

Unravelling hierarchies through percolation

Elsa Arcaute

Any hope for universality?

- Cities are very different
- Historical paths are all very different
- Societies and their cultures are very different
- Subjected to different environmental stresses

Looking for universal patterns, that regardless of all the geographical constraints, historical, socio-political trajectories, these can be identified all over the world.

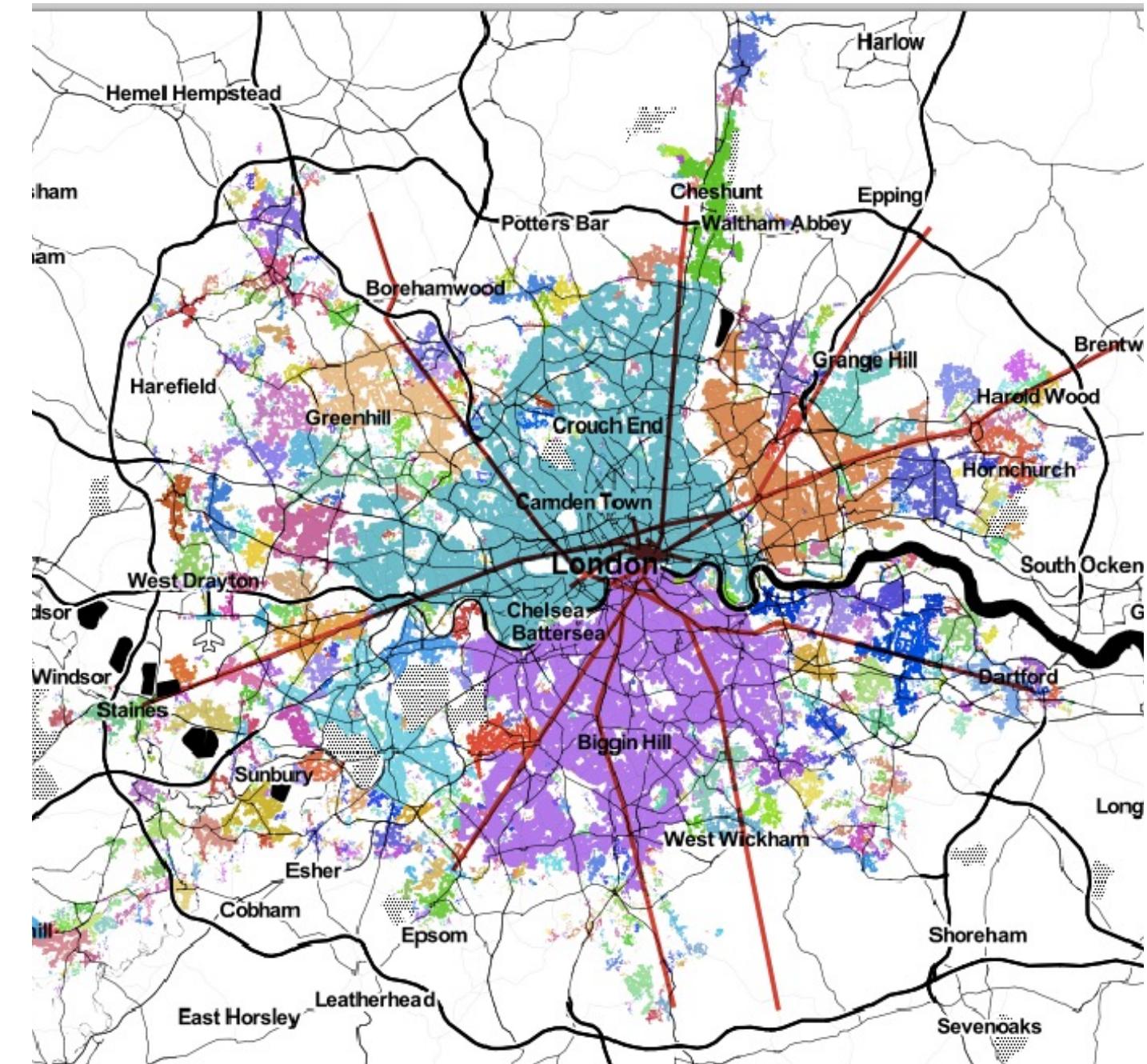
Morphology

Cities are places for interactions, and cities need to be connected

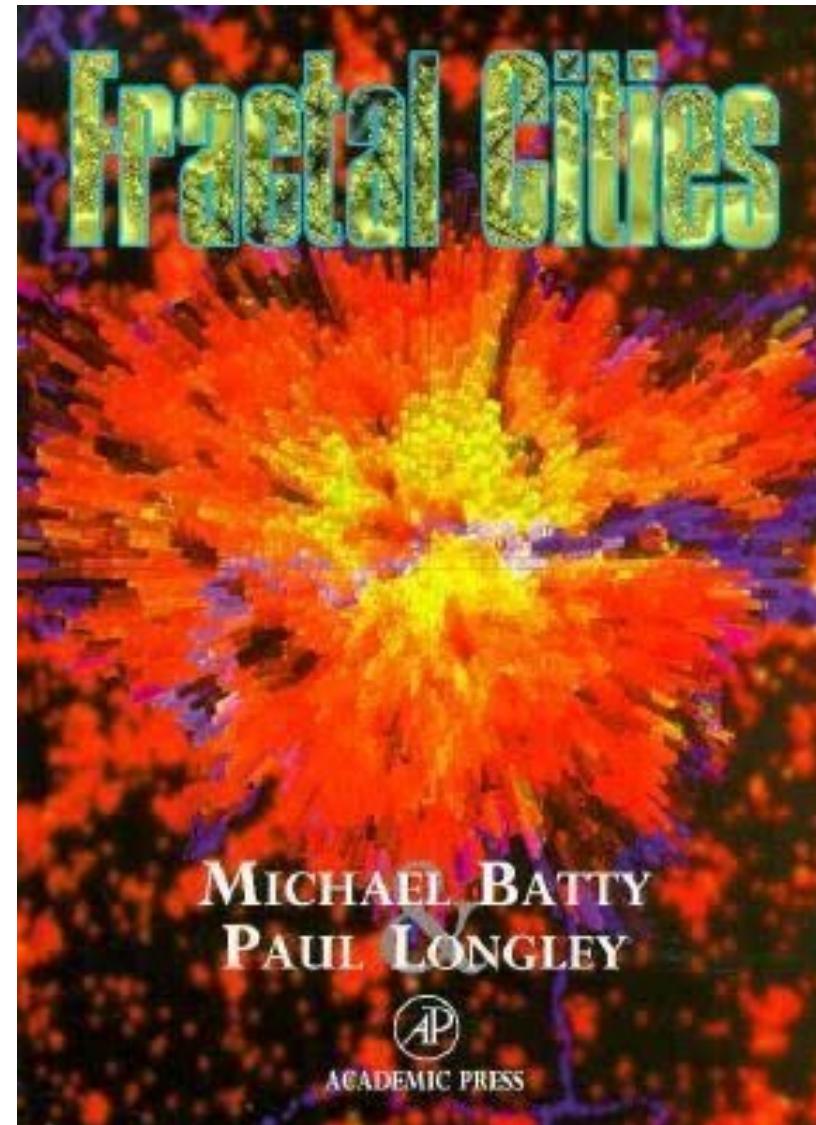
Roads: that we observe nowadays are the outcome of the reinforcement of relevant connectivity between 2 places

Roman roads that remain nowadays are important roads where retail is concentrated

Connectivity is fractal!

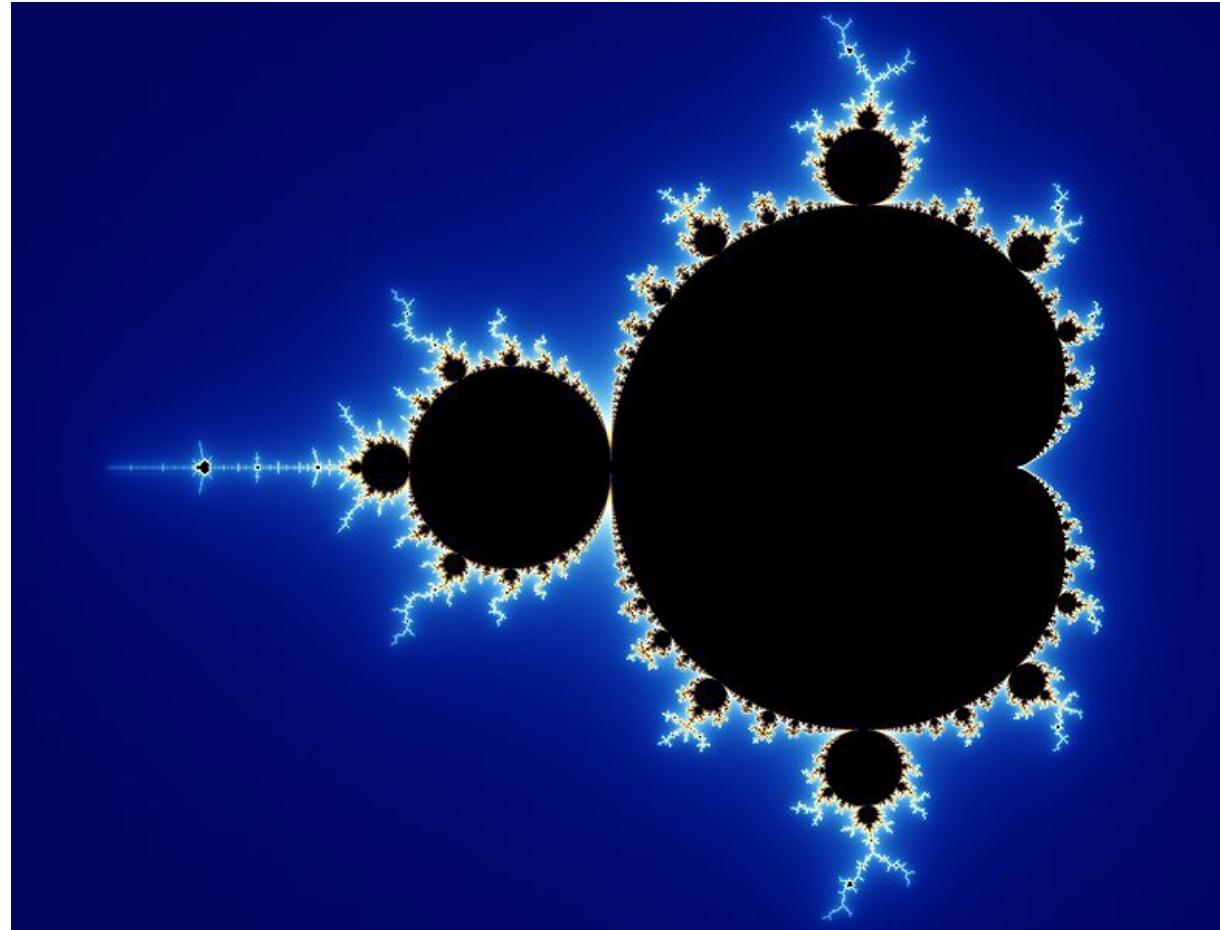


Fractal Cities



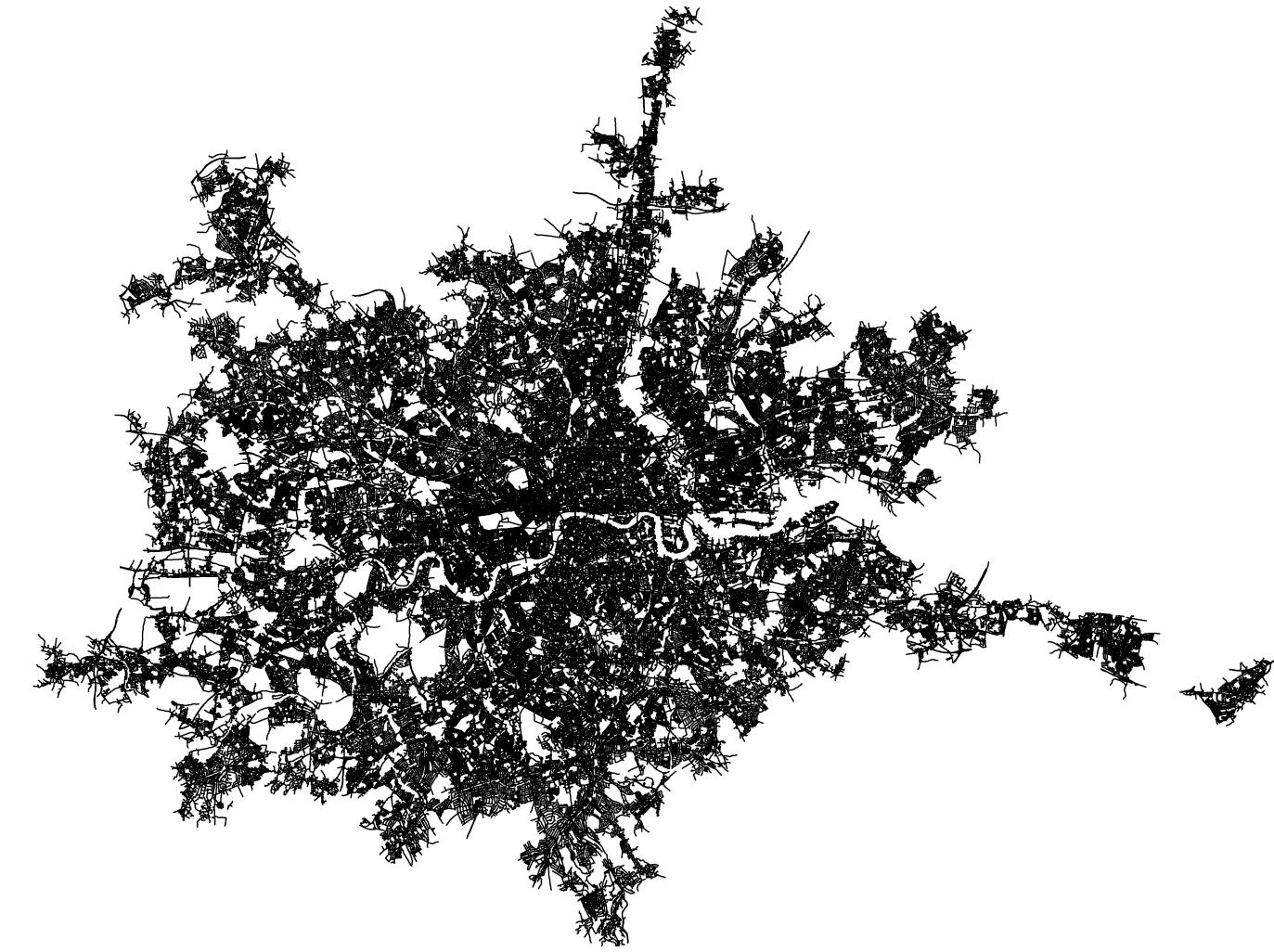
Michael Batty is one of the original proposers of considering cities as fractals! The other person is Frank Frankhauser. Both in 1994.

Regular vs random fractals



The Mandelbrot set

London street network



Fractals

Volcanic landscape



Tenerife

Zoom: volcanic rock, also fractal



Forest

Crown shyness: fractal pattern



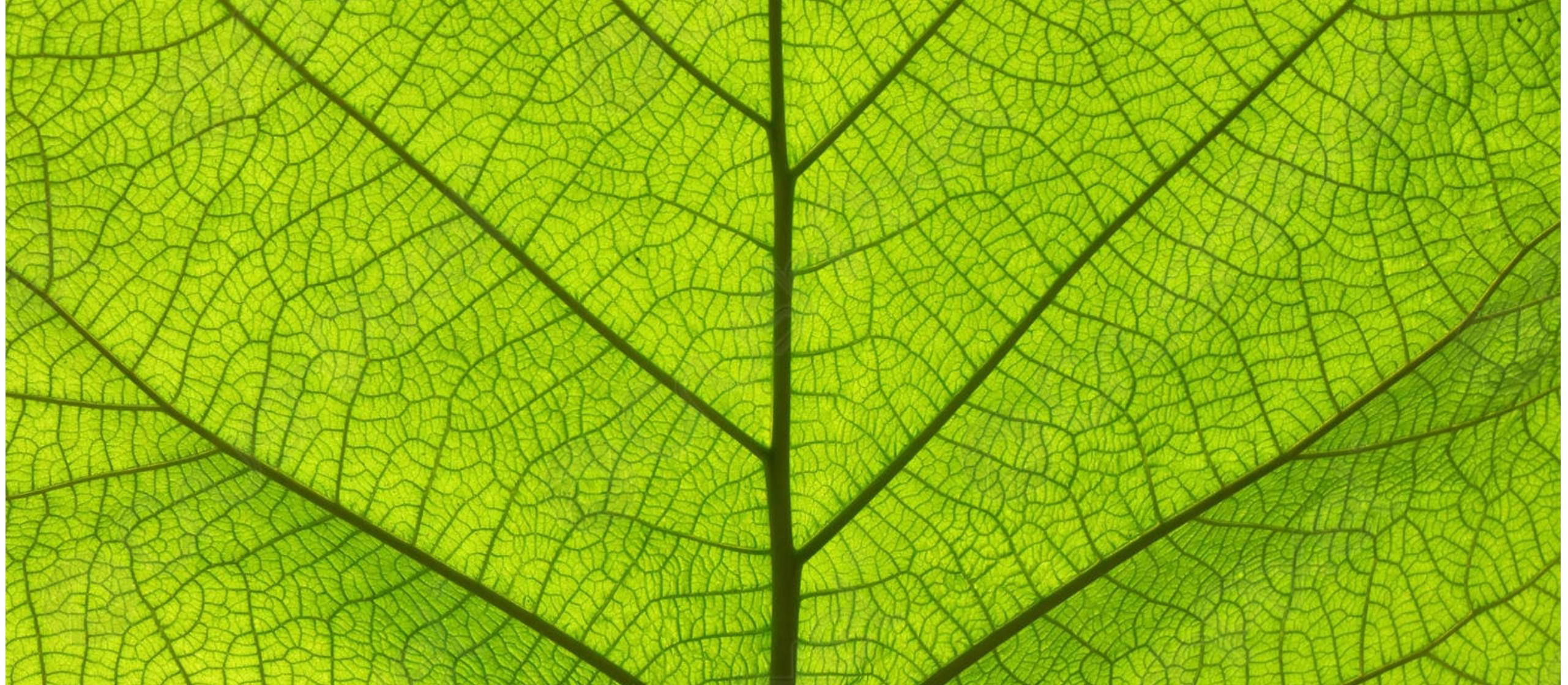
Hemis, Alamy

Zoom: tree

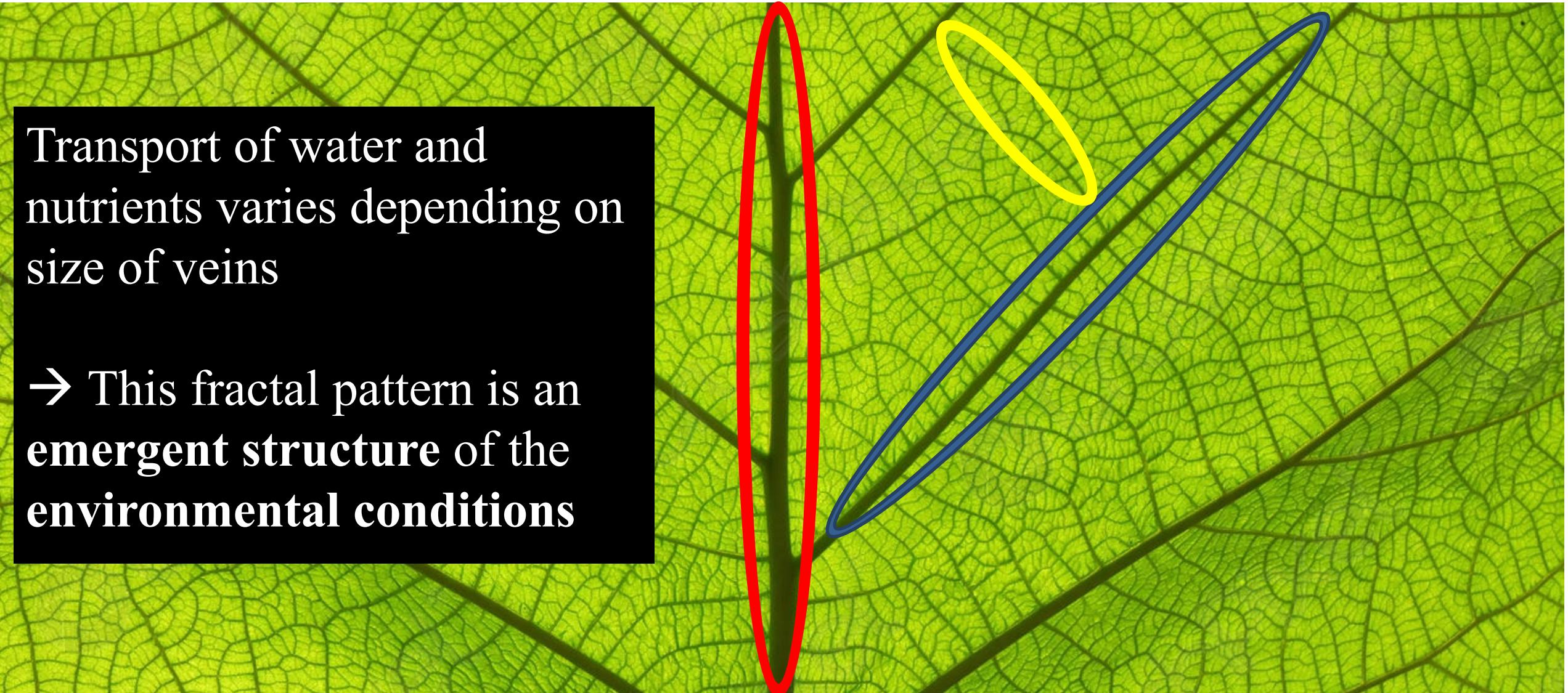


Catherine MacBride, Getty Images

Zoom: leaf



Hierarchical organisation



Hierarchical organisation of the street network



Emergent hierarchies

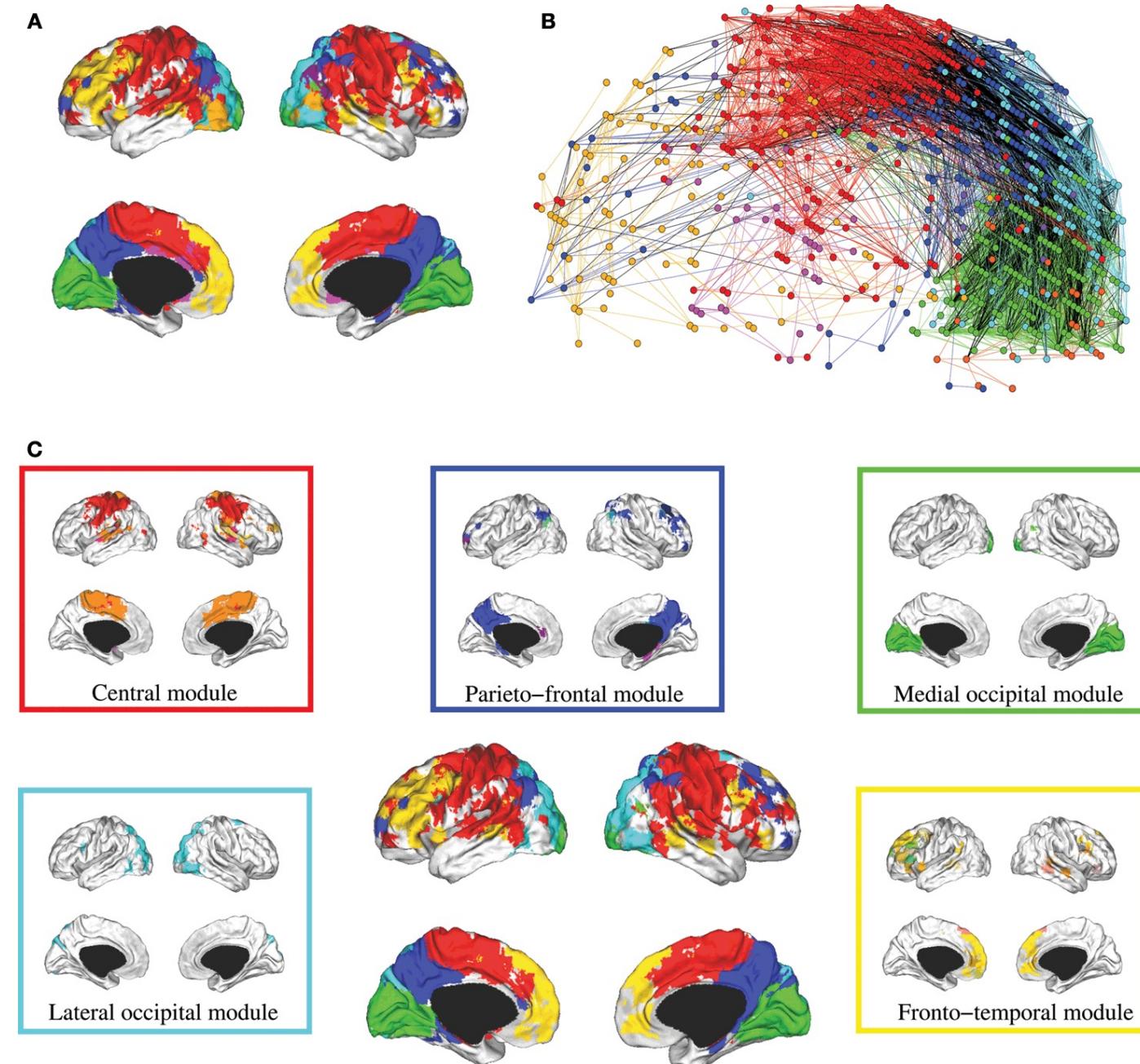
The brain

Front. Neuroinform., 30 October 2009
Volume 3 - 2009 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/neuro.11.037.2009>

Hierarchy and dynamics in neural networks
[View all 9 Articles >](#)

Hierarchical modularity in human brain functional networks

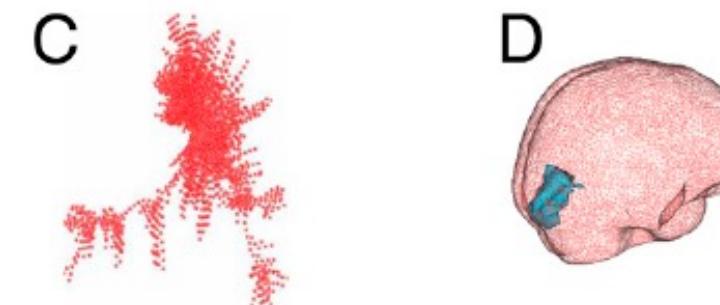
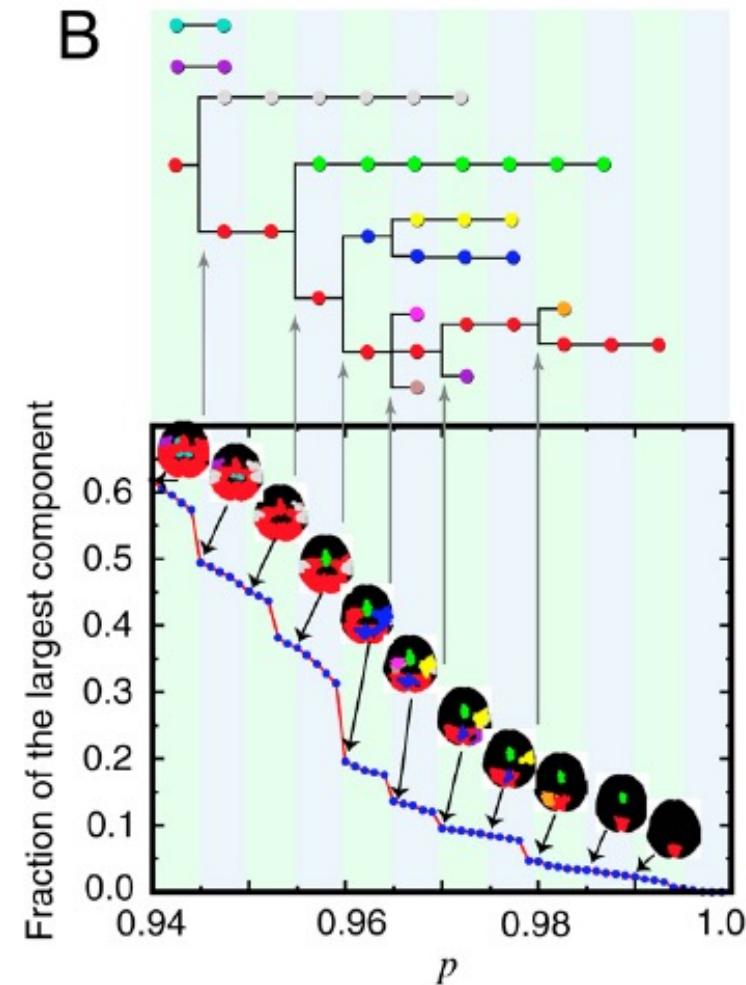
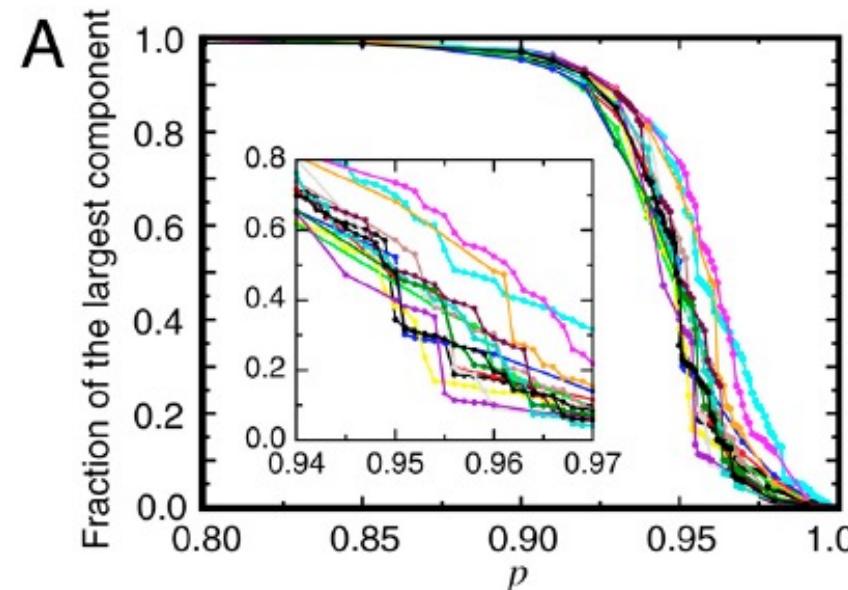
David Meunier^{1,2} Renaud Lambiotte³ Alex Fornito^{1,2,4} Karen D. Ersche^{1,2} Edward T. Bullmore^{1,2,5*}



Extracting the hierarchical structure of the brain

A small world of weak ties provides optimal
global integration of self-similar modules
in functional brain networks

Lazaros K. Gallos^a, Hernán A. Makse^{a,b,1}, and Mariano Sigman^b



Percolation: fire propagation

Fire spread and percolation modelling

Mathl Comput. Modelling Vol. 13, No. 11, pp. 77–96, 1990
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FIRE SPREAD AND PERCOLATION MODELLING

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I. G. ENTING

Division of Atmospheric Research, CSIRO
Private Bag No. 1, Mordialloc, Vic. 3195 Australia

(Received April 1990)

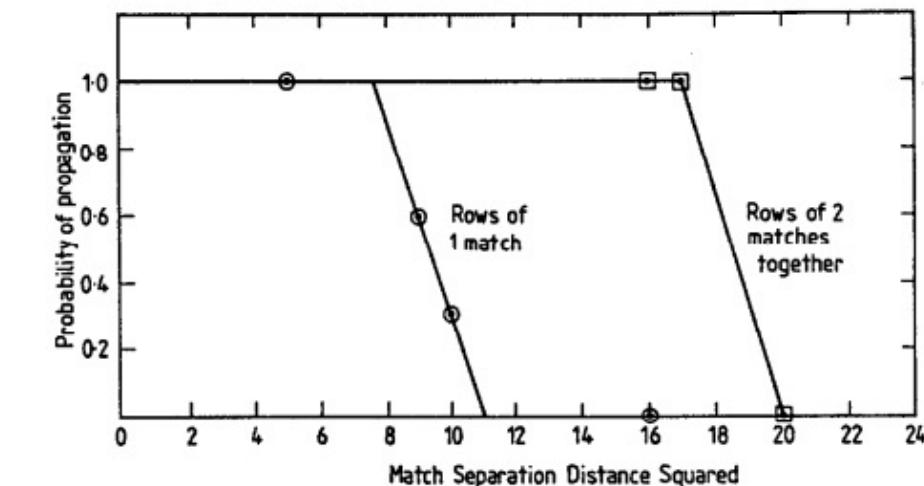


Figure 1: Propagation probabilities for lines of matches as a function of spacing squared (in units of mesh size squared).

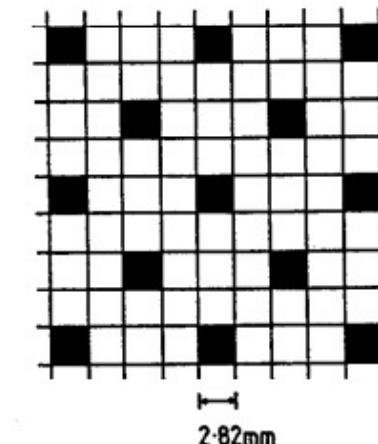
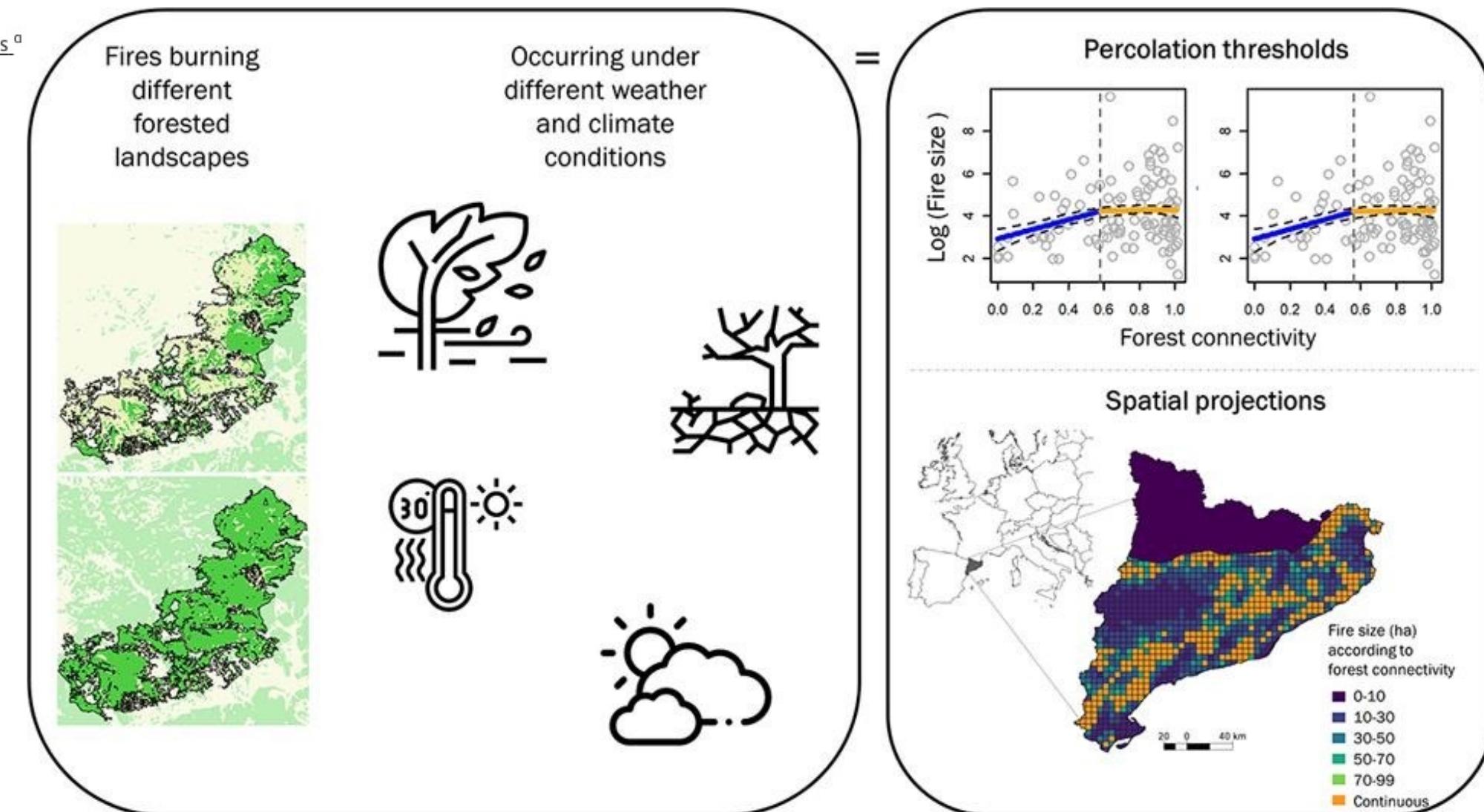


Figure 2: Spacing of matchsites (to be occupied randomly) relative to supporting mesh.

Forest connectivity percolation thresholds for fire spread under different weather conditions

Andrea Duane ^a   , Marcelo D. Miranda ^{b c} , Lluís Brotons ^a



The city

Cities are not isolated entities.

Distance modulates the probability of interaction between different parts of the city.

→ Distance is also modulated by transport!!!

- **The probability of encounters is not the same everywhere in the city.**
- **The probability of flows between cities is not the same for all cities.**

- In principle cities belonging to the same region should interact more, have larger flows, etc. Is it the case?

Cities belong to regions: can we extract the *hierarchy* emerging from the interactions?

