

**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni**

**Fakulta filozofická**

**Bakalářská práce**

**The City of Pilsen – a summary of its affiliated cities  
and culture activities past and present**

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**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni**

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**Bakalářská práce**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracoval(a) samostatně a použil(a) jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This bachelor thesis deals with the topic the city of Pilsen as a metropolis of European importance and tries to describe its activities in past and present in the field of economy, education and culture. The city of Pilsen (Plzeň in the Czech language) is located in the west of the Czech Republic and it is the culture, economic and administrative capital of the West Bohemian Region. This work provides an analysis of Pilsen international relations focused on cooperation with affiliated cities realized not only at the political level between the Municipal Offices of cities concerned, but between particular institutions as well. This bachelor thesis introduces the character of all seven affiliated cities and attempts to give an idea of the cooperation in general and then to describe some specific projects.

Firstly the important historical facts are stated and then described events from the recent history that help to understand better the development and today's character of the city. The modern face of Pilsen is introduced with its present economic situation. Pilsen is presented as a university city with special regard on the international relations of the University of the West Bohemia and the programme of Erasmus. When considering the cultural aspect the opportunities that the city can offer to its visitors and even its inhabitants are described. In the field of culture the biggest attention is paid to the event the European Capital of Culture, as it is considered very important for the contemporary and future cultural development of the city.

This work is concerned with the affiliated cities of Pilsen and its mutual cooperation. The aim is to provide basic information about the partner cities, find out and determine in what field and what kinds of shared projects are realized between them and Pilsen. To learn all this information a help of the Pilsen Municipal Office and the Municipal Offices of the affiliated cities was needed. Very important when collecting the facts about the cooperation were the willingness and kindness of

representatives of the institution involved to communicate with the author and provide her with all the essential information. The author wants to express her gratitude to them again. On the other hand a reluctance of some institutions to communicate was shown and the information was very difficult to get then. Most of the information about the cooperation was obtained from the e-mail communication or the personal meetings with the representatives of the institutions involved. The preferred option was seeing in person as it is more effective for both sides and it is possible to get personally acquainted with the institution and its activities.

As this work provides information about the city of Pilsen in the field of culture, economy and education, it could be useful for people interested in visiting this place, in working or studying there. Because of providing the concept of the cooperation with affiliated cities, it gives a possibility to see how it is realized or what benefits can it have. This could be interesting especially for institutions interested in establishing relations with some possible future partner institution or for other individuals interested in this issue.

The main goal of this thesis is to provide an extensive analysis of the city of Pilsen and its relations local and international.

## **2 THEORETICAL PART**

### **2.1 The city of Pilsen**

Pilsen is a statutory city and the capital of the West Bohemian Region. The city is located at the confluence of four rivers - Radbuza River, Mže River, Úslava River and Úhlava River. These four then create Berounka River. Pilsen is home to more than 170 000 inhabitants and when considering the suburban areas, the number will exceed 200 000 people. The city area covers about 140 km<sup>2</sup>. Thanks to its advantageous location Pilsen is for centuries natural important industrial, cultural and business centre. Today Pilsen is the fourth biggest city of the Czech Republic, the second biggest city of Bohemia and is known in the world as industrial and brewery metropolis. The city is seat to the Catholic Diocese of Pilsen.<sup>[1]</sup>

#### **2.1.1 HISTORY**

Pilsen has been first mentioned as castle, a scene of a battle between the Duke Boleslaus II. and the Emperor Otto II. in year 976. The city situated in today's location formerly called New Pilsen was founded by the Czech King Wenceslas II. as a royal town in 1295 in the advantageous location at the confluence of four rivers and between Prague and the country's borders. Approximately until the 16<sup>th</sup> century the name 'Pilsen' was used as a masculine. The city lied on an important crossroads of three trade routes leading to Saxony and Nuremberg or Regensburg in Bavaria and became very soon an important trade and administrative centre of the West Bohemia which has remained up to the present time. Already in Middle Ages Pilsen had about 3 000 inhabitants and was the third biggest city in Bohemia, after Prague and Kutná Hora.<sup>[2]</sup> In years 1599-1600 Pilsen was provisional seat of the Roman Emperor and Czech King Rudolf II., what proves its significance. During the Hussite Wars Pilsen was the centre of the Catholic resistance to the



Hussites and it was unsuccessfully besieged for five times.<sup>[3]</sup> In the period of Renaissance the city of Pilsen began to thrive, since the citizens profited from the lively relations and trading with Regensburg and Nuremberg. Another reason was that Pilsen obtained the privilege with the golden bull from the Emperor Zikmund and thanks to that it needed not to pay taxes in the whole Kingdom of Bohemia. The flowering time of culture and economy disrupted the Thirty Years' War and in year 1618 Pilsen was even conquered for the first time in all its history by the Protestant troops of Ernst von Mansfeld.<sup>[4]</sup> The city began to prosper again at the beginning of the 18th century and new baroque architecture was built. Later the city fortification was pulled down and new plantings arose on its place.<sup>[5]</sup>

The new really prosperous times came in 19<sup>th</sup> century when the industrial revolution changed the character of the city and numerous industrial plants emerged. Among the most important were Škoda works founded by Emil Škoda in 1859 and new Citizen's Brewery, where the first beer was brewed in 1842. The growth of economy supported the construction of the extensive railway network that connected Pilsen with both centre of Bohemia and foreign countries. In that times new dominants of the city like museum, theatre or the Jewish synagogue were built.<sup>[6]</sup>

After creation of Sudetenland in 1938 Pilsen remained at Czech territory, but became literally a frontier town. During the Nazi occupation Škoda works in Pilsen were important munition factory and were forced to produce armaments for the German army. Because of this Pilsen was during the Second World War aim of several air attacks, but Škoda works were significantly damaged only at the end of war. An important date in Pilsen history is the 6 May 1945 when the city was liberated from the Nazi Germany by the 3<sup>rd</sup> American Army under the leadership of General George Patton. This meant the definite end of the Second World War.

After the Communist takeover of 1948 in the Czech Republic any information about liberating of the West Bohemia by the American Army was systematically suppressed. Pilsen also entered to history with the first massive demonstration against the Communist regime. On 1 June 1953 about 20 000 people, mostly Škoda workers, were protesting in the streets against the currency reform launched by the Soviet-oriented Czech government. Similar to other places in the Czech Republic began in Pilsen at the end of the 50's a massive expansion of building industry, especially building of housing estates. The first large one has arisen in Slovany and then the others were set up. The 60's are generally connected with releasing of regime, but this finished in year 1968 when Pilsen was occupied by the Red Army.

After the Velvet Revolution in 1989 the new city management began to eliminate Communism repercussions and started with revitalization of the city. The whole historical centre was reconstructed and since 1989 it has been under cultural heritage preservation. Pilsen started to change its industrial structure from the traditional heavy industries to more modern industry branches. The changes in economy caused the break-up of Škoda works, the biggest employer in Pilsen until that time. Part of the works was denationalized and the not anymore profitable production sectors were closed. The industrial areas were moved from the city centre to the city peripheries and in Borská pole arose one of the largest industrial districts in the country. A great significance not only for Pilsen and the West Bohemian Region had the foundation of the University of West Bohemia in year 1991. After years Pilsen started to be pleasantly looking and developing city.<sup>[7]</sup>

### **2.1.2 INDUSTRY**

In addition to being a business and administrative centre became Pilsen in 19th century an important industrial centre in heart of the West Bohemia. In these days were founded the large industrial complexes like

Škoda works or the Pilsner Urquell Brewery and the most famous products that represent Pilsen in the world are made there.

