

### *SUMMARY*

#### *1 Preliminary remarks*

The Spatial Planning Report prepared by the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (Österreichische Raumordnungskonferenz – ÖROK) is designed to document periodically the activities of spatial planning relevance of the territorial authorities, the social and economic partners as well as of ÖROK itself. The first Spatial Planning Report was published in 1975 and now we are publishing the tenth issue. It covers the period 1999 through 2001 and discusses the variety and complexity of spatial planning schemes and measures in Austria.

The contents of the Spatial Planning Report and of this abbreviated version are structured by actor. Austria's constitution defines the legal framework for spatial planning: the federal government, the Länder, the municipalities and communities are the legitimate actors in the sphere of spatial planning in Austria, albeit with varying scopes of competence. The measures taken by these actors during the period under review is the central focus of this report. The measures and activities include all changes to relevant legislation (including agreements and treaties), financial and immaterial assistance granted, the planning and construction of infrastructure and buildings, research projects and public relations work. The concrete measures and activities described in the report are selected by the reporting bodies themselves, i.e., the federal level, the Länder, the municipalities and communities, and the social and economic partners. ÖROK coordinates the documentation and ensures the consistency of the reports, embedding these in an overall structure with additional analyses on the demographic, social and economic developments in Austria.

#### *2 Austria and Europe: Implementation of EU regional policy*

With the accession of Austria to the EU, spatial planning and regional development have ceased to be a purely national issue. National planning and activities – if they are to be successful – must increasingly take the European dimension into account, especially as regards measures at the supra-local level. Today, EU regional policy complements national activities, and has also had a considerable influence on the policy changes that have occurred. The new tier of actors has modified the interaction between the forces in play up to now and has created a stronger spirit of partnership, cooperation and mutually supportive collaboration. The multi-tiered European system, which has also become evident in the area of spatial planning and regional policy, has added to the complexity of the policymaking processes, while at the same time imposing closer collaboration and harmonisation.

##### *2.1 Features of the EU's regional policy*

Since its establishment, the European Union has pursued the goal of narrowing the gap between the development levels of the various regions and has helped to overcome the lagging development of the most disadvantaged regions, including rural regions, thus implementing regional policy. This policy has in fact been crowned with success, even though the cohesion efforts at the Member State level have been more successful than at the regional level. In the past few years, those regions have achieved the highest growth rates, which were given the highest priority for assistance (Objective 1) within the scope of the EU's structural policy programmes. Attempts to initiate convergence in development at the national level have been particularly successful. The encouraging economic performance of the cohesion states of Spain, Portugal, Greece and Ireland apparently prove the regional policy approach right of granting aid to the regions with the greatest developmental lag.

The volume of funds applied at the European level is, and has been, very impressive. The European Union makes assistance for economically disadvantaged regions available as well as for measures to improve the integration of the labour force, the so-called "structural policy instruments", which account for over 30 % of the EU's budget, ranking second after expenditure for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The money for these structural policy instruments are managed by four funds: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG). These funds are employed by the EU in diverse mixes in order to achieve structural policy objectives. The EU Structural Funds have been allocated since 1989 in accordance with the principles of concentrating on the achievement of horizontal and regional objectives, multi-annual programming, additionality (the EU funds are only granted in addition to national funds) and partnership (coordination of the preparation and implementation of the measures with the national and regional authorities of the Member States). The regional objectives in the period 1995–99 concentrated on “regions lagging behind in their development” (Objective 1 regions, funded by the ERDF, ESF und EAGGF-A), “declining industrial regions” (Objective 2 regions, funded by ERDF and ESF) and “rural regions” (Objective 5b regions, funded by the EAGGF-A, ERDF and ESF). The other structural policy objectives were not restricted to regions, but were applied horizontally to tasks. In addition, since the end of the 1980s, the Community Initiatives, which are endowed with much fewer funds, have been applied in the efforts to cope with special problems. In the last Structural Funds period, only a total of 9 % of the Structural Funds means were made available for Community Initiatives.

## *2.2 The implementation of EU regional policy during the period 1995–1999*

With the accession of Austria to the European Union, the European Union committed itself to make available a total of EUR 1,623m in the programming period 1995–1999 (at the time ECU) to Austria. EUR 146m were used for Community Initiatives, EUR 16m for pilot projects, and EUR 1,461m for assistance to high priority objective programmes. Of these EUR 1,461m, almost half went to the regional objective programmes (1, 2 and 5b) and the other half went to horizontal tasks (Objectives 3, 4 and 5a).

During the period under review (and during the programming period 1995–1999) regional objective programmes were implemented in Burgenland (Objective 1), in Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Styria and Vorarlberg (Objective 2) as well as in Carinthia, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol and Vorarlberg (Objective 5b). Burgenland benefited the most from the EU Structural Funds for the regional objective programmes (Objective 1, Objective 2 and Objective 5b), obtaining a share of almost 25 %. It was followed by Styria (21 %), Lower Austria (20 %) and Upper Austria (16 %). The remaining funds went to Carinthia (9 %), Tyrol (5 %), Vorarlberg (3 %) and Salzburg (2 %). The funding by the Structural Funds was supplemented under the principle of additionality by the national state aid regulations of the federal government, the Länder, and sometimes of the municipalities and communities to varying extents, depending on the objective region concerned. In a number of assisted projects, apart from public funding, funds were also made available from the private sources of the project actors.

In total, about 41 % of the population of Austria, primarily in rural regions, has received assistance from the regional objective programmes. The focus of the assistance granted was on industry and commerce, tourism, research and development, human resources as well as on regional management. In the programmes for Objective 1 and 5b regions, assistance was also granted under the programming strands of agriculture and forestry as well as nature protection.

Apart from the regional objective programmes, the European Commission supported a number of widely varying Community Initiatives with a total funding volume of EUR 146m in the period 1995–1999. The most important Community Initiative for Austria was INTERREG II, which provided assistance for cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation based on specific projects. The EU provided assistance to projects totalling some EUR 44m. With EUR 27m, LEADER II (rural development) came in second followed by Initiatives to help cope with industrial change (SME, RECHAR II, RESIDER II, RETEX) and URBAN (urban problem areas).

## *2.3 The evaluation of regional policy measures*

During the reporting period, ex post evaluations of the implementation of the programmes were prepared. For the programmes Objective 1, Objective 2, INTERREG and the Community Initiative

URBAN, these evaluations will be carried out on behalf of the European Commission (DG Regional Policy) for the entire EU area. Likewise, the DG Agriculture will publish a synthesis report for the community level to supplement the national ex post evaluations of all LEADER II programmes. Work on these evaluations will start in 2002. For the Objective 5b and LEADER II programmes in Austria (Länder: Carinthia, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol and Vorarlberg) a joint national ex post evaluation was completed and the results have been published in the ÖROK publication series (No. 161).

