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## ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF SMALL SILESIAN TOWNS IN THE YEARS 1990–1999\*

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**Abstract:** This elaboration concerns small towns in the highly urbanized region of Upper Silesia. The character of the towns is presented against the background of the urban conurbation of the Upper Silesian Industrial Centre, as are demographic changes—such as the decline and ageing of the population—during the 1990s. The size structure of enterprises, including the smallest so important in the process of transformation, was shown. Moreover, a regionally differentiated labour market—characterized by a decrease in the number of persons employed in medium and large enterprises, and an increase in the number of small economic enterprises—was described.

**Key words:** small town, economic transformation, demographic changes, Upper Silesia.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1999, small towns (of up to 20,000 inhabitants) constituted 74% of all Polish towns (Demographic Yearbook 2000). These towns are a part of an old and dense settlement network, which was being formed in Northern Europe from the 11th century on (Benevolo 1995). There is no explicit definition of a small European town; each country applies criteria conforming with its own demographic, legal and historical conditions. In Poland, apart from the criterion of possessing civic rights, the criterion of size (not more than 20,000 inhabitants) is the one most often applied.<sup>1</sup>

In the 1990s, the problems of small towns were not the centre of attention for European research workers. Research work from the Czech Republic (Vaishar and Zapletova 1998; Vaishar et al. 2001; Prokop 1993), Hungary (Rudl 1998) and France (Bessey and Sicamois 1998) is among the small amount that was done. In the Poland of the 1990s, in which a radical constitutional and economic transformation had been initiated, the interest in small towns revived. On one hand, a revival of local initiative and economics had occurred as a result of the transformation. On the other, a number of small towns found themselves in a critical situation, being unable to cope with new economic conditions (e.g. the competitiveness of big towns, a reduction in the subsidies for industrial establishments) and as a consequence losing the economic basis for their existence and population. For these reasons, research work on small towns

\* The present work is based on the author's Doctoral Dissertation (unpublished).

<sup>1</sup> The Central Statistical Office also applies the division into three subgroups: to 5,000, from 5,000 to 10,000, from 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants.

