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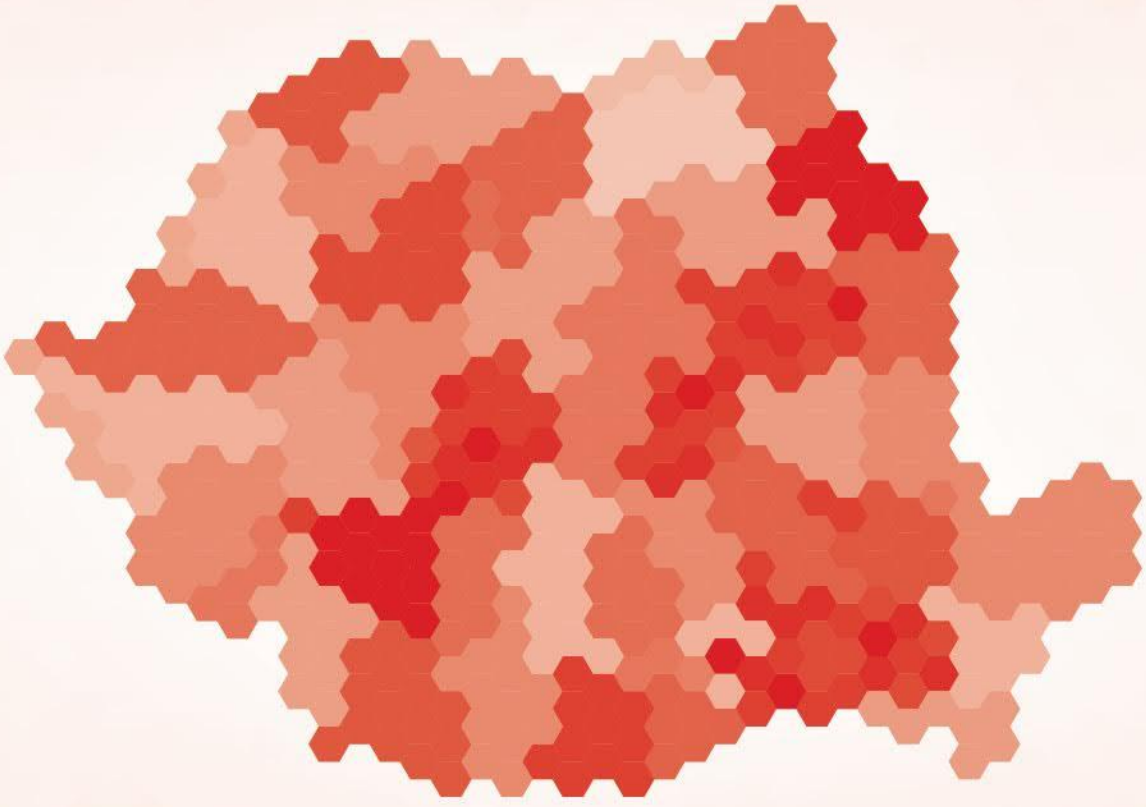
Shrinking Cities / Cities in Transition



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ROMANIA

Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement on the Romania Urban Policy (P171176)

OUTPUT 3. INPUTS TO THE URBAN POLICY 2020-2035

COMPANION PAPER 4

Cities in Transition: A literature review of urban shrinkage and its implications for Romania

December 2020

MINISTERUL LUCRĂRILOR PUBLICE, DEZVOLTĂRII ȘI ADMINISTRAȚIEI

WORLD BANK GROUP

Project co-financed from the European Social Fund through 2014-2020 Administrative Capacity Operational Program

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This report was delivered in December 2020 under the Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement on the *Romania Urban Policy*, concluded between the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on November 29, 2019. This report represents a supporting paper for Output 3 under the above-mentioned agreement - *Inputs to the Urban Policy 2020-2035*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been delivered under the provisions of the Reimbursable Advisory Services Agreement on the *Romania Urban Policy* and has been prepared under the guidance and supervision of Christoph Pusch (Practice Manager, Urban and Disaster Risk Management, Europe and Central Asia), David N. Sislen (Practice Manager, Urban and Disaster Risk Management, Latin America and Caribbean), and Tatiana Proskuryakova (Country Manager, Romania and Hungary). The report has been prepared by a team under the coordination of Dean Cira (Lead Urban Specialist) and Paul Kriss (Lead Urban Specialist) and composed of Carli Bunding-Venter (Senior Urban Development Specialist), Yondela Silimela (Senior Urban Specialist), Ilinca Păun Constantinescu (Urban Development Expert), Vera Marin (Social Development Expert), Barbu Mateescu (Social Development Expert), Nicolaie Moldovan (Urban Development Expert), Bogdan Topan (Policy Expert), Oana Ivan (Social Development Expert), Damaris Bangean (Urban Development Expert), and supported by Oana Frant (Operations Expert) and George Moldoveanu (Information Assistant).

The team would like to express its gratitude for the excellent cooperation, guidance, and timely feedback provided by the representatives of the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration, in particular to the Minister Ion Ștefan, State Secretary Gheorghe Păsat, General Director Alexandru Soare, Director Liviu Băileșteanu, Head of Office Radu Necșuliu, and also Daniel Vâlceanu, Amalia Virdol, Bogdan Micu, Beniamin Stoica, Alina Huzui, Georgiana Toth, Anca Ureche, Antonia Dudău, Andrei Giurăscu, Andreea Chitrosan, and all local, regional and national partners that have contributed to the elaboration of this report.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CIRES	Cities Regrowing Smaller
CLLD	Community Led Local Development
COOPECO	Coopéco Coopératif Supermarket
COST	European Collaboration in Science and Technology
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
IBA	Internationale Bauausstellung or International Architecture Exhibition
LAG	Local Action Group
LED	Local Economic Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCIRN	Shrinking Cities International Research Network

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Urban Shrinkage is not a new concept, and the variations in size and density of human settlements have shown growth and decline for as long as populated areas have existed. With only isolated cases of shrinkage studied before the 1950s, the current debate in academia and literature focuses mainly on the period after WWII. The concept is well studied in the EU context, particularly with many examples of successful urban shrinkage infrastructure and policy responses from Germany. The study of this field started both as an observation of patterns of shrinkage, and as a search for possible source of solutions for countering this phenomenon. This academic field has evolved through a number of phases from the 1980's (outlined in section 2 of this report). More recently, the topics of shrinkage and aging populations are intersecting and the focus on a post-pandemic recovery will certainly frame future research on the topic of shrinking cities.

A shrinking city is one that may have reached its historical peak and has undergone significant decline in terms of population size, economic power or political importance. Definitions and typologies of the concept abound (and are represented in section 2.2 of this report). An official definition by the OECD defines a shrinking city as 'an urban area – city, part of a city, entire metropolitan area or a town – that has experienced population loss, economic downturn, employment decline and social problems as symptoms of a structural crisis. According to the project Shrinking Cities in Romania, just about half of cities (163 of the 320) in Romania have shrunk over the past 30 years: from coastal resort towns, harbors, and mono-industrial cities, among others. Many of these cities may never return to their historical peak but still retain elements of former glory which can be celebrated, reinvented and complemented by targeted investments in other local assets to help the city thrive in the present.

The transformations of urban spaces, as well as urban shrinkage, can usually not be attributed to a sole phenomenon and should be seen as a combination of factors contributing to the decay of the fiber of urban spaces. The transitional political processes also play an important role in addressing urban shrinkage, as they can cause long-term manifestations that affect the structure of the urban areas, as well as the structure of the population. Understanding the main drivers of shrinkage however offers opportunities to consider approaches and responses and a set of typologies are discussed in more detail in section 2.2.2 of this report, summarized as:

- Based on **political and economic drivers:** including industrial declined due to closure of manufacturing facilities, mono-industry shifts in a locality, and economic shocks (such as post-socialist economic collapse;
- Based on the **duration of shrinkage:** often presented as a chronological timeline from growth to shrinkage and the degree of the shrinkage process, or the extent of the shrinkage can be classified either as ordinary or extreme;
- Based on **spatial levels:** urban areas as a whole is shrinking, central core in decline while sprawl is happening in peri-urban areas or a declining locality within a larger metropolitan area; and
- Based on population dynamics: larger (>100,000 residents) or smaller cities (<100,000 residents), with literature largely overlooking small towns often due to data deficiencies. The difference in size of cities could be a significant factor in the ability to counter shrinkage patters.

Various EU projects on the topic include 'Shrink Smart – The Governance of Shrinkage (2009-2012) and Cities Regrowing Smaller (CIRES) project (2009-2013). The topic has been relatively under studied in Eastern European countries, even though post-communist countries face explicit challenges relating to de-industrialization and demographic decline. There are two reasons cited for the status quo, namely i) that the shrinking of a city is perceived as something negative, even shameful, it is not an attractive public relations topic; and ii) the English term *shrinking* translates badly into Slavic languages particularly. The Czech Republic,

Hungary and Poland all show similar urban trajectories, with a limited number of vibrant, large growing cities and smaller towns in decline (both in terms of economy and demographics).

Statistical data show that most Romanian cities, of different sizes and types (small touristic towns, industrial towns, agricultural towns and harbor towns along the Danube) are facing various forms of decline: socio-cultural, economic, physical, demographic. Even though a large portion of cities and towns are undergoing severe shrinkage, Romania's participation in European-level initiatives dedicated to Shrinking Cities, both academic and political, is almost non-existent. The most vulnerable elements in the urban network are small towns. While large cities are relatively stable and provide both diversity and opportunities and most mid-sized cities have successfully adapted to the profound transformations of the communist era, the basis of the urban pyramid is the one most affected by shrinkage.

A number of challenges remain in the general understanding of shrinkage as an urban phenomenon, with a key issue being underestimating the complexity of shrinkage and the need for integrated approaches. Further issues are the lack of local level data and the disconnect between data and figures and lived realities, the failure to acknowledge that shrinkage is a continuous process which is both dynamic and unpredictable; and the many variations found within the broad term, each requiring different policy responses. Shrinkage does not only offer challenges and problems and there are opportunities for re-imagined futures in many of these places and communities. Some of these positive potentials can be found in:

- A more sustainable and environmentally friendly future in towns and cities with more space and even newly productive space from an urban agriculture perspective.
- Encouraging active aging and utilizing the skills and expertise of a thriving "silver economy".
- New forms of density can emergence, replacing built density with social density through human connection and interaction.
- Shrinking Cities are often the starting points for cultural innovation and spontaneous or organized artistic manifestations.

Policy responses to Shrinking Cities can be classified into four broad and somewhat sequential categories depending on the political economy of a country or a specific locality. This ranges from 1) Ignoring Shrinkage to 2) Countering Shrinkage, then 3) Accepting Shrinkage and finally, the most ambitious option 4) Making use of Shrinkage. Section 4 of this report contains an extensive set of practical case studies, mainly from Europe and Romania, for each of the four categories. The section on *Making use of Shrinkage* includes examples showcasing each of the four opportunities for re-imagining shrinkage mentioned above. The list of case studies can be found in Annexure A and Annexure B offers a summary of the principles and menu of responses drawn from these case studies.

Many Shrinking Cities are rediscovering the benefits of working with their citizens to provide services and create employment opportunities, especially in a time of crisis and financial restrictions. Literature points to a key ingredient of successful strategic planning as a process involving citizens, the public sector and civil society. Many of the examples cited in this section points to the need to build trust and overcome inherent challenges such as a low level of local capacity and a lack of experience in previous collaborative efforts. In many cases strong local leadership is a key ingredient to involve citizens and proactively work with shrinkage. The EU's adoption of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) and the establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs) to drive local level planning and investment seem to have delivered some success**.** Further to this, Civic Society Organizations (CSOs) in its many forms (from NGOs to citizen groups) can play an important role in a broader civic engagement approach and have proven particularly important and valuable as partners in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response in Romania.

In a growth-cantered urban world, those cities that experience socio-cultural, physical, economic and demographic decline are often not afforded a large enough part of the discourse. The role of policies is oftentimes overlooked, as studies frequently concentrate on the effects of the shrinkage, without exploring

in-depth the root causes of this phenomenon. What the literature shows, and especially the studies on actions and responses, is that urban shrinkage can be a source of creativity, a driver of modernization and innovation, of repurposing and embracing alternative resources and of reassessing human relationships.

Being labelled a shrinking city is not a nice position for any mayor or community, but when these towns and cities are thought of as Cities in Transition with a bright but smaller future, the narrative can be changed. A focus on right-sizing existing infrastructure and carefully planning future infrastructure investments to ensure fit and sustainability within a smaller demographic context will have long term benefits for individual communities and the country as a whole. It is the right moment to think of an urban policy with a specific focus on shrinking cities, as the number of cities facing this challenge continues to grow and the country faces a post-pandemic recovery period.

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Bank has been contracted by the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Public Administration (MPWDA) to provide support in the elaboration of the Urban Policy for Romania. As part of the first deliverables a situational analysis, including a review of the legislative and strategic framework for cities were conducted. It further included a scan of the complex environment and issues faced by towns and cities, topics gaining traction and featuring as areas of action for civic society as well as a spatial and demographic analysis. This work culminated in the identification of a set of key challenges faced by the country in terms of urban development and urban shrinkage featured prominently in this list of 8 issues.

Given the prevalence of the issue of shrinkage in Romanian towns and cities, it was decided to commission further work to better understand the issue and identify potential policy responses applicable to the local context. To this end the World Bank commissioned a team of researcher, already well versed in the topic given their previous extensive research[1] in this field, to further explore the issue.

The variations in the size and density of different human settlements, as well as the growth and decline of these, have been present for as long as settlements themselves. Urban shrinkage is therefore not a new concept, and it has affected the development of populated places throughout history. With only isolated cases of shrinkage studied before the 1950s, the current debate in academia and literature focuses mainly on the period after WWII.

The study of this field started both as an observation of patterns of shrinkage, and as a possible source of solutions for countering this phenomenon. Although it deals with problems that were generated 70 years ago, the research on shrinkage started in 2000s, when the globality of this process, as well as its multiple facets, were demonstrated, triggered by the fall of the Iron Curtain. Nevertheless, it significantly refined in time, both from the point of view of the methods and with regard to the granularity of the results.

The literature mainly focuses on comparing the declining manifestations of cities, even if they had very different reasons for growth. American, Western European cities (especially Britain or Germany), or post-communist cities, are all observed as hiving common symptoms. Yet, the root causes of urban shrinkage are manifold, such as deindustrialization, suburbanization, change in the dynamics of population and economic exogenous shocks. Despite conceptual and technical differences across the globe with regard to the subsequent methods for studying this global phenomenon, the literature concerning this topic is already well-known and is witnessing an ascendant trend as a field of study.

Even in a time of rapid urbanization in some part of the world, the study of Shrinking Cities remains an important topic on the urban global agenda. As it is confirmed by the multiple working definitions, the international community did not manage to find a single comprehensive definition of the urban shrinkage, thus emphasizing the variety of manifestations of this phenomenon and the underlying complexities that changed the profile of urban settlements worldwide.

This report presents a comprehensive literature review of the issue of urban shrinkage, a number of practical case study examples and culminates in recommendations for Romanian cities and national government in approaching the phenomenon. The report is structured in three main sections, the first (Heading 2) offering *An overview of the literature on Shrinking Cities*, including the theory of shrinkage, describing the causes, effects and reasons to study the phenomenon, considering the evolution of research

[1] The ongoing Shrinking Cities in Romania project. See Box 1.

and analyzing comparatively the definitions of Shrinking Cities, and typologies of shrinkage, determined both conceptually, and geographically. The next section, *Perspectives on Shrinking Cities* (Heading 3) describes specific research projects that are either global, like Oswalt's Shrinking Cities Project, or applied, like Wiechmann's Cities Regrowing Smaller, focusing on the dynamics of European Shrinking Cities. The section further documents shrinkage in Eastern Europe and finally gives a more in-depth overview on the Romanian Shrinking Cities.

The most important part of the work, *From Research to Practice* (Section 4), depicts changes of paradigm in the field of planning determined by shrinkage and considers policy responses to urban shrinkage. Starting from the challenges in understanding this phenomenon, which is often not regarded in its full complexity, this section describes positive aspects of shrinkage, which are, in the next subsection, mirrored in policy responses. The work discusses, by presenting short case-studies, the extent to which the policy responses proposed at the academic and technical level were mirrored in the political and administrative decision-making, as well as the efficiency of these issues for dealing with the aforementioned issues. There is a specific focus in Section 0 on collaboration and the need to involve local communities in planning for a potential right sized urban future. The conclusion to the work is presented through a key tool in dealing with shrinkage: cooperation on all levels and between more disciplines. The report ends with a conclusive aspect on Romanian cities' administration, which, if well guided, are on the verge of making use of shrinkage.

2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON SHRINKING CITIES

SUMMARY

The shrinkage of cities is a topic studied by academia and of concern to policy makers as far back as the 1980's. The field has shifted from an initial focus on isolated examples of post-industrial decline in North-America and Germany to it coming into sharper focus as an emerging global issue from 2000 onwards. The field underwent some consolidation around key research groups, mainly focused on Europe, from 2010 onwards. At this point the issue of urban shrinkage also started featuring in urban policies and various case studies of best practice emerged. The current period entering the 2020s is characterized by revisiting theory, follow-up of implemented projects and consolidation of urban policies. The issue of aging cities (i.e. the demographic shift within cities, especially in Europe and Japan) and the need to become age ready in terms of urban infrastructure and services has also recently gained prominence.

Despite the multiplication of the study of the 'Shrinking Cities' phenomenon, the global academic community and supranational entities are yet to arrive at a common or universally accepted definition of the term. Some definitions utilize explicit population numbers to specifically restrict the application to smaller towns (i.e. population less than 5000 or 10000). Virtually all definitions do refer to some complex set of factors and the interplay between those (i.e. economic decline, population decline and urban decay), with specific reference to some negative longer term societal outcome.

Usually, the transformations of urban spaces, as well as urban shrinkage cannot be attributed to a sole phenomenon and should be seen as a combination of factors contributing to the decay of the fibre of urban spaces. Understanding the main drivers of shrinkage however offers opportunities to consider approaches and responses, and these can be broadly clustered as follows:

- Economic and Political drivers: further subdivided into 3 broad types of decline, namely industrial (i.e. closing down of large sets of factories in specific industries), mono-structural (i.e. an area heavily reliant on mining and then suffering from mining closures) and political shocks (such as post-socialist economic collapse of formerly planned economic systems)
- Duration or timeline of shrinkage: depicted across a timeline, varying from shrinkage to growth in a phased approach.
- Spatial: varying from overall urban contraction, to urban core decay or shrinking outlying towns as part of a larger metropolitan agglomeration.
- Population decline

In a growth-cantered urban world, those cities that experience socio-cultural, physical, economic and demographic decline are often not afforded a large enough part of the discourse. The role of policies is oftentimes overlooked, as studies frequently concentrate on the effects of the shrinkage, without exploring in-depth the root causes of this phenomenon. What the literature shows, and especially the studies on actions and responses, is that urban shrinkage can be a source of creativity, a driver of modernization and innovation, of repurposing and embracing alternative resources and of reassessing human relationships.

2.1 Timeline of the study of Shrinking Cities

In the last decade, the topic of Shrinking Cities, that is *negative urban growth*, has come to occupy a prominent place in both political and academic discourses. The term covers the recent social and economic problems that, in a worst-case scenario, lead to the abandonment of buildings and even of entire urban areas. Urban abandonment is not however a novel thing, as it is demonstrated by countless historical examples. With the risk of oversimplifying things, it can be stated that up to the Industrial Revolution, which generated the unprecedented generalized growth of cities that we know today as urbanization, the rise and the fall of a city constituted very much a 'natural' cycle, and one could even speak of alternation between the two.

It is the context of postmodernity and the beginning of deindustrialization in the West that generated the first theoretical efforts—rather weak and particularized—to deal with the issue of urban contraction. Since the political leaders of the Eastern Bloc countries pushed for increased manufacturing output until the end and ignored the reorientation toward tertiary activities in the West, deindustrialization arrived abruptly to Central and Eastern Europe, it lasted longer, and had a wider range of consequences. This explains why the discourse on Shrinking Cities only gained strength in the 2000s, when the effects of the fall of the Iron Curtain began to be properly felt. Starting from the assumption that Shrinking Cities everywhere share similar symptoms, the aim of this broader discourse was to compare the manifestation of this phenomenon in cities whose growth was fueled by very different factors—American cities were compared with Western European cities (particularly in the UK and Germany) or post-communist cities. The discourse on urban shrinkage[2] developed after the year 2000 distinguished itself from previous approaches in that it emphasized the global and multifaceted nature of the process to account, for instance, for the paradoxical rising trend of the world urban population. So, the current understanding of Shrinking Cities must take into account a diversity of forms of urban decline.

Recently popularized under the name of *Shrinking Cities*[3], the concept first appeared in the German and North-American literatures in the 1980s. The urban research focused then on the industrial twilight and the economic and social problems associated with it. Important contributions to the 1980s discussion were the works of Hartmut Häußermann and Walter Siebel—*Die Chancen des Schrumpfens* (1985), *Neue Urbanität* (1987) and *Die Schrumpfende Stadt und die Stadtsoziologie* (1988). During a period of general economic prosperity, these authors discussed the issue of German industrial cities and the coexistence of urban growth and decline. For the first time, it was claimed that economic restructuring and demographic decline might

[2] The number of studies and projects that dealt with Shrinking Cities grew in the 2000 and 2010s. Here are some examples:

International cultural project: Germany, 2002-2008, *Shrinking Cities Project,* funded by Kulturstiftung des Bundes, together with the Contemporary Art Gallery in Leipzig, Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Archplus magazine.

Academic research: U.S., 2004, Berkeley IURD (Institute of Urban and Regional Development): SCiRN (Shrinking Cities International Research Network).

Research funded by governments or other national agencies: the European Union, 2009-2013, COST (European framework supporting transnational cooperation among researchers, engineers and scholars; Romania is not a member) Project: *Cities Regrowing Smaller*, launched in Germany, Dresden/Dortmund; EU research funds: *Shrink Smart* (launched in Germany, Leipzig). EU, 2011, Urbact, *Cities of Tomorrow, Action Today: From Crisis to Choice: Re-imagining the Future in Shrinking Cities*; France, 2006, ANR (Agence Nationale de Recherche) research project *Shrinking Cities*, ANR-06-JCJC-0058; Australia, Australian Research Council, Discovery Projects, *Achieving Urban Vitality: Skills and Employment Development in Shrinking Cities*, DP0984530;UK, CAR (Cambridge Architectural Research Ltd), etc.

National Urban Redevelopment Programs: Stadtumbau Ost, Stadtumbau West, in Germany.

Implemented urban redevelopment projects: Germany, 2002-2010, IBA (Internationale Bauaustellung): Weniger Ist Zukunft, experimental interventions launched and implemented in nineteen towns across the Sachsen Anhalt Land, funded by Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Sachsen Anhalt Development Agency (SALEG); 2010: exhibition on the urban redevelopment of Sachsen Anhalt.

[3] Partially due to the *Shrinking Cities Project*, a complex cultural intervention led by Philipp Oswalt and funded by the German government from 2002 to 2008,

have a long-term impact on the constitution and development of cities. A new type of city was brought into the discussion, the *shrinking city*, which, although apparently indistinguishable from other cities, would follow its separate path of economic and social evolution. Interestingly, as early as the very first pieces published on the topic, the decline of shrinking industrial cities was not deemed temporary, a one-time thing or reversible, but a long-term process.

After German Reunification the debate gained momentum due to the unprecedented depopulation of East Germany after 1989. German researchers were at the forefront on the topic and culminated in the questioning of the, then dominant, growth-oriented strategies of cities in the 2000s. The new type of discourse on *Schrumpfende Städte* put forward the first demolition strategies[4], a pressing problem in the former German Democratic Republic, and discussed the difficulty of managing a complex process of urban contraction. Large-scale abandonment of buildings in the former East Germany and the state of emergency it triggered became major turning points for a new urban planning strategy.

The 2000s marked a shift in the way the role of planning was perceived, as professionals sought models that were integrated, flexible, and not exclusively growth-oriented. Henceforth, the literature on Shrinking Cities included examples from all over the world, while promoting a rational, constructive approach to deconstruction instead of a critical, manifesto-like one. In 2005, Germany became the fertile and effervescent scene of interdisciplinary planning of urban shrinkage, compiling success stories (new and old); examples of the local communities collaborating efficiently with local governments; and projects combining research, innovation and successful action.

In more recent years, after 2010, the study of Shrinking Cities has multiplied, both as the effects of globalization and social change takes shape, and as some of the historic drivers of decline continues to be relevant. Over time political taboo that encompassed the term shrinkage progressively started to fade. The phenomenon is beginning to be considered a reality not only linked to the modification of the urban planning patterns, but also with direct repercussions in the economic and demographic fields. This changing with regard to seeing Shrinking Cities as a taboo was accompanied by a stronger presence of the subject in the media, thus stimulating the debate around it and furthering the research in this field (cf. source from Branislav et al.) and the political momentum needed for discussing the realities of places that were lagging traction.

As emphasized in the most recently published literature[5], authorities and academia started to witness and to keep an account of regional discrepancies both in economic and demographic terms. They are accompanied more and more by the non-governmental environment, concurred in providing explanations for the lack of performance of some regions, and addressed this pressing issue as a try-out for making informed policy choices for dealing with urban shrinkage. While the current period is characterized by revisiting theory,

[4] 2001 marks the beginning of the Stadtumbau Ost demolition and urban redevelopment program (2002-2009 budget of 2.5 billion euro, projects until 2016). Stadtumbau West started with sixteen pilot towns that have become three hundred communes included in urban redevelopment strategies.

