

Supporting policy-relevant research using the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS)

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Outline

- Overview of the NELS
- 2011 Data Linkage
- Policy Outreach
- Research Themes: Transitions
- Research Themes: Inequalities
- Resources

Background

Research-Driven

- Cross-sectional studies: change over time?
- ONS-LS since 1971 Census (SLS since 2006)
- Health & socio-demographic profile

Legislation

- NISLS **confidentiality protected**, managed under **census legislation**
- NISRA have consulted:
 - Information Commissioner for Northern Ireland
 - Office of Research Ethics NI
 - Health and Social Care Privacy Advisory Committee

Funding

- Infrastructure funded by the HSC R&D Division & NISRA
- Research funded by ESRC Census Programme & NI Government (OFMDFM): **future implications ++**



Overview

Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS) – 28% sample (c. 500,000), based on health card registrations, routinely linked to:

- 2001 Census & 1991 Census (part)
- vital events (births, deaths, marriages)
- change of address/migration (health card registration)

AND potential to link to

- distinct Health & Social Care datasets
- 2011 Census

Northern Ireland Mortality Study (NIMS) – total enumerated population on 2001 Census Day linked to:

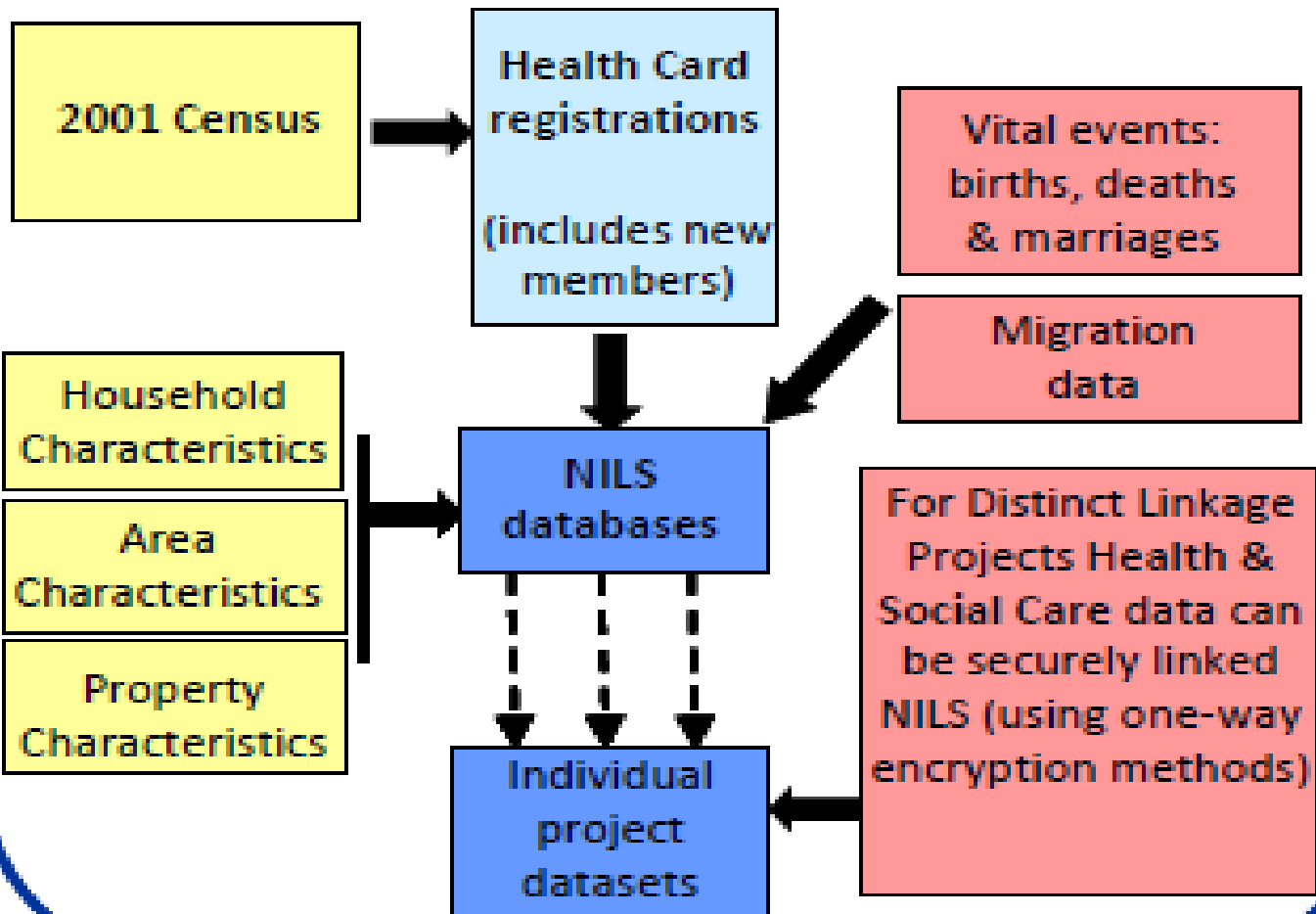
- 2001 Census returns
- subsequently registered mortality data

