

DID (AND DOES) THE BORDER MATTER?

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Our paper assesses the impact of the Border on

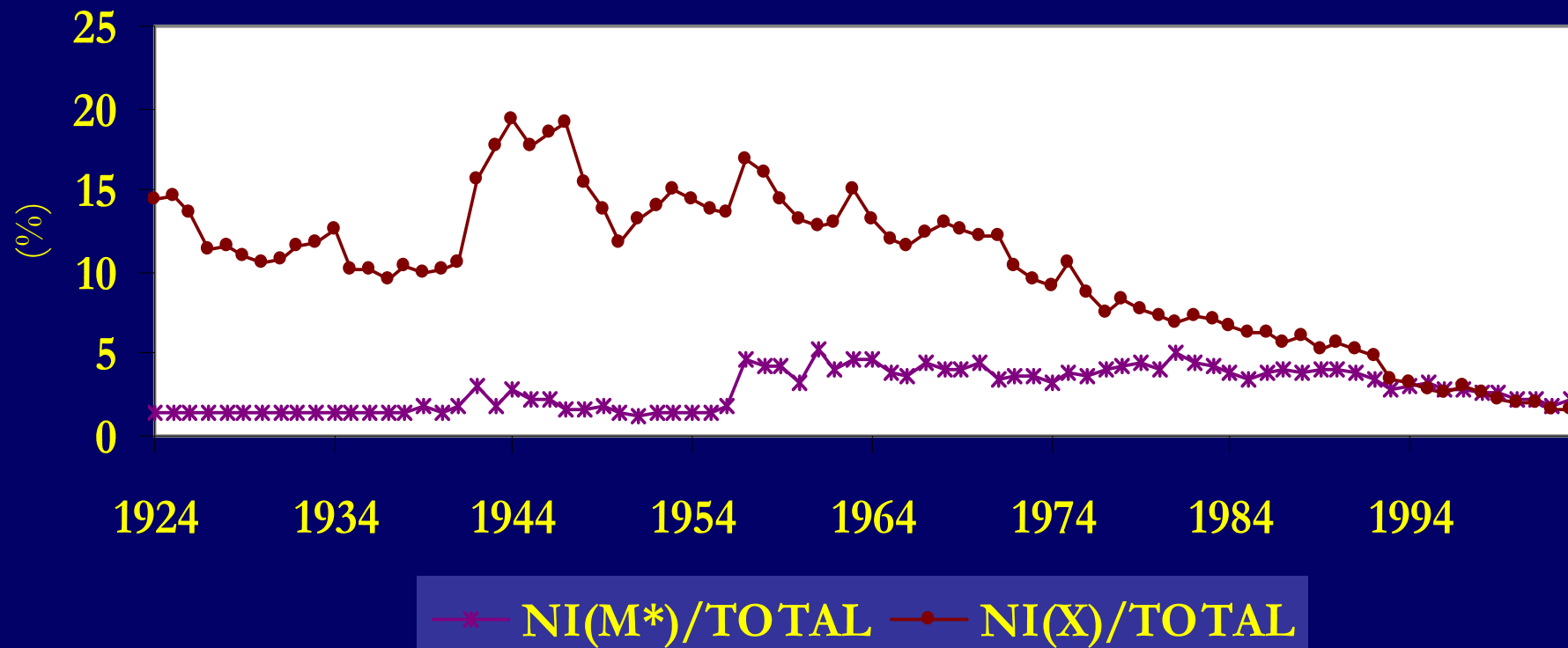
- North-South trade and traffic flows**
- North-South migration**
- Population development in Border areas**

