

Intra-Regional Migration in Formerly Industrialised Regions: Qualitative Modelling of Household Location Decisions as an Input to Policy and Plan Making in Leipzig/Germany and Wirral/Liverpool/UK

D. Reckien (April 2007)

The wide spread of old industrial cities in Europe and its particular problems in terms of economic, social and environmental parameters lead to the investigation of intraregional migration in these urban areas. Focused on an efficient land use development a Qualitative Model to the household location decisions builds the centre part of the work. It can deliver inputs to policy and plan making and is a truly new approach to suburbanisation.

The work builds on the assumption that old industrial Western urban regions and those in post-socialist contexts bear substantial similarities which is shown for Leipzig/Germany and Wirral/UK. Along four major research question following aspects have been investigated: (1) the urban/suburban population development in the last 50 years (urban life cycle model), (2) the main reasons for households to move to the urban fringes and (3) the consequences this has caused, (4) the possibilities to act against urban sprawl using the qualitative model that suggests leverage points to the dynamics between households. The dynamic model produces qualitative scenarios about the actors population in dependence of the attractiveness of the residential area and the interactions of movers onto the attractiveness. With respect to suggestions for policy and plan making aiming at lowering the rates of sprawl the qualitative model suggests that internal dynamics cannot halt urban sprawl in both regions. In Wirral a perpetuating development from low to high demand is projected for the suburban places leaving only a shortening of the high demand phases as intervention possibility. This is to achieve by enabling adequate housing for young couples in the inner urban areas and lower house prices in the suburbs. In Leipzig less sprawl would be achieved if single households are attracted to the fringes. They are changing the attractiveness for other households. As this is not very likely from the present perspective strong planning intervention is needed to change the internal dynamics through external (planning) actions. The model has proven to be useful to support plan making. These efforts are assumed to contribute to a higher awareness of and a joint action against climate change with lower energy consumption and lower land use change in urban regions.