

Endogenous money and Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis

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Structure

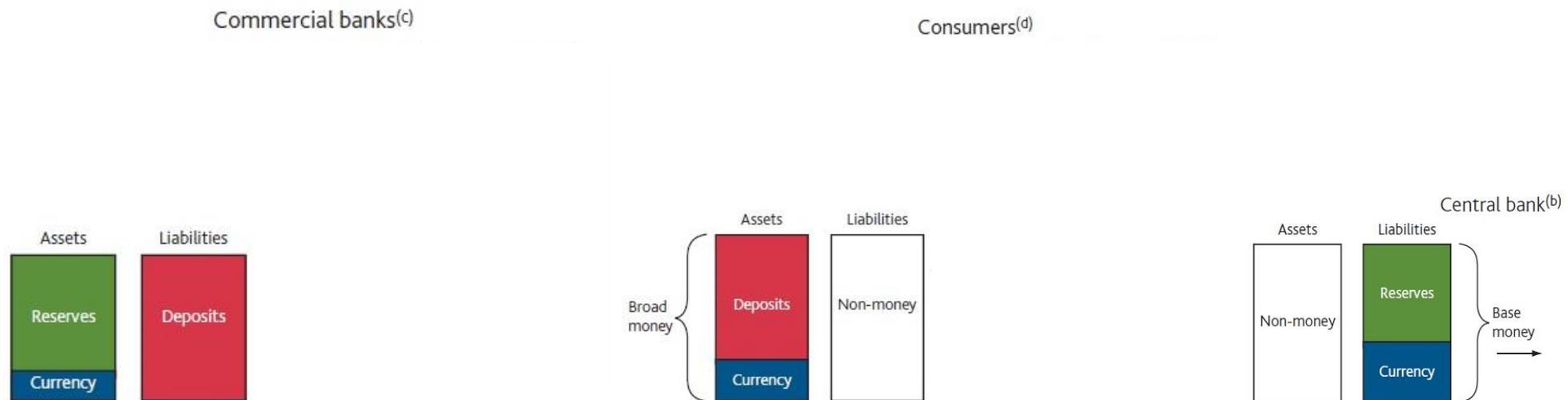
1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics
2. Endogenous money and shadow banking
3. Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis (FIH)
4. Modelling Minsky's FIH
5. Conclusion

1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics

- According to the traditional **mainstream** approach, banks are **financial intermediaries**: they receive deposits from households and provide loans using these deposits.
- This approach is reflected in the **multiplier model** of banking which can be found in the vast majority of textbooks.
- For many decades, **post-Keynesians** have called the money multiplier approach into question. They have argued that money is created endogenously and, therefore, banks do not need to wait for receiving deposits in order to provide loans (see e.g. Moore, 1988; Fontana, 2003).
- According to the **endogenous money approach**, loans are created ex nihilo as long as the borrower is creditworthy. Banks are not passive and their lending decisions can affect economic activity.
- Since the **Global Financial Crisis**, the view of post-Keynesians about the money creation process has been increasingly accepted in the academia and the central banking community (see e.g. Mc Leay et al., 2014; Unger, 2016; Bundensbank, 2017; Jakab and Kumhof, 2019).

1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics

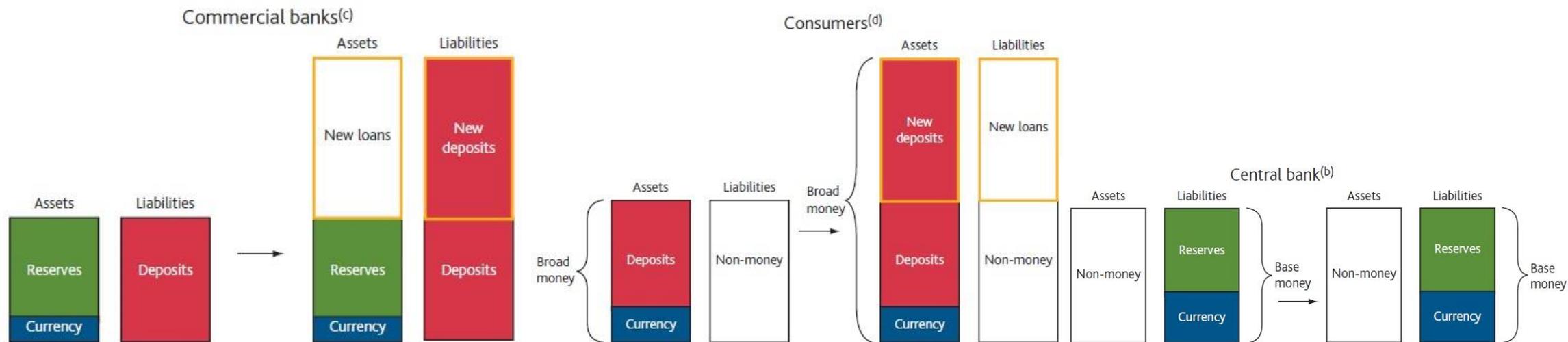
Suppose the following **balance sheets** of commercial banks, consumers and the central bank.



Source: McLeay et al (2014)

1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics

New lending affects the balance sheets as follows:



Source: McLeay et al (2014)

1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics

- At the **individual level**, however, the issue is a bit more complicated.
- Consider this hypothetical balance sheet of a bank:

Assets	Liabilities
Loans: 90 Reserves: 10	Deposits: 100

If the bank decides to **create new loans**, the change on its balance sheet is as follows: →

Assets	Liabilities
Loans: 90 (+50) Reserves: 10	Deposits: 100 (+50)

- What will happen if the borrower of the bank buys goods and services from a depositor of another bank? Even if there are no reserve requirements, the **bank needs to find £40**.

