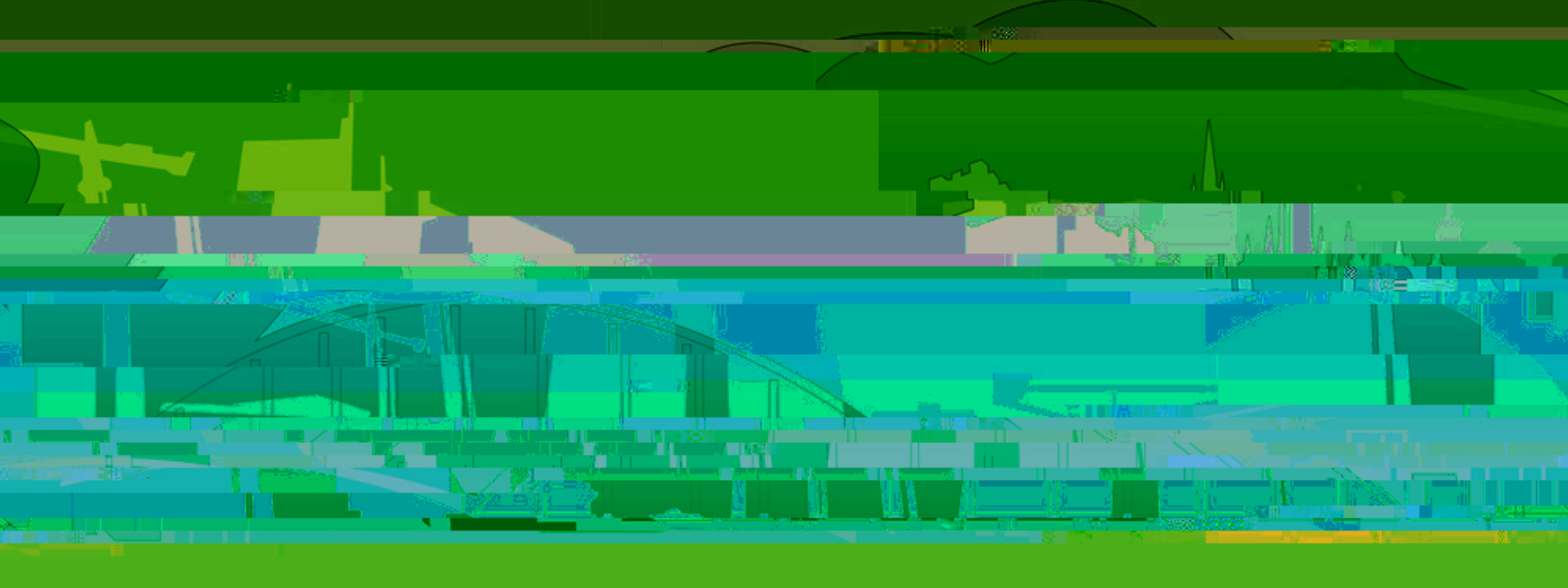


# The Changing Nature of Urban and Rural Areas in the United Kingdom and other European countries

Tony Champion



# The Changing Nature of Urban and Rural Areas in the United Kingdom and in other European countries

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  - population by urban/rural district type
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# European urbanisation in context

- UN data (WUP 2005 revision) put Europe's 47 countries at 728m people in 2000, up 11% from 1970, expected to fall by 4% by 2030
- Overall picture 1970-2000 of urban growth (+111m or +27%) and rural decline (-39m or -16%)
- Therefore, continuing rise in level of urbanisation: 63% 1970, 69% 1985, 72% 2000, 74% 2015, 78% 2030
- Still big differences across Eu

