

Q-Step Internship: Manchester in Europe

Internship at the Manchester City Council

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Manchester city council is the political representation of the people of Manchester. Its function's range all the way, from economic, to hous-

ing, to welfare and so on. My Internship was under the Core Performance and Intelligence team.

Objectives

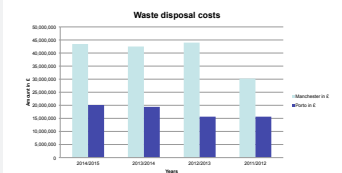
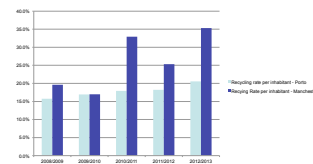
During my internship, under the University of Manchester q-step internship programme of 6 weeks I set out working in the research and innovation department at the Manchester city council on Manchester's position in Europe. Essentially my job was finding, for a variety of topics, how Manchester compared to other European cities and perhaps shed light on undiscovered issues and positive aspect of Manchester on the international context. I was not just a research experience but also a learning one, which would allow me to better understand benchmarking and the, at times, arduous task of finding good reliable data from which to take conclusions

Method

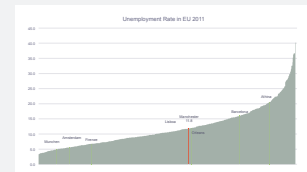
My methodological process involved mostly benchmarking and searching for the available information on a variety of official statistics databases. I selected a number of European cities, within the general European data, and compare it to Manchester. After a while I came to the conclusion that city statistics information was scarce, and had to be content, in some cases, with regional information. Most of the available data used to construct the diagrams and take conclusions was based on EUROSTAT. Other data was mostly based on national or regional official statistics.

Key Findings

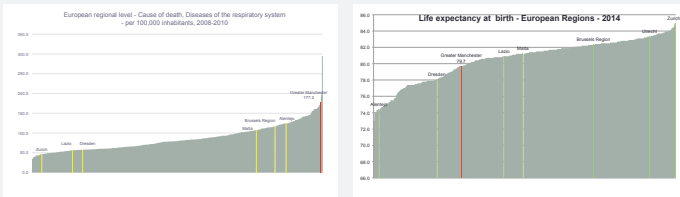
I started by analysing Manchester's recycling efficiency. My main finding was, when comparing it to Porto, I found Manchester's recycling system to be more efficient but also more costly.



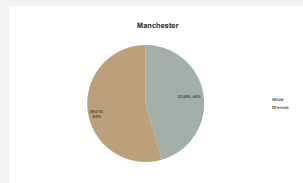
Next topic was employment. The Key interesting finding here was Manchester's unemployment rate being almost the same as Lisbon, capital of one of Europe's economies most affected by the crisis.



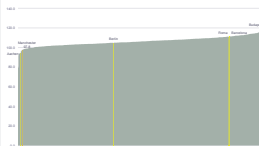
Moving on to the Health comparisons, Manchester is not amongst European cities with high life expectancy and has and amongst the highest in deaths relating to Diseases of the respiratory system, revealing a possible smoking or pollution issue.



When it came to education, the interesting aspect of it was, when compared to the employment data, how although women in Manchester are a majority in higher education in Manchester, they are in a minority in employment.



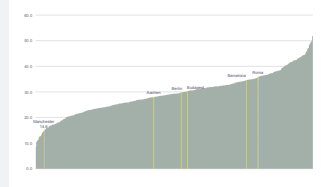
Demographics - Women per 100 men



A gender issue in Manchester was made more evident when, after comparing it to other European cities, I found that Manchester has one of the lowest ratios of women to 100 men in Europe.

The demographic data also revealed another interesting key aspect of Manchester, that it is one of the youngest cities in Europe, having one of the youngest demographics. The old age dependency ratio, out of the data, makes this clear.

Demographics - Old age dependency ratio (population 65 and over to population 20 to 64 years)



Conclusion

The conclusion I arrived at the end is that Manchester is a positive, involved and very prominent European city. This is evident by looking at the data, take for example, the waste collection or the overall satisfaction with the healthcare, or the positive young demographic. Like all other European cities there is room for improvement. It has prominent health issues, adult education, and most prominently of all, in my opinion, a gender issue to address. From the data, I could also see a steady improvement on all areas as well, giving me sound confidence that Manchester will easily overcome the challenges ahead. Benchmarking and finding good statistics proved harder than anticipated. Finding data on cities is very hard, and, on most cases, very bureaucratic. Something that should be improved

throughout all Europe.

It should also be stressed that in a post-Brexit UK, the position of a city, such as Manchester, in Europe is paramount. Manchester is the important northern UK city, it is involved in Europe, and, as we could see from the amount of EU businesses in Manchester, very well connected to the rest of Europe at its economy.

The future relation between the people of the UK and Europe might not lie at a National level, but more at a regional level. Organizations such as the Committee of the Regions have been paramount in developing a decentralised European cooperation. Cooperation to understand the issues that many cities have in common and willingness to solve said issues together at a regional level might be the future of the UK, and Manchester can and, I believe, will play a prominent part in that here.