1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics

- These are 3 ways via which the **bank can address** this issue:

1) Loans from other banks

Assets	Liabilities
Loans: 90 (+50)	Deposits: 100 (+50)
Reserves: 10 (+40)	Loans from other banks (+40)

2) Loans from the central bank

Assets	Liabilities
Loans: 90 (+50)	Deposits: 100 (+50)
Reserves: 10 (+40)	Loans from the central bank (+40)

3) Deposits of other banks

Assets	Liabilities
Loans: 90 (+50)	Deposits: 100 (+50+40)
Reserves: 10 (+40)	

- Therefore, even at the individual level, the lending behaviour of banks is **not restricted by reserves**.

1. Endogenous money and post-Keynesian economics

What drives money creation and the terms of credit?

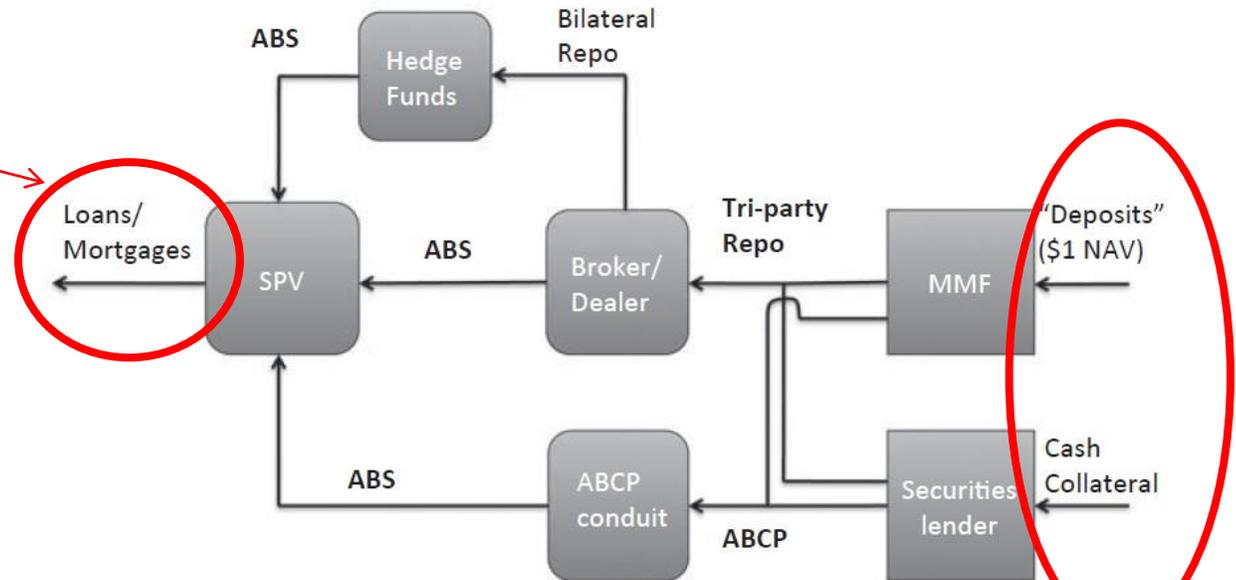
1. **Demand** for credit (how much firms and households want to borrow?)
 2. **Supply** of credit which depends on (a) the financial position of borrowers and (b) the financial position of lenders.
- Traditionally, **horizontalists** (e.g. Moore, 1988; Lavoie, 1992) have focused on (1) and 2 (a), while **structuralists** (e.g. Dow, 1996; Palley, 1996) have also concentrated on 2 (b).
 - **Interest rates** are affected by 2 (a) and 2 (b), but also by the oligopoly power of banks and the central bank policy.

2. Endogenous money and shadow banking

- **Shadow banking** captures financial intermediaries that conduct maturity, credit and liquidity transformation without access to central bank liquidity or public sector credit guarantees.
- Shadow banking has given rise to the so-called '**originate-to-distribute**' model of banking in which the default risk on granted loans is disconnected from loan originators.
- The originate-to-distribute model comes in contrast to the traditional '**originate-to-hold**' model.
- An important process conducted by shadow banking is **securitisation**.
- Broadly speaking, securitisation is a technique that **transforms illiquid assets into liquid tradable instruments**.

2. Endogenous money and shadow banking

The securitisation process begins when **commercial banks** (the originators) decide to securitise a part of their loans.



The securities are bought by **investors**.

