

In the accession process to the EU and necessary increase in competitiveness of Slovenia as a region, aspects of dispersion are increasingly urgent. Today dispersion is only increasing costs, that are being steadily doubled and although the problem is being put aside for a later date, they are only growing. In this context the necessity of a kind of »order in ratios« is growing, a certain rationality leading to organisation of services, mobility, use of urban spaces and environments, integration of functions and relations between the main functions and cities. The market is also irrepressibly entering the organisation of services and forcing us into rationalisation, decreasing costs and optimising administrative fields, also improving the services, if we want them or not. The unpleasant occurrence, especially for those living further away from settlements, is that as users they will be called upon to cover the real costs of services, stated in price lists, rather than indirectly through taxation.

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## Physical Planning and the Network of Towns in Slovenia:

### How transport-logistic terminals and enterprise zones stimulate urban growth

*People are often not really satisfied with spatial plans or their physical aspects, their implementation. On the other hand enlightened individuals don't even dare to think, what could happen in space, if they wouldn't plan at all ...*

#### 1. Introduction

##### 1.1 Transport-logistic terminals

The article presumes the development conjunction between urban centres and transport networks. When we speak about this conjunction, we digress into the issue of so called circular causality, meaning that »transport can cause urban development and on the other hand urban development can be the cause of increased transport« (Johnston, Gregory, Smith, 94, pp. 643). In other words or in a banal sense, sometimes it is necessary to build a new transport commodity and sometimes a new building or city part. Why build one or the other, where to develop the building (or road) and when one or the other, are questions, that can be answered only

on the basis of a spatial plan. What kind of spatial plan is right to attempt answering the questions, where, how, when, and above all why, is not easy. But answers are possible.

On the other hand we are opening the debate on the nature of the urban (or neo-urban) in the post-industrial or information age. As Anthony Giddens, a popular (and politicised) author at the turn of the century in Slovenia, put it, centres of industrial power are not equal to pre-capitalistic centres (Giddens 82, pp. 108). In Slovenia such examples are the medieval centre Ptuj and industrial Maribor. The choice of suitable economic activity that could drive development in the post-industrial, information age is their main issue, assuming that activities such as transport, logistics, telecommunication and information technology are the key economic fields.

Here it is necessary to point out the relation between two planning paradigms. The first is the rigid and hierarchical settlement system, more or less obsolete, while the second is the emerging, not fully accepted, paradigm of a dynamic and egalitarian system of settlements. The answer is as usual somewhere in between. For a planner the important input are, for example, indicators defining the number of people working from home or the forecast of the same in some 10 – 15 years. The article only points out the relation, but the emphasis is on the meaning of hierarchy in transport-logistic terminals.

Transport knots with inter-modal transport logistic terminals are generally extremely important for efficient combined transport, urban and economic development and environmental protection. »The importance of transport knots for goods and people is still increasing, if we consider future high speed connections between European cities (urban network) and the development of combined transport (terminals)«<sup>1</sup>. According to the White book<sup>3</sup> projects on transport infrastructure will: »mutually connect national networks and facilitate their inter-operativity with access to networks, including crossing from one transport mode to another«. Inter-modal transport and inter-modal transport logistic knots are therefore important for urban development and economic growth. By improving transport and with better placement of inter-modal knots, the possibilities for developing entrepreneurial industrial clusters increase. Finally, inter-modal transport is the smallest evil for preserving the environment.

Inter-modal knots, above all in the Koper port, already exist and function, but other measures have to be taken to assure their future development and improve their efficiency, thus increasing Slovenian competitiveness in the transport-logistic sector. In Koper inter-modality implies the exchange of transport modes between maritime, railway and road transport, Ljubljana between road and railway transport, while in Maribor, road and railway transport, plus potentially air transport, Celje is a knot on the TEN/TINA corridor and regional connection Celovec-Rijeka, Novo mesto as an improved model split for transports of Revoz, etc.

Development of inter-modal transport and transport-logistic knots has to follow the growth of traffic flows and consequential development of transport infrastructure, which is, as mentioned earlier, in Slovenia very dynamic. Because of the substantial extensiveness of this development activity, certain measures have to be taken by public and private institutions, including the Government, local authorities, companies involved with transport infrastructure and other related enterprises.

### Enterprise zones

When we discuss the connection between planning enterprise zones and spatial planning, it is beneficial to define the terms beforehand and to enlighten upon the planning circumstances in Slovenia. For the planning system one has to emphasise, that it connects both, enterprise zones as spatially placed entities of national economic planning and spatial planning as such. If the contrary prevailed, then France wouldn't have *Zone d'aménagement concerté*, neither Spain *Areas of economic promotion*, Great Britain *Enterprise zones and Simplified planning zones*, nor Luxembourg *National Industrial Zones*; all of which represent integral parts of the planning system and are integrated in national planning documents.

