

Suburbanization of population and employment has been the main trend in urban and regional dynamics in Central and Eastern Europe after socialism. In Western Europe and North America, two main trends in the relation between places of residence and work have been particularly consistent for the last 30 years. The contemporary literature on urban systems often argues that polycentricity has become the dominant metropolitan form, and that the monocentric model in which a principal city offers labor demand and the surrounding territory offers labor supply, is increasingly inaccurate. The second trend indicates the problems of rising job-housing imbalance, increasing long distance commuting, and traffic congestion in North America and Western Europe. As to the post-socialist cities and regions, both in Poland and in the other Central Eastern European countries, the issues of commuting patterns and behavior after the collapse of socialism are still largely understudied. More to the point, whereas the topic was extensively researched in the 1960s and 1970s, the knowledge on the polycentric urban development after socialism is selective, and available works are confined to the largest metropolitan regions. Most important, employed methods differ across studies, and the results from particular regions are very difficult, if not impossible, to compare. Finally, virtually nothing is known about the complex relationship between the socioeconomic characteristics of individuals, factors of urban/regional structure and commuting patterns in CEE. Relying on hard empirical data on spatial units and on individuals (and households), this projects relies on quantitative methods. Essentially, we use descriptive statistics and more advanced methods of statistical modeling to inspect the volume and direction of flows between spatial units within and between urban regions in Poland, but also to investigate the distance, time and mode of commuting at the individual level. In other words, this project offers a comprehensive analysis of 1) polycentric urban development at (supra)local level and regional level in Poland, and 2) individual level heterogeneity of commuter flows.