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Regional Social Planning in Agriculture

The planning of economic development in socialist countries has achieved substantial results. On the regional level the planning now extends to widespread elements of well-being of the agricultural population. The state managing authorities in CSSR approached the so-called social plans on the enterprise and the regional level. Social planning increases the possibilities of integrating numerous activities previously organised somehow for the people's benefit, yet with less consideration for conception and priorities. The social policy of the socialist countries has, even before this, provided the main features of life and social security to every citizen. Nevertheless, social planning becomes a special instrument in attaining state social policy goals. Special importance within the whole system of social planning in CSSR is given to regional planning.

In connection with the development of regional social planning there arises – with respect to the horizontal area character of agricultural production – the necessity of solving the relation of social plans on supra-enterprise level to plans of social development on the regional level. At the basic supra-enterprise level the agricultural management link is provided by district agricultural boards; the attention is primarily focused on the social plans of this district management level. The district social agricultural plan is developed in coordination with the District National Committee and the District Committee of the Union of Cooperative Farmers, as well as with the district bodies of the Trade Union of Agricultural Workers. The social agricultural plan of the district becomes part of the social plan of the whole region which is compiled by the District National Committee as the representative authority of state administration.

Perspective and complex plans of the socio-economic development of agriculture originate at the district level based on social plans of agricultural cooperatives, state farms, partner-agricultural cooperative and state enterprises, agricultural services and other production units. Of course this plan is not merely a summary of enterprise plans. Social plans on the supra-enterprise level manifest the influence of state social policy. From the social plan of the

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district agricultural management body are projected goals and the orientation of social development of the whole agriculture and agricultural industries into the regional plan of socio-economic development.

The importance of social planning in agriculture increases with intensified concentration, specialization and cooperation in agriculture through levelling up of cooperative and state membership. The central authorities focus, in the first place, on ensuring the system of social welfare, incomes, adult professional education and other complex tasks. On all agricultural management levels principles are applied covering collaboration of territorial, departmental and professional bodies and organizations. In the hierarchy of the social management system the social plans of higher level bodies are obligatory on the bodies on a lower level.

The concept of the regional plan of social development, especially the long term programme goals, involves a base derived from detailed complex analysis of social problems of the region. The analysis contains detailed objective information on the main social problems of the region, the solving of which is a decisive prerequisite for general social development (population development, its stabilization, work opportunities, housing, etc.), including information on individual spheres of regional social life (e.g., leisure time, cultural and sport activities, participation in public and other activities of inhabitants, etc.).

The social analysis is based on extensive data collection covering the social situation of the region. It is based on three main data and information sources. The first source is composed of official statistics (e.g., census of population, housing, etc.) and of other current data investigations by authorities and organizations. The second source constitutes the social plans of individual enterprises and organizations in the region. The third source represents the sociological research complementing missing and necessary data. The sociological research is usually performed on representative samples. Besides these main sources utilized other additional information is used (e.g., projections of the productive-technical base, orientative regional plans, etc.).

Methodically the social analysis is based on the confrontation of the present state of development in the region and evaluations by the inhabitants of the region. Considerable attention is devoted to the opinions, attitudes, aspirations and preferences of the region's inhabitants, as they substantially influence the people's satisfaction, trends to stabilization in the region and active participation to create the most suitable conditions of work and life.

In the planning of trends in the CSSR three principal methods of social planning are mainly used – the methods of normatives, balances and optimization. A degree of rational knowledge in social planning and their quantification requires adequacy of social terms, i.e., to link social terms to the mathematical ones. Finally, this adequacy means the construction of social quantities and variables and their qualitative interpretation.

At present the method of normatives is mostly used which is the most simple and enables plan development even in the present conditions of unsatisfactory aspects of social terms. It is possible to ascertain some social elements through simple summarization, others by means of standards and

equivalents where broad application is applied to so-called social norms (standards). Social norms differ substantially from the norms used in economic planning. Detailed definition is necessary for the determination of the utility function of the plan. The utility (objective) function of the plan is understood as a certain state of social elements considered as optimal.

Also balancing is used for planning social processes. Through this method various problems are solved and tasks coordinated.

Finally, there is the use of mathematical programming extended to social planning, especially linear programming with optimization from possible alternatives, including utility functions and limits. Leisure time is very often optimized. Practically it means searching for an optimum between working and leisure time, minimizing the working time and maximizing the leisure time. Of course, alone a utility function constructed in this way is not entirely satisfactory because in this way leisure time becomes the indicator of all well-being. In practice there are further problems and even the definition of leisure time is not always clearly determined. Optimization of the social plan assumes reaching maximal results for any indicator under given limits.