The most famous product that comes from Pilsen is definitely Pilsner Beer. Since 1898 protects its quality the trademark 'Pilsner Urquell'. The Pilsner brewery called *Plzeňský Prazdroj* is the leading brewery company not only in the Czech Republic, but in the whole central Europe. It has the biggest beer sales in the domestic market and exports its products to more than 50 countries all over the world. The glory of Pilsner beer spread to the world brandmarks Pilsner Urquell and Gambrinus, while Plzeňský Prazdroj is owner of two more breweries, Radegast and Velkopopovický kozel.<sup>[8]</sup>

Škoda works changed its character and structure after the year 1989 and transformed to a joint-stock company, now called Škoda Transportation, and its subsidiaries. The company production is now focused on transport engineering industry and its most important products are trams, locomotives, subway trains, trolleybuses and also complete driving gears for transport systems. Škoda Transportation is a dynamic manufacturer and has a strong position in both domestic and foreign markets. Its products are exported and used worldwide.<sup>[9]</sup> Mentioned can be exporting of trams to Hungarian city of Miskolc<sup>[10]</sup> or Wroclaw in Poland<sup>[11]</sup>, exporting of locomotives to Slovakia<sup>[12]</sup> or Lithuania<sup>[13]</sup> and many others. A big success was penetrating the Asian market by obtaining contract in China<sup>[14]</sup> and South Korea<sup>[15]</sup>. An important step was also expansion to American market when concluding a contract with American company Oregon Iron Works. On its basis Škoda sold its licence on trams manufacturing and trams manufactured according to Škoda know-how are produced in Portland and used also in the city of Tacoma.<sup>[16]</sup>

Other traditional branches of industry can be found in Pilsen as well. The north of the West Bohemia is rich in mineral resources and this

allowed creating of glass and ceramic industry focused mainly on building ceramics.

### **2.1.3 EDUCATION**

Pilsen is home to a lot of elementary schools and high schools. Higher education is represented by the Faculty of Medicine of the Charles University in Prague and primarily by the University of West Bohemia. The University of West Bohemia arose in 1991 by merging the Institute of Technology and the Faculty of Education. At the times of its foundation the University had five faculties (Faculty of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Education) and had about 4000 students. In 1993 has been joined Faculty of Law, in 1999 Faculty of Arts and in 2008 Faculty of Health Care Studies. Nowadays the University has 8 faculties, more than 60 departments and about 19 000 students.<sup>[17]</sup>

To maintain the international relations the University of West Bohemia is involved in Erasmus, programme encouraging mobility and transnational cooperation within the system of higher education institutions. The acronym Erasmus means European Region Actions Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. It is the integral part of the Lifelong Learning Programme and the aim is to increase and improve the quality of cooperation between the educational institutions in Europe and to increase the level of transparentness and compatibility of university qualification. Take part in the Erasmus can universities, some chosen colleges and intermediate organizations (consortiums). The Erasmus activities are intended for university students who want to study or work abroad, university pedagogues, employees or company instructors, who want to teach or educate themselves abroad. The basic condition for integration of the university to Erasmus programme is obtaining the Erasmus University Charter from the European Commission. All Erasmus activities are in responsibility of university representatives. It depends on a particular university which institutions will choose to cooperate with and

will conclude the bilateral agreement then. The cooperation and exchange of students per chance employees is realized only between the partner universities and the individuals are selected by the university where they study or work. Students who are going to study abroad within the Erasmus programme receive a scholarship paid out in euros that should cover their expenditures related to their studies. The amount of the scholarship varies in the length of the stay and the country where the target university is located. The scholarship is paid to students from their home university.<sup>[18]</sup>

What the seven affiliated cities of Pilsen and cooperation within the Erasmus programme concerns, two of them - Birmingham and Takasaki, can be straightly excluded as they are not European cities and do not meet the Erasmus conditions. When concerning the remaining five cities the University of West Bohemia cooperates with three of them, Regensburg in Germany, Limoges in France and Žilina in Slovakia. With these three cities cooperate seven of the total eight faculties, the only one that is keeping no relations with one of these universities is the Faculty of Health Studies. In Regensburg the affiliated institutions are the University of Regensburg and Fachhochschule Regensburg, in Limoges the University of Limoges and IUT du Limousin and in Žilina the University of Žilina. For the academic year 2012/2013 the total number of announced positions for the Erasmus scholarship in these cities is 35 for the students and 13 for the pedagogues. Out of these 35 positions four are announced for the University of Regensburg, eight for Fachhochschule in Regensburg, six for the University of Limoges, five for IUT de Limousin in Limoges and twelve for the University of Žilina. For pedagogues in most cases one free position in every university is available and their stay lasts one or two weeks.<sup>[19]</sup>

Naturally, the students of University of West Bohemia have a lot of other opportunities where to go for Erasmus. This work is concerned only with Erasmus positions in the affiliated cities of Pilsen.

## 2.1.4 CULTURE

Pilsen is the culture centre of the West Bohemia and its participating in the prestigious event 'European Capital of Culture' and the win of the title European Capital of Culture 2015 is helping the big cultural development of the city.

Pilsen can boast about the historical city centre where most of the architectural landmarks are located and that has been protected since 1989 as the city monument reserve. The dominant architectural features are the gothic St. Bartoloměj Cathedral, whose tower is the highest in the Czech Republic, and the Jewish Synagogue that is the second biggest in Europe and third biggest in the world.<sup>[20]</sup>

Pilsen has a long classic and puppet theatre tradition. The biggest and most significant is the J. K. Tyl Theatre, its new building built in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in neo-renaissance style belongs to architectural gems of the city. It has two permanent stages and both are home to the International Theatre Festival *Divadlo* that annually takes place in September and attracts many foreign theatre performers. Other significant is the Alfa Theatre which initially followed the puppet theatre tradition and now offers a wide range of performances intended for all age categories audience. Pilsen is also home to other theatres, but these two are the most famous and significant ones.<sup>[21]</sup>

Classical music production represents the Pilsen Philharmonic that has a long tradition, as its history and performing already began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The symphonic orchestra regularly represents Pilsen and all West Bohemian Region abroad, especially in Germany, Switzerland, Austria or Italy.<sup>[22]</sup>

Pilsen is home to more than 20 galleries, to the most significant ones belong the Gallery of West Bohemia or the City of Pilsen Gallery that is part of the townhall buildings complex. Other important are for example the University Gallery or the Gallery of Jiří Trnka.<sup>[23]</sup>

The most important city cultural centre is *Měšťanská Beseda* that is built in new renaissance style and has belonged since 1994 to historical landmarks. It disposes of few social halls, cinema, little theatre and famous art nouveau café. The other important is cultural centre Peklo that is seat to the Patton Memorial Pilsen, the only museum in the Czech Republic devoted to American Army.<sup>[24]</sup>

Pilsen is home to seven museums, the most famous is the Museum of West Bohemia. Unique is above mentioned the Patton Memorial Pilsen concerned with the American Army or interactive museum Techmania Science Centre. Expositions that are typical for Pilsen have the Museum of Puppets or the Brewery Museum.<sup>[25]</sup>

Pilsen is home to many traditional festivals. The most famous are the Liberation Festival taking place in May and celebrating the liberation of Pilsen at the end of the Second World War or the Pilsner Fest held in August and celebrating the glory of the Pilsner beer. Significant are also festivals *Smetanovské dny* that takes place in February and offers concerts, theatre performances, exhibitions and various broadcasts or *Skupova Plzeň*, the festival of professional theatres or above mentioned festival *Divadlo*.<sup>[26]</sup>

## 2.2 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

The 'European Capital of Culture' event is one of the most successful projects of European Union. The main idea and aim is to bring the European nations and inhabitants of European Union countries closer. "*The "European Capital of Culture" event gives European cities the opportunity to present a one-year cultural programme that highlights the richness, diversity and shared characteristics of Europe's cultures.*"<sup>[27]</sup> The win in this highly prestigious competition enables the city to make itself visible in the European dimension and mainly enables a big cultural development not only in the year of winning the title but also a long time after.