[5] Pallagst K., T. Wiechmann and Cristina Martinez-Fernandez (eds) *Shrinking Cities: International Perspectives and Policy Implications (Routledge Advances in Geography), 2014*

Shrinking Cities in Romania / Orașe românești în declin (2019), Vol. 1: Research and Analysis / O cercetare critică; Vol. 2: Responses and Interventions / Reacții și intervenții, Editor: Ilinca Păun Constantinescu, DOM publishers, Berlin & Editura MNAC, București,

Haase, A., Rink, d. and Grossman, K. (2016): 'Shrinking Cities in post-socialist europe: what can we learn from their analysis for theory building today?', Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography 98 (4): 305–31

Haase, A., Bernt, M., Großmann, K., Mykhnenko, V., & Rink, D. (2016). Varieties of shrinkage in European cities. European Urban and Regional Studies, 23(1), 86–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776413481985

Hartt, M., 2016. "Act Small and Think Big: Exploring the Plurality and Complexity of Shrinking Cities" (Doctoral dissertation), Waterloo, Ontario: University of Waterloo). Accessed May 20, 2020. https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/bitstream/handle/10012/10741/Hartt_Maxwell. pdf?sequence=3

follow-up of implemented projects and consolidation of urban policies, there are significant time lags between the implemented policies or projects in the Western Europe, and the Romanian case, where shrinkage still needs to be properly acknowledged, in order for a national policy to be adopted. However, besides the few interventions initiated by the cities' administration, the long chain of recent bottom-up actions, happening now in Romania is slowly triggering reactions and cooperation from local administration. The table that follows summarizes the timeline of evolution in terms of the academic work in the field of urban shrinkage.

Table 1. Synthetic representation of the chronology of approaches

'80 - Acknowledging isolated cases	2000s- Global phenomenon	2010s- Consolidation of research groups	2020s- Follow-up of implemented projects and consolidation of policies
USA: "Shrinking Cities" as an effect of politically encouraged suburbanization after WWII, linking two phenomenons: suburbanization triggering changes in the shapes of the citie (doughnut cities),and desindustrialisation, Both led to racial segregation and social inequalities / Weaver R.,(1977) Western Germany : shrinkage referred to isolated cases and addressed / prefigured suburbanization and deindustrialization. Häussermann, H. and Siebel, W. (1987)	The German reunification effects point out common problems in the Eastern Europe countries, as well as in the western world. Similar effects in cities all over the world point to a need for an international debate on shrinkage and an evaluation of what did not work in Eastern Germany in 1990s. This later influenced the interventions after the reunification, when funding for artificially keeping the local economy ongoing. A fundamental research approach with solid theoretical reflection and multi-disciplinary means of communication - passing the messages on the main characteristics of a PHENOMENON OSWALT, P., (2006) Shrinking Cities, Vol. 1. International Research, Ostfildern-Ruit, Germania, Hatje Cantz Verlag; OSWALT, P., (2006) Shrinking Cities Vol. 2. Interventions, Ostfildern-Ruit, Germania, Hatje Cantz Verlag; OSWALT, P., & T. RIENIETS, (2006) Atlas der schrumpfenden Städte (2006), Elke Beyer, Anke Hagemann, Kristina Herresthal, Henning Schirmel, ed. Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern; Shrinking Cities International Network / Berkley, Thorsten Wiechmann (2004) Institute of Urban and Regional Development (IURD) at the University of California, Berkeley / Karina Pallagst (2007)	Period of consolidation of research groups in academia (USA and EU), as well as of international networks. A period of thematic conferences and publications, and of proposals of urban policies (Cities Regrowing Smaller, SCIRN, EUKN, Shrink Smart, URBACT) Ex: Bontje, M. and Musterd, S. (eds.) (2012) Understanding shrinkage in European regions (special issue). Built Environment 38 COST Action Cities Regrowing Smaller - Fostering Knowledge on Regeneration Strategies in Shrinking Cities across Europe (2009-2013) Urbact II - From Crisis to Choice: Re-imagining the Future in Shrinking Cities Shrink Smart Project / (2009-2012) Leipzig / Dieter Rink, Annegret Haase, and follow-up publications IBA Stadtumbau 2010 / Less is Future/ 19 Cities, 19 Themes, Sachsen Anhalt IBA (Internationale Bauaustellung) Germany 2002-2010: Weniger ist Zukunft, experimental actions initiated and implemented by 19 cities in the state of Saxony-Anhalt	Case studies with examples of implemented policies and programs Detailed analysis of the phenomena in Romania: Shrinking Cities in Romania publication and exhibition Correlation to Aging cities - demographic concerns all around the world Correlation to Climate Change concern - downshifting, eco-aware lifestyles Unclear at this stage what the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic might be on shrinking cities when compared to growing cities, if more cities might adopt a post-growth approach

2.2 Definition and typologies of shrinkage

2.2.1 Definition and context

The definition of urban spaces has itself evolved over time, from the narrow focus on administrative boundaries to taking into account several cities or localities forming a metropolitan region or a functional urban area. This has arguably recognized the process of suburbanization that many cities face, in a more negative framing referred to as urban sprawl. The concept of Shrinking Cities however shows less clarity in terms of definitions, with no harmonized single definition. This lack of a push towards a global definition might be influenced by the ever-expanding definition of urban, and the strong global focus of the development community on urbanization (i.e. people moving to cities), which present many challenges around large parts of the developing world.

Some of the most commonly used definitions for urban shrinkage are outlined here:

- The definition of shrinking cities provided by the **Shrinking Cities International Research Network** (Wiechmann, 2006) is that shrinking cities is represented by an urban area that is dense and includes a physically built-up urban territory with minimum 10.000 inhabitants, experienced a population decline, has faced economic problems, has had demographic and economic problems for more than two years.
- **Shrink Smart** defines urban shrinkage as an event resulting from an interplay of different macro-processes at a local scale. These macro processes may be related to the economic, demographic or settlement system development, as well as to environmental issues or changes in the political and administrative system. Urban shrinkage occurs when the specific interplay of the mentioned macro-processes leads to population decline Population decline is not the same as the phenomenon of urban shrinkage as well. (Rink et al.,2009).
- **COST (European Collaboration in Science and Technology) action Cities Regrowing Smaller** defines Shrinking Cities as a functional urban area with a minimum population of 5000 residents in its core city (or certain districts in it) that has faced a remarkable population loss at least for 5 years (in recent years or in some former period) and / or is undergoing a long-term or episodic economic, social or cultural transformation that causes symptoms of a structural crisis. (CIRES, 2011)
- The **OECD** definition defines Shrinking Cities as 'an urban area – city, part of a city, entire metropolitan area or a town – that has experienced population loss, economic downturn, employment decline and social problems as symptoms of a structural crisis'. This definition, taking into account surfaces larger than the respective borders of an administrative area of a city, shows that shrinking areas may also decline because of suburbanization and also underscores the multi-faceted manifestations of the shrinkage process. (*Martinez-Fernandez & others, 2012)*
- According to **Shrinking Cites in Romania project**, shrinkage is the result of a complex interplay of factors. As such, it describes a phenomenon that produces both quantitative and qualitative changes at the city or neighborhood scale. It includes the following aspects:

- Social and cultural shrinkage: closures of urban facilities (theatres, cinemas, sports facilities, etc.); weakened communities;
- Physical shrinkage: abandonment of buildings and public spaces; dilapidation or demolition works outnumber construction works;
- Economic shrinkage: lack of jobs; falling property values; etc.;
- Demographic shrinkage: the global indicator that measures population loss over a certain period. (Păun Constantinescu, 2013)

Nevertheless, the modification and ultimately shrinkage of urban areas represent a near universal historical phenomenon. Several stages of development have been accompanied by leaving behind urban settlements, like, for example, the cities developed in the United States during the Gold Rush, or, more recently, the Dallas Housing Crisis during the 1970s. In other parts of the world shrinkage has taken place due to the ageing of the population in Japan or the dire economic and migration consequences that followed the dismantling of the socialist states and the subsequent deindustrialization process in Eastern Europe (Haase, A., Rink, D. and Grossman, K. , 2016). Some of these typologies driving shrinkage will be explored in more detail below.

2.2.2 Typologies of shrinkage

Given that recurrent patterns have been studied at the global scale, regional tendencies emerged, especially with regard to the main causes and effects of shrinking processes. This led, in time, to the formulation of multiple typologies for studying urban shrinkage. The most visible determinant of urban shrinkage, and, for a long time, the most important instrument for assessing this phenomenon was the structural loss of population, that was observed, in time, by census data or migratory tendencies. The population loss was also important in studying subsequent phenomena that acted as a chain reaction following the population loss, such as economic decline and changes in the population geography, especially ageing of the population and decrease of the birth rate. Population loss was also linked to other dimensions of urban shrinkage, such as the 'brain drain' of some regions, that exacerbated the existent gaps and further emphasized the decay of industrial and production landscape.

Usually, the transformations of urban spaces, as well as urban shrinkage cannot be attributed to a sole phenomenon and should be seen as a combination of factors contributing to the decay of the fiber of urban spaces. The transitional political processes also play an important role in addressing urban shrinkage, as they can cause long-term manifestations that affect the structure of the urban areas, as well as the structure of the population and the efficiency of policymaking with regard to urban areas. Understanding the main drivers of shrinkage however offers opportunities to consider approaches and responses and are worth exploring in more detail. These typologies are discussed in more detail under specific headings below.

a) Based on economic and political causes

Economic shrinkage is closely related to the political factors, often cited together as drivers of shrinkage in literature. As Karina Pallagst witnessed (2007, 2009), there is a strong interrelation of economic and political causes, and to a certain extent the political causes can be synonymous to economic causes. As an example, long-term changes in industry, which results in some industries no longer being competitive in the marketplace could see workers departing for other places, thus leaving a gap of population. The

political side of this story would underline a lack of protection of the labor force, as well as to a lack of policies capable of providing opportunities for the respective workers or supporting a shift in focus for the historic industries.

The economic causes can be grouped, historically, along three broad areas:

- The industrial (or Fordist) type of shrinkage refers to the industrial decline that led to shrinkage. This might happen in the context of the closing of an industry, having the population leaving the respective area, in the lack of other economic opportunities.
- The second type of economic shrinkage, the mono-structural type, refers to the closing of single-scope industrial areas that lead to shrinkage. This can be observed in several regions, such as the Rhein-Ruhr region in Germany or in the Jiu Valley area in Romania. The sudden economic downturn, expressed by an economic crisis or an exogenous shock that makes certain areas to be less attractive, because of a lack of economic opportunities, inflation, or political-induced persecution.
- The shock-therapy type, similar to the Fordist type, refers to the post-socialist economic collapse of formerly planned economic systems, defined by centralization. This phenomenon was largely witnessed in Central and East European countries from the former soviet bloc, that saw their industries fading away after the fall of communism and failed to subsist in the new capitalist economic environment. These political changes had long-term repercussions that lead, in some countries, to external migration and to a constant climate of upheaval, that created lasting effects and generated further political unrest

A feature of shrinkage is that whether long or short term, it usually has serious consequences, that can be an explanatory factor for some serious structural disequilibria of the respective urban area. Also, the shrinkage can be periodical, or, more precisely, can manifest with a cyclical periodicity or as a one-time event than is not furtherly propagating. (Hartt, M., 2016)

b) Based on the duration of the shrinkage

The classification related to the timeline of the shrinkage is closely related to the one related to the duration of the shrinkage (Hartt, 2016). In this classification there is an emphasis not only the shrinking process, but also the possibility of growth and, thus, the possibility of urban regeneration. There are two main types of shrinkage based on the duration of the process, either constant or fluctuating, and then further either long-term (with an incidence of longer than one decade) or short term (less than one decade). A feature of shrinkage is that whether long or short term, it usually has serious consequences, that can be an explanatory factor for some serious structural disequilibria of the respective urban area. Also, the shrinkage can be periodical, or, more precisely, can manifest with a cyclical periodicity or as a one-time event than is not furtherly propagating. (Hartt, M., 2016)

This approach makes a gradual contrast between growth and shrinkage, showing that, in some cases, the respective process can be reversible. The cyclic character of shrinkage is approached by many authors in human geography, economy or urban sociology. (Van den Berg, 1982, Champion, 2001; Cheshire 1995.) Hence, in this typology, the shrinkage is varying from shrinkage to growth in a phased approach.

Table 2. Typology of shrinkage based on the duration of shrinkage

Shrinkage	Shrinkage has a constant manifestation in time, determined by a structural loss of population and a subsequent loss of economic opportunities that could attract the population residing in the respective urban settlement.
Stabilized shrinkage	Is a process composed from three parts, more precisely starting with a process of shrinkage, followed by a period of stabilization, then progressively worsening and leading to a loss of population.
Cyclical shrinkage	Cyclical shrinkage is defined by a period of shrinkage, followed by a period of growth, without loss of population.
Cyclical growth	Cyclical growth is defined by a period of shrinkage followed by a period of growth, manifested by an overall net gain in terms of population.
Recovery	The recovery phase is composed by a period of shrinkage, followed by a period of stabilization, followed by growth, being characterized, like in the case of the cyclical growth, by an overall gain in terms of population.
Growth	Continuous growth in time, without any type of shrinkage.

From the point of view of the degree of the shrinkage process, or to the extent of the shrinkage, it can be classified either as ordinary or extreme. Despite some differences of acceptance of different thesis in the literature, the conclusion is that Shrinking Cities are those that lost more than a quarter of their population in a duration of 40 years (Adelaja, S., 2010). The extreme shrinkage can be seen as a process where the very nature of the respective urban settlement is affected, with more than a half of the real-estate properties being empty (Burkholder, S., 2012.)

c) Based on the spatial level

From the point of view of the spatial distribution of the shrinkage, three types can be emphasized. The first type is represented by urban areas that are shrinking in totality, that can be observed on a geospatial localization as a constant process marking the entire urban settlement. The underlying causes of this shrinkage are related to the incapacity of economic recovery, political factors, or, sometimes, a process that is linked to the irreversible deterioration of the urban fabric, with places not being considered attractive anymore by the citizens.

The second type can be described as the central core shrinking, with a suburban area growing, while the inner part is shrinking. Several pieces of literature over recent years connect the duration of shrinkage to spatial effects (Alves et al, 2016; Stryjackiewicz and Jaroszewska, 2016). If constant shrinkage usually involves an entire urban area fluctuating one is often observed as shrinkage in some urban parts (usually in the inner areas of cities) and growth in other areas (often peri-urban), generating the so-called 'doughnut cities'[6]. This phenomenon, strongly linked to urban sprawl, has multiple causes, linked to the

[6] The phenomena of a declining core and growing peri-urban area is documented in a spatial analysis presented in the Companion Paper for this project titled Growth and Shrinkage of Romanian cities

choices of people to migrate towards more suburban settlements that are closer to their working places, or, they are migrating towards 'dormitory neighborhoods', or businesses are migrating to new commercial facilities closer to the suburbs, that are facilitating the accessibility condition for their working force.

The third type, defined by a shrinkage of parts of urban settlements, such as municipalities making part from larger metropolitan areas, specific neighborhoods or parts of the cities. This specific type of shrinkage is usually related to socio-economic conditions, the respective neighborhoods being considered as not developed enough or lacking economic opportunities. Also, in some countries, there are specific social issues that make for some neighborhoods to be considered more attractive than others.

d) Based on the population size of the Shrinking Cities

The population dimension of the shrinkage is defined as either bigger Shrinking Cities, with more than 100.000 inhabitants, or smaller Shrinking Cities, with less than 100.000 inhabitants. Nevertheless, the specialized literature is largely overlooking smaller Shrinking Cities, most of the studies are dealing with bigger cities, one of the reasons being that the effects of shrinkage can be observed more easily. Also, data is not as rich and available in smaller cities than in bigger cities.

A recent study emphasizes that there is a difference given by the size of the cities linked to the capacity of overrunning shrinking patterns (Restrepo, 2017). This is given both by the more numerous material resources and capital of bigger cities for countering the phenomenon, but also by the existence of the necessary infrastructure for attracting a different population, thus producing effects with regard to the structure of the population, without changing the profile of the city. Smaller cities, on the other hand, are prone to long-term extreme urban shrinkage, if the respective smaller city is in the neighborhood of a larger city that has traction. In this case, the respective smaller city can become a 'dormitory' city for the bigger city and, with the right infrastructure, an important part of the metropolitan area of the bigger city. This emphasizes the importance of social infrastructure, as well as the topicality of the functional role of a place for countering shrinkage (Restrepo C., Cineas, G., Quintero, L. and Zhukova, S., 2017)

Also, this thesis is proving that, sometimes, the control of the shrinkage process is a subsequent part of the policies designed for a specific place, while other times is a part of a structural phenomenon that cannot be countered, obliging an urban settlement to find a different function, or, in some cases, to accept that its role has changed.

2.3 Shortcomings of defining and providing typologies of Shrinking Cities

There are several shortcomings regarding both the accepted definitions and commonly used typologies of Shrinking Cities, given the fact that they are to some extent restrictive and inclined to 'force' the introduction of a city in a certain category. The multipolarity of the shrinkage is also due to the fact that it is seldom possible to find a singular source for the shrinkage, and the respective pattern of the shrinkage can modify both in time and space, for different reasons.

All dimensions discussed up to this point (spatial, political, social, geographical and demographic) are interrelated and it is often hard to point to a singular cause explaining the shrinkage of an urban settlement. The role of the policies used for dealing with the respective shrinkage, as well as the respective role of the regional, national and, sometimes, international context in which the shrinkage is taking place is of utmost importance. The role of policies is oftentimes overlooked, as studies frequently concentrate on the effects of the shrinkage, without exploring in-depth the root causes of this phenomenon. As mentioned, some larger studies are only treating municipalities that have at least

200.000 inhabitants, and significantly less studies are addressing the problems of cities between 10.000 and 200.000 inhabitants.

The contemporary discourse about the city focuses on polarization, on alternating and coexisting growth and decline. Caught in a growth-centered urban world, Shrinking Cities, those cities that experience socio-cultural, physical, economic and demographic decline, are, paradoxically or not, part of this discourse. What the literature shows, and especially the studies on actions and responses, is that urban shrinkage can be a source of creativity, a driver of modernization and innovation, of repurposing and embracing alternative resources, of reassessing human relationships. “Direct participation is essential to planning,” researchers of urban shrinkage like Wiechmann, Rink or Haase claim. But such an approach requires a genuine preoccupation from the local decision-makers to understand social life and actual problems by encouraging citizen involvement in governance processes and social economy, in the co-production of public services.

3. RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES ON SHRINKING CITIES

SUMMARY

Published literature on the Shrinking Cities phenomenon intensified around 2010 and the sources of information regarding this topic multiplied on all continents, thus providing a global and regional picture of the phenomenon. At global level the Shrinking Cities International Research Network (SCIRN) has collated comparative case studies on a number of topics across 30 cities. The work of Oswalt as part of the German government project Shrinking Cities/ Schrumpfende Städte (2002 – 2008) is arguably some of the best known globally. It particularly contributed to introducing ideas for alternative models of action and intervention, mainly emphasizing that shrinkage can be an opportunity for remodeling and that urban decline can be planned.

Subsequent EU level projects on the topic include 'Shrink Smart – The Governance of Shrinkage (2009-2012) and Cities Regrowing Smaller (CIRES) project (2009-2013). The former focused on policy and governance challenges and solutions, and the latter applied a more quantitative approach to mapping and defining typologies of shrinking cities**.** The topic has been relatively under studied in Eastern European countries, even though post-communist countries face explicit challenges relating to de-industrialization and demographic decline. There are two reasons cited for the status quo, namely i) that the shrinking of a city is perceived as something negative, even shameful, it is not an attractive public relations topic; and ii) the English term *shrinking* translates badly into Slavic languages particularly. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland all show similar urban trajectories, with a limited number of vibrant, large growing cities and smaller towns in decline (both in terms of economy and demographics).

Analyzed statistical data (in the project Shrinking Cities in Romania – see box) show that most Romanian cities of different sizes and types are facing various forms of decline: socio-cultural, economic, physical, and demographic. Half of the country's cities currently have 20% fewer residents than in the 1990s. In the last 30 years, out of the 320 cities of Romania, 163 cities have decreased by 20%, and 62 with 30% of the population. Urban shrinkage in Romania has been driven by two factors, first the communist legacy of an urbanization heavily reliant on manufacturing and of a wide range of flaws in the structure of cities and secondly by the rapid shift to a capitalist economic system severely altered decisive economic and demographic factors. The most vulnerable elements in the urban network have been small town, and research has grouped these based on their characteristics with each group facing different drivers of shrinkage and subsequently having different response options. These categories are Industrial towns, Tourist towns, Danube port towns and Agrarian towns. The research points to two effects of shrinkage that deserve further attention, namely i) the ruralization of the urban (either through a return to agrarian activities or deliberate life choices in relocation from large urban centers) and ii) the gradual demise of urban attributes (ranging from a loss of social and

The first projects that addressed urban shrinkage were not structured in a purely academic manner, but rather as action or policy-oriented documents. These projects were designed to find counter measures or to limit the negative effects coming to the fore in places that were already strongly affected by this

phenomenon**.** From a geographic and thematic point of view, the dynamics of studying Shrinking Cities evolved in time, and developed in an uneven manner. This development does not necessarily follow a concrete trajectory from global studies to local case studies, but rather develops on a subject-matter and evolves towards reaching a worldview of the phenomenon. The shrinkage of urban spaces has different sources and respond to different patterns. Sometimes shrinkage makes part of a structural gap rather than from a series of conjectural effects of specific phenomena, therefore transforming shrinkage in a multi-faceted or, as sometimes called, 'multiplex' phenomenon.

However, most studies fail to take into account the 'multiplex dimension' of shrinkage, i.e. a mix of factors that lead to shrinkage. Usually, the studies favor one of the dimensions – there are very little meta-analytical studies or empirical studies that delve into regional studies. In practice, usually this phenomenon has either as a source or as an effect economic shocks, political aspects of shrinkage are frequently omitted. In other words, it is hard to see direct correlations, for example, speed of the shrinkage correlated with proximity of national borders, etc.

Some literature has attempted to harmonize national debates with the international landscape[7], but most of the national debates still rely on a singular manner of presentation, without comparative approaches. Only a few sources analyzing the national situation of Shrinking Cities offer a comparative approach[8] as well as a historical perspective and a focus on typology. The following sections will explore global and European research networks and projects, then focus on research done around the phenomenon in Eastern Europe and finally Romania.

3.1 Shrinking Cities International Research Network (SCIRN)

The Shrinking Cities International Research Network (SCIRN) was founded in 2004 and has collated an impressive catalogue of projects, cases and policy interventions. The network is a research consortium of 30 scholars and experts from 14 different countries pursuing research on shrinking cities in a global context, hosted by the Institute of Urban and Regional Development at the University of California, Berkeley. It was established with the aim to address, in a transdisciplinary manner, the research in this

[7] national debates

- Martinez-Fernandez, C., Audirac, I., Fol, S., & Cunningham-Sabot, E. (2012). Shrinking Cities: Urban challenges of globalization. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 36(2), 213–225. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2427.2011.01092.x

[8] comparative approaches:

- Cunningham-Sabot,E.andFol,C.,2007."PolycentrismeetgouvernancedanslaCentralBelt, Ecosse". L'Espace géographique 36 no.: 304-319. DOI: 10.3917/eg.364.0304

-Martinez-Fernandez, C. & Wu, C-T., 2007. "Shrinking Cities in Australia". Accessed October 15, 2016. http://soac.fbe.unsw.edu.au/2007/SOAC/shrinkingcities.pdf.

-Moraes, S., 2009. "Inequality and urban shrinkage- a close relationship in Latin America". In The Future of Shrinking Cities: Problems, Patterns and Strategies of Urban Transformation in a Global Context, edited by K. Pallagst et al, 49-60. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

-Beauregard, R., 2009. "Shrinking Cities in the United States in Historical Perspective: A Research Note". In The Future of Shrinking Cities: Problems, Patterns and Strategies of Urban Transformation in a Global Context, edited by K. Pallagst et al, 61-68. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

-Alves, D., Barreira, A. P., Helena Guimarães, M. H. and Panagopoulos, T., 2016. "Historical trajectories of currently shrinking Portuguese cities: A typology of urban shrinkage". Cities 52: 20-29. DOI: 10.1016/ j.cities.2015.11.008.

field, improving the understanding of population decrease in urban regions and urban decline, and for dealing with causes, manifestations, and effectiveness of policies and interventions affecting urban areas. It set out to catalogue intervention, best practices and successful projects in 30 cities, ultimately generating typologies for policy interventions. The city experiences were filtered through several criteria for creating a benchmark with regard to the effectiveness of policies.

Amongst the criteria used in the SCIRN analysis is the role of innovation and its importance in the process of economic growth. The specific report on this topic presents the case of five Australian cities: Whyalla, Broken Hill, Mt. Isa - mining towns and Newcastle and Wollongong - former important industrial centers, reborn through alternative projects. Going beyond reconversion, the report is analyzing the role of sustainable development practices and their effects on countering shrinkage. Among the studies undertaken in this area are Newark in Great Britain, Gelsenkirchen in Germany and Pittsburgh and San Francisco in the United States.