Structure of the NILES

Contextual data

NILES Core data

Events

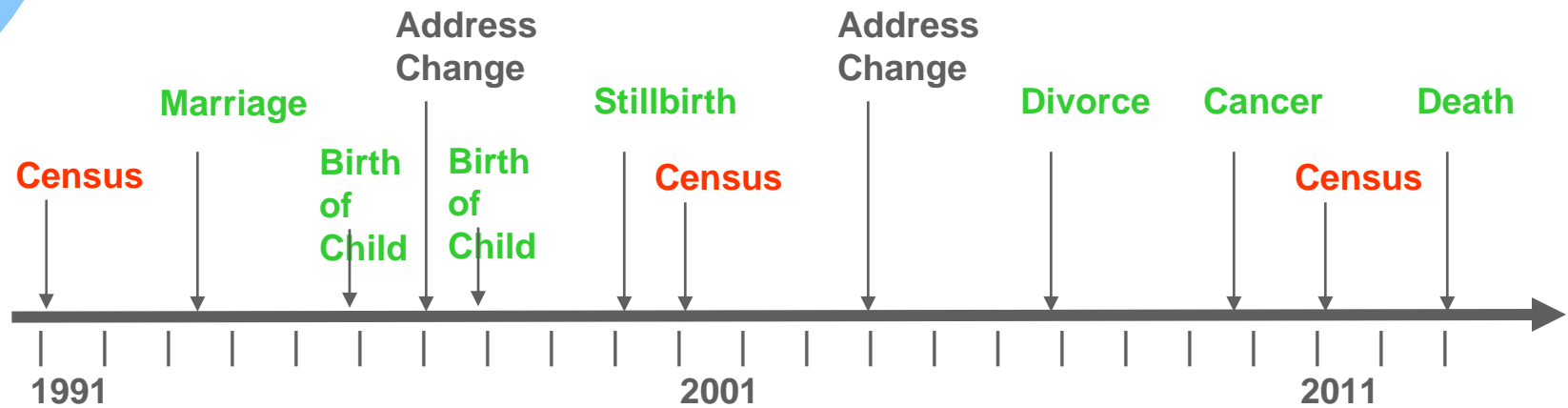


Datasets Currently Available

Census Data 2001	GRO Vital Events Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Age, sex, marital status- Religion & community background- Family, household or communal establishment- Housing, tenure, rooms & amenities- Country of birth, ethnic- Educational qualifications- Economic activity, occupation & social class- Migration (between 2000 & 2001)- LLTI, general health, care-giving- Travel-to-work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- New births into the sample- Births to sample members- Stillbirths to sample mothers- Infant mortality of children to sample members- Deaths of sample members- Marriages- Widow(er)hoods
LPS Property Data	Health Card Registration Datasets
<p>Capital and rating value</p> <p>-Household characteristics (no. of rooms, property type, floor space, central heating)</p>	<p>Demographics: age, status & location</p> <p>Migration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Immigration to the sample- Emigration out of sample- Re-entry of sample members to NI-Internal migration

