Polycentric Development and Metropolitan Governance

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The 21st C. is the first *urban* century

- **Before 1850,** no society was predominantly urbanised

- **By 1900,** Britain was the only urbanised society

- **In 1975,** 38% of the world's population lived in cities

- **Today,** over half of the world's 6.3 mill. population are urban dwellers

Nigel Blythe
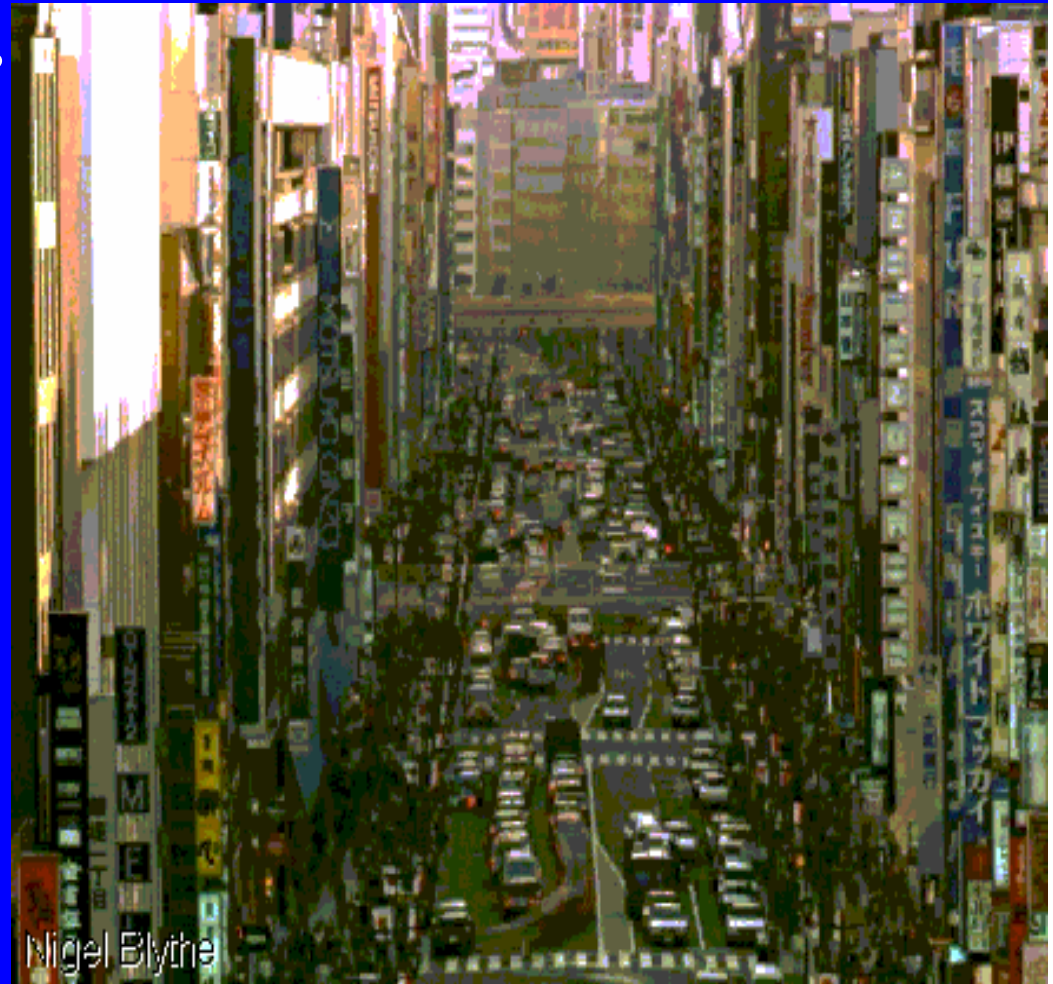
Ginza District, Tokyo

The pace of urbanisation is even faster in developing countries

- It took London 130 years to grow to a population of 8 mill.

- Mexico City reached that mark in 30 years

- Bombay is expanding even faster

The 'urban millennium'

- **For the first time in history,** across the world more people live in urban areas than in rural areas
- **4 out of 5 European** citizens live in urban areas

The 21ˢᵗ C. is a globally networked century

- Revolution in information technology has led to:
  - 'time-space compaction'
  - 'space of flows' but,

  - not to the 'death of distance'

Agglomeration forces

- Population and economic growth tend to gravitate to major urban centres
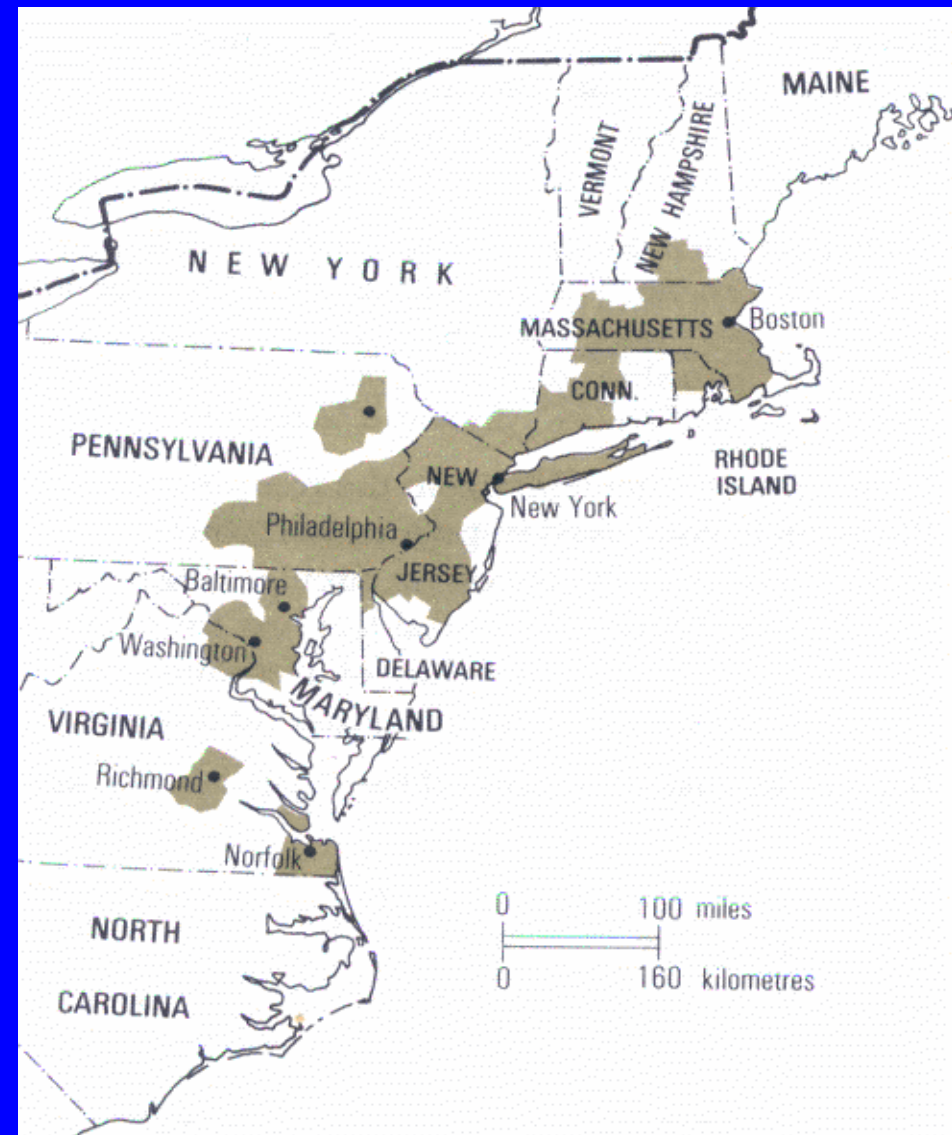
- Leading to monocentric development

Dublin 1956

Dublin 1998

Milan 1955

Milan 1997

residential

Industrial/commercial/transport
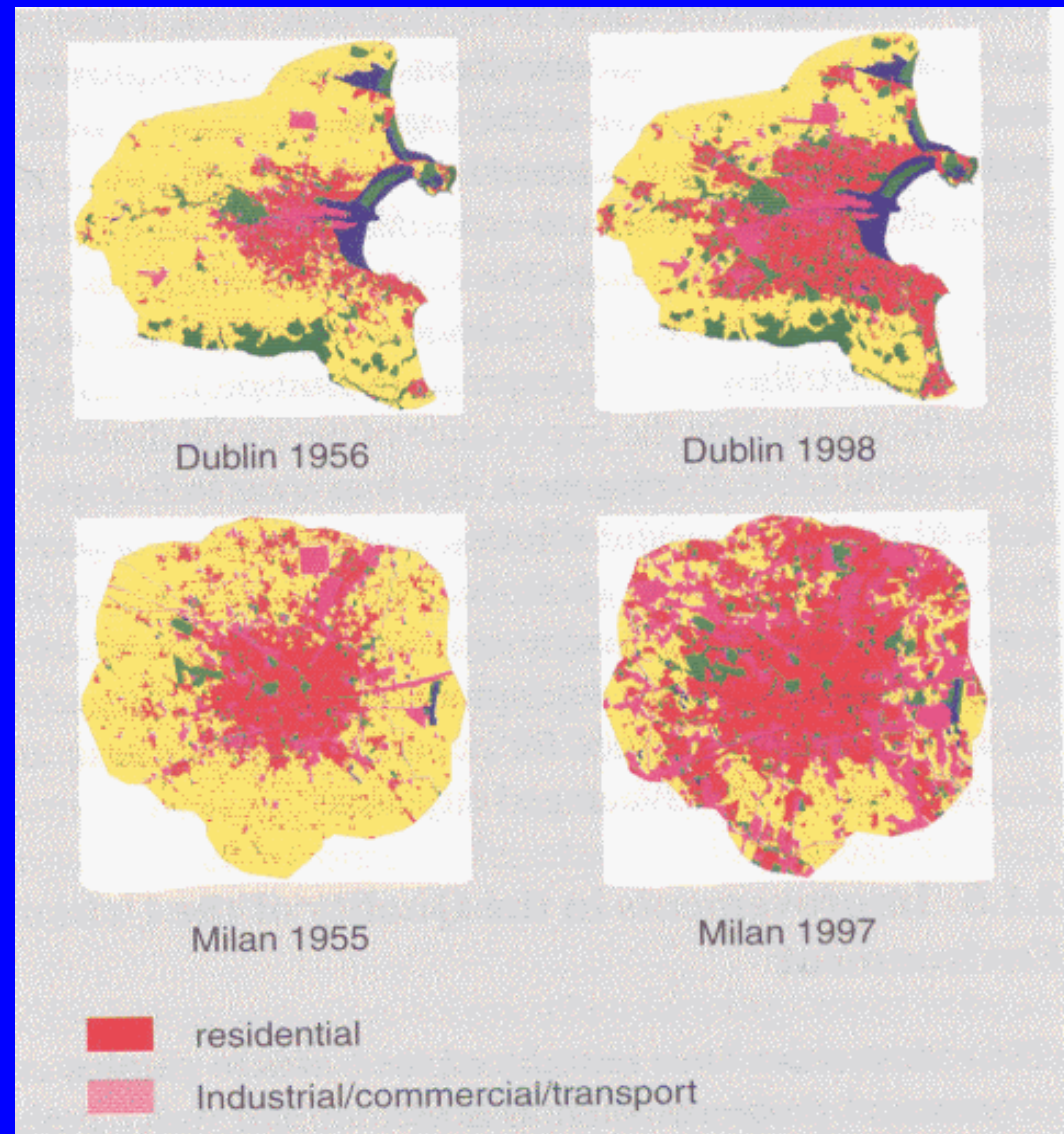
Megalopolis

