

# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGIONAL DIVISION OF SLOVENIA

## REGIONALNI RAZVOJ V POKRAJINSKI ČLENITVI SLOVENIJE

Marjan Ravbar



Novo mesto – the most important industrial town of Southeastern Slovenia  
(photography Marjan Garbajs).

Novo mesto – najpomembnejše industrijsko središče jugovzhodne Slovenije  
(fotografija Marjan Garbajs).

## **Regional Development in the Regional Division of Slovenia**

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**ABSTRACT:** In the reform of the institutional system with the introduction of a second level of local self-government, factors of balanced regional development play an important role. These are linked to the suitable division of Slovenia into functionally rounded areas and the evaluation of variant divisions and the effects of the polycentric basis of the network of settlements and the decentralization of institutions. The size and geographical position of regions are of strategic importance for the country's regional and spatial planning policies.

**KEYWORDS:** regionalization, decentralization, regional development.

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## **Regionalni razvoj v pokrajinski členitvi Slovenije**

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**IZVLEČEK:** Pri reformi institucionalnega sistema z uvajanjem druge stopnje lokalne samouprave imajo pomembno vlogo tudi dejavniki skladnega regionalnega razvoja. Povezani so s pripravo ustrezne členitve Slovenije na funkcijsko zaokrožena območja, vrednotenjem variantnih členitev med učinki policentrične zasnove omrežja naselij in decentralizacije institucij. Velikost in obseg regij sta strateškega pomena za regionalno in prostorsko politiko države.

**KLJUČNE BESEDE:** regionalizacija, decentralizacija, regionalni razvoj.

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**ADDRESS – NASLOV:**

**Marjan Ravbar, Ph. D.**

Anton Melik Geographical Institute

Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Gosposka ulica 13

SI – 1000 Ljubljana

Slovenia

Phone – telefon: +386 (1) 200 27 23

Fax – faks: +386 (1) 425 77 93

E-mail – e-pošta: marjan.ravbar@zrc-sazu.si

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# 1 Introduction

In the anticipated reform of the political and institutional system with the introduction of a second level of local self-government, factors of balanced regional development play an important role. Their role is not just linked to the preparation of suitable divisions into appropriate functionally rounded areas since modern social opportunities demand the systematic evaluation of variant divisions from the viewpoint of causal connectedness of the formation of regions between regional development, the effects of the polycentric basis of the network of settlements, and the decentralization of (public) institutions.

The diversity of Slovene territory has resulted in numerous regionalizations, and their heterogeneity and historic conditions greatly complicate and burden this process. Considering the extraordinary regional (natural-geographical) and ecological mosaic, the dispersed settling pattern, and the loyalty of residents to microeconomic areas, it would be quite easy to distinguish a larger number of smaller regions. However, a larger number of regions would be too expensive for small Slovenia and its use of regional resources and European economic criteria for regional integration.

Each of the regional divisions that Slovenia experienced in the past is still reflected in its own way in the modern perception of the people. The division of the country from the »Austrian« period is still anchored, and even though long outlived, it still remains as a possible hidden basis for future regional divisions. We have long been familiar with later administrative divisions from the postwar period (for example, into district, commune, and planning regions and finally statistical or development regions) that have assumed certain administrative and other functions with adjustments of minor importance. With the developmental transformation of the country and the introduction of the lowest level of local self-government, new functions appeared, for example, in the sphere of public institutions. Furthermore, the gravitational areas of the cities as regional labour markets are changing.

Although discussions about regions have lasted for almost a decade, it is still not clear how many regions Slovenia should have or what size they should be. Regardless of its defects, the existing urban network with its functions will remain the framework for (future) regional organization, however it turns out. Deliberations so far regarding regions as intermediate administrative and self-government units between the municipalities and the national government have indicated perceptible conflict relative to the size, role, and functions of future regions<sup>1</sup>. To simplify, proposals between two extremes have appeared, that is, between so-called »large« and »small« regions. This is not an easy decision since both of the possible extreme variants have their advantages and disadvantages.

The advantages of a smaller number of larger regions include the larger population and greater economic power of the regions and the ability to form economic associations as a basis for the development of regional awareness on economic grounds, better possibilities for implementing a common regional development policy, a greater possibility of advancing regional and spatial planning, easier execution of ecological and environmental protection measures, better possibilities for investments in modern infrastructure, a relatively small number of national administrative units, the easier coordination of the territorial organization of various national services and the correspondingly lower administrative costs, a larger number of users of public functions, the abolishment of small localisms, and finally, comparability with neighbouring regions (Ravbar 1999).

On the other hand, however, there are advantages in a larger number of smaller regions: better adaptability to local and microregional needs and interests of the population, better connection of the territory and frequently rounded natural units, and the introduction of a larger number of administrative centers offering better supply and greater possibilities for employment. Within smaller regions it is also easier to develop the sense of common allegiance. However, numerous reasons, mostly connected with economic power, oppose this course. Smaller regions are economically weaker and therefore more economically

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<sup>1</sup> Here we should point out that in the countries of the European Union, an average region on the level of NUTS 3 has 410,000 residents and measures 5,400 km<sup>2</sup>.

vulnerable, they require more expensive and more numerous administration, and it is also more difficult for them undertake spatial planning and improve their infrastructure. Major differences between individual regions would appear in the level of development, and relative to size structure, the level of development of individual regional centers also presents a problem.

Whatever the political decision may be, regions in any case will have to originate from the fundamental geographical features of Slovenia, that is, its natural, geographical, and sociogeographical diversity and its already formed hierarchy of supply centers. It will be necessary to devote great attention to the regional awareness of the population since ignoring this factor can cause numerous problems.

To rationalize the functioning of the state, it is therefore necessary to define the space that defines the territory of the regions. Defining the size and extent of regions is usually based on historic, natural and geographical, administrative, economic, and functional forms, on homogeneity and the gravitational affiliation of areas, the size of settlement structure joined into a network of settlements, and other economic activities. The formation especially depends on the size and geographical position of the area, which are of strategic importance for the country's regional and spatial planning policies. In addition, the formation also depends on the socioeconomic situation, on accessibility to the urban centers that in the hierarchy of towns and cities have »won« the role of development generators, mostly in the sphere of the formation of (public) institutions, employment, business and supply functions, and political-administrative factors.

## **2 Regionalization in the role of accelerating regional development**

Modern concepts of the formation of »regions« as autonomous political and/or administrative units have their origins in Slovenia in the scheme of polycentric development, while in Europe they are linked with the gradual formation of structural and cohesive funds. These two comparable concepts are a good thirty years old. In many ways, they are connected with deviations from the traditional view of the formation of regions as lower, direct levels of the state with political representation through elected representatives. The new ideas derive more from the introduction of the idea that legally established territorial communities should manage their social development themselves and to a great extent develop using their own development potentials. These ideas were never fully implemented. Decentralization is a process whereby, to the greatest extent possible, the state transfers some of its functions to lower organs. These organs are of course connected with the state center, but they are relatively independent in making and implementing decisions. Decentralization therefore means a transfer of the power of decision-making, responsibility, and the control of financial and human resources from the national level to lower levels or legally established sociopolitical communities that are closer to the citizens. This involves the activities of public institutions that the state legally transfers to the original competence of regional communities along with guaranteeing them the means and control over their execution.

