

# Healthy environment, healthy lives: How the environment influences health and well-being in Europe



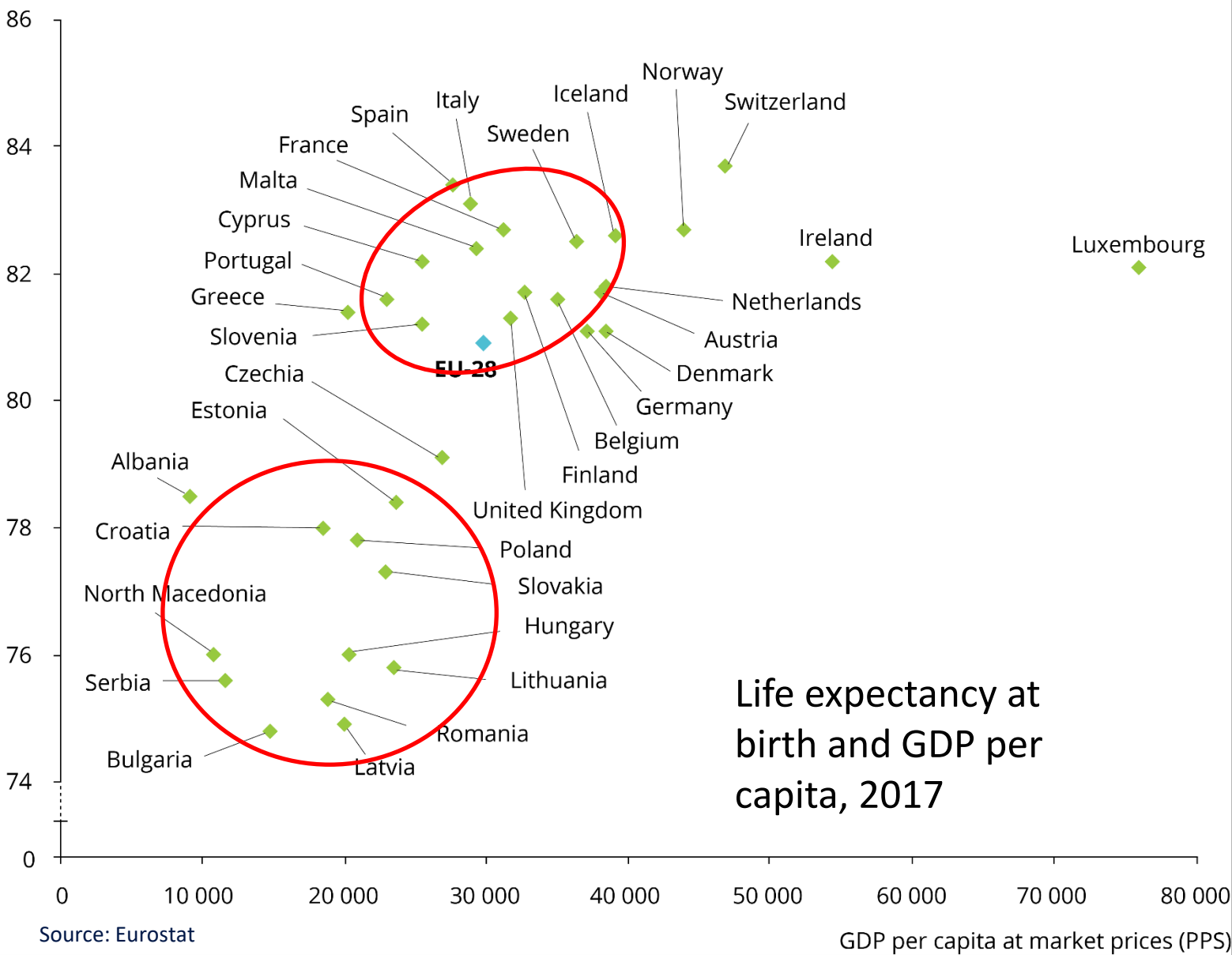
European Environment Agency



Martin Adams | 16 October 2020

# Health inequities across Europe

Life expectancy at birth (years)



