

# THE IDENTIFICATION OF RESIDENTS WITH THEIR REGION AND THE CONTINUITY OF SOCIO-HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

*The regional identity of inhabitants in typologically different regions, which differ mainly in terms of the continuity of their socio-historical development, is examined in this article using the example of two case study areas. An important dimension of the concept of any population's regional identity is the phenomenon of the identification of inhabitants with their region, and this is subject to analysis in this paper. The research demonstrated that a stronger form of the identity phenomenon could be reported for the case study region in which socio-historical development had an uninterrupted continuity. The observed findings helped to confirm the importance of long-term processes in a region's formation.*

## Shrnutí

### Identifikace obyvatel se svým regionem a kontinuita socio-historického vývoje

*Příspěvek se zabývá komparací regionální identity obyvatel v typologicky rozdílných regionech, lišících se zejména v kontinuitě socio-historického vývoje, a to na příkladu dvou modelových území. Důležitou dimenzí konceptu regionální identity obyvatel je fenomén identifikace obyvatel se svým regionem. Z tohoto důvodu byl fenomén podroben analýze. Analýza prokázala silnější podobu fenoménu v regionu s nepřerušovanou kontinuitou socio-historického vývoje. Zjištěný poznatek přispívá k potvrzení důležitosti procesu dlouhodobého formování regionů.*

**Key words:** regional identity of inhabitants, socio-historical development, continuity, Jeseník region, Valašské Klobouky region, Czech Republic

## 1. Introduction

The identification of inhabitants with their region is a concept that can be understood as one of the essential principles of the regional identity of a population. Seen from a broader perspective, it is also an essential dimension of the phenomenon of regional identity (Paasi, 1986). The specific form of the concept that is presented here is variable and depends undoubtedly on many aspects. These aspects include the characteristics of a regions' inhabitants, which can represent regional typology criteria. The core of the present paper is therefore the issue of the identification of people with their regions, which are typologically different, as shown below.

Although intense research efforts have been devoted to the connection and identification of communities with their regions and can be observed at theoretical and empirical levels in world geography since the 1980s (Knight, 1982; Paasi, 1986; Pred, 1984), in Czech geography, these efforts involve only a narrow circle of scholars, such as Chromý (2003), Chromý, Skála (2010), Nikischer (2013), Siwek and Kaňok (2000), Siwek and Bogdová (2007) and Vencálek (1998). The present article can thus be seen as a contribution to a more detailed understanding of the concept under review, with attention paid to specific and typologically different regions of the Czech Republic.

The specific objective of the paper is to assess to what extent the current level of a population's identification with their region differs in regions with a different continuity of socio-historical development. The situation where inhabitants of a particular region identify strongly with their region must be understood as the outcome of a long-evolving process that has its origins in the past. The current form of the identification

of a community with its region is deeply conditioned by historical development in general, but also by the specific historical development of the region (Graham, 2000).

In the course of Czech history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we can trace events that determined to a great extent the regional typology discussed in this paper. As indicated above, we refer to the classification of regions into two groups: those with a discontinuity of socio-historical development, and those in which the interruption of this continuity did not occur. The fundamental processes are those that one could see immediately after the Second World War: the post-war transfer of the German population, whether in the form of so-called 'wild expulsion' or displacement under the terms of the Potsdam Agreement (cf. Čapka, Slezák, Vaculík, 2005). This transfer is related directly to large-scale migration processes: the inhabitation of empty territories which arose due to the transfer.

In both cases, the above-mentioned processes resulted in an overall population exchange in a number of regions, concentrated predominantly in border areas (Daněk, 1993). Chromý (2003) aptly refers to these territories as regions with a lost identity. The Jeseník region is one of them. Since its population was almost completely replaced in the post-war period, it can be seen as a region of discontinuity in terms of its socio-historical development. Not all border areas of today's Czech Republic, however, were forced to undergo such an extensive transformation of their populations. In those with a minor share of the German population, this transformation occurred only partially as emigration of local residents to a greater or lesser extent connected with the above-mentioned settlement processes. The identification relationships that developed over the long term between local communities and

their regions have not been disturbed by interventions from outside. The Valašské Klobouky region is a typical example of such a region where no post-war population change took place, and we can therefore speak of it as of a region with an uninterrupted continuity of socio-historical development. There are a number of practical limitations in performing an extensive and logistically demanding research study that would cover all or at least most of the border regions, so only the two above-mentioned regions were selected for the purposes of this paper.

The research questions formulated in order to reflect the set of objectives are as follows:

- a. in the case of the regions in question, how intense is the degree of identification of local people with their region?;
- b. is the comparison of the degree of a population's identification with their region in the studied regions characterised as conformity, or rather as difference?;
- c. is the degree of a population's identification with their region affected by the basic socio-demographic profiles of the populations in the studied regions?

In the following sections of this paper, the theoretical and methodological bases of primary issues to be examined are presented, followed by a characterisation of the regions of interest and the research methods applied to find answers to the above research questions. Then we will present the results from the field surveys and their interpretation. Finally, some essential conclusions will be discussed.