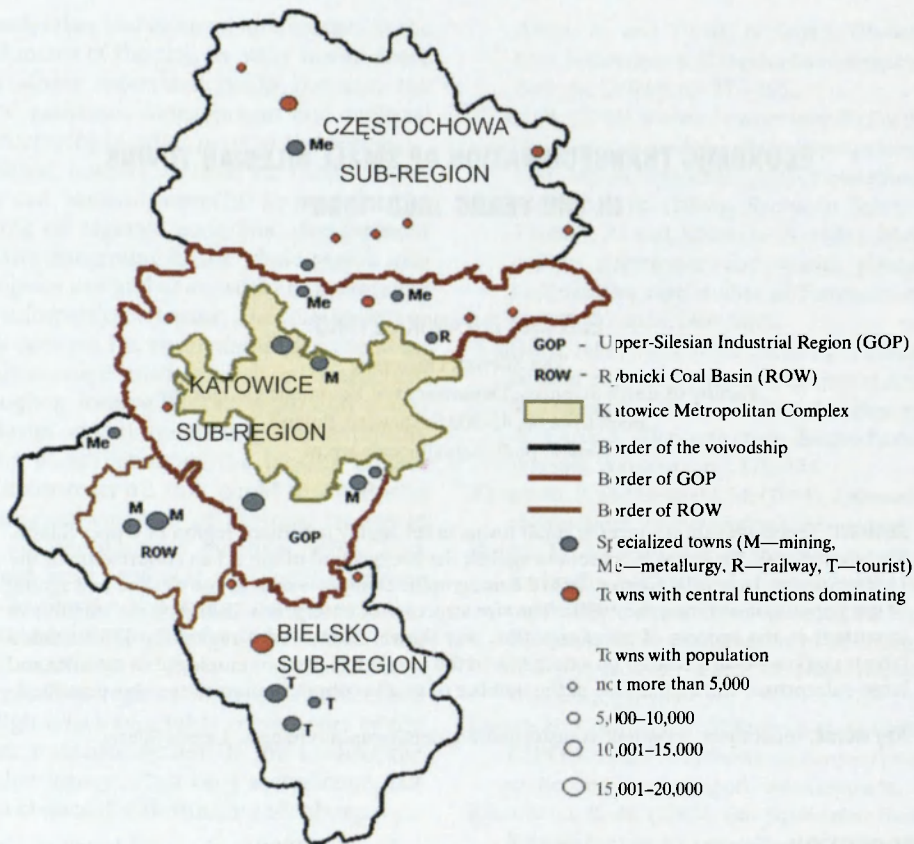


Figure 1. Locations of the surveyed towns within Silesia Voivodship.

Source: Author's own elaboration.

in different regions of the country has been undertaken.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of the article is to present demographic and economic changes in the small towns of Upper Silesia (of not more than 20,000 inhabitants) in the 1990s. In the end of the 1990, 31 towns (45% of those in the voivodship) fulfilled the criteria of municipality and size (Demographic Yearbook 2000). Some aspects of the municipal economy

(sizes of enterprises, employment) and some aspects of demography (e.g. changes in the size and age structure of the population) have been taken into account. The elaboration is based partly on material obtained from field surveys, and partly on analysis of statistical data (published and not published).

### THE CHARACTER OF THE SMALL TOWNS IN THE SILESIAN REGION

The existence of mineral resources (hard coal (mainly), iron, zinc and lead ores, marl and limestone) and of industry developing on the basis of these resources, exerted a decisive influence on the formation of a modern

<sup>2</sup> By way of example, surveys on small towns in the following regions can be mentioned: Pomerania (Jażewicz 2000, 2001; Rydz and Jażewicz, 1999, 2001), Wielkopolska (Konecka-Szydłowska 2003), Małopolska (Kwiatk-Soltys 1998), Lower Silesia (Łoboda 1992), Opole Silesia (Drobek 1999; Heffner 2003) and Upper Silesia (Zuzńska-Żysko 2001, 2002).

urban network in Silesia Voivodship. Not all the towns of this region expanded (in terms of population) in the period of dynamic industrialization. Some of them remained small centres. Most of the surveyed towns are situated in the central part of the region (Katowice Sub-region) within the borders of the Upper Silesia Industrial Region and the Rybnicki Coal District.

Fifteen towns with central functions dominating and 16 towns with specialized functions<sup>3</sup> (9 in mining, steel and the metals industry as well as the railways) were distinguished (Figure 1). The first group came into being between the 13th and 19th centuries as communication and service centres servicing extensive (up to the present moment) rural areas. The second group are former villages, which—due to local mineral resources—transformed into industrial towns.

The surveyed towns were characterized (in 1999) by a differentiated share of employment in different sectors of the economy: from 12% to 73% in industry (the highest share in small mining towns of the Katowice Sub-region) and from 27% to 87% in services. A higher share of employment in services was observed mainly in towns-central places, servicing agricultural areas and tourist centres (from 47% to 82%) than in industrial towns (from 27% to 59%), particularly those with one big manufacturing establishment.

<sup>3</sup> Central places are centres, which obtained civic rights not later than in the 19th century, and are now in possession of the status of municipal-rural gminas. Specialized centres are towns created in the 20th century (earlier villages) due to the development of industry. These towns were not of a municipal-rural character.

<sup>4</sup> Under the administrative reform (from 1.01.1999) the powiat is the middle element of the three-tier territorial organization of the country (into voivodships, powiats and gminas).

<sup>5</sup> The smallest town with powiat status was Radziejów (6,000 people in 2001) in Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship (Kwiatk-Soltys 2002).

<sup>6</sup> In 1998, natural increase per 1 000 inhabitants in four surveyed towns was the lowest in Poland: 8.8‰ in Sośnicowice (6th position in Poland), 5.6‰ in Wojkowice (25th position), 4.9‰ in Siewierz (39th position), and 4.4‰ in Łazy (48th position).

<sup>7</sup> In 1990, the set included 22 towns, and in 1991, 23 towns.

