

Household income in metropolitan areas

The income of metropolitan residents are, on average, 21% higher than those living elsewhere, but differences between metropolitan areas within the same country can be sizeable.

People living in metropolitan areas have on average a 21% higher income than the rest of the country (Figure 4.10). Differences between the average income in metropolitan areas and the rest of the country are highest in Chile (60% higher), followed by Mexico (51%) and Estonia (34%). Belgium is the only country where income levels are higher outside metropolitan areas.

Within each country, the differences in average disposable income between metropolitan areas are considerable. Mexico has the highest dispersion of income levels across cities, with the average income in Hermosillo being 2.5 times higher than in Orizaba (Figure 4.11). In the United States and Italy, income in the richest metropolitan area (San Francisco and Bologna) was also more than twice as high as in the metropolitan area with the lowest income levels (Hidalgo and Palermo). The metropolitan areas with the highest income compared to the national income are Hermosillo (Mexico, 66%), Santiago (Chile, 53%) and San Francisco (USA, 46%). In contrast, income levels in Hidalgo (USA, 35%), Orizaba (Mexico, 34%), and Palermo (Italy, 32%) were significantly below than the average national income. In the majority of countries, capital cities are the metropolitan areas with the highest income level.

Income levels do not only vary across cities but also differ between different areas of the same city. Income levels in the city core are on average 3% higher than in the respective commuting zone (Figure 4.12). Countries are divided into two groups: a first group where residents in

the core of metropolitan areas are on average richer than in the commuting zone (Mexico, Italy, Chile, Hungary, Portugal, Australia, Denmark, and the United States) and a second group where, on the contrary, residents in the commuting zone are richer (Germany, Sweden, France, the United Kingdom, Estonia, Austria, the Netherlands and Belgium). The gap between the core and the commuting zone is highest for Mexico (51% higher in the core) and Italy (20%) and lowest for Belgium (19% lower in the core than in the commuting zone) and the Netherlands (15%).

Source

See Annex B for details on data sources.

Reference years and territorial level

2016 or latest available year. Estonia, 2017; France, 2015; Germany, 2013.

Further information

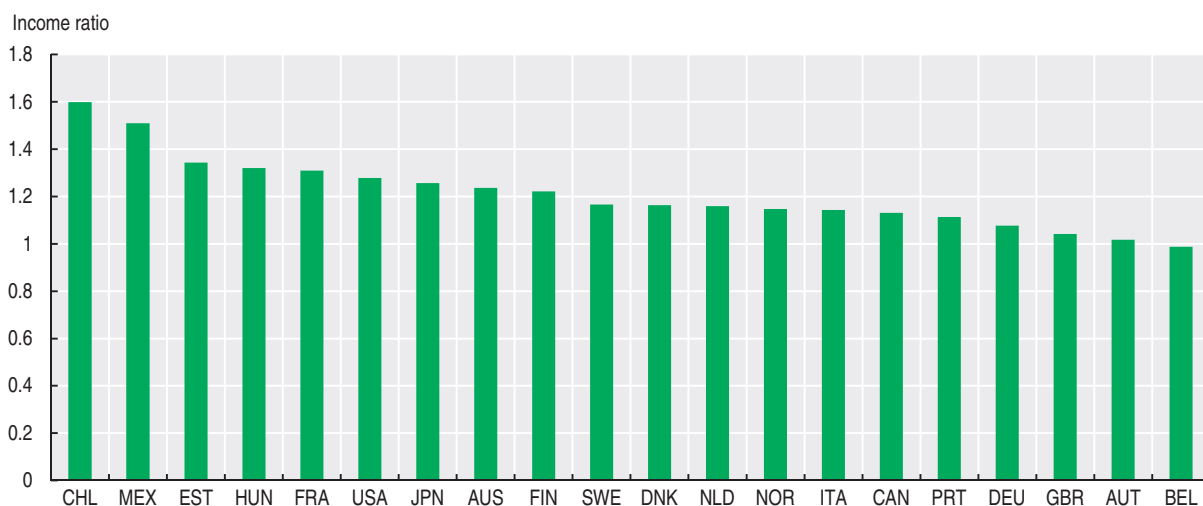
Boulant, J., M. Brezzi and P. Veneri (2016), "Income Levels and Inequality in Metropolitan Areas: A Comparative Approach in OECD Countries", *OECD Regional Development Working Papers*, 2016/06, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jlwj02zz4mr-en>.

OECD (2012), *Redefining "Urban": A New Way to Measure Metropolitan Areas*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264174108-en>.

