

Transformation of service network in the Bratislava's hinterland region

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Abstract

The paper analyses the influence of the transformation process of Slovak society and economy after 1989. It focused the attention on hinterland region of Bratislava (Pezinok district) and measured the changes in service network of rural settlements. Evidence of transformation of service facilities in rural settlements of Pezinok district was followed according the change of the number of service facilities in 1989, then in 1995 and finally in 2002. The subject of the research were facilities including: grocery stores, restaurants and fast refreshments, shops, public services, education, healthcare, culture, church and sport. In these categories the fastest development was in the selected time span recorded in the sphere of not specified public services for costumers. In common the development of service network in rural settlements resulted in increasing living standards of its inhabitants and beside it also in granting profound economic base of villages. They are not only "bedrooms" of workers in large cities. This can be one of the ways for sustainable development of villages.

Key words: services, transformation of society, rural settlements, suburbanization of Bratislava

1 Introduction

This paper is a part of a broader regional geography research, which is provided by Department of regional geography, landscape protection and planning of Faculty of Natural Sciences on Comenius University in Bratislava. It is framed by grant project VEGA: "Geographical regions and geographical development in the context of transformation of society and its research."

Transformation process, which started in Slovakia after 1989, gradually entered all spheres of social and economical life. Very sensitive reactions evoked especially in the retail sector. This fact is documented (except many others) by rapid increase of employees in services. The ratio of people occupied in services was just about 27% in the year 1990. This ratio dabbled and reached the number of employees occupied in tercial sector as high as 56% in the year 2001.

The process of transformation in the sphere of services was, of course, the most intensive in towns especially in large cities. They are in regional structure the places with service tasks of highest rank. The strongest boom in banking and insurance, development of retail services, restaurants, hotels etc was recorded. This phenomenon influenced rural space in the hinterland of large cities. In connection to this it is useful

to point out the most typical features of this transformation in suburban and rural region in the hinterland of Bratislava, in Pezinok district.

It is obvious that to Bratislava, Bratislava's region and the broader region of western Slovakia was (in context of transformation and regional development) paid a special attention. Some publications from our faculty's research introduced: V. Lauko (2001a, 2001b), V. Lauko et al. (2002), P. Korec, A. Rochovská (2003): Pezinok (center of district in research field) was in focus of research from the point of view of commercial and service activities in the paper V. Lauko, E. Rajčáková (1996): Less attention was devoted to hinterland of Bratislava and to its rural environment, which is very interesting from transformation matters.

2 Basic characteristics of research region

Pezinok district (more precisely its rural settlements) was pointed out as model region. Pezinok district was founded in the framework of latest changes of administrative structure of Slovakia in the year 1996. The district existed already during years 1949–1960. It lays to the northeast in the vicinity of Bratislava. Natural borders of the district on its northwest side creates the ridge of Malé Karpaty (Small Carpathians). Many important tourist centers, e. g. above Modra (Harmónia, Zochova chata), next to Pezinok (Baba), above Časta (Červený kameň) and above Limbach (Slnečné údolie) are located in the picturesque mountains neighboring the capital city of Slovakia. There are historical wine producing towns and villages with wine cellars inspired the appearance of attractive "Wine way".

Traditional wine yards are at the edge of Malé Karpaty mountains and on its slopes. It contributed to the fact that in spite with small area of the district (375 km²) there are located 3 towns (Pezinok, Modra, Svätý Jur). The rest of the district is located in the Podunajská nížina – lowland.

All 14 rural villages have good accessibility to Bratislava, as well as 3 towns in the district. From the point of view of the number of inhabitants all villages have them more than 200. Two settlements (Píla a Štefanová) are in category 200–499 inhabitants, 3 villages (Dubová, Jablonec, Vinosady) in 500–999 inhabitants, 8 settlements (Báhoň, Budmerice, Častá, Doľany, Limbach, Slovenský Grob, Viničné, Vištuk) have 1000–2499 inhabitants and one village (Šenkvice) has more than 2500 inhabitants.

