

Productivity Insights Network

**RSAI-BIS Special Sessions,
17th July 2019, Cambridge**



@ProductivityNW #rsaibis2019



The geography of productivity

What it means for policy

Paul Swinney
Centre for Cities

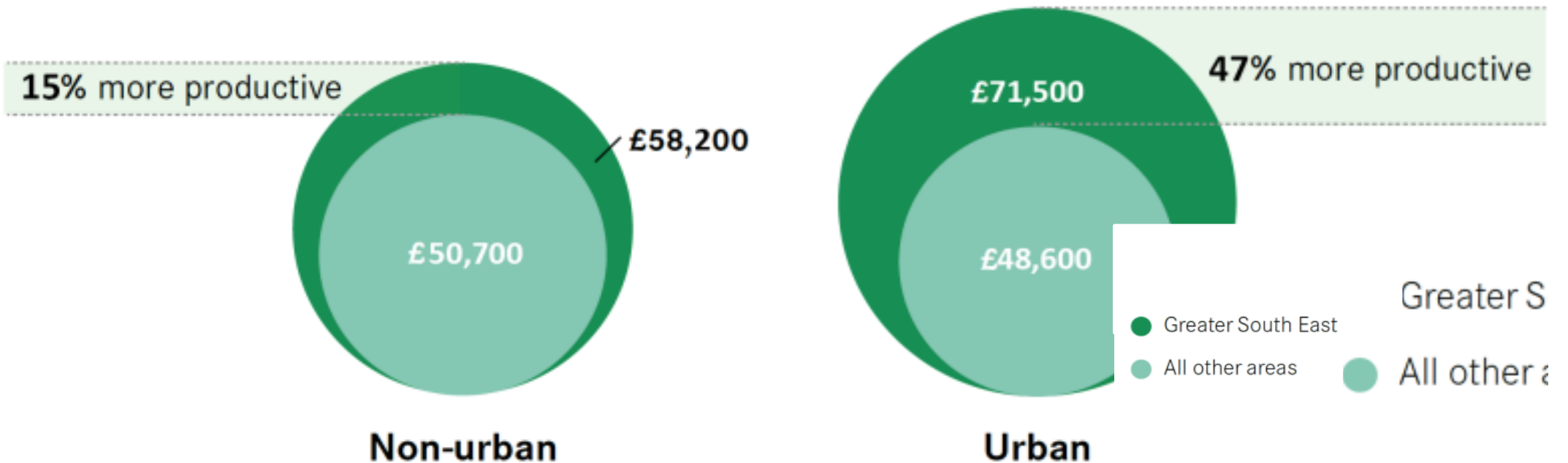


@paul_swinney

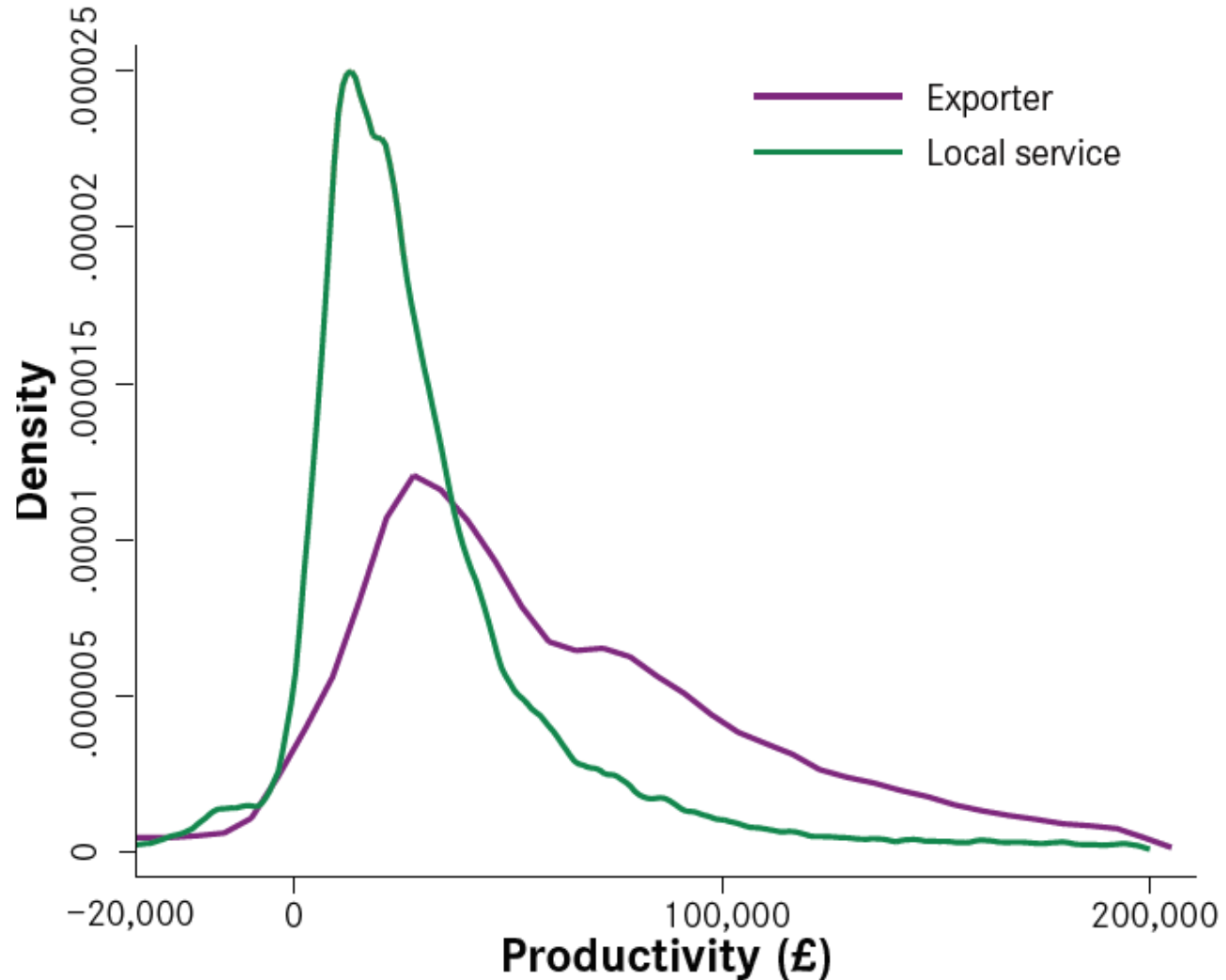


Geography has a big role to play in understanding national productivity

“It takes people in Germany four days to produce what people in the UK take five days to produce.”