East Coast of America

"coalescence of a chain of metropolitan areas, each of which has grown around a substantial urban nucleus"

(Gottman, 1957)
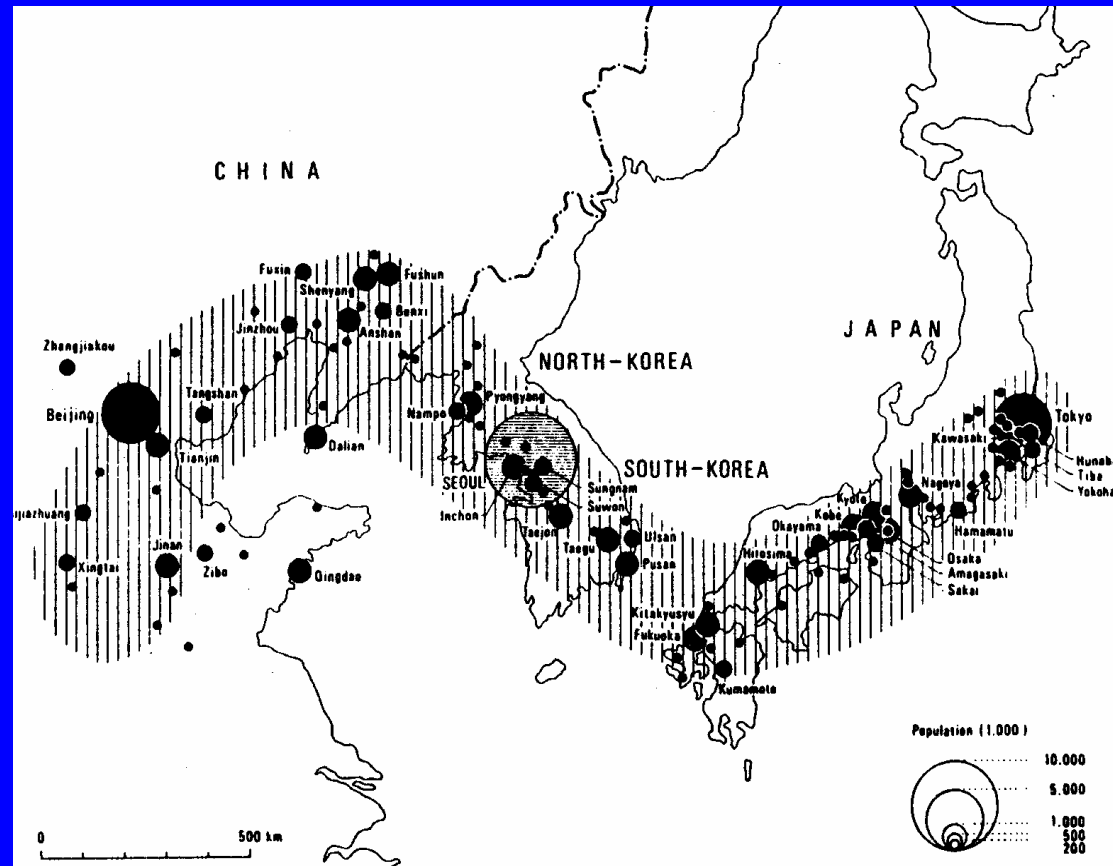
Ecumenopolis?

BeSeTo

Urban Corridor

in East Asia**:**
- – Beijing
- – Seoul
- – Tokyo

Population: 98 m.

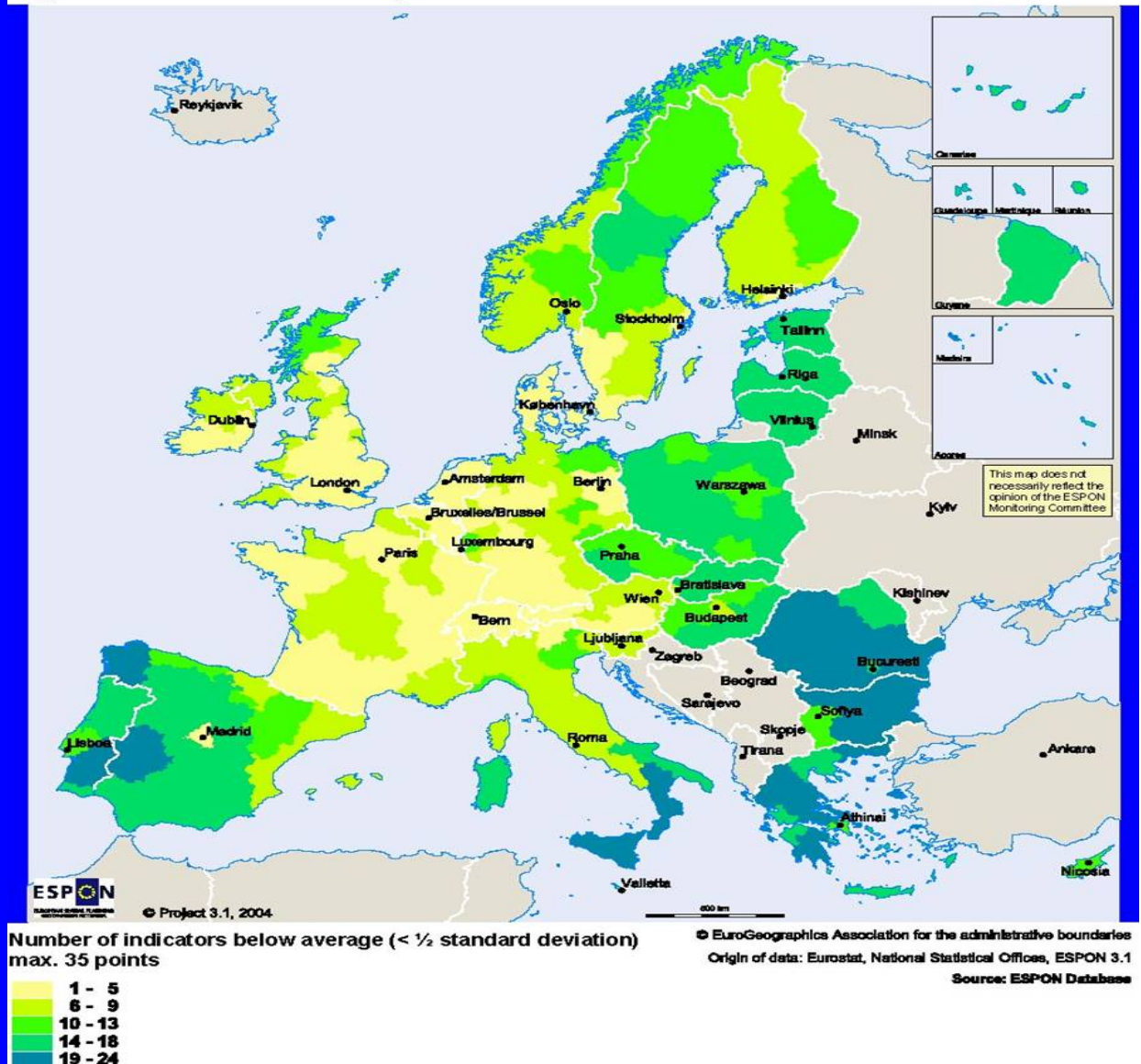**Area:** 1500 Km.

Air travel time: 1.5 h

Uneven development of the EU

- A prosperous , highly connected **core** stands against an underdeveloped **periphery**

    – Economy
    – Labour market
    – Demography
    – Environment
    – Hazards
    – Accessibility
    – Spatial structure

Regional classification of Europe - all thematic fields

ESPON

© Project 3.1, 2004

Number of indicators below average (< ½ standard deviation) max. 35 points

- 1 - 5
- 6 - 9
- 10 - 13
- 14 - 18
- 19 - 24

© EuroGeographics Association for the administrative boundaries
Origin of data: Eurostat, National Statistical Offices, ESPON 3.1
Source: ESPON Database

Depicting the EU core–periphery image

- *European Megalopolis*
  (Gottman, 1976)

- *Golden Triangle*
  (Cheshire & Hay, 1989)

- *The Blue Banana*
  (Brunet, 1989)

- *The pentagon*
  (ESDP, 1999)

Legend:
- Dorsale
- Dépendances
- Nord du Sud
- Assimilés
- Finisterres
- «Suds»
- Lacune
- Liaisons avec l'Est?

