

## Suburbanization and local governance – positive and negative forms: Olomouc case study

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### How to cite:

Kladivo, P., Roubínek, P., Opravil, Z. and Nesvadbová, M., 2015: Suburbanization and local governance – positive and negative forms: Olomouc case study. In: Szymańska, D. and Rogatka, K. editors, *Bulletin of Geography. Socio-economic Series*, No. 27, Toruń: Nicolaus Copernicus University, pp. 95–107. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/bog-2015-0007>

**Abstract.** Over the previous 15-20 years (in Czech conditions), suburban processes have substantially influenced the appearance and transformation of municipalities on the fringe of larger cities. And it is not only the morphology of the municipality structure (new housing estates and their urban as well as architectural solutions) that has undergone the transformation, but also the functions municipalities have started to fulfil (the development of civic amenities and services). After such a long period of time, we are capable of identifying negative as well as positive impacts of suburban processes on municipalities, and evaluating the role of local actors (with regard to local governance) in the shaping of suburbs and their appearance (the area urban solution, infrastructure, architecture in terms of housing appearance, etc.). We are also capable of assessing new construction sites based on their location or appearance (housing naturally complementing or suitably extending the municipality built-up area, or, on the contrary, a satellite housing estate built “on a greenfield site”), social climate between old residents and newcomers, etc. The goal of the paper is to present the most significant aspects that have had influence on new housing construction in suburban zone municipalities, and to describe differences in the application of the concept of local governance (at the lowest – microregional, or possibly municipal tier) in positively impacted municipalities as compared with those affected rather negatively. Concentrating on the city of Olomouc and its suburban zone in greater detail, the study shall also outline expected future development.

### Article details:

Received: 26 November 2013

Revised: 26 March 2014

Accepted: 11 December 2014

### Key words:

suburbanization,  
governance,  
Olomouc,  
municipalities,  
spatial planning.

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**1. Introduction - theoretical part**

The term ‘governance’ has only been paid closer attention in the framework of so-called social sciences within the last two decades. The term aptly expresses the subject matter of spatial development management, and supersedes the older concept of ‘government’. The latter concept considers state authorities, organised through partial formal institutions of hierarchically ordered public administration (and self-administration), mainly applying bureaucratic procedures in the decision-making process, to be absolutely dominant development actors. On the other hand, ‘governance’ involves a considerably wider spectrum of actors, views the spatial development issue in a much more comprehensive way, identifies relations between actors, and involves even new actors – e.g. private entities (enterprises, businesspersons, investors, developers), and non-profit sector actors that are becoming more and more important. This attitude to the spatial development issue complies with the latest trend putting more and more emphasis on the principles of partnership, involvement and cooperation between various types of regional development actors, and incorporating them into legislation. Simply put, governance, if compared to the concept of government, expresses the current level and functioning of local politics more accurately, and is also more flexible (John, 2001).

Based on the concept of governance, the British Economic and Social Research Council is making an effort to define (in some cases it is rather a description, sometimes it has a normative character) new forms of the state-civic society relationship. Governance (as opposed to the hierarchical admin-

istration or administration subject to the market) is supposed to comprise networks established unintentionally as a result of neoliberal reforms (NPM, marketisation, privatisation), the consequences of which were often far from the authors’ original intentions. The reforms led to the fragmentation of the service providing system, and weakened central supervision without establishing appropriate markets – they gave rise to the creation of networks, with the state only acting as one of many organisations providing services and having often very restricted management and decision-making tools available (Rhodes, Bevir, 2001).

Rumpel (2011) lists several possible attributes to the term *governance*. These are, for example, *good governance*, *territorial governance*, *global governance*, *multi-level governance*, *regional governance*, *local governance* or *rural governance*. In the *governance*-related discussion, strong emphasis is put on how to create, out of fragmented management and territory development decision-making systems, an integrated system, or rather how to convert the inconsistent system into a consistent system so that territories at various tiers in the hierarchy are able to act as collective actors (Davoudi et al., 2008). The issue of local governance is also concerned with Olsen (2007), who also works with relations between local governance of selected regions and decentralisation.

The concept of so-called ‘local governance’ or ‘urban governance’ best fits the purpose of our study. The former term is defined as the process of organising and coordinating actors with the aim of undertaking a collective action in order to increase the rate of development of a certain lowest-tier territory (a town and its fringe), and thus reach the state of economic, social and territorial cohesion. The citizens’ involvement and partnership, the cooperation

of local actors, a sufficient number of these actors in all spheres, sufficient information flow, institutions acting responsibly, etc. are then building blocks of high-quality local governance (UNDP, 2004; Rumpel, 2011). United Nations-Habitat defines *urban governance* as a sum of all individuals and institutions planning and managing all town activities. It is a continuous process giving rise to disputes and different views that are settled based on the cooperation of the actors involved. The whole concept comprises a formal level (institutions), an informal level and inhabitants' social capital (UN-HABITAT, 2002).