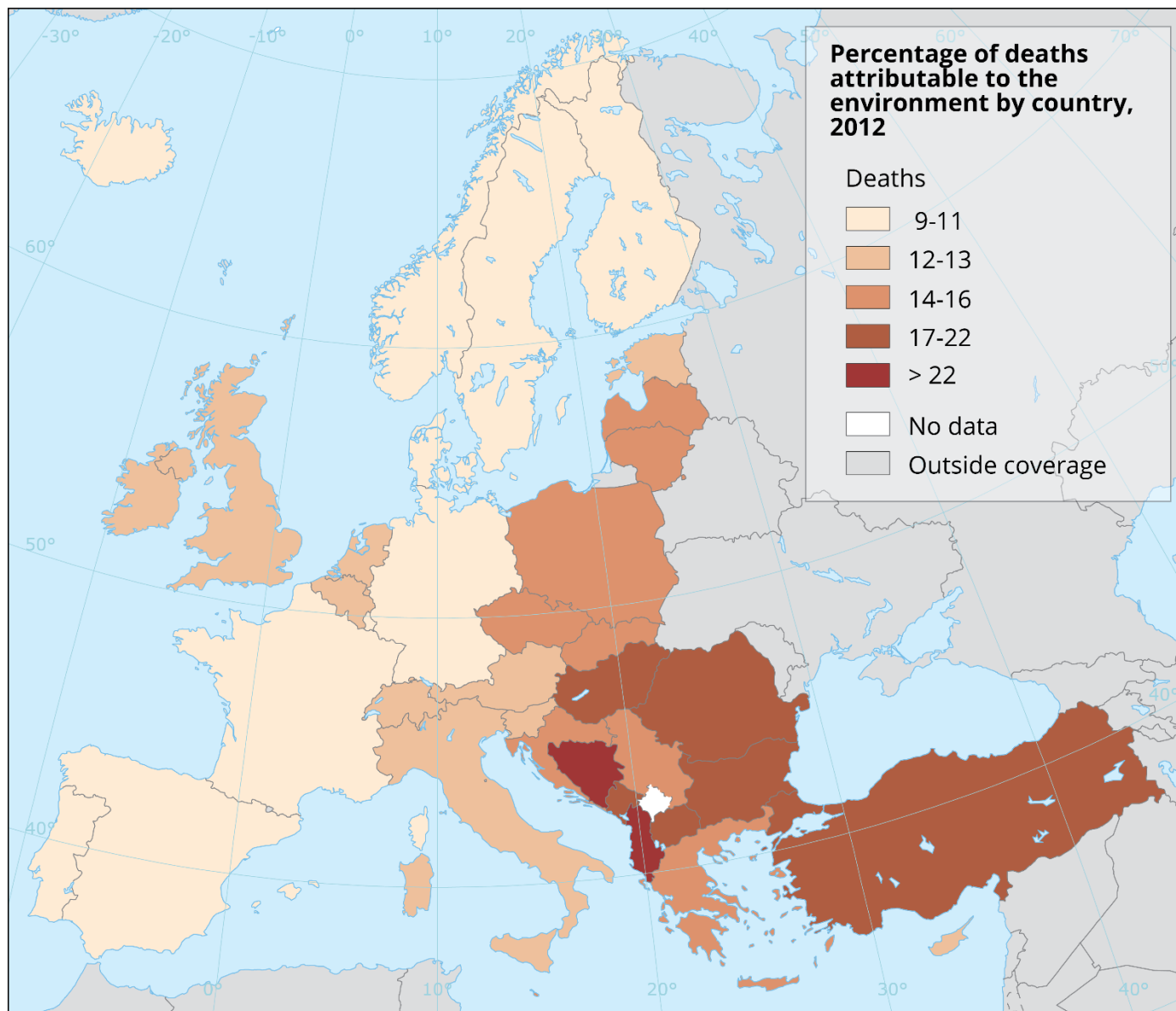
8 years difference in life expectancy across EU Member States

Poorer people live..

- live shorter lives
- fewer healthy life-years and have...
- poorer self-perceived health
- more long-term health problems

