

Hedonic pricing (1)

Applied Econometrics for Spatial Economics

Hans Koster

Professor of Urban Economics and Real Estate

1. Introduction
2. The MWTP
3. The value function
4. Demand functions
5. Summary

- **Topics:**

1. **Discrete choice**

- Random utility framework, estimating binary and multinomial regression models

2. **Spatial econometrics**

- Spatial data, autocorrelation, spatial regressions

3. **Identification**

- Research design, IV, OLS, RDD, quasi-experiments, standard errors

4. **Hedonic pricing**

- **Theory and estimation**

5. **Quantitative spatial economics**

- **General equilibrium models in spatial economics**

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Wednesday

09:30-10:30	Lecture 1	Discrete Choice I (The random utility framework)
10:45-11:45	Lecture 2	Discrete Choice II (Estimating discrete choice models)
12:00-13:00	Lecture 3	Spatial Econometrics I (Spatial data)
14:00-15:30	Tutorial 1	Assignment 1

Thursday

09:30-10:30	Lecture 4	Spatial Econometrics II (Spatial autocorrelation)
10:45-11:45	Lecture 5	Spatial Econometrics III (Spatial regressions)
12:00-12:30	Lecture 6	Identification I (Research design)
13:30-14:00	Tutorial 2	Discussion of Assignment 1
14:00-15:00	Tutorial 3	Assignment 2

Friday

09:30-10:00	Lecture 7	Identification II (RCTs, OLS, IV, quasi-experiments)
10:00-10:30	Lecture 8	Hedonic pricing I (Theory)
10:45-11:45	Lecture 9	Hedonic pricing II (Estimation)
12:00-12:30	Tutorial 4	Discussion of Assignment 2

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INDEPENDENT
Property
Olympic Park house prices have jumped 60 per cent

Average house price in the 14 areas of East London closest to the Olympic Park is now £334,11

Alex Johnson | @shedworking | Friday 25 July 2014 11:13 BST | 0 comments



The Guardian
How a landfill site can hit the value of your home

Two hundred thousand homes close to landfill sites are worth an average £5,500 less because of the nuisance caused by dust, noise, smell and vermin, according to a government report.

In the first comprehensive look at the effect of landfill sites on house prices, the survey found that in the country as a whole prices were 7% lower near landfill sites. But there were marked regional variations, with the Scots losing 41% of the value of their homes if there was a landfill site within a quarter of a mile.

The value of the nation's housing stock was reduced by £2.48bn because of landfill.

The survey looked at the sale of 592,000 houses over 10 years, and compared prices of similar properties near the 11,300 landfill sites in the country. Houses within a quarter of a mile of a site were worth on average £5,500 less and those between a quarter and half a mile £1,600 less.

The purpose of the survey was to help the Treasury measure the loss of amenity caused by landfill so the landfill tax could be fixed accordingly.

Environment minister, said: "It is not surprising people do not want to live near a landfill site but until now we had no real measure of the damage."

de Volkskrant
Hoe dicht er bij windmolens, hoe meer de huizenprijs daalt

Huizen dalen in waarde als er windparken in de omgeving verschijnen, al is het minder dan veel huiseigenaren denken. Bij de hoogste windmolens loopt het verlies op tot 5 procent of meer. De kans op schadeclaims neemt hierdoor sterk toe.

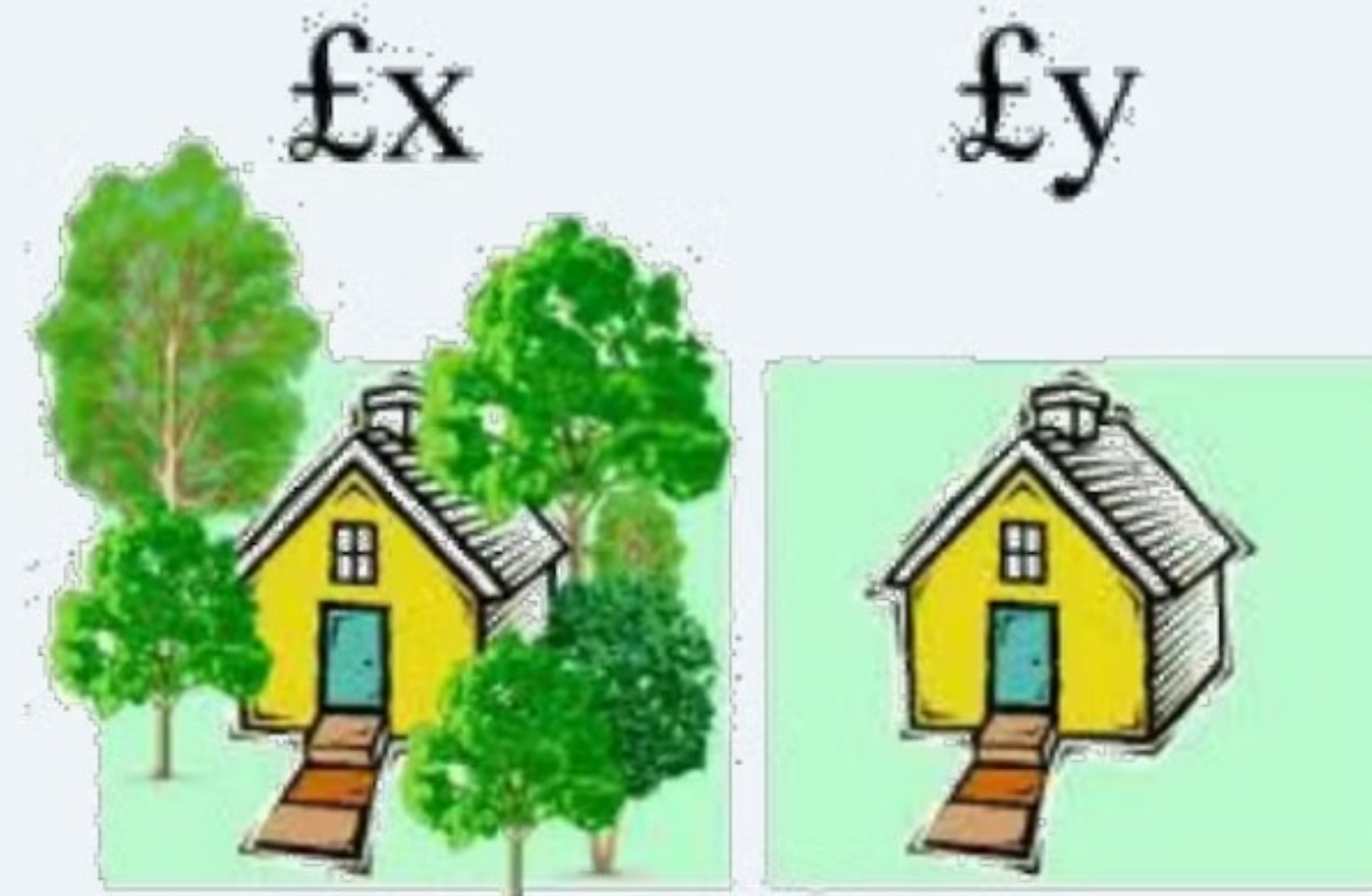
Door: Jeroen Trommelen 19 april 2016, 06:08

Ik ben tegen, want mijn huis wordt minder waard.' In de directe omgeving van een te bouwen windpark is dat argument niet helemaal uit de lucht gegrepen, zeggen onderzoekers van het Tinbergen Instituut. De

Blijf op de hoogte
Elke avond om 20.30 het laatste nieuws en alvast zes artikelen de krant van morgen in je mailbox? Schrijf je nu gratis in.

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- We focus on the housing market
- Hedonic price theory is often used to measure the price of public goods



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- Often used in applied research to answers questions like:
 - Is it beneficial to invest in a new park?
 - What are the social costs of a polluting power plant?
 - Are there any external effects of investments in poor neighbourhoods?
 - What is the effect of earthquakes?
 - ...

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Goals of this class are:

1. **Understand what a hedonic price function**
2. **Have basic knowledge about how a hedonic price function is linked to economic theory**

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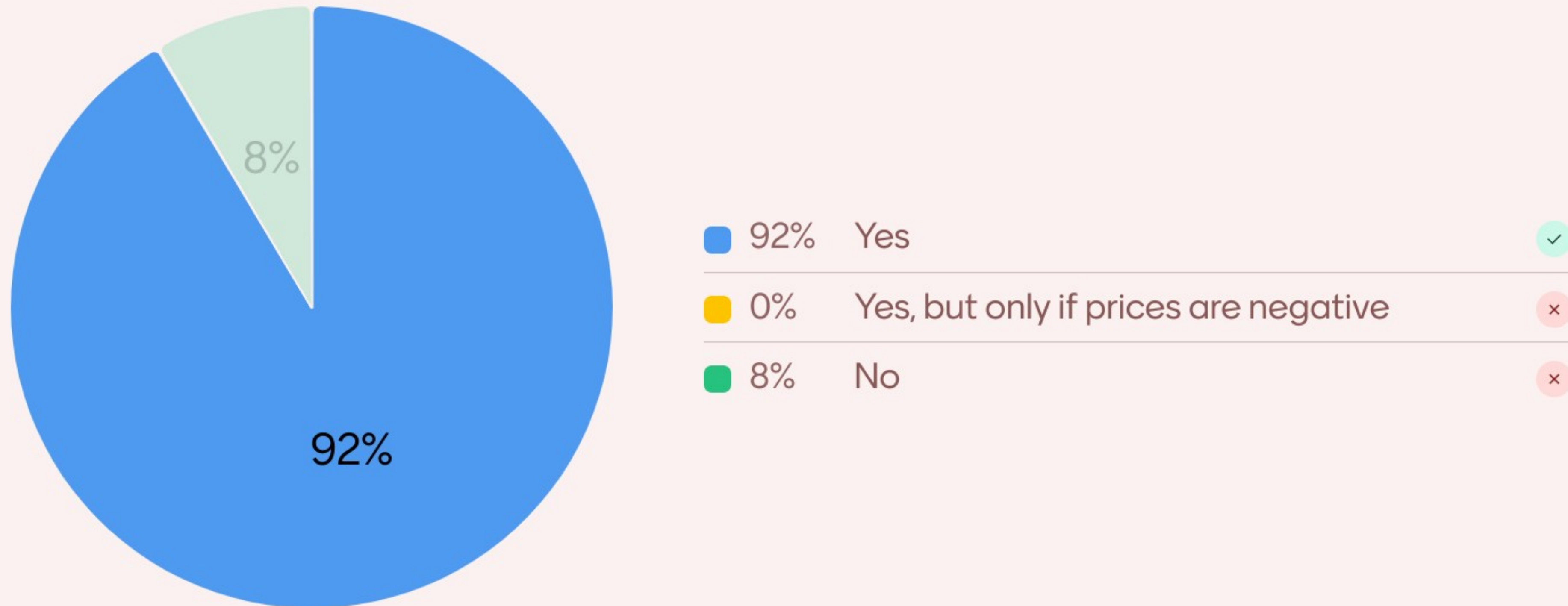
A hedonic price function is:

- A description of the equilibrium prices of varieties of a heterogeneous good influenced by supply and demand
- Is not expected to be stable over time
- Economic theory does not tell much about the shape of the hedonic price function

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- Consider a heterogenous good
- Heterogeneity is described by a number of attributes k .
- Price is a function of these attributes, so $p = p(k)$.
- If there are enough observations, we can estimate $p(k)$.

This hedonic price function is downward sloping in the figure. Could it also be upward sloping?



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- Hedonic price function developed by Andrew Court (1939) in application to cars

- Extended by Zvi Griliches (1961)
 - Also applied to cars
 - Since then a standard econometric tool

- Rosen (1974) provided a link between the hedonic price theory and standard economic theory

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- **How is the hedonic price function related to economic theory?**

- **Let's assume a utility maximising household**
 $u = u(q, k)$
 q denotes a composite good
 k denotes an attribute (*e.g. house size*)
subject to a budget constraint $y = q + p(k)$.

- **Then, it holds that:**
$$\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$$

With $u = u(q, k)$ and $y = q + p(k)$, show that $\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$.



I am ready!

