

Summary

This diploma thesis deals with a new approach to the rural development in the EU, which is the LEADER initiative. This initiative is significative by involving of local actors to the rural development, elaboration of coherent strategy of development and the *bottom-up* approach. First part of this thesis deals with the level of exercise of this principle in two concrete member states. I choosed two very different states for my comparaisn: Czech republic as a new member state (2004), which has never used LEADER initiative and France as one of six founders of the EC, a country, where the LEADER initiative has been exercised since it's begginings in 1991. I've concluded my analyse of the implementation of this initiative (or sub-measure of LEADER+ type) by finding, that the *bottom-up* principle is exercited better in France than in the Czech republic. The selection of projects to be financed by LEADER initiative had to be approved directly by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic. The selection in France was done only by local action groups.

I've realised a comparative case study of two concrete local action groups LAG Posázaví, o.p.s. (Czech Republic, Středočeský kraj) and LAG Pays d'Albret (France, Aquitaine region) in the second part of my thesis. My target was to ratify or disprove a hypothesis defined in the opening of this paper: Tight cooperation between private and public sector of the society has been established rather in France than in Czech Republic thanks to long-term experiences obtained by exercise of the LEADER approach. A row of structured interviews with members of LAGs served me as a starting point.

I can't ratify my hypothesis. As proved by the learning regions theory (Lundvall, Johnson), there are codified knowledges – like principles and rules of the LEADER initiative – and knowledges that can not be codified. That knowledges are given by a specific ambience in every particular local action group. As France is passing through a long period of stability, Czech Republic passed the era of transformation in nineties. It's citizens got new freedoms and then the possibility to decide, by themselves, about the future development of their area, initiative LEADER. That's why the activity of members of the LAG Posázaví, o.p.s. and the cooperation between private and public sector is so significantly higher, than in the case of the French LAG Pays d'Albret.