



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority

The Need for Strategic Local Area Planning and Development

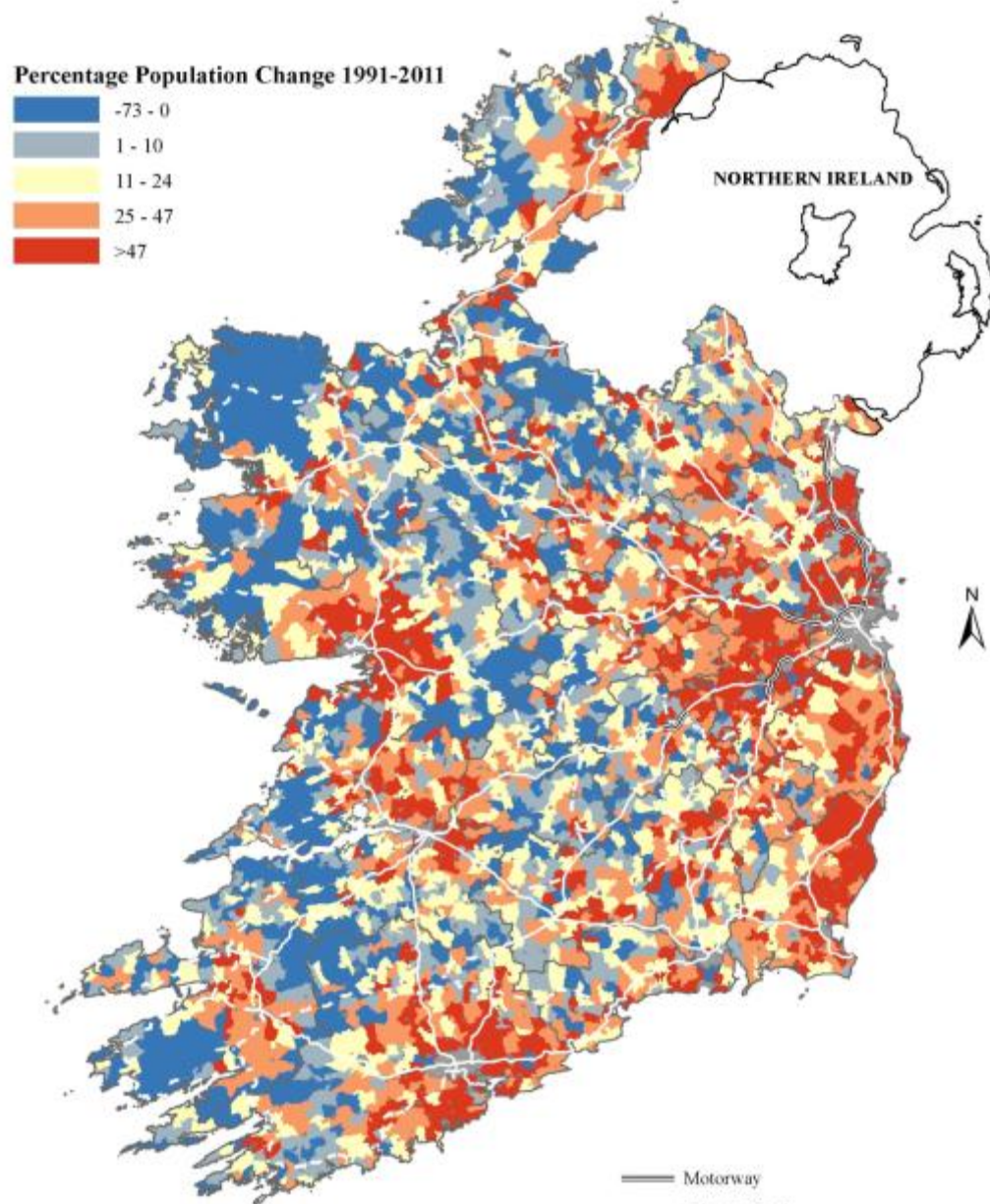
David Meredith

Rural Ireland: Diverse, Integrated and Divergent

- Rural Ireland is highly diverse (socially, culturally and economically).
- Rural economies (and communities) are increasingly integrated with other places, some near, some far. In general, rural areas are increasingly integrated with rural towns and, in some places, the cities.
- Rural Ireland is divergent – we need to talk about rural Ireland’s – and understand that different types of rural areas face different challenges.
- Together, these features present very complex challenges in designing and delivering operational programmes.
 - Critical that we identify the appropriate geographic scale for intervention.
 - Critical that community, local, regional and national (sector) development strategies align.
 - Critical that we recognise that not all places are at the same point in terms of their development (and perhaps their potential to develop)

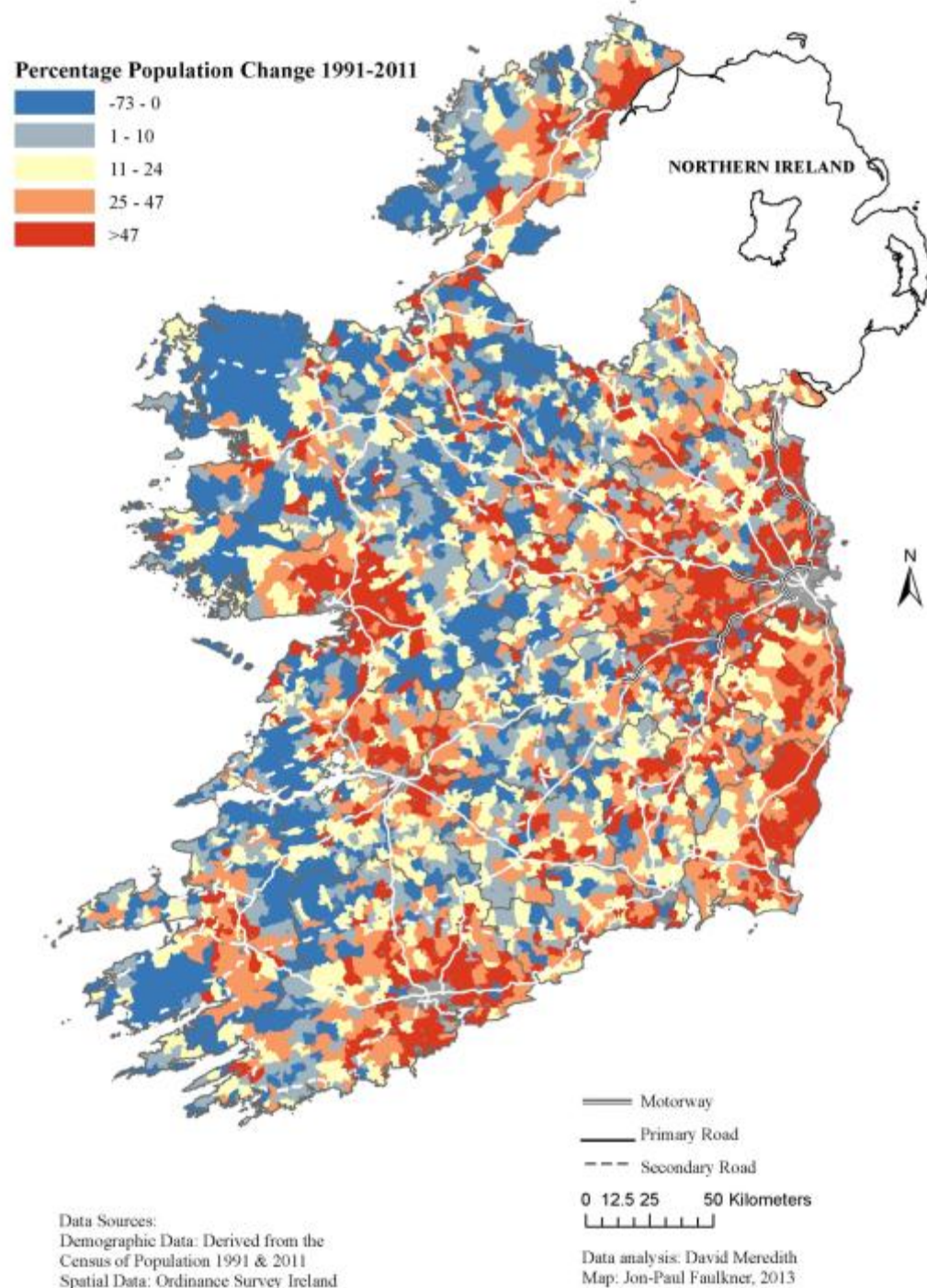
Overview: A tale of two rural Ireland's (Part 1)

