

CITIES

# CITY LIMITS

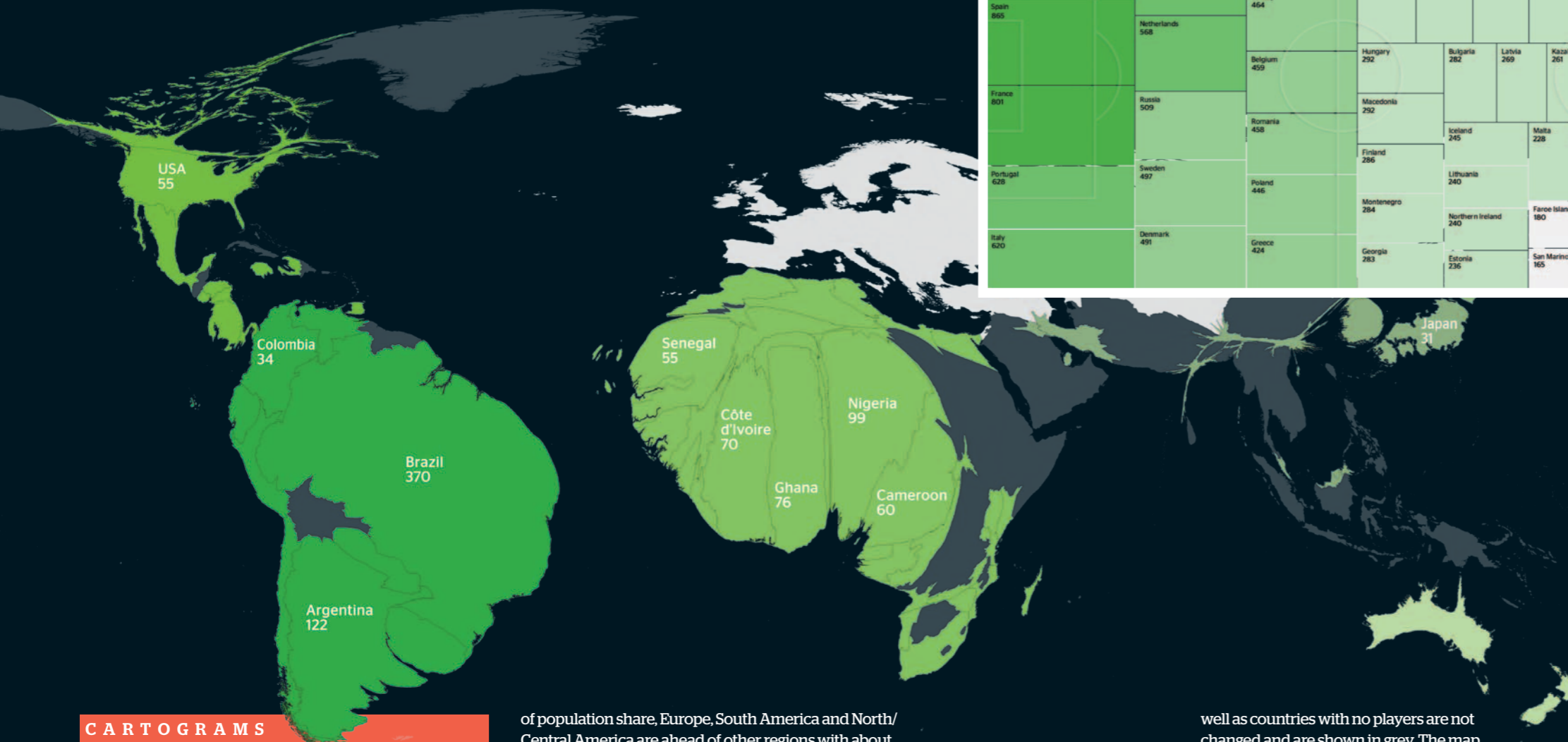
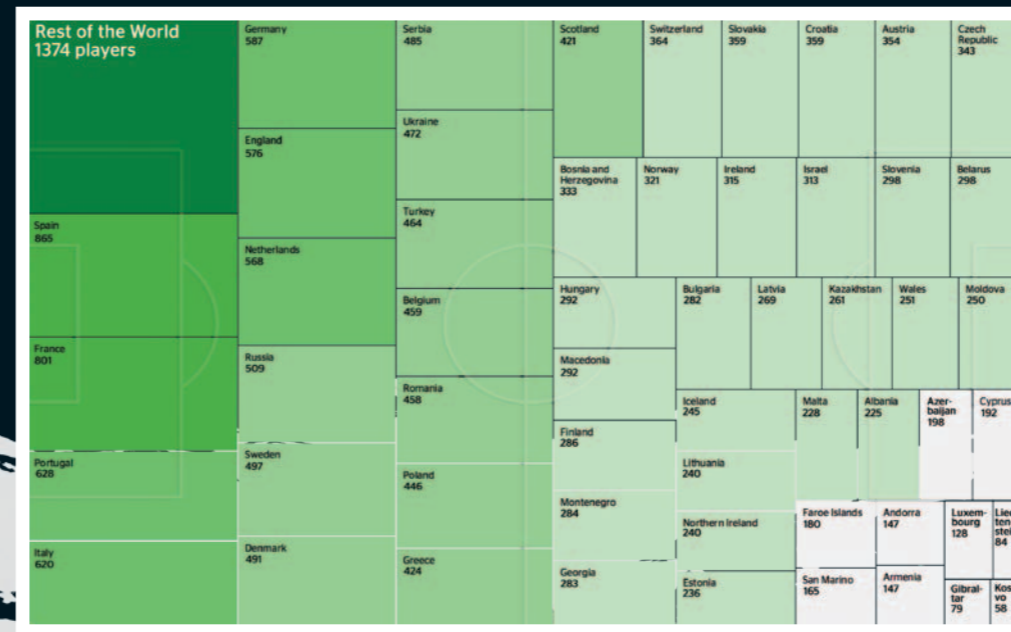
City leaders from around the world gathered last month for the Global Parliament of Mayors. Could cities be set to overtake national governments as key decision makers?