0

I am stuck

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- **Derivation (by setting up a Lagrange)**

$$\mathcal{L} = u(q, k) + \lambda(y - q - p(k)) \quad (1)$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial q} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial q} - \lambda = 0 \quad (2)$$

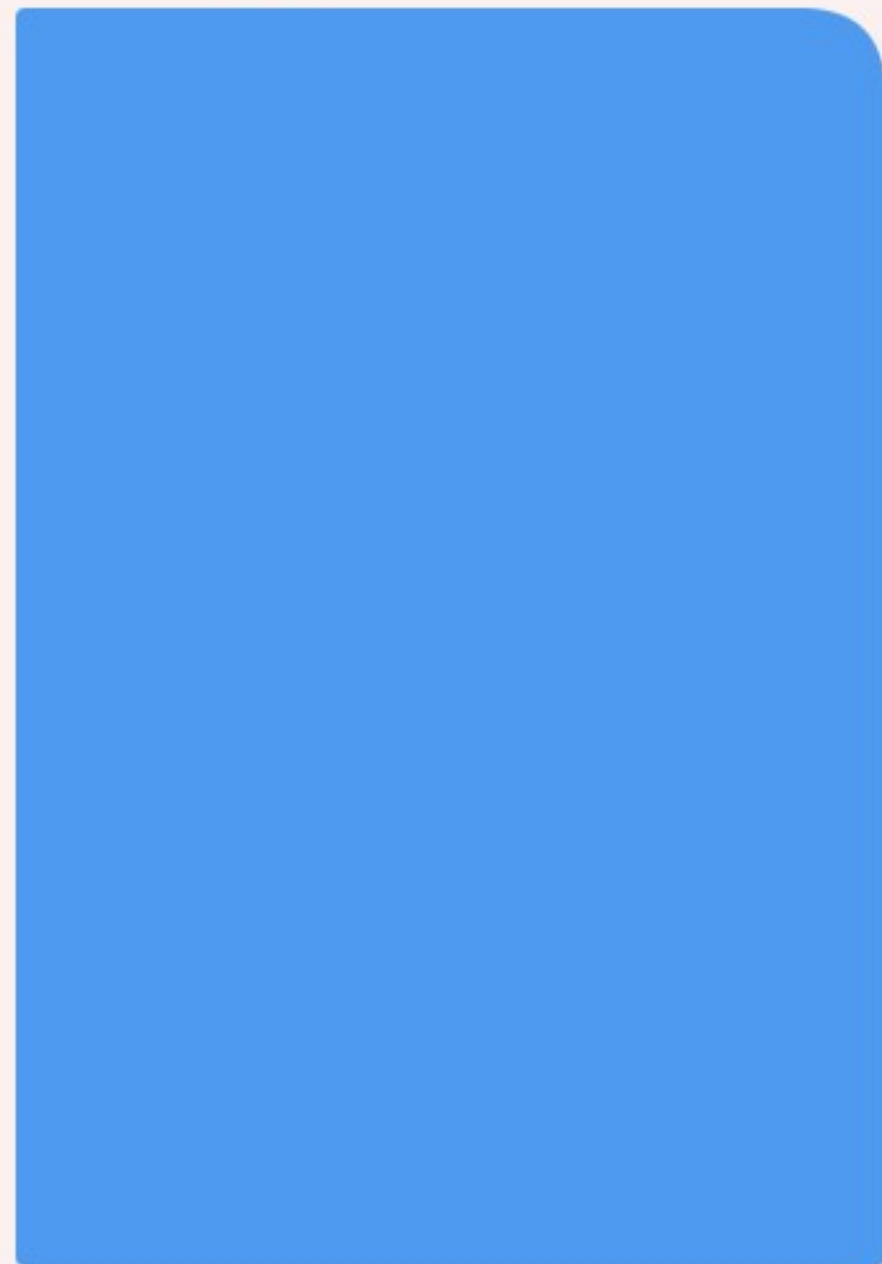
$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial k} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial k} - \lambda \frac{\partial p}{\partial k} = 0 \quad (3)$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial \lambda} = y - q - p(k) = 0 \quad (4)$$

Divide (3) by (2) to obtain $\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$

Please interpret $\frac{\partial u/\partial k}{\partial u/\partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$. (multiple answers may be correct)

10 ✓



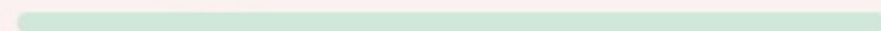
The first expression denotes the marginal rate of substitution

0 ✗



The first expression denotes the marginal rate of transformation

0 ✗



The first expression captures an external effect of the attribute on utility, holding the consumption of the composite good constant

7 ✓



The second expression denotes the willingness to pay for one unit change in the attribute

4 ✗



The second expression denotes the willingness to accept for one unit change in the attribute

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- **Derivation (by setting up a Lagrange)**

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$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial k} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial k} - \lambda \frac{\partial p}{\partial k} = 0 \quad (3)$$

$$\frac{\partial \mathcal{L}}{\partial \lambda} = y - q - p(k) = 0 \quad (4)$$

Divide (3) by (2) to obtain $\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$

- **The marginal rate of substitution (MRS) $\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q}$ equals the marginal willingness to pay $\frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$**

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$$\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$$

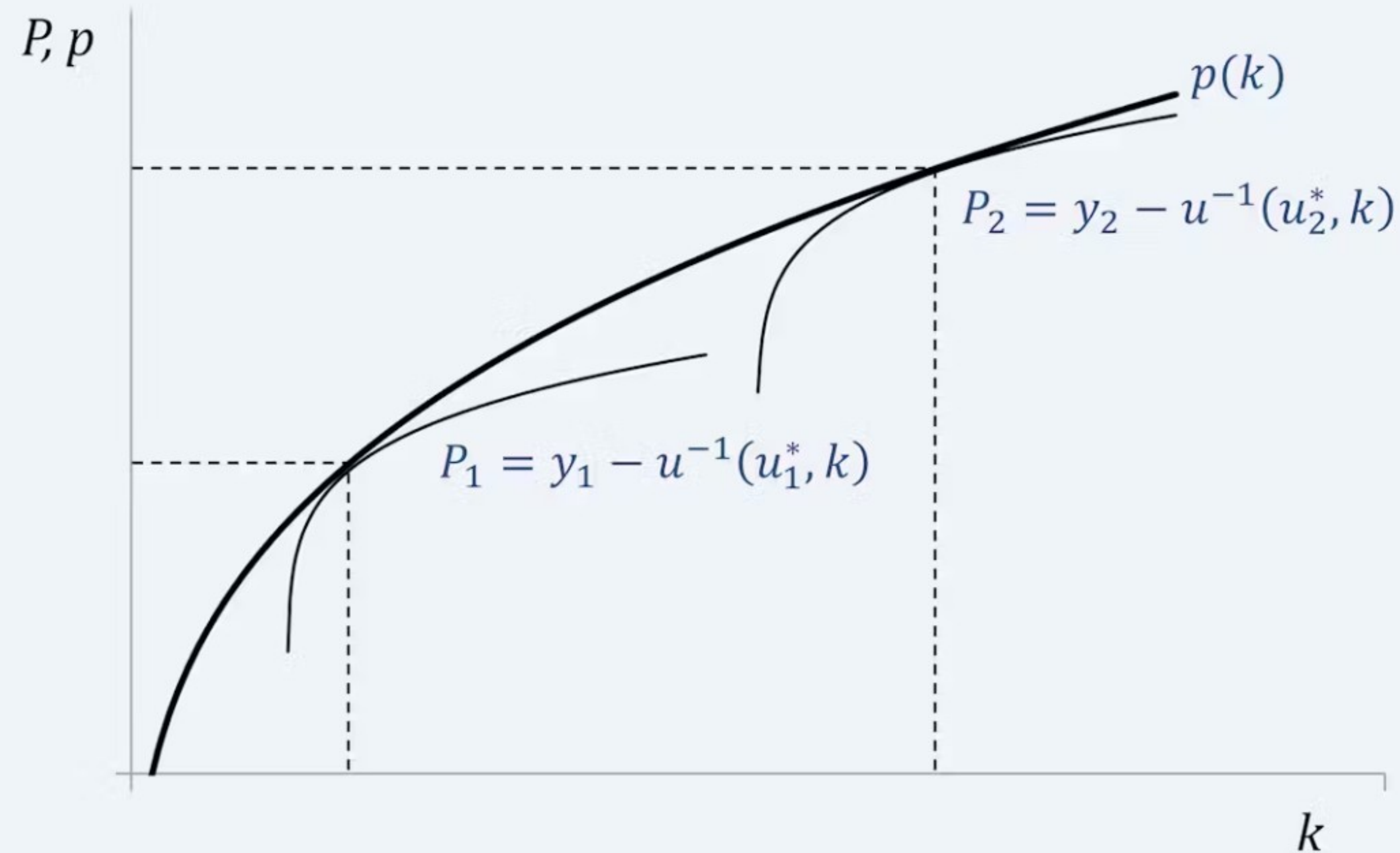
- It indicates the amount of money a consumer is willing to pay to get an additional unit of the attribute
 - An additional square meter of house size
 - Engine power for cars
 - *while holding utility constant*
- Problem: households are not homogeneous in their utility functions!

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- **To analyse the equilibrium we may use the concept of the 'value function'**
 - **We may write $u_1 = u_1^* = u(y_1 - P_1, k)$.**
 - **We then invert the utility function with respect to $y_1 - P_1$ to obtain $P_1 = y_1 - u^{-1}(u_1^*, k)$**
 - **$\frac{\partial P_1}{\partial k} = \frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} \rightarrow$ MRS is equal to implicit price for k**
 - **$\frac{\partial P_1}{\partial y_1} = 1 \rightarrow$ Δy translates completely into ΔWTP**
 - **$\frac{\partial P_1}{\partial u_1^*} = -\frac{1}{\partial u / \partial k} \rightarrow$ WTP for good decreases in \bar{u}**

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- **With heterogenous households, we have:**



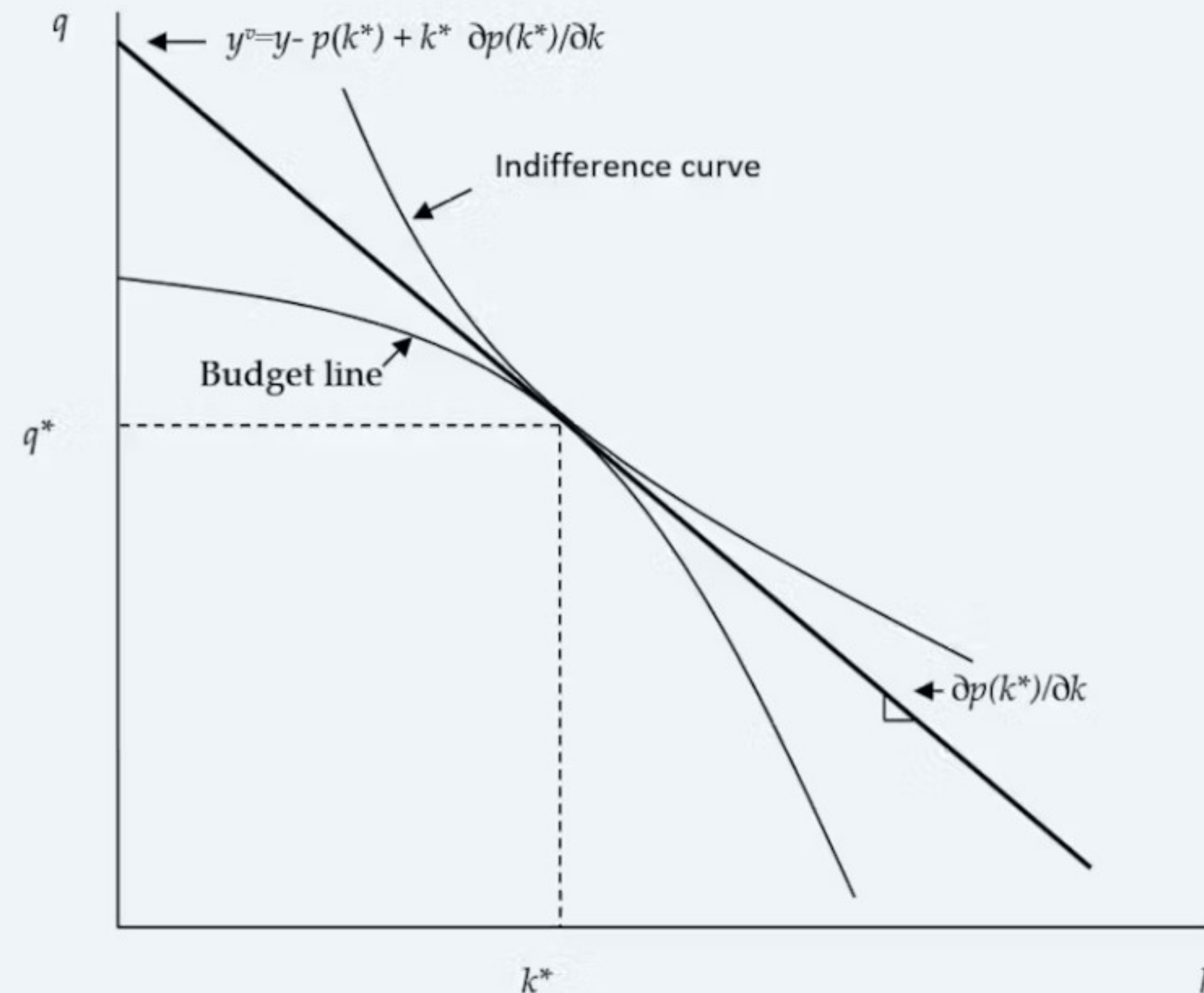
- **Note that the *value functions* give the WTP, (P_1, P_2) for different consumers**
- **Hedonic pricing function $p(k)$ gives market price**

