

The role of local self-government in local development during post-socialist period: the case study of Bratislava

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Abstract: Paper focuses on identification of the extent and main forms of local self-government involvement in local development of Bratislava during post-socialist period. In more general terms, it is depending especially on situation of local economy and condition of local self-government functioning. While the situation of local economy looks promising, the powers and resources of local self-government are limited. Direct economic involvement is strongly related to municipal sector that was strongly reduced after 1989. Participation in selected physical development projects document the second main approach in direct economic involvement. Activities in planning and regulation are studied as main factors of indirect involvement. There are also mentioned some “softer” approaches to the local development addressing local “business climate” and formation of Bratislava as good place for living (with priorities in environmental and public safety). More participation and communication with citizens and non-governmental organisations also improve quality of the development process. Local self-governments co-operate with central state especially in the field of large infrastructure completion.

Key words: local self-government, local development, Bratislava, transformation, planning

1. Introduction

Bratislava's local development faces a lot of challenges from external as well as its internal environment. From the external environment, it has been an urgent need to improve competitive position of local economy and expand its participation in global economy. The second challenge reflects consequences of previous development. It was especially obsolete physical environment, underdeveloped infrastructure, dependence on old-fashioned socialist industrial development, lack of services of all types, insufficient housing stock and its poor quality, low environmental quality of life that ask for change. These two dimensions should influence orientation of development activities of local self-government.

The main aim of this paper is to identify main fields and approaches of local self-government involvement in local development of Bratislava during post-socialist period. Basic relations between local government and local development are outlined in its first section. Local government involvement in development depends especially on situation of local economy (including consequences of economic transformation) and condition of local self-government functioning (powers and local democracy). While the situation of local economy looks promising, the powers and resources of local self-government are limited in a case of Bratislava. Besides the dual character of local

public administration (self-government and state administration), I document development issues also within the framework of two-tier model of local self-government applied in Bratislava (city-wide and city-quarter self-governments). Direct economic involvement of the city-wide self-government has been strongly related to municipal sector. It has included series companies that needed transformation, as well as many new economic subjects with municipal participation. Participation in selected physical development projects document the second main approach in direct economic involvement. Activities in planning and regulation are studied as main factors of indirect involvement. There are also mentioned some other "softer" approaches in urban development addressing improvements in local "business climate" and formation of Bratislava as good place for living. They were especially environmental and public safety that obtained higher priority within the last years. More participation and communication with citizens and non-governmental organisation also improved quality of the development process. Local self-governments co-operate with central state especially in the field of large infrastructure completion. There are visible signs of economic vitality, general modernisation of local life and conversion of the city into multi-nodal metropolis accomplished under the influence of local self-governments in Bratislava.

The main spheres of investigation were activities of local self-governments on city-wide, as well as at the city-quarter levels. Main sources of information were their decisions, by-laws, guidelines, documents of local councils, projects. Special attention was given to various forms of co-operation with local business sphere (projects, sponsorship, personal contacts).

2. Local self-government and local development in post-socialist situation

Among the crucial issues, there is a need to specify meanings of local development addressed within the framework of this contribution. The first meaning respects local development in its economic and physical development terms (e.g. Leitner, 1989, Bovaird, 1993). This meaning focuses on rising employment, growth in number of businesses, modernisation and expansion of existing companies, and is also visible in new physical development projects mostly in office, infrastructure and commercial development. The second meaning reflects the traditional role of local self-governments in collective consumption (see e.g. Dunleavy 1980, Cox and Jonas, 1993). Local government can do very much in modernisation of infrastructure and efficient service delivery, creating sound conditions for local economy functioning. The third meaning reflects rising environmental requirements mostly labelled as sustainable urban development (e.g. Borja et al., 1997). Various forms of environmental improvements should lead to formation of the city as a favourite place for living and doing business.

The position of local self-government in local development in post-socialist situation is related to general conditions of local self-government functioning (1), progress and consequences of social and economic transformation (2) and the scope of democratisation in local self-government (3).

In transition situation, the role of local self-government is influenced by scope of decentralisation, expressed in powers that local self-governments control. Level of local

autonomy and financial capacity of local self-government also influence the extent of its involvement in development. Important roles also have central state and local state administration. This influence has more specific context in a case of capital cities, where state interests are much more extensive and interventions of central government more frequent.

