

# KOOPERATIONSPOTENZIALE IN DER STADTREGION WIEN

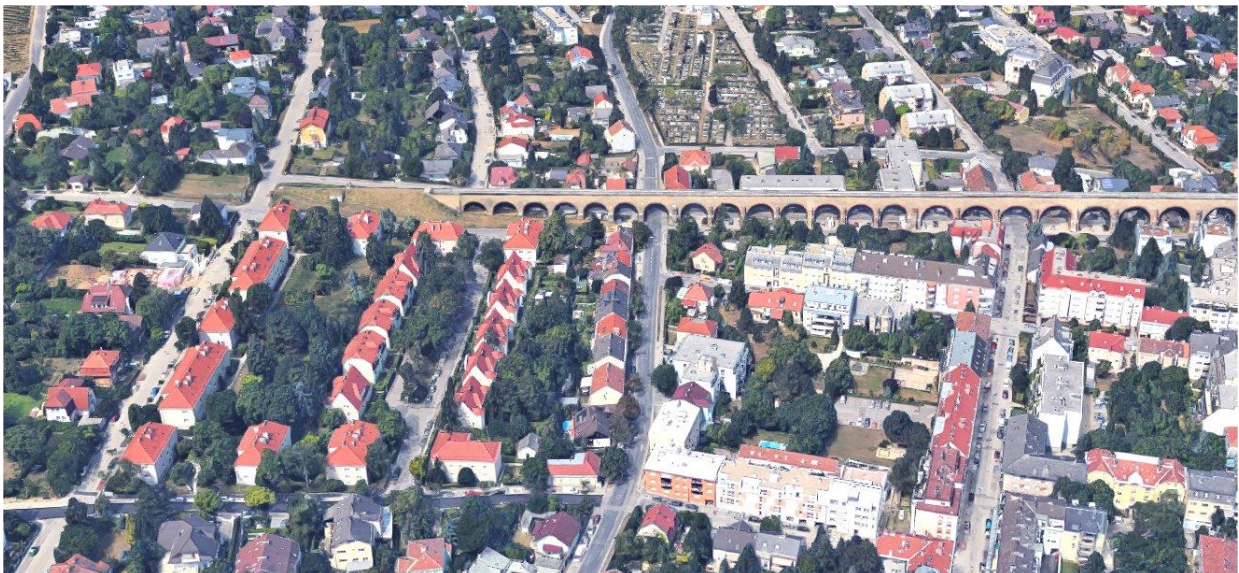
Grundlagen, Rahmenbedingungen und Anknüpfungspunkte für die  
Initialisierung stadtregioer Kooperationen

EIN FORSCHUNGSPROJEKT IM RAHMEN DER WIENER WOHNBAUFORSCHUNG

Summary

im Auftrag der MA 50

---



**Dipl.-Ing. Josef Hameter**  
Ingenieurkonsulent für Raumplanung und Raumordnung,  
staatlich befugter und beideter Ziviltechniker  
Morenogasse 6/2, A-2540 Bad Vöslau  
Filiale: Am Flachhard 9, A-2500 Baden

November 2017  
DI HA / Mag.<sup>a</sup> VP

**VerfasserInnen:**

Mag.<sup>a</sup> Verena PAUL  
Morenogasse 6/2  
2540 Bad Vöslau

Dipl.-Ing. Josef HAMETER  
Ingenieurkonsulent für Raumplanung und Raumordnung  
Hochstraße 23  
2540 Bad Vöslau

**im Auftrag des**

Magistrat der Stadt Wien  
Magistratsabteilung 50  
Muthgasse 62 / F1.20  
1194 Wien

**BearbeiterInnen:**

Mag.<sup>a</sup> Verena Paul (verena.paul@univie.ac.at)  
DI Josef Hameter (hameter@raumundplan.at)

Bad Vöslau, November 2017

## **Summary**

### **Abstract**

Vienna and its catchment area are increasingly growing. In particular, in the southern part of the Vienna urban region there are close structural and functional links between Vienna and its Lower Austrian neighboring communities. The population growth increases the demand for affordable housing. The dynamic of settlement poses a challenge for the qualitative development of settlements and open spaces, of infrastructures but also for the social structure and the identification with the place of residence. Cross-border co-ordination and cooperation among policymakers, local authorities and administrators becomes more important. Through the joint development of target areas, the coordination on the level of legal instruments and the launch of strategic alliances, sustainable spatial development and housing provision can be addressed at the level of the urban region. Urban regional cooperation is furthermore necessary to preserve a high quality of recreational areas, transport infrastructures and social services. Throughout the project a set of cooperative approaches has been analyzed to unveil potentials but also barriers to urban regional cooperation. Opportunities can be found in the networking activities of the Planungsgemeinschaft Ost and the Stadt-Umland-Management, the ongoing coordination processes on the level of Lower Austrian municipalities as well as in innovative projects which are (co-)financed by the EU. Barriers for cooperation in the urban region occur because of different legal frameworks and concepts of housing policy, a lack of incentives and support programs and the difficulty of finding a system for compensating spatially unequally distributed benefits and burdens of (sub)urban settlement development.

