

United Kingdom



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 the United Kingdom is the 2011 Geostat grid. The geographic building blocks are the LAU-1 units. Commuting data comes from the 2011 Census.

Table 1. List of functional urban areas

FUA name	FUA code	Population in 2015 (GHS)	Share of population living in the city (%)
Aberdeen	UK016	477 000	47
Ashford	UK041	124 000	100
Basingstoke and Deane	UK548	172 000	100
Bath and North East Somerset	UK031	178 000	100
Bedford	UK549	163 000	100
Belfast	UK012	767 000	43
Blackburn with Darwen	UK557	289 000	80
Blackpool	UK553	309 000	42
Bournemouth	UK539	508 000	65
Bracknell Forest	UK573	113 000	100
Brighton and Hove	UK515	429 000	63
Bristol	UK011	918 000	48
Burnley	UK050	174 000	49
Cambridge	UK017	376 000	34
Cardiff	UK009	901 000	40
Carlisle	UK575	110 000	100
Cheltenham	UK571	204 000	57
Cheshire West and Chester	UK568	485 000	69
Chesterfield	UK047	99 000	100

Colchester	UK546	307 000	58
Corby	UK582	63 000	100
Coventry	UK025	697 000	100
Crawley	UK576	105 000	100
Dacorum	UK556	147 000	100
Darlington	UK044	108 000	100
Derby	UK518	487 000	52
Derry & Strabane Local Government District	UK586	149 000	100
Doncaster	UK506	311 000	100
Dundee City	UK550	258 000	56
East Staffordshire	UK043	111 000	100
Eastbourne	UK055	94 000	100
Edinburgh	UK007	842 000	57
Exeter	UK018	450 000	26
Falkirk	UK551	159 000	100
Glasgow	UK004	1 786 000	66
Gloucester	UK572	122 000	100
Great Yarmouth	UK051	97 000	100
Guildford	UK033	262 000	54
Halton	UK062	125 000	100
Hastings	UK056	175 000	50
Ipswich	UK569	349 000	39
Kettering	UK583	99 000	100
Kingston upon Hull	UK026	590 000	43
Leeds	UK003	2 577 000	80
Leicester	UK014	867 000	40
Lincoln	UK019	303 000	31
Liverpool	UK006	1 484 000	82
London	UK001	11 982 000	82
Luton	UK532	200 000	100
Maidstone	UK554	164 000	100
Manchester	UK008	3 293 000	84
Mansfield	UK046	106 000	100
Medway	UK513	263 000	100
Middlesbrough	UK559	554 000	76
Milton Keynes	UK525	264 000	100
Newcastle upon Tyne	UK013	1 151 000	73

Newport	UK558	239 000	62
North East Lincolnshire	UK543	159 000	100
Northampton	UK528	465 000	45
Norwich	UK566	392 000	32
Nottingham	UK029	892 000	36
Oxford	UK560	528 000	29
Peterborough	UK545	197 000	100
Plymouth	UK516	393 000	63
Portsmouth	UK023	510 000	55
Preston	UK562	254 000	56
Reading	UK552	310 000	48
Redditch	UK059	80 000	100
Rushmoor	UK580	89 000	100
Sheffield	UK010	1 164 000	91
Slough	UK567	140 000	100
Southampton	UK520	664 000	55
Stevenage	UK021	78 000	100
Stoke-on-Trent	UK027	470 000	78
Sunderland	UK510	265 000	100
Swansea	UK517	378 000	63
Swindon	UK535	219 000	100
Telford and Wrekin	UK542	168 000	100
Thanet	UK034	125 000	100
Torbay	UK561	125 000	100
Warrington	UK531	205 000	100
Waveney	UK038	113 000	100
West Midlands urban area	UK002	3 020 000	87
Worcester	UK024	174 000	54
Worthing	UK045	101 000	100
Wrexham	UK022	137 000	100
Wycombe	UK540	171 000	100
York	UK533	204 000	100

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>.