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- Recall that $\frac{\partial u / \partial k}{\partial u / \partial q} = \frac{\partial p}{\partial k}$
- So what can we learn from the data if we estimate a hedonic price function?
 - We aim to obtain $\partial p / \partial k = \alpha$
- Can we determine the *demand* for an attribute k for an individual if we obtain α ?
 - *e.g.* demand for open space
 - Demand function: $k = f(\alpha)$
 - Inverse demand function: $\alpha = f(k)$

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- **The budget constraint: $y = q + p(k)$**
- **A problem: there is no constant unit price of quality k**
 - **The price (or willingness to pay) depends on the amount consumed**

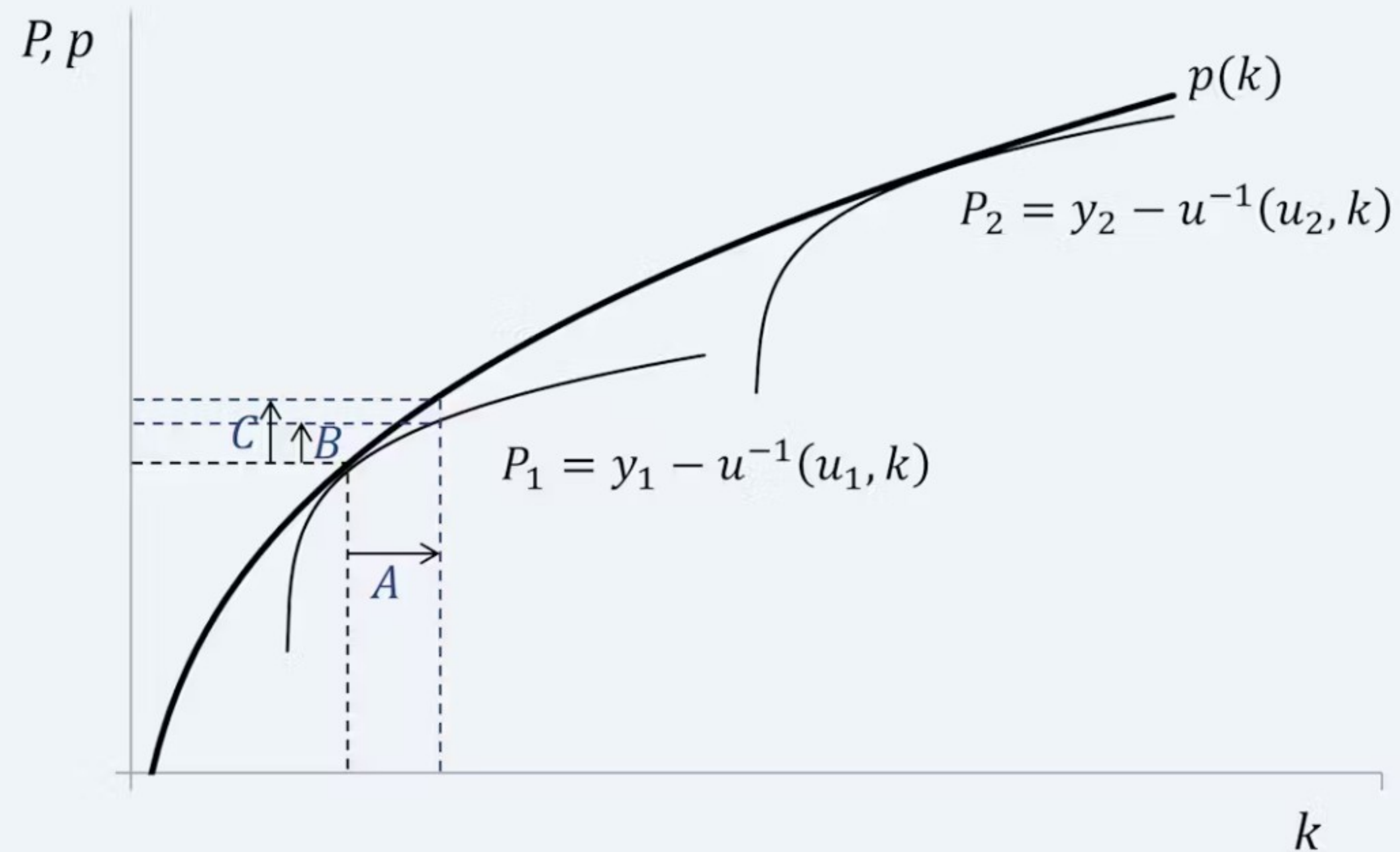


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- **Homogeneity:**
 - In practice we usually calculate the average of the WTP
 - We often do not attempt to estimate structural utility/demand parameters but focus on *marginal changes*
 - Hence, we only identify the point on the value function that touches the equilibrium price function

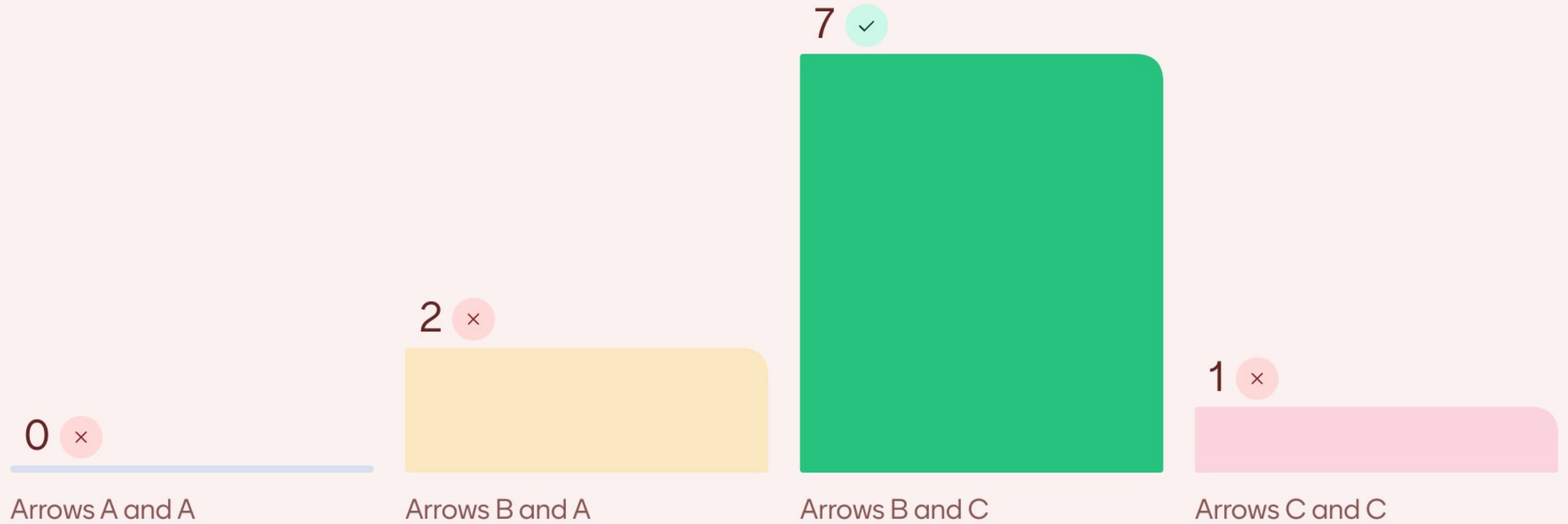
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- **Structural (large) vs. marginal (small) changes in k**



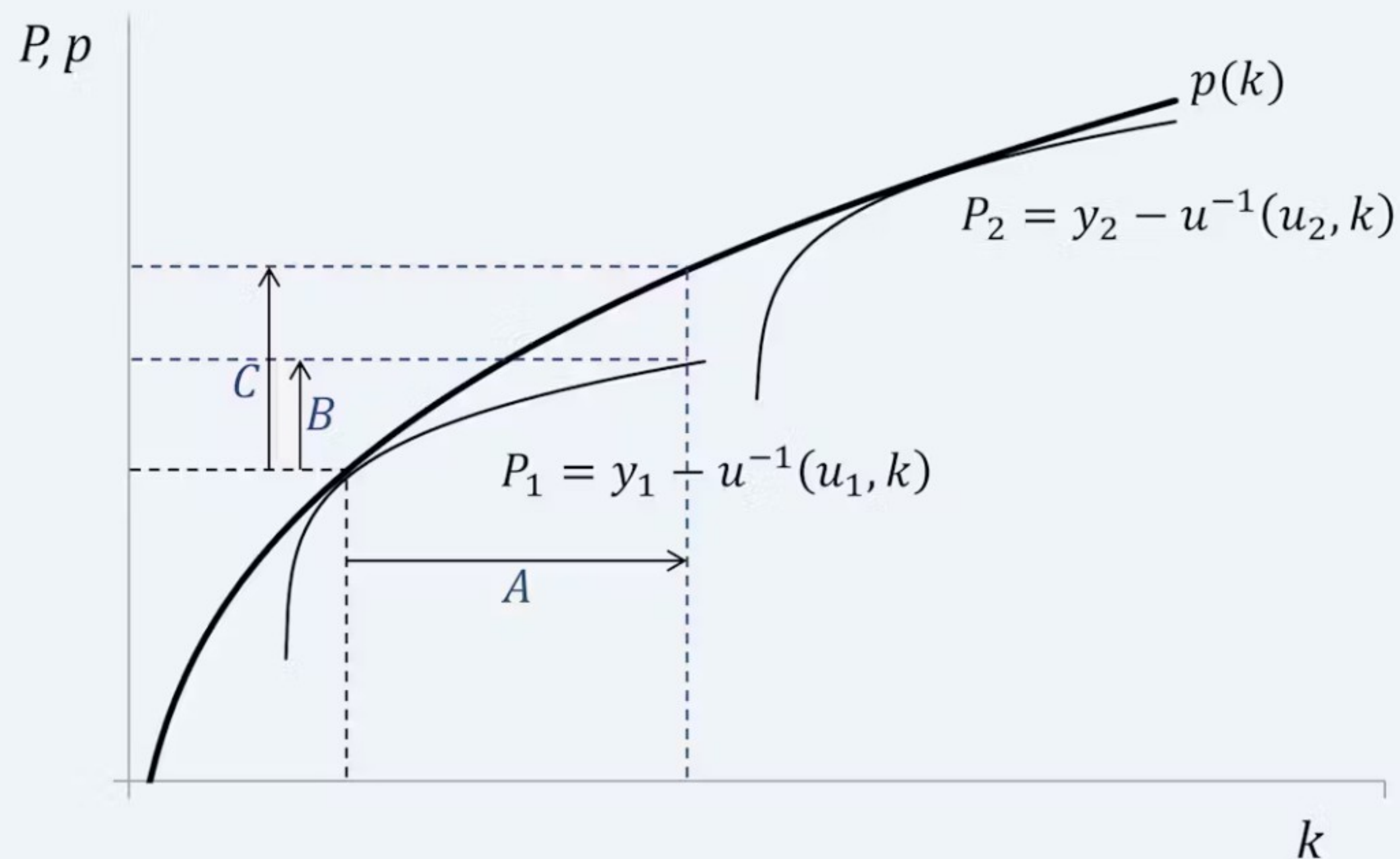
- **Let's consider a *small* change in k**
 - **What is the actual willingness to pay?**

Let's consider a *small* change in k . What is the actual, resp. measured, WTP for the change in k ?