The character of development policies in post-socialist cities also depends on progress in economic and social transformation (perceived e.g. by the scope of public sector in economy, public power intervention into economy). Progress in economic transformation affects changes for example in over-expanded municipal sector from previous regime. More involvement in economic development is related to the need to rectify discrepancies of previous economic development strategies (e.g. large non-competitive industry, environmental damages). Local self-governments also react on consequences of economic transformation at the local level (e.g. high unemployment, out-migration, overloaded transport system etc.).

Decision making processes influence various aspects of local democracy and rising citizens' participation. Elections, democratic accountability, direct participation can modify development strategies and aims. They can stop or challenge certain conflicting development initiatives, as well as expand the ways for development initiatives from below.

I refer to two main directions of local self-government involvement into local economy – direct and indirect. The most known form of direct involvement is municipal sector of local economy usually oriented on collective consumption (delivery of certain group of public services). It also includes various municipal enterprises (with full or partial ownership of local self-government) outside the most typical public sector, as well as development projects with its direct partnership. Indirect involvement is based on creating or improving conditions for local economy functioning and its growth in general. Besides the most used local planning documents, local regulations, this role also covers initiatives in improving local business environment, infrastructure and physical environment, public investments in public spaces and public facilities, labour force training activities etc.

Among the most interesting issues is if local self-government in post-socialist city, it is adapting forms of involvement in local development applied in developed countries. Are the city institutions still involved only in traditional land use control and planning and public services provision or they shifted to entrepreneurial stance to economic development, as it is proposed for example by Harvey (1989) and Leitner (1990). It should include increasing intervention by local authorities (subsidies and support of local businesses), growing frequency of public-private partnerships and public-private collaboration (Bovaird 1993, Mayer 1995). Governments seek business support and approval because their investment and economic activity are crucial to maintaining societal wealth and popular support for the government (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994). Amin and Thrift (1995) stress two factors in economic development – institutional thickness (plethora of institutions of different kind, as well as high level of interactions amongst the network of institutions in local area) and embedding the global (international investments in the city). Cities also are interested in improvement of its position in global economic networks dominated by multinational corporations and (Graham, 1995). Development initiatives related to innovation in institutional development take various forms of local

development agencies, growth coalitions, ad hoc development councils etc (e.g. Thomas, 1990, Ahlbrandt 1990).

3. Local economy and motivation for development initiatives of local self-government

It is often mentioned that city institutions are the most active in formulating own development policy that overcomes traditional municipal sector when local economy faces difficulties. It is mostly reaction on local consequences of global and national economy restructuring (especially decline of industry), poverty among local residents, as it has been documented on a case of some cities e.g. in United States (Robinson, 1989, Warf and Holly, 1997). Post-socialist economic transformation is long term process. Its progress and consequences have not been spatially equally distributed in Slovakia. While some local economies were quickly and successfully transformed, for others it has been painful process.

Bratislava was formed as an industrial, working class dominated city during socialist era. Its key industrial sectors included machinery and chemical industry, electrical engineering, food processing, as well as construction industry. All local industries suffered by typical failures of Slovak industry in general – low technological level of production, high consumption of raw materials and energy, low export potential, high number of employees and monopoly of state ownership (Korec, Buček, 1999). Service sector was underdeveloped, as it was typical for that period. However at the same time, Bratislava was the largest centre of higher education and research in Slovakia, with very good age and education structure of population. The most typical features of Bratislava's local economy transformation can be labelled as de-industrialisation and globalisation (although it is rather selective process in Bratislava).

It was especially privatisation and non-competitiveness of former state enterprises that caused decline in production, closures of many non-effective industrial units and sharp decrease of employment in industry. New owners frequently reduced employment in favour of technological improvements and higher productivity. Higher costs of land and labour costs also forced potential investors to search for cheaper locations outside the city. Economic depression and strong reduction in new housing construction strongly diminish activities in construction industry. This depressing sectoral characteristic has been partly reversed by a set of modernised and newly established companies. Nevertheless it is clear that the role of industry in local economy diminished.

