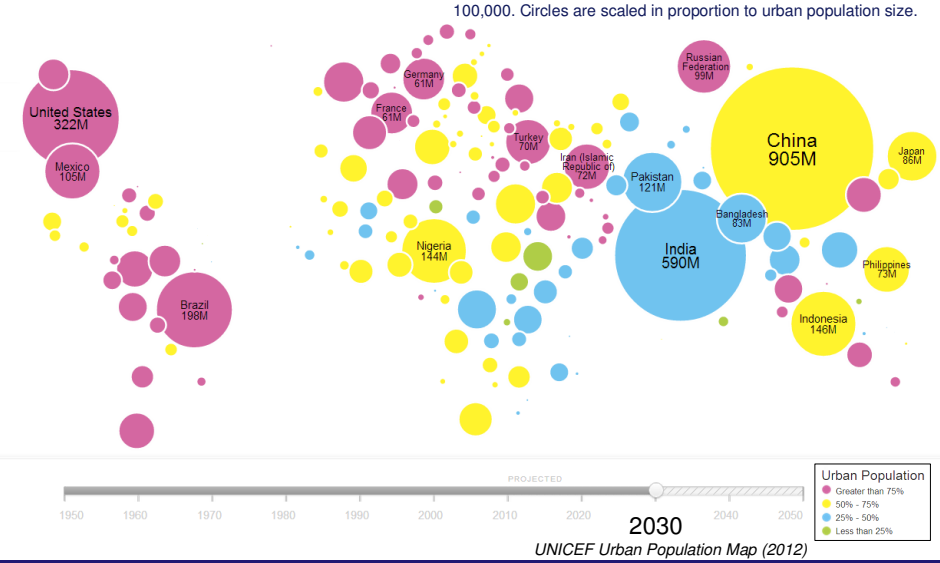

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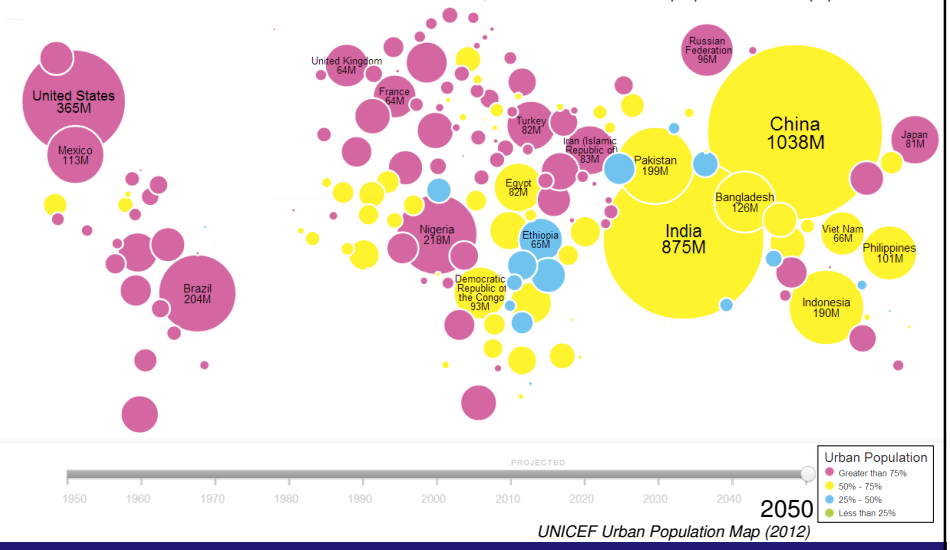

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And looking closer at Europe..