For this reason, the reform of regional self-government and the regional policy of creating uniform areas based on »cohesion« principles connect them even more firmly on a more or less institutional level. Implementing a common regional policy devoted to preventing regional disparities places the role of regions and their institutions on an equal footing with the national institutions, which are thus freed of control over the implementation of regional policy.

The need to establish regions is indicated in the implementation of common policies. Among them, development policy plays the decisive role and through subsidiary and partnership transforms the policy for regions to the policy of regions. In addition, in modern society, the need is growing for complex technical, cultural, and administrative services, which include the maintenance of an innovative social infrastructure for the formation of so-called »learning« regions. The network foundation of social relationships demands a close connection between economic interests and other groups of common tasks on the supra-local level. In these conditions, the creation of optimally-sized regions linked with »inter-

nal« organization is of key importance and has intensively occupied the political and professional public since Slovenia's independence. The formation of regions is promoted in particular by:

- a) competition and the competitiveness in European integrations that force local communities into joint cooperation. In addition, numerous common tasks demand the intensification of inter-municipal cooperation, which small local communities cannot cope with to a satisfactory degree;
- b) regionalism and regional identity are acquiring importance as a motivating element for self-help. This is compatible with the concept of spatial and regional policy and the strengthening of endogenous potentials, where regional actors play an important role.

The integration of Slovenia into the European Union remains an impulse – motivation – for regionalization, which is certainly in the national interest since the presence of powerful urban centers in the immediate vicinity (for example, Trieste, Gorizia, Graz, Klagenfurt, ...) can weaken efforts toward coherent regional development. The existence of regions and powerful urban centers in the border areas is a decisive factor for balancing the gravitational attraction of large neighbouring cities that are historically, traditionally, economically, geographically linked with the lives of Slovenes on both sides of the political borders. The increasing importance of regional and spatial factors as endogenous development factors is generally acknowledged today. However, the driving force in regional development can be established on different levels, which is shown by the example of the new instruments of economic development employed in depressed industrial areas such as Zasavje and Mežiška dolina that are transforming them into development centers of national importance. There are no a priori reasons that functional spatial units should not be congruent with administrative formations. It is more important to ensure that the so-far undetermined centers of national importance create conditions for a more successful regional policy on the supra-local level than they have done so far. Optimizing the size of the regions is less important.

Regionalization linked to the decentralization of institutions must be defined as a process whose goal is the introduction of autonomous executive authorities of regions as a condition for the simultaneous growth of creativity of sub-national but supra-local significance. Usually, this is triggered by economic restructuring for increasing regional identity and solidarity. However, it requires the political will as well as starting points for developing regional potentials: already existing development institutions and/or new institutions that will encourage further development. Last but not least, the mobility of institutions also plays an important role in the elimination of regional disparities. To a certain extent, regionalization is a part of a movement that is focused on providing the simpler management of local matters and simultaneously is a motive or developmental drive in (as a rule, less developed) areas. It is reflected in the changing functions of existing middle-level institutions. If we consider these functions as a connecting link of the state administration in the form of specific institutions, they are justifiable. The corresponding regionalization of institutional takeovers is connected with the support to the areas in question and their own interests, first of all, of course, to socioeconomic interests, but always in the context of the cultural and national economy perspective.

### **3 Factors of regional development in the function of regional division**

Regional differences in Slovenia are the reflection of physical geographical, transportation, historical, economic, and administrative-political conditions and are reflected in differing uses of human resources, lifestyles, and employment. The unequal economic distribution and the nature of these conditions are reflected in the differing population density and the social situation of the population, in the structure of labour force, and in the level of development of the infrastructure. The attractiveness of a region and its situation in the framework of national economy are based on these factors. The inequality of living conditions and the desire for the economic integration of the entire national territory dictates the formation of policies that will provide comparable living conditions and employment for all citizens. Under the influence of market forces, industrial, commercial, banking, insurance, and other economic activities and the corresponding creative milieu and educational, cultural, and other social infrastructures gravitate to the more developed areas. While the original concentration of production forces was the consequence

of classical location advantages (raw materials, energy resources, transportation means), the modern concentration is based on an educated labour force, developed communications, research and development work, and everything that gives the geographical environment a »friendly« character. Regional disparities result in the interregional migration of the labour force since mostly the younger and more educated labour force moves away from less developed areas. Interregional differences in the structure of the production, per capita income, the level of employment, and the mobility and age structure of the population are the principal reasons for the occurrence of problem areas. Among them are predominantly agrarian areas, areas with technologically backward industries – which, as a rule, are also environmentally degraded – and a high level of unemployment, and less accessible and border regions.

By definition, regional policy is a fundamental tool for the long-term and coordinated management of spatial and regional development and connotes an achieved level of agreement on fundamental problems and goals for directing regional development on the national, regional, and municipal levels with the consideration of current European connections. Regional and spatial development policies form the framework for endeavours toward market-economy efficiency, social justice, and the ecological acceptability of development and must take the legal order of the country, the cultural independence of the nation, and the vital interests of all citizens into consideration. By accelerating regional development, we are trying to eliminate or at least mitigate the consequences of the market economy that create regional disparities and because of which some parts enjoy advantages while others are neglected and their development stagnates and even regresses<sup>2</sup>. The causes for these trends are various: historical development, attractiveness for investment, the transportation situation, border locations, the introduction of innovations (particularly technical and technological innovations), social conditions, the self-generating accumulation of advantages brought on by major investments at specific locations, and the social and psychological readiness for the introduction of innovations and the achievement of progress. Regional disparities often result in discrimination against individual areas, the ultimate consequences of which are detrimental to the entire social community. They also cause political problems that progressive societies attempt to avoid through a deliberate development policy that asserts the accepted social principle of »equal opportunity regardless of place of residence.« Experience shows, however, that the elimination of regional development differences is a difficult, expensive, and slow process, and it is not possible to expect rapid and brilliant success. For this reason it is necessary to continuously evaluate the success of development policy to identify further regional development movements and problems and to determine how to continue.

The initial period of introducing regional policy after World War II was based on classical principles of state intervention. This regional policy was oriented toward eliminating imbalances through investment subsidies, the creation of new jobs in industry for the (largely unskilled) labour force, and the modernization of the infrastructure system. For this purpose, instruments were created that included financial support for industrial companies, loans with subsidized interest rates, relief from taxes and social welfare contributions, investments in the infrastructure, subsidizing of transport expenses, and so forth. Problem areas were defined with the help of selected uniform indicators. Initially, this policy appeared successful. Although the differences between countries were considerable, the basic approach was similar everywhere.

The economic crisis at the end of the 1980's and the simultaneous breakthrough of new information technologies brought new changes in the structure of regions. Many previously stable regions such as Podravje, Zasavje, Savinjska, and Koroška experienced a crisis, while many »marginal« regions such as Goriška exploited their geostrategic situations and acquired new importance. However, border areas along the current »Schengen« border remain a special development problem.