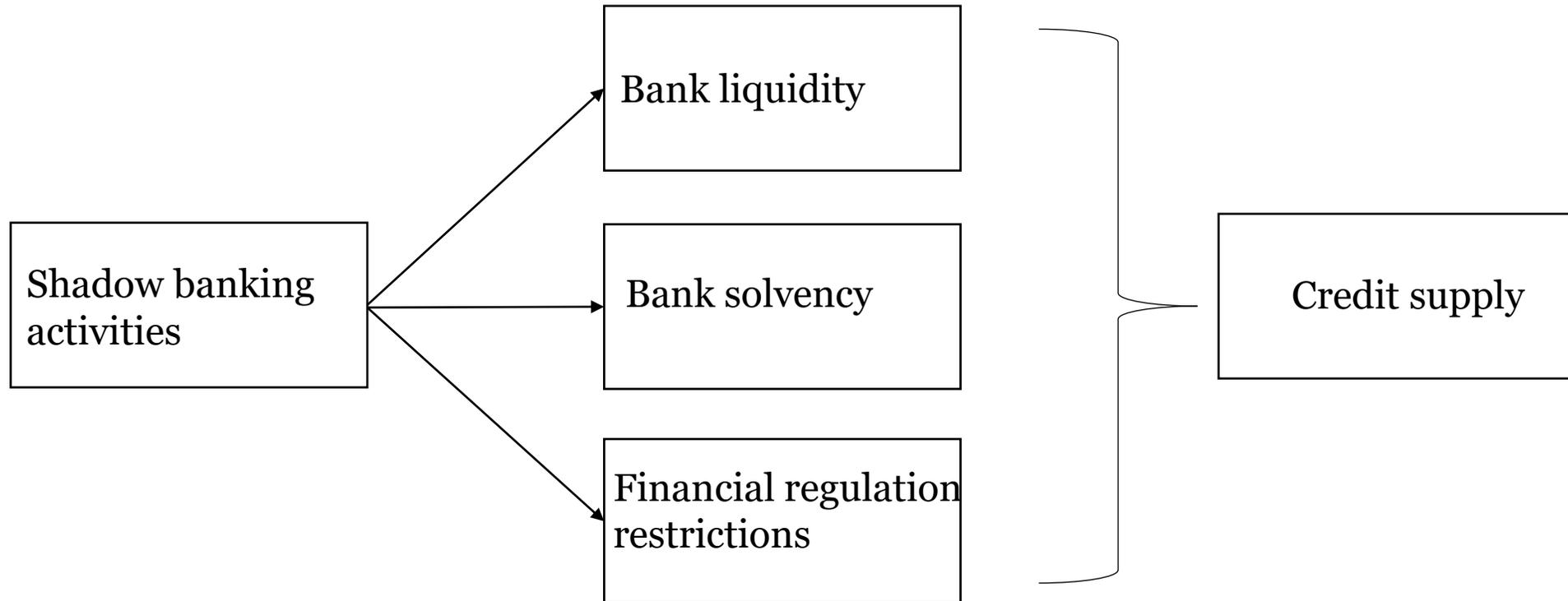
2. Endogenous money and shadow banking

Links between securitisation and repos

Citybank		Goldman Sachs (GS)		IBM		PIMCO hedge fund	
Assets	Liabilities	Assets	Liabilities	Assets	Liabilities	Assets	Liabilities
	IBM deposit -100 GS deposit +100	Deposit +100	Repos +100	Deposit -100 Repos +100			
Securitized loans -100	IBM deposit -100	MBS +100	Repos +100	Deposit -100 Repos +100			
Securitized loans -100 New loan to PIMCO +100	IBM deposit -100 PIMCO deposit +100	MBS +100	Repos +100	Deposit -100 Repos +100		Deposit at City bank +100	Loan from City bank +100

Source: Lavoie (2014)

2. Endogenous money and shadow banking



2. Endogenous money and shadow banking

Securitisation and capital requirements

- **Securitisation process** can help banks to avoid capital requirements (Lavoie, 2014).
- This is the case since securitisation allows banks to **remove loans** out of their balance sheet (and receive fee income).
- The removal of these loans reduces the capital adequacy requirements of banks (since a risky asset is removed from their balance sheets). This reduction incentivises **banks to provide new loans**.
- Banks might also provide **more credit** because they need to worry less about the ability of borrowers to repay their debt.

Capital adequacy ratio (CAR)

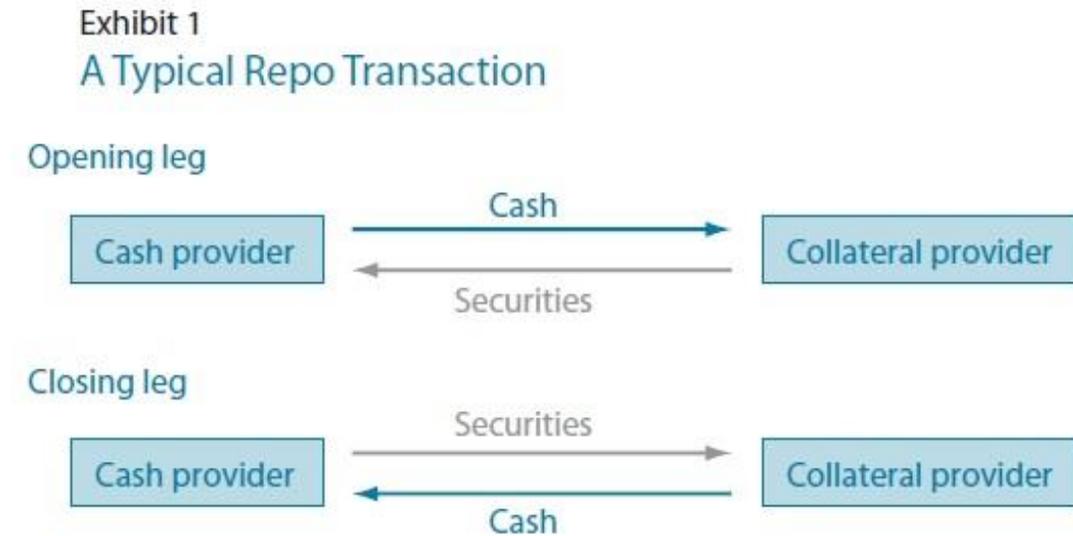
$$CAR = \frac{\textit{Capital}}{\textit{RWA}}$$

Note: RWA stands for risk-weighted assets

2. Endogenous money and shadow banking

Repos and liquidity in private markets

- **Repos** are used for getting access to liquidity in the private markets through collateralised lending.
- The **haircut** is the excess of the market value of the securities over the borrowed money (cash), divided by the market value of securities (see figure).
- When the price of collateral increases and the haircut of collateral declines, banks and non-banks can get access to liquidity more easily and this can reinforce financial asset price inflation. This can **increase credit supply**.
- However, the opposite holds when the price of collateral declines and the haircut of collateral increases. Thus, repos are conducive to the **pro-cyclicality of credit**.



