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# Unprivileged groups are less served by green cooling services in major European urban areas

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### **Abstract**

Heat stress is the leading climate-related cause of premature deaths in Europe. Major heatwaves have struck Europe recently and are expected to increase in magnitude and length. Large cities are particularly threatened due to the urban morphology and imperviousness. Green spaces mitigate heat, providing cooling services through shade provision and evapotranspiration. However, the distribution of green cooling and the population most affected are often unknown. Here we reveal environmental injustice regarding green cooling in 14 major European urban areas. Vulnerable residents in Europe are not concentrated in the suburbs but in run-down central areas that coincide with low-cooling regions. In all studied areas, lower-income residents, tenants, immigrants and unemployed citizens receive below-average green cooling, while upper-income residents, nationals and homeowners experience above-average cooling provision. The fatality risk during extreme heatwaves may increase as vulnerable residents are unable to afford passive or active cooling mitigation.

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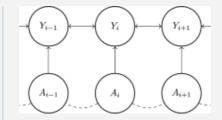
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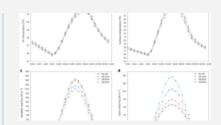
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### **Data availability**

The model inputs used in this study and the resultant maps are publicly available on the original open access source (Extended Data Table 1). The EC measurements used to validate the model should be requested for each location separately. The social indicators are available at the ArcGIS Living Atlas of the World under the Esri agreement or at the national census bureau of each country. Esri provides the standardization and redistribution of the indicators in granulated points from the sources: Michael Bauer Research GmbH (EU), Nexiga (DE), AIS and Instituto Nacional de Estadistica (Spain) and 4 orange (the Netherlands). The green cooling simulations and the 10-m-resolution GCoS maps for all functional urban areas are available via Zenodo at <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10708300">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10708300</a> (ref. 69) Functional urban areas from Global Human Settlement Layer (GHSL-FUA)68 used to define the urban areas is available at <a href="https://jeodpp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ftp/jrc-opendata/GHSL/GHS\_STAT\_UCDB2015MT\_GLOBE\_R2019A/V1-2/">https://jeodpp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ftp/jrc-opendata/GHSL/GHS\_STAT\_UCDB2015MT\_GLOBE\_R2019A/V1-2/</a> (last accessed 4 April 2023).

## **Code availability**

The SCOPE model (2.0) code for MATLAB (R2018b or higher) is available at ref.  $\frac{70}{}$ . The R package to download, preprocess the input data and run the SCOPE model is available by rSCOPE (2.0) $\frac{71}{}$  at <a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6204580">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6204580</a>. The code to calculate and map the GCoS is available at <a href="https://github.com/AlbyDR/GCoS">https://github.com/AlbyDR/GCoS</a> (<a href="https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10708300">https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10708300</a>) $\frac{69}{}$ .

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#### Contributions

A.D.R., M.F., S.V. and B.K. designed the overall research goals and aims. B.M., C.H., F.M., G.-J.S., N.C., G.N., B.G., L.J., A.D.R. and M.F. were responsible for data selection

and preprocessing (EC data, forcing data and socioeconomic indicators, respectively). A.D.R. conducted the data simulations, analysis and paper draft preparation. The paper received inputs about the urban areas and their climatological characteristics from B.G., B.K., B.M., C.H., F.M., G.-J.S., G.N., J.F.B., L.J., N.C. and S.V. All authors discussed the results and contributed to reviewing and editing the final version of the paper.

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### **Ethics declarations**

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

### **Peer review**

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### **Extended data**

## **Extended Data Fig. 1 ET model validation per EC towers location.**

Model validation of ET per month and hourly average for each urban area with EC towers measurements – 2019/2021. Note: The values up to six hours after a rain event were excluded.

# <u>Extended Data Fig. 2 Spatial distribution of GCoS at different scales in</u> Berlin.

GCoS distribution at a neighbourhood scale in Berlin (a), and at a 10 m resolution in a central area (b and c). Background image source (b and c): Leaflet | Tiles © Esri – Source: Esri, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, GeoEye, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, UPR-EGP, and the GIS User Community.

Extended Data Table 1 Model inputs and data sources used to simulate ET and soil temperature from SCOPE

Extended Data Table 2 Model accuracy based on hourly ET for the cities with EC tower measurements – 2019-2021

### **Supplementary information**

## **Supplementary Information**

Supplementary maps, Figs. 1–14 and Table 1.

## **Reporting Summary**

### Source data

## Source Data Figs. 4-6

Statistical source data (Pearson correlation for all indicators and urban areas used in the paper).

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