## 2. Theoretical and methodological starting points

The scientific interest in places, the importance that people attach to them and the interest in how people identify themselves with place, have a long tradition. Vávra (2010) sees the philosophical basis of the study of places as early as in the works of Husserl and Heidegger. Heidegger (2008) introduced the concept of the spatiality of being, which was later transferred into geography by humanistic geographers. For example, Tuan (1974) argued that if a person names a part of a space and identifies with it, this part of space becomes a place. People naturally identify with some places more strongly than with other ones, and therefore they attach more importance to them. These subjective attitudes are mainly produced by the perceptions of the place and by the experiences of people in this place. For this principle of subjective attachment to the importance of meaning, he uses the term sense of place.

Places are also an important source of identity for individuals. Relph (1976) suggests that identity is conditioned by places on two levels. First, there is an *identity of place*, understood as a lasting stability and unity of a place that enables the place to be distinguished from others. The identity of place is determined by three components: physical setting, activities and meaning. Relph argues that of these three components, meaning is probably more difficult to grasp than the others, yet it is of vital importance. Secondly, there is *identity with place*. The essence of the concept is the degree of interconnection, consistency and involvement of people with the place.

At this point, it is desirable to conceptualise the spatial categories of place and region, and to indicate some differences between them. At first glance, this problem may appear to be a mere quibble; however, to understand the content of the following sections such a conceptualisation

is necessary. It seems crucial that 'scale' or 'territory size' of the categories place and region is not as important as the number of people who are associated with them. If a place is understood as an individual category, then the category of region is seen as a collective category (Paasi, 1986). Place is therefore a spatial entity, in which stages of human life take place. In the event of the death of a person, this place can cease to exist. Naturally, people do not live in isolated spaces and they share a number of places. In this case, when people live at a certain place and share similar experiences, everyday practices or some reproduced historical consciousness in connection with it, it is appropriate to use the term region. A region can also be seen as an entity that mediates the interaction of people with the institutional sphere. Thus, unlike identification with a place, regional identity, of which a key part is the sense of belonging and identification, has a collective basis (Zimmerbauer, 2011).

Scientific interest in the above-outlined properties of regions intensified in the 1980s. The main finding in this period is an understanding of regions as processes or social constructs (Knight, 1982; Paasi, 1986). For example, Pred (1984) opposes the concept of regions as clearly delimited and visible entities. He also rejects their static nature and instead he understands a region as a *process whereby the reproduction of social and cultural forms, the formation of biographies, and the transformation of nature ceaselessly become one another, at the same time that time-space specific path-project intersections and power relations continuously become one another* (Pred, 1984: 292).

The identification of a population with their living space can be understood as one of the key aspects of socially constructed regions (Chromý et al., 2011). It is a long-lasting process in which the identity of individual people is created; therefore, Graham (2000) emphasised the importance of the area's socio-historical development. In this sense, the evolutionary continuity of a society is very important. If the continuity of regional communities is preserved, the continuity of the perception of living space and the continuity of the relationship of belonging are usually maintained, too. These processes usually help to establish favourable conditions for future generations and permanent reproduction of the process of the identification of people with their milieu.

When we see a break in the continuity of regional communities, however, it is evident that in the subsequent development of the region the character of these conditions will be different. Thus, we can assume a difference in the character of the process of people's identification with their milieu. The act of discontinuity itself can be seen in two forms, which differ in their dynamics. In the first case there is a relatively short-term process caused mainly by external factors. A prime example is the post-war development of the borderland regions in the Czech Republic, which were formerly inhabited mostly by the German population. In the second case, there is a long-term process, which can affect several generations, and can be seen as a result of both internal and external factors. A good example is the long-term trend of emigration, which in its extreme form can result in an actual interruption of continuity.

It has already been mentioned that the identities of individual persons are influenced strongly by spatial factors: individuals perceive themselves as members of the local community on a kind of exclusive basis. As stated by Kučerová-Kuldová (2008), a necessary condition for developing awareness of belonging to a particular area is a long-term stay in it. Long-term residence of individuals

in the area and permanent residence as a specific form of this, are linked with the permanent perception of stimuli that shape identification with the region. Not only the length of their stay in the territory, but also other qualitative characteristics by which people can be divided into sub-groups (or structures), may affect the principles of developing an identification of residents with their region. Here we have in mind mainly their age, which to some extent corresponds with the previous quality of length of stay, and the level of their educational background; differences between men and women may also play a role.

Breakwell (1992) offered an evaluation of some of the principles by which people use places and regions to create their own identity. He presented the following hierarchically arranged principles:

- a. distinctiveness: the principle of distinguishing a person from others based on the place where he/she lives;
- b. continuity: the principle consists of the awareness of life continuity of a person living in one place on a long-term basis;
- c. the principle of self-esteem: a person has a feeling of respect for the place where he/she lives; and
- d. the principle of self-efficacy: by virtue of its character, a place can make human life easier in many aspects.

The phenomenon of the interconnection or identification of residents with the region, through which the residents attribute a role to the region in the hierarchy of regional consciousness, can be considered an essential subset of the regional identity of a region's inhabitants (Paasi, 2002), which is, according to Paasi (1986), also formed (secondly) by the idea of community, which may be either ideal or factual. The third formative subset of a population's regional identity is the image of the region. For completeness, it is essential to add that communities living outside the region also actively participate in the creation of the nature of this subset. In summary, it can be stated that the identification of a population with a region is an essential and organic part of a broader concept of regional identity. This phenomenon has another important feature in relation to the competitiveness of regions (Paasi, 2013), their further development and continuous reproduction, which is attested to by Chromý and Janů (2003), Paasi (2003), Raagmaa (2001, 2002) and Zimmerbauer and Paasi (2013).