Small Silesian towns have preserved their local character and do not perform (except in one case) the function of a powiat<sup>4</sup> in the new territorial organization of the country. These functions were reserved for bigger towns (of more than 20,000 people), the network of which is exceptionally well developed in the surveyed region. In other parts of the country 25% to 54% of small towns performed the function of a powiat.<sup>5</sup>

### CHANGES IN THE DEMOGRAPHIC POTENTIAL OF SMALL TOWNS: DECLINE AND AGEING OF THE POPULATION

In 1999, 31 small towns, of populations ranging from 1901 to 18,975 persons, were inhabited by 271,000 people (Table 1). As compared with 1990, the number of towns had increased (by 8), as had the population (by 101,400, that is about 40%). Administrative reforms were the reason for this increase—civic rights, lost in the 1970s on the basis of a decision of former authorities, were restored in 8 towns.

The surveyed towns were characterized by weak demographic dynamics in the last decade; the average rate of population growth was of only 0.14%. A steadily developing decline in population was observed in 10 towns, while symptoms of approaching demographic regression appeared in another 12. A low natural increase (from the mid 1990s) was the cause of this situation.<sup>6</sup> In the early 1990s (1990–1991), small towns were still characterized by a positive population balance; data for both natural increase and net migrations were positive. Over 70% of the surveyed towns had a surplus of births over deaths.<sup>7</sup> In the years 1992–1993, the size of the population declined steadily though all towns retained a positive balance of population. The situation changed during the subsequent few years: in 1994 only 12 towns (out of 24 for which data are available for the whole of the 1990s) gave evidence of a positive natural increase. 1995 was the first year, in which a real decline was observed in small towns. After 1995, the demographic situation stabilized again,

Table 1. Size of population in small Silesian towns, 1990, 1995 and 1999

Miasta	1990	1995	1999	Increase or Decline in persons	
				1995-1999	1990-1999
Koziegłowy	2655	2537	2474	-63	-181
Wojkowice	—	10245	10074	-171	—
Pilica	—	2145	2032	-113	—
Łazy	7337	7350	7227	-123	-110
Szczekociny	4365	4335	4283	-52	-82
Kłobuck	14033	13991	13953	-38	-80
Imielin	—	7643	7620	-23	—
Miasteczko Śląskie	—	7626	7604	-22	—
Toszek	5076	5171	5063	-108	-13
Lędziny	—	17710	17702	-8	—
Woźniki	4560	4546	4567	21	7
Żarki	4276	4225	4293	68	17
Poręba	8964	8913	8992	79	28
Pszów	—	15048	15082	34	—
Ustroń	15890	15793	15925	132	35
Siewierz	5488	5554	5535	-19	47
Krzepice	4627	4626	4681	55	54
Kuźnia Raciborska	6007	6017	6085	68	78
Ogrodzieniec	4409	4373	4519	146	110
Wilamowice	2642	2721	2770	49	128
Kalety	8881	9010	9013	3	132
Szczyrk	5493	5562	5631	69	138
Skoczów	15702	15888	15890	2	188
Błachownia	9943	10128	10267	139	324
Koniecpol	6362	6687	6740	53	378
Wisła	11476	11638	11868	230	392
Strumień	2935	3393	3439	46	504
Orzesze	18229	18765	18975	210	746
Sośnicowice	—	—	1901	—	—
Radzionków	—	—	18063	—	—
Radlin	—	—	18497	—	—

Source: Data from the Statistical Office in Katowice. ('—') implies, that data for earlier periods are not available, towns being either districts or rural areas then).

though this was the effect of positive net migration and a decreasing rate of increase. At the end of the decade, in 1999, symptoms of demographic regression had appeared, due to a steady decrease in the number of births, and increase in the number of deaths, as well as weakening migration. Small towns again noted a decline in population.

The unfavourable demographic situation for small Silesian towns was worsened by the appearance of features of an old society<sup>8</sup> (Zuzanska-Zysko, 2003). The share of the population aged 65 years and more was about 0.8 percentage points higher than in other towns of the region, and almost 2 percentage points higher than the national average (Table 2). The decreasing population and increasing share of the population of post-working age not only characterizes the demographic situation of small towns of

<sup>8</sup> Old society comprises the group of persons aged 65 years and more.

