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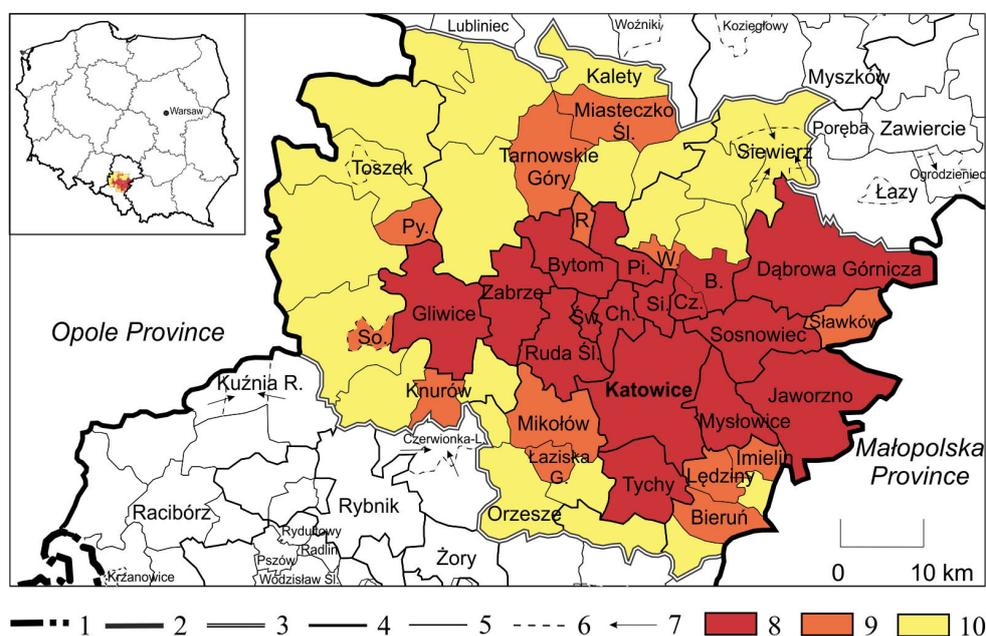
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Trajectories of depopulation and urban shrinkage in the Katowice Conurbation, Poland

Introduction

- 1 One of the major socio-economic, but also spatial problems in Central and Eastern Europe over the last 20 years has been the process of the broadly understood depopulation of regions and cities [Turok, Mykhnenko, 2007; Palagst, 2008; Runge, 2008; Kabisch *et al.*, 2012; Steinführer, Haase, 2007]. In the article, the term of depopulation refers to the phenomenon of statistical and long-term loss of population [Kantor-Pietraga, 2014].
- 2 In Poland, the phenomenon of population loss is presently observed in a greater part of its territory. According to Central Statistical Office's forecast, the percentage of administrative units (provinces, counties) experiencing depopulation will be increasing in the coming decades [Proгноза..., 2014]. The region where depopulation will be particularly strong is the Silesian Voivodeship in southern Poland [Runge, 2010]. Within it, the largest decrease in population is recorded in the polycentric Katowice conurbation.
- 3 The Katowice conurbation (also known as the Upper Silesian or Silesian conurbation) was established in the nineteenth century as one of Europe's largest mining and industrial regions. In Central Europe, it is the second biggest urban complex, following Berlin. It covers an area of 3213 km² with a population of 2.468 million people as of 2013 and consists of 33 cities¹ (figure 1).
- 4 The Katowice conurbation core cities (14 of 16 cities) – make up the Górnośląsko-Zagłębiowska Metropolia "Silesia" (in Polish) and The Upper-Silesian-Dabrowa Basin Metropolis "Silesia" (in English) [Krzysztofik, Runge, Spórna, 2011; Durand, 2011]. The Katowice conurbation, together with the agglomerations of Kraków, Rybnik, Bielsko-Biała and Częstochowa and the agglomeration of Ostrava in the Czech Republic, make up an interstate agglomeration zone [Runge *et al.*, 2011].

Figure 1. The area of Katowice conurbation, Poland



Explanation: 1 - boundary of Poland, 2 - province boundaries, 3 - Katowice conurbation boundaries, 4 - powiat (NUTS 4), 5 - gmina (NUTS 5), 6 - boundaries between city in urban-rural gmina and rural area, 7 - rural area in urban-rural gmina, 8 - core of conurbation, 9 - inner zone of conurbation, 10 - outer zone of conurbation;

Normal text - city, B. - Będzin, Ch. - Chorzów, Cz. - Czeladź, Pi. - Piekary Śląskie, Py. - Pyskowitz, R. - Radzionków, Si. - Siemianowice Śląskie, So. - Sośnicowice, Św. - Świętochłowice, W. - Wojkowice.

Source: Author's own elaboration.

5 The primary objective of this paper is a synthesis of the depopulation process in the Katowice conurbation as a region, as well as an indication of the significance of some shrinking cities located therein. The choice of this case study was dictated by the greatest value of population decrease and also huge scale of socioeconomic problems determined by urban shrinkage in Poland and probably in Central-Eastern Europe. The paths of depopulation and urban shrinkage have been presented in the article in a broader depiction – the Katowice conurbation as a whole, and in a narrower depiction, using the example of the cities of Bytom and Sosnowiec. Both cities constitute model examples of the multifaceted process of urban shrinkage, with one of its most distinct effects being significant depopulation in the past 25 years but also during shorter e.g. 5-year periods.

6 The concept of urban shrinkage is understood as a complex process that involves precipitation of urban potential in the economic, social and spatial sphere, and its lasting effect is the obvious depopulation of a city. The essence of the determination of a shrinking city is to capture the following dependency having the nature of a closed system:

... – causes of urban shrinkage – depopulation of the city and its multidimensional regress – the effects of urban shrinkage – further depopulation and regress of the city – ...

7 In this system, the causes of the phenomenon at some point become identical with the results. It is also crucial that definition of urban shrinkage does not mean only statistical approach of depopulation, although this actually is its standard element.

8 While the process of depopulation after 1989 (the collapse of the socialist system in Poland) affected practically all the cities of the region, including all large cities (over 100 thousand inhabitants) and medium cities (20–99.9 thousand inhabitants), this phenomenon was not of uniform intensity. Not all the cities of the conurbation experienced depopulation as a result of urban shrinkage [Runge, Kłosowki, 2011; Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2012a].

9 Today, due to the process of depopulation and de-industrialization, the Katowice conurbation is one of two (next to the agricultural regions in the east of Poland) key problem areas in Poland. The process of depopulation, and especially urban shrinkage, entails many social, economic, spatial, infrastructural, and also political issues.

