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Physical planning in Europe

A short review of activities and institutions of European physical planning and their applicability in Slovenia

1. Introduction

In 1996 the European Union (EU) published a book in the collection Regional policy and cohesion titled: The spatial consequences of the integration of the new German Länder into the community. This seven-year old publication is worth repeated contemplation for several reasons. First, because of the name »new German Länder«. The term New Europe, which was used by Donald Rumsfeld, the defence secretary of USA, defines countries of Central and above all, Eastern Europe that are practically already integrated in EU (Jančar, 2003). What will be the spatial consequences of integration into EU for New Europe, what for old Europe and what for all of Europe? Second, the title of the discourse has a distinct tone, which marks the integration of new German states into the community and not united Germany! Does this mean that the exorbitant resources, travelling to Brandenburg, West Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and East Berlin under the tutelage of Monika Wulf-Mathis, the commissioner for regional development, in fact represent the interest for harmonised regional development of the EU and not united Germany? The question is important for balance between the terms Europe of regions versus Europe of nation states! Third, how many experts in national administration and research institutes in Slovenia have analysed this discourse and similar ones in detail? In conjunction with the third question one has to point out that Austria for example commissioned the execution of many excellent studies for its' border regions during the last five years (which were of course followed with real measures) with one sole purpose: improvement of competitive advantages of its' regions following the expected EU enlargement. Let us review the quantity of subsidies given to Burgenland, a region known as the least developed in Austria, with the smallest GDP per capita or even that it was given to Austria after the St. Germain treaty. Last, but not least, the discourse is worth analysing because of the presented long-term scenarios of spatial development, which are practically underway. The reader of the discourse should analyse the texts and maps from pages 95 to 117 and compare them with the proposal for the Slovenian strategy of spatial development presented in 2003. *Facta, facta, non verba*. In both cases, i.e. because they actually prepared a strategy of spatial development and because they created a good strategy, unified Germany has overtaken Slovenia by at least ten years.

2. Physical planning and European institutions and organisations

The article deals with physical and urbanistic planning, as defined in the new Slovenian law (Law on spatial management, Official bulletin 110/2002). The term spatial planning (physical planning) is used and, if not specified, the term includes both physical and urbanistic planning. Since Europe, or more pre-

cisely the EU, has the ESDP, even in Slovenia we have translated and harmonised terminology dealing with physical planning on a comparable European professional level.

The importance of development planning in Europe, thus directly also physical planning, is increasing, mainly because of three trends. The first is the fact of departmental planning on the EU level. We can present the case by describing transport and structure and cohesion funds (ESDP, 1999, Vickerman, 1996) and try to define the issue. Ten inter-modal TEN corridors were created in cooperation between the Brussels directorate for transport and national transport departments. In Hungary and Slovenia for example, they are actually increasing centralisation in either countries. Then again, policies of structural and cohesion funds are essentially tied to intra-national and not necessarily to bilateral or international physical planning. In other words, cooperation of regional development planning and spatial planning between countries and regions within the EU is a decade-long practice, while cooperation between »old« and »new« Europe has just started.

The second is EU enlargement, which has *de iure* been accomplished, but *de facto* will take some time to be completed. The enlarged EU is causing changes to economy, society and space in new member states, but also the older ones. The activity of joint physical planning is becoming increasingly important in the broadest European scale, i.e. the strategic level, on the level of cooperation between physical planning entities, as well as »cross-border« regions and local communities.

The third is possibly least known in Slovenia. In the mid-nineties within the framework of the term »new economy« and in certain economic circles, the significance of physical space, development poles, concentration of capital etc. were re-emphasised (Krugman, Matsusita, Venebles, 1999). We could say that the theory of new economy balances the role of larger cities as motors of development as opposed to the often over-exaggerated significance being given to the role of hierarchical networks.

2.1 The European Union

During the mid-nineties Directorate XVI initiated and financed a fundamental project titled The EU compendium of spatial planning systems and policies (1997). The compendium and European spatial development perspective (1999) marked the end of an extremely successful period when Monika Wulf Mathis was head of the directorate. One also has to mention an informal body, i.e. the Committee for spatial development (CSD), which defined twelve measures for forwarding implementation of ESDP at an informal meeting in Potsdam (May, 1999). The informal CSD met again in Tampere, October 1999 and began implementation of the twelve programme's measures. The committee's meetings informality is emphasised because of the fact that EU doesn't have laws for physical planning, i.e. the activity is left to the member states.

