

## REPORTS

### 2nd Geographical Discussion Forum

On 17 October 2012, the *2nd Geographical Discussion Forum* was held in Mikulov. It was organised by the Department of Geography, Palacký University in Olomouc, Institute of Geonics, AS CR and Department of Regional Economics and Administration, Masaryk University as a part of the projects GA AS CR no. IAA301670901 *Spatio-temporal organisation of daily urban systems: analysis and assessment of selected processes* and CSF P404/11/1811 *Urban and suburban quality of life: geographical perspective*. The meeting ensued the 2011 geographical seminar held in honour of doc. RNDr. Stanislav Řehák, CSc. (Daniel and Šerý 2011).

The second year of the geographical discussion forum was dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the publication of the human geographical regionalisation of Czechoslovakia that was worked out at the Geographical Institute of CSAS in Brno (Maryáš and Řehák 1987). The programme of the forum was partly in line with the dedication and the meeting was attended by almost 30 participants from seven geographical institutions. Themes of three panels were: “objective” (quantitative) approach to the study of regions, “subjective” (perception) approaches to the study of regions, and geography of retail and consumption.

Similarly as in 2011 the main purpose of the forum was to mediate the meeting of leading specialists, whose activities are related to the above-mentioned themes. The organisers put the main stress to the incitement of discussion on crucial or problematic questions regarding the themes and on possibilities of further research. This objective was reflected in the organisation and form of the forum. All panels were introduced by moderators who presented selected

fields of questions. The intention of organisers was to link the presentations of moderators with discussion. The panels were not firmly structured and the discussion did not take place only after the presentations, on the contrary a lively discussion interweaved the whole time reserved to the panels.

The forum was opened by the key note speech of the most competent person – Dr. Maryáš, one of the authors of the human geographical regionalisation. Dr. Maryáš revealed in detail the methods applied in the regionalisation. He successively explained the theoretical basis, the procedure of the formation of partial regions (working and service), the parameters of the selection of centres and the delineation of the complex regions. In the end he pointed out the further use of the regionalisation both in the geographical research (e.g. in *Atlas of the environment and health of the population of the CSFR*) and in applications for decisive sphere (e.g. one of the bases for the selection of municipalities with extended authority).

The key note speech was followed by the first discussion panel “*Objective*” (*quantitative*) *approaches to the study of regions*. The moderators, Assoc. Prof. Marián Halás and Dr. Pavel Klapka, successively presented several questions aimed at the theoretical and methodological problems related to the application of regional taxonomic methods. The first part of the panel was concerned with the issue of regional centres, both from the point of view of the methods and parameters of their identification and from the point of view of their mutual relations in the polycentric regions (either competition or cooperation). The second part was concerned with the assessment of interaction data employed in the functional regionalisations and the discussion was aimed at the quality and information capability of standard data and at the relevance of

alternative data (e.g. transportation census, mobile operators' data) and at the limits of their application. Attention was paid also to the methods of delineation of NUTS 3 regions and to the application of advanced regional taxonomic methods in the Czech Republic.

The second panel concerned with "*subjective*" (*qualitative*) *approaches to the study of regions* was opened by Dr. Pavel Chromý, who claimed that these approaches are not the alternative towards the "objective" approaches but that they are rather complementary. A number of suggestions were presented subsequently, based on the approaches of new regional geography and related to the questions of the construction of regions and territorial identities. The influence of relict borders on cultural traits and population identity was discussed in detail on several examples (e.g., Czech-German ethnic border, Bohemian-Moravian land border). Institutional tools of the formation of the regions were discussed as well, together with the issue of the formation of regional identities at the level of administrative regions and the issue of administrative borders and their influence on the formation process. Research methods were presented by mgr. Semian on the example of the Czech Paradise and the possibilities of application of mental maps for regional delineation.

The third panel was moderated by Assoc. Prof. Szczyrba and Dr. Kunc, who presented selected questions of *geography of retail and consumption*. The issues of retail facilities localisation in towns and the development of this phenomenon during last 20 years were discussed first, including the contrasts between green field and brown field or central and suburban locations. The issue of retail regulation and efforts to manage the development of private investors was raised further and the situation in the Czech Republic was compared to the foreign experience. The question of changes in shopping behaviour with respect to the introduction of modern retail formats was discussed as well, particularly on the example of the city of Brno. Finally new themes in geography of retail and consumption and possible directions of further research in this field were touched upon.

## References

- Daniel, J., Šerý, M.** 2011: Geographic seminar organised in honour of doc. RNDr. Stanislav Řehák, CSc. *AUPO Geographica* 42 (2), 121-123.
- Řehák, S., Maryáš, J.** 1987: Regionální působnost středisek osídlení. In *Atlas obyvatelstva ČSSR*. GÚ ČSAV, Brno – FSÚ, Praha.

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