Christaller's Central Place Theory 1933

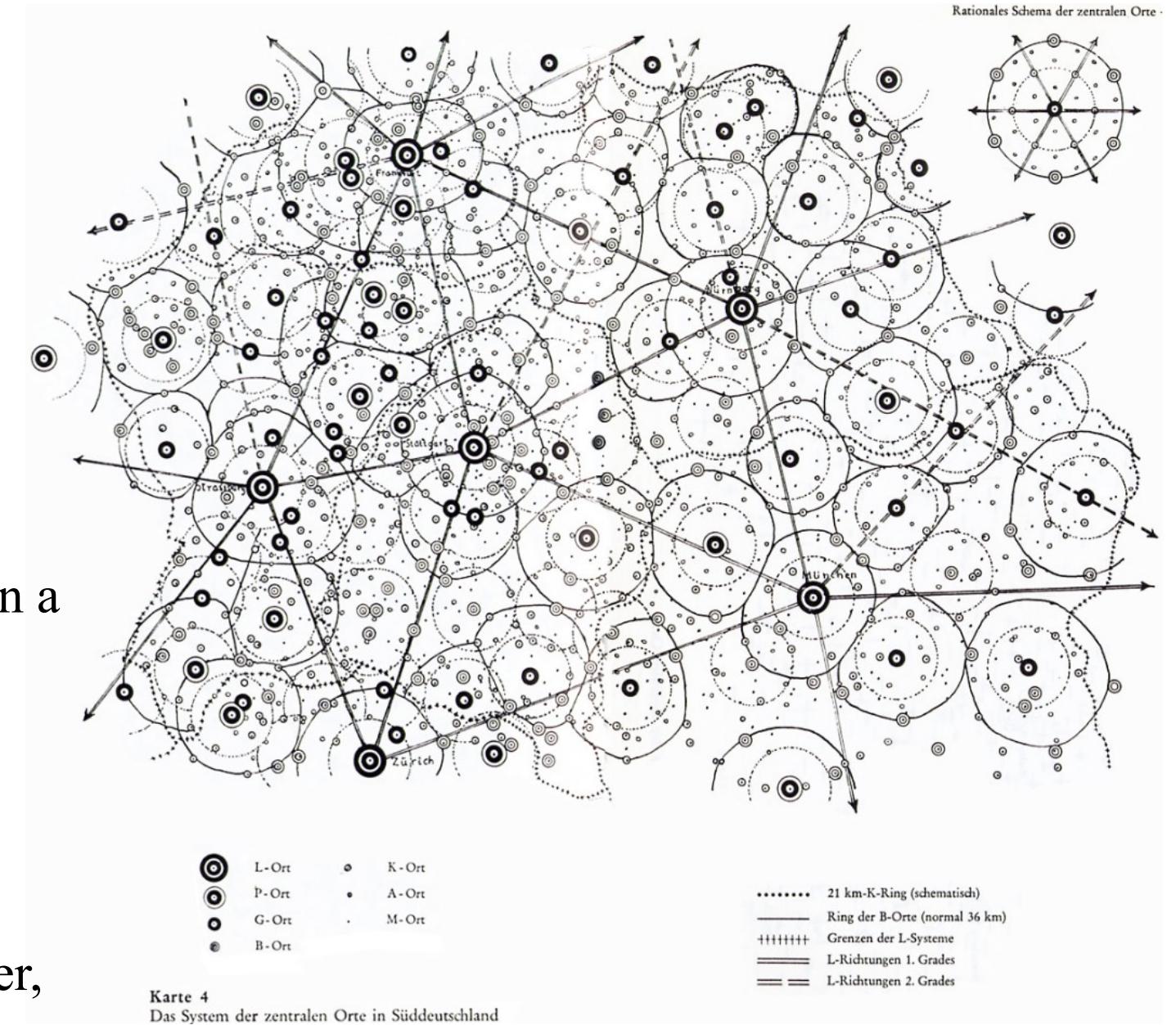
Central places provide goods and services to surrounding areas



Hierarchical organisation of urban centres

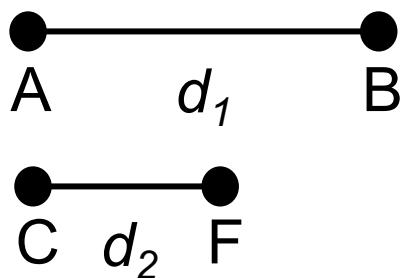
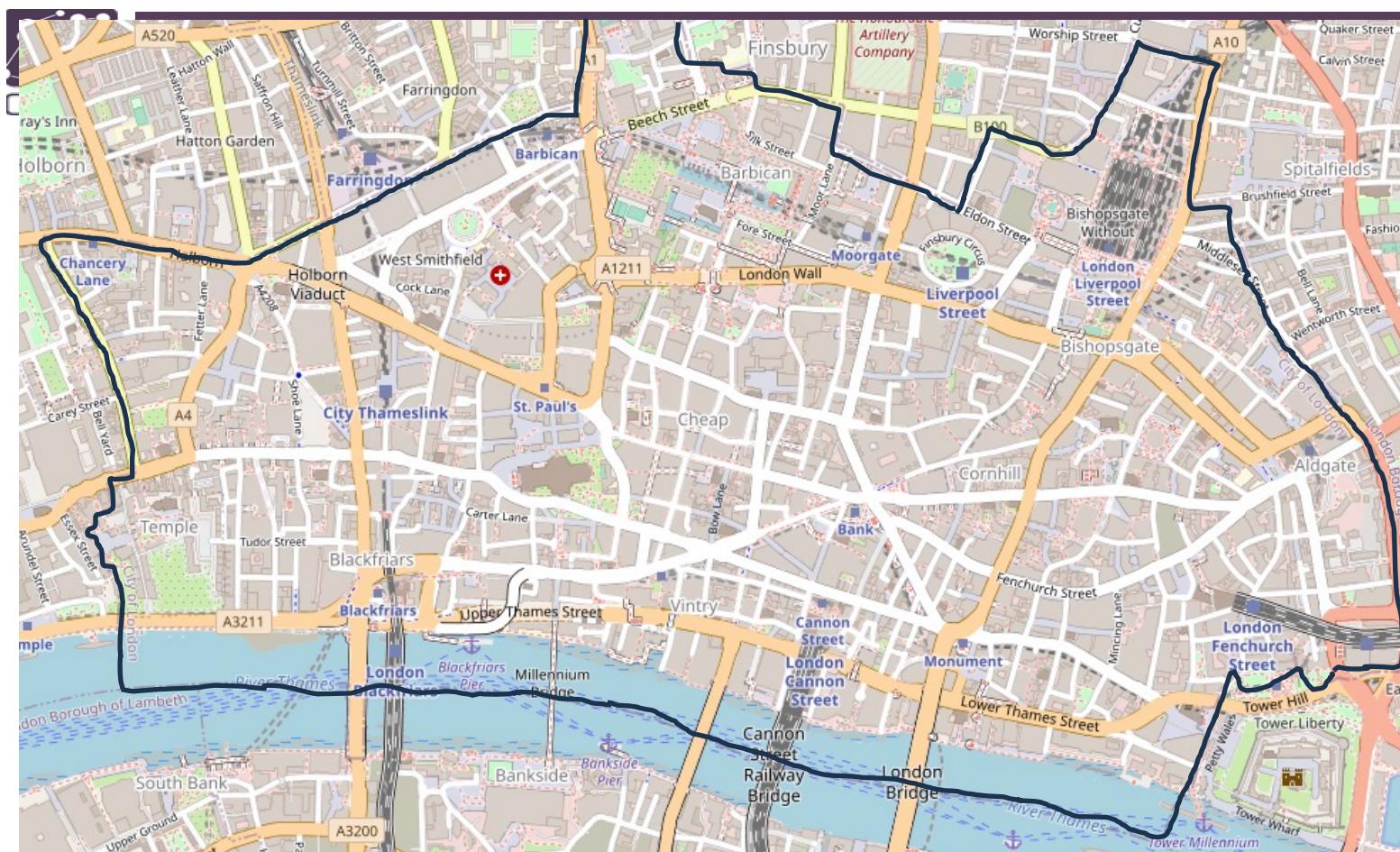
Assumptions:

- Evenly distributed population
- All settlements are equidistant and exist in a triangular lattice
- Evenly distributed resources
- Perfect competition
- Consumers visit the nearest place minimising travel
- Everybody has the same purchasing power, etc.



Get the street network
and transform it into a
network.

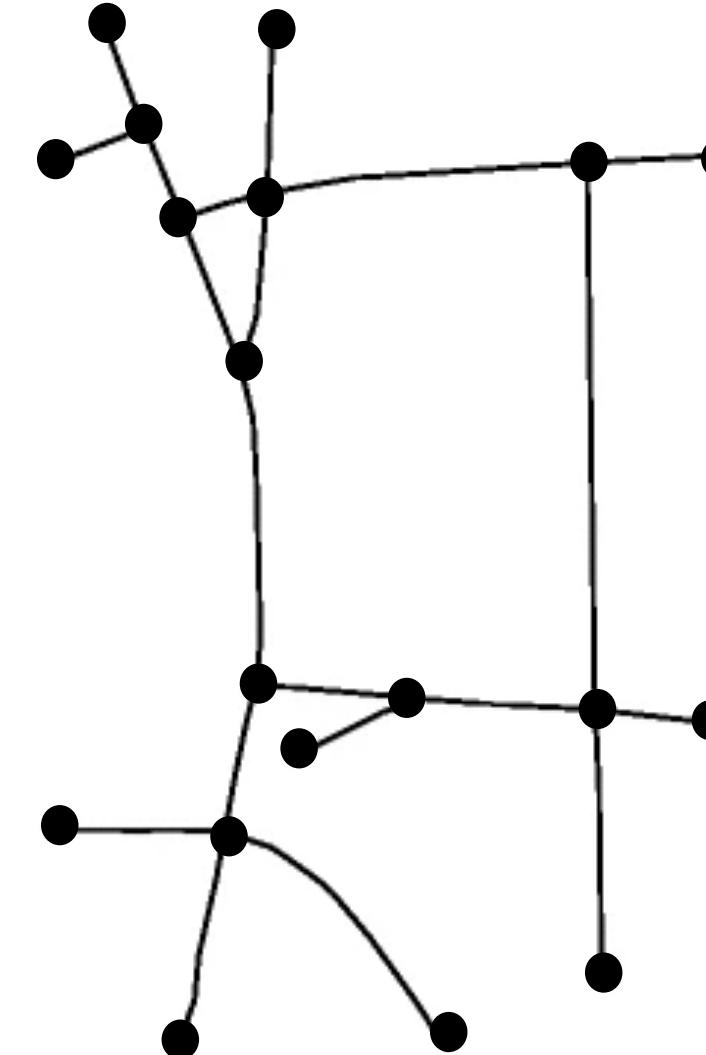
Proxy for interaction → distance



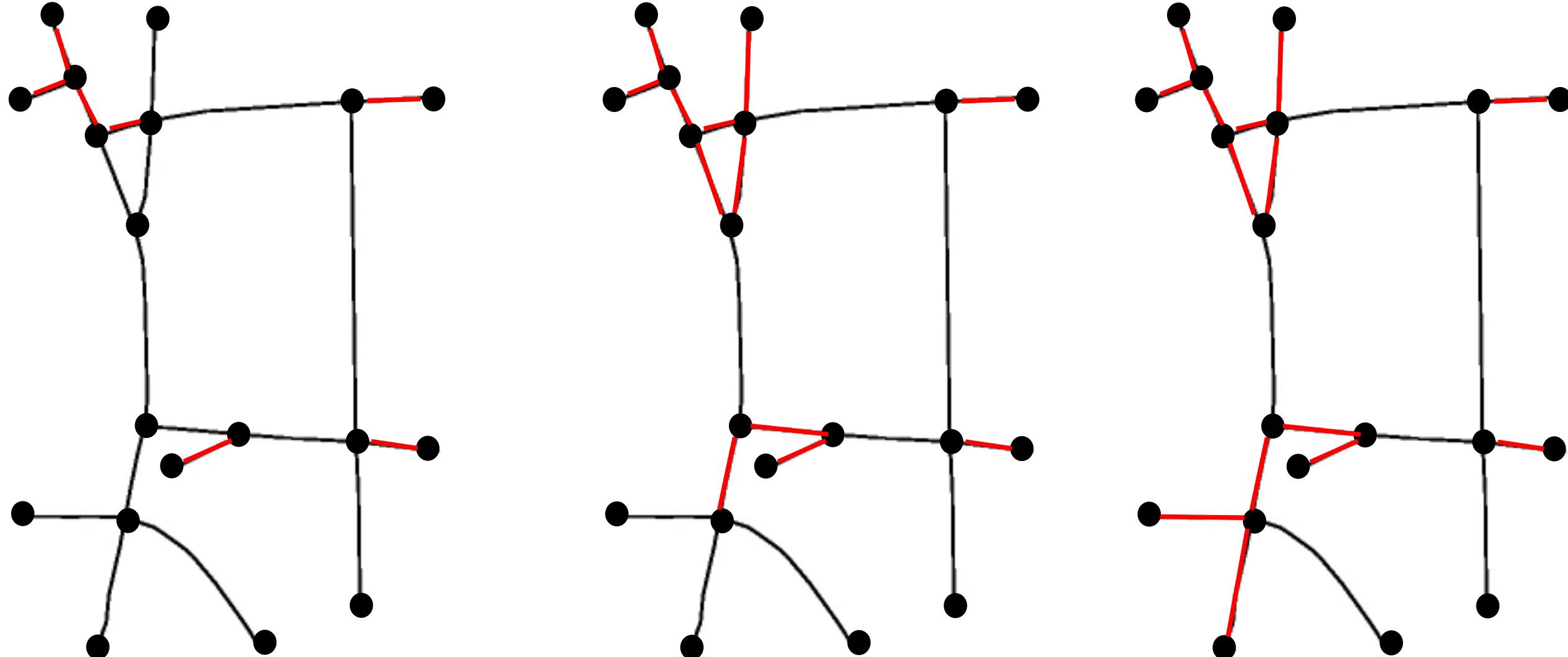
Higher probability
of interaction
between C and F



Recover communities in urban systems in the same way as modules in the brain



Recover communities in urban systems in the same way as modules in the brain: proximity modulates connectivity



Stimulus in the brain ~ distance in the network

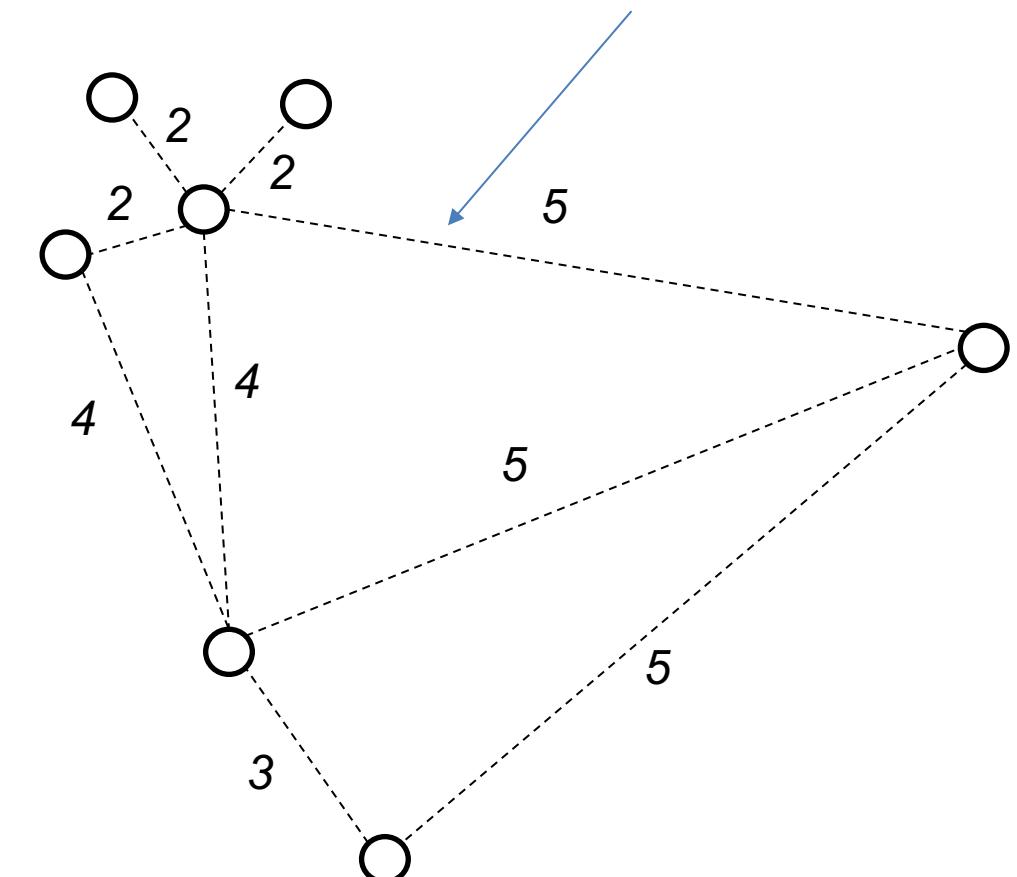
Network at $d = 1$

At the shortest distance, no nodes are connected

→ Visualise them as the leaves in a tree

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ $d = 1$

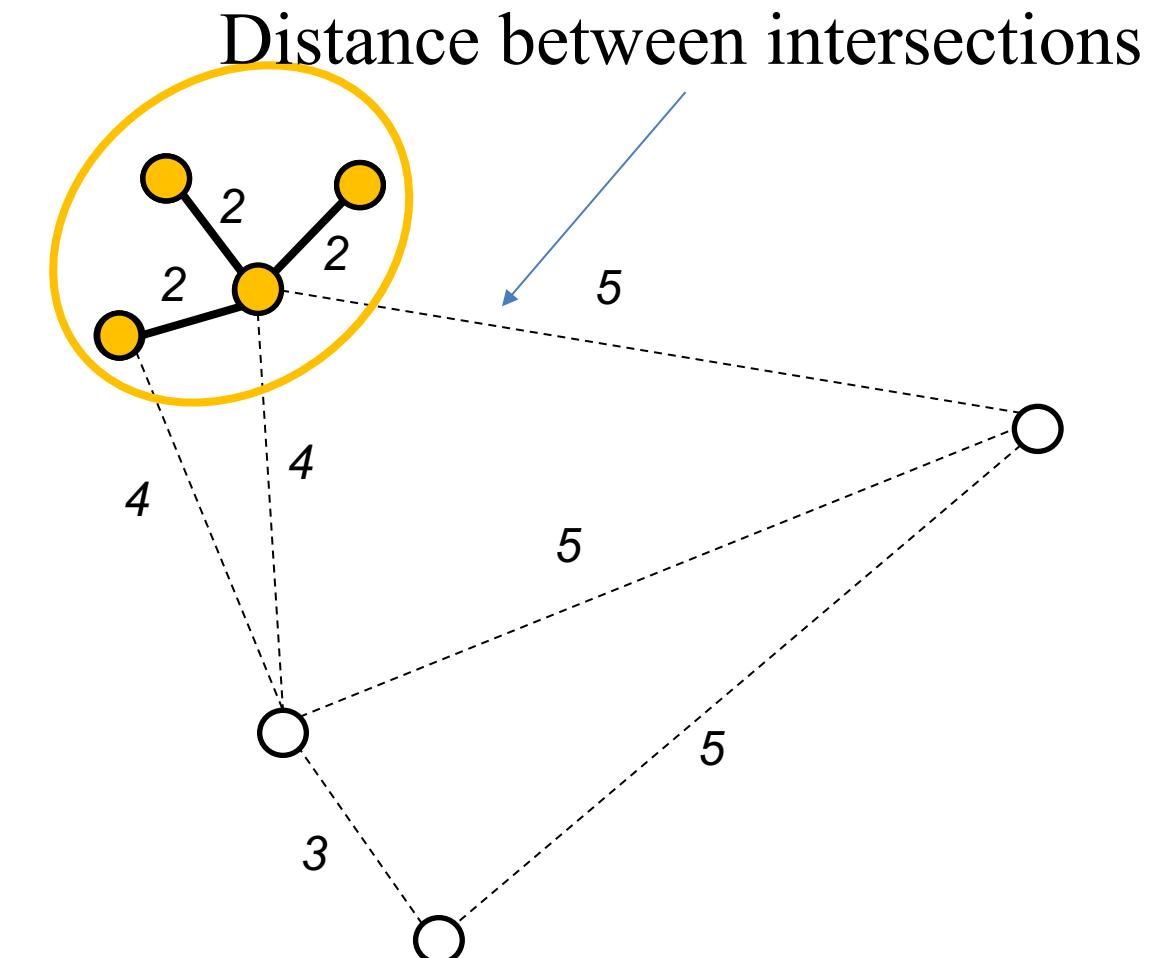
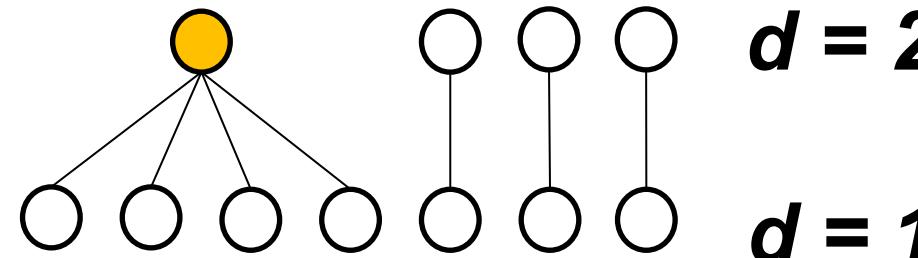
Distance between intersections



Stimulus in the brain ~ distance in the network

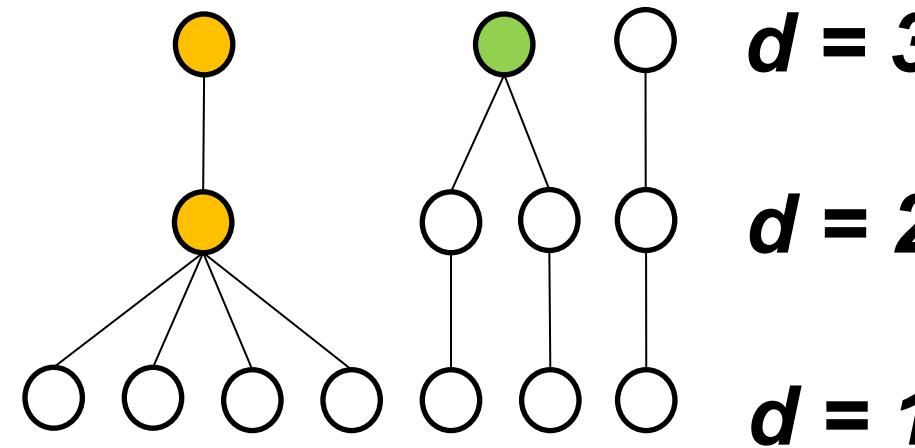
Network at $d = 2$

→ Tree starts to form

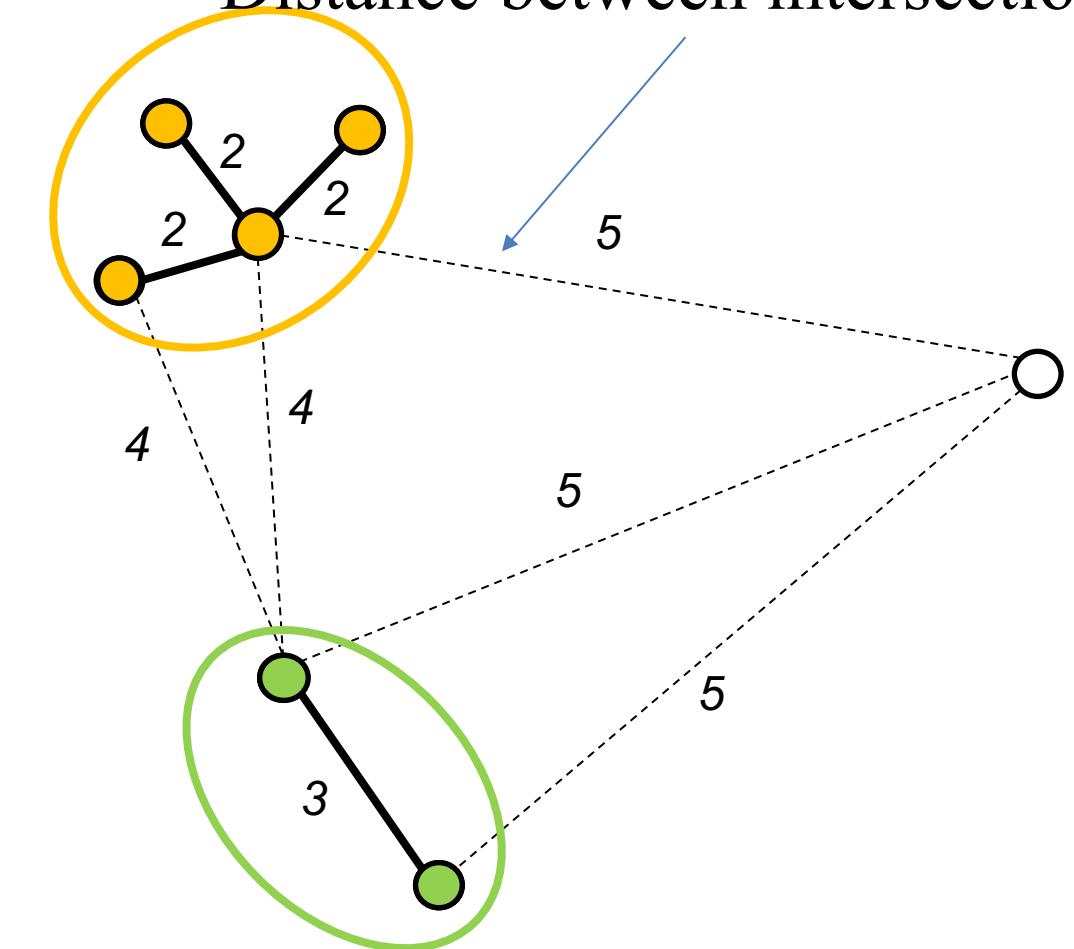


Stimulus in the brain ~ distance in the network

Network at $d = 3$

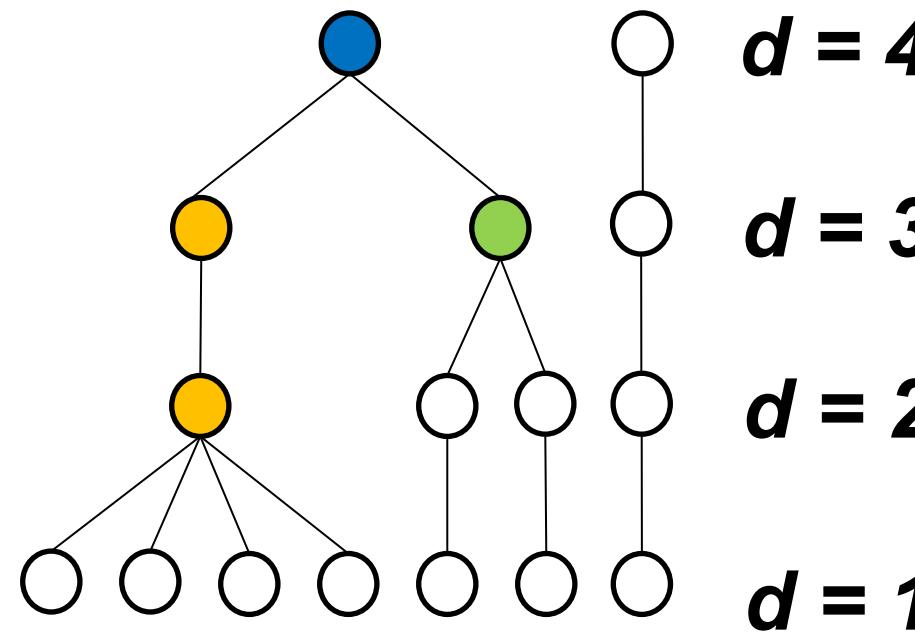


Distance between intersections

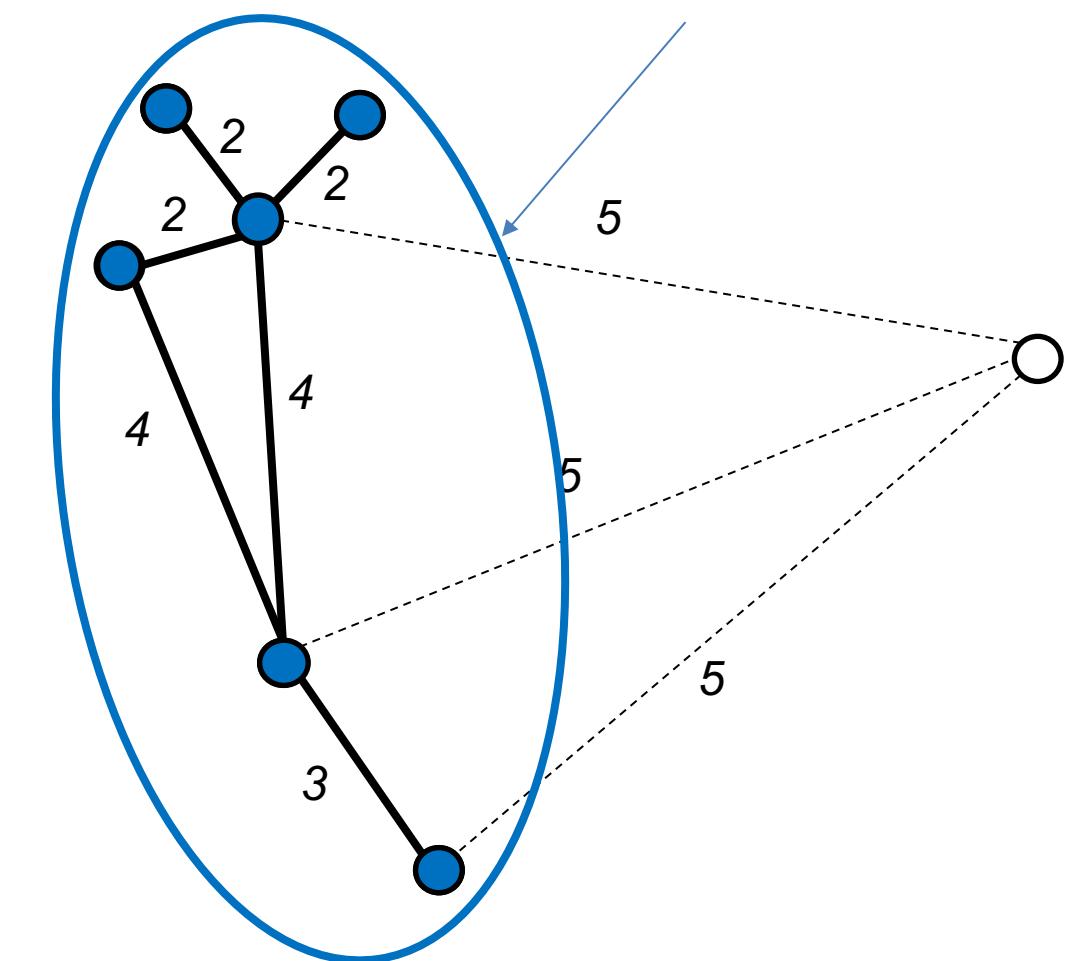


Stimulus in the brain ~ distance in the network

Network at $d = 4$

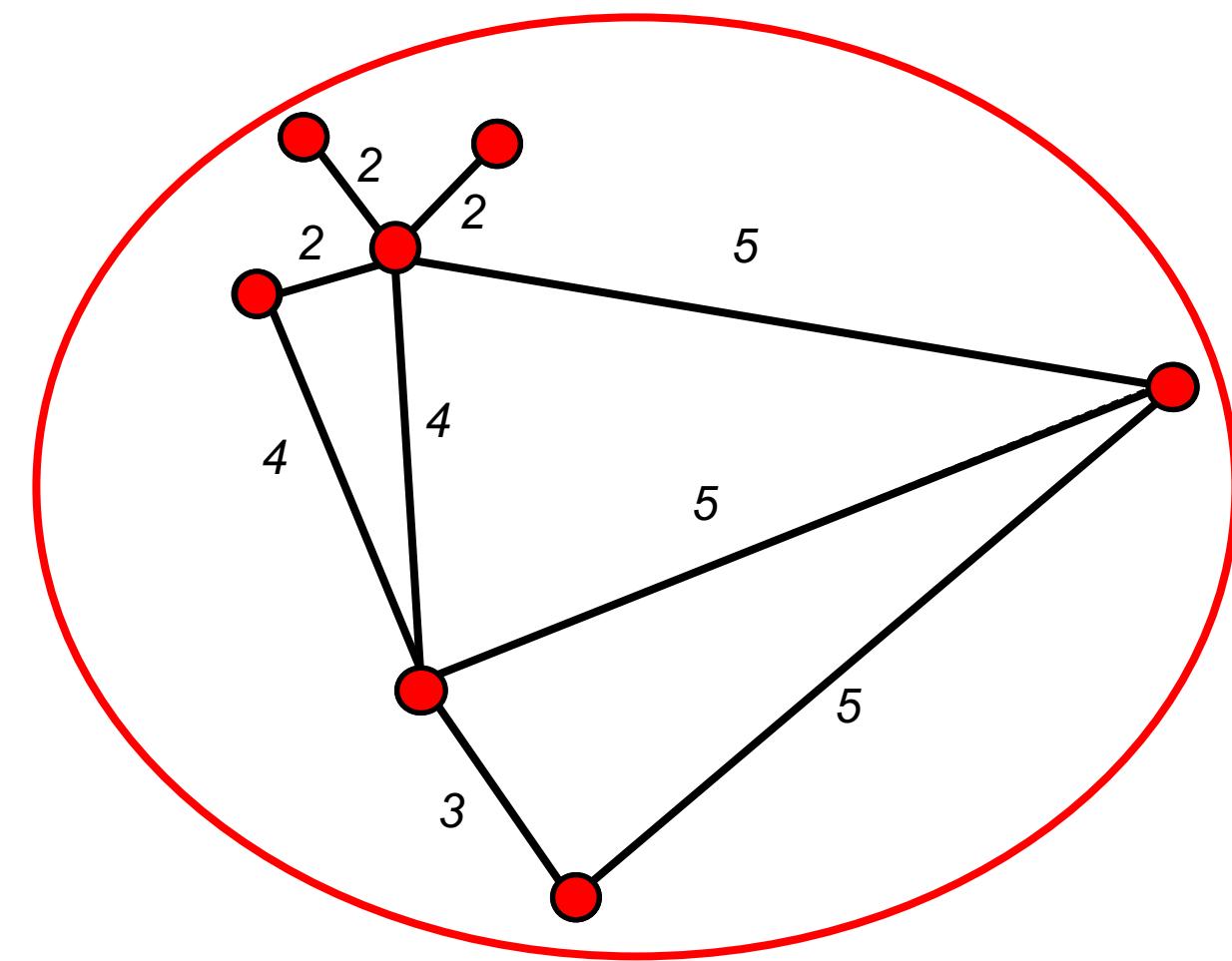
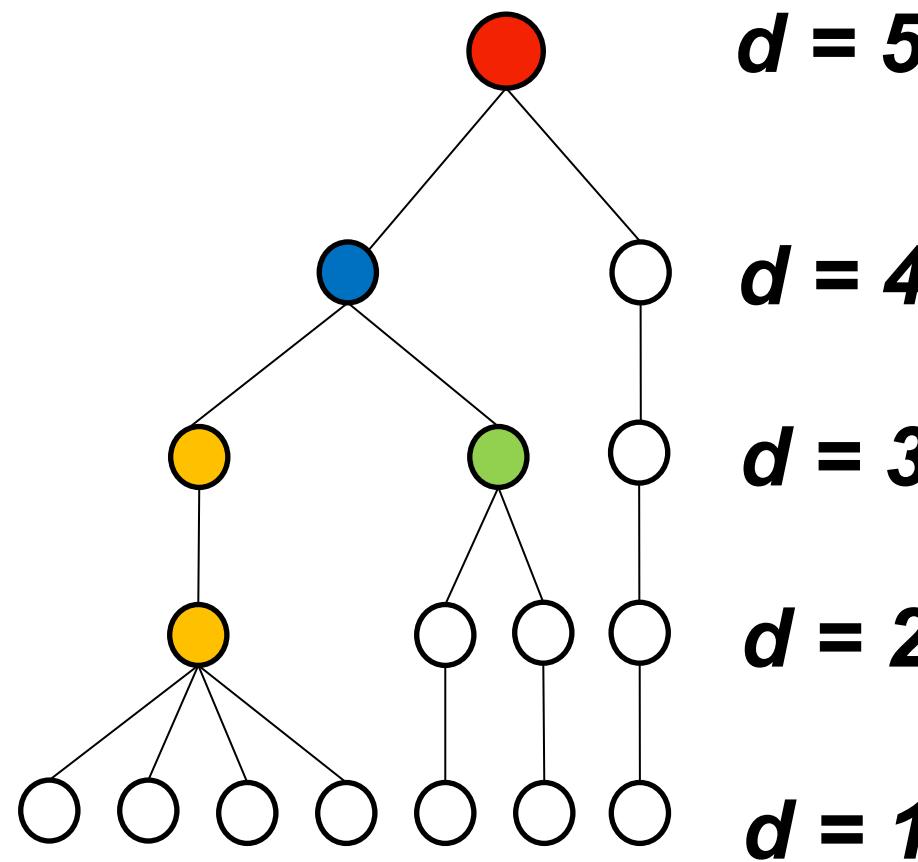


Distance between intersections

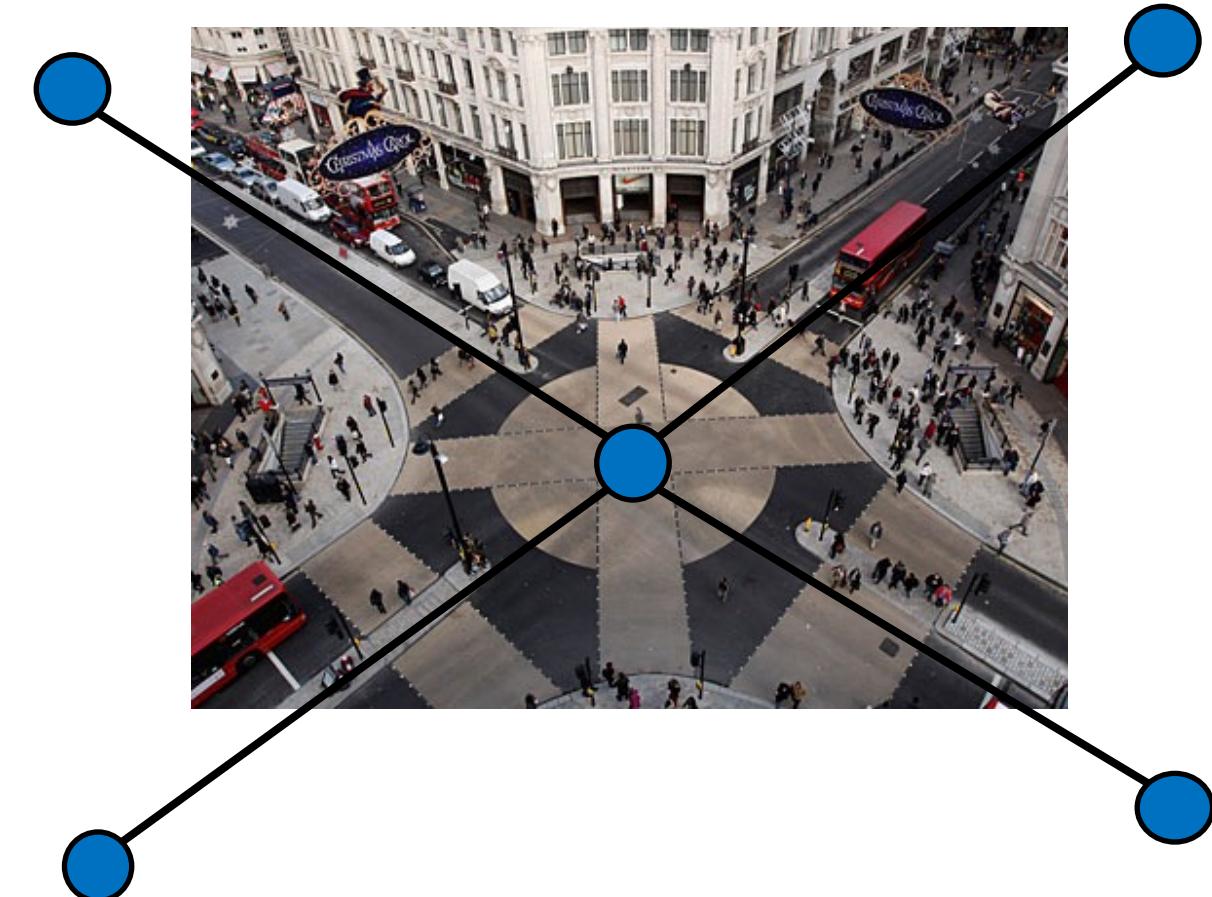


Stimulus in the brain ~ distance in the network

Network at $d = 5$



Percolation: imagine a message spreading in a city as fire in a forest

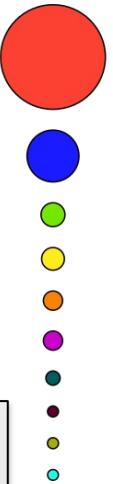


- Street network:
interconnectivity
between settlements



interactions!