Source: Copeland et al (2012)

2. Endogenous money and shadow banking

Repos and central bank liquidity

- In the case of central bank lending, central banks typically ask for **collateral** when they lend through their facilities.
- The assets that can serve as **collateral** are determined by central banks based on a number of criteria that reflect credit quality.
- Central banks determine the **haircut** on assets: the higher the haircut of an asset the lower the liquidity that can be obtained using this asset as collateral.
- The Eurosystem collateral framework is conducive to the **pro-cyclicality** of credit since it largely adopts the practices in the private repo markets.
- Vestergaard and Gabor (2022) argue that the Eurosystem collateral policies **should address this procyclicality** by: (1) using countercyclical haircuts, (2) suspending collateral valuation practices and (iii) conducting outright purchases of collateral assets.

3. Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis (FIH)

- The **Financial instability hypothesis (FIH)** was developed in the 1970s and 1980s by Hyman Minsky.
- It has been used by various economists to explain the **global financial crisis**.
- Minsky's FIH can be summarised by the phrase '**stability is destabilising**'.
- There are two **reasons** why stability can be destabilising.
- The first one is linked to the way that financial agents form **expectations**. During periods of euphoria both firms and banks might be induced to participate in more debt contracts and increase their **financial fragility**.



Hyman Minsky (1919-1996)



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The Fed discovers Hyman Minsky

Jan 7th 2010, 13:47 BY THE ECONOMIST | WASHINGTON

Available at :
http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2010/01/the_fed_discovers_hyman_minsky

3. Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis (FIH)

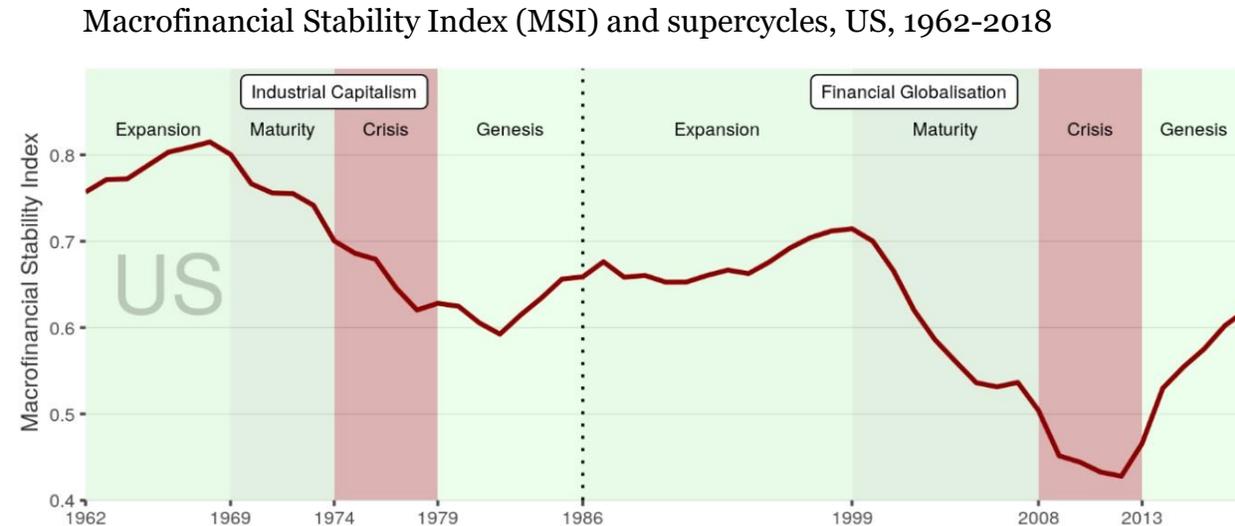
- Minsky captured the increase in indebtedness by making a **distinction** between three finance regimes: (a) hedge (b) speculative and (c) Ponzi.
 - i. A **hedge** unit is deemed viable and debt financing is not expected.
 - ii. A **speculative** economic unit is expected to take on new debt in order to cover (partially or totally) the amortisation of debt commitments.
 - iii. The **Ponzi** finance regime corresponds to the more financially fragile situation.
- The economy is more **financially fragile** the higher is the proportion of speculative and Ponzi firms.
- Financial fragility can lead to **financial instability** which is captured by an increase in defaults, a decline in asset prices and a fall in economic activity.
- The passage from hedge towards Ponzi finance regimes is driven primarily by **euphoric expectations**.

3. Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis (FIH)

- The second reason why stability is destabilising is the fact that stability brings about **institutional** and **policy changes** that might make the system more fragile.
- One evolution that Minsky paid particular attention to was the change in institutions that led to the emergence of the so-called **money managers**, who replaced **corporate managers** as the masters of private sector economic activity since the early 1980s.
- Wray (2011) has used the concept of **money manager capitalism (MMC)** to explain the processes that led to the Global Financial Crisis.

3. Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis (FIH)

- Minsky used the term **'thwarting mechanisms'** to describe those institutional structures and policies that can stabilise the inherently unstable macrofinancial system.
- Dafermos et al. (2020) argue that the endogenous change in the effectiveness of thwarting mechanisms can give rise to institutional supercycles.



Source: Dafermos, Gabor and Michell (2020), available at:
<https://www.rebuildingmacroeconomics.ac.uk/post/institutional-supercycles-an-evolutionary-macro-finance-approach>

3. Minsky's Financial Instability Hypothesis (FIH)

What are the key features in Minsky's FIH that make it unique compared to conventional approaches to financial crises?

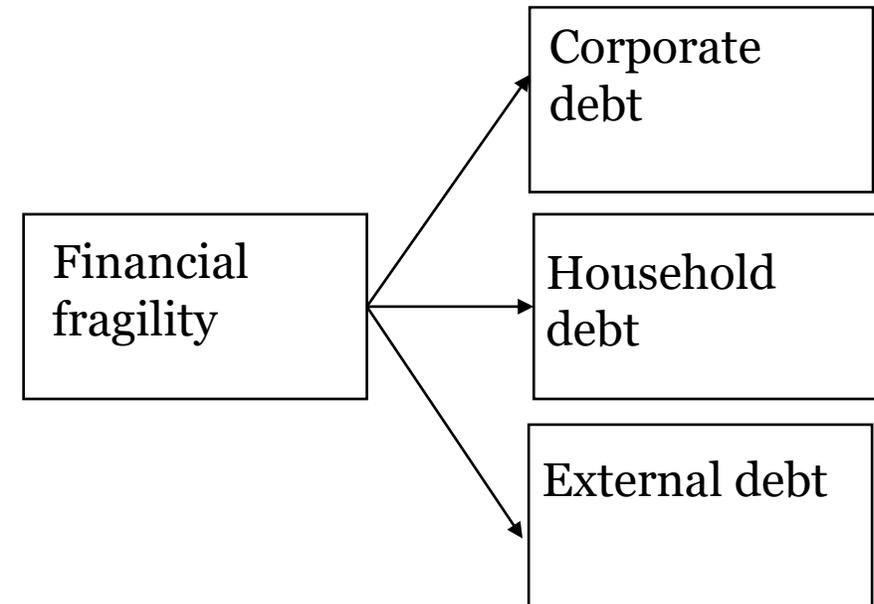
- First, Minsky views the financial system as a network of **interconnected balance sheets** that interact dynamically (Gabor, 2020). Financial instability is the result of the endogenous interaction of balance sheets.
- Second, in Minsky's FIH **money is endogenous**.
- Third, Minsky's understanding of financial instability takes explicitly into account **evolutionary** changes that affect the stabilising role of institutions (see Wray, 2011; Argitis, 2019; Dafermos et al., 2020).

4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

How can economies become financially fragile?

- **Financial fragility** is connected with the accumulation of debt.
- The Minskyan literature has focused in **three types of debt**: i) corporate debt, ii) household debt and iii) external debt
- The aim is to explain what can drive the rise in each of these types of debt and how debt accumulation can lead to **instability**.

Different shades of financial fragility

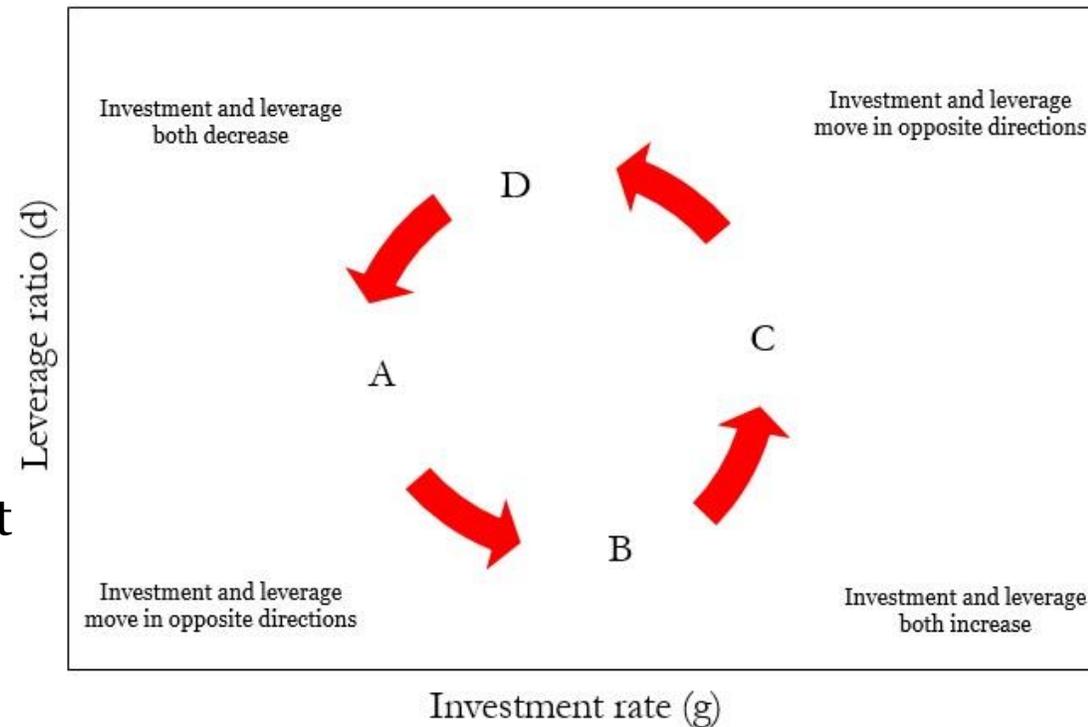


Source: Nikolaidi (2017, 2021); see also Nikolaidi and Stockhammer (2017)