The ex post evaluations contracted out by the European Commission for the Objective 1 and Objective 2 programmes are not available yet, but we can still draw the following conclusions from the evaluations completed to date:

- ◆ Due to the enormous financing volumes received by Burgenland within the scope of the Objective 1 programme, the progress achieved in development is very tangible and is moving in the desired direction. Employment growth in Burgenland is the highest in the country and the increase in GDP per capita was higher than the growth rates in the other Länder for the reporting period. It is not easy to determine the exact contribution of the assistance programmes to the progress achieved or to clearly state which portion is attributable to the opening of the borders to the east. In any case, one thing is clear, new structures have evolved in Burgenland that are well-equipped to serve as a foundation for long-term economic growth (among others, the construction of thermal and golf resorts, the Technology Centre Eisenstadt and the Technology Campaign South Burgenland)

- ◆ But all other Länder also benefited, albeit to varying extents, from the assistance programmes. Lower Austria reported approximately 9,000 projects realised under the objective programmes (Objective 2 and 5b). These programmes also spawned investments of over EUR 1.7bn in the structurally weakest regions of Lower Austria, and 6,213 new jobs were created and a further 31,601 jobs were secured.

- ◆ In addition to the many smaller and larger projects realised, the regional policy pursued by the EU has brought considerable immaterial benefits to the regions. The introduction of EU regional policy was an innovation in many respects, because it reformed conventional patterns of regional policy actions and procedures. Among the benefits gained: concepts designed to cover time spans of several years; integrated regional strategies; evaluations and thus the scrutiny of the results achieved; the establishment of regional management on a large-scale based on project management principles. Especially the regional management facilities have evolved into multi-functional communication interfaces, hubs and networking nodes that provide information to the local and regional actors and coordinate activities, and in this context, also cooperate with the federal, Land and EU bodies. EU regional policy has helped to improve developmental cooperation among the various actors and institutions at the regional level with grass roots support, and has enabled the development and implementation of strategies accorded jointly by the Länder and the federal bodies as well as the consensual realisation of key projects by all major actors in a region.

### *2.4 The programming period 2000–2006 – changes and outlook*

The funds available in the period 2000–2006 for structural policy measures in the 15 member states amount to EUR 213bn, and EUR 47bn for the Central and East European candidate countries. The central principles of European regional policy – programme planning spanning several years, concentration on priority goals, additionality principle in the application of community funds, the principle of partnership – have not changed even after the third reform of the Structural Funds just completed. The enlargement option and the ceilings defined for the expenditure of the Structural Funds make it necessary to concentrate the funds by theme and geographic area.

The share of the population living in the assisted areas was reduced from 51 % to 40 % and the previously applicable seven priority goals were condensed into only three. Objective 1 continues to be targeted at assistance to regions that are lagging behind in their development (GDP per capita of less than 75 % of the Community average), including the “old” Objective 6 regions (extremely thinly populated regions). Objective 2 (new) replaces the former Objectives 2 and 5b and comprises rural, declining industrial regions and urban regions with a “considerable need for economic and social restructuring”. Finally,

Objective 3 (new) comprises the former labour market policy Objectives 3 and 4, and concentrates on the adaptation and modernisation of educational, training and employment policies and systems. Objective 3 remains a “horizontal objective” without a direct link to a specific region, though funding is only granted to recipients outside of Objective 1 regions.

The largest share of the total budget of the Structural Funds is earmarked for Objective 1 regions and amounts to 69.7 %. Objective 2 regions receive 11.5 % and Objective 3 regions 12.3 % of the Structural Funds' budget.

A concentration process has been observed in the other Community Initiatives as well. The former 13 Community Initiatives have been concentrated into four Initiatives. The share in the expenditure of the Structural Funds has been cut back from 9 % to 5.35 %. Community Initiatives have lost significance in comparison to the last programming period. Of the remaining Initiatives, INTERREG has gained even more importance in the light of the coming enlargement. Half of the funds in the Structural Funds allocated to Community Initiatives go to INTERREG. This means that one of the demands vigorously put forth by Austria in the Agenda 2000 negotiations to grant assistance to the border regions have been taken into account.

Austria expects to receive funds amounting to some EUR 1,831m for the programming period 2000–2006. This means that the co-financing amount of the EU has increased by about 10 % in comparison to the last programming period. Burgenland remains an Objective 1 region, but under the newly defined eligibility criteria for assistance under Objective 2, the other assisted areas classified as Objective 2 and Objective 5b regions up to now have been forced to accept a reduction by one-third (as measured by the population). This is due to the very strict system imposed by the Commission defining ceilings for the population numbers for Objective 2 regions. In the case of Austria, this upper limit is 1.995 million inhabitants, that is, 25 % of the entire Austrian population. Within this scope there are EUR 578m foreseen for Objective 2 regions.

For those regions that were classified as Objective 2 or Objective 5b in the former programming period 1995–1999, but which are no longer eligible under the current programming period for Objective 2 funding, will receive transitional funding until the year 2005 amounting to EUR 102 m. For the regionally unlimited, horizontal Objective 3 (new), Austria will receive EUR 528m for the current period. By contrast, Austria has improved its position with respect to the Community Initiatives and now receives EUR 358m. The Community Initiatives of special importance for Austria, INTERREG (relating to EU enlargement) and LEADER (development of rural regions through endogenous innovative regional development approaches) will receive higher funding of 134 % and 74 % per year, respectively, to ensure the continuation of Austria's long years of experience in promoting endogenous regional development.

### *3 The planning and measures of the federal government*

#### *3.1 The impact of the spatial planning policies of the federal government*

It is well-known that spatial planning according to the Austrian constitution is an area which is not explicitly assigned to the federal level by legislation or the implementing decrees. In contrast to other countries organised as federal states (Germany, Switzerland), the federal government in Austria is not assigned any explicit overall competence for spatial planning. However, this does not mean that planning activities and measures at the federal level can be neglected. On the contrary: In the political multi-hierarchical system, the federal level is very important as its measures influence regional development and spatial planning in Austria. Actions at the federal level regarding transport policy, funding for the business sector and research, energy policy, employment and labour market policy as well as health and social policy always have consequences of spatial relevance, even though these are not explicitly mentioned or taken into account. The broad spectrum of explicit and implicit measures of spatial impact carried out by the federal government makes it difficult to describe these in only a few examples. The following summary is therefore intended to present exemplary highlights rather than a detailed or systematic analysis; it follows the focus set out in the Austrian Spatial Planning Concept 2001, which was completed during the reporting period.

### *3.2 Reinforcing Austria's standing as a business location*

A major dimension of political action at the federal level relates to all the measures aimed at improving Austria's position as a business location. This dimension is important because competition among the economic and business location regions in Europe calls for the exploitation and further development of the specific endogenous potentials of each of Austria's regions. Among the potentials that can be exploited are the spatial, social and cultural as well as the geopolitical location factors.

A large part of the country's territory may be classified as a border region. Being a neighbour to other countries is an opportunity that could reap benefits if the locational advantages of this position are efficiently exploited. The realisation of joint projects under the Community Initiative INTERREG make it a valuable instrument for eliminating existing prejudices and scepticism vis-à-vis cooperation partners, their culture, language and ways of working. In order to develop the attractive features of business locations it is crucial to substantially increase the funding allotted to INTERREG in the current programming period. The federal government transfers the funds and coordinates the relevant projects, perceiving in this work an important contribution to locational policy for the entire territory.

