

POLICY ACTORS AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE LAGs: A NEW CIVIC SPACE?

A CZECH CASE STUDY

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LEADER (“Links between actions of rural development”)

- First launched in 1991-1993 by the ECC in order to support local development actions
- LEADER II (1995-1999) helped launching pilot actions for stimulating local innovative projects
- LEADER+ program (2000-2007) extended this approach, especially with the adhesion of new member states
- At the present time, LEADER is no longer a separated program but is integrated (“mainstreaming”) in the rural development program of the Common Agricultural Policy

The LEADER philosophy

- an innovative policy (Sociologia Ruralis 2000. Special issue 42-2; Maurel and Chevalier, in this issue)
- a new model for local rural development (EEC 1988)
- a tool designed for promoting an integrated and sustainable rural development based on an autonomous, community-based and participatory approach (The Cork declaration, 1996)

-> the leader approach in former communist countries ?

The Local action group (LAG)

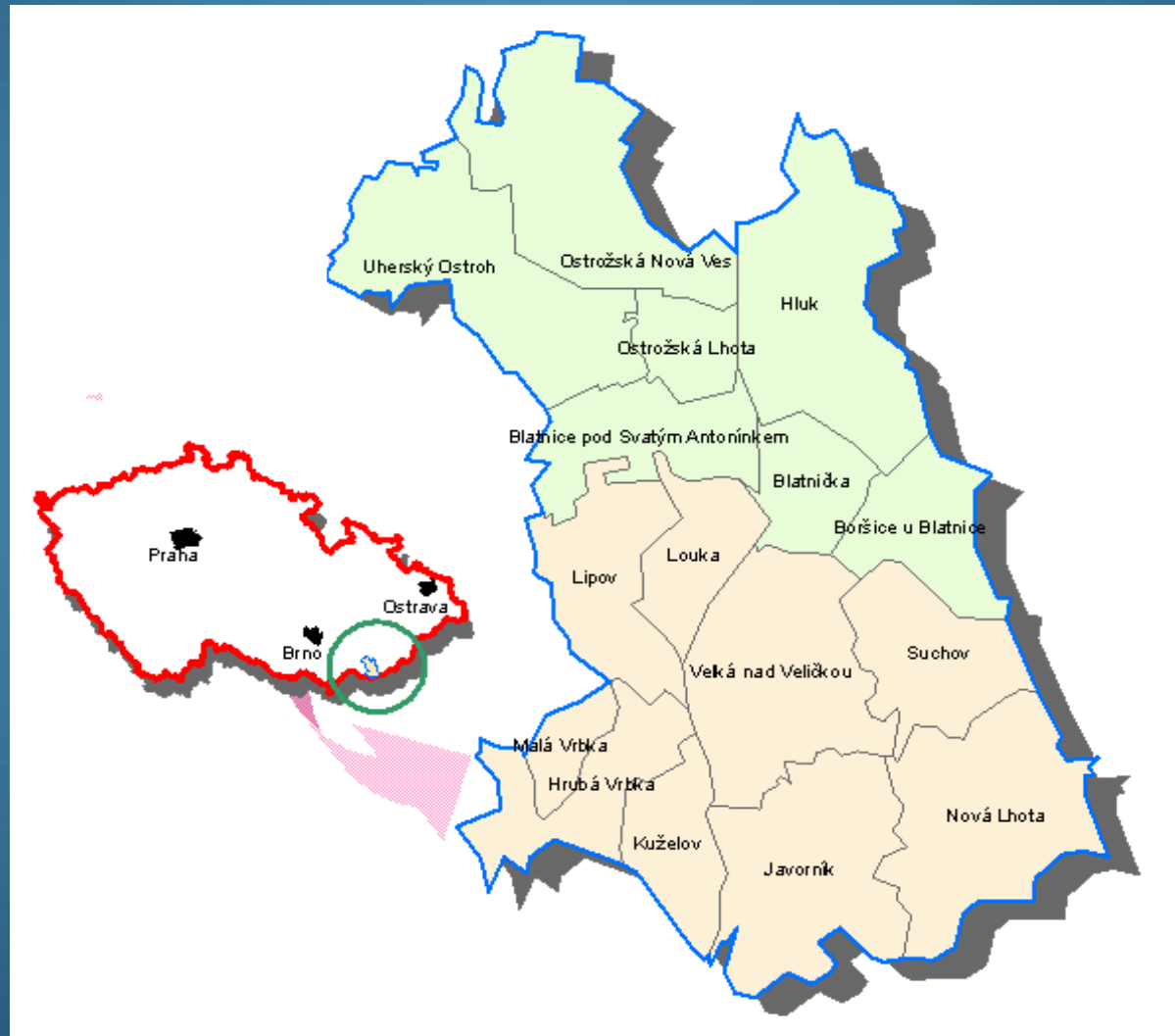
- a local body constituted of public and private actors
- designs a strategy and allows funding to local projects coming up from public sector, companies or nongovernmental organizations
- institutional place where multiple and diverse actors cooperate and manage to solve conflicts of interest
- a tool for local partnership (Nardone et al 2010), negotiation and contractualization (Koutsouris 2008)

-> A NEW CIVIC SPACE ?

