

The Local Autonomy Project

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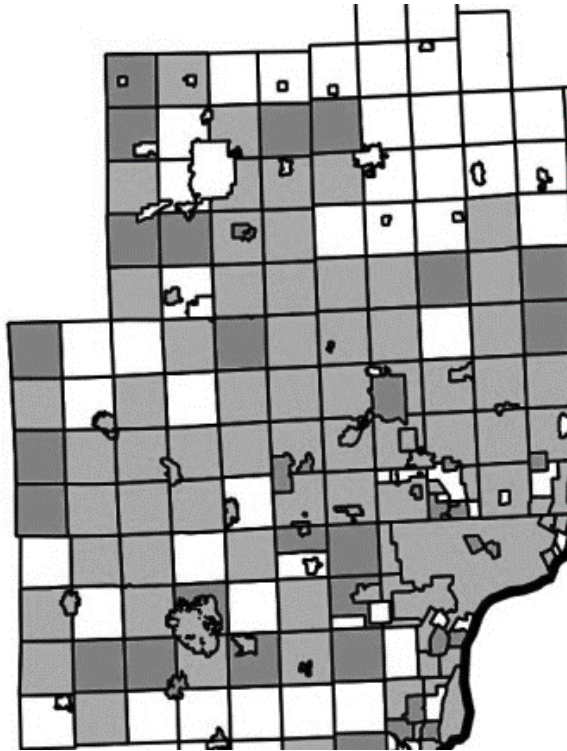
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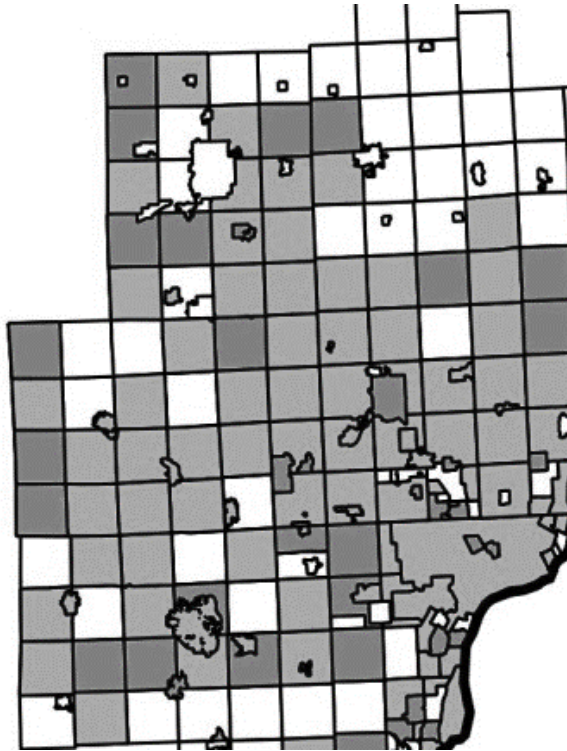
RESEARCH MOTIVATION



