



BULLETIN

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HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

INTERVIEW

“Within HCCZ, renewable sources of energy are ‘our’ topic.”



**An interview
with Petr Hermann,
Deputy Mayor of Litomerice
and HCP Politician**

1. Together with Hodonin and Vsetin, Litomerice has become a pilot city for a two-year project of the Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic entitled the Network of Local Agendas 21, supported by the Czech Ministry of Environment and the European Union. What are the expectations of the city hall?

We were very pleased to have been invited by HCCZ to participate in the project. As part of the project, we will be contributing to a database of best practice in various areas of life in cities, municipalities and regions. The database will include new methods and well-tested forms of work in areas such as the environment, transport, activities of authorities, education, and free time. We are convinced that it will inspire and help us as well as the mayors and citizens of the others cities.

2. There is also another HCCZ project under way in Litomerice. It is entitled Strategic Management of Municipalities towards Sustainable Development and has been supported by the State Environmental Fund. What has the city hall done and what does it plan to do in the future? What are the main benefits of the project?

Litomerice launched this project in September 2004, and it is nearing completion at the moment. We are currently training the strategic team to work with the strategic plan. We have not completed the plan yet, but the fundamentals are ready. We have completed the expert analysis and the community's City Health Development Plan (CHDP). The public has participated

in the drafting of the strategic plan; a record-breaking eighty people came to the public session to discuss the Litomerice CHDP.

3. Your city is one of the few HCCZ members in Ustecky Region. You have made the greatest progress in implementing local Agenda 21 (LA21) and you have clearly profiled as a supporter of renewable sources of energy. Do you cooperate with the region and other cities within the region in terms of these activities?

So far, there has been little cooperation with the region in these areas, but we have received strong support from HCCZ in the implementation of LA21. We also cooperate with our colleagues within the network of Healthy Cities. We try to use every opportunity to promote the use of alternative sources of energy, such as solar systems or heat pumps. During the city-wide Earth Day campaign, for instance, there are stands in the square exhibiting products of firms involved in this line of business; also, the city hall financially supports citizens in installing heating systems that use alternative sources of energy. In 2003, Litomerice hosted an MCAP session devoted to alternative sources of energy, and we will have a presentation on this topic at the MCAP session entitled “Solar Energy”, which will take place in Letovice in November this year. Within HCCZ, renewable sources of energy are ‘our’ topic.

NEWS

Local Agenda 21 Criteria – A Chance for Active Cities, Municipalities and Regions

The local Agenda 21 criteria will make it possible to measure the quality of cities, municipalities and regions in terms of certain aspects, and can help the municipalities in obtaining financial resources.

Early in 2005, the Governmental Council for Sustainable Development (GCSD) discussed **a set of criteria** for assessing the quality of the **local Agendas 21** process (LA21 Criteria) and decided that, until the end of 2005, the Criteria will be tested in dozens of Czech cities, municipalities and regions involved in

LA21. The implementation of LA21 Criteria is not an end in itself. The cities and municipalities that, based on clearly defined parameters, prove they have been using LA21 in practice will be able to benefit from their activities. The Criteria can function as **a means of support** in applications for EU grants and for subsidies from individual ministries or regions. In the future, active Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions implementing LA21 will be in a better position to obtain these funds and subsidies. As a result, HCCZ members who have adopted the principles of LA21 and sustainable development and have been actively involved in their promotion for years will be able to benefit from their long-term efforts in increasing the quality of life. At the same time, they will be able to objectively assess their achievements in this area, and compare them with others. The city of Vsetin can serve as a paragon to other Czech cities, as it has made the greatest progress of them all in this respect. This topic will be dealt with in detail at HCCZ Summer School in Jihlava between July 12 and 15.

Sustainable Development as an Opportunity for Collaboration?

This was the topic discussed recently at a meeting of NGO representatives, cities, entrepreneurs, public administration officials and academics, including foreign guests, in Prague. Among the prominent guests were John Hontelez of the European Environment Agency and a number of Czech personalities, such as Bedrich Moldan, Hana Librova, and Martin Bursik. The topic of this year's conference was sustainable development in the Czech Republic and internationally, and the importance of technological innovation, consumer preferences and public administration for sustainable development.

