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Metropolisation of the European Economic Territory as a Consequence of Increasing Specialisation of Urban Agglomerations in the Knowledge Economy

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Abstract

The development of Europe's economic territory today can be characterised as a process of metropolisation of economic development potentials and innovation capacities. “Metropolisation” is a paraphrase for the selective concentration of research-intensive industries and knowledge-intensive services on metropolitan regions and major urban agglomerations. On this basis the metropolitan regions and urban agglomerations are functioning as the “motors” of the European economy. In this article the metropolisation of the European economic territory is being analysed with regard to the increasing specialisation of Europe's major urban regions on knowledge-intensive economic activities. Particular emphasis is being put on the different sectoral profiles and development paths of the European urban agglomerations' and metropolitan

regions' knowledge-intensive economy. The result of this analysis is a differentiated representation of the developmental dynamics in the European Union urban system which allows to overcome simplifying general trend descriptions as for example the structural change of urban regions towards becoming “service centres”.

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