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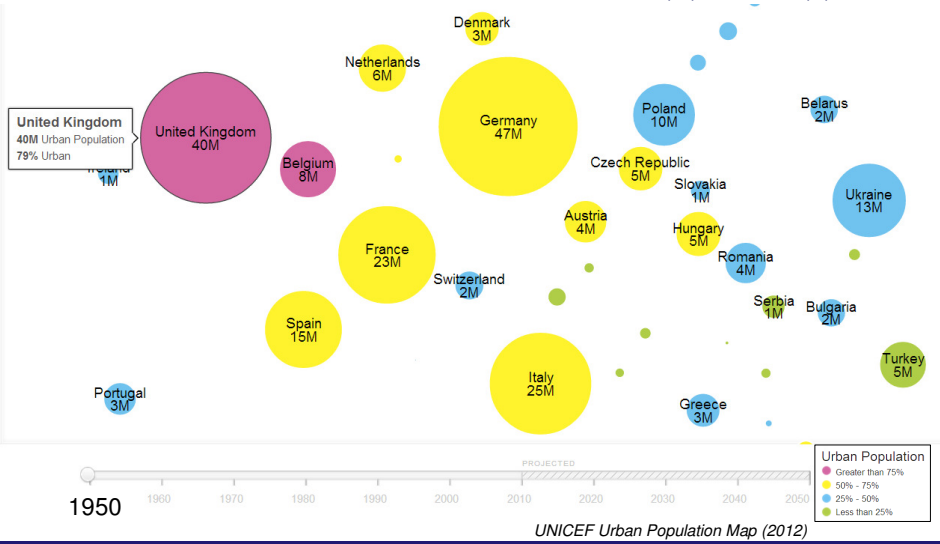

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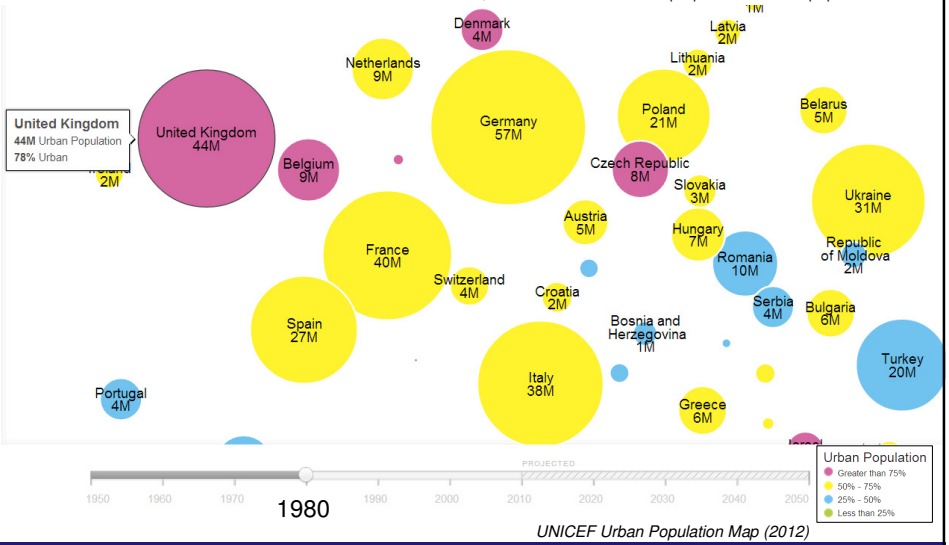

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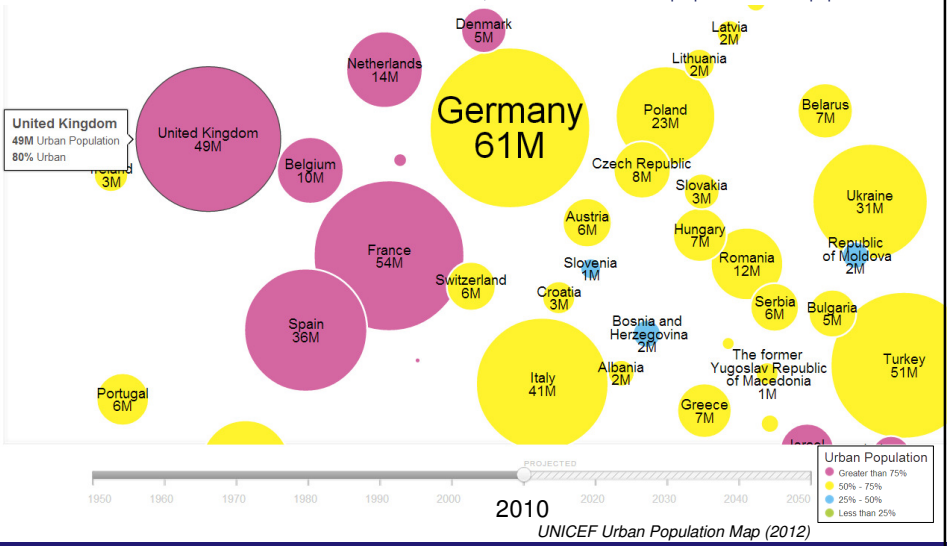