The phrase »planning system« implies connections between terms, such as spatial planning, even economic and social planning, as well as sectorial planning by particular competent ministries. Here one can wonder, whether we have a planning system at all in Slovenia. Organised planning in the Republic of Slovenia has since the early nineties been almost non-existent (when the changes in the political and economic system abolished social, or rather formerly tied economic, social and spatial planning) until last years with the adoption of the Law on balanced regional development in Parliament (Official bulletin No 60/99). The Law establishes the system of development planning, but will become operational after a series of by-laws will be passed. However, the Law has introduced the following key factors:

- Agency for regional development, as the national key development co-ordination body;
- Three documents:
  - Strategy of economic development of Slovenia,
  - Strategy of regional development of Slovenia (indirectly)
  - Spatial plan of Slovenia and
- Regional development programmes in 12 or less (if joined) statistical regions.

Of course it is also necessary to evaluate the circumstances of planning systems in member states of the European Union, especially the consideration, that all countries with market oriented economies, economic and social planning is present in varying degrees. This means that with operational spatial planning they co-create a more or less effective system. Here I will refrain from evaluating particular planning systems, the fact that they exist is sufficient in assuming, that governments stimulate economic development economic development with entrepreneurial zones that are an integral part of national and/or regional planning documentation.

## 2. Transport terminals

### 2.1 Categories and function

For the purposes of this discussion, transport-logistic terminals in Slovenia are categorised as Euro-terminals, port terminals, regional terminals and border terminals. This *ad hoc* categorisation is based on the Ordinance of the National Council with legal power, i.e. on the spatial elements of the long-term plan of the Republic of Slovenia for 1986–2000, supplemented in 1999, cartographic part IIIa: Concept of the transport and telecommunication network (Official bulletin No. 11/99). There are two definitions:

- transport terminals for combined cargo (Koper, Ljubljana in Maribor) and
- transport knots of regional importance.

The other definitions can be found in the final report of the research Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment, (TINA Final Report, 1999), where the categories are:

- TINA terminal, (Ljubljana, Novo Mesto, Celje, Maribor) and
- TINA port (Koper).

A basis combined from Slovenian legal prerequisites and the all-European expert research, gives the following categorisation:

- Euro-terminal (Ljubljana, Novo mesto, Celje and Maribor),
- port terminal (Koper)
- regional terminals (Kranj, Trbovlje, Ptuj, Murska Sobota)
- border terminals (Nova Gorica, Sežana, Jesenice, Ilirska Bistrica, Brežice, Dravograd).

Within the four mentioned categories, a further, much more detailed and even more interdisciplinary analysis would include a whole palette of terminals, known in Europe under various names: Italian Interporti; German Güterverkehrszentren; French Plates-formes Logistiques, English Freight Villages, Interconnection Points, Intermodal Platforms; Combined Transport (CT) Terminals, Logistic Centres, Conventional Terminals; Spanish Zonas de Actividades Logísticas. They differ in size and importance. The number of European transport terminals in Slovenia are few, but the operational terminal in Koper is already double the size of the terminal in Ljubljana, the latter being substantially larger, than the one in Maribor etc.

The formal and legal basis for categorising transport knots for cargo can be found in the national planning categories, while the contents stem from the functional categorisation of transport-logistic terminals for cargo. Besides the national plans, local, municipal plans also have to be considered. Furthermore needs have to be defined, that will be included in supplemented and amended municipal and/or national spatial plans,

In our context another consideration has to be pointed out. The Italian Interporti mainly service the trans-alpine and maritime flows, as well as the non-transport flows between them, thus they are relatively close together (e.g. in northern Italy the average distance between them is less than 100 km (Höltgen 94).

Negotiating development interests between transport-logistic terminals (that are an integral part of the transport network), is one of the tasks of spatial planning, above all in connection with urban development and environmental protection. The connected and necessary activity are amendments to master plans – urban outlays in all towns with terminals. Furthermore, harmonisation of road, railway, port and partly air traffic has to be achieved within the national transport concept.

The levels of harmonisation are local, regional and national, in some cases international. However, since inter-modal transport-logistic terminals are integrated in national, regional and urban transport networks, besides the primary transport of cargo, in regional centres passenger terminals should also be mentioned. The final goal is to prepare a planning document for inter-modal transport-logistic terminals. Finally we also have to point out the following:

1. Besides definitions on the macro (national, regional) level, alternative types of sites for transport-logistic knots have to be prepared on the micro level, for all three major cities:
  - in the settlement
  - outside the settlement
  - combined site

2. The possible connection of cargo and passenger transport flows with the same infrastructure (e.g. the planned light rail urban infrastructure to Brnik airport, could also be used for cargo)
3. In view of the fact, that the economic effect of logistic centres is unstable, regional planning is compulsory (Höltgen 94).