Our methodology draws on

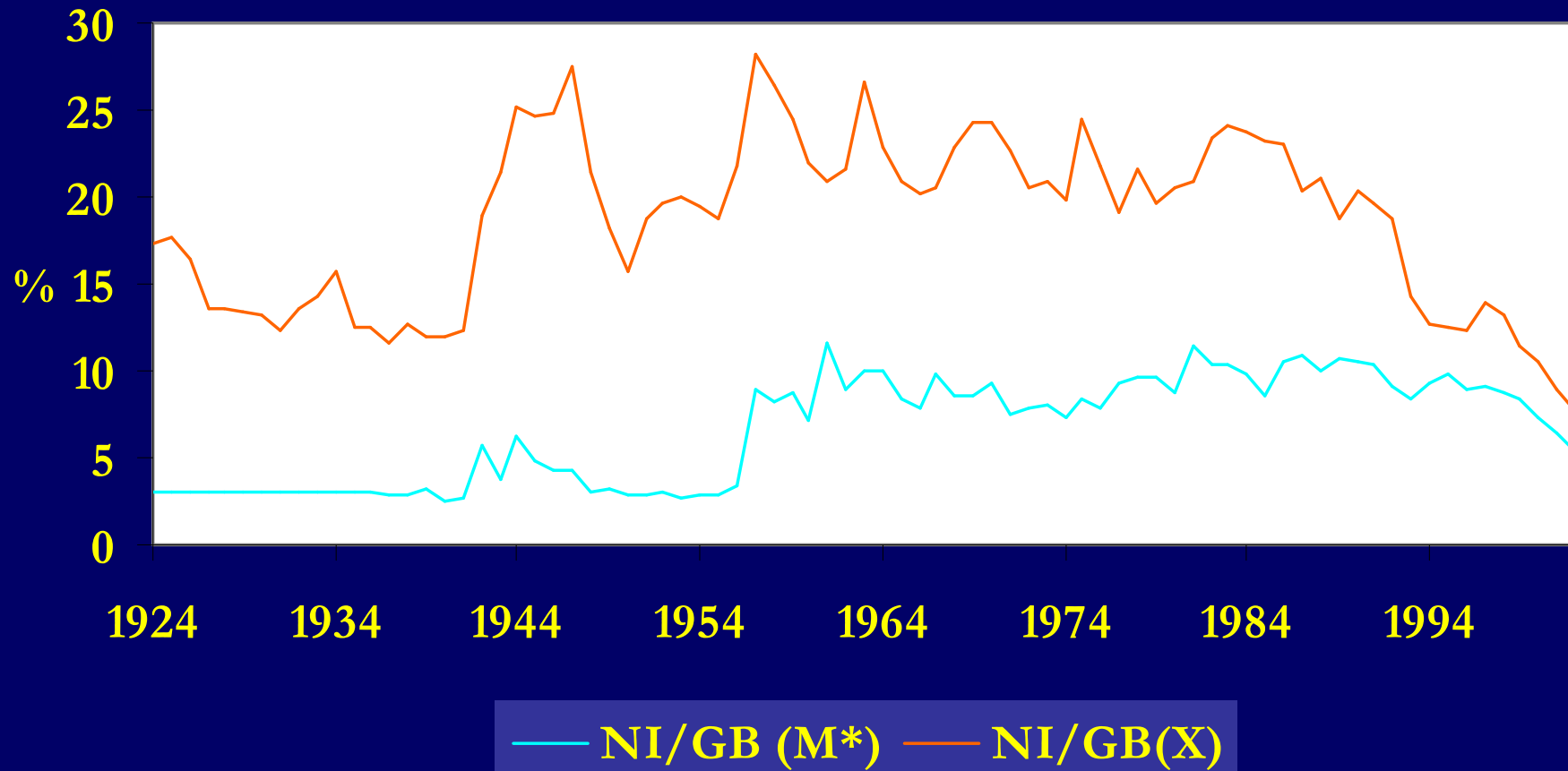
- Before / after Partition Comparisons**
- With / without the Border counterfactuals**

The Border and North-South trade

Fig. 1a. NI TRADE AS A PERCENTAGE OF RoI TRADE,
1924-2004



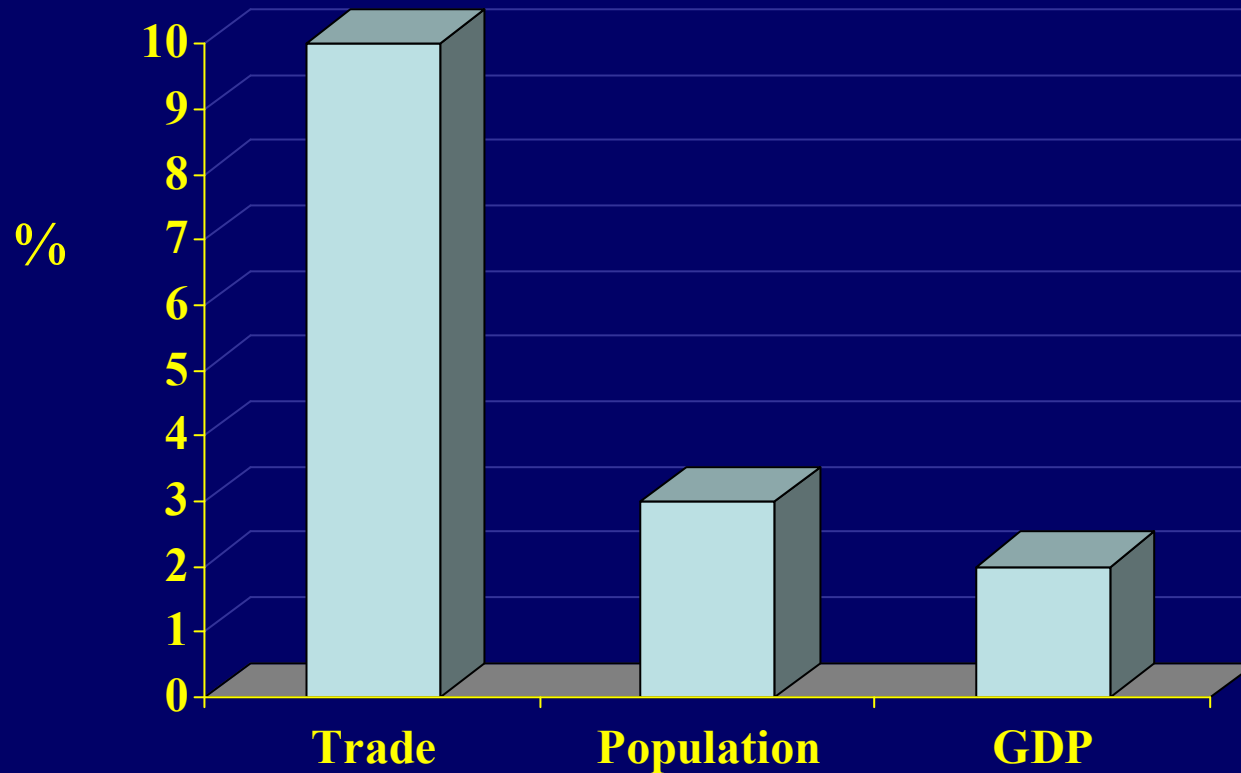
**Fig. 2. ROI/NI TRADE RELATIVE TO GB/ROI TRADE,
1924-2002**



