UN Regional Training Workshop on Measuring SDG Indicators through Population and Housing Census and Civil Registration Data, ESCWA, 17-19 November 2020

Overview of the people-based definition of cities and rural areas for international statistical comparison

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KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION BRANCH

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Outline

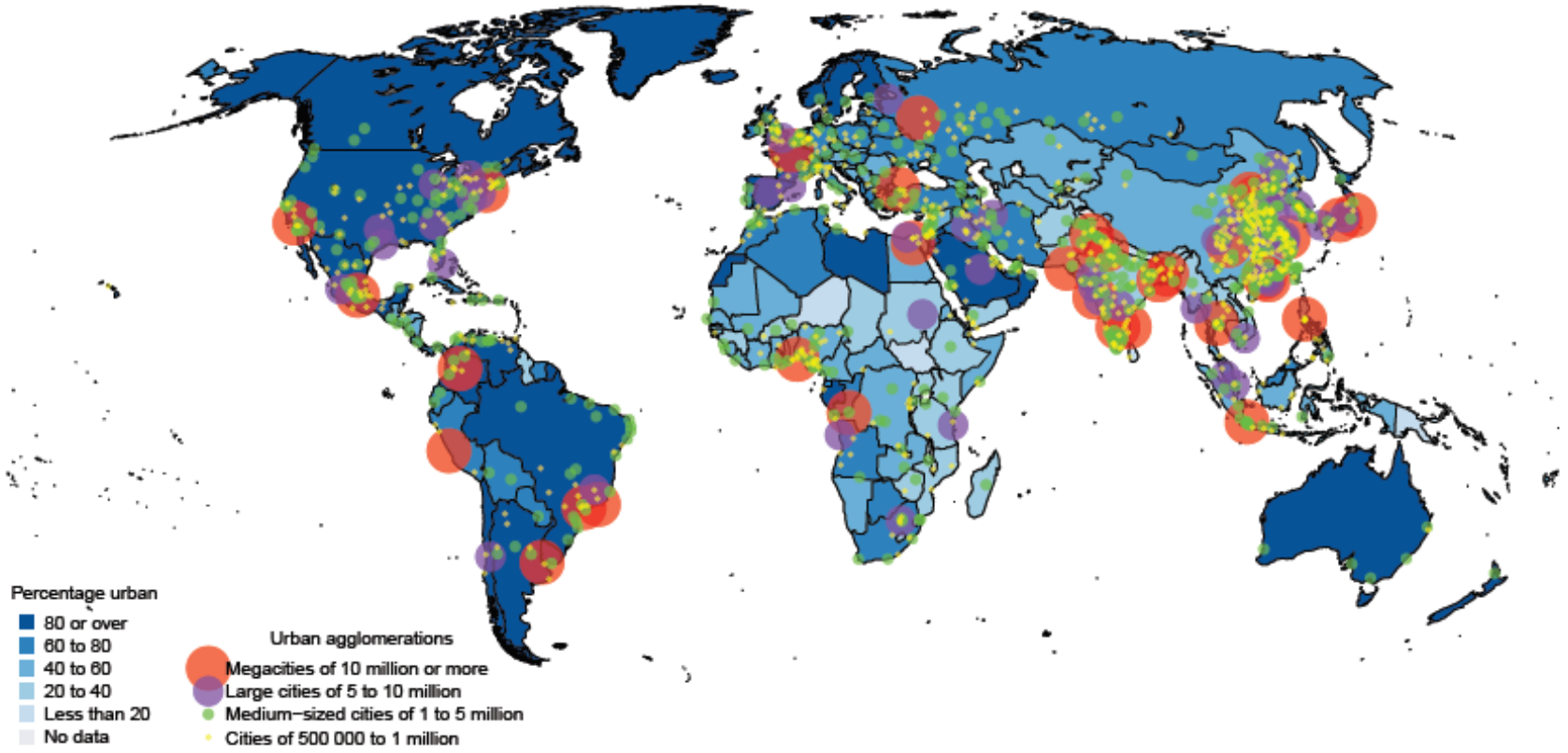
- Part 1: Background
  - Why a harmonized definition is needed
  - The global voluntary commitment
  - Country consultations and adoption of harmonized approach by UN Statistical Commission

- Part 2: Overview of the Degree of Urbanisation and its implementation workflow

PART 1: BACKGROUND

Why a harmonized definition is needed

Percentage urban and urban agglomerations with 500,000 inhabitants or more, 2018



UNDESA(2018). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision

Data produced using a variety of definitions

a) Varied inputs which vary across and within countries

- Population size
- Population density amidst varying spatial units
- Administrative / political delineations
- Economic activities
- Combinations of aspects

b) Varied concepts

- City proper
- Urban agglomeration
- Metropolitan area
- Etc

Changing, mixing, tossing definitions would create different results

Some variations in urban definitions in select Arab Countries

	Administrative function	Economic function	Population size	Population density	Urban characteristics	Other criteria	No definition
Bahrain	x	x	x	x	x		
Jordan			x				
Morocco	X		x		x		
Palestine						x	
Saudi Arabia	x	x	x			x	
Sudan	x		x		x		
Syria			x				
Tunisia							x
Yemen	x		x				
Iraq	X	X	X	X	X		
Lebanon							x
Egypt					x	X	
UAE			x			X	

UN-Habitat survey, 2019

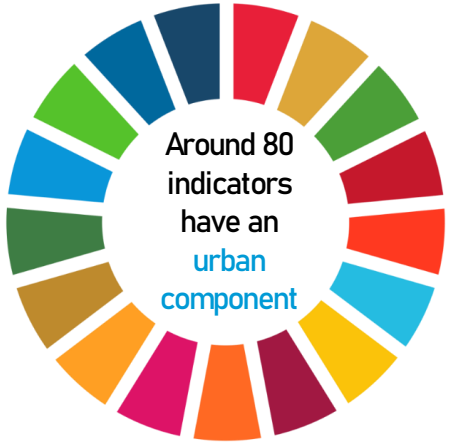
Why a harmonized definition is needed Ctd.

The 2030 agenda of leaving no one and no place behind requires multiple levels of data disaggregation

- Relevant, location-specific data to understand varying needs
- Relevant, timely, location specific data for informed actions

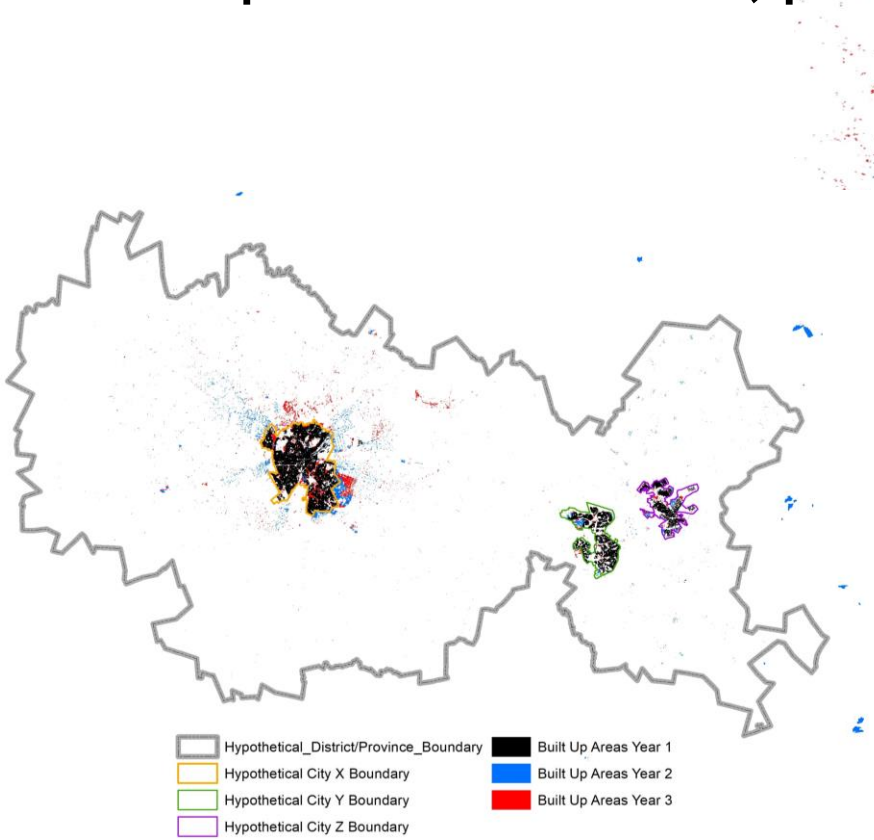
Vs

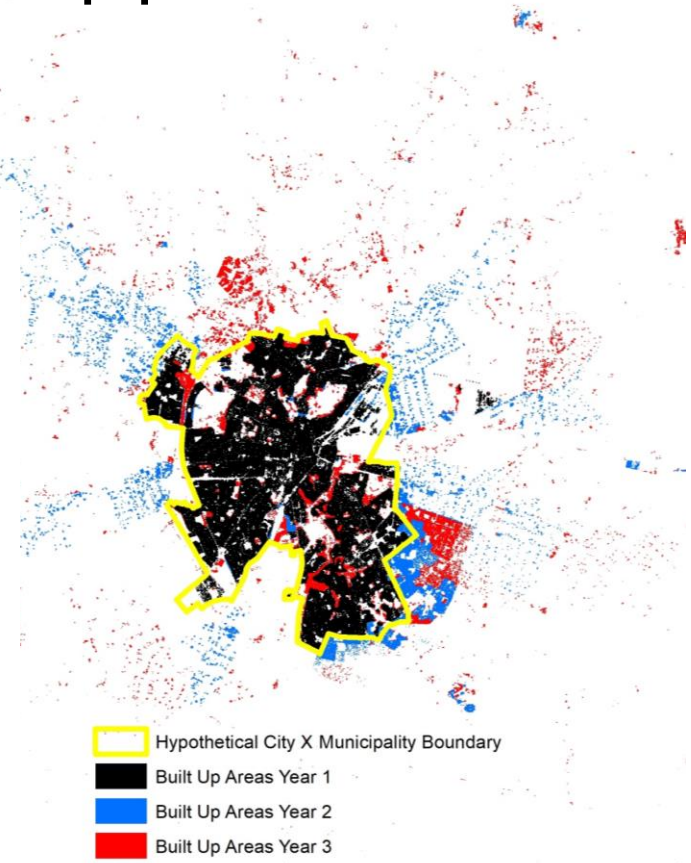
About 1/3 of SDG indicators can be measured at the local level

