

## HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

### INTERVIEW



**An interview with deputy Mayor of the Healthy City of Chrudim and politician of the Healthy City Project (HCP) and Local Agenda 21, Mr. Petr Řezníček.**

### Actions Speak Louder than Words

**Chrudim, together with other Healthy Cities, recently received a significant award from the Ministry of Interior. Can you mention why your city deserved the award?**

In autumn last year we put our name down for the competition of departmental prize of Mol for quality in regional public administration "Organisation of Good Public Service for 2006". The basis of our approach lies in wider application of sustainable development principles in Chrudim, namely through processes of strategic planning and management – Local Agendas 21 (LA21). What we are concerned with is ensurance of conditions for citizens' quality life in the long-term perspective. The project is aimed at continuation in LA21 implementation according to officially specified parameters – LA21 Criteria. The Criteria help us evaluating the actual LA21 process level and determine common steps that need to be taken for the sake of further increase in the quality of public administration in Chrudim, in accordance with LA21 and CAF model.

**An award often works as a positive motivation for the future. In what ways would you like to improve Chrudim's municipal house work further?**

Our endeavours have many directions. For instance we would like to continue in developing the communication with public by means of LA21 processes and address various target groups concerning collaboration on projects. At the office we have been developing another method of quality CAF, which results in further improvement in public services quality. For the 2007 we have prepared the Action Plan of LA21 Process Improvement, where we e.g. want to focus on implementation

of HCCZ DataPlan into the common office activity and we will further monitor and evaluate the local (community) indicators and European Common Indicators (ECI). We will also join the common theme of Healthy Cities and LA21, which is "sustainable and safe transportation".

**A popular saying claims that actions speak louder than words. What would you recommend to those of your colleagues, who would like to follow the Chrudim's example?**

*Verba movent, exempla trahunt* – actions speak louder than words. Words are about someone telling you something about the quality of work, collaboration with public etc. Try it and you will see if you become a good example. In case the Healthy Cities Association can help you at the beginning, feel free to turn to it. We have also done so. Don't let yourself be discouraged by anything if you want to serve your citizens well.

### TOPIC OF THE MONTH:

### "QUALITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION"

The quality of life and its long-term sustainability are terms very frequented in today's society. We may often encounter an opinion that this is more of a political formula that everybody talk about "in a scholarly fashion", than basic social objective that should be fulfilled in a real content of everyday work. Conditions for quality life in fact are not created solely at the ministries, but mostly in a particular municipality,



One of the key tasks for increasing efficiency of public administration and improving quality of life in our cities, municipalities and regions, is the ability to establish active and bilateral communication with the public.

city or region. These are responsible for improvement of their services for citizens and improvement of their living standard and quality of the environment they live in. Despite this fact, the way in which central bodies influence the possibilities of self-administrations in the process of performing their tasks in the area of developing quality of public administration well, remains absolutely crucial. Because a quality life, which is the objective of Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions, can be hardly achieved without a quality public administration, this year's second issue of HCCZ Bulletin is dedicated just to the possibilities of improving the quality of work of our offices further, in collaboration and with active participation of the public.

## QUALITY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REMAINS AN EVER ACTUAL ISSUE

**Quality administration of public affairs is currently a significant element not only for the development of cities, municipalities and regions, but also for their partners from the business sphere. Quality of services provide by offices and civil servants, in the first place depends on good work from the part of municipalities and communication with the public, but also on the number of regulations that prescribe the municipalities and regions actions to take. Entrepreneurs likewise suffer from excessive regulation, the costs related to various types of administration annually amount to tens of billions.**

A very frequent problem of public administration (PA) is its inefficiency, or complicity of measuring its performance and determination of measures suitable for improvement of its functioning. This is why Ministry of Interior, into whose authority the area of PA falls, has recently concentrated on implementing modern methods of evaluating the quality of office work and on improving the efficiency of their functioning. In this respect it seeks **greater involvement of self-administrations** in implementation of quality methods in their offices. This implementation is currently based on optionality, which in practice means that each municipality can choose whether and which method it would implement at its office. For the future MoI should create a conception document for quality implementation on the level