<sup>9</sup> Information obtained from the Statistical Office in Katowice.

the region, but also constitute elements to the evaluation of their economic situation.

### CHANGES IN THE NUMBER AND SIZES OF ENTERPRISES: FROM LARGE STATE-OWNED ONES TO SMALL PRIVATE ONES

The nation-wide political and economic transformations after 1990 influenced the ownership structure and size of enterprises in the surveyed region. Comparing the years 1995 and 1999, the number of enterprises is seen to have increased from 8% to 103% in almost all surveyed towns. Unfortunately, earlier data are incomplete and not comparable. In 19 towns there was constant growth (Table 3). It was mainly private enterprises that were formed: 13,400 firms were registered in 1995, and this number had increased to 21,500 by the end of 1999 (by about 54%).<sup>9</sup> This growth was twice as rapid as in Silesia Voivodship as a whole (c.26%). Though the firms increased in number and proportion,

Table 2. Age structure of the population of small Silesian towns compared with that in the voivodship and the country in 1995 and 1999

Specification	Years	Total	Age		
			pre-working 0–17	working 18–64	Post-working 65 and more
Poland ('000)	1999	38,683.6	9,613.8	24,376.1	4,663.7
%			24.9	63.0	12.1
('000)	1995	38,609.4	10,644.8	22,647.4	5,317.2
%			27.6	58.7	13.8
Towns of Silesia Voivodship ('000)	1999	3,876.2	896.7	2,466.3	513.2
%			23.1	63.6	13.2
('000)	1995	3,924.9	1,018.1	2,431.4	475.4
%			25.9	61.9	12.1
Small towns of Silesia Voivodship ('000)	1999	270.8	63.9	168.9	38.0
%			23.6	62.4	14.0
('000)	1995	231.6	61.3	139.6	30.8
%			26.4	60.3	13.3

Source: Data from the Statistical Office in Katowice and <[www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl)>

Table 3. Economic entities in small Silesian towns, 1995–1999

Towns	Economic entities					% Increase 1999
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	
Strumień (C)	149	216	226	278	303	103
Woźniki (C)	145	175	216	272	278	92
Wilamowice (C)	142	160	189	222	243	71
Koziegłowy (C)	272	314	376	404	450	65
Kalety (W)	328	391	471	514	526	60
Szczyrk (T)	479	579	590	676	728	52
Konieczpol (C)	339	368	416	465	501	48
Żarki (C)	425	468	544	561	615	45
Wisła (T)	977	1060	1096	1 305	1 405	44
Lędziny (M)	625	640	720	838	898	44
Skoczów (C)	1086	1163	1195	1 394	1 550	43
Ustroń (T)	1405	1507	1582	1 804	1 991	42
Krzepice (C)	333	396	410	433	459	38
Toszek (C)	161	187	203	218	218	35
Łazy (R)	439	436	499	553	590	34
Ogrodzieniec (C)	292	264	298	355	392	34
Orzesze (W)	987	1043	1095	1 231	1 310	33
Kuźnia Raciborska (Me)	224	229	271	292	295	32
Miasteczko Śląskie (Me)	296	346	275	365	388	31
Kłobuck (C)	1020	1135	1206	1 287	1 317	29
Blachownia (Me)	628	677	730	759	788	25
Szczekociny	312	336	345	370	391	25
Wojkowice (M)	581	567	656	682	727	25
Siewierz (C)	544	537	618	659	670	23
Pilica (C)	158	149	137	160	193	22
Imielin (W)	513	535	563	594	604	18
Poręba (Me)	481	416	436	525	537	12
Pszów (M)	606	524	554	610	656	8
Radlin (M)	—	—	699	866	979	—
Radzionków (W)	—	—	—	1 242	1 312	—
Sośnicowice (C)	—	153	148	154	151	—
Total	13947	14971	16764	20 088	21 465	40

Source: Registered in the REGON Register.