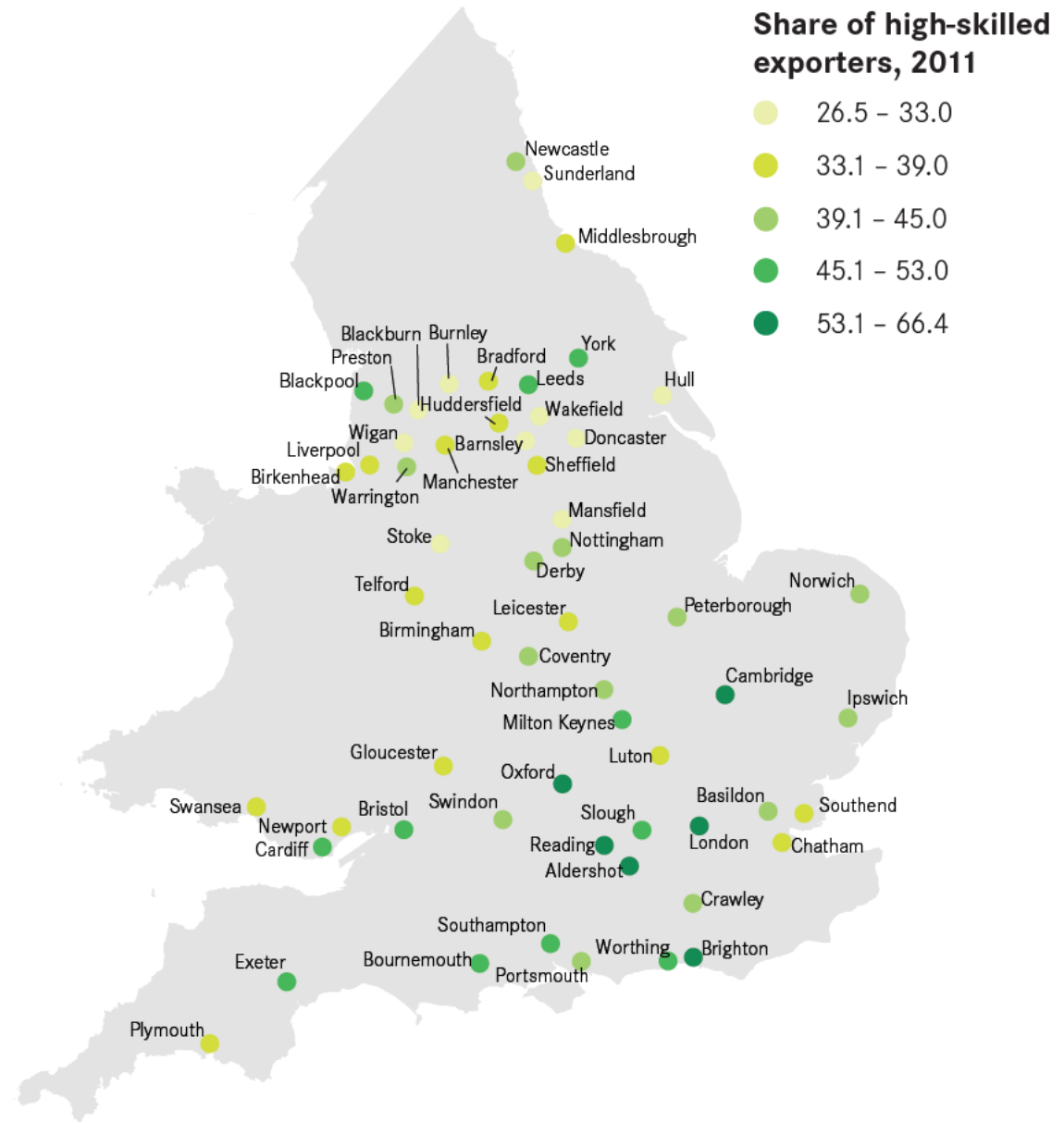


But to understand this, we must look at the performance of 'exporters'



Source: ONS, Annual Business Survey


And the exporting base varies across the country



Source: Census 2011

Notes: Data is available for England and Wales and for grouped broad industrial sectors only, so the definition of exporters used here is C Manufacturing; H, J Transport and communication; and K, L, M, N Financial, Real Estate, Professional and Administrative activities

Source: Census 2011



This results because of the relative attributes that cities offer to a(n exporting) business

