



A closer look at Rural Europe

Better rural statistics for evidence-based policymaking

Teodora Brandmueller

Eurostat

Rural Pact Conference 'From vision to action: Empowering rural areas for the future'

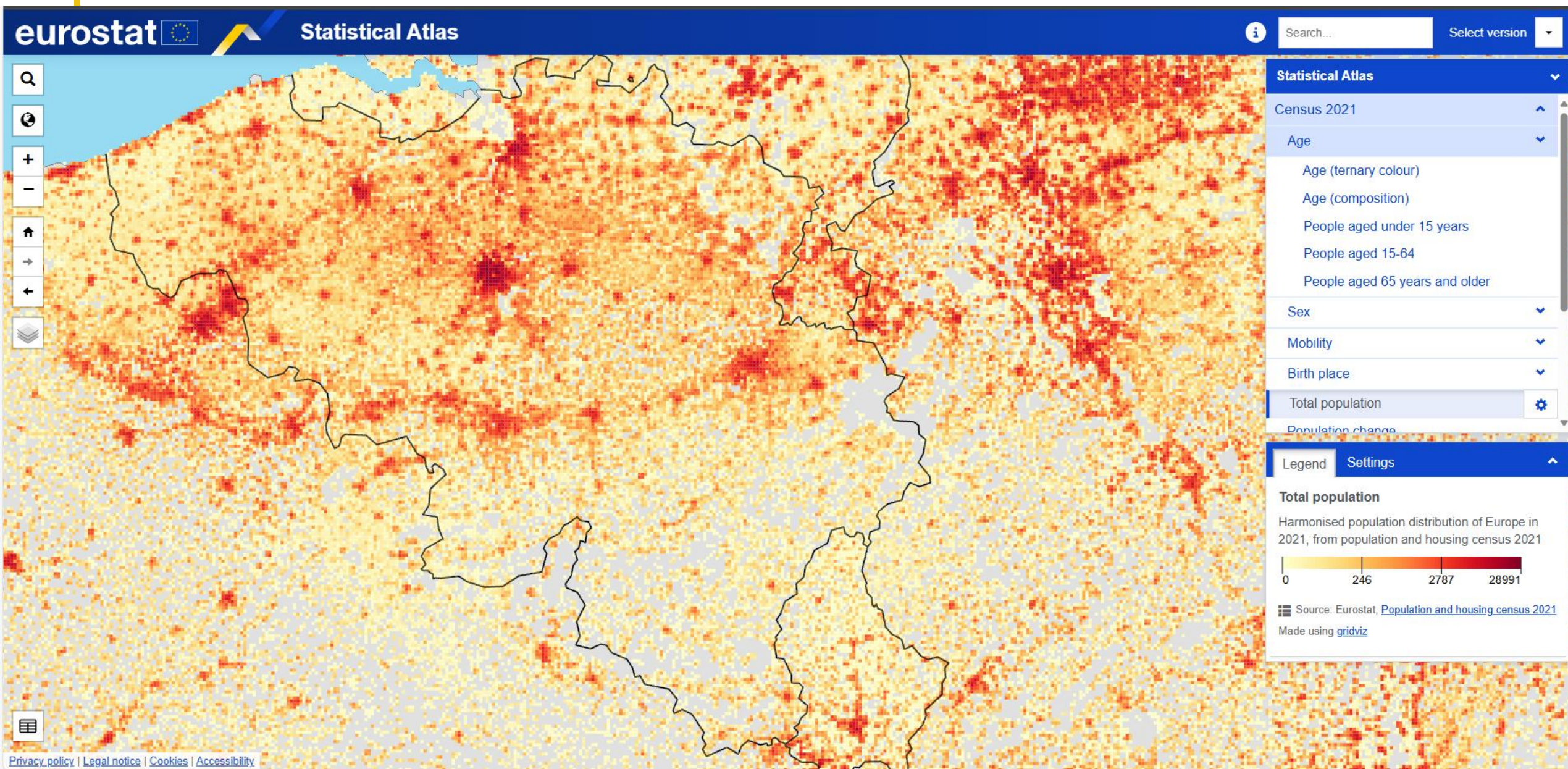
Château du Biez (Belgium)

16-17 September



Adding value by geolocalisation







Statistical Atlas

Census 2021

1

^

Age

1

▼

Age (ternary colour)

⚙

Age (composition)