Example

27-year old Female in 1991





2011 Data Linkage

- Information from two censuses (2001 & 2011), significant information from 1991 Census & 14 years of vital events data
- Time-scales
- Approvals Process (facilitate policy use of the NLS by non-academic users / Beta Testing Projects)
- Focus on:
 - analysis of health, social, economic & demographic transitions between the two census points; and
 - research & policy interests across health, demography, equality, migration, deprivation, labour market & social change



Policy Outreach

- Policy-makers signpost research priorities (e.g. Programme for Government and today!)
- Government staff involved in NILS projects
- Researchers engage policy-makers with their proposals & findings:
 - Applications must have publicity & dissemination strategies with specific policy-impact and clear stakeholder engagement
 - NILS Research Briefs: summary of key findings & policy implications of NILS-based research



Research Potential: Collaborative Government Projects

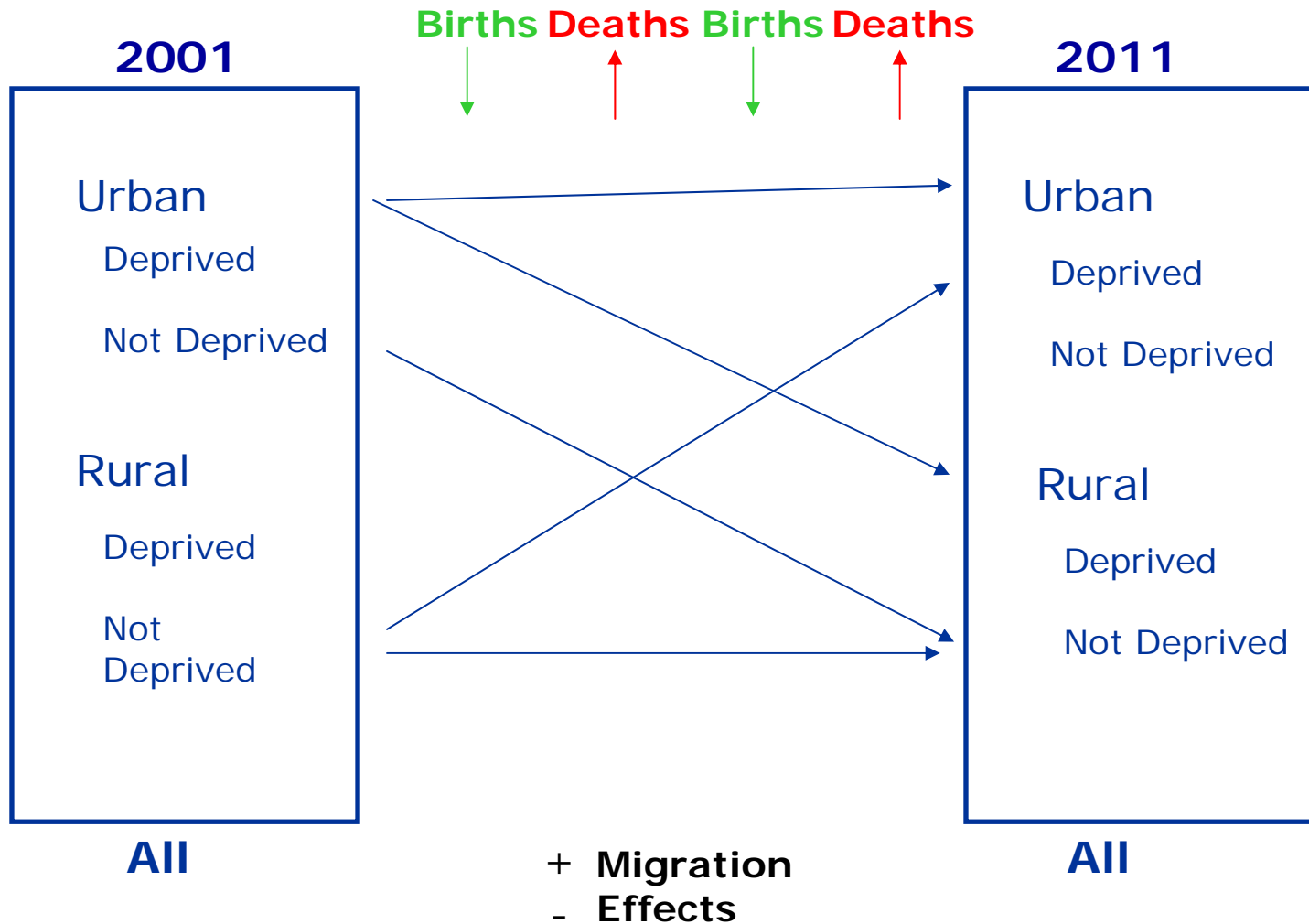
- Temperature-related mortality & housing / Movement between and within Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (**DSD**)
- Distribution of cancer deaths by population & household type (**NI Cancer Registry**)
- Projected fertility levels by area & community background (**DENI**)
- Vital events: Annual Standard Table Outputs (**DMB**)
- Educational attainment, occupational group & mobility (**DEL**)
- Pervasive area poverty: modelled household income / Section 75 groups & social disadvantage / Spatial measures of need (**OFMDFM**)
- Equality assessment of health outcomes: cause-specific mortality for Section 75 groups (**DHSSPS**)