This idea was introduced for the first time in year 1985 by Melina Mercouri, the Greek Minister of Culture, and brought into practice by the Council of Ministers of European Union. In the same year became Athens, the capital of Greece, as the wholly first city the holder of the title 'European capital of Culture.' A possibility to take part in this project have cities of European Union Member Countries and the Council of Ministers is still the only authority that is competent to award the cities this highly prestigious title. In the past only one city in one year could get the title, but in relation to the enlargement of European Union and to rising of the cities interest to take part in the competition, the conditions of the project were adjusted to comply with the European Union requirements better and now two European cities have the opportunity to become the European Capital of Culture. The Decesion issued by the European Parliament and Council in 2006 determined the modified conditions of the programme and selection process.<sup>[28]</sup>

Taking part in the project requires meeting certain conditions. Every city interested in participating must submit a cultural programme of European dimension based on culture cooperation that meets the given criteria. These are divided into two cathegories, namely 'European dimension' and 'the city and citizens'.<sup>[29]</sup> European dimension means intensifying of cooperation between all culture institutions at all levels, developing and higligting Europe's culture richness and diversity as well as the common features of the European nations. 'The city and citizens' means increasing of citizens' interest in the European Capital of Culture event and to streghten the long-lasting culture developing of the city concerned. The selection process itself has four phases. Submission of application, where the EU country interested in participating publish an application call no later than six years before beginning the event, the cities interested have then ten months to submit their application. Pre-selection, where the selection panel comprised of 13 experts meets to shortlist the amount of applied cities no later than five years before the event starts. Final selection, where the selection panel meets again to



discuss the presented programmes of the shortlisted cities and suggests one of them as the European Capital of Culture and also submits to the EU country concerned and Commission the recommendation for the chosen city. Designation, where the two EU countries concerned present to EU institution the application of one chosen city that has recommended the selection panel and the Council officially designates one city as the 'European Capital of Culture' in the two Member States concerned. After this a phase of monitoring comes, where experts help the chosen cities to implement their programmes and after mid-term and final monitoring is decided if the city is awarded by granting the Melina Mercouri prize.<sup>[30]</sup>

For year 2012 the title 'European Capital of Culture' won the Portuguese city Guimarães and Slovenien city Maribor.<sup>[31]</sup>

Pilsen was given the title 'European Capital of Culture' for the year 2015 together with the Belgian city of Mons.

### **2.2.1 PROJECTS REALIZED IN PILSEN**

All the projects and preparations related to Pilsen as the European Capital of Culture 2015 are in charge of organization *Pilzeň 2015* that was found for this purpose. The city of Pilsen as the winner has completed a document dealing with a programme of culture development of the city in the next years - what necessary has to be improved to allow Pilsen to become a metropolis of European importance. As the aim of this bachelor thesis is not to analyse all the process and measures, only the important projects will be mentioned.<sup>[32]</sup>

To support the attractiveness and culture importance of the city and to enable a modern theatre performancing, a new theatre building will be built. The building will serve as a place for concerts of the Pilsen Philharmonic, performances of the ballet school or the J.K.Tyl Theatre management. Due to the construction of new building new types of performances will be realized. A new building of the Pilsen City Library will

arise and this institution will become a modern multimedia centre for providing information. A significant project is reconstruction of the former brewery building in Světovar. The reconstruction will change the old dilapidated industrial building to modern one offering space for practising and performing of unprofessional culture organisations, where various types of art could meet. Another building waiting for reconstruction is the present cultural centre Peklo which is located near the place where new theatre building should be built and therefore it is needed to think about this whole area as a culture quarter. But the matter of reconstruction is uncertain, as it is necessary to determine new function and owner of the object before the revitalisation starts. Establishing of the new expositions and construction of the new buildings for this purpose also belongs to the programme of culture. Mentioned could be the Patton Memorial Pilsen, an exposition considering the Second World War and Pilsen's liberating by the American Army or establishing space for exhibition in the water tower and connect it with the tour of the Pilsen underground. New buildings for galleries are intended to built, as the Gallery of the West Bohemia owns extensive collectings of the Czech works of art, but has no room where to exhibit them. Pilsen also negotiate with the Museum of Art and Industry in Prague and the aim is to establish its branch focused on lifestyle and design.<sup>[33]</sup>

### **3 PRACTICAL PART**

#### **3.1 AFFILIATED CITIES**

The main aim of the partnership between foreign cities is to encourage culture activities supporting the mutual knowledge of different nations and cultures. This is the reason why the range of Pilsen partner cities covers not only cities from the close European states, but also from the USA or Japan. The city becomes partner city of Pilsen when the Partnership Agreement is concluded and signed by the representatives of both cities. This agreement is mostly not time limited and is valid till one of the cities decides to end the partnership. According to the Partnership Agreement both cities are pledged to active cooperation and to active maintenance of contacts between the official representatives. Both sides of the partnership have to make an effort to develop incentives for the cooperation and to come up with new ideas. The partnership enables cooperation in a number of different fields of activity and brings a lot of opportunities how to promote the qualities of life in both cities due to more international cultural events and exchange of experiences or traineeships as well as promoting many of various shared projects.<sup>[34]</sup>

The city of Pilsen cooperates with seven affiliated foreign cities located on three continents. It is Takasaki in Japan, Birmingham in the USA, Liège in Belgium, Limoges in France, Regensburg in Germany, Winterthur in Switzerland and Žilina in Slovakia. The cooperation allows intensifying of the international relations. On the basis of the signed agreements Pilsen and its sister cities maintain the regular cooperation in various aspects, especially in a field of culture and education. The city of Pilsen welcomes every year a number of foreign artists and lots of international cultural events are held here. International festivals, concerts, expositions or theatre performances, all of these enrich the life of the citizens. But Pilsen has also a lot of talented artists to offer and the partnership allows them to represent the Czech Republic abroad. The exchange programmes that are realized between schools are an excellent

opportunity how to enable young people to discover and understand other nations and gain new experiences. From mutual projects that are realized due to cooperation benefit both cities.

Every year the city of Pilsen gets several cooperation offers from the new potential partner cities. When considering the offers the most important fact that has to be taken into account is the contribution of the partnership for Pilsen and also the contribution of Pilsen for the partner city. The partnership must be equally beneficial for both. Other important fact is that both cities must have at least some common features like similar number of inhabitants or similar culture interests and aims. The city of Pilsen won the title European Capital of Culture 2015 and therefore the international relations are currently oriented on the countries of European Union. Because of the financial and organizational demands, Pilsen is not presently considering concluding of any new partnership.