- Long running concentration process at work
 - Draw people and some types of economic activity out of more remote or less accessible rural areas into urban areas *initially*. This is only part of the story.
- The past 20 years have seen flows of people and households out of the cities and many towns into the surrounding countryside, a process commonly referred to as counter-urbanisation but in Ireland it would be more appropriate to call it ex-urbanisation.
- The impacts of these processes mean that accessible rural places are increasingly areas or **'zones of growth'**.



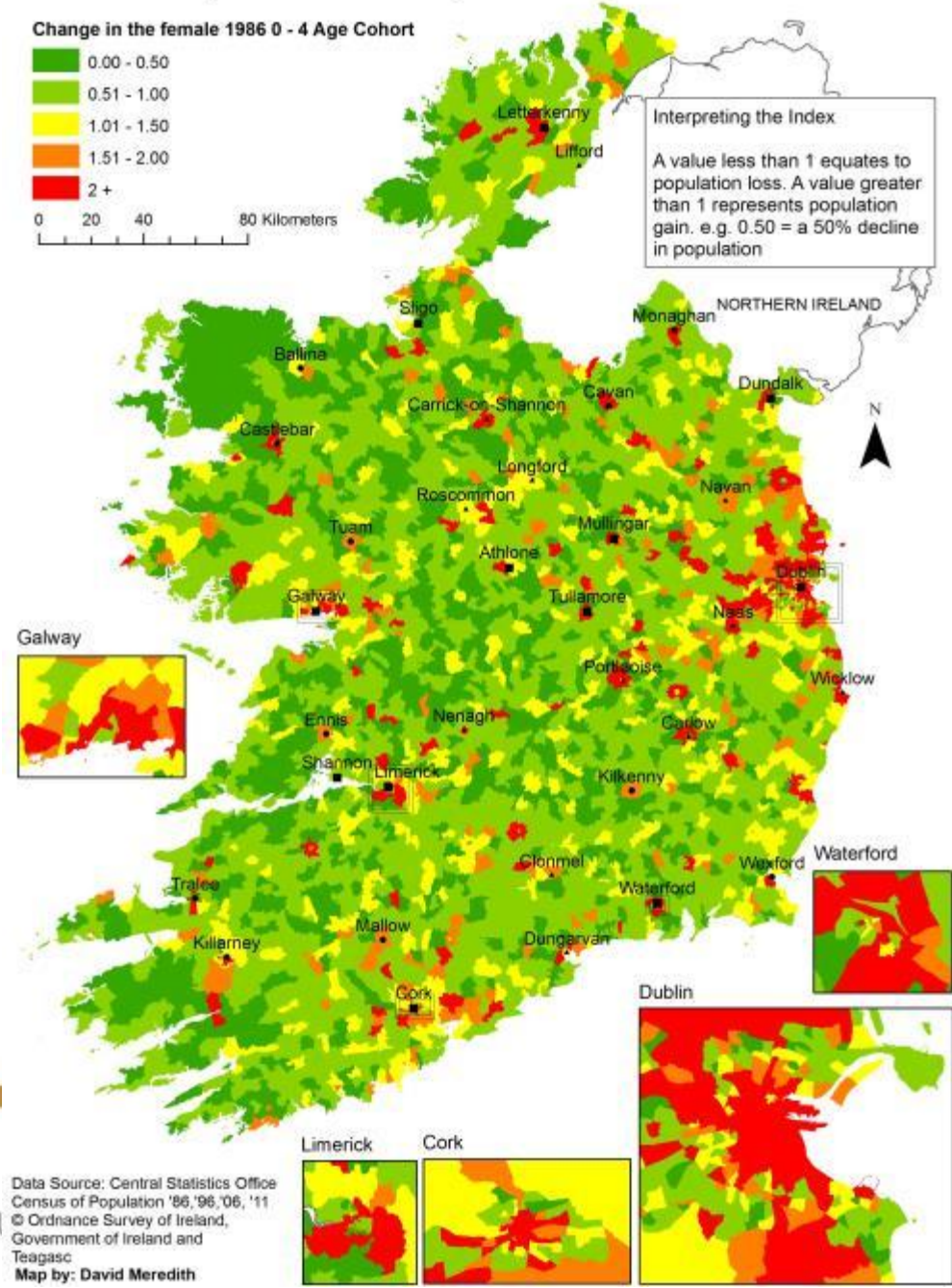
Overview: A tale of two rural Ireland's (Part 2)

- Less accessible and remote rural areas have not fared as well as accessible areas.
- Decline in traditional industries combined with a general inability to retain or attract sufficient population has denuded the critical social and economic capacity of these places, particularly through the process of youth migration.
 - In some places the denuding of human capacity has resulted in a limited capacity to act on the part of locals.
- In ability to act has left these areas with relatively weak industrial structures, exposed to consolidation of various economic sectors, e.g. farming and food processing, high levels of persistent unemployment and emigration.



