

Poverty Estimates for Places in the United States

by

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This presentation is intended to inform interested parties of ongoing research and to encourage discussion of work in progress. The views expressed on methodological issues are those of the presenter and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

U S C E N S U S B U R E A U

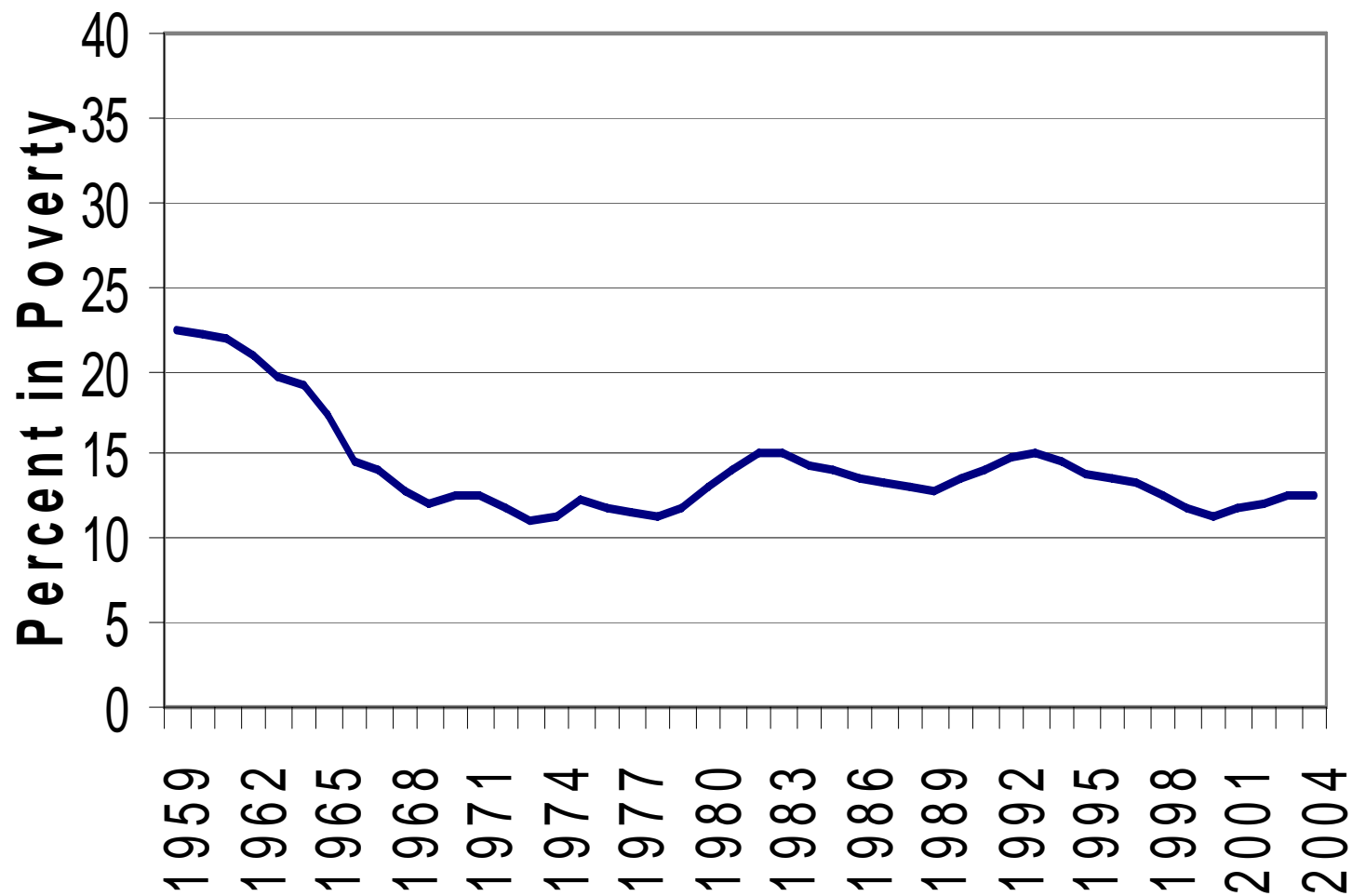
What is Poverty?

- In the U.S., one is in poverty if that person's family money income is below a specified threshold, which varies by family size and composition
- First adopted in 1965, modified a little since
- Equivalent to roughly three times the cost of food (a basic adequate diet); updated each year for general inflation
- Measured officially using the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS ASEC)

How is Poverty Related to Place?

Is it characteristics of a place that determine its economic well-being (the “structuralist” view), or is it the characteristics of its residents (the “individualist” view)?