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- Structural (large) vs. marginal (small) changes in k

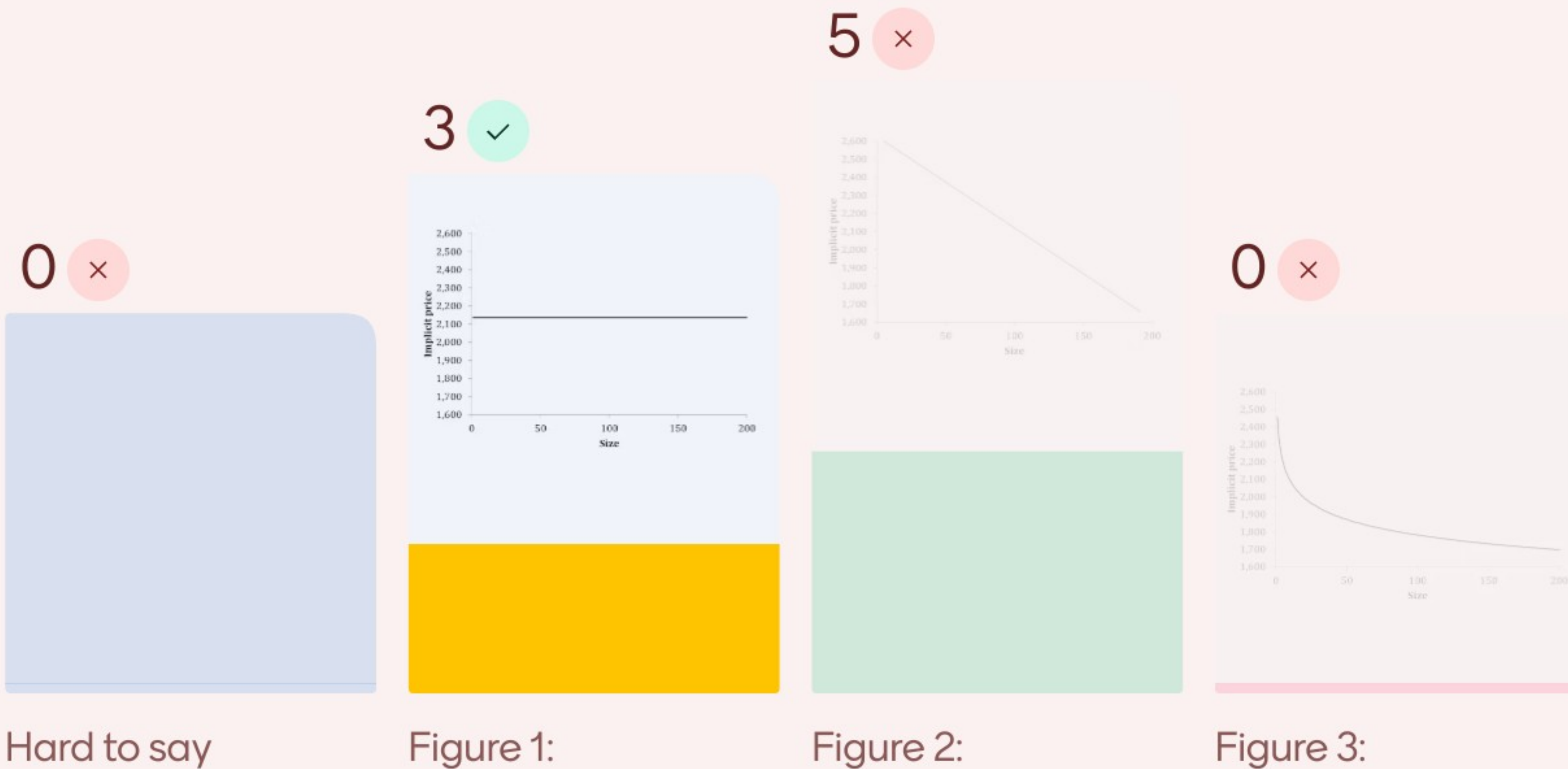


- Let's consider a *large* change in k
 - What is the willingness to pay?

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- **To identify demand functions, Rosen (1974) suggested a three-step procedure**
 1. **Estimate a hedonic price function**
 2. **Calculate the implicit prices**
 3. **Estimate the inverse demand functions by a regression of marginal prices $\partial p / \partial k$ on the amount consumed of attribute k**

How would demand functions look like for a linear hedonic price function



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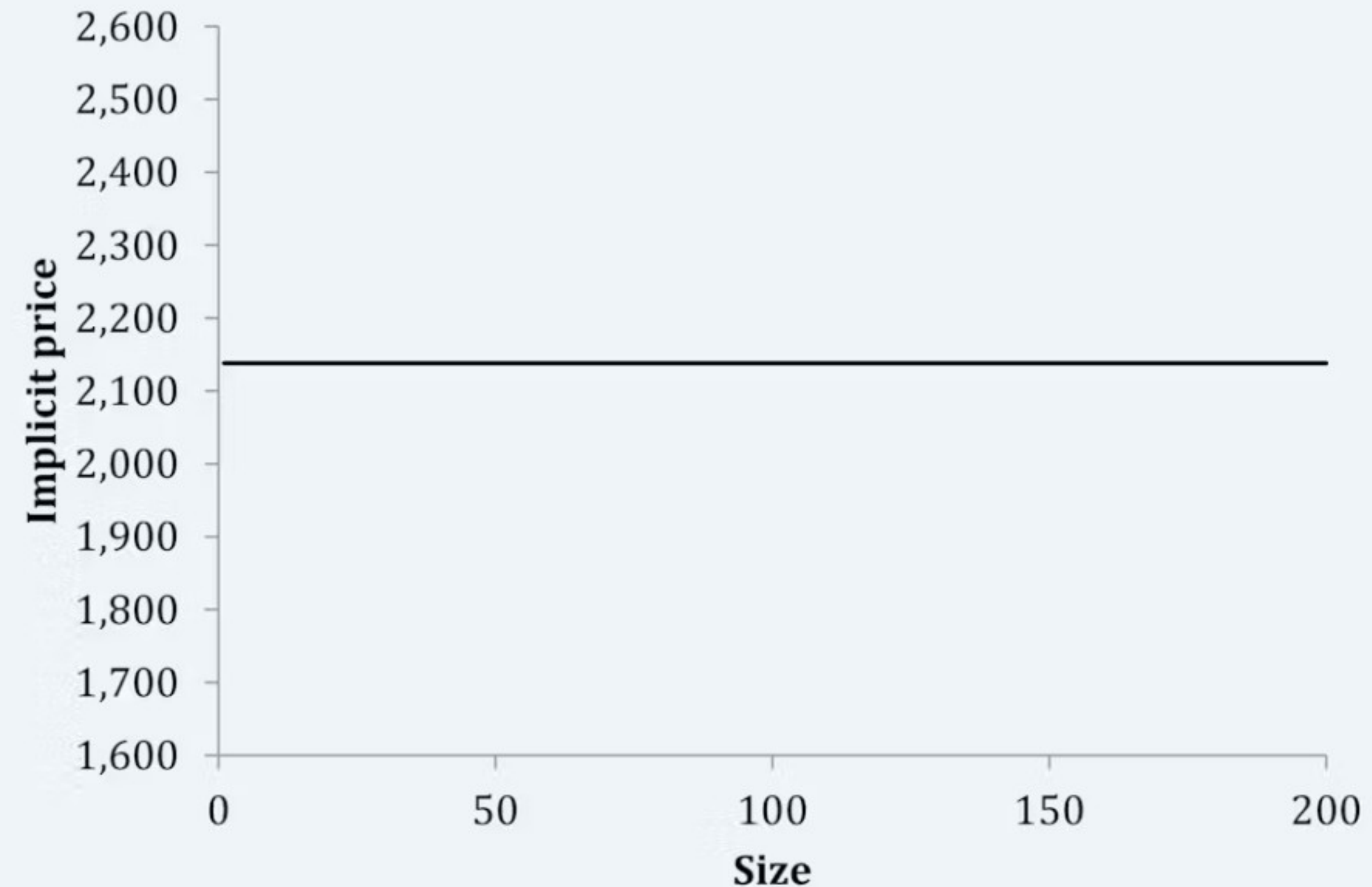
- **Example linear hedonic price function:**

1. **Estimate hedonic price function**

$$p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 k_i + \xi_i$$

2. $\frac{\partial p_i}{\partial k_i} = \hat{\alpha}_1 = 2139$

- 3.



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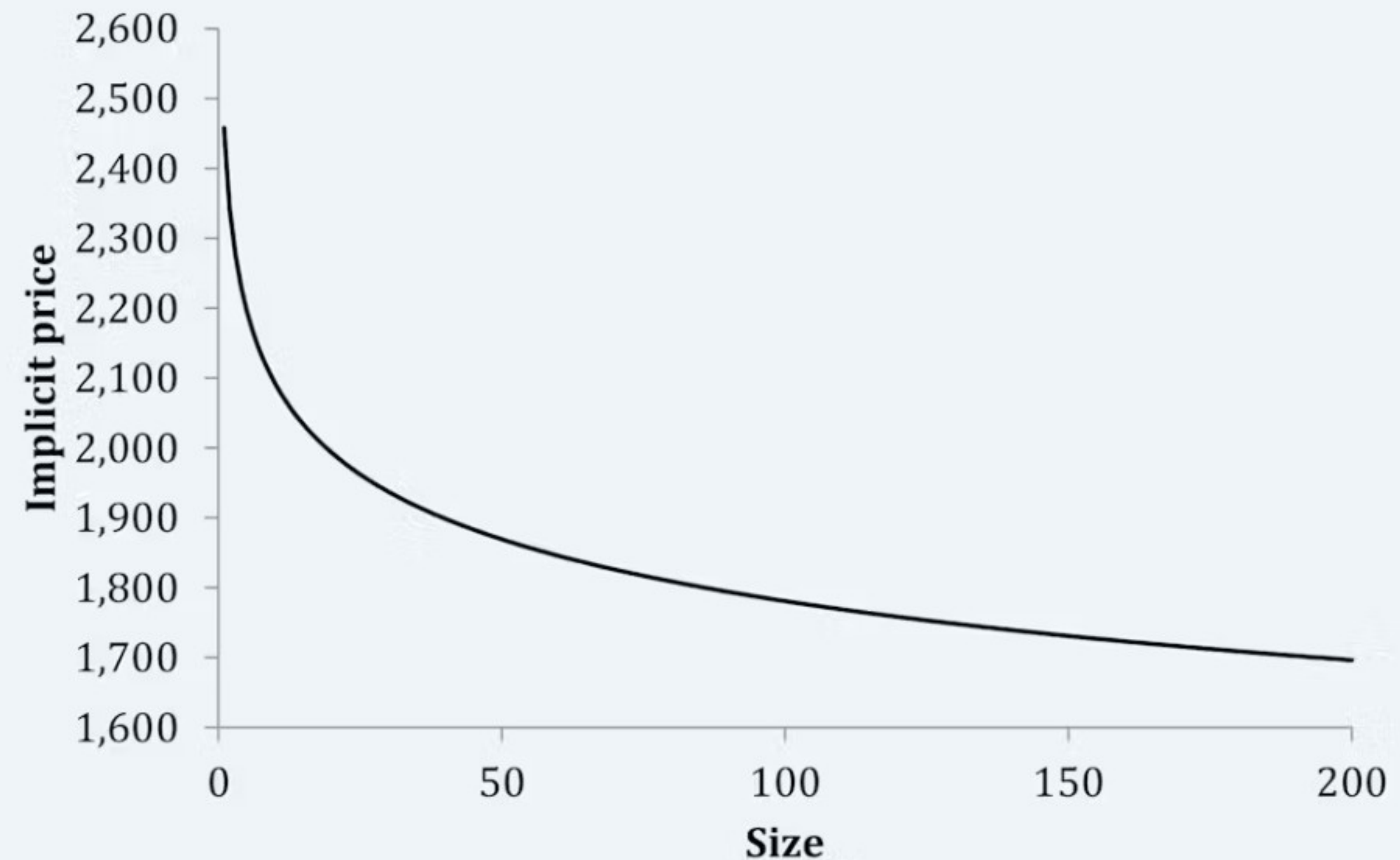
- **Example log-linear hedonic price function:**

1. **Estimate hedonic price function**

$$\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \log k_i + \xi_i$$

2. $\hat{\alpha}_1 = 0.9276; \frac{\partial p_i}{\partial k_i} = \frac{\hat{\alpha}_1 p_i}{k_i}$

- 3.



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- **The procedure to obtain demand functions is misleading**
 - **Demand functions entirely depend on assumed functional form of hedonic price function**

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- **There are some solutions to the identification of demand functions:**
 - **Use *multimarket* data**
 - › **Utility functions are identical across markets but WTP is different**
 - **Use *multiple observations* for each individual**
 - › **Bishop and Timmins (2018)**
 - **Nonparametric methods**
 - › **Ekeland *et al.* (2004)**
 - › **Bajari and Kahn (2005)**

What is your preference regarding using *multimarket data*, *multiple observations* or use *nonparametric methods* to identify demand functions?



