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PLENARY SESSION



Countryside – Our World?

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Annotation: The communist regime had gambled with the Czech countryside for more than 40 years. The degree of its devastation is considerable even today. Therefore, we shall consider the revitalisation and recovery of the Czech countryside as a complex and demanding process which we need to approach with a great deal of empathy towards the very valuable national heritage represented by traditions of interpersonal relationships or the phenomenon of the Czech landscape and the unpretentious link of a human being with the nature. For example, it is rather complicated for film makers to shoot a fairy tale in the industrialised Czech countryside. The revitalisation of the Czech rural areas is still a complex and sensitive issue that cannot be decreed remotely by means of percentage of this or that. Moreover, it cannot be changed by the planned numbers of wind mill power stations either. I would say that we are experiencing the socialistic planning ideas and methods known as “commanding the wind and rain” again. Thus we are facing a major question. How do we confront the new negative trends affecting the Czech countryside?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all participants of today's international conference “The Country Is Our World” in Kutná Hora. This is already the second event in this vein after the meeting in Český Krumlov in 2006. I am very glad that it has been realized, because I believe that questions about the development of the rural areas are of primary importance in the Czech Republic as well as in every other European state. These issues cannot be reduced to questions of recreation, ecology or agricultural production. Hence, I highly appreciate that among the participants of this conference there are also the representatives of some Czech ministries, just as I take it for granted that in the Czech Senate, for instance, - which I have the honour to represent - there is a Standing Committee for the Development of the Country, which has been active for many years.

The word “countryside, rural area” could very well be substituted by the word “roots”. Education and employment we seek almost always in large cities, our countryside, however, with its traditions, its down-to-earth characteristics and its nature provides us with the essential energy. The cumulative energy of

individual nations and their territories turns Europe into a colourful and attractive palette of colours, forms and scents that those who love unification, conformity and a life according to exactly given patterns, luckily have still not succeeded in blurring. Europe will never be an ideal place to live, as long as there is a handful of cunning bureaucrats who invent directives for unifying the forms of our beloved Czech rolls or the number of wind turbines on our hills. But then, when the energy of the *genius loci* of the individual European regions is connected to form one colourful, complex, but above all viable force.

I would like to thank the Czech University of Agriculture in Prague for organizing this conference as an international working meeting, where all those things that are important to the country in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in Europe should be discussed objectively. Things that are not important will have to be a controversial subject discussed between politicians who think realistically and those who do not understand these issues.

I thus wish all participants of today's conference mutually inspiring discussions and a pleasant stay in this ancient town - the importance of its past to Czech history truly cannot be overlooked.

Thank you for your attention.

The program “Sázava Clean, Healthy and Romantic“ and the development of countryside

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The wide idea of the “countryside development in the object if a wide interest of many institutions in the Czech Republic, from the central state administration institutions, public administration on the regional and local level, academic and scientific institutes and institutions down to civil associations and other NGOs. The outstanding feature of the projects is their atomisation and the lack of the mutual interrelations. A clear integrating vision of the development, based on the idea of sustainability and at the same time respecting the specific local needs and conditions, is missing. An attempt of solving this situation is the program Sázava 21 - Sázava Clean, Healthy and Romantic, which starts from the initiative of the township Kácov deputies and the intention was announced at the meeting of the region mayor on June 19, 2007. The program is managed by the co-ordination board the chairman of which is Bedřich Moldan. The aim is to contribute to the sustainable development of the region through concrete issuing from the identified local needs, mutually interrelated and co-ordinated.

From the regional viewpoint, the program is delimited by the hydrological range of the Sázava river, which measures 4,349 km² and which is, besides the Sázava river range, formed also by the partial range of the rivers Želivka, Blanice and several smaller watercourses. Among the bigger towns in the river range, we can include Havlíčkův Brod, Žďár nad Sázavou, Benešov, Pelhřimov, Vlašim, Humpolec, Světlá nad Sázavou, Ledec nad Sázavou, Týnec nad Sázavou, Pacov and Zruč nad Sázavou. The povodí is administrered by the Středočeským Region, the Region Vysočina and from a small part by the Jihočeský Region. As the sub-title indicates, the program Sázava 21 has three main axes. The “Clean Sázava“ is aimed at the area of water, the “Healthy Sázava“ at the wider problem of environment and energy production and the “Romantic Sázava“ at the development of culture, sports and tourism.

The content of the axis “Clean Sázava“ is formed by the projects aimed at different aspect of the water policy. Primarily, it means the problem of quantity that means the quantity of water. For example, the Sázava river is lacking a certain amount of water because the massive water supply system takes away high amounts of drinking water from the water-dam Švihov to

Prague and many other communes, some of them outside the Sázava range. This fact can impact in a negative way the lower part of the Sázava watercourse. It can be presupposed that new problems will emerge in consequence of the ongoing global climatic changes, which will probably bring about a decrease of the minimum summer amounts of water flow in Czech rivers. The second aspect is the quality of water given by the chemical pollution level. Notwithstanding the generally prevailing idea of a clean river, in reality Sázava belongs among the relatively highly polluted Czech watercourses. It is a typical example of the importance of the so-called spatial pollution from many smaller as well as bigger sources, which are only hardly individually identifiable. However, this situation is repeated, to a certain extent, everywhere in the Czech Republic. The third area of the axis "Clean Sázava" is the biological life in the water, namely in the Sázava river itself, but also in the smaller watercourse and the numerous water dams and ponds. Fourthly, it regards the water springs areas revitalisation in connection to the land adaptations and the anti-erosion measures. Water erosion of agricultural soil is one of the important problems in the whole river range. The last topic of the water policy area is the anti-flood measures the form of which should be efficient, but at the same time they should be done in a nature-friendly way.

The axis "Healthy Sázava" regards the wider area of environmental issues. An attention is paid namely to the atmosphere protection, which suffers, namely in the winter period, from the emission from local sources caused by the low-quality ways of heating. We can meet also with other sources of pollution (transport, industry); however, the local pollution from the home heating systems represents the heaviest burden. Combined with the much diversified terrain of the Posázaví where the majority of dwellings lay very often in deep-cut valleys, the level of air pollution in the winter period is critical. The presupposed solutions are imbedded in the wider frame of solving the energy economy of the whole region. Attention should be paid to the renewable energy resources, where also the revitalisation of the old water constructions directly on the river Sázava can play a role. This area includes also nature protection, be it the sustaining of valuable biotopes or the protection of the selected plant and animal species. At present, there goes on the gradual proclaiming and preparation of agreements on the localities of the Natura 200 system, to which the program Sázava 21 wants to contribute in a considerable way. Neither will be forgotten the area of refuse management including transport of refuse, insufficiently secured refuse dump areas and "black" dumps.

An important part of the "Romantic Sázava" is the care for cultural sights, which are very numerous in the whole region, including the extraordinarily high number of churches and chapels, field crosses, bigger and small monuments, castles and chateaus as well as other historical buildings, but also

parks, tree alleys or memorial trees. These cultural sights are often not in a very good state of repair from the building or other viewpoints. The care for cultural heritage is one of the foremost aims of the whole program. The second part is tourism and sports. The river Sázava of the famous past, the tramps of the 20s and 30s, the “Sázava Paccific“ and the well-known recreation centres of the pre-war period represent the glorious past which is remembered with nostalgia by its contemporaries. The goal of the whole project is to continue from this past glory and to renew it under the present conditions. An example of this might be building of the cyclo-trails.

The prerequisite of the success of the program is a close co-operation of the institutions on the national level, including several ministries (of environment, culture, agriculture and regional development) and the outstanding research institutions (namely the TGM Research Institute of Water Management, the Research Institute of Ameliorations and Soil Protection, the Nature and Countryside Protection Agency and other), with the local institutions. Among them, we include the communal representation bodies, micro-regions, local action groups, civil organisations and other. A close co-operation of them, namely with the communes, is perhaps the most important aspect of the whole program. The Sázava range includes more than 400 communes, a high number of them having less than 100 inhabitants (the smallest of them is Vysoká Lhota in the Pacov area with only 23 inhabitants). Communal deputies and the mayors are reliable representatives of the people living in the region and the program Sázava 21 therefore stands or falls with their co-operation. We have to keep in mind, however, that the range of the communal deputies – namely those of the smallest communes – is limited. This fact has to be very seriously considered.

Sázava 21 is not a project but a program: It represents an umbrella concept the expression of which is the at present prepared integrated program document (of the working name Master Plan). The individual projects which the program consists of are to have their own financing and their own action plans including the clearly defined concrete goals, responsible actors, timetable etc. The program is to serve the initiation of such projects, to aid their fulfilment and namely to identify the necessary activities and their interrelationships. Very important is financing of the individual projects in which several categories of resources including the European funds will be incorporated. It will also be necessary to mobilise, to a smaller or greater extent, own resources of the Individual communes, what in many cases might meet with difficulties. Neither can we forget the seemingly unimportant but often almost unsurpassable administration demands at the point of submitting projects and also their continual evaluation, which is often done according to different rules and forms a considerable burden for the communes. For the smallest communes this matter can then means an unsurpassable barrier.

An important feature of the program is the integrated approach. It endeavours to seek the synergy among the individual partial projects, the connecting of which would bring about a considerably higher effect than just their isolated application. As an example, we can mention the water spring areas revitalisation in a close connection with the anti-erosion protection and the anti-flood measures construction; the result of them should also be the improved water quality. To that, also building of the biological ponds as reliable and nature-friendly way of cleaning sewage water from the small communes should contribute. The final goal then is improved quality of life of the whole population of the region, its cultural and economic development, a healthier environment as well as protection of nature and its biological wealth. At the same time, the program should serve as a pilot one, the results of which could be applied also in other regions of the Czech Republic. We suppose that it will be possible to generalise the conclusions to such an extent that they will become the methodological base for the widely applicable procedures and eventually also for the changes in legislation.

Common Agricultural Policy and Territorial Cohesion

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The European Union is full of expectations towards the results of Common Agricultural Policy Reform. The Second Pillar of CAP was deemed to stabilise population in rural areas, to raise incomes of rural inhabitants, to bring jobs and education and stop ageing. A significant part of agricultural resources (EAGGF) mixed with the regional resources (ERDF) were dedicated to fulfil these objectives in rural areas by using a new Fund – European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Though it is relatively early to evaluate the impacts the first information from Member States show that a complex rural development cannot be achieved, the decaying rural areas continue to decline, their character is not changing and that the inter-links between agricultural and rural world is only partly real. Where agriculture grows - rural areas continue to decline. Majority of resources is dedicated to organic farming and modernisation of farms. Also the 3rd and 4th Axes of Rural Development Programmes, which were intended to contribute to rural stability, are mostly farm oriented. Taking into account the First Pillar subsidies a really small percentage of resources are at present used for the quality of life in rural areas. The support is not specific according to the needs of specific rural areas.

The rural areas were extensively defined according to OECD methodology, what means for example the whole territory of the Czech Republic except Prague. The resources are not adequate to this definition. The Regional Policy in all three Objectives territories is built complementarily to CAP and as a consequence it does not cover the needs of rural areas. A clear demarcation line between the two policies had to be respected.

From a positive point of view farm and forest management developed a better attitude to rural environment and society, but agriculture or forestry themselves and diversified activities of farmers could not provide enough jobs and services for village inhabitants. Farm headquarters are also often not located in villages, where they operate, but elsewhere or in towns instead.

The methods of Rural Policy have taken a lot of Regional Policy principles, what is a promising step towards future. The Leader principles can be taken as especially successful example. The LEADER+ Initiative as well as Leader

Axis have the potential to maximise the impacts of limited resources in the respective territory thanks to synergy of different actions.

The Czech Republic will be the presiding country of the European Union in the first half of 2009. A major discussion is expected on the future of the Agricultural Policy and the Cohesion Policy. The tendencies which we can see now show isolation of discussions on each Policy both at national and European level. This can result in dramatic cuts of budget either in the Agricultural Policy or in the Cohesion Policy. The way out of this trap is difficult to find. Maybe a joint approach could be recommended where both Policies adopt the Territorial Cohesion principle and where savings could be found in synergy of Agricultural Policy and Cohesion policy. The territorial principle includes a comprehensive approach which covers social, economic, environmental and cultural development of a territory in their inter-relations and synergies. The EU ESPON Operational Programme will evaluate the European and later sector policies through Territorial Impact Assessment methodology, which may open the door to territorial understanding also of CAP.

AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS – POSITION AND FUTURE ROLE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Local Food Production and Rural Sustainable Development

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Annotation. This paper depicts the main theoretical aspects of rural sustainable development and local food production and applies these theories to the particular example of the Devon and Cornwall regions within Great Britain especially considering the promotion of local food products at the regional market. Accent is also put on relation between local food production and sustainable development of rural communities.

Key words: Endogenous development, local food products, organic farming, rural development, sustainable development.

1 Introduction

Increasing competitive pressures are strongly associated with the globalization of economy and economic structures. Thus the question is how companies, regions and states are able to face these pressures and become more competitive within the global economy. Mainly rural areas are the most problematic especially considering their close dependence on agriculture, depopulation of rural areas and traditional rural culture. So, rural development is also focused on local food production and creating favourable conditions for local farmers to encourage sustainable development of rural areas. One of the possibilities to encourage rural sustainable development is to promote local food products at the regional market, what is important not only for increasing the demand for local food products but also for stronger co-operation between farmers and local inhabitants as well as between the rural and urban population.

2 Objective and methods

Main theoretical approach based on concept of sustainable development as a key concept of regional development theories. Sustainable development is development that meets needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts. The first one is concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor. To which overriding priority should be given. The second one is the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs. [7] The chief focus of sustainable development is on society, and its aim is to include environmental consideration in the steering of societal change, especially through changes to the way in which the economy functions. Promoting sustainable development is about steering change at the interface between social, economic and ecological ways of regional development. These are known as the three dimensions or pillars of sustainable development. [1] The main aim of this paper is to depict the main theoretical and practical aspects of local food production and promotion of local food products at the regional market and to apply the experiences from Great Britain to the conditions of the Czech Republic and accent is also put on relation between local food production and sustainable development of rural communities. From the methodological point of view mainly secondary analysis of theoretical concepts and analysis of websites of the regional institutions within Great Britain are used.

3 Results

Rural development is the set of activities and actions of diverse actors – individuals, organizations, groups – which taken together leads to progress in rural areas. Progress is defined differently by different people: historically, material progress – growth of incomes and wealth, poverty alleviation – has been the main consideration in development theory and practice. Today other indicators of progress – cultural, spiritual, ethical – are increasingly taking their place beside the material in a reformulated, more holistic concept of development. So, rural development is strongly associated with agriculture, main patterns of sustainable development and in these days also with endogenous development theories. There are many ways in which modern agriculture compromises the interests of future generation: loss of vital topsoil which can only be built up slowly and painfully, pollution of soil, water and atmosphere, deforestation, irrigation rendering soils unusable or unproductive

due to salinity, massive tampering with the eco-system such that gross imbalances and vulnerabilities are created, loss of genetic diversity in plants and livestock which reduces the ability of future generations to explore genetic options to their problems. These environmental consequences are due to both the increasing intensity and the increasing extent of agriculture in the modern world. This is one of the reasons to encourage organic farming and local food production within the small farms as a counterpoise to intensive agriculture production. Nowadays, rural development has matured to the point at which it is possible to perceive of solutions to many of its long-standing problems which pass the test of sustainability, equitability, and efficient use of resources.[6]

As mentioned above, endogenous development is nowadays associated with rural development and it is possible to talk about endogenous rural development. Endogenous development is possible to define as development based mainly on local strategies, knowledge, institutions and resources. It is continuous process of adaptation and innovation, starting from within the local community. A key criterion for endogenous development is that it is controlled by local actors. It aims at the strengthening of local resources for the benefit of local population and enhancing the ability to integrate selected elements from outside into local practise. Enhancing the endogenous development process involves the material, social and also cultural dimension of the people within the locality. But on the other hand, according to Jan Douwe van der Ploeg [5], endogenous development patterns are based mainly, but not exclusively, on locally available resources, making full use of ecology, labour force and knowledge of an area as well as those patterns which have developed locally to link production and consumption. Endogenous development can revitalize and provide a new dynamic to local resources that might otherwise become superfluous. Endogenous development emerges as a self-oriented process of growth and relatively large part of the total value generated by this type of development is re-allocated in the region itself. The close dependency of endogenous development on local resources implies that this type of development can have a positive impact on local interests and perspectives. So, promotion of local food production is one of the measures used for realizing of endogenous rural development within the particular rural areas.

Even as food production has become increasingly integrated into global networks, there has been a growing research interest in local agro-food systems, a trend that, it has been suggested, is largely related to a perceived need to balance the dominance of the globalization rhetoric, engendering an emergence and revitalization of local food studies. The acknowledge importance of heterogeneity at the local level of agro-food systems and the increasing interest in a cultural economy approach to rural development are evidence that globalization as a defining paradigm for structuring our

understanding of food systems is being challenged. Localization has been seen as a process that reverses the trend of globalization by conscious discrimination in favour of local products. The idea of local itself is ambiguous, needing explicit definition with respect to significance and meanings for rural communities. The concept of local foods is frequently linked to traditional foods or to organic foods, both being a proxy for distance between production and consumption, and both loaded with normative values of goodness with respect to environmental and social outcomes. The particular meaning of local for this paper is defined as traditional foods that are historically linked to livelihoods and cultural identities. The distinction is less about distance as a criterion of social meaning than about history and cultural identity. [3]

As mentioned above, organic farming is increasingly being recognised as a potential solution to many of the policy problems facing agriculture in both developed and developing countries. It is not easy to define organic farming but for the purpose of this paper could be organic farming define as a production system which avoids or largely excludes the use of synthetically compounded fertilisers, pesticides, growth regulators and livestock feed additives. To the maximum extent feasible, organic farming systems rely on crop rotations, crop residues, animal manures, legumes, green manures, off-farm organic wastes, and aspects of biological pest control to maintain soil productivity and tilth, to supply plant nutrients and to control insects, weeds and other pests. The concept of soil as a living system is central to this definition.[2]Close attention to marketing is an integral part of successful organic farming. The development of modern agriculture in Britain has suffered to a large extent from excessive attention to production and little concern about what the consumer actually wants. Organically produced food offers an opportunity to remedy this. Marketing is not about selling, or persuading the consumer to buy goods which are not really wanted – the consumer will probably not be persuaded a second time. Marketing is about identifying products, which the consumer does want, and supplying them at the right price, where and when and in the form which the consumer wants them.[2] So, local food production, which is usually also production of organic farming, is possible to promote by using of the wide range of marketing measures.

There exists a specialized association for promotion of local food products within Great Britain, which is called the National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association (FARMA). FARMA is a co-operative of farmers, producers selling on a local scale, and Farmers' markets organisers. FARMA works throughout Great Britain and it is the largest organisation of this type in the world, representing direct sales to customers not only through Farmers' markets but also through farm shops, Pick-Your-Own, home delivery, on-farm

catering, and farm entertainment. The association implements the Government's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy within Great Britain. The aim of the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy is to help farmers adapt to the changing world, particularly as a result of Common agriculture policy reform, in which they must deliver environmental goods while learning to live without production subsidies and becoming more in tune with their markets. From this point of view one of the greatest opportunities for farmers to add value and retain a bigger slice of retail price is to build on the public's enthusiasm for locally produced food, or food with a clear regional provenance. Increasing the market share of such food would have benefits for the farmer and consumer alike. One of the most popular ways to promote local food production is Farmers' market. Farmers' markets have been running since 1996 following the setting up of Britain's first true Farmers' market in Bath. Since that time, the sector has exploded with over 500 Farmers' markets around the country, and nearly 200 Certified by FARMA (including Plymouth Farmers' market) to uphold the ethical retailing principles which lie behind the concept. [4]

The popular Farmers' market in Plymouth is held every two weeks at the main promenade in the heart of the city centre but it is possible to find similar markets also in other towns within the region (e.g. Bristol, Exeter, Tavistock). It is also possible to purchase locally reared ostrich meat, pork, beef, lamb, locally grown strawberries and vegetables, plus locally produced cheeses, chutney, pies and pasties. This is not only an opportunity for local farmers to sell their goods but also a great opportunity to promote goodwill for local food products and to create stronger connections between the rural and urban population. One of the results of the promotion of local food products by FARMA is the increasing importance of "trademark local" within global shopping networks within Great Britain. So, "local" is considered as a synonym to good quality, environmental friendly and healthy products.

4 Discussion

As mentioned above, one of the opportunities to promote local food products at regional markets is the creation of Farmers' markets within towns. It is also a possibility for stronger co-operation between the rural and urban population and for the realization of rural sustainable development within the neighbourhood of chosen towns. The National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association exists to promote local food products within Great Britain. The question is whether this system of promotion of local food products is applicable to the conditions of the Czech Republic. There is a significant difference within the structure of agricultural producers as a result of different

historical development of these countries. It seems to be a good idea to promote local food products by Farmers' markets within the Czech Republic but it is necessary to implement some modifications. Whether and to what extent it is efficient to support small-scale tourism and the marketing of local food products by Farmers' markets will be part of ensuing research.

5 Conclusion

It is necessary to achieve the aims of rural sustainable development within rural areas to protect these areas from depopulation and other social and economic problems. One of the possibilities to encourage rural sustainable development is to promote local food products. It is important not only from the point of view of increasing the revenues of local farmers but also from the point of view of encouraging close co-operation between the rural and urban population. Close co-operation between the rural and urban population is important for supporting rural sustainable development not only by the rural but also by the urban population. The National Farmers' Retail and Markets Association and Farmers' markets are interesting examples of this relation between the rural and urban population within Great Britain and could be seen also as an example for other countries including the Czech Republic. But different structure of agricultural producers (mainly the scale of farms) in the Czech Republic must be taken in mind.

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Economic Localisation in the Context of Sustainable Rural Development

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Annotation. *Economic localisation* is a useful tool in the discourse on sustainable rural development. It is defined as support for locally owned businesses which use local resources, employ locals and serve primarily local consumers. We discuss some merits of this approach as well as a tool for measurement of economic localisation: the local multiplier.

Key words: economic localisation, sustainable rural development, local multiplier.

1 Introduction

It is generally acknowledged that sustainable development consists of three pillars: the economic, the social and the environmental. The whole concept of sustainability is based on the harmonious and balanced development of all three pillars. (e.g. Moldan et al. 2002:14) The Czech Strategy for Sustainable Development¹ defines strategic goals and instruments, „formulated so as to eliminate, to the maximum extent possible, imbalances in relations between the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainability.“ (Progress Report 2006:12) This indicates that some imbalances do exist. More straightforwardly, Mezřícký (2005:79) gives unclear connections between the three pillars as the first among several reasons for existing difficulties in implementing sustainable development strategies.

In our opinion, the emerging *concept of economic localisation* can be seen as a practical application of the goals of sustainable development and has the potential to take into account all the three pillars in a well-balanced way. Besides, we believe it is coherent enough to serve as *an opposite pole of thought to economic globalisation* (if we define the latter as a belief in and

¹The document was adopted under Czech Government Resolution No 1242 of 8 December 2004 (Progress Report 2006: 12).

support of unfettered free trade and labour mobility). The discourse itself is new, although it has many links, albeit often acknowledged, to historic undercurrents.² Rather than a unified movement or school of thought, however, it is a spectrum, ranging from utopias and visions which can be seen as navigational compasses towards alternative futures (in the sense of de Geus 2001) to very practical and doable suggestions, techniques and descriptions of a localisation process which is already underway in many parts of the world.³

2 Defining economic localisation

Drawing on Shuman (1998:6), Hines (2000:28) and others, localisation can briefly be defined as both the process and the result of a moral, political and practical support for locally owned businesses (including co-operatives, community enterprises etc.) which use local resources, employ locals and serve primarily local consumers. As a corollary to local ownership, production and consumption, localisation entails efforts at higher rate of local self-sufficiency and a declining reliance on imports, which leads to a more diversified economy in terms of production of goods and services. The content of the term “local” (i.e. the scale) varies, depending on the author and on the perspective adopted. An important strand of most localisation thinking is the support of localised finance, credit and capital investment, local currencies as well as mutual and non-monetised economy. In some perspectives, localisation also entails or leads to a decentralisation of settlement, government and production, and communal ownership of capital.⁴ The thrust for

² Other concepts with very similar or concurring meanings have included *self-reliance* (Galtung 1986, Nozick 1992, Shuman 1998), *bioregionalism* (Sale 1991, Andruss et al. 1990, Mills 1995), *bioregional development* (Desai and Riddellstone 2002), *going local* (Shuman 1998), *encouraging homegrown local economies* (Robertson 1990), *short-circuiting-strengthening local economies* (Douthwaite 1996), *building sustainable communities* (Morehouse 1997) *building “new economics” structures* (Crabtree 2006), *counter-development* (Norberg-Hodge 1991), *person-in-community* (Daly and Cobb 1990: 168–186) and building a *lean economy* (Fleming 2005).

³ Quite often, the visionary and practical approaches overlap considerably within one text. Most authors in this field are not academics, and their overarching concern is neither with grand theory nor with social scientific research. Their goal is to find, in theory and practice, viable and positive alternatives to a world which they perceive as going in the wrong direction. Among the more theoretical texts can be counted: Robertson (1990), Sale (1991) and Fleming (2005). Douthwaite (1996), Crabtree (2006) and Desai and Riddellstone (2002) are closer to the practical shore.

⁴ The idea of localisation ties in with tendencies over the last decades to re-think regional development models in terms of “endogenous” rather than “exogenous”

localisation has both pragmatic and ethical underpinnings, as will be discussed below. But before attending more deeply to economic localisation, we will try here to outline why we think it is needed. In other words, to answer the question.

3 What is the problem?

The literature on the impact of economic globalisation on sustainability is vast and need not be reiterated here (see e.g. Korten 1995, Goldsmith & Mander 2003), for a recent Czech summary see Sedláček (2005). We will therefore focus on only two issues of direct relevance to the rural.

The first of these, linked directly to the environmental sustainability pillar, is the growing problem of international transport of staple food products, leading to rising *food miles*.⁵ Basic food which has traditionally been produced in the Czech Republic is now flown in from other continents, which has an obvious impact on the hidden energy content of the food and thus on global warming and a host of related energy issues.

Data from the Czech statistical office (Český statistický úřad) indicate the magnitude of the problem: In 2007, the Czech Republic imported 9 thousand tons of poultry meat from Brazil, while in the case of Germany, Slovakia and the Netherlands, a comparable amount of poultry meat was exported to and imported from the Czech Republic, adding to the absurdity of the whole process (Table 1). In the case of eggs, another Czech staple, a similar situation exists, with comparable amounts of eggs exported from and to Slovakia from the Czech Republic in 2001. In addition, another ten million eggs were imported from the USA⁶ (Table 2).

models of development, i.e. relying on local natural and human resources, strengths and assets (Cato 2000, 2004, Kretzmann and McKnight 1993, Lowe 2000, Pretty 2001: 225–229).

⁵ The British Government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has suggested food miles as one of indicators of sustainable development. See e.g. Smith et al. (2005) or Food Miles (2008).

⁶ That is one American egg per each inhabitant of the Czech Republic in 2001.

Table 1. The balance of Czech import and export of poultry meat in 2007. Only the main import and export countries are included. (Czech Statistical Office 2008).

Czech import and export of poultry meat in 2007			
Import from	Amount [tons]	Export to	Amount [tons]
Poland	14 743		
Brazil	9 151		
Germany	6 609	Germany	4 278
Slovakia	6 609	Slovakia	10 267
Holland	5 592	Holland	2 139
Total	50 839	Total	21 389

Table 2. The balance of Czech import and export of eggs in 2001. Only main import and export countries are included. (Czech Statistical Office 2006)

Czech import and export of eggs in 2001			
Import from	Amount [pcs]	Export to	Amount [pcs]
Germany	9 200 000	Germany	22 500 000
Slovakia	15 200 000	Slovakia	18 900 000
USA	10 200 000		
Total	42 500 000	Total	70 000 000

However, according to more recent information the Czech Republic has stopped exporting eggs since 2004. According to the director of ProAgro Nymburk Bohuslav Kohout, “ Problems started with our admission into the EU, when cheap competitors from Poland and Latvia took over Czech markets. Some supermarket chains do not take Czech eggs at all today.” (Olbrichová 2006)

The second big problem linked to the economic globalisation process is the demise of local producers and services. In the case of Czech egg producers, the impact of Polish and Latvian competitors has been likened to the onslaught of avian flu. In addition to the decimation of poultry breeders, there has been a knock-effect on poultry feed producers and the farmers who supply them. The consumer has not benefitted since imported eggs are said to be of poor nutritional quality (Olbrichova 2006). As regards the demise of rural services, the New Economics Foundation (NEF 2002, 2003) has documented the rapid closure of small shops and other independent outlets in Britain, and while this

is a national problem, rural areas have been hit the hardest.⁷ Although 60 % to 80 % of people interviewed in a 1999 British Social Attitudes survey said that it was “fairly important” or “very important” that basic services are “within a 15 minute walk away” (Countryside Agency 2000:30), statistics show that 33 % of rural English parishes have no shop, pub or village hall, 43 % have no post office, 73 % have no bus service, 83 % have no medical service, and 91 % have no bank or building society. (Conaty et al. 2002)

In the Czech Republic, rural services have also been declining, though data are not as readily available. However, pilot studies from South-Central Bohemia (the former districts of Píbram, Benesov, Strakonice, Písek, Tabor and Pelhřimov) found that 53 % of rural settlements (under 2,500 inhabitants) had no food retail outlet. (Kubeš 2000:113) As this is an area with a large percentage of settlements of under 100 inhabitants, the statistics might be more favourable in other areas, like Moravia, where villages are less de-populated.

In a recent survey of shopping habits in Czech rural areas, many respondents (43 %) said they bought their groceries “as opportunity allowed”.⁸ (Majerová 2003:142) The implication here is that all respondents had a choice between buying their food locally and buying in a more distant shop. However, as the research noted above indicates, this may be far from being the case today.

Like retail outlets, public transport services have strongly declined in Czech rural areas after the 1989 democratic revolution, as documented by another study from South Bohemia. (Kubeš and Slezáková 2000) Kubeš and Horáková (2000) have compiled statistics showing a drastic decrease of primary schools in the Písek and Tábor districts: of a total of 112 rural primary schools in 1965/66, only 14, i.e. 12.5 %, remained in 1998/99. This is probably fairly representative of other Czech rural areas. The closure of a primary school may start a *reinforcing demographic feedback loop* as young families, not wanting their young children to commute long distances, settle elsewhere. In the long-term, the absence of primary schools and kindergartens in a village weakens

⁷ According to New Economics Foundation (NEF 2002a: 12): “Since the 1940s, around 100,000 small shops have closed, and every year their number drops by approximately 10 %. Between 1995 and 2000, independent fresh food specialists – including bakers, butchers, fishmongers and greengrocers – saw their sales drop by 40 %, as supermarkets consolidated their grip over the food retail sector. Fifteen years ago there were 47,068 independent grocery retailers in Britain. Today, that figure has been reduced to just 28,319.... The Rural Shops Alliance estimates that there are fewer than 12,000 rural shops left in Britain, and, according to The Grocer magazine (31 March 2001), we are losing them at a rate of 300 a year.”

⁸ On the average for the whole republic, only 17 % of the rural residents bought their food purely in their place of residence. Regionally, the largest percentage of people buying purely locally (31.5 %) lived on the Moravian/Slovakian border. (Majerová 2003:142)

the local community in many subtle ways culturally, socially and economically.

The demise of rural producers and small retailers, linked to economic globalisation, appears to be aggravated in the Czech countryside by local school closures, dating from the Communist era, and by more recent cutbacks on public transport. The combination of these factors can lead to a weakening of both the economic potential and social capital of more remote rural areas, and thus have a negative impact on both the economic and the social pillars of sustainable development objectives.

4 Particular aspects of localisation

After having outlined some examples of problematic aspects of current development, we will try to introduce more deeply the possible positive impact of economic localisation, both in theory and in practice.

Although such intangibles are hard to quantify, human happiness is seen to be closely connected with a *sense of place and community* (Shuman 1998:31-33, Douthwaite 1996: 362, Norberg-Hodge 1991:83-87): distinctive local cultures are built on rooted and distinctive local economies. When these are gone, social capital is lost (Daly and Cobb 1990: 161-165, Fleming 2005, NEF 2002:36) and anti-social behaviour (Shuman 1998:48) and a culture of litigation (Berry 1988:5-6) follow. Such societies, which have lost the glue of mutual trust, can then be seen as economically inefficient because prices reflect the burden of a hypertrophic structure of government agencies, insurance companies, lawyers etc. set up to prevent social pathology. (Benello in Morehouse 1997:85–89)⁹

Being at home, with its connotations of stability, trust and friendship, is an important benefit associated with localisation. Even partial localisation is widely linked with enhanced community values. According to Shuman (1998:6): "... local ownership [of enterprises] boosts local loyalty... It means

⁹ A project described by Desai and Riddlestone's (2002:79-80) involved the partial revival of growing lavender for making lavender oil in a southern London suburb. The project drew local residents together as they searched for original lavender bushes in their gardens, volunteers collected cuttings and older residents sent in their reminiscences. A refurbished local pub was named after a family of lavender growers. According to the authors, a re-linking with their past and with the land brought an *enhanced sense of meaning to people*: "A sense of community can be fostered by a sense of place, through locally distinct neighbourhoods and industries linked to the ecology and heritage of an area." (Desai and Riddlestone 2002:75).

that... community stability, cultural preservation, and civic pride enter business decisions along with traditional measures of profitability.”

Localisation is also seen as a *key to enhancing employment*. In a situation when the rich often no longer need the poor due to automation, the marginalised groups, regions and nations can respond by gauging their real needs and producing locally for local consumption. Such local production, even though it may be uncompetitive on a world market, can provide both useful products and livelihoods on a local level. Smaller enterprises are uncompetitive precisely because they are more labour intensive. However, this can be seen as an advantage when local employment is the goal.¹⁰ Locally-owned enterprises are less likely to relocate abroad. Enhancement and stability of employment has thus been one of the main arguments for economic localization. (Douthwaite 1996, Shuman 1998, Hines 2001, Desai and Riddlestone 2002:77) A more diversified economy, besides reducing the risk inherent in specialisation (Desai and Riddlestone 2002:77), also gives residents more possibilities of a meaningful vocation, thus further enhancing quality of life and economic freedom. (Desai and Riddlestone 2002:77, Berry 2001:6)

Schumacher and others have suggested that a localised economy also gives people *more control over their destiny* (Schumacher 1993: chapter 2, Mathews 1999:156). A local biogas plant is more understandable and controllable than a distant nuclear power plant. More local self-sufficiency means less vulnerability to power failure and terrorist attack. (Berry 1988:7-8, Daly and Cobb 1990:348, Sale 1991:76–77) Ownership and control of local enterprises, resources and capital gives the community power to decide its own matters. (Nozick 1992:61-62, Goldsmith 2003:302-303, Bruyn 1992:327– 373) The link here to the concepts of economic democracy and economic freedom is clear.

Localisation is often presented as a *shield against the instability* of the current economic system and the so called race to the bottom.¹¹ (Douthwaite 1996:13-

¹⁰ This was originally Gandhi’s point, when suggesting that India should support the production of necessities, such as cloth, in the villages using traditional tools (Gandhi 1995). While the efficiency of production would be low, it would still be much higher than if the people involved made nothing (see also Douthwaite 1996: 44). J. C. Kumarappa, one of Gandhi’s disciples, developed Gandhi’s ideas on rural economies in a series of books, but was marginalised after India gained independence (Guha and Martinez-Alier 2000: 158-9, Kumarappa 1960).

¹¹ The *race to the bottom* can be described as an economic process where producers, dependent on a global market, are forced into ever-greater efficiency, characterised by lower labour input, economies of increasing scale, and rising externalities in terms of environmental and social costs, including costs to people who are robbed of resources and/or unable to compete in such an environment. (George 1975, Anonymus 1996) This process is described by Korten (1995: 229 - 237) as a “race to the bottom” (see also Shuman 1998: 6-15).

29, 33-34, Bruyn 1992:374) Typically, authors advocating localisation value stability more than high profit and economic growth. Douthwaite (1996:36) puts it this way: "...because a community needs its income for long-term tasks, such as raising children, it wants to be sure that [a business activity] will continue for many years". And according to Shuman (1998:94), "... a business with a 3 percent rate of return that stays is more valuable to a community than a business with a 30 percent rate of return that leaves." Shuman, however, emphasises that a localised business does need to have a profit margin, albeit small: „There is no escape from basic principles of good management. Efficiency is an important goal for community economics– not the only goal, but a necessary one”.

John Galtung was an early proponent of national and community localisation, which he called *self-reliance* (Galtung 1986). He was not against trade as such, but felt that trade was conducive to a dependency of the less powerful regions and countries, the „periphery“, on a more powerful centre. Peripheries tend to export their raw materials in exchange for finished products from the centres, and are exploited in various subtle and less subtle ways: „The damage done to the weak is less visible ...“ (1986:99). Remote and less technologically and politically powerful countries and regions are thus subject to negative externalities, while those at the more powerful „centre“ are left with the positive externalities, such as supporting industries, research and the addition of value through processing. (Nozick 1992:60)¹² Galtung therefore advocated *trade without dependency and exploitation*. To reach the first goal, regions should be not only self-reliant, but at least potentially self-sufficient: they need to be able to produce basic necessities for themselves. For the second goal, trade needs to be equitable. This might for example entail intrasectoral rather than intersectoral trading (exchange of primary products for primary products, or services for services, etc.). (Galtung 1986:102) A similar plea for equitable exchange is voiced by Canadian author Marcia Nozick in her text on self-reliance (1992:60). Desai and Riddlestone (2002:58–61) in their book on bioregional solutions suggest an index which, when applied to products traded internationally, would give an indication of environmental impact combined with trade profitability. This FEET (Foreign exchange earnings per transport tonne of CO₂) index would be calculated by dividing the foreign exchange earned by the CO₂ released by transporting the product to the country of sale: the higher the index, the more sustainable and equitable the trade process.

As these examples indicate, proponents of localisation, although concerned with the social and environmental impacts of free trade, seldom advocate

¹² The positive externalities of localisation can be argued to be much wider. In a broad sense, all the benefits associated with localisation detailed in this section can be equally defined as positive externalities.

complete economic autarky for regions and countries (but see Sale 1991:79). Most advocate *a change of emphasis*: Localisation is a desirable goal and therefore policies should be geared to support it, and countries and localities should be free to choose if, when and with whom they wish to exchange products and services, and free to support localisation. (Shuman 1998:78, 125–126, Berry 2001:262, Norberg–Hodge 2003:242, Nozick 1992:59–60, Douthwaite 1996:35) According to Shuman, “... a community can – indeed must – maintain economic relationships with the rest of the world, provided it retains *control* of these relationships“. (1998:50, emphasis in original).

In a deeper vein, David Fleming (2005) quotes the philosopher David Miller who stresses that we are all part of a community which stretches back and forward across the generations and which, being indebted to our antecedents, we cannot renounce. (Miller 2000:28–29) While Douthwaite and Fleming emphasise *the principle of responsibility*, Hines (2001:28) in his localisation proposals builds on the concept of human rights (i.e. we have a right to participate in decisions that affect our lives). In any case, many localisation proponents are unabashedly normative, decrying the absence of ethics in economics and seeing the *benefits of localisation in the ethical as well as the material sphere*. Both E. F. Schumacher (1993: chapter 2) and John Galtung (1986:98–99) have pointed to the ethical vacuum at the heart of economics, which replaces compassion and concern in human dealings with a search for profit, not discerning the multiple long-term negative impacts of such an approach, not least on its perpetrators.

For the British new economist Andrew Simms, localisation is to economics what organic has become to food: healthy, real and connected (Simms 2003:9), while mainstream economics is persistently failing because it has not acknowledged that the economy is a „wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment and the human society“. (2003:7) From an environmental perspective, Australian thinker Ted Trainer (1995:79–80) starkly states that the current economy, geared to constant growth of production, is at direct odds with sustainability, and sees *self-sufficiency as the key to an environmentally ethical economy*. The important argument voiced by John Galtung and others (e.g. Nozick 1992:62) stating that localisation internalises negative externalities, is also essentially ethical.

5 How to measure the local economy?

While the merits of an economic localisation approach are many, most are not directly measurable and as such may fail to impress hard-headed politicians, businessmen, economists or even local inhabitants. In such a case, a single-digit indicator of economic localisation can be useful. Such an indicator, called the

local multiplier, has been developed in Britain by the New Economics Foundation (Sacks 2002) and is being piloted in the Czech Republic by the Economy and Society Trust. (Kutáček 2008)¹³

Essentially, a local multiplier is a number which can be figured out for any institution (local retailer, local council, non-government organisation, etc.). It indicates the degree to which money which an institution spends circulates in the locality before it flows off. In other words, it quantifies the relative contribution such an institution makes to the local economy (Kutáček 2008). The calculation process is illustrated in Fig. 1.

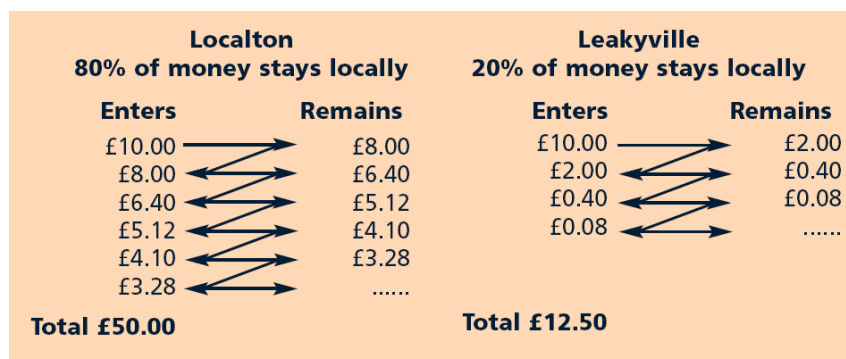


Fig. 1. Local money trails in model examples of Localton and Leakyville
The values are in British pounds (Sacks 2002:16)

In the first model village, Localton, 80 % of all money is always spent locally, that is in Localton itself. On the other hand, the inhabitants of Leakyville only spend 20 % of their income locally. Following the money trail, or the fate of 10 pounds spent into circulation in both villages, we see that after five rounds of spending, only 0.08 pounds have remained in the local economy in Leakyville, while in Localton 3.24 pounds are still able to circulate. In total, the original 10 pounds *created* 50 pounds' purchasing power on Localton, but only 12.50 in Leakyville. (Sacks 2002:16)

For practical purposes, a three-round local multiplier (dubbed the LM 3) is used. To obtain the value of LM3 we add up the money in all three rounds (in our case it is $10+8+6,4 = 24,4$ for Localton and $10+2+0,4 = 12,4$ for Leakyville) and we divide this result by the initial income (10 pounds in both cases). We obtain the result of $LM3 = 2,44$ for Localton and $LM3 = 1,24$ for Leakyville. The numbers can be interpreted as saying that while in Localtown 1.44 pounds were generated from every pound that entered the system, in

¹³ The local multiplier is based on the economic concept of the regional multiplier.

Leakyville each initial pound generated only 0.24 pounds during the same period. (Sacks 2002:19-20)¹⁴

As discussed above, besides enhancing the local economy *per se*, economic localisation can be seen as having a positive influence both on the social and the environmental aspects of sustainable development. The local multiplier as an indicator of the intensity of local economic relationships can thus arguably be seen as an indicator, or one of the indicators, of the economic pillar of sustainable development.

6 Conclusion

Summing up, most of its proponents see economic localisation as having considerable social, economic, democratic, environmental, ethical and also emotional benefits. They see it as a path which should be followed to make life more meaningful as well as economically secure and vibrant. In the words of Richard Doutwaite, one of the foremost proponents of localisation: “... whatever we do locally, we must never forget that we are trying to build a society rather than an economy. This means that idealism must be at least as important as realism, and the prospect of joy and fulfilment for ourselves and our friends a much stronger motive than anxiety about what will happen if things continue as they are.” (1996:362) At the same time, it is important to look at economic localisation pragmatically, link it to other concepts and approaches and, if we find it viable, try and introduce it into mainstream thinking in both economics and rural development. The local multiplier (LM3) described above can be a useful tool in this undertaking.

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¹⁴ In Czech conditions, a few pilot measurements of LM3 have been carried out, the last in the Moravian village of Hostětín (LM3 was calculated separately for the local heating plant, cider house and educational centre). For the results of these studies and for a more detailed methodology see Kutáček (2008).

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Interregional comparison of price transmissions in pork agri-food chain

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Annotation. The paper deals with the analysis of regional price transmissions in pork agri-food chain. The analysis uses the fitted VECM to analyze the nature and dynamics of the transmission. Then, the interregional comparison is carried out and important consequences are pointed out and discussed. The results are part of the solution of research intention MSM 6046070906 „Economics of resources of Czech agriculture and their efficient use in frame of multifunctional agri-food systems“.

Key words: regional price transmission, vertically related markets, agri-food chain, pork.

1 Introduction

Pork agri-food chain belongs to the most important agri-food chains in the Czech Republic. Analysis of the pork market, based especially on the analysis of prices is fundamental for making decisions, suggestions and whole agri-food chain running. Relationship among farmer price, processing price and consumer price is crucial for this analysis. This paper is focused on the price transmission, concretely farmer price and processing price of pork meat are considered in the following analysis.

Generally, it is possible to define several methods and tools to analyse and describe price transmission, e.g. multivariate time series models as ADL (Autoregressive Distributed Lag model), VAR (Vector Autoregressive model) or VECM (Vector Error Correction model) models. In this paper VECM was chosen as the most appropriate tool for the analysis. The paper analyses and compares price transmission in pork agri-food chain in separate regions of the Czech Republic.

2 Aim and Methodology

The aim of this paper is to analyse regional price transmissions in pork agri-food chain in the Czech Republic. The analysis is based on the multivariate time series analysis, the VECM (Vector Error Correction Model) was employed to compare the relationship between farmer price and weighted processing price of pork meat in separate regions of the Czech Republic, concretely region Stredni Cechy, Severovychod, Severozapad, Jihozapad, Jihovychod and Moravsko-slezsko. Region Stredni Morava was not analysed because of the lack of the available data set.

The set of data was provided by State Agricultural Intervention Fund (SZIF), the time series contain biweekly data from June 2002 till December 2007. Within these time series several values were missing, hence, they were omitted for the analysis. All calculations were done with the help of econometric software RATS 6.35.

The relationship between farmer price and processing price in each region was analysed in several consecutive steps. First of all, unit root tests were employed:

- *AIC* (Akaike Information Criterion) and *SBC* (Schwarz Bayesian Criterion) criterions were employed to detect the maximal lag of each time series;
- *ADF* (Augmented Dickey-Fuller test) and *PP* (Phillips-Perron test) tests were employed to check the stationarity of each time series.

Then, the VECM model for each region was derived. According to the time series behaviour parameters of VAR or VECM model can be estimated. VAR model should be specified for stationary time series, while VECM model should be specified for nonstationary time series. Formally, the VECM may be written as:

$$\Delta X_t = \eta + \Pi X_{t-1} + \sum_{s=1}^p C_s \Delta X_{t-s} + u_t, \quad (1)$$

where $C_s = 0$ for $s > p$, X_t is $k \times 1$ vector of variables, which are integrated of order 1, i.e. $I(1)$, u_1, \dots, u_t are iid $(0, \Sigma)$ and Π is a matrix of long-run relationship. If the variables are not cointegrated, the VECM reduces to VAR model, as following:

$$\Delta X_t = \Pi X_{t-1} + \sum_{s=1}^p C_s \Delta X_{t-s} + u_t. \quad [1] \quad (2)$$

Then, impulse-response analysis was used to determine and describe responses of each variable to unitary innovation (shock) of any variable. On the basis of this analysis, long-term relationship among the variables can be examined and approaching the equilibrium after the innovation determined.

The last step, *decomposition of variance* was done to decompose the forecast error variance into the part due to each of the innovation processes [2]. Finally, the results of all analysed regions were compared and discussed.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Unit root tests

First of all, AIC (Akaike Information Criterion) and SBC (Schwarz Bayesian Criterion) tests detected the maximal lag of farmer price (FP) and processing price (PP) of pork meat in each analysed region of the Czech Republic. Both criterions provide the same result - 20 lags for both, farmer price and processing price, were recommended as the most suitable form of equation to test unit root in all analysed regions except Moravsko-slezsko region, where both tests suggest 19 lags for both variables (see Table 1).

Table 1. Results of AIC and SBC tests

Region	Stredni Cechy	Severovychod	Severozapad	Jihozapad	Jihovychod	Moravsko- slezsko
FP	20	20	20	20	20	19
PP	20	20	20	20	20	19

The results of the AIC and SBC tests show the importance of maximal 20 lags of both, farmer price and processing price of pork meat. 20 lags in time series of biweekly data mean approximately 10 months' lag.

Subsequently, ADF (Augmented Dickey-Fuller test) and PP (Phillips-Perron test) tests are employed as the second part of unit root analysis. Generally, ADF and PP tests discover the time series' character, whether the time series is stationary or nonstationary. This analysis is crucial for the following application of the most suitable model to analyse and describe the relationship between selected variables. Results of ADF and PP tests of farmer price (FP), processing price (PP) and their first differences (dFP, dPP) are in almost all cases contrary (see Table 2). Thus, it is quite difficult to make decision on the main character of these time series.

Table 2. Results of ADF and PP tests

Region	Stredni Cechy		Severovychod		Severozapad		Jihozapad		Jihovychod		Moravsko-slezsko	
	ADF	PP	ADF	PP	ADF	PP	ADF	PP	ADF	PP	ADF	PP
FP	N	N	N	S	N	N/S	N	N	N	N	N	N
dFP	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
PP	N	N/S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	N	N	S
dPP	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S

S = stationary, N = nonstationary, N/S = impossible to make decision

Stationarity of all time series was analysed on 10 % significance level. On the basis of results shown in the table it can be deduced that time series of FP is according both tests nonstationary. According to ADF test time series of PP, dFP and dPP in all analysed regions seem to be nonstationary, while according to PP test all these time series in almost all regions seem to be stationary. Because of the ambiguous results of ADF and PP tests general VECM model might be more suitable and is considered in the following analysis.

3.2 VECM

Even 20, respectively 19 lags of the time series of farmer price and processing price were suggested based on AIC and SCB tests as the most suitable form of the unit root, calculated statistical characteristics of VECM models for all analysed regions recommend smaller lags' number in all cases. Estimated VECM for region Stredni Cechy, Severovychod, Severozapad and Moravsko-slezsko contain just 10 lags of farmer price and processing price time series, VECM of Jihozapad region contains 9 lags and VECM of Jihovychod region contains just 8 lags of selected variables. Parameters of all VECM were estimated on the basis of time series of logarithms of FP (logFP) and logarithms of PP (logPP). Selected results of VECMs are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Selected results of VECMs

Region	Stredni Cechy	Severovychod	Severozapad	Jihozapad	Jihovychod	Moravsko-slezsko
lags	10	10	10	9	8	10
PP → FP	S	I	I	I	I	I
FP → PP	I	S	I	I	S	I

PP → FP: PP influence on FP, FP → PP: FP influence on PP; S = significant, I = insignificant

Generally, VECM contains information about short-term relationship between analysed variables and also long-term relationship between these variables. The analysis is focused just on the long-term relationship. Significance of long-term influence of farmer price on processing price and processing price on farmer price was analysed on 10 % significance level. Based on this analysis almost all long-term relationships seem to be insignificant. Only one-way relationship between processing price and farmer price in Stredni Cechy, Severovychod and Jihovychod regions is significant on the selected significance level.

3.3 Impulse-response analysis

Impulse response analysis describes reactions of farmer price and processing price of pork meat to unitary innovation of each variable. Figure 1 shows the responses of logFP and logPP to unitary shock in Jihovychod region, as an example of output of this analysis.

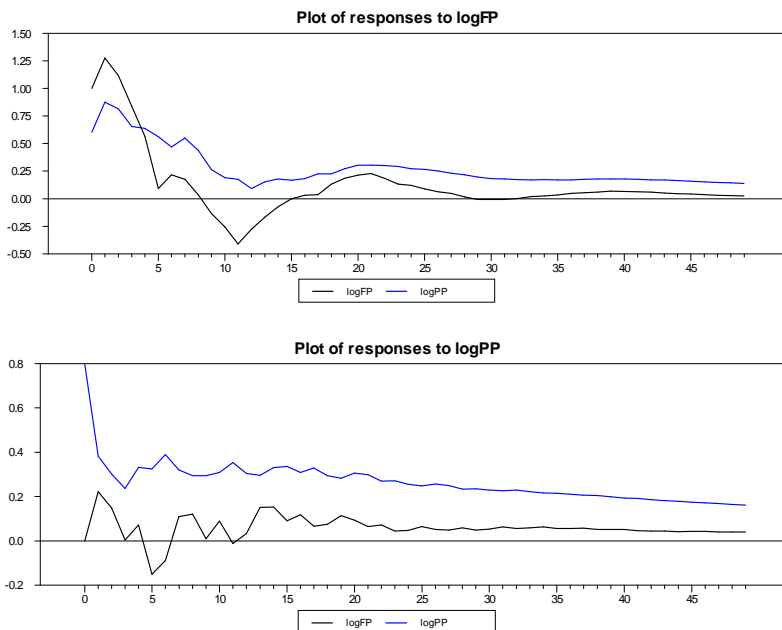


Figure 1. Plot of responses to logFP and logPP in Jihovychod region

Impulse-response analysis discovers that reactions of logFP and logPP to unitary innovations in all analysed regions oscillate from positive to negative. Impulse-response analysis also shows that the first reaction of logFP and logPP after the unitary innovation is positive in all regions. In Severovychod, Severozapad, Jihozapad and Jihovychod regions tendency to approach the equilibrium after approximately 20 periods was discovered, for both, logFP and logPP variables, while in Stredni Cechy and Moravsko-slezsko regions equilibrium approaching wasn't detected, even the oscillations in Stredni Cechy region are damped. 20 periods again mean approximately the period of 10 months. Furthermore, the reactions of logFP and logPP to the unitary shock have similar course in all analysed regions.

3.4 Decomposition of variance

In the last step, decomposition of variance is used to detect the ratio of logFP and logPP on the forecast error of each variable. Results of this analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Decomposition of variance of logFP and logPP (%)

logFP												
Region	Stredni Cechy		Severovychod		Severozapad		Jihozapad		Jihovychod		Moravsko-slezsko	
Step	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP
1	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
10	48.95	51.05	96.17	3.83	79.60	20.40	96.40	3.60	94.94	5.06	87.04	12.96
20	52.54	47.46	94.26	5.74	81.28	18.72	96.28	3.72	94.87	5.13	86.96	13.04

logPP												
Region	Stredni Cechy		Severovychod		Severozapad		Jihozapad		Jihovychod		Moravsko-slezsko	
Step	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP	logFP	logPP
1	39.05	60.95	4.90	95.10	13.25	86.75	4.89	95.11	30.85	69.15	8.95	91.05
10	62.24	37.76	84.76	15.24	52.28	47.72	76.87	23.13	74.87	25.13	48.87	51.13
20	65.79	34.21	92.50	7.50	72.25	27.75	81.66	18.34	63.47	36.53	68.40	31.60

Decomposition of variance of logFP shows almost the same situation in all regions except Stredni Cechy region. In all analysed regions 100 % of logFP forecast error is caused by logFP. In following steps the ratio of logFP in forecast error slightly decreases in advantage of logPP. In the 10th step in Severovychod, Jihozapad and Jihovychod regions approximately 95 % of forecast error is caused by logFP and 5 % by logPP, in the 20th step the ratio remains approximately the same. In Moravsko-slezsko region after 10 steps

87 % of forecast error is caused by logFP and 13 % by logPP, after 20 steps the situation remains the same. In all mentioned regions ratio of forecast error caused by logFP is slightly smaller, till approximately 95 %. In Severozapad region the forecast error after 10 steps is allocated between approximately 80 % of logFP and 20 % of logPP, after 20 steps the ratio of logFP slightly increases to approximately 82 %. Decomposition of variance discovered quite different development of forecast error in Stredni Cechy region, where logFP causes approximately 49 % of forecast error and logPP 51 % after 10 steps. After 20 steps logFP causes approximately 53 % of forecast error and logPP 47 %.

Decomposition of variance of logPP shows that in all analysed regions larger part of forecast error of logPP in the 1st step is caused by logPP. Further, in all cases, except Jihovychod region, after 10 steps the ratio of forecast error caused by logFP is much higher than after the 1st step. After 20 steps the ratio is again higher than after the 10th step. For example in Severovychod region after the 1st step 5 % of logPP forecast error is caused by logFP, after 10 steps 85 % and after 20 steps 93 %. Other results are shown in the Table.

4 Conclusion

The aim of this paper was fulfilled on the basis of multivariate time series analysis, concretely with the help of VECM model. Price transmission was analysed in 6 regions of the Czech Republic, then the individual results were compared. Farmer price and weighted processing price were considered in the analysis.

First of all, unit root tests showed approximately same results in all analysed regions. AIC and SBC criterions suggested 20 lags as the most suitable form of unit root in almost all regions. Then, ADF and PP tests provided contrary results, again in all analysed regions. Because of this, all time series were considered as nonstationary.

In spite of the recommendation of AIC and SBS tests calculated statistical characteristics of VECMs in all analysed regions suggested quite different number of lags. In almost all analysed regions 10 lags were considered as the most suitable VECMs. Nevertheless, long-term relationship between farmer price and processing price is not significant in almost all regions of the Czech Republic. More over, perfect market competition wasn't confirmed.

Then, impulse-response analysis discovered tendency to approach the equilibrium of both variables after unitary innovation in each of them. The approaching to the long-run equilibrium was detected in almost all analysed regions. The period to reach the equilibrium is approximately 20 periods.

In the last step, decomposition of variance showed logFP and logPP influences ratio on forecast error of both variables. Decomposition of variance provided again similar results in almost all analysed regions.

To conclude, whole analysis shows that the price transmission in almost all analysed regions has very similar character. However, several exceptions were detected. The analysis shows especially differences of the price transmission character between Moravsko-slezsko and other regions. More detailed results will be provided based on the consecutive research.

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The upcoming changes in CAP and problems of balance between efficiency of holdings and rural agrarian employment in the Czech Republic

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Annotation. The share of subsidies and in it LFA payments on the economic results of farms is evaluated and compared for different groups of holdings. As a result of analysis the winners and losers of the current system was derived. Future changes in the system of support should not be based on stimulating further the dismissal of agricultural workers from large legal entities.

Key words: less favoured areas (LFA), Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN), LFA payments, Gross Farm Income, Family Farm Income, agricultural households.

1 Introduction

The support to farmers working in less favoured areas has had more than a thirty-year's tradition in Europe. The EU representatives are aware of this subsidy's importance; however, in the EU there is not a uniform view on defining the conditions for payments. The aim of the payments is to maintain agriculture and use of land by means of adequate but not excessive financial compensation. Less favoured areas, which form about 50% of total agricultural land in the Czech Republic, are to be found in all 13 regions of the Czech Republic (Prague being an exception). In individual regions within less favoured areas agriculture has become dependent on subsidies to such a great extent that it is often the key economic activity of the population. This paper discusses the impacts of compensation payments on the economic results of Czech holdings from various points of view.

2 Objective and Methods

The objective is to analyse the impact of LFA payments on farm economic results on the basis of the FADN in the Czech Republic [3]. The specific aggregation of farms is used to assess the impact of LFA payment on the economic results of agricultural activities of FADN holdings. A methodical approach is proposed that classifies holdings with a view to monitoring the impact of LFA payment impact [2]. The holdings are classified by LFA type, size of eligible land and share of grassland in agricultural land and the production orientation. Based on analyses, the role of LFA payments in farms economic results in individual types of LFA is assessed. The subsequent analysis assesses the share of LFA payments in the economic results of FADN holdings in average of years 2004, 2005 and 2006. Basic economic indicators are monitored, such as Gross Farm Income (GFI), Farm net Value Added (FNVA), Family Farm Income (FFI), current subsidies and LFA payments as the mean value for groups of holdings and the share of LFA compensation payments in GFI is compared. The different impact of LFA payments in recalculation on hectare of agricultural farm land and in recalculation on AWU is also pointed out. As a result of analysis the winners and losers of the current system were derived. The future impact on agricultural employment is also estimated.

Agricultural holding classification used in this paper:

The approach to classifying holdings by LFA varies depending on the applied methodology and purpose. In some cases it is essential to respect the prescribed EU methodology. The classification of holdings within the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) for classification by LFA type is based on Commission Regulation, DG Agri, no. 2253/2004 defined by the Communities Committee for FADN. An agricultural holding (in the Czech Republic) is allocated to one of three groups depending on the share of agricultural land in the particular LFA type in the total agricultural land of the holding. Special attention is paid to mountainous areas but “Other” LFA and “areas with specific handicap” are not specified in detail. Holdings representing areas not included in LFA are those with less than 50% of agricultural land in LFA, according to this classification.

In other cases more precise methods of LFA type classification have to be employed for the sake of more detailed analyses. FADN holdings with zero agricultural land used, garden centres; specialised vine or fruit growing holdings were excluded from the file. Representative of mountainous areas were holdings where more than 50% agricultural land is situated in mountain LFA. “Other” LFA are holdings with over 50% agricultural land in “Other” LFA and areas with specific handicaps are holdings with over 50% agricultural land in this LFA type. Holdings operating in favourable natural conditions in

the Czech Republic are those with more than 95% agricultural land outside LFA. Holdings whose shares of agricultural land in individual LFA types do not meet the criteria are excluded from further calculations, even though more than 50% of their operations take place in LFA. They do represent LFA for the purposes of other analyses in this paper.

For the analysis of the impact of current subsidies and LFA payments according to land use another specific aggregation of FADN holdings was applied. The LFA group comprises holdings with more than 50% agricultural land in LFA. Representatives of outside LFA holdings are agricultural holdings where up to 50% of agricultural land is included in LFA. In these basic two groups holdings with grassland up to 50% and over 50% of agricultural land were observed.

For analysis of current subsidies and LFA payments impact according the farm size FAND holdings was aggregated in size categories by hectares of eligible area (grassland in LFA) in farms. The holdings above 500 ha of agricultural land were used for analysis according production structure. They were subdivided to groups according LFA (more than 50 % of agricultural land in LFA and less than 50 % of agricultural land in LFA) and to groups with and without dairy cows

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Share of LFA payments in the economic results of agricultural holdings by LFA type in the Czech Republic

Table 1 compares the average value of selected indicators of income from agricultural activities per hectare of agricultural land and also per annual working unit for groups of agricultural holdings allocated to individual LFA types. The GFI per hectare of agricultural land on average in holdings operating in mountain areas and areas with specific handicaps was only 79% (or 76%) of the performance of holdings operating in favourable conditions, while on average for farms in “Other” LFA this was 81%. A similar proportion can be seen in FNVA per hectare of agricultural land. Subsidies per hectare of agricultural land in mountain areas were 44% higher than in holdings in favourable conditions, in areas with specific handicaps they were 31% higher and in “Other” LFA they were 19% higher. Average LFA payments per hectare of UAA in mountain LFA and areas with specific handicaps exceeded those in “Other” LFA. As a result average FFI from agricultural activities per hectare of agricultural land was lowest in “Other” LFA and highest in mountain LFA. The amount of FFI is influenced also by

external factors, such as wages, rent of land and interest. These items were, on average, higher per hectare of agricultural land in holdings outside LFA than in LFA, in particular low were in mountain LFA and areas with specific handicaps.

Table 1. Selected indicators of economic result according LFA types

LFA	Gross Farm Income	Farm Net Value Added	Family Farm Income	Current subsidies	of which LFA payments
CZK per hectare of farm agricultural land					
M	12,372	10,197	2,832	7,502	2,211
S	11,815	9,642	2,942	6,804	1,926
O	12,651	10,183	1,608	6,187	757
N	15,622	12,822	2,474	5,199	
CZK per AWU					
M	387,396	319,287	88,693	234,910	69 223
S	361,692	295,182	90,049	208,300	58 948
O	353,785	284,754	44,976	173,004	21 167
N	417,563	342,734	66,126	138,964	

The GFI converted to AWU and the share of current subsidies and LFA payments in its formation in individual LFA types as an average for years 2004-2006 are shown in Figure 1.

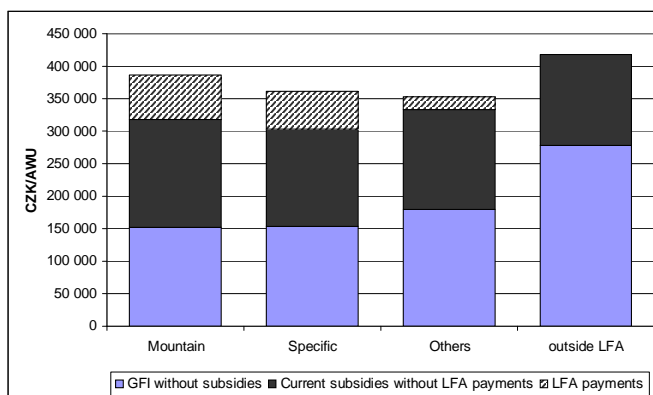


Fig. 1. Share of subsidies and LFA payments in GFI per AWU by LFA type

The monitored indicators are shown in relation to the number of annual work units (AWU) for groups of holdings according to LFA type. These indicators are influenced by lower number of workers per 100 hectares of agricultural land especially in mountain LFA (3,2) and areas with specific handicaps (3,3) while in “Other” LFA 3,6 and outside LFA 3,7 workers per 100 hectares of agricultural land. As a result FFI per AWU in mountain LFA and areas with specific handicaps exceeded this indicator in non LFA 34% (36%). On the contrary “Other” LFA, which were designated as areas with an above-average share of agricultural employment in the economic active population, recorded a very low FFI per AWU.

3.2 Share of LFA payments in the economic results of agricultural holdings by permanent grassland share in agricultural land and LFA

In compliance with the system of LFA measurement in the Czech Republic the eligible area for LFA payments is the area of grassland only. Holdings in LFA and outside LFA in 2004-06 were sub-divided according to the proportion of grassland in agricultural land, so that the impact of agricultural land use on the size of GFI, FNVA, and FFI formation and its structure has also been evaluated. The LFA group comprises holdings with more than 50% agricultural land in LFA. Representatives of outside LFA are agricultural holdings where up to 50% of agricultural land is included in LFA. In these basic two groups holdings with grassland up to 50% and over 50% of agricultural land were observed. As documented in Table 2, it is clear that the share of grassland significantly influences the total amount of subsidies and LFA payments per hectare of agricultural land as well as AWU. The information in the table indicates that even in holdings representing the outside LFA group these payments can contribute to the economic result because part of the land can be situated in LFA.

Holdings with a large share of grassland employ fewer workers. The holdings with grassland making up more than 50% of UAA employ on average 2.7 AWU per 100 ha of agricultural land. The average number of 3.7 AWU per 100 ha of agricultural land was identified in both groups of holdings (LFA and outside LFA) with lower grassland shares. This factor together with Czech payments system created big differences in FFI per hectare as well as per AWU between the analyzed groups of holdings. The lowest GFI and FNVA per hectares were recorded by holdings with a large share of grassland. But due to subsidies farms with a large share of grassland in LFA have FFI per hectare even higher than that of outside LFA farms operated mainly on arable land. In recalculating per AWU the lowest GFI, FNVA and FFI were recording by farms in LFA with less than 50 % grassland.

Table 2. Selected indicators of economic result by grassland share and LFA

Group of farms	GFI	FNVA	FFI	Current subsidies	of which LFA payments
CZK per hectare of farm agricultural land					
LFA above 50 % grassland	10,464	8,664	3,073	8,153	2,753
LFA up to 50 % grassland	13,023	10,510	1,721	6,153	810
Non LFA up to 50 % grass	14,979	11,864	2,201	5,253	60
CZK per AWU					
LFA above 50 % grassland	387,810	321,078	113,899	302,166	102,011
LFA up to 50 % grassland	356,068	287,360	47,060	168,225	22,138
Non LFA up to 50 % grass	410,309	324,985	60,294	143,881	1,633

Figure 2 shows the average GFI converted to an AWU and the share of current subsidies and LFA payments in its formation in these groups of holdings in average of years 2004-06.

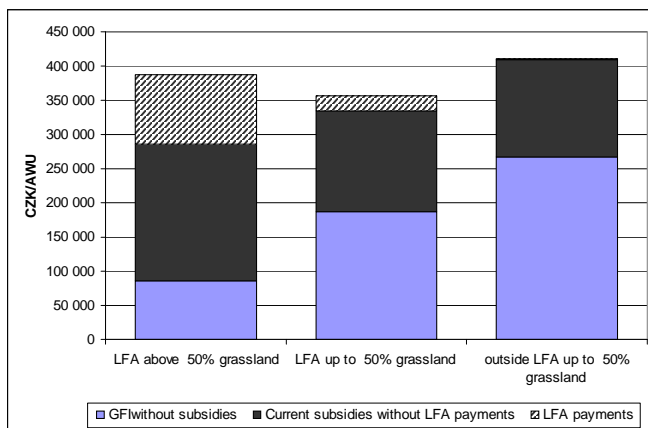


Fig. 2. Share of subsidies and LFA payments in GFI per AWU by grassland share in agricultural land and LFA

3.3 Results of holdings by the size of eligible land in LFA

Another aspect used in the analysis of LFA payments on the economic results of agricultural holdings was the size of the farm's eligible land. In 2004–06 the eligible land for LFA payments was the area of grassland in the cadastral areas classified as LFA. The minimum size of the holding eligible for LFA payments was 5 hectares of agricultural land. This is why holdings with less than 5ha agricultural land in a LFA were first excluded from the FADN database in 2005. Other holdings were sub-divided into groups according to the grassland area in a LFA, i.e. the farm's eligible land. The average GFI, FNVA, FFI generated by holdings in individual groups and the contribution of subsidies in average of years 2004–2006 are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Selected indicators of economic result by the size of eligible grassland area

Groups of farms by eligible area	GFI	FNVA	FFI	Current subsidies	of which LFA payments
CZK per hectare of farm agricultural land					
0	15,830	12,480	2,685	5,175	0
to 50 ha	12,603	9,907	2,032	5,346	202
50 - 100 ha	11,469	9,276	2,489	5,579	582
100 - 200 ha	12,594	10,191	1,469	5,949	642
200 - 300 ha	12,975	10,454	1,432	6,191	717
300 - 400 ha	13,544	10,991	1,440	6,414	902
400 - 500 ha	13,114	10,965	1,918	6,302	1,071
500 - 600 ha	13,279	10,819	1,058	6,530	1,178
600 - 700 ha	11,152	9,253	1,452	6,939	1,609
700 - 800 ha	12,784	10,001	1,964	7,630	2,077
800 - 900 ha	9,614	7,535	1,215	7,372	1,884
900 -1000 ha	12,475	10,668	3,267	7,875	2,394
1000 - 1200 ha	12,195	9,863	2,324	7,985	2,019
1200 - 1400 ha	10,556	8,801	3,183	8,685	3,651
1400 - 1600 ha	9,964	8,086	2,855	8,178	2,527
above 1600 ha	12,779	10,745	4,322	9,733	3,821
Groups of farms by eligible area	GFI	FNVA	FFI	Current subsidies	of which LFA payments
CZK per hectare of farm agricultural land					
0	425,472	335,430	72,155	139,093	0
to 50 ha	383,894	301,787	61,881	162,831	6,142
50 - 100 ha	384,203	310,758	83,389	186,908	19,488
100 - 200 ha	356,656	288,611	41,599	168,476	18,184
200 - 300 ha	363,088	292,543	40,078	173,255	20,054
300 - 400 ha	340,049	275,959	36,142	161,038	22,638
400 - 500 ha	363,263	303,721	53,138	174,572	29,671
500 - 600 ha	351,135	286,071	27,975	172,663	31,137
600 - 700 ha	352,051	292,116	45,850	219,063	50,798
700 - 800 ha	355,005	277,707	54,546	211,870	57,674
800 - 900 ha	381,627	299,082	48,219	292,632	74,794
900 -1000 ha	376,584	322,016	98,608	237,709	72,269
1000 - 1200 ha	387,311	313,230	73,816	253,605	64,112
1200 - 1400 ha	312,752	260,733	94,302	257,299	108,183
1400 - 1600 ha	383,815	311,460	109,979	315,004	97,344
above 1600 ha	456,893	384,174	154,538	348,008	136,619

This table indicates the clear difference in the drawing on subsidies and the LFA payments between per hectare of agricultural land and per AWU in the groups of holdings with more than about 900 ha grassland in a LFA as compared to holdings with less grassland areas. Figure 3 shows the differences in generated FFI per AWU compared to LFA payments per AWU in the size groups of holdings.

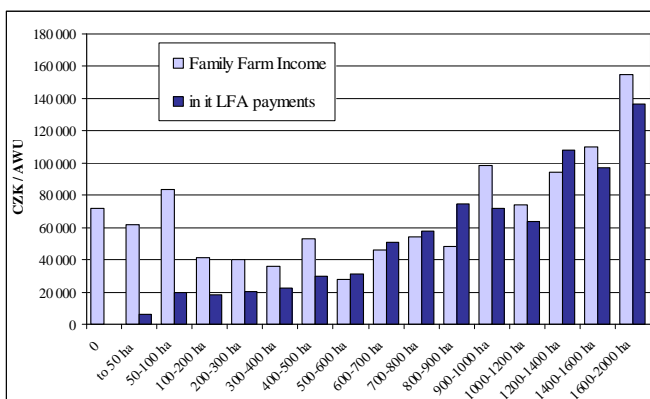


Fig. 3. Family Farm Income per AWU and contribution of LFA payments - classification of holdings by eligible area

3.4 Share of LFA payments in the economic results of large holdings by production structure and LFA

Deep analysis of large agricultural holding was carried out to evaluate the impact of production such as milk production and more extensive types of farming without dairy cows. The holdings larger than 500 ha of agricultural land were used for this analysis. The average GFI, FNVA and FFI generated by holdings in the individual groups and the contribution of subsidies and LFA payments in average of years 2004–06 per hectare of agriculture land and per AWU are provided in Table 4.

It is evident that large farms in a LFA without milk production generated the lowest amount of GFI per hectare of agricultural land but due to subsidies and very low external factors (wages, rent, interest per hectare) the highest FFI per hectare. The large farms with milk production employed on average 3.8 AWU per 100 ha of agricultural land in LFA and 4.0 AWU per 100 ha of agricultural land in the outside LFA group. The large farms without milk production employed on average 1.4 AWU per 100 ha of agricultural land in LFA and 2.8 AWU per 100 ha of agricultural land in outside LFA group.

The LFA farms without milk production generated about 70% higher GFI and FNVA per AWU than LFA farms with milk production. FFI was 2.5 times higher and current subsidies per AWU were more than 3 times higher than on the average LFA farms with milk production.

Table 4. Selected indicators of economic result by of large holdings by milk production and LFA

Group of farms	GFI	FNVA	FFI	Current subsidies	of which LFA payments
CZK per hectare of farm agricultural land					
LFA with milk prod.	13,177	10,725	1,492	6,507	1,075
LFA without milk prod.	7,770	6,490	2,699	7,278	2,190
Non LFA with milk.	15,614	12,591	1,628	5,394	81
Non LFA without milk	13,086	10,054	2,211	5,029	44
CZK per hectare of farm agricultural land					
LFA with milk prod.	346,424	281,956	39,218	171,086	28,263
LFA without milk prod.	573,720	479,208	199,284	537,365	161,674
Non LFA with milk	389,998	314,482	40,651	134,715	2,015
Non LFA without milk	465,877	357,933	78,700	179,035	1,67

Thus big an inequality in LFA payments distribution is shown in Figure 4.

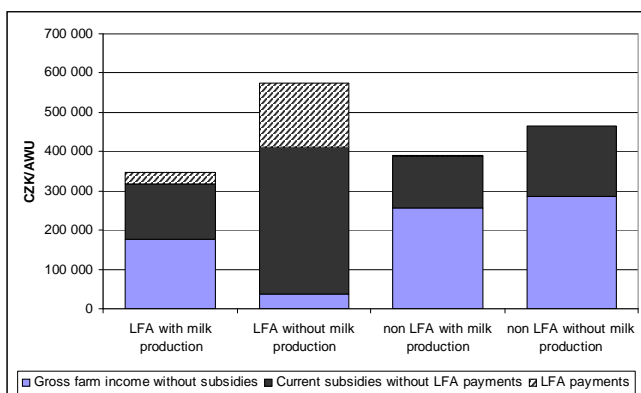


Fig. 4. Share of LFA payments in GFI per AWU in holdings above 500 ha of agricultural land by milk production and LFA

4 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of economic results achieved by FADN holdings in 2004–2006 and the contribution of LFA within this, it is possible to conclude that the substantial increase in LFA rates following the Czech Republic's accession to the EU has been reflected in the economic results of holdings in LFA. The contribution of LFA payments markedly increased the family farm income per hectare of farm agriculture land and per AWU in mountain areas and areas with specific handicaps. This mainly concerns areas where state-owned farms had previously operated and following their privatisation and subsequent departure of most workers from agriculture large extensively working agricultural holdings have been established with a large grassland share adapted to LFA payment eligibility.

The current LFA payment system prefers extensive farming with low demand for workers as is shown by analysis according land use. The eligible area for LFA payments is the area of grassland only. This fact leads to 2.4 times higher family farm income per AWU created by LFA holdings with a large share of grassland in agricultural land in comparison with LFA farms with less than 50% of grassland.

There is any degresivity of payments for large holdings applied in the Czech Republic. The holdings of eligible area above around 900 ha of grassland demonstrate very good economic results due to financial contribution of LFA payments and other current subsidies even better than holdings out of LFA. Very differentiated effects of current subsidies and LFA payments were experienced within large holdings (acreage above 500 ha of agricultural land) depending on the production orientation. LFA holdings exceeding the acreage of 500 ha of agricultural land with milk production as the representatives of a more labour intensive production even if ranked amongst large holdings, they realize very low GFI, FNVA, and in particular FFI per AWU. By contrast, FFI per agricultural hectare in the group of LFA holdings with the acreage above 500 ha of agricultural land, but without milk production, exceeded the level of this indicator implemented by large LFA holdings with milk production by 81% and when converted to AWU, it was more than five times higher. The current system of LFA payments prefers low labour requirement systems of management.

It is evident that current LFA payment system in CR cause very big disproportion of economic situation of holdings in LFA. The most efficient are the largest holdings with small number of workers. An evaluation of the payment level and its impact on economic results of holdings has to be put into a broader context and future proposals have to take into account the potential impact on the agricultural holdings in LFA as well as the rural countryside and community. As the previous research showed in Czech agricultural households

17 % are represented of heads of private farms 83% are employees of agricultural holdings [1]. The support of less workers demanding production could lead to dismissing of workers from agricultural holdings with negative impact to rural community. The whole system is desirable to be re-evaluated and redesigned the LFA scheme after 2010.

Acknowledgemnet

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EVERYDAY LIFE IN RURAL EUROPE



Agricultural Policy Supports Implementation in Rural Areas of the Czech Republic

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Annotation. The paper presents results of the analysis focused on the implementation of direct payments, national supplementary direct payments and financial resources coming from selected HRDP measures into rural areas of four district types. These district types were classified into homogenous groups based on socioeconomic indicators. The main objective was to assess whether the payments into rural development were distributed equally or regional differences were identified. In summary, the analysis has proven the existence of regional differences in the Czech Republic.

Key words: HRDP measures, regional differences, district, rural development.

1 Introduction

Supports aimed to improvement of economic situation and life within the European Union, have long-term tradition. The structural funds were established in compliance with principles of economic and social solidarity, the basic purpose of which is, through the development programs, to decrease backwardness of handicapped regions, including the rural ones and to secure balanced and sustainable development of rural areas. Provision of equal chances and conditions for development of the regions, so that their demographic, natural and economic potential is fully and valuably utilized, belongs among the major targets of the regional policy of both EU and CR (Svatošová 2005). Programs organized within the Lisbon Strategy are intended to decrease differences in the business environment among the individual EU regions (Kadeřábková 2005). Programs supporting development of business undertaking within agriculture and quality of life in the rural areas have been introduced into practice. The sector of agriculture needs not to be viewed as a separate sector of the national economy but it shall be understood as fully integrated part of the rural area. Horizontal Rural Development Plan, measures

of which are focused on development of agricultural and social areas of the provinces, shall be classified among complex supporting concepts of rural areas development.

The contribution provides information on realization of direct payments, national supplementary payments and financial means from the selected measures of the Horizontal Rural Development Plan for the period 2004–2006 (HRDP) in four types of districts. The individual types are the results of a purpose-bound typology of rural areas developed by us. It was our objective to find out whether financial funds intended for rural areas support are provided equally, i.e. on the flat-rate basis or whether regional differences can be identified.

2 Typology Development

A typology of rural areas, which is based on two groups of indicators, was compiled for purposes of evaluation of implementation of selected supports leading to the rural areas of the Czech Republic. Only such indicators, which we considered as significant for characteristic and expression of “problematic character” in the rural areas, were selected. The first group contained 14 indicators characterizing agriculture in districts of the Czech Republic; the second group includes the remaining 12 indicators which describe socioeconomic situation in the districts of the Czech Republic.

We selected the indicators so that they would be comparable among the districts (they are always related to some basis – e.g. number of communities in a district, area in hectares etc.) and that more indicators did not provide the same information.

Districts which consisted only of a city (metropolitan districts) were excluded from the monitoring. It concerns Prague, Plzeň – město, Brno – město and Ostrava.

We applied an exact method to create the typology. According to various authors a cluster analysis is very convenient for this purpose. A breakdown of the particular set of districts characterized by a group of particular input variables into so called clusters is the objective of cluster analysis where districts within one cluster are the most similar and districts belonging in various clusters are less similar one to another (Hebák *et al.* 2005, Lukasová *et al.* 1985, Meloun *et al.* 2005). Standardization of data into dimensionless quantity was carried out before the cluster analysis itself due to fact that a group of variables which were not expressed in identical units.

We divided the districts of the Czech Republic into two clusters according to the indicators characterizing the agriculture and into two clusters according to

the socioeconomic characteristics. We received four types of districts by combination of these clusters:

- A1) Districts with important role of agriculture and more favorable socioeconomic conditions;
- A2) Districts with important role of agriculture and less favorable socioeconomic conditions;
- B1) Districts with less important role of agriculture and more favorable socioeconomic conditions;
- B2) Districts with less important role of agriculture and less favorable socioeconomic conditions.

Graphical division of rural districts is indicated on the figure 1.

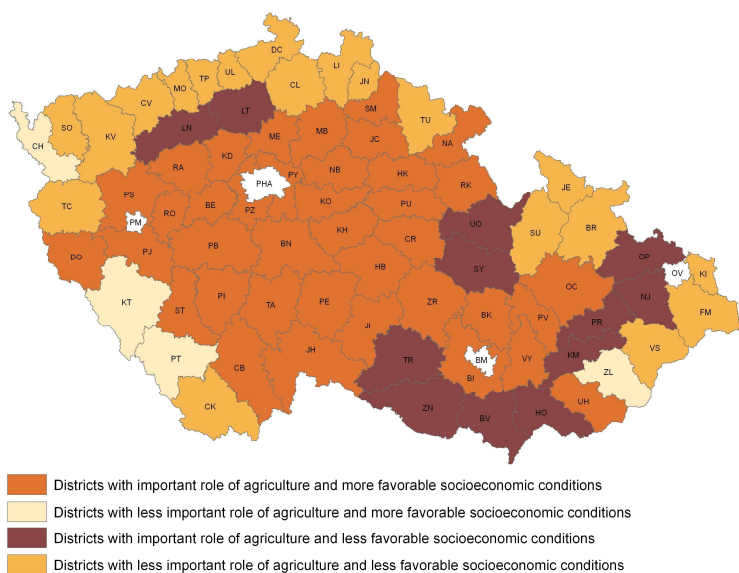


Figure 1. Typology of Rural Areas according Agricultural and Socioeconomic Characteristics

3 Agricultural Policy Supports Implementation

In this chapter we tried to show what role direct payments (SAPS), national supplementary direct payments (TOP-UP) and selected measures of HRDP (Early retirement from farming, Less favorable areas – LFA, Agro-environmental measures, Forestry and Setting of producer groups) play in the four types of districts A1, A2, B1 and B2 proposed by us.

Public database “List of main subsidies from the EU Funds and from the state budget of the Czech Republic through mediation of SZIF administration” which is available on the websites of the State Agricultural Intervention Fund was used as a source of data for graphical as well as tabular expression. The data shall not be considered as a fix value because the database is being continuously updated. These are just informative data on volume of funds which were paid out as of 31 May 2007. The data on the paid-out financial funds are related to receivers who applied for subsidies in the period between 2004 and 2006.

First we performed summary of provided finances for the monitored period, i.e. from 2004 until 31 May 2007 according to measures listed above (direct payments, national supplementary payments, measures of HRDP). We chose a district for the basic monitored unit (level NUTS IV) and the summarized paid-out funds for the individual measures are related to the districts.

For emphasizing of the fact that we intend to identify impacts of the measures onto the rural area:

- a) We did not include metropolitan districts within the purpose-oriented typology: Capital City of Prague, Ostrava, Brno-město and Plzeň-město;
- b) To make better data comparison we converted the obtained summaries of the paid-out finances for the individual measures by districts into per capita living in rural areas of the particular district. The number of rural inhabitants of a district was obtained by sorting out municipality population of which exceeds 2,000 are considered as urban according to the statistics of the Czech Statistic Agency (despite of the fact they may be of rural character).

Data regarding the population number was adopted from the Czech Statistic Agency and they are valid as of 31st December 2005.

Direct payments

Direct payments are provided per one hectare of the farmed land. For our purposes, the provided payments were converted into number of population of rural communities in the individual regions. The results are thereby influenced by the number of population of rural communities in a district and by area of the farmed agricultural land. The converted payments are showed in a differentiated manner in all groups of the districts. In average, the least

volumes were provided to the B2 Group (244 EUR per capita living in rural areas of this group), i.e. to a group with less important role of agriculture and worse socioeconomic conditions. The greatest differences among the districts within a group may be seen in a group A1, in which the amount of payments fluctuated in the interval from 125 EUR (District of Brno-venkov) to 556 EUR (District of Jindřichův Hradec) per capita of the particular district's rural area.

National Supplementary Direct Payments

National Supplementary "Top Up" Payments were provided in the assessed period 2004 – 5/2007 in all monitored districts. The Top Up payments reached the highest values within the national comparison in the Group A1 which includes districts with important role of agriculture and favorable socioeconomic conditions. Larger areas of ploughed land and a higher ratio of ruminants can be found in these districts. Lower volumes of payments are obvious especially in districts situated in hinterland of Prague and Brno. Similar amounts of "Top Up" payments can be seen in the A2 and B1 Groups, lower percentage of supplementary payments was in the Moravian districts. The lowest values were reached in the Group B2, which includes border districts with less favorable conditions for agriculture. In comparison to the average of the Czech Republic this group is characteristic by lower percentage of ploughed land and by lower percentage of ruminants in most districts as well.

Early retirement from farming

In comparison with other measures HRDP (especially then the measure of the Less Favorable Area) Early retirement from farming belongs among less frequent measures. Fact that the paid-out sums of this measure were converted into values per capita in rural areas shall be taken into account and the fact that some districts have a higher rate of rural population may influence the overall value of the indicator. Farmers did not use this measure during the assessed period at all in many districts especially those belonging in the Group B2. It concerns districts in North Bohemia (Most, Teplice, Ústí nad Labem, Sokolov) and in the North Moravia (Jeseník and Karviná). The highest values, and thereby the highest number of terminations of active farming activities, were reached in the Group A1; it concerned districts of Benešov, Jihlava a Tábor. Higher drawing of funds from the measures was discovered in the Group A2 in comparison to other districts of the Czech Republic. We may point out to districts of Louny, Litoměřice and Kroměříž in this respect.

Less Favorable Areas (LFA)

Distribution of payments LFA corresponds to the purpose of this measure. Payments are not provided on a flat-rate basis, but they are goal-directed to an

area. Partial improvement of economic situation of the farms which operate in these areas is the main objective of these compensational payments. The lowest drawing of LFA funds was recorded in districts, to which fertile areas of Polabí and Haná reach. Contrary to that, in border and mountain and foothill region it was the highest. Highest volumes of funds in conversion into per provincial capita were provided in the districts of Klatovy, Prachatice and Cheb (more than 333 EUR per capita living in rural areas). Higher payments were achieved in the Groups of B1 and B2, in which border districts with less favorable conditions for production-oriented farming can be identified.

Agro-environmental Measures

Agro-environmental measures are focused especially to support of less productive areas. More funds were earmarked for treatment of grass lands and grassing of arable land. Therefore, high sums of finances were realized in areas with worse conditions for productive farming and more intensive specialization to extra-productive farming. From the designed purpose-oriented typology the highest volumes of money were provided to districts classified in a Group B1 (278 EUR in average per capita living in rural areas of the district) and B2 (212 EUR in average per capita living in rural areas of the district). For comparison, in districts where agriculture plays important role, i.e. Groups of A1 and A2, the sum achieved 86 EUR in average per capita living in the rural area of the district in the A1 Group and 95 EUR per capita living in rural area of the district in the A2 Group.

Forestry

The measure of Forestry does not belong among crucial measures. Volumes of funds for this measure were therefore very low. Especially in case of forest stands care support funds were almost unused. Delay in using the support within the measure of Forestry may be the explanation of this situation. The highest volumes were realized in the A1 Group (1.8 EUR in average per capita living in rural areas of the district). In other groups the values fluctuated similarly, in average about 0.87 EUR per capita living in rural areas of the district. The vastest differences between the districts with a group can be seen in the A1 Group, and especially in the B2 Group, where 6 districts can be found within this group to which none finances were provided.

Setting of producer groups

Subsidies from this measure were provided to the sale organizations operating on the territory of the Czech Republic. From the proposed groups of districts points of view, finances were drawn most in groups with important role of agriculture, i.e. the A1 and A2 Groups. In the A1 Group it concerns the districts of Mladá Boleslav, Nymburk, Plzeň-sever, Plzeň-jih, Tábor,

Jindřichův Hradec, Jihlava, Žďár nad Sázavou, Blansko, Brno-venkov and Prostějov. In the A2 Group finances were used in the districts of Louny, Ústí nad Orlicí, Třebíč, Hodonín and Kroměříž. In the districts with less important role of agriculture, i.e. the groups of B1 and B2 this measure was used at minimum level, in the B1 Group not used at all in the districts of Karlovy Vary, Trutnov and Šumperk.

4 Conclusion

We can summarize that analyses has proved the regional differentiations on the territory of the Czech Republic. Direct payments and national supplementary direct payments represented a significant financial source flowing to the rural area of the groups A1 and A2, i.e. groups of districts with important role of agriculture. In the groups of areas with less important role of agriculture, i.e. in the groups of B1 and B2, subsidies within the direct payments, LFA measures and the Agro-environmental measures, played the most important role. In general, more finances per capita living in rural areas of the districts of B1 and B2 groups flowed into this area per capita than to inhabitants of the rural communities of the A1 and A2 groups.

Besides, the analyses confirmed that direct payments and the national supplementary direct payments represented more significant source of funds for the rural areas in comparison to the HRDP measures.

As the measures of Less Favorable Areas and the Agro-environmental measure were targeted to areas with less favorable conditions for agriculture, drawing of these funds in the production areas of the Czech Republic was on a small scale. Contrary to that, finances from the measure of Early retirement from farming, Setting of producer groups and Forestry. The highest volumes of finances were drawn up from the measures of Less Favorable Areas and the Agro-environmental measures (in conversion per capital living in rural areas of the districts) in areas with extra-productive farming, especially then in the districts of Český Krumlov, Bruntál, Tachov, Karlovy Vary, Most, Ústí nad Labem and Děčín. However, in these districts Early retirement from farming, Forestry and Setting of producer groups were used at minimum level or not used at all. Based upon the proposed typology these districts belong among areas with less important role of agriculture and with rather less favorable socio-economic conditions. Emphasis will have to be paid to extra-productive functions of agriculture and support given to growth of the rural population's quality of life in such districts by using the measure of Axis III of the Rural Development Program of the Czech Republic for the period of 2007 - 2013, especially then the Priority III.1 – Job creation and the Priority III.2 – Conditions of Growth and Quality of life in Rural Areas.

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Some Specifics of Social Capital and Social Networks in Rural Municipalities

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Annotation. The statement about the impact of different size and type of municipalities on social capital is tested in the paper. Some characteristics of social networks and some indicators of social capital are analyzed on the basis of the ISSP 2001 data for the Czech Republic. The results are compared for different types of municipalities.

Key words: social capital, municipality, social relations, rural areas, countryside.

1 Introduction

The term “social capital” experiences currently an immense wave of interest in social sciences. Roughly speaking, the term social capital represents individual or collective resources which result from social relations of individuals and collectivities and from the reciprocity which is based on these relations. The term itself is not very clear and there are several different conceptions of social capital. It makes the usefulness of the term a little bit questionable. But on the other hand the term is very attractive because it offers a useful “soft” explanatory factor for a broad range of important sociological problems like the problem of collective action, problem of differences in individual success and social inequality, problem of transaction costs of human action or even the problem of well being.

There appears a hypothesis in the professional literature on this topic that social capital of traditional communities (or communities which live in rural municipalities) is higher than social capital in towns. [Wiesinger 2007, Coleman 1990] This difference can result from the following three factors: The inhabitants of rural communities know each other much more than the inhabitants of towns and are interconnected in much more tight social networks; the mutual obligations resulting from mutual usefulness and the stability of social relations are more intensive in rural communities than in

towns; the norms of mutual support and help are more developed in rural communities, because their members are more dependent upon each other.

It is nevertheless important to perform a theoretical reflection of the term before conducting some analyses, because the social capital concept is rather unclear and there are several different conceptions of social capital. Existing conceptions of social capital differ from each other so strongly that it is possible to speak about different paradigms [Šafr, Sedláčková 2006].

The most relevant difference lies between concepts of social capital as an individual good or as a collective good. Social capital as an individual good can be understood as an individual resource based on social relations of individuals. Its owners can use it for the achievement of their personal goals. This approach to social capital was made popular mainly by P. Bourdieu [1979].

A very different conception understands social capital as a collective resource, as an attribute of bigger or smaller communities which makes collective action within the community easier and contributes to the performance of the community or the society as a whole. Similar as the individual social capital concept, collective social capital results from a specific quality of social relations among the members of the community. The most prominent conception of social capital as a collective good was introduced by R. Putnam [1993, 2002]. Social capital according to his conception refers to some features of social organization like trust among people, norms and social networks which make coordinated action more feasible and contribute so to the efficiency of societies.

Another relevant problem of the social capital concept is the fact that structural and cognitive elements are mixed in it. The main cognitive elements of social capital are trust in other people or institutions and shared norms which make collective action more feasible or contribute to the quality of life. Structural elements are formal and informal social networks and social relations [Born 2005].

The term social capital contains so a theoretical presupposition of a relationship between structural and cognitive elements. Putnam shows quite convincingly that structural elements of social capital are really related to the cognitive elements (development of institutions of citizen participation correlate with the level of trust). The relation may nevertheless not be generally true and it is not clear, if social capital according to Putnam represents an interculturally transferable concept. This problem is tightly connected to the question of cultural embeddedness of particular forms of social capital. The idea of existing individual or collective resources consisting in the form of social relations and social organization and in some cognitive aspects is probably generally true, but these resources can have very different forms in different contexts. If it is true, it wouldn't be possible to conduct comparative

studies of social capital by means of several generally used indicators, it would be necessary to search for indicators of social capital in each context separately. Comparing of different levels of social capital among different geographical or temporal contexts would lose sense in that case, because its elements wouldn't be mutually comparable.

Methodological difficulties of social capital analyses result first of all from the lack of preciseness of the term, which makes the creation of usable indicators very difficult. Another problem consists nevertheless in the fact that social capital (understood as a collective resource) is very often measured by aggregate individual data obtained by surveys. Important elements of social capital, especially the existence of effective shared norms and sanctions, but e.g. the degree of mutual obligations as well can be measured only indirect and with difficulties that way.

The initial postulate about higher levels of social capital in rural communities than in towns complicates so considerably.

2 Conceptualization

There are a number of studies comparing social capital of municipalities [Rice 2002, Lowndes, Wilson 2001, Hofferth, Iceland 2001]. The concept is typically used in the form of a collective resource. Social capital of a municipality stands in that case for structural and cognitive features of the social environment of the municipality, which make individual and collective action of the inhabitants within the community more feasible. It can be therefore applied e.g. in the analyses of local political processes, which proceed among the members of the community.

Most of the analyses of social capital refer to the Putnam's [1993] concept of social capital. The problem is that Putnam's approach is partly biased. Not only understands he social capital as an essentially positive aspect of social environment, but he approaches it as a correlate of a developed civil society which is interested in citizen participation and is able to organize collective political action. He considers e.g. the level of citizen involvement or the norm about political equality of all people as important indicators of social capital.¹ Other important elements of social capital are out of his perspective, e.g. developed informal networks of mutual help and support or norms regulating the effort to engage in such networks.

¹ In later studies Putnam has adjusted and extended his view of social capital in an effort to eliminate the most consequential objections [Putnam 2002]. But nevertheless his approach to social capital is tightly connected to the quality of democracy and the performance of political institutions.

A considerably wider concept of social capital offers Coleman [1990]. According to Coleman, social capital represents in part individual resources in form of mutual obligations and in part a set of aspects of social structure. In contrast to other forms of capital social capital consists in social relations, it is not part of individuals (human capital) or things (physical capital). Its main function is to make actions of individuals more feasible. Mutual obligations are profitable for the actors because they can rely on the support from people which are obliged to them. But these obligations can be developed only within social structure dominated by trust and intensive social networks. Other important element of social capital is the information flow potential within a community, which is the secondary effect of social networks. The third element of social capital represents effective norms and related sanctions, especially norms which lead to the preferring of public interest over individual interest (e.g. the readiness to volunteering or the participation in public affairs). Through developing of obligations and creating of social relations individuals increase their individual social capital, but at the same time they increase the social capital of the whole community. So the both aspect of social capital influence each other.

Coleman shows that social capital is individual and collective good at the same time. Building of individual social capital supports the creation of social capital of the whole community and the total amount of individual social capital and the possibilities for its mobilization depend upon the level of collective social capital. His conception is more useful for the analysis of social capital in rural communities than the Putnam's one, because it deals with its elements and manifestations not only in the area of politics and democracy.

Coleman's conception of social capital is based on the opinion that living or working within a community which is dominated by trustful social relations and shared norms can be advantageous for individual actions of people within this community. The main goal of my analysis is to show if small rural communities dispose from this point of view of better conditions than other settlements – in other words, if they dispose of a higher level of social capital.

3 Indicators of social capital

Searching of suitable social capital indicators belongs to very difficult tasks because the whole concept is rather vague. In my analysis I have worked with the following indicators:

Generalized trust

Trust in good faith of other people. Trust is a necessary condition for the formation of networks of mutual obligations, because without trust the risk that my help and support won't be returned is too high.

Social networks among the inhabitants

The existence of social networks of friends in the locality is one of the important indicators too. It is possible to suppose that reciprocity arises first of all in networks of friends.

Participation in networks of mutual help and support

The possibility to attend friends or neighbors with request for help is the third important indicator of social capital. It indicates the relevance of norms of mutual support and help. These norms are beside trust a necessary condition for the existence of mutual obligations.

4 Methodology

In my analysis I have used the Czech data from the international survey ISSP 2001 which was focused on social networks. All indicators were constructed aggregate indicators based on several questions of the survey.² For the purpose of comparison it was necessary to distinguish respondents living in rural municipalities from other respondents. The pure size of the municipality was not very suitable, because it doesn't make it possible to distinguish small rural municipalities from small municipalities in suburban areas. Municipalities in suburban areas differ very strongly from traditional rural municipalities. I have used therefore two criterions: Municipality size and district within which the municipality lies. On the base of these two criterions the municipalities were classified in the following groups:

- Municipalities in predominantly rural areas with less than 2000 inhabitants (rural municipalities);
- Municipalities with more than 5000 inhabitants (towns);
- Prague;
- Other municipalities – These municipalities were excluded from the analysis because it was not possible to determine whether the municipalities have the character of a rural municipality or not.

In the analysis indicators of social capital were compared among these three types of communities.

² Questions underlying the indicators are cited at the end of the article.

Table 1. The number of respondents living in the individual types of municipalities

Rural municipalities	164
Towns	631
Prague	135
TOTAL	930

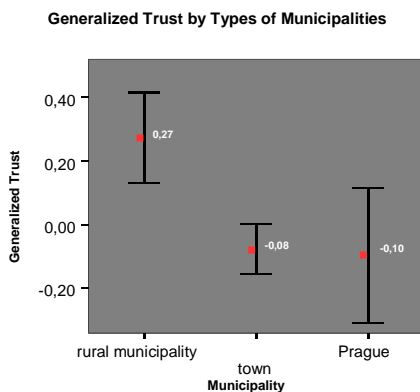
Source: ISSP 2001, weighted

5 Results of the analysis

Generalized Trust

The index of generalized trust was created as a factor score of factor analysis of three questions. (Questions are included at the end of the study.) Using factor analysis only one factor underlying these three questions was found, which demonstrates the one-dimensionality of the indicator. Comparison of average values of generalized trust is included in Figure 1.

Figure 1



Source: ISSP 2001, weighted

The figure shows the means of the trust indicator with the 95% confidence interval. The level of trust is significantly higher in rural municipalities and there is no difference between Prague and other towns. This result supports the hypothesis about higher social capital in rural municipalities. The realized differences are nevertheless not very high.

Social networks among inhabitants and the frequency of contacts among them
The analysis of local social networks shows similar results. Two indicators were analyzed in this field - the share of friends who live in the same locality as respondent (Figure 2) and the frequency of contacts among relatives (Figure 3).

Figure 2

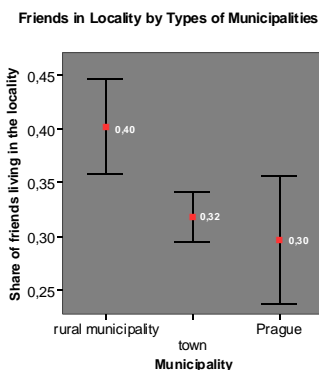
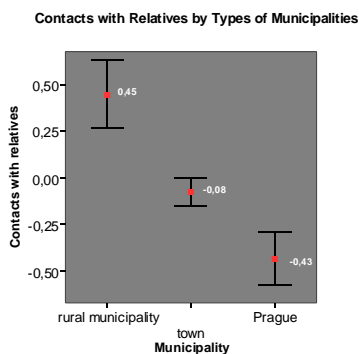


Figure 3



Source: ISSP 2001, weighted

Figure 2 shows, that in rural municipalities a higher share of friends comes from the same locality as the respondent (about 40 percent). In other municipalities this share is lower. It means that social networks of friends are more connected to the locality in rural areas. The conditions for higher levels of social capital are therefore higher.

The comparison of frequency of contacts with relatives (Figure 3) shows a very persuasive tendency. There are much more intensive contacts among relatives in rural areas than in towns or in Prague. Unfortunately it is not possible to determine, if these relatives live in the same locality as the respondent. This account makes the relevance of this comparison questionable. But it seems probably that networks of relatives are more connected to the locality in rural areas than in other settlements.

Mutual help and support

Mutual help and support represents one of the central elements of social capital according to Coleman as well. In this field two analyses were conducted as well. The involvement of respondents in social networks of mutual help and support³ (Figure 4) and the extent of help afforded to friends in the last 12 months (Figure 5) were analyzed. Figure 4 shows the results of the first analysis.

³ The indicator of participation in networks of mutual help and support was created according to Matějů, Vitásková [2006].

Figure 4

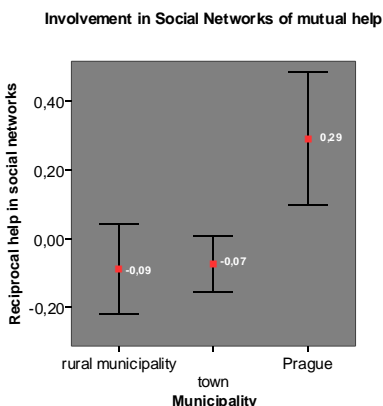
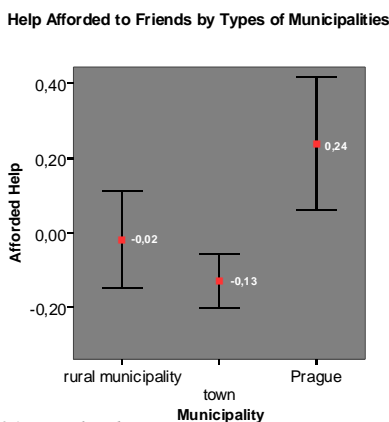


Figure 5



Source: ISSP 2001, weighted

The results are very different from the previous figures. The most intensive involvement in these networks was found in Prague. Other settlements don't differ from each other. The interpretation of these results must nevertheless take into account, that the used indicator doesn't trace the territorial distribution of social networks. It is possible that supportive social networks of respondents are distributed over the whole Czech Republic.

Figure 5 – afforded help – shows similar results. Respondents from Prague afforded probably more help to their friends and relatives than respondent from other types of municipalities, even if the differences are not very significant.

How can these disproportions be explained? A probably explanation offers the construction of the last the indicators. The both indicators of mutual help and obligations are not territorially specified. We don't know whether networks of reciprocity are local or whether they are territorially spread. It seems probably that such networks are territorially more spread in the case of Praguers and more locally bound in rural municipalities. Praguers can probably more rely on the support of people living in a wide area, not only in their surroundings.

6 Conclusions

The conclusions are ambiguous. The level of generalized trust is higher in rural municipalities and their inhabitants have more intensive locally specified social networks of friends and relatives. The both findings support the hypothesis about higher social capital of rural municipalities.

On the other hand, mutual help and support is probably not more developed in rural areas than in towns. Supportive social networks exceed probably often the locality, where people live. Even people living in areas with low social capital can rely on help and support of social networks, which are widely territorially spread. It seems plausible, that social networks are more spread in towns than in rural communities.

With regard to the fact that generalized trust and involvement in supportive networks are dependent on social status, an alternative explanation of these findings is possible. The observed differences could be caused by higher average social status of people living in towns and Prague. This hypothesis was tested by means of linear regression and even if social status is an important factor for some indicators of social capital, the impact of municipality type wasn't affected by this variable.

For more precise findings, more detailed information on the form of mutual help and obligations and on the territorial distribution of social networks of mutual help would be necessary.

7 Appendix

Indicators and survey questions

Generalized Trust - Factor scores based on the following questions:

- There are only a few people I can trust completely.
- Most of the time you can be sure that other people want the best for you.
- If you are not careful, other people will take advantage of you.

Share of friends in locality – Number of friends living in the same locality (neighbourhood or district) as respondent divided by the total number of friends.

Frequency of contacts with relatives – Z scores of an additive scale based on the following questions:

- Please indicate how often you have been in contact with any of the following types of relatives in the last four weeks. (uncle or aunts, cousins, parents-in-law, brothers- or sisters-in-law, nieces or nephews).

Involvement in social networks of mutual help and support - Factor scores based on the following questions:

- How often do other people (relatives, friends and other acquaintance) address you as the one who has certain occupation, job position, or social contacts for a help to solve some problems, life hardships or to apply your authority.
- If you face some hardships (need a help of a good doctor or lawyer, want to get better employment, arrange school for children or interpellate some authorities, etc.) do you think that there are people you can address for a help?
- How important are those contacts in your life?

Afforded help - Factor scores based on the following questions:

- During the past two months, how often have you done any of the following things for people you know personally, such as relatives, friends, neighbours or other acquaintances?
 - o Helped someone outside of your house-hold with housework or shopping;
 - o Lent quite a bit of money to another person;
 - o Spent time talking with someone who was a bit down or depressed;
 - o Helped somebody to find a job.

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The presentation of Castles and Mansions in the Czech Countryside

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Annotation. The total amount of Czech castles, chateaux, and bigger mansions is about 2000. A lot of them still remain in state hands, a big deal in now under care of the municipalities, and remarkable amount have returned back to private hands, including members of old aristocracy. It is important to study the historical and contemporary development and stages of presentation of various mansions for the sake of regional development and the common life in countryside.

Key words: castle, chateau, presentation, regional development, community life.

1 Introduction

A number of papers specialized on history of art as well as cultural heritage describe the concrete interior installations and museum-like expositions within castles and mansions in the Czech countryside, especially owned by state or municipalities. But the broad analysis of particular stages of development of presentation of Czech mansions and castles since the end of 18th century till nowadays have not appeared yet, moreover including the aspect of private owned castles and mansions and the wholeness of cultural landscape and countryside. Such a comparative study could offer adequate information, how and to which extent the Czech countryside can utilise mansions and castles as the stimulus for regional development. The following paper is therefore the contribution to fill this gap in the knowledge the item given above.

2 What do we understand under the term presentation?

The term “spontaneous” can be fruitful to describe the first type of presentation. For example a castle ruin on a rocky promontory presents itself

by its total, above all romanticizing picturesque look. This spontaneous presentation is naturally more than mere “looking at”, a visitor often travels a long way and still the object remains in principle beyond of tourist access; be it for its location attainable only to exceptionally fit people or because it really represents a mere bare torso the value of which is in the countryside-aesthetic effect for interested, but not expert public.

The second type of presentation is active presentation. Under this term could be understood making ancient monument as available point and the establishment of object presentation system for the public. Professional active presentation supposes a lot of highly technical decisions, i.e. for example if we should present a partial development stage of art history and applied art or if we should present the object in its last artistically valuable development stage. These issues are dealt with by the subjects of museology, conservation of monuments, technology of conservation and they are not the subject of this paper. This paper inquires into the use of Czech mansions by means of cultural animation including the most fundamental settings and strategies of their presentation.

To sum up, the presentation of castles and mansions including its farm buildings, gardens and parks and including the mobiliaries can be divided into “spontaneous” and “active”. Each historic cultural object presents itself “spontaneously” on the broad scale of aesthetic individualised impressions and perceptions, but only some of the objects are officially (mainly in a commercial regime predominantly for an entrance fee) made available for the public and presented as culturally-historically significant objects. Active presentation is mainly a controlled process a part of which is a degree of enlightenment and pedagogic influence defined in advance that uses knowledge of specialised subjects like museology, architecture or technology of conversation. Most of the objects are presented spontaneously and actively but there are also extreme cases when an object is presented – for various reasons, emergency, property, because of its physical inaccessibility – only spontaneously. However, also this exclusive type of presentation creates the attractivity of tourism with connected infrastructure.

Presentation does not mean promotion; presentation (predominantly the active one) of ancient monument is a separate discipline, not directly linked with tourism, even though it is a precondition for it. Promotion what about the cultural tourism is thoroughly investigated for instance by Kesner.¹

In this paper we will inquire into development of active presentation of mansions and castles on the territory of the Czech Republic.

¹ See Kesner L.: Marketing a management muzeí a památek, Grada Publishing, 2005.

3 Basic characteristics of mansions on the territory of the Czech Republic

There are around 2 032 mansions on the territory of the Czech Republic. Among them are castles, castle ruins, chateaux, fortresses and also former monasteries.

Table 1. Total structure of mansions in the Czech Republic²

Castles and castle ruins	Chateaux	Fortresses	Number of preserved collection objects
331	1446	200	750 000 +documentation and archive material

Now to characterise briefly the number of mansions on the territory of the Czech Republic. It is obvious that from urban and landscape design perspective they form a very dense network due to high density of rural manors is extraordinary feature of the Czech Republic area. There is no space for thorough assessment of artistically-historical uniqueness of this survived collection of buildings in comparison with the values of preserved ones in other European countries. British writer Stephen Weeks, who is very interested in Czech castles and chateaux and who systematically revived the Penhow Castle in the British Isles, sees the qualities of Czech mansions collection as follows:

“As buildings, Czech castles are in most respects similar to the Republic’s neighbours of Slovakia, Austria and the old German states of Saxony and east Bavaria. Many of them have developed from medieval fortifications, and although often cloaked by renaissance or baroque attempts to make them more fashionable or even comfortable in those later days, they often remain, on their visible high-ground sites, with substantial remains of their old towers, moats, defensive approaches and enclosed courtyards.”³

The collection of Czech castles, chateaux and monasteries is however not only interesting for its artistic-historical values, but because it reflects the big battle of époques as immensely as any other building complex in Europe. On the one hand during the époque of 19. century when the newly ennoblemented aristocracy recruited from businessmen rebuilt old chateaux mansions

² Mžýková M.: Správa hradů a zámků, příklady a inspirace, Seminář ke zprávě a prezentaci veřejnosti přístupných památkových objektů, Jindřichův Hradec 11.-13. října 1994, str. 1.

³ Weeks S.: The Fate of Czech Castles, problems and solutions in their presentation, the contribution for The Face of Our Earth Conference, Prague 2008.

(Konopiště, Sychrov, Hluboká nad Vltavou, Kynžvart etc.) and copied there the life of old aristocracy including the imitation of medieval jousting. Further follows the époque of republicanism after the disintegration of Austrian monarchy when castles and chateaux were not directly expropriated, but the land fund of nobility was substantially reduced by Masaryk's land reforms⁴, from which the maintaining of noble mansions was subsidized (it can be clearly seen on the house of Colloredo-Mansfeld's property in the Opočno chateau). And ultimately the époque after the Second World War comes, when the total fund of castles and chateaux was as a whole nationalised on the basis of President Beneš decrees; it was partially transferred to serve cultural purposes and partially to serve the needs of particular state offices including the army. And now we are in the époque that in a certain way sums up former époques and seeks a compromise model of ownership in the line municipality-regions-restituents-private capital-state.

The history of castles, chateaux and monasteries on the Czech territory enables as hardly any other collection to examine the phenomena of ancient monument values presentation to broad public and thus a detailed analysis of the concept "usage of ancient monument for the sake of revitalization of the countryside."

4 Basic development stages of mansion active presentation on the territory of the Czech Republic

4.1 Presentation of private mansions in 19. century

Already in 19. century representative chateau chambers are installed in a museum-like. They are described in tourist guides and tourists can normally see them guided by castellan. The chateau was the seat of hereditary peerage, member of the imperial court, new aristocracy and bourgeoisie in the 19. century; concerning its construction and function it had such firm hierarchy as the society of that time. It was characterised by binding layout and firmly stipulated function of individual chambers; that distinguished it from the mere homestead or villa. Mainly the old hereditary peerage, that was gradually losing its social influence, rebuilt its country chateaux (in the Czech lands e.g. Žleby by the house of Auersperg) into romantic style of medieval mansions. Moreover, it imported some architectonic elements into ground plan structure that were continuously created in England of that time; England sought its stability in admiring idealised gothic past of the Isles face to face industrial development endangering its certainties. Among the chambers that are in

⁴Tzv. záborový zákon, náhradový zákon, přidělový zákon, viz Mžýková M.: Navracené poklady, Restitutio ad integrum, Katalog ke stejnojmenné výstavě, Pragafilm 1994, 11.

principle uninhabitable and serve the representation of family fame mainly through historic relicts or antiquities belong knight's hall, staircase halls with richly carved balustrades and the so called morning chamber.⁵ Antiquities are omnipresent at that time and get even to habitable rooms. House of Harrach brought to the newly built chateau in Hrádek u Nechanic e.g. wooden walls wainscoting from its ancient family possession in Austria. At the turn of 19. and 20. century also with newly ennoblemented aristocracy the effort is asserted to use its newly built chateau mansions for representative, presentation purposes.

