



**BROWNFIELDS
AND WAYS OF THEIR
REGENERATION IN
SELECTED EU COUNTRIES**



STRUCTURE

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1. NEGATIVE BROWNIELDS INFLUENCE ON MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS DEVELOPMENT

Brownfields in the European Union Member States are considered to be a relatively large localities (sometimes with buildings of different quality) that are now outdated. Their existence complicates the municipalities and regions development.

Brownfields are also represented by spaces which were utilized for various agricultural and construction activities in the past.

One of brownfields features is the fact that many of them are contaminated nowadays predominantly by different chemical substances.

The majority of brownfields are:

- ***former mining areas;***
- ***former metallurgical and other factories;***
- ***former military bases and other spaces used by the army that are now often devastated.***

Vast majority of brownfields could be, therefore, characterized as territories degraded especially due to the restructuralization of selected industrial activities (in the Czech Republic predominantly in the Moravian - Silesian region as well as the Ústí nad Labem region) as well as the restructure of agricultural production.

2. EUROPEAN UNION AND BROWNFIELDS

What concerns their contemporary EU specification, brownfields are characterized either as "derelict and vacant lands" (typically for Scotland) or "formally technically equipped lands" (in England). Some of brownfields are also represented by the dumps of waste.

The European Communities started to support the relatively expensive brownfields regeneration since approximately the half of the 1970s.

3. WHY TO REGENERATE BROWNFIELDS?

It is quite clear that if brownfields are not regenerated their existence would:

- *diminish the competitiveness of not only individual municipalities but also of the whole regions;*
- *diminish the quality of life of offended municipalities and regions;*
- *contribute to these territories inhabitants migration acceleration to the regions with better environmental, economic and social conditions;*

- ***to diminish the potential investors interest in industrial and other entrepreneurial activities in the offended regions;***
- ***to diminish the interests of tourists in such territories influencing - among others – negatively the volume of available financial resources necessary for municipalities and regions development;***
- ***to diminish pieces of lands sales and leasings not only in devastated territories but also in their surroundings (first of all of agricultural land).***

The experience accumulated in European countries concerning the brownfields regenerations confirms the fact that there are

three principle possible ways of this process implementation:

1. Complete regeneration financed exclusively by the public administration (i.e. local government) authorities - on the basis of projects invested from public finances.

2. Regeneration established by private developers – completely through projects financed from private resources.

3. The combination of public and private sectors financial, other material and human sources on the basis of the municipalities and regions stakeholders close cooperation: the projects are then financed from the public and private resources.

The very significant feature of this Public - Private - Partnership approach implementation in brownfields regeneration is significant from the point of view of municipalities and regions development by the fact that the decisive role in this form of business activities is played by the local government.

4. ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES RESPONSABILITIES IN REGENERATION ACTIVITIES

Elected representatives of municipalities in the European union are fully responsible for:

- *all decontamination and other regeneration activities;*
- *the reconstruction of some old buildings situated in brownfields as well as for the construction of new ones;*
- *the infrastructure construction;*
- *making decision concerning the possibly most effective utilization of the regenerated territory.*

5. CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF BROWNFIELDS REGENERATION IN EU SELECTED MEMBER STATES

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The role of local government offices and authorities in brownfields regeneration was strengthened substantially in this country since the beginning of the 1990s by the adoption of the new *Environmental Protection Act*.

It was in time when the Global, Continental, National, Regional and Local *Agendas 21* were worked out and then approved by the first United Nations Conference on Protection of Environment held in Rio de Janeiro in the year 1992.

These basic Agenda 21 principles were implemented in England, Scotland and Wales during the 1990 s and the beginning of the 21st century – including in the sphere of brownfields regeneration.

The mentioned orientation was further strengthened in April 2004 when the *European Union Directive Nr. 2004/35/ES* was approved and started to be implemented in the British legal system.

All mentioned legal standards underlined - at first - the local government representatives duty to identify the contaminated localities and to take care for their regeneration.

a) SCOTTISH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ROLE

The mentioned activities are traditionally directed in the United Kingdom by the *Development Agencies*.

The *Scottish Development Agency (SDA)* established in year 1974 was very progressive among them.