4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

Corporate debt

- Most Minskyan macroeconomic models have analysed the **fragility** that stems from corporate debt using this setting as a starting point (see e.g. Lima and Meirelles, 2007, Charles, 2008):
 - Firms undertake investment, driven primarily by expected sales and profitability.
 - The part of investment spending that is not covered by retained profits is **financed through loans**.
- There might be a dynamic interaction between leverage ratio and investment that can give rise to instability and real-financial **cycles** (see the figure).



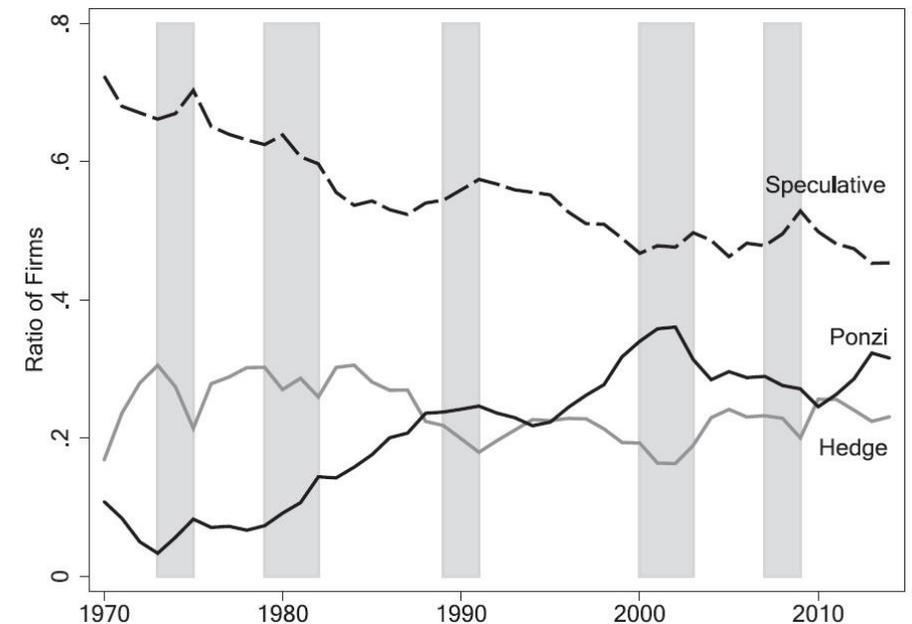
4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

Corporate debt

Empirical question (i): is the leverage ratio of firms pro-cyclical?

- Wolfson (1990) showed that ahead of the US stock market crash in 1987 there was an **increase** in the corporate net interest payments to gross capital income.
- However, Lavoie and Secarrecia (2001) **did not find** supportive evidence for an increasing leverage ratio for the G-7 countries over the period 1971-97.
- Davis et al. (2019) show that there was a secular growth in the share of Ponzi firms in the US non-financial corporate sector, from 10.8% in 1970 to 31.6% in 2014. However, the share of **Ponzi firms did not increase** during all periods of economic expansion.

Incidence of hedge, speculative and Ponzi financing regimes.
Full sample of firms; 1970-2014.



Source: Davis et al (2019)

4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

Corporate debt

Empirical question (ii): does firm leverage have a negative impact on investment?

- Ndikumana (1999) showed that the debt service ratio negatively affected investment in the US over the period 1972-91 (see for similar results Arza and Español (2008) for Argentina over the period 1992–2001 and Caldentey et al. (2019) for Latin American countries over the period 2009-16).

Empirical question (iii): can we observe cycles that are driven by corporate debt?

- Stockhammer et al. (2019a) found evidence in favour of corporate debt cycles in Canada and the UK over the period 1970–2015. In a similar study, Stockhammer et al. (2019b) focused on the US (1889-2015) and the UK (1882–2010), finding supportive evidence of corporate debt cycles only for the US.

