

How to cite:

Sobala-Gwosdz A. & Gwosdz K. (2017) "Katowice effect"? Regeneration of the site of the former Katowice coal mine through prestige cultural projects, *Urban Development Issues*, vol. 56, pp. 27–40, DOI: 10.2478/udi-2018-0010

URBAN ISSUES

27

#flagship projects
#brownfield regeneration
#Katowice urban area

"Katowice effect"? Regeneration of the site of the former Katowice coal mine through prestige cultural projects

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Abstract

This paper aims to give an in-depth account of the regeneration of the site of the former Katowice coalmine, by far the largest regeneration venture financed by the public sector on a post-industrial site in Poland, and to capture the primary outcomes and effects of this prestige project. Contrary to a simplified interpretation of a 'Polish Bilbao effect', the authors argue that the Culture Zone follows a unique development model that was driven by a coincidence of such factors as the situation of a major (post-) industrial conurbation seeking a new identity, the availability of external funding, chance events (with the origins of some of them dating back to WW2), and pre-existing spatial factors. The study area has been diagnosed to include all the positive effects of flagship projects, as well as most of the weaknesses associated with such a type of regeneration. All in all, it is a successful undertaking given the external conditions under which it has been implemented.

submitted: October 2017

reviewed: December 2017

accepted: March 2018

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Introduction

In the last decade, we have been witnessing the regeneration of post-industrial sites (brownfields) in Polish cities by prestigious cultural buildings financed predominantly from public funds, with significant support from the European Union budget. Cities in which such buildings were erected include Gdansk (Solidarity Centre, Museum of WW2), Lodz (EC1), Cracow (MOCAK, Cricoteka) and Katowice (NOSPR, Silesian Museum). This new approach to the redevelopment of brownfield land in the Polish context can be interpreted *inter alia* in terms of growing metropolitan aspirations and a rise in the perception of the role of culture and creativity as the leading drivers of socio-economic change.

Although the specific conditions for the development of CEE cities are widely acknowledged in urban studies (Sýkora & Bouzarovski 2012; Golubchikov, Badyina & Makhrova 2014) in contrast to Western Europe (WE), research on urban regeneration by flagship projects in the post-socialist context of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has not received much attention so far. M. Feldman (2000) discusses the unique settings of the regeneration process in post-socialist states, pointing out factors including the fragmented and unstable institutional context and the lack of partnership and cooperation among stakeholders. J. Temelová (2007) investigated the impact of the Golden Angel project on the physical transformation of Prague's inner city. N. S. Trumbull (2014) on the example of Mariinsky Theatre-2 argues that Culture-led flagship projects generated significant changes not only to St Petersburg's built environment but also to its social fabric.

This paper aims to give an in-depth account of the regeneration of the site of the former Katowice coalmine and to capture the primary outcomes and effects of this prestige project. This is by far the largest regeneration venture financed by the public sector on a post-industrial site in Poland. There are currently three buildings constructed on the site (covering an area of 19 ha), which form the core element of the so-called Culture Zone. They were completed in 2014–2015 while further investment by private capital (office buildings and a residential complex) is currently being carried out by private investors. The case study analysed is regarded as 'the most evident example of transformations of post-industrial brownfields by cultural institutions' (Orzechowska-Wa awska 2017: 184), and provokes contradictory opinions both from scholars and the wider public (*c.f.* *Strefa Kultury* 2015, Nawrocki 2015, Orzechowska-Wa awska 2017). The analyses of the phenomenon of the Katowice Culture Zone published to date have a certain weakness, which in our opinion stems from comparing the project with

Abandoibarra in Bilbao. Meanwhile, the reconstruction of the history of the Katowice project proves it to be a qualitatively different process in terms of its mechanisms, course and effects. Maybe, in the future, regeneration discourse will refer to the "Katowice effect," rather than to the "Polish Bilbao effect."

The authors rely on four main sources of information. The accounts of stakeholders directly involved in the process of transformation of this area, including the former mayor of Katowice Piotr Uszok, the architects (Tomasz Konior, Jerzy Szczepanik-Dzikowski from JEMS Architekci), and the head managers of the institutions active in the area (Alicja Knast, Wojciech Ku pik) were collected by the authors during several panel discussions (February 2016, February 2017, April 2017, September 2017). Two field projects undertaken with students were conducted in November 2016 and September 2017, using such methods as behavioural mapping, direct observation, guided walks and a self-survey inspired by the Project for Public Space methodology. Since June 2015, the authors have been conducting systematic field observations, including photo documentation. Finally, the opinions expressed in the publications were analysed, out of which the special issue of the *Fabryka Silesia* quarterly delivered especially interesting insights.

In the sections that follow, we will give an overview of the strengths and shortcomings of regeneration by prestige projects based on literature reviews. Next, an account of the process of regeneration of the former Katowice Colliery site is presented. The fourth section is devoted to an assessment of the effects of the regeneration, including the main arguments of the project's critics. The last part of the paper presents a few more general conclusions that arise from the case study under analysis.

