

36. NON-MEDICAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: PREVALENCE OF OBESITY

Obesity is a known risk factor for several health problems, including diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases, as well as respiratory and musculoskeletal disorders. There has been a considerable increase in obesity-related problems over the past two decades, along with an associated rise in health-care costs. Adults with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of over 30 are defined as obese. However, some ethnic groups may have equivalent levels of risk at lower or higher BMIs. Survey definitions differ significantly among countries. As a consequence, results may be quite different depending on whether obesity is self-reported (e.g. Australia, the United States) or measured (see Sources and Methodologies).

Obesity is highest in North America and Hungary

Of the nine countries for which this information is available at the regional level, obesity is most

prevalent on average in the United States, Canada and Hungary (respectively 22%, 18% and 18% compared with the 15% average across all nine countries) (Figure 36.1). The region with the lowest prevalence of obesity in each of these countries has a rate higher than the OECD average. At the other end of the scale, Italy, and particularly Switzerland, have far fewer cases of obesity (averaging 9% and 7%, respectively).

Regional variations are small in Australia ...

Australia has the smallest regional disparities, ranging from 15.6% to 17.6% (Figure 36.2). In Canada, which has an average incidence of obesity similar to Australia's, there are very wide regional disparities, ranging from 11.6% to 21.9%.

... but large in Spain

While obesity is below the OECD average in Spain, it displays the largest regional disparities.

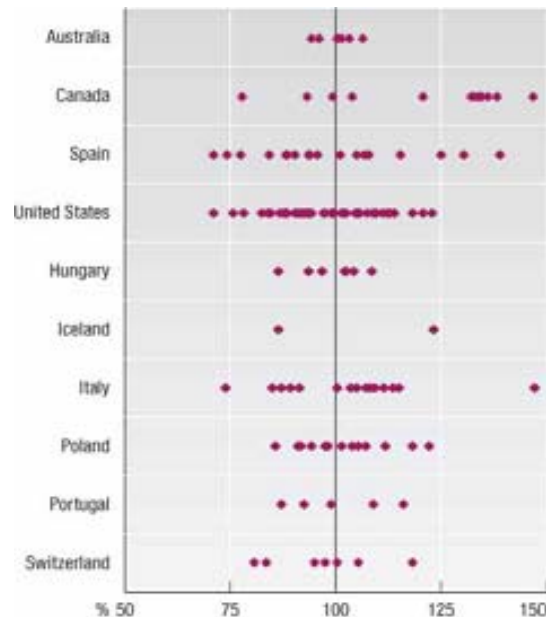
36.1. Prevalence of obesity

Percentage of population aged 15 years and over, 2004



36.2. Regional disparities in the prevalence of obesity

Percentage of the national average, 2004 (TL2)



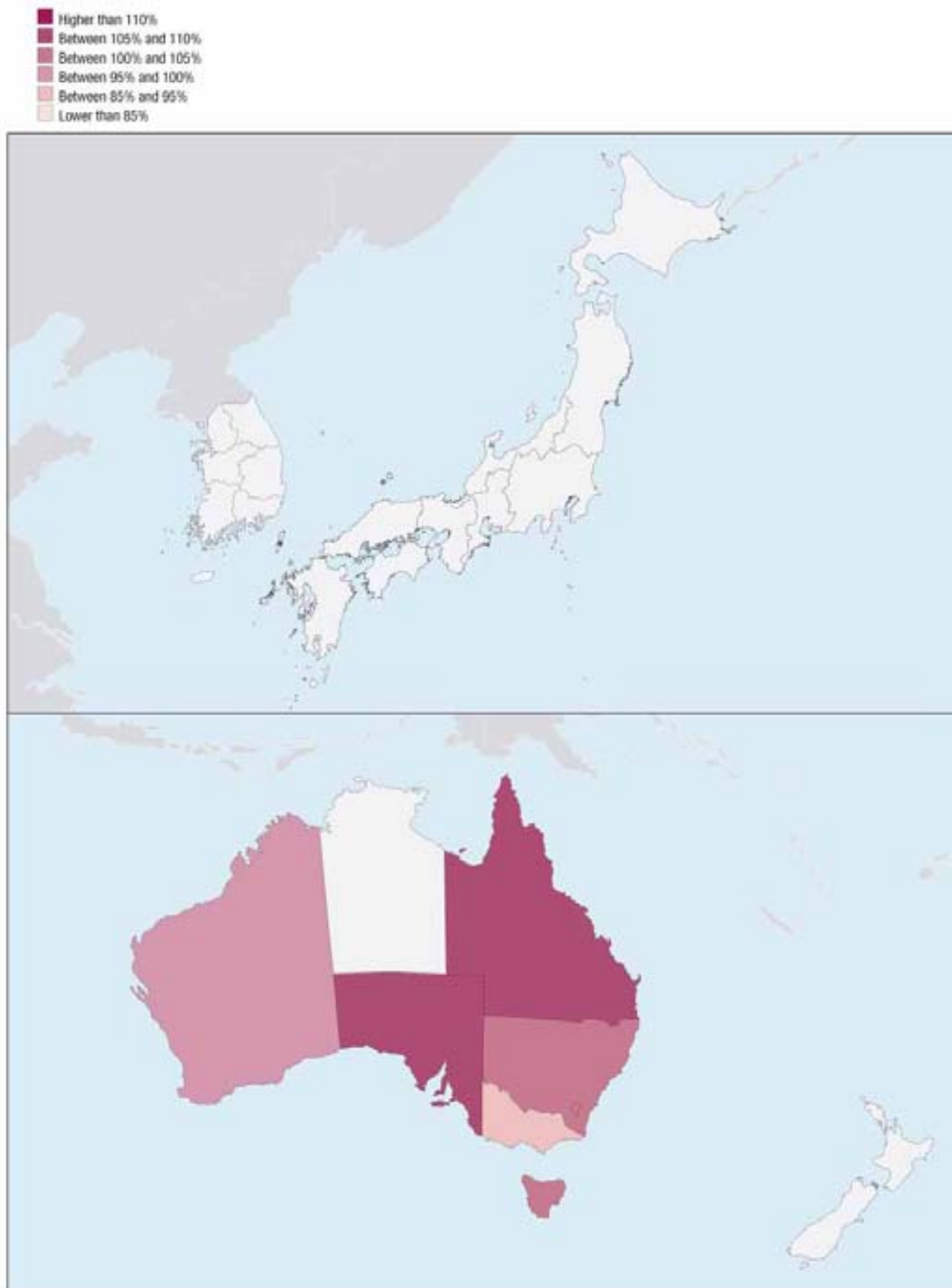
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/433308868127>


