# An emerging global, standard to define cities, urban and rural areas

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European Commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

ILO

OECD

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

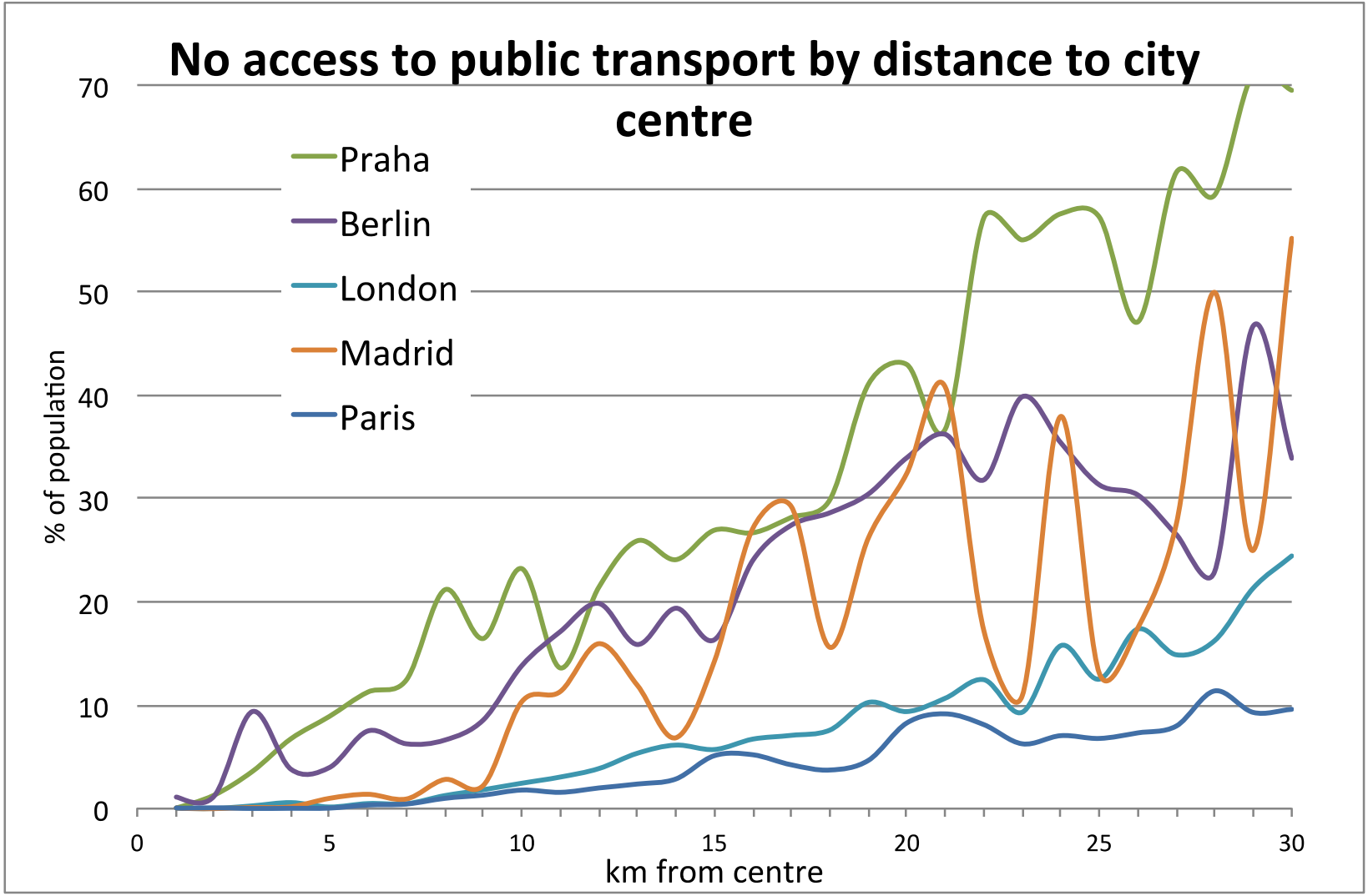
THE WORLD BANK

# These SDG indicators are sensitive to the rural definition used

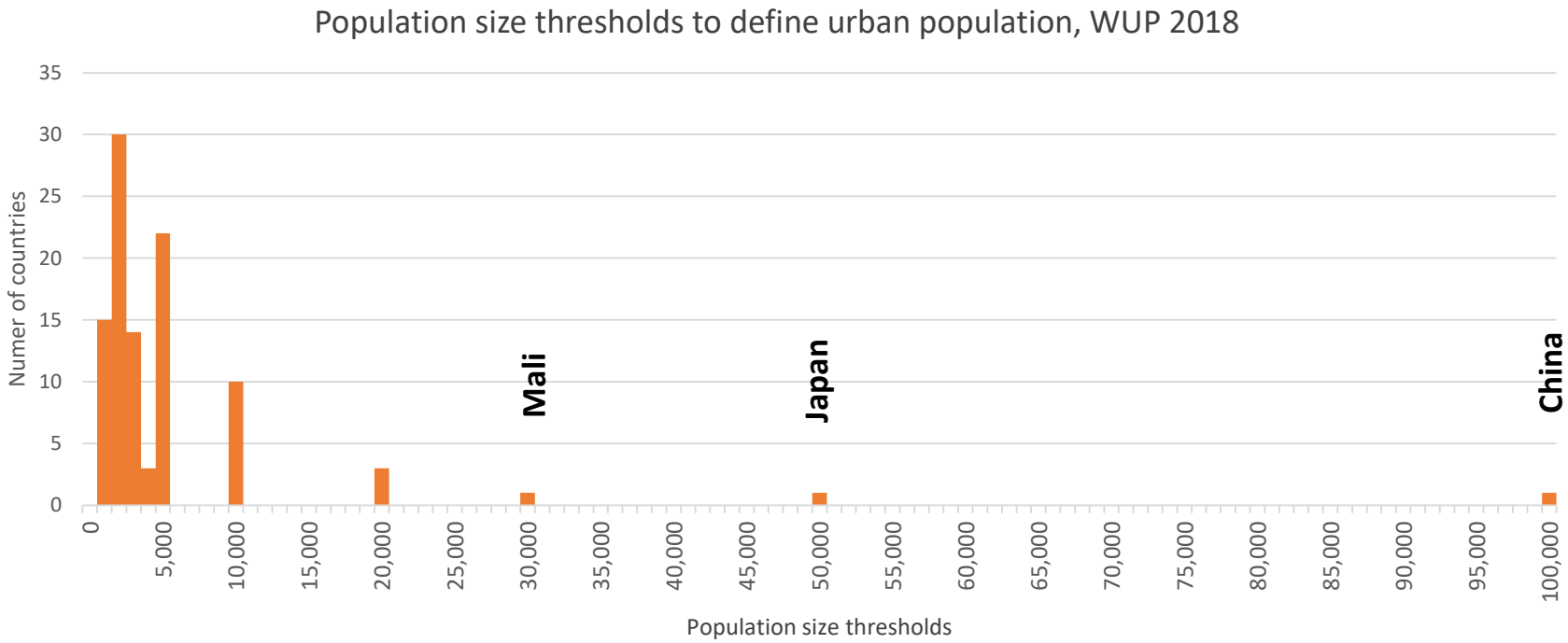
- 3.c.1 Health worker density and distribution
- 4.1.1 Children in school & proficiency
- 4.6.1 Adult literacy and numeracy
- 6.1.1 Access to safe drinking water
- 7.1.1 Access to electricity
- 8.10.1 Use of banking services
- 9.c.1 Coverage by mobile network
- 9.1.1 Rural population with access to an all weather road