(C)—central places; (M)—dominating function mining; (Me)—metal industry; (T)—tourism; (R)—rail transport; (W)—others specialized

sometimes considerably (in 17 towns from 25% to 50%, in 5 towns by over 50% in the years 1995–1999) (Table 3), their role on the regional scale (of Silesia Voivodship) is unimportant. They constitute an inconsiderable though growing percentage of all firms in the region (from 5% to 7% in the years 1995–1999).

The rate of growth in the number of firms in small towns differed in relation to character of the economy: it was weaker in specialized towns (from 8% in mining towns to 52% in towns of a strong tourist function) and stronger in towns servicing agricultural areas (from 22% to 103%).<sup>10</sup> The weakest initiative (in line with the analysis of the gathered data) was observed in those towns, in which one large state-owned establishment was located (employing 250 and more persons).<sup>11</sup> In all towns where industry dominates in the structure of the economy (employing more than 50% of the population), the rate of initiative<sup>12</sup> was the lowest in the overall set.<sup>13</sup> The presence of large enterprises of the traditional heavy industry in these towns counteracted the diversification of economic structures and impeded changes in the production profile and organization of work. As long as these establishments had functioned, assuring stable work and the privileges resulting from it, there was no necessity of finding a new place of work. The increase in the rate of initiative differed from place to place from 43 to 182 (with lowest values in the central part of the region and highest ones in the north (Figure 2). In the years 1995–1999, the greatest increase in the number of enterprises was that observed in small towns of the Bielsko Sub-region, with about 330 entities per town, while in the Częstochowa Sub-region it was only 169, and in the Katowice Sub-region 123.

The surveyed towns were characterized by non-significant differences in the size structure of economic entities. In the years 1998 and 1999, as many as 83% to 95% of establishments employed not more than 5 persons. Such a high percentage of micro-firms is a new phenomenon, connected with the political and economic transformations

of the 1990s. Such small firms mainly engage in their economic activities in the sector of market services<sup>14</sup>, in agriculture and in construction. The liberalization of regulations concerning economic activity on one's own account after 1989, combined with the difficulties which faced big firms (crashes and mass layoffs) to ensure that the creation of individuals' own enterprises become be a 'normal' occurrence, and sometimes even a necessity. The activities of inhabitants, expressed in terms of the number of established firms, may thus derive from a lack of other possibilities of work. The fact of possessing houses, garages and farm buildings, which can be adapted for the purposes of new economic activities, can be a simplification, more frequent in small towns than in larger ones.

## CHANGES ON THE LABOUR MARKET

In 1999, there were 100,000 employed persons in the surveyed towns (5.5% of all those employed in Upper Silesia). In comparison with the previous year, employment was lower by about 2,700 persons, mainly due to a transformation of establishments (through privatization and liquidation and occasionally a reduction of employment). A decline in the number of employed persons occurred, as in the country as a whole (Kabaj 2000), in medium and large enterprises only.

In years 1991–1999, each of the surveyed towns lost an average of 133 jobs. The biggest losses were noted in the Katowice Sub-region, where over 10,000 persons lost their jobs (an average of 677 per small town in this

<sup>10</sup> Data from the Statistical Office in Katowice.

<sup>11</sup> In 2003, there were 683 entities in Silesia Voivodship, employing 250 and more persons, <[www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl)>.

<sup>12</sup> The rate of initiative expresses the number of economic entities per 1000 head of population.

<sup>13</sup> Low values of the rate of initiative in industrial towns were observed earlier by Tkocz (2001) and Sitek (2002).

<sup>14</sup> In trade, transport, real estate, renting and business activities, financial intermediation, hotels and restaurants and other service activities.



