

## ENGLISH ABSTRACTS OF KEY ARTICLES

### **Dušan Riedl, Seventy Years of the Brno Exhibition Centre**

The Brno Exhibition Centre originated seventy years ago as a unique urban complex of a clearly given function. Since it is a site of dynamic development where new and interesting architectural items are being added to the original buildings (today protected), it is worth realizing the values of the exhibition grounds in Brno and even the reasons and connections behind its origins and its life.

### **Milan Körner, Exhibition Grounds in Central Europe**

This year, the most important Czech exhibition site in Brno celebrates its 70th anniversary. The last period of its existence may definitely be regarded as successful, as the number of visitors to the Brno Exhibition Centre and the sales of the exhibition area were higher than in competitive cities of Budapest, Poznan, Vienna, or Bratislava.

There are quite many cities of fairs and exhibitions in Central Europe. In some countries, big fairs and exhibitions are almost exclusively concentrated in one city, such as Poznan in Poland, Bratislava in Slovakia, Budapest in Hungary, or Brno in the Czech Republic.

In all these countries, there also are minor exhibition centres but their infrastructure (mainly the interior exhibition area) and the annual numbers of visitors are substantially lower. In Czechia, Prague is a specific example thereof, not having any large and permanent exhibition site but being comparable to Brno as for the number of events, exhibitors, and visitors.

### **Alena Navrátilová & Eva Rozehnalová, Flood Protection in the Context of Physical Planning**

Phenomenons like floods, avalanches, landslides, and rock slips make us always aware of the necessity to take into consideration the laws of nature when planning and developing settlements and the country. Urban planning functions, buildings, and activities may be distributed throughout a territory only if the characteristics, laws, sources, and potentials of the territory - but also its limits - are known.

Urban planning, as a technical, economic, and environmental discipline, is responsible for this job. The proceedings of elaborating, negotiating, and approving to physical planning documentation are carried out in a manner to provide democratic approach to decisions and good communication among all the participants of the process.

### **Vítězslav Kuta, Large Administration Units and Regional Centres**

The article deals with the questions of regional centres. The initial part focuses on today's importance of this problem. Then the reasons for the origin of regional centres are given and various types of regional arrangement are summed up. More detailed is the description of the functions of regional centres and their positions within a larger concept of settlements. Specific attention is paid to the functions of a regional centre in the conditions of polycentric housing and industrial agglomerations. Finally, the example of the Ostrava region shows the necessity to divide the functions among individual centres in the case of a polycentric model of regional arrangement.

### **Jiří Gřegorič, Karel Schmeidler, Karel Pažourek, Stanislav Prokeš, The Relation between the Urban Spatial Structure and the Traffic Network in Large Cities**

Today's enormous increase of urban traffic has brought better mobility for people but also a good deal of problems to the inhabitants, to the environment, and to the cities themselves as individual entities.

We propose to consider the degree to which some harmony between the town structure and the traffic network can be achieved as "Urban Value of Territory", to be determined by means of four criteria: the town's functional use, traffic, spatial shaping (cultural values), and environment. The determination of the Urban Value of Territory is to serve as an objective starting point to propose reconstructions of towns or changes in their traffic organization.

We distinguish three levels on which the above relation can be examined. Level 1 is the street, defined as an arrangement of buildings, open spaces, and communications. Level 2 is the town planning structure of an urban area. Level 3 is the town as a residential entity.

Focusing on levels 1 and 2, the evaluation of the territory is done in view of the best utilization of its traffic capacity. So, our research suggests a typology system of urban structures and traffic networks. Furthermore, principles of the best arrangement of streets and the optimum of the town spatial structure are designed.

### **Karel Schmeidler, A Sociologist's View; What to Do with Large Housing Complexes, the Blocks of Flats?**

The prefab blocks of flats are getting old. Gradually, they become a problem in the context of architecture, urban planning, and also, sociology. The housing complexes built from the late 50's to the early 90's were meant to solve the questions of housing and adopt the migrating labour force from the country. The complexes were built as a unit, though their concepts were often altered during the construction. The aim was to give flats for workers of new factories and for people who had to move because of urban reconstructions. Entire housing units in the green, following British, Scandinavian, or French examples, were to be built in the form of complex urban planning operations. Finally, these operations became the main model of spatial development in cities. Large complexes were often built using an only technology, the prefabricated slabs. Approximately 30% of the population of Czechia now live in these blocks of flats (e. g. Prague 43%, Sokolov 73%, Blansko 56%, Český Krumlov 56%, Klatovy 52%, Hradec Králové 52%, Olomouc 42%), facing many problems of urban planning, economy, sociology, and demography. In the Czech Republic, there are 62 456 buildings of prefabricated slabs, with 1 138 069 flats, inhabited by more than 3 million people.