

# IVETA PAUHOFOVÁ, PETER STANĚK, BEÁTA STEHLÍKOVÁ: SMART REGIONS IN SLOVAK REPUBLIC POSSIBILITY AND REALITY

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The application of smart technologies and smart solutions to the management of regions and local governments is currently becoming an increasingly topical issue. It is emphasized in particular in connection with the need to optimize the system of functioning of self-governing units, given the rapid pace of urbanization and global change. The concept of smart regions and smart cities is currently being introduced by countries around the world. The Slovak Republic is also trying to change the settings of management and functioning of regions and cities. In this area, however, we face several problems that prevent us from developing in this area. The team of authors Pauhofová, Staněk and Stehlíková wrote a monograph in which they document and point to the current reality and possibilities of using the potential of the regions of Slovakia in the application of smart concepts. The monograph consists of three chapters that reflect the potential of the regions, qualitative changes in the infrastructure of the regions and the generation of security conditions in the regions. Within these chapters, the authors deal with the issue of informing people about smart solutions, the impact of global change on urban development, differences between regions in terms of wages and employment, as well as differences in the overall development of regions.

The authors provide basic information on the problems and limits of Slovakia, including the outflow of young people from less developed areas, the often mentioned problem of a large number of small municipalities, setting up a social system for the Roma population or creating only short-term employment in the regions. They highlight the tourist potential of Slovakia, which according to them should be a springboard and a basic driver of the Slovak economy in the future. They cite as examples the functioning system of tourism and the presentation of culture in Austria or Germany. They point out in detail the importance of the renewal of agriculture and thus the creation of food security in Slovakia, which should be focused not only on self-sufficiency but also on the quality of food,

which affects the health of the population. At the same time, they point to the need to connect the relations of the information society, which is a basic prerequisite for the development not only of tourism but also of the entire region. The authors emphasize the need to link tourism, agriculture and health care and thus attract tourists who would return to the regions, as well as the need to increase the quality of life of the population and thus their interest in the development of their own region or city. In this chapter, it would be useful to illustrate an example of a specific region, which could help the reader to better explain how it can lead to a link of this kind and what the consequences could be for this region.

The second chapter monograph provides an insight into the infrastructure of Slovakia, which dominates transport network, focusing on the highway system, but the attention should be paid to regional transport. The authors offer the idea of autonomous trains, which, however, is not applicable to Slovakia in the current conditions, and at the same time point out the issue of the abolition of regional train connections, without replacing them. It is interesting to address the issue of health care through maps of regions that would display the most common diseases in the area and these diseases would also condition the location of specialized health facilities. In the field of education authors emphasized the need to increase the social status of teachers and to connect universities with secondary schools and connection of universities, which would enable study at several universities at once, and thus produce more qualified professionals with better and more comprehensive education. It is necessary to interconnect regions which would improve problem solving through mutual assistance, because problems often go beyond the regional borders. In the third chapter, the problem of regional interconnection is linked to the problems of infrastructure security, which is disrupted not only by natural disasters. In order to better understand this topic, it would be appropriate to include in this section an example of a specific area, which would show how it is possible to prevent e.g. river basins, or to reduce the damage they cause.

The publication provides the reader with a large amount of theoretical knowledge dealing with a complex set of problems of application of intelligent solutions in Slovakia. The topics are generally interconnected and logically follow each other. They point out the problems that need to be solved in order to be able to implement functioning smart concepts throughout the Slovak Republic. The publication, however, lacks examples of specific regions /cities where it would be possible to identify problems and so better to imagine the impact and interconnectedness. Despite the fact that the monograph contains several examples from abroad, there is no deeper look into the system of their functioning and implementation in a given country. It would be appropriate to create a continuation of the monograph, which would use the theoretical knowledge from this monograph and reflect the background of the real situation on the examples of regions of Slovakia. Based on these examples of model reader would also be

easier to identify the status of the regions, how intelligent solutions to improve the lives of the inhabitants of the region and what would be the impact on the whole country. Part of the continuation of the monograph could be a part of examples of the application of intelligent concepts abroad, which would point out the mistakes and positives and their impact on the development of selected foreign regions and cities.

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