# The case of the United Kingdom

- Good example of current patterns of interest, given that England & Wales was already 78% urbanised in 1901
- Britain's 2001 level of urbanisation (on agglomeration basis) depends on size cut-off: 93% if all urban areas included, 88% if only those with 2k+ residents, 79% if only 10k+ (which is most common cut-off for governmental purposes) – see Table 1
- Across size range, a clear counterurbanisation pattern of population change (growth rate rises with falling size) – see Table 2
- But most demographic analyses are based on classifications of areas based on broad urban/rural status, e.g. Urban, Mixed, Rural – see DEFRA district-level classification map below)

# GB population 2001, by population size of settlement

Size of urban area 2001	2001 population	% 2001 population	% 2001 cumulative
1,000,000 +	15,475,010	27.1	27.1
500,000 - 999,999	3,554,356	6.2	33.3
200,000 - 499,999	7,332,922	12.8	46.2
100,000 - 199,999	5,402,465	9.5	55.6
50,000 - 99,999	4,361,740	7.6	63.3
20,000 - 49,999	5,451,565	9.5	72.8
<b>10,000 - 19,999</b>	3,365,573	5.9	<b>78.7</b>
5,000 - 9,999	2,746,740	4.8	83.5
2,000 - 4,999	2,728,752	4.8	88.3
<b>1,500 - 2,000</b>	721,342	1.3	<b>89.6</b>
1,000 - 1,499	845,587	1.5	91.0
<b>Under 1,000</b>	1,067,490	1.9	<b>92.9</b>
Other settlement	4,050,396	7.1	100.0
Great Britain	57,103,938	100.0	n/a



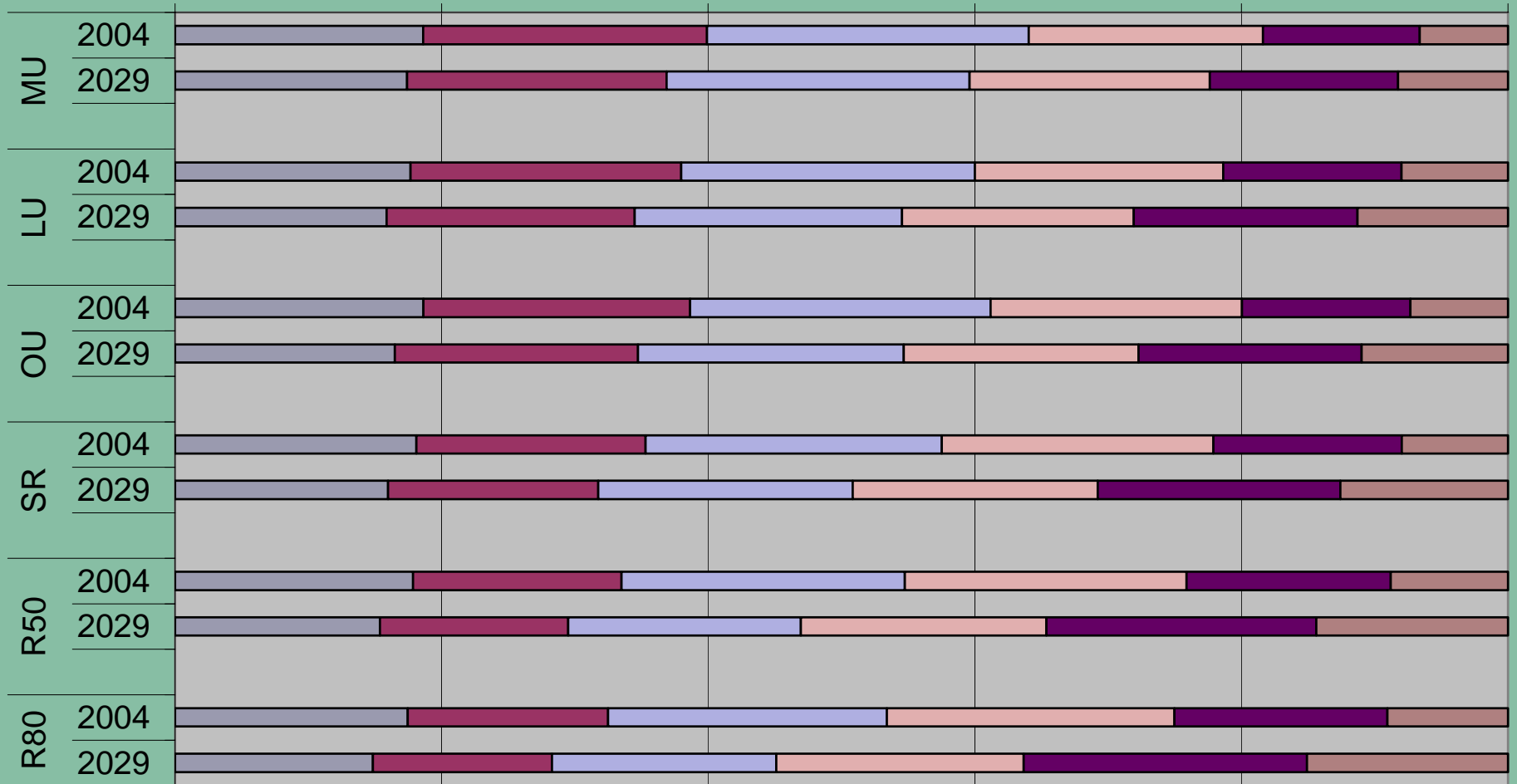
## Population change 2001-2006, England, by broad district type