## 2.2 Enterprise zone

In the article, there are no definitions of differences between entrepreneurial zones, economic zones or enterprise zones. In general the term enterprise zone is used, because it corresponds to the nature of the type of zone in the original, English language, and is estimated to correspond closely to our intentions, i.e. lower taxes, little or no planning limitations, thus attracting entrepreneurs – investors from far and wide.

## 3. European Union

In the context of the article, EU activities in economic development and industrial development are differentiated (EC 97). Economic development policies include financial instruments for enterprises and communities, whose general goal is the establishment and/or promotion of employment possibilities. Other goals with spatial implications are:

- improvements in infrastructure and other physical conditions for promoting investment and economic growth,
- encouraging and supporting small and medium sized enterprises,
- promotion of sustainable economic development and
- the need for maintaining the production, industrial sector.

In the EU White book, titled »Growth, competition and employment« special priority was given to, first, the implementation of trans-european transport, energy and information networks and second, encouraging sustainable development. Of course every member country in the EU have their own development policy, national development agencies for the co-ordination and distribution of structure funds (national and from »Brussels«) and special development instruments (EC 97), for example:

- France: *Zone d'aménagement concerté* – ZAC,
- Spain: *Areas of economic promotion* (ZPEs),
- Great Britain: *Enterprise Zones* (EZ) and *Simplified Planning Zones* (SPZs).

Site features (thus also the spatial character!) of industrial development policies are exemplified by two typical approaches for determining the industry network.

The first is typical for countries, such as: Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden, with emphasis on:

- Determining suitable site categories,
- Good environment,
- Adequate education and training
- Good infrastructure.

In the second approach, the public sector has an interventionist role, enforced as tax reductions, aid and permitting, in the sense of diminishing regional differences and aid to

problem regions. It is typical for France, Italy and Greece. In Luxembourg for example, »National industrial zones« are defined, their goal being the prevention of industrial dispersion, maintenance of existing industrial centres and indirectly enabling the development of tourism and environmental protection in other areas (EC 97).

### 3.1 Great Britain as a special case

The concept of economic zones actually represents a combination of special tax relief and simplified planning control (Hall, 92). The term *Economic zone* was established in the 80s as part of the Thatcher policies; economic zones were a manifestation of the »no-plan« concept. The newly elected conservative government decreased dotation to regions from the former 43 % of subsidised population to 25 % (Hall, 92). The policy was presented as substantially less interventionistic from the national level, with less activity in regional development, while simultaneously not embarking on any greater national regional policy. The government re-directed its economic activity into a policy of economic incentives and decentralisation in the larger cities and ports. In 1980–81, 11 economic zones varying in character, were established in:

- degraded inner city areas (Isle of Dogs – London, Belfast, Salford),
- peripheral conurbations (Speke, Clydebank),
- dilapidated industrial areas (Dudley, Salford, Swansea) and
- planned industrial areas, together with service activities (Team Valley, Gateshead).

In 1982–83, 13 new economic zones were established, again extremely different in character, and after a long pause in the early 90s, 3 more zones (Easington, Derane Valley and Mansfield), all in mining areas, came into being

Formally economic zones were defined in the Local Government Planning and Land Act, from 1980. Before that they were mentioned in the 1979 annual budget as: »areas in the country that are free from planning control, where companies do not pay local property taxes for 10 years and have certain other financial benefits« (Hall 92, pp.153). More precisely these benefits were:

- exemption from taxes on industrial and commercial property,
- 100 % tax support for capital expenditure,
- diminished demands on necessary reports to Government and
- simplified planning procedure.

Between 1981–1986 for example, the cost of economic zones covered by the British government was 297 million GBP; 51 % of the value was capital support, 28 % tax relief and 21 % procurement of infrastructure and land. During the period, 2800 enterprises were established, mainly small companies, employing 63.000 people, however independent experts estimated, that the real number of employees in economic zones was just 13.000 (Hall 92).

An interesting fact is that site permits for economic zones was given beforehand, within the framework of formal permission for economic zones, by the Secretary of State for Environment. The expert basis for the permit was the Economic Zone Scheme, prepared jointly by district councils and

development corporations, representing a public-private partnership.

