

Why the Scots (especially the Glaswegians) die younger

a.k.a...

David Walsh

Glasgow Centre for Population Health

November 2017

History, politics and vulnerability: explaining excess mortality in Scotland and Glasgow

David Walsh, Gerry McCartney, Chik Collins,
Martin Taulbut, G David Batty

May 2016

A report by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, NHS Health Scotland, the
University of the West of Scotland and University College London



Today

- Overview of Scotland's & Glasgow's health
 - i.e. some depressing introductory statistics...
 - ...but mercifully brief
- What do we mean by 'excess' mortality? (also very briefly)
- Main components of explanatory model for **Glasgow** (rather than Scotland)
- NB: (very) edited highlights only today...
- *...at 100mph!*

Scotland's & Glasgow's health

THE SCOTSMAN
WEDNESDAY 11 MAY 2006
SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
BEST DAILY VALUE 50p

IKEA WHICH STORES KEEP THEIR CUSTOMERS SATISFIED? Page 21
THE ROAD TO VE DAY Part three: ride today

Scotland: still the sick man of Europe

■ Medication which is prescribed for thousands of Scots sufferers dramatically increases the risk of dying from a heart attack Page 2

Young Tory star cast into the lion's den
George Osborne, at 33 the rising star of the Conservative Party, was made new shadow chancellor by Michael Howard, with the job of taking on Gordon Brown. Page 2

Executive under fire over efficiency drive
Ex-minister Wendy Alexander accused the Scottish Executive of failing to match Whitehall's efficiency drive, depriving the country of £400m savings. Page 4

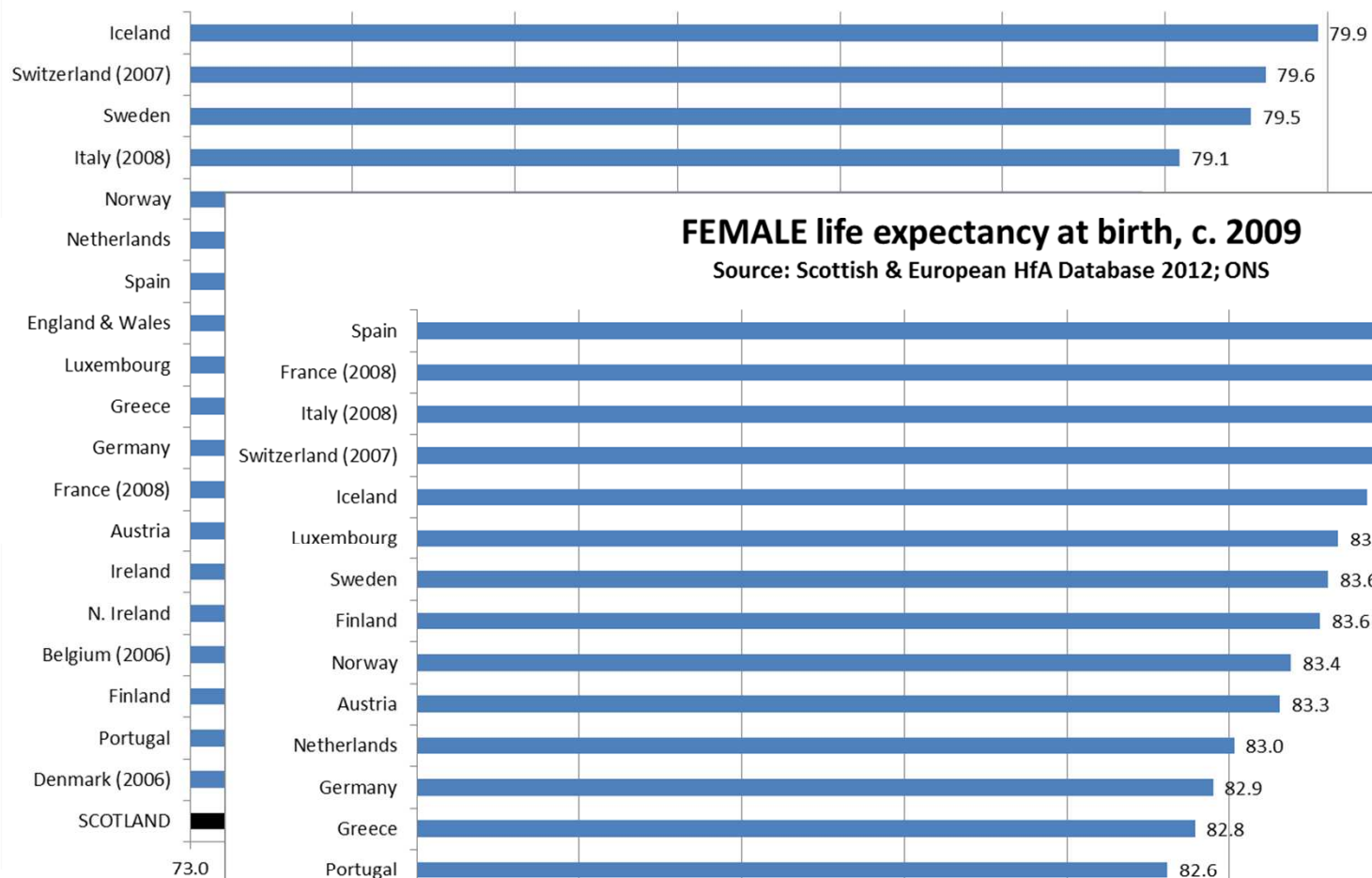


Got married. V good day
SSE is best known as the queen of singerson, her Bridget Jones actress friend Zeltweg got married yesterday, to country music star Kenny Chesney on the Caribbean island of St John in the US Virgin Islands. Page 5

Weather 4; Television and Radio 29-32; Announcements 46; Crosswords 43 and 4; Letters 26

