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RESEARCH MEETS INNOVATION

Maroš Finka • Matej Jaško • Milan Husár  
Editors

# The Role of Public Sector in Local Economic and Territorial Development

Innovation in Central, Eastern and South  
Eastern Europe

 Springer

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# Preface

This book reflects current outputs from the research of the member institutions of the Network of Spatial Research and Planning in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe—[SPA-CE.net](#) and their contribution to professional debate on the role of the public sector in innovative local economic and territorial development in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. The ambition of this book, published in collaboration with the European Alliance for Innovation, is to foster broader discussion on challenges and changes in the position of the public sector in the development and spread of innovations across different sectors. The [SPA-CE.net](#) follows with this book its mission to ensure sustainable development on the European continent by providing spatial research results to policymakers, scientists and the interested public, to contribute significantly to improving the quality of life, to enhancing the protection and management of Europe's cultural and natural heritage as well as creating new jobs and spurring economic growth and to mobilising Europe's potential for research and practical application in the field of sustainable spatial development.

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# Introduction

Support of sustainable communities' development at the local and regional level helping people to shape better communities through participation, education, information and the effective use of technology belongs recently to the main tasks for public authorities. Community sustainability is directly linked to the sustainable territorial development and the development of local economies that are socially responsible, economically viable and environmentally sound. To face responsibly this task requires the participation of the whole public sector to identify community needs and potentials, to find appropriate interventions and to implement innovative solutions.

In the contexts of current challenges and problems in territorial development in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, smart sustainable growth in all spheres of community life seems to be the target quality in territorial as well as economic development. Civil society development, forthcoming European integration, transformation towards knowledge-based economy, demographic shifts, strengthened environmental awareness, increased fiscal concerns and more nuanced views of growth determine the framework not only for territorial and economic development itself, but for its management and for the role of the public sector in it as well. The result is the formulation of new qualitative and quantitative demands and new opportunities for smart growth.

Although the features distinguishing smart growth in a community can vary from place to place and from sphere to sphere of community life, in general, smart growth means to invest time, creativity and resources in innovative solutions, restoring community and developing vital local and regional economy delivering sustainable working places and meeting available labour market potential.

This book shows the potential of the public sector in the Central, South and South Eastern European countries represented by national, regional and local governmental and self-governmental bodies, public institutions, non-governmental organisations, groups of activists and professionals to help communities to identify and leverage community assets to create sustainable policies, plans and practices reflecting dynamic development and unique framework preconditions and challenges in new innovative planning and development concepts.

Chapter 2 “Innovations and changing role of public sector in spatial development strategies” discusses the problems and challenges for local and regional development in Central and Eastern European Countries resulting from the global transformation processes of the society and economy accelerated by the transition process in the majority of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The authors address societal and economic transformation processes framing the innovations and changing the role of the public sector in spatial development strategies, challenges for economic and territorial development relevant for new definition of the role of the public sector related to the development as the object of the policy and related to the process of the governance and decision-making. The chapter shows that the identified deep changes and principal challenges need proper response in the content and in the processes of the elaboration of spatial development strategies as integrative and integrated strategies as well as particular strategies for the development of spatial relevant fields of societal life. Conceptual innovations have to be followed by the substantial, instrumental and processual innovations reaching from institutional via behavioural up to technological as it is shown in the following chapters.

Chapter 3 “Spatial planning policies and the integration models as a means for a better delivery of services of general interest” is devoted to new approaches of the services of general interest (SGI) provision, especially in remote mountain territories and border areas. Harsh economic conditions, population ageing, dispersed settlement and the geomorphology hinder the provision and supply of the SGI in these territories. In order to overcome this deficiency, new approaches of the SGI provision should be sought and identified. Therefore, spatial planning and sectorial policies and the related models of integration (sectors, actors, funds, services, policies, etc.) were investigated. The analysis of the coverage of the SGI in the spatial planning and other (space related) sectorial policies documents (regulations, strategies, plans, guidelines, etc.) was done in five Alpine countries (Italy, Switzerland, Austria, France and Slovenia). Similarities and distinctions among those five countries are entirely discussed.

Chapter 4 “Utilising endogenous potentials via regional policy-led development initiatives in (post-) industrial regions of Central Europe” analyses the ways how place-based endogenous potentials are conceptualised and used, particularly in the local and regional context. Places characterised as non-agglomeration, (post-) industrial regions in Central Europe, often situated in the spatial peripheries, are in the spotlight. This contribution highlights governance issues and the valorisation of endogenous development potentials by different policy levels, discussing agenda setting and implementation. The authors argue that utilising potentials is streamlined top-down via various policy frameworks, which are in turn mediated by local and regional governance settings, adapting and translating these programmes into practical, regional and local actions, and thereby creating important learning effects for the regions.

