

The Austrian Spatial Development Concept 2001

Abbreviated version



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ÖREK 2001 – PREFACE

Spatial planning and spatial development are tasks carried out by the federal government, the Länder and the municipalities in Austria, involving the complex issue of the assignment of competencies. The federal government is the competent body for sectoral issues, the Länder have the general competence for development planning under the General Provisions of the Austrian Constitution. The execution of local spatial planning is the competence of the municipalities according to the Provisions of the Austrian Constitution. Within the scope of private administration, local authorities may engage in planning activities and implement planning measures.

As early as in the 1960s, spatial planning was recognised as a joint task of the federal, Länder and municipal governments. As a result, the "Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (Österreichische Raumordnungskonferenz, ÖROK)" was founded in 1971. At the time, one of the main tasks assigned to ÖROK was the drafting of a spatial planning concept for Austria. This task was accomplished for the first time in 1981; ten years later a revised version, the "Austrian Spatial Planning Concept 1991" was published.

In drafting the "Austrian Spatial Development Concept 2001" (ÖREK 2001), the former version was completely revised with a special focus on the integration of Austria into the European Union and on the enlargement process as well as on the issues of securing Austria's qualities as business location in a globalised economy and the growing significance of cross-border co-operation.

The revision work for the ÖREK 2001 was organised with the objective of making the process as open as possible and to enable the broad participation of all partners (federal government, Länder, municipalities, social and economic partners) as well as all interested experts. This approach entailed a lengthy work and discussion procedure, and the outcome of these efforts was the draft of the ÖREK 2001 completed in spring 2001. After an intensive finalisation phase, the top-level body of officials of ÖROK, the Commission of Deputies, adopted the draft ÖREK 2001 in December 2001 and recommended the proposal to the Political Conference at which the concept was adopted in April 2002.

The "Austrian Spatial Development Concept 2001" is a document arrived at by the consensus of all the ÖROK partners. It is not binding, but is rather intended to serve as guidance and is therefore a recommendation and orientation for all parties involved in planning work with a spatial impact. Thus, ÖREK 2001 will only have a meaningful impact if it is fully accepted by the actors involved in Austrian spatial development and spatial planning policy. The approach applied involved a very broad range of participants in the preparatory phase with the aim to achieve broad acceptance. ÖREK 2001 has been designed to play a pivotal role in achieving sustainable spatial development in Austria.

Vienna, April 2002

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CHANGED FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The European integration process

The overall conditions for spatial development in Austria have changed fundamentally due to Austria's accession to the EU in 1995, the further development of the Union itself and its plans for eastward enlargement:

- Major economic, security and foreign policy decisions must now be accorded with the European partners.
- The single market and monetary union have made the exchange of goods and services across national borders easier, and the international division of labour has been further advanced.
- The accession of the Central and East European Countries (CEEC) is another challenge facing the European Union.
- The increasing interdependence of European states in the sphere of politics, economics, social and ecological affairs has heightened the awareness of the need to coordinate spatial development at the European level.

The globalisation of the economy and society

The process of internationalisation and globalisation of the economy and society is progressing irrespective of European integration.

- The markets for capital and goods are expanding.
- The new information technologies are reducing physical barriers and broadening

the possibilities for the global exchange of information.

- A stronger international division of labour, the elimination of barriers at the national level and technological development have increased the mobility of the production factors of labour and capital, while qualitative location features are gaining significance and becoming decisive in the competition of the regions.

Labour market flexibility

The changes in the global economy are having an impact on the framework conditions for the labour market:

- Easing of social legislation and business organisation regulations. Emergence of new forms of occupation, increase in part-time work and average duration of employment with a firm decreases.
- Decrease of traditional ties to locations that result from belonging to specific firms. Increasingly mobile population.

Societal changes

The relationships between space and society are changing. This development requires substantial adjustment efforts, as all institutions and social security systems are directly affected.

- In Austria – as in many other industrialised countries – the population is growing only at very low rates.
- Higher life expectancy and sinking birth rates are resulting in an aging population: A declining number of young people contrast with the growing number of older people.
- The decreasing size of average households and higher demands on living

standards are leading to sustained high settlement pressure despite a population that is growing only slightly.