As indicated by Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001), a variety of approaches can be found on both theoretical and methodological levels. There is no uniformly used name for the phenomenon; it is possible to find similar terms such as community attachment, sense of community, place attachment, place identity, place dependence, or sense of place. In empirical terms, there are also different approaches to particular problems of measuring the population's identification with a region. On the one hand, one hears opinions based on the humanistic tradition in geography claiming that identification with the region is a very abstract concept and an appreciation of how it is formed, develops and disappears is a complex task. When trying to accomplish it, it is appropriate to use a rather subjective and "softer" approach. The measurement of the phenomenon is then unnecessary (Lewis, 1979). On the other hand, there are researchers (Shamai, 1991; Shamai, Kellerman, 1985; Shamai, Ilatov, 2005) who are influenced by positivist approaches and who try to measure and consequently categorise the levels of process of identification with the region. This paper lies somewhere in between these two

approaches. Being aware of the fact that not everything can be measured precisely and following the evaluation of the above-mentioned principles offered by Breakwell (1992), an attempt is made to outline the present form of the concerned issue through the example of two case study regions.

### 3. The case study regions

Both of the previously-mentioned areas of interest have many identical or at least similar features. In particular, they are both rural areas (for a detailed typology of rural areas cf. Perlín, Kučerová, Kučera (2010)). According to a group of partial theories of regional development based on the core-periphery model, our areas of interest are, as mentioned earlier, peripheral areas (Mikšátová, 2005; Vaishar, Zapletalová, 2005). This finding is also supported by empirical investigation, especially by Musil and Müller (2008). The effects of peripherality are strongly influenced by another common feature of both studied areas, which is their border location (Jeřábek, Dokoupil, Havlíček et al., 2004). For the region of Valašské Klobouky, Vaishar and Zapletalová (2005) even use the term marginalised area, as they see this region, together with the Jeseník region, as problematic zones.

Location is then a strong influence on the phenomena that are clearly observable in the two areas, such as, inter alia, high unemployment, long-term negative net migration, a low educational structure of the population, or poor transport services. On the other hand, the regions differ structurally in terms of religiosity, which is significantly higher in the Valašské Klobouky region. Furthermore, we can find different patterns of voting behaviour, different ethnic relationships before 1945 – see Tab. 1 – and primarily the above-mentioned different trends of post-war development. According to Chromý's (2003:172) typology of regions based on regional consciousness, the two study areas would be ranked in different categories. While the Jeseník region – as stated above – is a region of lost identity (border area displaced after the Second World War, which lost its standard-bearers, i.e. autochthonous inhabitants), the Valašské Klobouky region, as a southern part of the traditional cultural and historic region of Wallachia, may be classified as a region of traditional regional consciousness. The post-war development thus caused the regions in question to show different regional milieu with different conditions for the formation of the regional identity of local inhabitants. The Jeseník region can be typologically assigned to the category of regions whose continuity of the socio-historical development was interrupted, while the Valašské Klobouky region can be typologically assigned to the category of regions whose continuity of socio-historical development was uninterrupted.

The Jeseník region and the Valašské Klobouky region can be perceived as spatially inexact, with boundaries of a slightly fuzzy character, which may have several reasons. First, the historical and administrative development of the areas, which resulted in changes in the administrative delimitation of these areas, should be mentioned. Further, the process of the subjective attribution of these regions' spatial extent by local residents, whose individual delimitations often vary, should be considered. In this context, the two regions under examination can be seen as a result of social construction. This is a concept, which is directly related to the points at issue and therefore it is dealt with in this paper.

Any exclusive spatial definition for the Jeseník region and the Valašské Klobouky region is hence denied here, and therefore, for the purposes of this paper, the author used the



current administrative zoning that existed at the time of field surveys organised in 2009 (Jeseník region) and 2011 (Valašské Klobouky region). Therefore, the Valašské Klobouky region was de facto identified with the administrative district of the municipality with extended competence (MEC) of Valašské Klobouky, and similarly the Jeseník region was defined as an administrative district of the Jeseník MEC. The two regions under study, in the form in which they were defined for the purposes of our paper, are shown in Figure 1.

**4. Research methods**

The necessary data used for the purposes of this paper were gathered during two field surveys. The first of them took place in the Jeseník region in May 2009, and this was followed by the second field survey, realised in the

Valašské Klobouky region in the period May-August, 2011. The acquisition of data and information took place using two methods. The main part of the fieldwork used a questionnaire survey, which was then supported by informal questioning of a selected group of respondents beyond the content of the questionnaire. In total, the above method included 696 residents. Out of this, 420 were respondents whose place of residence at the time of the survey was in the territory of the administrative district of the Jeseník MEC. This number equalled 1.02% of the total population (41,318) of the Jeseník region as of July 1, 2009 (CZSO, 2010). The remaining 276 respondents had their place of residence in the territory of the administrative district of the Valašské Klobouky MEC. Proportionally, it was about 1.17% of the population (23,656) of the Valašské Klobouky region as of July 1, 2011 (CZSO, 2012).