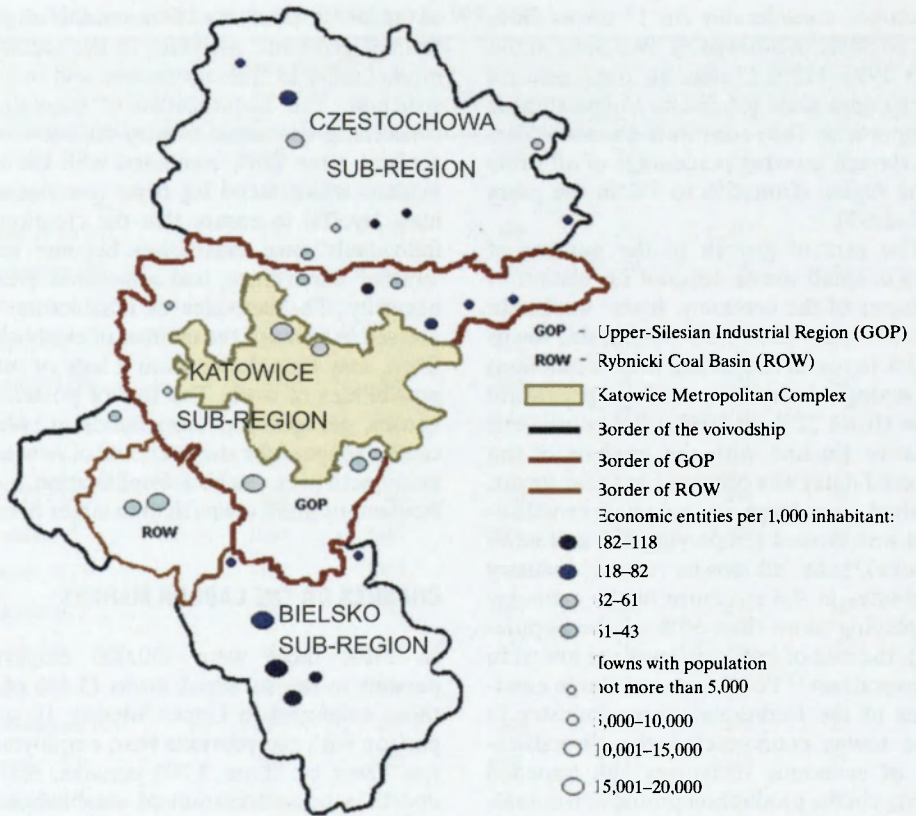


Figure 2. The rate of initiatives in small Silesian towns in 1999.

Source: Author's own elaboration.

sub-region). A considerable decline in the number of jobs was observed in four small mining towns. On the scale of the individual town magnitudes ranged from several hundred to several thousand workplaces over a few years (e.g. in Łędziny employment decreased by 3,100 over years, in Pszów 900 over 5 years). Losses cannot be determined for all towns, because some were for some time districts of large towns, so did not as such gather data. A considerable decline in employment was observed in the Katowice Sub-region, this being particularly 'rich' in large (250 employee or larger) state-owned or cooperative establishments requiring transformation (e.g. mines or steelworks located in most of the surveyed towns). The

most favourable labour market was to be observed in small towns of the Bielsko Sub-region, where a decrease of 130 employed was noted (22 persons on average in each town). In this region there are fewer technologically time-worn state-owned manufacturing enterprises. Moreover, the development of tourist and health-resort functions, as well as trade along the Polish-Czech borderland was undoubtedly favourable to the creation of new job opportunities.

Not everywhere was a decline in employment observed. In about 1/3 of small Silesian towns (for which statistical data are available in the years 1993-1999) employment increased in enterprises employing more than 5 persons from 2.7% to 44.8%

(Table 4). In the remaining 2/3 of small towns employment increased in small firms only. It is difficult to determine, in the light of the available data, whether this was due to persons being employed for the first time, or being laid off from larger enterprises.

In 1999, a majority of persons (25,000) were in jobs connected with production activities (section D of the European Classification of Activities<sup>15</sup>). Trade and repair (section G) employed 17,000 persons (Table 5). Third place was taken by mining and quarrying which, in spite of a reduction in employment, was continuing to give work to about 15,000 persons in 1999 (8.5% of total employment in mining in Silesia Voivodship). In total, some 57,000 persons were employed in mining and quarrying, manufacturing and trade (sections C, D and G), that is over a half of all persons employed in small towns, and about 54,103 persons in the remaining sections of the national economy (from 1600 in agriculture to 7166 in transport).