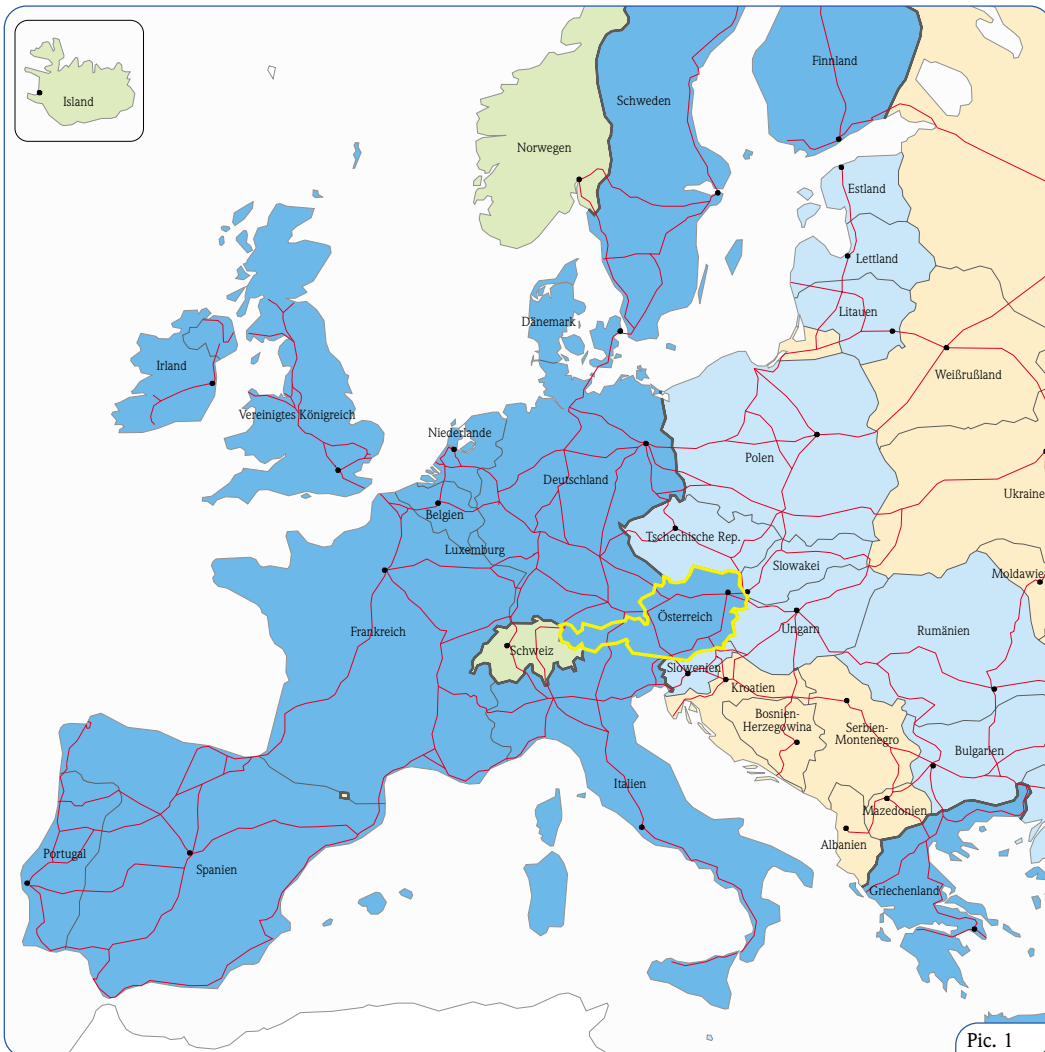
- Population growth depends on international migration due to the low birth rates. This has led to an ever increasing number of multi-cultural societies in Europe.

- The variety of lifestyles and forms of living as well as the growing mobility of the population are causing people to lose touch with their immediate living space and traditional social ties. People are increasingly more willing to spend different life phases in different places.

- By contrast, the emergence of an opposite trend of a stronger identification with one's immediate living environs, own town or city quarter, and own region has been observed.

- Leisure time and recreation are becoming increasingly important for individual lifestyles. In "areas of confrontation" traditional life forms may conflict with new forms of leisure time activities.

- Traditional shopping behaviour is increasingly being displaced by a shopping experience perceived as an adventure. In procuring goods and using services, it is





Pic. 2

no longer merely the aim to cover needs, but it is becoming increasingly important that purpose be linked with adventures and events.

- Information and knowledge are gaining significance; life-long learning is becoming an indispensable prerequisite for an innovative society. At the same time, a well-educated population is a major locational advantage for the economy. Technological developments are making it possible to seize opportunities, even in remote regions, but also create new problems of isolation and a possible trend of de-solidarity.

Spatial developments

- Urban regions are the gainers of globalisation; this is promoted by high capacity infrastructure, highly qualified human resources and excellent accessibility.
- Extending from urbanised areas, the process of suburbanisation is expanding into the hinterlands, driven by the people's desire to live in green areas as well as by the rising demand for space for transport, retail, commerce, industry, services and leisure time facilities. This is contrasted by the process of reurbanisation, triggered by the attractiveness of the city centres for certain segments of the population.
- Rural regions are showing clear tendencies to urban forms of life and urbanisation. The discontinuation of farming in agricultural areas could lead to the renaturalisation of cultivated landscapes. Settlement areas may be threatened by natural menaces.
- Large-scale models of supply, leisure time and tourism activities promote the



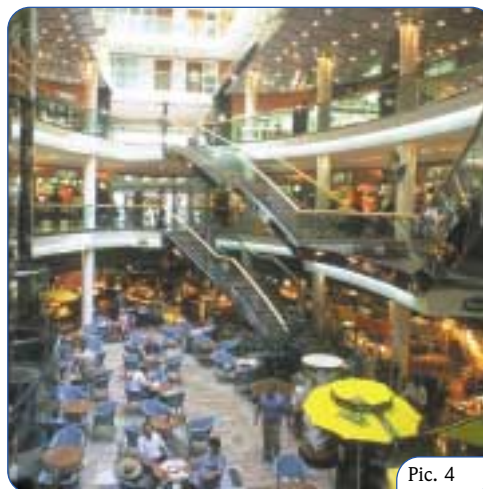
Pic. 3

spatial specialisation. On the one hand, these may play a major role as economic factors, but on the other hand, they may also lead to the economic decline of traditional town and city cores.