Percentage of People in Poverty: 1959-2004

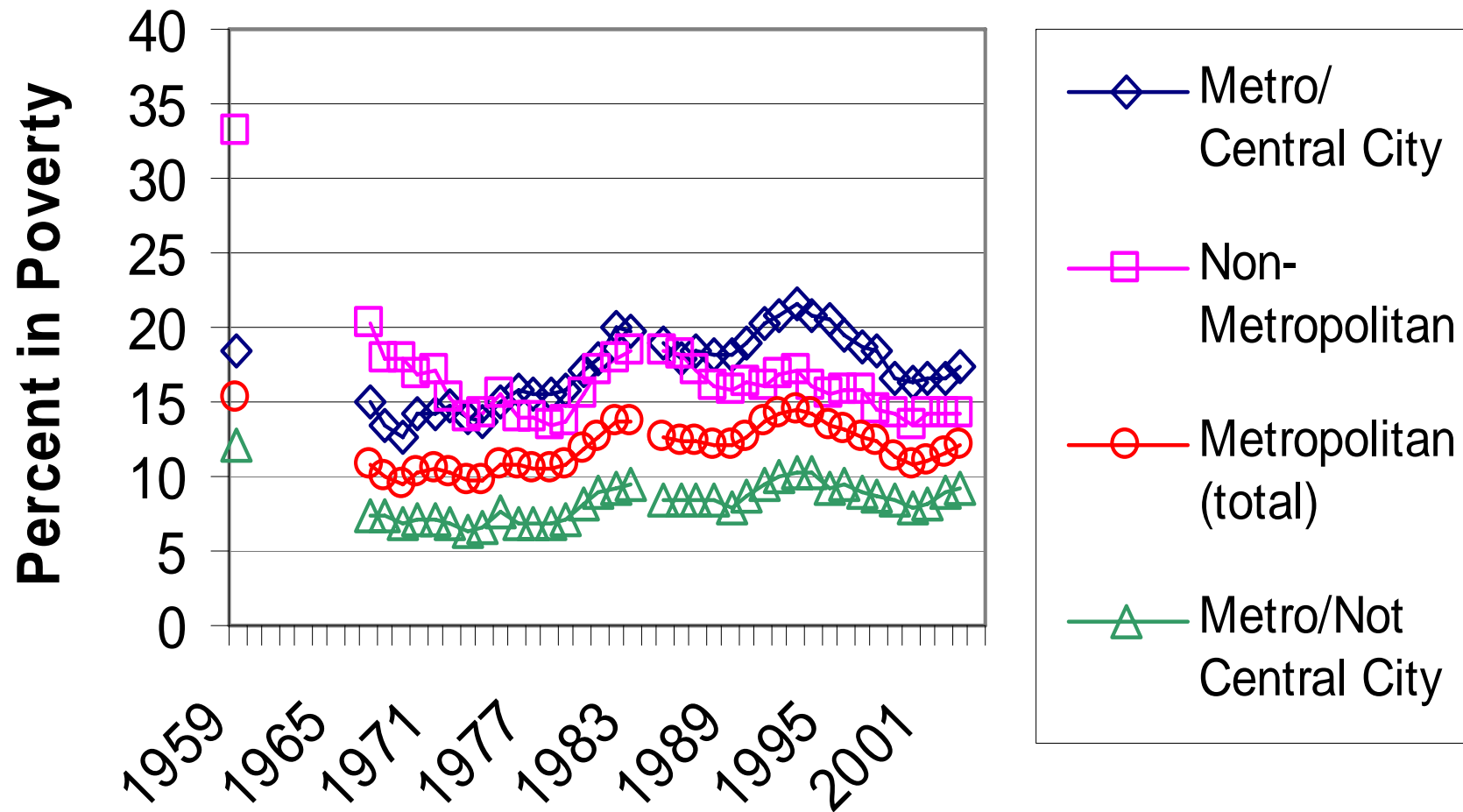


Main U.S. Census Bureau Geographic Concepts (1): Core Based Statistical Areas

1. Core based statistical areas (CBSAs) – metropolitan and micropolitan areas – and outside core based statistical areas; replaces the previous standards designating areas as metropolitan or non-metropolitan.

Of the total U.S. population as of November 2004, 83 percent lived in metropolitan statistical areas, 10 percent lived in micropolitan statistical areas, and the remaining 7 percent lived outside core based statistical areas.

Percentage of People in Poverty, by Metropolitan Residence: 1959-2003



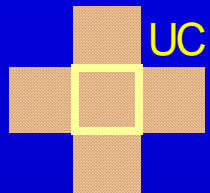
Main U.S. Census Bureau Geographic Concepts (2): Urban-Rural

2. An urban area is all territory, population, and housing units in urbanized areas and in places (urban clusters) of more than 2,500 persons outside of urbanized areas; population density in urbanized areas must be at least 1,000 people per square mile. A rural area is all territory, population, and housing units not classified as urban.

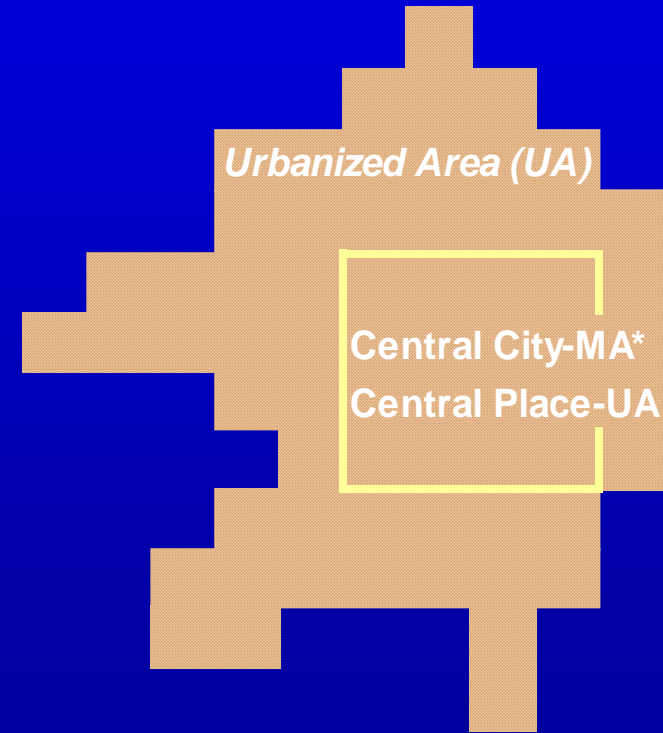
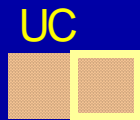
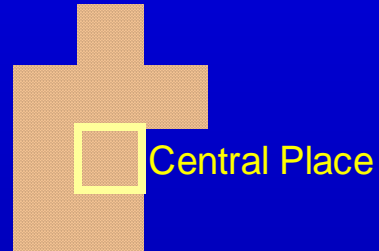
Illustration of U.S. Census Bureau Geographic Concepts

