Applying the degree of urbanisation
How to define cities, towns and rural areas for international comparison

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EUROSTAT
These SDG indicators are …

Sensitive to the **rural** definition used:
- 4.1.1 Children in school & proficiency
- 4.6.1 Adult literacy and numeracy
- 6.1.1 Access to safe drinking water
- 7.1.1 Access to electricity
- 8.10.1 Use of banking services
- 9.c.1 Coverage by mobile network
- 9.1.1 Rural population with access to an all weather road

Sensitive to the **city** definition used:
- 11.2.1 Population that has convenient access to public transport
- 11.3.1 Land consumption over population growth
- 11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (e.g. PM2.5 and PM10) in cities
- 11.7.1 Open public space for public use for all
What is the solution?

- **Apply** the global, people-based definition of cities, urban and rural areas that could be generally used across the world for international statistical comparisons.

- This method is the **Degree of Urbanisation** and its two extensions.
The Degree of Urbanisation level 1

Step 1 – Identify clusters based on population density, size and contiguity

Step 2 – Overlay clusters with local units and classify them

Urban centre, urban cluster and rural grid cells around Durban, South Africa

City, towns & semi-dense areas, and rural areas around Durban, South Africa

Source: (Florczyk et al 2019)
Six advantages

1. Starts from a population grid to reduce the bias generated by the different shapes and sizes of spatial units

2. Measures population clusters directly, instead by proxy through building clusters

3. Uses the same population size and density thresholds across the globe
Six advantages

4. Captures the urban-rural continuum in harmonised manner

5. Defines areas to monitor access to services, not areas defined by access to services

6. Proposes a cost-effective approach
Example on using the Degree of Urbanisation level 1

Share of households having access to safely managed drinking water, by degree of urbanisation, selected countries, 2010-2016
Extension: Degree of Urbanisation level 2

Average distance (in km) to the nearest health care facility, by degree of urbanisation, sub-Saharan countries, 2012-2016
Endorsed the methodology for delineation of cities and urban and rural areas for international and regional statistical comparison purposes, as presented in the report, while emphasizing that the methodology is not intended to replace national definitions of urban and rural areas, but to complement them;
More information

Thank you for your attention!