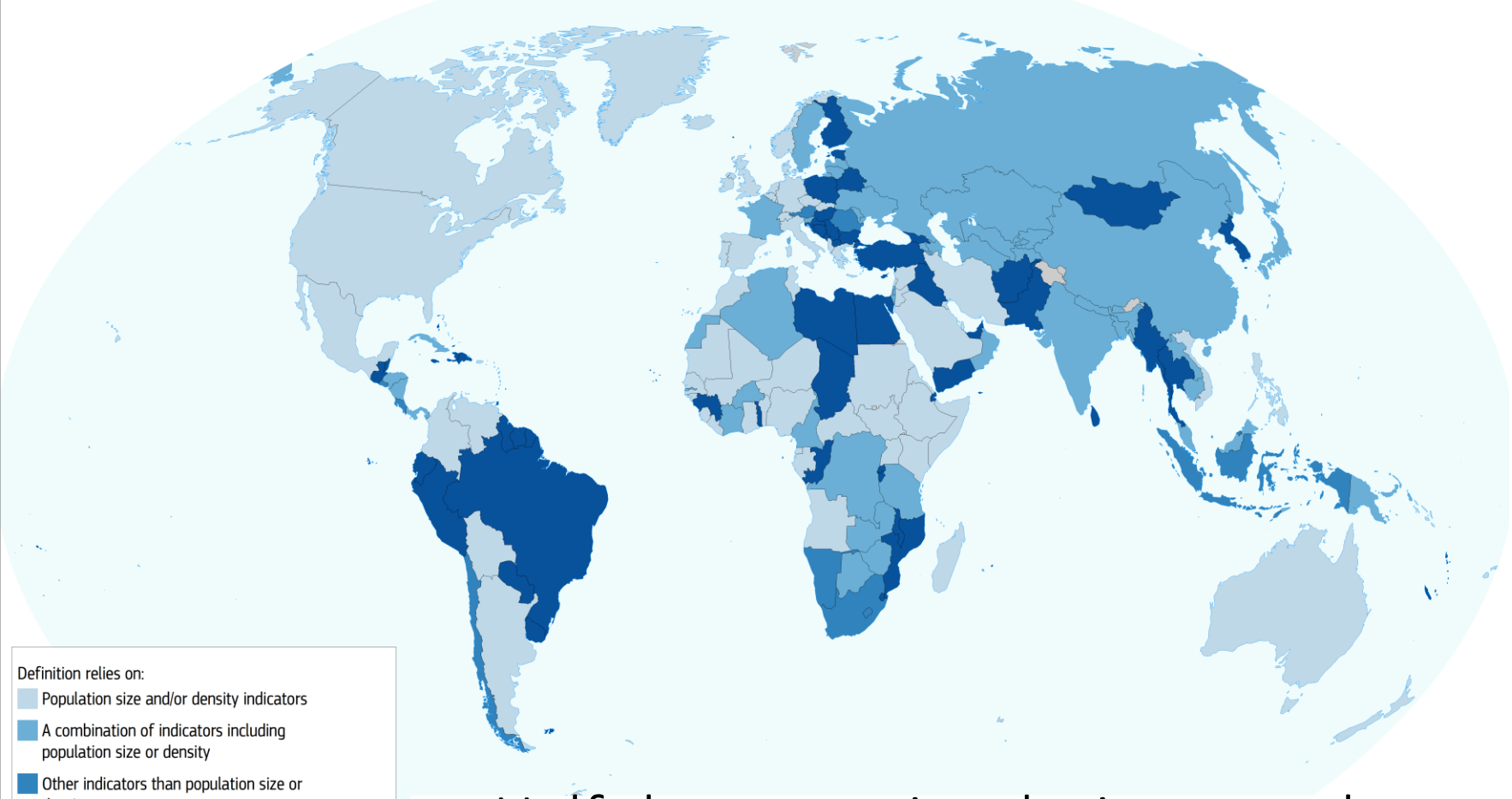
# These SDG indicators are highly sensitive to the city definition used

- 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


No access to public transport by distance to city centre
Praha
Berlin
London
Madrid
Paris
% of population
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
km from centre