The SCIRN study also underlines the importance of culture and the creative industry studied comparatively in five cities. Among the effects generated by the cultural sector and by the creative industry are attracting investment, economic growth and increasing the quality of life through community involvement. This also proved to generate an increase in the consumption patterns at the individual level, and a large propensity for personal development in experimenting with new cultural events or with community-based experiences, such as events, fairs and exhibits. It is interesting to note that amongst the cities selected for emphasizing the role of sustainable development are large-scale cities, such as Manchester and Glasgow, Saint Louis, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, San José, the Montreuil district in Paris, Vienna, Bilbao and New York. A number of other areas of importance are highlighted in the SCIRN work:

- The importance of **information and communication technology**, as evidenced by the study of two cities in Texas (Dallas and Forth Worth), underlining the relation between social space and physical space, with an impact on the phenomena of urban dispersion and regional concentration, which although antagonistic are also simultaneous phenomenon.
- **Efficient land use** and the inversely proportional relationship between decline and growth that can be applied to metropolitan areas affected by factors other than the collapse of industry, such as the cities of Pittsburgh, Youngstown and San Jose.
- **The role of transport and industrial infrastructure** in the development / regeneration of a metropolitan area, applied to the example of the municipal district of São Caetano do Sul within the São Paulo area. If the presence of the railway helped to transform the area into an industrial hub in the 1950s, the construction of a highway in a neighboring district triggered the decline of the industry by transferring functions.
- **Community involvement** has been acknowledged as playing a key role in designing strategies for the regeneration of sectoral industries, such as declining mining cities in South Korea. Given the cultural pattern of South Korea makes that hierarchy is strongly respected and that it is a country where decisions are usually not participatory but are taken at a high level shows the importance of community involvement and of participatory approaches.
- The phenomenon of **declining suburbs and central areas** in large metropolises was based on the study of the first suburban ring of Paris compared to Saint-Etienne and Glasgow, highlighting in particular the reactions of local governments and the sets of measures and strategies applied and their impact.

- **Former socialist cities** are subject to double tendencies of transformation: post-socialist and post-Fordist. The collapse of the economy and industry in the cities of Leipzig and Dresden came as a result of a sudden confrontation with the highly competitive global market.

3.2 Research networks / projects / comparative perspectives in Europe

The European landscape with regard to the study of Shrinking Cities is rich and well developed, with a broad field of literature and multiple national, regional and local case studies. A unique feature is that the research projects were usually developed by practitioners working in the field. Many of the studies addressed the underlying causes from a multipolar approach, encompassing several fields that proved to be explanatory for the decaying of European Urban regions. There are also important case studies with regard to the importance of comparative approaches. (Haase, A., Bernt, M., Großmann, K., Mykhnenko, V., Rink, D. 2016). The work of Turok and Mykhenenko studied, from a comparative perspective, the development of European cities from 1950 to 2005, approaching several issues such as different experiences of growth and decay. (Thurok and Mykhnenko, 2007). Most recently the work of Stefanie Doringer is providing a comparative analysis between Europe and Japan with regard to the research done in the field of urban areas. (Döringer, Uchiyama, Penker, Kohsaka - 2019)

Arguably the best-known body of work was produced in the Shrinking Cities/ Schrumpfende Städte (2002-2008) project by the Federal Government of Germany under the leadership of Philipp Oswalt. The project aimed to address the hardships of the decaying cities in Germany, following the reunification of West and East Germany in the 1990s. An architect by training, Oswalt approach the study not solely from a geographic perspective, but also from a thematic point of view. It was the first awareness, large scale initiative that gave the phenomenon a name and generated public conversation about shrinkage. This discourse seeks to compare the declining manifestations of cities that have had very different reasons for growth, such as American, Western European cities (especially Britain or Germany), or post-communist cities, starting from the premise of observing that they have common symptoms. The project demonstrates the globality of this process, as well as its multiple facets. In 2005, a compendium of international research published under the project presented urban shrinkage from a global perspective, presenting findings on both the form taken by this shrinkage and a focus on root causes. This offered a comprehensive view of the literature and studies undertaken up to that point. The paradigm subsequently established emphasized that, apart from the effects generated by the physical decaying of urban places, other effects caused important disruptions, such as social, cultural and, ultimately, long-term effects.

In a second phase of the project ideas for alternative models of action and intervention were developed, mainly emphasizing that shrinkage can be an opportunity for remodeling and that urban decline can be planned. A network of more than 200 artists, architects, academics and local initiatives participated in four years of investigations and produced a series of potential responses. In the last two centuries, urban planning has dealt almost exclusively with growth processes, but with economic or demographic stagnation or decline, the idea of colonization loses its legitimacy, so building is no longer a goal, but it becomes a starting point. Architecture and urbanism are thus confronted with a unique situation, which needs other paradigms. However, planning follows social behavior, space adapts to society and not the other way around. Planning in Shrinking Cities is adaptive, flexible, reversible. The proposed concepts of action illustrated in the work are: Negotiating Inequality, Self-Governance, Creating Images, Organizing Retreat and Occupying Space.

One of the relevant European studies defining this paradigm was done under the auspices of the European Union's 7th Framework Programme and was entitled 'Shrink Smart – The Governance of Shrinkage (2009-2012)[9]. This was in the context of an ever-growing problem related to decaying cities and their subsequent economic disruption, but also relating to structural issues, such as the ageing of the population and the brain-drain. The Shrink Smart project was among the first of its kind, studying policies and governance of cities in a comparative manner in seven different shrinking urban regions, both from Eastern and Southern Europe. This type of studying of pattern allowed a better comprehension of the main challenges for urban planning, but also provided alternatives for urban governance in the age of Shrinking Cities. (Pallagst & Fleschurz & Said, 2017).

Almost concomitantly, between 2009-2013, the Cities Regrowing Smaller (CIRES) project[10] studied the demographic and economic challenges of European cities and provided a strategic direction for addressing this challenge. It also introduced creative solutions and established a common terminology with regard to urban shrinkage at the European level. It is interesting to note, nevertheless, that this project developed, within one of its working groups (2), a Theory-Practice Interface, for relying on academics and practitioners of the field[11]. CIRES studied European states, specifically those that are members of COST (participation of 35 countries), analyzing population declines in all cities with more than 5,000 inhabitants from 1990 to 2013 (over a 5-year period) and comparing them with surrounding areas. After centralizing the data of 7035 cities in 37 countries, the result is a map of the increase and decrease areas. The limits considered were a decline of 15%, and extreme cases are considered to have lost more than 30% of the population. From the correlation of the size-type decreases analyses, various typologies emerged, for example large cities, with rapid and continuous decrease, large stable cities, less dynamic regional centers, etc.

The conclusion from CIRES data analysis is that more than half of European cities (3563 out of 7035) represent one of the shrinking types A, B or C identified in the research. The countries with the most Shrinking cities are, in order: Latvia, Romania, Lithuania, Estonia, Bulgaria. For the same cities, the study continues with statistical data, analyzing natural growth, internal and external migration, labor force, number of abandoned homes. However, the latest statistics could not be fully compared, as some countries' databases do not exist. It is the first time that a rigorous study of such magnitude shows the dynamics of European cities. The study draws attention to the over simplified and sometimes misleading interpretations of demographic data.

3.3 Shrinkage in Eastern Europe[12]

3.3.1 Specific context

Throughout the recent history of the Eastern Bloc countries, urban growth has been mainly driven by industrial development and particularly through the 1950s and 1960s. However, while Romania continued to pursue a development strategy focused almost exclusively on manufacturing, neighboring

[9] Governance of shrinkage within a European context - https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/225193

[10] Developed by COST Action and sponsored by the European Union through the European cooperation in science and technology

[11] Further information available here: *http://www.shrinkingcities.eu/fileadmin/Action_Poster.pdf*

[12] This section is broadly based on phD Ilinca Paun Constantinescu (Romania and Eastren Europe) and CIRES / Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz (Eastren Europe), Karel Schmeidler (Czech Republic), Erzsebet Vajdovich Visy (Hungary), Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz, Emilia Jaroszewska, Szymon Marcinczak (Poland)

states such as Hungary and Yugoslavia embraced the service industry as early as the 1960s, joined by Poland in the 1970s. The gap between the economies of Eastern and Western European countries was not that obvious until the 1973 oil crisis, and grew wider from that point forward and into the 1980's as a recession set in.

Cities throughout the Eastern Bloc have undergone similar transformations after 1990. The communist ideology promoted the image of a deeply rationalized and urbanized society that stemmed from the tenets of Modernism. Although they drew on the shared principles of the Athens Charter, state-controlled Eastern European economies and free market-driven Western European economies produced very different patterns of urban growth. The rigid approach to the communist city—worshipped and deemed the embodiment of the perfect "socialist union"—is reflected in the shared features of today's post-communist cities, the consequences of a lack of truly effective strategic planning.

One of the main effects of the transition to the market economy in these countries was the closure of state-owned companies, which resulted in high unemployment rates and the expansion of industrial ruins. In the mid-1990s, as the economy started to recover, many incoherent or even illegal interventions were carried out under the guise of investment policies, defacing the urban space, sometimes with irreversible effects. Some authors claim that the lack of concern in post-communism to connect old structures with new ones was a reaction to the communist overregulated style of urban planning (Stanilov, 2010).

Broadly, urbanization patterns in these countries lagged behind that of Western Europe, in terms of timeline of development, and often took place with much lower infrastructure standards. In the late stages of communism, the Romanian state kept strict control over the compactness of its cities, which was not the case in other Eastern Bloc countries. In capital cities or regional centers with metropolitan functions such as Brno in Czechoslovakia, Györ in Hungary, Cracow or Poznan in Poland, and Ljubljana in Slovenia, a suburbanization process started as early as the 1980s. In post-communism, the demographic shock was first felt in the richer countries, and from there it spread to the other countries. Coupled with migration and suburbanization, it constituted the basis of the socioeconomic decline of many cities.

3.3.2 Perception

In Eastern Europe, the shrinkage phenomenon has not been openly acknowledged and consequently never featured on the public agenda. The perception of shrinking is vague and of minor importance, being a subject of debate largely confined to a narrow group of experts and professionals. Contraction is not a central topic for discussion and attracts little attention from the political circles or the public in general. Local politicians and administrations continue to have a dominant focus on pursuing growth and economic prosperity, however elusive that might be.

The process of shrinkage in East-Central (post-communist) Europe is understood in two ways, either as a suburbanization process or as cities in crisis. Firstly, there is talk of 'Shrinking Cities' when referring to the suburbanization processes taking place in large agglomerations which lose people from the core in favor of the periphery. Thus, the only aspect involved here is demographic, and in this approach the number of 'Shrinking Cities' is very great. The second common usage of 'Shrinking Cities' appear in the context of problem areas in the grip of a socio-economic crisis, including cities suffering rapid industrial (mono-industrial) or extractive industry decline.

There has been no wider-ranging research into this process focused on this region. Especially politicians, mayors and other leaders of local communities generally do not wish to discuss the topic, for two main reasons:

- The shrinking of a city is perceived as something negative, even shameful, it is not an attractive public relations topic; and
- the English term *shrinking* translates badly into Slavic languages particularly[13].

Urban shrinkage and how it is represented in literature is explored in more detail for three countries, namely the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland below.

3.3.3 Three countries of Eastern Europe

In the Czech Republic (formerly part of Czechoslovakia) urban growth and decline follows a familiar Eastern European pattern. In the postwar period of the 20th century some cities were limited in growth because of population limits imposed by the communist authorities. Prague, the capital, was limited to 1,000,000 inhabitants, other smaller towns had their limits, too. In the 1980s a centralist system of settlement structure was introduced where some cities were intentionally stimulated to grow while others were shrinking. A new wave of Shrinking Cities began in the Czech Republic in the late 1980s and early 90s, and the changes in the urban structure are closely related with changes in the economy. The former mining regions such as the Ústecký and Moravskoslezský districts were the most affected. The Czech government had to work out special development programs for those regions to prevent their situation from worsening (especially projects for better employment opportunities). The process of gradual shrinkage mostly concerns medium-sized cities (pop. 100,000 – 500,000), e.g. Brno, Olomouc, Pardubice or Hradec Králové. Relatively prosperous, they keep losing their inhabitants because of demographic trends and out-migration to Prague and suburban areas. This trend is visible in small towns located in peripheral regions too. In some cases, former mercantile towns are now just larger villages, because they have lost their urban functions.

In Hungary, since 1985, the total population has been on the decline, as the gain from international migration does not compensate for the deficit from natural demographic change. In this process of overall decline, a gradual spatial restructuring is taking place. There is population growth in the central, urbanized region around the capital, while the population keeps decreasing in the north-eastern, eastern as well as south-eastern and south-western parts of the country. There were marked suburbanization processes around Budapest and major cities, particularly in the western part of the country (e.g. around Gyor) during the 1980s, especially in the second half of that decade. The growth of population in

[13] The terminology of shrinkage, used in English and German, is usually translated in other languages with terms that express negative features like *déclin* (decline), *rétrécissement* (shrinkage), and *décroissance* (decrease). In Russian, adjectives added to describe shrinkage: *сокращающийся* (contraction), *убывающий* and *сжимающийся*, (population decrease and spatial shrinkage [Averkieva, 2014]. Despite the conceptual identification of shrinkage, its application in empirical studies varies greatly with respect to the spatial and temporal scales of urban delineation [Cunningham-Sabot *et al.*, 2010; Châtel, 2011].

settlements around the major cities had been a well observable trend already since the 1960s, though it was not really suburbanization, but rather the result of an inflow from rural regions.

Budapest is the city that derives greatest benefit from international migration, with a long pattern of demographic decline turning to a slightly upward trajectory from 2007. The urbanized belt around the city is growing steadily and its territory is expanding. The core city is affected by several contradictory and controversial trends of growth and decline, prosperity and poverty, decay and regeneration. After the capital with its population of 1,740,000 (and well over 2,500,000 in the Budapest region), there is a considerable gap followed by the next size group made up of eight cities with over 100,000 inhabitants. All of them are surrounded by suburban belts undergoing growth, while the population figures in the core cities - after a steady growth until 1990 - have been fluctuating slightly upwards and downwards in the successive years depending on migration flows attracted by local industries.

In Poland, after 1989 there has been a radical acceleration of depopulation and the disturbance of the demographic structure of many areas as a result of the fall of socialized agriculture, state-run industrial plants, and the failure of economic restructuring in single-function industrial canters. The ever more readily visible polarization of the socio-demographic structures manifests itself in the concentration of the population in metropolitan areas and the depopulation of peripheral ones. Most metropolitan areas, benefiting most from migratory trends, have been able to adjust their economies to the new market conditions fairly quickly. The remainder of smaller towns grapple with such problems as industrial decline, high unemployment rates, and an outflow of population (especially young and educated). These are old industrial cities with the predominance of the heavy, extractive and textile industries, with most located in the south of Poland (in old industrial districts).

3.3.4 Measures

According to literature, there are no specific, shrinkage-oriented strategies and policies, but some sectoral policies can be interpreted as a response to urban shrinkage and the challenges it poses. For instance, in the Czeck Republic, and in other Eastern European states, there are initiatives to improve the former socialist housing estates, as the poor quality of available housing may contribute to further shrinking. City representatives started to pay more attention to urban development issues, with greater decentralization and local governments much more active in adopting measures and techniques of strategic planning and local economic development (LED). Local governments actively use such state development frameworks as state support for industrial parks and housing (mostly social and rented).

In Hungary, the National Spatial Strategy and operational programs of the New Hungarian Development Plan promote an integrated approach to the Urban Region of Budapest. Its objectives are the enhancement of the transnational importance of the capital in a knowledge-based economy, technological modernization, and financial, technical and cultural services. In response to urban shrinkage, the Budapest urban renewal projects include intensive development of public transport, regeneration of the city Center (the Heart of Budapest Project), and a variety of renewal and rehabilitation projects in the run-down inner-city districts, including gradual participatory projects, social rehabilitation experiments, and investment-oriented redevelopment.

The national Growth Pole Program focuses on the upgrading and specialized development of cities of the 100,000-200,000 size range, with particular emphasis on the mobilization and enhancement of their

local resources, such as traditions, cultural assets, and natural heritage. In their integrated development strategies, each city has identified its special orientation, such as new technology, creative industries, environmental technology, etc. Furthermore, several projects are undertaken for city center renewal (the so-called Main Square programs), housing renovation, and especially environmental upgrading of large, prefabricated housing estates.

In addition to these focused programs, cities in Hungary have demonstrated a variety of responses to the socio-political change and industrial restructuring. Gyor in the northwest and Debrecen in the north-east have been the most successful cases. Gyor benefits from its links with the West and connections to Vienna and Bratislava, and has preserved and renewed its industrial importance, consolidated by the recent rise in higher education and technological development. Debrecen, a traditional cultural and educational center in eastern Hungary, is becoming a center of medical and electronic research and of knowledge transfer and innovation. Pécs and Szeged in the south-west and south-east have taken steps to capitalize on their educational, research and cultural base; Pécs was a Cultural Capital of Europe in 2010. Székesfehérvár and Kecskemét, with their multinational manufacturing companies, are becoming subsidiary canters of the broad urban region of Budapest. Miskolc and Nyíregyháza in north-eastern Hungary are still suffering from the impact of industrial restructuring.

Proactive local governments in Poland often use state development frameworks and support programs for industrial parks and housing (mostly social, rented) to combat shrinkage. One of the major instruments of the state policy pursued then was the establishment of special economic zones (SEZs) offering, among other things, tax incentives whose principal goals included a reduction of unemployment or participation in the restructuring of old industrial districts (Stryjakiewicz 1999). Those zones were set up in such Shrinking Cities or regions as e.g. Łódz, Wałbrzych, and Upper Silesia. In the National Strategy for Regional Development 2010-2020, the priorities set for Poland in the urban policy field include revitalization of problem areas in towns and measures to stop uncontrolled suburbanization.

3.4 Shrinking Phenomena in Romania[14]

Most of the Romanian cities and towns are undergoing severe shrinkage as a result of economic, social and demographic transformations generated by the (still ongoing) decentralization process. However, Romania's participation in European-level initiatives dedicated to Shrinking Cities, both academic and political, is almost non-existent. The haphazard state-driven labelling and un-labelling of many Romanian cities as industrial in a short timespan led to an identity crisis, which was experienced first as a rupture in the natural rhythm of their evolution and then as a need to find a new direction. All this is reflected in the very structure of cities as they start bleeding residents for the first time: almost half of Romanian cities have lost a fifth of their population compared to 1989.

Analysed statistical data show that most Romanian cities, of different sizes and types (small touristic towns, industrial, agricultural towns, harbors by the Danube) are facing various forms of decline: socio-cultural, economic, physical, demographic. Half of the country's cities currently have 20% fewer residents than in the 1990s. In the last 30 years, out of the 320 cities of Romania, 163 cities have decreased by 20%, and 62 with 30% of the population. While many of the areas entering a steep decline are to be found besides prosperous magnet cities, in the marginalized towns, factories, houses of culture, meeting spaces,

[14] This section is largely based on and extracted from Ilinca Păun Constantinescu – PhD diss. and *Shrinking Cities in Romania* book (co-author of this paper)

even homes are closed or abandoned, and their inhabitants are being left behind. In addition to the generalized drop in birth rates, this drastic reduction of cities is given by mass emigration, temporary or permanent, as the only means of survival of the inhabitants in the context of the lack of attractiveness and opportunities of the hometown. This fact places Romania in the top five emigrant populations in the world.

3.4.1 Specific Context

The main circumstances that determined the emergence of shrinkage processes in Romania can be divided into two categories. First, there was the communist legacy of an urbanization heavily reliant on manufacturing[15] and of a wide range of flaws in the structure of cities. Second, the rupture caused by the shift to a capitalist economic system severely altered decisive economic and demographic factors.

Post-1989 is heavily characterized as a time of urban transformation. In the immediate aftermath of the dismantling of the centralized system, disorder reigned in the urban network as an entire category of towns lost their previously established identity and economic purpose, only to later enter a rapid course of decline. This sequence of events was generated by the intersection of problems inherited from the last decade of the communist regime and radical economic and demographic transformations in post-communism. The newly found freedom in terms of urban development clashed with the old, collapsing social structures and the local memory to produce confusion.

Economically, the shift from a centralized, planned economy to a decentralized model driven by private initiative and capital called for a process of restructuring. In time, this modified the share of the different sectors in the national economy. In 1990, manufacturing still represented the main economic sector, with a share of 58.1 percent in the national income. As communism collapsed so did the Council for Mutual Assistance, virtually the only outlet for Romanian exports, predictably resulting in a reduction of industrial activities in the long run. The populist politics of the early 1990s pushed for a two-step program: restructuring was to be followed by privatization. The restructuring of manufacturing companies that began in 1993 (affecting a number of thirty facilities) went on through 1994 (over two hundred facilities) when, for the first time, Romania faced a high unemployment rate (11 percent in 1994), particularly high in the towns upgraded to urban status in 1968—Adjud, Huși, Bârlad, and Darabani (over 30 percent). Surprisingly, in 1995 the industrial output increased, yet this was a false growth considering that the mining industry and the large national companies were still subsidized by the government.

The restructuring prior to privatization policy hindered much needed reforms. Industrial restructuring effectively began only after 1996 in the context of accelerated privatization; this time the facilities were to be restructured *after* being privatized (from 1997 to 2000). State subsidizing of underperforming industrial branches was cut, and the industrial output declined sharply. The most affected were mining and chemical industries, and only partially food and lumber industries. The 2000s saw the privatization of giants such as SIDEX, Petromedia, Mioveni Factories, which translated in significant growth, but overall, the number of people employed in the secondary sector continued to decrease, while employment in the tertiary sector increased only slightly. Other industrial facilities were closed down in 2004, 2007 and 2012 (Hunedoara, Reșița, CâmpiaTurzii, etc.). The impact of these decisions is still deeply felt, affecting the urban structures and causing the rise of the service industries, i.e. the tertiarization of cities.

[15] Before 1989, in Romania there were forty-three mono-industrial towns, with half of the population employed in manufacturing.

Embracing the capitalist society model, along with the economic opportunities opened by Romania's membership in the European Union, had other long-term consequences on the configuration of urban living. Megatrends such as globalization, social and cultural atomization, social disparities and cultural diversity were expressed as polarization. Nonetheless, one needs to keep in mind that inequality and urban polarization, as well as the increasing coexistence of growth and decline, are all chief concerns of contemporary societies. In the Romanian case, the overlapping of these global trends and local factors enhances urban dynamics, making it fast and unpredictable, "often calling for adaptations and strategic repositioning" and not so many strategies that succeed each other in a linear fashion.[16]

3.4.2 Demographics

A factor with a strong impact on the urban environment is demographic trends and shifts[17]. There are two causes that led to important changes in population figures. First, birth rates declined after 1990, as the ban on abortion was removed and no pro-natalist policies were put in place, leading to the aging of the population. Second, Romania's coming out of international isolation, the opening up of the international labor market to Romanians in 2004, the EU membership in 2007, and the constant political instability sparked successive waves of emigration.

As for internal migration, the early 1990s were characterized by the growth of large cities as population caps were removed. In the first six months of 1990, people moved in droves to cities such as Constanța, Timișoara, Craiova, Galați, and Pitești, causing hikes in population of around 10 percent—while the share of the national urban population went up from 53.2 percent in 1989 to 54.8 percent in 1992. With the adoption of the 1991 Law on the restitution of nationalized property, a wave of return migration from urban to rural ensued. As a result, farming was re-established as the main activity in some areas of the country and the share of the urban population in the total population decreased to 52.8 percent in 2002.

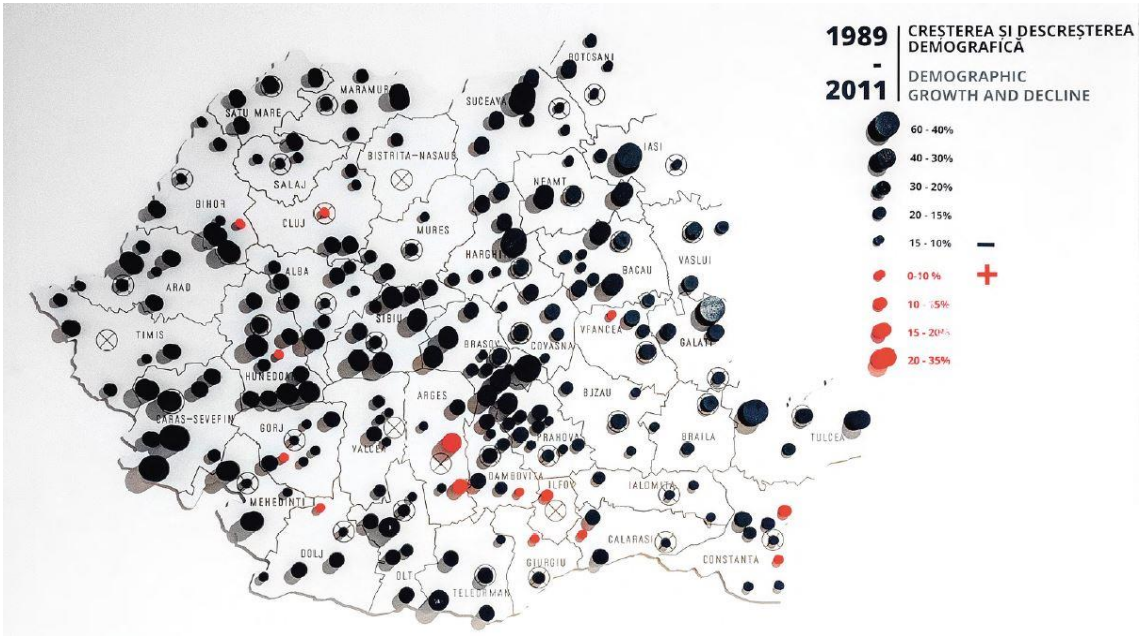
Some stark and concrete examples of population growth and decline is evident in individual cities from 1989 to 2002. As a result of the post-communist policies of industrial investment, the population of Mioveni doubled, while other towns likeCălan, Năvodari, Nucet, Filiași, Sovata, and Seini experienced significant population growth. The reverse occurred in the towns deindustrialized in the early 1990s (Bălan, Moldova Nouă, Anina, Predeal, Sinaia, and Azuga lost a third of their populations) and in traditionally ethnically diverse cities whose ethnic residents, for the most part, decided to emigrate to the countries of their ethnicity, predominantly to Hungary (Brașov, Sibiu, Mediaș and Cisnădie lost about 20 percent of their residents). From 2002 to 2012, the only urban populations to have increased were those of Ilfov and Giurgiu counties, a consequence of the suburbanization of Bucharest. Elsewhere in the country, deindustrialization continues, accompanied by alarming population decline —Solca, Agnita, Roman, Târgu Frumos, Oneşti, Buhuşi, Curtici, Ştei, Negreşti-Oaş, Corabia, and Lupeni have lost an additional 30percentof their populations. Indeed, the small towns were the hardest hit by demographic

[16] See Liviu Ianăși, "Noi practici în planificarea urbană. Oraşele mari din România în contextul integrării europene," (PhD thesis, 2012).

