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TRANS-BORDER REGION OF UPPER SILESIA AND NORTH MORAVIA IN THE CURRENT STAGE OF GLOBALISATION AND THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Abstract: The term of globalisation expresses the fact that in addition to the local, regional, and national level of organization and people integration also the world-wide level is formed, which is a consequence of increasingly intensive interlocking of economics. For the first time in the human history anything can be produced anywhere on the earth.

Globalisation initiates changes essentially influencing competitiveness of the trans-border region at both sides of the Czech-Polish border. Globalisation pressures have been even hastened by Czech Republic and Poland joining the EU. The trans-border region will be facing new opportunities as well as threats because the international competition of economic processes taking place in the EU will be deepened. Economic entities as well as territorial systems (regions, cities) will be exposed to the growing competition pressure.

The region of Upper Silesia and North Moravia is in danger of becoming a region at the periphery in the integrating European space if restructuring and revitalization processes are not hastened. A number of measures should be taken at the state and regional level to lessen the threat of marginalisation. Such measures would have to take into account the new mechanisms of development, new criteria in localisation in global economic processes as well as in small business entities.

1. Economic globalisation main features

A great part of political, economic and intellectual elites claims that from the beginning of the communistic movement a more impor-

tant and more unpredictable social process as the contemporary economic globalisation has not happened on this planet. Thus, it is just the globalisation that should become a determining element of the world's further development after the fall of communism.

According to Kapuscinski „globalisation does not run only on one level as it is often put, but on two or even three levels. The first level is the official one it is a free flow of capital, an open access to markets, communication, multinational corporations, mass culture, mass production, mass consumption. This is the globalisation often discussed and written about. There is, however, another one, and according to Kapuscinski opinion, a strong globalisation, which is negative and destructive. It is a globalisation of criminal underworld, mafia, drugs, trade with weapons, dirty money laundering, tax evasions, and financial fraud. This is actually happening on a global scale. This other globalisation makes use of unoccupied space and freedom, and electronic means of communication. For a weaker state it is becoming rather difficult to control this other globalisation.

And then there is the third globalisation, including international non-governmental organizations, movements and sects. It is characteristic of this kind activity that it cannot be controlled. This is an extraordinary important circumstance for understanding such events that took place on 11th September because it proves that we are likely to deal with uncontrolled forces that will be difficult to control in the future. In the past it was the state that had a monopoly to resort a force, only the state could be in possession of armed forces, police, intelligence service. This does not hold true any longer [7].

Almost every place on the earth has been influenced by the globalisation to a certain extent. A majority of them is a mere receiver of globalisation impacts. There are only few places where globalisation processes' basic character is really created and shaped.

The term globalisation refers to the fact that in addition to the local, regional, and national level of organization and integration of people, a worldwide level is formed as a consequence of increasingly intensive interlocking of economies.

The most important bearer of economic processes' globalisation are multinational corporations and at the same time large world metropolitan cities that are centres of their managing body and thus also centres of key information and incentives to the development of global economy. Multinational corporations as well as financial institutions have become the chief force organizing the world economy. Their eco-

conomic strength often exceeds the strength of medium-developed countries and their activity concerns more and more larger world space. A growing role of international corporations and multinational companies in the global economy, in societal and political systems will be reflected in forming the European region.

Multinational companies bring to the countries to which they decided to invest a number of advantages and benefits. It is not only the inflow of capital in the form of direct foreign investments and production capacities growth that are in question but also the creation of new job opportunities, production processes improvement, the implementation of new technologies, budget incomes from the new production, and improvement in country trade balance. Benefits provided by multinational companies, however, may appear to be only apparent. Profits from the production need not be invested in the site of their rise but they can be transferred to the parent firm. After some time the re-flow of finance can exceed the initial investment. Another considerable problem are tax evasions for which multinational companies use quite legally so-called transfer prices. Also input costs serving to attract foreign investments should be mentioned, e.g. expenditures from public budgets to be spent on building the infrastructure. Money should not be forgotten either, especially in case it had never flowed to the budget of the state, region or community due to the granted taxes and other relieves [21].

The chief organizer of the global connections seems to be large world metropolitan cities as the centres of decision-making, information, finance and simultaneously the centres of culture and science achievements. An absolute majority of actors shaping the globalisation have their seats in world metropolitan cities. These significant cities belong to few localities to which the globalisation brings a relative prosperity and success.