© RECLUS, 1989

European Spatial Development Perspective

- ***The pentagon*** was coined by the ESDP in 1999
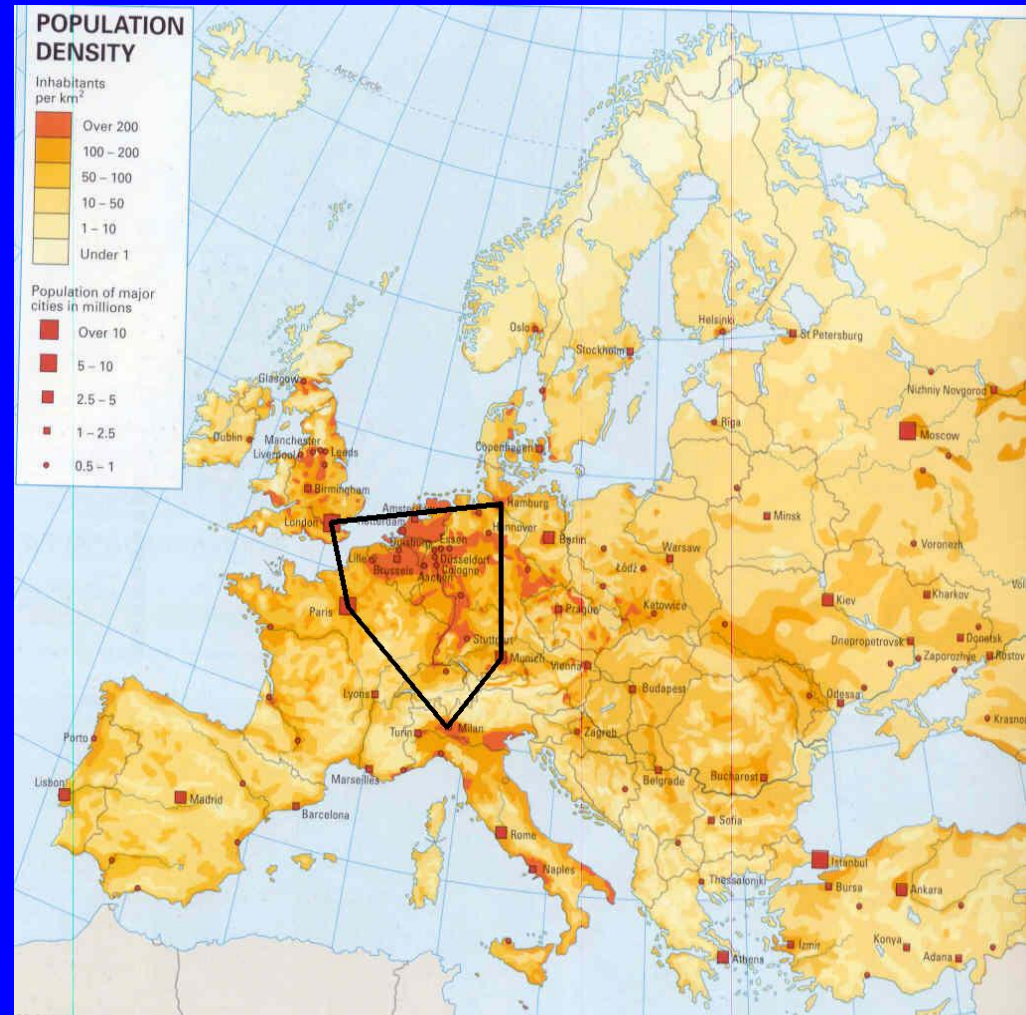
- A non-binding, yet influential, strategic framework for EU spatial development

EU Core – Periphery Image

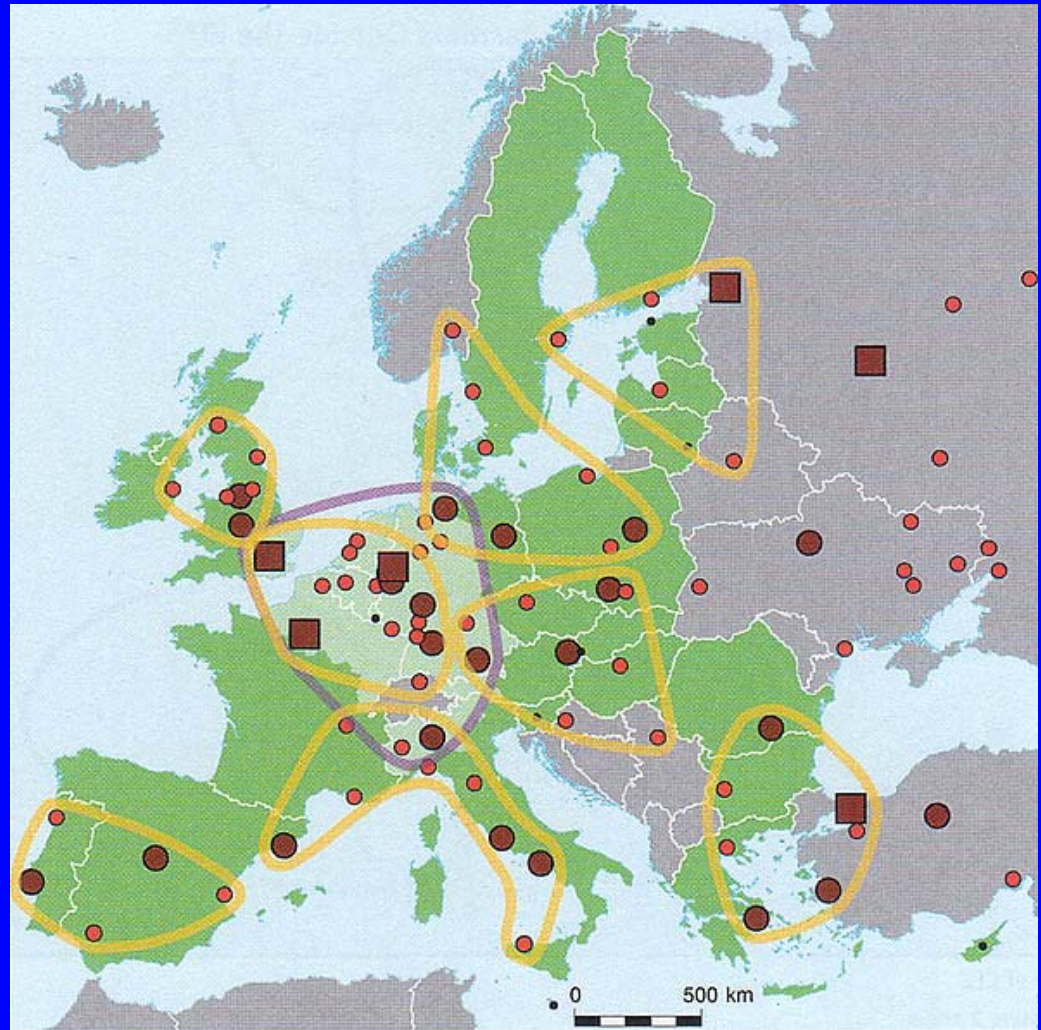The 'pentagon':

London, Paris, Milan,

Munich and Hamburg

- 20% of area
- 40% of population
- 50% of GDP
- 75% of R&D

- Seen as the only globally competitive economic zone in EU

The Main Thrust of the ESDP

- Creation of multiple zones of globally significant economic growth

- Making the EU:
  - Economically more competitive
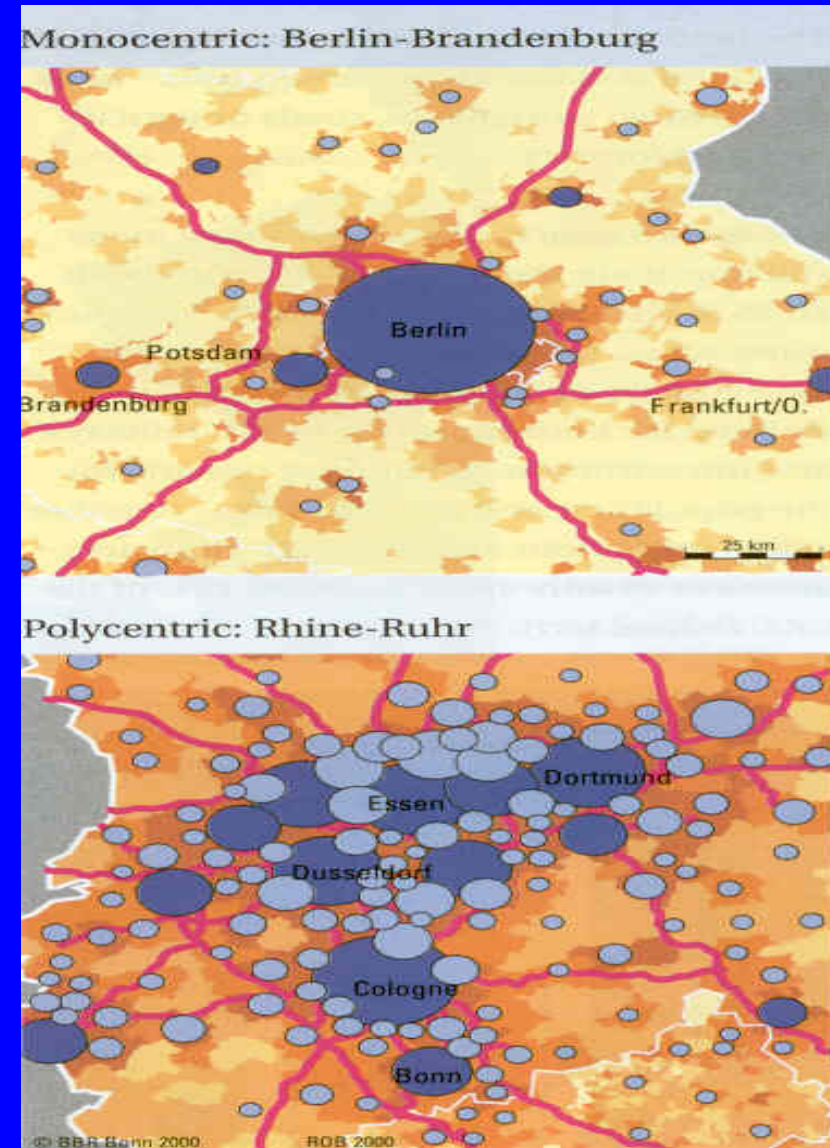 - Socially and spatially more cohesive

European Polycentric Development

- **A *Bunch of Grapes***
  (Kunzmann & Wegener, 1991)