What would happen if mayors ruled the world? We had our first glimpse last month, when mayors from over 60 cities around the world convened in The Hague, Netherlands, for the inaugural Global Parliament of Mayors (GPM), to discuss how our urban hubs can work together to solve the world's challenges.

*If Mayors Ruled the World: Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities*, the inspiration for the GPM, is a 2013 book by political theorist Benjamin Barber. He argues that the days of nation-states being able to significantly influence the world are numbered, and that networks between cities have taken over as the most effective way to create effective global change. 'After a long history of regional success, the nation-state is failing us on the global scale,' he writes. 'The city, always the human habitat of first resort, has in today's globalising world once again become democracy's best hope.'

After a weekend of debate, chaired by Jozias van Aartsen, Mayor of The Hague, delegates agreed upon 'The Hague Global Mayors Call to Action', establishing the GPM as an annual fixture in the calendar. 'It's one thing to have interesting ideas that engage people,' says Barber, 'but it's quite another to move from an idea to the actual institutionalisation of a new global governance body.' The mayors discussed how cities can respond to global challenges - such as climate change and the refugee crisis - emphasising these issues will by far have most impact on cities. 'What happened in the The Hague was not that cities found solutions to these questions,' explains Barber, 'but that they acknowledged it's their responsibility to look for solutions that can be enforced by cities working together.'

'There are well-intentioned moves towards networks of cities trying to address major social problems,' observes Neil Lee, Assistant Professor of Economic Geography at the London School of Economics. 'This is partly driven by dissatisfaction with national government, but it also reflects the growing economic power of cities. The aim is to share best practice in areas of importance, but also to move forward the policy agendas urban policymakers think are important. Given that there has been a global trend towards devolution of powers to sub-national government, some of these agendas might be quite significant in the future.'



CARTOGRAMS

# SPORTS REPORT

BY BENJAMIN HENNIG

Football is a truly global phenomenon. Statistics about real levels of support are problematic, but there are estimates of up to 3.5 billion fans of football globally. A study conducted in 2006 by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), which represents 211 members as the global governing body of football, estimated 270 million people being active in the sport worldwide. FIFA's data give a rough idea of football's global importance and distribution. From the statistics published, Asia emerged as the biggest player with 85 million footballers. Europe had 62 million, Africa 46 million, North and Central America had 43 million, South America 27 million, and Oceania 0.5 million. In terms

of population share, Europe, South America and North/Central America are ahead of other regions with about seven per cent of their respective populations. European football remains the most relevant globally when it comes to the revenue of its national sports leagues. England, Germany, Spain, Italy and France (with Monaco) have the most profitable football leagues. This makes the European administrative body, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) perhaps the most important of the six continental confederations that are part of FIFA. UEFA consists of 55 national members. According to the most recent statistics (from 2016), 20,344 players are currently participating in UEFA competitions. Here, geography plays an important role in understanding the global dynamics of football. European football leagues see significant inner-European flows of talent into the most prestigious leagues. But being such an important player internationally, 1,374 players from outside the UEFA countries compete in UEFA tournaments. By comparison, the largest single national representation from within Europe is that of Spain with 865 players. It should be noted that these numbers only count those in the European competitions, rather than all players in national leagues. This month's cartogram shows this share of international players in UEFA competitions. Each country outside UEFA is resized proportional to the number of players from there (the ten largest are labelled along with their respective number of players). Countries that are members of UEFA as

well as countries with no players are not changed and are shown in grey. The map shows how dominant African and South American countries are in these flows of football migration into Europe. In addition, a 'treemap' visualises the overall geographical distribution of all players in UEFA competitions by country. It uses nested rectangles ordered by absolute size to display the share of players from each country. It is similar to early forms of cartograms, but does not include the geographical location in its display in order to give the hierarchical structure more prominence. In the European-wide distribution of players it is interesting to observe that despite large differences in the overall populations, the numbers of those who compete at European level seem much closer to each other. The largest football nations do have the largest numbers, but with much smaller gaps to the smaller nations. England, for example, has only 2.4 times as many players than Iceland in UEFA competitions, even if it has a population 164 times larger. Benjamin Hennig (@geoviews) is Assistant Professor in Geography, University of Iceland and Honorary Research Associate in the School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford. He is part of the Worldmapper project and is author of [www.viewsoftheworld.net](http://www.viewsoftheworld.net). See Dossier (page 32) for an in-depth look at the role football plays in the world of modern-day people trafficking.