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- Faculty of Science (Department of Geography)
- Faculty of Social and Economic Studies



Hungarian Academy of Sciences
- Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences



Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice
- Faculty of Science (Department of Geography)



Polish Academy of Sciences
- Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization



Conference:

Post-agricultural rural economies and rural development policies

Lesná Mountain Hotel (Horský hotel Lesná), Ore Mountains (Krušné hory – Erzgebirge), Czechia
2 – 4 July 2015

First circular and call for papers

The conference is organized under the auspices of:
Martin Balej, J. E. Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem, head of the Department of Geography
Jan D. Bláha, head of the Northern-Bohemian Branch of Czech Geographic Society



This conference is supported by the International Visegrad Fund within the project *Non-agricultural and non-tourist economic industries in rural peripheries of the Visegrad countries* (No. 21410332).

'Policymakers continue to believe, or at least act as if they believe, that farming is the sum total of rural life. Therefore, policies aimed at supporting agriculture are touted as 'rural economic and community development' when in truth their effect on the larger economy and community is minimal.

T. D. Rowley (2003): *The Rural Identity Crisis*. Rural Policy Research Institute.

Supported by the International Visegrad Fund (no. 21410332): www.visegradfund.org
Project website: <http://geography.ujep.cz/clanky/visegrad>



For centuries agriculture was the dominant source of employment in rural areas and the driving force of rural economies. It had a pervasive influence on the organization of rural society and culture. When it was spoken about rural development, it traditionally meant taking measures in order to increase agricultural production. After World War II one of the main policy goals of nation states was to provide food security, which called for the maximization of agricultural production. However, the rapid technological modernization of farms, their specialization and concentration of agricultural production also caused a decreasing demand for labour in rural areas.

However, rural areas have not become job deserts. Substantial changes in farming have been accompanied by the transition from an industrial society to an information society. The expansion of ICT technologies, together with intensifying individual mobility, based on the development of transport technologies and infrastructure which has diminished the obstacle of distance and have exposed rural areas to the process of counterurbanization. Qualified and wealthy newcomers have significantly increased the human and social capital of rural areas and therefore also their potential for economic revival as newcomers very often set up new start-up businesses in rural areas. Spatial deconcentration tendency is observable also in the growing dispersion of industrial and commercial estates, especially in the peri-urban zones. Such dispersion, apart from the development of transport technologies which has decreased the cost of transporting material goods, was conditioned also by the post-Fordist transition in Western and later also in post-socialist countries. The post-Fordist transition and the restoration of private enterprise in post-socialist countries have given rise to new small and medium enterprises in manufacturing which have expanded to rural areas and hereby made some authors speak of urban-rural shift in manufacturing.

However, despite the minor importance of agriculture for rural areas in developed countries, in terms of its benefits for employment and income of rural inhabitants, its dominance still persists in rural development policies in developed countries. This conference would like to draw our attention to this fact and stimulate a fruitful discussion which would focus on:

- non-agricultural and non-tourist economic activities in rural areas,
- entrepreneurship in rural areas in the era of the knowledge society and continuing time-space compression,
- the perception of rural areas as a place for doing business,
- spatially uneven conditions of rural localities for economic development.

This conference should also help to formulate new and more efficient approaches to and strategies for:

- rural economic development,
- job-generating rural development policies,
- increasing the entrepreneurship in post-socialist rural areas.

Presentations of both project partners' participants and non-project participants focused on these and other closely related topics are kindly welcome.





Preliminary programme:

Thursday, 2 July

Afternoon - arrival of participants (either at Ústí nad Labem – further with shuttle bus – or at Lesná) and registration at Lesná Mountain Hotel

Opening ceremony and dinner

Friday, 3 July

9.30 – 18.00 Plenary Sessions

19.00 Conference Reception

Saturday, 4 July

Check-out

Excursion – Changing economy and society of the Ore Mountains

Afternoon - departure of participants

Conference venue

Lesná Mountain Hotel (Horský hotel Lesná – [website](#)) is located in the very heart of the Ore Mountains (Erzgebirge, Krušné hory) in the Ústí Region (Ústecký kraj), Chomutov district by the Czech-Saxon border.

GPS: 50° 33'53.129"N 13° 25'50.895"E (50.56469, 13.430589), see [Google Maps](#)

Excursion:

The excursion will start on Saturday morning at the hotel and finish in the early afternoon in Ústí nad Labem at the main railway station. The unique history of the Ore Mountains will be discussed outdoors, directly in formerly buoyant places. The Ore Mountains, a mountain range creating a natural Czech-Saxon border, have a very interesting history. From the mediaeval ages they were very intensively exploited due to large deposits of silver, tin, cobalt ores and uranium, and consequently, in the 16th century the Ore Mountains became the heart of the mining industry in Central Europe. As such they attracted more and more people so at that time they probably became the most densely populated mountains in the world. However, ore mining largely came to a standstill in the 17th century. Together with the expulsion of German Czechs after World War II the demographic, social and economic profile of the mountains transformed completely. Now, due to the unique mining history still visible in the landscape the Mining Cultural Landscape, Krušnohoří/Erzgebirge aspires for nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Participation fee:

The conference is **free of charge** (registration is needed).

Accommodation and board:

Accommodation and board is provided **free of charge** for a limited number of conference guests (registration is needed).

Registration and deadlines:

Please fill in the registration form, including the abstract of your presentation (see the attachment), and mail it **by 30 April 2015** to Vladan Hruška (vladan.hruska@ujep.cz).

Organizing Committee:

Vladan Hruška (Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem)

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Konrad Czapiewski (Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization)

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