**But NI-RoI trade is still larger than
might be expected . . .**

**. . . by simple comparison of NI's
share of RoI's trade with UK
relative to its share of UK
population and GDP**

NI's share of RoI's trade with UK relative to its share of UK population and GDP , 1998



**Or from the predictions of an
econometric model of trade
between RoI's trading partners
based on their size, proximity,
common language, etc.**

Trade patterns

RI has consistently run a trading surplus with NI and indeed with the UK as a whole.

Not much evidence that the South's protectionist stance 1934-1966 had much impact on trade *shares*

Long-run decline in relative importance of North-South trade reflects

- UK's declining share of RoI's trade, and
- Some decline in NI's share of RI's trade with UK

No clear breaks corresponding to Troubles or change in currency regime (Pre-Partition data not available, but see comments on traffic flows, below)

Bearing in mind that North-South trade is relatively large, we may still ask whether it has been reduced by

- the division of the island in 1922,**
- policies pursued by the two governments,**
- the Troubles, etc,**

Or whether structural factors dominate

Structural factors

The long-standing specialization of the two parts of the island in different export activities

- The North in linen, shipbuilding, engineering, tobacco and rope making,
- The South in livestock, alcoholic beverages and more recently high-tech industries

none of which have significant natural north-south

backward or forward linkages

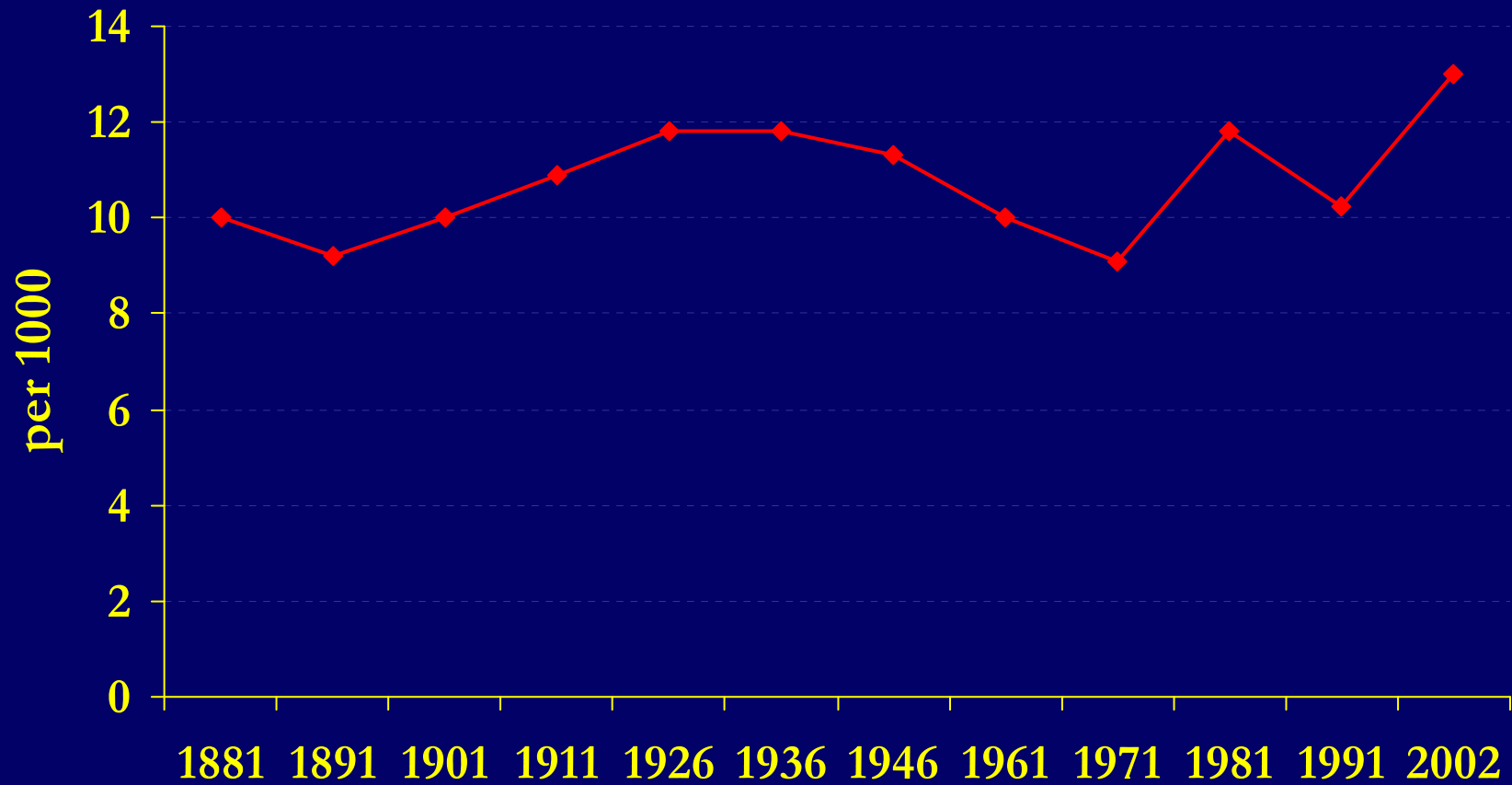
Migration and Residence

Geary and Hughes 1970 noted on this front
“A phenomenon of lower and, as we think,
diminishing association, [that] has
lasted for hundreds of years”

Northerners living in South

- Proportion of South's population born in North has fluctuated round 1% for over 100 years
 - Low relative to rate of inter-county migration in South
- No marked male/female difference
- No big breaks evident after Partition or during the Troubles
- Has risen in response to increased prosperity in South, but fallen relative to total immigration

Figure 4: Proportion of RoI residents born in NI



Share of NI in total immigration to RoI

The previous figure showed that 1.3 % of the 2002 RoI population was born in NI.

This represented just 12.5% of all those born outside RoI recorded in the Census.

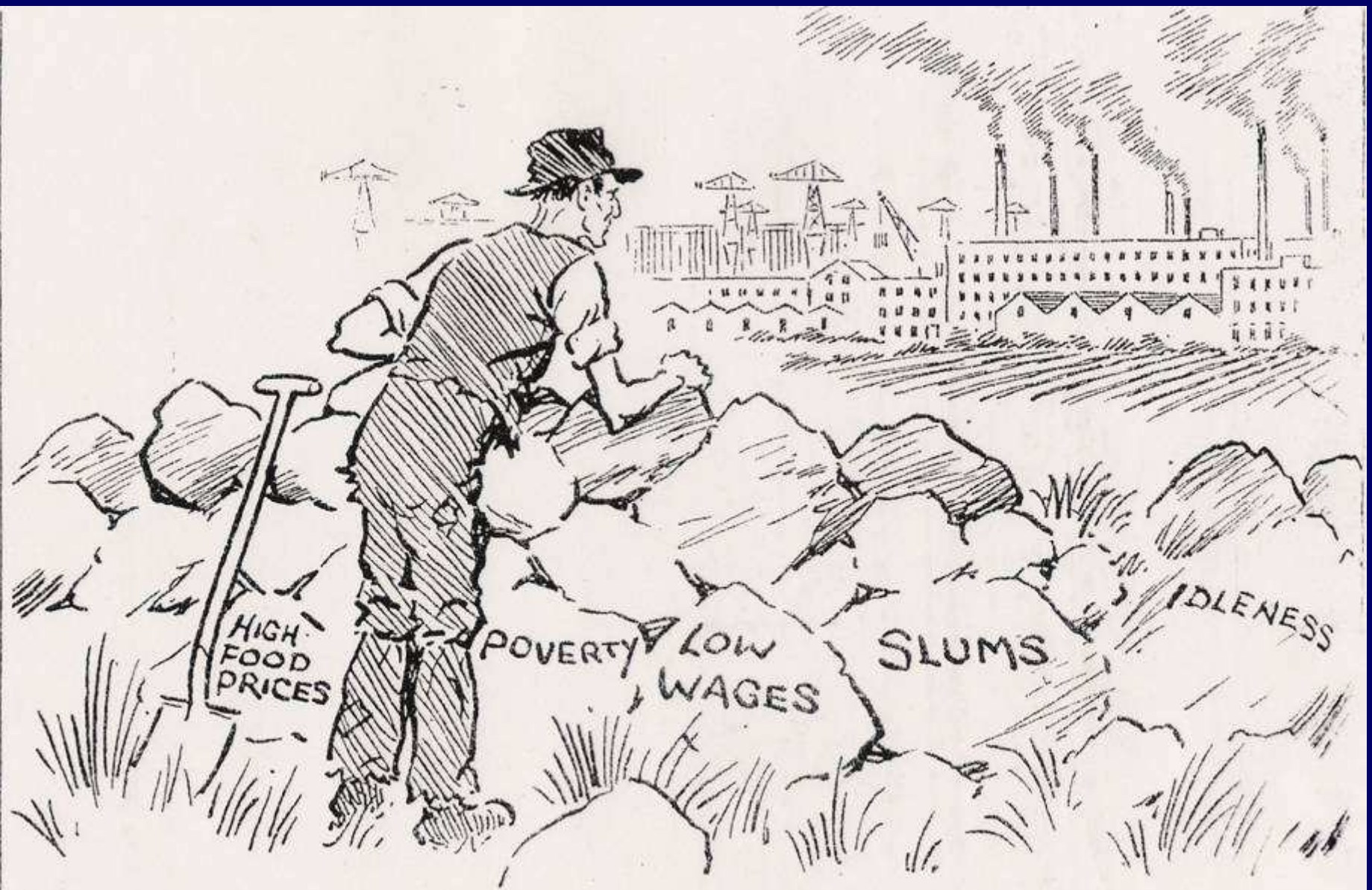
Moreover, the share of NI immigrants in the recent inflow is much lower . . .