In the organisational sense and in view of better efficiency, the whole policy of economic zones was enveloped by the Government and the Secretary of State for Environment in Simplified Planning Zones (SPZ), representing: »... a system were the word »simplified« implies less planning control« (Cullingworth, Nadin 94, pp. 15). As soon as 1984, 3 years after the first economic zones were established, more suitable activities were defined for SPZ, i.e. their development, conditions and limitations. The limitations for example were, that a SPZ cannot be established in National parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty – AONB), areas of special scientific interest, urban green belts and other protected areas. In the early 90s (1992), 6 more SPZ were established while 10 more are in preparation.

In this context the Urban Development Corporation – UDC has to be mentioned; on the mentioned Isle of Dogs the London Docklands Development Corporation was established, whose integral part is one of the more successful economic zones.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

Concerning the circular causality the activity of planning has to be placed between development and construction, meaning that only the executed activity of spatial planning (and its logical conclusion – the spatial plan) can provide answers about spatial potentials of particular sites, about the suitability of particular activities on particular sites and about time dynamics. Under present Slovenian circumstances, these answers will have to be provided on the strategic level by the national spatial plan, while on the more concrete level by regional development programmes with harmonised regional spatial plans, carried out by inter-municipal co-operation and non-government organisations.

Concerning the hierarchy of transport knots, the proposal of four levels of transport-logistic terminals has to be critically evaluated, whereby the mentioned categorisation creates the hierarchical network of nodal points according to their importance and size. Terminals, thus also transport-development knots are:

1. Euroterminal: Ljubljana, Novo mesto, Celje and Maribor,
2. port terminal, (Koper)
3. regional terminal (Kranj, Trbovlje, Ptuj, Murska Sobota)
4. border terminal (Nova Gorica, Sežana, Jesenice, Ilirska Bistrica, Brežice, Dravograd).

Last, but not least, economic and similar zones are common practice in EU countries<sup>4</sup>. All of them are explicitly defined in national planning instruments (EU 97) However the question, where will the legal framework for defining economic zones be in Slovenian national documentation, cannot be answered, as was mentioned earlier. Nevertheless I believe, that they will have to be defined somewhere, meaning written, described and drawn ... Presently the possibility lies in the proposed three new documents: Strategy of economic development of Slovenia, Strategy of regional development of Slovenia and the National spatial plan.

Economic zones need a legal basis. In Great Britain the legal basis is the Local Government Planning and Land Act

from 1980. In Slovenia the equivalent legal basis will be the new Law on spatial planning. We mustn't however forget, that economic zones are already defined in the Law on economic zones, but they have to be defined in other national documents as well, for example the budget and spatial plan. Concerning the spatial plan it is necessary to add, that because of the long-term nature of the document (10 – 15 years), economic zones can represent the part of the plan that can be revised upon successful execution of a zone.

Another warning is necessary. The question of economic planning and connected allocation of economic zones is tied to the so called Slovenian regional problem. What does it mean? First, economic planning is in many cases regional economic planning, meaning planning in a certain area, certain region. Simultaneously it means that economic planning is regionalised and, if you will, spatially placed and that it is not above all and only a macro-economic document, as is the Strategy of economic development of Slovenia.

Finally, regional economic planning implies that certain towns in a region, we could also say in a nodal region, because of their size, economic power (or weakness) and transport position, more important than others, thus representing growth centres (Hansen) or growth poles (Perroux). If anyone considers these terms obsolete in economic theory, they are wrong, development poles are again being reinstated in national plans of EU member states (EC 97). Which are those towns in Slovenia, that have the potential of regional poles or regional centres, even administrative centres? Undoubtedly a difficult question.

Before concluding I have to point out the rather politicised and locally driven debate on administrative regions, the second tier of local self-government or the debate on administrative units, a variety of decentralised national government! An adequate solution are (planning, programme, development ...) regions, introduced by the Law on balanced regional development. A brief glance over the Slovenian will suffice! Don't the examples of Ireland, Portugal, Greece, Poland or Hungary, where they don't have administrative regions (yet), but all have their planning or programme or development regions, prove good enough or successful examples even for Slovenia? In such regions we could implement a networks of development axes and/or development triangles, thus solving problems of regional centralism, for example in the relation between Maribor and Ptuj, Celje and Velenje (and vice versa), Postojna and Ilirska Bistrica, just to name a few.

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#### Notes:

- 1 In the direction of transeuropean networks, CEC 90
- 2 European committee 94
- 3 With special regard to France, (*Zone d'aménagement concerté – ZAC*), Spain (*Areas of economic promotion – ZPEs*), Great Britain (*Enterprise zones – EZ, Simplified planning Zones – SPZs*) and Luxembourg: *National Industrial Zones – NIZ*.

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