1. Background of depopulation in the Katowice conurbation

10 The urban development in the Katowice conurbation, including a number of industrial settlements, occurred mainly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries [Pounds, 1958; Riley, Tkocz, 1998]. It was mostly based on the exploitation of coal, the iron industry, mining and metallurgy of zinc and lead ores, and coke, steel and textile industries [Tkocz, 2005]. In the socialist period (1945–1989), the industrial potential of the region increased significantly. Coal mining expanded, together with iron and energy industries based on coal. In the 1970s, the automotive industry developed (the Fiat brand). The dynamic development of industry resulted in a rapid increase in population. In 1991, the Katowice conurbation population reached a maximum value of 2.831 million people and it was the third largest mining and industrial region in Europe (following the Ruhrgebiet and the Donetsk Basin). As far as the size structure is concerned, large and medium-sized cities prevailed (table 2). They were monofunctional, based on mining and / or manufacturing. From a functional point of view, in almost all the cities of the conurbation, the mining sector accounted for from 50 to 80% of the workforce. Exogenous services were poorly developed, while endogenous services oriented on the population of the region dominated. Despite the statistically high employment in endogenous services, development was not satisfactory due to the loads and restraints of the socialist economy. It was especially explicit in the field of trade. In the region, Katowice had the most diverse functions, as the largest city of the conurbation and the capital of a voivodeship. These were administrative, scientific and cultural functions. Another city with

higher order services was Gliwice – the seat of the Silesian University of Technology and research institutes associated with industry.

- 11 This quite clear functional monolith, stabilized with mining and industrial potential "burst" with the collapse of socialist economy and the Polish inclusion to the group of free-market countries. In the first phase of de-industrialization of the Katowice region (until 1997), mainly the processing industry underwent a profound restructuring. The loss of employment was experienced in all facilities connected with iron, metal, electrical, energy, coke, textile and clothing industries [Tkocz, 2001, 2005]. More than 50 companies employing over 500 people were completely closed down. In some large enterprises, the loss in employment reached up to 80% and more. During this period, some unprofitable coal mines were liquidated, mainly in the eastern part of the conurbation (the Dabrowa Basin), but also in Katowice and Bytom. Not less than 500 thousand people lost jobs in the previously existing plants. For example, in Sosnowiec, until 2005, 3 out of 4 coal mines had been closed down, 2 steel plants thoroughly restructured, 4 large textile and clothing industry plants had been closed down, 4 big factories of metal, machinery and electronics industries had been closed down and 3 restructured. More than 10 other companies employing between 100 and 500 people had been restructured.
- 12 Of course, some of the laid-off workers found jobs in new, mainly small production companies and the booming trade and services. However, the rate of unemployment is very high, especially in the cities where de-industrialization was very dynamic (e.g. Bytom, Sosnowiec).
- 13 Unemployment in the cities of the Katowice conurbation had steadily declined until 2008. (Table 1). But, as a result of the global economic crisis, there has been a re-growth. The key role as drivers of unemployment decrease in the region played: out-migrations (mainly foreign), new economic investments in manufacturing and service sectors, generations of baby bust from the 90s on local labour market or relatively stabilization in coal-mining (until 2013). However, the registered unemployment rate is still very high, especially in industrial cities and industrial and services centres, such as Bytom, Świętochłowice, Piekary Śląskie, and Siemianowice Śląskie, where the number exceeds 15%.
- 14 The lowest registered unemployment rate is present in Katowice (5.4%), which serves the function of the capital of the Silesia Voivodeship and the main economic centre of the region. Despite the strong depopulation of Katowice, the city remains an attractive labour market not only for its residents, but also for the population of the Katowice conurbation (Sitek *et al.*, 2013). The economic potential of the city is expressed by the number of jobs, which surpasses the population of the city. In the western part of the Katowice conurbation, another important labour market is Gliwice.

Table 1. Registered unemployment rate in main cities of Katowice conurbation, 2000-2013

City	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Bytom	17.5	22.9	25.0	27.1	26.7	24.6	21.1	15.9	12.7	16.8	18.1	19.6	19.9	21.1
Chorzów	17.4	21.4	22.7	24.6	23.7	22.3	18.4	12.6	8.2	11.5	11.6	11.2	11.6	12.1
Dąbrowa Górń.	13.6	17.2	18.9	20.2	19.9	18.2	15.5	11.6	7.5	11.4	11.1	11.4	12.6	12.3
Gliwice	11.1	13.6	14.5	14.9	14.0	12.5	9.3	6.2	4.5	6.7	6.8	6.4	7.2	7.5
Jaworzno	16.2	21.5	23.1	23.8	22.7	17.7	14.4	13.0	8.9	11.3	11.1	10.2	11.6	11.0
Katowice	5.0	7.1	8.2	8.4	7.7	7.1	5.4	3.3	1.9	3.3	3.8	4.2	5.2	5.4
Mysowice	12.7	15.0	16.4	18.0	17.0	15.1	12.2	9.1	7.3	8.4	9.2	8.4	9.8	9.5
Piekary Śląskie	15.2	17.4	21.9	23.2	21.9	17.7	17.1	14.5	9.8	13.2	14.5	14.7	16.1	17.0
Ruda Śląska	12.4	15.7	16.5	15.1	14.2	13.0	10.3	6.8	5.0	7.2	8.5	8.1	9.0	9.4
Siemianowice Śl.	18.8	26.9	27.4	31.1	28.1	24.0	18.5	13.6	10.3	13.6	12.5	14.3	14.3	15.1
Sosnowiec	16.5	22.1	23.7	22.9	22.9	20.4	16.3	12.0	9.2	13.1	13.9	13.7	15.3	14.8
Świętochłowice	20.9	24.1	27.1	28.2	29.0	25.7	21.2	12.8	9.3	15.2	17.6	16.6	18.2	18.8
Tychy	13.2	16.5	15.7	14.3	13.1	12.0	8.8	5.2	3.6	5.1	5.8	5.8	6.9	7.0
Zabrze	19.3	22.7	23.3	23.6	23.4	21.0	18.7	13.0	9.3	12.1	12.5	12.9	13.6	14.0
Poland	15.1	17.5	18.0	20.0	19.0	17.6	14.8	11.2	9.5	12.1	12.4	12.5	13.4	13.4

Source: Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Śląskiego 2001-2004 and Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland.

- 15 The increase in the unemployment rate has had a direct impact on the increase in the number of social issues and, indirectly, also in spatial, infrastructural and image problems of the region. As a result of competition in the labour market, the salaries of those who had a job were also significantly low. With the exception of the mining and energy sectors, salaries in traditional

processing plants were relatively low. A low level of household income lead to delays and limitations in the renovation and regeneration of housing. It was particularly evident in housing block areas, which dominated the landscape of cities in the region after 1970 [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2011].

