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## **SHRINKING CITIES IN SERBIA – REGIONAL DIFFERENTIATION AND TRAJECTORIES OF POST-SOCIALIST URBAN TRANSFORMATION**

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Urban shrinkage has been common phenomena for many European cities over the last decades. This process, accompanied by rapid demographic and socioeconomic changes, affected large areas in post-socialist countries forming a new “pole of shrinkage”. Although shrinkage processes produced rather homogeneous urban transformation in CEE from the macro perspective, it seems to be both spatially and temporally uneven from micro perspective, causing different development trajectories among post-socialist cities and uneven regional development. The transition from a centrally governed and urban-based industrialization to a neoliberal market economy and new multiparty democratic system, together with the collapse of socialist Yugoslavia, civil wars, and political and economic crumple during the 1990s, has brought significant changes to the structures of Serbian cities. Urban areas in Central Serbia and Vojvodina, with 167 urban settlements according to official (administrative) criteria, and 59.4% of total population, are facing population loss, which is closely related to the out-migration and population aging. This paper focuses on different development dynamics that have produced heterogeneous development patterns of urban space in Serbia. Diverse categories of the cities have been represented, from the most developed urban centres to the small towns, which are in the stage of depopulation and economic decline. The main goal of this research is to understand the pace and scale of shrinkage process, together with its causes and consequences, and to determine different types of shrinking cities in Serbia. This should act as a starting point for future development strategies that will have to recognize the heterogeneity caused by different level of shrinkage and diverse development opportunities for the urban settlements in Serbia.