**Metropolitan regions
with sub-state (local)
governments**

Example: Detroit region,
partial view of metropolitan statistical area

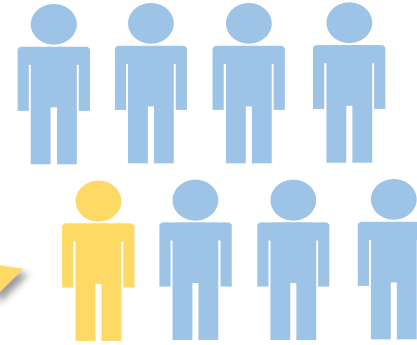
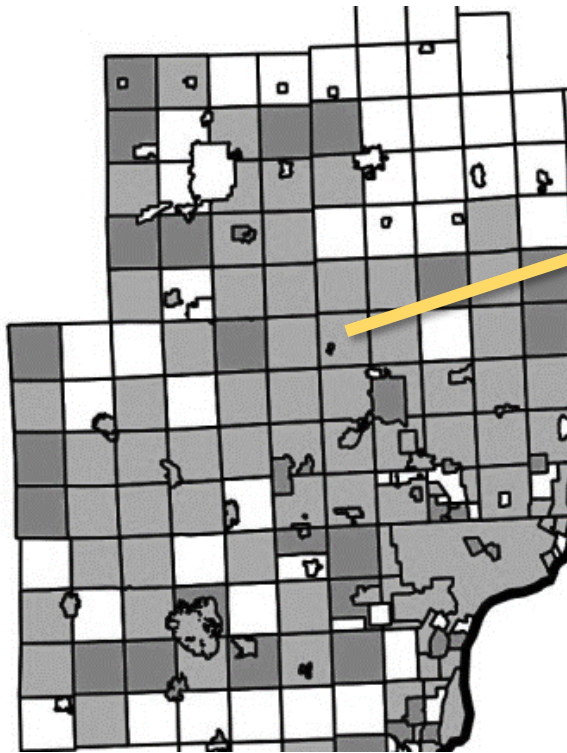
RESEARCH MOTIVATION



Metropolitan regions
with sub-state (local)
governments

Governance via regional
intergovernmental organizations

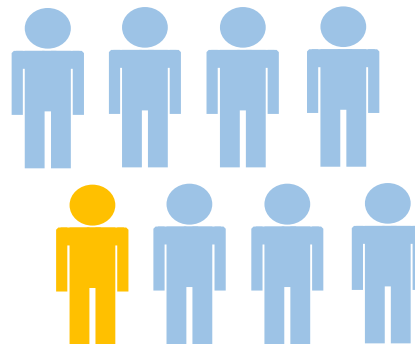
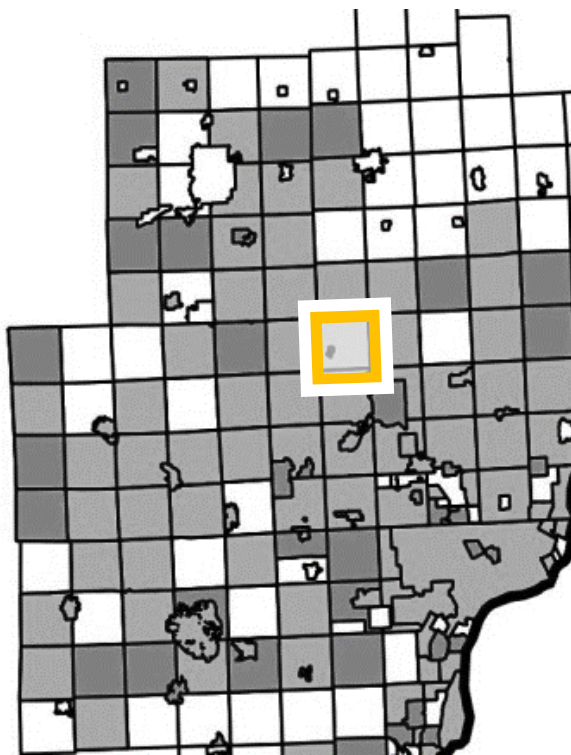
RESEARCH MOTIVATION



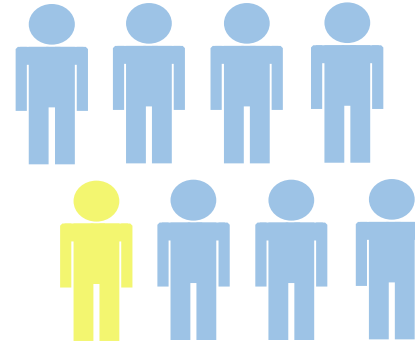
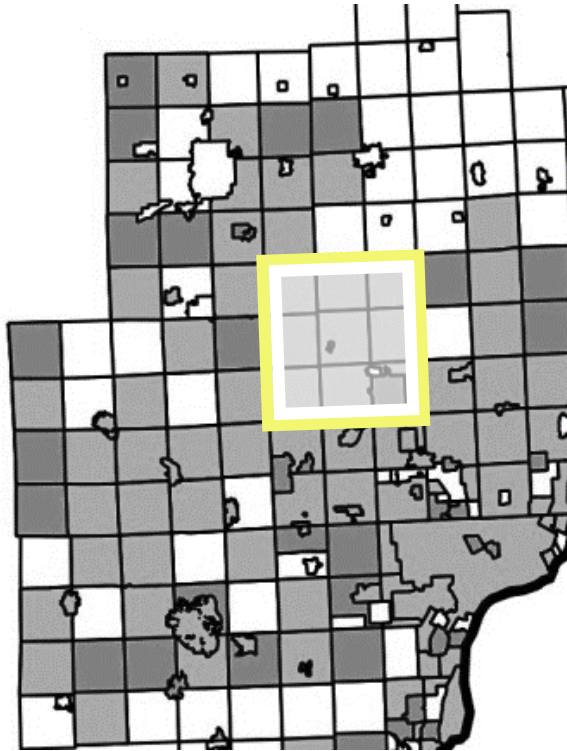
board of directors