Commemorating ten years from the passing of Josef Vavrousek, former Minister of Environment and a great supporter of sustainable development, the conference was held in Prague between May 1 and 2, the topic being "Sustainable Development – An Opportunity for Collaboration." The conference was under the auspices of Deputy Prime Minister Martin Jahn and the Prague Councillor for Environment Milos Gregar. The opening



speech at the conference, delivered on behalf of Vaclav Havel (who could not attend the conference in person), outlined the principles forming the European intellectual heritage and emphasized the role of values and responsibility of mankind for this and the future worlds. Mikulas Huba then shared some of his recollections of Josef Vavrousek, remembering

him as a long-time colleague and friend. An information-rich presentation was delivered by John Hontelez, Secretary of the European Environment Agency, the membership of which includes 140 environmental civic associations from all over the EU. Among others, he called for mutual respect between public administration officials and the general public, as well as for openness in finding solutions to problems involving governance-related issues. The subsequent presentations and discussions covered four main topics, each producing many interesting observations and practical examples. The topics of the first day were "Sustainable Development in the Czech Republic and in the World" and "Technologies and Innovation." The speakers included many well-known personalities, among them two former Czech Ministers of Environment, Bedrich Moldan and Martin Bursik. Prominent sociologist Hana Librova opened the second day of the conference, the topics of which were "Consumers' Choice" and "Public Administration and Sustainable Development." One of the participants in the panel discussion was Josef Postranecky, Deputy Minister of Interior for Public Administration. He emphasized the role of the Ministry of Interior in promoting the concept of sustainable development, as public administration influences most of all aspects of public life. At the same time, he defined sustainable public administration as one that "is able to meet the demands of all those whom it is to serve in a timely manner and in the required quality." He highly appreciated the contribution of the Healthy Cities Project and local Agenda 21 to the quality of life at a local and regional level. He concluded his speech by noting that "efficient public administration is a prerequisite of sustainable development, and sustainable development is an integral part of public administration." The other speakers in the panel discussion were Ladislav Ambrozek, Deputy Mayor of the Healthy City of Hodonin, Petr Svec, HCCZ Director, and Roman Haken of the Community Planning Centre, who discussed the experience and problems encountered in day-to-day implementation of sustainable development in the Czech Republic. The agenda of the conference included the jubilee Josef Vavrousek Awards ceremony; as every year since 1996, the winners received the awards in acknowledgment of their active promotion of sustainable development.

World No-Tobacco Day – A Fixed Star among HCCZ Campaigns

The World No-Tobacco Day was initiated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1988. HCCZ members and their partners (such as schools, NGOs and health care facilities) have been actively involved in the campaign since 2000. Although the World No-Tobacco Day traditionally falls on the last day of May, various entertainment and sporting events focusing on the prevention of smoking and promotion of healthy lifestyle had been under way in many Czech Healthy Cities and Municipalities throughout May. This year, a total of nineteen HCCZ members supported this worldwide campaign. Details regarding the World No-Tobacco Day agenda in the individual cities, including photographs, are available at <http://nszm.cz/dbt>.

The following HCCZ members have taken part in this year's anti-smoking campaign:

Blansko; Boskovice; Brno; Ceske Budejovice; Hodonin; Chrudim; Karvina; Koprivnice; Letovice; Litomerice; Moravska Trebova; Orlova; Prostějov; Trebic; Valasske Mezirici; Velke Mezirici; Vsetin; Zlin; and the Zlin Region.



The Campaign Diary

Mlada Boleslav, Koprivnice: City Halls Became Non-Smoking Workplaces

By decision of the councillors, **Mlada Boleslav** city hall became a non-smoking workplace on the occasion of this year's World No-Tobacco Day. From now on, members of the city hall staff who will feel like having a cigarette will only be allowed to do so outside the city hall building. According to Deputy Mayor Eva Peskova, smoking does not quite fit in with the ideals of a Healthy City. Fortunately, there are only a few smokers among the city hall employees. The city hall of the Healthy City of **Koprivnice** also plans to become a smoking-free zone. "The Secretary of the Municipal Authority intends to adopt a declaration making the office a non-smoking workplace,"

disclosed Koprivnice's HCP coordinator Radka Chalupkova. In addition, HCP working group wants to address local restaurant owners, encouraging them to detach a part of their premises as a non-smoking area, or to prohibit smoking at their restaurant altogether.

Prostejov, Litomerice: Anti-Smoking Prevention at Schools

On May 27, Healthy City of **Prostejov** Committee members were giving an apple for a cigarette to pupils and students of Prostejov schools. As children often light a cigarette on their way to school in the morning, the Committee members waited for them in the Smetana Park, a favourite gathering place of young smokers. On the World No-Tobacco Day, the Healthy City of **Litomerice** ran a number of events mottoed 'It is in not to smoke'. A practical demonstration using the anatomic model of a man showed the eighth and ninth year pupils the kind of health problems faced by long-term smokers. Students of Litomerice's Secondary Pedagogical School visited local kindergartens with 'Cig the Cigarette', preventive programmes for pre-school children. The staff of the kindergarten at Stranskeho Street staged a puppet fairy tale entitled 'About Smoky, the Bad Fairy'.