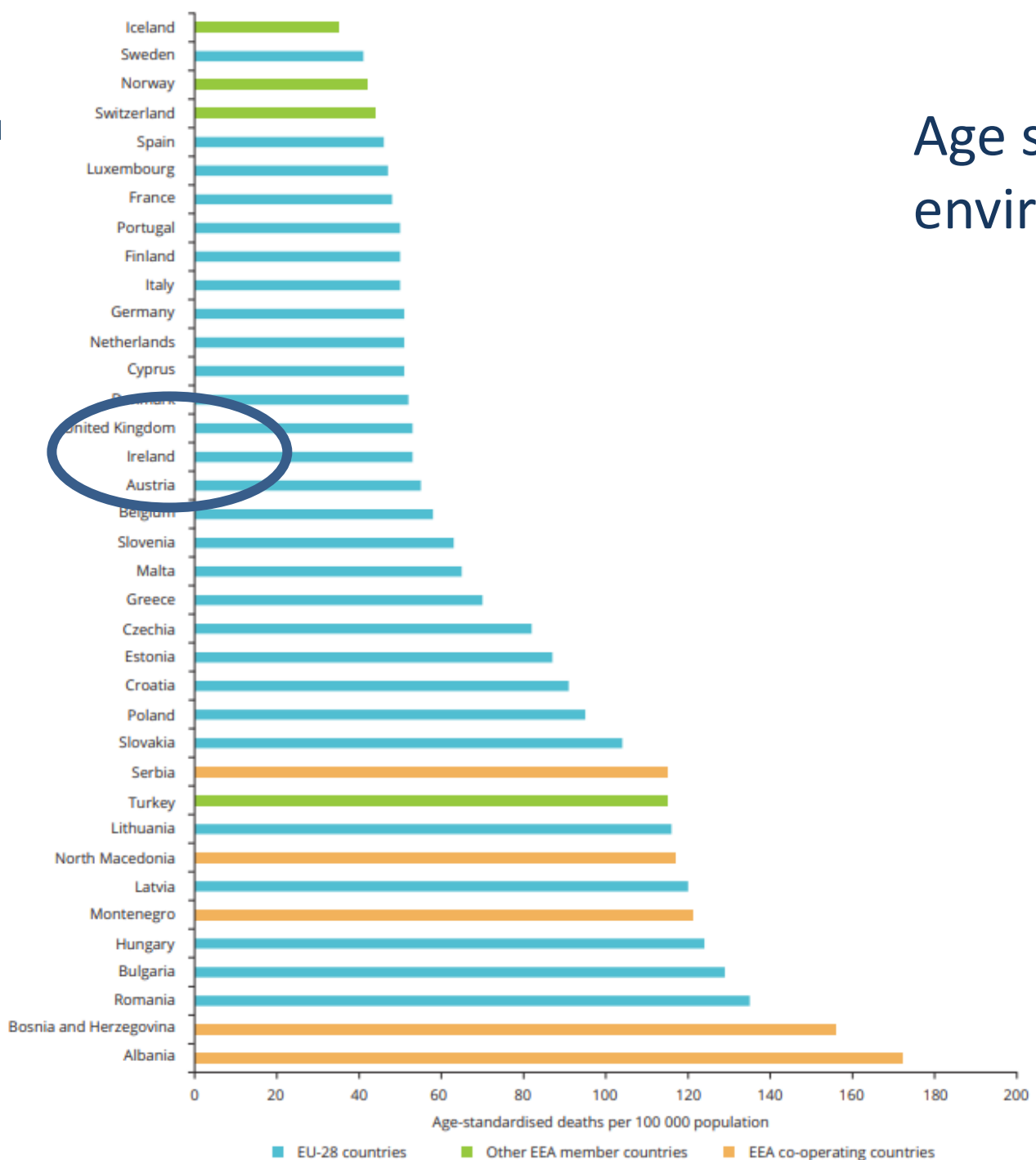


# Deaths driven by environmental pollution

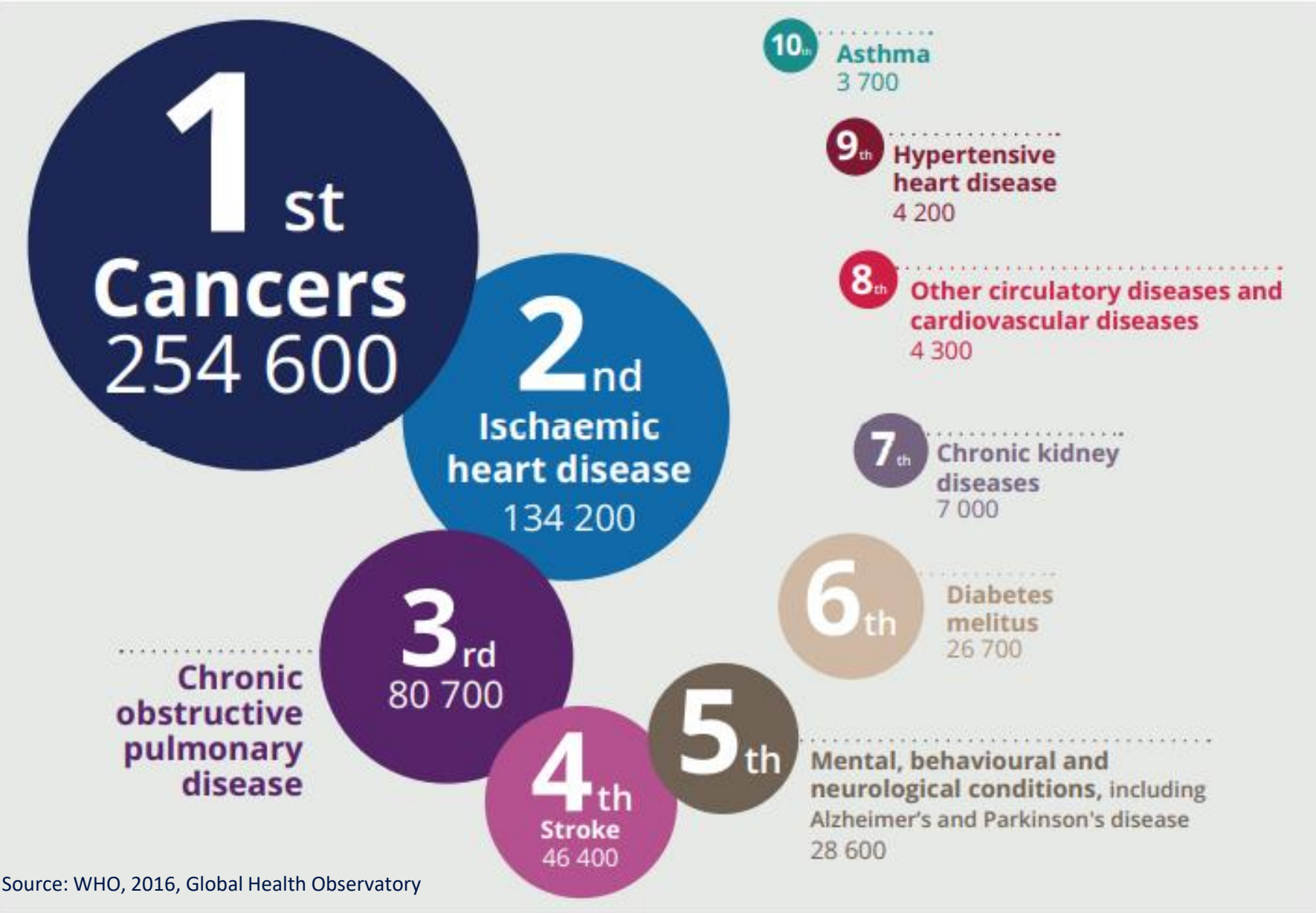


- 1 in 8 deaths is linked to environmental pollution in Europe – 13 %
- Difference across Europe: East and West
- Pollution is associated with
  - 27 % of deaths in Romania
  - 10 % in Denmark and Sweden
  - And beyond the EU... 27 % in Bosnia and Herzegovina

