



# BULLETIN

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HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

## INTERVIEW

### Housing Estate Regeneration as an Example of Best Practice



**An interview with Jiri Novak,  
Deputy Mayor of the Healthy City  
of Koprivnice and Healthy Cities  
Project (HCP) Politician**



***A long-term project is under way in the Healthy City of Koprivnice to regenerate its Sever housing estate. Inhabitants of the estate have been actively involved in the project. Can you tell us more about it?***

In opinion polls, Koprivnice citizens have identified the Sever housing estate as the most problematic part of the city. About 6,000 people live in this very small area, with the high-risers being close to one another and some elementary facilities missing. Koprivnice's councillors decided to solve the situation and used a grant of the Ministry for Local Development to launch a regeneration project. In line with the Healthy City principles, we wanted the inhabitants of the estate to participate; the city hall and the Institute for Community Development have, therefore, prepared a plan for getting the public involved in the process. The whole project should be completed within seven years; in 2003, the city contributed CZK 2 million out of the total CZK 7 million required for Phase 1. Phase 2 is currently under way, which includes the refurbishing of houses, building of new children playgrounds and parking stalls and planting of new trees and shrubs.

***Can the regeneration of this Koprivnice housing estate be considered an example of best practice for other Healthy Cities? If so, why?***

I think so. One of the key benefits of the project is the maximum involvement of the inhabitants. The citizens were encouraged

to participate in the planning process at meetings with city representatives and designers. The people had a chance to see what the designers were planning to do, and the designers were able to find out about the inhabitants' major concerns. Mutual exchange of information is really important. The citizens know that they can ask questions about anything, and that they will receive answers to those questions. During the planning process, they can come up with suggestions for changes, helping shape the future of their residential area.

***Koprivnice is preparing for public negotiations of the City Health Development Plan. Can you describe the current situation?***

At the moment, the City Health Development Plan is being negotiated in working groups. Shortly, there will be a public discussion of the draft. After that, the plan will be submitted to the councillors to be integrated in the city's Strategic Plan.

***What other interesting projects will be implemented in the Healthy City of Koprivnice?***

Some time ago, regional authorities initiated a project to develop a regional network of cycling routes; we would now like to focus on a network of cycling routes in the city. Again, we want the citizens to participate as much as possible in the project. We are going to hold a planning meeting of architects and city officials with our inhabitants, among them a representative of disabled citizens to make sure that public areas in the city are barrier-free.

## NEWS

### Healthy City of Kromeriz has the Safest School in Central Europe

**The Zachar Basic School in the Healthy City of Kromeriz is proud to be the first Safe School in the Czech Republic. As a matter of fact, it is the only educational facility in Central Europe to have met the strict criteria of the World Health Organization (WHO) and to become a member of the international Safe Schools network.**

The school and its founder, the Kromeriz city hall, received the certificate of membership in a special ceremony on November 21. Safe Schools emphasize prevention of injuries and of physical and mental violence and strive to create an agreeable environment for children as well as the staff. During classes, the teachers place the subject matter within the context of wider issues, such as the general lifestyle, information about health habits or addictive substances. Kromeriz's Zachar School has



