Urban-rural relationships in England

Exploring policy concepts and evidence methods

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Lifestyle? versus Life Patterns:
Planning for new urban and rural inter-dependence
Outline of presentation

- Defining rural and urban
- Established rural and urban policies in England
- Rural-urban relationships, an upcoming discussion
- Interpretations of the term rural urban relationship
- Rural-urban classification
- Less-explored aspects of rural-urban relationships
- Analysis of Commuting based on Census 2001 figures
- Analysis of Business Moves using the Beta Model
- Conclusion
Defining rural and urban – and endless story

• Dichotomical definitions
  – by physical attributes, e.g. built-up area
    • Everything non-urban as defined by the ODPM urban areas
    • Urban footprint
  – By socio-economic attributes, e.g. population density
    • SOCCODE by the Countryside Agency defining 145 districts/ UA as rural

• Differentiation by typologies
  – Area Classification by ONS
    • Countryside, senior communities, out of town manufacturing, accessible countryside
    • industrial hinterlands, traditional manufacturing, built-up areas, prospering metropolitan, student communities, multicultural metropolitan, suburbs and small towns
  – Urban-rural classification by CA, Defra, ODPM, ONS and WAG
    • Categories: Urban; Fringe and town; Village, hamlet and dispersed households
    • Differentiation by sparse/remote and less sparse/non-remote
• Categories: Urban; Fringe and town; Village, hamlet

Urban footprint and rural/urban classification

• Differentiation by sparse/remote and less sparse/non-remote

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Intensity of land consumption 1990-2000 (Siedentop 2007)
Location and context new settlements (Siedentop 2008)
The containment of urban England

• Comparison of urban sprawl processes on a European scale using CORINE land use data of 1990 & 2000 (Siedentop 2007/2008)
  – UK: settlement growth 30579 ha (1.8%), strong growth rates in areas of medium to high extent of urbanisation and in average 23 km distance to cities > 100,000 inhabitants
  – Germany: settlement growth 174393 ha (6.7%), strong growth rates in rural areas of less than 10% urbanisation and in average 30km distance to cities > 100,000 inhabitants

• Difference in floorspace per dwelling/head
  – New dwellings in England 82.7 m² (1981-2001) and in Germany 109.3 m² (after 2001) (source: housing statistics European Union)
The containment of urban England

- Established policies of urban containment
  - Greenbelts in England
  - Restrictive planning policies in rural areas
  - Focus on redevelopment of brownfield land
- But also...
  - Sub/Counter/peri/de-urbanization
  - Population decline in urban cores/ shrinking cities
  - Edge City developments
The containment of urban England

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Population change 1991-2001

Unemployment rate 2001

The highest price of £322,894 can be found here.

The lowest price of £16,953 can be found in the North of Manchester.

Source: HM Land Registry 2001
LAND FOR SALE

07708185896

0771895796
Beyond the rural urban dichotomy

- Campaign to Protect Rural England fighting against urbanisation of the countryside, supporting urban containment
- Town and Country Planning Association supporting modern versions of the Garden City
- “Let's do away with rural” (Hoggard K, 1990)
- The economic diversity of rural England: stylised fallacies and uncertain evidence (Hodge I, 2004)
- „The rural“ as a social representation of space, especially in British and English culture (Halfacree K, 2004)
- Rural and urban as both analytical categories and social constructions
Rural-urban relationships, an upcoming discussion

- A number of policy documents both on national and regional level stress the importance of rural-urban relationships
- Yet it often remains unclear what is really meant by that
- Economic policies for rural areas tend to focus on agriculture/ marketing of regional products/ tourism
- At the same time a necessary diversification of the rural economy is stressed
- Lack of knowledge and detailed policies for the rest of the rural economy and their development in relation to urban areas
Alternative terms for rural urban relationship

- Interdependence
- Interactions
- Relations
- Linkages
- Partnership
- Cooperation
- Rurbanisation
- Periurbanisation
- Counterurbanisation
- Shift
- Exchange
- Interplay
- Division
- Transformation
- Dynamics
- Divorce
Exemplary studies about rural urban relationships

- Major aim in the ESDP is strengthening of rural urban relationships and partnerships
- Strategic study "Towards a New Rural-Urban Partnership in Europe" by SPESP/BBR in 1999/2000 as a predecessor of ESPON
- Interdependence between Urban and Rural Areas in the West of England 2000/2001 by University of West of England
- Special issue of Built Environment in 2003 about urban-rural relationships
- Publications of the final ESPON report about urban-rural relations in Europe in March 2005
- Economic Linkages Between Small Towns And Surrounding Rural Areas In Scotland: Final Report, March 2005, report for Scottish Executive
- City Regions and Rural Areas in North East England, 2005, part of the Tyne and Wear City Region Development Programme and the Northern Way initiative
Interpretations of the term rural urban relationship

- Patterns of urbanization/”ruralization”
  - Linked to the debate about the definition and classification of rural and urban areas
  - Morphological/ structural
- Flows (material/informational) or links between rural and urban areas, functional
- Relationship as a partnership or cooperation between rural and urban areas
- …
Fishing in muddy waters…
or Mapping the Unknown

• So far debate mainly qualitative debate
• Need for a quantitative evidence base
• Partnership and rational cooperation require evidence base to assess diverging or converging interests between town and countryside
• Aim: To analyse how and with which methods one can gain a better understanding of the nature and changes of rural-urban relationships.
• Traditionally strong policy focus on agriculture tourism and natural resources
• Therefore the focus here is on commuting and economic change
Is there an urban-rural shift of business activities?