Classical research, which previously pointed to the importance of a region's infrastructure and analyzed the economic structure, the offer of service activities, the presence of highly productive activities, traffic connections, etc., is being replaced by new views regarding the evaluation of the relationships within a regional community. That is why the expression »creative milieu,« a synonym for the intensive linking of

<sup>2</sup> In many places, these are small and rounded areas that are significantly marked by natural geographical features and their »reflection« in sociogeographical conditions.

scientific-technological centers with other economic networks, is used in numerous studies and has important spatial implications on the regional level. In a way, this is a new and unique view, but the modern interpretation of the contents of regional planning has adapted to it. The table below presents a survey of the principal differences in the content of approaches in regional planning.

Table 1: Changing paradigms of regional policy past and present<sup>3</sup>.

Characteristics	Classical	Modern
Theoretical bases: <i>fulcrums</i>	Location theory: key factor of development are production costs and the availability of a labour force Location factors: immediate proximity of raw materials, markets and suppliers, creation of new jobs (diversification)	Theories of learning regions: key factors are the creation of added value, a creative milieu, decentralization of production (growth of industrial »clusters«), increase of costs in centers, old industries move to areas with lower costs, specialization of new production, presence of research instruments; respect for sustainable development
Regional policy <i>characteristics</i>	Problem areas: mountain, karst, border areas Reduction of regional disparities: equality development of all regions	All regions: a reference framework for program and project among regions Balanced competitiveness among regions with the help of innovations
Intention <i>Equality and efficiency</i>	Upgrading of infrastructure system and individual industrial plants	Promotion of innovation processes (for example, »clustering«), inter-sector coordination
Goal	New jobs, new investments	Improved competitiveness (entrepreneurship, innovations, knowledge)
Analytical base	Indicators of level of development	SWOT analyses of regions, regional »foresight«
Key activities	Help for companies, hard infrastructure	Development program, business environment, soft infrastructure
Organization of defining of policies	Development impulses: centralized (top-down)	Collective, partnership: bottom-up; entrepreneurial, innovative ...
Key institution	Central authorities	Decentralization, transfer to regional level, renewed role of regional planning, emphasis on quality of life
Partners	None	Strengthening of research on the regional level (»private-public-academic partnership«), local associations, non-governmental organizations, social partners ...
Administration	simple/rational: promotion and cofinancing of development concepts, verification and cofinancing of individual projects	Complex/developmental: promotion of »clusters« and network projects, support for »pilot« and innovative projects on the basis of previously established rules, monitoring and evaluation
Selection of projects	Internal	Participative
Time frame	»Five-year« plans	Multi-year development perspective (six years)
Evaluation	concluding (ex-post)	Preliminary, intermediate, final
Results:	Difficult to measure, especially in the short term	Measurable

Changes in regional policy in recent years include the following:

- Traditional approaches to spatial and regional policy based on the stimulation of certain problem areas have lost their importance. The competitiveness of cities and city regions is in the foreground. This approach is based on the stimulation of endogenous factors and competitiveness, and the stimulation of development in individual regions is adapted to characteristics of the regions themselves. This approach characterizes Austria, Finland, Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, Norway, France, and to some extent Ireland.
- Due to the changed philosophy, partnership is strengthened so that the roles of regional and local authorities and of the private sector are increased. This requires the comprehensive coordination of sector policies and the coordination of individual levels (European Union, national, regional, local).

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Neue Regionalpolitik, Schlussbericht, 2001 and Bachtler John, Yuill Douglas, 2001. p. 12



- The reforms of spatial planning and regional planning are directly linked to the reform of local self-government (as in Great Britain, Sweden, Finland, Norway)<sup>4</sup>. Often, both aspects are within the jurisdiction of one of the ministries or services (for example, in Finland and Great Britain), and frequently the authority and means to stimulate development are transferred to the middle level.
- Trends toward linking regional development and spatial planning are characteristic. Due to the stimulation of development in an entire territory (even though problem areas still exist in the majority of countries despite more abundant state assistance), the implementation of spatial and regional policies has become more complicated. The new approach requires more coordination and therefore special coordination mechanisms have been established in various countries (government representatives in regions, regional advisory committees, etc.).

In implementing regional policy, countries encounter various challenges: difficulty in coordinating sector policies, tensions between individual levels, the advancement of smaller functional regions (Sweden, France, partly Finland) that does not hinder activities in pursuing the goals of regional policies in the national framework and in the European Union.

Development is increasingly based on strategic planning, which in the European Union was additionally helped by the reform of structural funds. Thus today we see regional policies based on creating wealth and no longer based on the redistribution of means. Regions are becoming the framework of national competitiveness, where the role of cities as development generators is decisive. Even though the regional level is gaining importance, the central authority still has a vital role in the preparation and coordination of regional policies.

Among the members of the European Union, trends toward the uniformity of approaches of stimulating regional policies are evident. In spite of this, differences still exist as the consequence of institutional differences, history, regional differences, and the administrative and legal systems in individual countries. According to principles of stimulation, they can be classified into four groups:

- »cohesion« countries (Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain): their main goal of development is on the national level, although the regional level is also important and gaining importance. This group includes the majority of the least developed regions of the European Union;
- Germany and Italy: from the development viewpoint, these are »dual« countries (north-south development gap in Italy, west-east gap in Germany) where regional policy is focused on the less developed part; however, both countries also apply a regional policy in the developed part of the country (structural adjustment);
- Western Europe (Benelux, Denmark, France, Great Britain, and also Austria): regional problems in these countries are not of major concern, although they are important from the viewpoint of structural adjustment and the level of unemployment. Here, regional policy in itself is not the decisive factor, but in spite of this, all these countries set regional competitiveness as one of the fundamental national goals;
- Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden): regional problems are connected with sparse settling, and in the case of Finland also with a high level of unemployment in the areas of sparse settling.

In the modern paradigm of regional development, two opposing processes occur simultaneously: »globalization« as the reflection of the international intertwinement of economic and political currents versus »small« local and/or regional political interests whose goals are based on balanced or self-supporting regional development, local economies, balanced circulation of production and raw materials, and the linkage of the national network of centers into a uniform network of urban systems. Production activities have an increasingly supranational character due to advancing globalization. They usually only express their desire for new building sites. Decisions linked with socioeconomic sphere, where the decisive role is played by qualification and educational level of the labour force which increase the possibilities of being included in innovative economic currents, are less important because regional identity and sociocultural creativity determined »from the inside« are undoubtedly the strongest arguments for the content (re)formation of development planning. New innovative technologies are gradually penetrating the network organization

<sup>4</sup> Precisely what is not the case in Slovenia!

concepts in all social sectors. The changes encompassed not only production but also the social, cultural, and political spheres. The structural transformation is also reflected in space.

Successful regional development no longer depends to such a degree on technical innovations and the creative milieu, as many authors asserted only recently, but in many ways is connected with the creation and advancement of certain organizational forms of decentralized democratization. With the introduction of regionalization, modern development policy institutions devoted to regional development have acquired a decisive lever directed against the centralization of the country. The regionalization of the country with the help of the decentralization of institutions operates as an impulse – motivation – and the central fulcrum for harmonious social development.