Migration: Not just emigration

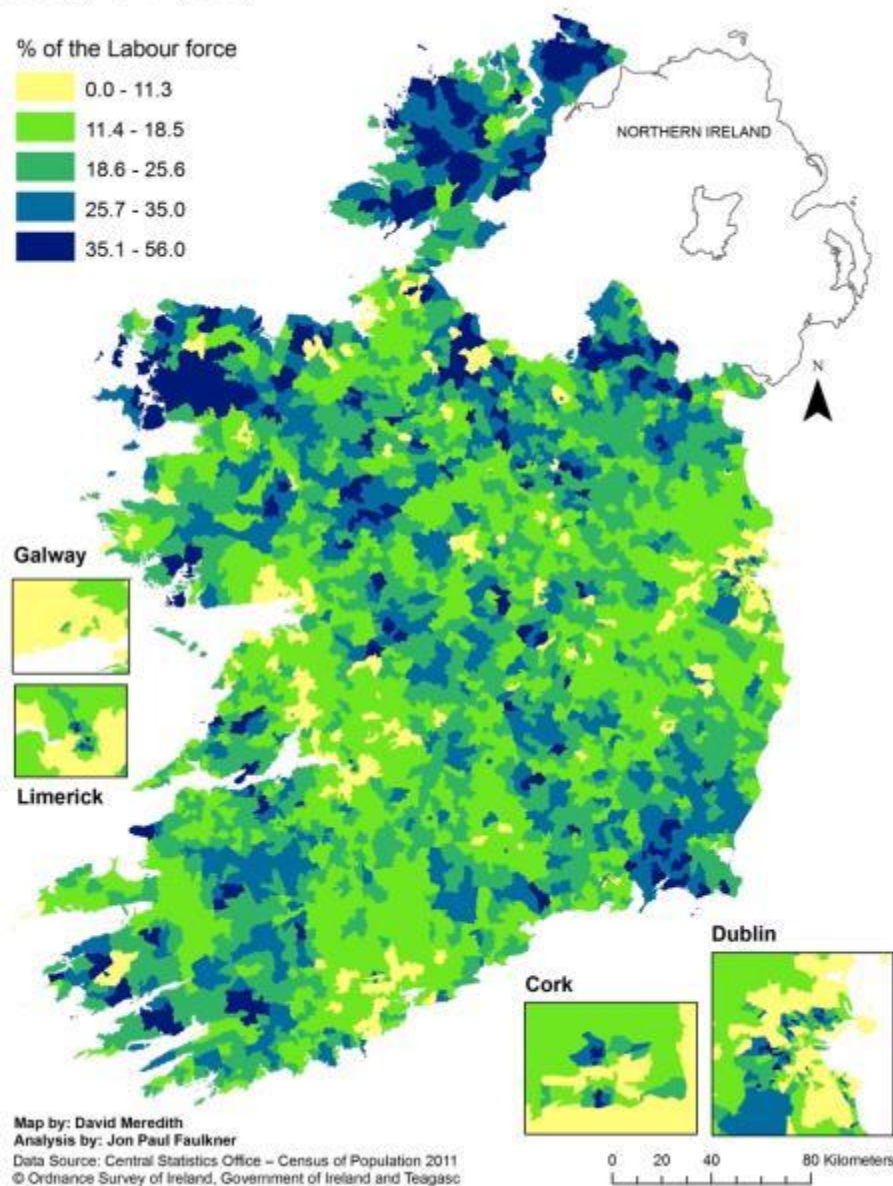
Index of Population Change 1986 - 2011



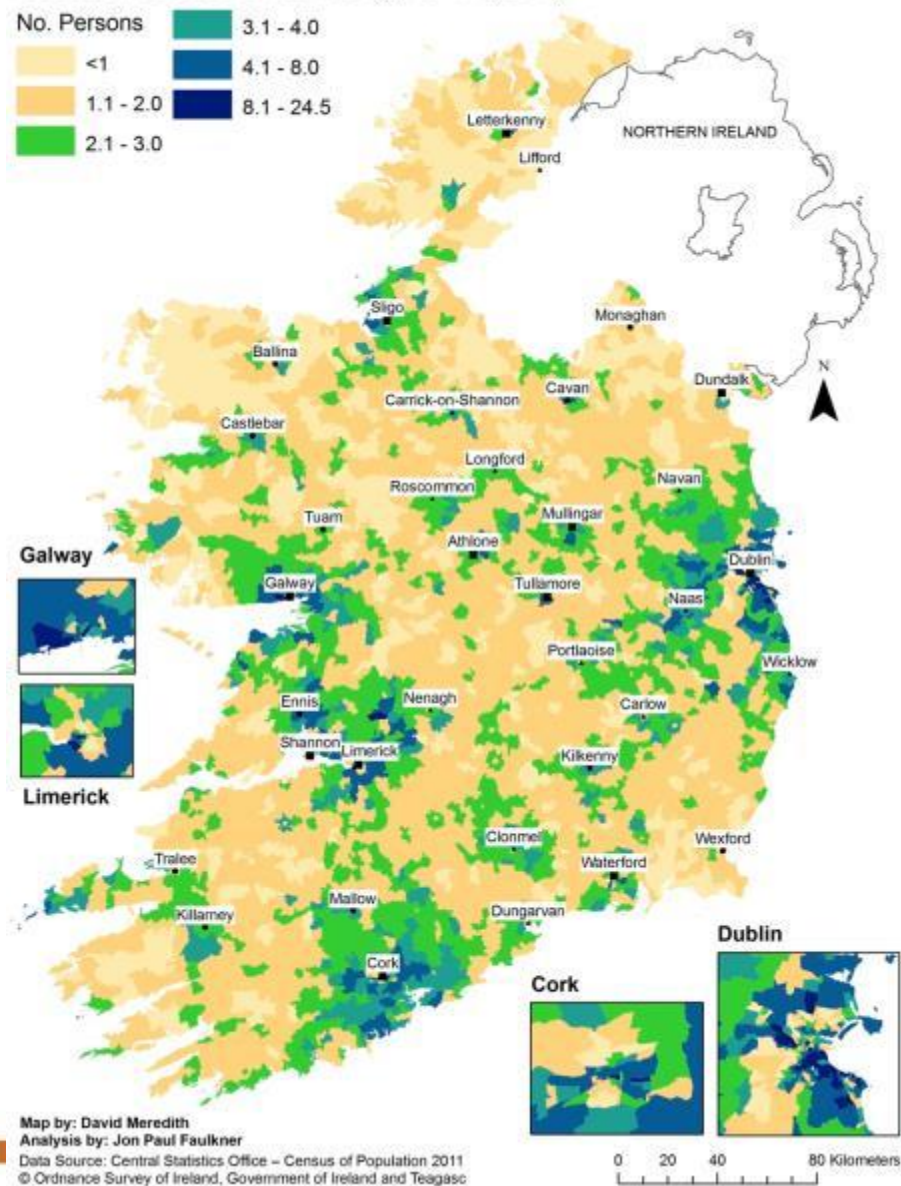
The Irish Agricultural

Data Source: Central Statistics Office
Census of Population '96, '06, '11
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Teagasc
Map by: David Meredith

Percentage of the labour force whos education ceased before the age of 17 (2011)