How do local actors serving in regional intergovernmental organizations reconcile tensions between local and regional interests?

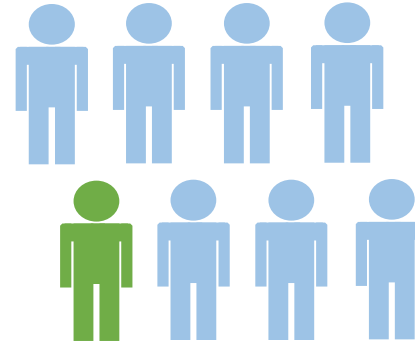
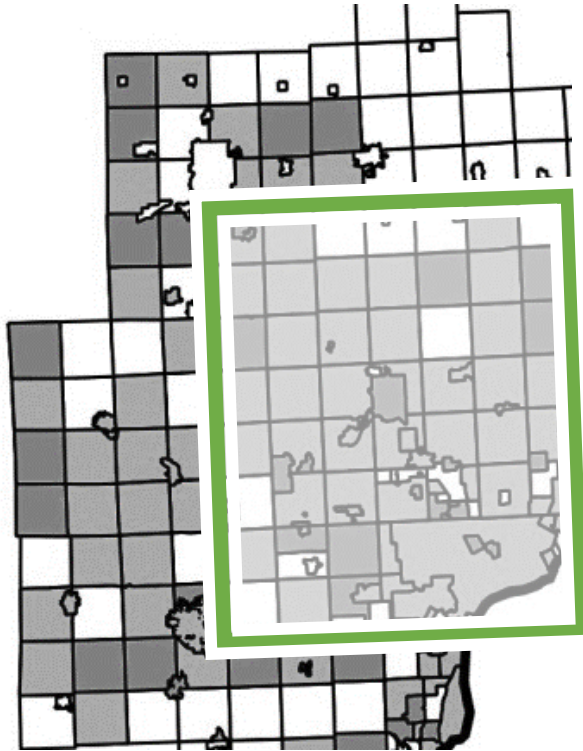
RESEARCH MOTIVATION



