SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF TRANSFORMATION OF THE SERVICES SECTOR IN AN AREA – A CASE STUDY FOR THE MICRO-REGION OF OLOMOUCKO (CONTRIBUTION TO RESEARCH ON THE ISSUE)

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Abstract

After the year 1989, almost all sectors of the Czech economy were reshaped by a dynamic transformation. Pronounced organisational and spatially-functional changes occurred namely in the services sector which had not been counted among the preferred economic fields before the transformation period. This paper represents a microregional probe surveying the changes within the services sector in the city of Olomouc and its rural vicinity after 1989.

KEY WORDS: services sector, transformation, spatial variability, micro-region

1. INTRODUCTION

Extensive changes in the services sector appertain to the significant features of the transformation process in the Czech Republic. On one hand they constitute a sound shift from the generally low quality of community facilities in the period before 1989. On the other hand they respond to the dynamic transformation of economic conditions induced by a wide range of tertiary activities developed by both domestic and foreign economic entities. As to spatial organisation, dramatic changes in the parameters of civic amenities in Czech settlements are considered. It is not only the number and forms of service entities that have transformed; spatial mobility of population in relation to services has altered as well. The former socialist services pattern based on central planning rather than on the principles of free market has been consistently removed by these changes.

2. GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS OF TERTIARISATION IN THE POST-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

Relatively close attention has been paid to the phenomenon of tertiarisation of the Czech society after 1989 in national scientific literature, yet mostly in publications focused on

sociology or economy (Večerník, 1998a, 1998b, and other). Basic geographical research covers this issue in minor extent. Among geographers, tertiarisation of the Czech society in broader context has been studied on a long-term basis by the team of researchers at the Department of Social Geography and Regional Development at the Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague (Hampl et al., 1996, 2001), or for example by J. Maryáš who deals with issues on regional differentiation of small and medium-sized businesses in the Czech Republic (1999, 2000). Likewise, recent Polish literature contains works critically assessing transformation of the services sector in the context of all-society changes, including selected spatial aspects (Jakubowicz, 2000, Wilk, 2001), whereas considerable accent is given to the transformation of retail as an exemplary sector (Powęska, 1995, Taylor, 2000, Pokorska a Kasprzak, 2002, Wilk, 2005, and others). Increased frequency of topics related to spatial aspects of transformation of retail is evident in both Czech (e.g. Szczyrba, 2000, 2004, 2005) and Slovak geographical literature (Pulpitlová, 2002, Fertaľová, 2005). Transformation of the services sector in the rural vicinity of the Slovak capital city after 1989 was studied by V. Lauko (2003) who explicitly quantified the extent of transformation changes in an almost full spectrum of service facilities for the years 1989, 1995, and 2001. The published outputs of his study allow deriving two basic findings; first, the increasing extent of commercial services for the resident population (retail, restaurants, etc.), second, the stagnation or slight reduction in public services in the rural area. Similarly to sociological or economic literature, authors of geographical studies work preferably on rather general features of tertiarisation, i.e. mostly on inter-sector exchange of labour force and goods, their causal and implicational relations, regional differentiation and variability and the like (Nowosielska, 1994). Only few authors focus on issues on the level of facilities in an area during economic transformation. For example, J. Kubeš (2000) studies the transformation issues and the current level of service facilities on a broader spatial scale; his monograph entitled *Issues on stabilisation of rural settlement in the Czech Republic* (*Problémy stabilizace venkovského osídlení ČR*) examines the current level of facilities in the Czech rural areas. Kubeš considers the question of public service and indirectly points to the fact that a disturbance in the stability of a given part of the settlement area by reducing the facilities serving to residential population results in a long-term impact in its functional infrastructure. This intensifies the mobility of rural population towards services. Another example of publications dealing with the services sector and its transformation after the year 1989 is a series of research studies entitled *Geography of small towns* (*Geografie malých měst*), published annually by the Institute of Geonics, Science Foundation of the Czech Republic (Vaishar et al., 2005 etc.).

3. BASIC GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISATION OF THE OLOMOUCKO MICRO-REGION

The rural vicinity of the city of Olomouc comprises of 44 municipalities with a total population of 57,681 (as of December 31, 2004), representing more than one third (36.4%) of the population of the Olomouc administrative territory[1]. When sorted according to

[1] A micro-region defined by the Czech Act no. 314/2002 Coll. as an administrative territory of municipality with extended powers.

population size, 19 of the municipalities fall into the category of 1,000–1,999 inhabitants, altogether containing almost one half (45%) of the population in the area. Compared to the previous years, more significant trend towards suburbanisation in the micro-region is noted, resulting in population growth of smaller municipalities in the vicinity of Olomouc (Ptáček, 2004, Sedláková, 2005). On the contrary, the city of Olomouc lost almost 2,000 inhabitants between the years 2001 and 2004 ($index_{2004/2001}$ = 98.2). The city population has therefore decreased close to 100,000.