[17] For detailed information, see Vasile Gheţău, "The Depopulation of Romania" - Shrinking Cities in Romania - volume 1

decline throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, but other categories of cities lost over 30 percent of their populations too.[18]

Figure 1. Demographic growth and decline in Romania after 1989, according to the dimension of shrinkage and to the size of the cities[19]

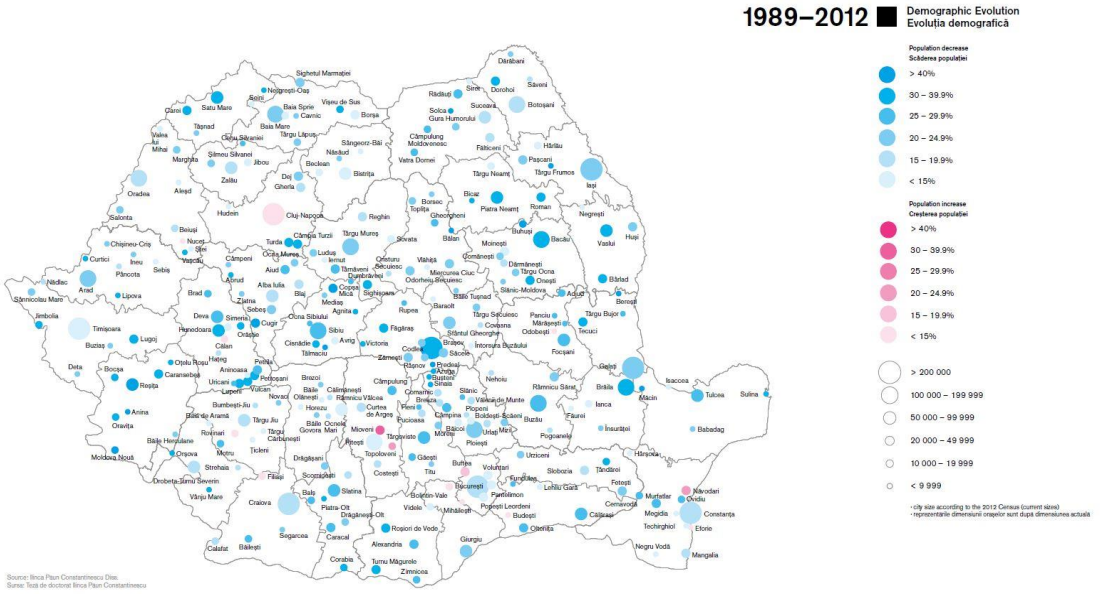


Source: Ilinca Paun Constantinescu diss.

[18]The cities that lost over 30 percent of their population from 1989 to 2012: Bălan, Târgu Frumos, Bereşti, Solca, Moldova Nouă, Anina, Predeal, Măcin, Cugir, Mediaş, Ştei, Reşiţa, Buhuşi, Tălmaciu, Bocşa, Agnita, Orşova, Roman, Cisnădie, Turnu Măgurele, Sulina, Negreşti-Oaş, Făgăraş, Curtici, Hunedoara, Piatra-Olt, Oneşti, Sinaia, Oraviţa, Caransebeş, Vulcan, OţeluRoşu, Petroşani, Vânju Mare, Victoria, Braşov, Roşiori de Vede, Azuga, Corabia, Vişeu de Sus, Buşteni, Bârlad, Bicaz, Vaşcău, Tecuci, Piatra Neamţ, Turda, Lupeni, Orăştie, Abrud, Lipova, Lugoj, Ţăndărei, Carei, CâmpiaTurzii, Bacău, Vaslui, Jimbolia, Satu Mare, Sighişoara, Brăila, Dorohoi.

[19] Maps and Infographics in the "Information Filter", Shrinking Cities in Romania exhibition, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, April-October 2016. Photo credit: Tudor Constantinescu, 2016 / Ingographic Shrinking Citie sin Romania Project

Figure 2. Demographic growth and decline in Romania after 1989, according to the dimension of shrinkage and to the size of the cities



Source: Ilinca Paun Constantinescu diss.

3.4.3 The urban planning response

On the whole, until the 2000s, cities in Romania lost residents to rural areas, with urban to rural migration effectively reducing the share of the national urban population. Consequently, to partially offset those effects, a wave of upgrades to urban status was launched under Law no. 83 of 2004. This process was flawed in many ways but mostly because not many localities fulfilled the minimum requirements under Law no. 351 of 2001 for Grade III urban localities—i.e., the minimum required number of residents, access to communication networks, facilities, etc. Some localities met none of those requirements. Facing major difficulties to finance their oversized local administrations, some of these essentially rural localities, largely unprepared to become urbanized, claimed back their rural status. In short, the small towns created in 1989 were joined by a significant number of even more vulnerable new towns.

In contrast to the surge of urbanization of the previous decades, the towns artificially created in the 2000s, along with the paradoxical stasis of the share of urban population over the past thirty years, are clear evidence of the decline of urbanization rates and of a series of problems with the urban network. Urban planners and geographers have pointed out several issues with the territorial distribution of cities. In addition to the relatively low urbanization rate (52% in 2012), cities and towns are unevenly distributed throughout the country, resulting in weak polarization. Further, there are areas with not one town or city within a thirty-kilometer radius or more, there is no real competition among cities, and vacant areas around large cities continue to expand.

The divide between the urban dynamics, on the one hand, and the response of the authorities and planning processes, on the other, has yet to be bridged. In spite of some earlier reform initiatives, mainly studies and Government decisions, the first law on regional development was ten years in the making.

When it was finally passed in 2001, the law had been long outpaced by the processes of urban transformation[20]. The legislation lent itself immediately to criticism from professionals, especially in what concerns macro-level planning. While it set forth very detailed rules for micro-level planning, rules that are often disregarded in practice, the law provided no guidelines for the operationalizing of the macro-scale principles. In continuity with the idea of a balanced territorial distribution of localities, Law no. 351 focused on areas with no urban settlement on a 35 kilometer radius, as well as on declining rural areas, without however tackling the issue of urban decline. This lack of support for urban development after 1989, as well as the Government's failure to acknowledge cities as drivers of the national economy, was dubbed "urban abandonment"[21].

3.4.4 Challenges and opportunities in small towns

The most vulnerable elements in the urban network are small towns. While large cities are relatively stable and provide both diversity and opportunities and most mid-sized cities have successfully adapted to the profound transformations of the communist era, the basis of the urban pyramid is the one most affected by shrinkage. These towns can be grouped based on their characteristics with each group facing different drivers of shrinkage and subsequently having different response options.

1. **Industrial towns**

Among the industrial towns, mining towns form a category of their own (Baia Sprie, Anina, Bălan, Brad, Cavnic, Motru, Rovinari, Moldova Nouă, Țicleni, and the towns in the Jiu Valley). They all share the dichotomous image of the 'hero miner'/ the 'unemployed miner' and the highly diverse communities once held together by the economic significance and the dangerous nature of the mining jobs, as well as by practices and activities outside the mine, that have become deeply divided after the mine closures. As a result of regional policies and the absence of genuine strategies of diversification, the areas that relied on a single industry were deeply affected by economic restructuring, and the massive unemployment and poverty that ensued.

Industrial towns that are very different in terms of profile (metallurgy, coal mining, chemical), size (small, >20,000 residents, medium-small, medium-big) and history (established in the Middle Ages, early twentieth century, during the Soviet-style socialist era or during the period of centralized economy) face similar problems. Declining or abandoned areas quickly appeared here, a process often enhanced by poor, uneven infrastructure, leading to high contrasts between regions. Most of the industrial sites were abandoned shortly after the Revolution, with no intention to repurpose or rehabilitate them. Reluctant to invest in cleaning up and converting old industrial brownfields, developers preferred to build on new greenfields already connected to the transport network. These actions had a huge impact, not only on the economy, but also on society, on the people. In addition to the lack of job opportunities and widespread poverty, the sterile social life is one of the main causes of migration and urban shrinkage. The former industrial towns represent indeed the majority of Romanian Shrinking Cities, but they are not the only ones in a state of decline.

[20] ibidem 7

[21] by architect and urban planner Liviu Ianăși.

2. **Tourist towns**

Another category consists of small tourist towns whose facilities—some of them architectural heritage—are temporarily or permanently abandoned (e.g., Băile Herculane, Borsec, Solca, Băile Govora, Techirghiol, and Căciulata). Given that these towns have preserved a positive image, revitalization appears to be the obvious solution here, but it depends on administrative and economic decisions that, more often than not, are hindered by disputes over ownership. So, despite an obvious potential for regeneration, the towns in this category remain vulnerable.

3. **Danube port towns**

A third group is represented by declining Danube port towns, such as Sulina, Corabia, Turnu Măgurele, Zimnicea. They are indeed some of the most interesting small or medium-small Romanian towns due to their unique urban layouts designed in the nineteenth century, their position within the country, both peripheral and open, and the similar deeply rural surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the strongest potential driver of growth, the Danube, does not currently play a significant role in their urban life.

4. **Agrarian towns**

The final category strongly affected by shrinkage are agrarian towns (4), former villages or communes built around agricultural production, which did not have a chance to develop an urban identity, e.g., Isaccea, Vânju Mare, Berești, Darabani, Babadag, Curtici. Usually situated in the lowland areas, these towns are too far away from major cities and to a large extent disconnected from infrastructure. Hastily developed in the last decade of communist rule, they are characterized by forms of urban dwelling artificially implanted in a rural setting and small industrial areas on the peripheries.

3.4.5 Effects of Shrinkage

1. **Ruralization**

The ruralization of the urban is yet another characteristic of small towns worth examining. This can be either a manifestation of continuity, in that the rural character was never lost, or a consequence of poverty, a state of regression. Therefore, ruralization is to be understood here, on the one hand, as a return to farming activities and, on the other hand, as a consequence of reverse migration, i.e., 'young retirees' and recent workforce in the 1990s[22] and the workers laid off in the 2000s turn to agriculture as a means of subsistence.

At the other end of the spectrum, the ruralization trend can be a virtue translated into a deliberate life choice, and not an expression of backwardness. Reactivating traditional lifestyles, while integrating modern comforts, is after all one of the major preoccupations of contemporary architecture. Perhaps some of these towns with problematic identities and weak urban features, characterized by a strong tendency toward ruralization, should be encouraged to transform so as to stay true to their main features, i.e., to become a type of city where modern comforts do not translate into an ill-fitting urban attribute.

[22] Under Decree-law no. 60 of March 1990, a large number of employees (in state-owned companies) were incentivized to retire early. Only from 1990 to 1992, under President Ion Iliescu and Prime Minister Petre Roman, the number of retirees increased by 600,000.

2. Gradual demise of urban attributes

Another recurring observation from the case studies under analysis is the gradual demise of urban attributes. This ranges from the closure or fragmentation of cultural or public commercial facilities, such as Houses of Culture, cinemas, "commercial complexes", or department store buildings, replaced by small temporary businesses or corner shops, which are more dynamic and easily managed, to extreme poverty cases where the residents give up basic urban utilities, such as central heating, water supply, because the costs are too high relative to the residents' incomes.

There are also small towns with urban features that are an untapped potential. Their identities could be easily reactivated or reinvented. In any case, the future of these places must be planned as part of the whole system; there can be no development scenario in isolation given that small towns are functionally dependent on the larger ones.

Box 1. The Shrinking Cities Project in Romania

THE PROJECT SHRINKING CITIES IN ROMANIA (2019- PRESENT DAY)

Gathering a large group of academics, researchers, artists, architects, urban planners and hosting several recurring events, Shrinking Cities in Romania is a pioneering initiative to raise awareness about an acute and pervasive, yet too little discussed matter, which is presented in an attractive and interactive formulation, aiming to create a positive perspective on a negative phenomenon. The motivation for this ongoing project was, on the one hand, to provide a clear picture of the current state of Romanian cities and, on the other hand, to demonstrate the extent to which the phenomenon is overlooked in the Romanian public sphere by the exclusive focus on growth processes in the public discourse. These aspects became the project objectives: to raise awareness about the overlooked phenomenon of Shrinking Cities in Romania and to state the resulting need to redefine the role of architecture and urban planning.

Timeline:

2009-2013: RESEARCH

Ilinca Păun Constantinescu, PhD dissertation, "Shrinking Cities în România. O abordare contemporană a contracției și declinului urban" (2013), Architecture Department of the Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism (UAUIM), Bucharest, supervised by architect Ana Maria Zahariade, PhD.

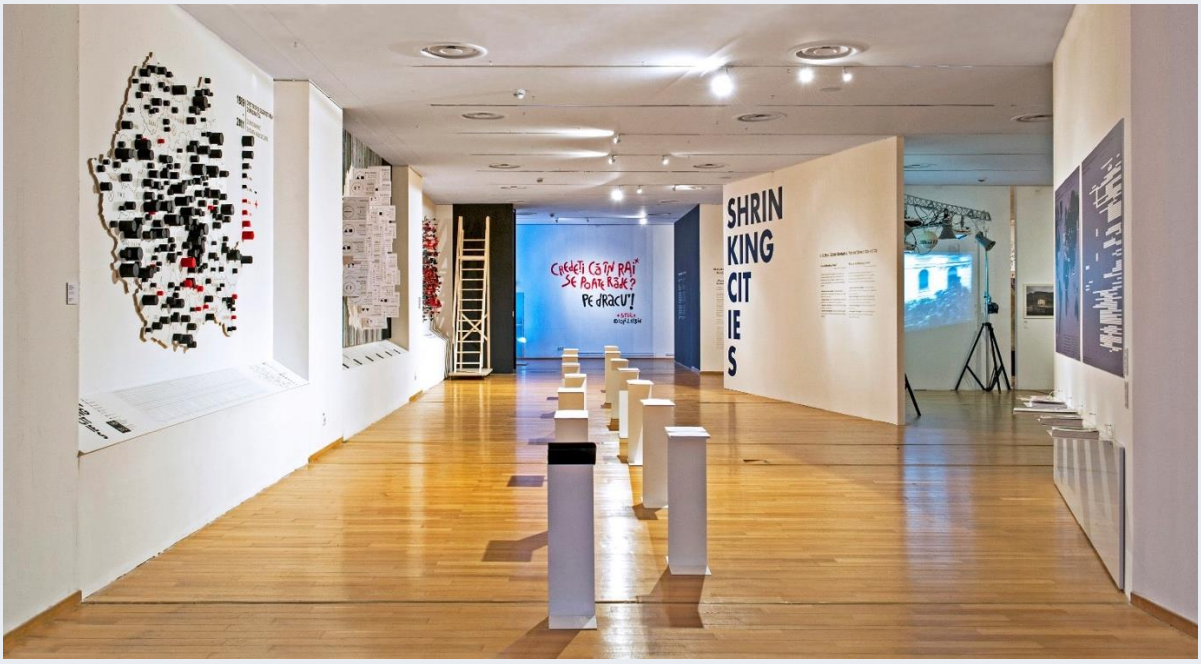
Coming more than ten years after a first event showcasing this phenomenon in Berlin (Shrinking Cities, 2004, Berlin, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, curated by Philipp Oswalt), the Romanian exhibition was preceded by a PhD thesis a few failed attempts to put together a similar project years ago, and visiting more than 60 cities across Romania, during 5 years. The field trips reveal stories about abandoned spaces, people who had lost their sense of purpose, and a general state of disenchantment. Or, on the contrary, incredibly enthusiastic groups of people that had cultural and social initiatives. The literature research approach as well as the field work contributed to defining Shrinking Cities with four contraction components - a definition that applies well to Romanian realities. Shrinkage is the result of a complex interplay of factors. As such, it describes a phenomenon that produces both quantitative

and qualitative changes at the city or neighborhood scale. It includes the following aspects: social and cultural shrinkage, physical shrinkage, economic shrinkage and demographic shrinkage.

2016: NATIONAL EXHIBITION

Shrinking Cities in Romania Exhibition at the National Museum of Contemporary Art (MNAC), Curator and concept: Ilinca Păun Constantinescu; Curatorial team: IDEILAGRAM Association; Architects: Tudor Constantinescu, Iulia Păun Curiman, Alexandru Păun, Laura Popa-Florea; Graphics: Gabriela Belcineanu; Partners: ATU (Asociația pentru Tranziția Urbană); Funding: AFCN (National Cultural Fund Administration); the Embassy of the German Federal Republic.

The exhibition in Bucharest undertook to introduce the concept and underlying problem of urban shrinkage to the Romanian public. Although it appears to carry entirely negative connotations, shrinkage, also known as Schrumpfung in the German literature, describes very complex forms of urban decline.

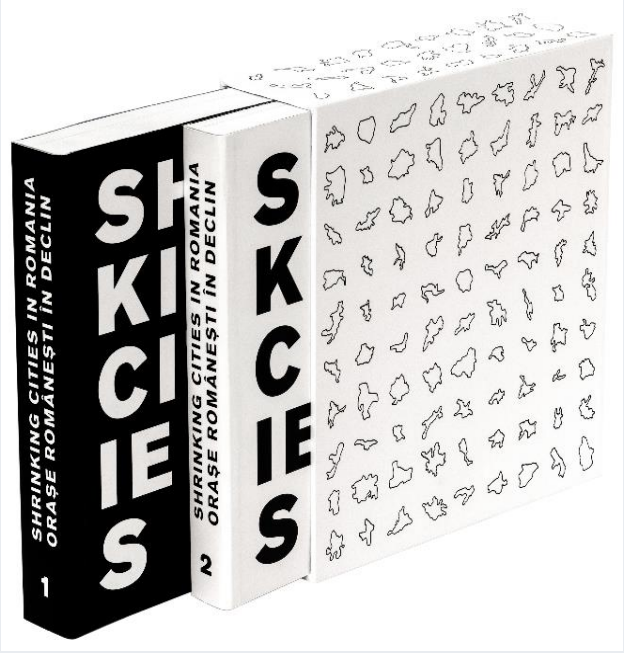


The "Information Filter" section of the Shrinking Cities in Romania exhibition, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, April-October 2016. Photo credit: Larisa Sitar, 2016

2019: INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION

Shrinking Cities in Romania / Orașe românești în declin, Vol. 1: Research and Analysis / O cercetare critică; Vol. 2: Responses and Interventions / Reacții și intervenții, Editor: Ilinca Păun Constantinescu, DOM publishers, Berlin & Editura MNAC, București,

In English and Romanian and internationally distributed, the two 800 pages volumes discuss the shrinkage of Romanian cities, as a widespread phenomenon. The publication follows the structure of the exhibition presented at the MNAC in 2016, a pioneering initiative to raise awareness about an acute and pervasive, yet too little discussed matter, and substantially complements its contents through extensive articles by distinguished researchers. Although mostly perceived as a negative phenomenon, shrinkage can be a vector for modernization and innovation, re-use, alternative resources, artistic creation, and reevaluation of interpersonal relationships.



2021: INTERNATIONAL EXHIBTION

The project is scheduled to be presented at the Venice Architecture Biennale, together with “Away” by Teleleu, in the Romanian Pavillon, “Fading Borders”.

KEY TAKEAWAYS & RESULTS

One major question arose in connection with both the 2016 exhibition and the book: How to introduce a difficult topic so as to articulate a positive perception of a phenomenon too often perceived as entirely negative? The project activities were therefore focused on:

- research and inform about shrinkage in Romania
- create an interdisciplinary platform for researchers, artists, architects and urban planners that is visible, action-oriented and debate-inducing
- foster as many bottom-up local initiatives as possible in the future.
- establish a connection with similar research groups in Europe and to provide a starting point for designing urban policies for Shrinking Cities at national level.
- point out the benefits and opportunities in working with SC communities and redefine the role of architecture and (urban) planning for these cases
- present complex ideas in formats and places that would help reach new audiences.

Besides the products (which enjoyed much appreciation from the professional community (MNAC exhibition, regular interdisciplinary and art events, international conference and the two volumes book), the impact of the project mirrored both the motivations and the specific objectives. The long term outcome is the contribution of this project to building a team with an interdisciplinary perspective on Shrinking Cities, and a confirmation that their work is relevant once it is made visible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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4. FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

SUMMARY

While the main causes of urban shrinkage are political, economic and demographic macro-processes, they translate in a highly dynamic, unpredictable, complex and varied urban and social phenomenon, that requires an integrated and transdisciplinary approach. A number of challenges remain in the general understanding of shrinkage as an urban phenomenon, and these are crucial to acknowledge as the focus shifts to creating tools for attempting to deal with shrinkage. These challenges can be summarized as:

- Misunderstanding shrinkage due to the disconnect between data and figures and lived realities (observed through field research);
- Underestimating the complexity of shrinkage and the need for an integrated approach;
- Acknowledge that shrinkage is a continuous process which is both dynamic and unpredictable; and
- There are many variations found within the broad term, each requiring different policy responses

But shrinkage does not only offer challenges and problems and there are opportunities for re-imagined futures in many of these places and communities. Some of these positive potentials can be found in:

- A more sustainable and environmentally friendly future in towns and cities with not only more space but even newly productive space from an urban agriculture perspective. The opportunity to right-size infrastructure within the bounds of agreed minimum service standards for a community offers greater sustainability potential;
- Aging tends to go hand-in-hand with shrinkage but through encouraging active aging and utilizing the skills and expertise a thriving "silver economy" can be developed;
- New forms of density can emergence, replacing built density with social density through human connection and interaction. Often forgotten heritage assets, including buildings, industrial heritage sites and even old tourist assets can be used as sources of focus around which communities can come together to preserve their heritage, create new community spaces and even stimulate a local economy;
- A wide variety of new developments in popular and high culture emerge from these urban crisis sites. Shrinking Cities are often the starting points for cultural innovation and spontaneous or organized artistic manifestations.

Policy responses to Shrinking Cities can be classified into four broad and somewhat sequential categories depending on the political economy of a country or a specific locality. This ranges from 1) Ignoring Shrinkage to 2) Countering Shrinkage, then 3) Accepting Shrinkage and finally, the most ambitious option 4) Making use of Shrinkage. The chapter includes an extensive set of practical case studies, mainly from Europe and Romania, for each of the four categories. The section on *Making use of Shrinkage* includes examples showcasing each of the four opportunities for re-imagining shrinkage mentioned above.

4.1 Challenges for understanding Shrinking Cities phenomenon

Many sources that were studied for this literature review report indicate the fact that a proper understanding of shrinkage is a precondition in shaping the tools to further work with this urban condition. These challenges were also briefly mentioned in the first chapter in the section concerning the shortcomings of defining and providing typologies of Shrinking Cities. Also, as previously stated, much of the preparation has to do with being open minded about it as an opportunity for change. Some of the challenges in understanding shrinkage better are outlined below.

4.1.1 Misunderstanding Shrinkage. Connecting figures and field research

While the urban shrinkage phenomenon is fairly universal, its essence is often hidden from view. Shrinkage is typically manifested in dwindling population, emerging vacant spaces, and the underuse or closure of existing urban infrastructure, ranging from industrial facilities, to houses of culture, schools, or public space. In understanding and interpreting shrinkage, field experience in research is essential. Figures are not enough to depict specific manifestations of shrinkage, that link economic to urban and social effects, mapping phenomenons, relationships, etc. One of the traps of working with shrinkage is having a mechanical approach when working with the cause-effect relationship, taking into account only the terms of decay, blight, decline, abandonment, de-urbanization, urban crisis, and demographic change), ignoring the dynamic that could lead to better/positive outcomes. Many authors have stated the importance of the field work that can't be replaced by tables and figures and even with field work - the search has to be made having in mind that little details can count a lot and that quantity is sometimes less important than quality.

4.1.2 Complexity of Shrinkage. Need for an integrated approach

Often, presence of growth and shrinkage occur simultaneously, in the same city, creating perforated urban fabrics and polarization. The same affirmation is valid at a larger scale, in which marginalized cities are often situated in the proximity of prosperous, magnet cities. Besides the effects observed in the specific shrinking areas, issues like migration, social equity, climate change, sustainability are to take into account. These translate in (1) the need to work with the phenomenon both globally, taking the regional context into account, and locally focusing on local specificities and observations and (2) a need for multi-disciplinary or even trans-disciplinary approaches of urban studies, human geography, social sciences. This overlapping of fields, perspectives and scales is difficult to transfer into practice, but it is the integrated approach that is the only way to deal with the complexity of shrinkage. (the literature on area based interventions for urban regeneration is also highly relevant in respect to this point).