People aged under 15 years

People aged 15-64

People aged 65 years and older

Sex

▼

Mobility

▼

Birth place

▼

Total population

Population change

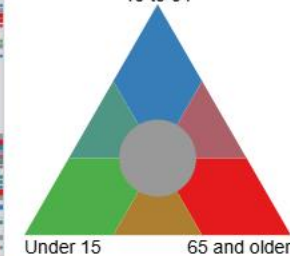
Legend

Settings

^

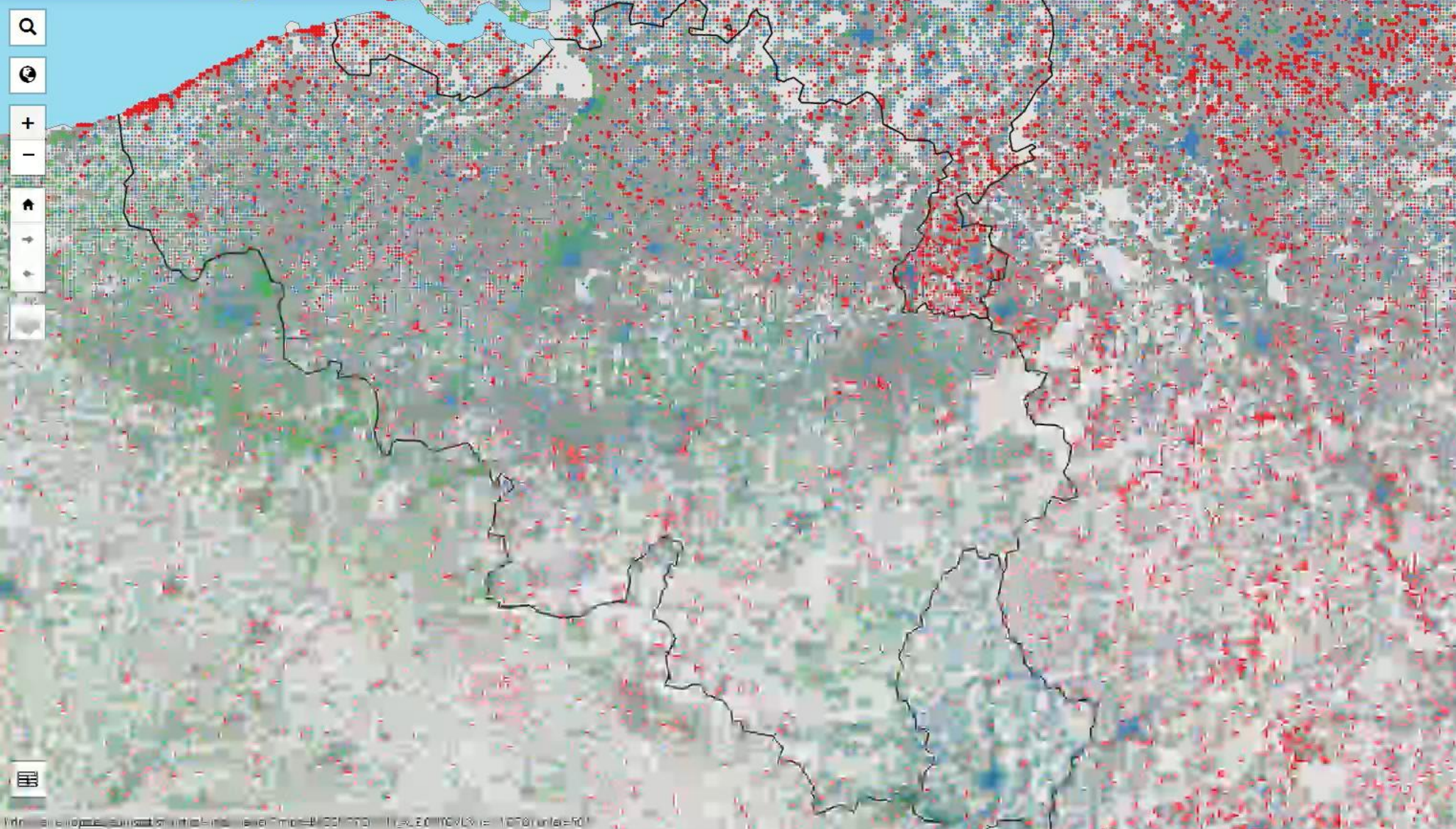
Age (ternary colour)

