

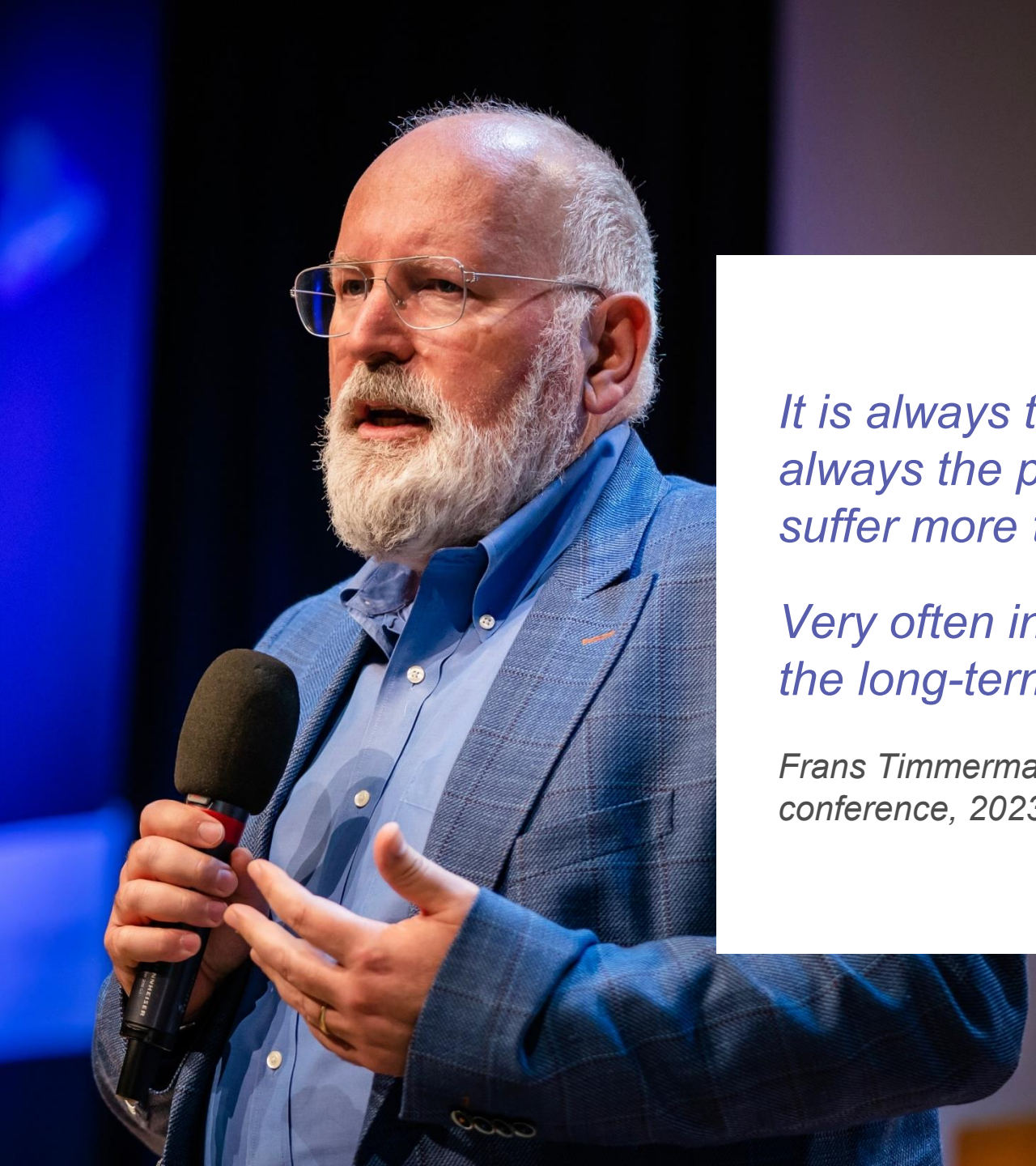
PATRIZIA SULIS

*The Future of Cities policy briefs:
a webinar series*



Inclusive cities fit for crises and long-term challenges

THURSDAY 20 JUNE 2024



It is always the same: when there's a new crisis, it's always the people already in a difficult position that suffer more than anybody else.

Very often in politics [...] the immediate crisis drives out the long-term challenge. This is a luxury we can't afford.

Frans Timmermans at the Mission for Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities conference, 2023

Introduction

- Cities face several challenges, and the magnitude and duration of disruptions are difficult to predict.
- This challenges traditional risk-based management approaches to cope with crises.



Introduction

It is critical to understand how cities can turn into places of resilience and strength, rather than become centres of vulnerabilities.

While a strict universal definition of resilience is lacking, what does resilience and preparedness mean for cities?