### **Objectives**

The Vienna urban region is facing considerable population growth and has to cope with fundamental changes in population and the structure of the economic system. The area of research which covers the 23<sup>rd</sup> district of Vienna and its surrounding Lower Austrian communities is submitted to constant social change. Its development can be characterized by high densities of inhabitants and jobs and increasing commuter flows, which reinforce mutual dependencies between the core city and its surrounding municipalities. In order to ensure a socially sustainable spatial development, a good quality of open spaces, transport infrastructures and social services, structures of cross-border-governance has to be set up. This raises the question how to coordinate settlement, traffic and infrastructure development through regional cooperation.

In the course of the project, various approaches of regional coordination and inter-communal cooperation which aim at long-term improvements for the resident population have been explored. These case studies focused on the district Liesing and the adjoining communities Perchtoldsdorf, Brunn am Gebirge and Vösendorf. This area covers one of the main target areas of the Urban Development Plan of Vienna in Liesing (eg "In der Wiesen", "Carrée Atzgersdorf"). On the other hand it is designated as a "regional cooperation area" for a networking project which is funded by the EU program URBACT III. On the basis of the case studies conditions are identified which turn out to be necessary, so that cooperative models can be established in the urban region. The main focus is on voluntary forms of cooperation, which may serve as a starting point for institutionalizing regional cooperation.

### **Methods**

The methodical design of the project encompasses different steps of document analysis and qualitative interviews with experts in the fields of politics, administration and social research. The literature review was based on the question of how to initialize regional cooperation. For this purpose the main driving forces and pitfalls have been identified.

## Results

As a first step a document analysis was conducted to compare the strategic objectives of the development concepts of Vienna and Lower Austria on the level of *Länder* and communities. It was found that the main regional strategy of Lower Austria aims for strengthening inter-municipal cooperation, especially in the fields of "identity-creating measures" and the development of "city-regional governance". In this respect there is convergence with The Urban Development Plan of Vienna (STEP 2025) which identifies various areas for piloting urban regional cooperation projects.

Sectoral or functional cooperation is often initiated by a bottom-up-process. Regional cooperation which is aligned on long-term targets has to be pushed from the top down through the state level or has to be supported by specific incentives. The promotion of model projects or innovative approaches can trigger cooperative ventures. Since regions are not institutionalized as a separate level in the political-administrative system, top-down governance is not applicable. Therefore urban-regional cooperation has to build on existing coordination processes and forms of cooperation. With regard to housing policies there are four potential levels to set up urban-regional cooperation: the level of projects, the level of legal instruments for spatial planning, the level of development of sub-areas and the level of strategic alliances.

Project-related cooperation creates a sense of achievement and therefore a social climate that encourages cooperation. Common projects are important for incrementally launching urban-regional alliances. These include co-operation in the field of technical and social infrastructure, but also projects in sub-areas, that have been identified as joint development areas. Another possibility for cooperation can be found at the level of coordination of legal instruments. Finally, alliances concerning housing policy can be concluded in order to initiate concrete implementation steps on the basis of common goals.

The communities that served as case studies mainly cooperate in the field of wastewater treatment plants, the disposal of construction waste and the technical structure of the water supply and sewer pipelines. In the field of social infrastructure (childcare, education, health and care) there is no current cooperation between Vienna and the surrounding communities. In the interviews, the establishment of cross-border *Schulsprengel* in compulsory education is discussed in particular. There is no regional coordination in the field of culture apart from occasional personal contacts. This would be important for the development of larger areas that could serve as regional cultural centers as the former *Leiner* building in Mödling and the abandoned coffin factory in Atzgersdorf. An example of cooperative development of target areas is the EU-co-funded URBACT III project "sub> urban. re-inventing the fringe". A Local Action Plan is currently being developed by administrators from the local authorities of Vienna, Vösendorf, the Government of Lower Austria, the PGO and the SUM. Joint measures will address the area "Wien Liesing / Marktviertel Vösendorf". Specifically, it is about an upgrading of parts of the Triester Straße and public spaces, the closure of gaps in cycling and walking paths and connecting of green spaces.