4.2 Presentation of nationalized mansions with cultural utilisation (1945-1989)

Beneš decrees brought about significant social and spiritual changes influencing the following decades. They meant abrupt solution and the state heritage care was moreover dragged into the centre of ideological fight of that time and had to adapt its subtle vocabulary to substantially harsher one. After the Second World War thanks the President of the Republic's decree No. 12/1945 and No. 108/1945 had gone into force, the Czechoslovak state gathered almost 496 castles, chateaux including the immovable and movable accessories. The so called National Cultural Commission (Národní kulturní komise) had to supervise and to administer about 95 castles and chateaux that were predestined to be monuments with cultural focus (opened for the wide public)⁶. In the middle of 1950 the so called "Plan for the Utilisation of Objects administered by the National Cultural Commission" was set up and for the first time in the history of heritage care the word "utilisation of monument" emerged in a key position. Then the newly discovered concept "utilisation of monument" appears relatively often, for example in the proper denomination "Coordination Commission for Cultural Utilisation of State Castles and Chateaux in the Czech lands".⁷ What about the international scope, the concept of "utilisation of monuments" is precisely discussed within so called Venezia Charter from the sixties, about twenty years later.

The staff of the Commission first carried out the so called "pro tempore installation"; it means removing of previous owners day-to-day necessities including following stylish retouches in order to clarify overall style

⁵ Pospíšilová M., *Romantické zámecké interiéry*, Krajské středisko Státní památkové péče a ochrany přírody, Ústí nad Labem, 1986.

⁶ Uhlíková K., *Národní kulturní komise (1947-1951)*, Artefactum, Ústav dějin umění, Praha 2006.

⁷ Blažiček O. J., *Minulost a současné otázky prezentace zámeckých interiérů*, KSSPOPP v Ústí nad Labem, 1983, str. 11

orientation of the monument, e.g. “rococo chateau with corresponding mobiliary”. These interventions were partially motivated ideologically because they removed familiar, “private” references to the life of former owners and consequently a chateau or a castle could become in a way neutral, depersonalised cultural facility.⁸ Then, after certain sorting out of nationalised castles’ and chateaux’ mobiliaries, model plans were proposed for the usage of nationalised castles and chateaux with cultural use; model plan looked as follows:

- some castles and chateaux should have been transformed into museums of housing culture. In that matter should be enacted so called renaissance style museums (chateaux Velké Losiny, Jindřichův Hradec), baroque period museums (chateau Veltrusy, Vizovice), rococo style museums (chateaux Dobříš, Nové Hradky near Vysoké Mýto), museum of Napoleonic-empire period (chateau Kynžvart), museums of the romantic period (chateaux Hluboká, Sychrov), museums of historical styles of 19th century (castle Bouzov, chateau Častolovice);
- other chateaux were planned as special museums (museum of fashion in the Jemniště chateau);
- such purpose was not permitted in other objects because the respect to them was decisive (Karlštejn).

It has to be mentioned that in the period 1945-1989 a series of monument installations in the state castles and chateaux were carried out mainly by O. J. Blažíček, when visitor of that time gets gradually acquainted with the renaissance, baroque, classicist or empire interior when the visitors were passing by their tour through individual chambers for instance in “piano nobile”.

4.3 Contemporary presentations of mansions in the Czech Republic

During the last two decades after 1989 the presentation of mansions has been influenced by crucial change of the social situation and by resurrection of both private ownership and peerage as such. A lot of by state just owned objects was returned to hands of previous aristocracy-owners (castles Český Šternberk, Kost, chateaux Častolovice, Dobříš, Rychnov nad Kněžnou), a lot of objects was as a property transferred to municipalities (chateaux Děčín, Brandýs nad Labem), a lot of buildings was newly privatised (chateaux Nové Hradky, Luka).

In the presentation of mansions (the total number of castles, chateaux and monasteries in all forms of ownership and open to public is 154) the effort for

⁸ Syslová V., Nová prohlídková trasa státního zámku Milotice, nástin předchozího vývoje, Památková péče na Moravě 11, 2006, str. 101.

unified procedures does not last any longer, gradual decentralisation and diversification beyond traditional procedures from the years 1948 to 1989 is obvious. Independent approach how to install in the parts open for public of the Častolovice chateau has been proposed. What is more, castles and chateaux are being used for commercial activities beyond the framework of mere presentation of cultural values. The example of weddings or various products of tourism are on the table, this could be already identified as functional and morphological transformation of object that is not the matter of this paper.

The interconnection between object presentation as cultural value and the use of object for non-traditional commercial activities (weddings, meetings, congress tourism) is perhaps the most important for the beginning of 21. century for both objects in private ownership and to a greater extent for objects in the state ownership (chateau Kynžvart). Another characteristic feature within presentations themselves – and installations within these presentations – is the emphasis of everything that has historically organically grown together with the object including the attributes of everyday life of their original owners.

4.4 The development of mansions presentations (examples)

The presentation development of chateau Milotice (state chateau)

In the Milotice chateau tours were provided already in the year 1948 when the first floor (piano nobile) was opened for the public. In the next years the establishment of ethnography museum on the second floor was seriously considered. The “opposite to feudal culture of 18. century, the proof of which is the chateau building with all accessories of a mansion in the precinct”⁹ should have been established. New complete installation was opened only in the year 1974; it was composed as a Blažiček-like “natural trail” of the development of historic styles from baroque up to Napoleonic-empire. The particular chambers were equipped in a simple way and gallery-like in the framework of individual styles. For example the reception room that had never been in Milotice chateau, it was rather artificially and in the false way incorporated into the presentation, regardless the historical truth.

During the years 2004-2005 a new interior installation was done that has already abandoned the gallery-like exhibition of historical styles development moreover gathered from the so called haulage of goods (mobiliary from chateaux determined for other than cultural purposes after nationalisation) and it focussed on the presentation of the chateau as an authentic seat for normal family life of not very wealthy family of Seilerns at the turn of 19. and 20.

⁹ Ibid. page 102.

century. Nevertheless, the baroque installation reminding of the house of Serényi, with whom the Seilerns were affined, has been continued. The conception of the guided tour is truly based on the way of life of the Seilerns family; for example it comes out of the fact that their day began and ended in the oratory.

Originally the installation was suggested in the spirits of life of powerful baroque nobility of Serényi noble family, but it was abandoned because of its high financial cost.

The development of chateau Mníšek pod Brdy presentation (state chateau)

This royal little castle has been rebuilt many times; namely it was the baroque reconstruction, further classicist reconstruction and then the reconstruction in the years 1910-11 that transformed the interiors into the form suitable for comfortable life of entrepreneur's elite near Prague. Later the object was used (transformed into) for archive of the Ministry of Interior. The object is now in state ownership and it is administered by the National Monument Institute (Národní památkový ústav). The presentation of interior therefore starts "de novo". It can be seen just now that the presentation will be interconnected with such utilisation of the object that would go beyond the framework of cultural animation and cultural use; social events, receptions etc. are scheduled. The actual presentation of the object as cultural property is done by means of two guided tours; one is focussed on baroque values, the other on everyday life in the mansion at the turn of 19. and 20. century.¹⁰

The development of chateau Častolovice presentation (restitution, owner Diana Phipps Sternberg)

Nationalisation in the year 1948 caused that the interior installation was carried out in a part of the chateau. The vocational school Kovoslužby moved to the eastern wing and it subsequently lived out these spaces. After the restitution in the year 1992 the permanent exposition of the chateau has been placed in twenty chambers that are equipped with historic furniture from the times of renaissance up to biedermeier style. Small daily use objects give visitors the impression that its inhabitants have just left. Several times a year the second guided tour is also available for the broad public where Diana Phipps Sternberg presents herself as interior architect.

¹⁰ Státní zámek v Mníšku pod Brdy, obnova zámku, ing. arch. Olga Kantová, KANT – Atelier, 2004.

5 Conclusion

The development in active presentations of mansions is clear and it will obviously continue qualitatively and quantitatively regarding the fact, that number of previously state owned mansions is and will be transferred into private hands and the role of state as the owner will decline. The activities within tourism must adapt to this evolution as tourism represents important development phenomenon within countryside. It is evident, that the utilisation of monument (castles and mansions for instance) in both cultural and non-cultural aspect has a very long and unique tradition in the Czech republic and is deeply rooted, though, if course, is partially based on historical injustice (immense nationalisation) occurred after the Second World War. On the other hand the state owned monuments with cultural aims have used to serve mostly gallery-like and museum-like with only a slight respect to individual history of one or other mansion. But the art of presentation develops and true fact about the mansion evolution increasingly takes in consideration.

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Quality of life in rural areas

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Annotation. Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy continues to be a key priority of the European Union policy in view of rural areas provide food, constitute a reservoir of biodiversity a natural resources and renewable energies. They host approximately half of Europe's population and provide space for leisure and cultural activities. But after all, many rural areas of European Union and so Czech Republic are confronted with increasing economic, social and environmental problems. Rural areas face difficulties economic growth, job creation and sustainability. Rural development policy plays its part in the sustainable development of Europe and Czech Republic's territory.

Key words: Quality of life, Rural area, Development policy.

1 Introduction

Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy is very important. The strategic decisions should take into account situation in view of regional and rural areas perspective roles in regional sustainable development, competitiveness and employment. It is necessary to create more and better jobs for participation more young people into employment or entrepreneurial activity so as not to leave rural areas.

The regional and rural development is playing an important role in helping rural areas to meet the economic, social and environmental challenges. Rural areas make up 90 % of the territory of the enlarged EU and over 60 % of the population of the European Union living in rural areas [1], 19 % of the population live in predominantly rural regions and 37 % in significantly rural regions. These regions provide 53 % of the employment [2], but tend to lag behind non-rural areas as regards a number of socio-economic indicators, including structural indicators. In rural areas, per capita income is around a third less, activity rates for women are lower, the service sector is less

developed, higher education levels are generally lower, and a smaller percentage of households has access to broadband internet.

Remoteness and peripherality are major problems in some rural regions. These disadvantages tend to be even more significant in predominantly rural regions, although the general picture at EU level can vary substantially between Member States. Lack of opportunities, contacts and training infrastructure are a particular problem for women and young people in remote rural areas [2].

The rural development is a vitally important policy area. Farming and forestry remain crucial for land use and the management of natural resources in the EU's rural areas, and as a platform for economic diversification in rural communities. The strengthening of EU rural development policy has, therefore, become an overall EU priority [1]. The Economic and Cohesion policy will support business activities in agricultural, non-agricultural enterprises, micro-enterprises, including new trade licenses.

2 Project

This article presents the sub layer of research project of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic: No. 1 J016/04-DP2: „Socio - Economic Development of Rural Area and Agricultural in the Czech Republic“ [3].

The aim of the project is complex and systematic collection and analysis of information related to social-economic and demographic phenomena and processes in Czech agriculture and rural areas. The research will cover basic spheres of work and life of agricultural workers and inhabitants of rural areas with regard to their living conditions in rural areas, stabilization of rural settlement and creation of prerequisites for ecologically sustainable social and economic development of the region. In the research we have monitoring and analysing of the social and economic situation at the regional and rural area and of the demographic structure of the South Bohemia rural villages and life in choice villages and Lhenice has been the subject of our research [4].

2.1 The roles for rural areas in tomorrow's Europe

Rural areas cover 90 percent of Europe's land and host approximately half of its population [5]. They provide food, jobs and open space for leisure and cultural activities. They also constitute a reservoir of biodiversity and natural resources such as water, clean air and renewable energies. They are, in short, a key element of Europe's heritage.

All these areas can be located within a suite of interlocking considerations on policy matters related, for example, to agriculture and rural development, regional development, social affairs, transport, energy, the environment, spatial planning, education and culture.

The European Citizens' panel [5] felt appropriate across the themes and identified core dimensions of the rural challenge and potential ways by which these could be related to EU policy domains and the results were as follows:

Education;	Infrastructure;
Health Youth;	Conservation;
Transport;	Housing;
Energy;	Enterprise and Industry;
Agriculture;	Services;
Employment;	Funding;
Participation;	Tourism;
Land use planning;	Public administration.

The most important themes of the Roles of Rural Areas in Tomorrow's Europe, where were identified, concerned in:

Young people: the need to strengthen opportunity for young people in rural areas, more youth education, retaining young people in rural areas and encouraging them to return to rural areas, listening to young people and their needs, giving support to their self-initiated project ideas, improved bus services especially late evening services and free travel for those under 18 years of age.

The vision content young people in rural areas having the same opportunity as those in urban areas, more youth associations and youth groups with improved leisure time activities, better apprenticeship opportunities and a climate in which young people are listened-to. The EU should divert some funding from agriculture to invest in infrastructure (e.g. sports facilities, education, services) that will make rural areas as attractive as cities to young people.

Education: there where identified the following concerns: the need for educational opportunity for all sections of society, in both urban and rural settings, with particular attention being given to young people, the elderly, minorities and the disabled, the availability of multiple levels of educational provision, training including internships, and maintaining local schools.

The vision content under this heading relates to access to education and training being enjoyed by all age groups, education and training standards harmonised across Europe, entrepreneurship knowledge as part of the curriculum and students from disadvantaged backgrounds being able to more easily enter higher education.

Transport: there were identified the following concerns: the lack of affordable and adequate public transport (both bus and train based) in rural areas, not least its availability for young people, the elderly and the disabled, along with the need to recognize its contribution to saving energy and reducing pollution.

The visions for transport in rural areas make reference to the presence of affordable and environmental friendly services with a reduction in road traffic, the acceptance of car free Sundays, greater appreciation for inter-modal movement (for example, in regard to freight) and greater coordination among all modes of transport.

Conservation and Environment: there were identified the following concerns: the need to preserve rural character including the retention of agricultural land, avoiding the build-up of dormitory villages, preventing the expansion of cities into rural areas, having long term commitments to sustainable land planning, limiting the general development of housing and industry in the countryside while making provision for farmers and their families, enforcing environmental regulations and retaining the peace and ambience of rural space. Additionally, citizens asked that politicians should support sustainable energy sources and the greater use of recycling practices.

The visioning work under this theme relates to sustainable forestry policies, sustainable housing development, environmentally clean transport including 'green cars', independent and renewable energy production (for example in schools), a healthy flora and fauna, a healthy agricultural industry and a situation where new roads go around natural areas rather than through them.

Enterprise and Employment: there were identified the following concerns: unacceptable levels of unemployment and the lack of investment in rural areas for enterprise creation, the need to grow small and medium sized businesses including craft based activities, encourage the presence of a diversity of professions in order to maintain rural regions, and have less bureaucracy for businesses to deal with. Tourism was perceived as an economic opportunity, not least job creation, with particular attention being given to eco-tourism.

The visioning process under this heading recognizes that, in the future, funds for Research and Development are more easily accessible by rural entrepreneurs and that there is less bureaucracy and simpler application forms. Moreover, new economic activity respects the environment, logistics that support enterprise offer quality access, and spatial relationships between industry and wildlife, natural areas, leisure areas and housing are well managed by planning controls.

The recommendations are: Small and medium-size business entrepreneurship support at start up. Less taxes and fees and easier access to funding sources for rural entrepreneurs and to abide by an environmental plan with a view to compliance with EU regulations.

Participation: the difficulty of having rural interests listened to and the need to generate opportunities for citizen engagement on priority topics, which could include greater use of citizen surveys and citizen panels.

Agriculture: the uncertain future for agricultural production and the need to return to a human scale agriculture that is environmentally friendly and linked to the production of healthy (possibly organic) foods; the need for more jobs related to the farming sector, perhaps in agri-tourism, and expressed support for a landscape based mode of production that could produce high quality food with a good productivity performance.

The visioning relates to fair prices for farmers and consumers, along with much more information for consumers related to choices being made.

Health: the inadequacy of health services in rural areas regarding accessibility to hospital care, management decisions not being patient-centred, lengthy waiting lists, the need for nearer on-call doctor services and support for hospice and other caring services in rural areas. Additionally, the view was expressed that society must have quality and healthy food and thus support should be offered to farmers and through education channels about the importance of these matters.

Funding: the more investing into its constituent regions and that, more generally, social benefit systems require assessment in regard to which agencies control funding and deliver support.

The visioning activity under this heading sees balance between urban and rural areas, clearer rules on distributional responsibilities and which industries are eligible for support, more transparency on disbursements and more attention being given to the family and family relations by the EU.

Integrated development: the need to preserve the viability of rural areas through a combination of measures related to youth, employment, services, energy, environment and agriculture. The issue of housing was commented on by citizens in relation to it being too expensive for local first time buyers and competition from the second homes market. Citizens were also concerned about the relative lack of services in rural areas, especially healthcare and the need for a greater and sensitive police presence.

The visioning activity related to this heading focuses on the sustainability and identity of rural areas in 2020 which will have rediscovered the value of everyone belonging there, where people live in harmony with their environment, where people are close to services and employment, and where a diversity of agriculture is practiced. Moreover, energy and agriculture will be inter-related, for example through biomass production, and more use will be being made of wind, solar and water resources [5].

2.2 Real life in the rural areas - village Lhenice

The Prachaticko Region, where the village of Lhenice [4] is located, represents a territory in the southwestern part of the Region of South Bohemia. It is a region of the Šumava and Šumava foothills. The Blansky Forest Protected Landscape Area with the highest peak – Klet - extends to the Lhenicko Region. The significance of Lhenice city is evidenced also by the fact that a planetoid, which was discovered at Klet observatory, was named after it. The region is among the least polluted areas of the Czech Republic, making it a territory for tourism.

The village has 9 cadastral divisions, 2 of which have been declared “Village monument zone“ [6] - Třešňový Újezd and “Village monument reservation” [7] –Vodice.

The village extends over an area of 3,914 ha [8] and, in the period from 2001 to 2006, the amount of arable land decreased in area by approximately 80 ha. On the other hand, approximately 16 ha of gardens, 4 ha of orchards and 47 ha of meadows appeared.

There are 1,781 inhabitants living in the village at the present moment. In the monitored period of the years from 2001 to 2006, the number of inhabitants slightly increased, by 21 persons, from the original number of 1,760 permanently residing inhabitants in 2001 to 1,781 inhabitants in 2006. This increase reflected the influx of new inhabitants. In recent years, the number of people of productive age has increased, but the number of children aged between 0-14 years has been decreasing. The current trend shows an increase in the average age of inhabitants from 36.5 years in 2001 to 39.5 years today.

The civic and technical amenities are at a good level. There is the Lhenice Municipal Office, Registry Office, Parish Office and Office of Domiciliary Services. The technical facilities of Lhenice include all the usual elements. However, there is only water supply to some cadastral divisions, there is no sewerage system connected to a sewerage plant, nor has the gas supply been implemented there yet.

The village has created a publicly accessible Internet, including printer, scanner and data projector. It is situated at the school where it is also used for teaching purposes. Other access points for the public are in the City Hall and Public Library. The Internet is provided free of charge to the public.

Traffic access is secured by the Class I road, which connects České Budějovice, and Vodňany and continues to Písek and Karlovy Vary. There is no railway line to the city. The bus connection is good on working days but the accessibility to the individual cadastral areas is very limited on Saturdays and Sundays.

The number of households stated in the ČSÚ (Czech Statistical Office) review is 663. There are 605 registered dwelling units. There are 631 permanently

inhabited dwelling units in the city, of these, 63.7 % are family houses. Flats not permanently inhabited are utilised for recreational purposes (22.5 %). The city built 70 council flats for low-income groups of residents and also garages that were offered to people with assigned flats. The demand for city flats is not high. Young families want to build their own houses on their parents' plots. The village has 847 economically active inhabitants [9], i.e. 48.6 % out of the total number of the citizens of the city, 51.7 % of all those employed commute to work out of the city and, of this number, 79.5 % on a daily basis, mostly to Prachatice, the nearest and hinterland city. It was discovered in 2001 that there were 52 unemployed residents in the city, with the level of unemployment at 6.73 %. In 2007, as on 30th September, there were 35 unemployed persons, which amounted to 3.85 %. These are mostly long-term unemployed people and their composition remains practically unchanged. The Municipal office wants to deal with the situation, to help the unemployed and to use their help in the city. It is negotiating with the Employment Office about this issue at the moment.

Economically active projects. The village Lhenice is not the owner of nor a participant in entrepreneurial projects; however, it supports the activities of entrepreneurs. The number of economically active projects grew by 25 during the years 2003–2006. Their highest growth was especially in the field of services and trade. On the other hand, a decrease occurred in the field of agriculture and industry. The biggest group in legal terms for 2006 [10] are entrepreneurs – physical persons (287) and independently farming smallholders (68).

Local administration and self-government. The Mayoress and Deputy Mayor stand at the head of the village and their office has 5 employees. 57.48 % of voters participated in the elections in 2006 and the City Council consists of 11 members. The City Council approved the budget for 2006 on 30th March 2006. At the same time, the financial forecast for the years 2006-2008 and the Budget forecast for the years 2007 – 2010 were approved [11].

The village has its own web pages that provide information to the public and citizens about the activities of the Municipal office, its decisions and announcements. There are links to transport connections, cultural facilities, State institutions and offices, health facilities and others, always with contact details. Companies have the possibility of advertising on the web pages. The Municipal office issues a periodical for citizens, the “Lhenice Bulletin” (Lhenický zpravodaj) with the following columns: News from City Hall, Information for citizens, Information from schools, Social Chronicle and others. All citizens may submit their contributions.

Cultural and social facilities, such as the *Cinema, Library, Club* and *Sokol House*, are utilised for cultural events, concerts, festivals, theatrical

performances, meetings, birthday celebrations, graduation parties and, on working days, there are the Public Nursery and Children's and Youth Clubs.

The most important events include: the Autumn festival of Fruit, the Closing of the Cycling season in the South Bohemia Region, Festivals of Fruit and Festival of Flowers and the famous and popular "Hradiště" event, the Carnival, Feast, and St. Nicholas entertainment, Balls and traditional meetings on the name-day of Master Jan Hus.

There are extensive associated activities in the city. Sporting events and football also have a long-term tradition. There are 3 football teams in the city: men, youth and juniors and football tournaments are organised there.

The social life in the city is very vibrant, also concerning activities in conjunction with neighbouring cities and micro regions.

The village Lhenice participates in communal activities within emerging regions, associations and foreign co-operation, because today it is not possible to progress and develop without the support of and cohesion with the surrounding area. The city belongs to the association of cities, which forms the micro region known as the "Chelčice-Lhenice Micro region". It is also active in the "Blossoming of the South Bohemia Garden" Association [12].

The "Chelčice-Lhenice Micro region" (Development strategy) whose goal is to secure the balanced and permanently sustainable development of the rural area, to increase the economic stability and competitiveness of the area, to support the development of entrepreneurial activities, to support the development of traditional agricultural production, to create conditions for the socio-economic development of the micro region, to improve the living standard of citizens, to strive for the maintenance of the rural character of the micro region and to maintain cultural traditions.

The local action group, the "Blossoming of the South Bohemia Garden" has as its goals the support of regional development. The document, the "Strengthening of the local economic environment and the evaluation of local production" shows the orientation towards the co-ordination of the co-operation between cities, such as the association of cities, private entrepreneurs, farmers, schools, research centres and the non-profit sector. The objective is a harmoniously developing region with a developed civic society and healthy living environment, which respects the cultural and natural wealth. The city drew financial means for its projects: Wireless local data network (Internet), Historical landscape of the Netolicko Region - III. Stage 3, Netolicko Educational Cyclopath, Repair of Lhenice communications, Regional development of information and communication technologies.

SWOT analysis was executed within further development and priority areas and strategic objectives were determined for the years 2004–2010. In the village Lhenice it would be suitable, on the basis of this analysis, to give more support over longer periods of time to the development of the tourist trade and

the creation of further conditions for tourism, Cyclotourism and Agro tourism and to support the recreational possibilities for families with children.

3 Conclusion

The problem of population decrease in rural regions is accompanying phenomenon of transforming land. Czech Republic records absolute population fall since 1994. From research results further follow that globally happens in rural municipality (municipality to the 2000 inhabitant) to growth of the number of inhabitant. Our research results bear to that it happens to depopulation in South Bohemia, on the contrary the lasting trend is migration to the region so also the natural population growth. On this trend especially participate inhabitant immigration to the municipality in proximity bigger cities [13]. It acknowledges also Majerova [14]. South Bohemia is seen like region in which are good how ecological conditions so also conditions economically favourable to regional development [15].

Research appeared there are no problem with deinhabitant. Regional and structural policy, usage of funds and financial support from EU and Czech Republic give possibilities to brace up an all - round social and economic development in regional regions and rural territory.

The village supports the development and stabilisation of its inhabitants; it is significantly developing in all its cadastral divisions. In the years 2001-2006, unemployment decreased and the number of inhabitants and economically active inhabitants grew. The city takes care of amenities, serviceability, stabilisation of the inhabitants and extension of dwelling possibilities. It also supports the creation of entrepreneurial projects.

The village also devotes itself to cultural, social and sporting activities. It supports clubs and associations, organises sporting and social events, is creating a Maternity Centre. Two playgrounds were built for children, a skateboarding surface for the youth and an area for sitting around an open fire were provided for older citizens. Other activities include courses in foreign languages and the practice of Yoga.

On its web pages, notice boards and by means of newspapers and a public address system, it provides information to the public and residents, both about Municipal office activities and general information.

Village Lhenice repairs and maintenance of historical buildings, chapels, wayside crosses, listed buildings and their gables are being executed in all the cadastral divisions of the city. The reconstruction of schools, the Municipal office and Fire Station is planned. The building of the next stage of the

Cyclopath for the support of the tourist trade and activities of its own inhabitants is also being planned.

Development strategies follow the Plan of the South Bohemia Region Development, strategic documents of the Czech Republic and the European Union, comply with and meet the conditions for the LEADER ČR programme and are within the context of other EU programmes or programmes financed from the State budget of the Czech Republic [16].

In the period between 2007-2013 the Czech Republic can make use of about € 26.7 billion, which is about CZK 752.7 billion from EU funds to improve the living standard of its population [17]. For next development not only in rural of South Bohemia it is important to be able to get financial resources from European Union funds and by sufficient amount of quality projects and effectively used them. Various projects or programs financed of these funds would have had contribute by not only to economic prosperity of region but also to social.

4 Regional and rural development policy

Rural Development policy 2007-2013 gives the direction of boosting growth and creating jobs in rural areas and improving sustainability. EU strategic guidelines identify the areas important for the realisation of Community priorities and a range of options, which Member States could use in their national strategy plans and Rural Development programmes. The strategic guidelines are [1]:

1. Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors.
2. Improving the environment and the countryside.
3. Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification. Building local capacity for employment and diversification.

Agriculture continues to be the largest user of rural land, as well as a key determinant of the quality of the countryside and the environment. The importance and relevance of the CAP and rural development have increased with the recent enlargement of the European Union.

The future rural development policy focuses on three key areas: the agrifood economy, the environment and the broader rural economy and population. The new generation of rural development strategies and programmes will be built around axes: on improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector; on improving the environment and the countryside; on the quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy.

Regional and Cohesion Policy. European Union aims at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions, including rural areas. The strategic

guidelines on economic, social and territorial cohesion should be established with a view to promoting the harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the Community. In meeting the objectives set out in the Treaty, and in particular that of fostering real economic convergence, the actions supported with the limited resources. Available to cohesion policy should be concentrated on promoting sustainable growth, competitiveness and employment [4]. The territorial dimension of cohesion policy is important and all areas of the Community should have the possibility to contribute to growth and jobs. Accordingly the strategic guidelines should take account of investment needs in both urban and rural areas in view of their respective roles in regional development and in order to promote balanced development, sustainable communities and social inclusion.

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The importance of cultural traditions in development of countryside

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Annotation. To understand important aspects connected with beginnings of European identity helps to understand cultural traditions in contemporary countryside. Culture as cumulated knowledge of social whole is operating part of social system. The research confirms importance of influence of contemporary cultural traditions to level of human relations and stability of country region. This article is elaborated in the frame of research project MPSV 1J016/04-DP2.

Key words: stability of countryside, cultural traditions, interhuman relations.

1 Introduction

Motto:

„If you are not able to make clean accounts for 3 millenaries stay in darkness without illumination. Live from one to other day.”

J. W. Goethe

For understanding the continuity of development, especially in cultural sphere is important to understand own bases 3 thousand years ago. According Jung /1993/ is finding of collective unconsciousness in cultural memory. B.C. was in Europe something what created beginnings of contemporary European cultural identity. The former area from Ireland to the Black Sea was connected through Celtic-druids culture. Cultural elements of these traditions were imported into Christianity and exist in cultural unconsciousness of societies till today. At present there is danger of global culture-it is separated from most of ethic values and for everybody it is necessary belong somewhere. To have an information about own elements is point of view in our contemporary life, there are all certainties only relative. So we can speak not only about globalization /localization is term used abroad/ and it is possible to use the term regionalization. The variety and specialty of local cultures is increased, but together with tolerance can increase the whole-world community.

2 Aim and methods

The aim of the contribution is impression of cultural traditions of countryside area. To describe their foundation and understanding were used methods of analogy, analyses, syntheses and the holistic approach by help of many supported materials. The research was executed in two villages by helping of questionnaire method. One village /about 500 inhabitants/ with important cultural traditions is 20 km far from regional town. The second /about 1 500 inhabitants/ is bee-line 30 km far from the border with Germany. The article is published in connection to research project Socio-economic development of Czech countryside and agriculture registered by MPSV No. 1 J016/-DP2.

3 Results and discussion

Cultural traditions of the region are really something what can we identify, if we understand what is cultural capital in regional culture. Culture is human product. Culture is summarized experience of social group and is managing part of each social system.

In our culture are common basis they connect us with the European Union. Contemporary Westeuropeans are for connection of Europe above the flag the European Union. They are looking for connected idea, common cultural identity common for the whole Europe or for the essential part. And they find it in Celtic-druid culture, as it confirmed international conference helded on the Prague Castle in 1993. It followed the most importante exhibition about Celts organized in Venice in 1991. The historians from Sorbona and Padova spoke about the problem of missing part of our archeological findings. We can say, that Europe knows, what is it about, but we do not know, that Czech and Moravian countries are centre of area from which the Celtic culture extended into the whole Europe. Europe of this time, from Ireland to the Black Sea, was European whole with matured culture /Bauerova, 1998, Filip, 1995, Ellis, 1996/.

At many places of Europe are traditions of this cultural heritage preserved and there are places, for example Ireland, where is the language of Celts - geilik still living. In our country represents the culture in the name. The first known name "Cech" is of Celtic origin and till today we can see it in many languages. New trunks entered Czech and fused with the Celtic population /Venclova in Ellis, 1996/. Celtic culture existed in our country in the 2nd millenary B.C. Specify for our regionality is tradition 1000 years older than in other Europe.

Palacky mentioned, that Celts did not leave our country, they fused with new population only. The new population took over from Celts their culture, myths and everyday habits. And there is the strength of this culture. Contemporary culture in our country has a lot of old signs. To understand this period, which is in our collective unconscious, is important to accept our second “non-Czech” very important part, connected with Europe.

If we can deal with stability of countryside region in connection with cultural traditions and their influences, we must mention transfer of cultural traditions from the Celtic period till today.

Former Celtic culture was about connection with nature and space regularities /Poborsky, 1993/. The essential part of Europe was influenced by Celtic culture in year 1000 B.C. till year 51.

The cultural-anthropologic conception of Assmann /2001/ is based on comparison of many connected cultures. He is interested in social orientated and formative dimension of human memory, which is necessary for understanding of propriety in each community. He is interested in forms and instruments of common shared memory what is base for identity of each cultures. Collective identity is certainly metaphor for social propriety. It is necessary common area of symbols and through these can the participants move as “members” of this culture. To think over cultural memory means deal with history, which is important for present time.

Each cultures are different through their story and means of presentation of this basic story. Primary forms are ritual and text. There are differences between cultures, it is about model consideration, in praxis are in cultures as text as ritual.

To discussion about share of ritual and text in our cultural memory we can say, that our present stay of “Czech” depends on revival by helping of the text. Although in the Celtic culture exists writing “Ogham” used for rituals only, remained in our culture Celtic ceremonies, but their base and tradition was forgotten from our memory.

But there in these traditions and habits exists something, what influences us – if we want or do not want. Cultural elements of these traditions exist as form of cultural memory in collective unconsciousness. If we start to deal with conscious, we can use them in future with orientation to strength stability of countryside regions and to create long-term strategy new established in this area.

To perceive cultural traditions is new knowledge of this research. Connection with border we can hardly return, but connection with landscape and cultural elements is one of parts of stability in area. Instead of totalitarian ideology the education in sphere of cultural aspects connected with the region is necessary.

The research in two different villages confirmed elements of stabilization and development of countryside areas, for example opportunity for employment, transport services, technician and civil infrastructure.

At first there is sufficient and diversified offer of opportunities for employment. The village near the border has not many unemployed people and thanks to industrial production offers possibilities for employment in the village. In the smaller village there are not many people employed locally, there are not many possibilities and they must go to the regional town.

The next element is transport services. The small village has not good connection with surroundings, has not many bus lines. And it is necessary for stabilization of countryside seats. Transfer services are good thanks to train connection.

To ensure technician infrastructure is necessary only in small village where is not sewerage. The bigger village has not serious problems with infrastructure. Civil equipment is connected with education and it is important stabilized factor for all people in the village. The basic school plays a role of cultural and social centre in the village. Its abolishment understands many people in the village as decline. The school in the small village has few pupils, because the others take the children to the regional town. Basic school in the second village has no problems and people are satisfied. Health services are the next element and one of important factors how to stabilize people in the village. Bigger village has surgery of practical doctor, but small village has separated surgery only.

Although smaller village has shortage of stabilized material-technician elements, the people are much more satisfied with inter-human relations in the village. But it is not only that the village is smaller and the people from the regional town moved there (but are a bit separated). They find very important nature and participation in important cultural ceremonies organized here for many years. So that we can say, that non-material elements are very important. Supporting social and cultural life in both villages is good how to strengthen contact among members of local community, to create feeling they belong to village, landscape, region is very important for young generation. In both villages is this factor fulfilled and we can say, that it is reason not to move these places.

But between both villages is difference in satisfaction with inter-human relations. In small village with big traditions and habits and people participate in traditional country life and are satisfied with social relations. In bigger village, where events and entertainment has town character are people less satisfied, but they are supporting elements of material-technician stability.

Strong old traditions influence in small village same as former generations. They like for example Beltain and scorching witches. In the big village people like "fair", it is "market" connected with entertainment for children and adults.

This and others events have elements of town character and they do not create either community or contact with nature.

Feeling of cultural traditions and stabilization of country regions is very important for this research. If they come back into our life, especially if they became text form they could support stability of country regions and our and European cultural identity.

4 Conclusion

Contribution of research is that connection of culture, traditions and nature area with human relations is important and has influence for stability of villages. Old-folk habits connect the people, make better human relations, and come into sociality of the village. Because culture is summarized knowledge of social group and is managing part of each social system.

The oldest features of our cultural memory influence us and are 3000 years old connected with nature and space regularities. To deal with culture memory means be in touch with opened, lived and mixture history and it is important part of our present living.

In old cultural traditions and habits is something what influences us. Cultural parts of these traditions exist as form of cultural memory in collective unconsciousness. When we start to deal with conscious, we can use them for the future in connection to long-term strategy of historical reasons. The historians say that there is a lot of information in our country about unknown history of Celts. It is our heritage, we must accept it and give to another generations. Cultural traditions, connection with area and influence of stabilization of village regions are new important contributions of research. We can hardly give back connection to land into our village region. It is one of the part and their cultural parts for stability of people in the countryside.

If we want to deal with stability of village it is necessary to join stronger nonmaterial parts as for example cultural traditions and their influences. But we must inform the inhabitants about it to help the stability of village regions.

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Designated Landscape Values versus Local Attachment – A Preliminary Survey

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Annotation. Landscape values may play a vital role in formation of the identity of local inhabitants as well as this identity represented in their attitudes may affect the surrounding environment. Thus the aim of this paper is to discuss the relationship between designated landscape values and attachment of local inhabitants to particular areas of Czechia. The paper is based on the results of the research grant projects supported by The Grant Agency of Charles University (No. 150007) and the VaV project MMR ČR (No. WD-01-07-1).

Key words: landscape values – local attachment – landscape heritage – local identity – areal preservation – Czechia.

1 Introduction

What do we mean by the term landscape is often rather felt than strictly defined. It is something very hard to outline and handle but, on the other side, anyone knows what we are speaking about, is able to develop an attitude towards it. Everyone is involved with landscape it is something anyone may be interested in. However, this means it is something too many individuals are concerned with to definitely agree on why and how to approach, manage, protect and plan it [28]; [30]; compare with [21]. Nevertheless, certainly it may be stated that it is a perceived and dynamic whole [1], which has its form, function and value [39], although we are not always able to explain which clearly. We may even say landscape is a fundamental heritage of everyone [28]. And that this heritage contributes significantly to our identity (see for example [11]; the issues of identity in relation to landscape have addressed for example [2]; [7]; [31]).

Landscape is perceived as heritage especially on the two following levels, which are not separate, but interconnected: 1) the level of individual experience and 2) the level of societal ideology (compare for example to [41];

see also [19]). Our perception of landscape as image [4] of the immediately lived environment is intern and personal (see for example the calls of [44]; [26] and [42] for the study of individual experience of the environment and landscape in geography; compare [45] for the review of some recent developments in the discipline of cultural geography) and as unique subjects we are able to give landscape many different meanings and values. Next to these individual values there are also those which are believed to be corporate and are expressed through political decisions. These values are symbolically represented for example through designation of protected areas of different categories (for its overview in the case of Czechia see for example [47] and [46] with the aim to save particular values for future generations.

However, it remains questionable how much do these two different approaches to the definition of significant landscape values overlap. Therefore the aim of this paper is to discuss, on the example of Czechia, the attachment of inhabitants to the landscape they live in as compared to the values attached to this landscape by the wider society. This way our study also contributes to the discussion about the aims and importance of protected areas and the problems of landscape protection in Czechia generally (see for example [25], who have conducted a research on the relationship between protected areas, in this case biosphere reserves, and the quality of life of the local inhabitants).

2 Valued landscapes and identity

As was anticipated in the introduction, landscape and identity may be very closely related. However, the definition of this relationship is not simple and straightforward.

Generally, we may distinguish two principal meanings of the term landscape. By landscape we may mean (1) particular area or region as well as (2) perceived scenery (see for example [32]; compare with [5]; also [21]. The key sense for the perception of landscape is sight through which we observe landscape as something separated from us by a certain minimum distance, as something on the edge, a horizon, scenery or an image [4]. Though sight is the dominant, but not the only one sense by which we are able to experience landscape. Thus for example [13], p. 22 cited in [20], p. 81–82 defined it as “the total sensory effect which a piece of land or the sky above it arouses in us (...) the whole perceived environment, not only as a perceived entity but also, and mainly, as an experiential environment”, which, as compared to proximate field of vision (proximity), is a distant field of environment, hence it is not always perceivable, requiring a certain minimum lightning.

On the other hand, we may define landscape as a delimited part of the earth's surface [38], "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors" [11]. But we do not perceive this area continually as a whole rather it is represented to us through our perception of specific images localized in space. This means they are perceived from particular places [37]; compare with [10], p. 16, who says, that landscape is "the visual expression of the sum of objects and processes in a given locality at a given time"). The image acquired in those places is not infrequently identified with the image of the whole region. Thus a characteristic landscape may contribute to the formation of the identity of certain area, its regional identity [29]. Landscape may this way become a necessary condition of the self-identification of its inhabitants.

To deal with the level of regional identity, we must at first define the term "identity" (for closer discussion of the terms identity and regional identity see for example [24]). It is used the most frequently in (social) psychology, where it is understood as the "unity of internal psychical life and acts, which is also called authentic being" [48], p. 18. According to [3], p. 246, identity is "the way in which either an individual or a group of individuals define themselves, feel their existence (uniqueness) and which supports their consciousness in relation to others." When the strongest space (geographical) aspect is present in the formation of identity, we speak generally about "regional identity". This can be defined similarly according to the above-mentioned statement by [3] as the way in which either an individual or a group of individuals define themselves in relation to a particular territory (region).

However, according to [34], it is not precise to use the term "regional identity" as a synonym for "regional consciousness", because this kind of social consciousness is only the first dimension of regional identity. The second one is the "identity of the region". The identity of the region (also image of the region) displays the characters of environment, culture and people used in scientific and general classification/regionalization in the sense of differentiation of one region from the others. Whereas regional consciousness corresponds to the identification of individuals with the symbols of the region leading to its institutionalization. Thus for the emergence of the completely new region there must be at least two assumptions fulfilled first: 1) the region must be as a specific object recognized from the outside, by people who do not live in it, and 2) there must exist the need and will for its delimitation among the insiders, its inhabitants.

Region and regional identity are therefore an intersection of delimitation according to the relational closeness based on selected characteristics (identity of the region) (for example [15]) and the relational closeness based on mutual identification of concerned subjects as inhabitants of a certain region (regional consciousness) [34]; compare with [3]; [12]; [24]. At this point, it is also

important to note that we understand relational closeness as territorial relational closeness (see [15]) and not as temporal, because identity is a social process of perpetual re-writing of the self and social collectives [35]. In course of time it is possible to gain as well as to lose it, it can be reinforced or it can decline, and this is true for the identity of each individual and for both components of regional identity (regional consciousness and identity of the region).

In the process of the regional identity formation, the role of landscape is thus twofold. First it influences the identity of the inhabitants, their belonging with the region, and second the perception and presentation of its specific landscape outside the region influences its image. And it is particularly the relationship of the inhabitants to the landscape they live in, we will further discuss in this paper.

3 Local attachment and landscape values – the case of Czechia

One of the main forms of the protection of landscape and its values on national level is areal preservation. This we traditionally define as a more or less successful management of certain characteristics or elements in particular areas selected and delimited for its protection [22]; compare [47] and [46]; also [8]; [9]; [33]. Because these areas were delimited following the presupposed corporate preferences and values, they may be also used as an indicator for the delimitation of the most valuable landscapes.

Thus using the data about contemporary protected areas the typology of Czechia according to the presupposed landscape values could be created (see fig. 1). This typology is based on the evaluation of the importance of areal preservation in the districts of municipalities. However, due to the lack of data, some of the districts had to be excluded. For the creation of the typology were used the data about the extent and number of protected areas of natural as well as cultural heritage in Czechia. Its main presumption is that landscape is most valuable there, where it is most intensively protected. Thus the bigger is the share of municipality area in protected areas of different categories and the bigger is the number of these areas, the more valuable landscape it is (see also [22]).

However, we should not treat the results of this typology as absolute ones, the protected areas are very heterogenous in their actual meanings and purposes. Moreover, we are combining the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, in spite of the fact that the aims and goals of its protection may be very different (on which see for example [27]). Thus we should treat the above

mentioned typology rather as a mean than the result of our research. It is only one of the impulses for further discussion about the future scope of our research.

In our typology the landscape of Czechia is divided into four main types, the areas where the importance of areal preservation and accordingly the assigned corporate values are: 1) high, 2) medium, 3) low or 4) none.

The landscapes with high and medium value (types 1 and 2 in our typology) are located either in the borderland mainly where there is traditionally very strong position of the protection of natural heritage (near the state border all the four national parks in Czechia are situated: České Švýcarsko, Krkonoše, Podyjí, Šumava; and also the majority of the landscape protected areas) or in the areas with significant intersection of natural and cultural values (for example Kokořínsko, Třeboňsko). Specific in its importance is the area of the capital city Prague. The landscapes cover about 40 % of the total area of Czechia where approximately 60 % of its inhabitants live. On the contrary very few inhabitants live in the areas where, there is no protected area to be found. This is due to the fact, that for the construction of the typology we have also used the data about small-scale protected areas, which are very numerous in Czechia. Thus large parts of its territory are included in type 3.

Meanwhile, it remains questionable how much are the above mentioned landscapes important for their everyday users. Thus we will now attempt to uncover the areal differentiation of the potential local attachment of inhabitants to landscape in the municipalities where they live. As was also suggested in the previous parts of the paper, we have tried to develop a simple model of reality based on accessible, predicative and reliable data which could be also used in formulation of the future research. Thus also in the research on such qualitative phenomenon as is the attachment of local inhabitants to surrounding landscape we will use the quantitative data of official statistics. We suppose that with the help of suitably chosen indicators we are able, at least preliminarily, to predict also the qualitative or cultural characteristics of the environment (see for example [23]). However, while conducting such research, one has to always keep in mind that it is possible only through the use of chosen model of reality. And that this model is only its artificial representation based on accessible and subjectively chosen parameters. Thus the findings presented and discussed in this paper below can not be taken as absolutely perfect. They certainly need further discussion and evaluation through the research in case study areas.

The construction of our model comes out from the presupposition that valuable is the landscape in which people want to live. They are able to develop a certain kind of relationship to it and this landscape also becomes the part of their identity. It is valuable to them, so they take care of it, because they want it survive.

The direct expression of this value is that individual wants to: a) stay in the landscape, to live there, does want to emigrate; and b) participate actively in making decisions about its future development, either directly through its own practice or indirectly through the discussion.

On these statements the choice of the indicators used to assess the potential for the attachment of the inhabitants to its landscape is based. It is important to note that the potential for the attachment we are assessing only from the perspective of the people living there in the landscape (insiders), not tourists or holidaymakers (outsiders). From possible quantitative characteristics on the level of municipalities we have in the end chosen following indicators:

- 1) percentual change in the number of inhabitants between 1930 and 2001;
- 2) percentual share of natives in 2001;
- 3) percentual share of believers in 2001;
- 4) perceptual share of inhabitants with other nationality than Czech, Moravian or Silesian in 2001;
- 5) perceptual share of inhabitants daily commuting to work or school across the border of their municipality in 2001;
- 6) education index (the ratio between weighed sum of inhabitants in different categories of finished education and its total number);
- 7) perceptual share of inhabitants participating in local elections in 2006.

The first two indicators represent the will of individual to stay in the landscape. Whereas the other five indicators together with the share of natives represent the presupposed will of the inhabitants to take care of their landscape. The above mentioned indicators were chosen especially for these reasons:

ad 1) in areas, which are attractive for living, there will be no major decrease in population in the long term;

ad 2) individual, who lives in its place of residence the longest time possible, since its birth, has potentially the strongest relationship to this place;

ad 3) the believer has a potential to take care of these selected elements in the landscape that are also valued by the society as a part of its cultural heritage;

ad 4) the individual, who is not the member of a major ethnic in the area may be disadvantaged in the community, excluded from the social life and loses opportunities and will to participate in taking care for the surrounding environment;

ad 5) the one, who commutes daily, spends a lot of time outside his municipality and thus loses the opportunities to participate in taking care for the surrounding environment;

ad 6) the inhabitants with higher education dispose of larger amount of knowledge and skills (but not experience), are more able to predict the consequences of their behaviour and may be also expressed through taking care for the surrounding environment;

ad 7) this indicator stands for the measure of indirect participation in landscape development because taking part in the elections may be also interpreted as the expression of the interest in the management of certain area.

For the evaluation of the above mentioned data we have chosen one of the multidimensional statistical methods, component analysis. This method enables the reduction of the large number of original variables based on the assessment of mutual relationships among them into the new general ones, which are easier to interpret. In our case the three main components explaining almost 70 % of the original variability of the set were created. Then the nature of each component, which is the outcome of different contributions of the original variables to it, was interpreted. As a last step, the value of the component, component score, per municipality was calculated. And the name for each component considering the contribution of original variables as well as the areal differentiation of its values was created. These components may be described as follows:

1) *Traditional non-transfer municipalities* – The first component explains 30 % of the original variability of the set. Share of natives and believers mainly contribute to it along with share of election participants. On the other hand the share of inhabitants with other nationality contributes to it negatively. The component has high values particularly in the eastern part of Czechia. These are the areas which were not affected by the transfer of the Czech Germans and consequent resettlement after World War II [6]; [40]. This part of Czechia is traditionally very religious [17]. The areal differentiation of the component is influenced by the national homogeneity of the inland in general with the exception of the capital city of Prague.

2) *Municipalities with long-term population growth* – Second component explains 23 % of the original variability of the set. High values of education index and the change in the number of inhabitants are characteristic for it. The main negative contributions to it are those of the shares of election participants and the inhabitants with other nationality. The period from 1930 to 2001 is very heterogenous in population development. Thus in relation to the measure of education it may be only stated that the values of this component spatially correspond with the division of Czech territory into cores and peripheries or structurally afflicted areas (compare for example with [14]).

3) *Administration delegating commuters* – Third component explains only 15 % of the original variability of the set. The share of commuters and the share of election participants are the variables that mainly saturate it. On the other hand, share of the inhabitants with other nationality and the population change contribute to it negatively. It may be suggested that the areal differentiation of its values corresponds with the distribution of small settlements from which the inhabitants have to commute to the place of their work. High share of election participants may be the result social control in

these settlements. The spatial distribution of the component values is also influenced by the accessibility of superior centres and by the combination of specific conditions in the Czech borderland (large extent of municipality areas where the daily commuting is mainly realized only in one municipality, not across its borders; undeveloped tradition of self-government resulting in the low rate of participation in local elections; see for example [16]; [18].

The continuous values of component scores were then categorized, so the areal differentiation of each above described component could be compared with that of landscape values. The statistical analysis of their mutual relationship was conducted with the help of contingency tables and chi-square tests of independence of the variables. However, we were not able to falsify the null hypothesis of their independency significantly.

4 Conclusion

Our study did not prove the existence of statistically significant relationship between the attachment of inhabitants to the landscape they live in and the values attached to this landscape by the wider society. However, this should not mean there is no such relationship, perhaps it should be searched by other methods. But how this should be done remains open for discussion.

Partial outcomes of our research are corresponding with more general findings and may be explained in terms of three in reality existing dichotomies: 1) core \times periphery; 2) inland \times resettled borderland; 3) Bohemia \times Moravia.

In the corporate values attached to landscapes in Czechia, as they are represented by the designated protected areas, there exists significant difference between core and peripheral areas as well as between continually settled inland and borderland resettled after 1945. From this point of view, areas near the borders of state and of the main regions are those where there the most valuable landscapes are (see [22]; also [36]). Although one of our presumptions was that valuable landscape is such in which an individual desires to live, it is the Czech borderland with some of the most valuable landscapes in Czechia that suffers from the change of inhabitants after World War II and depopulation in the long term. According to our model it is one of the areas with the most reduced potential of local inhabitants for creating the relationship to surrounding landscape.

The above mentioned dichotomies are further intensified by the general trends in the development of settlement system. In opposition to Moravia, in Bohemia the spatial distribution of inhabitants is more heterogeneous, with major concentrations in core areas. Large parts of Bohemia belong to sparsely populated peripheries [15]; [14] with many protected areas. In Moravia these are not so much different in attached values as in the intensity of settlement.

Whereas Moravian protected areas are relatively densely populated with many natives, in similar areas of Bohemia their recreational function is more significant (see for example [43]). They are thus relatively more open to outside influences which from large part determine their future.

In conclusion, it may be stated that future development of the Czech landscape depends not only on our definition of its values. But also on the fact, whether we will be successful in joining the interests coming from outside of particular territory with the needs of its inhabitants.

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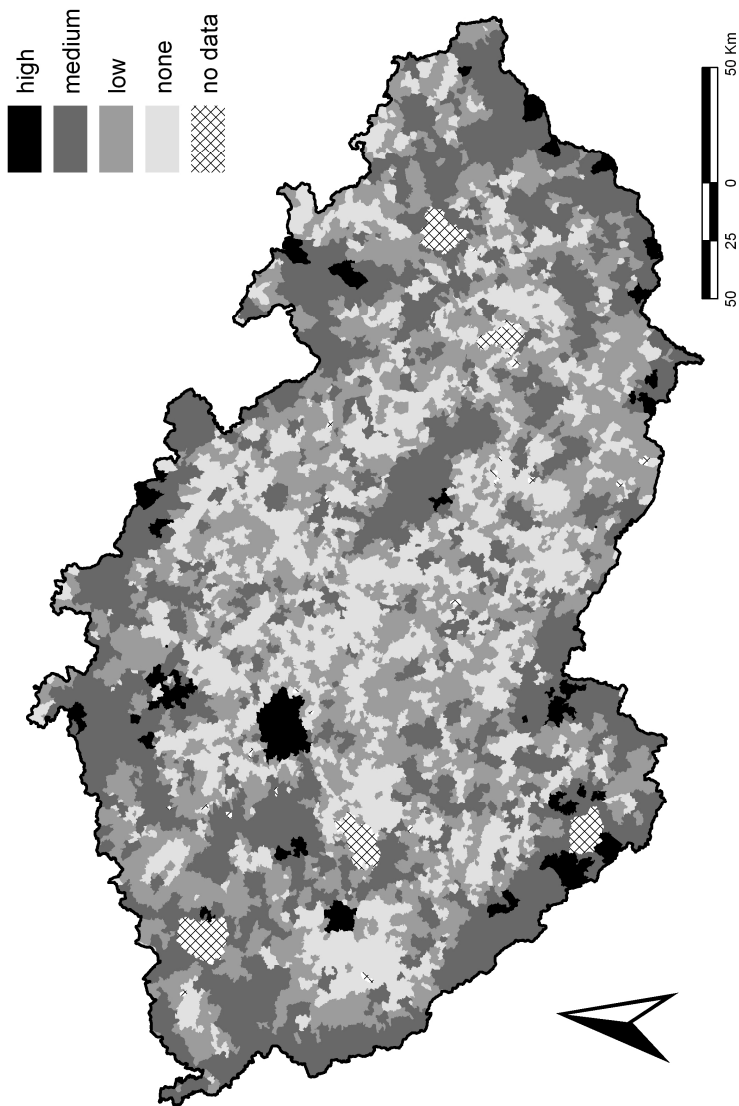
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Fig. 1: The importance of areal preservation, districts of municipalities, Czechia, 2007



NGO financing from self-governed funds on the example of Voluntary Fire Brigade in Boczek near Lowicz

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Annotation. A commune is incorporated in Poland. Thanks to this fact it fulfils public tasks on its own and for its responsibility. The main its goal is to meet collective needs. One of the self-governing and lasting associations is the Volunteer. It takes care not only of inhabitants protection but also of cultural aspects of their life. This operation is financed from different sources.

Key words: Volunteer Fire Service Association, local government.

A commune is incorporated in Poland. Thanks to this fact it fulfils public tasks on its own and for its own responsibility.¹ The main its goal is to meet collective needs. One of the local government's aims is to keep public order and protection against fire.² In order to support the idea of local government and protection of common interests, communes can establish associations. An association's statute includes its organization, aim as well as a way of operating.³

In Poland there has been the law since 1989, which has enabled Poles to form associations. Every association is voluntary, self-governing and lasting entity, which does not aim at income. Every association determines their goals, operational programs and organizational structures on their own and prepares own internal acts concerning its activities. Associations are based on voluntary work of their members but they can employ workers for running their interests. All people who have legal capacity and are not devoid of public rights can be

¹ Dziennik Ustaw, nr 16, poz. 95, 1990, Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 roku o samorządzie terytorialnym, art. 2.

² Dziennik Ustaw, nr 16, poz. 95, 1990, Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 roku o samorządzie terytorialnym, art. 7.1, punkt 14.

³ Dziennik Ustaw, nr 16, poz. 95, 1990, Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 roku o samorządzie terytorialnym, art. 84.

an associations' members as well as persons from 16 to 18 years. Persons under 16 can be an association's member under the acceptance of a legal guardian. Every association has to be registered in a regional district. The statute is the base of an association's operation. It determines: an association's name, region of operation and address, goals and ways of their realization, the procedure of becoming a member and lose of membership, reasons of membership's lose as well as members' rights and duties, association's board, procedure of its election, its completion as well as its competences, methods of an association's representations and property obligations' assuming and also circumstances of its decisions' validity, ways of financial resources' gaining, membership fees' imposing and the form of an association's finishing. General assembly of delegates is an association's highest authority but it is obliged to having a board as well as an internal control entity. An association's property comes from membership fees, donations, inheritances, income from own economic activities, an association's property as well as public generosity.⁴

One of the self-governing and lasting associations is the Volunteer Fire Services Association of the Republic of Poland operating in the whole Poland. The Association unites Volunteer Fire Services as well as other legal persons in order to represent their rights and statute's aims realization. First information on organized fire rescue works on the Polish area comes from the Middle Ages. Later, town's authorities paid more and more attention to fire protection equipment as well as prevention. In the sixties of the XIX century, fire services organizations were formed independently on the area of three Polish territories annexed during partition (Galicia, the Polish Kingdom and Prussian annexed territory).

The Volunteer Fire Services Association of the Republic of Poland has been operating on the base of the law dated on April 7th, 1989 concerning the law on associations, the law dated on August 24th, 1991 on fire prevention as well as the statute. The Association can have regional units, which gain legal personality on the base of the Main Board's decision. The Association is not responsible for obligations of units with legal personality. The main aims of the Association are: operations in order to life's, property's and environment's protection against fire, disasters and ecological dangers, fulfilling tasks considering protection against fire, flood, life-saving and public security imposed by the public administration's entities, promotion of culture, art, cultural heritage's and tradition's preservation as well as sport's promotion, development of regional and interregional cooperation as well as activities for European integration, development of contacts and cooperation between communities. These aims are realized through the cooperation with the State

⁴ Dziennik Ustaw 1989 nr 20, poz. 104, ustawa z dnia 7 kwietnia 1989 roku Prawo o stowarzyszeniach, art. 1 – 3, 8, 10, 11, 33.

Fire Service, public administration's entities and other institutions, support of the Volunteer Fire Services regarding providing equipment, uniforms, awards as well as trainings' organization and finding and gathering financial resources, initiation and organization of sport events as well as promotion of local communities on the national and international level in issues connected with the Association's events.⁵

Management of the Volunteer Fire Services is carried by: the General Assembly of Members, the Board and the Revision Committee. Property and financial resources of the Volunteer Fire Services come from membership fees, donations, inheritances, public generosity income from owned property organized events, and own economic activities if it runs such activities according to law regulations and procedures enclosed in the statute. The Volunteer Fire Services can run economic activity according to rules determined in special regulations and only for purposes included in its statute. Income from economic activity and financial resources gained from it have to be passed on the statute's goals realization and cannot be divided between members of the Volunteer Fire Services.

The South Kocierzew commune is placed in the Łowicz powiat.

There are 14 villages with the Volunteer Fire Services on this commune's area. The oldest one was formed during the first world war in the village Różyce. The one in Boczki was established in 1929. Contemporary it numbers 57 of members. The Board includes: chairman, chief, vice-chairmen, secretary, treasurer, manager, chronicler and member. This unit is equipped with two fire cars Star 244 GBAM i 266 GBAM, two generating sets, one mechanical saw for wood and one from metal, aluminum convertible ladder as well as light tower. The commune's authorities allotted 2% of their budget accounted for 8,2 billion zlotys for the year 2007 in order to support the Volunteer Fire Service's operation. This money was spend mainly for purchase of new equipment as well as the old ones' repairing, car's fuel and exploitation, purchase of fire-extinguishers as well as other things connected with daily functioning. The Volunteer Fire Service in Boczki built and rebuilt its fire station and it was a significant part of its spending. According to the regulations from 1989, an association can employ some people to fulfill its statute's tasks. The Volunteer Fire Service in the South Kocierzew usually employs drivers. In the Volunteer Fire Service in Boczki two persons are employed. 21% of the commune's spending connected with the Volunteer Fire Services was allotted to the Volunteer Fire Service in Boczki.

The Boczki's unit has been trying to join the National System of Fire Services Assistance since 1999. In order to this there was a necessity to exchange equipment and to buy new cars. The unit's Board applied for financial

⁵ Statut Związku Ochotniczych Straży Pożarnych Rzeczypospolitej Polski, § 2, 4, 8 – 9.

resources in the Regional Environmental Protection Fund for purchase of a medium class fire engine.

Now it should be mentioned that the unit's property, which is owned by the village's inhabitants, includes the building with garages, social rooms and the part prepared to organized special events with a kitchen. The fire station, built in 1970, was enlarged with scene room in 1998 and with a kitchen and in cold storage room in 2005. Thanks to these it is possible to gain additional income.

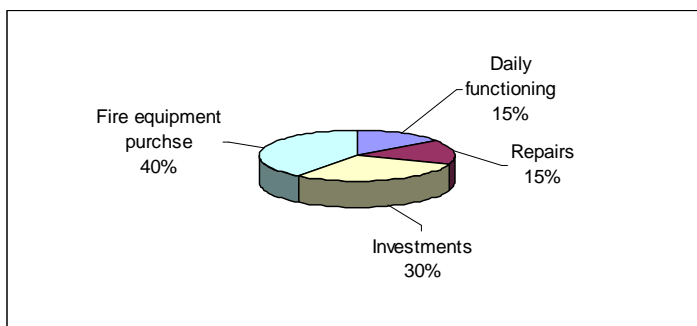


Fig. 1. Spending's structure of the Boczki Fire Service in 2007

Thanks to income from leasing buildings or organization of dance events there are possibilities of implementation of many investments and cars' purchase. Support gained form the local authorities is only limited to issues connected with formal organization of public auction. As the result of financial resources from the Regional Environmental Protection Fund as well as bank loans two new cars was bought in 2000 and 2004, which exchanged old Star 33 produced in 1966.

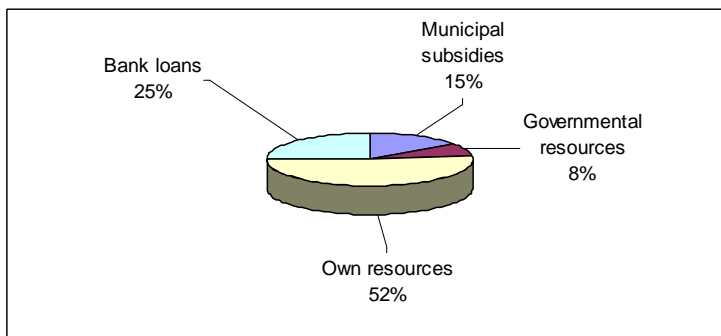


Fig. 2. Income's structure of the Boczki Fire Service in 2007

Thanks to owned infrastructure there was a possibility to establish the Regional Dancing Assemble “Boczki Chełmońskie”. This organization is connected from the Volunteer Fire Service from its establishment. At the beginning only firemen engaged in organizing of the municipal harvest festival. Nowadays the group consists of 60 members, inhabitants of the whole municipality. During 34 years of operation the Assemble gained a lot of rewards thanks to a large number of performances in Poland and abroad. Law and political transformations resulted in less intensive connections between the Fire Service and the Assemble. Financial as well as socio-political issues influenced on taking the Assemble by the municipal authorities. It has started changing recently. The “Boczki Chełmońskie” Regional Association was established by the members of the Fire Service in 2006. It was the result of many voices concerning the Assemble’s financing among local authorities and new possibilities of financing by the European Union.

As the result of functioning as the local cultural centre by the Fire Service, the local authorities allotted more financial resources for infrastructure development. Currently, the unit’s personnel includes senior firemen and two fire brigades (young men). Additionally the organization contains two youth groups and one women group but they do not participate in rescue actions but they are still learning security rules and win most of municipal completions. Thanks to this youth people’s engagement there is hope that the investments and what is more important traditions connected with folk and volunteer rescue will survive.

Mentioning the social role of the Fire Service, there should be a note on Rural Women Association, which also participates in costs of the unit’s maintenance and in organization of different events. Firemen’ wives are usually its members.

In 2006 there was a significant change in the unit’s financial situation after the period of huge investments and debts. The “light” class car bought with financial resources from the national governmental reserve was allotted to the Boczki unit but they was no room for this and it was given to the smallest unit in the neighborhood. The next event was incorporation of the unit to the National Rescue System, which was connected with the new possibilities of purchase of additional equipment and special uniforms. The third, maybe the most important event, which allowed to pay back debts as well as implementation of a few new investments in the village, was selling common property - the land and buildings.

Conclusions: Co-financing of active local associations, like the Boczki’s Fire Service, by the local authorities’ resources to larger extent is very advantageous because it takes over a lot of municipal functions connected with development of culture, sport and social activities. An association is the excellent example that support of local initiatives on rural areas can be very

fruitful in the aspect of rational and proper use of financial resources as well as a perfect instance for others. It is possible thanks to mutual dialog and cooperation.

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1. www.folklor.lowicz.pl.
2. www.kocierzepoludniowy.pl.

Quality of life in rural areas: an analysis based on the European Social Survey

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Annotation. This paper deals with measurement of quality of life in rural areas of the Czech Republic. First, the term “quality of life” is introduced and discussed as an analytic tool for rural areas research. A set of indicators is proposed, based on current research development and their fitness for a country vs. city comparison. Next, basic findings on the differences in Czech urban and rural quality of life are presented and there is a comparison with rural areas of neighbouring countries as well. The results are based on the European Social Survey 2004 data and additional sources. Key factors determining the specificity of living in rural areas are presented in conclusion.

Key words: quality of life, rural areas, Czech Republic, European social survey.

1 Introduction

Like other popular terms in social science, quality of life has found its way into everyday discourses, including that of media and politics. A recent example is a statement of the current Czech minister of agriculture, who has called for „increasing quality of life in rural areas“ to be a primary goal of the Common agricultural policy reform.¹ In this paper, we would like to analyze the empirical usability of the term, and, in turn, suggest a way of measuring it along with some results. It is clear to us that quality of life is a very broad and rather blurry concept, the nature of which might seem inconsistent with the idea of empirical measurement – yet, acknowledging the positivist notion that „everything which exists, exists in a certain amount, and thus can be measured“, we believe we can posit an applicable framework.

¹ Quoted from <http://www.biom.cz>, 10th April 2008.

Quality of life is a interdisciplinary term² (Bartoňková 2006:90-91), a synergic category, consisting of multiple dimensions (Murgaš 2007, Adámek & Němec 2005). It is being studied by scholars with a wide range of professional background (including that in psychology, sociology, regional development, ecology, medicine, andragogy, management and others). A number of seminars and conferences on quality of life are being held both in the Czech Republic (such as in Třeboň in 2004) and abroad. Vaďurová (2004) lists 54 major organizations and research groups that are focused on the issues of quality of life. Lastly, quality of life is also a subject of study of international organizations, including WHO, UN and EU.

A number of indeces have been constructed for measuring quality of life. These differ in depth, scope and other issues. Our approach, as shall be explained onwards, will focus on a set of mostly subjective indicators, following the work of Hagerty and his colleagues (Hagerty et al., 2001) in both their review of up-to-date studies of quality of life, as well as the theoretical model they introduced.

We have used these theoretical approaches and the data from European social survey (ESS) for a twofold comparison: first, we compare quality of life in Czech rural and non-rural areas. Second, we look for differences between Czech countryside and the countryside of five neighbouring countries (Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland). The paper is structured in the following way: first we discuss conceptual and theoretical problems concerning the measurement of quality of life. Next, our method and data are introduced, and a series of results is presented. In the concluding part, we shall elaborate on the figures.

2 Quality of life - conceptualization

It is vital, when studying quality of life, to understand the conceptual dilemmas inherent in the term, regardless of its empirical content. First, a distinction must be kept between quality of life and lifestyle, the latter becoming increasingly pluralized as a mark of individualization. Next, quality of life, like many other subjects of social science study (Znebežánek, 2007) can be either

² Aside from the content of the term, it is possible to analyze it in the context of discursive formations (Foucault, 2002). These include scientific discourses (to which would this paper like to contribute), political and administrative discourse formation (quality of life is a part of the Rural development programme, as mentioned above, as well as the political programme of the Czech Green party – which is actually called „Quality of life“) and a discourse of the New movements, presenting post materialistic attitudes – see Librová (1993, 2003) or Brooks (2001).

perceived as a structure with a specific set of elements interacting in certain relationship, or, on the other hand, it can be understood as a process by which quality of life is recognized and perceived in relation to individual actions and decisions. A related discussion could be lead over understanding quality of life in a partialistic way (i.e. reducible to segments) or in a holistic way as a phenomenon *sui generis* (Winkler, Petrussek 1997). We also need to think about who is experiencing quality of life – be it individuals or social aggregates, for instance. Other substantial distinctions include objective vs. subjective factors³ (see next paragraph) or inner vs. outer factors⁴ (Vaďurová, 2004).

The crucial dilemma for the measurement of quality of life would be the choice between subjective and objective factors. Objective factors (such as income, education, housing, etc.) are generally more robust and insensitive to individual interpretation of terms. Unlike subjective factors, these can be directly influenced by state policies, which make this research popular amongst policy-makers.⁵ Subjective factors (such as happiness, life satisfaction, etc.), on the other hand, might be more difficult to measure or change, yet their validity is much stronger. Paraphrasing Peter Blau, there is no such thing as a quality of life, if there is none to perceive it. Subjective factors are the real predictors of quality of life.

The decision between these two sets of factors could be made easier with reference to previous research on the relationship between subjective and objective indicators – yet, unfortunately, it is not the case. Boelhouwer and Stoop (1999:51-75) found a relationship of 0,33 between these two sets, Cummins (2000:55-72) quotes a relationship of 0,12.⁶ Apparently, there is a disparity here, which cannot be resolved. It appears that subjective and objective factors go together and correlate on a high level only in cases of very low objective well-being (Hagerty et al., 2001).

³ The objective factors were, in the Czech Republic, studied by Potůček (2002, s. 50). His understanding includes four groups of factors: sociopolitical, social, economic and environmental.

⁴ The inner factors are largely determined by individual experience. Related to Maslow's „pyramidal“ theory of needs, quality of life relates specifically to fulfillment of those needs that occupy higher positions in the hierarchy – i.e. feelings of life satisfaction will be most likely displayed by people, whose basic needs are fulfilled, which allows them to seek for the higher needs (self-realization, understanding, etc.).

⁵ As quoted from Czech Rural development programme, the improvement in quality of life should include „rural infrastructure development, aiming to promote small and middle-scale businesses and to improve living conditions in rural areas“ (Pělucha, 2006:121).

⁶ It must be noted though, that in Cummins' study, the relationships between subjective and subjective indicators correlated at 0,38 and between objective and objective indicators only at 0,32.

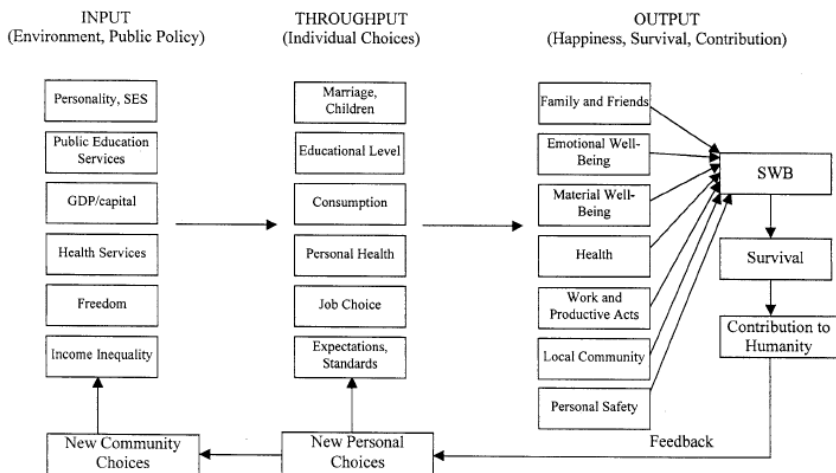


Fig. 1. Hagerty's Systems Theory Structure of Quality of Life Concepts and Causes (Hagerty et al., 2001, p. 80)

We based our approach on a theoretical model called systemic theory of quality of life (Hagerty et al., 2001). The model (see Fig.1) introduces a three-pillar system: input (i.e. mostly objective factors), throughput (individual choices) and output (subjective factors).

Apparently, introducing the category of throughput is crucial here. One's objective quality of life might be very low, yet through a set of individual choices (resorting to illegal activities such as drug trafficking) he or she can, with a lot of skill and luck, reach a comfortable and happy retirement. This is to say that the influence of individual decisions, both as a way of directing one's own life and as a response to outside stimuli, is such, that we cannot predict the output (experienced quality of life) from objective conditions. In other words, we have decided to build on a subjective approach towards quality of life.

Hagerty and his colleagues have compiled an extensive review of 32 up-to-date studies on quality of life, including 22 quality of life indeces.⁷ These

⁷ Health-Related QoL (HRQoL), WHOQoL, Consumer Confidence Indexes, Money's "Best Practices", Index of Economics Well Being (IEWB), Genuine Progress Index (GPI), American Demographics Index, Johnson's Quality of Life Index, Eurobarometer, Veenhoven's Healthy Life Expectancy, International Living, U.N. Development Index, Index of Social Health, Annual QoL in Virginia Survey, Estes' ISP Index, Diener's Basic and Advanced Index, Cummins' COMQoL, North America

indices together use 173 different indicators for empirical measurement of quality of life. Of these, seven domains were chosen as being the most often represented. A relative weight was assigned to each of them in order to achieve mutual comparability. The list goes as follows:

1. Relationship with family and friends (relative weight 100)
 2. Emotional well-being (98)
 3. Material well-being (77)
 4. Health (67)
 5. Work and productive activity (61)
 6. Feeling part of one's local community (29)
 7. Personal safety (27)
- (Hagerty et al., 2001: 74).

Following the structure-favouring approach to studying quality of life, we consider these seven domains to be independent of each other. Next, we discuss the data these concepts were applied on.

3 Data sources and results of analysis

Data sources

The data we used come from the European social survey (ESS)⁸ which is an extensive European quantitative questionnaire survey. The last round with the participation of the Czech Republic was in 2004/2005.⁹

Our focus is aimed at rural population, which was, in ESS determined by self-classification.¹⁰ Respondents were asked to describe their domicile with options as follows: a big city, suburbs or outskirts of a big city, town or small city, country village, farm or home in countryside. Our sample of rural

Social Report, Philippines' Weather Station, Netherlands LCI, German Social Indicator System and Swedish ULF.

⁸ Initiated by European science foundation, which includes major national academic funding agencies. Information on the project is available from www.europeansocialsurvey.org.

⁹ Coordinated by the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (Klára Plecíť-Vlachová). Financial support by The Grant Agency of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, data collected by SC&C.

¹⁰ Other methods widely used to separate rural population from non-rural include a threshold in a number of inhabitants in a municipality or in population density. While these entire have their problems with validity, self-classification appears to be the best choice for a European research, given the diversity of countries included.

population included the last two categories (a village or a separate farm/hamlet), all other categories were coded as non-rural. The Czech sample includes 3026 respondents, 855 of whom were coded as rural population. Due to space limitations, only few of the numeric results are shown in full. The important ones are commented on in the text.

Results of analysis

Relationships with family and friends

First, we looked at the indicators related to relationships with family and friends. The benchmark relative weight of 100 indicates a very important dimension. It is difficult to anticipate possible differences between urban and rural settings, since the density and quality of family and friends relationship might be similar, although the ways these relationships are experienced and kept might differ in rural and non-rural areas.

Obviously, this dimension is heavily subjective, relying only on the ways respondents feel about their lives. Three ESS questions were used to cover this dimension: How often do you socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues (C2), Have you got anyone to discuss intimate and personal matters with (C3) and How often do you take part in social activities compared to others of the same age (C4).

The non-rural – rural comparison yielded no important differences and although some of the data seem slightly in favour of the non-rural segment (see Table 1). Nonetheless, none of the differences found was statistically significant and none of the relations displayed any substantial strength.

Table 1. Have you got anyone to discuss intimate and **personal matters with (CZ)** (% , N = 2922) – results for Czech urban and rural areas and comparison to neighbouring countries (rural areas)

Answer /Area	Yes	No			
Non-rural	80,36	19,64			
Rural	75,46	24,54			
Total	78,99	21,01			
Phi 0,054, Cramer's V 0,054					
CZ	SK	PL	HU	AT	DE
75,50	84,30	85,60	89,60	90,00	94,10

Valid percent "yes"

Emotional well-being

As for emotional well-being, seven indicators were employed.¹¹ Again, this is a subjective dimension, focused on the feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life in both short-term and long-term context. The previous round of ESS in 2002 has shown a slight difference in levels of overall happiness in favour of urban population. This time, however, none of the non-rural–rural differences is statistically significant and the correlations, again, are negligible (see Table 2). Similarly to the previous set of indicators, the German and Austrian rural populations seem to be generally better off than their post-communist counterparts. This pattern is recognizable across the whole range of data.

Table 2. Daily life been filled with things that interest me last 2 weeks (CZ)
(%, N = 2970) – results for Czech urban and rural areas and comparison to
neighbouring countries (rural areas)

Answer /Area	1. All of the time	Most of the time	More than half of the time	Less than half of the time	Some of the time	6. At no time
Non-rural	11,08	27,14	31,88	19,91	8,87	1,13
Rural	8,33	28,57	35,00	16,90	9,52	1,67
Total	10,30	27,54	32,76	19,06	9,06	1,28
<i>Sig. 0,401, Eta 0,015</i>						
CZ	SK	PL	HU	AT	DE	
2,96	3,03	2,65	3,97	2,74	2,77	

Country *mean* for rural areas (1 = all of the time, 6 = at no time)

Material well-being

As for material well-being, this set of indicators leans more towards objective characteristics of quality of life; however, it is arguable whether these objective conditions give us a valid image of life quality, as discussed afore.¹² It is for this reason, that more importance should be attached to subjective feelings about one's income or economic situation. There is a difference

¹¹ 1. Have felt cheerful and in good spirit in last two weeks, 2. Have felt calm and relaxed in last two weeks, 3. Have felt active and vigorous in last two weeks, 4. Have woken up feeling fresh and rested in last two weeks, 5. Daily life been filled with things that interest me in last two weeks, 6. How satisfied with life as a whole and 7. How happy are you.

¹² As noted by authors such as Librová (1993), the differences in income are hardly to be held accountable for differences in life satisfaction. People often tend to choose a job with lower income, balanced by other assets (such as the extent to which they find their work interesting, the working hours and other, incalculable advantages). Again we see the importance of „throughput“ pillar, as posited in the systemic theory afore.

between Czech rural and non-rural areas both in income as such and a feeling household have about their income. In both cases, the differences (in favour of the non-rural population) are statistically significant, the strength of the correlation however barely reaches 0,1. There is an important difference (in favour of the rural population) in the number of rooms a household has use of, but this difference tells us little about quality of life as such. Not surprisingly, there are international differences in income, strongly in favour of the “western” states, yet this difference is visible on subjective level as well.

Health

The importance of health is, no doubt, an important factor but it can be assumed that its importance increases with age. Some research suggests that for quality of life as perceived, health is more important than material well-being. There is a significant, yet a very weak notion that rural population tends to be more often hampered in daily activities by disease. The is same true for subjective general health, which, again, is slightly better in Czech cities (see Table 3). However, it must be noted that rural population tends to be older which could explain these differences. In the international comparison, Czech countryside has the highest share of people suffering from disease or disability.

Table 3. Subjective general health (CZ) (% , N = 3002) – results for Czech urban and rural areas and comparison to neighbouring countries (rural areas)

Answer /Area	1. Very good	Good	Fair	Bad	5. Very bad
Non-rural	18,47	39,26	31,11	9,86	1,30
Rural	16,86	36,82	32,66	11,76	1,90
Total	18,02	38,57	31,55	10,39	1,47
<i>Spearman 0,040</i>					
CZ	SK	PL	HU	AT	DE
2,46	2,45	2,46	2,73	1,95	2,35

Country *mean* for rural areas (1 = very good, 5 = very bad)

Work and productive activity

This dimension was analyzed using a total of 14 indicators (questions). Again, the differences between Czech rural and non-rural populations are mostly marginal. Specifically, there are some significant differences (though the correlation strength is always less than 0,1) when it comes to safety at work (rural inhabitants tend to perceive their job as more risky or dangerous, which is probably to be understood in the context of different structure of employment in sectors in rural and urban areas). Non-rural residents feel slightly more capable of influencing the start and end of their working day, the

organization of work and activities of their employer organization. While the differences in the total working hours between Czech rural and non-rural areas are negligible, there is a smaller share of people who, in the past, were unemployed for longer period than three months, in rural areas.

In the international comparison, we added relative country rankings up to a mean rank on the scale of the 14 indicators. Unsurprisingly, German and Austrian villagers were the best off, with the Czech Republic being the third.

Feeling part of one's local community

Four ESS indicators were chosen to represent this dimension (trust in others (A8), election participation (B11), fear of dishonest treatment (E12) and the possibility to borrow money (F34). Once again, the differences found were only slight, with little statistical impact. Czech rural residents find it a little more difficult to borrow money than their city counterparts, on the other hand the display lower levels of worry about being treated dishonestly by others.

In the international comparison, Czech villagers had the lowest election participation and they, more than anyone else, felt it was likely they would be treated dishonestly. With Germany and Austria again displaying the best results in this dimension, Czech rural population scored the worst.

Personal safety

Last but not least, personal safety plays a role, though maybe not as important in Central European political and geographical conditions, as the previously mentioned indicators. It must be noted that scores on this dimension also vary with age, as older people tend to be more afraid. Nevertheless, Czech rural inhabitants are – rather unsurprisingly – to be significantly less often victims of crime and they also feel safer walking alone at night (which were the two indicators we used to measure this dimension).

4 Conclusions

On a general level, results from previous studies in Western Europe seem to indicate higher levels of quality of life in rural areas (Bell 1992, Richmond et al. 2000, Spellerberg et al. 2007). This seems to be true for subjective indicators, as well as some of the objective ones. However, our present study suggests that this is not the case in the Czech Republic, since the indicators seem to assume little differences between rural and non-rural areas. This result supports the hypothesis claiming that the differences between „western“ countries and post-communist Europe are most clearly visible in rural areas. In other words, while the standards of living and living conditions in major Czech cities are becoming more and more similar to that in their western

counterparts, the east-west gap in rural areas is closing more slowly (which is not to say that the rural areas are lagging, the cause is more likely in the fast pace of the cities).

Second, we have seen little difference between Czech rural and non-rural environments. Spellerberg and her colleagues (2007), having found a similar effect in Germany (east and west combined), argue that this effect has mainly been caused by increased mobility and migration. However, it is arguable whether we can rely on such an explanation in the Czech case, since Czech population appears to be less mobile and intra-state migration is hampered by high housing prices and regulated market. Similarly, moving to a different place for work reasons is still far from usual in the Czech Republic.

The explanations we would like to suggest, are mostly grounded in history. First, many European studies present an image of the Czech population as homogenous and egalitarian – Czech Gini index is traditionally amongst the lowest in Europe¹³ and a sense of egalitarianism blurs all distinctions, not just the rural-urban one. Second, there is a very high density of municipalities in Czech Republic, and a general lack of big cities (as compared to Western Europe). The country is highly urbanized and extremes (i.e. metropolitan areas or peripheries) are very rare. Together with this, it must be noted, that the past century also made Czech Republic an industrialized country. With all this in mind, is it any wonder that rural population does not display any specific qualities? Given the facts that a large part of rural inhabitants work in industry and that almost every Czech village is within a small distance from a city, we would argue, that the absence of differences in quality of life is understandable.

Czech society is one where urbanism has become a way of life, as Louis Wirth would say. As suggested by Hubík (2007), in a condition of network society, the boundaries between urban and rural become blurred and difficult to define. With this in mind, we reach a twist in our thought: when setting out to explore quality of life in rural areas, we thought that the „quality of life“ part would be the problem. As it appears, however, it is the „rural“ which gets problematic in Czech conditions. The issue here is not being better off or worse off than in the city, but being distinct at all. We would like to continue our research on quality of life, this time distinguishing between the various types of rural areas present in the Czech Republic, which will, hopefully, give us more insight into the fleeting world of a Czech village.

¹³ European foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions (<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/>)

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Countryside Between Supermarket and Ecological Luxury

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Annotation. There is a stereotypical fiction about rural beauty and the delight and harmony of the rural lifestyle. Today the real picture of the countryside is further than ever from this romantic ideal. Questions thus arise: In what way and in what form does the traditional rural lifestyle continue in villages today? Does it make sense to try to provide for oneself self-sufficiently in this age of supermarkets?

Key words: lifestyle, modernization, countryside, ecological luxury, self-sufficiency, self-supply.

1 In our back yard

Traditionally, back yards were full of domestic animals. But it is necessary to say that this picture of the back yard has disappeared in recent decades. Ducks, geese, rabbits and hens are no longer fixtures of the back yard. The membership base of the famous Czech Union of Animal Keepers has dropped and is ageing, even though local chapters still exist in many villages. To see domestic animals like pigs or goats in any back yard today is very rare. While children visit “grandma’s back yard” in the city zoo, cats and dogs live on comfortable sofas in our houses and become parts of the family, with all the advantages. These days, back yards are quite sad in comparison to the past.

Back yards were once multifunctional places where everyday activities took place, but now they have transformed into places for rest and relaxation. A swimming pool is now located where the dunghill used to be, and the barn is changed into a garage. The yard, formerly an open-air storage area containing many different things and materials, is now populated with chairs, tables and a grill (Klvač, 2006). Garden vegetable beds are replaced by carefully groomed “golf” lawns. Many orchards, now desolate and carpeted with fallen apples, are no longer wanted because it is easier to go by car into the nearest supermarket. And, as Rudolf Šmíd says, there is even no one left to frighten

away the birds. Scarecrows which were once so common are slowly dying out (Šmíd, 1999).

The good times of the past are sometimes recalled in visible memorials such as a badly masked circular saw or a low-power homemade tractor (Šmíd, 2006). To see their bizarre designs and the creativity of their creators brings to mind a turn of phrase referring to “the golden Czech hands.” The mixture of traditional and (post)modern artifacts seems comical and a bit surrealistic in our back yards.

This exterior side of country life mirrors inner changes in the rural mentality. Who would be interested, in our fast-paced, throwaway lifestyle, in something that requires time and patience for cultivation, does not have an immediate payback and often does not have a clear result? Looking after domestic animals and a garden requires such an investment. Old people do not have enough strength to maintain the old ways and “the young ones are not interested.” Today’s village dweller does not want to live the traditional way of village life, the “old one” in which it is necessary to fetch grass for rabbits in summer and strip the feathers from geese in winter. The freedom and mobility of the city is a very attractive alternative. Yet traditional rituals are still very popular. Families and friends still gather for the seasonal ritual pig slaughter, though the pig is purchased from an industrial, high-capacity breeding farm (Ulčák, 2006). Stanislav Komárek thinks that the tradition of the pig slaughter is the final evolutionary phase of a totemic feast (Komárek, 2006).

There is a question: In what way and in what form does self-sufficiency continue in the village today? Does it make sense to try to provide for oneself in this age of supermarkets?

2 Pig roast – ecological or predatory luxury?

A Czech household pork breeding was chosen as a typical example of traditional household meat production combining its economic function with a popular social event of a “pig-roast”. The popularity of pork is documented also by official statistics, which tell about the popularity of pork in the Czech Republic. In 2001 an average citizen consumed 40.9 kg of pork, which is more than half of the total per capita meat consumption (Pavlu, Vondráček, 2002).

Dvořáková-Janů (1999) and Fraňková, Dvořáková-Janů (2003) suggest various reasons for food self-supply in modern households. For some this still has some economic reasons, but more often other aspects are mentioned – leisure activity, local tradition in association with social control, community life (hobby gardener and breeder associations). But from the point of time and cost-effectiveness this activity remains mainly irrational and noneffective – people usually invest more time and money into the home food production

compare to the market prize of the product of similar quality (often including organic products). Therefore it can be considered an “ecological luxury” as proposed by Librová (2003). This luxury is characteristic for its small ecological footprint, use of soft technologies, reflected intrinsic value of nature and social dimension in form of altruism, in comparison to the “predatory luxury” which often may seem to respect nature, but in fact tends to appropriate everything rare for its own use (e.g. “eco-tourism”, building new houses in the countryside).

In the Czech lands keeping a pig and its home slaughter has old tradition described already in the 17th century by the Czech pedagogue and theologist Comenius in his Latin encyclopedia *Janua linguarum reserata*. Javůrek (2006) summarises some of the rituals mentioned by Comenius, which may be understood as paying respect to an animal – like the hog being ritually “sentenced” to death and slaughtered only after his “will” was read.

Although these rituals vanished long time ago, the tradition of keeping or killing a pig lasts until the present time. This was not changed even during the period of communist rule and predominating collective type of farming (1948-1989), when individual ownership of pig was allowed, but in some period regulated to one. This can be illustrated by the decree No. 48/1963 (Sbírka, 1963) of the “Central Direction for Agricultural Products Purchase” a state regulatory body which ceased to exist in 1967. It regulated the formal conditions under which the slaughter was allowed by different categories of farmers and public institutions, but it also permitted slaughtering one hog per year even to non-owners of agricultural lands – an illustration of how deeply the tradition was respected. It has to be mentioned that this had been happening in the country, which compare to some other countries with centrally regulated economies was not of mainly rural character and where there was not a shortage of public supply of animal products. Rearing a pig was nevertheless a welcomed contribution to an household economy and a good way of using household by-products as fodder for the animals.

In 2007 present around 3 900 000 pigs from large scale farms was slaughtered in commercial slaughterhouses annually in the Czech Republic (ČSU, 2008). While the Czech Statistical Office estimates the number of pigs in the small household production only as 50 000 (based on interview) (ČSU, 2006a) the number of home-slaughtered pigs is estimated as 450 000.

Pig as instrumental animal

The popularity of the pig roast itself is increased by its presentation in the media and some Czech cultural icons – painters of the 19th and early 20th century Mikoláš Aleš, Josef Mánes, Vlastimil Rada and Josef Lada. These painters often illustrated children primary textbooks together with the rhymes for different seasons, where the winter is often accompanied with the theme of

pig roast. A particular attention should be paid to the works of Josef Lada (1887-1957), who developed an unique style sometimes misunderstood for naïve copying of reality, but in fact creating a new reality, admired by the modern artists of his time (Picasso, Filla, Tichý, Čapek). As stressed by Pečinková (1998:156): *“While Czech painters develop the surrealist lessons and discover unconscious dramas of human existence, Lada happily draws flowers, birdies, and kills piggies in his museum. But total opposites often have common grounds. Lada works are in their ways related to the Jung world of archetypes, but speak different language than was the artistic one of international avant-garde.”* In his works he often returns to the world of his village childhood with its traditional events, village feasts and balls, children games.

It is the works of these authors where we can see the roots of the pig being perceived as “instrumental animal” (Swabe et al., 2005) by majority of people who in modern society are totally separated from any form of agricultural activity. Instrumental animals are more strongly transformed into objects than others – thanks to their size or function people are more sensitive to their deaths (cow x chicken). In the Czech society nevertheless it seems that in the case of pig its perception is the opposite – it is the death and the processing of its products what make this animal favourable. As presented in details by Idel (2000) this was not the case in 18 and 19th century in the central European region, when the reputation of pig was very bad.

From the above mentioned reasons it can be concluded that „home“ pork production is not anymore connected to the individual care for the animal through its whole life, including home or local production of fodder. Therefore local rural traditions, which contribute to the continuation of rural practices, thus maintaining local landscape character, are being neglected. By its increasing ecological footprint and by the tendency to a quick pleasure the home pork production and pig roast are increasingly of predatory luxury.

3 Conclusions

Data available from the Czech Statistical Office offer an interesting comparison. The most common home-raised animal is chicken (13% of households). More than 8% of households keep rabbits (an estimated 4 790 000 rabbits!). This number is equal to the number of rabbits kept in commercial farms. And Czech households keep more goats, geese, and ducks than commercial producers (ČSU, 2006a).

To what extent can this information be regarded as optimistic? The same research informs us about the trends of household animal production. Approximately half of the households did not change in the number of

animals, in comparison with 2005. But 46% of households reduced or ceased their activities, and only 4.5% enlarged the number of their animals.

The same trends were found in our qualitative research of selected households in the 13 villages of the Dražanská vrchovina region, carried out in the autumn of 2006 (Klvač, 2007). The sad picture of the disappearing skills of gardeners, vegetable growers, and small animal breeders comes as a result of interviews and pictures of the village environment and its inhabitants. In the landscaped gardens surrounding the modern village houses there is no space for the beds of carrot and onion, accompanied by rabbit and chicken huts. We listened to the ageing breeders and gardeners, who protect their *“last fields and beds”*: *“I ploughed it the last time; what will happen next year, I don't know...”* We listened to the words of their old experience: *“When the cows have lots of greens, no greens for the bees it means...”* *“When planting the trees - it's your child who sees [the results]... But I have already finished my job and will not plant any more. I am 81.”* Their attitudes toward the soil, fruit trees, and animals reflect much more than just the expectation of profit. *“If I didn't enjoy it, I wouldn't do it,”* says old Mr. Jura about his bees.

So while many town-dwelling consumers are much attracted by the modern concept of local and organic food, the Czech and Moravian countryside slowly loses its elements of self supply. It remains a question, how much of it can be saved by conscious ecological luxury and how much by the state and the European subsidies.

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KNOWLEDGE POTENTIAL OF THE COUNTRYSIDE



University Graduates in Rural Municipal Councils

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Annotation. Municipal council as the main local authority directly elected by citizens presents very interesting information on knowledge potential of the community. The paper is based on election data that contain academic prefixes of candidates and elected members of municipal councils.

Key words: Knowledge potential, rural municipalities, municipal councils, elections.

1 Introduction

When dealing with politics, Socrates and Plato attributed so much importance to knowledge that it led them to the rejection of democratic political order. In democracy, it is the majority that takes decisions, however, with its knowledge potential, it can never compete with the educated political elite which, while being a minority, is the best prepared for the political role. For that matter, educating members of political elite was seen in ancient Greece as the objective of philosophy [5].

Proponents of democracy, too, recognize the essential importance of education and knowledge for the functioning of the political system. Unlike the advocates of oligarchy or aristocracy, they do not focus on the education of the elite but on the education of the whole of the civic community. The democratic theory is based on an ambitious scheme to use education and learning to boost intellectual, emotional and moral capacities of citizens to enable them to unite into a true community [7:211].

Comparative research came up with the idea of division of societies with high or low “civic literacy” [4]. The level of education and the knowledge potential are generally put into relation with the level of political participation of citizens, most often measured by election turnout. For instance, Paul Howe [2] compared the level of political knowledge with the level of election turnout of citizens in Canada and the Netherlands. Although both societies and their political systems are very different, the comparison revealed significant

similarities. The generation gap between young and older citizens was observed in the two countries, regardless of their knowledge potential. Otherwise, the general rule is that the bigger the knowledge potential, the higher the political participation (which is, however, influenced by other factors too).

Information and knowledge potential is nowadays seen as one of the main sources not only of successful business but also of activities of any organization, including political and administrative bodies. Svensson, resuming positions of Huntington and others, writes: "Citizens with a higher degree of education and a higher sense of political commitment are also citizens with greater knowledge of political and societal problems and with a stronger will to deal with these issues" [7:226]. This fact is naturally observed upon the whole vertical axis of the political process, but is especially important on its lowest level, closest to the citizen, in other words on the level of municipalities and their bodies.

2 Objective and methods

The present paper is pursuing two objectives.¹⁴ The immediate objective of this paper is to show the manifestation of knowledge potential in rural municipal councils. The second objective is linked to interdisciplinary cooperation within the Strategic Management Information and Knowledge Support research project (MSM6046070904). TM7 module deals with designing a knowledge and information structure, methodologies, procedures, formalization, representation and algorithmization in communication processes between users and knowledge databases in organizations' knowledge environment. In this context, there is an opportunity to offer data for testing and simulation reflecting the functioning of municipal authorities and the local political process. For this purpose, statistical data must be completed by further information, namely by findings obtained by observation and qualitative research of decision-making processes in selected municipalities and regional structures. To this is linked the formulation of interpretation options to be tested. This paper is aiming at exactly this task.

The paper is based on the results of elections into local councils in 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006. In selected municipalities, lists of candidates and elected councils are analyzed, whereas the knowledge potential is measured as the participation of people with a degree on the overall number of candidates and

¹⁴ This paper was prepared within the Strategic Management Information and Knowledge Support research project (MSM6046070904) and GAČR project Citizens Participation in Rural Municipalities Public Life in the CR (403/06/1308).

elected representatives. Nonetheless, it must be considered that data on university degrees of candidates and representatives does not to be – namely in the instance of elections held at earlier dates – all too reliable. In the 1994 local elections, the academic title of the candidates was apparently not recorded as a separate piece of information; overviews of lists of candidates and elected municipal representatives feature a box to enter the academic degree, still if the degree is mentioned, it is done directly in the box with the surname and not in the box dedicated for the academic degree. It depended whether the candidates themselves put their degree next to their name or not. In the following elections, the degree was already recorded in a specific box.

Furthermore, the paper uses statistical data provided by the Czech Statistical Office reflecting election results achieved in municipal elections at the district level [1]. The choice of municipalities had to respect the specific feature of the CR population which is characterized by a large number of very small municipalities. On the other hand, it was not possible to use mechanically the threshold of 2,000 citizens that generally serves in the Czech context to determine rural municipalities. The opposition between cities and non-urban municipalities cannot be used either, as there are 57 towns with less than 2,000 inhabitants, and on the other hand, there are municipalities, too, exceeding significantly the 3,000 inhabitant threshold which still are not cities. Many smaller towns perform different economic, administrative and cultural functions for their rural municipalities' background and cannot be this eliminated from the rural space.

The analyzed selection of municipalities namely included those municipalities participating in a 2007 field research within the Citizen Participation in Rural Municipalities Public Life grant project, supported by GAČR. The comparison also included some smaller municipalities which were analyzed in other research projects. The chosen selection includes very different types of municipalities differing by their size, location, distance from the administrative and economic centre as well as by a series of other parameters. They have as their common denominator the fact they are located in rural areas or in locations where rural areas turns to suburban zones. Six municipalities in the selection represent the smallest municipalities with less than 1,000 inhabitants. One of these closely exceeds 100 inhabitant threshold, one 300 inhabitant threshold and one 500 inhabitant threshold. Five municipalities have between 1,000 and 2,000 inhabitants, one of them having a town status. Two municipalities have more than 3,000 inhabitants. In one instance, it is a town in the Vysočina region, in the other; it is a non-urban municipality near Prague with more than 5,000 inhabitants which is the biggest analyzed municipality in the analyzed sample.

3 Results and discussion

The proportion of citizens with university education in the overall population of the CR citizens older than 15 has been gradually increasing. Whereas in 1993 it was 7.8 %, by 2001, it jumped by more than one percent to 8.9 %, and by 2004 by another one percent to 9.9 %, which is two percent more than in the beginning of the 1990s, but almost one percent below the average of the enlarged EU. According to SLBD, in 2001, the biggest number of university graduates lived in Prague, which with its 18.9 % exceeded more than two times the then national average (8.9 %). South Moravian region ranked second, closely exceeding the national average (with 10.3 %). On the other pole was Ústecký region with 5.4 % and Karlovarský region with 5.6 % [6:15].

Participation of university graduates in elected municipal councils reaches two or three times the value of their number in the overall population. Graduates are represented most significantly in municipal councils of big cities; they are the least in regions of rural and agricultural character. For instance, after the 1998 elections, Brno was the leader with more than 62 % of its representatives having university education. The 50 % threshold was exceeded by three other cities – Karviná (56.6 %), Ostrava (53.7 %) and Praha (53 %). Pilsen achieved exactly 50 %. University graduates were the least represented in municipal councils in the district of Jičín with 11.5 %, Pilsen – South with 12.3 % and Jihlava with 12.7 % [1].

The comparison of lists of candidates with election results in selected municipalities shows, first of all, the influence of the size of the municipality (or the number of its population) on the representation of university graduates. In the smallest municipalities up to 500 inhabitants, the number of candidates and representatives with a university degree is very marginal. For instance, in Doubice, the smallest analyzed municipality with some mere 102 inhabitants, there was only one university graduated candidate in the elections held in 2002 and 2006; however, he was elected only in 2002. In Libořice with 335 inhabitants, only one university graduate stood as a candidate and was elected in 2002. In Straky, municipality which is only slightly exceeding the 500 inhabitant threshold with its population of 514 inhabitants, candidates with a university degree only appeared in 2006, however, in a relative big number (4 out of 22 candidates) and were all elected (4 out of 11 representatives).

In municipalities with more than 500 inhabitants, the proportion of university graduates between candidates and representatives starts to increase, but there are other factors contributing to that, too, as shown by a survey done in Ůholičky (613 inhabitants) near Prague.

Table 1. The share of university graduated (UG) candidates and elected representatives in Úholičky

	Total candidates	UG candidates #	%	Total councillors	UG councillors #	%
1994	24	3	12.5	9	2	22.2
1998	19	2	10.5	9	1	11.1
2002	21	3	14.3	9	0	0
2006	43	9	20.9	9	1	11.1

Source: Czech Statistical Office

The table shows namely the increase of university graduated candidates in the 2006 elections. Whereas in the elections held in 1994, 1998 and 2002, three election parties stood for candidacy, in 2006 there were five election parties. There is a an observable relationship between the increasing number of lists of candidates and the rise in the number of inhabitants from 543 in 2002 to 613 in 2006, as indicated by the table.

Table 2. Demographic development in Úholičky

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of inhabitants	512	543	565	592	596	613

Source: Czech Statistical Office

The increase in the number of inhabitants was namely due to people trying to get decent housing near Prague. They had higher level of education and were more active than old residents from which they tried to differentiate themselves in a critical way. A similar background can be observed in the increase in the number of university graduates between candidates and elected representatives in Straky in 2006.

The comparison of analyzed rural municipalities has revealed that the size of the municipalities itself measured by the number of inhabitants has no decisive influence on the representation of university graduates on lists of candidates and in elected municipal councils. It is the demographic development that plays a major role. In municipalities with a stable number of inhabitants, the participation of university graduates on lists of candidates and in municipal councils does not change much and can indeed even decrease. A different situation can be observed in municipalities where the number of inhabitants increases in an important way.

The extreme example is Jesenice municipality which belongs to the suburban area around Prague and according to the typology of T. Kostecký [3], it can

be classified as a rapidly developing satellite area for upper classes. The population development is shown in the following table:

Table 3. Demographic development in Jesenice

Year	1900	1910	1921	1930	1950	1961	1970	1980	1991	2001	2007
Inhab.	1224	1306	1200	1394	1301	1345	1298	1455	1758	2475	4757

Source: Czech Statistical Office

The table clearly points out to a sharp increase in the population in the 1990s and namely after 2000. In a majority of cases, new inhabitants represent families of educated and better paid white collar workers and managers, possibly businessmen too, who were looking for decent housing near Prague, commuting to work by car. As shown by the following table and chart, the demographic development after 2000 decidedly impacted the composition of lists of candidates and elected municipal councils.

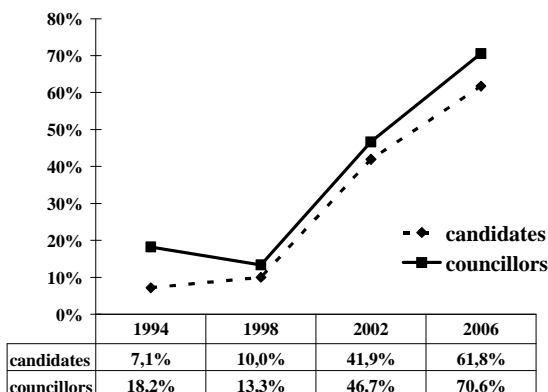


Fig. 1. The percentage of university graduated candidates and councillors in Jesenice

This example is an exceptional case reflecting the transformation of rural areas into a rapidly developing suburban area near the capital city. But similar examples exist in the intermediary rural area too. Dolní Bukovsko municipality, 25 km far from České Budějovice, today houses 1,514 inhabitants. It becomes apparent from the table showing the development of the number of inhabitants of this municipality; at the beginning of the 20th century, it had twice as much population as the aforementioned municipality,

which was followed by gradual decrease down to 1,426 inhabitants in 2001. Since, its population has started to slightly increase again.

Table 4. Demographic development in Dolní Bukovsko

Year	1910	1921	1930	1950	1961	1970	1980	1991	2001	2002	2006
Inhab.	2499	2500	2312	1833	1801	1592	1567	1503	1426	1453	1521

Source: Czech Statistical Office

In the 1990s, no member of the municipal councils mentioned their academic degree. In the 1998 elections, the number of university graduates on the lists of candidates already increased significantly, still, it had no real impact on the municipal council composition. An ever more increase occurred after 2000, not only between the candidates, but also between the elected local representatives, as indicated by the table and chart hereunder.

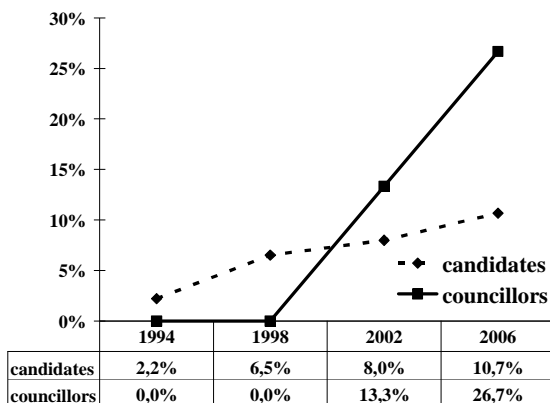


Fig. 2. The percentage of university graduated candidates and councillors in Dolní Bukovsko

The increase in the participation of university graduates on the lists of candidates and in the municipal councils is not easy to explain. The only explanation, besides the factor of shorter distance from the given regional capital, is its closeness to the site of Temelín nuclear power station which supports neighboring municipalities financially in organizing different events to activate public life. A more detailed and reliable explanation would however require carrying out a qualitative survey in this municipality.

4 Conclusion

It stems from the comparison of lists of candidates and elected municipal councils that there is a dependency of the proportion of university graduates on the distance of the municipality from the given economic and administrative centre on the one hand, and on the growth of population of the municipality in question on the other. Candidates and elected members of municipal councils generally represent the active part of the municipality inhabitants. This is why the participation of university graduates in municipal councils equally reflects the knowledge potential of the municipality; however, it is not the definite factor. Qualitative research indicates that very interesting findings can be obtained by comparing “political CVs” of the municipality representatives. In this respect, our students who try to make use of the knowledge acquired at our faculty in public and political municipal life can become a very good source of information as well as a sample to be studied. In this context, we may give a very interesting example of a student who worked in quite an important position at a certain ministry. He decided to upgrade his high school education and graduated in Public Administration and Regional Development (VSRR) at our faculty. After finishing his studies, he decided to make use of the acquired knowledge and enter local politics. During the election campaign, he would come to our faculty to discuss the election manifesto and major steps in the political contest. His candidate list won a landslide victory. Our graduate became mayor and renounced to his ministerial aspirations. At the beginning of 2008, he renewed the consultations as he realized he was in mid term of his mandate and needed to get ready to defend his positions.

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Knowledge base of regional best practices

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Annotation. The paper describes the core methodology used in presentation and transfer of best practices and benchmarking via Internet to assist countryside people in learning from relevant e-experience in four domains: (1) work and skills, (2) digital SME, (3) social inclusion, (4) regional cohesion. Cases are hidden in a knowledge base, accessed by the internet, which anyone can use to: (a) survey who has done what in a variety of selected fields, (b) benchmark themselves against the best examples, (c) investigate what constitutes best practice, (d) access a variety of up-to-date surveys of best practice.

Key words: knowledge base, best practices, work and skills, digital SMES, social inclusion, social cohesion.

1 Objectives and methods

Paper deals with transfer of knowledge which is hidden in case studies and other similar information and data documents. These knowledge sources are stored in knowledge databases and here ready to serve the users. Often, knowledge databases store hundreds of documents. To be ready for potential user each document have to be described and evaluated: what problem is solved, in which environment its solution takes place, what is the core problem, how it is identified, what added value it brings, how is the solution provided, etc. The description of the problem and its solution is made by a set of identifiers/codes which should identify each stored document as most as precisely. The more precise coding of document is the better access to stored knowledge the user will have.

The overall aim of the paper is to develop a set of identifiers for coding of cases to be easily and rationally described from more points of view and thus enable the user:

- 1 survey who has done what in a variety of selected fields,
- 2 benchmark (i.e. measure and compare) themselves against the best examples in their selected field,

- 3 investigate what constitutes best practice using actual examples of real practical achievements,
- 4 access a variety of up-to-date surveys and analyses of best practice in similar problems.

The set of identifiers is developed to focus, identify and provide access to best practice in areas relevant to the *regional development* based upon one of the highest quality European Commission initiatives: The eEurope Initiative (incorporating the Action Plan 2002) with the following benchmarking objectives:

- enable Member States to compare their performance,
- identify best practice,
- provide insight into the factors of importance for widespread diffusion of digital technologies,
- enable remedial action to be taken.

The work is based on the previous research and research methods provided in two projects. Identifiers for coding of cases and other knowledge documents were developed for the knowledge database “MOBIDIKER” which is continuously developed within the project of the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic No. MSM6046070904 – “Information and Knowledge Support of Strategic Management”. The project also utilises results of the project “BEEP” of the 7th European Framework Programme [6].

In the MOBIDIKER the cases are hidden in the knowledge base which consists of set of cases, studies and other relevant information sources with a common structure, common searching and usage facilities, and common updating possibilities. The knowledge database can be used for a) macro use – the best practice synthesis of a large number of cases and also for b) micro use – detailed analysis of the best practice illustrated by one or two cases, aimed at different target groups through a variety of services [2], [3].

Coding of documents makes possible to describe documents from more points of view and thus enable the user purposive work with knowledge database. On the other hand the set of identifiers also are ready to provide users with an internet platform for inputting, analysing, benchmarking and accessing their own best practice examples, projects and cases.

Four broad domains constitute a base for coding all cases and documents in the database. Of course, these can in principle be developed and widen to enable to benchmark and access best practice in any other field.

The four basic domains are: (1) Domain 1– work and skills. (2) Domain 2 – the digital SMEs. (3) Domain 3 – social inclusion. (4) Domain 4 – regional cohesion.

2 Common description of domains

Domain 1– work and skills

Policy measures addressed to improving skills and competencies are viewed as efforts to develop and maintain the kinds of human resource inputs demanded by new organisational forms in the digital era. These initiatives can be seen as inputs in the work process. Some initiatives of this type have to do with overcoming the “digital skills gap”. Other initiatives address the higher-level cognitive and social skills needed for effective participation in decentralised, self-managed and knowledge-based work. Still other initiatives aim to create continuous and flexible learning opportunities to enable employees to upgrade their skills over their entire working life as new technologies emerge and as their tasks change. Some employers are attempting to scan the advanced ICT environment and project future skill needs and to proactively educate their employees accordingly [1], [5].

ICT is deployed to improve decision making and to make business processes more efficient. ICT may also be deployed to help work groups capture and use what their community of practice has learned via interoperable knowledge transfer. ICT-mediated work requires higher skill levels and may, in fact, increase employees’ engagement in and responsibility for their tasks. It is also evident now that networked and mobile or portable technologies can be deployed to enable more flexible approaches to working times and places.

Domain 2 – the digital SMEs

Digital technologies change the daily work of SMEs. In the digital economy change has mostly to do with knowledge. Digital technologies do exert a significant influence on the knowledge-driven economy. Competitiveness today is measured on the control and exchange of knowledge. The most striking feature of the digital technologies is the power to translate knowledge into algorithms and the miniaturisation of the devices operating universal languages which make possible low cost and high speed exchanges and trading of codified knowledge all among producers and consumers. The interaction of tacit and explicit knowledge, as well as the transformation of information into knowledge offer great opportunities to individuals and to business. Therefore, the penetration of ICTs in the small or larger businesses has to have a return on the development of the knowledge-driven economy in Europe, to strengthen the knowledge accumulation process.

Domain 3 – social inclusion

Key-words in this context are "info-inclusion" and "digital inclusion", and also – using the opposite wording – the danger of an "info-exclusion" and of a "digital divide". Existing computer-mediated human activities undergo fundamental changes, and a wide variety of new ones appear, such as access to on-line information, e-communication, digital libraries, e-business, on-line health services, e-learning, on-line communities, on-line public and administrative services, e-democracy, tele-work and tele-presence, on-line entertainment, etc.

The use of computers is increasingly penetrating a wider range of human activities in a broader variety of environments, such as the school, the home, the market place, and other civil and social contexts. The information society has the potential to improve the quality of life of citizens, the efficiency of our social and economic organisation, and to reinforce cohesion.

However, it can also have disadvantages, introducing new barriers, human isolation and alienation, if the diverse requirements of all potential users are not taken seriously into consideration and if an appropriate connection to computer applications and services is not guaranteed. As a consequence, it may lead to a "two-tier" society of "haves" and "have-nots", in which only a part of the population has access to the new technology and is comfortable to use it and fully enjoy the benefits [4].

The domain social inclusion examines in what ways exactly ICT can have an impact on social inclusion (or exclusion) and describes best practices in exploiting their positive impact potential. It is intuitively clear that the issue of ICT and social inclusion is more relevant for certain groups of society than for others, particularly for those who are frequently summarised as "vulnerable groups" in the policy discourse. It is assumed that ensuring info-inclusion is a pre-requisite for the larger objective of achieving sustained social inclusion in the information society.

Domain 4 – regional cohesion

The digital, knowledge or new economy is dramatically changing the environment in which business and the public sector operates. New information and communication technology is no longer simply a tool to do existing things faster, cheaper or better. ICT is in many ways redefining the economic, social and political landscape by providing new opportunities, posing new threats, changing relationships, opening new ways of doing things and producing new types of goods and services. The response to these changes and challenges in the Czech Republic varies tremendously from region to region and from locality to locality.

Regional differences, in fact, remain the prime sources of competitive advantage. But a region also provides a sense of place and belonging, which is necessary for social and economic stability. Indeed, regional identity, and the territorial expression of this through the integration of economic, political, environmental, social and cultural assets and characteristics, lies at the heart of the new regional thinking in the Knowledge Society.

The regional cohesion domain should not focus only on formal regions, but also upon regions which have a clear territorial expression and identity, within which integrating and/or synergising approaches have been adopted. Thus, in the context of cases coding the regions can also be small communities, neighbourhoods or functional regions such as villages, suburbs, transport corridors, river basins, etc.

3 List of identifiers/codes

3.1 Work & Skills

To improve skills and competencies

Employer support for continuous learning.

The increase in the level of support provided by an employer to employees to promote continuous learning through the provision of additional finance, resources and/or time.

Increased number of employees undertaking training.

How much the employees increase their use of continuous learning irrespective of who provides. It may include self-learning and employer's sponsored learning.

Improved provision of learning.

The improvement in providing innovative forms of learning such as on-line learning on the net.

To improve work structures and processes

Collaborative working.

An increase in the company's or organisation's workforce collaborating on joint projects or tasks.

Improved management of organisational knowledge.

Sharing of knowledge within the organisation or a region through the use of ICT.

Improved participation in decision making.

Removal of barriers which prevent, or slow down, the participatory process in decision making within the organisation.

Improved business processes.

Using ICT to improve the processing of business tasks.

More innovative organizational structures.

The use of ICT to enhance the organisation's ability to conceive of, and implement new ways of working within the organisation.

To improve the quality of working life and working environment

Improved worker involvement and autonomy.

Improving the employee's satisfaction with the work process through greater control over the way they work or reducing the amount of repetition.

Improved workplace environments.