Urban/rural classification of LA districts	Overall change	Natural change	Inter-national migration	Within-UK migration
	%/year	%/year	%/year	%/year
England	0.53	0.21	0.36	-0.04
Urban	0.39	<b>0.35</b>	<b>0.57</b>	-0.54
Mixed	0.59	0.19	0.24	0.16
Rural	<b>0.77</b>	-0.08	0.05	<b>0.79</b>

# Age composition of England's population 2004 and 2029, by DEFRA district type

% all residents

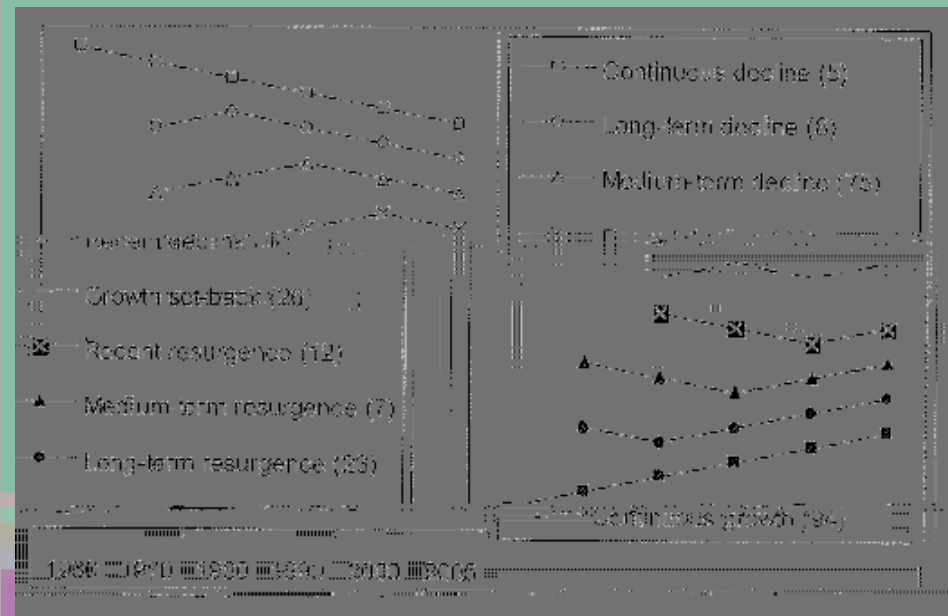
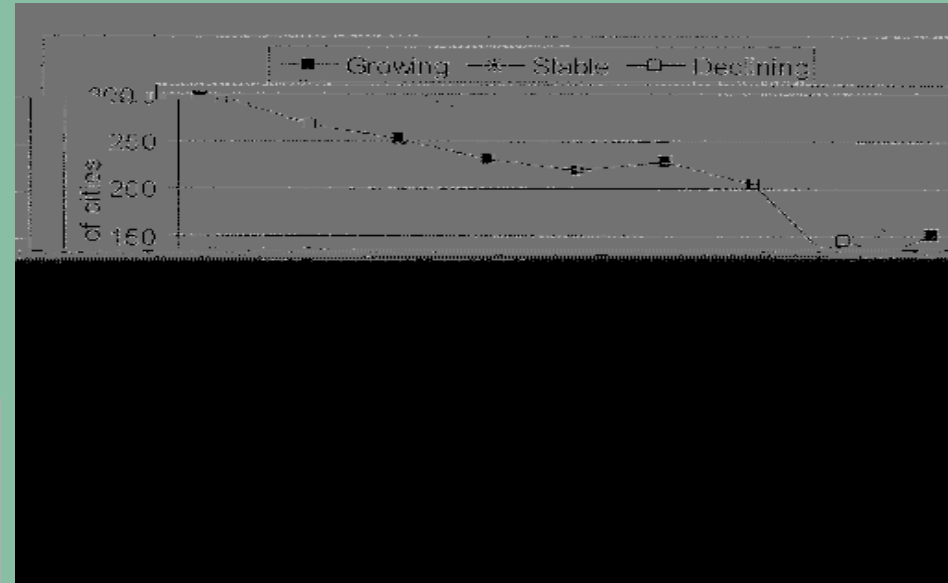
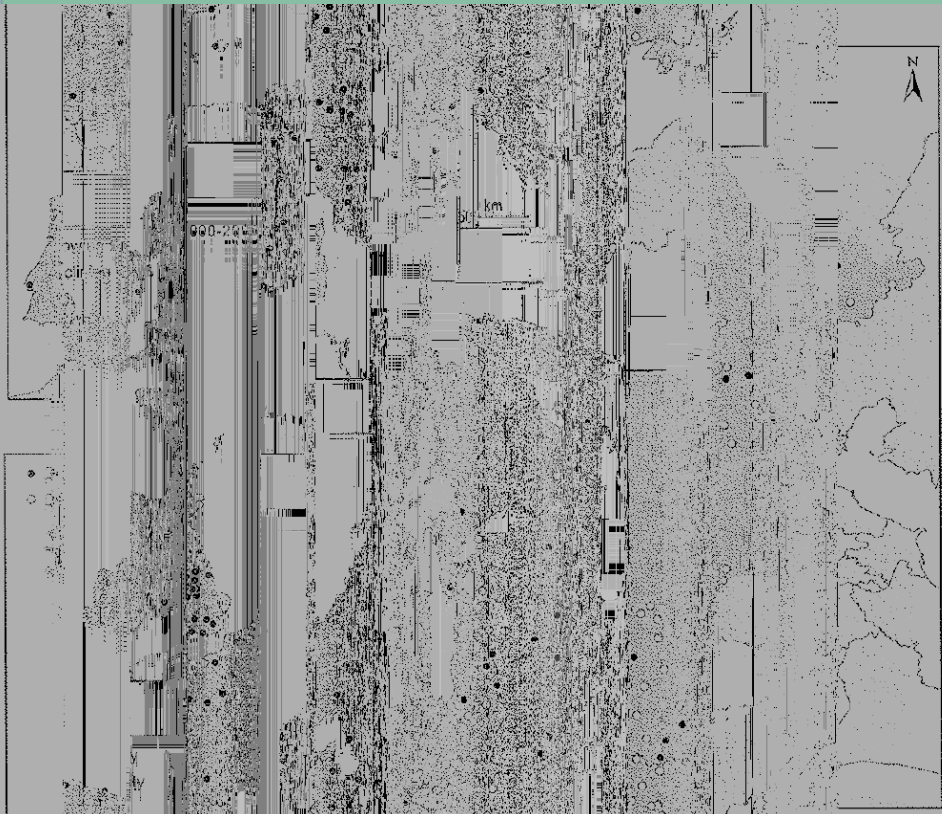
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%