RESEARCH MOTIVATION



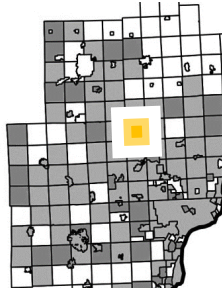
RESEARCH MOTIVATION



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



elected

low

conservative

INDIVIDUAL

position

slack / discretion

ideology

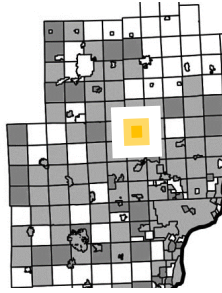


administrative

high

liberal

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



local / sub-local

public

conservative

NETWORK

scale

sector

ideology

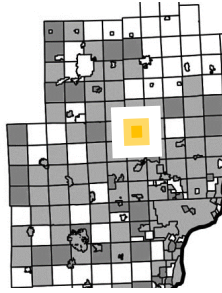


regional / global

private

liberal

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

monocenter / polycenter

metro position

non-center

strong / weak

relative health

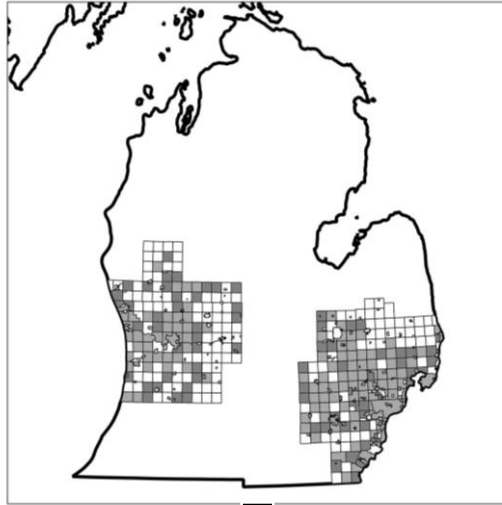
strong / weak

strong / weak

autonomy

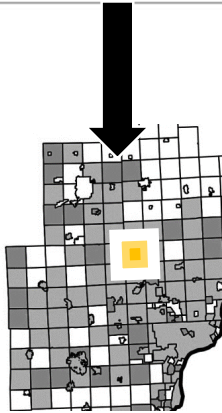
strong / weak

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

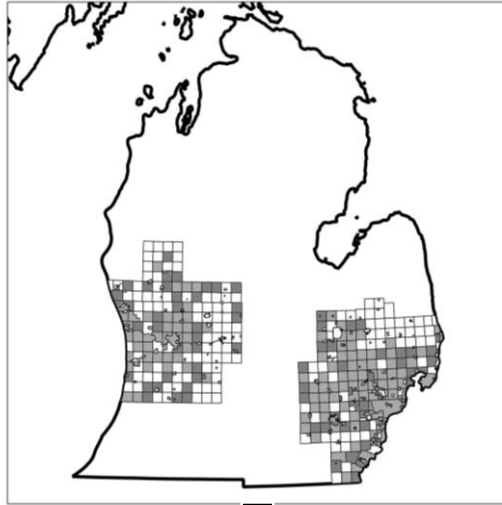


local autonomy concerns the **legal relationship** between state and sub-state governments

local autonomy has been used empirically and theoretically as an **objective construct**

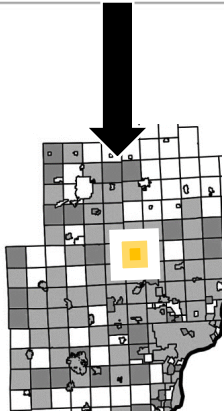


THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



Variation in objective local autonomy does not necessarily track variation in the understanding of it by local actors

- term limits
- lack of professionalization
- reliance on attorney and other staff
- ideological filtering