Acceleration of globalisation and the rise of new forms of competition call for revision of the traditional definition of industry and the concept of competitiveness. Since companies structure the chain of manufactured products and services value creation to various markets, the traditional criteria focused on particular industrial sectors are becoming less fitting. Sectors (branches) should not serve as a unit (field) for the evaluation of competitiveness but rather activities and markets.

Competition position of a firm based on the advanced technology or on intellectual know-how and an ability quickly to generate a high added value is often becoming changeable and unsteady. It is also becoming difficult to measure the national and regional competitiveness.

As cross-border property, relocation of production operations, fast rotation of ownership and remote work is growing so the geographical identification of a company is becoming difficult.

2. Economic globalisation consequences

It is almost unbelievable how quickly the prognosis worked out by Thurow has been fulfilled. He forecasted the present changes in his book *The Future of Capitalism* that became a bestseller in the late nineties of the last century in the U.S.A. Thurow, the then advisor to President Clinton, forecasted a deep radical change in the whole world of labour.

„A dramatic challenge is coming above all from developing states of southeaster Asia where there are large-size developing markets and a growing number of modern technologies holders. We will be attempted not only in the sector of less sophisticated activities but also by means of modern technologies.“[23]. It means that job vacancies are jeopardized by redeployment and there is a real danger that a probable loss of job vacancies (e.g. in West Europe) will be higher than probable gains. He asked a fatal question: „What kind of work and how much work (job vacancies) will be available in central Europe in five or ten years?“ [23].

In the past decades the decline in number of job opportunities in one sector was compensated by jobs creation in the new sectors of economics. At present this does not occur. There is no branch where job vacancies would be created on a massive scale. Massive implementation of new technologies in the period from 2001 to 2004 contributes in the U.S.A. to a brisk increase in productivity and gains. According to economists' estimation, however, increase in productivity by one percentage means the loss of 1.3 million of job vacancies. These „American trends“ are not likely to avoid Europe. Where it will be possible to find job vacancies?

American legislation allows to firms to hire and fire their employees quite easily. This follows from a high flexibility on the labour market. Firms are not satisfied only with deliveries „just-in-time“ but introduce „just-in-time“ paid labour. They employ people for really needed time. Those who perform routine work that can be turned in some way into algorithm have to be afraid of replacing their activities by a self-service station or by a poorly paid foreigner.

A university degree is not any longer a full guarantee of high earnings and bright career prospects. For example five years ago a narrowly specialised expert in technology as e.g. software programmes did not have rivals and job-related worries. These days they worry about being replaced by somebody in India.

Ninety percent of American firms including small and medium-size ones use some form of supply from abroad, foreign „outsourcing“, which is regarded for the root of all evil on the labour market“ [10].

Until recently the shift of labour force to the countries with low wages took place only within industries. A well-known representative of this era is China. Nowadays, the shift in order to find a cheap labour force affects also the sector of services, which has been until recently protected by natural geographical barriers. The Internet, however, has changed the rules of the game. India with its high number of educated English speaking people can serve as the best example. This is a so-called „*business process outsourcing (BPO)*“.

Corporations in the U.S.A. and Europe found out that certain tasks could be sent to developing countries where educated, accommodating and English speaking labour force would fulfil them at one quarter of the domestic costs. While in the 70s and 80s part of job opportunities in industries was moved to southeast Asia a Latin America to make use of cheap labour force, a similar trend can be seen at the beginning of the new century in the field of job vacancies for „white collars“ – accountants, software programmers *etc.*

Béngalúr in south India has become the fourth largest IT innovation centre after Silicon Valley, Boston and London. Who that wants to count for much on the global market must be a member of all important innovation centres and Béngalúr is by all means one of them. Experts from Nasscom, the Industrial Association of Indian IT Companies foresee a sharp growth. The branch of IT technologies is supposed annually to rise by forty percent. In 2008 two million people should be employed in the branch, which would represent one third of Indian export [4].

The case of Béngalúr illustrates a positive impact of economic globalisation on developing countries' economics. There are, however, some doubts. While middle-class India beams with satisfaction thanks to the flow of job vacancies, outsourcing in the U.S.A. has become one of the most painful topics of the pre-election campaign. A candidate for President, John Kerry, used it for the illustration of President Bush's policy aimed at placing the interests of corporations over the interests of ordinary American people and thus it had its share in the export of job vacancies abroad [9].

According to Samuelson, one of the most significant economists of the twentieth century, the shift of job vacancies to cheap countries may lead to lasting damages of the national economy.