It must be noted that the concept of local governance is often criticised by a number of sociologists, political geographers and economists. Most often, the role of unelected subjects (social and commercial organisations, interest groups, etc.) in local politics and regional development is questioned. According to some authors, sufficiently strong self-administration (democratically elected) may not accept the network of ties in the form of local governance, and may decide by itself, i.e. only the concept of government is applied here (Vajdová et al., 2006).

Although the concept of local governance and the suburbanization issue are quite common, they are usually not interconnected. Feiock et al. (2004) mention metropolitan governance and its impact on suburbanization; in the Czech environment (particularly in Prague's metropolitan area), the suburban development actors are analysed, and the functioning of local governance is mapped by Ouředníček (2007), Špačková et al. (2011) and Ouředníček et al. (2013). Both foreign and domestic authors, e.g. Downs (1999), Kahn (2000), Johnson (2001), Sýkora (2002, 2003), Hasse, Lathrop (2003), Halás (2003) mostly mention negative impacts of suburban development, mainly in environmental and urban, but also social, terms, yet, occasionally, positive effects (Puldová, Ouředníček, 2011; Ouředníček et al., 2013), such as demographic revitalisation of municipalities on the fringe of large cities, increase in social activities, or forced infrastructure development, are also described.

In this paper, it is our intention to clarify not only what influence the local governance, its functioning and individual components have on the urban and architectural appearance of municipalities,

but also what share it takes in the intensity of suburban processes. In addition to the role of local actors, including the self-administration (in particular mayors, but also the municipality board), space planners, urbanists, architects, state administration (building office/department or spatial planning department officials), businesspeople, investors, developers, landowners and the public, aspects affecting the intensity of housing construction in suburbs, and directly influencing their development and current appearance will be investigated.

These aspects, selected based on works by Ouředníček et al. (2011), Feřtřová et al. (2013), are as follows: (a) restitutions and related changes in land ownership; (b) attitude of owners of land with residential potential and the land ownership structure; (c) investors' and developers' influence on the construction process, their policy, activities and potential pressure; (d) land improvement, territorial system of ecological stability (TSES); (e) head office accessibility, both by passenger car, and public transport; (f) environment attractiveness in environmental and urban terms; (g) the prime construction initiator, the initiator's post and qualification; (h) civic amenities in a municipality (in the past and today); (i) the mayor's, and local actors' initiative, e.g. the role of a non-released vs a released mayor, etc.; (j) spatial planning tool application – spatial planning documentation (a spatial plan, a regulatory plan) and other tools (e.g. a planning study, a spatial study) or planning agreements (e.g. new legal institutes introduced by Act no. 183/2006 Coll. on Town and Country Planning and Building Code (Building Act)); (k) land price; (l) municipality size.

The above-listed factors will be classified according to the role they play in suburbanization processes, and simplified and generalised models of ties between actor-selected factors, most often acting in practice and having immediate influence on the morphological form of suburbs, will be represented in diagrams.

## 2. Methodological concept

The main goal of the entire research was to contribute to the clarification of the relationship between local governance at the lowest, municipal tier and

suburban processes, and to evaluate the role of individual actors, aspects and factors involved in suburban development. As already mentioned, this topic has been only occasionally addressed in Czech geographical literature. In our opinion, the topic is, however, of huge, if not crucial importance, as the subject of interest has direct influence on the formation of geographical space. In our opinion, it has not been paid the attention it deserves.

Social changes at the beginning of the 1990s related to the economic transformation, decentralisation, etc. were naturally reflected in the sphere of urbanism and spatial planning. Since approximately the mid-1990s, along with the start of suburban processes in the Czech environment, insufficient experience with spatial planning and regulation began to emerge to a great extent. Often, urban rules were not adhered to; the weak role of self-administration or mutual influence between self- and state administration (represented by the building office officials) also posed a problem. And developers in the background were engaged in the process, too. In consequence of these uncoordinated processes, municipalities will have to face negative impacts in the future. Approximately twenty years after the start of these processes (in the case of Moravian centres the period of time is slightly shorter, as the suburbanization started later there), there are enough tools enabling the evaluation of both positive and negative impacts of housing development in suburban zones, the assessment of the significance of individual aspects, and the identification of prime local actors, who have had direct influence on the positive/negative shaping of suburbs.

The evaluation must take even subjective elements into consideration. Yet, in order to ensure maximum possible objectivity, guided interviews were conducted with mayors, other self-administration representatives, i.e. municipal board members, state administration representatives, i.e. building office representatives, as well as investors and developers. The total number of interviews and their structure was as follows: 18 structured interviews were conducted with mayors of municipalities in the suburban zone (including two city parts outside Olomouc compact city) and two representatives of the affected communities, as well as two representatives of the local building office in the area of interest and two developers, respectively initiators of

construction. All interviews were realised in the period from May to July 2013, the greatest problem being to find free time convenient to both researchers and respondents. During the realisation of the interview no problems appeared, because the respondents received research questions in advance.

