

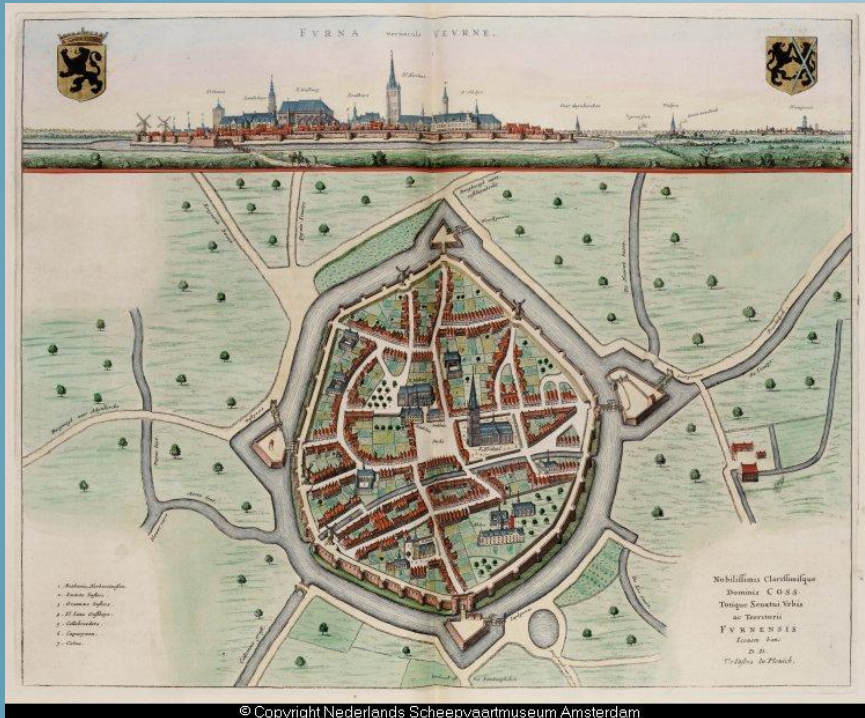
THE COUNTRYSIDE IN URBANIZED FLANDERS: TOWARDS A FLEXIBLE DEFINITION FOR A DYNAMIC POLICY

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WHAT IS URBAN, WHAT IS RURAL?



