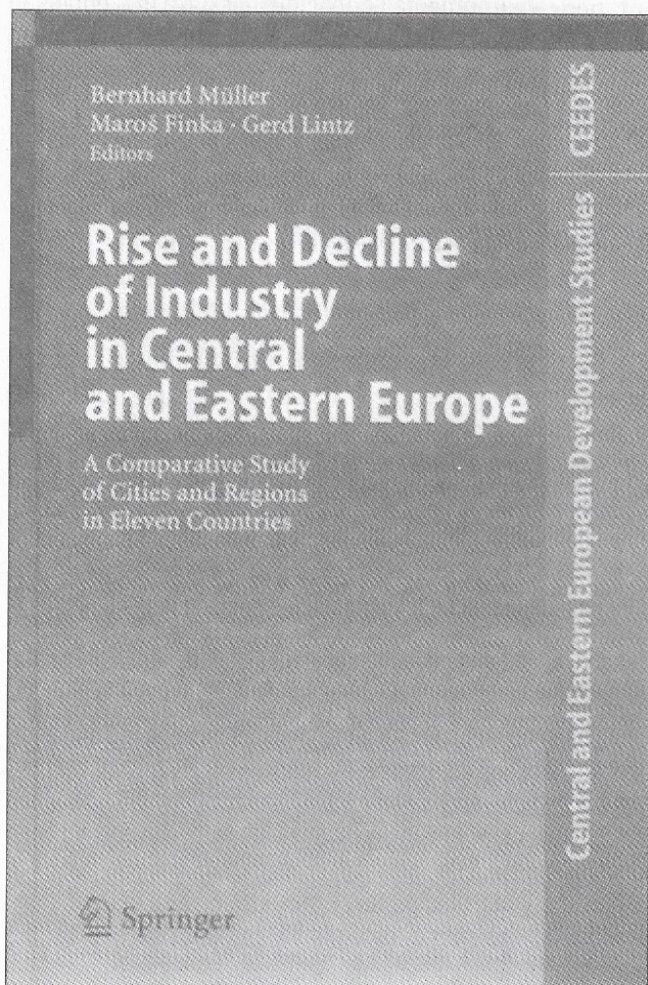


B.Muller, M. Finka, G. Lintz

RISE AND DECLINE OF INDUSTRY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE



**Rise and Decline of Industry
in Central and Eastern Europe**

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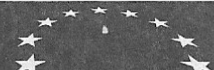
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Transformation of the socialist Central and Eastern European Countries (CEE) towards democratic systems of western types with the dominance of market economy has caused dramatic shifts in economic, social and ecological development. It became clear at an early stage that this transformation has a spatial dimension. Thus while some regions have been able to take advantage of the new situation, others have been seriously weakened by structural change. Many cities and regions which prospered during an era when political priorities were focused on industrial development have suffered rapid economic decline. Unemployment, social problems and environmental damage were some of the consequences which now place a heavy burden on the development of these areas.

Numerous cities and regions which for decades had been the motors of national economic development owing to their strong industrial base, are now confronted by considerable socio-economic and environmental problems. The need of restructuring of industry became a challenge for professionals of all concerned fields. From the point of practice it was necessary to investigate the specific problems and to explore the strategies that have been adopted to cope with the restructuring - in the change of professional orientation of the majority of citizens, in the increased commuting, in the impacts to landscapes. The amount of the problems initiated a wider discussion and the platform to exchange the experience that resulted in a research project on the future of old industrial regions and cities undergoing structural changes (FOCUS - The Future of Industrialised Cities and Regions Undergoing Structural Changes). The objective of the project were to analyse the problems of transformation in affected region, to compare the strategies which have been applied to deal with the problems.

With the support of EU Community Initiative INTERREG IIC, designed to encourage cooperation and the exchange of experience, research teams from 11 countries were involved in the project: Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the Ukraine. In 2000, the Leipzig declaration of the Network of Spatial Research Institutions in CEE countries became an important milestone in international discussion about the future of industrialised cities and regions undergoing structural changes.

The book "Rise and Decline of Industry in Central and Eastern Europe" with its subtitle "A Comparative Study of Cities and Regions in Eleven Countries" highlights the major results of the Focus project which from 1999 ran over several years among national research teams in the mentioned eleven countries. Eleven country reports are presented:



Austria - (G. Schimak, T. Dillinger, H. Wagner)
Bulgaria - (J. Spiridonova, M. Novakova)
Czech Republic - (J. Stejskal)
Germany - (G. Lintz, K. Schmude)
Hungary - (E. Visy, G. Zala, K. Schneller)
Latvia - (Z. Krišjane)
Poland - (E. Okraska)
Romania - (S. Nadejde, D. Pantea, A. Dumitrache, I. Braulete)
Slovak Republic - (M. Finka, R. Janaček, D. Petříková)
Slovenia - (Z. Ploštajner)
Ukraine - (L. Rudenko, I. Gukalova, G. Pidgryšnij)

The reports largely refer to the situation in the late nineties and at the beginning of the new century, and are placed into the framework of the current state of discussion. part of the reports are also short case studies from the selected cities and regions of the above mentioned countries that became the background for the development of the future oriented strategies and policies.

The book is guided by the introductory chapter "The Challenge of Structural Change for Industrial Cities and Regions in the CEE Countries" on the origins and objectives of the project and the synthetic final chapter "Conclusions and Perspectives: A way forward" that brings the statements that are not only indicating the good practice and verified ways and recommendations but brings also perspectives and opportunities in relation to sustainable development.

The authors of the introductory and final chapters are outstanding professionals from the field of spatial planning:

- Prof. **Bernhard Muller** from TU Dresden and IOER Dresden, D,
- Prof. **Maroš Finka** from FA STU in Bratislava, SK,
- **Gerd Lintz**, project leader at the Leibniz Institut of Ecological and Regional Development in Dresden (IOER), D,

who contributed to fill the gap in this field for both laic and professional public.

The book is rich as to its contents, partly resulting from the right choice of the countries rich in variety of various kind (political, historical, religious, legislative, environmental, economic, social, cultural and others) as well as with the detailed information focused on specific issues of industrial regions and cities (bringing the national surveys of the most pressing issues) under the changing European conditions.

The form of the book is transparent in the structure of alphabet order of eleven country reports as the contributions on the updated processes of transformation of industrial regions with the aim to adopt common regional policy under the conditions of European unification. The text is enriched by 29 tables that are commented directly in the chapters and by 12 maps that give better orientation in new European space. Each chapter is divided into subchapters, brings the case study in bold and the references of the national literature to the topic. At the end of the book there is the subject index in alphabetical order of the most used passwords as well as the list of authors with their e-mails.

The book is aimed at the readers with the interest in spatial development and planning - scientists and practitioners, undergraduates and postgraduates of the branches related to planning, public administrations at the local and regional governments and the citizens. the book fulfils the role of presenting the research work and its results of the international research team on interregional cooperation on the given topic but also fits in the literature on the life in European regions.

Danka Gindlová