The city of Olomouc with its fringe (suburban zone), as demarcated by the preceding research, was selected as the area of interest based on the intensity of interaction between the municipalities and the centre (Halás et al., 2012).

The paper is primarily concerned with morphological changes in the municipalities in question and individual urban and architectural solutions of the space with new residential construction, or rather new detached house construction. The paper does not deal with the social climate between newcomers and old residents; this issue will only be covered marginally, and shall be subject to further research.

In order to approach the issue in question as comprehensively as possible, the interviews were conducted not only with the mayors of suburban zone municipalities with the most intensive and less intensive processes, but also with representatives of municipalities located on the Olomouc fringe that remained unaffected by the urban sprawl and retained their original character.

The interview outcomes will enable evaluation of the local actors' role in the entire process and the significance of individual factors and aspects, but also construction of simple local governance models (networks and ties between the institutions, representatives and actors involved) with positive, neutral and negative impacts on municipalities. The conclusions will then be supported by case studies dedicated to individual municipalities in Olomouc suburban zone. The reason why the main outputs of the study are primarily focused on Olomouc and not on another city is quite simple. We consider the local conditions for suburbanization as a specific, and we do not have a sufficient number of relevant studies from comparable cities. The comparison (to similarly sized cities) of our results with the functioning of local governance at the municipal level, focusing on the suburban processes, will be the subject of further studies.

The development in the city of Olomouc (but also other cities of 100,000 inhabitants in the Czech Re-

public) is characterised by residential construction in city districts distant from the compact city (some of them over 10 km from the centre). It is a legacy of socialism, as the municipalities were mainly integrated in the 1970s and 1980s. Even though such construction cannot be literally referred to as suburbanization, as citizens do not move out of the city, the principle is identical, and even intensified by the rural character of the above-mentioned districts. That is why the research also concentrates on these sites, and the interviews will be conducted there. Olomouc districts (as opposed to some other large cities similar in size) lack self-administration; the entire territory is managed centrally on one tier (municipal authorities). The city area is divided into 27 units, 'administered' by so-called city district committees having almost no power, nor financial means. Their representatives, however, are well-informed, and their opinions about the issues in question are considered significant.

The interview questions (the mayors had been contacted, and could prepare their answers in advance) can be divided into several categories. They were focused on the initial conditions of suburban development (land ownership structure, restitutions, conversion of agricultural areas into building parcels, land improvement and the territorial system of ecological stability, etc.), how and where the construction was regulated in the municipality (spatial plan, other forms of regulation, etc.), and the construction process proper (the initiator, roles of developers, investors and self-administration, factors having influence on the housing construction localisation, etc.). The interview was also concerned with the consequences of the new construction and the actors' attitude to further development of municipalities.

### 3. Analytical part

Based on the research, carried out with the help of twenty mayors of Olomouc suburban zone municipalities, the twelve aforementioned factors having crucial influence on the intensity of housing construction, resulting appearance of individual satellites and overall transformation of municipalities, were classified into three categories (A – most significant, B – less significant, C – insignificant) ac-

ording to their significance. A simple analysis is provided below:

**Category A** includes the following factors: (a) the mayor's and local actors' initiative – the role of a non-released vs a released mayor, etc.; (b) spatial planning, a planning (spatial) study, a planning agreement; (c) prime initiator of the construction; (d) attitudes of owners of land having residential potential.

The research proved these four factors to be crucial and directly affecting the transformation of municipalities. Furthermore, they are interlinked. The mayor together with the municipality board plays one of the most important roles, but, surprisingly enough, the mayor's status, being either released and working 'full-time', or, conversely, non-released, also proved to have significant influence on the municipality development and suburbanization impacts. The research showed problems in municipalities with a non-released mayor in the sphere of land purchase, communication with a developer, insufficient knowledge of spatial planning issues, etc. Despite the fact that some of the municipalities are virtually adjacent to the Olomouc cadastral area, or are only slightly distant, suburbanization processes missed most of them utterly, or only low-intensity construction affected them.

In the municipality of Ústín, for example, a developer purchased land with the potential of construction of as many as fifty houses from a private owner, but only four of them have been built. At present, the investor faces financial difficulties, and the situation has become almost insolvable. The investor refuses to abandon the land, agreements and relations with the municipality and its representatives are not on a good level, the infrastructure is not completed, and the municipality's potential development is stagnating. Other municipalities with a non-released mayor face similar troubles. Generally put, lack of time on the mayors' part adversely affects not only the communication with a potential investor, but also the municipal initiative to purchase land from private owners, and sell it subsequently for individual housing construction.

