

# ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN THE CITY OF PRAGUE\*

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The current form of the environmental protection organizational arrangement in the City of Prague at the level of municipalities and administrative wards is analyzed. Effectiveness of the organizational arrangement is assessed and disunity of the organizational structure stated. The study revealed an unsatisfactory state, which, however, no one has addressed so far. Possible solutions are discussed, and optimizing approach consisting in the reduction of municipalities themselves within the reform of public administration, or in a transfer of public administration execution to a higher level – i.e. the administrative ward, is proposed. Other related issues such as administrative workload of staff members are dealt with proposing, among other, to desist from unnecessary activities. Actual work effectiveness was not assessed because of limited data available. The paper presents the line of research into this problem conducted at the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague.

organizational structure; environmental policy; administrative wards; municipality; Department of the Environment



doi: 10.1515/sab-2015-0004

Received for publication on November 7, 2013

Accepted for publication on September 30, 2014

## INTRODUCTION

The institutional arrangement of environmental protection in the Czech Republic underwent a fundamental change after 1989. As mentioned by Slábová (2006), in the autumn of 1989 the discontent of the Teplice town residents with the state of the environment resulted in the demonstration. It can therefore be stated that the ecological crisis significantly contributed to an almost full loss of confidence in the former regime. Since 1990, legal regulations in the field of environmental protection have been fundamentally changed along with an institutional change based on the Competence Act No. 131/2000 Coll. on the City of Prague) including other related arrangements.

Public administration in environmental protection plays an irreplaceable role in enforcing environmental policy. It is one of the key stages of the policy cycle (Vig, Kraft, 1990), with major importance for addressing environmental problems and meeting the objectives of environmental policy. Public administration also addresses practical issues of environmental

protection. These include, for example, environmental management systems that are implemented in towns and villages (Emilsson, Hjelm, 2002) and influence not only public administration workplaces themselves, but also the level of the entire public administration management system in environmental protection. Given the fact that this is a public institution, its approach to environmental protection is an example for private entities, but also for other municipalities and towns (Lozano, Valléz, 2007).

The purpose of organizing is to effectively define and efficiently ensure the planned and other essential activities of people (individuals, collectives) in meeting the objectives and other needs of the organizational unit or its part.

The form of associating activities and people to ensure the tasks to organize are organizational structures. They should correspond to the need to coordinate the activities of sub-teams of people in ensuring the objectives of the organizational unit or its part. In addition, they should create favourable conditions for satisfaction and motivation to achieve good results of working together (Voďáček, Voďáčková, 2006).

\* Supported by the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic, Project No. QJ1230330.

From this classical management concept there follows for public administration just the need for effective control, which is allowed by the structured organization.

One of the current problems of the self-administration is the deficit in the area of management and innovation. According to Půček, Ochrana (2009), Drucker states two reasons for crisis or failure: 'Every existing organization quickly turns bankrupt, if it fails to innovate. On the contrary, every new organization quickly collapses, if it fails to manage.' According to Drucker, this holds true in both profit and nonprofit making sector, including of course states, territorial units.

The task of administration is based on and within the law to apply, enforce, and protect the public interest and in connection with it also decide on the rights, obligations or, as the case may be, the interests of natural persons and legal persons (Hendrych et al., 2009).

Control is an essential element of public administration activities. Similarly to any social organization, also public administration includes sources of errors and bureaucratic structures for their petrification or reproduction. Through the control of public administration from the outside and inside we also seek to prevent the degeneration of authority caused by the abuse thereof. Control in the field of public administration seeks to follow the rule of law, efficiency, and economy of matters that are subject to control (Hendrych, 2007). And just the organization, its transparency, logical arrangement and structure are conducive to effective control. However, the absence of a general structure of organization of environmental departments not only makes this activity difficult, but often may even make it uncontrollable.

Important for the implementation of environmental policy is the principle of subsidiarity, which in the area of public administration defines the crucial role of towns and villages. According to this principle, it is possible to resolve many environmental problems at this level, with a higher effectiveness than at the level of government. It is therefore important how competencies are defined, and not only among ministries (Act No. 2/1969 Coll., on the establishment of ministries and other central government authorities of the Czech Republic, defining central authorities and regulating their scope of activity), but also at the municipal level. In the execution of public administration, environmental policy instruments are used, especially various forms of funding through municipal budgets. The statistical data shows that in the Czech Republic there is a long-term trend of increasing the share of local budgets in funding the environmental protection (Hájek, 2005). A significant role is played by the public administration in the field of the environment in the process of land-use planning, including the relation to protected areas (Steiner, 1991), and in other fields.

The aim of this paper is to present one of the topics of research, including its partial results, which is conducted at the Department of Economics and Forestry Management of the Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague. The paper deals with the organizational structure of environmental protection in the City of Prague. It presents an overview of all areas of execution of public administration in environmental protection, analyzes the effectiveness of the current approach, while proposing possible optimal solutions and future changes for the City of Prague. The main contribution of this paper is the assessment of the current form of organizational arrangement of environmental protection in the City of Prague, which has remained unnoticed so far.

The research is important for understanding the current state of nature conservation in Prague, but also for designing the optimal form of organization.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

In assessing the effectiveness of institutional arrangement of environmental protection, single-criterion methods are used (Strecková, Malý, 1998). In doing so, it is proceeded on the basis of the criterion of economy, effectiveness, and efficiency (Ochrana et al., 2010). The economy criterion is met when the defined objective is achieved with minimum input costs. In this case, the input costs are represented by the number of staff members (jobs) executing public administration in the field of environmental protection.

As a criterion of effectiveness of public expenditures spent on institutional arrangement such a use of public funds is assessed, which achieves the highest possible range, quality and benefits of the performed tasks in comparison with the amount of funds spent on performing these tasks, or the number of staff members (jobs). In using this criterion, the highest effectiveness is achieved in the case of the largest number of outputs per unit of input (per staff member).

The third criterion is efficiency, when the set objectives/outputs are often compared to the actually achieved outputs. It is such a use of public funds, which ensures the optimum level of achieved objectives.

The use of benchmarking is very important. For example, in assessing the effectiveness, the amount of outputs (practical execution of public administration) per unit of expenditures (per staff member) is compared.

The purity of administrative systems can only be achieved through understanding the entirely different to contradictory purpose and function of public administration and local self-administration. The territorial order can only be achieved through a careful study of the residential structure and respecting the requirement to put the territorial-administrative

structure of the state in adequate compliance with its residential structure. This is corresponded to by the two basic principles of functional and territorial organizational arrangement of public administration: (1) the principle of duplicity of public administration and (2) the principle of (adequate) compliance of the administrative structure with the residential structure (Kupka, Žamberský, 2006).

Basic data on public administration activities in the field of the environment in the City of Prague were collected from publicly available information sources. Based on this information, correlation analysis was performed to assess the current form of public administration in the administrative wards. The comparison was made for the dependence of the number of employees engaged in the public administration in the field of the environment on the number of residents and the area of the administrative ward in question. The dependence of the number of employees on the number of residents and the area of the ward was calculated using the Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) (Hendl, 2012).  $X$  is the value of the first measurement (Number of civil servants),  $Y$  is the value of the second measurement (Number of residents or Area in hectares):

$$r = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \bar{y})^2}}$$

The correlation was selected as the preferred method because it expresses interdependence.

For municipalities, the comparison of organizational arrangement of public administration was made through assessing the number of employees and their qualifications.

The data required for the present research was collected from publicly available, mandatorily disclosed information and information systems. Based on structured interviews in selected administrative wards and municipalities there was obtained detailed information to discuss the current public administration system, its strengths and weaknesses and the professional level of public administration in the field of environmental protection in the City of Prague.

The collected information was analyzed and assessed especially in terms of effectiveness in performing the main tasks of public administration in the field of environmental protection.

The status and competence of the City of Prague are defined by a special separate law on the City of Prague. In the structure of public administration authorities, Municipal Authorities of Prague are the equivalent of the regional public administration (the City of Prague is seen as a region). Through the Statute of the City of Prague, competencies within the city are divided so that they are in accordance with the relevant legal

rules. The Statute shall be taken as a generally binding regulation.

Some legal rules (for example, Act No. 114/1992 Coll., on protection of nature and landscape, which is in accordance with the standards of the European Union) take into account the special Status of the City of Prague (Decree No. 55/2000 Coll.) and define directly what is pertinent to what level, however, for other laws this is not always the case (Hadravová, 2008).

Public administration activities are carried out at three levels: independent authority is entrusted by law to all 57 municipalities, in terms of authority delegated by the Statute of the City of Prague, the execution of public administration is divided to 22 administrative wards or, as the case may be, to all 57 municipalities. At the local level, major part of the execution of the public administration in the current system of public administration is ensured by regions and municipalities (within the so-called delegated authority). In the City of Prague, public administration is performed primarily by the Municipal Authorities of Prague and municipal offices based on the competence given directly by law or based on competence entrusted to them by the Statute of the City of Prague. Regions and municipalities ensure environmental protection on their territories also within self-administration (the so-called independent authority) (Stach, 2013).

The City of Prague is a municipality and a region, too. It is divided into 22 administrative wards executing the public administration in the field of environmental protection under the delegated authority and 57 municipalities executing the public administration under the independent authority and executing also the self-administration. The City of Prague is located at 112 cadastral territories.

Prague is the capital of the Czech Republic and also the largest city in area (496 km<sup>2</sup>) and population (1.25 million residents in 2009). In terms of quality of the environment, the City of Prague (as a modern city in the developed post-industrial country) has to solve similar issues as other large cities in the world. These include mainly the impact of automobile traffic, water and energy management, waste management, but also sustainable land use, care for cleanliness, greenery, and valuable natural sites in the city. In its Strategic Plan the City of Prague declares intention to 'achieve high quality natural and urban environment while respecting the principles of sustainable development. It strives to significantly reduce the current environmental load and achieve a balance between residential structures and the landscape so as to become a city that is clean, healthy and harmonious' (Stach, 2011).

Yet today there is no uniform division of agendas within the competence of administrative wards, so many activities related to environmental protection are performed by different authorities in different departments. For example, public administration in the

area of water management is executed by Construction Departments or Departments of the Environment.

A similar problem occurs also in municipalities, where the independent authority in the field of environmental protection is often executed by departments other than department of the environment and often also by staff members who fail to meet the professional requirements for the execution of the public administration of environmental protection.

The last change was recorded by the City of Prague in 2001, when the number of 15 administrative wards increased to reach the number of 22 while the area of Prague remained unchanged. The debate about this solution is still kept alive and additional proposals of optimization are presented, including a reduction of municipalities themselves. Another problem then is the delegation of authority of the public administration of environmental protection to administrative wards (*de facto* from the Municipal Authorities of Prague) and the volume of competence, which is subject to most frequent changes. These are usually not publicized in the media and often not even related to amendments to the legislation, but rather to decisions of the political representation at the regional or municipal level.

And it is the proposed numbers of administrative wards, municipalities and possibilities of adding new ones or conversely creating 'smaller' inner Prague, which are today much more discussed than the formation of integrated structure and organization of environmental protection, either under the delegated or independent authority.

The actual environmental policy depends on political representation generated by each election and subsequent coalition negotiations. Yet in recent years and election periods there have not been major changes and the period 2001–2014 might be regarded as rather stable. Minimal changes affected primarily the Department of the Environment of the Municipal Authorities of Prague after its renaming to the Department of Environmental Protection. Far more fundamental change, however, was its division into two departments in 2012 – Department of the Environment executing solely the public administration and Department of Public Sector Development under the section of city administration. This led to the separation of executing the public administration under the delegated authority from execution under the independent authority and self-administration activities. This step as well, however, implies the imperfection of the duplicity of the public administration system in the form in which it functioned in Prague and still functions in municipalities.

However, due to non-uniform division of agendas into departments, particularly in administrative ward and municipal offices, the policy remains relatively generally defined by areas of protection or interest. This definition is published annually in the Yearbook – Report on the State of the Environment for the relevant year.

Department of the Environment in 22 administrative wards in the City of Prague usually ensures the execution of the public administration for the Administrative Department (and also for the municipality, where the administrative ward office is located and with which the administrative ward is identical) in the area of waste management, nature and landscape protection, air protection, agricultural land fund, protection of animals against cruelty, the delegated part of the section of game management and agriculture. This is with the assumption that the public administration of water management is executed by Construction Office as, for example, in the municipality of Prague 1.

Department of the Environment, in addition, usually under the self-administration authority ensures the maintenance of public green areas, management of children's playgrounds in urban green areas, removal of illegal dumps, collection of bulky waste from residents, coordination of municipal waste management within the municipality, environmental education, etc. Here, however, the administrative activities may overlap with other departments, especially of technical management and property, or these activities may be performed by one of them, and not necessarily the Department of the Environment (as is the case, for example, of the municipality in Prague 18).

According to the Statute of the City of Prague, the Department of the Environment of the administrative ward ensures the execution of the public administration under the independent or delegated authority in the area of environmental protection, resulting from more than ten laws and related implementing regulations.

## RESULTS

In Prague there are structural differences between the administrative wards regardless of whether or not the ward is divided into departments. These differences, however, may be the cause of other problems in the actual activities in environmental protection. It will therefore be necessary to collect, sort out, and analyze data from each of Prague municipalities and create, if possible, an optimal model of a more general nature.

In addition, at this level there is the strongest friction caused by the current system of duplicity of the public administration in Prague. Although a staff member executes the public administration under the delegated authority, he/she is an employee of the Municipal Authority, which is really led by the mayor, i.e. the highest representative of self-administration. Although administrative wards and municipalities receive grants for executing the delegated public administration, due to the method of conversion, where a significant role was played by the number of the population, the received funds do not always cover the costs associated with the work and the existence of office personnel of the relevant ward. Execution of

Table 1. The diversity of the organizational structure of departments

	Number (x)	Percentage (x/22)
Number of administrative wards	22	100.0
Separate Department of the Environment	10	45.4
Joint Department of the Environment and Transport	12	54.5
Joint Department of the Environment and Construction (and Transport)	1	4.5
Joint Department of the Environment and Development (and Transport)	1	4.5
Execution of the public administration in the field of water management	8	36.4
Without self-administration (i.e. without management of green areas, etc.)	2	9.1

the public administration is so often covered from the Municipal Office budget, it means self-administration money. Therefore it would be necessary to verify the amount of funds obtained as a contribution to the public administration and the amount of the actual coverage. Another question should be work effectiveness and number of employees. They are then subject to controls and audits performed by the Municipal Authorities of Prague as a methodological body, as well as by the relevant ministry.

Although the execution of the public administration by the administrative department in these areas is very limited and often applies only to one or two specific activities defined by law or decree, the requirements for knowledge of many legislative regulations put these departments in an entirely different situation if compared to other ones. This also implies considerable demands on staffing of officer and leading positions. While, for example, Small Business Department is virtually the same in all municipalities, in Departments of the Environment we find considerable variation in the organization and also in the actual execution of the public administration (Table 1).

In most cases it is a merged Department of the Environment and Transport, sometimes in conjunction with the Department of Construction or Development. Less than half of departments are separate. However, for the vast majority of departments, the execution of

the public administration is joined with the execution of the self-administration.

In some offices, within the Department of the Environment, there is also executed the public administration in the fields of water management and transport, and in most of them also self-administration management of green areas (which burdens the Department with the greatest amount of obligations and can so take time for the effective execution of the public administration) and even entirely different activities.

To determine the effectiveness of execution of the public administration by Departments of the Environment of administrative wards and their staff members, there were used the data, their comparison and correlation, of the number of employees executing the public administration in dependence on area and also the number of residents. The number of employees was assumed to be directly proportional to the extent of the area and the number of residents. Therefore, similar dependence was sought. Fig. 1 shows the dependence of the number of civil servants executing the public administration of environmental protection in administrative wards on the number of residents. It shows, however, entirely scattered, random, and even chaotic results. The chart so clearly refutes the assumed thesis.

Fig. 2 expresses the dependence of the number of civil servants executing the public administration of environmental protection in administrative wards on

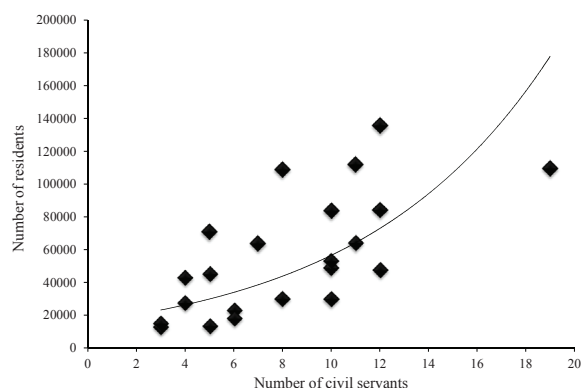


Fig. 1. Dependence of the number of civil servants on the number of residents

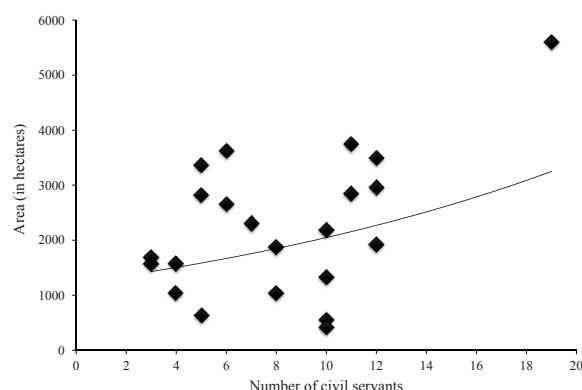


Fig. 2. Dependence of the number of civil servants on the areal extent (in ha)

Table 2. Expertise of employees in small municipalities.

	Number (x)	Percentage (x/35)
Number of municipalities	57	-
Number of administrative wards (large municipalities)	22	-
Number of remaining, assessed municipalities	35	100.0
Municipality with department	5	14.3
Municipality with division	1	2.9
Municipality with a qualified employee	11	31.4
Municipality with an employee without university education	7 of 11	63.6 (7/11) 20% of the total (7/35)
Municipality without a qualified employee	16	45.7
Nothing stated	2	5.7

the extent of an area. Here a direct proportion between the area and the amount of work was assumed as well, and thus a need for a higher number of employees and the resulting demonstrable dependence. But also here the results are absolutely unsystematic, clearly refuting the assumed thesis, and showing only the chaotic organization of departments.

Moreover, a correlation of dependence was calculated. The result is 0.67 for the residents and 0.48 for the area. From this it follows that dependence of the number of civil servants is greater for the residents as shown in Fig. 1. In both cases, however, the correlation value is in the zone of the medium strength of association, hence it follows that the dependence is little demonstrable, illustrating again the lack of organization system.

Execution of environmental protection in 57 small municipalities is in most cases entrusted to a released member of the Council, mayor or officer who is subordinated to the mayor. Only a few municipalities have their own department or section within another department, as shown in Table 2. This, taking into account the size of the cadastral territory and the amount of funds from the budget, is entirely understandable. However, there may also occur and often there occur problems concerning professional qualifications for such acts.

The acts covered by the independent authority of the municipality include, for example, permits for felling trees, investigation of possible animal cruelty, waste management (containers for separated waste, containers for bulk waste), cleanliness of public areas, illegal dumps, maintenance of greenery, and collection of local fees.

At this level, only with exaggeration we can talk about the execution of the public administration, because it is fully, and it should be added that entirely illogically, entrusted to the self-administration. By this, however, the possibility of control and protection itself disappears. In addition, the interests of the self-administration often contradict the interests and principles of the public administration and environmental protection. It would therefore be necessary to compare all municipalities, the form of execution of the independent authority in the field of environmental

protection, the number and qualifications of staff, and ultimately perhaps even consider the possibility of performing the environmental protection under given conditions at this municipal level.

A quite obvious problem is the quality and level of expertise of employees in environmental protection. At present, all over the Czech Republic there has been a trend, which as a basic condition for employing the applicant on the position of an officer (not only for the Department of the Environment) requires university education. This should guarantee at least a basic knowledge of the field. Also this was the reason for using this aspect in the present research of the effectiveness of the public administration of environmental protection (see Table 2). Although the personnel should undergo training, pass tests of special professional knowledge of the relevant laws, in practice the employer may not always proceed in this way. However, university education in the relevant field remains the basic prerequisite for correct and impartial work in the field of environmental protection. Here again is an apparent diversity of the organizational structure.

Table 2 clearly shows that 65.7% (23 out of 35) of small municipalities demonstrably fail to satisfactorily and competently execute the public administration of environmental protection. There is an apparent considerable diversity of organizational structure on the one hand, but also entirely unsatisfactory state in terms of qualification of staff on the other. While in larger offices such as Čakovice there exists directly the Department of the Environment (although joint with the Department of Property), elsewhere a qualified employee is missing and his/her work is performed either by the secretariat, if present, or even by a released councillor or mayor. Here, however, is an absolutely obvious conflict of interests, that may affect the quality and decision-making itself as well as the public administration of environmental protection (Table 3).

## DISCUSSION

There is still not enough experience in the management of environmental protection in municipalities and

Table 3. Number of qualified employees in small municipalities of Prague

	Number (x)	Percentage (x/35)
Number of municipalities	57	–
Number of administrative wards	22	–
Number of assessed municipalities	35	100.0
0 employees	16	45.7
1 employee	15	34.3
2 or more employees	2	5.7
Nothing stated	2	5.7

some positive results stem from extraordinary interest of some of leading representatives of municipalities, or from public pressure on implementing specific measures to address environmental protection. The crucial source of funding the measures to protect the environment at the level of municipalities and towns are municipal budgets, which gradually become independent and stabilized after fundamental changes during the transformation of the economy. The key moment of the implementation of environmental policy is setting priorities based on knowledge of the local conditions and professional expertise demonstrating the objective state of the environment in the location concerned (Hájek, 2002).

In September 2011, the Mayor of the City of Prague called the mayors of municipalities to submit no later than by October 31, 2011 their suggestions to streamline the management of the city. This was followed by a meeting with the Mayor of the City of Prague. Representatives of municipalities understood that this meant an attempt to reduce their number and responded by preparing suggestions in the sense of strengthening the powers of municipal offices, particularly of the small municipalities which, according to them, would simplify and accelerate proceedings between citizens and authorities.

In this way there was presented, in our opinion, a major objection against the citizen's contact with the office and its availability.

However, Councillor Manhart admitted that a reduction of municipalities was part of the coalition agreement (Bořík, 2012).

Since a reduction of municipalities has been the only so far proposed solution, some form of reduction can be envisaged in the future, for example, on the assumption of planned savings, which would not be met by maintaining the current number and structure of municipalities. This may not necessarily be a reduction of small municipalities, which will, as shown by the current course of discussions, argue for the right of self-administration. However, this is largely quite an odd argument, because the territorial and functional organization of the City of Prague into municipalities is subject to a formulation of the law on the City of Prague and the Statute of the City of Prague, which identifies the division of Prague into municipalities.

As the only strong argument will thus remain just the 'contact between citizen and office'.

A big and today enough medialized problem is the above mentioned influencing the execution of the public administration by the self-administration. This may not necessarily be only corruption, so much talked about today, but let us recall e.g. the lack of professional qualifications of employees of municipalities, especially where such qualifications are entirely missing and are performed by representatives of the self-administration, accompanied by lobbying by construction, investment, and other companies, personal interests of the self-administration or protectionism towards employees.

The example of small municipalities has shown us an alarming fact of staff failing to be qualified for environmental protection at the lowest level (independent authority of municipalities). The problem faced by the current representative democracy of municipalities, however, is also incompetence and lack of education of elected representatives. This in turn directly affects decision-making on environmental protection just where qualified staff is missing and the public administration is executed *de facto* by the self-administration. This is also the reason for imperfection of the current duplicity of the public administration and representative democracy itself. Citizens do not elect on the basis of expertise and experience and thus they may choose not sufficiently educated or knowing representatives.

A similar problem also occurs in administrative wards, but where the administrative ward comprises more municipalities, the problem can be more easily recognized and resolved. Even so, the changes should also apply to this management level of environmental protection, especially in terms of the establishment of a single, well-controllable organizational structure.

Another problem of organization of environmental protection in Prague is the fact that in many municipal offices one department and often even one employee executes both the public administration and self-administration. Since the self-administration is the main interest of the employer, i.e. the municipal office management, this may lead to influencing the public administration even on the position of this employee.

A totally confusing organization in this field was also described by Dámorský et al. (2010), who

therefore refer directly to the applicable legislation: Currently, due to frequent changes, it is very difficult to become fully oriented in competencies and powers of public administration authorities in Prague. Therefore they stress the necessity to always refer to the full and valid wording of applicable laws.

Another issue is the actual execution of the public administration and its contents. Due to existing forms of municipal office structures it is evident that employees of one department have to execute both the public administration and self-administration. By this, however, the execution of the public administration is in many cases subordinated to the needs of the self-administration, since it is self-administration that leads (and pays) employees of the municipal offices.

A similar problem is an overgrown agenda of the public administration. There are included activities that should simplify the work, but they have an opposite effect and raise the volume of work and time for its performance. A typical example may be the filling service that has these effects due to constant changes and frequent updates of programmes. It is similar for a number of record-keeping programmes. Another aspect may be a question whether all activities are really necessary. An example is the recent update of implementing regulation on the protection of trees (Decree No. 189/2013 Coll., on protection of trees and permits for their felling implementing the provision of Section 8, subsection 3 and 5 of Act No. 114/1992 Coll., on nature and landscape protection), which abolished the obligation to apply for a decision on felling trees outside public areas, i.e. in private, closed areas. As regards record-keeping programmes themselves, it is similar for e.g. EVI 8 – programme for the reporting of hazardous waste management (which, unlike annual reports) is practically uncontrollable and requires a qualified employee for a full-time job. Similar controversial activities are numerous. Therefore, all agendas and their contents should be reviewed, those unnecessary should be identified and omitted, or transferred to a higher level with enough qualified staff. By this, arbitrary omitting of important acts by the executors of public administration would be avoided.

## CONCLUSION

The completed analysis shows poor situation in the organization of environmental protection management in the City of Prague. While administrative departments have no firm organizational structure, compared to other departments, which on the one hand makes it impossible to effectively control and on the other hand cannot guarantee the effective management of public matters, the municipalities themselves face a much worse situation. They have no any particular organizational structure, but moreover they often

lack a professionally qualified staff. Moreover, in most cases they are under the direct influence of self-administration, which leads to a conflict of interests.

In addition to these problems there appear other problems, which the representatives of the City of Prague try to address by numerous proposals for a new reform of public administration in Prague. Often discussed proposals have so far included the only one solution concerning also the organization of environmental protection, namely reduction of the number of municipalities or of administrative wards. Other options, yet not made available to the public, include the creation of “small“ inner Prague and separation of peripheral districts by their affiliation to Prague East or Prague West. Another solution is also the currently suspended extension of Prague by other municipalities, which would, however, require further change in the division of Prague.

This paper definitely shows that the abolition or substantial reduction of the so-called small municipalities would be clearly beneficial to the public administration of environmental protection in Prague. In the case of a smaller number of municipalities it would be possible to create a sufficiently controllable organizational structure. The second solution consisting in the transfer of the public administration agenda to a higher level of the public administration would streamline the execution of the administration by professional and qualified staff and would also eliminate or at least reduce influencing the public administration by the self-administration within its duplicity. The right to self-administration would not be constrained by this, because municipalities are not actually the municipality but only a district of the municipality – the City of Prague, whose citizens the residents are.

In the case of administrative wards, there should clearly be established an integrated and logical organizational structure, because even in the current state and enough staff there are conditions necessary to take this step. The ideal form of the Department of the Environment of the administrative ward would be a separate department, without the execution of self-administration, or with the execution of self-administration within a specific department, without overlapping the work of staff engaged in the public administration. Moreover, Prague cannot use as an excuse the lack of qualified staff needed for this step. The question remains whether to maintain or reduce the so-called large municipalities, i.e. 22 administrative wards. The latest expansion to reach the number of 22 administrative wards was made by a political decision and not by the actual need of citizens to improve the availability of municipal office. In the future further proposals for a reduction can also be expected, while even today there are detached workplaces, which can serve as an optimal or rather a compromise solution for the availability of a municipal office. However,



even if they are not accepted, due to a sufficiently developed public transport network the situation is well manageable.

Another question is the solution in the form of decentralization and transfer of competencies by the Municipal Authorities of Prague, which have, however, a sufficient number of qualified professionals, to lower the levels of public administration. The current approach should be reviewed and a further deterioration of the public administration of environmental protection at lower levels should be prevented.

The research was not directed at actual work effectiveness analysis requiring much more data, nevertheless, it presents important findings concerning the institutional arrangements for environmental protection in the City of Prague. At the same time it presents the way leading to the efficient environmental management on the Prague territory.

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