Improving the layout or physical environment within which the employee is expected to work.

Increased flexibility of work patterns.

Making it easier for employees to match personal and working life through being able to adapt time and location of working.

3.2 The Digital SMEs

To improve networking

Improved use of ICT networks.

Good provision and use of ICT networks.

Improved supply chains.

Efficient and effective supply chains which improve production and save costs.

Improved consumer networks.

Consumer networks which help a business in its marketing strategy.

Improved use of networks for collaboration.

Effective and efficient networks help SMEs compete and benefit from the support such networks provide.

To improve innovation within an organization

Improved innovation of products and services.

Development of innovative products and services. Innovation does not have to be unique but should be new within the context of the organisation or region.

Improved integration of business process.

Actions that enable different business functions to work together, or merely to communicate effectively.

To improve the effectiveness of human and knowledge resources

Improved use of knowledge resources.

Actions that add value to the available knowledge resources by ensuring that they are better disseminated or understood. Activities that make existing

knowledge resources more available and that enable people to access additional knowledge from the internet.

Improved matching of human resources to business needs.

Actions to reduce the gap between the skills that people have and the skills that employers want.

Improved use of financial transaction tools.

Better use of financial management tools and other digital resources used in the management of a company or organisation.

Improved business management.

Achievements of the organisational and decision making efficiency associated with the use of ICT applications in business management.

To improve ICT training

Improved marketing.

How digital SMEs are able to develop marketing strategies to enable them meet clients' needs, compete with others at reasonable costs.

Improved business strategies.

How develop and improve on business strategies to increase their turnover and maximise profits through diversification through market penetration, inward investments and the acquisition of higher market share. Corporate identity and culture.

Improved use of e-transaction tools.

Impact on the organisation's trading figures of the adoption of e-commerce tools in the transactions with the market.

3.3 Social Inclusion

To improve access to information for all

Improved accessibility and usability of ICT.

Flexibility built into a design to enable it to work on different platforms or in different environments or by different classes of user.

Reduction in overall costs.

Reducing the cost of internet access helps all sectors of the community, but proportionally more disadvantages people benefit as cost is frequently a more important issue to this sector.

Improved compliance with standards and legislation.

Ensuring compliance with accepted standards makes applications easier to maintain and upgrade whilst compliance with legislation ensures that it is safe or acceptable to be used.

To improve ICT training

Improved access to ICT in schools.

Improved provision of physical resources which are required to improve the training.

Improved training of trainers.

Activities that increase the skill level of teachers.

Improved educational resources.

Provision of resources in web for educational purposes.

Improved ICT training programmes.

Training programmes which help combat ICT illiteracy and thereby help reduce the digital divide.

To improve the quality of life for vulnerable groups

Improved opportunities for women.

Although women are becoming more active in ICT in the Czech Republic, there is still a need to encourage them further.

Improved support for the elderly.

Actions that improve the quality of life for the elderly including better social services, improved/adapted technology, etc.

Improved support for the disabled.

Actions that improve the quality of life for disabled people including tools that help them work for a company as well as social services and technology to help them overcome their handicaps.

To improve awareness raising

Improved adoption of e-inclusion policy.

How information on e-inclusion is disseminated through research, cases, studies, reports, media, radio, discussion forums etc and thereby influences decision makers.

Improved networking between support organizations.

How organisations that operate with similar goals are able to co-operate and collaborate with each other to challenge policy and issues regarding social exclusion using digital technologies. Diversity and multi-cultural approach. Professional associations, educational institutions, community associations, ethnic minority associations, gender groups, etc.

Improved awareness of support activities.

How organisations/individuals engaged in or affected by social exclusion are assisted with gateways to enhance or facilitate their course. Alternatives in making choices to meet their needs. Online information sources, access to physical structures like community centres, counselling centres, advice bureaux, legal advice etc.

3.4 Regional cohesion

To improve territorial identity and structure

Improved regional identity.

Overall strength of the identity of the region for people inside and outside the region.

Improved regional policy, strategy and planning.

Integrated regional policy, strategy and planning.

Improved regional governance and institutional framework.

Management and government institutions of society. Distribution of power between the different actors and the different types of government; the public sector and its relations with corporations and civic bodies and how they are organised and governed.

Improved transport infrastructure and services.

Public transport and goods transport, both supply and demand sides.

Improved regional physical infrastructure and services.

Physical services in the region, such as the utilities and services concerning land and buildings, both supply and demand sides.

Improved regional ICT infrastructure and services.

All aspects of ICT supply in the region. Types of service, infrastructure platforms, user terminals and applications.

To improve regional economic development

Improved regional economic investment and performance.

Regional economic investment and performance, as regional inputs and outputs to economic processes.

Improved regional economic structure and business activity.

Regional economic structure and business activity, including regional entrepreneurship and competitiveness.

Improved regional knowledge infrastructure.

Regional knowledge infrastructure, including knowledge based activities, value chains, networks, clusters, business reorganisation and knowledge management, business associations, and the linking of business knowledge creation organisations.

Improved regional innovation and R&D.

Regional R&D and innovation, i.e. knowledge creation and application, and technology transfer.

Improved regional human capital.

Regional human capital, i.e. education and training, workforce adaptability and learning, etc.

Improved regional economic policy.

Regional economic policy, regional economic information and improved regional social cohesion.

To improve regional social cohesion

Improved regional social and community services.

Regional social and community service initiatives, i.e. health, education, care, income support, law enforcement and legal services.

Improved regional quality of life.

Regional quality of life, i.e. services and initiatives encompassing culture, recreation, amenity and human environment.

Improved regional social capital.

Building and improving civic, community and voluntary associations and networks, the regional media, trust building, co-operation and solidarity.

Improved regional inclusion.

Reduction of uneven geographic access to ICT and uneven development.

Improved social policy.

Improvements to regional social policy and to regional social information and awareness.

To improve regional environmental sustainability

More effective use of regional resources.

Regional resource use, i.e. materials, energy and water use, the shift to renewable resources, re-use and handling of non-dangerous waste, and progress towards de-materialisation.

Cleaner and safer regional environments.

Progress towards cleaner and safer environments in the region, including air quality, reductions in traffic pollution and congestion as well as the re-use and handling of dangerous waste.

Improved regional emergency and disaster response.

Regional environmental monitoring, in initiatives for avoiding emergencies and for coping with emergencies when they occur.

Improved regional natural environment.

Natural environment of the region, i.e. regional nature conservancy and biodiversity.

Improved regional environmental policy.

Regional environmental policy and to regional environmental information and awareness.

4 Conclusion

The membership of a case to each identifier of the whole identifier's family is expressed by the percentage: the total affinity with the identifier is weighted by 100%, zero affinity by 0%; the percentage between 100% and 0% denotes how much the case satisfies requirements of the identifier.

The user communicates with the database by internet. After imputing an inquiry, e.g. after denoting identifiers which is the user interested in, the system offers a list of relevant cases and/or documents which are present and available in the database. Each document is denoted by its membership value in percents. This makes possible the user to provide ordinary or cardinary ordering of cases and select the most interesting and relevant best practices.

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Accessing Knowledge on Motivation by Studying Behaviour of Country Dwellers

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Annotation. The paper deals with a critical analysis of the current theories of work motivation. The analysis is aimed to show several specific problems with these theories, namely these theories being contingent to the Western cultural background. The paper shows that not only culture, but social background have to be taken in the account.

Key words: work motivation, theories of, cross-cultural differences.

1 Introduction

Psychological theories of work motivation were developed mostly through the second part of the twentieth century and as psychology then existed as a recognized field of knowledge only in the Western societies, they are sometimes criticized because of their (supposed or real) Western cultural bias. What we would like to stress in this paper is a fact that these theories are biased not only in this way, but in two others, as well. First, the current theories of work motivation were developed by their originators with industrial and/or business companies in mind and practically no concern was given to workers in agriculture and countryside dwellers. Second, there could be identified a pronounced ideological effect in those theories stemming mostly from liberal ideas on work and industrial relations. In this paper the present authors try to expound on the character of these biases and bring forth some empirical findings, which according to them illustrate the need to turn to countryside to find new knowledge on work motivation. As we hope this knowledge is going to prove helpful both in developments of the theory, as well as in its practical uses.

2 Humanistic approaches to human labour and their critics

After centuries when human work was appreciated only under certain circumstances and the most important people in a society, i. e. the aristocracy, did not work at all, the general attitudes to work started to change in the 20th century. The triggering mechanism of these changes was probably the end of the Second World War as well as the economic growth which had started earlier but was hampered and interrupted by the both World Wars and the economic recession which preceded the Second World War. An important role in the thinking of psychologists also played results of studies in Hawthorn which are, however, so well-known among specialists that we do not have to deal with them in any detail here.

There is nothing inherently wrong with psychological theories being humanistic oriented. However, it seems, this orientation narrowed considerably the outlook of the theoreticians and restricted the development of the field in the period. In this paper we will try to discuss some consequences of the one-sided humanistic orientation of the work motivation theory and support the discussion by quotes of critical comments on the present state of the art in the field. The comments mentioned were derived mostly from other authors, but some results of the present author supporting the claim will be introduced there as well.

Work Psychology by Arnold et al. (2005) is a standard textbook of work psychology. This book contains a lot of critical comments on the theories of motivation. From these the following are the most important:

1. *Maslow theory* was refuted;
2. Maslow's presumption that needs create hierarchy in the way he supposed was not confirmed;
3. McGregor's *theory X and Y* are not theories in *sensu stricto*; they are generalisations and generalisations are both true and false and thus they cannot be confirmed or refuted (and so in the sense of Popperian methodology they are not scientific theories);
4. Vroom's *Expectancy theory* did not lead to research verification; at the present it stands aside the main interest of experts in this field;
5. *Justice theories (equity, justice, citizenship theories)* in fact are directly linked to ideas connected with self-governance and democracy as mentioned above. In research they have shown good results. However, most probably because they are not connected to any cultural tradition, do not work in the same way in all cultures.

Further criticism of present theories of work motivation can be found in Hofstede. Hofstede criticises especially Malsow, Herzberg's two-factor theory and McClelland's concept of achievement motivation (need of achievement;

Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005, p. 264 – 268, 275). Hofstede's criticism focuses especially on cultural contingency of these theories and theoretical concepts they work with.

At present the most often used concept in work motivation is the theory of psychological empowerment which Arnold and colleagues (op. cit., p. 326) define as motivation by job re-design. Some of the significant supporters of this concept are T. D. Wall and W. Wood, to mention just a few. As Wall et al. (2004) state at the beginning of their paper, the idea of empowerment has started to be used in a wider sense in the last decade not only in work psychology but also in management theory. This at present quite popular concept seems to join both psychological and managerial and organizational approaches and ways of understanding of the role of motivation in organizations into one thought and at the same time practical approach. At the same time it can be taken as a synthesis of older approaches, including those theories of motivation we have dealt with above. In the Anglo-Saxon world the word empowerment was used before, especially in politics, social work and feminist movement. In the scope of work psychology and organization and management it gained a narrower and more concrete meaning. It is used to identify a higher autonomy of employees in how they carry out their work and their higher participation in decision-making even without a direct connection to what they do within the whole organization.

It is supposed that psychological empowerment is the element that leads to a better performance. First there is created, with the help of role empowerment, an environment which enables to raise the autonomy of employees. They experience psychological empowerment thanks to which their self-efficacy, i.e. the belief in their own abilities and in what they can do at work really well (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). The experienced self-efficacy of employees then raises both their determination and persistence. The carried out research shows that psychological empowerment has four cognitive aspects (Thomas and Velthaus, 1990).

These are:

- 1 *influence*, i.e. the scope in which the individuals regard their behaviour as leading to the desired result in their working role;
- 2 *competence*, i.e. the feeling of an individual that they can effectively fulfil their tasks;
- 3 *meaning*, i.e. the objective or purpose of the work;
- 4 *choice*, i.e. causal responsibility for their own behaviours.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is one of the most significant forerunners to the theory of psychological empowerment, especially his method of job enrichment. Herzberg thought in accordance with his studies that motivation and job satisfaction can be raised by using qualifications, job attractiveness etc. Another important principle of this approach to work consideration was

whether work enables the employee self-development, which is in fact an echo of Maslow's self-actualization.

The research studies done nowadays seem to have shown for more than 10 years that the theory of psychological empowerment might really be the right concept, which enables us to comprehend and understand motivation processes within an organization and to influence and control the performance of employees. However, the case of the psychological empowerment theory might be just a repetition of what has happened several times in the field before. Other theories of work motivation were deemed irrefutable before and only after some time it was found otherwise. In a survey we have conducted some time before we have run into data which might lead us to reconsider the concept of empowerment as the main and all-important principle. The survey in question has compared data from city-dwellers with those of the respondents living in small towns in the marginal regions of this country and it looks like the knowledge gained that way might show it really is so. The survey is going to be described in the next section. As the survey results were described elsewhere already, the description is going to be rather sketchy.

3 Questionnaire EDMK and the question DP6

The study was based on the use of the questionnaire EDMK, which is described in more detail in the references (Ten Horn, L. et al., 1996). The questionnaire EDMK was created by its authors as a set of modules, from which scales or items can be selected according to the needs of an individual research. Its authors have used it in an international study which compared work motivation in several European countries. According to their conclusions (see Roe and others, 2000) they identified in the countries surveyed the same motivational mechanisms which were, however, significantly modified by the local conditions. Based on a preliminary study the research team chose for further work a module EDMK, specified as mod 8. The results of the study can be found in papers by Chamoutová et al. (2006) and Michálek et al. (2006). The module questions were completed with other six questions DP (work consequences), based on a previous study (Kolman, 2001). One of these, specified as DP6, brought results which we consider relevant to the problem we deal with in this article. These results are discussed below, but first we have to clarify the nature of the question mentioned above.

Question DP6 was derived some time ago by Kolman on the basis of data on Czech organizations. Question DP6 is, as follows: "How probable is the following result of an extraordinary work performance in your organization: the employee remains in the same position because s/he knows the job well." In a previous study it was shown that respondents stated a higher possibility of

such a consequence the older and the less educated they were. The findings were statistically significant. Kolman interpreted the findings as a reflection of persisting ideas and beliefs which formed in the people's minds more than 15 years ago, and as a consequence of sharing values in a social group. Further results led us to a slightly different formulation that will be explained later.

Table 1. Scales of the *mod 8* module (EDMK questionnaire)

RS – responsibility
MF – meaningful of the work
OC – organization commitment
JI – job interestedness
SR – stress related to work
TL – tendency to leave
SA – job satisfaction
RP – role repletion and requests
PH – physical condition for work
RS – responsibility
MF – meaningful of the work
OC – organization commitment
JI – job interestedness

Questionnaire EDMK and Kolman's questions DP were applied in a survey focused on motivation characteristics of Czech population. Using the questionnaire EDMK data from 882 respondents were obtained. These data were subjected to statistical analysis; variance, correlation and factor analyses were used. A special attention was paid to verifying the scales of reliability. The scales, as introduced in the table 1, all showed a satisfactory reliability as measured by Cronbach's alphas.

Table 2. statistically significant correlations of DP6 with the EDMK scales

<i>scale</i>	MF	OC	TL	SA	PH
<i>correlation</i>	-0,118	-0,156	-0,118	-0,163	-0,172

Answers to the question DP6 were found associated to several EDMK scales. The correlation coefficients were significant at 5% level and are shown in the table 2 above. These results hold for the whole sample of 882 respondents. A sub-sample of 342 respondents was used to compare results for the Prague Metropolitan Area (Prague and Central Bohemia) with the data from small townships in the marginal regions of the country. Actually, this comparison

could be understood as contrasting the people who live and/or work in the Metropolis on one side and the people living in countryside. The sub-sample size was N=342. The sub-sample was analysed by means of ANOVA. Significant differences (at 5% level) were found in the tendency to leave and for the aforementioned question DP6. The tendency to leave was lesser for the country dwellers, as in the small townships in the country marginal areas it is much more difficult to find a new job. The DP6 question was found significantly more plausible by the country dwellers.

4 Discussion and conclusions

Questionnaire EDMK was based on the concept very close to the theory of psychological empowerment. Items and scales EDMK are formulated in such a way that can enable to measure parameters that are dealt with in this theory. Although the results which were stated in the previous part are not revolutionary, without doubt they prove that motivation characteristics can be influenced by conditions in which the subject lives and probably also by their experience, life situation and by the way they understand the world around them. Question DP6 is a bit queer in that the people who answer it positively in fact do not perceive that the organization they work in is run according to the rational principles of modern management. At the same time it seems that for these people work is not a means to achieve goals in life, neither organizational nor personal.

The results referred here, the present authors deem, show quite clearly that studying work motivation without taking in the account data on the countryside dwellers would lead to simplified or even biased conclusions.

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Countryside as a sociological research object in Latvia

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Annotation. The sociological research of the countryside in Latvia began in the 20-ties years of the 20th century and continues having larger or smaller success up to now. During this almost 90 year period it is possible to find 3 different periods having common and at the same time different features. Each of these periods is characterized by the research themes, organization of scientific work, publications.

Key words: country of research object, periods of research, main problems of research.

1 Introduction

Rural sociology is one of those fields of sociology which has a rather long history when compared with the other fields. It firstly appeared in the 20ties of the 20th century. Several factors determined the appearance of rural sociology in the pre-war Latvia. Firstly, for hundreds of years Latvians have been a peasant nation, it had always a disposition to land. In 1918 Latvia obtained its political independence and the possibility appeared for a radical agrarian reforma as well as for strenthening the social unity of the society. In such a way the peasant and its environment – countryside as a traditional value of way of life in a Latvian point of view. Secondly, at this time the largest part of Latvia population live in the countryside and the agricultural production is the principal field of national economy, the principal producer of export production with which this country takes part in the world market. In such a way, the farmers and the countryside are the values of economic life. Thirdly, Latvia is not an isolated territory, but is closely connected with the whole world. The development of sociology as an analytic method of the society and its influence coming into Latvia too, takes place, and one of its subjects is the countryside, the farmer which at the same period of time is mainly a peasant. It is approved in the literature of 20ties-30ties by the authors of the Western world as P. Sorokin, F. Tennis, Ch. Gelpin.

From today view-point it is possible to deal out several periods in the development of rural sociology in Latvia:

- the period up to 1940;
- the period of 70ties -80ties;
- the period beginning with the 90ties and continuing up to our time.

Each of these periods has its specific character as regards the organization and the problems because of the change of the political, economical and social conditions. The structure of scientists, their fields of activities and preparedness for carrying out research in sociology change too.

The author considers the principal task of this paper to show the problems investigated without analyzing the investigations of separate scientists in detail, which could be the task of future work while working out the history of rural sociology in Latvia

2 The first period of rural sociology

During 20ties-30ties the analysis of rural countryside social life was carried out, but for the time being it is only partly investigated. However, it is already possible to say at present that the origin of rural sociology are to be looked for in the 1st half of the 20th century in the period of the independent Latvia.

During that period the scientists paid their attention firstly to the formulation of the countryside life features by comparing them with the urban life, and in connection with it they consider the birth-rate, mortality, the structure of population age and sex, family status, profession, criminality. All these problems are shown in the areas of this country relating to the history of civilization. [1]

The second, and perhaps the widest group of problems which are interesting during this period is the groupings of land owners before and after the agrarian reform of 1922, which brought essential changes in Latvia countryside. The reform did away with the large land properties of the landlords and created a wide section of petty farmers and small farmers. The land amount (size) in the property is considered as the principal criterion of peasantry groupings, and according to the authors' opinion the peasantry may be divided in large farmers, owners of farms of medium size, small farmers and petty farmers. The publications formulate both the differences of inner groups of peasantry and also deal with the peasantry condition in comparison with the other classes of the society. Rich statistical information makes it possible to show both the additional work of the farmers (smith, miller, craftsman etc.) and agriculture as an additional work too (the farm owner gets the basic income working in different state and municipal institutions, the representative of the so-called free professions, or works in commerce etc.) (Birkerts P.,

Skujenieks M., Ceihners A.) [1, 25] Peasantry groupings are analysed in regional aspect too in several publications. [20, 21]

The scientists are interested also in the wage labour in agriculture which is considered as a special social group of rural population. The farm hand structure, its regional features, sources of wage labour have been analysed, the situation of Latvia has been compared with those in Estonia, Lithuania, Eastern Prussia, Denmark. Views are expressed widely why the unnecessary man-power in the small farms and petty farms do not move in the large farms where they are short of man-power, and it is necessary „to import” this man-power from other countries, particularly from Lithuania and Poland. [1, 26]

As the people mentioned are economists and agronomists, they have often described the problems of the stratification of the society and those of social mobility in economic categories and have mainly used only objective criteria. However, in several cases the information for making conclusions has been collected with sociological methods too – by organizing questionnaires of farmers about the subscription of periodicals, by taking part in public organizations, about the possibility for children to obtain education etc., or by inquiring the rustics moving into Riga about the causes of leaving the countryside, i. e., such information not provided by the statistics. [21, 26]

A future review of the heritage of 20ties – 30ties will show some materials not revealed yet about the rural social life and will enrich our notions about the work carried out during those years. In any case the success achieved in this time of rural sociology is the result of separate individual scientists' work.

3 Principal trends of research in 70ties-80ties

The second period of the development of rural sociology began only after 25-30 years. 2 occupations, 3 deportations (1941, 1945, 1949), forced collectivization is not the political, economical and social environment when the power structures could get a „positive” information about the processes taking place in the society, but a negative information is not only desirable but they are afraid it. Therefore the sociology is reduced to silence. Only with the second part of 60ties the interest about sociology is revived in Latvia, including however, about the rural society. In the period of 70ties-80ties the rural sociology as a trend takes a stable and rather significant role in the scientific research. First of all, the problems in the centre of scientists' attention testify it.

Firstly, it is the socially class and Professional structure of the rural, particularly the groups connected with the agricultural production. First of all, the analysis of those people working in state farms as well as in the collective large farms: agricultural specialists (Rivza B., Kruzmetra M.) as well as the

main groups of manual work-machine-operators and cattle-farm workers (Vedla A., Prieditis A.)

Secondly, it is the agricultural work. Intensive migration of young people to the towns, large changeability of the workers in the existing economical structures as well as unsatisfactory production results makes it necessary to take up the analysis of the agricultural work: contents and conditions of work, organization of work, Professional orientation to agricultural work, professional training system and other problems connected with this work.

Thirdly, the analysis of living environment. It includes social life and cultural environment in the countryside as well as the situation of social infrastructure and the formation of villages often dealt with through the prism of the rapprochement between the towns and the countryside (Porietis J., Timofejevs V., Kozlinskis V., Kruzmetra M.)

The system of needs and the level of meeting them of the people working in agriculture are also to be investigated. They have been analyzed twice in 1975 and repeated in 1990. Both of the investigations mentioned 24 needs which may be classified in 6 groups: needs connected with work, psychological comfort, material well-being, spare time of full value, normal social conditions, mental culture. In such a way, a comparative research was carried out for the first time which made it possible to see the dynamics of the phenomenon: change of needs in total as well as in separate groups of workers (Kruzmetra M., Murnieks E., Pavlovs O., Rivža B.) [2]

At the beginning of the 70ties the project formation of the social development for work collectives began. These activities appear in the countryside too. However, in the countryside these projects or plans had to be not only the documents of work collectives but also those of the development of a certain territory, as it was impossible to separate the non-service life of the people working in agriculture and other branches of national economy. Unfortunately, the idea was quickly changed into a formal „administrative deal” which stopped the interest both the specific farm collectives and the society in total (Porietis J., Kruzmetra M.)

As regards the organizing aspect, the period of 70ties and 80ties may be considered as the activity of small separate groups in Riga Polytechnic Institute, Latvia State University and Latvia Academy of Agriculture. However, in the course of time Latvia Academy of Agriculture became the uniting centre. It was determined by several conditions. Firstly, the profile of this educational institution – training of agricultural specialists of the highest qualification. Secondly, beginning with 1972 scientific practical conferences devoted to rural social development problems take place regularly after each 2 years at the academy. The materials of these conferences are published in collected scientific articles. Thirdly, during this period the group of LAA develop close relations with other centers of rural research in different regions

– in Estonia, Lithuania, Byelorussia, the Ukraine, Russia (Moscow, Leningrad, Novosibirsk, Vologda). Since 1975 the Baltic branch of Soviet Sociologists Association is created, in which there is a Rural section which organized sections of Rural problems in several conferences.

However, in today's aspect, one is to see both positive and critical sides too. According to the spirit of that time, the publications have an ideological nature. Therefore, for example, when writing about the development tendencies of socially class structure of the society, the common features of groups, „rapprochement” tendencies (disappearance of differences in practice is mostly the result of administrative activity; for example, between the people working in collective large farms and those in state farms) are marked out, but the same time nothing is said (prohibited to write) about the formation of new groups as well as about the differentiation of the society according to the belonging to the power levels, but while writing about the formation of villages, mainly that part of population is paid attention to which is interested to move to the village, but ignored those people which did not want to do it.

The research lacks a complex approach. The countryside is not analyzed as a socially territorial totality having a whole problem range. Whole groups of population as the groups of people working in medicine, education, communication, trade, building, melioration, social services, administrative departments etc. Which make up the rural society, are left outside the report. Already the data of census in 1970 demonstrate that in agriculture together with forestry only 55,3% of the whole rural population are employed, but 44,7% work already in other fields of national economy. If there are not the analyses of the last groups, there are not also the analyses of their interaction, their connection with the social environment etc.

No special issue has not yet been created in which the principal investigations carried out in Latvia were published, because there is a minimum demand for the sociological information. Functionaries of the power structures lack the sociological competence what to do with such information. There is an order for such information which could give an immediate economic or political effect.

Finally, we must mention that there are not enough means, techniques, and information processing programs to carry out the investigations. People having professional sociologists' education continue to carry out the investigations. Only in that stage they mainly are not specialists in agriculture, but historians, economists, philosophers, lawyers and the representatives of other specialties who often have obtained the knowledge and skills in sociology by means of self-education. These people are enthusiasts of the research work and try to do it as well as they can.

4 Trends of research beginning with the 90-ties

Reorganization of the society in Latvia according to new economic and political principles, restoration of private property, implementation of agrarian reform brought changes also in the development of rural sociology, and with the beginning of the 90-ties it is possible to speak about its new development period.

Firstly, new themes come in the investigations. As in the society in comparison with the former period of development, new social communities as farmers, craftsmen, entrepreneurs, wage labor, appear, the scientists pay them attention to these new groups. In the centre of attention there is farmers, this principal group of rural population revives in the time and space. It is significant to analyze how large is the part of rural society that is interested to become individual farmers, from what groups the farmers comes, what is the rate of their formation, what factors promote it and what factors hinder it. The advantages of specialists of former collective and state farm in the conditions of individual management are analyzed, and the perspectives of „farmers living in towns” are considered. (Kruzmetra M., Rivza B.) [3, 4, 5, 10,15]

As the peasantry is formed by differently educated and professionally trained people, then an essential role is their training, therefore the consulting service activities of agriculture, the attitude of peasantry towards it, formed in Latvia is investigated (Tisenkopfs T., Zobena A.) [22, 23]

Instead of searching the tendencies of approachability of the social structure, as demanded by the former ideology, taking up the problems of differentiation processes, horizontal and vertical mobility, and tendencies of stratification of rural society both in rural society as a whole and in the peasantry as well, become actual. (Kruzmetra M., Rivza B.) [14, 16, 19]

As the changes taking place in the society apply to all elements and have a qualitative character, the main thing is a complex aspect and the territorial approach, i.e., the countryside becomes the principal object of research instead of agriculture. The transition from the production aspect to the territorial one may be noticed. Therefore, the self-governments of municipalities and counties and their role in providing the social development of the territory administered, the activities and influence of the non-governmental sector become the subject of research (Tisenkopfs T., Zobena A., Kruzmetra M.) [12, 17, 24]

Rural women, their role and status in the society and family become a more significant subject in comparison with the previous period. In the world research about women, including rural women becomes more active, and this tendency is seen in Latvia too. (Kruzmetra M.) [6, 9, 11, 17]

It could be said that in this period 2 lines are seen in rural sociology as regards its contents. One of them is more connected to the analysis of the countryside as a socially territorial totality, as well as to the problems of the development

of space (Kruzmetra M.), but the other one – to the research of agriculture as a phenomenon characterizing the countryside, as well as a sustained agricultural policy and conditions of the development of biodynamic agriculture (Zobena A.) [13, 18, 27]

Secondly, a turn of administrative structures to sociology may be seen. Some interest is sometimes shown by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and regional development as well as some self-government of districts and municipalities, particularly as regards the elaboration of the development programs of administrative territorial structures.

Although there is a rather small range of people dealing with the rural sociology, there are new features in comparison with the previous period. People having the education of a professional sociologist and scientific degree begin to investigate the rural problems. Conferences dedicated to rural problems have been resumed after a short pause at the Latvia university of agriculture.

If the previous period may be characterized with the formation of wide contacts with the Eastern countries from Latvia, in this period these contacts are with the Western countries too – with the scientists from Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Germany Ireland, Czech Republic. As a result, the rural sociologists in Latvia become the participants of several international research programs.

5 Conclusions

In each of the periods of the development dealt with an essential step is made in the rural research, however, in the society – in the rural society as well – the social changes taking place in the rural society as well asks for new tasks. The principal of them – according to the author's opinion may be mentioned as follows :

1. A methodological task should be solved – what could be called “the countryside” in Latvia. The statistical and official documents assume as “the countryside” such administrative territories as counties and municipalities, but exclude small towns the number of population of which is often smaller than in many territories mentioned before and the way of life of the population is closer to that of the population of county and municipalities more than that of the population of larger towns.
2. The rural research should be broadened through the notion of spatial capital by giving the possibility to see the processes taking place in the territory to be research and mainly the interaction of these processes, at the same time by the identification the level of the attractiveness of space and the indicators determining it.

3. The participation of cross-border researches should be activated thus giving the possibility to compare the situation in the countryside of Latvia with that in EU member countries in order to understand better both the features observed in all the countries and to see at the same time the differences in them.

The solution of these problems could mark the beginning of the next period in the sociological investigations of Latvia countryside.

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Experience tourism – a new way of presentation and preservation of cultural and historical heritage

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Annotation. Unique local attractivities are the main part of cultural and historical heritage. Responsibility for its preservation and presentation is up to the local and regional museums. We analysed more than 40 expositions. There has been proved correlation between the attractivity significance on the one hand and intensity and frequency of interpretation on the other hand.

Key words: cultural and historical heritage, experience tourism, interpretation, exposition, museum, rural area.

1 Introduction

The Czech Republic boasts of almost two hundred museums available to preserve the cultural & historical heritage. Be they small village museums or large institutions of nationwide importance, they often try to look like places where research is taken seriously, perhaps too seriously. Visitors are only allowed to see the exhibits, but any attempt at touching them is prohibited. Unfortunately, this policy is likely to discourage any potential museum-goers. Kids and youngsters are inclined to perceive a trip to such museum as a duty, an unpleasant task, in fact. Tourists are prone to skip such museums. Our museums are still lacking elements which can make learning an attractive activity.

According to McKercher & Du Cros many cultural heritage managers seem to resist accepting that the assets they manage have touristic appeal. The first key to the successful management of any cultural heritage tourism attractivity is to accept that the attractivity is indeed a tourism attractivity and must be managed as such, at least in part, for tourism use [4].

A modern museum is not only to collect new exhibits and search for those still missing, but it should present the cultural & historical heritage using inventive interpretation and personal experience. If so, the visitor will leave the premises instructed, happy, and eager to come again.

Interpretation is about communicating. It is also about communicating more than just information. Information simply gives facts, but interpretation aims to give new insights, ideas and ways of looking at, or appreciating, a place. Interpretation is also about sharing enthusiasm about sites so that audience will find them fascinating too [8].

New visitors analogous to new tourists are being creative while spending their leisure time. They are educated, culturally mature, curious and analytical, self-knowledge, active and participative [3].

For the interpretation it is worth remembering that research shows that visitors recall: 10% of what they hear, 30% of what they read, 50% of what they see, 90% of what they do [8].

Museums have to seek new methods of presentation, methods making contacts with the real things as a common part of experience that the visitors are offered. Such possibility will attract a more varied crowd and the museums may even become competitors to the show business. A touch of a real exhibit will broaden the visitors' experience and involve all their senses, a fact of particular importance to families and the disabled visitors.

In the near future museums will stand or fall not only by their competence to care for collections but also by their ability to care for people. They will need to be market-oriented if they are to survive [1].

Major management implications facing cultural heritage managers are a) educating visitors through entertainment, b) commodification of cultural heritage, and c) use of interpretation to improve learning amongst visitors [7].

An available solution rests in the application of principles known as the "experience tourism". A visitor of today is motivated mainly by craving for experiences, and the experiences may be important beyond the character of the visited place itself. Such a visitor will seek experiences out of the ordinary. He or she will search for excitement and variety through direct contact with nature, cultural milieu, or attractivities possibly represented by a museum exposition of an appealing concept. Experience tourism could be a powerful tool used to strengthen the bond between visitors and museums. In an increasingly competitive environment, such relationships are vital to visitor retention efforts [5]. If the potential of experience tourism is used to the full, it will certainly help preserve, among other things, the memory of country life in general public.

2 Objective and methods

Forty permanent museum displays have been reviewed, representing a range of attractivities in both the Czech Republic and the neighbouring countries. Moreover, seventeen permanent expositions have been analyzed within the

Šumpersko district, irrespective of the quality and significance of the type of cultural & historical heritage they presented. The analysis, focused on the level of presentations encountered in selected expositions, relied on 7 parameters.

2.1 Parameters monitored in attractivities of the local cultural & historical heritage

Before the analysis started, each of the expositions - attractivities of the local cultural - historical (C & H) heritage - was characterized in consideration of these parameters [6]:

- attractivity type: locality or object, event, celebrity, traditional technology and its possible repercussions in the other types of attractivities;
- attractivity significance: local, regional, nationwide or international;
- jubilee periodicity/rise & fall of interest in the local C & H heritage: annual to over several years or annual, seasonal, continuous throughout the year;
- topicality of the attractivity: Yes/No;
- uniqueness of the attractivity: number of attractivities of the same or comparable type in the Czech Republic;
- commodification levels: number of kinds of paid-for products and services related to the attractivity presented - entrance fee, price of personal guide, specially arranged programmes, sale of thematic souvenirs, offer of the thematic workshops;
- level of interpretation that an exposition already offers: physical, sensual, rational, emotional, and mental transformation.

The form in which the museums put some selected attractivities on display has been analyzed using a "level of interpretation" (i.e. labels, exhibit arrangement, explanations, experiments, or tackling tasks through worksheets). All these factors at work in the museum expositions have been plotted in the relevant charts for visualization (Fig. 1.).

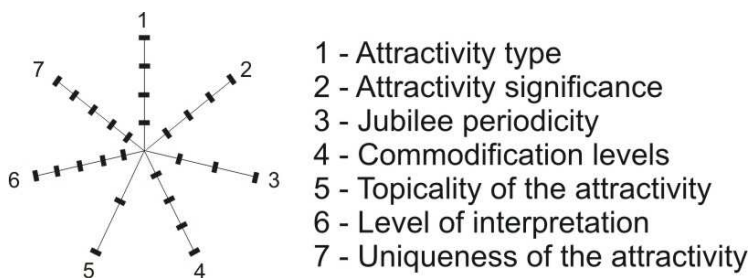


Fig. 1. Visualization chart of analysed parameters

2.2 Analysis of the interpretational methods

To analyze the form in which some selected attractivities have been presented, we relied on what is called the level of interpretation. Regarded as the lowest physical level of interpretation were the labels, since these allow the visitors no freedom in making their own or mediated interpretations. They simply present the straightforward facts.

The manner of exhibit arrangement gives the visitors a chance of interpreting the object through their other senses - that is why we characterize this level as sensual. On the sensual level a person is engaged in the object being presented without developing any deeper arguments or opinions. The interpretation alternates only between appealing and unappealing or well-chosen and ill-chosen example (as seen from the viewpoint of C & H heritage interpretation).

The form of explanation offered for an exhibit permits the visitors to accept the interpretation but also to reject it - they may refuse to simply believe the presented explanation. This stage of the interpretation assessment leans on facts and arguments - therefore we designate this level as rational.

The fourth level of interpretation is emotional. By presenting a story the visitors are encouraged to conjure up their own perceptions, observations and experiences in interpreting the presented reality, and thus to establish a personal relation with the exhibits. It is a level where emotions come into the picture. Hence the designation emotional level.

The fifth level of interpretation, the top one, is occupied by experiment through which the visitors are encouraged to arrive at their own interpretations. They are offered hands-on experience and allowed to verify in person what is asserted to be a fact. We believe that this top level of interpretation combines personal experience with scientifically accurate explanation delivered in a generally understandable manner. If proper tools are used, the visitors undergo a sort of mental transformation, and they may even feel proud of their achievement. The visitors will thus become aware of the wider context, and their previous attitudes will be modified. This is what we call mental level.

To describe indicators, techniques and other tools used to analyze the interpretations of local C & H heritage, we have transformed the "experience pyramid" [9] into the "interpretation level pyramid" (Fig. 2.).

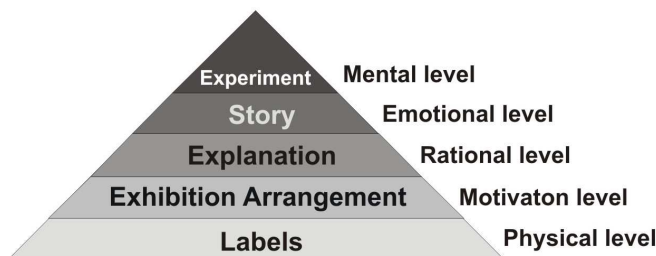


Fig. 2. Modification of interactivity pyramid into the interpretation level pyramid

The gathered values of parameters have been arranged into matrices of the expositions to be then subject to further analysis. For easy reference the matrices have been visualized as multiple-axis diagrams (Fig. 3.).

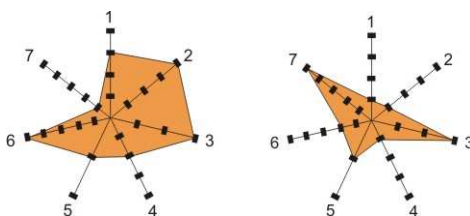


Fig. 3. Visualization charts of analysed parameters for the Memorial of Dr. Emil Holub in Holic (on the left) and the Municipal Museum in Kraliky

2.3 Determining the degree of similarity between the parameter matrices of the different expositions

The similarity of expositions has been determined on the one hand as the similarity of the individual parameters and on the other hand as the overall similarity calculated like this:

$$\text{Similarity } i,j = \sum \text{abs}(x_j - x_i)$$

The higher the resulting figure, the lower the degree of similarity found in the presentations of local expositions. We have scrutinized the hypothesis assuming that general and specialized expositions of similar nature feature also similar parameters.

2.4 Correlation between the exposition's significance and the level of interpretation

Proper understanding and, consequently, preservation of cultural & historical heritage handed down by our ancestors is much dependant on how its owners and administrators present the heritage to the public.

To present the local heritage in the most appealing way, the inventiveness and variety of interpretations offered to the visitors should, hypothetically, grow with the growing number of attractivities available in a region. The analysis aimed to verify validity of the hypothesis. We have tested the linear correlation between (1) the attractivity significance and (2) the level of its interpretation. The degree to which the two variables are statistically interdependent is follows from the formula:

$$Y = A + BX$$

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Similarity of expositions

The similarity values have been arranged into a matrix.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
1	x																											
2	x	x																										
3			x																									
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Fig. 4. Matrix of similarity compiled in consideration of 7 parameters characteristic of the permanent expositions

No two museum expositions have been found to have the similarity value of "0". Two pairs of expositions have showed the similarity with the unit deviation in a single parameter (P=1). Ten pairs of expositions have showed similarity with the unit deviation in two parameters (P=2).

Table 1. Pairs of permanent expositions with the P=1 similarity

Pairs of permanent expositions	
Museum of Handmade paper in Velke Losiny	Museum of local unique cheese “Olomoucke syrecky” in Lostice
Municipal Museum in Sumperk	Municipal Museum in Kraliky

Table 2. Pairs of permanent expositions with the P=2 similarity.

Pairs of permanent expositions	
Museum of Handmade paper in Velke Losiny	Hussite Museum at the Kotnov Castle in Tabor
Birthplace of Prokop Divis in Zamberk	Museum of Unitas Fratrum in Kunvald
Municipal Museum in Mohelnice	Museum in Stare Mesto
Municipal Museum in Mohelnice	Municipal Museum in Kraliky
Museum of Vincent Priznitz in Jesenik	Museum of Unitas Fratrum in Kunvald
Museum in Stare Mesto	Municipal Museum in Kraliky
Municipal Museum in Sumperk	Museum of Vintage Cars & Motorbikes in Ceska Ves
Museum of Handicrafts in Letohrad	Windmill in Kuzelov
Museum of Photography in Tabor	Museum of Tourism and Countryside in Destne v Orlickych horach
Open-Air Archeological Site “Villa Nova” in Uhrinov	Treasure of Tabor exposition in Tabor

As proven in the research, expositions with special topics have been arranged and presented likewise, and the general topics expositions have also been found similar in how they presented the local cultural and historical heritage.

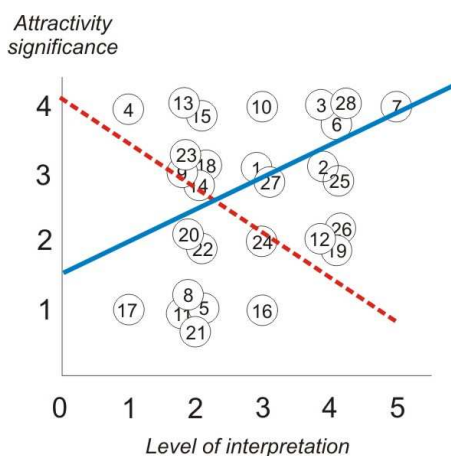
3.2 Correlation between the attractivity significance and the level of its interpretation

The correlation between the variables of (1) attractivity significance (local, regional, nationwide, international) and (2) the level of interpretation (labels, exhibit arrangement, explanations, experiments /or possibly tackling tasks through worksheets/) is described by this equation:

$$Y = 1.75 + 0.32 X$$

with the correlation coefficient of $r^2 = 0.3$

Fig. 5. Correlation between the attractivity significance and the level of interpretation



Legend:

1. Museum of Handmade paper in Velke Losiny
2. Museum of Adolf Kaspar in Lostice
3. Birthplace of Prokop Divis in Zamberk
4. Museum with Karel Dietters exposition in Javornik
5. Municipal Museum in Mohelnice
6. Museum of local unique cheese “Olomoucke syrecky” in Lostice
7. Museum of Vincent Priznitz in Jesenik
8. Museum in Stare Mesto
9. Exhibition of Forest Management Education in the Usov Castle
10. Museum of Unitas Fratrum in Kunvald
11. Municipal Museum in Sumperk
12. Museum of Handicrafts in Letohrad
13. Municipal Museum in Zabreh na Morave
14. Agricultural Open-Air Museum “U Havlicku” in Vintirovice
15. Exposition dedicated to Dr. Eduard Albert in Zamberk
16. Museum of Photography in Tabor
17. Museum of Tourism and Countryside in Destne v Orlickych horach
18. Museum of Gardening and Environment in Valtice
19. Windmill in Kuzelov
20. Museum of Vintage Cars & Motorbikes in Ceska Ves
21. Municipal Museum in Kraliky
22. Museum of Czechoslovak Border Fortification in Kraliky
23. The Anthropos Pavilion in Brno
24. Open-Air Archeological Site “Villa Nova” in Uhrinov
25. Schwarzenberg Canal exposition in Jeleni Vrchy
26. Treasure of Tabor exposition in Tabor
27. Hussite Museum at the Kotnov Castle in Tabor
28. Memorial of Dr. Emil Holub in Holice

4 Discussion

As follows from the correlation between the attractivity significance and the methods of their interpretation in local museums, the thematic attractivities make much more use of the interpretational tools than general expositions, irrespective of the size of community and the volume of funds invested to the exposition. Moreover, general expositions found at different places bear a strong resemblance to each other.

To support tourism, particularly the "experience" kind of tourism, this relation should be reversed. The less appeal an attractivity has, the more inventive and tempting methods of its interpretation have to be applied, because "the gems will find their way to the visitors much easier, i.e. with much less effort needed to be spent".

The memory of country life should certainly embrace the expositions of agricultural tools or craft instruments used by our ancestors. The analytical results and theoretical assumptions presented above lead us to believe that simply putting such exhibits on display and attaching labels to them is really not enough. They should be presented with reliance on new forms of interpretation.

Each exhibit has its own story to relate. To make it tell the story, the exhibit only needs to be offered suitable circumstances. Should it so happen, the artifact would tell us about how it originated, what purpose it served, in which way its owner used it, and how its features or production varied in different times and different regions of origin.

The task of displaying farming tools and craft instruments entails no special material or technical obstacles. Such an exposition can be completed using borrowed original items, replicas, or just photographs with the related sketches. The onset of information technologies, however, and their rapid advancement experienced today, offer also new presentational and instructional techniques, increasingly affordable. Besides, the new forms of presentation will motivate particularly the young generation to learn about how our ancestors lived, which would be probably a stiff job without the high-tech devices.

5 Conclusion

The cultural & historical heritage is interpreted through a range of communication tools - starting from mere putting the exhibits on display and finishing with guided tours and live enactments. One of the tools available can be seen in workshops organized to instill the cultural & historical heritage into

the minds of people. Different segments of the heritage require different methods and forms of interpretation, but the means of interpretation will always need to be discussed with experts in the related disciplines, e.g. people knowledgeable about acting and dramatical enactments, specialists in the experience tourism, or professionals in the experience pedagogy. In contrast, not each and every artifact of the cultural & historical heritage will necessitate the use of far-reaching interpretations or sophisticated instruments.

According to Howard [2] there are some reasons to suppose that in many situations the best option is no, or minimal, interpretation.

The tourist industry has been thriving for quite a long time, recently boosted by what is known as the educational tourism and cultural heritage tourism. The development is attributable to people craving for experiences, who are willing to spend their holidays or even shorter periods of leisure on theme-related trips or to seek fun in any other active manners. In addition, they wish to learn new facts and broaden their horizons. These requirements are sufficiently met by the experience-oriented tourism.

As the cultural heritage tourism spreads and advances, the cooperation among local, regional, national and multinational organizations can be expected to expand and bring in innovations still unheard of. The cultural heritage tourism will develop stronger market orientation, more effective management and neatly targeted research, all of these yielding better tourism products. The local population and host destinations will benefit from the added economical and social advantages.

As Ritchie [7] remarks in his book, there is a lack of research in many areas related to educational and cultural heritage tourism. In particular it is:

- The need to assess and evaluation the educational needs of school teachers and students, ecotourists and cultural heritage tourists, and the adult educational tourist market.
- The need to understand educational and cultural heritage tourism in its scale and nature. How big is the market? What are the drivers and inhibitors of this form of tourism? What policies and methods are the best for this form of tourism?
- The need to understand the impacts of educational and cultural heritage tourism, including the economic, social, environmental, marketing and long-term personal benefits of educational and cultural heritage tourism.

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Why is the water protection and landscape planning appropriate topic for LAG's strategy

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Annotation. The possibility to determine the share of risks or facilitates the application of appropriate land-use methods in harmony with the natural potential of landscape. The sustainable rural development is always based on three pillars that are connected by many relations. A sustainable rural economy is possible only if environment is getting better or stabilizing and currently a social area is developing and affordable.

Key words: water protection, environmental functions, rural development.

1 Introduction

A public opinion is changing not in the whole world, in Europe but also in the local levels too. Many people can see more impacts of long-term situation in landscape management such as floods, erosion and droughts. Water Framework Directive and the draft for new European Flood Risk Directive ask for new tools and consequent application of instrument of river basin management to achieve the targets of a good status and strategy for flood risk management. The main principles of river basin management are:

- It is tool for sustainable and harmonized process of development and land use planning from the water management perspective.
- It sets objectives based on environmental and societal consideration to be implemented in subregions of the catchment.
- It is multi-level and interdisciplinary approach
- It works on different scales beginning from the catchment scale down to the local scale for implementation and actions including communication concept.
- River basin management defines on the one hand side objectives, that other disciplines have to take into account in their planning and action and on the other side integrates societal needs and requests of other disciplines.

- It contains survey of opportunities in program documents of Rural development plan and Structural funds. It can be included in Landscape strategy plan and LAGs strategy plan in LEADER.

The present situation of agriculture landscape is more substandard and less satisfactory for sustainable water management, water retention and erosion size. It is very important to awake to difficulties of slope conditions influencing the development of erosion and transport processes in river basins. Typical characteristics of present landscape involve a share of original biotope areas that are very closed to an autochthonous stand and in other side the affected areas with a reduced stability. The change of landscape scenery that happened 70 years ago such as disturbance of eco-stabilizing elements (permanent grassland, balks, groups of trees, grassy valley lines, rows of trees) has stayed the same in all till these days. A soil management has to respect natural conditions, slopes, biodiversity, a soil depth, soil physical and chemical characteristics. Farmers should choose such technologies and measures so that the soil quality and surrounding nature in this locality do not decrease. A farm practise should use experiences of consultancy for soil protection from erosion and an increase of water retention in landscape. Combination of good experts and GIS tools can produce analyses in short time and provide proposals for creative farm management changes, e.g. rotation of crops, small terrain lines, grassing part or full field, making water reservoirs. The whole complex of measures can increase a retention area ability, it can be reduced a transport of sediment runoff, that can compensated unfavourable effects of surface runoff during local storm rainfalls. Another effect mentioned in complex measures is a water pollution control in nitrate organic and mineral compounds.

2 The main aim

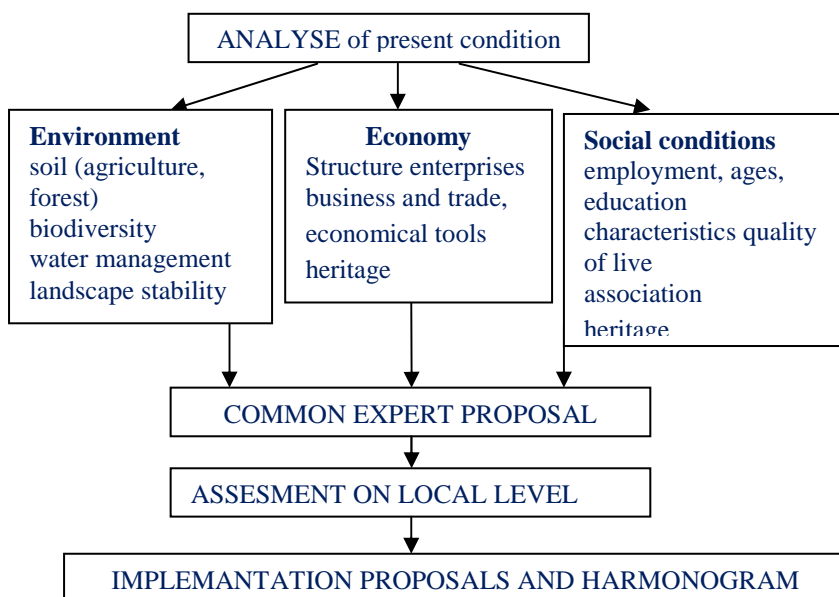
To provide expert assistance for rural development particularly in the improvement water protection and landscape stability. The expert proposals offer for LAG's strategy or other local activities, municipalities and one regional government.

We guess that the synergic landscape proposals are more pursuable due to discussion with local people. We also think that the outcomes have to be clear and understandable technical outputs.

3 Material and method

I oriented to proposals and implementation to local bases. Phase of preparation for integrated proposals was first step. Second step was optimalization of proposals according territorial conditions and choosing priorities with local people. The complex approach is important mostly for local strategies, which often miss relevant evaluation for environment and landscape plan. I would like to focus on third step - process involvement proposed measures. In this respect I would like to mention two projects:

- Integrated Land Use Planning - ILUP (INTERREG IIIB CADSES) 2002-2006;
- Research and development project 2B06013 Kačina (2006-2011).



4 Description of first project - ILUP Pomoraví INTERREG IIIB CADSES) [3]

The main output of the project was:

- Integrated river basin management as a new efficient planning tool;
- Strategies for evaluating foothill and hill country regarding to natural hazards and using potentials as well as prevention support;
- Transnational coordination;
- Concepts for land use and landscape management (minimising of use conflicts) for a sustainable development and transnational cooperation;
- Increasing the acceptance among population for river basin management through new market and communication mechanisms. River related impulses for regional development.

The Czech part of ILUP-Pomoraví deals with the optimizing of farming and forest management, i.e. the spatial specification of bio-technical measures aimed to reducing risks of large-range floods along the entire river basin. The Pomoraví project includes a system of erosion control measures designed on the basis of new methodology, making use particularly of the register LPIS and applying the model of erosion risk and landscape water effluent in the entire area of the Morava river upper basin with a special attention to agricultural land.

A number of the existing as well as sorts of new maps has been integrated with the participation of experts from the fields of soil science, agricultural technology, ecology, informatics, GIS and digital cartography, territorial planning, remote sensing, forestry planning and management, agricultural economy, hydrology, landscape planning, environmental education, and social and regional policy.

The project aim was to improve a flood prevention and to decrease a negative soil erosion caused by rainfalls, to propose concrete landscape arrangements in the solved area including economical aspects of these proposals.

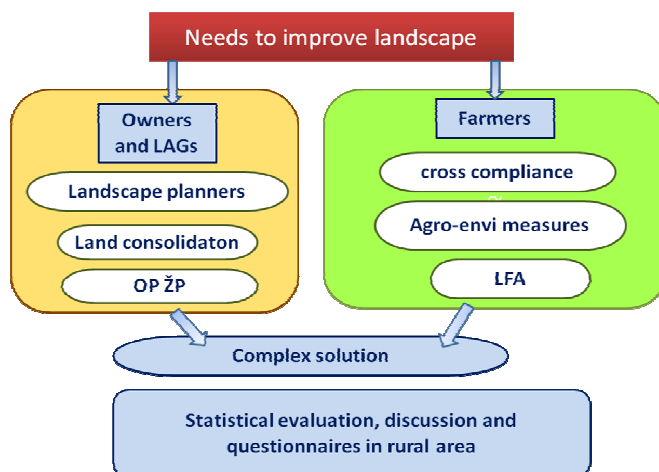
The sustainable rural development is always based on three pillars that are connected by many relations. A sustainable rural economy is possible only if environment is getting better or stabilizing and currently a social area is developing and affordable. In the first phase there was completed a database from Pomoraví project outputs and then supplied by verified statistical data. In the second phase there was organized a large questionnaire search. The aim was to obtain primary data to indicators of sustainable rural development that are not usually following and there is no other way to find out them. Preparing of this search involved creating of a methodical process for a terrain search, a questionnaire creation, a correctness control of formulated questions, proposals of collecting data processing, setting of hypothesis. On the base of chosen

methods there was set up number of municipalities and inhabitants and made a concrete choice of municipalities, mayors and businessmen.

There are some questions which we use during “discussion” with experts and local people:

- Is rural development sustainable?
- How to get success in rural area?
- Who is responsible and available to improve weakness?
- What can country-side offer?
- Where do you invest finance support for the best effect?
- There has been harmony between sustainable landscape and people from rural area?
- How to obtain information a public service and people from rural area?

Fig.1 The logical procedure is characterized on the flowchart



Next step is speaking with local people (including local action groups) to show results of expert’s proposal and analyze their ways of identifying primary issues within their territory, their responses and attitude.

5 Description of second project - KAČINA

Research and development project 2B06013 [4]

Implementation of measures “The European Landscape Convention in intensive agricultural area with significant historical heritages” – the pilot study Nové Dvory – Kačina has this activities:

- Documentation and assessment of historical development in landscape with using of historical dates like maps, plans orthophoto pictures and photos e.g.
- An assessment of present landscape situation around Kačina, value identification and instruments consideration and power which can form landscape structures.
- SWOT analyse.
- A proposal of target area characteristics in Kačina and basis preparing for a strategy land-use plan, land consolidation, nature protection and preservation area.

There is used methodology ECOVAST [5]. It is policy approach for rural Europe is set out in our “Strategy for Rural Europe”. We have published a number of other policy and technical documents. This “Guide to Good Practice in Landscape Identification” was produced by ECOVAST’s Working Group on Landscape, as a sequel to our active participation in the Council of Europe’s consultation on the draft European Landscape Convention. The first step in caring for the landscape is to understand, or identify, its character. Next step is fulfilling a blank check list, the landscape matrix, which you can photocopy and use to assist your own analysis of the landscape. It shows the 10 main elements of landscape character. It enables you to note those features (within each heading) which are clearly visible within the landscape and contribute to its character; and the relative strength of those features.

The Landscape Matrix also provides space for you to add:

- a short description of the landscape, summarising its character;
- additional comments;
- pictures (two pages with illustrations of the dominating characteristics and an aerial photographic map of the area/landscape described).

6 Used instruments in both projects

EU Water Framework Directive [1]

It involves general aims which should provide sustainable fair using water sources and decrease expanding the scope of water protection to all waters, surface waters and groundwater.

Cross compliance [2]

A tool fulfils the conditions European Commission (EC), which target to incorporate environmental principles in Common Agricultural Policy. Payments to farmers under the CAP are now dependent on the achievement and maintenance of baseline standards on environmental and public health, animal and plant health, and animal welfare.

Rural development plan 2007-2013

Land consolidation (axis 1) involves plan of consolidated environment (roads, line trees, bio corridors, water reservoirs, landscape elements), which contribute to better permeability and stabilization of areas.

LFA (axis 2)

In the Czech Republic, supports under “Less-favoured areas” measure are paid for grasslands. They represent not only an economic and social aid aiming at preserving stable incomes of farmers farming in less-favoured natural conditions, but function also as a restructuring measure encouraging the keeping of cattle and other grassland utilising livestock.

NATURE 2000 (axis 2)

The aim is to assist farmers in coping with a specific handicap resulting from the implementation of European directives for the Nature 2000 network and the Water Framework Directive.

Agri-environmental measures (AEMs) (axis 2)

LEADER + (axis 4)

Support for 3 measures:

- Implementation of local development strategies through a Leader approach to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of one or several of the three other axes ;
- Inter-territorial and trans-national co-operation between LAGs;
- Running costs of Local Action Groups (LAGs), capacity building and animation.

Local strategies can improve environment in rural landscape and at the same time could strengthen social and cultural relations inhabitants. LAGs are able to target on “soft measures” with low costs and farmers or land owners can realise these small projects.

7 Discussion

The first project ILUP Pomoraví provided solution that involves a discussion of multi branches linked to landscape and by thus significantly lowers risk zones. Among project users belong municipality mayors; businessmen, agricultural and forest subjects. It can help in funding from structural sources for landscape maintenance and development. There was built up the “area information system” and proposed regular data upgrading for its potential users. The ILUP Pomoraví is engaged in a complex rural space. It is a background material for decision-making and landscape planning with exact and technically available outputs in the area of spatial planning and planning of investments into the regional development especially water management, agriculture and forestry.

Instruments of ILUP are areas studies, plan documents, regulative plans. Land-use planning involves the scientific, aesthetic and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services with a view to securing the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities.

The second project Kačina is running. There were finished analyses and begun discussion with local people. These people started to be open and draw their proposals to the maps with description, what is important for them and why. The approach of ECOVAST helps to identify and to understand, a landscape is a rewarding experience in itself. It is like studying a great work of art (which in fact many landscapes are!), reading a fine book, The European Landscape Convention encourages peoples and governments to 'identify, assess, protect, manage and plan' their landscapes. They are a major part of our living heritage, the setting of our daily lives, the magnet for our recreation and our tourism. They have changed, and will continue to change. Our needs and our duties are to ensure that this change is good. Our aim should be to ensure that the quality and the special character of each landscape are enhanced, rather than diminished, by each necessary change.

That is why it is crucial first to understand the character of each landscape, and the ways in which it appears to be changing. It then becomes possible to take the further steps.

8 Conclusions

Inhabitants in rural areas (beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries) need good advisory service especially for axes 3 and 4.

The main aim of land-use planning is to create premises to capital construction and sustainable development in area. The proposed technical measures in landscape need operational and up-dated information system.

Very useful is communication among experts, beneficiaries and providers of support. It is possible to realize due to participation methodology.

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SOCIAL CHANGE AND RESTRUCTURING IN RURAL SOCIETIES – OPPORTUNITIES AND VULNERABILITIES



Potentials of Rural Tourism in the Southbohemian Region

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Annotation. This article deals with rural tourism, it focuses on potentials of tourism in the Southbohemian region. There are analyzed mainly primary and secondary potentials of rural tourism in the region. Moreover, from these potentials there was made a cluster analysis. The potentials were then compared to number of accommodated visitors.

Key words: Tourism, Rural tourism, Potentials of tourism, cluster analysis.

1 Introduction

1.1 Tourism

Tourism is the world's fastest growing industry and the World Tourist Organization expects that the tourism will be the world's largest industry by 2020. According to the World Tourist Organization's statistics (2006), in the year 2005 international tourism sustained the sharp upturn that began in 2004 in spite of the various tragic events it had to contend. Globally, international tourists spend 2 billion USD every day on tourism and hospitality related activities. This is expected to increase up to 5 billion USD per day by 2020. [8] Tourism has an important role to play in the economic development of free market economies. Tourism is a generator of foreign exchange earnings and makes a direct contribution to the balance of payment. Tourism can create and sustain jobs in the economy through direct and indirect employment resulting from visitors expenditure in the economy, the multiplier effect in tourism is more significant than in other industries. [9]

1.2 Rural tourism

According to the Stříbrná (2005), rural tourism relates to low population, open space and locations with less than 10 000 inhabitants. Pourová (2002) defines rural tourism as the tourism evolving both outside recreation and tourism centres, outside of urban areas. [6]

Rural tourism is engaged by tourists seeking rural peace: it is away from the mainstream, away from areas of intensive tourism activity. It is engaged by visitors who wish to interact with the rural environment and the host community, in a meaningful and authentic way. [8]

Rural tourism is characterized by the following features connected with the concept of rurality: [2]

- It is located in a rural environment.
- It is functionally rural, built on special features of the rural world (open space, contact with nature).
- It is rural in its scale (small settlements).
- It is traditional in its character.
- It is sustainable in the sense that its development should preserve the special rural character of the given area and should not destroy, but should rather stabilize local development. Rural tourism must be seen as a potential instrument for protection of nature and the landscape together with the development of human needs.
- It is necessarily composed of a great many products that enable assimilation of the overall image of the rural environment, economy and history.

Rural tourism takes many different forms and is pursued for different reasons. There are developmental reasons to promote tourism such as regeneration following agro-industrial collapse, or diversification of remote marginal agricultural areas into adventure tourism or cultural tourism. [6] The development of rural tourism offers potential solutions to many of the problems, that are rural areas facing to, such as economic growth, diversification and stabilization of employment, socio-cultural development, maintenance of public services, revitalization of local crafts, customs and culture, protection and improvement of both natural and built environment and infrastructure. [2]

Rural tourism becomes very popular especially in the economically developed countries. It is its economically and socially positive impact which allows farmers to gain additional financial sources and create new job positions for local people. In fact, it is a very positive and ecological form of tourism. Decentralization of accommodation allows visitors to spread all over the region and provides good opportunities for individual activities. Very often such activities are specialized, followed by other cultural additional

programmes. This allows improvement of the quality and attractiveness of such service, or stabilization of the targeted group. Such additional programmes include horse riding, cycling-tourism, hunting or fishing. All these just fill the gaps in local services which would not be otherwise provided. [6] Rural tourism can be taken to mean farm tourism or agri-tourism, moreover it can include also campsites, lodges, safari drivers, adventure sports, walking trails, heritage sites, musical event. Rural tourism includes any tourist activity taking place in rural area. [3]

1.3 Potentials of tourism

The term “tourism potential” is widely used in the tourism literature but attempts for its scientific definition are scarce. Generally, tourism potential can be defined as the ability of an area to form a complete tourism product and develop an economically vital tourism. It is not necessary for this ability to be displayed or realized at the present moment but it must exist, according to the knowledge of contemporaneous tourism. [7]

The place having tourism potential must: [7]

- Have tourism resources allowing the attraction of considerable amount of tourist flows, securing a short term or medium term economically effective development of tourism.
- Be situated relatively close to important centres of forming and distributing tourism demand.

Tourism potentials can be conventionally view as a primary, secondary or tertiary. [1]

Primary potentials present all natural and social attractions in the region. Among natural attractions belong climate, hydrology, morphology, various kinds of plant and animal species, environment. Among social attractions belong architecture, historical buildings, museums, cultural events, sport events, local cuisine, local traditions, habits, and folklore.

Secondary potentials present factors, which launch incomes and employment. These factors also help to diversify rural landscape and make the location more attractive both for tourist as well as for residents. Among these factors belong accessibility of the location, possibilities of accommodation, boarding. Driving up secondary potentials is depended on human abilities, concretely on management of destination and its ability of strategic and local planning.

Tertiary potentials represent the ability of local authorities of organization, development and stabilization of the location. It is depended on cooperation of authorities on local, national and international level.

2 Objective and methods

The aim of the paper is to identify potentials of rural tourism in the Southern Bohemia. The paper focuses especially on primary and secondary potentials in the region.

Among *primary potentials* were analyzed natural parks, natural reserves, rivers, lakes and ponds, dams, pools, monuments and sights, zoos, ruins, architecture, spas, museums, ski areas and finally culture events.

Among *secondary potentials* were analyzed accommodation (according to the type of accommodation, roads (according to the type of road), roads for cycling.

To analyze better the potentials and for better evaluation of them there was made a questionnaire. The informants were asked about their preferences to rural tourism, especially preferences for their visits referring the primary potentials. The informants were also asked, which type of road they used, and in which type of accommodation they were mainly accommodated in.

The results of the questionnaire were used as the base for assignment of the statistical weight for the potentials. To all potentials there were assigned the appropriate weights according to the results of questionnaire and own experience.

From evaluated potentials there was made a cluster analysis, in order to see clearly the situation in the Southern Bohemia. Finally the potentials were compared with number of accommodated visitors in the regions.

Cluster analysis

The cluster analysis, first used by Tryon in the year 1939, is an exploratory data analysis tool for solving classification problems. It sorts objects into groups, so that the degree of association is strong between members of the same cluster and weak between members of different clusters. This analysis can used different methods of clustering, like tree clustering, block clustering, or k means clustering. In this paper, the tree clustering method is used. This method uses the dissimilarities or distances between objects when forming the clusters. The most used way of computing distances between objects is to compute Euclidian distance [5], which is also used in this paper. The Euclidean distance between two vectors Y and Z is defined as:

$$v_{YZ} = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^k (y_i - z_i)^2} .$$

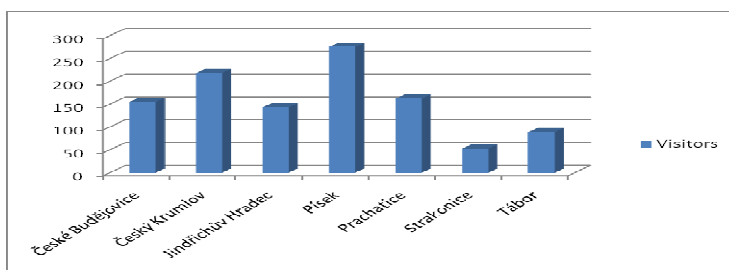
Other important issue of clustering is how to determine the distances between clusters. The single linkage („the nearest neighbor“) is used in this paper.

This method is determined by the distance of the two closest objects in the different clusters. This rule will, in a sense, string objects together to form clusters, and the resulting clusters tend to represent long "chains." [4] The results of this clustering is a special graph, called dendrogram, which shows the clusters of region according to their potentials to rural tourism.

3 Results

The analysis of potentials for rural tourism in South Bohemia region compared the number of visitors (represented by number of accommodated visitors) with the potentials of these areas for rural tourism. As the graph 1 shows the highest number of people visited Písek region, then the Český Krumlov region. On the other hand, Strakonice region had the lowest number of the South of Bohemia.

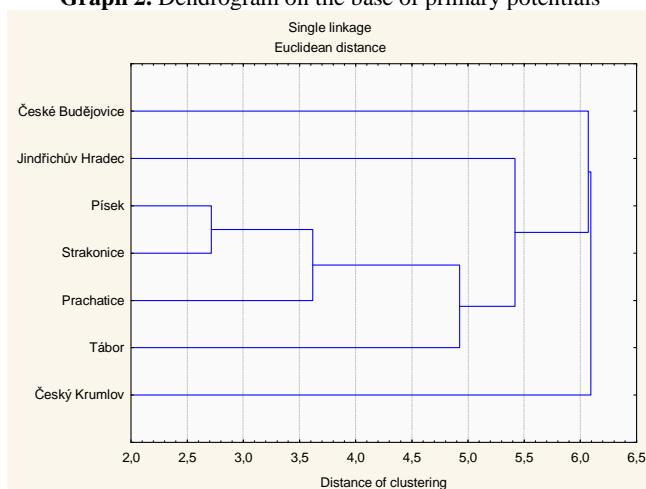
Graph 1. Thousand of visitors



Source: Czech Statistical Office

Prácheň and České Budějovice regions have very similar visit rate. The reason for these results were analyzed on the base of the cluster analysis. This analysis showed the regions with the same potentials for rural tourism. As the graph 2 shows, Písek have surprisingly the same potentials as Strakonice region. Both these regions have not any national parks and protected nature areas, any caves, any reservoir. There are also no spas or ski centres. In both regions, there is the same number of castles. These two regions should be called less primary potentials equipped areas for rural tourism. In this point of view, it is surprise, that Písek had the best value of visitors.

Graph 2. Dendrogram on the base of primary potentials

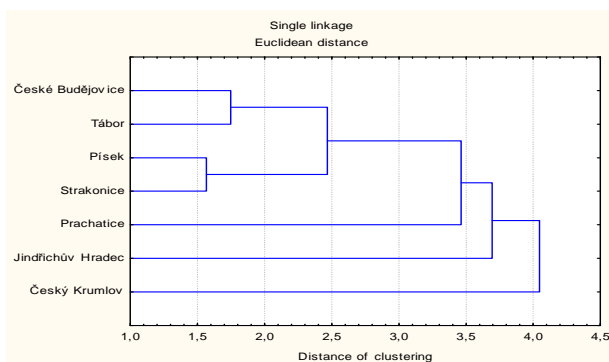


Source: Own calculations

The most different regions are Český Krumlov and České Budějovice. These two regions have better primary potentials for rural tourism. Both of them have a national park or protected nature areas. The Šumava national park and Šumava mountains, and Blanský les are located there. Both of these regions have rivers, which are suitable for sailing. There are also some famous castles – especially Hluboká in České Budějovice and Český Krumlov in the same named region. Both these regions have potentials to be the most visited regions in South Bohemia, there are also lots of attractions for visitors, for example in České Budějovice region, there are lot of possibilities for cycling. České Budějovice has the biggest number of cycle routes. Lots of culture actions also take place in these regions. Huge number of galleries and museums are located there.

Above made analysis shows that Český Krumlov and České Budějovice regions, like the best equipped areas, could not effectively use their potentials. The analysis of rural tourism should not be concentrate only in primary potentials for tourism. That is the reason to make the cluster analysis based on the secondary potentials, which results shows the graph 3.

Graph 3. Dendrogram on the base of secondary potentials



Source: Own calculations

In secondary potentials, Písek and Strakonice regions have also very similar possibilities. Both of these regions have the lowest potentials of accommodation. There is the lack of hotels and pensions. There is also the worst situation in roads, not only for their primary using as the way how to come to this region, but also in the point of cycling using.

Český Krumlov region is the most different one. It is well equipped region with hotels and other types of accommodation. Other region with perfect accommodation potential is Jindřichův Hradec, what is also the region with the well road equipage.

The analysis of the secondary potentials shows that Český Krumlov becomes one of the best equipped region, but it cannot use its potentials and turns them into the number of visitors.

4 Conclusion

This article carries out the method of analysis and evaluation the regional potentials for rural tourism. The method was applied only in the South Bohemia, where it shows that the best potentials for rural tourism are located in Český Krumlov region. This region can offer lot of natural attraction, famous castle and lot of museums, galleries and other cultural actions, which can be attract for rural tourists. There are also many accommodation possibilities. But this region is not able to turn these attractions into number of visited. Pieces of knowledge introduced in this paper resulted from solution of an institutional research intention MSM 6046070906 „Economics of resources of Czech agriculture and their efficient use in frame of multifunctional agri-food systems“.

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Development structures of rural regions

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Annotation. Development structures of particular areas are the base of development activities. It concern the participants network which take with certain way notice of given space, put through their interests and participate in development. Their interactions and aims coordination leads into creation of formal or informal relations and groups. The paper aspires to present specifics of rural areas development structures and thence following synergic approach to area development.

Key words: Development structures, rural regions, participants, union of municipalities, local action groups, synergic approach.

1 Introduction

Rural area is intricately structured system, namely both space and social. In common the rural development possibilities unwind from internal predispositions and external influences and trends, however utilization of chances in spectrum, choice of development strategy and instruments are set of real existing and functioning development structures. Key and mutual inseparable steps are knowledge of rural region, creation of relationship system of development participants and coordination of individual subjects development activities.

Formation of development structures unwind from characteristics of individual participants and from their motivation. Problems, or development, perception in given space context and influence of several interest groups on setting development aims and on choice of development instruments are starting points of participant networks which react on perceived development requirements. Settings of development structures parameters is them joined to existence and quality mutual relationships between participants. Roles, possibilities, abilities and interests of participants blend together in different ways, the base motive of their cooperation remains in synergistic effects and utilization of strengths in particular sectors. Effective development effort is usually based on so-called synergic approach, when roles, motivations,

interests and activities are clarified, consensus in vision and development aims exists and the framework of mutual cooperation is created. Mentioned processes take place in context of developing aspects of rural area and they are modified by local specifics.

The main principle of GaREP research team, whose members author are, is perception connections between number of the municipality population and its location and accent on activation of human resources in rural regions. Initial step of all development activities should be „development balance“ in form of strategic plan codifying visions and aims of development and connecting particular participants in process of its creation and realization. Development in area in any form is always gone upon cooperation and mutual assistance of local subjects. Development, especially in case of rural regions, is based not only on projects and investments, but also from substantial part on various communal activities. Not only the aim is important, but also way to it, when the social life and fellow feeling take effect in rural areas on content of inhabitants and quality of their life. In this respect the project of Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic „Rural area and its activation (WB-29-04) addressed to objectification of particular factual themes of rural area and to common development assumptions. Possibilities of cooperation as the key instrument of rural area development were evolved in parallel project „Cooperation of municipalities as factor of development (WB-07-05). Other advance in this issue is realized in actually solved research project of Ministry of Agriculture no. QH82249 „Synergy in the country development approach“ and project of Ministry of Regional Development no. WD-39-07-1 „Development interactive audit“ developing aspects of development structures and instruments conditionality and possibilities of synergetic approach to development in rural areas. Following text presents and interlaces chosen pieces of knowledge as stepping stone to enforcing of efficiency of development instruments in rural area.

2 Development participants in rural regions and their relationships

The rural area is considerably heterogeneous category. Social-economic changes after 1990 bring along new trends and new development stimuli. Heavy barrier of rural development is sweeping perception of some its problems, without spatial differ and grading by size. It comes to the polarization of rural area, when the wide group of rural municipalities derives benefits from passed changes or it adjusts promptly (municipalities in neighbourhood of cities and on development axes with good traffic accessibility), whereas the other group of municipalities suffers from the

accumulation of problems. Development of area is influenced substantially unevenly by strong subjects which touch wide surroundings.

Plentiful number of institutions influencing, developing or solving several components or problems of rural area is reflection of variety and stratification of this area. At the level of state administration they are especially Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Regional development and Ministry of Environment, employment Office play also important role. In 2001 constituted self-governing regions establish themselves as subjects the most reflecting problems of rural areas. In dichotomy of self-governing regions and big cities (for example the city of Brno has the comparable budget as South-Moravian region and it acts as on regional government wholly independent subject), self-governing regions address, besides regional infrastructure and public services, especially to subsidy and activation of their rural areas.


At the level of interest self-government Agrarian Chamber and their regional organizations dominate. Regional information centres for agriculture and country development were established. For diversification of entrepreneurial activities the engagement of Commercial Chambers is important. In rural area there is concerned number of other partial interest organization as well. Municipalities pursue many activities to rural area activation: Association for rural renewal, Schools for rural renewal, National network of rural development, National observatory of rural area, National network of rural community schools. Regional governments promote rural municipalities in framework of rural development programmes.

Mentioned participants and others work for rural area activation: for advancement in quality of life in rural areas, human resources development; they use the wide scale of instruments and they get considerable financial resources into the region with their activities. From this point of view of sustainable development conceptional approach to particular features and participants cooperation in area formation are crucial. Development structures of rural areas rise as reaction to internal needs and problems of participants, the influence of supporting instruments which determine formal settlement of development participant is significant.

Optional unions of municipalities referred to as micro-regions, become during last 15 years the basic over-municipal space entity. On the basis of this form of intermunicipal cooperation the primary conceptional documents of rural area development were created, many projects were realized and numerous common activities were developed. The union of municipalities can be instrument how to overcome insufficient personal and qualifying set-out of local governments. Part of development activities of municipalities can be deputed to manager of micro-region who follows targeting and fully development aspects of region.

In connection with initiative LEADER and with application of Leader method based on partnership cooperation between self-government representatives, entrepreneurs and non-profit sector the Local Action Groups (LAG) rise since 2002. The strength of LAG consists in connection of public and private sector and their importance grows. With the help of these groupings, financial resources flow on rural development. These resources reasonable by engagement in this structure strengthen their dynamic development in recent years. Participation of entrepreneurial sector can help to realistically catch development occasions of regions and to coordinate views of public administration and enterprisers (managers) how to target the development. Public administration representatives are informed about enterpriser intentions and can create proper background for their realisation. In practice LAG are set in the platform of bunches of municipalities (one or more) where other development level arises, which gears other group of participants. But LAG's have some difficulties too. The first one is member structure of public sector representatives that are both bunches and municipalities, which causes inconsistent structure. The second one is proportional representation of enterprisers. Their structure isn't usually created conceptually; they enter LAG only in order to gain some financial resources for realisation their own interests. One example can be a LAG where agricultural subject outweighed, that is why as a priority project a slaughter was realised. Authors of this article mean that likewise exogenous relations are not totally adjusted. Also other groupings aim to establish their interests to development of the region. They can act either alone or by participating in formalised structures (especially LAG). These groupings are classified in table 1 according to type of governance and to participants' categories.

Table 1. Typology of regional interests' participants

Type of governance	Category of participants	Type of participants	Legitimacy
Public governance	All public participants	Self-government association (municipalities, regions).	
	Semi-public entities	Regional development agencies, innovation centres, cross-border structures.	
Private governance	Non-profit subjects	NGO-association, cultural interests etc.	
	Commercial interests	Economic chamber, enterprise sector, industrial branches, clusters.	

Source: Dočkal, V.: Aktéři regionálních zájmů a formalizovaný politický dialog (The rigorous study). Brno: Fakulta sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity, 2006. p. 10.

From interests of individual participant types proceed forms of cooperation in a given region and concrete alignment of these forms. Background of all the successful development processes frames coordinating of interests and motivation and using strong points of individual subjects, which leads to get maximal synergetic effect.

Common development activities at local level are based on everyday cooperation of relevant local subjects. Institutionalisation of this cooperation unwinds mainly from instruments used by higher spatial levels to support a given region.

Key participants constructing development structures in rural areas are the following ones:

- City mayors of rural municipalities are mostly irredundant.¹ Their priority is to solve basic needs of their municipality (especially infrastructure building which takes the greatest part of resources), and they perceive problems mainly in local context. Subjects in local, if you like micro-regional, level are rather individual; collective interests are created as an intersection of local interests. That is why domain of cooperation can be delimited very narrowly.
- Development managers or workers of individual cooperation forms (bunch of municipalities' manager, or its secretary, LAG manager, public-weal company director, civil association head etc.) have often restricted or deformed sphere of action. Their feasibility differs according to aims of a given grouping and to participants' motivation. Basic scope of their employment is preparing projects and acquiring grants; rise of cooperation quality is not accentuated. Also cooperation benefits are not fully solved. Transfer of certain activities to over-municipality level – i. e. to the cooperation manager – should ensure their higher quality, economy of scale (one documentation for the whole project, collectively run establishment etc.) or for example negotiation better conditions with suppliers (e. g. collective actions against monopolies).
- Enterprisers, private profit sector, have tidy (and so far rarely exploited) potential for development actions realisation, nevertheless they prefer clearly valuable costs and benefits of the cooperation. They are ready to give a boost to several development projects, but they anticipate reciprocity. Contemporary legislature restrains to a great extent a long-lime cooperation between municipalities and enterprisers (e. g. they

¹ The project “Identifikace kompetencí zatěžujících výkon územní veřejné správy se zvláštním přihlédnutím k malým obcím” (Identification of competences tasking achievement of territorial public administration especially respecting small municipalities) which was realised for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Czech Republic (Brno: GaREP, 2007) displayed that almost 60 % city mayors of municipalities below population 1000 are irredundant.

cooperated by building an equipment for citizens, but for finding a keeper there must be a selection procedure realised again).

- Special-interest grouping speak in support of a certain type of interest and cooperation with them is often only partial; in the case of regional special-interest grouping can be difficult to develop the cooperation. Their skilled potential in certain sphere is usually substantial. If the region disposes of a quality region development strategy and has created a system of communication and cooperation, than can be these grouping key participants in realisation particular development actions. For ensuring their efficiency regarding to development of the region as a complex the regional management is important, who would coordinate individual actions of various subjects and make the best of their synergic effects without overlaps.
- Regional self-government should in an ideal case give a clear frame to targeting the development of the territory and support building development nets and regional management developing. Because strategic documents are not strongly binding and their implementation isn't at a requisite level, it is difficult to develop regions really conceptually. Communication channels are often constructed very selectively. For most regions main partners in their area are bunches of municipalities. Region managements see rural areas in a broader context, but problems can occur in concept of region development – exacting implements don't find partners in those areas. Main grant resources are regional development programmes for rural areas because of their easy administration and high applicants' rate of success.
- At the central level a departmental approach dominates, not only relate to rural areas. Regional development program for rural areas was transferred to regions, and the Ministry of Regional development now attends to Country renewal program.² The crucial position in development of rural areas gained Ministry of Agriculture because of its displacement from agricultural policy to rural and agriculture development policy. But it didn't pass re-orientation of its approach to the country (which is not the same as agriculture). Countryside is also in the Ministry of Environment's place of interest which established an expert group for sustainable country development, but there is a problem of rather narrow approach of this Ministry.

Mentioned characteristics of participants' efforts to catch the development illustrate difficultness of creating development nets in regions, so that local

² In 2008 only 3 types of grants: Endowment title No. 1 – The winners of “Village of the year 2007” support, endowment title No. 2 – Support of children and youth engagement to community life, endowment title No. 3 – Municipal cooperation on country renewal and development support.

resources could be optimally exploited and greatest effects could be achieved. Finding nodal points among individual participants of rural areas as well as structured proposal of procedures, actions and implements (incl. their formalisation) are carrier components of synergic approach to country development.

3 Synergic approach to development

A carrier cooperation principle is to achieve a synergy, introduce a synergic development. Country is an area of conflicts of many interests and many visions about its development ways. That is why expanding of synergy (generally or within individual development structures) extraordinary significant. Synergy can be followed as “co-working of various energies or powers to one final result”³ and it is considered as a situation when “impact of various interventions (or their various parts) together is greater than their common sum total. Synergy is a case of positive impacts; but impact can also be negative, it is so-called anti-synergy.”⁴

In connection with efforts to gain the sustainable development can be an inspiration so-called synergetics. This branch is engaged to phenomena which cause in disequilibrium status of a system some qualitative changes; these methods are used also for examine biological, sociological and other phenomena.⁵ It addresses general methods to research new properties of systems – nonlinear dynamics, creation of time-space self organising systems etc.⁶

The first step to formulate presumptions for a synergic approach to rural development is to create a net of relations among participants and its systematisation. For a long-term cooperation it is necessary formalizing mutual dialog to communication channels for coordinating development activities and solving problems. Forming procedural relations comments Dočkal⁷: “A process of cooperation and collective solving regional questions at the lowest spatial level relates especially to uncontrolled building of political nets.

³ Malá československá encyklopedie. URL <<http://www.coto.je>>

⁴ Evaluace socioekonomického rozvoje. Metodická příručka. Praha: Ministerstvo pro místní rozvoj ČR, 2005. p. 98.

⁵ Kraus, J., Petráčková, V. a kol. Akademický slovník cizích slov, Praha: Academia, 1995. p. 725

⁶ Kraval, I.: Simulace synergetických systémů na PC a dynamické synergetické rovnice. URL <<http://www.mujweb.cz/www/objectconsulting/synergetika.html>>

⁷ Dočkal, V.: Aktéři regionálních zájmů a formalizovaný politický dialog (The rigorous study). Brno: Fakulta sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity, 2006. p. 11. (adapted).

Generally, a formalisation level of a political dialog with regional participants predicates a degree of engaging those participants to governance. If no formal procedural rules exist, it can be hardly supposed that special-interest participants would participate creating or realisations of policies. And a vice versa, if a formalisation (eventually institutionalisation) degree of a political dialog is high, it can be supposed that given special-interest participants engage the governance process. It is of course not necessary to ratify the formalisation in writing, also common unwritten patterns and customs are possible.” In practice relations building proceed more or less within the public administration. Private sector participants are allowed to involve the development strategy forming, but they do so relatively rarely and not conceptually.

By adjusting, or (if you like) identification, of development structures it is necessary to distinguish internal and external ways, it means tasks for rural participants themselves and tasks needful to be done from outside. Choice and efficiency of individual instruments are involved by several factors, especially municipality size, its location (related to traffic network, settlement structure, geographical situation); economic activities in a municipality and its surroundings (companies and enterprisers, i. e. employers); activity of inhabitants and municipal management capability. Individual factors work together and can strengthen or weaken effects of used implements. For example activity of inhabitants is fundamental for development projects’ realisation and for social and cultural activation of a country. Municipality location is a key factor involving enterprise activities there, according to municipality size is differentiated availability of services for citizens.

Purposefulness and utility of development structures is given by combination of engaging participants and their capabilities, by identified problems and available development implements. In Table 2 there are schematically indicated differences among mentioned elements. It also shows limits of implements’ efficiency to certain spatial levels, drift of participants and different perceiving of problems.

Table 2. A model case of different dispositions to form development structures at various spatial levels

Spatial level	Problems	Development instruments	Key participants
Municipality	A, B	N, P, R	1, 2, 3, 4
District	B, C	P, R	2, 3, 4
Region	C, D	P, R, S	3, 4, 5
State	C, D, E	S, T, U	4, 5, 6, 7

Source: Rozvojový interaktivní audit, regionální politika a poznání disparit. Souhrnná studie z řešení aktivity A701. Brno: GaREP, 2007. Adjusted.

Taking up knowledge of a region, its specificity and problems, identification development participants, seeking of concrete activities or locations are attended, where a synergic approach could be applied. A proper example illustrating synergic approach to regional development is cycle roads building in the South-Moravian region – the Lesy ČR company (Woods of the Czech Republic) adapt its scheme of building hardened roads in woods following the regional plan of building cycle roads, so that the prepared roads could be optimally used also for cycling.

From a viewpoint of development there are often defined sets of linked and mutually eking local resources which aim to concrete ways how to use and develop the area. Transformation of accessible resources into a developing potential has to be selective, participants have to choose several (not many) ways of development. Differently defined types of “developing potentials” do not stand side-by-side, but they overlap according to a activities and relations among them. There is often only a narrow border between a resource as an occasion to development and a reason of its threat. Using numerous resources can eliminate each other and it is necessary to choose the development priorities. An example can be natural resources mining or industry, which can contribute to higher employment rate and earn some benefit, on the other hand it can lead to irreversible changes of the area and disallow creating a tourism potential. It is necessary to evolve such resources that are the most proper for a given purpose and in so doing don't use attractive but unrealistic ways of development which are not sensitively linked to local conditions. It is essentially to coordinate developing presumptions (area identification) with ideas of participants and with their structures. In concrete projects there should be i. a. identified concrete chances of synergy. On this basis synergic aspects should be projected to related projects and activities, eventually could be filled out needed communication channels for coordinating various developing moves.

By catching up the whole complex of developing activities realised in rural areas and by evaluating their relations, effects and limits of their full unwinding some chances can be found how to solve unfavourable trends in rural areas more effectively through coordinating approaches of individual development participants and through unwinding mutual support and cooperation. A key issue of activation, development or stabilisation of a country is to understand relations among its components (represented by various participants or their groups); it means to learn relevant interactions among social-economic conditions for human life, their projecting in the settlement structure, and agriculture and forestry as a traditional economic branch, and other business in rural area.

4 Conclusion

Countryside is a compact entity that is why its particular problems shouldn't be solved separately. In light of development there can be defined several various types of a country, departmental policies do not project into rural area. Subjects of public administration don't approach country development integrated, but choose only a part of rural reality which they will handle. There are various activities in rural development, but most of them proceed apart or in parallel. A complicated definition of the country (or contrariwise formal and disnatured separating of rural municipalities) creates problems with adjusting and efficiency country development instruments. There is a heavy problem in decision-making which is often realised by external subjects, likewise preset of development supporting implements stems from views of "non-rural" inhabitants. Also small towns are not perceived as important element of country development. By providing country development it is important to exploit and spread out natural catchment links.

Mentioned complex of weak points in country development can be solved by long-term creating of development structures – formalised or informal – and appropriate communication channels. Coordination heterogeneous development processes and applying synergic approach to country development can be a significant move to reduce some problems, to make savings in organisational and economical sphere and to raise efficiency of development instruments.

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Employers in the Rural Towns

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Annotation. The development of labour market in rural towns is necessary precondition for the sustainability of local government districts. There are regional differences in the number of employees, the form of entrepreneurship and other. The role of employers in rural town's labour market differs due to branch of economy and interaction between employers and employees.

Key words: employment, agents, sustainability, rural towns.

1 Introduction

Latvia is a country of small population and low population density. The structure of population density in Latvia can be divided in four categories of settlement according the level of urbanization. More then one third of the population is concentrated in the capital – city Riga. There are six large towns in Latvia which in the EU context would more likely be classified as medium – sized towns (major towns) and other towns (small towns) and rural areas. Consequently, the labour market conditions and employers situation differ according to locality. The main objective of the study is to clear out the employers characteristics in the rural towns in Latvia. The branch, sector of economic activity, size of employer's institution, and interaction patterns with local municipality and employees are topics analysed in this article.

2 Agency relationship in labour market in rural towns

The precondition for successful regional development is employment. It is impossible without the involvement and activity of employers. Employers represent public (state and local governments' institutions) and private sector (entrepreneurship) in Latvia. Employers could be characterised according to the number of employees in the enterprise: micro, small, medium, large.

The theory of active agents (actors) motivates to act within or without a network or a community. Agents propensity to join a community or a network is detected everywhere. The question of agency is that of autonomy of human action while approaches focusing on agency relationships – seek to understand the ability of principals (employers or local leaders) to influence the actions of their agents (representatives of employers, specialists of municipalities, state institutions). Theory of agency presupposes certain agency relationships: autonomy of action implies that an agent is constrained by some environmental factor and – to the extent to which that constraint is social in nature – finds him – or herself in an agency relationship with that social force. Those relations might be utterly unsatisfactory from the agent's viewpoint, but it is an agency relationship nonetheless. Agency relationship models are merely policy tools and their virtues should be judged on the basis of their effectiveness regarding specific policy interventions [2]. It also regards to regional and employments policy. Restructuring and occupational changes disarrange the permanent employment patterns and have given rise to more precarious forms of employment characterized, for example, by insecure short-term jobs or unregistered employment [3].

Typical for rural town as a place of work is that it has a lot fewer employment opportunities as in urbanized areas. Employment in rural towns can be characterized as local. A significant part of the small businesses is orientated towards the local market, local consumption of goods. Local demands for goods and services change and reduce due to the decreasing and aging of population in rural areas.

The specific feature of rural towns is that they are like a transition from country to city. Rural towns should be centres where inhabitants of surrounding areas could find work and services, but employment opportunities are limited by the number of job offers and the availability of personal and public transportation, and the quality of roads. These are barriers also for employers to start and develop their activities [6].

The sustainability of rural towns facilitates their function as administrative, employment and service (health, education, trade) centres. Settlement could be regarded as sustainable, if it is a place where people want to live and work, now and in the future, where they are safe and inclusive, well planned built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all [5]. The most important issue of living in rural towns is employment possibilities.

The role of employers as the key agents in labour market processes differ according to each local municipality priorities, whether they are more administratively, economically or socially directed. Social importance of employers in rural towns differs also due to social relations between rural towns and the population of surrounding territories.

3 Methods

A combination of quantitative and qualitative data sources were employed in current study, including:

- analysis of Statistical Data;
- secondary data analysis (survey “Specific features of Latvia Regions Labour Market”);
- document analyses;
- experts interviews.

The survey covers all regions of Latvia and shows all forms of economic activity in different types of settlement: city, major town, small town and rural areas. The survey was performed from December 2006 till March 2007 as Computer Assisted Personal Interviews in state (including municipalities) and private sector enterprises and institutions using random sample (N = 6066). The parameters for sampling were: region, sector of economic activity, type of settlement and the number of employees.

The study explores data from the case study “Strategies for Small towns to become Centres of Employment and services” field work in small towns in different regions in Latvia in 2006-2007: 60 semi structured interviews with experts in small rural towns’: leaders and specialists of local municipalities and local employers in 12 small rural towns. The places of study were chosen according to two criteria: distance from capital (more than 100 km) and number of inhabitants (< than 10 000).

4 Employment in rural towns in Latvia

When considering balanced, sustainable development in Latvia’s regions, a special role could be assigned to the rural towns that already are centres or could become such as result of current administrative – territorial reform (ATR).

In accordance with OECD classifications, which are based on criteria such as population density, distribution of population, and the size of cities, Latvia’s regions can be separated into the following categories:

- predominantly rural regions: over 50% of population live in areas where the density of population does not exceed 150 per km²;
- regions with substantial rural influence: 15-50% of the population live in areas where density of population does not exceed 150 per km² with towns with a population of over 200 000;

- predominantly urban regions: less than 15% of the population live in areas where density of population does not exceed 150 per km² with towns of population over 500 000 [4].

According to these classifications, only Riga and its surroundings can be characterized as an urban region.

The population structure of Latvia includes Riga city, six larger towns, other towns and rural areas. The urban population compile 67.9%, the rural population – 32.1%. At the same time the living conditions, social and economic conditions are influenced by the kind of settlement and rural towns often are more similar to rural territories than to cities or major towns. That's why it is important to analyze Riga – 32%, Major towns – 17%, small towns and rural areas – 51% [1].

There is one city in Latvia – Riga, with 722 485 inhabitants in 2007 [1]. There are 6 major towns with more than 30 000 inhabitants in Latvia. All other towns located outside Riga urban area are small and could be defined as rural towns.

The major part of employers is concentrated in Riga and its surrounding areas and major towns of Latvia. There is a problem to analyze the employers, their activities in rural towns due to the lack of correct statistical data (rural towns are still not statistical units regarding economic and social records). Statistical data on rural towns are not divided in those including and not including rural territories.

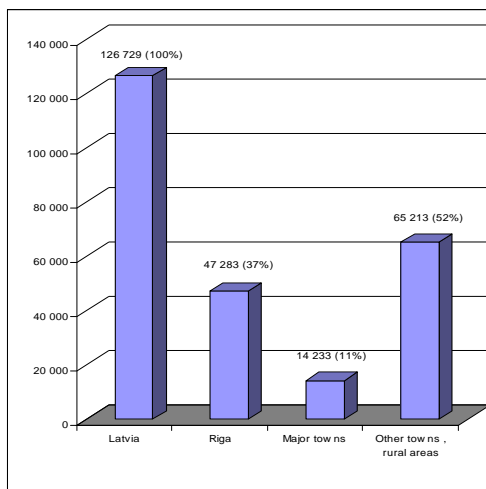


Figure 1. Economic activity in different type of settlements (N = 6066)

The kind of economic activity represents different groups of employers. The number of units of economic activity in towns and rural places compose 52% of all units and the number is proportional to population (51%). It could seem a normal situation according economic activity in rural areas but it is a delusion because the form of economic activity and the size of enterprise are not similar (see Figure 1).

The economic and employment possibilities in rural towns are more similar with the countryside and differ from social and economic conditions in capital city Riga and major towns.

The results of survey show that opportunities to start business differ notably in Riga and rural areas (see Figure 2).

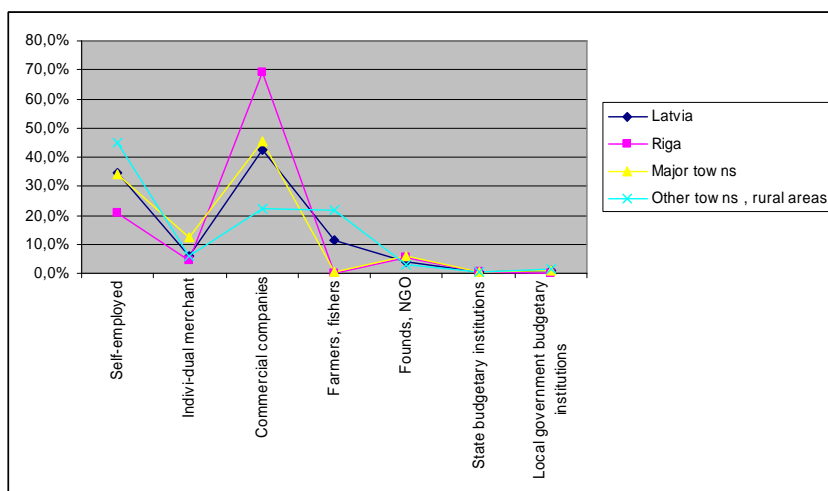


Figure 2. The forms of economic activity in different types of settlement (N = 6066)

The division of branches characterize employers according to different types of settlement and employment possibilities in each of them as well. Data from the “Specific features of Labour market in Latvia regions” survey show limited supply of job places in rural towns and rural area (see Figure 3).

The branches of economics are: 1 – agriculture, hunting and forestry (A); 2 – food industry; 3 – textiles; 4 – wood-working industry; 5 – printing and publishing industry; 6 – furniture industry; 7 – machine manufacturing; 8 – other manufacturing industry; 9 – electricity, gas and water supply; 10 – construction; 11 – wholesale, retail trade; 12 – hotels and restaurants; 13 – transport, storage and telecommunication; 14 – financial intermediation; 15 – Real estate, renting and business activities; 16 – repair of motor vehicles,

motorcycles, personal, household goods; 17 – IT; 18 – research; 19 – public administration and defence; compulsory social security; 20 – education; 21 – health and social work; 22 – other community, social and personal service [1].

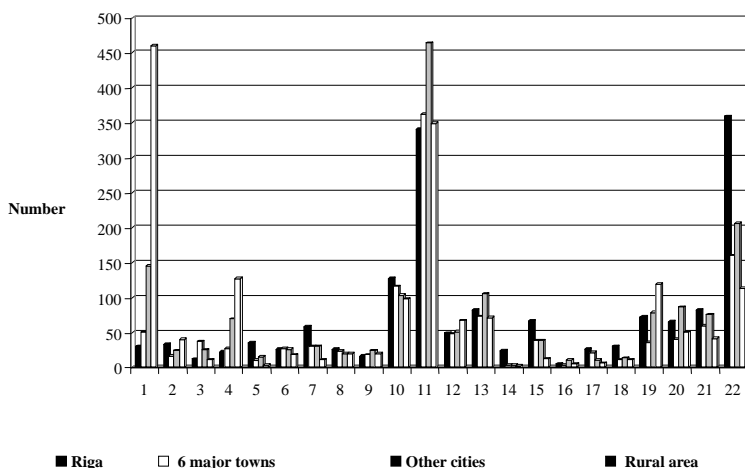


Figure 3. Branches of economic activity in different types of settlement (N=6066)

The agriculture is the branch of economic dominance in rural areas and the third most important branch of economics and employment in rural towns. Trade is in the second place in rural areas and in the first place in rural towns. In the third place in rural areas is wood-working and community, social and personal services in rural towns.

The branches unrepresented among employers in rural towns and areas are: 5 – printing and publishing; 14 – financial intermediation, 16 – repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles, personal, household goods; 17 – IT; 18 – research. The result is, firstly, lack of work place for specialists' in these branches and, secondly, lack of services supplied by these branches of employers in rural areas. These are potential directions to develop rural towns and strengthen their power as centers for sustainable rural development.

5 Employers as agents in rural towns

Main employers in rural towns are state and local municipality institutions. Private sector according to experts' opinion is related with traditional, branches of economics: dairy-farming, agriculture, woodworking, trade and

tourism. Traditional agriculture branches are declining each year. Most of them are micro or small enterprises and work for local consumption:

There are 15-20 stable farms in the rural territory of the town prevailing traditional branches. There are greenhouse and some apiarists too in the town (municipality leader Cesvaine).

The quality of services supplied by employers is very important for the survival of enterprise. It stands out against background cases when some goods or services attach inhabitants of surrounding territories:

There is a beauty parlour in Cesvaine. There go people from Jaunpiebalga and even from Gulbene (municipality leader Cesvaine).

Tourism as a branch of economics in rural towns developed quite well in most of them. It could be organized by private entrepreneurs (guest houses, recreation possibilities) or by agencies of local municipality (nature trails, museums). It helps to attract visitors from major towns and cities in Latvia, Baltic States and other countries. The entertainment in rural towns could be more attractive for persons who do not want to enjoy themselves in their own settlement (in familiar environment):

How many gambling places are in Smiltene? About five. It is better to play not at home. Here we can see medium level businessmen who do not want to be seen in the capital. They come here (municipality leader Smiltene).

Obviously, there are some positive practices in rural towns when employers attach different customers due to gainful geographical location, infrastructure. However, there is not enough evidence about orientation of employers to innovative solutions. It testifies that rural towns currently do not work as local centres of innovation. Employers in rural towns usually have very limited social and territorial perspective.

Employees' recruiting and selection mechanisms in rural towns are mostly local, traditional and limited by close social ties and prejudice. The fact that is often encountered in local labour market relations is unequal attitude towards different social groups. The telling example is regarding gender perspective. Almost all of the interviewed leaders and specialists of local municipalities and employers declared that the women situation in the labour market is worse than of men. They based their opinion on prejudice about appropriate "women professions" – sewing, trade etc.

Well, unemployment... If the man wants to work – no problem. Of course, we can talk about level... Sometimes they had good wages and they take a rest these months. They can do some work illegally. Women have little problems. From these 200 unemployed we have 120 women. In the same time in women spheres – trade, storage, sewing, - not every woman wants it and not every woman can it.. (municipality specialist Smiltene).

Results of interviews show that there is a lack of flexibility in the labour market in rural towns. Gender is still a very important ground for labour division. Similar situation is regarding age stereotypes and against persons with disabilities:

Do you think you can go as sells-girl in your age (32)?! (employer Ape)

It shows that gender stereotypes are very consistent in rural towns and influence choice and action of employers. Furthermore, it is a barrier for flexible, innovative changes in rural towns' labour market.

There is a serie objective factor influencing the situation of employment and development of rural towns in general.

First of all the infrastructure is unsatisfactory in rural towns, including the presence and quality of roads, public transport, healthcare service, schools and kindergartens:

We have problem with kindergarten. There are 180-200 children in the row. Parents know the situation, they look for other solutions. This is reason why many of women do not work (municipality leader Dagda).

In addition, an important factor is the administrative territorial reform. It was started in 1996 and is still not finished. As a result inhabitants can not plan their future in the rural towns and, as follows, employers could not see the perspective for their business.

The cooperation is another aspect in describing employers' as agents' role in rural towns. It is possible to distinguish horizontal and vertical ties. In most of the cases employers of rural towns use formal and informal vertical social ties. For example, former inhabitants return in rural towns to establish their enterprise due to personal contacts with the leaders of local municipality. Former inhabitants usually help employers to set up contacts with state institutions, political parties etc.:

We have lobbies in good sense. They do not forget the town. They bring together with right people in the highest level (municipality leader Smiltene).

There are very few horizontal social ties regarding cooperation and partnership between local municipalities and entrepreneurs:

Yes, cooperation. Not in the big volume, but it is. For example, sidewalks. Along private shop we divide expenses for building with owner (municipality specialists Grobina).

Most of the cases such cooperation occurs with the aim to increase the welfare of inhabitants. Local municipalities of rural towns promote entrepreneurship within their limited possibilities. However, there are many possibilities to develop entrepreneurship into less represented branches of economics – research, printing and publishing, finance intermediation and IT.

6 Conclusions

Employers in rural towns usually perform their economical activities in a traditional way. Traditional employment patterns associated with stable permanent employment and economy. Orientation to traditional employment patterns appears in:

- weak entrepreneurship initiatives;
- current economic activities;
- perspective employment strategies in rural towns.

The branches of economic activity often represented by employers in rural towns are trade, wood-working and agriculture.

The branches unrepresented are printing and publishing, financial intermediation, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles, personal, household goods; IT, research.

Consequently, representation of economic branches among employers impact employment possibilities for the inhabitants in rural towns and surrounding area.

The form of entrepreneurship – commercial companies is the more represented in rural towns and the countryside than in city or major towns.

The weak development of infrastructure is a barrier to formation of new employers – entrepreneurs.

The existing prejudices eliminate flexibility and innovation in the labour market in rural towns.

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Rural Development Program – SR and CR Comparison

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Annotation. The Rural Development Program is elaborated under the new condition of European Cohesion Policy first time. For the programming period 2007 – 2013, rural development will be implemented through one fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural development (EAFRD). At the same time, the policy aims have been simplified and clarified around three clearly defined objectives: (Axis 1) improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector, (Axis 2) improving the environment and the country side, and (Axis 3) enhancing the quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy. Compared shall be the structure of the RuDePr in respective countries, the linkage to National Strategic Reference Framework (all before regional development operational programs and rural development) and the consequences, that both documents are elaborated separately. Comparison of SWOT analyse results of countries, the development axis and financial resources for support program and selected aspects of implementation mechanism.

Key words: rural development program, SWOT analysis, implementaion a administrative structure, axis and priority measures.

A recent study on the territorial impact of the CAP came to the conclusion that market policy support tends to benefit the more developed rural areas with large farms and lower unemployment rates as well as higher than average population growth. These areas tend to be concentrated more in the core regions in northern and Western Europe and less in the peripheral regions in

the east and south During the period 2000–2006, rural development programme were financed under the CAP by both the EAGGF-Guidance and the EAGGF-Guarantee funds, the former applying in Objective 1 regions, the latter elsewhere.

For the programming period 2007–2013, rural development will be implemented through one fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). At the same time, the policy aims have been simplified and clarified around three clearly defined objectives: (Axis 1) improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector, (Axis 2) improving the environment and the country side, and (Axis 3) enhancing the quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy. In addition, the Leader method, a bottom up approach which has improved rural development through local action groups (almost 1000 across Europe) implementing strategies for their own areas will be mainstreamed. A budget of some EUR 88.3 billion¹³ has been allocated to the EAFRD for 2007–2013, with at least EUR 48.2 billion of this going to the Convergence regions. The overall budget is EUR 20 billion less than the Commission had initially proposed (In: *Growing Regions, growing Europe` Fourth Report on Economic and Social Cohesion*, EC Brussels, 2007, pp. 168 -170).

The minimum amounts earmarked for Convergence regions have been withheld; 2007–2013 will average some EUR 40 per head and per year, substantially higher than in other regions (i.e. the Regional competitiveness and employment ones) where the average will be EUR 18 per head and per year. (Commission Decision 2006/636).

In most Member States of the EU-27, the agricultural sector no longer constitutes the dominant part of the rural economy. In 2004, employment in the sector averaged 7.4% of the total in the EU-27, but with considerable variations between countries.

This paper is dealing with the comparison of Slovak and Czech programs of rural development, where the attention is on evaluation the concept approach to processing these documents and their connection with national strategic reference frames in these countries.

- a) With the comparison it was found out , that in Czech republic and Slovak republic was in the phase of processing the documents used partnership and cooperation principle, and concrete as a negotiation between the ministries and with another public administration bodies (for examples regions), non-government organizations and private sector representatives. In realization phase is used creation of coordination group model. The role of the group was coordinate activities within the programs creation. Also it was and it is monitored not to overlay between various programs and exclusion blanks, what is insured by already define correlation various operational programs to other financial instruments. In Slovakia was for instance Agriculture

paying agency, which should make cross control of possible covering from more sources.

- b) In Czech republic the responsible body for Program of rural areas development is Ministry of agriculture, the payment agency is State agricultural intervene fund, which also execute administrative support for program, the authorized body is Ministry of Finance, which is authorized give or take the payment agency the accreditation and as certification body is created within the Ministry of Finance. Another component, which expresses the conceptual approach and internal relations, is implementation structure made into each region through intermediary subjects. There are 7 regional divisions of State agricultural intervene fund as intermediary subjects in Czech Republic. In this case is necessary to observe, that their regional competences correspondence with the classification of cohesion regions, the exception is Stredocesky region and Praha region, which have same division of State agricultural intervene fund with the seat in Praha. In Slovakia is implementation structure the same as in Czech Republic. The responsible body is Ministry of agriculture, payment agency is Agricultural payment agency, which is also the administrative support for the program and certification body is Deloitte Audit, Ltd. The difference is in setting the implementation structure into each region through intermediary subjects, which is realized by 18 regional divisions of Agricultural payment agency. Within the conceptual approach there was evaluated also the structure of both documents. Programs of rural areas development are processed in harmony with European documents and regulations.

Table 1. A structure of Program of rural areas development in Czech and Slovak republic

Program of rural areas development in Czech Republic 2007 - 13	Program of rural areas development in Slovak Republic 2007 - 13
A list of used shortcuts	
Definition of terms	
Introduction	
1 The name of the Program of rural areas development	1 The name of the Program
2 The member state and the administration region	2 The member state and the administrative region
3 The analysis of the situation from the strong and weak aspects, chosen strategy for their solving and ex-ante evaluation	3 The analysis of the situation from the strong and weak aspects, chosen strategy for their solving and ex-ante evaluation
4 The justifying of chosen priorities regarding to European strategic directions and National strategic plan of rural areas development	4 The justifying of priorities chosen regarding to European strategic directions and national strategic plan, and also expected influence ex-ante evaluation

Program of rural areas development in Czech Republic 2007 - 13	Program of rural areas development in Slovak Republic 2007 - 13
5 Information about the axis and implementations designed for each axis and their description inclusive of concrete verifiable objectives and indicators, which allow to measure the progress, efficiency and expediency of the program	5 Information about axis and implementations designed for each axis and their description
6 Financial plan	6 Financial plan
7 Indicative financial classification according to implementations of the Program of rural areas development from the public and private expenses aspect (in euro, for the complete period)	7 Indicative financial classification according to rural areas development implementations (in EUR, complete period)
8 Complementary internal financing	8 The table of additional national financing according to the axis definitive between the implementations in regulation (ES) 1698/2005
9 Elements needed for evaluation according to economic competition, or the list of support programs approved according to the article 87 – 89 of Agreement to program implementation	9 Elements needed for evaluation according to economic competition and if it is usable, the list of support programs approved according to the articles 87, 88 and 89 of Agreement to program implementation
10 Information about program complementarity's in relation to implementations financed from another common agricultural policy instruments through cohesion policy and instrument for fishery	10 Information about complementarity with implementations financed from another common agricultural instruments through cohesion policy and also European fund for fishery
11 Program implementation	11 Administration bodies and responsible subject defining
12 Partners defining according to the article 6 of the regulation and the results from consultation with partners	12 Monitoring and evaluating systems
Enclousures	13 Articles providing program propagation
	14 Partners and consultations results definition
	15 Men and women equality
	16 Technical help

There is a comparison of SWOT analysis results in the second part.

Table 2. Comparison of SWOT analyses results of the Programmes of Rural Development in Czech Republic and Slovak Republic

Programme of Rural Development of Czech Republic 2007 – 2013	Programme of Rural Development of Slovak Republic 2007 – 2013
Strengths	
Rich tradition of agricultural production in all CR regions	Relatively dense settlement structure
Plenty of competitiveness commodities also in international perspective	Suitable size structure of agricultural enterprises
Related to production capacity, existing basic technical and social infrastructure and systems of transportation supply for rural settlements	Great potential of agricultural land use, particularly meadows and pastures, tradition in agricultural and forest land cultivation
Existing cultural heritage potential, developed social life and leisure time activities in rural areas	Solid forests production potential
	Developing intermunicipal and intersectoral cooperation
Weaknesses	
Lack of working opportunities in rural area	Unfavorable population trend
Out-migration of young and qualified labor force to more attractive areas	Lack of working opportunities
Sale problems as a result of commerce chains pressure	Migration of rural population to city regions
Insufficient integration of competitive agricultural enterprises with other producers and subsequent manufacturing industries	Low developed human resources capacity
Husbandry on rented land	Unfavorable demographic structure of rural population and high unemployment
Eroded land structure from the past, reduces biodiversity	Low developed land market as a result of fragmented ownership of land
Outdated technologies of agricultural enterprises and farmers	
Slow transfer of knowledge and innovations	
Low quality of surface and subterranean waters as a result of intense agricultural production	

Source: Programme of Rural Development of Czech Republic 2007-13, p. 35-37, Programme of Rural Development of Slovak Republic 2007 – 2013.

Table 3. Comparison of SWOT analyses results of the Programmes of Rural Development in Czech Republic and Slovak Republic (external aspects)

Programme of Rural Development of Czech Republic 2007 – 2013	Programme of Rural Development of Slovak Republic 2007 – 2013
Opportunities	
Taking advantage of rich cultural traditions	Decreasing of dependence on agricultural prime-production
Exploiting of the non-production function of agriculture for development	Creating or preserving of working opportunities
Production capacities should be concentrated on competitive commodities	Diversification of the rural economic base
Utilizing of modern technologies and knowledge of science and research in order to improve quality of agricultural products with higher value added.	Utilizing of local natural resources
Production of renewable energy resources and utilization of renewable energy resources in diversification of agricultural activities	Capital inflow to rural areas
Important role of agricultural subjects in land and nature value care	Improving the competitiveness of agro-food and forestry sector
Role of micro-enterprises in rural settlements	Space for new technologies implementation
Threats	
Import of cheap agricultural production from low-cost regions	Low labour forces mobility
Insufficient supply of technical infrastructure in rural settlements	High proportion of rural population in post productive age and continuous outflow of personal capacities from rural areas
Migration from rural areas, population ageing, decrease of business activity, decrease of purchase power.	Not developing of land market as basic precondition for enterprise in agriculture
Climate changes dangerous for agricultural production and property of rural population	Increasing unemployment in rural areas, deepening of agricultural decay of municipalities and rural areas

Source: Programme of Rural Development of Czech Republic 2007-13, p. 35-37, Programme of Rural Development of Slovak Republic 2007 – 2013.