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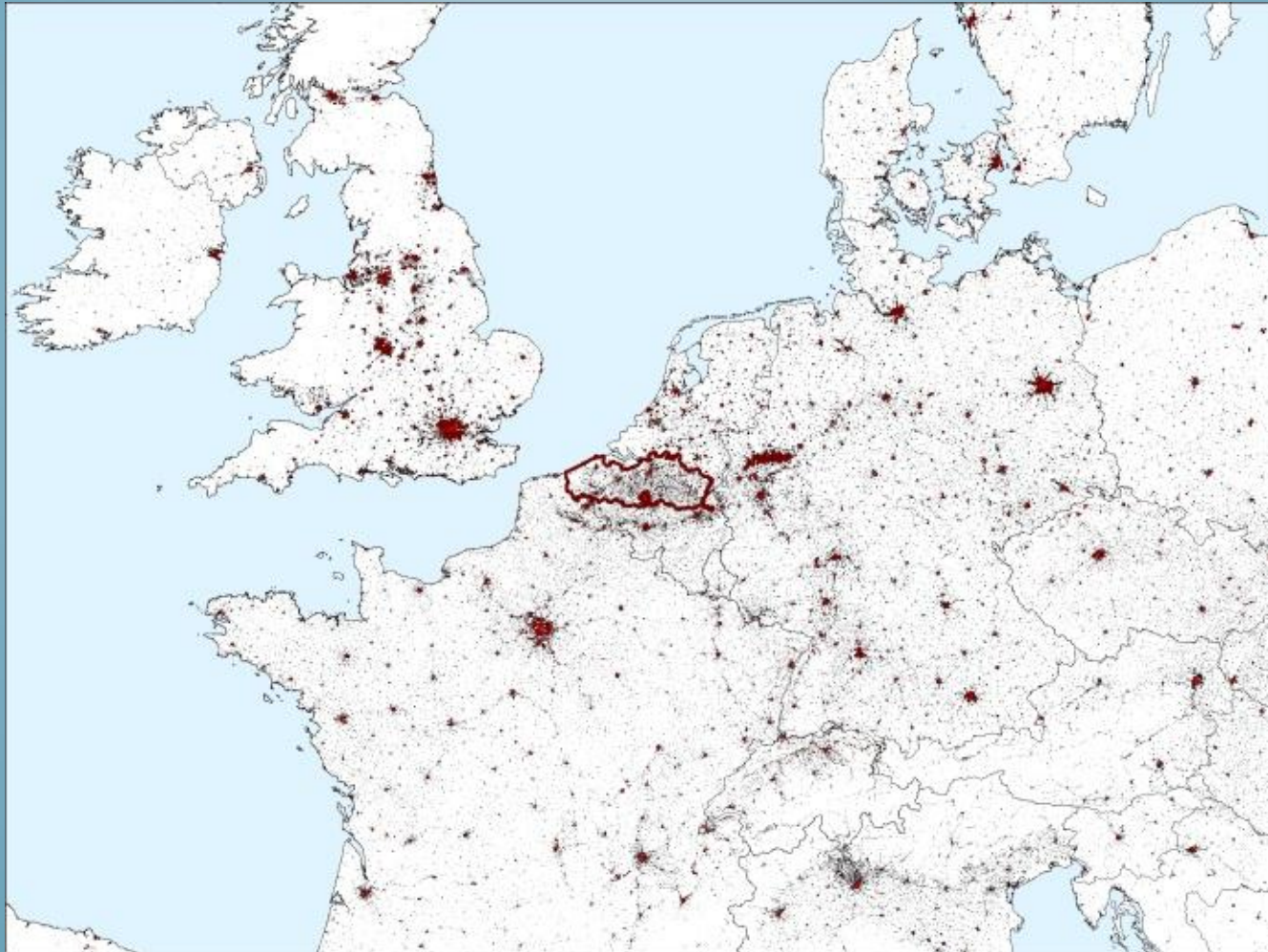
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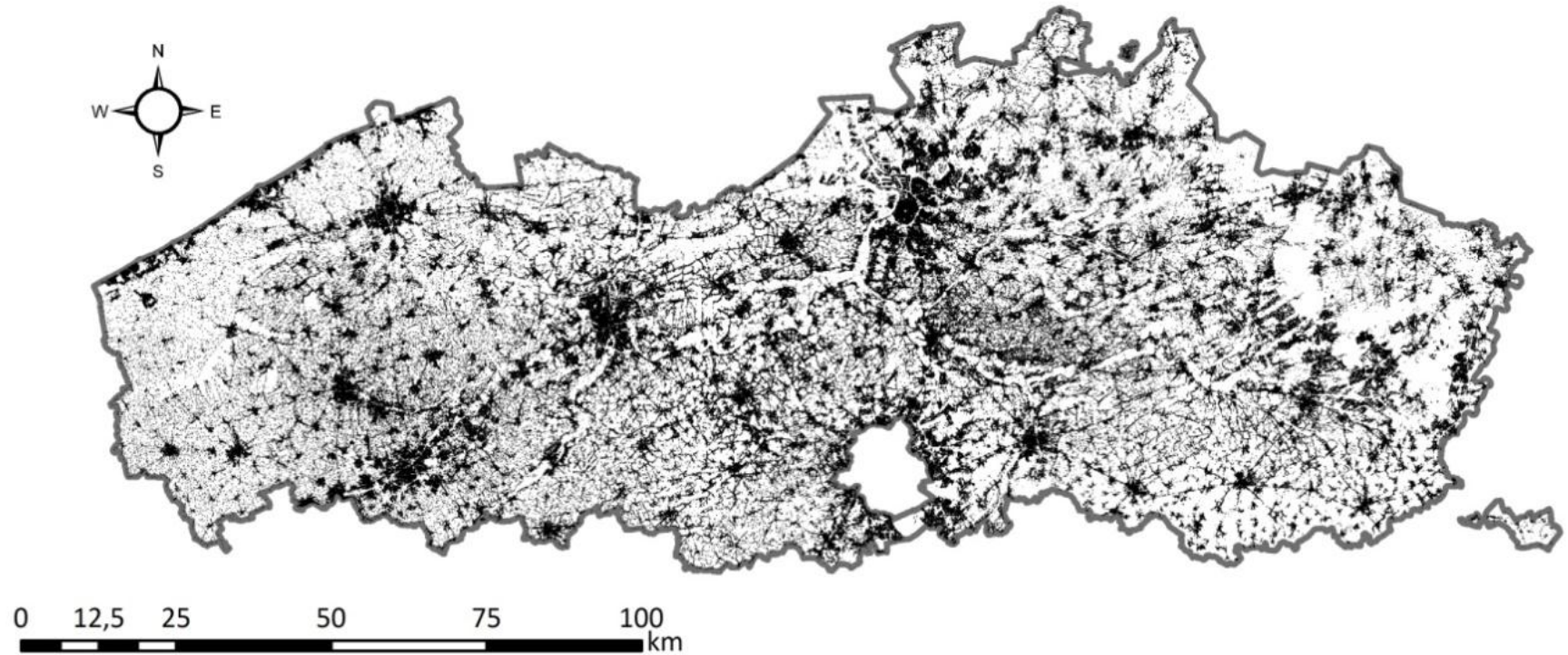
Veurne, West-Flanders

WHAT IS URBAN, WHAT IS RURAL?