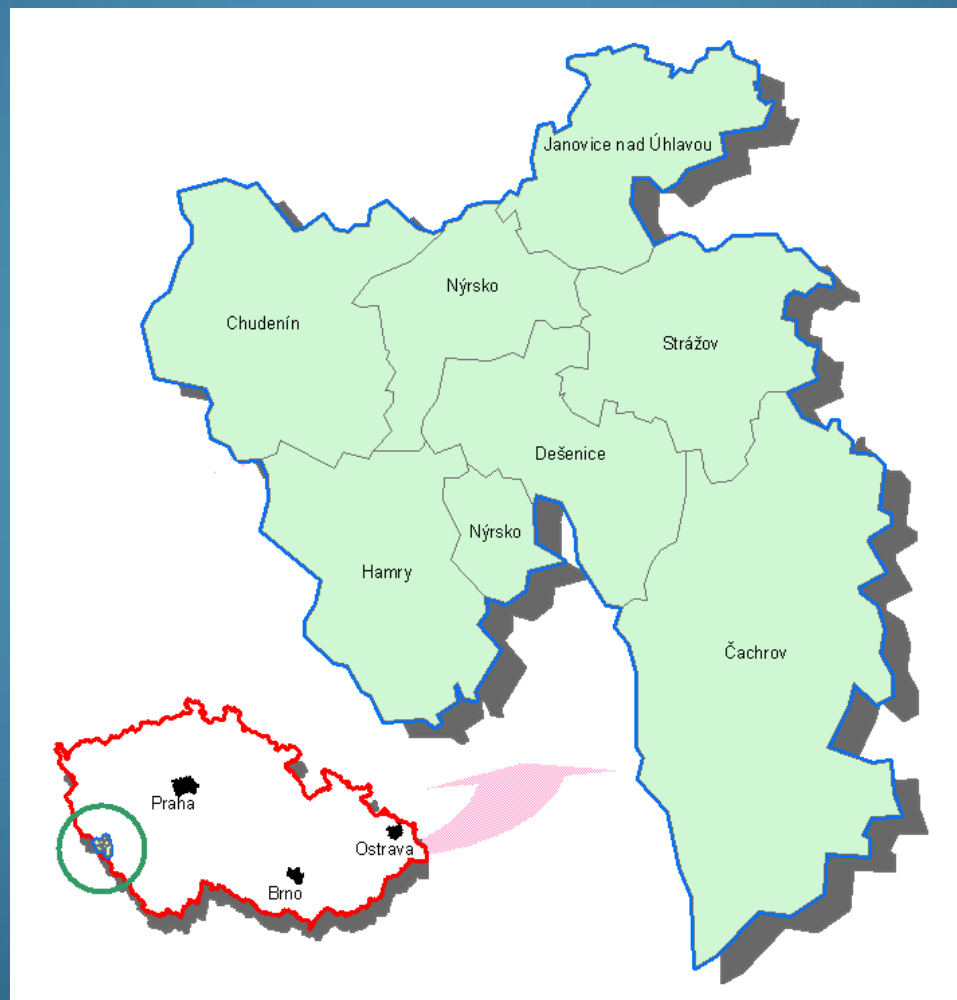
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- Hypothesis 1: LEADER as a driving force for changing local modalities of collective action for rural development
- Hypothesis 2: LEADER only supports an additional way of getting resources through the use of a new rhetoric

