



# Urban areas in Europe: a new definition and new land use data

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# New definition of urban areas

- Joint EC-OECD harmonised definition
- Developed together OECD-REGIO-EUROSTAT-JRC
- Validated by the national statistical institutes
- Will be include as an official spatial definition by Eurostat
- New city data collection will be published in summer 2013
- Used since January 2012 in surveys such Labour Force Survey and SILC

# Characteristics

- **Urban centres:** clusters of high-density raster cells
- **Cities:** LAU2 units with majority of their population in urban centre
- **Greater cities:** clusters of LAU2s where city is underbound compared to the urban centre
- **Metropolitan areas or Larger Urban Zones:** city + commuting zone
- **Metropolitan regions:** NUTS3 approximations of LUZs

# Defining urban areas in Europe

Three levels of urban areas based on population distribution and commuting

## Grid level

A classification of each one of 1 km<sup>2</sup> using criteria of population density and contiguity. Where available, the population distribution is derived from registers. Otherwise, it is derived from local (LAU2) population figures.



Comparison with national statistics and with population with a density of at least 1,000 inh./km<sup>2</sup> and a minimum of 50,000 inhabitants



Urban centres > 50 000 inh.

## LAU2 level

A classification of local administrative units (LAU2) based on the share of population living in urban centres and the share of population commuting to a city.



The share of work in the surrounding area



A new 5% of population remain after urban

Commuting zones

Cities

Larger urban zones

## NUTS 3 level

A mapping of NUTS 3 regions based on the share of regional population living in a city and its commuting zone (i.e. Larger Urban Zone) of more than 250,000 inhabitants.



Non-metro regions



Metro regions

These proposals have been developed by DG Regional and Urban Policy in cooperation with DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Council, DG Joint Research Centre and ECIS.

Data sources: Eurostat, EC, ITC, national statistical institutes, ISTAT.

For more information:

- European Urban Manifesto (2016) <http://ec.europa.eu/urban-manifesto/>
- EU Urban Agenda (2019) <http://ec.europa.eu/urban-manifesto/>
- Cities: Shaping our future (2016) <http://ec.europa.eu/urban-manifesto/>

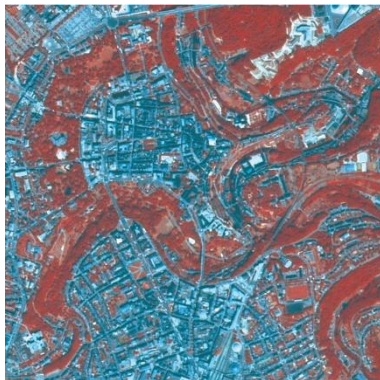
## More information

- Regional focus: "Cities in Europe - The new OECD-EC definition" by Dijkstra & Poelman  
[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/focus/2012\\_01\\_city.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/focus/2012_01_city.pdf)
- "Territorial typologies for European cities and metropolitan regions"  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Territorial typologies for European cities and metropolitan regions](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Territorial_typologies_for_European_cities_and_metropolitan_regions)
- New OECD webpage:  
<http://measuringurban.oecd.org/#>

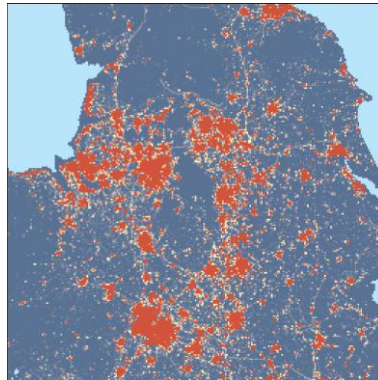
# The Urban Atlas: harmonised and detailed land use data

- A Copernicus (GMES) land monitoring service
- Comparable, high-resolution land use datasets for major European cities and surroundings (year 2006), based on:

Satellite  
imagery



Imperviousness  
(soil sealing)