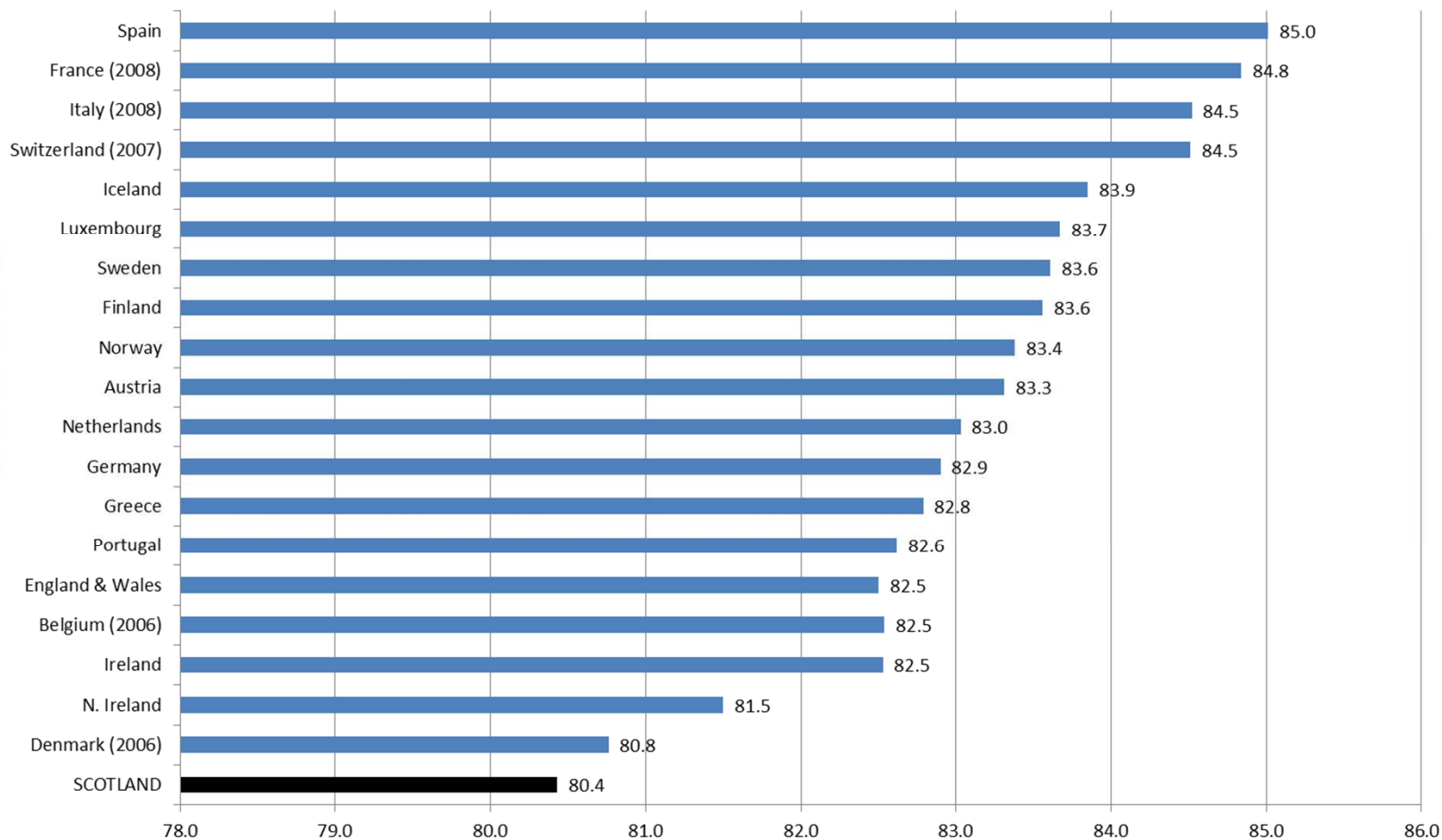
MALE life expectancy at birth, c. 2009

Source: Scottish & European HfA Database 2012; ONS



FEMALE life expectancy at birth, c. 2009

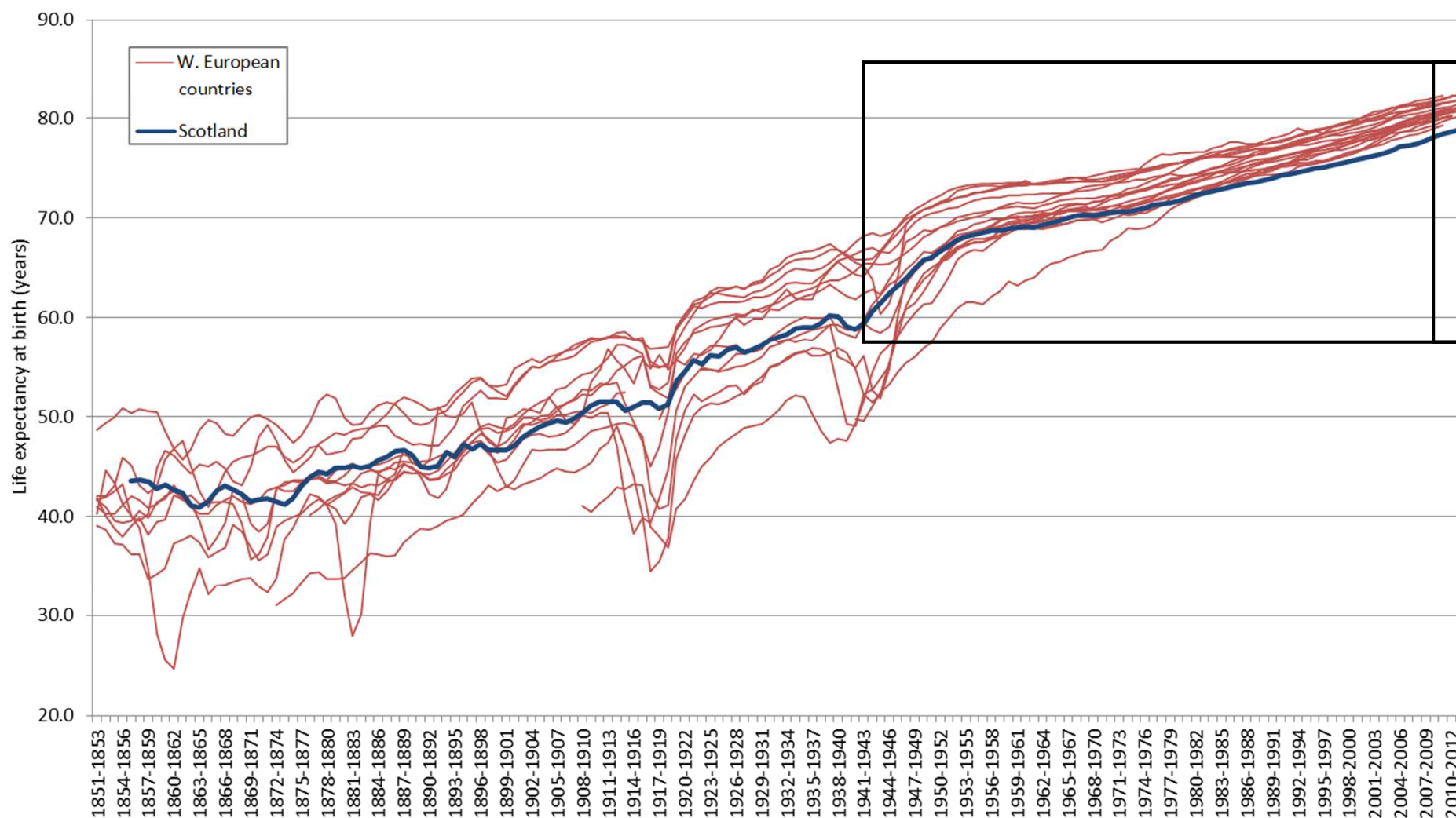
Source: Scottish & European HfA Database 2012; ONS



Not always the 'Sick Man of Europe'

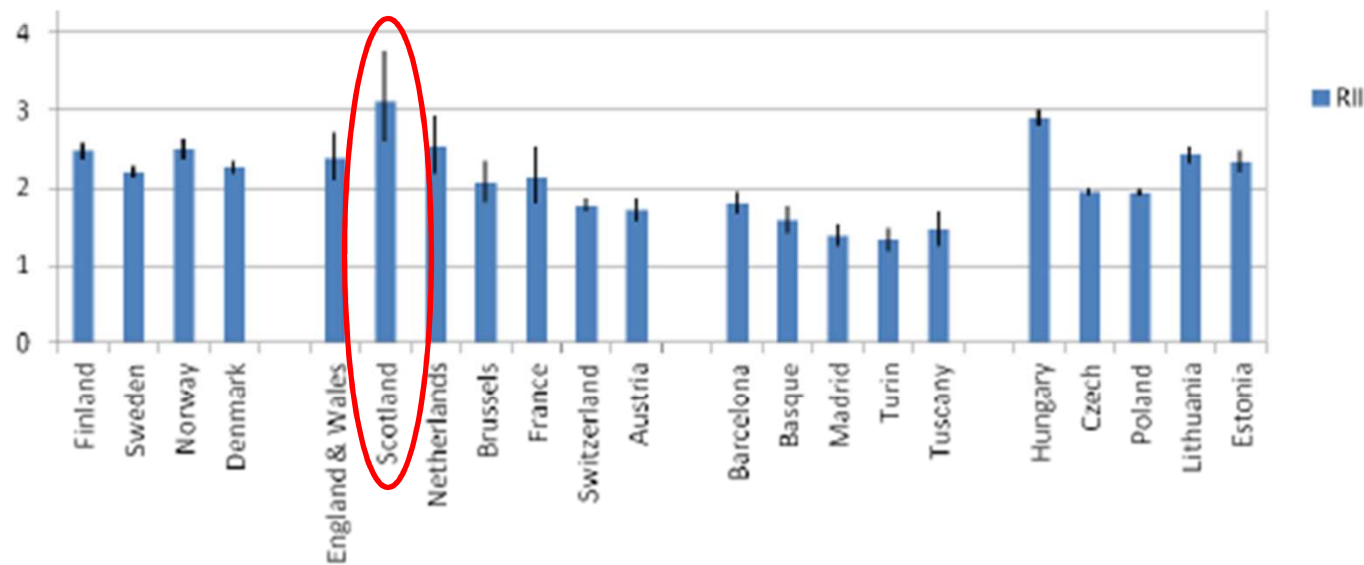
Male & female life expectancy:
Scotland and 18 other Western European Countries, 1851-2013

Source: Human Mortality Database



Widest health inequalities in W. Europe

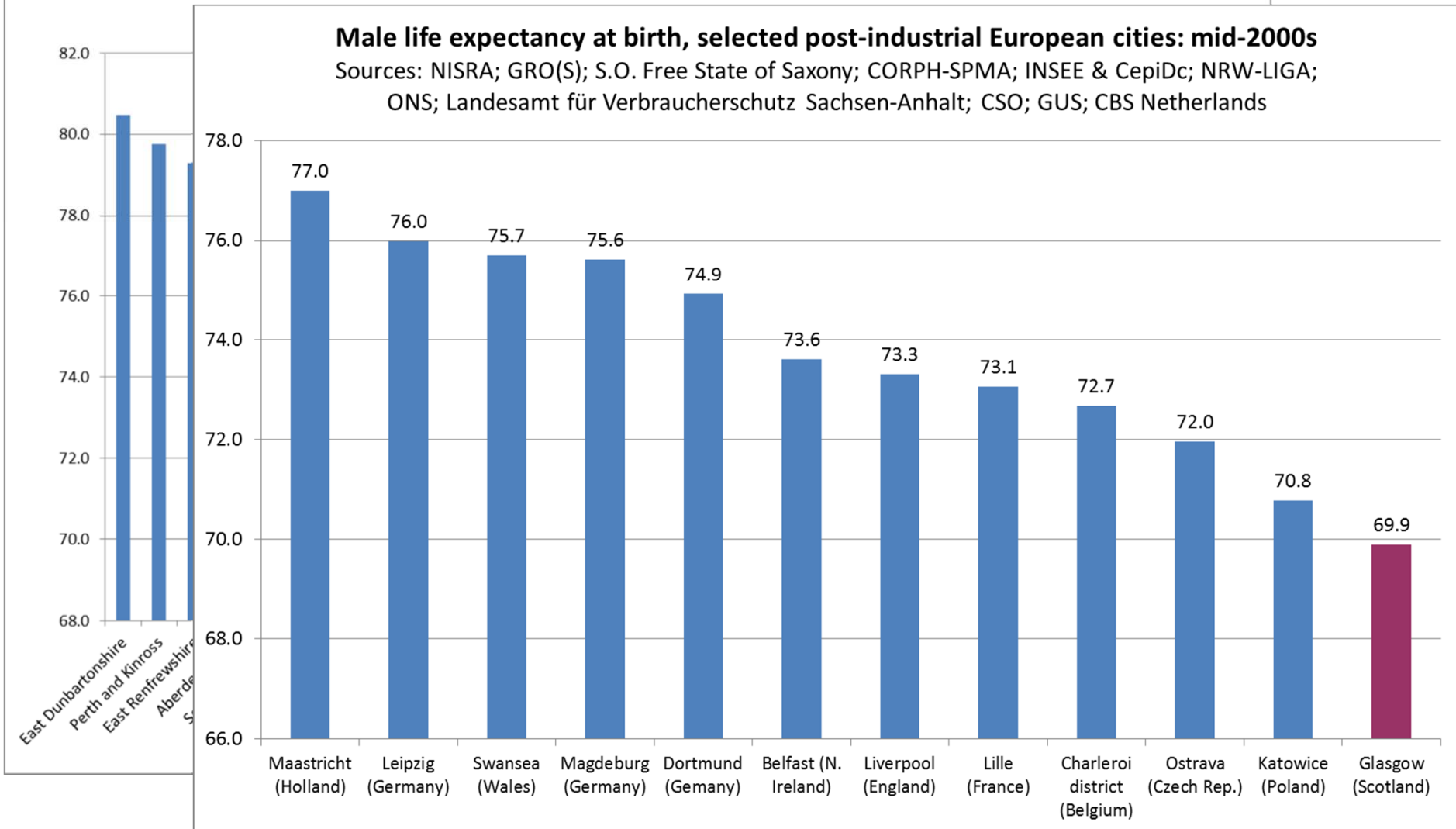
Education based Relative Index of Inequality (RII) for all-cause mortality, females 30-74 years, early to mid 2000s



Source: Eikemo T.A. & Mackenbach J.P. (Eds). EURO GBD SE: the potential for reduction of health inequalities in Europe. Final Report. University Medical Center Rotterdam, 2012

Glasgow's health

Male life expectancy at birth by Scottish local authority area, 2013-15



NEWS MAGAZINE

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5 June 2014 Last updated at 01:21



Why is Glasgow the UK's sickest city?

