Case 3

HU-Miskolc: Diósgyőr Ironworks

Location: Miskolc, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, Hungary
Type of site: Heavy industrial complex and workers' neighbourhood
Size: Approx. 120 ha
Ownership: Mixed - private industrial parcels owned by small local companies, municipal areas
Main legacy: Steel and armament production (Diósgyőr Ironworks)
Period of activity: 1868-1990s
Main challenges: Contamination, social exclusion, fragmented reuse, degraded infrastructure
Priority of cluster relevance: Green Development, Economy & Reuse, Public Space & Housing, Heritage & City Image

Historical Overview

Founded in 1868, Diósgyőr Ironworks was one of Hungary's major metallurgical centres, symbolising both monarchic and socialist-era industrial pride.
After 1990, economic restructuring led to massive job losses and partial demolition.
Only small metallurgical and mechanical workshops remain, scattered among derelict structures.
Adjacent to the plant, the workers' neighbourhood - once a model settlement - now faces poverty and marginalisation.

Present Condition

The area is characterised by large brownfields, fenced parcels, and informal green zones emerging through natural succession. Illegal dumping and soil contamination persist.
The Szinva stream, flowing near the site, offers ecological potential but requires remediation. Residents of the former workers' neighbourhood depend on informal networks and lack access to quality public space.

Governance & Actors

- Municipality of Miskolc - manages integrated urban development and climate strategy.
- NGOs with regional focus - conducted research on postindustrial inequalities and ecological justice, focusing on structural changes.
- University of Miskolc - plans of an urban knowledge centre on site, with corporate collaborations.
- Small local private owners - partially reuse halls for logistics and small production.

Key Insights

Miskolc demonstrates that brownfield regeneration is an ecological process as much as an economic one. Integrating river restoration, green infrastructure, and small-scale

industries could transform the site into a productive ecological corridor.
The neighbourhood's experience underscores the need for multi-functional land-use planning linking circular economy, climate adaptation, and social equity. circular economy, climate adaptation, and social equity.

Leverage Points

River corridor as regeneration spine

Partnership between companies & university

Small-scale reuse of industrial halls

Lessons Learned

Environmental recovery attracts investment

Data-driven planning builds credibility

Incremental redevelopment avoids displacement

Transferable Tools

Blue-green infrastructure strategies

University-corporate partnership models

Participatory planning supported by iterative feedback cycles

Abandoned structures of the Miskolc Ironworks, with cooling towers and disused industrial halls gradually overtaken by scrub and pioneer species
Photo: Gergely Papp / PAD