Regeneration of brownfields through cultural flagships projects

Flagship projects have been a preferred tool for the regeneration of degraded urban areas or entire urban conurbations in Western Europe since the 1980s. According to J. Temelová (2007: 171) 'The main idea behind flagship projects is that such schemes hold the potential to impact outside themselves and thus influence the surrounding environment'. F. Bianchini, J. Dawson and R. Evans (1992: 247) argue that there has been a remarkable consensus about the usefulness of flagships among public and private actors involved in the process of urban regeneration. Flagship projects are perceived as visible symbols of urban renewal, powerful place-marketing tools and catalysts of regeneration (Bianchini et al., 1992). There was a widely accepted view that 'a city without a flagship did not have a regeneration strategy' (O'Toole

TABLE 1

Main arguments pro- and con- prestige projects

Source: adopted from P. Loftman & B. Nevin (1995: 303–311)

Argument in support of prestige projects	Criticisms of prestige projects
Effective mechanisms for achieving the physical transformation of declining or previously neglected parts of urban areas	Are merely mechanisms for achieving the physical and economic regeneration of discrete parts of urban areas;
Positive externalities (raising property values and development activity in adjoining areas)	Prestige projects entail massive financial costs which tend to be wholly underwritten or heavily subsidised by the public sector
Provide high profile and visible symbolic evidence of success and renaissance, act as visible symbols of change	Tend to be located within or adjacent to city centre or waterfront areas, rather than in areas which have relatively high concentrations of disadvantaged groups and few identifiable 'development opportunities'
Represent an important or even essential place-marketing tool in the global inter-urban competition for private investment	Characterised by overambitious intentions on the part of project initiators or developers, and by high financial risk
Facilitate the physical restructuring of urban areas (introducing and promoting new land uses and infrastructure)	Planning of individual elements rather than integrated urban systems
Assist older cities previously dependent on declining industries to diversify their economic base	Prestige projects often entail the diversion of scarce public sector resources away from welfare-related needs (such as social housing, education and social services) and deprived neighbourhoods
Provide benefits for all city residents (also disadvantaged groups via the trickle-down process) through the generation of wealth, jobs, an improved physical environment and new places to visit, admire and enjoy	There is little evidence that this process actually generates significant employment or other benefits for disadvantaged residents. Much of the growth in employment which has resulted from the prestige projects is located in sectors of the economy characterised by low pay, part-time work and high vacancy turnover rates

& Usher 1992: 221). The supporters of flagship projects, and in particular the so-called 'prestigious flagship projects'¹, formulated several arguments claiming that the prestige project is the essential tool for local economic development and stressed their (seemingly) positive sum-game character (Tab. 1, left column). Critics of this means of urban regeneration, however, had their strong arguments, the most important of which was the social justice, inclusion and equity question (Bianchini et al., 1992; Harvey 2000, Loftman and Nevin 1995, Stevenson 2004). It was emphasised that flagships were established in prestigious areas (e.g., downtown, waterfronts) and not where high concentrations of disadvantaged groups existed. They were unable to achieve social regeneration goals and even contributed to increasing social polarisation (Tab. 1, right column).

There are many examples of how the international recognition of former industrial cities (Manchester, Glasgow, Lille, the Ruhr, Pécs, among others) has been achieved by flagship projects (Carley et al. 2000, Borina & Paunović 2015, Oevermann & Mieg 2015, Pintér & Csapó 2016).

1. P. Loftman and B. Nevin (1995: 300) define a prestigious flagship project as 'a pioneering or innovative, high profile, large-scale, self-contained development which is primarily justified in terms of its ability to attract inward investment, create and promote new urban images, and act as the hub of a radiating renaissance facilitating increases in land values and development activities to adjacent areas'.

There are also spectacular examples of failure, i.e. the City of Arts and Sciences in Valencia (Rius-Ulldemolins, Gil-Manuel & Torres 2015). The Bilbao case is perhaps the most well-known case of the success of a prestige project (Vicario & Monje 2003). But the interpretation of the Bilbao case as a model regeneration by flagships is often erroneously identified with the 'Guggenheim effect'. Such superficial thinking – as J. Orzechowska-Waślawska (2012: 12–13) remarked – completely ignores what was essential in Bilbao: the long-term, multi-faceted and comprehensive strategy for a proactive approach to spatial planning, in which the Guggenheim Museum, which has become a cliché for Bilbao's transformation, was only part of that strategy (Orzechowska-Waślawska 2012, Murzyn 2003).

Under growing pressure from European integration and globalisation in the 2000s, the construction of cultural flagship architecture has been even more promoted as a tool for maintaining establishing metropolitan status (Frantz 2005). Undoubtedly, culture has received substantial political attention in the recent two decades, while the idea of creative cities has been recognised as a new paradigm for urban development (Miles & Paddison 2005). In K. R. Kunzmann's (2013: 8) opinion a 'new vision is a liveable and convivial city; one where culture is thriving and cultural events meet the demand for entertainment and educational advancement and where iconic cultural