Resilience noun

re·sil·ience ri- 'zil-yən(t)s

[1] the capability of a strained body to **recover its size and shape** after deformation caused especially by compressive stress

[2] an ability to **recover from or adjust easily** to misfortune or change

Resilience

A new compass for EU policies:

- The ability to withstand and cope with challenges
- The ability to undergo transitions, in a sustainable, fair, and democratic manner
- A dynamic concept, evolving over time in response to changing decisions, plans and policies.

Crises often affect vulnerable communities disproportionately.



Stressing an inclusive approach to crises response is crucial.



Inclusiveness in urban resilience

- Characteristics of resilience: flexibility, adaptiveness, redundancy.
- In terms of urban planning, practical implications are still vague and implementation varies across cities.
- **Novel crises and emergencies tend to highlight and reveal long existing, underlying problems**



To increase resilience, cities should focus on structural issues such as inequality and socioeconomic disparities, with marginalised communities suffering most from crises.





Inclusive cities fit for crises and long-term challenges

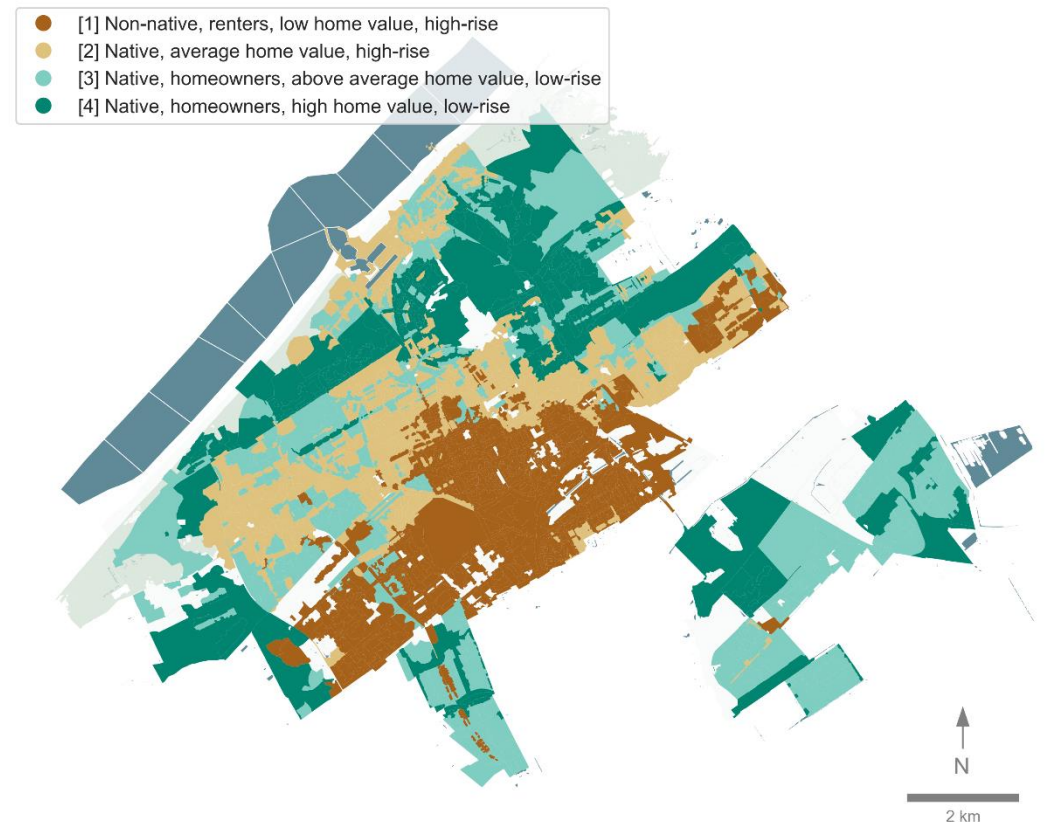
The Future of Cities

This policy brief...

1. Discusses 2 (of the many) long-term **urban challenges** that are periodically highlighted and exacerbated by new crises
2. Offers some **practical suggestions** to develop an inclusive approach to a wider array of challenges
3. Presents **3 case studies from the Netherlands** to offer valuable insights on long-term urban challenges and potential approaches to build resilience and preparedness.