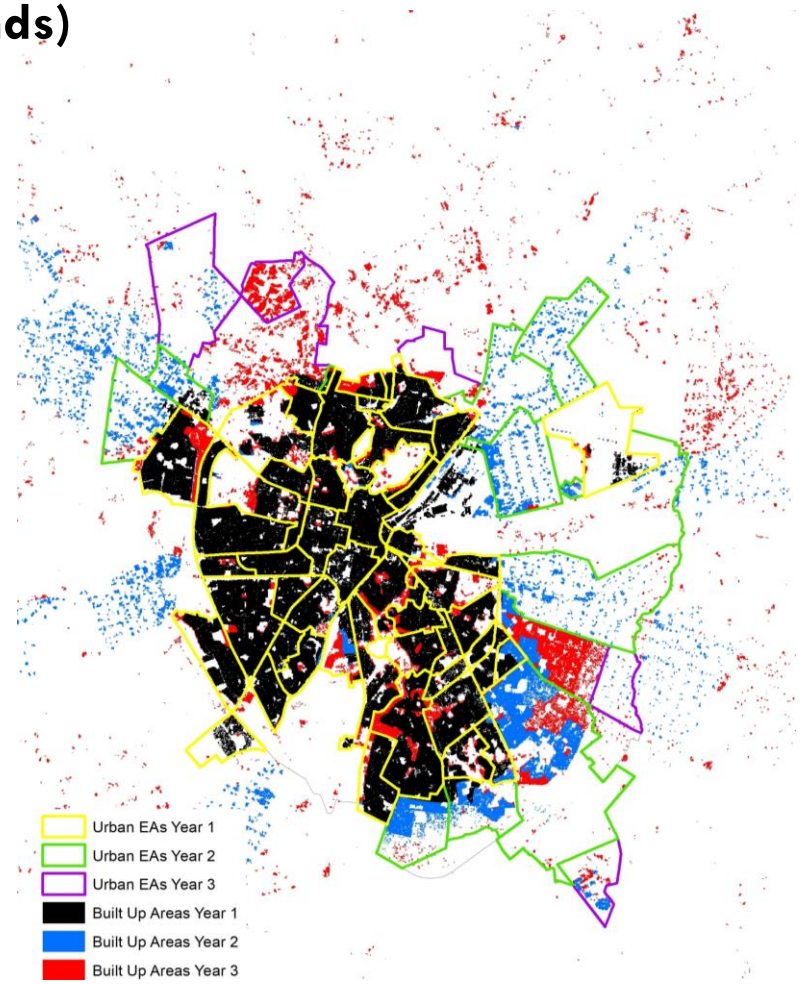


How “urban” is defined determines SDG 11 indicator results

Example 1: Indicator 11.3.1 (spatial and population urbanization trends)