16 Restrictions of household budgets (hence property managers) and decreasing municipal budgets derived from taxes on land and other taxes from large companies, as well as the parts of personal income tax resulted in investment restrictions both in terms of municipal investments, as well as in infrastructure and transportation. Compared to other large Polish agglomerations, in many respects these delays ranged from 5–15 years. The situation was worsened by the accelerated degradation and exploitation of housing and infrastructure damage due to mining. This fact resulted in stagnation and further spreading of the negative image of the region. From the point of view of the image of the region, the biggest problem, however, was posed by numerous post-industrial brownfields. Firstly, they exposed the degradation of the region, and secondly, its economic shrinkage, frequently creating barriers in re-integrating neighbourhoods. In the ranking of "the most repulsive Polish cities", created in 2006, as many as 7 of the 10 worst cities in this respect were located in the Katowice region [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2011].

17 All these factors have also had a significant impact on the political life of the region. Economic and social crises often caused tensions between the inhabitants and the local government. In many cities, there were trends to have referendums that dismissed municipal authorities. In many of those cities, they were even carried out effectively. The city of Bytom presents a special case, where due to indirect consequences of shrinkage, early elections of mayor were carried out twice [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2012a]. General socio-economic problems lead to a decline in the cohesion of city centres with their peripheral districts. As a result of social centrifugal processes, some neighbourhoods separated from the cities in which they were located (Bieruń and Łęziny from Tychy, Imielin from Mysłowice, Radzionków from Bytom, Wojkowice from Będzin).

18 The negative background of depopulation and urban shrinkage was mitigated by phenomena and considerations mitigating the problems of unemployment and the resulting social problems. The key aspect here was the opening of the EU lobar market and an increase in the number of new industrial investments, both within the existing brownfields (Sosnowiec), as well as in the greenfields areas (Gliwice, Tychy). Most large industrial plants were established within the framework of the Katowice Special Economic Zone. The mitigating element, as far as socio-economic problems are concerned, was the troubleshoot policy of mining and iron industries (including early retirement, financial resources for activation and change of trade). Eventually, a slow improvement in the socio-economic situation of the region became noticeable since about 2002 [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2012a]. It was undoubtedly interrupted by the economic crisis of 2008 and further restructuring and liquidation in local mining and industry. Gradually, after 2005, an increase in finances for regeneration, modernization of residential areas, and improvement of municipal and transportation infrastructure has become visible. Still, many neighbourhoods are neglected and under-invested.

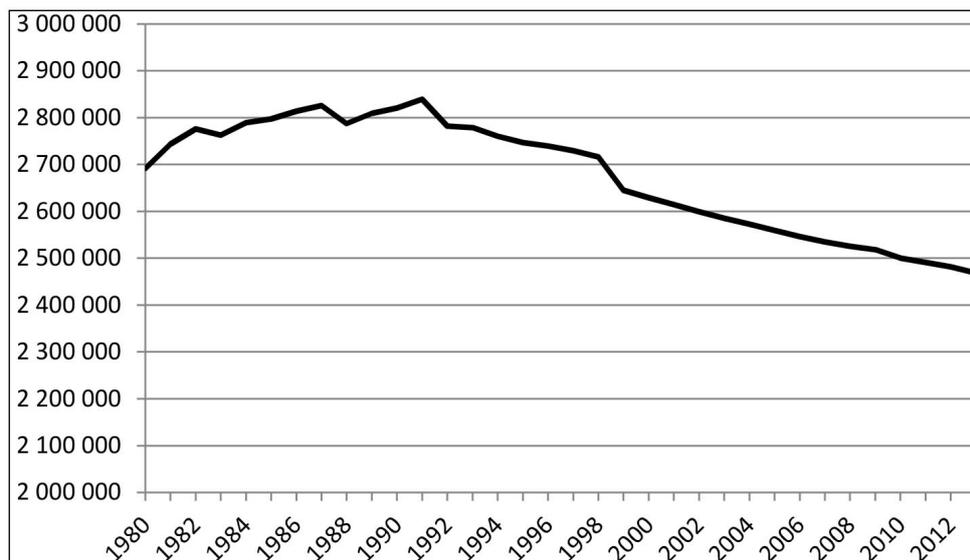
19 In summary, socioeconomic transformation in the Katowice conurbation highlights demographic problems of old industrial regions in Europe [Eckart ed., 2003; Turok, Mykhnenko, 2007]. Many of the phenomena and processes identified in the Katowice conurbation, have been observed in similar urban regions [Sucháček, 2005; Vaishar, 2002; Rechlowicz, Tkocz, 2013; Van Dijk, 2002; Spórna, Kurpanik, 2013].

2. Depopulation in the cities of the Katowice conurbation

20 The Katowice conurbation population had continuously increased until 1991. In contrast, from the 1990s, there has been a steady loss (figure. 2). In 1991, the Katowice conurbation had a population of 2.838 million people, of which 2.449 million lived in the core. In 2013, the region was inhabited by only 2.468 million, including 2.1 million in the core. Therefore, in the period 1991–2013, the conurbation lost 0.37 million people (i.e. 13%), of which the depopulation rate of its core was as high as 0.349 million people. The forecast long-term changes in the

Katowice conurbation population reveal a further loss of its inhabitants [*Prognoza...*, 2014]. The situation is slightly more favourable in the inner and the outer zone of the region, where a slight increase in population has been observed since about 2005.