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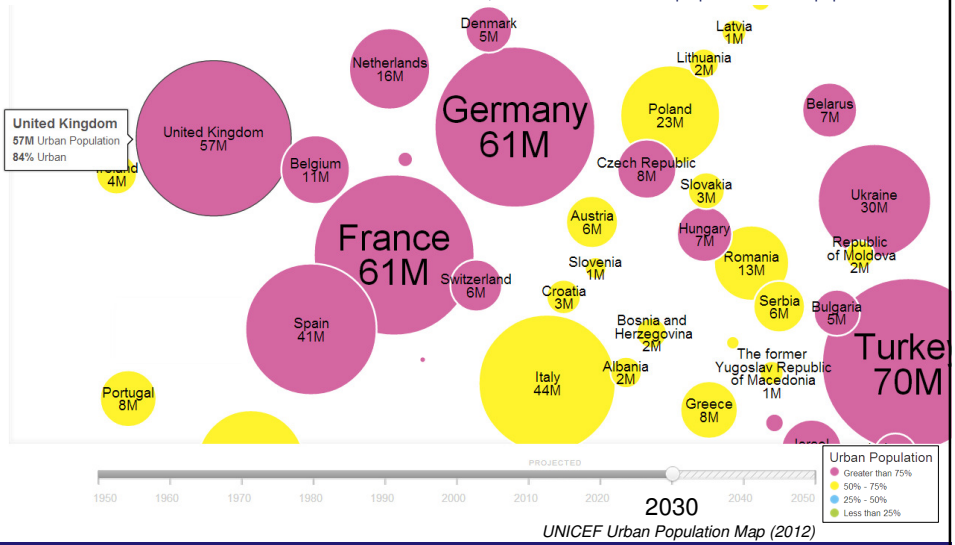

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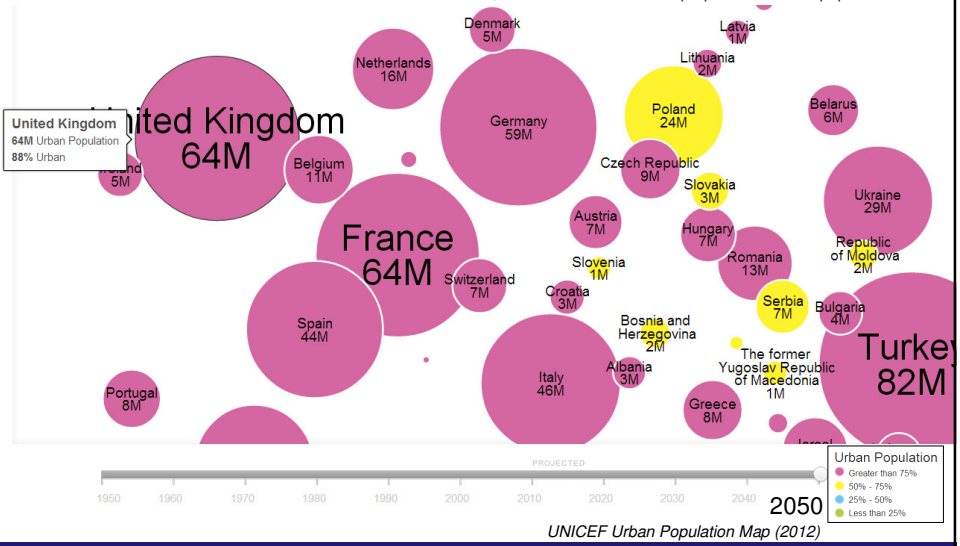

UNICEF Urban Population Map (2012)

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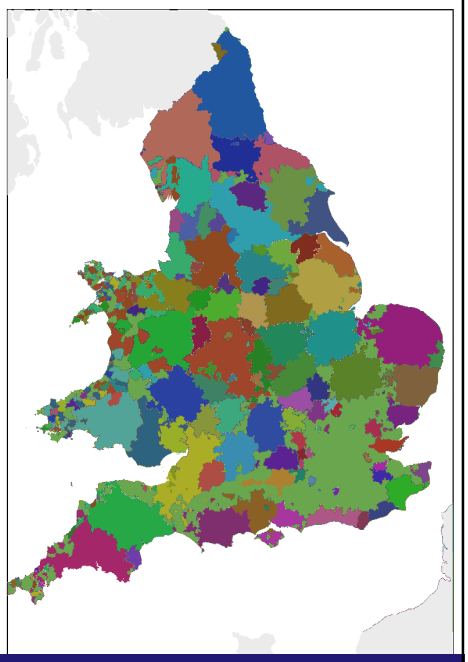
What is a City?