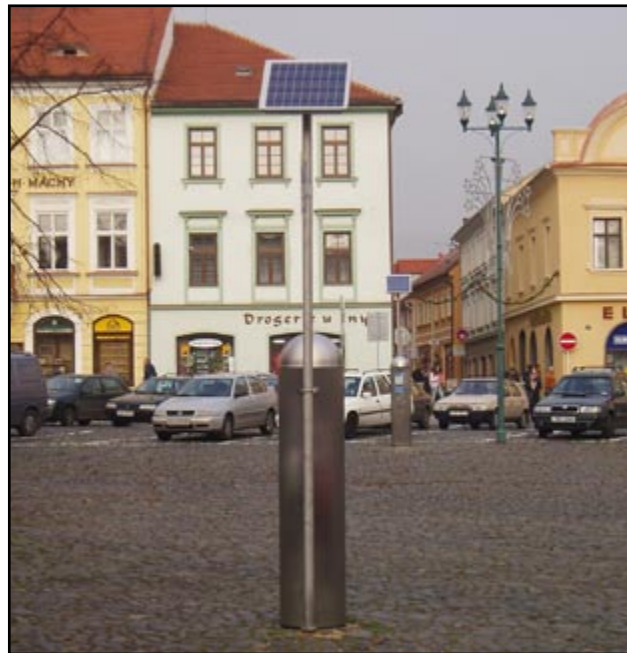
The photograph captures Petr Dvoracek, Mayor of Kromeriz, and Veronika Benesova of the Injury Prevention Centre of 2<sup>nd</sup> Medical Faculty of Charles University, Prague.

operated this way for the past five years, during which time it has worked hard to be able to join this prestigious club. Safe School is one of the new programmes of the WHO International Safe Communities Network. The global network currently has over eighty members, including cities such as Rotterdam, Dallas, Calgary, or Melbourne.

## Healthy City of Litomerice Placing Second in Czech Solar League 2005

**The second year of the Czech Solar League – a competition of cities and municipalities in utilization of solar energy – was concluded on November 22 by a ceremony announcing the winning cities and the most interesting installations. In the new division of categories, the Healthy City of Litomerice has scored high this year, securing silver in the category of municipalities with 5,000 to 50,000 inhabitants.**

The competition is organized by the civic association Ecological Alternatives League with the support of the State Environmental Fund and the business sector. The aim of the Solar League is to encourage and motivate cities and municipalities to utilize the practically inexhaustible source of energy – the Sun. According to a set key, the competing installations of solar (converting solar energy to heat) and photovoltaic (converting solar energy to electricity) panels receive “solar” points, which are then related to the number of inhabitants of the respective municipality to determine its final ranking. Taking part in the League, the cities and municipalities demonstrate their commitment to improving the quality of air and reducing the greenhouse effect. This year, **28** out of the total 386 competitors were **Healthy Cities**. **Litomerice** was the most successful of them, securing second place in the category of cities with 5



Litomerice's parking meters are driven by solar energy.

to 50 thousand inhabitants. Among other things, Litomerice encourages its citizens to use solar energy for heating utility water by direct subsidies of CZK 20 thousand per solar system. In the future, the councillors plan on installing solar collectors at all elementary schools and kindergartens in the city. However, Litomerice was not the only Healthy City scoring high in the League. The **Healthy City of Brno leads the way** among large cities in the use of photovoltaic panels. The panels, installed at the Pedagogical Faculty of Masaryk University, have a total output of 40 kW and cover 333 m<sup>2</sup>, which is the largest area in the Czech Republic.

## Healthy Cities in Lidove noviny

**Together with Lidove noviny, HCCZ has prepared a four-page supplement for this nationwide daily. The goal was to introduce the readers to activities of HCCZ and to present the Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions through examples of best practice in areas they excel in.**

For the **first time**, Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions were offered a whole newspaper supplement to present themselves to a wide forum – the readers of Lidove noviny and the general public. The special supplement entitled **Cities to Themselves** came out on **Thursday, November 24**, bringing a lot of information about recent, current as well as future activities of HCCZ and its members. It presented **12 concrete examples of best practice**, such as the emergency calling system for senior citizens in Boskovice, ecological buses in Prostejov, or the Health Days campaign in Brno. The supplement described numerous achievements of the Healthy Cities in fulfilling the principles of sustainable development and their ability to obtain EU funding. Briefly informing the readers about the latest in Healthy Cities, the articles and short columns on various topics were also intended as inspiration for other Czech municipalities and regions in regards to promoting health, sustainable development and the quality of life. The readers were provided basic information on the WHO Healthy Cities Project and on local Agenda 21 activities.