### **3.1.1 LIÈGE**

The city of Liège is the capital and administrative centre of the province Liège situated in the eastern Belgium close to the Netherlands and German border. On the area of 70 km<sup>2</sup> live about 476 000 people, the whole agglomeration of Liège has an area of 265 km<sup>2</sup> and is comprised by approximately 600 000 inhabitants. With this size is Liège the third largest metropolis in Belgium (after Brussels and Antwerp) and the principal economic and culture centre of Wallonia. Most of the population is French-speaking but with typical Walloon dialect. In the city lives an important Italian community (about 5%). The head of the city is mayor Willy Demeyer. Liège is known for the folk festivals that take place every year.

Liège is home to the only one state francophone university in Belgium, University of Liège, which consist of nine faculties and has about 20 000 students. Liège has an industrial background, as it was one of the most important steel-making centres in Europe. Even though the city

tends to modernise nowadays with modern buildings and international events, the steel industry – steel producing and manufacturing remain important part of its economy. The city of Liège is also a very important transport and logistics centre, as there is the third biggest river port and the seventh biggest cargo airport in Europe. Liège is a part of high-speed network which provides direct railway connection to the important cities in Belgium and also abroad. The highway network is important for national and international traffic.<sup>[35,36]</sup>

### Partnership since 1965

Officially the partnership was concluded during the visit of Maurice Destenay, mayor of Liège, and Mr. Albert Hanquet in Pilsen on 2 July 1965 when the Partnership Agreement was signed by Maurice Destaney and by Gustav Rada, the Chairman of the National Committee of Pilsen.

The way to the partnership between these cities was very long and has already started in 1945 when the Belgian volunteers from Liège, members of the 17<sup>th</sup> Belgian Fusilier Battalion, came to help by the liberation of Pilsen as a part of the American Army under the leadership of General G.S.Patton. After the end of the Second World War the representatives of 17<sup>th</sup> Belgian Fusilier Battalion showed interest to establish a partnership between Liège and Pilsen. In 1947 by the occasion of celebration of the Pilsen liberation was laid the corner stone of the American Liberation Monument which is situated at the top of the Americká Street. Among the important guests were also the members of 17<sup>th</sup> Belgian Fusilier Battalion. After the Communist takeover of February 1948 was the interest to conclude the partnership from Pilsen considerably smaller and the relations were weakened, but thanks to the initiative and efforts of representatives from Liège, the partnership agreement was ratified in 1965. Between the years 1965 and 1989 no common activities took place.<sup>[37]</sup>

### 3.1.2 LIMOGES

The city of Limoges lies on the Vienne River and it is the capital of Haute Vienne department. It is situated in the central-west part of France in the Limousin region that is called the green heart of France, because almost all its area is covered by forests. The city is now home to 142 000 inhabitants, called Limougeauds, the whole urban area to 260 000. The area is approximately 78 km<sup>2</sup>. Limoges is situated at a crossroads on the major European road network and enjoys the advantage of its excellent location, as it is the administrative and economic capital of the whole region. The head of the city is a mayor Alain Rodet.<sup>[38]</sup>

In 2008 the city of Limoges joined the national network of 139 cities and has been awarded as 'Town of Art and history'. This is very prestigious title given by the Ministry of Culture to the local authorities that have worked to promote the heritage of their region.<sup>[39]</sup> The city is seat to the University of Limoges, which belongs to the youngest universities in France. However this fact does not decrease its qualities, with the high number of innovations and modern design counts the university to the most reputable in France. The university has 5 faculties, 3 institutes and welcomes about 14 000 students every year.<sup>[40]</sup>

Limoges is world famous for its porcelain that has been made since 18<sup>th</sup> century and more than 50% of all porcelain made in France is produced here. Limoges is also known for its medieval enamels on copper and oak barrels used for Cognac production. Except for the strong connection with porcelain industry and ceramics, Limoges is home to important electrical (international company Legrand) or car industry (international company Valeo).<sup>[41]</sup> To the most significant cultural institutions belong the Francophone Multimedia Library, the Conservatory and a big number of museums.<sup>[42]</sup>

### Partnership since 1987

The partnership agreement between the city of Pilsen and the city of Limoges was signed in 1966. As the cooperation has not been very active, the agreement was renewed on 11 June 1987 and on 13 April was written down the Agreement of Cooperation and Development of Mutual Relations.<sup>[43]</sup>

### **3.1.3 TAKASAKI**

The city of Takasaki lies in Kantó lowland and is situated in the Gunma prefecture on the Honshu Island. On the city area of 460 km<sup>2</sup> live about 370 000 people. Takasaki benefits from its advantageous location on the important arterial road and easy accessibility to Tokyo provided by super express Shinkansen and national network of highways makes from the city an important business centre and one of the busiest place in the area. The head of the city is mayor Kenji Tomioka.

The city is home to the University of Economics which is visited by about 3000 students. In Takasaki a big emphasis is laid to education in a field of ecology and environmental conservation and a lot of proofs of it is there to be seen. The region is renowned for thermal springs and spas. Takasaki is surrounded by mountains and some of them are extinct volcanoes providing hot springs used for spas. Another typical feature of the town is its industrial character. Local factories employing traditional skills and forefront companies working at high-tech, machine or beverage industries are located in a separate industrial district. The most characteristic product of the traditional manufacturing is a Daruma Doll, doll that is supposed to bring luck. Other famous products are Japanese wine Sake, products made from Japanese plums or products of traditional food industry. The cultural aspect including love for arts and music as well as the admiration of nature is also very important feature of the city. Even though Takasaki is a regional city, it has an own city orchestra - Gunma Philharmonic Orchestra. Takasaki is home to institutions such as the

Museum of Art, the Kamachi Yamada Memorial Museum, the Gunma Music Centre which is headquarters of the Gunma Symphony Orchestra and also the main hall for the festivals or the Comprehensive Cultural Centre which includes the City Cultural Centre, the Children's Science Museum with a planetarium, a library and a public hall. Famous is also an extensive recreational park with the statue of the Goddess Kannon. In the park is situated the Dye Plant Botanical Garden which is the first botanical garden of this type in Japan.<sup>[44]</sup>

#### Partnership since 1990

Since the brewery Kirin Beer in Takasaki and the Pilsner Urquell brewery in Pilsen had kept the technical and economical relations for a long time, it developed into partnership of the cities. An important role played the previous mayor of Takasaki, Yukio Matsuura, who kept big interest in cooperation with Pilsen for the whole time when being in office. The Partnership Agreement was signed on 1 August 1990.<sup>[45]</sup>

### **3.1.4 REGENSBURG**

Regensburg is one of the Germany's oldest cities and is located at the confluence of the Danube and Regen Rivers. The city is the fourth biggest city in Bavaria and the administrative capital of the Bavarian region Upper Palatinate. Today Regensburg is a prosperous city of about 150 000 inhabitants and area about 81 km<sup>2</sup>. The city is home to many landmarks mostly dated to the Middle Ages and it is very attractive for tourists. Since 2006 the old city of Regensburg has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The head of the city is currently Hans Schaidinger.<sup>[46]</sup>