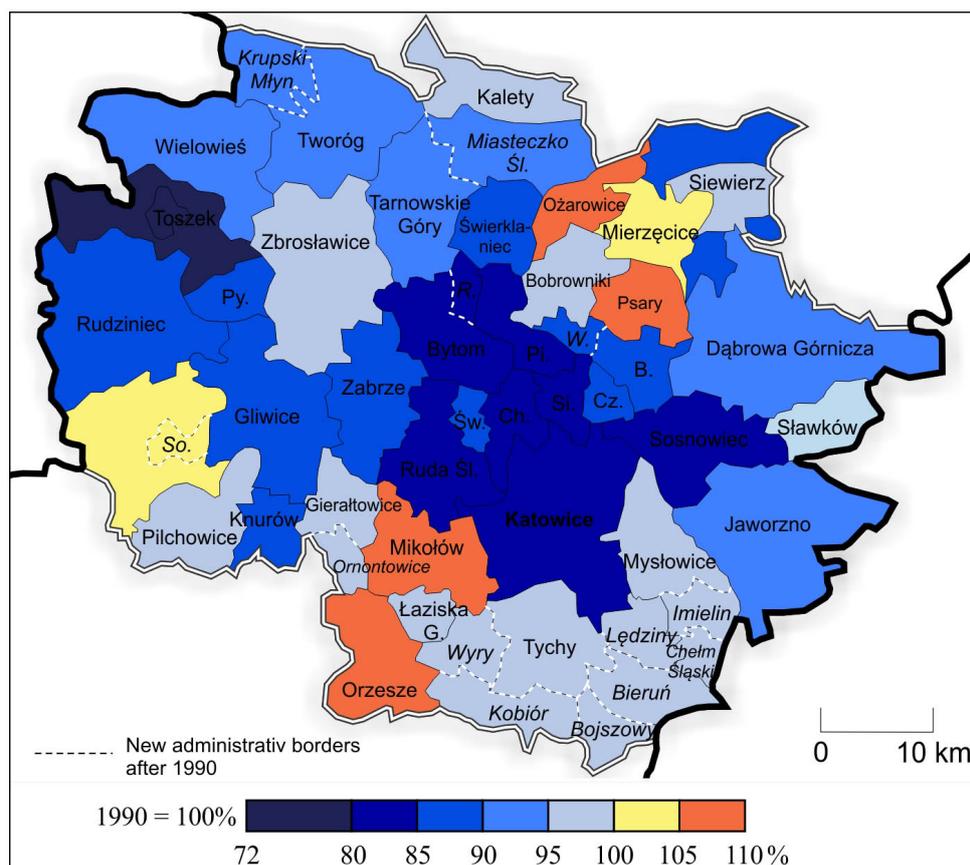
Figure 2. Population changes in Katowice conurbation in period 1980-2013



Source: own elaboration based on Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1981-1995 and Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland.

- 21 In spatial terms, in the years 1990–2013, the Katowice conurbation depopulation process was observed in 32 out of 37 municipalities (in their 1990 borders). All major cities of the Katowice conurbation are characterized by a strong process of depopulation, and in particular its core (figure. 3). In contrast, population growth was recorded in some municipalities of the inner and outer zones, which are characterized by a convenient location with respect to the transportation to the core cities. They also have high natural features and availability of free land for new housing development.

Figure 3. Dynamics of population changes in Katowice conurbation in period 1990–2013 (administrative borders from 1990)



Explanations: B. - Będzin, Ch. - Chorzów, Cz. - Czeladź, Pi. - Piekary Śląskie, Py. - Pyskowitz, R. - Radzionków, Si. - Siemianowice Śląskie, So. - Sośnicowice, Św. - Świętochłowice, W. - Wojkowitz.

Source: own elaboration based on Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1991–1995 and Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland.

- 22 It shall be highlighted, however, that the official statistics represent both permanent population, as well as people who migrate to cities for a short period. With this group excluded, Katowice accounts for less than 290 thousand residents, and Sosnowiec will cease to be a city of 200 thousand inhabitants in 2015. In addition, these numbers are inflated by the fact that many people who emigrated permanently abroad after 2004, are still formal residents of the region. They are listed in the census, but, in fact, they have been abroad for many years and by conservative data, 90% of them will never return to Poland. The unpublished research of the article authors for the three cities in the region indicate that the phenomenon may affect between 3% to 10% of the population formally registered in their cities.
- 23 In the analysed period 1990–2013, a decline in the population of large cities was particularly pronounced: Katowice – the capital of the region, lost more than 60 thousand inhabitants, Bytom – 57 thousand and Sosnowiec – nearly 50 thousand. Significant declines were also visible in Zabrze, Gliwice, Ruda Śląska and Chorzów (Table 2).

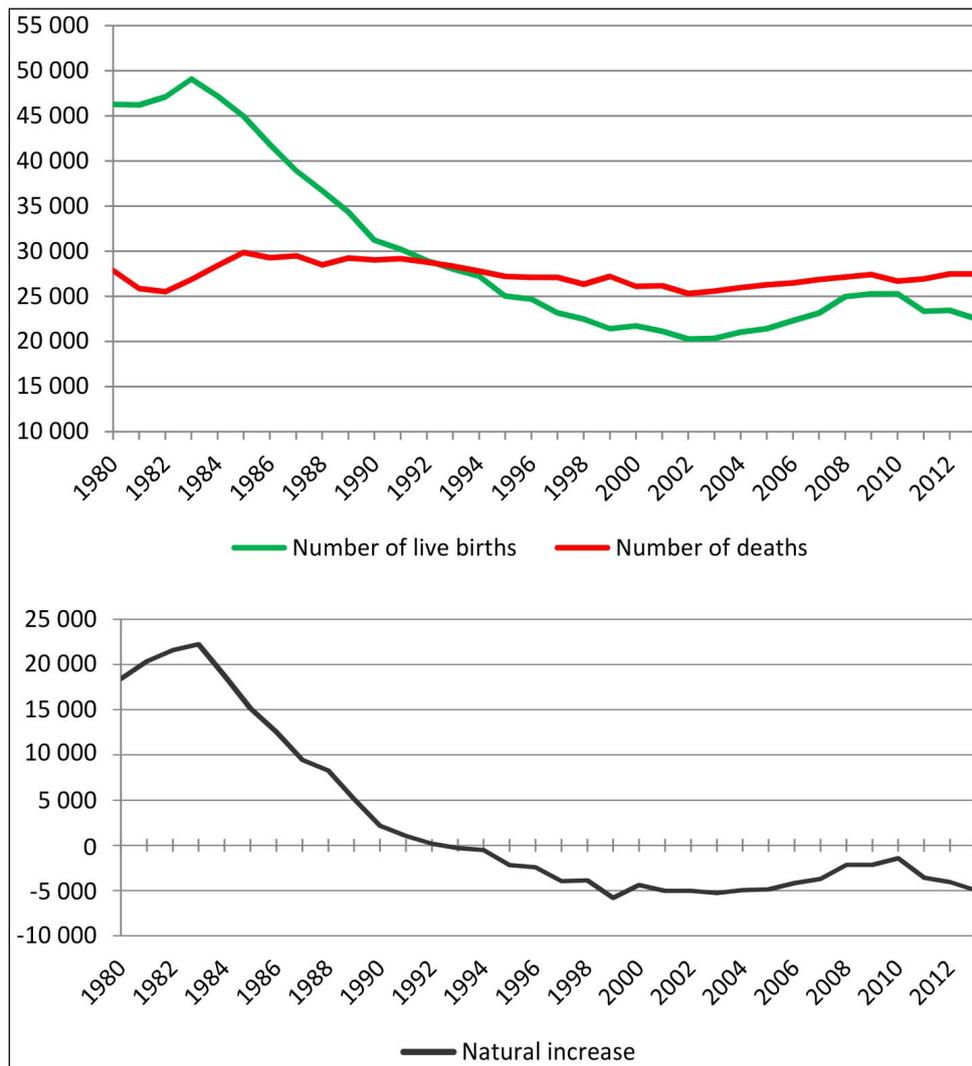
Table 2. Population changes in cities of core area of Katowice conurbation, 1980–2013