- A more balanced development of the EU territory
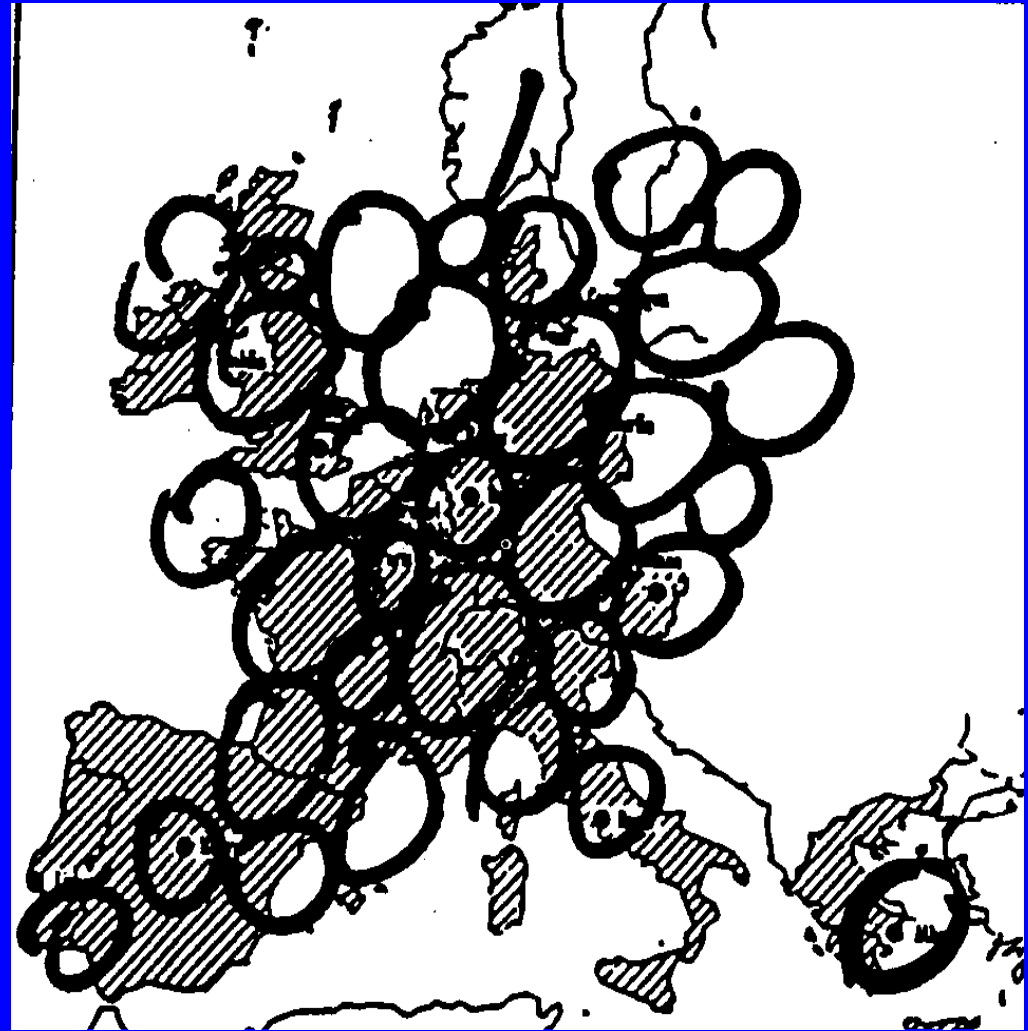
Polycentric Urban Region

What is a PUR?

- Three or more cities

- Historically and politically separate

- No hierarchical ranking

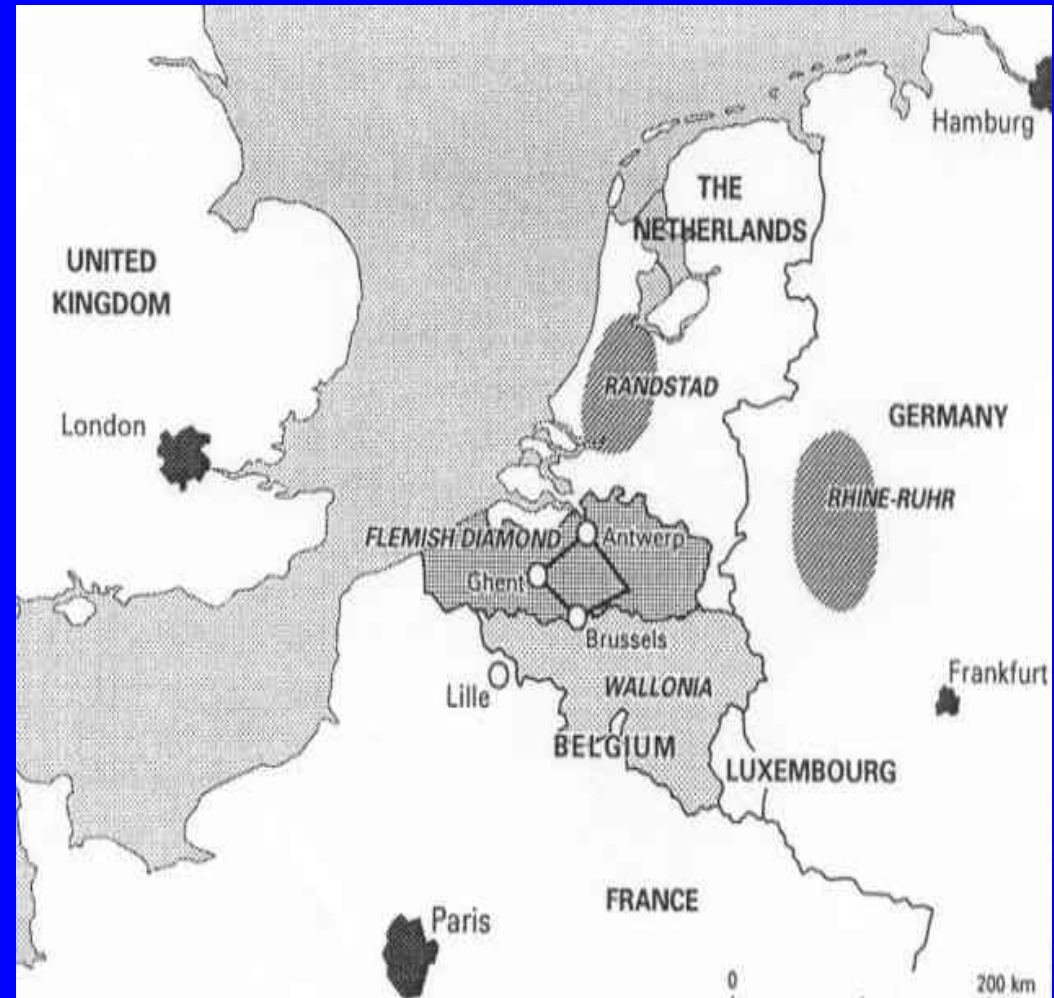- Reasonable proximity

- Functional complementarities

European Examples of PUR
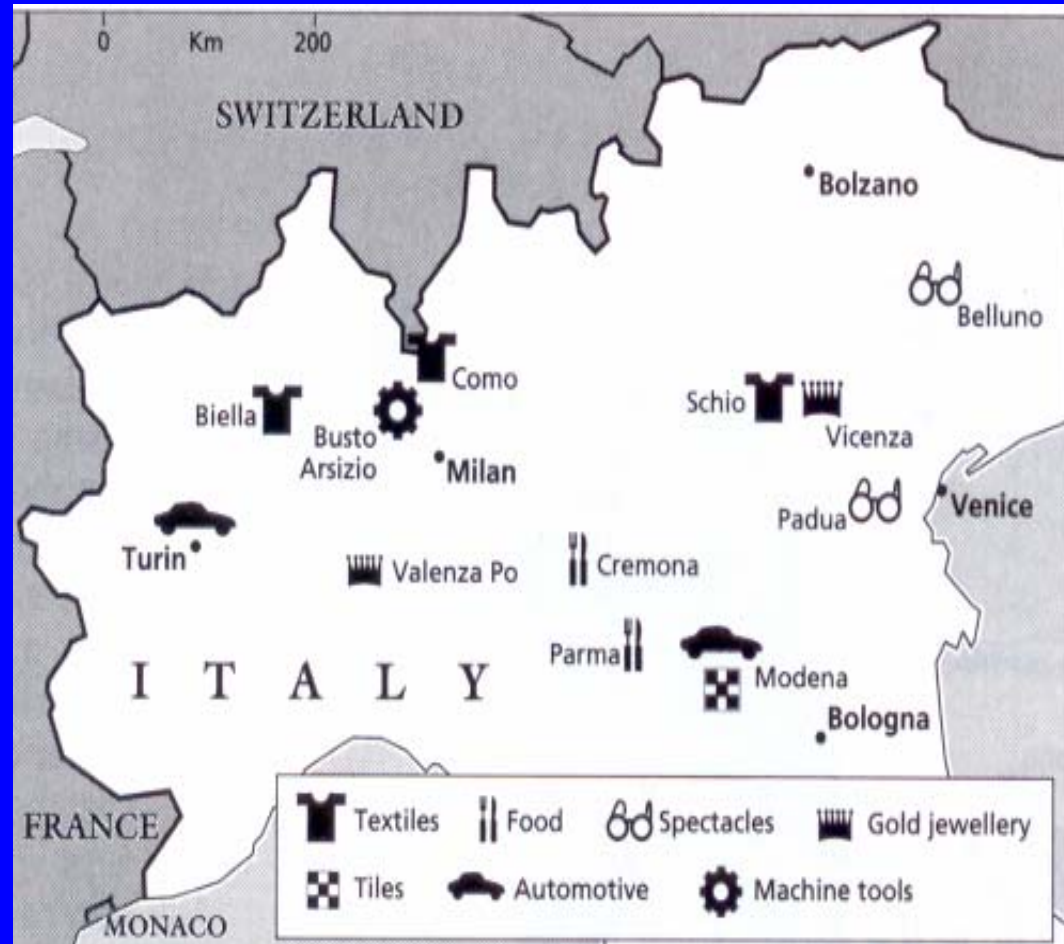
Flemish Diamond