4.1.3 Shrinkage as a continuous process. Unpredictability, dynamics

One of the main challenges in working with shrinkage is the ability to approach it as a process: a presupposition, a medium, and an outcome of continually changing social relationships. This leads to the idea of using adaptable planning, which may be reversible, and in which building may no longer be a goal, but a starting point. One of the traps is trying to reverse the trend without understanding the real changes in demand for residential, office, and commercial spaces. In many cases, a classical market-based, pro-growth policy based on competition has proved not efficient. The strategic challenge is to deal

with reality while accepting that the future remains unpredictable. Hence, „strategic flexibility becomes more important than the strategy itself" (Wiechmann, 2014).

4.1.4 Variety of the phenomenon. Different policy implications

There is a great variation of shrinkage, as shown in the first part, and very different kinds of settlements are affected quite differently. This ranges from Western former industrial cities, large cities in the USA, post-socialist European cities to cities with specific characteristics in Asia. Suburbanization, globalization, deindustrialization, aging population occur in many places and understanding these broad patterns is important, but only in correlation with particularities of each context. The variety relies on the relation between the different scales, sometimes in the historical and political trajectories which led to the current state, and, for the future and the different policy implication it is also a very relevant variety coming from planning systems, financial instruments, roles of the stakeholders, etc. It is then not enough to look at the built environment characteristics and the socio-economic data but analyzing the policy environment in which these shrinking processes take place is essential. (Haase, 2014).

4.2 Possible Positive Effects of Shrinkage

Several authors have already stated the importance of having a vision about the contractions as an opportunity for change. This section explores the characteristics of shrinkage that appear in the reviewed literature as being potentially positive. It is possible to plan for de-growth instead of growth, and for the improvement of the quality of life of the existing population, instead of competing for external big investments.

4.2.1 Sustainability / Ecology potential/ Environmentally friendly [23]

One of the issues that frequently come up in the literature on Shrinking Cities is sustainability. According to numerous authors, Shrinking Cities have the potential to be more sustainable in the future: the decreasing population and the higher rate of vacancies creates potential for a reduction of build-up area and therefore increase the resilience towards natural extremes caused by climate change. Also, the empty buildings represent infrastructure that can be used for new technologies and production processes which involve renewable energy, reuse of materials, etc.

4.2.1.1 Landscape is an important tool to work with: the empty spaces can become permeable areas and be linked in green corridors. Landscape can have multiple roles: (a) as a planning and a design tool, or (b) as a productive: urban farming, community gardens etc.

a. ***Landscape as a planning tool*.** By creating many voids in its structure, shrinkage will force a deeper integration of urban and open space planning, creating a better balance between nature and man-made, between the green space and the built environment. This is how the landscape of Shrinking Cities could play a much more prominent role in land use and urban design by making more room for nature. Taking a look back in the history of architecture, cities that were created as alternatives to large, agglomerated, polluted ones such as Ebenezer's Howard Garden City of the 19th century, or Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City in the 20th century, advocated for a morphology that is absorbed in an agricultural hinterland. Howard's well-known and influential

[23] Knowledge-Note 1 - on ecology

concept of the Garden City includes an agricultural belt that would provide a healthy city environment, food for its residents, and a sense of community spirit. Later, in the U.S. this time, Wright came up with the idea of the Broadacre City where farming and industry would coexist in a fully de-densified, dispersed, center-less city that would fade into the rural.

Extensive open spaces as building blocks have been used as experiments by the International Building Exhibition in Germany (see chapter V)

in the design of Shrinking Cities. Planners are using land that becomes vacant in the course of shrinkage as a component to change the basic structure of the urban fabric. As an example, large amounts of former industrial land can be redefined into designed landscape with a stronger presence of nature that could welcome sports and free time for all ages (adventure parks, bikers and rollers areas, but also simple walks).

b. **(*Co) Productive landscape.*** Visions or practices of organized urban agriculture are not new. There are numerous times in history when agriculture was sought as a solution to moments of crisis: in the nineteenth century, it was used to combat overcrowding in the compact industrial city and the alienation of individuals (see Howard, Wright); in the twentieth century, it was seen as a method to rebuild community cohesion and a sense of belonging after the world wars (Victory Gardens, or Scharoun, Berlin) or a means to blow off some steam in tightly controlled political environments; in the twenty-first century, it is perceived as a transition activity that could help rebuild social capital and community ethos after great economic and social upheavals. And attitudes toward urban agriculture changed after the famines brought on by the world wars: the Weimar Republic passed a law giving every citizen the right to an allotment that they could use to grow food, while Hans Scharoun made a proposal that garden plots should be included in the reconstruction plan for Berlin. Variations on the same theme were the Kleingärten in the German Democratic Republic (DDR), namely small unbuildable plots on the edges of towns, extremely popular after the 1960s as leisure spaces meant to give people a feeling of belonging.

   The co-production model is increasingly widespread. It takes up and reinterprets the principles of New American Urbanism that advocated for neighborhoods and the creation of communities in an increasingly atomized and self-centered world. Co-production implied that the local administration and community would work together to create public services that were then used by the citizens who had created them. As we saw above, as early as the beginning of the twentieth century, we find community gardens and even large plots managed collectively, under various forms of organization and ownership regimes. In the wake of the crisis of deindustrialization, the question arises today if it is indeed possible to go from 'urban' industrial production to urban agricultural production? (as in the case of Detroit, which will be illustrated in chapter 4.3.)

5.2.1.2 Scale down and slowdown is another concept to work with: determining a MINIMUM standard of service and infrastructure to assure equity and adjustment of living conditions. The concept aims at improving the quality of life, sustainability and diversity of local communities in our fast-paced, globalized economy taking advantage of local qualities instead of going with the global flow. (See the Città Slow movement, an international network of cities, mostly small size, whose aim is to provide a sustainable, healthy lifestyle to their residents, including eating local food, reviving traditional crafts and slow cultural and leisure community activities. For details, see www.cittaslow.net or https://natura2000.ro). This is

how Shrinking Cities can embrace new potentials for resource efficiency and have the potential for a healthier and environmentally friendly city.

4.2.2 Active Aging[24]

The aging of cities is a general phenomenon all around the globe, it is increasingly important for Europe and even more so for the Shrinking Cities. The demographics of Shrinking Cities are showing not only a contraction of the population, but also an increase of the ratio of elderly from the overall number. But there is more and more awareness on the role of the elderly in the local economy and on the possibilities of living a longer and healthier active life. The Active Aging Index of the UNECE is a multidimensional concept referring to a situation where people continue to participate in the formal labor market, engage in unpaid productive activities (such as care provision to family members and volunteering), and live healthy, independent and secure lives as they age. Active ageing policies are formulated at national and local level in order to address this variety of dimensions: enable possibilities for longer working life, ensure social involvement, encourage healthy lifestyles, and provide opportunities for independent living for both men and women[25].

Shrinkage and aging are both cause and effect for the other. With economic and cultural contractions, comes the decrease of the ratio of young adults, which leads to a less dynamic settlement. But this is only the case if the aging population is perceived as being passive, with limited resources to spend and with a high level of demand for medical care services. Hence, the positive perspective could rely on the fact that many of the elderly have to keep being active because there is very little replacement pressure - if they retire, many jobs would remain unfilled or they would simply disappear - leading to lack of variety in services. Since the level of competition for jobs is not very high and the ways of doing things don't necessarily have to change, their previous working experience is relevant. But in order to rely on this energy, Shrinking Cities have to support active aging by being friendly to the elderly.

Since 2007, the World Health Organization has presented already guidelines for age friendly cities[26]. It is recommended that in an age-friendly city, policies, services, settings and structures support and enable people to age actively by recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among older people. It further anticipates and responds flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences; respects their decisions and lifestyle choices, protects those who are most vulnerable and promotes their inclusion in and contribution to all areas of community life.

The Eastern part of Europe, although facing aging demographic projections, has not yet embarked in an active manner into international exchanges on specific policies and programs around aging[27]. The public agenda in this part of the world (that is still facing numerous challenges inherited from its past), does not yet cover the topics associated with age readiness. Hence, the case of Romania is relevant also for presenting the starting point of getting this topic on the public agenda, as well as for grassroots actions. One important step towards this public awareness was the National Strategy for Promoting Active Aging and Protection of the Elderly 2015-2020. The genesis of this official document is probably linked to the

[24] Knowledge Note 2 - on active aging in Shrinking Cities

[25] (https://www.unece.org/population/aai.html).

[26] (https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf)

[27] As the map of WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities shows.

European year of Active Aging and Solidarity between Generations (2012) that brought mobilization into the Member States central authorities. A forthcoming World Bank publication focused on age ready cities will include a deep dive case study on Romania and could inform further urban actions in this area.

4.2.3 New form of density[28]

This refers to the new spatial qualities that the Shrinking Cities develop, regarding space or buildings.

B.3.1. Built density replaced by social density.

First, lower density can improve life quality if balanced with activities. Built density is replaced by a social density of interaction and cultural functions. Literature on Shrinking Cities shows that this can be achieved by concentrating activities in cores and working with landscape for the rest. This stabilizes an important form of urban density, while keeping green areas for resilience functions. All the above are an interpretation of the idea of compact city, in which suburbanization needs to be controlled. Planners have to find balance between the de-densification of the city and creating a compact city to reduce the costs of utilities and transport.

B.3.2. Heritage. Valuing unused or forgotten existing resources

Most of the Shrinking Cities have resources that are sometimes forgotten which must be cultivated and developed. These values can be very diverse: historical buildings, industrial heritage, natural assets or even immaterial heritage, like traditions. In order for the approach to be sustainable, heritage must be made more attractive as a place to be used, lived, and better exploited. For instance, by permanently reusing / converting abandoned spaces, or first by temporary uses (as shown by Urban Catalysts) attention can be drawn upon these unused resources**.**

4.2.4 Innovation and creativity[29]

A wide variety of new developments in popular and high culture emerge from these urban crisis sites. Shrinking Cities are often the starting points for cultural innovation, spontaneous or organized artistic manifestations. Whether in music, art, or architecture, in literature, photography, or film – these are often part of novel cultures of everyday life based equally on the potentials and the difficulties of these sites. They often thereby make an essential contribution to redefining identities and mental milieus and thus offer important approaches for conceiving models of action. (Oswalt, Shrinking Cities Project, The Culture of Shrinkage). Only a few examples of creation are stated below:

a. artistic movements generated by crises. Art, literature, and humor are forms of resistance used by the mining city of Petrila, Romania throughout its history, not least as illustrated by local writer I.D. Sârbu, well-known during the communist era. In the postindustrial times, the contemporary famous artist Ion Barbu embraces change through art, but also accepts the decline as inevitable (Petrila case illustrated in 4.3)

b. Shrinking Cities and music- techno and house in Detroit, indie new wave and hip-hop in Manchester etc. Empty buildings and vacant sites, long abandoned by industry, gave

[28] Knowledge Note 3 - mapping the social connections and local heritage as a resource, places for being together - quality of life for the inhabitants

[29] Knowledge Note 4 - new cultures, redefining identities, means for expression.

young people the chance to create new forms of music production and reception: warehouse parties, raves and clubs. (Rockerill in Charleroi, illustrated in a case study box)

c. Shrinking Cities and film (see film festival Shrinking Cities Film)

As seen in literature, heritage, culture and creativity are catalysts for urban development in Shrinking Cities. More illustrations of this idea are to be found in the next section.

4.3 Policy Responses to the Shrinkage of Cities

This section describes how the challenges in understanding shrinkage (A) and the positive effects of shrinkage (B) translates into governance. As the literature has shown, the types of policy responses to shrinkage are divided between ignoring shrinkage, countering it, accepting it and making use of it.

4.3.1 Policy Response 1. Ignoring shrinkage

Especially in Eastern Europe, but also in the Western world, in localities where shrinkage is not really yet recognized, data are called in question, trivialized and brushed aside. Not admitting that the city has a problem blocks any possible reforms. The contributions for the 2 volumes of Shrinking Cities in Romania have emphasized this attitude ever since 1990s but have identified a turning point of today.

4.3.2 Policy Response 2. Countering shrinkage

This policy is based on the idea that the city has to regrow, and shrinkage is just temporary. It is well illustrated by two examples – one from the former Eastern Bloc (Dresden) and the other one from the US (Detroit), both with unexpected turnouts. They are both relevant in terms of the need for more flexibility – and the hard way that the local administration reached this conclusion after failing with an approach based on competition and market-oriented state incentives pumped in for growth but leading to failed investments.

CASE STUDY: COUNTERING SHRINKAGE

DRESDEN, GERMANY

Initially trying to reverse trends, followed by adapting to the trends with better results

Immediately after the political changes of 1989 and 1990, Dresden experienced vibrant construction activities, but, as in many other East German cities, the spatial focus of investment activities lay initially on the outskirts of the city. Plans for the inner city were impeded by long-held opinions regarding principles of urban design and by controversial property rights. Heavily influenced by national investment incentives, the construction of housing units reached a peak between 1995 and 1998 with an annual completion of more than 5,000 dwellings. This level was two to five times higher than in comparable cities in West Germany. Paradoxically, housing construction and out-migration reached their post-reunification peaks in the same period, the city lost 60,000 of its 500,000 residents within one decade. The result was an oversupply of housing, leading to a vacancy rate of more than 20% at the end of the decade. Yet, in the 1990's, the local administration was still organized towards growth objectives.

Phase I - Ignoring Shrinkage / Going for Growth (1990 - 1995)

In 1991/92, the city planning department prepared three major strategic plans: a city development strategy, a downtown vision, and a transportation concept. The ambitious stated aim was to reverse the trend in population decrease and to make Dresden a city of immigration. Planners expected 500,000 residents in 2005, and the city development strategy assumed the necessity of 50,000 new housing units, 700 hectares (1,729 acres) of new commercial zones, and more than 3 million square meters (32 million square feet) of new office floor space. Other objective was the protection and preservation of historic neighborhoods which, after fifty years of economic scarcity, were ruined.

Phase II - Urban Restructuring (1996 - 2001)

In the second half of the 1990s, the city changed its policy and focused on the rehabilitation of several large housing areas of the 1970s and 1980s, which had become increasingly impoverished and hotspots of out migration and social inequality. 9 municipalities with a total of 34,000 residents were incorporated by the City of Dresden. The new population of 471,000 residents inside the enlarged municipal area corresponded approximately with the population inside the borders from only five years before.

Dresden was included in the federal program Stadtumbau Ost (City Restructuring East) with an eight-year budget of 2.7 billion Euros - intended to stabilize the housing market by tearing down abandoned or underused buildings and improving more stable housing areas. As a precondition to receiving funds, municipalities had to elaborate integrated development concepts for their territories. The new strategic plan for Dresden from 2001was no longer growth oriented. Instead, the model of the compact European city with an attractive urban center, reduced land consumption, and a stable population was emphasized. A maximum of 1,000 new housing units are to be built annually and a certain share of the existing brownfields will become green spaces. Nearly 10,000 housing units have been torn down since 1989. These areas were or will be reused as green spaces or as potential sites for single-family homes.

Phase III - Reurbanization (today)

Today in Dresden, areas of shrinkage and decline are in close proximity to prospering and wealthy communities. The strategic challenge is to deal with this patchwork while accepting that the future remains unpredictable. Hence, strategic flexibility becomes more important than the strategy itself. Here, maybe for the first time in modern urban planning, planners disengage from the illusion of new growth and aspire to conduct a pragmatic deconstruction. An unexpected growth of 25,000 residents occurred, even though the region is still losing population. Processes of suburbanization have turned into processes of reurbanization with rising birth rates, less suburbanization, and a positive migration balance.

CASE STUDY: COUNTERING SHRINKAGE

DETROIT, USA

Failed flagship project, followed by sustainable solutions

The city of Detroit started to decline in the 60s and still, while its urban fabric was declining, the suburbs on the metropolitan fringe continued to sprawl. One of the peaks of the crisis was the urban riots in 1967, as a consequence of racial and social exclusion. As a reaction, the first attempt was to use major development projects to promote a revival. Expectation was that through building modernization and flagship projects shrinkage would be countered. This included a Civic Center complex on the riverfront and Cobo Hall and Arena, which were at the time the largest convention facility in the world, followed by Detroit Renaissance Center. In spite of the large state investment, the development did dot attract private investors and the large area stood deserted. Instead of recognizing the dysfunctional metropolitan problems that accentuated sprawl, doughnut effect and segregation, the city focused on a utopian project, proving a lack of suitable vision for the city's future.

After a continuous decline that attracted labels such as "the most dangerous" or "most violent" for many years, unexpected changes started to take place on the vacant sites of Detroit. A re-envisioning process started which was previously unthinkable: promoting nature conservation, environmental and commercial agricultural uses on vacant sites. From the most notorious industrial shrinking city in the USA, to its 1500 self-sustained gardens, Detroit radically changed its image of a "Motor City" into the most famous example of big scale urban agriculture that overlaps other functions.

The contemporary idea of urban agriculture is the self-sustained production of agricultural goods within the city, and sociologists like Bernd Hamm sustains that it should be strategically brought into urban planning. In a downsized context, moving towards the rightsized city, the idea of having a better city without growing is emphasized and urban farming, community food plots, gardens, improvised playgrounds and urban forestry are part of the new city image. A very recent trend is the one of agrihoods-agricultural neighborhoods, meaning centering agriculture in neighborhoods. It is mostly targeted at affluent millennials, who are increasingly considering proximity to fresh and "clean" foods.

The Michigan Urban Farming Initiative is a good example of a non-profit founded in 2012, the first sustainable urban agrihood from America. It has a 3-acre farm and is focusing on food insecurity in one of Detroit's historic decaying communities. It plans to provide a Community Resource Center with educational programs and meeting space across from the garden, a café, and two commercial kitchens. Products are free to all, the farm is open for harvesting on Saturday mornings. The agricultural campus that has helped sustain the neighborhood, attracted new residents and area investment.

The Detroit Black Community Food Security Network operates the largest gardens of Detroit, growing fruits and vegetables that are sold at local farmers markets, employs people part time and uses volunteers in exchange for food.

Oakland Avenue Urban Farm organizes frequent community events, farm-to-table dinners, parties. The agricultural neighborhoods create a safer, more appealing environment, and are attractions for newcomers to the city.

The lessons from Detroit are that massive flagship projects are unlikely to halt decline especially when precipitated by a significant adjustment in the economic foundations of a city. A more forward-thinking policy mix could make a difference in such places, particularly if regional spatial planning is supported by joined-up governance approaches and a degree of resource redistribution from growing to distressed areas.

4.3.3 Policy Response 3. Accepting shrinkage

This policy focuses on how to retain, rather than on how to attract. The tendency is trying to stabilize the population, and strategies are aimed at the improvement of the quality of life for the existing inhabitants. One of the directions this translates into is using and improving the existent built environment, either through new uses („new ideas must use old buildings"), or adapting old buildings, which fits with the concept of "ageing in place". As examples of this approach a study of Brno, Czech Republic is presented, and it is also evident in the German approach and even the UK's approach to planning for decline.

CASE STUDY: ACCEPTING SHRINKAGE

BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

Bottom up approach that has led to a focus on family support

After the WWII, Brno grew from 285,000 to approximately 388,300 in 1990. In 1960s and 1970s, large panel housing estates were built in border districts. During communist era, most workforce was employed in industry (mainly machinery). After 1989, part of the workforce switched from industry to services. Notably, Brno became the IT center of Czechia. Nevertheless, new industrial zones were built at the edge of the city. In 2001, the overall population was of 376.000 – and there is a small growing tendency today.

A bottom-up approach has led to a focus on family support. Making the live of local families easier is seen as the main solution to the city's shrinkage problems. Since 2008, the urban authorities have subsidized what they refer to as "family cohesion" with measures to improve the homework balance and the social inclusion of child-caring parents. In addition, families can get free advice and support at local contact centers that are part of the so-called "Family Point" project. For shrinking cities creating a child-friendly environment is a wise strategy, because it can be a decisive factor for local families remaining in the neighborhood and thus prevent the further decline of a local community.

**based on Schmeidler, K. (2012 in Urban Regeneration and Revitalization Strategies in the Czech Republic)*

CASE STUDY: ACCEPTING SHRINKAGE

WANSLEBEN, GERMANY

A top down approach within the German Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA)

Wanzleben, with a population of 5,200, is a small town in the historic agricultural region known as the Börde. It is no longer the district capital and has therefore lost jobs, inhabitants, and significance. The town has to cope with a process of shrinkage, but there is a good social capital base due to its history of plant research and cultivation in which a high proportion of its residents are educated and active. Informal structures for mutual help and communication are sound, and their erosion due to out-migration has been kept to a minimum. The town has forty-five associations ranging from cultural associations, the Volkssolidarität (people's solidarity), the disabled people's association, and even a "friends of the voluntary fire brigade" group.

Wanzleben, as one of the IBA laboratories, experimented with a model to stabilize its thinning urban society with an unconventional, intergenerational "family policy." Family policy does not mean strengthening the family in the classic sense but transferring the family system to a modern urban society. Social responsibilities will increasingly be taken on by selected families, friends, or the public—both through civic involvement and informally. One approach in Wanzleben is to strengthen the awareness of this neighborly help and to encourage its appreciation by the general public. In the IBA process, Wanzleben poses the question of how a local community should be organised in order to fulfil the tasks of welfare, socialization, and communality.

A group named "Familienbündnis" (family alliance) was formed by the associations and active citizens of Wanzleben. It started with the questions: How can we jointly take over the care giving tasks that can no longer be provided by the community? How do we look after our community? How do we prevent Wanzleben from becoming a dormitory town? How do we improve our quality of life? - "associations and clubs as family", "neighbors as family"

Another issue was the organization of school transport. In order to strengthen school solidarity, the alliance organised the secondary schools in Wanzleben to have a common midday break for all pupils, the so-called "Mittagsband." Activities such as the open-air cinema once a year in August, raft-building, or a Wanzleben soapbox derby keep up public interest.

A supporting measure to accompany the IBA project is the park along the "grüne Bande" (green belt) on the banks of the Sarre, with attractions for children, young people, and adults. The family league supported the BurgKrümel e. V. club's idea of developing a concept for a "generation playground."

4.3.4 Policy Response 4. Making use of shrinkage

The following ideas are recurrent in the literature dedicated to Shrinking Cities policy implications. The paragraphs below synthesize and group the documented statements in principles to orient action, that focus on preparation and managing the implementation process, in order to obtain good results (4.3.4.1). The last part depicts a menu of intervention, by describing frequently implemented projects, grouped around themes that mirror the positive effects of shrinkage illustrated in section 4.2 into sustainability (4.3.4.2 a) silver economy (4.3.4.2 b), low density as a quality (4.3.4.2 c) and creative industries (4.3.4.2 d).

4.3.4.1 Principles to orient action

a) Prepare well

- Before any economic or social reforms, the first step is to **accept reality** and then to shape a strategic vision. This vision may start from the idea of non-growth as a realistic and optimistic option and requires a change in mentality and embrace shrinkage. This affirmation applies not only to local governments, but also to planners, architects and developers.
- Consider the **territorial aspect** of shrinkage. The cities need to be analyzed as a part of a system, at regional, national and international level, with globalization and its impact being a part of it. Decide the levels of government at which the policy is implemented, taking into consideration the need to work at a regional scale as well, not only local.
- **Prepare in advance.** For the mono-cities preparing for deindustrialization or de-corporation prepare strategies and programs before entering into the declining phase. Think in the future, not in the past (do not repair what was ruined, rethink it from the present perspective)
- Find partners. **Cooperate and assure consistency at all levels**. Policy coherence is needed, try to get support both from the national programs and the grassroots movements. Take advantage of amalgamation of local councils, linkages of small communities, associations of public administrations, relations with local businesses and - sometimes - international / larger corporations cooperation. There are many actors and institutions that need to work together in this fragmented, uncertain environment, and, although they know that cooperation does raise collective welfare, it takes rules to impose working together to find the win-win (natural tendency is competition when limited resources).

b) Ensure a good process for good results

- **Work with shrinkage as an interrelated process growth-decline**. Understand the cycles of growth and shrinkage, and the diversification of strategies that work with both.
- **Local, custom approach. Focus on the existing resources.** The starting point for dealing with Shrinking Cities should be focusing on improving the quality of life using existing resources. Even if the city will be smaller in the future, it can be a good place to live - and even better than it was before shrinkage. The essential and lasting change comes from within the cities, in cooperation with directives from the outside, which may be too far away to really know the details of the problem. Sadly, too often old buildings are run down instead of being reused, and, apart from the sustainability idea of reuse, often the buildings are loaded with identitary values. Therefore, knowing the local resources and values is crucial. Cities may possess unused built or unbuilt heritage and the first step is getting to know the sometimes hidden potentials, by embracing the idea that new ideas use old buildings and using the surplus.
- **Understand the needs of the citizens**. Instruments and programs need to address the real demands of communities. They might not be employment, or skills, but a demand for services in health, education, environment, housing and entertainment.
- **Strengthen the communities** Community governance fosters networks, produces synergies in partnership. To overcome the consequences of shrinkage, joint action is needed: local authorities need to involve citizens in governance processes and the social economy, and help create co-services, also with neighboring cities. Empower civil society, because social capital needs to be a

part of the programs and strategies. Reestablish relations between the government (the public sector), the market (the private sector) and the civil society (the third sector). Achieving a new form of collective action produces outcomes that neither the state nor the market could have achieved on its own, but civic engagement is not something that can be dictated. If city councils want citizens to care for their community, they must enable them to do so.

