

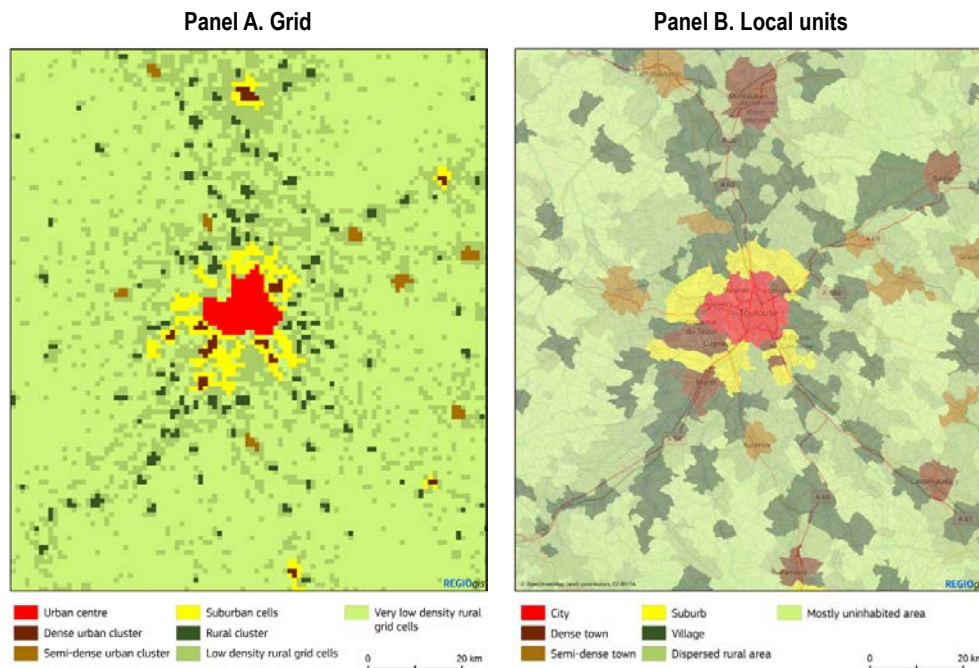
Annex A. Degree of urbanisation classification

The Degree of Urbanisation was designed to create a simple and neutral method that could be applied in every country in the world. It relies primarily on population size and density thresholds applied to a population grid with cells of 1 by 1 km. The different types of grid cells are subsequently used to classify small spatial units, such as municipalities or census enumeration areas (see Figure A.1 for an example). The Degree of Urbanisation was endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2020.¹

The Degree of Urbanisation classifies the entire territory into:

- Cities, with a population of at least 50 000 in contiguous grid cells with a density of at least 1 500 inhabitants per km².
- Dense towns, with a population between 5 000 and 50 000 in contiguous grid cells with a density of at least 1 500 inhabitants per km².
- Semi-dense towns, with a population of at least 5 000 in contiguous cells with a density of at least 300 inhabitants per km² and are at least 2 km away from the edge of a city or dense town.
- Suburbs, with most of their population in contiguous cells with a density of at least 300 inhabitants per km² that are part of a cluster with at least 5 000 inhabitants but are not part of a town.
- Villages, with between 500 and 5 000 inhabitants in contiguous cells with a density of at least 300 inhabitants per km².
- Dispersed rural areas, with most of their population in grid cells with a density between 50 and 300 inhabitants per km².
- Mostly uninhabited areas, with most of their population in grid cells with a density of less than 50 inhabitants per km².

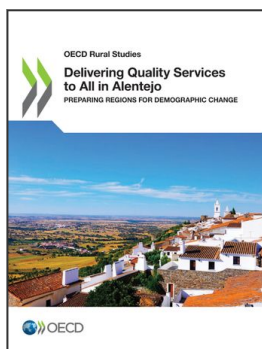
Figure A.1. Degree of urbanisation grid classification around Toulouse, France



For the analysis in this document, these categories are collapsed into four categories: 1) sparse rural areas (composed of mostly uninhabited areas and dispersed rural areas); 2) villages; 3) towns and suburbs; and 4) cities.

Note

¹ European Commission/ILO/FAO/OECD/UN-Habitat/World Bank (2020), “A recommendation on the method to delineate cities, urban and rural areas for international statistical comparisons”, Statistical Commission background document, 51th session, 3-6 March 2020. Items for discussion and decision: demographic statistics. Available at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/BG-Item3j-Recommendation-E.pdf>



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