Regensburg is home to the renowned University of Regensburg and two other colleges. The University of Regensburg has highly developed international relations and every semester hosts about 1 500 international students. The Regensburg economy is based on automobile, engineering and electrical industry. The most important



companies that have seat in Regensburg are BMW, Siemens, BSH Bosh, Toshiba, Infineon and many others. Another important branch is the future industry as there is an important IT centre and about thirty Biotech companies located in the BioPark. Regensburg has a lot to offer, that is why an important role in Regensburg economy plays tourism. The city as one of the few in Germany was almost undamaged during the Second World War and can boast with an excellently preserved medieval city centre. The most famous buildings are the St. Peter's Cathedral built in gothic style and the Stone Bridge across the Danube River. However not only the sights are attractive, in Regensburg are lots of interesting museums and galleries.<sup>[47,48]</sup>

#### Partnership since 1993

Pilsen and Regensburg have lots of common features. Both have almost the same size, both of them are home to many historical buildings and both are significant cities to their regions. The big advantage for the partnership is that Regensburg lies only about 155 km from Pilsen what brings a lot of opportunities for developing the mutual projects. All these facts have contributed to the final decision to conclude the partnership and the Partnership Agreement was signed on 25 September 1993 by Zdeněk Mráček, the former city mayor of Pilsen, and Christa Meier, former mayoress of Regensburg.<sup>[49]</sup>

### **3.1.5 WINTERTHUR**

The city of Winterthur is a minor industrial city located in the German speaking part of Switzerland in the canton of Zurich in the northern part of the country. With about 110 000 inhabitants and area about 68 km<sup>2</sup> Winterthur is the sixth biggest city in Switzerland and after Zurich the second biggest city in the canton Zurich. The city is located in a basin of the Töss River and a little Eulach River flows through the town. Most of the town inhabitants speak German and the second important language is Italian. The city mayor is currently Ernst Wohlwend.<sup>[50]</sup>

Winterthur became an industrial centre during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as it was one of the homes of Switzerland's rail and machine industries with factories of companies like Sulzer or Rieter. But most of the heavy industries have now almost disappeared. The city is now changing to a city of services and high-tech industry, an important part of economy has become research and development and also financial sector. Union Bank of Switzerland, Switzerland's largest bank and also one of the world's largest banks was founded in Winterthur. Winterthur was also home to one of the largest insurance company 'Winterthur Insurance', but this company was acquired by a French company AXA.<sup>[51]</sup> The city is home to the University of Applied Sciences (*Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften*)<sup>[52]</sup> which was created by merging of four schools and to the University of Art (*Zürcher Hochschule der Künste ZHdK*)<sup>[53]</sup> where dance, music and theatre are possible fields of studying. This kind of university is unique in Switzerland. The cultural aspect of the town is also important. In the city are located 17 museums (important is the Oskar Reinhart collection), six theatres, eight cultural centres, the Regional and City Library and the Technology Park Technorama. Winterthur also has a chamber orchestra *Orchestr Musikkollegium Winterthur*.<sup>[54]</sup> Many buildings from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century are still preserved in the city centre, for example the Kyburg castle and Hegi castle. In 1989 Winterthur received the Wakker Prize for development and preservation of its architectural heritage. This prize is awarded annually by the Swiss Heritage Society.<sup>[55]</sup>

#### Partnership since 1994

The city of Winterthur established the relations with Pilsen in 1991 when the Cooperation Agreement was signed. But the partnership was concluded and the Partnership Agreement ratified in 1994. After 1989 the mayor of Winterthur visited many Czech cities and chose Pilsen as a future partner city. Crucial for the decision were the common features of both cities and important was also the fact that the mayor of Winterthur was a historian, he liked Pilsen very much and he offered Pilsen a help in

re-establishing the new self-governing and a new structure of the city after the Communist period.<sup>[56]</sup>

### **3.1.6 BIRMINGHAM**

Birmingham lies in a north-central part of the American state Alabama, it is its biggest city and the county seat of Jefferson County at the same time . The city has a population of about 250 000 inhabitants and area about 390 km<sup>2</sup>. Birmingham was founded as an industrial centre just after the end of the American Civil War and it was named after Birmingham, one of the most important industrial cities in the United Kingdom. Today Birmingham is a very important industrial and business centre of the south-east and also one of the most significant bank and financial centres of the whole United States. The present mayor of Birmingham is William A. Bell.

The field of education is very important in Birmingham and therefore the city is home to many renowned schools. One of the most important is the University of Alabama which has about 20 000 students and employs the biggest number of people in Birmingham. In the whole history of Birmingham the crucial role in the economy has played the steel industry. Nowadays the structure of economy has changed a little bit and even though the production and processing of steel are not longer the only one important branch, it still plays a key role in Birmingham's economy. Other important branches of industry are automobile, aerial or cosmic industry and also biotechnology and research. Birmingham is also a leading bank and financial centre and is home to a lot of financial institutions and insurance companies.

Birmingham is the cultural capital of Alabama and a lot of entertainment is to be found there. The city is home to lots of galleries and museums, for example to the famous Museum of Art. Birmingham is seat to the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and the state ballet and opera. The

city is also home to several theatres and numerous festivals presenting music, films or regional heritage.<sup>[57,58]</sup>

#### Partnership since 2005

The main initiative to have a partner city in the USA was the fact that Pilsen was at the end of the Second World War liberalized by the American Army. In 2004 the USA embassy in the Czech Republic recommended Birmingham as a possible suitable sister city. A big role in establishing of relationships with Birmingham played the former American ambassador William Cabanis, who comes from Birmingham and who helped to establish the diplomatic relations there. The Partnership Agreement was ratified by the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of Pilsen liberation by the American Army in May 2005. The Director of Birmingham Sister Cities Commission, Scotty Colson introduced: „Our signing of the relationship several years ago was a wonderful event that featured the Victory day parade and celebration.“

### **3.1.7 ŽILINA**

The city of Žilina is located in the north-west of Slovakia, close to the Czech and Polish border. It lies at the confluence of three rivers, Váh River, Kysuca River and Rajčianka River. The city is with about 85 000 inhabitants and area of about 80km<sup>2</sup> the fourth biggest city in Slovakia and the biggest city situated on the Váh River. Žilina is an administrative centre of the Žilina Region and also Žilina District. The city lies on an important road and railway junction and has also an international airport. The head of the city is mayor Igor Chuma. The city is home to the University of Žilina, known as the University of Transport and Communications in the past.

Žilina is an industrial hub of the north-western Slovakia and also an important business centre with fast-growing economy. Automobile industry is one of the most important branches and Žilina is a seat of

international Korean car company Kia, the biggest employer in the city. Other important branches of industry are engineering, construction and transportation engineering, chemical industry and also wood processing and paper production.<sup>[59]</sup> Žilina is surrounded by mountains and beautiful nature and in its surroundings four national parks are located. Besides that in Žilina there is a lot of landmarks to be found and its historical centre is protected as a city monument reserve. This all creates excellent conditions for promotion of tourism. The city is noticing a rapid growth of tourism in last couple of years and incomes from tourism are also important for Žilina economy.<sup>[60]</sup> As a regional city, Žilina is a cultural centre and is home to two theatres, several museums, galleries and regional library. The city is seat to the internationally renowned State Chamber Orchestra Žilina.<sup>[61]</sup>

#### Partnership since 2008

As the Czech Republic and Slovakia have the common historical development, there was an initiative from the side of Pilsen to find an affiliated city in Slovakia. When looking for a suitable city a help of an organisation called *Regionální obec Slováků Plzeň* was provided. Žilina was found as the best city, because it has a lot of common features with Pilsen. The interest to conclude partnership was reciprocal and so the representatives of both cities signed in 2008 a Cooperation Agreement valid for two years and in September 2010 the Partnership Agreement for an indeterminate period was signed.