Let Us Age Actively

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO), a seminar on the topic of 'Satisfying the Health Needs of Senior Citizens and Other Disadvantaged Social Groups' took place at the Institute of Postgraduate Education in Health Services in Prague. The seminar was opened by Dr. Antonin Malina, Director of the Institute, who then welcomed the first speaker, the prominent foreign guest Dr. Agis Tsouros, Regional Adviser for Healthy Cities and Urban Governance and Head of Centre for Urban Health at WHO in Copenhagen. Dr. Tsouros highly appreciated the efforts of the Czech Republic in the area of senior citizens' life and their active approach to health. At present, active ageing is one of the key priorities of the European Network of Healthy Cities,



as these issues are often overlooked and marginalised. Dr. Tsouros emphasized the role of Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions in the care of older people, and said he was sorry that Prague had not joined the Healthy Cities Project yet. When asked by Dr. Malina whether Prague could possibly be too large a city for this project, Dr. Tsouros referred to Italy, where all large

cities are actively involved in the Healthy Cities Project. HCCZ Director Petr Svec followed up with concrete examples from the Czech Republic. Dr. Vostrakova of the Ministry of Health talked about the priorities of the Czech Republic's health policy and other health-related aspects of ageing. She said that the level of public utilities available to senior citizens in terms of health care was very low, noting that mayors of cities and municipalities did not consider the lack of services for senior citizens to be a serious problem. She also presented interesting results of her own research, which indicated that senior citizens are most worried about not having enough money (to be able to live respectably), housing problems (where to spend the last years of their life respectably) and only then do they worry about their health (in what physical condition they will be near the end of their lives). Jan Lorman of the civic association Life 90 emphasized the vital role of non-governmental non-profit organisations in ensuring the care and services for old people, particularly the NGOs' ability to be far more flexible and sensitive to their real needs. Availability of funding continues to be the major limiting factor in the development of these services provided by NGOs. The afternoon session focused on vulnerable groups of population, above all on the situation of the homeless and their access to health care, which requires a specific approach. People without a home are often elderly, which makes them even more vulnerable. As Mr. Varga, a representative of civic association Hope, confirmed, health care facilities often refuse to take care of homeless persons, as the work is not paid for by health insurance companies, so the facilities are forced to take non-standard steps. Ensuring better health care for homeless people would require a more transparent health care system, including the financing, as well as improved communication and cooperation among the organisations and institutions involved, directly or indirectly, in the problem.

Many Czech Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions engage in a variety of activities to enable our senior fellow-citizens to age actively. **Universities of the Third Age**, for instance, are the most frequently encountered form, with educational programmes for elderly citizens being offered by Litomyšl, Mlada Boleslav, Uherske Hradiste, Zlin, Vsetin and many other cities. Senior citizens also like to meet at various seminars, with **'Relishing Life'** being one with the highest attendance. Participants in the programme include cities such as Brno, Chrudim, Hradec Kralove, and Trebic.

IN BRIEF

- **HCCZ: HCCZ Summer School** will take place in Jihlava between July 12 and 15, this time on the topic of EU funds and the advantageous position of the Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions in obtaining them. This regular educational event organised by HCCZ for HCP and local Agenda 21 coordinators and politicians forms a part of an accredited educational programme.
- **Kromeriz: Going Biking? – Don't Forget Your Helmet!** This original project of the Safe Community of Kromeriz received a major award in the annual Safe Roads for Children competition, organised by Volvo and Our Child foundation. Members of the jury selecting the winning project included actor Jaroslav Dusek and Head of Central Bohemian Traffic Police Stanislav Huml. The award and the amount of CZK 20,000 as prize money can help increase awareness of the importance of wearing bicycle helmets not only among children.
- **Brno:** A varied company of sportsmen as well as families with little children gathered at Brno Luzanky Park on June 11 for the eleventh year of the Terry Fox Run. The event was supported by the Healthy City Office of the Brno City Hall.
- **Uherske Hradiste, Ceske Budejovice:** As part of the Healthy Cities Project, both cities took part in the 4th year of the nationwide children drawing contest entitled Life Is Beautiful. The contest is designed for kindergarten children, basic school pupils and for young people over 15 years of age. This year, the main theme was a healthy and happy life, but also the risks threatening one's health. The annual nationwide contest has been organised by the Institutes of Public Health based in both regions.

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(The photographs were provided by the archives of HCCZ member cities, municipalities and regions.)