in Flanders, Belgium

- Brussels
- Leuven
- Antwerp
- Ghent

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European Examples of PUR

Padua-Treviso-
Venice Area
 in Northern Italy

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European Examples of PUR
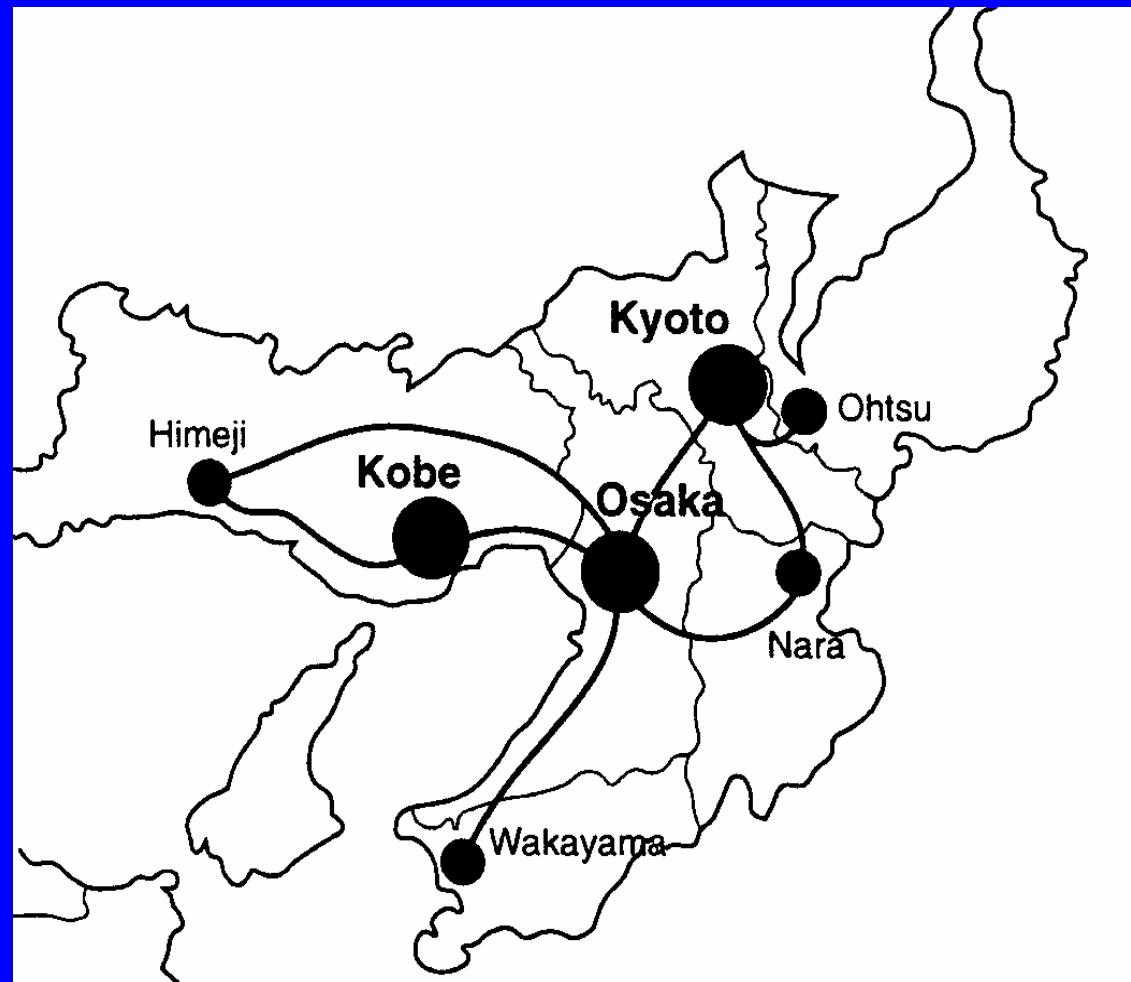
The Basque Country

- Bilbao
- San Sebastian
- Vitoria

Other Examples of PUR

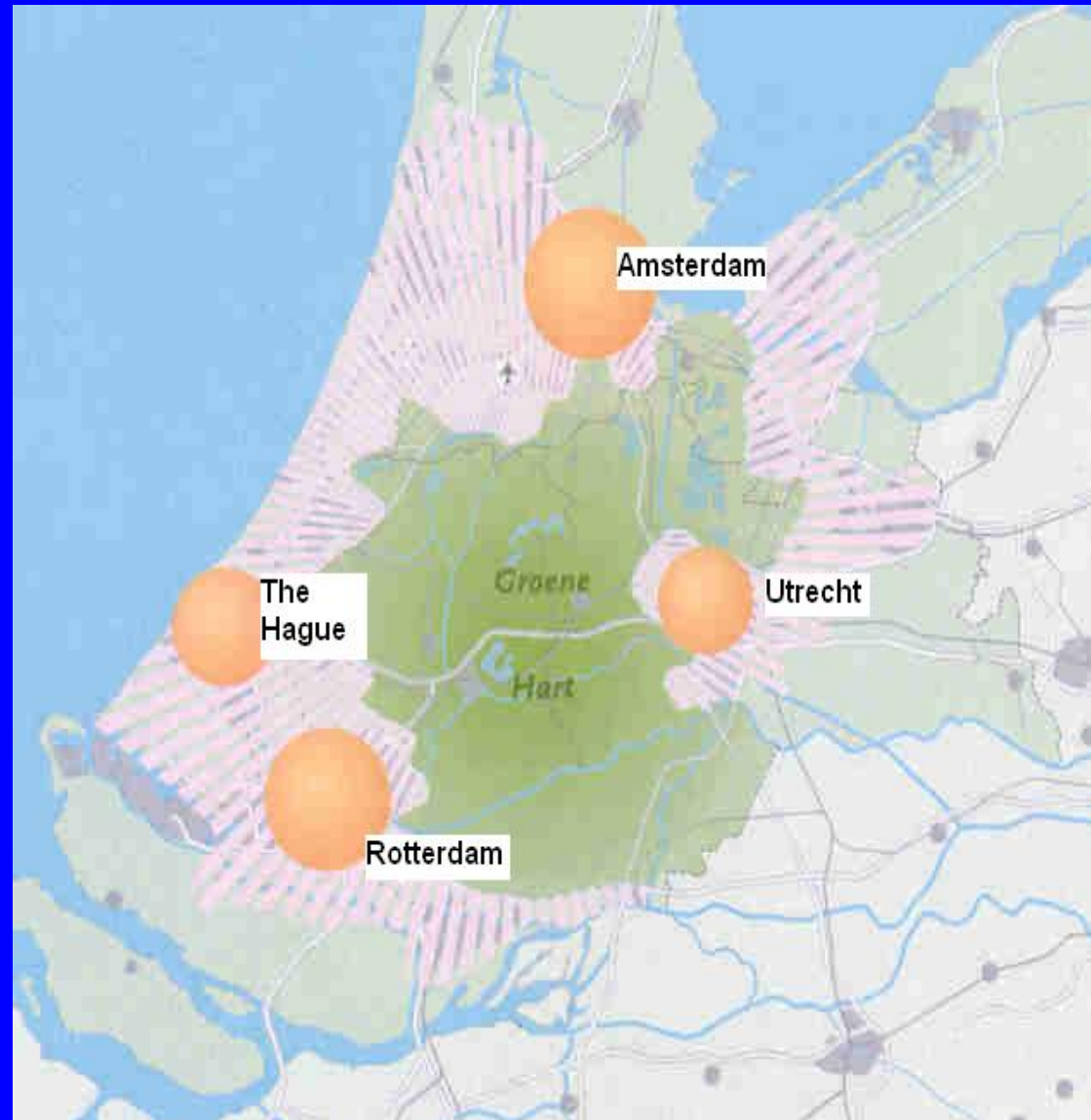**Kansai** in Japan

- Osaka
- Kyoto
- Kobe

A Classic Example of PUR

Randstad in Holland:

- A 'ring' of cities around the Green Heart:
  - Amsterdam
  - Utrecht
  - The Hague
  - Rotterdam

- European Delta Metropolis

Problems of Definition and Measurement

- A **PUR** consists of 3+ cities of *reasonable proximity* and with *functional interconnections*

- **What is a reasonable proximity?**
  - One hour (Geddes, 1915)
  - 40 minutes (Blumenfeld, 1971)
  - 30 minutes (Batten, 1995)
  - 45 minutes (ESPON, 2004-6)

- **How do we measure functional interconnections?**
  - Labour market flows (common criterion)
  - Non-work trip-generating activities (shopping, leisure)
  - Inter-firm flows of goods, information and know how

# Key challenges to the ESDP's normative approach to polycentricity

- Is PUR a panacea for solving regional problems?

- Is PUR a more sustainable form of managing urban growth?

- What kind of policy intervention can facilitate the development of a PUR?

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Is PUR a panacea for economic competitiveness?

- No conclusive evidence of a correlation between economic competitiveness and PUR as a specific *spatial structure* but,

- The concept of polycentric development has become a powerful *political discourse* for promoting spatial equity and balanced development

- It is seen as the appropriate spatial model for achieving the EU's *territorial cohesion* agenda

Ireland's Monocentric Growth

- **Dublin City Region:**

- 40% of national population

- 48% of national GVA

- 70% of major Co. HQs

- 80% of government agencies

- 100% of financial institutions
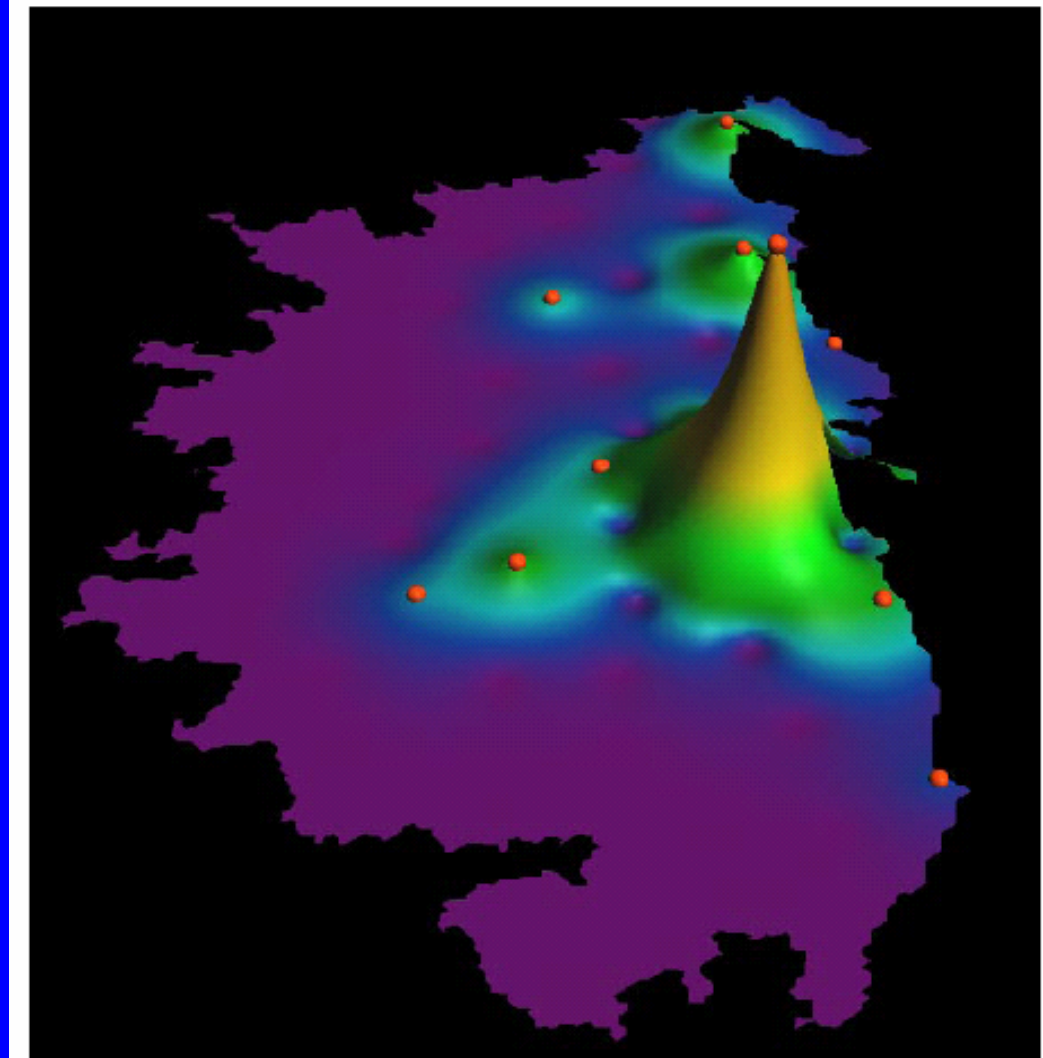
Source: Polynet Project