The rapid growth of service sector of local economy responded on its under-development under previous regime. Bratislava has become by far the largest concentration of various types of administration and distribution activities in Slovakia. Buček and Pitoňák (1997) emphasised three groups of administrative activities that are attracted to Bratislava under new conditions – offices connected to governmental activities (state administration at all levels, local self-government, state agencies, foreign state representations), administrative offices/headquarters of corporations active in other sectors (industry, construction, transport, commerce etc.), and quickly expanding business services. Very dynamic growth in retailing and wholesaling also has been observable in large-scale development projects close to the end of nineties.

The second aspect of transformation – globalisation – is driven by foreign direct investments. “Gateway” location on western border, its proximity to Vienna, position on intersection of important transport lines attracted to city many companies. Bratislava also serves as commands and control – headquarter centre for majority of foreign companies operating on Slovak market. The best showcase of very good development potential of the city is in large expansion of Volkswagen car plant in Bratislava. It grew into production unit with about 6 thousand employees and production of 180000 cars in year 2000. It is the most successful foreign investment in the country and node of growing car industry cluster in the city hinterland and within the whole country. Similar cases of FDI include also units owned by Pirelli (cables), Austrian Schärtinger and German Meggle (milk production), growing share of Hungarian MOL and international finance institutions (IFC, EBRD) in leading Slovak oil refinery Slovnaft. Specific position has strongly internationalised banking sector concentrated in the city (mostly under the control of Austrian, German, Italian, French and US banks). Foreign capital penetrated into city’s retailing sector especially after 1998, including leading European retailers like TESCO, Carrefour, IKEA, hobby market Baumax etc (e.g. Korec, Kováčiková, 2000). Foreign owners attracted also hotel industry (e.g. hotels Holiday Inn, Carlton Radisson) and food services (besides usual fast food multinationals it includes also restaurants with various nations’ cuisine). Growing are investments in property development by foreign developers and institutions.

Bratislava and its hinterland, they are generally considered as economically best working and the most successfully transformed Slovak region. Good situation of local economy documents the lowest level of unemployment (average unemployment rate in 1999 was 5.6 % comparing to national 19.2%) and the highest average wages, comparing to the rest of the country (14536 SK comparing to 10728 SK). Local economy documents its vitality and growth that do not require specific and well-elaborated strategies and policies of involvement. Natural economic attraction, business climate and improving living conditions seem good enough for economic development. From this point of view, local self-governmental institutions and local politicians and activist are not pressed to act intensively in local development. However, if it is true from Slovak point of view, it is questionable if the location and human resources potential is adequately used and development dynamics is sufficient (e.g. comparing to neighbouring capital cities regions).

4. Local self-government involvement in local development

4.1. General framework – local self-government reform

During the initial stage of reforms after 1989, old structures of public administration were transformed in Slovakia. System of local and district ‘national councils’ was replaced by newly established two separate lines of local self-government and local state administration in 1990. At present, basic structure of local public administration is rather complicated. It combines two-tier self-government (city-quarter and the city), two-tier general state administration offices (district and regional offices) and offices of specialised state administration. Slow progress in public administration reform, limited powers and finances of local self-government, periods of conflicts between city-quarter and city-wide

level of self-government, period of “cold” relations to central government, they altogether influenced the scope and results of development initiatives.

State legislation respected specificity of the capital city administration by approval of Act on Bratislava in Slovak Parliament (Act 377/1990). The two-tier model of local self-government was introduced, with two main levels of self-government – city-wide level and level of city-quarters. Especially for city-quarters it meant symbolic return of government back to the local level, return of local democracy, renewed source of local identity building, or its revitalisation. It was important sign of satisfaction when taking into account forced administrative integration ‘from above’ under previous regime. Self-government in Bratislava has been composed of 17 city-quarters (Slov. *mestská časť*) and one city-wide institution. Both levels have their own elected institutions – City-wide mayor (Slov. *Primátor*) and City Council, and City-quarter mayors (Slov. *Starosta*) and city quarter councils. Basic relations between these two levels are formulated in mentioned Act, while further details are defined in City Statute. However, the debate over the optimal structure of self-government is almost everlasting. The key issue has been co-operation and co-ordination of activities between city-wide and city-quarter institutions. Particular attempts for change of relations among them were expressed during 1993–1994 and during 1998–2001, with discussion between proponents of more centralised and supporters of more clearly specified two-tier model of city government (for details see e.g. Buček 1999).