# Age standardised deaths attributable to the environment per 100 000 people, 2012



# 90 % of EU deaths linked to the environment are from non-communicable disease



Top 10  
non-communicable  
diseases linked to  
by environmental  
pollution

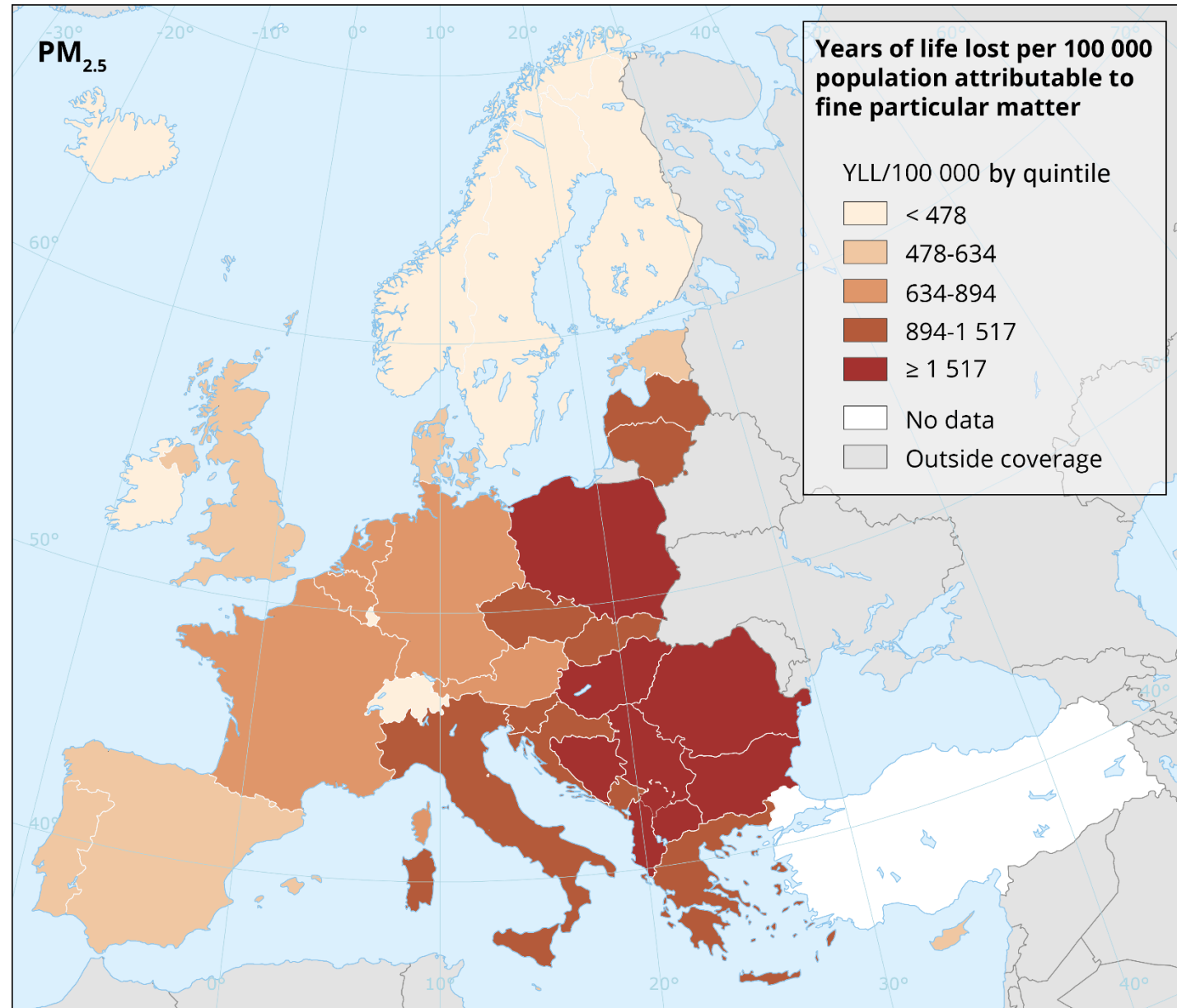
Source: WHO, 2016, Global Health Observatory