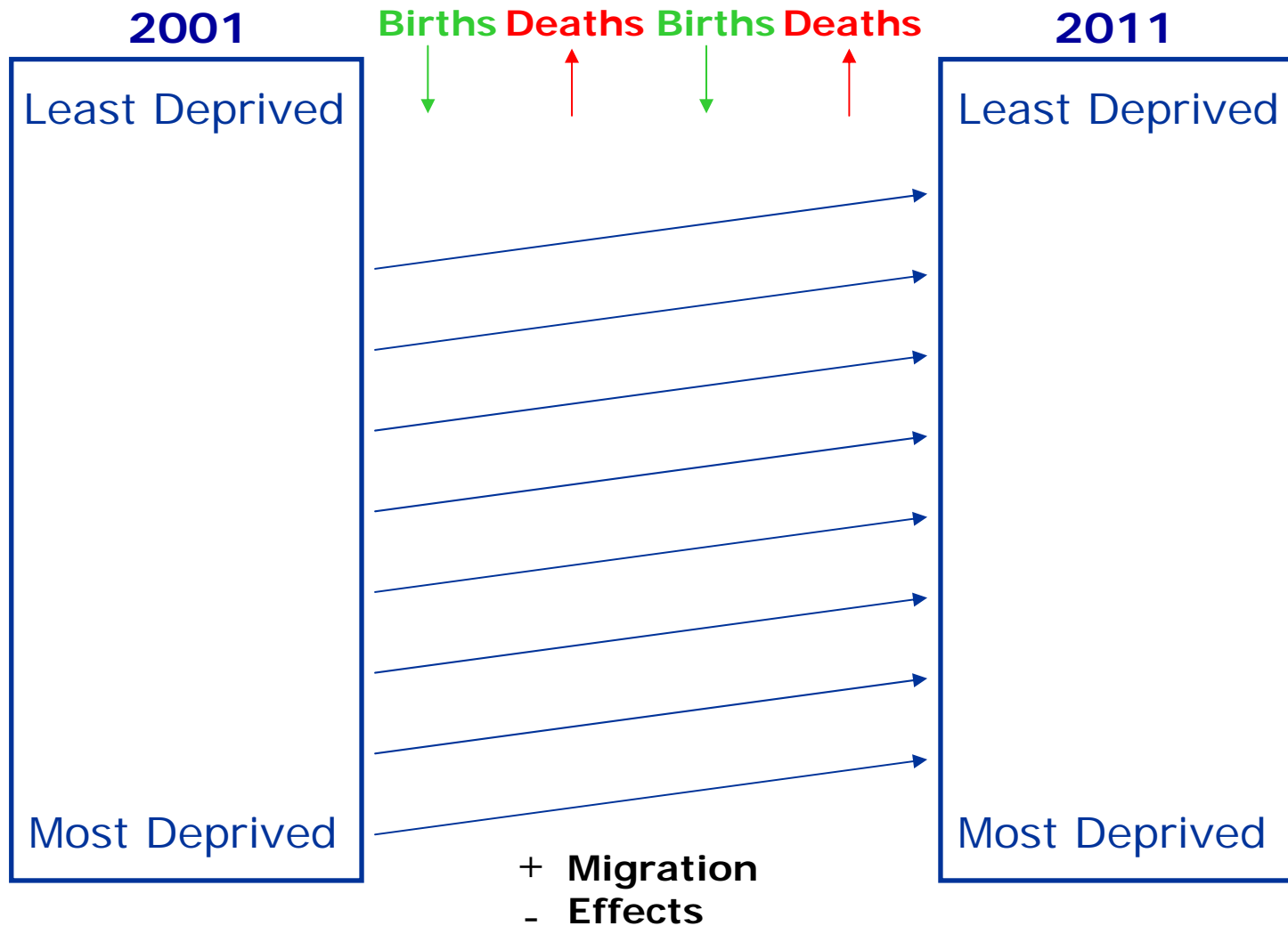
Research Themes: Transitions

- Enables analyses of 'NI in Transition 2001-2011'
- Breadth of topic areas to be considered is wide
 - What influences social mobility in NI?
 - Stability of housing tenure
 - Importance of community background in labour market
 - Impact of ill-health in 2001 on labour market status in 2011
 - Who emigrates?
 - The internal migration patterns of immigrant communities?