*This symbolic photograph was on the title page of the Lidove noviny supplement.*

The lead article was written by Jiri Cunek, HCCZ Chairman and Mayor of the Healthy City of Vsetin. In an interview on the last page, HCCZ Director Petr Svec presented a vision of "healthy and prosperous" cities able to obtain EU funding and invest the money to the benefit of their citizens. In addition to the printed form, the supplement will also come out electronically on CD-ROM, which will be distributed at HCCZ events and will be enclosed in the **Modern Municipality** magazine early next year. We trust that cooperation with Lidove noviny will meet with a positive response among Healthy Cities as well as others, and that there will be more such opportunities to present HCCZ and its activities to the readers in the future.

## Prostejov Hosting This Year's HCCZ Autumn School

**The three-day training for coordinators and politicians from Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions took place in Prostejov between November 14 and 16. In addition to gaining new experience in communication and rhetoric and in health promotion, the participants were introduced to new HCCZ information tools for public administration – DataPlan and Best Practice Database. Twenty-one HCP and LA21 coordinators and politicians took part in this year's Autumn School.**

HCCZ Autumn School 2005 was opened jointly by Mayor of Prostejov Jan Tesar and Bozena Sekaninova, Deputy Mayor of Prostejov and HCP and LA21 politician. HCCZ Director Petr Svec informed about **HCCZ having been nominated by the Czech Ministry of Interior for UN award** for the support of quality in public administration.



*A joint welcome to participants in HCCZ Autumn School by Mayor Jan Tesar and Deputy Mayor Bozena Sekaninova of the Healthy City of Prostejov.*

As part of the discussion workshop on the first day, HCCZ Office staff introduced HCCZ information systems, particularly HCCZ DataPlan and its component part, the Best Practice Database. The participants were also informed about the official LA21 Database. These topics sparked a lively discussion, which provided a valuable feedback from the primary users of these tools – HCP and LA21 coordinators. The above IT tools will play an important part in that they should contribute to overall effectiveness and implementation of HCP. The afternoon session dealt with media promotion of activities in Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions. Pavel Herot and Tomas Hradil of the consulting firm MediaCon explained why promoting HCP activities was important, and provided useful guidelines regarding practical issues such as drafting a press release, communicating with journalists or building a positive image of the city. A lot of the information was based on the preliminary results of the **media analysis** to be completed by the end of the year.

Concluding the working day, there was a presentation on health promotion in Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions, which emphasized the role of the WHO as the umbrella organisation and **Health 21** as its fundamental conceptual document. The presentation also mentioned the current activities of the WHO Working Group focusing on injury prevention, of which HCCZ is a member.

On Monday evening, Prostejov HCP coordinator Petra Mejzlikova showed the participants round the representation rooms of the Prostejov city hall.

On Tuesday, the agenda included two parallel sessions. Anchored by HCCZ Director Petr Svec, the **discussion section** on HCP and LA21 dealt with the latest developments within



*Video training as part of presentation skills practise*

HCCZ and responded to queries and suggestions that HCP and LA21 coordinators were encouraged to send in by e-mail in advance. The coordinators found the discussion of topical issues most useful. The second section, anchored by professional lecturer Roman Branberger, focused on **presentation and communication skills**. For instance, each participant could practice putting together a PowerPoint presentation on HCP, including advice concerning the do's and don'ts. Video training was a part of the session; volunteers had been filmed on video and the whole group then discussed the strong and weak points of the presentation. Owing to this method, the participants were eventually able to identify the **basic rules of presentation**. The training will continue at HCCZ Spring School in Mlada Boleslav in March next year.