Non-metropolitan County

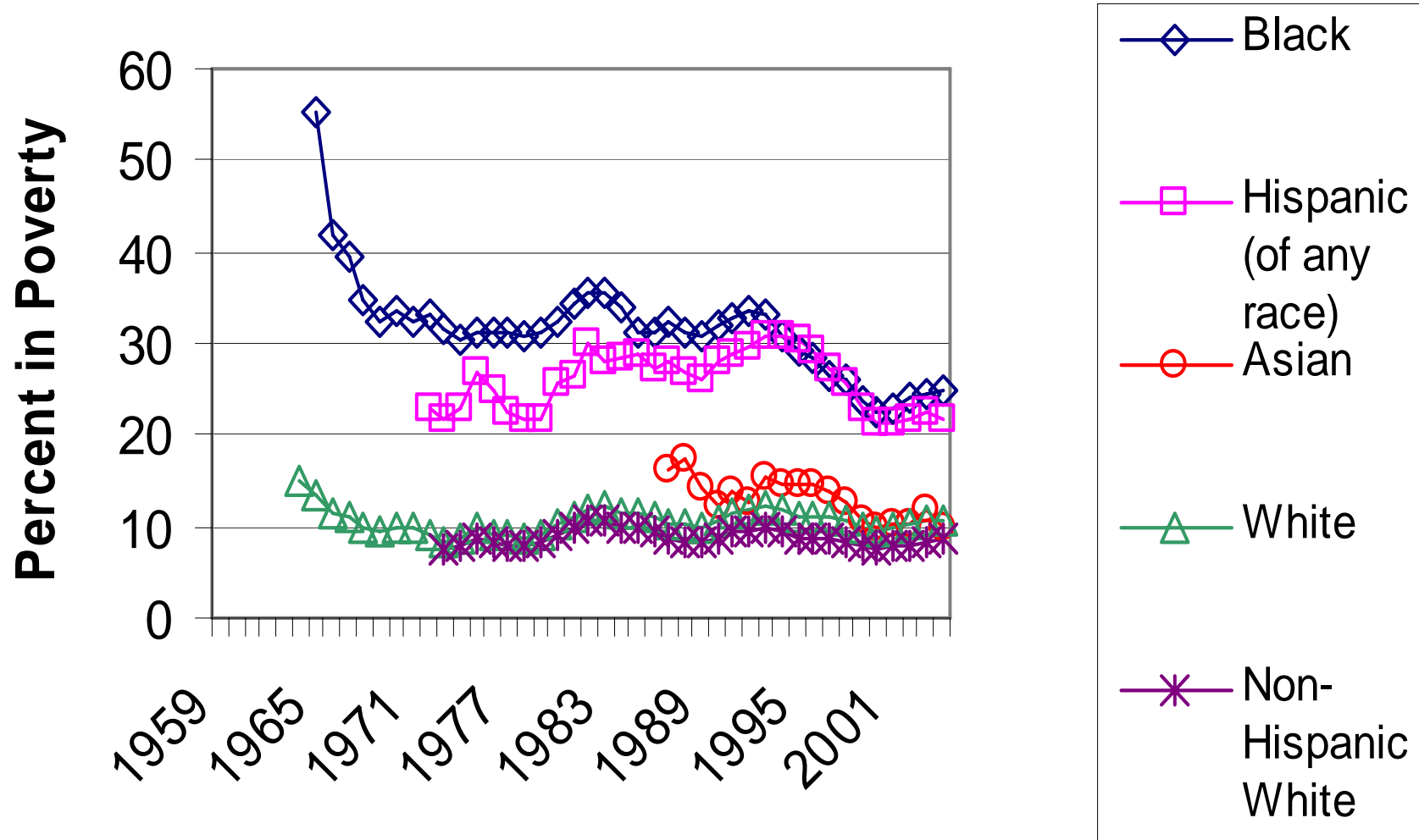
Metropolitan County



Urban Cluster (UC)

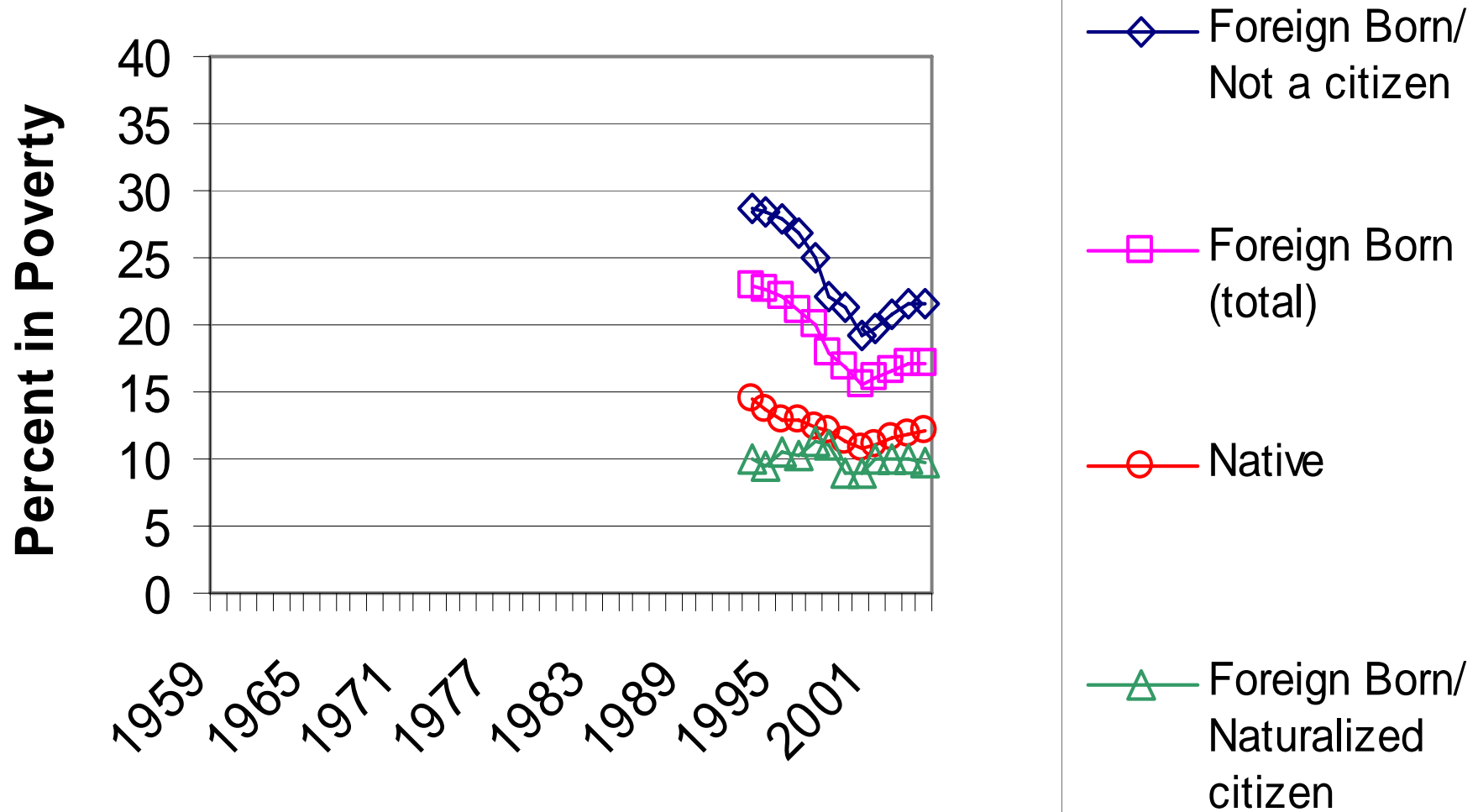


Percentage of People in Poverty, by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1964-2004