Building pattern in Western Europe

WHAT IS URBAN, WHAT IS RURAL?



Building pattern in the region of Flanders (Belgium)

WHAT IS URBAN, WHAT IS RURAL?



rural



rural?

PROBLEM

No universal agreement on the definition of the term 'rural', impossible to develop an exact and unambiguous definition.

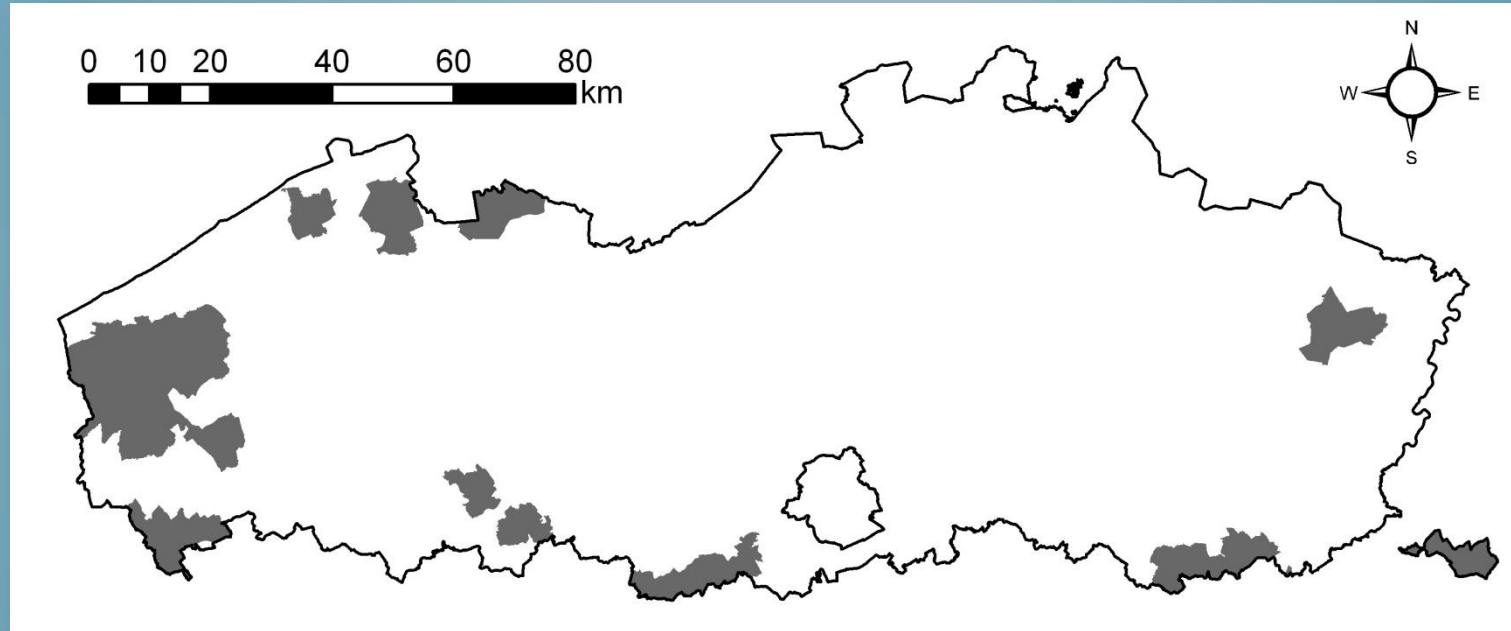


Increasing need for a clear demarcation of rural and urban areas, because many policy initiatives are based on it (e.g. European Rural Development Policy)

OBJECTIVES

- *Analysis of existing definitions of the Flemish countryside*
- *Development of a new dynamic method to define the Flemish countryside in a flexible way*