## Quality and Innovation – The Way to Sustainable Development

**As part of the European Quality Week, the National House at Vinohrady, Prague, hosted an international conference entitled Quality and Innovation – The Way to Sustainable Development between November 8 and 9.**

This meeting of experts from the Czech Republic and abroad was prompted by the growing importance of quality that has become a crucial factor for the success of a firm as well as a public sector organisation. Today, quality is understood in a wider context to mean products, services as well as the good reputation of their provider. This requires the company or organisation to provide clear guarantees as to environmental protection, safety of employees or development of the area where they operate. The **quality of life of citizens** is becoming a primary concern; satisfaction of present-day needs should not jeopardise the needs of future generations. A comprehensive quality concept and the strengthening of its significance is a logical step on the way to fulfilling principles of sustainable development. As such, quality has become a **priority** in the future development of the EU. HCCZ Director Petr Svec described this new concept of quality in his speech. He presented HCP as a way of improving the quality of public administration, mentioning also the international **local Agenda 21** programme, which pursues the same goal – to improve the functioning of public administration with active participation of citizens. He concluded his presentation by pointing out the services rendered by HCCZ to its members to help them meet the international quality standards and succeed in competing for the limited EU funds. The **Healthy City of Hodonin** is a good example in this regard; by implementing HCP, it was able to significantly improve its results according to the **Common Assessment Framework** (CAF). Representatives of Hodonin and another HCCZ member, the Vysocina Region, then shared their experience in improving the quality of life of their citizens and the quality of public administration.

Between December 5 and 7, **2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference for Quality in Public Administration** will be held in Pilsen. Lecturers at the conference will include representatives of the Ministry for Local Development and the Ministry of Environment, with HCCZ being the expert partner for one of the technical sections.

## How Do We Plan to Be Healthier?

**On 24 November, an MCAP session took place in Trebic, focusing on Local Environmental Health Action Plans (LEHAP). As healthy urban planning, expert health plans and a health policy are an integral part of each Healthy City, Municipality or Region, these issues were among those discussed in Trebic by HCCZ members, regional health authorities and institutes officials and HCCZ Office staff.**

National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP) of the Czech Republic contains a set of recommendations directed at improving the environment and the health condition of Czech population. NEHAP is followed up by local Environmental Health Action Plans (LEHAP). LEHAPs have been developed for the purposes of national action plans' implementation when it became apparent that these priorities and activities are best fulfilled in cities and regions. The emphasis is on strong partnerships between health specialists and citizens as recipients of the services. The European Union has promoted LEHAP as the best way to improve health of citizens and the standard of medical care, thereby contributing to the overall quality of their lives. The MCAP session in Trebic presented information on the **new aspects** of the Healthy Cities Project, which recommend including the criterion of health and the impact on equity, the quality of life, sustainable development and safety in the strategic development of the city when working on area planning. Strategic development should include a **Health Profile** of each Healthy City. A representative of the Jihlava Health Institute presented this **new analytical document** formulating the city's health policy using the Healthy City of Trebic as an example.



*Marie Cerna, Deputy Marshall of Vysocina Region, Radek Cihal, Deputy Mayor of Trebic, and HCCZ Director Petr Svec discussed various ways of creating conditions for the quality of life.*

## IN BRIEF

- **HCCZ:** HCCZ is going to implement **Pilot Projects to Develop Partnerships in South Moravian Region** in the cities of Letovice, Boskovice, Kurim, and partly in Hodonin. The emphasis will be on active participation of all relevant target groups: political representatives; authorities; business sector; NGOs; educational institutions; and

the general public. Local partnerships will serve two purposes – as preparation of projects for financing from EU funds and as a basis for updating the Regional Development Programme and any other strategic and conceptual documents.

■ **HCCZ: HCCZ General Meeting** took place in Letovice on Wednesday, November 30. Apart from regular topics such as the report on the state and activities of HCCZ, there was a discussion of key issues such as the new system of membership fees, HCCZ League rules, and the

structure, content and format of HCCZ Methodology. The participants were also introduced to the short, medium and long-term outlook of HCCZ and the budget for 2006.

■ **Letovice: An MCAP session on renewable sources of energy** took place in Letovice on the same day as the General Meeting. Representatives of Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions had an opportunity to exchange information and examples of best practice and to see how solar energy is utilized at the Letovice Social Services Centre.

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