The application of construction regulation tools ranks undoubtedly among the basic factors. Provably, the municipalities that strictly insisted on drawing up planning (spatial) studies, observing regulations, etc. do not currently face problems with

“unsightly looking” sites of low architectural quality. Nevertheless, a number of municipalities failed to enforce the rules; e.g. in the municipality of Dolany, in the most intensively affected suburban zone, the so-called building restriction line was repeatedly violated, as a result of which the line of houses, fences, etc. is irregular making the implementation of infrastructural projects, such as new road surface installation, impossible. In contrast, the interesting urban project in Bukovany, where attention was paid to details, is an example of a very good solution. Moreover, the site is acknowledged for its favourable social climate, engagement of new residents in the community life, etc. In our opinion, the municipality represents an example of positive impacts of suburban processes.

The issue of the most preferable prime construction initiator, i.e. private land owners, several investors or one big developer, is rather complex, and cannot be generalised. In practice, all three options bring both positives and negatives. They are, however, linked by one important thing, which is the previous factor – construction regulation and spatial planning. According to the overall majority of mayors, the construction-regulating legislation is sufficient, and new standards are not required. The standard application in practice, the state administration and self-administration performance quality, the supervisory system, and, in particular, law enforceability, however, pose a considerable problem.

The attitude of owners of land with development potential is also crucial. Here, the municipalities encounter problems with the purchase of land, regardless of whether it is purchased by the municipalities themselves or the developer. This results in unnatural gaps of unattended land in a continuous line of new houses, otherwise suitably solved in urban terms. One land owner’s negative attitude often prevents the implementation of larger projects, as investors usually care about the area’s integrity, in particular with regard to the underground service installation. In this respect, mayors would appreciate more powers.

**Category B** includes the following factors: (a) restitutions and related changes in land ownership; (b) civic amenities; (c) land price; (d) developer’s influence, potential pressure.

The second category includes factors having, according to municipality mayors, slightly less influence on the intensity and quality of suburban processes, or manifesting themselves in a smaller number of municipalities. The issue of restitutions is a typical example. In the framework of the restitutions, land was returned to owners in all municipalities in question, but it had only partial influence on the housing construction development. The restitutions most seriously affected the above-mentioned municipality of Dolany, where attractive land was returned to private owners, and most beneficiaries of restitution divided it and sold it as building parcels. The conversion of the land into building parcels was rather unrestrained, and the inconsistency in the regulation and spatial planning gave rise to certain troubles.

Civic amenities in municipalities were not of crucial importance, either; they have been paid attention only recently, and their role is more significant nowadays. The amenities of interest are, for example, nursery schools in Olomouc fringe municipalities. In consequence of the so-called “baby boom” in the period 2005–2010, the capacities of nursery schools in Olomouc are fully utilised, and the demand even considerably exceeds the supply, as a result of which surrounding municipalities having capacity available are given a better chance. As for other services, traditional market rules apply – where there is demand, there is also supply. Hence, services, such as restaurants, hairdressers, etc. started to appear naturally at sites with positive suburban development, whereas no or minimum new services (Hlušovice) emerged in other municipalities located in the most intensive zone, which have more than doubled in the number of inhabitants; new residents make use of the services in the close centre, i.e. in Olomouc.

Now, land prices shall be discussed. Theoretically, these can be considered the most significant indicator, but the experience gained during the research only proved it partially; moreover, the factor varied depending on time. In the mid-1990s, even at the most attractive sites, the land was, due to owners’ lack of information and experience, purchased in the order of tens of CZK, while the developers sold it subsequently for a price multiplied by hundreds of percent. But in fact, the prices were mostly similar, and took the location, environment quality,

etc. into consideration. In the period of the building boom, affecting the parcel and land business, at the end of the 1990s, the price was important, but did not play the most significant role. Primarily, the rate and smoothness of the land purchase were considered. The land price, however, has recently become one of the crucial factors in consequence of the economic recession and related building industry recession. Prospective purchasers now consider whether to purchase parcels at more distant sites, in municipalities with good civic amenities (Majetín, Doloplazy etc.) for the price up to CZK1,000/m<sup>2</sup>, or on the closest fringe (Křelov, Dolany, Velký Týnec), where the price often doubles.

Influence, pressure, lobbying and other tools play one of the most important roles in the framework of suburban process forming, but they manifest themselves in various ways. Furthermore, the developers' activities in the geographical space are hardly predictable, and highly differentiated. Approximately a half of the mayors have experienced pressure from developers, and, in several specific cases, developers contrived to implement projects in conflict with the spatial plan. The projects were pushed through 'by force' against the municipality board's will or without municipality inhabitants' approval.

**Category C** includes the following factors: (a) head office accessibility; (b) environment attractiveness; (c) municipality size; (d) land improvement, TSES.