1930									
Jeseník region	Czechoslovaks		Germans		Others		Foreigners		
	Total	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)
	71,717	2,703	3.77	66,987	93.4	135	0.19	1,892	2.64
1950									
Valašské Klobouky region	Czechoslovaks		Germans		Others		Foreigners		
	Total	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)	abs.	rel. (%)
	24,341	24,091	99.0	68	0.3	39	0.2	143	0.5
Total population 1950									
Jeseník region			37,571						
Valašské Klobouky region			32,995						

Tab. 1: Population of the areas under study before and after World War II  
Sources: Bartoš, Schulz, Trapl (1982, 1994); CZSO (1951); author's processing

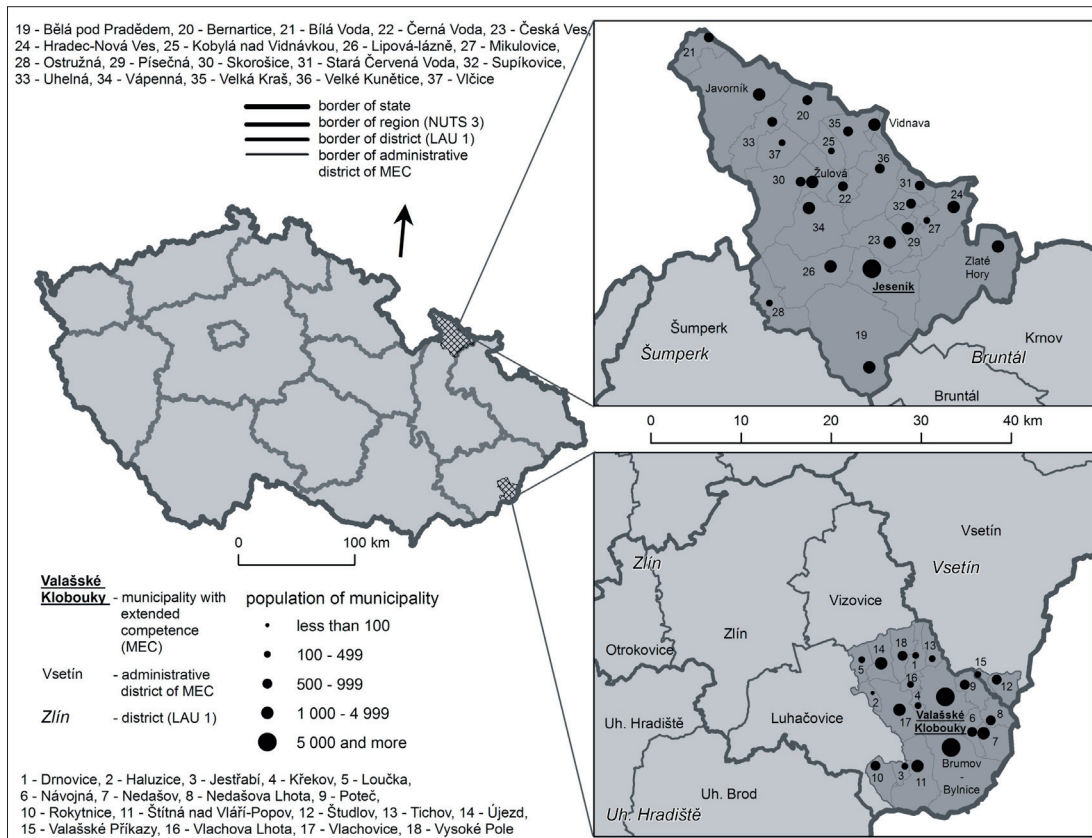


Fig. 1: Areas under study. Sources: ArcČR 500 version 2.0a; author's processing

The interviewed residents were subsequently structured according to four selected categories, which were based on identifiers that constituted a part of the questionnaire. The identifiers generating the final form of the profile were as follows: gender, age, education, and length of residence in a municipality within the area of interest. The resulting structure of interviewed residents is presented in Table 2. The level of compliance (representativeness) of the socio-demographic profile of the population sample that was investigated according to these categories with the identically conditioned profile of populations living in the regions of Jeseník and Valašské Klobouky at the time of the survey, was validated using the  $\chi^2$  test. The resulting findings are shown in Table 3.

The  $\chi^2$  test (at a significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) showed a compliance in the sets of interviewed respondents from the regions of Jeseník and Valašské Klobouky with the total population of these regions by the sub-groups of gender, age, and residence duration. On the other hand, a relatively great discrepancy was found between the educational structures of the two areas, indicated by the computed value significantly exceeding the tabled value of the criterion, especially in the case of the respondents from the Valašské Klobouky region. The main reason for the observed discrepancy may be seen in the exceptionally high proportion of university graduates (11.3% in the Jeseník region, 13.4% in the Valašské Klobouky region) in the groups of interviewed residents. We can say that as to the quantity of respondents and the

Time spent in the area as resident							
Jeseník region				Valašské Klobouky region			
Natives	Greater part of life	Lesser part of life	Short-lived	Natives	Greater part of life	Lesser part of life	Short-lived
45.5	33.5	14.0	7.0	59.4	27.5	10.9	2.2
Age group							
Jeseník region							
15–24		25–34		35–44		45–54	
21.6		14.3		16.9		14.6	
55–64		65+					
18.9		13.7					
Valašské Klobouky region							
15–24		25–34		35–44		45–54	
22.1		15.2		17.7		20.0	
55–64		65+					
11.6		13.4					
Education							
Jeseník region							
Elementary		Secondary school without graduation		Secondary school with graduation		University	
19.6		37.2		31.9		11.3	
Valašské Klobouky region							
Elementary		Secondary school without graduation		Secondary school with graduation		University	
22.5		35.5		28.6		13.4	
Gender							
Jeseník region				Valašské Klobouky region			
Males		Females		Males		Females	
50.8		49.2		44.2		55.8	