Another characteristic feature with a substantial impact on the level of service facilities is the volume of commutation to work and schools in terms of centripetal relations. The net commuting migration rate is negative at an overwhelming majority of municipalities, with a total of –12,524 inhabitants, i.e. more than 22 commuters per 100 inhabitants of the micro-region. Only two municipalities in the area record a markedly positive commuting migration rate owing to the presence of local job opportunities in two large machinery companies: *Hlubočky* (4.5 thousand inhabitants, company MORA MORAVIA), and *Lutín* (3.2 thousand inhabitants, SIGMA). Both municipalities underwent pronounced physiognomic changes in the socialist past with the construction of housing estates and associated service facilities for the needs of industry and residents. Nonetheless, both Hlubočky and Lutín remain in the category of rural municipalities, although in terms of functional typology they are classified as industry-service municipalities (type A). The only municipality with a town status is *Velká Bystřice* (2.8 thousand inhabitants) with a general employment-residential function (type B). Other rural municipalities in the micro-region are markedly residential with a negligible manufactural function (type C).

The functional specification of municipalities described above presents significant characteristics in terms of the potential expected level of service facilities, much like the classification of municipalities according to principles of the so-called central settlement pattern, used as the key guideline in designing and consolidating the capacity of facilities in an area before 1989.[2] In the studied micro-region, 13 municipalities were classified as central (called first-order centres), while the city of Olomouc was naturally classified into a higher level within the hierarchy (Fig. 1). From today's perspective, all municipalities with a population of 2,000–2,499 (a total of eight) together with five larger municipalities of type C and a population size of 1,000–1,999 inhabitants fall into the category of first-order centres.

[2] On the other hand, the central settlement pattern was used as a tool for the integration of municipalities (in the 1970s and 1980s). Municipalities were classified into two basic groups as either central or non-central. The service facilities were subsequently designed on a scale proportional to the hierarchy of centres.

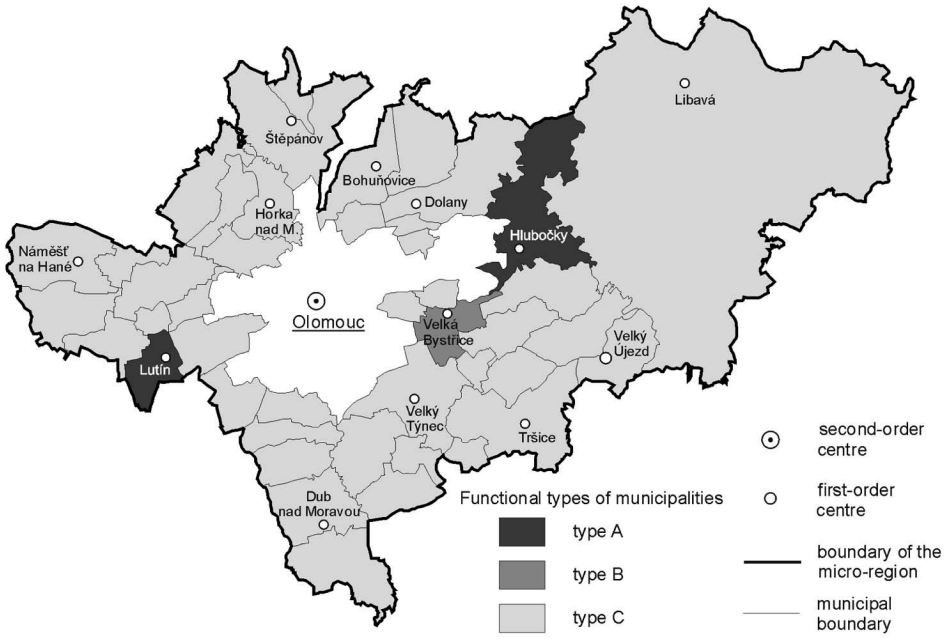

Fig. 1: The Olomoucko micro-region, functional types of municipalities

4. TRANSFORMATION OF THE SERVICES SECTOR IN THE OLOMOUCKO MICRO-REGION

Because spatial data on service facilities in the Czech Republic are not collected generally on any regular statistical basis, it was necessary to carry out field research in 2005 in order to register the level and nature of changes in the studied micro-region. The field research was realised as part of the project no. 402/04/0535 of the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic entitled *"Transformation of the services sector in the Czech Republic"* (*„Transformace sektoru služeb na území ČR"*). The methods used were derived from a research project undertaken by the Federal Statistical Office of Czechoslovakia in the late 1980s. This so-called *Survey on the civic amenities of settlements* (*Šetření občanské vybavenosti sídel*, 1987) was also used as an information source for subsequent comparisons and analyses. The service facilities network was classified into 9 categories (see below).[3]

Data in Table 1 reveal that the intensity of changes within the service sector graduated according to its type. During the observed period of time (1989–2005) *progressive* development of commercial services was recorded before all, encompassing retail, catering establishments, accommodation, and other commercial services for the resident population, i.e. services scanty during the previous socialist period.

