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The new Czech county development concept and the opportunities and risks it presents in Karlovy Vary county

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Zusammenfassung

In der tschechischen Republik werden für die neuen Bezirksverwaltungen Entwicklungskonzepte erarbeitet, um den EU-Beitritt zielgerichtet vorzubereiten. Am Beispiel des Entwicklungskonzeptes für den Bezirk Karlovy Vary wurden auf der Basis der aktuellen Ausgangsbedingungen und abgeschätzten Entwicklungsverläufe Ziele formuliert, die auf Anforderungen der Informations- und Wissensgesellschaft reagieren und auf die Umsetzung in der Praxis orientiert sind. Modellhaft wird ein Kommunikationsprozess zwischen den Akteuren angebahnt, der über die kontinuierliche Netzwerkarbeit die Umsetzung der räumlichen Entwicklungsziele voranbringen soll. Die Entwicklungsbedingungen und differenzierten Ziele für die Förderung natürlicher und kulturhistorischer, sozialer und ökonomischer Potentiale werden vor dem Hintergrund von Optionen und Risiken diskutiert. Für das strategische Vorgehen bei der Gebietsentwicklung wird die Profilierung diesbezüglicher Potentiale, Qualitäten und Kompetenzen und deren funktionsteilige Vernetzung vorgeschlagen.

Summary

Development concepts are being drawn up for the new county administrations in the Czech Republic as part of focused preparations for accession to the EU. Taking the example of the development concept for the Karlovy Vary county, targets have been formulated on the basis of current conditions and estimated development patterns that respond to the requirements of the information and knowledge society and are geared towards implementation in practice. The way is being paved for a model communication process between players that is designed to advance the implementation of spatial development targets through on-going networking activities. Development conditions and differing targets for the nurturing of natural, cultural-history, social and economic potential are discussed against the backdrop of the options and risks involved. Means of raising the profile of pertinent types of potential, qualities and skills and of networking them on a division-of-functions basis are being proposed with a strategic approach to area development in mind.

1. Introduction

As of 1 January 2000, 14 counties were set up in the Czech Republic as a middle tier in public administration¹. The drawing-up of county development concepts has been commissioned to aid the work of the county authority, which will be up and running by year-end 2000 (cf. Chap 4), as the basis for using funds from the PHARE-CBC programme, as a condition for EU accession and, following accession, as a basis for using resources from the Structural Fund. This theoretical work draws on several previous local analyses and strategies such as the situational analyses for districts of 1998, the profiles of county towns of 1998, development strategies drawn up by the Czech government for all counties in 1989, the Regional Operational Programmes for the NUTS II regions of 1999 and the PHARE-CBC-INTERREG III development concepts for the Bavarian-Czech, Saxon-Czech and Austrian-Czech border areas of 1999 and 2000. A methodology² of how to draw up county

¹ Cf. Constitutional Act No. 347/1997 Slg.

² Cf. DHV CR Praha (2000)

development concepts was produced in early 2000 that envisages 15 work stages for the setting-up of the new regional-policy tool. This methodology was presented at IÖR Dresden during European Week 2000³ and its effectiveness was discussed⁴ from the point of view, amongst other things, of current tasks and action needed in the Czech Republic as determined by the conditions and requirements of European integration.

These starting conditions together with the opportunities and risks presented by spatial development in the Czech Republic, which convey universal tendencies notably in the socio-economic pronouncements made, are set out below citing selected development targets and principles for area development in the county of Karlovy Vary⁵. At the same time, attention is given to the methodological approach to drawing up the concept and to the medium-term development prospects for spatial networking, adjusted to account for structural changes, and reference is made to further tasks involved in applying this tool.

Drawing up a development concept for Karlovy Vary county involves principal and ancillary objectives:

Principal objective

To draw up an implementation-driven development concept that meets the requirements of the information and knowledge society and is adapted to the specific conditions of the Czech Republic.