*Representative of the Minister of Interior, Mrs. Martina Jalovecká introduces plans of her department at the national conference of Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions "Best Practice – The Gate to Europe".*

of central state administration that might serve as an inspiration for regional public administration (i.e. municipality, cities, regions). *"The final objective should however be creation of a concept for all levels of public administration, so that implementation of methods has clear rules and procedures"*, says **Martina Jalovecká**, director of department of strategies and conceptions of the Department of Regulatory Reform and Quality of Public Administration.

Another activity from the part of Ministry of Interior is also related to improvement of public administration quality. Currently it has been

preparing methodology for **public involvement**, so that citizens could to a greater extent collaborate in creating governmental materials. The idea is such that all documents prepared by the ministries should be available at websites prior to their endorsement by the government. The department of interior has been also preparing an important **regulation impact evaluation** directive. *"In other words, this is a guideline according to which the central bodies would evaluate each proposal of legal regulation also with respect to the extent that it would burden the affected subjects – citizens, entrepreneurs, offices etc. All the economical, social and environmental impacts of proposal would be controlled"*, Jalovecká explains the issue. The duty to perform evaluation of regulation impact in the process of preparing all directives on the level of central state administration will be introduced as soon as in the course of this year.

**Monitoring of administrative load** caused by the current legislation is another act of Ministry of Interior. The load of entrepreneurs from the point of view of information duty has been analysed in the initial phase. In this connection the Ministry of Interior will present a material of how to reduce this load until the end of March this year. *"In case this system proves practical, we would also like to relieve citizens from unnecessary administrative requirements"*, foreshadows Martina Jalovecká the further development. *"We expect that these measures will contribute to more effective work both on the part of civil offices and city-houses and municipalities and also to their mutual collaboration"*, concludes Jalovecká.

More information to the issue of increasing quality in public administration can be found in the new MOI newsletter **Effective Administration** (available for download at <http://www.mvcr.cz/sprava/moderniz/dokumenty/efektivnisprava.pdf>).

## QUALITY METHODS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN A NUTSHELL

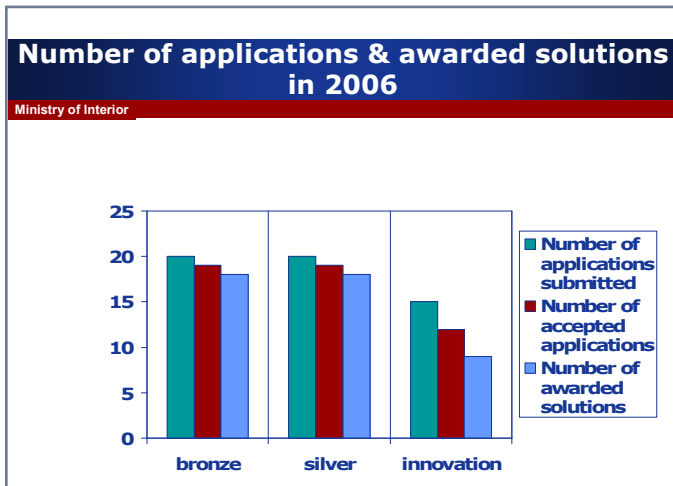
**Joining the European Union, limited financial resources and increasing agenda increasingly force cities and civil offices to make their work and the whole management process system more effective. One of ways of how to achieve better quality in public administration is to introduce modern methods of quality evaluation that originate in the commercial sphere. The main objective of companies – i.e. generating profit – is in this case replaced by seeking the highest possible quality of services available to citizens while having the lowest possible demands on public budgets.**

Among the most frequently employed methods, applied in the Czech Republic, in particular belong the **CAF Method** (Common Assessment Framework), **Benchmarking**, **Balanced ScoreCard** (BSC) and **Local Agenda 21**.