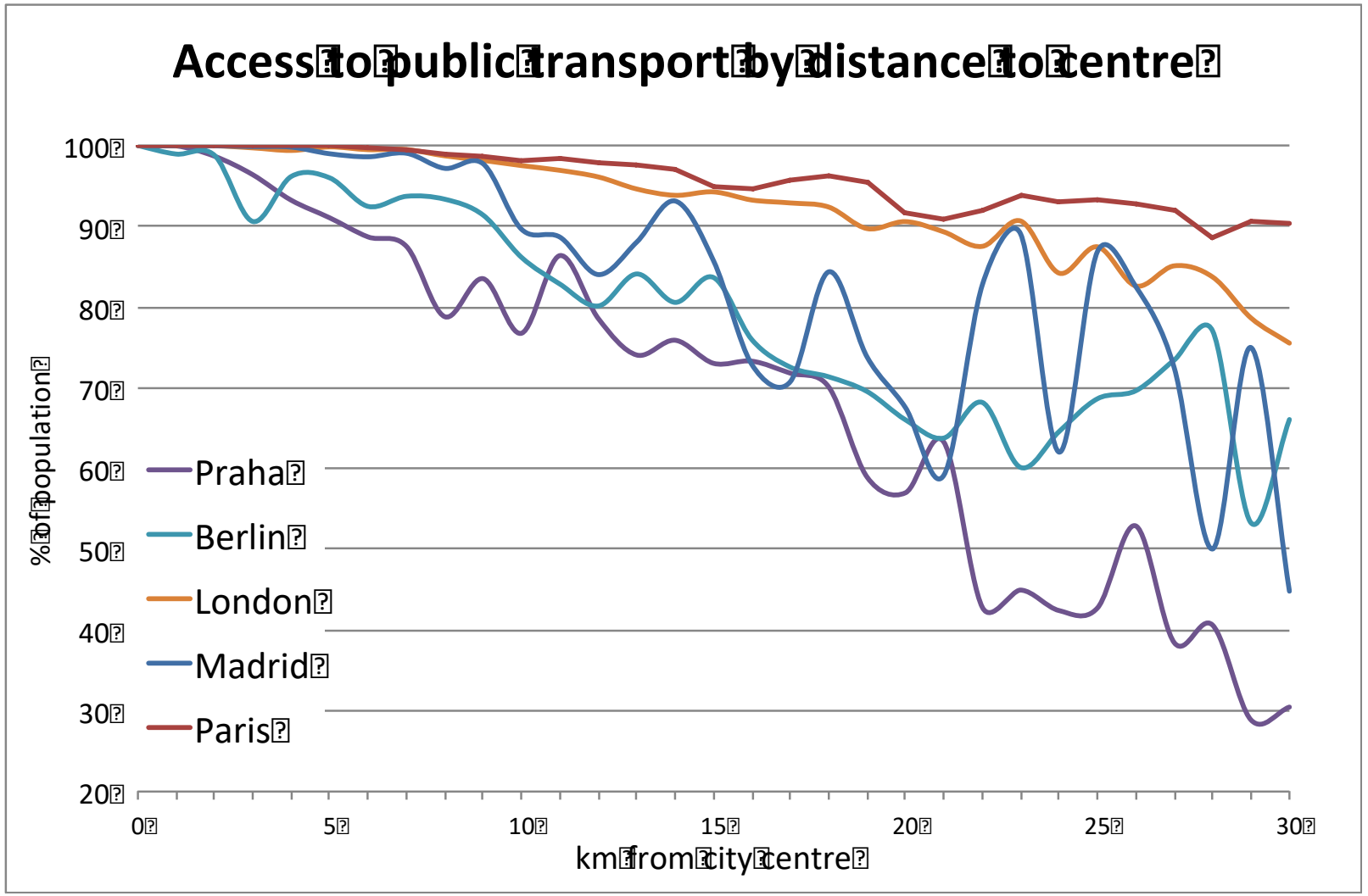






How “urban” is defined determines SDG 11 indicator results

Example 2: Indicator 11.2.1: Access to public transport in urban areas



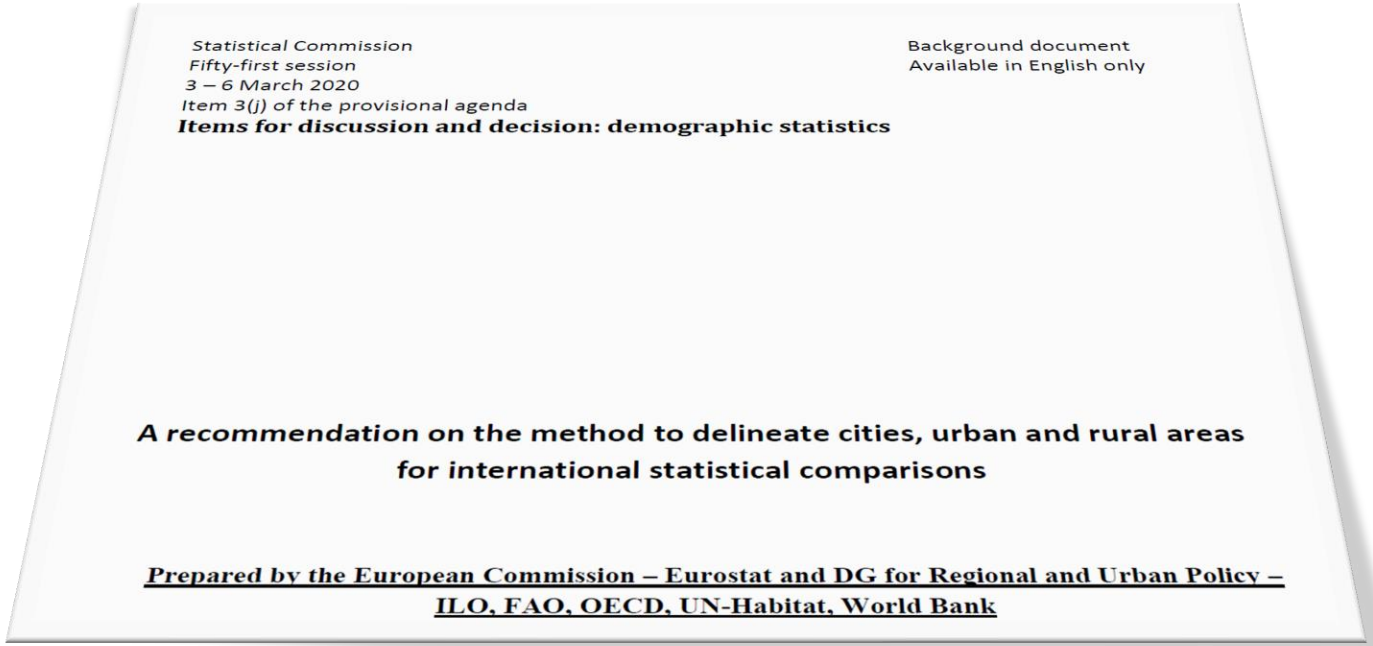
Credits: EC /DG-REGIO

The global voluntary commitment on harmonizing settlement definitions

- Voluntary commitment during Habitat III conference (2016) to support harmonization of definitions for global agendas monitoring and reporting

- Country consultations organized by UN-Habitat & EC undertaken in 2018 – 2019

- DEGURBA endorsed by UN Statistical Commission (51st Session) as recommended method for settlement delineation for statistical comparisons



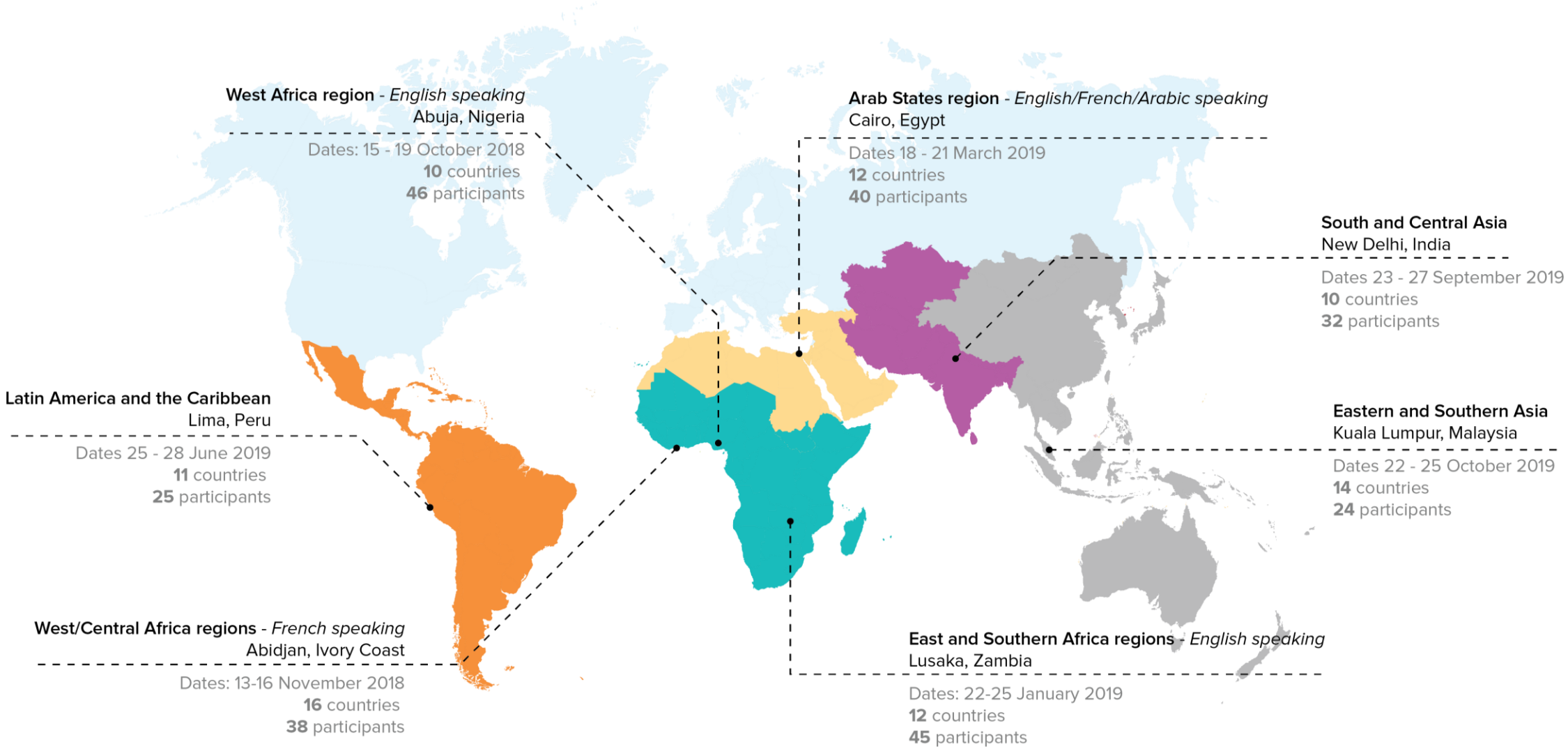
Statistical Commission
Fifty-first session
3 – 6 March 2020
Item 3(j) of the provisional agenda
Items for discussion and decision: demographic statistics

Background document
Available in English only

A recommendation on the method to delineate cities, urban and rural areas for international statistical comparisons

Prepared by the European Commission – Eurostat and DG for Regional and Urban Policy – ILO, FAO, OECD, UN-Habitat, World Bank

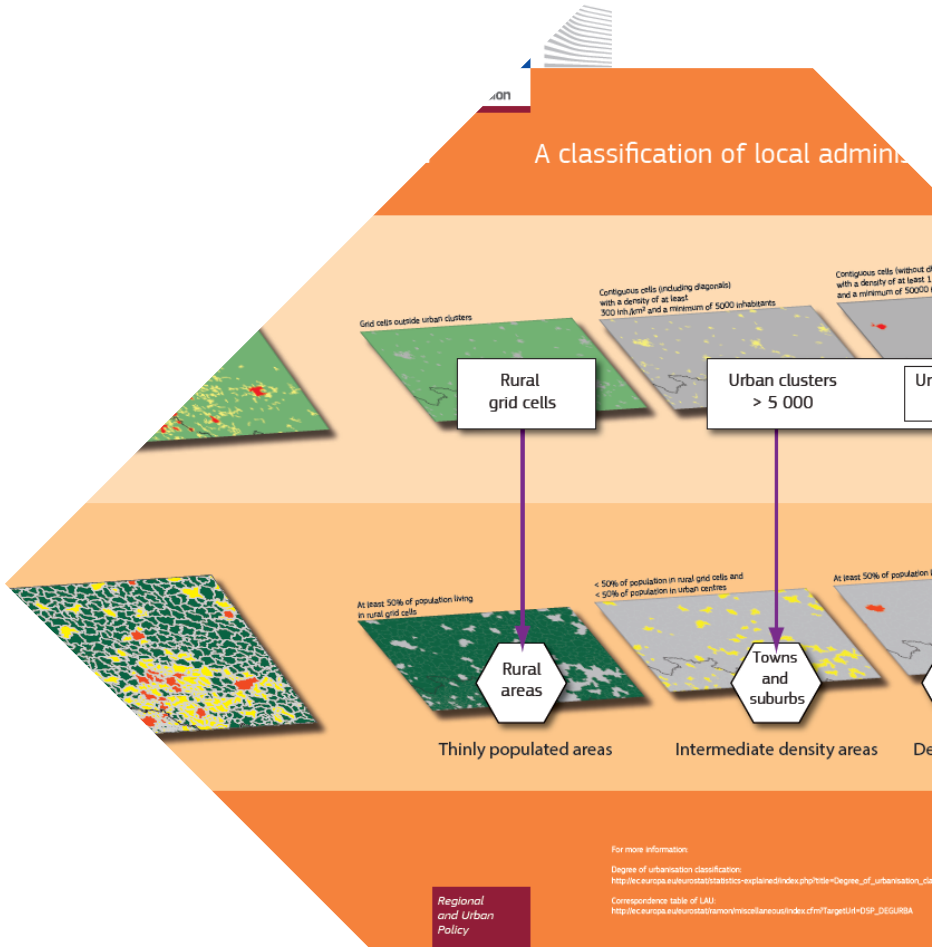
Summary of country consultation workshops