By Lucy Ash

BBC News



Babies born in Glasgow are expected to live the shortest lives of any in Britain. One in four Glaswegian men won't reach their 65th birthday. What is behind the "Glasgow Effect" and can it be prevented?

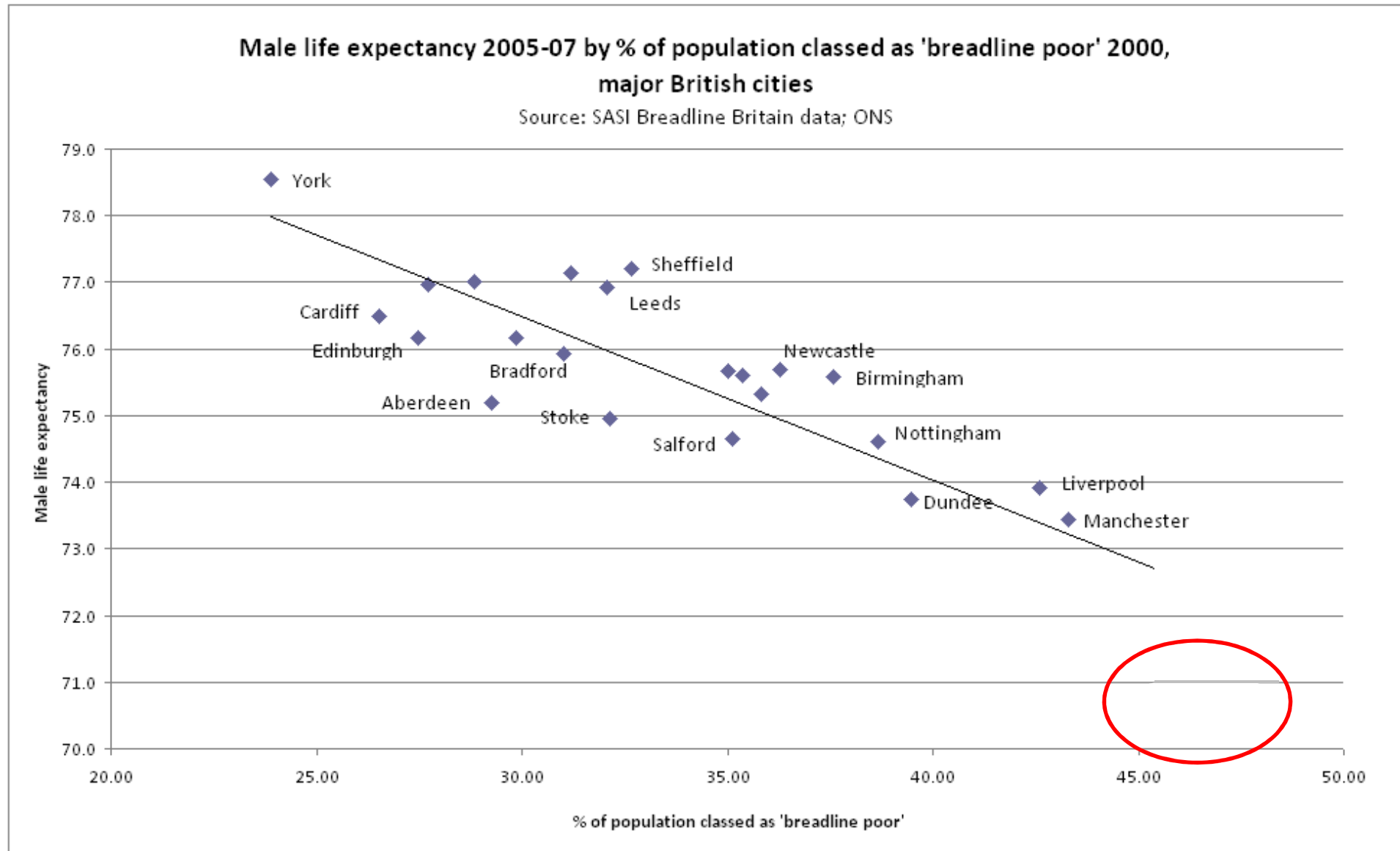
In today's
Magazine

The joyful dearth of

Scottish 'excess' mortality

- Traditional explanation: socio-economic deprivation (underpinned by effects of post-industrial decline)
- NB Massively important: poverty and deprivation (and underlying/related factors e.g. deindustrialisation) main drivers of poor health in any society
- But...not a sufficient explanation
- **'Excess' mortality**: higher mortality observed in Scotland (compared to elsewhere in the UK) *over and above* that explained by differences in socio-economic deprivation
- Ubiquitous in Scotland but greatest in and around Glasgow/West Central Scotland e.g.
 - Glasgow vs Liverpool & Manchester 2003-07 (*GCPH, 2010*):
 - 30% higher premature deaths (<65 years)
 - 15% higher deaths all ages

Poverty & life expectancy: UK cities



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 - 30% higher premature deaths (<65 years)
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- Unhelpfully referred to as 'Scottish Effect' and 'Glasgow Effect' (cue tedious rant...)

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Cities

Resilient cities

The Glasgow effect: 'We die you but you just get on with it'

Research based on newly released 1970s policy documents shows Glaswegians' higher risk of premature death was caused by 's - rehousing skilled workers in new towns, and leaving the po

Revealed: 'Glasgow effect' mortality rate blamed on Westminster social engineering



Scotland 2016
@BBCScot2016



It's been known as the 'Glasgow Effect' for many years. so why's it taken so long to tack

Scotland Office policies blamed for Glasgow Effect in forthcoming report

The Glasgow Effect: Activism as a public health issue



HOME / Politics

Labour let down Glasgow's poor. Nicola Sturgeon must not do the same.



Kevin McKenna
23 May 2016



Comment: Kevin McKenna on the Glasgow Effect and why it damns politicians and policy makers.

What explains the excess?
Synthesising the evidence

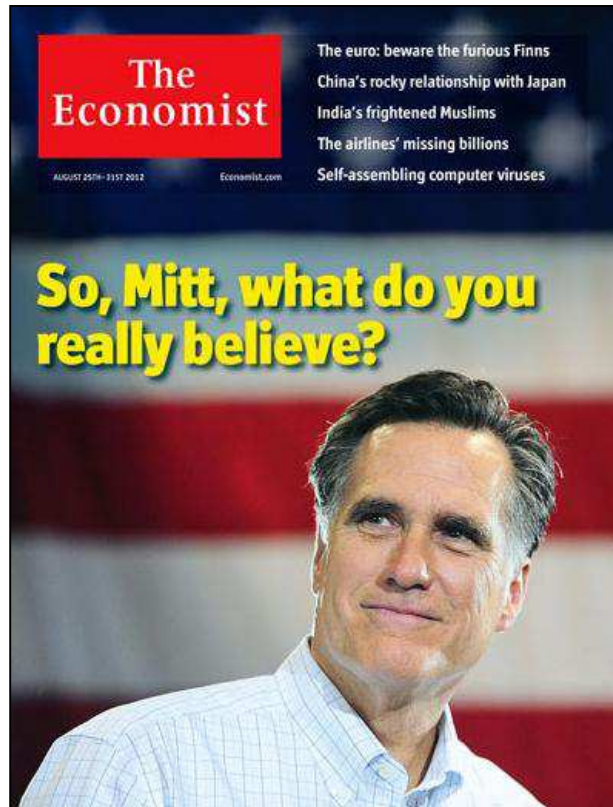
Theories, theories, theories...

- Artefact
- Migration
- Political attack/effects
- Culture
- Deindustrialisation
- Income inequalities
- Social mobility
- Substance misuse cultures
- Alienation/anomie
- Family/parenting/early years
- Social capital
- (Health) services
- Patterning of deprivation
- Sectarianism
- Individual values (e.g. psychological outlook)
- Sense of coherence
- Behaviours
- Genetics
- The weather...