Tab. 2: The socio-demographic profile of survey respondents (%)

Sources: field survey; author's processing

	Jeseník region			Valašské Klobouky region		
	Criterion value	Critical value	Structure answers	Criterion value	Critical value	Structure answers
Structure by gender	0.16	$\chi^2$ (0.05;1) 3.84	yes	3.67	$\chi^2$ (0.05;1) 3.84	yes
Age structure	11.05	$\chi^2$ (0.05;5) 11.07	yes	10.82	$\chi^2$ (0.05;5) 11.07	yes
Educational structure	32.04	$\chi^2$ (0.05;3) 7.81	no	61.43	$\chi^2$ (0.05;3) 7.81	no
Structure by birthplace	1.12	$\chi^2$ (0.05;1) 3.84	yes	3.36	$\chi^2$ (0.05;1) 3.84	yes

Tab. 3: Representativeness of the sample:  $\chi^2$  test results

Sources: CZSO (2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2010, 2011); field survey; author's processing

qualitative character of selected sub-groups, the selected population group of respondents constituted a sufficiently representative sample of populations in the regions of Jeseník and Valašské Klobouky, except for the educational structure of the interviewed residents.

Statistical methods (using  $\chi^2$  tests of association) were also applied for testing hypotheses using the survey data, to identify statistically significant differences in the aggregate and partial structures of the responses between the two studied regions. As a basic set, the author selected the structure of responses from the Jeseník region, with the statistical assumption that the frequency of different types of responses from the respondents in the Valašské Klobouky region would coincide with the frequency of each type of answer of the respondents in the Jeseník region.

## 5. Analysis of field survey results

The attempt to evaluate the extent of a population's interconnection with their regions in the areas of interest was made by using a set of comprehensible closed questions, which in some cases were supplemented with open-ended sub-questions. Due to the size limitations of this paper, only three of these questions will be analysed. Specific formulations of the questions mentioned below were chosen in order to evaluate the emigration potential and principles (Breakwell, 1992) introduced in Section 2, by which people use places to create their own identity. When trying to reflect the last two of these principles, it was found that the fundamental question relating to the principle of self-esteem is Question 1: "Do you feel to be a patriot, i.e.: Are you proud of the region in which you live?". Table 4 presents responses to this question, with the simple region breakdown.

Table 4 suggests a relatively significant difference between the resulting declarations of respondents in both regions. With 82% of the answers to this question being positive, the respondents from the Valašské Klobouky region showed a significantly higher sense of pride in their region. On the contrary, the respondents from the Jeseník region declared their patriotism in 64% of cases. An essential difference was observed in the partial response "not at all". In the Jeseník

region, there were 76 respondents (18%) choosing this answer, while in the Valašské Klobouky region it was only one respondent (0.36%). The test of a significant difference between the regions ( $\chi^2$  test: note that all partial results of tests between regions and for sub-groups are integrated in Table 5, below) showed that the responses to this question showed statistically significant differences between the regions, as the critical value was exceeded many times. In this case, the null hypothesis of the compliance of the structures of responses between the studied regions had to be rejected.

In the studied partial socio-demographic categories, the greatest statistical differences were recorded in the responses of natives living in the region. In this category, the author would have expected stronger links with the region, because it is the area where they were born, grew up, stayed to live and hence they are usually very well familiar with it. This was outlined in Section 2, above, and therefore the observed differences seem surprising. The test results show that over 86% of the natives responded positively in the Valašské Klobouky region, while in the Jeseník region, it was only 60% of the natives. The natives of the Jeseník region addressed during the survey may be considered members of the next generation of post-war immigrants, who apparently failed to build a 'proper' sense of pride in their new home. Thus, they could not pass it onto the next generation, for whom the Jeseník region is their place of birth.

Another significant difference (from the  $\chi^2$  test) was detected in the sub-category of women, while for men nothing like that was evidenced. It is possible to say that the frequency of positive responses from females clearly prevailed in the Valašské Klobouky region again. Local women declared a positive response in more than 83% of cases, while in the Jeseník region it was only some 54% of women. Thus, it seems that women in the Valašské Klobouky region use their region for building their own identity more strongly than women in the Jeseník region.

If we look at the partial categories of respondents defined by their education, we find that the response rates were similar for the categories of inhabitants with basic education and those who had completed secondary education.

Questions	Responses	Valašské Klobouky region	Jeseník region
<b>Question 1:</b> "Do you feel to be a patriot, i.e., are you proud of the region in which you live?"	<i>Definitely yes</i>	33.7%	30.0%
	<i>Maybe yes</i>	48.6%	30.9%
	<i>Not really</i>	5.4%	17.2%
	<i>Not at all</i>	0.4%	17.2%
	<i>I do not mind</i>	11.9%	4.7%
<b>Question 2:</b> "Do you think the region you live in can make in some way your life easier as compared with other regions?"	<i>Definitely yes</i>	6.9%	6.9%
	<i>Maybe yes</i>	21.7%	9.4%
	<i>Not really</i>	43.2%	35.6%
	<i>Not at all</i>	15.2%	43.8%
	<i>I do not mind</i>	13.0%	4.3%
<b>Question 3:</b> "Have you ever thought about moving to another region?"	<i>Yes</i>	26.4%	38.7%
	<i>No</i>	73.6%	61.3%