## 4 Conclusion

The reform of local self-government stimulated the establishment of numerous new municipalities. This was a reflection of the desire of the local population to contribute to development; however, in many cases they became caught in their own trap. Economically weak municipalities cannot assemble sufficient financial means to support local development. They also lack qualified staff and are especially affected by the absence of coordination at the regional level. While the situation in the sphere of regional development in the 1970's and 1980's was marked by conflicts of interest between various supporters of development due to the lack of capital, a qualified labour force, and a suitable infrastructure, from the 1990's on, the absence of cooperation or any common administrative network linking development centers became increasingly obvious. In these circumstances, the absence of institutions on the regional level is particularly significant. In contrast to the desired three-level territorial division in which regions would be a connecting link, the gap between the state and the local communities is increasing in Slovenia. Noticeable centralization tendencies are encroaching on (possibly too narrow) local interests, which in most cases hurts everyone, the state as much as the municipalities.

Surrendering development to the current tendencies will lead to multi-level development. According to predictions, only the metropolitan Ljubljana region, which has long been Slovenia's leading development generator, will be successful at »catching up« with globalization currents. According to these forecasts, a development axis will form on the basis of inter-city cooperation and the strategic orientations of the three university centers – Ljubljana, Maribor, Koper/Nova Gorica – that will reciprocally link places between Koper or Nova Gorica, Ljubljana, and Maribor (along the 5<sup>th</sup> traffic corridor). The active inclusion of other centers in globalization currents will only be possible through close links to Ljubljana – or to centers outside the Republic of Slovenia! Other areas will be subject to stagnation and gradual degradation and will only compete with individual employment centers. In our opinion, this scenario is very unfavourable for Slovenia and would slow down harmonious regional development, even though it does represent a basis for the spatial dispersion of activities that is supported by the desire to have a residence in a more relaxing and less polluted environment. However, the consequences of such a policy would include even greater daily commuting, the overburdening of the transportation infrastructure, and the irrational use of energy resources.

A counterbalance to the existing tendencies lies in the more consistent implementation of three decades of effort to advance the polycentric system of a network of settlements. This approach advocates a double strategy for avoiding undesirable urban concentrations and urban sprawl:

- a) preserving and increasing the number of highly specialized jobs in centers of national importance means interweaving the spectrum of economic activities with centers of lower or regional importance and with partner cities throughout the world. In this case, the creation of an intercity network between neighbouring and more distant cities of similar size is decisive;
- b) establishing and strengthening economic cooperation between cities and their hinterlands, which is mutually beneficial due to the complementing of functions.

Modern socioeconomic processes also counter the implementation of a centralized urban network of settlements. The origins of urban regions offer various development challenges that are the consequence of

different forms and development levels of urbanization that interact in a complementary fashion. Therefore the model of a »shallow« and decentralized network of satellite cities within functionally and gravitationally linked urban regions based on modern principles of the network linking of developmental poles (or dispersed development poles at infrastructural nodes) is more realistic for Slovenia and more congruent with modern trends of socioeconomic and demographic development. From the national viewpoint, it is important for balanced regional development that economic development increases the attractiveness of an entire region and with this improves the quality of life. Furthermore, in spite of the heterogeneity of regions and their size, it is necessary to strive for a decentralized scheme of a network of cities whose activity structure will be mutually complementary.

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# 1 Uvod

Pri pričakovani reformi politično institucionalnega sistema z uvajanjem druge stopnje lokalne samouprave imajo pomembno vlogo tudi dejavniki skladnega regionalnega razvoja. Njihova vloga ni zgolj povezana s pripravo členitve na ustrezna funkcijsko zaokrožena območja, marveč sodobne družbene prilike od njih zahtevajo sistematično vrednotenje variantnih členitev z vidika vzročne povezanosti oblikovanja pokrajin med regionalnim razvojem, učinki policentrične zasnove omrežja naselij in decentralizacije (javnih institucij).

Pestrost slovenskega ozemlja je vzrok številnim regionalizacijam in prav heterogenost in historične prilike jih še močno zapletajo in otežujejo. Ob upoštevanju izredne pokrajinske (naravnogeografske) in ekološke mozaičnosti, razpršenega poselitvenega vzorca ter pripadnosti prebivalcev v okvirih mikroekonomskih območij, bi bilo lažje izdvojiti večje število manjših regij. Veliko število regij pa bi bilo za majhno Slovenijo ter izrabo regionalnih virov in evropske gospodarske kriterije regionalnega povezovanja predrago.

Pokrajinske členitve, ki jih je Slovenija v preteklosti doživela, se vsaka zase na svojstven način še vedno odražajo v sodobni zavesti ljudi. Delitev na dežele iz Avstro-Ogrskega obdobja je še vedno zasidrana, in čeprav je že zdavnaj preživeta, je kljub temu še vedno možna prikrita podlaga bodoče pokrajinske členitve. Tudi poznejše administrativne delitve (npr. na okraje, pa komune in planske ter nazadnje statistične oz. razvojne regije) prevzemanja določenih upravnih in drugih funkcij, poznamo, ob manj pomembnih prilagoditvah, že dalj časa v obdobju po 2. svetovni vojni. Z razvojno preobrazbo države in uveljavitvijo najnižje ravni lokalne samouprave se pojavljajo še nove funkcije (npr. na področju javnih institucij). Spreminjajo se tudi gravitacijska območja mest kot regionalnih trgov delovne sile.

Kljub temu, da razprava o pokrajinah poteka že skoraj desetletje, še vedno ni jasno, koliko jih naj bi Slovenija imela in kakšna naj bo njihova velikost. Ne glede na pomanjkljivosti, bo obstoječe urbano omrežje s svojimi funkcijami pomenilo ogrodje (bodoče) regionalne organiziranosti (pa kakršna koli pač bo). Dosedanja razglabljanja o pokrajinah kot vmesnih upravnih in samoupravnih enotah med občinami in državami so pokazala zaznaven antagonizem med velikostjo, vlogo in funkcijo bodočih pokrajin<sup>1</sup>. Če poenostavimo, se pojavljajo predlogi med dvema skrajnostima: med t. i. »velikimi« in »majhnimi« regijami. Odločitev je težka, saj imata obe možni skrajni različici svoje prednosti in pomanjkljivosti.

Prednosti manjšega števila večjih pokrajin so večja populacijska in ekonomska moč regije ter sposobnost oblikovanja gospodarskih združenj kot podlage za razvijanje regionalne zavesti na ekonomskih temeljih, večje možnosti za izvajanje skupne regionalne razvojne politike, za uveljavitev regionalnega in prostorskega planiranja, lažje izvajanje ekoloških sanacij in varovanje okolja, večje možnosti sodobnih infrastrukturnih vlaganj, relativno manj številni državni aparat, lažja uskladitev teritorialne organiziranosti različnih državnih služb in s tem cenejša uprava, večje število uporabnikov javnih funkcij, preprečevanje drobnih lokalizmov in končno, primerljivost s sosesčino (Ravbar 1999).

Na drugi strani pa so prednosti večjega števila manjših pokrajin večja prilagoditev lokalnim in mikroregionalnim potrebam in interesom prebivalstva, večja povezanost ozemlja in pogosta naravna zaokroženost, uveljavitev večjega števila upravnih središč in s tem povezane boljše oskrbe ter večje možnosti zaposlovanja. Prav tako se znotraj majhnih pokrajin lažje razvije občutek skupne pripadnosti. Vendar pa nasproti tem stojijo številni, predvsem z gospodarsko močjo povezani razlogi. Majhne pokrajine so namreč ekonomsko šibkejšje in zato z gospodarskega vidika ranljivejše, imajo dražjo in številčnejšo upravo, prav tako pa tudi težje načrtujejo posege v prostoru ter infrastrukturno oskrbo. Med posameznimi pokrajinami bi prihajalo do velikih razlik v stopnji razvitosti, glede velikostne sestave je problematična tudi raven razvitosti posameznih regionalnih centrov.