(85 Countries covered, 250 Participants)

Some feedback from countries on application of DEGURBA at local level

- Overall agreement on the need for harmonized settlements definition
- **Simplicity of approach** – DEGURBA adopts practical metrics which can be applied globally
- **Innovativeness of population grid** - for disaggregated data production + monitoring
- Satisfactory identification of urban areas
- **Consistency in measurement unit & thresholds** – DEGURBA offers consistent approach to defining settlements, producing data & can result in functional cities / urban areas
- DEGURBA integrates new technologies in line with modern data needs
- Increasing production of geo-coded data creates opportunities for higher resolution data



PART 2: DEGURBA
A people-based people-based definition of cities and rural areas

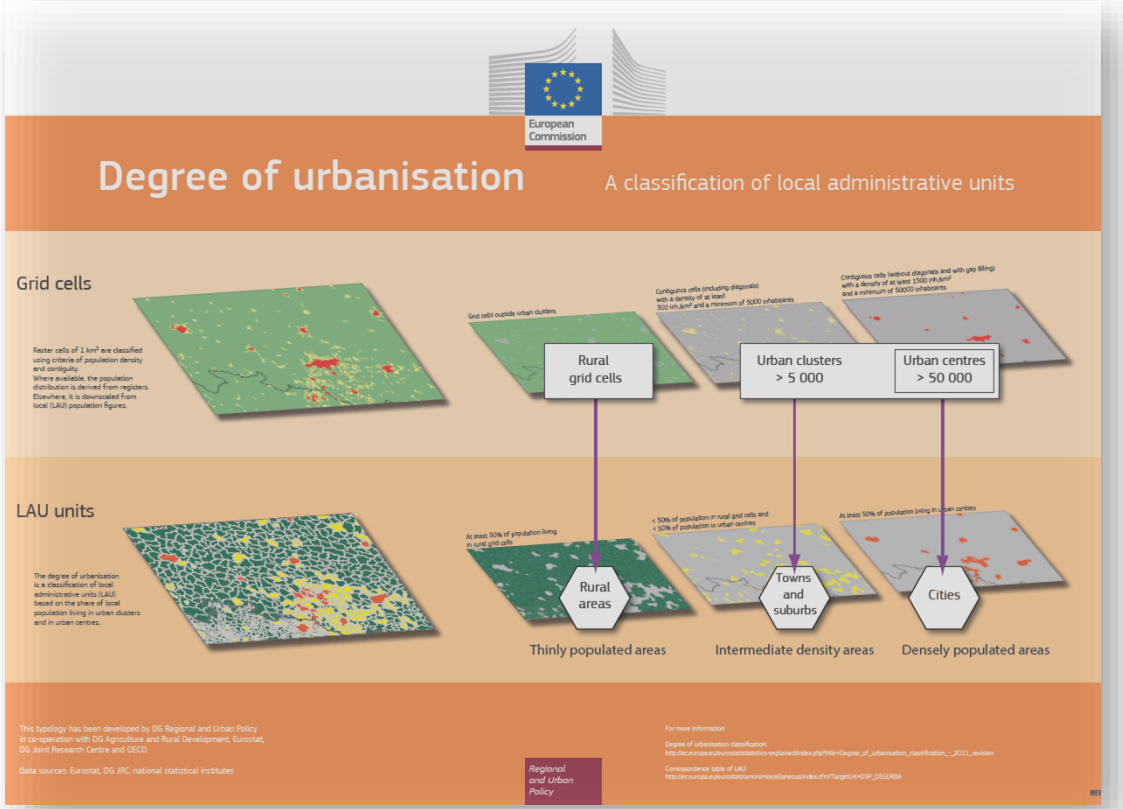
Overview of DEGURBA Components and Workflow

1. Disaggregating population to grids

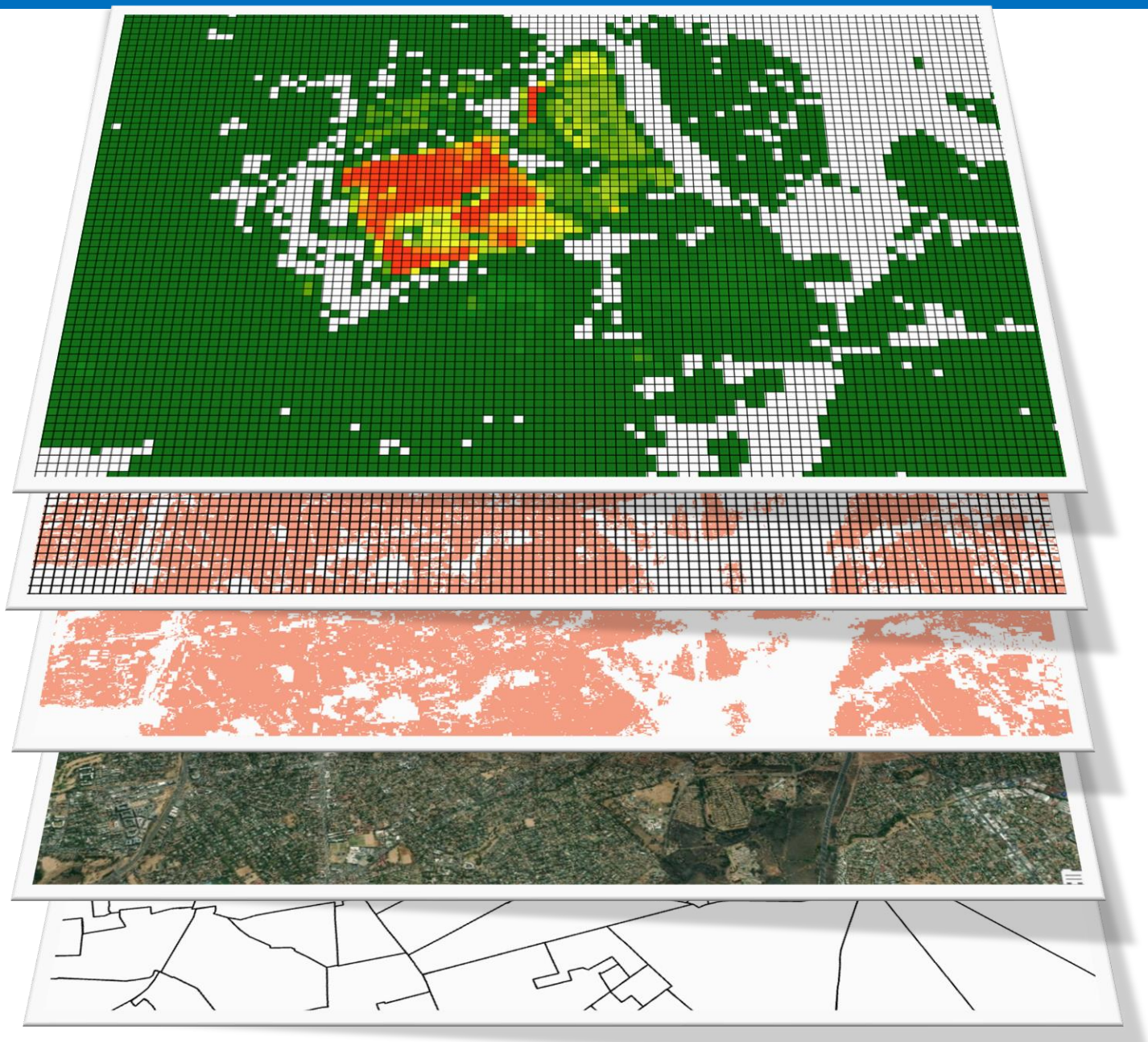
2. Determining level of urbanization at the grid level – the DEGURBA settlement model

3. Applying level of urbanization to local administrative units level

4. The functional urban area



1. Disaggregating population to grids



4. Gridded population

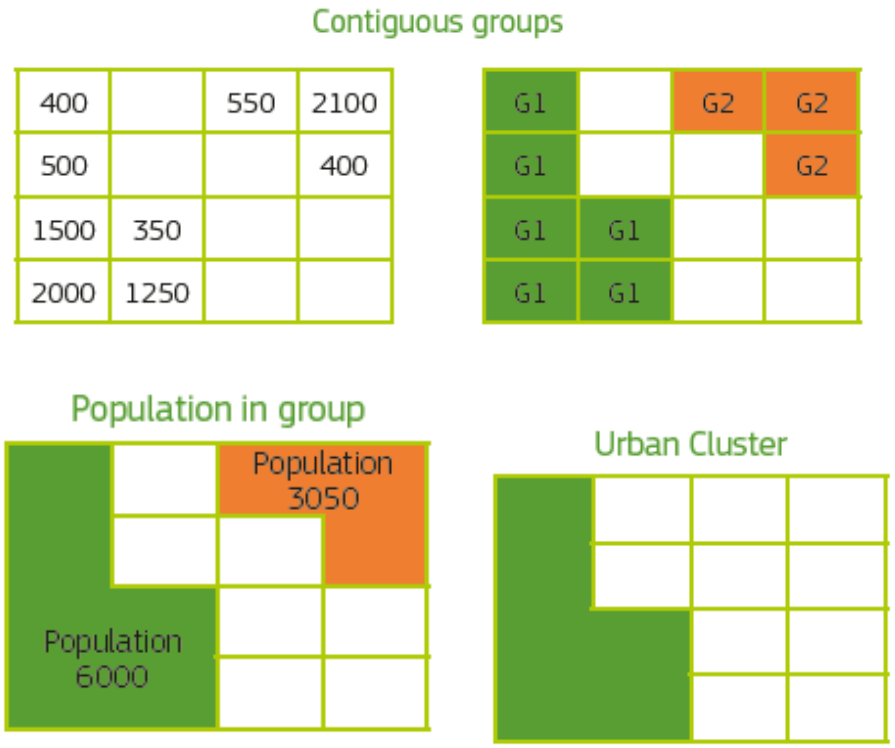
3. Equal sized grids (1km2) – analysis unit