Tab. 4: Descriptive statistics related to three key questions  
Sources: field survey; author's processing

Category	Question 1		Question 2		Question 3	
	critical value: $\chi^2(0.05; 4) = 9.49$		critical value: $\chi^2(0.05; 4) = 9.49$		critical value: $\chi^2(0.05; 1) = 3.84$	
	value of criterion	significant statistical difference	value of criterion	significant statistical difference	value of criterion	significant statistical difference
Total	22.00	yes	30.35	yes	8.32	yes
Males	7.18	no	20.56	yes	3.02	no
Females	17.03	yes	11.66	yes	4.47	yes
Natives	21.25	yes	24.43	yes	1.81	no
Bigger part of life	2.54	no	6.26	no	2.93	no
Lesser part of life	0.77	no	2.93	no	0.92	no
Short-lived	1.33	no	2.00	no	3.63	no
15-24	11.41	yes	11.43	yes	15.20	yes
25-34	4.18	no	5.41	no	5.52	yes
35-44	3.65	no	4.52	no	1.12	no
45-54	7.78	no	6.64	no	0.28	no
55-64	3.67	no	5.42	no	0.03	no
65+	0.73	no	1.23	no	0.18	no
Elementary	5.10	no	4.68	no	0.49	no
Secondary school without graduation	12.22	yes	10.76	yes	7.19	yes
Secondary school with graduation	3.53	no	12.13	yes	0.96	no
University	12.40	yes	4.78	no	3.29	no

Tab. 5: Results of testing for statistically significant differences between the partial socio-demographic categories of the case study regions. Sources: field survey, author's processing

Statistically significant differences were demonstrated in inhabitants with secondary education and university education. In both cases, a higher frequency of positive responses was found in the Valašské Klobouky region, and a higher frequency of negative responses in the Jeseník region. In the inhabitants with secondary education, the observed difference probably comes from their high representation in the total set of respondents in each of the regions; see Table 2. As to university students, whose representation was much lower, this result is rather surprising, as one might assume that the long-term effects of the educational system on this sub-group would have a positive impact on the positive expression of regional patriotism in both cases. The reason for this assumption is the importance of the education system during the formation of a population's regional identity (Chromý, 2003). This importance lies in the possibility of reproducing this phenomenon and contributing to the production of its strong form. With some caution, it is possible to say that this process was more efficiently applied for the university-educated respondents in the Valašské Klobouky region.

Results of testing within age groups suggest that only the youngest age category exhibited a statistically significant difference. The reason may be the higher frequency of negative responses to the question from respondents of this age group in the Jeseník region. The fact that more than 42% of the respondents answered negatively is not 'good news' for the Jeseník region, as this age group should mediate feelings of pride in the region, or, in a broader sense, the regional identity of local inhabitants in the future. In this context, young people in the Valašské Klobouky region (6% negative responses) represent a far greater potential for the future direction of their region.

Some interesting findings stemmed from comments which interviewees used to justify their answers. In the case of respondents from the Jeseník region, comments were given by 82% of residents who responded to the question positively, while only about a half (43%) of the respondents tried to justify their negative response. Similar ratios were observed in the Valašské Klobouky region: 85% of respondents justified their positive answers, while only 37% of respondents presented arguments for their negative attitudes. Perhaps we are seeing a pattern where people can more easily formulate positive aspects that they perceive within their region.

An attempt was made to classify the seemingly wide range of responses (when answering an open-ended question, respondents could provide a variety of reasons) within aggregating categories, whose definitions were not significantly different between the surveyed regions. Most people justified their positive responses by their long-term residence in the region, which they defined as their home and the area where their families live. The second most frequent category was physical-geographical and environmental conditions, aesthetic quality of the landscape, or, more precisely, the positive perception of these. The third most frequent type of responses demonstrated a certain emotional link with their region. Instead of tangible reasons that respondents were not able to express, they used emotionally-tinged formulations such as a "matter of the heart" or "I like it here". Another source of pride proved to be positive identification with the local community. In the Jeseník region, the respondents characterised local inhabitants by using adjectives such as "kind, honest, hardworking" or as people who are "happy to help". In the Valašské Klobouky region, the respondents highlighted such



properties as stability, independence, cordiality, and, very often, religiousness. Some respondents declared as a source of pride in the region, the local culture and traditions, or their overall satisfaction with the region.

As for the justification of negative responses, the respondents in both regions mostly complained of the lack of job opportunities and the related need to commute to work, high unemployment, and low living standards caused by financial problems. In both regions, the dissatisfaction with inadequate wage levels was obvious. The second largest share of responses then reflected poor infrastructure, transport services, and the low level of service facilities. In the Jeseník region, 24% of the respondents showed an overall dissatisfaction with the region, calling it a “backwoods” or “sleepy hollow” or “a region with nothing to be proud of”. In the Valašské Klobouky region, a much smaller share (8%) of people responded in this way; they mostly agreed that “there is no reason to be proud of anything”. In the Jeseník region, there was an apparent aversion to the local inhabitants, who were labelled as “bad, strange, hypocritical, ignorant, or stupid”, and negative descriptions of the local Roma community were quite frequent (“because there are too many Gypsies here”). In the Valašské Klobouky region, this justification was less frequent; the local community was criticised mainly for its enviousness, alcoholism, ignorance, and inclination to crime (thievery).