Colours: rank size
of clusters



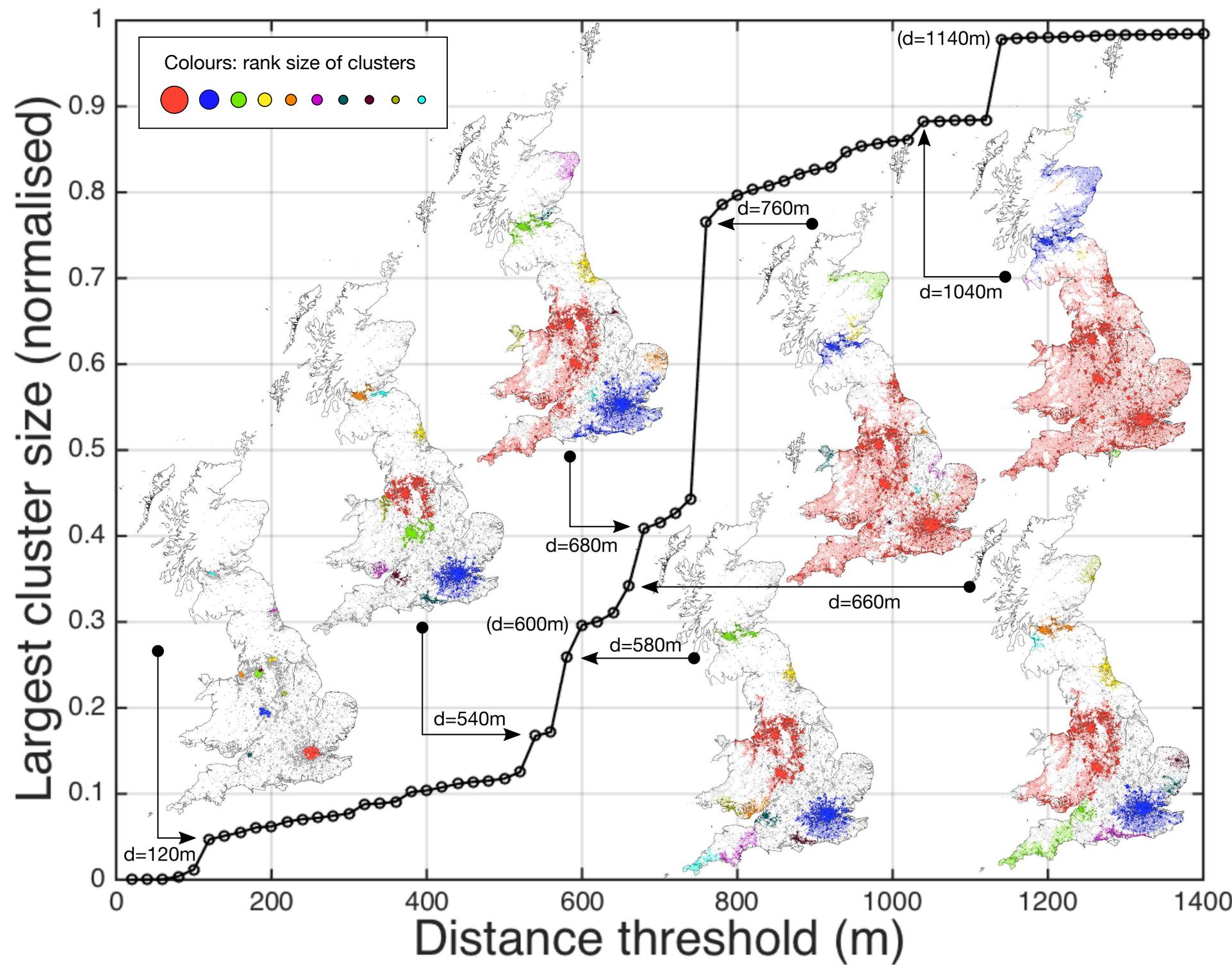
- Communities/cities/regions →
outcome of interactions

- Model connectivity as a
percolation process on the
road network

- Multiple transitions

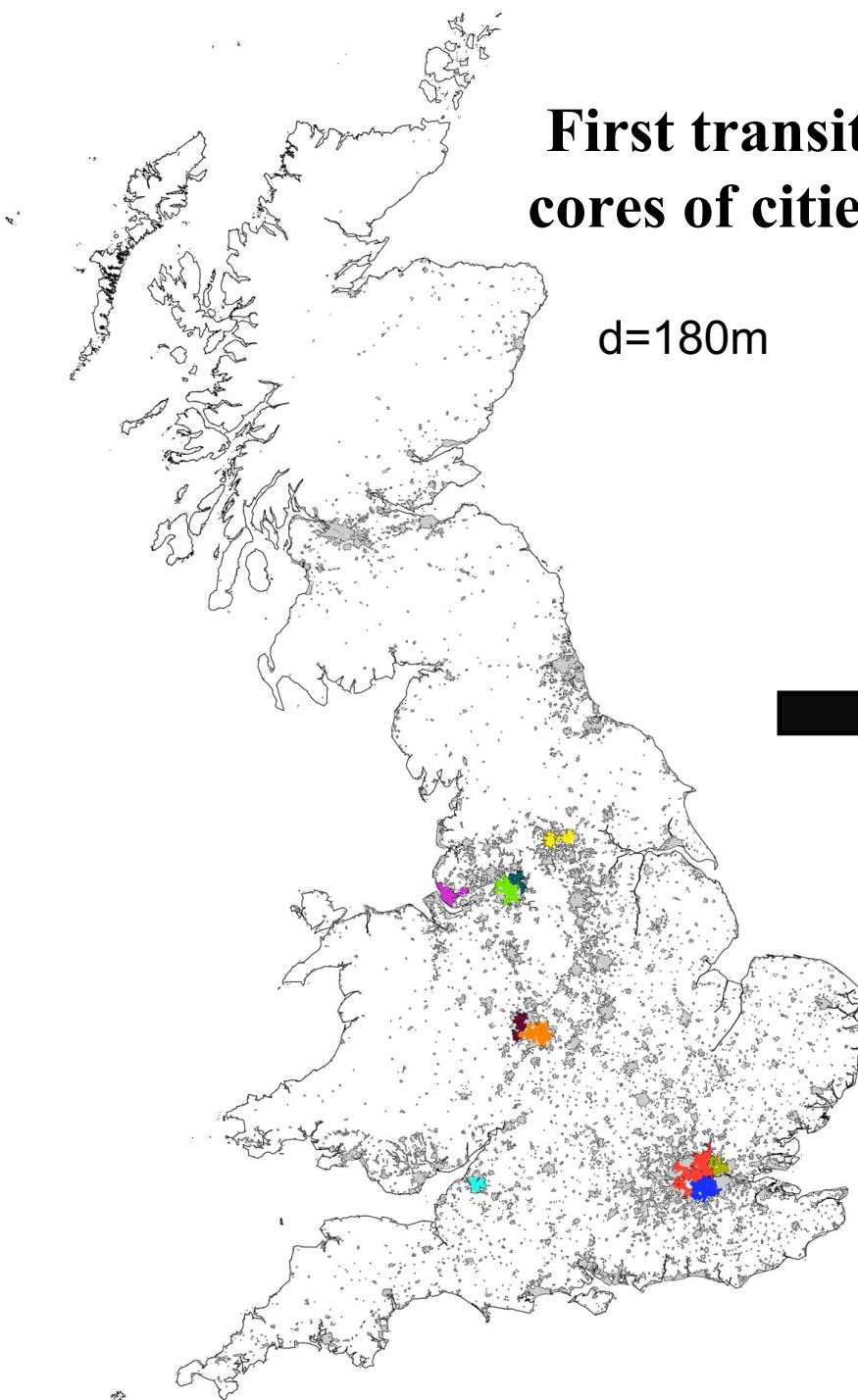


- Obtain hierarchical structure

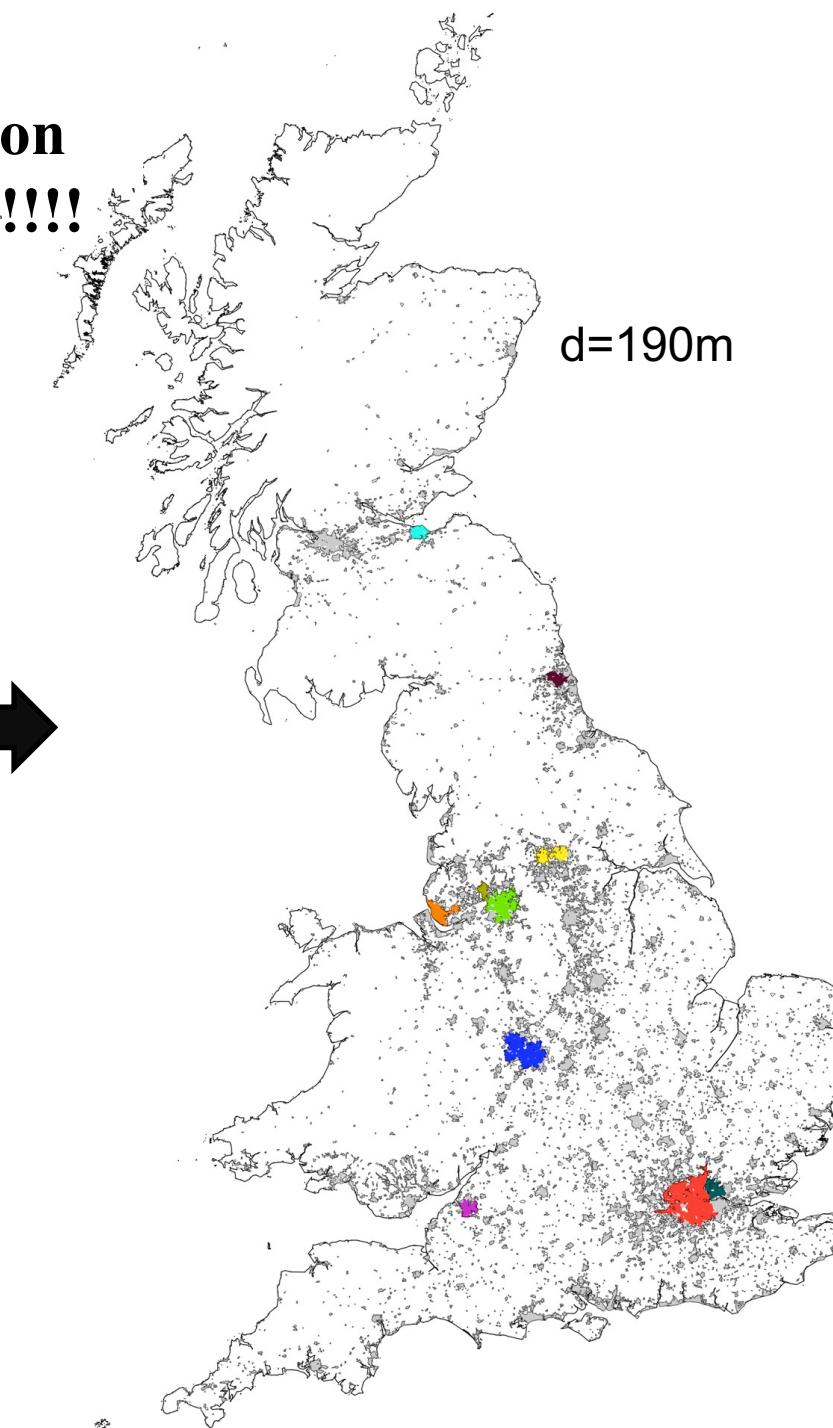


**First transition
cores of cities!!!!**

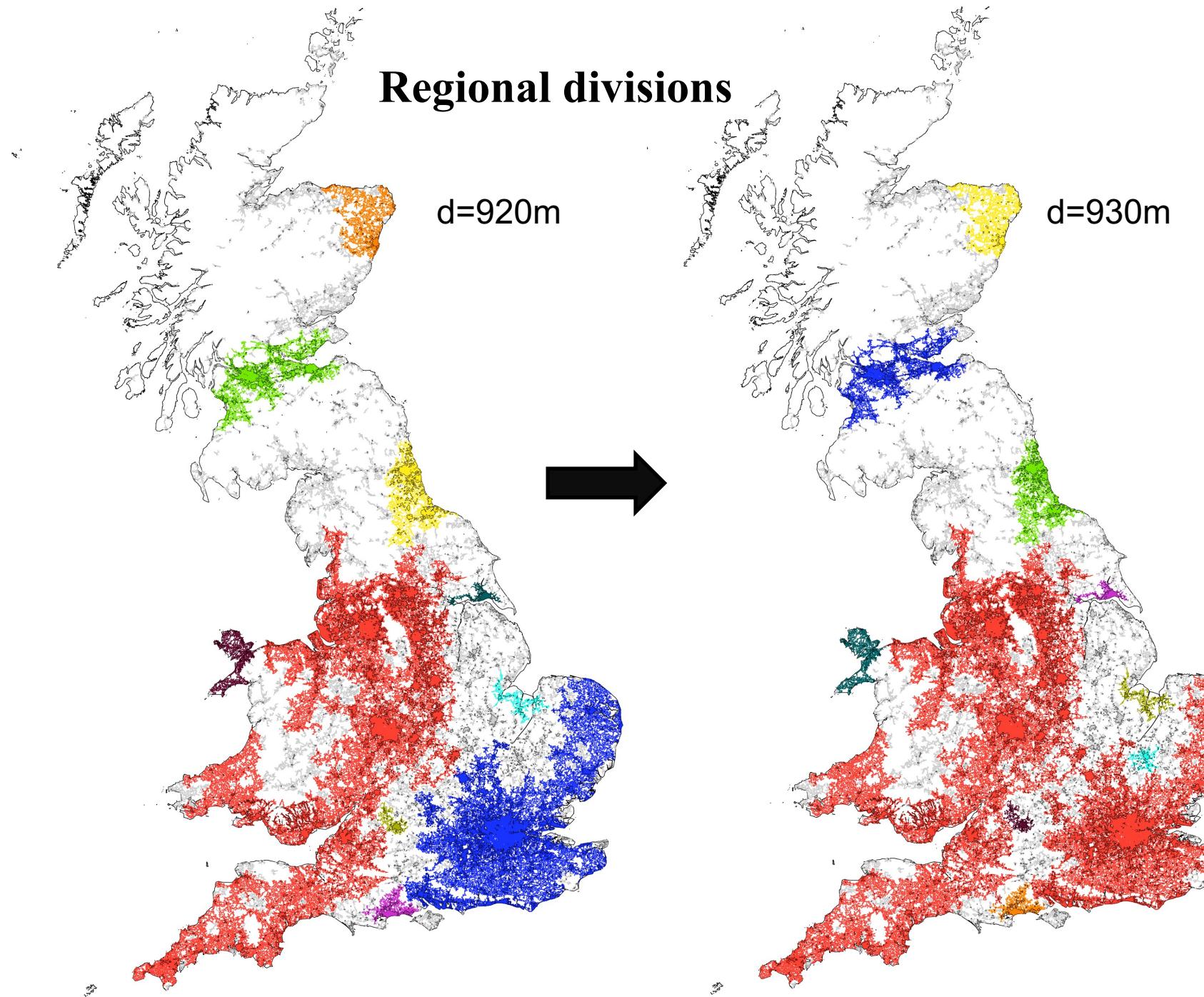
d=180m



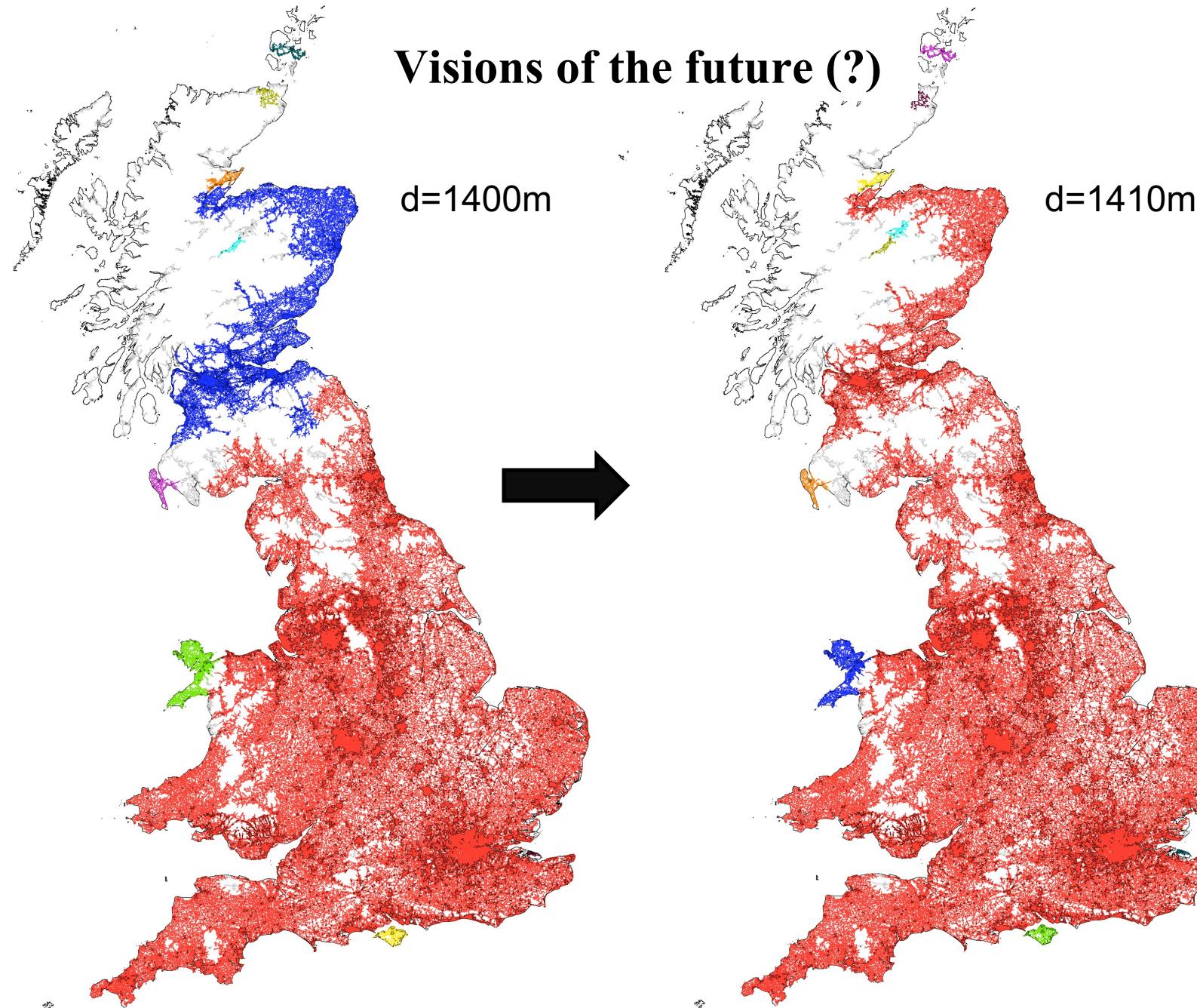
d=190m



Regional divisions



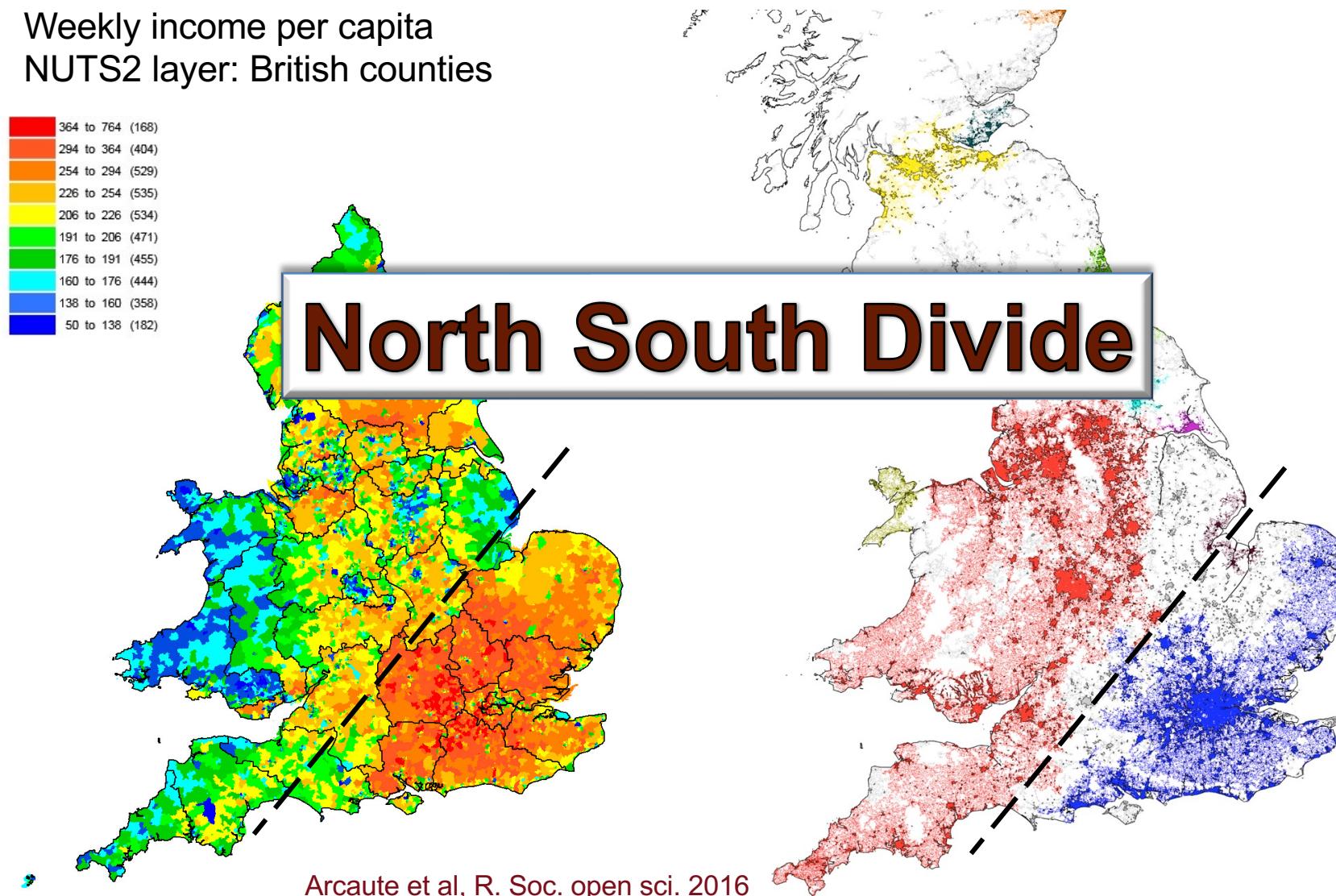
Visions of the future (?)



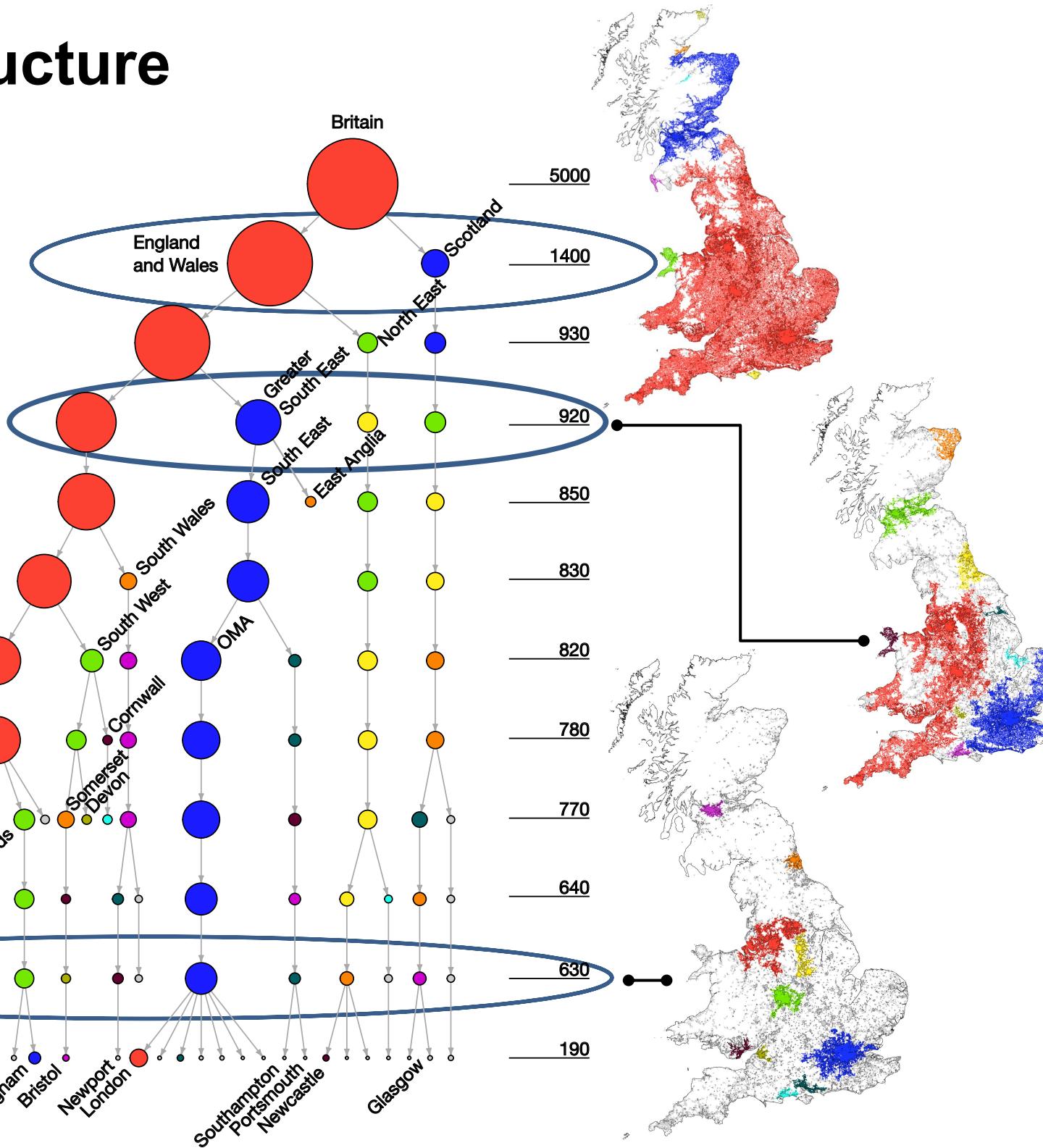
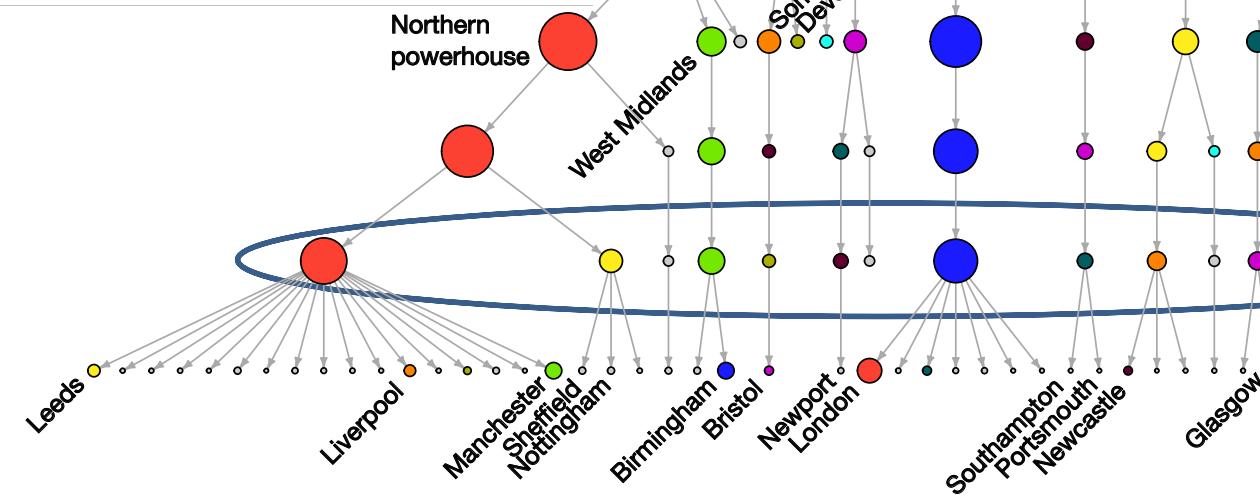
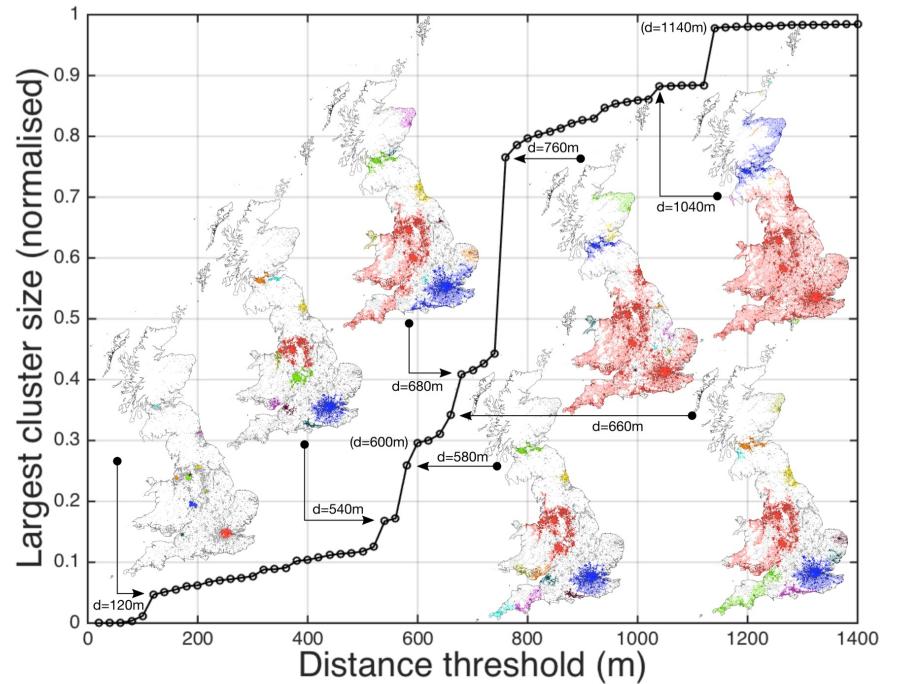
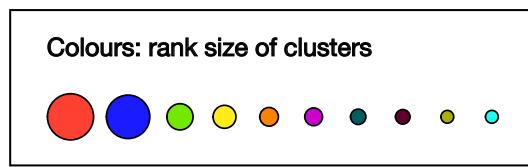
Weekly income per capita
NUTS2 layer: British counties



North South Divide



Hierarchical structure



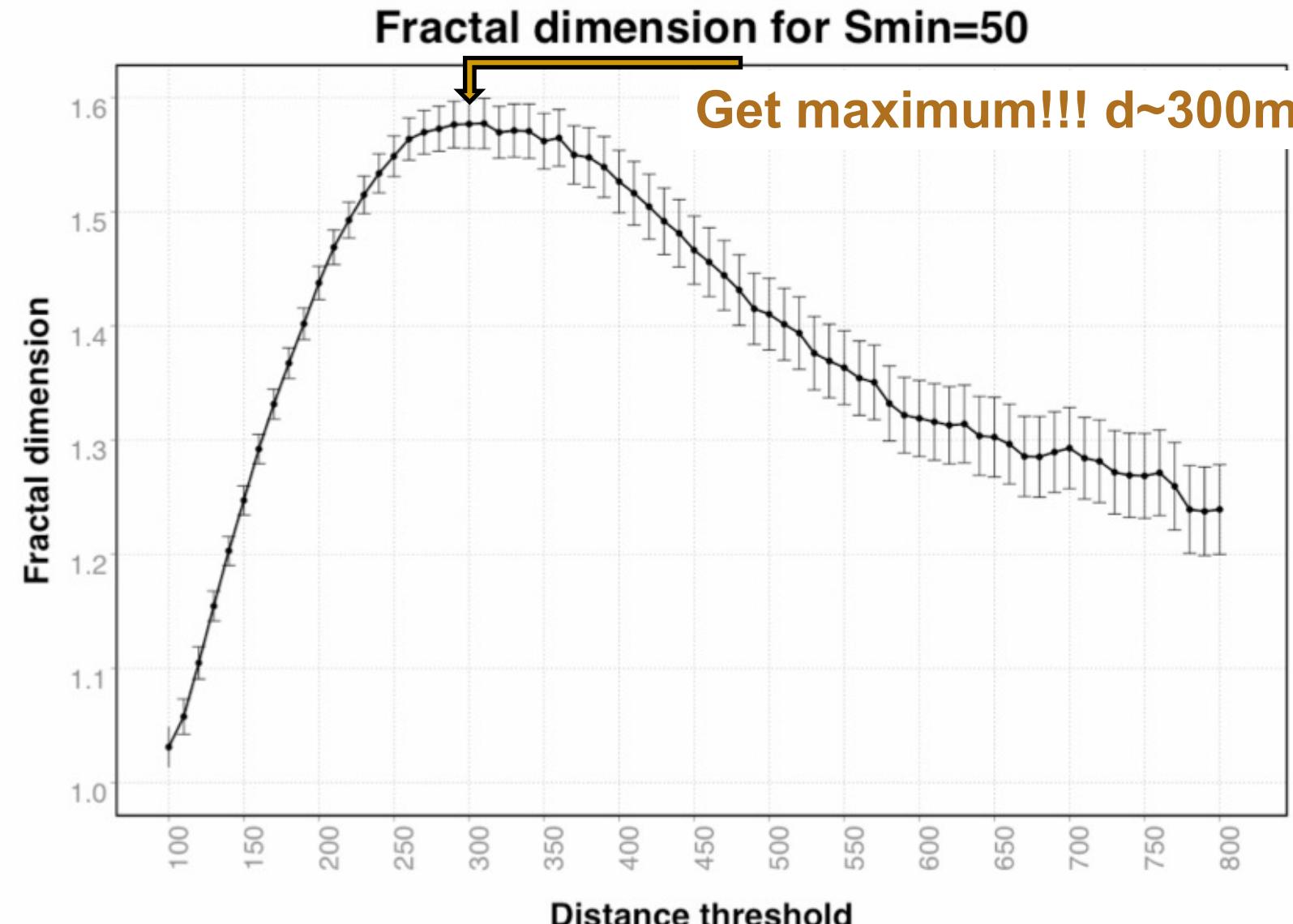
Defining cities

Fractal dimension of networks

- At each threshold compute the size of each network, given by the number of nodes N , and its diameter r_{max} .
- Using the following relation, extract the exponent, which corresponds to the fractal dimension of the system