The EU doesn't have any legal responsibilities concerning physical planning, but nevertheless the activity is indirectly integrated in the work of the directorate for regional policy. In the recent period (Report, 2002) there is an ongoing professional and political debate within the EU, whose topic are relations between particular (departmental) EU policies

and physical planning. A similar topic was attempted with the document ESDP (ESDP, p. 13).

2.2 Programmes and initiatives

In the context of the article, initiatives and programmes are divided into spatial and other ones. The key spatial ones are Interreg III-B, ESPON and URBAN. Interreg III-B is a programme intended for cooperation, especially physical planning of international, bilateral and inter-regional projects and/or areas.

The ESPON initiative ESPON (European Spatial Planning Observatory Network) is supported by the Interreg III programme. Its purpose is to:

- Strengthen the European approach to physical planning;
- Develop instruments for implementing ESDP;
- Enable coordination between different levels of decision-making;
- Establish consultancy bodies between politics, sectors and scientists.

The URBAN initiative operating by urban pilot projects and the New Community Initiative Urban is intended for four priorities: economic development of socially weak areas, environmental measures with economic results, rehabilitation of historical centres and utilising technological advantages of cities.

RECITE is a programme intended for municipalities with more than 50.000 inhabitants. The programme's content is to connect regions and cities within the EU. It was established to ensure knowledge provided by better off cities to poorer ones, to support local economic partners, to generally promote and stimulate economic development, to fight against social exclusion, to improve transport systems, to support environmental projects, in short, for a whole series of activities needing remedying in urban centres. A very important fact is that the RECITE programme for medium sized cities has provided aid for the preparation of strategic development plans of cities, which position urban planning as a culturally conditioned function of social and economic development and with respect to environmental protection conditions. In the Republic of Slovenia there are several medium sized cities, and precisely these regional centres are the places, which will benefit from aid provided by the RECITE programme.

Other important programmes are those that are territorially and functionally tied to urban space. The EMPLOYMENT initiative promotes employment mainly in urban areas for particular social groups that have difficulties in obtaining jobs: women, functionally disabled, young people, job seekers without or with inadequate skills.

The INTEGRA initiative is also intended for the unemployed: long-term job seekers, unemployed parents, homeless, drug abusers and job seekers after completed prison sentences. In view of the high rate of unemployment in Slovenia and the fact that many urban problems are a consequence of unemployment, integration in these projects is essential.

2.3 Reports based on monitoring

European laws stipulate various types of reports. In physical planning and also regional development, the key reports are Periodic reports on economic and social conditions in regions, as well as the (so-called) First and Second reports

on economic and social cohesion. While periodic reports about conditions in regions are important for aggregating statistical data (economy, demography, labour force market), which are fundamental for EU structural policies, the economic and social report are important because of their contents. One has to emphasise that economic and social cohesion are the two main goals of EU.

The significance of the territorial component in cohesion is specially emphasised by real actions. Based on the meetings of CSD in Potsdam and Tampere, the Committee has decided to partially finance ESPON. As mentioned earlier, ESPON will ensure useful information for harmonised development of the Union and define the concept of territorial cohesion.

3. Other European organisations

3.1 Council of Europe – CEMAT

The Council of Europe (CE) is, territorially speaking, the widest European organisation, but is nevertheless weaker than the EU when power and responsibilities are the concern. For physical planning the most important organisations within CE are CEMAT (Conference of ministers responsible for physical planning) and CLARE (Permanent conference of European local and regional communities). In 1983 CEMAT adopted the Torremolinos Charter, which still represents an array of professional recommendations, guidelines and strategies for physical planning. The next important document is the European Regional Planning Strategy, adopted in Strasbourg in 1992. At present the presidency of CEMAT is in Slovenia (president Margarita Jančič, Ministry for environment, planning and energy). The 2003 conference will be in Ljubljana in September, at which the Ljubljana declaration will be passed. Slovenia is therefore very present and active within CEMAT:

3.2 Professional links

The European Council of Town planners – ECTP is the only pan-European organisation connecting professional organisations (societies, chambers etc.) of physical and urban planners from various countries. Besides the fact that ECTP is a non-governmental organisation it is nevertheless recognised by the EU as a connecting organisation for physical planning within the EU.

One of the permanent tasks of ECTP is work on the New Athens Charter. During the thirties of the last century the Athens Charter was the foundation of modernist urbanism and modernist architecture. Now it is the subject of a separate working group within the ECTP and at the autumn assembly this year in Athens, the New Athens Charter, revised for the second time, should be adopted.