Exploiting the specific potentials requires in many cases the application of financial means. Innovative products and processes need to be matured to market-readiness, existing businesses must be modernised, start-ups facilitated and the internationalisation of, in particular, small and medium-sized companies needs to be promoted. This frequently requires aid from the public sector to help prefinance the necessary activities. A number of assistance measures are available: the regional innovation subsidies from the federal or Länder governments (until the end of 1999), ERP subsidies, subsidies for small and medium-sized businesses (BÜRGES), subsidies for investment in tourism), enterprise-linked labour market subsidies, regional infrastructure subsidies (RIF), the start-up programme AplusB, and many others. Additionally, there are two specific strategic focus programmes for tourism and the leisure time industry ("DMMA – Destination Management Monitor Austria" and "Austria – Well-being Destination of Europe"). These assistance schemes are either financed with funds from the federal government or are managed by the federal government.

Strengthening Austria as a business location is achieved through – or even because of – the expansion of transport routes. A high priority transport system forms the backbone of any supranational locational network. During the period under review, the relevant construction measures were started or continued, and planning work on future infrastructure needs was completed. Due to a need to catch up that has its roots in the past, but also due to the opening of the east and the coming EU enlargement, east-west transportation links – among other aspects – have moved into the limelight. In 1998, a master plan was published that shows the target routes for roads, railways and waterways from the point of view of the Minister of Science and Transport at the time of writing. The main statements are: railways: enlargement of the four track Westbahn route Vienna - Linz; enlargement to four tracks in Unterinntal; the construction of the Semmering tunnel and the Koralm railway line; the high capacity route Vienna - Airport - Sopron as well as diverse selected enlargement projects. In 1999, the Ministry for Economic Affairs conducted a functional evaluation of the road network entitled "The Design of the High Capacity Roadway Routes in the European Danube Space", which analysed the deficits in existing road links to the neighbouring transition countries. In February 2002, the Austrian Transportation Policy Scheme was presented to the public, which defines Austria's main transportation axes (Danube, Süd, Brenner, Arlberg, Tauern and Pyhrn) and points out the links with the Transeuropean Network, the Pan-European Corridors and the overlapping TINA network. The corridors are intended to improve accessibility internally and externally, and to enhance the appeal of Austria as a business location and reduce as far as possible regional disparities.

An important event during the reporting period was the liberalisation of the telecom market. The competition prevailing in the market now has resulted in the emergence of a number of alternative telephony operators most of whom are interested in steadily expanding the infrastructure and range of products and services offered as broadly as possible, while at the same time a tendency of declining rates has emerged. This development is of great importance for the business location of Austria in a complex economy based on the division of labour.

Finally, we have to mention the energy policy measures taken that are aimed at improving the safety and the efficiency of the energy supply as well as environmental compatibility; moreover, the goal is to raise the acceptance in society of energy production and supply systems. This scope of measures includes the liberalisation of the electricity and natural gas markets, subsidies for small-scale power plants, the promotion of renewable energy sources and securing supply by expanding the required high voltage and natural gas lines.

### *3.3 The sustainable use of natural resources*

Another dimension of the federal sphere of competence relates to the issue of sustainability. The federal government has declared its commitment to a policy of sustainability as a cross-sectoral task covering many different areas. The consumption of natural resources by society is to be brought into line with the management of available resources in a region. The application of this principle implies a change in the design of spatial development conditions, thus also influencing spatial planning in Austria. A few of the activities are:

- During the reporting period, the Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management has completed, commissioned or initiated fundamental research and studies to prepare a concept for Austria's environmental policy: The Green Book "Österreichs Zukunft nachhaltig gestalten" (2001) (Sustainable Development for the Future of Austria), "Strategie für ein Nachhaltiges Österreich" (2002) (Strategies for Sustainability in Austria); the network of actors founded in 1998 "Nachhaltiges Österreich" (Achieving Sustainability in Austria) or the joint declaration "Erklärung zur Weiterentwicklung der Umweltpolitik in Österreich" (1999) (Declaration on the Further Development of Environmental Policy in Austria).
- The Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology has adopted an incentive programme ("Nachhaltig Wirtschaften" (Doing Business in a Sustainable Economy), which pursues the goal of creating incentives for Austria's economy by promoting sustainable development. This ministry has declared in a number of planning projects, and in particular, in the Austrian Transportation Policy Scheme that the planning process and the development of the transportation infrastructure has to take ecological criteria into consideration; moreover, it has stated that it will grant assistance for the development of innovative, environmentally-friendly transportation technologies and finally, it has committed itself to promote an awareness among participants in transportation of the need for "sustainable mobility behaviour pattern", especially by creating incentives, but also through the application of steering measures. The pertinent programmes and research projects have been granted assistance or commissioned.
- In the field of tourism, the Department for Tourism and the Leisure Time Industry at the Ministry for Economy and Labour completed a study in January 2000 entitled, "Nachhaltigkeit im österreichischen Tourismus – Grundlagen und Bestandsaufnahmen" (Sustainability in Austria's Tourism Industry – Basic Facts and Status Quo), from which goals and strategies may be derived for a sustainable development in tourism from today's point of view.
- In the field of energy supply and energy use, the sustainable use of resources by federal bodies is supported mainly by the promotion of the use of renewable energy sources and compliance with environmental compatibility. In the reporting period, measures were funded such as the drafting of communal and regional energy concepts and the creation of regional energy agencies. In the field of waste management, the strategy was pursued of waste avoidance, recycling and the application of methods of efficient waste disposal. The search for additional thermal waste treatment plants has also been continued in the reporting period. Finally, the Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management also continued its efforts to improve water quality, waste water disposal and flood protection.
- In the reporting period, the work relating to the "Special Protection Zones" and their demarcation continued. These zones are part of the overall European network "NATURA 2000", which is the foundation for securing the diversity of species and of natural habitats throughout Europe. In accordance with their fields of competence in the area of nature protection, Austria's Länder have defined protected areas under the Bird Protection Directive and the Fauna-Flora-Habitat (FFH) Directive. At present, 160 zones

(= approx. 16 % of the country's territory), also taking into account possible overlaps, have been nominated, of which 126 zones fall under the FFH Directive and 82 zones under the Bird Protection Directive.

### *3.4 Securing spatial equality and social integration*

The third dimension of the measures and activities of the federal government, whose effects are implicitly of spatial relevance, relate to measures and activities aimed at achieving spatial equality and social integration. This means that all segments of the population must be given acceptable access to resources without necessarily aspiring to absolute equality among all. The use of resources on an equal footing by the entire population is a requirement for social integration and subsumes the spatial dimension.

A major component of this social integration policy is the demand to create employment opportunities for the population capable of gainful employment. Gainful employment means a regular income, the social integration into the working community and defines the position of every individual in a society. Equal access to gainful employment is a primary goal of labour and employment policies. The federal government adopted a "National Action Plan for Employment" for Austria in the period under review. It comprises special measures to promote and qualify certain groups in the labour market. At the Länder and regional level, territorial employment pacts were concluded that pursue similar goals: marginalised groups of persons and the long-term unemployed are to be re-integrated into the employment system through a variety of measures.