4.2. Direct involvement in local development

Local self-governments were forced to participate on privatisation processes and on transformation of inherited municipal sector of local economy during first years after 1989. Only later local self-governments could shape their own initiatives and strategies in this field much more freely. After brief evaluation of local government direct economic involvement in Bratislava, it can be outlined that it is directed on two main spheres – activities in public services delivery and in physical development projects. However, theirs’ activity space has been strongly influenced by general framework imposed by central state, local economy development and financial situation of local governments.

The economic role of the local government has been influenced by the role of city government in local economy before 1989. The post-socialist self-government “inherited” from previous era 10 large enterprises (Kresánek et al 1998). These enterprises were transformed by means of fragmentation into 31 new companies (in 1. 7. 1990) as the first step. It allowed selective approach during next step in 1991–1992. Four main forms were adopted in transformation of municipal economic sector:

- part of companies remained under full or partial control of the city (with changed status according to the new business code – joint stock companies, Ltd. companies),
- large group of companies was privatised. It concerned especially smaller ones active in retailing, restaurants, accommodation facilities (so-called “small privatisation”),
- minor group of companies underwent full scale, or formal liquidation. They were not enough competitive and they became deeply indebted under new conditions. Their production and services offered were of non-purely public character (e.g. “ZARES” garden centre). The group of typical industrial production units (e.g. in furniture,

clothing) were liquidated, in some cases followed by starting new private businesses on their grounds,

- the last group of companies was transferred to the state ownership (expecting future transformation). It concerned group of smaller construction companies, water and sewage network. This was caused by new approach to development process after 1989. Previously, construction companies directly served for development activities of the city, while afterwards this approach was replaced by contracting out and tendering (in fact city development projects were very limited for years). For example, water and sewage networks are still under the state control, with planned transfer to local level in 2000–2002 (combined with private sector involvement).

After reorganisation of inherited municipal enterprises portfolio especially since 1990 to 1994, city could reshape its role in local economy. City-wide government is active in business sphere mostly according to specific interests of the city. After more detailed survey of these activities, I divided them on the following (partly overlapping) groups:

- Strategic interests – oriented on control over development in sensitive fields, partial influence over key services (prices, modernisation, accessibility) with long term interest and vision. Strategic interests document majority ownership. The most typical is 100% ownership of local mass transport corporation (DPB), waste liquidation and disposal corporation (OLO), corporation active in infrastructure development (civil engineering projects, future underground transport system planning – Metro), company running city parking system.
- Initialising interests – self-government established companies to start particular development projects. City has initialised new development and runs projects to particular stage (with planned later retreat from them). For example, it is the case of Halbart Slovakia (50 % owner – transit transport centre at the border with Austria), or Zámocká spoločnosť (10 % owner – development in Bratislava Castle area).
- Capitalisation interests – city capitalise its assets and property (especially buildings and land) by their capitalisation mostly in companies that should generate profit in the future. It is the case of Istrobanka bank (18% share of the city), or Hasičská Insurance (17% share).
- Minority interests and residuals – minority involvement of city in companies, mostly as a result of privatisation processes, when city was included into privatisation projects for compensation or protection of certain influence. One of the most typical cases is minor share in Czech airlines (less than 1% share). Similar companies are Matador-Obnova (49% – tyres renewal), Incheba (below 20% – foreign trade corporation, owner of the city's largest exhibition and congress centre).

It has to be mentioned that there exist “circle” links among corporations with particular share of the municipal ownership. For example, Hasičská Insurance also serves as a main insurer for the city and its enterprises, or Matador-Obnova serves local mass transport company (DPB).

There is even group of institutions under the control of local self-government with the most typical public collective consumption character. Majority of these municipal

organisations (see Table 1) are fully, or partially dependent on local self-government budgets. Local self-governments also support by direct financial transfer local newspapers, local televisions, voluntary fire brigades and very differentiated third sector initiatives (addressing especially environmental issues, youth and children, sport and culture).