# Europe No 1. environmental risk factor - Air pollution

400 000 premature deaths per year in Europe in 2018

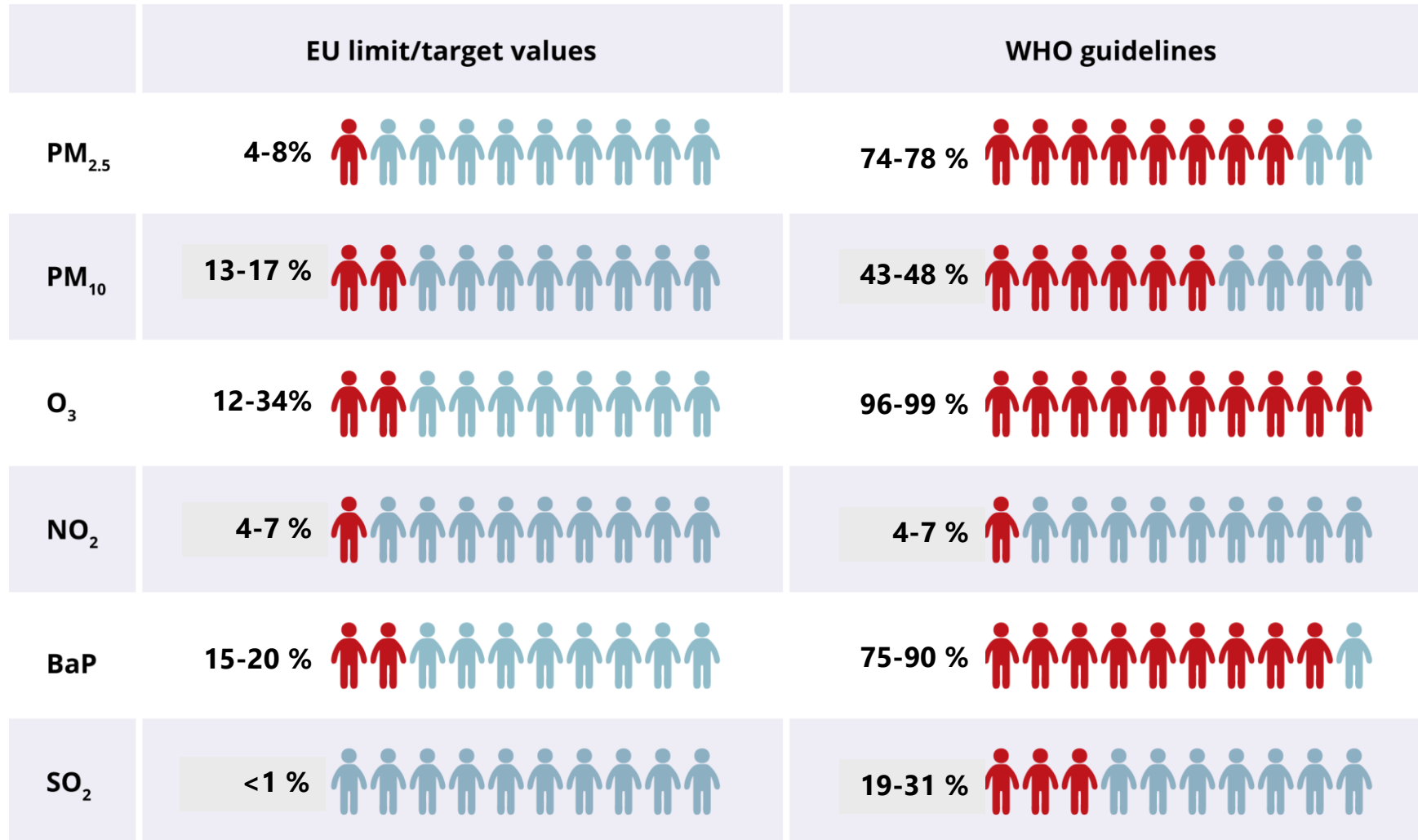
Air pollution is linked to:

- 17 % of deaths from lung cancer
- 12 % of deaths from ischaemic heart disease
- 11 % of deaths from stroke