- The tendency of spatial separation of functions is causing traffic volumes to rise. The growing dependence of mobility on individual means of motorised transport is causing growing conflicts between individual users of means of transport and the affected residential population.

- Despite many efforts to check these developments, we expect the consumption of raw materials and non-renewable forms of energy to continue rising. Climate changes, the strain on ecological systems and their dismemberment, especially by transportation means are also causing damages to the environment.

These changed framework conditions have created new challenges for the local authorities in Austria dealing with issues of spatial relevance and have given rise to



Pic. 4

the need for examining, and if necessary, adapting the tasks as defined to date. On the other hand, they also restrict the latitude for successful policies.

Guidelines and principles

The objective is make sustainability an inherent part of Austria's spatial development policy. This means that environmentally benign economic activity and practice should be guided by the objective



Pic. 5

of a balanced spatial development that strives for the harmony of the social and economic demands on space with its ecological and cultural functions. Austria's spatial development policy has therefore committed itself to pursue the following principles:

- the cost-conscious, prudent use of space and the environment;
- the creation of spatial prerequisites for economic development;
- the development of society in space, and
- the active participation in change processes.

The spatially well-balanced reinforcement of the competitiveness of the regions, securing equal access to infrastructure and knowledge, and the maintenance of the natural environment as the foundation of life and of cultural heritage are intended to contribute to economic and social cohesion, equal living conditions in the subregions and to social integration.

SIX PRIORITY THEMES FOR AUSTRIAN SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AT THE OUTSET OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Austria as a business location in Europe

New challenges

The location of Austria has been described to date using the large-scale regional



Pic. 6

features of a landlocked country, a mountainous country and a border country. The European integration process, and in particular, the EU enlargement are changing the geopolitical positioning of Austria: The traditional spatial image of the past decades – Austria as a country at the border (as a bulwark, as a bridge) – will no longer be significant in an enlarged Europe.

If prosperity and quality of life in Austria and its regions are to be lastingly secured, Austria will have to face the following challenges:

- In international competition as a business location, apart from the "hard" location factors such as infrastructure and production costs, the so-called "soft" factors, i.e., qualitative factors (qualification and motivation of labour, friendly business climate and creative environment, quality of life, etc.) will be crucial. The sustainable development of these factors will therefore become a success factor in the competition of the regions.

- International access to transport routes will continue to be an important location factor. The European transport system is currently in a state of rapid development. The decisions at the European and national levels on the priorities regarding the expansion of the high capacity transport infrastructure and the definition of the legal and organisational framework conditions for the operation of transport systems will also be decisive for a location's potential.

- Not only markets for globally traded goods and services, but also increasingly labour and regionally offered services are extending across national borders. This requires a stronger focus on the cross-border aspects of economic and labour market policy.



Pic. 7

Strategic orientation

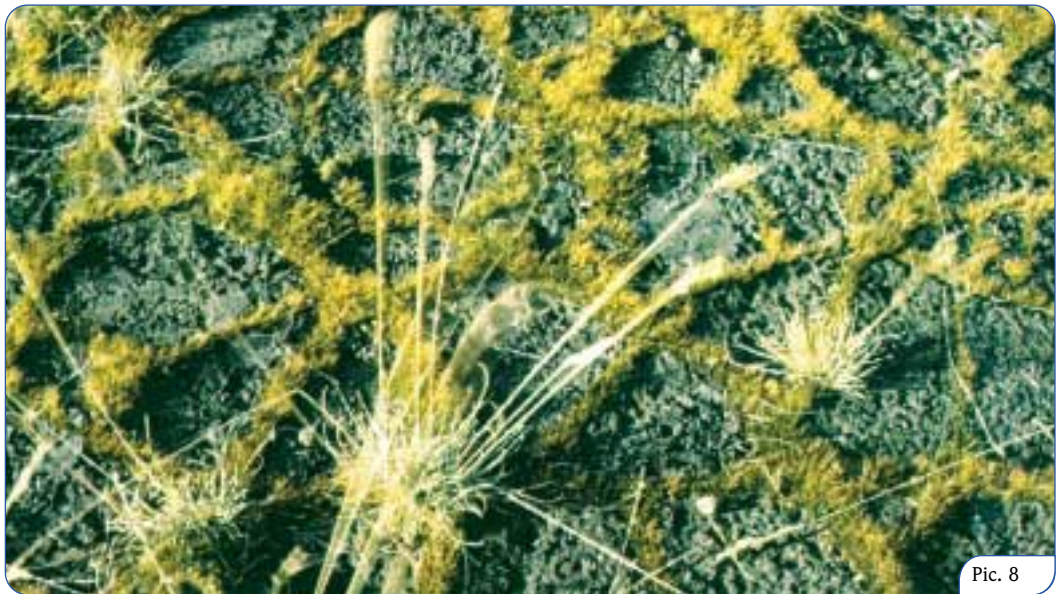
In order to be able to successfully meet the challenges derived from the above-mentioned trends, it is proposed to create a strategy for this decade for the development of the “business location of Austria in Europe“ that rests on three pillars:

- The existing – both hard and soft – location factors of Austria have to be actively reinforced and better positioned internationally, and they must be further developed taking into account the large-scale regional interrelationships.
- All important Austrian economic areas are in the vicinity of borders. It shall therefore be especially important to foster a more intensive exploitation of the opportunities of cross-border collaboration in locational development.
- The diversity and attractiveness of the natural spaces and cultural environment of Austria’s regions constitute a valuable potential which should be used and developed sustainably and prudently for locational development.