Kakršna koli bo že politična odločitev, v vsakem primeru bodo pokrajine morale izhajati iz temeljnih geografskih potez Slovenije, to je njene naravno- in družbenogeografske pestrosti ter že izoblikovane hierarhije

<sup>1</sup> Pri tem velja opozoriti, da v deželah EZ šteje povprečna pokrajina na ravni NUTS 3 410 tisoč prebivalcev in meri 5400 km<sup>2</sup>.

oskrbnih centrov. Velik poudarek bo potrebno nameniti tudi regionalni zavesti prebivalstva, saj lahko le-ta ob njenem neupoštevanju povzroča številne probleme.

Za racionalnejše funkcioniranje države je torej potrebno opredeliti prostor, ki določa območje pokrajine. Določanje velikosti in obsega pokrajin običajno temelji na historičnih, naravnogeografskih, administrativnih, ekonomskih in funkcijskih oblikah, na homogenosti in gravitacijski pripadnosti območij ter velikosti naselbinske strukture, povezane v omrežje naselij in drugih gospodarskih aktivnosti. Oblikovanje je zlasti odvisno od velikosti in geografskega položaja območja, ki sta strateškega pomena za regionalno in prostorsko politiko države. Poleg tega pa še od socialno-ekonomskih prilik, od dostopnosti do tistih urbanih središč, ki so si v hierarhiji mest »priborile« vlogo razvojnih generatorjev, predvsem na področju oblikovanja (javnih) institucij, zaposlovanja, poslovno-oskrbnih funkcij in od politično-administrativnih dejavnikov.

## 2 Regionalizacija v vlogi pospeševanja regionalnega razvoja

Sodobni koncepti oblikovanja »pokrajin«, kot avtonomnih političnih in/ali administrativnih tvorb, imajo v Sloveniji svoje zametke v zasnovi policentričnega razvoja, v Evropi pa so povezane s postopnim oblikovanjem strukturnih in kohezijskih skladov. Oba primerljiva koncepta sta stara dobrih trideset let. V marsičem sta povezana z odstopanjem od tradicionalnih pogledov na oblikovanje pokrajin kot nižje neposredne ravni države s politično reprezentativnostjo, ki je izražena z voljenimi predstavniki. Nove ideje bolj izhajajo iz uveljavljanja zamisli, da javnopravne teritorialne skupnosti same uravnavajo družbeni razvoj in ga razvijajo v pretežni meri z lastnimi razvojnimi potenciali. Te zamisli nikoli niso bile izpeljane do konca. Kajti decentralizacija je proces, kjer država v kar največji možni meri del svojih funkcij prenese na nižje organe, ki so z državnim središčem sicer povezani, vendar pri odločanju in izvrševanju relativno samostojni. Pomeni torej prenos moči odločanja, odgovornosti in kontrole finančnih in človeških virov iz državne na nižje ravni oz. javnopravne družbenopolitične skupnosti, ki so občanom bližje. Gre za dejavnosti javnih institucij, ki jih država z zakonom prenese v izvirno pristojnost regionalnim skupnostim, s tem da jim zagotovi sredstva in nadzor nad izvajanjem.

Prav zato lahko reforma regionalne samouprave in regionalne politike oblikovanja enotnih območij, temelječih na »kohezijskih« principih, le še trdneje povežeta na bolj ali manj institucionalno raven. Vodenje skupne regionalne politike, namenjene preprečevanju regionalnih nesorazmerij postavlja vlogo pokrajin in njenih institucij v enakovreden položaj z državnimi institucijami, ki so potemtakem osvobodjene kontrole nad izvajanjem regionalne politike.

Potreba po ustanovitvi pokrajin se kaže pri izvajanju skupnih politik. Med njimi je odločilna razvojna politika, ki se je s subsidiarnostjo in partnerstvom preobrazila iz politike za regije v politiko regij. Poleg tega v moderni družbi naraščajo potrebe po kompleksnih tehničnih, kulturnih in upravnih storitvah, kar vključuje vzdrževanje inovativne družbene infrastrukture za oblikovanje t. i. »učeeh« se regij. Mrežna zasnova družbenih odnosov pogojuje tesno povezanost gospodarskih interesov in drugih skupnih nalog na nadlokalni ravni. V teh pogojih je oblikovanje optimalne regionalne velikosti, povezane z »notranjo« organiziranostjo ključnega pomena in intenzivno zaposluje politično in strokovno javnost že od osamosvojitve dalje. Oblikovanje pokrajin pospešujeta zlasti:

- a) Konkurenca in tekmovalnost v evropskih integracijah, ki lokalne skupnosti silijo k skupnemu sodelovanju. Poleg tega številne skupne naloge zahtevajo intenziviranje medobčinskega sodelovanja, ki jim drobne lokalne skupnosti niso v zadovoljivi meri kos.
- b) Regionalizem in regionalna identiteta pridobivata na pomenu kot motivacijska sestavina za samopomoč. To je združljivo s konceptom prostorske in regionalne politike in krepitev endogenih potencialov, pri čemer imajo regionalni akterji pomembno vlogo.

Integracija Slovenije z EZ pa je vendarle impulz – motivacija – za regionalizacijo, ki je vsekakor v nacionalnem interesu, saj močna urbana središča v neposredni soseščini (npr. Trst, Gorica, Gradec, Celovec) lahko dezintegrirajo težnje po skladnem regionalnem razvoju. Obstoj pokrajin in močnih urbanih središč na obmejnih območjih je odločujoči dejavnik za uravnavanje gravitacijske privlačnosti velikih sosednjih

mest, ki so historično, tradicionalno in ekonomsko-geografsko povezana s slovenskim življem to- in onstran politične meje. Naraščajoči pomen regionalnih in prostorskih značilnosti kot endogenih razvojnih dejavnikov je danes razpoznan. Vendar je gonilno silo v regionalnem razvoju moč vzpostaviti na različnih ravneh, kar kaže primer novih instrumentov gospodarskega razvoja, uporabljenih na depresivnih industrijskih območjih (npr. Zasavje, Mežiška dolina), ki se sublimirajo v razvojnih središčih nacionalnega pomena. Nobenih »a priori« razlogov ni, da se funkcionalne prostorske enote ne bi skladale z upravnimi tvorbami. Pomembnejše bi bilo zagotoviti, da doslej sicer še nedorečena središča nacionalnega pomena ustvarjajo pogoje za uspešnejšo regionalno politiko na nad-lokalni ravni, kot so jo doslej. Optimiranje velikosti regij je manj pomembno.