Number of inhabitants	1991	1995	2001
Pezinok	20 515	21 552	21 082
Modra	8090	8409	8536
Sv. Jur	4600	4529	4614
Báhoň	1440	1479	1591
Budmerice	1892	1866	1969
Častá	2009	1948	2068
Doľany	986	1019	1011
Dubová	834	826	860

Jablonec	773	751	805
Limbach	904	913	1141
Píla	248	233	261
Sl. Grob	1785	1737	1843
Šenkvice	3982	4000	4230
Štefanová	331	351	338
Viničné	1439	1419	1497
Vinosady	884	842	969
Vištuk	1366	1297	1349
Pezinok district	52 078	53 171	54 164
Rural settlements	31 563	31 619	33 082

Natural features determined the traditional activities of inhabitants of this region. The majority worked and lived on lowland and agriculture was the source of living. Considerable part of men worked in wine yards, in the woods and next to Pezinok in mines. Industrialization caused a considerable change in occupation of inhabitants in the second part of 20th century. The majority of them worked in industrial enterprises of Bratislava or other neighboring towns. The services were concentrated in these places as well. Collectivization and mechanization of agriculture, state run manufactures and retails rapidly lowered the number of jobs in rural settlements. It caused a rapid and strong movement of inhabitants to towns.

3 Changes of basic service facilities in rural settlements of Pezinok district

Evidence of transformation of service facilities in rural settlements of Pezinok district was followed according the change of the number of service facilities in 1989, then in 1995 and finally in 2002. The subject of the research were facilities including: grocery stores, restaurants and fast refreshments, shops, public services, education, healthcare, culture, church and sport.

In these categories the fastest development was in the selected time span recorded in the sphere of not specified public services for costumers. The number of these facilities in 1989 was 28 and in 2002 it reached 51. It means 182% increase.

Within this service category was the highest increase observed in artisanal (craft) services (567%). They had a fast and even growth in both time intervals. Considerable growth was recorded in the category barber's, hairdresser, cosmetic's and massage's (250%). This fact can be explained first of all by the possibility of running a private service enterprise after 1989. This was a forbidden activity during the socialist era. It was provided just on the bases of cooperative or state regulated facilities called "Komunálne služby" – public services. There were placed in towns. Part of these services were run in the villages as well but on illegal bases e.g. hairdresser, carpenter, bricklayer, housepainter. It is secondary raw material purchase from less widespread services. They increased from 1 to 3. This field seems to be an interesting activity for undertaking.

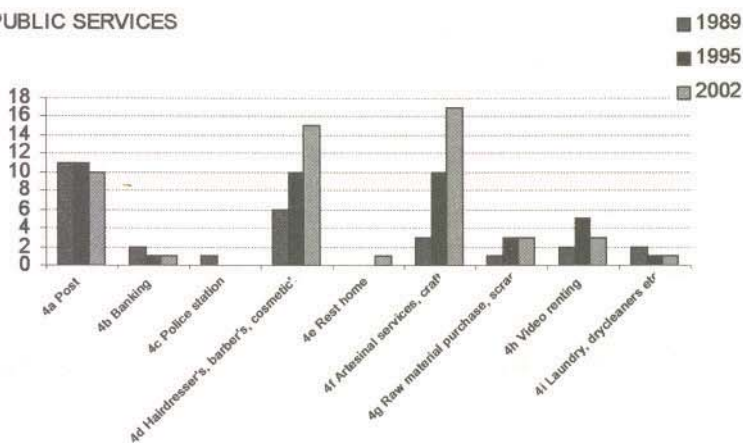
Table of basic categories of services and their number according years 1989, 1995, 2002