Physical components of cities include:

- Physical boundaries
- Population size
- Hinterland
- Natural infrastructure
- Built infrastructure
- Transport links to other cities & countries



Source: Arcaute, E., Ferguson, P. et al
arXiv:1301.1674 [physics.soc-ph]
Data from Census 2001

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More than infrastructure

Cities emerge from the demand for populations to interact and are about people:

- Poverty and wealth
- Culture and diversity
- Social inclusion/exclusion
- Crime
- Demographics, e.g., ageing population
- Overlapping systems of governance
- Legal designation

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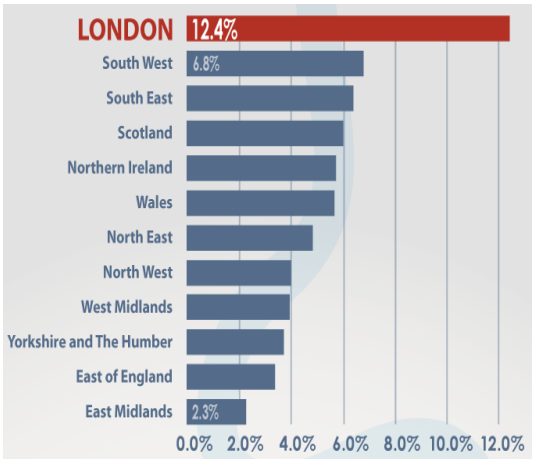
Current Trends in the UK

London is outperforming the rest of the UK economy.

Our largest cities lag behind London in terms of their performance – and lag behind their European rivals in terms of levels of GDP per capita achieved.

Cities do not work in isolation – the networks and interactions between them are important.



Growth in output (nominal Gross Value Added) 2007-2011

Note: Regional GVA not adjusted for inflation
Source: ONS, Regional Economic Indicators - March 2013
http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/regional-trends/regional-economic-indicators/march-2013/sty---infographic-summary.html

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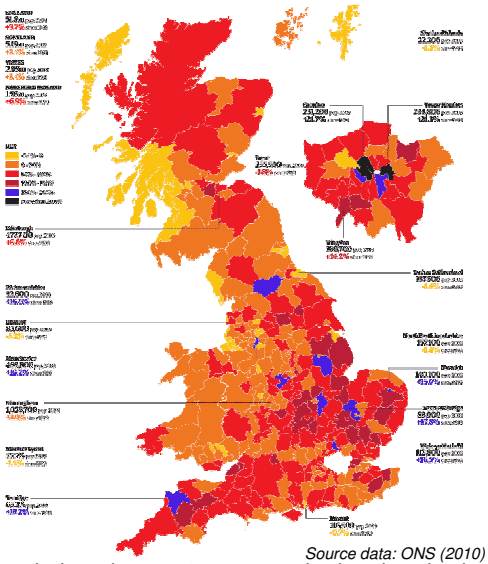
Future challenges and opportunities

- Demography - Ageing population
- Economic competitiveness
- Governance
- Climate change
- Technology
- Sustainability – energy, waste, resilience
- International competition
- Network of cities

Key Questions:

What are the key enablers of success for different cities?

What are their most important decisions in preparing for the future?



Source data: ONS (2010)

UK population change 1999-2009 by local authority

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Foresight – Future of Cities Project

- Public policy is delivered via cities, which are centres of innovation and growth
- Foresight project will take a cross government interdisciplinary approach, building on existing work.
- Aim to provide a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities UK cities will face in the future
- Seeking input in order to shape project and focus outputs on most important questions facing policy makers

Examples of previous projects

Flooding & Coastal Defence

Land Use Futures

Sustainable Energy & the Built Environment

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http://www.bis.gov.uk/foresight

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Foresight Project
Future of Cities

Presentation made to the Foundation for Science and Technology discussion on *Cities of the future – science, innovation and city management*, June 2013

Sir Mark Walport, Chief Scientific Adviser to HM Government

Foresight would like acknowledge UCL Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis and specifically thank Pete Ferguson and Robin Edwards for their support in developing this slide pack.

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