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The 'counterurbanization cascade'

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The 'counterurbanization cascade'

- Introduction: importance of migration
- Defining counterurbanization and cascade
- Testing for counterurbanization (CU)
- Testing for the CU cascade (CUC)
- Drivers of CU/CUC: flight, quest, overspill?
- CU as a self-reinforcing process
- How transferable (from UK)?
- How durable in context of societal changes?
- Concluding comments



Importance of migration

- Not just in terms of immigration and asylum seeking
- Also internal population movements: inter-regional shifts (e.g. sun-ward) and more local (e.g. suburban growth)
- Focus here on urban-system concentration/deconcentration trends (intermediate scale? - based on urban hierarchy)
- Issues reflected in terms like 'metro migration reversal', 'counterurbanization', 'back to the city', 'rural rebound', 'urban renaissance'

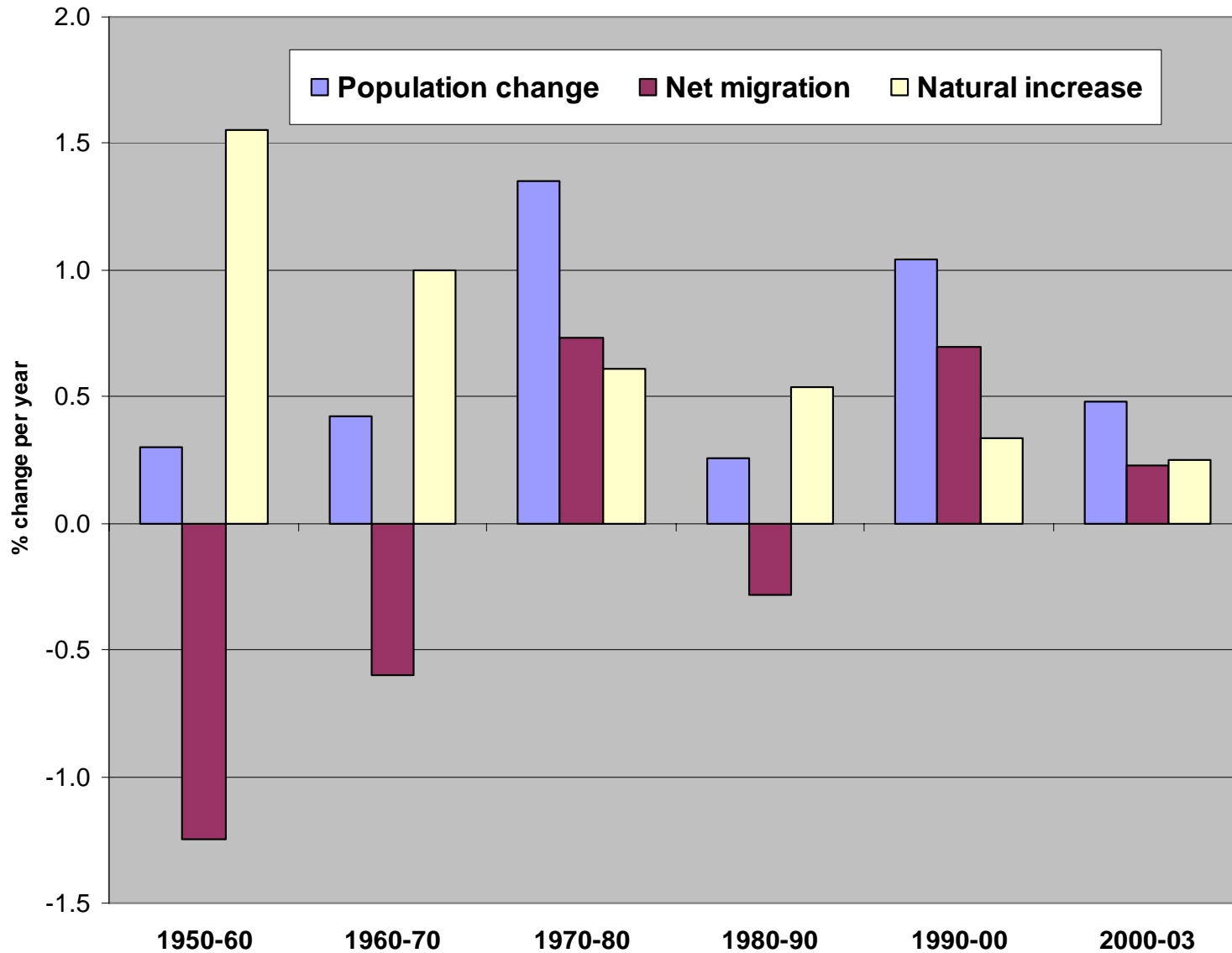


Brief history of 'counterurbanization'

