

32. HEALTH RESOURCES: DENSITY OF PRACTISING NURSES

Nursing staff are involved in several ways in the provision of both primary health care and hospital care. They form the largest category of health-care providers in almost all OECD member countries.

Distribution of nurses is an important factor

A sufficient number of nurses is required to guarantee the quality of hospital care. The distribution of labour between doctors and nurses may vary, and there may be substitution for some types of care. It is therefore important to take account of both physicians and nurses per 1 000 population, to obtain an accurate reflection of care provision.

The organisation of healthcare systems and the distribution of work, duties and competencies of health-care professionals vary widely across countries. In addition, the professional categories covered by the term “nurse” in the statistics may also vary. For instance, it may include midwives.

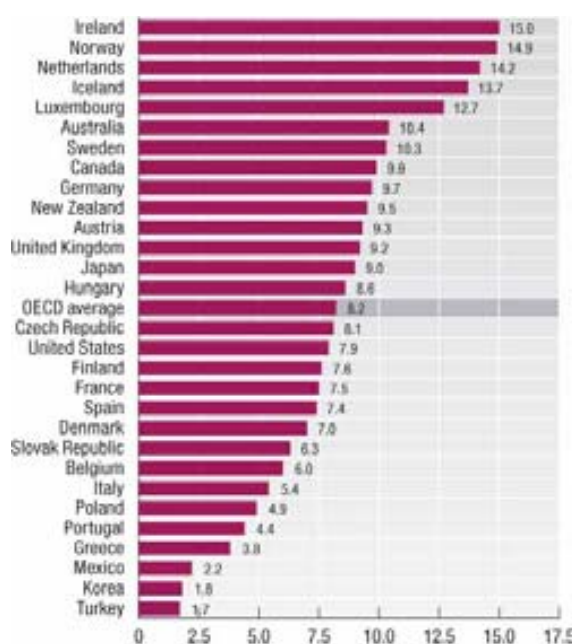
Moreover, coverage may be incomplete for some care establishments.

In 2004, the average number of nurses in OECD countries was 8.2 per 1 000 population, but it varies substantially from one OECD country to another, in part because of the limited comparability of data (Figure 32.1).

Regional variations are high in Spain and Mexico

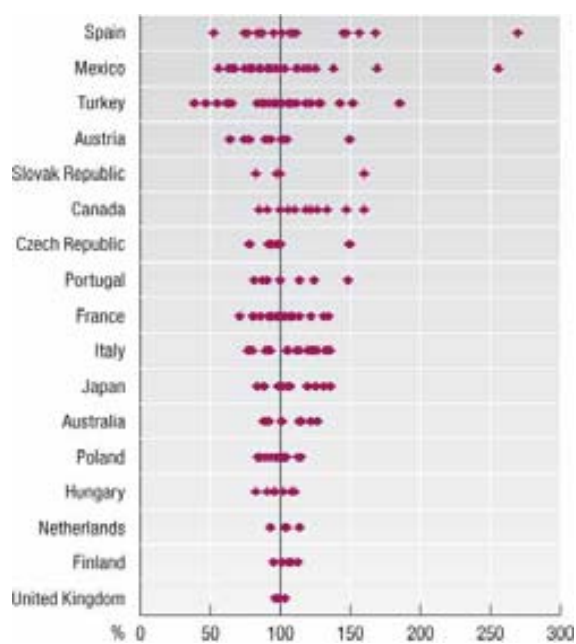
In Spain, Mexico and Turkey, the number of nurses per 1 000 population varies considerably across regions. Some regions in Spain and Mexico have 2.5 times more nurses per 1 000 than the national average (Figure 32.2). In parts of Turkey, the number of nursing staff per 1 000 population is only 40% of the national average. In other OECD countries, particularly the United Kingdom and Finland, the regional distribution is markedly more balanced.

