



ALPNET –

Cooperation and technical assistance to small-medium alpine local authorities on sustainable urban regeneration activities

1. Proposal

for European Territorial Cooperation, Alpine Space project promoted by the Region of Piedmont, Italy

Most of the small-medium cities in Lower-Austria have to face problems like processes of socio-economic decline, inadequate public/private services and limited access to culture and participation.

These challenges are similar to the defiances of other small alpine cities in other European countries.

To solve these problems Alp Net has been initialised. The objectives of this project are promoting common understanding, cultural and political change for a sustainable development. The project refers particular to the program priority 1 “competitiveness and attractiveness of the Alpine Space” and to program priority 3 “Wise management of nature, landscapes and cultural heritage, promotion of the environment and the prevention of natural disasters“.

Furthermore Priority 4 “Technical Assistance” is fulfilled, which means program administration, information and evaluation.

Last but not least with the aid of this program main aims of the European Union concerning regional policy could be fulfilled:

- adjustment of circumstances
- harmonic and sustainable development to overcome the economic and social differences between the EU – members and regions
- Common increase of the level from disadvantaged regions by European cooperation and exchange of experience

2. Status quo

Background of Sustainable Urban Regeneration in Lower-Austria

Tasks

In the year 1992 the program was started, actually 52 towns (or 75% of all towns of Lower-Austria) are members of the program.

The task of this program is to enable the citizens and the local authorities to articulate their needs, to organise self-help and to realise the planned projects. Therefore in each town an office with a consultant is installed in co-operation with the local authority.

In the region of Lower-Austria the towns are small and have mostly between 5.000 and 10.000 inhabitants.

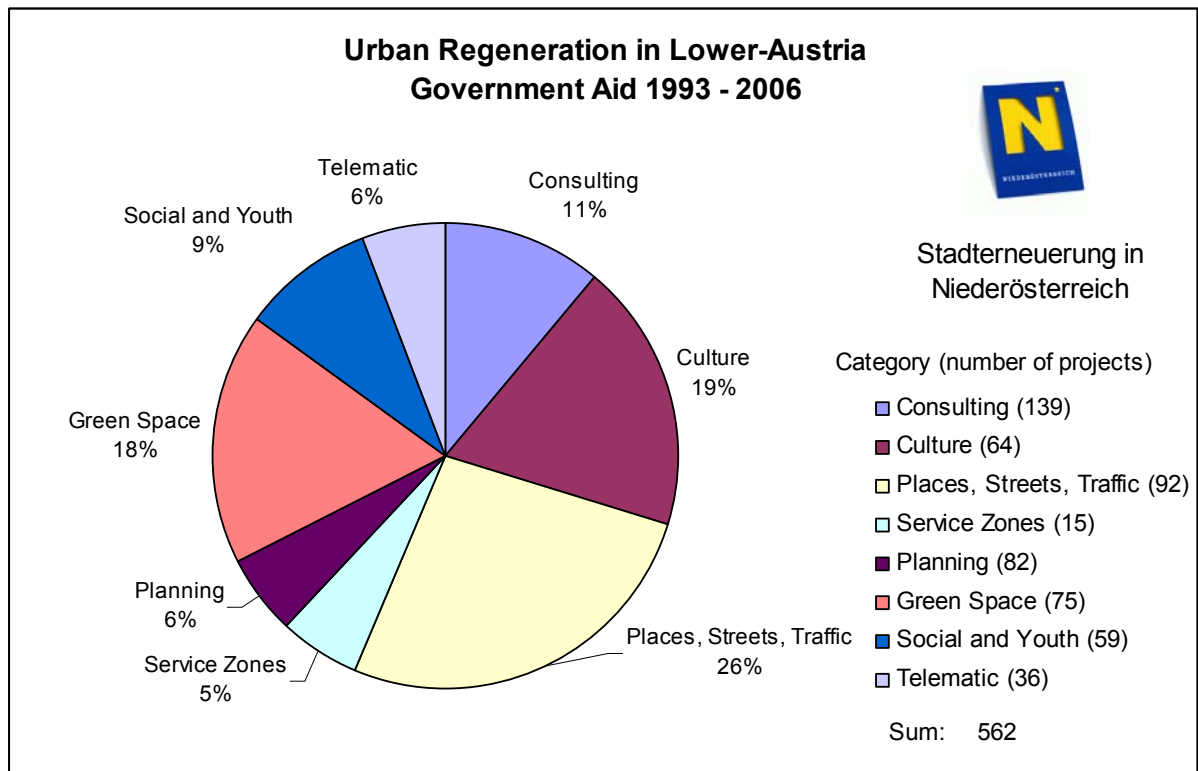
Regeneration concept

The first step in urban regeneration is to develop an integrated concept for sustainable urban regeneration by participation of the inhabitants. Therefore an advisory council with members from policy, administration and inhabitants is installed.

Projects

The main focus of the government aid is laid on projects dealing with youth, arts and culture, telematics and networking. Another objective is making city centres more attractive.

Since the year 1992 more than 620 projects have been realised. 20 Mio Euro government aid and ERDF funds have been given causing an amount of investment with total costs of 83 Mio Euro.



Last update: August 2006

3. Planned Activities

Objectives of the project “Alp Net - Cooperation of small-medium alpine towns”

Small-medium alpine towns have to face many problems. These challenges are similar to the defiances of other small alpine cities in other European countries. But towns do not always have enough financial and human resources to solve all their problems and to manage the future in a successful way.

Networks for small-medium alpine towns allow to group and to effective use available strengths.

Together the cities can share costs and human resources to solve common problems. This is a good way to manage the collective future.

This shows that networking is a reasonable way to handle problems and we are interested in experiences of other countries. This will be the next step of grouping and effective using available power.