- Population turnaround in rural America (Beale, 1975)
- 'Counterurbanization' as a major turning point in settlement patterns (Berry, 1976)
- Population dispersal demonstrated at variety of spatial scales in many countries (1980s), including 'polarization reversal' in some LDCs (Richardson, 1980)
- Challenged conceptually (e.g. Gordon, 1979) and empirically ('back to the city' findings in late 1980s)
- 1990s: 'rural rebound' in USA (e.g. Johnson & Cromartie, 2005), cyclic pattern in 'differential urbanization model' (Kontuly and Geyer, 2003)

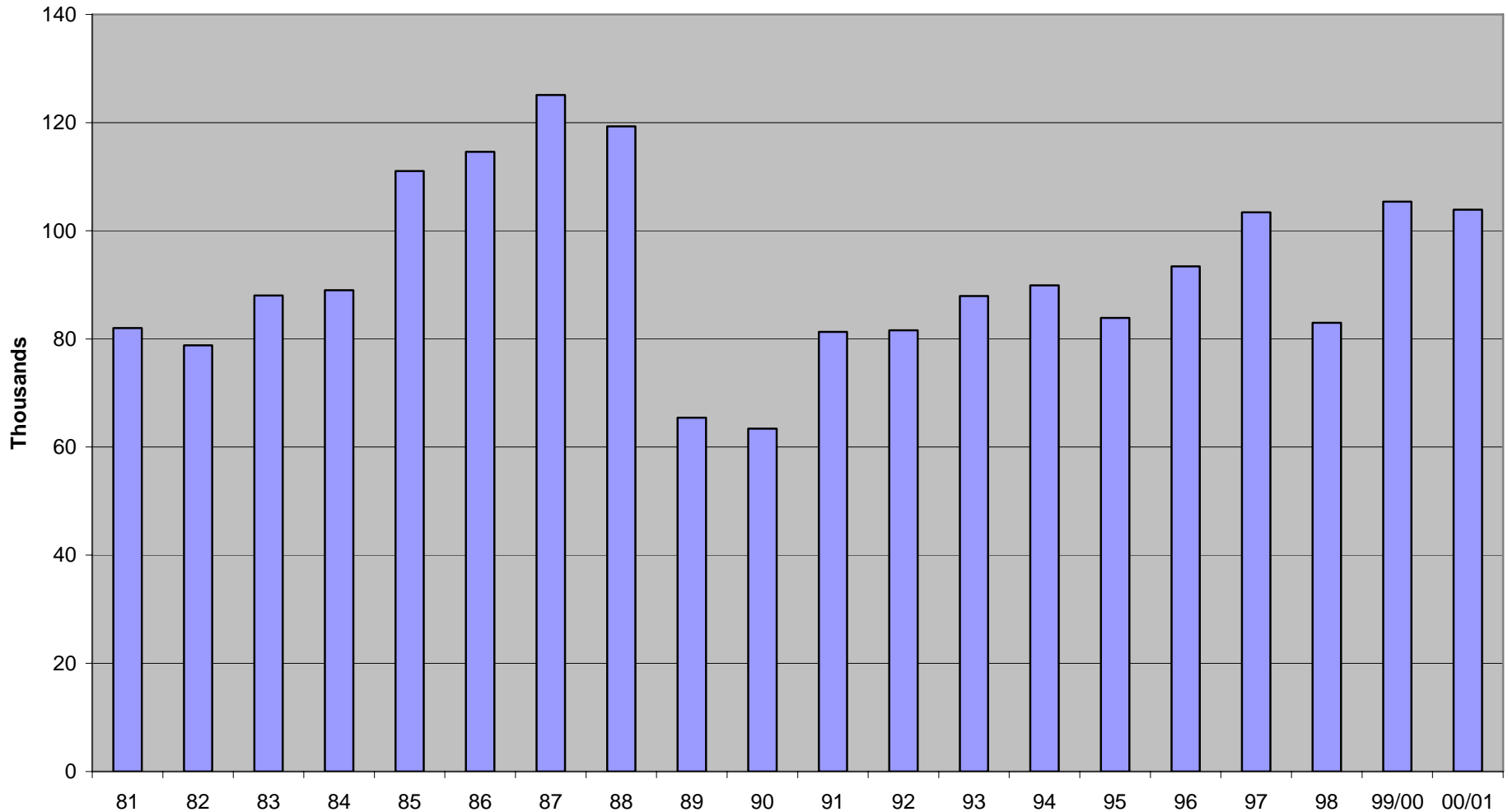


US non-metropolitan demographic trends, 1950-2003 (from Johnson & Cromartie, 2005)