[3] The network of banking facilities was intentionally not evaluated, in consideration of the specific development in the financial sector before and after the year 1989.

Progressive transformation was registered also in the network of healthcare and social-service facilities, represented by apothecaries, individual offices of medicine doctors, and new social-work institutes (namely rest homes with day care for seniors). A rather significant change in both qualitative and quantitative manner was recorded at physical training and sports facilities. Certain types of amenities, e.g. aquaparks of golf courses, have been experiencing radical upswing and became the fashionable item within the range of services.

Tab. 1: Transformation changes in the services sector in the Olomoucko micro-region, 1989–2005

Basic classes of service facilities		Number of facilities in year		Nature of change
	Sub-classes	1989	2005	
1	**Schools**	**80**	**82**	±
	1a Kindergartens	46	45	±
	1b Primary schools	33	34	±
	1c Secondary schools	1	3	+
2	**Culture amenities**	**88**	**78**	–
	2a Cinemas	15	5	– –
	2b Culture houses	31	31	±
	2c Libraries	42	42	±
3	**Sports facilities**	**125**	**160**	+
	3a Sports grounds	65	80	+
	3b Gymnasia	43	45	±
	3c Other (swimming pools, shooting ranges etc.)	17	35	+ +
4	**Healthcare and social-service facilities**	**56**	**101**	+ +
	4a Apothecaries	5	13	+ +
	4b Health centres	11	11	±
	4c Individual offices of medicine doctors	34	61	+ +
	4d Specialised healthcare institutions	2	4	+
	4e Social-work institutes	4	12	+ +
5	**Retail facilities**	**93**	**192**	+ +
	5a General merchandise	51	56	+
	5b Shopping centres	12	13	±
	5c Individual shops selling foodstuffs	11	46	+ +
	5d Individual shops selling non-foodstuffs	19	77	+ +
6	**Accommodation facilities**	**8**	**31**	+ +
	6a Guesthouses	1	9	+
	6b Hotels	1	3	+
	6c Other	6	19	+ +
7	**Catering establishments**	**75**	**134**	+ +
	7a Restaurants, pubs	63	103	+ +
	7b Coffee lounges, confectioneries	12	31	+ +
8	**Non-manufacturing service facilities**	**39**	**93**	+ +
	8a Hairdressers	20	46	+ +
	8b Other facilities	19	47	+ +
9	**Manufacturing and repair service facilities**	**52**	**163**	+ +

Explanation: **– –** *sharp decrease* **–** *decrease* **±** *no change* **+** *increase* **+ +** *sharp increase*

On the contrary, a *regressive* trend was typical for cinemas. The decrease in their number in recent years has become one of the most evident transformation changes within the service network. Among the causes of such reduction belongs on one hand the growing availability of audiovisual appliances (VHS or DVD recorders etc.) substituting in part the distribution of movies, on the other hand the recent boom of multiplexes in the Czech cities.[4] Almost no change has entered the network of public services (schools, culture amenities); from the transformation perspective, their situation can be described as *stagnant*.

4.1. Spatial changes

From the perspective of spatial distribution of service facilities, the most widespread in the micro-region are schools, culture amenities, and physical training and sports facilities, present in most of the 44 observed municipalities. Also retail facilities show significant spatial variability, as well as other commercial facilities both manufacturing and non-manufacturing. Only the healthcare ad social-work facilities record spatial concentration into central municipalities (first-order centres) which localize up to three quarters of these facilities (see Table 2).

Data in Table 2 reveal that the services sector underwent development differentiated according to functional types of municipalities. More pronounced changes are highlighted in the table; they allow identifying the settlement-functional changes in services after the year 1989. Among the significant changes belongs the attenuation of centrality of the former central municipalities in terms of health-care facilities, social-work facilities, and catering establishments, partly also in terms of manufacturing and repair services. On the contrary, the range of services has widened in rural municipalities (type C) where a more pronounced change was described at health-care, social-service, and accommodation facilities.

[4] According to the Union of Film Distributors (http://www.ufd.cz/) the share of multiplexes in the total cinema attendance increased from 10% in 1999 to over 70% in 2005. At present there are 17 multiplexes in the Czech Republic. From a total of some 1,300 cinemas at the end of 1989 approximately one half was closed down (Ondráčková, 2004).