Basic categories of services	Number of recorded facilities of selected services in year		
	1989	1995	2002
<i>Service categories</i>			
1. Grocery stores	70	80	73
1a Grocery store – basic assortment	15	17	11
1b Grocery store – complex assortment	22	29	28
1c Grocery store – selfservice	15	16	18
1d Butchery	10	9	7
1e Bakery, sweetshop	3	4	3
1f Fruit and vegetables shop	6	5	6
2. Pub, restaurant etc.	26	31	38
3. Consumption commodity shops	23	36	43
3a Industrial goods (elektronics, ironmonger's, household goods)	5	4	6
3b Textile, shoes shop	5	10	12
3c Stationer's, bookstore, tobacco, newspaper and toys shop	4	7	4
3d Drugstore (exceptionally presents and local goods)	2	2	1
3e Petrol station	1	1	4
3f Building goods (bricks etc.)	2	3	5
3g Florist, petshop, gardening	4	9	11
4. Public services	28	41	51
4a Post	11	11	10
4b Banking	2	1	1
4c Police station	1	0	0
4d Hairdresser's, barber's, cosmetic's, massage	6	10	15
4e Rest home	0	0	1
4f Artisanal services, craft	3	10	17
4g Raw material purchase, scrap	1	3	3
4h Video renting	2	5	3
4i Laundry, drycleaners etc	2	1	1
5. Education	34	32	33
5a Kindergarten	18	18	18
5b Elementary school (1.–4. grades)	11	9	8
5c Elementary school (1.–9. grades)	5	5	6
5d Elementary artschool	0	0	1
6. Healthcare	18	15	18
6a Ordination of general practitioner	8	8	8
6b Ordination of specialist	5	3	6
6c Apothecary's	5	4	4

Basic categories of services	Number of recorded facilities of selected services in year		
	1989	1995	2002
<i>Service categories</i>			
7. Culture	13	12	12
7a House of culture etc.	10	10	10
7b Cinema (working)	3	2	2
8. Church	43	43	43
8a Church with regular divine services	15	15	15
8b Parsonage	10	10	10
8c Cemetery	18	18	18
9. Sport	48	51	53
9a Soccer playground (regular)	13	13	13
9b Soccer playground (iregular)	4	6	6
9c Volleyball, tennis and other playground	8	9	11
9d Gymnasium	7	8	8
9e Place adapted for swimming	2	2	2
9f Sport union	14	13	13

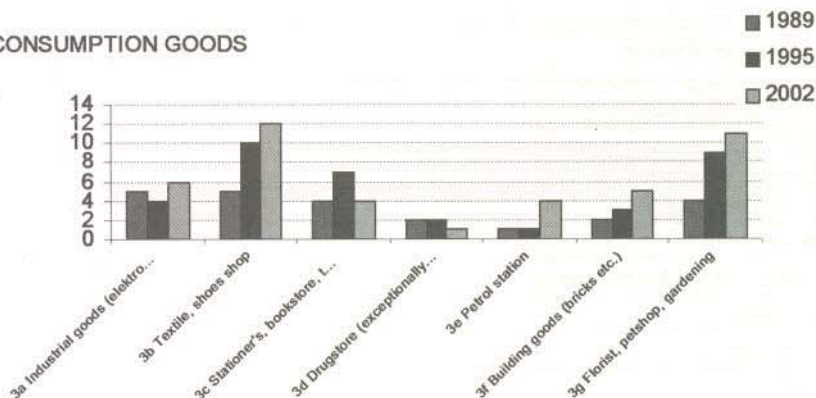
On the other hand it became to certain decrease in this category (public services) in Pezinok district. There were canceled and closed were the following services one bank, police station, post and cleaning shop. This can be explained by reducing of state expenses and closing the less rentable facilities of services.

PUBLIC SERVICES



Relatively high was the increase also in the category of shops with consumption commodity from 23 to 43 (187%). The most considerable increase was in petrol stations (from 1 to 4) in this category. It was determined by the increase automobile transportation. Markedly increased the number of florist's, pet shops, gardening (275%), shops with building equipment and material (250%) and textile and clothes shops (240%).