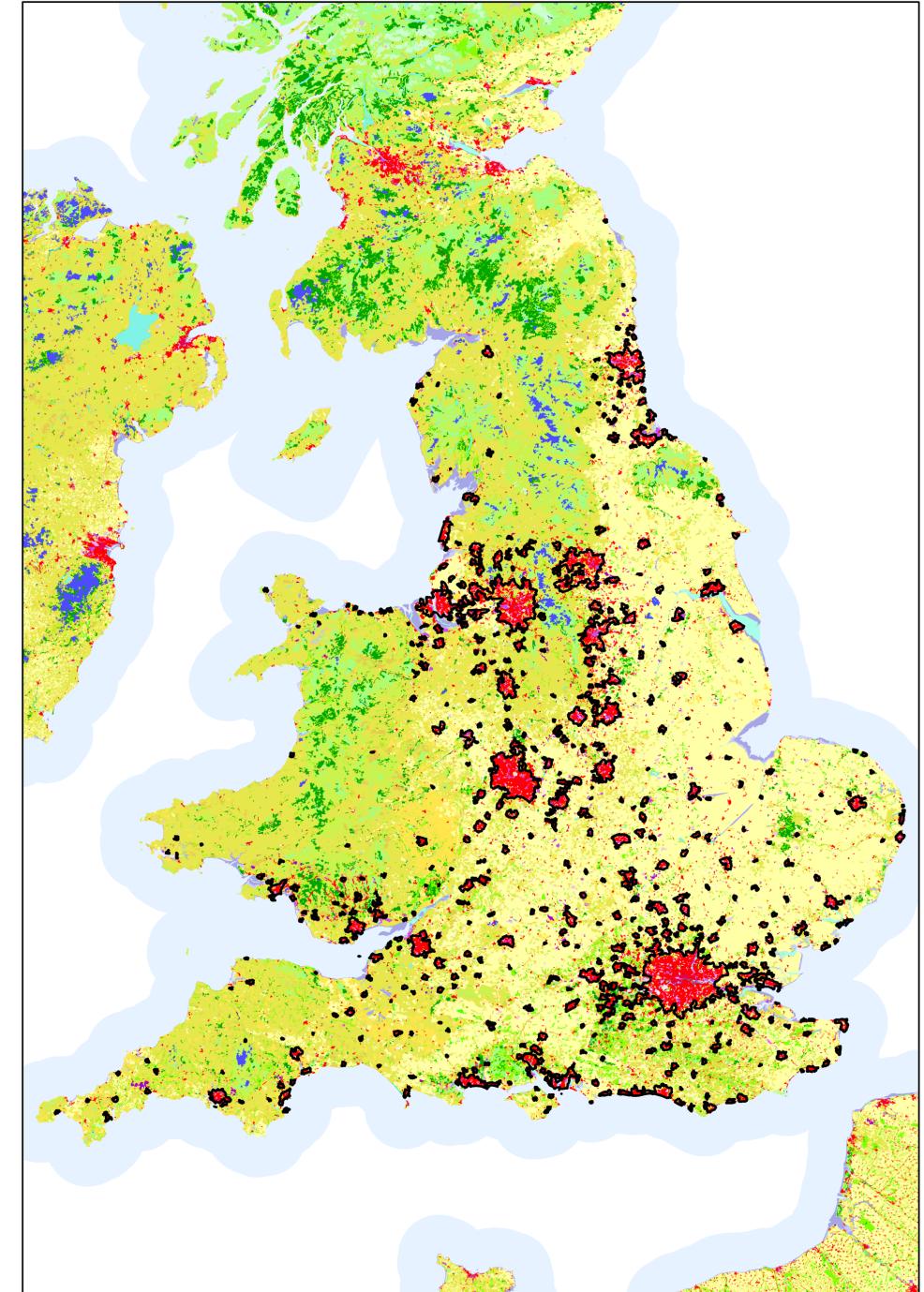
$$N \sim r_{\max}^\alpha$$

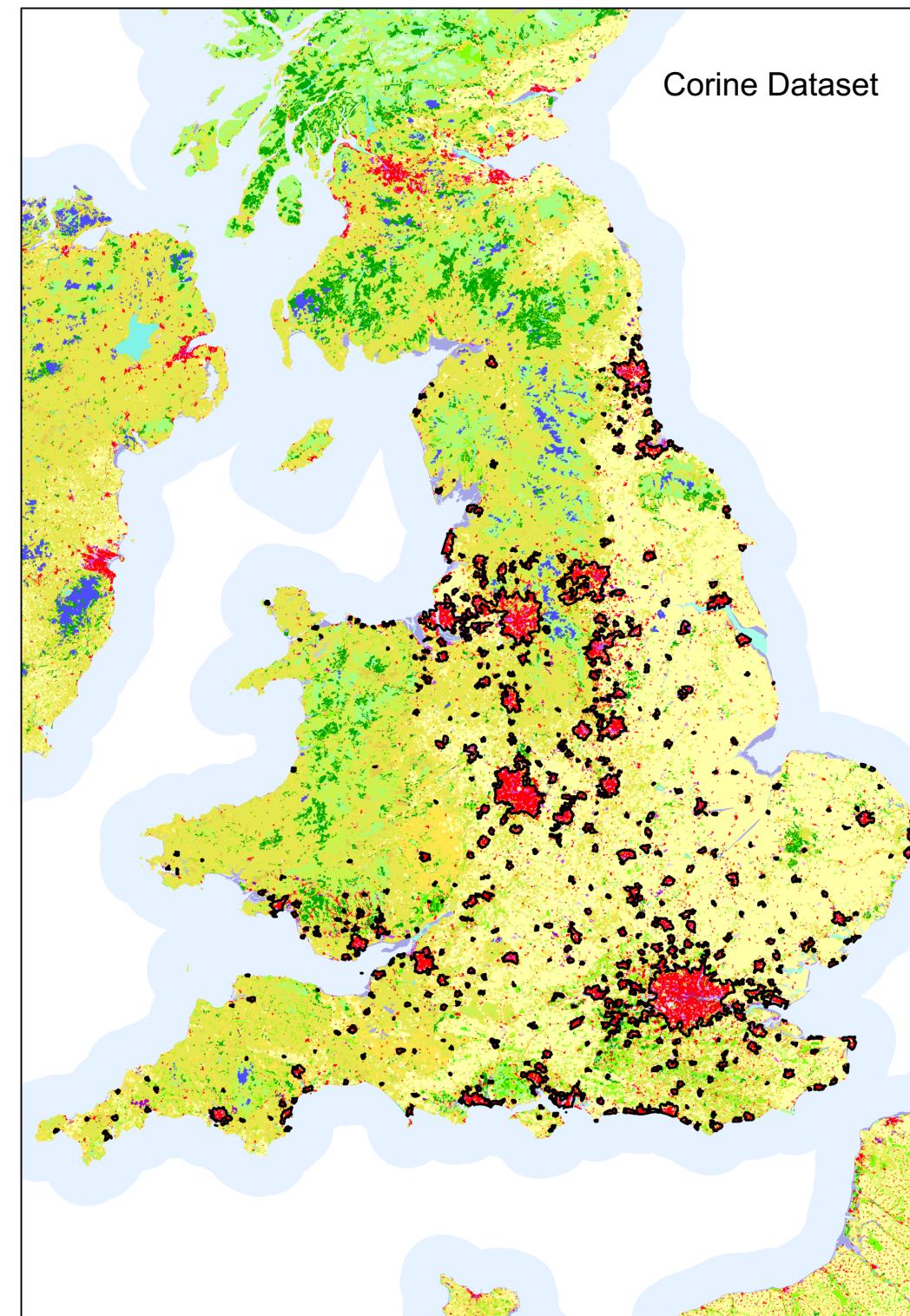
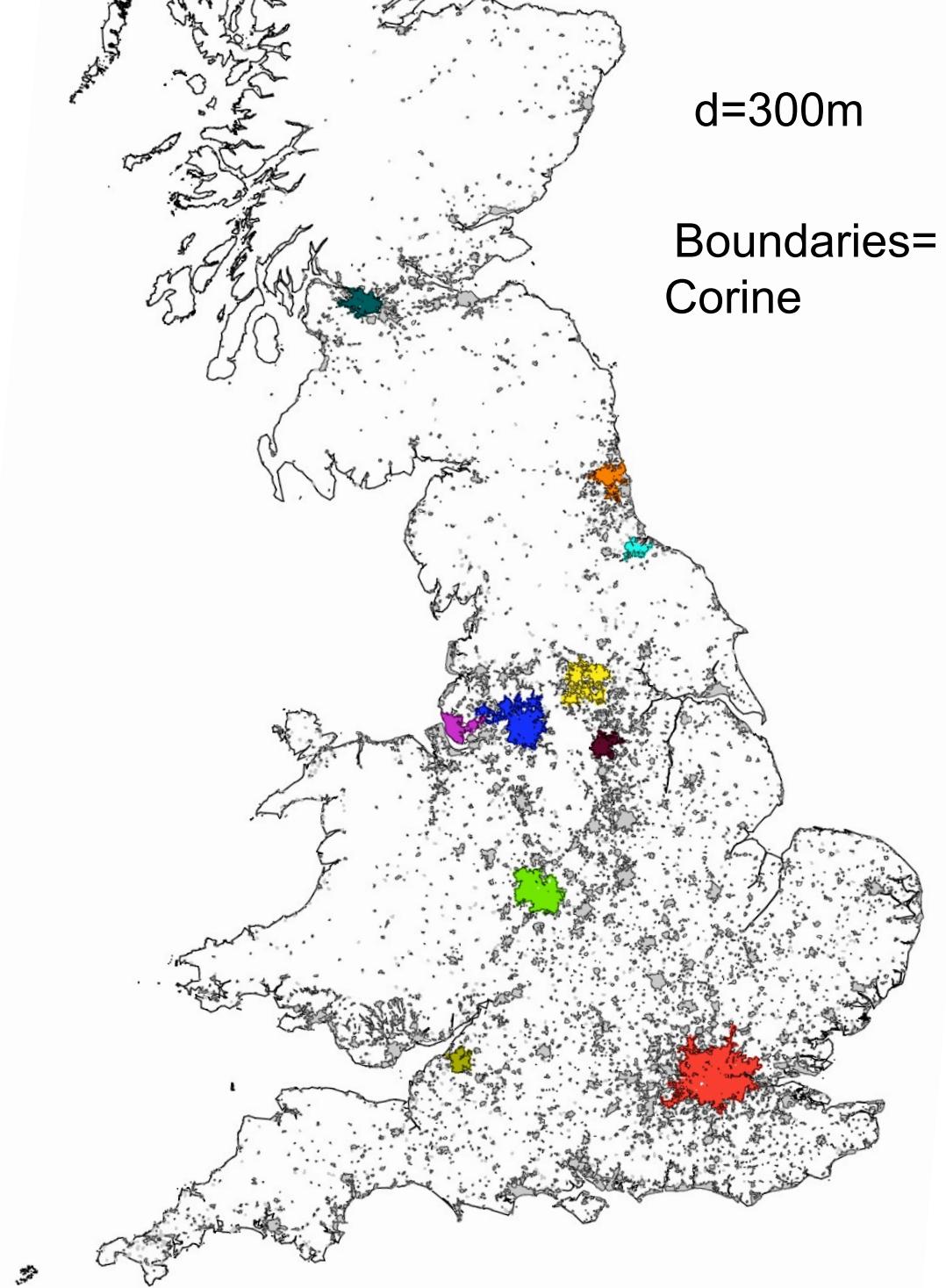
Fractal dimension of clusters at each distance threshold

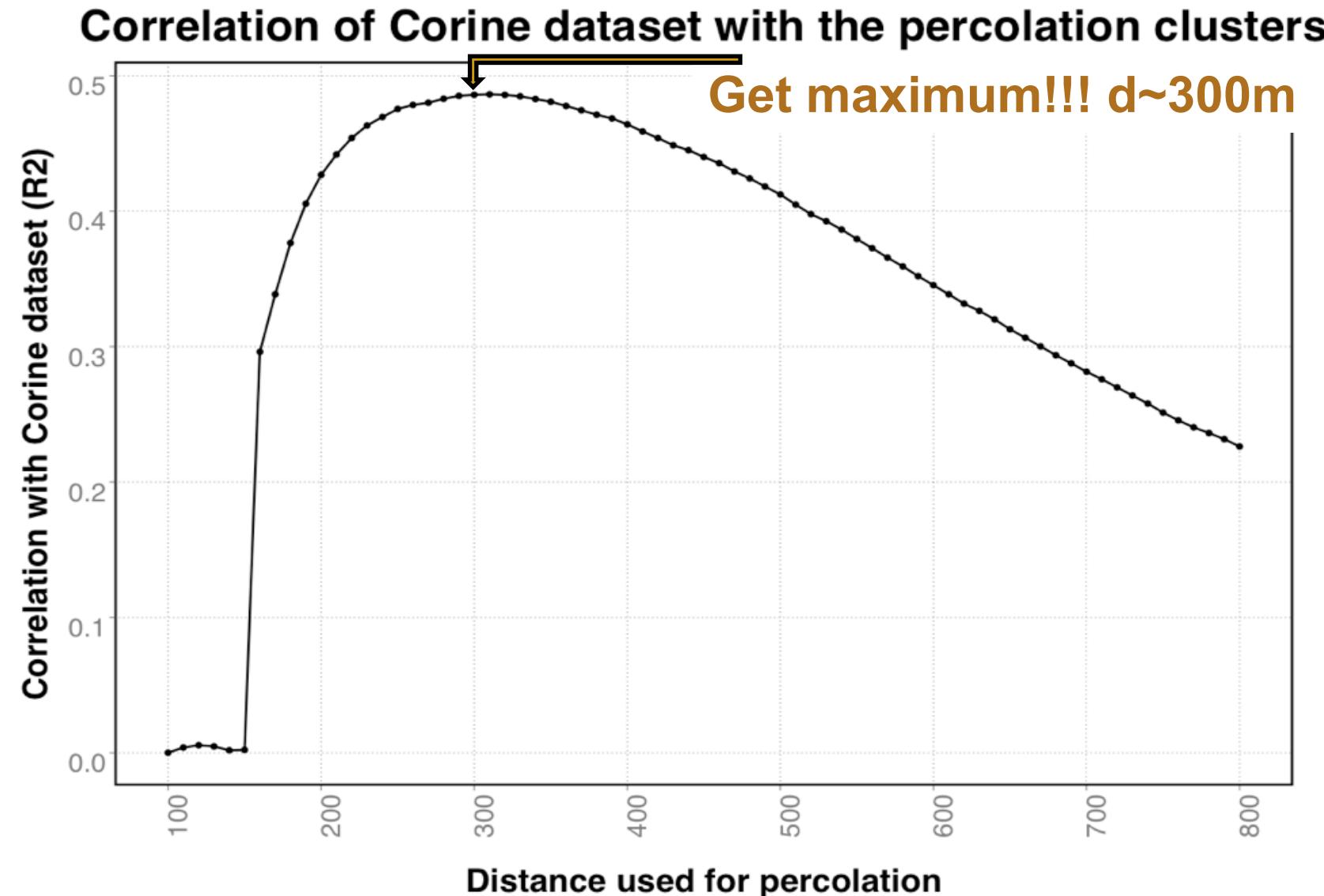


Validation of results using satellite maps

- Corine dataset from Lansat satellite.
- Pink colour corresponds to built-up area
- Black boundaries are added as proxies for the delimitation of cities







Universal fractal dimension for cities?

No!!!

→ Computing the exponent is no simple matter.... Different methods might lead to slightly different results.

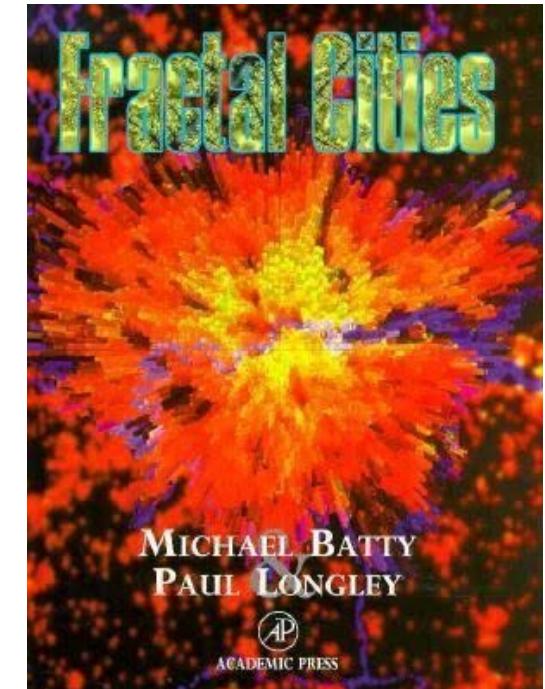
Also, it turns out that cities are not fractals, they are **multifractals!!!**

→ Probability of growth is not the same everywhere

Multifractal measures

- Fractal objects reduce their density as they grow
- Usually, obtain a unique global fractal dimension: **monofractal**
- Density distribution is assumed uniform:
 - growth probability uniform

Michael Batty & Paul Longley (1994)
Fractal Cities: A Geometry of Form and Function
(Academic Press, San Diego, CA and London)



- What if this is not uniform any longer, and different regions present different growth probabilities?
 - E.g. DLA: different growth probabilities at the tips than deep into the structure
- Observe local fractal dimensions that differ among regions
 - Would need an infinite amount of these to fully characterise the system

Multifractal

Cities as fractals in time

London's evolution

Dataset: Kiril Stanilov
Paolo Masucci

AP. Masucci, K. Stanilov, and M. Batty. London's street network dynamics since the 18th century. *PLoS ONE*, 8:e69469, 2013.

Multifractal analysis:

Roberto Murcio, A. Paolo Masucci, Elsa Arcaute and Michael Batty
Phys. Rev. E 92, 062130 (2015)

→ Compute 3 special fractal dimensions from whole spectrum

- i) $D_0 \longleftrightarrow$ box counting
- ii) $D_1 \longleftrightarrow$ information dimension
- iii) $D_2 \longleftrightarrow$ correlation

Multifractal phenomena in physics and chemistry

H. Eugene Stanley* & Paul Meakin†

* Center for Polymer Studies and Department of Physics, Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts 02215, USA

† Central Research and Development Department, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, Experimental Station, Wilmington, Delaware 19898, USA

Stanley and Meakin, Nature vol. 335, 29, 1988

$$D_q = \frac{\tau(q)}{(q-1)}$$

For monofractals: $D_0 \sim D_1 \sim D_2$

A. Analogies of multifractals with thermodynamics and multifractal scaling

Consider the sum in equation (1) in the form

$$Z(q) = \sum_p e^{F(p)} \quad (A1)$$

where

$$F(p) = \log n(p) + q \log p \quad (A2)$$

The sum in (A1) is dominated by some value $p = p^*$, where p^* is the value of p that maximizes $F(p)$. Thus

$$Z(q) \sim e^{F(p^*)} = n(p^*)(p^*)^q \quad (A3)$$

For fixed q , p^* and $(n(p^*))$ both depend on the system size L , leading one to define the new q -dependent exponents α and f by

$$p^* \sim L^{-\alpha}; \quad n(p^*) \sim L^f \quad (A4)$$

Substituting (A4) into (A3) gives

$$Z(q) \sim L^{f-\alpha q} \quad (A5)$$

Comparing (A5) with equation (2), we find the desired result

$$\tau(q) = q\alpha(q) - f(q). \quad (A6)$$

From (A2) it follows that

$$\frac{d}{dq} \tau(q) = \alpha(q). \quad (A7)$$

Hence we can interpret $f(\alpha)$ as the negative of the Legendre transform of the function $\tau(q)$

$$f(\alpha) = -(\tau(q) - q\alpha) \quad (A8)$$

where $\alpha = d\tau/dq$. The function $Z(q)$ is formally analogous to the partition function $Z(\beta)$ in thermodynamics, so that $\tau(\beta)$ is like the free energy. The Legendre transform $f(\alpha)$ is thus the analogue of the entropy, with α being the analogue of the energy E . Indeed, the characteristic shape of plots of $f(\alpha)$ against α (compare Fig. 3) are reminiscent of plots of the dependence on E of the entropy for a thermodynamic system.

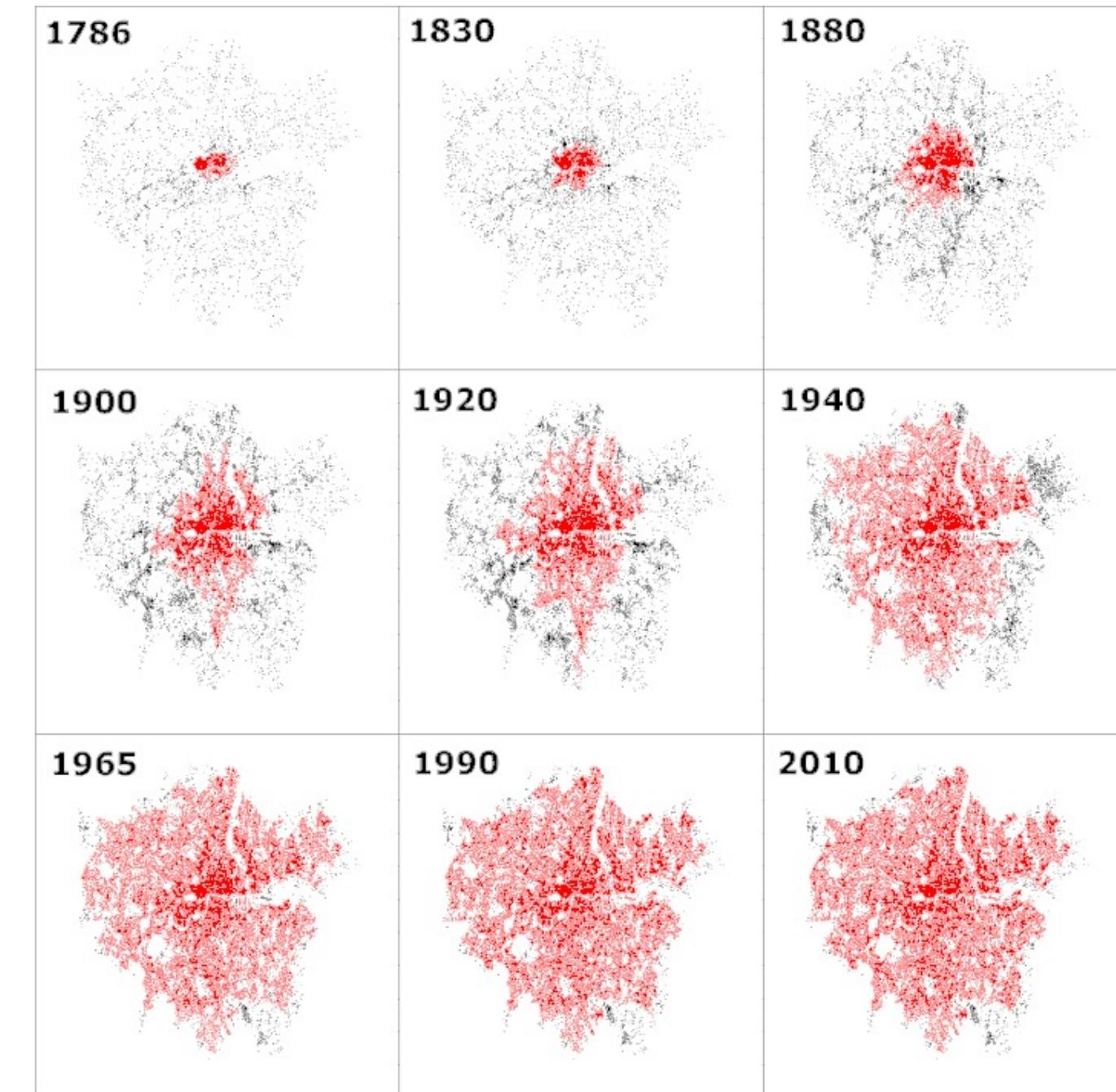
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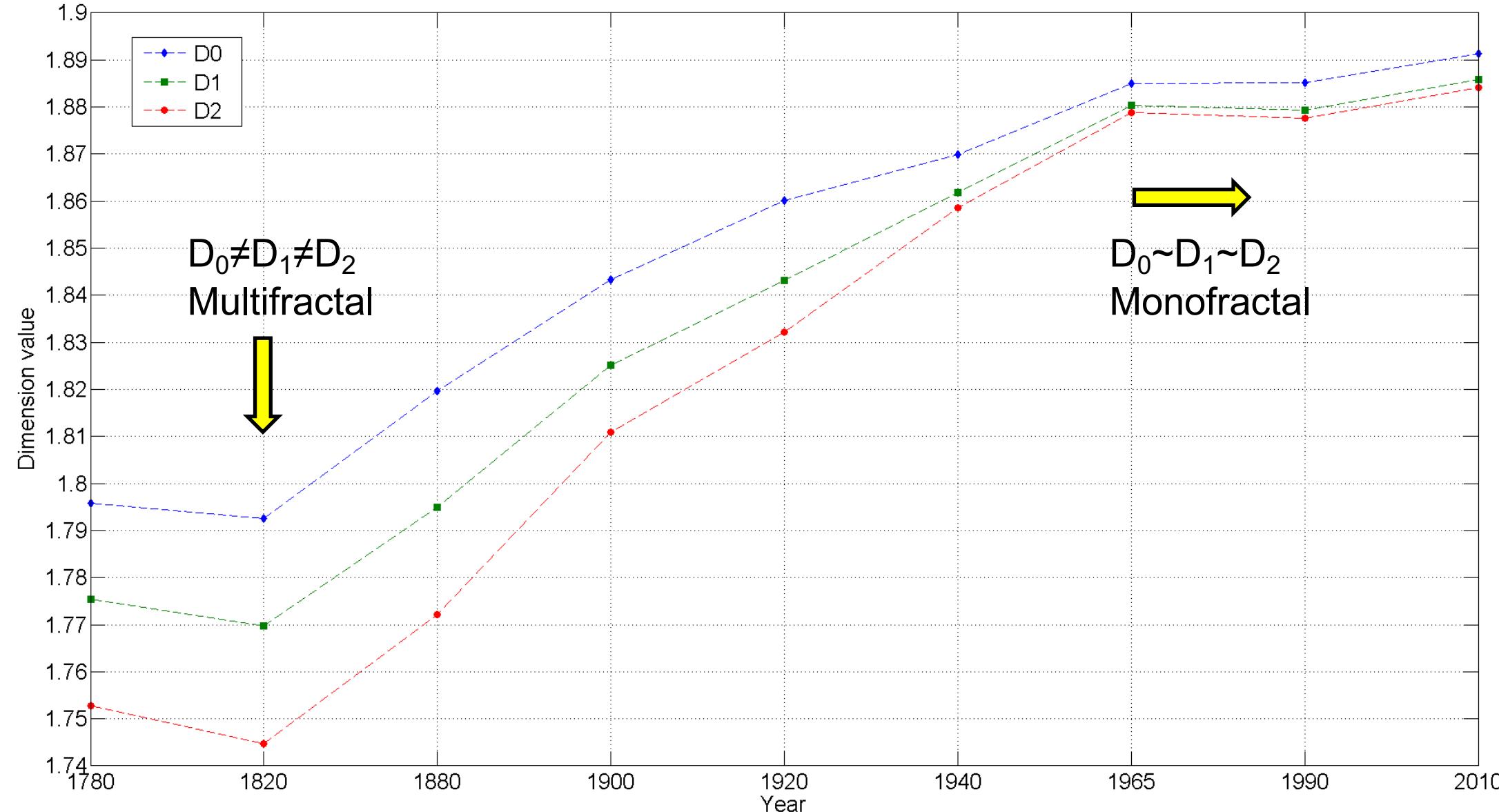
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AP. Masucci, K. Stanilov, and M. Batty. London's street network dynamics since the 18th century. *PLoS ONE*, 8:e69469, 2013.

Multifractal analysis:
Murcio et al, PRE, 2015





London is evolving from multifractality to monofractality!!

- greenbelt is constraining growth, the space is getting filled
- policy changes the morphology of the streets

For review of different methodologies to compute the multifractal spectrum

Physica A 473 (2017) 467–487



Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Physica A

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/physa



Hadrien Salat
Mathematician
Alan Turing Institute

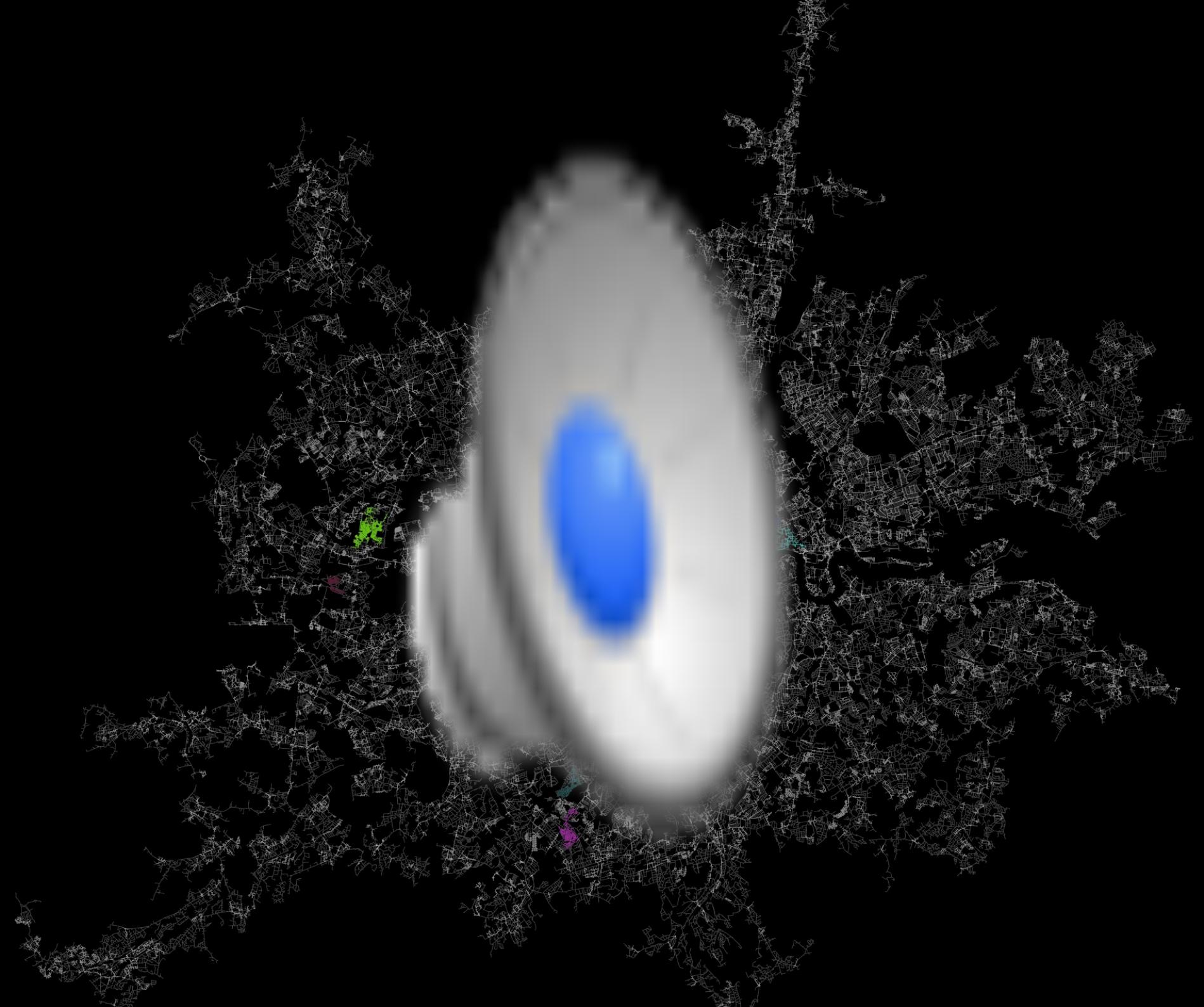
Minireview

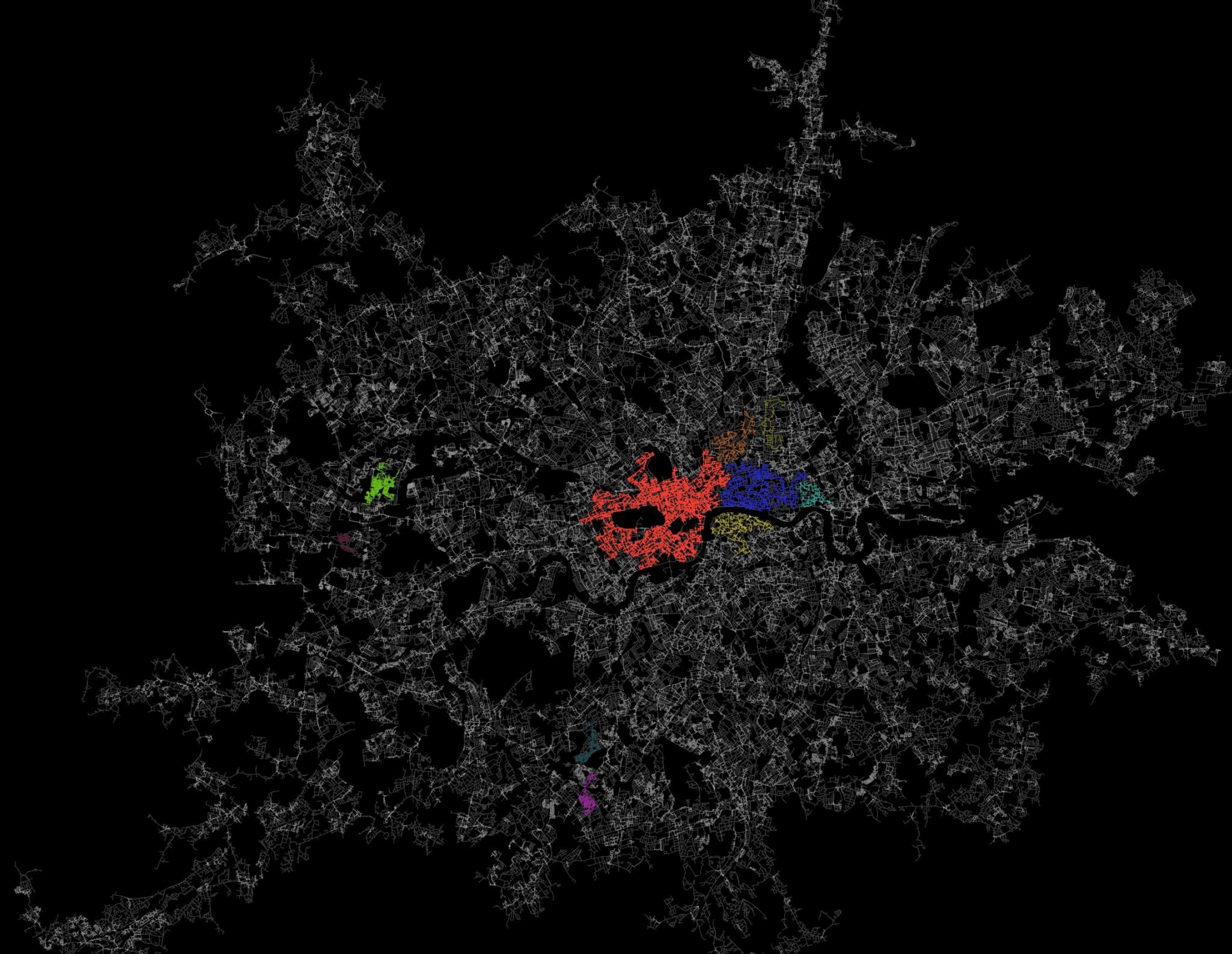
Multifractal methodology

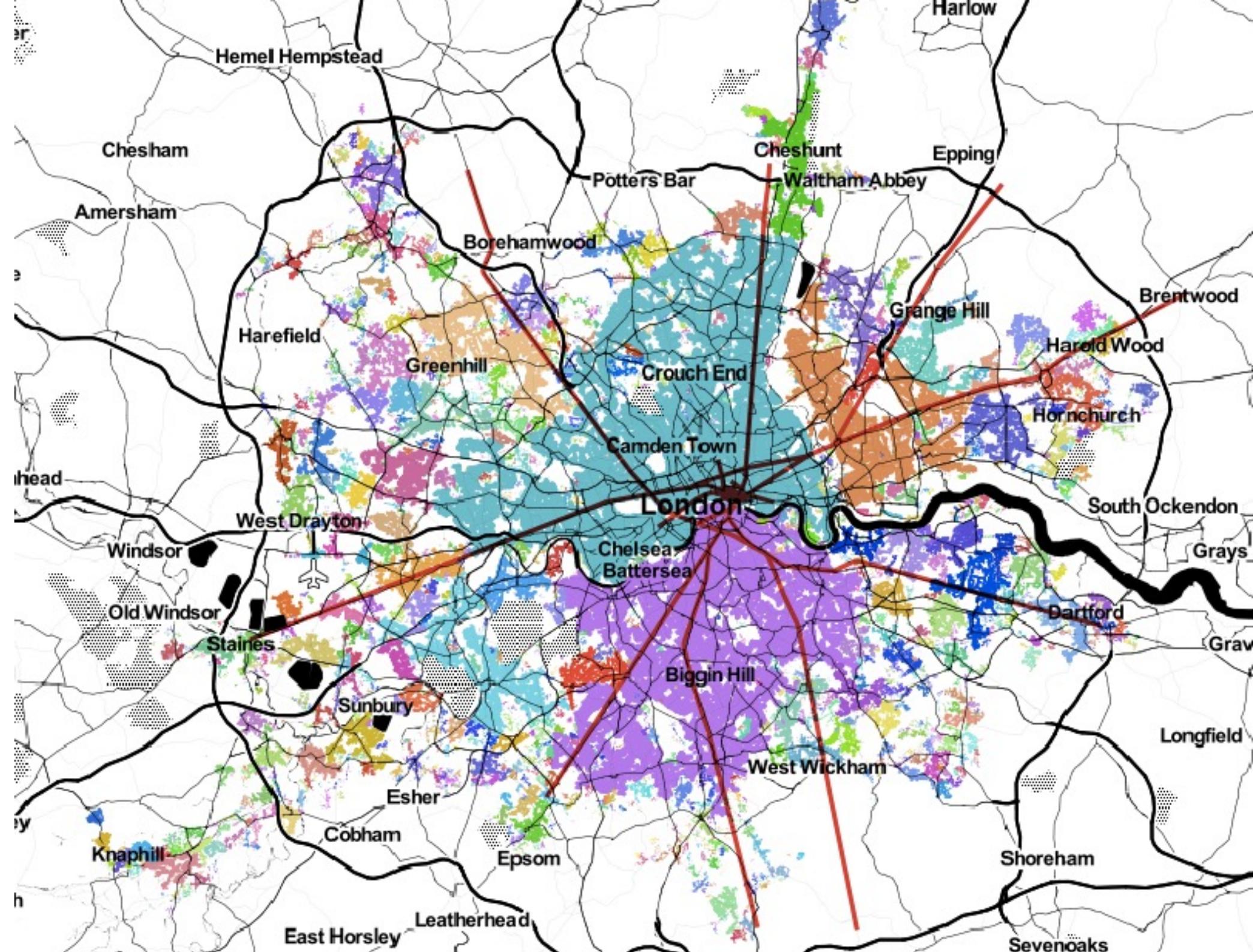
Hadrien Salat ^{a,*}, Roberto Murcio ^b, Elsa Arcaute ^a

^a Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, University College London, London, UK

^b Consumer Research Data Centre, University College London, London, UK



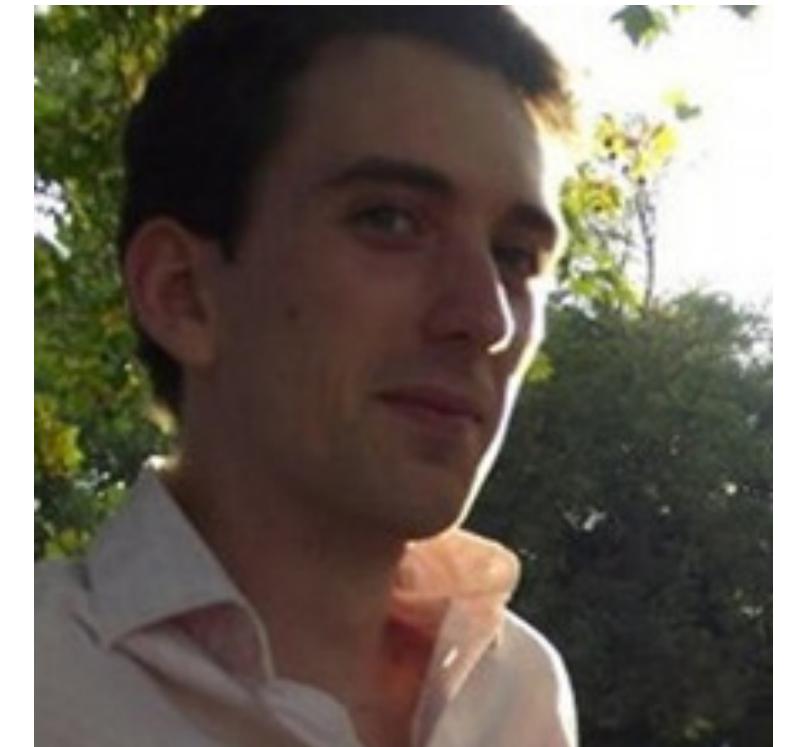




What about other countries?