Application in policy areas of spatial relevance

The application of the existing set of instruments employed by local authorities shall focus in future more strongly on providing support to labour force and businesses in coping with the challenges of European integration, especially in connection with the EU enlargement. The following sets of measures shall be given special attention:

- the focused application of assistance instruments of the federal government and of the Länder for the purpose of improving the infrastructure of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and raising the level of qualification of the labour force, including motivational consulting for specific target groups;
- Improvement of the cross-border infrastructure, including the multi-modal nodes necessary to secure the capacity of the of the area;
- Public relations work to inform the population of the measures already taken and of the planned measures for border



regions, including their exposition on the basis of successful project examples (best practice).

It will be possible to successfully overcome these new challenges in the future only in cooperation with the involved local authorities. This relates in particular to:

- regional cooperation of the Länder as well as of the cities and municipalities in the form of regional development associations and urban-hinterland partnerships;
- cross-border cooperation with the neighbouring states (also at the regional and local level, especially within the scope of the so-called "Euregios");
- the participation of cities and regions in Europe-wide cooperation networks.

Sustainable use of natural resources

New challenges

Natural resources are the basis for the existence of flora and fauna as well as for the diversity of biotopes, natural and cultivated landscapes. To avoid the over-

straining of the soil, water, air and energy resources, ecological limits must be acknowledged. The limitation of the use of resources is defined according to the principle of sustainability. Accordingly, the use must be efficient so as to ensure that no irreversible effects occur on the natural balance or other forms of use persist that would diminish the development opportunities of the present generation and especially the future generations. A basic understanding of the necessity of sustainable development and the corresponding preservation of natural resources contrast with spatial trends that contradict the principle of sustainability:

- growing consumption of space,
- increasing ecological strains from settlements, the businesses and transport,
- hazards to the soil and ground water,
- loss of resources due to rising volumes of waste and contaminated sites needing restoration.

In the past decade, the principle of sustainability has been recognised as an internationally agreed-on goal in numerous documents of the UN, the EU and the Council of Europe. At the same time the economic globalisation tendencies

Pic. 8

have been making it harder to adhere to a policy guided by the principle of sustainability. In this context of conflicting ambitious objectives and limiting framework conditions at the global scale, national policies must search for feasible solutions.

Strategic orientation

In implementing the principles of sustainability, local settlement development is of strategic significance. Settlement structures have a major influence on traffic volumes and thus the consumption of resources (especially for transport and energy):

- A sustainable settlement development will always endeavour to attain a mix of basic subsistence functions. The vicinity of the places where people live, work, engage in leisure time activities, purchase goods, enjoy education and communicate has increased the likelihood of environmentally-friendly forms of transport (bicycle, walking).

- Residential construction should be linked with public transport in order to secure a more efficient use of the transport infrastructure.

- A sufficient settlement density in the catchment areas of public and private utilities also contributes to the economic efficiency of local suppliers and fosters social infrastructures.

- In land development and planning, the focus should not be only on aspects of design, but also on the efficient use of resources for energy supply and heating, and the issue of renewable or non-renewable energy sources.

Application in policy areas of spatial relevance

To achieve the prudent and sustainable use of space, local authorities already have a range of instruments at their disposal for influencing developments that need to be expanded and applied even more efficiently:



Pic. 9

- The instruments of local spatial planning should be oriented on the models of compact settlements and a small-scale mix of (compatible) uses.

- The procedures to assess the spatial and environmental impacts of large plants (also under EU law) must be applied consistently.

- Landscape and open space concepts should be an integral part of regional and local development concepts.

- Spatial planning should offer assistance in the search for suitable locations for



Pic. 10



Pic. 11

plants for the thermal treatment and depositing of waste.

- The assistance instruments applied by local authorities should be examined as to their impacts with respect to a sustainable development and, if necessary, modified.

- A prerequisite for successful planning at the local level with a view to attaining sustainability is ensuring that the local



Pic. 12

population is sufficiently informed on the status and objectives of the planning and interested parties are integrated into the discussion process at an early point in time.

Balanced regional development and social integration

New challenges

Austria belongs to the group of economically highly developed and strong countries. The extent of social inequality is low in comparison with other countries. Less than one-tenth of the population is considered to be threatened by poverty and social exclusion.

A growing tendency of social imbalance has been observed that is emerging against a backdrop of increasing flexibility on the labour market and the reform of the social security system, which is enlarging the widening of the social gap.