Regionalizacijo, povezano z decentralizacijo institucij, je treba definirati kot proces, čigar cilj je uveljavitev avtonomne izvršilne oblasti pokrajin kot pogoja za hkraten razmah ustvarjalnosti sub-nacionalnega, vendar nad-lokalnega pomena. Običajno jo sproži gospodarsko prestrukturiranje za razmah regionalne identitete in solidarnosti. Za to pa je potrebna politična volja in izhodiščni regionalni razvojni potenciali: že obstoječe razvojne institucije ali/in nove za nov razvojnih razmah. Nenazadnje, pri odpravljanju regionalnih disparitet je pomembna tudi mobilnost institucij. V določeni meri je regionalizacija del gibanja s težiščem, ki zagovarja enostavnejše upravljanje lokalnih zadev in je hkrati motiv – razvojno gibalno (v praviloma manj razvitih) območjih. Izraža se s spreminjanjem funkcij obstoječih institucij na srednji ravni. Če te funkcije smatramo kot vezni člen državne uprave v obliki specifičnih institucij, potem so le-te upravičene. Ustrezna regionalizacija institucionalnih prevzemov je povezana s podporo dotičnemu območju in njihovim lastnim interesom, najprej seveda socialnoekonomskim, toda vedno v kontekstu kulturne in narodnogospodarske perspektive.

### 3 Dejavniki regionalnega razvoja v funkciji pokrajinske členitve

Regionalne razlike v Sloveniji so odsev naravno naravno- in prometno-geografskih, historičnih, ekonomskih, ekoloških in upravno-političnih pogojev ter odsevajo različno izrabo človeških virov, način življenja in dela. Neenakomerna gospodarska razporeditev in narava pogojev se odraža v različni gostoti in socialnem položaju prebivalstva, v strukturi delovne sile ter infrastrukturni opremljenosti. Na tej podlagi temelji privlačnost regije in njen položaj v okviru narodnega gospodarstva. Neizenačenost življenjskih pogojev in želja po gospodarskem integriranju celotnega državnega teritorija narekuje oblikovanje takšnih politik, ki naj bi prebivalcem omogočile primerljive razmere za življenje in delo. Pod vplivom tržnih sil se namreč industrijske, trgovske, bančne, zavarovalniške in druge gospodarske dejavnosti, s tem pa tudi ustvarjalno okolje, izobraževanje in kultura ter preostala družbena infrastruktura kopičijo v razvitejših okoljih. Medtem ko je bila prvotna koncentracija proizvodnih sil posledica klasičnih lokacijskih prednosti (surovine, energetski viri, prometni položaj), sloni sodobna koncentracija na izobraženi delovni sili, razvitih komunikacijah, razvojno-raziskovalnem delu ter vsem, kar daje geografskemu okolju »prijazen« značaj. Regionalne disparitete povzročajo medregionalne migracije delovne sile, saj se predvsem mlajša in izobražena delovna sila seli iz manj razvitih območij. Medregionalne razlike v sestavi proizvodnje, višini dohodka na prebivalca, stopnji zaposlenosti, mobilnosti in starostni strukturi prebivalstva so poglaviti razlog za nastanek problemskih območij. Mednje uvrščamo pretežno agrarna območja, območja s tehnološko zastalo industrijo (ki so praviloma tudi z okoljskega vidika degradirana) in visoko stopnjo brezposelnosti ter težje dostopne in obmejne regije.

Regionalna politika je, po svojem namenu, temeljno orodje za dolgoročno in usklajeno usmerjanje prostorskega in regionalnega razvoja ter pomeni doseženo stopnjo soglasja o temeljnih problemih in ciljih usmerjanja regionalnega razvoja na državni, pokrajinski in občinskih ravneh z upoštevanjem aktualnih evropskih povezav. Regionalna in prostorska politika tvorita okvir prizadevanjem za tržno gospodarsko učinkovitost, socialno pravičnost in ekološko sprejemljivost razvoja, ki morajo spoštovati pravni red države, kulturno samobitnost naroda in življenjske interese vseh državljanov. S pospeševanjem regionalnega razvoja skušamo odpraviti ali vsaj ublažiti posledice tržnega gospodarstva, ki povzročajo regionalne razlike med različnimi območji in zaradi katerih nekateri deli uživajo prednosti, drugi pa so zapostavljeni

in njihov razvoj stagnira ali celo nazaduje<sup>2</sup>. Vzroki za ta gibanja so različni: zgodovinski razvoj, privlačnost za naložbe, prometni položaj, obmejna lega, uvajanje inovacij (zlasti tehniških in tehnoloških), socialne razmere, samogibno kopičenje prednosti, ki jih prinašajo velike naložbe na določeni lokaciji, pa tudi družbena psihološka naravnost za uvajanje novosti in dosego napredka. Regionalne razlike torej ustvarjajo neutemeljeno razlikovanje med posameznimi območji, ki gre v končnih posledicah na škodo celotne družbene skupnosti. Povzročajo tudi politične probleme, ki se jim skušajo v naprednih družbah izogniti s premišljeno razvojno politiko in z njo uveljaviti sprejeto družbeno načelo »o enakih možnostih ne glede na kraj prebivališča«. Izkušnje kažejo, da je odpravljanje regionalnih razvojnih razlik težavno, drago in počasno. Ni mogoče pričakovati hitrih in bleščečih uspehov. Zaradi tega je treba sprotno vrednotiti uspešnost razvojne politike in ob tem ugotavljati, kakšna so regionalna razvojna gibanja, problemi ter kako nadaljevati.

Preglednica 1: Spremenjena paradigma regionalne politike v preteklosti in sodobnosti<sup>3</sup>.

Značilnosti	Klasična	Moderna
teoretske podlage <i>oporne točke</i>	lokacijska teorija: ključni faktorji razvoja so proizvodni stroški in razpoložljivost delovne sile lokacijski faktorji: neposredna bližina surovin, trga in oskrbovalcev, ustvarjanje novih delovnih mest (diverzifikacija)	teorije učeče se regije: ključni faktorji so ustvarjanje dodane vrednosti, inovacijsko okolje, decentralizacija proizvodnje (rast industrijskih » <i>clustrov</i> «), večanje stroškov v središčih, stare industrije se selijo v območja z nižjimi stroški, specializacija novih proizvajalcev, prisotnost raziskovalnega instrumentarija, spoštovanje trajnostnega razvoja
regionalna politika <i>značilnosti</i>	problemska območja: gorska, kraška, obmejna zmanjševanje regionalnih disparitet: izravnava med regijami	vse regije: referenčni okvir za programski in projektni razvoj vseh regij, uravnotežena tekmovalnost med regijami s pomočjo inovacij
namen <i>enakost in učinkovitost</i>	pospeševanje infrastrukturne opremljenosti in posameznih industrijskih obratov	pospeševanje inovacijskih procesov (npr. »grozdenje«), medsektorska koordinacija
cilj	nova delovna mesta, nove investicije	izboljšana konkurenčnost (podjetništvo, inovacije, znanje)
analitična osnova	kazalniki stopnje razvitosti	SWOT analize regij, regionalni » <i>foresight</i> «
ključne aktivnosti	pomoč podjetjem, trda infrastruktura	razvojni program, poslovno okolje, mehka infrastruktura
organizacija določanja politik	razvojni impulzi: centralizirano ( <i>top-down</i> )	kolektivno – partnersko: od spodaj navzgor; podjetniško, inovativno
ključna institucija	centralna oblast	decentralizacija, prehod na regionalno raven, obnovljena vloga regionalnega planiranja, poudarek na kvaliteti življenja
partnerji	jih ni	na regionalni ravni krepitev raziskovanja (»privatno-javno-akademsko partnerstvo«), lokalna združenja, nevladne organizacije, socialni partnerji
administracija	enostavna/racionalna: pospeševanje in sofinanciranje razvojnih konceptov, potrjevanje in sofinanciranje posameznih projektov	kompleksna/razvojna: pospeševanje » <i>clustrov</i> « in mrežnih projektov, podpora »pilotnim« in inovativnim projektom na podlagi predhodno določenih pravil, monitoring in evalvacija
izbor projektov	notranji	participativen
časovni okvir	»petletka«	večletna razvojna perspektiva (šest let)
vrednotenje	zaključno ( <i>ex-post</i> )	predhodno, vmesno, končno
rezultati	težko merljivi, še posebej kratkoročno	merljivi