# The wider European scene: resurgent cities?

Fewer cities growing in 1990s than 1960s, but small increase in number 2000-2005 (Turok & Mykhnenko, 2007)



# The wider European scene: national analyses of urban system change

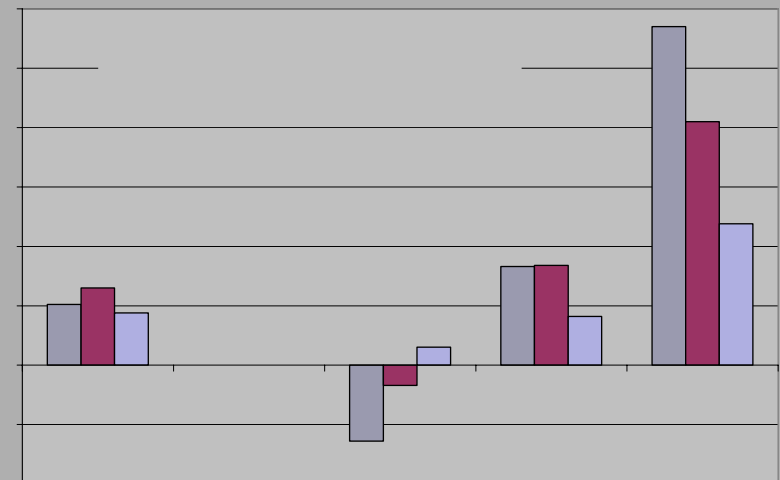
- Analyses based on Geyer & Kontuly (1993) model of 'differential urbanisation' based on which of 3 sizes is growing fastest
- **Case studies since 1950:**
  - Finland: PR 1955-65, CU 1965-75, U(2) 1990-98
  - Britain: CU since 1931
  - W Germany: U 1950-61, PR 1961-70, CU 1970-87, PR 1987-95
  - Estonia: U 1950-90, U 1990-2000
  - Italy

# The wider European scene: urban sprawl

- Traditional preference for city life in Continental Europe, but now urban sprawl is increasing
- Example of France: expanding daily urban systems ('aires urbaines'): 1968 32,733 km<sup>2</sup>, 1999 176,000 km<sup>2</sup> – see map:
- Population growth 1990-1999: core +0.15%, suburbs +0.41%, outer ring +1.19%. But this gap is smaller than in 2 previous periods – see chart:



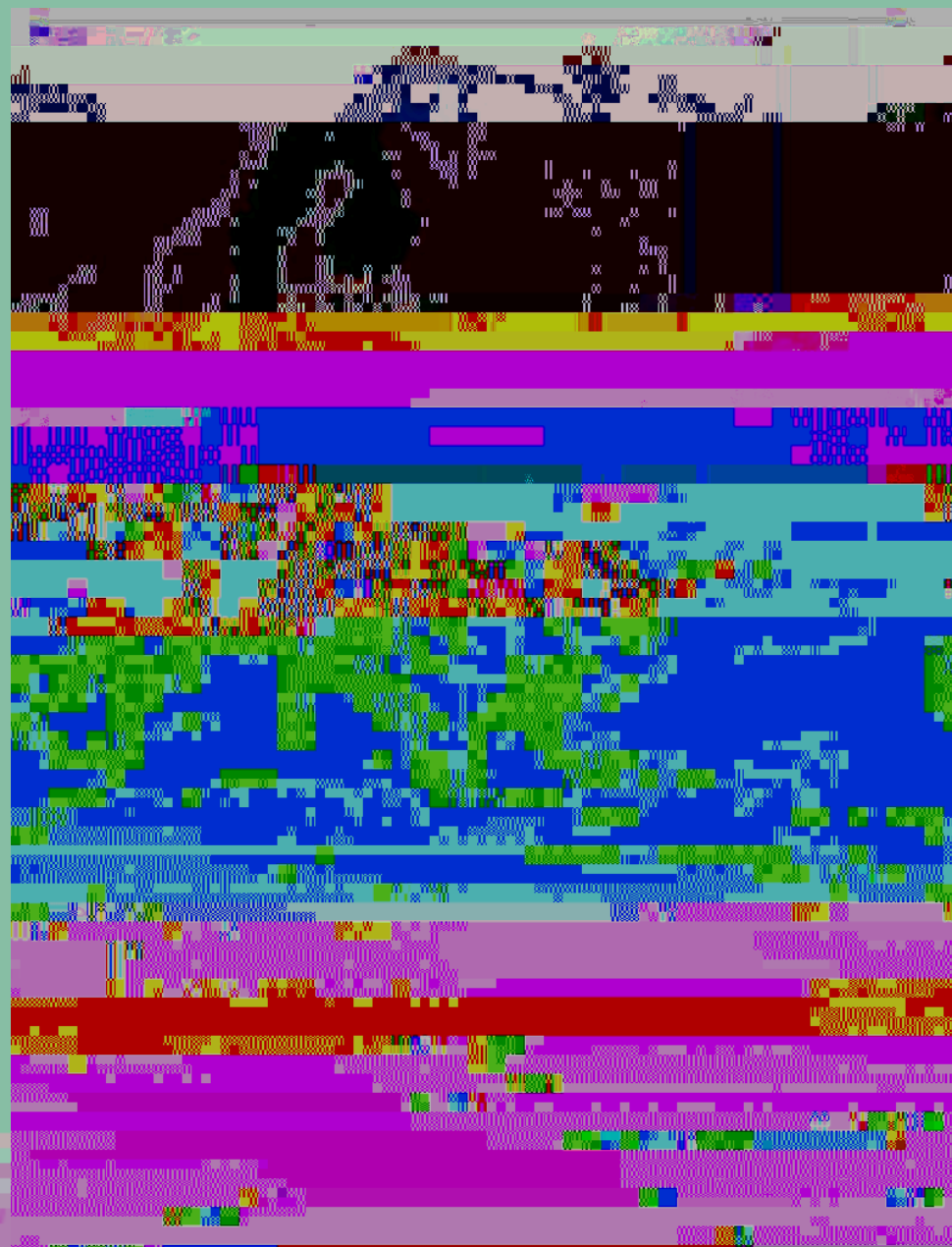
Mean annual population growth rate, 1975-1999, for France's 'aires urbaines'