Cities of core area of Katowice conurbation	Population					Population changes			
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2013	1990-2013
Będzin*	75 042	76 222	59 719	59 133	58 425	1 180	-16 503	-1 294	-17 797
Bytom*	234 292	231 206	195 807	177 266	173 439	-3 086	-35 399	-22 368	-57 767
Chorzów	150 107	131 902	118 708	111 843	110 761	-18 205	-13 194	-7 947	-21 141
Czeladź	35 415	37 597	35 336	33 803	32 940	2 182	-2 261	-2 396	-4 657
Dąbrowa Górń.*	141 431	136 862	132 858	126 079	123 994	-4 569	-4 004	-8 864	-12 868
Gliwice	197 467	214 202	205 092	187 830	185 450	16 735	-9 110	-19 642	-28 752
Jaworzno	89 278	99 547	97 119	94 831	93 708	10 269	-2 428	-3 411	-5 839
Katowice	355 117	366 798	330 625	311 421	304 362	11 681	-36 173	-26 263	-62 436
Mysowice*	79 773	93 748	75 949	75 501	75 129	13 975	-17 799	-820	-18 619
Piekary Śląskie	64 321	68 502	61 347	58 022	57 148	4 181	-7 155	-4 199	-11 354
Ruda Śląska	159 097	171 034	152 280	143 566	141 521	11 937	-18 754	-10 759	-29 513
Siemianowice Śl.	77 080	81 123	74 782	70 296	68 844	4 043	-6 341	-5 938	-12 279
Sosnowiec	246 082	259 353	234 486	216 961	211 275	13 271	-24 867	-23 211	-48 078
Świętochowice	58 651	60 504	56 852	53 304	51 824	1 853	-3 652	-5 028	-8 680
Tychy*	166 573	191 723	133 463	129 507	128 799	25 150	-58 260	-4 664	-62 924
Zabrze	196 028	205 029	197 111	181 399	178 357	9 001	-7 918	-18 754	-26 672
Sum total	2 325 754	2 425 352	2 161 534	2 030 762	1 995 976	99 598	-263 818	-165 558	-429 376

* - cities with significant administrative changes: Będzin (until 1991 with Wojkowice), Bytom (until 1997 with Radzionków), Dąbrowa Górnicza (until 1983 with Sławków), Mysłowice (until 1994 with Imielin and Chełm Śląski) Tychy (until 1990 with Bieruń, Łędziny and rural boroughs of Bojszowy, Kobiór, Wyry).

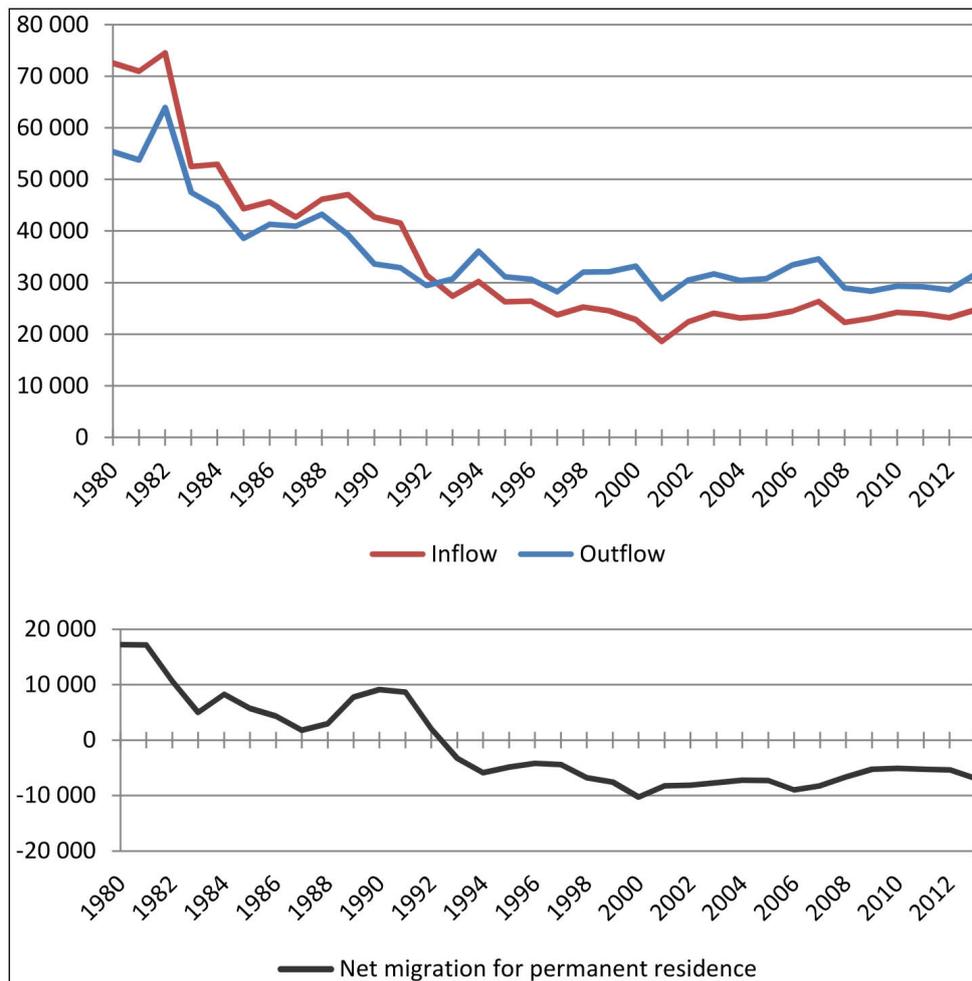
Source: own elaboration based on Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1981, 1991 and Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland.

24 The demographic development of the peripheral zone is linked to the phenomenon of suburbanization, just like in other large Polish cities and in most European cities. In the region of the discussed conurbation, suburbanization is mostly linked to migration flows from the core. Unfortunately, a demographic forecast for the region indicates that by 2035, the demographic loss will have affected the inner zone and a large part of the outer zone as well. The depopulation of cities located in the core of the conurbation will have been more dynamic [*Prognoza...*, 2014]. Currently, the relatively small decrease in population of the conurbation, even in comparison with the 1990s results from the so-called population boom of the 1970s and 1980s. The observed increase in the number of births in 2002–2010, however, is significantly smaller than the so-called simple succession of generations (figure 4). This means that despite growth trends, a decline in population is actually observed, considered from the perspective of the natural movement of the population. The year of 1993 is the final year in the Katowice conurbation area, closing the period from 1946 when the number of births exceeded the number of deaths.