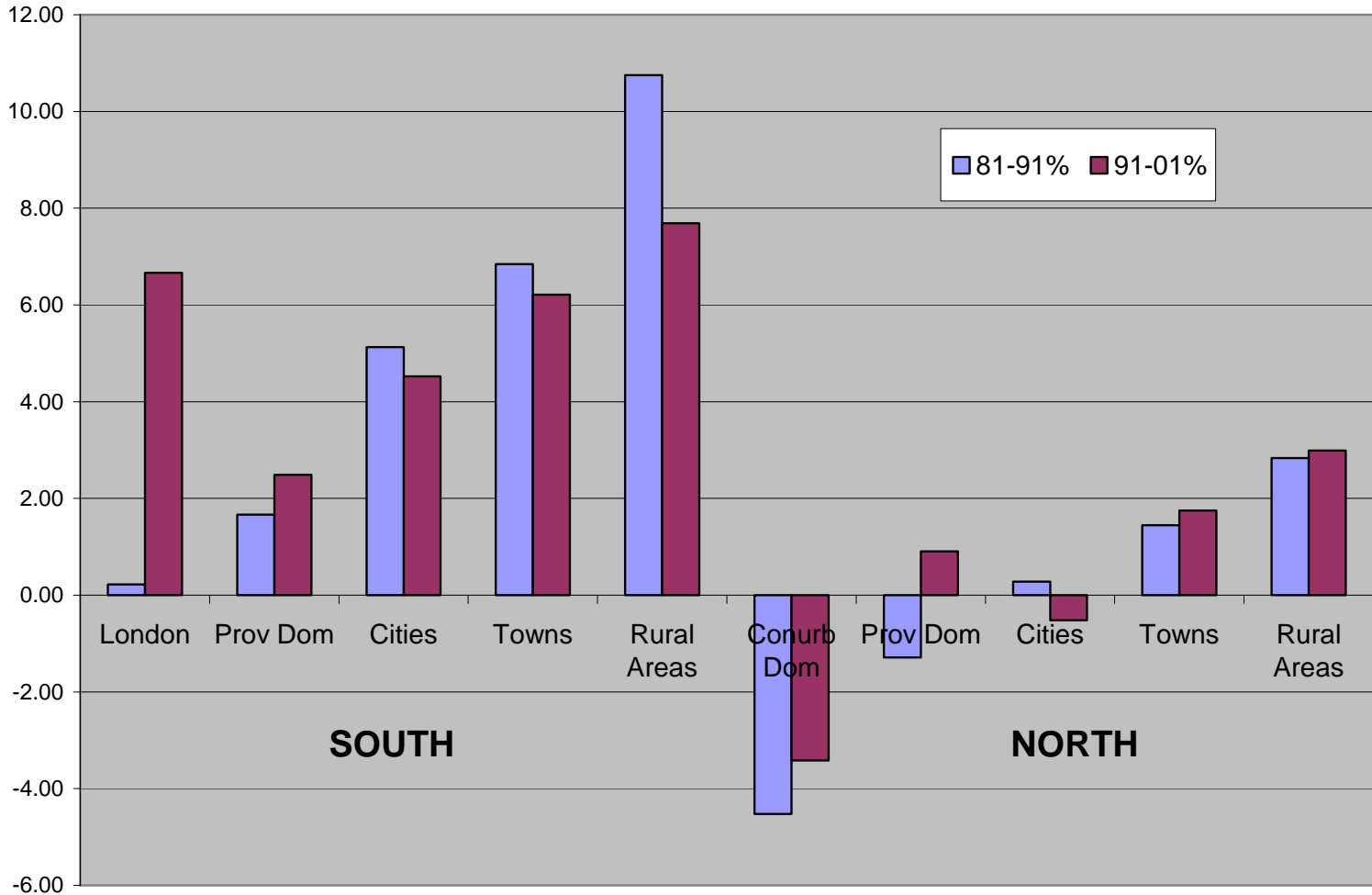
Net migration from Metropolitan England (London and 6 Metro Counties) to Rest of the UK, 1981-2000/01

Net migration for metropolitan England, 1981-2000/01



Population change rate, 1981-1991 and 1991-2001, by North/South and size of Local Labour Market Area, % for decade

Population change, 1981-1991 and 1991-2001, by LLMA Hier and South/North (GB, N=246), %
for period



Defining counterurbanization ...