- Not many detailed studies about rural economy beyond agriculture and tourism
- Study by Keeble/Tyler in early 1990s
  - Different structures of change in accessible and remote rural locations
  - Both categories showed significant growth
  - High growth rates in job creation in the 1980s slowed down recently
  - High growth rates in manufacturing but increasingly also service sector
  - Definition used includes small- and medium-sized towns
- Study by Kiehl/ Panebianco about urban-rural employment shift in Western Europe
  - UK, Germany, Italy
  - Importance of manufacturing sector
- The studies did not discuss the impact on rural-urban relationships or on issues like commuting flows
- Most studies so far investigate a rather large spatial scale
Commuting as an indicator for independence or interdependence
• Long distance commuting 2001
  – Based on Census 2001
  – Calculated distance between postcodes of place of work and place of residence
  – Easier to analyse than directional flows
  – High shares in parts of Allerdale, the southern wards of Lancaster and parts of Cheshire/ Vale Royal
  – Not surprisingly generally low rates in all urban areas
  – Surprisingly low rates in rural parts of Lancashire and South Lakeland
  – In comparison with the rest of England generally low rate of long distance commuting.
• Working at or from home 2001
  – Based on Census 2001
  – Calculated distance between postcodes of place of work and place of residence
  – Clear rural urban-difference
  – Reflection of the higher share of people working in agriculture or tourism
  – In comparison with the rest of England relatively high share of homework
• Changes in long-distance commuting
  – Comparison of Census 1991/2001
  – Figures for 1991 are less reliable as these are based on a sample
  – Decrease of the share of long distance commuting in some rural regions such as West of London
  – This trend is not as clear in the rest of England nor in the North West region
• Commuting in the light of Defra classification
  – Using Defra classification of rural and urban areas for local authority districts
  – Combination with district interaction matrix
  – Disadvantage of a rather large scale geography
  – Advantage of comparability with statistics available for local authority districts
• Commuting in the light of ONS classification
  – Using ONS classification of rural, town/fringe and urban areas for local authority districts
  – Enables to identify areas of stronger commuting interactions across the urban-rural hierarchy
  – Disadvantage of a rather large scale geography
  – Advantage of comparability with statistics available for local authority districts
Structure of rural and urban economy in England

- High share of agriculture in rural areas, yet low average size of businesses
- Overall similar structure of rural and urban economies
- Stronger differences in real estate and retail

Table taken from State of Countryside 2003 Economy and Enterprise, page 111
• Small firm birth rate 2003
  – VAT registrations per 10000 economically active population
  – Highest rates in Trafford, Ribble Valley Macclesfield and South Lakeland
  – Low rates in Merseyside and the north of Greater Manchester, Lancaster and the coastal districts in Cumbria
  – No clear rural-urban difference
  – Lowest possible level of analysis is local authority district
Getting a more detailed picture – the Beta Model

- Database monitoring business location, appearance and moves on a small scale
- Mainly based on address data from Yellow Pages
- Currently mainly used for policy evaluation of area based regeneration initiatives
- Not yet explored for academic work or used in a rural context
- Limited access allowed by the company for PhD research
Getting a more detailed picture – the Beta Model

- Detailed spatial analysis of the case studies
  - Reports generated: trend, survival, movement, benchmark, employment and size-distribution
- Connection to the urban-rural typology from ONS
  - Possibility to assess if there is an overall trend of urban-rural business migration/relocation.
  - Access to the core data instead of the reports would be required for full analysis
  - Therefore focus on two exemplary case studies in the North West: Ribble Valley and Congleton
Two case studies

- **Ribble Valley**
  - Very high small firm birth rate
  - Comparatively low share of long-distance commuters
  - Low unemployment rate

- **Congleton**
  - Medium small firm birth rate
  - Low to high share of long-distance commuting
  - Very low unemployment rate
  - High average income
  - Located nearby the coastal towns of Lancashire and medium sized towns north of Manchester
  - Relatively high housing prices
  - Located in accessible distance to the Manchester/Liverpool conurbations and other medium sized towns in the West Midlands
  - Medium average income
  - Low housing prices compared to the rest of Cheshire
An example – business movements Ribble Valley

- Generation of reports via web interface
- Differentiation by year and size class of business
- Difficulty of monitoring individuals that close down a company in urban areas and restart a business in rural areas
Conclusion

• Number of overall movements is quite low per ward – typically 1 to 3 over the four years observed
• Movement tends to take place inside and between neighbouring local authorities and less on a region-wide level.
• No significant difference between the movement on the region-wide and nation-wide level
• Analysis is currently quite time consuming due to necessary manual adjustments
Conclusion

- Some signs of increased economic independence of some rural areas
- This might lead to a strengthened socio-economic disparity between rural and urban areas
- It remains to be seen in how far these diverging interests would lead to a process of rational cooperation between rural and urban areas.
- Some evidence based approaches to understand rural-urban links and relationships might support such a process.
- Yet the voluntary evolvement of such a rational cooperation process is not very likely given the complex nature of rural-urban relationships.