Table 1. List of city-wide and city-quarter organisations

City police
City fire units
BIS – Bratislava Information Service
Houses and pensions for elderly
City Gallery
GIB (serving as investor and developer unit)
Marianum (cemeteries administration)
City Library
City Cultural Centre
City Forests
City Museum
City Institute of Heritage Protection
PAMING (heritage reconstruction)
PKO (culture and exhibition centre)
STARZ (sport and recreation facilities administration)
ZOO (zoo park)

Usual city-quarters' organisations

Libraries
Cultural centres
Public services companies (in some of them) – especially street maintenance
Clubs of elderly
Housing administration

Future plans concerning direct involvement of local self-government in local economy are influenced by long term financial scarcity, as well as low income generated by corporations with various portion of city ownership. During year 2000 representatives of the city announced plans to reduce its minority capital involvement, e.g. in financial institutions (SME, January 14, 2000). However, due to the existence of many attractive investment opportunities in privatisation (e.g. largest state banks in Slovakia in 2000–2001) it was not done. On the opposite hand, city plans active participation in privatisation of remaining state enterprises active on the territory of the city. It concerns especially infrastructure networks, as well as land under the control of state enterprises. Success in privatisation is highly dependent on central level decision. City-wide self-government for example received 7 % share in large state enterprise Slovak Shipping & Ports, mostly in respect to protection of certain influence over Danube river port in Bratislava (in 2001).

4.3. Direct involvement in physical development projects

The most visible is self-government involvement in large physical development projects. They negotiate case by case planning and regulatory framework, quite often is long-term rent of own land. In some cases, they co-finance particular parts of projects, or

apply for additional financial resources from specific state funds supporting development of infrastructure. They invite or try to attract other private partners to financing (e.g. building societies into housing parts of the projects). Larger of them form mixed public-private corporations for certain development projects.

One of the key issues is, if the activities of city-quarters self-governments influence urban environment modernisation and its transformation into multi-nodal city. Almost ten years experiences prove that city-wide, as well as each city-quarters have their own visions of development. There are development projects where prevails the involvement of city-wide level, as well as projects where city-quarters participate more. The sensitive mixture of competition and co-operation between city-wide and city quarter level, as well as among city quarters in local development are natural reaction under the existing model of metropolitan government in Bratislava. City-wide level is directly involved in large infrastructure projects (bridges, transport system) and also completed series of individual physical development projects (multifunctional building, reconstruction of historical building). Both levels regularly have invested in reconstruction, improvement and maintenance of public spaces. It is the most visible in renovated Old City streets, or in introduction of numerous pedestrian zones. City-quarters are very active in formation of own service and business centres. It is especially the case of the largest and ambitious city quarters (Nové Mesto, Ružinov, Staré Mesto, Petržalka). The most typical projects with larger involvement of local self-governments are "Polus City Center" development in city quarter Nové Mesto, formation of multifunction pedestrian zone (so-called "Petržalské korzo") that will connect Staré Mesto with Petržalka, as well as planned revitalisation of SNP square in Staré Mesto. This situation we could only hardly expect if there would not be institution of city-quarter self-government working as initiator and co-ordinator of such activities.

For brief documentation of the development process I selected one of the largest development project in city-quarter Nové Mesto. This city quarter belonged to city quarters composed by large mono-functional spaces (housing, industry and sport) and underdeveloped own central space. Both, private and public interests have been combined in "Polus City Center" development project. The area of development is neighbouring to City Quarter Hall and also includes new city quarter central square completion (with water cascade, green area, small open-air theatre etc.). The project combines large commercial (about 50 th sq. m.), administration (two high rise buildings with 40 th. sq. m.), housing (14 th. sq. m.) and entertainment (multiplex with 8 cinemas, family entertainment centre, bowling centre) spaces and about 2000 parking places. Leading role had private developer TriGránit Development Corporation as joint venture of Trizec Hahn Corp. (with Canadian background) and regionally active Polus Investment, know from similar activities in Budapest. Project was financed by EBRD and foreign banks' resources (especially Austrian), and its first phase costs were about 80 mil. USD. The team of architects (Adamson Associates and local Fischer s.r.o.) and fact that the leading contractor was one of the largest Austrian construction company Ilbau (working with many local Slovak sub-contractors) documents international nature of this projects. City-quarter self-government rented the land under long-term conditions (99 years) and will earn also from real estate tax, as well as fees from selling particular goods in Carrefour hypermarket that rented substantial part of commercial spaces. The project has generated significant