In the case of Czech Republic, it can be positively valued, that SWOT analyze is divided into several priority areas, therefore it becomes compendious and more detailed; the brief summary of the SWOT analyze outcomes follows then. The depression of the both monitored documents is the simple presentation of the weakness, strengths, opportunities and threats indicators, without the description of the fact, whether these indicators are primed according to signification level. There is the absence of the coincidence matrix (table), which will interconnect the several elements with the proposal parts (priority axes and measures). It is not possible to know, which indicator will be laid the stress on and what was the base for the strategy choose connected with utilization and strengthening the strengths and elimination the weaknesses (strategy „maxi S – mini W”) jointly by all priority axes. The external and internal questions in CR and SR are solved through **four strategic development axes**, which define the basic development way of agriculture and rural areas for the period of the years 2007-2013 (see the structure of the priority axes and measures).

Further the valuation was focused on (3) **the structure of priority axes and their classification into measures**. It was realized the (a) **structure** comparison and on the basis of this analysis (see the table 6) can be alleged, that in the both monitored states is the same basic division of support areas, namely the 5 priority axes (in CR), or 4 axes (in SR), where the technical assistance is not referred to as solo axis. The further division in CR is based on the division algorithm „*the priority axis – the series of measures – measures – the further division*” whereby in SR is utilized the following division „*Axis – measures – the further division*” with the exception of one axis, which is divided on two groups of measures. The **contents** comparison of the areas for support (see the table 6) gives outcomes, through which can be alleged, that is similar in the both monitored documents.

Table 4. CR and SR comparison – Structure of support

CR		SR	
Priority axes	Group of Measures	Priority axes	Measures and Group of Measures
Axis 1: Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector	<i>I.1 – the physical capital restructuralisation and development, innovation support</i>	Axis 1: Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector	1. Modernisation of agricultural holdings 2. Adding value to agricultural and forestry products 3. Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry 4 Improving the economic value of forests 5. Producer groups 6. Vocational training and information actions 7. Use of advisory services
	<i>I.2 – transitional measures for CR and new member states</i>		
	<i>I.3 – knowledge support and human potential improvement</i>		
Axis 2: Improving the environment and the countryside	<i>II.1 – the sustainable use of agricultural land</i>	Axis 2: Improving the environment and the countryside	1 Measures targeting the sustainable use of agricultural land (4 Measures: Natural handicap payments in mountain areas and payments in other areas with handicaps; Natura 2000 payments and payments linked to Directive 2000/60/EC ;Agri-environmental payments; Animal welfare payments) 2. Measures targeting the sustainable use of forestry land (4 Measures: First afforestation of agricultural land; Natura 2000 payments – forestry land; Forest-environment payments; Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions)
	<i>II.2 – the sustainable use of forestry land</i>		
Axis 3: Quality of life in rural areas	<i>III.1 – Diversification of rural activities</i>	Axis 3: Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy	5 Measures: Diversification into non-agricultural activities; Encouragement of rural tourism activities; Training and information; Village renewal and development, development of amenities and services; Skill acquisition, animation and implementation of local development strategies
	<i>III.2 The quality of life improvement in a rural areas</i>		
	<i>III.3 – Information and education of all subjects involved in axis 3</i>		
IV. LEADER	<i>the local action group</i>	4 LEADER	3 Measures: Implementation of integrated local development strategies;Implementation of cooperation projects;Running the local action group
	<i>Implementation of local development strategies</i>		
	<i>Implementation of cooperation projects</i>		
V. Technical assistance		Technical assistance	

Source: PRV ČR 2007-13, PRV SR 2007-13.

In addition to the valuation of the both monitored documents, it was realized the (4) **confrontation of the extent of financial sources** too. The following table (see the table 7) shows, how much financial sources it will be able to exhaust from the rural development program in the current programming period, in the both monitored states.

Table 5. Financing plan – domestic and EU resources

CR		SR	
EU resources	2,815 mld. €	EU resources	1,969 mld. €
Domestic resources	0,800 mld. €	Domestic resources	0,593 mld. €
Total	3,616 mld. €	Total	2,562 mld. €

Source: PRV ČR 2007-13, PRV SR 2007-13.

The more detailed analysis of the financial sources (see the table 8) shows, that in the both states are some differences in their division between several priority axes. The most of the sources are intended for the priority axis II Improving the environment and the countryside in the both states and then follows the priority axis I Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector. The axis III Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy is covered as follows: 17,58 % in CR and 13,50 % in SR; 4,78 % in CR and 3,00 % in SR is devoted to Leader approach. The distinctive difference is in the amount allocated to technical assistance, which is in Slovakia fourtimes higher than in CR.

Table 6 Financing plan for corresponding axes for 2007-13 Rural Development Programme

	CR			SR		
	Public sources			Public sources		
	Public sources total	EEAFRD Support	% Share of Public sources	Public sources total	EEAFRD Support	% Share of Public sources
Axis I	840 522 497	630 391 873	23,25	835 427 149	620 366 695	31,50
Axis II	1 945 738 851	1 554 159 507	53,81	1 242 076 174	984 709 039	50,00
Axis III	635 553 634	476 665 226	17,58	358 040 205	265 871 440	13,50
Axis IV	175 969 147	140 775 318	4,87	74 524 570	59 082 542	3,00
Technical Assistance	18 019 241	13 614 430	0,50	52 517 816	39 388 362	2,00
Total	3 615 803 370	2 815 606 354	x	2 562 585 914	1 969 418 078	x

Source: PRV ČR 2007-13, PRV SR 2007-13. The final part of the research.

The final part of the research was on (5) **the valuation of selected aspects of their realization mechanism oriented** and in the first place on (i) the conditions of giving the grant support, (ii) defining the support recipients and (iii) specification of entitled expenditures.

The support recipient's definition is regulated by the basic program documents and more detailed specifications are showed in the concrete calls. There is no point in listing the long list of entitled applicants, because these groups of applicants differentiate according to axes and individual measurements. In general it can be stated, that the first and the second axis cover the subjects which run a business in the agricultural and forestry sector. The axis III Quality of life in rural areas covers in the both states the potential recipients that are qualified according to size of the municipality, which is generally until 500 inhabitants. The axis IV LEADER covers the local action groups, which rise on forward conditions.¹

The conditions of giving the grant support are also regulated by the program document, the conditions are, that the project has to be in accordance with the relevant legal regulation, all the approved projects could be covered financially by only one source of financing from the EU funds and the educational projects can not include the teaching, which is standardly organized within the school educational system.

The specification of entitled expenditures is also generally regulated by the program documents in accordance with the focus of several measurements. The more detailed description of these expenditures is the part of the individual calls. In general they are non repayable grants, which are selectively defined for several groups of recipients. The difference is in the statement, whether the recipients are from the sector of public administration, or they are private legal nonprofit organizations and entrepreneurs.

On the basis of the valuation of selected aspects, it is possible to point out, that as well as in the former fields of research, with the exception of implementation structure in regions, there are also utilized the same mechanisms.

Conclusion

The aim of the presentation is comparison of (i) program documents of the CR and SR (in framework of rural development and convergence policy), (ii) implementation praxis:

- There is the same mechanism of documents creation, where partners from public and private sectors, academic and scientific institutions are involved,
- Identical or very similar structure of documents,

¹In more detail to LEADER see Krbová, J.: Jak se venkov připravuje na Leader EU? – Úloha MAS v regionálním rozvoji. Sborník příspěvků v rámci řešení grantu Iniciační a akcelerační scénáře venkovských mikroregionů IG 613025, 2005 – 2006.

- Based on SWOT analysis the development is based on three axis and LEADER methodology, but the mutual relation between analytical and programming part (for example by use of the coincidence matrix) is insufficient,
- Different algorithm for the structure of the priority axis: in the CR priority axis – group of measures (support field) – measure – other possible classification. In the SR : Axis – measure – other classification (Axis 2 is exception with two groups).
- A different implementation structure > in the CR the subjects are corresponding to cohesion policy realization - better for coordination of both politics. In the SR differt structure in regions - worse coordination , but better access for applicants.
- As to financial allocation to priority axis there is clear dominance for landscape, environment and quality of life in rural areas is on the third place only.

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Voting Participation in Relation to the Size of Municipality

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Annotation. In the concept of social capital, the level of social capital is positively related with the level of political participation. Voter turnout is used as indicator of political participation. This paper is focusing on the differences in voter turnout between municipalities of different sizes in the Czech Republic. We will see that small municipalities has higher voter turnout than big one. Furthermore this paper shows the differences in voter turnout among regions in the Czech Republic.

Key words: voter turnout, political participation, municipality.

1 Introduction

This paper is an outcome of project the Partnership and Participation in Local Public Administration: Meaning, Experiences and Promises (shortly we call it PARTNER) which is being examined in the department of Local and Regional Studies on Institute of Sociology. Main goal of this project is to identify how local communities understand the idea of partnership and participation, to what extent and with what instruments the participation is implemented and what structures of partnership are created among particular actors.

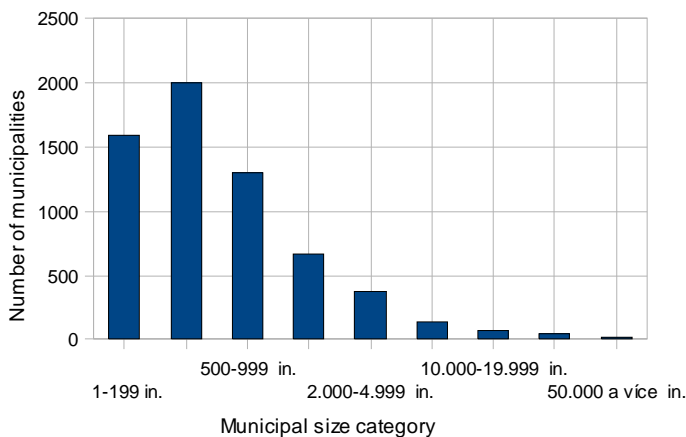
The objects of our research are local communities in three towns, working unions of municipalities and one regional government. We hope that our findings will help to understand the processes of participation and partnership. And we also hope that our outcomes will help with pulling down the barriers that are obstructing successful management of municipalities.

However, in this paper we will focus on voting participation in general on national level. The paper is divided into two parts. In the first part we will tell you about differences in voter turnout in relation to the size of municipality in the Czech Republic. In the second part we will show you the differences in voter turnout among regions (kraje) in the Czech Republic.

2 Analysis of differences in voter turnout

In the first part of this paper we will describe the differences in voter turnout in relation with size of municipality in the Czech Republic. Size of municipality is not the only factor that affects voter turnout, but it seems to be the most important differentiating factor of them all. You can see (Graph 1) the structure of municipalities in the Czech Republic in relation to their size. In the year 2006 we had 6.248 municipalities. You can see that majority consists of municipalities of smaller size under 1.000 inhabitants. It is about 79% of municipalities.

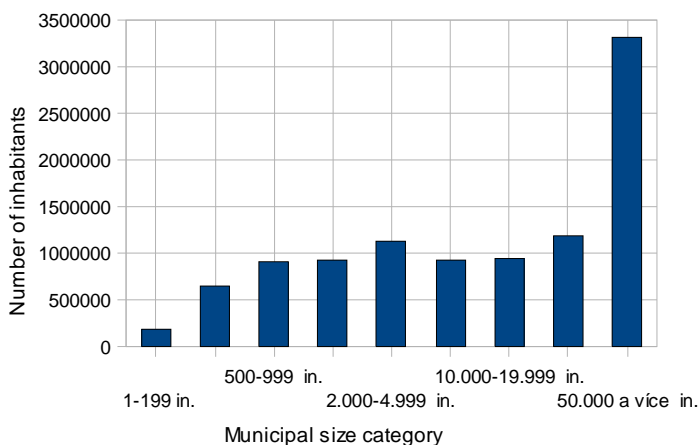
Graph 1. Structure of municipalities in the Czech Republic in relation to their size



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

If you look on Graph 2, you can see that only small share of inhabitants of the Czech Republic live in villages. Its only 17% of inhabitants in municipalities of size under 1000 inhabitants. On the contrary municipalities with 10.000 inhabitants and more make only 2% of municipalities, but 54% of people live there.

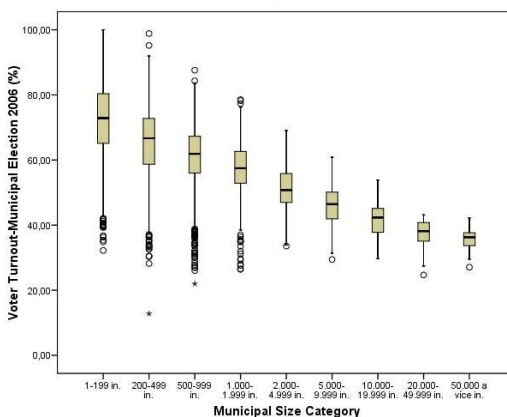
Graph 2. - Share of people living in municipality of specific size



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

Subsequently you can see boxplot (Graph 3) which shows the voter turnout in municipal election 2006 in relation to the size category of municipality. Voter turnout is decreasing in relation with increasing size of municipality. Voter turnout in the smallest municipalities is more then two times higher than in the biggest municipalities (72% against 35%) [Czech Republic has in total 63%].

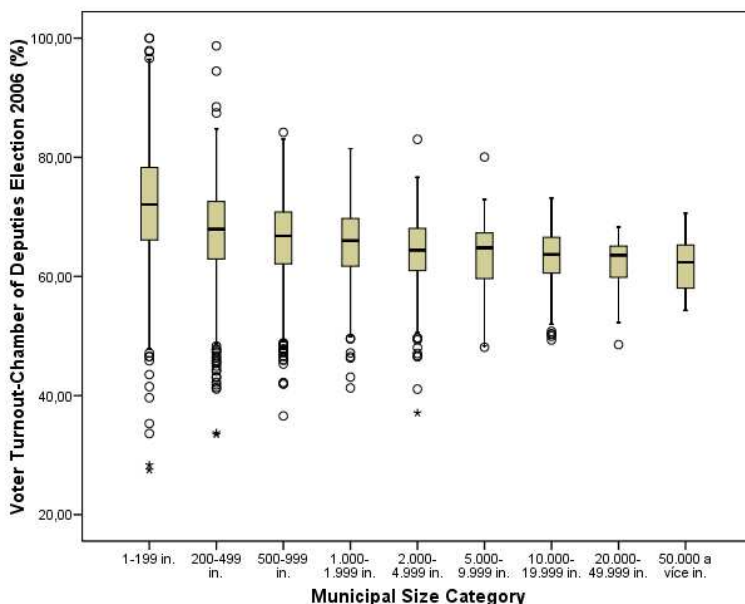
Graph 3. Voter turnout in Relation to the Size of Municipality (Municipal Election 2006)



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

On the following boxplot (Graph 4) you can see again the relation of size of municipality and voter turnout. This time it is the election to Chamber of Deputies. It is the same pattern like in case of the municipal election however the decrease is slighter but still significant. [Czech Republic in total 67%].

Graph 4. Voter turnout in Relation to the Size of Municipality (Chamber of Deputies Election 2006)



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

Above mentioned trend - inverse relation between size of municipality and voter turnout has been mentioned in many countries (Denmark, Slovakia, USA ...) [Krivý 2007; Larsen 2002; Oliver 2000].

This differences in voter turnout have been observed in the Czech Republic also in some previous elections [Čmejrek 2007; Kostelecký 2007].

But how we explain this relation? Why people in small municipalities participate in election more than in large municipalities? *It is not difficult to find arguments for why people in small communes participate in the local elections more than their counterparts who live in larger communes. They may be better informed about the municipal politics, they may have greater personal knowledge of the local politicians and have more ways, including very informal, to get in contact with them. Voters in small municipality may*

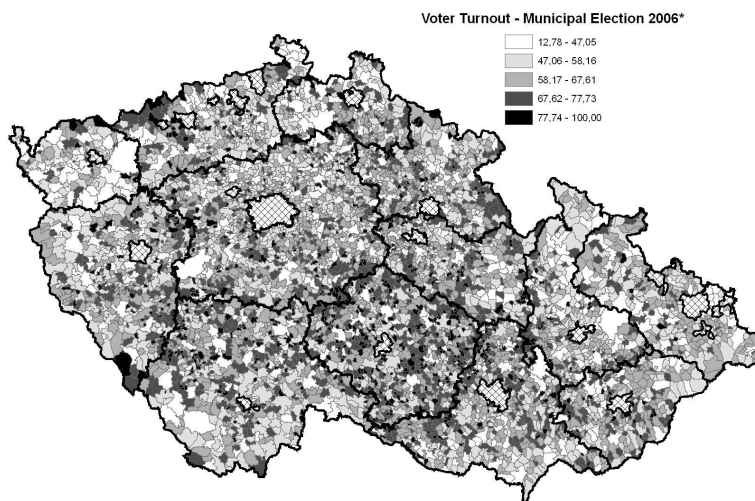
also take into account a rational choice argument; because of the generally small number of voters, they calculate that they have a greater chance of influencing the voting results, compared to voters in a large municipality where the vote of individual carries less weight. For all that, and may be also for other reasons, people in a small community may be more willing to participate [Kostelecký 2005].

But how we explain that the same pattern works in elections on national level? The arguments about greater personal knowledge of politicians or rational choice lack purpose. *It is possible that, in general, the greater social interaction found in small communities supports greater political participation. ... It is also possible that participation in local elections makes people in small municipalities accustomed to voting, and such “voting habits” also affect their participation in the national elections. ... Finally, it is also probable that higher electoral participation in small municipalities is caused partly by the fact that social control there is tighter. Participation in the elections is considered ... at least as “the responsible behaviour of citizen”. ... Consequently, the greater social control in the small municipalities prevents some of their inhabitants from abstaining [Kostelecký 2005].*

Now we will focus on regional differences in voter turnout. On this cartogram (Picture 1) you can see some differences among these regions. The most urbanised regions, like Karlovarský, Ústecký and Moravskoslezský (and of course Prague¹) have very low voter turnout. Only in the above mentioned regions the voter turnout was lower than 60% in municipal elections 2006. On the contrary one of the most ruralised regions, Vysočina, is region with highest voter turnout.

¹ But Prague is a special case, because this region consists of one city that creates in the same time one municipality, one district and one region.

Picture 1. Voter turnout in Relation to the Size of Municipality (Municipal Election 2006)

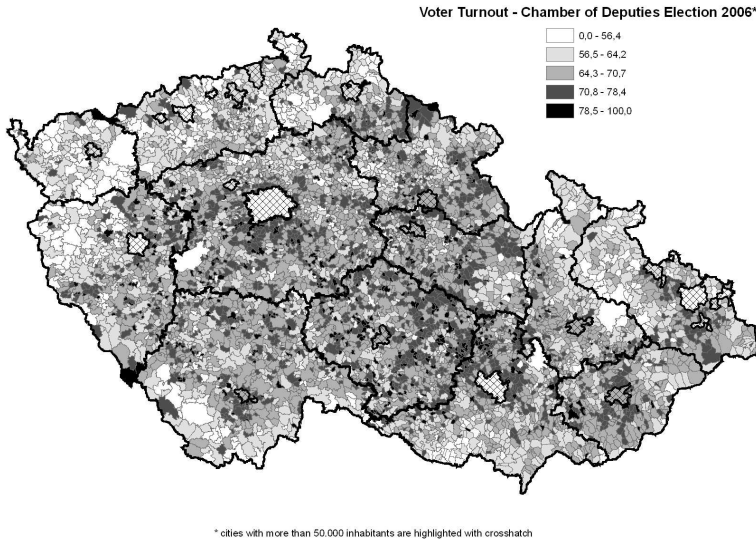


* cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants are highlighted with crosshatch

Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

The same pattern of spatial distribution like in the previous case you can see on following cartogram (Picture 2). Again the same regions, Karlovarský, Ústecký and Moravskoslezský, have lower voter turnout and Vysočina region higher turnout.

Picture 2. Voter turnout in Relation to the Size of Municipality (Chamber of Deputies Election 2006)



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

We asked, are the differences among regions caused only by different structure of municipalities by size? We have to say no, it is not caused only by the structure. If we compare municipalities of the same size, we found that there are also differences among regions. For example small village or big city in region Ústecký usually have lower voter turnout than settlements of same size in region Vysočina. In table 1 you can see the differences in voter turnout among municipalities of same size in different regions.

Table 1. Differences in voter turnout among municipalities of same size in different regions

Region	Inhabitants									
	0-199	200-499	500-999	1000-1999	2000-4999	5000-9999	10000-19999	20000 - 49999	50000 and more	Total
2 Středočeský	72,0	62,5	58,4	56,3	52,1	46,1	41,6	38,4	31,2	62,2
3 Jihočeský	72,4	65,8	59,2	58,2	51,3	47,6	41,2	38,1	35,8	65,5
4 Plzeňský	71,6	63,6	59,1	55,4	48,9	44,8	44,6	43,1	37,1	63,9
5 Karlovarský	71,4	62,2	55,3	47,3	43,7	39,1	32,7	30,7	35,7	55,6
6 Ústecký	70,0	65,0	59,0	52,4	47,2	38,8	35,8	33,8	34,2	59,7
7 Liberecký	69,1	67,2	60,9	54,7	44,5	45,0	43,2	34,2	38,7	60,9
8 Královohradecký	69,6	65,2	60,7	54,9	51,2	48,1	45,2	39,7	41,1	63,2
9 Pardubický	70,0	64,7	60,2	58,6	53,4	49,5	44,8	40,8	37,6	63,5
10 Vysočina	75,5	69,2	63,8	61,8	54,1	49,6	46,6	41,9	36,5	70,3
11 Jihomoravský	73,0	65,5	63,1	58,1	54,6	49,6	44,8	39,1	40,6	63,3
12 Olomoucký	70,0	66,5	60,7	56,7	49,5	40,7	41,7	36,0	33,7	61,4
13 Zlínský	70,7	67,0	64,5	60,6	53,5	47,6	41,9	41,4	38,8	62,5
14 Moravskoslezský	70,2	65,1	62,4	59,5	52,3	44,5	38,7	34,3	33,3	58,8
Total	72,3	65,2	60,7	57,2	51,2	46,1	41,5	37,5	35,8	63,4

Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

3 Conclusions

How we can explain these regional differences? Our experiences indicates that these differences are very similar to differences in the level of trust to political institution or spatial distribution of some indicators of problematic behaviour like abortion rate, divorce rate or illegitimate child birth-rate, unemployment rate, approximately crime rate and so on.

We should also take history of observed regions into account. It seems that some regions, where Sudeten Germans were expatriated and consequently repopulated with Czechs, now belong to the regions with lowest voter turnout. But our available data doesn't provide us to test hypothesis about relation between regions with lower voter turnout and expatriated regions.

Recently Kostecký, Patočková and Vobecká (2007) measured the level of social capital in Czech regions and they got very similar results – the lowest level of social capital is in regions Ústecký and Karlovarský and the highest in

regions Pardubický and Vysočina. (aggregate index of social capital consist of following indicators: number of NGOs per 1000 people, percentage of people reading newspapers and watching TV, level of trust in the president, regional councils and municipal boards; share of blood donors and voter turnout in regional and national elections (yes – again, but it is not only indicator, that have been used).

As conclusion we have to say – there is inverse relation between size of municipality and voter turnout in the Czech Republic. It does not matter on type of elections. But the strength of relation is bigger in elections on local level. There are also regional differences in voter turnout, but these differences in voter turnout are not dependent only on the structure of settlements but also on specific region. To find, how regional differences in voter turnout are created and what are main causes of this situation, is one of our objectives for further research.

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Appendix:

Picture 1. NUTS III regions (kraje) in the Czech Republic.



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own computations

Social Inclusion in Rural Municipalities in Latvia: View of Local Authorities

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Annotation. The problems of social exclusion are being addressed in rural municipalities in Latvia – social workers are employed and various services are offered to risk groups. However, deputies do not consider social exclusion to be an urgent problem, and they do not fully understand issues connected with social inclusion and its necessity.

Key words: Social inclusion, rural municipalities.

1 Introduction

Approximately one-third of the total population of Latvia (which is about 2.3 million) resides in rural areas. The reforms carried out lately in Latvia, together with Latvia's membership in the EU, have had a positive impact on the economic development of the country. Along with high economic growth rates, which are significantly more favourable in urban than rural areas [1], has come a rising rate of inflation. Overall, incomes have increased, but here also are marked income disparities between urban and rural areas [1]. In spite of rising incomes, there is a relatively high proportion inhabitants living in poverty. The at-risk-of-poverty rate (ratio of population living below the relative poverty line) has reached about one-fifth of total population [2], and the rate is higher in rural areas.

Though on the whole Latvia has experienced economic growth and an increase of individuals' and households' well-being, the society is experiencing problems of poverty and social exclusion. Social exclusion means the inability of individuals or groups of persons to fully or partially integrate into society, when they have been denied access or they have been impeded in accessing goods, services and/or actions vital for the development of personality and full participation in society [2]. The main precondition for reducing poverty and social exclusion is coordinated and well-balanced policy promoting social inclusion of different population groups. Social inclusion is a process aimed at preventing and reducing the risk of poverty and social exclusion and promoting full integration of people into society [2].

The process of social inclusion is multi-dimensional and complicated. It is regulated by a wide range of policy documents and legislative acts – European, national, and local. Local authorities are those who decide priorities, allocation of resources, and give finances to social assistance and social services in their municipalities. To get information about social exclusion and efforts to address the problem in rural municipalities, this research was carried out. This topic, in particular the emphasis on rural areas, has not been investigated before.

2 Sample and method

The research on „Implementation of social inclusion policy in rural municipalities in Latvia” was carried out by five researchers from Latvia’s University of Agriculture and one from Riga Stradins University. Field work took place October-December 2007. The sample was created by two steps: first, two regions (one with the largest and one with the smallest number of population) from each of four planning regions were chosen; second, by random sample three local governments were chosen in each region. A quantitative methodology was used for data collection. The questionnaire was filled by 141 local deputies in 24 rural municipalities.

The questionnaire consists of 53 questions which can be divided into several groups. There are questions about the functions of local governments and their implementation; about the social exclusion situation and excluded groups; about social work, social assistance and services; and about co-operation with other organizations and institutions in the sphere of social inclusion.

3 Results

The main tasks of social inclusion on the national level are as follows: improvement of accessibility of education and labour market services to children and young people subjected to the risk of poverty and social exclusion and improvement of access to resources and services for families, especially large and single-parent families, and for retired persons at risk of poverty, especially those living alone [1]. The tasks correspond with some of the statutory functions of local governments defined in the “Law on Local Governments”: to ensure social assistance; to provide for education; to provide assistance regarding housing; to facilitate economic activity and reduce the number of unemployed persons. Not all of the statutory functions are regarded by the deputies as equally important.

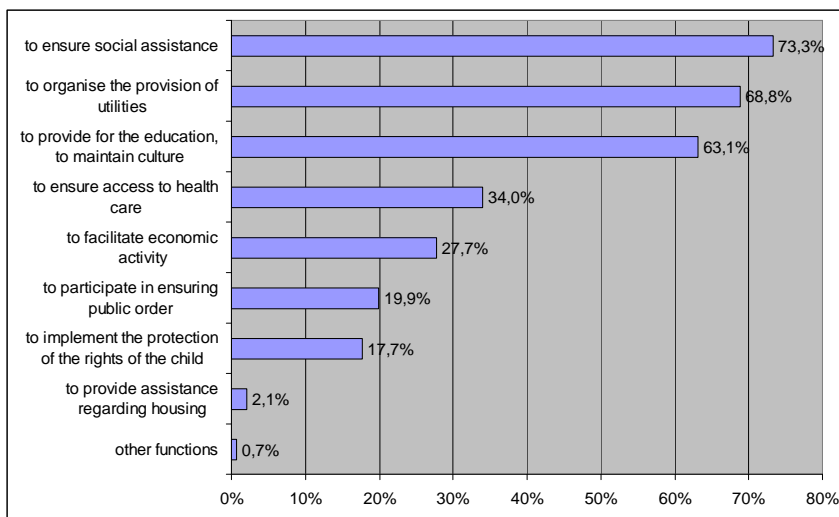


Fig. 1. View about the priority functions of municipalities

Provision of social assistance, provision of utilities and improvement of a territory, and financial allocations for the education and maintenance of culture are mentioned as priorities of municipalities. At the same time, other functions which also are closely related to social inclusion – facilitation of economic activity and provision of assistance regarding housing – are not considered as priorities.

Although social inclusion is considered a state priority in the social sphere, most respondents do not see social exclusion as an urgent problem in their municipalities. Only 35,5% of the respondents recognize it as a significant or more or less significant issue (see fig. 2). Therefore, it is not surprising that only 14,9% of respondents indicate that they have elaborated a plan of social inclusion. More than a half mentions that a plan is not elaborated, but issues of social inclusion are included in other plans. About one-fifth of the deputies do not see the necessity of such a plan in their municipality.

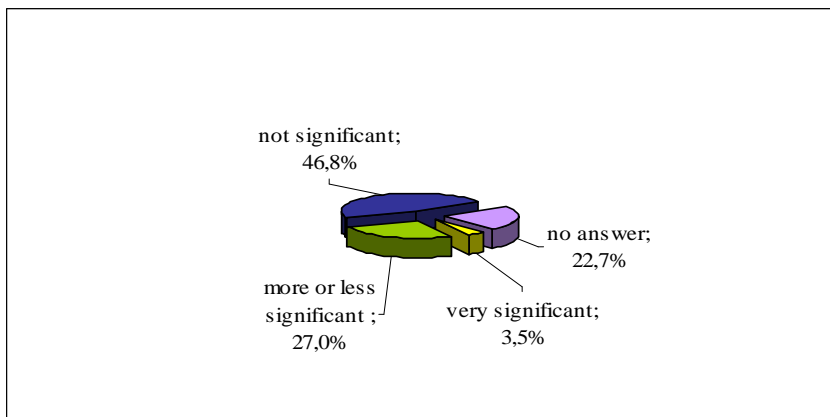


Fig. 2. View about significance of social exclusion issues

Generally, the following are identified as groups subject to the risk of social exclusion: large and single-parent families, disabled people; persons of pre-retirement age and retired persons; children and young people under social risk (from disadvantaged families, with functional impairments, ethnic minorities` children, especially Roma, young people released from imprisonment, orphans, unemployed, addicts, etc.), unemployed persons (the long-term unemployed in particular), homeless persons, persons released from imprisonment, ethnic minorities (particularly the Roma people) and victims of human trafficking [1].

The risk groups of social exclusion in rural municipalities are similar to those in the country in general, but there are also some differences (see fig. 2.). The differences probably are caused by the demographic and socioeconomic context of countryside. Rural municipalities in their work in the sphere of social inclusion pay more attention to retired persons, poor persons, large families and people with disabilities. Less emphasis is put on work with parents (women) after child-care leave, persons released from imprisonment, and homeless people. Probably, representatives of these groups are relatively few or none in rural areas.

The respondents mention also several categories of people who are not priorities yet, but, according to the view of deputies, their needs should be addressed: alcohol abusers (mentioned by 9% of the respondents), teenagers (1,4%), persons whose parents or children work abroad (1,4%). It depends very much on the decision of local authorities how resources in the social sphere are divided and which groups receive priority in terms of support.

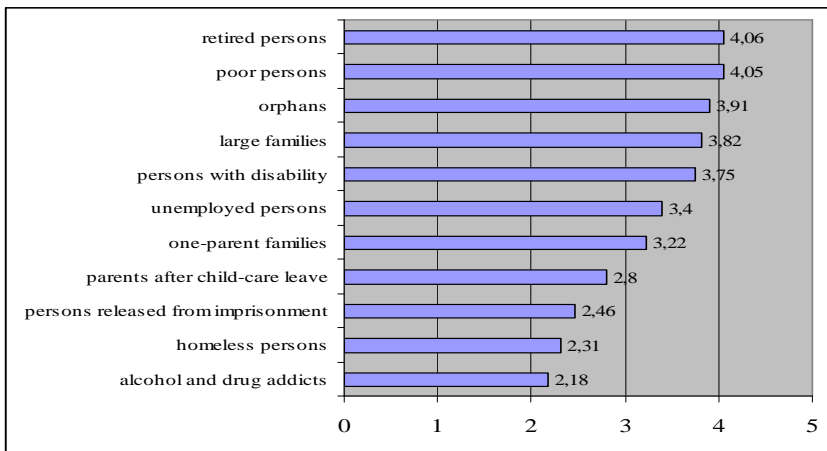


Fig. 3. Priority groups for social inclusion (mean grades, where “5” shows most priority)

The municipalities offer a wide range of services to the risk groups of social exclusion. The emphasis in social inclusion work in rural areas is put on social assistance, which is understood as “support in cash or in kind to persons (families) lacking means to meet their basic needs (food, housing, health care, compulsory education)” [2]. Along with various kinds of benefits (guaranteed minimum income benefit, lump-sum benefit in cases of emergency, and benefits paid out on local governments’ initiative), a significant role is played by information offered to risk groups about their rights, assistance, and services available.

Services offered to different segments of the population differ according to their needs. So, education and re-qualification services more often are offered to unemployed people (mentioned by 46,6% of respondents), orphans (20,6%), poor people (17,7%) and persons with a disability (17,0%). As target groups for home care service the respondents see persons with a disability (53,2%) and retired persons (51,1%). All groups are recipients of social rehabilitation, but most often it is provided for persons with disabilities (29,1%), alcohol abusers (19,1%), and retired persons (17,0%). Local governments are responsible also for accessibility of the environment; however, these services are mentioned by the local authorities more rarely than other services and forms of assistance. Interestingly, respondents more often see retired persons, large families, single-parent families and persons released from imprisonment as targets of support. Only then are disabled persons mentioned, though it might seem that this issue is more relevant to them than to other categories of service recipients.

In addressing complicated social problems and promoting social inclusion, social work is of great importance. The “Social Services and Social Assistance Law” states that municipalities have to provide at least one social worker per thousand inhabitants. Municipalities in which the population exceeds 3000 persons must set up a social service office. In reality, 15% of the total number of municipalities does not have a social service office or a social worker. These duties are performed as an additional job by a person holding another job. In addition, only about 40% of social workers have adequate specialized education, and 29% are studying [2].

The situation regarding social workers is better in the investigated municipalities. Fully 38,3% of the respondents indicate that there is a social service office in their municipality, 58,9% have a social worker, and only 2,1% of the respondents say that social work is performed as additional job in their municipality. As well, the competence of social workers is evaluated as high by 83% of the deputies, and only 1.4% of the respondents mention that a qualification of their social worker is law and it would be good to replace the worker.

The situation in municipalities is not as good with other resources important for social inclusion (see table 1).

Table 1. Evaluation of resources (%)

Resources	Sufficient	Insufficient
Financial	25,5	66,6
Human	41,8	41,8
Infrastructure	53,9	25,5

Although about two thirds of the deputies mention a lack of financial resources, this is not considered as a central problem in social inclusion work. Instead, respondents see subjective factors as obstacles: unwillingness of people to solve their problems, a lack of interest, inability to adapt to changes, inability to make decisions. Often also alcohol abuse is seen as a factor that hampers social inclusion. More rarely do the deputies relate the problems in reducing social exclusion to objective factors – a lack of finances, a lack of job vacancies, distance from the capital, bad road conditions, lack of day-centres, etc.

To facilitate the work of social inclusion, municipalities have established co-operation with state and local governments’ institutions, NGOs, and the private sector. Most of the respondents evaluate the co-operation as good. They also give a positive evaluation to social inclusion work carried out in their municipalities in general.

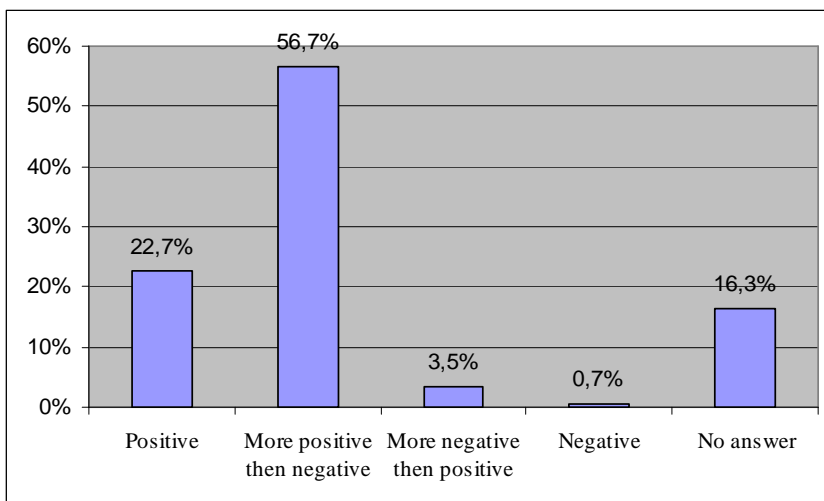


Fig. 4. Evaluation of social inclusion work in rural municipalities

On one hand, the responses given by deputies show quite an optimistic picture of the social sphere in their municipalities. On the other hand, it is surprising that a significant number of the respondents do not have sufficient information and knowledge about social exclusion issues and their solution in the municipalities. So, 22,7% of the deputies cannot answer if social exclusion is an urgent issue in their municipality; 23,4% do not know whether there are plans where social inclusion activities are elaborated; 15,6% cannot evaluate the competence of social workers in their municipality. Approximately one-third of the respondents do not know if there is co-operation in social inclusion work between the local government and NGOs or the private sector; about a fifth are not able to evaluate resources of infrastructure. Therefore it is not surprising that 16,3% of the respondents have difficulties evaluating the work of local government in the solution of issues of social exclusion.

It is understandable that not all of the deputies are experts in the social sphere in general and social inclusion in particular, but we must not forget that local authorities are those who with their decisions shape local social policy and allocation of resources for its implementation.

4 Conclusions

The work of social inclusion has been done in rural municipalities, although a substantial proportion of rural deputies do not consider social exclusion to be an issue there.

Various social services and social assistance are offered to the risk groups of social exclusion, and social assistance is dominant among other activities. Most attention in this work is paid to retired persons and poor persons, however, services are offered to other groups as well. There are social service offices established and social workers employed in rural municipalities; they can be considered as significant resources for social inclusion work.

The deputies see various obstacles that hamper social inclusion. Notably, they mention subjective (individual) factors more often than objective (structural) factors as reasons for social exclusion.

Taking into account the fact that a significant number of the respondents had difficulty giving definite answers, we can conclude that a part of the deputies do not fully understand the issues connected with social inclusion and its necessity, and not all of them have enough information about social inclusion activities taking place in their municipalities. Local authorities probably rely too much on social workers; they do not pay much attention and do not go in depth into social issues and the means to address problems themselves.

To ensure a more nuanced approach and to make work in the social sphere more successful, it would be useful to elaborate a plan for social inclusion in municipalities. It would also be useful for the deputies to widen and deepen their knowledge about social issues, their solution, and the necessity of this work.

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Transformation of occupations and educational levels through generations of rural inhabitants in Poland

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Annotation. The main objective of the paper is to present transformation of occupations, educational levels and additional qualifications through generations of rural inhabitants in Poland on the base of research results considering three generations of rural inhabitants.

Key words: rural inhabitants, occupation, education level, additional qualifications, generation.

1 Introduction

The main objective of the paper is to present transformation of occupations and educational levels through generations of rural inhabitants in Poland, as one of the most important aspects of socio-economic characteristics of the countryside on the base of research results considering three generations of rural inhabitants in Poland. Such formulated aim can be realized by looking for relationship between three distinguished age groups (generations) and education levels as well as occupations and additional qualifications.

1.1 The role of occupation and educational level of rural inhabitants from the sociological point of view

From the sociological and even historical point of view it is very interesting to observe and analyze transformation of occupations and educational levels through generations of rural inhabitants. Changes taking place in rural communities reflect more global trends, like human capital development and specialisation, concerning all societies in the world.

First of all it should be stressed that there have still been the quite significant differences between urban and rural areas in Poland. At the end of 2006 there were 38,6% of Polish population living on rural areas whereas 61,4% lived on urban areas [1].

Anthropologists' researches as well as various sociological researches has been revealed significant differentiation of material and civilization living conditions in different size of towns and villages. Rural inhabitants have usually had lower incomes and have been worse educated. However, there are also differences inside rural population. People living in households with a farm's user constitute slightly more than 50% and usually they perceive themselves as farmers but agriculture as the main source of income is only for 17% or even less (depending on the researches and their methodology) of rural inhabitants. The next group, persons who are not farmers, have non-agricultural jobs or have so-called transfer sources of income like: pensions or different kinds of social relieves. Moreover there is more and more people, who treat rural areas as a place of seasonal or even year-long stay. They bring new patterns of behaviour and open new possibilities of occasional works [6].

However, it should be also mentioned that the researches on distances between social and occupational categories show that farmers are perceived beyond the main dimension, as if they are on the another side of the axis identifying social and cultural isolation of rural areas. This phenomena takes place regardless of the level of economic development, political system and culture [4]. Additionally in Poland, such job as "farmer" is also not a very esteemed one, placed usually near the middle of a job's hierarchy.

Taking into account these conditions it is very important to observe transformations taking place in rural communities concerning educational level, occupation as well as additional qualifications of rural inhabitants and research if these changes bring them closer to urban communities or enlarge the differences.

1.2 The role of occupation and educational level of rural inhabitants from the economic point of view

Human resources are currently considered to be the most important factor that determines a country's development and its competitiveness on the international arena. An essential role in the shaping of human resources is played by the education. More and more young residents of Poland's rural areas understand the importance of education for their future life and career. However, the general level of the rural population's education is still lower than that of urban population [3].

As far as the branch of economic activities is concerned, agriculture and agribusiness were traditionally perceived as a main element of rural areas.

These patterns have been changing recently and there are some functions which are getting more and more important. One of the results of these processes is change in occupations, educational levels and additional qualifications represented by rural societies. Moreover, nowadays quite significant proportion of rural inhabitants does not come from the countryside – they work in towns but moved to the countryside because they want to have a rest from pressure from an urbanised lifestyle.

In most rural areas of the European Union the primary sector accounts for less than 10% of total employment. In a third of rural areas its share is less than 5% (around the EU-25 average). However, in some rural areas – particularly in the East and South of the EU – its share is above 25% [5]. Education level as well as occupation of rural inhabitants, and consequently to some extent agricultural workers, decide also on development opportunities of this sector. Unfortunately many farmers do not have the skills necessary to take advantage of the potential of the new environment for innovation, provision of environmental services, diversification, and development of local services and bioenergy production.

From the economic point of view educational levels and occupations play an important role as determinants of possibilities of finding a job in non-agricultural sectors, which are the base for sustainable rural development. The service sector is the biggest employer in Europe's rural areas but is smaller compared to urban areas and tends to be dominated by the public sector. This is due to the underdevelopment of private services which remain largely urban. This is reflected in the slower shift to activities centred in the knowledge-based economy [2].

2 Research methods and results

2.1 Resource materials

Empirical data analyzed in the paper comes from the research project entitled “Analysis and assessment of rural women situation on labour market” co-financed by the European Social Fund within Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development realized in Department of Marketing and Agrarian Policy in Warsaw University of Life Sciences. Though women situation on labour market cannot be considered without their families, especially so traditional as these ones in the countryside, so 1000 entire rural households from selected 24 Polish poviats were interviewed during the research in 2006. The total investigated population numbered 3034 people aged more than 18 years.

All data from the questionnaires were gathered in a database in the SPSS software and all statistical analyses were prepared on its base.

2.2 Methods of analysis

Occupations of investigated rural inhabitants were classified on the base of the Polish Classification of Occupations and Specialities [8] adjusted to the International Standard Classification of Occupations accepted at the XIV. International Conference of Labour Statisticians in Geneva in 1987 as well as its next edition from 1994, so called ISCO-88 (COM) [7] adjusted to requirements of the European Union. The analysis of occupations of the examined population was carried out on the base of sub-major groups of these classifications.

Statistical analyses were carried out with use of contingency coefficient and V. Cramer's coefficient to examine the relationship (correlation) between age and education level as well as occupation and additional qualifications. The choice of coefficients was conditioned by the kind of data – the selected coefficients allow to compare categorical variables such as age group with education level and occupation.

2.3 Results

The investigated population of rural inhabitants was divided into three groups (generations):

1. the youngest group – from 18 to 30 years;
2. the middle group – from 31 to the pensionable age (60 years for women and 65 for men in Poland);
3. the group of pensioners.

Nearly all individuals with not completed primary education (except one) belonged to the group of pensioners. The lowest proportion with only primary education was in the youngest group whereas the highest in the group of pensioners. The opposite relationship can be observed concerning the persons with academic education – the proportion of people with such education level was the highest among the youngest interviewed people.

The preliminary analysis of proportions of rural inhabitants with particular educational levels according to participation in these three groups was confirmed by the statistical correlation coefficients. The contingency coefficient and V Cramer's coefficient had respectively values 0,524 and 0,434 with the level of significance $p < 0,001$ which indicated quite strong relationship between age group and educational level (both the contingency

coefficient and V Cramer's lie in the interval $<0; 1>$, so obtained results allow to confirm quite visible relationship).

Similar relationship could also be expected in the analysis of occupations of investigated rural inhabitants (figure 1). The proportion of persons without any occupation was the largest in the group of pensioners (nearly 50%) whereas among the representatives of the middle group it was at the level 5% and the youngest group even 3%. On the other hand, the general secondary education level was more frequent in the youngest group.

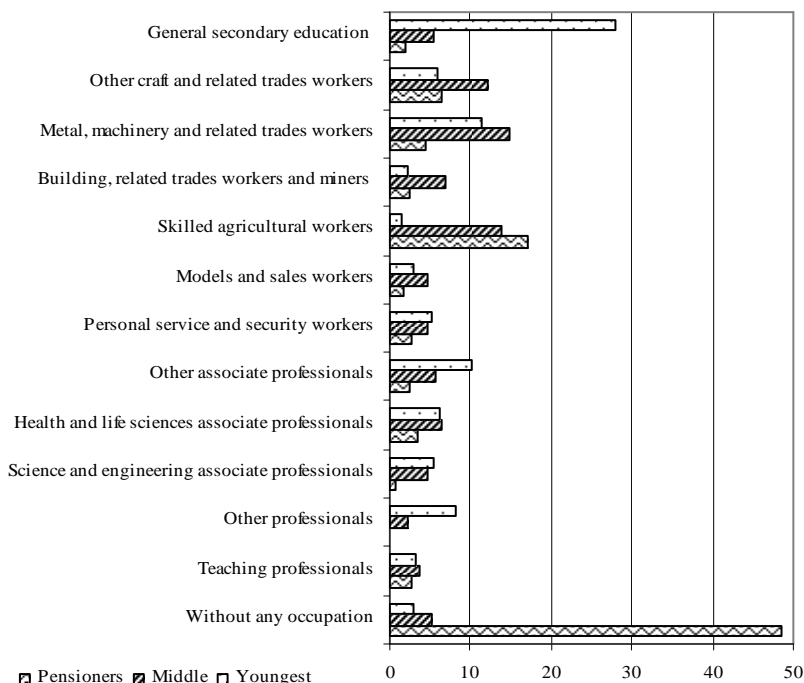


Fig. 1. Occupations of rural inhabitants according to age group (occupation whose proportions in the whole population exceed 3%)

It is also clear that belonging to a group of skilled agricultural workers was the most popular among investigated pensioners whereas in the middle and the youngest groups metal, machinery and related trade workers constituted the highest proportion.

As in case of the previous relationship the preliminary analysis of proportions of rural inhabitants with particular occupation according to participation in three age groups was confirmed by the statistical correlation coefficients. The contingency coefficient and V Cramer's coefficient had even slightly higher

values, respectively 0,561 and 0,479 with the level of significance $p<0,001$ which of course indicated quite strong relationship between age group and occupation.

The above analysis is based on the sub-major groups of the Polish Classification of Occupations and Specialities because the presentation of all occupations represented by investigated rural inhabitants could have make it not clear. However it seems to be interesting to determine the most popular occupations within particular age groups at the level of a unit occupational group. Results of analysis at this level indicates that the most popular occupational unit group was a group of plant and animal production farmers both within pensioners as well as in the middle group. It confirms the historic pattern of a countryside as a exclusive place of agriculture and consequently the first sector. The representatives of the youngest group are more generally educated because, the proportion of people with general secondary education is the highest. It can be a very advantageous factor of sustainable rural development and diversification of activities in the countryside because nowadays the cases of working at only one place during the whole life is very rarely, people quite often change places of work and having general education is better preparation to adapt for new challenges.

These positive changes taking place in the Polish countryside are also confirmed by the analysis of additional qualifications owned by the researched rural inhabitants. In the group of pensioners only 4% had additional qualifications – the most popular were connected with metal, machinery and related trades qualifications as well as of course widely understood farmer's qualifications. Practically, taking into consideration more detailed classification at the level of unit groups, the additional farmer's qualifications were the most popular ones. The middle group was characterized by the highest proportion of persons with additional qualifications – 16%, with drivers and mobile plant operators dominating, from more detailed point of view – heavy truck and lorry drivers. There were 10% of the youngest investigated rural inhabitants with additional qualifications, let us hope that they will gain more extra abilities during their vocational life. The most popular in this group was also drivers and mobile plant operating, from more detailed point of view also heavy truck and lorry drivers but the next was computer's using, less popular in the middle group whereas in the group of pensioners only one person declared such ability.

However, relationship between age group and ownership or not of additional qualifications was confirmed by the rather low values of the contingency coefficient and V Cramer's coefficient calculated during this analysis – respectively 0,127 and 0,128 with the level of significance $p<0,001$.

Not so strong relationships were found during comparison of educational level and origin of a household with a farm or a non-agricultural household. The

contingency coefficient and V Cramer's coefficient had respectively values 0,113 and 0,114 with the level of significance $p < 0,001$ – the lowest one calculated in this analysis. It can indicate that the differences in educational level are not so strongly associated with running a farm.

Occupations of investigated individuals were more closely related to ownership a farm - the contingency coefficient and V Cramer's coefficient had respectively values 0,236 and 0,243 with the level of significance $p < 0,001$ – but these relationship were also smaller than within the analysis according to age group.

3 Conclusions

Education level, occupation as well as additional qualifications are very important factors of rural development both from the economic as well as sociological point of view.

Higher educational levels, diversification of occupations with general background as well as gaining additional qualifications are very important factors of sustainable rural development. Conducted analyses prove that significant changes have taken place in this field on Polish rural areas.

From the statistical point of view the most considerable relationship was found between age group and occupation, but it occurred positive tendency like increasing diversification of occupation in younger researched groups. The similar scale of connection was between age group and educational level also with positive tendency in form of higher educational level in younger investigated groups. The relationships between additional qualifications and age group as well as educational level and occupation in comparison with origin of a household with a farm or a non-agricultural household were also examined. However the results did not indicate so strong relationship like in the previous cases but they also proved positive structural transformations on the Polish rural areas.

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The Key Elements for Success and Intervention Effectiveness of Local Action Groups

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Annotation. The main benefit of the project that takes two years of work (2007 - 2008) is a comparison of Local Action Groups (LAG) in the Czech Republic which are usually used as an example of presentable attitudes to the regional development management and identifying so called "good practice" of the LAGs' functioning. This project will bring information about the impact of the community approach on rural development and about its benefits for increasing the social-economic dynamics of the rural areas in the Czech Republic.

Key words: The LEADER method, Local Action Group, rural development, regional development, methodology for determining the LAG quality, LAG management, the good practice of LAG management.

1 Introduction

What is the purpose of this project?

Rural regions in the Czech Republic had the opportunity to prepare for the application of the LEADER method, the main purpose of which is the stimulation of local development in the "bottom-up" principle, since 2002 under the "Rural Development Program". It was later implemented into practice in the form of national programs called LEADER ČR, which started in 2004, and primarily LEADER+ implemented under the Rural Development and Multifunctional Agriculture Operating Program co-financed by the European Union. The LEADER method is seen as a significant tool that can be used for rural areas to achieve competitiveness, cohesion and approximation to sustainable living.

The primary tool of the LEADER method resides in Local Action Groups (MAS – Místní akční skupina), which comprise of local stakeholders applying the public-private partnership principle. It is thus typical that local action groups associate the representatives of self-governments and other public

institutions, entrepreneurs and non-governmental, non-profit organizations. It is however not exception that members of such LAG are also proactive members of the public, which we see as very positive. These intersectoral and interdisciplinary partnerships may hold out great potentials to participate successfully in the strategic rural country planning while taking care to accommodate for the diverse conditions in the individual regions. They dispose of financial means to implement their strategies and those accomplished in their cost-effective use are able to influence the practical development of the region significantly.

Gradually, they are beginning to perform functions that are not connected directly with the mere distribution of subsidies to individual entities operating over the local action group's territory. Local action groups are emerging as active members of the region's social and cultural environment. A strong civic society is a prerequisite to the success of rural development policies. As a result, the functions of local action groups include the delivery of as high as practically achievable participation of key players in the regional development process of the given rural area. This is the type of functions, in addition to enforcing the LEADER method that is in the focus of project called "Key Elements for the Success of Local Action Groups".

The primary objective of this project is to perform a pilot comparison of the activities of selected local action groups within the territories of their operation and the evaluation of their operational success. The outcome of this project will be a methodical guideline for the operational effectiveness evaluation of local action groups. This guideline will provide answers to such questions as whether the approach of a local action group to issues identified within its operational territory is good and assist other entrepreneurs, non-governmental non-profit organizations (NNO) and municipalities in their development. Among other, the guideline will include a checklist to be used by local action groups in assessing their own activities. The project implementation is planned to end in December 2008 and is supported by the Ministry for Local Development based on the results of a public contest in research and development under the WD Program – regional disparity solutions research.

Where is the project implemented?

Six local action groups (MAS – Místní Akční Skupina in Czech) seated over the territories of Bohemia and Moravia participate in the project. When selecting these LAGs, emphases were given to their geographical position, the varied sizes of their territories and numbers of population as well as to the number of implemented programs (LEADER ČR 2004 – 2006, LEADER+). The selections included local action groups of varied sizes and of varied levels of experience with the implementation of the LEADER method.

The following local action groups participate in the project:

- Český Západ – Místní partnerství (Plzeňský kraj /Plzeň Region/);
- Kyjovské Slovácko v pohybu (Jihomoravský kraj /South-Moravian Region/);
- Pobeskyd (Moravskoslezský kraj /Moravian-Silesian Region/);
- Posázaví (Středočeský kraj /Central-Bohemian Region/);
- RP Regionu Hranicko (Olomoucký kraj /Olomouc Region/);
- MAS Vltava (Jihočeský kraj /South-Bohemian Region/).

What are the steps of the project?

These sample local action groups are used to analyze their ways of identifying primary issues within their territory, their responses and attitude to entities applying for support for their projects. Furthermore, the contributions of individual action groups to the development of the given territory outside the scope of the LEADER Program. After performing the comparison analysis of these local action groups, draft criteria will be designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the action groups' operations.

This draft will be finalized based on comments provided by local action groups participating in the project and an external expert board of the project comprised of LEADER Program experts from ministries and agencies in charge of implementing the LEADER Program in the Czech Republic, as well as experts from the academic environment. Outcomes of the project will then be discussed with interested members of the wider public.

What are the benefits of this project?

This project will result in the creation of a methodical guideline to evaluate the operational effectiveness of local action groups, which will give answers to such issues as whether the given LAG approaches problems identified within its territory adequately, whether it communicates well with its territorial partners and assists other entrepreneurs, NGOs and municipalities in their development. Such performed pilot evaluation of the success levels of the activities of six LAGs can be then used to evaluate the operating effectiveness of LAGs implementing the LEADER Program in the 2007 – 2013 period and thus for the evaluation of the suitability of public funds expended in this period.

What came in 2007?

At this point, we would like to draw our reader's attention to the fact that this text only contains the working versions that will be further brushed up during the project implementation.

In 2007, the first two activities of the project were implemented. The first subsisted in the creation of a methodical guideline for the comparison analysis of individual LAGs, containing the socio-demographic data scopes to be determined, a survey questionnaire for individual local action groups participating in the project and structured interviews to be conducted with the representatives of individual LAGs and applicants for support from LEADER type programs within the action group's territory. Additionally, a procedure to compare LAG strategic documents was set up.

The second implemented activity involved data collection based on the guideline made under the first step. In the course of the year, statistical data were collected from open sources, the project implementers studied strategic documents and other materials received from local action groups and simultaneously performed field surveys in their territory. There was also a preliminary survey in the local action groups in the form of a survey questionnaire designed as part of the comparison analysis guideline. The progress of the above activities gave rise to the first draft thesis for the evaluation of intervention effectiveness of local action groups. Currently, this draft is subject to the commentary procedure.

2 First draft thesis for the evaluation of intervention effectiveness of local action groups

The following text is structured into three levels. Main theses are broken down to sections, which are further detailed in statements to be verified.

Main thesis 1: *Identified issues correspond with the real-life issues*

Demographic Section

The strategy contains measures leading to stabilizing the territory's population.

Economic Section

If the region shows unemployment level greater than twice the state average, the strategy contains measures to improve the employment (re-training, consulting, support to entrepreneurship and establishing of new businesses).

Territorial Integrity Section

A uniform element exists (historical, topical, geographical, administrative) providing basis for the territorial integrity of the local action group.

Educational Section

The strategy contains measures to improve the population's motivation to education.

Economic Activity Section

If the unemployment rate is high in the region and does not decline in time, and simultaneously, there is a low number of businesses per thousand inhabitants compared to the state average, the strategy contains measures to support entrepreneurship and the establishment of businesses.

Civic Facilities Section

If the community facilities within the LAG territory are fewer than the state average, the strategy contains measures to improve the availability of cultural and athletic facilities in the region.

Educational Section

If the number of kindergartens and primary schools per 1000 children of ages ranging from 0 – 14 is significantly lower than the state average or a reference value (acquired on the researched sample of LAGs), the strategy contains measures to support community education of pre-school and school children and to support municipal projects aimed at renewing educational facilities.

Technical Infrastructure Section

The strategy does/does not involve technical infrastructure.

Community Development Section

The strategy does/does not include topics of non-investment type under community development issues.

Main thesis 2: *The local action group performs qualified identification of the problems and possibilities within its operational territory and based on their evaluation determines a territory development strategy.*

SWOT Analysis Section

Is the analysis performed with the participation of all MAS members and other development stakeholders?

Has it been discussed with the wide public?

Was it made as part of the development strategy, not only as an attachment to an application for funding?

Is it regularly updated?

Public Meetings Section

Several types of public meetings take place frequently and regularly.

They include development players from both the public and private spheres.

LAG members show interest in and attend the public meetings.

Their outcomes are evaluated and used to update strategic documents.

Communication with Local Self-government Section

LAGs use various tools (questionnaires, interviews, ...) to communicate with local self-government.

The geographical distribution of project funding applications is even.

There are no frictions in the interrelations of municipalities within the LAG.

No differences exist in the way the LAG communicates with municipalities within its territory.

Meetings of All LAG Members Section

They take place.

Apart from law-imposed obligations, LAG members also discuss the action group's activities for the upcoming period and their financing.

Strategic Documents Section

The strategy for the LAG relates to microregion development strategies or responds to them in another explicit way.

LAG analyzes higher-rank strategic documents (e.g. Regional Development Plan).

The strategy preparatory process is participative enough, nobody is excluded, the process is set up to effectively serve to identify problems.

The strategy is widely accepted and performed by multiple members of the public and private sector, who evenly represent the entire territory.

Strategic documents are used as a tool to plan activities; they are not used just to plan the redistribution of funding received from the LEADER Program or similar programs.

The efficiency and implementation of the selected strategy are evaluated on regular basis and the evaluation results are used to update the strategy (or set a new strategy).

Main thesis 3: *In its activities, LAG works adequately with the potential available in the territory. Apart from the redistribution of funds provided by LEADER-type programs it also implements other projects striving toward the priorities of the approved or otherwise agreed development strategy of the LAG territory.*

Subsidy Re-distribution and Partnership Aspect in Projects Section

The LAG has put in place a corresponding money distribution mechanism for LEADER programs.

A wider group is involved in selecting projects rather than just the selection board.

In programs where the criteria are set by the LAG itself, the project selection is done based on such publicized criteria. The criteria are set up to correspond with the supported area focus according to the strategy and to be formally passed by the supreme body of the LAG.

There is an assistance mechanism in place for applicants and it corresponds with the territory size and the program level of difficulty.

In the project selection process, an emphasis is given to the cooperation of NGOs, entrepreneurs and self-administration.

Projects with regional impact get preference (to local or municipal projects).

When selecting projects, applicants who are and who are not the LAG members enjoy the same standing.

When selecting projects, applicants from all three types of entities in the partnership enjoy the same standing (public administration, entrepreneurs, NGOs).

The LAG creates grant programs funded from sources other than LEADER.

LAG Own Activities Section

LAG also implements its own projects.

LAG systematically pursues the attracting of additional sources to the territory. To implement own projects (programs), the LAG management has adequate capacities in place so that fund distribution under the LEADER Programs is not at risk.

Selection of topics for own projects of the LAG is subject to internal discussion in the LAG executive body.

Own projects of the LAG build on approved strategic priorities.

LAG increases the self-funding share (collects dues from LAG members, carries out or is preparing to carry out some business activities and the scope of business is in line with the approved strategy, works to accomplish its priorities).

Within its territory, the LAG also provides other socially beneficial services funded from its own economic activity and technical assistance (information, consulting and assistance services, publication, community, social, environmental and other services).

LAG has steady partners who are involved in the preparation and implementation of its projects.

LAG organizes subject-special seminars.

LAG Management Section

Is such management professional, i.e. does it dispose of adequate capacity, experience and ability of continual learning?

Is it sustainable, financed appropriately in relation with the salary tariffs of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs; is the turnover of employees, associates and external consultants low?

Members of LAG management live within their operational territory.

“Cook Book” for Applicants Section

The LAG has an applicant’s guideline in place to help applicants implement projects successfully. Applicants are aware of the guideline and use it.

The LAG evaluates the quality of the guideline and amends it based on received comments.

Member municipalities of the LAG regularly communicate the LAG activities to entities operating within their cadastre.

Main thesis 4: *LAG activities are carried out in cooperation with all local players based on partnership principles. LAG reports on its activities and the*

happening within its operating territory. It is the drive of social and cultural living in the region.

LAG Membership Section

LAG is striving for the even representation of both the private and public sectors throughout its membership structure.

The acceptance of members to the LAG is decided by the highest body of the association or there is an option to appeal lower body's decision to the highest body.

LAG broadly informs of the possibility to become a member and its advantages and disadvantages.

The private and public sectors are evenly represented in the elective and appointed bodies of the LAG.

LAG Openness Section

Every member has the right to be elected for the LAG management bodies.

Membership in the LAG is open to every player residing and/or operating within the LAG territory.

Each microregion that is part of the LAG has its contact person that serves as the liaison between its members and the LAG management.

Media Section

LAG reports on its activities by means of media.

LAG archives its press releases and knows which of them were published.

LAG invites journalists and reporters to the events that it organizes.

Internet Section

The LAG regularly updates its website (at least once per two months).

The LAG website contains information from its operational region (cultural events and other, not just LEADER and calls).

Every member of the LAG has the possibility to put his/her contribution on the LAG website (not advertising).

The LAG website provides basic information about the LAG and its activities.

Information Materials Section

LAG issues its own printed or electronic bulletins informing on its activities.

Information materials are available in the region to all that may be interested – the LAG has a system in place to distribute its information materials efficiently throughout its operational territory.

LAG issues and distributes its annual report to all that have shown interest.

Participation in the Social and Cultural Living Section

The LAG staff are significant local initiators of the territory's social and cultural living.

Events organized by the LAG are attended by the public (not only LAG members).

Such events are organized in various parts of the region.

Main thesis 5: *LAG acquires and conveys experience with working in the rural space at regional, national and international levels*

Partnership with other entities and cooperation outside LEADER programs section

Cooperation agreements exist between the LAG and other LAGs in the Czech Republic and abroad.

The LAG exchanges experience with other LAGs in the Czech Republic and abroad. Such transfer of experiences is documented and published.

Meetings with partner LAGs are attended by more members/interested people from the region (not only the LAG managements).

The LAG disposes of an external system to evaluate its activities.

Subjects of cooperation are defined in the strategy.

The LAG exchanges experience also with entities other than other LAGs in the Czech Republic and abroad.

The LAG cooperates on topics ensuing from the development strategy.

3 Conclusion

The acquired data will be amended in the upcoming period with the outputs of interviews conducted by the project implementers with the representatives of local action groups, selected applicants for subsidies and other subjects. The evaluation of acquired data will lead to identifying “good practices” in the functioning of local action groups. Such identified “good practices” will then be used as basis to verify the validity of the theses to evaluate LAG activities. Based on the validated theses, the project will conclude by creating a methodical guideline for evaluating the effectiveness of LAG activities as described in the paper introduction.

In our opinion the evaluation of LAG activity stands on effectiveness and complex operation analysis - in other words analysis and evaluation of internal procedures and processes. From this point of view effective LAG is the one that:

- performs qualified identification of the problems and possibilities within its operational territory and based on their evaluation determines a territory development strategy;
- works adequately with the potential available in the territory. Apart from the redistribution of funds provided by LEADER type programs it also implements other projects striving toward the priorities of the approved or otherwise agreed development strategy of the LAG territory;
- carries out its activities in cooperation with all local players based on partnership principles. LAG reports on its activities and the happening

within its operating territory. It is the drive of social and cultural living in the region;

- acquires and conveys experience with working in the rural space at regional, national and international levels.

It seems these four themes are the key ones and elementary to follow for the LAG to be able to contribute in the long term to the region development and to be able to provide for professional and qualified assistance for the local actors.

4 What is center for community organizing¹

Center for Community Organizing, West Bohemia (CCO WB)² is a branch office of CCO with its own legal personality. The objectives of CCO are to support participative democracy and civic involvement at the local, municipal and regional levels. Through its programs, CCO invites citizens to participate in the development planning of their cities, municipalities and regions and thus contributes to the development of civil society. CCO WB implements pilot projects in the Plzeňský kraj region and transfers its acquired experience through the CCO branch office network, seminars and guidelines to other CR regions.

CCO carries projects in the following areas:

- Public participation in the development planning of cities, municipalities and microregions: implementation of programs for the public participation in investment planning and in the creation of city and rural microregion development strategies. We organize public discussions, workshops and public hearings, and carry out public opinion and attitude surveys, etc.
- Regional development and the EU: CCO engages civic organizations and the public in the preparations of development programs to utilize the EU Structural Funds. We organize seminars for NGOs on EU programs concerning regional development, civil society, etc.

¹ In Czech: Centrum pro komunitní práci (CpKP).

² In Czech: Centrum pro komunitní práci západní Čechy (CpKP ZČ).

Analysis of the EU Structural Funds in a Chosen Region

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Annotation. The article reviews the structural funds use in the microregion Rychnovsko during the time period 2004 – 2007, whereas the breakdown by objectives and territorial allocation are analyzed. The analysis is focused on assumptions for an optimal use of financial sources. The results were elaborated within the institutional research intention MSM 6046070906.

Key words: microregion, structural funds, economic and social development.

1 Introduction

The Czech Republic's membership in the European Union has brought new challenges for delimited regions with structural problems. The approach of the structural policy enables to use a variety of measures targeted at social and economic cohesion. The support within the structural policy plays an important role especially at the micro-region level. Creating and carrying on micro-regional activities is very important for promoting intentions of rural municipalities within their development. This paper is focusing on analyzing challenges for development within the structural policy support in a micro-region Rychnovsko.

2 Aim and methodology

The aim of the paper is to evaluate an impact of the chosen micro-region located in the area of district Rychnov nad Kněžnou on its development and a possibility to exploit activities supported by EU-structural measures.

At first in the paper's structure there is introduced a rise and a brief characteristics of the micro-region. Further a strategy of the micro-region development is expressed in form of delimited aims. In the analytical part, an evaluation of the structural support is realized in total for the chosen area and the most valuable projects are introduced according to their localization in particular municipalities.

3 Results

3.1 Characteristics of the micro-region

The Micro-region Rychnovsko is situated in the north-east part of the Czech Republic. The centre of the micro-region is the town Rychnov nad Kněžnou. A voluntary association of 28 municipalities spreads on 403 km² and has about 32 thousand inhabitants.

The micro-region was founded at the beginning of 2004 in order to coordinate a total development of the region based on a common strategy of member municipalities. The common strategy is focusing on a coordination of individual plans, performing investments as well as a common promotion of tourism in the region.

The structure of inhabitants is unbalanced in the region. A population density with 60 inhabitants per 1 sq km in average indicates a rural character of the region. The region does not have a coherent economic structure and it can be characterized as agricultural-industrial one. In the North, the Polish border delimits the region which gives potential for cross - border activities. The industry is represented mainly by the car producer Škoda Auto, and some smaller enterprises are complementing industrial activities. A part of the micro-region area falls into the Protected Landscape Area Orlické hory. Compared areas around the town Rychnov and the mountains Orlické hory, the conditions for agricultural production vary significantly.

An absence of a highway or any other quick transportation ranges the region among localities with low transport accessibility. The existing I-class roads are very loaded. Two local railway lines are crossing the micro-region.

The area Rychnovsko can be thus characterised as a popular touristic and recreation area. It concerns both the nature in the mountains Orlické hory and many significant cultural monuments (e.g. castles Opočno, Častolovice etc.). The region is characterised by low production of emissions. The above mentioned facts can indicate that the region has a big potential for development of travel movement.

3.2 Development Strategy of Microregion Rychnovsko

The SWOT analysis of the region was used as a basis for elaboration of the Development Strategy for the whole Micro-region Rychnovsko. The strategy is focusing on economic fields, human resources, infrastructure, environment, travel movement and rural development.

The basic global aim is presented as a sustainable territorial development of the region in all fields of human activities and life of inhabitants. Other strategic development aims are oriented on an increase of competitiveness of entrepreneurial subjects, marginality reduction and environment protection of particular places, maintenance of rural values with regard to traditions, and improving the possibilities of travel movement.

Three Local Action Groups (LAGs) are active in the region. They have learned that a support within the structural measures can be an essential part of their development strategy and can bring significant effects. Also the Regional Department in Hradec Králové belongs to important donators providing funds for the micro-region. The strategy of the region considers that both the common activity of the micro-region and individual activities of municipalities are necessary for the most effective use of support.

In the period 2004 – 2007 overall 27 projects were submitted in the region; 23 of them were accepted. Rate of success in proposing projects was unequal. The total financial sources allocated in the micro-regionm Rychnovsko are illustrated in the table 1.

Table 1. Spending financial sources in the Microregion Rychnovsko in 2004 - 2007 (in Thousand CZK)

Applicant	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Microregion Rychnovsko	-	-	581	-	581
Rychnov nad Kněžnou	750	532	692	417	2 390
Potštejn	-	-	3 577	-	3 577
Solnice	-	75	-	-	75
Skuhrov nad Bělou	-	9 766	219	-	9 986
Other RK	-	2 998	91 886	-	94 884
LAG Splav	-	480	3 383	-	3 863
LAG Pohoda venkova	-	-	575	-	575
LAG Vyhlídka	-	-	79	-	79
Microregion Bělá	-	484	-	-	484
Total	-	14 335	100 993	417	116 494

The first successful project was financed within the programme Phare in 2004. The recipient of the support was the centre of the region Rychnov nad Kněžnou and the supported activity concerned building-up a Czech-Polish tourist centre. In following years 2005 and 2006 the number of supported projects increased essentially; a higher number of municipalities and LAGs were able to apply successfully for financial support. As the table 1 presents, the town Skuhrov nad Bělou achieved a significant support. It obtained almost 10 million CZK from the European Rural Development Fund in a period of two years by participation in the Joint Regional Operational Programme. The project "Integration centre Bělá" was realized as the first one. The Office of Labour in Rychnov nad Kněžnou successfully has brought into effect a project financed from the European Social Fund supported by 3 millions CZK determined for an enterprise development in the whole Rychnovsko region. The LAG Splav has oriented the activity on the project "Common way to rural development" in 2005. The town Potštejn obtained a support of 3.6 millions CZK from the Joint Regional Operational Programme in 2006 which was used for a renovation of a castle. The most significant contribution in 2006 of the micro-region was a subsidy of 92 millions CZK determined for a road reconstruction Rychnov – Rokytnice. Also here the European funds were participating.

The LAGs were participating in the program Leader; the total amount contributed represented almost 14 millions CZK. In the total, the sum allocated from European contributions reached the level of 116.5 millions CZK which was a significant element for an improvement of quality of life of the region's inhabitants and of other visitors in the area.

The structure of financial sources according to operational programs consisted above all in the Joint Regional Operational Programme (93 %). Other programmes were taking part with a proportion of the residual 7 %. Financial flow classification according to the structural funds is represented by the ERDF with 96 %. The own financing of projects was realized according to appropriate rules for spending financial means from relevant resources.

4 Conclusion

After foundation of the association of municipalities Rychnovsko, the activities were focused on elaboration of quality development strategy for the region. Determination of the development aims is given by a need of a uniform development strategy of the micro-region in areas which are felt as delicate and there is an effort to solve them by proposed measures and activities. For this purpose it was necessary to obtain a certain amount of financial support for the micro-region as well as to arrange necessary training of workers who will deal with subsequent processing of the projects.

The successful functioning of the micro-region requires a continuous cooperation and mutual contact with all municipalities in the micro-region. It is necessary to be acquainted with all the needs and problems of particular municipalities and to try to connect them and to look for suitable common solutions within the micro-region. An association of municipalities is established mainly because municipalities as individual applicants for the EU support have to battle with many problems.

Activities of the micro-region bring along also certain complications and possible problems. The micro-region Rychnovsko is facing problems of ownership. To be able to ask successfully for the EU support for a certain projects, the subject of the project has to be in ownership of the applicants, i.e. the micro-region.

The micro-region Rychnovsko, respectively municipalities and LAGs succeeded in obtaining together in total 116 494 219 CZK in the evaluated period 2004 – 2007. The level of allotted support has an enormous significance for the development of the whole region. Without the financial support from European funds projects would be hardly realized.

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The Exploitation of the Structural Policy in the development of the South Bohemian region

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Annotation. The structural policy in its regional and social dimension is able to activate the factors of regional development expressively by means of activities especially contributing to the balanced progress of all the region. The South Bohemian region has the conditions for the exploitation of its development potential assigned with geographical position, preserved and touristic countryside, historically valuable sights on the one hand, and with extended education system, low unemployment, facilities for the development of small and middle business, cross-frontier cooperation and others on the other hand. Recently, it is a case of the support of innovative processes associated with the entry of foreign investors, and the improvement of active policy of employment, especially in the areas endangered with displacement. The structural policy – in compliance with the intentions of the European Union at the support of landscape territory – should contribute to the social consistency with the removal of certain disproportions in employment and to the investment support of more backward territories of the region. It is necessary with the subsidiary policy to create the favourable business climate attractive for investors and requisite for the economic expansion of the region.

Key words: South Bohemian region, structural policy, social consistency, development potential, innovation, investment support, European social fund (ESF), human resources.

1 Introduction

The Structural policy of the European Union closely related to the Regional and Social policies is the important part of overall policy and it also expresses the solidarity of states with high economic potential to those states which lag economically behind them.

After the accession of the Czech republic to the EU the exploitation of Structural funds became an important aid especially for the regions which dispose of lower development potential but they also have prerequisites for an efficient use of paid-in financial means.

This will involve the regions with proceeding economic and social redevelopment; regions where social and economic changes will not dispense with the need of European funds and initiatives support. The NUTS 2 level Region Jihozápad (South-west) belongs to such regions and it is within the South Bohemian Region with the GDP at level over 60% of the EU average.

We can determine The South Bohemian Region as so-called „space region“, i. e. region with low GDP growth, low population density, low-incomes (within CR). The main competitive advantages are still relatively low costs and the absence of big industrial agglomeration competitive disadvantages.

In terms of region characteristics we cannot omit an importance of tourism, agriculture, food industry, landscaping and aspects related to power engineering and living environment.

The South Bohemian Region is according to the comparison of regional GDP per capita in the CR and particular regions placed the fourth behind Prague, the South Moravian Region and the Pilsen Region at level of 89% of republic average which generates an estimated 60% of the EU average.

2 Objective and methods

The structural policy in the South Bohemian Region in its regional and social dimensions supports factors of regional development and especially the activities which lead to the use of regional development potential. This potential is based on favourable geographical location which enables valuable cross-border cooperation in tourist attractive and interesting countryside with many valuable historical monuments and sights, low unemployment, and in the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with the participation of foreign investors.

The use of this development potential is possible primarily with the complex support of innovative activities, developing favourable business activity conditions and mainly with the support of human resources development.

The part of this development is also the support of education with the aim of spreading knowledge exploitable in competitive environments influenced by globalization trends and tendencies to sell knowledge in innovative process.

The success of innovative strategy in the South Bohemian Region is closely connected with the use of science results and investigation to innovate manufacturing.

In this respect, it is necessary to submit the fact the region is short of graduates in technical subject field branches, especially engineering and power engineering. There are enough skilled and competent specialists in economic, pedagogical (educational) and humanities branches.

The tertiary education presents manpower which would utmost contribute to making up competitiveness of the regions, states, but also all Europe. The human resources make up practically the most important part in a whole innovative process and if this is ignored, the other supports will not have any chance to change anything. The fact that population with tertiary education in the CR or more precisely in the South Bohemian Region makes only about 10% of economically active inhabitants, is extensively unfavourable.

In accordance with the world trend, a general principle of lifelong learning development is also in the CR emphasized. There is an essential structure for optimizing this permeating not only tertiary sector but also a whole education system according to the National programme for the Development of Education in the CR. The amount of population involved in lifelong learning is in 15 EU Member States at average of 9,7%. Compared with this, the CR amount is nearly a half (5,4%), the amount in the South Bohemian Region is thrice lower (3,1%).

On this account, it is reasonable to take advantage of possibilities of EU Structural policy, especially its social aspect. Between 2007 and 2013, there are the funds from European Social Fund and the fund delivering via Operational Programmes provided by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT), especially operational programme „Education and Competitiveness and an operational programme „Research and Development of Innovations“ in conjunction with Ministry of Industry and Trade (MPO) and an operational programme „Human resources and Employment“ provided by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MPSV).

3 Results and discussion

European Social Fund was between 2004 and 2006 via an operational programme „Human Resources Development“ (OPRLZ) sufficiently exploited. There were most projects (24) realized within “Development of Further Professional Education“ (3.3.) in the amount of about 13.7 mil. CZK considering the demand for staff retraining and education with regard to supposed innovations in the region development. There were many other awarded projects (23) within “Increasing adaptability of employers and employees to economic and technological changes; promoting competitiveness“ (4.1.) in the amount of about 48.7 mil. CZK. The least number of projects (2) were related to “Equality of the Opportunities of Men

and Women at the Labour Market“ in the amount of 7.4 mil. CZK. In total, 91 projects were realized within the South Bohemian Region by total financial costs of about 213.14 mil. CZK [3].

There are much more opportunities to apply projects within operational programmes for the period 2007-2013. Therefore, it is really important to be ready for projects call appeals by relevant ministries or monitoring committees.

The funding from structural funds for sectoral and regional operational programmes proceeded in the conformity with National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) must be in compliance with the financial plan concerning the support preceded by this document and approved by the Czech Republic Government and European Commission [4].

The funding from the European Social Fund is differentiated according to:

- the importance of specific regional or social problems which would be eliminated on the strength of the given support;
- financial capacity of the Member State regarding relative prosperity and the need of avoiding overgrowth of budget expense;
- the Fund objectives considering the EC priorities;
- the importance given to the priorities in the regional and national point of view;
- specification of priority with the aim of support in human resources development and employment [2];
- optimal use of financial resources in accordance with financial plans including the combination of public or private sources according to chosen forms of help in conformity with EU support [1].

The quality of human resources will become one of the most decisive and important factors for the increase of economic and innovative performance efficiency in the South Bohemian Region. Human resources are the main prerequisite for the development of competitiveness activities in the region and they can substantially influence on contributory factors for the regional development such as science findings and research results implementation as a crucial precondition of innovative potential of the region, the exploitation of foreign direct investments, adaptation to inner and external ambient conditions of its development.

Human resources are essential for building up economics based upon the knowledge. The change over from productive orientated economics to the knowledge economics mainly expands in connection with the mobility of activities of private companies. It is necessary to deal with the development of the companies based upon the knowledge - advisory services, design, research and development, or those which hand over value added to them which have new manufacturing processes and accession to the resource. The knowledge and skills present the important competitive advantage and the mutual

cooperation between research and science sector with business sector is a driving and motivating force of innovation.

As it turned out, the investigation of professional structure of skills in connection with the demand at the labour market is one of the most important aspects in solving research tasks. It supports the industrial applicability of local man power without any need of extensive staff retraining which raises up the costs of investors [1].

4 Conclusion

The different extent of the adaptability to new market conditions becomes evident in regions, and therefore it is necessary to identify these problems of South Bohemian region and continuously weigh and evaluate their potential to necessary structural and social changes. At the same time it is preceded from the assumption that farming in such determined areas is limited and the social interest to keep the settlement in these areas on condition of endurable living circumstances for their inhabitants exists. The article deals with the problems which are very actual nowadays, it concerns the problem with evaluation of areas from the standpoints of regional policy and policy of country development.

It will be necessary to demonstrate an adequate readiness for fulfilling EU legislative conditions connected with delivering the funds to reach the realization aims of the South Bohemian Region with the supports from the EU Structural Funds. At the same time, it will be necessary to enlist required complexity, national as well as private, in the realization of awarded grant projects. However, the sufficient amount of suitable projects accordant with the Strategy of the Regional development and the realization of innovative processes will absolutely become the most important. The human potential must prove the ability to manage and check achieving aims and predetermine indicators of awarded projects.

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An Analysis of Organisational Opportunities and Constraints Confronting Small-scale Farmers in Produce Marketing: Milk Production in Central Brazil¹

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Annotation. This paper focuses on the contradiction which may arise between the quantity incentives offered to farmers by large-scale marketing and processing enterprises and the potential for efficient and equitable resource use on small-scale family farms. The paper explores some of the ramifications of this contradiction, with particular reference to the sphere of joint marketing as a countervailing strategy for small-scale producers.

Key words: land settlement, small-scale farming, joint milk marketing.

1 Introduction

The paper is motivated by the findings of a 2006 study of dairy farm performance in central Brazil. The study compared the performance of a group of farms belonging to land reform beneficiaries with other dairy farms, both large and small, in the neighbouring area. The results indicated that the largest farms were not the most cost-efficient milk producers, yet the main milk buyers [multinationals, plus large national companies and cooperatives] offer

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strong quantity-based price incentives which encourage large-scale production [see Table 1 below]. A key policy issue is whether smaller-scale farmers, including land reform beneficiaries, can adopt joint marketing practices which will enable them, too, to benefit from these price incentives. Collective marketing offers the potential for low income, small-scale farmers to benefit from quantity based price premia. However, for dairy farmers it entails establishment of a jointly operated milk collection and cooling facility. This paper investigates some of the factors which contribute to determining whether such joint resource management succeeds or fails.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides a brief summary of the survey methodology and of the results with respect to farm performance. Section 3 examines some of the variables which can be expected to determine whether small scale producers succeed in exercising countervailing power in the milk market. Section 4 concludes.

Table 1. Milk Price to the Producer According to Milk Quantity Delivered

Litres per delivery	Price in March 2006 [R\$]*
< 51	0.399
51-200	0.439
201-500	0.479
501-1000	0.501
>1000	0.536

**Source: Danilo Biasi, dairy farmer and formerly lecturer in economics, Federal University of Uberlândia, personal communication, September, 2006.*

2 Farm Performance: Summary of Survey Methodology and Findings

2.1 Survey location and methodology

The survey covered 81 dairy enterprises in a region known as the Triângulo Mineiro in the state of Minas Gerais; 39 were small-scale enterprises belonging to land reform beneficiaries located on the Rio das Pedras land settlement and 42 belonged to commercial dairy farms in the neighbouring area. The settlement was established in 1998 on 1982 hectares of former ranch land, some severely degraded, located 18 kilometres from the town of Uberlândia. Settlement followed compulsory purchase of the land by the local government. The land was then divided into 87 plots averaging 18 hectares and allocated to settlers who were provided with a grant towards house

construction plus credit towards the equipment of the farm. Homesteads were not initially provided with public utilities; by 2006 each had an electricity connection but all were still without access to treated water. The average level of formal education among the settlers is low: in 2006 66 per cent of household heads had not completed primary education.² Sixty-two per cent of households had previously resided in the urban sector; some, but not all, of the heads of these households and their spouses had grown up in the rural sector and had previous farming experience. Provision of technical advice to the settlers had been limited: only 14 per cent stated that they had received any technical assistance during the calendar year 2005.³

All of the settler farms which were producing milk for sale were surveyed. Outside the settlement, farms were selected at random, and in approximately equal number, from lists provided by three of the 5 main milk buyers [Nestlé, Parmalat and one large cooperative which competes with private milk processors in selling both liquid and processed milk]. The study employed a range of technical and economic criteria in order to assess farm performance.⁴ Technical performance is assessed by physical criteria: average daily milk yield per cow, milk yield per hectare, proportion of cows in lactation and number of cows/hectare. In order to minimise the need to impute values to fixed resources, economic performance criteria emphasise the relationship between revenue and operating costs.⁵ The main criteria used are gross margin per litre and per hectare, plus output and revenue per unit of recurrent cost.⁶ All labour, including family labour, is included as a recurrent cost. Settler family labour is valued at, or slightly above, the minimum wage.⁷ All input

²Among the settlers producing milk for sale, 92 per cent had not proceeded beyond primary education.

³Delivery of technical advice to individual dairy farmers is limited throughout Minas Gerais: Gomes, *op. cit.*; 46, states that in 2005 23 % of farmers regarded their milk outlet [agro-industry or cooperative] as their main source of technical advice and just 6 per cent EMATER [the state-run extension agency].

⁴For a more detailed account of research methodology and a fuller analysis of the findings, see Hunt, Ribeiro, Shiki, Biasi and Faria, 2007 and Hunt, Ribeiro and Shiki, 2007.

⁵We also justify this approach by the fact that the higher is a farmer's surplus of revenue over operating cost, the more revenue is available to contribute to the cost of farm fixed capital – and, once these costs are met, to farm profit. [Farm size and non-land fixed costs per hectare were positively correlated.]

⁶The gross margin is the difference between revenue and operating costs.

⁷Imputed values for settler family labour time are based on the assumption that on farms with no more than 15 lactating cows and no more than 20 cows in total, normally not more than half of one person-day per day is spent caring for cattle. This assumption was based on scrutiny of the labour costs incurred by those farms outside the settlement which had the smallest herds and on the responses of those settlers with relatively large

and output data refer to the month of March 2006. Dairy farmers in this region obtain on average 20 per cent of their income from sale of calves and retired calves, with sales concentrated in January and June-July. Our analysis focused on milk production but the potential significance of this additional revenue for the proportion of farms recording a negative gross margin is also noted. The performance data have been analysed using tests of correlation and difference, including univariate regressions.⁸

2.2 The scale and performance of 42 dairy farms in the municipalities of Uberlandia and Monte Alegre

As Appendix Table 1 shows, there were wide variations in the scale and performance of the 81 farms, not only across the full sample but within each of the two sub-groups - settler and non-settler. In what follows we consider first the 42 farms outside the settlement.

A notable feature of these farms' technical performance is the extent to which use of purchased inputs, especially feedstuffs, rises with farm size, whether the latter is measured in terms of herd size, milk output or farm area. This increase in input intensity is in turn associated with increased yield per cow. The adjusted r^2 for a linear regression of yield on purchased feedstuffs is 0.572, significant at the level of 0.000, with a response elasticity at the mean of 0.3. However, there was clear evidence of diminishing returns to the use of purchased feedstuffs: with the exception of one high performing outlier, there was a marked decline in response elasticity among the top quartile of farms.⁹ This was reflected in an adverse impact on the larger farms' economic performance, even though these farms benefited from the highest milk prices.¹⁰ Gross margin per litre tends to fall beyond a herd size of 55 cows and to be higher among farms producing less than 800 litres per day. Gross margin per

herds who had valued their labour time at the minimum wage. We assumed a higher use of labour time for a few households who also processed milk and for one other which made a case for doing so. With one exception, the imputed value for family labour does not fall below the equivalent of half a day's labour input per day. The exception relates to one of the two smallest dairy enterprises surveyed, where firm information on time use was provided by the farmer.

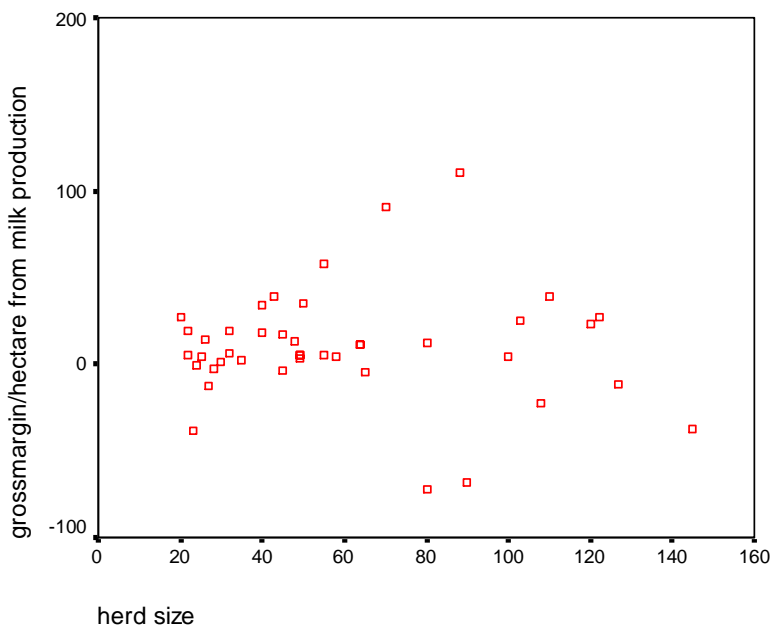
⁸Small sample size precluded the use of multiple regression analysis. Data envelopment analysis, a non-parametric method used primarily for assessing technical efficiency, is in principle well suited for use with small samples. However, its use is appropriate only where all farms use the same production technology - not the case with our sample⁸.

⁹The adjusted r^2 for a quadratic regression of yield on purchased feedstuffs for the remaining farms is 0.443 significant at the level of 0.000⁹ with a slight increase in response elasticity at the lower mean.

¹⁰Prices obtained ranged from 0.37 to 0.58 cents per litre.

hectare peaks at a herd size of 90 cows but, as Figure 1 below shows, it falls within a similar range for most farms of all sizes, with 50 per cent achieving a gross margin of between R\$0.00 and R\$20.00 per hectare.¹¹ Even more striking, total gross margin fails to peak on the largest farms: the total peaks among farms producing within the wide range of 600 to 1300 litres per day and on farms with widely varying herd size.

Figure 1. Gross Margin/Hectare by Total Herd Size: 42 farms



In Table 2, the 42 farms are aggregated into three groups. To derive the groups, the farms were first ranked by a composite index obtained by multiplying the value of purchased non-labour inputs per cow by the stocking rate [number of lactating cows per hectare].¹² The ranked farms were listed, together with a number of performance characteristics, and, on the basis of

¹¹ In the first half of 2006, the exchange rate from Brazilian reais to the US dollar approximated R\$2.3: US\$1.00.

¹² Low and high values for the index represent distinct production technologies – the first land extensive, with low use of purchased inputs, and the other land and input intensive, with gradations in between.

visual inspection of the data, they were divided into Group 1 [16 farms], and groups 2 and 3 [13 farms each]. The groups are distinguished primarily by differences in yield per cow [groups 1 and 2] and by herd size [group 3], as well as by other aspects of their performance. Average daily yield per cow is 7.3 litres in group 1 [with low input intensity], 11.7 litres in group 2 and 14.2 litres in group 3 [high input intensity]. Other measures of technical performance also rise across the three groups, as do total operating costs per cow.

These aggregated results confirm that the owners of the larger herds [group 3] were using a production strategy which was more intensive in purchased inputs and were generating both higher yields per cow and somewhat higher lactation rates than those obtained in smaller herds. The differences in the mean value of non-labour inputs per cow between groups 1 and 2 and between groups 2 and 3 are significant at the levels of 0.000 and 0.008 respectively. However, while there is also a significant difference in mean yield per cow between groups 1 and 2¹³, the difference is not significant between groups 2 and 3 – a reflection of the diminishing returns already noted. Furthermore, although average price received per litre rises across the three groups, from R\$ 0.42 for Group 1 to R\$ 0.52 for Group 3, the average gross margin per litre is lowest for Group 3: given the milk prices received, the farms which used an intermediate level of input intensity obtained the highest average gross margin per litre. However, if the Group 1 farms had matched the average price per litre of Group 2, then they would also have matched the Group 2 gross margin per litre [see Table 2, final two columns].

Table 2. Average Performance Outcomes: 42 Commercial Dairy Farms

Group	total cows	Average yield/cow/day [litres]	% cows lactating	Lactating cows/hect	input/cow [R\$]	Tot. op.c/cow* [R\$]	G.M./litre*	price/litre
1	38.00	7.3	62.5	0.38	22.03	38.54	.035	0.42
2	43.00	11.7	69.2	0.50	58.71	81.88	.079	0.47
3	103.00	14.2	74.4	1.14	126.87	150.8	.019	0.52

*Tot.op.c. = total operating costs [including labour costs]

** G.M.= gross margin

¹³ Significant at the level of 0.000.

2.3 The Rio das Pedras land settlement

Despite the settlers' relatively unfavourable resource endowments, and some notable variation in their performance outcomes, they revealed a potential to match the economic efficiency of farms outside the settlement – a potential which in some cases was already being realised. However, the settlers' experience also highlighted a problem faced by all small-scale dairy farms in Brazil: that of obtaining a milk price which enables them to compete with larger-scale producers. In what follows, performance outcomes are reviewed first, followed by the marketing problem.

The range of technical performance among the settler farms is indicated in Appendix Table 1, columns 4 and 5. The difference between settler and non-settler farms with respect to the average proportion of cows lactating was not significant at the cut-off level of 0.05¹⁴ but the difference in average daily yield per lactating cow was: farms outside the settlement achieved an average yield which was 28 per cent higher – an outcome which can be explained by their higher expenditure on non-labour inputs.¹⁵

On average, the farms outside the settlement obtained a gross margin per litre which was 5.6 cents higher than on the settler farms.¹⁶ Nonetheless, the highest settler gross margins/litre were exceeded by only one farm outside the settlement [see Figure 2 below]. As noted above, these gross margins are based on valuations of family labour time at, or, for some settler households, slightly above, the minimum wage. However, a case can be made for imputing a zero cost to settler family labour on the grounds that for many, if not all, low income family operated smallholdings in central Brazil the opportunity cost of family labour time, in terms of alternative income foregone, is zero. When family labour across all farms, settler and non-settler, is given a zero value, the superior average gross margin per litre on non-settler farms is eliminated: the settler average is R\$ 0.11 per litre and for the non-settler farms the average is

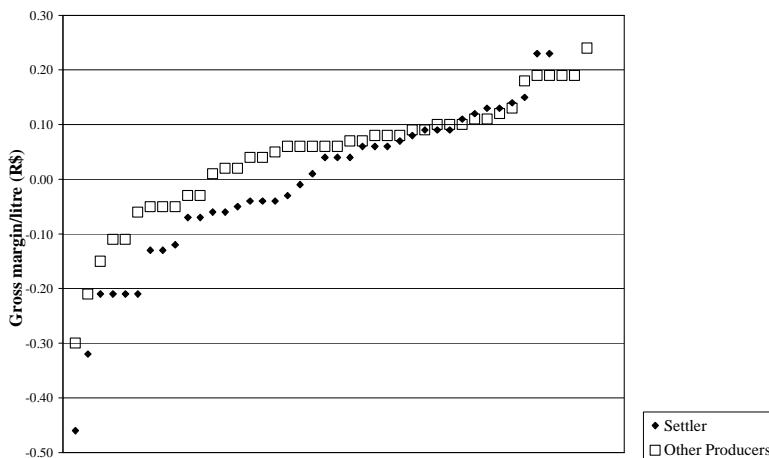
¹⁴For all statistical results reported, the benchmark significance level is 0.05 unless otherwise specified. The average difference in the proportion of lactating cows was, however, significant at the level 0.07, with an average proportion for farms outside the settlement which was 7 percentage points higher than for the farms of the settlers.

¹⁵The difference in this expenditure was significant at the level of 0.014 [two-tailed test]. Settlers appear to incur higher labour costs per litre although this may be due partly to the criteria used for valuing their labour [see footnote 10 above].

¹⁶The difference was significant at the level of 0.054 [two-tailed test]. The mean gross margin per litre which was obtained by the settlers was negative: R\$ -0.01, with the median positive at R\$ 0.01. Half the farms achieved a positive gross margin solely from milk production, compared with 74 per cent outside the settlement. In order to assess to what extent animal sales were enabling these dairy enterprises to survive, we added 20 per cent to the milk revenue of each farm. This reduced the farms with an operating loss outside the settlement to 12 per cent and within the settlement to 31 per cent.

R\$ 0.9 per litre.¹⁷ In what follows, all remaining comparisons employ the positive values for family labour noted above.¹⁸

Figure 2. Gross Margin/Litre [all farms]



The difference between settlers and non-settlers in the mean gross margin per *hectare* for milk production was not statistically significant, due to the wide variation in outcome on both groups of farms.¹⁹ There was also no significant difference in average output per unit of total operating cost or the revenue to cost ratio: the settlers produced an average of 3.7 litres per R\$ 1.00 of recurrent costs, while farms outside the settlement produced an average of 3.4 litres. Average revenue per unit of operating cost was R\$ 1.12 for the settlers and R\$ 1.26 for the other farms. The fact that the settlers tend to outperform non-settlers on the first of these two measures but not on the second reflects the influence of price differentials.

The settlers reported a milk price ranging from 0.30 to 0.45 cents per litre with an average of 40 cents: 7 cents less, on average, than for farms outside the settlement. This difference is more than sufficient to account for the higher

¹⁷These results illustrate the sensitivity of farm performance comparisons to the valuation of family labour when some are more heavily family labour based than others.

¹⁸We err on the side of exaggeration, rather than underestimation, of settler labour costs.

¹⁹ $t = -1.052$, significant at the level of 0.296

average gross margin per litre obtained outside the settlement. It stems both from the price premia paid to large-scale producers by the major buyers and the very low prices received by some settlers who sell via an intermediary.²⁰ However, in contrast to the farms outside the settlement, the correlation between price and output for the settler farms is weak and insignificant. The settler farms were all producing at output levels which fell in the lowest two price categories set by the major buyers but the settlement had been provided with an externally funded, 2,000 litre capacity, milk cooling tank²¹ to which all could deliver milk for a standard price determined by the firm which buys the milk. This price is invariant with quantity delivered. However, not all settlers deliver to the tank and not all of those who do, do so on the same terms: some deliver directly to the tank while others do so via a neighbour in an attempt to lower transport costs: delivery to the settlement tank from the more distant farms can take up to 3 hours.²²

3 Investment in joint capital: the relevant decision criteria

When either an external agent or a group of potential users considers funding acquisition of a capital asset which is to be jointly managed by a user group, the cost and revenue projections which are central to the investment decision may seem straightforward: capital depreciation and running costs relative to projected revenue from a user charge [in this case per unit of milk delivered]. The reality, however, may be more complex. Firstly, scale economies embodied in capital costs [as with milk storage and cooling tanks], create an incentive to enhance scale to the maximum which appears justified by group size and projected use rates: in this case, the driving goal may become to minimise cost per unit of throughput. However, in the case of any jointly used physical facility, catchment area enlargement results in rising transport time for users at the margin. When user costs are taken into account, the full costs of installing and operating an item of fixed capital may embody both economies and diseconomies of scale and optimum scale will depend on the strength of this trade-off. As Figure 3 illustrates, if, as scale is increased, recurrent use costs per unit rise at a faster rate than fixed costs fall, then the choice of maximum scale will be sub-optimal: in the example shown, the sum

²⁰ When the gross margins per litre obtained by settlers producing between 50 and 199 litres per day were compared with those of farms producing in the same range outside the settlement, so that most of the price differential was eliminated, the returns obtained by each group were almost identical.

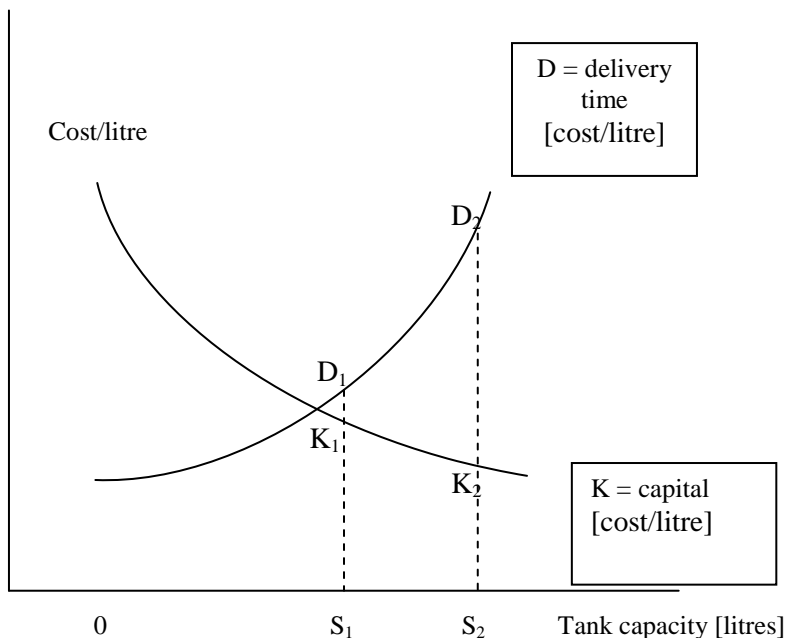
²¹ The tank has a capacity of 2,000 litres.

²² Delivery is usually by mule-drawn cart.

of fixed cost S_2K_2 plus delivery time cost S_2D_2 is greater than the sum of S_1K_1 and S_1D_1 .²³

Meanwhile, other transactions costs, in addition to transport costs, may contribute to determining whether target group members opt to use the joint facility. To ignore these is to increase the risk making sub-optimal choices with respect to scale, design and/or location of the joint facility.

Figure 3. The Capital Cost/Delivery Time Trade-off for Joint Produce Storage²⁴



The decision calculus employed by potential users of a joint facility entails deciding:

- a) whether to use the newly created collective cupital;
- b) whether to do so according to the agreed rules, and;
- c) whether to continue using the facility when either:
 - [i] others are perceived to break the rules and/or
 - [ii] the terms of participation change [eg due to change in price offered]

²³In this example, operating costs are, for simplicity, assumed equal to zero.

²⁴Total cost per litre is given by the sum of the vertical distances below the two curves.

It is reasonable to expect that decisions falling under ‘a’ and ‘c[ii]’ will be based on income maximising rational choice criteria, whereas those relating to ‘b’ and c[i] are better understood with reference to Ostrom’s behavioural theory of collective action.

Step 1 in an individual’s decision regarding whether, and how, to use jointly owned and managed physical capital for produce collection and storage is to compare the expected increase in revenue [price differential x quantity sold] with the change in selling cost, where selling costs consist of transport and other transactions costs. The settlers at Rio das Pedras reported that the factors which influenced their decision whether to deliver directly to the communal tank included the trade-off between the lower price obtained by selling to an alternative, nearer outlet and the time saved by doing so. The expected value of the trade-off is determined by the quantity of milk to be sold, the time required for delivery, the value of labour time, the value of the price differential between alternative outlets and the confidence which the farmer has in alternative outlets. Even if labour has a zero opportunity cost in terms of cash income foregone, there may be positive costs attached to committing additional time to milk delivery in terms of both energy consumption and leisure foregone. As Table 3 illustrates, for a given distance from a communal tank, the attraction of selling to a closer outlet at a lower price is inversely related to the volume of daily milk production: the lower the output, the lower the opportunity cost of not delivering to the tank and, conversely, the higher the price differential needed to induce delivery to the tank - a factor which may contribute to locking some of the more distant small-scale producers into a low-scale, low return production system. There was a disproportionate tendency for those with the smallest herds to sell through an alternative outlet.

Table 3. Choice of Milk Outlet: An Example of Time-Price-Quantity Trade-offs

Value of time [per hour]*	Additional delivery time to collective tank [hours]	Quantity of milk delivered per journey[litres]	Break-even price differential[cents per litre]
R\$1.00	1	50	2
R\$1.00	2	50	4
R\$1.00	3	50	6
R\$1.00	3	25	12

* Time valued at half the minimum wage

In cases where the pay-off to use of a joint facility does not justify an individual’s projected use costs, there may be scope for individual initiative to reduce these costs. Where such initiatives entail additional cooperation between sub-groups of users, they generate problems pertaining to individual reputation and trust analogous to those discussed below in relation to decision categories b and c[i].

If use of the facility appears attractive, then Step 2 in the decision calculus is to determine whether use offers scope for free-riding, including with respect to product quality and, if yes, to address a social dilemma: decide whether to act cooperatively or to free-ride, taking into account:

- the probability of discovery,
- the nature of any likely sanctions,
- the perceived likelihood that others will also free-ride based on their reputations for trustworthiness.

A social dilemma arises when individuals ‘face choices in which maximisation of short-term self-interest yields less favourable outcomes than feasible alternatives’ which can be attained through collective action [Ostrom, 1998: 1]. A ‘second order’, social dilemma arises if other users of a joint resource fail to observe the agreed operational rules: each cooperating individual must decide not only whether to continue to cooperate but whether further joint action [for example to strengthen rules and sanctions] is necessary as a prerequisite for successful future cooperation.

The central problem in a social dilemma arises from the interdependence of the outcomes of individuals’ actions in a context in which no one knows with certainty how others will behave. Ostrom, 1998, cites a large number of empirical and experimental studies which show that individuals cooperate in contexts in which rational choice theory predicts that they would not. She offers an explanation for these outcomes which emphasises the influence on

decisions whether to cooperate of four variables: reputation, trust, reciprocity and key structural characteristics of different decision contexts.

In the absence of full information regarding how others will behave, most individuals will act cooperatively only if they trust others to do so as well. The basis of trust lies in individual reputations. Trust may be developed and reinforced through face-to-face contacts – easier to achieve in smaller groups. It may also be reinforced by the design of institutions governing the use of collective assets. Those institutions which are most effective in raising trust entail transparency of behaviour and provide for graded sanctions for non-cooperative behaviour. Institutions governing collective resource use tend to be most effective when designed by the users, while achieving effective institutional design is likely to require several iterations. Meanwhile, key structural variables characterise all social dilemma situations and influence the scope for successful collective action. They include group size, homogeneity and endowments as well as exogenously determined resource access and any exogenously determined institutional arrangements which affect the management of a jointly held asset.

Reasons for underutilisation of the collective milk marketing facility

In the light of the foregoing, we can reconsider why only 49 per cent of milk producers at the land settlement delivered milk to the communal tank. Firstly, over-emphasis on scale economies in creation and operation of the collective storage and cooling facility led to creation of a single facility: this emphasis outweighed any consideration of user costs. An alternative to installation of a single collection and cooling tank would have been to install two or more smaller tanks dispersed within the settlement. Given tank fixed costs on the one hand, and the time involved in milk delivery from more distant farms, there can be little doubt that such a decision would have been rational. Tank purchase costs, at R\$ 8,000 for a 1,000 litre tank and R\$ 10,000 for a 2,000 litre tank²⁵, amount to R\$ 8 and R\$ 5 per litre of storage capacity respectively. A one cent per litre levy would permit cost recovery for the smaller tank within 5-6 years, assuming that milk is collected by the buyer every two days. At a milk price of 45 cents per litre to the settlers for joint deliveries of 1,000 litres and above, and given the price range which prevailed for the settlers in 2006 [see Appendix Table 1] the information in Table 4 suggests that enabling more farmers to deliver their milk within a maximum of 1.5 to 2 hours would indeed have induced more of them to sell collectively. At another settlement in Minas Gerais, with a smaller area and a similar number of milk producers,

²⁵ 2006 prices: source, Biasi, D., personal communication, September 2006.

the settlers themselves, following consultation, opted to install two medium-size tanks specifically in order to reduce delivery time.²⁶

Meanwhile, two less readily quantifiable factors also entered the decision calculus of the settlers: the relative confidence/trust which each had in the different available milk outlets and the nature of any linked relations which each had with the individual who controlled each outlet. Attempts to establish shared delivery arrangements to the tank had sometimes been baulked by pre-existing mistrust among settlers and in other cases had generated mistrust, notably with respect to the payment received by the individual who did not deliver the milk, especially if this person was illiterate: low literacy levels among some of members of the target group – a key structural variable – reduced confidence in cost-sharing arrangements for milk delivery. Operation of the tank had also led to concerns and suspicion regarding the quality of individual deliveries, for which there were no adequate checks. Such tensions had contributed to withdrawal by some from the joint marketing project. They arose from a failure – and inability – to apply two general principles which Ostrom identifies as underlying all successful regimes for the management of common-pool resources: clear mechanisms for monitoring rule conformance and implementation of graduated sanctions for enforcing compliance. This failure can in turn be explained by another structural variable: the absence of a viable technology for checking the quality of individual milk deliveries.

The outcomes of the choices made at Rio das Pedras with respect to the scale, location and operating procedures for the collective milk tank are important not least because the settlers do not have the resources to acquire an additional tank: future decisions regarding the management of collective marketing will be conditioned by past choices. Meanwhile, 51 per cent of milk producers at the settlement fail to use the tank. Inability to access a higher milk price locks small-scale producers located far from the tank into low input, low return production, with no scope to fund improved inputs.

4 Policy implications and conclusions

Points highlighted by this case study include:

- the absence of any significant and consistent link between scale of milk production in the region surveyed and economic performance gauged in terms of gross margin per litre or per hectare or output and revenue per unit of operating cost: gauged by these criteria, small-scale milk producers can match the performance of larger scale producers;

²⁶ See Oliveira et al., 2007.

- market liberalisation in low and middle income regions can undermine redistributive policy goals and policy reforms: positive income and equity impacts of resource redistribution to small-scale farmers may be undermined by private produce buyers who offer quantity-based price differentials;
- collective action by small-scale producers offers scope for raising the price received;
- however, joint marketing entails investment in a) physical and b) institutional capital;
- external agencies, through their interventions, have the potential to both enhance and constrain the opportunities for successful collective action: the former through funding investment costs, the latter through inappropriate choices for project design;
- project appraisal for the installation of collective capital should entail assessment of: a) all costs and benefits, including user costs, b) the feasibility of cost-recovery and c) the scope for transparency and enforceability in operating procedures;
- full appraisal entails target group consultation to assess variation in user costs over the intended user catchment area;
- structural variables influence the scope for achieving optimal solutions to social dilemmas;
- there may be a role for external intervention in reducing some structural constraints on the successful outcome of joint action: eg., support for development and dissemination of affordable technology to implement quality checks on produce deliveries;
- small-scale farmers may be constrained in operating a jointly held produce collection and storage facility by scarcity of intangible capital [the latter including both human capital and individual reputations] as well as by technological constraints;
- low levels of reputation and trust in newly formed population clusters may enhance difficulties in instigating and implementing effective collective action.

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Appendix Table 1. Comparison of Scale and Performance Outcomes: Dairy Farms outside and on the Rio das Pedras Settlement, Minas Gerais State, Central Brazil

	42 farms outside the settlement		39 settler farms	
	range	average	range	average
Scale indicators				
Hectares devoted to milk production***	9 – 170	74	9 – 17.8	14.5
Cows in lactation***	12 – 120	42	2 – 17	8
Total number of cows***	20 – 145	60	4 – 29	13
Total daily production (Litres)***	86 – 2406	512	16 – 182	65
Physical performance indicators				
Daily production per lactating cow (Litres)*	4 - 26	10.8	4 - 15	8.4
Cows in lactation [%]*	45 – 89	68	12 – 100	61.5
Lactating cows/hectare	0.19 – 2.79	0.66	0.12 – 1.17	0.54
Monthly yield/hectare (Litres)**	34 – 795	234	34 – 471	141
Economic performance †				
Labour cost/litre sold (R\$)*	0.04 – 0.39	0.13	0.06 – 0.6	0.20
Labour cost/litre produced (R\$)**	0.03 – 0.26	0.10	0.05 – 0.35	0.13
Other operating costs/litre sold (R\$)	0.06 – 0.58	0.30	0.00 – 0.68	0.27
Other operating costs/litre produced** (R\$)	0.04 – 0.54	0.25	0.00 – 0.40	0.20
Labour cost/cow (R\$)	8 – 59	21	9 – 45	18
Total operating cost/cow (R\$)***	16 – 403	87	11 – 126	47
Gross margin/litre sold (R\$)*	-0.30 – 0.24	0.04	-0.46 – 0.23	-0.01
Gross margin/hectare from milk production: (R\$)	-77.17 – 110.87	10.00	-43 – 107	3.2
Revenue/unit of operating cost (R\$)	0.48 – 3.30	1.26	0.34 – 2.31	1.12
Milk price/litre fresh milk (R\$)***	0.37 – 0.58	0.47	0.30 – 0.45	0.40
Average milk yield/unit of operating cost (Litres)	1.65 – 12.32	3.4	1.33 – 9.59	3.7

† All settler labour valued at a rate equal to, or slightly above, the minimum wage.

*, **, ***, represent difference significant at below the levels of 0.1, 0.05 and 0.01 respectively.

Cooperation Networks of Public and Private Sectors in Rural Tourism of Latvia

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Annotation. Development of rural tourism in Latvia and social agents of both public and private sectors involved in this industry have been characterised in the paper. The authors seek to find methodological solutions for promotion of co operational networks and for optimization of cooperation between agents involved in rural tourism.

Key words: rural tourism, public sector, private sector, cooperation networks.

1 Introduction

According to the statistically based territorial division in urban and rural areas, 98% of Latvia's territory is rural with approximately one third of the total population, wherewith is obvious that rural development issues including rural tourism as a significant branch of rural economy is essential for Latvia.

Within a framework of Lisbon strategy, in February 2005 European Commission started realization of two priorities of the EU. They are as follows: to achieve sustained and significant growth of national economy and to create comprehensive job possibilities. Tourism can give great contribution to achieve these priorities successfully, because tourism integrates various services and trades and is related with many other branches of the economy. Tourism has impact on transport, construction, retail trade and other branches producing products for entertainment, services and holidays. [5]

Accordingly to the strategy, successful realization of these priorities requires involvement of all parties or social agents concerned at all levels. Especially cooperation of public and private sectors is emphasized. Since tourism industry have many links to other fields of economy, it is important to study vertical and horizontal networking as a basis for cooperation within a tourism system.

The objective of the paper is to analyse tourism as a system where cooperation networks are of great importance and to introduce with a pilot research which

focuses on cooperation networks within rural tourism. System approach and social network analysis were chosen as the research methods for this study.

2 Development of rural tourism in Latvia

In order to better understand the role of tourism in economic processes of Latvia, it is useful to give a brief insight in a history of the development of this industry. Those socially economic factors that had played the major role in tourism development trends and agents of public and private sectors involved in the tourism industry will be emphasized here.

It is possible to distinguish three periods in development of rural tourism. *The first one* refers to a period when Latvia was independent nation state before 1940. When local tourism was established, it promoted an interest of foreign tourists about Latvia. Until 1930, tourism as a purposefully developed industry contributed to the State budget revenues more than export of agricultural products.