Ancillary objectives

- focus on the region, its potential, problem areas, definition of development options. From this angle, attention is then turned to neighbours at home and in the neighbouring German federal states of Bavaria and Saxony, development stimuli.
- thoroughgoing sectoral and spatial assessment of development options with a view to membership of the EU and in preparation for co-operative work with other EU States.
- introduction of a development process as part of drawing up the concept by dint of intensive co-operation with regional players and by bracketing individual aspects of sectoral and spatial development.
- setting in train a process of communication between those with responsibility in districts, specialist departments, municipalities, enterprises and sociopolitical groupings as a means of developing a regional identity and jointly putting important goals of area development into practice. As regards active area development, detailed information has been, and continues to be, forthcoming on funding options and conditions within the framework of EU programmes.
- model nature of this undertaking for regional development in the Czech Republic and other Central European countries.

One particular facet of the development concept drawn up for Karlovy Vary county was that it was used to set in train active dialogue-based networking with holders of responsibility, sectoral experts and other players so as to awaken sensibilities for development opportunities and problems, allow joint development tasks to be formulated and draw attention to regional concerns from the very outset of the undertaking.

From a methodological point of view (cf. Methodological Working Schedule Tab. 1), evaluation of area development for the period since elaboration of the Trilateral Development

³ Das Bezirksentwicklungskonzept in Tschechien. Hoffnungen und Erfahrungen zum aktuellen Auftrag./Programy rozvoje krajů v České republice. Naděje a zkušenosti k aktuálnímu zadání. (2000). With contributions by Hucka, M.; Andrlé, Alois; Rehfeld, Dieter; Roch, Isolde et al.

⁴ Cf. Roch, Isolde (2000): Das Bezirksentwicklungskonzept in Tschechien. Hoffnungen und Erfahrungen zum aktuellen Auftrag IÖR-Textebeit (to be concluded).

⁵ The county development plan was drawn up by IÖR Dresden on behalf of the counties of Karlovy Vary, Sokolov and Cheb and the town of Karlovy Vary and funded with resources from the PHARE-CBC programme for smaller projects.

Concept of 1994 for the area bounded by Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic ('Dreiländereck') was used alongside estimates of development trends for sectoral factors as compared with international and Eastern German trends. Project work was directed towards putting to effect measures to attain sectoral and territorial development goals. Debate within the specialist working groups was used to air project notions and assess their contribution to meeting targets. The working group teams dispose over a wide range of experience in implementation under the real-life conditions of everyday work as well as over sufficient knowledge to assess players' actual scope for action. By applying the 'countercurrent' principle - naming of projects by players and derivation of measures and project ideas from strength-and-weakness analyses - objectives couched as expert opinions could be verified and indications of the practicality of projects responded to.

Selected goals of spatial development and principles of strategic approaches are set out below.

Table 1: Methodological work schedule

Work stages	Subject-matter covered	Range of players	Partners in EU border region
1st work stage Analysis	Collect data by subject areas - potential - constraints - conflicts - existing data coverage and comparability of data	Identify important players by - planning level - administration sector - authority - association/club - campaign Delineate network	- pinpoint important targets - establish current project work by sector, area and state of progress - communication requirements and options
2nd work stage Developing guidelines	Drawing on analyses and taking account of international development trends for subject areas Harnessing potential Removing weak spots Steps to solve conflicts	Development options and communication requirements for flow of information to aid transparency in decision-making Define co-ordinating points	Define useful meshing points in terms of staff sector-related
3rd work stage Defining goals and responsible project groups	Draw up sectoral objectives Enumerating conditions of implementation Set sectoral priorities for project work	Develop an organisation plan for providing information on and monitoring stages of implementation Identify political priorities Recommend a sequence plan	On-going information on project work funding acquisition and co-financing
4th work stage Strategy of implementation	Complete Catalogue of Measures and identify priority projects Safeguard flow of information	Finalise sequence plan identifying key areas for implementation of concept Put information system to effect	Safeguard flow of information

IÖR, Roch 1999

2. Objectives of spatial development in Karlovy Vary County and the opportunities and risks involved

The following objectives have been visualised at a scale of 1:50,000 on a land-use plan for Karlovy Vary County together with a complementary foil on medium-term goals in area development. This has allowed areas of action that were hitherto self-contained and rather small to be opened up and placed in a regional perspective. The scale reflects the needs of municipalities as well as sectoral factors and planning ventures. It provides the basis for medium-term development lines such as a regional land-use plan in which regional development potential can be exploited and expanded upon by the county and municipalities. The development opportunities and risks for the common residential and commercial area can be assessed in the process from a number of angles and locations within the area. At the same time, setting out the main framing conditions and development options will point up the preconditions for the transformation process and the emergence of a competitive European region.