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Dublin: the Engine of 'Celtic Tiger' but,

- Its over heated economy has created social and environmental problems

- Its excessive growth has led to the widening of regional disparities

The 'pull' factors

- In Cohesion Countries, the EU funds have been absorbed by major urban centres, particularly capital cities due to their:
  - Critical mass
  - Infrastructure
  - Institutional capacity

- A similar trend is happening in the new Member States

'Atlantic Gateways' as counterbalance to Dublin City Region

- Irish NSS aims to maximise the potential of the city regions outside Dublin by forging cooperation between neighbouring cities in SW:
  - Cork
  - Limerick / Shannon
  - Waterford
  - Galway
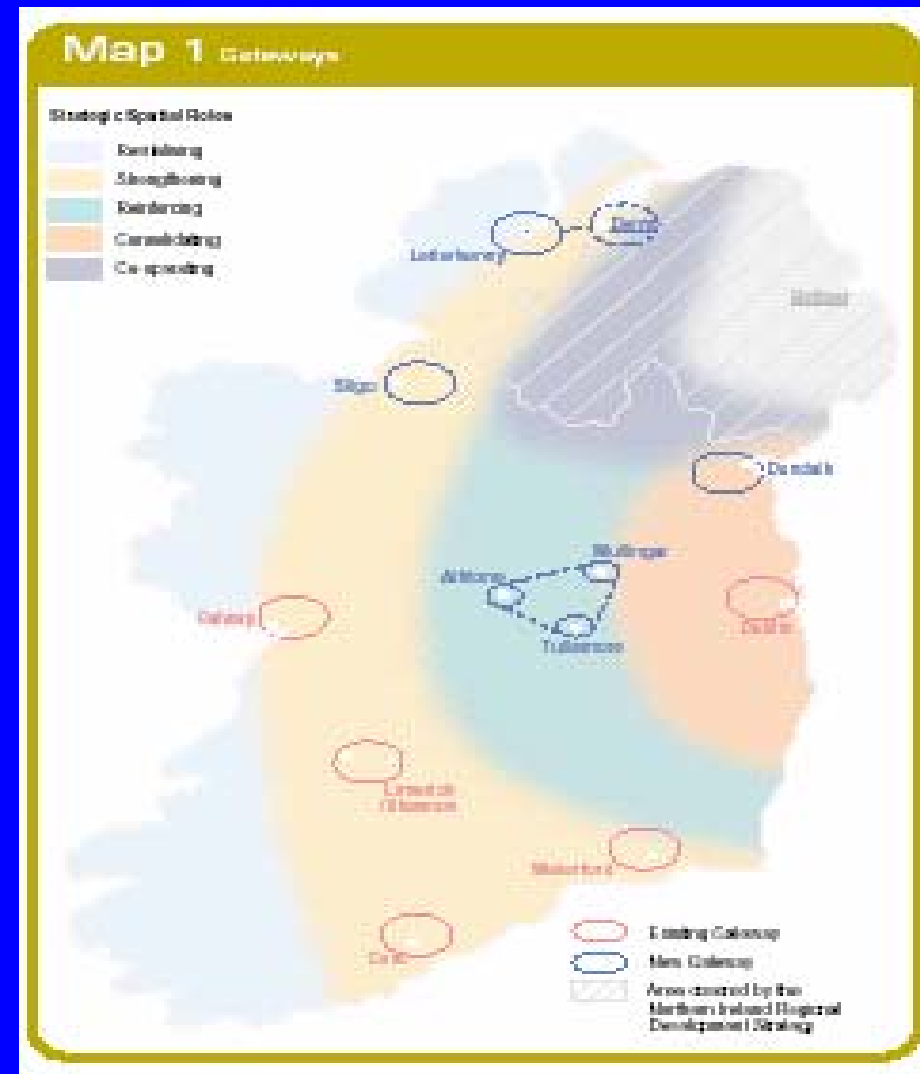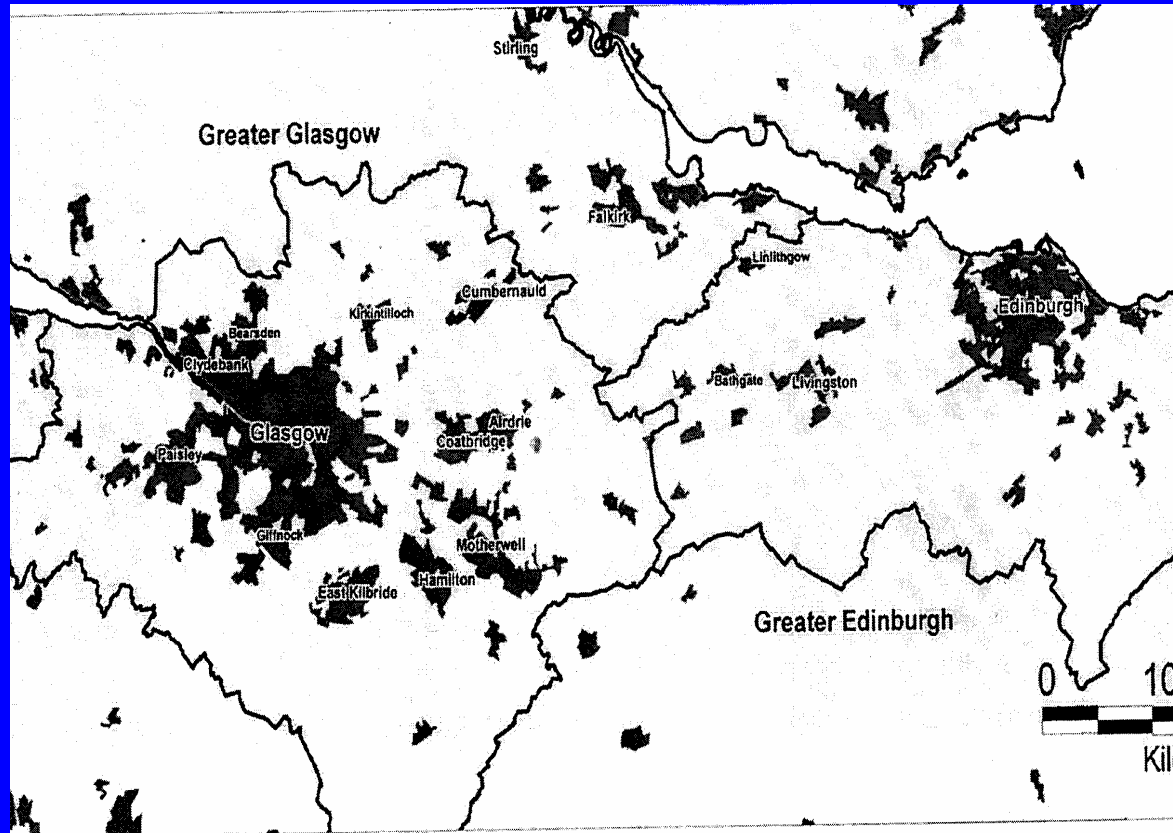
The Northern Way Megalopolis

- With 8 city regions:

  – Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds Sheffield, Hull, Central Lancashire

  – Tees Valley, Newcastle /Gateshead

- Aiming to close the North-South divide in England
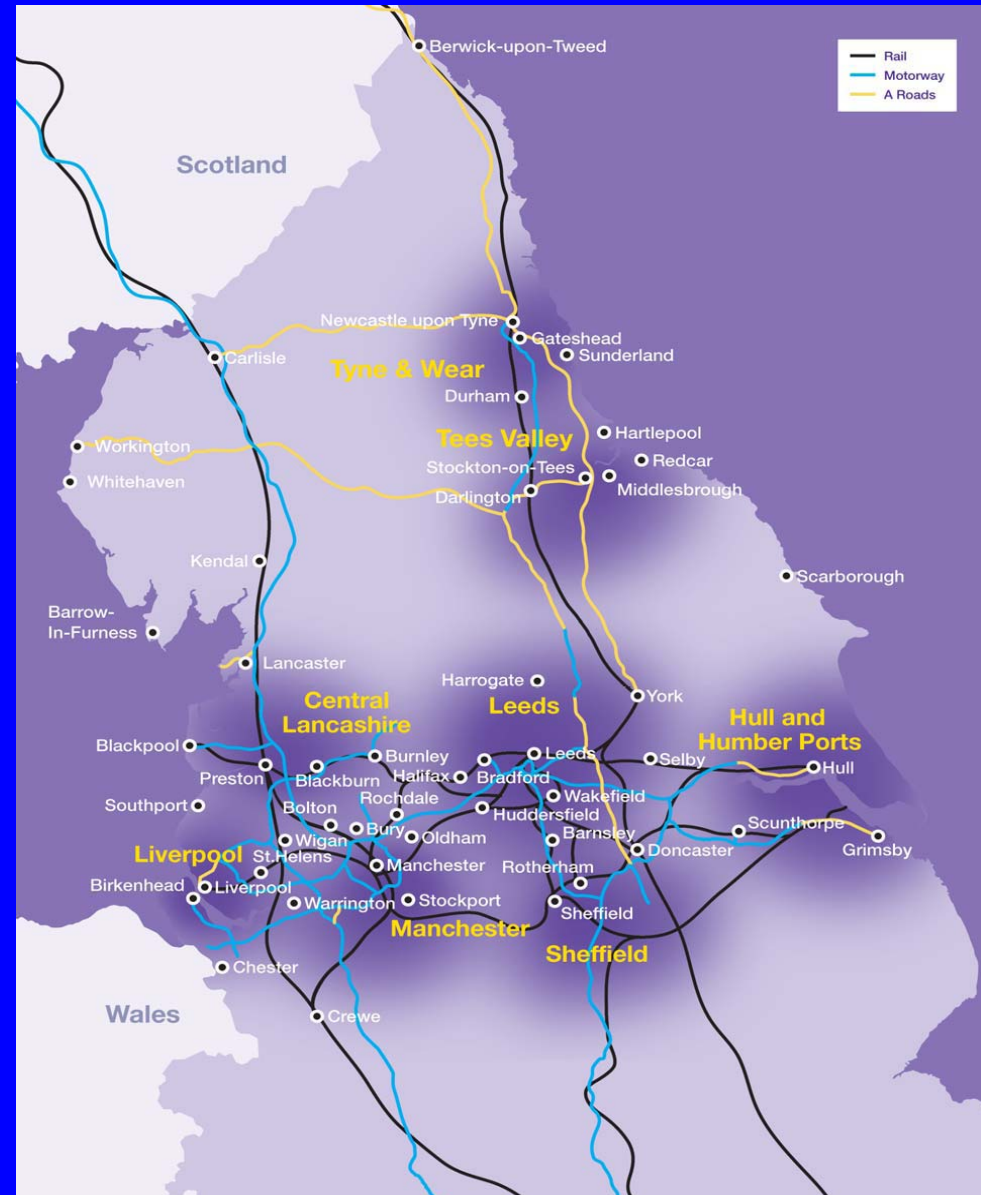
Functional interconnection is the key to PUR