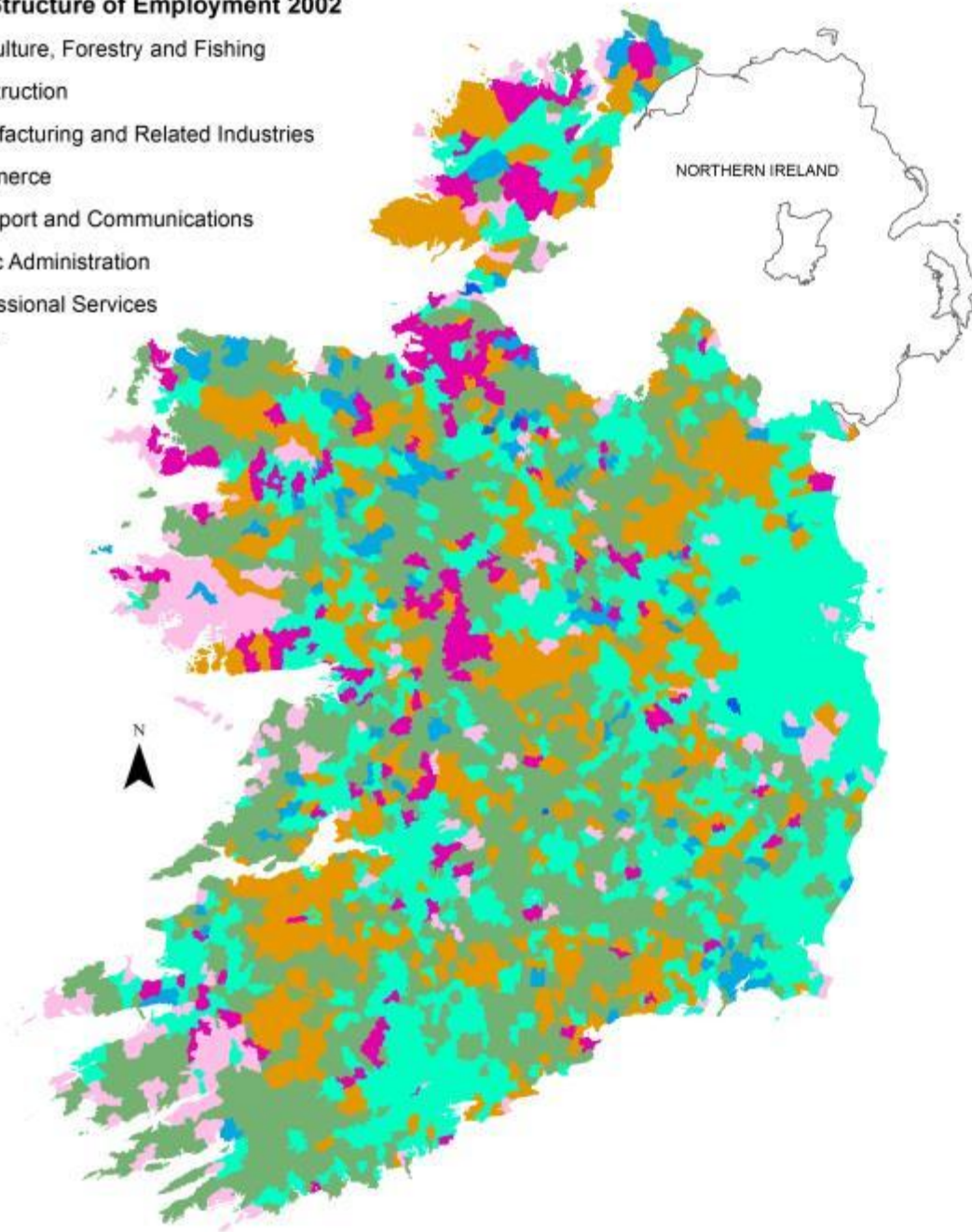


Ratio of population with a post secondary qualification to those whos education ceased before the age of 17 (2011)

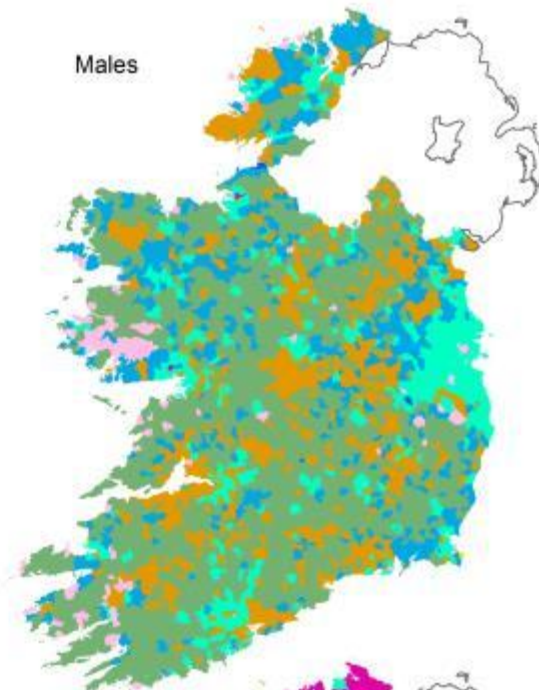


Industrial Structure of Employment 2002

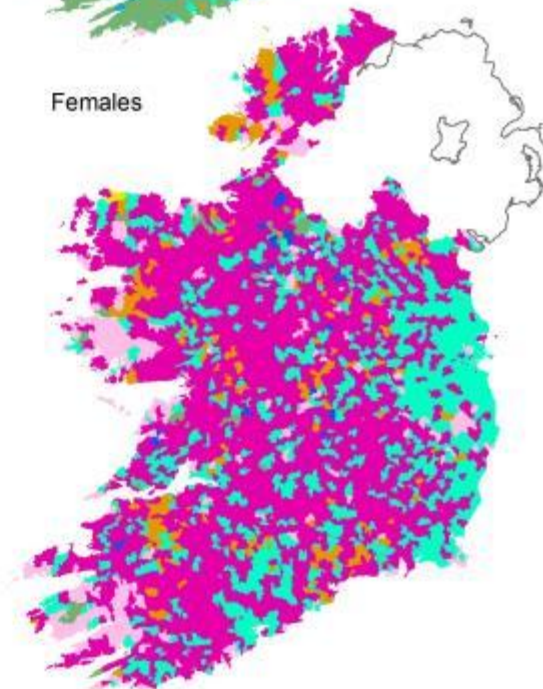
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Construction
- Manufacturing and Related Industries
- Commerce
- Transport and Communications
- Public Administration
- Professional Services
- Other