# Population thresholds to define urban areas can differ radically (from UN WUP)






Half the countries designate urban and rural areas, which cannot be replicated

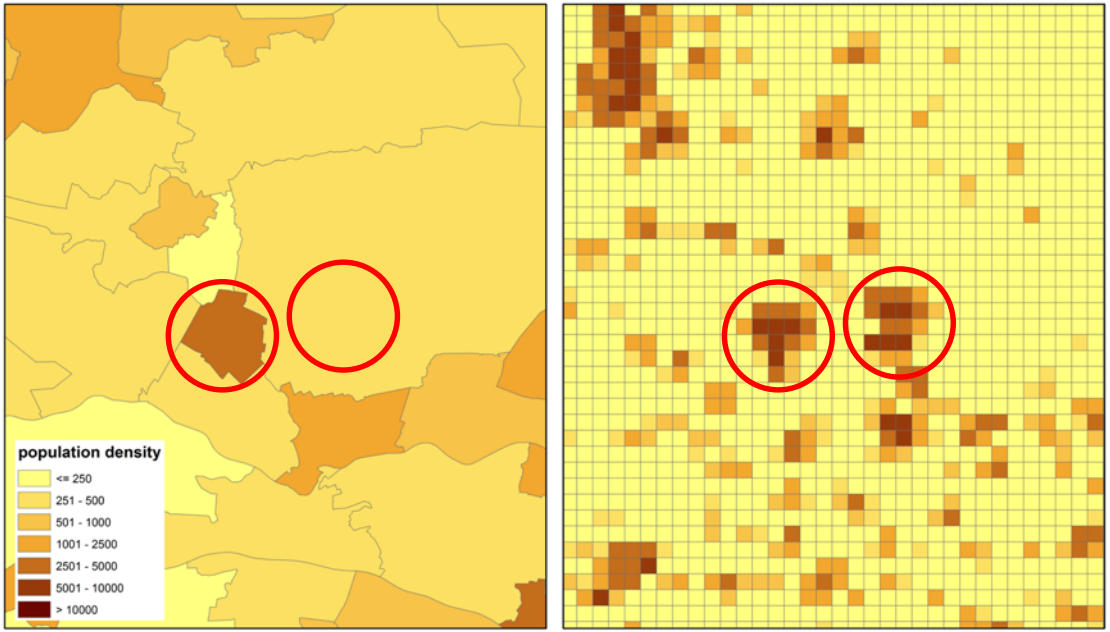
# Timeline

- 2016 Work on global definition launched at Habitat III conference by European Union, OECD and World Bank
- 2017 Side-event at UN Statistical Commission as part of UNGGIM
- 2017 Expert workshop in Brussels organised by UN-Habitat
- 2017-18 FAO, ILO and UN-Habitat join the coalition
- 2018 Dedicated side-event at UN Statistical Commission
- 2019 UN Expert meeting
- 2019 UN SD side event at UN Statistical Commission
- 2020 UN Statistical Commission for discussion (and approval?)
- 2021 Implementation post census ?

# A population grid helps to ensure that all settlements are detected

- A large rural unit can have a large population size
- A large urban unit can have a low population density

**Areas of high density can be obscured in large local units**

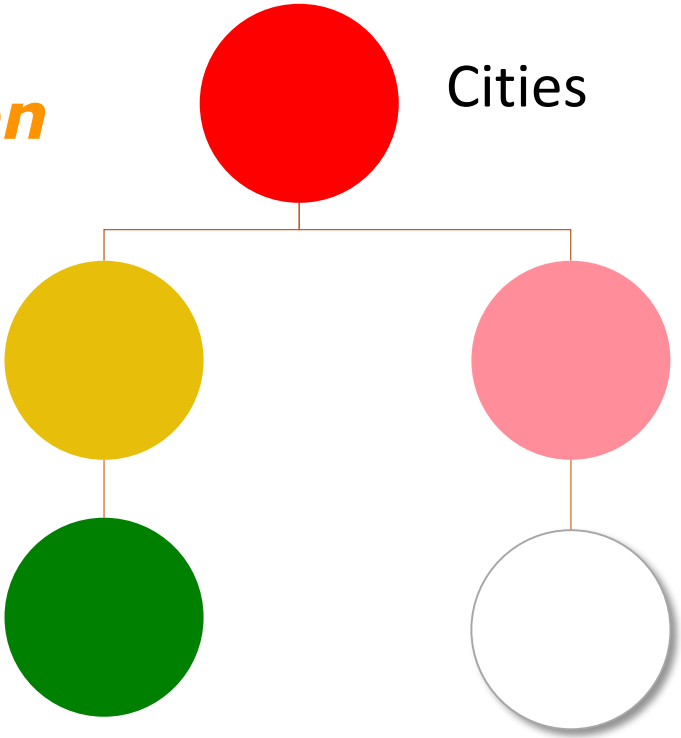


# Two definitions with a common element: Cities

***Degree of urbanisation Level 1***

Towns & suburbs

Rural areas




***Functional urban area***

Commuting zones

Outside FUA

# The level 2 of degree of urbanisation

| Population density of cells, residents per sq km | | Minimum population size of a cluster of cells (settlement size) | | | | No minimum population size (not a settlement) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | >50,000 | 50,000 - 5,000 | 5,000 - 500 | | |
| | >1500 | Cities | Dense towns | Villages | >1500 | |
| | >300 | | Semi-dense towns | | >300 | Suburbs or peri-urban area |
| | 300 - 50 | | | | 300 - 50 | Dispersed rural areas |
| | <50 | | | | <50 | Mostly uninhabited areas |