Figure 4. Natural increase in Katowice conurbation in period 1980-2013

Source: own elaboration based on Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1981-1995 and Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland.

- 25 The negative image of the cities in the Katowice conurbation can also be seen in terms of migration movement (figure. 5). The advantage of the influx of migration over the outflow in the Katowice conurbation had been observed until 1992. As a result of restructuring of the economy of the region (the 1990s), and the opening of the labour markets of Western Europe (after 2004), the cities of the Katowice conurbation have been experiencing continuous migration loss. Migration within the conurbation is also strong, but emigration abroad and to other Polish metropolises – Warsaw, Krakow and Wrocław are the most apparent (Sitek *et al.*, 2013).
- 26 The migrations of the population to the peripheral zone of the region have already been mentioned. However, the migration of local character is of limited relevance. The specificity of the Katowice region has been a quite large population outflow to small towns and villages in various regions of Poland associated with people who came here to seek work in mining and industry in the 1960s, 1970s, or 1980s [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2011]. This outflow, however, was greater in the 1990s than in the 2000s.

Figure 5. Population migration in Katowice conurbation in period 1980-2013

Source: own elaboration based on Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Katowickiego 1981-1995 and Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland.

- 27 These features of spatial redistribution distinguish the polycentric Katowice conurbation from large monocentric agglomerations in Poland. In contrast to the latter, with a definitely strong suburbanization processes, in the Katowice conurbation, traditional suburbanization balances with migration to remote regions and cities: abroad, to other major metropolitan areas in Poland, to small villages in other parts of Poland and regions of tourism and recreation in the western Carpathians and the Krakow and Czestochowa Upland [Kantor-Pietraga, 2014].
- 28 A specific, albeit contrasted with the overall loss, positive development is the process of internal suburbanization in the Katowice conurbation [Runge *et al.*, 2011]. This specific phenomenon involves the creation of suburbs close to city centres, in areas previously not invested in, often administratively being central parts of cities. This phenomenon is possible due to the specific, chess-board like zoning arrangement of the Katowice conurbation. In this system, there are numerous areas with low ground rent (brownfields, abandoned farmland), which are used in new construction and location of settlements typical for suburbs rather than city centres. This process is also encouraged by a diverse spatial structure of Polish cities, which was significantly affected by the socialist economy (years 1945-1989).
- 29 Parallel to the depopulation process, the process of population is taking place [Sojka, 2011]. It applies to all urban centres of the region and as demographic forecasts indicate, the proportion of people over 60 will continue to increase. The aspect ratio between groups of people in pre-working and post-working ages is very unfavourable and deteriorating.

3. Trajectories of urban shrinkage in the Katowice conurbation using case studies of Bytom and Sosnowiec

30 A feature of the Katowice conurbation depopulation is that it is accompanied by a process of urban shrinking. This phenomenon applies to most cities located in the core of the conurbation and many other towns in the peripheral zone. In the region like the Katowice conurbation, urban shrinkage should be primarily identified with different forms of post-industrialism. A detailed analysis of socio-economic transformations in the cities of the region reveals that centres that have lost their economic base, have not yet managed to build any clear structure of a new economy (Bytom), but there are also cities like Sosnowiec, where, despite many successful attempts to decelerate depopulation and urban shrinkage, these attributes are still quite important [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2011]. There are also cities that are developing quite dynamically, but in spite of that they experience a clear loss of population (Katowice, Gliwice). In these cases, it is rather a depopulation process. Two examples of shrinking cities in the Katowice conurbation are Bytom and Sosnowiec².

31 **Bytom.** The city of Bytom in 2013 formally had 173 thousand residents. However, the actual census of 2014 indicated that only 157.4 thousand permanent residents lived in the town. Also, unregistered immigrants to Western Europe must be taken into account, which is the number of no less than 7 thousand people. Therefore, by the end of 2014 Bytom was inhabited by about 150 thousand residents. Taking into account the highest population of the city, from 1987, amounting to 239.8 thousand, the actual loss of nearly 90 thousand people should be noted. Moreover, about 20 thousand people resided in Radzionków, which separated from Bytom in 1996. Considering the present borders of the city, the loss of population in this period amounted to approximately 70 thousand residents, which is more than 1/3. The rate of depopulation in the most recent period is also significant. The number of permanent residents in the period of December 31, 2009 to December 31, 2013 dropped from 169.8 to 158.8 thousand, which is as much as 6.5%³.

32 These significant declines in population are direct consequences of multi-faceted urban shrinkage (Table 3). Currently, out of 6 mines that operated in Bytom in the 1980s, only one remains, but even this one ultimately is scheduled to close in the nearest future. Out of two large steelworks - "Zygmunt" and "Bobrek" only the latter is still open, but it has undergone a profound restructuring process. Also the local power plant has been restructured. Other large establishments connected with the fuel industry and clothing have been either closed or moved to other cities. Bytom is currently the largest Polish city which, despite losing its economic base, has not created a new one based on innovative production and specialized services [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2011]. This is mostly the reason why the city has the largest unemployment rate of over 20% (2014), not only in the conurbation, but also among major Polish cities. In other cities of the conurbation the level of unemployment remains at approximately 5–15%. High unemployment is, in turn, a key condition for the enormous social problems of the city. The scale of social exclusion, homelessness, and social pathologies is significant in this city.

33 Compared to other cities in the region, Bytom has yet another infamous indicator, namely vacancy rates, particularly in its central district (Śródmieście). The authors' study suggests that about 2,200 flats (about 8 %) here are uninhabited, which, as for the conditions of a large Polish city, is an extremely large number [Kantor-Pietraga, Machowski, 2012]. The problem of vacancies, as well as many demolished urban quarters, is a result of the negative impacts of coal mining. In some places, the land subsided by even more than a dozen meters.

34 I. Kantor-Pietraga [2014] indicates that Bytom as a city, is "unnecessary from a functional point of view". The demographic potential here is misaligned with the number of jobs and good living conditions. Bytom is the most telling example of a shrinking city in Poland – it has lost its territory, is dramatically losing inhabitants, has lost almost all of its existing economic base, the forecast, as to the number and structure of the population (ageing population), is unfavourable, there has been a loss in terms of technical and transportation infrastructure. Since at least the 1970s, demolition of individual buildings as well as entire urban quarters have been permanent parts of its landscape.