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Hedonic pricing (2)

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- **Topics:**

1. **Discrete choice**

- Random utility framework, estimating binary and multinomial regression models

2. **Spatial econometrics**

- Spatial data, autocorrelation, spatial regressions

3. **Identification**

- Research design, IV, OLS, RDD, quasi-experiments, standard errors

4. **Hedonic pricing**

- **Theory and estimation**

5. **Quantitative spatial economics**

- General equilibrium models in spatial economics

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13:30-14:00	Tutorial 2	Discussion of Assignment 1
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Friday

09:30-10:00	Lecture 7	Identification II (RCTs, OLS, IV, quasi-experiments)
10:00-10:30	Lecture 8	Hedonic pricing I (Theory)
10:45-11:45	Lecture 9	Hedonic pricing II (Estimation)
12:00-12:30	Tutorial 4	Discussion of Assignment 2

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- Hedonic price functions are used to answer a lot of policy related questions
- $p_i = \alpha_0 + f(k_i) + \xi_i$
- However:
 1. Misspecification
 2. Endogeneity

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A Historic amenities and house prices

▪ Koster and Rouwendal (2017)

- We apply hedonic price methods to study whether investments in cultural heritage improve neighbourhood quality
- ... Measured by house prices

A Historic amenities and house prices

- **Koster and Rouwendal (2017)**
- **Data on 650 thousand housing transactions**
 - 96% took place in urban areas
 - The average investments are € 89 thousand per km²
 - The standard deviation is € 436 thousand per km²
- **Over 12 thousand cultural heritage investment projects**
 - Since 1980s
 - € 3 billion investments, of which about € 1 billion is a subsidy
 - Focus on small scale projects in vicinity of residential properties → € 1.63 billion investments

We are interested in measuring the *external effects* of investments in historic buildings. What do these capture?

0% 

The fact that the person living in the historic building enjoys a better and nicer home

100% 

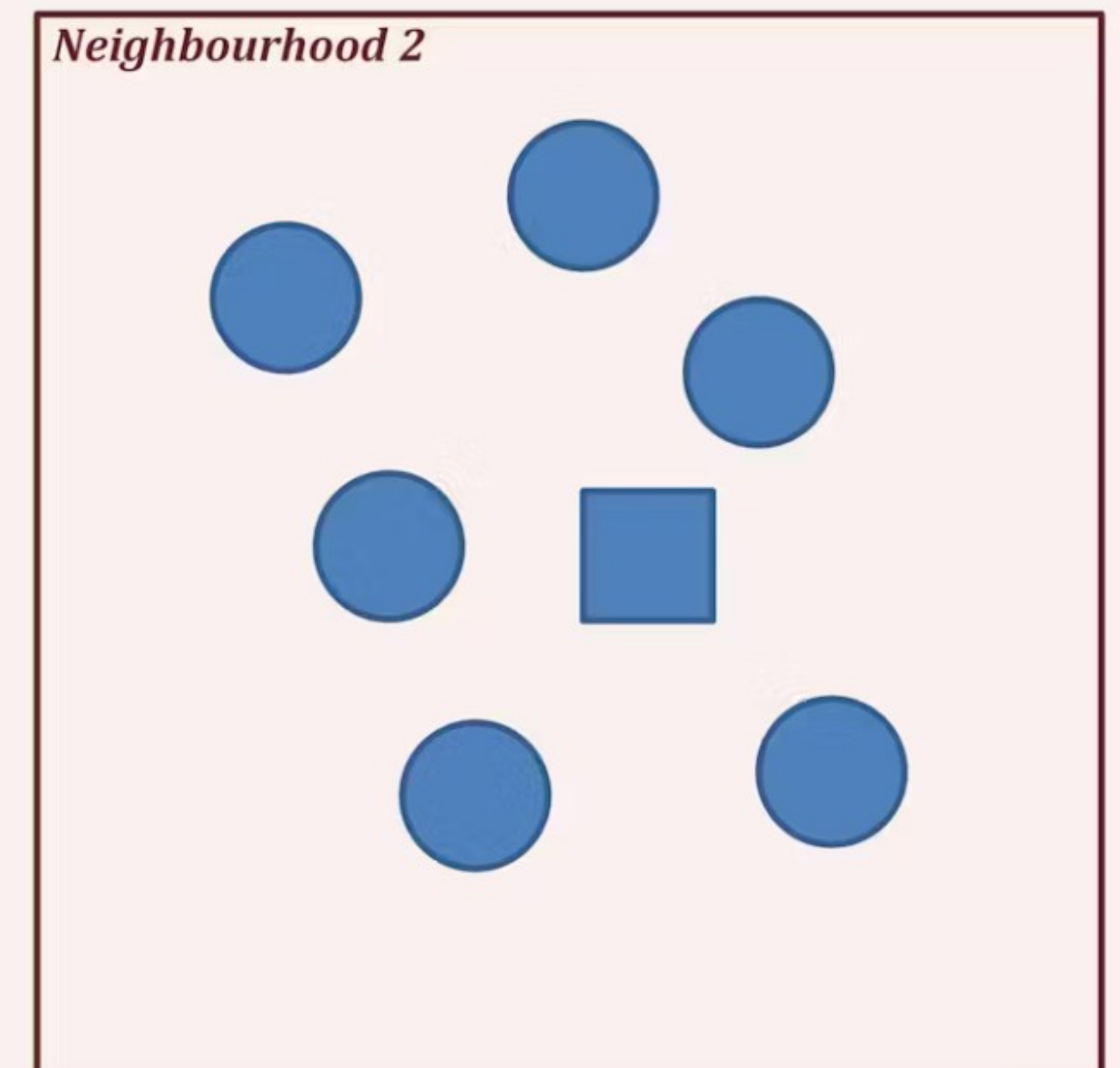
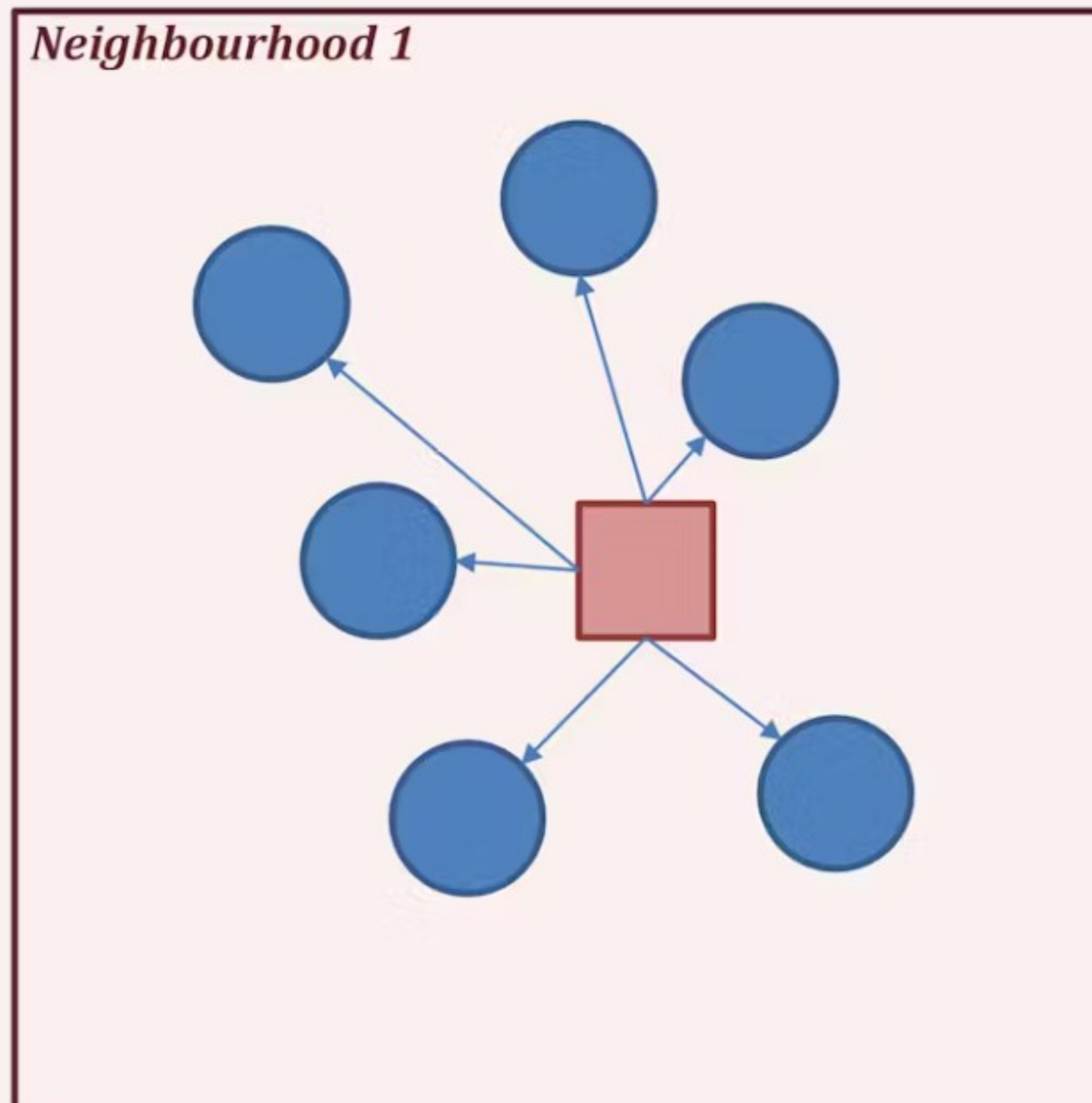
The fact that other people around the historic building enjoy a better neighbourhood quality

0% 

The fact that if you subsidise a historic building, this will imply that it will be more energy efficient, leading to lower CO₂ emissions

A Historic amenities and house prices

- We are interested in the external effect!
 - On prices of surrounding properties



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Subsidie monumenten stuwt huizenprijzen

13 februari 2015 • 54 • Door Redactie



Binnenstad Maassluis Foto: Arch via wikimedia

Door investeringen in cultureel erfgoed stijgen de huizenprijzen in de buurt eromheen. De omgeving wordt daardoor kennelijk aantrekkelijker voor huizenkopers, blijkt uit donderdag gepubliceerd onderzoek van de economen Hans Koster en Jan Rouwendal van de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

A Historic amenities and house prices

Restauratie monumenten stuwt huizenprijzen

12 februari 2015, 16:19

Door investeringen in cultureel erfgoed stijgen de huizenprijzen in de buurt eromheen. De omgeving wordt daardoor kennelijk aantrekkelijker voor huizenkopers, blijkt uit donderdag gepubliceerd onderzoek van de economen Hans Koster en Jan Rouwendal van de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

Zij onderzochten gesubsidieerde monumenten, die een zeer groot cultureel erfgoed van de stad vormen.

MONUMENT VERHOOGT HUIZENPRIJZEN

Onderzoekers van de Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam hebben onderzocht welk effect het opknappen van monumenten heeft op prijzen van de omliggende woningen. Dit blijkt een positief effect te hebben.

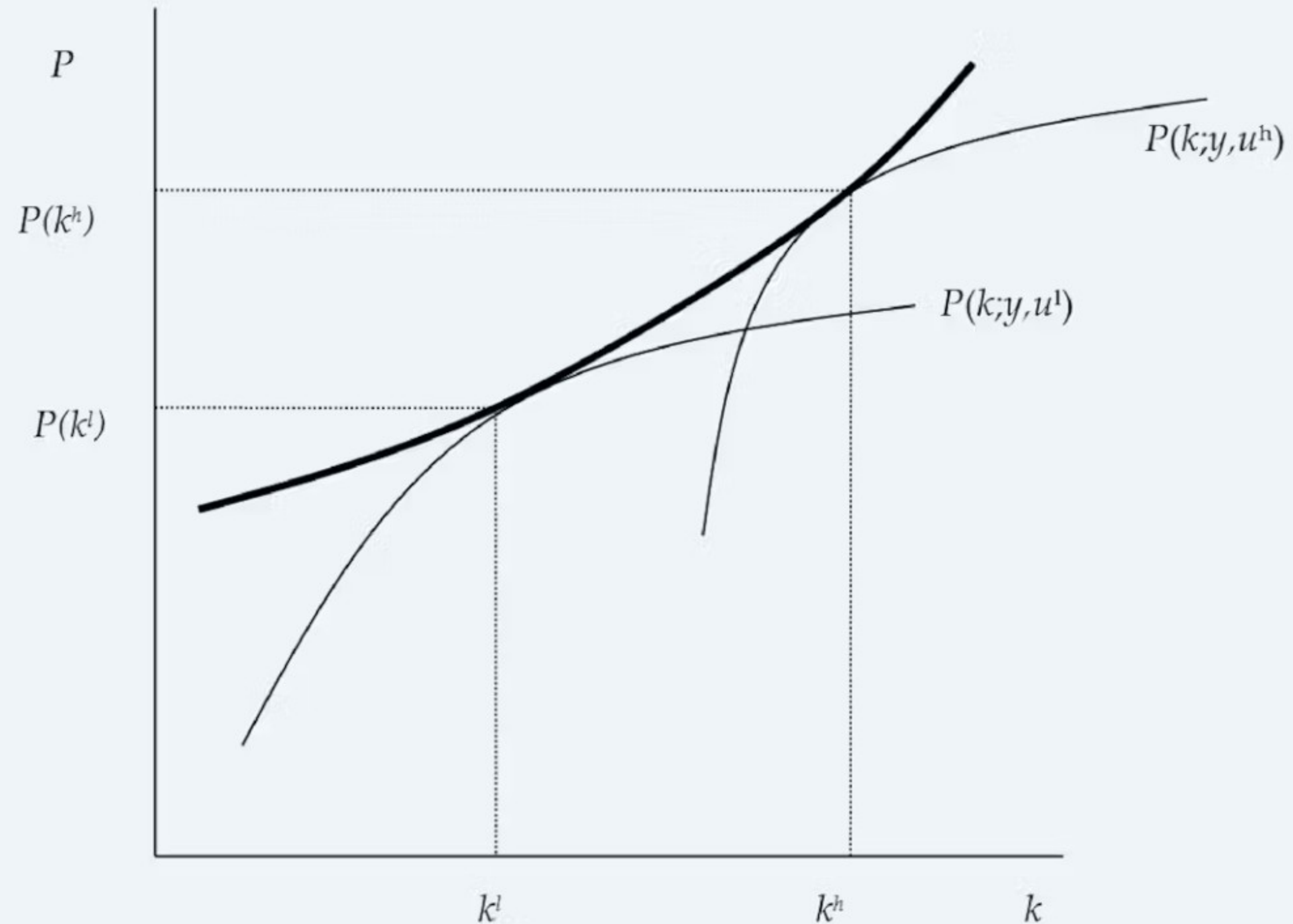
Een gemiddelde restauratiebeurt kan de prijzen van omliggende woningen met 1,5 tot 3 procent laten stijgen. Het restaureren van monumenten met een cultuurhistorische waarde is dus niet alleen de moeite waard voor de uitstraling van het gebouw zelf. De omgeving knapt er zichtbaar van op en er bestaat een grote kans dat omwonenden hun woning met een hoger percentage kunnen verkopen.

