

The Transformation Challenge and Path Exploration of the National Central City in Northeast China

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Due to the changes of external environment, geopolitics and other factors, the economic development speed of China has gradually slowed down from the original medium-high speed development, and China is currently at a critical stage of economic restructuring and transformation. Under this background, the central government of China pays more attention to regional development, further strengthens the radiation power of cities with important influence in economy, politics, culture, science and technology, and promotes the coordinated development within the region^[1]. This paper takes Northeast China as an example to analyze the development of central cities in the economic downturn, and puts forward the strategies of industrial structure adjustment and innovation-driven in economic transformation.

The northeast of China was once the most developed industrial area in China, and the economic development in the northeast was dominated by heavy industry, coal and steel manufacturing. However, with the acceleration of globalization, these industries gradually showed a declining trend in global competition. However, due to its excessive dependence on heavy industry and difficulties in the reform of state-owned enterprises, its industrial structure is single and its technology is backward. In terms of regional development, the economic development speed of northeast China lags far behind the Pearl River Delta region, Yangtze River Delta region and Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region in the east. In order to promote the coordinated development of regional economy, the government gathers resources by setting up central cities and promotes the development of surrounding cities through radiation^[2]. However, unlike the southern central cities, which have mature light and heavy industry systems, manufacturing industries and service industries, the central cities in the northeast of China still take the old heavy industry as the main means of economic development, but with the change of global economic environment, especially the transformation and upgrading of China's economy, the traditional heavy industry has gradually exposed its sustainability problems. With the increasingly strict environmental protection policy, resource price fluctuation and rising labor costs. Northeast China also shoulders the heavy responsibility of China's granary, which is doomed to fail to copy the successful transformation cases of manufacturing to high-end manufacturing and service industries in economically developed areas such as Pearl River Delta and Yangtze River Delta. That shows that the economic restructuring in the northeast is imminent.

In order to improve the level of urban construction and promote economic development in Harbin in Northeast China, the government put forward the strategy of developing "ice and snow economy" according to local conditions, taking culture and tourism as the core driving forces, shaping the city brand, attracting foreign investment, improving the quality of life of residents and promoting the innovation and growth of related industries. This strategy began in 2023, and it was promoted on the short video platform through "ice and snow tourism resort", "ice and snow economic highland" and "humanistic care", and achieved very good results. Changchun, another central city in Northeast China, is also actively exploring the transformation path driven by culture and tourism. Relying on the unique local resources, Changchun City has launched Changbai Mountain cultural tourism projects such as "Genting

Tiangong", made full use of the cultural characteristics of Changbai Mountain and its surrounding areas, developed a series of related tourism products, and combined the natural landscape and cultural activities of Changbai Mountain, attracting a large number of tourists. In addition, "Baicheng" has further strengthened its economic ties with Changchun by building eco-tourism projects and agricultural sightseeing parks, and formed a coordinated development model of tourism, agriculture and service industries. The construction of these projects not only improved Changchun's tourist reception capacity, but also promoted infrastructure construction, improved the service level of transportation, hotels, restaurants and other industries, and promoted the prosperity of a large number of related industries. With the increase in the number of tourists, the employment opportunities in Changchun and its surrounding areas have increased significantly, and the income level of residents has improved.

From the successful cases of Harbin and Changchun, we can see that culture and tourism, as important engines to promote urban transformation and economic development, have great potential and prospects. It can be seen that the transformation of the central cities in Northeast China need not copy the southern central cities, but can give priority to the industrial upgrading of culture and tourism, use the siphon effect of the central cities to attract external investment, improve the quality of life of residents, accelerate the gathering of talents and enterprises, continuously optimize the industrial structure and promote regional economic integration^[3].

References

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