4. CITIES AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES

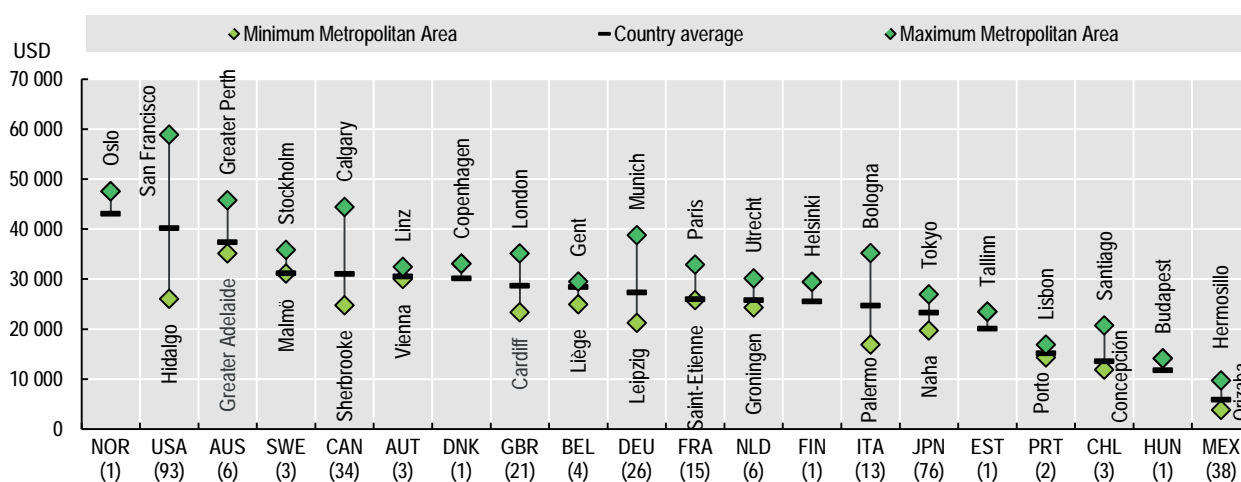
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4.10. Income ratio of metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, by country



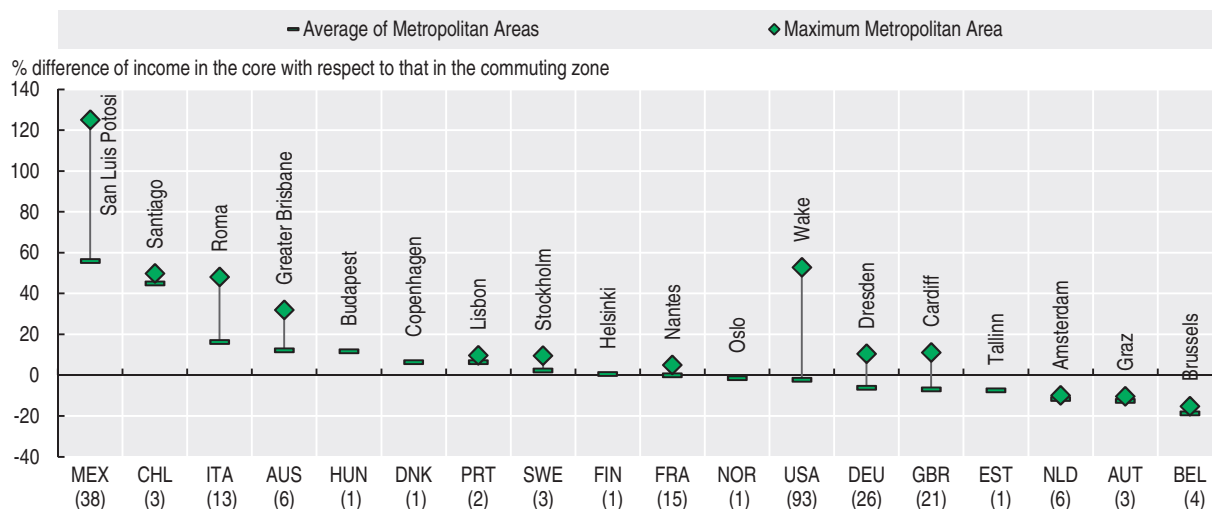
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933818074>

4.11. Household disposable income in metropolitan areas, 2016

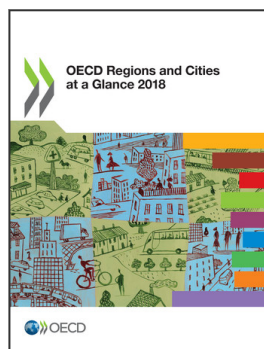


StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933818093>

4.12. Income differences between core and commuting zone, 2016



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933818112>



From:
OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2018

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/reg_cit_glance-2018-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2018), "Household income in metropolitan areas", in *OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/reg_cit_glance-2018-36-en

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