- 35 The paradox is also the fact that the central district of Bytom, but also parts of other districts, have exceptional architectural and urban planning values, not only in Upper Silesia, but also in Poland (figure 6). In the city centre, valuable spatial layouts contrast with various social, spatial and infrastructural problems [Kantor-Pietraga, Machowski, 2012].
- 36 All the problems directly or indirectly related to the urban shrinkage, as well as the strong contrast between anthropogenic and natural values of the city and its problems, for many years, have created a tense situation in urban policy. One of the results was early elections in 1996 (the secession of Radzionków) and in 2012 (liquidation of schools and conflict regarding the negative impact of coal mining on development of the city). Also, social and political participation in the local governance system is meaningful. The weak part of this system is, however, a lack of large business entities that would stimulate and provide a framework for economic policy and the local labour market. Hence, the clearly visible managerial mode of governance with its key actor represented by the mayor and the city council [Bernt *et al.*, 2014].

Figure 6. Bytom. Historic mansions on the Market Square



Source: by authors.

- 37 **Sosnowiec.** According to the official statistics, the population of Sosnowiec in 2013 decreased to 211.3 thousand people. However, as in the case of Bytom and other cities in the region, the actual level of the population is much lower. Firstly, the number of permanent residents in 2014 fell to 202 thousand [3]. Secondly, the scale of unregistered foreign and domestic emigration is also significant. It amounts to about 10 thousand people, and therefore the actual city population oscillates around 190 thousand residents. Taking into account the fact that in the mid-1980s, the population of Sosnowiec was nearly 260 thousand, the actual decline was 70 thousand, just like in Bytom. Also a short-term population decline is meaningful; the number dropped from 214.5 thousand as of 31.12.2009 to 203.9 thousand as of 31.12.2013.
- 38 The conditions of Sosnowiec shrinkage are similar to those that took place in Bytom. Therefore, firstly, the liquidation and restructuring of coal mining and industry took place. Out of four major coal mines existing in Sosnowiec in 1990, there was only one in 2014 (its closing is scheduled for 2015). There are still 2 ironworks, but due to the process of restructuring, they employ fewer than half of the employees in comparison with the 1980s. In Sosnowiec, almost all textile and clothing industry (4 large factories) was liquidated, most of its electrical industry and a part of metal industry [Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2011].

39 In contrast to Bytom, Sosnowiec experienced a relatively quick response to the threat posed by
the liquidation of existing plants. Already in 1996, a branch of the Katowice Special Economic
Zone was opened within the city limits, establishing new investment areas on brownfields,
that previously held mining functions. The first investments, however, began to appear only in
about the year 2000. By 2010, more than 20 large and medium-sized manufacturing companies
had been founded in the city limits, a part of brownfields was developed for logistics, which
became particularly dynamic after 2010.

40 However, despite quite expansionary policies of the re-industrialization of the city, it still
experiences a distinct depopulation (Table 3). This is mainly due to relatively low salaries
in new companies (paradoxically better salaries are offered by plants representing traditional
industries – mining, ironworks and energy). The big problem is also posed by the fact once
termed by G. Benko as *le paysage urbain*, namely the townscape is dominated by residential
blocks from the 1970s and 1980s, frequently not renovated and increasingly depopulated
(figure 7). The city, with the exception of its peripheral districts, has a negative social
perception.

Figure 7. Sosnowiec. Typical not renovated residential block from the 1970s



Source: by authors

41 In contrast to Bytom, the degraded land and buildings in Sosnowiec are not as much of
a problem. Many brownfields, as already mentioned, have been re-developed or wooded
[Krzysztofik *et al.*, 2012b].

42 Also, the system of local governance is differently shaped. Due to the existence in the Katowice
Special Economic Zone branch and other large entities, urban policy relies heavily on two
actors – the local government and local business. The social representation is relatively weak
in comparison to Bytom. Seeking to determine the most appropriate local policy, the corporate
mode of governance by Di Gaetano and Strom [2003] is suggested.

Table 3. Dynamics of population in Bytom and Sosnowiec 1887/1900–2012 and some population projection

Year	Bytom			Sosnowiec		
	Population	Dynamics	Dynamics	Population	Dynamics	Dynamics
	thous.	%	%	thous.	%	%
1887/1900	76,2	–	100,0	32,3	–	100,0
1910	105,1	37,9	137,9	89,0	175,5	275,5
1921/1925	114,9	9,3	150,8	86,5	-2,8	267,8
1931/1933	138,5	20,5	181,8	109,0	26,0	337,5
1939	140,1	1,2	183,9	129,6	18,9	401,2
1946	93,2	-33,5	122,3	84,3	-35,0	261,0
1950	174,0	86,7	228,3	96,4	14,4	298,5
1955	180,7	3,9	237,1	124,4	29,0	385,1
1960	182,6	1,1	239,6	131,7	5,9	407,7
1965	191,0	4,6	250,7	139,8	6,2	432,8
1970	187,5	-1,8	246,1	145,0	3,7	448,9
1975	234,4	25,0	307,6	197,9	36,5	612,7
1980	234,3	0,0	307,5	246,1	24,4	761,9
1985	238,9	2,0	313,5	256,4	4,2	793,8
1990	231,2	-3,2	303,4	259,4	1,2	803,1
1992	229,2	-0,9	300,8	251,3	-3,1	778,0
1994	228,2	-0,4	299,5	248,9	-1,0	770,6
1996	225,3	-1,3	295,7	246,3	-1,0	762,5
1998	205,6	-8,7	269,8	244,1	-0,9	755,7
2000	201,9	-1,8	265,0	241,1	-1,2	746,4
2002	192,6	-4,6	252,8	231,0	-4,2	715,2
2004	189,5	-1,6	248,7	228,1	-1,3	706,2
2006	186,5	-1,6	244,8	224,2	-1,7	694,1
2008	183,8	-1,4	241,2	221,3	-1,3	685,1
2010	177,3	-3,5	232,7	217,0	-1,9	671,8
2012	174,7	-1,5	229,3	213,5	-1,6	661,0
2014	172,2	-1,4	226,0	209,5	-1,9	648,6
2020	164,1	-4,7	215,4	197,9	-5,5	612,7
2025	156,7	-4,5	205,6	187,5	-5,3	580,5
2030	149,0	-4,9	195,5	176,6	-5,8	546,7
2035	140,9	-5,4	184,9	165,2	-6,5	511,5

Source: Krzysztofik, Runge, Kantor-Pietraga, 2011; Local Data Bank, GUS, Poland; *Prognoza...*, 2014.

43 Where, then, is the key problem of the city? It should be recalled that almost the sole reason for the rapid growth of the population of Sosnowiec in the second half of the twentieth century was the issue of relatively high salaries in industry and mining and quite a big chance to get a new apartment in block developments. These two indications stimulated a very strong migration inflow. Presently, both of these reasons have disappeared. What remained are largely de-stimulants or indifferent attributes of development. Hence, the social image of the city, dominated by people aged 40–70, residing in block developments and simultaneously a large scale of migration of young people under 35 to other cities and abroad.