Now this exchange should be made more professional by human and technical assistance. In the last decade organisations and institutions with cross border character, networks for exchange of experience and know how transfer have been initialised.

Based on these networks in different fields cooperations should be installed which can help small-medium alpine towns to improve services and to ensure sustainable development.

The process shall be documented to make it transferable to other local authorities.

Main objectives

- Supporting the development of cooperation and networks of authorities and NGO's from a local to a provincial level
- Strengthen the role of urban areas as engine for sustainable growth of a region
- Reducing territorial and social unbalances by fastening the development of peripheral regions by cooperation of their centres
- Capitalising endogenous potentials, human resources and local identities

Main target groups

- local, regional and provincial decision maker
- local, regional and provincial authorities
- economic actors
- NGO's dealing with the themes of the co operational networks

Target area

- Urban areas and their hinterland facing the problems of urban sprawl
- Centres of peripheral areas

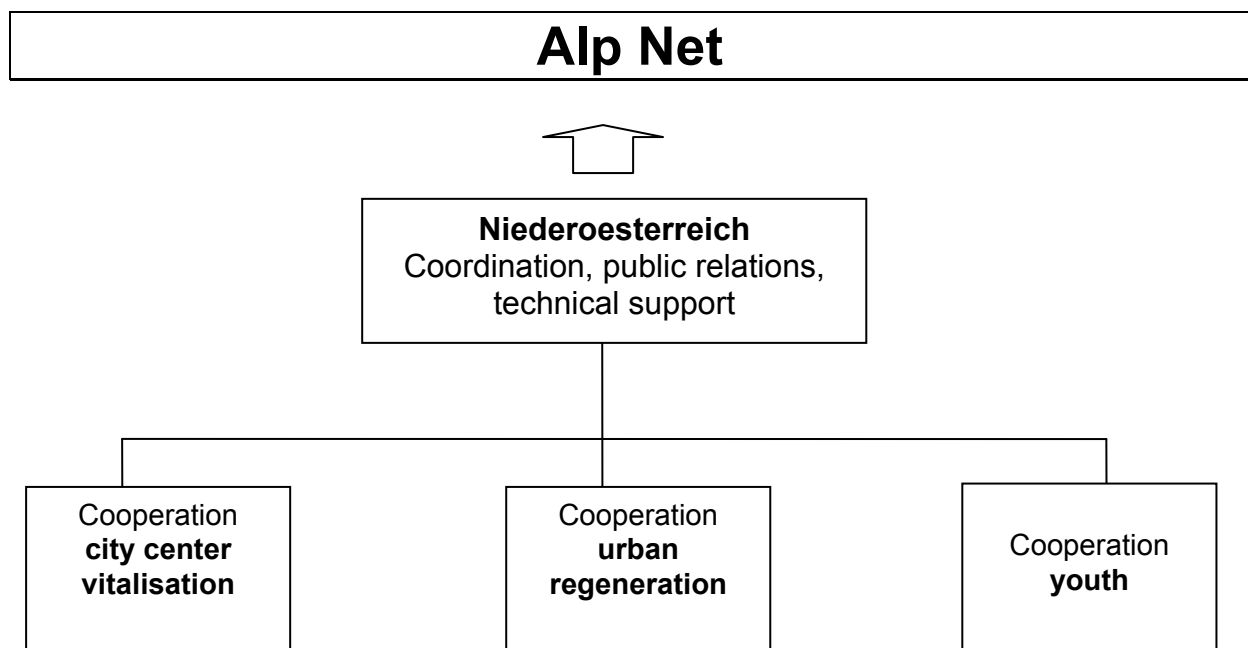
Quality target of the process

- Participation of authorities, stakeholders, inhabitants, NGO's,..
- Transparency of decisions
- Supporting the process of decision making with technical assistance
- Transferability of the experiences to other institutions

Setting up of networks and tasks

- selection of local authorities during the project preparation phase
- conception and program for realisation
- preparation of data concerning the fields of networks
- research of best practice examples
- implement structure of organization between local authorities, associations and appropriate authorities
- set up of infrastructure for networking and know how transfer
- carry out of projects using efficient financial and personnel resources
- encourage new and innovative forms of development
- public relations work

Organisation



Cooperation to improve quality of life and services in small-medium alpine towns – Cooperation planned

◆ Cooperation City Centre Vitalisation in small-medium alpine towns

The main focus of Urban Regeneration in Lower-Austria is the stimulation of city centres. In the future this aim should be fulfilled with a program which concentrates on grouping and effective using of available strengths.

There are three focuses which could be used:

- promotion of city centre mall
- promotion of trade
- aimed promotion of housing to stimulate city centres

Now these programs were tested in some communes and networking allows to exchange and to create common knowledge and strategies.

International networking would increase the chance on grouping and effective using available strength and to exchange different knowledge and strategies. Together the towns can use their common resources to solve problems which small alpine cities have to face.

◆ **Cooperation Urban Regeneration in small-medium alpine towns**

Regeneration of towns dealing with urban regeneration will guarantee the know-how transfer to other local authorities all over Europe. New forms of participation in the towns will be installed to face the near problems of spatial development of urban areas. Best practices will foster the transferability of experiences to other communities.

◆ **Cooperation Youth in small-medium alpine towns**

The aim is to integrate the youth in decision making, forming of opinion and design process. The network should help to exchange experiences and topics. Another aim is to invent methods for a sustainable involvement of the youth in these processes. Together there should be a way to find answers for the challenge Youth in Lower-Austria.

Furthermore these activities and outcomes should be exchanged with other small-medium alpine towns in other countries. A cooperation between local authorities and associations could give new ideas, new impulse, and new points of view.

Trauner Hubert

Krems, 22nd March 2007