2. Built up layer extracted from satellite imagery

1. Population data at smallest unit e.g E.A

2. Determining level of urbanization at the grid level

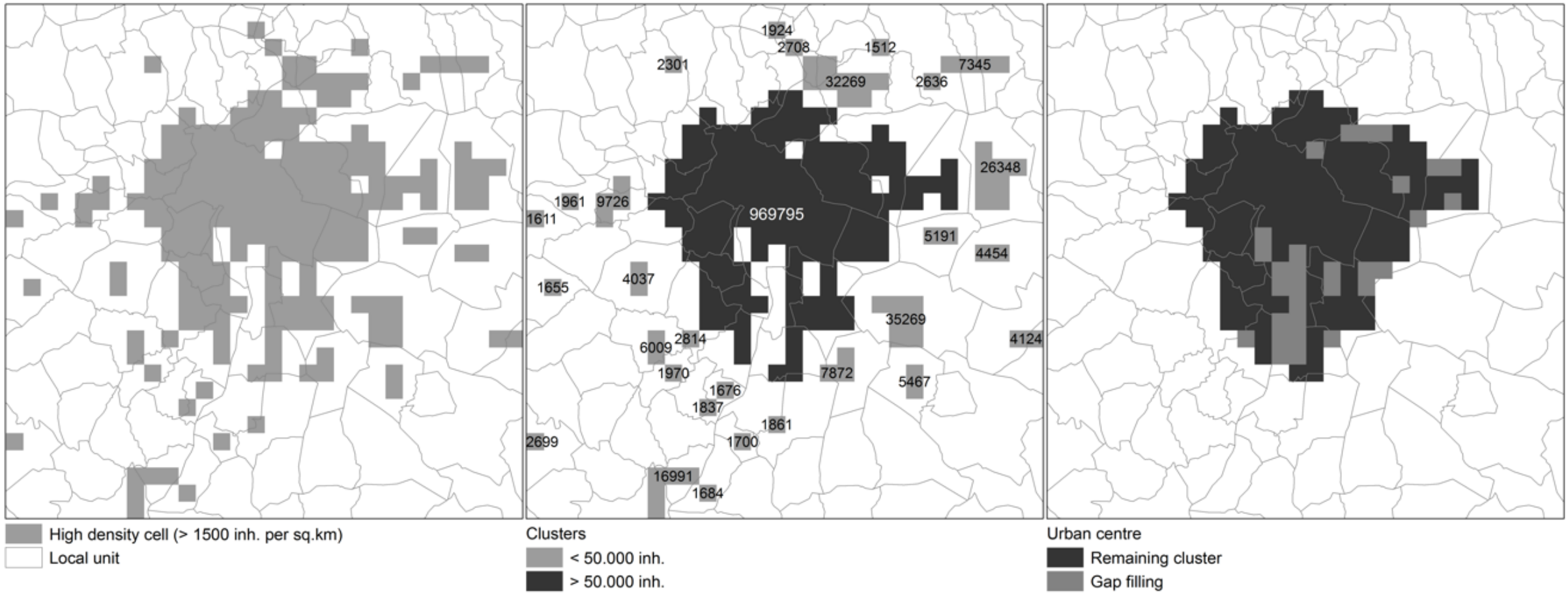
3 classifications of grid cells based on population density & total population of contiguous cells / clusters



Urban centres	Contiguous cells above 1,500 residents per km^2 and at least 50,000 people in the centre
Urban Clusters	Contiguous cells above 300 residents per km^2 and at least 5,000 people in the cluster
Rural grid cells	Cells below 300 residents per km^2 + other cells outside urban clusters

Slide Credits: EC / DG-REGIO

Three steps at the grid level



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Applying level of urbanization to local administrative units

3 classifications of local spatial units (administrative units) based on type/ typology of the grid in which the majority of the population resides.

Cities	> 50% pop. in urban centres
Towns and suburbs	> 50% pop. in urban clusters and not classified as city
Rural area	> 50% pop. in rural grid cells

Urban areas = Cities + Towns and Suburbs

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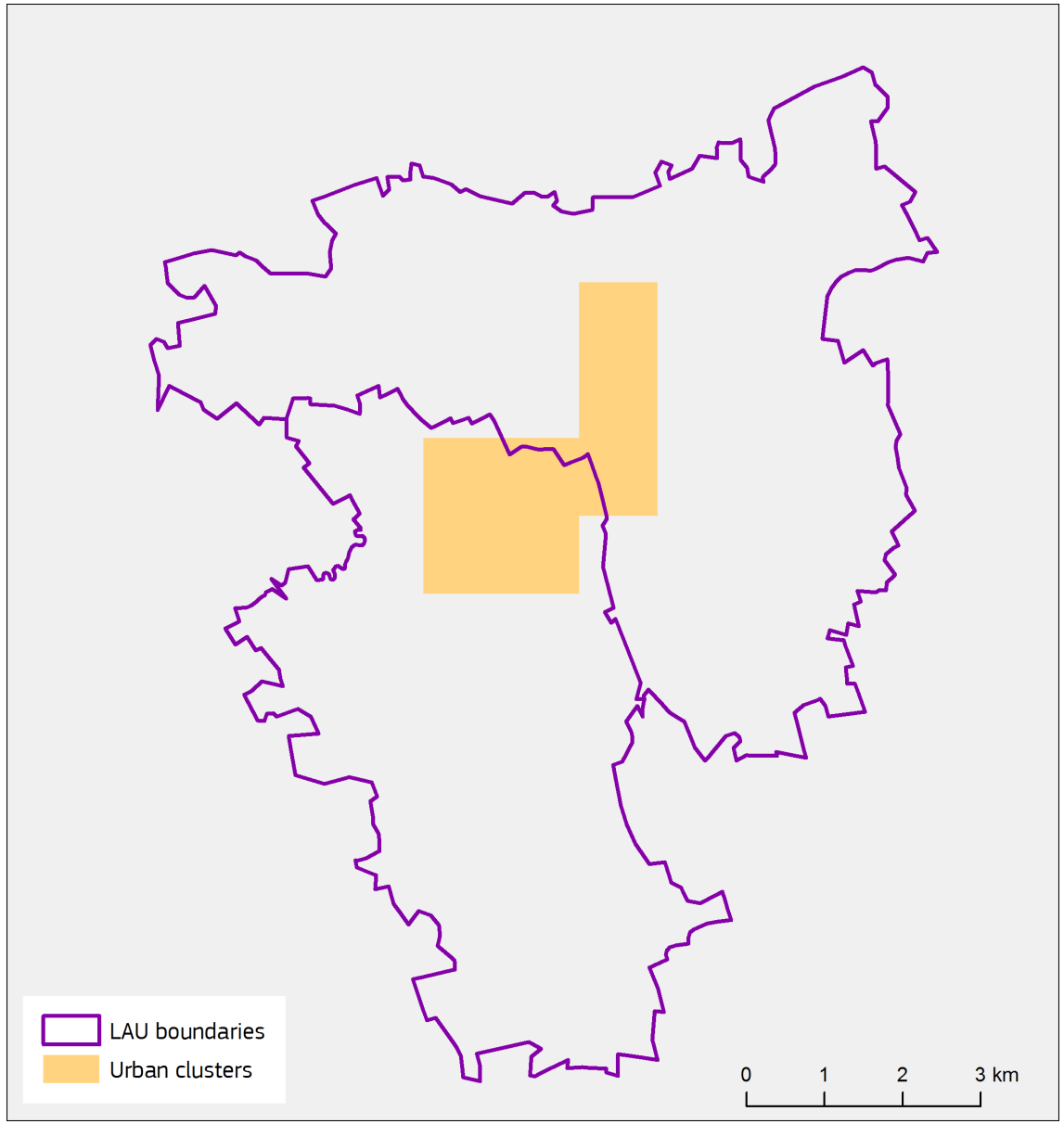
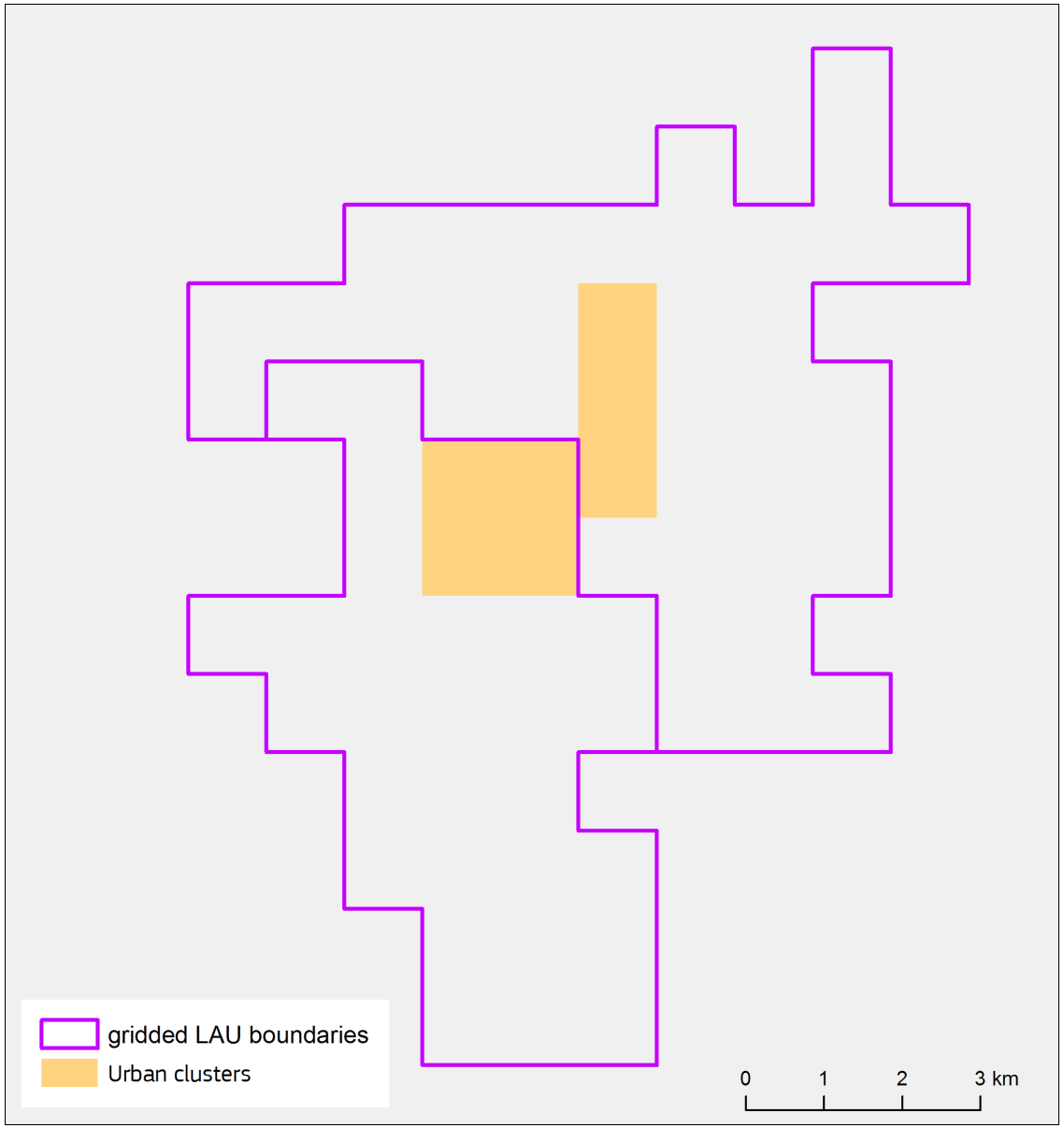
Applying level of urbanization to local administrative units