Theories not necessarily grounded in solid evidence

- Irn Bru
- Less broadband
- Water impurities
- A lack of runner beans
- Fewer pet dogs
- Submarines on the Clyde
- Low air pressure
- A general “curse”

Theories not necessarily grounded in solid evidence



“It is as if a malign vapour rises from the Clyde at night and settles in the lungs of sleeping Glaswegians”

The Economist. ‘No City for Old Men’. August 2012

Synthesising the evidence

- We assessed the merits (or, er, otherwise) of 40 (!!) (more plausible) proposed explanations
- All 40 assessed in terms of:
 - evidence for causal links from research literature
 - data for Scotland v England & Wales
 - data for Glasgow v Liverpool & Manchester

57 varieties (well, nearly – 40)

Air pollution	Educational attainment	Housing quality and provision	Quality of physical envt.: vacant & derelict land
Anomie	Employment/ labour market	Impacts of the World Wars	Scale of deindustrialisation
Artefact: inadequate measurement of poverty and deprivation	Ethnicity	Income inequalities	Scale and nature of post-war urban change
(Culture)	Genetics	Individual values	Sectarianism
Climate: rainfall	Health & social services	Lagged effects of poverty & deprivation	Sense of coherence
Climate: vitamin D deficiency	Health behaviours - alcohol	Migration	Social capital
Climate: winter deaths	Health behaviours - diet	Obesity	Social mobility
Culture of dependency	Health behaviours - drugs misuse	Political influences and vulnerability	Spatial patterning of deprivation
Culture of substance misuse	Health behaviours - physical activity	Premature and low birth-weight babies	Terminations of pregnancy
Early years: family, gender relations and parenting differences	Health behaviours - smoking	Quality of physical envt.: land contamination	Water hardness

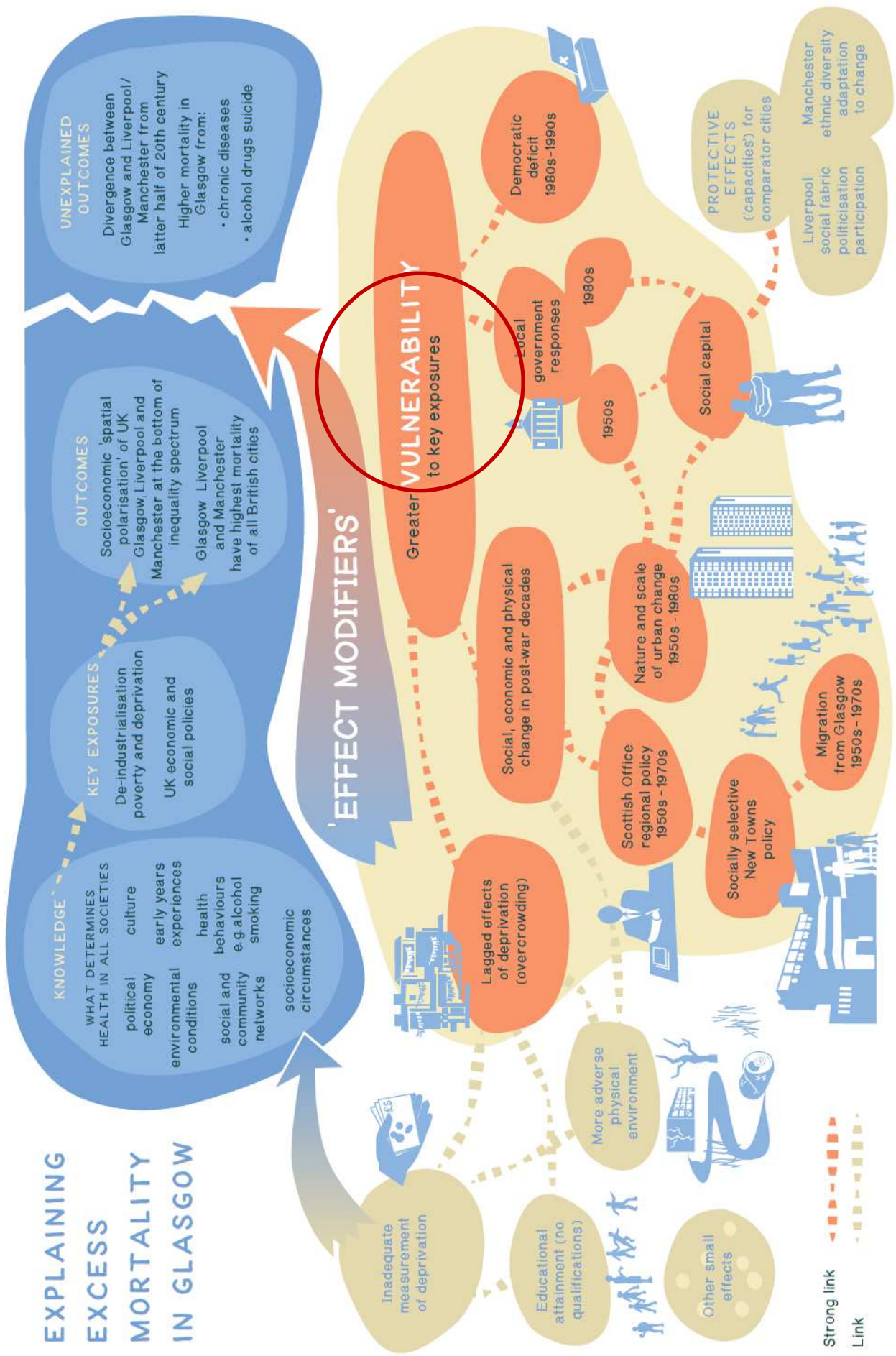
Synthesising the evidence

- New report: we have assessed the merits (or, er, otherwise) of 40 (!!) (more plausible) proposed explanations
- All 40 assessed in terms of:
 - evidence for causal links from research literature
 - data for Scotland v England & Wales
 - data for Glasgow v Liverpool & Manchester
- But focus here is **only** on relevant, evidence-based, explanations

Explanatory model for Glasgow

- Based on explicit comparison with Liverpool and Manchester (excellent comparator cities)
- Reflects evidence & knowledge of health determinants...
- ...including political influences on health
- Very complex...

EXPLAINING EXCESS MORTALITY IN GLASGOW



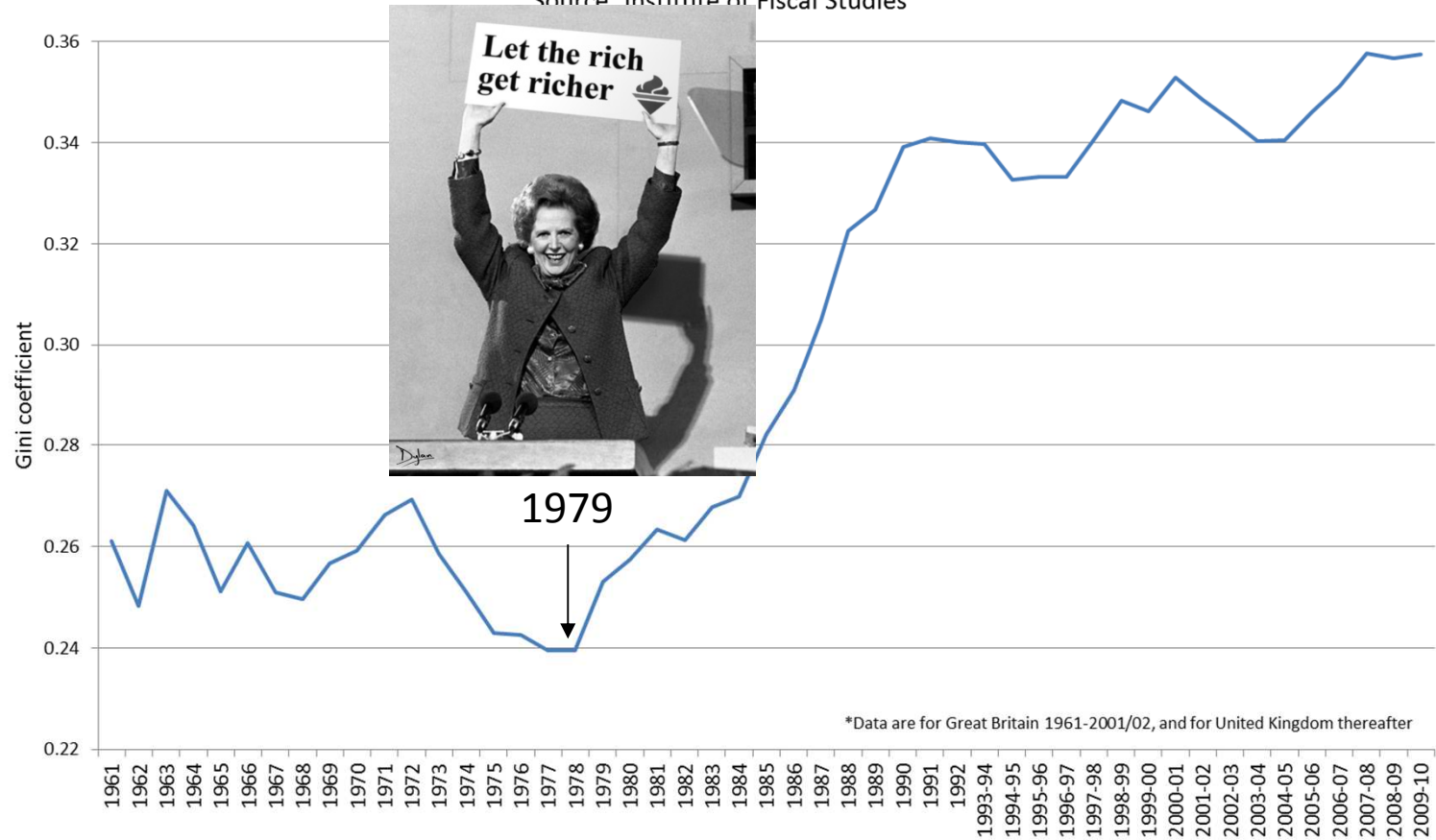
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% loss 1931-2001

Trends in income inequality (Gini coefficient of equivalised inequality in income after tax and before housing costs), GB/UK* 1961-2010