4. Conclusions

The purpose of this article was to present a short review of activities within the EU and other European institutions. Surely a more detailed analysis is needed of funds, programmes, initiatives and other activities within the EU concerning regional development, as well as physical and urban planning. But above all it is necessary for particular institutions in Slovenia to do their work, which has been clear for quite some time.

The state administration should help municipalities, individuals and companies with concrete information about possibilities for obtaining funds for documentation and/or completion of projects. Similarly the government should prepare documents (e.g. Strategy of spatial development of Slovenia and National planning order) done on a high European level; the quantity of comparable analyses, knowledge and possibilities for reviewing good examples from the recent past of EU practice is sufficient. Education institutions have to change and supplement their study programmes and curriculum thus providing better education for a larger number of physical and urban planners; the activities of physical and urban planning cannot be done by only architects, landscape architects, civil engineers and surveyors and other professions, but by individuals educated in a graduate course of physical planning.

The proposed concrete measures are as follows:

- A. Member states and the Commission have decided that ESDP is an instrument, which can help in improving coordination between the unions (departmental) policies (ESDP, p.19). Since Slovenia will become a full member of EU in 2004 even ESDP and all the documents and materials adopted by DG XVI will gain more influence. In other words, the activity of physical planning, despite the fact that EU doesn't have specific laws for the discipline, has gained in its' own right.
- B. The use of physical planning as a tool of economic, social and cultural goals, as well as environmental conditions is essential. Physical and urban planning cannot be self-referential. Therefore key links have to be established on the national level with the Government office for structural policy and regional development and with Regional development agencies on the regional level.
- C. For the activity of physical and urban planning a national programme of integrating institutions into EU planning funds, programmes and initiatives has to be created. The responsible department is the Ministry for environment, planning and energy, while the Chamber for architecture and space and the Town and spatial planning association of Slovenia can provide support.
- D. The levels and institutions responsible for particular levels have to be defined. The country as such is the responsibility of the department (Ministry for environment, planning and energy), but also organisations involved with physical planning (Chamber, Association etc.), while the twelve statistical regions are the responsibility of Regional development agencies, which are, according to the law on balanced regional development, responsible for physical planning.
- E. Education institutions dedicated to professions involved with the inter-disciplinary field of physical planning should integrate knowledge about »European physical planning«.

Finally, the Chamber for architecture and space will have to stop acting as a foster mother to physical planners. We mustn't forget that it includes three equal professions, academic disciplines and practices: architecture, landscape architecture and physical planning. The fact that there are seven times more architects and one third the number of landscape architects, than there are physical planners, is essentially irrelevant.

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Alenka FIKFAK

Development of spatial laws – changes in spatial management of suburban settlements

1. Introduction

Legal-administrative measures are those, which should aid more »suitable« spatial management. These measures are general and based on knowledge about space. They are conditioned by a simple fact: when people lived their whole life cycle in a limited space, they carried with themselves all knowledge about the space – natural conditions and spatial changes; with loss of dependency on land and nature and removal from the essential relations in space, the need by individuals and society of limitations, norms and provisions, which should direct living, increased. Recognised development factors, such as durability and stability, safety from fire, hygienic, medical and environmental protection, safe use of buildings, protection from noise, rational use of energy, are all starting points for quality in spatial management and construction of buildings, as well as for the establishment of normative instruments. Because of changes occurring in contemporary society they should be set flexibly and appropriately to quick changes. This should also be the basic rationale of the new Law on spatial management (LSM) [1]. In these changing times, much more than before, stimulating, un-compulsory development instruments will have the advantage.

2. The twentieth century until the end of the 2. World War

»We cannot speak about direct effects of buildings laws in the countryside, either in the form of fire codes or later building codes, until the late 19th century« (Lah, 1994, p. 88). The primary layout of settlements wasn't planned in the contemporary legal-formal sense of physical planning. »However, builders are always respectful – even without legal plans – for the disposition of a building, sunlight, street grid, defence capabilities, trade, social contacts and numerous other circumstances for rational, economic and aesthetic design of ones living and working environment« (Pogačnik, 1999, p. 47). By the late 19th century building orders were adopted by all provinces, which were part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, in which were »written« all until then respected unwritten norms and measures, thus replacing fire codes.

The building order of the Duchy of Carniola from 1876 [2] was a general act, which didn't provide concrete solutions pertaining to particular sites. The building order contained technical regulations concerning construction, while principles for positioning buildings were short and lax. The building line and ground-floor level were the main instruments. Regulations about dimensions were accurate but non-obligatory and were mostly applied to fire safety, e.g. »The kitchen floor, entrances to stables from kitchens: The