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*Metropolises and Peripheries of CEE Countries: New
Challenges for EU, National and Regional Policies*

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location of the region, difficult climatic and geographical conditions, and in economic terms, i.e. an unfavorable structure of the economy or insufficiently developed infrastructure.

The aim of the paper is to analyse the level of economic, social and territorial cohesion of regions of the Visegrad Group. The Visegrad Group ie. Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary (also known as the "Visegrad Four" or simply "V4") cooperate in a number of areas within the all-European integration. In this context, one of the basic issues affecting the level of mutual cooperation is the level of their social, economic and territorial cohesion. In the article, we try to analyze, compare and divide the surveyed regions of „Visegrad Four” into similar groups in terms of their level of cohesion.

POPULATION CHANGE AND PUBLIC SERVICE NETWORKS IN LITHUANIAN PERIPHERIES

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The paper deals with 3 interrelated processes taking place in Lithuanian peripheral regions. Regional differentiation of wellbeing, depopulation and shrinking public networks are reshaping Lithuania and its urban network. Such trends are visible both on national scale and within metropolitan regions – cities and their hinterlands. The research is based on empirical methodology and statistical data analysis is the main research method. The paper aims to reveal differences of economic wellbeing, resulting trends of depopulation in peripheral regions mostly related to out migration and shrinking public infrastructure, which further damages attractiveness of peripheral places in Lithuania. Since the collapse of Soviet Union, fast decrease of employment in industry and agriculture damaged first of all peripheral regions and later resulted in mass emigration, which is still evident in most Lithuanian municipalities. The decrease of jobs in these sectors meant that majority of residents of non-metropolitan regions had to find new jobs outside the localities they reside. The fast depopulation of peripheral regions results in shrinking public services, what, however, is taking place differently in different regions. The shrinkage of public sector reduces attractiveness and jobs in such regions even more. Every municipality pursues different policy, which is not necessarily well grounded to existing changes of population and often weakly coordinated with neighbouring municipalities. Authors seek to reveal the spatial characteristics of ongoing trends and establish relationships between trends of population shrinkage and public decisions concerning management of public infrastructure.

SUSTAINABLE PERI-URBANIZATION AND FUTURE URBAN SYSTEMS

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Different regions in Europe, especially in Central Eastern Europe (CEE), are the subject of intensive peri-urbanization. The consequent diminishing of Open Spaces (OS), considered as one of the most valuable resource for European cities and regions, and the constant emerging of Peri-Urban-Landscapes (PULs), are one of the most relevant effects of this phenomenon. PUL are transitional and hybrid territories covering many jurisdictional units (e.g. communes or municipalities), connecting urban and rural areas and involving diverse governance actors. Overestimated role of grey infrastructures over green infrastructures fosters intensive fragmentation of ecosystems, loss of natural habitats and consequent loss of biodiversity. Various environmental conflicts arise in PULs, such as agricultural vs recreational land use or human activities vs wildlife habitats. The socio-economic dynamics are significantly affected by