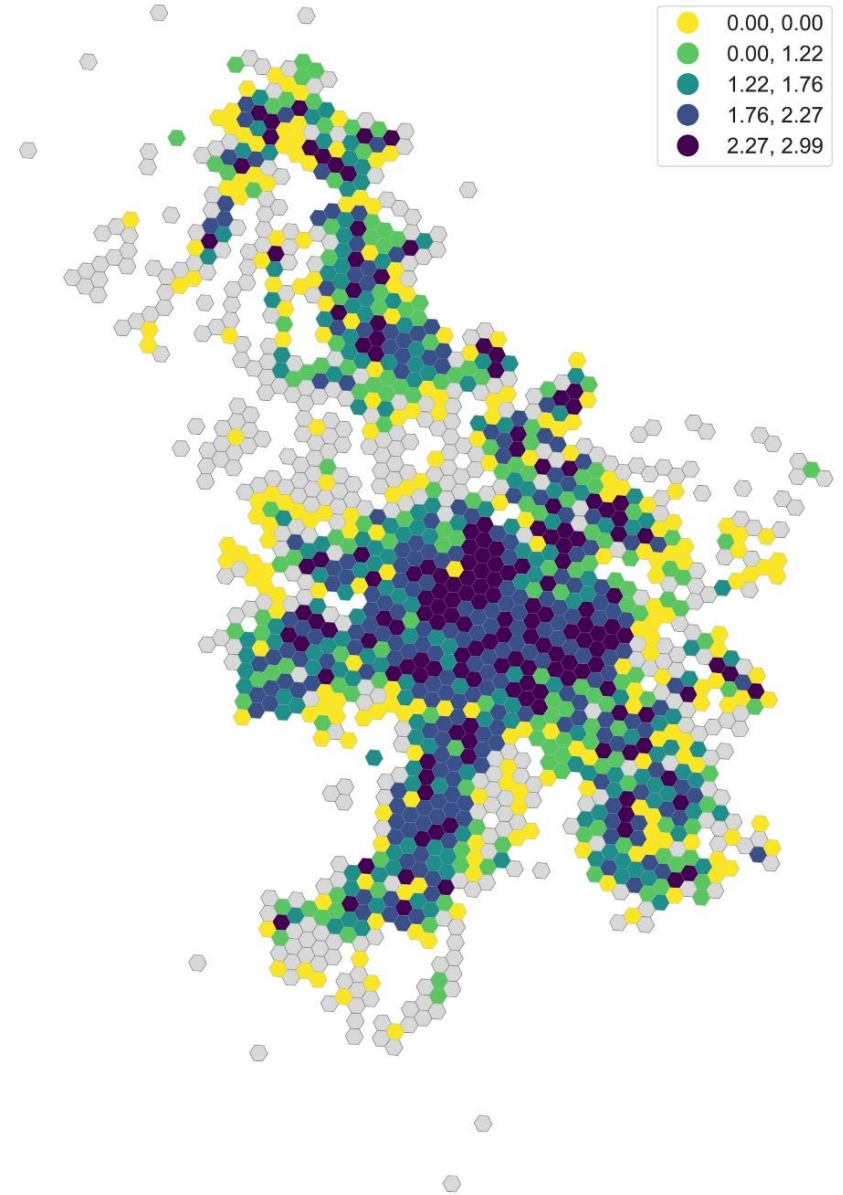
Urban challenges: energy poverty

- People are unable to access or afford sufficient domestic energy services to ensure their **well-being** and **meaningful participation to society**
- A multi-dimensional phenomenon, emerging from a combination of low-income, energy expenses, and poor energy efficiency in buildings
- Addressing energy poverty in cities intersects with **energy transition** and **renovation interventions**



Urban challenges: local accessibility

- Local access to **essential services** is crucial in cities, both from an environmental and social perspective
- Uneven access to amenities can impact citizens' daily routine significantly, forcing them to move across the city for basic daily needs
- The lack of local access to an adequate diversity of urban amenities may lead to **marginalisation** of residents in certain places in the city



Social inclusion in cities



‘**Inclusive Climate Action Rotterdam**’ (ICAR) is a new movement linked to Rotterdam Weather Wise:

- Advocates for a socially oriented approach of the climate crisis
- Strives for **climate justice**
- ICAR divides the term ‘climate justice’ into 4 principles.