number of jobs (about 1000 jobs during construction works, 1000 to 1500 new permanent jobs will generate full operation of the complex). High standard administrative space attracts offices of leading companies operating in Slovakia and located in Bratislava (e.g. IBM). This well accessible area (on main route from city centre to the east), in walking distance to the city's core sport area (football stadium of two leading clubs Slovan and Inter, swimming stadium, as well as to future National Tennis Centre, nearby lake Kuchajda). It will be one the most attractive centres for the whole metropolitan region outside the city core. This development is accompanied in immediate neighbourhood by smaller multi-functional ICT project (app. 10 mil. USD) with commercial, administrative and housing space (finished in October 2000).

5. Indirect involvement in local development

The crucial tools for managing development of the city are its powers in urban planning and local regulations. Long term tradition of territorial planning was combined with application of environmental planning techniques and attempts for strategic planning approaches after 1989. Regulatory environment is completed by local by-laws, approved as on the city-wide, as on city-quarter level. These documents give basic framework for local development. Some signs of subsidies as a support available for local businesses emerged during last years. The procedures of planning and regulation elaboration are much more participatory at present. For example, under the pressure of citizens associations Lord Mayor Moravčík substantially prolonged the discussion on new Master Plan in 2000–2001.

Self-government especially at the city-wide level turned voluntary to strategic planning (some city quarters also have its own "minor" strategic plans, mostly defining priorities for longer period). First "Strategy of the development of the city" elaborated in 1993 was used as informal vision without formal approval by the City Council. Strategy of Development, adopted by City Council in 1999, is much more influential. Here are defined two main trends of local development. Alternative "A" of economic development supposes efficient use of existing economic structure, and future development of the city as industrial – commercial a distribution centre, without more important interventions into market forces allocation. Alternative "B" is based on preferential use of human potential, on formation of research/development and experimental capacities, orientation on progressive sector of economy and more sophisticated production. Key sector of local economy development should be branches of so-called fourth sector, including information technologies, in strong co-operation with Vienna space.

Planning powers belong to key tools to influence local development. Local self-governments are obliged for preparation of Master Plan of the city (in Slovak – Územný plán UPN). This is crucial regulatory document for approval of any activities within the city. During the transitional period of city's development its spatial development was regulated within the framework of amendment of 1976 UPN as amended in 1992–1993. This basic framework was combined with large number of more detailed planning documentation. Master plan was under strong and frequent pressure for changes coming from city quarters, as well as from investors during nineties. For example, there were ten special by-laws from

total thirteen by-laws approved in 1998 that contained changes in existing UPN (there also was one “planning” by-law in 1999 and four in 2000). Most of changes were prepared under the pressure of new development and considered changes in urban land functions, mostly conversion from agricultural land to land available for housing, industry, services (mostly wholesaling and retailing) and related infrastructure. However, it has to be mentioned that in some cases within one by-law there were included numerous changes in planning regulation (mostly according to city-quarters, or related to one larger development project). There were changes in almost 200 planning locations within the framework of 1998 changes in by-laws. Changes allowed e.g. large expansion of VW plant in Bratislava (e.g. by-laws 11/1998 and 7/2000) that was not expected at the beginning of nineties. In similar way, changes reflects trends of group of smaller city-quarters (Záhorská Bystrica, Rusovce, Vajnory, Devín) to form themselves as attractive residential quarters, according to changes (e.g. by-laws 5/1996, 16/1996, 7/1998, 9/2000). Numerous changes and obsolete Master plan inevitably led to preparation of new one that should respond current and future development requirements. This long-term process started in 1998 with expected completion in 2001. New Master plan should reflect the changed nature of development process and respect better needs of city-quarters as well as investors.

Local “by-laws” (in Slovak – Všeobecne záväzné nariadenia – VZN) are the main tool of regulation of selected activities at the city territory. They are prepared by city-wide as well as city quarter self-governments and strongly depend on the scope of local competencies. At the city level VZN have minor direct impact on economic development, because they influence activities like waste collection, city lighting, parking, taxi services, cemeteries etc. There also are no signs of any special tax (real estate tax) and local fees’ exempts under the intention to support economic development or support of businesses at the city-quarter level. The latest development observed is starting of programmes of subsidising or borrowing in favour of various legal entities on their territory, including businesses from municipal budgets. They were approved in 1998–2000 (e.g. in Petržalka, Dúbravka, Karlova Ves, Ružinov). However, they are addressed more on not-for-profit sector and underfinanced state sector (e.g. schools). Larger support is in fact impossible due to financial scarcity at the local self-government level.