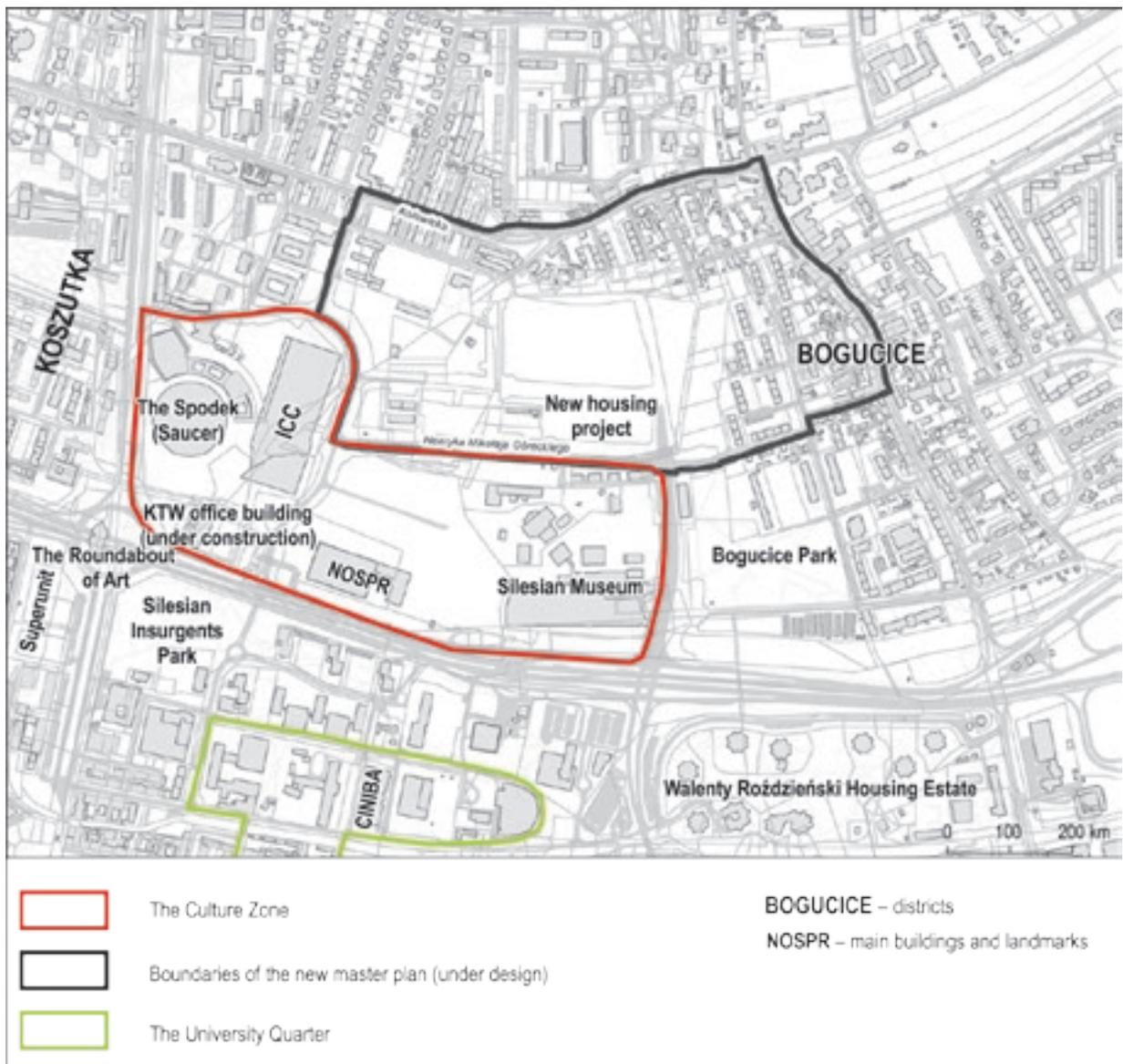


FIGURE 1
The area of the former Katowice coalmine
Source: authors, cartography: <http://www.infokatowice.pl/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/strefakulturympzp.jpg>

infrastructure attracts tourists. I. Areso, an architect, and since 2014 Mayor of Bilbao stressed that 'In contemporary society, cultural activities, the arts, sport, and leisure constitute a genuine thermometer of collective vitality, determining the attractiveness of a city, contributing to its image abroad and setting out the conditions for adding new activities [...]. Encouragement of cultural activity is a factor which boosts dynamises the city internally and shows it to the outside world.' (Areso 2007: 3).

Enthusiasm for the creative city idea is tempered by in-depth and cross-sectional studies on the conditions of emergence and growth of the creative sectors in different geographical contexts. In particular, the importance of long-term structures and the existence of an "enabling" or "restricting" environment for new economic activities, including culture and creativity, are highlighted (see Stryjakiewicz & Stachowiak 2010, Hansen & Winther 2015).

The course of the regeneration process

The site of the former Katowice shaft (closed in 1999, ca. 3050 employees in 1995) represents typical features of the megasite, i.e. brownfield with particularly complex problems resulting from such features as the size of the area (nearly 20 ha) and the contamination of the site. As such, several con-

ditions must be taken into account in the regeneration of such a site, including the high remediation costs; the necessity of involving many stakeholders in the process, the necessity of partnership formation (both public and private) and last but not least, the economic and planning implications which must be considered at all relevant (regional and local) levels (*The Megasite Management Guidelines* 2014).

The area is located in the northern part of the vast Katowice inner zone, less than one kilometre from the historic core of the city, in close proximity to the city icon – the Spodek ('Saucer') Sports and Entertainment Hall (Fig. 1). In the design, implemented in 1999–2015, the site forms an urban field, with a dominant function of culture and education and congress and exhibition space. Soon it will also be filled with commercial buildings (KTW office buildings) and a residential quarter.

Originally the city did not have a strategic concept for the redevelopment of the brownfield, and its closure hindered its development by private investors due to the lack of an adequate road infrastructure. To the south, the significant barrier was a railway embankment, which was part of the former Katowice mine. Furthermore, a new multilane road (in Polish: *Drogowa Trasa Średnicowa* [DTŚ]) was designed at that time which after completion in the 2000s separated the site from the neighbouring downtown area. Land ownership was another problem. An American investor with a plan to build a large retail centre there was the first who expressed interest in this site but resigned from the plan, probably discouraged by the obstacles mentioned above. In the meantime, discussion on the proper functions for the brownfield site arose within the city, and this took account of its proximity to the symbolic landmark of the city.

The problems associated with finding a private investor forced the city authorities to focus primarily on clarifying the issue of land ownership² and to build a system of streets to link the area with its surroundings. The process of property conversion took seven years (Fig. 2), and its final success would not be possible without proper cooperation between the local (city) government and the regional authorities.

In the meantime, the idea of a museum quarter was born in the Town hall, pressure for which stimulated the Marshal's Office to make the decision to change the site of the proposed new headquarters of the Silesian Museum from the initially proposed location on the southern edge of the inner city to the location of the former Katowice coalmine. The problems that arose in

connection with the necessity for property exchange were successfully finalised thanks to financial support from the city authorities of Katowice, which had a strong interest in the proposed relocation. The decision to locate the Silesian Museum in the former area of Katowice Colliery was taken in 2004.