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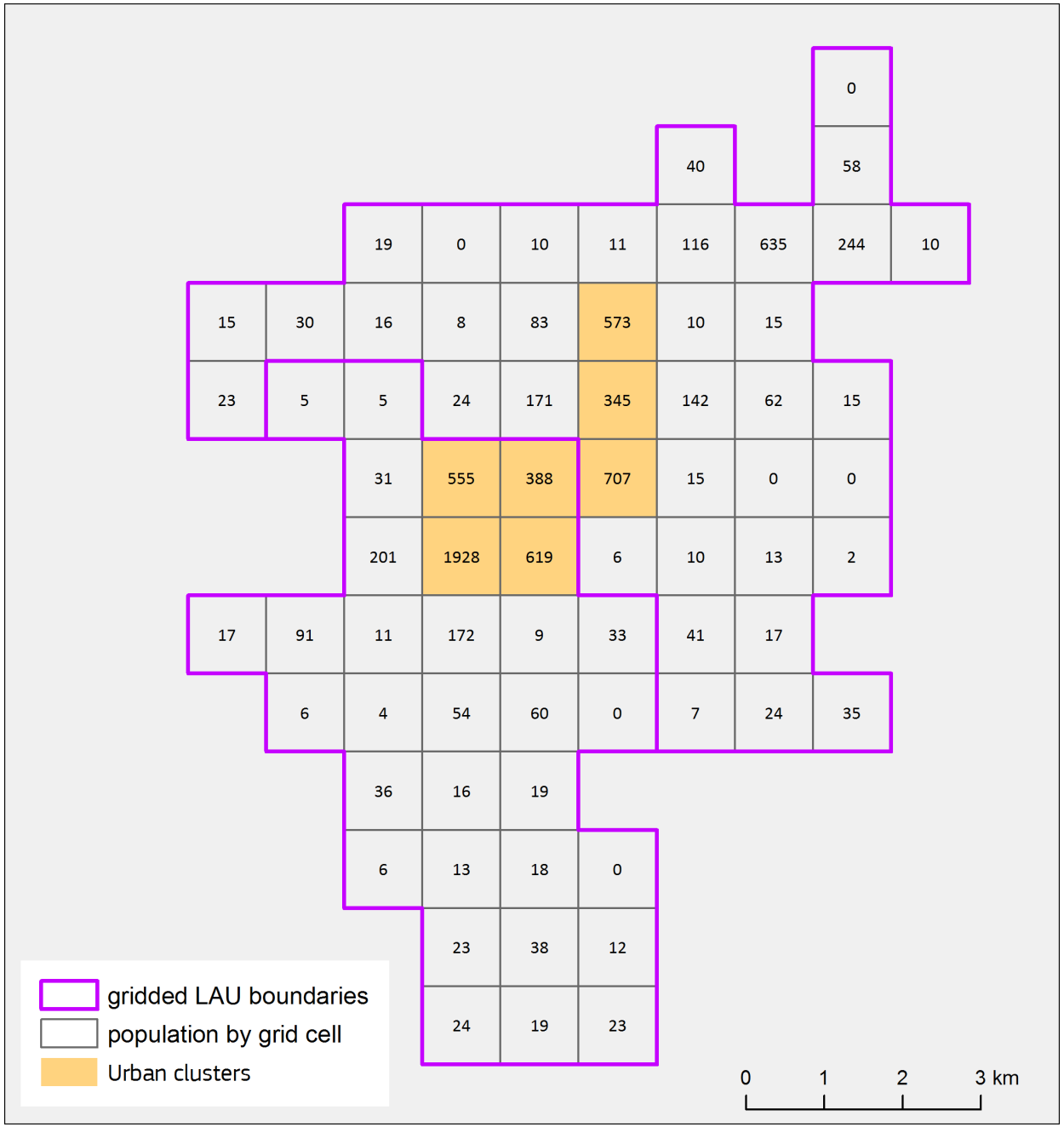