neel
Nederlandse
Cultureel Erfgoed, bestaat
orende huizenprijzen en 12.000

investering in een restauratieproject was 250.000 euro.

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- **Recall: the hedonic price function is formed of different people attaching different values to a good**



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- **We have the following hedonic price function:**

$$p_i = \alpha_0 + f(k_i) + \xi_i$$

- **Functional form is unknown**
 - **May be highly nonlinear due to heterogeneity**

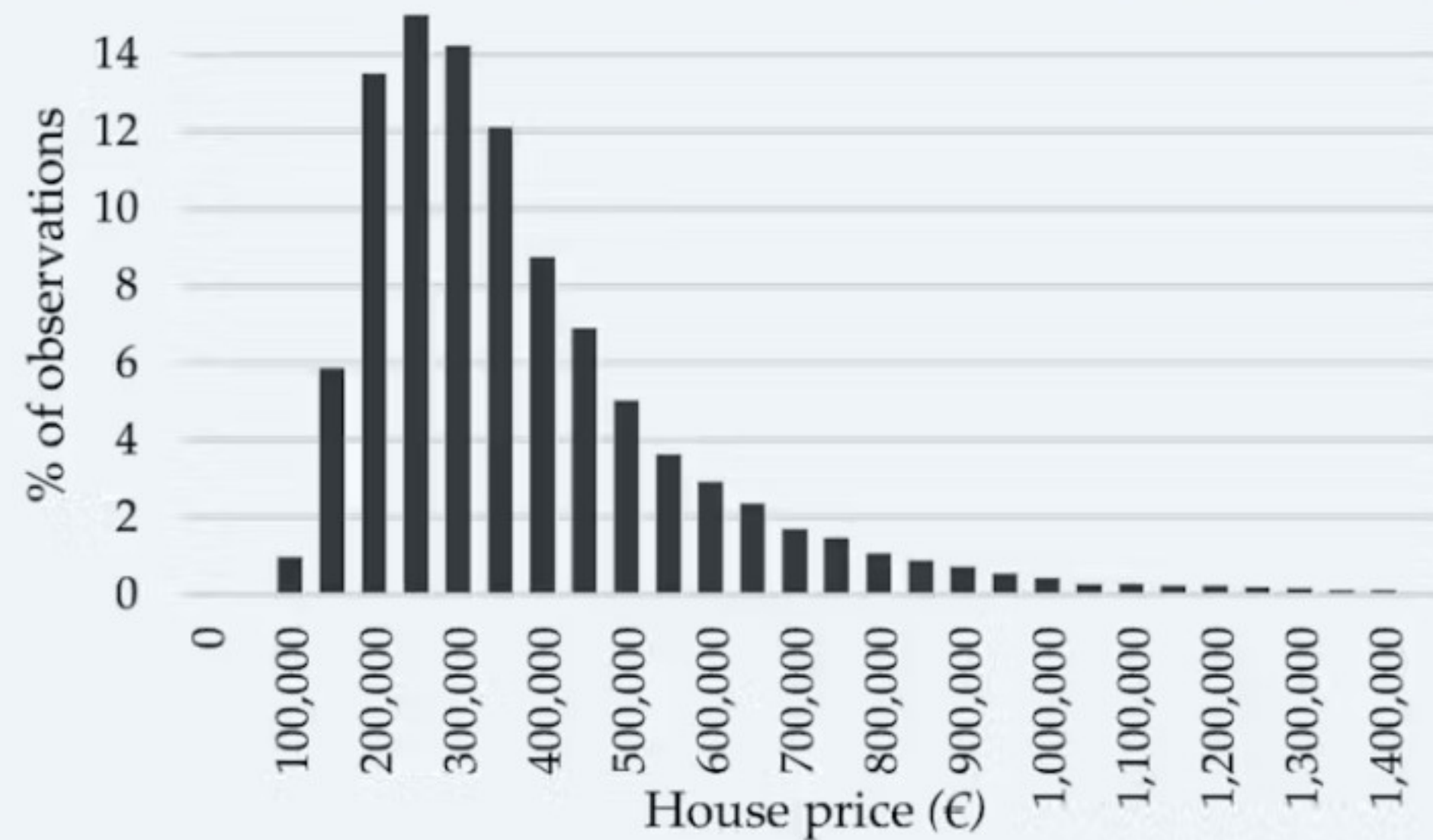
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- **Logarithmic functions are often assumed:**

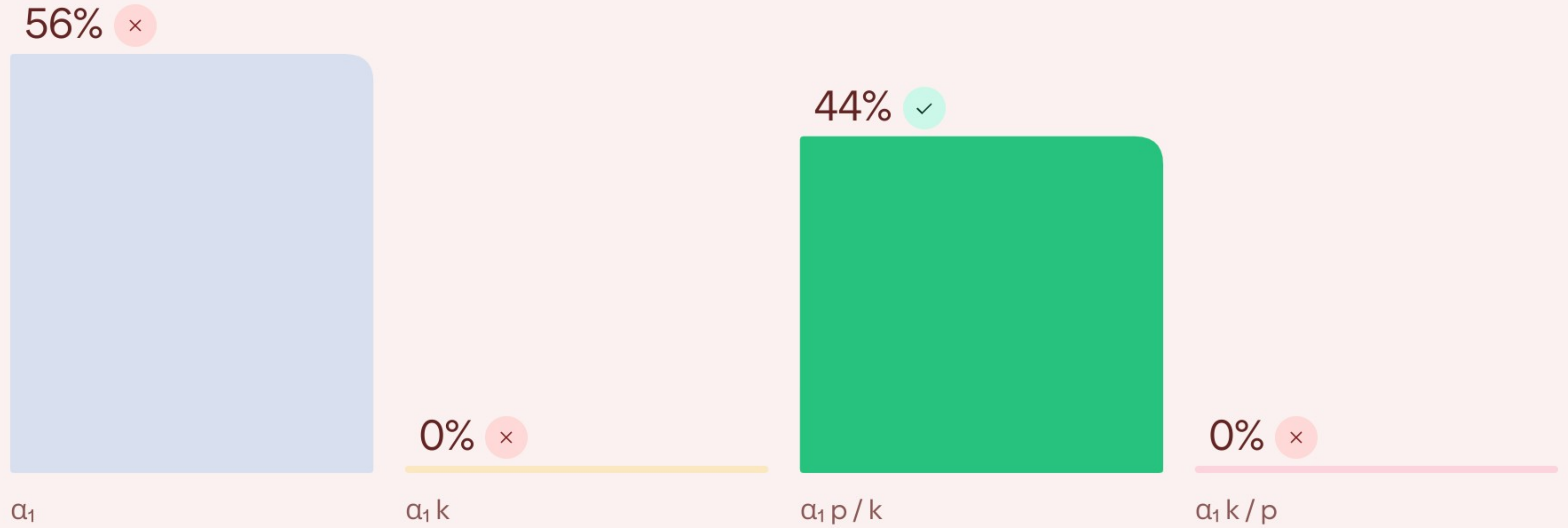
$$\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \log k_i + \xi_i$$

$$\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 k_i + \xi_i$$

- **Common feature of house price data: skewness**
... issue of skewness is then addressed



Given $\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \log k_i + \xi_i$, what is the willingness to pay for k_i ?



A Historic amenities and house prices

- Estimate simple hedonic price function:

$$\log p_{int} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 z_{nt} + \theta_t + \xi_{int}$$

where i is the property

n is the neighbourhood

t is the year of observation

p_{int} is the house price

z_{nt} are the cumulative investments in
cultural heritage in million € per km²

α_1 is the coefficient of interest

θ_t are year fixed effects

ξ_{int} is a residual

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A Historic amenities and house prices

- Preliminary results

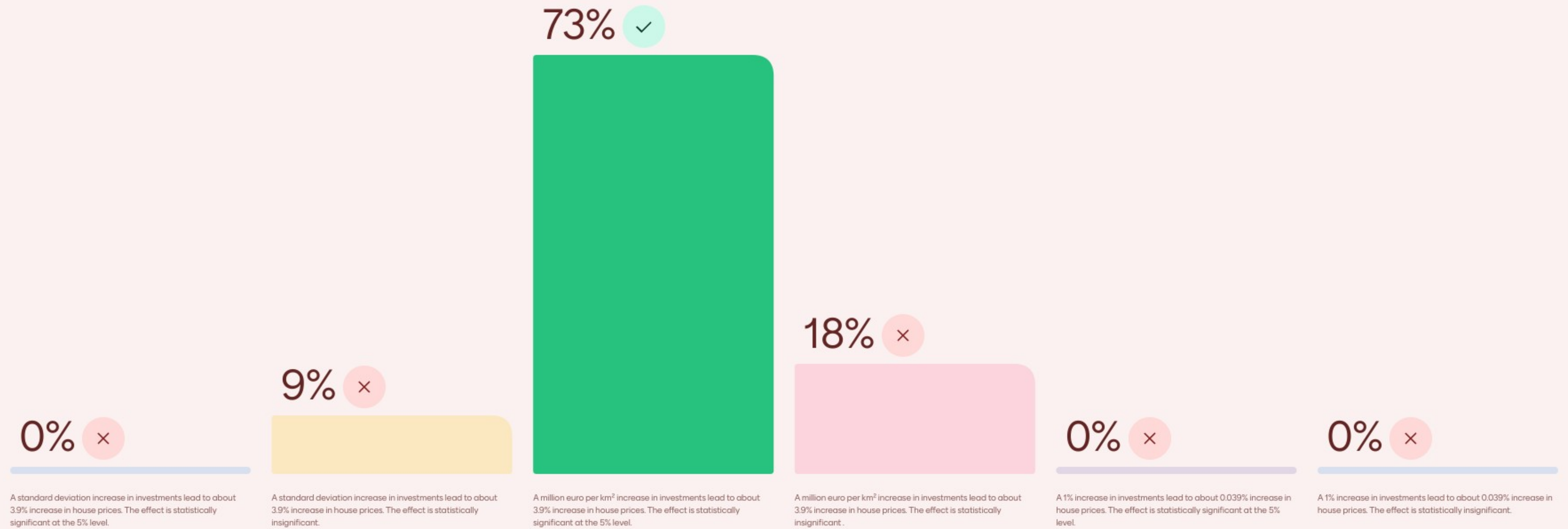
Table 3.1 – REGRESSION RESULTS

(Dependent variable: log of house price)

	(1)
Investments in historic buildings <i>(in million € per km²)</i>	0.0389** (0.0160)
Housing control variables (17)	No
Year fixed effects	No
Property fixed effects	No
Observations	657,574
R^2	0.400

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the neighbourhood level and in parentheses. ***
 $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.10$.

Please interpret the coefficient.