Following Fielding (1982):

- Builds on the second definition of 'urbanization' – i.e. not just as a rising % of people living in urban areas, but also in terms of the increasing concentration of the urban population in the larger cities
- So: 'counterurbanization' = reducing concentration of (urban) population in larger cities
- i.e. a negative relationship between city size and growth, where:
 - growth is measured in terms of net domestic migration
 - city is defined in terms of 'functional urban region' (e.g. metro area, daily urban system, commutershed)

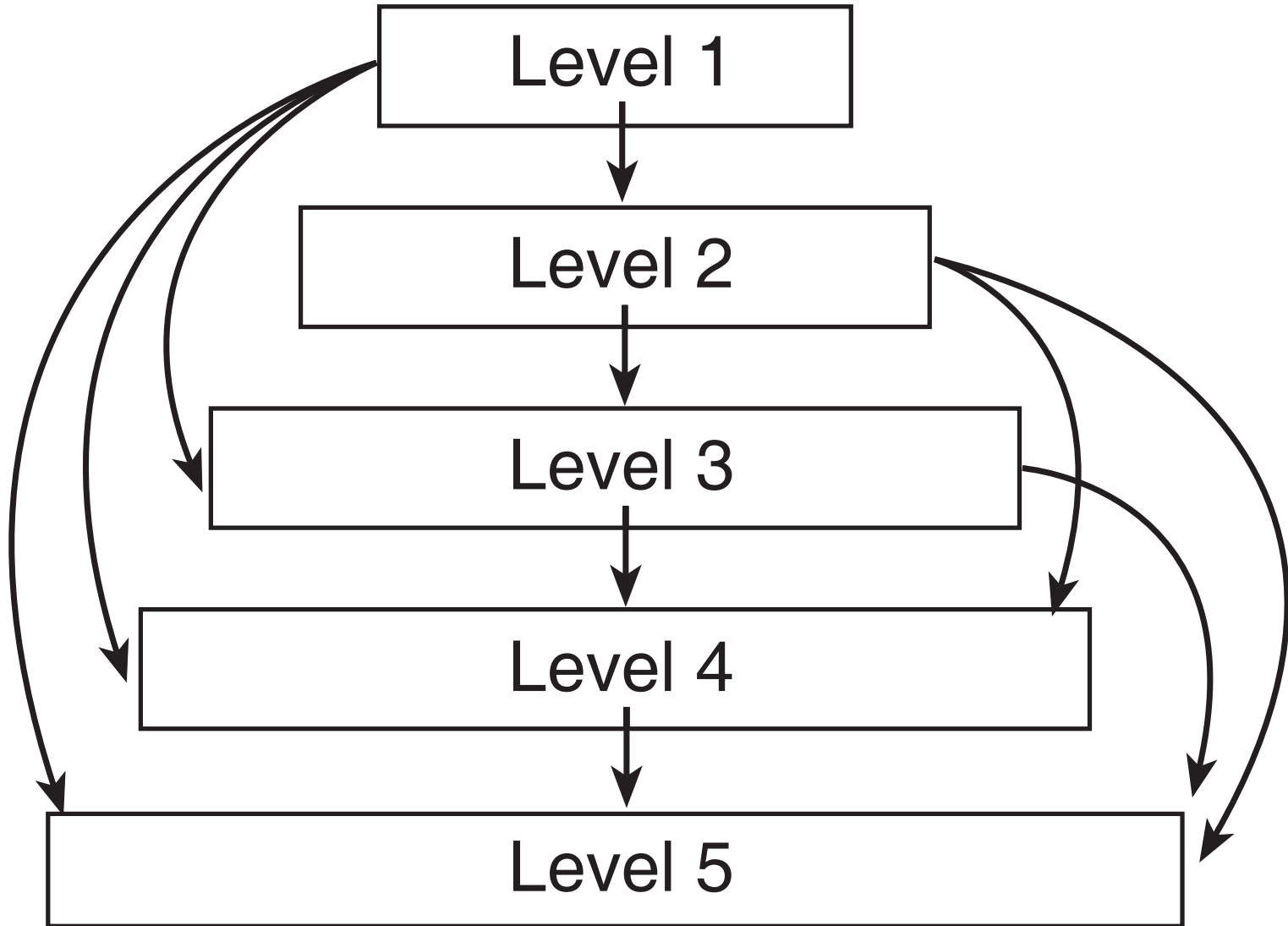


... and counterurbanization cascade

- Assuming a CU relationship, what is the pattern of migration flow between different sizes of cities (i.e. 'down the urban hierarchy' from largest city/ies to smaller)?
- 'Cascade' model hypothesizes a regular pattern where the top level spills over into the next level down,
- ... which then becomes full and spills into the next, and so on ...
- Until the lowest level (with smallest urban centres with their commutersheds) mops up the rest.
- Alternative 'volcano' model throws up matter in such a way that material from main vent drops back on to ALL the lower levels, and some material from side vents may pitch up at a higher level than the vent



The CU cascade: simple or diffuse?