Males



Females



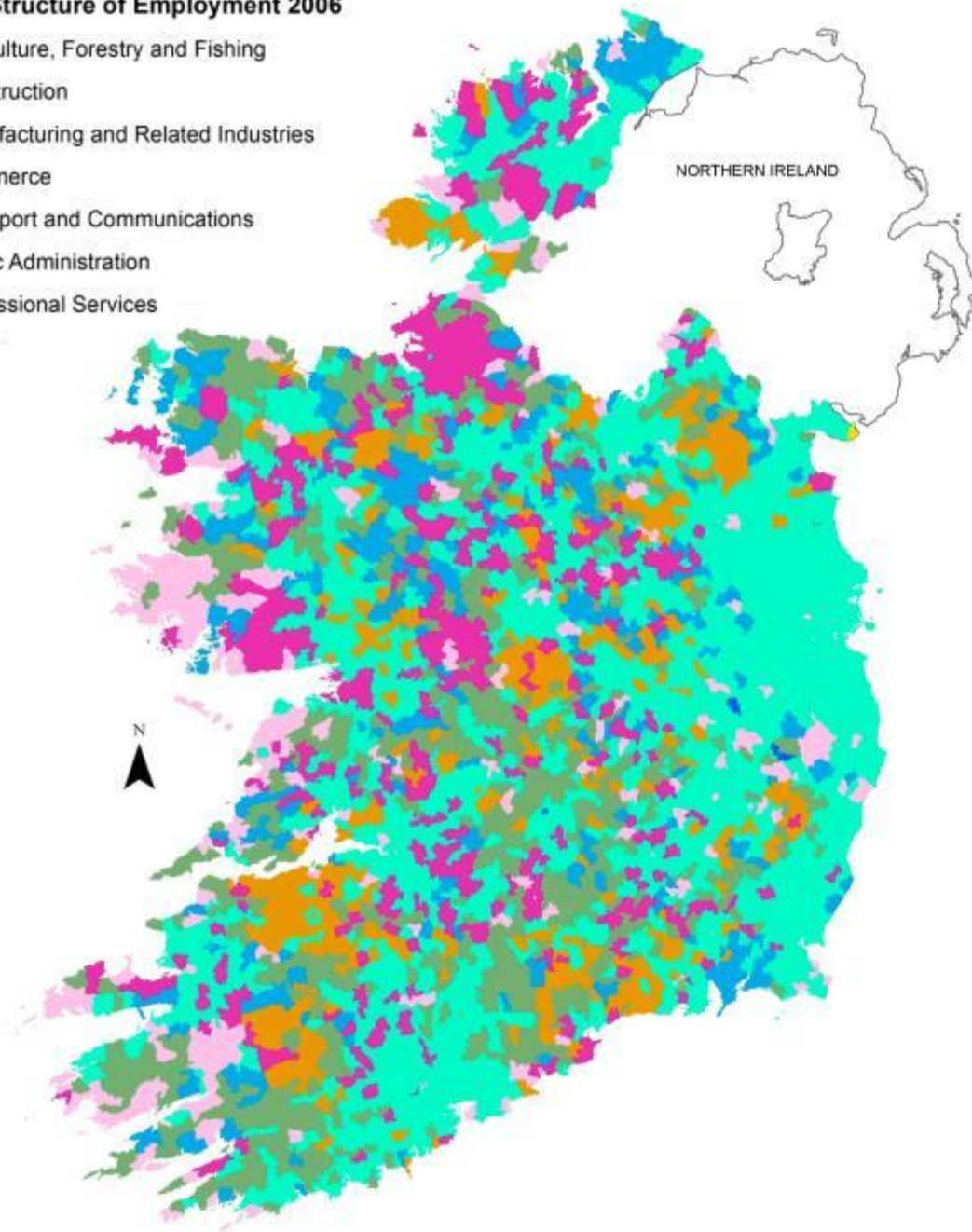
Map by: David Meredith

Data Source: Central Statistics Office – Census of Population, Various Years
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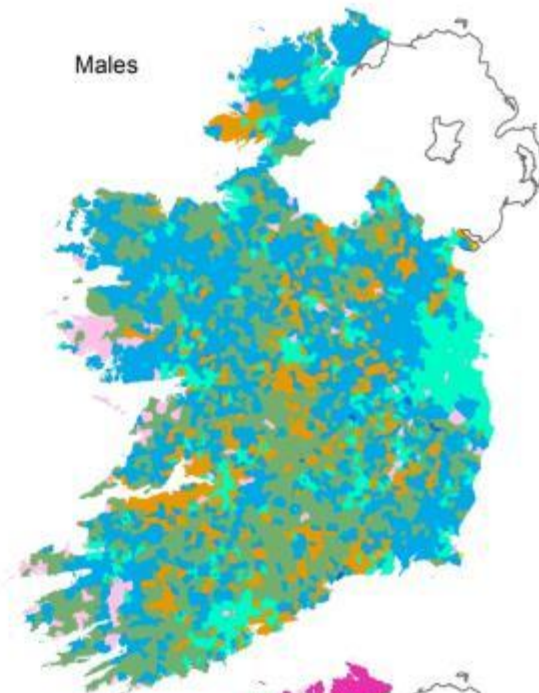
0 20 40 80 Kilometers

Industrial Structure of Employment 2006

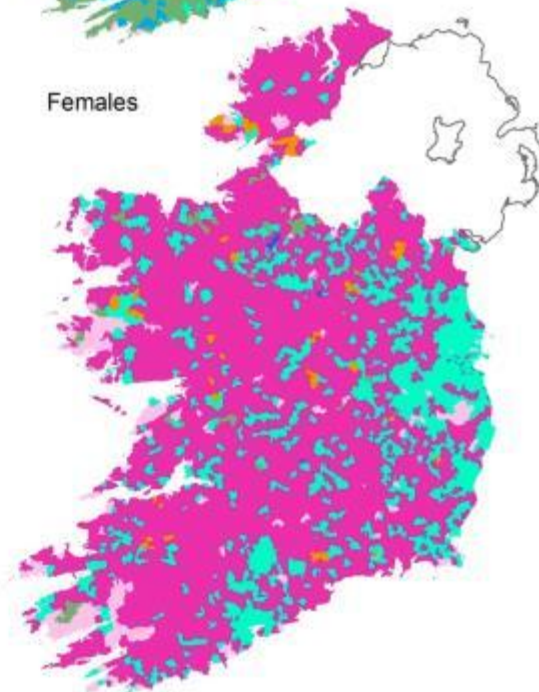
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Males



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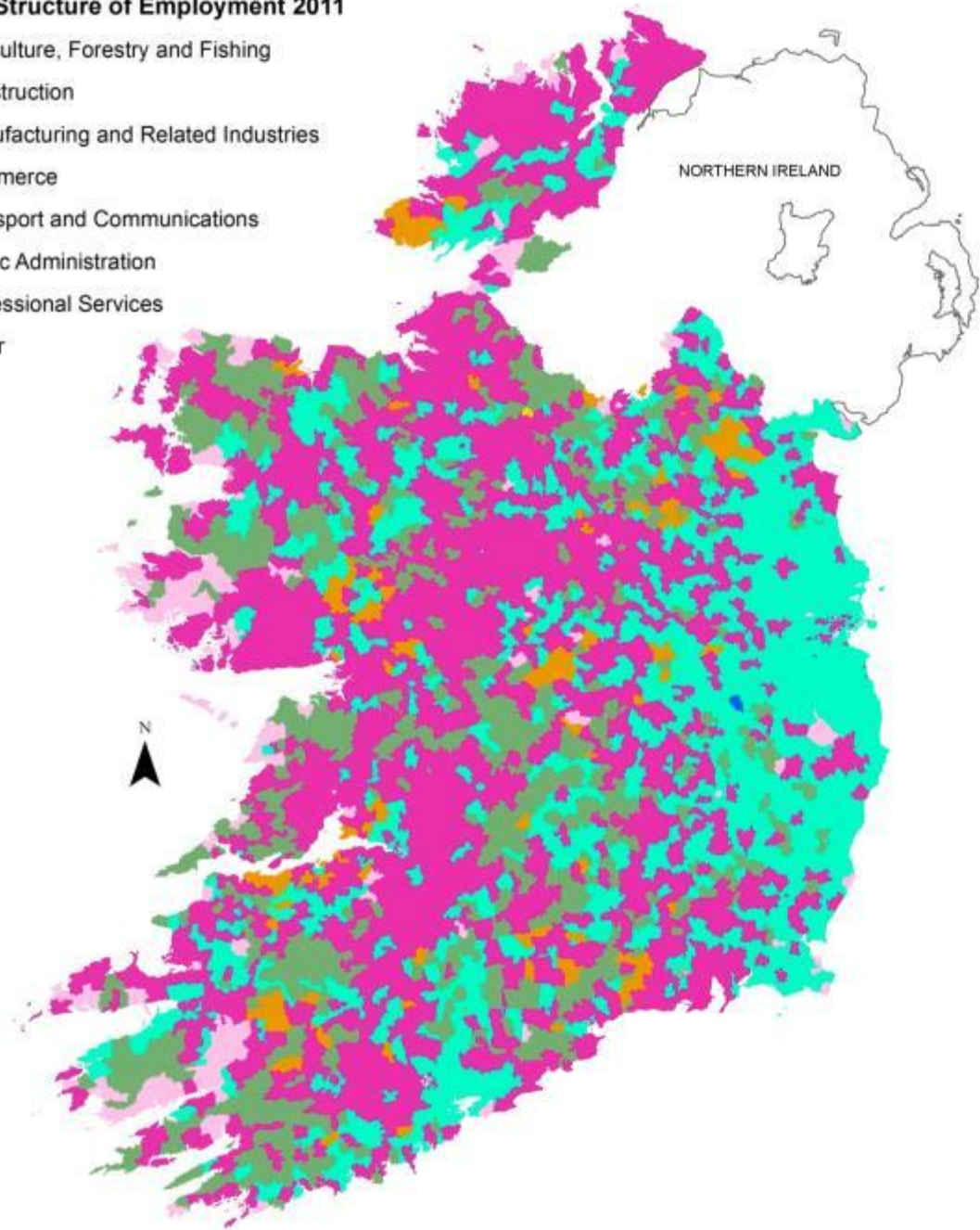
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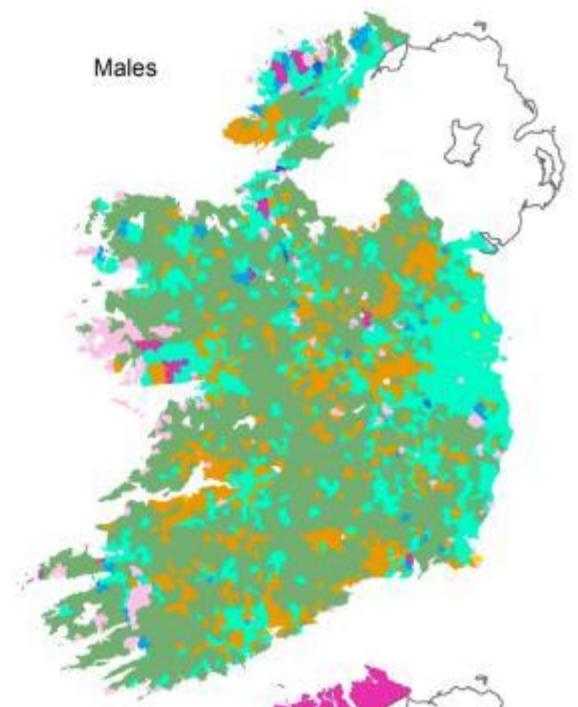
0 20 40 80 Kilometers