# Many Europeans are still exposed to harmful levels of air pollution

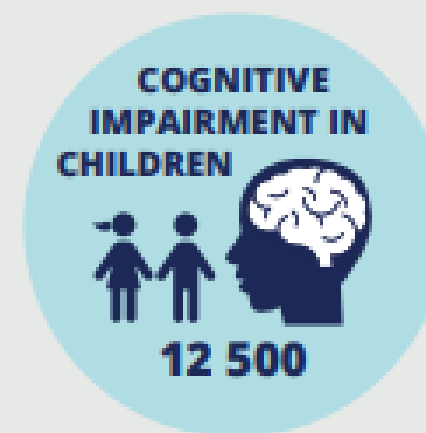
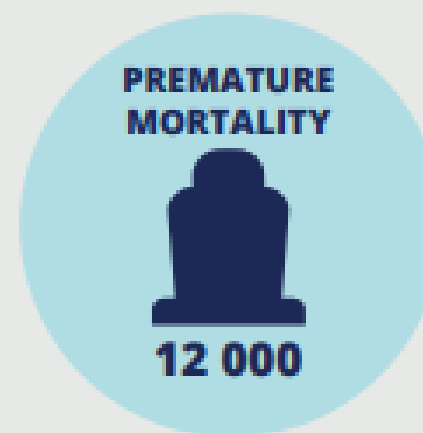
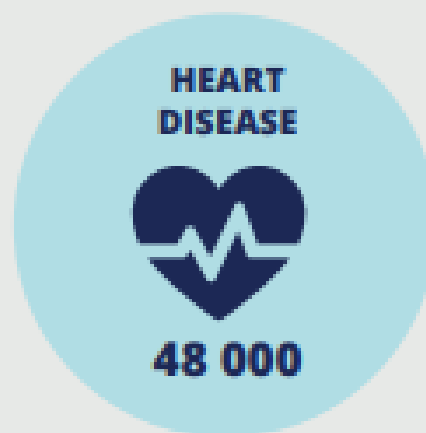
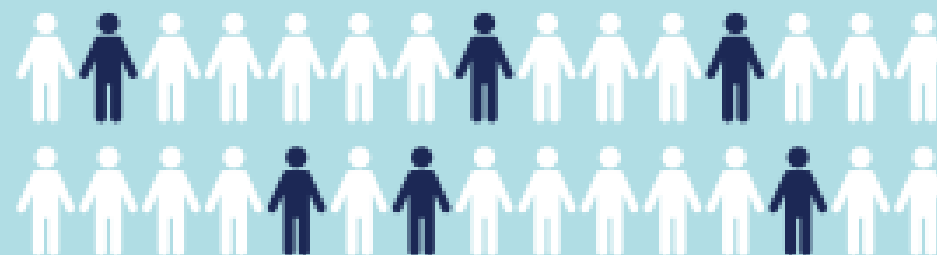
EU urban population exposed to levels of air pollution above EU and WHO reference concentrations 2016 – 2018, according to:



Source: EEA Air Quality in Europe – 2020 report (forthcoming)

# No. 2 environmental risk - noise

20 % of the EU population — one in five people — live in areas where noise levels are considered harmful to health.

