Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic
ESPON 2013 PROGRAMME
OPEN SEMINAR

Territorial Development Opportunities
in the Global Economic Recession

Top Hotel Prague,
3 – 4 June 2009
REGIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

- Vertical structure derived from the structure of Public Administration
  - 8 Cohesion Regions,
  - 14 Regions (krajs),
  - 76 Districts, and
  - More than 6 240 municipalities.

- 205 municipalities with extended powers (majority of these powers were taken over from former district offices)
- 23 statutory cities (>50 thous. + Mladá Boleslav)
Cohesion Regions - NUTS II
SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE
and the Role of Cities

- Fragmented settlement of the CR (high level of scattering of rural settlements pattern)
- Relatively low number of big cities
- Close connection rate
- Process of sub-urbanization (increasing need for public investments, infrastructure, etc.)
- Significant role of small and medium towns
- Fragmentation of territorial and urban development
SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE

Urbanization and the Role of Cities

- only one city more than 1 million inhabitants (capital city of Prague)
- five cities more than 100 thousand inhabitants
- 22 cities more than 50 thousand inhabitants
- 63 cities more than 20 thousand inhabitants

While 5 690 municipalities with less than 4 000 inhabitants.
SETTLEMENT in the CR—Municipalities with 500 inhabitants and more
GENERAL OVERVIEW IN TERMS OF POLYCENTRIC DEVELOPMENT

- Based on the Czech settlement, a need for polycentric development is predetermined (incl. territorial administration)

- Territorial differences (disparities) still exist within the Czech Republic

  - monocentric system in Bohemia versus polycentric system in Moravia and Silesia
  
  - Bohemian and Moravian gradient
  
  - gravity areas determined by settlement
GENERAL OVERVIEW IN TERMS OF POLYCENTRIC DEVELOPMENT

- to consider the polycentric development not only between large cities, but also smaller one (hierarchy of settlements)
- Polycentrism is projected at several levels of administration
  - **horizontal structure (relations):** networks of towns, urban regions and municipalities (developmental strategies, delivering services, transport accessibility)
  - **vertical structure:** public administration (municipalities with extended powers, with delegated powers and „basic“ municipalities)
Overlapping of individual region types

The small and medium towns play irreplaceable role

Urban-Rural issues are resolved at „all“ levels

Basic problem – continuing existence of significant linkages of rural areas to agricultural

Rural settlement has undergone gradual transformation of their functions
Strategic documents relating to cooperation

- National strategies and concepts do not mention directly urban-rural relations
- Operational Programmes – urban-rural relations or relations between cities and their surroundings are very similar
- when optimizing urban-rural linkages – fundamental issue is a large number of municipalities
Instruments appearing in the relevant programmes and strategies

- Creation of conceptual and development documents,
- Coordination and organizational measures
- Transport and communication networks
- Transport service in the territory
- Information and booking networks
- Marketing and promotion
- Development of urban-rural partnerships
URBAN – RURAL RELATIONS IN THE CZECH REP.

Key obstacles in more effective cooperation between territorial cohesion issues and the urban development policy

- lack of national vertical structure which would match the actual hierarchy of strategic documents promoting the polycentrism

- relatively extensive fragmentation, particularly due to the preference of the sectoral approach to classification of programmes financed by public funds
Proposals relating to better coordination of urban-rural relations

- Establishment of a vertical structure reflecting hierarchy of strategic documents promoting the implementation of urban-rural relations
- Setting up a systemic framework of the urban-rural issue – a comprehensive approach to territory
- Overcoming fragmentation of programmes financed from public funds and applying the territorial dimension in these programmes
- Promoting research of urban-rural issues
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITY 1.1a

(URBAN – RURAL RELATIONS)

The Mf.RD assumed the responsibility for the implementation of action 1.1a (during the Slovenian Presidency)

2008-2010 timeframe

The objective is to create and promote guidelines and policy measures in order to support the coordination between both urban and territorial development (titled Urban-Rural Relations)

“need to elaborate a contribution to support the polycentric development and innovation through the networking of regions and city regions”

The working group has been established

(partners: Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Turkey and representatives of the EC (DG Regio), CEMR, AEBR and University of Economics in Prague, and the Union of Towns and Municipalities of the CR)
CRITICAL ISSUES FOR URBAN-RURAL RELATIONS

Within 1.1a

- Difference between old and new EU MS in the context of urban-rural issue and its implementation
- Challenge to use best-practices in new EU Member states with regard to specific conditions (confrontation with bad practices as well)
- Stimulation of bottom-up approach
- Binding force versus ways of implementation
- Need to understand the issue as complex topic
- wide scope focus based
- Lack of data at regional and local level
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

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