A test of the 'counterurbanization cascade' in the UK

- Testing for an urban-rural gradient in internal migration
- Then a more detailed analysis based on the 'counterurbanisation cascade' framework
- Take data from the NHS Patients Register's annual download of addresses, coded to 376 local authority districts of England and Wales
- Use 13-way typology of local authority districts from most urban to most rural

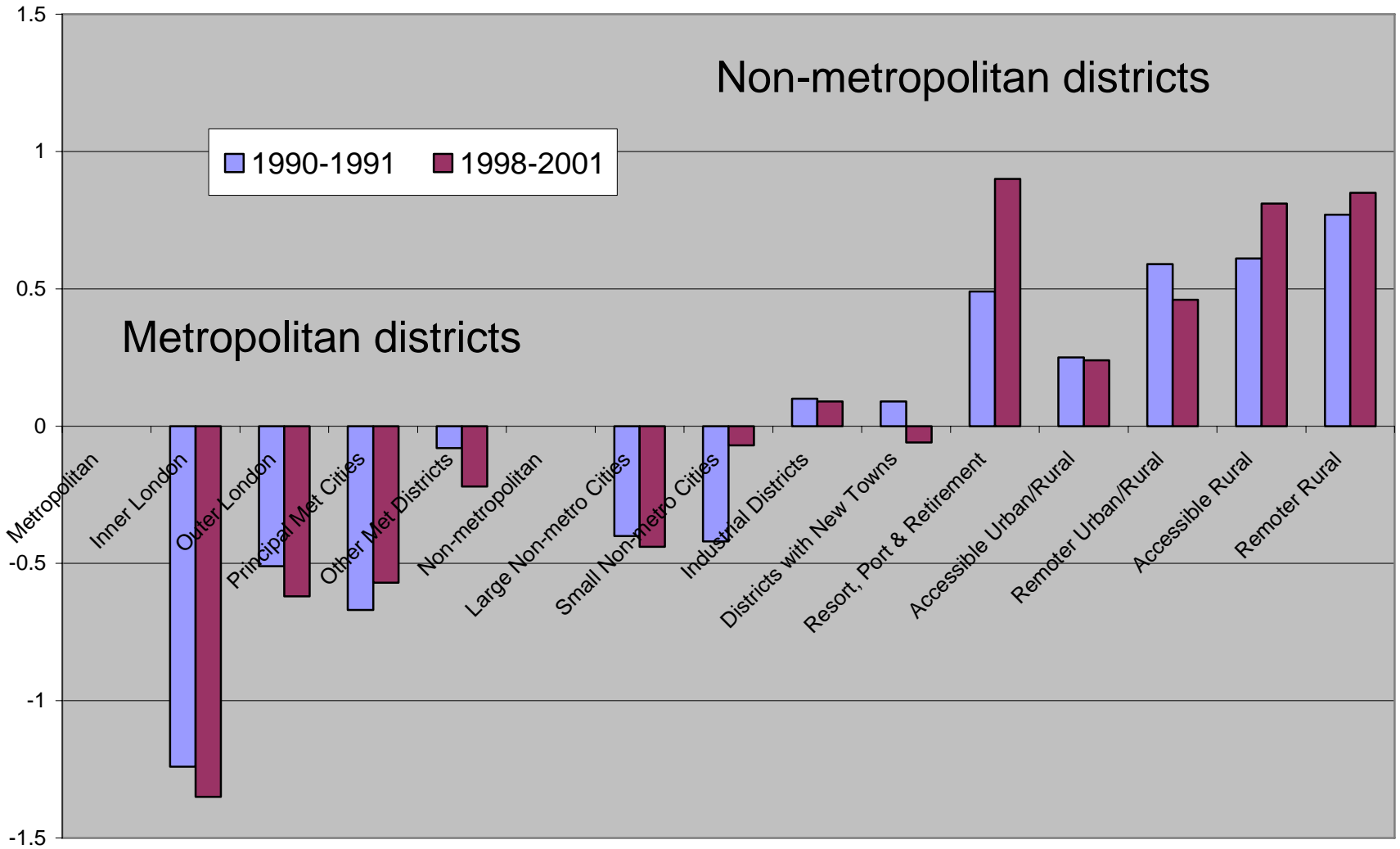


Migration between 13 types of local authority districts, England and Wales, 1998-2001