4.3.4.2 Menu of possible interventions

There are many cases in which cities use the advantages of shrinkage. The implemented projects are centered on certain ideas, which are grouped under the concepts of sustainability, low density, silver economy and creativity. They mirror the positive effects described in a more detailed manner in chapter 4.2. Although organized in the text around certain concepts, the illustrated examples are often interwoven, as the ideas cannot separate, so the case studies should read as such.

a) Sustainability

Shrinking Cities have the potential to be more sustainable in the future, according to literature. The voids created in the urban fabric are opportunities to rethink the cities, embrace new potentials for resource efficiency and create a healthier and environmentally friendly city. The examples below explore the concepts / tools to work toward the idea of sustainability in shrinking environments.

a. **the scale down / slow down concept** aims at determining a minimum standard of service and infrastructure to assure equity and at adjustment of living conditions improving the quality of life, sustainability and diversity of local communities in our fast-paced, globalized economy. This is the starting point of the endeavor developed by the Urbanium group in **Turnu Măgurele**, presented above. Their aim is to use the untapped potential of the area, i.e., the natural resources, the agricultural assets and local skills, to promote small towns as an attractive, green, social alternative to large cities.

b. **Landscape as an important urban planning tool**, creating a better balance between natural and built environment, and as (co)productive landscape, as a transition activity that could help rebuild social capital and community ethos after great economic and social upheavals.

   The cases illustrate landscape as an urban tool by illustrating, a strategy developed through the Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) [30] that deals with **Dessau-Rosslau** and emphasizes the inner urban landscape and preservation of industrial and cultural assets, a project that was developed in a participatory manner. Further, it depicts the notion of a co-productive landscape and the example of a food cooperative with social purpose in Charleroi (**Avanti +Coopeco**).

[30] Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) or International Architecture Exhibition is a German device for urban engineering and architecture, in order to show new concepts in terms of social, cultural and ecologic ideas

CASE STUDY: THE SCALE DOWN / SLOW DOWN CONCEPT

TURNU MĂGURELE, ROMANIA

The declining Danube port towns, such as Sulina, Corabia, Turnu Măgurele, Zimnicea are some of the most interesting small or medium-small Romanian towns due to their unique urban layouts designed in the nineteenth century, their position within the country, both peripheral and open, and the similar deeply rural surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the strongest potential driver of growth, the Danube, does not currently play a significant role in their urban life. The Urbanium Turnu Măgurele approach, a group of young people from Turnu, is to enhance the natural heritage, agricultural assets and local practical skills to promote the province as an attractive, supportive and ecological substitute for the big cities.

In Romania, as in many East-European countries, the industrial facilities, legacy of the communist era, were abandoned or leased to local businessmen who gradually and purposefully brought them into bankruptcy. Discount retail chains have taken over both the centers and the periphery of towns, making them the only economic operators to have truly flourished over the last decades.

Urbanium was created in 2013 to attract activist and innovative art, social and economic movements to small towns (>30,000 residents), particularly in Southern Romania, with the purpose of facilitating the transition to urban diversity in Romania. For a section of the population, small towns are seen as an appealing, community-oriented, and environmentally-friendly alternative to large cities. The first experimental space was Turnu Măgurele, the hometown of most Urbanium members. This particular context facilitated the credibility of the project, as well as the adaptability of solutions and community participation. Moreover, Turnu Măgurele is representative of southern Romanian small towns due to its size (approximately 20,000 residents), proximity (cca two hours) to a large city (Bucharest), the development pattern centered on the chemical and agricultural and food industries during the communist years, unused natural assets, i.e., touristic potential. For all these reasons, they believe that it could become a model to be replicated in other towns.

In imagining its urban and community development approaches, Urbanium borrows from two global movements, Transition Network and Città Slow. Building local resilience, one of the focuses of the Transition Network, is particularly relevant for urban and rural small-size localities in Southern Romania as these are the most economically and geographically vulnerable to climate change. The harnessing of agricultural goods and local practical skills promoted by Città Slow could provide the creative and real development solutions that southern Romanian small towns need.

CASE STUDY: LANDSCAPE AS AN IMPORTANT URBAN PLANNING TOOL

CHARLEROI, BELGIUM

AVANTI Charleroi requalification center + COOPECO

AVANTI project is located in the former slaughterhouses of Marchienne-au-Pont which houses, among other things, Marchienne Babel and the Coopéco Coopératif Supermarket. Created in 2003, AVANTI is a socio-professional integration center which sets up collective, social, artistic, cultural, sports workshops. It is intended for any adult person, with or without training and professional experience. The project is also open to citizens of the neighborhood, as well as to anyone in a precarious situation wishing to enroll in a process of social and professional integration.

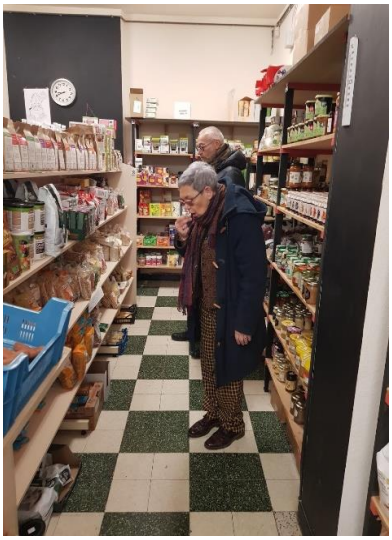
Recently, the CPAS of Charleroi has loaned a plot of 35 acres where an edible forest and a shared vegetable garden can be established. In addition to interns, people working on site and other associations that make up the place, citizens are invited to participate in the creation of the project; compost harvest, adoption of a tree for the edible forest, help in the development of a collective vegetable garden but also festive and convivial moments throughout the year. AVANTI offers several workshops; cabinetmaking, ironwork, performing art but also more recently, permaculture. For each trainee, the objective is to discover and use their skills through a program of 35 hours per week for a maximum period of 18 months. The projects and activities set up aim to meet the needs and wishes expressed by the trainees and citizens, while promoting emancipation, the expression of lived situations, analysis and questioning about what we are experiencing, its context, its local environment.

Above: Places of Work Below: People of Avanti / cantine and workshops

COOPECO (https://coopeco-supermarche.be/coopeco/) is a private Cooperative Society (SCRL) with social purpose established in 2016, within AVANTI. Coopéco is implementing a participative alternative to mass distribution. The store works thanks to the active participation of the member - a large-scale cooperative that offers everyone access to quality food and affordable prices, in an approach that respects the environment and people.

Priorities are the promotion of local producers, the use of short circuits, the placing of ethical and seasonal products in stores, and finally the fight against food waste. Each client is first of all a cooperating member. Everyone is therefore the owner of the Coopéco Super-Market and has an impact on its development thanks to the decisions taken together during our General Meetings. Each member agrees to participate in the operation of the Super-Market by making himself available to Coopéco for three hours per month. There are many activities to be implemented: search for funding, communication, management of the purchasing group, fitting out of the premises, research of products, recruitment of members, reflection on labeling, delivery, services associated with the store, etc.

The store is open 3 days a week and offers several hundred different products on the shelves that are usually found in an organic supermarket. The future plans of COOPECO include: opening of the store 6 days a week and increase to 400 active cooperative members, move towards the “One stop shop” with a higher diversify the products to allow most of the purchases to be made in one place, encourage the sale of local products manufactured with respect for the environment and people, insure low but fair prices for consumers and producers, develop new activities and related services (workshops, nurseries, personal assistance, etc.) to create a stronger community.



Shelves and Products of COOPECO

CASE STUDY: LANDSCAPE AS AN IMPORTANT URBAN PLANNING TOOL

DESSAU-ROSSLAU, GERMANY

Urban Core Areas - Landscape Zones

After 1990 and reunification, Dessau lost most of its industrial employment due to failed privatization and outsourcing. As a result, many young workers migrated from the area. The city has lost more than a quarter of its population and has a mortality rate twice that of its birth rate. To structure the city's shrinkage the local government bought back many of the disused spaces and spent 4.5 million euros demolishing defunct structures. The city organized a series of public engagement activities called "Days of Urban Redevelopment" and "City Strolls" to educate and involve residents in discussions about the future of the city.

The IBA Saxony-Anhalt created 19 separate city-wide strategies to deal with shrinkage across the region. Each city implemented a range of built construction, demolition, events and education programming. Tactics employed depended on the locality's particular needs and conditions. Dessau-Rosslau is one of the more successful cases from the IBA, able to implement a range of projects according to nuanced reimaging concepts.

The strategy developed through the IBA to deal with Dessau-Rosslau's shrinkage emphasizes the inner urban landscape and preservation of industrial and cultural assets. As disused buildings were demolished, the newly vacant lots were turned into open space. Residents participated with planners and ecologists to design different types of landscapes: meadows, rock gardens, energy-generation landscapes. There was a fear that the districts with much demolition would be abandoned, leaving them marginalized. The IBA team and local planners worked with residents and stakeholders to understand that the restructuring would be executed with a maintained attention towards these areas. They would be transformed but not forgotten.

Decisions about the new open spaces were made through a participatory planning process. The city with residents decided to plant the open spaces as wild meadows, which would allow for minimal maintenance (mowing just once a year) and a high level of biodiversity. To provide a unified identity to the swath of open space in the center of the city, a Red Thread project was organized. The 'claims' are 400 square meter allotments offered to citizens or local organizations to use. The basic rules for these 'claims' are that the spaces must be implemented for noncommercial and public uses without buildings. Completed projects include a beekeeping garden, a pharmacy garden, a Zen Buddhist rock garden, a multicultural garden, a biomass plantation and a space for BMX bikers. In addition to programmatic interventions, the claim incorporated landscape design features. Oak quincunx, an indigenous tree species, was planted across open spaces as a unifying design element. Old smokestacks were also left amongst the demolished lots to act as exclamation marks in the landscape.

The IBA program in Dessau-Rosslau also addressed the renovation of several historic buildings, including Bauhaus structures. Additionally, a social center was organized in a vacant storefront. The space is used for social work and an information zone for the restructuring activities. The investment for the Dessau-Rosslau projects included EUR 469,257,000 from EU Structural Funds.

b) Silver economy

There is a strong connection between the shrinking phenomena in cities and towns and the aging of their population, and they are both cause and effect for the other. Ageing population may offer opportunities for the development of new services and applications in the field of living, leisure and care. With economic and cultural contractions, comes the decrease of the ratio of young adults, which leads to a less dynamic settlement. But this is only the case if the aging population is perceived as being passive, with limited resources to spend and with a high level of demand for medical care services. This circle could be broken with proper analysis and planning for aspects that should be answered at national and local level so that any disadvantaged person of age has the same chances for social services no matter where he or she lives (larger subventions from national budget for the elderly homes for instance).

Local budgets, especially the strained ones, could address local specific objectives related to active aging, to prevention, to inclusiveness and social connections which can be very helpful in creating more cohesive communities and more resilient aging populations. In the Ruhr Area, an ageing area, the administration developed smart living concepts for elderly people. Turnu Magurele and Petrila offer positive example from Romania.

CASE STUDY: SILVER ECONOMY

RUHR AREA, GERMANY

The Silver Economy ('Seniorenwirtschaft') project aims to help as many social, health and economic institutions in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) as possible and to improve their range of old-age-oriented and age-appropriate products and services.

This is supposed to improve the living situation of older citizens in NRW and to increase the level of employment in companies that provide products and services for older people. The purchasing power of older people from NRW (but also from neighboring regions) is mobilized, and NRW distinguish itself as an (exportable) competence location for questions that concern the future of aging and the place of the aging of society.

CASE STUDY: SILVER ECONOMY

TURNU MAGURELE, ROMANIA

Aging towns with an active role in a rural territory

Turnu Măgurele is a good place to age in: it is a green city, with planned parks and squares, where activities can be organized. Everything is in walking distance. Most of its inhabitants live in houses with garden plots. While the aging population is dominant, the city slowly recognizes that its inhabitants are a valuable resource and their needs have to be taken into account within planning processes. During the COVID-19 pandemic the local administration demonstrated this understanding and took care of the elderly, sent baskets of food and organized mutual programs.

Grandparents and children after school in Parcul Mic

LAG (Local Action Group) *Turnu 21* is a non-governmental organization (cf. OUG 26/2000) established within a POCU project of preparatory support for the elaboration and implementation of an Integrated Development Strategy (SDL Turnu 21) between 2018 and 2023. It was a call for projects with a specific procedure for CLLD – community led local development focused on Marginalized Urban Areas (ZUM). These ZUM were defined through a set of criteria – and this mechanism required not only a mix of infrastructure (Regional Operational Program funding) with social development projects (Human Capital Operational Program) in those areas, but also a process that demonstrated a formal alliance between the municipality, the local business sector, local associations and groups, as well as the implication of representatives of the inhabitants of the marginalized urban area.

In Turnu Magurele, two areas in the city Bâlci , Rampa Gării) and the Center area were addressed., The level of dependence on social services is high: in both ZUMs, over 75% of the population's income comes from pensions, social assistance, social benefits. In the functional area, according to the opinion poll, 11.75% of people are in a situation of severe material deprivation.

The proposals of Turnu 21 local development strategy are described below together with the problems they are focused on:

Problem: Lack of leisure spaces for adults, including lack of cultural activities and meeting spaces. According to the opinion poll, the most common ways to spend free time are at home, on TV, computer or with household activities.

Proposal: Development of a multifunctional cultural center in the functional area for all ages that will offer the following services free of charge for community members, especially from ZUM. Creation of a group of senior volunteers / proposal to support the LAG in various activities, library or teachers in the Community Cultural Center / Flacara; nurses and doctors in the Social Medical Center, already functioning in Cinema Flacăra / a room for the pensioners to play backgammon, take painting lessons guided by a locally renown art professor (who is also around 70 years old).

Problem: Reduced access to integrated social and socio -- medical services - DGSAPC Teleorman does not have any service developed in Turnu Măgurele.

Proposal: providing social housing services: fixed-term / permanent accommodation of persons over 60 years of age who do not have a home development of a Community Solidarity Area for the collection of clothes, books, toys, other objects, food ("community refrigerator") and their distribution in ZUMs, in partnership with schools, already functioning in front of the church Sf. Vineri- weekly collections and exchange

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Problem: Lack of active involvement of citizens

Proposal: Creating community urban garden for all ages "La Pasarelă" in the passage area to ZUM (CFR / APL land Rampa Garii) / for the areas with blocks of flats, Participatory construction program of local development scenarios "TURNU 2050"

Other proposals include: Promotion of local producers and distributors ("Made in Turnu" brand, online map), promoting and consolidating activities and traditions.

CASE STUDY: SILVER ECONOMY

PETRILA, ROMANIA

Elderly as human resources for local policies and programs.

In the case of a shrinking community, experienced people are a valuable human resource in their jobs but also strongly involved into the local networks, sometimes opinion leaders and examples for others in getting things done and expressing their beliefs in doing them**.** Active aging is not only possible, but it is also desirable.

Professor Cordea, PE trainer, 70 years old

"In '97 we had 1,040 students at school. Now there are about 280. That's how you get an idea of what Petrila's future looks like." Mr. Ioan Cordea lives in the first house in the city, where the famous quote from I.D. Sîrbu is written. "Mr. Cordea's parents came to the Jiu Valley from Ponor, Apuseni, for mining. However, he chose another path, becoming, in '74, a teacher of Physical Education and Sports. He has 3 children: a boy, teacher in Petrila, a daughter veterinarian in Cluj and another who moved to London.

"I am most glad that I managed to practice and promote sports in Petrila, despite the harsh conditions. A friend who came to visit and seeing the conditions in which the children train, asked me in surprise: how do you get champions from here ?!"

Yes, Mr. Cordea "takes out" champions, because, in addition to school hours, he is a Kyokushin judo and karate coach. Although he has a vice-champion title and two bronze medals in judo in his personal record, the teacher is more proud of the performances of his students. He confesses that he did not keep track of the medals, but listed a long list of names of award-winning students.

Pharmacist Maria Puiu, 71 years old

"Cultural actions are like medicine."

Mrs. Maria Puiu is 71 years old, and for 49 years she has been working in the oldest pharmacy in Petrila, which in 1992 became her property. Everyone knows her as "Mrs. Maia". The Puiu spouses have 3 children: "One of the twins is now taking the orthopedic-traumatology specialist exam, the other is a construction engineer, and their brother is a lawyer." "My husband worked at Mina Petrila, head of the sector, then became technical director at Mina Livezeni. All pharmacists in Vale are married to mining engineers."

Eng. Cristina Șandor, 62 years old

Cristina is 62 years old and has worked for 20 years as a mining engineer, of which 11 years at Petrila Mine Preparation. She retired in 1999 due to illness. About the same time, she began to dedicate his time to the I.D. Sîrbu Memorial Museum., and to get involved in numerous volunteer actions, becoming a true civic and cultural activist. "I don't understand, I can't understand why they want to tear down everything: buildings in good condition, with so much history, like the Central Pit.

When there are viable alternatives, I don't understand how to choose destruction! You can't help it!"

***Casa Pensionarilor* (House of the Retired People) - services for the elderly:**

- Home services for those who are sick, are unable to move - paying bills, shopping, preventing others to take advantage of the elderly. (e.g., because many do not know how to use the internet)

- organizes trips with pensioners, at least once a month. Recently, tours of the mine and to the train station + depot were discussed.

- Members and the number of members has continuously increased. CARP Petrila now has around 4,700 members- Other services: funeral: transport and coffin for the deceased. There was a workshop where coffins were made. Loans are granted, funeral aids, but also for medical problems, hearing aids.

- Moderate monthly fee + a modest fee, separate from the monthly fee, will give them the opportunity to have someone to buy them or pay their bills. (fee 5 lei / month in 2019)

In 2012, Casa Pensionarilor supported the industrial regeneration workshops in Petrila by providing space, organizing a folk concert, actively participating in the debates on the future of Petrila mine and also offering dinner.

c) Low density as a quality

New form of density refers to the infinite possibilities of reusing vacant spaces and buildings and taking advantage of the new spatial qualities that the Shrinking Cities develop. Projects can take the form of valuing unused or forgotten existing resources by making use of built heritage (a), conversions of industrial areas (b), Temporary uses (Urban Catalysts) (c), or even controlled demolition programs, trying to find balance between the de-densification of the city and creating a compact city, as illustrated by the IBA (d).;

The examples focus on a long-term and successful strategy in **Leipzig**, that takes into account the new characteristics of the city and transforms them in policies, and a renowned example from **Băile Herculane**, this time a bottom-up project, where the reuse of heritage becomes the starting point of the possible revitalization of a historic spa-town in Romania.

CASE STUDY: MAKING USE OF BUILT HERITAGE

BAILE HERCULANE, ROMANIA

New ideas must use old buildings. Bottom-up initiative. Architectural heritage

This pattern affecting many Romanian spa towns is by no means unique to Băile Herculane. The resorts are still operating to some extent, but no improvements have been made in a long time, and the old valuable built environment is slowly turning into ruins. One by one, the spa facilities have been closed, and access to the mineral springs has been restricted, while the historic center has been completely abandoned, despite the resort's fame and the high demand.

Responding to an acute need given by the seriously damaged condition of the emblematic building of the Neptune Baths, a team of students, who meanwhile became architects begins a real struggle for social and architectural reactivation of the resort and manages to start, from their own resources, the construction site for the restoration of the building, engaging the owners and local authorities in a regeneration process.

d) Creative industries

Shrinking Cities need to harness the creativity of their citizens even in very difficult contexts to utilize buildings in ways they had not originally intended. As seen in literature, heritage, culture and creativity are catalysts for urban development in Shrinking Cities, and cultural manifestations can emerge from urban crises. Shrinking Cities are often the starting points for cultural innovation, spontaneous or organized artistic manifestations, be they in music, art, or architecture, in literature, photography, or film. The two examples both illustrate artistic movements that attracted public interest, and became in time important projects within their cities, leading to collaboration with the administration. **Petrila project** in Romania started as a bottom-up initiative in a mining city, with the first purpose to stop the industrial buildings from demolition. The initiative gathered first a nucleus of architects and members of the local community, but transformed into an umbrella project, called "Planeta Petrila", in which the administration also takes part. **Club Rockerill** in Charleroi is also a recovered industrial building transformed into a club containing concert halls, ironwork cooperative, artists' workshops and creation, that in time started to collaborate with Eden, a Cultural Center managed by an agency of the city.

CASE STUDY: CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

PETRILA, ROMANIA

Bottom –up actions, artistic interventions and Industrial Heritage turn in time into a scenario fostered by administration.

The story of Petrila is very much the story of many declining industrial towns and cities in Romania. There is, however, something that distinguishes it from the others. Petrila has the cartoonist Ion Artistic expression as perhaps the most honest form of perception, as it is capable of embracing and resisting at the same time. Art, literature, and humor seem to have been the favorite forms of resistance used by Petrila throughout its history, not least as illustrated by local writer I.D. Sârbu, well-known during the communist era. Ion Barbu embraces change through art, to be sure, but also accepts the decline as inevitable.

The project in Petrila began as a bottom-up manifesto against imminent demolition and tried to prove to the authorities that industrial heritage can be a source for regeneration in a town with serious social and economic problems. It commenced as a call from the local, internationally acknowledged artist and political cartoonist Ion Barbu, who specifically sought to establish an art museum in one of the main buildings from Petrila Mine. The original intention was to organize an architecture workshop that Barbu hoped would focus on converting the mine itself. The associated architects responded promptly to the call.

The project began as a research project called "Petrila: Regenerating an Industrial Landscape." The first workshop dealt with a coordinated multidisciplinary analysis, with the goal of collecting data that would serve as a basis for the themes of a future project. Five teams of architects and students from various fields (architecture, landscape, urbanism, ecology, and sociology) researched the mine's relationship with specific issues, particularly its own history, the city as whole, the public space, the residents of Petrila, and the housing settlements. The result of the study was an analytical book that integrated these fields in a way that had never been done before for a mining city from the valley. None of the many state-funded

projects concerning the Jiu Valley have integrated more academic fields, nor have they taken into consideration the value of the built environment in any way.

As a next step, our group reached out to the local authorities, seeking to formally include them in the project. Drawing from our workshop "Five Scenarios for Petrila Mine," the French-Romanian architectural team offered several possible alternatives to demolition to the city council. As the five scenarios, compiled in a prefeasibility study titled "Maintenance, Security and Functional Conversion of Structures with Patrimonial and Economic Value from Petrila Mine Exploitation," were unanimously supported in a formal vote by Petrila's city council, it seemed as though the collaboration had succeeded. Despite this, however, the demolition process continued. This represented the project's turning point, and the project divided into two complementary directions: one that focused on industrial heritage and one that migrated towards community-based projects. The participant architects turned to promoting the listing of several buildings for inclusion on the national heritage list, deservingly, but also as the only immediate protection against demolition. Petrila Coal Mine not only was the first mine in the valley (created December 30, 1858), it also represents the most important stages of historical and technical development of coal mining, from the early exploitations of the 1850s to the hyper-industrialization of the 1970s and 1980s. As a result of this act, the demolition of the buildings stopped.

2014 is the year of the first participatory intervention inside the Petrila mine: StartUp Petrila is a first physical action, a small representation as a scale of the existing potential: the former pump station inside the mine is highlighted by a temporary intervention (which has meanwhile become permanent), open to the public. Until now, this space has remained in the management of the local association Condiția Română, represented by Ion Barbu.

At the end of 2017, by the same civic initiative, PRIC was initiated - Regeneration Program through cultural initiatives, a coordinated process of action, whose ultimate goal is the development of the new administrative, economic and cultural center of Petrila together with an active and open local community. The implementation of the PRIC was based on: researching existing and possible needs and opportunities, mapping local, regional and national resources and facilitating public participation of residents. The first stage of PRIC consists in generating and implementing cultural events, in the form of tactical actions with a role in providing visible results, in the short to medium term both to gain the trust of the administration and locals, testing and validating PRIC directions and to increase culture consumption at the local level, the gradual development of new audiences and finally the reintroduction of the mine in the collective mind and the increase of pressure for reconversion.

The short-term objectives were to form the administrative structure to coordinate the process of reconversion of the heritage complex, to organize cultural events to maintain the general interest in the subject of Petrila (also involving an increasing number of locals), the transfer of the property SNIM VJ owned by the city of Petrila and the inclusion of the objective in the list of members of the association ERIH-European Route of Industrial Heritage.

Following this process, a new collaborative association, Planeta Petrila, was created, with the following founding members: Petrila City Hall - local public authorities, Plusminus Association - representative of professionals who worked to rank the ensemble, Ideilagram Association through artist Ion Barbu -, ACV Petroşani - representative of the local NGO environment, and partners SNIM VJ, the RUR coordinator for the PUG of the city, the representatives of the local civil society and from other cities of the country and experts in European funds.

The project is moving more and more into a collaboration form between the administration, experts and citizens. The fact that Mina Petrila becomes a new center of the city represents the chance of a change in the general discourse, from resignation to optimism and from fatalism to attachment to the common values of the Petrilean community.

CASE STUDY: CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

EDEN & ROCKERILL, CHARLEROI, BELGIUM

Spontaneous or organized artistic manifestations, supported by local agencies

In the mining region of Charleroi several interesting intersections between the administration and the civic society are found. An important factor in the transition of the city from its industrial past is Eden, a Cultural Center as well as a Center of Expression and Creativity recognized and subsidized by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Wallonia, the Province of Hainaut, the City of Charleroi and supported by the CPAS Charleroi. Most of its programming is focused on the Eden, a former theatre in downtown Charleroi that incidentally gives its name to the project, but its action covers the entire Greater Charleroi. Its seasons mix concerts, meetings / debates, open stages, shows for young and old. All these proposals reach more than 55,000 people every year.

Alongside its dimension of show broadcasting, Eden devotes a lot of energy to supporting amateur artistic practices and stimulating expression and creativity. Whether by organizing internships, workshops and workshops or by bringing a creative and cultural dimension to several projects carried out by the city, in a participatory logic that mix workshops dance, textile creations, circus, music, street arts, etc.

