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[Review of "The Human atlas of Europe:
A continent united in diversity" by
Dimitris Ballas, Danny Dorling and
Benjamin Henning]

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Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives

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Ballas, Dimitris, Dorling, Danny, and Hennig, Benjamin. ***The Human Atlas of Europe: A Continent United in Diversity***. Chicago, IL: Policy Press, 2017. 188p. \$34.95 US. ISBN 978-1447313540.

The Human Atlas of Europe: A Continent United in Diversity explores Europe's society, culture, economy, politics and environment using a series of maps, infographics and explanatory commentary. The authors note that, "The maps presented in this atlas show just how different the separate countries, regions and great cities of this continent are, but also the ways in which they are often so similar." Countries included are either current European Union members, official potential candidates, or state signatories to agreements such as the European Economic Area or European Monetary Union, which results in Turkey appearing in the atlas but not Russia.

This atlas is organized into a series of sections that include chapters on Population, Wealth & Poverty, Health, Education, Work, Environment, Politics, Identity & Culture, and EU Budget. All chapters include a brief one-page overview and a series of 15-20 statistical indicators for each separate topic. Indicators visualized and explained in Chapter B – Population, for example, include items about refugees and asylum-seekers, people who live in a different country from that of their birth, the geographical distribution of the Roma people, inequalities in life expectancy, etc. Data sources used to create indicators are clearly documented, relatively up-to-date (i.e., 2014-15), and are from reputable international government organizations such as the World Bank, UN, WHO, and Eurostat.

Visualizations included in the atlas are 140+ maps which distinguish this volume from other sources. Co-authors of the atlas are geography professors at European universities who make excellent use of their mapmaking and human geography expertise throughout the volume. Instead of simply reflecting country land areas on their maps, the authors have used novel human cartography techniques to show each country sized in proportion to its population as well as other social statistics. The result of these techniques is a series of sophisticated and visually interesting maps that also retain European country shapes and boundaries. These map types are known as country cartograms, population cartograms, and gridded-population cartograms. Thanks to these innovative methods, the thematic maps appearing in the atlas are effective in displaying a significant amount of statistical information without overwhelming the reader. This makes it convenient for atlas users to get complete overview of a specific statistical indicator at a single glance.

Narrative overviews, tabular statistics and explanatory highlights accompany all visualizations that appear in the atlas. These features are particularly valuable to atlas users as they provide insight into the importance of the information presented. In Chapter I – Identity & Culture, for example, the General Happiness section provides information about the survey instrument (European Values Survey), specific questions asked, and how linguistic issues affect responses to happiness questions. Interestingly, the tabular information containing numerical values for happiness indicates that Netherlands (56.1%) and Iceland (51.1%) had the highest estimated numbers of very happy people. A minor quibble about atlas data tables is that only the values for five highest and five lowest countries are included which limits the utility of the atlas as a statistical reference source. All original data sources are, however, available in the

Notes and Sources section of the atlas for those interested in locating complete statistical information.

Overall, the unique maps and the brief yet high-quality commentaries that accompany them make ***The Human Atlas of Europe*** an excellent resource for undergraduate students seeking current, factual and accessible information about the people of Europe.

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