District type	in-migration	out-migration	net migration	% net 3 years	% net pa
<u>Metropolitan</u>					
Inner London (IL)	347515	459614	-112099	-4.05	-1.35
Outer London (OL)	479084	561508	-82424	-1.87	-0.62
Principal Metro Cities (PMC)	355699	412089	-56390	-1.71	-0.57
Other Metro Districts (OMD)	455500	504759	-49259	-0.65	-0.22
<u>Non-metropolitan</u>					
Large Non-metro Cities (LNC)	368508	405745	-37237	-1.33	-0.44
Small Non-metro Cities (SNC)	358122	362836	-4714	-0.22	-0.07
Industrial Districts (ID)	582467	562766	19701	0.28	0.09
Districts with New Towns (NT)	274624	278612	-3988	-0.17	-0.06
Resort, Port & Retirement (RPR)	460524	361499	99025	2.69	0.90
Accessible Urban/Rural (AUR)	978723	919204	59519	0.71	0.24
Remoter Urban/Rural (RUR)	284504	253446	31058	1.39	0.46
Accessible Rural (AR)	208034	173583	34451	2.42	0.81
Remoter Rural (RR)	485861	383504	102357	2.55	0.85



**Net migration between 13 types of local authority districts,
1990-1991 and 1998-2001, % per year**



Testing for 'counterurbanisation cascade' model

- Analysis of net flows between all possible pairs of the 13 district types (N=78) to see what proportion involve down-hierarchy net population movement
- 61 out of 78 net flows were 'counterurban' in 1999-2001.
- 17 up-hierarchy (22% of 78). See table.



Net migration between pairings of 13 district types, 1998-2001, England and Wales

FROM:	IL	OL	PMC	OMD	LNC	SNC	ID	NT	RPR	AUR	RUR	AR
TO: ↙												
OL	91146											
PMC	-7971	-2639										
OMD	-2759	-173	29731									
LNC	-6124	-1886	-778	1143								
SNC	-7052	2593	681	4967	1795							
ID	6454	15541	2502	14892	11692	-2486						
NT	4324	14061	1258	4429	-833	122	-2236					
RPR	9337	27931	1903	10042	-800	4173	9563	5597				
AUR	16101	87064	8267	23265	7508	2252	4819	4781	-28793			
RUR	1579	5988	142	1583	14298	1309	828	2715	-2290	13339		
AR	1681	6240	1283	6525	-765	714	4774	3600	-641	13776	446	
RR	5383	18850	791	9212	-3303	1614	11146	8420	445	38630	7987	3182



Departures (X) from the 'CU cascade', i.e. migration shifts up the urban hierarchy

Destination/origin pairing of net migration flow	1998-2001	1990-91
Inner London from Principal Metro Cities	X	X
Inner London from Other Metro Districts	X	
Inner London from Large Non-metro Cities	X	X
Inner London from Small Non-metro Cities	X	X
Outer London from Principal Metro Cities	X	X
Outer London from Other Metro Districts	X	
Outer London from Large Non-metro Cities	X	
Principal Metro Cities from Large Non-metro Cities	X	X
Other Metro Districts from Large Non-metro Cities		X
Large Non-metro Cities from New Towns	X	
Large Non-metro Cities from Resort, Port and Retirement	X	
Large Non-metro Cities from Accessible Rural	X	
Large Non-metro Cities from Remoter Rural	X	
Small Non-metro Cities from Industrial Districts	X	
Small Non-metro Cities from Accessible Rural		X
Industrial Districts from New Towns	X	X
Industrial Districts from Accessible Urban/Rural		X
Resort, Port and Retirement from Accessible Urban/Rural	X	X
Resort, Port and Retirement from Remoter Urban/Rural	X	
Resort, Port and Retirement from Accessible Rural	X	X
Remoter Urban/Rural from Accessible Rural		X



A 'diffuse' form of 'CU cascade'

- Most levels of the settlement system receive net migration from all levels above, and lose population to all levels below - rather than most 'spilling' over from next level up.
- As an example, the lowest level (Remoter Rural) gains net migration from all levels above except one. See table.