Definition

Number of people suffering from obesity in the population. Obesity is measured by the Body Mass Index (BMI). The obese population is the percentage of people aged 15 and over with a BMI over 30.

36.3. Prevalence of obesity: Asia and Oceania

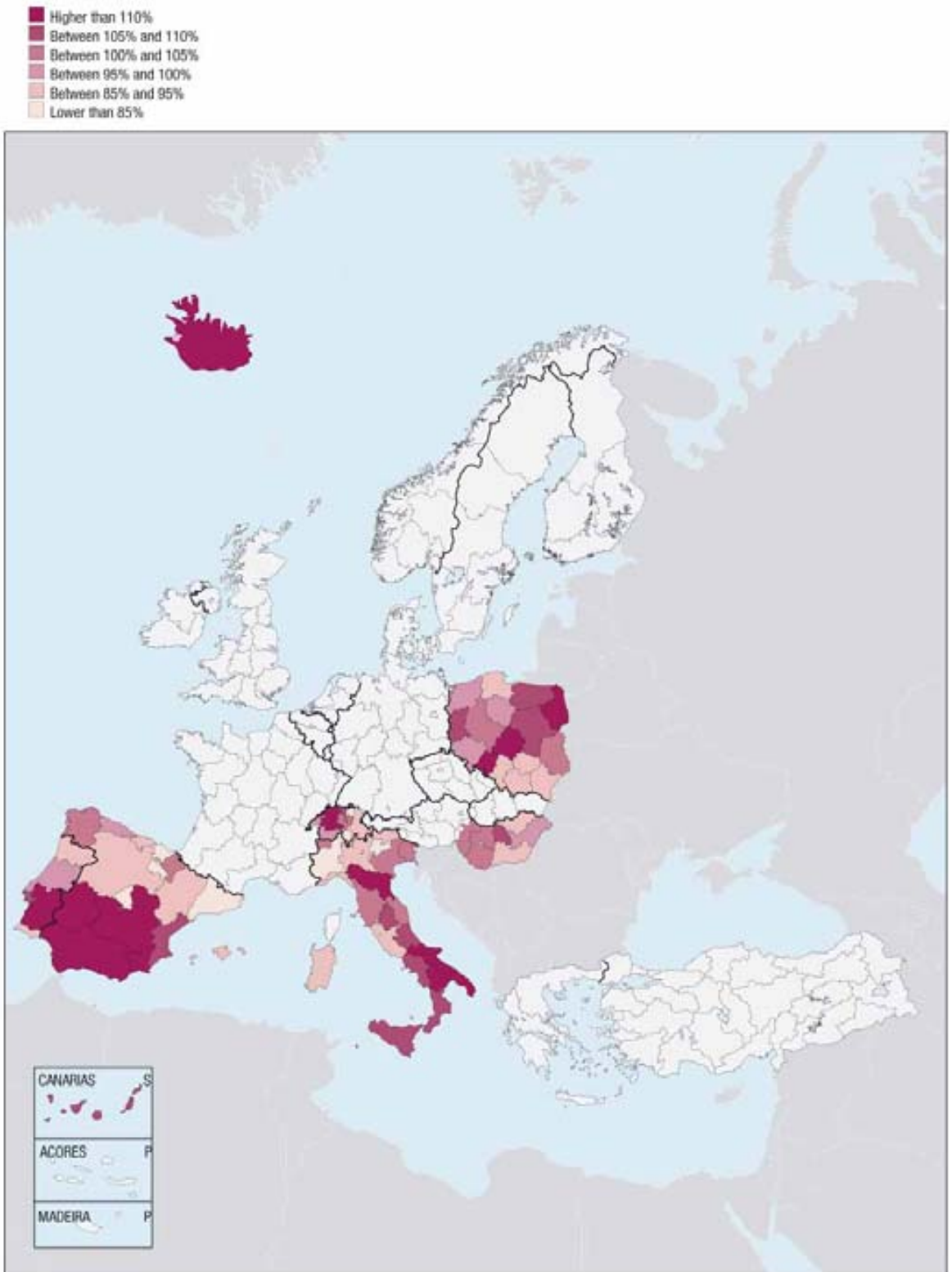
Percentage of national average, 2004



StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/010101203614>

36.4. Prevalence of obesity: Europe