Central Belt of Scotland:

- Physical proximity does not necessary lead to functional interdependencies

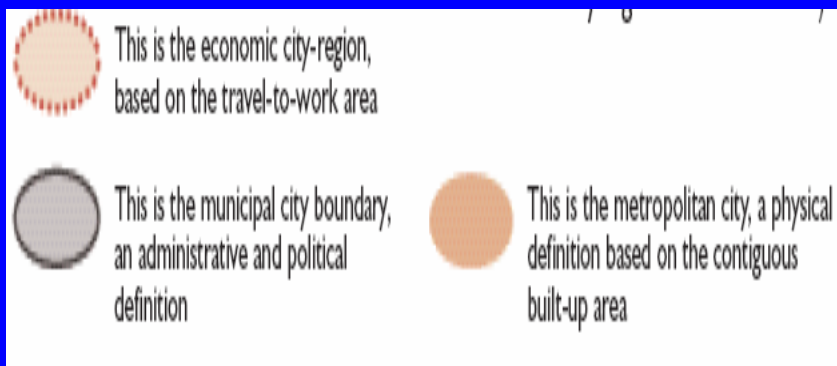# Forging functional synergies between neighbouring cities requires:

- '*Hard infrastructure*': efficient transport and telecommunication networks

- '*Soft infrastructure*': effective institutions and governance arrangements

The Mismatch
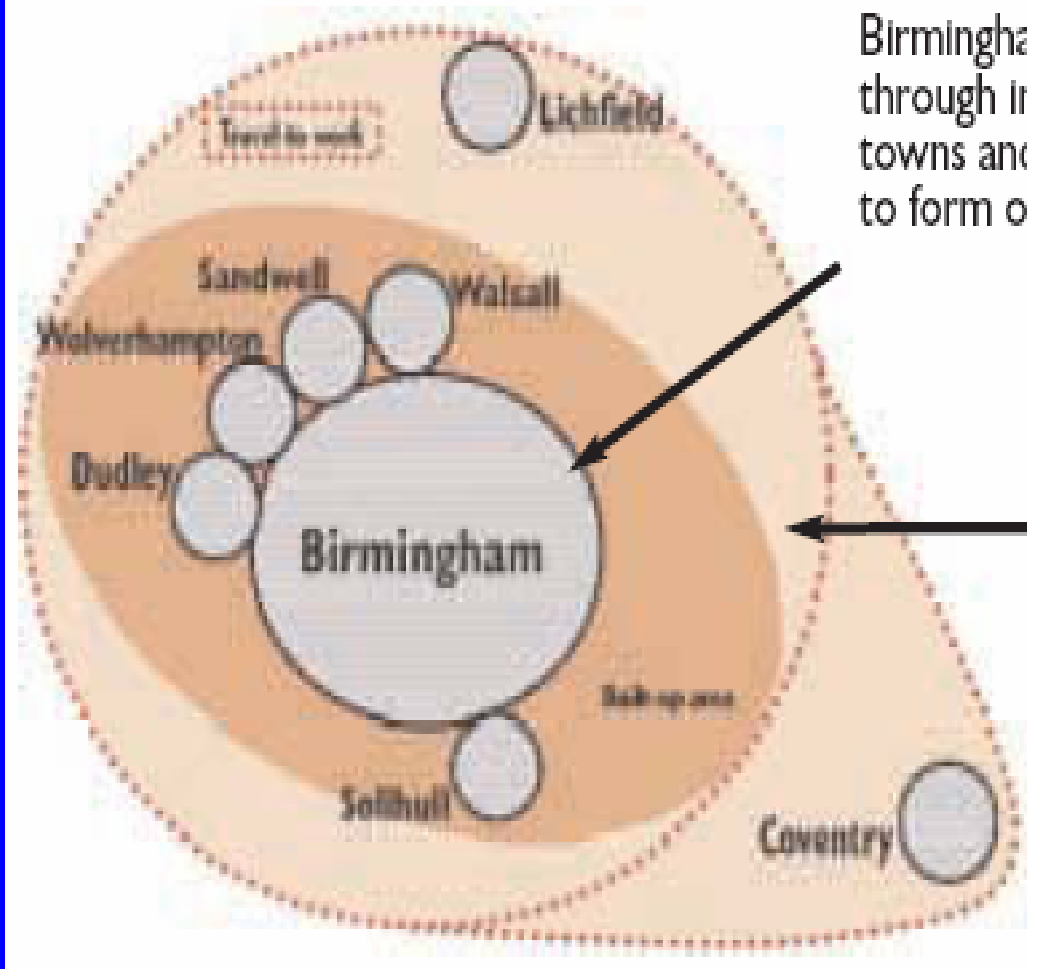
- Between **functional areas and administrative boundaries**
  - Government operates on the basis of: communes, municipalities, boroughs, local authorities, Kreise, …
  - Industries, businesses, and households operate within functionally defined areas

- 40% of the UK working population cross at least one local authority boundary during their journey to work.

- What is the alternative?

Aligning Functional & Admin Boundaries

- No single local authority has administrative control over the whole city-region

Brimingham/West Midlands city-region

Birmingha
through i
towns and
to form o

This is the economic city-region, based on the travel-to-work area

This is the municipal city boundary, an administrative and political definition

This is the metropolitan city, a physical definition based on the contiguous built-up area

Lichfield
Treel to work
Sandwell
Walsall
Wolverhampton
Dudley
Birmingham
Built-up area
Solihull
Coventry

One size does not fit all!

- Co-aligning does not necessarily mean creating a new layer of formal government structure for the functional area

- It is even more perverse, to argue for such a formal structure at the level of PUR
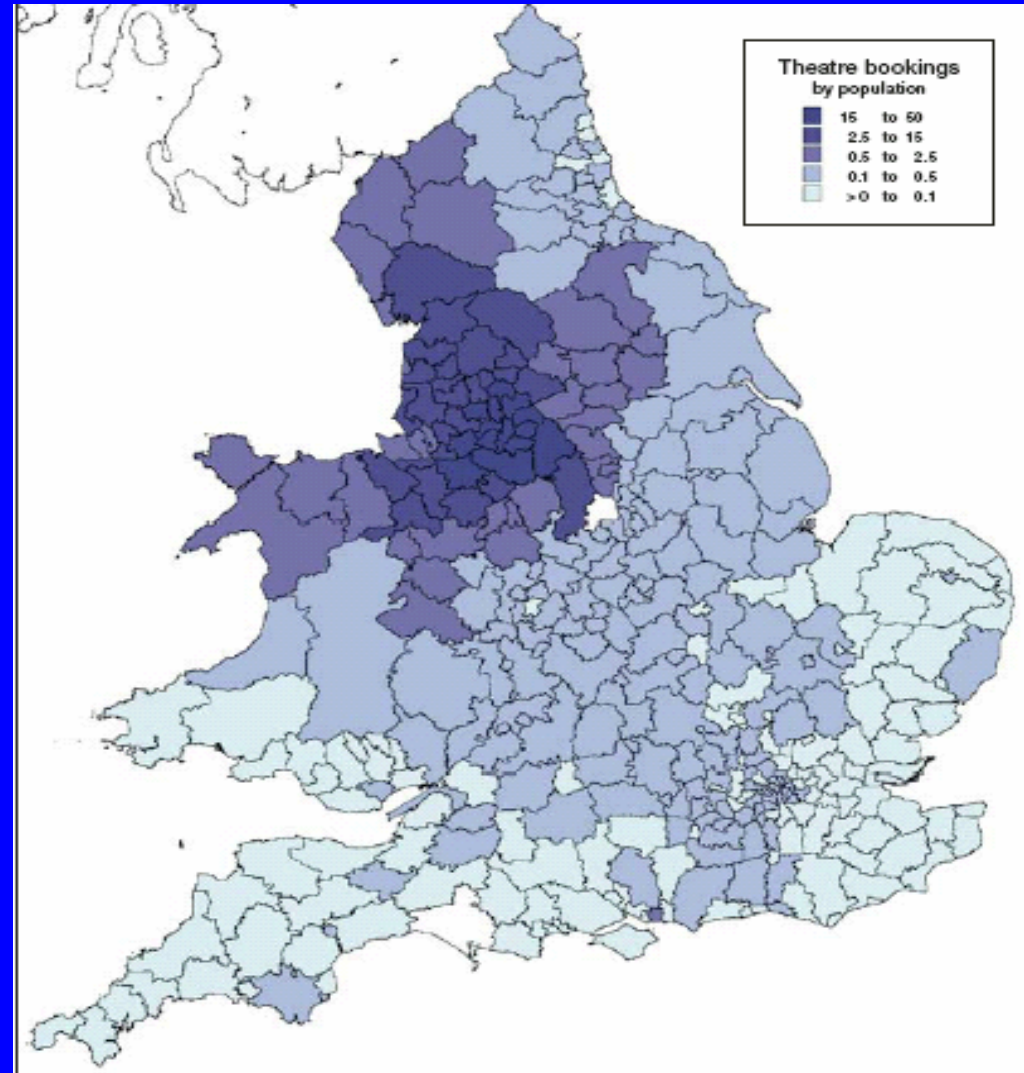
Why?