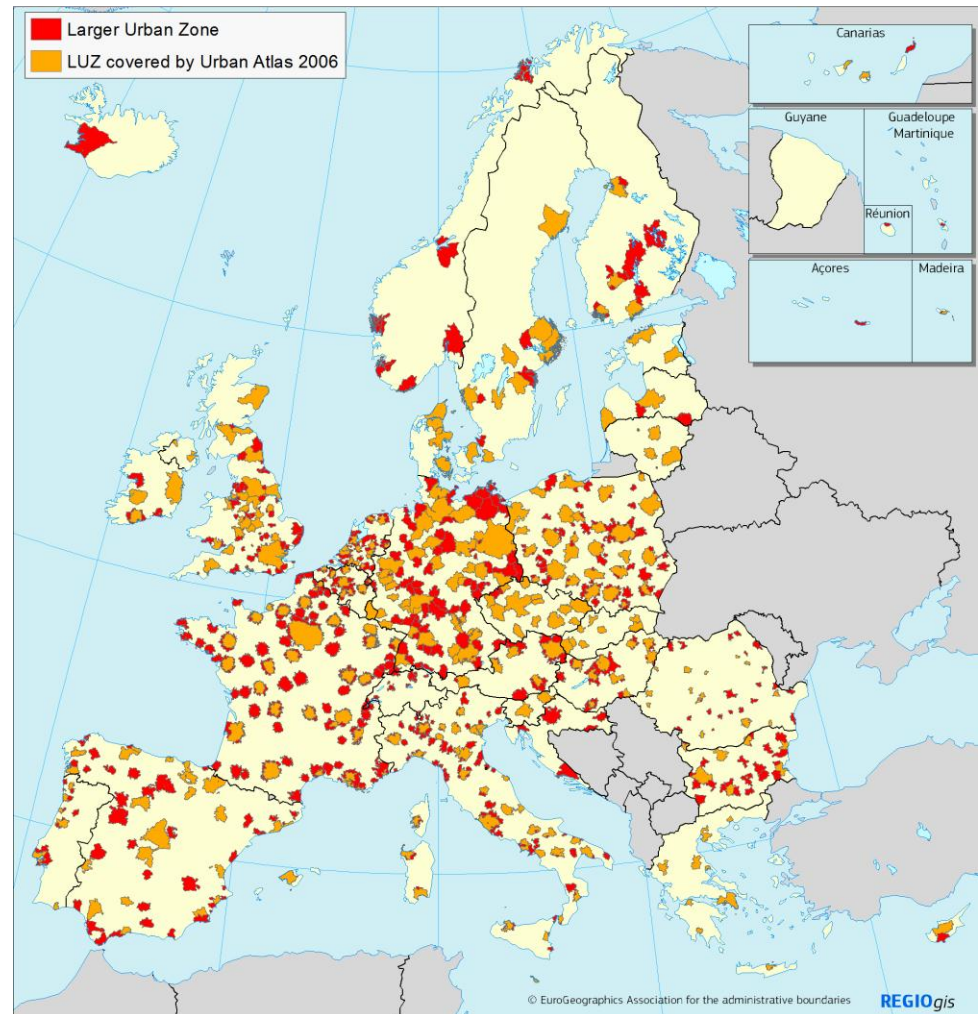


Road  
network



# Urban Atlas 2012

- More cities: revised and extended definition of Urban Audit cities and larger urban zones
- Also including cities in Croatia and EFTA countries



# Features of Urban Atlas 2012

- Extended nomenclature for 2012 layer
  - More thematic detail in non-urban classes
- New layer based on 2012 imagery
- Revised 2006 datasets
  - Extent adjusted to new LUZ boundaries
- Change layer 2006-2012



## More information

- Datasets are freely downloadable from the EEA website:  
<http://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/urban-atlas>
- + Technical details on the classification in the mapping guide
- Map viewer:  
<http://eyeonearth.org/templates/eoebasicviewer/index.html?appid=30e92becacba48cf9d9f1ca8b9f1545a>
- New datasets 2012 forthcoming from Autumn 2013 onwards (check EEA website)