Začetno obdobje uveljavljanja regionalne politike po koncu 2. svetovne vojne je temeljilo na klasičnih principih državnega poseganja. Takšna regionalna politika je bila usmerjena v odpravljanje nerazvitosti

<sup>2</sup> Marsikje gre za drobna in svojstveno zaokrožena območja, ki so jih posebej zaznamovale naravnogeografske specifičnosti in njihov »odsev« v družbenogeografskih prilikah.

<sup>3</sup> Priredba po: Neue Regionalpolitik, Schlussbericht, 2001 in Bachtler John, Yuill Douglas, 2001. str. 12.

s subvencioniranjem kapitala in ustvarjanjem novih delovnih mest v industriji za (pretežno nekvalificirano) delovno silo ter posodabljanjem infrastrukturne opremljenosti. V ta namen so bili izoblikovani instrumenti, ki so zajemali tudi denarne podpore industrijskim podjetjem, kredite s subvencionirano obrestno mero, olajšave davčnih in socialnih prispevkov, naložbe v infrastrukturo, subvencioniranje transportnih stroškov... Problemska območja so določili s pomočjo izbranih endotnih kazalnikov. Politika pospeševanja se je v prvem obdobju izkazala kot uspešno. Čeprav so bile razlike med državami znatne, je bil temeljni pristop povsod podoben.

Gospodarska kriza konec 80-let in istočasni preboj novih informacijskih tehnologij sta povzročila nove spremembe v strukturi regij. Številne, dotlej stabilne regije so zapadle v krizo (npr. Podravje, Zasavje, Savinjska, Slovenska Koroška), veliko »robnih« pa je izkoristilo svoj geostrateški položaj in pridobilo na pomenu (npr. Goriška). Poseben razvojni problem pa še vedno predstavljajo obmejna območja ob nastajajoči »šengenski« meji.

Klasične raziskave, ki so dotlej opozarjale na pomen regionalne opremljenosti in prikazovale gospodarsko strukturo, ponudbo storitvenih dejavnosti, prisotnost visoko produktivnih dejavnosti, prometno povezanost, itd. nadomeščajo novi pogledi vrednotenja odnosov znotraj regionalne skupnosti. Za to se v številnih razpravah uporablja pojem »kreativni miljé« (ustvarjalno okolje), ki je sinonim za intenzivno povezovanje znanstveno – tehnoloških centrov z ostalimi gospodarskimi omrežji in ima pomembne prostorske implikacije na regionalni ravni. Po svoje je to nov pogled in temu je prilagojena svojstvena, vendar sodobna interpretacija vsebin regionalnega planiranja.

Spremembe v regionalni politiki so v zadnjih letih torej naslednje:

- Tradicionalni pristopi k prostorski in regionalni politiki, ki temeljijo na spodbujanju določenih problemskih območij izgubljajo pomen. V ospredju je konkurenčnost mest (regij). Takšen pristop temelji na spodbujanju endogenih faktorjev in konkurenčnosti, kjer je spodbujanje razvoja v posamezni regiji prilagojeno značilnostim samih regij. To je značilno za Avstrijo, Finsko, Italijo, Nizozemsko, Švedsko, Veliko Britanijo, Norveško, Francijo in deloma Irsko.
- Zaradi spremenjene filozofije se je okrepilo partnerstvo s tem, da se je povečala vloga regionalnih in lokalnih oblasti, kakor tudi zasebnega sektorja. To zahteva vsestransko koordinacijo sektorskih politik in usklajenost posameznih ravni (EZ, nacionalna, regionalna, lokalna).
- Reformi prostorskega in regionalnega planiranja sta neposredno povezani z reformo lokalne samouprave (npr. Velika Britanija, Švedska, Finska, Norveška)<sup>4</sup>. Pogosto sta oba vidika v pristojnosti enega ministrstva ali službe (npr. Finska, Velika Britanija) in pogosto se pristojnosti in sredstva za spodbujanje razvoja prenesene na srednjo raven.
- Značilne so težnje k povezovanju regionalnega razvoja in prostorskega planiranja. Zaradi spodbujanja razvoja na celotnem ozemlju (čeprav v večini držav še vedno obstajajo problemska območja, kjer je državna pomoč izdatnejša) je izvajanje prostorske in regionalne politike postalo bolj zapleteno. Nov pristop zahteva več koordinacije. Zato so v različnih državah vzpostavljeni posebni koordinacijski mehanizmi (vladna predstavništva v regijah, regionalni sosveti).

Pri izvajanju regionalne politike se srečujejo države z različnimi izzivi: težave pri koordinaciji sektorskih politik, napetostmi med posameznimi ravni, uveljavljanje manjših funkcionalnih regij (Švedska, Francija, deloma Finska), kar pa ne zavira aktivnosti pri uveljavljanju ciljev regionalne politike v nacionalnih okvirih in EZ.

Razvoj vse bolj temelji na strateškem planiranju, k čemer je v EZ dodatno pripomogla reforma strukturnih skladov. Tako smo danes priča regionalni politiki, ki temelji na ustvarjanju bogastva in ne več na redistribuciji sredstev. Regije postajajo okvir nacionalne konkurenčnosti, kjer je odločujoča vloga mest kot razvojnih generatorjev. Čeprav regionalna raven pridobiva na pomenu, pa ima še vedno centralna oblast vitalno vlogo pri pripravi in koordinaciji regionalne politike.

<sup>4</sup> Ravno to, kar v Sloveniji ni primer.



Med članicami EZ opazujemo težnje po poenotenju pristopov spodbujanja regionalne politike. Kljub temu so še vedno razlike, kot posledice institucionalnih razlik, zgodovine, regionalnih razlik in upravno-pravne ureditve v posamezni državi. Glede principov spodbujanja jih je moč razvrstiti v 4 skupine:

- »Kohezijske« države (Grčija, Irska, Portugalska, Španija): zaanje velja, da je glavni cilj razvoj na nacionalni ravni, čeprav je pomemben tudi na regionalni ravni in pridobiva na pomenu. V tej skupini je večina najmanj razvitih regij EZ.
- Nemčija in Italija: za ti dve državi velja, da sta z razvojnega vidika »dualni« državi (v Italiji razvojni razkorak sever–jug, v Nemčiji zahod–vzhod), kjer je regionalna politika osredotočena v manj razvitem delu, vendar obe državi vodita regionalno politiko tudi v razvitem delu države (strukturno prilagajanje).
- Zahodna Evropa (Benelux, Danska, Francija, Velika Britanija in tudi Avstrija): v njih regionalni problemi niso zaskrbljujoči, čeprav so pomembni tako iz vidika strukturnega prilagajanja, kot z vidika stopnje brezposelnosti. Tu regionalna politika sama po sebi ni odločujoča, kljub temu pa vse države postavljajo regionalno konkurenčnost kot enega temeljnih nacionalnih ciljev.
- Nordijski državi (Finska, Švedska): regionalni problemi so povezani z redko poseljenostjo, v primeru Finske pa tudi z visoko stopnjo brezposelnosti v območjih redke poseljenosti.