2.1 Developing natural and cultural potential

The dominant potential for area development derives from natural conditions (cf. Fig. 2), specifically a rich variety of landscapes that, with their healing springs, have been turned into cultural landscapes in the course of settlement history and, due to the very specific attributes of parts of the landscape and selected towns and villages, offer excellent opportunities for the establishment of a tourist region. The county disposes over sufficient quality areas for active recreation the whole year round, a form of gentle tourism that could accommodate those who appreciate and love beautiful unspoilt nature. Infrastructural facilities need to be brought in line with this demand and added to accordingly. In the winter sports areas, cross-border schemes ought to be extended and joint service products devised.

The potential for cultural and urban tourism is similarly abundant, interesting and clearly definable. It takes the form of functionally intact and complete ensembles in the inner cities and of gems of cultural history (cf. Fig. 3) and can be developed in multifarious ways. Cross-border tourism routes linking up with the Silvermine Trail in Saxony, the networking of glass and porcelain-making locations, and the exploitation of important destination and panorama points can all help extend the present product and attract specific user groups outside the main seasons. The mainstay of the tourist trade will inevitably remain the long-standing health spa sector, with classic modes of treatment needing to be augmented by prophylactic and rehabilitation services. In view of the fact that the percentage of older people is generally growing, age-specific accommodation ought to be offered or expanded, since this would also attract the elderly from neighbouring German-speaking countries as long as there are good and varied medical and cultural services at realistic prices. Harnessing this potential requires cost-intensive redevelopment of buildings and also of the landscape. The latter includes development and extension of a characteristic landscape design. The development of open land for towns and conurbations ought to be included in this concept. The soft location factor landscape needs to be consciously developed and varied in nuanced area-use types. This requires spa resorts and their environs in particular to offer patient and guest care services that go beyond the present parameters of the spa business. The positive historical image should be retained whilst adding a new qualitative dimension by extending ranges of services and rendering them more specific.

In addition to the specific clientele for the health and spa industries and groups seeking urban tourism or gentle tourism products, adolescent user groups can be gained for occasional spectacular events. Areas left over from open-cast lignite mining⁶ can be used for

⁶ Cf. in this respect EXPO projects in Saxony-Anhalt and the Fürst-Pückler-Land venture in Brandenburg.

open-air functions such as jazz concerts, open-air cinema, laser shows etc., which young bikers in particular could avail themselves of and which could be expanded accordingly. Follow-up utilisation of mining areas does not lead to overlapping of demand on space and does not represent a noise or dust burden for urban populations. Behind the gigantic lignite craters the Ore Mountain ridge offers a unique backdrop for internationally popular youth festivals and motor-sport events, which could become regular features in the off-season schedule. Stability studies are just as necessary here as traffic and parking concepts and considerations on how to further develop the catering and accommodation sectors. Fig. 4 shows the options referred to for exploiting specific types of tourism potential with a view to developing the region in a balanced manner. By establishing nuanced tourism profiles, a variety of user groups can be attracted. Such profiles could, if uniformly managed, help ensure year-round utilisation and hence justify the development of the requisite advanced tourism infrastructure. Good utilisation is likely to filter through into jobs and tax receipts, which would help stabilise population trends and cover the costs of ambitious infrastructure. Development into a tourist region of European dimensions is only possible in the form of a joint regional effort. Besides targeted promotion of services as special products or all-in packages from the region, issues of the burden-to-benefit ratio between municipalities and cross-border neighbours present themselves. The networking of individual tourism options with the neighbouring federal states of Bavaria and Saxony appears to make sense once regional potential and aspirations have been furthered and consolidated. These opportunities can be advanced by means of transnational project work. Studies to identify advantageous management strategies ought to help pave the way for a transnational European spa region.

There is further natural potential in the suitability of soils for the retention and further development of agricultural and horticultural production. Full-time farming needs to increasingly embrace the processing of agricultural products for consumption by the local population and guests. Eco-products should preferably be grown on extensively farmed land, with the option of processing in conjunction with gentle tourism pursuits, and exported if need be. Over and above this, agricultural products ought to be used to revive market days in towns and, besides the supply angle, play a role in the tourism concept.