## **3.2 MUTUAL COOPERATION**

### **3.2.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The facts and data about the cooperation described here are information obtained either from an email communication or personal meeting of the author with the chosen institutions representatives and from documents obtained while communicating with them.

After searching for the mutual cooperation between Pilsen and its affiliated cities, it can be said, that Pilsen still cooperates with all of them, but with some the cooperation is not such active anymore as in the past. Important thing to say is that Pilsen is interested in maintaining future relations with all of these cities, the interest is mutual and therefore the representatives of the cities are trying to come up with new possible fields of cooperation and new initiatives for other projects. Even though Pilsen does not currently intend to find a new affiliated city, it does not completely refuse establishing of some new diplomatic relations in case some city would be interested. However the aim of the Municipal Office of Pilsen is now to intensify the cooperation with its present partner cities and to increase the awareness of Pilsen's citizens about these cities. In the Pilsen Municipal Office the department responsible for cooperation with affiliated cities is called Protocol Department of the Mayor's Office.

Most of the cooperation is realized in the field of culture by way of different festivals, exhibitions or international performances and in the field of education mostly by way of different exchange stays or visits.

There are two types of cooperation. The first type are the projects organised on the initiative of the Municipal Office of Pilsen such as diplomatic visits, events related to celebration of partnership anniversary, chosen festivals etc. The second type is cooperation established and realized on the initiative of the institutions themselves due to their own effort. This covers cooperation of all possible institutions, in case of Pilsen especially of schools. All shared project are then in competence of these institutions.

These two types of cooperation stand for two types of cooperation funding. The Municipal Office of Pilsen has an own draft budget for financing the activities concerning affiliated cities actions and all money needed are taken from this budget. Municipal Office of Pilsen is not applying for subsidies from the European Union to fund the cooperation with affiliated cities. The institution themselves have a chance to obtain

money by asking for a grant from the Municipal Office. To get the money, the institutions must submit a request containing an exact description of the activity, its main aim and state for what exactly is the grant required. The request is under discussion of the Commission of the City of Pilsen Council for European Integration and Affiliated cities that decides of approving or not approving of the grant.

### **3.2.2 VOLUME OF COOPERATION**

What the volume of cooperation among the total of seven affiliated cities concerns, there are to distinguish two of them with those the cooperation is regular and very active – Regensburg and Takasaki and on the contrary one of them with which almost no projects are now realized– Birmingham. A very little active city what the amount of project concerns is also Winterthur.

What the amount of shared projects concerns the most intensive cooperation is realized between Pilsen and Regensburg, what is not so surprising, because Regensburg is the closest affiliated city of Pilsen. There is an advantage of short distance between the cities and smaller financial demands of projects realized. Important is also the fact that the cities have a lot of common. With Regensburg not only the biggest amount of shared projects are realized, but the incentives for cooperation have been developed in very various fields.

Takasaki on the other hand is a city of completely different culture located in a distant part of the world what may seem as a disadvantage for developing of intensive cooperation. However, the interest in discovering another culture shown both from side of Pilsen and Takasaki supports the active cooperation. From the very beginning as the most perspective field for cooperation is seen the field of culture. A significant phenomenon that helps the developing of the relationships is the financial support of Takasaki that is willing to pay most of the costs related to the shared projects.

On the contrary the cooperation with Birmingham is now not really active and the main reason are high financial demands caused by a big distance between the cities. The funding of mutual activities is not supported in such way as in the case of Takasaki. Scotty Colson, director of Birmingham Sister Cities Commission, stated about the current situation: "We have not been as active last year as we would like (economic problems are touching all of us) and former USA Ambassador Cabaniss, who is a Birmingham resident was able to help sponsor programs in the past." That is the reason why in the last year a meeting took place where the representatives of both cities discussed the possible fields of future cooperation. It was negotiated a possibility of starting so called 'pen pal' project among the students of some schools and a possibility of realizing some art exhibitions or competitions. There was also discussed an issue of possible exchanging of skilled workers between Pilsen and Birmingham Zoo. Affiliated institutions are for example the Birmingham Southern College and the Institute of Art and Design of the University of West Bohemia or Rotary clubs in both cities, but in the last year no cooperation or projects were realized between them.

Winterthur also belongs to less active cities what the amount of cooperation concerns. The reason might be the change in the administration board in Winterthur. Here can not be determined one particular field of cooperation, because the shared activities are different and random. In 2009 took place a meeting dealing with the possibility of using money from the Swiss funds for cooperation between the interactive museum Techmania in Pilsen and Technorama in Winterthur. However the negotiation failed and other projects were preferred. Nowadays, performing of J.K. Tyl Theatre in Winterthur belongs to the only regular realized projects.

What the remaining three cities concerns the cooperation is realized regularly, but is not so various as in case of Takasaki and Regensburg. It rather focuses on one or few particular fields where the cooperation is the most intensive.



In case of Liège most of the mutual projects were based on cooperation with the Fraternity of Belgian Veterans. After 1989 the Belgian veterans from 17<sup>th</sup> Belgian Fusilier Battalion have started to visit Pilsen every year in May by the occasion of the Liberation Festival. To support the mutual relations they decided at instigation of Paul Jacobs to establish a writing competition for the French-speaking students of all secondary schools in West Bohemian Region called Jan Palach's Prize. The task is to write an essay in the French language on a topic assigned by the Fraternity of 17<sup>th</sup> Fusilier Battalion that always concerns the history or present of Europe. The competition is being announced every two years since 1990. The last winner until now was in 2010 Ester Kizmanová, who wrote the best work on topic 'Are you for united Europe or against and why?'. The price for winner includes a return ticket from Prague to Liège and two weeks stay in the families of Belgian veterans, all expenditures are covered by the Fraternity.<sup>[62]</sup> However in the last year the Fraternity finished its activity and the representatives of both cities are trying to find some new possible fields of cooperation. At the last meeting the cooperation of primary or secondary schools in programme of Comenius was negotiated. What other mutual cooperation between these two cities concerns, the city of Liège promised Pilsen support in its candidacy to the European Capital of Culture and Pilsen promised to support Liège in the project of Expo (project of world and international expositions), as Liège, on behalf of Belgium, is running to organise an International Expo and submitted its application to be the hosting city in 2017 with the theme 'Connecting the world, linking people – Creativity for a better future.' In Pilsen annually takes place a festival *Bonjour Plzeň* introducing the culture of the French speaking countries and the representatives or chosen artists from Liège visit Pilsen every year. The festival is organised with the aid of *Alliance Française* and in 2012 will take place the twentieth year.

In case of Limoges, the most intensive cooperation is realized in the cultural scene, especially in music scene. The Conservatory in Pilsen

cooperates with the Conservatory in Limoges (*Conservatoire National de la Région de Limoges*). The schools were coacting in a project focused on classical music based on exchanging students and pedagogues with the aim to encourage the students to get to know the French and Czech music better. Other shared projects are common concerts, specialized courses organized either in Pilsen or in Limoges. The cooperation is also realized between the Children's Choir in Pilsen and in Limoges. Two important events belong to the festival called the Czech Days in Limoges held in Limoges and presenting the Czech culture and again the festival *Bonjour Plzeň* held here in Pilsen and presenting the francophone culture.

Žilina is the youngest affiliated city of Pilsen, but as the cities have a big amount of common features, the cooperation is very likely to develop quickly and be beneficial. The cooperation is now most intensive in the field of culture. The two most important events are festivals the Days of European Culture in Žilina presenting culture of all its affiliated cities with the aim to strengthen the cooperation and introduce it to the public and the Czech-Slovakian Days in Pilsen presenting Slovakian culture and traditions. What the particular institutions concerns, with Žilina cooperate for example the Pilsen Conservatory or the Alfa Theatre. So far two primary schools in Pilsen have established the relations with schools in Žilina, namely the 14. and 16. Primary Schools in Pilsen. When the author was speaking with the directress of the 14. Primary School, she stated that the established relations are very beneficial and highlighted the interest of children in the projects. In year 2011 ended the project 'Our school connect us' and has begun a new one 'Anglicisms around us' intended for pupils of the sixth grade. The task was to draw a picture and add a description in English, Czech and Slovak. From the collected drawings was made an exhibition which also supported Pilsen as a European Capital of Culture.

### **3.3 SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF COOPERATION**

#### **3.3.1 PILSEN-REGENSBURG**

On the basis of short distance, easy accessibility and of the fact that the German language is taught in most of the schools in Pilsen, contacts have been made between primary and secondary schools and also between the universities. The University of West Bohemia signed the bilateral contract within the Erasmus programme with the University of Regensburg and with the Fachhochschule Regensburg. Relations have been established between the Institute of Art and Design and the private college Regensburg Academy. On the basis of the bilateral contract signed in 2008, expositions of students works are occasionally realized either in Pilsen in the University Gallery or in Regensburg. What the cooperation among primary schools concerns, partnership since 1992 exists between the 28. Pilsen Primary School and the Gerhardinger Primary School in Regensburg. A specific example of cooperation is performing of children choir of 28. Pilsen Primary School in Regensburg. Another example of primary schools cooperation can be an art competition announced by the occasion of the Earth Day in which participated pupils from the Von der Tann Schule in Regensburg. However, as the most intensive and beneficial was found the cooperation realized between high schools and therefore two detailed descriptions of projects will be introduced.

The first one is example of cooperation between the Business Academy in Pilsen and the Matthäus Runtinger Trade School in Regensburg. Partnership between these schools has a long tradition, as the bilateral contract was signed already in 1994. There are two types of projects realized - commercial praxis and exchange stays of students. The programme of commercial praxes is intended for maximum of 8 students of the third grade and lasts three weeks. Students are chosen by teachers and the only conditions are good knowledge of the German language and good study results. Financial assistance is arranged by

Tandem, organization dealing with the Czech-German exchange of young people and its funding. The students are placed into firms in Regensburg and have the possibility to experience some business tasks in praxis. Firms in Regensburg traditionally supporting this project are for example *Landratsamt Regensburg*, *Euro Graphics*, *Papier Liebl GmbH* or *Krankenhaus Wörth*. In the academic year 2010/2011 the students from Regensburg came to Pilsen for the first time, as it was very difficult due to the language barrier to find some firms or organisations where the German students could be placed. The second type of project is the programme of the reciprocal exchange stays which last one school week and is intended again for students of the third grades. Necessity for participating in this programme is a language knowledge, either German or English, and having a possibility to accommodate the student. Students coming for the exchange stay are always accommodated in families of local students and vice versa. Every year a topic of the exchange is selected and a programme for every day of the week is completed, the students then work in groups on different activities and then make together a final presentation in the German language. The topic of the last presentation was the Czech and Bavarian cuisine. During the week some trips are realized, one always to Prague. Most of the expenses are covered from the subsidy provided by the Commission of the City of Pilsen Council for European Integration and Affiliated Cities. The rest of the money is paid by the Association of Business Academy Supporters and students also pay a symbolic financial contribution.

Similar programme of exchange stays is realized between the grammar schools, *Sportovní Gymnázium* in Pilsen and private *Gymnasium Pindl* in Regensburg. It again goes about the reciprocal one week exchange of students that has a certain topic and is intended for students of the third or second grades. Every year participate about 30 students, 15 from each school and they are accommodated in host families. The topic of the exchange programme is mostly connected with

nature or science as the Pindl Gymnasium is scientific oriented. The topic of the last programme was 'Waters' and the next one is going to be 'Sun'.

When talking about the exchange programmes it is important to mention the Tandem organisation. It is an organisation supporting exchanging of young people between the Czech Republic and Germany in way of getting money for the projects. The Tandem activity is not strictly oriented on the mutual cooperation between partner cities because its activity has significance within the whole Czech Republic. However, nowadays it starts to be interested in it more and more. Most of the money that is Tandem able to obtain comes from the Czech-German Fund for the Future or from the subsidies provided by the County Council. When considering the place for location of the German Tandem organisation, Regensburg was found as the best and most suitable city and one of the factors influencing this decision was that Regensburg is an affiliated city of Pilsen.

Other examples of cooperation concerning young people are activities of *Junák*, association of Pilsen Scouts, which annually organizes a cycling tour between Pilsen and Regensburg (already the sixtieth year) or diocesan organization *Brána*, which organizes bus trips for young people to Regensburg with the aim to discover the city better. They also had an opportunity to meet the bishop of Regensburg, as the Diocesan Churches in both cities maintain close relationships. Active is the cooperation in the field of sport that includes participating in different types of tournaments, especially volleyball.

Pilsen is also very interested in the project Mini-Regensburg and is considering establishing the project Mini-Pilsen. Project Mini-City is a city of children where they simulate real city life with all the institution and with help of adults organizing this project manage all the institution as in a real life. Negotiations are in progress and organizers of this project from Regensburg are trying to pass the experiences to their colleges in Pilsen. TRK organisation established in Mini-Regensburg the Pilsen Info Centre

and childrens from Mini-Regensburg also visited Pilsen in the last year. Establishing of the Mini-Pilsen project would increase the attractiveness of Pilsen as the European Capital of Culture.

Culture cooperation can include partnership between the Pilsen Gallery and *Kulturamt der Stadt Regensburg* and their shared expositions. In Regensburg every two years a festival called *Bürgerfest* takes place, which is always visited by the delegation of representatives from Pilsen. Artists from both cities participate in various events, for example *Jazz-weekend* in Regensburg or *Hudební rej* in Pilsen. Every year takes place reciprocal subsidized trip to Christmas Markets.

Cooperation is maintained by firemen and police of both cities. As an example can be introduced the Jupiter Project organized by the Bavarian and West Bohemian police intended for students of primary and secondary schools in Pilsen maintaining relations with some partnerschools in Bavaria. The project deals with the criminality prevention, it is organized in an interactive way and is planned for the academic year 2012/2013. The programme includes two-day theoretical part and three-day practical part where students can apply their theoretical knowledge and which is held in the climbing park in Hirschbach, Germany.

The partnership between Regensburg and Pilsen will reach 20 years in the coming year of 2013 and therefore lots of important culture events are going to be prepared by this occasion.