Social integration also means the expansion of the social infrastructure according to specific objectives. In order to assure the attainment of this goal, in 2000 the Austrian Hospital and Large Apparatus Scheme (ÖKAP/GGP) was thoroughly revised and supplemented by elements from the new concept "Planning according to capacity needs for hospitals". The ÖKAP/GGP 2001 is now a constituent part of the new agreement pursuant to Art. 15b, Federal Constitutional Act on the "restructuring of the health sector and hospital financing", which took effect as of 1 January 2001 and will be fully enforced by the end of 2004.

Several studies were completed in the reporting period which deal with the size of regional disparities in the area of health care. The study published in 2000 on the "Quality of Medical Care in Austria" investigated existing and future deficiencies in stationary and outpatient care based on an in-depth analysis of existing offerings in the medical care sector, and also dedicated a special section to the current disparities in preventive care. The Austrian Federal Institute for Healthcare compiled a comparative study in 1999 of the needs and development plans of the Länder. A number of centres for the mediation of persons offering voluntary services for specific purposes and a network against violence in the family were set up.

### *3.5 Specific measures for the development of rural regions*

In this section we would like to describe the measures and activities of the federal government targeted at the development of rural areas. Even if the federal government does not have the overall competency to explicitly influence the use of land or the development in defined rural areas, it is still indirectly able to do so through agricultural policy and sectoral assistance measures (conditions may vary for specific assistance schemes, e.g. higher subsidies from BÜRGES).

Rural areas are, of course, the ones that profit the most from the assistance activities of the federal government in the field of agriculture and forestry. In this context we would like to mention the ÖPUL (Österreichisches Programm zur Förderung einer umweltgerechten, extensiven und den natürlichen Lebensraum schützenden Landwirtschaft – Austrian Assistance Programme for Promoting Environmentally-friendly, Extensive Agriculture that Protects Natural Habitats), which is the most important assistance programme for Austria's farmers. In 2000, a number of 152,000 farms, which equals three quarters of all farms, took part in the environmentally-friendly agriculture programme (ÖPUL 95 and ÖPUL 98). 85 % of land used for agriculture is covered by the ÖPUL measures.

Rural areas also receive funding under EU regional policy schemes and the federal government and the Länder are responsible for their implementation in Austria. These policies have released enormous development potentials. Three examples with the participation of the federal government illustrate this development:



- In 1999, a total of 40 persons were employed in eight Länder and 25 regions very successfully as regional managers. The employers are the 25 regional development organisations that have different ownership and organisational structures. Roughly two-thirds of the development agencies are municipal and communal associations. The services offered by these organisations are subsidised by funding from the Länder and start-up subsidies from the Federal Chancellery (up until and through 2000). Regional management centres in the EU assisted areas also receive co-financing funds from the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRD).

- Within the scope of the ESF participation in the Objective 5b programmes 1995–1999, ESF funds amounting to EUR 68.31m were applied for specific labour market policy measures. The measures funded were aimed at stabilising the services offered relating to vocational orientation, expanding education and training consulting services in the regions as well as qualification and employment measures, and at supporting labour market segments with growth potentials (e.g. tourism); moreover, funds also went to the retraining of employees and unemployed persons in the agricultural sector for other activities with the help of training offerings and assistance for establishing new enterprises. The federal government plays an important role in the implementation and organisation of the ESF assistance.

- In the context of the EU Community Initiative LEADER II, rural areas received assistance for the improvement of tourism marketing activities, the presentation of regional tourism offerings, the expansion of bicycle and hiking paths as well as other tourism offerings. In this context as well, the federal government is involved in its implementation in partnerships.

#### *4 The planning and measures of the Länder*

Spatial planning remains the competence of the autonomous sphere of activity of the Länder according to Article 15 of the Austrian Federal Constitutional Act. Legislation passed by the Länder governments is the legal foundation for the activities of the Länder in the area of supralocal spatial planning and for activities of the municipalities and communities relating to local spatial planning. Therefore, the general nature of spatial planning in the Länder has a strong normative bias: the Länder define the legal framework by virtue of their competence to pass laws, while the federal government – in collaboration with the EU regional policy – has more influence at the political level on the formation of the factual conditions (in the area of assistance, infrastructure and location policy). In the following, we concentrate more on the activities of the Länder in the relevant legislation and their implementation during the reporting period.

##### *4.1 Development trends in the sphere of spatial planning legislation*

All Länder have passed spatial planning acts decades ago, which are called Regional Planning Acts in Vorarlberg and Burgenland. They define the general principles and goals of spatial planning and also the instruments of supralocal and local spatial planning. Relevant for supralocal issues are generally the regional development schemes and spatial planning schemes and concepts, even though some of these instruments are not legally binding. They apply either to the entire territory of a Land or to parts of the territory (regional and subregional development and spatial planning programmes). Additionally, there are sectoral development and spatial planning programmes for sectors (concepts, if they are not intended to be legally binding).

The instruments for local spatial planning are also defined in the spatial planning acts. These are local spatial planning programmes (or development concepts), the land use plan and the building regulation plan. In Lower Austria and Upper Austria, the local spatial planning programme and the land use plan are combined in a (joint) decree, while in other Länder these are separate instruments. The activities at the local level are summarised in the following in more detail.

In the reporting period, Salzburg and Tyrol amended and repromulgated their spatial planning acts. The regional planning acts of Burgenland and Vorarlberg as well as the spatial planning acts of Lower Austria and Upper Austria were amended. Work on an amendment is underway in Styria. Additionally, the municipal planning act in Carinthia was amended and building codes were amended and repromulgated in the



Länder of Tyrol and Vorarlberg, while in Burgenland, Carinthia, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria and Vienna the pertinent acts were amended.

Despite the differences arising from the federal nature of the country's administration, a common trend is revealed in all local and supralocal spatial planning by the following features:

- ◆ The emergence of large-scale retail and specialty sales centres on the peripheries of all larger agglomerations, having a negative impact on traditional businesses in the city cores and creating higher traffic volumes and the need for more regulation. In the spatial planning legislation (and building codes) of Burgenland, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, Tyrol, Vorarlberg and Vienna, conditions have been introduced in order to steer the construction of new large-scale shopping centres into orderly development channels.
- ◆ In the relevant spatial planning laws (including building codes), the depth of regulatory provisions has not been expanded but rather reduced. A simplification of procedures and shorter processing times are trends that have emerged in local spatial planning and building codes. The main points are the simplification of the minimum content of building plan, the elimination of mandatory building densities and design regulations, the reduction of the number of construction projects requiring permits and simpler land use plan procedures. In Tyrol and Upper Austria, there is a trend of increasing the use of farm buildings.
- ◆ The concept of mobilising land zoned for building for actual use has become established despite some setbacks under constitutional law. A number of instruments to promote the use of land have found their way into the pertinent provisions. Examples are: in Burgenland, zoning as building land is limited to a certain period of time; in Lower Austria, a local rate has been introduced on land development (for transport routes, water supply, sewage) actually constructed or to be constructed connecting building land; and in Salzburg a declaration of use is required. This new law stipulates that building land may only be zoned as such in cases in which the owners of the properties sign a land use declaration agreeing to build up the land within a period of ten years as of the effective date of the Land Use Plan.
- ◆ In this context, we must mention the efforts of the Länder to reduce the amount of building land zoned as such by the municipalities and communities, but left unused. The excess of land zoned for building land not being used, i.e., land hoarding, often leads to the situation in which new land is zoned as building land in order to keep residents willing to build located in the community. The excess of zoning for building land also results in inefficiency in building up land and the despoliation off the landscape. In the amended land use plans, the municipalities are obligated to provide evidence that it is possible to build up land zoned as building land rationally and efficiently within a medium-term horizon (usually 10 years) and that this activity will not add to the despoliation of the landscape. The rezoning of building land is to be encouraged (rezoning to green land).
- ◆ Another feature of the changes to the legal framework relates to regional planning as well as to the participation of citizens in the planning process. Regional planning is increasing being carried out with the participation of the persons affected ("grass roots planning"), and the institutionalisation of this participation is regulated in different ways. In the Länder of Upper Austria, Styria and Tyrol, there are regional bodies (regional planning advisors, district commissions) that provide consulting to the Länder governments and the Regional Planning Advisory Board. The social and economic partners, and experts are represented in these bodies in the municipalities and communities. In Salzburg, regional programmes are set up independently by the regional associations and are declared binding after passing the scrutiny of the supervisory body of the Land government. The level of involvement is particularly high at the regional and local level concerning the drafting of "subregional concepts" (Lower Austria) and "concepts for subregions" (Styria).
- ◆ Changes to legislation also had to be made during the reporting period due to the adoption of legally binding European agreements. The implementation of EU Directives motivated Lower Austria to define environmental assessment tests for application within the scope of local and supralocal spatial planning, and in Tyrol to incorporate the SEVESO II Directive in relevant legislation.

## 4.2 The reformulation and updating of land development programmes and concepts

In the reporting period, several Länder updated and revised their Land development programmes (or Land development concepts), though we must bear in mind that the legal basis and the contents may vary widely. In some Länder the statements relating to the programmes and the concepts at the Land level are legally binding (per decree), in others they are not.

In 2000 Burgenland updated its programme dating from the year 1994; Upper Austria commissioned an "Overall Regional Economic Development Concept" in 1999 and Salzburg amended its Land development plan (1999 and 2000). In 1998, the Land government of Tyrol passed an "Overall Economic Concept" and Vorarlberg still bases its regional development on the "Principles" passed in 1996 by the Land government, while Styria revised its programme drafted in 1977. Carinthia adopted (in 1997) an "Overall Development Concept" and Vienna an Urban Development Plan (in 1994); the latter was supplemented in 2001 by a strategy plan, while Lower Austria will soon be adopting a comprehensive Land development concept. By the end of the reporting period, all Länder will have a Land development plan or concept, or will be soon adopting one or have similar documents to rely on for guidance.

## 4.3 Regional spatial planning and development programmes

Another instrument which is foreseen in all spatial planning laws concerns regional spatial planning and regional developmental concepts. The variety of the contents in the concepts is an expression of the diverse legal frameworks in force, the differentiated objectives and thus of federal diversity. A summary of the regional development concepts and programmes illustrates this diversity.

- ◆ In Burgenland, the Regional Development Programme for the Lower Pinka and Strem Valley from 1977 is still in force and was recently supplemented by "Development Guidelines". Since 1997, a legally binding government-approved development concept has been passed into law.
- ◆ In Carinthia, seven regional development programmes are legally binding, which are based on the Spatial Planning Act of 1969. The last programme for the Weissensee Region was adopted in 1987. Draft decrees for regional development programmes such as for the Carinthian Central Region, the districts of St. Veit an der Glan and Feldkirchen did not take effect before the amendment to the Spatial Planning Act 1994 came into force. A draft exists for a "Regional Development Programme for Upper Carinthia" (districts of Spittal an der Drau and Hermagor).
- ◆ In Lower Austria between 1982 and 1995 five legally binding regional (and for zones) spatial planning programmes were adopted. These relate to the planning regions Wr. Neustadt-Neunkirchen, the planning area "Untere Enns", "Untere Traisental", the planning regions Wien-Umland (Vienna's hinterlands to the north and south) as well as the "Lower Austrian Central Region". In the reporting period, the programmes for Wien-Umland and the region Wiener Neustadt - Neunkirchen were amended. Programmes are currently being prepared for further planning regions. In addition, there are 31 "Subregional Development Concepts" which have not been promulgated by decree and are thus not legally binding.
- ◆ In Upper Austria "Regional Spatial Planning Programmes" were prepared for the first time, which were further developed into draft decrees. The programmes relate to the areas of Linz-Umland (area of the Advisory Planning Boards Linz-Süd and Urfahr-Umland covering 21 municipalities and communities), "Welscher Heide" (17 municipalities and communities) and "Mittleres Mattigtal" (4 municipalities and communities). The programme for the region Linz-Umland was the only one promulgated by decree in 1999. The basis for these activities at the regional level is the "Regional Planning Advisory Board", which is created by the municipality/community pursuant to the Spatial Planning Act 1994 for the purpose of the "voluntary coordination of measures with a spatial impact".
- ◆ In Salzburg, all regional development plans and programmes are legally binding which were adopted between 1965 and 1986. The Spatial Planning Act 1992 created a new basis for regional planning. The

municipalities are under the obligation to set up regional associations for the 16 planning regions defined in the Land Development Programme 1994 whose task is to draft regional development programmes. By issuing a declaration of commitment to this programme, the former regional programmes adopted pursuant to the spatial planning acts ceased to be legally binding. By combining the planned or existing regional associations, a lower number of regional programmes will be needed to cover the territory. By the end of 2001, the following regional programmes were in effect which had been adopted pursuant to the Spatial Planning Act 1998: Flachgau-Nord, Salzburg Stadt and surrounding communities, Lungau and Unteres Saalachtal. The regional programme for Hallein and surroundings as well as for the Lammertal were adopted in November 2001 by the regional association and presented to the Land government for a declaration of commitment.

- ◆ In Styria, under the Land Development Programme 1977, "Regional Development Programmes" are to be drafted for 16 planning regions. These were passed as decrees between 1990 and 1996, the most recent ones for Graz and Graz' hinterlands. For the planning region Leibnitz, in 2001 the first regional programme of the "second generation" was promulgated by decree. Moreover, since 1989 "Subregional Development Programmes" have existed for selected areas with special problems (e.g. Northern Leibnitzer Feld, southern part of the region of Radkersburg). In the past few years, a number of "General Subregional Development Concepts" were drafted within the scope of intercommunal cooperation, but have not yet been declared legally binding.

- ◆ In Tyrol, a number of nine development plans were drafted for 12 of the 56 subregions of the Land between 1979 and 1988 which are legally binding for a limited period of 10 years. In 1998, the last programme (for the subregion Wipptal) was abolished, as this type of regional planning has been discontinued. The draft for a regional development programme for Lechtal (new generation) was completed in 2001 and is to be promulgated by decree in 2002. Furthermore, since 1991 "supralocal green areas" were defined within the scope of development programmes for the subregions "Südöstliches Mittelgebirge", "Hall and surroundings", "Wörgl and surroundings" as well as "Westliches Mittelgebirge", which were amended during the reporting period. Further development programmes have been promulgated for "agricultural priority areas" in the subregions "Oberes Lechtal", "Reutte and surroundings", "Vorderes Zillertal" and "Hinteres Zillertal" by decree and some were amended several times in the reporting period. "A supralocal framework for local spatial planning concepts" in the form of commented expert opinions are intended to support the drafting of local spatial planning concepts by municipalities and communities avoiding "bureaucratic red tape".