City government developed series of initiatives aimed on improvement of more “soft” factors of local development. For documentation of such initiatives, I selected attempts to improve participation and communication with citizens, improvement of environmental quality of life and improvement of public safety. First of them are more citizens’ oriented, stressing search for more participatory government and more extensive local democracy. The next initiative respond on inherited and still lasting environmental problems. The third initiative responds on growing crime level as one of the significant problem of post-socialist cities. They are important parts of suitable business climate and good place of living. In most cases, they are programmes with other partners.

Project “The Communicating city” (in Slovak “Komunikujúce mesto”) focus on improvement of communication with citizens. The partners in this programme are British Embassy and research institute IROMAR. One of the goal of the programme, it is to develop network of information centres for citizens. They should serve citizens in various fields, answering their questions in the field of employment, social problems, business

start, legislation, local issues, etc. More accessible and flexible services for citizens within the city should be achieved.

Bratislava similarly to other post-socialist industrial cities inherited large environmental problems. The most crucial issues were resolved during the first years after 1989 (closure of the most dangerous production lines e.g. in local chemical industry). Part of environmental improvements concerns large modernisation schemes in many companies (e.g. in oil refinery Slovnaft). The most important and the largest project with city-wide self-government involvement is modernisation of city's incineration plant (60 mil EUR total costs expected) that will serve not only to liquidate communal waste produced by the city, but also will serve as heating production unit for housing. On public space revitalisation and maintenance is oriented "Green City" (Slov. Zelené mesto) project (Kačáni 1999). These public green spaces revitalisation project is sponsored by the largest Slovak tobacco company – S.I.T (owned by multinational Reemtsma) and realised by young environmental activists.

The next project should improve public safety in the city. Implementation of the project – "Bratislava – The Safe City" (Slov. Bratislava – Bezpečné mesto) started in 1999 (Miňovská 2000). The main executive tool is City Police (in co-operation with state police). It includes series of guidelines addressing physical security, technical protection and preventive – educational measures. Technical part of the project includes monitoring of selected localities by camera systems, addressing especially street crime in the most attractive tourist and commercial sites. There started introduction of automatic information system for police, with better equipment for police patrols in the field. There is also expected positive shift in other types of crime, combined with strengthened competencies of local/city police units since 1999.

6. The role of local state administration and central state in local development

Current local state's administration (district and regional level) activities in local development are mostly in the conceptual sphere (planning and development strategies of larger territorial units), in monitoring and regulation of certain aspects of local development (especially its environmental and regional policy branches) and in direct administration of particular public services (e.g. schools, social services). It has very circumscribed capacities for participation and direct involvement in local development having limited personal and professional capacities, and almost no investment budget. They are oriented mostly on supervision over the development projects, process of evaluation and permission of their operation. One the most perceived barriers in development dynamics in Bratislava have been slowly working cadastral branches of state administration (long term waiting for registration of changes in ownership of real estates).

The central state (central government, parliament) involvement is primarily in the field of basic legal framework formulation that concerns all actors in local development. Besides this standard role of central state, specific influence has had transitional legislature and decision-making strongly affecting the scope of municipal sector and city's participation on transformation processes like privatisation. Traditional special interest of central state in its capital city was not always true in a case of Bratislava. Almost all

Bratislava's self-governmental institutions (Mayors, all Councils) had been controlled by opposition parties between 1994–1998. Totally different political orientation of all city-quarter self-governments led to absence of communication among central level and "Bratislava's" institutions including development issues. Such situation led to overseeing of Bratislava needs and problems. Both level of self-government turned to own urban development projects and mobilisation of own resources under such situation. The most sensitive issues were transport issues. It was the case of mass transport subsidies as well as road infrastructure network completion (under the pressure of quickly growing number of car in the region). Situation of discord among the local self-governments and the central state was changed in 1998 elections and was reflected in series of negotiation among city and central government. The last case of central state support to Bratislava development is accelerated highway construction substantially improving transit transport, as well as adopted state guarantee needed for financing of new 5th bridge over Danube in Bratislava (Slov. Most Košická). However, in respect to much larger development problems in other Slovak regions, the central state (Ministry of Construction and Regional Development), which plans to establish and support an integrated network of Regional Development Agencies throughout the country, it does not suppose to establish such institution in Bratislava.