In the analysis of Latvia's tourism policy of this period, external and internal tourism policies should be distinguished. The external policy seriously considered the ways of making immigration process easier. Objective of the internal policy was also promotion of national tourism since travelling of local inhabitants around the country was treated as an important contribution to national economy. [6]

Local cognitive tourism should be emphasized here as a most popular branch of tourism in Latvia of the period discussed. 185 thousands of people responded to an appeal of 1939 motivating Latvians to travel over and get introduced with a native land. On the basis of this appeal a movement of entire nation was awakened – local tourism became popular and especially in rural areas.

Travelling and tourism produced income for both *enterprises directly involved in tourism* that existed solely from tourism movement (hotels, travelling agencies, industry of souvenirs and travel accessories, trade, restaurants, and sleeping-car enterprises) and *enterprises indirectly involved in tourism* (all traffic enterprises, health resort, beaches and other places for swimming, food production enterprises, etc.).

Privately owned farms and guest houses in rural areas that were opened seasonally were influenced by tourism most sharply. Income from tourism ensured development of conveyance branch, agriculture, craft, industry, trade, arts (concerts, exhibitions). That led to other positive effects, for example, unemployment declined (what is important in terms of policy), municipal revenue increased (entrepreneurs were able to pay duties). Thus tourism improved national economy in general.

Successful development of both tourism industry and rural tourism in particular was based on two aspects: firstly, on quite simple coordination of the branch performed by the state, and secondly, on propaganda that turned out very responsive from both local people and foreigners, who expressed interest of Latvia as a new European country.

The Soviet regime from 1940-1990 characterised *the second period* in development of tourism in Latvia. Totalitarian regime and transition to planned economy in Latvia had a significant impact on development of tourism industry. A very understanding of tourism changed. In Soviet times tourism was popularized as a way of active recreation rather than a way of entrepreneurship. Much of that, what was developed in the field of rural tourism before 1940, was destroyed by collectivization and destruction of private property greatly. Rural areas became an environment for agricultural production solely. Planned economy ensured that rural people did not experience unemployment. In fact, step by step a typical Latvian rural landscape was destroyed by agricultural production and negatively impacted cultural monuments that were not recognized by totalitarian regime in many cases. Farmers were not involved in tourism since tourism industry was completely dominated by the state monopoly.

After 1990, when Latvia gained independence, *the third stage* of development of tourism occurred. Because of transition towards market economy and democracy, changes in people's attitude towards tourism were required again. Now both travelling abroad and to Latvia became available without restrictions in many cases.

Rural areas in Latvia were affected heavily by transition to market economy. Collective farms were eliminated what led to increased unemployment. Private property was renewed and it was necessary to consider new employment possibilities and activities in rural areas. New situation required to change understanding about rural areas and particularly to consider two ideas: rural areas are not only an environment for agricultural production and agricultural boom does not mean simultaneously prosperity of rural areas.

The policy of rural development of the EU is based on Cork Declaration (1986) and decisions of Salzburg Conference (2003) that envisage balanced formation of rural development, integrated rural policy approach and diversification of rural economy.

After 1990, many processes in the field of rural tourism in Latvia had to be developed from the beginning. The main activities were directed into three directions: development of entrepreneurship in rural tourism, organizational formation, seeking for specificity of tourism products and markets. Great investments were involved in business start-ups in rural tourism. That was necessary for enterprises to be ready to offer qualitative services for tourists and compete with many European countries that offer similar tourism

opportunities. Quality of the offer was greatly affected by bad infrastructure in rural areas.

Provision of an enabling environment for entrepreneurship is one of the criteria of stability of rural tourism enterprises. Research on risk factors in rural tourism identifies lack of information, knowledge and experience as some of risks. [9]

A number of rural tourism enterprises, volume and quality have significantly increased because of national and the EU financial support provided by various programs. A time period, when Latvia started joining to the EU, had a great influence on development of rural tourism. This process had a positive impact on development of rural areas, promoted maintenance of cultural objects and environment, keeping traditions, preservation and renewal of ancient trades and crafts. Rural areas have become more attractive and offer many landscapes thus ensuring that rural tourism diversifies rural economy, also through integration in agricultural activities.

Complexity and involvement of great number of bodies in tourism industry require cooperation among all agents involved when planning development of the branch in general. In this process specificity of each kind of tourism should be taken into consideration.

Since 1993, Association of Latvian rural tourism “Lauku ceļotājs” is responsible for organizing of rural tourism in Latvia. The association as a legal organization has significant role in popularization of tourism product and attraction of new clients; it represents the interests of its members who are engaged in rural tourism industry. Individuals and legal entities, which are owners of private houses, farms, cottages, dressage horse bases, rural and private hotels, can become members of the Association. Physical persons and legal bodies who are interested in development of Latvian rural tourism and are not directly engaged with rural tourism also can become associated members of this organization. Any municipality of Latvia can become a member of the association. [2]

From this it is obvious that in Latvia rural tourism industry as a system involves agents of both public and private sectors.

In Latvia rural tourism is developing faster than it is formulated in policy documents where tourism is related with agriculture. Currently rural tourism experiences new generation of entrepreneurs what changes an industry itself. It is expected that rural tourism offers in the future will be based on sustainable and reasonable usage of resources that are available in countryside. Simultaneously it is important to improve infrastructure and accessibility of information. Therefore an important precondition for development of tourism is promotion of cooperation between public and private sectors. This problem is formulated in national tourism policy and is a topic of issue for many seminars and conferences.

In order to address these matters (dialogue, cooperation, and partnership) that are important for tourism in the future, it is important to detect all social agents directly and indirectly involved in tourism. One of the ways how to do that is to treat tourism as a system. In next section the authors of the paper present systematic view on tourism industry characterising a multiplicative nature of the branch.

3 Tourism system in theory and practice

To evaluate tourism as a way of diversification of rural economy, the authors use a model of tourism system elaborated by W. Pompl [3], SWOT analysis and social network analysis.

The main elements in the scheme proposed by W. Pompl are as follows: *external environment of tourism* influencing system of tourism directly and indirectly and *system of tourism* that consists of the main or nuclear system and subsystems.

W. Pompl pointed out that the main external factors which influence tourism are nature, economy, policies and societies. *Natural factors* involve so-called primary offers which, in their essence, are not directly linked to tourism, but at the same time do shape the force of attraction and the goals of tourism. These include geographic situations, climate, hydro-resources, flora and fauna. Natural factors are turned over for the use of tourism activities with no compensation. This means that there can be a reciprocal link – tourism activities can effect the environment both positively and negatively, but if natural factors are successfully merged with other elements of a tourism system, economic benefits can be gained.

Economies are another external factor, and they can affect tourism in two ways – negatively in the case of tourism import and positively in the case of tourism export.

Government *policies* specify the conditions for tourism development both directly and indirectly. Direct processes are those which influence tourism as a sector of the economy, while indirect ones include such things as currency policies, transport policies, regional policies and so fort.

Societies can influence tourism with their culture and with positive or negative attitudes toward tourists. At the same time, the tourism sector must take into consideration certain ethical principles that are focused on respecting the culture, environment, lifestyles and politics of tourism destinations. [1]

The *main or nuclear system* of tourism is formed of tour operators, intermediates, and travellers. Tour operator is a tourism enterprise that creates and realizes tourism services – so called tourism package. Tourism agency is an enterprise that operates as an intermediate between tourists and tour

operators and other providers of services. A third element of the nuclear system is formed by travellers. Activities of other two system elements are directed towards interests of travellers.

A *subsystem* of tourism is formed by providers of services, suppliers, attractiveness of a place and institutions. Providers of services are enterprises providing services of catering, accommodation, transport, sport and entertainment. Quantity and quality of these enterprises are one of preconditions for normal functioning of tourism system.

Suppliers in a tourism system are those enterprises which do not provide tourism services directly but are necessary for tourists and tourism firms. They are enterprises involved in market research, advertising agencies, publishers of books and newspapers, left-luggage offices, car rental enterprises and those that lease recreational equipment.

Attractiveness plays an important role in provision of normal functioning of tourism system. Attractiveness is mainly influenced by nature, what is external factor of tourism system. However, beauty of nature is not the only one reason what attracts tourists to many places. Natural environment is a primary factor but in analysis of attractiveness secondary factors also should be taken into consideration. Those are specially prepared for the goals of tourism: undertakings, open-air activities in special parks, museums, theatres, information centres, production of souvenirs, playground, etc. This means that organizations which are involved in formation of attractiveness also should be observed.

Tourism system involves also institutions. They are all organizations or associations of interests which directly influence development of tourism, educational establishments that prepare specialists for tourism industry and mass media. The most important elements in this category are state institutions that make political decisions and thus develop national tourism policy, and municipalities that form environment for the entrepreneurship. [1]

In order to evaluate activities of tourism industry and to detect both strengths and weaknesses, it is necessary to analyse all elements of the tourism system in terms of their mutual interaction in a particular territory. SWOT analysis is a method that is useful for detection of weaknesses in operation of tourism system. By using this method it is possible to state a role of public and private sectors in planning further development of the tourism in Latvia and its regions.

This approach in analysis of the branch was applied in Jelgava district (Zemgale region) in 2000. Jelgava case study proved that SWOT analysis and system approaches allow studying tourism as a system. [1]

In order to identify agents involved in the tourism industry, system approach in tourism analysis should be expanded more detailed. I. Siļiņēviča presents that kind of view on tourism. [4]

Industry of tourism is closely linked with the following elements: travel organizations and agencies, transport, catering, recreation, hotels, entertainment, humanitarian fields and special interests of tourists. (See Fig. 1.) In order to detect agents of public and private sectors involved in cooperation for tourism, it is worth to identify sub elements of the elements mentioned above.

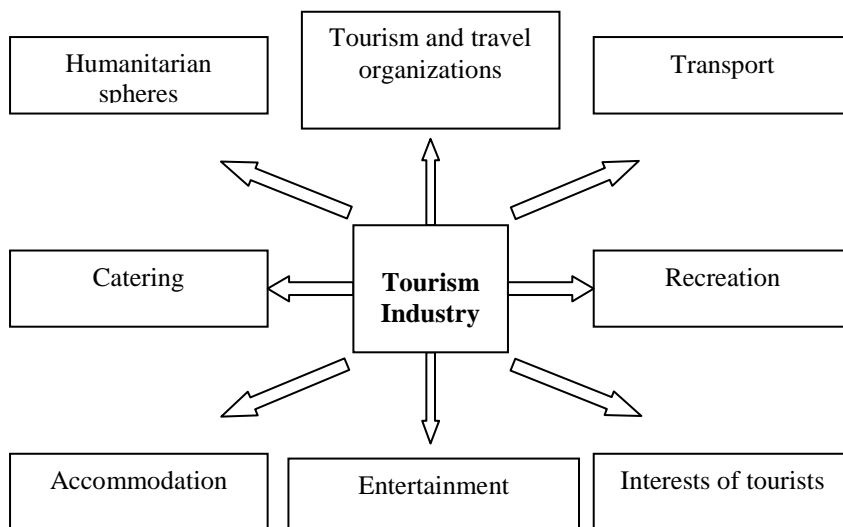


Fig. 1. Tourism industry (Adapted from Siļiņēviča I.)

Travel and tourism organizations involve tour operators, travel agents, tourism organizations that operate at national, regional and local levels and tourism information centres. Transport element in tourism system comprises such sub elements as air-ports, ports, railway, bus station, car lease, taxes. Catering is the element involving restaurants, cafes, bars, fast food enterprises, and take-away food services. Recreation enterprises are, for example, sport centres, swimming pools, skating and skiing places, golf, fishing and hunting providers, nature and national parks. An important element for tourism system is accommodation what is provided by hotels, motels, guest houses, B&B, camping places, board and lodging and rural houses.

Tourism industry is closely linked with entertainment industry and culture of a particular nation. Therefore this system involves such elements like entertainment what embraces theatres, cinemas, music-halls, open-air scene,

amusement parks, and humanitarian fields represented by drama, poesy, music, languages and arts.

Besides elements that were mentioned already, another one should be emphasized. This element is specific tourist interests which are regarded by private and public enterprises or other agents in every country. They are historical monuments, historical places, museums and exhibitions, historical buildings and thematic parks.

The authors of the paper state, that this point of view could be expanded considering specificity of tourism products in each country.

Successful operation of the system requires cooperation between its elements.

Next chapter will focus on social network analysis as methodological solution how to investigate cooperation between social agents involved in rural tourism. Some results of the pilot study will be presented showing general scheme of possible cooperation network within the industry.

4 Cooperation networks in rural tourism

Recently concept of networks becomes popular in many disciplines – economics, information, security and other. Network analysis is the study of social relations among a set of actors (social entities) that are linked to one another by social ties. The focus on relations and the patterns of relations requires a specific set of methods and analytic concepts. [7] Social network analysis is viewed as a distinct research perspective within social and behavioural sciences because it is based on and emphasizes the importance of relationships among interacting actors. [7] Social relations can be viewed as dyadic attributes (two actors and their ties), triads (three actors and their ties), or larger groups (subgroups of individuals, entire networks). [8]

There are two basic kinds of network analysis: ego network analysis and complete network analysis. These kinds reflect two basically different kinds of data. In ego network analysis each respondent is asked about the people they interact with and about the relationships among them. In this case respondents might be chosen randomly from the bigger population and therefore analysis involves assessing the quality (size, diversity, etc.) of a person's networks. In complete network analysis the researcher tries to obtain all the relationships among a set of respondents. [8]

The ego network analysis approach was chosen for the pilot study what is useful in detection of social agents that are involved in rural tourism industry. However, when tourism industry is treated as a system, a complete network analysis is more appropriate approach for the study. Complete network analysis gives a comprehensive and detailed picture on the state of cooperation

between agents of public and private sectors. Since tourism industry involves plenty of agents, to conduct a complete network analysis is quite difficult. A pilot research carried out in Jelgava district showed that tourism industry involves state and municipal institutions and enterprises and those, which are privately owned. Recently many professional associations involve in formation of tourism industry.

Figure 2 presents very general scheme of cooperation between social agents involved in the industry. The scheme is derived from the interviews with entrepreneurs of rural tourism providing tourism products in Jelgava district. Therefore a tourism enterprise offering tourism products is put in the centre of the scheme. Cooperation between agents might be regular and frequent as well as occasional. As pilot research showed, entrepreneurs are more likely to cooperate with well known and small number of partners. For many of them cooperation is occasional with the most of agents presented in the scheme. This attitude and strategy often is based on lack of trust.

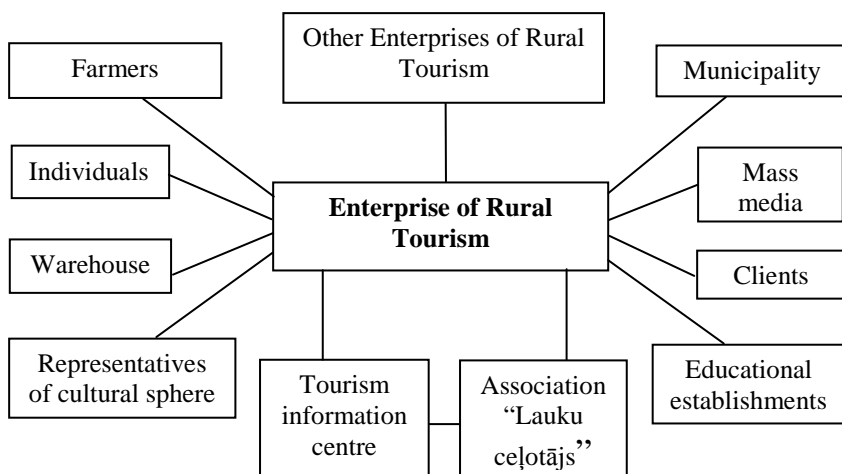


Fig. 2. General cooperation network in rural tourism

In order to resolve strategically important issues of dialogue, cooperation and partnership, it is necessary to detect all agents directly and indirectly involved in tourism. This approach would allow identifying already cooperating agents and those who might be potentially partners in the future. Some other problems could be addressed by such research, for example, promoting reasons for and hindering obstacles of cooperation, and optimization possibilities for better and more successful and beneficial cooperation.

5 Conclusions

Tourism industry is a complex system having number of linkages with other branches of the economy. For improvement of services and creation of new tourism products, cooperation both vertical and horizontal between system elements is very important.

In order to optimize cooperation between public and private sectors a detailed analysis of all agents directly and indirectly involved in the tourism industry is required. Therefore tourism system theory is appropriate theoretical basis for structuring of SWOT analysis and in evaluation of the industry.

Social network analysis is useful for number of reasons. First, it can help in detecting existing networks within industry; second, it can help in identifying cooperation problems and promoting factors.

Theoretical and methodological aspects tested in pilot researches serve as a basis for elaboration of new methodologies for tourism studies. That can contribute in finding solutions for problems in tourism industry.

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Behaviour between society and environment: Czech Republic and Asian countries

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Annotation. The environmental behaviour is based on post-materialism and new environmental paradigm. There is a measure for environmental impacts - ecological footprint. Psychosocial impacts are not measured. The psychosocial impacts are wide-spread e.g. in Aral Sea region, in the Czech Republic they do not appear due to environmental behaviour.

Key words: post-materialism, environmental behaviour, ecological footprint, gender, psychosocial impacts, Czech Republic, Asia.

1 Introduction

Environmental behaviour of population could be defined as a behaviour to the environment in terms of a positive approach to its protection. The aim of this study is to find out how it contributes to make the environmental impacts sustainable. The possibility of preventing subsequent impacts of polluted environment onto the society and differences among Western and Asian cultures in the environmental behaviour are discussed as well.

2 Environmental behaviour

The environmental behaviour has been appearing in developed countries since sixties. Since the time without war and of growing affluence in the Europe and North America. It has been appearing in developing countries with off-set subsequently. It is one of phenomenons of present-day society. The origin and research of this behaviour come from five theories.

Post-materialism. The theory of post-materialism (Inglehart, 1971) [8] states that the environment is more emphasized in developed (Western) countries than in developing ones. This phenomenon appears in the post-modern society. The post-materialism comes from Maslow's hierarchy of needs: people firstly

satisfy their material needs and only after this satisfaction the individual can attend to the satisfaction of the post-material needs. People in developed countries, whose material needs (like security and economic safety) has already been saturated, tend more to environment and its protection. The theory was subsequently expanded - environmental behaviour depends not only on the number of post-material oriented individuals, but also on the environment quality of a country (the support for protection increases when quality is worse).

The theory of post-materialism was evaluated in the Czech Republic as a willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of the environment (Soukup, 2001) [12]. Between 1993 and 2000 this willingness decreased. This is related to better quality of environment in 2000. The willingness is further depended on education level (increases with education). More willing are people of post-material values than material ones. A disagreement between attitude and behaviour of Czech population towards the protection of the environment persists.

Cultural theory (grid/group). This theory divides individuals in four types on the basis of legitimacy of by norms specified behaviour (grid) and power of ties with others (group). The views of the environment of these types are different: fatalists (nature capricious), individualists (benign), hierarchists (perverse and tolerant) and egalitarian (ephemeral). Significant differences among mentioned types in relation to the environment in the Czech Republic have not been approved (Soukup, 2001) [12].

Gender influences the perception of environmental risks. Davidson and Freudenburg (1996) [3] found out that women more perceive the risks than men not because they less know, but because they more concern in everything. The results from the Czech Republic confirm this statement.

New environmental paradigm (NEP). It comes from (since 70ties) ecocentric view - the need of limitation of economic growth and living in agreement with nature, because the man is a part of the nature, not its ruler. To measure the respondent's attitude towards NEP, a set of twelve statements is commonly used. Individuals with NEP attitude thinks about environment similarly as post-material oriented. This attitude reflects their environmentally friendly behaviour.

According to theory of **Religion and Environmentalism** (White, 1967) [17], the anthropocentric Christianity, in which the relation man-nature is like ruler-ruled, contributed to contemporary ecological crisis (consequences of human activity on the nature). However, an attitude of Christians and non-Christians towards the environment does not vary in the Czech Republic.

Developing countries. Table 1 shows a selection from UN's Millenium Development Goals indicators in a European post-socialist, Asian post-socialist and Asian socialist country. The two developing countries have

lower living standard (more people below poverty line) than the Czech Republic and simultaneously produce less CO₂ per capita, which is the main indicator of environmental impacts (in STIRPAT model, see below).

Table 1. Millenium Development Goals indicators of Czech Republic and Asian developing countries

Czech Republic		Uzbekistan		Vietnam	
Population below \$1 per day consumption (%)					
1993	2	1993	3,3	1993	14,6
1996	2	1998	19,2	1998	3,8
2000-4	no data	2003	10-19	2002	2,2
Children under five mortality rate (per 1000 live births)					
1990	13	1990	79	1990	53
1995	9	1995	75	1995	44
2000	5	2000	71	2000	30
2005	4	2005	68	2005	19
Carbon dioxide emissions (metric tons of CO ₂ per capita)					
1992	13,4283	1992	5,4936	1992	0,3238
1995	11,785	1995	4,6318	1995	0,4069
2000	11,6301	2000	5,2182	2000	0,6809
2001	11,6305	2001	5,1751	2001	0,7582
2002	11,2608	2002	5,198	2002	0,8856
2003	11,4385	2003	5,176	2003	0,9337
2004	11,4759	2004	5,2619	2004	1,1768

Source: Data from UN - www.mdgmonitor.net. [14]

In Vietnam, the amount of pollution grows with decreasing poverty and child mortality. This does not correspond with post-materialism. But it corresponds with the need of production growth in order to increase the living standard. The theory of *treadmill of production in capitalism* from the field of political economy (Schnaiberg and Gould, 1994 in York et al., 2003) [18] is in partial conformity with this. According to treadmill of production, economic growth is the key driving force of environmental impacts. The continual expansion of the production increases impacts by placing greater demands on resources and by producing greater volume of waste. It is interesting that socialist (though Asian) countries like Vietnam and China appear like this. On the contrary, the increasing poverty has no influence on the amount of pollution in Uzbekistan. Environmental behaviour most probably expresses itself differently in countries outside the Western civilization. It is more bound to their culture and religion

and, in some cases, to politics. Farmer et al. (2001) [5] in the case of Central Asia's environmental NGO's show that they are strongly bound to their governments and their future development should not necessarily be viewed within western model of NGO's.

As for religion, it is possible that especially the East Asian religions have better relation to environment than Christianity (though theory of Religion and Environmentalism is disputed for its universal validity). There is only little evidence for Islamic model of environmentalism (Farmer et al., 2001) [5]. Muslims do not combine environmental protection with politics because of their faith that everything, even the environment quality, is the God's will.

3 Human ecological footprint on the environment

How affect (quantitatively) the human societies their physical environment in a global scale? Studies on this subject come from three theories: human ecology, modernization and political economy (summarily known as environmental impact theories).

Model. What are the ways to measure these impacts? There is a model STIRPAT (STochastic Impacts by Regression on Population, Affluence and Technology) coming from older IPAT model originally used in the natural sciences and allowing the sociological and other factors to enter the latter. The basic specification of the STIRPAT is:

$$I_i = aP_i^b A_i^c T_i^d e_i \quad (1)$$

where the constant a scales the model; b , c and d are the exponents (completive factors) of P, A and T and e is the error term. The unit of I is CO₂ emissions, for A it is GDP per capita and for T it is CO₂ emissions per unit of GDP. (Rosa and Dietz, 1998) [10].

Ecological footprint. The most comprehensive indicator of environmental impacts available is the ecological footprint. It is an aggregate measure that reflects the fact that land is a basis for three benefits provided to humans by the environment: living space, natural resources and disposal site for wastes. The ecological footprint is the amount of land necessary to sustainably support an average global citizen, typically measured in hectares. There are six types of land forming the total ecological footprint:

1. cropland;
2. grazing land;
3. forest;
4. fishing ground;
5. built-up land;
6. land area required to absorb CO₂ emissions from the use of fossil fuel.

According to York et al. (2003) [18], the national ecological footprint is highly correlated (at significance level $p < 0.001$) with other important environmental variables: emissions of ozone depleting substances ($r = 0.78$) and nuclear power generation ($r = 0.74$).

Estimated global productive land per capita is 2.1 ha. But the the global ecological footprint per capita is 2.8 ha (Wackernagel et al., 1999) [16]. This should be taken as a mesure of sustainable development - nations with footprint at or below 2.1 ha have a global environmental impact that does not threat the sustainability if population growth were halted. The examples of national ecological footprint according to Wackernagel et al. (2000) [15] are: USA (12.2 ha), China (1.8 ha) and Bangladesh (the lowest, 0.6 ha).

Human ecology model of impacts. The theory of human ecology applies ecological principles to the understanding of human societies. Human ecologists emphasize an ecological foundation for understanding the driving forces of anthropogenic environmental impacts, with the expectation that key social and political variables may mediate impacts, but not fundamentally overcome them. After York et al. (2003) [18] the variables of STIRPAT significantly affecting the ecological footprint (according the human ecology model of environmental impacts) are:

1. population size (1 percent increase in population leads to 0.98 percent increase of ecological footprint);
2. age structure of the population (the larger amount of the most productive ages between 15 and 65 increases the ecological footprint);
3. ecological variables: latitude (nations in temperate regions have 30 percent greater and nations in arctic regions 40 percent greater ecological footprints than do the nations in the tropics) and land area per capita (impacts are higher in nations with more land area per capita);
4. GDP per capita (increase of this variable consistently leads to an increase of the ecological footprint).

Countries according to human ecology. York et al. (2003) [18] used STIRPAT to examine the effect of theoretically relevant variables on the ecological footprint. The environmental impact of selected countries when controlling for basic material conditions (multipliers of ecological footprint) are: (the least eco-efficient) United Arab Emirates - Uzbekistan - USA - Russia - Czech Republic - Slovakia - Vietnam - Germany - Tajikistan - Iceland (the most eco-efficient). Source data are from around 1996 and should be taken roughly.

It can be said that the developed countries show slightly higher footprint than the developing ones, but the values of both groups are very variable. Hereafter, the results of human ecology theory are in some cases contradictory to two other environmental impact theories (modernization and political economy). The urbanization is an example of this. Foster (1999) [6] claims that counter to

the claims of modernization, urbanization increases impacts because of the separation it generates between countryside and city, creates metabolic rift between ecological and economic processes.

Footprinting and environmental behaviour. Czech Republic's ecological footprint is similar to other post-socialist European countries and in 1993 the Czech Republic belonged by its population's environmental behaviour and opinions to the group of central and east European countries with common socialist past. Between 1993 and 2000 a decrease of a willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of the environment took place (Soukup, 2001) [12]. But in fact, there are only several variables (affecting the ecological footprint according to human ecology theory) influenceable by government of democratic type. Even intensive environmental policy cannot affect the latitude, land area, age structure of the population. It can only little affect population and more the GDP. Otherwise, if we deal with the modernization theory, the state environmentalism has no significant effects on the impacts (York et al., 2003) [18].

The environmental behaviour (as a result of population's post-material orientation and/or NEP above all) can in a long-time scale decrease the national ecological footprint, which is eligible. This behaviour should be (in this case) pointed at the variables of human ecology theory significantly affecting the ecological footprint. Each developed country should emphasize technologies with more benign environmental impacts as well.

As for developing countries it can be roughly noted that sub-Saharan countries had smaller ecological footprint than Asian countries in 90ties. Especially Persian Gulf and Central Asian (except Tajikistan) countries show high environmental impacts. It is possible that, for example, artificial raising of population in Turkmenistan (Kadyrov, 2001 in Horák, 2005) [7] can misrepresent data about impacts.

It is expectable that economic growth, especially in China and other East Asian countries, already increases the global ecological footprint. But there is different environmental behaviour than in West in these countries and it is not quite evident to what rate the theory of political economy (which identifies the economic growth as the key driving force behind environmental impacts in capitalism) is applicable to these Asian and sometimes socialist countries.

The official development cooperation should first of all find the way how to maintain the development of each country in a feasible rate from the environmental viewpoint.

4 Psychosocial impacts onto the society

After the society pollutes its environment, there is a time delay before this environment can affect the society. The country which causes the pollution does not need to be affected in such a scale as another, “innocent“, one. How are the human societies affected (qualitatively) by the polluted environment?

Psychosocial impacts. Exposure of humans to heavily polluted environment (water, land and air) may impact not only the physiological health (diseases) but also psychosocial health of individuals (Crighton et al., 2003). [2] The basis of these psychosocial impacts onto the society consist in the theory of environmental stress. This stress is defined (Baum et al., 1982) [1] as “a process by which environmental events or forces, called stressors, threaten an organism’s existence and well-being and by which the organism responds to this threat.“ A reaction to this stress comprises a symptoms like fear, emotional distress, anger and others. These symptoms subsequently cause new social features, the migration above all, which are measurable by methods of social sciences. These migratories are called environmental refugees (Small, I., van der Meer, J. a Upshur, R., 2001) [11].

There is only a few cases of impacts onto the society in the Czech Republic. At the end of the 80ties, for example, when there was highly polluted air in the industrial areas of north-western Bohemia, the people were wearing facecloths, which could cause above mentioned symptoms. This pollution was subsequently removed after being publicized in the media. There is no evidence of so much polluted agricultural land and water that could lead to origin of new social features. This speaks in favour of more likely post-material orientation of Czech society.

Karakalpakstan. On the contrary, the psychosocial impacts are widely extended in the region of former Aral Sea in Uzbekistan. The primary pollution of soil, water and air comes from pesticides applied to cotton fields. Because the psychosocial impacts now threaten even the basic material needs and health, the environmental behaviour cannot be studied. A question is how post-material this community (ethnically Karakalpaks) would be without an extreme pollution. After Crighton et al. (2003) [2], a migration (people considered moving and really moving) runs there and its intensity changes with distance of home from former Aral coast. Approximately one half of 1100 respondents has somatic symptoms associated with emotional distress. Informal social support (friends, relatives) reduces impacts and being involved in community activities (formal) increase impacts because of awareness of local environmental, social and economic problems.

Environmental behaviour and psychosocial impacts. The measures similar to the ecological footprint should be developed in order to measure suffering of individuals from polluted environment. Environmental behaviour must

contribute to prevention of psychosocial impacts above all. Environmental education of young generations is therefore needed. Kronberga and Barisa (2006) [9] found out that young people in convincing most agree that polluted environment affects health. However, slightly more than one third (of 177 respondents) agreed partially. These results from “clean” rural parts of Latvia should be a way out for research in more polluted and endangered regions. Subsequent development aid should be there aimed at environmental education.

Significant differences in level of emotional distress between men and women as well as between ethnic groups has been observed (Crighton et al., 2003) [2]. Women thus not only more perceive the environmental risks but also eventual subsequent psychosocial impacts. Ethnic differences in distress are worth consider in connection with different environmental behaviour of different cultures. It is possible that relations with environment differ as to a single nation.

5 Environmental policy and attitudes in the Czech Republic

Attitudes to Czech environmental policy. Table 2 depicts the attitudes of the Czech population towards environmental policy in 2006. Slightly more inhabitants evaluate the environment in the Czech Republic as good (54%) than bad (46%). Likewise, slightly more people agree than disagree with giving up part of their income in favour of preventing pollution. This would disapprove with decreasing willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of the environment between 1993 and 2000. But Czech population is not for tax increasing (31% for increasing, 57% against, rest don’t know) for using them to prevent pollution.

Czech people are in most interested in informations about environment, but slightly more inhabitants assume that the government sufficiently does not inform about and does not care for the environment.

Table 2. Czech population's attitude and government's environmental policy;
1033 respondents older than 15 years

Are you sufficiently informed about the state of the environment in the Czech republic?		
Completely	%	1
Rather sufficiently	%	33
Rather insufficiently	%	48
Insufficiently	%	8
Don't know	%	10
In your opinion, the Czech Republic is ... concerned about environmental protection...		
Excessively	%	1
Adequately	%	45
Insufficiently	%	49
Don't know	%	5
Are you interested in informations about the environment in the Czech Republic?		
Very interested	%	13
A bit interested	%	56
Not very interested	%	26
Not interested at all	%	3
Don't know	%	2
Do you save energy and water for environmental reasons?		
Always	%	14
Often	%	34
Rarely	%	32
Never	%	14
Don't know	%	4
Does not apply	%	2
Would you be willing to give up part of your income if you were sure that the money would be used to prevent pollution?		
Definitely agree	%	6
Rather agree	%	38
Rather disagree	%	26
Definitely disagree	%	16
Don't know	%	14

Source: Statistical Environmental Yearbook of the Czech Republic, 2007. [13]

Water and land. Table 3 shows that more people perceive as a very serious problem pollution and shortage of water. Because water is a daily need of each individual, the land pollution (which does not directly touch at least urban inhabitants) is perceived as less problematic. Today, only 0,98% af total water

withdrawal per year is used in agriculture (Statistical Environmental Yearbook, 2007) [13]. This is least from post-socialist EU countries as well as the fresh water withdrawal per capita. But the Czech Republic's renewable water resources per capita are lowest from these countries. It seems that sparing and environmental behaviour towards water resources is partially a matter of necessity.

Table 3. Phenomenons of the environment in the Czech Republic

Can you assess the following phenomenon? Is...a problem?	Pollution of drinking water	Shortage of drinking water	Pollution and degradation of agricultural land
Very serious problem	65	64	41
Quite serious problem	30	26	43
Not a very serious problem	3	5	9
Not a problem at all	0	1	1
Don't know	2	4	6

Source: Statistical Environmental Yearbook of the Czech Republic, 2007. [13]

Most of data speaks in favour of post-material orientation and new environmental paradigm attitude of at least part of Czech population. Although the Czech Republic has common socialist past with some developing countries of Asia, this era lasted only tens of years and attitudes and behaviour towards environment are different. They depend on society development in a longer-time scale.

There are some ways for development cooperation in countries of Asian culture that are endangered by impacts of pollution onto its society (e.g. psychosocial impacts). To educate its population in environmental behaviour of Western type is one of possibilities. After Easterly (2006) [4] the search for type of work and subsequent experiment, based on the results of the search, are firstly needed to be successful at development cooperation.

6 Conclusion

Although the environmental behaviour is a phenomenon of the post-materialism, the types of its exhibition depend also on historical development of society. In Western civilization (which passed from traditional through modern to post-modern or post-material society) the environmental behaviour is more known. There can be an environmental behaviour in Asian cultures,

but different. Environmental impact theories appeared in West and applicable there do not need to be wholly valid in Asia. It is expectable that economic growth especially in East Asia increases the total ecological footprint. Because the environmental behaviour is dependent on culture, politics and religion of these developing countries, the dynamics of future increase of ecological footprint should be studied.

Environmental behaviour cannot be studied in regions, where the pollution threatens even material needs and health. As for psychosocial impacts of polluted environment onto the society, there have been found differences not only among ethnics but also between men and women. It is recommended to pursue an environmental education in endangered regions as a form of development cooperation. Supporting the environmental behaviour in Asian countries is a way how to make their dynamic development sustainable.

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The role of the extension services in rural areas – perception by local actors

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Annotation. The paper is focused on the issue of extension services for the Czech countryside and further on discussing the question, how and who should provide information (extension service) necessary for the development of rural areas. The paper is based on two interviewed groups of respondents (as local actors) by the technique of Focus Groups. The local actors are just those, who, according to the endogenous approach, are best understanding the problems of their location. The results and conclusions of this paper provide their opinions and perception of the discussed issues – the extension service and information for Czech countryside.

Key words: extension services, information, rural area, local actors.

1 Introduction

It is possible to introduce this paper by words of a French sociologist of a country P. Rambaud from the seventies of the twentieth century: „*A conception, that a country has a position of „a second sequence“ after a town results from an awareness of a development lateness. ... A new function of rural space – recreational and regenerative – rather expels a productive function and it is a factor of changes of a rural community ...* (Rambaud 1974).

An above mentioned extract of the French sociologist is a motto not only for this paper but it is also possible to speculate about it as a fundamental idea of a rural space development at all. It is the reason why a theoretical determination of a conceptual framework of this paper ties together with the Rambaud's extract and determines first rural space, then deals with an endogenous approach, which is possible to choose for a rural space development and at the end connects to the rural space development the one, who is essential for the rural space development according to principles of an endogenous approach i.e. a participant active in a particular locality, an active participant for a

development of this locality. An information (knowing), gained among others also through the medium of consultancy belongs undoubtedly among „know-how“ of such a rural/local participant.

What is a role of consultancy and how „prospective“ participants of rural space development perceive a role of consultancy and advisory services? Results and conclusions of this paper bring a basic mapping out of this problems, gained through the medium respondents' opinions, which were carried out by the use of qualitative technique of the sociological empiric research Focus Groups (gathered in two localities – South Bohemian and North Bohemian region), and seen by eyes of prospective participants of rural development.

2 A theoretical determination

RURAL SPACE¹ includes a country as a geographical space and further a country as a social space including agriculture as an activity connected with nature, that is just typical of this space in contrast to urban space, typical rather of its activities connected with industry (Hudečková, Lošťák 2002). Rambaud's question in the introduction indicates it was common, that a country and a town (two different social spaces, types of social organization in the space) were defined as opposites till the 70's of the 20th century.²

A town and a country were at the beginning observed dichotomically by social conceptualization and terminology, by the way of polar typologies. This concept was spread at most in the 20's till the 30's especially thanks to works of F. Tönniese³ from the end of the 19th century, but also in connection with comprehensive comparative material gathered by P. Sorokin and C. Zimmerman and other American sociologists of a country, who at the beginning of the 20th century examined rural communities in the USA. These and other authors for example (Becker, Durkheim, Weber and others) used dichotomic categories for societies marking of rural or urban type, in which a criterion of demographic-statistical location of population in space predominated (i.e. especially number indicators and population density in a territory), although authors used a number

¹Also the term “rural space” is often used from the viewpoint of significance for rural space, thanks to broader pithiness that this concept “rural” offers.

²A definition “country” comes from the Latin word “rural” and is an opposite for the term “town” (urban).

³It is proper to mention the particular Tönnies's work from the year 1887 „*Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*“, for its connection with dichotomic concept, as one of the oldest concepts considering the relation town and country. Country is mentioned in comparison with town as a diverse way of social organisation in the concept.

of further indicators, in order to line up every examined domicile to so called continuum town – country.⁴

From the 70's of the 20th century the rural space begins to be accented by a perspective of a well-balanced environment (again physical and social), that leads to founding of the most natural ways, that consciously respect individuality of rural space.⁵ It concerns an effort to perceive nature sensitively in consideration of both nature itself and recreational and medical function, further perception of socio-cultural context with regard to sustenance and development of rural subculture (personal social ties, respect towards traditions, life pace, that is not stressful and others) and at the end a perception of economic aspects, that evolve agricultural production in optimal interconnection with delivering of established services (Velký sociologický slovník, 1996). Most of mentioned attributes of rural environs (physical and social) find a common factor at a present time in so called multifunctional agriculture with a mission of permanently sustainable life at the country.

Country and its individual character (as an opposite of a town or as distinct from a town) is significant by its particularity, that is not distinguished exclusively by disparities and inequalities but also specialities occurring in rural space. Complicacy seen in an approach of issue solving RURAL SPACE DEVELOPMENT must necessarily lead to interdisciplinary character of its insight. That is why this complicacy is focused both as a theory of regional development (Blažek, Uhlř 2002), whose economic theories were and still are vital essence at the beginning (A. Ziegler, H. R. Peters, H. Schroers a U. Hahne in R. Jehle 1998), and more recently (from the 70's of the 20th century) also sociological theories (P. Allières, J. P. Billaud, N. Mathieu – J. Mengin, B. Kayser in H. Hudečková, R. Jehle 1997). However, perspectives of particular disciplines are diverse and went through development of opinions of that, what is “the best” for rural development, which was embodied by different authors to a broad spectrum of studies and development theories. Nevertheless, a

⁴ A principle for another of the used concepts about relation between town and country was put down this way (concept of continuum of town with country that develops more from the 60's and dominates in the 70's) that served well to empiric research but does not overcome the starting point of opposite between town and country.

⁵ The last from the concepts considering relation country and town begins to rise in this time, the most complicated from the used ones, a concept of convergence and divergence of town with country that does not suffer from simplicity and at the same time support neither country nor town. Country is in it mentioned as an equal partner and both of them have the right of independent existence. It does not deny that town dominates over country, but at the same time recognizes values of rural social space.

question of country preservation is not contemporary it is being solved for more than 100 years.⁶

Two basic approaches for problems solving of regions development, the country and rural space or disadvantaged areas crystallized in the course of the time – ENDOGENOUS and EXOGENOUS. The basic principle of exogenous models is seen in possible development outgoing from environs OUTSIDE OF the location, while possible potentials for development are especially searched for WITHIN the location at endogenous models, because they dispose of specific (natural, cultural, human) resources that need to be mobilized for development. Exogenous approaches were ordinarily applicable till the 70's of the 20th century, but later (in the 80's) they showed themselves as insufficient and were submitted to criticism (Lowe 2000). In addition, some negative results only of exogenously guided processes of rural development implied that such a guided process is not practicable, because it is insufficient for a permanent sustenance of rural space. Contemporary knowledge shows, that the most appropriate way is a collective way, in which both approaches (exogenous and endogenous) mingle and combine themselves (with emphasis on the endogenous principles) and is most appropriately expressed by the perspective IERR⁷ – integrated endogenous regional (rural/local) development (economic, social, political, cultural, ecological and others).

If there was above mentioned, that the development of rural areas are complicated issues demanding an interdisciplinary approach and if there was stated, that a local development cannot otherwise function without external interventions, but also cannot originate and continue without local will and initiative (within endogenous model of development), it is necessary to focus theoretical part also on a PARTICIPANT, who plays a crucial role (just according to the endogenous approach towards the problems of rural development).

The term PARTICIPANT originates from French (acteur), that took it over from the Latin expression "actor" and means someone who is acting i.e. bearer, initiator or implementer of social activities. A participant (or person

⁶Rural sociology in USA solved a practical question in time of its birth (beginning of the 20. century): „How to achieve a social consensus in emergent communities of American country“, while European rural sociology was considering above all the question: „How to prevent country from backwardness at the present conservation of its social identity“. This question is practically being solved at the present time as well (Hudečková, Lošťák 2002, Majerová 2003).

⁷ IEER strategies are not brand new. They have been already discussed in the 70's, when a regional politics was searching for development strategies for countries of the third world. After it, the politics of EU countries began to speculate about ieer strategies for their rural areas (most markedly in LEADER initiative and in its three gradual versions – LEADER I, LEADER II a LEADER+).

involved) can be in a narrower sense an individual, in broad sense a social group as a bearer of social activities. The French sociologist M. Crozier sees participants and their “involving” following: *„A participant has only rarely an aim and less commonly a coherent project. Participants are numerous, more or less ambiguous, more or less detected, more or less contradictory. But they are joined by their active behaviour. ... It is a behaviour that makes always sense ...* (Crozier in Hudečková, Jehle 1997). It is possible to divide participants moving in rural space into 3 categories. Countrymen themselves, whose abidance in rural space has a long term character, are the first and the most important category. The second category is created by those people, who expand to the country, they use the rural space with an objective of personal and a short term profit and it could be said they struggle for it. A state and its territorial organizations are the third and the last category. These as participants in the rural space do not have an own aim and are rather only intermediaries or performer of long term interests of the state, eventually of other participants, who have their usually long term interests in rural space (Hudečková, Jehle 1997).

Social participants (personalities of rural life, local organizations, municipalities, bigger territorial units, eventually state and others) act, perform and exercise “in an own play field” their strategies based on power. In social fields they take positions of superiority or subordination, advantageous and disadvantageous positions, positions of equilibrium, stable positions as well as positions changing in time. At the same time, it is possible to distinguish various levels within the fields (supranational, national, territorial units, municipal).

If this paper deals with the role of consultancy in rural development, and if an expression of the term “participant” was inserted into the theoretical determination as a potential⁸ “provider and consumer” of an advisory activity (next to already determined rural space and its development), it remains to replenish the theoretical framework with terms dealing with the consultancy itself. Because the consultancy is sometimes connected with education or information, conclusion of the theoretical determination is focused just on these concepts.

It is possible in the most general conception to perceive CONSULTANCY as a professional providing of expert advice, precaution proposal formulated by one subject/participant in order to solve a problem of the other subject/participant. Both individuals and organisations or institutions can create both subjects, poles of this specific communication. Consultancy is seen from various visual angles from the sociological point of view. It is possible to see consultancy as a social interaction and information transfer with relatively same roles of both

⁸ Here is the word “potential” deliberately chosen because to struggle for development of rural areas where participants move depends always on their will.

participated sides – advisor and client (it is possible in this case to say “participants”, who give advices and “participants”, who ask for an advice), but also as a specific activity, precisely to say, a complex of specific activities with exactly determined objectives and defined rules. Consultancy constitutes a form of help and opinion influencing and acting of particular participants at the same time, it is one of social institutions originated from practical need in society⁹ (Velký sociologický slovník, 1996). Providers of consultancy can be financed from various sources. It is possible to divide them into 3 groups. These are partly subjects providing consultancy as a publicly available services to citizens that are established and financed by the state, state organs and institutions and partly private subjects providing advisory services that are paid. The third group is formed by various organisations, associations and institutions that provide mostly services out of charge and are established and financed by charitable organizations or foundations.

Consultancy is to certain extent a process of information transfer. INFORMATION is any form of statement or message that is countable. Information is in general understood in sociology as a statement about some reality (irrespective of an acquired contribution), in narrower sense it concerns a statement, that exceeds a framework of present knowledge.

By insertion into the theoretical framework and by definition of some concepts for examined issues were defined borders for this chapter. The following two parts (methodical approach and research outputs) are the empiric part of the chapter and will try to make use of theoretical background for practical use, application, and comparison of acquired empiric knowledge with pieces of knowledge acquired in the course of conceptualization.

3 A methodical approach and a used technique of data gathering

A sociological laboratory has been working on a project “Consultancy for rural development” in the year 2006, whose provider was Department of Agriculture

⁹It is possible to understand consultancy as a method and a medium towards information base delivery for effective decision making, system of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, particular profession or a type of service or if you like a system of services. Basic principle of consultancy is a help offered by an assessment of own possibilities and by decision making about problem solution on the basis of information offered by an adviser. Utilization of consultancy services is voluntary, nobody is forced to ask for the services nor to accept them. The sense of consultancy is to direct an applicant towards independent, active and an effective coping with an existing problem situation (Velký sociologický slovník, 1996).

of the Czech Republic. A terrain examination was carried out in terms of this project that was implemented in several phases proceeding in the last three months of the year 2006. At the beginning a quantitative approach was chosen for a sociological empiric research and later was the quantitative approach combined with a qualitative approach for completion and specification of “quantitatively” gathered data. This is the reason why quantitative interview techniques were used at first for terrain examination (questionnaire, semi-standardized interview), consequently were used qualitative techniques (non-standardized interview and Focus Groups). The paper was entirely focused on data gathering in terrain by Focus Groups technique in two localities - Protivín (an area around České Budějovice) and Třebenice (an area around Liberec). Both Focus Groups were implemented by an agency STEM, that on the basis of requirements dated up by workers of sociological laboratory of the Czech university of Life Sciences in Prague chose both the place of performance and its participants. The basic requirements were a location of above mentioned areas (around České Budějovice and Liberec) and it was necessary to choose respondents in such a way, so that they could represent representatives of local participants or so they would be the participants themselves acting in these localities. The agency STEM chose the respondents among mayors, association representatives of municipalities or MAS, entrepreneurs (sole traders, self-employed farmers), significant personalities of local life (a school director, a teacher, a priest). Before the final choice was made, it had been many times consulted with workers of sociological laboratory.

3.1. Group description of respondents

The final set up file of respondents for group interview was following:

Table 1. Composition of discussion groups (Třebenice a Protivín) – socio-demographical characteristics and a viewpoint of interest in rural development and development of municipalities and a position of a respondent

		T	P			T	P
Sex	man	7	7	Interest in rural development	Big	8	7
	woman	3	3		Middle	1	3
Age	30-44	2	3		Small	1	0
	45-59	5	4	Position Function Contract	Management of a municipality	4	2
	60+	3	3		Entrepreneurs	3	2
Education	Skilled	1	1		Micro-regions and MAS	3	2
	Secondary education	5	4		Activists of associations	4	6
	University education	4	5		Important occupation	2	2

Source: STEM, technical report from performed Focus Groups, arranged.

This table documents, that roles of local participants are often multiple, in that way, that a position and a function of some respondents enables an enlistment into several characteristics at once (an entrepreneur was at the same time a mayor, a representative was an active member of a hunt club and so on.). If we evaluated these multiple roles of local participants, there was not any difference between the two observed locations. It is interesting to notice, that among active representatives of public life (at least in these two groups) are women represented always by one quarter in contrast to men, who are represented by two quarters. This fact does not play any essential role, because women (in discussion group in Protivín) were considerably stronger debaters, even though they were in numerical minority (see further). Both groups of respondents were represented pro rate in all three age categories. Nine tenth of respondents had secondary and university education.

It is possible to incorporate the respondents' activity into the basic characteristics that they showed in the course of group discussion. Respondent T10 in Třebenice expressed himself most often to the discussed issues,

according to the number of noted statements.¹⁰ His expressions created less than one quarter of the total number of all expressions. This one and respondent T₁ (with less than one fifth of statements) and respondent T₉ (with almost 17 % of statements) were three dominant debaters with total 2/3 of all statement. Their statements were added by other respondents (remaining 1/3 of expressions, see the table below). Almost a concurrent situation happened in Protivín, where three strong debaters¹¹ (P₃, P₄ and P₇) gained control of the discussion in amount of expressions – almost from 2/3. The other respondents participated in the whole discussion with remaining 1/3 from the total number of all statements.

Table 2. Respondents' statements – basic orientation

Třebenice					Protivín				
Resp.	Number of expressions		Number of words		Resp.	Number of expressions		Number of words	
	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)		abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)
T ₁	18	18,95	950	16,33	P ₁	1	0,81	22	0,38
T ₂	1	1,05	171	2,94	P ₂	5	4,07	425	7,40
T ₃	5	5,26	222	3,82	P ₃	40	32,52	2589	45,05
T ₄	8	8,42	528	9,08	P ₄	18	14,63	444	7,73
T ₅	2	2,11	62	1,07	P ₅	8	6,50	249	4,33
T ₆	6	6,32	104	1,79	P ₆	9	7,32	495	8,61
T ₇	6	6,32	157	2,70	P ₇	19	15,45	717	12,48
T ₈	5	5,26	178	3,06	P ₈	8	6,50	390	6,79
T ₉	16	16,84	1326	22,80	P ₉	9	7,32	323	5,62
T ₁₀	28	29,47	2118	36,42	P ₁₀	6	4,88	93	1,62
Totally	95	100,00	5816	100,00	Totally	123	100,00	5747	100,00

Source: Own calculations.

It is possible to specify orientation characteristics by taking into consideration a number of words that each respondent said. The strongest debaters in amount of words still remain respondents (T₁, T₉ and T₁₀) from Třebenice, only with that difference that their share will move upwards to $\frac{3}{4}$. It means that from all words said by respondents during discussion, $\frac{3}{4}$ were said just by these three

¹⁰ Statements are seen as particular respondents' statements that were heard at group discussion regardless time that participants needed for their statement formulation. More accurate though still an orientation characterization is number of words delivered during the group discussion by each of respondents. Both indicators (both number of statements and number of words) serve for an orientation about the course of group discussion.

¹¹ The strongest three debaters in amount of statements were all women.

men. If we observe a number of words said in this way in a discussion group in Protivín, the strongest three respondents will take up the concurrent 2/3 of space (as the number of statements), indeed with that difference that respondent P₄ falls out from the strong trio and respondent T6 substitutes him. It is possible to close the respondents' group description by evaluation of moderator activity, who directed both discussion groups, in that way, that he had to use twice more words in Protivín than he used in the group of Třebenice. The Třebenice group was lively and respondents were willing to discuss, the moderator did not have to explain so much and force people to talk.

4 Results

4.1 What is country at all...

...it is possible to cross it easily on foot, by bike...

It is possible to characterize a country by respondents' eyes of both groups rather by lifestyle, (environment, freedom, more peaceful way of life ... T₉: *it is a question of choice, how you want to live, a country is a place, where I am in contact with nature, where I am not limited by architecture, I have a space for my interests and perceptions development...* a mutual knowledge of people, but at the same time shyness, closeness, willingness to open themselves for the others, P₃: *...It seems to me, that here are people too reserved, they don't accept a new contact easily, they don't mix in...*), than by limitation of a country geographically or demographically (P₆: *...where is the limit of the country. Do we take into account a priority of a country, i.e. a part or a little village, which has a nice countryside, with some water in it, is this a country? Is there a fresh air? Or...shall we broaden it here, shall we make here agglomerations, shall we make here an industry zone. When ...does the village get a town statute? It is created in suburb areas of big cities, a satellite towns emerge, I wouldn't like to be there personally. At a present time it is such a megalomania. It was a little village and now it is a part of a bigger town ...*).

Primarily, the respondents are satisfied with the life at the country. Later on, they object above all to transportation, infrastructure, lack of job possibilities, aging of population, little opportunities for young people, not a big chance to have own living, but also inconvenient redistributing of tax yield for smaller villages, problematic grant acquisition for agriculture (... *agriculture without donations is Utopia...*) and so on.

4.2 Development of a country

...in contemporary time agriculture gains a new orientation, the original function changes and cycling, hiking or ecological agriculture tourism develop ... we try to create an area interesting for tourism, ensure all services, ...we know, we are only at the beginning...

Respondents connect rural development with business support, with better conditions for life (particularly of young families, entrepreneurs, generally of people, who would like to settle at the country). These conditions should be for example tax preferences, support for agriculture, improvement in transportation, reconstruction of houses and modernization of infrastructure.

Knowledge in projects, from which it is possible to obtain financial donation for rural development, is by educated persons (mayors, representatives of local operational groups, associations of villages etc.) at the very high level with a very good survey about existing programmes including familiarity about financing in the next financial period 2007-2013 (EAFRD and its 4 main programmes i.e. LEADER, POV, European social fund, cross-border cooperation and others.). A problem is, whether others know about these people and services, they offer. An information transfer stagnates somewhere (Protivín) towards citizens and potential applicants. (*P₃: ...I don't know why aren't the people informed, we try. We have founded the association the fish of Vodňany...so that we could help farmers, entrepreneurs and nobody comes, nobody knows about it. Why don't the mayors inform about it? We cannot manage it...*).

4.3 A difficult support and donation accessibility for rural development

... An application processing for a project is for a common person very difficult.

Complicated and exacting administration rather from the Czech side than from the side of EU, inexplicit rules – different rules for different departments changing in the course of the year, bank credit inaccessibility – in contrast to the Czech foreign bank, domestic banks approach the cooperation with regions, municipalities and entrepreneurs hesitantly, a system of project advanced financing in general are criticized by respondents, who have knowledge in problems of acquiring financial resources from the above mentioned programmes. There is also a problem at project documentations cofinancing, data listing of particular rounds of application forms are inexplicit (it is not clear a long time, if the round is going to be put up or not), short deadlines for applications processing and their submission, long time limits for their evaluation, an approach of the Czech republic is criticized, local

participants feel rather endangered for their inability to exhaust offered resources.

Respondents of both groups expressed for example a term „project“ by a great number of expressions and attributions in the course of the whole discussion. In general, it is possible to state that the respondents from Protivín thought of the term „projects“ and their creation in a more sceptical or critical way. They rather searched for problems and complained of difficulties that projects creation normally brings. Respondents from the Třebenice group seemed to appear more optimistically, they knew it is not easy to create a project, with regard to contemporary minimal certainty it will be successful. They also understood it is necessary to overcome difficulties, so that new projects¹² could be **prepared** according to the already accepted ones.

A support from the side of the region was by different participants of local life evaluated in a different way – a development of a region is not a priority for North Bohemian region, on the contrary South Bohemian region offered a „bridge“ support for the activity (operation) of MAS. What both regions have in common is that there is no possibility for municipalities and independent mayors to influence happening on region scale.

¹²The respondents from Protivín gave to the term „project“ following attributes: absolutely functionless, insufficient, technically functioning/defunctioning, too much legislation, many things are needed for it, important is the way of its implementation, project can lie a long time on the table (till half an year), it can concern a set of municipalities, project must be made in a way, so that it functions, so that it can get over authorities and pass legislation. Projects are also limited partly by financial resources and partly by ability to compile a project, further by a difficult preparation, bad cooperation or functionless information system.

Respondents from Třebenice saw „project“ as complicated to compile for an ordinary person but it is possible to get donation for it (for example from SROP), interesting (for example LEADER), each must have a cooperation (projects also with a foreign participation – INTERREG, made with participation of Saxony), another prepared is one with the name „The Czech entrepreneur in Germany“, „A German entrepreneur in the Czech Republic“, in the course there is a project a road construction to entrepreneurial objects from MMR, there is a project of bio-power station for a municipality. The main objective is to create together the projects, compile and look for them (by means of Serviso, o.p.s.), Workers of implementing agencies are sometimes interviewed about hadning in the projects.

4.4 Information and a need of consultancy – a necessary help

M: ...If you want to get some information, where do you go?

P₄: Internet...P₅: from some friends...P₇: Recommendation from friends.

Personal contacts....P₇: A municipality is a last place, where you go, if you need something...You get little information at the municipality.

...P₃: the association is responsible for it ...

That is the place, where can people get the information and they are exhausting.

Both groups expressed themselves there are enough information. However, it is necessary to create a functioning, reliable and simple system, whereon could potential applicants approach, if they have intention to. This system should also involve services from an information about a project processing (from an idea to a project documentation resulting in planning permission or towards other stage necessary for submitting an application for grant), application processing at a professional level, monitoring, administration connected with evaluation and account with grant subsidies.

Is such a system created (for example a local operational group or association of villages in connection with „a service firm“, that manages these operations professionally, for example Serviso o.p.s. in the area of Třebenice), than rural areas are able to make use of offered donations.

Is the system not created, information transfer doesn't function. People are waiting for help from above („...someone from a department should come and inform people which possibilities they have ...or the same as you came today...“), they become passive („if there are no results, activity weakens“) they blame each other, information about a possibility, how to get some money is blocked (mayors, region, departments don't know about an existence of regional groups etc.).¹³

The way towards creation of efficacious information system is partly in possible supporting of professional MAS activities and their background, that does not perform a function not only in the projects of LEADER types, but also in the whole spectrum of provided donations. For example a good activity of authorities as well as a thorough activity of clerks from particular departments in regions and municipalities with extended field of action that targets the exhaustion of direct donations is taken for granted. The better the systems will function, the less will be their activity substituted by other subjects (for instance Economic Chambers and others.)

¹³ Not only inhabitants living in the area feel the help but also the particular local participants do.

5 Conclusion

A basic mapping out of problems of consultancy in two different localities (South Bohemian and North Bohemian region) was an objective of this paper. A central question asked in this paper was: *What is a role of consultancy and how „prospective“ participants of rural space development perceive a role of consultancy and advisory services?* An answer to this question was searched for in respondents' testimonies, carried out in two group discussions in Protivín and Třebenice. Before we approach the very empiric part, there was limited its theoretical and conceptual framework in the chapter. It dealt with determination of a country, rural space and its possible potential sources of development, whereas the emphasis is placed on endogenous approach, in which local participants, a local will and initiative towards development play an essential role, because in this way the local needs are best understood. At the same time it is impossible to do without necessary information, that can local participants get among others thanks to possible net of advisory services.

Local participants confirm a non-simplicity of rural development in group discussions in terms of a difficult orientation in the problems of projects (rather Protivín) and possibilities to get grants for their localities both financed from the state budget and foreign resources (resources of EU). Třebenice confirms easier navigation: if we already have some programmes „checked out“ and if we at least partially know its functional mechanism and at the same time are there institutions created, that make their management easier and suggest „how to proceed“ (for example local authorities, that are engaged in a net of service organisations, association of villages, MAS and so on), than a management of how to get resources for a local localities development for now functions. Respondents confirm, that a creation of an informative or advisory system is almost an essential condition for creation of activities connected with the locality development and its role at data acquisition is crucial. In case of absence of an informative/advisory centre, extensive passivity and disinterest can happen. *How to create a functioning and effective informative/advisory net for needs of rural development?* It is a subject of further research.

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Population dynamics of developing countries in 21st century

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Annotation: The Earth has now 6.1 billion inhabitants, in 2015 it should be populated by 7.1 to 7.8 billion people, the lower estimate margin for 2050 is 7.9 billion, the medium 9.3 billion and the top estimate 11.9 billion. Solution of the population problem is to a great extent connected with the problem of governance quality, i.e. strengthening of the individual economic freedom and support of democratic institutions. Also the burden of the LDCs indebtedness, international trade liberalisation, financial assistance and approach to technologies supports reaching of economic progress and poverty relief.

Key Words: Population, world population development, developing countries, population ageing.

1 World population development

The Earth has now 6.1 billion inhabitants, in 2015 it should be populated by 7.1 to 7.8 billion people, the lower estimate margin for 2050 is 7.9 billion, the medium 9.3 billion and the top estimate 11.9 billion. The first billion of human population was reached in 1804, the second in 1927 (after 123 years), the third in 1960 (after 23 years), fourth in 1974 (after 14 years), fifth in 1987 (after 13 years), sixth in 1999 (after 12 years). Therefore it is spoken of the overpopulation problem and the catastrophic scenarios.

Table 1. Development of the world population average growth rates

	Population average growth rate (in %)			Average yearly population increase (in ths)		
	1980-85	1990-95	2000-05	1980-85	1990-95	2000-05
Africa	2.9	2.8	2.6	14 627	19 081	22 960
Europe	0.4	0.2	0.0	2 676	1 053	17
North and Central America	1.3	1.4	1.1	5 097	6 114	5 492
South America	2.1	1.7	1.4	5 301	5 332	5 172
Asia	1.9	1.6	1.4	52 331	54 302	53 473
Oceania	1.5	1.5	1.3	354	424	415
World total	1.7	1.6	1.4	80 319	86 319	87 270

Source: FAO, www.fao.org

The catastrophic scenarios need not be fulfilled, since population decreases even in developing countries (by 45 % during the last three decades), the size of families diminishes (by almost a half in the same period) and the knowledge and practical utilisation of contraception extends. As an illustration, we can use the total fertility data, i.e. the number of children per 1 woman: in 50, it was 6.1 children in developing countries, at present, it is 3.5 – but considerable differences still persist.

Table 2. The most populated world countries in 2000 and 2050

	Country	Inhabitants	
		2000	2050
1	China	1.2 billion	1.3 billion
2	India	1.0 billion	1.7 billion
3	USA	275.5 million	394.2. million
4	Indonesia	224.7 million	330.5 million
5	Brazil	172.8 million	228.1 million
6	Russia	146.0 million	121.7 million
7	Pakistan	141.5 million	260.2 million
8	Bangladesh	129.1 million	211.0 million
9	Japan	126,5 million	101.3 million
10	Nigeria	123.3 million	337.5 million

Source: Bureau of Census, U.S. department of Trade

Why the population in some developed countries is decreasing? The reason is double:

- first: demographic indicators – fertility following the natural movement of population and migration;
- second: another demographic reason, namely ageing of the population.

During the last twenty years, life expectation in developed countries has increased by 3.5 years and in developing countries by 8 years.

Prolonged life and lower fertility lead necessarily to the ageing of population – this phenomenon, known at present from the developed countries, will sooner or later become the planetary problem.

During the next three to five decades, Europe, Russia and North America will decrease in proportion, Asia, Latin America and Oceania will stay at approximately the same level and Africa will increase considerably. As a consequence of the children mortality level decreasing in long-term, a great share of the DCs population is created by young people, what presents a certainty that population growth will rather continue.

An image of the present world is given by – today already classical – picture of the world village (Meadows). If the world were one village of 1 000 inhabitants, there would live in it 584 Asians, 124 Africans, 95 East Europeans and West Europeans, 55 inhabitants of the former USSR (inc. Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians and other ethnic groups), 52 North Americans, 2 Czechs. Of the village inhabitants would have communication problems - 165 will speak in Chinese, 86 in English, 83 in Hindi/Urdu, 64 in Spanish, 58 in Russian, 37 in Arabic. Only the mother tongues of one half of the villagers are included in this list. The other half would speak Bengali, Portuguese, Indonesian, Japanese, German, French and another 200 languages. In the village, there would live 329 Christians (among them, 187 Roman Catholics, 84 Protestants, 31 Orthodox), 178 Muslims, 167 “non-believers”, 132 Hinduists, 60 Buddhists, 45 atheists, 3 Jews, 86 other religions. One third (330) from 1 thousand world village inhabitants would be children and only 60 people would be over 65. Half children would be immune against inoculable contagious diseases like mumps and polio. In the village, there would be 5 soldiers, 7 teachers, 1 medical doctor, and 3 refugees of war or drought. The total village budget, public as well as private, would be over 3 million USD – that means 3 000 USD per capita if evenly distributed. From 3 million USD, 181 ths. would be allocated for armament, 159 ths. for education, 132 ths for health care. Half of the married women would have approach to the modern contraception means and would use them. During the first year, 28 children would be born. In the same year, 10 people would die, in that 3 from undernourishment, 1 of cancer and also 2 children born in the same year. One person would be infected by the HIV: the AIDS symptoms will probably not

have developed yet. With 28 births and 10 deaths, the village would have 1 018 inhabitants in the second year.

Similarly to the hitherto unknown world population growth rate, there continues also an enormous migration from rural to urban areas and also the migration among countries. Most countries are shifting gradually to the structure of low natality and mortality, but by different rates, from which the still more differentiated demographic situation issues.

The accelerated rate of urban immigration is partially the consequence of the resource concentration in the cities and also of the economic policy deepening the inequalities between urban and rural areas. Urbanisation is an inseparable part of the development and cities are the centres of economic and cultural activity, but the growing city population creates social, economic and environmental problems.

An important role in the people movement among countries is played by economic conditions. Approximately one half from 125 million immigrants of the world are from developing countries. International migration usually ensures the back income transfer to the communities of the migrants origin and the necessary human resources to the communities they aim at. However, if international migration is supposed to be manageable in the long run, people must have the choice to stay in their own countries. The increase of labour force in the developing areas continually increases international migration, but the countries are not generally willing to accept an increased number of immigrants; therefore, it can be expected that illegal immigration will increase. The number of people seeking refuge against persecution and other forms of human rights violation has grown from 8.5 million in 1985 to 25 million in 2000. Most of them found asylum in developing countries. The number of refugees and applicants for asylum is growing considerably in the developed countries. Population growth, migration and urbanisation are interconnected to poverty, the consumption and production structures leading to waste, non-sustainable use of natural resources, environment deterioration, inequalities in the social sphere and in gender.

All these relationships have to be considered in the endeavour for improving the present generation quality of life by the ways not preventing future generations in the satisfying of theirs. Poverty is often accompanied by illiteracy and limited approach to health care and family planning services, the position of the poor is often very bad. The mentioned circumstances contribute to high fertility, diseases, high mortality and low economic productivity. The result of population growth in many countries is a high share of young people, what demands the perpetual creation of jobs for the growing labour force in the problems of population explosion, poverty, inequality and environment endangering are so closely interconnected that none of them can be evaluated and solved in the isolated way. In the whole world, there are exploited the

resources on which also the next generation will depend, also environment deterioration is growing at the hitherto unknown population growth, underlined by the social and economic inequality and the superfluous consumption and waste. In most countries, the slowing down population growth would strengthen economic progress and ease the endeavour at poverty relief. The burden of securing education, hygiene, housing, appropriate nutrition and urban infrastructure for the quickly growing population burdens the weak economies and limits the development possibilities.

2 Solution of population problem

Population problem solution is to a great extent connected with the problem of governance quality, i.e. strengthening of the individual economic freedom and support of democratic institutions. Also the burden of the LDCs indebtedness, international trade liberalisation, financial assistance and approach to technologies supports reaching of economic progress and poverty relief.

Strengthening of the position of women is the main prerequisite of solving the population problem, since men and women have to participate fully in the productive and reproductive life and also to share the obligations in the child care and nutrition and keeping of the household. The position of women regards above all education, health care and economic activities. Improvement of the women position accelerates their ability to make important decisions, namely regarding reproduction, what subsequently is one of the main prerequisites of the long-term success of population programs, since the experience shows that population and, development programs are the most efficient when they are realised together with the steps for improving the position of women. Strengthening of the contribution of women lays in their engagement in the area of population, health, education and earning activities, both as participants and users. The legal, political and social barriers should be removed gradually in all countries and the measures to improving the possibilities of women to earn their own income, to reach economic independence, to own and dispose of property and finances should be taken.

Education is one of the most important means how to strengthen women and to supply for them such knowledge, qualification and self-esteem, which are necessary for them to become equal partners in the development process.

More than 5 years ago, the Common Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed that everybody has the right to education. In 1990 on the “Summit on Education for All“, the states have accepted the goal of the universal approach to basic education. Notwithstanding this, there are still approximately 1 billion of illiterate adults in the world, two thirds of which are women. More than one third of adult people in the world, most of which women, have thus no

approach to knowledge in the written form, to new qualification and the technologies which would improve the quality of their life and help them to adapt to the social and economic changes. About 150 million of children in the world do not attend even primary school, 70 % from which are girls.

For reaching the fully equal rights, the sine qua non is the changes in the attitudes and behaviour both of men and women. The key role in introducing equality lies on men, since they apply the predominant power in almost all countries and in all spheres of life, starting from personal decisions regarding the size of family up to the measures and programs on the governmental level. Equal participation of men and women in all spheres of responsibility towards family including family planning, upbringing of children and household chores is necessary, if both partners should have the same right in making decisions on the balance of their home as well as public obligations. Such equality can be further developed and inspired by informations, education, legal measures together with occupation and securing child care. Part of the process of the rapid demographical, social and economic changes everywhere in the world are considerable shifts through which the types of family formations and family life, and as a consequence of these changes, also the structure and numerousness of families are changing in many societies.

The traditional division of productive and reproductive functions in the family according to gender often does not reflect the reality and aspirations, since still more women in all parts of the world are entering paid employment outside home. The woman who wants to bear children in a time distance or to limit the numerousness of their family cannot do so, since they have no approach to the family planning services, what is consequently a key factor of the fact that in many countries, the high fertility and accelerated population growth persist.

The global aim of a considerable decrease of the world population increment through more efficient measures and programs in the individual countries is that the number of inhabitants gets into balance with the existing resources.

The unprecedented world population growth, the general poverty, social and economic inequality – including inequality between men and women – and waste in consumption accelerate depletion of the basic resources and deteriorate intensively environment. The efficient steps towards solution of these problems are inseparable, if the quality of life of the present as well as future generations is to be sustained or improved

Therefore, the action program of the U. N. International Conference On population and Development in 1994 (ICPD) obliges the world community to fulfilling of the quantitative goals for the period 1995-2015, in three mutually supporting areas influencing the strategic population growth:

- Education, namely for viros;
- Lowering the mortality of newborn infants, children and mother;

- Securing universal approach in the sphere of family planning and healthy reduction.

In this direction, the ICPD followed, among other, the results of the World Summit for Children in 1990, the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 and the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 and was a contribution to the World Summit on Social development in 1995 and the 4th World conference on Women in 1995.

The basic principle and the way how to influence population growth is the right of all couples to decide freely and with responsibility on the number and time sequence of their children, and to have the information and means to do it. The goal of the family planning programs is the maximum freedom of choice in the questions regarding child birth. The principle of choice based on information is necessary for the long-term success in the family planning area, not any pressure physical, economic or psychological. Any compulsion represents violation of human rights and is contra-productive to the main goal of the family planning programs, i.e. strengthening of the endeavour of individuals and couples to reach an efficient control over their reproductive life. Approximately 60% of married couples in developing countries use any of the family planning methods, what means almost five times as much compared to the mid-60s. In average, the fertility in developing countries has decreased approximately by half owing to the family planning program, from 6-7 children per family in the 60s to about 3-4 children at present.

The modern family planning methods are not accessible to at least 350 million couples. The research data show, that at present, further 120 million women would use any of the modern family planning methods, if they had more precise information and services, if they could afford it and if their husbands and the wider family community supported them.

One of the signs of a big unsatisfied demand for more and better services in the family planning area is the estimated number of 50 million abortions every year. The family planning programs are most successful if they are a part of or are closely connected to the wider programs of healthy reproduction, which solve the connecting health problems, and if women are fully engaged in their creation, implementation, management and evaluation of the services.

Special needs in the sphere of healthy reproduction are those of the growing up. Motherhood at a low age brings about a much higher risks of the mother death and the children of young mothers have a considerably higher mortality and rate of illnesses. An early marriage and early motherhood of young girls are seriously limiting the educational and labour opportunities of women and have, with high probability, a long-term negative impact on their life. The first step to healthy reproduction of the growing up young people this is to remove the legal and regulation barriers which block the access of young people to these services.

It shows that the programs for young people are most successful if they secure the full incorporation of young people both to the process of ascertaining their needs of reproduction and sexual health and into the programs reacting at these needs. Family planning and infant survival are interconnected. The natality and infant mortality are decreasing quickly in places, where the parents come to the conclusion that a lower number of born children and better time sequence of their birth mean healthier children and a better chance for their survival.

The population problem and with its solution connected recommendations on the local, regional, national and international level can be characterised in short through the already quoted ICPD action program:

- Family is the basic unit of society, but it has different forms in different countries;
- Strengthened position of women is in itself of utmost importance. It has also basic importance for the tangible progress. Men and women have to participate in the productive and reproductive life and to share the responsibility for the child care and household. Education is one of the most important means for strengthening the position of women. The state has to remove inequality between men and women as soon as possible;
- Governments should respect the culture of the aborigines and to enable them to survive and prosper;
- People have reproduction rights which include also the right to decide freely and with responsibility on the number of their children, the periods between child births and their timing;
- All countries should endeavour at the commonly accessible system of the basic health and reproduction care, including the services and extension on family planning;
- Governments should help women to prevent abortions, which in no case can be recommended as a family planning method, but they also should in all cases secure the human care and advisory service for women who had to resort to an abortion. Governments should cope with unprofessional abortions which are endangering public health;
- Growing up young people should have to their disposal a reliable advisory service on sexual matters, but the responsibility on its management is up to the parents;
- States should try to reach such level of newborn infants mortality by 2 015, which would not surpass the level of 35 per 1000 of the live born, and such a level of children up to 5 years mortality, which would not surpass 45 per 1 000 living children (compared to world averages of the period 1985-90, which were 70 resp. 105 deaths);
- Governments have to accept the life importance of unifying families in legal migration cases;

- All the mentioned recommendations of the U.N. Conference on Population and Development are submitted to the supreme rights of each country, national legal frame and respecting of the religious and ethical values and cultural habits.

3 Human population is getting older

Human population – namely in the richer part of the world – becomes uncontrollably and irreversibly older, and that more quickly than ever before. This trend becomes to be more dramatic than the population explosion. The U. N. demographers suppose that in the middle of this century, there will be more inhabitants older than 60 years at this planet than people younger than 15. Today, into the 60+ category, there belong 629 million people in this world, i.e. every tenth inhabitant. However, it will be every third person in 2050, altogether about 2 billion people. And one hundred years later, it is supposed that even every third inhabitant of the planet will be a senior.

Many of them will even reach the desired one hundred years. On the other hand, it might be quite a problem. Ageing of human population becomes one of the main problems of the future of human civilisation.

The tendency poses a whole series of pressing questions. For example: Will the remainder of active population be able to feed the increasing number of old people? And what will happen to the nations in which even today mortality prevails over natality? Will they just leave the scene or will they endeavour aggressively for survival at any price?

The process already creates problems in developed countries. It regards Japan, Italy Great Britain, Spain – which is supposed to be the oldest country in the world in 2050 – and also the Czech Republic, which is also slowly depopulating. However, not even the most populated countries of the world, India and China, do not stand aside – even there, with the growing level of living, better nutrition and health care, the number of old people quickly increases. Ageing of population in developed countries can soon endanger their prosperity.

What, then, can be done? As one of the most efficient measure how at least to mitigate this development a little, the demographers regard later retirement. The well-known British analytical organisation Future Foundation imagines the life of our descendants as follows: People will live up to 120 years; they will be retired at the earliest in 80 and will marry at least three times. They will graduate from the university twice during their life, their working activity will prolong, and everybody will gradually learn several professions. In 55, when the present generation starts thinking of retirement, the “new” people are supposed to start their third career in life.

Population in 2050

There will obviously be more than 9 billion of us by the middle of the century. The decisive majority of the population will by 2050 live in the developing countries, while the share of developed countries in world population will drop from the present 15% to less than 10%. It follows from the newest U. N. demographical projections.

The United Nation Organization estimates, that the biggest population increments will register developing countries by 2050. In the least developed countries, there will live almost 2 billion people instead of the present 658 million.

That means that most people will be added in the poorest developing countries, at that notwithstanding the fact that these countries are most severely tried by the mortal disease of AIDS, and tens of million people live there with the HIV virus or directly with AIDS. It means that the whole parts of the world will have to cope with many difficulties: with increasing number of people, the area of cultivated land will decrease, therefore the fight for securing food and drinking water will be still fiercer. A very important problem will be, among other, creating new working opportunities for young people, which will flood the labour market.

While in the developing world population explosion will be connected with poverty and lack of food, developed countries will probably face a different problem. Their population will stagnate and perhaps even decline. Still less babies will be born and the share of population over 60 will increase. By 2050, there should be twice as much of them then the young people up to 19.

The U. N. expects that the number of the sixty-years-old in the world will increase from the present 6060 million up to 2 billion. Therefore the governments will be faced by a difficult search of the ways to the efficient social protection of the ageing population as well as diverting the acute lack of labour force.

In the EU present countries, there are supposed to be only 154 million people in the productive age, while five years ago it was 169 million. The decrease of labour will impact all regions according to the EUROSTAT. All generations will have to work longer in future. It is necessary to take care that older people will stay longer in the economic process. Another possibility is the pension system reform and a more liberal immigration policy. One of the ways how to increase the share of active population is to bring into Europe the dynamic and qualified youth from outside.

One hundred years ago, one obscure German philosopher has written a short-lived bestseller called "Doom of the West". His name was Oswald Spengler and his style smelled of the mysticism and nihilism of Nietzsche and Wagner,

the same potion which has contributed partially to the rise of the Hitler and Mussolini fascism and, indirectly, also the Lenin-Stalin communism.

In the economic sphere, Spengler was totally and principally mistaken. He forecast that in the 20. century, the West will come to downfall, while the real history testifies on the explosive economic growth based namely on science, technology and global markets. The “curse“ of Malthus and deriving that the tendency of humankind to overpopulation will lead human civilisation, limited by the space, unavoidably into the blind alley of decreasing yields, was broken for the first time.

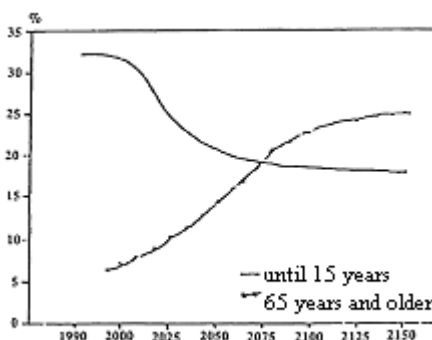
However, there emerged another “doom“ which neither Spengler nor Marx and Toynbee foresaw. Since 1900 – and in France still earlier – the stable natality rate of the well secured and educated middle classes began to decrease. This decrease, expressed by the number of births delivered during the life, is not connected in any way with the failing reproduction ability of people between 16 and 45. On the contrary, the scientists state that enough of food and free time increased the biological fertility. What has changed in general is the ability to choose a partner and to adapt to conditions in the over-populated towns.

Is this valid in general? Practically yes. Japan is not in West; nevertheless it is on the top of the ladder of the societies, which are not successful in the prerequisite that everybody should produce at least two descendants – which is necessary if the unavoidable exponential decrease of population is not to begin. Neither China nor Korea are the exceptions. Neither even Italy, in past the country of the omnipresent *bambinos*. And in Sweden, future Nobel Prize winners Gunnar and Alva Myrdal got into newspapers headlines 70 years ago owing to their appropriate warning. The Scandinavian area is driven to the negative net population increase.

The problem will be also the natality increase to the simple reproduction, for which every woman, as has been already said, should bear in average 2.2 children. In the world average it is 2.7 children per woman, but the developed world sadly lags behind this indicator. The worst situation is in Europe, where it is only 1.4 children. And bad situation is even in the countries where families with many children belonged to the tradition – besides Bulgaria or Russia, also for example Spain. In some parts of the Russian Federation, it is less than 1 child per family.

Many, namely European countries, will compensate the demographical drop by accepting immigrants. The USA, in fact, “rejuvenates“ their population in this way even now. Also in other countries, like Germany, Italy, Greece, Portugal and many other European countries the immigrants add to the population numbers.

Graph 2. Changes in the world population age structure



Source: Long-Range World Population Projection: Two Centuries of Population Growth, 1950-2150; UN, United Nations Division, New York, forthcoming, executive summary

Let us concentrate the above mentioned population development trend up to 2050 into several main points:

- World population which amounts to 6.1 billion people at present will reach about 9.3 billion people. The maximal estimates are speaking even of 11 billion; the minimal estimate is 7.9 billion people.
- In 48 poorest countries of the world, the population will increase from the present 658 million to 1.8 billion people. By the half of the century, nine from every world inhabitants should live in the developing world.
- An important population decrease is expected, among other, in Japan, Germany, Italy, Russia, Ukraine or Hungary.
- In the present EU member states, there will live the mere 4 % of the whole world population. At present, it is about 7 % according to the EUROSTAT.
- Humankind as a whole will live longer. The individual countries and continents will differ, however. While for example the average life expectancy in Japan will overreach the limit of 90 years, it will be about 75 in the developing world. Average life expectancy in the rich states should be approximately 82 years. People over 80 and older should form about 4 % of the world population and there will be about 379 million of them.
- Today, about one half of world population lives in towns, starting from 2030 it should already be two thirds inhabitants of the planet. In tens of enormous town agglomerations of more than 10 million inhabitants which would by the number of people be on the level of bigger states, there will concentrate social problems. It would be difficult to secure housing and

jobs for these mega cities inhabitants, also the demands on water, energy supply and environment will grow up.

- People will fight with the shortage of drinking water: 50 years later, 2.4 billion people will lack water. Overburdening of the towns infrastructure will also lead to the danger of the contagious diseases epidemics.
- The Czech Republic should belong among the 10 countries with the oldest population. From 8.5 million inhabitants, 4 from 10 will be over 60. The average life expectancy should be 81 years. Natality rate should approximate the world average

Population in 2100 - predictions

Natality has already started falling down in many densely populated developing countries. According to the world demographers, it is possible that the forecasted overpopulation of the planet will never occur.

During the last 30 years, the natality rate was decreasing in Western countries, what the demographers knew. They supposed. However, that natality will stay high in the big developing countries. However, it is falling even there at present to lower level than presupposed.

For the first time ever, it can be regarded as possible that approximately 100 years later, the population of the Earth will start falling down, and that from the level of 10 - 11 billion down again to the present level, which is 6.1 billion, or even below it.

There exist together 13 countries which should get relatively soon below the basic statistical level of 2 children per 1 woman. There belongs Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Mexico, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, South Africa, Indonesia, Iran, Philippines, Turkey and Vietnam.

Under the mentioned level, also 2 very important South Asia countries should get – even if later: India (at present, it has approx. 1.030 billion people) and the neighbouring Bangladesh (more than 131 million).

Seventy four countries of the world, which are showing the natality of 2.1 - 5 children per one woman and represent in total 43 % of the world population, should get down to the population index 1.85 before 2050. That will mean a considerable decrease – for example there will live by 85 million less people in India at that time.

Europe has at present the average natality 1.34 children per one woman and is closely behind Japan, where the mentioned indicator reached the value of 1.33. In the most populated country of the world, China, now 1.8 children falls per one woman after the draconic government measures.

And what is the reason that natality on the planet does not increase quickly as during the past decades? We can mention several reasons: spreading of

contraception, a massive emigration of people from rural into urban areas. The consumer life style is spreading into all nooks of the world and its acolytes are, with growing expenditures on consumer's goods, loosing the willingness to spend money on feeding children, respectively keeping a big family.

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Administrative-territorial reform: interests of state and inhabitants

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Annotation. Reformation of Latvian local governments begun after regaining independence on year 1991 and approval of main administrative-territorial reform concepts. The process of power decentralization and democratization was engaged in the country. Contradictions between state interests and inhabitants of local governments arose during reform process.

Key words: administrative-territorial reform; amalgamated local municipalities.

1 Introduction

Administrative-territorial division in Latvia made during the Soviet times, retained also after regaining independence in 1991. It is not suitable for new economic structure, development of new technologies, democratization of society and growing role and functions of local authorities [3]. There were 553 local government on January, 2008:

- 527 local or the first level authorities (7 republican cities and 53 towns, 441 pagasts, 29 amalgamated local municipalities (novads);
- 26 the second territorial level authorities (rajons).

Many of pagasts are extremely small. Over half of them have fewer than 1500 inhabitants. Their functions, nevertheless, are considerable and include the provision of primary and secondary education, primary health care, social assistance, water supply, sewerage, heating, solid waste management, and road maintenance. The analysis of local authorities functioning has shown [3], [2], that:

- small local authorities cannot ensure separation of decision making and executive power;
- these authorities insufficiently perform their functions;

- small authorities have comparatively high administrative expenditure and few resources for development needs;
- they cannot recruit high level specialists;
- considerable disparities of socio-economic character exist among administrative territories in Latvia.

Government has embarked upon an effort to encourage smaller jurisdictions to amalgamate in novads. The process began in 1998 with the adoption of the Law on Administrative Territorial Reform. The Law defines the main objective of the reform: “to establish administrative territories with local (and regional) authorities able to develop economically and provide quality services to inhabitants” [3]. Government of Latvia expected, that novads will increase concentration of different kinds of resources and will gain the possibility to better perform functions and to use a wider scope of measures for development. As stated by law, administrative - territorial reform must be carried out until local government elections in year 2009.

However, the process of amalgamation is very slow. Current discussions in political level and in local authorities, reflected in mass media, show considerable resistance to the novadu reform.

Contradiction between state interests and inhabitants of local governments arose during reform process. Several researches on public opinion alleged that local government interests often differed from state reform concepts. Therefore reform is still not giving expected results.

The objectives of current research

- to identify arguments of negative attitude of inhabitants of local authorities to administratively territorial reform in Latvia;
- to clear Ozolnieki novads inhabitants' opinion on changes in performance of local authority functions after amalgamation in 2004.

Research was carried out by using expert interviews and population survey in Jelgava rajons. So, it has been seen as pilot research for country scale investigation.

2. The results of research

2.1 Contradictions in administratively-territorial reform: experts view

To get overall insight in research subject three expert interviews were conducted. Experts (A.R., N.E., and L.K.) have high competence in subject, because they are actual or former heads of local authorities and therefore have been involved in reform process.

The first block of questions was asked on necessity of administratively - territorial reform. All respondents accept the idea of amalgamation arguing that small pagasts has no capacity for development. *If local authority has less than 1000 inhabitants the tax income is insufficient for providing all public services (L.K.).*

However, all experts have critical remarks on implementation conditions of reform. *It is too late. It should be finished 10 years ago (N.E.). This was the painful process (L.K.).* It was also noted that *starting with 1998 comprehensive analytical work was carried out to develop and justify specific amalgamation models by Phare suppor.. it is strange that these results are not reflected in latest reform model-map (A.R.).* The main factors why local authorities did not use the option of voluntary amalgamation the respondents list following: essential disparities in financial resources, distrust to neighbors expressing will to join, impossibility to come to consensus wich village should become the novada center, and lack of personal motivation of municipal officials.

Further respondents were asked on benefits or damages for inhabitants at the end of reform. It was highlighted that *state always try solve its problems on expense of local authorities and its' inhabitants (L.K.), principles of democracy have not been observed because of lack of public discussions involving local population (N.E.).* All respondents acknowledged that population and even local authorities' officials are poorly informed on reform issues. *State uses power arguments and don't care about real arguments (A.R.).* Respondents listed many different cases showing also lack of normative basis for operations and activities of novads administration, what increase uncertainty among people.

Respondent N.E. also describes examples of best and unsuccessful practice. As positive example was used establishment of Ozolnieku novads, where factors of success were: strong reforms leadership, motivation to develop territory, improvement of accessibility of services, high administrative and service delivery culture. So, relatively small territory but with high administrative capacity amalgamated much larger territories. But Kandava novads was

mentioned as negative example: head of authority rely upon mere political slogans; management was not able to maintain sustainable development of whole territory, quality of life decrease in periphery of novads.

So, expert interviews outline one of main factors stimulating resistance to the reform: lack of democratic dialogue between state and population, and between state and local authorities.

2.2 Survey of population of Ozolnieki novads

The objectives of the survey

Survey of population was carried out to identify:

- 1) Attitude of Ozolnieki amalgamate inhabitants on possible joining of Sidrabene local authority to Ozolnieki amalgamate, and
- 2) Opinion of Ozolnieki amalgamate inhabitants on performance of current functions of the local authority.

The survey was performed by staff of Faculty of Social Sciences of Latvia University of Agriculture.

Methodology

The questionnaire was elaborated containing three blocks of eleven questions included.

First block of the questions is related to possible joining of Sidrabene pagasts to Ozolnieki novads, second block deals with current functions of Ozolnieki novads and its future performance. The third block is the demographic part of the questionnaire, there respondents give information about themselves: sex, age, occupation, address, period of living in the administrative territory.

Survey of Ozolnieki novads population took place from 12.11.2007 till 26.11.2007 and 216 questionnaires were collected. Unfortunately, in some questionnaires, the respondents have not answered to all the questions, therefore the common number of respondents differs in the course of analysis.

The main results

Regarding the joining of Sidrabene pagasts, the central question was *if the inhabitants of the Ozolnieki novads support this will* (see Fig. 1)?

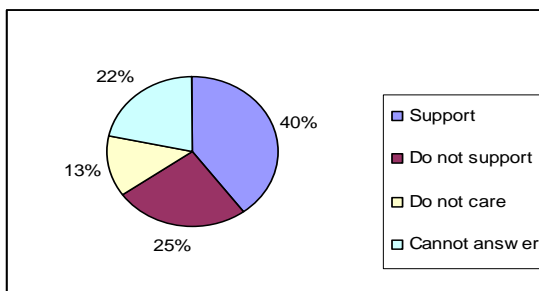


Figure 1. Support by Ozolnieki novads inhabitants to joining of Sidrabene pagasts to the novads

As it can be seen in the figure, 40% (85 respondents) of the questioned Ozolnieki novads population support this initiative. It is not supported by 25% (54) of the respondents. Twenty-eight respondents or 13% have said that they principally do not care but respectively great number – 46 or 22% of the respondents could not answer to this question.

We can conclude that the tendencies are beneficial for joining of Sidrabene pagasts because we can assume that about half of the respondents who now do not care or cannot answer, could later decide for joining of Sidrabene pagasts to the region.

In this question the respondents were asked to argue their answer.

These respondents who express support for joining of Sidrabene pagasts to Ozolnieki novads substantiate it by: *'better Sidrabene than Jelgava (another option); we already had previous collaboration; bigger and more stable local authority (Sidrabene); it will be better for Sidrabene pagasts; Sidrabene already have been planned to amalgamate with our novads; my real estate is in Sidrabene; we can manage more together; the least evil'*.

As it is obvious by these statements, the support motives are as follow – personal (property) and also with understanding of its public importance.

The respondents not supporting the Ozolnieki amalgamation with Sidrabene pagasts were worried that there would be one more peripheral territory which would not be paid attention enough: *'the government of the novads is interested only in the centre in Ozolnieki; too much investments should be put into the backward pagasts (Sidrabene); the Ozolnieki is already large territory and it is hard to manage it; Ozolnieki local authority cannot manage even the present territory; Sidrabene chooses the best variant because they have not done anything themselves'*.

Main worry of the respondents are that the novads is already large, less budget resources will spent for development of current territory and needs of its inhabitants, all parts of larger territory would not be paid the necessary

attention and resources. Some answers of the respondents show that they not trust their neighbours.

The population was asked to answer *what are their comments regarding joining of Sidrabene pagasts?*. The present comments can be divided into those which principally support enlargement of the novads, mark some benefits from the situation, as well as set directions of further activities, and into those which express doubt about usefulness of Sidrabene joining. The first group mention following typical comments:

- *life in Cenas pagasts (amalgamated before with Ozolnieki) is remarkably improved after joining in Ozolnieki novads;*
- *it will solve borders problems and will be benefit for population of both Sidrabene and Ozolnieki;*
- *the development level of Sidrabene pagasts should be also promoted;*
- *local authority should not forget to supply population living in periphery of novads with transport, information and medical care;*
- *joining Ozolnieki novads with Sidrabene pagasts is less evil than joining Ozolnieki and Jelgava region.*

So, there are development motives or inevitability are dominant arguments.

And there is the second group of comments:

I have no idea about changes regarding the whole region and about future management system.

It could happen 4 years ago! Why only now?

Where were they earlier? Now their 'motives' seem suspicious.

It is good as it is.

Common people can influence nothing because it will be done by the decisions of government.

(- "To my mind, it is going to create more inconvenience to the most part of the population our novads is not so well developed yet to be able to help to such a big rural area as Sidrabene is. -There is no use of big novads").

To summarize motivation against amalgamation we can find following – lack of information, worry about future development, distrust to neighbours, other better territorial reform variants.

Respondents were asked also to evaluate performance of functions Ozolnieki novads authority (see Tab. 1).

Table 1. Character of changes in the period after formation of Ozolnieki novads by evaluation of the respondents

No	Character of changes	Number
1	Only positive	46
2	More positive than negative	107
3	More negative than positive	7
4	Only negative	2
5	Nothing is changed	17
6	Difficult to say	28
7	Total	208

As it can be seen by the table, the most of the respondents consider that changes had happened in the novads. This is assumption of 162 respondents. Changes as positive as and more positive than negative are evaluated by 153 people. Changes being negative are considered just by two respondents. 28 of the respondents although could not evaluate the changes.

Further the respondents were asked to evaluate the main functions of the local authority: if their performance is *improved*, stayed the same level or *get worse* (see Tab. 2, 3, 4).

Table 2. Evaluation of execution of the municipality functions (position: improved)

Function of municipality	number	%
Organisation of public facilities	57	28,1
Supplement of education opportunities	104	53,1
Improvement of territory	177	85,1
Activities of construction organisation	49	24,7
Sphere of culture	135	66,2
Supplement of social care	55	27,8
Supplement of health care	45	22,1
Care of decrease of unemployment	36	18,1
Promoting entrepreneurship	54	27,1
Security of population of public order	73	35,4
Execution of administrative functions	65	32,2
Sports	93	45,8

As it can be seen in the table, the population take a good view and on improvement of the territory, sphere of culture and education opportunities. Comparatively high indicators are also having *the sports* and *maintenance of*

population security and *public order*. Very positive evaluation is received in spheres like construction organization and supplement of health care.

Table 3. Evaluation of execution of the municipality functions (position: get worse)

Function of municipality	number	%
Organisation of public facilities	26	12,8
Supplement of education opportunities	2	1,0
Improvement of territory	5	2,4
Activities of construction organisation	16	8,1
Sphere of culture	5	2,5
Supplement of social care	4	2,0
Supplement of health care	18	8,8
Care of decrease of unemployment	4	2,0
Promoting entrepreneurship	4	2,0
Security of population of public order	13	6,3
Execution of administrative functions	13	6,3
Sports	11	5,4

The respondents take a bad view on such functions as organization of public facilities, supplement of health care and work of construction organization.

There is obvious tendency to evaluate more strongly the spheres of municipality activities of direct connection with population everyday life. So we can propose that that the inhabitants might not be informed enough about other responsibilities of local authority.

It was important to get to know for the novads administration performance development, what improvements the inhabitants might want in future.

Regarding the work of *social service* and *custody court*, there were concrete positions offered, the respondents themselves could put down concrete proposals regarding other activities spheres. Although, we should mention that this opportunity was not used by all of them; they just marked the variant that improvements are generally necessary in the concrete sphere (see Tab. 4).

Table 4. Improvements in municipality work by the view of the respondents

Activities direction	Is necessary %	Not necessary %	Diffi- cult to say %
Day centres	81,4	2,1	16,5
Care at home	84,5	1,6	14,0
Family counselling	64,2	10,0	25,8
Psychologist service	69,6	10,5	19,9
Baby sisters' service	76,2	5,5	18,2
Work of public facilities	72,1	0,8	27,1
Education opportunities	62,9	7,8	30,2
Culture	66,9	8,7	24,4
Public order	69,7	8,2	22,1

The table shows that, in the work of public department, there is great necessity for day centres for children, youths and young mothers, care about people at home is also supported by the most of the respondents.

Development of custody court work could be succeeded by all the three offered positions: family counselling, psychologist service in the region and baby – sitters' service.

Also in other mentioned spheres, the population wants improvements, although not everywhere it is appointed- what exactly. But there were respondents who named concrete activities directions for the development of the region.

Totally, during the questioning, it was stated that:

1. 91% of the respondents were informed about the wish of Sidrabene pagasts to amalgamate with Ozolnieki novads.
2. Regarding amalgamation of Sidrabene pagasts to Ozolnieki novads, it would be concluded that the views are not unequivocal because clear support is expressed only by 40% of the respondents.
3. Changes in Ozolnieki novads after its forming are assumed by 162 respondents, and 153 of them evaluate them as positive.
4. The greatest improvement in the municipality functions is considered by the population in territory improvement, culture sphere and supplement of education opportunities.
5. As worsened municipality functions, the respondents most often name organizing of public service supplement of prime health care and work of construction organization.
6. In the work of public department, there is great necessity for day centres for children, youths and young mothers, care about people at home is also supported by the most of the respondents.

7. Development of custody court work could be succeeded by all the three offered positions: family counselling, psychologist service in the region and baby – sitters' service.
8. Such indicators of demographic part of the questionnaire as the represented novads territory, living time within the territory of the novads and different occupational directions of the respondents allow conclude that the questioning covers group of respondents that is appropriate to the territorial and demographic structure of the novads; they can evaluate the situation adequately.

3 Conclusions

1. The main reason of negative attitude to administratively-territorial reform is lack of democratic dialogue between state and inhabitants. It creates feeling of uncertainty and mutual mistrust.
2. Positive amalgamation experience and improvement of functions performance of Ozolnieki novads administration during the last years stimulate inhabitants' positive attitude to further reform process.
3. Regarding the question if the respondents support wish of Sidrabene pagasts to amalgamate with Ozolnieki novads, we have to conclude that although the numbers are not unequivocal the tendencies are beneficial for joining of Sidrabene rural area because we can assume that about half of the respondents who now do not care or cannot answer, could later decide for joining of Sidrabene rural area to the region.
4. Performance of local authority functions after establishment of Ozolnieki novads generally are evaluated as positive by the respondents; at the same time they point on service gaps and propose further development ideas for municipality work spheres.

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Development Strategies of Small Towns as the Bases of Sustainability

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Annotation. Administrative territorial reform there is realized in Latvia to create the bases of sustainability. The task of the article is to ascertain the main strategies used by the local municipalities of the small towns to turn them into centers employment and services.

Key words: administrative territorial reform, small towns, strategies.

1 Introduction

A sustainable development of a territory is brought forward as an aim of national and European Union levels. The Latvia National development plan for the years 2007-2013 anticipates balanced and sustainable development of the state territory that would lean on a potential of a city and enable cooperation between cities and also an interaction between cities and country.[3] A balanced development of a territory foresees that inhabitants shouldn't feel any obstructions for their quality of life because of the belonging to a certain territory. When establishing activities of EU structural funds, this principle is also one of the horizontal priorities. It is thought that preconditions of a balanced development of a territory anticipate concerted action, concentration of financial resources accordingly to possibilities and growth potential of the territory, effective use of a supporting instruments, involvement and awareness of a society, implementation of the supervisory process.[6] Another basic principle, on which the balanced development of a territory is based on, is subsidiary. This principle foresees that all questions and problems can be solved as close to inhabitants as possible. It means that municipalities have a duty to ensure necessary services for the people.

At present, the administrative territorial reform is taking place in Latvia to create the basis for sustainable development. The aim of the reform is to create administrative territories with the municipalities that could develop economically. It would ensure qualitative service rendering for the people.

During the reform, it is anticipated to create 96 amalgamated local municipalities and 9 republic cities instead of 525 municipalities. Instant district centers and small towns will become the centers of the amalgamated local municipalities.

Therefore the aim of the scientific paper is to ascertain the strategies that are used by small towns to become centers of services and employment.

The main tasks of the scientific paper:

1. To get acquainted with the theoretical aspects of the small towns strategies;
2. To analyze small towns of Latvia in the aspect of development strategies of employment and services centers.

Hypothesis: Small towns use traditional strategies to ensure sustainability.

Typology of the small towns offered by M. Rozīte and also Dz. Malkolm's, S. Robinz's, R. Mails's and Ch. Snovs ideas about strategies are used as a methodological base of the research.

In July - September, 2007, the research was carried out to ascertain what development strategies are used in the small towns of Latvia to ensure their sustainable development as the centers of employment and services. It was based on following methods:

- case study;
- analyses of the documents;
- partly structured interviews with the heads of the municipalities, specialists, experts. 24 interviews were taken in all.

Seven small towns were involved in the research: Smiltene, Cesvaine, Viļāni, Grobiņa, Pāvilosta, Skrunda, Auce. These small towns were chosen to represent different regions, to be located in different distances of the region centers and they would have the experience of positive changes. Four towns with the country territories and 1 centre of amalgamated local municipality were elected intermediate small towns.

2 Theoretical aspects of the strategy

Frequently, the concept strategy is used as a synonym for the concept aim. In this writing, these concepts are detached. The aim is understood as something that small towns would like to reach but strategy - how and in what ways and means to reach the aim. In this aspect, strategy is an integrational, logical and balanced entirety of the decisions and action systems. Usually a strategy is worked out to define the processes that have to be changed substantially to solve specific problems, to make the actions better, to define the needs of society and to change the services. The municipalities have to become organizers of strategy and development.

Stephen Robbins distributes three models of strategies that could be ascribed also to the small towns in Latvia - innovative, expenses minimizing and imitation or temporizing. He takes the new article turning out and new services establishment on principle as a base of his typology of strategies. With the innovative strategy S. Robbins understands a strategy that is directed to really relevant, unique changes. Organizations that are using expenses minimizing strategy usually are trying to avoid from non-obligatory innovation or the increase of marketing expenses, thus trying to increase the earnings. Organizations that have chosen an imitation strategy are trying to take the best from both previous groups- they are trying to minimize risks and increase earnings. They are turning out a new production or establish new services only after innovators have approbated them in the market.[7]

J. M. Malcolm offers two types of strategies: traditional and innovative. Studying solving of the country problems in Great Britain and other Western Europe countries he has made a chart that would be applicable also for analyzing problems of the small towns in Latvia in the context of sustainable development. Malcolm analyzed the problems of development in 8 groups, ascribing them to the country society image, business, workplace forming, professional tuition appraisal, density of population, economical development in the territory, agricultural and food article market, environmental problems and technologies. Accordingly to every problem group he shows both traditional solutions, and likely new approaches. He considers increasing of employment in a public sector about typical traditional approach in new workplace forming. As a new approach the author offers new workplace forming in the culture, free time application and relaxing fields, creating private service etc. To improve the image of country society it may not only traditionally establish different urban models and values in the country and small cities. It can also be done with such innovations as renovation of villages, keeping heritage relating to the history of civilization etc., making new comprehension about country and small town modernity. To enable a business it is offered to involve inhabitants in different activities of their small towns, in the same time enabling their business education.[4] The main conclusion that stems from J. Malcolm strategy model is that the small towns needed to be modernized and activated both traditional activities, and activities connected with new skills and knowledge, needed to interest labor force in a development, enable applied researches etc.

Raymond Miles and Charles Snow typology also can be used for the analyses of the small town strategies. The base of those typologies is environmental needs: prospector, defender, and analyzer and reactor strategies.

Prospector strategy is typical for organizations (in this case- for the small towns) that are ready to risk, establish innovations, searching new development potentialities. Defender strategy is completely opposite. It is

guided to stability and decreasing expenses. Analyzer strategy is trying to develop stable organizations and it is based on keeping the balance between products and services that already exist and novelties. Reactor strategy anticipates organization adaptation to the threats caused by environment. This kind of organizations do not work out long term plans and do not offer exactly defined mission and aims. They are living for today.[1]

The strategies in the context of the administrative territorial reform that are carried out in the small towns in Latvia can be divided into two groups: 1) temporizing (passive) strategies when municipality has taken temporized position or they do not have a clear development perspective; 2) strategies for development. The second group can be divided into two kinds - traditional and innovative. Both geographical location, and accessible resources- human resources, finances, nature resources and infrastructure serves as a base to choose the strategy for the small towns. They are included into development programs that are worked out and enacted by every local municipality in accordance with territorial planning and district municipality development program and territorial planning.

3 The small towns strategies in Latvia

A small town is a populated place that has its own history, traditions, peculiarities, and there are no marked dynamic and estrangement as it is in the cities.[5] In general, for the year 2007, there are 77 cities and towns in Latvia with a very different population number. Among them, there are 7 republic cities, 20 larger towns - district centers. On the background of these cities, other ones can be named as the small towns.[2] The role and functions of the small towns are appropriate for the local centre status, wherewith the small towns' development is closely connected with a country development. After the production downgrade in 20th century 90-ties, the small towns developed mostly into two directions:

- agricultural production treatment;
- service rendering for the surrounding country territories.[8]

Now days there is one more direction - tourism. The constitutive factor of the small town development is the city or republic city closeness and potentialities to get there (developed road net). If the larger cities are far then the definite service centers can be located in a small town and the small town can become the local territory centre. Would the small town keep its territorial centre sense and ensure sustainable development, depends on the choice of the right strategy. During the research, the analyses of the strategies of small towns were done in the following directions: 1) production and employment; 2) infrastructure; 3) innovations; 4) education, science, culture.

4 Production and employment

The main task of the economic life in the city is to provide life conditions for people so that they could satisfy their individual needs as far as possible. Therefore one of the constitutive strategies for the small towns is production processing and employment promotion. Mostly small and average entities are inherent to the small towns wherewith the number of workplaces is limited and the level of specialization is low. In the research about a legal capability in the regions inhabitants as the main factor that affects a choice of domicile name the possibilities to find a work.[9] Unfortunately current laws in Latvia about the small towns do not give any extra large possibilities of an action. The mayor of the Auce town admits:” These taxes or those discounts give us nothing at all. For example, the real estate tax in Auce is about 20000. Ok, we can give a discount and decrease for 2000 Ls, 3000 Ls, ok, 5000 Ls, well, this is the money what I got from one businessman...” It can be inferred from the interviews that in general business activities develop in large enough scale in the small towns. One of the indicators of development is low unemployment level, because everyone, who wants to find a work, can do that, but there are some places, for example, Auce, where the women workers for the sewing workshop are taken from Lithuania. As the most important in the production field could be mentioned sewing, (it is developing almost in all small towns) metal working, milk and agricultural product processing, wood-processing, tourism etc. The dearth of the territory, lack of an enterprise and incomplete administrative territorial reform can be noted as obstructive factors for the production. Executive director of Smiltene pointed at the dearth of the territory:” There would have been farther development in Smiltene, I think, if there would be a territory. There were rather serious investors, but there is no territory”. Lack of enterprise was in Pāvilosta. “Business - where will it come from if all those smart heads are moving to Riga. Business- those hobos! It can not be said, but they will not raise up a business... well, maybe only a small business...but not big, with a lot of workplaces.” Equally, attraction of population, especially youths, to the territory is not considered enough by making town environment fascinating and encouraging people’s will to come back there although convenient geographical location between Liepāja and Ventspils shows big opportunities for the new options, untraditional solutions. There are a lot of places where the municipality employee’s discontent about the long - standing administrative territorial reform, inconsequence for its implementation that creates uncertainty and delays its development, was felt. It was indicated in Viļāni, Cesvaine, Auce and also in other municipalities.

5 Infrastructure

Infrastructure and adjustment of territory are important factors which provide sustainability of small towns. Manager of Smiltene accented the role of roads in the development of town. He mentioned that the town is located on the point of intersection of twelve ways; nine of them are asphalted. Chairman of Auce council stressed the importance of adjustment and fascinating environment: “We can only adjust environment that we have - education and culture”. He tells with boast about children’s playground in the centre of the town, cultural life, kindergartens etc. “These are the maters by which we can attract... People from surrounding rural districts and rural areas are coming here. One arrives, takes a liking and is already considering settling down here”. Many small towns are involved in larger projects financed by European Union the main task of which is to adjust the infrastructure. For example such projects as renovation of drinking water and sewerage systems, waste water facilities, waste recovery etc. Unfortunately, there are some negotiations in the development of the infrastructure of the small towns. Already existing opportunities are not taken into account in many places. Railway in Skrunda is not put on a weight enough, but the railway toward Viļāni is closed at all. Problems are caused by deficit of flats. There are pushers who try to solve the problems by themselves, but it becomes ever difficult to take a credit for acquisition of habitation. At the same time there is not a unite habitation policy in the state.

6 Innovations

The results of interviews with heads and specialists of the small towns does not justify that the new and qualitatively different technologies are implemented by municipalities of small towns in various spheres. In the most cases there are used traditional approaches toward development. However, leaders of municipalities recognize that the implementation of new technologies is one of the most perspective strategies by which the sustainable development of the town can be provided: “If the modern technologies come where two servants are enough and 100 people are not needed and the scale of production is not decreased but on the contrary - it is increased, we must lot upon such technologies, that such matters will take place more and more – all will be more computerized”. (Skrunda)

The successful cooperation between town and experimental farm ‘Vecauce’ of the Latvia University of Agriculture is approved in Auce: “The same neat – house, the same bio-gas production unit, which will be build, is the best”.

Obviously, municipalities of small towns must think about that potential of scientists should be raised; local business incubators will be built etc.

7 Education, science and culture

The existence of schools in the small municipalities is privilege to the mind of surrounding rural districts. In all inspected small municipalities, the schools are preserved because of this privilege. In many places (e.g. Cesvaine, Skrunda and Vilani), also are Art and Music schools. The mayor of Cesvaine admitted, that “many intelligent people are in the town. The town could be a sort of intellectual centre.” Also one of the success factors mentioned by people of Cesvaine is high level of cultural development “many of them are rooted with heart and soul in the town”. People in Skrunda also mentioned importance of culture and education in the development of their town. For example, the author of several historical novels A. Henins considers that Skrunda is an intelligent town that attracts tourists with the river Venta and its history. Because of absence of secondary schools in surrounding rural districts, Skrunda secondary school in future will develop as region centre secondary school. It is worth mentioning also as positive aspect of use of vocational school staff. “All surrounding schools are very good places of training. Vocational school has taken all vacancies in cafeterias of Nikrace and Skrunda and also in Skrunda kindergarten. A good training base is also nearby in “Mezabele” restaurant.” These are the largest places of training. Interesting approach in education and culture is in Grobina, which is purposefully made as “sleeping car” of Liepaja. To attach attention of people of Liepaja, especially rich ones, in Grobina purposefully has been made attractive city environment, and secondary school has become a grammar school and is the same grammar school as in Liepaja. People of Cesvaine are also very proud of their secondary school because this is one of rare schools built after Latvia gained independence. As the city mayor said: “We have concentrated our activity on building the school a lot. In second place is building of sport centre. One day we will finish the sport centre, because there are many opportunities for young generation... If we won’t have school, then won’t have development.” Also one more factor of development, which mayors of small municipalities mentioned in the interviews, is the opening of subsidiary offices of different colleges and universities. The mayor of Smiltene admitted the successful cooperation between Smiltene Technical College and subsidiary offices of Latvia University of Agriculture (LLU) and Baltic International Academy. But the mayor of Auce highly evaluated the attendance of students in the city (he meant students of LLU, who passed training in Vecauce). “If in Soviet time the active period was summer, then now it is all over the year. Firstly, it is good

for Auce, but secondly, and it is more important, the government of Latvia at last realized, that field training is the best knowledge...” So the development of education and making attractive city environment are the main strategy to attach the attention of potential and already existing inhabitants of small municipalities.

8 Conclusions

1. Small municipalities have different strategies to retain the importance of their territorial centre and to provide development for a long time.
2. Small municipalities develop manufacturing and support employment according to their possibilities. As preventive factors for development of manufacturing could be dearth of territory, dearth of initiative and the uncertainty of administrative reform of territory.
3. The arrangement of infrastructure and territory is of large importance in providing long-term development.
4. Establishment of innovation is one of the strategies to provide long-term development.
5. Schools and local culture has large importance in development of small municipalities. They make the municipality more attractive to people of surrounding territories.

In the result of research, the realized strategies of small municipalities in long-term development can be marked:

1. passive strategies – when municipalities have taken temporizing position or do not have clear perspectives of development (Pavilosta);
2. developmentally oriented strategies:
 - a. traditional (Vilani, Skrunda);
 - b. innovative (Smiltene, Cesvaine, Grobiņa, Auce).

Unfortunately, from the amount of inspected small municipalities cannot be made complete classification of strategies of small municipalities. To make such classification, it is necessary to make collateral research.

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Rural knowledge society: Present and perspective

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Annotation. The contribution engages in the current social structure of Czech countryside. It analyses the possibilities of building up a knowledge society in Czech countryside and evaluates positive and negative sides of life in rural areas, which influence the life conditions and perspectives of young academics. It is based on the data acquired during empirical research of the Sociological Laboratory carried out between the years 2000 and 2007.

Key words: Czech countryside, social structure, knowledge society.

1 Introduction

In the opening chapter of the book of Jan Keller and Lubor Tvrďý “Knowledge Society? Temple, Lift and Insurance Company”¹ the authors discuss the thesis if the development of the “knowledge society” can fulfil the expectations set on it. From the fact that the Czech Republic is lagging behind in the long-term behind the developed EU countries regarding the share of university graduates, the hopes are generally derived that the mitigation of this educational difference would help solving many economic and social problems of the present. However, based on statistical data as well as my own reasoning, I would like to warn that such simplifying and often politically motivated slogans might be dangerously misleading. “The reality is much less unambiguous. The European countries which have stated the process of education half a century before us are still differing considerably both in the economic efficiency level and in the level of the importance of serious social problems they have to cope with”.²

¹ Keller, J., Tvrďý, L.: Knowledge Society? Temple, Lift and Insurance Company (Vzdělanostní společnost? Chrám, výtah a pojišťovna), SLON, Prague, 2008

² Ibid, p. 19.

Similar doubts and conclusions are emerging also in the connection with development of the qualification structure of Czech countryside. That is struggling since 1989 with the consequences of the extraordinarily extensive economic and social changes. The processes of privatisation and restitution impacted the ownership structure and rights of rural population (both in the positive and negative sense); the transformation of agricultural enterprises changed considerably the employment conditions of rural population, its socio-economic structure, working habits and the whole lifestyle. Namely, the long-term predictability of the professional career, employment certainty in one of the types of agricultural enterprises and the life stereotypes given by the limited possibilities of professional self-realisation disappeared completely. On the other hand, there used to be left enough time for the household plot, garden and the hobbies typical for rural areas – small animals husbandry, hunting, fishing, bee-keeping etc. A higher qualification did not necessarily mean a better professional career possibilities and the differences in remuneration among the different education levels were negligible before 1989. However, education still preserved a certain prestige, what was reflected in the increase of the education level in each succeeding generation, and that notwithstanding the fact that education did not bring about any direct economic advantages. The investments into education reflected rather in the social or cultural sphere, educated people were granted a higher social status by the surrounding society, the level of education enabled people to enter the selected social nets; it was a certain entrance pass to certain social circles, it influenced the way of consumption and free time. The increasing education level was reflected in the hierarchy of life needs as well as values. It was not by chance that the variable “education” belonged always among the most important and pronounced classification signs.