One of the collaborators of Eden is ROCKERILL, a concert hall, bar and cultural production space in Marchienne-au-Pont, near Charleroi on the site of the former Cockerill factories. In 2005, a group of artists and friends recovered and salvaged the industrial wasteland and renamed it Rockerill. A new life begins for the factory of more than 4,000 m2: concert halls, ironwork cooperative, artists' workshops and creation of the Rockerill Records label: the Industrial Apéros, the Rockerill Festival, the Uzine Festival, the FlashForward parties, the Flesh Factory Festival. The location was strategic it is true, located between the Sambre and the Charleroi-Brussels-Antwerp Canal, close to the Marchienne-Malinnes railway line and an important mining site.

** based on a study-trip to Charleroi* *https://www.eden-charleroi.be/eden/*

5. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE POWER OF COOPERATION

SUMMARY

"Planning for a shrinking area is far more difficult than planning for a growing city. Right from the beginning ideas should be developed with the people. The city could give up central control and give it to neighborhoods and communities instead, trusting that locals know these areas best and can therefore come up with plans for their future. In addition, if you have a strategic planning process for a shrinking place in which you try to develop perspective, it is more promising to involve citizens, the public sector and civil society"

-Wiechman 2012, Chair of CIRES network, p. 42

Many Shrinking Cities are rediscovering the benefits of working with their citizens to provide services and create employment opportunities, especially in a time of crisis and financial restrictions. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as many other crises have done in the past, points to the benefits of collaboration but brings with it some unique challenges as well. Many of the examples cited in this section points to the need to build trust and overcome inherent challenges such as a low level of experience in previous collaborative efforts. In many cases strong local leadership is a key ingredient to involve citizens and proactively work with shrinkage.

The EU's adoption of Community Lead Local Development (CLLD) and the establishment of Local Action Groups (LAG) to drive local level planning and investment seem to have delivered some success. Civic Society Organizations (CSOs) in its many forms (from NGOs to citizen groups) can play an important role in a broader civic engagement approach. This has proven particularly important and valuable as partners in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response in Romania. A set of recommendations to strengthen the CSO environment in Romania is also applicable at local level, including for example mapping the CSO landscape at local level to identify all active role players and building capacity jointly for local government and local CSLs.

Literature points to a key ingredient of successful strategic planning as a process involving citizens, the public sector and civil society. Many of the success stories reflected in this report point to a paradigm shift, in the sense that they openly address urban shrinkage rather than growth, regeneration strategy that focuses on small cities and towns over metropolises, and they see social inclusion as a durable solution for enhancing the quality of life in these cities. But the main instrument to achieve the proper implementation of projects in Shrinking Cities is, with no doubt, cooperation.

5.1 Cooperation between administration and communities

In Shrinking Cities, strengthening and mobilization of social networks are needed to create new forms of cooperation and of community governance. It has long been advocated that local administration should entrust the opinion and decisional power of the communities, as they know their needs and problems best. Giving responsibilities to the citizens in the public sphere, involving them in concrete

actions has also proved to be quite successful as participation leads to capacity building in communities and to self-fulfillment for residents.

While the literature dealing with shrinkage is filled with recommendations to work with communities and empower civil society, civic engagement is not something that can simply be copied from one place to another. If city councils want citizens to care for their community, they must enable them to do so, but this proves not to be such an easy task. The administration has to offer advocacy and support to communities and neighborhoods and intelligently divide tasks between citizens and government. There are several examples of municipalities in Germany that trigger the setting up of volunteer groups (such as students, employees from local firms or members of the community clubs) to help in diverse urban works, (painting buildings, renovations, carpentry works etc.)

Many Shrinking Cities are rediscovering the benefits of working with their citizens to provide services and create employment opportunities, especially in a time of crisis and financial restrictions. In many cases strong local leadership is a key ingredient to involve citizens and proactively work with shrinkage. This is well described by the case study of Altena, Germany, outlined below.

CASE STUDY: COOPERATION

ALTENA, GERMANY

A mayor leading change in a shrinkage situation

Altena is an old metal producing and processing town on the edge of the Ruhrgebiet. In the 1970s Altena began to lose large parts of its metalworking industries and the number of jobs declined from 9,000 in the 1970s to 5,000 in 2012. Over the same period population declined from 32,000 to 18,000 and the municipality expects to continue to shrink and eventually stabilize at around 15,000 residents, less than half the population it is designed for. The loss of residents and jobs has resulted in surplus residential and commercial property and a decline in the range and quality of services the town can offer.

The mayor understood that it was important to overcome deep-rooted denial of the reality of shrinkage among citizens, politicians and officials. It was important to recognize that smaller cities like Altena faced socio-economic problems which were as severe as those of larger cities. A strategy was devised with two aims:

- generate more financial support from regional government; and
- explain to citizens why services needed to be adjusted and reduced.

Through this re-envisioning process Altena was able to develop a new strategic perspective which no longer relied solely on economic growth to reverse decline but focused on how the quality of life could be improved with existing resources and in ways that are sustainable. The needs of older people were of course considered, but this group was presented now as playing a key role in reversing the fortunes of the town, rather than being seen as a burden on the public purse.

Encouraging citizen participation was part of this process and helped to turn negative energy into positive developments. This included investment in the local voluntary services council and a budget for small projects that can only be accessed if citizens are actively involved. A pivotal project which dramatically improved relations between municipality and citizens was the pedestrianization of the market square and riverside promenade. Improvements to these prime locations had been at planning stage for very many years but owing to lack of funding the municipality kept putting the project off. In the newly found spirit

of citizen-led action the municipality bought the building materials, closed the road on Fridays and Saturdays and called on the people of Altena to work with their own hands. Over several months the staff of the municipality, including the mayor, worked alongside traders and residents to resurface the areas. This process demonstrated that the municipality was determined to find innovative ways of working collaboratively with citizens and traders to improve the town. Since then, the strength of voluntary action by Altena's citizens has grown substantially.

This pioneering spirit recently resulted in the founding of a retail cooperative owned by the residents of the neighborhood it serves. This cooperative provides a butcher and mini-market in a neighborhood which 'market forces' have neglected for several decades. Residents are also taking responsibility for a growing number of premises the municipality would otherwise close, such as former nurseries or schools, and use them to provide a range of social care as well as cultural initiatives. Altena has a range of locational assets which were largely ignored during the years when the town was hoping that the prosperity of the past would return in some way. The re-envisioning process identified a number of assets the town could exploit. One of these assets is the riverfront which was largely obscured by civil engineering structures designed to deal with spring floods. Here the town opened up vistas, created access to the shore and encouraged cafés to open. At the time of writing this report two cafés were being established and a third was planning to open.

These and other initiatives are showing the first signs of a wider impact on the town. There is now growth in sales in the domestic property market with more people moving to Altena, and the commercial sector is also showing an upturn with new shops and restaurants opening. EU funds have been applied for to develop networks to overcome isolation and encourage the exchange of knowledge on how to deal with shrinkage. Perhaps most importantly, citizens are taking the initiative to use the assets of the town to help themselves. Without the contributions of the local community the mayor and the municipality are unlikely to have generated the level of positive change that is now evident.

Altena did not have the scope to develop flagship projects and instead nurtured its remaining industry and tried its best to manage with an ever-decreasing revenue base. Rather than being proactive in the early stages of decline, Altena was reactive and for several decades hoped for an economic upturn which would reverse its fortunes. This approach also did not help, because the population continued to decline which in turn exacerbated the problems and reduced the opportunities to reverse the downward trend.

Leadership is essential to develop new perspectives and initiatives in Shrinking Cities. This can be a difficult process because leaders need to find ways of incentivizing their citizens to become involved in a process of re-imaging the future of their city.

**based on URBACT and on mayor presentation, CIRES*

5.1.1 Challenges for collaboration in uncertain times

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has pointed to some weaknesses in the society and urban planning, but also generated cohesion and shed light on the importance of cooperation. In shrinking cities, this fact was even more stressed: fewer resources actually translate in a greater need for collaboration, rather than competition on those resources. With some larger cities seeing residents leave for more rural locations or larger properties in peri-urban areas and suburbs, symptoms that are similar to those in

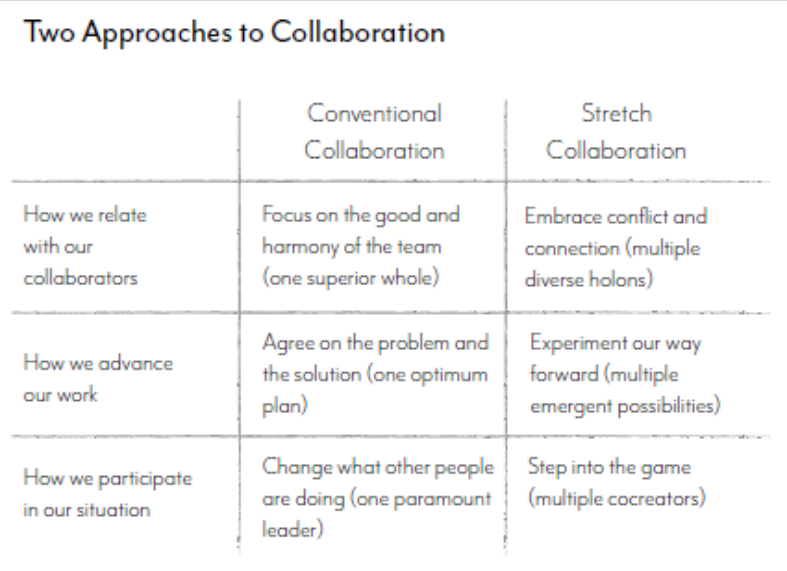
shrinking cities are being seen in different parts of cities[31]. This has raised questions in some quarters around more proactive planning or scenario building for post-growth scenarios in cities.

Box 2. A different approach to collaboration

In his most recently published work, Adam Kahane (2017) advocates for a different approach to collaboration under complex conditions and when the collaboration requires people who don't agree, like, or trust each other to work together. In his words, *Collaborating with the Enemy.*

The premise is that conventional strategies suffers from 2 premises, firstly that an elite circle of people know what is best for the others and are best equipped to launch change programs. Secondly, there is a deeply held belief that change will occur when we agree on a vision, set goals and define a predictable path to reach them, and specify observable measures, with timelines and milestones. Our conventional understanding of collaboration is that it requires us all to be on the same team and headed in the same direction, to agree on what has to happen and make sure this happens, and to get people to do what needs to be done. In other words, conventional collaboration looks like a planning meeting, which often doesn't yield expected results when working in complex situations with diverse others, and without control.

Kahane introduces the idea of stretch collaboration as an alternative to the dominant thinking about how progress is achieved. He outlines a process whereby those who have a long history of distrust, incompatible goals, and embedded stories of not liking each other can create an alternative future without reaching major agreements. This means bringing people with divergent intentions into a room together where the task is not to negotiate or develop action steps. They only need to agree that a condition needs to change, but at no point are they asked to give up their own solutions or story of their position.



[31] See support paper on Impact of COVID-19 on Cities as part of Output 3

Resilience through collaboration needs to be prepared in advance of a crisis. A recent study into the role of Civic Society Organizations (CSOs) and other civic networks in response to the COVID-19 pandemic found that an existing level of trust and cooperation is a pre-condition of success. Previous experiences of cooperation cleared the way for quick, open communication.[32] Civic engagement is widely considered a key driver for democracy and governance. While there will be a natural response to react during a crisis or challenge those responses can be better coordinated and oriented towards common goods (rather than individual benefit) in a community with a history of civic engagement.

5.2 Community Led Local Development (CLLD) and area based approaches

In 2013, the Council of the European Union endorsed the mechanism of CLLD as part of the new rules and legislation governing the next round of EU Cohesion Policy investment for 2014-2020. Financed by the Structural and the Rural Development Funds for the past 20 years, this approach has helped rural actors consider the long-term potential of their local region and proven an effective and efficient tool in the delivery of development policies. CLLD gives a new kind of role to local public administration to mobilize and involve local communities and organizations to contribute to achieving the Europe 2020 strategy goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, fostering territorial cohesion and reaching specific policy objectives.[33]

The main idea is that Local Action Groups (LAG) should be established for having a planning process that is led by the community. LAG requires all stakeholders to collaborate, the local public administration, Civil Society and not-for-profit organizations as well as private sector. The planning processes results in integrated and multi-sectorial area-based local development strategies. By planning together and by involving the three sectors of the society in a registered organization with specific rules and objectives, the challenge of really mapping local need and potential has better chances to be met. Besides, the process of planning together can be very helpful in assigning tasks to the LAG members and other stakeholders within the community for the implementation of the action plans embedded in these strategies.

Romania published its own, further refined guidelines for local development strategies in August 2017. This aimed to integrated interventions in Marginalized Urban Areas (ZUM) on the basis of the CLLD and LAG approach. The challenge was really difficult: the targeted areas for interventions within this mechanism were the poverty pockets in medium and small cities. Because the mix of funding (Regional Operational Program, and Human Capital Operational Program) required projects that are usually dealt with different departments in a local public administration, there was also a challenge of internal collaboration within the municipality. Public servants who do not usually work together had to be an active part of a process in which the Local Action Group had to:

- identify and fill in data about the conditions within the marginalized urban area – templates of the problems in the community that were imposing knowledge on indicators about the

[32] Calin,Alexandra; Volintiru,Clara Alexandra; Kasprovschi,Alina; Masud,Harika; Zambor,Andrei. Romania rapid assessment of CSO under COVID-19 conditions. World Bank. 2020

[33] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/community_en.pdf

built environment at different scales (dwelling building, neighborhood, public facilities in the area, etc.), but also about the cohesion degree within the community,

- organize training sessions on topics that are relevant for both the process and the results of the mechanism,
- organize actions for enhancing the cohesion within the community: cultural and artistic events, education activities, trips, but also concrete tools to get information from the inhabitants (mapping tools such as a box for questions and suggestions, public meetings, etc.),
- organize actions that would contribute to the decrease of segregation in these areas from the rest of the town (the measures and projects proposed for funding were to demonstrate their contribution to desegregation).

In order to be genuinely community-led, CLLDs require intensive communication efforts and information exchange between community members and different stakeholders. This would include a range of issues like priorities, objectives, sequence of activities, desired impact and possible risks for the projects selected for funding. This should be done through full transparency, while the community should be involved in all stages in the project preparation and the decision-making process. Mobilization of marginalized communities requires a few key elements, including mobilizing resources, people and leaders from the communities, involving an external facilitator (coach or mediator), developing community-building activities, involve media, and implementing community-based monitoring. One example of a Romanian city that has actively adapted the approach as envisioned in the guidelines for local strategies is Reșița.

CASE STUDY: LEARNING THROUGH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

REȘIȚA, ROMANIA

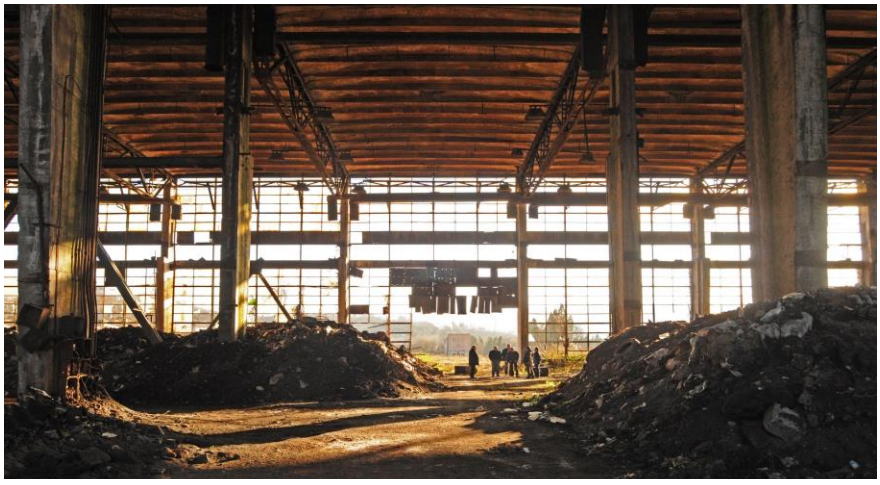
Reșița has seen a steady decline in population because of external migration, decrease of natural growth and particularly the closure of heavy industries (reducing from more than 35,000 employees to 1,500 currently). This city has several poverty pockets that qualified as marginalized areas for the call launched by the central public administrations.

Since 2016, the local political leadership of Reșița has committed to attract European funding and to fulfill the necessary conditions for that in terms of planning and preparation. One exemplary mobilization was made for the local development strategy required in 2017 for the mechanism of CLLD (*Dezvoltare locală plasată sub responsabilitatea comunității*). The municipalities intending to apply for this program had access to a grant for bringing Technical Assistance into the process of the elaboration of the strategy. Although the time was very short, the seriousness of the collaboration between the local public administration and the technical assistance team made possible not only a solid document that led to the funding, but also an increase in local capacity of both the municipality and of actors within the local community.

The strategy was elaborated with the help of an interdisciplinary team of professionals who worked with the Local Action Group (LAG) formed by the local public authority, charities, private companies, and importantly representatives from marginalized areas. The potential to access EU funds was a key motivator for the local stakeholders to embark in a participatory planning process. The process itself had to however still overcome some levels of reticence and mistrust, lack of experience in cooperation and perceptions by local residents that decisions would be imposed from top to down.

Resita obtained one of the highest scores in the evaluation of these strategies (ranking the 4th on a list of 31 cities). There were other planning documents prior to this strategy, including for example the general urban plan (PUG, 2011) and a local development strategy (2015). But these documents were not explicitly addressing the poor neighborhoods in which a complex area-based approach, combining interventions on the built environment with projects for desegregation, for community cohesion and for social services were needed. The process brought forward as priorities to be financed, backed up by evidence (mapping existing data, collecting new data through surveys), and by a genuine local consultation process. The funds secured through this process will be spent for reducing the number of people in severe poverty and social exclusion and for increasing the quality of life in these marginalized urban areas.

https://galresita.ro/strategie-de-dezvoltare-locala/

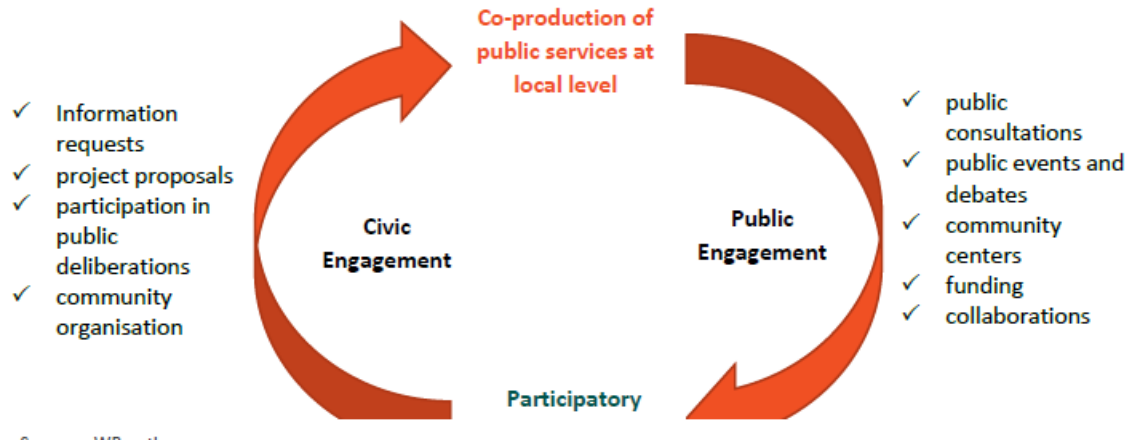


5.3 Collaboration dynamic between local government and civil society organizations[34]

Civic engagement consists of both citizens' direct engagement with the public sector, as well as CSOs engagement with the public sector. CSOs can play an important role in channeling information between citizen's and local government (both ways), acting as catalyst for civic and administrative action and assist in channeling resources. CSO engagement is one part of proactive civic engagement system but and cannot and should not fully replace a local government's direct public engagement efforts. They are however potential valuable partners, as the recent COVID-19 pandemic response has also demonstrated in Romania.

There is a virtuous circle between public policies at local level in support of civil society and the level of engagement on the part of local communities. Public engagement can manifest itself through such actions as funding CSOs or community-led projects, engaging in collaborative projects with CSOs or informal groups, organizing public consultations, events and debates, building or financing community centers etc. Civic engagement towards the public sector can manifest through project proposals, participation in public deliberations, community organization etc. The more active CSOs and citizens are, the more likely the local government will benefit from an input of ideas and knowledge that will help it develop its activities and implement new projects. Reversely, the more supportive a local government is towards its constituency, the more likely it is that the community will develop higher trust in the public sector and the perspective of collaboration with the state. This trust can nurture the dedication and involvement of citizens in solving local issues and needs (i.e. co-production of public services).

Figure 3. The reinforcing effect of mutual engagement



Source: World Bank, Romania Rapid Assessment of CSOs under COVID-19 conditions. P 49.

Local government's engagement with society starts with changes in the organisational culture of the local governments. The foundation of a meaningful collaboration with the civil society and the citizens is an institutional culture that values transparency, collaborations, willing to find the best solution and to

[34] This section is based on World Bank publication – Romania Rapid Assessment of CSOs under COVID-19 conditions (see reference list)

serve the public interest. Institutional capacity to engage is facilitate by such human resources elements as developing peer collaborations within national and transnational networks, peer-formation and know-how transfers, highly-skilled civil servants, and last but not least political vision. Equally important is the level of social cohesion, activism and willingness to engage on the part of the civil society at local level. The latter is however based on trust in the local government's good intentions and openness, and as such is achieved through iterative interactions.

The World Bank report on the role of CSOs during the COVID-19 pandemic in Romania points to a number of good practice recommendations. These could be particularly relevant and applicable in a shrinking cities context, with the below slightly modified to apply to local level as some of the original recommendations were aimed at national level:

1. **Identifying Civil Society at the local level :** In order to achieve a meaningful and constructive relationship amongst CSOs or between CSOs and public or private actors a local mapping of CSOs based in or active in a community is a necessary starting point.
2. **Inclusion of representatives of CSOs in relevant local or regional development structures :** Even if the regulatory framework for this does not exist yet, local actors could adopt best practice to ensure meaningful dialogue and broad representation on various forums.
3. **Building trust and social capital :** CSOs can further participatory governance, enhance the quality of democracy and increase the legitimacy of public actors.
4. **Role of the CSOs in disasters :** It has become clear that CSOs have the flexibility, the public trust, and the proven expertise, to support local and central governments in lowering the impact of a crisis. In order to be effective, Government needs to share data and information, to avoid fragmentation and duplication through coordination and dialogue.
5. **Data :** There is limited information on civil society actions at local level with a great need for more transparent, and a better integration and centralization of relevant data
6. **Addressing capacity gaps at local level :** In order to be effective, CSOs need to be properly funded and staffed and local government can also support in this way through the endowment of funds. Capacity gaps at local administration level is mirrored in that of local CSOs and various pro-active options for joint training and capacity building could be considered.
7. **Cities thrive where there is strong civil engagement :** This enables better governance through promoting public ethics and accountability on the part of public actors, can help cities priorities investments better and design innovative policies through public consultations, dialogue, and knowledge sharing.

In the boxes with examples from abroad the local governance system truly creates frames for consistent support for the civil society. There are examples of cultural centers as places to meet CSOs with various causes, small grant schemes, training, and many other ways to legitimize the CSOs to be part of the planning processes. It is further helpful to be clear about a precise roles and responsibilities, agree joint expectations, even when voluntary actions are mobilized.

5.3.1 Public Administration encouraging Social economies

Shrinking Cities offer the possibility of creating new successful economic models, such as social economies. The key tools are valuing social capital as well as valuing cultural, civic or entrepreneurial initiatives. In the same way as the market accumulates wealth, the social economy recycles capital and it builds alliances to pursue its interests. Social economy is a source of resilience that emphasizes the value and growth of social, economic, financial and physical assets.

Because Shrinking Cities experience a wide range of social, physical and also economic assets which are disconnected from the mainstream economy, social economy encourages local exchange trading schemes, and non-monetised trading. In these challenged urban areas, non-monetized trading and the activation of local assets and local talents could stimulate new cultural practices and ideas about community self-help. As emphasized in URBACT, 2013, "*social economy provides alternatives to failing private markets. It will not rival the market or public spending in situations of shrinkage but it can provide services, strengthen the capacity for self-organisation and develop more independent and collectivised models of revival*." An example of non-monetized practice is using virtual currency units. Members of certain networks buy and sell services but are paid in virtual currency units. For instance, a member who offers a service or product is paid in the local currency and this can be used to purchase other goods or services offered in the same system.

Co-production refers to citizens being involved in basic service provision with the view of contributing to quality of life and urban growth. It was first used as a distinct concept in the 1970s in the U.S. to encourage cost efficiency (i.e., to cut government spending with planning) during a time of scarce federal funding and pressure for economic reform. They used the term 'coproduction' to describe a relationship between public servants, as 'regular producers' and their clients, the 'coproducers', who make a contribution towards the provision of a service, safer or cleaner neighborhoods for example.

Co-productions are defined as local independent entities supported by the local administrations, made up of residents, community groups, nonprofits (sometimes receiving public aid), oriented on production

CASE STUDY: COPRODUCTION OF CHILDCARE

At a time of unprecedented budgetary austerity, many municipalities around Europe are beginning to build up their capabilities to foster the coproduction of services, in particular with regard to older people's services. Citizen participation in the coproduction of childcare services is also widespread across Europe, but participation takes different forms in different countries.

In France, Germany and Sweden many childcare services are initiated and managed by parents, who frequently substitute for professional staff. Parents coproduce childcare services in other ways as well. This involves a wide range of non-pedagogical tasks, such as keeping the accounts, cooking or carrying out repairs to the building. In addition, many parents also make financial contributions towards the cost of the services they use. However, without voluntary practical inputs a parent who just pays for the service would not be considered to be a coproducer; he or she would be a classic consumer or user of a service.