The last category includes localisation factors that proved, in the case of Olomouc, to be of little significance. One of these is, for example, the accessibility of Olomouc from the suburban zone municipalities. This aspect plays a crucial role in larger cities (Prague, Brno, Pilsen), but the Olomouc suburban zone is less extensive (since the suburban processes started slightly later there), and that is why the aspect is considered less significant. In fact, the city centre is accessible from all suburbs within minutes (under common traffic conditions). The quality of the public transport service at the site is not clearly decisive, either. Of course, the city district the residents commute to is also of a certain importance in individual cases.

This also applies to the attractiveness of the environment or municipality size. These indicators are preceded by those of categories A and B. If the mu-

nicipality is managed by a competent board with clear vision, the municipality size is no longer important, and if land for housing construction is provided, the construction is only a matter of a high-quality project study and a guarantee in the form of planning agreements: the planning agreement is a tool ensuring the applicant's participation particularly in cofinancing of new or existing public infrastructure construction. It is a document based on which a regulatory plan is issued at the applicant's request (Section 66 of the Building Act) and, in certain cases, a necessary condition of planning permission issuance (Section 88 of the Building Act).

In the Olomouc environment, the municipality of Hlušovice is a typical example, where the number of inhabitants has more than tripled since the mid-1990s (257 inhabitants in 1995 and 800 in 2012; source: Czech Statistical Office), in contrast to the aforementioned Ústín, Svědlice or Blatec. Similarly, recently implemented comprehensive land improvement, which helped the suburban process development locally, cannot be ranked among the most significant aspects.

#### 4. Synthesis of data obtained

As stated in the analytical part, the aspects, being interlinked, never act separately, and it is always a specific situation that determines to what extent they apply, how intensively they influence the municipality development, and how strongly they are interrelated. Despite this, certain similarities, or rather repeating models or situations, at least on the Olomouc fringe, can be observed. Generally put: based on detailed local governance studies and field research, in the framework of which we visited all suburban zone municipalities, and interviewed local actors, five basic types of suburbia formation could be identified, as shown in figures 1-3.

First, detached housing construction will be described, which, according to our opinion and the respondents' responses, suitably fitted the municipality character, is favourable in urban terms and currently free of troubles. In fact, there are two basic models. In both the cases, it is due to well-prepared spatial documentation, including detailed planning studies,

and, in certain municipalities, also due to newly-introduced legal institutes of planning agreement, defined in Act no. 183/2006 Coll. on Town and Country Planning and Building Code. Furthermore, planning and building processes were suitably phased and adhered to in these cases. But whether the land was owned by the municipality or various owners was of no importance. Similarly, the construction initiator, i.e. the investor, the developer or the municipality, did not play a crucial role. In contrast, the role

of a released mayor proved to be important. As far as the mayor is concerned, his/her profession or education is also of considerable importance. Although it may not be considered an important factor at first sight, the practice proved the opposite. Municipalities with an architect, a civil engineer, a geographer or a far-sighted person with good vision as a leader have been rather positively influenced by suburban processes. As model examples, various types of development are described below.

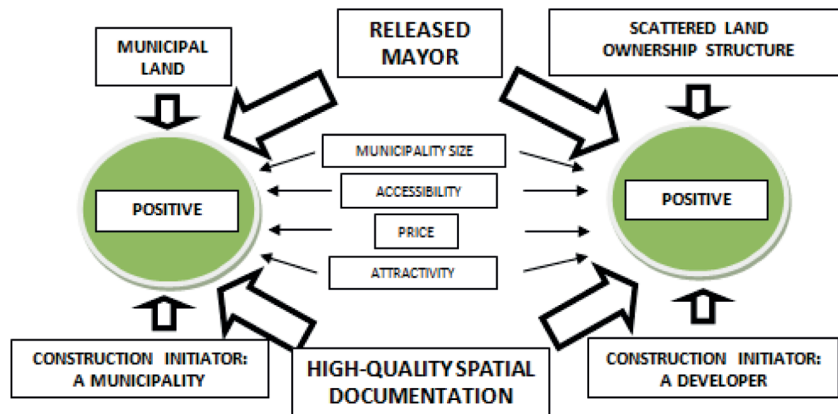


Fig. 1. Models of positive municipality development resulting from suburban processes

Source: Authors' own elaboration

Municipality of Grygov – the construction initiator was the municipality that purchased land from private owners, installed underground services in cooperation with a developer, then divided the land, and sold it for individual construction. Owing to good spatial planning documentation, the new housing estate naturally extended the Grygov built-up area; urban requirements, such as a building restriction line, etc., were observed.