Share of NI in recent immigration to RoI

In the 2002 Census, only 4.6% of the usual residents of the Republic who had been living elsewhere one year previously were from NI. Only 4.9% of those born outside RoI who moved in over the year were born in NI – a total of only 2,482.

Southerners living in North

- Proportion rose to a peak of about 5% in 1926
 - Northern fears of being swamped by immigrants from South?

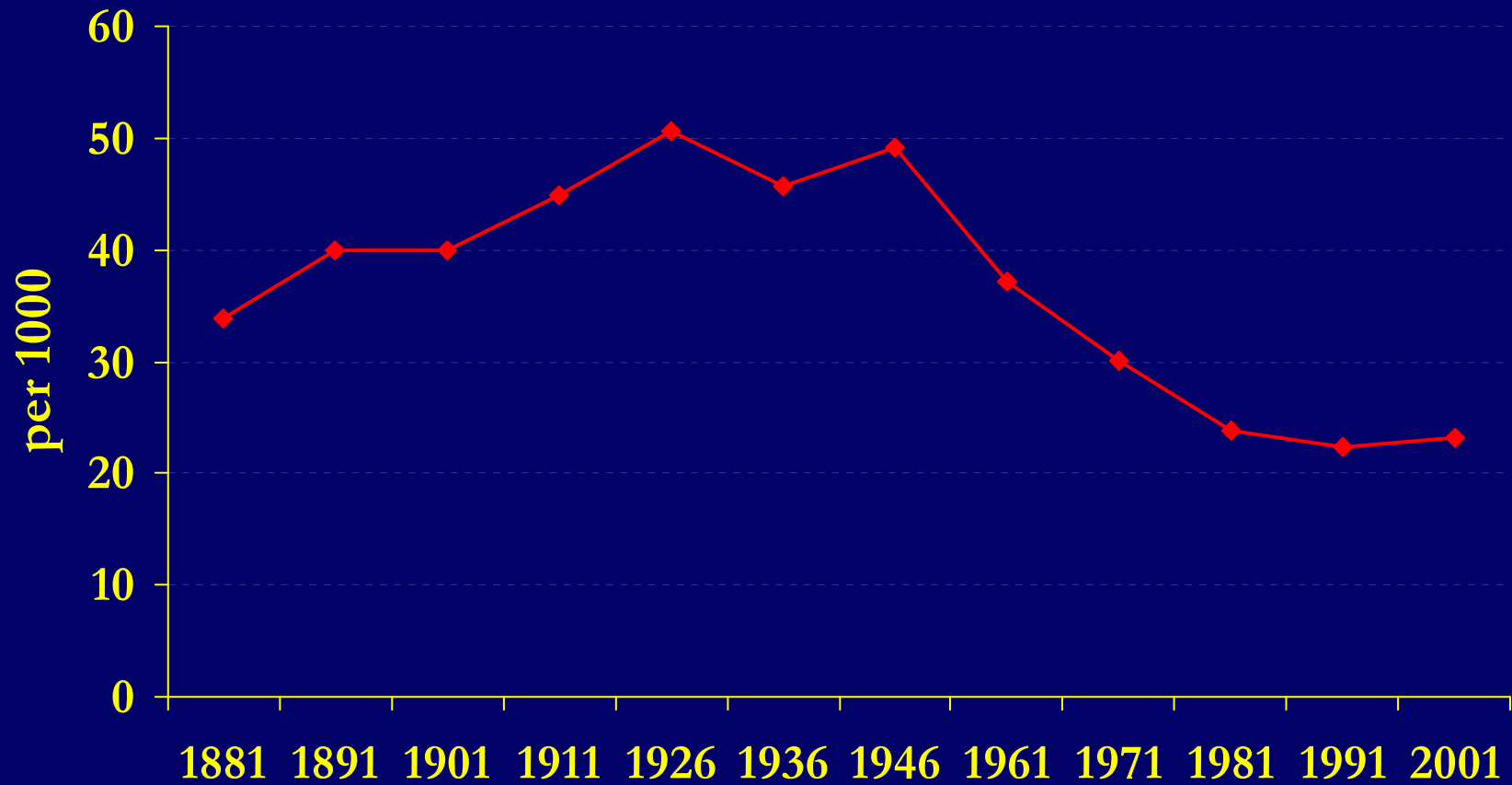


ILL-PAID EIRE WORKER: "WOULDN'T I JUST LIKE TO LIVE IN THAT SAME 'BLACK' NORTH!"

Southerners living in North

- Proportion rose to a peak of about 5% in 1926
 - Declined in half between 1946 and 1981
 - Levelled off over last 25 years
- Female proportion about 50% higher than male
 - Movement on marriage?