Moreover, this tendency shows a specific spatial distribution pattern, though it cannot be reduced to simple differentiations such as urban-rural or West-East. From a spatial development viewpoint, social inequality becomes a problem when it coincides with spatial segregation. Whenever segments of the population threatened by poverty concentrate in specific parts of a city or region, the risk of spiralling socio-economic downfall increases.

The loss of significance of the family and the growing size of the aging population is making the importance of the social infrastructure very clear.

The spatial differences in the quality of the availability of goods and services, especially in the retail business, are growing. A growing concentration at fewer locations in larger centres is contrasted by the disappearing functions in the numerous smaller and medium-sized cities. The simultaneous retreat of utilities from these areas is leading to losses in the standard of living among the less mobile population and to a tendency of disintegration.

As a consequence of the spatial division of labour, the increasing locational competition and locational specialisation, mono-structural function spaces are emerging. Parts of cities and rural municipalities that are dedicated exclusively for residential purposes not only contradict the objectives of sustainable development, but also reinforce social inequality with respect to people's option of being able to participate in social life.

Strategic orientation

Spatial development policy must strive to promote balanced structures in the long term and to prevent social segregation. Preserving a functional and social mix in urban and rural regions is the goal. Mechanisms that encourage involuntary segregation that gradually takes hold should be counteracted. Spatial development policy can contribute to this goal by observing the following principles:

- polycentric spatial development
- converging economic development
- preservation and expansion of compact settlement structures
- functional and social mix of settlements

- further development of local public transport systems

Knowledge has become a crucial strategic resource that supports the economic, social and cultural development of society as a whole as well as individuals and groups of persons.

This requires a diverse and spatially broad-based offering of facilities to promote the acquisition and exchange of knowledge.

Application in policy areas of spatial relevance



Measures to prevent spatial exclusion and to reinforce social integration may and must be taken in many policy areas:

- In urban renewal, care must be taken to avoid that restoration measures displace



Pic. 15

weak population groups or encourage segregation.

- Avoidance of social monostructures in new housing developments.
- Broad-based access to education and qualification opportunities must be guaranteed, also as regards the spatial aspects. Modern forms of telecommunications may help to overcome spatial barriers.
- Decentralised and mobile forms of healthcare, care for the elderly and social assistance can frequently be provided not only specifically as needed, but also at lower costs.

The services of social infrastructure are often provided by different private and public bodies.

A well-functioning cooperation between these institutions can contribute to providing a broad range of services and avoid parallel offerings, thus ensuring the efficient use of public funds.

Mobility and traffic: opportunities, moderation and excesses

New challenges

The political transformation in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 shifted Austria from a peripheral location at the border to the Iron Curtain to a central location at the heart of the continent. Until then the problem of transit traffic had been restricted to the transport routes across the Alps, especially in the west of the country, while the eastern part of Austria suffered from the dead regions along the borders; now new transport relations are developing at a highly dynamic pace with our eastern neighbours.

The economic structural changes are also having an impact on transport:

- Changes in the structure of goods (fewer goods, more high quality products, just-in-time delivery) are resulting in an increase of cargo good transport with a higher affinity to roads.

- The expansion of the service sector is creating higher traffic volumes of individual commercial transport.

- An increase in the degree of specialisation and the reduction of the manufactu-



Suburbanisation and the despoliation of the landscape are among the main causes of the disproportionately high rise in traffic capacity, as both the number and the length of the distances that can be covered by automobile are steadily increa-



ring depth has resulted in a strong increase in the transportation of semi-finished goods.

- The growing volume of traffic is due mainly to developments within national borders, also in the case of passenger traffic.

Demographic changes (more agile and more elderly people) and changes in lifestyles resulting from higher prosperity (young singles with more purchasing power, higher leisure time mobility, second cars and second homes) have added to the rising use of private automobiles.

Due to the spatial and temporal dispersion of transport demand, public transport is losing its capability to meet these needs adequately and inexpensively.

The growing number of opportunities to articulate diverse and often contradictory interests in the planning process, which is very desirable from a democratic policy standpoint, is delaying decision-making and the implementation of larger transport infrastructure projects. This is making it harder to find a balance between needs and supply, and is making the already very high costs of such projects even higher.

Strategic orientation

Austrian transportation policy has the aim of overcoming the fundamental conflicting objectives of the economy and the environment by pursuing a cooperative coordination policy for the benefit of both parties.

- On the one hand, a transportation network dimensioned and adjusted to the spatial structure and the use of space is necessary that consists of roadways, railway lines, waterways and their nodes as

reduced to sustainable and compatible levels through suitable market and regulation policy instruments – also by giving preferential treatment to environmentally-friendly modes of transport.

Application in policy areas of spatial relevance

The configuration of high capacity transportation networks (rail, road, the Danube waterway) is intended to correspond to the needs of the internal and external integration of Austria. Major



Pic. 20

well as airports in order to secure local and regional accessibility in all parts of the country.

- On the other hand, it is the goal of a transportation policy adjusted to the needs of people to achieve sustainable, socially and environmentally compatible traffic loads by fostering traffic-reducing spatial structures in conjunction with the appropriate transport policy framework conditions and transportation offerings. By applying a balanced mix of spatial, infrastructure and transportation policies, traffic is to be

agglomerations are to be linked with each other in line with the required capacities and qualities as well as through high capacity routes with the



Pic. 21

corresponding centres of the neighbouring countries.