Municipality of Bukovany – the municipality of Bukovany initiated the conversion of municipality land into building parcels, but the municipality itself installed underground services and built the access road. The construction complied with the planning study the municipality had drawn up. The site is selected as a positive example as it looks interesting and unconventional, offers calm and well accessible living, and, moreover, according to the mayor, new residents, due to the fact that their housing estate adjoins the built-up area and the site is trouble-free in all aspects, are accepted by old residents, and engage themselves in the municipal life and activities.

The issue of the impacts of negative suburban processes on municipalities is slightly more diversified. This is a consequence of three interlinked factors. The first is the absence of high-quality spatial planning documentation (e.g. a spatial plan) connected with improper planning (agreements between the municipality and a developer discriminating the municipality). The land ownership structure can make things even more difficult, when the municipality has only minimum land suitable for construction available, but, on the contrary, there is a sufficient number of privately owned parcels. Third, there is the role of municipality representatives. As a rule, a non-released mayor, lacking time (due to his/her job) to conduct municipality management-related activities, succumbs to an investor, or has no time to deal with emerging problems. The post of a released mayor is not much better, though; due to low-quality spatial planning documentation, s/he is incapable of regulating new housing construction, both individual, and development. For example:



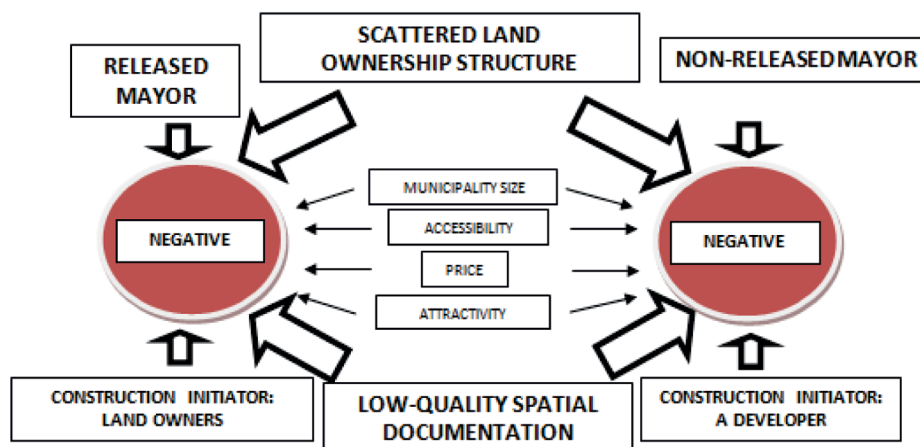


Fig. 2. Models of negative municipality development resulting from suburban processes  
 Source: Authors' own elaboration

Close to the municipalities of Dolany and Křelov on the closest fringe of Olomouc, the construction was primarily initiated by land owners; developers' activities were not very common. The land was delimited historically; the owners made an effort to divide the land in the form of stretches behind their houses. In these municipalities, the land ownership was also considerably affected by the restitutions. Individual parcels were later sold for individual construction, which, however, was rather unfortunate due to improper spatial planning. The building restriction line was not respected, the line of houses and fences at these sites is irregular, and it is thus impossible to build a road the new residents naturally request.

Municipality of Ústín – the municipality on the closest fringe of Olomouc in a favourable well-accessible environment abundant in services. It is one of the examples of negative or zero municipality development, though. The investor managed to purchase the land from a private owner (according to the mayor even for a sum of approx. CZK50/m<sup>2</sup>!!!), divide it and start building. Following the completion of four detached houses, rather controversial in architectural terms, the investor suspended, due to financial reasons, the construction, but also ceased to meet the obligations arising from the contract (agreement), concluded by former municipality representatives. The contract was too general with sanctions not explicitly set forth, which the

developer took advantage of; at present, the situation is insolvable. The developer still owns the remaining land, and hinders further development of the municipality. But the fault is also on the non-released mayor's part as she, due to lack of time for the performance of her function, or rather insufficient qualification, also contributed to the unfortunate situation.

To conclude the synthetic part, the situation in municipalities untouched by suburban construction, despite having high development potential, will be presented. The issue can be exemplified by the municipality of Svědlice. The land ownership structure, being not so much at variance with surrounding municipalities, cannot determine such changes in the municipality development, or possibly prevent any development. The problem lies in the private owners' reluctance to sell the land for the construction of detached houses. Nevertheless, the municipality management is also to blame as it does not support potential development; again, the mayor is non-released here.

The situation is, however, partially beneficial, as the municipality has retained its original character, and it can now learn from the experience of surrounding municipalities affected by suburban processes, properly design its future development, and benefit from its well-preserved and intact character and genius loci.