- ◆ In Vorarlberg, the supralocal programmes are restricted to the declarations of 1977 promulgated and posteriorly amended several times for supralocal open spaces in Rheintal and Walgau.

- ◆ In Vienna, the "Strategy Plan for Vienna 2000" was adopted in the reporting period, which pursues a strategy covering five strands: business location and labour market, city of knowledge, city of high living and environmental quality, nature, culture and urban living as well as European metropolis.

#### *4.4 Sectoral spatial planning and development programmes*

Sectoral development programmes have been drafted for the past 30 years. The significance of the fact that many of these programmes are legally binding is assessed differently. Currently, there is a trend towards more flexibility and looser regulations and for this reason in many Länder sectoral concepts are drafted, which are then adopted by the Länder governments or merely acknowledged by these. However, this also means that the enforceability of the concepts is limited.

- ◆ In Burgenland the only sectoral "Land spatial plan" was passed by decree in 1992. It refers to measures that are "expected to cause substantial adverse effects on the environment" and contains regulations on waste disposal sites for hazardous materials. In Burgenland, the Overall Transport Policy Scheme adopted in 1994 is currently being revised in order to take into account the "Memorandum of the Land government on the development of cross-border road traffic" as well as the transport planning of the EU and current traffic trends.

- ◆ In Carinthia, there are relatively few sectoral programmes. In addition to the programme for trade and commercial infrastructure (from 1993), a programme on “location sites for industry with a supralocal impact” (1996) exists. Moreover, in 1995 an Overall Transport Policy Scheme was adopted.
- ◆ In Lower Austria eight of the spatial planning programmes for central regions, commerce and industry, tourism, transport, health, social assistance, schools and leisure time and recreation promulgated by decree until 1978 are still formally in force (they have not been amended since 1994), even though these programmes are to be replaced by spatial planning concepts within the scope of deregulation efforts. In 1998, a “spatial planning programme for the mining of own mineral raw materials” was adopted and promulgated by decree. It regulates the mining of raw materials for those parts of the Land that are not yet covered by the regional spatial planning programmes. The Lower Austrian Transport Policy Scheme was adopted in 1991 and updated by the amendments of 1997 and 2001, but the relevant spatial planning programme has not yet been repealed. This also applies to the Social Assistance Programme, even though a spatial planning concept has been available since 1997 for Lower Austrian Retirement and Nursing Homes. A sectoral concept exists for “Tourism, leisure time and recreation”.
- ◆ In Upper Austria, after the adoption of the sectoral programme “Upper Austrian Music School Plan”, numerous “spatial planning programmes on the use of properties in the planning region ... for commercial buildings that satisfy supralocal demand” have been promulgated which contain very detailed regulations covering even small plots of land. In 1998, a spatial planning programme is defined the “Maximum size of the sales space in commercial buildings that satisfy supralocal demand” in the municipalities of Leonding and Pasching. This decree will be repealed when the applicable land use plan including the local development concept takes effect. In 1997 two concepts were adopted. They refer to the Upper Austrian Overall Concept on Gravel Excavation and the “Upper Austrian Plan on Demand and Development in Care of the Elderly and Handicapped Persons.”
- ◆ In Salzburg, the first sectoral programme was promulgated by decree in 1995. It referred to the “Development of settlements and business locations in the Salzburg Central Region”. In 1998, the sectoral programme “Golf centres” was adopted. Currently, drafts for the sectoral programmes on “Trade and commercial infrastructure and the wholesale trade”, “Securing raw materials” and “Trade zones in rural areas” are being prepared or are already in the approval stage.
- ◆ In Styria, under the Land Development Programme of 1977, development programmes are to be drafted for 12 sectors. Between 1984 and 1993, nine programmes (the last one in 1993 on “Keeping the air clean”) were adopted per decree. Work is underway on a regional sectoral programme for the “Recreational area in the hilly country east of Graz” and on an “Open space concept for Aichfeld-Murboden”.
- ◆ In Tyrol, sectoral concepts are being drafted for passage by the Land government, the 1992 “Cable-car principles” of limited time validity were replaced by a revised version repromulgated in 1996. The concept for golf centres adopted in the summer of 1993 was also revised and in 1997 it was adopted as the new “Tyrolian golf centre concept”. The “Raw materials concept Unterinntal” was adopted in 1998 by the Land government. This also applies to the “Overall Economic concept for Tyrol”, which was also adopted by the Land government.
- ◆ In Vorarlberg sectoral concepts are adopted by the Land government. The Vorarlberg Hiking Path Concept of 1995 was the last one to be passed.

#### *4.5 Assistance measures and schemes*

In the area of development planning, the Länder have adopted a number of schemes to improve the locational quality of selected regions and to stimulate specific regional economic developments. The majority of the assistance schemes of the Länder are either part of EU programmes, Community Initiatives or horizontal assistance schemes. The number of assistance schemes of the Länder without co-financing by the EU is negligible.

A large share of the activities of the Länder in the area of spatial planning and regional development were therefore undertaken within the scope of assistance programmes organised under partnerships. The Länder provide assistance for the conception, implementation and execution of projects within the scope of the programmes for Objectives regions and Community Initiatives. Additionally, the Länder pursue programmes with specific objectives, e.g. urban and village renewal, which have been in force in all Länder for many years with varying areas of focus (especially as regards architecture and social issues).

Lower Austria has undertaken further, independent measures to create impulses through the NAFES programme (working group to promote shopping in city cores) that assist municipalities and local businesses in the objective of securing the attractiveness and viability of urbanized cores for consumers. Under the "Styrian assistance scheme for independent regional initiatives" (STEFREI) 126 projects were supported. The major share of the subsidies were granted to regional initiatives whose project objectives took an integrated approach.

Due to the different nature of the underlying problems, the assistance schemes for Vienna are different from those of the Länder. The preservation of architectural heritage and the restoration of the building structures of the turn of century require specific measures of urban renewal that are only to be found in this form in Vienna. The Vienna Land Procurement and Urban Renewal Fund is not only responsible for the restoration of buildings, but also assists in the establishment of businesses. In addition, there are many measures and activities in the area of infrastructure, education and culture that help to raise the general quality of the location.

### *4.6 Miscellaneous: GIS and research*

#### 4.6.1 The digitalisation of planning documents

In addition to changes in the legal framework, the organisation of EU regional policy measures within the scope of partnerships and special projects promoted by some Länder, a trend observed throughout the reporting period is the improvement, and more specifically, the digitalisation of the planning documents used in local and supralocal spatial planning. Many Länder are working on the integration of existing plans and documents into geographic information systems (GIS). This work involves comparing and updating the planning documents. To name a few examples, some of the Länder engaged in these activities are Burgenland (BUGIS), Carinthia (KAGIS), Lower Austria (NÖGIS), Salzburg (SAGIS), Tyrol (TIRIS) and Vorarlberg (VOGIS). Other systems with similar functionalities exist in Styria, Upper Austria and Vienna.