### **3.3.2 PILSEN-TAKASAKI**

Although the long distance between the cities does not allow developing of the cooperation in such various fields as in the case of Regensburg, it is outstanding that the cooperation is so active. As it was already mentioned, a big role plays the financial support of Japan of projects held in both cities and also the long-term interest of Mr. Yukio

Matsuura, former Mayor of Takasaki, in the Czech culture. Nowadays he had been replaced, but interest in cooperation still remains.

Close partnership has been concluded between the Pilsen and Takasaki Conservatory, what definitely increases the status of the school. After the opportunity to look into its annual reports, it can be said that year 2010 was the most active one, partly due to the twenty years partnership celebrations and partly due to the reciprocal exchange programme. The Japanese delegation, when visiting Pilsen, was accompanied by the Czech flute player who lives and works in Takasaki. The Japanese students familiarized with the conservatory and visited some interesting places. Students of the Pilsen Conservatory are regularly invited to Takasaki, in 2011 visited Takasaki three talented students.

A very important project for representing Pilsen and even the Czech Republic abroad in outlying Japan became an art exhibition called *Hory a srdce* placed in the Takasaki City Gallery in 2009. The exposition is considered very important and successful, because it is not very usual that renowned Japan gallery would exhibit the Czech works of art. This was enabled due to the excellent relations between Pilsen and Takasaki. The exhibition introduced works of the Czech painter and xylographer Josef Váchal and present artist Jiří Kornatovský who works in the Institute of Art and Design.<sup>[63]</sup> The exposition's success was followed by the other important projects. The directress of Pilsen School of Art *Zámeček* has negotiated exchanges of student works with a school in Takasaki. Jan Dienstbier made extensive photographs collection of the exposition and these were later exhibited by the occasion of twenty years partnership. The fact that the director of the Takasaki City Gallery sent brochures including Pilsen logo to more than fifty famous Japan galleries and the fact that the exhibition was mentioned in Japan medias helped with representation of Pilsen abroad.

In recent years a significant event was the celebration of the twenty years partnership that took place in September 2010 in Pilsen and was

followed by the celebrations in Takasaki. It was also an important event for supporting Pilsen as the European Capital of Culture 2015. In Pilsen various types of exhibitions thematically connected with Japan were realized, for example *Měsíce a květy*, joint exhibition of the Czech and Japan artists or *Souběžná krajina obrazu*, joint exhibition of Pilsen and Takasaki students. Seminars of the traditional Japan art like calligraphy, origami or bonsai growing or various lectures about Japan were also held. In Takasaki took place interactive seminars about the traditional Czech crafts, gastronomy or dance as well as various exhibitions presenting the way of life in Pilsen. Takasaki arranged an exhibition of works of Alfons Mucha and exposition presenting Pilsen as the European Capital of Culture. The Alfa Theatre participated in celebrations with ten-day tour and interactive exhibition of puppets and five students of Pilsen Conservatory were also present. All the cost needed for the 22 persons representing Pilsen in Japan were covered by Takasaki.

To important projects carried out in the last year belongs arrangement of the trailer to film *Splněný Zen* made by Antonín Procházka - story filmed according to the real happenings during the visit of the Alfa Theatre in Takasaki. Music to the film will be composed by the world-known Japan composer Hideaki Ishi and all will be realized under the patronage of Petr Holý, director of the Czech centre in Tokyo. The film is a part of the winning application of Pilsen in the event the Capital of Culture and will help to make it visible abroad.

Cooperation is also realized in a field of environmental protection. Pilsen is involved in hexalateral programme of international conferences established in 1995 by Takasaki, which has integrated all its affiliated cities. Besides Pilsen these are Santo André in Brasil, Battle Creek in the USA, Chengde in China and since 2006 Muntlope in the Phillippines. Every year the conference has been held in one of these cities, the topic was chosen by the hosting city and experiences in field of environmental protection were exchanged by its participants. In 2009 the conference



took place in Pilsen and the final evaluation will be completed in the last conference in Takasaki in 2012.

## 4 CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis provides a comprehensive description of the city of Pilsen and its development by way of introducing a summary of its activities in the field of economy, education and culture. The main aim is to gain a complete overview of the city activities local and international. When describing the cultural aspect of the city a part devoted to the event European Capital of Culture was added, as it is considered to be a very significant factor influencing life in the city and its development. The obtained analysis of the city serves as a source of information that enables gaining a better idea of the city operation.

The thesis deals with an analysis of Pilsen's international relations and as the thesis attempts to provide complete knowledge of the city activities and its significance in the world, it includes information about the affiliated cities of Pilsen and its mutual cooperation. This work gives the general data about the cities and tries to explain in what way are the shared projects implemented. When dealing with this section the author's intention was to search for the required information to be able to provide a summary and analysis of the cooperation realized and its evaluation. Most of the information and facts necessary for elaborating this part was obtained in personal interviews, as it is considered to be the best way of getting the right facts with the opportunity to ask some further questions or gain any extra information. The e-mail communication was found as a good instrument for obtaining information, especially when it was not possible to arrange a personal meeting, for example when communicating directly with the officers in the affiliated cities. In case of failure to get the information by way of one of these two methods, the additional information was found in the informative reports or other official documents provided by the Pilsen Municipal Office. In final information processing the author decided to appraise the cooperation in general and then introduce the description of the specific projects only in case of two chosen cities. The reason is that the cooperation is most various and

interesting there and also the difference of these two cities is to emphasize.

The cooperation between Pilsen and its partner cities is seen as a relevant piece of city operation and the analysis helps to complete the total overview of the city. Possibility of further exploring this topic in wider scope offering time to carry out deeper research would enable the author to compile more detailed analysis with a possibility of comparison of the projects or activities. Closer investigation could cover for example additional meetings or even visits of the chosen cities and the involved institutions what would enable to get a better and more exact idea how the cooperation is realized now and how it might develop in the future. This might be interesting to compare and see the changes in the development. More extensive piece of research might include analysis of the cooperation among the other big Czech towns and their affiliated cities and its comparison to Pilsen.

Contribution of this thesis is seen in providing overall information about the city of Pilsen and knowledge about its operation and therefore might be helpful for everybody who needs to get acquainted with the city or just wants to gain a better idea about it. Facts stated in the practical part of the work might be interesting for persons possibly interested in establishing relationships with Pilsen or be inspirational for institutions that might be interested in making contacts with another potential partner institution.

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## **6 ABSTRACT**

The theoretical part of this bachelor thesis deals with the city of Pilsen, general description of its development in the past and present and summary of the principal institutions and their activities. The particular chapters are focused on economy, education and culture. The practical part is devoted to the affiliated cities of Pilsen and the cooperation with them. This part includes general information about the cooperation and then some specific examples are introduced.

The main aim of this thesis is to provide overall analysis of the city of Pilsen and its operation as well as evaluating its cooperation with affiliated cities.

## 7 RESUMÉ

Teoretická část této bakalářské práce se zabývá obecným popisem a vývojem města Plzně, v současnosti i minulosti, a činností zdejších institucí. Jednotlivé kapitoly se zaměřují na oblast hospodářství, školství a kultury. Praktická část práce je věnována partnerským městům Plzně a jejich vzájemné spolupráci. Tato část obsahuje obecné informace o spolupráci a jsou zde uvedeny i konkrétní příklady projektů.

Hlavním cílem této práce je podat ucelený popis města Plzně, jejího chodu a činností a také zhodnocení spolupráce s partnerskými městy.

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