Suburbs are contiguous with or within 2km of a city and/or a dense town

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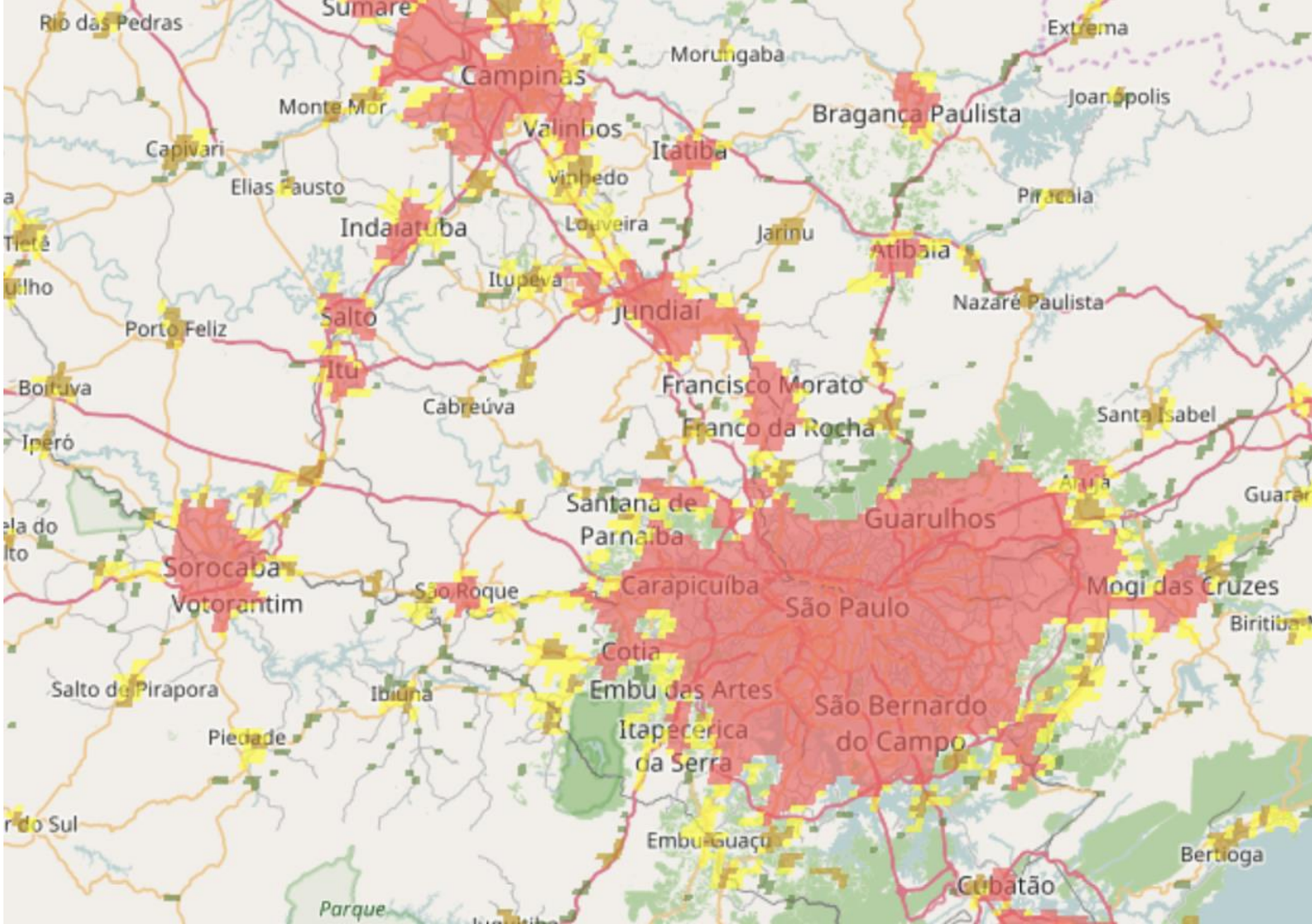
An example from Brazil: São Paulo



# Consultation and communication

- Seven regional workshops in Africa, Asia and South America led by UN-Habitat (Delhi in May, Lima in June, Kuala Lumpur in August)
- Pilot Projects with individual countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Haiti, Malaysia, South Africa, Turkey, Tunisia, Vietnam, USA
- Engagement with Russia  and Central Asia led by OECD
- Presentations at IAOS, ISI, UN GGIM, World Urban Forum, UN World Data Forum, OECD World Forum…
- Country factsheets and interactive maps: https://ghsl.jrc.ec.europa.eu/CFS.php

# Conclusions

| | |
|---|---|
| • A stronger policy demand | SDGs, AFINUA, GSARS… |
| • A new statistical instrument | The population grid |
| • New data sources | Remote sensing and geospatial data |
| • Two new definitions | Degree of urbanisation and FUA |

- A unique coalition of six international organisations …
- … that aims to create the first globally recommended definition of cities and rural areas to facilitate international comparisons (and not to replace national definitions!)