



# BULLETIN

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HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

## INTERVIEW



**Interview with deputy president of the Vysočina Region, Ing. Marie Černá**

*Within the framework of Measures of 3.3 Joint Regional Operational Plan (JROP 3.3), a project whose title says "Partnership for Vysočina" has recently been supported by the European Union (EU). The main target of this project is to prepare the subjects in the region – municipalities, entrepreneurs, farmers, nongovernmental non-profit organisations (NNO), micro regions and others – for drawing the resources from European funds in the period of years 2007-2013. One of the main attributes of JROP 3.3 is the principle of partnership, is it the same reason why your project also bears the same title?*

The Principle of Partnership is very important to the EU. However, it is also our objective to collaborate with various partners in our region and to search for a common agreement concerning their concepts and priorities. We do not only want to decide in a directive manner of what is important for Vysočina Region and what is not. Moreover, the title "Partnership for Vysočina" appears to me as friendly and expressing our real objective, i.e. to create the future of this area on the basis of a broad dialogue with municipalities, public, entrepreneurs, NNO and others.

*Can you disclose as of what the Vysočina Region expects from the project in the first place?*

Primarily we expect that we shall have as much information as possible about the objectives and needs in our area, which we want to reflect into elaboration of Regional Operational Plan (ROP), serving for drawing the sources from the EU in the following planning period of 2007-2013 – this is one of the main objectives. We naturally also count on the situation that it will not be possible to finance from these sources some of the identified needs. For financing of such needs that shall be general and that shall be mutual for the majority of the territory, we would like to set for instance a system of grant programs or other system supports from the part of the region.

*Has the fact, that Vysočina is the first region to become a member of the Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic, Municipalities and Regions helped you with preparation and realisation of the project?*

This fact has definitely influenced the whole project preparations and its conception in a positive way. The approach of the Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic (HCCZ) which is based just on the principle of partnership, demonstrates itself in an entirely practical way. In order to collect the objectives and projects, all accredited municipalities of the III. degree are being visited (15 towns and their subregions in the region). Further, the citizens, NNO, entrepreneurial sector, municipalities and others are invited in full scale to come up with their opinions and visions and to express them on these meetings - in this respect, the HCCZ headed by Petr Švec plays an absolutely vital part. The responses from my colleagues of individual sections and mainly from future project proposers, leading to moderating and managing of these meetings are very positive.

*The project "Partnership for Vysočina" is to prepare this region for drawing sources from the EU, for whose sake the ROP shall function, on which you will collaborate with the Southern Bohemia Region. How do you deal with different approaches of the project and objective collection and possibly even with different priorities?*

The differences in both regions naturally exist and the attitudes to procedures in individual regions differ. We hope that our procedure of the project and objective collection which is based on real needs of people and not only on officials' thoughts, might inspire the colleagues from other regions. From our perspective, it will probably be most important to generate common priorities and measures for both regions from the collected data, since our ROP will be based on this. The task for both parties is to come to agreement on these priorities.

*How do you solve the situations with project objectives in the regions that are in general currently not perceived by the public as actual or so needy?*

Our duty is to look ahead into the farther future, where problems currently not considered important or actual may arise. ROP cannot reflect only the current needs of the region, it is also bound by the national and European priorities of a long-term character. A typical and frequently underestimated example is the problem concerning the ageing of the population which can appear as a threat only in the future. The money from the EU sources shall be coming to us until the year 2013, but practically with an overlap until the year 2015, i.e. for the period of the next ten years. It is therefore needed to observe the European trends and to set up the programs today so that even the areas that may become problematical only in several years are covered.

## NEWS

### The Partnership for Vysočina – the preparation for utilization of the EU financial sources



**The project "Partnership for Vysočina" has been supported within the framework of JROP 3.3, that should prepare the regions for drawing the financial sources from the European Union for the following planning period of 2007-2013. Negotiations with local politicians and citizens about regional priorities and their project objectives are under way in all "third-class" municipalities.**