The present attention given in CSSR to methodological and theoretical problems of social planning contributes further to solving some questions in the application of mathematical methods in social planning and to the further effectiveness of social plans.

Functions and goals of social plans, based on social and economic characteristics of the region, are the following:

(i) planning of changes in social structure with special reference to professional and geographical mobility of the labour force,

(ii) planning of further development of the conditions of work and living – including working environment, technical change in work characteristics, improvement of hygiene and safety of workers in enterprises, incomes, transport, recreation and welfare, living environment, infrastructure, housing etc.,

(iii) planning of special care of selected groups of workers and their families – youths, women, pensioners and persons with lower work ability,

(iv) planning of social activities, participation and education – various forms of adult-education, socialist competition, cultural and sport activities, etc.

Finally, the goal of social planning in the conditions of Czechoslovak agriculture is the levelling up of the working and living standards of country and city populations. Now, when income parity between agriculture and industry has already been achieved, social planning is aiming at other aspects of work and life. Regional social planning is above all orientated to living conditions and the sphere of working conditions is, first of all, integrated at enterprise level. With respect to living conditions in the country the main problems relate to the living environment, housing, public health, education and other facilities and possibilities of cultural life. Within the village the trend is to separate agricultural production units and dwellings of inhabitants. Large scale agricultural production units are being built as closed complete and compact units in places where living environment will not be disturbed by

agricultural emissions. The dwelling part of the village consists of dwelling houses and public facilities serving both the agricultural and non-agricultural village population. In the country, individual family houses predominate even though in many villages there are also multistorey dwelling houses. Housing construction is conducted according to territorial planning ensuring that all aspects of urban practice and architecture are respected. The extent of public facilities (infrastructure) of a village depends on the classification in which the village has been included. In villages forming historically and economically central points of areas and having about 2000–5000 inhabitants all kinds of public facilities are provided, e.g., nursery schools; kindergartens; health, education and cultural facilities; shopping centres and other services. In smaller villages the main kinds of infrastructure only are provided for. The classification includes also the very small villages with decreasing local population which gradually are intended to come to be used for recreation purposes for city inhabitants.

Priority in the development of public facilities in social planning is concentrated on design and construction of nurseries and kindergartens. In the construction of these facilities special features of the village are respected — lower capacity, use of the landscape, etc. Further shopping centres, various service-points, cultural and sports facilities, etc. are designed and constructed. Public facilities are mainly built by means of associated financial funds of national committees and enterprises in the region. Many good results can be attributed to the initiative of local inhabitants who participate in their leisure time in constructing the various facilities. The overall appearance of the village is complemented by green and park areas in the neighbourhood of the productive and non-productive units.

Generally speaking, regional social plans as they have been built up for the period of 1976–1980 also distinctly contribute to further development of dwelling and productive capacity of the village and represent further steps towards equalizing living conditions for country and city populations, while at the same time, the special values of country life are preserved, gaining more and more importance in the context of industrialization of the whole society.

DISCUSSION OPENING — A. Maris, *Netherlands*

In relation to Dr. Kunc's paper my first question is — which are the state social goals and how does the state know what is good for the well-being of the many different social groups with different culture patterns and behavioural patterns?

Is the goal of the Government to get one uniform culture based on several normatives or a variety of sub-cultures with individual values?

My second question has to do with the remarks about three principal methods — normatives, balances and optimalization. It is not quite clear to me what is to be understood by the balancing method. It would be helpful also to have some further details about the words "Socialist competition."

"Social planning" is given at the start of the paper as being "a special

instrument in attaining the state social policy goals". It is stated in the paper that income-parity is reached between agriculture and industry. Does the author mean that income-parity is reached on national and regional level? What is known about the personal income-distribution within the different sectors of the economy?

My final question relates to large-scale farming in, for instance, the East European countries and the modernised small scale farming in Western countries. The productivity in agriculture in the countries of the Common Market which started with mainly small-scale farming shows an annual increase of about 5%. Apart from these economic results, small-scale farming is an example of decentralisation and distribution of power, initiative and capability. The personal initiative and capability are fully used. Is it not a danger of large-scale collective farming that these forces are suppressed at the expense of economic and social goals?