Chapter 5 “Energy sensitive spatial planning as a public sector tool towards sustainable economic and territorial development” is focused on sustainable energy transition, which is increasingly regarded as a key topic of both policy and research in the EU context of the global process towards sustainable development. By link-

ing diverse sociocultural contexts and setting a particular focus on the local governance level, the chapter discusses current results of ongoing ECHOES project (HORIZON 2020) with regard to the literature review on energy planning and management and the discussions undertaken within three preliminary focus groups in Bulgaria. The authors then relate them to the findings of an accomplished university research project in the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy (UACEG) in Sofia, aimed at developing a framework for evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of strategic planning documents applied at the local/municipal level in Bulgaria to sustainable development requirements.

Chapter 6 “Determining land values by location: supporting public valuation expert committees in the provision of market transparency” is focused on land values which reflect the spatial location within a territory. Different criteria like economic situation or social condition are discussed. A consistent method of determining land values nationwide for all locations increases the provision of a high market transparency. Comprehensive decision-making basis for all market participants as well as for the public sector is a precondition for effective management of spatial development. The practical implication of the concept is shown in the case of Germany.

Chapter 7 “Forest commons as a model for territorial governance” refers to the territorial governance patterns generating perspective, place-based and highly adaptable models. Most territorial governance studies take a socio-institutional or spatial planning perspective. Still, territorial governance happens in and through other policy domains—this chapter examines ecosystem-based forest commons’ governance. Resilience of forest commons as resources and as institutions leads the society towards sustainable territorial development at local and global scales. The illustration of this account comes through exploring the Albanian model of forest commons within a river basin. The model embodies ecosystem values besides utilitarian ones and discusses the dimensions of territorial governance for forest commons. Evidence is collected through visual surveys, interviews and focus groups systematically researching a number of commons’ variables of endurance and functionality.

Chapter 8 “The role of leadership in the current contexts of Central European planning culture” is devoted to the relation between two of the most significant soft factors in spatial development, namely leadership and planning culture. The roles of planners have been recently dramatically modified—from the position of the designers of the future towards the mediators and leaders of the development processes. Understanding of cultural dynamics, the ability to develop a clear vision of the desired planning culture based on the democratic leadership and its active fostering should be an essential competence of any planner. It has been shown that highly profiled planning cultures based on the active leadership generating typical set of principles, values and approaches play an important role in the spatial development of any territory. This chapter introduces fundamental theoretical and methodological models of planning cultures and tries to investigate and define specific features and characteristics of Central European planning culture, including the field of leadership.

Chapter 9 “Urban transformation - cultural heritage and local economic development: the public sector on the battlefront?” investigates the phenomena of historical cities in Central and Eastern Europe beyond the booming metropolis, facing stagnation or decline of population and economic development. These cities might regain their competitiveness, but the existing building stock does not often meet the needs of housing or retail. Peculiarities of coordination process between the public and the private sector as well as within the public sector necessary to solve the conflict between cultural heritage preservation and local economic development are examined in the case of city of Görlitz. This chapter reflects the first experiences from matrix assessing balance between heritage preservation and urban development.

“Social innovation and sustainable economic development: participatory tourism destination management” is the main scope of chapter 10. This chapter addresses the role of bottom-up innovation to support sustainable local development, in particular in local tourism development, and introduces the case study of Gramsh, a remote Albanian region. This case shows that sustainable tourism can be developed in peripheral territories with typical problems like high rate of unemployment, lack of infrastructure, emigration, lack of investments and rather weak local government. Bottom-up driven tourism innovation strengthens the endogenous development potential. Such an approach fosters local identity formation and self-identification of the citizens with their own territory and local resources. Gramsh case study is a valuable contribution to searching for sustainable tourism management models, not only in the Western Balkans.

Chapter 11 deals with “Professional capacity building as the public sector intervention towards sustainable economic and territorial development” and introduces a key study devoted to knowledge hubs network for energy efficiency. This chapter is focused on the public sector role in professional capacity building necessary for the improvement of energy efficiency in the building sector at the national and local level, which has direct implications for the territorial and urban planning and the design of the national strategic documents and programmes targeted to the residential buildings. It brings together the results achieved by four consecutive EU-financed projects in reforming of the outdated training practices and implementation of nearly zero-energy building (NZEB) in Bulgaria and, consequently, in other countries in Eastern and Southern Europe.

Chapter 12 “The public in search of identity: new symbolism in urban spaces. A study of central squares of Balkan capitals” is devoted to thorough analysis of the process of building new political and cultural identities in the Western Balkans. This chapter presents a study of identity formation, specifically how identity in the four Western Balkan countries is expressed in significant place. The alterations of central squares of capitals, regarded as tangible expressions of national identity, have been studied in four small countries: Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro. The study focuses on how selective remembrance and active forgetting played a role in the development of main squares, how ambiguous spaces have been created with also banal practices and how the squares can be seen in view of globalised identities and cultural hybridities. Cases of cities of Tirana, Pristina, Podgorica and Skopje illustrate this process.