The documents published by the PGO and by the Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning (ÖROK) put special emphasis on the strategic importance of the urban region of Vienna. The federal governors (*Landeshauptleute*) of Vienna, Lower Austria and Burgenland have agreed on a common strategic framework which is summed up as "stadtregion\*". This concept relies on a shared perception of the future development of the urban region and specifies guiding planning principles on the way to a so called "structured city region". The main device is to direct settlement towards infrastructural well-developed areas along central traffic axes. Implementing the goals of this strategy would require additional land for building by mobilizing designated construction sites. Rising land prices and a shortage of affordable housing for communities aggravate the need to raise land or to intervene in providing and securing land for "affordable" housing. Further measures have to be undertaken to raise density in stock and to improve building structures by urban renewal. Therefore an appropriate use of regional planning instruments or additional funding would be necessary.

With regard to the lack of affordable housing the question arises of how the situation for subsidized housing can be improved by the instruments of local spatial planning and whether there is a need to cooperate across municipalities and countries.

At first, there are significant differences between Lower Austria and Vienna in terms of housing policy objectives, which are also reflected in the legal regulations for spatial planning. While the Lower Austrian development concept<sup>1</sup> does not contain any definite statement regarding affordable housing, its significance is explicitly highlighted in Vienna STEP 2025 as one of the "main pillars" in the field of housing policy. In the Lower Austrian development concept, the housing provision is issued with regard to an overall settlement development that provides relevant socio-economic functions in an appropriate ratio. The quality of living is also reflected in terms of the quality of architecture, recreational and open spaces, but not in terms of affordability. Housing-related objectives also differ on the level of regional planning principles between Vienna and Lower Austria.

The legal building regulations of Vienna prescribe to consider housing needs and housing provision when modifying and adopting zoning plans. In addition, it is possible to dedicate sub-zones for subsidized housing. The Lower Austrian Spatial Planning Law (NÖ ROG 2014) stipulates preserving and expanding the diversity of uses of urban land and urban centers as a key objective for local spatial planning, also in terms of a balanced share of residential use. Accordingly policy measures in the field of social housing are most likely to be pursued with regard to specific features of the location, but not with regard to affordability. It is not possible to zone out special areas for subsidized housing on the basis of the NÖ ROG. Therefore, ÖROK (2014) recommends a stronger regional anchoring of social housing in the context of local spatial planning by adapting legal instruments.

The matching of strategies in the field of spatial planning could be improved by a regional analysis of land needs and the specification of needs assessment criteria for local spatial planning. Another recommendation refers to the establishment of a fund to assist communities in active land policy. On the basis of the Lower Austrian Spatial Planning Law, the municipalities are empowered to intervene in the availability of land for building by private contracts. Contracts between local authorities and private land owners presuppose that the latter are willing to make a deal, which might not be applicable in many cases. The law also enables communities to zone areas as (temporary) retention areas for institutions fulfilling public purposes. The task of affordable housing is not included in the corresponding list. The Vienna Building Law also entitles the municipality to conclude private-law agreements with landowners in order to provide for land for the required living space and to involve landowners in the occurring costs for infrastructure.

Informal approaches, such as addressing owners of unused land or creating master plans do not interfere with the property rights of owners or property developers. A tool which is intended to support Lower Austrian communities to manage the land use according to local demands is provided by the Government of Lower Austria (data base for land use management). Other options to raise affordability of housing at a local level are the regulation of required parking spaces and the legally regulated densities of land use. According to the Lower Austrian Spatial Planning Law, structural density is legally required in the sense of a densely populated settlement structure, but must be within the scope of the main objective of preserving and improving the characteristic appearance of town centers and landscapes. So despite of the (sub)urbanized overall structure of municipalities in the urban region the rural structure of their centers entails a moderate density. Potentials for higher material densities, which would basically be possible due to the cubatures and building regulations, can't be exploited. Structural extensions to existing buildings are often controversial and encounter resistance, especially among neighbours. From the point of view of the surveyed municipalities, urban densities are also problematic, since they are opposed to the self-image as a "Weinort" or

---

<sup>1</sup> Amt der niederösterreichischen Landesregierung 2004: Landesentwicklungskonzept für Niederösterreich.

"garden city". These are important attributes to differ from the core city and thus for the local identity. With regard to regulating densities of building and settlement, the Lower Austrian Spatial Planning Law is rather restrictive: in order to "safeguard the structural character", the zoning of "building land-residential area" may be specified by restricting the number of housing units. In the southern suburbs of Vienna which are facing high settlement pressure, such restrictions are often used in zoning plans in order to prevent too dense development in single-family housing areas. The appropriate instrument for designating target areas for required higher densities would be Local Development Concepts, since they include, among other things, basic research that reveal future housing needs. Since the amendment 2014, however, these Local Development Concepts are no longer mandatory part of the Local Spatial Planning Program. Without any concepts of that kind, however, essential foundations for the socio-spatial situation of the population are missing, which would be necessary for a longer-term and cross-community coordination of housing needs.