CONSUMPTION GOODS

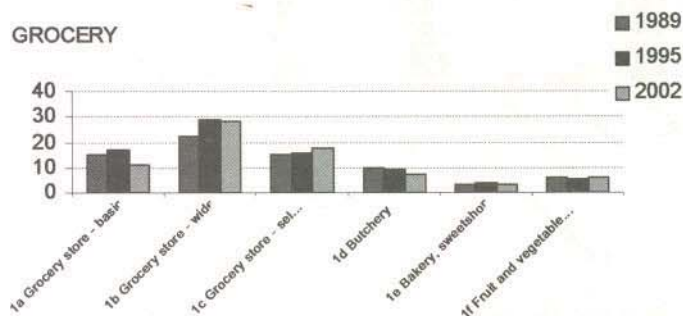


Just drugstores decreased by 1 from the shops. The reason is that the same goods are in shops with mixed grocery consumption goods.

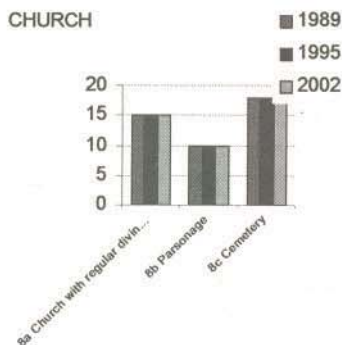
Growing number was recorded also in the category of restaurants and fast refreshment. The increase by 114% was lower than the expectations were. It seems that these facilities have in rural settlements a limited number of customers (according to the number of inhabitants of settlement), unless they are centers of tourism or recreation in the region. In the contrary in towns, which are centers of tourism, these services increased profoundly and fastest. Evidence of this fast growth comes from the research in Pezinok where in the year 1989 were 17 then in 1995 reached 70 it means 412% (V. Lauko, E. Rajčáková, 1996).

The number of grocery shops slightly increased. This increase was continues. Till 1995 they increased by 114% and then decreased a little, so in 2002 the final number was 104% in comparison to year 1989. The increase of quality of these shops is more evident. The ratio of shops with basic goods decreased (73%). It seems that they can not stand the concurrence of shops with more various goods and better offer. Their number increased (124%). The number of specialized butchery's shops (70%) was decreased. The number of the rest of grocery shops was stable.

GROCERY

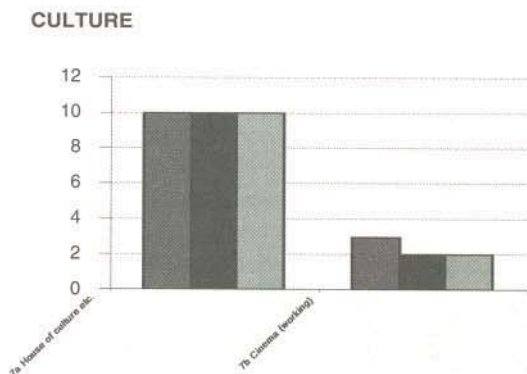


In the categories education, healthcare, culture, church, sport were, in comparison to the former mentioned categories, recorded. The most stable is the number of churches, cemeteries and parsonages.

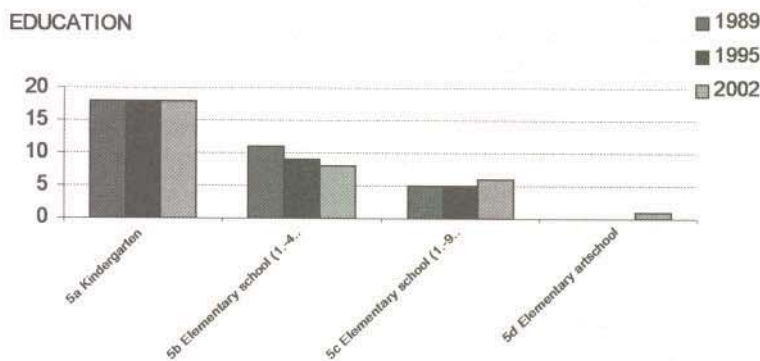


The number of healthcare facilities increased back with minimal changes in inner structure (the number of general practitioners is higher by 1, apothecary is lower by 1) after a slight decline in 1995. But healthcare is nowadays facing a restructuring.