Industrial Structure of Employment 2011

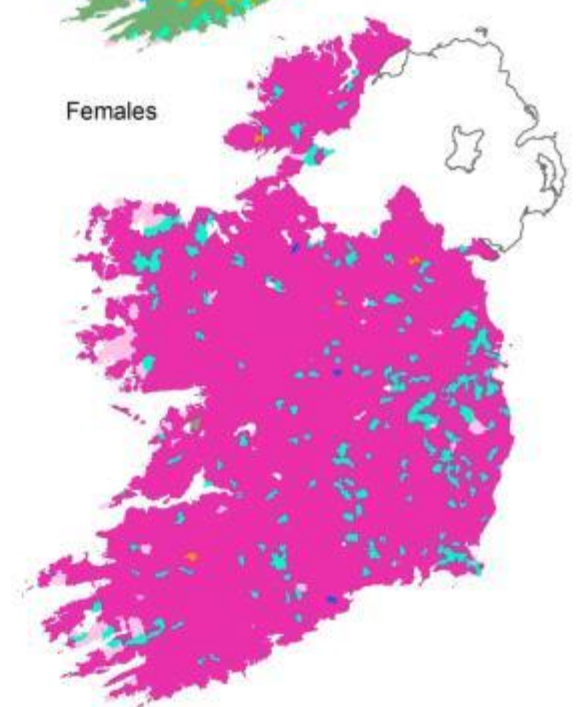
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Functional Areas

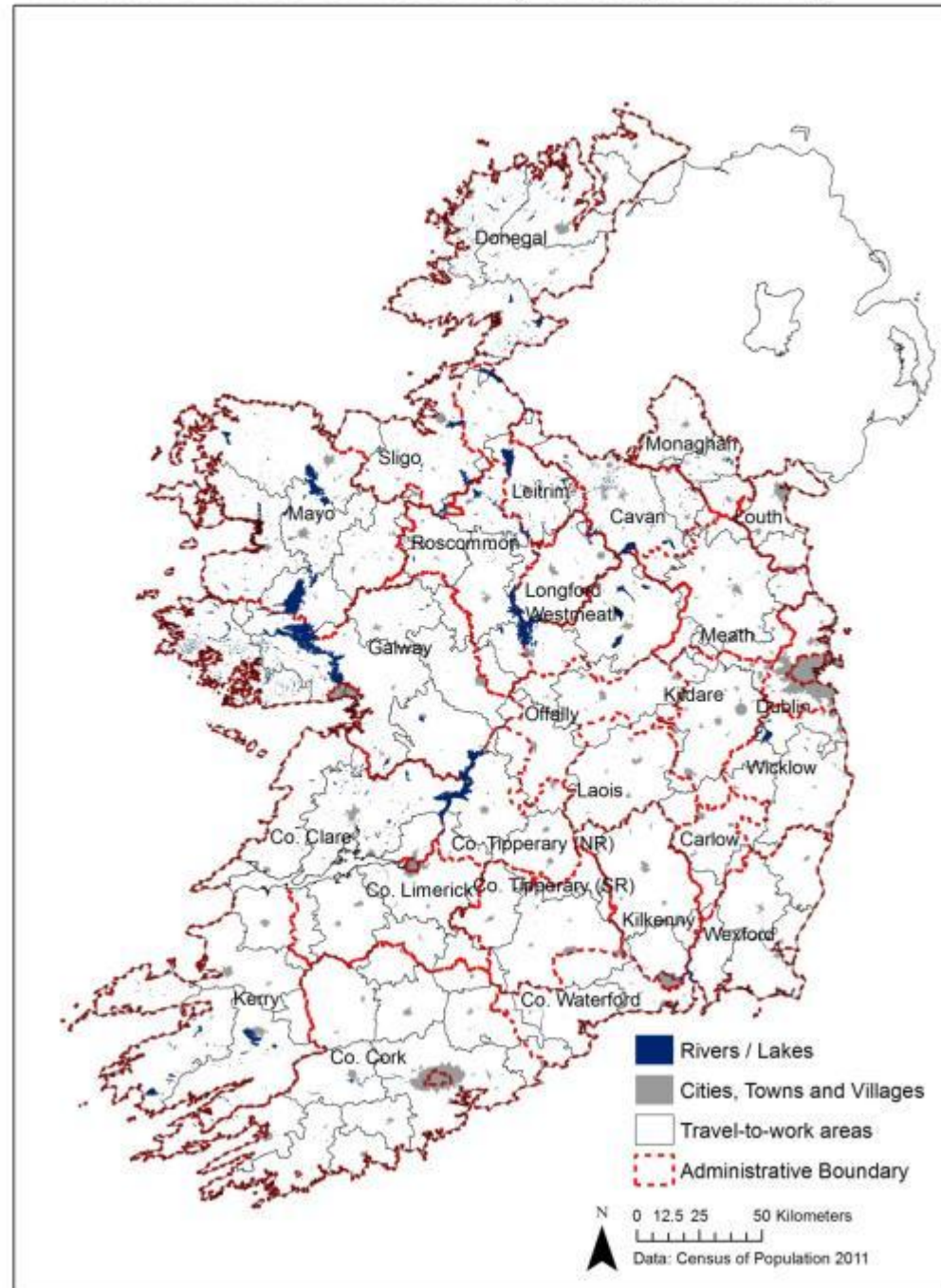
FA's reflect the spatial extent of people's daily lives, e.g. where they live and work.

These areas are, generally, smaller than local authority areas.

71 in Ireland

Pop: 10,000 – 1million+

The boundaries of these areas do not necessarily correspond with administrative boundaries.