2.2 Adding profile to socio-economic potential

Within the framework of county development, the use and strengthening of socio-economic potential to stabilise, tighten up the profiles of, and modernise existing commercial enterprises as well as developing new competitive enterprises in the tertiary and quaternary sectors is indispensable. Together with the tapping and extension of natural and cultural-history potential, such tasks and opportunities are the precondition for stabilising value-added and population trends in the county. Since transformation from the planned to the market economy has not yet been concluded in all post-socialist cities and towns, it is only as yet possible to give initial indications of how companies are stabilising and developing in their regional distribution. There is a discernible opportunity to raise productivity by making the traditional mechanical engineering sector more specialised, this sector already to an extent enjoying good economic relations with foreign firms and marketing its products further afield. The same applies for instrument making, which is concentrated in the north-east.

Support is needed for the manufacturing trades, which do not go back a long way and have mostly evolved out of former parts of conglomerates or come into being at the initiative of individual specialists. The development prospects for craft trades are good given regional nurturing of working conditions and need to be decentrally harnessed in all areas, in which case they can help revitalise towns and sustain productive activities in large villages. A further source of livelihood are curative preparations in combination with cosmetic product ranges and food, drink and tobacco items, which, benefiting from the reputation of Karlsbad wafers and Becherovka bitters, can help create jobs and give the region a name abroad. Locations for such enterprises could be complemented by extensions in the spheres of

services and special physiotherapeutic treatment to produce a combined “health region” package around the spas.

Commercial enterprises can only be made more specialised and the foundations of value-added made more distinctive in close co-operation with researchers and by making efficacious use of vocational advancement schemes for potential staff. The local population boasts favourable age structures and a good distribution of those of employable age. The challenges involved here relate to coaching staff to be flexibly deployable at various locations and in diverse areas of activity. Close co-operation between training establishments and companies is gaining in importance as a means of offering training in professions that are currently needed. The same can be said for the co-operation between newly established companies and tertiary education establishments. There is a need to develop new products and technologies in the region to serve special demand and accumulate specialist know-how. Any savings measures required should consequently not be to the detriment of educational facilities, though these do need restructuring and should be gauged by how successful they are. They should certainly be borne in mind where elaborating a distinctive range of economic products is concerned. In Karlovy Vary, for instance, emphasis could be given to third-level and vocational colleges with a medical thrust, whilst in Sokolov the emphasis might be more on environment-related technologies, materials science and the power sector, the respective networks of players being strengthened accordingly.

Demand-driven living conditions are a must if the right workforce potential is to be retained and encouraged and population and settlement structures stabilised. Care should be taken to use and preserve existing stocks having conducted appropriate assessments as well as to decentralise specified types of accommodation. Bearing the structural substance as it stands and development objectives for individual settlements in mind, the accent should be on establishing a wide variety of accommodation types as a factor of size, level of appointments and locational conditions when making shortages good. Supply should increasingly be geared to demand, the latter in turn being strongly influenced by the social standing and areas of activity of accommodation-seekers given that this is an age in which lifestyles are being ‘individualised’. It can be assumed that specific types of demand will emerge as value-added profiles become more distinctive.

The same holds true for demand for social services. There is a need here to differentiate more extensively between services to meet the needs of specific social groups and strata and those for tourists.

2.3 Division of functions and networking

In tandem with medium and long-term development options for value-added designed to give rise to specific commercial profiles and complementary types of supply for the residential population, a re-orientation is similarly called for as regards the further development of settlement structures and in particular settlement centres. This results from the need for economic efficiency and notably from the fixed cost of infrastructure, which cannot be adapted to settlement size. Further reasons relate to the need for a high level of supply of the population and the development and retention of high-quality local conditions for value-added. Enforcing a uniform level of supply for all settlements, by contrast, leads to a levelling off and gradual deterioration of the supply situation, which limits the international competitiveness of the region and does not meet the individual needs of the population. A qualitatively high level of supply and the development of concrete locational conditions can be attained by means of sharpened profiles, specialisation and sectoral networking in the area. The aim in the process is to allow settlement structure potential to fully unfold and be effectively made use of. This particularly concerns education, supply, the health system and cultural life.