**based on- URBACT website to view the article 'Coproduction, a New Perspective on Partnership*

for their own consumption[35]. At its core co-production is a form of partnership and is increasingly seen as a useful way to describe collaborations between public agencies and citizens, which are focused on the creation of tangible services – because coproduction is directly focused on practical service provision. Co-management refers to these entities working together on projects, while co-governance is defined as strategic planning for projects and actions.

CASE STUDY: COOPERATION FOR TEMPORARY USE

LEIPZIG, GERMANY - GUARDIAN HOUSES

Wächterhäuser (Guardian houses) project was founded in 2004 when Leipzig's inner-city districts with its valuable Wilhelminian building stock were endangered by high vacancies and decay, in many places even by the danger of the collapse of buildings. In order to maintain vacant buildings, mostly along main transport axes where a further residential use is highly improbable, a civic association (Haushalten e.V.) was founded which unites architects, planners and other groups of people who want to counteract the decay of the historical building stock. The aim of the "guardian houses" is to save old and probably derelict buildings by using them and thus protect the buildings from damage through vandalism and ongoing decay.

The program creates a framework where homeowners and potential renters sign a flexible contract to settle the conditions of use of these vacant houses. The contract regulates permission for the temporary use of the houses. The mutual agreement means that no rent has to be paid (except domestic services) but the tenants or users have to protect, to maintain and renovate the rooms, the flat or house themselves. Private owners are given the chance to reduce the ongoing running costs and to find new uses for the buildings as the first steps to revitalization. The civic association – a bottom-up initiative – cooperates closely with the owners of the buildings and also with some branches of the municipality. They also foster the settlement of "urban pioneers" in areas of decline and empty properties. "Guardian houses" also impact on their closer neighborhoods, and they undoubtedly contribute to the upgrading of the areas in which they are situated.

**based on Wiechmann, 2009, 2014*

5.4 Integrated cooperation: Regional and city-wide urban development strategies

Working with shrinkage involves many actors and institutions across spatial scales that need to work together. It is a process of coordinating actors, social groups, and institutions to attain particular goals, discussed and defined collectively in fragmented, uncertain environments" (Haase, 2014). Individual cities often decline in the context of a regional decline, and when cities try to outcompete their neighbors this often leads to a "race to the bottom" type of downward spiral with many losers. Of course, collaborating is usually not a first instinct and therefore policies at regional or national level can play a facilitating role. One example might be the allocation of resources to fund programs and projects only if there are collaboration between multiple localities in a specific area.

[35] As defined by Pestoff and Bradsen

Germany offers some good regional approaches to long term collaboration. One example is the requirement for an integrated city-wide urban development strategy as a precondition for obtaining national funding for projects (Stadtumbau IBA). The underlying idea was that local strategies of urban restructuring should contribute to adapting the city to the consequences of urban shrinkage and should offer favorable conditions for new development opportunities. In this context, Stadtumbau Ost uses the concept of scaling down in an exemplary way. One of the most important projects of the International Building Exhibition (IBA) on urban restructuring, illustrated below, is being developed in Saxony-Anhalt since 2010 (IBA Less is Future) and has focused on the phenomenon of Shrinking Cities, creating perspectives for cities with high population losses and declining economics. The project explored innovative urban redevelopment tools that were tested in selected cities which are affected by demographic change.

An interesting similarity that would apply to Romania is that IBA focused deliberately not on large-scale, prestigious projects but on projects in small and medium-sized cities. The tools focused on seven intersecting themes (city types, landscape, education, legacy, identity, climate change and shrinkage). A box further below outlines the theses and principles for the program which were instructive in its design and ultimate success.

CASE STUDY: REGIONAL COOPERATION

STADTUMBAU OST AND STADTUMBAU WEST

Following negative demographic consequences after the unification of Eastern and Western Germany, in 2000, an independent expert commission was installed by the German Federal Government to analyze the problems related to contraction processes. The Laender (Federal States) in East Germany also established an urban restructuring policy with deconstruction and conversion in housing areas and an emphasis on the revitalization of city centers.

Thus, the funding program STADTUMBAU OST was created in 2002 by the Federal German Government. The program had an eight-year budget of EUR 2.7 billion and aimed to support East German cities and municipalities to maintain or raise their existing standards as attractive locations for both working and living. It was intended to stabilize the housing market by tearing down abandoned or underused buildings and improving more stable housing quarters. As a precondition to receiving funds, municipalities have to elaborate integrated development concepts for their territories. The idea is that local strategies of urban restructuring should contribute to adapting the city to the consequences of urban shrinkage and should offer favorable conditions for new development opportunities

Since 2002, it has become a center of expertise and allows for continuous academic assessment of the program and its implementation. Core tasks of the federal transfer office include enabling and actively supporting information exchange and knowledge transfer between the various actors involved in the processes of urban restructuring, studying and analyzing the implementation of the program as well as providing information and advice to the commissioning bodies.

Their priorities were to

(a) adapt to ongoing trajectories and **scale down** the oversized physical structures. No more new developments were going to be made, the city was going to focus on using the existing ones. The idea was to determine the minimum standard of service and infrastructure needed for the inhabitants. The second priority was to

(b) **improve the quality of life** and to create equity, by adjusting the living conditions, and

(c) ensure that **culture and creativity** are catalysts for urban development.

The Urban Restructuring in West German, STADTUMBAU WEST, is a similar promotion program initiated by the German Federal Government and the state governments, which has been a central to urban development funding in Western Germany since 2004. The priorities for the cities to receive initial aid in the Stadtumbau West programme are

(a) strengthening the **inner cities** and town centers;

(b) **revitalizing** industrial locations / urban derelict land or brownfields; and

(c) develop **residential areas**.

source: www.stadtumbau-ost.info, Wiechmann, 2014 and Shay, 2012

CASE STUDY: REGIONAL COOPERATION

SACHSEN ANHALT, GERMANY

IBA, Less is the Future

The region of Sachsen Anhalt has lost around 20% of its population since the reunification of Germany, leading to abandoned city centers, increasing decline in employment, vacant buildings and spaces. The IBA Saxony-Anhalt 2010 was singularly focused on the process of shrinkage, which they addressed directly, in a very focused manner. The process of shaping and implementing urban policies were tested in the selected 19 cities (*19 cities, 19 themes*), and resulted in a well- documented project (see reference list).

IBA 2010 was run in partnership between the Bauhaus, Ministry of Saxony-Anhalt and the local governments of each of the 19 selected cities confronting shrinkage from Sachsen Anhalt. Through practitioner collaboration questions about what new types of cultural, architectural, economic and social solutions could be developed to improve the urban conditions for Shrinking Cities were brough to the fore. Each city worked with the IBA team through a structured process towards distinct solutions. The diversity of cities and the small scale of each city lead to a diversity of planning methods.

The IBA team played a consulting role with the local municipalities and acted as advisors and facilitators for each of the 19 cities. They worked closely with local planners to develop solutions, offering international expertise and best practices, as an "outsider" . However, the relationship between IBA practitioners and local governments was independent, and ultimately, the local government controlled the implementation of projects. The collaboration was also financially separated.: IBA team did not work as a client to the cities. This structure allows the IBA a special independent consulting role, giving the IBA team autonomy and offering local governments unencumbered supplemental support.

Because the core issue for the IBA Saxony-Anhalt was shrinkage, much of the project work was focused on shifting the cities' goals from growth to increased quality of life. The small scale of projects and projects that could be rapidly implemented allowed the cities to try out many different approaches without high risk, gaining confidence and expertise in new types of restructuring projects. The projects included constructing new infrastructure, structured demolition and soft interventions such as temporary programming and education campaigns (a key focus of IBA).

Throughout the process, the IBA team and participating cities followed an iterative experimentation process, which was evaluated yearly. The IBA team would make annual trips with guest experts to each of the 19 cities and held a yearly conference for representatives from all the cities. During these evaluation sessions the cities presented their previous year's work for review, discussions around how the projects achieved the goals and setting benchmarks for the coming years. This committee reached decisions on the inclusion of the cities and their themes, assessed biannually the progress of work on the development of these themes and their associated projects and decided annually on the cities' continued participation in the IBA Urban Redevelopment 2010. This process engendered a productive competition and sharing of practice between the 19 cities.

Box 3. IBA Principles and Theses to inform design policies

The original text of the resolution passed by the cabinet of the State Government of Saxony-Anhalt on August 27, 2002, following which the IBA Urban Redevelopment 2010 was officially launched.

THESES

1. Urban redevelopment concerns us all: To communicate the interests of inhabitants, property owners, businesses and local authorities within the process of redevelopment.

2. Structural change represents an opportunity for urban planning: To discover unknown potentials and develop them creatively within the process of redevelopment.

3. The form of the city is changing: To specify pre-eminent images for the redeveloped city and realise these in concepts for districts.

4. Model projects define redevelopment: To redevelop the cities in an attractive way by means of experimental design and innovative combinations of use.

5. Every city has its own path of development: To identify the qualities of our cities and organise them within the regional city network.

6. Free spaces emerge through redevelopment: To balance relations between city and landscape.

7. Urban redevelopment taps a wide range of financial sources: To combine funds from the spheres of economic, social and urban development policy in an exemplary way.

8. Media and communication define the image of a city: To design city-marketing concepts for redevelopment.

9. Shrinking Cities are an international phenomenon: To organize and mediate urban redevelopment in the global context

PRINCIPLES

IBA Urban Redevelopment 2010 ventures a form of urban redevelopment that opens up sustainable perspectives for the people of Saxony-Anhalt despite high migration and declining economic activity. The route taken by the IBA in doing so may be summarized according to the following six basic principles.

1. The IBA and shrinkage

The themes and projects of the IBA propose the concept of a city fit for the future, with less structural density, but with new qualities in respect of areas of freedom, building culture, citizens' engagement, civic society and the generation of cultural, social and economic power in the predominantly small and medium-sized IBA cities. Cities must prove their flexibility in order to maintain and stabilize their urban quarters regardless of the population decline. Diverse projects ranging from demolition and de-densification to directed new building and densification in urban cores as well as projects under the agency of citizens' action groups generate options for action, which are exploited by the cities as a scope for design

2. The IBA and small and medium-sized cities

In global terms, a clear majority of people live in small and medium-sized cities, rather than in metropolises. The IBA Urban Redevelopment 2010 has made a conscious decision to engage with these municipalities. In doing so, it opposes the prevailing urban discourse, which in the past has generally focused on large cities. Urban development policy in small towns is not provincial per se. With committed citizens and pragmatic management, these towns are particularly open to the development of innovative concepts. For the small town of the 21st century, the IBA Urban Redevelopment 2010 offers future-orientated models for planning and empowerment.

3. The IBA and concentration on urban cores

The construction of industrialized housing in the GDR and the subsequent phenomena of suburbanization in the 1990s meant that building activity in eastern Germany shifted largely to the peripheries of the cities. IBA devotes more attention to the centers and attempts to support these in their many functions. With its historic, structural and functional density, the center of a town essentially defines its image; it facilitates orientation and gives the inhabitants a sense of identity.

4. The IBA and updating historic city centers

IBA unites monument protection authorities and urban planners who work hand in hand rather than against each other to conserve the existing substance and to bring together contemporary architecture and historic building culture. IBA sees the historic city centers as an important resource, which must be cultivated and developed. The process is by no means one of simple reconstruction; the historic substance must be improved upon during the actual shrinkage process with new ideas, programs and contents, but also new functions. If they are to last, then they must be made more attractive as places to live and work, and better exploited.

5. The IBA Urban Redevelopment 2010 has no landmark projects

IBA has not yielded any landmark projects in terms of spectacular buildings but has worked instead on the profiles of cities and brought new protagonists into the field. This is only partly due to tight public budgets, the decisive factor being the conviction that financially weak parties can develop sufficient power to act when they cooperate and find alliance partners. These kinds of strategies result in neither investment yields nor tax revenues, yet both culture and the urban community can reap the benefits over the long term.

6. The IBA of individual themes: 19 cities – 19 themes

IBA accepts shrinkage as a social problem and guides the participating cities on the paths they have taken to shape this transformation. Rather than invest in images ripe for commercial exploitation, it focuses on sustainable perspectives that will continue to have an impact beyond 2010. The themes can only be developed in a dialogue pitched to the needs and interests of the participating cities and in constant exchange with the protagonists involved. The IBA therefore deliberately dispenses with a collective mission statement in favor of a role as a moderator: it helps the cities to exploit their own resources and local contexts in order to develop their own approach to shrinkage.

The ABC model of strategic brownfield land management policies refers to the costs and predicted revenues for different types of sites. This model identifies three types of sites according to their economic status (due to the cost of regeneration, the value of the land, etc.). Sites are classified as:

- A sites are highly economically viable, and the development projects are driven by private funding. The redevelopment causes a clear increase in site value. There is no demand for special public intervention. The existing planning and administration system could give a general framework to the development.

- B sites are sites of local and regional importance with development potential but also significant risks due to the final balance of the investment and the need for advice and assistance in planning and funding. These typical brownfield projects are situated in the border zone between profit and loss. In these cases, public-private partnership strategies are most effective. Risk-division, coordinated planning and financing of projects by public/private companies are ingenious milestones for public intervention.

- C sites are not in a condition where regeneration can be profitable. Their regeneration relies mainly on public sector or municipality driven projects. Public funding or specific legislative instruments (e.g. tax incentives) are required to stimulate regeneration of these sites.

* Extracted from: *Philipp Oswalt, Klaus Overmyer, and Holger Schmidt, study commissioned by the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Weniger ist mehr – Experimenteller Stadtumbau in Ostdeutschland, 2001.*

5. ROMANIA: TOWARDS MAKING USE OF SHRINKAGE IN CITIES IN TRANSITION

Since the phenomenon of urban shrinkage still needs to be fully acknowledged in Romania, the current situation is characterized by small-scale bottom-up actions and not by a national-level strategy. Local authorities often misconstrue the scale of the decline and the very notion of community, broadly categorized as ignoring shrinkage all together, or acknowledging it without accepting it. The public perception of shrinkage is considered to be dominated largely by ignorance. Actions like Urbanium Turnu Măgurele which research shrinkage and call it by its name, with the involvement of the municipality, or the recent on-site Planeta Petrila interventions, which made shrinkage into a topic for local public debate, play a very important role in fostering acceptance and, even further, an understanding of the possibly positive connotations of shrinkage.

The main lesson learnt from applied research studies is that, beyond objective scientific surveys, managing shrinkage also requires intuitive understanding. There are still questions that remain to be answered: Is there a point of no return, beyond which recovery is no longer possible for a shrinking city? What are the best ways to combine short-term and long-term strategies to address social problems? Before thinking of any economic or social reforms, the first step is to accept reality and to outline a strategic vision. And this vision must be based on non-growth as a realistic, optimistic option. Further, meaningful, sustainable change can only come from within these communities, and not from directives sent down from far away at the top where real knowledge of the problem lacks altogether. The starting point for Shrinking Cities should be to focus on improving the quality of life using locally available resources and a practical approach to identify and enhance the positive features of underdeveloped, peripheral areas and to implement high visibility micro-projects easily accessible for their residents. The city of the future might be smaller, but it is up to us to make it much better.

While the situation of Romanian cities, particularly small and mid-sized ones, can be regarded as a matter of concern, as history has shown repeatedly, a crisis situation can be turned into an opportunity for improvement. The reactions to the exhibition and debates, the involvement of actors at round tables, the increasing number of small-scale, bottom-up actions, that are starting to be embraced by local administration, prove that in Romania both local communities, as well as administrations are now more and more ready to take advantage of shrinkage.

Managing decline successfully requires intensive policy coordination and investment programming across a spectrum of areas – at both national and local level. Cities which are successful at responding to shrinkage or initiating re-growth over time do not focus on one aspect: they perform a basket of activities focused on maximizing their local assets to the greatest extent possible. While such assets are often heritage or tourism-related, they include a specific focus on the residents and local community – the city's human assets. This requires some mobilization, involvement and strong leadership to revitalize aspects that have the potential give a city the dynamism required to gracefully weather and find new opportunities in its shrinkage. For some cities, this starts with rediscovering and reclaiming the city's

identity and building on the image rooted in its past to create a vibrant present. In the case of Alba Iulia[36], this has entailed identifying and investing in its notable qualities of the past which hold value in the present; creating the city's cultural brand; and complementing with further investments to support a resilient, healthy, connected, inclusive, and present identity.

CASE STUDY: ACCEPTING SHRINKAGE

ALBA IULIA, ROMANIA

A range of responses focused on maximizing local assets and improving quality of life

While Alba Iulia may not have shrunk significantly in terms of population by domicile, it is located in a region with significant population decline and face the disappearance of its youth and younger working population. This pose considerable challenges to its productivity, vitality and population size in the next decades. The city has adopted a comprehensive and consistent approach over the past 20 years under strong local leadership and built around four key pillars:

1. **Visionary and dynamic local governance which has served as a vector of its development.** Alba Iulia's local government has created and executed a long-term vision for its development in a way that dynamically responds to needs and challenges. This has included considering and piloting various policy options, leveraging expertise for its planning, public policy and investment decisions, and making ample use of EU funds.
2. **Investing in the key assets which sustain and celebrate its legacy**. The transformation of its citadel from an abandoned fortress to a center of cultural life for the city has given the city a revamped status as a source of local pride and touristic destination.
3. **Supporting complementary investments in education, infrastructure, and social inclusion, which build an enabling environment for its inhabitants to thrive**. Such investments have helped the city maintain an economic and educational gravitas, improve connectivity and capitalize on its central positioning, support quality of life across social categories; and champion citizen-focused digital transformation.
4. **Partnerships and collaboration between civil society, private sector and local governance in a format that puts the needs of inhabitants first.** Alba Iulia's pioneering of collaborative relationships between these actors at the level of the municipality and greater functional urban has been essential in confronting the interdisciplinary challenges encountered by a city facing shrinkage.

Alba Iulia has made strides in celebrating and showcasing its cultural heritage and this has yielded tourism benefits for the local economy. It has done so by transferring ownership of assets to the Municipality so that they may be steered towards more productive use, investing in and revitalizing these historic and cultural assets through extensive regeneration works, and setting a cultural agenda with events which maximize the use of its revamped facilities.

[36] See Alba Iulia case study produced as supporting paper to the overall Output 3 for this project

It is the right moment to think of an urban policy with a specific focus on shrinking cities, as the number of cities facing this challenge continues to grow and the country faces a post-pandemic recovery period. The local public administrations of shrinking cities need technical support and know-how for designing participatory planning processes underpinned by data and comprehensive field work. That means putting together both social and physical resources and creating a social mapping. Planning documentations and local strategies have to be elaborated with the *de-growth* or *re-growing smaller* perspective in mind – land use regulations as well as public investments in infrastructure have to be carefully backed up with solid arguments, based on existing resources, and not on resources that would be eventually attracted in the too distant future. Just as in area-based interventions, shrinking cities require an integrated approach – local housing policies, green policies, heritage protection ones, mobility policies – all of these are inter-dependent. It is important to define micro-projects at neighborhood level that could insure this integration better than overall schemes for the whole shrinking city.

Being labelled a shrinking city is not a nice position for any mayor or community, but when these towns and cities are thought of as Cities in Transition with a bright but smaller future, the narrative can be changed. A focus on right-sizing existing infrastructure and carefully planning future infrastructure investments to ensure fit and sustainability within a smaller demographic context will have long term benefits for individual communities and the country as a whole. Tapping into the local assets – heritage buildings, tourist attractions and the people of a location, even an aging population, should be the foundation of any future local plans and strategies for these cities in transition.

6. ANNEXURES

Annexure A : Summary of Case Studies per Policy response options (Section 4) and on Cooperation (Section 5)

Policy Response 1: Ignoring shrinkage

None

Policy Response 2. Countering shrinkage

Dresden, Germany	Initially trying to reverse trends, followed by adapting to the trends with better results	Page 48
Detroit, USA	Failed flagship projects, followed by sustainable solutions	Page 49

Policy Response 3. Accepting shrinkage

Brno, Czech Republic	Bottom-up approach that has led to a focus on family support	Page 50
Wansleben, Germany	A top down approach within the German Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA)	Page 51

Policy Response 4. Making use of shrinkage

Turnu Măgurele, Romania	The scale down / slow down concept	Page 54
Charleroi, Blegium	Landscape as an important urban planning tool	Page 55
Desau-Rosslau, Germany	Landscape as an important urban planning tool Urban core areas - landscape zones	Page 57
Ruhr area, Germany	Silver economy	Page 58
Turnu Măgurele, Romania	Silver economy - Aging towns with an active role in a rural territory	Page 59
Petrila, Romania	Elderly as human resources for local policies and programs	Page 61
Leipzig, Germany	Making use of new density	Page 64
Baile Herculane, Romania	Making use of built heritage - New ideas must use old buildings. Bottom-up initiative. Architectural heritage	Page 65

Petrila, Romania	Creative industries – bottom up actions, artistic interventions and industrial heritage turn in time into a scenario fostered by administration	Page 66
Charleroi, Blegium (Eden & Rockerill)	Creative Industries - Spontaneous or organized artistic manifestations, supported by local agencies	Page 68

Section 6 :

Altena, Germany	Cooperation between administration and residents: A mayor leading change in a shrinkage situation	Page 70
Resita, Romania	Learning through technical assistance	Page 75
EU	Co-production of Childcare	Page 78
Leipzig, Germany	Co-production of temporary use of buildings (Guardian Houses)	Page 79
Germany	Regional Cooperation : Stadtumbau Ost and Stadtumbau West	Page 81
Sachsen Anhalt, Germany	Regional Cooperation (IBA approach – Less is the future)	Page 82

Section 7 :

Albu Iulia, Romania	Accepting Shrinkage	Page 87

Annexure B: Summary of approaches to and tools for making use of shrinkage (extracted from Section 4)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Principles</th></tr>
<tr><td>Prepare well
Accept shrinkage as a reality and then to shape a strategic vision around realistic non-growth
Consider the territorial aspect – a shrinking city is part of a regional, national and even international system
Find partners and begin to cooperate to ensure consistency at all levels – from national government to grassroots movements
Rethink from the present perspective and not a desire to repair what is ruined – in some cases decline can be anticipated and could be planned for in advance</td><td>Ensure a good process for good results
Work with shrinkage as an interrelated process of growth-decline
Focus on using existing resources to improve quality of life and build an approach grounded in local values.
Understand the needs of the citizens, instruments and programs need to address the real demands of communities.
Strengthen communities to become active participants - collective action can produce outcomes that neither the state nor the market could have achieved on its own</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Menu of possible interventions</th></tr>
<tr><td><u>Sustainability</u>
Potential for resource efficiency and to create a healthier and environmentally friendly city
Scale down/slow down minimum standard of service and infrastructure to assure equity and at adjustment of living conditions improving the quality of life, sustainability and diversity
Landscape as an important urban planning tool:
preservation of industrial and cultural assets
Co-productive landscapes</td><td><u>Low density</u>
Infinite possibilities of reusing vacant spaces and buildings and taking advantage of new spatial qualities that the Shrinking Cities develop
Compact cities with vibrant core countering sprawl
New ideas must use old buildings
Heritage preservation</td></tr>
<tr><td><u>Silver economy</u>
Ageing population may offer opportunities for the development of new services and applications in the field of living, leisure and care
Access to social services
inclusiveness and social connections to broader community
Productive and appreciated part of work force</td><td><u>Creativity</u>
Creativity is a catalyst for urban development and cultural manifestations can emerge from urban crises
Artistic movements can attract significant public interest
Collaboration between artist and administration, offering cultural vibrancy to communities
Productive use of vacant and heritage buildings and spaces</td></tr>
</table>

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Research groups, workshops, conferences

COST Action / Cities Regrowing Smaller / Thorsten Wiechmann (2009-2013)

Shrink Smart Project / (2009-2012) Leipzig / Dieter Rink, Annegret Haase

URBACT / Cites of Tomorrow

EUKN

Shrinking Cities in Romania

Shrinking Cities Project / architect Philipp Oswalt (2002-2008)

sponsored by Germany's Federal Cultural Foundation in co-operation with the Leipzig Gallery of Contemporary Art, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation and the magazine ARCH+

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Training School: Scenarios for Shrinking Cites in Europe, TU Dortmund, 9-11, 14 septembrie 2013;

Workshop: COST Action TU0803, Cities Regrowing Smaller, Faculty of Engineering, Porto, 11-12 mai 2011;

CITTA, 13.mai 2011, Porto;

Shrinkage in Europe; causes, effects and policy strategies, Center for Urban Studies Amsterdam 16-17 feb. 2011

Exhibitions:

Shrinking Cities, 2004, Berlin, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, curated by Philipp Oswalt.

KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (fall 2004); the Zentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst (ZfzK), Halle-Neustadt; and the Galerie für Zeitgenössische

Kunst Leipzig (Museum of Contemporary Art Leipzig; winter 2005/06).

2016, national exhibition: Shrinking Cities in Romania Exhibition at the National Museum of Contemporary Art (MNAC),

Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin
Programul Operațional Capacitate Administrativă 2014-2020!

Titlul proiectului: Elaborarea politicii urbane ca instrument de consolidare a capacității administrative și de planificare strategică a zonelor urbane din România

Codul proiectului: SIPOCA 711/ MySMIS 129720

Denumirea beneficiarului: Ministerul Lucrărilor Publice, Dezvoltării și Administrației

Data publicării: Decembrie 2020

Conținutul acestui raport nu reprezintă în mod obligatoriu poziția oficială a Uniunii Europene sau a Guvernului României.

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