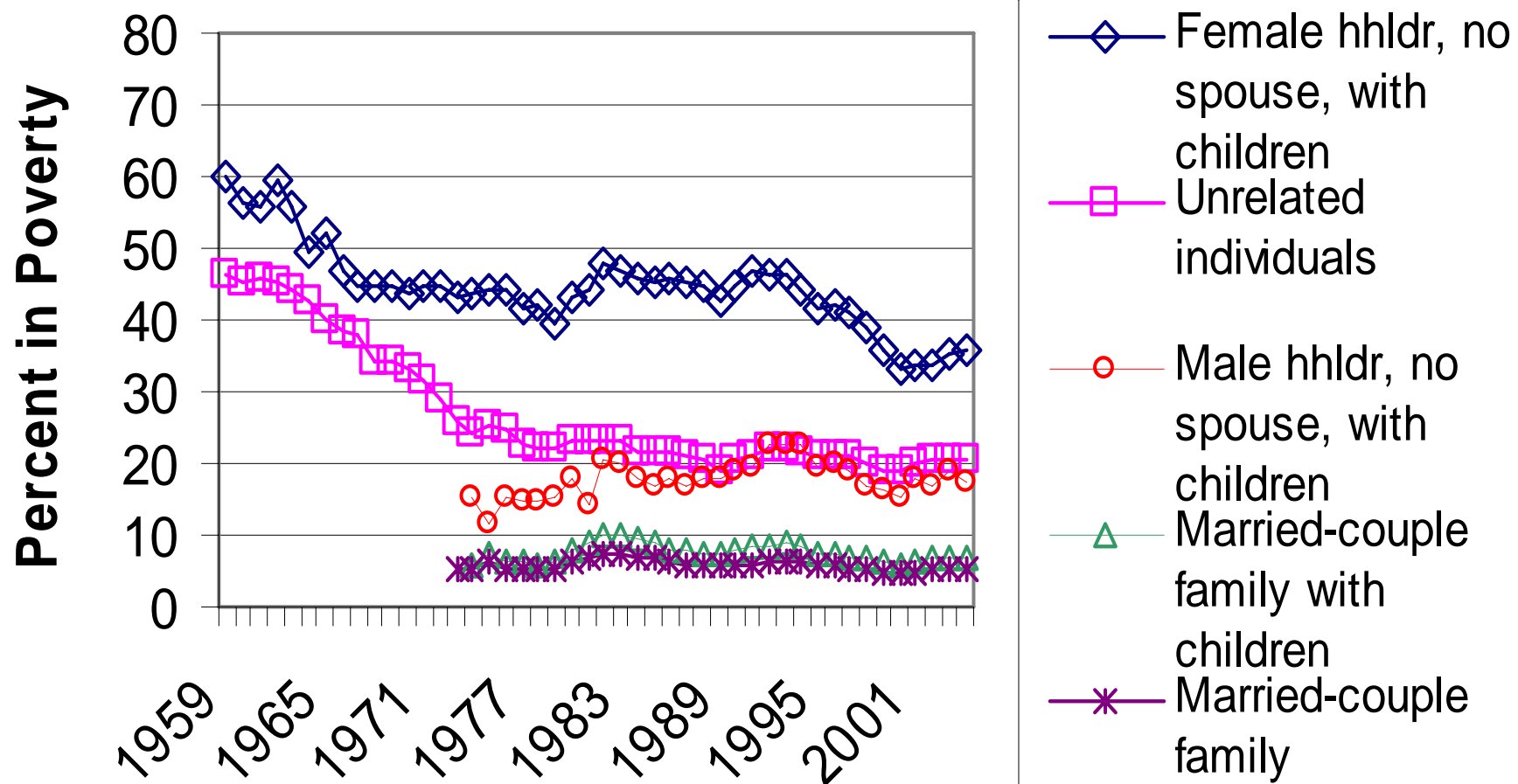


Source: Current Population Survey,
Annual Social and Economic Supplement

Percentage of People in Poverty, by Nativity: 1993-2004



Percentage of Families and Unrelated Individuals in Poverty, by Family Structure: 1959-2003



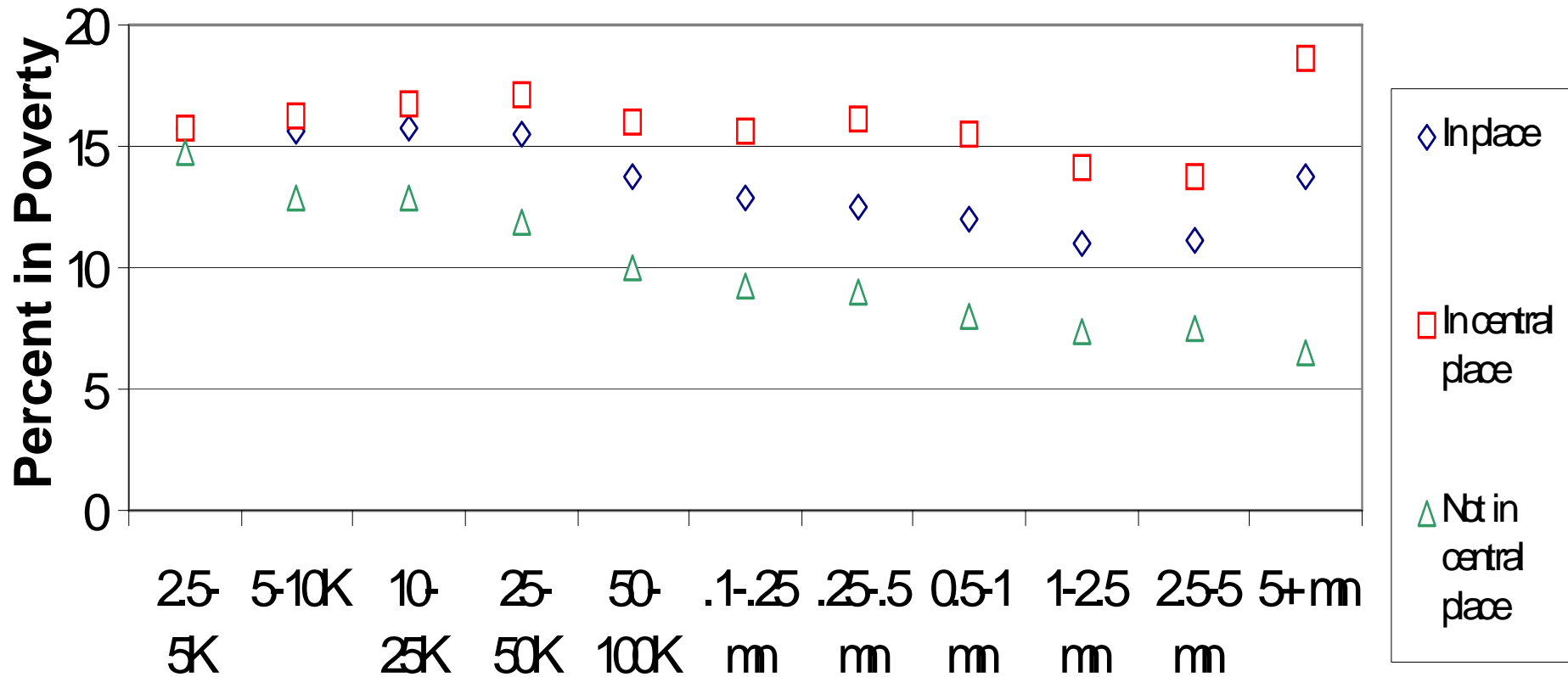
Census 2000 Urban and Rural Poverty

Compared to a 1999 U.S. overall poverty rate of 12.4 percent, urban areas had a slightly higher rate, 12.7 percent, and rural areas a lower rate, 11.0 percent.

Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Urban and Rural Poverty Rates: 1999

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|--|
| UNITED STATES | 12.4% | | |
| In metropolitan area | 11.8 | | |
| In central city | 17.6 | | |
| Not in central city | 8.4 | | |
| Urban | 8.4 | | |
| In urbanized area | 8.0 | | |
| In urban cluster | 12.8 | | |
| Rural | 8.2 | | |
| Not in metropolitan area | 14.6 | | |
| Urban | 16.6 | | |
| In urbanized area | 13.9 | | |
| In urban cluster | 17.0 | | |
| Rural | 13.3 | | |

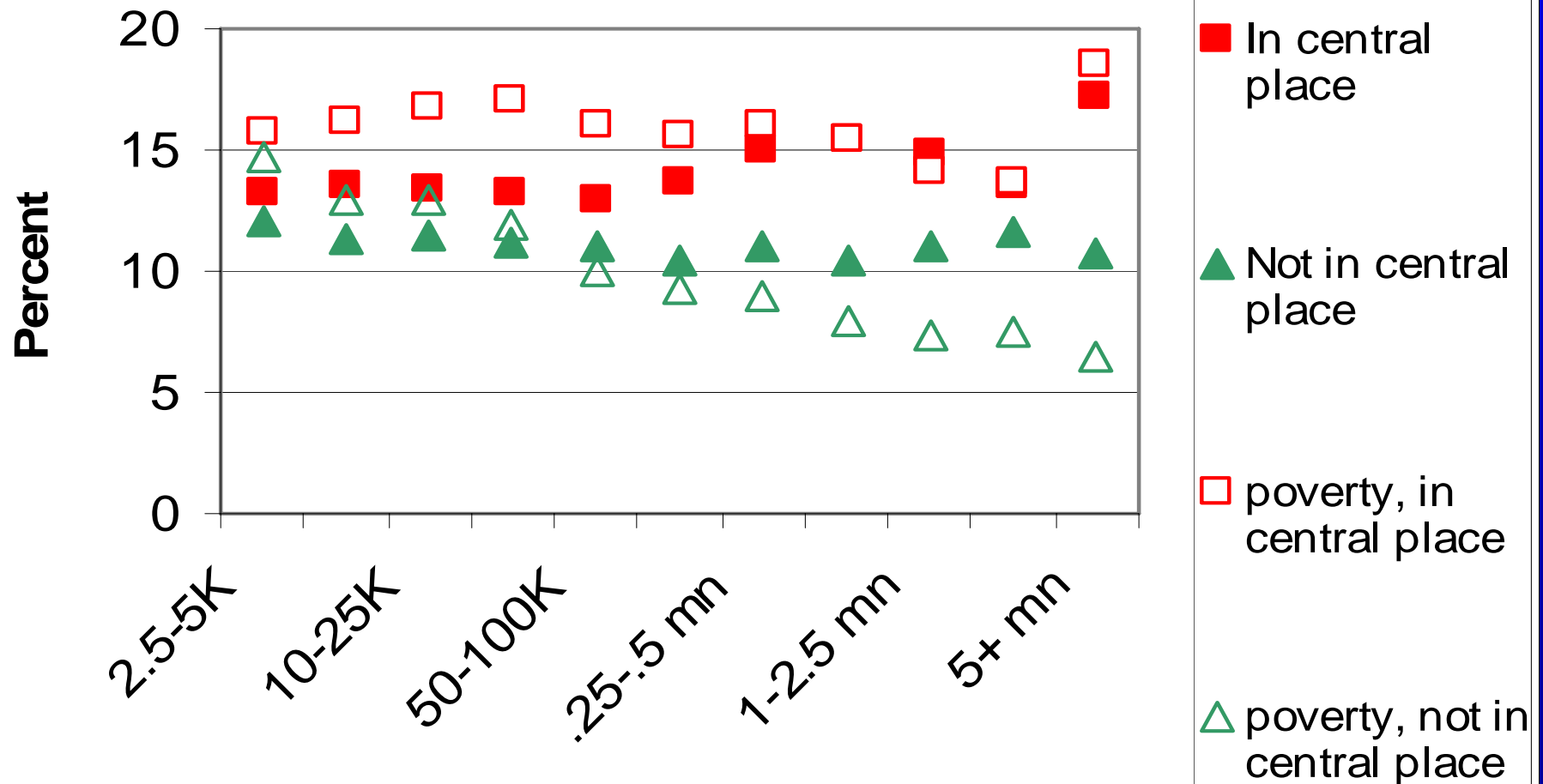
Percentage of People in Poverty, by Size of Urban Area: 1999