Source: Institute of Fiscal Studies



*UK Government economic
policy since 1979*

Explanatory model for Glasgow

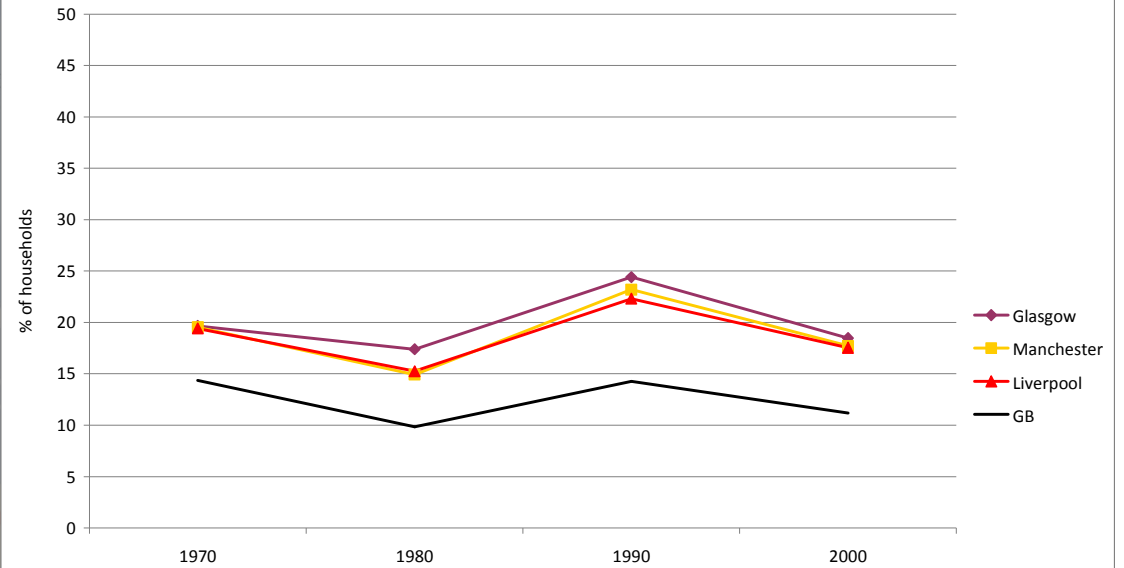
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- Population made more vulnerable by **cumulative effects** of a series of **historical factors/events/decisions**...

EXPLAINING EXCESS MORTALITY IN GLASGOW

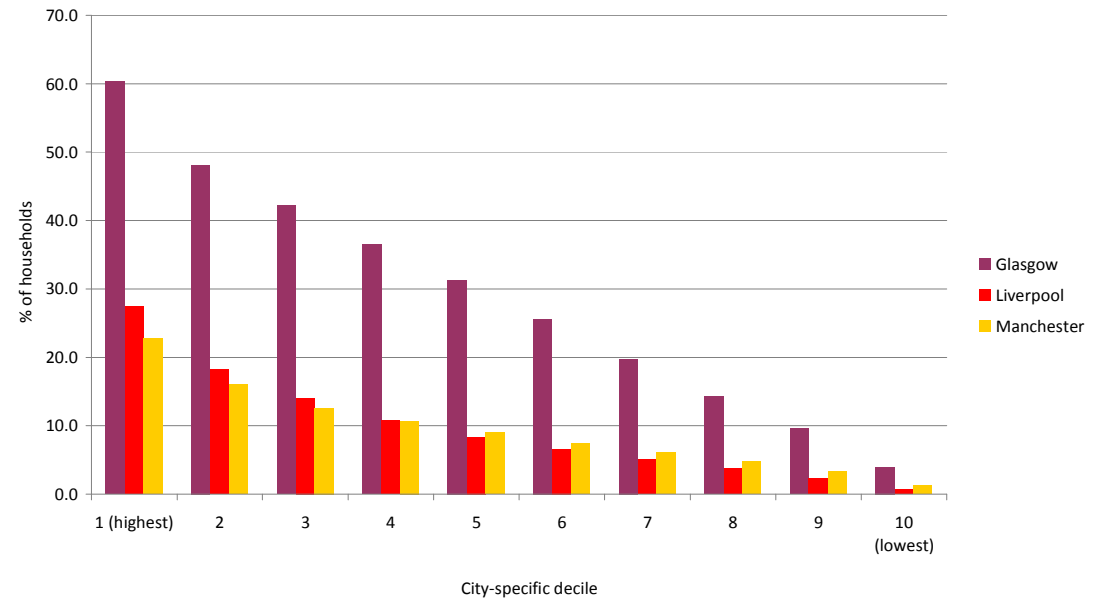


Percentage of households classed as 'core poor', 1970-2000

Source: Breadline Britain data (Dorling et al, 2007)



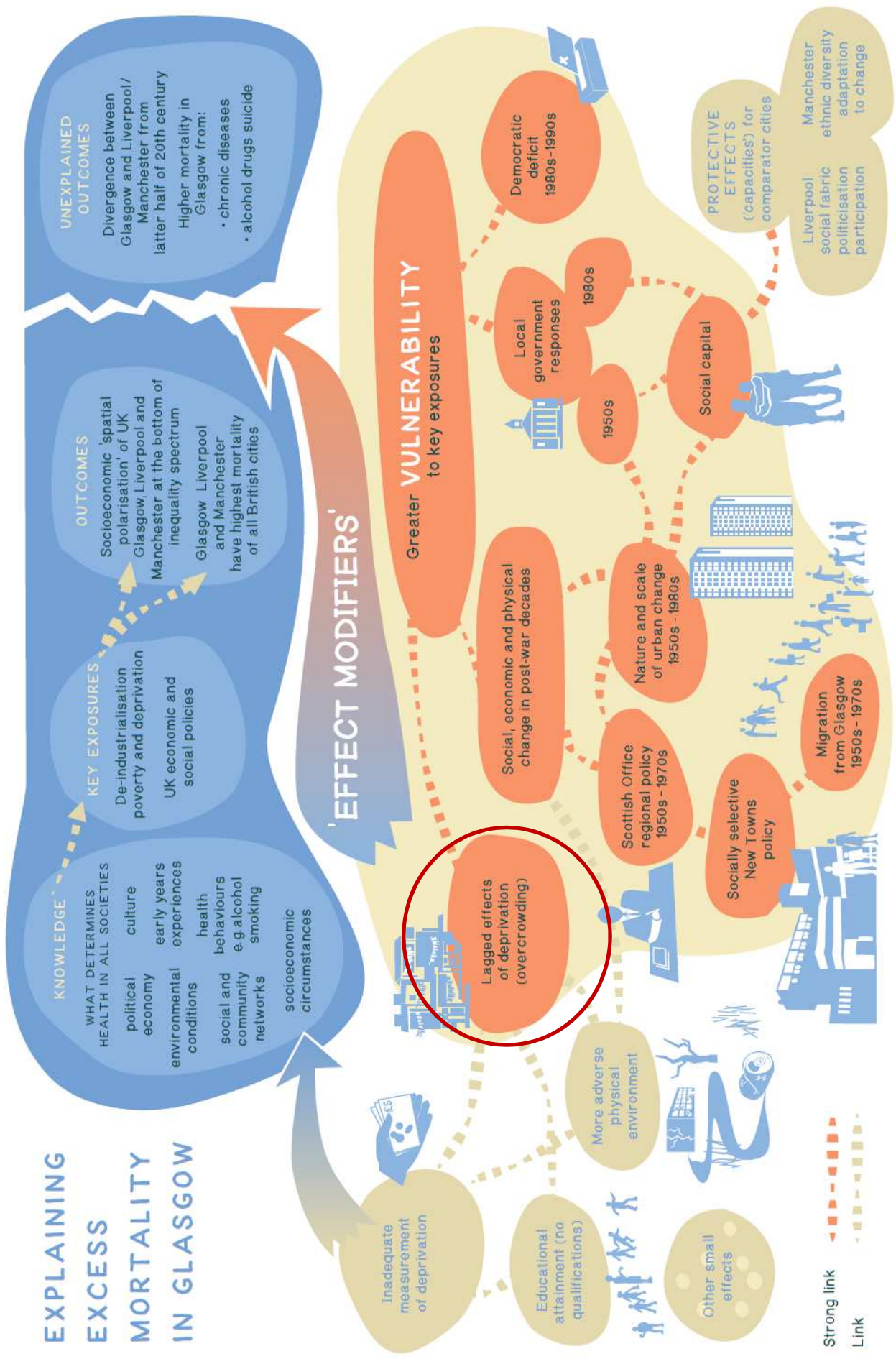
Distribution of overcrowding (households > 1 person per room) across city-specific deciles, 1971