As it had been mentioned in the introductory interview, the project title is inspired by the basic principle of the EU, which is a principle of partnership. One of the main targets of the Vysočina Region is to be prepared well for the next planning period, in which up **760 mld. CZK** can be obtained from the European funds. The basic content of the principle of partnership is a systematic and continuous communication with public, whereunto the process of the project objectives collection may be very well employed. *"Within the scope of this project we want to monitor the demand for projects, we want to know the priorities that should be solved in the area of the region, and we want to establish local partnerships that should consequently help finding the consensus on what project to submit in the end"*, stated the project manager and director of the department of regional development **RNDr. Ing. Martin Černý, MBA**. HCCZ with its experience and proven methodology helps the Vysočina Region to enter into dialogue with general public and to build with its assistance a Healthy region. Doing so, it follows-up to the Healthy City Project, in which, for instance, the towns of **Třebíč, Pelhřimov, Světlá n. S., Telč** or **Velké Meziříčí** are involved, and for which the communication with public is commonplace - this makes the whole work even more efficient. Even though the summer period does not usually favour similar activities, the participation in the project meetings within the project framework is very favourable. For instance in **Světlá**, in **Jihlava** and in **Pelhřimov**, several tens of people from various subjects have gathered and even better attendance can be anticipated in the autumn.

According to Martin Černý the major advantage of the HCCZ is the fact that it interconnects the community and expert planning and the fact that it is a well-trying system based on the active involvement of public. *"In case the demand comes from below, even if it is very difficult, it is a guarantee that on one hand, quality projects will be created and also that we will get*

*information we would be otherwise hardly able to acquire"* further mentions Martin Černý.

The information changes in time and the interests and concepts of individual partners change with it. It is therefore necessary to work with accumulated data further and not to content only with a one-time collection of project objectives. It is needed to evaluate the achieved results annually and to repeat the data collection so that it really reflects the actual needs and wishes of the inhabitants. Already today it has been managed in the



Vysočina Region to collect as much as **1500** projects and the whole process motivates additional potential partners to get involved and present their proposals. This can be done also by means of our website, on which the form for developmental objectives is available. Thus, there is a foundation to build on. Frequently it comes to the situation that a large number of plans, priorities and projects cannot be linked effectively, or it is very difficult to harmonize the targets and objectives included herein, as the case may be. In order to facilitate orientation and to increase the efficiency of decision-making there will function a special database environment, so called **DataPlan HCCZ**, which should enable comparing individual strategies and plans among themselves very easily and at the same time it should monitor as of what objectives are included in these projects and in what realisation phase these currently are. All



parties interested shall be therefore free to make inquiry about the targets are fulfilled by the region and whether these targets are in concord with their own ideas or whether an alteration or addition is needed.

The Vysočina Region has succeeded on the basis of the above mentioned procedures to establish the "information channels" between individual departments of the regional development on the level of all municipalities of the III. degree with extended operation, the public and other partners. *"In other regions this*



partnership is more or less coincidental, ordinarily, the case are previously selected groups of partners with sufficient personnel capacity and background, other potential partners usually do not participate, which is probably the main difference from the approach of other regions", adds Martin Černý. In the future, even closer cooperation of activities within the scope of this project with the activities of the **Healthy Region of Vysočina** should also take place. The **Healthy Region of Vysočina** project is based on similar principles and is heading to the same target – quality and systematic management of the public administration, which reflects the real needs of those whom they serve.

The principle of partnership therefore is not a single-phase activity which can be performed and crossed out of the list of tasks. It is a long-term process based on the dialogue of a wide range of partners, and whose substance is to continuously strengthen the connection between those who have clear notions of development of the environment in which they live and those who fulfil these concepts. We believe that this manner of cooperation shall also be chosen by other regions of the CR. As early as today, some towns of the south Moravian Region also embarked on the same course.

## The HCCZ Summer School this year already for the fourth time

**Overall in four days' educational meeting of coordinators and politicians from town halls of Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions has this time taken place in Jihlava, during 12.-15. July. The main subjects were possibilities of gaining and using the EU funds and the methodology of strategic management in Healthy municipalities, cities and regions.**

The Summer School was attended in total by 42 persons mostly from ranks of coordinators and politicians of the Healthy City Project and collaborating institutions, e.g. the Department of the Environment or National Health Institute. The appearance of Dr. Simon Smith of the British Salford University was an interesting contribution to this year's meeting. Dr. Smith presented a contribution to the subject of community planning in the Czech Republic and in Great Britain, having gained a great response from the participants. Apart from Petr Švec, HCCZ director, who has spoken in his speech about the advantages of HCCZ membership not only in the connection to using the EU sources, but also under the conditions of the CR, the representatives of the consulting company 4EuroPartners,