Tab. 2: Transformation changes in the services sector in the Olomoucko micro-region according to functional types of municipalities (share in total number of facilities expressed as %, 1989 : 2005)

Basic classes of service facilities		Functional types of municipalities		
		A + B	C	First-order centres
1	Schools	12.5 : 12.3	87.5 : 87.8	40.0 : 39.0
2	Culture amenities	9.1 : 7.7	90.9 : 92.3	37.5 : 34.6
3	Sports facilities	16.0 : 15.6	84.0 : 84.4	47.2 : 47.5
4	Healthcare and social-service facilities	46.4 : 35.6	53.6 : 64.4	85.7 : 76.2
5	Retail facilities	14.0 : 14.6	86.0 : 85.4	50.5 : 51.6
6	Accommodation facilities	37.5 : 29.0	62.5 : 71.0	37.5 : 54.8
7	Catering establishments	14.7 : 16.4	85.3 : 83.6	45.3 : 33.6
8	Non-manufacturing service facilities	10.3 : 12.9	89.7 : 87.1	46.2 : 47.3
9	Manufacturing and repair service facilities	17.3 : 14.7	82.7 : 85.3	55.8 : 48.5

Fig. 2: Dolany – new golf links
(Photo: Z. Szczyrba)

5. CONCLUSIONS

The selected set of municipalities was not decisive enough for any generalizing statements on the level of transformation in the service sector and its impact into spatial functions of services in an area. Nevertheless, the partial results of the performed analyses allow hypothesizing on the trend towards deconcetration within the services sector. The changes are directed from larger to smaller municipalities and lead to spatial decentralization of the spatial functions of services, resulting in a larger diffusion of services for the resident population in the area compared to the situation before the year 1989.

The outputs of the quantitative analysis allow identifying three basic types of services during the system transformation under the conditions of transitive economy. Services

with regressive development (type I) show a reduction in the network of facilities caused by various reasons. Services with stagnant development (type II) have kept their level and extent of functions from the past until the present. Services with progressive development (type III) indicate dynamic quantitative increase. It is naturally possible to derive subclasses within the basic types as specified above according to the nature of the transformation changes graduated by the second service spectrum.

SUMMARY

During the transformation period, significant changes occurred in the service facilities network in the Olomoucko micro-region, both on quantitative and qualitative basis. The changes that occurred between the years 1989 and 2005 varied in terms of the types of service facilities as well as in terms of their spatial setup.

The changes identified within the span of the transformation period are significant results of both organisational and spatial deconcentration. This process is directed in terms of the settlement-size pattern form the larger to the smaller municipalities, and also towards spatial decentralization in terms of the spatial functions of services. As a result, larger diffusion of services for the resident population in the area is recorded compared to the situation before the year 1989.

It is also possible to derive three basic types of services during the system transformation under the conditions of transitive economy. Services with regressive development (type I) show a reduction in the network of facilities, caused by various reasons. Services with stagnant development (type II) have kept their level and extent of functions from the past until the present. Services with progressive development (type III) indicate dynamic quantitative increase. It is naturally possible to derive subclasses within the basic types as specified above according to the nature of the transformation changes graduated by the second service spectrum.

SOUHRN

Signifikantní znaky transformace sektoru služeb v území – na příkladu mikroregionu Olomoucko (příspěvek ke studiu problematiky)

V průběhu transformačního období došlo na území zájmového mikroregionu Olomoucko k výrazné změně v sítí zařízení služeb, a to jak po stránce kvantity, tak i kvality nabízených služeb. Změny, ke kterým došlo v období 1989–2005 byly diferencovány, a to jak po stránce druhové skladby sítě obslužných zařízení, tak i prostorové organizace.

Změny, ke kterým došlo během transformačního období a které byly identifikovány, jsou prokazatelně výsledkem probíhajícího procesu organizační i prostorové dekoncentrace. Ta probíhá jednak ve směru sídelně velikostní struktury od větších k menším obcím, jednak směrem k prostorové decentralizaci na úrovni územně-obslužných funkcí. Výsledkem je větší rozptyl služeb pro bydlící obyvatelstvo v území, než tomu bylo před rokem 1989.

Dále je možno vymezit tři základní typy služeb pro období systémové transformace v podmínkách tranzitní ekonomiky. První typem jsou služby s regresivním vývojem (typ I), u nichž dochází vlivem různých vlivů k redukci obslužné sítě. Druhým typem jsou služby se stagnujícím vývojem (typ II), které jak v minulosti, tak i v současnosti si udržují své zastoupení v síti obslužných zařízení. Ke třetímu typu řadíme služby s progresivním vývojem (typ III), které vykazují známky dynamických kvantitativních přírůstků. V rámci jednotlivých typů mohou existovat subtypy v závislosti na charakteru transformačních změn, odstupňované podle druhého spektra služeb.

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