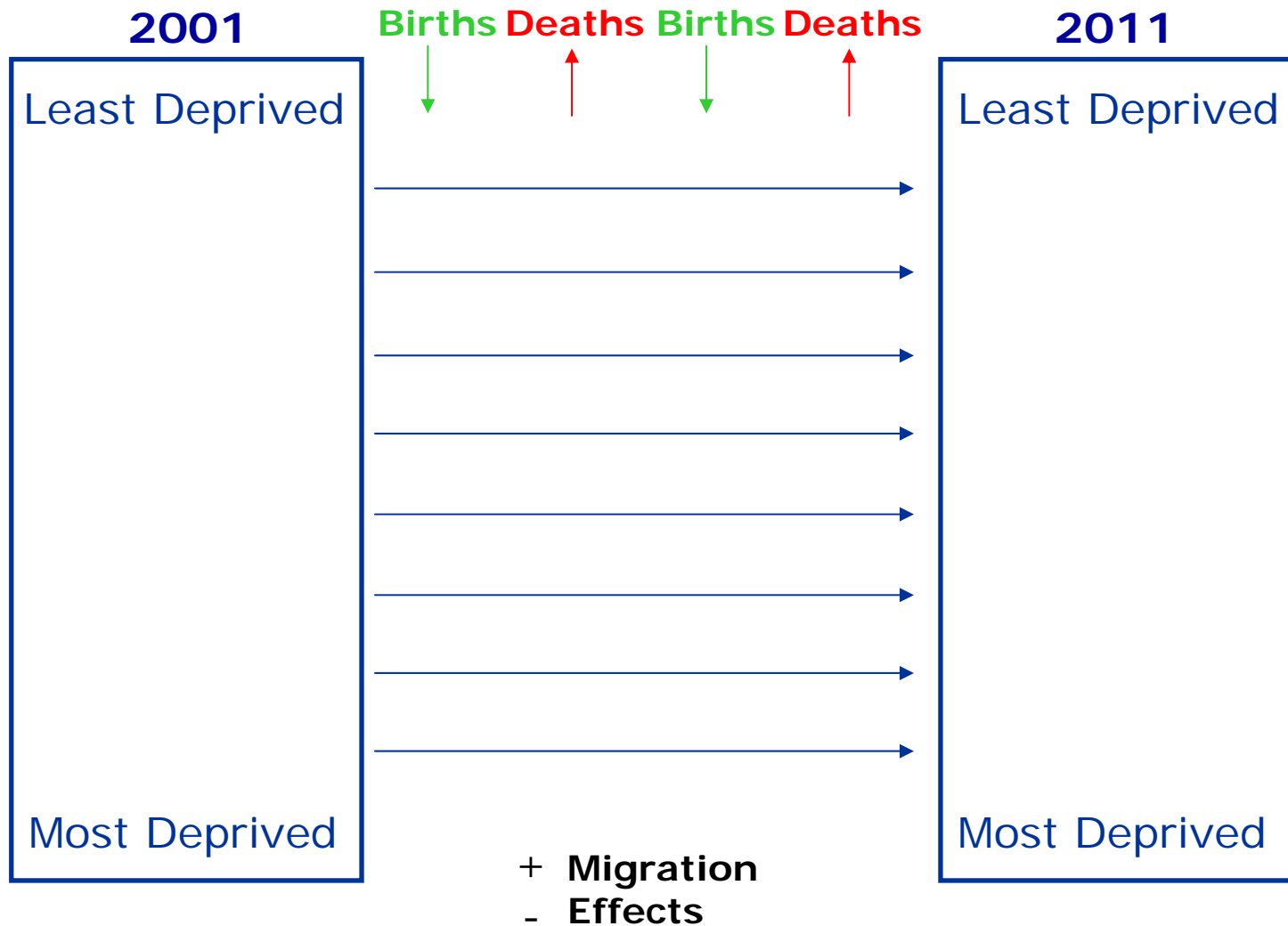
Population Mobility



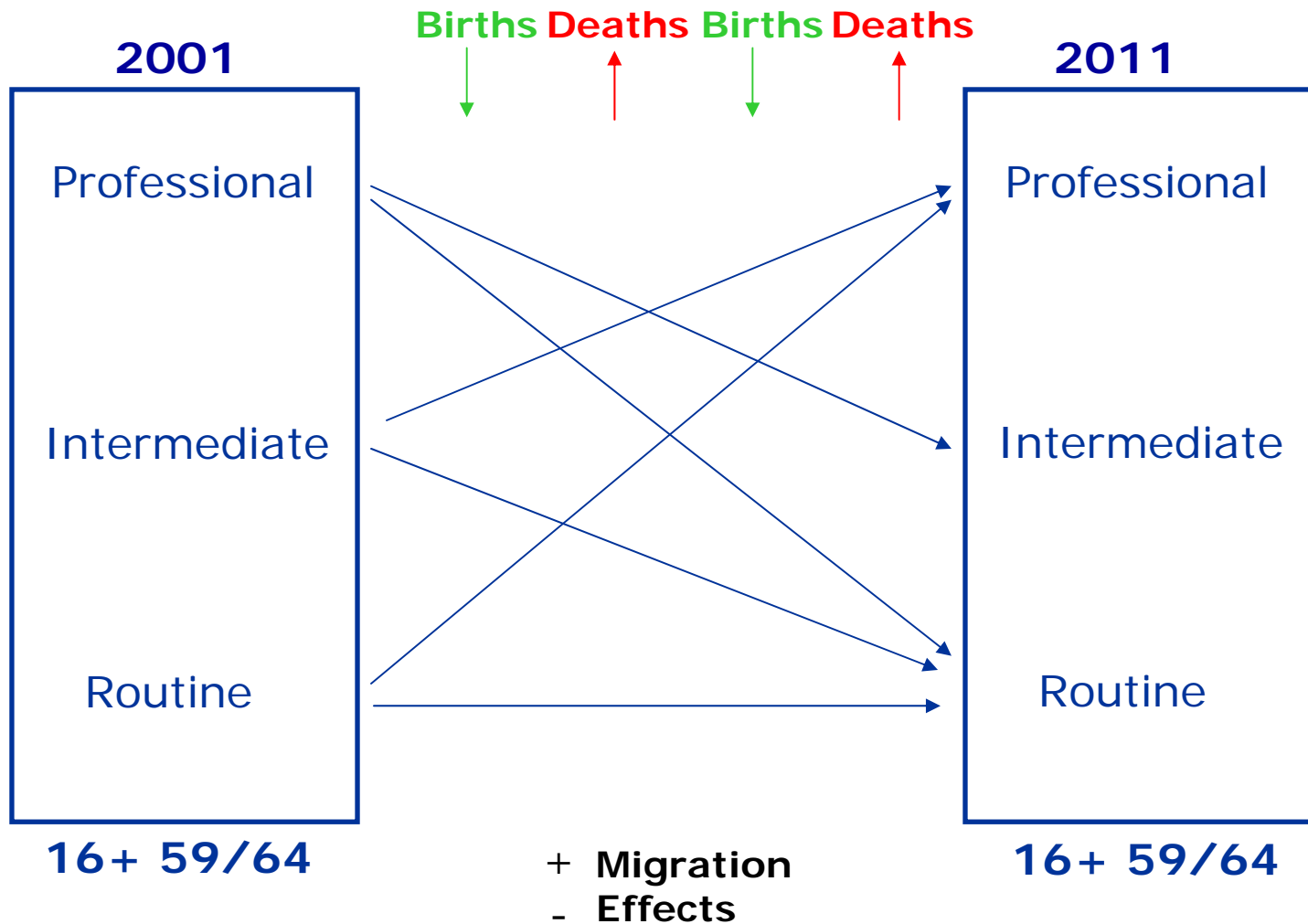
Area Change - Policy Intervention



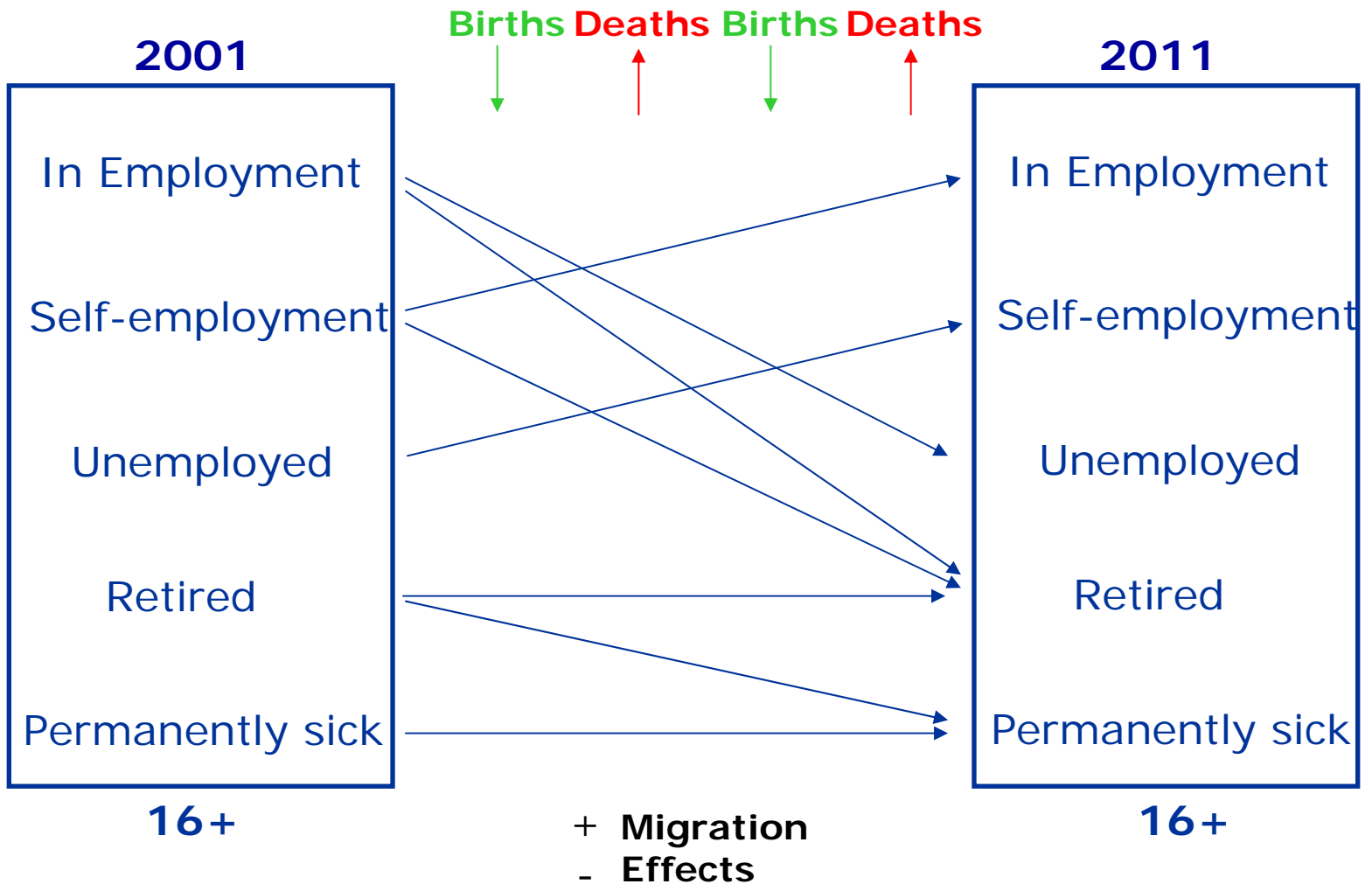
Area Change - No Policy Intervention



Social Mobility



Economic Mobility





Research Themes: Inequalities

- Health & mortality
- Demographic trends
- Socio-economic trends: education, employment & income
- Area-based analyses
- Equality research e.g. Section 75 groups



2011 Census: New Topics = New Research Potential

Equality Research

- Same-sex partnerships
- Language
 - ability in Ulster-Scots
 - main language (if not English, asked how well they can speak English)
- Migration (how long intend to stay)