4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

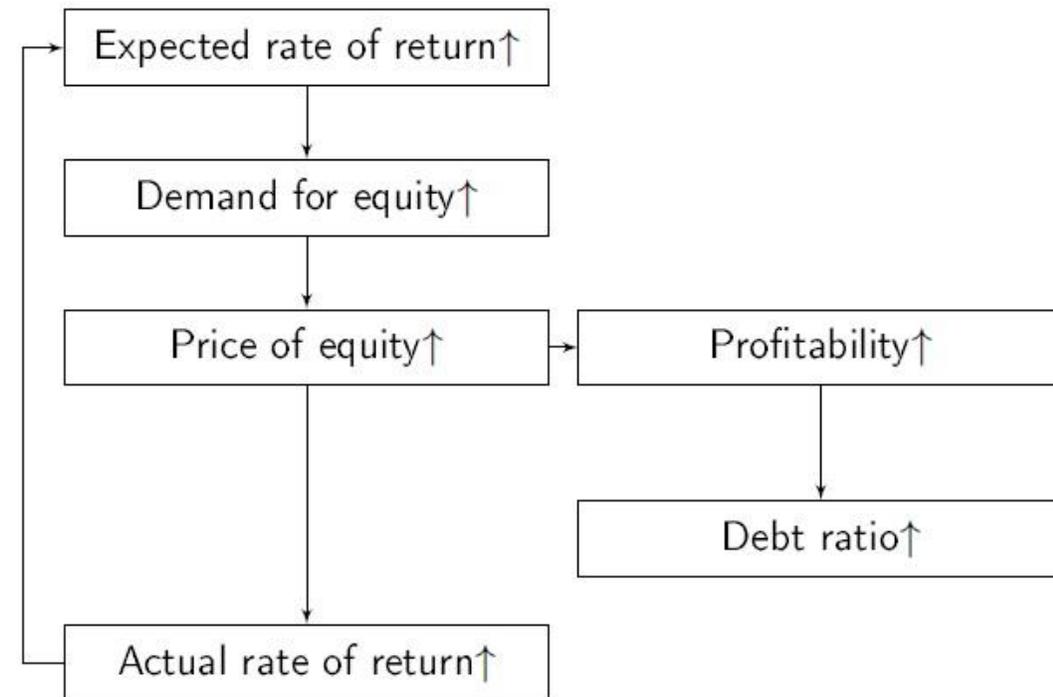
Corporate debt

How does the story about corporate debt-driven financial fragility change when an endogenous interest rate is considered?

- An endogenous **interest rate** can act as an additional source of financial fragility since it can increase the interest payments of firms during the upturn of the economic cycle. See Stockhammer et al. (2019a) for some empirical evidence.

Additional sources of financial fragility:

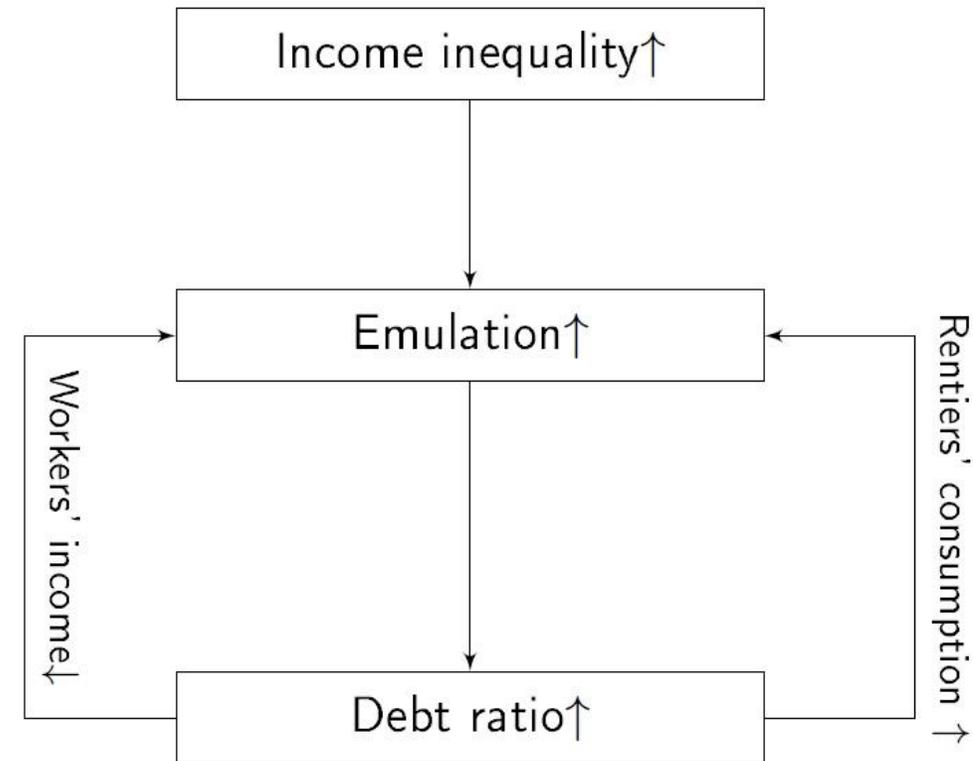
- **stock prices** change in an endogenous way,
- **wages** change during the economic cycle,
- the **retention rate** of firms is endogenous and
- **banks** play a more active role in the provision of credit (see Nikolaidi, 2014).