In spite of enormous growth in the number of small micro-firms in the 1990s, a majority of inhabitants of the 31 surveyed towns were still employed in the enterprises employing more than 5 persons (73% in 1998). Micro-firms employed from 27% to 29% of persons.<sup>16</sup> In the surveyed set of towns, there were 8 towns with about 40% or more persons employed in micro-firms—mainly in trade, hotels and restaurants and in other service activities.

Information obtained during field surveys conducted in six small towns<sup>17</sup> in the years 1998–1999 confirmed the commonly-known feature of greater flexibility of the

smallest firms in their activities. In the surveyed towns it resulted in a quick adjustment of production (e.g. of shoes and Christmas ornaments) to be in fashion, in the multi-specialization of employed persons, in the adjustment of sale days to the needs of clients etc. Micro-enterprises played their role in economic transformations of the observed centres, even if creating local job opportunities. It was particularly important in suburban areas as compared with the central zone of the Upper-Silesian conurbation, where finding job was much more difficult than in the centre. During field surveys in the Częstochowa Sub-region the formation of a conglomeration of small towns and rural gminas specializing in the production of similar articles (e.g. shoes, Christmas ornaments) was observed. Maybe these conglomerations represent the beginnings of future local poles of growth?

## SUMMARY

Small Silesian towns are shown from the results of the analysis of statistical data and field surveys to have reacted to political and socio-economic changes in the 1990s in a differentiated ways. Industrial towns entered the new century with a lesser percentage share of firms per 1000 people and lower employment in services (Table 5). Industry in a small town—a motor of development at first, turned out to be a restraint in the course of time—especially if it was a traditional industry requiring transformation and harmful to the environment—i.e. that kind of industry most often found in small Silesian towns. It was, therefore, harder to observe positive changes in these centres. However, such changes were observed in towns of a tourist function (including the recreational and the therapeutic). New jobs (particularly in hotels and restaurants, as well as health care) were created in these towns in order to meet the needs of tourists and patients, the offer of tourist services was broadened.<sup>18</sup> The economic transformation in centres servicing rural areas was

<sup>15</sup> European Classification of Activities introduced in Poland in 1994, based on the NACE.

These shares were spatially differentiated from 11.5% (in the Katowice Sub-region) to 58.4% (in the Częstochowa Sub-region).

<sup>16</sup> These shares were spatially differentiated from 11.5% (in the Katowice Sub-region) to 58.4% (in the Częstochowa Sub-region).

<sup>17</sup> In Krzepice, Zarki, Wojkowice, Skoczów, Szczyrk and Wisła.

<sup>18</sup> Szczyrk and Wisła offer ski and snowboard learning, mountain excursions on quedes, and paragliding shows, Ustroń year-round sanatorium services.

Table 4. Small Silesian towns: employed persons in economic entities employing more than five, 1991–1999

