

VARIA

CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHICAL FIELD SURVEY ON THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

The Department of Geography, Masaryk University has worked out a number of geographical studies, which were used at Departments of Regional Development at Districts Authorities. Regional studies have been solved as a long-term ones (approximately for 5 years). Nowadays more and more Districts Authorities ask for partial regional analyses that are being used for documentation. It is caused by the fact that district authorities have not enough information concerning the process of transformation of the area. The need of the up-to-date information which can often be obtained only by means of questionnaires is getting to be more and more necessary. The most often demand for working out the study (usually a Program of economic and social development of a district) comes from the so-called problem districts which can obtain a financial support from the Ministry of Economy of the Czech Republic. The time period necessary for such a study is 6-12 months. To accept all the demands of Districts Authorities the Department of Geography decided to choose another approach which is in harmony with the curriculum. Field survey in social and human geography is used for collecting and processing of needed population and economical data (e.g. there is a 10 days field survey in the curriculum of 2nd year of the geographical studies).

The main reasons for extending and intensifying the field survey at the Department of Geography are:

- the necessity to study the present-day economic and social changes and their impact on population of different regions i.e. discovering of regional differentiation of the process of transformation
- orientation of the research on problems, when there are no useful statistic data for their solution.

In case there are some statistical data, they are published with delay and therefore they are not so valuable

The cooperation with Districts Authorities gives a wide range of advantages. The research is really focused on up-to-date problems of temporally state and possible future development of the studied areas. Districts Authorities partly cover expenses of the field research. During a preparation of the field survey the Department of Geography prefers combination of questionnaires and public inquiries. The questionnaires are sent beforehand to Districts Authorities, to agricultural and industrial institutions, to the authorities of the nonproductive sphere. The data from the questionnaires are being verified and completed in the course of the investigation by means of public inquiries made by students.

During the last three years there were organized field surveys at the area of Frýdek-Místek, Vsetín and Znojmo districts. Two mentioned districts are problem areas and the district of Frýdek-Místek belongs to possibly structurally afflicted areas.

The different initial economical level of the districts Frýdek-Místek, Vsetín and Znojmo affects considerably the course of restructuring of economy (Tables 1 and 2). The principal features of the transformation in the districts correspond with the development in the Czech Republic, nevertheless specific features of the districts are very important. The fact that the districts under investigation have many problems with the process of transformation may be proved even by the graph (Fig. 1.).

Within a framework of the field research of the Department of Geography a great attention is paid to the population. As we respect demands of the district authorities we are focused on chosen population groups. For instance, we carried out the study "Analysis and strategy of development of the care of the postproductive population" for the district of Vsetín. In the district of Znojmo a part of the research was devoted to the long-term unemployment.

A lot of interesting experiences were obtained during the research dealing with the expected contribution or fear of economical reform. Especially the younger population was more optimistic. Almost 10 % of population admitted that they might lose their jobs (in the first half of 1991). Nevertheless, in one year the fear of being dismissed from the work becomes predominant with the active population in the districts of Vsetín and Znojmo. One of the aims of our research was to find out the reactions of the population to possible dismissal from work and the solution of this situation. We were surprised that only a small part of the population of Znojmo would contact unemployment agency and the others would prefer to try to find jobs by themselves. People, having lost their jobs dislike very much changing their profession or even moving to other places to get new jobs. For example as we made a research within the border with Austria we can say that only 1/4 of the inquired persons is willing to go to work abroad.

The District Authorities are also interested in prognoses of the population development including its structure. The official prognosis of the Czech statistic agency do not include any new trends in the development of the Czech population as for example a decrease in general fertility. Untill now carried out studies have initiated the interest in the work of the Department of Geography also within Bohemian districts.

The research will be carried out also in the districts of Chrudim and Svitavy.

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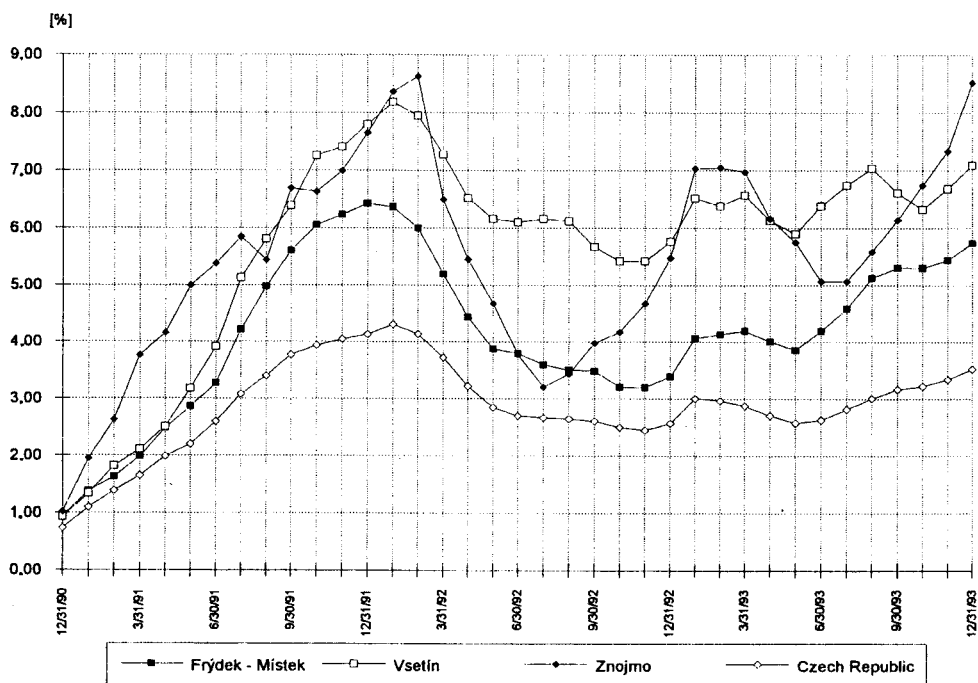


Fig. 1. Development of unemployment rate in districts Frýdek - Místek, Vsetín and Znojmo

Table 1. Basic indicators of population in districts Frýdek - Místek, Vsetín and Znojmo (as of March 3, 1991)

district	population	change 1981 - 1991 (%)			population of age (%)		urban population
		natural increase	net migration	total	0 - 14	60 and more	in %
Frýdek - Místek	227 523	2.5	0.7	3.2	24.4	16.8	61.9
Vsetín	146 898	3.2	-1.2	2.0	22.1	15.8	52.8
Znojmo	113 508	1.4	-4.0	-2.6	22.5	17.3	43.2
Czech Republic	10 302 215	0.6	0.2	0.8	21.0	17.8	69.6

Table 2. Basic indicators of economy in districts Frýdek - Místek, Vsetín and Znojmo (as of March 3, 1991)

district	agricultural areas ¹ (%)	goods production of industry ² (mill. CK)	numbers of workers				
			total	agriculture (%)	industry (%)	others (%)	net commuting
Frýdek - Místek	39.6	23 139.3	107 348	9.6	49.1	41.3	-6 720
Vsetín	35.7	8 940.3	74 837	12.4	46.7	40.9	-1 677
Znojmo	69.3	2 504.4	52 884	28.9	27.6	43.5	-4 353

¹ as of December 31, 1992² 1992