Let us look at Europe: Open Street Map

❖ Work by master student Tom Russell



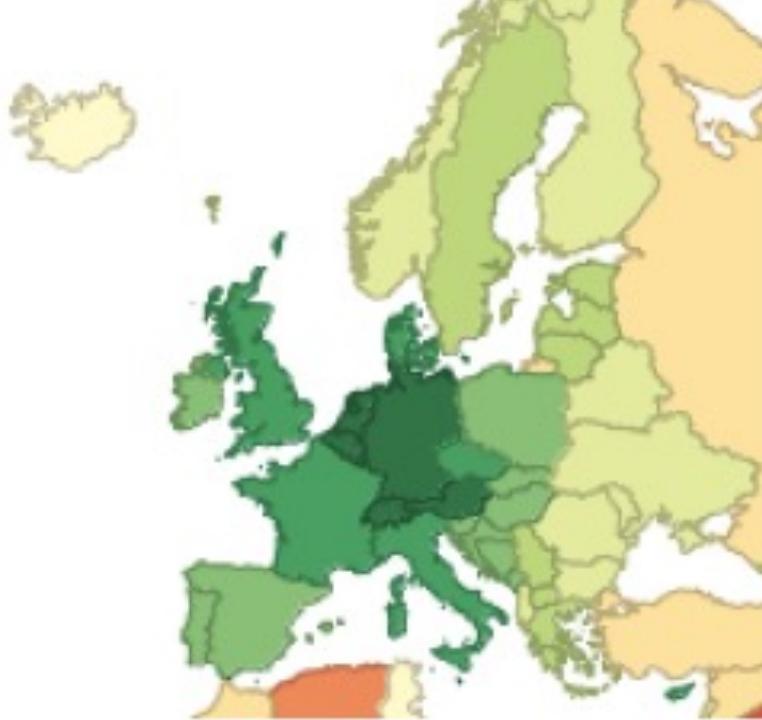
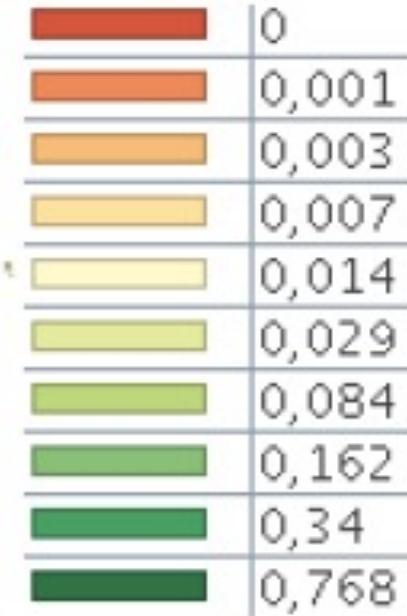


Figure 2: OSM users/day/1,000km², from Neis (2012)



Figure 3: Population density in 2000, from Hyde 3.1

Higher population density → more potential contributors to the dataset

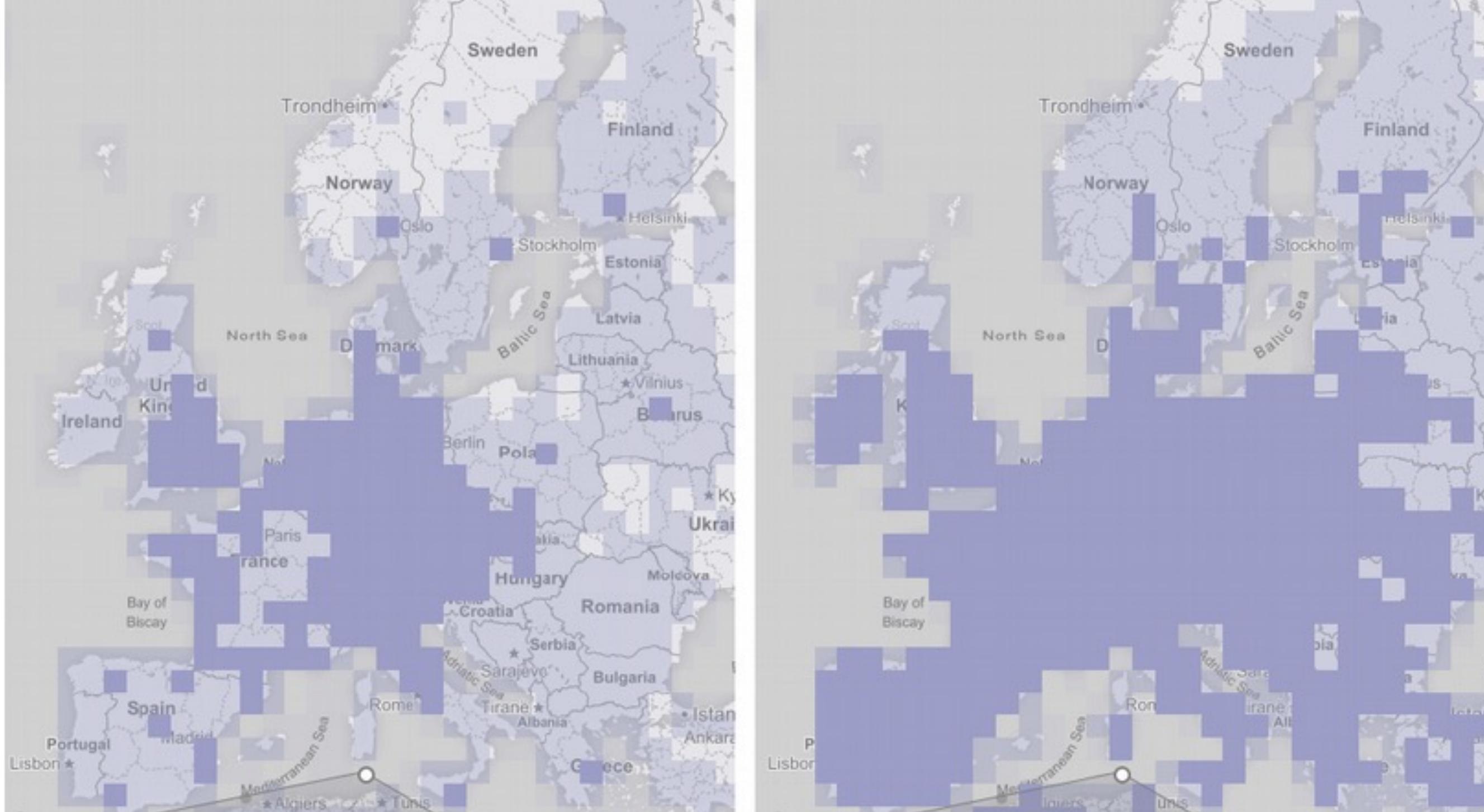
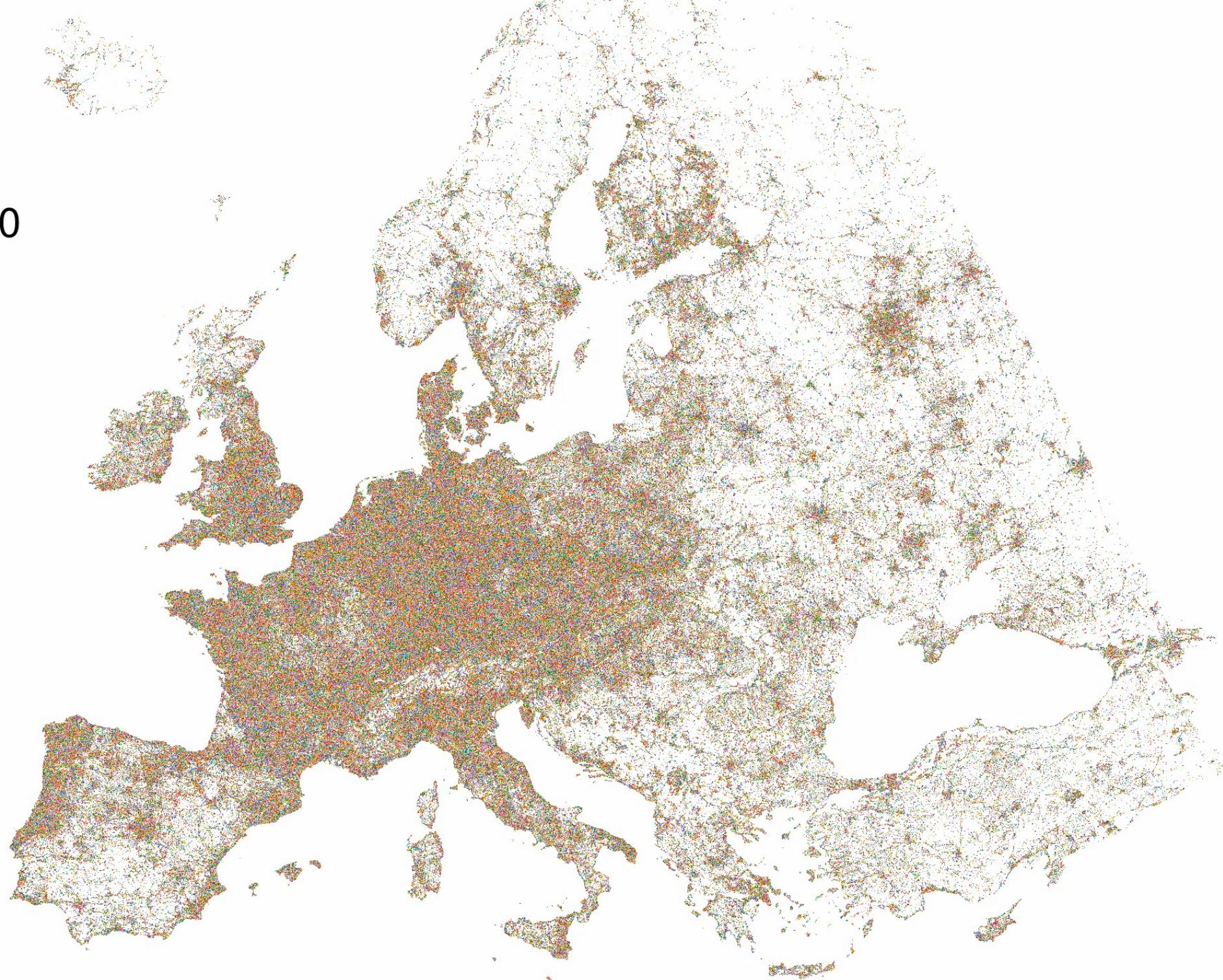
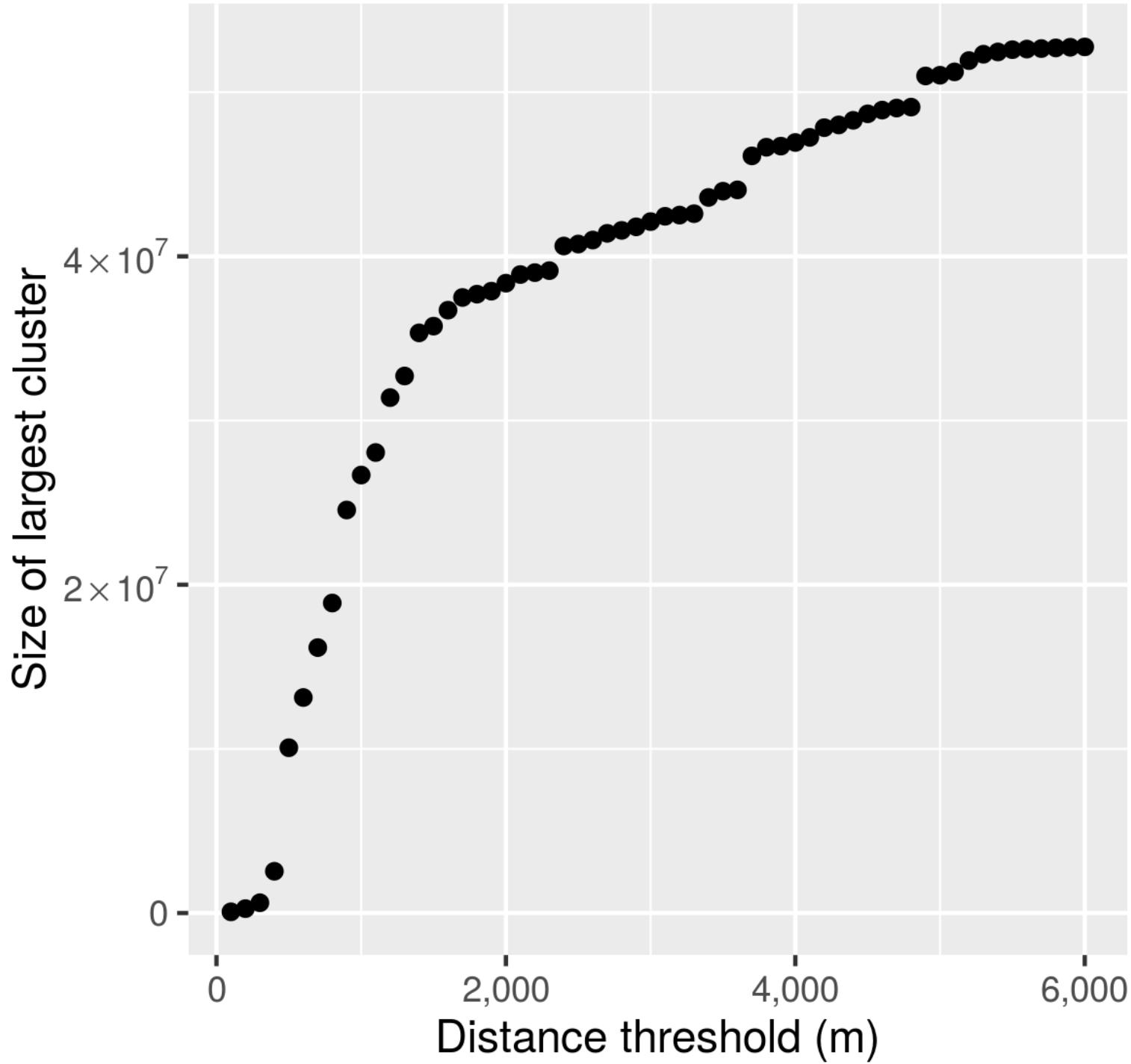


Figure 4: Relative density of OSM roads last modified in 2011 and 2016, from Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (2016).

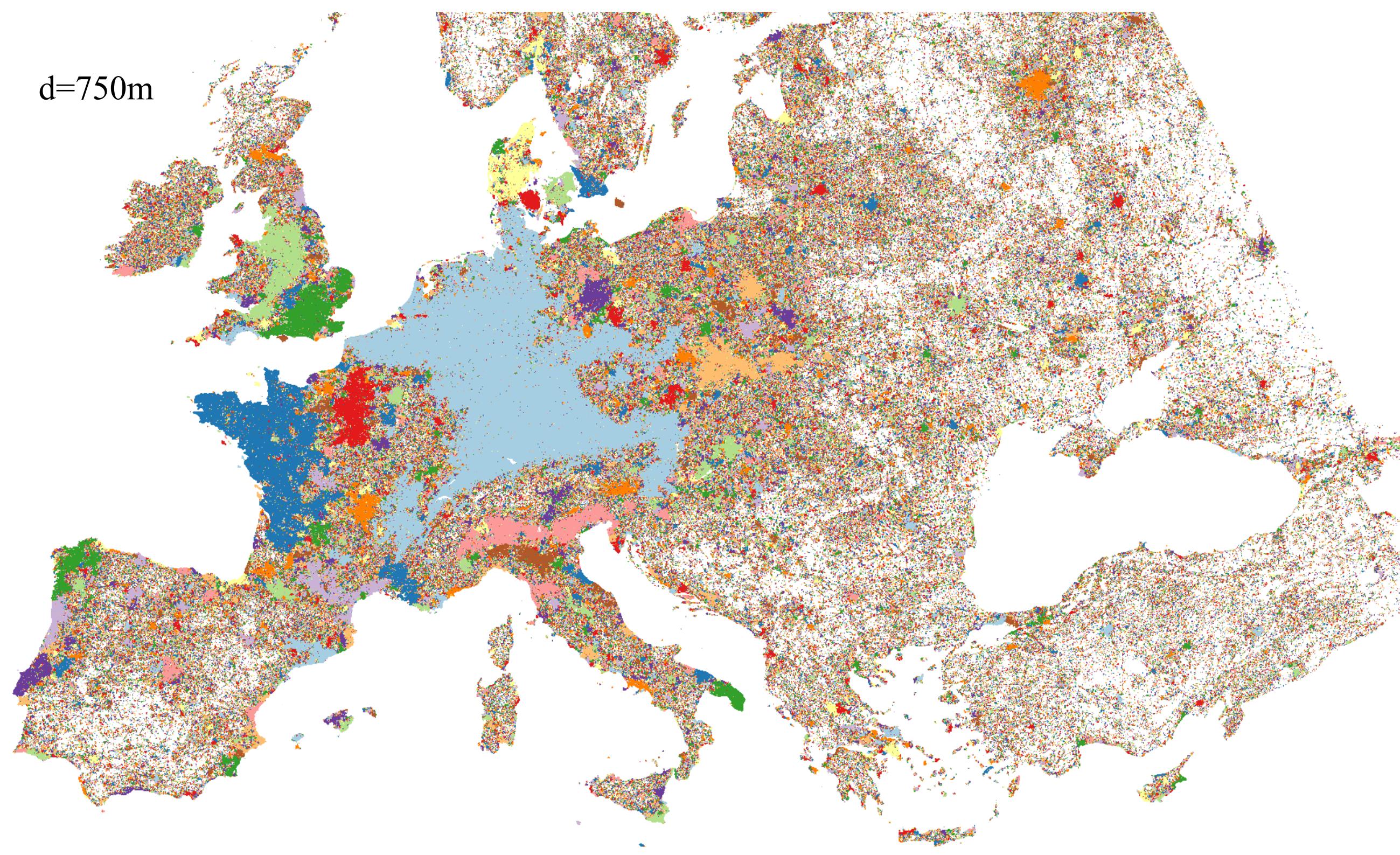
50



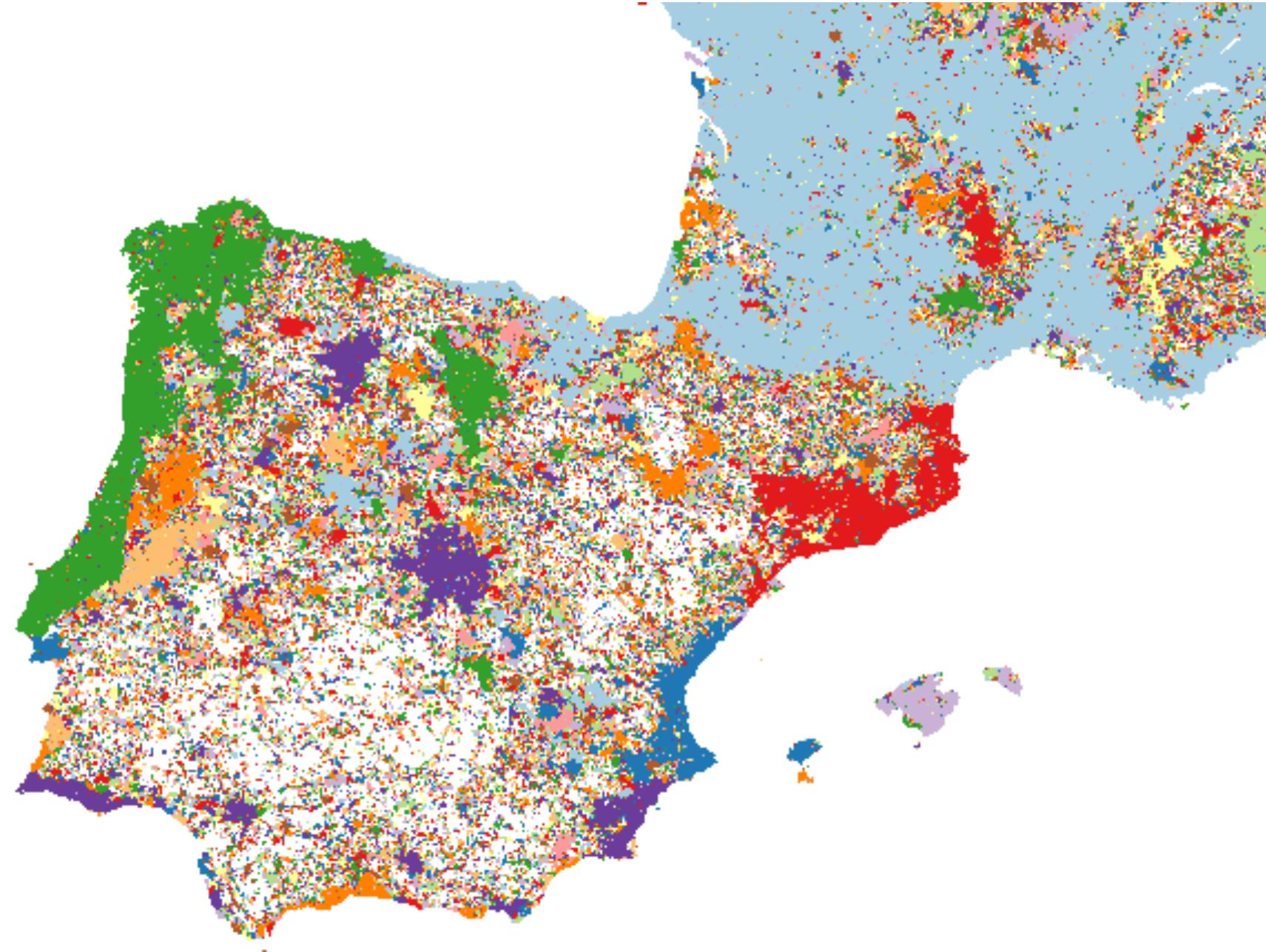
Are the transitions
representative of any
expected divisions?

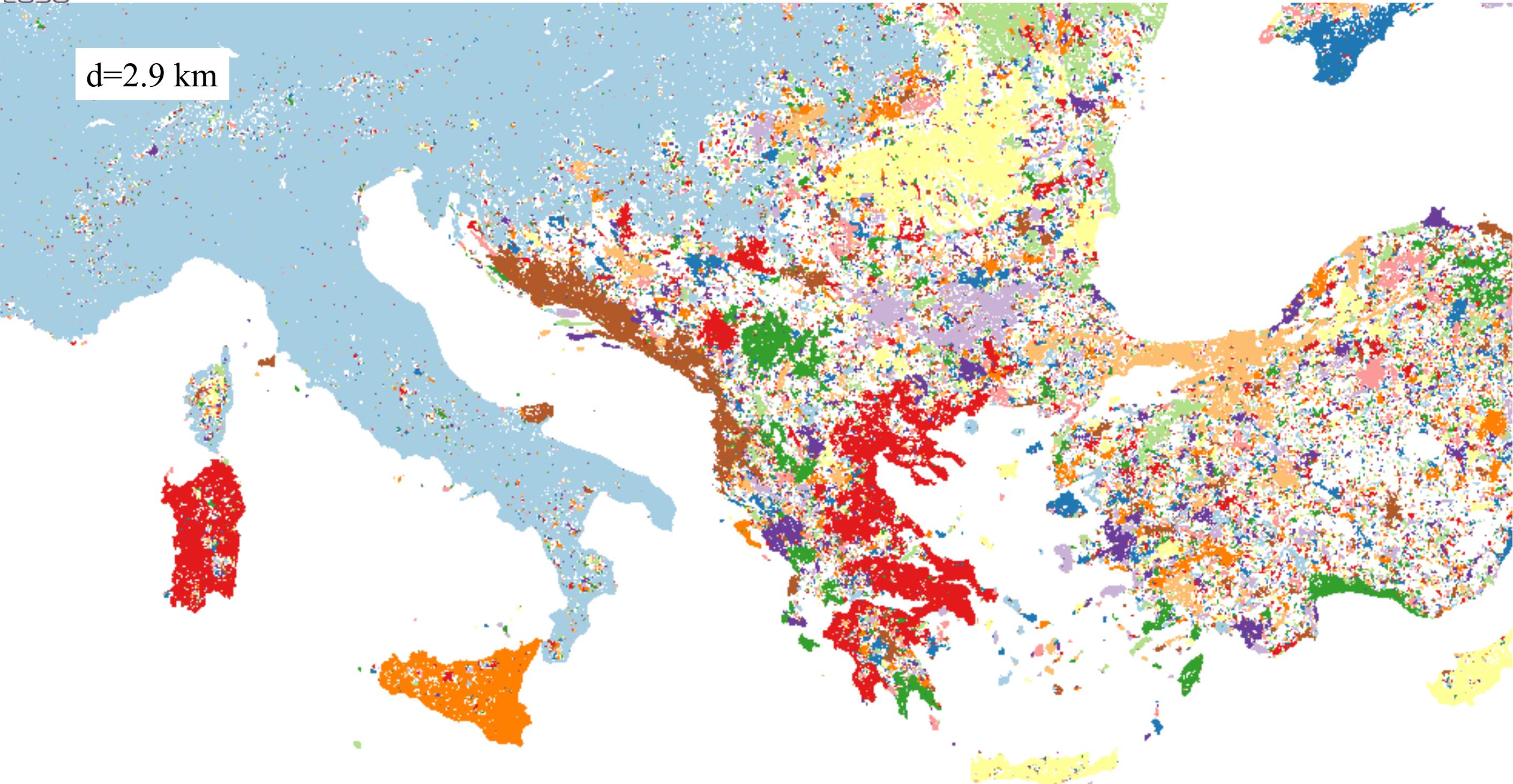


$d=750\text{m}$

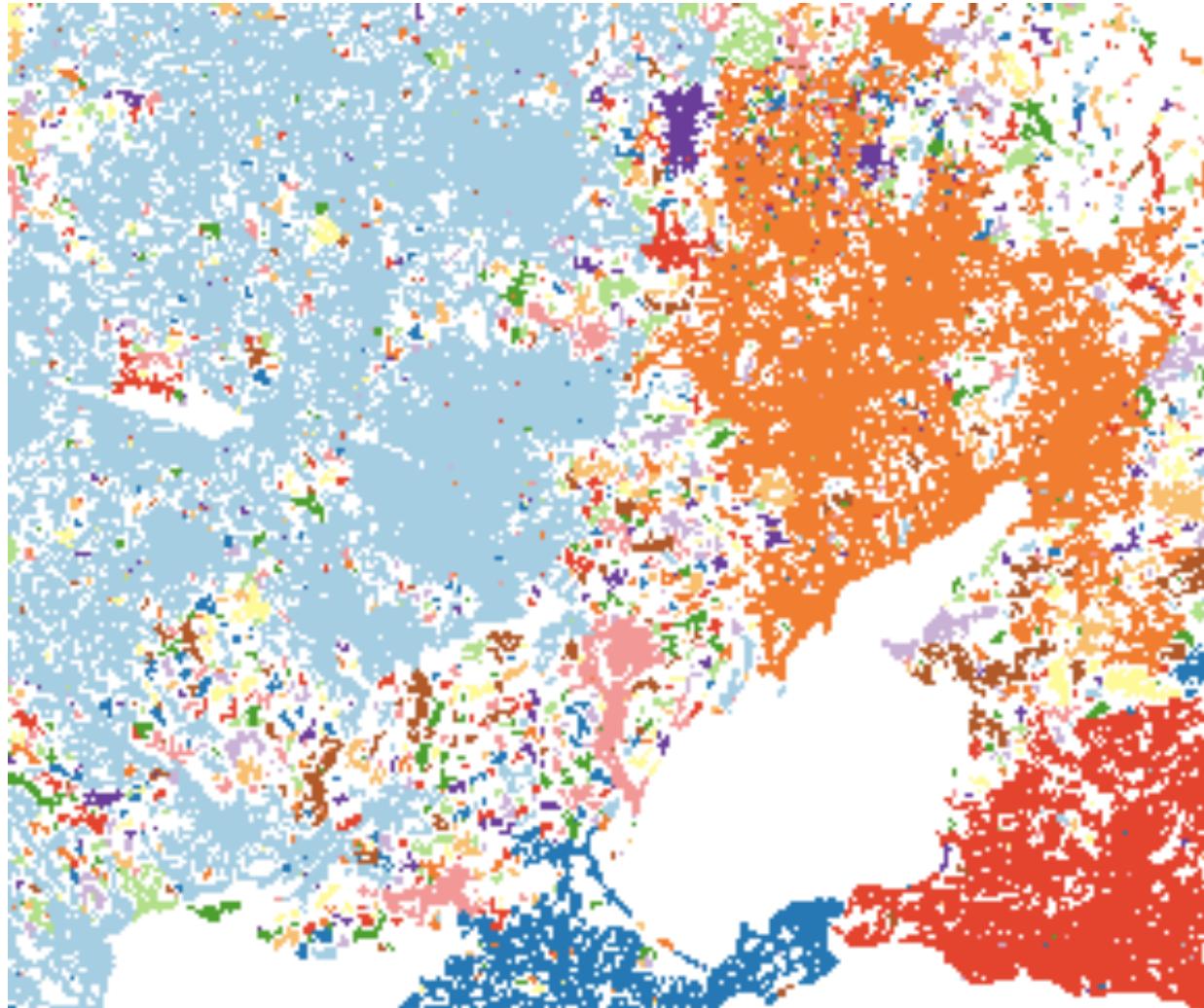


$d=1 \text{ km}$

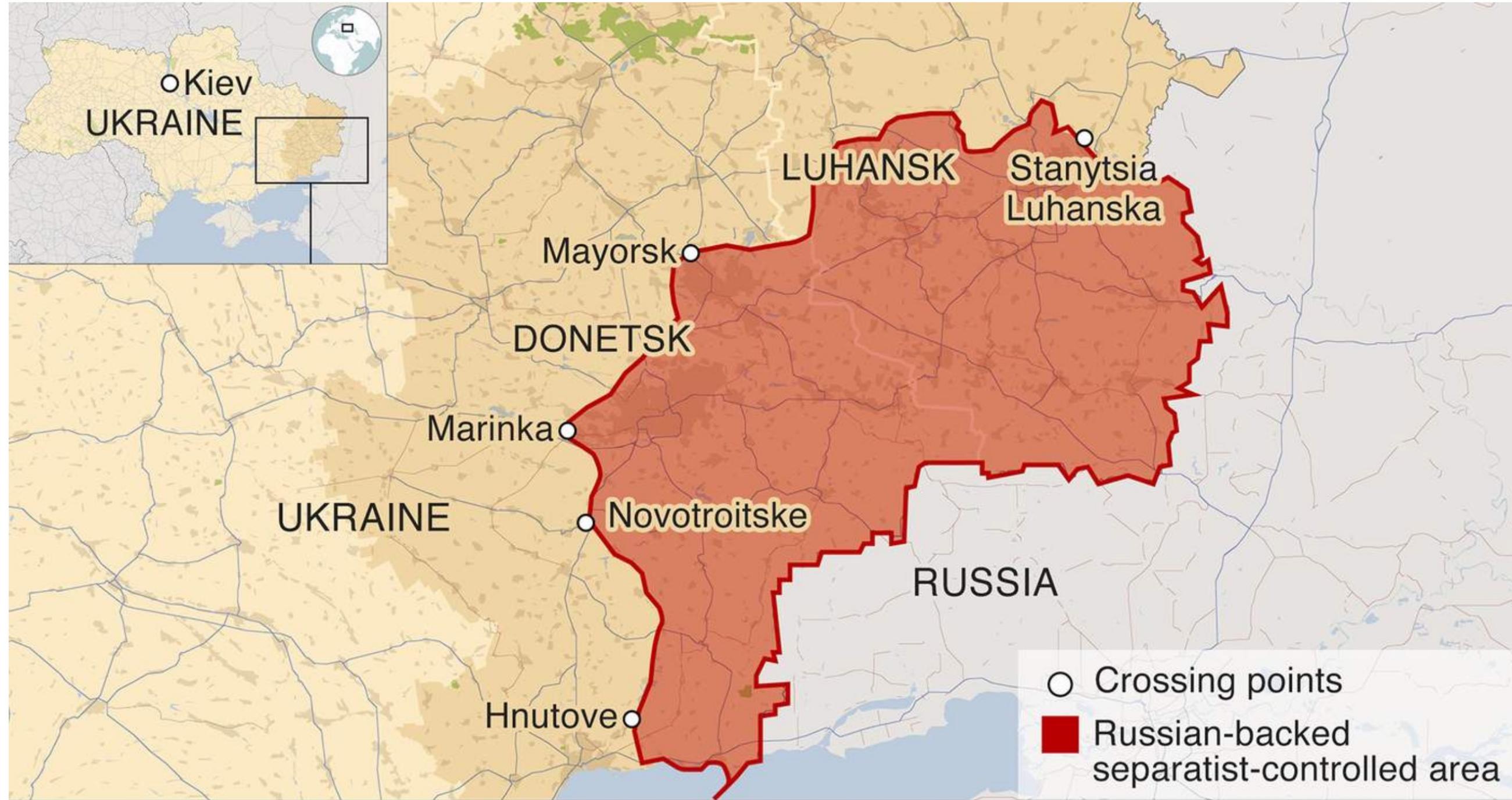




Donbass region



By Goran_tek-en, CC BY-SA 4.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=116044145>



Multiscalarity and dependencies

Local perspective of system misses bigger picture

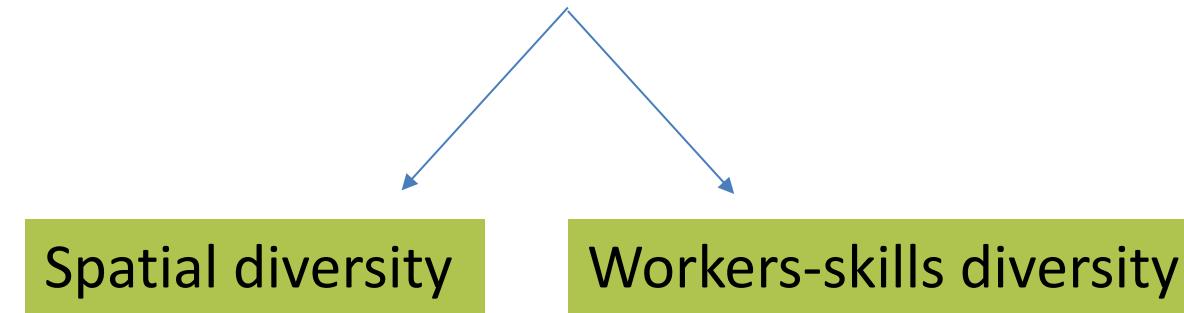


Multiscalar approach: system of cities

- Construct scales according to interactions between cities → **FLOWs**
- Commuting flows in particular → **dependencies**

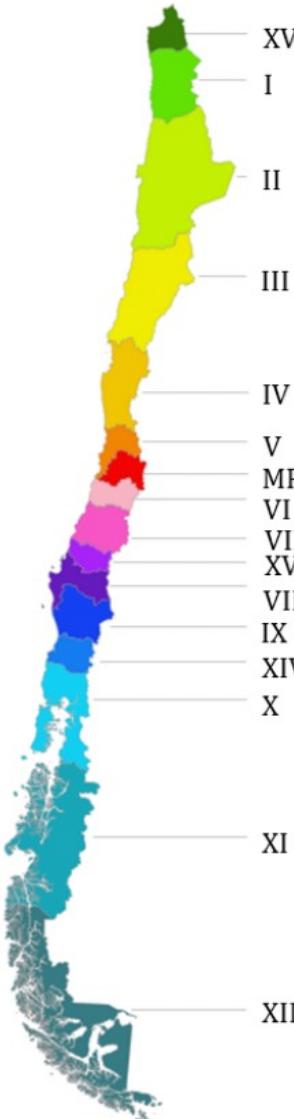


Total flows not enough, need to understand **DIVERSITY**



- Gain insights into level of **adaptability** to external shocks
- Gain insights into **polycentricity** and **monocentricity** of system
- Gain insights into potential for **knowledge spillovers** between a wide range of workers-skills

Case study: Chile



The following framework was derived by Dr Valentina Marin during her PhD, awarded a few months ago.