People and ambitious enterprises are in a position to profit from a high quality of 'soft' locational factors such as educational establishments, medical and cultural supply. At the same time, service provision can be financed by stabilising value-added, which helps prevent skilled staff moving away⁷ and ensures high utilisation of supply facilities. Given that high-quality infrastructural facilities are expensive, they cannot be provided in every settlement centre. Accordingly, this potential should be made sparing use of, with access to services being improved. This gives rise to the need in future settlement development to agree to specialise in high-quality supply services and merchandise on the basis of guaranteeing reliable basic supplies in all settlements. Such specialisation ought in particular to address specific services in the education, health and cultural sectors and implies in practice sectoral specialisation in centres in close alliance with value-added profiles and types of demand.

This approach differs from conventional multiplication of average supply in a region, which only admits of mean to low productivity and exacerbates rivalries. Reciprocal co-ordination and reliable co-operation, by contrast, offer the basis for implementing a high regional level of quality. This development favours less the accentuation of hierarchies based on the traditional centres and more the accentuation of settlement functions, which in turn evolve through reciprocation with the commercial profile and intense interaction with science. The focusing of profiles in a settlement network allows interrelations to be improved, activated and further developed. Urban rivalries over lesser distances can thus be turned into partnerships or urban networks⁸ and communication links can be decided upon in concert. Support for regional transport associations is the right answer to private motoring, the environmental issue and the evolution of the spa region. Fig. 5 illustrates reasonable dimensions of networking in the county which, if actively embraced and fully practised, rule out the emergence of disparities. Indeed, networking can lead to the identity of a unitary residential and commercial area being reinforced. It strengthens inner and outer awareness and identity and can be regarded as essential. A gain in identity by turn is a precondition for self-projection and self-assertion. The evolution of specific qualities in value-added and supply as opposed to the levelling-off of comparable services makes the area attractive to live in and fosters the development of creative milieus as sources of innovative and commercial energy. The tightening-up of profiles necessitates an up-to-the-minute analysis of settlement and landscape functions taking scenario developments into account and the identification of specialist inclinations. In addition, regional redevelopment concepts ought to be drawn up in the context of landscape evaluation and development so as heighten the unique landscape design and harness natural potential that has hitherto suffered damage. The redevelopment remit includes special studies into the development of new technologies for environmental protection and follow-up measures in the mining areas in co-operation with experts from other mining locations.

The targets addressed here, which have been portrayed from the angle of types and levels of potential, relate in equal measure to minimising weaknesses that may, for instance, become clear in the inadequate networking of specialised commercial enterprises. Particularly detrimental are a lack of communication links between craft and service enterprises and unevolved links with chambers of industry and commerce and training and further training establishments. There is, above all, a shortage of consultancy services provided by science and research as well as of targeted support when businesses are being built up. Comparable co-ordination and management shortcomings apply for the regional products of the tourism industry with its myriad forms of short and long-break holidays. Still militating against its function as a tourist centre is the region's negative image deriving from its large-scale open-cast lignite mine-works, power stations and petrochemical facilities, which have polluted the

⁷ The predisposition of young qualified staff to move away is rising according to recent surveys (Roch 2000) as accession to the EU approaches.

⁸ Cf. development objective in the regional planning orientation network in Germany.

air, devastated vast tracts of land and damaged vegetation. Despite undeniable successes in environmental protection and the recultivation of mining landscapes, these disadvantages are also affecting house-building patterns as well as the revitalisation of dilapidated buildings in town centres and the restructuring of former single-industry locations.

Insufficient public transport services are an impediment to improving the supply of those living in peripheral areas and in particular in the large number of small settlements. The downward trend in public transport provision can only currently be offset by resorting to private motoring, though this is undesirable for environmental reasons⁹. Transport links to the capital Prague, other Czech centres and centres in neighbouring countries are also deficient.

In single-industry locations, a high degree of specialisation and concentration in, for instance, mechanical engineering, mining or power generation can lead in the course of privatisation and the adaptation of commercial structures to international market conditions, with the attendant raising of labour productivity¹⁰, to staff being released who cannot all be taken on by other enterprises in the tertiary or quaternary sectors¹¹ (cf. Fig. 6). As the service and information society evolves, the previous predominantly high level of employment of those able to work will continue to fall in the same way, though at a later point, than in the neighbouring Saxon districts, with consequences both for the incomes of households and for municipal and national fiscal receipts. Knock-on effects take the form of growing commuting activity and, subsequently, a disposition amongst highly qualified and mobile younger staff towards moving away and over the national border. These international tendencies make it imperative that competitive industries be revalued, established and stabilised and that advanced, upgradeable information technologies be introduced to safeguard value-added for the area being considered. This will become even more important in the years ahead given that young employable people will be entering the jobs market in search of work over and above the jobs currently available.

