

The Functionality of Scotland's City-Regions

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ABSTRACT

The concept of the 'city-region' is one that has remained somewhat elusive despite efforts to theoretically underpin the term. This is especially true in the context of Scotland. A number of ways of defining and measuring the city-region have been suggested in the current literature, although no author has so far attempted to produce a single operational definition of 'functional rationality' with respect to city-regions.

After briefly reviewing the literature on measuring and defining the city-region, the author considers several different ways of conceptualising the city-region, firstly as a 'daily system', secondly as something wider and less tangible but with a defined threshold and thirdly as an even wider region that has territory assigned to it in order to exhaust the spatial scale of Scotland. Different ways of measuring these concepts of the city-region (some established in the literature, some not) are considered. It is concluded that commuting patterns should be deployed as the primary vehicle for considering the nature and extent of the city-region. A number of reasons exist as to why this should be so, the most important being that commuting manages to encompass many of the other measures in a highly meaningful manner.

Key Words: city-region, functional rationality, commuting