Modelling the multi-scalar effect of commuting on exposure to diversity

Valentina Marin^{1,*}, Carlos Molinero¹, and Elsa Arcaute¹

¹Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis (CASA) University College London, UK

*corresponding author: v.marin@ucl.ac.uk

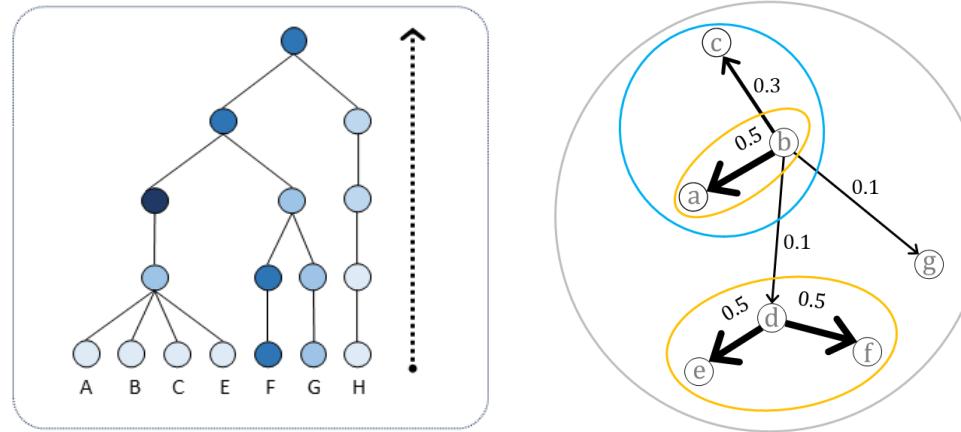
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2306.00213>



Dr Valentina Marin

Framework

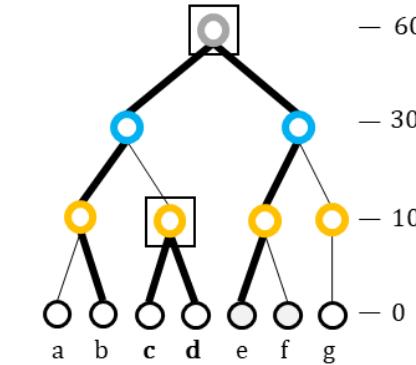
1.- Retrieve the hierarchical organisation of the commuting patterns given by the heterogeneity of the interactions



3.- Identify categories of systems of cities based on multi-scalar accessibility to diversity

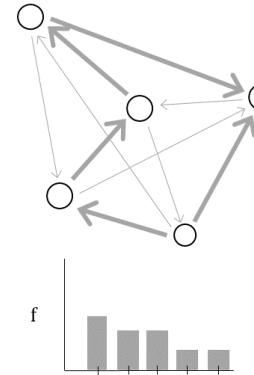
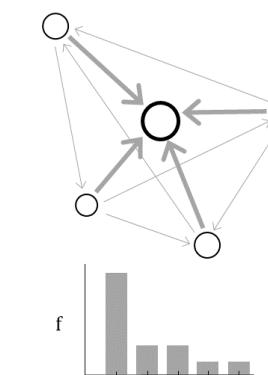
2.- Retrieve the distance in the tree between the different elements and their diversity (entropy-based metrics)

a Dendrogram



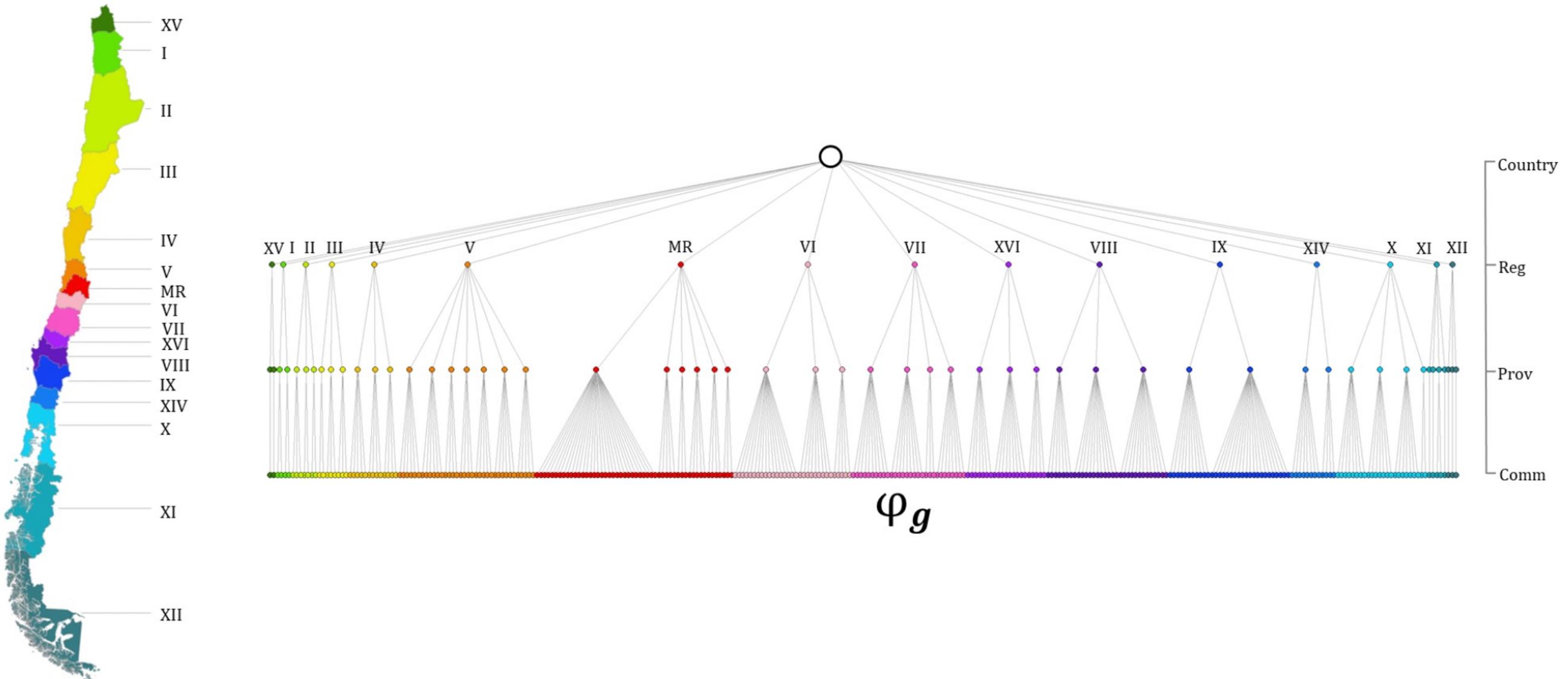
b Cophenetic distance matrix

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g
a							
b							
c							
d							
e							
f							
g							



1. Hierarchical organisation

Structure of governance

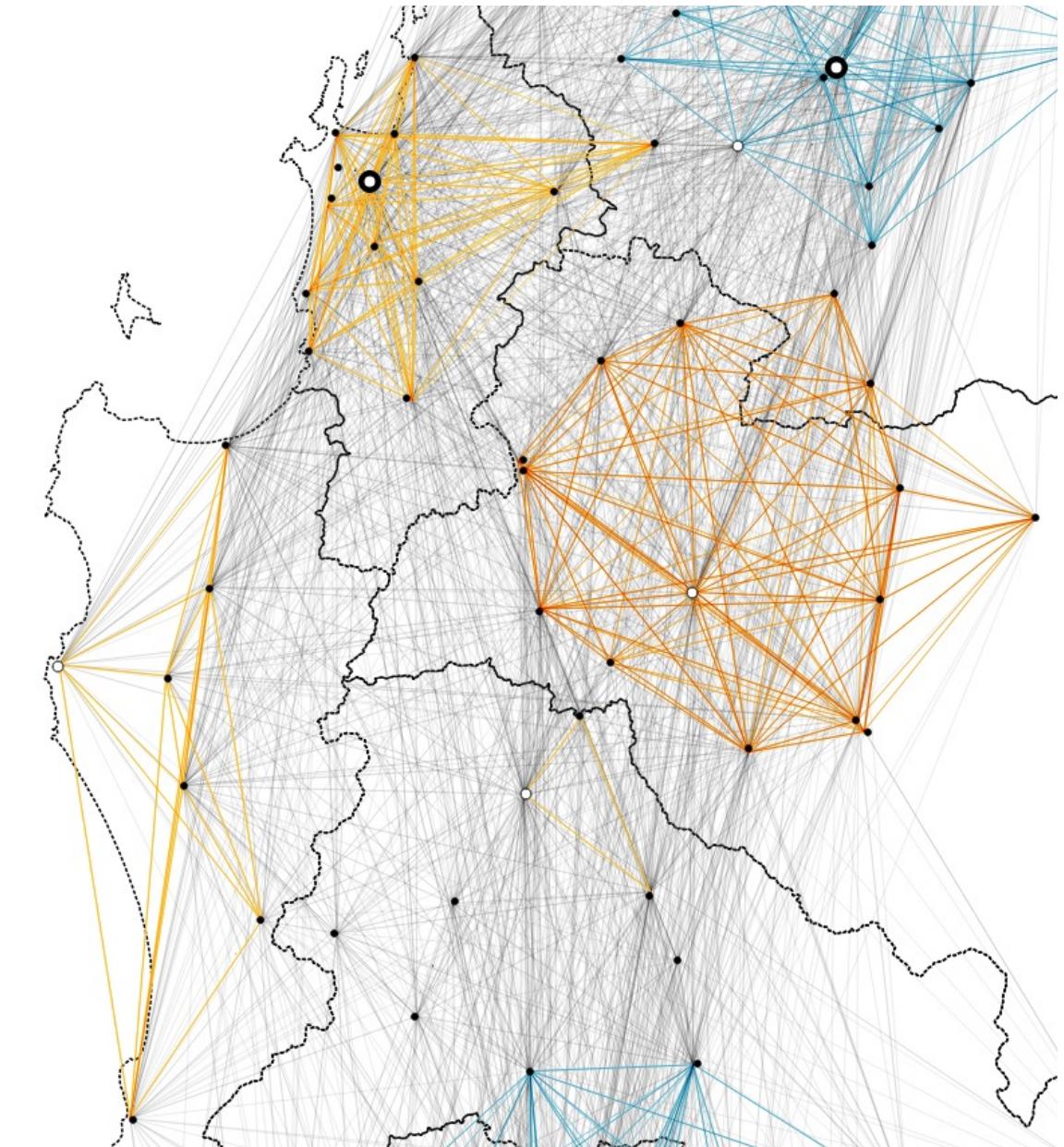


Commuting Networks: Data

- Census 2002
- Data aggregated from commune to **City level**
- Weighted directed network where cities are nodes and the weight indicates **dependency**
- **3 hours** is the max travel time (shortest path driving)
- The international Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)

The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)

ISCO-08 Major groups	Skill
1- Managers	4
2- Professionals	4
3- Technicians and associate professionals	3
4- Clerical support workers	
5- Service and sales workers	
6- Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	2
7- Craft related trades workers	
8- Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	
9- Elementary occupations	1
10- Armed forces occupations	

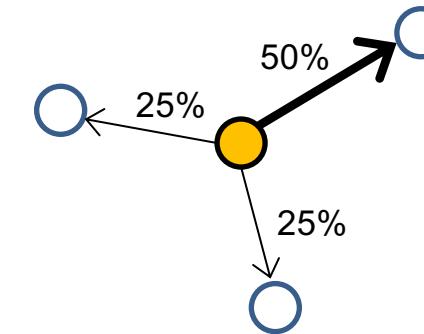


PERCOLATION-BASED HIERARCHICAL CLUSTERING

- Commuting as a network
 - cities as nodes
 - flows of commuters as links

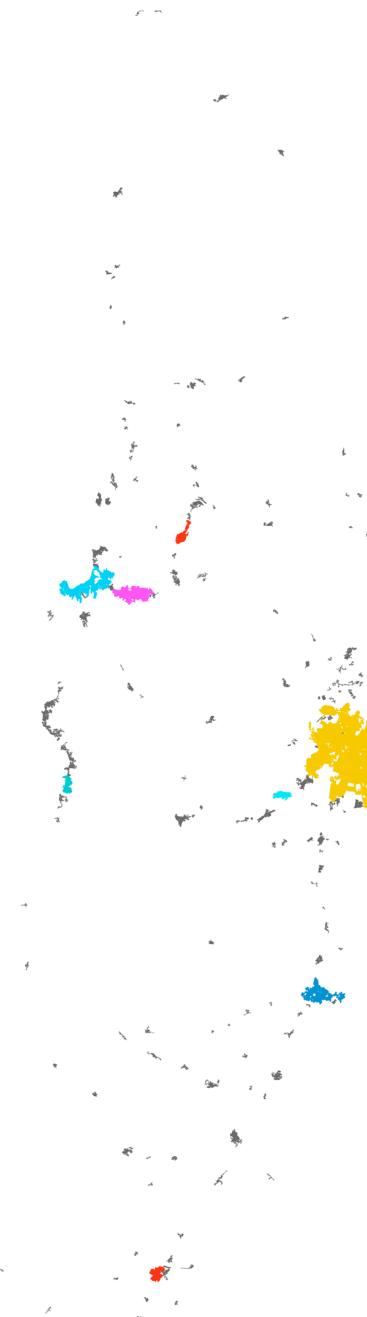
- Links weighted by share of flows

$$\text{Dependence weight } w_{ij} = \frac{T_{ij}}{\sum_j T_{ij}}$$



- Extracting nodes of connected links when $w_{ij} > \tau$

Clusters are induced by the intensity given by the number of commuters, and the relative dependencies.

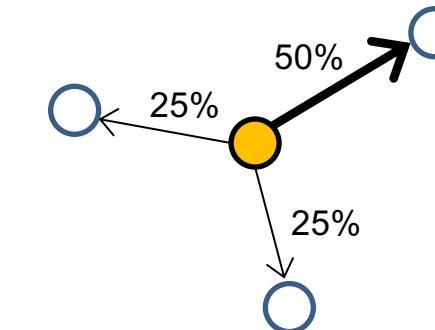


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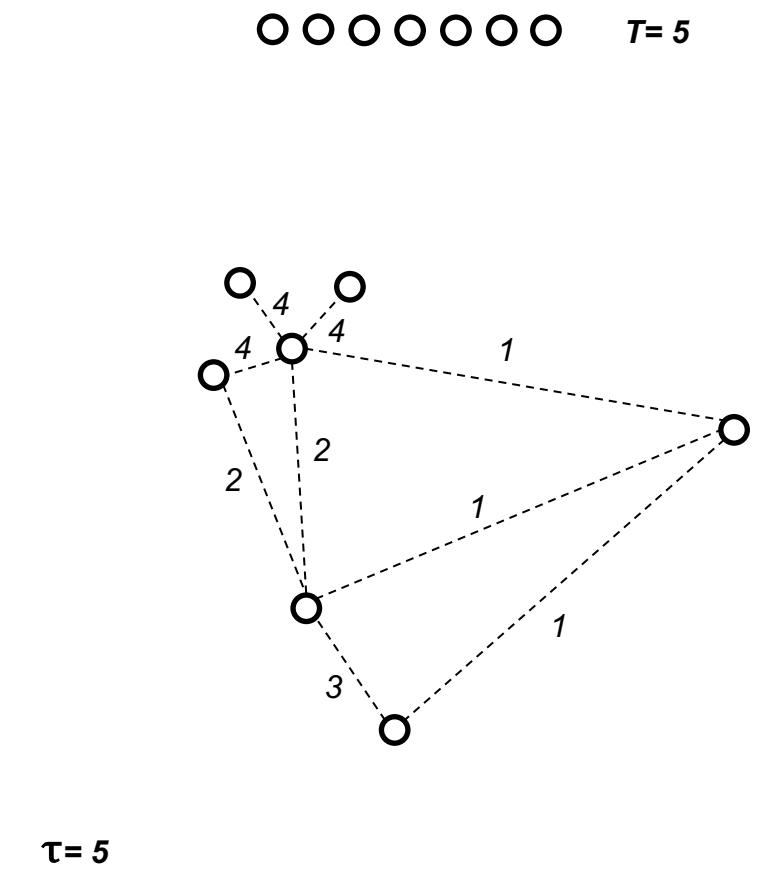
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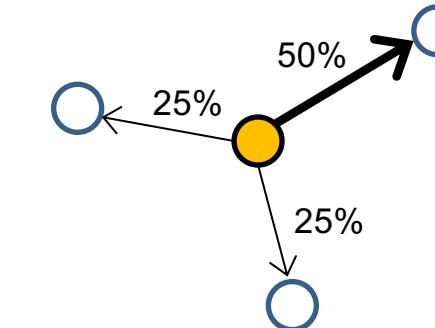
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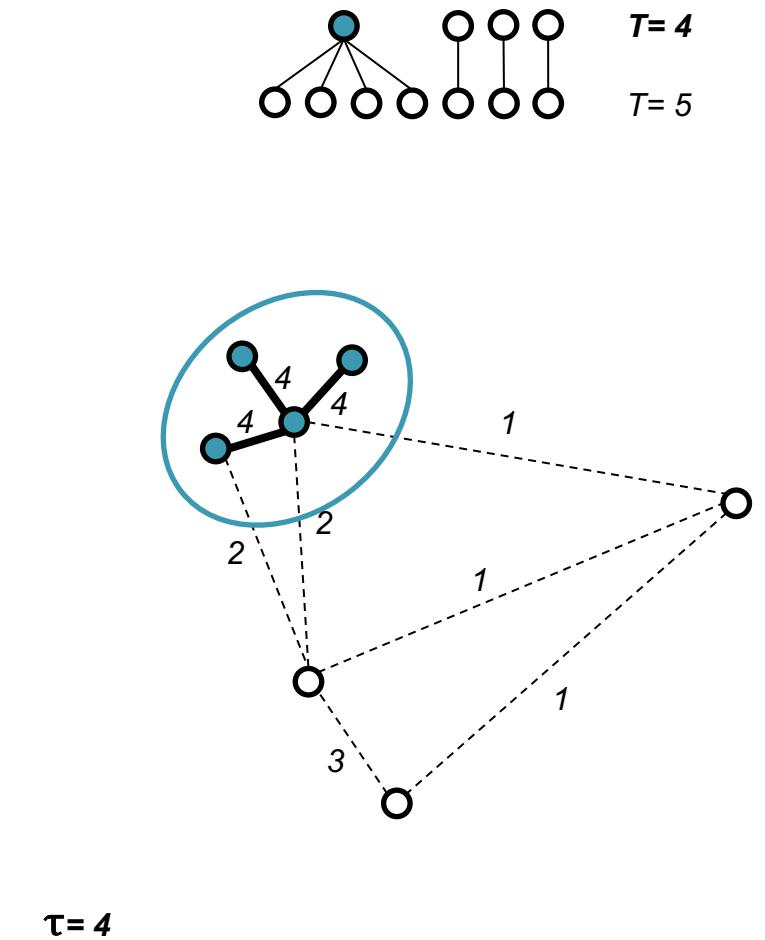
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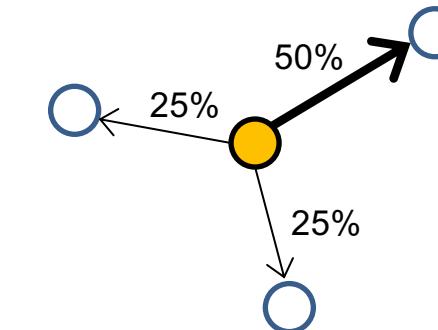
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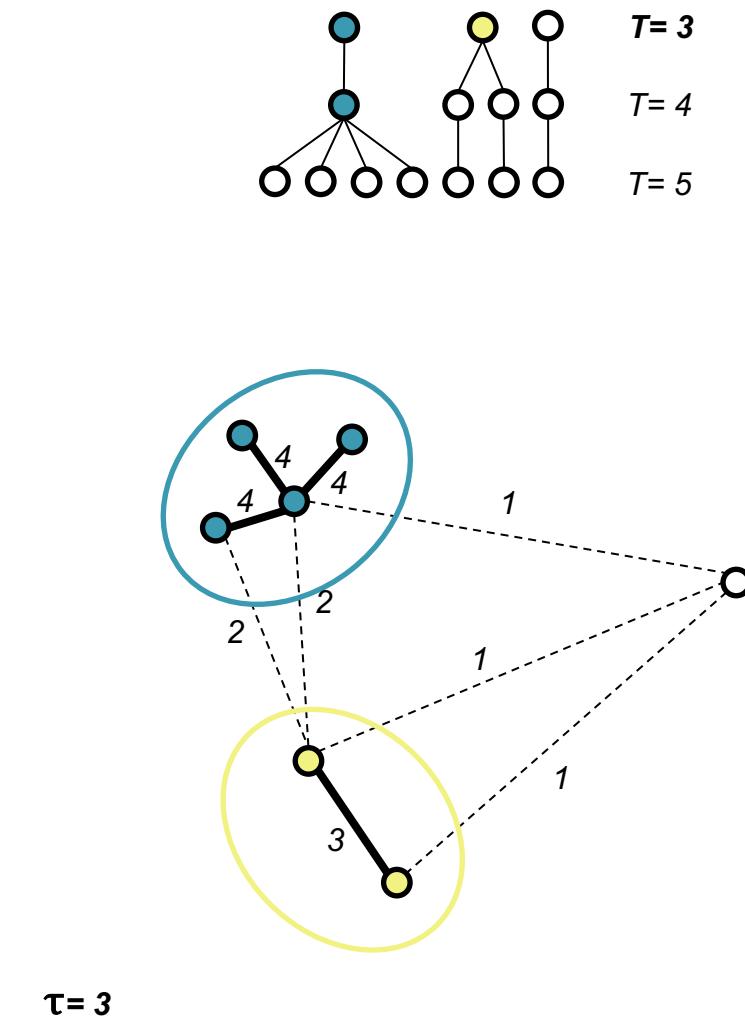
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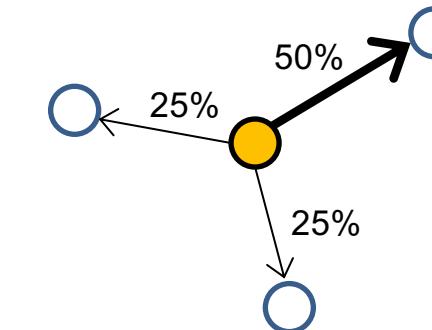


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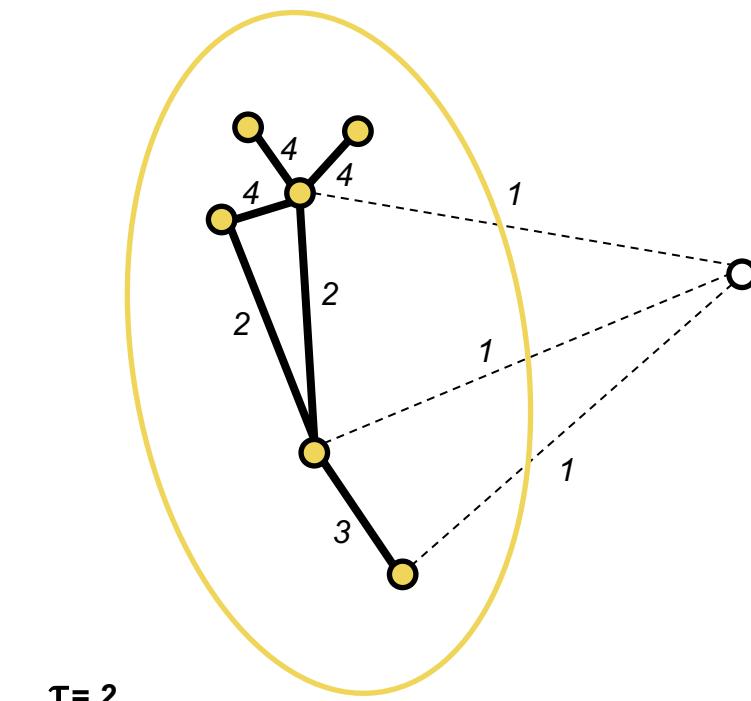
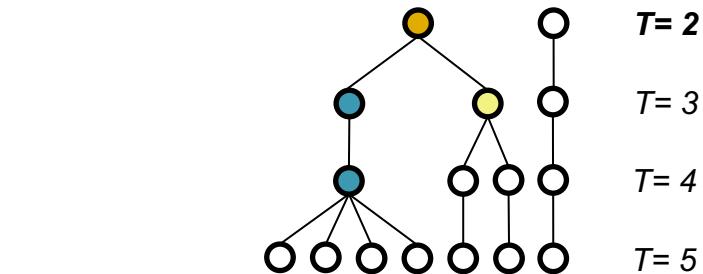
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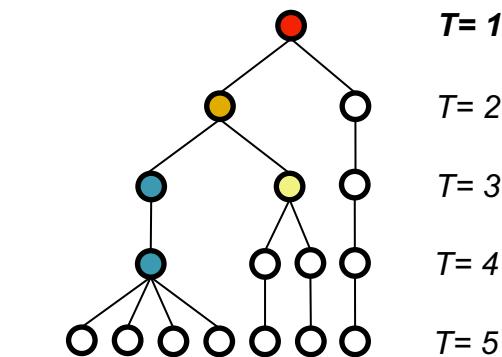
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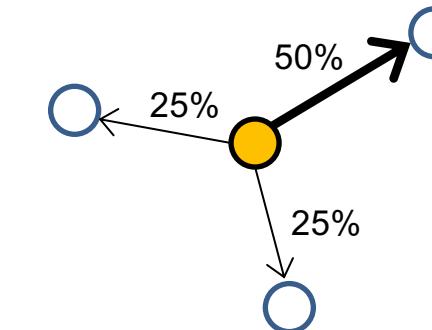
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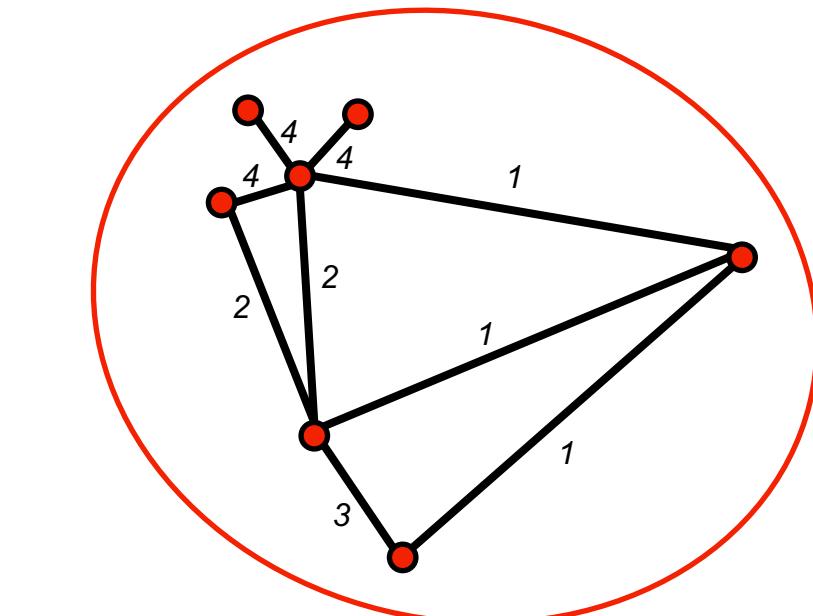
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Clusters are induced by the intensity given by the number of commuters, and the relative dependencies.



SCALAR DISTANCE

- Reconstruct hierarchy by ordering percolation clusters

“Everything is connected, but some things are more connected than others”
(Simon, 1977)

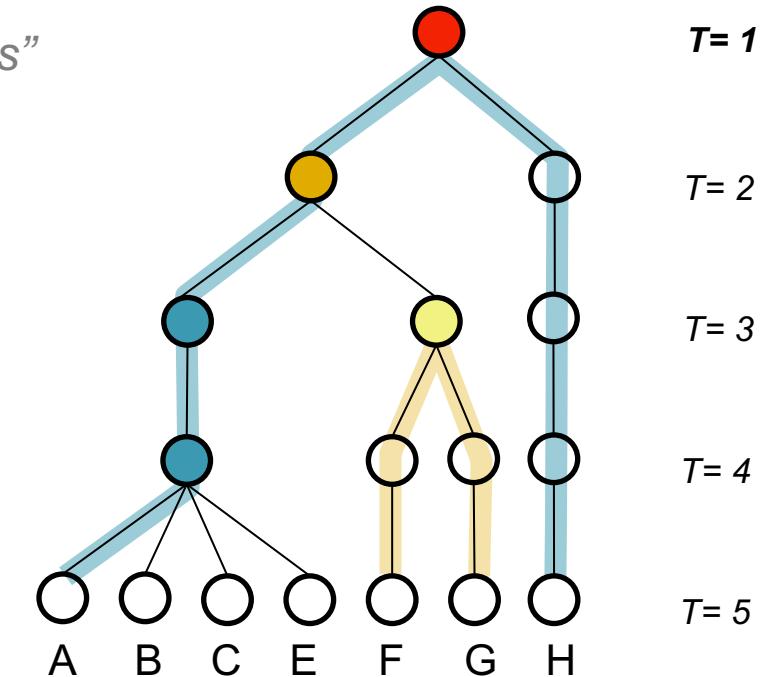
- Clusters are organised according to the intensity of connectivity

Horizontally: Stronger intra-cluster connectivity
Weaker inter-cluster connectivity

Vertically: Cross-scalar relationships

- Scalar distance between two points
(Cophenetic Distance)

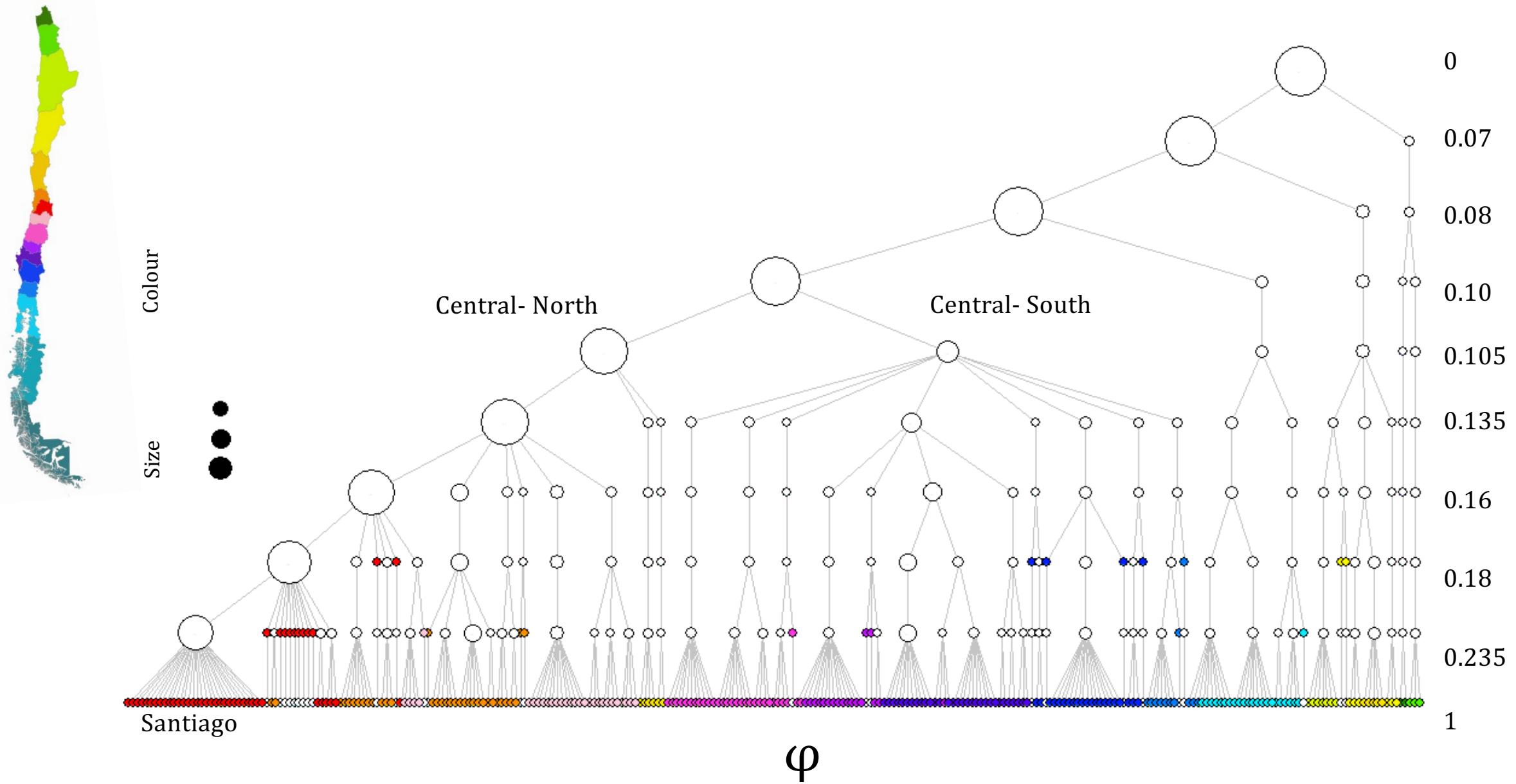
Distance is the height of the node at which two points are first joined together



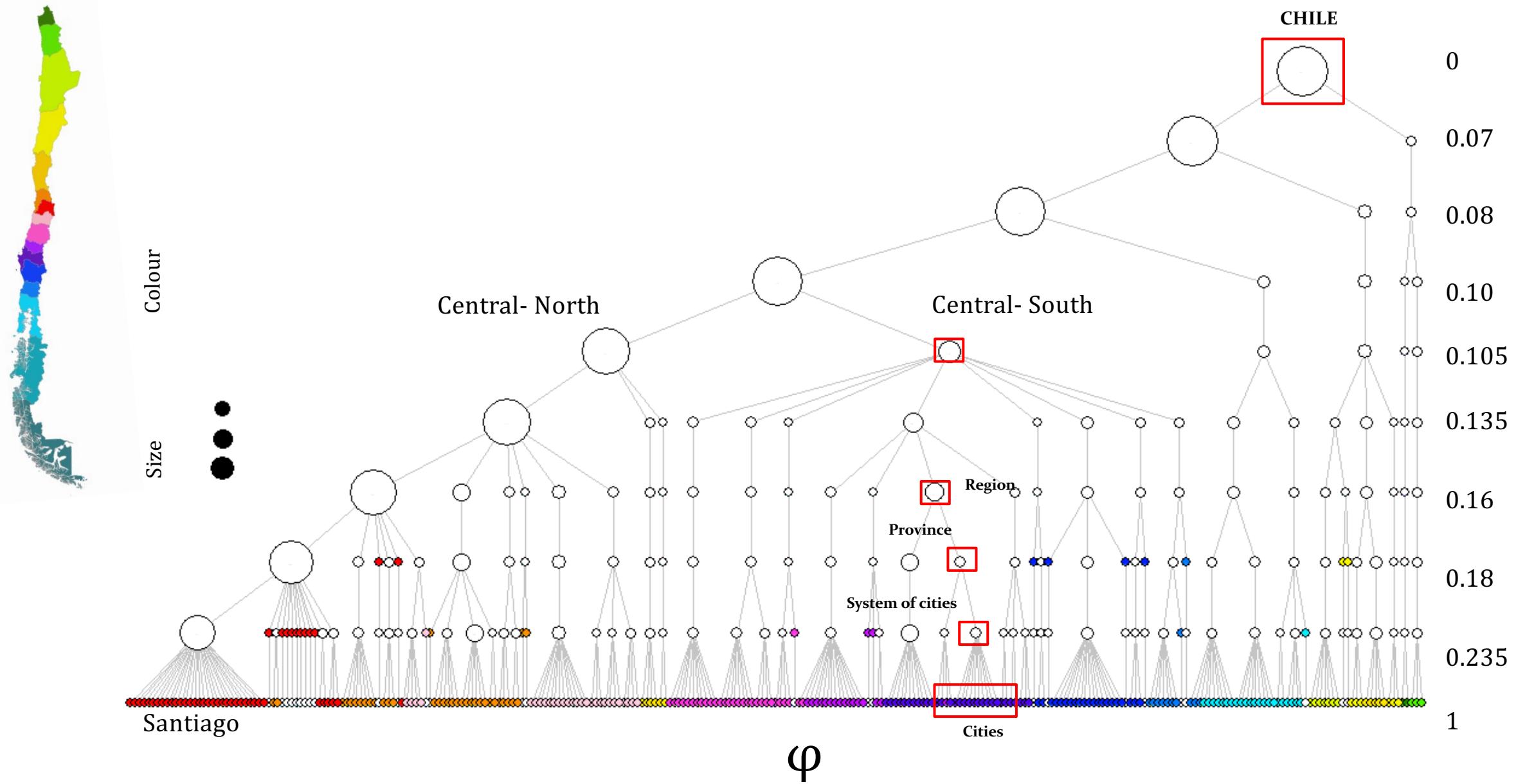
$$D(F,G) = 2$$

$$D(A,H) = 4$$

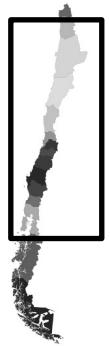
PERCOLATION-BASED HIERARCHICAL CLUSTERING



PERCOLATION-BASED HIERARCHICAL CLUSTERING



Cities



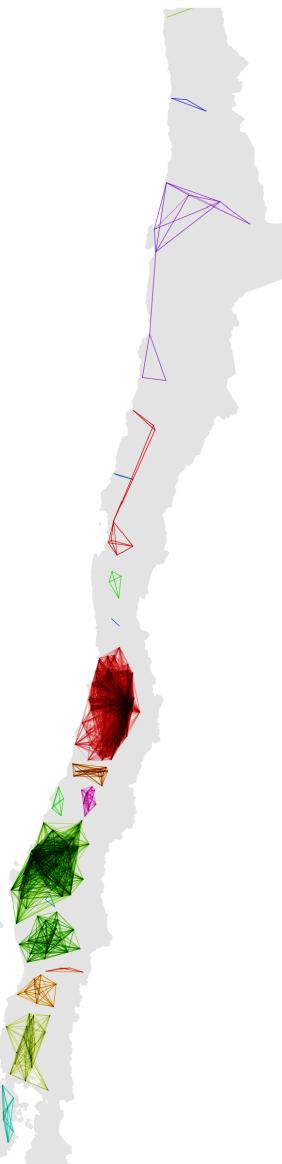
System of cities



Provinces



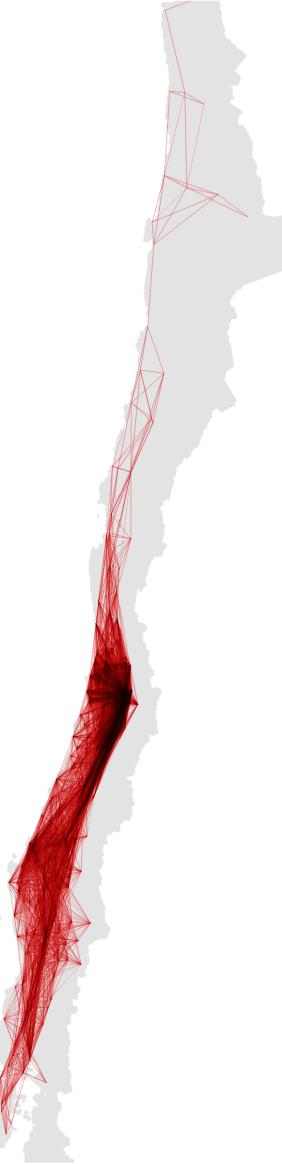
Regions



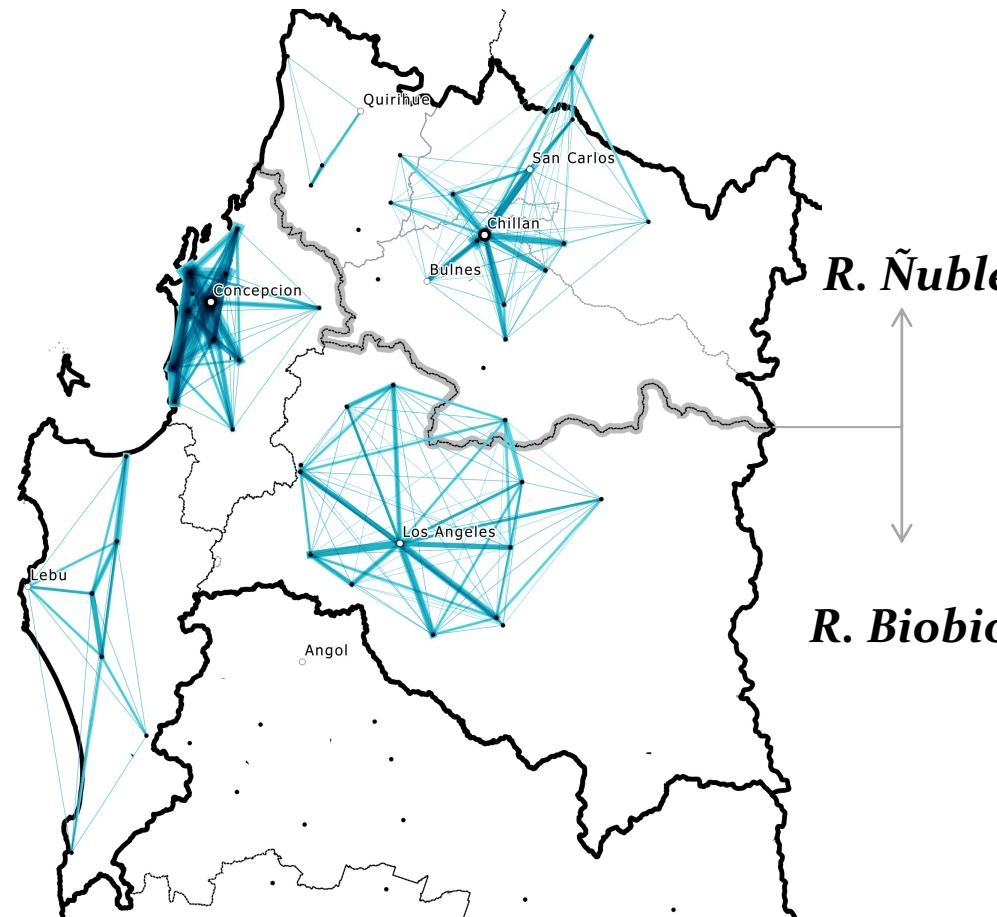
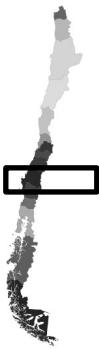
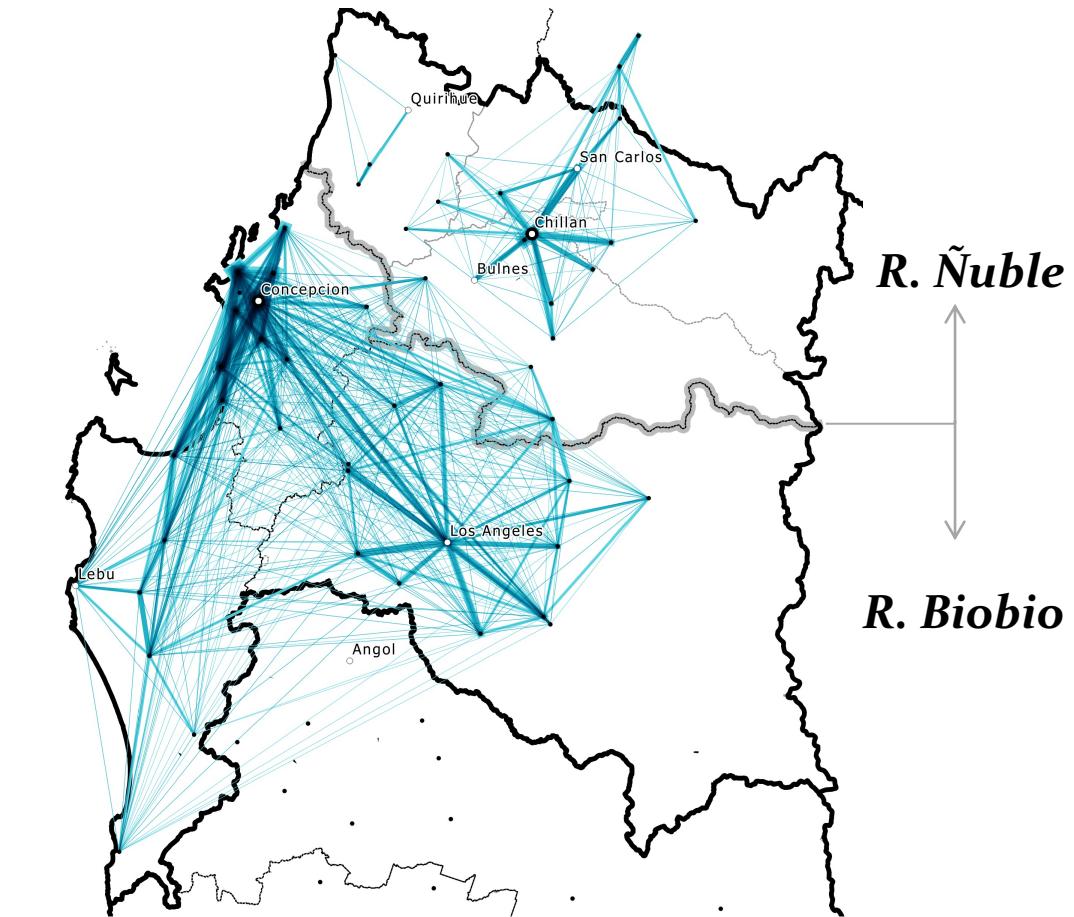
Macro-regions