The new Silesian Museum, designed by Riegler Riewe Architekten from Graz (Austria), refers in a creative way to the mining heritage of the site (Photo 2) and promotes the preservation of the cultural landscape of Upper Silesia (see Jodliński 2013: 35). Most of the area of the museum completed in the first stage of the project was hidden underground. Therefore, some art historians speak of 'architecture without architecture' (Kozina 2008 cited in Jodliński 2013:35) or 'hidden architecture' (Kiciński 2011). The project won numerous awards, including AIT Awards 'Best in Interior and Architecture', Grand Prix in the contest 'Best Public Space of the Silesian Voivodeship' and was also nominated for the Mies van der Rohe European Architectural Award in 2015.

The second building, which was constructed on the site of the former coalmine, is the headquarters of the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra (NOSPR). The construction of the new building required the establishment of a state-owned cultural institution, co-sponsored and co-financed by the Minister of Culture, Polish Radio and the President of Katowice, in 2005. The NOSPR HQ (Photo 1) was built in 2010–2014. The project would not have been possible without the determination of the managing director of NOSPR (Joanna Wnuk-Nazarowa) and a supervisory committee represented by world-renowned composers and conductors including Krzysztof Penderecki and Wojciech Kilar. The idea was accepted as it fell in line with the spatial context of the emerging cultural axis between the 'Spodek' Hall and the new Silesian Museum.

The architect of the NOSPR building (Konior Studio from Katowice) referred to traditional Silesian themes (red brick, red-painted window niches) and associations with music (rhythmic pillars). The plain-looking building was located in the southern corner of a plot of 4 hectares, with the intention of bringing it closer to the city centre. The interior was designed so that the multi-lane road running alongside it did not affect the sound. The building has a casket structure, containing, among other features, a unique large concert hall (1800 seats, vineyard type) designed in collaboration with Nagata Acoustics from Tokyo. The big challenge was to avoid so-called dead façades (see Gehl 2010) – this was partly achieved by opening it to the squares to the north and west of the building. The architect was aware that the building would not be surrounded by a tight urban fabric but wanted to

2. The site had many owners including both the State Treasury and private owners. Katowice City Council has taken over the land from the coalmine, mostly in lieu of overdue VAT.

PHOTO 1

The headquarters of the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra (NOSPR)
Source: authors (June 2015)

**PHOTO 2**

The refurbished Warszawa Shaft of former Katowice Colliery and the new premises of the Silesian Museum
Source: authors (September 2017)



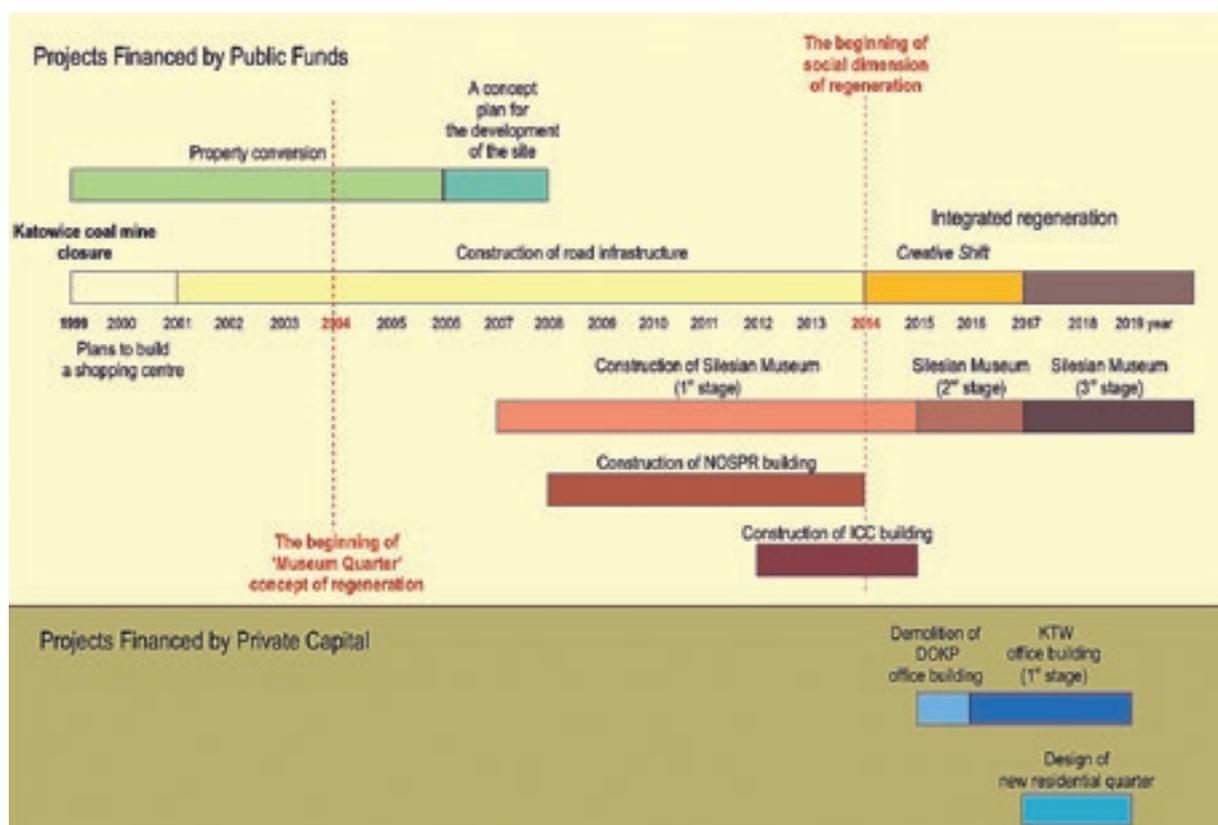


FIGURE 2
Stages of development of the Culture Zone
Note: colours indicate the stages of development of the Culture Zone
Source: authors

design attractive public areas around it. This design was achieved by establishing a system of squares and green areas that form an interesting and lively public space, due to, among other factors, the planting of 450 birch trees; the tree which is the symbol of Upper Silesia (see Bienek 1991). The labyrinth of hornbeam designed on the eastern side of the building resembles part of the so-called Great Katowice plan from the 1920s and is an allusion to the collapse of spatial planning in Poland in the last decade.

