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CONFERENCE "LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERIENCE FROM EU"

Conference "Local Development and Experience from EU" was taking place on May 18, 2004 in Košice at the Local Council in the frame of the project "European Policy on Sustainable Urban Development" prepared within the scheme of small Phare projects. The conference has been organised by the NGO "Centrum komunitného organizovania (CKO)" in close cooperation with the Central European Research and Training Centre in Spatial Planning (SPECTRA Centre) at the Faculty of Architecture Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava. The main objective of the project is to contribute to creation of favourable conditions for efficient and complex development of the cities and regions. The project is focused on the regions of Košice, Banská Bystrica and Nitra.

Sustainable urban development and functioning public administration are pressing issues in the old and new member states of European Union. Regional development is often perceived as the development of rural areas and subsidies for agriculture, nowadays nearly 80% of population are living in urban areas. And these areas are now also in the focus of attention and the themes of conferences, roundtable discussions and workshops. In the last decades the European cities and towns gave way to the economic growth, neglecting the social and environmental aspects of development. European Commission started to shift the attention on the issues of sustainable development of the cities and regions. Many of key European documents - e.g. Treaty on European Community (article 2, 6, 157 and 167), European Spatial Development Perspective and the 5th and 6th Environmental Action Plans as well as the 5th and 6th Framework Programmes for Research and Technology Development include a strong urban aspect.

In the 5th Framework Programme it was possible to tackle the urban issues within the Key Action "City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage". FA STU and SPECTRA Centre participates in five international projects of this kind:

- **ECOCITY - Urban Development towards Appropriate Structures for Sustainable Development, EVK4-CT-2001-00056**, (Case study from Slovakia: the city of Trnava)
- **LUDA - Improving the Quality of Life in Large Urban Distressed Areas EVK4-CT-2002-00081**, (Case study from Slovakia: Municipality of Bratislava-Rača, reference city - Trnava)
- **TRANSPLUS -TRANSport, Land Use and Sustainability, EVK4-CT-1999-00009**, (Case study from Slovakia - Bratislava, Motorway D1)
- **CABERNET - Concerted Action on Brownfield and Economic Regeneration Network, EVK4-CT-2001-2004**, (Case study from Slovakia: Bratislava - Rozadol)

- **SPECTRA -PERSEUS - Permanent Research in Spatial Development in the context of EU Enlargement and Information Society Advancement, EVK4-CT-2002-80006**,

In the 5th Framework Programme FA STU and SPECTRA Centre participates in:

- **INTELCITIES - Intelligent Cities, No. 507860** (Inteligentné mestá - reference city: Žiar nad Hronom), and on the project of initiative INTERREG III B - READY (Rehabilitation and Development of Mining Areas).

Experience from these projects has been in the focus of the paper of Assoc. Prof. D. Petříková, PhD., Prof. M. Finka, PhD. introduced the European Spatial Development Perspective and the models of local partnership and I. Belčáková, PhD. concentrated on strategic environmental assessment. Z. Hudeková, MSc. from the Regional Environmental Centre Bratislava (REC) explained the methodology of common European indicators of sustainability.

In Slovakia there are two significant processes taking place at the local level - the reform of public administration and changes related to the accession of Slovakia to the EU. The reform of public administration brought in new administrative division of the territory of our republic and at the same time it shifted the key competences to the local and regional governments. The process of decentralisation was overlapping with the process of European integration and their crossing affected the life of municipalities, regions and citizens. Currently at the level of public administration they go ahead in programming towards the development based on the principles of subsidiarity and towards using the EU structural funds. In preparation the projects for the EU structural funds, it is extremely important to understand the EU programming documents on relevant aspects of urban development (mainly balanced socio-economic, environmental and socio-cultural development). The projects from the EU structural funds is necessary to comprehend as the investment stimuli that have to be combined with local sources in a creative way in order to meet the development of modern European trend, particularly focused on sustainable development.