Commensurate with financing capabilities, the lacking connections are to be built and insufficient links are to be expanded. Infrastructure and operational conditions are to be established that to the farthest extent possible use environmentally-



Pic. 23



Pic. 22

goods and service suppliers, elementary schools, etc.) are to be designed to be possible by foot, bicycle or public transport.

Therefore, the development of the use of space and settlement structures is to be better adjusted to the development of transportation infrastructure.



Pic. 24

friendly modes of transport, such as waterways and railways, for the transport of passengers and freight.

As regards everyday mobility, the largest possible number of distances to low capacity, central place facilities (local

Taxes and public charges may be applied as a steering instrument of transportation policy to promote sustainability. Thus, for transportation by truck on high capacity roadways a toll system is to be implemented that is commensurate with

vehicle mileage (road pricing). This toll is to be implemented in accordance with the European law and should take external costs into account as far as possible.

Urban regions: dynamic development and need for guidance

New challenges

Urban regions are the growth drivers of the Austrian economy. The "hard" locational factors are still decisive, such as links to international transportation routes. However, the "soft" locational factors are increasingly playing a role in location decisions, such as the qualification of the labour force and the regional quality of life. The persistent in-migration of the population to the urban hinterlands as



Pict. 25



Pict. 26

well as the increasing space needs of the business sector are raising settlement pressure on the hinterlands. This results in the constant loss of undeveloped zones. Where areas that are zoned as building land are used depends to a large extent on the "coincidence" of the supply of space and property prices. In urban regions this leads to problematic spatial developments.

The in-migration and out-migration of the diverse social groups and relocations of diverse sectors has transformed the functions in some parts of the core cities. The expansion of urban regions and the increasing spatial separation of individual functions, in conjunction with the rising quality demands of society, are producing higher traffic loads.

Higher mobility requirements are mainly being met by motorised individual trans-

port modes. This has been straining the environment.

Strategic orientation

The objective of polycentric development, which has been defined as a desirable option in the European spatial development concept, also applies to Austria. Taking into account the specific Austrian context, this means that all important urban regions need to develop further without giving up the metropolis of Vienna's positioning as an international centre.

Within the urban regions, the guidance for spatial development is to come from the model of decentralised concentration, specifically, for both core cities and the suburban belts. This means a higher density and more functions in specific locations.

A central concern of urban regions is to retain existing corporate headquarters and

controlling units and to gain new ones. The public sector is to provide active support in procuring land. The provision of real estate for the business sector requires a harmonisation with public transport and with the development of qualitative locational factors.

Urban regions are to be defined as priority areas for public transport. Settlement planning is to be harmonised with the existing and planned infrastructure and vice versa. In order to preserve the quality of life in urban regions, especially in the core cities, green areas and open spaces are to be preserved and enhanced in value.

Application in policy areas of spatial relevance

To keep core cities attractive, a mix of instruments of urban renewal (improvement of apartments, buildings, living environment, infrastructure and frame-



Pic. 27

work conditions for business) must be applied and developed further. In order to assure coordinated settlement development in the urban hinterlands, an active, forward-looking and coordinated spatial planning is required. By defining supralocal settlement borders or by demarcating green and leisure time spaces of regional significance, large and coherent open spaces can be largely kept free of settlement activities. A broad-based range of measures is needed to retain the attractiveness of urban regions: the efficient management of space, high capacity internal and external land development for transportation and unbureaucratic administrative procedures as well as public spending to secure economic qualities and the residential and leisure time quality of the entire urban region. For these measures, which are to be taken by the very diverse public bodies, to be efficient and effective as a whole, partnership and cooperative relationships are needed among the municipalities within the urban region as well



as at the communal, Land and federal levels.

Rural regions: a variety of challenges and development opportunities

New challenges

Rural regions have diverse structures and can no longer be equated with agriculturally used space. Rural regions in the hinterlands of large cities are very diffe-



rent from those in peripheral locations or tourist regions.

As in Austria, a large share of public space is used for agriculture and forestry, rural regions are "spatially responsible" for the cultivated landscapes.

Some of these regions are still marked by the out-migration of young people capable of employment. Rural regions in the hinterlands of agglomerations and at the intersections of high capacity transportation modes are the destinations of in-migration of residential population and the location of plants and businesses. This is leading to substantial economic and



social structural changes. In many of these cases, there are conflicts of interest and use between the established parties and the newcomers.

Although it has been a long time since agriculture and forestry were the most important sources of income for the rural population, today they are still the predominant form of land use in most rural regions. A major change in the agricultural system consists of the increasing concentration and intensification of agriculture, facilitated by technological progress and necessitated by changing agricultural structures.

The accession to the EU and the implementation of the Community's agricultural system and thus of the subsidy policy of the EU oriented on zoning and land use

(especially of the agro-environmental programmes) have also had significant impacts on spatial development.

Sources of gainful employment outside of agriculture are restricted to a few economic areas in many rural regions. This type of one-sided dependence means that external changes are capable of considerably affecting the economic base of some rural regions. Among these factors are, for example, the locational preferences of industry or changes in demand in tourism as well as the reorganisation efforts in the area of public services.