Country

 $T \geq 26\%$ $T \geq 17\%$ $T \geq 15.5\%$ $T \geq 13.5\%$ $T \geq 10\%$ $T \geq 0.1\%$

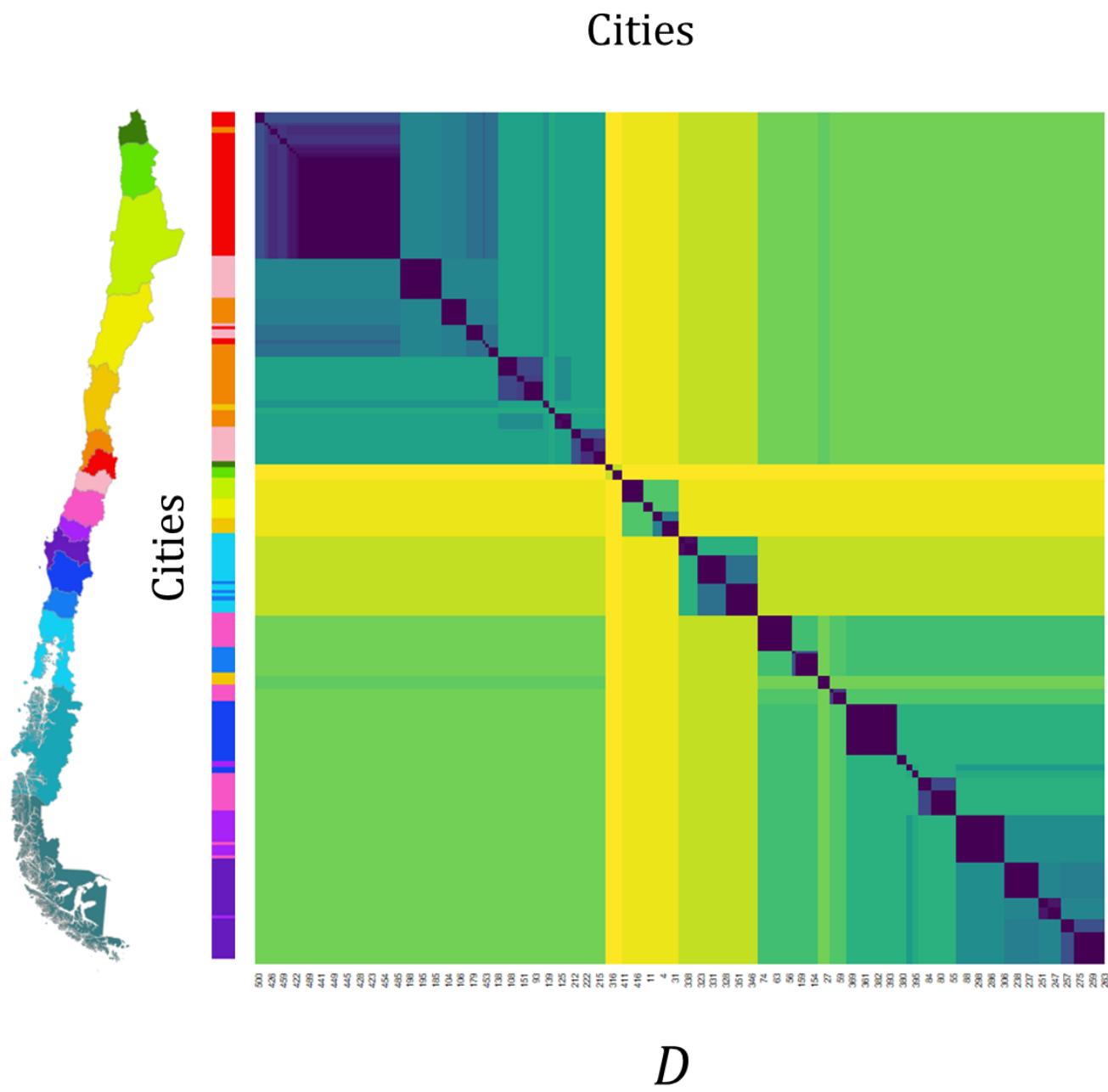
PERCOLATION-BASED HIERARCHICAL CLUSTERING

 $T \geq 26\%$  $T \geq 15.5\%$

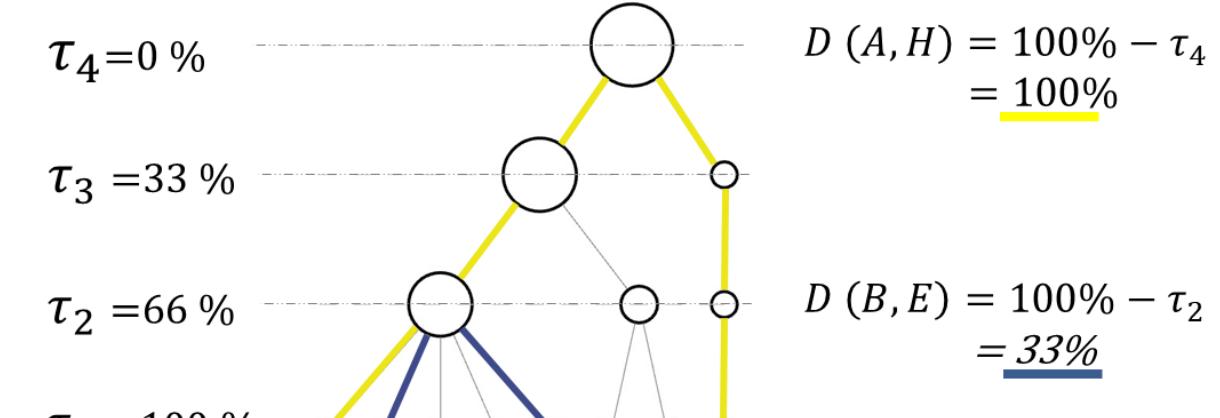
2. Distance and diversity

SCALAR DISTANCE

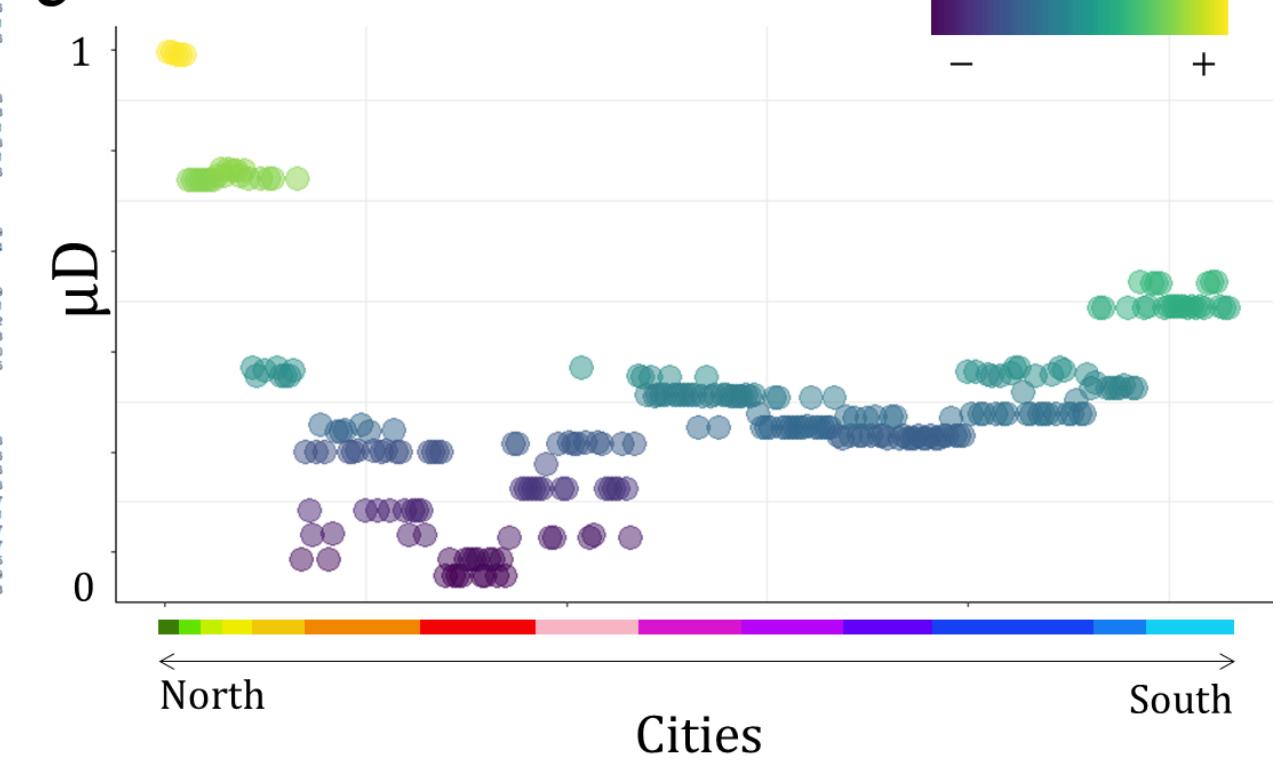
a



b



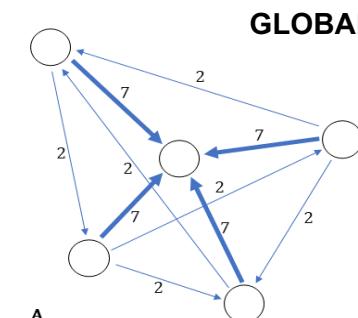
c



Network entropy

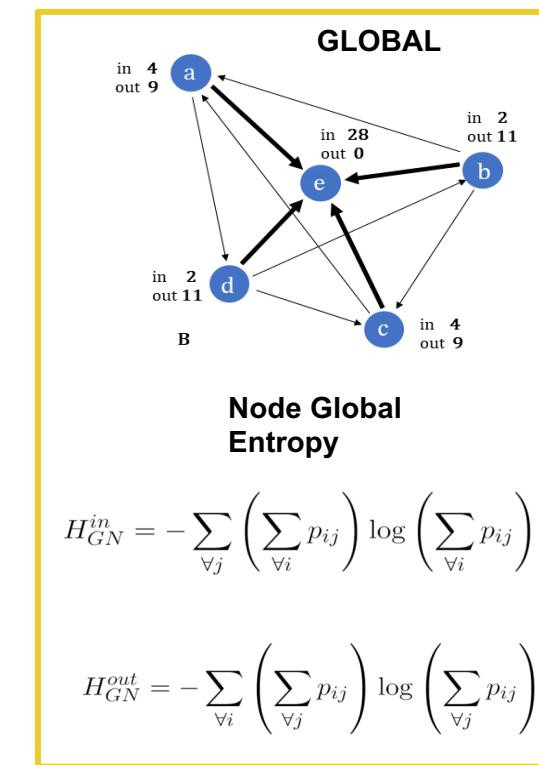
- Structural diversity of commuting networks
Structure of concentration and dispersion of flows
- Global and local entropy measures

Not affected by scalar and size change



Links Global Entropy

$$H_{GL} = - \sum_{\forall i} \sum_{\forall j} p_{ij} \log p_{ij}$$



$$H_{GN}^{in} = - \sum_{\forall j} \left(\sum_{\forall i} p_{ij} \right) \log \left(\sum_{\forall i} p_{ij} \right)$$

$$H_{GN}^{out} = - \sum_{\forall i} \left(\sum_{\forall j} p_{ij} \right) \log \left(\sum_{\forall j} p_{ij} \right)$$

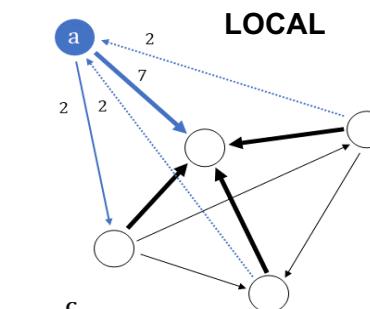
OPEN

scientific reports

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Uncovering structural diversity in commuting networks: global and local entropy

Valentina Marin[✉], Carlos Molinero & Elsa Arcaute



Node Local Entropy

$$H_L^{in} = - \sum_{\forall i} p_{(i|j)} \log p_{(i|j)} = - \sum_{\forall i} \frac{p_{ij}}{p_j} \log \frac{p_{ij}}{p_j}$$

$$H_L^{out} = - \sum_{\forall j} p_{j|i} \log p_{j|i} = - \sum_{\forall j} \frac{p_{ij}}{p_i} \log \frac{p_{ij}}{p_i}$$

STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY

Network entropy

- **GLOBAL IN-NODE ENTROPY**

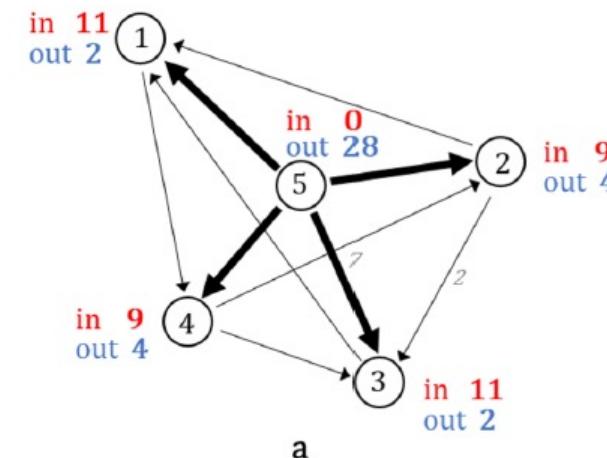
Concentration or dispersion of in-commuting flows among urban centres.

- Spatial distribution of labour supply and demand

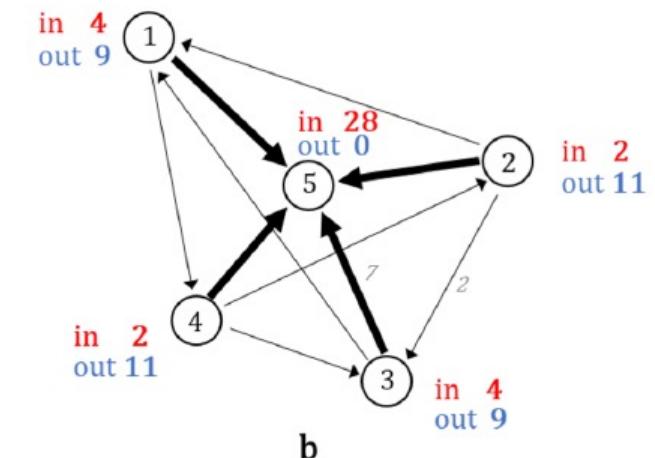
Explore whether the flows in a system tend to be concentrated in dominant areas, or evenly dispersed from many origins to many destinations.

Identifying monocentricity or polycentricity

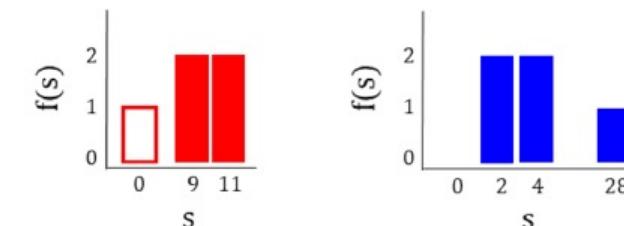
Possible functional dependencies due to disproportionate flow concentration



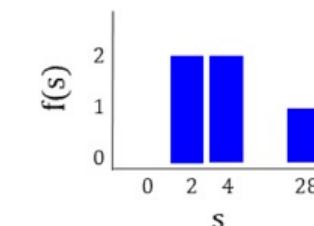
a



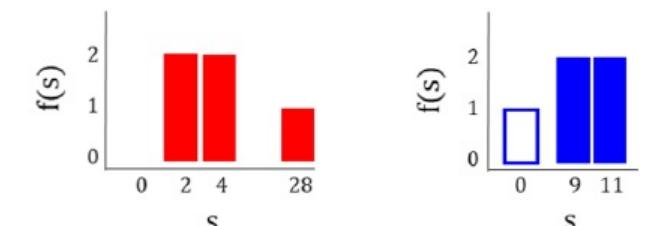
b



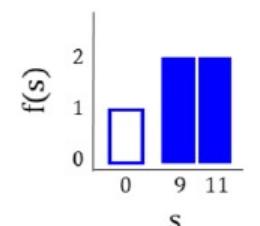
$$H_{GN}^{in}/H_{Tn} = 0.86$$



$$H_{GN}^{out}/H_{Tn} = 0.63$$



$$H_{GN}^{in}/H_{Tn} = 0.63$$



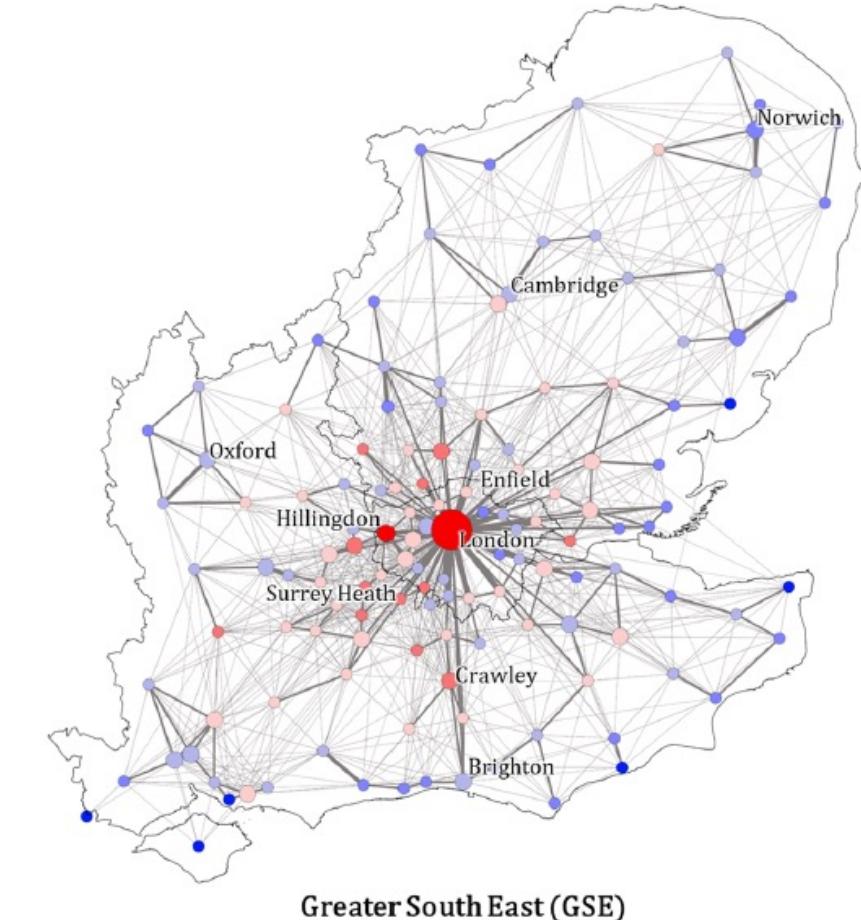
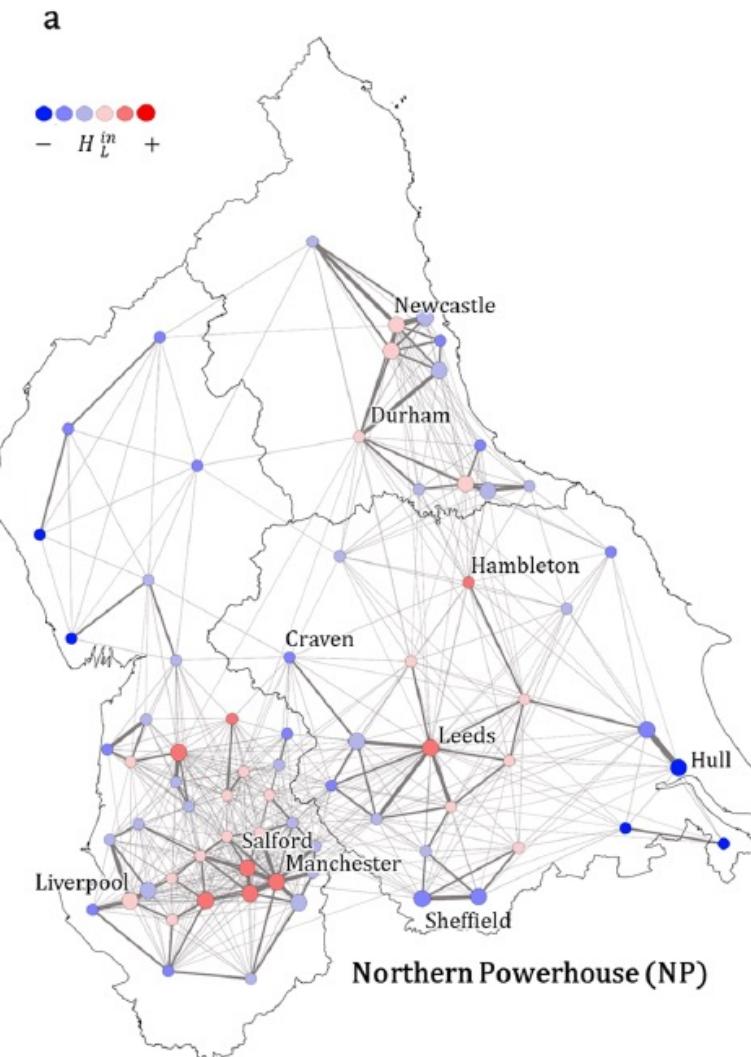
$$H_{GN}^{out}/H_{Tn} = 0.86$$

STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY

Network entropy

- **GLOBAL IN-NODE ENTROPY**

$$H_{GN}^{in} = - \sum_{\forall j} \left(\sum_{\forall i} p_{ij} \right) \log \left(\sum_{\forall i} p_{ij} \right)$$



$$H_{Global}^{in} = 0.910$$

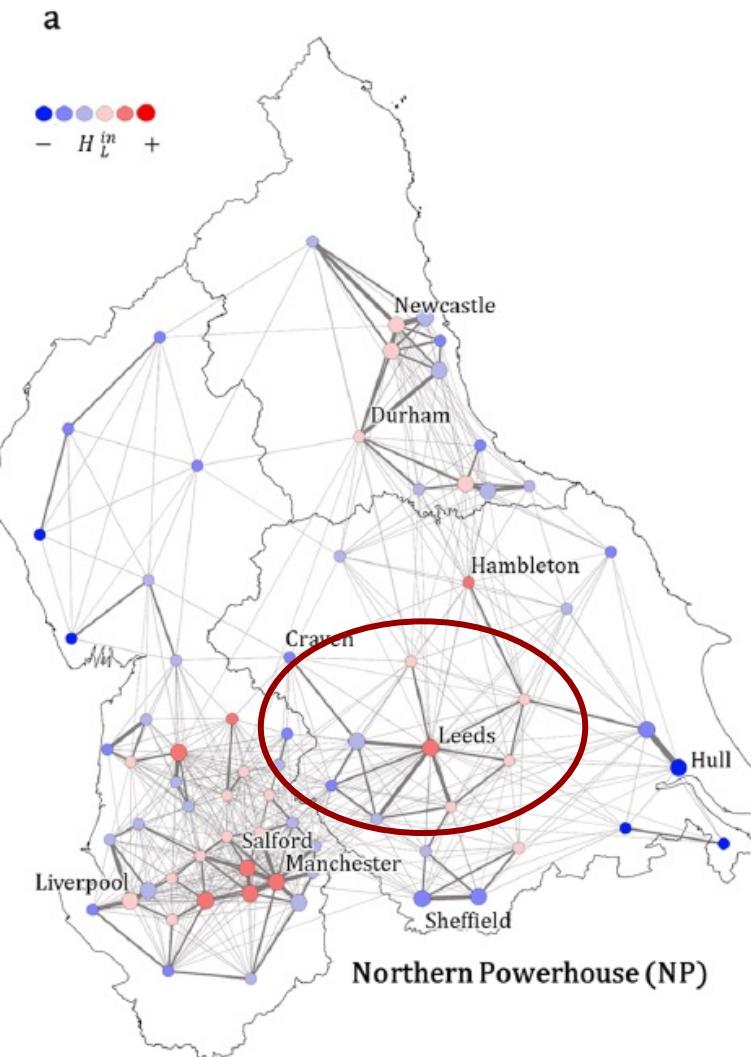
$$H_{Global}^{in} = 0.798$$

STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY

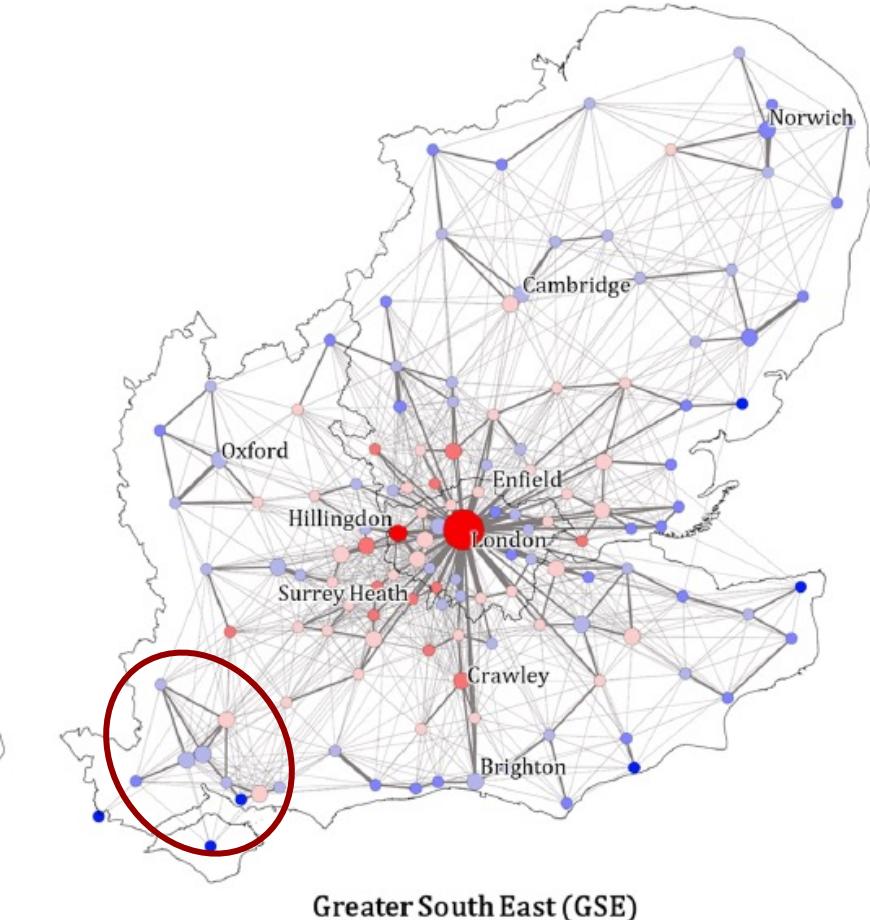
Network entropy

- **GLOBAL IN-NODE ENTROPY**

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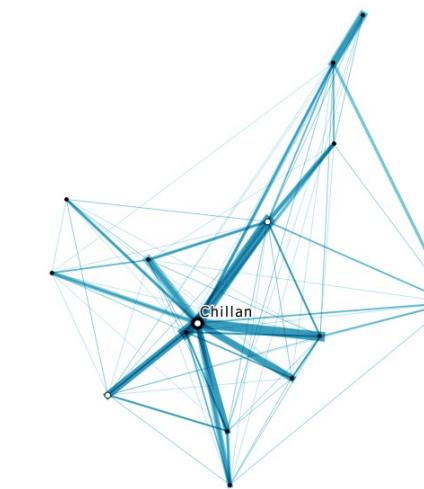
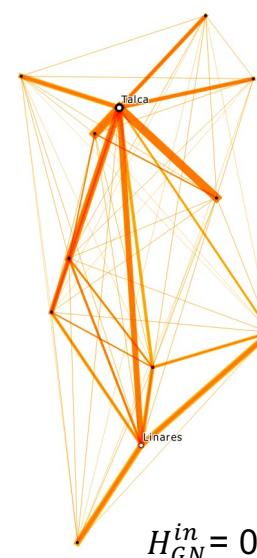
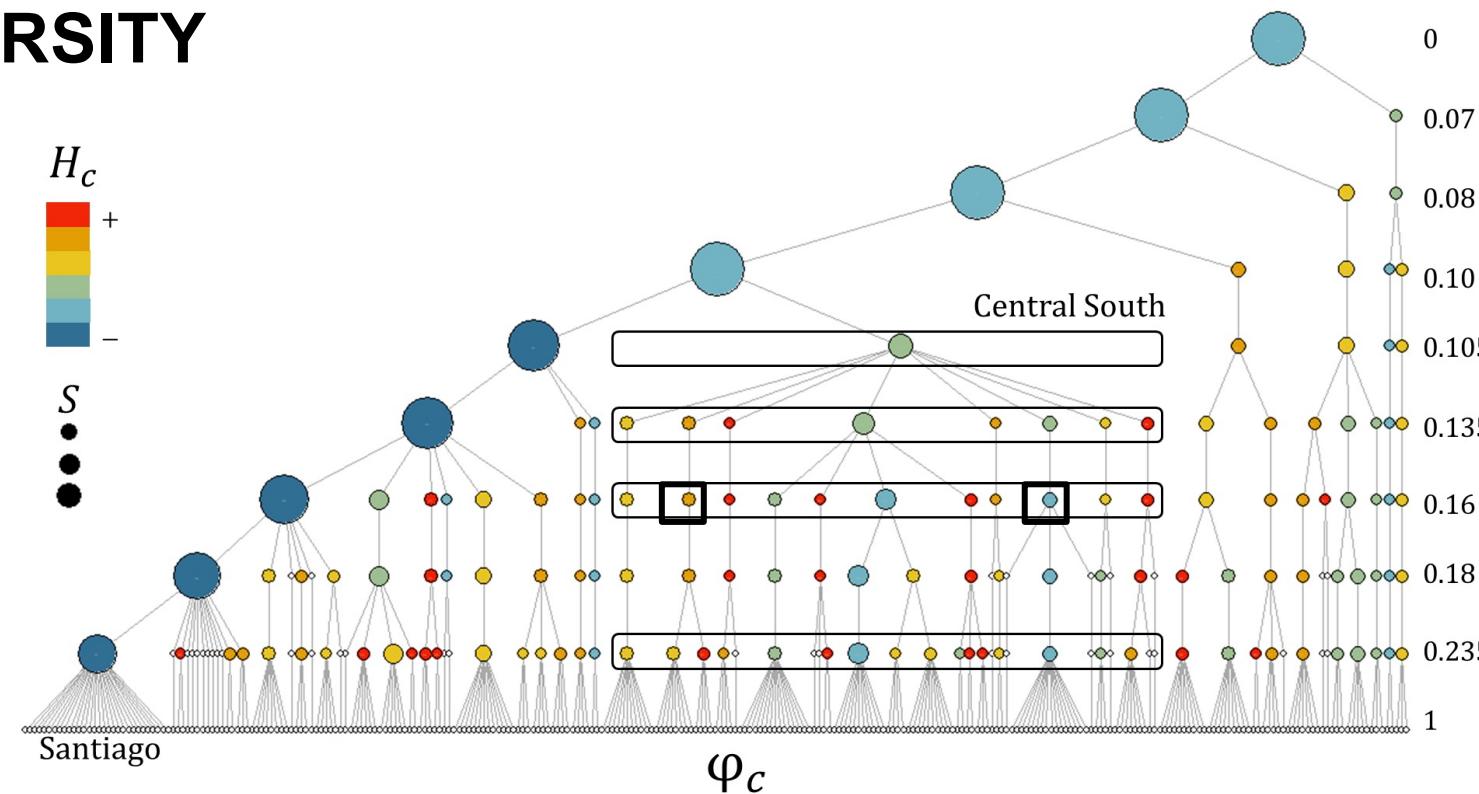


