

Abstract

The paper deals with the role of universities in regional development in the Czech Republic. It focuses mainly on the soft impacts taking the form of knowledge emerging from the university and subsequently spreading to the region, and the following increase of the human capital of the region. The main aim of the paper is to identify the existing patterns of mutual cooperation between Czech universities and the regions they are embedded in, and outline the most important differences between this and the situation abroad.

The basic theoretical concept used is the concept of the regional innovation system. The analysis of the situation in the Czech Republic is based on the description of the national innovation system with the focus on the shape of Czech R&D and the role of universities in it. The analysis itself is based on a review of existing literature which is accompanied by a case study of the role of the Technical University of Liberec in the regional development of the Liberec region. The data for the case study were collected during an interview survey among the representatives of the businesses and institutions of the region as well as among the representatives of the university itself. The main goal of the survey was to identify the main patterns of cooperation between the university and the regional public and business sectors and to find out what the general perception of the position and role of the Technical University is, with regards to the regional innovation system of the Liberec region.