- Citizenship (what passports they hold)
- National identity

Socio-Economic Trends

- Information on qualifications gained outside the UK
- Voluntary Work

Area-based Analyses

- Travel to school / address of study

2011 Census: New Topics = New Research Potential

Health & Mortality

Changes:

General health - 5 options : Very good; Good; Fair; Bad & Very bad

Limiting long-term illness - 3 options: Yes, limited a lot; Yes, limited a little, No

New:

- Adapted accommodation
- Nature of disability (2001: General Health & LLTI only)
 - Deafness or partial hearing loss
 - Blindness or partial sight loss
 - Communication difficulty
 - A mobility or dexterity difficulty
 - A learning difficulty, an intellectual difficulty, or a social or behavioural difficulty
 - An emotional, psychological or mental health condition
 - Long-term pain or discomfort
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Frequent periods of confusion or memory loss
 - A chronic illness (such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, heart disease or epilepsy)
 - Other condition

Resources: NILS Research Support Unit (NILS-RSU)

Remit:

- raise awareness of the NILS research potential; get new users
- assist with development of research ideas and projects;
- facilitate access to NILS data;
- Training and advice in use and analysis of NILS datasets;
- promote policy relevance; and
- enhance NILS research capacity incl: specific duty to assist government researchers to undertake exemplar public policy research.

Resources: NILS Research Support Unit (NILS-RSU)

Remit:

- See <http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/NILSResearchSupportUnit/> for documents/application forms;
- Projects must have a health dimension (but very broadly defined) and be longitudinal (eg only possible using the NILS)
- Straightforward projects using the database can expect to be undertaken quickly
- Some projects which involve linking data to the NILS can take more time because of the need for ethical approval and data undertakings to be completed



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