Australia

Note: This map is for illustrative purposes and is without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory covered by these maps.

The OECD, in cooperation with the EU, has developed a harmonised definition of functional urban areas (FUAs). Being composed of a city (or core) and its commuting zone, FUAs encompass the economic and functional extent of cities based on daily people's movements (OECD, 2012); (Dijkstra, Poelman, & Veneri, 2019). The definition of FUA aims at providing a functional/economic definition of cities and their area of influence, by maximising international comparability and overcoming the limitation of using purely administrative approaches. At the same time, the concept of FUA, unlike other approaches, ensures a minimum link to the government level of the city or metropolitan area.

FUAs are listed below by size, according to four classes:
- Small FUAs, with population between 50,000 and 100,000
- Medium-sized FUAs, with population between 100,000 and 250,000
- Metropolitan FUAs, with population between 250,000 and 1.5 million
- Large metropolitan FUAs, with population above 1.5 million

A city is a group of local administrative units (i.e. LAU for European countries, such as municipality, local authorities, etc.) where at least 50% of its population live in an urban centre. An urban centre is defined as a cluster of contiguous grid cells of one square kilometer with a density of at least 1,500 inhabitants per square kilometer and a population of at least 50,000 inhabitants overall.

The commuting zone is composed of the local administrative units for which at least 15% of their workforce commute to the city. Commuting zones of the functional areas are identified based on commuting data (travel from home-to-work). Commuting data are also used to define whether more than one city share the same commuting zone in a single polycentric functional urban area.

The list of functional urban areas takes into account the results of the consultation with the European National Statistical Institutes launched by Eurostat in June 2011 on the definition of cities and by the OECD with Delegates from the Working Party on Territorial Indicators. This list of functional urban areas may be reviewed on the basis of additional comments provided by countries. The OECD Metropolitan Database provides a set of economic, environmental, social and demographic modelled indicators on around 700 OECD metropolitan areas (functional urban areas with 250 000 or more inhabitants).

Additionally, interactive maps, histograms and summary profiles of each metropolitan area are available on the OECD Regions and Cities Data Visualisation tool.

The population grid used to create the FUAs in Australia is the 2015 Global Human Settlement (GHS) grid. The geographic building blocks are the Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2).

Table 1. List of functional urban areas

FUA name	FUA code	Population in 2015 (GHS)	Share of population living in the city (%)
Ballarat	AUS18	130 000	65
Bendigo	AUS19	107 000	68
Cairns	AUS15	161 000	60
Canberra	AUS07	400 000	74
Geelong	AUS14	274 000	60
Gold Coast	AUS06	536 000	55
Greater Adelaide	AUS05	1 352 000	86
Greater Brisbane	AUS03	2 258 000	72
Greater Darwin	AUS16	131 000	39
Greater Hobart	AUS12	217 000	33
Greater Melbourne	AUS02	4 441 000	86
Greater Perth	AUS04	1 901 000	74
Greater Sydney	AUS01	4 751 000	87
Newcastle	AUS08	447 000	62
Sunshine Coast	AUS11	230 000	37
Toowoomba	AUS17	171 000	59
Townsville	AUS13	192 000	64
Wollongong	AUS10	275 000	49

Note: This document includes information as of 2022.

References

Dijkstra, L., H. Poelman and P. Veneri (2019), "The EU-OECD definition of a functional urban area", OECD Regional Development Working Papers, No. 2019/11, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/d58cb34d-en.

OECD (2012), Redefining "Urban": A New Way to Measure Metropolitan Areas, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264174108-en.