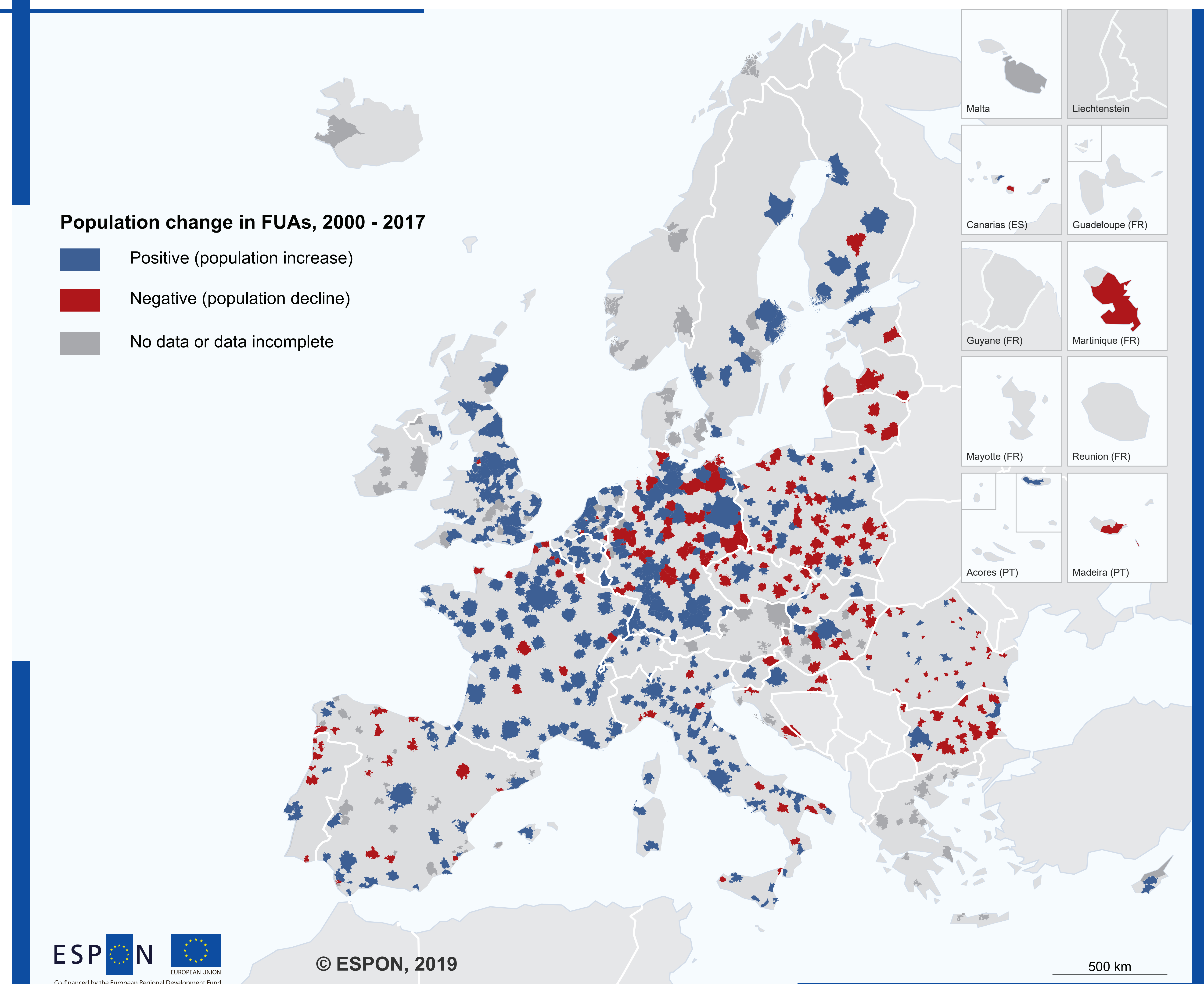


Population change in functional urban areas (FUA), 2000 - 2017



Regional level: FUA (Urban Audit)
Source: ESPON EGTC, 2019
Origin of data: Eurostat Urban Audit, 2019

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Integrated interventions in FUAs support territorial, economic and social cohesion

One in five cities in Europe has faced population losses since 1990. Population change in functional urban areas shows that urban shrinkage is especially pronounced in central and eastern Europe, partly due to labour migration.

In some cases, population ageing and the migration of the young and well-educated indicate a potential long-term decline and shrinkage in the regions they emigrate from. However, for many cities, shrinkage may not imply an overall economic decline, as part of the population moves to the suburbs and keeps working in the city. This points to the important role of a wider territorial perspective on cities' development, in order to harness their potential to support territorial, economic and social cohesion beyond their administrative boundaries.

A functional approach to metropolitan development allows capturing the complex socio-economic characteristics and dynamics, challenges and potential of these territories. To increase the efficiency of policy interventions, national and local policymakers should assess the fields which are most likely to have a cross-jurisdictional impact, substantiating metropolitan approaches. This could support a better integration of local, national and EU funding and an increased urban-rural cooperation. To this end, increasing the uptake of integrated approaches (e.g. ITI, CLLD) and the availability of national and European funding for metropolitan interventions outside the core city are necessary.

Further reading: Addressing Labour Migration Challenges in Europe (ESPON 2019), SPIMA - Spatial Dynamics and Strategic Planning in Metropolitan Areas (ESPON 2018).