Very often it overbalanced the influence of the gender or age differences of rural population. The development after 1989 cannot be evaluated as a one-direction or an unambiguous one. The general notion of “countryside” includes much differentiated types of regions, in which the development is taking different directions.

2 Education structure of rural population

While the age structure of rural population copies in average roughly the development trends in the CR, the education structure of towns and the countryside differs considerably.

Table 1. Population 15+ according to the highest finished education and size of the communes by March 1, 2001³

Size of commune	Primary	Secondary professional	Secondary complete	University	Not found	Total
Up to 1 999	28.89	43.66	22.19	4.24	1.03	100.00
over 2 000	21.60	35.99	30.51	10.51	1.39	100.00

Source: SLBD 2001 (CSO)

It is obvious namely in the categories of complete secondary and university education that the education level in rural areas is worse. More pronounced differences can be seen also among the size groups of the communes over 2,000 inhabitants, where the big cities (in Bohemia namely Prague, in Moravia Brno) attract the more educated population by the offer of more attractive jobs. The regional disparities in education are reflected as follows:

³ Maříková P.: Czech Countryside from the Statistical Viewpoint (Český venkov ze statistického pohledu) (subchapter 3.3.2 Education structure), in: Majerová V. et al.: Czech Countryside 2003 – Situation Before the EU Accession, FEM CULS 2003, pp. 42-43

Table 2. Education structure of the CR population in % (2007)⁴

	Education				
	Share of population	primary	SE without final exam	SE with final exam	University
CR (8877.9 ths)	100 %	18.7	36.5	33.6	11.1
Regions:					
City of Prague	11.9	11.6	20.3	44.3	23.6
Středočeský	12.0	18.1	38.1	34.7	9.0
Jihočeský	6.1	18.7	37.9	33.5	9.8
Plzeňský	5.3	17.4	38.6	33.5	10.5
Karlovarský	2.8	22.2	37.7	32.7	7.2
Ústecký	7.9	25.3	39.1	30.4	5.0
Liberecký	4.2	20.5	40.7	31.2	7.4
Královéhradecký	5.2	17.4	40.2	32.7	9.4
Pardubický	4.9	17.8	42.1	31.2	8.8
Vysočina	4.9	17.9	42.5	30.3	9.2
Jihomoravský	11.0	19.0	34.0	33.4	1.,4
Olomoucký	6.1	20.1	38.9	30.6	10.2
Zlínský	5.6	19.5	38.4	31.4	10.6
Moravskoslezský	12.1	20.8	39.4	30.4	9.2

The comparison of Czech regions shows considerable differences in education. If we omit the education structure of Prague which is logically outside the average, than the least positive situation is in the North of the CR. The regions Karlovarský, Ústecký a Liberecký show the highest shares of the population with only primary education and at the same time the lowest numbers of university graduates.

⁴ www.czso.cz (own computations)

Table 3. Education structure of men and women in the CR in % (2007)

	Education of men and women									
	Share of population		primary		SE without final exam		SE with final exam		University	
CR	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
(M=4305.2 ths) (W=(4572.7 ths)	100%	100%	13.3	23.7	43.6	29.8	30.4	36.6	12.6	9.8
Region:										
City of Prague	11.7	12.0	9.7	13.3	21.7	19.1	41.2	47.2	27.3	20.2
Středočeský	11.5	11.4	12.1	23.8	47.0	29.7	31.1	38.2	9.7	8.3
Jihočeský	6.2	6.1	13.5	23.7	45.3	30.8	31.0	36.0	10.2	9.4
Plzeňský	5.4	5.4	12.4	22.1	44.9	32.7	30.6	36.1	12.0	9.1
Karlovarský	2.9	2.9	17.1	27.0	45.3	30.6	28.9	36.2	8.5	6.1
Ústecký	7.9	7.9	19.0	31.2	48.1	30.5	27.4	33.3	5.2	4.9
Liberecký	4.1	4.2	16.3	24.5	47.5	34.3	28.1	34.0	8.0	6.9
Královéhradecký	5.4	5.3	12.7	21.9	46.7	34.0	29.0	36.1	11.2	7.7
Pardubický	4.9	4.9	12.3	22.9	48.5	36.3	29.8	32.4	9.5	8.1
Vysočina	5.0	4.9	11.5	24.0	50.8	34.4	26.9	33.6	10.6	8.0
Jihomoravský	11.0	11.1	12.5	25.1	41.5	27.0	29.8	36.8	16.2	10.9
Olomoucký	6.2	6.2	14.0	25.8	46.3	32.0	27.9	33.1	11.5	9.0
Zlínský	5.7	5.7	12.8	25.9	47.8	29.6	27.8	34.8	11.5	9.7
Moravskoslezský	12.1	12.0	14.5	26.7	47.5	31.7	27.0	33.6	10.6	8.0

Source: www.czso.cz (own computations)

The shares of men and women in the individual regions are approximately the same. However, their education structure is different; in all regions, the share of university educated women is lower than that of men and in the contrary, their share prevails in the primary education category, sometimes it is even double. A more positive is the share of women in the secondary education category, both with and without final exam.

In yet another view, in the comparison of the education structure of men and women regarding rural and urban population, we can see obvious negative differences to the detriment of women and rural population. We can, therefore, conclude that the most handicapped group from the education viewpoint is rural women. The level of education increases with the decreasing age. The highest education potential is represented by young women.

Table 4. Education structure (comparison of rural and urban population)

	Countryside		Towns	
	Total	Women	Total	Women
Without education	0.65	0.69	0.37	0.41
Primary and unfinished primary	28.24	36.93	21.22	26.43
Professional lower	43.65	33.47	35.98	30.31
Professional secondary	19.92	21.79	26.63	28.64
Higher and supplementary	2.27	2.74	3.87	4.57
University	4.24	3.45	10.51	8.39
<i>in that Bc.</i>	<i>0.30</i>	<i>0.30</i>	<i>0.62</i>	<i>0.60</i>
Not found	1.03	0.94	1.42	1.24
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Census 2001 (CSO)

3 Stabilisation of rural population

The level of education belongs among the important elements of the socio-economic position of rural population and after 1989 it influences economic possibilities of the individual. Even if the education level increases in each successive generation, still it is lower compared to the urban population. From this fact, we can draw the conclusion that the speed of the education structure improvement is in direct relation to the age structure improvement and that it is limited by the migration tendencies of the young population. The main reason of the young and educated people migration is namely the fact that they do not find sufficient life perspectives in rural areas. That, then, creates a vicious

circle because levelling of the life quality in towns and in the countryside is practically impossible without the stabilisation of active people able to act flexibly to economic changes, to fulfil business intentions, to develop social nets and to create such economic and social environment in which all social groups will be able to coexist and co-operate.

It cannot be supposed, however, that forming of a more quality material conditions of life will in itself contribute to a quicker stabilisation of rural population and creation of a more positive social structure. The situation is not jednoznačná in the sense that an overall depopulation of rural communes would have occurred. On the contrary, already in the mid 90s the depopulation of rural areas stopped and the migration trend can be characterised as the flow from the smaller communes into the bigger ones. The population increase grows linearly with the size of the commune. Several times less people moves into the small rural communes than into the bigger ones. Simultaneously, more young people leave the small communes and their age structure therefore deteriorates.

The reasons of moving out from the small communes are most often connected to job (the lack of job opportunities and low incomes), to housing (the lack of quality flats in the commune, the lack of building plots), to insufficient transport net, the lack of the culture, sport facilities and social occasions. If the impulse for moving lays in family reasons (following the husband or wife), it is regarded as a natural development. However, the family reasons are sometimes connected with the insufficient infrastructure of the commune (inaccessibility of education, health and social care etc.).

The opposite migration direction – from towns to rural communes – is usually limited to the big cities surroundings. Living in the countryside with a good accessibility of the town fulfils the demand of a cheaper a more quality housing, all other activities like work, shopping, services attending cultural, sport and social events are, however, realised in the town. The engagement of some of the commuting inhabitants in their own commune is low or even zero. They are not very interested in the problems of the commune, if it does not limit the quality of their housing.

The rural commune development presupposes, however, a more equal division of the advantages and disadvantages among all permanent inhabitants and an active approach of all social groups to the mutual co-operation which is a sine qua non of their cohabitation. It is presupposed that the growth of the education level will contribute to the rural communes' integration. An educated population is capable of a higher adaptability, it is less apt to accepting the extreme ideological opinions and has a higher intellectual potential for the solution of economic and social problems.

4 Role of the knowledge rural society

The reality is much more complicated. The simplification of the view of the functioning complex of factors and relations and the simple linear projections of their development can be very misleading. The mere fact of education means only that the individual has passed a certain education level. If we omit the fact that the differences of the education quality can be considerable, they can be divided into the objective (regarding the national, regional and local level) and subjective ones (regarding the abilities and qualities of the individual).

Among the objective conditions, we can include e.g. the number of job possibilities existing in the given locality (region, area), the scope of the national/European material and social support granted to the area (number and amount of subsidies), the impact of the long-term and short-term development strategies of the area etc.

Among the subjective conditions, there belong e.g. the ability of the individual to utilise theoretical knowledge in practice, the place of the individual in the life-cycle (namely of women in the fertile age), the possibility to utilise the acquired type and level of education in the concrete conditions of the commune and its surroundings, flexibility, adaptability and ability to co-operate etc. Education is just one of the parts of the personality, which has a potentially positive impact on his/her further development, or, precisely speaking, which opens the possibilities that might or might not be utilised in the future life. It can, however, function only in the co-operation with the other elements and features of the personality and the environment factors. As is obvious from the pronounced differences among the regions, the eternal environment factors are formed in a long-term horizon and are reflected as a burden (economic, cultural, and social) for decades. Social integration of the areas which underwent substantial changes during the war and after-war period (namely expatriation and the following inhabitation) is very complex and difficult even in the case they are economically supported.

Social integration and building of social capital (including the community capacity building) depends more on the social relationships quality than on the education structure quality (in the sense of higher education levels). If there are created or if there origin spontaneously the conditions for the utilisation of the tacit (latent) knowledge, abilities and talents of the population, then they contribute considerably to the population sustainability and the increased quality of life. In the transparent and lucid conditions of rural communes, good examples and their inspiration can spread around more quickly than in the anonymous environment of towns. On the other hand, successes can more easily become also the target of envy and misunderstanding.

5 Prospects of rural knowledge society

Rural areas are a part – even if a very important one – of the whole educational system. The White Book of Tertiary Education points out the strong and weak points of Czech educational system and opens the discussion topics by Chat tools the education level can be increased so that the CR would become competitive inside the EU as well as the overseas countries.

The lower average education of Czech rural population is without doubt hindering the development of countryside. In the connection with the above mentioned processes of economic transformation in agriculture, the possibilities for rural population of job in agriculture decreased and at the same time new, proper job opportunities were not created. Work in agriculture fulfilled some of the demands which made it relatively attractive for rural population: the proximity of the working place and the place of abode, a flexible working time, contact with nature and living organisms, the knowledge of the neighbour environment etc. Naturally, these jobs also had and still have many unfavourable characteristics (physical demands, dependence on natural conditions, risks of accidents and diseases, danger of the contact with chemicals etc.). Rural areas without agriculture have to look for other ways how to sustain and create countryside.

The multifunctionality of rural space opens the job possibilities in other sectors than in agriculture, and a combination of the means of living. Education for rural areas is conceived with regard to their development possibilities. The natural resources and biodiversity protection, support of the traditional local products (both food and crafts), tourism and other possibilities are getting to the foreground. All activities which are connected with the utilisation of information technologies are also a good perspective as they do not demand commuting after work. Just there we can see considerable reserves in the field of education for rural areas.

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Importance of transport possibilities in rural areas of Czechia

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Abstract. The paper deals with differentiation of rural regions in Czechia in light of public and individual transport possibilities and its real usage. At the national level, an analysis of municipalities having less than 3000 inhabitants, i.e. municipalities that can be considered as rural in conditions of Czechia, is done. The supply side is described by public transport connections and household car facilities; demand side is evaluated with help of Census 2001 data. Secondly, there is closely analyzed situation in several type-specific settlement centres and their hinterland. Empirical results are correlated with other socio-economic and demographic indicators in an effort to express social exclusion of inhabitants caused by poor transport services. The contribution ends with discussion of the transport services ensuring possibilities in rural/peripheral areas as important strategy for stabilization of distinctively fragmented rural settlement pattern in Czechia.

Key words: household automobilization, public transport, rural municipalities, commuting modes of transportation.

1 Introduction

Transport services availability belongs to the most frequently mentioned terms connected with the development of rural municipalities. Both Czech and foreign literature make reference to this issue quite frequently. E.g. Nutley (2003, 1998) mentions insufficient transport services in British rural areas that result in a higher level of automobilization in rural areas than in the urban ones. He mentions also the so-called vicious circle of public transports in rural areas that can be briefly described as follows: small population size determines low economic effectiveness of traffic connections and the necessity to ask for subsidies from public sources. The effort to increase profitability leads to a reduction of little used connections that result in a lower offer and quality of

transport services. Subsequently a part of users decide to use other transport modes (mostly cars). But this reduction of users further reduces the profitability of public transport connections.

We can presume that the issue of availability of transport services in rural areas will raise the importance because of the ongoing concentration of jobs and services of a higher order into larger settlement centres. Demand for transport services availability (because of the necessity to travel to ensure fundamental daily needs) will rather increase in rural areas. From the economic point of view, however, this demand is low because of small population size of rural settlements, especially in peripheral areas. The relationship between the offer of public transports and their effective use for commuting to work and school as the principal daily movement of population is an issue which needs further analysis. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to analyse the offer of transport services in rural municipalities of Czechia (with population size up to 3000 inhabitants) and to compare this offer with the effective use of means of transports for commuting on the example of a detailed study of the peripheral microregion of Jeseník. We can presume that, due to economic reasons, the insufficient offer of public transport connections will be evident mainly in municipalities of small population size and, in accordance with previous studies (Nutley 2003, Marada, Hudeček 2005 etc.); it will be partly compensated by a higher automobilization of households. Another aspect studied is the correlation between the offer of bus, rail and car transport services and their effective use.

2 National level: rural municipalities up to 3000 inhabitants

As the extent of this article does not allow a deeper assessment of transport offer, we will therefore try to interpret territorial differentiation of the share of households with at least one car and the number of public transport connections departing from municipalities. Both indices illustrate transport opportunities of inhabitants of rural municipalities of Czechia, which are, in this case, those of less than 3000 inhabitants. *Figure 1* shows mainly the lower automobilization of Moravia and Silesia when compared with Bohemia. On the level of districts (see Marada, Květoň 2005), a certain gradient of decreasing automobilization is evident in the direction southwest – northeast. This gradient is noticeable for a long time and empirical verification of possible reasons has not been done. But there is evident difference between urban and rural regions. Automobilization of rural municipalities is conditioned rather by the need of basic accessibility, as it is proved, on the level of districts, by a higher age of cars in rural districts than in the urbanized

ones (for more details see e.g., Marada, Hudeček 2005). A higher degree of automobilization of households is evident mainly in small municipalities of the so-called inner peripheries, i.e. along the border between Bohemia and Moravia. A lower degree of automobilization in the western and southern Bohemia borderland is somehow distorted by delimitation of large-area municipalities in territories affected by the post-war transfer of Germans from Bohemia; such municipalities consequently do not meet the chosen criterion of maximal population size (3000 inhabitants), although they are of rural character.

Another look at transport offer in municipalities up to 3000 inhabitants is given by *Figure 2* presenting the total number of bus and train connections departing from the municipality. An “ordinary” Saturday (October 6, 2007) was selected purposefully to show limited public transport services available in municipalities on weekends (a more detailed view of different parts of municipalities, i.e. settlements, would be yet more distinct). Nearly a half of municipalities up to 3000 inhabitants have no transport connection at all on Saturdays. Interesting is also the irregular distribution of localization of municipalities without transport services: the most of them are in Bohemia (or in Bohemian-Moravian Highland), while in Moravia and Silesia they are only exceptional. The key role of the type of rural settlement is thus confirmed: in general more fragmented settlement in Bohemia in comparison to Moravia conditions a worse economic effectiveness of available transport services and investments in general. On the contrary, the best services are available in municipalities situated in the background of big towns, i.e. in “indirectly urbanized” rural areas.

The mentioned links are more precisely expressed by pair correlations in *Table 1*. Besides the above mentioned transport indices, demographic characteristics (population size of the municipality, percentage of inhabitants of the municipality older than 65 years) and location characteristics (distance of the municipality – in minutes – from the former district town) were also included to the analysis. The quantified correlations indicate:

A relatively close correlation between the population size of municipalities and the volume of public transport connections (as against the independent relation between the number of inhabitants and share of households with cars) confirms that the quality of public transports availability is largely dependent on the population size of the municipality (because of economic effectiveness). On the contrary, the share of households with cars does not correspond to the size of municipalities and is probably caused by other reasons (e.g. need of accessibility, scale of values of inhabitants, local habits, etc.). These reasons are mentioned also in Marada, Květoň 2006.

The correlation value between the number of connections on working days (here on a Wednesday) and Saturdays is closer in case of rail transports than in

that of bus transports, which indicates that municipalities along railways have better transport connections, including during weekends.

The value of the correlation coefficients between the characteristics of bus and rail transports and automobilization of households indicates a certain complementarity of both types of public transports and individual mode as well. A slightly low negative value of the correlation between the percentage of households with car (AUTO) and the majority of other characteristics indicates the above discussed substitution of insufficient public transport services availability in small municipality by individual transports.

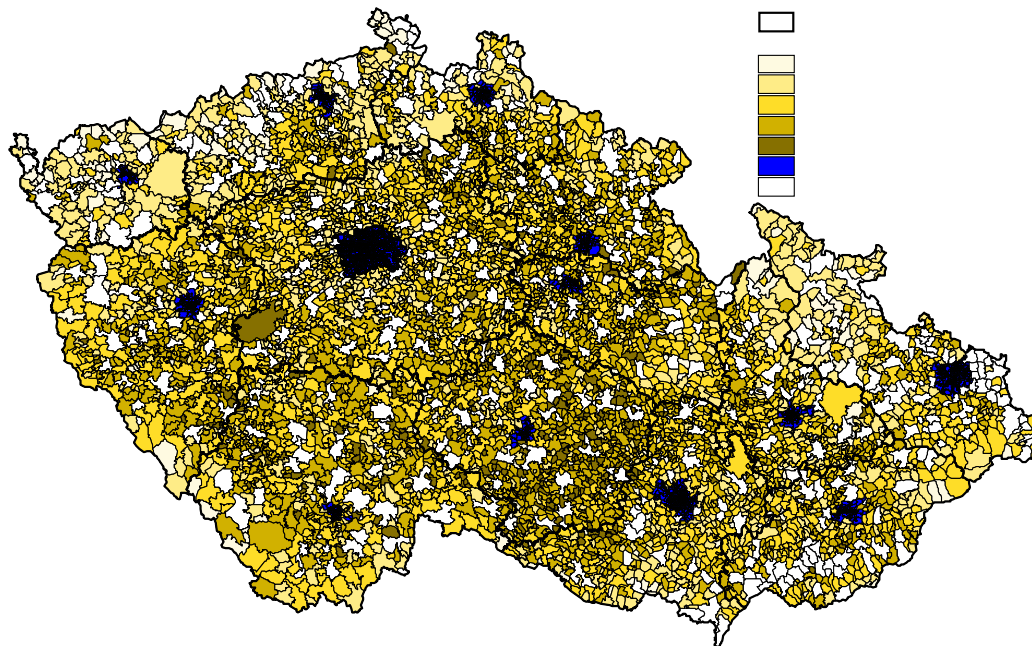


Fig. 1. Automobiliation: Share of households with one and more cars (%) in municipalities up to 3000 inhabitants

Source: SLDB 2001 (census), authors' calculations.

Notice: hranice krajů=border of regions, Míra automobilizace domácností=percentage of automobilized households, krajská města=regional capitals, ostatní obce=other municipalities.

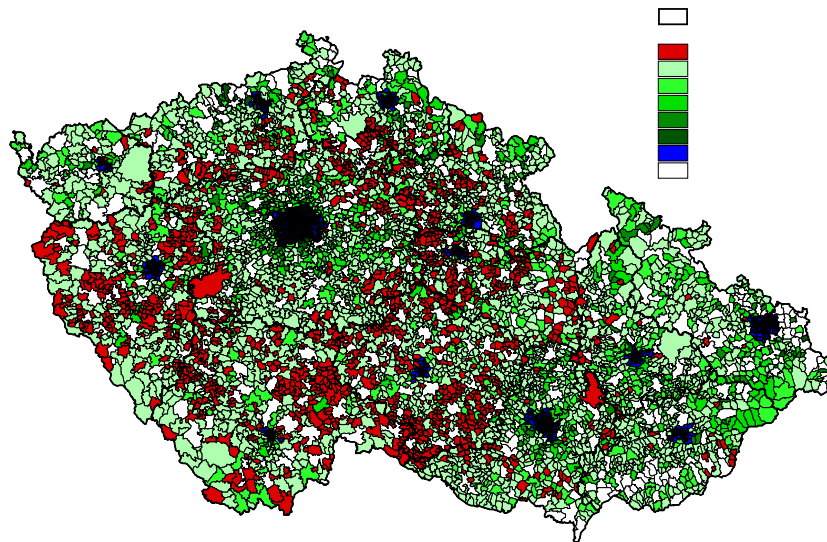


Fig. 2. Number of public transport connections departing from municipalities up to 3000 inhabitants (Saturday, October 6, 2007)

Source: database CHAPS Brno.

Notice: hranice krajů=border of regions, nabídka spojů veřejné dopravy=offer of public transport connections, krajská města=regional capitals, ostatní obce=other municipalities.

Table 1. Selected correlations of transport and settlement indicators

	AUTO	BUS Wed	TRAIN Wed	BUS Sat	TRAIN Sat	INHAB 2005	INHAB 65+	MIN to district
AUTO	1.000	-0.062	-0.110	-0.116	-0.117	-0.083	-0.061	0.021
BUS Wed	-0.062	1.000	0.104	0.838	0.107	0.501	0.468	-0.283
TRAIN Wed	-0.110	0.104	1.000	0.040	0.986	0.363	0.351	-0.122
BUS Sat	-0.116	0.838	0.040	1.000	0.047	0.400	0.367	-0.203
TRAIN Sat	-0.117	0.107	0.986	0.047	1.000	0.366	0.353	-0.124
INHAB 2005	-0.083	0.501	0.363	0.400	0.366	1.000	0.963	-0.168
INHAB 65+	-0.061	0.468	0.351	0.367	0.353	0.963	1.000	-0.142
MIN to district	0.021	-0.283	-0.122	-0.203	-0.124	-0.168	-0.142	1.000

Source: database CHAPS Brno (electronic timetable IDOS), SLDB 2001 (census), Czech statistical office (ČSÚ).

Note: AUTO=share of households with 1 car and more; BUS/TRAIN= number of connections departing from the municipality (Wed—in Wednesday, Sat—in Saturday); INHAB2005=number of inhabitants in 2005; INHAB 65+=share of inhabitants aged 65 and more (2005); MIN to district=accessibility of the district town in minutes.

3 Microregional level: case study of the Jeseník District

The second part of this article is focus on monitoring of transport services availability on the microregional level. A detailed case study can reveal deeper correlations between transport and other socio-geographic characteristics, especially the correlation between the offer of transport possibilities and their effective use (i.e. transport offer and demand). A richer database and a higher territorial detailness may enable a deeper understanding of the studied problems, but, on the other hand, it is necessary to stress the limited possibility to generalize the conclusions.

This case study was done in the district of Jeseník, characterized by a stabilized regional significance during the whole transformation period. The work background of the town of Jeseník, delimited according to the prevailing departing directions of inhabitants, was stable during the observed period between the two last censi and it is consistent with the administrative delimitation of the district. The whole region is situated in peripheral position and isolated from the inland by the barrier of Hrubý Jeseník Mountains. Typical is its orientation at strong outer centres.

Because of the orientation of analyses mainly at daily commuting to work, which is the basic integrating element of socio-geographic microregions, it was necessary to intercept, besides the offer of bus and rail public transport connections, also the increasing share of individual car transports. Both types of transport were assessed as transport possibilities or transport offer as well as according to their use for commuting to work (after the 2001 census). Transport conditions on the level of municipalities were therefore evaluated according to the following indices:

Offer of public mass transportation can be quantified on the basis of timetables as the number of bus and rail connection departing from the municipality (or from a part of the municipality) to a given centre during 24 hours, in our case on an “ordinary” Wednesday, October 3, 2007. The data were taken from the electronic timetable IDOS 2006–2007 compiled by the firm CHAPS Brno. The possibility to use individual car transportation is represented here by the share of households in the municipality (or in a part of the municipality) having at least one car. This indicator was taken from the 2001 census as the aggregate sum of households with one, two or more cars.

Demand for public mass transport and individual car transport is assessed here through data on the means of transport used for commuting to work, which were for the first time ascertained within the 2001 census. We analysed the main ways of commuting – by bus, train and car. The share of other categories,

i.e. commuting by bike, on foot, and especially different combinations of used transport modes, represent a relatively low part in the national average (about a third), which enables to use the mentioned data with a relatively sufficient informative value (similar data are not registered elsewhere).

3.1 Availability of transport for inhabitants

The case study of the Jeseník district is, from the point of view of the settlement system, divided in two scale levels. At first, an analysis was done on the level of municipalities and then attention was paid to the level of individual parts of municipalities, i.e. settlements. Because of a limited extent of this article, the results and comments of both parts are described together and, in case of the largest differences, selected examples are given.

Public bus and rail transport offer is graphically expressed in *Figure 3* related to the level of municipality parts. Bus transports are quite fundamental for transportation of inhabitants in the Jeseník region. Rail transport can be used only in eleven municipalities, which is very little in comparison with bus transports. Very good transport conditions and possibilities are offered to the inhabitants of the nearest background of the town of Jeseník. At least thirty bus connections pass through these municipalities every day and, in addition, there is also a main railway offering further transport options. A rather high intensity of bus transport in municipalities in the nearest background of Jeseník is given by integration of several lines coming from different directions. The highest total offer of public transports is in the municipality parts of Česká Ves, Dolní Lipová and Písečná. An above-standard intensity of bus connections is logically found also in municipalities situated along main communications. Thus the position of municipalities in transportation network plays an important role on the microregional level. Similar partial results were found also by Jansa (2004) and Rölc (2004) when studying transport characteristics of observed model territories. In the case of the Jeseník district, there are problematic those municipality's parts situated along the Czech-Polish border in the northern part of the district. This is confirmed also by a correlation analysis displaying a strong negative correlation between bus transport offer and time accessibility (-0.473). Insufficient transport services in some municipalities can be probably compensated by a higher automobilization (-0.654 on the level of settlements). A certain complementarity of the observed means of transport is evident. Because of the peripheral position of the territory, its high degree of unemployment, the lowest average salaries in Czechia and other under-average economic characteristics, we can presume also a very high age of cars. Unfortunately, data expressing the mean age of

cars are not available for the observed units¹. Figure 3 proves also a rather high dependence of the public transport offer on the transport position of municipalities in the sense of their position on different types of communications. An example can be the southern part of the model area which is crossed by the main communication I/44 going from the border crossing Mikulovice via Jeseník to the former district town Šumperk (Jeseník was detached in 1993). Transport services availability in municipalities in this part of the district is significantly higher than in the remaining ones.

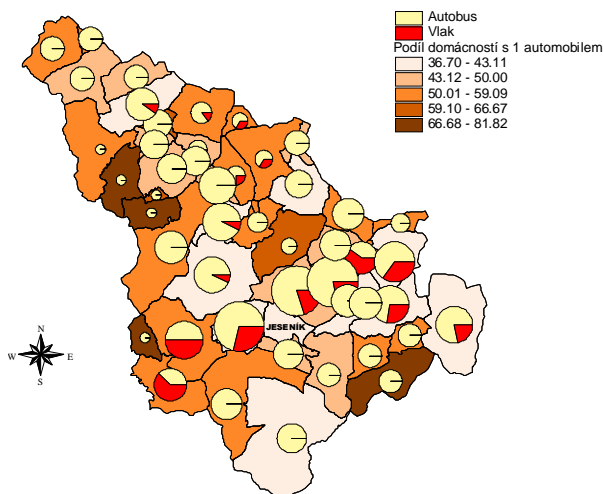


Fig. 3. Correlation between the public transport offer and automobilization in settlements

Source: SLDB 2001 (census)

Notice: *Autobus/Vlak*=commuting by bus/train,

Podíl domácností s 1 automobilem=percentage of households with 1 car.

Transport services in settlement units with a low offer of public transports are compensated by a higher automobilization, but also in another way. Besides the very limited number of existing direct connections, it is possible to get to Jeseník by lines bringing passengers to the “nodal point” (Žulová) with subsequent changing for buses going to Jeseník. The travel is interrupted by changing, but the overall time accessibility of the town of Jeseník does nearly not differ from the direct connection. This alternative form of transport is now more and more frequently put into practice, mainly in rural and peripheral

¹ The average age of cars at district level shows one of the oldest cars in Czechia (see also Marada, Květoň 2006)

areas. Direct connections parting from municipalities of small population size would be soon highly unprofitable and the possibility of such solution seems to be acceptable and effective. The public mass transport offer depends also on population size of municipalities (correlation coefficient 0.661). At the same time, a higher share of households with two and more cars in smaller municipalities in the observed territory is also evident. This dependence is clearly demonstrable on the level of municipality parts. On the level of municipalities, this correlation is not as significant.

3.2 Real use of public and individual transports

Demand for transport, i.e. its effective use, depends strongly on the offer of jobs in individual municipalities. The growth of job offer is not limited by the number of economically active population in the municipality: if it is higher, it can be compensated by commuting for these available jobs. In the case of our model region, the largest production units are often located in municipalities of a smaller population size (Lipová-Lázně, Česká Ves, Vápenná). Besides these municipalities with industrial enterprises, most of jobs are concentrated in the town of Jeseník which is the main destination of commuting both to work and to school. A correlation analysis confirmed, on the level of municipalities, the presumed hypothesis on public transport offer and a higher usage of these connections when commuting from the municipality. Surprisingly enough, there is no correlation between equipment of households by cars and their usage. *Figure 4* nevertheless shows that remote municipalities with a low offer of public transports (Bílá Voda, Bernartice) use for commuting more individual car transport.

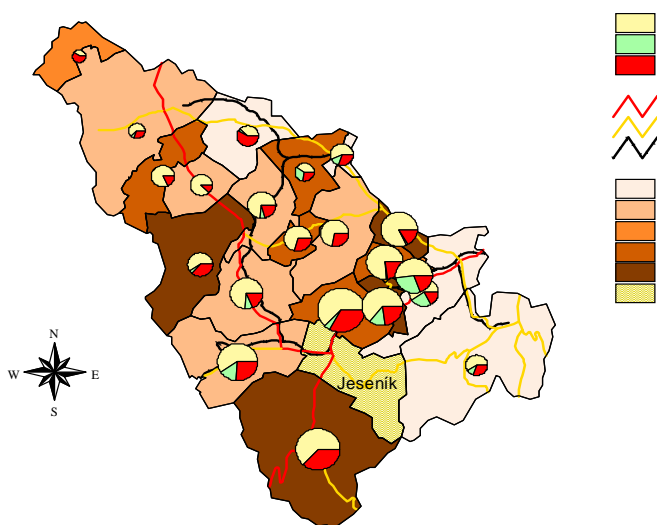


Fig. 4. Commuting to Jeseník according to the used means of transport (level of municipalities.)

Source: ČSÚ, calculations of authors.

Notice: Využitý dopravní prostředek=used mean of transport (bus=bus, vlak=train, auto=car), Silnice I./II. třídy=roads of 1st/2nd class, železnice=railway, Míra automobilizace=percentage of automobilization.

3.3 Impact of transport services availability on social exclusion

Public mass transports ensure accessibility for all inhabitants; they are nevertheless fundamental for specific groups of population. This is also one of the three main reasons why to safeguard public transports. The social reason is that some groups of population are unable to possess or to drive cars, which means that they are dependent on public transports. In rural areas with a low density of population, and therefore with a low demand, this problem is often very serious. This is stated e.g. by Perlín (2004) or Marada and Květoň (2006), who include into these affected groups students, pensioners and women in productive age.

Within this study an analysis of public transports accessibility for students aged 0-15 and for inhabitants over 60 years was done. Already the correlation analysis has suggested a possible relationship between the share of inhabitants

the supply of transport services from the point of view of directions and time situation of connections. While before 1989 commuting to work was organized mostly “hierarchically” (i.e. into the nodal municipality or to another hierarchically superior settlement, e.g. district town), at present, the set of commuting destinations is often larger and commuting takes place at different times. Under these conditions, it is more suitable to use private cars than public transport which would, in perspective, increase its importance mainly as transport to services (schools, health centres, administration).

A strong negative correlation between equipment of households by cars and the total offer of bus connections on the level of settlements (municipality’s parts) is an important finding. This is confirmed also by other researches (e.g. Marada, Květoň 2006 and 2007) stressing the fact that there are, on the level of individual settlements, large disparities of transport indices that can influence the development of these rural localities. On the level of municipalities (as administrative units including in general several settlements), the situation of transport services availability has been stabilized in Czechia for a longer time and many specialists and regional politicians presume that the level of transport services is sufficient. On the contrary, the situation in municipality’s parts manifests an insufficient availability of public transport services which probably causes substitution of lacking public transport services by individual automobilization. An increased automobilization of rural areas does not represent a more serious issue (in comparison with urban areas), the smallest settlements are nevertheless the demographically oldest ones, these are places with a higher share of persons in retiring age, i.e. those with a higher probability not to be able to drive cars. This presumption of “transport exclusion” must however be verified by more case studies in rural regions. At the same time, it is necessary to study alternative transport services which could optimise transport services in rural and peripheral areas.

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Factors of Small Municipalities' Development – Case Study

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Anotation. The case study of three municipalities in Děčín region in North Bohemia analyzed the history and current state of these municipalities, the development of number of inhabitants, available facilities and other additional data. The goal of this study was to show that higher number of inhabitants must not be a decisive factor for development.

Key words: rural municipalities, countryside, rural development.

1 Introduction

As a part of the project of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MLSA), Socio-economical Development of Czech Countryside and Agriculture, a comparative study of two Czech regions has been carried out by the Sociological Laboratory in 2007. The goal of this study was to describe regional differences and to identify factors influencing the development of rural municipalities in selected regions. To obtain a more detailed picture of the situation, further analyses on local level have been carried out. The case study of three municipalities in the Ústecký region was one of them.¹ The three municipalities selected for this case study share similar geographical localization and historic development and, at the same time, differ in size (one of the goals of this study was to show that the size of a municipality does not have to play the main role in its development) and outer appearance. Although outer appearance and of a municipality is a purely subjective criterion, we have seen that the „first impression“ a municipality makes reflects how the life there is. Further analysis has corroborated this connection.

¹This article is based on the 11th Chapter of The Case Study of Selected Municipalities in township Děčín (author P. Maříková), Czech Countryside 2007 – Study of South Bohemia and Ústecký Regions, FEM, CULS 2008, ISBN 978-80-213-1768-0.

2 Objective and methods

2.1 Characteristics of the analyzed region and common features of selected municipalities

Selected municipalities are located in the Ústecký region. According to the EUROSTAT methodology, this region belongs to mostly rural regions (as well as most of the regions in the Czech Republic). However, in comparison to other Czech regions, the Ústecký region is more urbanized and industrialized (with energy and mining industry). In the view of Czech regional politics, this region belongs among undeveloped and problematic regions.

Selected region in the context of CR:²

- with the area of 5 335 km² covers 7 % of the total area of CR, with the number of inhabitants 823 265 represents 8 % of Czech population – population density reaches 154,3 inhabitants/km² (average in CR is 130,4);
- 80 % inhabitants live in towns, this is 10 % „more than Czech average“;
- it is a „young“ region – average age 39,2 is one year lower than the Czech average;
- the unemployment rate (13,77 %) is double in comparison with the Czech average (7,67 %);
- secondary sector predominates over primary sector.

The unemployment rate in Děčín Township, where all three municipalities are located, is according to the Strategy of Regional Development high above average. The three municipalities are neighbors and are situated 25 km from the center of the township Děčín in a hilly area of the České středohoří (Czech Central mountain area).

The municipalities have common history – they were founded between 13th and 14th century as originally purely agricultural villages. During 18th century, deposits of black coal were found in their vicinity and first mines were opened. Thus the population structure and the way the inhabitants earn their living have changed. Machine building industry and textile manufactures developed here as well.

As a part of Sudets (Sudety, Sudetenland), this area was affected by the expulsion of German inhabitants after the World War II, who had predominated here after the colonization in 18th century. The number of inhabitants never grew back to the original number before the World War II.

All three municipalities with are classified as rural (less than 2 000 inhabitants and population density lower than 100 inhabitants/km²), one of them has, however, the status of a town.

²Source: Czech Statistical Office: Postavení kraje v České republice ve vybraných ukazatelích v roce 2006.

2.2 Characteristics of selected municipalities

Municipality A (Merboltice)

Merboltice is the smallest of the analyzed municipalities, with only 142 inhabitants in 2007. In the end of the 19th century, the population overreached 1000 inhabitants, most of them with German nationality. Merboltice has 150 houses. Permanent residents only live in 39 of them, the rest serve for recreation purposes. There are minimum facilities available – a pub and a library with internet access. There is no school or shop. The infrastructure is limited to water supply. Unemployment rate reaches 35 %.

Merboltice has a single cultural monument – a belfry, remainder of the church of St. Catherine, which was demolished in 1975. The municipality has taken it over from the church in 2002 and reconstructed it. After the unsuccessful attempt to find original bells, which were transported to Germany during the World War II, a new bell was bought for the belfry for 130 thousand CZK collected among the inhabitants.

During a similar initiative, an outlook-tower was re-built on a nearby hill Strážný vrch. The tower was financed from a public collection and from grants from the Program of Rural Renewal in 2001 to 2006.

Money collections are not the only activities of local inhabitants. There are two clubs in the village, which regularly organize activities and contests for children as well as for seniors. Inhabitants voluntarily take part in renewal of the village.

Local representatives and the mayor of Merboltice show that they can get financial support not only for reconstructions and new buildings but more importantly for programs decreasing unemployment. Its decrease (unemployment rate reached 50 % only five years ago) proves that they are successful. The municipality also runs its own website.

The first impression the village makes on a visitor is positive – the streets and public places are clean, buildings reconstructed. These are also proofs of the activity of the municipality and its inhabitants and their interest in further development.

Municipality B (Valkeřice)

The second municipality has a little less than 400 inhabitants. Its geographical location is similar as of the municipality A. Most of its hundred houses are permanently inhabited and the municipality is divided in two parts. Valkeřice has better facilities – it has library, post office, kindergarten, two pubs and three small grocery stores. Unemployment rate is around 19 %.

The church was here, as well as in municipality A, demolished in 1975. Also this municipality has its outlook-tower. It is, however, in a desolate state and closed for public.

Local inhabitants meet at traditional events for children and adults as shown in photo-documentation and unofficial websites of the municipality run by a group of local youth. One NGO is active in the municipality. It organizes the reconstruction of a house for a foster family and plans to build up a community center.

Only little information is available about the activities of the local representatives and the mayor. They are, however, active and have been successful in acquiring grants for renewal of the municipality and employment support.

Municipality C (Verneřice)

Verneřice is the largest of the analyzed municipalities. It has 1 084 inhabitants and 322 houses in six village parts. 200 houses are permanently inhabited, the rest are weekend houses. The central part of the municipality is provided with infrastructure and facilities - there is an elementary school, kindergarten, post office, library, cinema and an office of a general practitioner. Unemployment reaches 17 %.

During its history, Verneřice itself (without other village parts) had more than 2 000 inhabitants and already in 1522 received the status of a town. The number of inhabitants decreased during the second half of the twentieth century to 750 inhabitants. In the 1970s, other village parts were connected to Verneřice in the framework of centralization (among them the former small town Rychnov) and the number of inhabitants grew to the current number. The municipality regained its status of a town in 2006.

There are not many initiatives of local inhabitants documented at the municipality websites. Every year, a wake of St. Anna takes place and a small music festival is organized by the municipality. The inhabitants have also organized a public collection. More than 50 thousand CZK was collected for a new drapery and a bell clap for the local church of St. Anna.

Although the central square in Verneřice is mentioned as an important town unit with Imperial style architecture, seems neglected. The concrete “cube” of a shopping center built in 1980’s in the middle of the historic buildings and next to the Baroque church underlines the impression. Another church, the church of the Holly Trinity, which had been located on a nearby hill, was demolished in 1970s.

3 Results and discussion

The goal of this field study was to compare data characterizing each municipality, to find factors influencing development and to confirm or

disprove the hypothesis that the size of a municipality does not have to be the most important factor for its development.

Data on demographic development and the structure of population, facilities in the municipality and its accessibility, economic situation and participation in politics, etc. were collected. Some datasets were available in longer time frames (e.g. the number of inhabitants and houses since the year 1869, population mobility since 1991 and unemployment rate since 2002), some data was only available in relation to one date (population structure to 1. 3. 2001). Several dozens of indicators were selected from the available data according to different sectors (population, employment, living, quality of life, activity of citizens, activity of the municipality's authorities). To eliminate the possibility that the results would be skewed by the size of the municipality or the number of inhabitants, only relative (per person or per 100 inhabitants) or average numbers were taken into account.

Table 1. Comparison of Indicators of Development

Indicator	Unit		Period	A	B	C
Population structure and its development						
Relative increase/decrease	Change in %	↑	1900-1950	31,81	42,06	31,28
Relative increase/decrease	Change in %	↑	1950-1991	31,6	47,55	72,27
Relative increase/decrease	Change in %	↑	1991-2007	146,39	107,32	100,93
Average age	Age	↓	I.07	39,6	40,4	37,7
Vitality Index	Index	↑	2006	117,5	108,4	153,6
Index of education structure	Index	↑	III.01	176,34	178,53	182,85
Employment and labour market						
Unemployment Rate	%	↓	VIII.07	23,21	17,7	12,35
Economical subject per 100 inhabitants	Number/100 inhabitants	↑	X.07	36	17	18
Trend of unemployment rate	Change in %	↓	IV.2002-VIII.2007	49,33	81,59	77,05
Activity of municipality						
Acquiring subsidies (average per CZK/inhabitant inhabitant, 1999 - 2006)		↑	1999-2006	2283,1	942,5	566,9

The data was filled into a balance table, where their direction of activity was identified (whether are higher values negative or positive for development). Indicators, by which it was not possible to clearly state their "direction", were excluded from the analysis (for example the percentage of agricultural land). We have further excluded factors, which showed equal values for all three municipalities (engagement in micro-regions and associations) and factors that are clearly size dependent (available facilities).

Following table shows selected results. The best results are filled in bold and the worst have grey background.

4 Conclusion

At the first sight it is obvious that none of the municipalities is “the best” or “the worst”, each of them is the best in some factors and the worst in others. We can see that the largest municipality – municipality C has the highest count of “first places”, so to say. Should the answer therefore be: Yes, the number of inhabitants plays the key role in development of the municipality?

At the second sight, we realize that the factors the municipality C is “good at” are: the lowest population decrease in the second half of the 20th century, the lowest average age and the greatest index of vitality and education, the lowest unemployment rate.

Many of these criteria, however, can have other causes. The municipality was in the second half of the 20th century selected as the central municipality. This step has influenced the development of population – the number of inhabitants did not decrease so drastically as in the others non-central municipalities, new apartment buildings were built here, services and facilities for citizens flourished and the job offer increased. The municipality was, and even today is, therefore more attractive for young people to settle in. This is the reason for the municipality’s better age and educational structure. The employment rate is higher thanks to the job offer in services and other enterprises.

On the other hand, the smallest of the three municipalities shows the best values in four indicators, which clearly show development as such. They show that the municipality has currently become attractive and therefore shows population increase caused by migration (greatest relative population increase in last 15 years), greater activity of its inhabitants (relatively greatest number of private entrepreneurs) and activity of local authorities (the municipality received the highest subsidies for support of employment policies and community services per person). The unemployment rate has significantly decreased in last 5 years – the most from all three municipalities.

These are the factors that truly indicate development and are most probably based in strong social capital. They are not merely preconditions for it as in municipality C. The relationship of social capital and development will, however, have to be confirmed by further research

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Social Capital and Area: Territoriality of Social Networks and Groups

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Annotation. The paper discusses the constitution of social capital within social groups and networks and conceptualizes relations between social networks and territory. The main attention is devoted to territoriality of social networks and to horizontal and vertical relations between social networks at various scales, reflecting the distinction between bonding, bridging and linking types of social capital.

Key words: social capital, social networks, territory.

1 Introduction

The importance of social capital for local and regional development has been widely acknowledged during last decades. Localities, regions, nations and communities are more likely to achieve higher levels of development and to mitigate negative external influences if they have higher level of embedded social capital. Social capital is one of several factors influencing regional development. However, its role is growing due to increasing importance of mutual interactions in society and the impact of international division of labour on lives of people and communities (Castells 1996).

In this paper, we first discuss the concept of social capital, concentrating on its main characteristics and ways of its constitution. First we outline the origin of social capital within social networks and groups (structural part of social capital) and its reflection in the level of mutual trust in these groups and networks (cognitive part of social capital). In the following part we focus on territoriality of social groups and social networks and on the importance of horizontal and vertical relations between these networks on various geographical scales. We discuss types of social capital (bonding, bridging, linking) and their relation to spatial structures and territoriality of social relations acknowledging both differences and complementarities of particular types of social capital.

2 Social Capital

Social capital is a specific added value originating in quantity and quality of social interactions. These interactions are based on mutually agreed norms of social relations, trust in these norms and in institutions which guarantee them, as well as in other actors in one's social group, network or society in general. Social capital is formed, maintained and developed through (formal as well as informal) social interactions within social networks, groups, communities or whole societies. These interactions mean transfer and sharing of resources, information or knowledge between individuals in these social networks or groups. Social capital is one of the qualities of social structure and includes such features as relations, interactions and contacts, generally shared values, institutions, norms, sanctions, rules, procedural mechanisms, attitudes and trust in other citizens, institutions, social groups or society in general, which facilitate mutual coordination of social activities and thus increase the effectiveness of social organisation (Putnam et al. 1993). Social capital is formed through social linkages which support cooperation and coordination among people. This ensures lower transactional costs and enables to achieve common goals more effectively.

Social capital is primarily utilized by individuals. However, it also brings benefits to social groups and society in general. For this reason, both individual actors as well as whole social groups are interested in sustaining and developing social capital. Individual actor is as a member of social group (network) able to employ and use social capital for his/her individual benefit (Lin 2001). However, such individual benefit must be in harmony (or must not contradict) with common interests of social group. Individuals are interested to use the group resources available due to social relations within particular social group (network). The social group interest is to benefit from individual successes of group members, who also used social capital of the group for their individual achievements. Social capital is individual as well as collective resource which helps to fulfil personal as well as collective goals. However, some individuals can benefit from social capital more than the others. They have access to better resources and maintain such internal disparities. Social inequalities are thus reflected in an uneven access to social capital (Edwards, Foley 1998).

Social capital is based on relationships between actors which together form the social system. Social system is not a simple sum of components it consists of (social aggregate). The ties and linkages between the components are an important quality of social system as well. Social bonds connect economic, cultural and human capital of actors in social system in an integrated whole. Social capital is a relational entity integrating particular actors into larger social units enabling them to cooperate and use resources („capitals“) available

to other actors in the social group or network. We distinguish between social groups based on similar social and demographical characteristics, similar interests and shared values, and social networks, which we see as contact systems of actors connected by mutual interactions. Relations within social group can be indirect, mediated by shared norms, values and trust. Social networks are formed by direct interactions. Social networks can be formed by actors from the same social group as well as by actors from different social groups. Social capital is formed and encouraged by shared values reproduced in social groups as well as by direct interaction between actors in social networks.

3 Types of Social Capital

Social capital understood and investigated from two distinctive points of view: structural and cognitive. Structural social capital refers to variety of linkages within social networks and between them. The basic types of structural social capital are intra-group („bonding“), inter-group („bridging“) and hierarchical („linking“). The reflection of social capital in the level of mutual trust within and between social groups stands for cognitive social capital. Trust can be seen as particularized and generalized. Particularized trust exists between members of particular social group. Generalized trust refers to the level of trust in the whole society, regardless of the individual membership in particular social group. For some authors, generalized trust is the most important symptom of the existence and the level of social capital (Putnam 1993).

Social capital is a characteristic of internally highly structured society which consists of various social groups, networks, communities, etc. Ties represent relationships between individual members of social groups or networks as well as relations between networks within more complex societal networks. Ties and interactions can be reciprocal as well as hierarchical, horizontal linkages at the same level of social structure as well as vertical ties between different hierarchical levels of social structure. From this point of view, basic types of social capital are distinguished, including intra-group (bonding), inter-group (bridging) and hierarchical that links social groups and communities at lower hierarchical levels to more powerful actors and their networks in superior social systems (linking) (Putnam 2000, Halpern 2005).

Intra-group (bonding) social capital is based on high internal loyalty and high level of particularized trust within relatively homogenous social group. It is usually formed on the micro-level of social groups such as family, tribe or neighbourhood community. It can, however, also exist within nations and states. Bonding social capital enables internal organisation within social group, helps to protect the interest of the members of the social group against other

groups and helps the members of social group to overcome difficulties. Beside positive effects (e.g. family or friend helping somebody to find a job, local patriotism supporting entrepreneurship) negative consequences can appear as well (e.g. privileging members of a family or fraternity and destroying competitive environment). Strong bonding social capital can go hand in hand with antagonisms to other social groups and thus undermine the role of bridging social capital in wider society.

Inter-group (bridging) social capital connects particular social groups or networks. It enables exchange of information and services and supports the ability of social groups to cooperate and achieve commonly agreed goals. This type of social capital is seen as positive for social cohesion and development. However, it is based on weak and often unstable linkages. They, nevertheless, connect people of different social background, gender, nationality, political opinions and interests thus helping to develop and strengthen mutual trust in wider society and form more tolerant and inclusive societies. Provided some groups are excluded from bridging ties, high level of bridging social capital tends to maintain and deepen existing disparities between „involved“ and „excluded“ actors from different social groups.

Hierarchical (linking) social capital connects actors and social groups in lower social positions to key actors in hierarchically superior levels of social structure. Linking social capital enables some actors to draw benefits thanks to connections with actors with more power and resources. Actors on lower levels can also utilise linking social capital to influence decision-making (e.g. political) on higher levels.

Mutual trust between members of social networks and groups, together with trust to institutions and society in general is an important part of social capital. Trust is primary “present“ within social networks and groups. Higher intensity of certain kinds of social contacts generally increases shared experience and strengthens mutual trust. Higher density of contacts is more probable between individuals with similar social positions (Lin 2001). On the other hand side, interactions with different individuals (in terms of social, economical or cultural background) can bring mutual benefits, if based on equal, mutually beneficial relationship. Society is formed by social groups and networks which interact and overlap with each other („the network of networks“). Quality of these interactions impacts on the level of generalized and institutional trust. Trust should be therefore understood as being formed from particular trust to members of the same social group up to generalized trust in society and its institutions.

Trust reflects expected behaviour of the others. It is formed by personal as well as collective experience. It exists on all levels of social structure, starting from interpersonal trust between two individuals, going to trust towards own social group up to generalized trust which refers to “average“ level of trust to overall

society and its basic institutions. The level of generalized trust is furthermore influenced by other factors such as satisfaction with quality of life, feeling of control over one's life and optimism (Uslaner 2003) or participation in various civic groups and organizations (Putnam 1993).

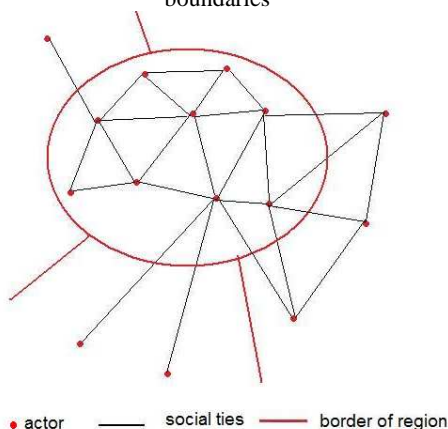
4 Social Capital, Territory and Geographical Organisation of Society

The formation and structuration of social capital is influenced by geographical organization of society (Hampl 2005). Geographical organization of society reflects and influences social relations in particular localities and regions. We can conceptualize the relation between social networks and territory from two different but complementary views. First looks on reality through localities or regions in which social actors and networks are present. Research of social networks which exist in particular locality or region contributes to accurate knowledge of complex organization in such territory. Second perspective looks at geographical organization of actors and their networks in all places to which their activities extend. In this case, the territory is delimited by geographical spread of social network. These perspectives reflect the conceptualization of the relation between firms and territory by Dicken and Malmberg (2001). On one hand side, territory can be approached as an "arena" which contains many firms, often without direct linkages. On the other hand side, territory is seen as a contact system for particular firm: it contains external contacts of the firm, e.g. locations of its trade partners or homes of its employers.

Geographical organization of social networks does not necessarily correspond to complex regional geographical organization (see figure 1). Particular territory can fully contain some social networks. However, other networks are formed in larger space of more territories and/or in a region on higher scale. We should distinguish different scales on which particular networks are formed, including hierarchical linkages between actors within these networks and their embeddedness on particular scale of geographical organization. When studying the relationship between social networks and territory, it is important to ask in which territories a network trenches as well as which networks influence the character of a locality or region. Social networks tend to connect actors with similar position in social structure and similar way of life (Lin 2001). And people of different social strata tend to have different spatial pattern of housing, work etc. We expect social networks to correspond most often with socio-spatial differentiation. Networks of people with different social status can then interconnect different localities. When looking at a given territory (neighbourhoods, municipality, city, region) as an "arena" we want to determine in which networks are local actors integrated but as well as which

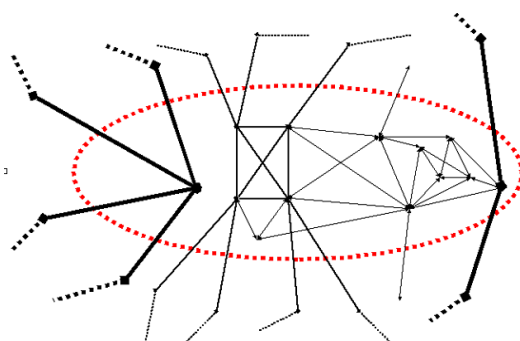
internal or external resources are available to them and how this together influences their activity in particular fields and how they influence the territory and territorial geographical organization by their activities (see figure 2).

Figure 1. Example of territorial scope of social network extending across regional boundaries



Source: authors

Figure 2. Territory as an arena of social networks



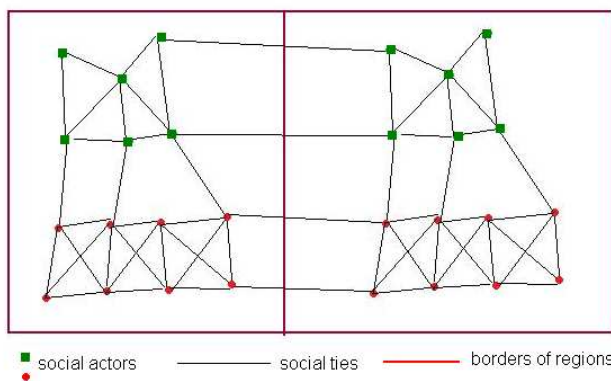
Note: The width of the tie represents its potential (in terms of available resources).

Source: authors

Different types of social capital have different spatial configurations. Their influence on geographical organization varies as well. Intra-group (bonding)

social capital integrates social group or network. This group needn't be geographically limited to particular territory. We can according to territoriality distinguish intra-regional and inter-regional intra-group (bonding) social capital. Intra-regional bonding social capital reflects and enables cooperation of the group within particular territory and probably also strengthens their relation to this territory (see Paasi 1986, Chromý 2003). Interactions of members from one social group or network can cross regional boundaries (see figure 3). Character and intensity of interaction between members of the same group who are located in different regions is influenced by spatial organization of everyday life. The territoriality of everyday life is formed by relations between places of housing, jobs, services, etc. We expect intra-regional direct contacts to be more intensive than inter-regional contacts and social capital respectively.

Figure 3. Intra-group (bonding) and inter-group (bridging) intra-regional and intra-group (bonding) and inter-group (bridging) inter-regional linkages



Source: authors

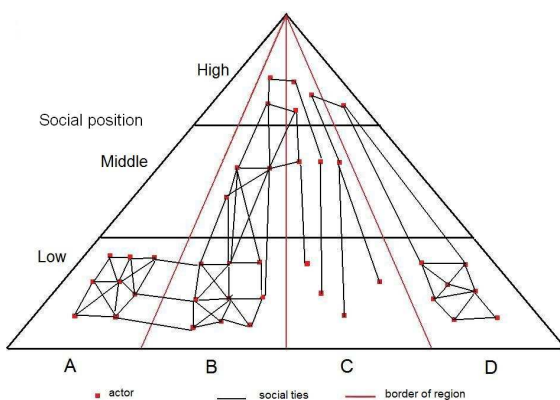
Inter-group (bridging) social capital stands for social linkages between different social groups. It enables and strengthens cooperation between them. Life in the same territory and regular, repeating social interactions (like meeting each other on public places) help to increase cooperation within the territory and form and strengthen bridging social capital.

Hierarchical (linking) social capital refers to relations between actors and their networks on different levels of social hierarchy. Higher social status is usually connected with higher scalar scope of activities one is involved in. Therefore there is scalar difference between connected social groups. Linking social capital stands for connections of actors with predominantly local ties (e.g. small entrepreneur with local trade partners or local mayor) to actors

working on higher geographical scales (e.g. consultants of multinational corporations or members of parliament).

Social groups and networks on different levels of social hierarchy and acting in various regions differ in geographical patterns of their activities. Some possible relations between social hierarchy and territorial structures are outlined in figure 4. Territories A, B, C, D are examples of possible situations. Only actors with low social position are present in territory A. Social network between these actors represents intra-regional intra-group (bonding) social capital. Some actors are connected to other actors of similar social position in territory B (inter-regional intra-group bonding social capital). Only few external resources are available to actors in territory A. Actors in territory B are highly connected with each other. We can identify dense networks with probable high levels of intra-regional and inter-regional bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Territory B is likely to develop high level of both particularized and generalized trust. In territory C, the share of actors with different social statuses is similar to region B. However, the character of social ties is different. Predominantly vertical networks (linking social capital) are not supplemented with networks that would represent bridging or bonding social capital. Possible competition and cleavages between different networks can undermine generalized trust in such kind of region. Territory D is similarly to territory A highly integrated by inter-group bonding social capital. However, a hierarchical linkage to an actor with high social status gives this territory an advantage compared to territory A.

Figure 4: Territoriality of social networks and corresponding types of social capital



Source: authors

5 Conclusions

In this paper, we attempted to connect the concept of social capital with the concept of geographical organisation of society. We especially utilised the structural view on social capital, distinguishing bonding, bridging and linking ties with respect to their territorial constitution. The main aim of the paper was to present and develop conceptual thinking about territoriality of social networks and groups in the context of social capital formation. Different social networks and types of social capital blend together in particular territories. Territorial scope and multiplicity of inter-connected (or not interconnected) social networks in concrete locality and region should be taken into account in research of social capital and its impact on local and regional development.

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Afforestation and Biodiversity Conservation in the Czech Rural Development

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Annotation. Afforestation of agricultural land was subsidized in the rural development program. The process was not running smoothly. The goal of afforested area was not met. Also, the environmental goals were not reached. The main problem remains the conflict of interest in afforestation and in conservation of biodiversity-rich grasslands.

Key words: rural development program, forestry subsidies, agricultural subsidies, biodiversity conservation.

1 Introduction

A policy research study has been carried out in order to evaluate five public expense programs related to nature conservation. The subsidy title *Afforestation of Agriculture Land* in the Horizontal Rural Development Plan for the Czech Republic (2004-2006) was among the evaluated programs. The objective of the work was to analyze the selected subsidies and to suggest ways of improvement in procedure and impact. The research was largely of academic interest, however its results are usable by policy decision makers.

The analytical part of the qualitative research consisted of series of 34 evaluative questions to which answers were sought for each of the programs.³ This analysis allowed for a comparison of conditions and results of implemented economic instruments. The so called “logic of intervention” was researched. In this approach, we inspect the problem that the given instrument is supposed to solve, together with the stated goal of the instrument. We

³This qualitative research metod was modified from Jilkova, J. *Methodics for detailed analysis of instruments of public policy*. In: Jilkova, J., Pavel, J. (eds.) *Evaluation of effectiveness of environmental public expense programs* (in Czech). IREAS, Prague, 2006, p. 134-140.

inspect the particular measures of the instrument, as well as the indicators of the instrument (description of the initial, final and intermediate status). In the literature the method of logic of intervention was dealt with by various authors (Davidson, 2005, Wahl, 1999). In our inquiry, the suggestions of OECD (Opschooor, 1989) were followed.

After answering the analytical questions, a synthesis of gained knowledge was carried out and recommendations for instruments' improvement were made.

In the study, there were the following three Czech national programs included:

- Landscape Care Program (Czech: Program péče o krajinu);
- Program of Revitalization of River Systems (Czech: Program revitalizace říčních systémů);
- Program of Care for Natural Environment (Czech: Program péče o přírodní prostředí).

Furthermore, the following two subsidy titles that are a part of the European Union policy were evaluated:

- Agri-environmental measures in the Horizontal Rural Development Plan;
- Afforestation of Agriculture Land in the Horizontal Rural Development Plan.

In this article, only the last subsidy title, the *Afforestation of Agriculture Land* in the Horizontal Rural Development Plan for the Czech Republic for the Years 2004-2006 will be dealt with. This subsidy title finances artificial afforestation of agricultural lands (grasslands and fields). These lands are not attractive for the owner to be used in their original agricultural manner. The goal of the financial subsidy is to support the declared social goals in land use.

2 Results of the study

On the positive side, we can claim that the area of forest, as a source of renewable source of material and energy, is increasing. Also, the young stands are improving the CO₂ balance. The planted stands have a relatively high proportion of ameliorative kinds of trees (deciduous trees) by current standards of the forestry sector (However, there are objections by nature conservationists against subsidized planting of coniferous trees, especially Norway spruce).

On the negative side, little forest originates on the arable land, where it has the largest significance from the declared social goal of decreasing the agricultural overproduction and also the largest significance from the environmental viewpoint. Also, the forest does not originate in the geographical areas with a low share of forestland (lowlands). Furthermore, there is some conflict of interest between afforestation efforts, and in preserving arable land (supported

by local agricultural authorities). Also there is a serious conflict of interest between land owners interested in subsidized afforestation (subsidies cover all the expense in most cases), and public nature conservation that attempts to protect grasslands with high biodiversity. Finally, the process of subsidy administration is too difficult for small land owners.

The opportunity for solving the problems is to increase the motivation for planting of forest stands in geographical areas with a small share of forestland, especially in lowlands (and proportionally decrease the subsidies for relatively well-forested highlands). Also, it is suggested to re-allocate the financial support in order to increase the motivation for planting trees *on arable land*. Furthermore, the 0.5 ha minimal area, that can be claimed for subsidy, should be cancelled, so that ecologically significant small groups of trees on arable land can be planted. The complex administrative procedure should be reviewed by an independent party (party out of public sector), and a simplification suggested. There should be clear conditions declared for the case of grasslands with high biodiversity, and these conditions communicated through all levels of public administration from the beginning of the process.

3 Conclusion

The subsidy title *Afforestation of agricultural land* in the Czech Horizontal Rural Development Plan for the Years 2004-2006 supported a renewable resource that could have an increasing significance in future. Also, it will contribute to an improvement of the CO₂ balance in association with the climate change issue. However, comparing the declared goal of afforested area with the results, the title did not meet the expectations in 2004-2006 period. The instrument exhibits weaknesses also in consideration of other partial goals. The arable land is not being afforested (afforestation happens mostly on grasslands). The afforestation is low in regions with a low share of forestland, where it would be most desirable in view of regional needs of renewable resources as well in view of ecological balance of the landscape. In the subsidy title, the differences in costs of afforestation by deciduous trees, as opposed to afforestation by coniferous trees, are not taken into account. The subsidy is too low for afforestation by oak in the lowlands.

A significant limitation is also the minimal subsidized area requirement (if the land does not adjoin an existing forest. There is a conflict of interest between subsidized afforestation and the nature conservation in case of biodiversity-rich grasslands. This conflict could be partly limited by better information, clear communication of conditions, unambiguous identification of protected public interest, as well as by better cooperation of different parts of public administration.

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Inner Peripheries of the Czech Republic as a Form of Social Exclusion

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Annotation Most often inner peripheries are described in terms of economic geography. This study is however stressing more the sociological aspects of peripheries, studying not only the causes, but also the social effects of life in peripheral regions. It combines the concept of life world (*espace vécu*) as defined by A. Fremont and A. Giddens, when describing the consequences of living in peripheries, and a modified G. Myrdal's theory of cumulative causation when trying to explain the origin and growth of peripheries. Inner peripheries are most often peripheral zones of metropolitan areas, and regional centres areas. In the middle of 90ties some peripheries stopped to lose population due to suburbanization processes.

Key words: social space, inner peripheries, social exclusion, mechanisms leading to the formation of peripheries.

1 Introduction

One of the less researched aspects of social exclusion in social cohesion studies are the forms caused by the *residing* of certain sectors of the population in places that, due to their location, restrict opportunities and life chances of individuals, families and social groups. This form of exclusion is thus caused by socio-spatial factors (cf. Musil 2006). The following study deals with *the micro-dimensional aspects of this type of social exclusion* in the Czech Republic, in other words with the internal peripheries in the Czech Republic. An enlarged version of this study, stressing some other sociologically relevant facts was published as well by J. Musil and J. Müller (Musil, Müller 2008) in *Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review* vol. 44 No. 2. The first and second stage of the study from 2005 and 2006 - about which we are reporting - aimed to:

1. Specify and describe these peripheries geographically and sociologically.

2. Estimate the number of citizens living in internal peripheries and how this number has been changing.
3. Establish whether the geographical extension of peripheries is increasing or decreasing.

At the end of the study main social *consequences of the process of peripherisation* are indicated together with *causes* of this process.

2 Regional Disparity as the Most Frequently Researched Phenomenon of Territorial Aspects of Declining Cohesion in European Countries

Differentiation processes of modernizing societies are manifested in territory by the increasing contrasts between different parts of state territory. Increasing contrasts are caused by division of labour, specialisation and concentration of specific activities and material structures (cp. for that especially Hampl 2001, Musil 2002). Urbanisation and regionalisation are the main forms of these processes. Their consequence is the emergence of *differing types of settlement structures* and in the past the existence of significant *disparity between country and city*.

Sharp contrasts between country and city had been, in most parts of Europe, overcome (cp. Frey Zimmer 2001, Anderson 2004). However, differences in several aspects of settlement structures (as e.g. expressed in density of population, size and density of communities, proportion of people living in cities, number of job opportunities per area unit, GDP per head, number of student placement opportunities in universities, air traffic opportunities etc.) are still significant in Europe and according to the majority of studies, they are even increasing (cp. Student 1998, Heidenreich 2003, Mittag 2006, Eckey, Türck 2006).

Socio-economic *differentiation of state territories* into differing regions is one of the consequences of modern society differentiation processes; it has got as well many other social and cultural consequences. It doesn't concern just socio-economic disparities. In the current period of developed telemedia and telecommunications, the territorial differentiation doesn't influence cultural and semiotic dimensions of life quality as much as in the past, but it is still, however, a significant factor influencing economic and educational opportunities of individuals. Studies from many European countries describe these differentiation processes as regional polarization.

It should be emphasised that the majority of studies dealing with the polarisation of regions (which can be rather big) are still concerned mainly with economic differences among regions, in other words with *disparities between large regions*.

3 New Approach to Research on Territorial Factors of Social Exclusion

In addition to this mainstream research on economic factors that differentiate large regions of European countries, another approach has been formed in recent years. This approach is focused on *social exclusion of some groups of population caused by the meso and micro geographical location of certain communities*. This approach emphasizes the fact that the quality of individuals' lives and households is to a *large extent determined by the accessibility of*:

- Job opportunities;
- Different levels of education, especially secondary and higher;
- Medical facilities, pharmacies etc.;
- Social facilities, childcare facilities and senior care facilities;
- Shops, from groceries to hard goods;
- Pubs, restaurants, clubs etc.;
- Culture, sport and other leisure time facilities;
- Churches, houses of prayer;
- Libraries, information centres etc.;
- Other services.

The common denominator of territorially determined social exclusion is the aggravated accessibility, or in other words, aggravated location within a settlement structure.

From this point of view, internal peripheries are disadvantaged meso and micro regions with disadvantaged job opportunities and accessibility of schools, medical, social, cultural and other facilities as well as shops. This is mostly caused by insufficient economic development of a given territory or by the decline of the old economic infrastructure, decline of population, the physically-geographical location (e.g. communities in mountains); nevertheless, above all it is caused by new trends in the distribution of economic activities and facilities. As we can also see in the development of the Czech Republic, a significant role is played explicitly by the distance of these communities and their clusters from main communications (railways and motorways) and from both large and medium sized cities. Another factor is a decline of public transport connecting these detached territories with cities. *Combined in internal peripheries are the economic weakness of a given territory with its disadvantaged distance from a centre or zones with higher concentrations of jobs, social infrastructure, and institutions.*

4 Approaches and Concepts Used in Our Internal Periphery Research

The concept of the periphery was, for a long time, especially in sociology, associated only with the outskirts of big cities.¹ Its contemporary meaning which is currently used in sociology and political sciences was introduced to our field and to political sciences by Immanuel Wallerstein (1974), Stein Rokkan (1982), or Paul Bairoch (1993). They began to distinguish concepts of centre and periphery on a European and worldwide scale.

This scale is, however, unsuitable for the purpose of our project. But it stimulated new directions of research. More significant for us are studies of social geographers in the Czech Republic, especially those from the Martin Hampl school of thought (1971, 1999) and from regionalists who deal with the issues of regional disparities and uneven regional development. An overview of regional theories that deal with the question of uneven development and regional peripheries was given by Jiří Blažek and David Uhlíř (2002). Very similar to our approach, are studies that deal with transportation accessibility of individual parts of the Czech Republic. These studies are drawn by social geographers under the direction of Miroslav Marada at the Faculty of Science of Charles University (cp. Květoň 2006). Transport accessibility as a factor of social exclusion is addressed by numerous British, Scandinavian and North American studies. They often end in political recommendations, for example the study drawn by the Office of British Prime Minister Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) from 2003. In the Czech Republic the internal periphery issue is dealt with indirectly as well by studies carried out by rural sociologist (cp. Countryside-Our World 2006) and in the application stage also in the Ministry of Agriculture analyses and recommendations.

However, social geographers focus often on overly large territorial units and don't access deeper sociological data about the *quality of life of people* living in peripheral communities. They describe social and economic disparities and inequalities between administrative districts (with approximately 100 000 inhabitants) but they don't say much about specific forms of social exclusion. Even the study "Labour Market and Regional Disparities in the Czech Republic" by A. Andrlé and J. Dupal, published in a volume issued by Heinz Fassmann (1997), dealing with regional transformations in East and Central Europe, didn't fully cover specific forms of exclusion in the district Jindřichův Hradec. This district is a unit considered by the authors to be a peripheral territory of the Republic and is compared with the district Mladá Boleslav. Within both districts are, however, affluent territories alongside those that can

¹ Compare for example the heading „periphery“ by Jiří Linhart in the Big Dictionary of Sociology published in 1996.

be described as peripheral. Therefore the collected data can be, from the perspective we exercise, distorted.

The procedure we use in our study emphasizes micro-dimension; it builds on data from municipalities or territorial units that originated from methodically thought-out clusters of two or more municipalities. In the terms of this micro-approach the *internal peripheries* can be preliminary qualified as *rural micro-territories that are not economically growing, are losing population, especially young people, and they are becoming demographically ageing communities. Their population mostly belongs to lower social and economic status groups. These micro-territories have as well worse technical and social infrastructure and older housing stock than other parts of the state territory. They face regularly accessibility problems, and due to all the mentioned features, as well as other factors within them specific problems connected with exclusion occur.*

5 Demarcation of Internal Peripheries in the Czech Republic

Demarcation of current internal peripheries is a continuation of studies carried out in the eighties (Musil 1988), and is based on a new methodology developed by Jan Müller (2005) from the Institute of Rationalization in the Building Industry, Inc. which was commissioned by CESES FSV UK. Definition of the term “internal periphery” also builds on the TERPLÁN study from 1984 especially because the units analysed (both in eighties and in the present) are not individual municipalities but are their clusters. Internal peripheries are clusters of communities, with one of them having the function of a central place. Nine hundred and sixteen clusters described as “general units” were constructed for the Czech Republic in 1984 and one thousand four hundred and twenty four “subregional units” were constructed for the Czech Republic in a study from 2005 and 2006. The clustering was necessary. Analyses of individual municipality’s data would necessarily result in a mosaic like and incoherent picture that would be hard to interpret. On the other hand, the data that describe current and former districts are describing socially heterogeneous territories. Therefore an intermediate stage of so-called subregional units was opted for. These are, in most cases, as already stated, groups of several municipalities. All our analyses were based on data representing these subregional units, i.e. clusters of rural communities. Such subregional units are composed mostly of a “primary” municipality that has a function of a small regional centre (central place) for other clustered municipalities. Determining these subregional units was a difficult task because of numerous changes in the legal status of Czech communities in the last 20 years and also due to other aspects of their existence. The delimitation

of subregional units builds on information from the Small Lexicon of Municipalities, from 2004, about basic facilities within municipalities such as post offices, elementary schools and medical facilities. Another criterion was the existence of current local government services, the most important for the given purpose proved to be registry offices. Another significant aspect was the census of 2001, which brought information about commuting to work and schools between municipalities and from this data information about the number of job opportunities was derived. A significant selection indicator was also the number of the municipalities' population.

In order to reach the clearest comparison between the nineteen eighties and current data, we used for 2004 subregional units the same indicators to establish the levels of peripherality that we applied in 1984, or we used analogical ones. In order to be methodologically transparent, it needs to be emphasised that the internal peripheries definition depends, to a great extent, on the selection of indicators. Indicators application then depends on reliable statistical data collection enabling there to be an analysis of all the subregional units and at least a rough comparison between 1984 and 2004. Because of the relative reliability of data collected for the population and its available housing, the major component of indicators were demographical, and those that were related to economic characteristics of populations and the nature of available housing. As suitable indicators we considered the following: low proportion of population younger than 25 years; high proportion of the population at the age of 60 and older; high proportion of the population without school-leaving examinations (A levels) from the sum of population of 15 years and over; low proportion of university educated population on 100 citizens of 25 years and more age; low number of job opportunities for 100 economically active employed; high proportion of economically active people in primary sectors; low proportion of economically active people in third sector; low proportion of dwellings in houses built between 1971-2001; low proportion of permanently lived-in houses with gas mains; low proportion of dwellings connected to public drainage; proportion of dwellings with computer; proportion of vacant dwellings from the total number of dwellings. Apart from that, we used the data about developments in numbers of the population (such as changes in the proportion of subregional units' population to the total number of the Czech Republic's population) to be indicators. Further, migration data, i.e. especially data about permanent migration losses were also included.

Internal peripheries were considered contiguous territories composed of subregional units fulfilling the above stated indicators. In addition, narrow and broad definitions of internal peripheries were achieved. Narrow definition (a kind of a solid centre of peripheries) matches to a definition that repeatedly came out when different indicators and criterions were used. Broader

definition -includes such subregional units that were peripheral only when some indicators were applied.

6 Main Outcomes of the Current Situation's Analyses and Some Comparisons with 1984

1. According to the 1980 research, in the peripheral territories 860 000 citizens were currently living during that year and the territories covered approximately 17 863 km² (22.7% CR). In 1961 it was approximately 1 million. It was quite a significant decrease of the population at the time when the population in CR as a whole was increasing. In some peripheries the size of population decreased in 19 years by 25% and in one extreme case it was by 33%. In 2001 approximately 750 000 people lived in internal peripheries. The distinctive characteristics of these territories in the socialism era were their *rapid depopulation*. Depopulation rates significantly decreased in the twenty-year period from 1980 to 2001.
2. Peripheral territories that were peripheral both in 1984 and in 2004 are without a doubt *stagnant territories in the long term, that are mostly, but not exclusively, located close to the borders of current and former administrative regions (kraje)*. It seems that these regional borders were and are borders of catchment areas of regional capitals, i. e. of large or medium sized Czech cities. The inner peripheries form quite often a kind of a contiguous wreath beyond a zone undergoing the suburbanization processes.
3. From the example of the West Bohemian District (Klatovy and Sušice regions) and South Bohemian District (Tábor and Písek regions) it is apparent that peripheral territories are also located at the borders of middle-sized and smaller catchment areas. An interesting fact is that the number of peripheries along the state borders is limited. Exceptions are peripheries alongside the Austrian borders, Polish borders in Jeseníky region in Northern Moravia and along the borders with Saxonia in North West Bohemia (Vejprty region).
4. It is also apparent that the total geographical area of the internal peripheries in Moravia is somehow smaller than that of the Czech Republic. This is especially true for the District Zlín and Moravia-Silesian region. In South Moravian and Olomouc regions the internal peripheries are located on the regional borders, in a zone which ends the catchment areas of the regional capitals. The Vysocina region has a specific structure; peripheries are both on its border and in its internal parts.
5. A comparison of broadly defined peripheries in 1980 and 2001 has shown that *internal peripheries expanded* into territories where they hadn't been

before. This is especially true for the emergence of a new zone of peripheral territories between Central and North Bohemia. This is indicative of the dynamics of peripheralisation processes and of the fact that in addition to the spatial stability of internal peripheries, there is also a change of their geographical location. At the same time some of the original peripheral territories ceased to be peripheral. This is, in all probability, a consequence of a suburbanisation process and the forming of bigger city regions, i.e. metropolitan areas. On the other hand, the number of peripheral territories increased as well. From the detected regularities in new formations of peripheral territories we emphasize the following two points: firstly, there is an *increase in number of peripheral territories alongside existing regions' boundaries*, secondly is their *increase alongside state boundaries*, especially in South Bohemia and Moravia, in the east and west Moravia and partially also in the north Bohemia.

6. Some of the clusters of peripheral municipalities are *relatively extensive*. About 100 000 citizens lived in the biggest ones, which is comparable to many districts. In 1984 these clusters included declining small towns such as former jurisdiction quarters, e.g. Nový Bydžov, Libáň, Kopidlno, Velvary, Klobouky near to Brno etc.
7. *The spatial stability of peripheries is remarkable* and at the same time easily explainable. Their formation was influenced by long-term geographically-economic factors that are modified by politically-economic systems. From the theoretical point of view it is important that the peripheralisation processes followed the same pattern in two very different societal systems. This opens an old and for many years discussed question to what extent some of the societal processes (as eg. urbanization, regionalization, demographic transition, household formation) in both systems had the same characteristics.
8. To the common socio-geographical features of peripheries belong their *territorial separation from developing territories and their worse transport accessibility* that borders on isolation. This deteriorated transport accessibility is, in some cases a consequence of physical geographical factors, i.e. it concerns mountain areas or mountain ridges.
9. *Spatial peripherality is connected with economic, social and cultural aspects of peripheries* as we know them on a European scale. Amongst the most significant we count: low density of population, with few exceptions mostly an agriculture character of territory, above average decrease of population, fast ageing of the population, above average proportion of widows, above average number of single men at the age from 20 to 40, a significantly higher proportion of agricultural population, low proportion of secondary and university educated population, higher proportion of vacant dwellings and houses serving recreation of urbanites, lower proportion of

- households owning a computer and by contrast, a higher proportion of households owning private cars. There is not, however, a significant correlation between peripheries and high unemployment.
10. From ethnographical studies that followed after statistic analysis and from common media information, it is apparent that in these territories is a relatively high number of dilapidated houses, neglected public buildings, communications, gardens and there is an insufficient network of shops and basic service facilities. Also technical networks are often in a bad state. In many cases elementary schools, cultural and public facilities are closed. In comparison with the past, many peripheral municipalities lost public transport. The most concerning fact is the deteriorating accessibility of medical and social services for the people living in inner peripheries.
 11. In addition to these apparent indicators of peripherality and with them the associated operational difficulties of households residing within them, there are many others significant sociological consequences of life in peripheries. These emerge from ethnographical studies written by Eva Abramuszkínová-Pavlíková, Michaela Šmídová, Eva Kučerová from CESES and from previous research done by the author of this study. They concern, firstly of *accessibility to job opportunities, job commuting costs and cost of travelling for shopping and services, citizens' time regimes, opportunities for starting a family* (young men – especially farmers – find it difficult to find brides), absence of dynamic models of active life, absence of motivation for higher education, resignation on higher career and life aims. In many cases it is issues of real forms of social isolation. It is the ambition of many younger people to escape from this “trap”. Their isolation is only partially offset by television, radio, telephone, mobile phones and a good living environment.²

7 Trends in Numbers of the Internal Peripheries Population in the Czech Republic

In 2006 we started a study concerned with changes in the size of population in internal peripheries between 1961 and 2005. In order to reliably establish the developmental trends in internal peripheries, they were calculated with the

²CERES employees, Dr. Eva Abramuszkínová-Pavlíková, Mgr. Michaela Šmídová and Mgr. Eva Kučerová, are currently working on an ethnographical study of three municipalities in peripheral territories of Bohemia and Moravia. Their objective is to reveal those anthropological and sociological characteristics of life that can't be recorded statistically.

help of several various methods: for the peripheries defined for the year 2005 and for the Czech Republic's territories that are outside of peripheries. Similarly, for the peripheries defined in 1984 and for territory outside of peripheries in the same year.

The outcomes are in a certain sense surprising. Many studies done by geographers and demographers in the past signalled that the growth of urban population, i.e. of population within the administrative borders of Czech cities, stopped around 1995. This was true not only for large cities but also for middle sized cities and even for small towns. In connection with that, it was stated that in the same period, the number of the population living in the country started increasing. For a long time there prevailed the opinion that this increase of "country municipalities" concerns primarily municipalities in the larger and middle sized towns' neighbourhood i.e. in the suburban zone and that it is a result of the formation of urban regions and metropolitan areas that was, in the socialist era, limited by various political and economic mechanisms.

We assumed that even the deep societal changes after 1989 couldn't stop the process of the Czech Republic's internal peripheries depopulation. This stand-point was based on the opinion that the internal peripheries location and their worsening accessibility, inadequate facilities and sometimes considerable isolation will, in the future, act as factors that will be causing further decreases in the number of the population, rather than its increase.

However, data about the internal peripheries development signalize a change in *long-term trends*. This data was collected for peripheries using both our characterisation and other characterisations (1984, 2004). For peripheries defined on the basis of a stricter method used in 2005 the number of population in their territories in 1961 was approximately 1 292 000. That was slightly higher than for the peripheries defined in 1984. Up to 1995 this number decreased to 972 000. Afterwards the population number in the defined peripheries started increasing to reach 976 000 in 2001 and 982 000 in 2005. According to the data the *process of the peripheries' depopulation has, during the last 10 years, stopped*. Whether this is a permanent change we can't say at the moment, however, it indicates that there are new mechanisms influencing households decisions regarding housing construction etc.

In terms of the application of the findings obtained from these statistics, and partly the ethnographic studies, it is important that, in spite of a certain increase in the number of population, territories that we classified as internal peripheries are still economically stagnant. They have deteriorated accessibility, technical and insufficient social infrastructure that contrast with the standards in other parts of the Czech Republic. Importantly, our results show that in these internal peripheries, when defined from a different perspective, live between 982 000 to 1 044 000 inhabitants. The fact that this

number is growing should be an inspiration for better thought-out regional economic politics and also regional social politics.

8 Are the Czech Republic's Internal Peripheries Spatially Growing?

In the other part of the study we wanted to find out whether the surface area of the territories which we defined as peripheral, have been increasing or decreasing. We stemmed from a hypothesis that the peripheries area will be increasing in the Czech Republic and that the number of people living there will be decreasing. This hypothesis was based on the current predominantly accepted theory about the processes of concentration of activities and inhabitants in cities. Verification of this theory proved to be more difficult than we expected. That was caused primarily by the small change in criteria of peripherality as used in the year 1984 and 2004. Therefore we used instead an indirect indicator of peripherality that was comparatively accurate and from which we had reliable data. It was density of population per km². As a threshold of low density we considered 40, or 30 inhabitants per km². The analyses brought certain surprises. The study's outcomes, based on comparable data between 1961 and 2005, can be summarised in following points:

1. From 1961 to 1995 the number of subregional units with low density of population (less than 40 and less than 30 inh./km²) has been increasing. Since 1995 this trend has changed and the number of low population density units started slightly decreasing.
2. Until 1995 the total area of subregional units with a low population density has been increasing and afterwards began slowly decreasing. The long-time trend of expansion of territories with low population density has started to change which also reflects the fact that the number of inhabitants in peripheral territories has since 1995, been gradually increasing.
3. Currently there are three significant clusters of regions with a high number of units that have low density of population, i.e. lower than 40 inhabitants per km². The biggest coherent cluster is a wide area of regions starting in the region of Klatovy, continuing through Strakonice, Příbram, Písek, Benešov and Tábor, Jindřichův Hradec, Pelhřimov, Havlíčkův Brod up to the region Třebíč. Another, significantly smaller cluster of regions with numerous peripheral territories is located west and northwest of Prague. A third cluster consists of regions Jeseník and Bruntál.
4. Bohemia has a significantly higher number of subregional units with a lower density of population than Moravia.

5. The general trend, valid for the whole Czech Republic, is an increase of territories with low density of population. A new and general trend is the increased contrast within individual republic's macro regions.

9 Comparisons with some Findings from Other Czech and Foreign Studies

Sociological literature describing and interpreting internal peripheries from the micro regional point of view is very limited. The following notes don't aspire to become a complex summary of existing literature. They just want to use a few references to point out relationships between four phenomena that contribute to internal peripheries becoming a serious social problem. These phenomenons are as follows:

1. An increasing area of peripheral territories;
2. Types of inhabitants whose lives are mostly influenced by the peripheral location;
3. Levels of transport accessibility of peripheries;
4. Changes in location of the most important activities and services.

There are only a few studies dedicated to internal peripheries in micro-dimensional interpretation. Only rarely are (for the use of social and regional politics) "stagnant" or "deprived regions" analysed. For example, there is a British government study about the index of deprivation (ODPM 2002).

More frequent are studies identifying groups of inhabitants whose life chances are negatively influenced by the fact that they live in peripheral territories. It has been repeatedly, in different European countries, discovered that it concerns mainly three following groups:

1. Young people – pupils and students;
2. Old people;
3. Middle aged women (cp. Květoň 2006, Shucksmith 2004, Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) 2003).

Relatively numerous, are the studies concerning accessibility of peripheral territories. These territories are often subsumed under the concept of rural regions. In relevant Czech literature the emphasis is laid on reductions in public bus and railway services in peripheries or in rural areas. V. Květoň (2006), who summarised both Czech literature and his empirical research, is explicitly pointing out that even though from the economic point of view, the public transport reductions appear inevitable, it is necessary to register the serious social impacts such as the social exclusion of part of population. Similarly the British study dedicated to the social exclusion (SEU 2003) highlights that the transportation problem can be, for relatively large groups of people, a social inclusion barrier.

The majority of studies are dedicated to the exclusion caused by spatial factors and to their dimensions. Shucksmith (2004) in his extensive overview of British studies states that from the demand point of view these factors are primarily:

1. Poverty of a certain category of inhabitants;
2. Difficulties with finding jobs, caused by the job market;
3. Difficulties with obtaining social benefits due to the lack of information ;
4. Difficulties caused by living costs;
5. Small amount of the political participation possibilities and small likelihood to influence political decisions.

British studies, especially SEU (2003) and Shucksmith, point also to the deeper structural (supply) causes of this spatially determined social exclusion:

1. Accessibility of peripheral territories by public transport is deteriorating.
2. Transport costs, be it public transport or car maintenance, are becoming more significant part of the household budget.
3. Activities and services location is increasingly inconvenient for the users.
For example in Great Britain the number of shopping centres located outside of settlements has in years 1986-1997 grown four times. At the same time smaller local shops and services were being closed (the same process was, on an even bigger scale, taking place in the Czech Republic).
4. People belonging in lower income brackets don't want to travel for shopping and services too far, their mobility is more restricted in comparison with the people with average or higher income.

The British study SEU (2003) shows, that during the last 50 years British society has become highly mobile, mainly thanks to cars, and at the same time the facilities providing services became bigger (shops, hospitals, schools, stadiums). Mass consumption, together with economies of scale caused a growth in the average size of these facilities and at the same time also a decrease in their number and caused also their concentration. That caused changes in their accessibility, i.e increased distance between these facilities and the inhabitants that use them.

10 Main Conclusions

In spite of the European Union intentions and efforts, economic disparities between regions inside of individual EU member countries have in the last decades increased or stagnated. Their significant reduction wasn't achieved and some authors even talk about the "conflict of regions".

From the sociological and social policy point of view the extent of social exclusion caused by the micro-location of communities (that is a location with regard to the economically and socially developed territories) is significant and often underestimated by politicians. Internal peripheries can be generally defined as *territories that are not economically expanding, losing population, are demographically ageing, have lower socio-economic status, their technical and social infrastructure is worse than in other parts of the country, they are less accessible, have older housing stock, and are experiencing specific social problems connected with exclusion.*

Currently in internal peripheries live approximately 10 percent of the Czech Republic's inhabitants. These internal peripheries are mainly rural areas and the number of population living inside them has been decreasing up to 1995. Since 1995, it is noticeable that there is a mild increase in the number of the internal peripheries population.

Statistical analysis has simultaneously shown that the area of territories that can be classified as internal peripheries has been, in the long term, increasing and their clusters are creating rather extensive and contiguous zones. Analysis of internal peripheries' locations, proved that they are located alongside the borders of catchment areas of both higher and lower regional centres.

One of the most significant features of internal peripheries is their deteriorated accessibility to job opportunities, schools, medical centres, shops and other facilities. The most afflicted categories of the population living in peripheral territories, that means most endangered by social exclusion, are pupils and students, old people, disabled people and middle aged women. These categories of the population are on the whole dependant on public transport and help from relatives and friends willing to transport them, or on taxi services.

The formation of internal peripheries is mainly caused by the urbanization process. At the same time their rise was stimulated also by the automobilization of these societies and above all by the increasing size of units providing services (shops, hospitals, schools, stadiums). Mass consumption connected with economies of scale led to the expansion of these facilities implicitly creating a reduction of their number and concentration and to an increase in their distance from their users' residencies.

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Amenity Migration into Rural Areas

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Annotation. Amenity migration is a specific type of in-migration which is not motivated by economic prosperity – it has been brought about by the desire to render more valuable natural or socio-cultural environment of the target territory, and it is often directed from metropolitan to rural areas. This paper describes the research of the area in the inner periphery along the boundary of the Central Bohemia and Pilsen region, which has identify a type of migrant to rural areas called an amenity migrant. We applied the statistic analysis and the questionnaire to gather information about social, economic and cultural life in the selected rural areas as conditions for amenity migrants.

Key words: amenity migration, rural area, inner peripheries.

1 Introduction

One of a contemporary global phenomenon becomes a specific type of the in-migration named **amenity migration** [16]. The amenity migration is not motivated by economic prosperity, it is either the in-migration to old, historical cities or the in-migration to purely rural areas (to real countryside). In both cases people migrate because they expect to enjoy a new milieu. The amenity migration began in the 1970s and it cause a growth of population in formerly depopulated rural areas. Currently it is one of the major forces of change in rural space of America [20].

In Europe it is possible to search the amenity migration in the Alps Mountains or in the Northern Europe. In the Czech Republic first type takes place in the historical city of Prague and in Český Krumlov and second type takes place in Šumava [6]. The in-migration into rural areas where people move because they approach wants to nature or to live traditional rural lifestyle, can save the rural regions from the decay [13] and [14] in the Czech Republic deals with this issue. The expansion of ITC can support the in-migration into rural areas [19], because rural area can become an alternative for the localization of economic activities of individuals or small enterprises which are based on these technologies.

First step for an amenity migration can be second homes - a recreation on cottages and rural houses. Bičík, Vágner, Fialová deal with this issue [3] or [21] in the Czech Republic.

In the project of the Czech Science Foundation we focused on a research dealing with the impact of the amenity migration on a regional development of rural areas. We will study forms of the amenity migration in selected regions, then analyse principal factors enabling the formation and the expansion of the amenity migration, forecast the development of the amenity migration in rural areas of the Czech Republic and assess a possible impact (positive or negative) on rural areas.

A model region where our research is pursuing, is area near the boundary of Středočeský, Plzeňský and Ústecký districts. This region was labeled in past as the peripheral area in the Czech Republic where population was diminishing. According to recent explorations [17] this region's marginal character is changing. Population of some villages is increasing. We would examine whether this positive development is not caused by the amenity migration. Next we would find out preconditions for future development the amenity migration and show barriers which are hindering an interest of the potential migrants.

On the beginning of the project we determined in-migration into the region by means of the analysis of statistical data – the time series of the in-migration (immigrants and emigrants). Then we executed interviews with stakeholders in this region, especially with mayors and we surveyed the social atmosphere in the villages and possible reasons of immigration into the region. The result of this exploration would evaluate the potential of the area for the sake of the amenity migration and assess possible preconditions of attractiveness of the area.

2 Study of the issue

The concept of urban-to-rural amenity migration is principally associated with an improvement the quality of life. But it is possible to differentiate two basic forms of the amenity migration [15]. It is a migration to better environment – a natural amenities, and migrations to areas with sociocultural peculiarity – a cultural amenities. A natural amenities are called too by [16] an environmental amenities. „Environmental Amenities are the valuable natural physical attributes of a place, including terrestrial and aquatic landscapes, distinguishing topographical features, climate, air, water and biodiversity quality and quantity“ [16, p. 8]. Some authors are using term environmental migration for migration under the influence of bad environmental conditions at past residence. It is possible to view it as „push force“ for environmental

migration [8]. This migration represents migration into rural areas in the Czech Republic [12].

„Cultural Amenities are tangible and intangible manifestations of human works, that make the area valuable. Tangible manifestations are landmarks especially buildings which significantly changes natural environment. Among intangible manifestations are can be considered the performing art, spectacles and rites, are audible language, gestures and other shared constructs such as aesthetic and organizational paradigms.“ [16, p. 9]

„Cultural amenities“ are linked with historical towns and cultural centres, but these can bring about a in-migration into rural area too. By [1] following issues can be included as drawing characteristic: specific lifestyle or local community character, tradition, religious practices or small production of a specific character in „cultural amenities“, that are present in Czech rural regions. Such „socio-cultural amenities“ were main reasons for in-migration among “neo-ruralists” in West Europe in the 1970s [5].

Amenity migration is the outcome of many dynamic factors. In the majority of cases the driving force of amenity migrants are internal, psychical factors, that give rise to move house. Main criterion of a choice of immigratory area presents a prospective enjoyable private experiences, that migrants are expecting in new immigratory area. The natural good state or more precisely environmental and cultural quality of a region have a great importance (a great value) [1]. Peripheral rural regions of the Czech Republic have benefits largely from an environmental and cultural points of view, their cultural – historical and natural resources to crease a nice place to live. From a social point of view these benefits need not to be so much explicit. A dissimilarity of the lifestyle of immigrants may be a reason of disagreements among indigenous people and immigrants [9].

A quality of traffic network and a development of informational and communications technologies impact a development of the amenity migration. Now input of informational and communications technologies may stimulate the development of rural areas and also facilitate “amenity migration” [19].

In publications two ways are described, how people are finding localities for amenity migration. First way they are inspired by a discontent of people in the present-day residence and by a search of other new locality. Second way is described by [20]. He introduces five basic steps leading to amenity migration. The same author assumes that the initial impulse bringing about amenity migration could be connected with experience mediated by a form of tourism. The five steps are as follows: (1) Initial visit to amenity area - (2) repeated visits - (3) renting a cottage or an old farm house - (4) buying the property as a second home - (5) migration. In this sense, considering the visitors, the necessary preconditions would be free time and financial means. It indicates that amenity migrants come from a group of those who are “economically

strong”, whose presence in the territory can positively influence the regional development [4].

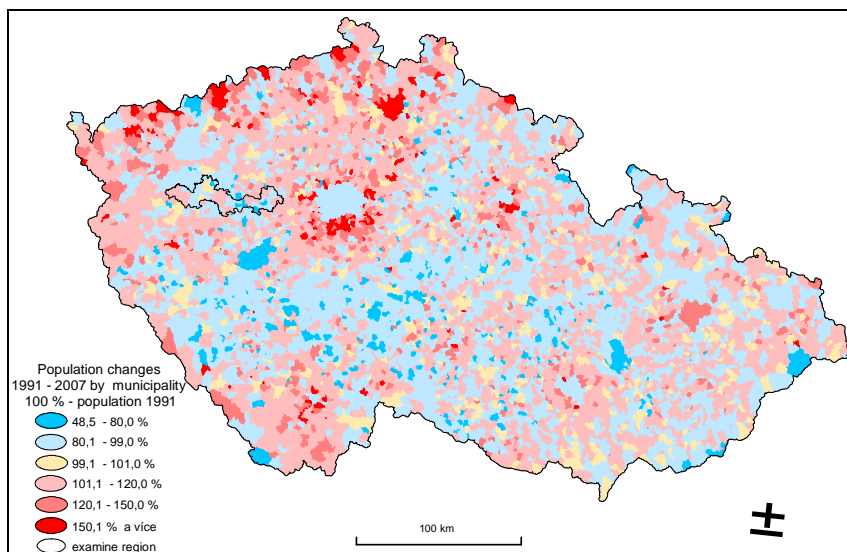
There is a specific situation, the ownership of second homes had become a lifestyle component in the 1970's and 1980's [3]. A huge number of families from urban areas owned cottages. The ownership of second homes or the legacy of the cottage can bring new different solvent residents into rural areas. A connection of well-off people with the ownership of second homes need not to be so valid. Beyond many object of second homes are small or they are located in inaccessible places. These buildings can not be using as residences [21]. In the Czech Republic residents of towns move away into rural areas at second homes as pensioners. Seniors citizen are spending the long fraction of a year at second homes, but they are not residents.

Librová [13] and [14] deals with a phenomenon of self-imposed movement of young residents from town to countryside („natural amenities“) in Czech surroundings. She is concentrating on explorations of changes in the lifestyle of people migrated to countryside. Otherwise she is concentrating on problems of a participation of immigrants into local communities and local economies.

The optimistic hypothesis of foreign authors (for example [10] or [11]) supposes that the amenity migration is able to reduce a depopulation in the rural areas, to trim down socioeconomic inequalities between individual regions and to preserve or to improve their environmental and cultural duality as well. Demographic surveys are indicating that an attractiveness of metropolitan areas in Europe does not decrease, that's why we must cope with a question, whether amenity migration into rural and peripheral areas is not only a specific period in lives of immigrants.

3 Geographical characterization of the region

The purpose of this article is to evaluate the conditions for amenity migration in a model area on the border of three regions - the Pilsen region, the Ústí region and the Central Bohemian region. This area is an example of the historical “inner periphery“ of the Czech Republic [17], therefore we call it the “West Inner Periphery“. We have included 46 municipalities in the Křivoklát, Kralovice and Manětín regions (Fig. 1) in this area. The town settlements in the examined area are the towns of Kralovice, Kozlany and Manětín, Křivoklát bears the statute of township.

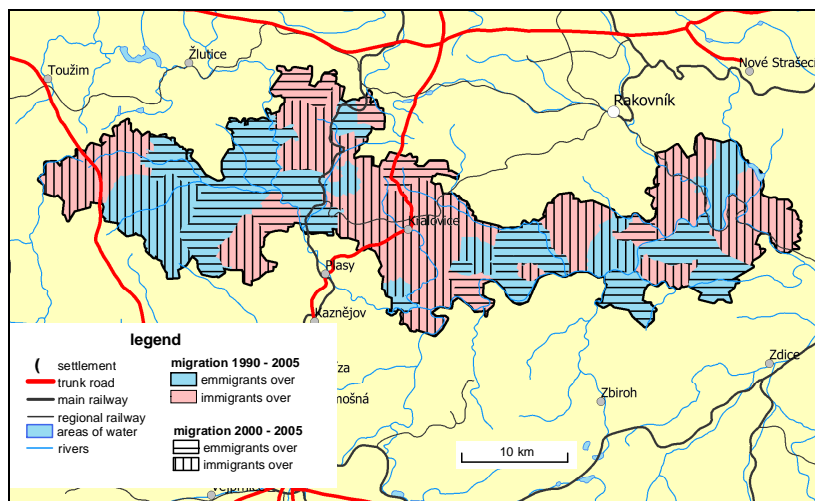


Source: ArcČR500, 2000, ČSÚ Praha, 2007, own results

Fig. 1. Development of the population in municipalities of Czech Republic in years 1991 – 2007 and delimitation research territory

In spite of the fact that the distance to the economic and political centres is not too great, only 40 km to the city of Pilsen and 50 km to Prague, this area can be called marginal. The low economic power of the area is typical, the formerly permanent decline in the number of inhabitants, the less effective agricultural production and the poorly developed infrastructure, including services supporting the development of tourism. Throughout the Second World War this concerned a poorly exposed area, outside the main urbanisation cores and away from the main roads. During this period (1945 – 1990) the number of inhabitants decreased throughout the whole area. The greatest reduction in inhabitants occurred in the western part of the area immediately after the Second World War, when inhabitants professing German nationality were displaced. Later on a marked reduction in the inhabitants of the region occurred due to movement to larger cities (Praha, Plzeň and cities in the north of Bohemia).

After 1990 immigration predominated in more than half of the villages (26 municipalities), this tendency became even more marked after 2000, and immigration predominated in 28 villages. The area situation is expressed in Fig. 2.



Source: ArcČR 500, data ČSÚ, own results

Fig. 2 Migration in the research region in years 1990 – 2005

The large-area Křivoklátsko Region Protected Landscape Area (establishment 1978) and the Křivoklátsko region “UNESCO biosphere reservation” (establishment 1977) encroach on the eastern part of the examined area. The natural and historical possibilities of this represent great potential that could be used to develop tourism, potentially as a stimulating factor for the development of “amenity migration”. The area along the Střela and the Berounka Rivers also has possibilities for this use, with individual buildings of secondary residence being concentrated there. There are also many picturesque villages and hamlets, where a large part of the residential fund is being used as recreational housing today. During this time it can be said of the area that tourism does not play a role in the development factor for the time being [7]. Various forms of secondary housing in the area may also be the initial stage for “amenity migration”. Cottages, frequently extensive farmhouses and larger chalets can be transformed into permanent residences in time.

4 Interpretation of the local investigation

During the period from 1991 – 2007 the number of inhabitants in the examined area decreased by 475. In 28 villages in the examined area the number of inhabitants decreased and in 17 villages the number of inhabitants increased

(Fig. 1). The decrease in the number of inhabitants is caused by natural changes, because the analysis of statistical data on migration in villages implies that more inhabitants moved to 26 villages in 1990 and more inhabitants moved out of 20 villages (Fig. 2). During the period following 2000 immigrants predominated in 28 villages.

We established the situation in villages and the possibilities for amenity immigration by terrain investigation. During the interviews conducted we contacted the mayors and local councillors of all 46 villages in the defined region. 41 participants gave us an interview. On the basis of these investigations we performed a socio-economic analysis of the selected region. In 31 villages most of the inhabitants have lived there since birth, in the north-west area (Nečtiny, Tis u Blatna, Žihle, Velečín) and in the Křivoklát region (Roztoky), inhabitants who have moved to the village predominate.

Since 2000 more than one fifth of the inhabitants have moved into 10 villages, and more than 10% of the inhabitants have moved into another 26 villages. The most frequent reason for moving to a village that the local councillor stated was the quality of the environment and housing reasons. Most of the people move to the region from Prague and from North Bohemia. In this case this often concerns “environmental” migrations (table no 1), which we can partially include in amenity migration.

Table 1. Dominant reasons of immigrants

Reasons	Number of answer report
housing	10
family	8
working	6
weariness from lifestyle of the town	4
environmental	24
another	4

Source: own results

Together with immigration there is also a high degree of emigration in the region. More than one fifth of the inhabitants moved out of 10 villages after 2000 and more than 10% of the inhabitants moved out of another 30 villages. The most frequent reason for emigration was clearly insufficient employment opportunities (table no. 3). Most of the people from the region move to large cities – Pilsen and Prague - and to town centres in the region or in its immediate vicinity (Kralovice, Rakovník) (table no. 4).

Table 2. Locality where from the people move to the region

Region, locality	Number of answer report
Praha	9
Mostecko, Ústecko	8
Kladno	4
Plzeň	2
Rakovník	4
Karlovarsko	2
Beroun	1
Neighbourhood	2
Nizozemí	1
Towns	18

*Source: own results***Table 3.** Reasons for emigration

Reasons	Number of answer report
employment opportunities	29
poor/bad accessible service	5
other	10

*Source: own results***Table 4.** Locality where the people out

Region, locality	Number of answer report
Plzeň	11
Praha	7
Kralovice	4
Rakovník	3

Source: own results

From the aspect of economic power this concerns a region with insufficient employment opportunities, most of the inhabitants travel to work. A significant proportion of the inhabitants of 29 villages travel outside the region. The most important centres for travelling to work to are Kralovice and Rakovník next Plzeň and Beroun (table no. 5).

From the economic aspect Kralovice has an important position in the region, it represents the economic centre of 17 villages. This particularly concerns small villages in the central part of the region, in the area surrounding Kralovice. For the eastern part of the area – the Křivoklátský region – the centre is both Rakovník and Beroun; for the western part – the Mělnický region - this is Pilsen. These economic centres are usually also perceived as centres for services, with the

exception of the Křivoklátský region, where Prague is perceived as the centre for services. Good traffic access to these centres represents a regional advantage of a settlement. In Fig. 2 you can see that the numbers of inhabitants most frequently increase in the areas surrounding Class 1 roads.

Table 5. Important centres for travelling to work

Locality of the commute	Number of answer report
Kralovice	17
Rakovník	13
Plzeň	9
Beroun	5
Kladno	3
Kožlany	2
Small centres in the region	4
Small centres out of region	9
In the regionu aggregate	23
Out of region aggregate	29

Source: own results

Improving the situation with respect to this problem may mean establishing a new method of work (teleworking and telecommuting).¹ This method of employment may attract amenity migrants to the region. However a good telecommunications connection is necessary for this. Information and communication technologies will bring “work“ closer and will enable various services over the internet or communication with friends in other regions. Consequently we inquired about the telecommunications equipment in the villages. In this case the situation is not very good in this area, landlines are lacking in some small settlements in five villages and the mobile telephone signal coverage is of poor quality in 11 villages in connection with the topography (river valleys) and distance from Class 1 roads. The situation regarding the internet connection is rapidly changing at present (table no. 6), many villages are investing in receivers and Wi-Fi connections. We encountered this approach particularly in the Kralovice and Křivoklátský regions. The situation in the Mělník region is more complicated, in larger settlements

¹The principle is the limitation of the necessity of travelling to company workplaces and performing work at fixed hours and days of the week. Instead of a fixed time and place regime, remote employment enables the optimization of an individual performance of work according to one's own needs from the aspect of time and place, and most people end up working from home.

this usually concerns settlements with municipal offices where the connection is good; smaller, more distant settlements are lacking a connection or their connection is of poor quality. Improvement of the telecommunications equipment situation could increase the attractiveness of the region for amenity migrants.

Table 6. Using the Internet

% residents exploiting Internet	Number of answer report	% answer report
80 and more	1	2,4
50 – 79	2	4,9
40 – 49	1	2,4
30 – 39	12	29,3
20 – 29	10	24,4
10 – 19	6	14,6
till 10	6	14,6
unknown	3	7,3

Source: own results

The development of amenity migration could be supported by a good quality infrastructure in villages. The mayors interviewed listed the chief problems in the village as the state of the local roads in the urban areas, the state of the roads outside the urban areas, water supplies and the lack of, or poor quality sewerage in the village.

As with other authors [20], [21] we assume that vacationers who own second homes² in the region may turn into amenity migrants. Consequently we established whether there are second homes in the region and how these are used. We discovered a total of 4,816 second homes in the area. Most of these are in the Křivoklát region (table no. 7). This chiefly concerns cabins concentrated in cabin settlements. Cabin localities are frequently located in difficult to access areas, far from roads, which is a disadvantage for this transition [21]. Less than 1/3 of the recreational buildings are country cottages. However, these buildings are most suitable for being transformed into permanent accommodation.

² Second homes are sometimes called cottages, vacation homes, or secondary residence.

Table 7. Village with second homes

Village	Number of second homes
Sýkořice	700
Zbečno	470
Hřebečnický	300
Křivoklát	288
Račice	286
Roztoky	253
Kožlany	250
Manětín	250
Skryje	220
Velká Buková	161
Mladotice	154
Nečtiny	140
Kozojedy	134
Dolní Dvořiště	131
Bezvěrov	130
Tis u Blatna	120
Žihle	115
Městečko	100

Source: own results

17 mayors stated that the cottagers have registered permanent residence in the village. But this chiefly concerns individual cases, this phenomenon is more frequent in only three villages. The situation when cottagers stay in the village for more than six months, but do not register permanent residence is more frequent. In this case this usually concerns pensioners.

Amenity migrants may also move into council flats or build their own family house. Consequently we also devoted time to this residential development in villages. At present the construction of council flats is not taking place in most of the villages, only five local councillors stated that they are constructing council flats, or plan on construction. But this mostly concerns annexes, where only one to two flats are added.

Conversely, family houses are being built in half of the villages. The limitation for construction in another one third of the villages is the non-existence of a ground plan. Some villages are only just creating one, others state that they lack the inances to create one, that the council budget is too small. There is great interest in real estate in the villages, real estate – houses or building land plots - is not being sold in only seven villages. However, the motivation for purchase of real estate has not been analysed in detail as yet.

5 Conclusion

The examined area has many possibilities for the development of amenity migration. A good quality natural environment with many historical monuments may attract city inhabitants. This may most frequently concern the type of transformation from recreational use to permanent residence. In this case we assume that the migrants will be older inhabitants, mostly of pensionable age, however, physically still in good condition. These may support various activities in the villages and become involved in public life.

The migration of younger inhabitants into the area is still not widespread. There is some interest in some localities in purchasing land plots or farms. One of the reasons for this may be the lower price of land and real estate in some of the village settlements, but it also may mean the beginning of the development of amenity migration. The limiting factor for the time being is the non-existence of village ground plans and consequently the lack of vacant land plots. Some settlements in the Křivoklát region show the most significant interest in residence, however this is reinforced by the relative proximity to Prague and therefore the fact that the locations are less peripheral.

The principle is the limitation of the necessity of travelling to company workplaces and performing work at fixed hours and days of the week. Instead of a fixed time and place regime, remote employment enables the optimization of an individual performance of work according to one's own needs from the aspect of time and place, and most people end up working from home.

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Recreational areas – a new element in the countryside

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Annotation. Czech countryside becomes more and more a target area for both home and foreign tourists. New recreational areas - holiday parks (villages), primarily for international clientele, are built as new recreational resorts in rural places highly evaluated from the nature point of view, which bring a range of negative elements in addition to positive ones. The question remains how to proceed to ensure that positives for all agents involved are higher than environmental risks.

Key words: Czechia, recreation, recreational areas, holiday villages, holiday parks, holiday apartments, risk factors, tourism, social structure.

1 Introduction

At the break of the millennium the interest in tourism in rural areas has been in boom [9], involving both domestic and international clients. Tourism has become one of possible alternative function for rural development. Various forms of stays in rural areas have different impacts at both physical and social structure of the area under survey. Other processes are joined with the use of original rural buildings for recreational purposes (cottage activities, lease of holiday homes, stays on the farms, small boarding houses) contrary to concentration of construction of new establishments and occupation of other land (camps, cabin colonies, holiday parks, recreational apartments). Second housing represents a form with a long-term tradition and new forms and activities have been developed recently. Besides traditional cabin and cottage activities and their current transformation towards residential function, ownership or lease of recreational apartments in environmentally attractive localities with possibilities for active leisure have been in increase in Czechia as well. Such a development, comparable with cabin activities boom in the 1960s and the 1970s, brings a lot of new phenomena into recreational localities. Consequences of construction and use of recreational apartments

represent a change in the structure of tourism participants, transfer functions of settlements and landscapes. The municipalities have to face new issues. Residents not always reflect new facts in positive way. The objective of this contribution is to elucidate these phenomena at the general level and in the same time to show them under Czech terms. Presented results originate from long-term research [1, 11] based mostly on field and detailed questionnaire surveys, partial studies focused on new trends as construction of recreational apartments [6] and holiday parks and villages [13, 7] constructed and used mostly by the Dutch. Case studies are based on detailed field surveys, structured interviews and questionnaire surveys with owners, residents, municipality representatives and investors.

2 Recreation in holiday parks, villages and apartments

In the recent decade new types of holiday recreational localities have risen, different from any others. The focus is given on the construction of new recreational establishments, which are used as second homes as well as commercial tourist facilities. They have been constructed in attractive environment (in hilly and piedmont regions, at water's edge) with perfect conditions for both summer and winter holidays. With respect to the exterior, spatial morphology and internal organization of the holiday homes 3 basic types of new recreational areas can be classified:

- *Holiday parks* (a complex of holiday homes in a special areas with an other recreational space);
- *Holiday villages* (a complex of independent holiday homes in a style of a cottage or a family house);
- *Buildings with recreational apartments.*

Holiday parks and villages are built in small municipalities and their more peripheral parts, close to or within the built-up area. The exterior and arrangement of the buildings do not correspond (with some rare exceptions) to residential built-up area and municipality arrangement (fig. 1-3). In summer 2007 five recreational parks and villages were surveyed (tab. 1).

All projects were invested by Dutch. Most owners of accommodation units are Dutch citizens as well – therefore media often use the term “Dutch villages” but some owners are Germans, French, Belgians, Czechs etc. (Landal Marina Lipno). The owners have their homes (units) leased when absent. The maintenance and repairs are provided by area caretakers or other delegated persons, mostly Czechs. Holidaymakers are foreigners dominantly (Dutch most frequently) – young families with children, middle-aged couples with adolescents, senior couples, groups of young people exceptionally. The guests

spend most time within the area and in near surroundings (biking, hiking, winter and water sports, restaurants, shopping) or make optional excursions (aquaparks, amusement parks, zoo, urban tourism etc.). Leisure activities in the holiday villages are more similar to traditional Czech cottage lifestyle, however holidaymakers commute more to amenity centres and mountain resorts in winter [7].



