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Territorial uncertainty and vulnerability as a challenge for urban and regional policy

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Modern chronicle of the village – case study Vysokomytsko microregion in the Czech Republic

The Landscape memory project maps the transformations in cultural landscape of the Czech Republic in the mental image of their inhabitants. It was necessary to identify, analyze and permanently document disappearing testimony in the memories of older generations. This testimony was made as a part of the cultural heritage of the village, in the form of so called “Modern chronicle of the village” using map outputs, field research, photographs and audio recordings of interviews with natives.

Target group were natives or old settlers (living in the village since the age of five) in the age of 65 and over. There were performed 10 interviews to obtain more objective view at the landscape structure. Interviews were performed directly in the field or in a public place with the current map, knowing a background of study area and syllabus issues of semi-standardized interview.

The Vysokomytsko microregion includes 28 municipalities with area nearly 200 km2. It is a voluntary association of municipalities in the Pardubice region, which was established in 2001. There are more than 21,000 inhabitants, but the population density is below average. Three quarters of municipalities are villages with more than 500 inhabitants.

Vysokomytsko microregion is predominantly rural type (Figure 1). The Vysokomytsko microregion has the largest percentage of agricultural land in the Pardubice region in the Czech Republic. Arable land is covering more than half of the microregion. Forest area is quite small and widely dispersed, larger area of forests is in the north of the microregion. Permanent grass land covers almost one fifth of agricultural land.

Modern chronicle of the village was made as interactive media; containing recordings of interviews with eyewitnesses, accompanied with visual material locally associated with the described verbally locations or events. The results showed that mental ties to the land are often decisive for the formation of local identity and stabilize the rural population.

Figure 1: Vysokomytsko landscape