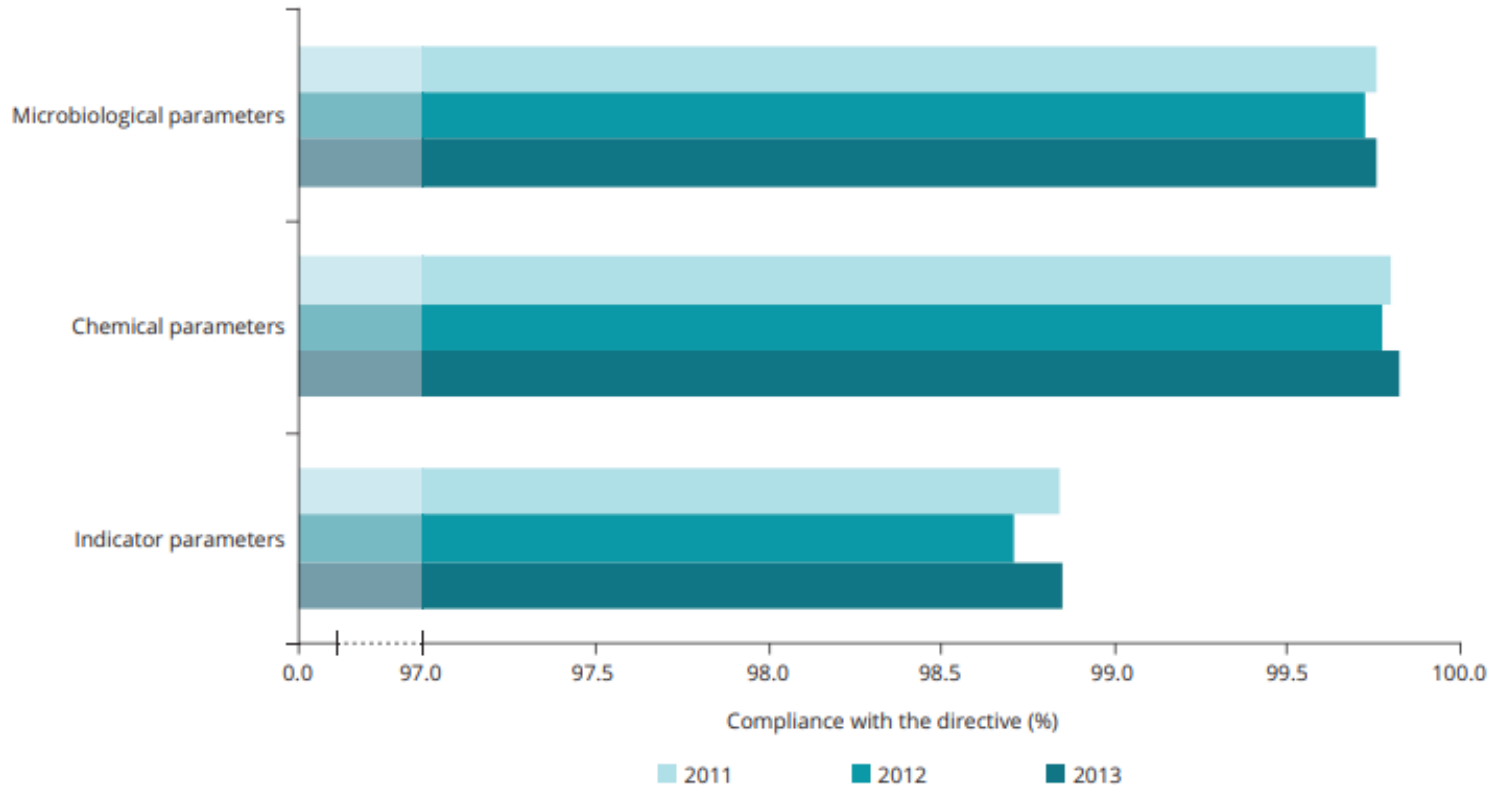




# Climate change impacts and vulnerability



# Drinking water quality is high



High compliance with parameters in the EU

Concerns:

- Small supplies
- Emerging chemicals
- Marginalised communities

# Unknowns and emerging risks

- Chemical exposure causes 3 % of the global disease burden
- Poor indoor air quality contributes to ill-health – with the burden unknown
- Antimicrobial resistance – 25 000 patient dies annually in the EU due to resistant bacteria