Last chapter “Professional associations as public actors in the formulation and implementation of spatial development policies. Key study monitoring and evaluation standard for the urban environment of Sofia” deals with the gradual shifts of the role of planning profession, its institutions and planning in general in Bulgaria. It introduces the conceptual context of the transactive planning in spatial development and lower level institutional thickness. Thorough analysis of the key studies of the Association of Bulgarian Urban and Regional Planners (ABURP) demonstration projects “Share the Neighbourhood” and “Set an Urban Standard” in Sofia is the main scope of this chapter.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Editorial</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
	Maroš Finka, Matej Jaško, and Milan Husár	
<b>2</b>	<b>Innovations and Changing Role of Public Sector in Spatial Development Strategies: Problems and Challenges for Local and Regional Development in Central and Eastern European Countries After 2020</b> . . . . .	<b>7</b>
	Milan Husár, Maroš Finka, Ľubomír Jamečný, and Vladimír Ondrejčka	
<b>3</b>	<b>Spatial Planning Policies and the Integration Models as a Means for a Better Delivery of Services of General Interest</b> . . . . .	<b>25</b>
	Špela Kolarič, Barbara Černič Mali, and Naja Marot	
<b>4</b>	<b>Utilising Endogenous Potentials via Regional Policy-Led Development Initiatives in (Post-) Industrial Regions of Central Europe</b> . . . . .	<b>43</b>
	Jörn Harfst, Peter Wirth, and Danko Simić	
<b>5</b>	<b>Energy Sensitive Spatial Planning as a Public Sector Tool Towards Sustainable Economic and Territorial Development</b> . . . . .	<b>59</b>
	Elena Dimitrova, Milena Tasheva-Petrova, Angel Burov, and Irina Mutafchiiska	
<b>6</b>	<b>Determining Land Values by Location: Supporting Public Valuation Expert Committees in the Provision of Market Transparency</b> . . . . .	<b>83</b>
	Andreas Ortner, Matthias Soot, and Alexandra Weitkamp	
<b>7</b>	<b>Forest Commons as a Model for Territorial Governance</b> . . . . .	<b>97</b>
	Rudina Toto	

<b>8</b>	<b>The Role of Leadership in the Current Contexts of Central European Planning Culture.</b> . . . . .	131
	Matej Jaško and Maroš Finka	
<b>9</b>	<b>Urban Transformation - Cultural Heritage and Local Economic Development: The Public Sector on the Battlefield?</b> . . . . .	161
	Robert Knippschild and Constanze Zöllter	
<b>10</b>	<b>Social Innovation and Sustainable Economic Development: Participatory Tourism Destination Management</b> . . . . .	173
	Aida Ciro, Merita Toska, and Peter Nientied	
<b>11</b>	<b>Professional Capacity Building as the Public Sector Intervention Towards Sustainable Economic and Territorial Development: Key Study Knowledge Hubs Network for Energy Efficiency</b> . . . . .	193
	Dragomir Tzanev	
<b>12</b>	<b>The Public in Search of Identity: New Symbolism in Urban Spaces. A Study of Central Squares of Balkan Capitals.</b> . . . . .	203
	Peter Nientied and Besnik Aliaj	
<b>13</b>	<b>Professional Associations as Public Actors in the Formulation and Implementation of Spatial Development Policies. Key Study Monitoring and Evaluation Standard for the Urban Environment of Sofia</b> . . . . .	239
	Angel Burov, Vasil Madzihirski, and Irina Mutafchiiska	
	<b>Index.</b> . . . . .	263

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# Abbreviations

ABURP	Association of Bulgarian Urban and Regional Planners
ARL	Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung
ASUB	Association of Students of Urbanism in Bulgaria
AT	Austria
BKH	Building Knowledge Hubs
BBSR	Das Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung
BL	Building land
CEE	Central and Eastern European
CEMAT	Council of Europe of Ministers Responsible for Spatial Planning
CLLD	Community-Led Local Development
CPR	Common pool resources
DUI	Democratic Union for Integration
EE	Energy efficiency
EEA	European Environment Agency
EU	European Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESDP	European Spatial Development Planning Network
ESF	European Social Fund
FYR	Former Yugoslav Republic
FRA	France
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GLTP	General Local Territorial Plan
GSPM	General Spatial Plans of the municipalities
IC	Information communication
ICT	Information communication technology
IT	Italy
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investments
IOER	Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development
IPURD	Integrated Plans for Urban REgeneration and Development
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investments
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale

MDP	Municipal development plans
MVH	Mountain Virtual Hospital
NAVET	National Agency for Vocational Education and Training
NGO	Non-government organisation
NSGI	Non-economic services
NUTS	Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques
NZEB	Nearly zero-energy building
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PH	Passive house
PHI	Passive house Institute
RENEUER	Regional Network for Efficient Use of Energy and Water Resources
RES	Renewable energy resources
RCCS	Regional Card for Services
RD	Regional development
SD	Sustainable development
SDAASP	Departmental Plan of Improved Accessibility to Services of General Interest
SEA	Strategic Environment Assessments
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SET Plan	Strategic Energy Technology Plan
SES	Socio-ecological systems
SESMAD	Socio-Ecological Systems Meta-Analysis Database
SGEI	Services of general economic interest
SGI	Services of general interest
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
TAR	Territorial Administrative Reform
UACEG	University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy
UBL	Untapped building land
UK	United Kingdom
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
WWII	World War II