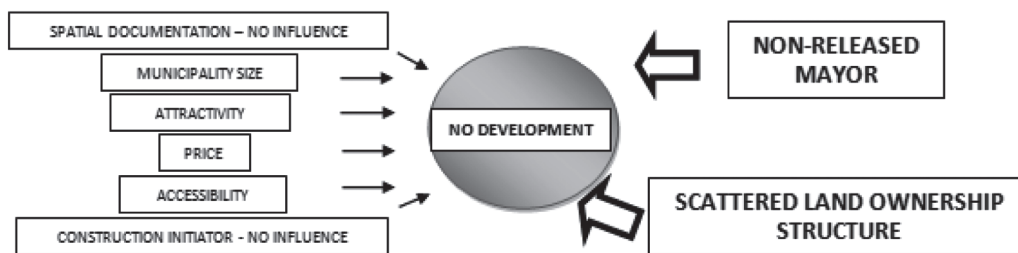


Fig. 3. Model of a municipality untouched by suburban processes

Source: Authors' own elaboration

## 5. Legislative tools

The guided interview results provided very interesting answers concerning the legislative solution to the spatial development of municipalities in the Czech Republic, the subject and method of planning and regulating, and missing tools. According to the overall majority of respondents, the basis of successful spatial planning is a properly drawn-up spatial plan based on the legislation in force (Act no. 183/2006 Coll. and an amendment to Act no. 350/2012 Coll.), and how the law (or parts of the law) is enforced in practice. This is closely related to the quality of the state administration performance, certain actors' insufficient qualification in space-related decision-making, and the associated supervisory system. We fully identify ourselves with the above-presented respondents' views. One significant aspect, however, must be mentioned, i.e. planning from a central city. In the Czech environment, planning is not coordinated within so-called metropolitan regions, which we consider a mistake. We think that it is necessary to plan urban development including areas of new housing construction, infrastructure, etc. (in the close hinterland of a regional centre) carried out in accordance and in cooperation with all stakeholders, mainly in cooperation with municipalities with the strongest relations to the centre (not completely individually, without a common concept).

Today, residential or commercial construction and its localisation and the forms of regulation are fully within the responsibility of municipalities. Supposing there are clear and provable links between the centre and municipalities on its fringe,

the spatial planning ought to follow the same principle helping to remove phenomena associated with the previously mentioned negative manifestations of suburban construction.

Yet, the tool municipalities sorely miss exists. It is the possibility of purchasing land in a planned detached housing construction zone, where its owners, often residing outside the municipality, or abroad, pointlessly, purposefully and on a long-term basis obstruct their sale. On the one hand, they may seem, based on democratic principles, to be entitled to such conduct; on the other hand, however, there should be a chance of purchasing the land (with adequate compensation). This would, however, materially interfere with the right of ownership, and should be duly governed by law first. Such a regulation would prevent situations peculiar from the urban point of view, e.g. large weedy gaps in a continuous line of houses giving a negative impression of an otherwise appealing housing estate. Currently, Act no. 183/2006 Coll., as amended, governs the conditions of expropriation. Proprietary rights to land can be removed in connection with public works of transport and technical infrastructure, public works reducing the danger of floods and other natural disasters, structures to secure the state defence and security and redevelopment of an area (Section 170 of Act no. 183/2006 Coll.). On the national level, there are tools that are totally missing on the municipal level.

Tools associated with, for example, the financial situation of municipalities in relation to the suburbanization shall be subject to further research. Nevertheless, what is still missing is a tool making new residents in municipalities on the fringe of large centres register their permanent addresses. Current

legislation fails in this respect, and a great number of municipalities are deprived of millions of CZK (only in taxes; other means are gained from municipal waste collection charges, etc.) due to new rules of distribution of taxes. Municipalities lack tools enabling them to force new residents to change their permanent addresses; the only way of coping with the issue is to negotiate with each resident individually, and persuade him/her to do the “right thing”.

## 6. Conclusions

It must be noted that as far as Olomouc, whose suburban zone is in focus here, is concerned, the suburban processes are not as intensive as in Prague or Brno agglomeration. Yet, the transformation of not only the morphological, but also functional character of municipalities can be clearly observed. The municipalities have changed from typical villages of the Hanakia region into suburbs comparable to the municipalities of the Prague fringe, etc. There are even municipalities described in the literature in detail (e.g. Hlušovice) with a characteristic, literally satellite layout of residential housing estates, unique in urban terms.

It was our intention to identify, describe and evaluate the patterns and networks hidden among local actors, affecting suburban processes, and, ideally, apply the concept of local governance to them, which would clarify, both horizontally and vertically, the process of suburbia formation in Olomouc and factors having the most intensive influence on the morphological transformation of the municipalities. Two basic types of positive and two types of negative municipality development, or rather ties participating in such formation, were identified. Both the patterns were supplemented by a generalised case of municipalities at good sites having development potential, but still experiencing no development within the last twenty years. According to our findings (some of them being no real surprise), the municipality self-administration, namely the mayor, who, together with the board, is the key actor in the spatial development of the municipality, plays the crucial role. The investor's or developer's role is not negligible, but depends on the relationship with the municipality representatives,

their ability to resist potential pressures, and mainly on the spatial planning documentation leading to the urban solution of housing estates.

