



Special Session Proposal

Suburbanization, urban sprawl, and their impact on the environment in Central Europe

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Abstract

This special session aims to deal with the environmental consequences of urban sprawl and suburbanization focusing on the Central European countries. We want to explore the specificities of this macro-region comparing to the similar processes in the other areas of Europe or other continents.

Over the past decade and a half, peri-urban development has changed the traditional cultural landscape, land use, and settlement-functions of villages around regional centres in Central Europe. This process has intensified in the former socialist countries after the 2000's and it challenged a number of problems, which became apparent during the eighties and nineties in Western countries, and in the fifties-sixties in the USA. The extent of new built-up areas often exceeds the rate of population growth; it is taking place even in the lack of population growth. The administrative areas of several settlements are affected by these processes thus the lack of coordination is often characteristic.

Urban sprawl causes numerous landscape-ecological problems. Spatial planners, self-governments and building officials who should regulate the residential suburbanisation are still quite passive in this question, as are local citizens. The land take, land consumption of this process brings irreversible changes in the landscape and causes environmental, ecological, agricultural consequences. The environmental impacts of suburbanization are under-explored and only a few works deal with it.