Understanding Geographies of Polarization and Peripheralization
New Geographies of Europe

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# Contents

*List of Illustrations*  
ixi

*Acknowledgements*  
x

*Notes on Contributors*  
xi

1 Understanding New Geographies of Central and Eastern Europe  
*PoSCoPP: Research Group Production of Space in the Context of Polarization and Peripheralization (collective authors)*

## Part I Theoretical Backgrounds, Methodological Considerations

2 Uneven Development, Socio-Spatial Polarization and Political Responses  
*Ray Hudson*  
25

3 Narrating the Diverse Regional Economies of Post-Socialist Apparel  
*John Pickles and Adrian Smith*  
40

4 Lost in Complexity? Researching the Role of Socio-Spatial Ascriptions in the Process of Peripheralization  
*Judith Miggelbrink and Frank Meyer*  
62

5 As Long as the Capital Is Far Away: Multi-Scalar Peripheralization in Central Asia  
*Wladimir Sgibnev and Aksana Ismailbekova*  
80

6 Peripheralization through Planning: The Case of a Golf Resort Proposal in Northern Ireland  
*Helen Carter*  
98

## Part II Role of Diverse Socio-Political Agents in the Production of Peripheries

7 Rural Peripheralization – Urban Polarization? The Significance of Gendered Mobility in Central Germany  
*Tim Leibert, Giulia Montanari and Karin Wiest*  
115
8 The Everyday Practices of the Reproduction of Peripherality and Marginality in Hungary 135
  Erika Nagy, Judit Timár, Gábor Nagy and Gábor Velkey

9 Socio-Spatial Polarization and Peripheralization in a Rapidly Changing Region – Building Europe’s Balkan Edge: Tourism Development in Coastal Bulgaria 156
  Max Holleran

10 Paths of Socio-Spatial Change in Post-Socialist Cities – Insights from Five City-Regions in Central and Eastern Europe 171
  Carola Neugebauer and Zoltán Kovács

Part III Fragmented and Relational Construction of Peripheralities

11 Cohesion as a Multi-Scalar Challenge: The EU-Wide Perspective 199
  Tobias Chilla and Markus Neufeld

12 Paths of Convergence and Polarization in the Visegrád Countries 217
  József Benedek and György Kocziszky

13 Measuring Territorial Cohesion: A Macro-Regional Approach 235
  Tomas Hanell

14 Challenges of the Post-Soviet Development of Ukraine: Economic Transformations, Demographic Changes and Socio-Spatial Polarization 252
  Kostyantyn Mezentsev, Grygorii Pidgrushnyi and Nataliia Mezentseva

15 Uneven Urban Resilience: The Economic Adjustment and Polarization of Russia’s Cities 270
  Oleg Golubchikov, Alla Makhrova, Anna Badyina and Isolde Brade

Part IV Different Modalities and Relations between Cores and Peripheries

16 Territorial Governance and Core-Periphery Relations: The Implications of European Policy Concepts for Central and Eastern Europe 287
  Garri Raagmaa
17 Concept of Polycentric Governance for Fuzzy Soft Spaces as a Challenge for Central European Peripheral Spaces 309
   Maroš Finka, Tatiana Kluvánková and Vladimír Ondrejička

18 Rural Regions, Globalization and Regional Responses: The Case of Oberlausitz Region 323
   Joachim Burdack, Robert Nadler and Michael Woods