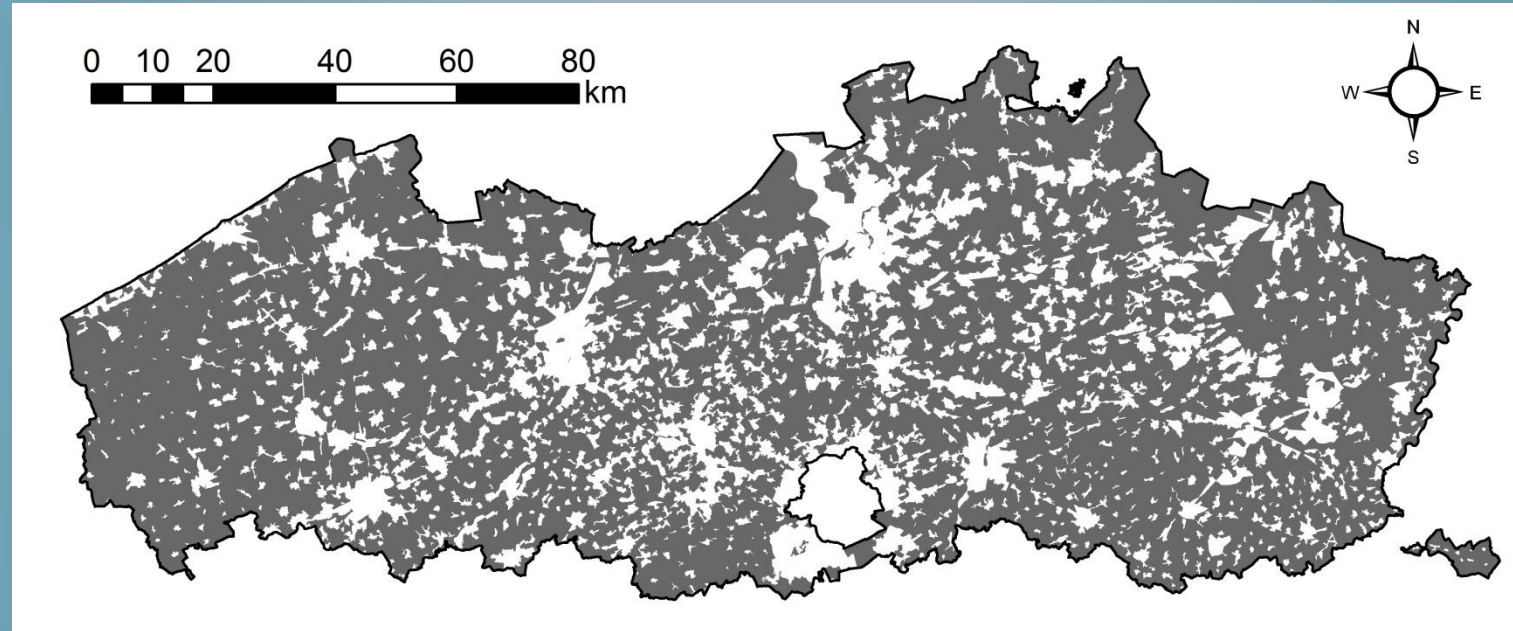
ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS



OECD DEFINITION

Criterion: 150 inh/km²

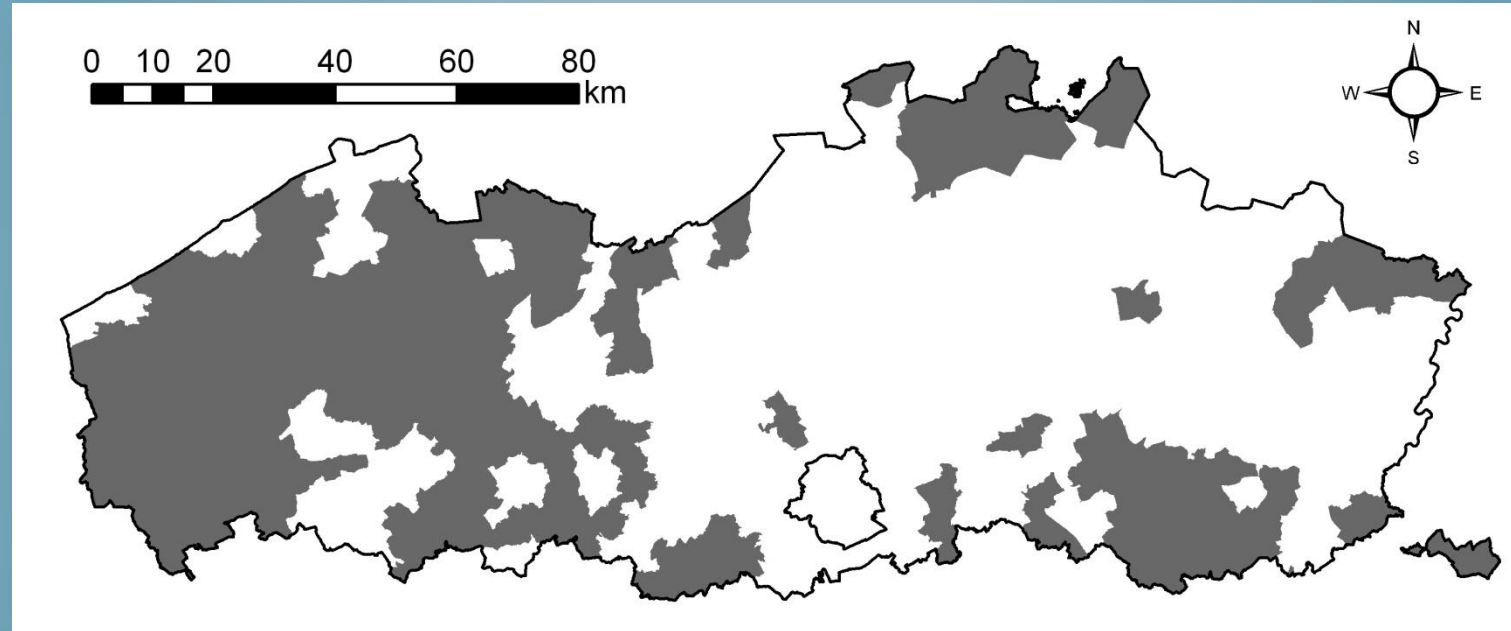
ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS



ADSEI non-residential areas

Criterion: morphologically connected developments

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS

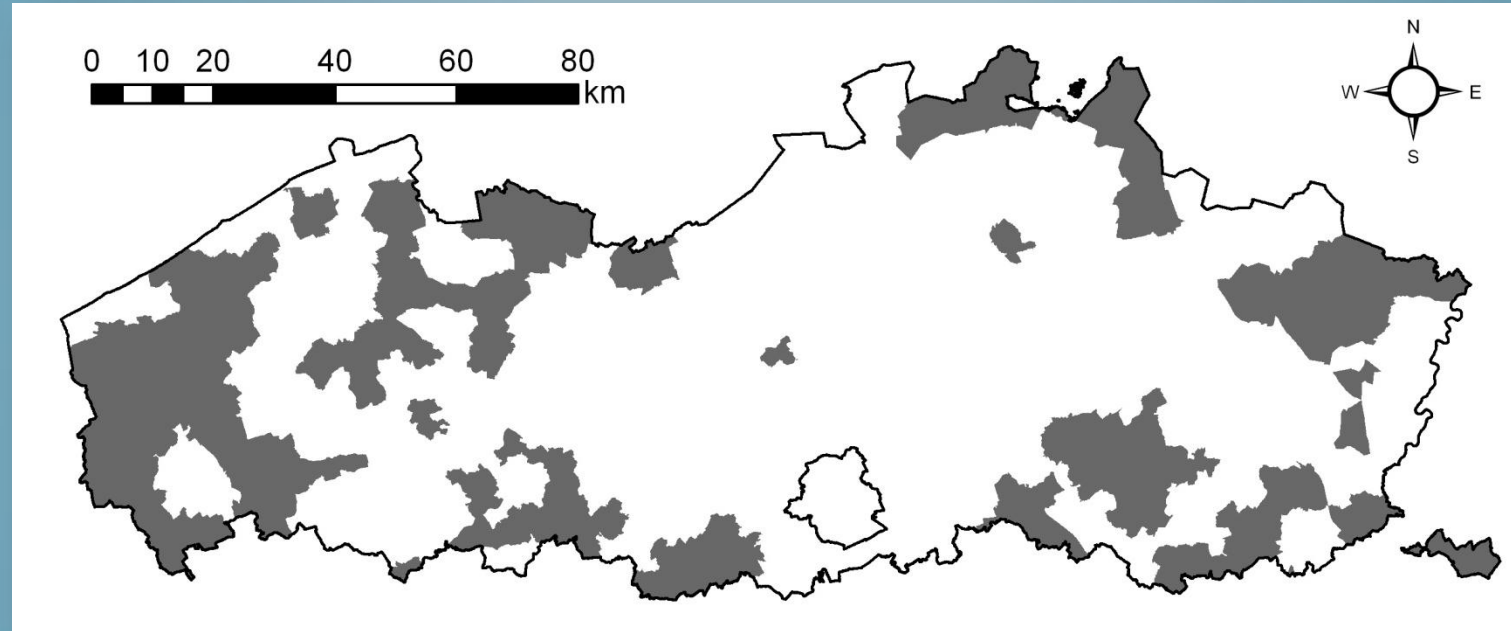


SPRE rural cluster

Criteria:

- population density
- population growth
- employment in agricultural sector
- area of agricultural land