In the category of cultural services the number of so called houses of culture unchanged. One cinema stopped working.

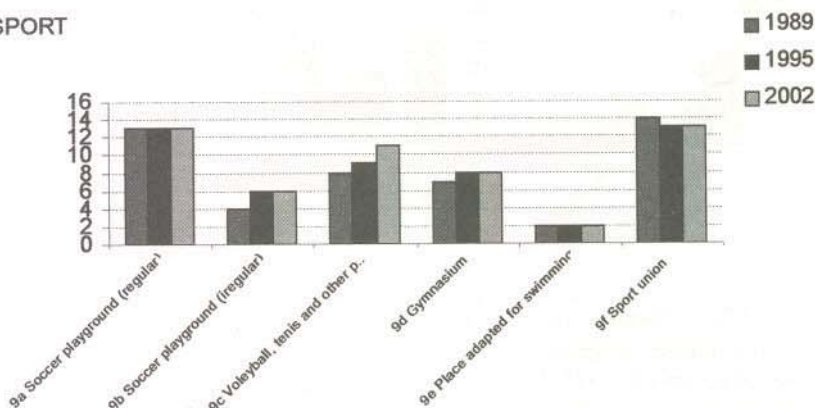


The total number of educational facilities decreased by 1. The number of elementary schools for 1.-4. grades decreased by 3. Kindergartens remained in the same numbers. On the other hand 1 new secondary school was founded as well as 1 artschool.

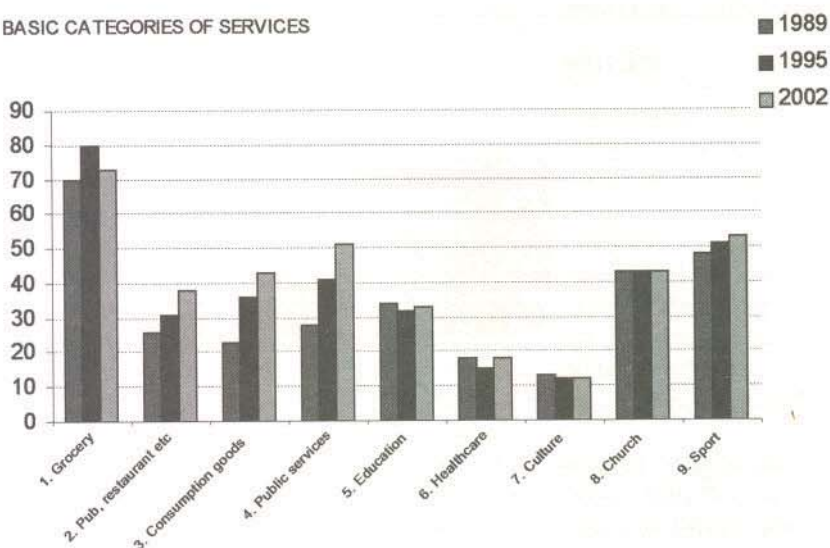


In sport facilities 1 sport union was canceled, and some new playgrounds were founded.

SPORT



BASIC CATEGORIES OF SERVICES



4 Correlation between the number of inhabitants of settlements and there service facilities

Settlements in the research area can be divided into categories according inhabitants: 200–499, 500–999, 1000–2499, 2500 and more.

This analyses showed the following conclusions:

1. Smallest villages with 200–499 inhabitants are the sites with: grocery store, pub or restaurant, kindergarten, culture house, church with regular divine services (not every village has a parsonage), cemetery and sport facility.

This state remained during the research period stable. The only change appeared in canceling 1 sport union.

2. Every settlement with 500–999 inhabitants has at present time 2–3 grocery stores, 1–3 pubs or restaurants, kindergarten, elementary school (1.–4. grades), church with regular divine services, cemetery, 1–3 sport facilities and a sport union. In few settlements are textile shops, shoes and post offices. On the other hand not every village has a culture house and a parsonage.