Towns	Years								% Increase/ Decrease (1995– 1999)
	1991	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	
Wilamowice (C)	—	525	466	445	381	520	633	624	40
Strumień (C)	—	829	847	868	811	892	906	1200	38
Imielin (W)	—	—	—	564	651	620	756	746	32
Koziegłowy (C)	366	467	365	304	389	438	446	401	32
Woźniki (C)	490	545	552	502	536	608	647	588	17
Ustroń (T)	—	5390	5314	5374	5882	5887	6208	6123	14
Skoczów (C)	—	5849	5976	5638	5899	5436	5706	5779	3
Krzepice (C)	1091	1057	1307	1245	1355	1431	1243	1264	2
Blachownia (Me)	2329	2686	2548	1876	2277	2211	2219	1900	1
Kłobuck (C)	4952	4440	4719	4229	3938	4135	4440	4278	1
Pilica (C)	—	—	563	564	561	606	546	539	-4
Szczekociny (C)	1157	981	1494	1437	1336	1399	1370	1361	-5
Kalety (W)	1271	1017	1121	1000	1026	949	913	947	-5
Miasteczko Śląskie (Me)	—	—	—	2189	2051	1970	2017	2036	-7
Siewierz (C)	1488	1308	1710	1410	1707	1637	1660	1278	-9
Orzesze (W)	2510	3105	2957	3228	3202	3236	3022	2852	-12
Żarki (C)	693	857	1222	1283	1354	1267	1307	1128	-12
Konieczpol (C)	2421	2248	2527	2392	2399	2376	2404	2060	-14
Pszów (M)	—	—	—	5945	5817	5603	5060	5028	-15
Poręba (Me)	2423	1832	1789	1864	1860	1797	1690	1574	-16
Kuźnia Raciborska (Me)	2281	2150	2488	1925	1920	1815	1750	1622	-16
Łazy (R)	2686	2576	2869	2887	2869	2707	2419	2425	-16
Toszek (C)	1183	1239	1020	1242	1178	1189	1126	1042	-16
Wisła (T)	—	2636	2603	2410	2266	2158	2118	1933	-20
Wojkowice (M)	—	—	3275	3255	3075	3213	2708	2522	-23
Szczyrk (T)	—	1374	1243	1049	1131	989	963	810	-23
Łęczyny (M)	11109	11361	10730	10517	10432	10141	9452	7996	-24
Ogrodzieniec (C)	928	1658	1712	1525	1545	1407	1387	572	-62
Radlin (M)	—	—	—	—	—	9999	6047	6397	—
Radzionków (W)	—	—	—	—	—	—	3452	3450	—
Sońnicowice (C)	—	—	—	—	36	560	583	575	—

Source: Data from the Statistical Offices in Bielsko-Biała, Częstochowa and Katowice and <www.stat.gov.pl>. (C)—central places; (M)—dominating function mining; (Me)—metal industry; (T)—tourism; (R)—rail transport; (W)—others specialized.

Table 5. Silesia Voivodship: Employed persons by sections of the European Classification of Activities (NACE), 1999

Specification	Employed					No more than 5 employed persons				
	Total Voivodship	Of which				Total Voivodship	Of which			
		towns	small towns		towns		small towns			
	in persons	%	in persons	%	in persons	%	in persons	%		
Total	1818896	1622921	89.2	100041	5.5	521410	442127	84.8	28991	5.6
Agriculture, hunting, forestry; fishing	15894	7744	48.7	1599	10.1	6155	2930	47.6	434	7.1
Mining and quarrying	174302	157911	90.6	14834	8.5	142	75	52.8	0	0.0
Manufacturing	397703	346542	87.1	24933	6.3	63424	47963	75.6	4453	7.0
Electricity, gas and water supply	42133	39973	94.9	1762	4.2	175	112	64.0	0	0.0
Construction	160782	142905	88.9	6987	4.3	59987	48677	81.1	3449	5.7
Trade and repair	349257	312997	89.6	17171	4.9	221532	193922	87.5	11783	5.3
Hotels and restaurants	34161	29010	84.9	2967	8.7	21146	17186	81.3	1743	8.2
Transport, storage and communication	124500	111119	89.3	7166	5.8	36339	29955	82.4	2028	5.6
Financial intermediation	56757	53574	94.4	1791	3.2	13518	12250	90.6	549	4.1
Real estate, renting and business activities	133664	128135	95.9	7174	5.4	53324	49314	92.5	2004	3.8
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	43121	39108	90.7	2188	5.1	486	447	92.0	16	3.3
Education	105632	90692	85.9	5207	4.9	6251	5545	88.7	288	4.6
Health and social work	133355	120591	90.4	6733	5.0	15292	13362	87.4	872	5.7
Other activities	47635	42620	89.5	2529	5.3	23639	20389	86.3	1372	5.8

Source: Data from the Statistical Office in Katowice

manifested in a higher initiative rate, and increased employment in medium-sized and large enterprises 1990s.

It is too early to evaluate whether, and on what scale, that small Silesian towns have profited from the opportunities of development which arose after 1989, and which towns were able to profit from these possibilities at all. A number of these towns must firstly make up for many years' economic negligence, while that part of them prosperous to some extent before 1989 must overcome the crisis of the 1990s. We still have too little data, and the period of observation is too short, to point to the winners and the losers. Probably, a process of selection will occur.

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