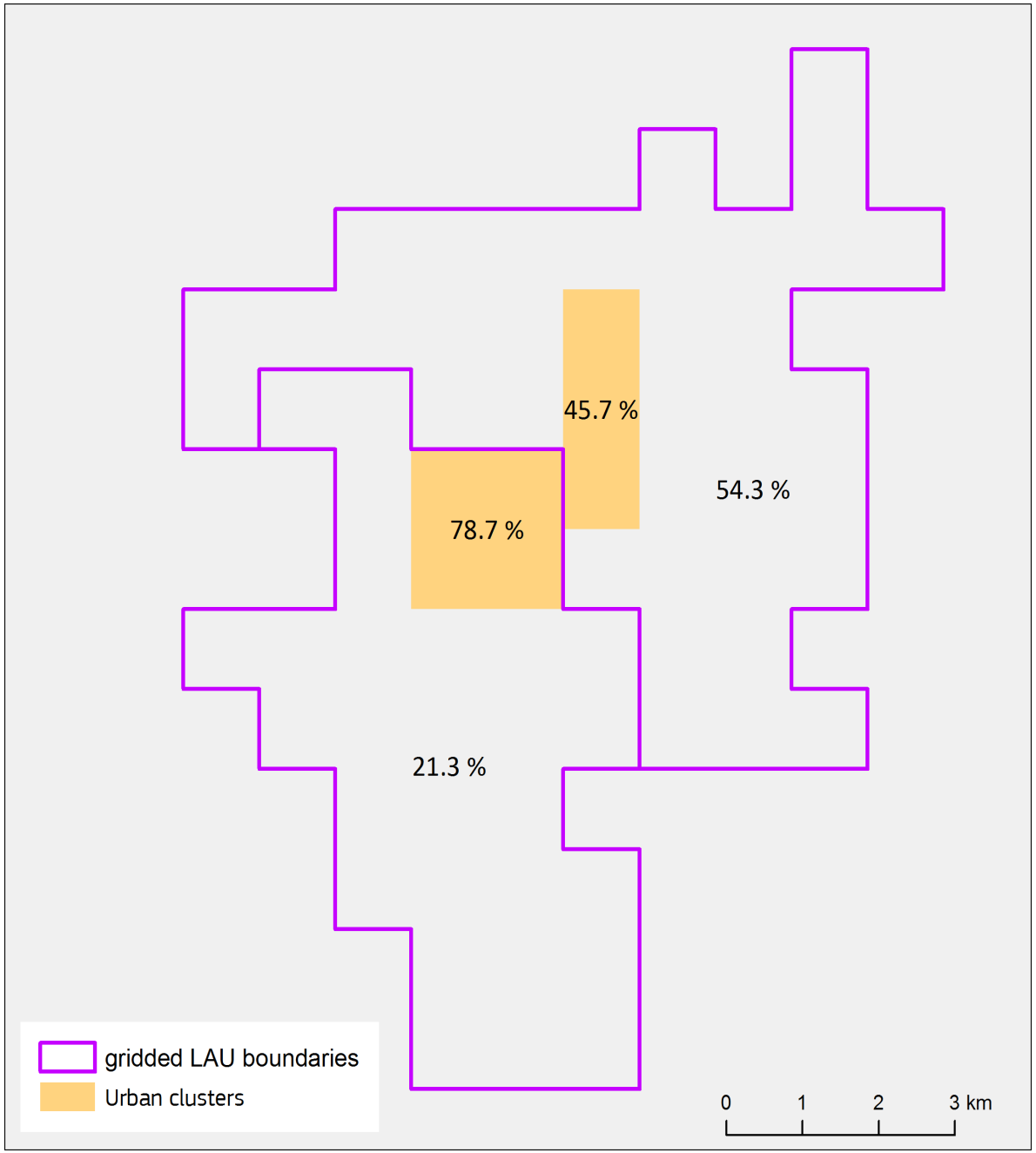

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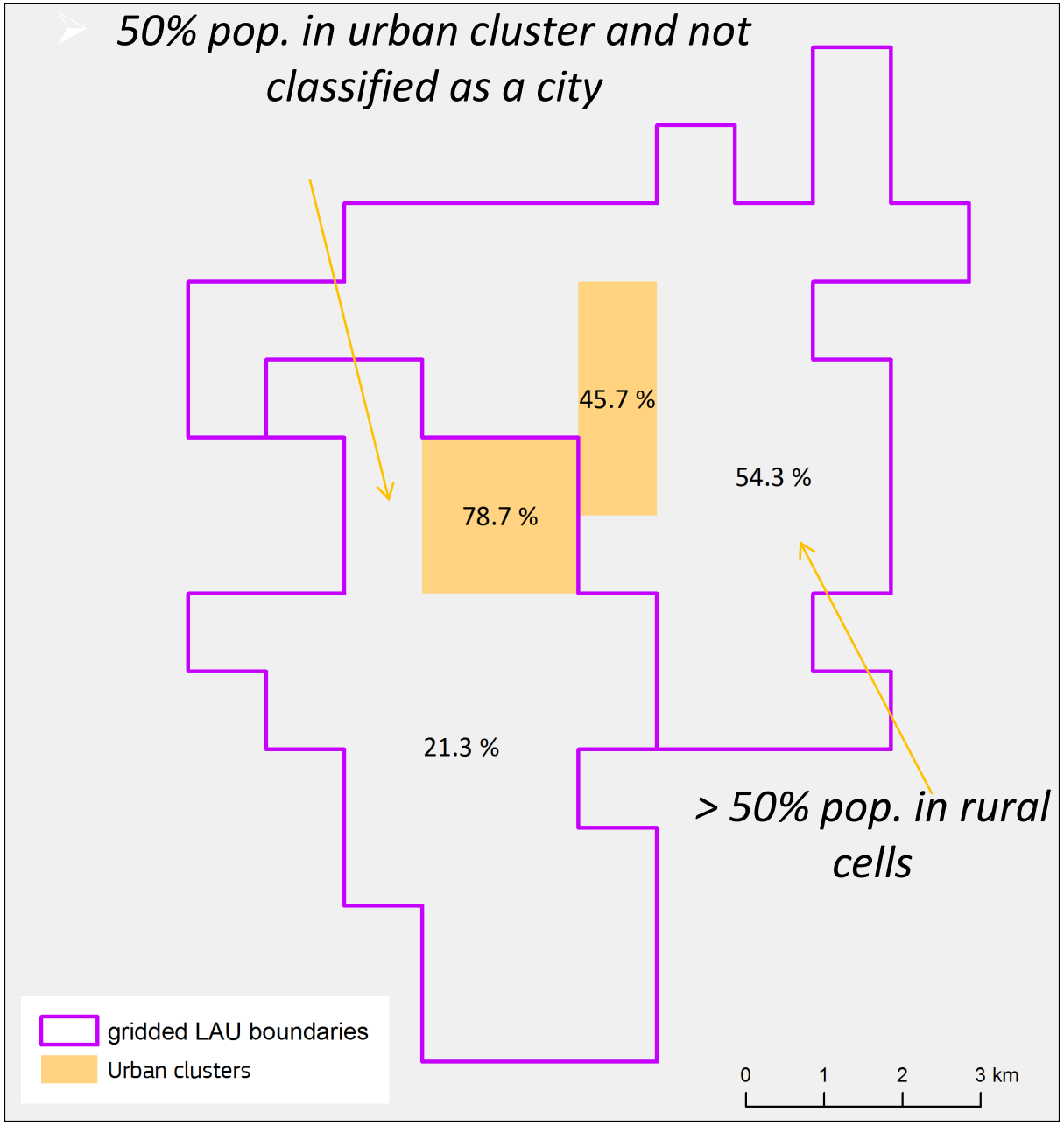