32.1. Nursing staff per 1 000 population, 2004



32.2. Regional variation in nursing staff per 1 000 population, 2004 (TL2)

Percentage of the national average



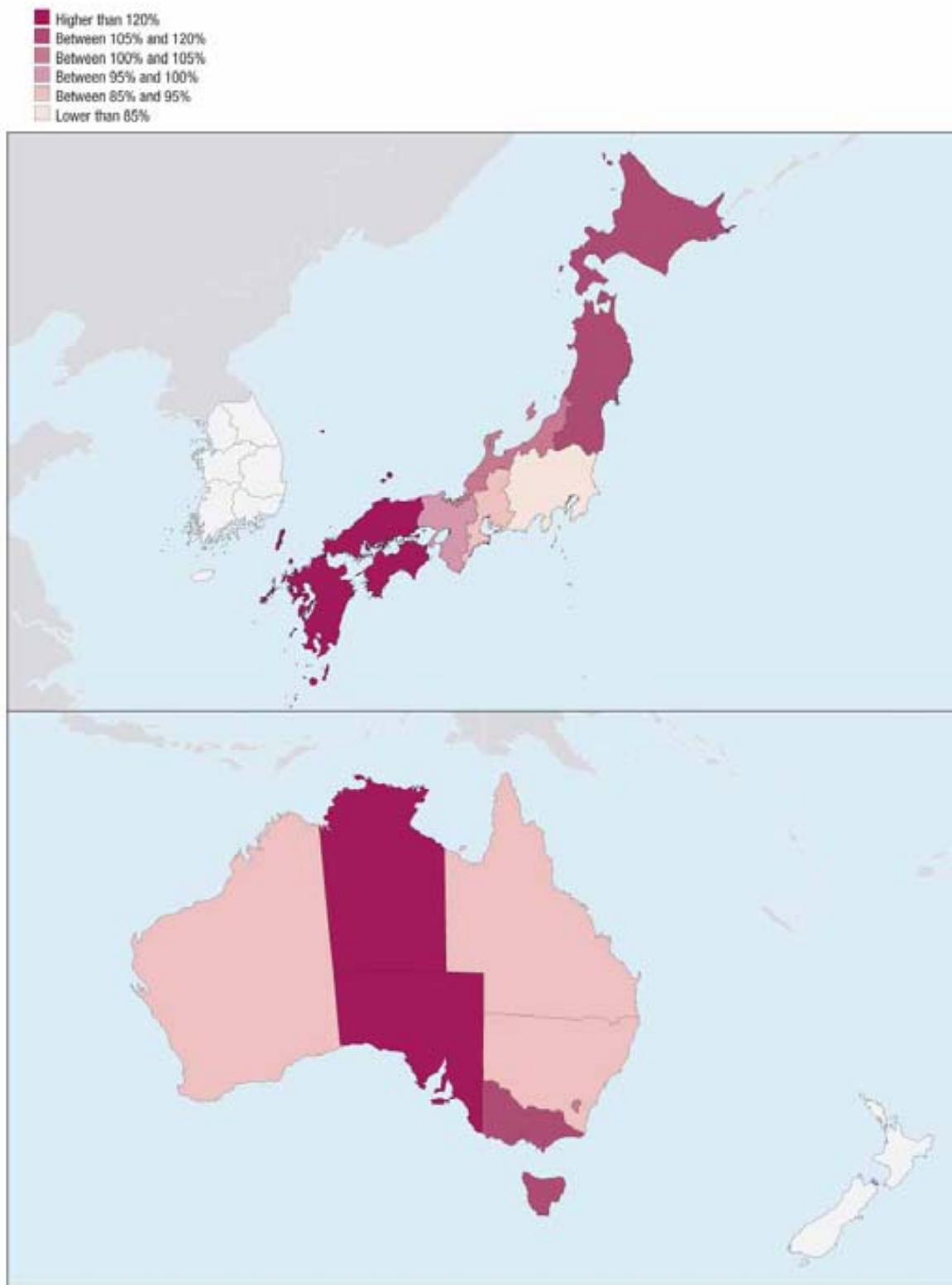
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Definition

The number of nurses practicing in a region during the reference year.