Fig. 1-3. Holiday parks in Lipno n. V., Čistá in Černý Důl and Stárkov
Photo: V. Nožičková 2007

Table 1. Basic characteristics of holiday parks and villages in Czechia in 2007

Type		Holiday park		Holiday village	
Location	Stárkov	Lipno nad Vltavou	Čistá in Černý Důl	Stupná in Vidochov	Javorník in Rudník
Name	Green Valley Park	Landal Marina Lipno	Villa Park Happy Hill	Arcadian Parc Stupná	Holiday homes Javorník
Number of buildings	22	37	42	27	6
Number of accommodation units	22	306	42	27	6
Bed capacity	153	1662	252	135*	48

* Estimation based on own calculation: number of apartments x k -coefficient, $k = 5$ persons/accommodation unit

Source: Nožičková (2007)

The construction of a holiday park/village may be perceived as a developing impulse for municipalities. A recreational area, however, brings besides economic benefits also many negative environmental, social and economic consequences. Besides exterior of the buildings often disturbing the scenery, spasmodic load on the area in high summer and winter season represents the most painful trouble. Population density in the high and low seasons is compared in table 2. The data do not reflect the very reality because do not

comprise capacities of other accommodation establishments (hotels, boarding houses) and second homes. The real load on the area is in some municipalities higher by dozens per cent (Černý Důl, Lipno n. V., Rudnák), even many times in some special settlement units.

Table 2. Estimated load in municipalities with holiday parks and villages

Municipality (settlement unit)	Stárvov	Lipno nad Vltavou	Černý Důl (Čistá)	Vidochoh (Stupná)	Rudnák (Javorník)
Population*	650	576	792 (328)	353 (47)	2174 (121)
Holidaymakers**	153	1 662	252	135	48
Area (km ²)	1 652	1 948	2 219	1 172	4 268
Density in low season	0,39	0,30	0,36	0,30	0,51
Density in high season***	0,49	1,15	0,47	0,42	0,52
Density index (low season = 100 %)	124	389	132	138	102

* 31. 12. 2006 (municipalities), Census 2001 (settlement units)

** Bed capacity with maximal occupancy of the holiday park/village

*** Other accommodation establishments and second homes not considered

Source: *Statistický lexikon obcí České republiky 2005. ČSÚ. Praha 2005.*

High seasonality results also in economic imbalance of incomes for local entrepreneurs with differences according to the tourist significance of the municipality (Lipno n. V. vs. Vidochoh). Job opportunities directly in the holiday parks/villages are relatively low – max. 2 permanent jobs (about 10 jobs in Landal Marina Lipno only). Occasional work (cleaning, repairs) is done by hired craftsmen, temporary workers and local firms. The highest contribution for municipality budgets is represented with incomes from taxes and fees. On the contrary municipalities spend on repairs of more loaded public infrastructure or on building tourist infrastructure for the purpose of attractiveness increase and prolonging of the tourist season. Significant strengthening of tourist function was achieved in Lipno nad Vltavou and Černý Důl due to their purposive development. Other municipalities deal only with higher demand of foreigners for realty ownership (see below in more details) in the locality itself or in close surroundings which has resulted in increase of realty prices. The physical arrangement of holiday parks/villages within the settlement influences also relationship between holidaymakers and residents. Different demands and ways of land use, life styles and language barrier especially contribute to separation and creation of a tourist ghetto and gated communities. Some municipalities suffer from unwillingness of residents and surprisingly also entrepreneurs to create profitable mutual relations.

Buildings with holiday (recreational) apartments have risen in the mountain resorts, either as reconstructed former recreational or other establishments or replace original buildings or appear close to built-up area. A case study [6] focuses on viewpoints of all actors (apartment owners, residents, municipality authorities, tourists, investors) and points out prevailing negative results. The owners are mostly Czech clients. Similarly to foreign owners of above described holiday homes (units) there are used for recreation of the owners as well as for commercial purposes. Frequency and length of stay differs, however, especially in winter season. The rise of other accommodation capacities in mountain resorts results in an extreme load on the area – especially on the natural environment and tourist infrastructure (ski slopes, restaurants, parking lots etc.). Overcrowded resorts are thus perceived negatively not only by residents but also holidaymakers and tourists themselves. The architecture of the buildings has been criticized as well. Several municipality authorities in the Krkonoše Mts. responded with construction closure and initiated attempts at solving the unbearable situation. Municipalities have to spend more on public services due to larger built-up area. The expenditures are not covered with adequate incomes. The holidaymakers do not pay nor recreational (resort) fees nor public service (because they are not residents). Permanent expenditures have to be paid also by owners of the holiday apartments themselves – maintenance and cleaning of common space in the building and nearby, leasing agencies etc. Purchase price of the holiday apartment and common running may cost similarly to a residential apartment. Another result of higher number of holidaymakers and tourists is increase of prices for consumer goods which affects highly the residents. Thus civic associations of residents have been established in order to prevent from construction of other holiday apartments. They have little chance, however, against the interests of strong investment corporations. Prospective uncontrolled boom of tourism can bring a risk of the tourist trap effect and breaking limits of bearable load on the area with crucial results at the environment and residents [9]. The authenticity of the locality, which was an original reason for the investment, may disappear. Contemporary trends in tourism move aside from mass tourism and holiday localities under survey (mostly newly built and developing mountain resorts) would face potential loss of attractiveness.

3 Recreation in own buildings

Positive experience from some above mention establishment or other type of stay evokes demand on private ownership of some real estate in Czechia by foreigners. It can be realized either directly with a purchase of a Czech real

estate or construction of a building individually or in the framework of an investor project (see above – holiday villages). Besides individual recreation the other purposes can be seen in allocation and valorisation of the capital, profit from lease or later sale or relax for seniors. Also conversion to permanent dwelling cannot be excluded [7].

Services joined with prospect, purchase (construction, reconstruction) and later maintenance, lease, watch of the building etc. are provided by realty agencies for foreign clients. For instance Dutch agencies, adapting their offer and activities to demand of Dutch clients, are specialized just in Czech (and Slovak) realties. The highest offer share is created from family houses, country farmhouses, cottages, cabins and holiday apartments, as well as larger buildings (hotels, manor houses, villas) and vacant plots located mostly in Northern, Eastern and Southern Bohemia and Southern Moravia [7].

The importance of this phenomenon has been proved with a case study of foreign owners of the holiday realties (Dutch and Germans mostly) in the Podkrkonoší and Broumovsko regions [13], field surveys in the municipalities with already built-up holiday parks/villages (Černý Důl, Rudník, Stárkov, Vidochov) and in the broader surroundings [7] or medially well-known activities of Russians in the Western Bohemia. Due to the activities of realty agencies and investors (see below) spatial diffusion of the phenomenon should be expected all over Czechia, especially in attractive tourist and holiday regions, in the regions with abandoned apartments and houses and with a good access. Best conditions are obvious in Czech border regions and rural areas in the interior [7].



Fig. 4-5. Newly built-up wooden holiday homes in Stupná in Vidochov
Photo: V. Nožičková 2007

The use of buildings for recreational and holiday (commercial) purposes in the municipality brings plenty of qualitative and quantitative changes. The most important ones appeared conversion from residential to recreational function and in many cases also saving of the building from continuous dilapidation and final extinction. Way and intensity of the use of the area and mobility streams have been hanging as well, with culmination in the summer and winter peak seasons. The influence of holidaymakers on the residents is clear as well. From

this standpoint the phenomenon can be compared to traditional Czech second homes and cottage activities [3]. A trouble can be seen in the classification of some buildings as permanent dwellings despite its only temporary recreational use. It is reflected in lower taxes on the recreational house in comparison with a residential one, no payments of recreational resort and other fees for the municipality etc. The municipalities gain much lower incomes to their budgets and miss the evidence of persons using the buildings (holidaymakers) to the contrary with municipalities with classified recreational establishments. Moreover incomes from the lease flow out of the municipality, mostly abroad. Despite negative perception of foreigners' realty ownership by Czech population it is obvious the foreign holidaymakers come much more frequently in contact with the residents (compared to traditional tourist establishments) and more space is created for mutual cultural enrichment.

3.1 Real estate ownership by foreigners in Czechia

Acquisition and ownership of real estates in Czechia is based on the International Currency Law No. 219/1999, latest version 2005. A foreign citizen, physical person, who does not respect the terms of this Law, has no right for the ownership of a real estate to the contrary of a legal person. In practice a foreigner interested in the ownership of a real estate in Czechia establishes a Limited Liability Company and purchases the estate as a legal person [12, 7]. This is relatively the simplest, fastest and cheapest procedure for a realty acquisition in Czechia for foreigners. The only disadvantage for the owner of such a company is the duty of accounting administration, dealing with authorities on a higher level and delivery of the realty tax and legal person income tax [7].

4 Other potential recreational localities

The rise of above mentioned recreational localities and apartment buildings since the late 1990s can be considered an introductory period for foreign investors to discover conditions in Czechia. Contemporary boom of the construction of new recreational buildings in attractive natural environment with plenty of opportunities for leisure activities is comparable to the boom of cabin activities in the 1970s and the 1980s [4]. The size, features and localization of the projects are classified with the example of the Dutch investment corporations (tab. 3).

Typology of projects based on size:

- small – several buildings (Rudník);
- big – dozens and hundreds of buildings (Nová Bystřice, Škrdlovice).

Typology of projects based on the construction methods:

- reconstruction of buildings (Vrchlabí, Rudník);
- “green meadow” construction.

Typology of projects based on localization:

- in the built-up area (Černý Důl, Rudník);
- close to built-up area (Lipno n. V., Lučany n. N.);
- out of built-up area (Nová Bystřice, Pecka, Vítkovice).

Typology of projects based on the main features:

- apartment buildings (Lipno n. V., Vítkovice aj.);
- family houses (Žaclěb aj.);
- recreational establishments (Černý Důl, Pecka, Rudník aj.);
- combination of different buildings (residential, recreational, public etc.) (Škrdlovice).

Table 3. Activities of Dutch investors in tourist industry in Czechia (spring 2007)

Municipality	Investor	Project
Černý Důl	?	24 holiday homes next to older recreational area
	?	Golf course and 30 holiday homes
Hrádek nad Nisou	?	Plan for 100 holiday homes - rejected - ? new proposal
Lipno nad Vltavou	?	Recreational apartments in one complex
	Riviera Lipno s.r.o.*	Apartments in several separate buildings
Lučany nad Nisou	Arcadian Developmenent Company Ltd.	Plan for partly-framed buildings, 10 with permission so far
Nová Bystřice	Farm Invest Ltd.	Plan for 200 holiday homes, 30 finished
Pecka	PVE Ltd. Hradec Králové	27 holiday homes
Proseč	GOODROCK Ltd.	33 holiday homes
Rudník	Bohemen Ltd.	6 holiday homes
	?	Reconstruction of old brewery for accommoation facility
Rychnov u Jablonce nad Nisou	?	11 holiday homes
Škrdlovice	Velké Dářko Project Ltd.	Plan for 400 recreational and residential apartments , leisure areas, public infrastructure
Vítkovice	Arcadian Developmenent Company Ltd.	Ski-apartments
Vrchlabí	Arcadian Developmenent Company Ltd.	Reconstruction of a preserved building for holiday apartments
Žacléř	A.V.C. Ltd.	10 holiday homes
	Klutave Ltd.	29 holiday homes

* Austrian investor, ** Czech investor, Dutch demand supposed

Source: Nožičková (2007)

Projects are in different stages of the construction process: discussion (Škrdlovice, Hrádek nad Nisou, Černý Důl), construction (Lučany nad Nisou, Nová Bystřice, Pecka) or finished construction (Lipno, Vrchlabí). Many projects cannot be certainly classified by future purpose (residential or recreational function), origin of owners (Czechs or foreigners) and even the realization of the project is not sure [7].



Fig. 4–5. New holiday homes in Lipno nad Vltavou
Photo: V. Nožičková 2007

Examples of intended and already realized projects prove the necessity of individual approach with assessment of possible impacts of similar projects for municipalities and the countryside in general – especially estimation of the project size and corresponding extent and significance of risks and benefits on the other side. Present examples of already built-up recreational localities indicate that the amount of presumed positive changes often does not reflect the reality and is redeemed with plenty of negative impacts, too. The assessment of presented projects call for an integral approach covering all actors (municipality, residents, local entrepreneurs, potential recreants, investors) and impacted fields (natural environment, landscape and scenery, present state and capacity of infrastructure, economic, social and cultural environment).

5 Conclusion

Recreational function of rural areas has been much more important in Czechia since recent years. Besides stays on the farms which have not been traditional in our country as much as second housing activities new forms of rural tourism have appeared and risen in significance. Holiday parks and villages mostly owned by foreign investors and used by foreign clients and newly built recreational apartments have become an integral part of tourist and holiday establishments. They are set both into already existed resorts and rural areas. Regulation of the process is highly necessary to prevent damage which may be

learned from many cases from abroad and home country – e. g. uncontrolled building of individual recreational cabins in naturally attractive localities. The new trends bring changes in social and physical structure with risk factors which should be avoided with targeted regulation. Solutions should reflect interests and benefits of all attached actors.

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Partnerships as Communities of Practice in Latvia

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Annotation. In Europe rural partnership approach is widely accepted as an institutional way how to involve local people in rural development processes. A theory of communities of practice is used to study how cooperation, mutual learning and networking are promoted in partnerships through process of learning by doing.

Key words: rural partnerships, community of practice, cooperation, learning by doing.

1 Introduction

More and more local actors are encouraged to take responsibility for the design and implementation of development strategies [10] thus emphasizing participatory approaches to rural development in order to ensure that existing resources are used in the best way. This refers to a *bottom-up* approach. Community development and rural partnership approach in particular is supported by the EU greatly through various programmes, for example, LEADER. The author of the paper emphasizes rural partnerships as an institutional form of cooperation that involves local initiatives in innovative development processes leading local communities towards social and economic changes in rural areas of Latvia. A theory of communities of practice (further in the text CoP) is applied in the research to study why and how people involved in the partnership work. The concept of CoP is used within a framework of social learning what involves learning by doing, cooperation, and exchange of knowledge and experience between partnership members in their everyday activities.

The objectives of the paper are as follows: *first*, to give a brief insight in history and experience of partnerships in European countries and Latvia in particular, *second*, to introduce with a theoretical approach that consider partnerships as CoPs and, *third*, to present some results of the survey that was carried out in seven community groups representing three area based partnerships in Latvia.

2 Partnership approach in European countries and Latvia

Partnership approach in Europe as well as in other countries all over the world emerged as a response to growing socio-economic problems in rural areas that were not addressed adequately by the state institutions. Partnership processes involve consultation, negotiations as well as bargaining. The partnership process is heavily dependent on a shared understanding of the key mechanisms and relationships in any given area [11]. Local knowledge ensures more realistic identification of local weaknesses and potential (an area's development capacities) when it is brought into the planning process [9]. Non-local actors such as governmental officials, funding officers, benefit from the local knowledge in that sense that learning from the local members helps expand or adapt their formerly more general knowledge [9].

Partnership can be discussed from the two points of view. First, it might be considered as an institutional or organizational setting involving number of partners (partnership as a structure). Second, partnership is a form of cooperation between numbers of partners (partnership as a process).

As a structure, partnership is defined as an "institutional arrangement in which objectives are shared and a common agenda is developed between the different agencies [actors] in pursuit of a common goal" [16]. It is important that partnership promotes integration both vertically (between different tiers of government, for example) and horizontally (between different spheres of society, like private, public and non-governmental). As a formal organizational structure for policy-making and implementation it mobilises a coalition of interests and the commitment of a range of different partners with a common agenda and multi-dimensional action programme. It also provides a possibility for collaboration between different stakeholders with potentially competing or conflicting interests [1]. Partnership has the aim of improving and developing the area's potential, and enriching the actions of different sectors (a formalized relationship between the community or voluntary sector and the State is set in this case). A partnership can also be the process whereby a network of relationships and solidarity is formed at a spatial level [3]. It is important that cooperation is not solely formal relationship between partners but indeed is based on mutual concerns and allows full-scale participation of all members involved.

It is difficult to compare partnerships as they differ from country to country in their structure and objectives [11]. Slee and Snowdon [16] classify them in a following way: (1) *strategic partnerships* (covering large area and addressing a wide range of issues), (2) *area based partnerships* (operating over a smaller area and closer to local community), (3) *topic-basic partnerships* (focus on particular issues such as forestry or tourism).

Another distinction may be made between partnerships delivering development projects and those enabling other groups (for example, through financial or administrative support) – to deliver projects. A partnership can thus be the delivery agent or the enabler of other groups that implement the actions [16].

Various programmes were promoted by the EU in 1980s and 1990s that supported locally-based development or cooperative movements. Firstly, the anti-poverty programmes Poverty 1 (ran from 1975-1980), Poverty 2 (ran from 1985-1985), and Poverty 3 (Medium-Term Community Action Programme to Foster the Social and Economic Integration of the Least Privileged Groups ran from 1989-1994) should be mentioned here [12]. Other programmes and initiatives, such as LEDA, LEADER, URBAN, INTERREG, NOW, Youthstart, HORIZON and INTEGRA, have promoted a local partnership framework and transnational networks of local partnerships [8].

The LEADER programmes should be emphasized here since the partnerships in Latvia are partnerships of this type. O'Hara points out that the introduction of the LEADER I Initiative (1991-1994) was the first attempt by the EU to support “bottom-up” development in rural areas involving all the key local actors in implementation of multi-sectoral plans for their areas. The experience of this first initiative showed a necessity to continue the programme and therefore the LEADER II Initiative (1995-2001) were implemented what stressed the importance of innovation and transferability [12; 9].

Partnership experience in Latvia started with the Rural Partnership Programme (RPP) that ran three years (2000-2003). RPP provided activities for rural development in the Eastern part of Latvia, in Latgale. The Programme was supported by the government of Great Britain and financed by PHARE 2000. The aim was to implement rural partnerships as institutions of rural development that could involve different agents: self-governments, private sector, state institutions, NGO's, and community groups. The objective of the partnership was to elaborate development strategies and to realise them by allocating small grants to community groups. Within a RPP framework three area based partnerships were established, each in different districts (Rēzekne, Daugavpils, and Balvi). These were pilot partnerships in Latvia, and it was planned that partnerships in Latvia were a crucial mechanism for LEADER implementation [17; 13].

Some other partnerships have evolved since 2003. LEADER Plus programme currently is being implemented in Latvia involving different social agents, for example, municipalities, educational establishments, NGOs, individuals, local farmers and entrepreneurs and others [7]. There are 28 rural partnerships or local action groups (LAGs) operating in Latvia where nearly half of them already realize their local development strategies and the rest are elaborating their strategies yet [2].

Partnerships are very much about the networking of rural actors and especially at horizontal or in other words at spatial level. This spatial approach refers to coordination of activities in the local area to enhance the capacity of local actors to cooperate and gain access to economic opportunities [10].

The emergence of partnerships has promoted some positive features in both European countries and Latvia:

- an enabling institutional framework, new geographies of collaboration, a vibrant culture of participative democracy and the potential for innovative actions [5];
- building up the capacity of voluntary and community organizations so they become more active in both planning and delivery of local programmes [8];
- the learning process through which agencies and individuals become more aware of, and more skilled in local development [8], people develop their common understanding and vision of local development and long-term goals [13], partners share their skills and that leads to greater efficiency and cost saving;
- reduction of socio-economic problems (e.g. social exclusion, unemployment), especially in less developed regions of Latvia [13].

However, this approach has a number of disadvantages and weaknesses. For example, participation may be dominated by some local authorities or undermined by local apathy. The authors identify also a number of serious deficiencies: institutional fragmentation, start-stop capacity building, and over-dependency on short-term public funding [15] what is observed and acknowledged by members of partnerships also in Latvia.

Working in partnership requires co-operation from agents that in turn can be developed by interactive learning between actors. Learning can help in generating stable cooperative groups – communities of practice with complementary expertise, where actors differ in their expertise.

Next chapter introduces with a theory of communities of practice and envisages how social learning occurs in a community.

3 Theory of communities of practice

The concept of community is central to many disciplines and is used in geography, politics as well as economics and sociology. Sometimes scholars and practitioners argue that it is quite difficult to identify boundaries of a community as well as to define a community itself. A usefulness of the concept for examining the ways in which individuals are connected to others has also often risen as an issue. Nevertheless, the author of the paper agrees with Scott, who says that in contemporary world there is no question whether communities exist, but more what types of local relationships people sustain

and what dependence they have on local institutions [14]. The role of the community is to fulfil specific purposes that its members cannot satisfy alone. The term *community* is used by sociologists in several different ways. In this research the term is used considering that the community is a group of people that share common interests, or goals, or participation and identity rather than just a common territory.

Lave and Wenger [6] first introduced the concept of CoPs based on a social theory of learning. This perspective deals with how learning occurs in social settings [4]. According to Wenger, CoPs are everywhere and all people belong to several CoPs at the same time. He says that the CoP “is an integral part of our daily lives” [18] and is informal and pervasive. The primary focus of the theory is on learning as social participation that includes four components: meaning, practice, community and identity [18].

Wenger argues that meaning is located in a process called the *negotiation of meaning* which involves the interaction of two constituent processes – participation and reification. Participation in this sense describes both the personal and the social experience of living in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement of all kinds of relations that promote, for example, conflicts and competitiveness as well as harmony and cooperation.

Wenger describes three dimensions of the relation to associate *practice* and *community*. The dimensions by which practice is the source of coherence of a community are (1) mutual engagement, (2) a joint enterprise, and (3) a shared repertoire. The author emphasizes that practice is not something abstract and it “resides in a community of people and the relations of mutual engagement” [18]. Mutual engagement involves the competence of all participants and helps to understand what every participant knows or does not know, can or cannot do and how it contributes to knowledge of others. In real life, this dimension of the relation creates the complex mixtures of both positive and negative relationships among people and it does not entail homogeneity [18]. The second dimension what Wenger is pointing out, is the negotiation of a common enterprise. The enterprises in practices are complex and do not imply agreement among people in any simple sense. The enterprises are joint ones because everything is commonly negotiated and only by common negotiating within the community do conditions, resources, and demands shape the practice. The third dimension is what Wenger calls “the repertoire of a community of practice” [18] which includes, for example, symbols, routines, ways of doing things or concepts that the community has produced or adopted while it exists. The repertoire becomes a part of the practice and is important in the process of learning for it is involved in codifying tacit knowledge and thus also in creating new knowledge. Hence, codified knowledge can be communicated and transferred to others.

Identification with the community and particular practice is an important aspect. Engagement in practice is a source of identification because people invest both in what they do and in their relationships with other people. Only through doing (being engaged in practice) people can see and understand how the world treats them; also they can explore ability to engage with one another [18].

A fixed membership does not determine the existence of the CoP. This implies that people can move in and out of the particular practice and the arrival of a new generation of members is very crucial [18]. Lave and Wenger [6] use the term “legitimate peripheral participation” to explain how the newcomers become included in a CoP or they become “insiders” through learning as a social affair – participation in practice [4]. Peripherality means an approximation of full participation that must provide access to all three dimensions of practice (mutual engagement, negotiation of the enterprise, and repertoire in use) so that newcomers could see and feel how the community operates. To be treated as potential members, newcomers must have enough legitimacy from the old members of the community. In other words, learners need legitimate access to the periphery of communication (for example, to formal and informal meetings, telephone conversations) to pick up invaluable “know how” from being on the periphery of competent practitioners. That means that potential members have to receive support from the members of the community and access to their practice. However, conflicts and rejection might also be included in this process [18] and that basically implies that the process of learning might develop with difficulties. Since the CoPs develop and change as well as their practices, access to the periphery is important from both sites of learning and innovation.

4 Survey results

111 community members of 7 community groups were involved in the survey, which focused on several aspects: *first*, why people involved in partnerships; *second*, how partnerships operate as CoPs; and *third*, what were the outcomes of partnership operation for both partnership members and wider society.

Research results show that the main reasons why people involved in partnership work were personal ones. Following reasons were identified as most important: opportunity to acquire new experience and knowledge (mentioned by 77 respondents), access to new opportunities (44 respondents) and chance to involve in the activities outside their households (41 respondents). Needs to be aware of local development issues and willingness to participate in local development processes were secondary ones and became important after the previously mentioned were met. Thus only

22 respondents admitted that they involved in the partnership because that was opportunity to do something actively on behalf of the community and 11 mentioned that they had willingness to take up an initiative in promotion of the community development.

Transferring the idea of CoP to rural partnerships in Latvia, collective or social learning within a community and “managing” knowledge are the central issues in successful partnership operation and practice with respect to running rural development in any particular rural area. Collective learning in doing and being engaged in a particular practice make partnership a CoP. Practices are different and they change, but in some stages they are common for all of the communities in partnerships: identification of the problems, negotiations on the possible solutions, elaboration of the development strategies, elaboration of the projects and applying for the funding, running a particular project, among others. Every stage of the partnership operation requires from the participants particular and sometimes specific skills or knowledge. For example, identification of the problems requires from the actors a clear understanding of the current situation and a vision of the future. They must also predict the problems that might be faced in the future. Participants have to negotiate their understandings and visions because they might differ. Negotiations do not exclude conflicts and competitiveness; hence, also negative emotions and experiences are part of the partnership’s life. That requires good communication skills which can be acquired only by doing the practice; or in other words by learning in doing through mutual engagement that involves the competence of all the participants. Respondents were asked to identify the skills they acquired while worked in partnership. Most of community members (78) mentioned project writing skills, 53 – communication skills, 49 – organizational skills, 25 – conflict resolution skills. 40 respondents admitted that they have acquired better understanding on local development issues.

As a consequence of repeated interaction between the actors, partnership develops a common repertoire (such as routines, symbols, and ways of doing). This is another characteristic that partnerships have in common with CoP. A very important characteristic of the CoP is identification with the community. The same is so with a partnership. According to Wenger [22] only through doing and identification with the community, or the partnership in this case, participants can see and understand how the wider society treats the partnership and what their abilities to be engaged with one another are. Most of respondents told that their families and other local people were positive about their involvement in partnership and received support.

Working in partnership requires from agents cooperation that in turn can be developed by interactive learning between actors having different experience, local knowledge and skills. By talking and watching the “old-timers”, new members of the partnership realize the “legitimate peripheral participation”

that is crucial especially for the acquisition of tacit knowledge. The more people interact, the more they strengthen their links with each other thus creating and developing bonding social capital with like-minded people. Horizontal links between actors within a partnership enhance the development of social network structures that is another form of social capital.

Participation is one of the preconditions for partnership operation that provides involvement of different agents for rural development. Participation generates trust, involves people in processes of development and enhances their knowledge and skills. Partnership boards operate as teams of volunteers that create consensus and common understanding, motivation, objectives. Accordingly with the concept of 'legitimate peripheral participation' [8], partnership members are encouraged by coordinators to participate together with board members in the common practices such as elaboration of development strategies. Thus the board members and coordinators play the role of 'old-timers' (term introduced by Wenger) and share their experience with local people that are newcomers in the practice of the decision making. Local people also share their local knowledge and thus in the process of mutual learning and sharing experience all participants gain mutual understanding about the local development problems and have a common vision on the possible solutions. Most of respondents were positive when asked about mutual trust between community members, they also stated that were quite informed about the fields other group member are competent.

Management and coordination is crucial for partnership operation as well as external support. Development initiatives are linked to learning processes and knowledge. Working in partnership for each member is a new experience that requires new knowledge both about partnership itself and about realizing particular projects. This requires from the participants different skills that cannot be learned from a book or prescriptions because essentially they are tacit and evolving. The best way to learn, for example, how to cooperate, communicate, or run a project, is to do it practically. Thus partnership members realize learning in doing. Being involved in a practice, actors can 'negotiate the meaning' [22] of their involvement in common relations. This is the way participants can practically learn about partnership itself.

Communication ensures participation, learning processes, management efficiency, transparency, and promotes legitimacy. It is necessary to inform society about the possibilities to be involved in partnership. Communication is important also within a partnership (building capacity, horizontal links) and with members from other partnerships (experience exchange). Communication thus enhances the development of links between partnership members or between different partnerships as well as links between different tiers within a partnership or different individuals or groups outside it. That is crucial in getting support from wider society for partnership operation. External links

provide a partnership with necessary information and other resources ensuring its sustainability.

As important outcomes of partnership operation respondents mentioned the following ones: social inclusion, raised self-esteem, better understanding of local development issues, business-start-ups, and closer networking within a community.

5 Conclusions

Partnership experience in many EU countries has a long history already, however in Latvia this is still developing. Transition to market economy and entering the EU provoked many institutional changes in rural areas and partnerships refer to one of them.

Partnership approach is seen as a serious institutional mechanism how to involve local social agents in elaboration and realization of development strategies. Community members have an opportunity to participate in a community life and to find resolutions for local problems.

Social learning in a partnership has a number of characteristic features: learning is situated and concerned with CoP, learning is more informal and occurs in every day activities, through informal and social process of learning by doing community members both exchange their knowledge and skills and acquire new ones.

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Function of LAGs in South Bohemia and Ustecký districts

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Annotation. As well as in other European countries, current progress in the Czech rural area is dependent on involvement of its inhabitants to implementation of projects and measures for rural development. Quite a lot of Local Action Groups (LAG) successfully implement developmental projects in some Czech rural regions. They are very active in acquiring financial resources intended for rural development from national and also from European funds. The aim of the article is overview thought function of LAGs in South Bohemia and Ustecký district.

Key words: rural area, rural development, local actors, local partnership, local action group.

1 Introduction

Rural area represents a large part of every EU member country. In order to manage complex and effective development of these areas, it is necessary to take their individual specifics and current conditions in each member country into account when planning common development strategies. Therefore, it is a current EU policy to apply the bottom – up approach and realize all changes and development directly through inhabitants of rural districts as they know the local conditions and know how to make use of the potential of their district. In the beginning of the 1990s, experience from practice lead EU representatives to starting the association of LEADER¹ initiatives, which enables carrying out EU programs and measures focused on development of rural areas through local initiatives – so called Local Action Groups (LAGs). Realization of programs based on this initiative proved to be a highly efficient

¹LEADER – Liaison entre les actions economic rural, tj. Propojování akcí hospodářského rozvoje venkova.

tool for sustainable development of rural areas. During 1990s, further initiatives LEADER I and LEADER II were therefore started. Today, they are followed by the program LEADER+.

In the Czech Republic, a program with a similar focus, i.e. supporting initiation of cooperation among all subjects active in rural areas, the Program of Rural Renewal, was realized in similar time scope. In 2004, was this successful program joined by the Program LEADER ČR. Its task was to build up and secure a sufficient network of well functioning local initiatives – LAGs, which would be able to draw financial resources from European funds for rural development in the new program period 2007 – 2013.

In 2007, the Sociological Laboratory has in cooperation with researchers from other Czech institutions engaged in comparison of two districts – South Bohemia and Ústecký district with the goal to find and define elements influencing stabilization of rural inhabitants. The study was carried out in the framework of the project 1J 016/04-DP2 of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

One of the significant factors we have defined is the existence of a functioning organization of local action groups in individual areas. This contribution will introduce the LAGs, which operate in each district and show how successful their initiatives are in proposing projects.

2 Literature overview

Functioning of local partnerships in rural areas is a very specific topic, about which a broad range of literature has been published so far.

Studies, documents and measures published directly by the European Commission are available. Information materials such as the LEADER+ magazine are meant to introduce the reader to characteristics of the program and to show possibilities of its use. Further has the European Union published strategic materials serving as a basis for preparation of national programs and for strategic development of rural areas. Preparation of these documents for the program period 2007 – 2013 was based on the Commission Regulation (ES) nr. 1698/2005 from September 20th on support of rural development from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

Regular meetings of national and international representatives of LAGs have taken place in the Czech Republic. The main goal of these conferences and seminars is mutual exchange of experience and knowledge in this area. These were for example: The National Conference on Issues of Rural Development, which took place in June 2005 (MA); international conference Program of European Commission on Rural Areas - LEADER in November 2005; National Conference on Countryside in September 2006; seminar on the new

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development with the focus on the axis IV. LEADER (MA) in November 2006. In June 2007, an international conference on the Program LEADER (MA) took place in Prague. The experience with realization of programs LEADER and LEADER+ were presented by representatives from 12 new member countries.

In Czech literature, Čepelka, Matoušková, Červená, Kroupová introduce the principles of and further deal with the LEADER initiative in their articles. This topic was also covered by Ježdíková and Pavlíková in 2005 within the edition Czech Countryside annually published by the Sociological Laboratory. Moreover, from the year 2005, the electronic Rural Newspaper regularly informs about problems and topics related to rural development. The Rural Newspaper is an info newspaper of the project Rural Voice. The websites www.leadercz.cz, www.leaderplus.cz, <http://forum.isu.cz> also serve to inform about these topics.

3 Material and methodology

As mentioned in the introduction, in 2007, members of the Sociological Laboratory focused on determination and definition of factors influencing the stabilization of rural population. This analysis was done in the framework of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs project 1J 016/04-DP2 “Socio-economic development of Czech countryside and agriculture”. Two districts were selected for the analysis: the South Bohemia district and the Ústecký district. These very different regions were deliberately selected to enable us to examine as many elements and structures as possible. The districts have equally 7 townships but otherwise are quite in contrast. The district of South Bohemia is an agricultural region with a great share of rural areas. Ústecký district, on the other hand, is a representative of an industrial district, which was selected for intensive state support in the period of 2007 – 2013. Activities of local actors – LAGs belong among the stabilizing factors in these district.

4 Results and conclusion

LAGs in examined districts

Following tables show the Local Action Groups in each district. [8]

Table 1. Number of LAGs in both districts

District	Total number of LAGs	LAGs with majority of covered area in examined region	LAGs partly covering examined regions
Ústecký	8	7	1
South Bohemia	17	15	2

Source: www.leaderplus.cz

Table 2. Overview of LAGs in both districts

<u>LAGs in Ústecký district:</u>	<u>LAGs in South Bohemia district:</u>	<u>LAGs in South Bohemia district:</u>
České středohoří	Hlubocko-	LAG Association Růže
Českokamenicko	Lišovsko, o.p.s	LAG Strakonicko
LAG Labské	Chance in Nature–	LAG Třeboňsko o.p.s.
skály	Local Action	LAG Veselsko-
LAG	Group	Řečicko o.p.s.
Šluknovsko	<i>Jemnicko (Podyjí)</i>	LAG Vltava
<i>LAG Vladař</i>	LAG Blanský les-	Rozkvět zahrady
Hope for	Netolicko o.p.s.	jižních Čech
Mostecko	LAG Krajina srdce	Střední Povltaví
Association	LAG Lužnice	Union of municipalities
Západní	<i>LAG Mikroregionu</i>	Blatensko
Krušnohoří	<i>Telčsko</i>	Vodňanská ryba
Serviso o.p.s.	LAG Pomalší, o.p.s	

Source: www.leaderplus.cz

Note: Since January 2007, has the LAG Veselsko-Řečicko merged with the LAG Třeboňsko;

source: <http://mas-treboňsko.cz/view.php?nazevclanku=valna-hromada-mas-veselsko-recicko-o-p-s&cislocclanku=2007010005>

Local Action Groups written in italics are active predominantly in other districts (MAS Vladař in Karlovy Vary district, Jemnicko (Podyjí) and LAG of

the Mikroregion Telčsko in district Vysočina). In the district South Bohemia, most LAGs are active in townships České Budějovice, Strakonice, Tábor and Prachatic. In the Ústecký district in townships Děčín, Litoměřice.

The main and the most common topics the LAGs focus on in the framework of program LEADER are: increase of life quality of inhabitants, mutual cooperation in microregions and the best possible use of local natural and cultural heritage (in correspondence with the program Natura 200). Additionally, some LAGs' goal is to support local small manufacturers and services (LAG Krajina srdce, Union of municipalities Blatensko, Association Západní Krušnohoří, LAG Labské skály).

Most of Local Action Groups in the South Bohemia district have been functioning for several years, mainly starting in the year 2004. Only the LAG Pomalší was founded a year later and the LAG of the mikroregion Telčsko joined the LEADER initiative in 2006. The LAGs in Ústecký district started in two waves; in 2004 after the Czech Republic has joined EU and the LEADER programs were started here, and one year later. Also here one LAG – the České Středohoří LAG, only started in 2006

Number of applications from LAGs under the sub-measure 2.1.4. Rural development – the initiative LEADER+² in years 2004 and 2005

Table 3 shows the numbers of registered application for funds, which were related to the sub-measure 2.1.4. Rural development, aimed at sub-measures of the same type as LEADER+.[9][10]

²These sub-measures are included in the sub-measure 2.1.4. Rural development and were realized by MA in the framework of the Operational Program for Rural Development and Multifunctional Agriculture (OP RVMZ).

Table 3. Registered applications of LAG according to their seat according to the State Agricultural Intervention Fund (SAIF)^{*)}

Measure/ submeasure/ investment projects	RO SAIF							Total
	Prague	České Budějovice	Ústí nad Labem	Hradec Králové	Brno	Olomouc	Opava	
Year 2004								
2.1.4. a)	3	10	2	3	3	5	4	30
2.1.4. c)	4	14	2	5	10	4	0	39
Year 2005								
2.1.4. b)	69	99	-	34	18	22	25	267
2.1.4. c)	5	6	6	11	5	19	0	52

Source: www.szif.cz; Annual reports of OP RVMZ

Note: *) These are regional departments of the State Agricultural Intervention Fund

Sub-measure 2.1.4. consists of 3 investment projects: a) projects of integrated territorial strategy of rural development of pilot character; b) group 1 – concrete project of strategy realization; c) group 2 – learning abilities

In the first year, 9 LAGs from the South Bohemia district and two from the Ústecký district applied for support of the investment project 2.1.4 a). Only two applications from the South Bohemia district were successful; LAG Chance in Nature and Association Růže. They were selected by the LAG committee for subsequent realization of the strategy (2.1.4. b)) in the year 2005. The first LAG submitted the total of 42 applications (prepared projects) with the request for co-financing of 25 million Czech Crowns from public funds. Association Růže submitted 33 projects with public co-financing of 10 million Crowns. In the Ústecký region, neither of the applicants (Serviso and Vladař) were successful.

Program LEADER ČR

When the program LEADER ČR was first started in 2004, 16 LAGs were selected by the Ministry of Agriculture to carry it out. There were 4 LAGs from the South Bohemia district among them – LAG Association Růže; LAG Krajina srdce; LAG Vltava a LAG Rozkvět zahrady jižních Čech and one from the Ústecký district - LAG Vladař.

In the second year of the program's existence in the Czech Republic (period of 2005 – 2006), the interest of local associations in this program has significantly grown and the funds were distributed among 23 local action groups. Again, three representatives from the South Bohemia district were successful - LAG Association Růže; LAG Třeboňsko and LAG Blanský les-Netolicko. Only one candidate was selected in the Ústecký district – LAG Vladař, which was also given funds in the last program period. Table 4 gives overview on the number of projects selected for state support from the program LEADER ČR. [11]

Table 4. Program LEADER ČR – chosen projects of individual LAGs

District of South Bohemia	Chosen projects	
	2004	2006
Rozkvět zahrady jižních Čech	5	-
LAG Krajina srdce	5	-
LAG Association Růže	5	6
LAG Vltava	5	-
LAG Blanský les-Netolicko	-	7
LAG Třeboňsko	-	2
Ústecký district		
LAG Vladař	5	6

Source: www.mze.cz

5 Conclusion

Available data and information on the role of local initiatives in rural development, from which only a part is presented in this article, clearly show that both European programs based on the LEADER initiative and national programs awake great interest of inhabitants of rural regions. These programs enable local actors (municipalities, entrepreneurs, representatives of the non-profit sector) to carry out such project that lead to sustainable development of their locality.

It is the task of these local subjects to stay, despite possible temporary failures, active and to seek all possibilities of acquiring funds for their projects. Some local action groups are founded as new associations, which have to learn the procedures connected with proposing projects and project administration. The most of them, however, build up on long time tradition of cooperation in microregions, which is connected with the realization of the Program of Rural Renewal.

The district of South Bohemia is an example of a region, where the interest of its inhabitants on its development is evident. Many local action groups and other initiatives with long-time experience with project planning and proposing are active here. Available data shows that these groups create and carry out very good projects, which are repeatedly successful in acquiring public funds from the program LEADER+ as well as LEADER ČR.

LAGs in Ústecký district were founded in the same year as those in the district of South Bohemia. However, their project applications for public funds bring little fruits although it could be expected that they have gained experience in proposing project throughout the years. We can only assume what the reasons are – loss of motivation after previous unsuccess, insufficient applications, lack of finances for necessary co-financing of projects, unfitting thematic focus of projects. To determine the concrete reasons, an extended analysis would be necessary including interviews with the representatives of individual LAGs.

It can be, however, concluded that future development of rural regions is predominantly dependent on the initiative and interest of local inhabitants, which need further support.

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Typology of rural areas

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1 Introduction

When monitoring the possibilities of development of rural areas, we mostly monitor indices characterizing rural areas as a whole and compare individual indices or monitored characteristics with urban areas.

The aim of this article is to call attention at differences within rural areas. The text is based on an older paper (Perlín, 1998), where characteristics of rural areas based on historical development and monitoring of certain socio-economic characteristics of rural areas were given for the first time. Definition of rural areas and of their individual different types is important both to confirm the identity of rural areas (for more details see e.g. Chromý 2003) and for key allocation of subsidies to back rural areas. Exactly the way of allocation of means is at present very frequently discussed in Czechia. The model of financing municipalities is, in a long-term perspective, frequently criticized and therefore it has been partially changed for the year 2008. The current priority for delimitation of subsidies for rural areas is to determine the extent of “rural areas”. There are very differing interpretations of how to define rural areas with the aim to include into this term the largest territory possible, i.e. the highest quantity of people – rural population. This political discussion was even the main subject of a public hearing in the Senate of the Czech Republic. According to this opinion, as rural can be considered all municipalities up to 10 000 inhabitants, i.e. about 46% of the total population of Czechia.

Transformation of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy from direct subsidies for farmers to indirect subsidies for rural development leads to increasing possibilities of drawing subsidies for support of rural areas and progressive transformation of the EU Common Agricultural Policy. This is proved also by Strategic Orientations of Common Agricultural Policy development (EU, 2006), which clearly defined, for the 2007-2013 programme period, the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, i.e. development of rural areas. Thanks to a clear identification of rural areas development as an

equivalent component of the Common Agricultural Policy and to repartition of responsibilities for rural areas development between the EU Regional Policy and the EU Common Agricultural Policy, it is possible to presume that in compliance with the long-term aims of the Common Agricultural Policy the volume of means for rural development will continue to increase. Exactly the means spent on rural development are, already in the current programme period, significantly higher than in the previous ones. Therefore the stress put upon monitoring of an effective spending of means on individual activities and in individual regions has been significantly growing. It is therefore necessary to be very well aware of the needs of individual regions and to differentiate the possibilities of an effective spending of invested means in individual rural areas. It is quite evident that individual rural municipalities will have different needs and absorption capacities to profit from the direct subsidies. This is also the reason why this article deals with the possibility to delimit differentiated rural areas with the aim to open discussion on further delimitation of specific types of rural areas in Czechia.

2 Delimitation of rural areas

Individual studies dealing with the development of rural areas must at first define them. Because settlement is continuous, it is difficult to identify clear and at the same time generally valid limits between rural and urban areas, between rural social or socio-economic characteristics and similar characteristics of towns. Delimitation of limits or of a group of criteria between the rural and the urban is not the same in different countries and it depends to a large degree on the historical development of settlement and organization of public administration as well as on political ambitions of individual municipal representatives.

The approach to definition of rural areas can be in principle double: The first one is aimed at objective characteristics of rural areas and it tries to define rural areas on the basis of some measurable or objectively existing indices. Discussion on delimitation of rural areas according to such indices was done e.g. by Perlín (2002). It turns out that it is possible, when monitoring rural areas as a whole, to use mainly the indices of the number of inhabitants or of the population density. Similar indices are used also by the EU, or OECD, when three basic categories are delimited according to the population density in NUTS III:

- Significantly rural regions – more than 50% of inhabitants live in rural municipalities (defined for this purpose as those of less than 150 inhabitants per 1 km²),

- Prevailingly rural regions – 15 to 50% of inhabitants live in rural municipalities,
- Prevailingly urban region – less than 15% of inhabitants live in rural municipalities.

This method was used also when defining rural areas of Czechia within the Programme of Rural Development (2006).

Problematic when defining rural areas according to the population density in NUTS III is mainly the difficult comparison of individual European countries in dependence on the size of individual municipalities, which is extremely high in individual European countries. On one hand there are states with very large municipalities (measured according to the number of inhabitants) as e.g. United Kingdom or Scandinavian countries and, on the other side, there are countries with relatively small municipalities which are very numerous in individual regions. Among these countries, there is, besides the Czech Republic, also France. The second problem when using the population density index is the difficult comparison of rural and urban units within individual NUTS III. When assessing the population density according to NUTS III, all regions of the Czech Republic (with the exception of Prague) are then included into prevailingly rural regions. Then also regional towns with more than 100 000 inhabitants are considered as rural areas.

Other criteria on the confine between objective and subjective indices are indices that evaluate rural and urban settlements. On the basis of in total six different characters – criteria - it is possible to characterize rural or urban settlements. Problematic when using a larger group of criteria is above all their very difficult quantification and practical impossibility to use these criteria for monitoring a larger number of municipalities or within a larger region. Their assessment depends then largely on personal knowledge of the area.

Table 1. Criteria for definition of rural settlements

Criterion	Main characteristic
Urban structure	Loose development, farms, large public spaces, a low share of built-up areas
Architectonic characters	Low-rise buildings, integration of residential and other functions, absence of rental housing, individual houses
Social characters	Conservatism, traditionalism, neighbourhood, participation, cooperation, sharing of common history
Economic characters	Commuting to work, employment in agriculture, a higher share of self-supplying, do-it-yourself
Public administration	Qualification of the municipality, position of the municipality in the public administration structure
Size characteristics	Number of inhabitants, population density, share of built-up areas

Source: Perlin (2003)

It is unsuitable to use indices of administrative position of municipalities as it is impossible to proceed to relevant assessment on the mere designation of a municipality as a town (or township) neither under the Czech conditions nor in international comparison. For instance municipalities with more than 1000 inhabitants are in Latvia qualified as towns and have different competencies and other way of financing as other rural municipalities (Bite, Rasnaca, Saulaja, 2008).

The second approach to definition of rural areas is to define them according to the style of life or according to the way they deal with different situations. Such delimitation is based mainly on subjective characteristics defining the rural way of life, a different style of life or another form of building friendship and community among inhabitants of a rural settlement. Among authors who observed this way of defining rural areas, let us mention above all Blažek (2005) who, on the example of a detailed studying of three selected rural regions, documented various approaches to solving basic life situations. Blažek also stressed in his paper differences of individual rural areas in Czechia.

Differently from Blažek (2005), who studied mainly existence and activation of local communities, Illner (2005) focuses his attention on the position of personalities in rural areas and, by studying the positions of leading rural representatives, he tries to identify basic characteristics of rural areas. Illner (2005), in reaction to the previous arguments of Hampl (1998), discusses the size structure of Czech municipalities and stresses the necessity of different approaches to studying of rural areas. When studying the size of rural municipalities, he observes four basic factors, i.e. economic and administrative effectiveness, local democracy, distribution of justice and development opportunities of rural municipalities. Much like Hampl (1998), Illner (2005) does not discuss individual regional differences among rural municipalities nor the ensuing different opportunities of their development.

Halfacree (1993) identifies four basic applied approaches to the assessment and definition of rural areas. He differentiates approaches based on descriptive studies, separates territorial determinism and, as another approach, characterizes studies aimed at individual localities and, last but not least, studies based on social constructivism with the aim to “help” rural areas and their inhabitants by direct or indirect instruments.

3 Aim of this paper

Rural areas as a homogenous space

When monitoring changes in rural areas, it is possible to analyse relations between towns, or between the urbanized and the rural areas. This type of monitoring is aimed at monitoring of the dichotomy urban – rural and therefore it monitors rural areas as a homogenous space where the dominant characteristics are significantly different than in the urbanized areas) (see e.g. Wirth 1996). Evaluation of differences (and convergences) between rural and urban areas necessarily leads to a discussion on definition of rural areas (see e.g. Kučera, Kuldová 2006).

Prerequisites to and opportunities of rural areas development, in comparison with urban areas, are studied by many authors. The authors of a study worked up at the instigation of the European study First European Quality of Life Survey: Urban–rural differences (Shucksmith, Cameron, Merridew, 2006) stress different opportunities of rural and urbanized (town) territories in present Europe on the example of pensions, different approaches and quality of housing, employment and education, living conditions and access to work, education, services and also on examples of a different structure of family and making friends. The study is aimed at investigation of the quality of life which is defined by Fahey (2004) by three basic characteristics:

- Individual situation of a person;
- Opportunities of contacts and mutual relations among individual subjects;
- Objective and subjective indices.

Another approach to observing the consequences of the polarity town/countryside is used in a series of studies on delimitation of peripheral areas on global (Wallerstein 1984, quoted by Hampl 2001; Novotný 2003) or national or microregional level (Jančák 2001; Marada 2001; Musil 2002, 2006, 2008; Novotná ed. 2005). Exactly methodological approaches defining individual types of peripheral areas are based on observation of the polarity town/countryside which is measured not only by the distance, but also by a different intensity of socio-economic as well as social links in a different environment (Friedmann 1969, quoted in Uhlř 2002; Havlíček, Chromý 2001).

Heterogeneous rural areas

A different approach to assessment of a rural area consists in monitoring of changes occurring there in connection with the same or similar processes in

another rural area. Monitoring of internal dynamism of changes in rural areas and of regional differentiation of these changes leads necessarily to assessment of internal heterogeneity of rural areas. It enables to observe the development of individual processes between rural municipalities or other subjects in rural areas, but not in comparison with towns. Monitoring of the complex heterogeneity of rural areas enables thus to define individual “similar” rural areas of the region. This approach leads to delimitation of individual types of rural areas and thus to formulation of individual typologies.

4 Methodological notes

Before the proper inquiry into the typology of rural areas of Czechia it was necessary to define at first the extent of the monitored rural areas. In the case of our project, we opted for the tradition way of delimitation of rural areas with the help of quantitatively measurable indices. Specifically, we selected the simplest normative criterion, i.e. determination of population size of municipalities. As rural municipalities are considered those with less than 3000 inhabitants on the date of the last population census (2001). We are aware of a certain methodical inaccuracy: not included into the category of rural municipalities are e.g. those composed from several parts, out of which none exceeds the normative limit of 3000 inhabitants, but in total the municipality would exceed this limit and is not included into our monitoring. Similarly excluded from the group of rural municipalities are rural parts of towns, i.e. rural settlements with a lower number of inhabitants being an administrative part of bigger towns. Nevertheless under the Czech conditions, these mentioned small methodical problems have no significant impact on the size and structure of the selected group of rural municipalities.

The above-described group of rural municipalities includes in total 5821 municipalities, including those in military grounds. On the basis of the defined criteria, we selected and gathered for the defined group of municipalities available statistical data expressing their development potential (capacities). This group of criteria included in total 25 items. The data were compiled from basic publicly accessible sources (Population, houses and flats census 1991 and 2001), information and databases sources of the Czech Statistical Office, public databases of the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic, of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, etc. The data on nominal rating of municipalities were taken from the sources of the CCB society. The total number of departures of connections on Wednesday, October 3, 2007 for each municipalities was ascertained from the database of timetables administered by the society IDOS. The indices of tourism-recreation stress and tourism-recreation function were taken from the

Atlas cestovního ruchu – Atlas of Tourist Trade (Vystoupil et al. 2006). To obtain data on the distance of the municipalities from the region's centre (in km) the ArcGIS 9.2 software was used – it processed the data by the OD Cost Matrix (Origin-Destination) instrument.

Two indices with non-continuous categorized variables (existence of a primary school in the municipality and nominal rating) were not included into further investigation because of their methodological inconvenience.

As analyses by multi-dimensional statistical methods for scale level of municipalities are not suitable, individual indices were aggregated from the municipal level to the level of administrative districts of municipalities with enlarged powers (MEP). From further processing were discarded those MEPS which have a too low number of rural municipalities (in our case, we did not include the units with less than 3 municipalities) or those without rural municipalities at all (Prague). They were specifically the MEPS Bohumín, Český Těšín, Havířov, Karviná, Orlová and Prague. Even after the reduction of the number of MEPS, the individual MEPS are very differentiated from the point of view of the total number of monitored units. While in some very small MEPS there are less than 10 rural municipalities (Králíky 3, Aš 4, Nová Paka and Česká Třebová – 4 rural municipalities, Varnsdorf and Kravaře 5 units), in the largest MEPS there is a very high number of units with the maximum in the MEP Znojmo with 109 rural municipalities (further on Mladá Boleslav 93, Třebíč 91, Rakovník 81, Chrudim 80). In spite of a high heterogeneity of individual monitored territorial units, the group of in total 199 MEPS can be considered as representative and enabling to evaluate the structure and development potential of rural municipalities in the Czech Republic.

Into further assessment are thus included all rural municipalities (municipalities up to 3000 inhabitants) which are classified according to their administrative affiliation to individual territorial districts of MEPS. The analysis of individual indices was done at two basic levels. Firstly the selected indices, the correlation of which was tested by correlation matrix, were evaluated individually. The territorial distribution of the monitored phenomena is expressed by cartograms. Definition of individual categories is done according to the classification of frequency of occurrence of individual phenomena according to the histogram of the observed phenomena frequency. Evaluation at this level is intended mainly for evaluation of regional differentiation of the monitored phenomena and a better understanding of certain regional behaviour patterns or occurrence of selected phenomena.

The second way of our investigation into the differentiation of Czech rural areas consists in a complex evaluation of all monitored indices on the basis of cluster analysis done with the help of SPSS 10.0. Statistical software.

Table 2. Indices evaluated within cluster analysis

1)	Total population as on January 1, 2005
2)	Index of changes in population 2005/1991
3)	Migration balance in 2005 related 100 inhabitants in 2005
4)	Share of permanently inhabited houses built between the years 1991 and 2001, in %
5)	Share of permanently inhabited houses related to the total number of houses, in %
6)	Tourism-recreation functions
7)	Tourism-recreation stress
8)	Total distance from the centre in km
9)	Total number of departing connections on Wednesday, October 3, 2007
10)	Rate of unemployment in 2005
11)	Share of inhabitants living in flats with gas connection related to the total population as to March 1, 2001 in %
12)	Share of inhabitants living in flats with sewer connection related to the total population as to March 1, 2001 in %
13)	Share of natives related to the total population as to March 1, 2001 in %
14)	Number of candidates related to the number of seats in elections in 2006
15)	Participation in elections in 2006 in %
16)	Share of the area covered by different categories of protected territories
17)	Population aged 65 and more related to 100 permanent residents in 2005
18)	Population density on 1 square km in 2005
19)	Share of inhabitants commuting to work from the total number of economically actives as to March 1, 2001 in %
20)	Share of inhabitants of other than Czech nationality as to March 1, 2001
21)	Total volume of subsidies to legal persons related to the total number of recipients (legal persons) between 1998 and 2005
22)	Percentage share of subsidies going to municipalities related to the total volume of subsidies to legal persons between 1998 and 2005
23)	Index of education as March 1, 2001

The objective of the cluster analysis is to identify territorial units manifesting a statistically significant accordance/similarity in the observed input indices and consequently to link them into groups (clusters) with maximal internal homogeneity and maximal inter-group dissimilarity. We chose the method of progressive elimination of the most distant neighbours, i.e. separation of territorial units which are the least similar. In this way, only the maximal dissimilarity among clusters was maintained, but the result was nearer to the expected space distribution of the variables.

Another methodological problem when using cluster analysis is to determine the number of resulting clusters. When they are little numerous, individual territorial types can be only hardly interpreted and they are significantly

characterized by a higher number of the initial variables. On the contrary, a high number of resulting clusters split the territory into a mosaic of not entirely territorially continuous types which have not a sufficient informative value. In our analysis, the process of clustering was monitored in individual sections which enabled to choose the optimal number of clusters and to stop the process of clustering at this level. The process of clustering was closed at the level of nine clusters: for evaluation of a set of in total 199 input units, it is purposeful to choose the number of resulting types of territories between 6 and 9. One-factor dispersion analysis with 9 clusters manifests a significant dissimilarity of characteristics of averages of individual clusters at the 5 percent level of significance. The number of districts of MEPs in individual clusters is shown by Graph 1, their territorial distribution by Figure 6. Average values of variables according to individual clusters and their variability within the given cluster enable us to briefly characterize individual clusters.

5 Evaluation of results

When evaluating the differentiation of rural areas in Czechia, we shall give at first the results according to individual indices we have observed and, in the second part of the paper, we shall try to explain the principal results of the above-mentioned cluster analysis.

5.1 Evaluation according to individual selected indices

When evaluating individual results for rural municipalities in Czechia, it is necessary to stress mainly the significant difference between the size of municipalities in the western part of the country – Bohemia and in the eastern part – Moravia (Fig. 1). The biggest municipalities from the point of view of both population size and density are situated either in southeast Moravia or in the proximity of big towns. Whereas big municipalities in Moravia have been formed by long-term stable population development, in background of big cities both population size and density are largely due mainly to an intensive short-term change, i.e. the suburbanization process (see for instance the background of Prague). Larger municipalities, but not settlements, are situated in border areas resettled after 1945 (Hampl, Müller 1998; Kuldová 2005). A higher population density is found in structurally affected industrial zones in north Bohemia and in Silesia and in traditional agricultural areas along Labe, in east and central Bohemia.

On the contrary, in the areas southwards from Prague and southwards from the imaginary join line west-east (Cheb, Prague, Pardubice and Olomouc), there are municipalities with a low number of inhabitants. This territory is also the

least densely populated in Czechia which strongly reduces the development potential of the area.

Evaluation according to the number of inhabitants and to the unemployment rate belongs to the principal monitored indices. In Czechia, the affirmation on the general progressing depopulation of rural areas is not true. The decrease or increase of the number of inhabitants in rural areas is very differentiated. The highest increase of the number of inhabitants was registered in the period 1991-2006 in two types of municipalities. First, they are municipalities in the background of regional centres and second, municipalities in the northwest Bohemia, i.e. rural municipalities in the neighbourhood of industrial centres with the youngest age structures in Czechia. On the contrary, a decrease of the number of inhabitants in rural areas was registered in peripheral areas on the border of Central Bohemia and South Bohemia Regions and in the Region of Vysočina. In the period 1991 – 2006, the population increased in total in 125 administrative districts of MEPs, in which 3290 rural municipalities are situated.

When evaluating unemployment in rural municipalities, there is still an evident difference between the unemployment rate in Bohemia and in Moravia. Bohemia has a lower unemployment rate. When evaluating the highest values of unemployment rate, we must stress that there are two types of unemployment. First, the structural unemployment existing mainly in northwest Bohemia and second, unemployment in stagnating rural areas in north Moravia and in Silesia and in the area of Znojmo. On the contrary, a very low unemployment rate is observed in the whole Bohemia, including the very small municipalities and in the southwest along the border with Bavaria.

Evaluation of the number of natives is significant from the perspective of the stability of population which creates good conditions for a good participation of inhabitants in common affairs and in the development of the municipality. When observing the share of natives in the population, there is an evident northwest – southeast gradient. Whereas the highest share of natives is in the south and the west of Moravia, the lowest one then in areas where German population used to live.

The index of participation in local election shows the interest of rural population in participation in decision-making on the future of the municipality they live in. Participation in elections (more than 70 per cent) is the highest in areas with the smallest municipalities in the Region of Vysočina and along the border of Central Bohemia and South Bohemia Regions. In regions with a stable population but bigger municipalities, participation in local election is surprisingly below average. The lowest participation in elections reaching nevertheless more than 50 per cent of all electors, is in the Central Bohemia Region, then in the north of Moravia (area of Ostrava) and in

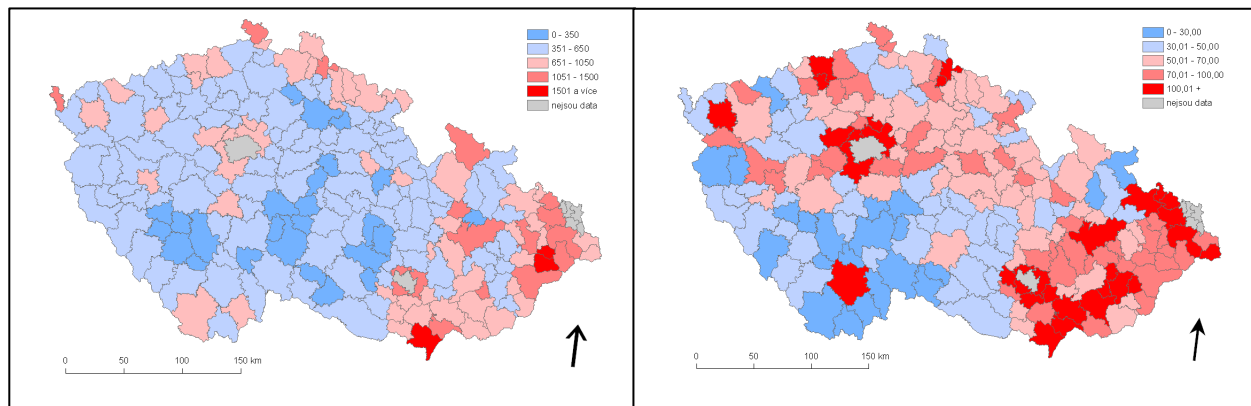
the west and north of Bohemia from Cheb to Česká Lípa (with the exception of the Chomutov area).

The index of subsidy activities of all subjects and of the share of subsidies for municipalities shows the capacity of local representatives to obtain means for their development projects. When evaluating the average amount of subsidies for all subjects in rural areas in the period 1998 – 2005, it is evident that the most successful applicants are in rural municipalities in the background of Prague as well as in structurally affected territories of northwest Bohemia. Significant subsidies went also to all applicants in Silesia and in the background of Brno. On the contrary, the lowest subsidies (per one project) went to relatively small municipalities in Czech rural areas and in the Region of Vysočina. Surprisingly the lowest volumes of means went also to big rural municipalities in east Moravia.

Evaluation of the share of subsidies allocated from the total volume of financial means to municipalities illustrates also the own activities of municipalities when ensuring means for investments. A higher share of subsidies for municipalities is in municipalities in the neighbourhood of Plzeň, in south and east Moravia and in selected municipalities in districts of MEPs in north Bohemia. The levels of the share of subsidies oscillate between less than 30 % of all subsidies and the extreme levels of more than 80 % of all subsidies going to municipal budgets. When comparing the two cartograms, it is evident that regions that are successful in ensuring higher subsidies per project obtain also a higher share of subsidies for investments actions carried on by municipalities.

Evaluation of the level of education with the help of the index of education (see e.g. Hampl 1999) shows the impact of regional centres which contribute to a higher level of education also in rural municipalities. This is connected above all with the process of suburbanization. A high level of education is also in the districts of MEPs in east Bohemia which may be connected with the local denser network of smaller regional centres, where traditionally secondary schools ending by A-level exams are situated. On the contrary, regions with a lower level of education are in traditional industrial areas in northwest Bohemia, in rural regions of north Bohemia (region of Jeseník) and the agricultural region of Břeclav. The share of seniors (inhabitants older than 65 years) is the highest in rural municipalities along the border of Central Bohemia and South Bohemia Regions and in the Region of Vysočina. These areas were the last migration source areas for the post-war resettlement and for the industrialization of north Bohemia and the region of Ostrava and they are also regions without activities for young population. On the contrary, young people live in background of towns (suburbanization) and in former industrial areas in the north of the country.

Figure 1. Average number of inhabitants in rural municipalities, density of population



Sources (Figs 1–5): Czech statistical office, census 2001, own recalculation

Figure 2. Changes in number of inhabitants in % (1991–2005), unemployment rate 2005

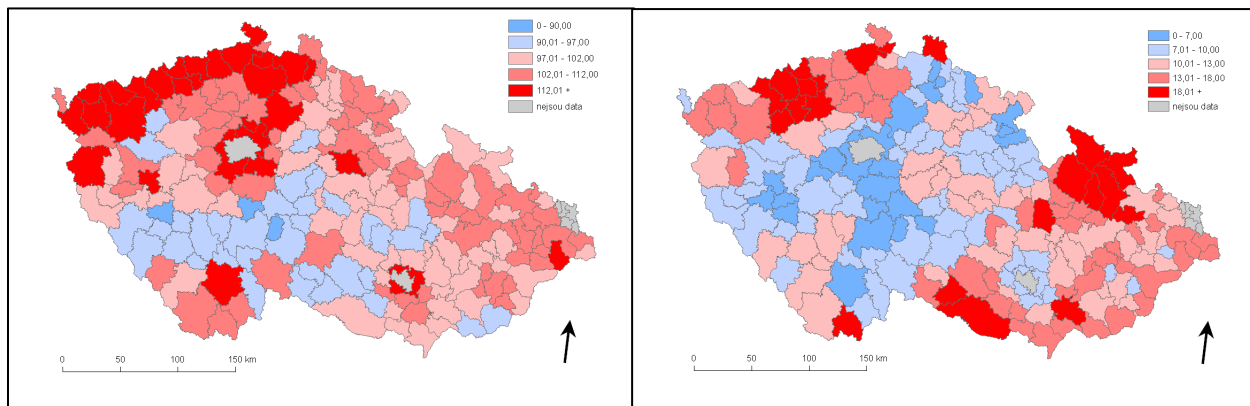


Figure 3. Share of inhabitants that have not moved - natives, participation in local election 2006 in %

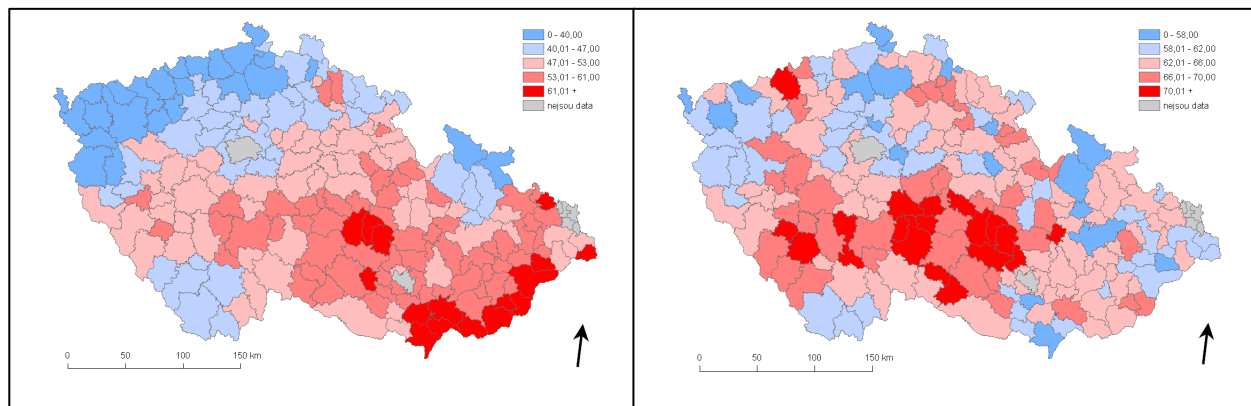


Figure 4. Average amount of subsidies per project 1998–2005 (in Czechia), share of all subsidies for municipality

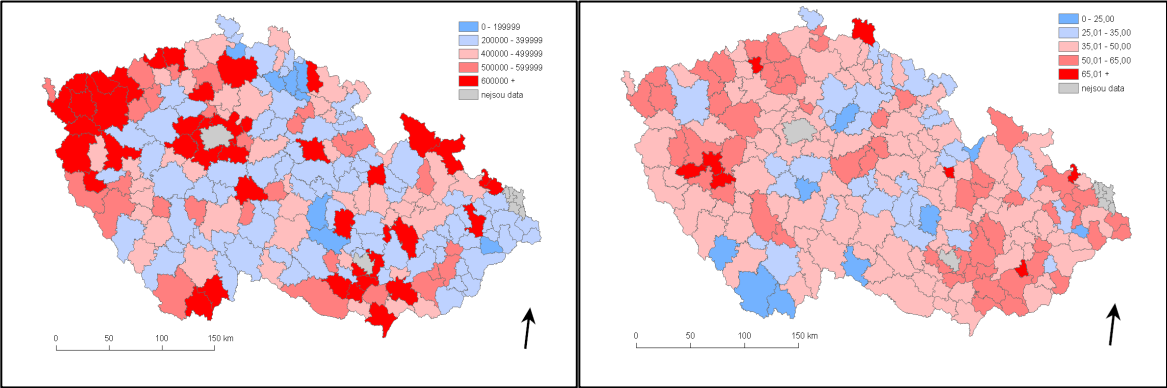
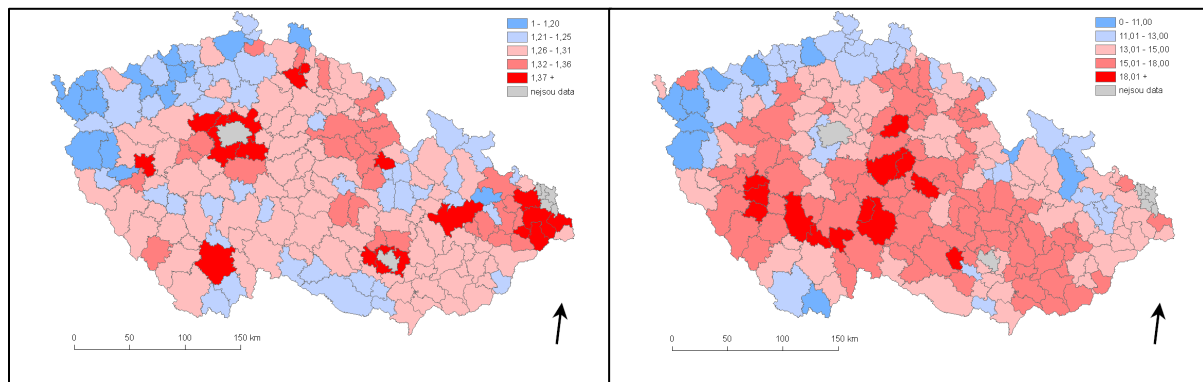
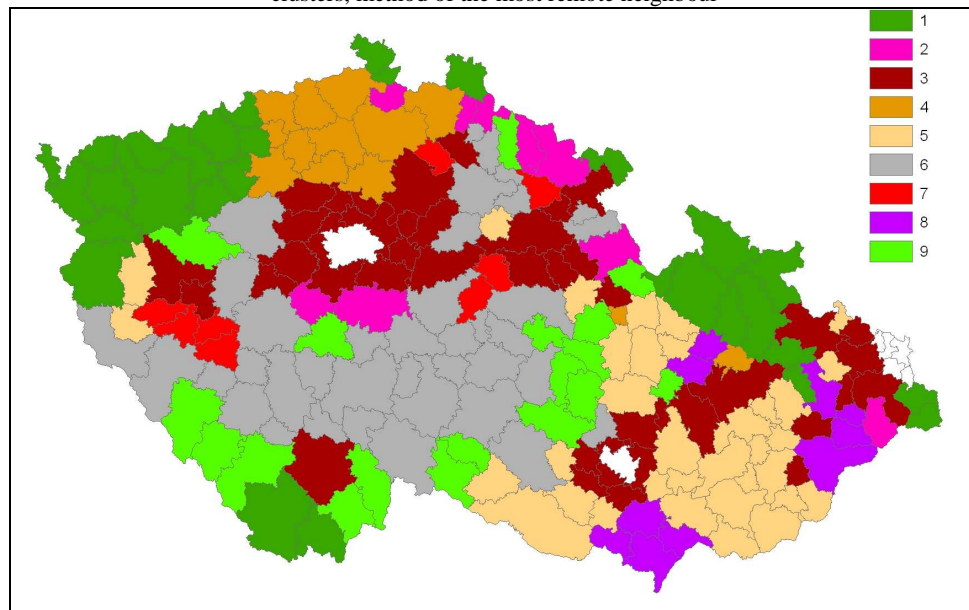


Figure 5. Share of people with higher education, share of people older than 65 years



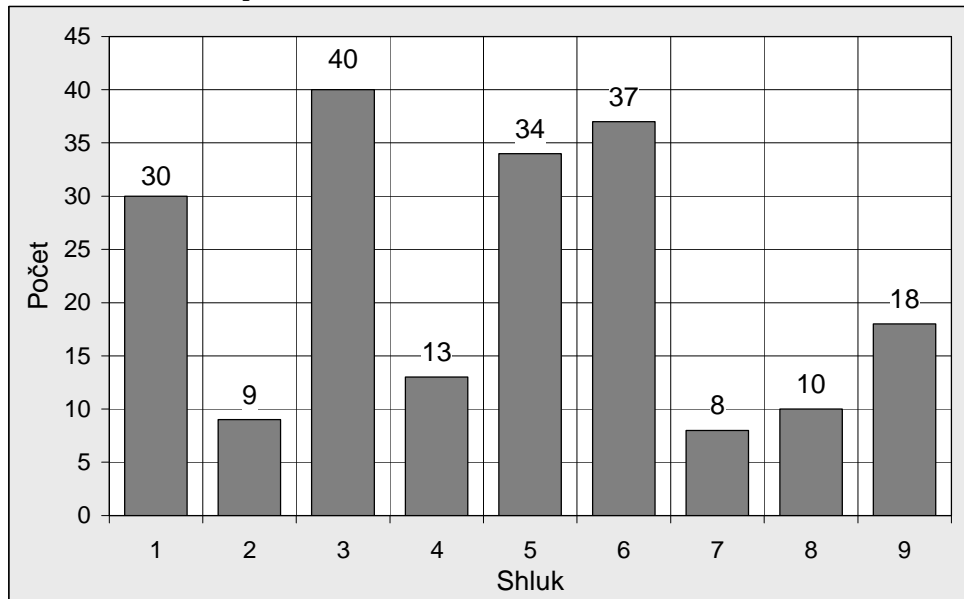
5.2 Evolution of cluster analysis

Figure 6. Typology of districts of MEPs according to the similarity of selected indices, section by clustering on the level of nine clusters, method of the most remote neighbour



Source: own calculation

Graph 1. Number of districts of MEPs in individual clusters



Source: own calculation

Type 1: “Peripheral resettled border areas”

This type is localized in the western part of Bohemia, in the area of Karlovy Vary and in the area of Jeseník. The municipalities we observed in this cluster are rural resettled border areas, both structurally affected and rural peripheral areas. Municipalities in this cluster manifest the highest unemployment rate, the lowest index of education, the lowest share of natives, a very high share of population of non-Czech nationality, the lowest share of inhabitants older than 65 years, a very high total volume of subsidies to legal persons per the number of receivers.

Type 2: “Tourist stress and jobs”

This is one of the least frequent clusters, where units do not form a continuous area. This type is formed by municipalities of a higher population size with an extremely high tourism-recreation function and stress, with the second highest share of nature protection in the territorial district of the municipality, with the highest share of houses built after 1991, with the lowest share of persons commuting to work and with the second highest index of education.

Type 3: “Metropolitan rural areas”

The type is found mainly in the background of big cities and formed by rural municipalities in districts of MEPs in the neighbourhood of Prague which are continuously connected via the Kolín MEP to the area of the Hradec Králové – Pardubice agglomeration with further connection to Mladá Boleslav and the area of Liberec. This type is further found in the background of Brno and Olomouc and in area of Ostrava. It is formed by municipalities with an extreme density of population, with a very high migration balance, with the second highest share of houses built after 1991, with the lowest unemployment, with the highest index of education, with a high number of connections, with an above-average total volume of subsidies, but with a rather lower participation of municipalities.

Type 4: “Active resettled border areas”

The type consists from 13 territorial districts of MEPs forming a continuous territory in the north of Bohemia between the Ústí nad Labem MEP and the Liberec MEP along the border of the Ústí nad Labem Region. Municipalities of this type have an above-average population size, the highest changes in the number of inhabitants in the period 1991 - 2005, the lowest age structures in Czechia (resettlement and industry), but at the same time also the highest migration balance, a very low share of inhabitants older than 65 years, the second lowest index of education, the shortest distance from the centres of regions, the second highest share of subsidies to municipalities from the total volume of subsidies.

Type 5: “Stable Moravian rural areas”

This type concentrates mostly rural municipalities in districts of MEPs situated in the Regions of South Moravia and Zlín, partly also in the Region of

Olomouc. They are municipalities characterized mainly by a low change of the number of inhabitants in the period 1991–2005, by the lowest migration balance, by the second highest share of natives, by a very high share of permanently inhabited houses, by the lowest tourism-recreation stress, by the second highest share of inhabitants with gas connections, by the highest share of inhabitants connected to sewer system.

Type 6: “Inner peripheries”

One of the multiple types is formed by rural municipalities in a very large settlement belt along the border of the Regions of Central Bohemia, Plzeň, South Bohemia and Vysočina and stretching further to the Krkonoše Mountains. It represents the traditional Czech rather scattered rural built-up territory at medium altitudes with municipalities with the second lowest number of inhabitants, with the second lowest population density, with the lowest change in the number of inhabitants between 1991–2005, with the second lowest share of houses built after 1991, with the highest share of inhabitants older than 65 years, with the second lowest share of permanently inhabited houses, with the second lowest share of protected territories in the areas of the municipality district, with a low number of connections, with a low unemployment rate, with a very low share of inhabitants with gas connection, but with an average number as to connection to sewage system, with a low number of candidates per the number of seats, but with the highest participation in elections, with the lowest total volume of subsidies to municipalities.

Type 7: “Very small municipalities”

The least frequent type, the characteristics of which are very similar to the previous type of inner peripheries. It does not form a continuous area and is only adjacent to the previous cluster and enlarging it. It has municipalities with the lowest population size, the lowest share of houses built after 1991, the second highest share of inhabitants older than 65 years, the lowest number of connections, but the highest share of persons commuting to work, a low unemployment rate, the lowest share of inhabitants with connection to sewage system, the lowest number of candidates per number of seats, the second lowest total volume of subsidies to legal persons, but the highest share of subsidies to municipalities.

Type 8: “Moravian periphery”

The MEP districts forming this cluster are situated in southeast Moravia (areas called Dolňácko, Valašsko, Malá Haná) and have municipalities with the highest population size, the highest share of natives, the second lowest migration balance, the second highest share of houses built after 1991, the highest share of permanently inhabited houses, the second highest population density, the lowest tourism-recreation stress, the highest number of connections, the highest share of inhabitants with gas connection, the highest

number of candidates per the number of seat, the second lowest share of subsidies to municipalities.

Type 9: “Protected areas”

This relatively numerous cluster has very similar characteristics as peripheral Czech rural areas, from which it differs by a high share of nature protection in individual rural municipalities. Municipalities of this type are further characterized by the lowest share of permanently inhabited houses, the lowest population density, the second lowest change in the number of inhabitants between 1991–2005, the second lowest migration balance, the highest distance from regional centres, the lowest share of inhabitants with gas connection, the second highest participation in elections, the lowest share of subsidies to municipalities from the total volume.

6 Conclusion

This elaboration of the typology of Czech rural areas both according to the selected indices and to the complex evaluation with the help of cluster analysis enabled us to prove unambiguously that there exist in Czech rural areas very significant regional differences in social-economic position of municipalities and therefore also large differences of their development potentials. When observing the development potential of Czech rural areas, we must take into account different possibilities and prerequisites of development of rural municipalities. It is therefore necessary to precisely diversify individual types of support for Czech rural areas, so that the offered support could be effectively used, and at the same time to ensure the really necessary investments or activities in rural municipalities. The most important rural types are:

- Suburban rural areas;
- Inner peripheries;
- Moravian rural areas;
- Rural areas from where the German population was transferred;
- Resettled border areas.

In these types of rural areas we can expect also in future different conditions of development and differentiated aims projected into the priorities of individual municipal politicians or representatives of non-profit or business sector in rural areas. If the decision-making sphere succeeds to find possibilities how to diversify the aims of rural development and thus also the support for the determined priorities in compliance with the real and different requirements of rural representatives, it will be possible to spend individual means in a much more effective way.

Acknowledgement

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A probability-based approach to regional differences in Vysočina Region communities

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Annotation. The paper analyzes outcomes of the empirical research carried out in the Vysočina Region villages in 2007. It pays attention to regional disparity problems as seen from the viewpoint of civic life aspects, where there were deteriorations felt as against the previous period. Representativity of the sample of communities was verified as to the village size and the county linkage. By means of the sign test subregions were selected showing considerable tendencies to deterioration and to improvement in the variables studied as against the assumptions expected. The consequent probabilistic assessment discovered the chances and risks of changes in the communities' approaches to positive changes according to county links in the Vysočina Region. The solution offered here demonstrates new areas of application of probabilistic procedures for statistical analyses of qualitative research.

Key words: Empirical research, community, Vysočina Region, sign test, chance, risk, statistical analysis, qualitative research.

1 Introduction

Vysočina is the region with the highest number of the villages up to 200 head and up to 500 head in the Czech Republic. Region Vysočina was delimitated to the NUTS 3 system in the year 2000 and there are five districts on its area: Havlíčkův Brod, Jihlava, Pelhřimov, Třebíč and Žďár nad Sázavou. Actual number of communities in Vysočina Region is 704. The municipal offices got the questionnaire for description and evaluation of conditions of inhabitant's life in the year 2007. Very important was excellent attitude of municipal representatives towards the research. They sent back 412 total or particular filling questionnaires. The magistrates were expressive of community facilities, of public finance, of community possibilities in the economic development and also of the social and human capital, of the environment and chances for another development concrete village or town. The survey was

interesting in historical connections, roots and traditions. Survey results were compiled by unusual statistical techniques and with the help of probability aimed at negative trends of basic needs in civil life in the Vysočina communities.

2 Objective and methods

The paper's aim is to quantify chances and risks of the future development and improving the life quality in Vysočina Region. Data and information about problems of rural development's are from enquiry, it has qualitative character. Many authors [1], [5] define qualitative enquiry as nonnumerical survey and interpretation of social reality, the aim is to discover of sense of survey's information. Principles of empirical enquiry and their pitfall are given for example in papers of [4].

Solution is based on the questionnaire survey carried out in all 704 municipalities in Vysočina Region. Collected data follow up missing readings finding out by central statistics and evidence. The survey was focused on opinions an experience of members of local authorities in fields of social, economic, environmental a human capital development. Partly is questionnaire focused on culture and tradition. Empirical survey was separated to following spheres of problems [7]:

- community facilities for wellness life in the community,
- infrastructure condition of community and transportation accessibility,
- economic potential of community,
- condition and dynamic development of social structure,
- condition for life in society, relaxation and culture.

The methods of data collecting in the field provided to put together written data of respondents. It is a reactive method, which is financially accessible. This way acquired data were good evaluable. The advantage of this questionnaire method was the possibility to focus on more respondents in relatively short time. In disadvantage can we include risk of misapprehension the questions and risk of stylization, respondent knows, that the research is focused on him and he wan to make the best effect. This potential misrepresentation in questionnaire was eliminate due to anonymity of respondents.

The representativity of the sample of communities was verified according to the village size and the county linkage at first. There was used one-sample test for relative frequency with alternative distribution. The changes of inhabitant attitudes towards basic public life were studied in the conjuncture research.

The aspects with the highest frequency were further on another analysis. Then were villages grouped by their size (up to 199 head and up to 499 head) and were chosen aspects. Statistical significance is an argument for deeper analysis.

Statistical significant relationships are analysed by means of sign test and indicators of risks and chances (Table 1, [6], [3]):

Table 1. Contingency table 2x2

Category of 1. variable	Category of 2. variable	
	v_{1s}	v_{2s}
v_{r1}	a	b
v_{r2}	c	d

Odds and chance were expressed by following formulas [2], [3], [6]:

Relative risk

$$RR_1 = \frac{\frac{a}{a+b}}{\frac{c}{c+d}} = \frac{a(c+d)}{c(a+b)} \quad (1)$$

The numerator in RR_1 fraction $a/(a+b)$ shows probability of realization category v_{r1} in alternatives v_{1s} (cell „a“). Complement to value 1 of this probability is share $b/(a+b)$. If the categories of the second variable are independent on categories of the first variable, is value $RR_1 = 1$. Values higher than 1 indicate, that in the cell „a“ will be occur higher share of the total frequency than in the cell „b“. Alongside will be higher share of total frequency of the variable v_{r2} in the cell „d“ than in the cell „c“. If the RR_1 value is lower than 1, has variable v_{r1} higher share of total frequency in the cell „b“ and variable v_{r2} has higher share of total frequency in the cell „c“. Correspondingly can be computed relative risk with focus on category v_{2s} (RR_2):

$$RR_2 = \frac{\frac{b}{a+b}}{\frac{d}{c+d}} = \frac{b(c+d)}{d(a+b)} \quad (2)$$

Odds ratio

$$OR = \frac{RR_1}{RR_2} = \frac{ad}{bc} \quad (3)$$

Odds ratio represents ratio of two alternatives of relative risk results (RR_1 a RR_2). The OR values are between zero and infinity, in the case of independent between variables equals OR 1. OR values that approach zero indicate strong dependent.

Attributive risk

$$AR = \frac{a}{a+b} - \frac{c}{c+d} \quad (4)$$

Attributive risk represents difference of probability of incidence v_{1s} for both categories of the first variable – v_{r1} a v_{r2} . It is between $<-1;1>$.

Relative attributive risk

$$RAR = \frac{\frac{a}{a+b} - \frac{c}{c+d}}{\frac{a}{a+b}} \cdot 100 \quad (5)$$

Relative attributive risk is based on attributive risk and it is percentage change of probability of incidence v_{1s} for both categories – v_{r1} a v_{r2} . Basis for computing is share of frequency incidence in the cell „a“ in relation to marginal frequency of category v_{r1} (share $a/(a+b)$).

3 Results and discussion

As a whole, there were 704 villages in the Vysočina region on November 30, 2006, to whom the questionnaire had been addressed by the end of 2006. The questionnaire completed was sent back by 412 representatives, i.e., the rate of return was 58,52 %. In three cases the village size and the name of district were not given, hence, size of the sample was reduced in the double-degree grouping operation.

Verification of representativity

In spite of the high number of responses, representativity of the sample had to be verified. Representativity was verified according to village size groups by

the number of inhabitants and also according to representation of villages in separate districts of the region. The tables 2 and 3 show the results of testing.

Table 2. Representation of respondents by the village groups by size

Size of village (number of the population)	Database	Relative frequency (%)	Selective dataset	Selective relative frequency (%)	Test criterion	„p“ value
to 199	336	47,73	167	40,83	-1,7852	0,14
200 - 499	212	30,11	140	34,23	1,0627	0,42
500 - 999	90	12,78	61	14,91	0,4458	0,70
100 - 1999	35	4,97	24	5,87	0,2029	0,88
2000 - 4999	13	1,85	9	2,20	0,0779	0,95
5000 - 9999	10	1,42	6	1,47	0,0103	0,99
10000 - 19999	4	0,57	1	0,24	-4,3835	0,00
20000 and more	4	0,57	1	0,24	-4,3835	0,00
Uninitiated	x	x	3	x	x	x
Total	704	100,00	412	100,00	—	—

Except the villages over 10 thousand of inhabitants, of which there are 1,14 % only in the entire list of communities, structure of the sample corresponds to the structure of the total population ($\alpha = 0.01$). Similar conclusion can be expressed as concerns the distribution of villages by districts.

Table 3. Representation of villages by county

Rural region	Database	Relative frequency (%)	Selective dataset	Selective relative frequency (%)	Test criterion	„p“ value
Havl. Brod	120	17,05	70	17,11	0,0133	0,99
Jihlava	121	17,19	69	16,87	-0,0705	0,96
Pelhřimov	120	17,05	66	16,14	-0,1966	0,87
Třebíč	172	24,43	104	25,43	0,2373	0,85
Žďár n. Sázavou	171	24,29	100	24,45	0,0373	0,97
Uninitiated	x	x	3	x	x	x
Total	704	100,00	412	100,00	—	—

Assessment of village infrastructures

Within most of the Vysočina region villages (> 60 %) many elements of the basic civic infrastructures and services are missing: elementary school, hairdresser's, dry cleaning shop, medical practitioner, gym, pharmacy, postoffice, police station, dentist, gas filling station, bank branch or the "hole in the wall", cinema hall, theatre and sports events. It is encouraging that, in 42 % of communities a kindergarten has been supported, however, an elementary school in 35 % only. In most villages there is a grocery shop, a restaurant and a sports court. A community library can be visited in most communities. Divine service can be attended in 60 % of communities, religious pilgrimages are attended as well as traditional feasts.

Bus is the most important public means of transport. In 95 % of communities a prevailing number of economically active population has to travel to work. Most households in the region use heating by coal and wood, however, about a quarter have gas heating. A problem is felt as concerns sewage cleaning and bad state of the surface of roads. The service sector is at insufficient level, except repair services. Social services are missing. The proportion of industrial production is lower as compared with other regions, some more importance can be assigned to wood processing and construction. Farm production is at the sub-mountain level, cereals and potatoes are grown and cattle is bred.

The villages are dependent upon State coffers and upon the taxes collected. Improvement of environment and of the level of living has been noted, transport accessibility has deteriorated as well as chances of employment. The representatives see a certain chance for the development of the villages in improving the living conditions for young families and improving the services.

Civic life in the region

Conjuncture research has been arranged in order to assess changes in the approaches of people to basic aspects of civic life (Table 4).

The village representatives appreciate positively the improvement in levels of living, in the environment, and sports and recreational activities. Negatively they assess the insufficient employment opportunities and the transport problems. The survey discovered deterioration of neighbourhood relationships within the villages. The "open" questionnaire questions completed the survey results by further explanations. Important reasons for people's remaining to live in the Vysočina villages are given by improvement and facilitation of life for the young families. Care for the elderly is insufficient. Three variables have been selected from the civic life problems, where a higher proportion of unsatisfied citizens has been recorded: employment opportunities, neighbourhood relations and transport problems. A detailed analysis has been carried out of the impact of the tendencies recorded upon the most threatened communities group, i.e., the smallest villages up to 200 and to 500 inhabitants.

Table 4. Structure of survey respondents in communities

Aspect	Part of answers (%)		
	Improvement	The same level	Upset
Labour chances	17,3	31,3	51,4
Neighbour's relationships	4,3	59,9	35,8
Recreational chances	37,7	55,8	6,5
Transportation chances	16,8	31,8	51,4
Cultural chances	24,1	58,0	17,8
Sports chances	44,4	48,2	7,3
Environment	50,9	42,9	6,3
Safety of inhabitants	8,8	62,6	28,5
Level of living	51,1	36,0	12,8
Criminality	5,1	64,8	30,1

Risks and chances of changes in the perception of communities development aspects

The most important indicator felt as the decisive one for maintenance and improvement of the inhabitants' levels of living and stability of the communities is that of employment opportunities. The Vysočina region is one of the regions having an above average proportion of farming on the region's GDP. In spite of the downfall of numbers of those employed in farming and forestry in the nineties, Vysočina belongs to the regions with the highest employment in these primary sectors. The problem of employment opportunities is given very high attention in Vysočina. The sign test signalled a significant feeling of worsened chances of employment especially in the smallest villages up to 200 inhabitants but in those up to 500 as well. The table 5 quantifies the facts recorded by means of probabilities. The probability for a citizen from a small village to assess real chances of his/her employment as worsened ones as against the previous period, is 1,257 times (men), or 1,316times (women) higher than for the larger communities' citizens. The chance for the smaller villages citizens to assess the situation of employment opportunities as a better one is 0,378times (0,396times) lower, while the chance that people from the smallest villages will express themselves negatively to the employment opportunities is 2,645times (2,527times) higher. The probability of a negative assessment of current situation in employment opportunities is by 0,1727 higher as against the communities above 200 head, i.e., by 20,47 %. Since, in the smallest villages up to 200 head a large proportion of the elderly live, this difference is much higher than in the villages up to 499 head. The difference between the probabilities of deterioration in the group up to 499 head and the group over 500 head makes it 0,1904, i.e., 144,69 %.

Table 5. Risks and chances of labour chances by village size

Size of village (number of the population)	Labour chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	worse	better	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 199	97	18	1,257	2,645	0,1727	20,47
200 and more	108	53				
Size of village (number of the population)	Labour chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	better	worse	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR
Up to 199	18	97	0,475	0,378	-0,1727	-110,32
200 and more	53	108				
Size of village (number of the population)	Labour chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	worse	better	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR
Up to 499	161	42	1,316	2,527	0,1904	144,69
500 and more	44	29				
Size of village (number of the population)	Labour chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	better	worse	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR
Up to 499	42	161	0,521	0,396	-0,1904	-92,03%
500 and more	29	44				

The condition sine qua non of high quality village life is a regular public transport facility. The sign test results show many a common tendency with the employment opportunities variable. The feeling of deterioration is recorded by the smallest villages up to 199 head, and improvement of transport facilities has been stated by the respondents from communities over 500 head. The probability of transport deterioration (Table 6) towards the smallest villages below 200 head as against larger communities is 1,143times higher, while in the villages up to 499 head is the probability of negative assessment 0,552times lower. This fact shows some further problems of the smallest villages. The difference of the probability of deterioration in the villages up to 199 head as against the larger ones is positive and it makes it 12,51 %, while the transport situation in the villages up to 499 head got improved according to the respondents, and the chance that these citizens will assess the transport towards their village as an improved one is 2,292times higher than the opposite opinion.

Table 6. Risks and chances of transportation chances by village size

Size of village (number of the population)	Transportation chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	worse	better	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 199	94	22	1,143	1,754	0,1014	12,51
200 and more	112	46				
Size of village (number of the population)	Transportation chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	better	worse	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 199	22	94	0,657	0,57	-0,1014	-53,45
200 and more	46	112				
Size of village (number of the population)	Transportation chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	worse	better	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 499	41	160	0,552	0,437	-0,1659	-81,22
500 and more	27	46				
Size of village (number of the population)	Transportation chances are		Chances and risk indicators			
	better	worse	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 499	160	41	1,263	2,291	0,1659	20,84
500 and more	46	27				

Solid neighbourhood relations are typical for the countryside. Historically, mutual collaboration was necessary, strenghtened moreover by kinship connections.

Table 7. Risks and chances of neighbour's relationships by village size

Size of village (number of the population)	Neighbour's relationships are		Chances and risk indicators			
	better	worse	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 199	10	49	2,494	2,799	0,1015	59,88
200 and more	7	96				
Size of village (number of the population)	Neighbour's relationships are		Chances and risk indicators			
	worse	better	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 199	49	10	0,891	0,357	-0,1015	-12,22
200 and more	96	7				
Size of village (number of the population)	Neighbour's relationships are		Chances and risk indicators			
	better	worse	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR %
Up to 499	16	100	6,355	7,211	0,1162	84,26
500 and more	1	45				
Size of village (number of the population)	Neighbour's relationships are		Chances and risk indicators			
	worse	better	RR ₁	OR	AR	RAR
Up to 499	100	16	0,881	0,139	-0,1162	-13,48%
500 and more	45	1				

Nowadays, the neighbourhood relations got loosened, but the survey has shown that, they are perceived as important. In spite of the growing level of living and independence upon the help of the others it shows that, neighbourhood links are maintained by the inhabitants of the smallest villages up to 199 head; it is understood that, the nature of the links has not been changed. Research has shown favourable findings in the population of villages up to 499 head, where an improvement has been recorded. On the contrary, an expected improvement of neighbourhood relations has not materialized in the villages over 500 head. The evaluation of chances and risks (Table 7) shows a favourable situation in the smallest villages up to 199 head and especially, the ratio of chances of the proportion of inhabitants in the village up to 500 head with positive feeling of neighbourhood atmosphere as against the large communities is an encouraging finding for the village representatives' work, too.

4 Conclusion

Maintenance and favourable development of small villages is a fundamental task of the State policies. Inhabitants of the small villages naturally wish to live a life of the same quality as the town people. In 2007 an extensive questionnaire survey was finished in all the communities of the Vysočina region, having a high 58,5 % return rate. The database formed supplied a large volume of data not obtainable by the standard periodic and non-periodic statistical surveys. After the verification of representativity of the sample as concerns the village size and the regional representation, deeper analyses became possible. Besides the multi-degree grouping exercise the procedure was intentionally aimed at conjunctural questions, the responses on which signalled unfavourable tendencies. These concerned problems of employment opportunities, of public transport availability, of neighbourhood relations. Contingency tables showed the links between responses and the village size. It is just the village size that in the Vysočina region presents an important factor since Vysočina reports the largest proportion of smallest villages. The solution offered distinguishes villages up to 199 head and up to 499 head within the "smallest villages" category.

By means of the risks and chances analysis it has been discovered that, the subdivision of the smallest villages into two groups is useful. The villages up to 199 head stand in the most complex situation within the regional development. Deterioration of employment opportunities happens there and bad problems of transport are felt. The ratio of further deterioration chances is high and the probability of improvement is low. If the availability of transport for the villages up to 199 head does not improve, depopulation will likely follow in Vysočina.

The villages of size 200 - 499 head represent perhaps the optimal size of the "smallest" villages, where most of the civic life aspects studied have improved. These villages have reported high values of the ratio of chances for further improvement in transport availability as well as in neighbourhood relations. The analysis carried out demonstrated further chances of application of statistical methods in the assessment of results of empirical research and offered ways of their possible use.

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Choice labour market indicators of South Bohemia countryside and possibilities of his development

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Annotation. The paper deals with limitation of South Bohemia countryside (rural area is here understood as all municipalities with size to the 2000 inhabitant), than with analysis of choice labour market indicator that was gained from Czech statistical office and with possibilities of countryside development.

Key words: rural area, labour market, unemployment, analysis, countryside development.

1 Introduction

Rural areas are characterized by lower population and dwelling density, smaller residences, higher employment in the “primary sector” (agriculture, forestry and fish farming), the close relationship of the inhabitants with the countryside, the style of architecture, the type of buildings, and by a certain life style of the population which differs in many aspects from that of urban life style. Currently we do not have an agreed on definition of the term rural area. The generally accepted international definition is OECD, which is based on the proportion of inhabitants occupying the area and population density of 150 inhabitants per km² or less. Rural areas are defined using this methodology at two levels:

1. local (i.e., villages) – rural area is defined as settlements with population density of 150 inhabitants per km² or less,
2. regional - defines regions as:
 - mostly rural where 50% or more of the population lives in rural villages,
 - significantly rural where 15 to 50% of the population lives in rural villages,
 - distinctly urban where less than 15% of the population lives in rural villages.

According to the law no. 128/2000 regarding settlements in the Czech Republic, a settlement of 3000 or more inhabitants is a town if, at the request

of the village council, the chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies, with the consent of the government, establishes it as such [6]. However there are many towns with a smaller population which gained their town status in the past. The National Strategic Plan concerning the development of rural areas uses the methodology of OECD for the definition of rural areas. All the lands of all the regions with the exception of the capital are included. The National Strategic Plan considers village settlements to be settlements of less than 2000 inhabitants, and they are also defined that way in this paper [3].

The goal of this paper is the delimitation of rural areas and the analysis and evaluation of selected labour market in the rural areas of this region. The development of rural areas is treated as an additional objective

2 Results and discussion

The area of the South Bohemia (10 057 km²) comprises almost 13% of the total area of the Czech Republic, making it the second largest region. Forested areas take up one-third and water surface covers 4% of this region. Major portion of this region is at an altitude of 400 – 600 m above sea level resulting in harsher climatic conditions. This region is considered to be, above all, an agricultural area. Processing and fabricating industries such as food processing, fabrication, textile and garment industry prevail in this region.

The Region is divided into 7 counties – České Budějovice, Český Krumlov, Jindřichův Hradec, Písek, Prachovice, Strakonice a Tábor. It occupies the last place among the regions in population density (62 inhabitants per km²), not a single county reaches the average Czech Republic population density parameter. The greatest population density occurs in Ceske Budejovice where roughly one quarter of the population of the region lives. This is mainly on account of the fact that the population concentrates in the region's capital. One third of Southern Bohemians live in the 5 largest cities (Č. Budějovice, Tábor, Písek, Strakonice a J. Hradec) of this region.

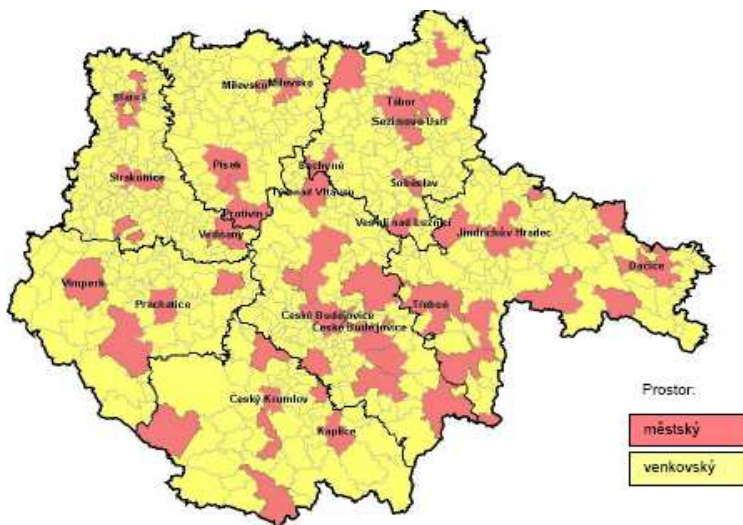
There were 573 rural villages in the region (7 776 km²). The population, as of the end of 2006, in these villages was more than 212 000 inhabitants – see Table 1. In comparison with the average Czech Republic value, the ratio of villages to the total number of settlements is 2.4 percentage points higher. The ratio of inhabitants living in these villages is also higher (7.3%).

Table 1. Basic characteristic of rural areas in South Bohemia and Czech Republic to 31.12.2006

	Number of municipality	Rural municipality		Number of population	Number of rural population	
	n	n	%	n	n	%
South Bohemia	623	573	92,0	630006	212335	33,7
Czech Republic	6249	5602	89,6	10287189	2714859	26,4

Source: Czech statistical office [1]

The picture 1 depicts urban and rural areas of South Bohemia and where they prevail.



Picture 1. Urban and rural areas of South Bohemia k 31.12.2006

Source: Czech statistical office [1]

2.1 Level of economic activity

When analysing certain indicators in the area of the labour market it is necessary to use the results of an official census since the data contained in the statistics of economic conditions are commonly obtained by selective means with the desired outputs calculated with the help of statistical methods and the data regarding smaller area standards are not representative enough. One

of these indicators is the level of economic activity expressed as a ratio of people engaged in economic activity per number of inhabitants 15 years and older. Working retirees, students and apprentices working part time, women on maternity leave, and the unemployed, in addition to employed persons, are all included in the population of the economically active per the methodology of counting inhabitants. As of 1.3. 2001 EAO in the region (61,47 %) exceeds the average nationwide value by 0.21%. In the rural areas the EAO climbs to 59.22%. More than 2/3 of the men and more than ½ of the women are EAO. The economic activity of the urban areas is about 3% higher. The economic activity of women shows a greater difference. The nationwide economic activity was 61.26%, with the rural areas indicating 59.35% of economic activity – see table 2.

Table 2. Employment in South Bohemia to 1.3.2001

	Municipality to 2 000 inhabitant (rural area)		Municipality over 2000 inhabitant (towns)		Total
	n	%	n	%	
Economically active population	100 792	-	219 754	-	320 546
In that men	58 155	-	119 327	-	177 482
women	42 637	-	100 427	-	143 064
Rate of econ. activity	-	59,22	-	62,57	61,47%
In that men	-	68,43	-	69,26	68,95%
women	-	49,67	-	55,22	53,44%
Employable - total	93 887	-	206 350	-	300 237
In primary sector	15 611	17,2	8 001	4,0	23 612 8,1%
In secondary sector	38 916	42,9	82 641	41,3	121 557 41,8%
In tertiary sector	36 247	39,9	109 454	54,7	145 701 50,1%

Source: Czech statistical office [1]

Another significant indicator of rural economic activity is the ratio of the employed in agriculture, forestry, and fish farming (primary sector) to the total employment. The region experiences 3.4% higher ratio in this employment area. Urban employment in agriculture is, naturally, indicating 13% fewer persons which is about 4% of the employment. This employment is made up of people occupying the peripheries of towns as well as the ones commuting from the towns to their primary sector work. Around 40% of the rural population is employed in the secondary and tertiary sector.

2.2 The rate of unemployment

The rate of unemployment is the most significant measure of unemployment. This is calculated here as the ratio of available applicants (able to enter the workforce), as filed at the work administration office at the end of the year, to the economically active number per the census. The trend during the last few years has been toward fewer applicants for jobs and therefore toward lower unemployment. Nationwide unemployment was 8.02% at the end of the last calendar year, with rural areas experiencing more unemployment than urban areas. The unfavorable conditions of the rural labour market reflect not only fewer available positions, but often the more difficult commute conditions as well as the inflexibility and lower achieved level of education of the populace.

Table 3. Job applicant in South Bohemia to 31.12.2006

	Municipality to 2 000 inhabitant (rural area)		Municipality over 2000 inhabitant (towns)		Total
	n	%	n	%	
Job applicant - total	7 499		12 927		20 426
In that men	3 260		5 758		9 018
women	4 239		7 169		11 408
Rate of unemployment	-	6,87	-	5,40	5,87
In that men	-	5,24	-	4,51	4,75
women	-	9,10	-	6,46	7,25
Job applicant into 25 years	1 312	17,5	2 360	18,3	3 672 18,0%
Job applicant above 50 years	2 123	28,3	3 314	25,6	5 437 26,6%
Job applicant registered at employment office more than 1 year	2 333	31,1	3 842	29,7	6 175 30,2%

Source: Czech statistical office [1]

The nationwide rural unemployment rate for the Czech Republic is 8.51%. The urban rate attains 7.86%. The Southern Bohemia region's long term unemployment is one of the lowest in the Czech Republic. The regional rural value is 6.87% (see table 3) and the urban value is lower by 1.5%. Women experience greater differences in the unemployment rate than men do. The unemployment in rural areas shows a slightly greater ratio of unemployed for those over 50 (about 3%) and those who have been unemployed for more than a year (1,5%). This seems to correlate to the more difficult search of open positions. Women are counted in the labour market problematic group and

they have hard time finding a job. Women in rural villages have unemployment rate of more than 9% which is 2.5% more than the cities.

2.3 Economics subjects

Small and medium size enterprises comprise a significant part of the market economy, not only in the Czech Republic, but also in the EU countries. They create energetic entrepreneurial conditions, increase the dynamics of the market, can absorb a large number of the workforce laid off from larger corporations, and are a stabilizing element of the economic system [5]. The number of small business enterprises leads the total number businesses both in rural and urban areas. We can find more farming and agricultural type of business in the villages – see table 4.

The micro-business group (into 9 employees) is the most numerous in the Czech Republic and employs roughly the same amount of people as the small and medium size enterprises combined highlighting its importance. The number of businesses employing 1 to 9 employees located on local premises and registered in the Czech Statistical Office Business Registry is evaluated at businesses per 1000 inhabitants in the 18-64 age group. The region averaged 30 by this indicator. This indicator of 24.06 for the rural areas of South Bohemia is higher than the nationwide average. The urban indicator's value is approximately 9 higher.

Small entrepreneurship represented 22.81 micro-businesses per 1000 inhabitants in the 18-64 age group in the Czech Republic at the end of 2006. Nationwide the number was 31.6. From the aforementioned numbers it can be deduced that small and medium entrepreneurship play a significant role in the rural areas, and that their development helps the overall rural development. It is, however, important to create opportunities for the establishment and operation of SMB (Small and Medium-size Businesses) in the form of soft backing and subsidies enabling easier access to the sources of financing. New forms of rural economic activity, the expansion of crafts, and traditional means of livelihood and production should also receive subsidies [4].

Table 4. Economics subjects in South Bohemia to 31. 12. 2006

	Municipality to 2 000 inhabitant (rural area)	Municipality over 2000 inhabitant (towns)	Total
	n	n %	
Economics subjects - total	47 296	99 029	146 325
In that legal entity	8 056	19 253	27 309
personal entity	39 240	79 776	119 016
In that agriculture	8 771	4 543	13 314
industry	6 861	12 811	19 672
building	6 600	11 655	18 255
In that subjects above 20 employees	503	1 512	2 015
Number of micro- companies on 1000 inhabitant (18-64 years)	24,06	33,11	30,09

Source: Czech statistical office [1]

2.4 Development of rural areas of South Bohemia

The National Strategic Plan for the development of rural areas of the Czech Republic for the years 2007 – 2013 is a strategic document for rural development which is implemented through the document dealing with various programs - Development of Rural Areas Document [3]. This document specifies four strategic developmental axes leading to the development of rural areas and agriculture: better competitive advantage of agriculture and forestry; improvement of the environment and the countryside; improvement of the quality of life in rural areas; diversification of the rural economy, LEADER.

Currently the program for our region, the development of the Southern Bohemian Region, is the important one. This program is the base of a document of medium-term regional development at the higher level of a region independent master plan. This region is administrating the development plan independently according to current legislature, with attention paid specifically to laws no. 248/2000 regarding the support for regional development and laws concerning regions no. 192/2000 [2].

The program proposes 8 priority points, of which point 5, rural spaces, concentrates on rural areas. The strategic goal of this point is the support of diversification of rural economy with the specific aim of utilizing modern forms of agriculture, fish farming, and forestry while exploiting and at the same time retaining the local traditions and respect for the countryside.

The specific goals are:

1. Better quality of life in rural areas: diversification of farming activities; improved conditions for new job creation; strengthening of rural economy diversity by supporting the establishment of new businesses and their development; development of various services in rural regions; creation of opportunity for new investments; support for the cooperation with local authorities, private, and non profit organizations.
2. Increasing the competitiveness of agriculture, forestry, and fish farming through the better usage of production facilities and better cooperation with connecting industries.

The support of rural areas can also utilize regional grants. The regional plan for the year 2008 designates 12 million CZK for the construction and renovation of water management infrastructure. The goal of this project is to support the renovation and the reconstruction of water management infrastructure (water supply and sewage) in small villages. Three million CZK is allocated for the support for the necessary documentation creation. The goal of this project is to enable entrepreneurs in agriculture to gain easier access to financial help for the creation of the project documentation and the required supplements.

The labour market area falls under Human Resources and Social Solidarity which is one of the program's main points. The strategic goal here is to expand education, tool innovation for the labour market, expansion of social infrastructure as well as equipment for sports and cultural endeavors, improvements in the quality of health care and social services and their optimization in the region. Operational goals are: reducing long-term unemployment; reducing unemployment in target groups of 25 and under and for persons who are disadvantaged in labour market; expansion of employment of the elderly in the labour market with the outlook of increasing the retirement age; the promotion of equal opportunities in the labour market for all the groups with emphasis on equal opportunities for men and women as well as different age groups; greater flow of information; greater mobility between professions through re-qualification.

3 Conclusion

Rural areas cover large part if not the whole Czech Republic. In order to find a comprehensive solution for rural development all the specifics need to be accounted for. The Southern Bohemia region has the lowest population density among the regions. This on the one hand results in less damage to the environment, but on the other hand worsens the quality of life, lowers

accessibility to services, and results in higher costs for technical and social improvements of settlements. Southern Bohemia region should be considered more rural than the Czech average. The ratio of rural inhabitants is about 10% greater than nationwide average. The area designated as rural makes up 80% of the total area of the region. Of the 623 settlements 573 can be considered as rural. The proportion of rural settlements is around 90% and is 2.4% higher than the Czech average. The rural areas, in contrast to urban areas, have a lower economic activity of its inhabitants, lower employment in the tertiary sector, lower number of micro businesses, and fewer applicants in the age group of 25 and under.

As opposed to the urban areas there is higher employment in the primary sector, overall higher unemployment rate, higher proportion of applicants 50 and over for jobs and higher number of applicants seeking a job one year or longer. Overall it can be said that the rural labour market is worse off. The development program should help better this situation.

Acknowledgement

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Principle of Subsidiarity - an opportunity for Rural Development

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Annotation. Local Action Groups (LAG) are representative organizations of rural areas (there are local municipalities, businessmen and NGOs in charge of). These organizations have experiences with strategic planning and are the closest to the local people. So according to principle of subsidiarity the LAGs can play role both at coordinating strategic regional projects and regional policies.

Key words: Subsidiarity, rural development, strategic planning, strategic government, LAG, employment, knowledge society, human resources.

1 Introduction

Principal of subsidiarity is very popular at European Union. It is mentioned almost at every policy and it plays an important role also at new Treaty of Lisbon.

We will start this paper by mentioning the main problems of the rural areas. Then we will explain the term “subsidiarity” at the state of art section, after that we will focus at the definition of the term “rural area” and next we will continue by introducing Local Action Groups (LAGs) like important social and strategic entities at the rural areas.

After introducing the basic terms, the more detailed view at the municipality structure at Czech Republic will be provided.

The author will add his subjective intervention at the end of this paper.

2 Problem definition

The rural areas at Europe have specific problems, other then towns have. These problems are mostly defined as:

- Bad demography;
- Lack of services;
- Lack of employee positions;
- Bad structure of employee positions;
- Bad transport infrastructure;
- Lack of finances;
- Worse conditions for local government (in compare to towns);
- Limited self-sufficiency. [3]

The rural areas are not able to compete to towns at economic strength. The population density will be always lower at rural areas, so all public and commercial services will be less effective at these areas. Just finances transfer will not solve all the problems. Next to finance redistribution, it is necessary to find some features of live at rural areas which will be used like strong traits satisfying people to live there.

3 State of art

We will describe what is known about the terms of “subsidiarity”, “rural areas” and what the LAGs are about at this part of the paper.

3.1 Subsidiarity

The term „subsidiarity“ is very popular in last decade. The wikipedia says: “Subsidiarity is the principle which states that matters ought to be handled by the smallest (or, the lowest) competent authority.” The Oxford English Dictionary defines subsidiarity as the idea that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level. [6]

In political documents we can find this term at Treaty of Maastrich from the year 1992. How is this term used in practice in EU policy is shown at the Treaty establishing the European Community updated by Treaty of Nice in 2002. There is written at the Article 5: “In areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community shall take action, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can

therefore, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved by the Community. Any action by the Community shall not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives of this Treaty.” [1]

This principle is very strongly implemented into new Treat of Lisbon. We will find the word “subsidiarity” 30 times at this Treat! This term is described very concretely at the annexed “Protocol on the application of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality”. For us is important, what is written at the preamble of this protocol. “THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES, WISHING to ensure that **decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizens of the Union, ...**” [5]

We will use this term at this paper in the way to help that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizens of the Union. Our special focus will be done to citizens living at rural areas. So we have to explain another term.

3.2 Rural areas

Different authors define this term diversely. It depends if the definition is done by geographs, statistics, sociologists, urbanists, etc. Generaly, there are two main ways of definition of rural areas in our field. The one is population density which OECD (*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*) and EUROSTATS (*Statistical Office of the European Union*) use and the second one is number of inhabitants of concrete municipality. The number of inhabitants indicator is more often used at Czech. Like rural municipality are mostly assumed municipalities with less then 2000 inhabitants.

But no one of these definitions fully cover the specialities of concrete areas with typical problems mentioned at the previous Problem definition part of this paper. So I suggest a new more complex definition of rural areas, which is suitable, in my view, for strategy planning and strategy government.

Rural area (countryside) is a community of people together with the territory they live in. This territory has to have the same historic, culture and natural background and has to cover more municipalities with less then 2 000 inhabitants and no more then one city up to 25 000 inhabitants. This definition is very similar to definition used at LEADER program which defines the LAGs and their method of work.