Figure 4: Proportion of NI residents born in RoI



Composition of migrant flows

- **Migration between South and North has always contained a disproportionate share of white-collar and skilled labour**
 - **In 2001 the NI workforce born in RoI was more skilled and clerical than that born in GB**

Border effects

- **Small fluctuations in proportions of Northerners living in southern Border counties**
 - Declined 1926-1966
 - Rose fairly sharply with recent southern prosperity
- **The share of southerners among the “immigrants” to Fermanagh declined in the post-war period**

Border effects

Some econometric evidence that the population of the five southern border counties grew less rapidly after Partition than would have been expected on the basis of the determinants of growth 1841-1911

- Partition reduced population of Border counties by 29% over period 1911-1996?
- Net loss to Republic of 4.2% of 1996 total?

Border effects

There is some evidence that Partition had a small negative effect on towns located near the Border

Population growth of towns located near the Border

some 22 percentage points lower than that of

comparable towns located some distance from the

Border (North and South)

Rail traffic flows

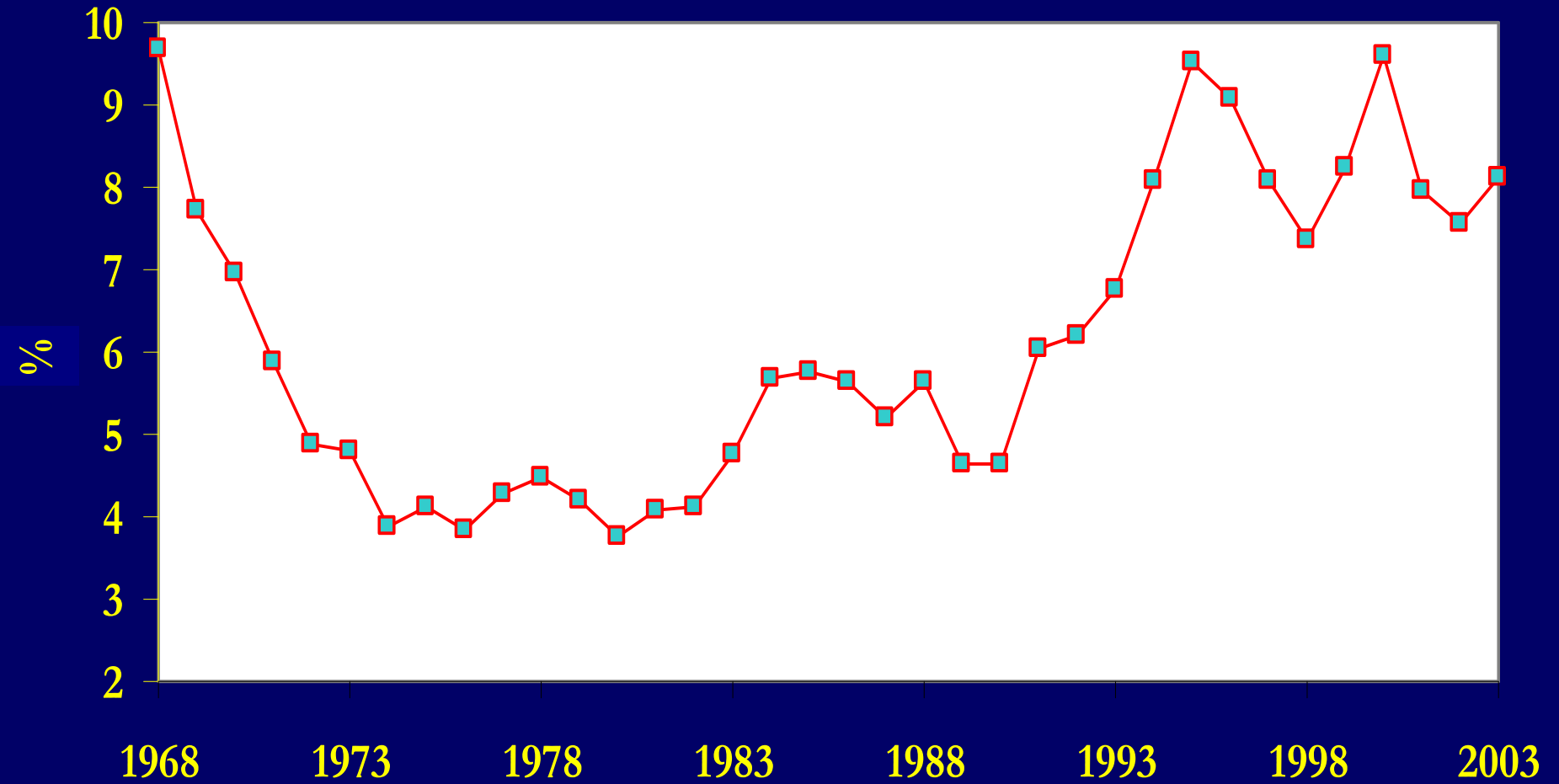
- **Dublin-Belfast rail passenger traffic declined as proportion of total during the Troubles but has recovered since**
 - **But it still accounts for only 10% of all RoI traffic**
 - **Amounts to less than 30% of Dublin-Cork traffic**
 - **Even these figures may be overstated by use of Dublin-Belfast line by travelers who do not cross Border**

Figure 7. Passengers on the Dublin-Belfast Line 1968-2004
(million)