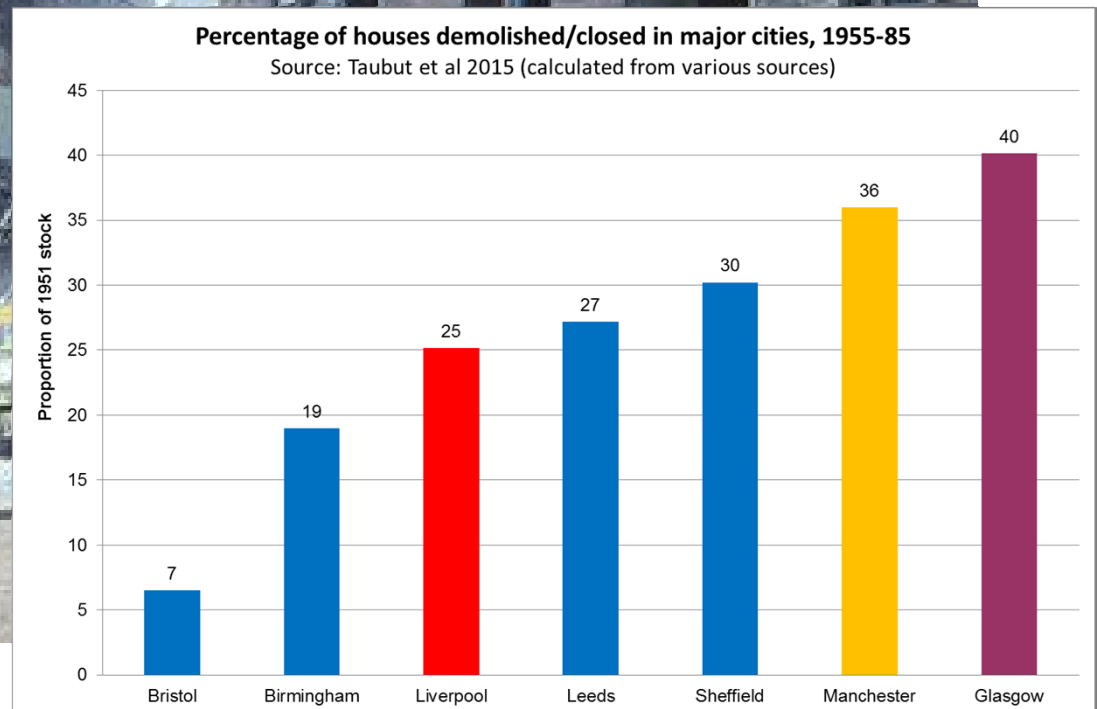


Source: Nick Hedges/Shelter Scotland (© Shelter 2015)

EXPLAINING EXCESS MORTALITY IN GLASGOW



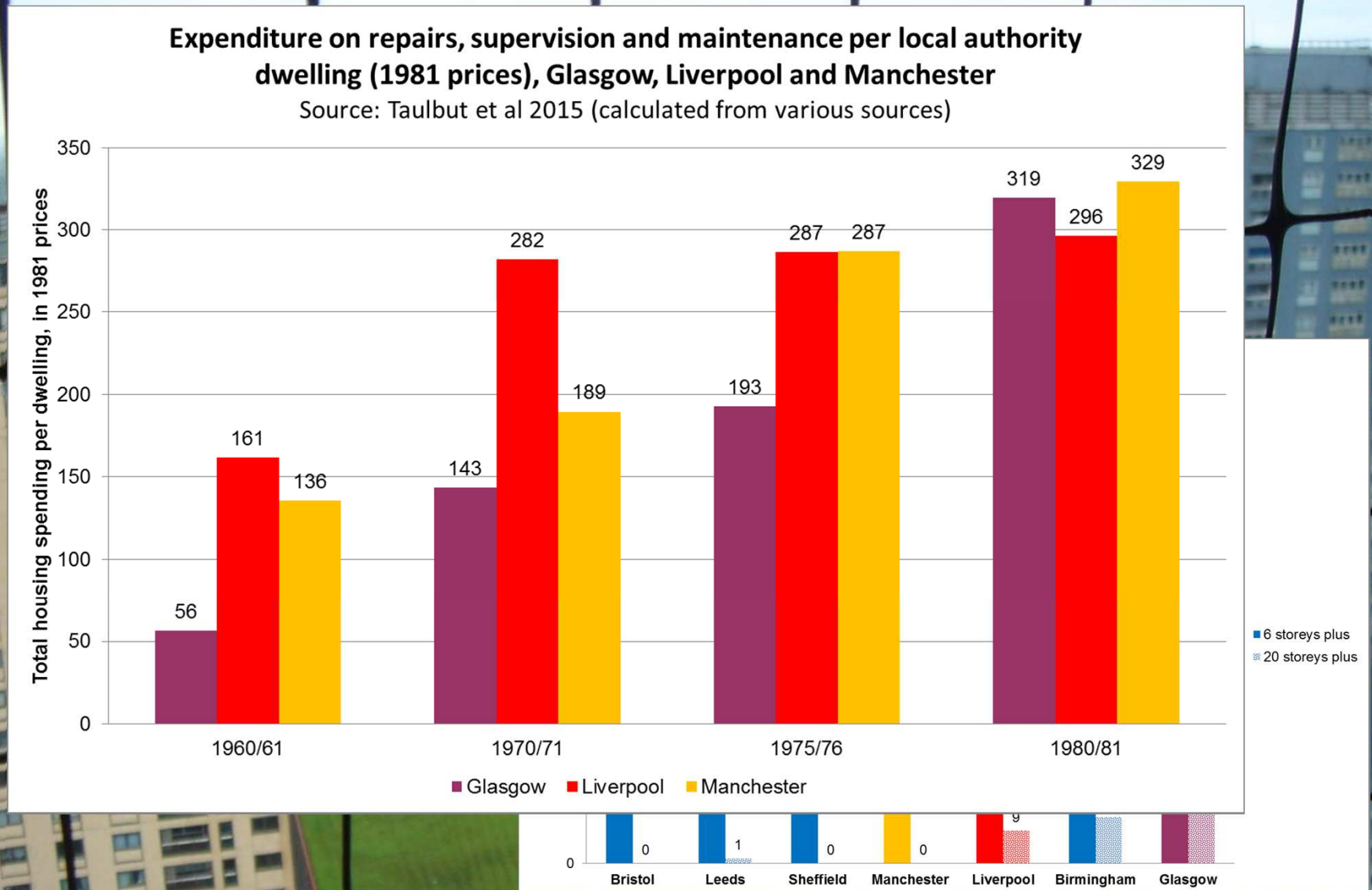
Nature & scale of urban change 1950s-80s



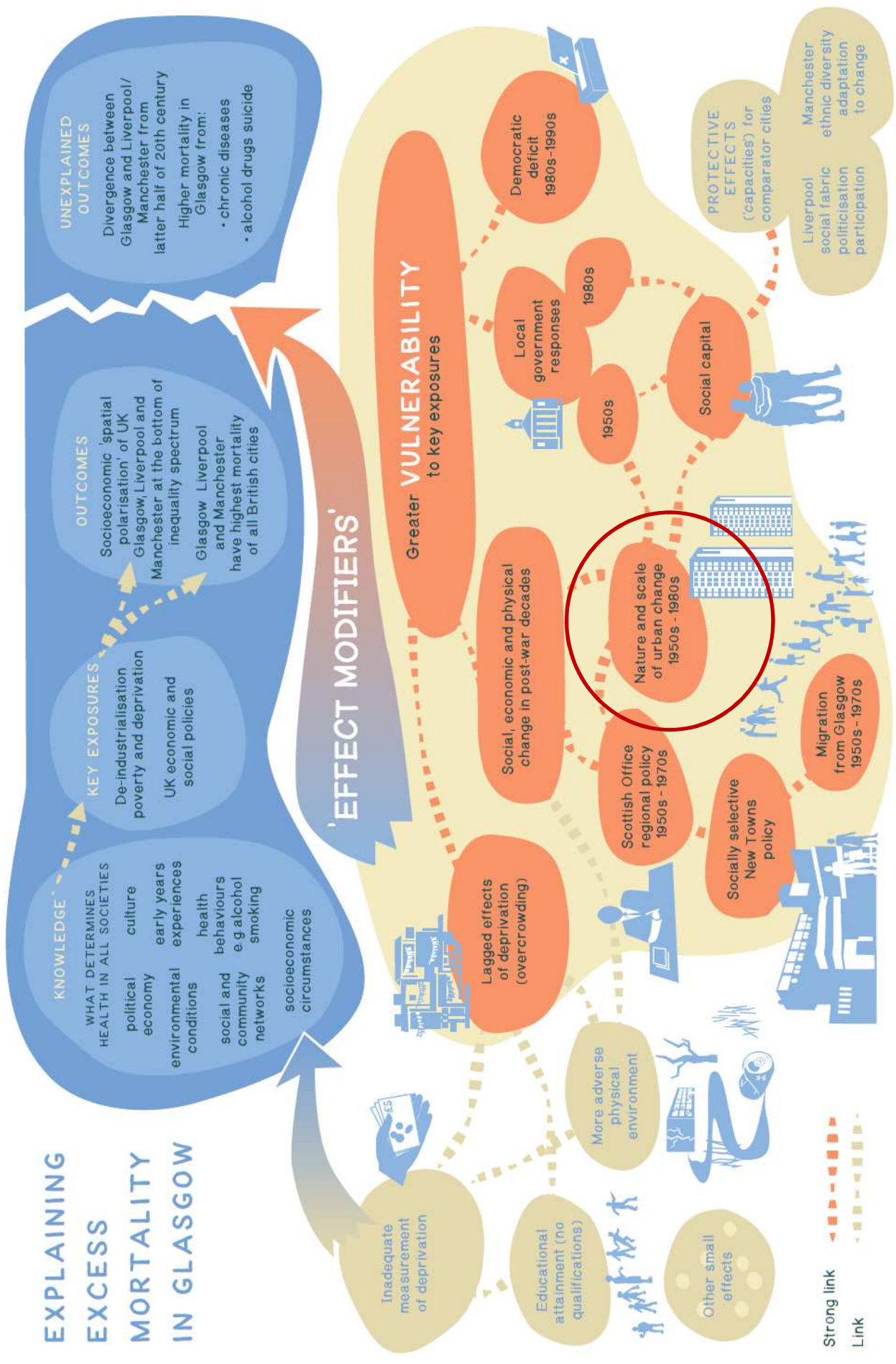
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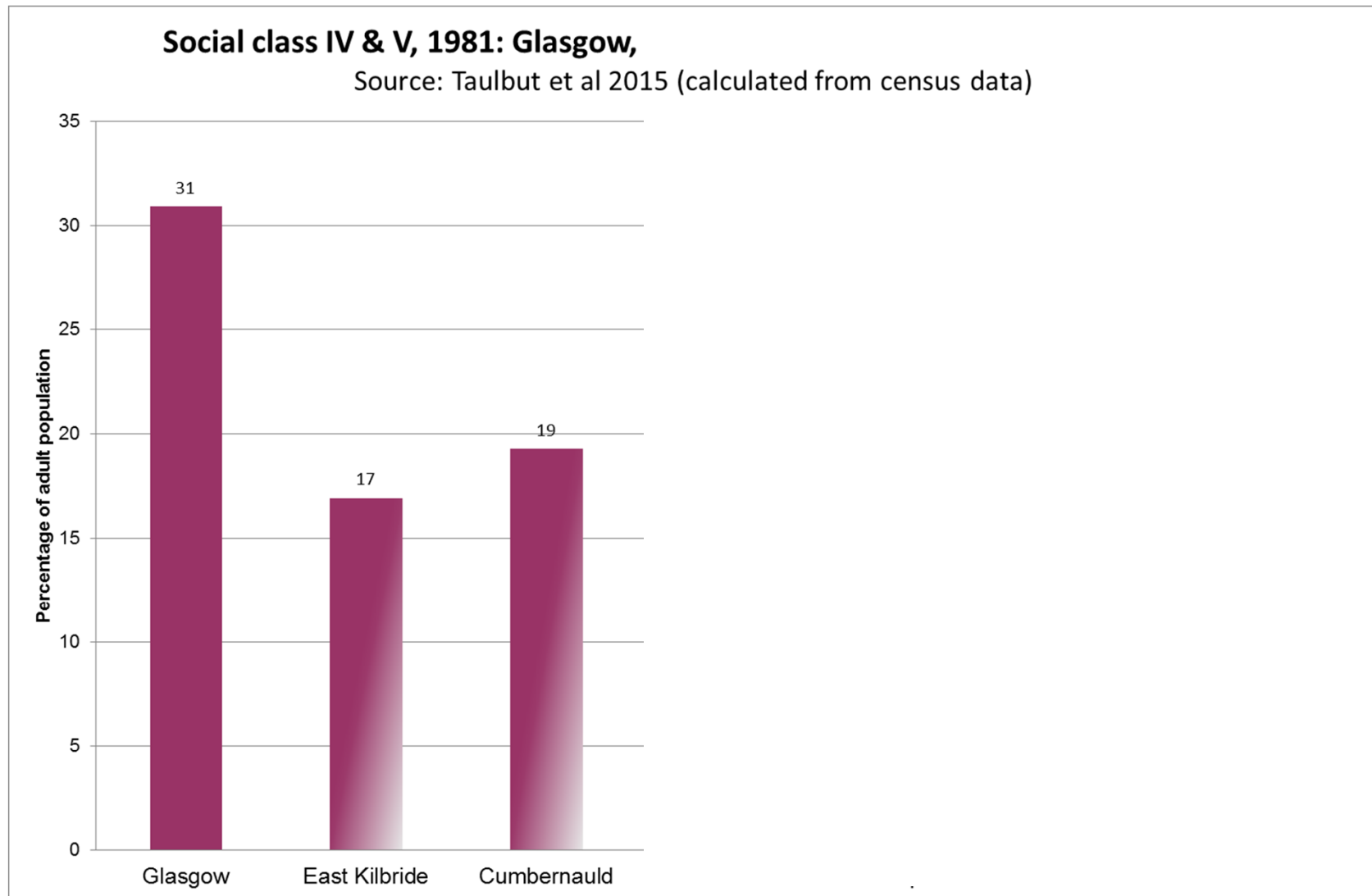
EXPLAINING EXCESS MORTALITY IN GLASGOW