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS



VVSG selection rural policy

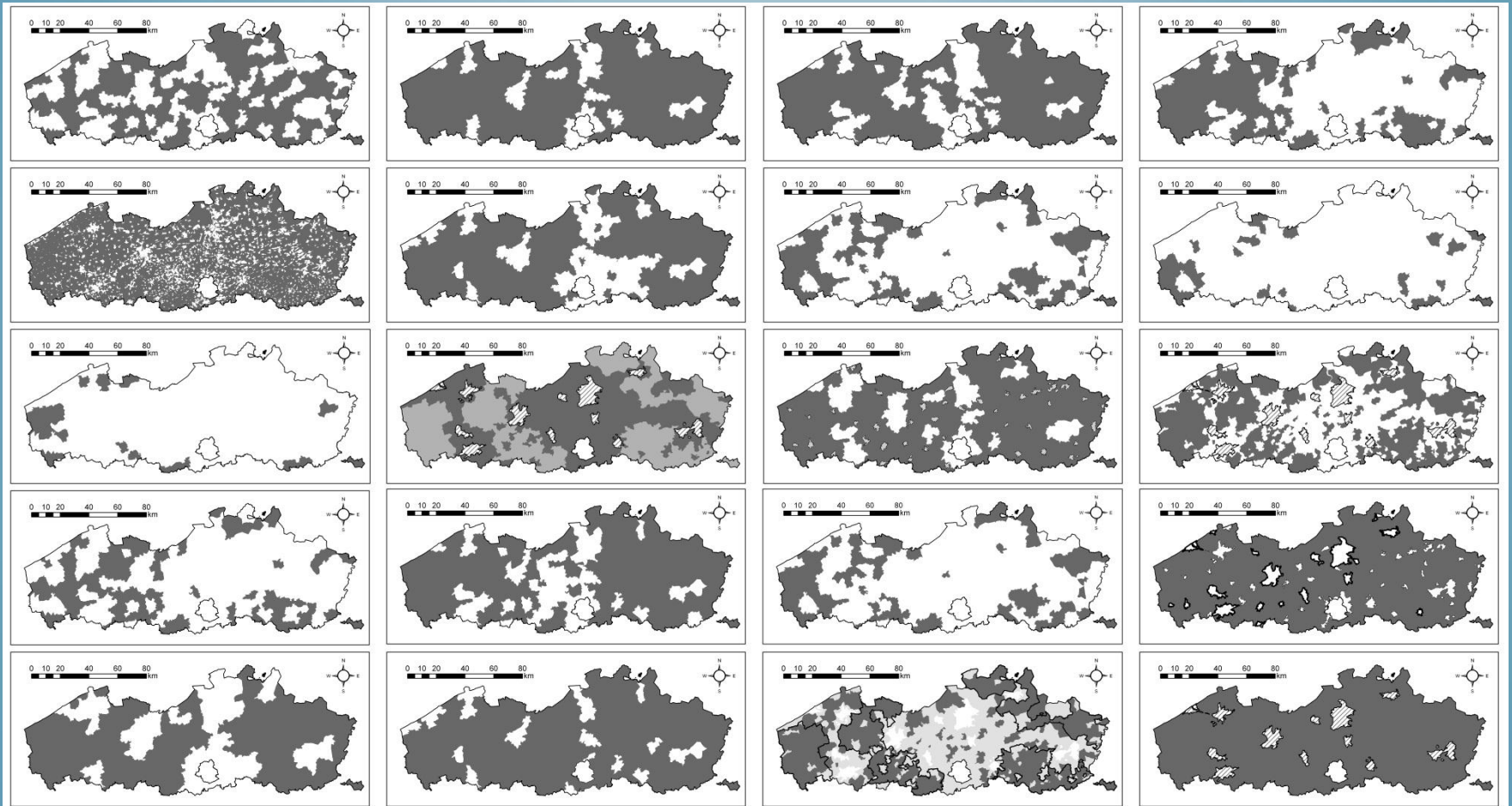
Criteria: - population

- population density

- municipal financial power

- percentage built-up area

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS



From 9 to 93 % of the Flemish territory

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEFINITIONS

CONCLUSIONS

- A multitude of definitions
- The countryside as a residual space
- Narrow view on indicators
- Focus on an unambiguous definition

NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH

- One dynamic method, easily adaptable to different purposes
- The countryside approached in a positive way, starting from its specific characteristics
- Morphologic, demographic, social, cultural and economic indicators
- Towards a continuum of different degrees of 'rurality'

A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE

Six themes and corresponding indicators



Preservation and/or strenghtening of open space

- Availability of open space
- Building density
- Green space contiguity
- Agricultural space contiguity
- Human pressure on open space
- Scenic value