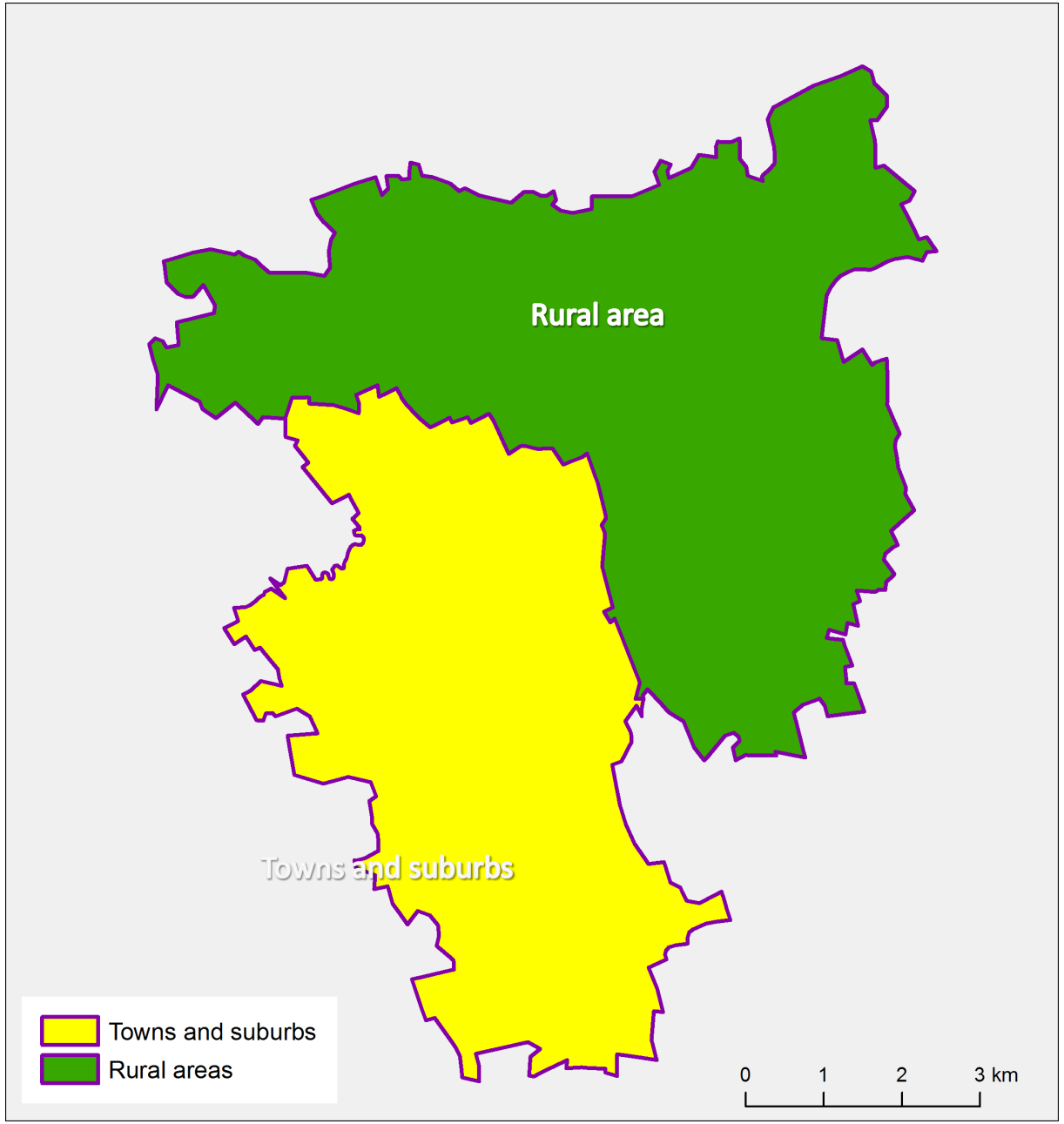

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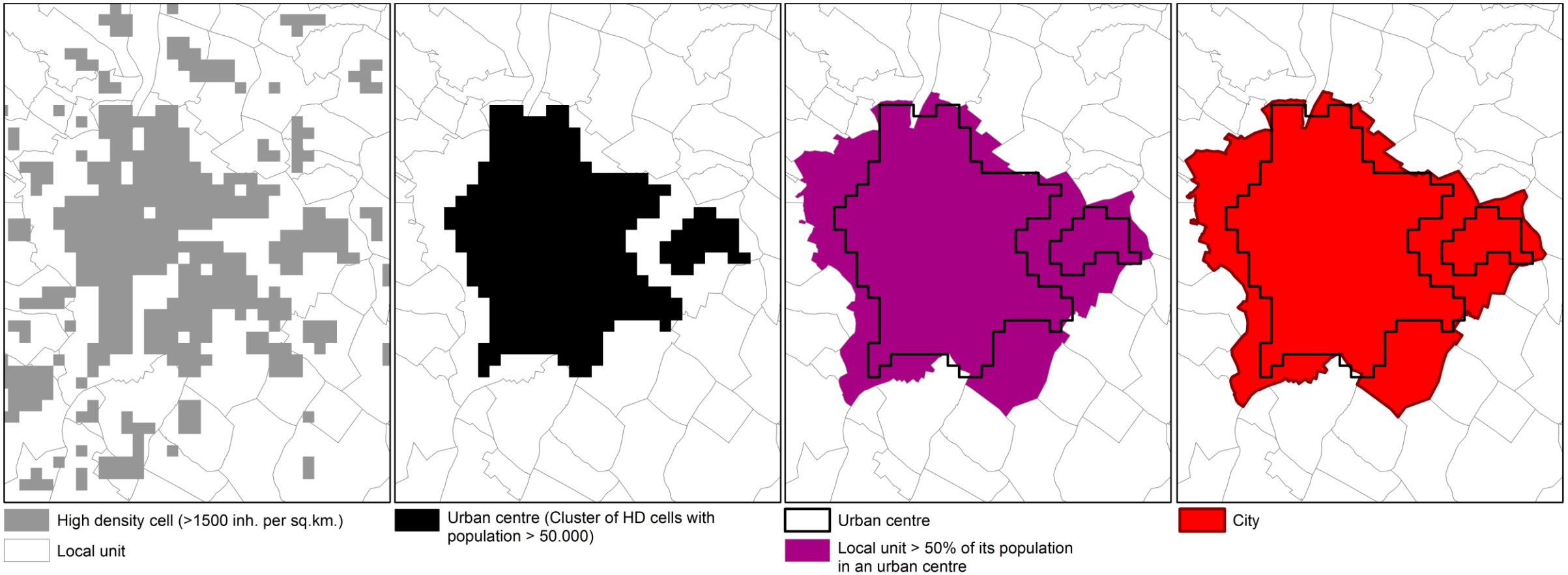
Some scenarios

1. Two urban centres to one city: Budapest, Hungary



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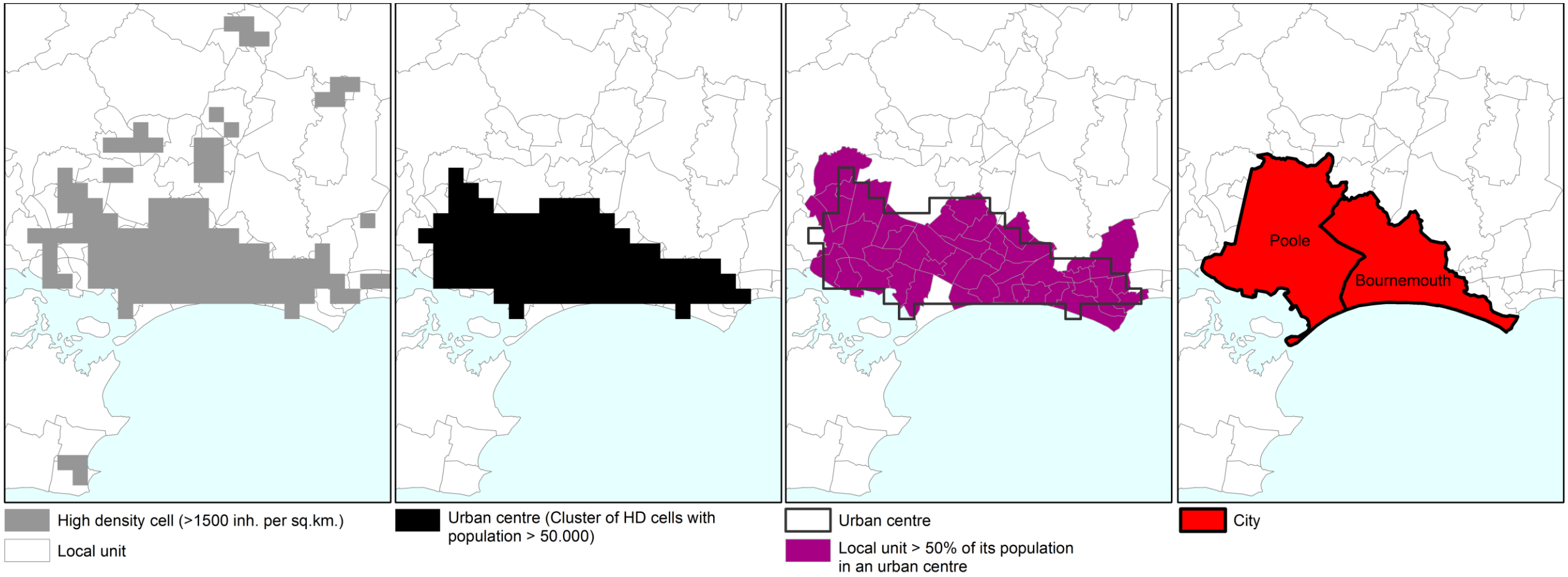
Some scenarios

2. One urban centre becomes two cities: Poole and Bournemouth, UK



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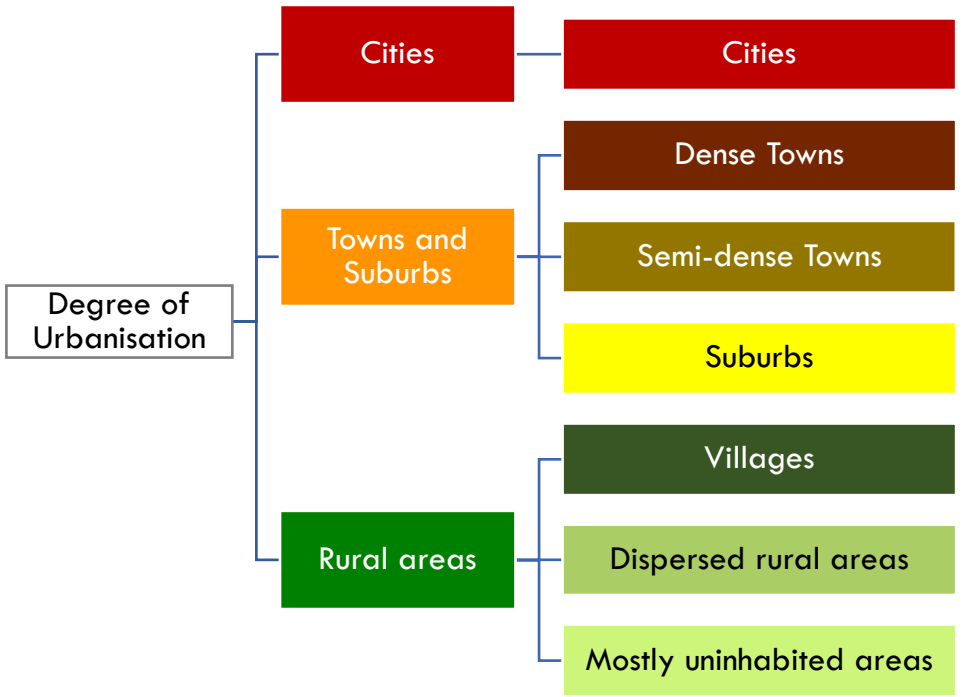
DEGURBA Level 2



Population density of cells, inhabitants per km^2			Population size thresholds of the >=50,000	Population size thresholds of the 5,000 - 49,999	Population size thresholds of the 500-4,999	No population size criterion (not a settlement)
	>=1500	High density	Cities	Dense Towns		
	>=300	Moderate density		Semi-dense Towns	Villages	Suburbs or peri-urban area
	>=50	Low density				Dispersed rural areas
	<50	Very low density				Mostly uninhabited areas

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More information

https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents/BG-Item3j-Recommendation-E.pdf

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THANK YOU!

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