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Implementing the Concept of Relational Polycentricity: Functional and Institutional Relations of CEE Capital Cities

The concept of polycentric development has played a central role in the discussion of spatial development in Europe over the last 15 years. According to most definitions given in European planning concepts (ESDP) or scientific studies (ESPON 1.1.1) polycentricity includes both morphological and relational aspects of spatial structures and can also be applied on different spatial levels. Based on a short overview on these different approaches this paper concentrates on the relational aspect of polycentricity on the macro-level trying to suggest applicable indicators for measuring and analysing the functional and institutional relations between different cities. For that purpose different data sources will be exploited (GaWC research network, Migration data, CORDIS database) in order to assess existing ties and actual flows between 7 capital city regions in Central Eastern Europe (Vienna, Bratislava, Prague, Warsaw, Berlin, Budapest and Ljubljana). These indicators, which are supposed to describe a highly relevant part of these cities' territorial capital, will be analysed with regard to the following questions:

- Which pairs of cities have significantly strong relations?
- Do distances and historic ties play an important role for the intensity of relations?
- How strong are the relations between these 7 cities in comparison to "external" relations with other capital cities?
- Are the relations equal or are there any hierarchies or dominances?
- Did the relations change over time?

The results of the empirical analysis will be discussed with regard to their relevance for future planning strategies of city regions in CEE.