Scottish Office regional policy 1950s-1970s

- Scottish Office was part of UK Government (but which had high levels of autonomy)
- Extensive analyses of previously secret government documents (Chik Collins & Ian Levitt)
- Scottish Office recognition of deep-rooted post-WWII housing problems
- No confidence that local government could solve it
- Policies to 'sacrifice' the city – to relocate industry and skilled population E.g. socially selective New Towns policy

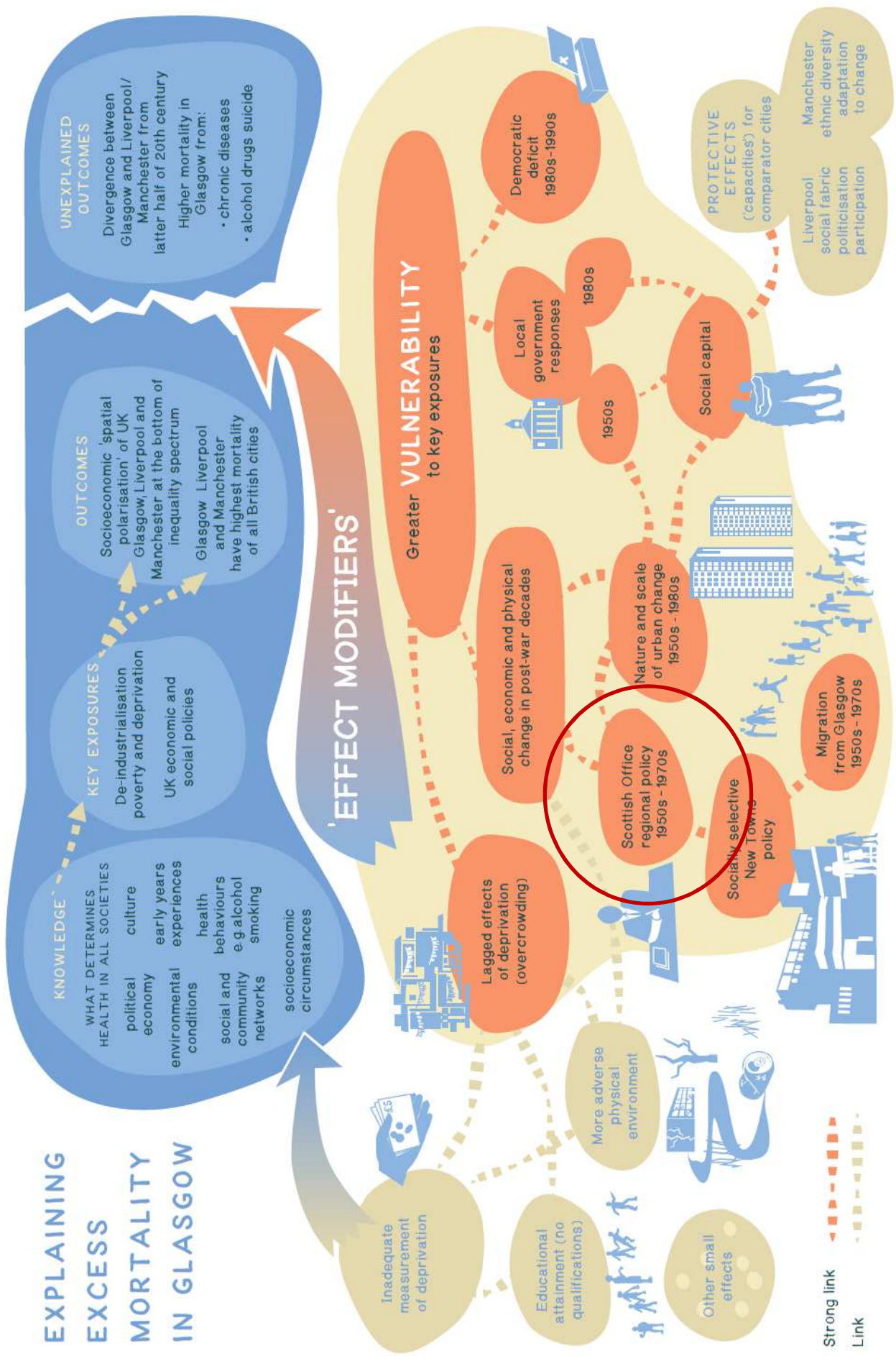
Regional policy post-WWII



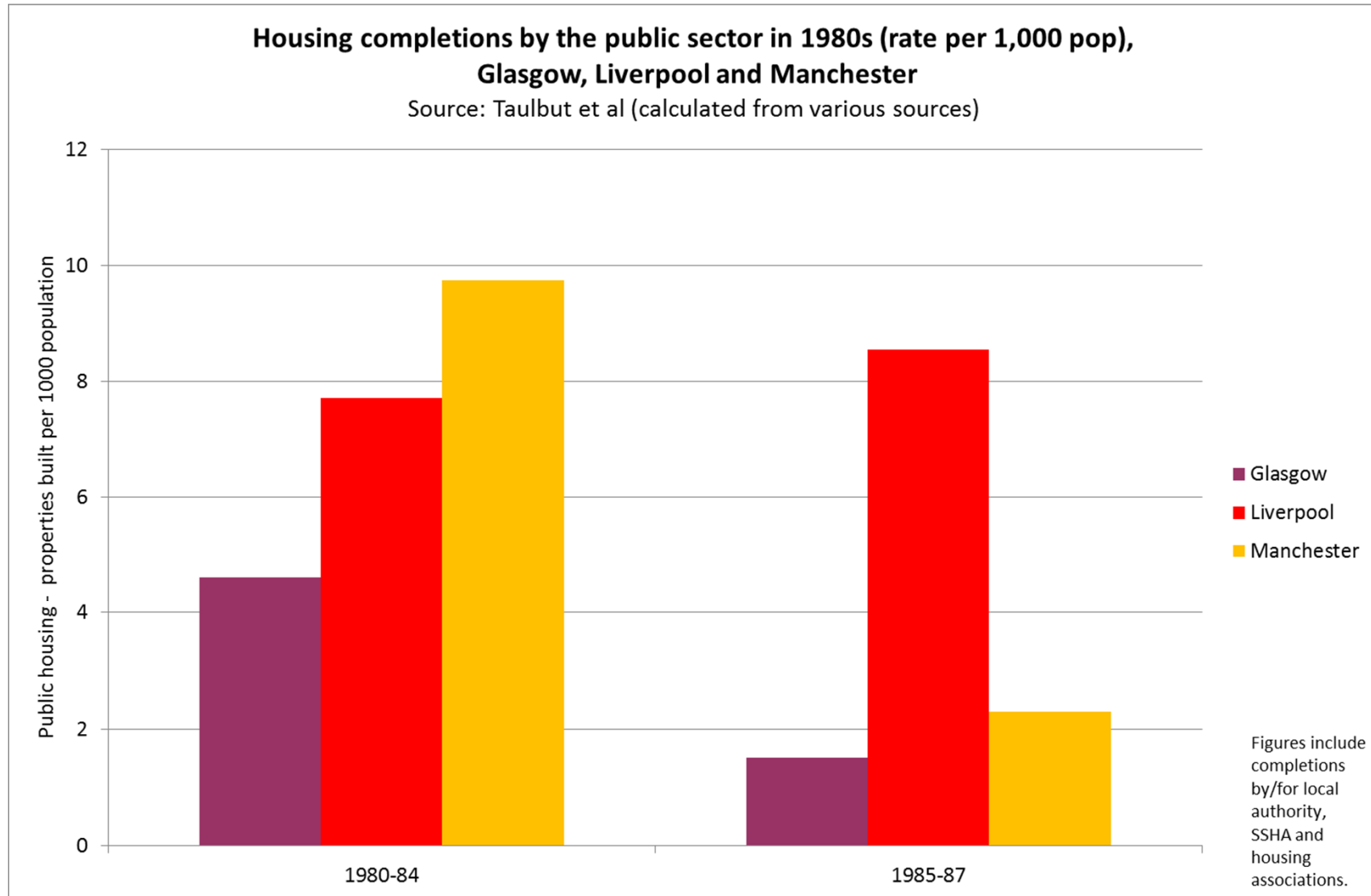
Regional policy post-WWII

- Policy extended & expedited during 1950s-70s despite awareness of consequences (socio-economic and health) for the city:
- “it is true that today we are getting rid of some of our best tenants and are leaving ourselves with this gap, **and we are losing the capacity for leadership in the very communities which are creating the social problems**” (Hugh Brown, MP, 1966)
- “Glasgow is in a socially... [and] economically dangerous position. The position is becoming worse because, although the rate of population reduction ... is acceptable, **the manner of it is destined within a decade or so to produce a seriously unbalanced population with a very high proportion of the old, the very poor and the almost unemployable** ... the above factors amount to a very powerful case for drastic action to reverse present trends within the city. [But] there is an immediate question as to how much room exists for manoeuvre.” (1971 SDD Reflective Review of the impact of overspill policy on Glasgow, “The Glasgow Crisis”).

EXPLAINING EXCESS MORTALITY IN GLASGOW



Local government responses 1980s



EXPLAINING EXCESS MORTALITY IN GLASGOW

KNOWLEDGE
WHAT DETERMINES HEALTH IN ALL SOCIETIES

- political economy
- environmental conditions
- culture
- early years experiences

KEY EXPOSURES

- De-industrialisation poverty and deprivation