15 to 64



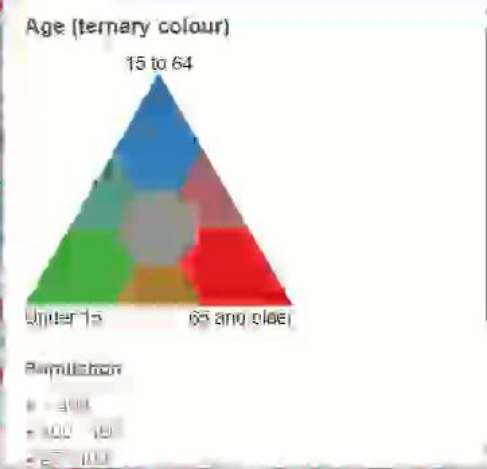
Population

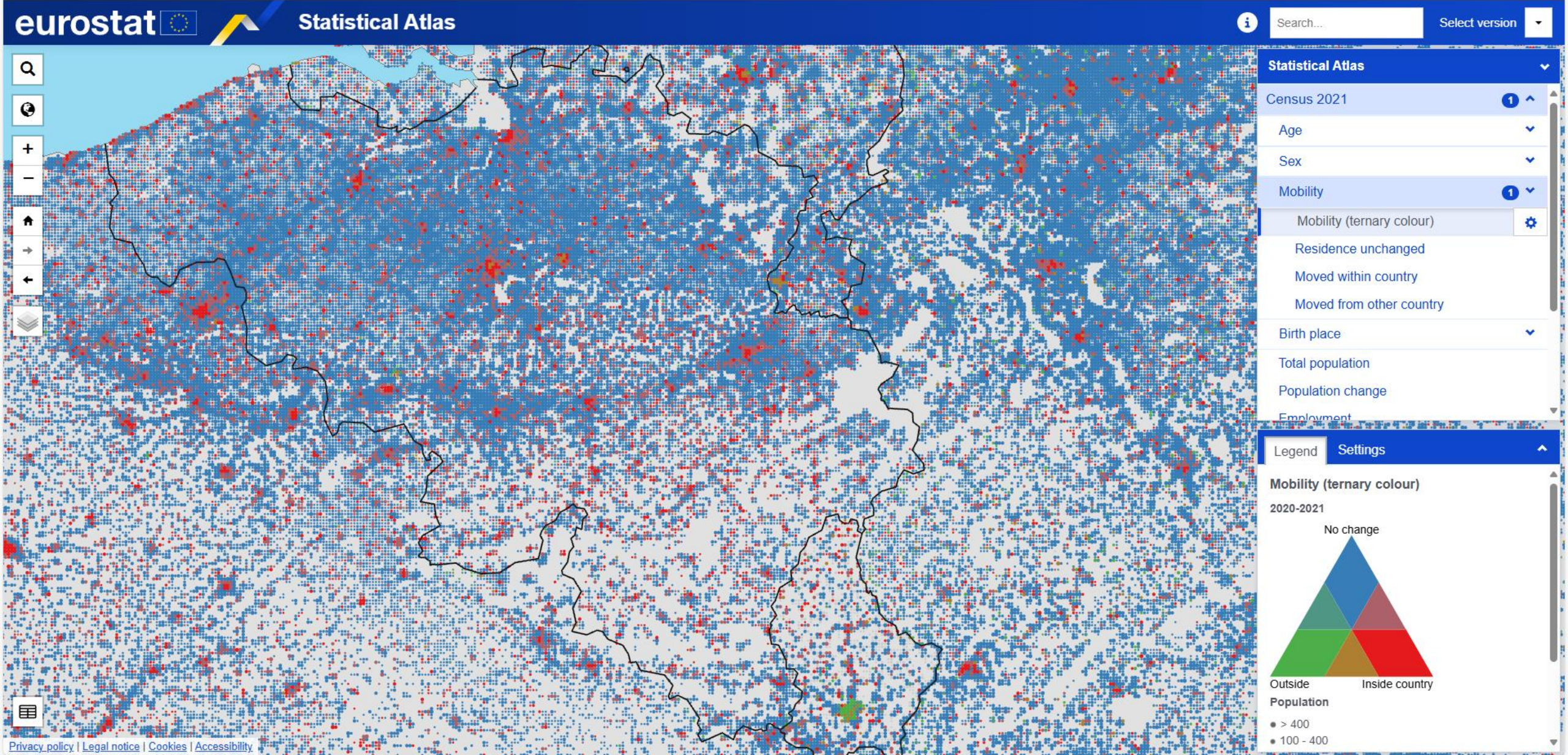
- > 400
- 100 - 400
- 25 - 100



- Statistical Atlas 
- Census 2021  1
- Farming 
- Land cover 
- Regional Yearbook 2024 
- Typologies, regions and cities 

Legend Settings





Why do we need harmonized definitions?