Sources of gross and net in-migration to Remoter Rural districts of England and Wales, 1998-2001

Origin district type	Gross in-migration to RR			Net in-migration to RR		
	Number	% total		Number	% total	
Inner London	18627	3.8		5383	5.3	
Outer London	32794	6.7		18850	18.4	
Principal Metro Cities	16187	3.3		791	0.8	
Other Metro Districts	29800	6.1		9212	9.0	
Metropolitan England	97408	20.0		34236	33.4	
Large Non-metro Cities	33346	6.9		-3303	-3.2	
Small Non-metro Cities	43507	9.0		1614	1.6	
Industrial Districts	59358	12.2		11146	10.9	
Districts with New Towns	24459	5.0		8420	8.2	
Resort, Port and Retirement	62645	12.9		445	0.4	
Accessible Urban/Rural	100201	20.6		38630	37.7	
Remoter Urban/Rural	43746	9.0		7987	7.8	
Accessible Rural	21191	4.4		3182	3.1	
Total to Remoter Rural	485861	100.0		102357	100.0	



Drivers of counterurbanization

- Flight?
- Quest?
- Overspill?



Flight?

- Abundant literature on the ills of the city
- Negative attitudes towards living in large cities:
 - 1) Physical environment (congestion, noise, traffic, pollution, lack of greenery)
 - 2) Problems of daily life (crime & safety, quality of schools & services, cultural & ethnic tensions, lack of jobs, 'rat race' stress)
- 'Headlong' flight? NO!
 - 4 move in for every 5 exiting (partly life-cycle)
 - higher income moving out faster than more vulnerable



Quest?

- Cascade pattern of urban exodus already suggests a 'seeking out'
- Well documented 'lure of the countryside' built around notions of a 'rural idyll'
- Gallup poll: 72% prefer 'living in the countryside' to 'living in the city'
- 1997 survey: 51% of inner-city residents prefer to live in village or countryside, 43% of suburban residents
- Less emphasis on urban push than rural pull:
 - nicer physical surroundings
 - better social relationships ('being part of a rural community')



Overspill?

- Not enough (nicer?) spaces in cities for the numbers trying to live there?
- Drivers of the need for extra space:
 - 1) migration pressures from outside the system
 - from other regions of the nation;
 - from international migration.
 - 2) natural increase (surplus of births over deaths)
 - 3) population 'thinning' (trend towards smaller household size)
- Constraints on the supply of extra space: primarily planning restrictions on building ('urban containment': 'green belts' etc.)



A self-reinforcing process?

- Seen as a vicious cycle, because of:
 - (1) emptying of larger cities especially of better-off people, and
 - (2) pressures on rural environment and on local low-wage communities.
- But, arguably, policies of urban consolidation and rural protection are self-defeating:
 - (1) higher-density building and infill increase the 'urban' nature of the cities;
 - (2) protection and enhancement of rural areas increase their attractiveness;
 - (3) rural building controls inflate house prices, leading to 'social kudos' of 'making it'.



How transferable?

- Would one expect to see a 'counterurbanization cascade' in other countries besides England/UK?
- Need to ask because I don't know of any similar research elsewhere (NB.- need O & D matrices)
- Key elements in UK case seem to be:
 - (1) Urban containment policy
 - (2) A widespread desire to live in a (more) rural location
 - (3) (Possibly) A dense network of existing rural centres ('villages')
- In a non-UK context, possibly a flight from high urban costs by the least wealthy (between 'cities', 'labour market areas' ?)