[1] Information and communication

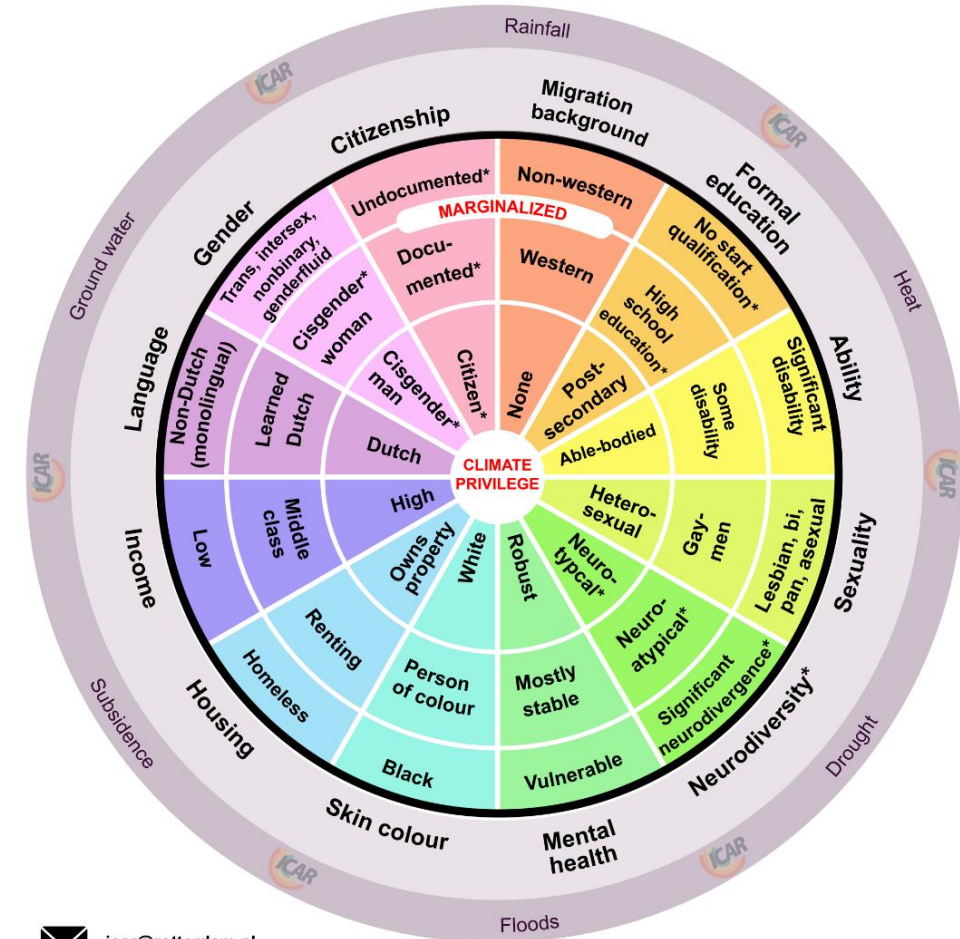
[2] Impact on well-being

[3] Perspective for action

[4] Social exclusion and discrimination

Social inclusion in cities

- The wheel explains the concept of marginalisation
- Provides insights into the diversity of a project team
- Helps identify missing perspectives
- Brings forward perspectives that might not be typically considered



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The way forward: scientific data for an inclusive approach to urban resilience

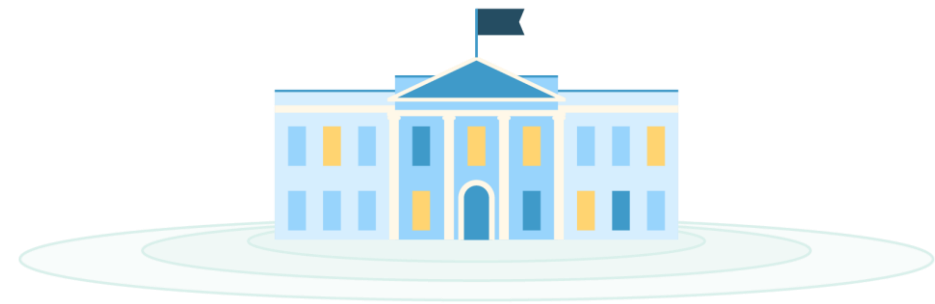
EU Resilience Dashboards...

- helps countries assess their strengths, weaknesses, and ability to make progress towards policy challenges.



Local city governments...

- are better placed to address challenges and inequalities;
- can affect the built environment directly and plan the transformation of urban spaces.





The way forward

- Large amounts of data are continuously collected and produced in cities to study urban geographies of inequalities.
- More and more urban **geographies of distribution** are becoming interrelated with issues of social injustices where resources and opportunities are not equitably distributed.
- A growing interest in **advancing data-driven methodologies** to support sustainability and urban resilience.

The way forward

Data-driven models can help identify **resilience patterns** within historical and socio-spatial data.

For example, understanding how cities responded during previous disruptions, and what can be learned to recover from similar crises effectively.

To ensure resilience in urban systems, decision-makers and urban planners must:

- recognise and address temporal trade-offs and trade-offs between the resilience principles;
- always keep an eye out for the most vulnerable groups in cities.



Conclusion

1. Building resilient cities is a complex, ambitious undertaking.
2. Reflecting on key structural issues of **past crises** can help us build cities that are ready to face crises.
3. An inclusive approach to crisis response is necessary. **All citizens must have a fair chance to weather the literal and figurative storms that lie ahead.**

Download the policy brief

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Thank you!

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