Index 340
Illustrations

Figures

3.1 CEE apparel exports over the period 44
4.1 Heuristic model 64
7.1 Migration balance of 18–25-year-olds in sparsely populated rural districts by macro-regions and sex, 2002–2011 122
8.1 Urban/rural character of LAU1 regions in Hungary, based on OECD methodology and the study areas 139
10.1 The evaluation of neighbourhoods in CEE city-regions 179
10.2 The socio-structural gaps between different neighbourhood types in the CEE city-regions, shown by varying characteristics (income level and university degree) 181
11.1 Development of total weighted deviation of NUTS 0 and NUTS 2 from EU average GDP/capita (pps) in per cent, 2005–2012 208
11.2 Total weighted deviation from club average of GDP/capita (pps), 2005–2012 210
11.3 Polarization – GDP per capita (pps), distance of top-performing NUTS 2-region from national average in percentage points (sorted in reverse order of difference between 2010 and 2000) 212
12.1 Economic convergence clubs in the Visegrád countries, 1995–2010 226
12.2 Multi-dimensional convergence clubs in the Visegrád countries, 1995–2010 229
13.1 The Gini Concentration Ratio and the Atkinson index in the BSR, 2005–2011 244
13.2 The 80/20 or Kuznets ratio in the BSR, 2005–2011 244
14.1 Gini coefficients – Interregional economic disparities in Ukraine 261
14.2 The age structure of the population of Ukraine in 2010 264
14.3 Proportion of people with average monthly per capita incomes lower than the subsistence minimum in 2011 266
15.1 Growing and shrinking cities: Population change in 1991–2011 (%) vs. town size (thousands) 274
15.2 The CEPI of cities of different size 278
16.1 Meanings of the concept of regional identity 291
16.2 Interrelations between the five dimensions of territorial governance 293
Maps

5.1 Location of the Ferghana valley in relation to state borders and main mountain ranges 83
5.2 The Ferghana valley: Borders cut across one metropolitan region 84
7.1 Unbalanced sex ratios on the local level in Central Germany, 2011 123
7.2 Sex ratio in Leipzig's boroughs (deviation from city mean) and residential locations of the students of different colleges and the university in Leipzig 128

Tables

10.1 City-regional contexts in the studied CEE metropolitan regions 177
10.2 Patterns of socio-spatial change in CEE city-regions: Socio-structural characteristics of incoming households in large housing estates and inner-city neighbourhoods 183
12.1 The GDP per capita of the EU countries, per cent in EU-27, for 2000, 2004, 2007 and 2011 220
12.2 Sigma-convergence (coefficient of variation (CV)) and Moran’s I statistic 222
12.3 Beta-convergence: Cross-section estimates 224
12.4 Economic convergence clubs for the period 1995–2010 226
12.5 Multi-dimensional convergence clubs for the period 1995–2010 228
15.1 Increasing population concentration in regional capital cities, 2002–2010 273
15.2 Wage levels in the regional administrative capitals relative to their regions (%) 278

Annexes

12.1 Economic convergence clubs in the Visegrád countries 231
12.2 Multi-dimensional convergence clubs in the Visegrád countries 232
Acknowledgements

The eastward enlargement of the European Union, increased globalization and internationalization, the demographic change and its socio-economic impacts as well as the recent financial and economic crisis have brought about fundamental changes of socio-spatial structures in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). These rapid changes have been producing new geographies that this book aims to explore in the light of the concepts of polarization and peripheralization.

This book comprises numerous chapters that reflect the activities of the IfL research group, *The production of space: polarisation and peripheralisation*, carried out in the last five years. Most chapters included in this volume originated as papers presented and discussed during a two-day workshop which took place at the Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography (IfL) in October 2013 and was funded by the IfL. The event involved colleagues from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Russia, Romania, Sweden, the UK and the US, who shared their perspectives on polarization and peripheralization issues in Eastern and Central Europe. Furthermore, in order to extend the perspective beyond this area, additional authors agreed to contribute to the volume.

At this point, we would like to take the opportunity of most warmly thanking all authors and reviewers. We extend our thanks to the administrative staff at the IfL and the research assistants of the institute (Friedemann Goerl, Ida Huckebrink and Huyen Vu, to name but a few) who have shown great commitment in realizing this endeavour. We also thank the editing team at Palgrave Macmillan, and the publishing house in general, which was willing to accept our book as the first volume of the series on *New Geographies of Europe*. 
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