Dr. Dan Marek and Ing. Tomáš Kantor have also presented their speeches. These lecturers have also led a specialist training of a project objective creating, in which the participants, divided into three groups, could practically try out as how to proceed when preparing a project and how to solve various difficulties related to it. The concluding part of the lecture part was dedicated to the issue of quality of the public administration, strategic



planning and management in Healthy municipalities, cities and regions and the Criteria MA21 related to this. The participants have also been made familiar with the MA21 Database and with the form used for its supplementation, the HCCZ database of good practices examples, which is currently being prepared, has also been discussed. The Friday's programme was open to individual consultations and discussions to all participants. Foto nějak rozhodit

## Observation from the Summer School

We have asked several participants for their opinions and observations that occurred to them in connection to this event, directly during the Summer School. Among these there have been the coordinators of the Healthy Cities Project (HCP) – the representatives of new members of HCCZ, but also experienced coordinators, the representatives of the long-term members of the HCCZ. They have all agreed on the fact that the Summer School fulfilled their expectations. "I have arrived as a participant full of vague expectations and I was thrilled by the Summer School. I had the opportunity to get to know most of my colleagues, including the team from the HCCZ Office. I appreciate the quality and ease of the lecturers. The environment was pleasant and the town was kindly calm", told us for instance the HCP coordinator from Ústí nad Labem, Eva Poláčková. The Vice Mayor of Orlová



and HCP politician, Marie Pustelníková, praised mostly the practical part of the programme. *"To me, the most important is the group work, in which everyone has to ponder upon a problem and search for the best solution possible; as well as the immediate feedback",* she stated. The participants have also appreciated the great quota of knowledge they received during the whole event and the possibility of their practical usage. While David Monsport, coordinator of the Healthy City of Koprivnice, finds the main contribution in obtaining information mostly during talks with the political representation, his predecessor Radka Chalúpková sees their usage for instance *"in redistribution of appeals for project submission to the individual subsidising EU titles."*

From the above mentioned observations we may deduce that the SS met with a warm reception and that another HCCZ School, which is planned for the November of this year, may pick up the threads of its success. The Autumn School of HCCZ will be focused apart from the mastery of instructing and presenting skills and work with information technologies for reporting and presentations, to the health support.

## IN BRIEF

- **HCCZ:** In September in the Czech Republic, the traditional campaign the **European Mobility Day** and the **Car Free Day** shall take place. This campaign draws attention mostly to the issue of road transport in towns. In the days of 16.-22.9. there will be again many interesting events organised in a number of Healthy Cities, in relation to this issue. So far, the towns of Kroměříž, České Budějovice, Velké Meziříčí or Vsetín have taken part in this campaign. The main motto of the European Mobility Day for the year 2005 is **"Clever Commuting"**.
- **HCCZ:** "The Town Without Emissions" is the title of the international conference under the auspices of the British Council, that shall take place on 21.9. in attendance of HCCZ representatives and a number of British experts. The conference will be dealing with the issue of the **quality of atmosphere** in the cities and the options of how to improve the current unpropitious situation. The 8<sup>th</sup> international conference and the exhibition **"Transportation and Technology for Sustainable Development"** in Karlovy Vary, between 14.-16.9, will be similarly oriented. The main topic shall be the issue of emissions of harmful substances in the transportation field.
- **HCCZ:** 13.9. The HCCZ holds under the auspices of the **Ministry of Transport, Milan Šimonovský** the seminar **"Safe Transport in the City"**, whose main topic shall be the calming of transport in the cities and municipalities and improvement of its safety. The seminar shall bring the actual information e.g. about **"Armadillo"** or **Going Biking? – Don't Forget Your Helmet!** campaigns, that have been participated by a number of Healthy cities and municipalities.
- **HCCZ:** The national coordinators of the Healthy City Project will meet in the Turkish Bursa between 22.-24. September. Among others, the **strategy of the European Healthy Cities Network** for the period of 2005-2007 or financing of its international activities will be introduced. A number of official guests from the ranks of mayors, sheriffs or Ministers of Health of the member countries have also been invited to the meeting. One of the main topics shall also be the discussion of the strategy for enlargement of the net of Healthy Cities Network by the new countries from the European region.

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