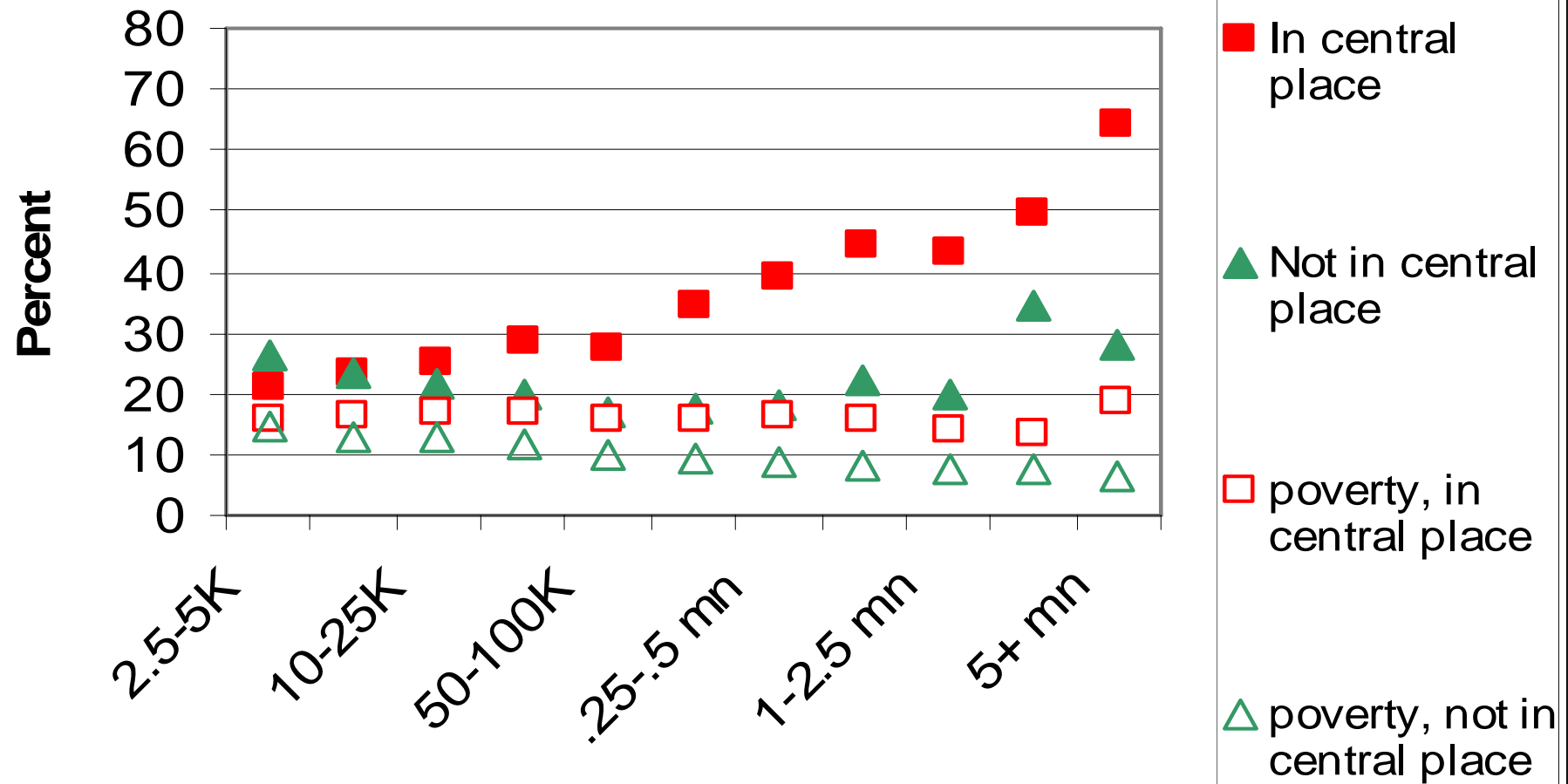
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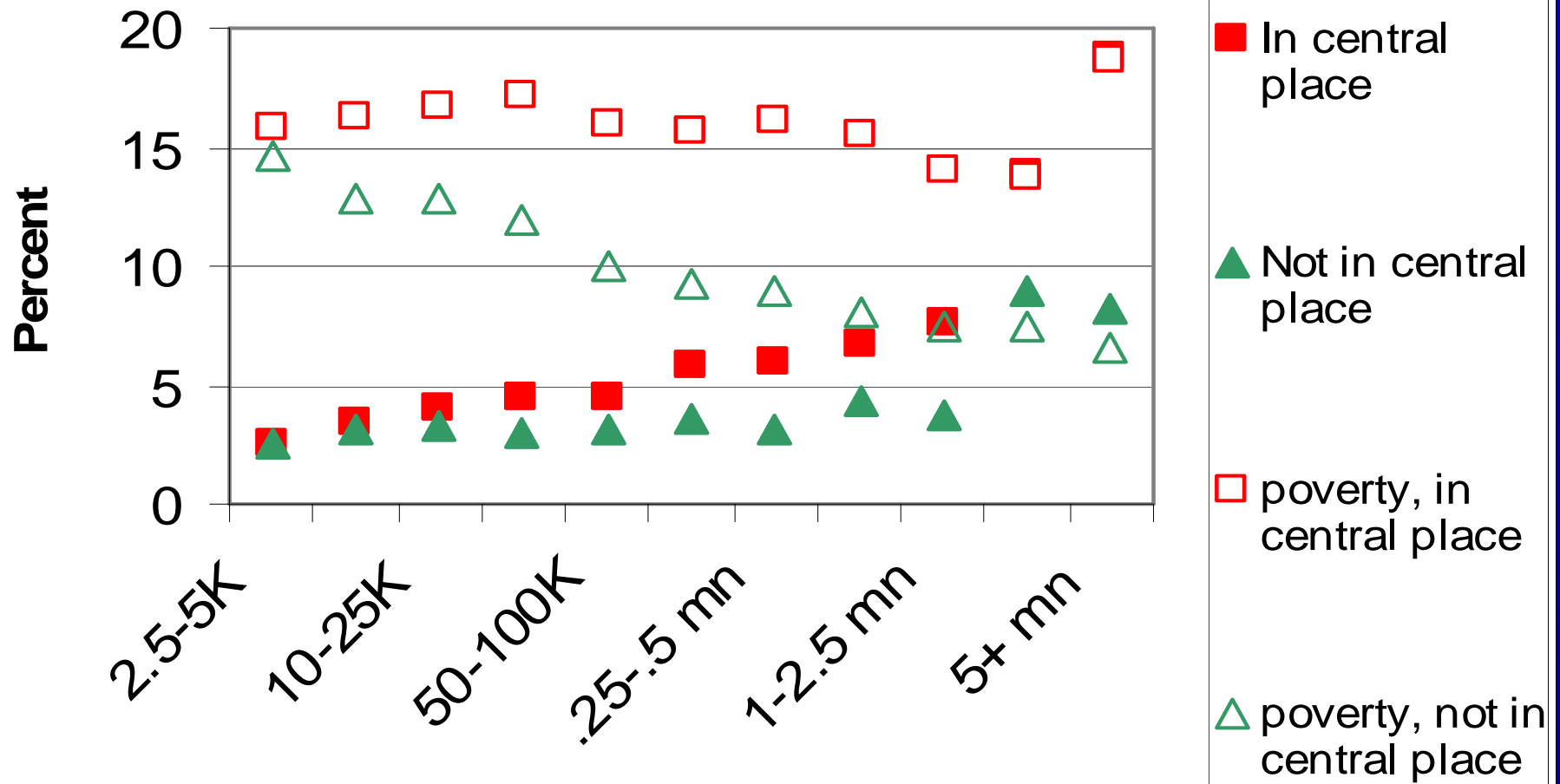
Percentage of female householders with children and poverty, by size of place: 1999



