

The thesis deals with the evaluation of the growth potential of the agglomeration Zlín - Otrokovice. The aim of the paper is to review socioeconomic performance of the agglomeration in the period following the Velvet Revolution and as well to identify key strengths and weaknesses of the local economy. The core part of the thesis is focused on socioeconomic analysis of the agglomeration and analysis of its company structure. The latter one pays particular attention to identification of the branches with higher number of employees and also the branches most attractive for foreign direct investment providers. To supplement some more detailed information about the agglomeration the representatives of the local and regional government as well as representatives of the regional development institutions were interviewed. Other information sources like the entrepreneurial environment survey or relevant strategic plans were used too.

The socioeconomic performance in the period after 1989 was characterised by the decline of shoe manufacturing and machinery industry and on the other hand successful restructuring of rubber and plastic industry. The growth of these branches are driven by long-term good performance of automotive industry. The main weaknesses of the local economy are presence of many low technology firms with just average profits, missing highway approach, low share of higher education population and lack of own business estates. On the other side the strengths of the local economy are: plastic, rubber and some machinery companies with long term tradition and specific know-how, high rate of business activity, growth potential of innovative entrepreneurship in the next years. The most active players promoting innovative entrepreneurship and using research results are Tomas Bata University and Zlín region.