Near the Spodek Hall, the International Congress Centre (MCK) was erected between 2010 and 2015, which is, so far, the most recently completed part of the Culture Zone. The precondition for MCK's location in the Zone was to reinforce the role of the Spodek Hall and to form a coherent landscape complex with it. The decision to build the MCK was made in 2006 when, after the tragic roof collapse of the Katowice International Fair building, both Katowice and the whole conurbation had lost a large exhibition facility. The cheek-by-jowl neighbourhood of the Spodek Hall was a great challenge for the architects (JEMS Architects from Warsaw). The dilemma was how to design a large rectangular building without dominating the Spodek Hall, while keeping the landscape axis of the culture zone open for spectators. From the very beginning the architects wanted somehow to cut the new building in the middle. The final design, the expressionist Green Valley (Photo 3) which is considered as the fifth facade of the building, was serendipitously discovered in peculiar circumstances. The dialogue of the MCK building with the coal-mining heritage of the site was achieved by a black façade, a luminous viewing terrace on top of the green valley and the 'black garden' on the south side.

Commissioning the facilities financed from public sources between October 2014 and June 2015 completed the first major stage of the transformation of the site. Currently, private investments are under way. In place of the demolished dull high rise building of the Regional State Railway

**PHOTO 3**

International Congress Centre (western façade with the green valley)
Source: authors (June 2017)

Headquarters, the construction of the KTW office complex (designed by the Medusa Group Bureau from Bytom) is underway. On an area of 1.2 hectares north of the Culture Zone, a housing estate is planned.

The decision to create a museums quarter coincided with funding opportunities for local government under the EU 2007–2013 financial perspective. A total of PLN 1.2 billion was invested in the Culture Zone, of which around 55% came from the EU budget (Tab. 2). It is clear that enticing such large investors would not be possible without leverage in the form of EU funds and a loan from the European Investment Bank.

Regeneration of the site was carried out within the framework of the Local Regeneration Programme for the City of Katowice for the years 2007–2013. The Silesian Museum and the MCK received funding under the Regional Operational Programme for 2007–2013, NOSPR was supported by the EU operational programme for infrastructure & environment. As part of the Local Regeneration Programme for the City of Katowice for the years 2016–2022, the second stage of the regeneration of the site was carried out by the Silesian Museum, which ended in 2017. It was financed under the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the Year 2009–2014 (Tab. 2). The investment included refurbishment and adaptation of historic buildings (the main bath and carpentry workshop) for exhibition and educational purposes, and the development of the surrounding area and the construction of a car park for cars and coaches with a total area of about 1.3 hectares. The next stage of regeneration planned for the years 2017–2022 will include renovation of the seven remaining historic buildings, including the most valuable buildings of the former Ferdinand mine. Financial engineering from various sources has been used to prepare for this task.

The conclusions of the TIMBRE project highlight the importance of spatial planning (*The Megasite Management Guidelines* 2014). It should be noted that the city of Katowice did not produce a Master Plan for the Culture Zone. However, it commissioned a concept plan for the development of the site which was prepared by the Association of Architects of the Republic of Poland (SARP). As a result of this work a more wide-ranging study was commissioned proposing the spatial restructuring of the Katowice downtown for the years 2006–2010.

TABLE 2

Public funds raised for the regeneration of the former Katowice coalmine site

* Note: Most of the funds have come from a European Investment Bank loan; in total EUR 63.3 million, which represents approx. 39% of the total cost of the investments, and which was obtained for the three investment projects

Source: compiled by the authors from www.mapadotacji.gov.pl and the data of Katowice City

Investment	Investment outlay (EUR millions)	Share of European Funds (%)	Source of financing
1st stage of the Culture Zone (2007–2015)	296.4	55	
Silesian Museum	65.2	85	– Regional Operational Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship for the years 2007–2013 – Minister of Culture and National Heritage as part of the 'Promesa' Programme
National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra (NOSPR)	75.9	51	– Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment – budget of the City of Katowice*
International Congress Centre (MCK)	94.1	73	– Regional Operational Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship for the years 2007–2013 – budget of the City of Katowice*
Construction of road infrastructure	21.4	0	– budget of the City of Katowice*
Modernisation of the Spodek Hall	39.8	0	– budget of the City of Katowice
2nd stage of Culture Zone (2015–2017)	7.5	35	
Regeneration of the historic buildings of the main baths and carpenter's shop together with the adjacent area of the former Katowice mine and the construction of the infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of The Silesian Museum in Katowice	7.5	35	– Mechanism of the European Economic Area – Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014
3rd Stage of the Culture Zone (2017–2022)	n.d.	n.d.	
Refurbishment and adaptation of 7 historic buildings of the Silesian Museum	21.6	n.d.	– Special purpose subsidy

All the new facilities were commissioned by international architectural contests. Some of the deficiencies of the absence of a Master Plan were partly solved by good cooperation between the institutions managing the three newly created structures. The regeneration significantly increased the attractiveness of the neighbourhood of the culture zone to private capital. To avoid the degradation of the high quality space in the vicinity, which could happen in the absence of a master plan, in 2015 the city of Katowice initiated actions to prepare such a document for the zone located in the northern part of the site. It currently covers the abandoned section of the former shaft and the historic part of the Bogucice settlement. The plan is expected to guarantee the creation of high quality space and buildings.