In fact, every year one hundred thousand job vacancies are shifted from the U.S.A. abroad. But Samuelson points out: „As long as a phenomenon appears to be meaningful, then it is only the matter of time before it is implemented on a large scale.”[24]. He states that at the end of the World War II the American share in the world production was forty percent. Since it has continuously dropped and now it is roughly 22%. By his timely attack on the theory of free trade, Samuelson touched one of the taboo subjects. More than two hundred years nobody has dared to doubt the thesis by David Richard, the English economist, according to which free trade with commodities and services brings profit to all involved. Samuelson in his treatise proves that the transfer of job vacancies to „cheap” foreign countries (outsourcing) can lead from a long-term standpoint to a considerable income dropping [24]

Also IT experts confirm the trend of loss in job vacancies in the U.S.A. and West Europe. For example Larry Ellison, chief director of Oracle Company, foresees that a real Internet revolution is yet coming. Computer technologies are extremely expensive and we will soon witness a drop in prices of computers and related services. Due to the globalisation brought by a worldwide network we will witness transferring of job vacancies (outsourcing) all over the world. Such revolution does not deal with what is coming after the Internet but it simply shows that the effect of the Internet has not become evident to the full extent. This impact will be absolutely enormous. Globalisation of economies will likely be as painful as the Industrial Revolution [5].

Europe measures and analyses the outsourcing to cheaper developing countries with a considerable anxiety. Experts from Forrester Research Company have quantified for the first time how many job opportunities the company could actually lose in the sector of information technologies and services till 2005. It is about 1.2 million job vacancies. They will be transferred to the countries with a cheaper labour force such as China, Malaysia or Mexico. From their calculations it follows that this year Great Britain will „export (outsource)” 56 thousand job vacancies. In 2015, the number will already be 760 thousand. In France, outsourcing to foreign countries gives rise to a considerable resistance. Rightwing premier Raffarin promises the firms will be provided with incentives if they keep job vacancies at home [14].

Dahrendorf and Fukuyama's persuasion that Europe could face the growing competitive fierceness of East Asian countries by the level of its education is a relative reasoning with the limited validity in time. It is impossible not to see that intellectual and managerial elites in contemporary China are reaching by mile steps the level of education in Europe. At the American and European universities have studied are studying and will be studying thousands of Chinese students absorbing the latest achievements of American and European science [16].

3. A trans-border region in the global competition

3.1. To avoid the risks outweighing the new opportunities

Before the EU enlargement there was a very topical question: How will the Central European firms stand on the European Union common market? According to NTC Research, a British research company, the Czech and Polish firms do not have problems with their competitiveness on the European Union markets. It seems that it is the West European firms that are under the pressure because their labour force is more expensive. The number of firms taking on employees is growing in the Czech Republic, which is thought an encouraging trend [13].

More than two thirds of multinational firms and experts believe that in the Central and East Europe stimulation in investments will occur in the coming year. This will happen thanks to the combination of firms' low taxation, a free access to the European market, to the European subsidies and also thanks to highly skilled manpower. This is a challenge also for our border regions; it might be their last chance. It is obvious that we will not be able to win in the competition with China, India and/or Turkey.

This contemporary relatively favourite development should not mislead us. It need not take a long time before our situation gets worse dramatically in the comparison with West European countries intensively improving their position in research and development, in the field of innovation, quality services of global significance and the like.

The basis of economic growth in our regions must be the development of manufacturing industries with a high added value associated with applied research and development of services with the export potential. Growing competitiveness of our firms allow them to integrate to a greater extent into manufacturing chains within the EU. The ques-

tion is whether the new economics based on knowledge (science) will have a chance to be successfully developed in our region.

As far as the Czech part of the trans-border region is concerned it should be said that the situation especially in the field of research and development is unsatisfactory. It is really a pity, that after 1989 the number of research capacities mainly of those engaged in applied research have been decreased or disintegrated in our region. It does not matter whether it was caused by privatisation or research and development policy. For the situation in the Czech Republic are characteristic low investments into research and development and extremely low number of students at technical and natural science faculties. Money is not the only problem, but also mechanisms of cooperation between the educational system and research, educational system and industries, educational system and public administration. The success in building bridges between the academic world and the world of enterprise will be a turning point. Whether it will be possible to involve people from practice into teaching at universities and to offer students actual professional and entrepreneur experience, technology, readings and background material for their thesis.