4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

Household debt

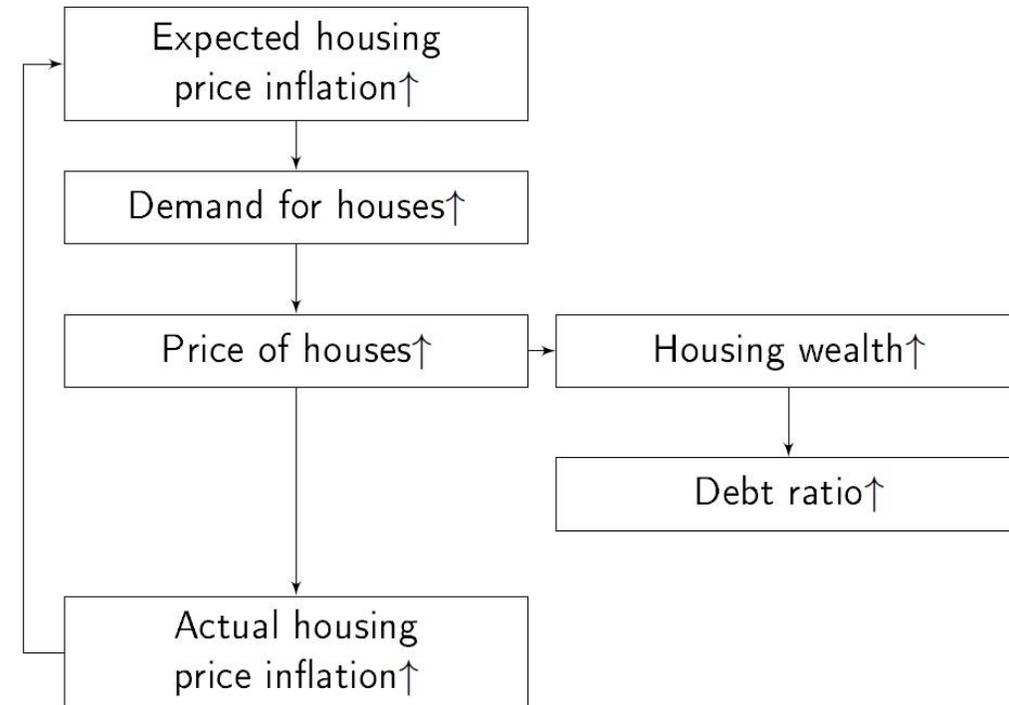
- **Minsky** did not analyse household debt in his FIH. However, household debt has been the focus of many Minskyan models.
- There are Minskyan models that analyse the way through which household debt interacts with **income distribution** (see Palley, 1994; Kapeller and Schütz, 2014; Ryoo and Kim, 2014; Giraud and Grasselli, 2021).
- These models are in line with some **empirical evidence**. For example, Cynamon and Fazzari (2008, 2016) and Barba and Pivetti (2009) argue that increasing income inequality contributed to the rise in the indebtedness of the US household sector (see Palley, 1994 and Kim, 2013, 2016).



4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

Household debt

- **Minskyan models** have paid attention to the interaction between the housing market and household debt.
- One such model has been developed by Ryoo (2016). In this model, households' investment in the **housing market** is induced by the belief that housing prices will go up.
- Nikolaidi (2015) has modelled the interaction between household debt, housing prices and income distribution, focusing on the role of **securitisation** (see also Botta et al., 2021).



4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

External debt

- External debt, and especially **foreign currency denominated debt**, can be a significant source of financial fragility in an open economy framework.
- Kohler (2019) has developed a Minskyan model that shows how endogenous cycles can arise in emerging market economies (EMEs) through the interaction between **flexible exchange rate** dynamics and balance sheet effects.
- However, endogenous cycles à la Minsky can arise in an open economy framework even in the case in which the **exchange rate is not flexible** (see Foley, 2003).
- Dafermos (2018) has shown how endogenous cycles can emerge as a result of endogenous changes in the **target debt ratio** of the domestic private sector. These changes in the target debt ratio are driven by the expectations of both the foreign lenders and the domestic borrowers.

4. Modelling Minsky's FIH

- Central banks and financial supervisors have recently paid attention to the **risks** that **climate change** poses to the financial system.
- Mark Carney (the former Governor of the Bank of England) was the first one who talked about the possibility of experiencing a **climate Minsky moment**, which broadly refers to the financial instability that could result from climate change or from actions taken to tackle climate change (Carney, 2015).
- There are some **ecological stock-flow consistent models** that have analysed some aspects of a climate Minsky moment (e.g. Dafermos and Nikolaidi, 2019, 2021)

Mark Carney: Breaking the tragedy of the horizon – climate change and financial stability

Speech by Mr Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England and Chairman of the Financial Stability Board, at Lloyd's of London, London, 29 September 2015.

* * *

I am grateful to Rhys Phillips and Iain de Weymarn for their assistance in preparing these remarks, and to Michael Sheren, Clare Ashton, Matthew Scott and Professor Myles Allen for their comments.

I'm grateful to Lloyd's for the invitation to speak tonight on the occasion of the first City Dinner held in this magnificent, eponymous "Room".

Lloyd's is the bedrock of the UK insurance industry.

An industry whose direct contribution to the UK economy is impressive: 300,000 high-paying jobs and £25bn in annual GDP.

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And you are doing so in market conditions as challenging as any in the last 20 years.

The need to manage emerging, mega risks is as important as ever.

Alongside major technological, demographic and political shifts, our very world is changing. Shifts in our climate bring potentially profound implications for insurers, financial stability and the economy.

I will focus on those risks from climate change this evening.

¹ The first aviation policy was written in 1911, followed in 1919 by the founding of the British Aviation Insurance Association. That venture closed in 1921, with underwriters concluding that "there seems to be no immediate future in aviation insurance..." www.lloyds.com/lloyds/about-us/history/innovation-and-unusual-risks/pioneers-of-travel.

5. Conclusion

- Post-Keynesians have traditionally emphasised the importance of **endogenous money**. This view has now been more widely accepted.
- The role of **shadow banking** in the money creation process has been a subject of debate (see e.g. Gabor and Vestergaard, 2016; Michell, 2017; Caverzasi et al., 2019; Lavoie, 2019; Bouguelli, 2020).
- Minsky's original writings focused on the destabilising role of **corporate debt**.
- However, Minsky's FIH has been extended to analyse the role of **household** and **external debt**.
- There is a need for more **empirical work** on the sources and implications of financial fragility.
- More work needs to be done to explore the channels of transmission of financial fragility from **high-income** to **low-income economies**.
- In the era of climate change, Minskyan perspectives can illuminate the complex dimensions of **climate-induced financial instability**.



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