

Delineating China's Metropolitan Areas Using Commuting Flows

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Abstract

Using novel commuting flow data between pairs of counties/townships, this paper delineates China's metropolitan areas by applying a simple algorithm that aggregate spatial units if the share of commuters in between exceeds a given threshold. We compare the commuting-based definitions of metropolitan areas and the administrative cities as well as those defined by satellite images. We explore the characteristics of commuting-based metropolitan areas and find that using administrative cities underestimates the large city premium along many important dimensions.

Keywords: Metropolitan area, commuting flow

JEL Classification:

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