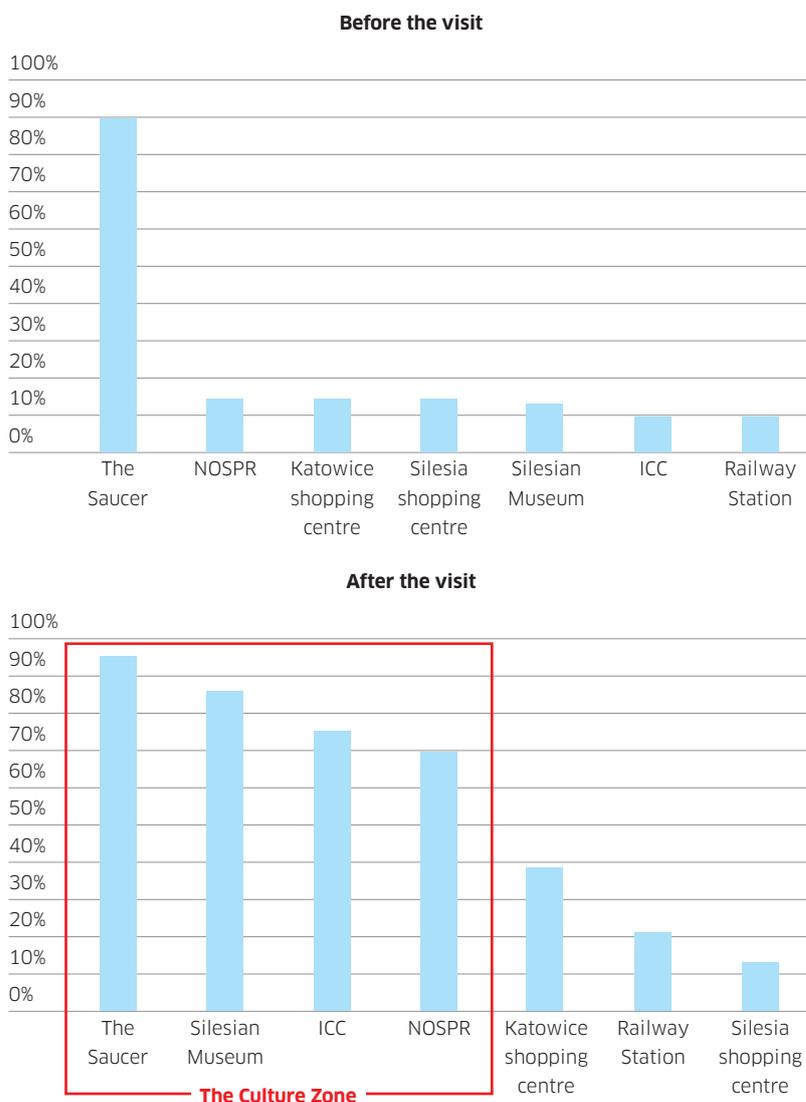
Discussion on the effects of the regeneration of the former Katowice coalmine to date

Almost on the eve of the opening of the Culture Zone in 2015, J. F. Lewandowski (2015: 2) remarked that “the Katowice coalmine passes into the service of higher cul-

ture, and this is metaphorical, although time will show the results. We do not know how the culture zone will change our lives, but it will inevitably stimulate us to consider the change” The whole spectrum of effects of the regeneration of the site will be revealed only after completion of the entire process. However, since three years have passed following the opening of the Silesian Museum, NOSPR and MCK, it is possible to formulate some conclusions. According to J. Temelová (2007: 169), three essential questions should be answered when analysing the flagship projects: how they intersect with the development needs of the locality, how they influence urban space and what is their real impact on the particular neighbourhoods of the city.

Undoubtedly, the effect of the physical transformation of the former coalmine has been achieved. The land, formerly an enclosed industrial facility on the edge of the downtown, has become an open public space and part of the centre. This resulted in the physical restructuring of the site and the promotion of new land uses and infrastructure. At the same time the most valuable mining

FIGURE 3
The most characteristic landmarks of Katowice in the opinion of students before and after a day visit to Katowice
Source: own research (n = 90)



buildings were preserved, and the new buildings clearly, if sometimes indirectly, refer to the mining heritage of the site. The new functions: high culture, education, exhibition and recreational use, have substantially expanded the functional area of Katowice downtown.

The Culture Zone acts as a visible symbol of Katowice's transformation to the post-industrial metropolitan city. The new buildings are candidates for new city landmarks, accentuating its leading role in the newly established Upper Silesian–Zagłębie metropolitan area. This is confirmed by the authors' research on the perception of the Katowice area by students. A panel questionnaire (sample of 90 people, most of the participants had not previously known the city from personal experience) was carried out before a day visit to Katowice's downtown area and after this visit, it was evident that it was the three newly completed buildings in the Culture Zone that gained most recognition (Fig. 3).

Undoubtedly, the Culture Zone is one of the key mechanisms behind a broader strategy for changing Katowice by activating the local creative sector. The process, which

was initiated by the city's efforts to become the European Capital of Culture in 2015, has radically changed the thinking about the city and region (Oslislo-Piekarska 2015, Nawrocki 2015, Orzechowska-Waclawska 2017), as a result of which UNESCO designated Katowice as a Creative City of Music in 2015. A vital question, from the perspective of the future trajectory of the city's development, has been posed by M. Murzyn-Kupisz & J. Działek (2017) who wonder to what extent the Culture Zone will become a space integrating artistic communities, in particular one conducive to interaction between representatives of different art disciplines. Without doubt, the Zone enhances the potential of the northern part of the city centre by complementing the independent cultural initiatives emerging in the Koszutka district (Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek 2014, Murzyn-Kupisz & Działek 2017). On the other hand, there is a need for a separate and in-depth analysis of the potential 'overshadowing effect' likely to result from the channelling of public funds into single flagship cultural projects concentrated within isolated city locations, instead of numerous, small-scale and dispersed grassroots

initiatives. The city authorities work towards ensuring a balance in this respect by promoting the 'Premises for Culture' (in Polish: *lokal na kulturę*) initiative, and in the sphere of social regeneration – by promoting the 'Making your backyard shine' (in Polish: *plac na glanc*) programme, which is dedicated to the renewal of the backyards of multi-family residential buildings.