The method of so called **Common Assessment Framework** (CAF) has been processed by the European Institute for Public Administration. Its testing was in progress since 2000 and the current model was created in 2002. CAF overall consists of 9 criteria that enable self-assessment of an organisation. The assessment focuses both on the capacity e.g. of an office (human resources, strategic planning etc.), and on results of its work (relationship to customers, performance, results). Each criterion is further divided into sub-criteria (27 overall). Find out more information in a publication at [http://www.npj.cz/doc/CAF1\\_cz.pdf](http://www.npj.cz/doc/CAF1_cz.pdf).

Public administration **benchmarking** enables the offices and other institutions to increase their performance on the basis of mutual comparison and learning from each other. Selected, precisely specified areas of activity are compared with an objective to find the best solution possible. Sharing best practices is also an integral part of this method. Municipalities and cities that apply this method have been united in so called Benchmarking Initiative 2005. This voluntary initiative enables access of all partners to the data, results of comparing and the





The picture shows a general overview of tools currently employed for increasing quality in public administration in the CR, according to Mol (source: Mol).

best practical experience of participating cities and municipalities. 85 municipalities and municipal districts are currently participating in this initiative. More information to this method can be found e.g. at <http://www.benchmarking.vcvscr.cz/dokumenty/114.pdf?PHPSESSID=43b49927732b2be4b2b2dd8958aa6a4b>.

The method of so called **Balanced ScoreCards** (BSC) chiefly focuses on development of strategic management in individual offices' activities. The method is based on balanced monitoring of both the financial and non-financial aspects of development strategies and mostly connects to the operation quality in a given organisation. Owing to BSC an office may monitor both the common agenda (e.g. customer's – voter's satisfaction) and the effort dedicated to reinforcement of its capacity (employee's motivation, education etc.). You can find out more e.g. at <http://casopisy.euke.sk/mtp/clanky/3-4-2006/dvorakova.pdf>. Among the municipalities that proceed according to the BSC Method or currently implement it, for instance belongs the Healthy City of **Vsetín** or the Healthy Region of **Vysočina**. Owing to the common project of Mol, MEPCO and Educational centre for Public Administration, further Healthy Cities and Regions have been joining the BSC and other quality methods.

Last year, Ministry of Interior of the CR filed the **international programme of local Agenda 21 (LA21)** among the official methods for measuring quality in public administration. A quality office may be thus also evaluated according to the quality of communication with its citizens and taking their opinions seriously or how it deals with application of sustainable development on the local level. The Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic (HCCZ) initiated acknowledgement of LA21 as a criterion of municipal house operation. In order to enable ascertainment of realisation level of this programme, a set of twenty-one **LA21 Criteria** were created on the grounds of **Governmental Council for Sustainable Development** in 2005. More about the LA21 Programme, its criteria or participating self-governments within the official LA21 Database can be found out at <http://www.nszm.cz/ma21>.

The systematic approach towards enforcement and support of quality services and products is introduced by the governmental programme of **National Quality Policy** (NQP). The aim of the NQP Programme is to create such an environment in the Czech Republic, in which quality is a natural part of life. The Quality Council of the CR, which is an advisory committee and initiation body of the Government, manages and coordinates this programme. The Council chairman

also announces the **Czech National Prize for Quality**, which is, along with prizes of the Ministry of Interior, the highest quality award granted in the Czech Republic.



Among other methods coming from the business sphere and adopted by the institutions of public administration, belong for instance the model of **European Foundation for Quality Management EFQM** (more at <http://www.efqm.org/>) or the **IIP Method – Investors In People** (more at <http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk>) or the **Metod of TQM – Total Quality Management**. **ISO standards** are an integral part of the family of qualitative standards – for instance **ISO 1400** or **ISO 9000** (more at <http://www.iso.cz>) and the **Programme of environmental management and audit EMAS** (more at [http://www.cenia.cz/www/webapp.nsf/webitems/home\\_EMAS](http://www.cenia.cz/www/webapp.nsf/webitems/home_EMAS)).