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... But log-linear hedonic price functions can still be considered as restrictive

- Recall that we had the following hedonic price function:

$$p_i = \alpha_0 + f(k_i) + \xi_i$$

- How should we estimate the above price function?
 - Nonparametric/semiparametric econometric techniques!
 - Put less structure on the data
- Nonparametric → no structure
- Semiparametric → a bit of structure

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- **Let's focus on two semiparametric estimation methods**
 - **Series approximation**
 - **Locally weighted regression (LWR)**

- **Series approximation**
 - **Estimate Taylor-series expansion**
 - **E.g., add k_i^2 and k_i^3 .**
 - **So, $\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 k_i + \alpha_2 k_i^2 + \alpha_3 k_i^3 + \xi_i$**

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- **Series approximation**
 - **Estimate Taylor-series expansion**
 - **E.g., add k_i^2 and k_i^3 .**
 - **So, $\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 k_i + \alpha_2 k_i^2 + \alpha_3 k_i^3 + \xi_i$**

- **Pros and cons**
 - **Linear in parameters**
 - **Problem if you have many explanatory variables**
 - **Sometimes not flexible enough**
 - **Performs poorly in 'boundary' regions**

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- **Locally weighted regression**
 - Estimate for each observation a *weighted regression*
 - Let weights be higher for observations that are 'similar'
 - So, $\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_i k_i + \xi_i$ where i is the observation
 - Run weighted regression for each observation
 - › Weights depend on value of k_i

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- **Locally weighted regression**

- **Weights depend on value of k :**

$$w_i = \frac{1}{h\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_k}} e^{-\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{k-k_i}{\sigma_k h}\right)^2}$$

- **Looks difficult, but weights are based on a normal distribution**

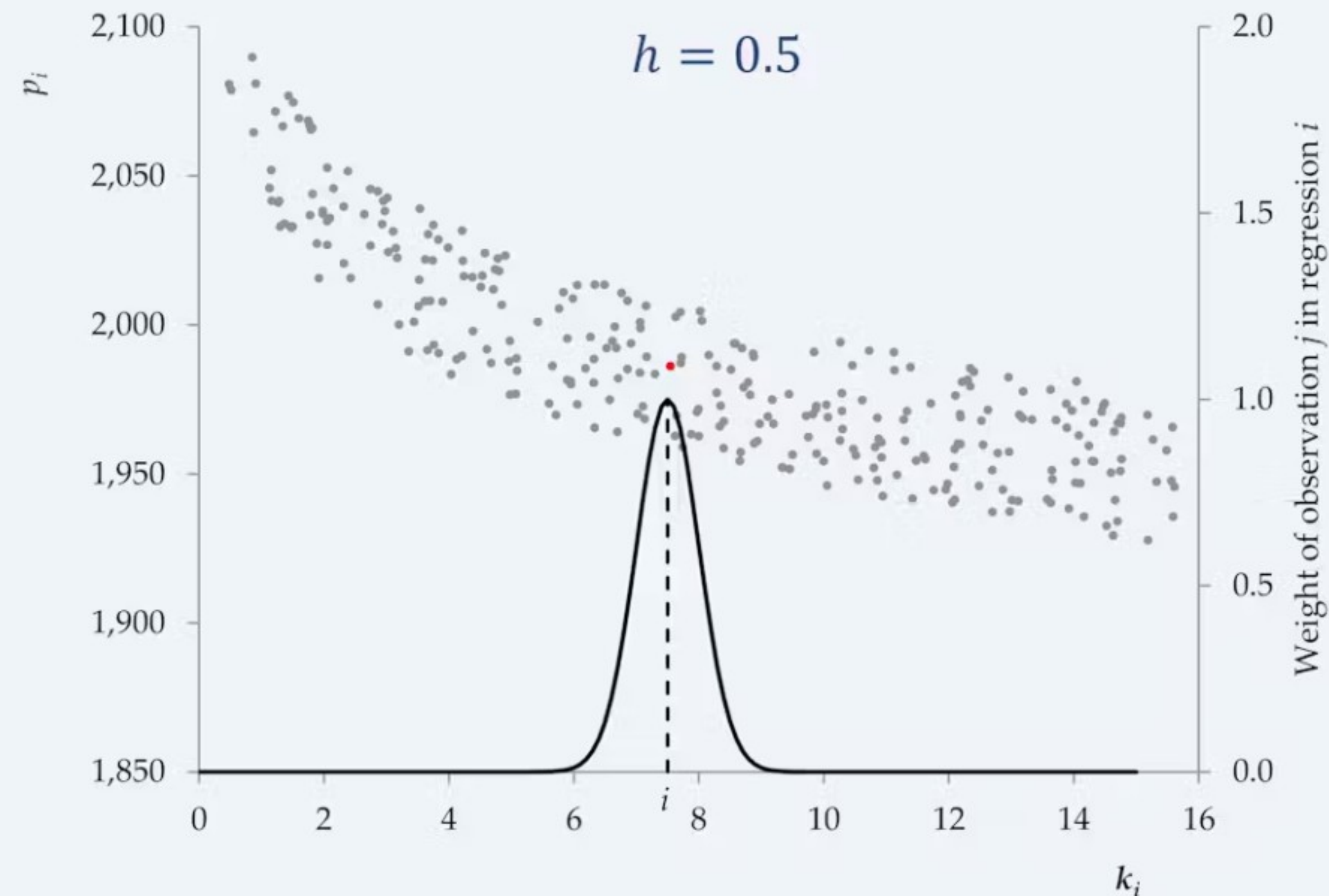
- **h is the bandwidth**

- **$h = 0$, only take observation i into account**
- **$h \rightarrow \infty$, identical to linear regression**

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- **Locally weighted regression**
 - **Weights depend on k_i :**

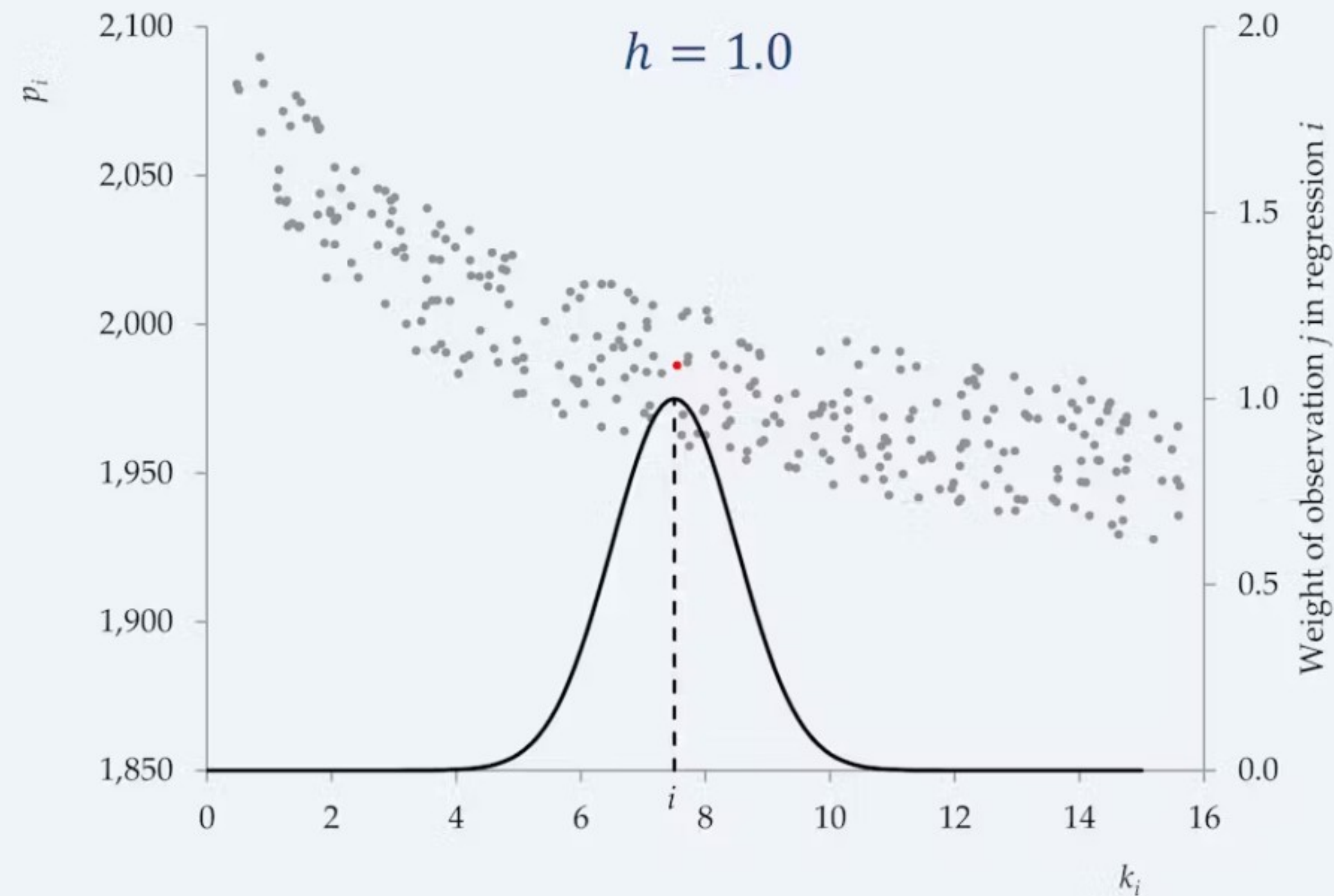
$$w_i = \frac{1}{h\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_k}} e^{-\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{k-k_i}{\sigma_k h}\right)^2}$$



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- **Locally weighted regression**
 - **Weights depend on k_i :**

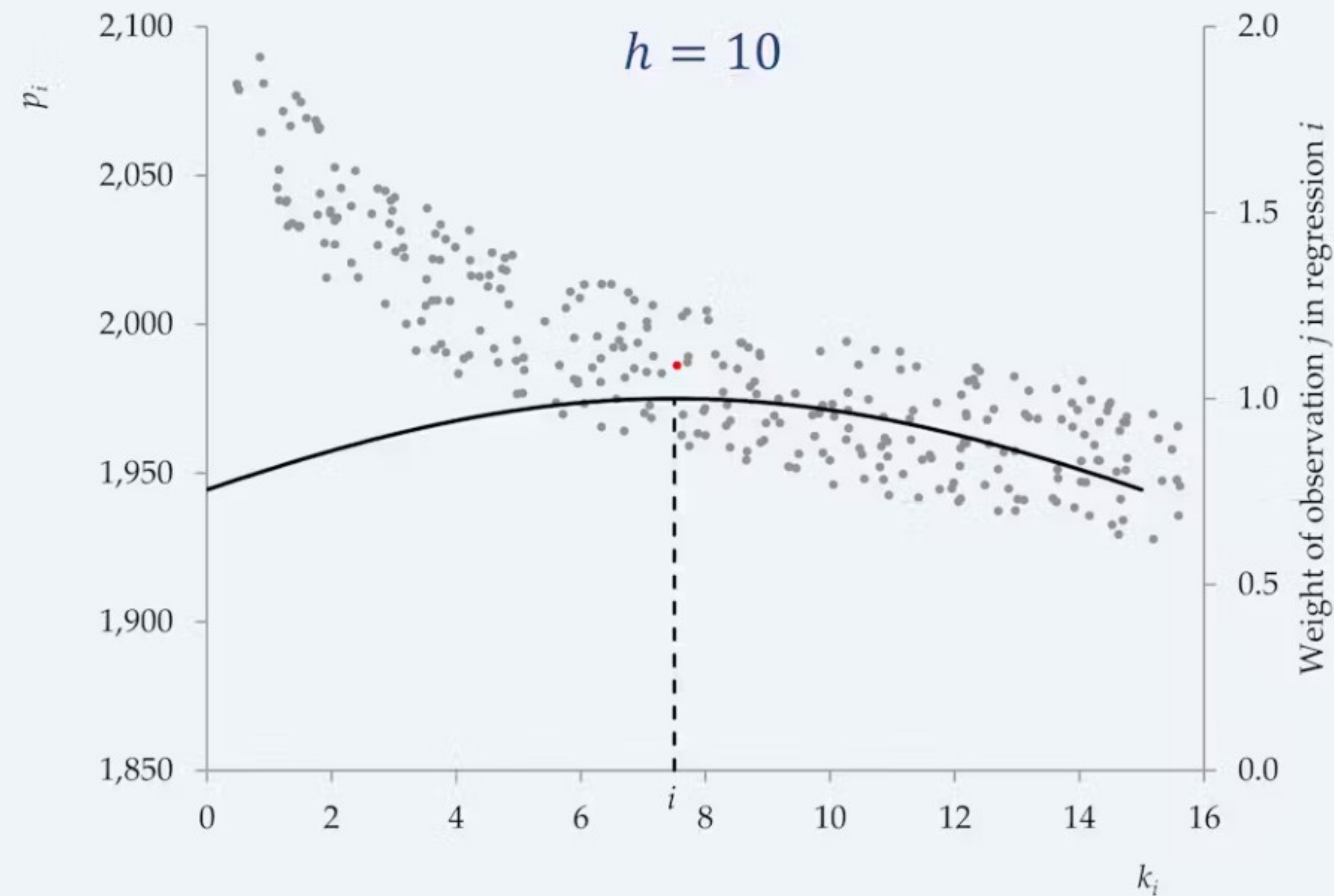
$$w_i = \frac{1}{h\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_k}} e^{-\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{k-k_i}{\sigma_k h}\right)^2}$$