Moreover, we have to join the international integration. We extremely lag behind the countries such as India and China not only in a number but also, as it has appeared lately, in the professional quality of research and development workers [6]. China exports technologies to the third world and it begins to penetrate on advanced markets. Every provincial government has its ministry for science and technologies and a worked out plan of science and technologies development in its province. Chinese leadership has decided to determine the principle programs of development in which both the central and provincial funds will be concentrated and private investments will be preferred [2]. Enterprises in our trans-border region should face up challenges resulting from China impressive performance.

The Czech Republic considerably lags behind the EU countries in the number of patents per head. Only few technological firms have been set up recently. The problem is that the Czech Academy workplaces and universities are nowadays assessed according to the number of published papers and not according to the number of patents or new firms that have been materialised by their efforts.

Certain rigidity, inability institutionally to react to changes and needs is characteristic for our research and development. A possibility to open new institutes in a very short time and, conversely, close the

other ones is so far unthinkable and all proposals to set up new institutes are conditioned by the availability of new funds [25].

The Czech firms have to join research and development activities within the EU to a more considerable extent. At present, they have an opportunity to ask for funds from the 6th general programme and they can take part in the preparation of the 7th general programme. The Czech Republic lags behind the European average. While a EU average firm, before EU enlargement in May, invests 3.45% of its turnover into science and knowledge, a Czech firm only 1.5%. Scandinavian companies put money into research and development at the rate of about five percent of their turnover [27]. The Czech government is preparing the first step to help the Czech Republic in the process of transformation from a cheap factory of Europe to the modern on knowledge-built economy. The new rules should ensure that it would be more advantageous for firms to put money into science, research and innovations. The principle is simple: for every crown it puts into new inventions it will be allowed to write off two crowns from its taxes. All companies based in the CR will be allowed to make use of double depreciation.

It is said that in „knowledge economy“ every country needs a growing number of university graduates and people with a formal qualification. This is the only way of acquiring the ability to compete. Education, however, according to Alison Wolf from London King's College is not a guarantee of economic growth to the extent as most politicians and businessmen suppose: more education does not necessarily mean more growth. Hong Kong can serve as an example. There, a meteoric economic growth did not have anything in common with centrally planned educational policy. Even though every country needs well-educated population, the idea that best educated population will ensure the highest prosperity is a mere chimera. „The more extended the university education is the less time young people spend by professional training. Economies are increasingly in need of more fully trained craftsmen rather than another ration of university graduates from humanities“ [26]. Moreover, a fast dissemination of university education very often takes place at the expense of quality.

For quite a long time, a shortage of fully skilled craftsmen cannot be resolved in Ostrava region where there is a shortage in job vacancies and young people cannot assert themselves on the labour market.

The number of school leavers repeatedly influences unemployment in the CR. A total number of school leavers without finding a job reached at the end of August the rate of 51.500 and this number is expected to grow. From the total number of people seeking for job they represented 9.6% [17].

It seems that there is a lot business people and industrialists who are drawing attention to the fact that Czech schools need to be updated because they do not train young people in the way relevant to the needs of economics. It is necessary to change the profile of a graduate from both secondary schools and universities. Companies could offer a helping hand to schools in the practical part of teaching, e.g. by offering them professional training. Let us mention an actual example – in Siemens Automobile Systems Company based in Frenštát pod Radhoštěm, a research and development group is coming into existence in cooperation with the VŠB-Technical University of Ostrava.

If the current situation is not improved the Czech Republic will not be able to keep up with the current development in the field of technologies. A vision by what competences the Czech Republic wants to be linked with the international chains of values creation is missing. Also the Czech and Polish side of the trans-border region should discuss a joint vision in the field of scientific and technological development.

Equally serious problem of our region is brain drain. The whole European Union has to cope with the same difficulties: Gifted scientists and professionals from the sphere of finance and business are brain-drained overseas. The European Commission points out that three from four Europeans who have attained a doctoral degree overseas stay there to take a job. Europe, at the same time, misses about 700 thousand scientists [28]. The most serious competitor for the U.S.A. is Great Britain. Its government has recently invested one milliard Czech crown (in conversion) to the programme aimed at attracting young British people to come back home and at tempting the foreigners. The sum should be spent solely on their salaries.

France has offered to young doctoral graduates about seven thousand job vacancies in the recent five years. Their salaries should be comparable with those in the U.S.A.

In the Czech Republic the incentives for the best ones to leave the country and go abroad are even higher because young scientists' salaries in comparison with those in overseas are much lower. Czech governments have not proposed any strategy of how to keep educated people at home, they seem not see this problem.