32.3. Density of nurses: Asia and Oceania

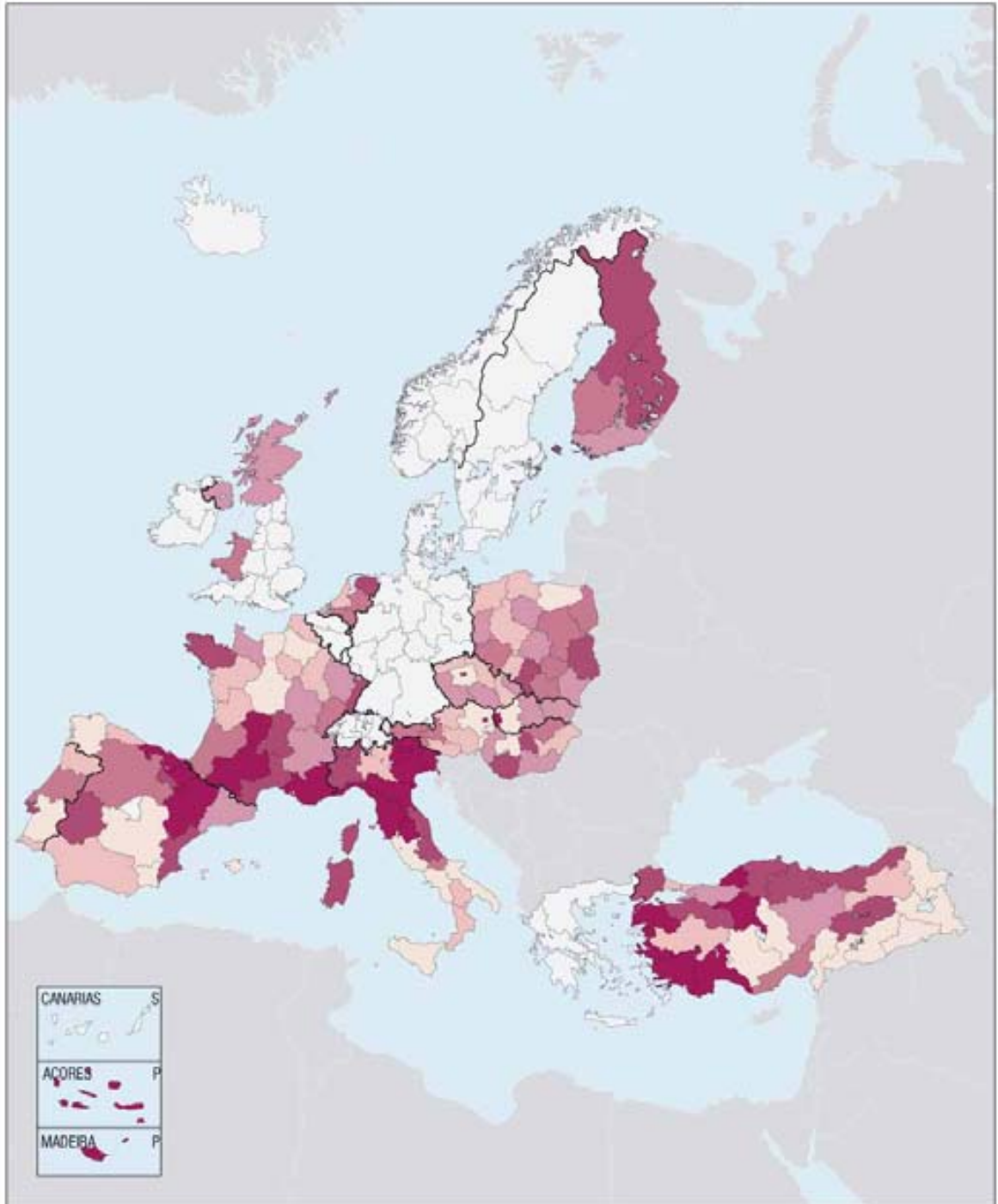
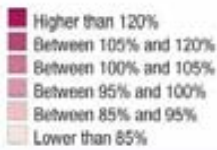
Percentage of national average, 2004



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32.4. Density of nurses: Europe