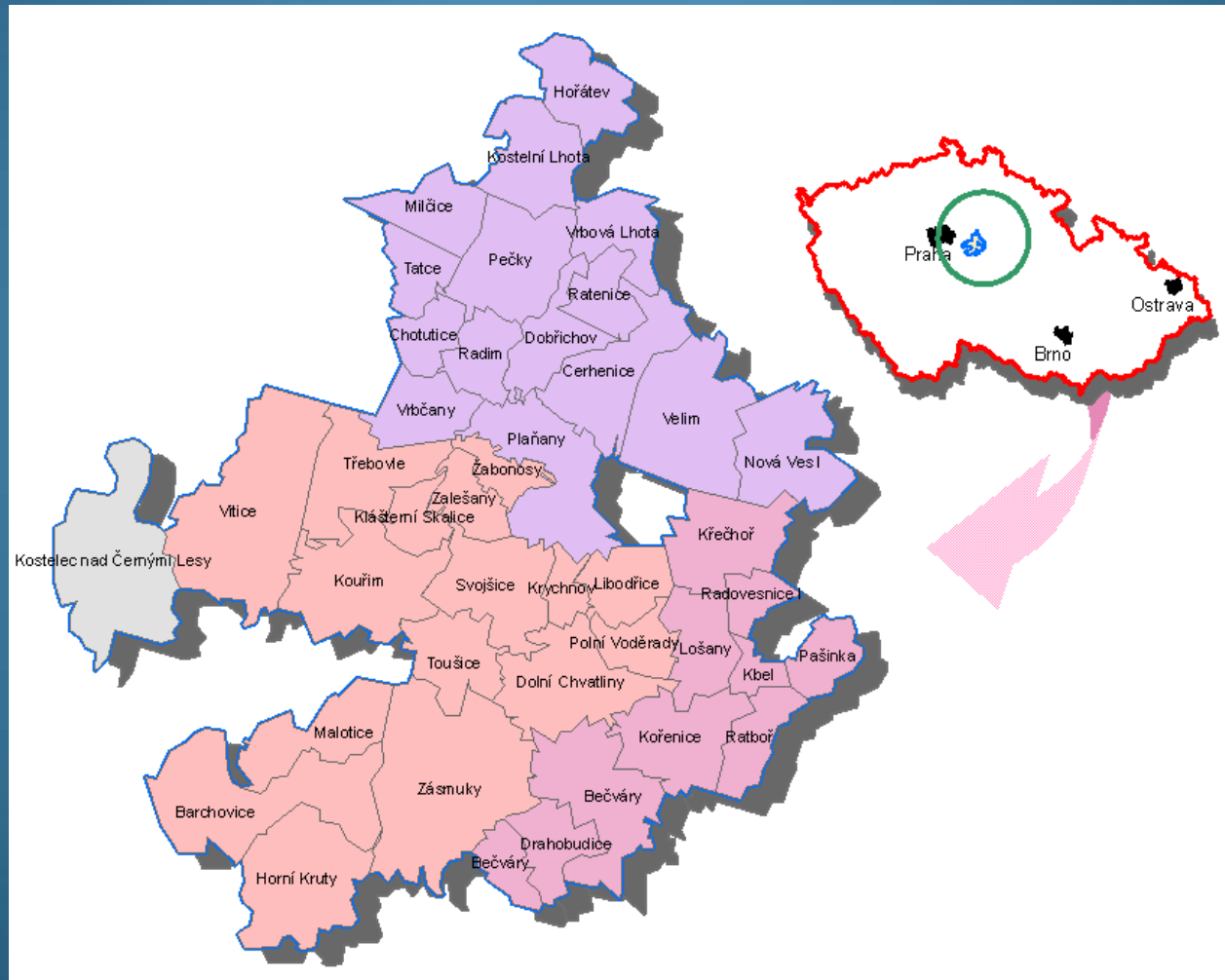
The LAG “Hornácko-Ostrožsko”



The LAG “Ekoregion Uhlava”



The LAG “Podlipansko”



The Czech LAG *ideal type*

- Lower proportion of women: 28%
- Over-representation of the 50-59 years old age group and quasi-absence of people below of 35 years old
- Lower proportion of the associative sector: 13%
- Associative sector mainly female: *83% of the associative representatives are women.*
- Few elected representatives women: *only 14% of the mayors*
- High proportion of elective representatives: *60% (including those who sit in the LAG with another status)*
- Numerous mayors sit in the LAG with another status (22%): *approximately 1/4 in the private sector and 1/3 in the associative sector.*

Typology of the LAG members groups

- Group A: The best assimilation of the project and its strategy
- Group B: The lowest assimilation
- Group C: Partial and general assimilation

Three types of LAGs very contrasted

- The LAG “Podlipansko”: Assimilation and diversity in a peri-urban context
- The LAG “Uhlava”: Local and individual centralization, dependency on few local leaders
- The LAG “Horňácko-Ostrožsko”: Inter-municipal model

CONCLUSION

- The LAG might correspond closely to a “democracy of appropriation” and not be conceived anymore as an electoral legitimacy resource (“democracy of identification”)
 - “Legitimacy of reflexivity” (Rosanvallon, 2008)
 - The legitimacies of “proximity and impartiality”
- ⇒ The cross country comparison throughout central European countries (the ALDETEC program)