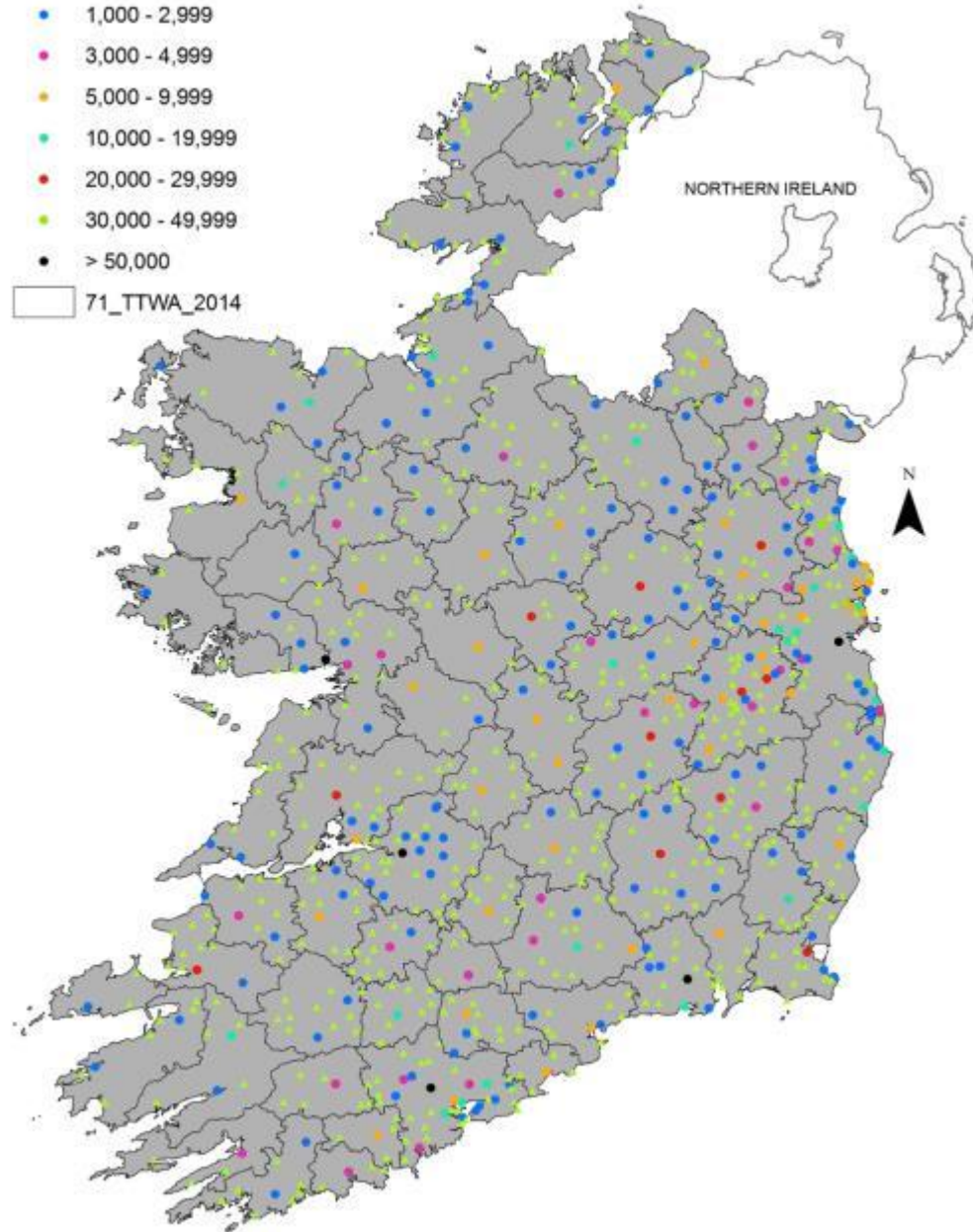


Functional Areas

Some functional areas have large numbers of different sized towns and villages whilst others have relatively few towns at all.

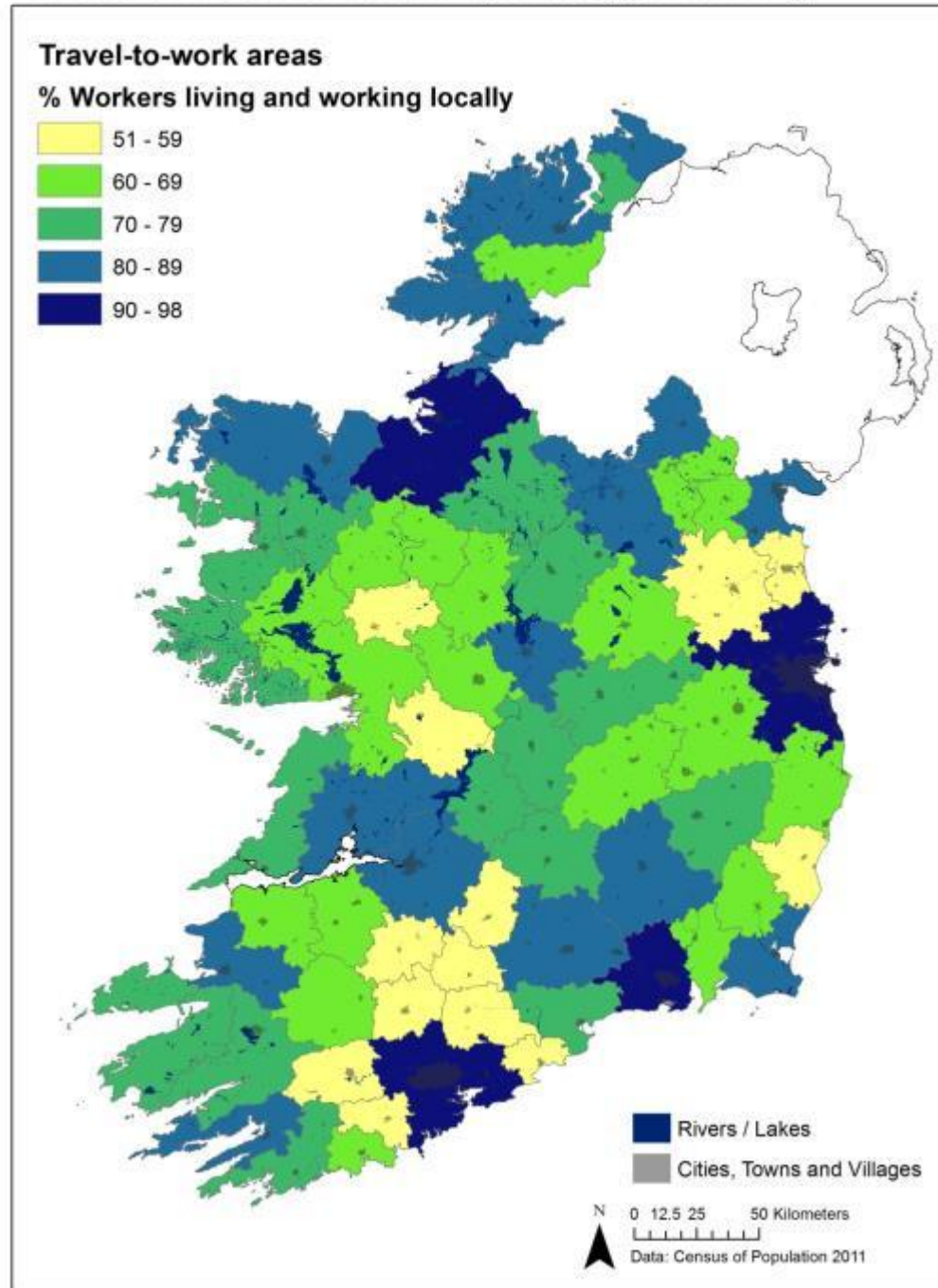
All FAs have some towns, whether they are large or small.