3.2. Cluster initiatives

In order to increase companies' and region's competitiveness, Moravian and Silesian part of the region is joining the (European) clus-

ter initiatives. The new economics calls for speed, quality, flexibility, innovation, networks of contacts, and creation of a critical number of firms within the scope of production. This new style of enterprise necessitates team cooperation at the local level – a cluster approach. Cluster behaviour development is important in the support of competitiveness of newly arising and restructured industries. Clusters are considered foundation stones of productive and innovatory economics.

The research confirms that clusters and skilled workers can become a key driving force of particular localities, cities and region's economic growth. Clusters and networks increase the economic and social growth of the region in which they arise [15]. Clusters are understood as an important setting for the development and growth of small and medium-size businesses because they help them to increase the productivity and ability of innovation, they facilitate innovated products commercialisation and help to increase employment.

In the recent decade the economic development based on clusters has become a subject matter of increased worldwide interest and the programmes aimed at clusters creation can be found in more than forty countries all over the world. Clusters get more and more attention from people determining the governmental policy. Clusters are considered a chief macroeconomic tool of the regional development and in the recent ten years they have become the main direction of macroeconomic policy in advanced countries. They interlink the industrial policy, regional policy, development of small and medium-size businesses, and research and innovation policy. Also the European Union encourages a regional development by means of clusters.

Although clusters arise from a natural need of particular participants, their development cannot be accidental. The process of shaping the clusters must come from a natural development in a particular locality. Cluster cannot be „set up“ by a mere application of the specified process. In the particular locality there must exist certain circumstances – „a seed of excellence“ that, possibly, will provide the cluster initiative with a solid base.

By this it is determined the central role of a facilitator (from an English verb – to facilitate). This should be a person facilitating the rise and development of clusters. He/she will be acting during the process as an unbiased side, as a cluster manager.

The process of the rise and development of clusters does not take place in a usual way (analysis – strategy – recommendation). The initial analysis is necessary, but the only reason for it is to show what the first

steps should be. Strategy that follows from the process of cluster rise and development has to be relevant to the needs of people who created it and also to the conditions of the particular site.

The process of analysis put an emphasis on the identification of all obstacles impeding the development that can be removed easier by a joint effort. The central point of this approach is building confidence among particular members of the cluster. Unnecessary building of relations, interactions and exchange of opinions, information and experience is, however, quite time-consuming

At the beginning of cluster initiative development, a governmental agency takes the leadership; this role can also be played by the regional or local self-government. The role of public administration is important with regard to a considerable dependence of clusters' arising and development on circumstances in the certain locality. In the course of time, with the initiative development, the leadership passes from the public administration to the management of industries, while the government remains a long-term partner. In some cases representatives of particular industries take the leadership from the very beginning and the government enters the process only as a partner.

Key actors create the strategy of clusters and they are also their owners. The aim is not a strategic plan created by advisors acting outside a cluster or an agency for economic development because the key participants in the cluster would not have much share in such strategic plan and therefore they would not accept it. On the contrary, the key participants create their strategy themselves, in a hard way, taking part in a series of seminars and workshops. Then they accept not only the strategy but also its implementation.

A majority of European states actively encourages the development of clusters in the form of supporting programmes. On the territory of the CR there is a significant potential for the rise of clusters and their successful working. The Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade has worked out in cooperation with CzechInvest Company an individual programme in support of clusters within the Operational programme „Industry and Business“ (see Table 1).

CzechInvest Company has recently trained a number of facilitators whose role will be to explain the importance of setting up the clusters for firms and regions, to look for opportunities for their foundation, to coordinate a preparation of clusters and to identify projects in the areas of common interest of their prospective members (e.g. development of new markets, products, training the employees, cooperation in

research and development, cooperation with the municipal and regional self-government).

Seminars about clusters and their creation have been taken place already in seven regional cities. Besides, special workshops have been organized for universities and ministries officials.