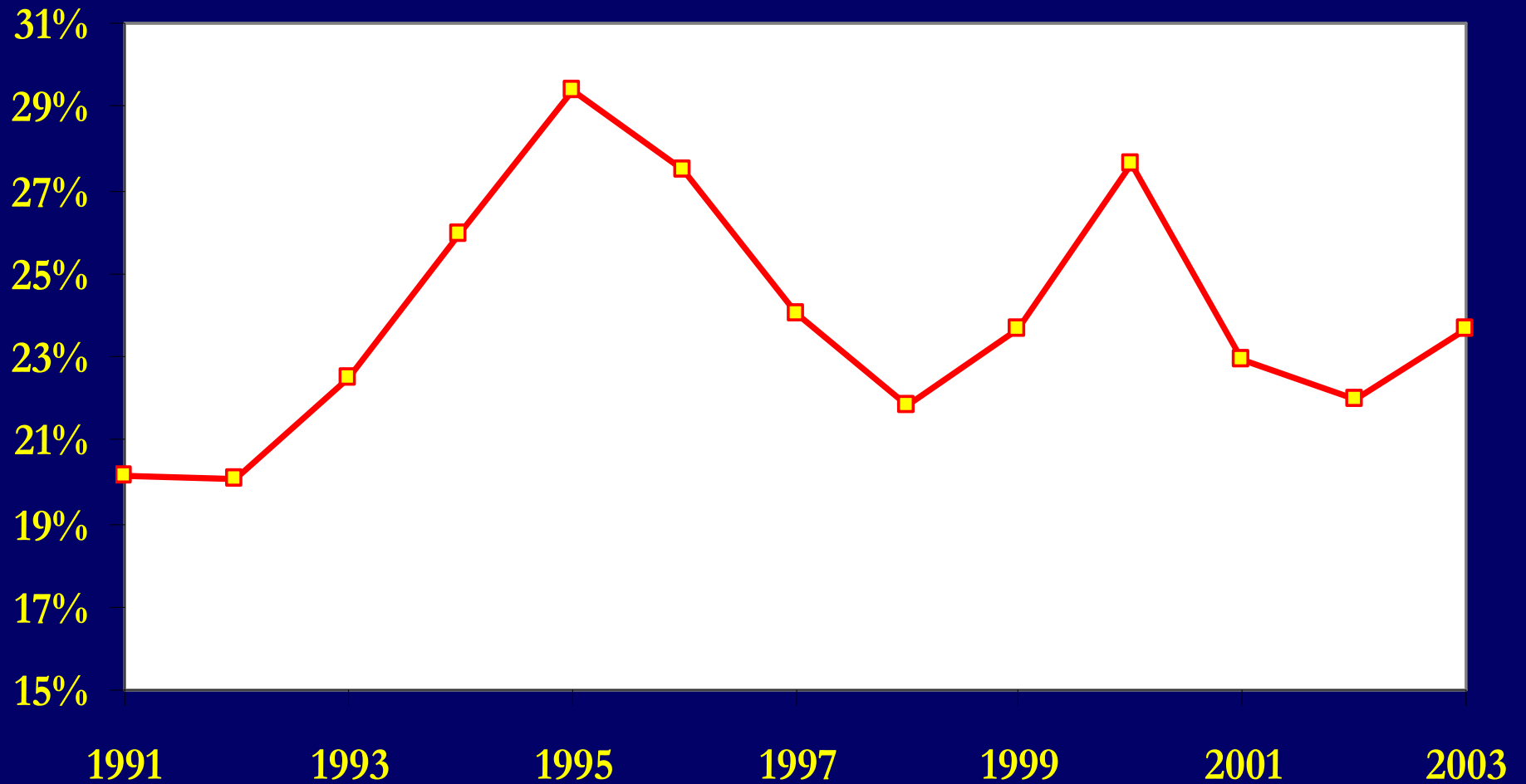
Note: Assumes all passengers cross the border!

Figure 8. Cross-border Passengers as a Percentage of all RoI Rail Passengers 1968-2003



Note: Assumes all passengers on Dublin-Belfast line cross the border!

**Figure 9. Belfast/Dublin as Proportion of
Cork/Dublin Rail Traffic, 1991-2003**



Road traffic flows

The available data confirm the relative unimportance of North-South road traffic when compared with South-South traffic.

- Between 1984-2004 traffic on southern routes grew slightly faster than traffic on North-South routes.

Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor?

“The two cities have business sectors that have developed independently so that there are very few complementarities and there is no tradition of inter-city linkages”

Consultancy Report *Border Crossing* 1999.

Plus ça change!

In its appraisal of a rail line that would link Dublin and Belfast via Navan and Armagh, in the mid-1830s the Drummond Commission found that it:

“would cross and intersect the stream of traffic flowing towards the coast and would, therefore, be of very little service in facilitating and promoting the carrying trade of this part of the country. It is on the conveyance of passengers that this line of Railway must rest its chief claim of support as a work of public utility . . . We have to observe, that it [the Coast Line] may be considered altogether in the light of a speculation which has no reference to the internal commercial traffic of the country, but as one which will afford a desirable facility for passenger intercourse between the important commercial towns which it is intended to connect.”