Construction, maintenance and management of local infrastructure

- Local roads
- Local verge management
- Local watercourses
- Local bicycle network
- Local sanitation costs

A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE

Six themes and corresponding indicators



*Ensuring a minimum and/or appropriate **accessibility***

- Car ownership
- Satisfaction with public transport
- Time distance to nearest city during rush hours



*Preservation and/or strenghtening of the **local economy***

- Job ratio
- Unemployment rate
- Commuting time
- Employment in agriculture

A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE

Six themes and corresponding indicators



Conservation and management of **local heritage**

- Architectural heritage
- Landscape point relics
- Protected city- and townscapes

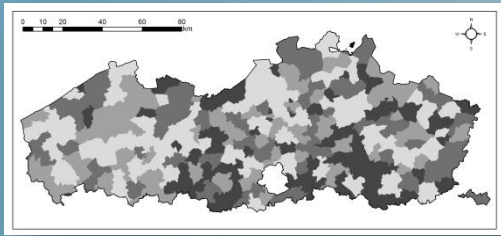


Provision of **(minimum) services** (education, culture, health care, ...)

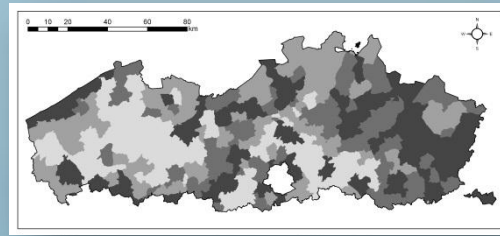
- Population density
- Address density
- Satisfaction with local shops
- Satisfaction with social and education facilities
- Satisfaction with culture and leisure facilities

A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE

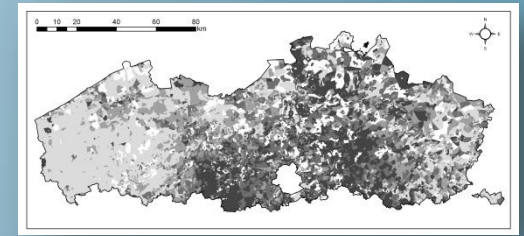
Different indicator maps per rural policy theme (e.g. 'local economy')



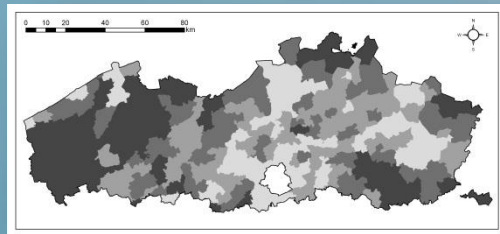
Job ratio



*Unemployment
rate*



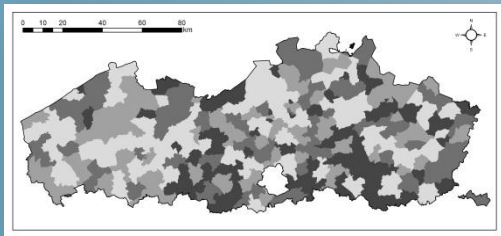
*Commuting
time*



*Employment in
agriculture*

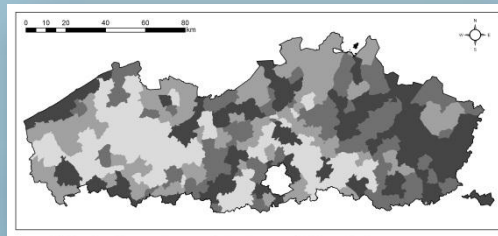
A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE

*Combined maps per rural policy theme
(e.g. 'local economy')*



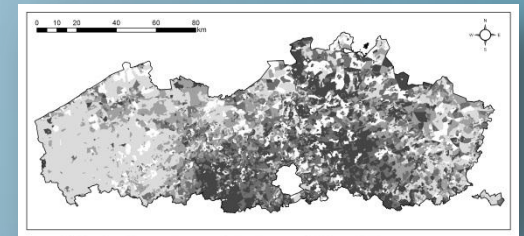
Job ratio

+



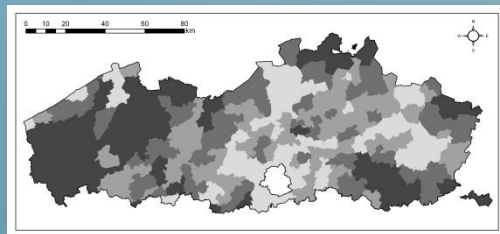
*Unemployment
rate*

+



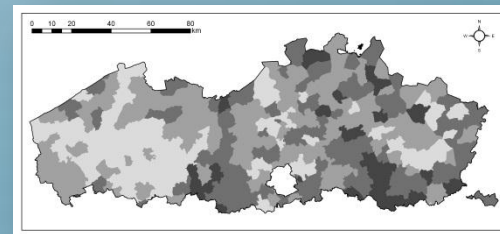
*Commuting
time*

+



*Employment in
agriculture*

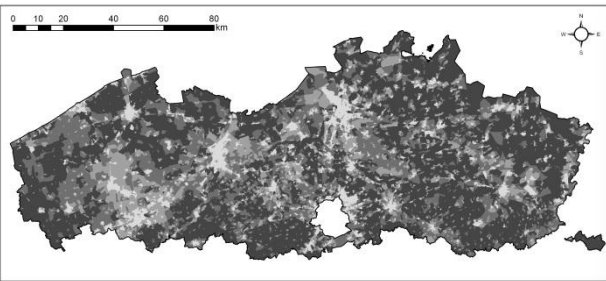
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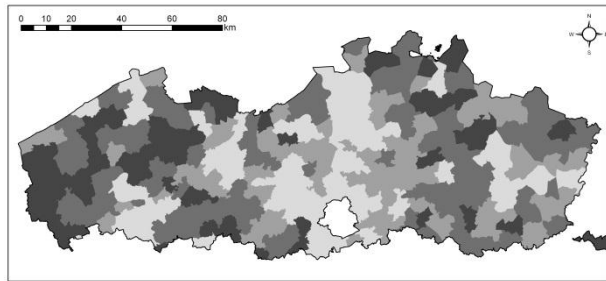
COMBINATION

A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE

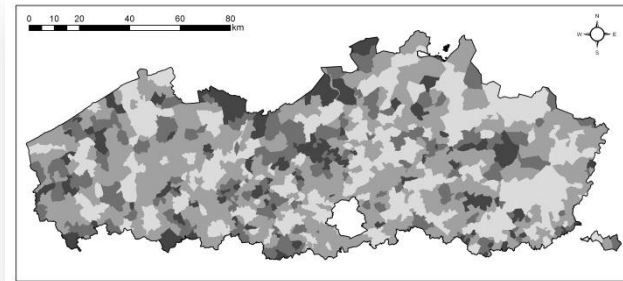
6 combined maps, 6 different definitions



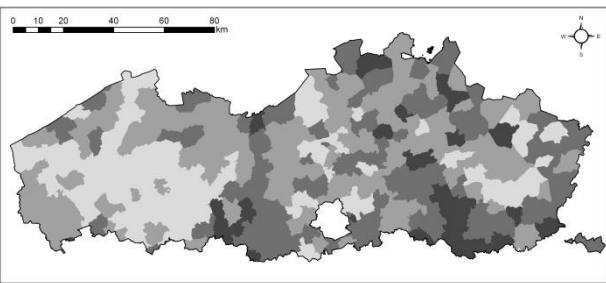
Open space



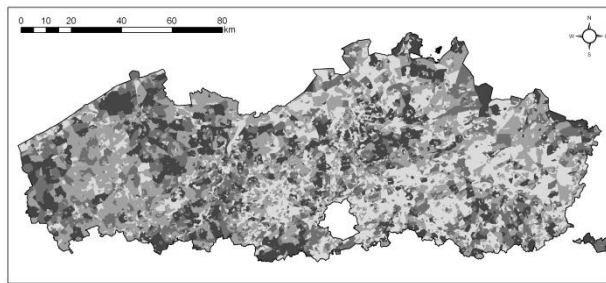
*Local
infrastructures*



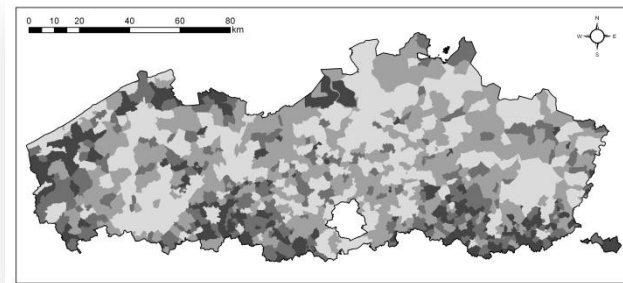
Accessibility



Local economy



Local heritage



*(Minimum)
services*

A NEW DYNAMIC METHOD TO DEFINE THE COUNTRYSIDE



- Possibility of an adapted definition, according to the specific rural policy aim
- Tool to define the areas on which rural policy has to concentrate, depending on priorities and budgets
- Evaluation instrument for financing projects
- Communication tool
- Not all rural characteristics are covered by existing indicators
- Outdated data

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