The risk, therefore, is that young population groups who are needed to tackle the structural changes in the country will move away and that the average age of the remaining population will rise. It can be anticipated that this will lead to rising needs for costly old-age care facilities. The increase in the percentage of old people echoes a worldwide trend. This gives rise to demands not only for a new socially-oriented distribution of national and regional resources but also that new types of demand be detected, forecast and implemented. In concrete terms, infrastructure is required to tighten up its profile and a modern, flexible communication system is required that can shuttle people to and from work and service facilities.

Risks for area development concern not only the great amount of catching up to be done in the development of demand-driven residential conditions. The same also applies for the earmarking of modern commercial estates and large leisure and retail facilities on the outskirts of towns. If it does not prove possible to find advantageous urban-planning solutions to such shortcomings and put these to effect in the regional interest through co-operation between municipalities, the upshot will be greater urban sprawl in this unique landscape and a tarnished image for the cultural region. The catching-up process could well be aided by emphasizing the special cultural and landscape-related attributes of the area through practical and visually appealing urban-planning solutions.

⁹ Development of traffic volume IV in eastern Germany (Book 1.3)

¹⁰ Through the deployment of advanced technologies and savings made on wage outlay.

¹¹ In eastern Germany, the highest unemployment rates relate to single-industry localities, i.e. Hoyerswerda (mining/power), Zwickau (mechanical engineering), Schwedt (petrochemical).

3. Principles of a strategic approach to area development

When considering the opportunities and risks associated with area development, the following priorities are set for a strategic approach to area development:

1. Safeguarding of landscape-culture values and significant locations. This goal includes the upgrading, aesthetic enhancement and further development of the built and natural landscapes as well as stabilisation of the eco-system and reasonable utilisation of natural resources. At the same time, this objective should also involve counteracting unreasonable urban sprawl and the attendant large-scale sealing of landscapes, visually troublesome high-rise building development and the plundering of natural resources. Where the use of natural resources is concerned, follow-up use, mixed uses and acceptable exploitation should be accorded priority. Regional circular-flow practices need to be developed and encouraged in the sphere of extensive farming and forestry.
2. Tightening-up of the value-added profile for the region by assessing the competitiveness of established sectors and firms, gauging the chances of success of new companies and adding enterprises from the tertiary and quaternary sectors whilst strengthening the industrial infrastructure. This concretely involves, firstly, accentuating and networking the health/spa industries and tourism products and marketing these as leading products from the region, secondly, consolidating the regional and transregional status of mechanical engineering and manufacturing trades and, thirdly, strengthening and refining nuanced forms of agricultural production with processing or marketing in farming areas. Single-industry localities are to be supplemented by means of a more varied range of jobs. The tightening-up of and process of change in economic structures are to be effected in close liaison with scientific consultants and to lead to the development of new products and scientific transfers.

The decentralised structure of business locations is to be retained and reinforced through the development of means of communication and co-operation. In farming areas in particular new manufacturing and commercial enterprises are to be encouraged and, where appropriate, tourism too.

3. As a means of solving the accommodation problem, lastingly ensuring a beneficial population structure and preserving existing building stocks in settlements, nuanced forms of financial support and practical incentives for personal input in refurbishment and conversion measures are to be developed. The size and level of appointments of accommodation are to be adapted to current needs. In town centres in particular empty housing should be avoided. New residential estates ought to be exclusively served by public modes of transport, i.e. built on sites with access to the public transport network. Any residential construction in rural areas should primarily take place within village boundaries. Building measures designed to enhance the agglomeration area ought definitely to be localised in the recommended areas of settlement development.
4. The supply infrastructure geared towards satisfying society's everyday needs should retain its decentralised form. Requirements of a higher nature, specifically as regards further training for various professional profiles, ought to be met at focal points in co-operation with enterprises and university bodies. Medical provision should likewise be available or be built upon at easily accessible locations, with attention being paid to the issue of age structures. The development of central, highly qualified service provision along separation-of-function lines has priority in the centres of the

agglomeration area. This presupposes that such priority services are enumerated and that municipalities agree to networking involving the districts.