In order to map the principle of self-efficacy, which was introduced in section 2, the respondents were asked Question 2: “Do you think the region you live in can make in some way your life easier as compared with other regions?”. The basic structure of their responses is shown in Tab. 4. At first sight, it is evident that the share of positive responses, in both areas of interest, was much lower than in the previous question and some significant statistical differences can be seen, for example the high value of the resulting criteria in Table 5, in the structure of responses. While in the Valašské Klobouky region, 29% of responses were positive, in the Jeseník region the share was only 16%. An interesting contradiction stems from the composition of the negative responses. In the Valašské Klobouky region, 43% of the respondents believe that their region does not make their lives easier when compared with other regions. In the Jeseník region, an almost identical percentage of respondents (44%) declared the opinion that their region, in comparison with other regions, does not make their lives easier at all.

As with the previous question, statistical structures of responses differed most for the regions’ natives and the reasons were very similar. Natives in the Valašské Klobouky region identified themselves with the principle of self-efficacy (almost 30%) more than natives in the Jeseník region (almost 17%), where a higher relative frequency of negative responses to this question was logically observed. Partial results indicated again a greater bond of the key social category with their region in the Valašské Klobouky region.

In addition to women, statistically significant differences were also shown in the responses of men this time. The main reason was a far higher relative frequency of “not at all” responses of respondents from the Jeseník region, both males and females.

The sub-categories determined by the level of education showed significant statistical differences in respondents with some secondary or complete secondary education. Here again, the author believes that the significant

difference resulted from the majority representation of both categories in the total set of respondents. For the sake of correctness, let us add that the investigated principle of self-efficacy reflected more in respondents with secondary education from the Valašské Klobouky region. In people with basic education, it was found that the proportion of positive answers was the highest in both regions as compared with the other educational categories. The author assumes that these findings do not necessarily imply their closer connection with the region. More probably, it is a result of the low level of education and the related low level of awareness of other regions. By contrast, university graduates in both regions hardly agreed with the thesis that their region, with its specific characteristics, makes their life easier. This may be due to their education, which provided them with a higher level of knowledge and a better background in terms of information, rather than the low level of their identification with the region.

As for the individual age groups, statistically significant differences were identified in the youngest age category only. In the group of respondents between 15 and 24 years of age in the Valašské Klobouky region, nearly 36% assumed that their region is of a better quality, while in the Jeseník region it was less than 25%. In both cases, however, in our opinion, the values were low and the regional decision makers should therefore target their activities at building a regional image, which could strengthen the principle of self-efficacy in this crucial social category.

Positive responses in the Valašské Klobouky region were justified in 43% of cases, while in the Jeseník region, where people defined the reasons for their answers more easily, they were justified in 66% of cases. In both regions, the answers were most often explained using a perception of the environmental quality of the region, in particular minimum air pollution, healthy living environment, cleanliness of the country, or the feeling of residents’ closeness to the countryside. The second most frequent justification was the same again: presence of family and friends in the region, or good knowledge of the local environment. In the Valašské Klobouky region, the respondents often reported reasons stemming from the local community, to which 14% of respondents who answered positively attributed a kind of cohesion and the following properties: hospitality, diligence, honesty, openness, independence, kindness, and pride. In the Jeseník region, nobody mentioned these generalising qualitative properties or any other ones. In the Valašské Klobouky region, people also emphasised some religious and cultural aspects (trust, respect for traditions, and the resulting easier upbringing of children). The economy of the regions (quantitatively and qualitatively adequate job opportunities, wealth of the region, and its positive development) were identified in both regions as aspects which determine the formation of the principle of self-efficacy to the smallest extent.

In Table 4, we can identify the main results of answers to question 3: “Have you ever thought about moving to another region?”. This question was chosen deliberately in order to map the tendency of residents to emigrate. The relation between continuous emigration and the interruption of socio-historical development has already been outlined in the theoretical part of this paper. Concerning regional identity, the potential emigration of inhabitants is crucial in several respects (see Raagmaa, 2001). First, it may be caused by the weak regional identity of local residents (exacerbated by inadequate fulfilment of their economic needs), and on



the other hand it may also cause weak regional identity. Through emigration, the region loses its standard-bearers, who can later establish links to other places or regions, and the original source region of migration is then converted into an area of memories or recreation (Zich, 2003). In the worst case, the links to the original region die away completely. Peripheral regions, including the two case study areas, have to face such emigration trends as a result of a population's moving to central locations in consequence of the post-totalitarian and post-industrial transformation (Chromý, Skála, 2010).

Application of the  $\chi^2$  test showed a statistically significant difference again. It is obvious that the idea of leaving the region comes more often to the minds of respondents from the Jeseník region. Almost two-fifths (39%) of them gave positive answers to this question, while in the Valašské Klobouky region it was only about a quarter (26%) of the respondents. The evaluated sub-categories showed statistically significant differences in the responses of women, for whom the tendency to migrate was higher in the Jeseník region. A similar situation was found in respondents from the 15–24 and 25–34 age groups. In general, the likelihood of young people emigrating is again more pronounced in the Jeseník region.

According to the results of the  $\chi^2$  test, the structure of motives for potential emigration did not show any statistically significant differences. In both regions, the primary cause of a possible move was the labour market. In other words, to find or change to a job outside the region in question is clearly the strongest motive, as shown in Table 6. The motive of relationships is much less frequent. In the Jeseník region, a larger part of the respondents who were considering a move declared an overall dissatisfaction with their place of residence or their region, while in the Valašské Klobouky region, this motive was found only marginally.