Why I suggest this definition is described at next part of the paper oriented at detailed analysis of municipalities at Czech Republic (CR).

3.3 Local Actions Groups (LAGs)

We speak about Local Action Groups at this paper, so just brief introducing what these entities are.

The Leader approach and LAGs are defined at articles 61 – 65 of Council regulation (EC) No. 1698/2005. [2]

The basic Leader principles are:

- Strategic and bottom up approach;
- Partnership among public and private sector at local level;
- All activities based upon complex multisectoral regional strategy;
- Innovation, wider partnership, cooperation.

The LAGs already cover almost whole rural area of Czech Republic (70 % of area of Czech Republic [4]) and are also widely overspread at other EU countries. Activities of the LAGs are supported the most by the LEADER program which is part of our Program for Rural Development in axis IV.

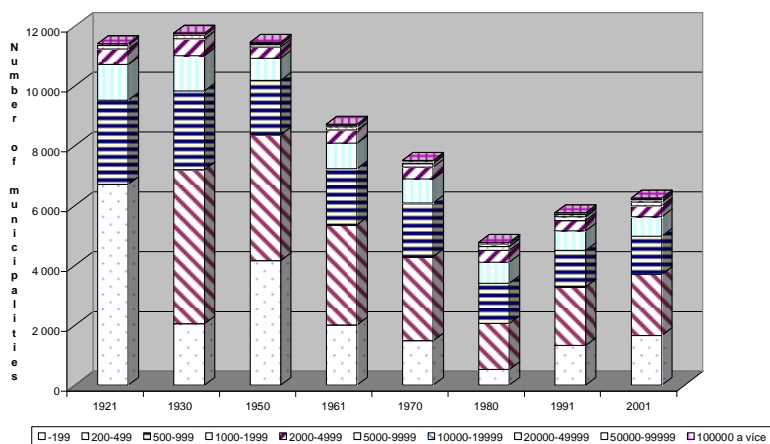
The LAGs are non-profit organizations in Czech Republic and most of them have already several years history.

So far, the main focus of LAGs is oriented into supporting small microregional projects financed by different kind of LEADER programs. But the serviceableness of these organizations is much wider.

4 Authors contribution

4.1 Definition of “Rural area”

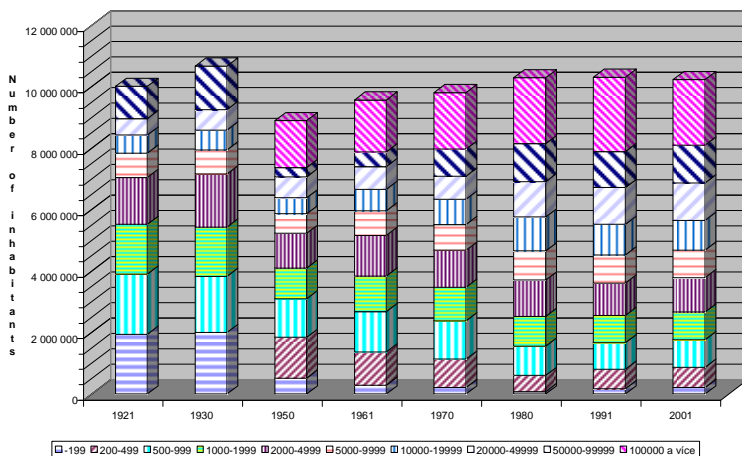
Thanks to my study at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University I did a small research focused at historic development of municipalities at Czech. The results of this study based upon data of Czech statistical institute are presented at several graphs made by me.



Source data: ČSÚ

Fig. 2. Number of municipalities by the size category (years 1921 - 2001) in CR

We can see at this graph, the number of municipalities was in historic perspective two times bigger than in nowadays. So, even some planners says the number of municipalities is too big in Czech, we can see there is no much space for reducing this number.

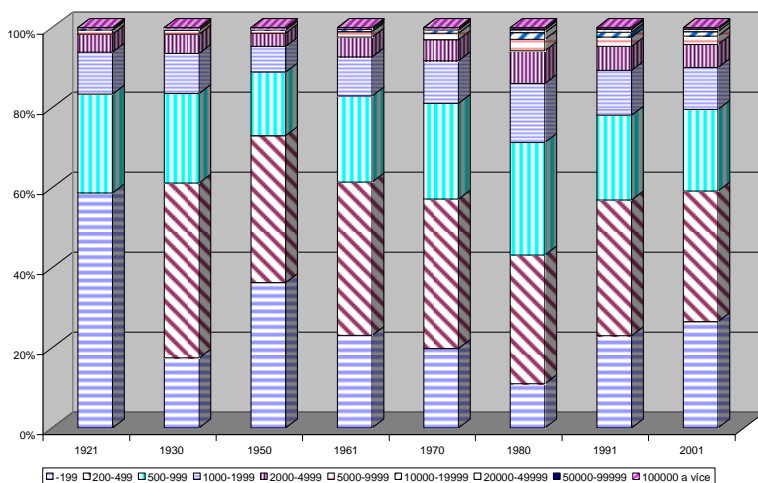


Source data: ČSÚ

Fig. 3. Number of inhabitants living at different municipalities size categories in CR

When we look at the change of number of inhabitants in different size of municipalities (see Fig. 3), we will see the strong correlation to the previous graph. Strong political reduction of the smallest villages in 50's – 70's caused the increase the number of inhabitants at the bigger towns. Since 90's is population at different size of municipalities stabile and no other exodus form small villages takes place. At least at general level from the perspective of whole country.

At the graph at the Fig. 4 we see the municipalities up to 2 000 inhabitants involve more then 80 % of the municipalities at Czech! When we add to the definition of “rural area” also the smaller towns, like it is at my definition mentioned earlier, we cover more then 90 % of municipalities. So when we solve the problems of this “rural areas”, we solve the problems almost all municipalities in Czech Republic! The problems of all these municipalities are really similar and their needs very differ from those, which have bigger towns.



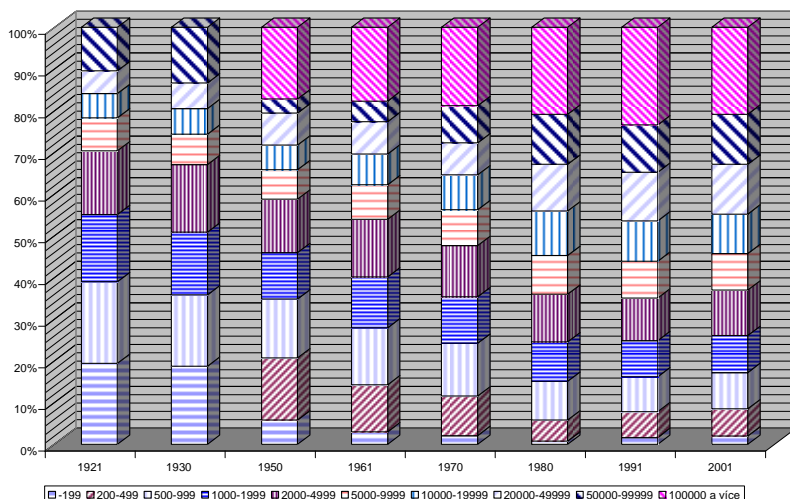
Source data: ČSÚ

Fig. 4. Participation of different size of municipalities on total amount of municipalities in CR

When we look at the graph at Fig. 5, we see there live more 20 % inhabitants at municipalities up to 2000 inhabitants and almost 50 % if we cover also small towns at rural areas according our definition. We see at this graph the most people live in several bigger towns. Maybe this is reason why politics are not so focused at problems of rural areas. Even these problems influent 75 %

of area of our country and most of municipalities, it is “only” some 2 mil. of voters...

But the problems of small municipalities are very closely touched to the nearest bigger city. Typically it is a municipality with enlarged authority (obce s rozšířenou působností). When we count the inhabitants of these towns, we will come to some 5 mil. people (see Fig. 3) who live at rural area. This is already power of the half of voters.



Source data: ČSÚ

Fig. 5. Participation of inhabitants on different size of municipalities in CR

4.2 Strategic government at rural area

Rural area has much worse preconditions for strategic government compare to towns. Their economic strength is much lower (operates with very small budgets), the state of human resources is worse quality (less high educated people live at rural areas), the mistakes are seen much deeply at rural area. At rural area almost everyone knows everyone very often dozens of years (inhabitants at small towns included), a lot of people are in some relationship with others, decisions are almost every time personalized.

All these preconditions convert into positive light Local Action Group (LAG), which operates at right way.

They invest a lot of resources into education (training of managers and other stuff), they are able to bring additional money into region (from different EU

grants, not just from Leader program), they work at community base so good knowing of each other. Understanding of local concrete conditions is an asset for LAG and not an obstacle like for municipalities.

In last years these organization granted hundreds of small local project by hundreds of million of crowns. [4] Dozens regions started actively grow.

It is a pity the LAGs are recognized often just like grant agency by official authorities and they are not received like a good partner for strategic planning.

The people from rural regions working at LAGs are still more and more professionals with very good managing, communicating and economic skills able to work in line with strategic planning. The LAGs may help to find solutions to local governments – municipalities, they are able to collect all necessary data, to find right priorities at right time and communicate the best solutions with local people. This work will be a big help to municipalities and will take a big burden from the local authority in head with mayors.

4.3 Subsidiarity

Finally we go back to the beginning of this paper and the term “subsidiarity”. Using the definition that according to this principle decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizens of the Union, we can see much more responsibility coming to municipalities and local governments. In this way we can mention also Counties (kraje), which have a very big role at European way of understanding regional structure.

There is seen some freedom in interpretation the term “subsidiarity”. It is good for inhabitants of EU the decisions about them will be done as close to them as possible. But to explain running concrete agendas at such low level like rural regions is “the most effective way” will not be easy. If there will not be good arguments for it, in contrary some agenda may be even taken into higher levels outside of local authorities...

LAGs like institutions with positive results, good personal and organization skills with experience in strategy planning, mostly very good technically equipped may play an important role at preparing these arguments and even provide this most effective way...

The LAGs are able to help like “private” advisory organizations to local authorities to solve concrete serious problems. These organizations run on the non-profit bases, pay common “rural” salaries, know the region. It causes their effectiveness must be very high.

5 Conclusion

The range of this paper doesn't allow going into detail of all mentioned aspects. The goal of this paper was to show the new opportunity for rural areas. To grasp this opportunity it is important to understand what rural area is and what the appropriate territories for strategic planning and strategic government are. We see at wider definition there live about 5 millions of inhabitants of Czech Republic at rural areas and about 90 % of municipalities at Czech Republic have character of rural areas. So solving problems of these municipalities is very serious and important topic.

There is not necessary to build something totally new, the principle of subsidiarity may be effectively used by current local governments structure with important help of non-profit regional organizations LAGs. It is important to well define the agenda these local authority may do and then transfer appropriate money for it.

Thanks to do LEADER program we may see people living at rural areas are skillful and very active if they have an opportunity to help and concrete meaningful goals.

Recognizing the LAGs like an appropriate part of strategic rural development will be a good step in supporting rural areas.

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Factors Influencing the Future of the Czech Countryside

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Annotation. In CR, the importance of the role of countryside will increase and the differentiation will tend to deepen not only on regional but also on the local level. Increasing call for poly-functional use and necessity of much more cultured behaviour have to be taken into account. Future formation and use/exploitation of the countryside will be influenced by the interaction of numerous external and internal factors such as globalization and integration in Europe.

Key words: contemporaneity, external and internal factors, tendencies of the future development.

1 Introduction

The spatial arrangement of the Central European countries, their settlement systems and landscape are influenced by mega-trends connected with the globalization of today's world and with deepening integration of Europe. Their impact is more and more significantly reflected in the changes of structure of rural areas, in the density of their population, in the life style of their population and in the extend and structure of employment, in the relation of living and work place, in the household equipment and in changes of urbanistic structure of settlements and shaping of landscape.

Decrease of employment in agriculture and forestry as well as in handicraft and trades in small industry accompanied by decrease and aging of population in rural areas undoubtedly belong to the consequences of these mega-trends. As a result, rural population is increasingly dependent on middle-sized and bigger town, in search for jobs as well as appropriate services and facilities.

There are great differences in level and character of social-economic, urbanistic, landscape and socio-cultural development can be observed among Central European countries as well as among their individual parts (regions, micro-regions, municipalities and settlements). These differences are the result of long term interaction of internal and external conditions, which influence

the transformation of rural areas in these countries and their parts in a different way and with a different intensity.

The traditional form of rural settlements and landscape from the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th century based on agriculture and forestry with the predominance of small and middle sized private farms often in combination with some trade or handicraft workplace, has changed radically in last 6 decades. The common trend of development is increasing of average size of farms or agricultural enterprises and also separation of trades and handicrafts and their concentration in independent specialized companies, of which the most gradually move to the towns and cities. These common general tendencies have, however, had principally different social-economic character and strength of impact and thus – depending on the political and social-economical situation in the country – different consequences in the life destinies of people and shaping of landscapes.

The rural areas in the Czech Republic have undergone specific development and show specific features. It will influence their reaction and adaptation to new challenges, with which they will be, as well as rural areas in other Central European countries, confronted in the upcoming years.

Currently, a necessary but demanding task, the objective characteristics of all substantial factors influencing the transformation of Czech rural areas from the year 1918 is still to be done. In this article, some significant factors and their main consequences regarding the changes in shaping of rural areas in our country during last 90 years will be described without the claim of being complete and balanced.

In the next step, description of the current state of Czech rural areas and identification of internal and external key factors, which will influence the changes in rural areas in CR in near future as well as evaluation of probable consequences of interaction of these factors in future development of our countryside are necessary.

2 Outline of factors, which have essentially influenced the transformation of Czech rural areas from the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic till today

2.1 Characteristics of the development of Czech rural areas from 1918 until 1948

The typical feature of Czech rural areas was the predomination of small farming based dominantly on manual work of the whole family with the use of draught animals – cattle or horses. Until 1949, the most farms had 1 – 5 ha of farming land and the average size of fields was 7 ares.

Although Czech lands belonged before the II. World War to the most industrial countries in the world, agricultural production employed excessive number of workers and the countryside was overpopulated. The housing conditions were unsatisfactory. In most farms, the residential part took up only about 10% of the buildings.

Living in village had additional hardships - manual pumping and carrying of all water for use and heating with waste and brushwood. There was often no electricity, the light was provided by candles and kerosene lamps.

The underdevelopment of villages regarding housing conditions is apparent from the data from a survey mapping available housing in 10 “purely agricultural” municipalities in the region of German (today Havlíčkův) Brod from the year 1932. 459 flats in 387 houses with 2256 inhabitants were assessed. It was concluded that 113 houses were in bad and 29 houses in extremely bad state – this means only 245 houses (63.3%) were in good state. The fact that the above mentioned 459 flats provided shelter for the total of 484 families (25 families did not have their own flat) also shows the housing shortage in those time. Young families often had to share flat with their parents. The number of persons living together in one flat was yet a greater problem. In average, 5 persons lived in one flat, however, 49 flats were shared by more than 8 people although the majority of flats (59%) only had one room and a kitchen. There was also a lack of beds – in 295 flats, there were only 3 beds and therefore often two people had to sleep in one bed.

Housing shortage, caused mostly by poverty, was together with unsuitable diet and use of water unfit to drink the main cause of the generally bad health of rural inhabitants especially of the members of families living from agriculture.

Data on relatively high numbers of deaths of tuberculosis pro 10 000 inhabitants in different parts of the Czechoslovak Republic from 1925, 1928 and 1932 give evidence of bad health conditions in rural areas:

Table 1. Deaths of tubeculosis pro 10000 inhabitants

Year	Bohemia	Moravia and Silesia	Slovakia	Ruthenia	CSR
1925	17,4	20,0	20,9	25,4	19,1
1928	16,3	17,8	20,0	26,9	18,0
1932	13,8	14,5	16,2	23,2	15,0

Source: Kettner, J.: Vesnické bydlení [5]

Facilities available in rural municipalities were also very sparse. They mostly included a pub, grocery shop and a school with one or two classes. In many villages, services necessary for running a farm and home were available. The most common were: tailors, smiths, farriers, joiners, carpenters, bricklayers and painters, road menders, shoemakers, sometimes a midwife and in bigger villages a bakery and slater. Most of them also had a small farm.

Commuting to work or to higher education facilities, to or to offices in bigger villages or towns was a problem. The bus network was very gappy and the fare was expensive, one had only travelled to town on exceptional occasions such as weddings, funerals and fairs or to offices. The distance was mostly covered on foot or by bike.

From the regional point of view, industry was very unevenly concentrated on the line Aš - Plzeň, Praha, Brno, Ostrava. Regions as South Bohemia, Českomoravská vysočina (Czech-Moravian highland), Šumava and others lacked, on the other hand, non-agricultural job offers. The living conditions of rural inhabitants also depended on the natural conditions – especially on fertility of the land. It also influenced the housing quality: the best was in the beat growing areas, then in grain growing areas and worse in areas where potato and fodder were grown.

The level of housing of individual persons and families depended foremost on their financial circumstances and their position in society. The living quality of families of independent farmers (agricultural enterprises) depended on the prosperity and size of their farm as well as „on the level of their education , which influenced the demand for comfort and organization of intimate life.“ „Separate issue is the living of farm labourers ... the rooms of farmhands' quarters have mostly no chimneys and thus no heating possibility in winter. Many farm lads still sleep on bund beds in stables and in the summer in the hayloft or the attic. Labourers, who receive the allowance, live with their families in one or two rooms, have and additional closet and a shed for small domestic animals in the yard. All farm labourers' flats are usually in one

house. These houses are often in bad state, especially when they inhabitants change often, Seasonal labourers are the worst off... They are housed in the attics, stables, barns or granaries, often together regardless of their sex, which leads to demoralisation and the danger of spreading of various diseases and to quarrels between individuals and whole groups.... It is no wonder that seasonal labourers are in every extend the poorest category of agricultural workers“[5]. During the Second World War, Czech rural areas were exploited through compulsory supply of products to the Great German Reich. Not fulfilling the prescribed supplies was unmercifully punished. Great area of agricultural land was taken from Czech small farmers. This stroke about 150 thousand persons. Inhabitants of some areas inland were also befallen: some villages in the regions of Sedlčany, Neveklov and in Brdy were taken for the use of army and their inhabitants were forced to move to other parts of the country. In the areas connected to Germany, all land was taken from Czech farmers, at the same time many German families from the war stricken areas in Germany had taken refuge in Czech inland and stayed till the end of war. Many young people, especially men, were summoned to work in ammunition factories and on fortification. Investment into reconstructions of dilapidated buildings and repairs farm machines and household equipment in Czech rural areas were reduced to minimum.

During the war, rural areas offered better chances for survival as well as for organization of armed resistance against the occupying forces, for the organization and hiding places of partisan groups backed up by airdropping of guns and reinforcements. An example of cruel crimes of the German police (Gestapo) against the inhabitants of Czech countryside was burning down of two municipalities – Lidice and Ležáky after the assassination attempt on Heidrich.

Devaluation of the Czech currency after the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia enabled many indebted families of farmers, artisans and traders in rural areas to pay debts, which burdened the majority of rural households. The debts of rural inhabitants had grown with the duty to repay the price of land, which peasants acquired during the First Land Reform carried out in 1920s.

Almost semi-feudal and predominantly small production character of Czech rural areas and its overpopulation had not begun to change until after 1948.

However, it is necessary to emphasize that the First Land Reform, realized in years 1919 – 1935 had been the first significant change in the ownership of agricultural land, which was indispensable for the improvement of social conditions in rural areas. Despite the fact, that the intention to redistribute 3.6 mil ha of agricultural land was during above mentioned period not fulfilled (only about half of the land was redistributed) it was a very important step. 780 ha of agricultural land were passed over to the possession of around

638 thousand persons. The average allotment was 1 - .5 ha, in contrast to originally planned allotment of 6 - 5 ha, against a payment, which contributed to increased indebtedness of small peasant families. The realization of the reform was inconsistent: large scale farms were left with average of 1200 ha of agricultural land (instead of the planned 150 ha), so called rest farms were established, to which 226 thousand ha of the most fertile land was allotted and the land in possessions of the Catholic Church was only minimally touched by the reform.

2.2 Characteristics of the development of Czech rural areas in the period from 1948 to 1989

This period of forty years brought the most dramatic interventions into the traditional organization of rural areas. Regarding the number of inhabitants in these areas, the key role played the expulsion of around 2.5 million inhabitants with German nationality, which hit predominantly rural municipalities in border areas (former Sudetenland). It was not possible to fully repopulate these “emptied” areas and as a result, many villages perished and the whole area declined.

The cardinal intervention to the preserved structure of rural areas, settlements and landscape was the general socialization of countryside. Unified Farmers Cooperatives and large scale farms were being established, private artisan and tradesmen and small entrepreneurs were concentrated into collectivist enterprises. The socialization of villages was accompanied by political and economic pressure, and often even persecutions and repressions. Their victims were predominantly the families of farmers, former estate owners, “kulaks”. Some families were even forcibly moved out of the village, some members of these families were imprisoned. The Second Land Reform served as a tool for implementation of property rights’ changes and subsequently changes social-economic relations in rural areas. It was carried out in three phases. The first two had not represented a significant turn in land policies.

During the first phase (1945 – 1948), the land of enemies and traitors was confiscated. It included 2946 ha of agricultural land (44% was forest) predominantly in border areas. The average of 10 ha of land were redistributed with the condition, that the new owner has to farm the land himself. The forests fell to the state and remaining, not-allotted land was farmed by the state farms. The second phase (starting in 1946) was the revision of the First Land Reform. 1 million ha of land (from that 28% agricultural land) was redistributed based on this phase of reform until 1949. Only about 61 thousand ha of agricultural land was left to their original owners and the rest was allotted to small allottees, municipalities, state farms and starting farmers’ cooperatives. The forests fell again to the state.

The start of sincerely radical interventions was represented by the third phase of the land reform. It has not only touched the rights to possess land but also the general social-economic relations in rural areas. It was enacted in March 1948 and is also called the Hradec program. The land reform was carried out based on following principles: the limit of private property was 50 ha (for churches the limit was set to 30 ha by the presbytery). All permanently leased agricultural land was also subject to the confiscation. Around 4 million ha of agricultural land were redistributed, 60% were allotted in the form of small allotments, 20% were taken over by state farms and the rest was allotted to agricultural cooperatives. Forest of around 1 million ha fell to the state.

While the First Land Reform was drafted, realized and used by the Agrarian Party, the Second Land Reform was carried out under the direction of the Communist Party and of the National Front controlled by the Communist Party. It has won many grateful voters among the small peasant and middle-scale farmers, which together with other circumstances (the disappointment from the approach of Western powers including USA to the Munich dictate and the following occupation of Czech lands by Hitler's Germany and the glorification and propagation of USSR as the main liberator and reliable ally) reflected in the results of elections on state, regional as well as municipal level. Subsequently, the process of forced collectivization of agriculture was commenced by founding Unified Farmers Cooperatives according to the principle: "one municipality, one cooperative" (on almost 2/3 of agricultural land) and by establishing state farms (predominantly in uninhabited parts of border areas and in industrial regions and in the vicinity of big towns).

1960's, 70's and especially 1980's were the periods of orientation towards concentration of agricultural production and centralization of its management by fusions of Unified Farmers' Cooperatives and state farms and enlargement of production centres of these institutions. The intensity of agricultural production and work productivity have gradually increased by the means of mechanization and improved management of agricultural cooperatives. The material living standard of rural inhabitants increased thanks to the growth of wages in agricultural production and to the fact that most of the families were part-time subsistence farmers in addition to their jobs.

From the economic and nutritional point of view, allotment gardening had undeniably also a great role in the growth of material living standard. It clearly meant an economical benefit and an unquestionable advantage of rural households, which had a supply of fresh agricultural products (vegetables, fruits, honey, eggs, poultry and in the beginning also milk). Although the care of private plots and maintenance and modernization of family houses are very time demanding, these activities represent a significant part of the way of life in rural areas. While the incomes in agriculture are substantially lower than

those in industrial sector, the allotment gardening represented an important source that decreased the difference in living standards of rural and town inhabitants. Together with other nature-connected activities such as fishing and hunting, the allotment gardening belongs to extremely valued advantages of life in rural areas.

As a result of detachment of the most part of agricultural large scale production from settlements and municipalities, the most former agricultural villages became de facto to living quarters – having the function of permanent, part-time (seasonal) or recreational (weekend) residences. The separation of agricultural production from settlements took also place in those municipalities, which had the function of centre of agricultural production. Here, it was mostly located on the periphery of the village. The development of agricultural large scale production lead to its rationalization by increasing the work productivity through mechanization and extensive use of chemicals and was connected with neglecting of ecological requirements.

Rationalization of agricultural production lead to colossal and mostly unorganized interferences with the traditional organization of the landscape. The area of individual stretches of arable land multiplied and many landscape forming elements were liquidated and destroyed – especially so called structural verdures (small groves, tree-lined alleys, water drains, fish ponds, wetlands, valley meadows), but also communications enabling permeability of the landscape and accessibility of individual plots registered as property of concrete owners such as field paths and dust roads. The great area of individual fields brought higher risk of water and wind erosion and the danger of floods.

Concentration of agricultural production and centralization of its management along with the concentration and centralization of other activities including services to still smaller number of so called developmental settlements reflected in the structure of local public administration.

Table 2. The connection between decreasing number of agricultural cooperatives and decrease of the number of villages in the Czech Republic between 1950 and 1980

Year	Number of agricultural institutions			Number of municipalities
	Unified Farmers' Cooperatives	State Farms	Total	
1950 - 52	4 157	153	4 310	11 459
1959 - 60	9 833	124	9 975	8 726
1970	4 317	247	4 564	7 515
1980	1 102	138	2 240	4 778

Source: Slepíčka, Venkov a/nebo město, 1982, p 211 and 214

When assessing the development of the number of farms and cooperatives engaged in agricultural primary production in connection with the number of municipalities it is necessary to take the large dimensions of these large scale producers into account: in 1980 the average area of a Unified Farmers' Cooperative was 2442 ha of arable land and one State Farm farmed in average on 7312 ha of arable land. The number of municipalities twice overreached the number of agricultural producers (State Farms, UFCs), this means that whole 50% of municipalities fulfilled the function of production centers of agricultural production. However, in an international comparison, the agricultural producers were already in 1980 many times larger than their counterparts in Western Europe. On the other hand, our municipalities belonged to the smallest in area in Europe.

Even more substantial difference between the further decreasing number of state farms and farmers' cooperatives and in the last decades quite stable number of remaining settlements is apparent from the comparison of the number agricultural producers with 1,1468 municipality parts or with 22,692 so called "basic settlement units" [8].

2.3 Characteristics of the development of rural areas in the Czech Republic after the year 1990

Fundamental change of the political system in Czechoslovakia into a neo-liberal democracy foreshadowed following key changes in all spheres of social life including property and lease conditions in rural areas.

The most important problems and events were:

- Restitutions of real estates including land;
- Application of democratic principles in public administration;
- Joining the European Union in 2004;

Restitutions of ownership of real estate is a problem which remains without satisfactory solution from the beginning of the 1990's. The first attempt to find a way out from this complex and relentless problem, which affects the interests of most of former members of Unified Farmers' Cooperatives (UFC) and their descendants (as many of the former members did not live up to just satisfaction of their claims), was the adoption of the Law of Transformation nr. č. 42/1992. However, there were many objections to it, one after another 10 proposals for amendments had been made, but none of them was accepted.

Currently, a new law on completion of restitutions is being drafted by the Ministry of Agriculture, the minister Gandalovič himself is expecting „a very heated discussion“. [6]

Further delicate issue is the privatization of around 250 000 ha of land still owned by the state connected with long considered and awaited liberation of

the market with agricultural land, which would enable the owners of this land (there are around 2 million of them) to use this land or rather sell it for the tenfold of its current price. The sale of state owned land and the trade liberation in general are, however, politically as well as economically very sensitive and touchy issues. On the top of that their fulfilment is dependent on the processing and realization of plans of land adjustments. They are expensive and time demanding: today, these adjustments have been only finished on about 3% large areas. It is also crucial that these land adjustments are processed in a very complex manner including draft and realization of landscape adaptations. It is obvious that these tasks will only be finished „in the long run“. [6]

The application of the principles of liberal democracy in the public administration represents another very complicated issue. The problem is not only excessive atomization of public administration on local – municipal level, which is measured by the average size of municipalities considering the number of inhabitants. It is a fact, that our villages are too small to manage challenging tasks, which are nowadays demanded from them, and to successfully assert legitimate rights of their citizens towards higher levels of public administration (especially on regional and state level) and towards economical, business and financial organizations and corporations. On the other hand, further splitting up of Czech villages took place in the 1990's.

Table 3. The development of number of small municipalities in CR 1950 - 2001

Size categories according to number of inhabitants	Year of census						
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1991	2001	2001/ 1980
up to 199	4 163	2 018	1 490	528	1 328	1 661	315%
200 – 499	4 204	3 341	2 805	1 355	1 955	2 041	151%
500 – 999	1 825	1 876	1 794	1 345	1 224	1 280	95%
over 1000	1 267	1 491	1 422	1 370	1 261	1 276	93%
Total	1 1459	8 726	7 511	4 778	5 768	6 258	131%

Source: Demografická příručka 2004, ČSÚ 2005; Šlepická

From the year 1980 till 2001, the number of the smallest villages with less than 199 inhabitants grew threefold. The number of municipalities with 200 to 499 inhabitants increased by 50% while the number of medium sized municipalities with 500 to 999 slightly decreased, as well as the number of municipalities with over 1000 inhabitants.

A greater problem, than the high percentage of the smallest municipalities is insufficient cooperation of municipalities (for example in the framework of micro-regions) in seeking solutions of social problems and asserting common

interests (including the possibilities of drawing financial resources from European structural funds). This fact has been confirmed by several sociological studies. [1,3]

Great structural changes took also place in agricultural production. They were, however, predominantly changes of proprietary forms and less changes of size structure and of the character of farming. Changes leading to multifunctional character of farms still have not been successfully implemented. The agricultural land is for the most part the property of private persons or corporations. It is typical that the ownership is fractionalized regarding the number of owners as well as the number of individual plots registered in the land register and their inaccessibility due to destruction of field paths.

In contrast to other EU member countries, relatively large farms predominate in our agriculture: in the year 2005, companies with more than 50 ha agricultural land farmed more than 92.2% of the total agricultural land area. Farms in CR extremely differ from those in other EU countries in that their owners are mostly companies or corporations: in 2004, the total of 72% of farmed agricultural land was owned by private entities. Farms with the acreage of 500 to 2000 ha dominated. The number of such farms in 2004 was 1548 and they farmed 67.8% of total area of agricultural land. Farms owned by private persons outnumber the large corporations. In 2004, there were 51 287 of them, 47,609 were farms with up to 50 ha and 30,356 farms with up to 5 ha of land. These smallest farms work together 47,609 ha, which means that in average each of them only has 1.57 ha of agricultural land. These farms mostly have complementary or subsidiary production function, some of them are only held as a hobby. Almost 90% of agricultural land is farmed in leasehold, which is a cardinal problem solvable only in the horizon of decades and has many undesirable effects. The structure of use of the agricultural land predeterminates the character of employment in this sector. It is typical of our agriculture that employment is its dominating form: in 2005, employees receiving wages accounted for 70.8% of the part of the population economically active in agriculture. Working members of agricultural cooperatives accounted for 10.5%, entrepreneurs working on their own account for 13.6%, dependants assisting their family members for 2.6% and the remaining workers for 2.5%.

A serious problem, which negatively influences the interest in working in agriculture and also the workers' commitment and performance, is the comparably very low income in a job in agriculture: the average income of a person who is working in agriculture and paid in wages added up to merely 13,635 CZK in 2005, whereas the average monthly nominal income in the national economy amounted to 19,030 CZK, in the industry it was 18,326 CZK. Thus, the monthly income in agriculture was 5,395 CZK lower than the

average income in the national economy – when compared to an income in the industry, the difference amounted to 4,691 CZK per month.

The low income for work in agriculture undoubtedly influences the unfavourable structure of workers in agriculture, concerning not only age structure, but especially education levels.

An alarming trend is the dramatic decrease of high-quality farmland, especially arable land and its fragmentation (being divided up into small parts): in as short a time period as 1995-2005 the area of farmland decreased, according to official sources, by more than 15,000 ha. In reality this decrease has probably been even larger and the use of farmland in favour of constructions of all sorts, continues.

With regard to the overall development of rural areas, one must altogether positively assess the relatively stable development of the total number of inhabitants in municipalities of up to 2000 inhabitants, with the exception of a decline in population in the settlements whose location is in the periphery. A negative phenomenon is the worsening of public transport services for small settlements in general and those next to a motorway in particular. A common problem of all rural settlements is that their infrastructure is lagging behind, especially in terms of canalization and supply of drinking water. A large part of roads in the 3rd and 4th category is also in a very bad and sometimes catastrophic state, as are the roads within settlements and public areas. Likewise, the insufficient care municipalities take for cultural and historical heritage becomes critical. This heritage includes castles and palaces, which passed over to the possession of rural municipalities without property during the restitution of ownership and, as a rule, were in a very bad state.

The development of the countryside is influenced, mostly positively, by the continuous interest in using its potential for the relaxation of city dwellers in different types of recreational buildings. According to statistical data there are more than 450,000 cottages and holiday homes on our territory, the majority of which is situated in the countryside.

In the hinterland of not only large but also medium-sized cities, mostly within a distance of 10 to 15 km, a number of new one-family houses is emerging. Unfortunately, only too often are they uncontrolled from an urbanistic and architectonic point of view – a chaotic torso of heterogeneous buildings, without the essential facilities for citizens, the necessary public areas, an appropriate water supply or spatial planning.

3 Outline of factors influencing the formation of the rural areas in the Czech Republic in the near future

The future is based on the present, which itself is based on the relatively recent past. The very brief description of the development of rural areas on the territory of the Czech republic during the past 90 years, that is from 1918 to the present, clearly shows that each one of the above-mentioned three phases of this dramatic development distinctly marked our countryside, its settlements, its landscape and its people and sometimes left scars and deep, hitherto unhealed wounds.

A more detailed, more enlightened, deeper and surely more objective evaluation of this fateful time period in the life of several generations on the relatively small area of our country is now waiting to be carried out thoroughly. If we want to at least approximately outline, which factors will influence the transformations of our rural areas during the life of future generations, it is crucial to try linking these possible visions of the future to a description of past developments.

The factors that will considerably influence the transformations of our rural areas in the near future have to be divided into external and internal factors – however, it is probable that their effects will combine and their final impact will depend on their interaction.

Among the external factors we have to distinguish those that have a global character and those that have limited effect, in our case in the framework of our continent as a whole or merely in the framework of the still expanding European Union.

Rural areas take a crucial role, especially in solving three interdependent and still aggravating global problems: the questions of food, energy and ecology. In addition, the development of rural areas could also contribute to solving the demographic problem more successfully.

Demands for an increased amount of agricultural production result not only from the fast-growing total number of the world population, especially in the developed countries, but also from increased standards of living in such populated states as China, India, Brazil and Indonesia. The increasing demand of the population in these countries for a change of food structure in favour of a larger amount of meat and animal proteins in general – including, for instance, eggs and fish – entails the need for a larger amount of cereals and rice than has been needed so far. Hence, the most important producers of rice, such as China, are already now their greatest importers.

In a global context, the increasing consumption of food will be reflected in increasing food prices. Thus, the standards of living of the population of individual states and continents will increasingly depend on the balance of their foreign trade in food.

For the Czech Republic, the distinct increase in food prices on the world market is a crucial moment. It is time to think about the increasing negative balance of our foreign trade and create the basic conditions for a fast and lasting change (in 2007 the balance of trade of agricultural and food products and resources showed a negative balance that amounted to 31.5 billion CZK).

As for the problem of energy, agriculture can considerably contribute to its solution: on the one hand through a more economical use of energy by cutting energy requirements, on the other hand through using waste biomass to generate energy, for instance biofuels.

It is particularly important to fully tap and further improve the productive potential of farmland.

Since farmland accounts for approximately 54% of the total area of the Czech Republic and together with the forest (which accounts for approximately one third of the total area of our state) constitutes more than 4/5 of its total area, the method of cultivating this territory, the number and the type of the fertilizers and the protective and stimulating materials used, greatly influences the dietetic quality of agricultural production as well as the quality of water and the environment in general. With respect to the quality of food for the population agricultural products take a top position. In this context, organic agriculture ought to play a crucial role.

At present, agriculture is the most widespread activity of humankind and the world population and will continue to be such for a long time. An increased cultural level of agriculture for a large, dominating part of the world population could greatly contribute to increasing the cultural and civilization level of the inhabitants of developing countries and thus to a moderation of the excessive population growth in the developing part of the world.

The accession of our republic to the European Union already now greatly influences the development of our agriculture and the entire countryside. During the coming years this influence will further intensify, but it will also gradually modify – on the one hand with regard to its further enlargement after the accession of new member states, on the other hand concerning the overall changing situation, not only within the EU, but also in a global context. The Czech Republic should use its 6-month presidency in the European Union fully to uphold its priorities in coordination with the other new EU member states. We want to strengthen a policy in favour of the multifunctional role of agriculture and complex development of rural areas including the support of the viability of less favoured areas (LFA).

To ensure sustainable development in our country, we have to fully use its assets, many of which the majority of our citizens is not aware of. Part of them is, above all, the central location of our republic in the framework of continental Europe. This advantage was aptly described by the head of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Angel

Gurría, when he stated (somewhat exaltedly): “You have got a unique location, you are truly condemned to success“. At the same time, however, he pointed out our present weaknesses: „For you, it is crucial to increase productivity... You have to focus on better education. People have to keep learning all their life... Be yourselves, do not try to forcibly change the structure of your economy. Do what you are able to and strive to become the best at it. And at the same time, look ahead: invest in education and science“...[9]

We have got, however, a number of other assets. One of them is the relatively well-balanced structure of settlements without excessive polarization between conglomerations of inhabitants and activities of all sorts in the megalomaniacally growing metropolitan centres on the one hand and the sparsely populated and still emptying regions on the other hand. What is more, we are not in danger of floods, as are, for instance, the people in the Netherlands, where fear of a repetition of the catastrophic floods leads to the widespread expensive construction and maintenance of massive dams. The risk of other natural disasters (such as thunderstorms, earthquakes or extensive fires) is incomparably lower in our country than in many other countries. If we add to this the multitude of our culturally and historically significant objects and collections and unique natural assets, we will, at last, hopefully start to appreciate our country more and to take better care of it.

On the other hand, however, the indisputable attraction of our country, intensified by its geographic position in the centre of Europe, increases the risk of its being continuously flooded and damaged by the trans-European transport, the use of our country as an advantageous place for storage of all sorts (including solid municipal waste from the neighbouring countries), for an expansion of activities that require space and a relatively cheap labour (such as logistic centres or car construction plants). In addition, our country presents a welcome opportunity for speculative purchases of real estate, including apartments, which from an international perspective is relatively cheap, and also for drastic exploitation and export of wood and other resources etc.

An increased pressure to use rural areas will be caused also by the citizens' increased standard of living. The number of new one-family houses in the countryside increases, even in rather small settlements in acceptable driving distance from smaller towns. The reason is a yearning to live in a quiet, clean environment and treat oneself to relatively cheap, spacious and luxurious, operationally economical residences (heated, for instance, by geothermal or solar energy), which make it possible to cultivate various hobbies and activities, such as the breeding of riding horses, playing golf or tennis, swimming in a pool etc. An expansion of even more luxurious forms of one-family houses requiring more space will be facilitated, among other things, by technological progress, especially in the fields of information science and transport, but also by increased standards of living of the population.

An essential prerequisite for a lasting development of our country in general and our rural areas in particular is motivating all our citizens to strive for this goal. In this respect, public administration, especially municipal offices and councils, have to take a crucial role. Their systematic, well-directed and coordinated cooperation and also the acquisition of sufficient financial means are of great importance. In addition, the disadvantages of small communities and towns must, among other things, be reduced by increasing their share in the financial means that are provided by the state budget. A criterion should not only be the number of inhabitants of a community, but also the size of the area, the number of buildings, routes and facilities (including culturally and historically significant objects), which the community has to take care of and which do not only serve its inhabitants, but are used (free of charge) by citizens of the whole country and foreign visitors.

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Institutional trust in the regions of the Czech Republic

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Annotation. The level of trust, both generalized trust and trust in public and political institutions, is one of the key aspects of the democracy and social life in general. The aim of this paper is to describe and explain regional differences in the level of trust in political institutions in the NUTS 2 regions in the Czech Republic. On the regional level the differences in the degree of political trust exists. However, these differences are connected rather with individual characteristics of respondents than with contextual regional factors. In addition, the differences between urban and rural regions were identified. The more urban region is the lower level of political trust was observed. Finally, the size of the municipality influences the level of institutional trust, especially the trust in municipal boards. The smaller the municipality is the higher confidence in municipal board was observed.

Key words: institutional trust, regional differences, Czech NUTS 2 regions.

1 Introduction

The level of trust is one of the key aspects of democracy performance on the one hand and social life in general on the other. Both, the level of social trust within the social groups and societies, and the level of institutional trust in the different social, public and political institutions are important for the current society. Trust is often included in the concept of social capital and is considered one of its most important components. The concept of social capital itself is one of the most popular conceptions in present social sciences. It was popularized first by Pierre Bourdieu [1986] and James Coleman [1990], later by Robert Putnam [1993, 1999, 2002]. Social capital is analyzed in the context of different aspects of social life – civil society, institutional performance, wealth, education, economic situation, community life or the crime rate. Also the explanation of regional variation of social capital - international or within the national state - became a research interest of social scientists in recent

years [Putnam 1993, Beugedijk, Schaik 2005, Middleton, Murie, Groves 2005, Oorschot, Arts, Wil, Gelissen 2006].

In this paper we use generally accepted definition of social capital [Harper, Kelly 2003, Halpern 2005]. Social capital represents social networks together with attitudes, values, norms and sanctions. Social capital enables cooperation and collective action in the society. Therefore generalized as well as institutional trust are important socio-cultural components of social capital and as such are investigated. Previous research proved that institutional trust is highly correlated with generalized trust [Grootaert 2001, Levi 1996, Bartkowski 2003, Meer 2003, Uslaner 2003, Stolle 2001, Stolle 2004, Stachová 2005]. So it is possible to regard institutional trust as generalization of social trust, specific form of general trust in people. In this paper will focus specifically on the abstract institutional trust, trust in political institutions that is also important dimension of social capital in the society. We assume that the results of trust analysis tell us also something about social capital in the Czech society.

The aim of the analysis is to describe the regional differences in trust in political institutions on the level NUTS 2 in the Czech Republic and to identify factors that influence the level of this type of trust. Not only individual characteristics were taken into account in this analysis, but also the contextual variables that characterize the social and economic situation in the locality where the respondents live. We assume that attitudes of citizens are influenced by both types of factors [Kostecký 1995, 2005; Kostecký, Čermák 2004; Rahn 2003]. We would like to answer several research questions:

- 1/ Are there any regional differences in the degree of trust in political institutions on the level NUTS 2 in the Czech Republic?
- 2/ Which factors are related to the level of institutional trust?
- 3/ Do contextual factors (especially the municipality size) play any role in the explanation of regional differences in the level of institutional trust?

2 Data

Data source for the analysis is firstly the public opinion research of CVVM (Public Opinion Research Centre, IS CAS CR). Ten surveys during the year 2004 were conducted, in which the questions on the trust in institutions were included. Thus the file of 10 465 respondents representative on the level NUTS2 is available. This file consists of individual as well as contextual variables. Secondly we add the data of Czech Statistical Office – regional statistics from the population census. This data characterize the situation in the district where the respondent live. In the Table 1 you can see the list of the used variables.

Table 1. Analyzed variables

Dependent variables(1)	Independent variables		
	Individual(1)	Contextual	Year
Trust in President	Satisfaction with political situation	Average wage(2)	2004
Trust in Government	Satisfaction with life	Proportion of businessmen(2)	2004
Trust in Parliament	Subjective household level of living	Proportion of dependent component of population (age 0-14 a 65+)(2)	2004
Trust in Senate	Age	Rate of unemployment(2)	2004
Trust in Regional Councils	Sex	Number of crimes per 1000 inhabitants(2)	2004
Trust in Municipal Councils	Education	Divorce index(2)	2004
-	Married or not	Abortion index(2)	2004
-	Businessman or not	Municipality size(1)	2004
-	Pensioner or not	Proportion of Catholics(2)	2001
-	Unemployed or not	NUTS II(1)	2004

(1) Source: CVVM, public opinion survey "Our Society", 2004 (Sociological Data Archive IS AS CR, Prague, <http://archiv.soc.cas.cz>).

(2) District data. Source: CSO.

3 Analysis

As for the level of institutional trust in the Czech Republic we can say this level is relatively stable in time and also the order of the institutions regarding the degree of expressed trust is relatively stable as the results of empirical surveys of CVVM in the years 1998-2006 show [Kunštát 2002, 2008; Chludilová 2003; Horáková 2004, 2005, 2006; Čadová 2007]. President is the most trusted political institution in the Czech Republic. People express also quite high trust in municipal and regional councils. On the other hand Parliament, Senate and Government have low levels of trust of Czech citizens.

Table 2. The level of trust in political institutions in the Czech Republic in 2004 in %

	Trust in					
	President	Government	Parliament	Senate	Regional Councils	Municipal Councils
Definitely and rather trust	73,6	31,9	22,9	20,1	42,2	61,1
Definitely and rather distrust	23,7	64,1	71,9	72,2	33,7	29,4

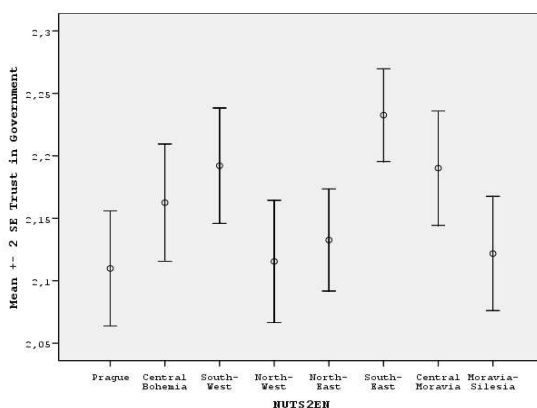
N (number of respondents): 7 943-10 177

Source: CVVM, SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., 2004 and own calculations.

The results of ANOVA analysis of variance show that the regional differences in the level of institutional trust between the NUTS2 exists – with the exception of Senate and president. Particular regional differences in the level of trust in political institutions you can see in the graphs. We used the Tukey Honestly Significant Difference test, which uses all pairwise comparisons between groups.

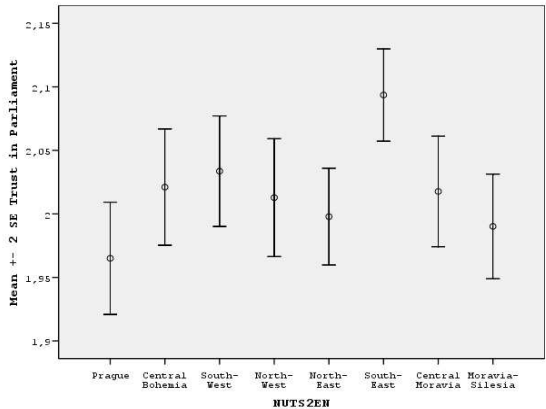
Regarding the trust in government Southeast region, where the trust is highest, significantly differs from Prague, Northeast, Northwest and Moravian-Silesian region (see Graph 1). Similarly, the highest trust in Parliament can be observed in Southeast, whereas the lowest rate is in Prague, Northeast and Moravian-Silesian region (see Graph 2).

Graph 1. Trust in government in NUTS2 regions (standard error of mean)



Source: CVVM, SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., 2004 and own calculations.

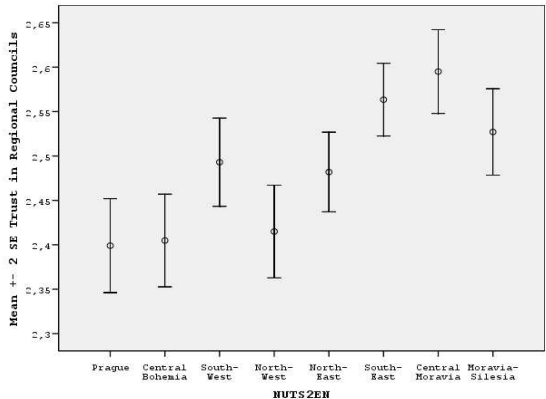
Graph 2. Trust in Parliament in NUTS2 regions (standard error of mean)



Source: CVVM, SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., 2004 and own calculations.

Diverse situation is observed in case of trust in regional and local self-government. In case of regional councils all Moravian regions reach high degrees of trust. We can statistically differ between Southeast, Central Moravia and Moravian-Silesian Region on the one hand and Prague, Central Bohemia and Northwest on the other (see Graph 4).

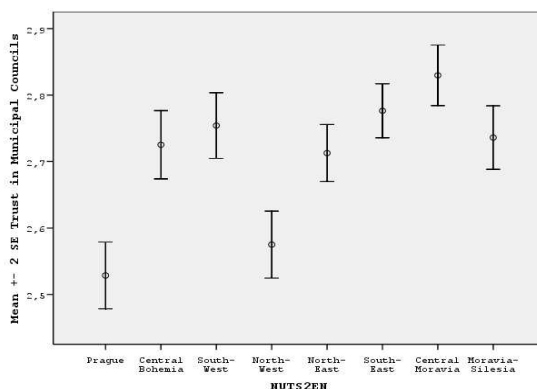
Graph 3. Trust in Regional Councils in NUTS2 regions (standard error of mean)



Source: CVVM, SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., 2004 and own calculations.

Trust in municipal councils divides the regions into two distinct groups. In the first group we can find Prague and Northwest and the second group consists of all other regions (see Graph 4).

Graph 4. Trust in Municipal Councils NUTS2 (standard error of mean)



Source: CVVM, SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i., 2004 and own calculations.

We can conclude that there are regional differences in the distribution of institutional trust in dependence on the position of the institution – central or regional. Trust in central political institutions (Government and Parliament) is characterized by the difference between the Southeast on the one hand, and Prague, Northeast and Northwest on the other hand. As for the local and regional political institutions, the lowest trust we can observe again in Prague and Northwest (plus Central Bohemia for the trust in Regional Councils), and the highest in the Southwest, Central Moravia and Moravian-Silesian Region. Now we try to explain these mentioned differences in the institutional trust. Are these differences connected only with individual characteristics of respondents, are they caused by different socioeconomic and demographic structure of inhabitants in NUTS2 regions? Or do contextual factors play any role in this variation?

To find answer to these questions we used general linear model. We found that the attitudinal variables – satisfaction with political situation, satisfaction with life and subjectively perceived level of living are highly connected with the level of trust. The more satisfied people more likely trust in political institutions. Also sex and being unemployed is significant for the level of trust, men and unemployed people trust less.

Contextual factors do not play any crucial role in the explanation of regional variance of institutional trust. They explain only little variance. However, we

should mention the size of the municipality and the average wage that have some degree of importance. The higher average wage is in the district the higher level of trust we can observe. And the smaller municipality is the higher institutional trust is identified. This correlation is mostly visible in the case of trust in Parliament and local political institutions (See Table 3).

Table 3. Trust in political institutions according to municipality size

Trust	Size of the municipality			
	Less than 2.000	2.000- 14.999	15.000- 29.999	30.000 and more
President	77	76	73	76
Government	36	33	30	32
Parliament	28	25	22	22
Senate	23	24	17	21
Regional councils	58	58	49	54
Municipal councils	76	70	62	61

Source: CVVM, SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i, and own calculations.

4 Conclusions

The differences between NUTS2 regions in the level of institutional trust were identified – depends on the position of the institution in the political system. The Southwest region reaches the highest level of institutional trust, Prague and Northwest is characterized by the lowest level of trust in political institutions. In general we could say that the more urban region is the lower level of political trust was observed. We assume the level of institutional trust as one of the components of social capital could point to the level of social capital in the regions in general. However, this presumption must be further examined.

The level of institutional trust is connected firstly with the perception of actual political situation and the satisfaction with life. The question of the direction of causality of this relationship remains unanswered. Also perceived economic situation of respondent is crucial for expressed level of trust in institutions. Further we observed the correlation of institutional trust with sex and unemployment of respondent. Although the contextual variables were not identified crucial in the model, we should mention two of them. The size of the municipality is the most important contextual factor influencing the level of trust. Other contextual significant variable is also average wage in the district. We can conclude that people dissatisfied with political situation, with their own life and economic situation, men, unemployed people and people from

larger municipalities and from regions with lower average wage, these all trust less in the political institutions of the Czech Republic.

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Appendix

Image 1. NUTS 2 regions in the Czech Republic



Source: <http://www.businessinfo.cz/cz/clanek/rozvoj-regionu/regionalni-usporadani-a-regiony/1001179/9043/> (30.4.2008).

Regional disparity of the household incomes in CR

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Annotation. The paper is based on an analysis of the household incomes in regions of Czech Republic. Household incomes represent one of the most important indicators of living conditions and the level of living of the population. Study and assessment of their volumes and structure at the regional level offers an important information about the situation and quality of life of the inhabitants in separate regions.

Key words: regional development, regional disparity, household incomes, statistical methods.

1 Introduction

One of the fundamental tasks of the EU and its member states' regional policies is securing of balanced development of the regions. The basic target is a balanced and harmonic development and reduction of regional disparities. EU stated three main goals for the period of 2007-2013 financial perspective: Convergence, Regional competitiveness and employment, and European regional co-operation. These reflect the demand for securing a sufficient growth potential of the EU, productivity strengthening and social cohesion strengthening. Main attention is paid to the development of human capital, representing the productive factor which synthesizes the use of all the other factors. Conditions of life and level of life of the population are one of the most important factors affecting the development of regions. Their level is a necessary condition and an indicator at the same time, of the overall economic development of a given region. The overall prosperity of the region is reflected in higher incomes and higher level of life of the population, in an improvement of regional demographic situation. On the other hand, low incomes and lower level of life can bring an outflow of the population from the given region, what reduces interest of the investors and enterprising within such a region and brings a further economic and social decline. Redress of such situations is very difficult, the solution takes a long time and if a negative migration balance is the case in such a risky region, it need not bring back a desirable effect any more.

2 Material and method

The paper deals with an analysis of the income situation of households in separate regions of the Czech Republic. It is based on a sample survey of incomes and conditions of life within the households of Czech Republic in 2006. This survey was carried out in 9,875 households. It was performed by means of a double-degree sampling (1. district, 2. household) in all the CR regions. Numbers of households sampled were chosen in proportions to the regions size. The survey hence supplied a large enough and representative sample, on the basis of which, estimation could be carried out concerning the entire population of households.

The analysis has been concentrated upon the income situation of households in separate regions of the Czech Republic and it has been aimed at specifying differences in incomes per head in their totals as well as their structures. The variables studied: gross money incomes, incomes from employment, incomes from enterprise, social incomes - pensions and social benefits, net money incomes and natural incomes, within separate social household groups. Attention has been paid to the households with incomes below the living wage. The level of income unevenness within the regions is assessed using two indicators: the income unevenness coefficient and the Gini concentration coefficient. The income unevenness coefficient gives the ratio of the total income volume of 20 % persons with the highest incomes to the total income volume of 20 % persons with the lowest incomes. The Gini concentration coefficient measures the degree of income unevenness. Its construction is based on the Lorenz curve, that represents graphically the degree of income differentiation.

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Household money incomes in CR total and in separate household groups

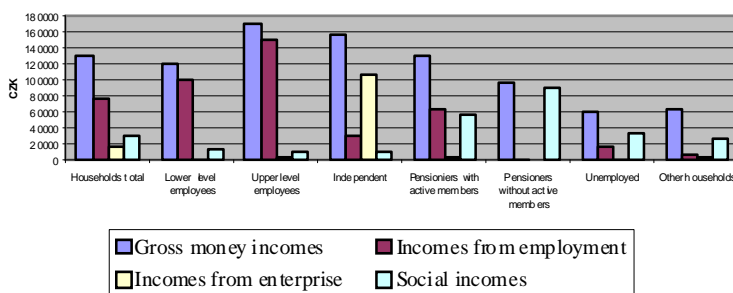
The amount of average gross money income per head/year in 2006 was CZK 131,812. The largest part of it - 60 % - were the incomes from employment. The share of incomes from enterprising was 14.7 % at an average, the share of social incomes, covering pensions, health insurance benefits, benefits for persons seeking employment, children benefits, parental benefits, accommodation benefits and other benefits of social support, was 22.8 %.

Table 1. Gross money incomes per head/year in CR 2006 by social groups of households

	Households total	Employees		Entrepreneurs	Pensioners		Unemployed	Other
		Lower	Upper		With active	Without active		
Share of households in %	100	25,2	24,6	12,5	4,0	27,8	4,8	1,1
Gross money incomes	131812	120614	169340	155649	129069	96428	61249	65545
Incomes from employment	79018	101183	149376	32470	63645	1043	18842	9248
Activities	19419	2318	5014	108154	5305	195	2928	4143
Social incomes	30077	15359	11607	11873	56017	91419	33905	26320

If the income situation and its structure in separate social household groups is compared, then the above-average gross money incomes per head are observed within the households of the upper level employees (the head of household has a high school level education, at least), that exceed the average by 28 %, and the households of entrepreneurs (the head of household is an entrepreneur or he/she has an independent profession), their incomes exceed the average by 9 %. In all the other social groups the gross incomes are below the CR average. In the lower level employees are the values below the average by 8.5 %, in pensioners by 22 %. Very much below the average are the incomes of households of the unemployed (46 % below) and other households (the head of household was not economically active and did not obtain a pension either). Incomes in the separate household groups differ not only by their levels but by the structures of separate items, too.

Picture 1. Structure of gross incomes per head in 2006 by the social groups of households



It is to be noted that, in spite of the assessment of income levels based on the average being the most often applied method, this method is not free of shortages, either. The value of an average depends on all the values of the variable so, if any extreme values come up in the sample, the value of average is deformed. This is the case of the average incomes. In such a case it is better to use the median, giving the middle value of the variable, by size. The information on the center of the distribution can be supplemented using the mode, too, whereby the most often frequented value is represented. A comparison of average values of gross money incomes is offered by the Table 2. It is obvious from the differences of the averages, medians and modes that, the distribution of wages is not even and that, the high incomes of a relatively small group of households affected the value of average. If we follow the distribution of gross money incomes then more than 60 % incomes are situated below the CR average.

Table 2. Average, median, mode of gross and net money incomes in CR 2006 per head/year

Characteristics	Gross money income per head/year (CZK)	Net money income per head/year (CZK)
Average	131 812	109 923
Median	110 904	101 520
Mode	96 428	96 647

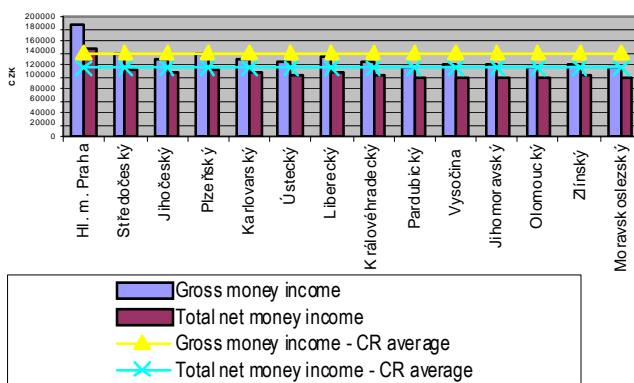
3.2 Assessment of income situation in CR regions

The income situation within regions can be assessed from two aspects:

1. Comparison of average incomes and separate components of those,
2. Comparison of the levels of income disparities.

As regards the average incomes by regions it is obvious, there are significant differences. Household incomes in Prague strongly exceed the all-Republic average (by more than 41 %), also the incomes in Středočeský region reach above the CR average (by 5.7 %), the same holds for Plzeňský region (by 5.1 %) and Liberecký region (by 0.4 %). By more than 10 % below the CR average are the incomes in the regions Pardubický, Olomoucký and Moravskoslezský.

Picture 2. Levels of the gross and net money incomes in CR regions 2006



As regards the income structure, in general the largest share (about 60 %) belongs to incomes from employment, 22.8 % are the social incomes mostly given to pensions, then the health insurance benefits, benefits for persons seeking employment, State social benefits and other social benefits. The share of incomes from enterprising has 14.7 % of the total. The shares of those components differ by separate regions. Within the regions with higher incomes (Praha, Středočeský, Plzeňský) is the proportion of incomes from enterprising higher and the proportion of social incomes lower, on the contrary, within the regions with lower incomes the proportion of social incomes rises and the proportion of incomes from enterprising declines.

Table 3. Household incomes in CR regions 2006 per head/year (CZK)

Region	Gross money income	Of which -%			Total net money incomes	Of which - %	
		Incomes from employment	Incomes from enterprising	Social incomes		Net money incomes	Natural incomes
Praha	186 783	62,0	20,8	15,3	148 314	99,5	0,5
Středočeský	139 281	59,3	16,9	20,4	115 215	99,2	0,8
Jihočeský	129 099	64,1	11,5	22,9	108 365	98,9	1,1
Plzeňský	138 559	64,2	12,9	20,7	115 325	99,0	1,0
Karlovarský	128 597	58,8	16,0	21,1	107 627	99,0	1,0
Ústecký	124 229	55,2	17,6	24,7	104 527	99,0	1,0
Liberecký	132 296	58,9	17,4	21,8	109 967	99,5	0,5
Královéhradecký	123 722	60,9	9,4	25,8	104 818	99,4	0,6
Pardubický	116 075	60,8	10,0	26,9	98 298	99,5	0,5
Vysočina	119 427	61,9	10,6	25,7	101 584	98,9	1,1
Jihomoravský	120 492	59,0	13,3	25,3	101 786	99,2	0,8
Olomoucký	115 043	56,6	13,0	25,9	98 051	99,0	1,0
Zlínský	119 991	54,3	16,7	26,7	102 762	99,0	1,0
Moravskoslezský	116 084	60,9	9,8	27,6	98 247	99,3	0,7
CR	131 812	59,9	14,7	22,8	109 923	99,2	0,8

As regards the level of living of the population, another important indicator is the share of households under the living wage level. This has been established for each independent household based on its structure, age of the children and legal amounts of the living wage. The average monthly living wage per head in CR 2006 was CZK 8,490 and the separate amounts by region differed slightly. The CR average share of households with under the living wage income level is 2.5 %, the range of values for separate regions is 0.3 % to 5.3 %. This share is at its lowest in Jihočeský region (0.3 %), in Prague (0.5 %) and in Vysočina region (0.6 %). The highest values are given in Ústecký region (5.3 %), Olomoucký region (4.8 %) and Moravskoslezský (3.4 %).

The income unevenness level has been assessed using two methods:

- the income unevenness coefficient, and
- the Gini concentration coefficient.

The income unevenness coefficient compares the share of income volume of the 20 % persons with highest incomes to the income volume of the 20 % persons with lowest incomes. A higher value of the coefficient then represents higher income unevenness. For CR total it has 4.12, but there are certain differences between the regions. The highest values over 4 have been recorded in the regions: Prague, Středočeský, Ústecký, Liberecký and Moravskoslezský,

the lowest value has the Olomoucký region (2.67). The remaining regions have shown values in between 3 and 4.

The Gini concentration coefficient measures the degree of income differentiation and its construction is based on a comparison of cumulative shares of incomes and cumulative shares of income earners. It is a dimensionless index with values from the (0;1) interval. A zero value means zero concentration – i.e., absolute equality - a unity value means 100 % concentration –i.e., absolute unevenness. On the comparison of separate household groups the highest value of the Gini coefficient has been recorded for households of the independent (entrepreneurs), at 0.294, the lowest value for the households of pensioners (0.135). On the comparison of the regions, the highest differentiation is in Prague (0.240), then in the regions: Ústecký (0.233), Středočeský (0.230), Moravskoslezský (0.225), Karlovarský (0.219) and Olomoucký (0.218). The lowest differentiation of incomes is in the Jihočeský region (0.175).

4 Conclusion

From the analyses above it comes that there are regional differences as concerns the level of incomes, and as concerns the degree of differentiation of incomes as well. Table 4 is gathering the conclusions by means of a comparison of ordering the regions according to those view points. The order has been established by the values of the separate indicators - ie., from the highest to the lowest values.

Table 4. Situation of the regions by net incomes and the income differentiation

Region	Rank of the region by			
	Net incomes per head	Share of households with incomes under living wage	Income unevenness coefficient	Gini coefficient of concentration
Praha	1	13	1	1
Středočeský	3	5	2	3
Jihočeský	5	14	13	14
Plzeňský	2	9	7	11
Karlovarský	6	11	12	5
Ústecký	8	1	3	2
Liberecký	4	10	5	7
Královéhradecký	7	6 - 7	8	10
Pardubický	12	8	11	13
Vysočina	11	12	9	9
Jihomoravský	10	4	6	8
Olomoucký	14	2	14	6
Zlínský	8	6-7	10	12
Moravskoslezský	13	3	4	4

The highest incomes and their highest differentiation at the same time are in the Prague region. This region has also the lowest proportion of households with incomes under the living wage. A slightly different situation is in the regions Moravskoslezský, Jihomoravský, Ústecký and Olomoucký. These are the regions with lower incomes, higher shares of households with incomes under living wage and a comparatively high income differentiation. As regards maintaining or reaching a corresponding level of living of all the population groups, these regions can be qualified as the risky ones. On the other hand, the most favorable situation is in the Jihočeský region, belonging to regions with average incomes, lowest shares of persons under living wage and the lowest income differentiation. Similar tendencies have been recorded in the Plzeňský region. What concerns the Moravian regions, the lowest income differentiation is in the Zlínský region. However, the household incomes in this region are slightly below the CR average and the share of households with incomes under living wage is higher.

It is obvious from the notions above that, regional differences in this domain exist. The development of the regions cannot be qualified as homogeneous from this viewpoint, and such measures have to be found both at the regional as well as at the State policies level to reach improvement of the given situation.

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The Country Development in The Central Bohemia Region

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Annotation. The following paper deals with the country development in the Central Bohemia region. The Central Bohemia region is unique in many ways that strongly affect the local rural development. First and foremost, it is about demographic indicators, infrastructure, housing, labor market, environment, and agriculture. The article is addressing not only previous trends in the rural development of the region, but is also focusing on the issue of future rural development in the years to come.

Key words: The central Bohemia region, The country development, infrastructure, housing, labor market, environment, agriculture.

1 Introduction

The Central Bohemia region is constituted as a unit of public administration on the basis of constitutional law no. 347/1997 Sb. on the creation of higher self-governing territories, and the specific nature of their administration since 1.1.2001 is governed by law no. 129/2000 Sb. on regional constitution. The Central Bohemia region and Prague are the only self-governing territories that have identical domain as it used to be with the once administrative divisions. As opposed to other regions, the Central Bohemia region does not have its own Regional residency – The Regional Office located on its own ground. Instead, it has its own office in the capital city of Prague.

2 Methodology

The aim of this paper is to picture the situation of the country development in the Central Bohemia region. This paper is elaborated with this methods: Literature search, analyze of literature and background research.

3 The Country Development in The Central Bohemia Region

The Central Bohemia region had a total of 1 201 827 inhabitants as of end of the year 2007. Compared to the beginning of 2007, its population has increased by 26 573 persons. In the Central Bohemia region there were 14 273 children born in 2007, the most of all the regions (the highest birth-rate seen in the counties of Kladno and Prague-East). The number of new arrivals (migration) reached 43 053, the highest in history since 1961. The number of emigrants was 18 549 persons. The Central Bohemia region has an above average rate of population gain.

The Bohemia region has high number of small municipalities (Tab. 1) with less than 2000 inhabitants (92,3%, Czech Republic average 89,7%) and especially the municipalities with less than 500 inhabitants.

Tab. 1. Size Groups of Municipalities by The Regions

CR, regions	Number of municipal. total	By population						Structure of municipalities by population in %					
		Under 500	500 - 999	1000 - 1999	2000 - 2999	3000 - 4999	5000 and over	Under 500	500- 999	1000 - 1999	2000 - 2999	3000 - 4999	5000 and over
Česká republika	6249	3610	1307	685	211	164	272	57,8	20,9	11,0	3,4	2,6	4,4
Praha	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	100
Středočeský	1146	689	259	110	26	24	38	60,1	22,6	9,6	2,3	2,1	3,3
Jihočeský	623	446	78	49	17	13	20	71,6	12,5	7,9	2,7	2,1	3,2
Plzeňský	501	338	77	44	16	12	14	67,5	15,4	8,8	3,2	2,4	2,8
Karlovarský	132	56	33	17	7	6	13	42,4	25,0	12,9	5,3	4,5	9,8
Ústecký	354	186	79	36	17	10	26	52,5	22,3	10,2	4,8	2,8	7,3
Liberecký	215	99	59	26	8	8	15	46,0	27,4	12,1	3,7	3,7	7,0
Královéhradecký	448	285	87	33	13	8	22	63,6	19,4	7,4	2,9	1,8	4,9
Pardubický	451	289	88	41	6	10	17	64,1	19,5	9,1	1,3	2,2	3,8
Vysočina	704	547	92	34	5	8	18	77,7	13,1	4,8	0,7	1,1	2,6
Jihomoravský	673	318	179	96	35	23	22	47,3	26,6	14,3	5,2	3,4	3,3
Olomoucký	398	178	100	75	21	11	13	44,7	25,1	18,8	5,3	2,8	3,3
Zlínský	304	104	99	49	23	9	20	34,2	32,6	16,1	7,6	3,0	6,6
Moravskoslezský	299	75	77	75	17	22	33	25,1	25,8	25,1	5,7	7,4	11,0

Source: ČSÚ (Czech Statistical Office) 2007

3.1 Transport Infrastructure of The Central Bohemia Region

The size and extent of the region together with worse transportation possibilities, divided residential areas structure with a high rate of municipalities with low number of inhabitants create a highly demanding situation for transportation and technical infrastructure. The Central Bohemia region (except from Prague) has the most dense and overcrowded transport

system in the Czech Republic. This region area accommodates the main radial transit motorways and railways.

Conditions for development in terms of the transport infrastructure are:

1. Transit ring road around Prague;
2. Finishing construction of R6 link (Prague – Karlovy Vary);
3. Building interstate motorway D3 (Prague – České Budějovice);
4. Finishing reconstruction of international railway corridors;
5. Modernization of the railway-track Prague – Kladno, alternatively building an express railway Prague – Kladno.

3.2 Technical Infrastructure of The Central Bohemia Region

Technical infrastructure include the connecting communities to the public water supply system, sewage system, natural gas supply system and dump sites for solid house garbage and waste disposal.

Technical infrastructure of the Central Bohemia region is the worst in the whole of Czech Republic. The rate of homes with the public water supply systems is 82,8% (the lowest number along with the Plzen region, Czech Republic average is 92,4%). The rate of homes with the public sewage systems is 66,0 % (Czech Republic average is 80%). Municipal house waste & garbage rate is the highest of all the regions just as in the Central Bohemia region and it is 343 kg/inhabitant.

Solving problems in transport and technical infrastructure in terms of the rural development is possible by means of the European rural development agricultural fund, axis 3 – improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activities and supporting measures *III.2.1.1. Renovation and Development of Villages*.

A central objective of measures is the support of transport and technical infrastructure including water management system, zoning & planning organization, as well as improving village appearances.

Supported plans and objectives are in terms measures III.2.1.1. for example: Improving transport and technical infrastructure and village appearances (building and reconstruction of local roads, building or reconstruction of public utility networks, public sewage system improvement etc.), water supply system, sewer system and waste water recycling facilities, revitalization of small water courses and surfaces, waste management system, public area rebuilding (purchase and planting of public green, parks rebuilding, purchase of equipment for green maintenance) and local plan.

Recipients of financial support are municipalities, municipality associations, non-governmental no-profit organization (NNO) common cause business associations, churches (a community association may also extend membership

to rural villages of more than 500 inhabitants, but the project must be carried out in village of less than 500 inhabitants).

Solving problems in technical infrastructure is possible by means of the operating program Environment in terms of *The Solidarity Fund* and priority axis 1: Improving water utilization infrastructure and reducing of risk for spates.

Measure *Reduction in Water Contamination* is stated for:

1. building, reconstruction and intensification of waste water recycling in rural agglomerations of more than 2000 inhabitants;
2. building, reconstruction and intensification of waste water recycling or similar clean-up facilities in rural agglomerations of less than 2000 inhabitants in the protected country areas, national parks, areas of Nature 2000 system, or protected zones of the national parks;
3. finishing building and reconstruction of drainage systems in rural agglomerations of more than 2000 inhabitants;
4. finishing building and reconstruction of drainage systems in rural agglomerations of less than 2000 inhabitants in the protected country areas, national parks, areas of Nature 2000 system, or protected zones of the national parks.

Measure *Improving Quality of Drinking Water* is stated for:

1. building, reconstruction and intensification of water treatment facilities and sources of drinking water which supply more than 2000 inhabitants;
2. building, reconstruction and completion of supply and distribution networks of drinking water in municipality areas of more than 2000 inhabitants;
3. building, reconstruction and intensification of water treatment facilities and sources of drinking water and building, reconstruction and completion of supply and distribution networks of drinking water in rural agglomerations of less than 2000 inhabitants in the protected country areas, national parks, areas of Nature 2000 system, or protected zones of the national parks.

3.3 Civic Facilities and Services in The Central Bohemia Region

Solving problems in term of civic facilities and services is possible by means of the European rural development agricultural fund, axis 3 – improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activities and supporting measures *III.2.1.2 Civic Facilities and Services*. The intent of the subsidy is to insure a social infrastructure and services in the areas of public government, education, health care, culture and social services,

initiative groups, pre-school and extracurricular activities for children, basic trade infrastructure, athletic training and sports.

III.2.2. Protection and Development of The Cultural Heritage in The Rural Area

This measure is intended to devise studies or programs of investments in conjunction with the care, renewal and valuation or usage of the cultural heritage of the country.

Backed plans:

- study reports and programs for renewal, use and regeneration of the cultural heritage,
- renewal and valuation of the cultural heritage of the country,
- permanent exhibition centers and museums.

III.1.3. Encouragement of Tourism Activities

This measure is intended to develop action plans in connection with development of the rural economy targeting tourism activities, especially support of agro-tourism.

Backed plans:

- hiking trails, wine trails and hippo-trails,
- accommodation, sports.

3.4 Housing in The Central Bohemia Region

In 2007 there was the highest number of all the housing projects in the Czech Republic. The number of new-built flats was the highest after the capital city of Prague. New housing projects were most active in counties Kolín, Prague-East and Prague-West. These counties account for 61% of all the completed apartment housing projects in the region. The most housing projects were started in the counties of Prague-East and Prague-West. A large number of flats is built in municipalities with 1000 to 2000 inhabitants and high density of population, as well as in the immediate suburbs of Prague. The municipalities up to 500 inhabitants have the lowest rate of new construction. The main factors of new flat construction rise have been and to some extent still are:

- positive situation on the mortgage market;
- higher value of loans supported by building saving programs;
- newly-weds support programs for first-time buyers;
- real estate tax exemption for new construction as long as 15 years;
- anticipated VAT changes for housing construction starting 1.1.2008.

3.5 Labor Market in The Central Bohemia Region

The total number of officially registered unemployed was 4,4% in the Central Bohemia region on the date 30.9.2007, with the highest number of unemployed people in the county of Kladno 6,35%, the lowest number in Prague-West 1,84% and Prague-East 1,97%. As opposed to year 2006, the unemployment rate in all the counties has declined. The low unemployment rates in the region are attributable to the proximity of the capital city of Prague – the city absorbs labor forces from the Central Bohemia region, especially from the nearest suburbs. The number of persons employed in the agricultural sectors in the Central Bohemia region is about 5,2%.

3.6 Agriculture and Environment of The Central Bohemia Region

The Central Bohemia region is generally regarded as an industrial-agricultural area. The farm land share in the total land available in the region is higher than the national average. Furthermore, the highest farm land shares are in the counties of the lowland fertile Polabí - Kolín and Nymburk. These areas, thanks to their excellent nature conditions, for example high-quality soil (black soil), favorable climate conditions (warm area with mild winters), land-slide safe terrain and sources of water – all of the above constitute a favorable disposition for developing farming. Agro-businesses involved in farming in this area try to maintain the highly-intensive crop production, mainly by growing food processing wheat, barley, rape and sugar beets. Given the favorable conditions for corn production, there are also intensive livestock operations (for feeding and dairy products).

The southern part of the Central Bohemia region is less suitable for agriculture. The farming capacity of land decreases southwards and towards south-west. That is being the result of a higher altitude and worse water quality. That is why, farm companies doing business in these worse soil-climate conditions, have adopted a new concept of farming, whereby country and land preservation are the priority. So they seek a fine line and balance between the agricultural performance and ecologically - economic stability of that particular location.

The forestry make up approximately 27% of the Central Bohemia region is territory. There are, among others, beech woodlands, oak-hornbeam woodlands or riparian woodlands. Human settlements and intensive farming have resulted in the deforestation of relatively large portions, especially in the north of the region. On the other hand, the southern part has quite considerable woods areas, especially around Dobříš, Rožmitál and Posázaví. The best available forest vegetation can be found in the protected areas, for example in Křivoklát area. As a result of the above mentioned intensive farming of the

recent years there has been devastation or conversion of some important biotopes. The soil structure is disturbed as a result of increased hunting and destruction of country elements such as game refuge, thresholds, tree avenues, extensive gardens, solitary trees, shrubbery or marshlands. The countryside is gradually failing to provide proper living conditions for wild-growing plants and wild animals. The application methods, quantity and types of used fertilizers, as well as plant protection means and use of heavy machinery – all that contribute to the negative changes of the landscape and countryside. Slight improvements should be possible after the start of application of the new agro-environmental programs of Ministry of agriculture of Czech Republic.

The Central Bohemia region is a dynamically growing space, a focus of attention of the business community, especially in the vicinity of the capital city of Prague. Proper zoning and planning documentation for specific municipalities and locations seem to be indispensable. The current planning and development principles should be applied when discussing new development plans and requirements. Besides, there will be substantial requirements for non-agricultural use of land if we are to insure the new development of the areas.

Water systems are worsening in the Central Bohemia region. The newly emerging industrial zones cause a growth in hardened areas in the region which leads to the change of drain systems and disappearance of quality farm land. Among the priorities of the Central Bohemia region there is a systematic troubleshooting of old environmental burdens.

3.7 Rural Development Programme Czech Republic

The rural development programme entails a complex strengthening of competitiveness of agriculture, forestry and the food industry, environmental issues and countryside development. Other parts address the broader development of the countryside and support of partnership based on the LEADER principle.

Local Action Groups (LAGs) consists of representatives from the local governments, business community and non-profit organizations existing as legal entities. The LAG makes rulings on subsidies based on a pre-approved strategy and financing options. The LEADER model is distinctive in ways such as:

- partnership agreement on the main development goals in the rural areas, joint preparation of strategies and, based on that, setting financial frameworks of subsidies for a particular region with the duration of the full 7 year planned period,
- decisions on project selection are made „from the bottom up“.

In the Central Bohemia region there are these LAGs:

MAS Lípa pro venkov, MAS Mníšecko, MAS Podlipansko, MAS Rakovnicko, MAS Říčansko, MAS Sedlčansko, o.p.s., MAS Svatojiřský les, Podbrdsko, o.s., Posázaví, Přemyslovské střední Čechy, Region Pošembeří, o.p.s., Srdce Čech, Svazek obcí Dobříšsko a Novoknínsko, Vyhličky, o.s., Zálabí, Zlatý pruh Polabí, o.p.s.

4 Conclusion

The future of the country development in the Central Bohemia region will be influenced by the EU subsidies, state budget and in terms of the Regional Office by the formation of conception with the guarantee of the development and the quality of country life. It is necessary to solve agriculture, countryside, housing development and transport infrastructure conjugate with the respect their bindings.

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„Village? ... that's when I know everyone in the bus“ (Contribution of Urban Sociology to the Research on Countryside)¹

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Annotation. During research on the phenomenon of suburbanization we have frequently come across the dichotomy of the „town“ and the „village“. We can say that our two analytical groups (existing residents and newcomers) label these localities identically as a „village“, however the meaning of this label is quite different and has a distinct significance.

Key words: city, country, urban sprawl, urbanisation, qualitative research, Brno, Czech Republic.

1 Introduction

The process of suburbanisation is one of the most visible phenomena in the last ten years to change the face of Bohemian and Moravian towns and the landscape. As part of the research work of the Institute for Research on Social Reproduction and Integration we are conducting research on sociocultural changes in suburban locations in the Brno conurbation.

During this work we frequently come across the dichotomy of town and village. For that matter, there is nothing surprising in this, if we realise that new residential locations are growing in our suburbs in urban hinterlands in communities that already exist.

This dichotomy also occurs commonly in scientific texts dealing with suburbanisation, as shown by the work of social geographers (and architects and urbanists) (e.g. [11, 7, 9, 6, 4]. Puldová and Ouředníček write directly: „In

¹This text is the result of a research project from the „Reproduction and integration of society“ (MSM0021622408) (<http://ivris.fss.muni.cz/>) supported by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. This contribution is also part of a research project „Individualization of life-style in environmental view“ (403/07/0804) supported by the Czech Science Foundation.

the hinterland of our towns we can observe the process of the blending of town and country milieux, populations, housing and lifestyles.” They also emphasise the „influx” of the „urban” into the village. Houses and gardens have a more urban character, people bring with them an urban lifestyle, models of urban behaviour [9: 139]. In this situation it may appear paradoxical that while in suburban locations we come to our informants as if they were suburban dwellers, they regard themselves as inhabitants of a village. In spite of the fact that their locations have already been an administrative part of the town² for a relatively long time, the idea persists that the „town” is way „over there” and that we are „here” in the „village”. So what are the changes to the meanings attached to the „countryside” by people who perceive themselves to be its inhabitants? Are they significantly different for the older residents who have lived in these communities sometimes for decades and for the newly arrived? How are these differences revealed in the day-to-day activities of the inhabitants? How are these „villages” changing and in the opinion of their inhabitants what is the impact on this of the process of rapid physical expansion of these locations and the sudden increase in the number of inhabitants?

Up to now, socio-geographical research has answered these questions in part only. The already referenced text *Změny sociálního prostředí v zázemí Prahy* (Changes in the social environment of the Prague hinterland) by Puldová and Ouředníček, in which the authors had as their aim the monitoring of changes in the social climate in suburbanised locations, is focussed primarily on the impact which newcomers have on the existing residents of the community. It is these who bring the „urban” to the „village” and the authors judge this contribution to be positive in principle. But if we were to ask, what this „urban” consists of, it is mainly the following: „an increase in the number of residents, in their heterogeneity and range of contacts, pavements, billboards and traffic lights appear in the village. And we should add to the new phenomena local newspapers with characteristically suburban adverts... and other subject matter.”[9: 140]

We have no hesitation in agreeing with the conclusion of the Prague geographers [9] that suburbanisation need not perforce be a threat, that the arrival of new residents can also bring positive impacts (a levelling out of the demographic and educational profile of communities, previously disturbed by the departure of the young and educated to the cities, and so on). We are of course interested in the bilateral impact, in how residents deal with these changes and what significance they attribute to their day-to-day and holiday activities. The technique of in-depth interviews conducted with residents of

² The research is currently taking place in four suburban locations and one neighbouring community. The suburbs were attached to Brno in the most recent wave of urban expansion – one in 1960 and three in 1971.

these locations enables us to better understand significant changes in life in these communities. We conduct these interviews with the mayors of town suburbs, with annalists, with residents who are in some way actively involved in civic life in the community, and in some cases also with new arrivals who are not involved in these activities. We are interested in a specific section of their personal biography: the period of changes which take place in a community, their experiences with the sale of building plots, with the creation and/or renewal of traditions and the introduction of entirely new activities, an assessment of life in the community before and after the construction of new homes, as well as the motives (or later legitimisation) for moving, their method of choosing a location, coming to terms with the new environment. Data gathered in this way open up the way for interpretation of how, and through which meanings and activities, the image of the „countryside” is constituted. For it is precisely suburbia as „liminal spaces”, places which are neither countryside nor town but a characteristic mixture of both, which permit us to understand the current change on the basis of the sense and symbolic negotiations of their residents. This is a process which mirrors deeper changes in society, social polarisation, the change in values of quality living and neighbourly relationships and relationships to a place, but also of the significance and change in the family and in basic links in society.

2 The urbanised village?

Communities which are the subject of our research are termed „villages” basically in the same way by both newcomers³ and existing residents, and in all manner of contexts. This is most often true in connection with housing near the country, with a certain type of social connections and activities and not least in reflection of the type and character of the area.

It can be said that the image of a quiet countryside close to nature is, in addition to ownership of a family home, one of the significant motivational factors for moving for new arrived inhabitants. It is not the case that they do not know that the part of town into which they are moving has a rural character, but their ideas for the most part differ from real life in that community. The countryside is in their case rather „scenery” (as termed by Pavel Klvač „the installation of the country into the modern scene“[5]) or

³ These urban migrants are unanimously termed „silt“, a non-abusive term which however covers both recent suburban migrants as well as people who came to the community much earlier, for example by marrying in or buying one of the older houses in the old built-up part of the village. The difference between these two groups of „silt“ is mainly in their numbers and also in the intensity of their previous relationships and links to the locality.

adornment⁴, while for the existing inhabitants it is more a way of life, a set of specific practices: „*We have two large smallholdings here. When it's harvest time, you have a combine harvester, which has been standing all year in the barn with the oils emptied out of it and when you want to use it again, you have to start it up and the combine harvester must run for 4, 5 or 6 hours while they check it out.... And of course it's a diesel which stinks and of course these people complain that they want to live in the fresh air and that they're spoiling their environment. And at the same time, they're the ones creating this environment, because they cultivate all these fields and create all this beauty, when these folk are going for a walk they walk through the fields and not the weeds [...] Basically if you raise pigs it's going to smell. And they've been raising pigs here for two or three hundred years. And just because I've built myself a showhouse next door, why should they give up raising pigs*“ (a mayor, moved to the community about 10 years ago).

The main differentiator between old and new residents is therefore their lifestyle, their link to the location and the knowledge which they share about it, while part of these differences in their responses is directly tied to their perception of the difference between town and country. As the earlier quotation from a conversation illustrates, the countryside is still connected with at least a certain level of agricultural activity both as a living and for example for self-sufficiency: „*basically those people in the village live differently... they go to work on the garden, they have big gardens, there's always work in a garden, isn't there, they've got animals and everything...they said at that exercise, one of the mums ran that, she said: well nobody's going to come, they're harvesting something [...] so it only worked during the winter, when there was a deep frost*“ (woman living in new housing, runs a mothers' group). This does not mean that smallholdings were a matter of course in every household in the old part of the community – as the community goes through the generations, so the lifestyles of the existing residents changes. In this context of more significance is shared local knowledge – even if the existing residents sold their fields, for example, as building plots, they „understand“ the limits and advantages which smallholding brings. Inhabitants from the new parts working on land around their homes are not a complete exception, nevertheless the scope of this is much smaller and gardens around their homes are above all for appearances and for their ornamental and leisure function. Of domestic animals it is mainly pets, also a very marked connecting link between inhabitants – a relatively new activity like walking the dog off one's own land is again interpreted on multiple levels – is an example of an activity which generates repeated chance meetings which are the basis for mutual awareness of the residents and are

⁴ The term is borrowed from Lubor Kysučan (discussion seminar for the „The individualisation of lifestyles in an environmental perspective“ project).

often the precursor to the development of a personal relationship (similar, for example, to children's games on playgrounds maintained by the community, if there are any such in the locality).⁵ Residents meeting while walking their dogs, or for example at local bus stops, is one of the significant daily moments for social contacts and acquaintance. It can be said that suburbanisation brings an entirely urban phenomenon to the countryside – that of the „stranger“. A civil inattention of mutually anonymous passers-by is a characteristic of urban life, while for the country more typical is knowledge of each other and the recognition of „locals“ and „strangers“ while the presence of strangers is perceived as a reason for vigilance (for typical signs of urban life see for example [12]). The rapid and headlong increase in the number of inhabitants brings part of this urban anonymity to the village – people come across „strangers“ who although they live in the locality, have not become „locals“, as demonstrated by the statements of the existing residents: *„People I don't know at all started to use the bus - I used to know the whole bus!“* In the same way the meaning of these contacts is confirmed also by those newly arrived inhabitants, who have succeeded in joining in with the life of the community: *„The older residents complain that the newer ones don't say hello, that they don't know how, that they are used to wishing each other good day, you know, but it's true that when I moved here, then I made a point of doing that, I would say hello to everyone, because I know that's what they do in this village.“* The mutual recognisability of people is a typical marker of social control at the most elementary level of social contacts, which has great significance for the perception of safety.

A fundamental feature of different life styles which can be interpreted within the town/country dichotomy is the means of making contacts and maintaining links within the community. If we now generalise from the fact that both groups of inhabitants maintain to varying degrees work and social links in the central town, we may say that while for the existing residents it is typical to use informal links based on mutual awareness and day-to-day communication, through which they participate in and organise their common activities, for the others relations which lead to activities, are rather the result of unsatisfied needs. For the existing residents it is a case mainly of activities focussed on strengthening local identity, perhaps linked to local traditions and aimed inwards (for example, feasts, of which we will speak in a later part of our text), while the activities of newly arrived residents are rather motivated by altered needs which are linked on the one hand to their different lifestyle and on the other to specific life cycles in which they find themselves (mothers' groups, handicraft circles, aerobics, and so on). As a report by the European

⁵ But in the same way the walking of dogs, not a widespread activity among the existing residents, is a source of conflict, particularly where there are marked signs of fencing off and closure, to which we will return in a later chapter.

Environmental Agency EEA points out: „The socio-economic character of suburban and peripheral areas is typified by middle and upper income families with children, who have the necessary mobility and lifestyle to enable them to function effectively in these localities. However, the suburban experience for other groups, including the young and old, who lack mobility and resources can be very different and can reduce social interaction. „ [3: 35] And precisely the aforementioned groups, that is senior citizens or, for example, mothers on maternity leave, who are often also mentioned as being potentially threatened by social exclusion [2], are the supporters of new activities within the community. It can be said that these are often exactly a reaction to the problem of spatial isolation and the inadequate range of services when compared with the central town and in connection with a specific phase of the life cycle. So leisure clubs for mothers or women are formed. In the activities of newly arrived residents there is a perceptible tendency to seek institutionalised routes to arranging their activities. This occurs also in the original or revived activities of the existing residents, but mainly where it is necessary and „traditionally” based (general support for the organisation of feasts, firefighting associations, and so on), otherwise it is more a case of activities of an informal nature.

3 Public spaces

It is how public spaces are handled, their building, adaptation and use, which is a good example of the differing approach to the „village“ of existing residents and newcomers. A young university student who moved to one of these communities during the first wave of construction in the 1980s described the advantages of „country” living thus:

„It's great, being able to go out on the street in just your tracksuit, I'm not sure if I'd do that nowadays, but that's how it is, there's not such a dividing line between your home and the outside like there is in the city. It's not just that you have a garden, but the fact that you simply go out and there on the street there are another five people you can say hello to, who you have something to say to and they know you and ask how you are and what you're doing...”

This quotation of course indicates that there is not just a difference between the attitude of old and new residents, but that the approach to public spaces is changing in general. Nevertheless we can identify a certain kind of simple scale of attitudes towards public spaces, such as streets, pavements, squares and village greens: From „public and common” through „public” to entirely „private”. „Public and common spaces” are those which are in public use and where residents are willing to take responsibility for the upkeep of these

spaces. A simple and at the same classic example of an activity focussed on such a space, which we often meet in localities, is the regular sweeping of pavements in front of one's house, as described to us by a female existing resident: *„Here we're in the habit of sweeping the pavement every Saturday. The road as well. [As for the newcomers] because it's a public space, why would they bother, it doesn't interest them.“*

As we can see, this attitude is typical mainly of existing residents. By contrast, newly arrived residents expect the community authorities to take care of the public spaces such as streets and pavements. To a large extent this expectation is a result of their experience from the city, where most of these residents moved from. At the same time it can be shown that when the mayors talk of „disproportionate demands” from the new residents (as noted as a category by Puldová and Ouředníček [9]), they are talking about these demands. In one of the localities which we monitored the problem of dog-walking, already mentioned, generated relatively large interest; in our interviews this turned out to be very important for many of our informants. The vice-mayor described it thus (he is not an existing resident, he married into the village, but as he says himself, he also comes originally from a village):

„We've discussed this a lot and laughed about it a lot, too.... Baskets for dog refuse, as an example. All of us, or most of us in the village have a dog and it does its business either in the yard or in the garden, where we can clean up and pop it in the dustbin. These people, when they buy their nice little house, are used to taking the dog out, on a leash, and it does its business somewhere in a public place. So that's the first thing. Then they expect the authorities to increase the local charges, but then we as a village have a very low local charge, especially compared to the cities [...] and then the charge also goes up for those people from the old parts who are used to their own way, and then there is friction, there are clashes.“

The last of the attitudes which we have identified towards the development of public street space is its total privatisation, which occurs in localities of new houses and streets. This space, created on their land and which they maintain together with their closest neighbours, remains closed to other residents of the community, through the expenditure of relatively large sums of money. The degree of this closure can however vary: From „only” a symbolic closure using signs announcing private property through to complete physical closure using barriers and (even less penetrable) gates. It can be shown of course that in places where this occurs, these measures are perceived by the owners of these gates and restrictions as being security-driven and that they have turned to them after unpleasant experiences with automobile theft, thefts of car tyres and house burglaries as well. They are a kind of substitute for informal social control which does not work in these streets as it does in other parts of the

community, where, put simply „everybody knows everybody and everything about them“.

A further reason for installing barriers is then the attempt to prevent access by heavy vehicles to possible sites for new homes on adjacent building sites. In a conversation on signs restricting access to a street, one of its residents told us: „But it's not as if people can't walk here, anyone can, but they were really put there to put a stop to cars going through.“ Here it is shown that not even the presence of restrictions or gates has to mean the definitive closure of a space. Its use depends to a large extent on a social consensus developed around it by negotiation among the individual actors.⁶ Not even the residents themselves of such closed streets are of a single mind in their view of these measures. The same woman described the process of closing streets as relatively questionable, using these words among others: „For example the neighbouring street, not everyone there was in favour of closing it, but they said yes, most are in favour, so we'll sign [application for change of road status from frontage road to tertiary road – authors' note].“ While that street is now closed with a gate, in the other, the disagreements over the placing of a physical barrier led to a split.

All these kinds of attitudes to public space show above all the differing perception of existing residents and newcomers to the boundary between private and public space. The private space of existing residents expands and in some way „naturally“ merges with public space (in the sociological literature we may find the term semi-public used for this kind of space), which is shown in the responsibility assumed for adjacent pavements and streets but also in the characteristic use of these spaces: responding to the complaint that in the newly-built residential areas there are no public spaces, for example corners with benches where local residents might sit and talk, the mayoress of one part of the town objected (a at the same time confirmed a difference in generational life styles which is not connected to the suburbanisation process): „...but here [meaning the old part of town] we don't have them either, here people [chat] in their gardens or pull out a chair onto the pavement here...There's a couple of old women, but other than that the youngsters don't do, the women don't get involved like they used to in neighbourly chitchat of an evening, the younger generation isn't interested, they have other interests now.“

By contrast, newly arrived residents strictly separate the space of their houses and gardens from public spaces which fall under local authority administration. But they often feel a lack of public spaces where they might spend their time

⁶ On the other hand we must acknowledge that so far cars have not yet driven into the street in question, because it is a cul-de-sac – this is evidently more a rationalisation of this approach, which is probably taken by the actors themselves to be questionable. On the subject of street closures see [10].

on so-called „leisure” activities. So communities develop children’s playgrounds or sports fields to cover the specific needs of the new residents, who are unburdened with the upkeep of a smallholding. These are mainly the needs of mothers with young children, home alone during the day. One of the mayors described to us the attempt to build such a park in these words:

„In order to make the space work and develop it in the sense that people would come there to relax, play, let the children run around and so on, we have plans to build a lot more there. [...] For example we have a picnic area, for pensioners, with a lovely view of the surrounding country, in the spring we’ll be planting large trees, so that they can relax there, eat their picnic and whatever else, on the other side there’ll be something else, probably picnic grills ...an exercise trail as well, we’d like some open-air chess and other things ... „

So far we have discussed day-to-day use of public spaces. But in the life of every community there are also festive occasions, when the use of public space is subject to temporary rules. A typical example of this kind of use of public space are the feasts which have already been mentioned. They are linked to a significant extent (albeit not exclusively) with the activities of local organisations such as the fire brigade or Sokol [traditional gymnastics and sports association – translator’s note]. Puldová and Ouředníček, in the article already referred to, also note that „three times as many existing residents take part” in these activities [9: 137].⁷

A local chronicler who has been keeping a chronicle in one of these communities for 18 years describes the relationship of existing residents and newcomers as crystallised around the organisation of festivities in these words: *„Each part lives its own life. Look at this way, there’s a festival, so the boys and girls go out to invite people to the feast, carrying the rosemary, calling at houses and inviting people. And there is a custom that the old residents here give them, nowadays, fifty or a hundred crowns. They would go there [to the new streets] with their invitations, and out of the whole street just one person would give them fifty crowns. They are not familiar with the custom, well, who’s going to tell them? Except that when that Three Kings charity went there, they did alright...”*

But other informants, old folk and organisers of these festivities confirm to us that these festivals can function as a mechanism to bring existing residents and newcomers together – the children of newcomers, when old enough to be involved, are gradually drawn into the organisation of the feasts. But usually on such occasions they and their parents are passive spectators, consuming the

⁷ Of course we should make a further comment, that 90% of all residents in the community under study take no part in their activities at all – which on the other hand simply confirms that the number of active residents in a community is always distinctly lower than those who are so-called „spectators” or „clients”.

„show” which is on offer on the street. For that matter, this relationship to public space corresponds to their attitude to its upkeep. In this case as well, new residents want to be consumers, rather than creators of their environment. At the same time however this experience with the organisation of feasts points to a deeper difference: the chronicler himself deduced that this passive interest can arise from ignorance of the tradition, which would also be indicated by the well-publicised collections of the Three Kings charity. Feasts organised traditionally on the basis of a history jointly shared by the inhabitants of a community⁸ do not have media publicity which would explain what it's about and how to behave in a situation which is new to many, and what is expected on this occasion. So it is probable that in time the new residents will become more active and, especially, informed.

4 Discussion and conclusion

In the conclusion to their text Puldová and Ouředníček write: „Empirical research conducted in recent years in the hinterland of Prague confirms the limited validity of the proposition of the reduction of social cohesion and participation in the newly suburbanised communities in the hinterland of Czech cities. Only in exceptional cases does the relatively significant difference in the demographic, social and economic structure of residents living in the old country residential areas and the newly arrived residents result in the polarisation of the social environment” [9: 138]. In a certain sense our empirical findings also confirm the thesis of the limited validity of hypotheses on the reduction of social cohesion. There is a series of examples of good practice in the founding of associations, clubs or leisure activities, to which both existing and new residents of the community subscribe. In a closer look at the means and practices and above all at the significance attached to these activities we determine how deep are the changes which the localities are going through. We can say that that polarisation does take place and in some cases this leads to conflicts at the local political level. If integration takes place on the basis of common interests, the motivation of existing residents and new residents differ greatly, as do the routes that they choose to further their interests, which sharply influences and changes the atmosphere and relationships in the community. At the same time much depends on the type of housing in the community – different changes are brought about by the construction of relatively inexpensive, small town houses designed mainly for middle-income groups, while life in the community is affected differently by

⁸ We will set aside for the moment the debate on the creation of traditions in the interest of developing a common history.

apartments perceived as a „starting point” for young families with children and differently again by larger, more luxurious houses bought by people and families at the peak of their productive lives. So more general socio-demographic changes, such as the slightly increased birthrate and an ageing population, have an effect on links in the locality; but so also does a change in the family strategies described by the theoreticians of the modern individualised society [1] (rise in divorce rates and serial monogamy, rise in the number of households with one member or older couples after children leave for their own flat or house, and so on). It is also necessary to show that the source of these community activities is certain forms of potential deprivation or exclusion to which life „on the outskirts”, so called by Potočný in his qualitative case study [8], leads and at whose overcoming or prevention it aims. We have also met with the example of a civic association which directly documented the walling off and privatism of new residents of the community – its aim was to arrange the maintenance and repair of private closed streets. Although by form it is part of civic society, in its aims and meaning it most does not contribute to the former’s development. The expectations and lifestyle of the new residents therefore enrich the community in the form of an influx of young, more educated and more prosperous residents equipped with greater social and cultural capital, but also bring with them a series of structural (inadequate infrastructure, uncompleted building projects, inadequate services – nursery and other schools) and social problems (changes in the perception of public actions and public spaces, willingness to participate in the running of the community, discontinuity, the forming of links to the locality and implantation into the shared „memory”, changes in perception of the *genius loci* and atmosphere of communities). In a whole series of such changes a significant role is played by the definition and negotiation of the positions of the urban and country lifestyles of the residents.

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Cross-border influences on the local community of municipalities in Czech border areas

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Annotation. Presentation of research findings concerning the perception of proximity of a foreign country, the impact on the population's acting and thinking, the development of individual contacts and economic, project and institutional cooperation. A gradual creation of germs of a future cross-border association can be noticed.

Key words: cross-border influences, local communities, local authorities policy, cross-border association.

1 Introduction

Border municipalities represent the periphery of the Czech Republic. Their development has been marked by a number of historical events. Since 1945 a considerable part of the Czech borderland has gone through changes which have caused a complete break-up of the local community including its traditional economic system. A crucial event was the transfer of German and Austrian inhabitants, mostly from the Czech borderland, to Germany and Austria as a consequence of the defeat of the German fascist state, then the collectivization in agriculture and abolition of small enterprises in the 1950s. Many of the border localities disappeared from maps because they were in areas of military and security interests of the state. The consequences of these changes can be felt in border communities even today. Unlike the inland situation, in border areas the traditional form of local community has not been restored, not even after 1989. Whereas in the inland the restored democracy, market economy and restitutions have resulted in a change of the social structure of local communities, in the border communities the post-revolution changes have often had different consequences. Particularly restitutions did not mean restoration of the farmer status or the self-proprietor status in their traditional forms. Restituents, most of whom did not have any relationship to their formally owned farmland for a long time, have either sold it or put it out to lease. The land is farmed by various subjects, mostly by the transformed remainders of former state or cooperative farms, or it is left unused. Moreover,

all these problems are joined by a geographical factor – most border communities lie in mountain regions or close to them, where productivity is generally very low. A rather different situation is in the fertile wine regions of Southern Moravia. Another exception is represented by communities with the traditional settlement on the borders with Slovakia and partly with Poland.

The initial revitalization of most border communities after 1989 was also marked by a low number of permanent residents and to a considerable extent also by their low human and social capital. After the break-up of state farms and the decrease in local job opportunities many inhabitants were seeking jobs abroad or they moved to regional centres or to some inland localities. It is also true that a considerable part of the housing capacity in rural communities is used for holiday-making, which substantially marks the local communities in borderland.

A new situation after 1989 enabled the existence and development of private enterprises, which has become a way out and hope for survival in this area for many local inhabitants. Especially in the first half of the 1990s there was a local enterprise boom aimed mainly at selling goods and services. It was based on the assumption of permanent interest of foreigners in visiting the Czech Republic and relied on the development of tourism, taking advantage of the different economic powers of currencies. But due to a fall in foreign demand for traveling, shopping and services on the Czech side of frontiers many of the entrepreneurial activities have been gradually forced to close down. Moreover, lucrative localities have been gradually occupied by Vietnamese and other foreign sellers, who have become an invincible obstacle for Czech entrepreneurs.

The objective of my contribution is not a detailed analysis of all economic, political and other changes that the border communities have had to go through in the last 20 years due to political changes and their own activities. I would like to draw your attention to the importance of developing mutual cross-border contacts and relationships and their influence on the lives of local communities. The development of cross-border cooperation appears to be a certain chance for inhabitants of many border communities how to not only survive but also take part in the process of changing former peripheral regions into the centres of arising cross-border communities.

I would like to present some findings of the research into the reflection of the impact of cross-border influences on the inhabitants of the Czech borderland.¹ The research was carried out in the entire border area of the Czech Republic, i.e. on the borders with Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Austria.

¹The findings of the project “Cross-border influences on the local community of Czech borderland” supported by a grant of MPSV ČR, no. 1J045/05-DP1, solved in the years 2005-2007.

Generally, it can be stated at the beginning that cross-border contacts and relations have been strong and steadily increasing, both in quantity and quality. At the same time it is obvious that they are different in relation to particular foreign neighbours and local conditions.

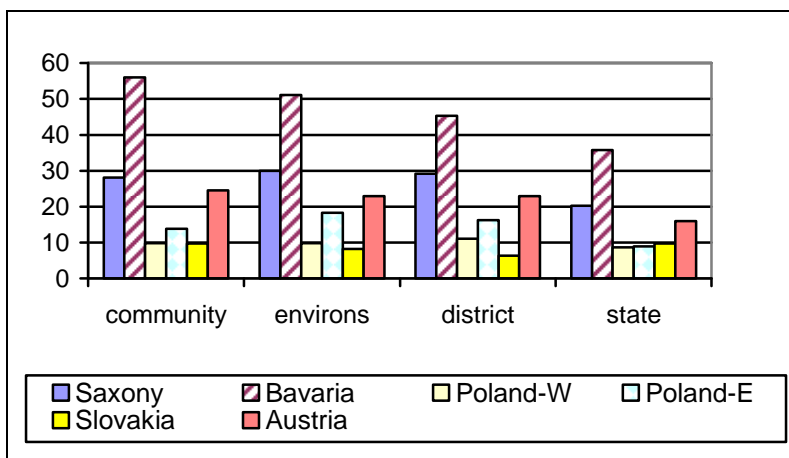
2 The perception of the strength of cross-border influences

According to the results of the survey among inhabitants of the borderland, more than half of the respondents perceive the impact of cross-border influences in a certain form. There are approximately 5-7 % of active participants in cross-border contacts with permanent relationship. The contacts of the other part, of approximately one third, are rather unsystematic and incidental.

The assessment of the strength of cross-border influences varies according to the particular neighbouring country. See graph 1.

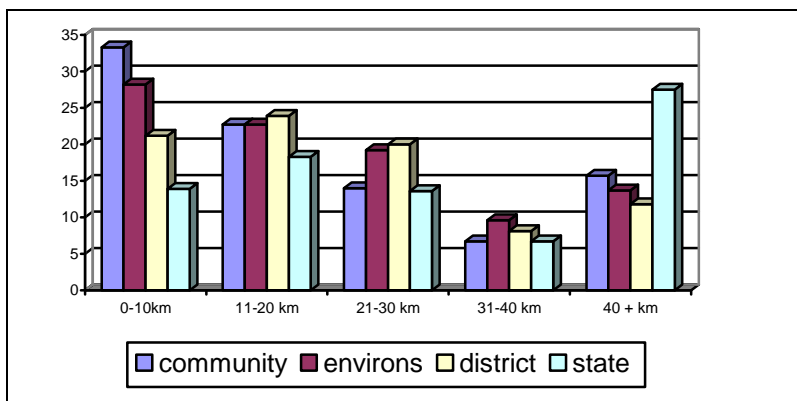
The influence of Germany, especially Bavaria, and Austria is mostly described as “considerable”. The fewest evaluations of this kind are from the borders with Slovakia, the West of Poland, and partly also with the East of Poland.

Graph 1. The percentage of respondents describing cross-border influence on their community, environs, district and state as considerable – in dependence on the neighbouring country (%)



The assessment of the strength of the influence corresponds with the distance from the state frontier. The nearer the frontier the more frequent is the assessment “medium” and “considerable”. Thus we can draw the conclusion that the strongest influence of a foreign neighbouring country can be noticed locally (communities and their environs up to 20 km) on the borders with Bavaria, Saxony and Austria. See graph 2.

Graph 2. The percentage of responses “the neighbouring foreign country has considerable influence on the community, its environs, district and state” – in dependence on the distance of respondents’ place of residence from the frontier (%)

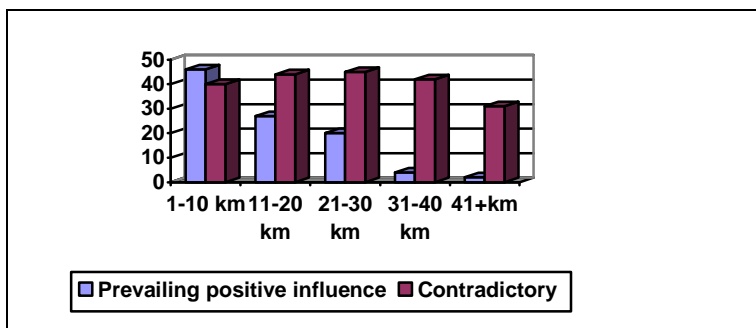


3 Evaluation of cross-border influences

Half of the respondents who stated that the neighbouring country has a certain influence on their community, its environs, district and state evaluate this influence as positive.

Most positive evaluations are from respondents living within 10 km from the frontier (regardless which the neighbouring country is). See graph 3.

Graph 3. The dependence of the evaluation of cross-border influence on the distance of respondents' place of residence from the frontier (%)



As the neighbouring country is concerned, the evaluation of foreign influence as positive or negative does not quite coincide with the assessment of the strength of the influence. The assessment of the strength correlates most with the evaluation of quality from respondents living in the border area with Bavaria. A positive evaluation is also frequent from respondents living in the border area with Poland. Although the influence from this side is not described as strong, it is more frequently described as positive. It is surprising that the evaluation of the influence of Slovakia is rather negative.

If we summarize the cross-border influences, they are felt most strongly in the economic area, especially on the borders with Germany and Austria (including their negative connotations). A further area is the influence on ecology and on the accessibility of borderland (communications and their condition). The factor relating to cross-border activities of organizations and institutions is also quite strong. As relatively least influential in respondents' evaluation appears to be the influence on morals (including the occurrence of socially pathological phenomena), on behaviour and relationships between people in the borderland. In other words – interpersonal relationships, their morals appear to be relatively stable, and most respondents do not perceive any changes caused by opening the borders, cross-border activities and cross-cultural influences.

The impact on particular areas of life in local communities in the borderland is mostly felt as positive, regardless of the distance of respondents' place of residence from the frontier.

The introductory question of the battery evaluating the influence on particular areas of life in local communities of border regions was:

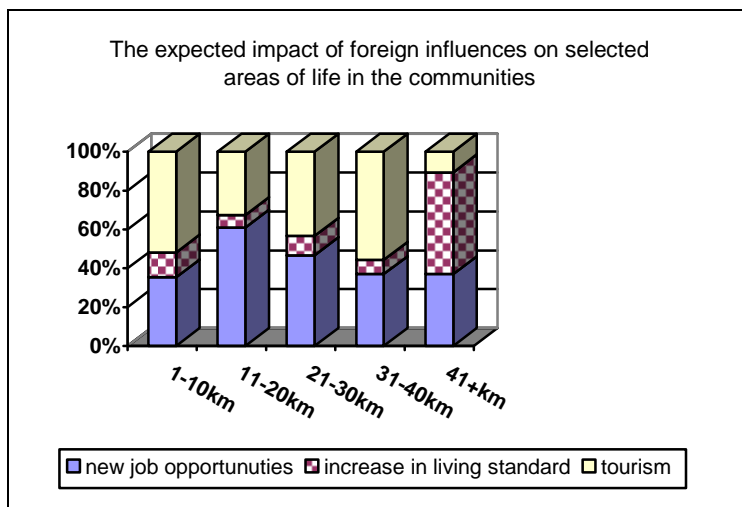
Table 1. “How does the neighbouring foreign country influence the life in your community, its environs, district and state in the following areas?”

Area of influence	Saxony	Bavaria	Austria	Poland-west	Poland-east	Slovakia	Total
Tourism	21,8	12,8	27,1	7,9	21,8	8,6	100
Entrepreneurial activities of Czech citizens	23,2	17,5	30,2	6,9	16,9	5,7	100
Standard of living	22,4	15,2	31,9	7,2	18,6	4,7	100
Inflow of foreign investments	25,0	18,0	30,6	6,0	14,8	5,6	100
Activities of social organizations	19,9	12,7	27,1	7,1	24,8	8,4	100
Employment of local inhabitants	25,3	18,9	35,9	4,9	11,5	3,5	100
Community appearance, house renovation	24,2	15,8	34,7	4,3	16,5	4,5	100
Local public services	23,8	14,2	32,0	5,4	19,1	5,4	100
Views on neighbouring foreign people	18,6	15,4	25,6	7,6	25,1	7,8	100
General interest in immovable property	25,9	18,1	33,0	5,6	10,5	6,8	100
Views on the importance of EU	21,0	15,9	26,7	6,1	24,1	6,2	100
Landscape appearance	23,7	14,8	30,9	5,0	18,7	7,0	100
Communications, roads	22,8	19,4	27,0	6,2	18,2	6,4	100
Ecology, landscape conservation	22,8	15,5	32,1	3,7	18,4	7,5	100
Relationships between local people	19,7	7,6	26,4	8,2	27,9	10,1	100
Population migration	25,5	10,5	32,7	4,8	14,6	11,9	100
Morals of local people	24,1	9,0	29,6	6,0	23,6	7,8	100
Emergence of socially pathological phenomena *	18,2	13,6	40,9	0	22,7	4,5	100

**) Evaluating responses in this area are problematic because respondents perceived socially pathological phenomena (e.g. prostitution) as entirely negative, which is quite logical. So this is not about evaluating positive or negative influence in this area but about evaluating these phenomena as negative.*

This classification also corresponds with the expected impact of cross-border influences in the future. Most responses related to the distance from the frontier concentrate on three areas. See graph 4.

Graph 4. The percentage of responses about expected changes in relation to the distance from the frontier



4 Summary

From this brief presentation of selected research findings it is obvious that the foreign influence on the situation in our border communities is considerable. The inhabitants evaluate it mostly as positive and beneficial. In many regards, especially the communities near the frontier rely on cross-border cooperation as on the main factor of stability and development of their community.

The research has also shown that taking full advantage of cross-border cooperation depends to a large extent on the level of local elites and especially on the work of local boards of representatives. Probably, if the community management is good, the community will modernize and develop faster and will be gradually able to compete with neighbouring West-European communities in all areas of life. Currently, most Czech border communities have taken a considerable step forwards in their development – for instance their infrastructure is under construction or finished, they are building or reconstructing houses, renovating historic buildings and enhancing their communities in general. A considerable part in these results has been taken by cross-border projects or projects of local development supported by structural and other EU funds. We can also notice activities of individual inhabitants

renovating their existing houses or building new ones. Investments of this kind confirm the stability of local population.

Future development of communities in the Czech borderland depends to a large extent on the level of local authority management, on activities of local economic subjects and on the level and activity of local inhabitants. The transition of villages and entire regions in the borderland from backward settlements into modern, lively communities also depends on cross-border cooperation. Through opening the frontiers and expanding universal cross-border cooperation the borderland is gradually losing its former peripheral character. Naturally, this process is differentiated and according to the size and changeable conditions both in the Czech and foreign border regions these changes are neither general nor always noticeable. It is important that this process has started and is bringing positive results.

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