In the positive municipality development mapped, it is the mayor qualified as an architect, geographer, civil engineer, or simply a knowledgeable person with good vision, who often plays a significant role. It is also important that the mayor is released. If s/he lacks the aforementioned qualifications and skills, it is essential that the board members have them. There is also a factor that has not been mentioned yet. It is the investor's or developer's influence. Our research has proved (against our original assumptions) that a local investor, preferably living in the particular municipality, has positive influence on the municipality development. Naturally, this results from relations with other inhabitants, but also with municipality representatives, and a certain fear of possible problems and related social, or economic expulsion (in my village I want to give a good account of myself). Thus, the municipalities of Velký Týnec or Majetín are examples of positive suburban development. Yet, even here discussion concerning the solution of public space, etc. would be desirable. In support of the statement above, investors can be mentioned who, having no relationship to the area, contributed to a negative situation in municipalities – within the “Nový Ústín” project, the investor purchased land in the municipality of Ústín, but, due to an unfavourable financial situation, has suspended all planned construction, including the completion of underground service installation, has ceased to communicate with the municipality representatives, and, in fact, hinders further development of Ústín at the site in question.

When it comes to legislation, successful spatial planning is, as already mentioned, based on a properly drawn-up spatial plan. After Act no. 183/2006 Coll. on Town and Country Planning and Building Code (Building Act) came into effect, it is beneficial for municipalities to have spatial planning documentation. The Building Act does not impose an obligation for municipalities to have a spatial plan, but certain limitations, in particular in connection with the municipality development, arising from its absence, must be taken into consideration. In addition to the spatial plan, some municipalities made use of other spatial planning tools, i.e. spatial

studies and planning agreements. According to the overall majority of respondents, these are sufficient tools capable of influencing and regulating residential construction. The current legislation is imperfect; some problems have already been mentioned. Certain other problems, independently emerging in the interviews with the municipality mayors, must also be mentioned. These are, for example, the legislative datedness (an amendment to the Building Act is in force since January 2013, while the Act on the Agricultural Land Protection came into effect in 1992), ambiguous legislative interpretation (e.g. in the sphere of landscape character, sustainable development), or the above-mentioned state- and self-administration interconnection (officials influenced by political representation).

Another problem, which surprised us unpleasantly, is the great number of building office territorial competences in the Olomouc suburban zone. In total, 23 municipalities selected within the suburban zone fall under 9 building offices (in the entire Czech Republic, there are 703 offices). With such a number, it is impossible to ensure a sufficient number of qualified workers for specific positions, and coordinate or regulate the construction. According to the authors and mayors, the reduction in the number of building offices is delayed, and has not been implemented in accordance with the Building Act amendment. The problem is even more serious due to unfinished state administration reform, the lack of an act on officials, etc. Attention should be brought again to the almost essential need for spatial planning on the agglomeration or metropolitan region level. This requirement seems to be logical and fully justifiable with regard to the existing interactive ties (transport, migration as well as social) between municipalities on the fringe and the centre.

Should the financial aspect, which is not the main subject matter of the study, be briefly commented on, mayors in the most intensively affected suburban zone lack a tool enforcing newcomers to register their permanent addresses. Roughly quantified, the losses reach sums in the order of several hundreds of thousands or even millions of CZK in taxes and municipal charges, but the problem is even more serious and became topical after changes to the rules of distribution of taxes were introduced in January 2013.

The attitude of municipalities to further development is quite interesting. A number of mayors, together with municipality representatives, see the future positive development in new residents purchasing houses in village squares and reconstructing them, which would add to the positive municipality look and character. The mayors also refuse further sprawl of municipalities and sale of parcels for construction (e.g. at the expense of agricultural land). The initiative for the construction naturally complementing the built-up area by suitable houses, etc. can be evaluated in a similar way.

Service development has also indicated positive or negative municipality development. In a number of municipalities, mostly evaluated as negative in our paper, new residents typically fail to register their permanent addresses, which subsequently reflected in the rate of engagement in municipality life and related service development in the suburb. The majority of the inhabitants only pass the night at their new residence, and pursue all other activities in the centre, which harms the respective municipalities. They, however, only have minimum means at their disposal to change it. In contrast, there are municipalities with no such problems, and they continue, even in terms of services, to develop. The priorities in the sphere of services primarily include the existence, maintenance, or establishment of a school/nursery school and the development of services also beneficial for old residents, such as medical services, a shop, a restaurant or a hairdresser's.

Also, in positive examples of suburbs, new residents' engagement in municipality life may be observed, and not only in the form of municipality board membership, but also in organising or participating in cultural events, etc. In agreement with Ouredníček (2011), the positive impact can be seen in the educational and age shift in municipalities on the fringe of the centre.

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