5. The key to fostering and successfully operating enterprises as well as to stabilising decentralised population development to suit the locality lies in developing an efficient integrated transport system. Local public transport services have got to be developed in line with current work, service-provision and leisure-related mobility needs and to respond flexibly with products to suit demand as and when it arises. Regions and municipalities ought to offer incentives for environmentally benign forms of transportation such as car-sharing. Local public transport primarily serves locations in the agglomerate area as well as networking these together. A cost-effective solution for peripheral areas involves supporting private motoring. The development of routes for the transregional networking of the area under investigation with major locations in neighbouring regions merits special attention.
6. Settlement structures should be further developed taking account of industrial locations and population density and growth in individual settlements by expanding specific practical services and accentuating the division of functions between centres. The supply of smaller settlements with higher-order and periodic services is to be ensured by means of appropriate facilities in the centres. Provision here should be wide-ranging and in line with demand (cf. Target map) with accessibility being guaranteed.

One major task concerns developing a commercially-centred infrastructure that encourages enterprises in the tertiary and quaternary sectors as well as higher-order education facilities in the centres or in the emerging agglomerate area featuring commerce, industry, retailing and banking in close proximity. The current pattern of regressive population development in towns and increases in households and residential space per person needs to be counteracted by restructuring the housing inventory and by building new housing in designated areas as a means of extending the agglomerate area. In this way commuting distances can be minimised. The presence of sectoral and State institutions ought to be consciously used to strengthen industrial enterprises and develop locations of transregional significance.

When developing networking links in the region and within the agglomerate area, urban-planning parameters are to be established that ensure the structuring of functionally determined utilisation areas and draw on the cultural and aesthetic effects of spatial structures. This acknowledges the locality's cultural dimension as well as strengthening and refining its image. Such 'soft' locational factors can help stabilise economic and population development. At the same time they give rise to the opportunity and necessity of including landscape elements and bio-corridors in the shaping of urban structures, in recreational usage and in cultural enrichment drives, in the process harnessing microclimatic benefits.

The strategic approach to realising cross-sectoral and regionally effective goals needs to be geared overall towards the medium-term timeframe in respect of the vision for the study area and to be put to effect gradually and point by point using concrete measures and projects with sectoral objectives. The medium-term view addresses development processes that are not yet definable as dimensions and figures but that affect the conditions for spatial development. By integrating sectoral development targets and co-ordinating measures and other activities, it will be possible even now, given a medium-term view, to harness effects for area development and identify hurdles and where possible eliminate them. Whatever the case, successful implementation of a development concept presupposes a conscious declaration of intent on the part of players and county residents to treat said concept as a master plan and breathe life into it. It thrives on involvement and can if necessary be

concretised and refined in spatial and sectoral components. Hence, the action and development concept is essentially dependent on regional will and consensus as to sectoral and cross-sectoral objectives. It is put to effect, **firstly**, by means of postulated measures involving assigned project work as the active constituent of the development concept. This work component is supplemented, **secondly**, by indispensable activities in the day-to-day dealings of authorities, departments and municipalities, which are required to meet or observe the targets listed in the sectoral chapters and to implement national planning legislation.

The involvement of major regional players in the process of implementation is central to the success of development work. There are numerous examples in literature and practice of how to handle the tasks of moderation and management that arise, all of which are at the experimental stage and clearly cannot be regarded as universally valid remedies. Conversely, it is undeniable that the process of implementation is extraordinarily difficult to moderate on account of the cross-sectoral co-operation, varying administrative structures and responsibilities, differing effects over time of various players' input and, last but not least, the voluntary nature of commitment involved. Indeed, the whole process is effectively unmanageable unless powers and responsibilities are clarified from the outset. Responsibilities concern functional/sectoral groups of tasks involving influence by State, municipal and private players. In anticipation of the imminent functional reform constituting part of the rejigging of the administrative set-up, consideration ought to be given from the outset to which tasks for the region categorically have to be executed by the State and its administrative bodies and which can be assumed by private parties in the short or medium term.