High skill

Low skill

Benefits

Access to knowledge

-

Access to shared infrastructure

Access to shared infrastructure

Access to high-skilled workers

Access to low-skilled workers

Costs

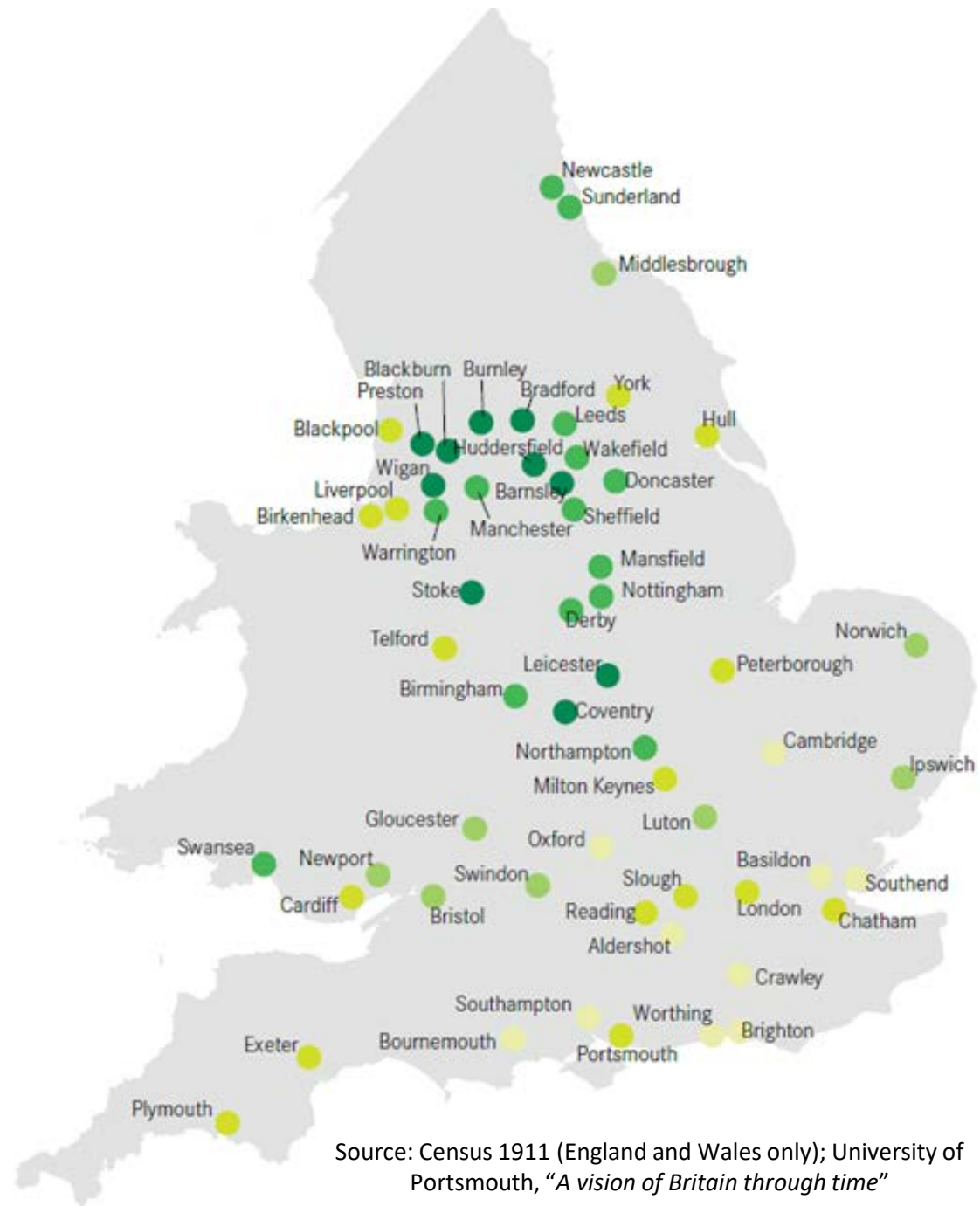
High cost

Low cost

These patterns
are long running,
stretching back at
least a century

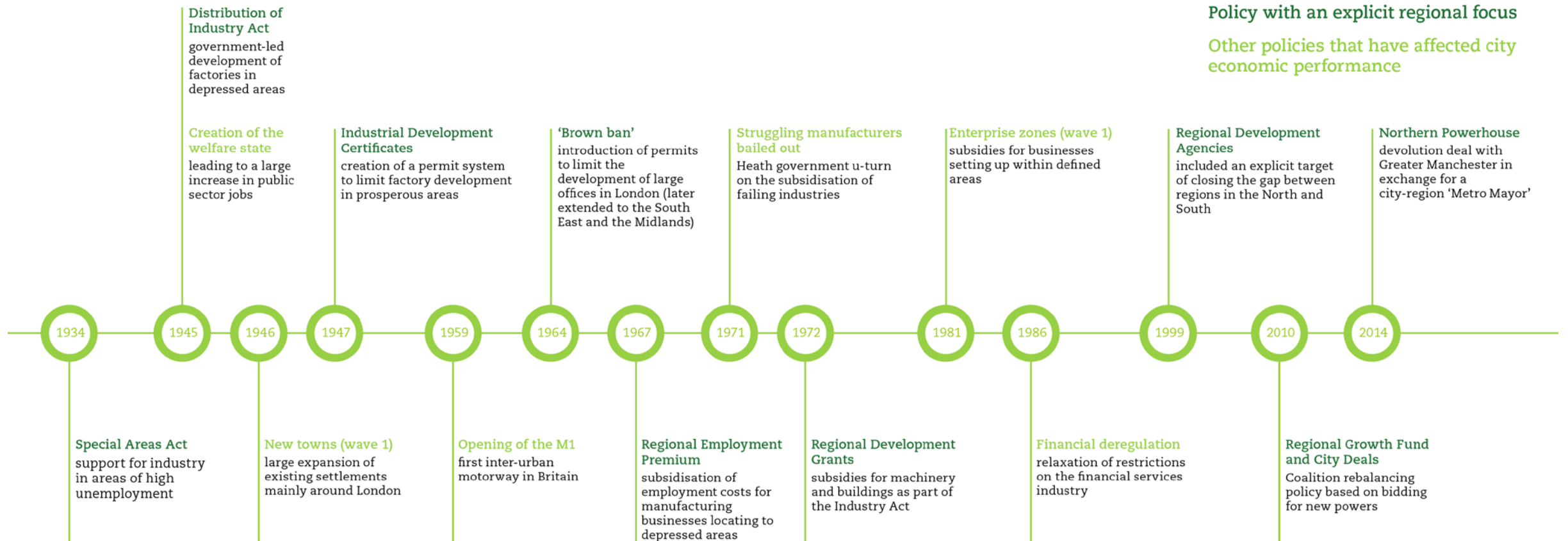
**Jobs in mining and
manufacturing, 1911 (%)**

- 10.5 - 21.5
- 21.6 - 33.9
- 34 - 47.1
- 47.2 - 57.5
- 57.6 - 69.4



Source: Census 1911 (England and Wales only); University of Portsmouth, "A vision of Britain through time"

And we've been attempting to reverse them for at least 80 years





Paul Swinney

p.swinney@centreforcities.org

020 7803 4305



@Paul_Swinney