Percentage other than non-Hispanic White and poverty, by size of place: 1999

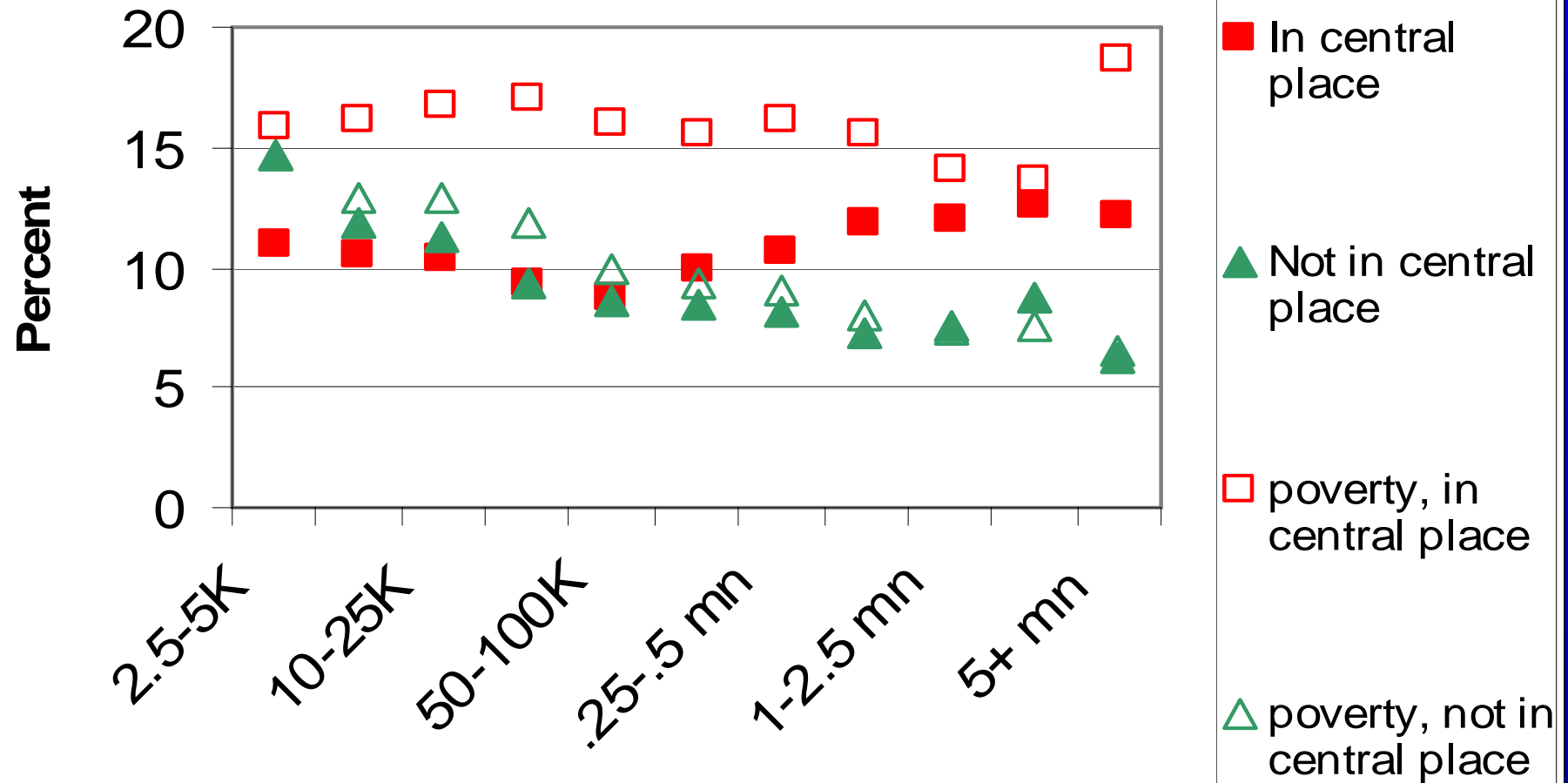


Percentage of noncitizens and poverty, by size of place: 1999

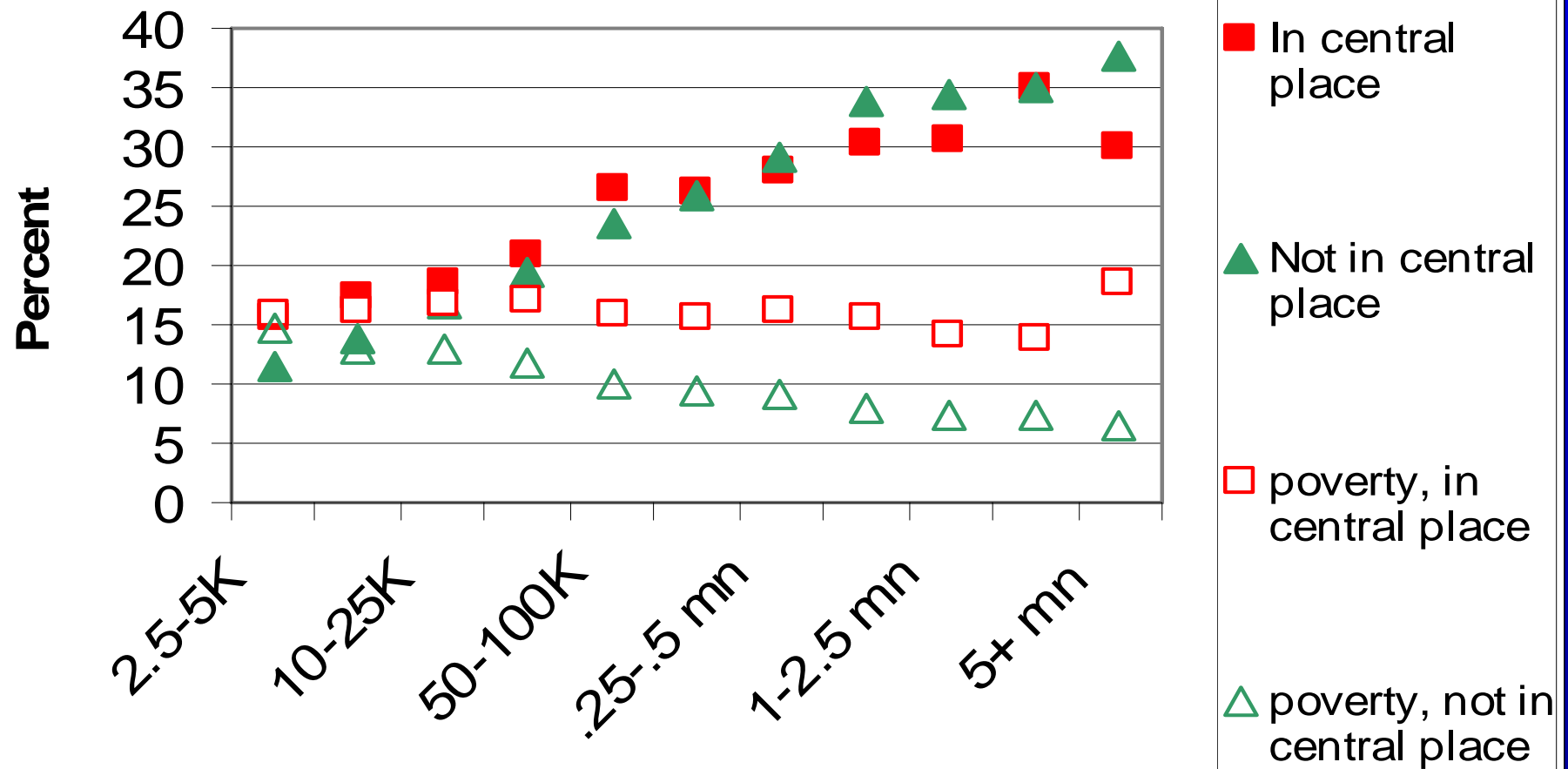


Percentage of “dropouts” and poverty, by size of place: 1999

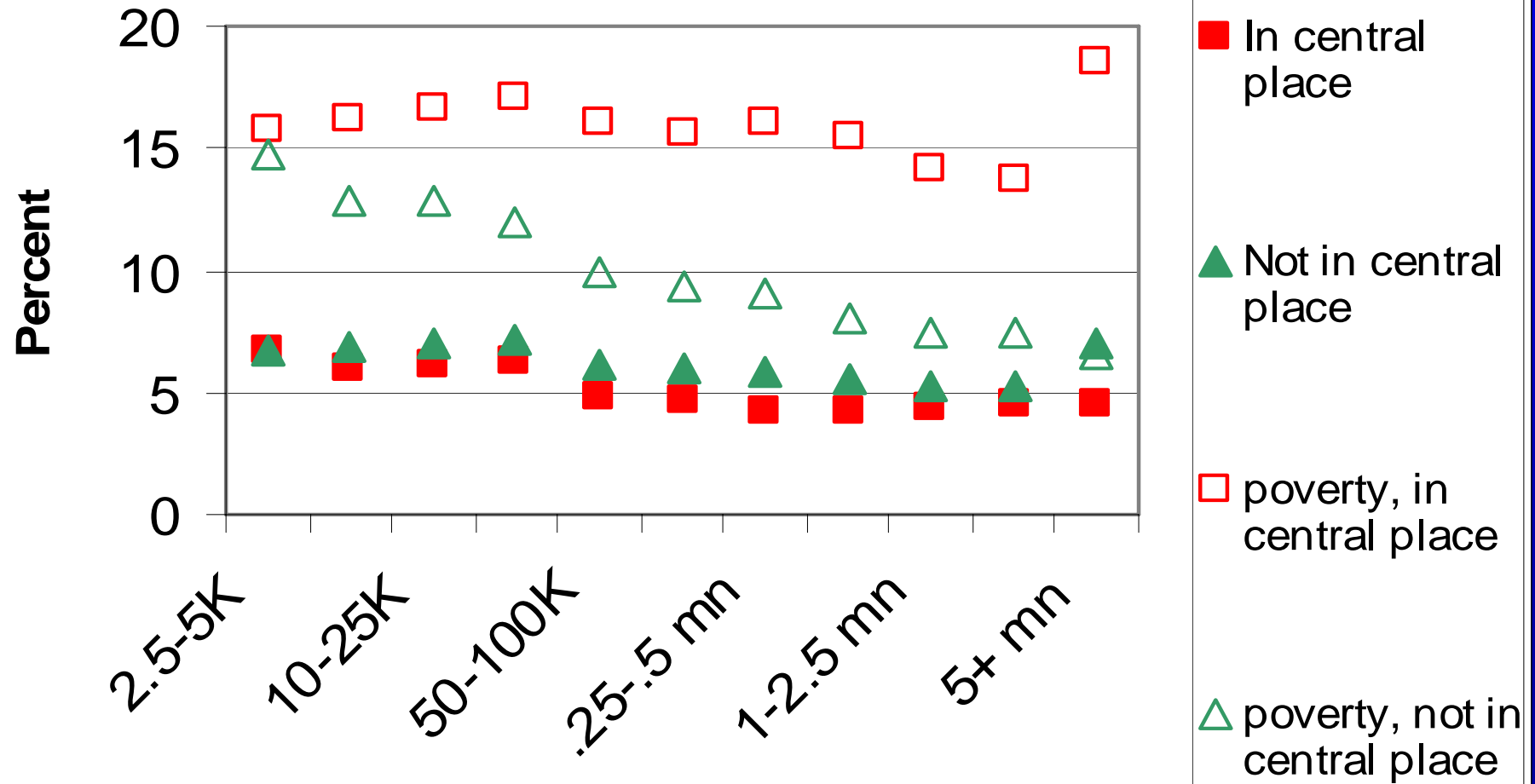
[dropouts: 16-19 year olds not enrolled in school and not high school graduates]



Percentage of young adults with a Bachelor's degree and poverty, by size of place: 1999



Percentage unemployed and poverty, by size of place: 1999



Concluding Comments (1)

Rural poverty is now less than urban poverty even in non-metropolitan areas.

Poverty rates are lower as an urban area gets larger, with the exception of urbanized areas of 5 million or more. The higher poverty rates in those areas appears to be accounted for by the increased poverty of the central places of those areas.

Concluding Comments (2)

One of the critical relationships appears to be the location of certain types of people – female householders, non-citizens, people of color, and college graduates. Models are needed to take account of the interaction of all these factors.

Caveat: This presentation has given only the basic facts and correlates about the relationship of poverty to place, but not the causes.

A New Development Holds Promise: The American Community Survey

- Designed to replace the decennial census long form: over any five-year period, the ACS will sample roughly one in every eight housing units.
- By aggregating the data over multiple time periods, the ACS will provide tabulations for all levels of Census geography, down to the census tract level.