Case 9

CZ-Ostrava: Liberty Steelworks – former ArcelorMittal

Location: Vítkovice - Kunčice industrial zone, Ostrava, Moravian-Silesian Region, Czechia
Type of site: Heavy industry complex in transition
Size: ~700 ha
Ownership: Liberty Steel Group (private)
Main legacy: Iron and steel production (since 1830s)
Period of activity: 1830s - present
Main challenges: Decarbonisation, job loss, land contamination
Priority of cluster relevance: Economy & Reuse, Green Development

Historical Overview

Ostrava's steelworks anchored Central Europe's metallurgical economy for over 150 years. After privatisation and EU accession, production modernised under foreign ownership, but global market shifts forced restructuring.
Recent EU climate goals and the Green Deal Industrial Plan prompted a transformation toward low-carbon steel production.

Present Condition

The site remains active, employing roughly 2 500 workers.
Parallel initiatives explore circular material use, waste-heat recovery, and industrial symbiosis.
Peripheral brownfields are slated for adaptive reuse in logistics, innovation hubs, and education facilities.

Governance & Actors

- Liberty Steel / GFG Alliance - global steel and mining company
- City of Ostrava - land-use coordination and stakeholder engagement
- University of Ostrava - environmental, urban and labour studies
- Regional government (Moravian-Silesian) - Just Transition coordination

Key Insights

Liberty Steel embodies the region's shift from industrial dependence to industrial innovation. Decarbonisation and circular economy principles redefine production and employment, showing that climate goals can coexist with industrial continuity.

Leverage Points

Collaboration between plant & city

Workforce reskilling programmes

Lessons Learned

Shared planning reduces socio-economic shock

Human capital is key to decarbonisation

Transferable Tools

Just energy transition partnership models

Green skills training frameworks

The Liberty Steelworks in Ostrava, a landmark of the city's heavy industrial past and a key site in ongoing postindustrial and environmental transition debates.
Photo: Petr Stefek

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