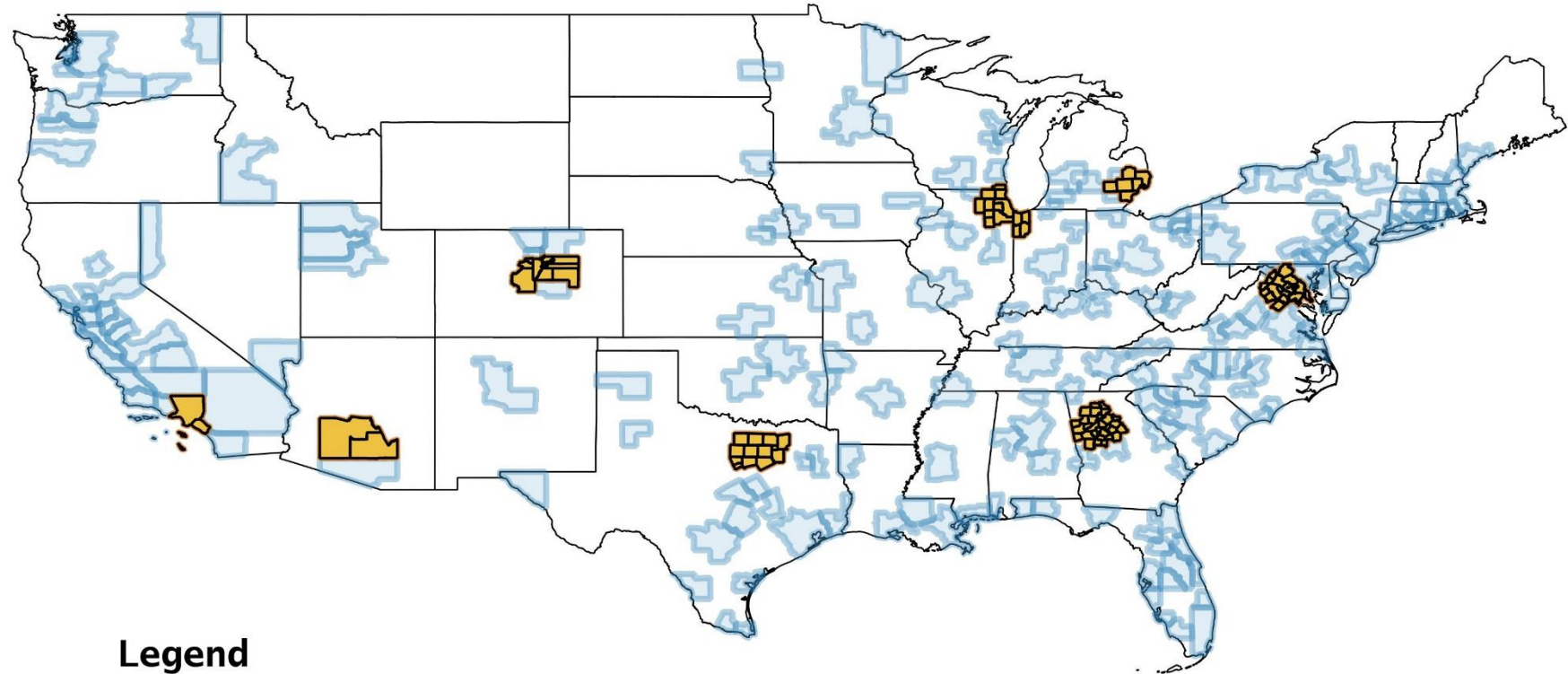


subjective local autonomy




PROPOSITIONS

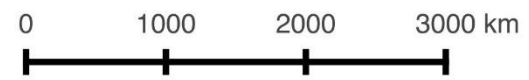
subjective local autonomy

- variation within the same class of local government in a state
- variation among individuals working in the same local government
- variation among its component dimensions