The resulting structures of potential target areas for emigration did not show statistically significant differences and were easy to interpret. In both cases, the lack of ambition

to migrate to another municipality in the region can be explained by poor job opportunities, which the respondents perceived very well. Therefore, in both regions, the answer “elsewhere in the Olomouc (or) Zlín region” dominated, where ‘region’ in these cases was the new Administrative Region (AR): see Figure 2. This is attributable to the fact that, first, the respondents in the case study areas have a good general knowledge of the area of these administrative units. Additionally, it is desirable to talk about a relatively strong identification of inhabitants in the studied areas with the Olomouc AR and the Zlín AR, which was demonstrated during our investigation. Although these spatial entities were only institutionalised in their current form in 2000, it seems that because of the purposefully constructed image of the Olomouc region and Zlín region through the creation of symbols, an effective influence of local media, and visibility of regional institutions and awareness building through the educational system, these new self-governing Administrative Regions have successfully rooted



Fig. 2: Administrative regions of the Czech Republic  
Sources: ArcCR 500 version 2.0a; author's processing  
Note: The Region of Central Bohemia has its administrative centre situated in Prague

Valašské Klobouky region				Jeseník region				critical value: $\chi^2 (0.05; 3) = 7.82$	
reason of potential moving from the region (%)								value of criterion	significant statistical difference
relationship	employment	general dissatisfaction with the place/region	other reasons	relationship	employment	general dissatisfaction with the place/region	other reasons		
26.03	64.38	2.74	6.85	6.74	75.28	10.11	7.87	3.99	no
the destination of potential emigration (%)								value of criterion	significant statistical difference
elsewhere in the studied area	elsewhere in the administrative region	outside the administrative region	outside the Czech Republic	elsewhere in the studied area	elsewhere in the administrative region	outside the administrative region	outside the Czech Republic		
15.07	45.21	30.14	9.59	4.49	52.81	37.08	5.62	1.71	no

Tab. 6: Residents susceptible to emigration: their reasons and potential destinations  
Sources: field survey, author's processing

themselves in the minds of local inhabitants. Among various target destinations, the regional centres (Olomouc and Zlín) predominated, while former district cities (Šumperk and Vsetín) were mentioned less frequently. Naming these cities can be understood as a result of respondents' perceptions of the concentration of job opportunities.

In both regions, about one third of the respondents considered the possibility "outside the Olomouc/Zlín region", where the prominent cities played a key role again. The most frequently mentioned city in both regions was Brno, which most probably reflected personal experiences (studies, previous employment) of the respondents. In the Jeseník region, the factor of personal experience played a relatively strong role in the case of Ostrava and also Opava, while in the Valašské Klobouky region, Olomouc is followed again, though to a lesser extent, by Ostrava (see Table 6).

## 6. Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to evaluate whether the contemporary level of the identification of inhabitants with their region differs in typologically different regions in which the socio-historical continuity of development was different. We selected two areas of interest (case study regions) that correspond with this regional typology: the Jeseník region (resettled area with an interrupted continuity) and the Valašské Klobouky region (area that was not resettled and with an uninterrupted continuity). In order to reflect the set objectives, we formulated three research questions: first, how intense is the degree of identification of local people with their case study region; second, whether a comparison of the level of identification with their region for these case study regions, may be characterised as conformity or rather as difference; and third, whether the phenomenon of the degree of the identification of inhabitants with their region is affected by the basic socio-demographic profile of the population in these regions.

Answers to these questions were sought by analysing three factors, namely the principle of self-esteem, the principle of self-efficacy and the tendency to emigrate. The required data sets were obtained through surveying residents in the study regions and then analysed using  $\chi^2$  tests of association. The analysis showed differences in the intensity of the level of identification between the two regions: a higher level of identification of the population with their region was demonstrated for the Valašské Klobouky region, as both the principles that were rated (self-esteem, self-efficacy) were markedly apparent in the Valašské Klobouky region, while in the Jeseník region a greater tendency to emigrate was found. It is also reasonable to assume that the comparison of the phenomena under evaluation between the two regions has the character of difference rather than conformity. In the case of responses relating to the principle of self-esteem, the principle of self-efficacy and the tendency to emigrate, statistically significant differences between the two regions were demonstrated. In terms of particular socio-demographic sub-groups, we found statistically significant differences that count 'against' the Jeseník region between the responses of women (compared to men), as well as for other key social categories – especially natives and the younger age groups.

Based on these findings, it is possible to attribute a higher degree of regional identity to the inhabitants of the Valašské Klobouky region than for the population of the Jeseník region. It seems, therefore, that as compared with the Jeseník region, we identified conditions more

favourable for a further shaping of regional identity and higher levels of partial endogenous development potential in the Valašské Klobouky region.

Although the conclusions of this paper correspond with other findings (Chromý, Kučerová, Kučera, 2009; Jančák, Chromý, Marada, Havlíček, Vondráčková, 2010; Kuldová, 2005) demonstrating the differentiation of the Czech population's regional identity as a dichotomy between resettled and not-resettled territories, it is probable that no generalisation of the above-mentioned findings is possible at the moment. Although these findings reflect the importance of historically contingent processes for the development of the socially constructed population's regional identities, the author maintains that a formulation of general conclusions would have to be supported by a survey in other regions reflecting the afore-mentioned dichotomy.

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