- ▶ Many policy relevant statistical indicators should be measured in rural and urban areas.
- ▶ For international comparison we need a harmonised definition
- ▶ European Statistical System has adopted a harmonised approach to define rural areas and rural regions

Washington D.C.
23°



Paris
23°

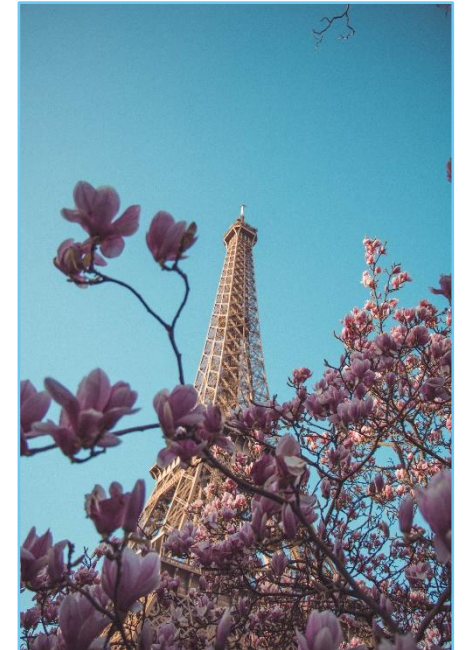
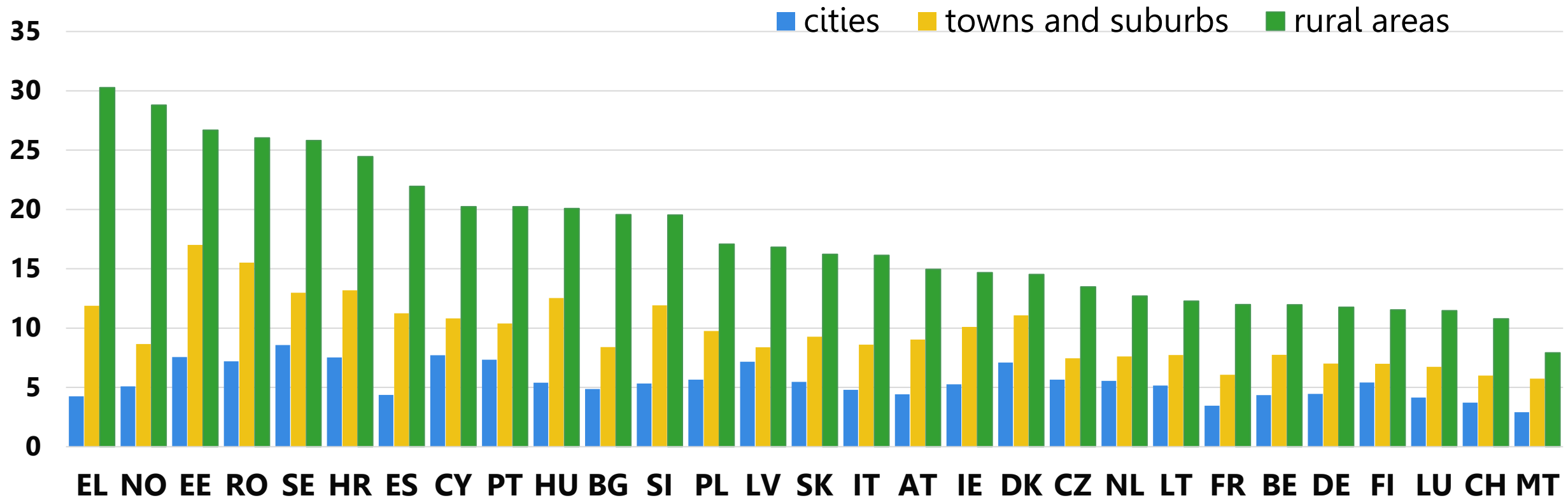


Photo by [Caleb Fisher](#) on [Unsplash](#)
Photo by [Killian Cartignies](#) on [Unsplash](#)