4. Discussion and conclusions

44 The problem of depopulation and shrinkage of large metropolitan areas in many parts of Poland and Europe is going to deepen in the future. In Polish cities, including the Katowice region,

population decline took place just before systemic abandonment of homes and buildings and, consequently, their demolition of which has already taken place in eastern Germany and in many other places in Western Europe or the US. Therefore, the key problem and challenge of urban policy is whether this also occurs in Poland. The frequently dramatic population decline in the cities also exposed in this article suggests that this might soon be the case. Today in Sosnowiec, as many as 40 thousand households are single-person households of generally the elderly. In addition, this number is systematically growing. On the other hand, a large oversupply of housing results in a drop of their prices. Not by chance the cheapest apartments in Poland are located in shrinking metropolises – Katowice and Łódź. This, in turn, may be an argument for the interest in real estate by migrants from outside, which, in fact, is already recorded.

45 Only that migration inflow is equally stimulated by not only the economic availability of housing, but also by the possibility of their purchase and maintenance for salaries. And those in the region, especially in the sector of new manufacturing companies, are not the highest, especially in the case of young people entering the labour market, who constitute the social group most interested in the potential of migration flow.

46 Looking, in turn, for a counter-argument to this issue, it may be forecast that the loss of population can compensate for the problems of unemployment, which is steadily, though slowly confirmed in statistical data. It is expected that an employer's market, turned into an employee market, shall boost salaries. This process is already visible in Warsaw, Poznan, and to a lesser extent, in the Katowice region.

47 On the other hand, however, a region subject to depopulation, constitutes a smaller market. This is particularly important in the endogenous sector (focused on population), mainly in trade, personal services and education. This, in turn, can lead to stabilization of the unemployment rate at a certain level and maintaining low salaries at least in some sectors of the economy.

48 Of course dilemmas similar to the above are numerous, each of them being a very important part of strategic and planning urban policy. In Poland and the region of Katowice, public debate on the negative effects of depopulation and urban shrinkage only started about 5 years ago, from the initiative of, inter alia, the authors of this article. Already, many positive signs are noticed – the problem is included in strategic and planning documents, taken into account in regional and urban policies, and public participation in solving the problems of the region has increased. Still, in many situations (economic marketing, attracting investors) the issue of urban shrinkage is taboo. It is understood to a certain extent, but in many cases, it presents itself as harmful.

49 The Katowice conurbation is the largest urban area in Poland and one of the largest in Europe. Unfortunately, it is also the largest Polish region of depopulation with highlighted urban shrinkage. The Central Statistical Office latest forecast predicts that by 2035, the population of the Katowice conurbation will have decreased by 336 thousand people, i.e. 14%, and it does not foresee an inhibition of this negative process to at least 2050. (*Prognoza...*, 2014)

50 The challenges facing the region have already been fairly well recognized, just like the tools and methods of deceleration of negative trends. It therefore remains necessary to conduct a reasonable policy towards this issue, and good and efficient organization of activities. An important argument in the process of transforming the image of the region is also financial support for any remedial projects. In fact, there is a great understanding of this purpose, both at EU, national, regional and local levels. It seems that a special fund of 100 million granted by the Polish government to Bytom in order to ease the consequences of urban shrinkage is a good start of activities in this area.

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Notes

- 1 According to various studies, the Katowice conurbation is identified as the Upper Silesian Industrial Region, the Katowice Agglomeration in its narrowed area – the Upper Silesian Metropolitan Association. Delimitation of borders of the Katowice conurbation and the Upper-Silesian-Dabrowa Basin Metropolis "Silesia" was presented, among others, by Krzysztofik, Runge, Spórna, 2011, p. 30, 50, 57.
- 2 The Polish participation in the international research project SHRINK SMART (Shrink Smart. Governance of Shrinkage within a European Context) was attended by the co-authors of this article was dedicated to this aspect of their situation.
- 3 Statistical data – PESEL population data base (Ministry of Administration of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw).

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Résumés

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview on trajectories of urban shrinkage in the Katowice conurbation (after 1990), which is an example of a traditional old industrial region in Central and Eastern Europe.

The process of urban shrinkage and its effects, due to the restructuring of the economy of the region since 1989, has been presented in a broader depiction, using the example of the Katowice conurbation and in a narrower depiction, based on two cities: Sosnowiec and Bytom. Bytom and Sosnowiec are models that explains majority of typical path of shrinkage in the Katowice Conurbation. Cities represent urban centers of historical both Upper Silesia (Bytom) and The Dabrowa Basin Region (Sosnowiec). The shrinking cities of the Katowice Conurbation present the most spectacular example of socio-economic problems existing in the post-industrial area of the urban region.

One of the signs of urban shrinkage in the Katowice conurbation is the loss of population in the period 1991–2013 in the number of 370 thousand people. In addition, the cities are facing numerous social, economic and spatial issues.

It is well known that the Katowice Conurbation as post-industrial region has gone through specific and complicated – economic as well as social transformation. This fact is a key point of view on shrinkage process in described region.

Les trajectoires de déclin urbain dans l'agglomération de Katowice (Pologne)

Cet article présente un aperçu général de trajectoire du processus de la diminution des villes dans la Conurbation de Katowice (après 1990). Cette ville est un exemple de région industrielle traditionnelle en Europe centrale et orientale.

Le processus de diminution des villes, et ses effets, qui sont causé par la restructuration de l'économie de la région après 1989 est présenté en termes plus généraux - sur exemple de la Conurbation de Katowice et de termes spécifiques sur exemple de deux grandes villes: Sosnowiec et Bytom.

Bytom et Sosnowiec c'est un exemple parfait des villes de la Conurbation de Katowice qui ont été touchées par le processus de diminution urbain. Ces villes représentent les centres historiques de Haute-Silésie (Bytom) et de Dąbrowa Bassin (Sosnowiec). Elles constituent l'exemple le plus spectaculaire de problèmes socio-économiques de la Conurbation de Katowice.

Une des manifestations de diminution des villes de la Conurbation de Katowice est la perte de la population dans les années 1991–2013 c'est-à-dire -370,000 personnes. En outre, de nombreuses villes ont un certain nombre des problèmes sociales, économiques et spatiales.

La Conurbation de Katowice, comme une région post-industrielle, a connu une transformation économique et sociale spécifique et complexe. Ce fait est essentiel dans l'interprétation du processus de diminution des villes.

Entrées d'index

Mots-clés : dépeuplement, urban shrinkage, Conurbation de Katowice, Pologne

Keywords : depopulation, urban shrinkage, Katowice conurbation, Poland