- UK economic and social policies

OUTCOMES

Socioeconomic 'spatial polarisation' of UK Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester at the bottom of inequality spectrum

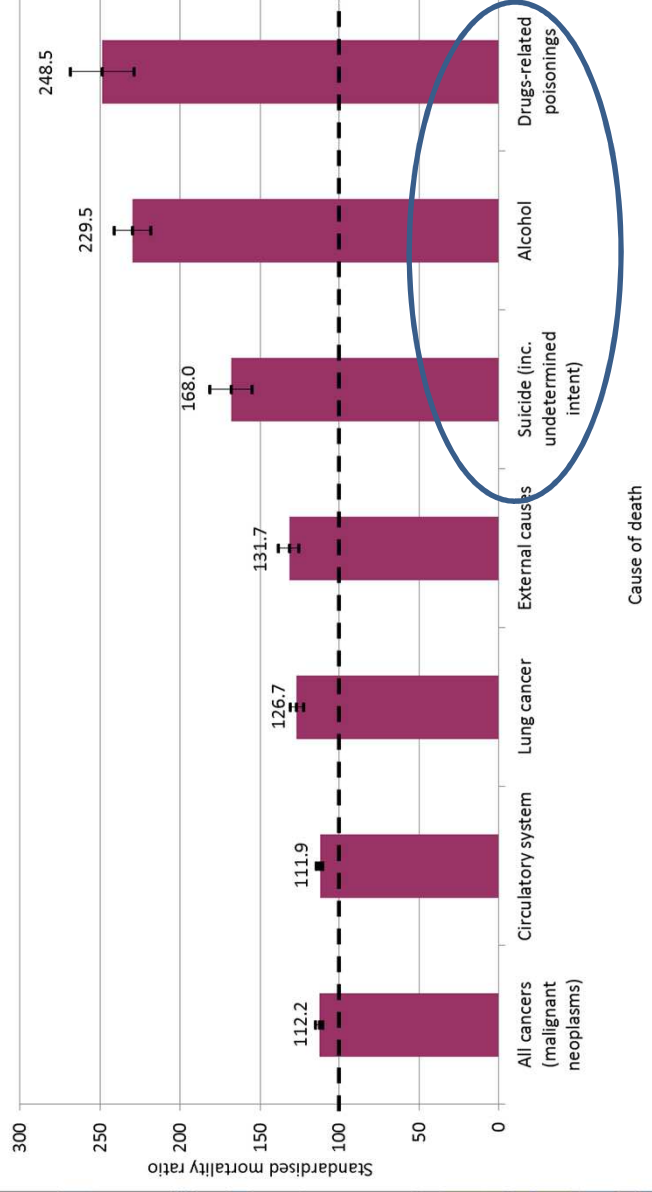
UNEXPLAINED OUTCOMES

Divergence between Glasgow and Liverpool/Manchester from latter half of 20th century

Higher mortality in Glasgow from:

- chronic diseases
- alcohol drugs suicide

All ages, both sexes: cause-specific standardised mortality ratios 2003-07, Glasgow relative to Liverpool & Manchester, standardised by age, sex and deprivation decile



Cause of death

Strong link

Link

Inadequate measurement of deprivation

Educational attainment (no qualifications)

Other small effects

Socially selective New Towns policy

Migration from Glasgow 1950s - 1970s

PROTECTIVE EFFECTS ('capacities') for comparator cities

Liverpool social fabric politicisation

Manchester ethnic diversity adaptation to change

Democratic deficit 1980s-1990s

Conclusions

- Health in Scotland (and especially Glasgow) characterised by extremely wide inequalities
- ‘Excess’ mortality plays a huge part in that
- The scale of the excess is enormous – and tragic
- Most likely underlying causes now identified
 - Highly complex and multifactorial
 - Glasgow made more vulnerable to economic/political exposures by a whole series of adverse historical factors and decisions
- Emphasises importance of political (especially economic) decisions for population health
 - Report includes 26 specific policy recommendations to address the issue

And finally...

The 'new' Glasgow

- From this...

The 'new' Glasgow



The 'new' Glasgow

- From this...
- ...to this...

Glasgow...



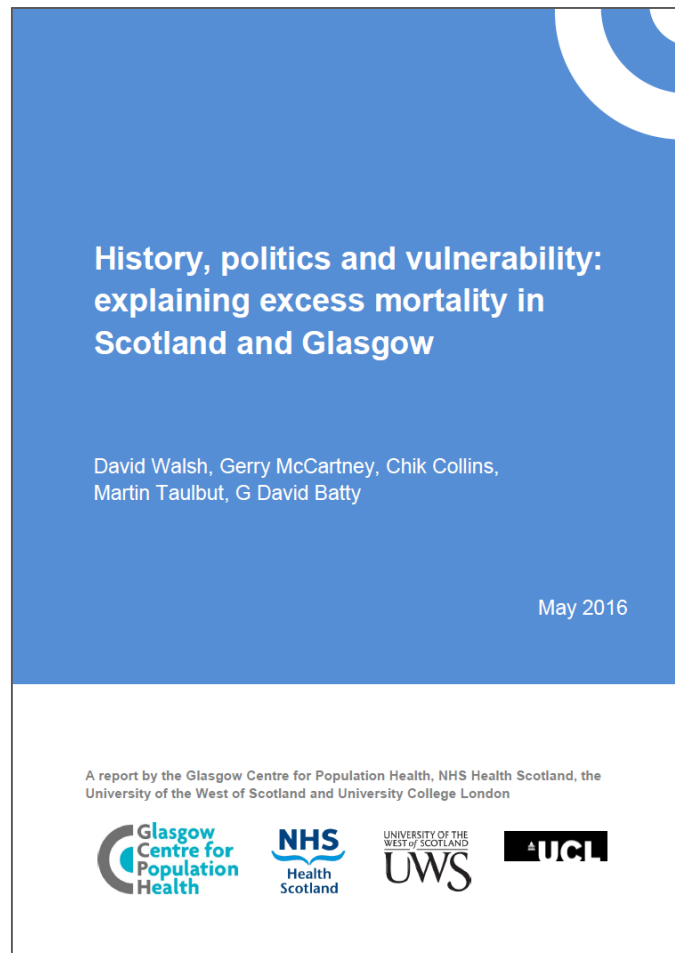
Glasgow:
Scotland with style®



Clashdown! Scotland®
with style



Further details



- Report available from:
www.gcph.co.uk
- Or email me:
david.walsh.2@glasgow.ac.uk

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