# Resilient cities: benefits of green and blue spaces



Parklife: Health and social cohesion



Roof garden: Water management

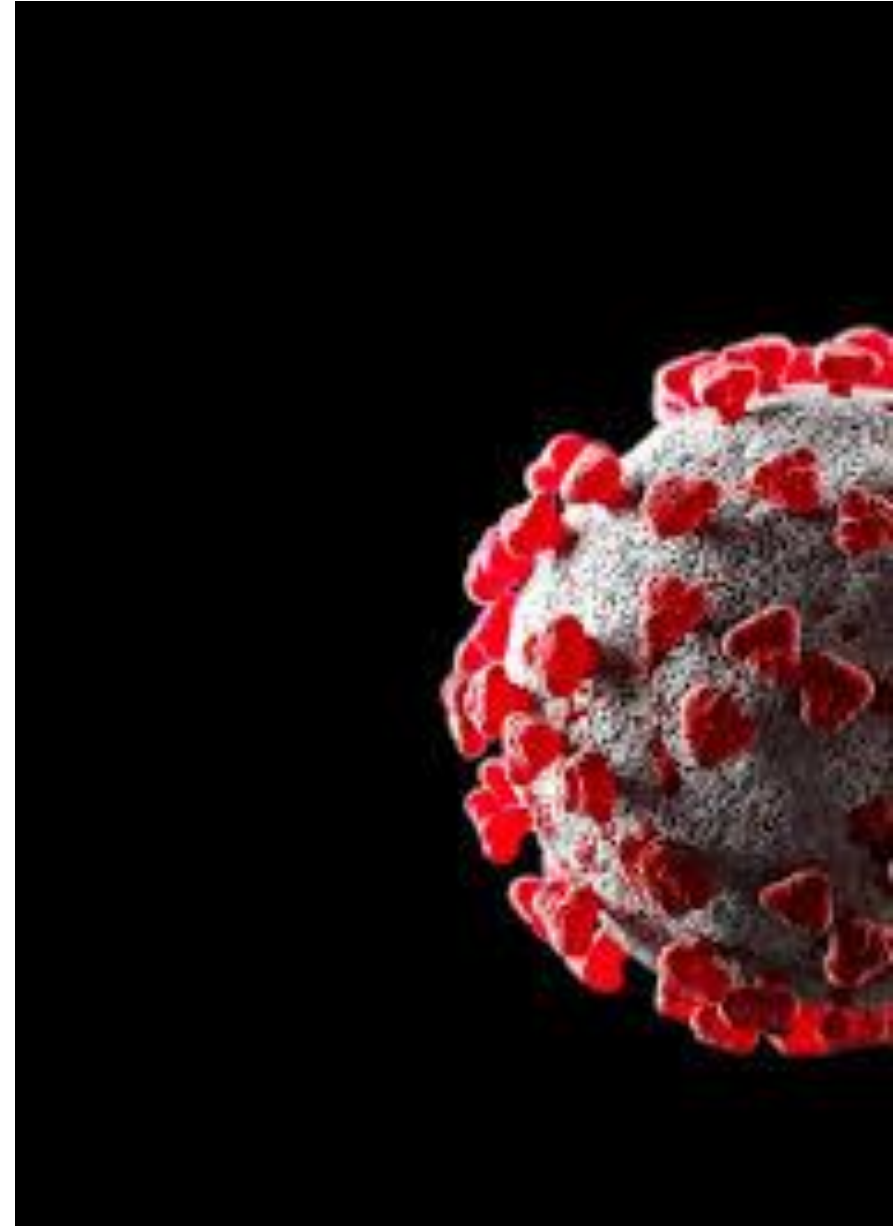


Blue space: Leisure and cooling



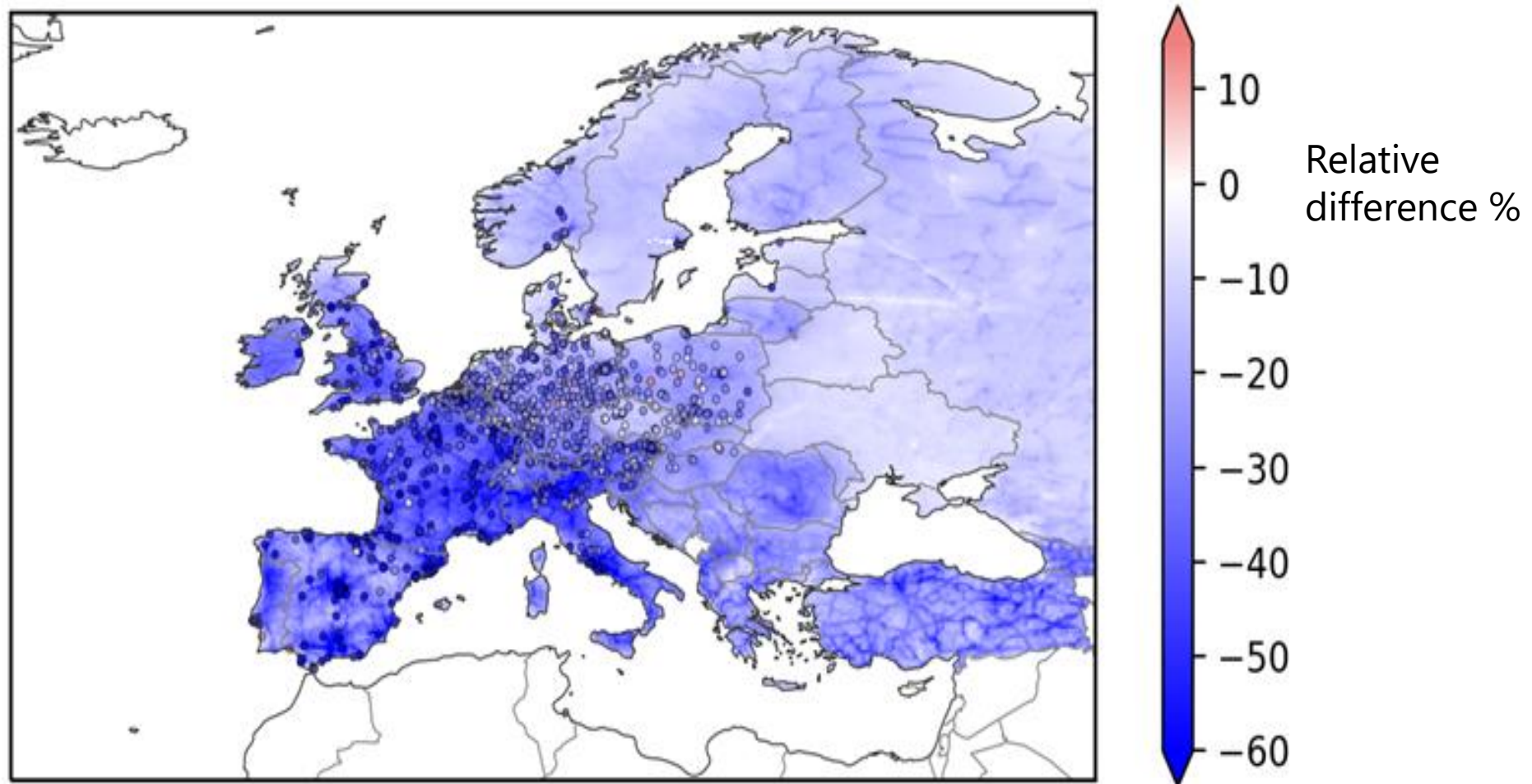
# COVID-19 and environmental health

- Zoonotic disease
- Air pollution may be linked to a higher death rate from COVID-19
- Double burden of ill health and air pollution in disadvantaged communities
- Critical role for WASH – water, sanitation and hygiene
- Waste water monitoring for COVID-19



# Short-term impacts of COVID-19 lock-down measures

April – 2020 Modelling nitrogen dioxide ( $\text{NO}_2$ ) concentrations



# A new policy context: European Green Deal

- First **climate-neutral** continent
- **Zero pollution** strategy
- **Biodiversity** Strategy 2030
- New **Circular Economy** Action Plan
- **Farm to fork** strategy
- **Just transition**
- **Sustainable** European **Investment** Plan
- Future ready economy – new **industrial strategy**





# Investing in nature: win-win-win





Thank you



16 October 2020