Spatial development in rural regions is being marked more and more by the increasing division of functions between the municipalities as well as by strong interrelationships between residential and working communities. The consequences are a steep rise in motorised individual means of transport, decreasing efficiency of public means of passenger transport, higher costs for developing infrastructure and a threat to the local supply of goods and services.



Strategic orientation

The development of rural regions should be oriented on strengthening mixed settlement and economic structures and avoiding dependence on monostructures for reasons of achieving sustainability and

for social and labour market policy-related reasons. For rural regions to prevail in an ever growing fierce global competition, it is necessary for them to sustainably develop their respective potentials as best as possible (attractive landscape, availability of space, natural resources, cultural traditions, but especially the labour force and local enterprises with



Pic. 32

specific know-how), taking advantage of existing synergies. The protection of natural resources is, above all, of regional nature. To secure the vital element of water, it is of particular importance to protect surface waters and ground water. The potential capacity of forests and thus forests as a source of income – bearing in mind the objective of sustainability – is still underestimated and left unexploited by farmers who own forests. It is also decisive for future developments to care for cultivated landscapes, to protect and preserve their value without inhibiting dynamic growth in rural regions. The limits of environmental compatibility in the use of landscapes for leisure time and tourism purposes must be recognised and secured through prudent management. Small and medium-sized centres in rural regions are the drivers and focal points of their development. The potential for gainful employment outside of agriculture are bundled in these centres. The development of sufficient infrastructure to secure this potential must be secured at these centres. However, for it to be possible to



Pic. 33

provide infrastructures at acceptable economic terms, a sufficient concentration of users in the catchment areas must be assured.

Application in policy areas of spatial relevance

Rural development must be supported by a broad-based bundle of measures of the diverse public bodies:

- by local spatial planning measures to limit the utilisation of land, by giving preference to settlement density over settlement expansion and settlement concentration,
- by defining the framework and development guidelines for supralocal spatial planning,
- by implementing legally-binding measures for securing resources and for protection against natural hazards,
- by land development for transportation (providing access to transportation routes) in close cooperation with spatial planning,
- through assistance measures for commercial and agricultural enterprises that are not only in the form of financial subsidies, but also, and above all, in the form of transfer of information and support services across several companies

(especially in marketing or in the area of tourism organisation). The focus in this context should be on strengthening the regional development levels, performing independent and professional resource management, promotion of cultivated landscape management, use and improvement of land policy instruments and the harmonisation of spatial planning, development and equalisation measures. Considering the close relationships growing at the regional level, the following factors have come to play a major role: cooperation among the municipalities at the regional level as well as the objective of securing and furthering the regional coordination and consulting facilities created in the past years (regional management, regional development agencies).

CURRENT REQUIREMENTS – A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF PLANNING

Planning relates to everyone: sensitivity and mobilisation of the population for planning issues

Themes and problems with spatial relevance need to be dealt with publicly to an increasing extent in order to raise awareness among citizens and decision-makers. Often, before planning decisions can be



reached, an opinion-forming process must be initiated to create the foundation for such decisions, which includes a broad-based discussion and the harmonisation of interests in order to create the basis for the spatial planning and regional development measures to be taken. Without the preparatory work, often political acceptance will be lacking, which may render the necessary concepts ineffective from a professional point of view. Activities to inform the public and the initiation of social and political discourse with respect to topics of spatial relevance will therefore be given higher priority in the planning work in the future. The use of existing channels of communication



employed by spatial planning can be reinforced and expanded (e.g. own publications, collaboration with the media, set-up and expansion of consulting services, development of local support centres). The use of the Internet and the World Wide Web will be standard forms of communicating information in the future. The focus of these information activities would be, among other things, to communicate the systemic relationships in spatial planning, to show the disadvantages of unwanted developments and the presentation of successful solutions and planning

procedures (best practice). Moreover, institutions are needed that can cause opinion-forming processes.

Planning: from the product to the process

The process of planning, taking into account the relevant population and interest groups, is growing in significance. Process orientation can help to create and heighten an awareness of the problems already in the planning stage and thus contribute to forming a foundation for the implementation of the planning measures. The closer a person is involved in the planning creation process, the higher the probability of identification with the results and the greater the willingness to support the outcome. At the same time, the participation also creates access to valuable additional information than can be used to influence the decision-making process. Key features of process-oriented planning are, among other things, the free

flow of information and communication, transparent decision-making procedures, moderated hearings and a clear distribution of tasks and competencies.