The Culture Zone has added significantly to the activation of the institutions operating within it, which produces direct and indirect economic and social effects. A total of 350 thousand people visited the new premises of the Silesian Museum between June 2015 and September 2017, an impressive increase in comparison with the old site. NOSPR performed 322 concerts in 2016 as compared to 33 in the old location. Approximately 950 thousand people have taken part in the events organised in the MCK and Spodek Hall between May 2016 and September 2017. There are significant synergies in the activities of the institutions active in the area that translate into good practices in public-private and public-public partnerships. Unleashing the full economic potential of EU-funded facilities will be possible after the expiry of the so-called durability period, which will allow for a wider range of commercial functions in the premises³.

Significant revenue growth is also visible in the HORECA industry. In the period 2013–2016, the number of overnight stays by foreign guests in Katowice increased by 45%, while the hotel occupancy rate grew by 28.6% (according to the data provided by **Central Statistical Office** bdl.stat.gov.pl). The Culture Zone has a perceivable direct economic effect on the area of the city and its districts by increasing the value and attractiveness of adjacent land⁴.

The newly-created space gives rise to controversy, but as is often the case, the arguments presented by its critics are strongly linked to the values they profess. The proponents of new urbanism stress that the Culture Zone follows the modernist city planning model, which has been declining in Western Europe (even though it is still practiced in our part of the continent). It is a monofunctional 'festive space', which creates scarce opportunities for spontaneous activity on the part of its users. It preserves the predominance

of cars over pedestrians (car parks and roads cover 14% of the regenerated area)⁵. The clear spatial barriers (especially the Central Highway /DTŚ/ to the south) limit its beneficial effect, strengthening its enclave-like nature.

The main points of criticism of the Culture Zone are expressed aptly by T. Nawrocki (2015): 'The Culture Zone is separated from the rest of the city by clear edges. Thus it forms a specific enclave within Katowice. We go to the Zone and then leave it. Mainly by car, which fact results in the encircling of the Zone with a sea of vehicles. The buildings do not radiate out towards the city as they would if they were located in different parts of the city. [...] We never drop by there without a reason. We go specifically to the museum, to a concert, or to the Congress Centre. This has produced an excellent effect for the city's image, but as it seems from today's perspective, an opportunity for a deeper transformation of the city has been missed.'

In the light of this, the feelings of a group of nineteen geography and spatial planning students who took part in a seven-hour study visit organised by the authors of this text and employees of the Silesian Museum in September 2017 are interesting (even though, given the size of the sample, the results should be treated with caution). The students, who came from eight European countries, gave a high rating to the first impression made by the Culture Zone (an average of 4.9 on a 1–5 scale), with the most appreciated element being the so-called Green Valley (36% of indications). The green areas were the planning component they liked the most because of the 'many relaxing zones for every kind of people.' In general, they liked the openness of the space ('common areas where people can sit and talk. It creates an open atmosphere, a lot of possibilities to relax'). Another feature that was appreciated was the existence of successful links to the cultural heritage of the site. The thing they considered problematic was, first of all, the small number of users of the regenerated space ('It's too empty!') and the poor spatial coherence of the area ('there is no fluent connection between some parts of the Culture Zone'). Interestingly, none of the users criticised the extensive parking areas (Photo 4) which fragment the space in the Zone and which are often highlighted by professionals

3. Pursuant to Article 71 of Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EU) 1303/2013 of 17 December 2013, in this case, the durability of the project must be retained for 5 years after the project is cleared.

4. This is exemplified by the sale of the former DOKP office building and the plots lying south of the Culture Zone. The Polish Railway Company (PKP) sold the DOKP building near the Spodek in Katowice to TDJ Estates for PLN 29 million, which was nearly PLN 15 million more than the starting price in the auction. In another auction, the same company paid PLN 20 million to Eurostar Real Estate (nearly 100% more than the asking price) for three plots with a total area of over 5 ha lying north of the Culture Zone, situated along the axis of Tadeusz Dobrowolski Street towards Bogucice.

5. The large parking area within the Culture Zone mirrors the fact that the proportion of car trips in polycentric systems is greater than in monocentric systems. For example, in their 2017 survey on the mobility of artists, M. Murzyn-Kupisz and J. Działek found that a large proportion of respondents use cars, with a much higher share of pedestrians and travel by public transport in Kraków. The patchwork-like city structure, with former industrial settlements joined to the core city area and inefficient public transport, adds to the "car culture" in Katowice. Another major issue (as shown by an URBACT study) is that Katowice suffers from a great shortage of public car parks in the city centre relative to the number of cars, and as the authors of the regeneration design maintain, the vast area of the former coalmine Katowice was supposed to mitigate the problem.

**PHOTO 4**

Vast parking lots are regarded as the primary factor hindering spatial cohesion of the Zone. In the background the KTW office building under construction
Source: authors (October 2017)

as one of the greatest ills of the area (T. Nawrocki (2015) described this as ‘islands of culture amidst a sea of cars’). On the other hand, the students noticed that the space and infrastructure lacked elements that would mitigate their “event-oriented” nature (e.g. ‘lack of everyday activities such as amateur sports near the Spodek or more places for children and the elderly inside and outside’).