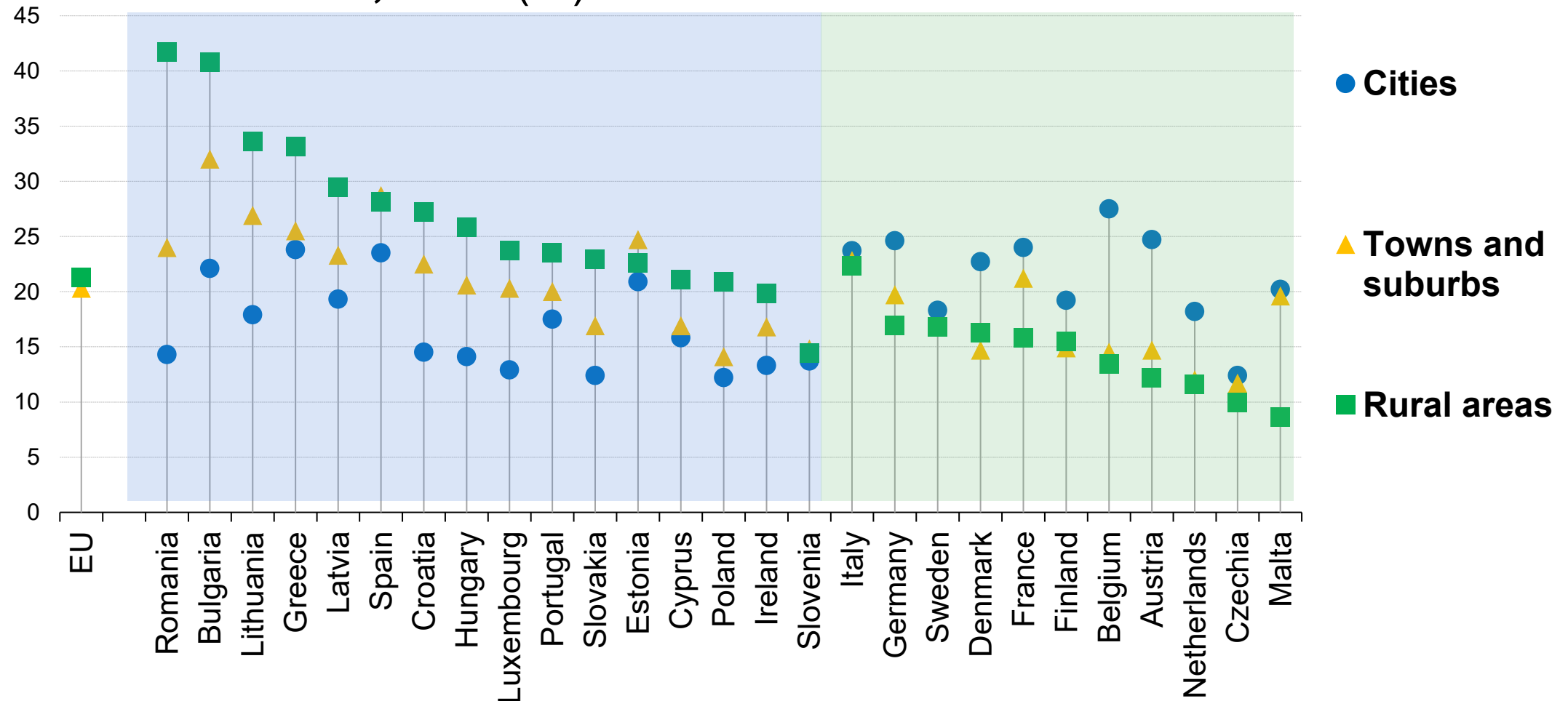
Accessibility to health care services

Population weighted average travel time to the nearest healthcare service in minutes



Beyond the EU average: Unequal realities across Rural and Urban Europe

Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion by degree of urbanisation, 2024 (%)



Looking behind the numbers...



Romania
42%



France
16%



Spain
28%



Denmark
16%



Sweden
17%



Netherlands
12%

The many faces of Rural Europe



Source: Photos www.gapminder.org (Creative Commons Attribution 4.0);

What they treasure most



Source: Photos www.gapminder.org (Creative Commons Attribution 4.0;

Better rural statistics – Achievements of the Rural Action Plan

- ▶ Detailed population data from the 2021 census disseminated via a 1kmx1km grid, enabling user-defined rural analyses
- ▶ Improved public service accessibility Indicators
- ▶ A rural area delineation using harmonized methodology and 2021 population census data
- ▶ A growing number of indicators—covering health, education, employment, living conditions, digital society and more—are now published, facilitating detailed analysis of rural areas. See [Rural Europe - Statistics Explained - Eurostat](#)

Better rural statistics – The way forward

- ▶ Tap into **new data sources** and innovative methods
- ▶ Speak the **same language** with harmonised definitions
- ▶ Capture the **full picture** with richer indicators

**Marking sheep is quick.
Measuring rural realities takes
time and effort!**





Thank you!

Join the Rural Pact Community and online platform

www.ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en



www.ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu

