Summary

The modernisation of the transport infrastructure in Austrian Silesia between 1742 and 1914

In the course of the 18th and 19th century fundamental changes in transport infrastructure occurred and laid foundations to the current form of transport. The process of modernisation in transport, traditionally called the transport revolution, had many facets; it was complicated and regionally differentiated. If we take for granted the statement that one of the fundamental features of modern transport is infrastructure requiring capital, then the first clear signs of changes in capital infrastructure can be observed in Western and Central Europe during the 18th century. From the first half of the 18th century onwards, we can observe the first stage of modernisation in the Habsburg Monarchy which was marked with attempts at systematic construction of both waterways and good quality stone roads, the so called "chaussée". Roads and navigable river sections represented the main trade arteries used for an supra–regional trade and they created the most important land communications prior to the railway transport.

On the turn of the 1820s and 1830s other fundamental changes took place in the Central European transport environment with respect to a transportation systems development. A not–so–large number of roads, which were built and maintained by the state, and navigable–made water courses formed a spine of the supra–regional trade and transport. A horse–drawn railway represents a certain sign of a shift towards a new type of transport. This, however, appeared in Central Europe at the time when a steam railway had already started in England. From the beginning of the 1830s, a new transportation system started to push through – it was the steam railway which soon gained an exceptional position.

The importance of road infrastructure started to change quickly under the influence of the railway. Long–haul transport in carriers' carriages, postal and private stage–coaches was quickly replaced by railways, which, thanks to their capacity, eclipsed the road transport in the 19th century. Therefore, towards the end of the 1840s the state ceased to be engaged in the construction of the road network and the issue of its further modernisation is later closely connected with the improvement of regionally important roads – which were later maintained mainly by all levels of self–government.

However, the road network gains a new importance under the new conditions. If railways created a new transport spine, then roads of all categories created a "capillary" network which not only complemented the network of main and later local railways but it also made them accessible. With respect to the history of transport, the period of the second half of the 19th century is characterised by a completion of the road network and its continuing modernisation. Towards the end of the observed period, the road network, which was gradually becoming more advanced, created an important pre–requisite for the commencement of automobile transport – which came on a mass scale after 1918.

The steam railway and, in case of suitable conditions, also the steamboats became the phenomena of this period and in fact their embodiment too. The Habsburg Monarchy did not provide many options for a larger–scale development of the steamboat transport due to its geographical, respectively hydrological, conditions. This transport developed with a considerable difficulty only on the Danube, and partly on the Vltava and the Elbe during the 1830s and 1840s. Due to the inland character of the Habsburg Monarchy which had only a few ports situated on the periphery and also due to a not very advanced water transport, the road transport and mainly the railway transport played immensely important roles there.

A rail network construction represented a so called "leading sector" in the 19th century which considerably influenced the economy. A railway construction created an investment multiplication effect, high demand for energy sources and raw materials and last but not least also a demand for innovation. The 19th century railways introduced new conditions under which industry was localised and the new transport services were much more cost effective than in the previous periods. With respect to employment, the railway provided jobs both for a large number of labourers but also for a new skilled workforce and it mobilised new entrepreneurial and technical talents. As far as the financial aspect is concerned, the railway construction represented an area of until then unseen investment and massive capital accumulation.

The extensive changes in transport and communications during the 19th century did not represent only a necessary condition for development of economy and business but they also had an absolutely essential social, cultural and civilisation impact. A fundamental transformation of the ways how space and time used to be perceived occurred in connection with fast modernisation and communication in the 19th century; also an information flow became faster and last but not least the everyday life of the society changed.

The process of modernisation within transport can be studied from many angles. Although a wide range of historical processes, including modernisation and industrialisation, are essentially global, they were demonstrated with a pronounced regional differentiation. This work focuses mainly on the historical analysis of the transfer from a pre–modern form of transport infrastructure to its modern type in one of the historical regions of the Czech Lands. As the interest area, we selected the region of Austrian Silesia. Although it was one of the smallest crown lands of the Habsburg

Monarchy, it represented thanks to its geographical location an important communication hub connecting the Czech Lands, Prussian Silesia, Galicia and Upper Hungary.

The changes in the transport infrastructure hit the interest region in several stages during the 18th and 19th century. The Habsburg Monarchy started contemplating construction of stone roads in connection with the war of the Spanish succession. In 1724, Emperor Charles IV issued a decree, that ordered repair work (in fact this was construction work) on five main roads, which were to connect Vienna with Trieste, Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary, Upper Austria and Silesia. If, under the reign of Charles IV, it was planned to build only a very limited number of roads, the purpose of which was to secure a safe long–haul trade and army transfer, the number of such road projects increased under the reign of Maria Theresia. Towards the end of the 1740s, there was a project that envisaged either the construction or the reconstruction of 910 km of roads just for Moravia and Silesia which should have covered the needs of local and foreign traders.

If we examine the efforts of the absolutist state to formulate its transport and political strategy more closely, we can see that this was a dynamic process. The transport and political strategy depended on geopolitical interests of the Habsburg court. Following the unsuccessful Silesian wars, we can observe how the original interest in a good quality transport connection between Vienna and the centre of the richest Habsburg province, Wroclaw, was forced to alter so that it could be focused on the new centre of the remaining Upper Silesia – Opava. Due to the crucial character of Austrian Silesia, not only a good connection between Vienna and Opava became the priority but it was also necessary to connect this geographically unified area in the east–west direction, i.e. from Opava to Bielsko.

Until the beginning of the 1770s, modern roads construction work did not touch the interest region. This does not mean though that, with respect to the geo–political interests of the Vienna court, the region would not be interesting – it was the opposite case. Archive documents show an urgent effort to stabilise the transport situation in newly established Austrian Silesia and to secure a good quality connection of the land with the centre of the Monarchy. The acquisition of Galicia during the first division of Poland in 1772 created a fundamental impulse for a speedy construction of a good quality road infrastructure in Austrian Silesia. The newly designed Silesian – Galicia road, built between 1775 and 1780, leading from Opava to Bielsko was supposed to secure the power over Austrian Silesia. The Silesia – Galicia road represents one of the most important transport projects in the Czech Lands in the era of Maria Theresia's reign. It can also serve as a model example of problems connected with demanding construction projects in the field of infrastructure.

Funding represented one of many main permanent problems connected to road construction which was very expensive. Therefore it had to be funded from four sources until the middle of the 19th century: 1. state funds, i.e. the court chamber (*Hofkammer*), 2. guilds funds, 3. revenue from private tolls and various lands surcharges and 4. the revenue from the travel fund which was financed by newly estab-

lished public treasury travel and road toll charges. The compulsory labour provided by estate owners, who also supplied construction material, and their subjects, played a key role in the road construction. In this way a very complex system of funding for construction and consequent maintenance of the road network, referred to as the land competition (*Landes–Concurrenz*), was established. Next to the compulsory labour also paid labour was used during the construction of the road infrastructure in the 18th century. Primarily, the paid labour was used in a technically more demanding construction, mainly in a bridge construction. However, there was an issue of speed and effectiveness of work provided by labour force. The unpaid compulsory labour seemed to be not so productive and was referred to as a brake of construction effort.

The period of the second half of the 18th century was negatively influenced by many war events which regularly paralyzed the road construction work and caused lengthy transport problems. Moreover, even in times of peace it was not possible to carry out road works at all times. Due to the cycle of agricultural work, the road labour was used only in early spring and in autumn when there was only little fieldwork.

The character of the 18th and 19th century road construction differed considerably in its character and routing from the older types of roads; this was caused by interference in until then valid owner's rights. Newly constructed roads occupied new land which had to be bought out by the state. There were frequent disputes over the confiscated land, mainly on the side of nobility, but the state sustained just a fraction of objections and it more often resorted to various ways of compensation. It is an interesting finding that an alteration of a route of a particular road could have affected an estate's economy. A diversion of a road could have damaged some nobility's incomes, mainly with respect to taprooms in nobility's pubs.

Joseph II introduced major changes into the road network construction. His efforts to reform the road management can be detected on several levels. He militarised the management of roads and he also changed the system of the road maintenance due to financial cuts. He enforced his plan which delegated the responsibility for the maintenance of most roads to individual estates. The estates received a small contribution for this work and the saved financial resources should have been used to support the construction of new roads. In 1781 the court office published new lists of roads in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia to be built or maintained from the road fund. In fact, a new transport policy was implemented this way. The emperor stopped a completion of the Silesia – Galicia road in the interest region and he decided to give preference to a shorter but strategically more useful connection of Vienna with Galicia and Upper Hungary through Olomouc, Hranice, Frýdek and Těšín. This move strengthened the importance of Těšín as a communication bridge. In the course of the 1780s and 1790s the Těšín region became an immensely valuable area from the point of view of transport strategy which was demonstrated in the construction of several other roads which were to ease off the connection to Moravia, Austrian Silesia, Galicia and Upper Hungary.

The impacts of emperor's reforms were both positive and negative. During the reign of Joseph II, the construction of new roads progresses considerably – mainly in Mora-

via and Silesia. Until the end of the 18th century, approximately 680 km of stone roads were built here which, compared to the total area, was much more than in Bohemia. On the other hand, rented roads deteriorated quickly. At the end of the 1780s, the plan to rent out state communications was abandoned and damaged roads were transferred under the state maintenance again.

From the 1790s the construction work slowed down. At the beginning of the 19th century, the state attempted to solve the lack of funding for the road construction and their maintenance in three ways: 1. intervention in a toll system which was to generate more income; 2. improved audits of expenditures on roads; 3. introducing a system of the so called voluntary competition (*freiwillige Concurrenz*) which was based on the state's attempt to have the lowest possible direct financial expenditures. The above innovation was implemented fairly quickly and in a synchronised way. Private entrepreneurs carried out most of the construction work in the times following the Napoleonic wars. From 1812 all state, guild and town contracts were realized through a system of public bids. The biding procedure during which interested parties offered the highest possible discount on pre–calculated costs was to secure the lowest cost of a contract.

The effort to secure more than just a few strategically important connections motivated the state to apply the same principles already used for the construction and maintenance of state roads also in case of less important communications. The system of a district road competition was being introduced in the Czech lands during the 1820s. In 1829 a special decree introducing a systematic construction and maintenance of district roads was issued.

The so called Krnov road leading from Opava, via Krnov and Město Albrechtice towards Prudnik launched the second phase of a stone road construction in Austrian Silesia in the 1820s. The so called Šumperk road connecting Silesia with Bohemia and leading via Bruntál, Šumperk and Žamberk was being built from 1839 and at the same time it was the most important road of the Moravian–Silesian district in the first half of the 19th century. With respect to the north – east connection, the so called Lomnice road was built at the beginning of the 1840s. In this stage, the priority was to secure access to Western Silesia, which compared to the Těšín region, had still a very underdeveloped infrastructure. Overall, the construction of a state road network intended mainly for a supra–regional transport was completed before the revolutionary year 1848.

A fast introduction of the steam railway as a new form of transport started to change the character of the road infrastructure in the 1830s and 1840s. A state involvement in the road network construction ended and the issue of its further modernisation is connected with the improvement of regional roads standards. Although the state was not significantly engaged in the road construction any more in the second half of the 19th century and it left the initiative in this area up to the forming self–government, still there were some localities which needed so much support in the area of transport that the state bodies decided to intervene directly. However, there was just one such

case in the whole interest area – and it was the isolated Jeseník region. Modest state transport activities in the Jeseník region can be seen as the final (and specific) third phase in the road construction in Austrian Silesia during the second half of the 19th century.

District roads covered the biggest segment of the road infrastructure before 1914. The funding for their maintenance and construction was acquired through a tax surcharge after 1848. After the constitution was re–adopted in 1861, district offices in Bohemia and district road committees in Moravia and Silesia were delegated to maintain district roads. The district road committees in Austrian Silesia acted as self–governing bodies from the end of the 1860s.

A distinct modernisation of district roads in Austrian Silesia can be proven from the 1880s when both the number of district roads increased and also their standard gradually improved in connection with rolling of the road surface. This new technology, which was fully introduced from 1890s, contributed to a shorter travel time, better comfort of the travel and prepared conditions for introduction of the automobile transport.

The railway, which represented a key element with respect to further development, enhanced the transport system in the Czech lands at exactly the same time when the network of main roads was completed.

The first stage of the railway construction in Austrian Silesia, which can be defined from the beginnings of the railway construction up to the year 1855, was characterised by activities of the *k. k. privilegierte Kaiser Ferdinands Nordbahn*. Not only that the *Nordbahn* belonged to the oldest and largest private transport enterprises in the Habsburg Monarchy but it also played a remarkable role in a genesis of the railway network in Moravia and Austrian Silesia. Up to the middle of the 1850s it created a spinal connection between Vienna and Moravia, Austrian and Prussian Silesia and Galicia. Apart from this, the Austrian railway network was first connected with the Prussian railway in Bohumín in 1849. Next to its primary role – to provide transport services – the *Nordbahn* was also active in the coalmining industry. Further, it owned estate property and directly or indirectly influenced other transport companies which did business in Moravia and Silesia. From the 1880s, the *Nordbahn* was strongly engaged also in the construction of local railways, which were directly connected to the regular lines of the company.

Not only it was important for the transport and economy of Austrian Silesia to build the main line of the *Nordbahn* but also to build branch lines to the land capital of Opava and to Bielsko which represented the largest centre of textile production in the Těšín region. An analysis of archive sources concerning the construction of the branch line to Opava shows that Opava representatives strived for a change in the project of the *Nordbahn* at least from the 1840s and they demanded the main line to be lead via the land capital city. Unfortunately, the proposal came relatively late and the change never happened. From the 1850s Opava had a railway connection but contemporary observers did not consider it to be suitable enough.

Economical impacts of the railway were rather strong as early as in the first stage of the railway construction. On one hand, the newly forming Ostrava industrial region is getting more economically powerful, on the other hand traditional business centres of Western Silesia are getting economically weaker. The remaining brief information on the development of business in Western Silesia in the 1850s and 1860s suggests that the *Nordbahn* took over a role of an international business mediator to a considerable extent. The result was a decreasing importance of Western Silesia as a mediator of a supra–national goods exchange. This reduced the significance of the business centres in Western Silesia.

The year 1855 can be seen as a milestone in the development of the railway network in Austrian Silesia. Not only the *k. k. privilegierte Kaiser Ferdinands Nordbahn* completed their branch lines in the interest area and thus closed the first stage of its construction activities. Furthermore, between 1854 and 1855 a fast transformation of the transport policy of the state took place. The state withdrew itself from direct railway enterprise; it privatised the state railway and supported railway construction delivered by private subjects.

During the last quarter of the 19th century, foundations of railway network were laid both in the interest area and in the whole of the Czech Lands. Prior to 1873, four private railway carriers started operating their railways in the interest area one after another; these were the *k. k. privilegierte Kaschau–Oderberger Bahn*, *k.k. privilegierte Ostrau–Friedlander Eisenbahn*, the *k. k. privilegierte Mährisch–Schleisische Centralbahn* and *k.k. privilegierte Mährische Grenzbahn*. Apart from that, the *k.k. privilegierte Kaiser Ferdinands Nordbahn* built a mine railway travelling via the Ostrava – Karviná coalfield.

The *k. k. privilegierte Kaschau–Oderberger Bahn* represents the second most important railway with respect to the strategic and economic importance. The railway was significant due to fact that it was one of a few railway connections between the Czech Lands and Hungary. It was important for the transport of grain, iron ore and raw iron to the Czech Lands and it also assisted in the transportation of coal and coke from the Ostrava–Karviná region into the area of Upper Hungry. The strategic importance of the *k. k. privilegierte Kaschau–Oderberger Bahn* was seen mainly after the Czechoslovak Republic was established since it became a key connecting route for the Czech Lands, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. Further, it represented a significant point during the negotiations about the destiny of the disputed Těšín region.

The first intentions to build a connection between the Těšín region and Upper Hungary date back to the middle of the 1850s when a plan to built a railway in Považí with a prospect to connect it with the *k. k. privilegierte KaiserFerdinands–Nordbahn* emerged. Although industrialists from the Těšín region were interested in the project, the plan was not mature enough. The Austrian Ministry of Trade, however, considered the construction of the railway from Bohumín to Košice to be desirable with respect to the national economy. The railway was placed amongst the five most essential connections in the development plan for the railway network in the Habsburg Monarchy from 1864. From the beginning of the 1860s, several parties were interested in the

construction of the railway. A foreign enterprise consortium finally obtained a concession to build and operate the railway in 1866. However, the concession holders had clearly speculated from the very beginning. Consequently, the actual construction work was postponed continuously and this initiated complicated negotiations with the local government. In 1869 the *Anglo–Österreichische Bank* took over the concession and this move secured a fast completion of the main route and the following trouble free operation of the railway.

The economic strategy of the *k. k. privilegierte Kaschau–Oderberger Bahn* was successful considering its initial problems. The section of the railway located in the Těšín region was the most profitable from the whole railway; thanks to a high concentration of heavy industry prior to WWI it belonged to the most profitable railway routes in the whole of the Habsburg Monarchy. The situation in the Hungarian part of the railway was worse because the railway travelled via an economically less attractive area. Overall, the railway was always run with a sufficient surplus, to which mostly the advanced freight transport contributed.

On the other hand, the *k. k. privilegierte Ostrau–Friedlander Eisenbahn* belonged to small railway businesses with a local character. Due to this, the railway depended on fluctuating demands of the local industry, which took its toll in the recession years of the 1870s. A construction of a railway connecting the Ostrava–Karviná coalfield with businesses of the Frýdek–Místek region had been discussed from as early as 1863. The railway project was strongly supported by local industrialists who became a real driving force of the project. In 1869 the concession for the construction of the railway was issued to a consortium of entrepreneurs who made sure that the railway was put in service quickly. Although there were plans to extend the railway so that it could expand beyond its local character, these visions were not implemented due to the recession in the 70s.

The first stage of the railway construction hit the strategically situated Těšín region in the same way as it was in the case of the road infrastructure. Leaving apart the branch railway to Opava, the area of north–western Moravia tussled with an actual absence of a railway network until the middle of the 1860s. Local representatives perceived this situation as a handicap. From the middle of the 1850s, we can come across a range of projects which were supposed to connect the area to both the Austrian and Prussian railway networks. These efforts, however, remained unsuccessful until the time of the war between Prussia and Austria.

The defeat of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1866 meant a turning point in the railway strategy. The Austrian Ministry of War stopped opposing projects in regions bordering on Prussia. In the second half of the 1860s, numerous Moravian and Silesian organisations were established and they focused on the improvement of the transport situation in north–western Moravia and western Silesia. These organisations gave rise to consortia of applicants for railway concessions. Two railways, essential for the transport access into north–western Moravia and western Silesia, were put into service on the turn of the 1860s and 1870s: the *k. k. privilegierte Mährische Grenzbahn* and *the k.k.*

privilegierte Mährisch–Schleisische Centralbahn. Both railways had a similar character and similar problems.

The *k. k. privilegierte Mährische Grenzbahn* used to connect traditional north Moravian textile industry centres. A short track of Zábřeh na Moravě – Sobotín, which was put in service by the important north Moravian entrepreneur Klein family in 1871, laid foundations for the railway. In the same year, a concession for the *k. k. privilegierte Märishe Grenzbahn* was approved. The company intended to build and run a railway travelling from Šternberk via Šumperk and Hanušovice as far as Eastern Bohemian Králíky with a connection to a railway from Ústí nad Orlicí – Międzylesie. Due to the location of the Zábřeh – Sobotín railway and the *Mährische Grenzbahn* and also due to personnel links between their executive boards, the companies were eventually merged. The *Mährische Grenzbahn* was put in service in October 1873 and in 1874 it was connected to the *k. k. privilegierte Österreichische Nordwestbahn* in Dolní Lipka. Due to the impact of the recession, negotiations about the merge of the two companies were opened. Therefore the *Mährische Grenzbahn* became the first railway in Austria–Hungaria whose stabilisation was discussed. In 1876 the attempts to merge the two companies met with a strong opposition of the house of commons as well as the attempt to merge with the *k. k. privilegierte Märishe–Schlesische Centralbahn* did. Eventually, in 1883, the state took over the control of the operation of the *Mährische Grenzbahn* and at the beginning of 1895 the railway was nationalized.

The concession holders of the *Mährische Grenzbahn* overestimated its economic possibilities and viability. The economic results of the railway were very poor over the whole observed period. Despite this fact, it played an important role in the economic life of north–eastern Moravia. It became a natural starting point for a rather delayed construction of the railway network in the Jeseník region.

The *k. k. privilegierte Märishe–Schlesische Centralbahn* played a vital role in the constitution of the railway network in western Silesia. It provided a multiple connection to the network of the Prussian railways. A range of branch railways was gradually connected to the main route and these branches provided local transport. The fate of this railway shows the twists and turns of a railway company where a good idea and financial speculation intertwined. The profitability of the company was on the verge of being bearable until the *Societé Belge* entered the company in 1880. Consequently, the situation became stable but until the nationalization in 1894 the railway tussled with a variety of difficulties, not different from those of the *Mährische Grenzbahn*.

The year 1873 represents a milestone in the development of railway enterprise since this year marked the beginning of the recession. This brought not only a significant recession in initiatives of private railways but was also notably projected into the operation of the already existing railways where it proved their economic strength. Traditional, strong and strategically located haulage companies overcame the recession most easily (e.g. the *k. k. privilegierte Kaiser Ferdinands–Nordbahn*). The situation was generally worse for railways which were opened only at the turn of the 1860s and 1870s. Transit companies (such as the *k. k. privilegiert Kaschau–Oderberger Bahn*)

had a relatively reasonable chance to overcome the recession. The crisis had the most severe impact on only recently founded medium sized and small railways (the *k. k. privilegierte Märishe–Schlesische Centralbahn* and the *k. k. privilegierte Märishe Grenzbahn*). An analysis of the stock market price of railways clearly shows that the recession hit haulage companies even in the year 1873 and it reached its peak in the second half of the 1870s. A large part of haulage companies got out of the recession at the beginning of the 1880s and they gradually started a process of economic strengthening, which in many cases was possible also thanks to the involvement of the state.

In the recession years of the 1870s, the importance of state interventions into the transport was obvious. This fact could be detected in the support of the already existing railways and also in the intervention into the direct railway construction within the interest region. The state support was proven essential also in the following period of the local railway construction. The analysis of the situation in the interest region clearly shows that another stage of railway construction would be practically unthinkable without the state intervention.

From the beginning of the 1880s the attention of the state and entrepreneurs was aimed on a support of a new type of railway – the local railway. The timescale for the local railway networks development shows that we can define its first stage from the beginnings of the construction of local railways up to the time when land acts on the construction of lower class railways were approved. Before the 1880 Local Railways Support Act was approved, several railways with technical specification of future local railways had already been built by the state in some exceptional cases. This concerned two short local railways located in the interest area. Following the approval of the Imperial Act, mostly large companies with a large capital were involved in the construction of local railways. In the interest region there were the *k. k. privilegierte Kaiser Ferdinands–Nordbahn* and the *Österreichische Lokaleisenbahngesellschaft*.

Self–government authorities on the land level had dealt with railway issues long before relevant land acts supporting the construction of lower class railways were approved. However, the Imperial Council allocated financial support to Austrian Silesia only in a limited way. In the 1880s the highest land support was allocated to the local railways in the Jeseník region, which was isolated from other transport networks.

The second stage of the local railway construction in the interest region was launched in connection with the approval of land acts supporting lower class railways in Moravia and Silesia in the middle of 1895. The above listed acts supported the "self–aid" construction of local railways which was financially backed up by local interested partied (municipalities, entrepreneurs, etc.) and also by land bodies or the state. Following the approval of the land acts, several projects for shorter local railways travelling mostly through economically little attractive areas were realized. The construction of local railways concentrated solely on the region of western Silesia and north–western Moravia. An expensive but economically successful project of the *Schlesische Landesbahnen*, realized just before the WWI in the area of the quickly expanding Ostrava–Karviná region, was an exception.

Local railways showed much differentiated economic results during both defined periods. On one hand there were local railways showing just marginal viability, on the other hand some railways evolved into profitable businesses. Based on the examples of the local railways in the interest region, we can state that railways with developed cargo haulage or local suburban railways oriented towards public transport had a bigger chance to achieve higher profits.

There were several local railway projects which were never implemented. Particularly after the land acts on the construction of lower class railways were issued, the general public used to propose a growing number of ideas for clearly local railways. However, the plans were not implemented in many cases. The ideas behind these projects were revived after 1918 but the plans lost their appeal in the context of the expanding automobile transport. A large part of projects for local railways failed due to a predicted low profitability, although in many cases those, who submitted the projects, had already overestimated the profits. It seems that a corresponding political and public support was more important than a demonstrated profitability. Disputes took place both in the parliament and in land assemblies and these disputes had a fundamental impact on the railway strategy in the interest region. The answer to the question why plans for local railways were implemented in some cases and they failed in others can be found in the ability to obtain the support from a sufficient number of publicly active and influential personalities.

An integral modern transport infrastructure was built in the interest region prior to the WWI. This statement is supported by the fact that the local road and railway infrastructure was altered only to a minimum extent in the following decades. The above described changes that took place in the transport infrastructure in the period between the middle of the 18th century and the beginning of WWI can be quite rightly viewed as absolutely fundamental for the constitution of the transport infrastructure in both the interest region and the whole area of the Czech Lands.