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- **Locally weighted regression**
 - **Weights depend on k_i :**

$$w_i = \frac{1}{h\sqrt{2\pi\sigma_k}} e^{-\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{k-k_i}{\sigma_k h}\right)^2}$$



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- **Locally weighted regression**
 - **Very flexible**
 - **Easy to estimate implicit prices** ($\partial p_i / \partial k_i = \alpha_i$)
 - **Bandwidth is important parameter; determines smoothness**
 - **Becomes popular in applied research**
 - › **Bajari and Kahn (2005)**
 - › **McMillen and Redfearn (2010)**
 - **Use for example** NPREGRESS **command in STATA**

- **But: computationally intensive!**
 - **It takes very long to estimate when $N \gtrsim 50000$**

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- **How to estimate partially linear functions?**

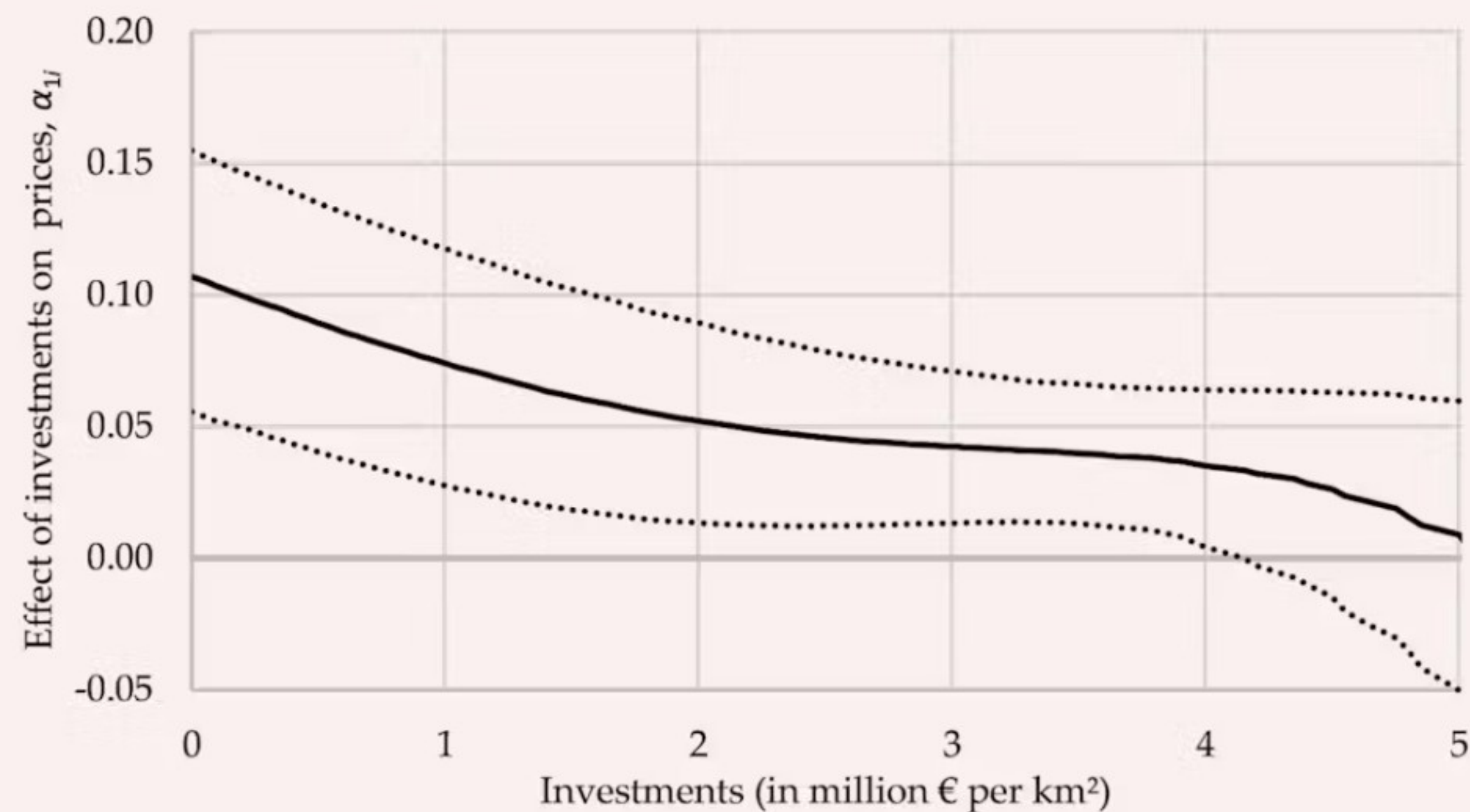
$$p_i = f(k_i) + \beta x_i + \xi_i$$

- **Use series estimation**
- **Use Robinson's procedure**
 - › **PLREG in STATA**


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A Historic amenities and house prices

- **Estimate partially linear LWR**
$$\log p_{int} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_{1i} z_{nt} + \theta_t + \xi_{int}$$
- **Note that α_{1i} is now property-specific**



What do you observe?

0% 

The impact of investments is essentially linear.

0% 

Prices decrease once investments are higher.

100% 



The marginal impact of investments becomes smaller once investments are higher.

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- **Omitted variable bias (OVB) is a big issue when estimating hedonic price functions**
 - **So:** $\log p_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \log k_i + \xi_i$
 - **If $E[\xi_i | k_i] \neq 0$, α_1 will be inconsistent**

A Historic amenities and house prices

- **Let's include housing controls and property fixed effects**

$$\log p_{int} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \log z_{nt} + \sum_{c=2}^C \alpha_c k_{itc} + \mu_t + \theta_t + \xi_i$$

- **The 17 control variables included are house size, construction year, house type, rooms, maintenance quality, etc.**

A Historic amenities and house prices

- **Results**
- **Including property fixed effects matters!**
- **So: many characteristics of properties are hard to measure**

Table 3.1 – REGRESSION RESULTS
 (Dependent variable: log of house price)

		+ Controls	+ House f.e.
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Investments in historic buildings (in million € per km ²)	0.0389** (0.0160)	0.0411*** (0.0142)	0.0151*** (0.00514)
Housing control variables (17)	No	Yes	Yes
Year fixed effects	No	Yes	Yes
Property fixed effects	No	No	Yes
Observations	657,574	657,574	657,574
R ²	0.400	0.763	0.982

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the neighbourhood level and in parentheses. ***
 $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.10$.

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A Historic amenities and house prices

▪ Koster and Rouwendal (2017)

- We apply hedonic price methods to study whether investments in cultural heritage improve neighbourhood quality
- ... Measured by house prices

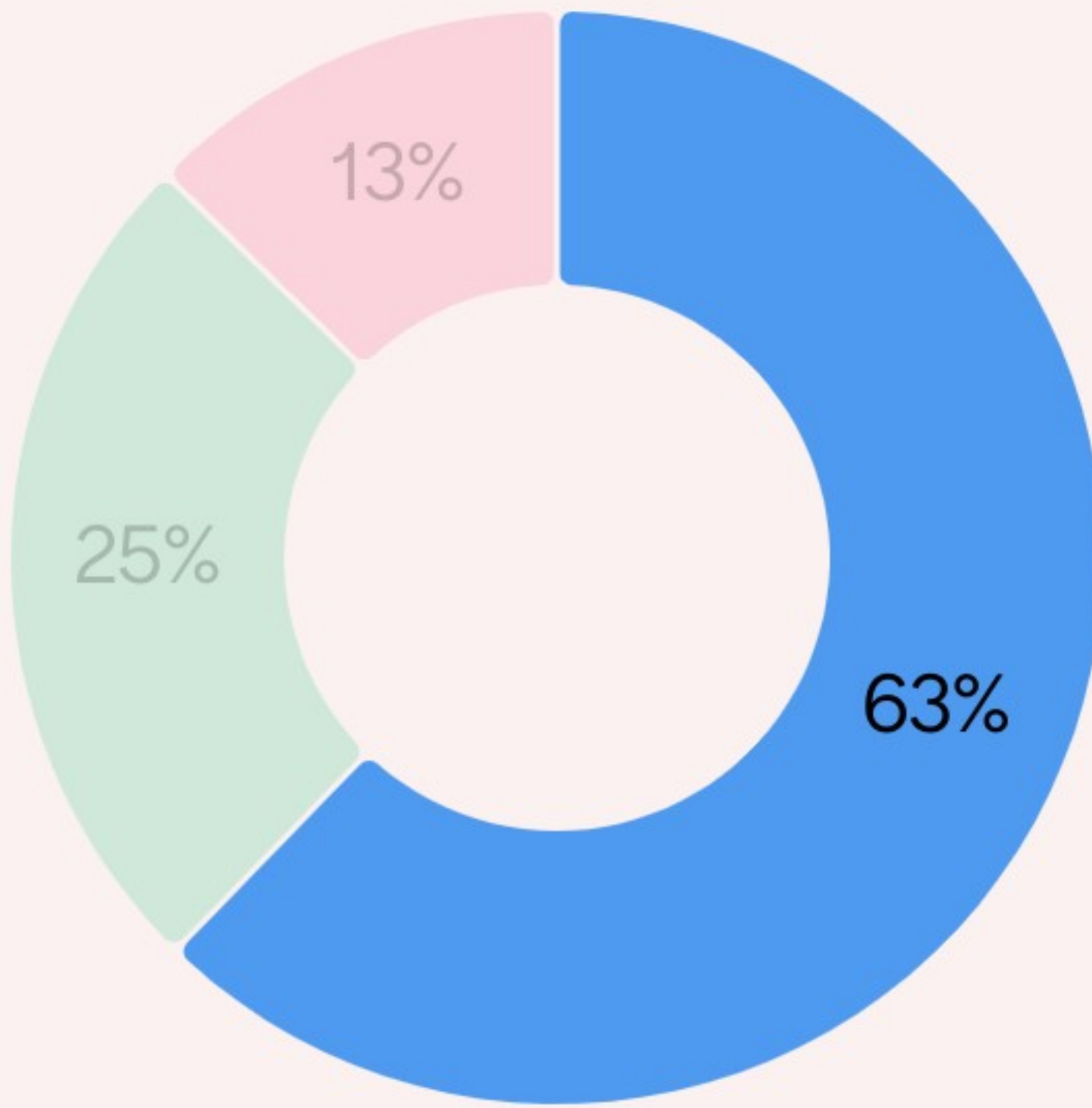
A Historic amenities and house prices

- Using earlier estimates, we can calculate the total external benefits and compare them to the subsidies

Estimates of External Effects of Investments in Cultural Heritage

	Owner-occupied houses		All houses	
Assumed price effect	1.68%	5.39%	1.68%	5.39%
External benefits, total (in million €)	1,852	2,890	5,941	6,979
External benefits/project total (in €)	160,711	250,782	515,614	605,686
Investments, total (in million €)	1,630	1,630	1,630	1,630
Investments/project (in €)	141,493	141,493	141,493	141,493
External benefits/investments	1.14	1.77	3.64	4.28
Subsidies, total (in million €)	626	626	626	626
Subsidies/project (in €)	54,347	54,347	54,347	54,347
External benefits/subsidies	2.96	4.61	9.49	11.14

Does subsidising historic buildings seems like a good idea?



63%	Yes	✓
0%	No	✗
25%	Hard to say - the results are not clear	✗
13%	Hard to say - hedonic pricing techniques are flawed	✗

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Hedonic pricing:

1. Understand what a hedonic price function
 - *A description of the equilibrium prices of varieties of a heterogeneous good*
2. Have basic knowledge about how a hedonic price function is linked to economic theory
 - *Heterogeneous households have different WTPs for goods*
3. Understand how to address misspecification and endogeneity when estimating hedonic price functions
 - *Estimate log-linear hedonic price functions*
 - *Series approximation / LWR*
 - *Add controls and fixed effects*
 - *Consider IV/quasi experiments*

Hedonic pricing (2)

Applied Econometrics for Spatial Economics

Hans Koster

Professor of Urban Economics and Real Estate