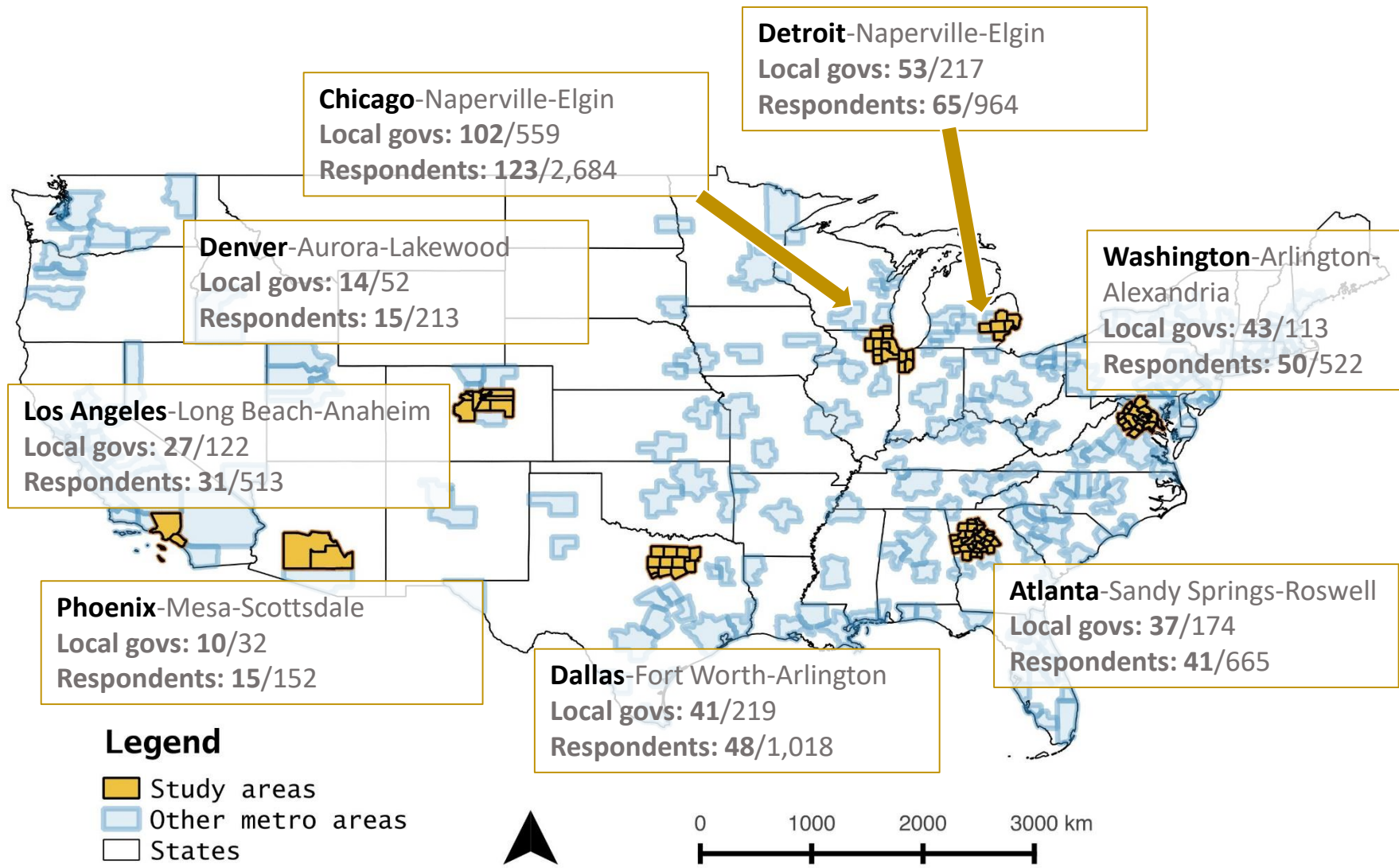


Legend

-  Study areas
-  Other metro areas
-  States

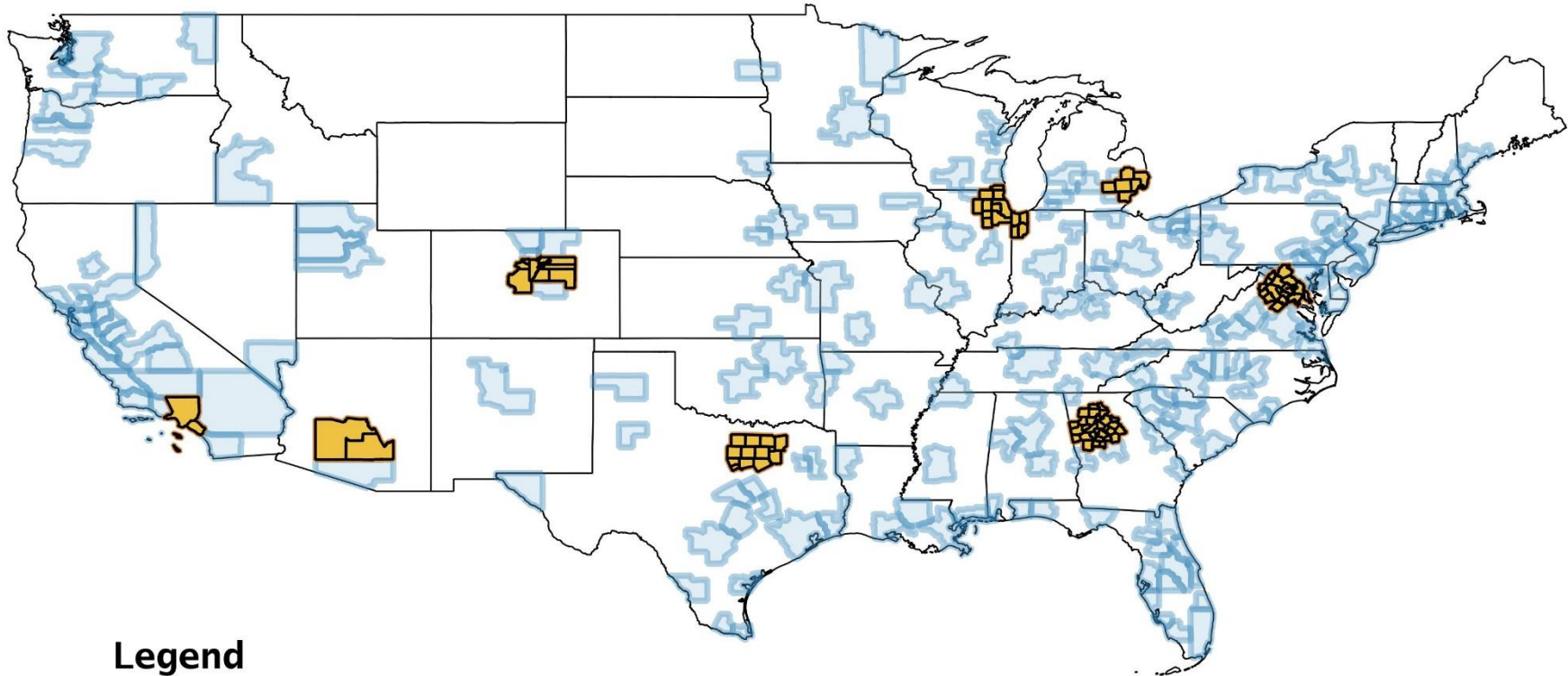


SOURCE: TIGER/Esri shapefiles for states, counties, places, and county subdivisions; U.S. Census of Governments (2017)
CREATED BY: Thomas Skuzinski (10 November, 2018)



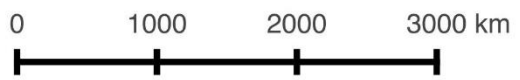
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Local govts: 327 / 1,436
Respondents: 388 / 6,731



Legend

- Study areas
- Other metro areas
- States



SOURCE: TIGER/Esi shapefiles for states, counties, places, and county subdivisions; U.S. Census of Governments (2017)
CREATED BY: Thomas Skuzinski (10 November, 2018)

RESEARCH DESIGN

survey: outcome variables

- Fiscal discretion (taxation; debt)
- Territorial discretion (annexation; consolidation)
- Functional discretion (land use; econ. dev.; cooperation)
- Basic concepts (home rule; Dillon's rule)

RESEARCH DESIGN

survey: outcome variables

- dichotomous measure based on scenario (yes/no)
- ordinal measure of confidence
- ordinal measure of relative autonomy (general)

KEY FINDINGS

Knowledge deficits

- Average fiscal score: 2.5 / 3
- Average territorial score: 2.1 / 3
- Average functional score: 6.7 / 14
- Basic concepts: 5.3 / 10
- Overall “grade”: 16.6 / 30

KEY FINDINGS

Knowledge deficits

- Each additional year in office: +1.37
- Large government (>10,000 pop): +3.42
- Education, gender, political affiliation: N/S
- State, region: N/S

KEY FINDINGS

Confidence

- Average fiscal score: +1.10
- Average territorial score: +0.67
- Average functional score: -0.21
- Overall: +0.31 (-3 to +3, forced response)

KEY FINDINGS

General autonomy

- Average (relative to in-state peers): -0.76
- Average (relative to out-state peers): -1.12

NEXT STEPS

- Refining estimation models
- Hot-spot analysis
- Follow-up interviews
- Linking subjective and objective autonomy to regional decision-making

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