Clearly, the regenerated area is mostly targeted at the middle and higher classes, displaying certain characteristics of ‘symbolic exclusion’. At the time when the investments were being designed and completed, namely in 1999–2015, no public consultation was carried out with the inhabitants of the surrounding areas, even though some people responsible for the projects highlighted the need to pursue public purposes (see Jodliński 2013). Such action targeted at the local community, especially that of the adjacent Bogucice district, only began in 2015, and was linked to the project implemented by the Silesian Museum under the name ‘Creative Shift’ (in Polish: *Szychta Kreatywna*). The action involved passing a resolution entitled ‘Towards integrative regeneration’, which stressed local community issues in 7 out of its 10 points (*Szychta kreatywna... 2017*)⁶. The benefits of the Culture Zone for the living standards of the population inhabiting the areas north-east of the Zone also include improved accessibility of the area from the city centre (the area is open 24/7, the historic route between Bogucice and the city centre has been recreated) and the regeneration effort undertaken by the city in the adjacent Bogucki Park. Around 100–130 jobs linked to its basic operation (security, cleaning, catering) have been created within the Culture Zone⁷.

Conclusions

Given its scale and nature, the former site of the Katowice coalmine is a unique example of brown-field regeneration in the post-Communist countries of East-Central Europe. When identifying the driving forces and mechanisms that underlie the transformation under discussion, it can be concluded that it was not a fully aware, all-embracing plan. Rather, the explanation of the development can be sought in the evolutionary concept of path dependence (Mahoney 2000) and interpreted as a ‘critical juncture’ of such factors as the situation of the major (post-)industrial conurbation seeking a new identity, the availability of external funding (EU European Regional Development Fund) and chance events (with the origins of some of them dating back to WW2), and pre-existing spatial factors (like the location of the city’s iconic Spodek building in the vicinity of the former mining areas). In this context, the Culture Zone follows a unique development model, which has prevailed in Katowice for the last 150 years, where each new period of development (M. Murzyn-Kupisz & K. Gwosdz (2011) have distinguished 5 such phases) has contributed to the creation of significant new landscape elements to testify to new prosperity and present day success. Thus, paraphrasing J. Orzechowska-Wałańska (2012), the Culture Zone could have only been created in Katowice.

6. One should not forget about the educational function of the Silesian Museum, which builds human capital in the conurbation and the region.

7. These functions are outsourced by the Silesian Museum and NOSPR. The tender requirements provide that the persons providing the services must be hired on a contract of employment basis. According to our estimates, a total of 500–550 persons are employed at the three institutions in the Zone (the Silesian Museum, NOSPR, MCK). It is to be noted that, under its tendering procedures, NOSPR applies social clauses conducive to social regeneration processes.

At least three reasons justify the use of the 'Katowice effect' metaphor for the case study discussed here. The culture zone has a high (and probably the greatest) potential of all local and regional activities undertaken to date, to significantly change the image of the city (and perhaps the whole Upper Silesia conurbation). Through its implementation and especially approach to public spaces surrounding the edifices, Katowice has become a benchmark of successful and innovative regeneration through prestige projects for other local governments in Poland. The Culture Zone is also a good model of public-public partnership at various levels of administration which is still rare in Central and Eastern Europe. The spatial proximity of the high culture institution, the exhibition and conference venues and the sports and entertainment hall gave unexpected synergy effects to both these institutions and their surroundings. In comparison to prestigious facilities in Western Europe, the Culture Zone is not a typical 'star architecture', while the innovation and comprehensiveness of this project are noteworthy when it is juxtaposed with other flagships in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Culture Zone has been diagnosed to include all the positive effects of flagship projects (Tab.1), as well as most of the weaknesses associated with such types of regeneration. All in all, it is a successful undertaking given the external conditions under which it has been implemented, i.e. in a semi-peripheral country, with low social and institutional capital. Naturally, criticism of the Zone presented from perspectives other than the modernist paradigm is noteworthy, but it can be accused of idealism as it does not take into account the fact that the opportunities available are limited by the institutional, legal, financial and civilisational modalities under which urban and regeneration projects have been implemented in Poland after 1990. It is worth noting that ambitious projects, responsive to new urban and social trends (or based on old good practice), do not go beyond the design stage, or are transformed in the course of being implemented into their own caricatures (e.g. the story of the so-called New City or Zabłocie in Cracow, or the Dzielnica Akademicka ['Academic District'] project in Katowice). It seems that significant

territorial and institutional path dependencies hinder the mobility of urban policy and the reterritorialisation from the 'old EU' to new members (c.f. Clarke 2012).

Finally, in the context of the theory and practice of brownfield regeneration, it is worth mentioning four issues that arise in relation to the case analysed here:

1. Creating a new, internationally recognisable cultural identity and symbolism by a post-industrial metropolis is possible thanks to a high-quality architectural culture. The associated process produces path dependencies and self-reinforcing coupling, good architecture attracts other good projects (there would be no Culture Zone, and especially no Green Valley, in the area, nor would they exist in their present form, were it not for Spodek).
2. However, a new image and the attractive symbolism of a metropolis are not sufficient to create a city-like character of urban spaces. The modernist paradigm has its inevitable limitations.
3. In particular, the overarching objective should be to create good places and user-friendly public spaces. What is characteristic is that the green areas are the feature of the Culture Zone most appreciated by "ordinary" users.
4. As is often the case, what is unintentional, created by chance, or is an effect of a non-completed investment projects, proves to be a success. The space you create can neither be monofunctional nor total in order to develop, it must be able to change by being oriented to spontaneous actions by its users. A creative or successful solution will never be produced by mere (usually superficial) duplication of success, but instead by a unique combination of its own resources and skill in taking advantage of the positive opportunities that appear in the surroundings.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to express their gratitude to Dr. Jarosław Działek from the Jagiellonian University for many valuable comments on the first draft of the article. The authors would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions which helped to improve the quality of the paper.

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