Population of Town / City



Functional Areas

Economic FA's are areas within which most people live and work



Functional Areas

FA's are areas within which most people live and work

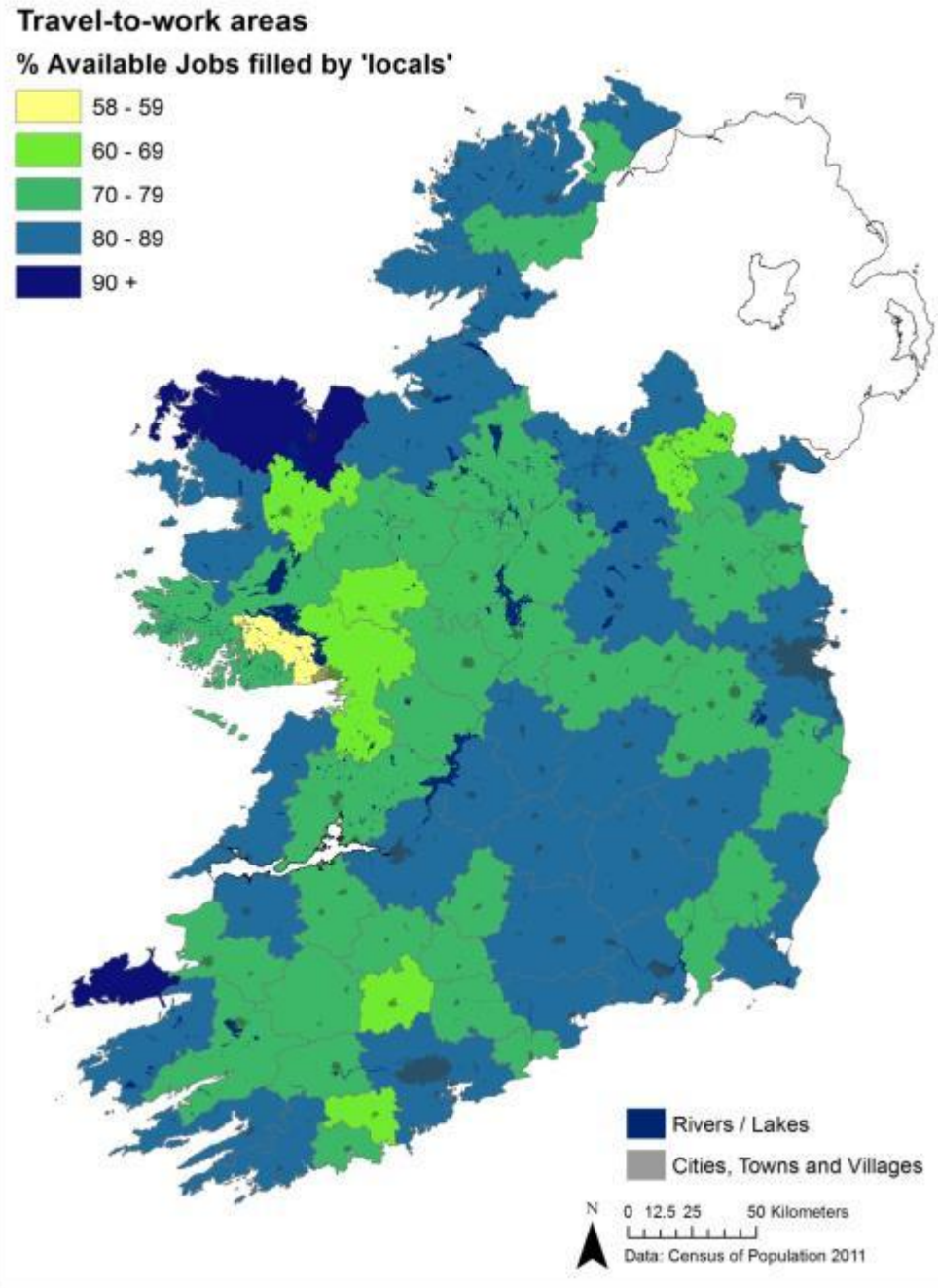
AND

the areas within which employers source most of their labour needs

MOST = > 66%

FA's represent the geographic area within which most people live their 'economic lives'

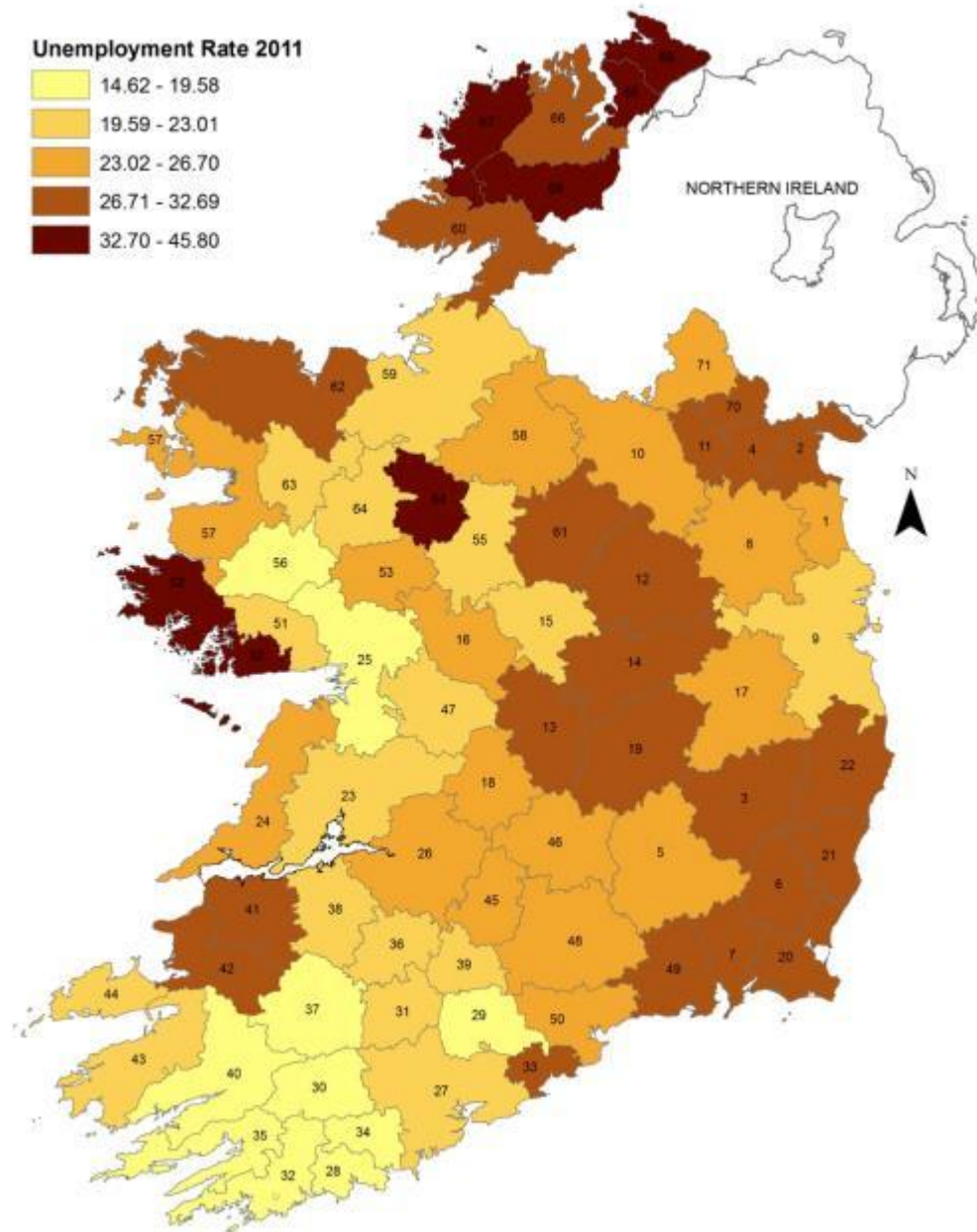
For an enterprise it represents the readily available pool of workers, i.e. where they are likely to find an employee



Functional Areas

The challenges that communities living within a functional area face may be similar to those faced by others elsewhere but the potential and opportunities will be largely specific to that place.

Inappropriate solutions to local problems perpetuate and exacerbate the problem!



Unemployment

- Youth unemployment in Ireland currently stands at 30%
 - It was 9% in 2007.
 - Ireland has one of the highest rates of young people who are not in education, not in employment and not in training (NEET) in the EU at 21%.
 - These figures suggest a need to develop alternative pathways to education outside of the current formal third level structures.
- Young people are more likely to emigrate
- People without higher levels of education or who have ties to a place (i.e. their partner is in employment, they own a house, they have other family responsibilities) cannot move.
 - These ties grow or intensify with age
 - => need to consider not only youth initiatives