#### 4.6.2 Regional studies

Among the activities of the Länder in the reporting period were, of course, also the execution and funding of projects that deal with the fundamental issues and application of regional studies. The aim is to improve the basis on which political decisions are reached by basing these on the findings of academic research. The range of the subjects of research is very broad and often depends on the specific problems in each of the Länder. Assistance for research is often accompanied by work in the field of education in the region and the establishment of independent institutions. We would like to mention only a few of the highlights of the activities undertaken.

In Carinthia, for example, the "Kärntner Akademie für Dorf- und Stadtentwicklung" (Carinthian Academy for Village and Urban Renewal) was set up as a subdepartment of Department 20 of the Land government. In Lower Austria, an accessibility model for individual means of transportation was developed and fine-tuned. In Salzburg, research was carried out on the subjects of settlement development in the Salzburg central place, acceptance of regional planning by the population of the Land Salzburg, locational potentials of supraregional business sites and research on the theory of central places. In Styria, a project is underway which deals with the assessment of future residential housing needs and building land zoning. In Tyrol, an analysis was conducted based on the properties registry of the Federal Surveying Office investigating the ownership structure of agricultural, cultivated land. In Vorarlberg, the regional planning department is conducting an investigation on the possibilities of preserving the system of collective alpine pasturelands and their structures in Montafon known in the local language as "Maisäßen".

## 4.7 Local spatial planning

### 4.7.1 The legal framework for local spatial planning

With the passage of the Federal Constitutional Act of 1962 (Gemeindeverfassungsnovelle – Municipality Amendment) the concept of regional planning used in connection with spatial planning was introduced at the constitutional level and for the local level it was transferred to the municipalities and communities within their own separate sphere of competence (“local spatial planning”). Thus, the constitution now defines a two-tier planning system: local and supralocal. Local spatial planning is the responsibility of the municipalities and communities in their own sphere of competence; however, the local development programmes (with the exception of Styria), the land use plans in general and building regulation plans require the approval of the Land government. The Land government is also responsible for supralocal spatial planning, as explained above.

### 4.7.2 Instruments and development trends

The set of instruments available for local spatial planning defined in the spatial planning acts (and regional planning acts) of the Länder. The set usually consists of three parts: local spatial planning programmes or development concepts, land use plans and building regulation plans. In Lower Austria and Upper Austria, the local spatial planning programme and the land use plan are combined in a (joint) decree, while in other Länder these are separate instruments. However, in Salzburg the spatial development concept is the foundation for drafting a land use plan. The spatial development concept is drafted in Vorarlberg on a voluntary basis. In the Vienna Building Code, the instrument of a local development concept does not exist.

The content and objective of all three of the instruments of local spatial planning mentioned are set out below, although the precise terms and the detailed definition of the content vary from Land to Land:

- ♦ The local spatial planning programme describes the fundamental and long-term objectives of municipal development. The local spatial planning programme also provides information on how the municipalities and communities are to be structured in the future, the target number of inhabitants and economic perspectives. This instrument is intended to be discussed and drafted in collaboration with the population, although this does not always happen.
- ♦ The land use plans of municipalities and communities contain definitions of the distribution of territory – in accordance with the objectives pursued – and the types of zoning for all spaces; the land use plan defines the spaces to be used as green land, built-up land and for transportation. Three types of land use are defined for the purpose of achieving a precise demarcation of zones, though land use types may vary from Land to Land, and special areas may be defined for specific spatial uses. Some spatial planning acts also define access routes (Carinthia) and zones for planned building activities (Vorarlberg) as a land use category with a limited duration of validity.
- ♦ The building regulation plan, which must be drafted for building land, contains the type of building permitted, the construction density, the permitted heights of buildings and the basic architectural forms. The building regulation plan defines if construction is to be dense or loose, if specific roof forms are permitted and how the property must be fenced in. As important as the building regulation plan may seem, it has yet to be given the priority it deserves in some spatial planning acts and building codes, because the preparation of comprehensive building regulation plans put a financial strain on municipalities and communities which results in the frequent practice of drafting only partial building regulation plans that refer only to zones for new constructions. According to Tyrol's Spatial Planning Act it is possible for municipalities with “little building activity” to obtain an exemption from the obligation to draft a building regulation plan per decree of the Land government. The Carinthian Municipal Planning Act and the Tyrol Spatial Planning Act foresee design concepts in which the building design principles for the land zoned as building land may be defined verbally. In Burgenland and Styria, municipalities and communities have the option of zoning building land and issuing building regulation guidelines.

All three instruments are of fundamental importance, as they define the appearance, the structure and future of a municipality or community and the immediate living space of the population. They are subject to changes in the legal framework, which become necessary as social aspirations and political concepts change. We have already pointed out the tendency of simplification that has emerged in procedures to change land use plans (Carinthia), the definition of new zoning categories (Carinthia and Upper Austria), the increased consideration given to the issue of natural hazards when defining building areas (Lower Austria) as well as the measures to bring about the actual use of building land zoned as such (Salzburg).

### 4.7.3 Enforcement and status

At the beginning of 1999, about 60 % of the municipalities in Austria had a local spatial planning programme and/or a spatial development concept. Over 900 of the total of 2,359 municipalities and communities had not yet prepared or commissioned the drafting of this instrument of local spatial planning. The situation is much better in the case of land use plans. At the end of the reporting period all municipalities had a land use plan which covered at least parts of the respective territory of the municipality or community. A number of 27 municipalities and communities in Lower Austria still have simplified plans, in 591 municipalities and communities the plans are over 19 years old (irrespective of small changes), which means that 1,741 municipalities and communities or 74 % have (more or less) up to date land use plans. It is also remarkable that the city of Innsbruck does not have a legally binding land use plan for its entire territory.

A detailed overview of the status of the building regulation plans in Austria is not possible, as not all Länder impose reporting and approval obligations on the municipalities and communities. Building regulation plans and partial building regulation plans exist in Vienna where the land use plan and the building regulation plan are decreed simultaneously, as well as in many municipalities in Burgenland, Carinthia, Upper Austria and Vorarlberg.

## *5 The planning and measures of the cities*

This Spatial Planning Report gives an overview of the planning activities and measures of the larger cities in Austria. Bregenz, Eisenstadt, Feldkirch, Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Linz, Salzburg and St. Pölten report on the urban planning activities of the past few years. These reports are, of course, very different and heterogeneous. After all, urban planning has to respond to specific local challenges, and those of Bregenz are different from those facing Eisenstadt, Graz and Feldkirch.

An attempt to summarise the information provided by the cities allows us to discern a pattern of activity that is characterised by two fundamental objectives. On the one hand, the aim of the cities is to achieve orderly construction and settlement development patterns. By carrying out fundamental research, and formulating spatial development concepts and urban development plans, the cities attempt to anticipate future developments and bring these into perspective with planning objectives and thus steer developments in the desired direction.

On the other hand, specific problems are addressed by specifically designed measures. Strengthening the economic base of the city cores is one of the planning and development goals of many cities (see Eisenstadt, Graz, Klagenfurt and Salzburg). Typical measures in this field are traffic reduction schemes, parking space management, city furniture, restoration work on buildings and joint concepts for city marketing.