Its activities are oriented predominantly to the regeneration of localities damaged by the coal and slate mining activities and also to localities where the dominated position had the heavy industry for many centuries.

Nowadays these sectors of national economy are, unfortunately, in the crises for a long time.

Vast majority of those projects are financed from the public finances sector till now in Scotland.

Nevertheless, the cooperation of the public and the private sector on the basis of the Public - Private - Partnership principles implementation is becoming more and more often.

Every year about 150 million EURO are invested into the brownfields regeneration only in Scotland.

The Scottish Development Agency cooperates closely with the organization named "Scottish Homes" that constructs - mainly around a very famous town Glasgow and in the Lanarkshire county - cheaper social flats in the regenerated areas.

In such a way Scotland is becoming the example for other European countries in the brownfields regeneration activities.

b) ENGLISH PARTNERSHIP ROLE

Effective steps in the brownfields regenerations were made also in *England*, especially thanks to the activities of the organization called *English Partnership* established in the year 1994.

Its principal duty is to identify all fallow lands capable for their regeneration and which are offered for:

- *the modern industrial activities;***
- *communal flats construction;***
- *recreation of the local inhabitants.***

All these activities are considered to be very complex.

That is why several Regional Development Agencies implementing the mentioned activities were founded in England in year 1999.

The idea of Public- Private - Partnership in brownfields regeneration was implemented in England through the Land Restoration Trust established by the alliance of English Partnerships, Environmental Agency, the Forest Commission and the organization Groundwork.

This alliance decided to regenerate 10 000 hectares of brownfields in the period of ten years.

c) WELSH DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ROLE

What concerns the restoration activities in Wales, it is coordinated by the *Welsh Development Agency (WDA)* closely cooperated with the local government offices and authorities.

More than 1 300 such localities were restored and offered for different utilization only in the period of years 1966 – 2000. This organization planned to construct approximately 60% of new houses in the regenerated localities till year 2010.

d) FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Brownfields regeneration was made predominantly in the Northern Rhine – Westvallen region.

This territory was one of those where the so called industrial revolution has begun in Germany in the 19th century (half of the century).

Northern Rhine – Westvallen region represented the centre of the mining and metallurgical industry in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries - is now in crises - like the Black Country region in England.

Taking all these facts into account the plan of the river Emscher basin brownfields regeneration in the territory of about 800 000 km² was worked out and step by step implemented.

Nearly 60% of the restoration costs were settled here by the European Union from its structural funds.

About 500 hectares of restored land were offered to 1 300 industrial enterprises for its utilization and approximately 1 300 flats were constructed there.

e) BROWNFIELDS REGENERATION ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE

What concerns other EU Member States, some precious experiences from brownfields restoration were achieved also in the northern and eastern French regions:

most of them in the *Nord – Pas de Calais* and in the *Loirin* regions.

6. EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGIES AND BROWNFIELDS REGENERATION

EU Members States are supporting the brownfields regeneration predominantly in the framework of their regional policy and through some other programmes.

They underline the significance of:

- *new building construction in the regenerated areas;***
- *modernization of buildings constructed in previous periods in that localities, possible brownfields transformation into greenfields.***

FINANCIAL SOURCES UTILIZED FOR BROWNFIELDS REGENERATION

Except of European Regional Development Fund the another possible source of financial supports for brownfields regenerations is the EU Cohesion fund.

Money from this fund is used for activities aimed mainly at the improvement of the environmental situation.

Last but not least some money is possible to achieve in the form of credits provided by the European Investment Bank as well as from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

REMARK TO NATIONAL STRATEGIES OF BROWNFIELDS REGENERATION

European Union member states and their public administration are obliged to work out their *National strategies of brownfields regeneration.*

The European Union authorities underline the position that those strategies could be successful only if their implementation is based on the consensus of all decisive political and other active forces of national states.

Moreover, the European Union as the whole shares the opinion that the successful brownfields regeneration strategy implementation helps to increase the competitiveness of individual regions- first of all of NUTS II – and that it simultaneously contributes positively to the diminishing of inter- regional disparities. That is why the brownfields regeneration plays the important role in the European union regional policy.

Moreover, it was underlined for several times that a consensus of all municipalities and regions development actors is extremely important for the brownfields concrete regeneration activities in the regional and local levels.