The process of implementation is invariably aided if there is involvement by sectorally knowledgeable, committed staff/department heads at State and/or regional level who can offer appropriate support in respect of planning legislation. These can inform their superiors of the state of progress of work. They are also to be involved in important decisions. In addition, representatives from industry, councils, science and the civic population are to be involved, in thematic working groups for instance. Moderation can be performed by an agency, a scientific establishment or a consultancy firm. In this respect, there is a need to opt for either the benefits of objective consideration by outside parties as a means of clarifying conflicting objectives and harmonisation requirements or those of a locally cognisant planning team. The planning team's approach is development-driven as a rule, though there may be an element of sectoral and spatial bias.

Moderation is about on-going provision of information, taking account of current events in local politics or with regard to a given discipline, liaising with neighbours at home and abroad, preparing, running and wrapping up events and, last but not least, pursuing and implementing project work with a funding portion. A useful and effective adjunct to on-going work in sectoral working groups and the collation of findings in regional fora is strategic restructuring by authorised representatives from the regional forum. This body's consultations should be prepared by the working group. Procedures envisaged by this body should in similar measure be dealt with and expanded upon in the working groups.

This generally successful strategy of active regional development utilises, fosters and trains communication and democratic self-determination. It is well-placed to advance economic, environmental and cultural objectives. This strategic approach ought to focus on the following **key subject areas** in the initiation phase:

- organisation of communication between players identified, determination of remit ranges and responsibilities;

- development of transfer of knowledge between science, practitioners and Chambers and departments plus on-going local press releases on development work and results and success in achieving goals;
- nurturing of new private enterprises by, for instance, making premises available, tax incentives, vocational advancement schemes etc.;
- tightening-up and fostering of vocational advancement profiles including development of new research remits for regional issues;
- finding means of satisfying demand for accommodation placing particular focus on the young and the setting-up of families. Favouring the refurbishment of older buildings with accommodation units being restructured to reflect changing household sizes, plus targeted forms of new house building to suit demand ;
- active pursuance of the goals of settlement development and outward representation of the region within the Czech Republic and abroad. To this end, activation of links to EU and other sources of funding.

4. Outlook

During work with the individual specialist working groups and presentation and discussion of the development objectives in plenary session, extensive support for proceeding jointly in harnessing and tapping the potential set out above was repeatedly offset by those voicing misgivings, notably as regards the present governing parameters¹² for cross-sectoral spatial action. Decision-making powers on matters of spatial and sectoral development rest with municipalities. With the exception of a few larger cities, the majority of these small communities are not in a position either economically or in terms of access to specialist and management skills to take action in this respect or become involved. The specialist departments and senior office-holders in the *okres* (districts) are employed by the Czech government. Regardless of their specialist skills and knowledge of spatial causalities, they are not authorised to initiate and co-ordinate sub-regional or regional development processes. Just like staff in State departments and scientific establishments, they are links in the network. Young people starting out in business are interested in county development but have yet to be consolidated for the most part. There are frequent cases of dual employment in a large privatised company and one's own fledgling enterprise. Expectations of active county development are accordingly pinned on young agencies¹³, which have gained initial experience of project management but whose level of qualification in the various counties can be said to be uneven. Much is expected of the new county administrations. These will be operative following elections by year-end 2000 and will make decisions on county development. How these bodies are constituted will have a decisive bearing on whether county development is effected by means of sectoral project work, as foreseen by the methodology of the county development programme¹⁴, or whether development opportunities will be recognised and exploited through medium-term cross-sectoral action. Operation of the county development programme as a regional policy tool will also reveal whether a correlation emerges between the project work with its respective phases Programme Formulation, Operationalisation and Evaluation and existing Czech territorial plans¹⁵ and the spatial options for county development set out in Chapters 2 and 3. Both the tasks and opportunities presented by the transformation process in the Czech Republic and the challenges involved in developing competitive European regions could be purposefully led to a successful conclusion on the basis of forward-looking regional planning used as a framework for flexible action. The moderate size of the county territories is likewise

¹² Lack of statutory regulations, uncertainties about privatisation, access to real estate in rural areas.

¹³ Agentura pro regionální rozvoj

¹⁴ DHV CR (2000) und Institut für ökologische Raumentwicklung e. V., Dresden (2000): contribution by Mr Hučka, Miroslav

¹⁵ Some still being drafted

conducive to this, offering good potential for mobilising regional forces and facilitating management.

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