The first cluster in the Czech Republic was established in 2003. It is Moravian and Silesian mechanical engineering cluster (MSSK) based

Table 1

The basic parameters of the programme Clusters

The form of subsidy	Non-returnable subsidy (grant)
The rate of subsidy	<p>Project of finding suitable firms for clusters Maximum 75 % of recognizable costs 0.2 million CZK – 1 million CZK</p> <p>Project of cluster setting up and development Maximum 75 % (1st year), 50 % (2nd year), 25 % (3rd year) of recognizable costs total maximum 50 % of recognizable costs 3 million CZK – 45 million CZK</p>
Receiver of the subsidy	<p>Region or by the region determined organizations, institutions of tertiary education, a research institute (aimed at finding firms suitable for clusters formation)</p> <p>Legal entity according to § 18 of the law No 40/1964 Coll. of the civil code, established for the purpose of the support of innovation and competitiveness increase in the branch (setting up and development of clusters)</p>
Recognizable costs	<p>Finding suitable firms for clusters Costs of finding firms suitable for clusters</p> <p>Setting up and development of clusters Offices hiring and equipment Acquiring of tangible and intangible property Consultation services Market research and competition Promotion of the cluster and its activities Staff wage costs and travelling expenses Benchmarking</p>
Specificities of limitation	<p>Showing an interest in working out a study from at least 10 firms, universities or regional governments (finding firms suitable for clusters) a cluster has to include at least 15 individual organizations minimum 60 % of members is represented by MSP and institutions of tertiary education or research organization (setting up and development of clusters)</p>
Subsidized activities	<p>Industrial production and services according to OKEC specified in the enclosure of the programme</p> <p>Focus on innovation and increase in export</p>

in Ostrava. More than 50 firms and organizations took part in its establishment. It is mainly aimed at representation and support of interests on the part of mechanical engineering companies in the region. The actual aims are as follows:

- improvement of the scope of cooperation among its participants and networking strengthening;
- promotion of cluster's strong points;
- better cooperation between the cluster and VŠB-Technical University of Ostrava;
- increase in performance and competitiveness of mechanical engineering companies;
- acquiring a governmental support for the cluster and Moravian and Silesian mechanical engineering

Within the announced Programme, a feasibility study about a suitability of clusters creation is being carried out also in other Czech regions.

According to Pietrzyk from AE Krakow *„...także w Polsce należałoby podjąć próbę zidentyfikowania potencjalnych lokalnych systemów produkcyjnych i rozważyć możliwość stymulowania współpracy przedsiębiorstw działających w pokrewnych dziedzinach wytwórczości lub usług”* [18].

From Berg research findings [1] it follows that the development of clusters is highly dependant on the characteristics of functional municipality regions as a whole. It is primarily the economic structure of the local economics that influences the growth of a specified cluster in addition to the importance of demand conditions. Another important element of the municipal region is the level of the local economics knowledge base, which is reflected in workforce qualification, the existence of schools and institutes of research and development. Knowledge is a key driving force of growth and development. Regions with highly qualified workforce and efficient research and development institutes will always be in advance (a comparative advantage) of other regions.

Conclusion

In our contribution we wanted to outline hard conditions laid down by the process of globalisation under which a trans-border region has to hasten processes of restructuring and to find solid grounds of its future orientation.

The current development suggests that it would be increasingly difficult to secure job vacancies already having been created in the region. It will not be possible to solve unfavourable impacts of globalisation on the labour market by the rise of state budget expenditures and their further redistribution, but by new approaches: by the support of companies' competitiveness, decrease in direct taxes and their transfer to indirect consumption taxes, by the new policy of employment and by the support of individual responsibility. Member countries will choose various ways in dependency on their own traditions and it is quite probable that both favourable and unfavourable effects will be unequally reflected in particular member countries (regions).

Globalisation of economic processes prompts a necessity of closer cooperation within the trans-border region having a strategic location of European significance on one hand, but a number of problems associated with the past development on the other hand.

The first step to be taken should be making a unified SWOT analysis in both trans-border regions. The analysis should show their comparative advantages (preferences) and shortages both from the standpoint of the European Union level and that of global one. It should also suggest what infrastructure is missing and for which industrial activities and services the appropriate conditions should be created including conditions for the rise of clusters. Also formulation of the set of economic stimulations for putting into practice its conclusion should be another important output of the analysis.

A very complicated and time-consuming activity is at the stake. It is necessary for self-administration bodies, business people and universities officials from both part of the trans-border regions to take part in this activity. Particular projects of this SWOT analysis should be aided by grants not only at the regional (state) level but also at the European Union level.

It should be positively pointed out that the regional self-governments (Silesian voivodship and Moravian and Silesian region) are aware of the importance of such cooperation and concluded in 2001 an agreement on cooperation and on that occasion they specified, among others, the need of preparation of long-term strategy of development that would help in acquiring the means from the European Union funds.

We may not fully realize how important are for us the first years in the EU. This period will considerably influence the prospective role of our states in the EU as well as that of our regions. Especially in case the new constitution would be approved.

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