Taken as a whole, the spatial development strategies proposed by the PGO would provide the necessary basis for cooperative decision-making for dealing with the future population growth in the urban region of Vienna. However, its implementation is complicated because of different responsibilities in the field of spatial planning (local vs. regional spatial planning, responsibility of the federal governments for sectoral planning and for general regional planning). The interlocking of "horizontal" as well as "vertical" patterns therefore becomes a prerequisite in order to direct regional developments on specific paths. A significant innovation in this context was the introduction of the instrument of Regional Guidance Plans (*Regionale Leitplanung*), which established a new approach to spatial planning in Lower Austria.

This innovative way of regional planning was first tested in the north of Vienna and then applied in a second step in the district of Mödling. (Regional Master Plan Mödling 2016) Future challenges of spatial development have been discussed among municipalities of the district of Mödling and representatives of the federal government. Specific strategies and measures were defined on the base of the recommendations of the "stadtreion". This coordination process also facilitates cooperative projects with the city of Vienna, since the particular interests of the surrounding communities have finally been broken down to a common set of targets. On the one hand, this makes it easier to handle regional coordination processes. On the other hand the position of the comparatively small municipalities is strengthened in relation to the core city. A critical point that can't be clarified on the current status is the effectiveness of the Regional Master Plan Mödling in practice. This concerns the issue of the implementation of the agreed measures, including the revision of zoning plans, the use of urban development contracts, an active land policy, the definition of regional settlement areas and the establishment of a regional infrastructure fund.

Another starting point for regional cooperation in the area of housing provision would be the creation of housing policy concepts, which can be used as a basis for joint housing policy initiatives. The creation of such concepts can strengthen the position of municipalities and cities in the housing market. Regional stock analyses and forecasts can quantify regional housing demands and differentiate them according to different forms of living such as single flats, family flats and age-appropriate flats. Regional analysis can be based on the monitoring of settlement development in the urban region of Vienna which is commissioned by the PGO.

Finally the sustainability of interregional cooperation depends on the extent to which it is possible to reconcile the interests of the core city and the surrounding communities or between municipalities. This can be attained as a result of growth effects or by implementing new systems for balancing regional burdens and benefits. The Regional Master Plan Mödling provides for a "regional infrastructure fund" to compensate for unevenly distributed burdens and benefits in the form of inter-communal financial equalization regarding expenditures and revenues. However, clarifying the issue of spatially unequally distributed burdens also raises the question of setting non-monetary benefits such as the provision of places for recreation and leisure activities. Although there is a broad

discourse among professionals and scientists, there are no practical solutions available for the Vienna Urban Region.

Regional cooperation in the Vienna area is confronted with structural barriers, above all because of the federal state border. However, with regard to the establishment of a co-operative culture, new opportunities emerge, resulting from EU-funded pilot projects, legal relief for community co-operation, new possibilities of municipal taxation, the instrument of regional planning and the data base provided by the Monitoring of the Vienna Urban Region. A local action plan for an area at the southern interface between Vienna and Lower Austria can enhance the image of a transitional area that has been barely perceived until then. Legal regulations offer different forms of organization for inter-communal cooperation, which can be adapted to local needs. Dividing municipal taxation between communities can provide a basis for financing regional projects. The data on the urban region can serve as a starting point for a regionally coordinated planning of housing and social infrastructure. The coordination among Lower Austrian municipalities in the course of creating Regional Master Plans increases their bargaining power towards Vienna and thus contributes to the solution of the problem of asymmetry for city-periphery cooperation.

Rising land prices, scarcity of land and socio-structural changes create a problem for the entire urban region, which makes alliances between municipalities more probable, despite differences in housing policy concepts. Vienna and its southern "suburbanization axis" are confronted with rising demands for housing and bottlenecks in affordable housing space or available building land. The Lower Austrian Spatial Planning Law aims to foster compact settlement structures. Therefore municipalities must pay special attention to potential densification possibilities within existing structures. Increasing social and architectural densities are changing the interaction of private and public spaces. Quality requirements are increased on open spaces and architecture. In order to be able to generate benefits from population growth, communities must communicate individual and public values regarding (sub)urban transformation. This would require positive visions of the future and debates about (sub)urban qualities that could provide a common link for regional dialogues and cooperation projects.