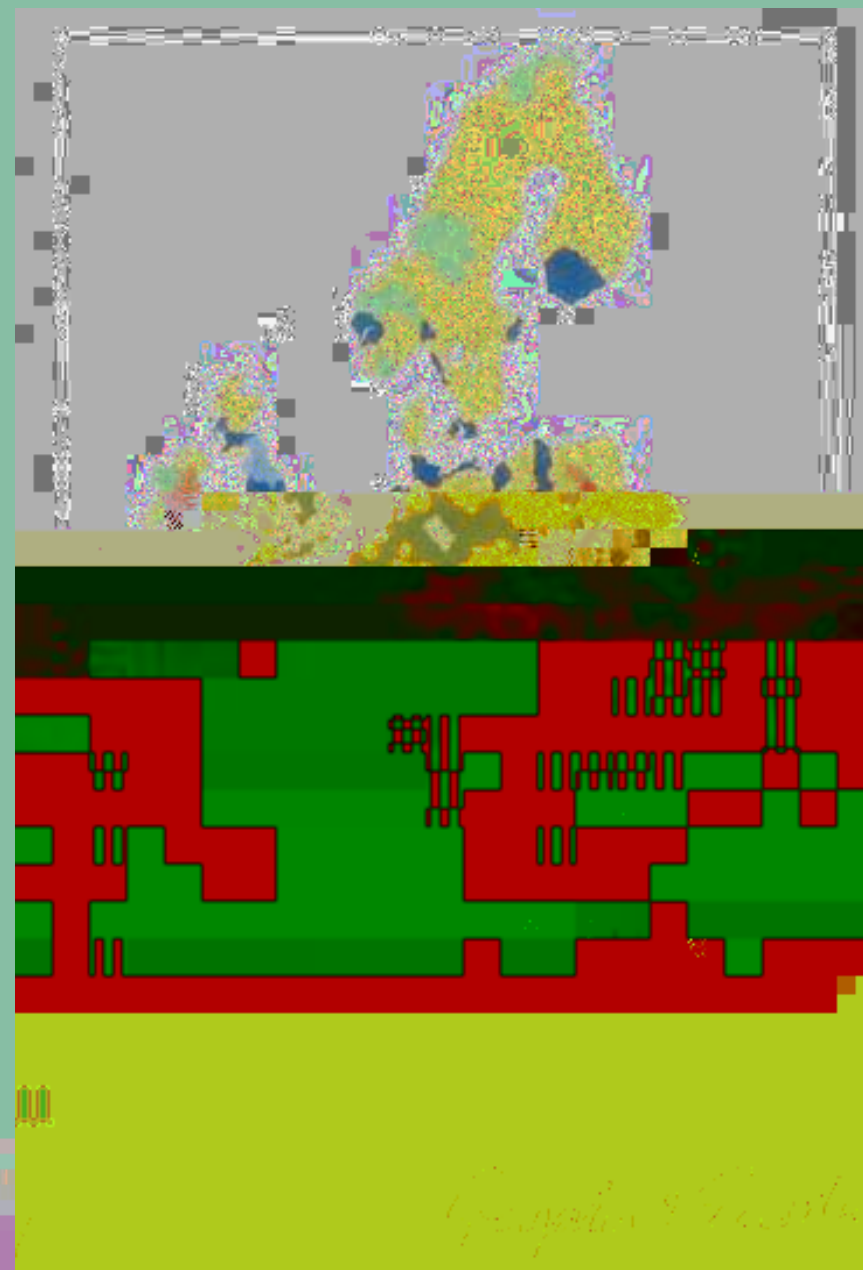
# Implications for studying urban and rural areas

- Urban development trends not only make the task of urban definition more difficult: they challenge the underlying rationale for this
- 'Is it possible and sensible to make a distinction between urban and rural areas in Europe?' (Bengs & Schmid-Thomé, 2006, for ESPON)
- Yes, they say, but based on larger areas like England's district types (they use the even larger NUTS3 regions)
- They derive 6 types, based on high/low degrees of urban influence (measured by density, urban size) X high/medium/low degrees of human intervention (measured by land cover) – see map (& Table 4)
- Seen as replacing an earlier regional typology of rural-urban spatial patterns by Moriconi-Ébrard and Eurostat (1999) – see map

Map 1 (ESPON 1.1.2)



Map 2 (Moriconi-Ébrard and Eurostat)



## In conclusion

- Settlement size is still regarded as important for classifying space, but mainly for the bigger urban areas: a wider range of criteria is used for smaller settlements and more rural areas
- As suggested by Coombes (2004), three groups of criteria measure related but different aspects of 'urbanisation': settlement size, intensity or concentration of settlements, accessibility to services - hence the value of multi-dimensional classification like ESPON 1.1.2
- Also major issue of what territorial units to classify: administrative units usually tend to be unsatisfactory
- Probably the best general-purpose approach is a 2-level schema based on (1) physically-defined areas (e.g. 'urbanised areas') and (2) functionally-defined regions (e.g. 'metropolitan regions')
- Not a new idea – see UN (1969) and UN (1973). But it is high time that this sort of alternative was developed further, judging by the wealth of evidence on new forms of urbanisation recently assembled by National Research Council (2003) and Champion & Hugo (2004)