7. Conclusion

The role of local self-government in local development is narrow oriented in Bratislava. The application of only certain approaches, absence of more complex institutional environment, combined with limited powers, they document more liberal approach to local development. Preferred are typical land-based activities, physical development projects and use of planning regulation tools. It is often related to better use of municipal property (land, buildings). Local self-governments also use initialisation of certain activities in local economy and development projects according to own priorities, but with intention to retreat from direct involvement later. They also try to create supportive and responsive local institutional environment for private investors. In larger infrastructure schemes local self-governments co-operate with state. Activities are also limited by fiscal austerity of all local self-governments.

The role of both levels of local self-government in the city's development is different. It is related to the distribution of powers among city-wide and city-quarters self-government. The city-wide level has more strategic role in local development. City quarters are responsible for numerous very local services and activities that they can organise or deliver better comparing to the city level. More direct involvement in form of municipal enterprises we can find at the city-wide level and less at the city-quarter level. It reflects its competencies in public service delivery for the whole territory of the city. However, city-quarter level (mostly larger ones) seems very vital being able to organise or negotiate activities in the field of physical development projects. The situation can be changed in the future if large infrastructure projects will be realised, mostly in the field of urban transport. Local development activities resulted in transformation of Bratislava into the multi-nodal city, with many modernised urban spaces. The role of city-quarters in this trend is indisputable.

When comparing institutional environment in support of local development in Bratislava, there are missing some typical institutional forms with usual important role of local self-government. There are no signs of building more formal growth coalitions, ad hoc development councils or development agencies. Despite absence of more formal institutional environment for development, city and city-quarters are active in building informal networks in favour of local development. They are expressed in establishing links, their internationalisation and as well as their orientation on influential actors, including important companies, universities, embassies, non-governmental organisations etc. The city-wide mayor (J. Moravčík, the last Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, for short period also Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic), as well as city-quarters mayors realised series of visits and negotiations with important local economic actors. The most typical case of developing better ties to important local foreign industrial interests is Mr. Moravčík's visit to Volkswagen headquarters in Wolfsburg, related to quickly expanding VW production in its Bratislava branch. City developed good relations with other larger multinationals operating in Slovakia. One of the most important is Siemens, co-operating with the city in large project of city-lighting and incineration plant modernisation. The shift into more softer forms of pro-development initiatives addressing especially improvement of human resources, support on new business start, technological change, and new work places generation is insufficient. This is caused partly by very good situation on the local economy.

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ROLE MÍSTNÍ SAMOSPRÁVY V LOKÁLNÍM ROZVOJI BĚHEM POSTSOCIALISTICKÉHO OBDOBÍ: PŘÍKLADOVÁ STUDIE BRATISLAVY

Résumé

Příspěvek je zaměřen na určení rozsahu a hlavních forem místní samosprávy v lokálním rozvoji Bratislavy během post-socialistického období, hlavně na situaci v místní ekonomice a fungování místní samosprávy. Zatím co situace v místní ekonomice se jeví příznivě, kompetence a zdroje místní samosprávy jsou omezené. Přímé zapojení ekonomických subjektů je velice vázané na obecní sektor, který byl po roce 1989 silně omezen. Účast na vybraných rozvojových projektech ukazuje druhý hlavní přístup k místnímu ekonomickému rozvoji. Aktivity v plánování a řízení jsou analyzovány jako hlavní faktory určující zapojení do místního ekonomického rozvoje. Také jsou uvažovány „měkké“ přístupy k lokálnímu rozvoji, které se věnují místnímu „podnikatelskému klimatu“ a formování Bratislavy jako dobrého místa k usídlení (priority životního prostředí a veřejné bezpečnosti). Více participace a komunikace s občany a subjekty neziskového sektoru rovněž zlepšují kvalitu rozvojového procesu. Místní samospráva spolupracuje s centrální vládou hlavně v oblasti doplňování velkých projektů týkajících se infrastruktury.