V sodobni paradigmi regionalnega razvoja sočasno potekata dva nasprotujoča si procesa: »globalizacija« kot odraz mednarodne prepletenosti gospodarskih in političnih tokov, nasproti »drobnim« lokalnim in/ali regionalno političnim interesom, katerih cilji temeljijo na uravnoteženem ali samonosilnem regionalnem razvoju, lokalnih ekonomijah, uravnoteženem krogotoku produkcije in surovin ter povezanosti nacionalnega omrežja središč v enoten mrežni urbani sistem. Proizvodne dejavnosti imajo zaradi napredujoče globalizacije vedno bolj nadnacionalen značaj. Običajno izražajo svoje želje le po novih površinah. Manj pomembne pa so presoje, povezane s socialno-ekonomskim področjem, kjer igra odločujočo vlogo še kvalifikacijska in izobrazbena raven delovne sile, s katero se povečujejo možnosti vključevanja v inovacijske gospodarske tokove, kajti »od znotraj« določena regionalna identiteta in socio-kulturna kreativnost sta brez dvoma najmočnejši argumenti za vsebinsko (pre)oblikovanje razvojnega planiranja. Nove inovacijske tehnologije postopno prežemajo mrežni organizacijski koncepti v vseh družbenih sektorjih. Spremembe pa niso zajele le proizvodnje, temveč tudi socialno, kulturno in politično sfero. Strukturna preobrazba pa odseva tudi v prostoru.

Uspešen regionalni razvoj pa ni več v tolikšni meri odvisen od tehničnih inovacij in ustvarjalnega okolja, kot so to mnogi avtorji še nedavno zagovarjali, ampak je v marsičem povezan tudi z oblikovanjem in pospeševanjem določenih organizacijskih oblik decentralizirane demokratizacije. Z uvajanjem regionalizacije dobivajo v sodobni razvojni politiki institucije, namenjene regionalnemu razvoju odločujoč vzvod, naperjen tudi proti centralizaciji države. Regionalizacija države s pomočjo decentralizacije institucij nastopa kot impulz – motivacija – in osrednja oporna točka za skladen družbeni razvoj.

## 4 Sklep

Reforma lokalne samouprave je vzpodbudila nastanek številnih občin. Te so odraz volje ljudi, ki želijo prispevati k razvoju, pri tem pa so se v številnih primerih ujeli v lastno past. Gospodarsko šibke občine nimajo zadostnih sredstev za lasten razvojni zagon. Primanjkuje tudi usposobljen kader in zlasti odsotnost koordinacije na regionalni ravni. Če je stanje na področju regionalnega razvoja v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih izkazovalo navzkrižje interesov med različnimi nosilci razvoja zaradi pomanjkanja kapitala, kvalificirane delovne sile in infrastrukturne opremljenosti, je od devetdesetih dalje vse bolj opaziti odsotnost kooperacije in skupnega upravljanja (mreženja) med razvojnimi središči. V teh okoliščinah je zlasti čutiti odsotnost institucij na regionalni ravni. Za razliko od zelene tri nivojske teritorialne členitve, kjer bi pokrajina predstavljala vezni člen, se v Sloveniji vse bolj povečuje razkorak med državo in lokalnimi skupnostmi. Občutnim centralizacijskim težnjam se pojavljajo po robu (pre)ozki lokalni interesi, kar v večini primerov vodi v škodo vseh, tako države kot občin.

Prepustitev razvoja obstoječim težnjam vodi v večstopenjsko razvitost. »Lovljenje« globalizacijskih tokov bo po predvidevanjih uspevalo le ljubljanski metropolitanski regiji, ki je že dalj časa vodilni razvojni pol.

Na podlagi medmestnega sodelovanja in strateških usmeritev treh univerzitetnih središč se bo po predvidevanjih izoblikovala razvojna os, ki bo medsebojno povezala mesta med Koprom oz. Novo Gorico–Ljubljano–Mariborom (ob 5. prometnem koridorju). Aktivna vpetost ostalih središč v globalizacijske tokove bo možna le preko tesne navezave na Ljubljano ali pa na središča izven RS. Ostala območja bodo podvržena stagnaciji in postopni degradaciji, katerim bodo konkurirala le posamezna zaposlitvena središča. Omenjeni za Slovenijo neugoden scenarij bi po našem prepričanju zavrl skladen regionalni razvoj. Bil pa bi podlaga za disperzijo dejavnosti v prostoru, ki je podprta z željo po bivanju v sproščajočem in manj onesnaženem okolju. Posledica takšne politike bodo še obsežnejše dnevne migracije in obremenjevanje prometne infrastrukture ter neracionalno trošenje energentov.

Protiutež obstoječim težnjam je v doslednejši implementaciji tri desetletja dolgih naporov uveljavitve policentričnega sistema omrežja naselij. Zagovarja dvojno strategijo »izravnalnega« mestnega življenja:

- a) z ohranitvijo in pospeševanjem visoko specializiranih delovnih mest v središčih nacionalnega pomena pomeni prepletanje spektra gospodarskih dejavnosti s središči nižjega – regionalnega pomena in partnerskih mest po svetu (V tem primeru je odločujoče oblikovanje medmestnega omrežja (*Network*) med sosednjimi (in tudi oddaljenimi) mesti podobne velikosti.) ter
- b) z vzpostavljanjem in poglobljanjem gospodarskih kooperacij med mesti in tudi s pripadajočim podeželjem, kar je v obojestransko korist zaradi dopolnjevanja funkcij.

Sodobni družbeno-ekonomski procesi tudi izključujejo implementacijo centraliziranega urbanega omrežja naselij. Zametki mestnih regij ponujajo raznovrstne razvojne izzive, ki so posledica različnih oblik in razvojnih stopenj urbanizacije, ki med seboj na komplementaren način součinkujejo. Zato je model »plitvega« in decentraliziranega omrežja satelitskih mest znotraj funkcijsko in gravitacijsko povezanih mestnih regij, ki temelji na sodobnih principih mrežnega povezovanja razvojnih polov za Slovenijo (oz. razpršenih razvojnih polov ob infrastrukturnih vozliščih), bolj realističen in skladen s sodobnimi težnjami družbeno-ekonomskega in demogeografskega razvoja. Za uravnotežen regionalni razvoj je z nacionalnega vidika pomembno, da gospodarski razvoj povečuje atraktivnost celotnega funkcijskega območja in s tem izboljšuje kvaliteto življenja. Nadalje je kljub heterogenosti funkcijskih območij in njihovi velikosti potrebno stremeti k decentralizirani zasnovi omrežja mest, čigar dejavnostna struktura se vzajemno dopolnjuje.

## 5. Literatura

Glej angleški del prispevka.