(British Parliamentary Papers (BPP) 1837/8: 15 and 8:44). 32

In the event the completion of the North-South link and bridging the 56-mile gap between Drogheda and Portadown involved litigation regarding differing gauges, reluctant cooperation between fragile companies, and the unprecedented engineering feat of bridging the Boyne Valley It was not completed until 1855, some six years after the Dublin-Cork line was completed.

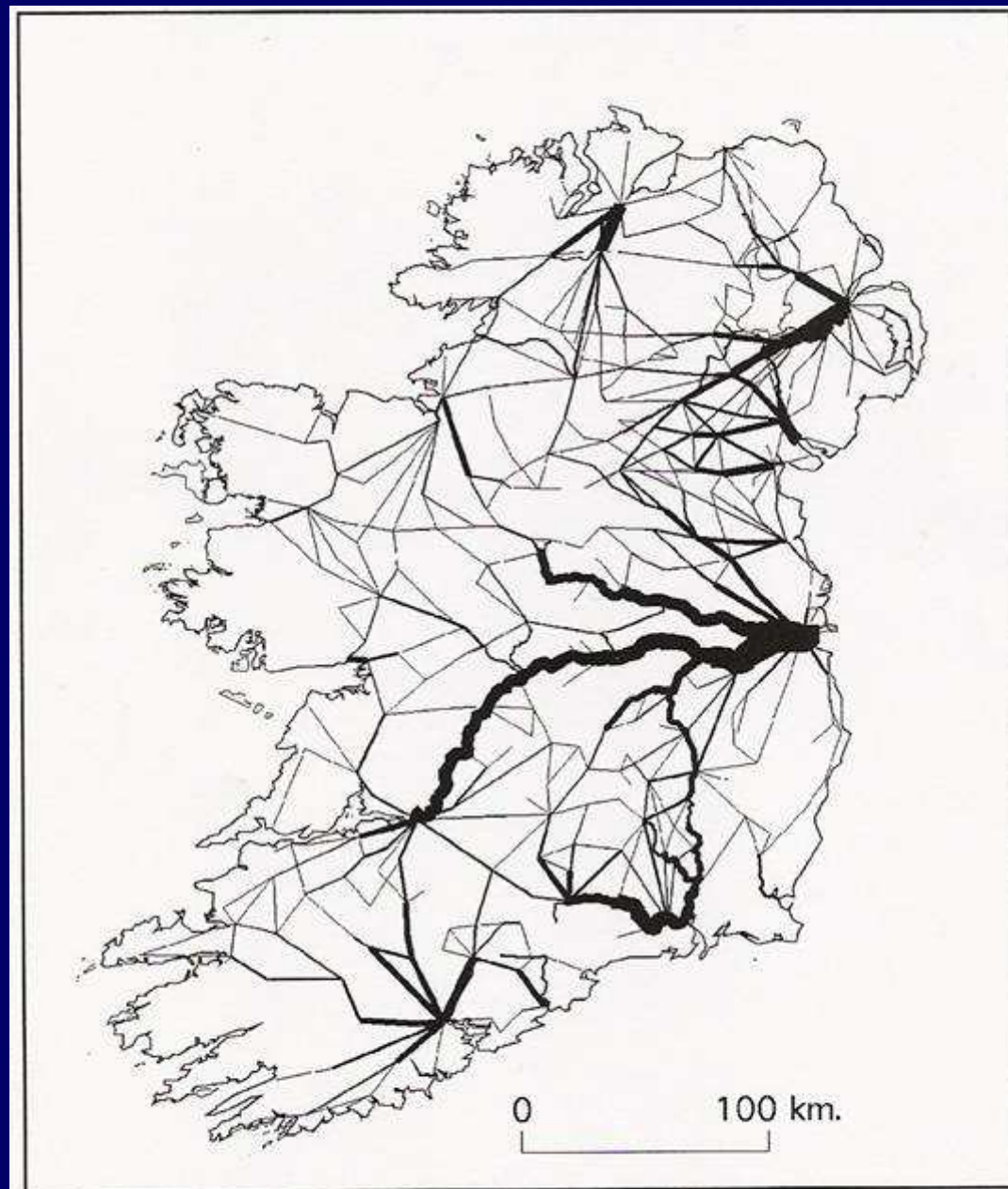


Figure 6. Freight traffic on roads and waterways, 1837.
Source: Railway Commissioners, Ireland, 1838.

Concluding remarks

We have found some evidence that the partition of Ireland in 1922 drove a wedge between North and South, for example

- Population growth in the Border areas seems to have been depressed from what would have been expected

Concluding remarks

But by and large we have been impressed by continuity rather than disruption

- **The volume of North-South trade remains higher than might be expected on the basis of the standard economic determinants of trade**
- **North-South migration and passenger flows appear to be relative feeble, but this seems to follow a long-established tendency for the two parts of the island to develop separately**

Concluding remarks

Particularly striking are the facts that during the sustained improvement in the Republic's relative economic performance that started in the 1990s

- The North's share in the Republic's trade has continued to fall, and
- The attraction of the Republic for immigrants from the North has barely increased, despite the massive upsurge in immigration from other countries.