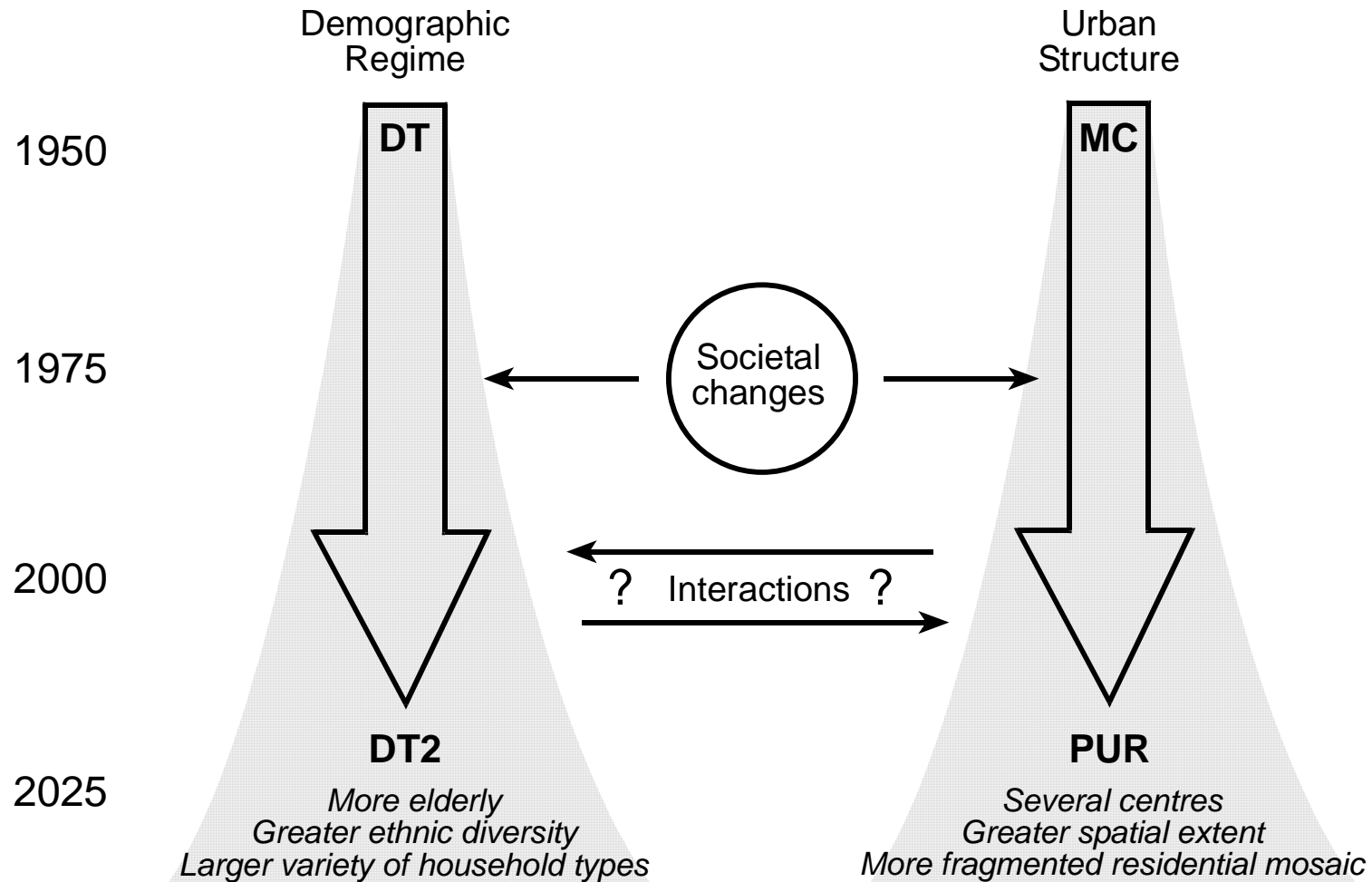


How durable?

- Effect of any changes in ‘town and country planning’ policies? Towards the ‘compact city’, relaxing ‘green belt’ rules.
- Effect of any ‘natural’ (i.e. market-forces) changes in the nature of urban areas and settlement patterns (including effect of industrial restructuring and employment relocations)? From the monocentric city to polycentric urban configurations.
- Effect of any changes in the demographic regime and population structures? Through the ‘second demographic transition’



Links Between Evolutions of Demographic Regime and of Settlement Structure



DT : End of Demographic Transition

MC : Monocentric City

DT2 : Second Demographic Transition

PUR : Polycentric Urban Region

Test example: seniors?

- Increasing % seniors is one key element of the evolving demographic regime
- Retirees as the pioneers of counterurbanization – perhaps more of a waterfall than a cascade! – but primarily exiting the largest cities (eg.London)
- Where will they live in a future (now?) in which:
 - 1) % seniors is higher
 - 2) cities are no longer single-centred with one single land/house-price gradient out to edge
 - 3) the modal age for exiting large cities is 30-50 years old, not retirement age
- Stay put in ‘counterurban’ surroundings (‘age in place’), find new niche within ‘PUR’, ...?



Test example:

- Minority ethnic groups
- ‘New’ (i.e. non-standard-family) household types, e.g.
 - home aloners (middle-aged: single, divorced, separated)
 - home aloners (young adults)
 - couples (mixed-sex)
 - couples (same-sex)
 - multi-adult sharers of household spaces



Concluding comments

- Counterurbanization is a common process, with large-city exodus, rural rebound (cyclic?)
- CU Cascade exists in UK, though not in simple form: more diffuse, waterfall/volcano, ... - and some up-hierarchy shifts (linked to interregional moves, also to migration of young adults)
- But may be place/culture-specific (UK's planning system, appeal of the 'rural idyll' -> social kudos)
- And may be time-specific (possible effects of changes in planning policy, demographic regime and urban-region structuring)
- Therefore, scope for further work on these topics and on residential preferences/constraints



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