Percentage of national average, 2004

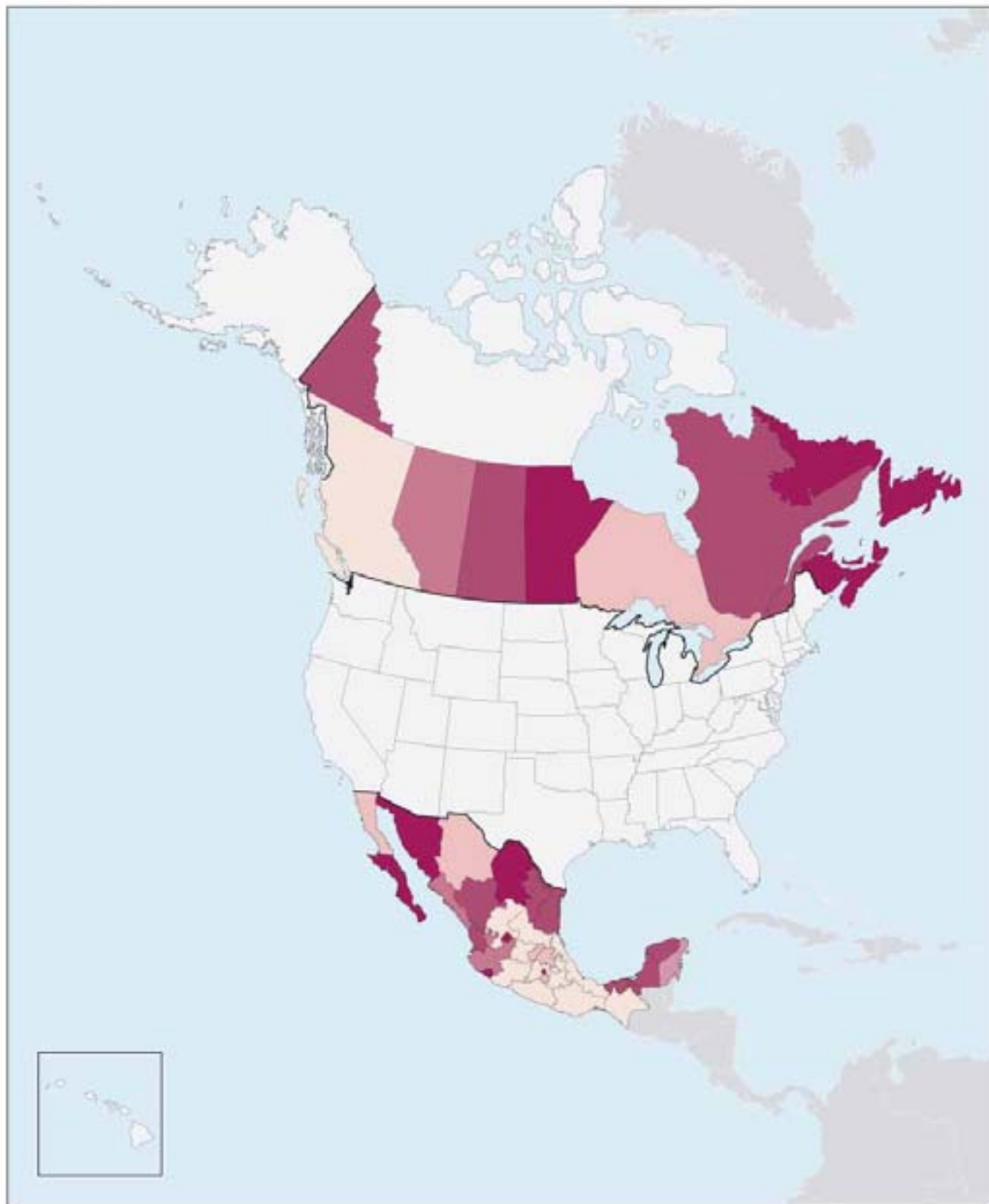



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32.5. Density of nurses: North America

Percentage of national average, 2004

- Higher than 120%
- Between 105% and 120%
- Between 100% and 105%
- Between 95% and 100%
- Between 85% and 95%
- Lower than 85%



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Symbols and Abbreviations

OECD (25) average	Unweighted average of 25 OECD countries.
OECD (25) total	Sum over all regions of 25 OECD countries.
OECD (25)	Range of variation over all regions of 25 OECD countries.
TL2	Territorial Level 2.
TL3	Territorial Level 3
NOG	Non Official Grid
*	Differences in the definition of data or regions. Please check the “Sources and Methodology” section.
PU	Predominantly Urban
IN	Intermediate
PR	Predominantly Rural
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
USD	United States Dollar





I. REGIONS AS ACTORS OF NATIONAL GROWTH

1. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF POPULATION
2. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF THE ELDERLY POPULATION
3. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF GDP
4. REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO GROWTH IN NATIONAL GDP
5. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF INDUSTRIES
6. REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT
7. GEOGRAPHIC CONCENTRATION OF PATENTS

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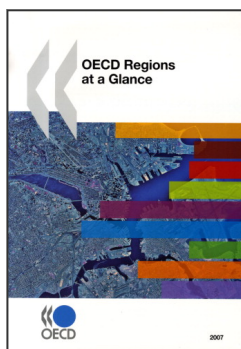
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