These settlements with less than 1000 inhabitants lost during the transformation period (comparing to year 1989) their specialized butcheries, building goods shop and one post office was canceled. There activities canceled 1 florist, gardening, barber's and hairdresser's which were registered in the year 1995. New services started with foundation of textile shop and shoe shop.

3. Settlements with 1000–2499 inhabitants create more than a half of the total number of settlements in the research area. They are the most representative.

All of them have: a post office, an elementary school, a church with regular divine services, 1–2 cemeteries, 2–6 grocery stores, 1–5 pubs or restaurants, 1–3 kindergartens, 1–2 sport facilities. In few settlements are textile shops, shoes and post offices. On the other hand not every village has a culture house and a parsonage.

75% of settlements have: florists, gardening, pet shop, barber's and hairdresser's, culture house, sport union.

63% of settlements have: butchery, artisanal services, video renting.

50% of settlements have: fruit and vegetable shop, industrial goods shop, textile shop, shoe shop, building goods shop, petrol station, general practitioner ordination.

38% of settlements have: ordination of specialist, apothecary.

25% of settlements have: bakery, sweet shop, facility in category stationer's, bookstore, tobacco, newspaper and toys shop, scrap – raw material purchase.

Drugstore, laundry, drycleaner, elementary artschool, cinema are operating in some villages.

The most important changes during years 1989–2001 were recorded in the category of public services, e. g. barber, hairdresser, cosmetics, massage and rapidly increased the number of petrol stations (from 1 to 4).

4. There is just one settlement (village) with more than 2500 inhabitants (Šenkvice) in the research area. Its service facilities belong to the best in the area. The most remarkable are the healthcare services. There are more than 3 ordinations of general practitioners and more than 3 ordinations of specialists.

In the village opened during the research period their business 1 petrol station, industrial goods shop, hairdresser, barber. On the other hand canceled 1 textile shop, shoe shop, stationer's, bookstore, tobacco, newspaper shop, laundry and drycleaner.

The result of the correlation analyses between the category of settlement (according the number of inhabitants) and their service facilities proved the theory, that the larger settlements are regularly better equipped (have more and better services).

5 Conclusion

In spite of some minor problems resulting from the chosen research method (simplification of statistical research just to record the number of facilities, objective data on financial status of facilities and the number of employees are not accessible) there can be stated some common tendencies.

Basic social and economical changes, which started in Slovakia in the year 1989: transformation to market economy, canceling the artificially planned development of rural settlements, more independent rights delegated to government of settlements, private undertaking and enterprises, slowed down emigration to towns, suburbanization, loss of original occupation had mostly positive influence on transformation of services in rural settlements (villages).

Above all it is obvious that during the research period there appeared an evident development of service network in the research area. This development is the most evident in services we can call economic (services for inhabitants mostly craft – artesinal, different types of stores, restaurants and pubs). Categories of services as: education, church, sport, culture are typical with their stability.

The most rapidly developing type of services were craft services. They were during the last regime concentrated in larger cooperatives and enterprises, mostly in towns, or craft was illegally operated. The possibility of private undertaking (sometimes the loss of original occupation) resulted in the development of private craft enterprises. Considerable was the increase of the numbers of shops of different types.

Some facilities were canceled on the other hand. They were mostly branches of widespread enterprises (with not rentable functioning) as: branch of bank, post office, police station, laundry.

The overall development of service network in rural settlements is a positive feature from the point of view of increasing living standard in the research region in the hinterland of Bratislava. The number of inhabitants is also not decreasing due to the process of suburbanization in this region. During the period between two censuses (1991–2001) the number of inhabitants of settlements in Pezinok district increased in all of them except one (Vištuk). The total number in rural settlements of the district increased from 31 562 to 33 082. It means 105% from the state in year 1991. In towns the increase was about 103%.

The development of service network in rural settlements resulted in increasing living standards of its inhabitants and beside it also in granting profound economic base of villages. They are not only “bedrooms” of workers in large cities. This can be one of the ways for sustainable development of villages.

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