- **First**, it is politically sensitive

- **Second**, the geography of functional areas varies depending on:
  - the methodology applied to define them
  - different functions and markets
  - travel to work patterns may be different from patterns of travel to shopping and entertainment centres

The Cultural Draw of Met. Cities

- The catchment area of less frequently used services, such as theatres, is much wider than that of daily travel to work

- Breakdown of customers attending any of 8 theatres in G. Manchester, 1998-2003

Theatre bookings by population
- 15 to 50
- 2.5 to 15
- 0.5 to 2.5
- 0.1 to 0.5
- >0 to 0.1

Source: ODPM 2006

3. Catchment areas differ for different occupations

Figure 2.10: Catchments for professional and managerial workers

Node
Catchment

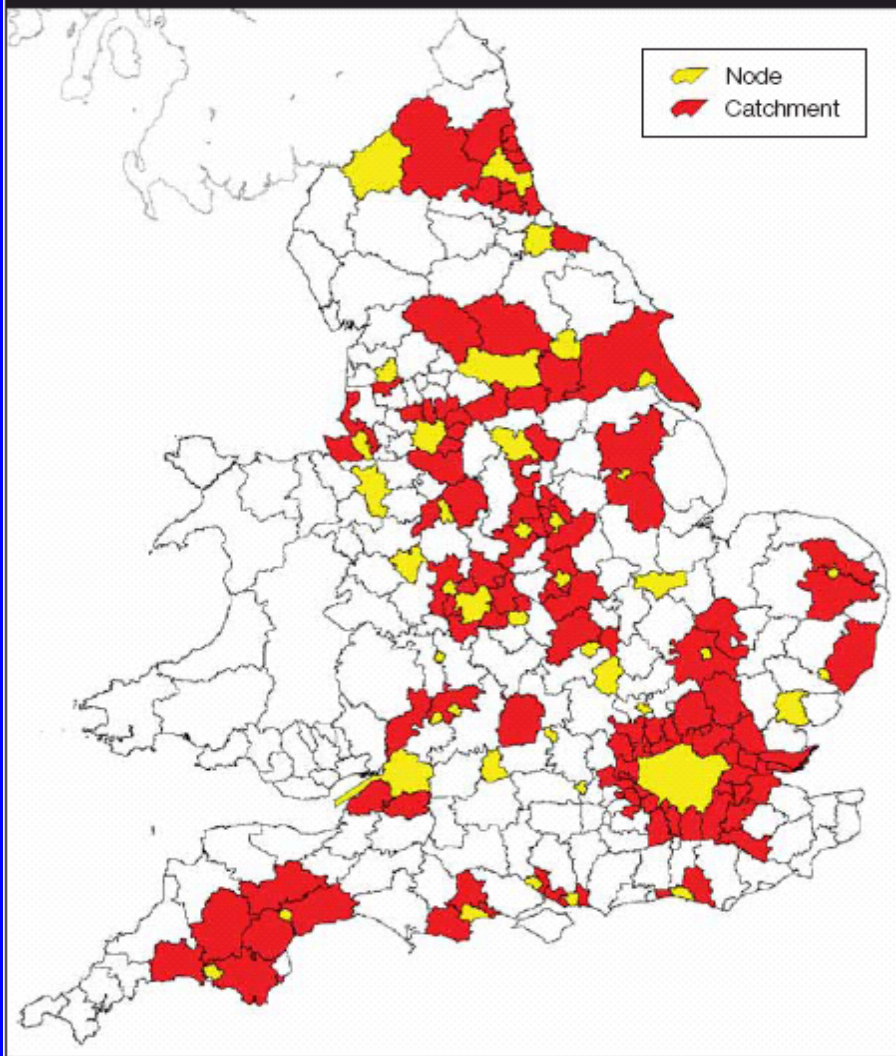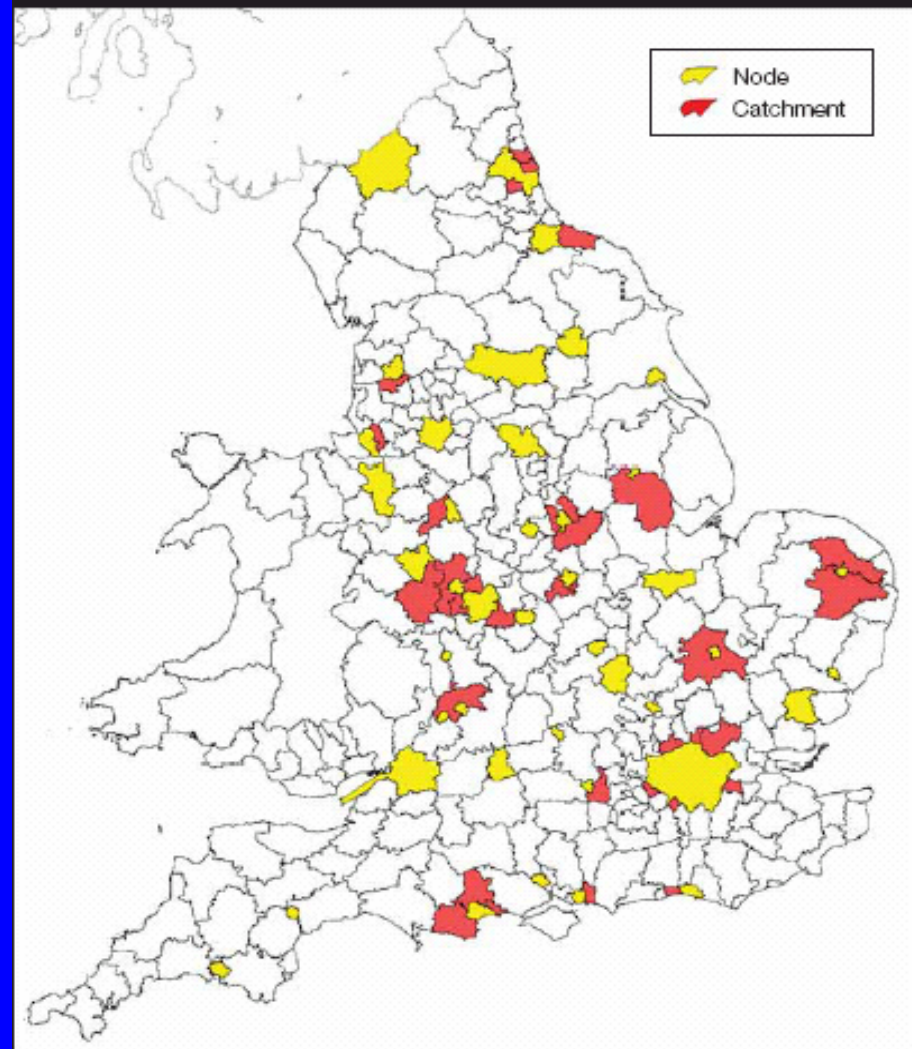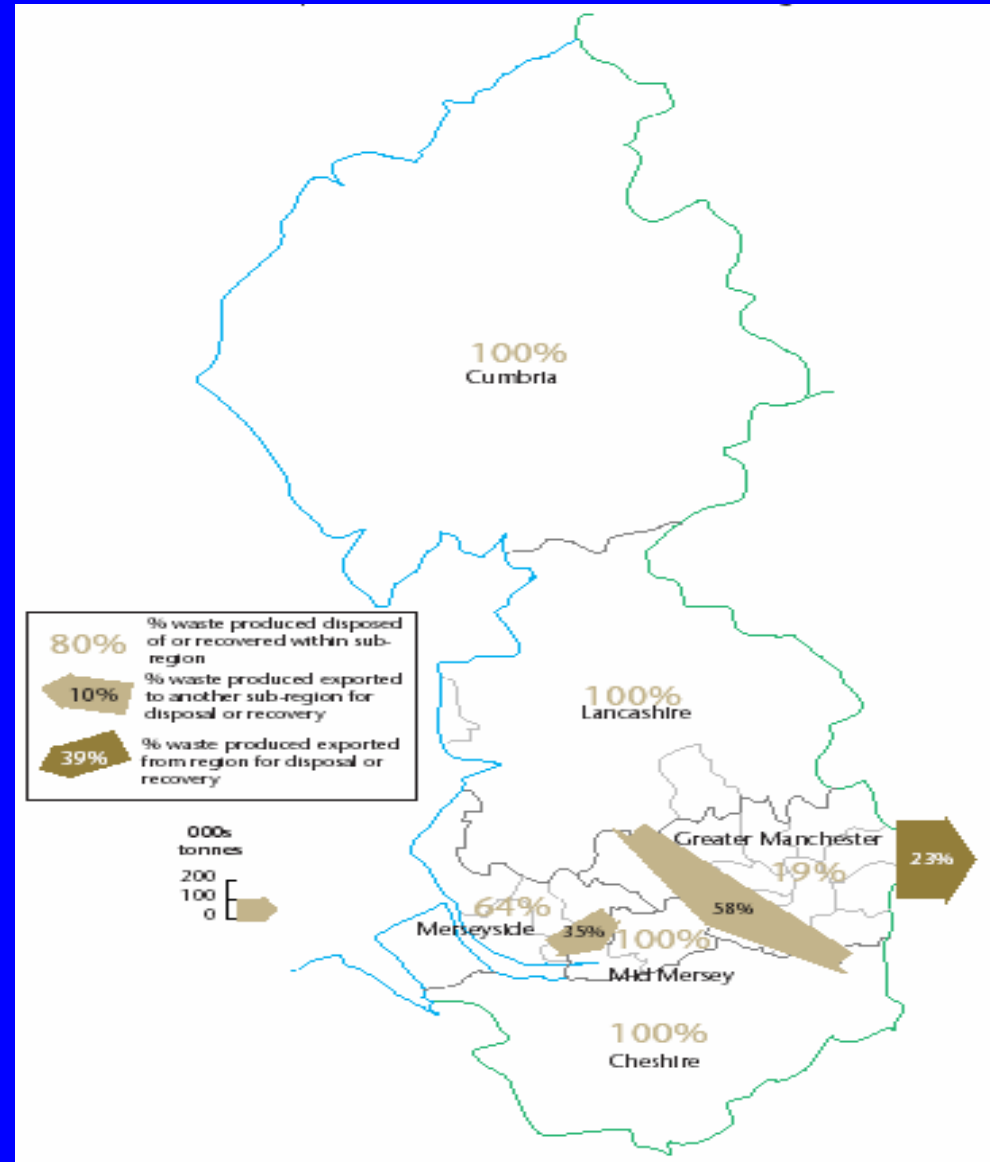Figure 2.11: Catchments for semi-skilled and routine workers

Node
Catchment

Source; ODPM, 2006

4. Cross-authority flows of waste

- Typically from metropolitan areas to shire counties

- 58% of municipal waste from Gr. Manchester is exported to Warrington for disposal

Hence: One size doesn't fit all!

- There is no single overarching city-region boundary

- Hence, little justification for a single, formal city-region government

- Even less justifiable to have a formal PUR-wide government

- 'Fuzzy' boundaries of the functional areas don't fit in tightly-drawn administrative boundaries

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Variable Geometry

- Informal, flexible, yet purposeful inter-municipal collaborations and networking

- Reflecting the transition from *government* to *governance*

- Representing alternative models of managing **collective affairs**, based on:
    - horizontal self-organisation among mutually interdependent actors

- How can policy intervention facilitate functional inter-connections between neighbouring cities of a potential polycentric urban region?

- **By incentivizing inclusive, inter-municipal coalitions across the PUR geometries**

Conclusion

- **Collaboration is the hallmark of effective governance!**

- **Effective governance is a prerequisite for developing polycentric urban regions**