Another task which has been named by almost all other reporting cities refers to the solution of inner city traffic problems. Because historic city ensembles have a higher value today than the freedom of individual mobility, traffic needs to be channelled, reduced and shifted to other means of transport. The corresponding concepts were drafted in the reporting period by Bregenz, Eisenstadt, Innsbruck, Linz, Salzburg and St. Pölten.

All reporting cities name a number of measures taken that are designed to improve the attractiveness of the city in general and in particular for local inhabitants and businesses willing to locate there. Among the measures applied are the definition of areas for establishing businesses (Innsbruck, Linz) and the



creation of infrastructure in the areas of education and research (Eisenstadt, Salzburg) and raising the value of the city as an attractive metropolis (Graz as cultural capital).

## *6 Contributions by the social and economic partners*

The spatial planning report contains statements and reports on activities in the area of spatial planning and regional policy by the Federal Chamber of Labour, the Federal Economic Chamber and the Conference of Presidents of the Chambers of Agriculture. This section of the Spatial Planning Report is grouped according to a structure that differs from that of the other sections, of course, as the formal framework governing the organisations representing interest groups must be assessed differently than that of the territorial authorities. The interest group representatives do not have any formal competencies in many cases and therefore cannot engage in much activity in the area of Austrian spatial planning or at the operating level. The role of the interest group representatives focuses rather finding expression for an institutionalised public opinion, which assesses and criticises the measures taken by public bodies and frequently also defines problems in specific areas, based on scientific research.

During the period under review, the Federal Chamber of Labour dealt with the issue of the EU enlargement and its consequences for the labour market, for border regions as well as with regional problems such as unemployment, property price developments, transportation development and commuting patterns. The Federal Chamber of Labour deals with these issues in the same way as many others by commissioning studies, engaging in thematically focused public relations work and collaborating with the various advisory boards (among others also the Regional Planning Advisory Board of the Länder).

The Federal Economic Chamber deals with similar subjects. This organisation also discusses issues relating to EU enlargement that range from agriculture policy, border regions, infrastructure expansion to the labour market. The Federal Economic Chamber makes a plea in its statement to give special attention to furthering local spatial planning. It also proposes that the regulatory policy measure orientation of spatial planning should shift to a more project-related spatial planning with an emphasis on the participation of the population. The Chamber of Commerce of Styria has a particularly "radical" stance in this context.

The Conference of Presidents refers in its statement mainly to the EU agricultural policy. It assesses the assistance scheme introduced in the reporting period that grants subsidies to mountain farmers on account of the adverse conditions under which they must work and assistance to other structurally disadvantaged regions as an important and useful measure. The differentiation by individual enterprise achieved with the help of the mountain farm cadastre instead of the mountain farm zoning method has considerably improved objectivity also by introducing telescope surveying to determine the inclination of the slopes and other factors including regional key figures. In the area of land policy, the Conference of Presidents clearly rejects any fiscal policy measures that would increase taxes on property.

## *7 International and national cooperation*

In an increasingly integrated Europe, cross-border spatial planning and regional development are gaining significance. The mutual harmonisation of planning and measures is designed to prevent negative developments in border regions and to recognise positive development opportunities. Of special significance in this context is cooperation within the scope of the European Union (INTERREG and PHARE) as well as the bilateral spatial planning treaties with Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia; moreover, membership in supranational institutions such as the OECD and the Council of Europe and collaboration in the diverse associations (ARGE ALP, ARGE ALPEN-ADRIA, ARGE Donauländer, Internationale Bodenseekonferenz) must also be mentioned.

Since the accession of Austria to the EU, cross-border cooperation within the scope of the EU structural policies has achieved great progress. This has resulted in the relative loss in significance of traditional forms of cooperation. Between 1995 and 2001, numerous EUREGIOs have been created along Austria's borders and their tasks are gaining significance under the INTERREG and PHARE CBC programmes. At the end of the reporting period, nine EUREGIOs were institutionalised and a tenth one is being prepared.

These are the EUREGIOs: "West/Nyugat Pannonia", "Weinviertel - Southern Moravia - Western Slovakia", "Bavarian Forest - Bohemian Forest - Sumava", "Inn - Salzach", "Salzburg - Berchtesgadener Land/Traunstein", "Inntal", "Zugspitze/Wetterstein - Karwendel", "Via Salina" as well as "Styria - Northeast Slovenia". Despite the large number of EUREGIOs, their task is uniform and clearly outlined: to promote cross-border cooperation among municipalities/communities and regions in culture and business.

At the national level, agreements exist pursuant to Article 15a of the Federal Constitutional Act between the federal government and the Länder as well as agreements between the Länder regarding partnerships for implementing EU regional programmes, for setting up and maintaining national parks and for improving the harmonisation of spatial planning issues. The Planungsgemeinschaft Ost (PGO, Planning Association for Eastern Austria) is a special institution set up for cooperation among the three eastern Länder.

### *8 Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning – ÖROK*

In the period 1999–2001, work on the Austrian Spatial Development Concept 2001 was the focus of activity at the Office of the ÖROK. Furthermore, the Sub-committee on Regional Economy was involved in the work of preparing for the new EU Structural Funds period 2000–2006. The preparations concerned the Objective regions and assisted areas according to EU competition law, and the participation of the regions and municipalities in the Community Initiatives INTERREG III and URBAN II.

The Office of ÖROK again assumed the function of Secretariat for the Monitoring Committees of the Objective 1 Programme for Burgenland and for all Austrian Objective 2 programmes and the Community Initiatives LEADER+ and URBAN II (Graz and Vienna) in the new programming period (2000–2006). The Office of ÖROK is also the national contact point for the joint Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON), which is to be realised as an INTERREG III programme. At the end of 2001, the resolution was passed to assign the Standing Committee the function of national coordination platform for the trans-national strand of the EU Community Initiative INTERREG (INTERREG IIIB und INTERREG IIIC). The task is to define the Austrian interests with respect to the different themes and to define their position accordingly in the projects to be implemented.

The activities of ÖROK in the reporting period comprised the execution, support and publication of fundamental research and work in the area of spatial planning. Work on the atlas of spatial development in Austria continued and several studies were completed. ÖROK has thus fulfilled its assigned tasks under the Internal Rules of Business (preparation, maintenance and practical implementation of the Austrian Spatial Planning Concept, the coordination of spatially relevant planning and measures among the territorial authorities as well as fundamental research in the area of spatial planning.)

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#### *Footnotes*

*1) Objective 3 is aimed primarily at combating long-term unemployment and Objective 4, at facilitating the adjustment of the labour force to industrial change processes (both programmes are funded exclusively by the ESF). Objective 5a aims at promoting the development of rural regions by achieving adjustments in agricultural structures (funding only from the EAGGF-A). Objective 6 was earmarked for assistance to regions with extremely low population densities (Northern Sweden and Finland).*

*2) The following limits apply to the past and present programming period of the Structural Funds: the Structural Funds cover at the most 75 % of the total costs for measures in Objective 1 regions, and at the most 50 % of total costs for measures in Objective 2 and Objective 5b regions and for regional Community Initiatives.*