The mobilisation of synergy effects through cooperation

The numerous actors involved and the increasing spatial complexity have heightened the significance of cooperation and collaboration at all spatial levels. Spatial planning and spatial development relate to topics that address many areas and for this reason it is essential to use more intensively and develop existing organisational forms and modes of procedure. Cooperation among the local authorities of one level (e.g. cooperation among the municipalities of a region to prepare an autonomous regional development policy, cross-border cooperation among regions) as well as among the local authorities of



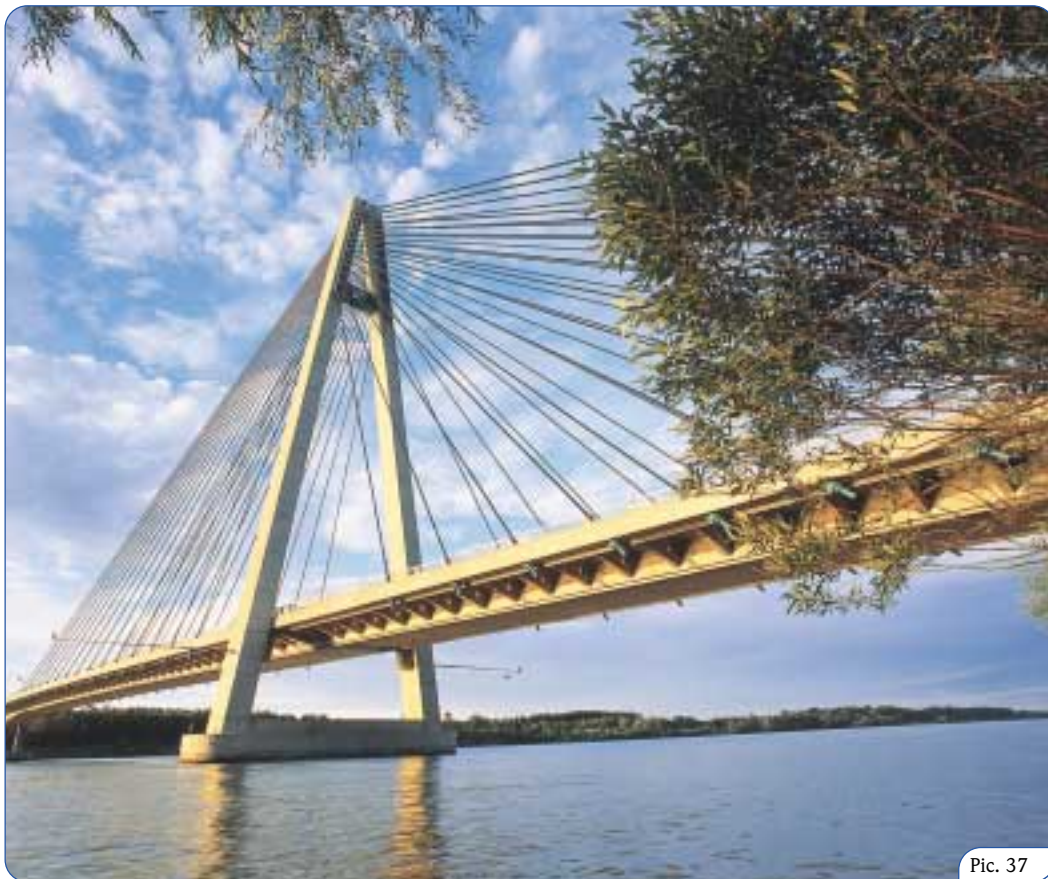
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different levels (e.g. agreement between federal and Länder bodies regarding issues of regional development and subsidies for agriculture) and cross-sectoral collaboration will become even more important in the future. In the future, planning partnerships must be extended and deepened through new communication forms and the participation of regional consulting and development facilities such as the regional management and regional development agencies. Moreover, we expect to see more public-private partnerships in the future. On the one hand, the effects of budgetary austerity program-

effects of the know-how of private and public institutions in implementing public tasks will be used more often.

A reorientation of the relationship between spatial planning and regional development policy

The sovereign measures comprise a bundle of binding regulatory ordinances issued by authorities in executing public law. Among such measures are particularly the instruments of spatial planning. This set of instruments is fully developed and is applied consistently especially at the



mes will increasingly shift the financing of infrastructure and management projects to private sources of equity and sponsoring. On the other hand, cooperation forms that exploit the synergy

local level. Among the sovereign measures are those relating to planning by the federal and Länder authorities targeted at individual sectoral planning schemes with a spatial impact (transport

planning, nature protection planning etc.). Only a harmonisation achieved across the individual sectors will assure an optimal overall development. This applies in particular to the harmonisation of transport planning and settlement development. Moreover, local authorities may take measures under private law such as purchasing property, granting assistance and building infrastructure. The federal, Länder and municipal levels currently act separately in this area. The adequate harmonisation and cooperation among the institutions of this sector basically having equal rights should help to avoid parallel and sometimes even competing structures. Cooperation in this context is closely related to the objective of an efficient and targeted use of public funds. Intensive cooperation is required in the areas of granting assistance in accordance with the rules of the EU. It will be a future challenge to harmonise

the development policy and spatial planning policy measures to avoid that any of these measures induce opposing developments. Examples where harmonisation would be sensible are investments in transport infrastructure, guidelines for granting residential housing subsidies and the regional distribution of public facilities.

Focus on the spatial impact of sectoral policies through legal norms, planning and assistance schemes

The implementation of development and spatial planning objectives is achieved largely through the application of instruments that are not directly available to the authorities responsible for spatial planning. For this reason it necessary to heighten the awareness of the spatial impact of sectoral policies by expanding the harmonisation mechanisms and forms of cooperation.



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