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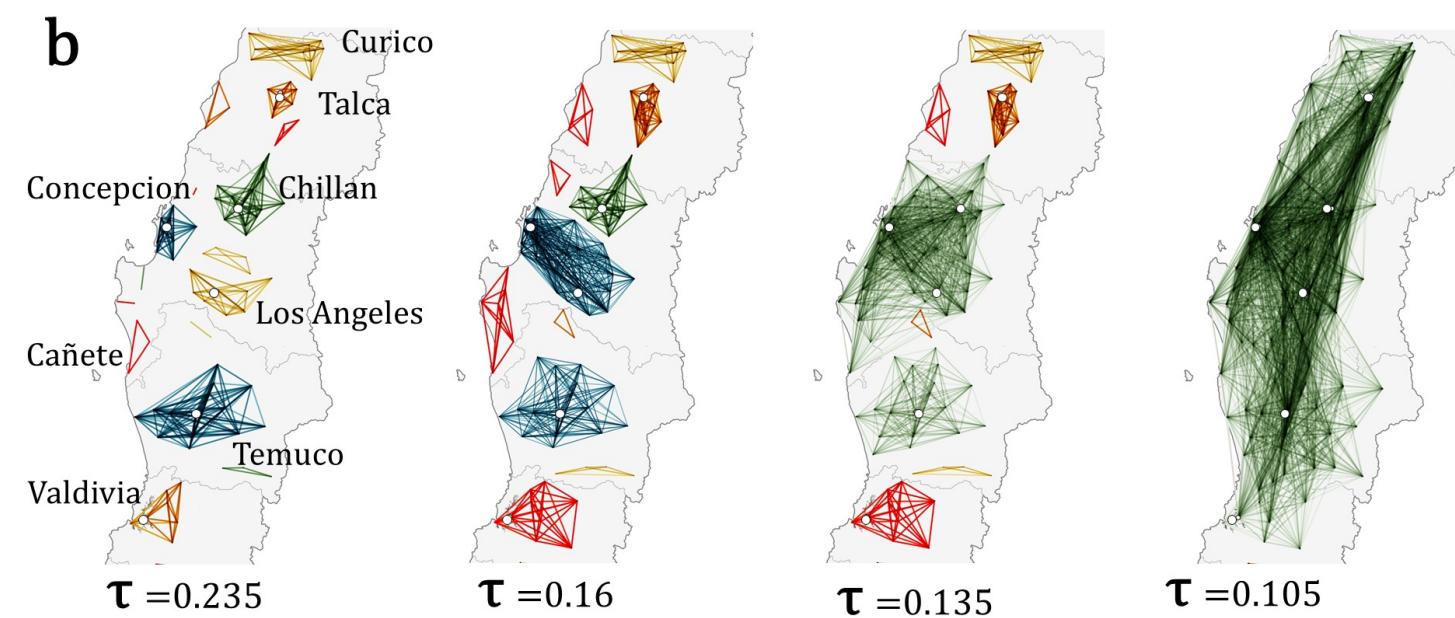
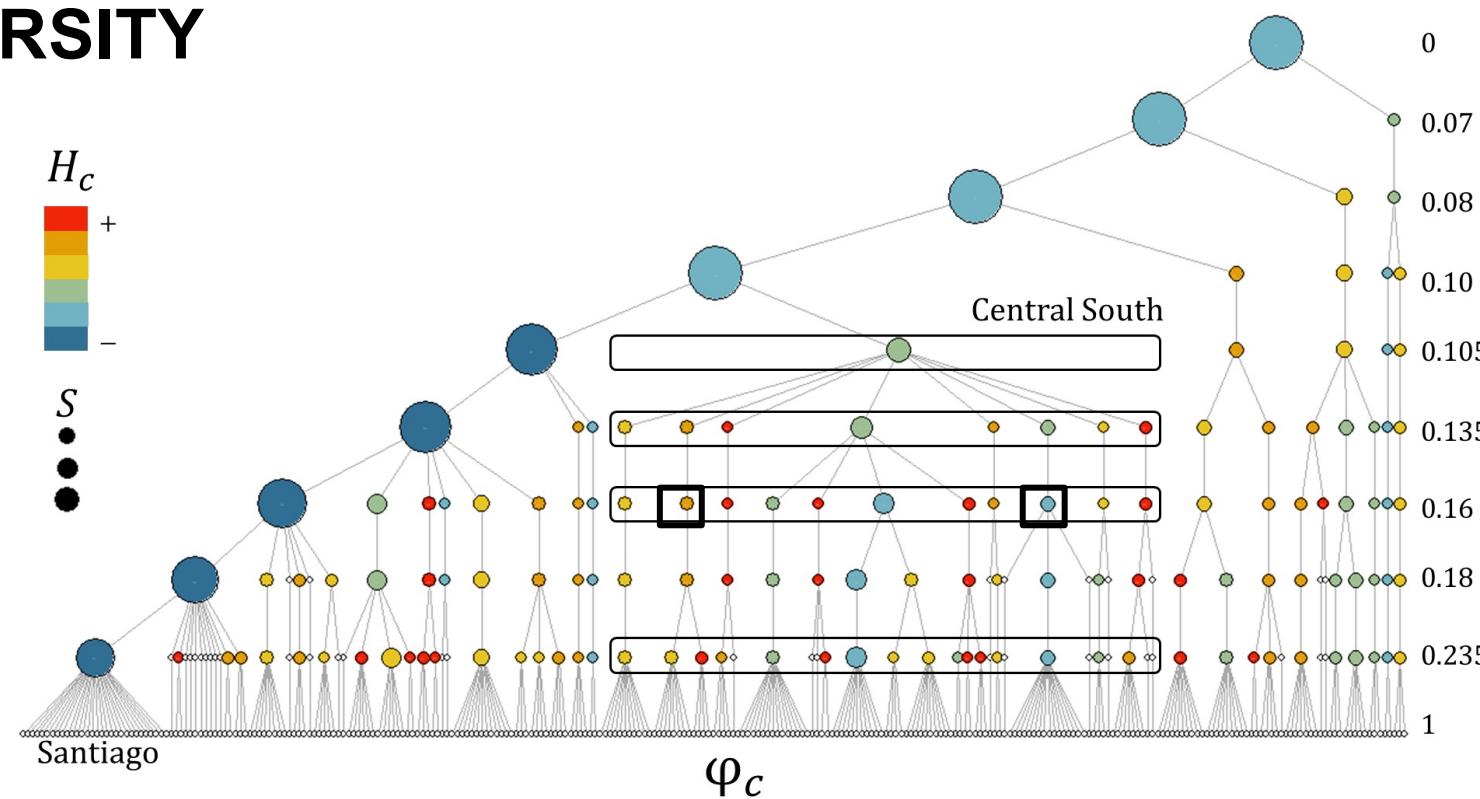


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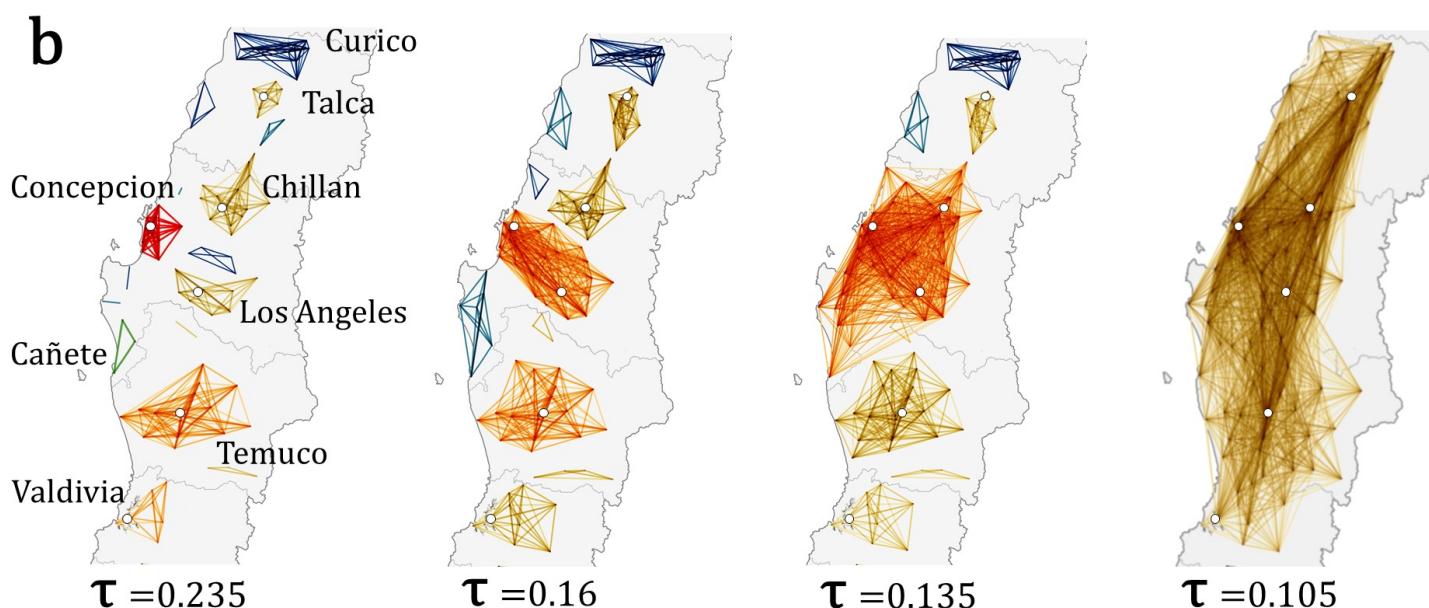
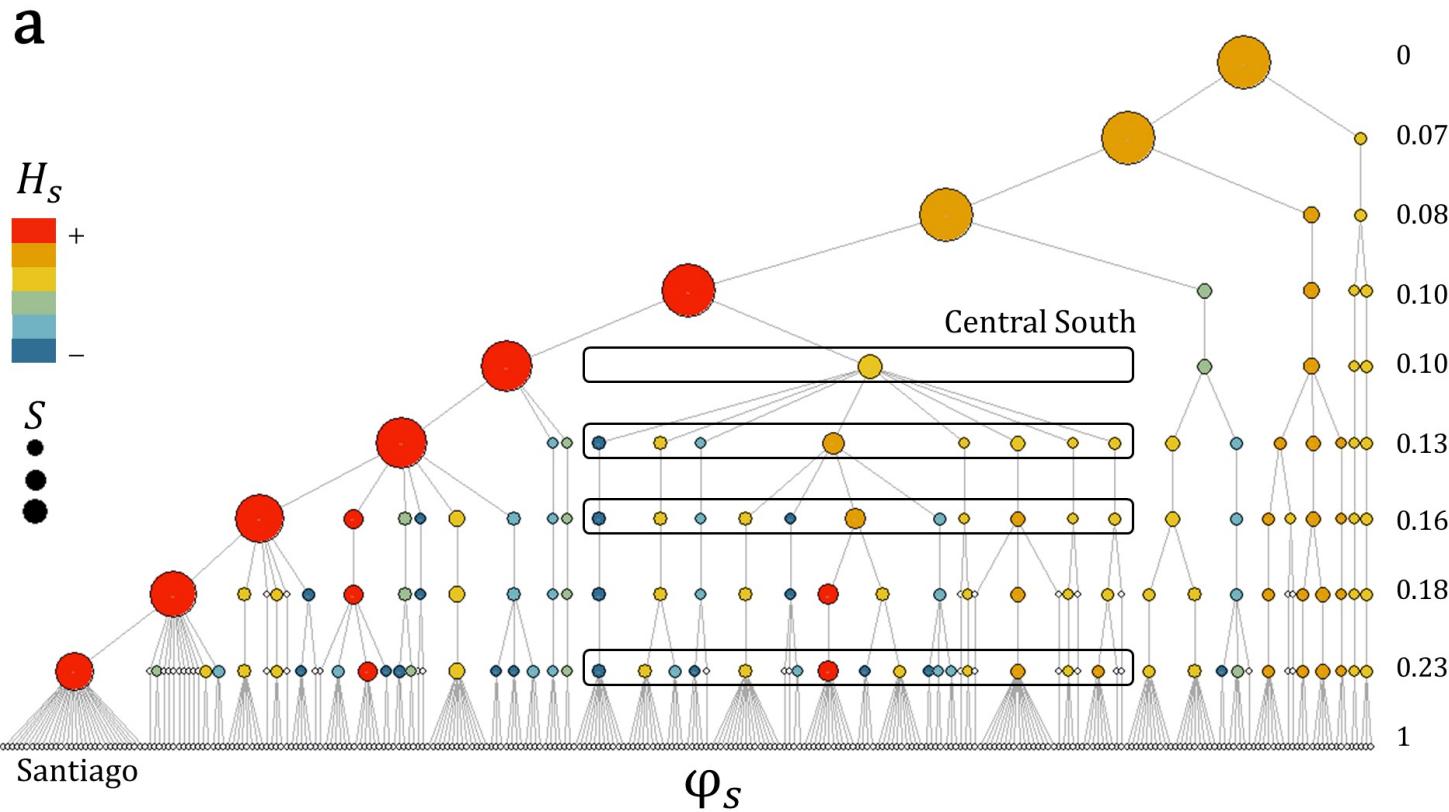
STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY



STRUCTURAL DIVERSITY

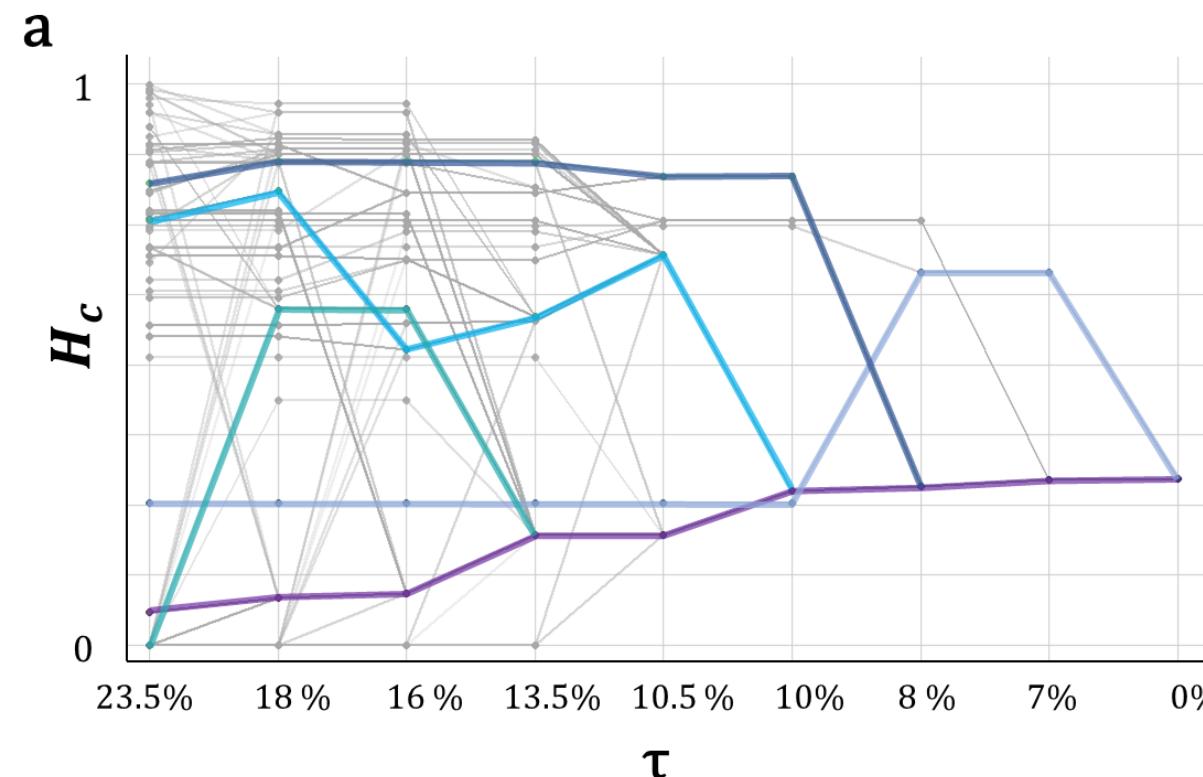


SKILLS DIVERSITY

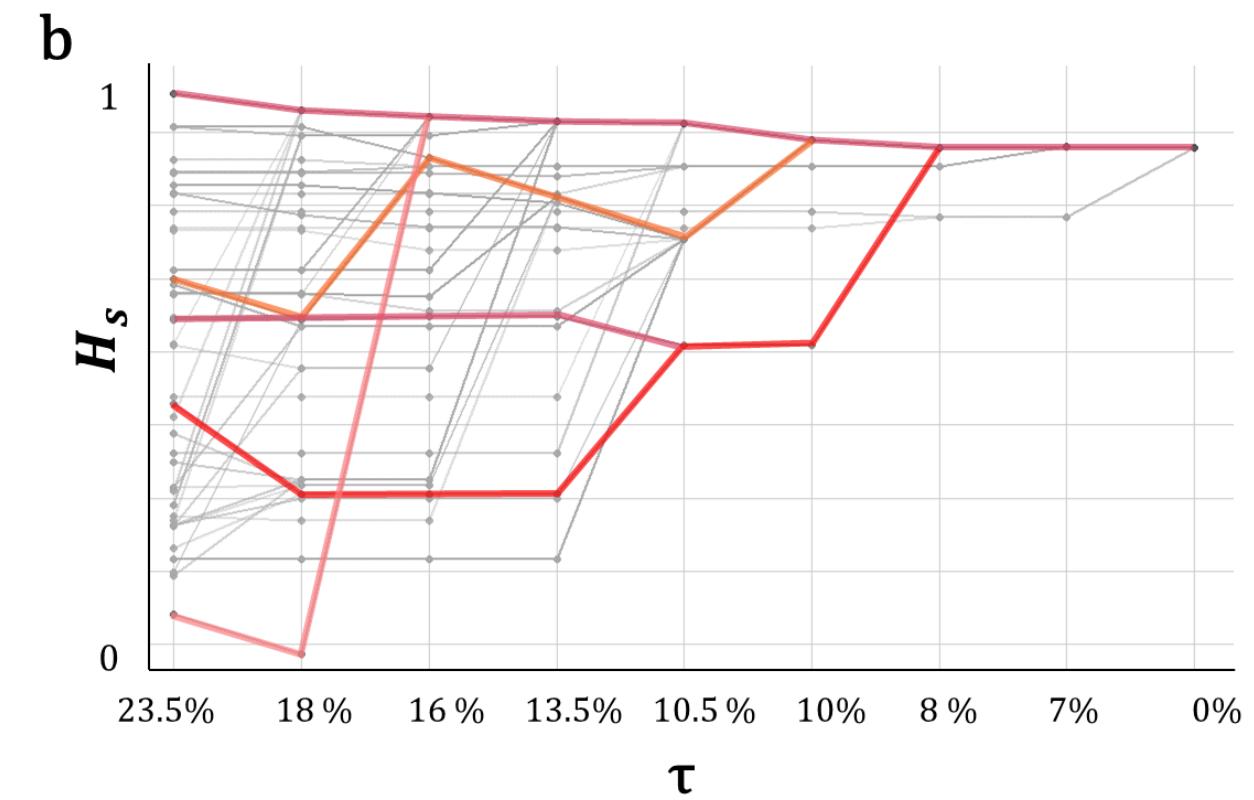


SCALAR VARIATION

Structural diversity



Skills diversity



3. Classification of cities

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

- **Structural diversity**

Global Node In-commuting entropy across scales

- **Commuters' diversity**

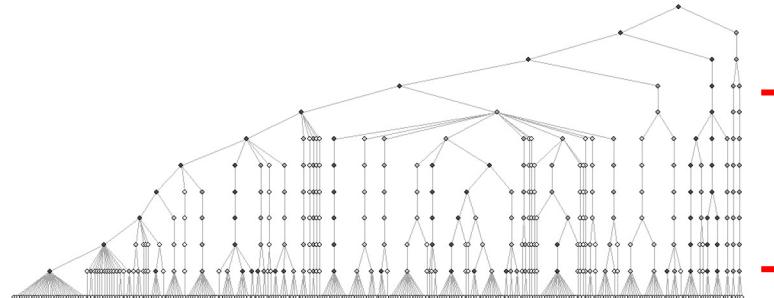
Skill Levels diversity across scales

PCA across scales

→ 2 principal components account for 67% of total variance

K-means clustering of PCA results

→ Obtain 5 city clusters



T 26% - 14.5%

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

- **Structural diversity**

Global Node In-commuting entropy across scales

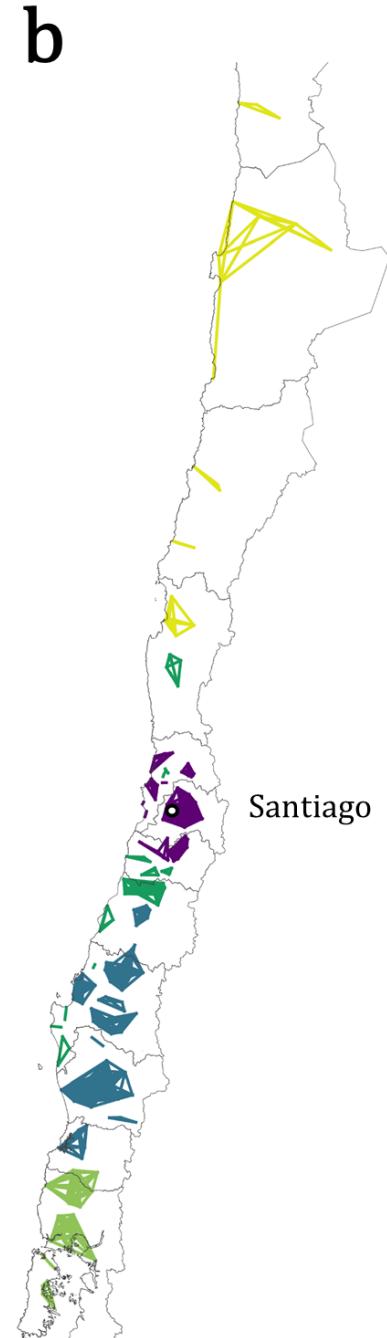
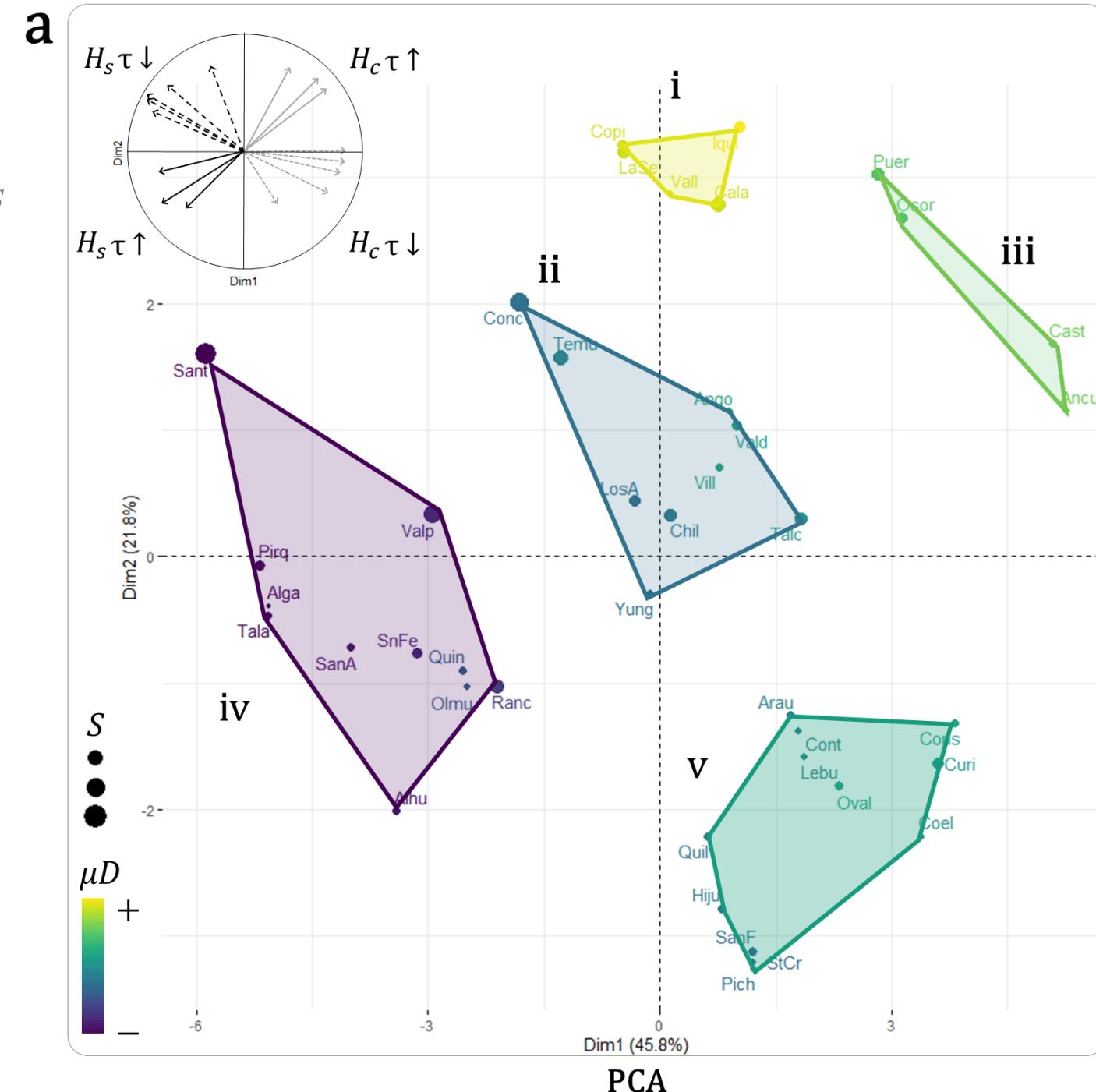
- **Commuters' diversity**

Skill Levels diversity across scales

Results:

→ local and global scales of commuting diversity tend to be negatively correlated with local and global scales of skills diversity.

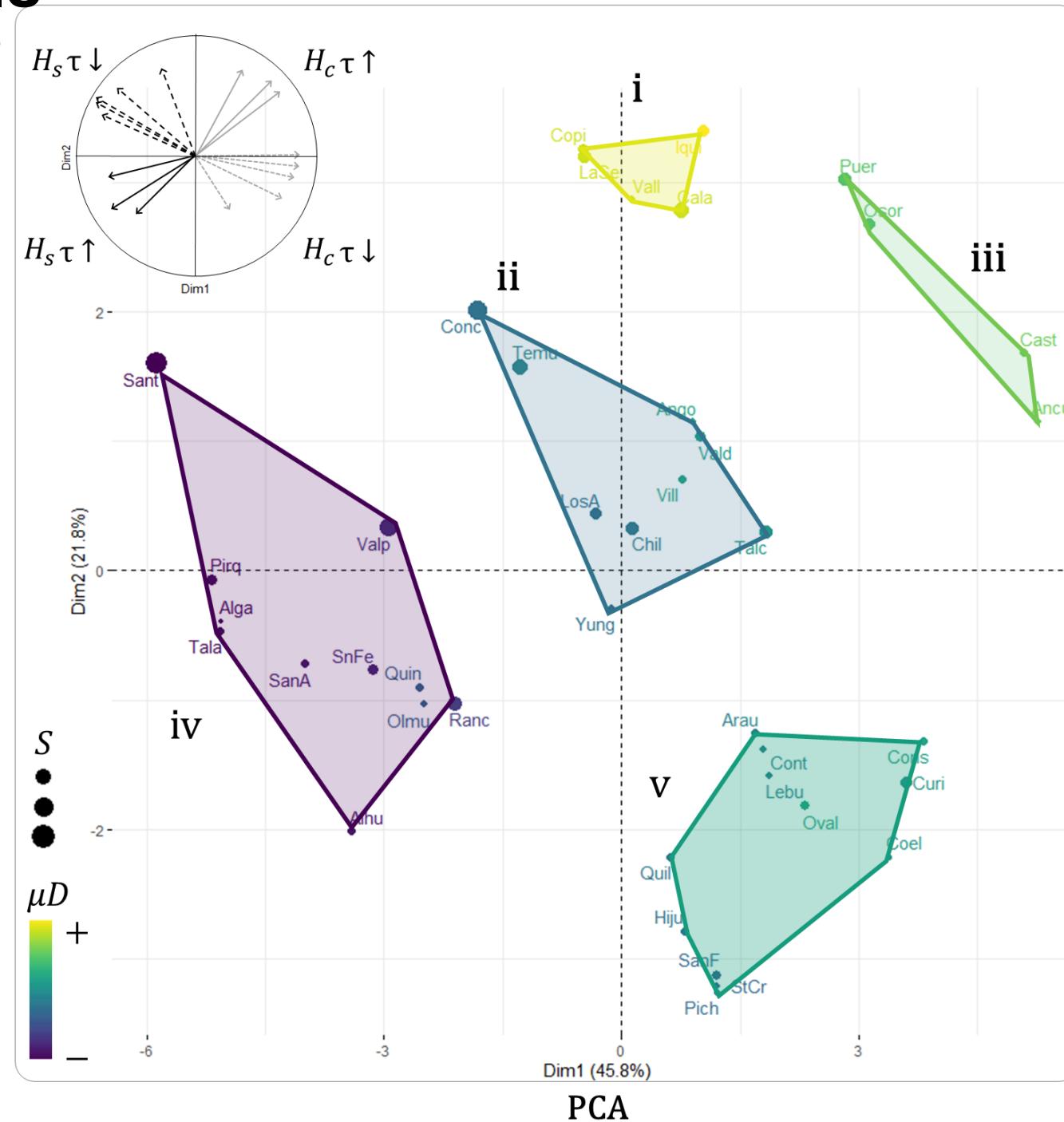
→ cities with high commuting diversity tend to have lower levels of skills diversity, and vice versa.



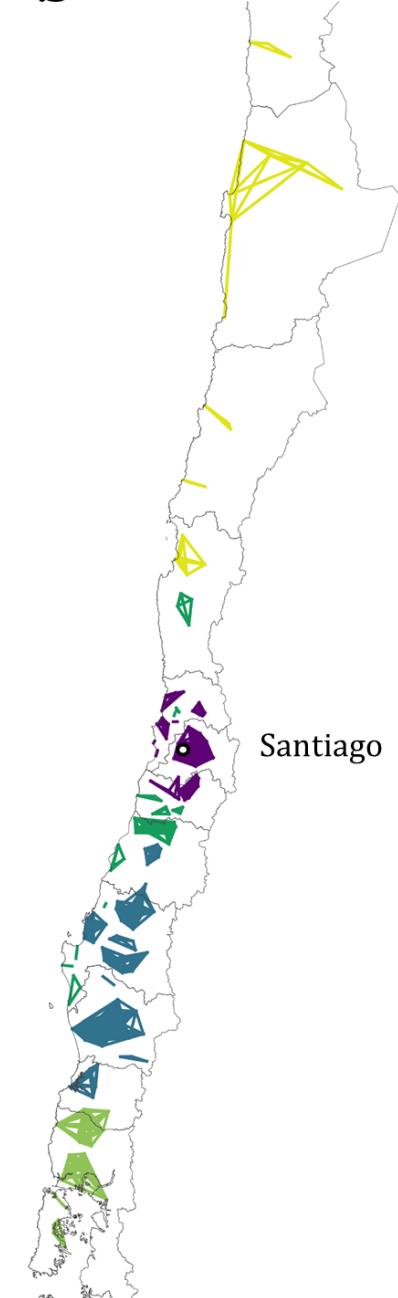
$\tau = 0.235$

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

a



b



$$\tau = 0.235$$

iii "Southern specialised centres":

- Polycentric city systems
- low skill diversity across scales
- small to medium-sized cities characterised by highly specialised economies
- active local exchange, but limited interdependence with larger systems as shown by high hierarchical distances at the national level.

iv "Metropolitan urban systems":

- Highly monocentric structures that persist at larger scales due to the dominance of Santiago and Valparaiso throughout the country.
- smaller cities in the system have limited local skill diversity, they gain exposure to greater diversity as they merge with larger cities at the first thresholds.

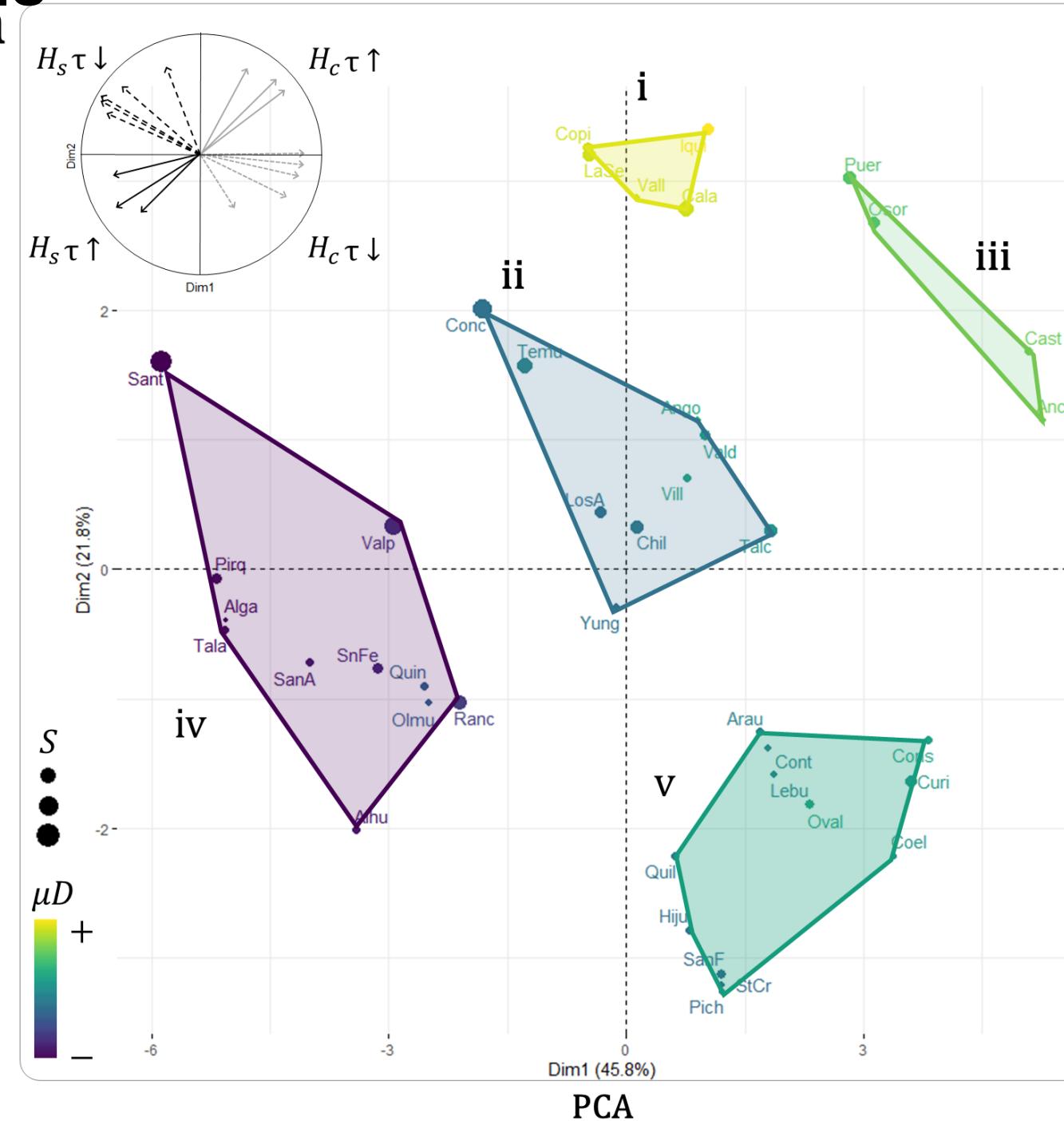
MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

a

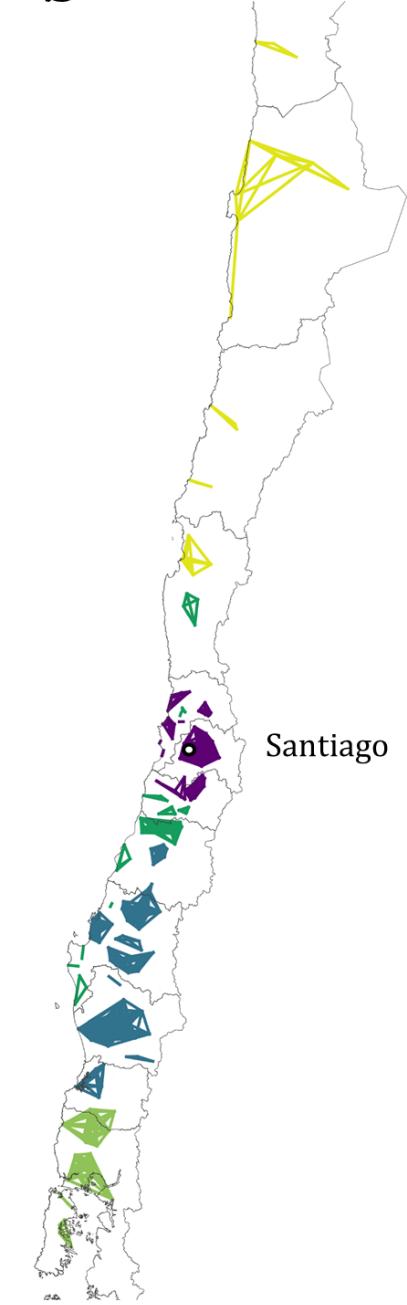
i "Northern urban hubs": Cities of medium to large size, exhibit monocentric structures and high skill diversity at a local scale. At larger scales, they form more polycentric regions with limited intercity exchange.

ii "Regional cities": Cities with structures that tend to be monocentric at smaller scales but more polycentric at larger scales.

v "In-between cities": Exhibit limited skill diversity at the local level and are dominated by a single economic sector. Despite being part of a local polycentric system, they are also part of larger monocentric regions, with dominant urban centres, which means they have exposure to a broader range of skills beyond their local area.



b



$$\tau = 0.235$$

Conclusions

- Cities are complex systems that have non-linear relationships, feedback loops, and path dependencies.
- Connectivity between individuals and settlements leave footprints in the form of spatial patterns that can be traced back. All interactions are heterogeneous.
- Heterogeneity gives rise to a hierarchical organisation of the urban system.
- The street network is an excellent proxy for urbanisation.
- Dependencies can also be recovered from the flows of the system.
- Understanding the relationship between different scales is essential for interventions, that need to be introduced at the right scale for effectiveness



Michael Batty
Founder of CASA



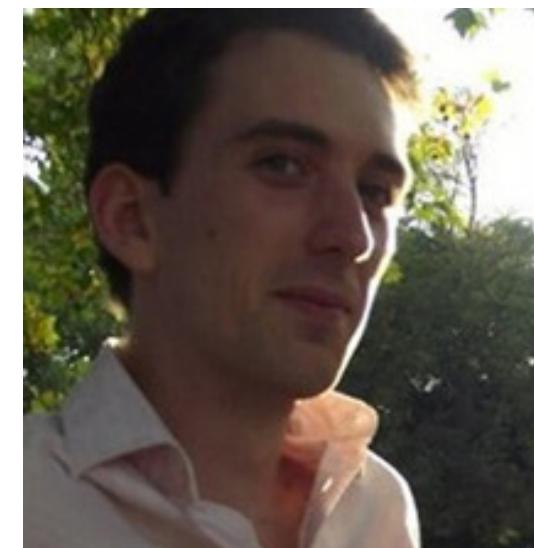
Erez Hatna
Geographer and
modeller



Carlos Molinero
Urban Networks



Roberto Murcio
Mathematician



Thomas Russell, when
Master student at CASA



Valentina Marin
While PhD
Architect

Thank you!