Good and efficient work of an office, however, is not created solely by quality methods but also by new, especially information technologies that gradually find their way into the management framework of municipal and regional offices. In this respect, for instance the **e-government** initiative belongs among the important systematic solutions, focused on utilisation of information and telecommunication technologies in state administration and self-government. (more for instance at <http://www.micr.cz/egovernment/default.htm>). As a particular example in this respect may serve for instance the establishment of **unified contact places**, so called **Czech Points** that enable e.g. issuing of various certificates or certifications at one place (more at [http://www.financninoviny.cz/zpravodajstvi/pocitace/index\\_view.php?id=237790](http://www.financninoviny.cz/zpravodajstvi/pocitace/index_view.php?id=237790)).

One of such new tools that helps the cities, municipalities and regions to manage their offices better and more effectively, is the **HCCZ DataPlan**. This database tool interconnects individual office activities on all management levels – from daily tasks to strategic and conceptual planning – and gathers thus at one place otherwise hardly accessible thousands of information needed for everyday decision making of mayors but also for long-term strategic development. This information is then transparently connected to budgets and enables the cities to monitor the areas that their financial resources are invested into. More at <http://www.dataplan.info>.

The overall quality and especially the way it is perceived by the public is significantly contributed to by the ability of office to work **transparently** and according to generally applicable **ethical standards**. Corruption, nepotism and other forms of public power misuse belong to major problems particularly in the newly transforming countries. These problems have, besides the moral aspect, also significant negative economical impacts. This is why some organisations accept so called **codes of ethics** that should increase the credit and credibility of a given institution. Into this family belongs for instance the **Citizen's Chart**, whose objective is to improve the performance of administration activities and public services on those workplaces that get in touch with citizens (more at <http://www.mvcr.cz/sprava/2006/charta/index.html>).

## HCCZ PARTNERS

### HCCZ collaborates with key public sector institutions in the long run

As a representative of cities, municipalities and regions, the HCCZ association has become, owing to its initiative and active approach towards its members, a stable partner of top state administration bodies and other institutions. **Ministry of Interior** belongs among the main expert partners in the field of quality in public administration. One of tangible outputs of this collaboration is e.g. acknowledgement of Local Agenda 21 Criteria as a method of office quality assessment (see above) or the current collaboration in updating the Strategy of Sustainable Development in the CR, in the process of which the HCCZ have been invited to the chapter "Good governance". **Ministry for Regional Development** is a natural thematic partner on the

national level. In connection to the LA21 programme, HCCZ also collaborates with **Ministry of Environment** and **Czech Environmental Information Agency CENIA**. HCCZ also collaborates with **Education Centre for Public Administration** on selected projects and in the sphere of quality in public administration and indicators. In the field of implementing health standards and creating so called Health Profiles in cities and municipalities, the partner to HCCZ is the **Ministry of Health** or **Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the CR**. Last but not least, the collaboration with regional **WHO Office** of the Czech Republic is significant in this respect.



## BEST PRACTICE IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION QUALITY

For the third time already, the institutions that improve quality in public administration met at a National Conference, this time in the North-Bohemian City of Liberec. In the course of three days the representatives of self-governments, educational institutions, public administration and other institutions presented their approaches and some of these also received significant awards. The Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions and their associations did not fall short.

In the days of 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> January 2007, the 3<sup>rd</sup> national conference of quality in public administration took place in Liberec under the auspices of the Minister of Interior **Dr. Ivan Langer** and marshal of Liberecký Region, Mr. **Petr Skokan**. Organisations of public administration introduced in this place the results achieved in the field of improvement the quality of their work with the aid of various methods in 2006 (see above). In the event that they fulfilled the specified criteria in the process of their application, they also received some of departmental prizes of the Ministry of Interior, as well as institutions that applied their own solutions in the process of improving the quality of their services. In the first category there were 36 organisations nominated, in the second then 12 organisations overall.

The Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions and their association received 17 prizes altogether. The Healthy Cities of **Ústí nad Labem**, **Kopřivnice** and the Healthy Municipality of **Strašín** have been awarded for their quality approach within the LA21 by the Prize of Minister of Interior "Organisation Improving the Quality of Public

Service" (so called bronze). The Prize of "Organisation of Good Public Service" (so called silver) has been received from the hands of deputy Minister of Interior, Mr. Tomáš Zajíček, by the Healthy Cities of **Chrudim** and **Vsetín** that achieved the second highest category "B" within the LA21 Criteria as the first cities in the CR. The "Silver" for CAF and advancement within the LA21 has been also awarded to the



The imaginary silver for quality in public administration has been received at the conference by the representatives of Healthy Cities of Chrudim and Vsetín, Mr. Petr Řezníček and Dr. Lubomír Gajdůšek.

Healthy Cities of **Hodonín** and **Prostějov**. Systematic participation of public in the strategic management has been prized in **Praha-Libuš**. The prize for innovation has been also received in connection to the above stated issue by the Healthy Cities of **Vsetín** and **Strakonice**. The Prize of the Ministry of Interior for **innovation in public administration** has been also received by the **Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic** for their information tool DataPlan that supports the cities, municipalities and regions in transparent and efficient management of processes within the public administration and makes the general management and planning on the municipality level more effective and high-quality (for more see above or at <http://www.dataplan.info.cz>)

## DATA PLAN Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic

Among others awarded HCCZ members there were **Hradec Králové**, **Mladá Boleslav**, **Orlová**, **Šternberk**, **Uherské Hradiště**, **Vysočina Region** and **Zlínský Region**. Further information about presentation of prizes and photographs can be found at [http://www.mvcr.cz/zpravy/2007/ceny\\_3nkkvs.html](http://www.mvcr.cz/zpravy/2007/ceny_3nkkvs.html).

## RESOURCES AND PROJECTS

### Financial resources for quality public administration will come from the European Social Fund

In the field of improving the quality in public administration, represented for instance by quality methods, it will be possible in the following programming period to utilise in particular the European Social Fund and its Operational Programme of **Human Resources and Employment**. The most important resource for cities, municipalities and regions will be its 4<sup>th</sup> priority axis of **Public Administration Modernisation**, which is focused on **implementation of quality** in public administration and self-governments. This programme will be launched approximately in half of 2007 and in dependence

on the results of negotiations with the European Commission the first invitations should be ready in the second half of 2007. Actual information, including invitations can be found at <http://www.esfcr.cz>. The **Integrated Operational Programme** (IOP), financed from



resources of the European Fund for Regional Development, is also an interesting resource. The **priority axes 1 and 2** are also dedicated to the field of public administration and services. More at <http://www.strukturalni-fondy.cz/iop>.

## The Healthy Cities joined implementation of the EMAS system

The Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions could take the advantage of an exclusive offer to join the EU project of implementing the **EMAS systems in offices** (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme). The European Commission Project, covered in the CR by the Ministry of Environment and EMAS Agency, bears the name "EMAS in Local Authorities" and represents a systematic approach to management of environmental aspects of various types of organisations (enterprises as well as offices) and is a tool that enables the organisations on basis of their

free decision to evaluate and gradually improve their impact on the environment and influence other organisations along the same lines. The project primarily focuses on assessment of the following areas: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, waste management, environmentally-friendly office operation or transportation. The project has been joined by the Healthy Cities of **Chrudim, Kopřivnice** and **Vsetín** and HCCZ will keep you informed about its progress and contributions to participating municipalities.



All website references are generally in Czech language.

The traditional part of HCCZ Bulletin "Calendar of Events" and "Bits and Pieces from Healthy Cities, Municipalities and Regions" have been lately sent every month independently via e-mail messages. The current edition can be downloaded at <http://www.nszm.cz/kalendarium> (Only in Czech).

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



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