Percentage of national average, 2004

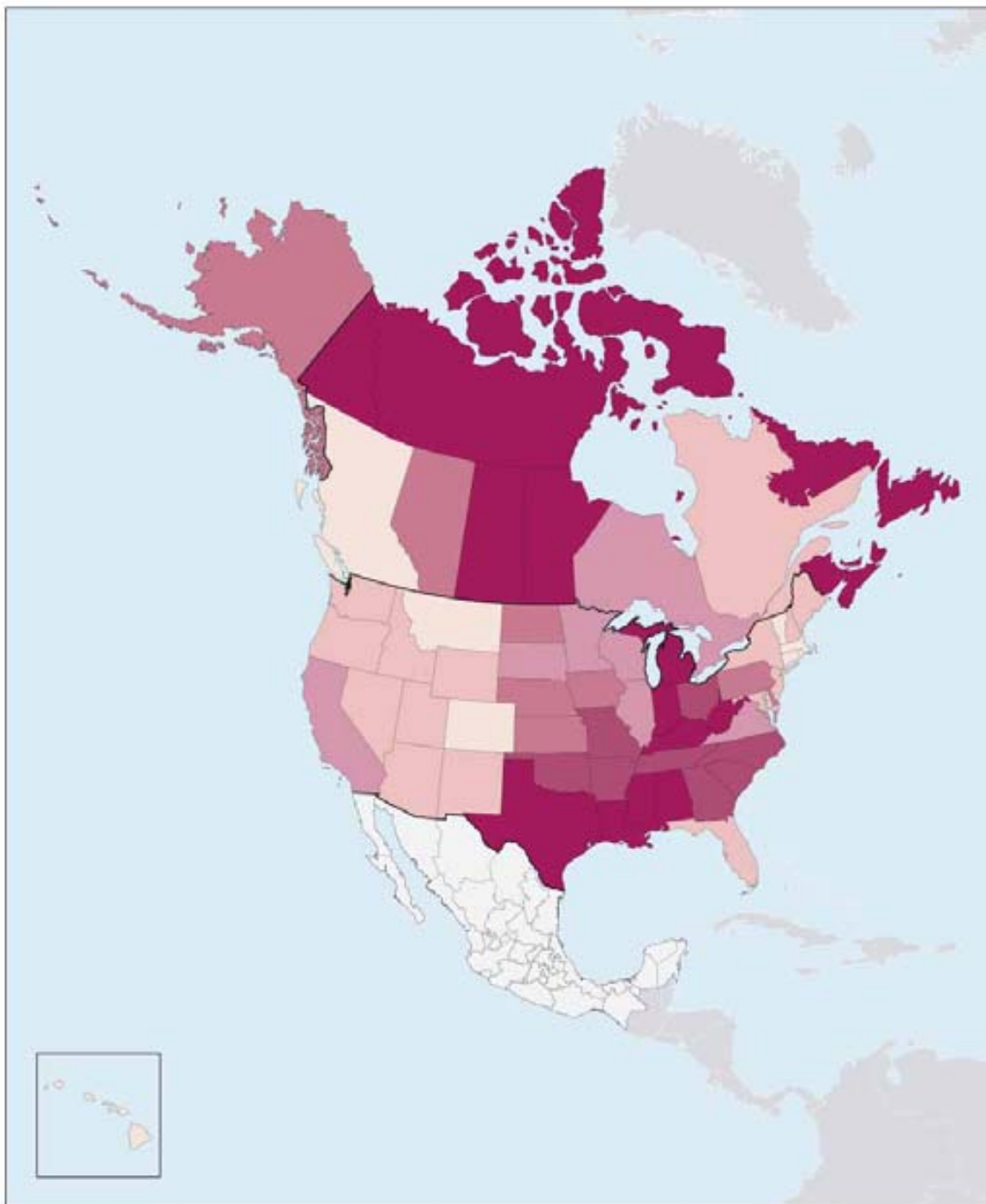



StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/010101203614>

36.5. Prevalence of obesity: North America

Percentage of national average, 2004

- Higher than 110%
- Between 105% and 110%
- 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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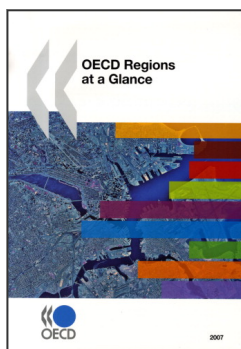
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