

Thomas Weith / Annekathrin Jacobs

Recommendations for Hinterland development policies in future

Based on the results of the analytical tools, mobilising project elements (e.g. scenario workshops) and several projects meetings, including intensive discussions in working groups, a set of overall consequences and changes for European, national and regional political agendas are to be described. In addition to some general cross-sectored aspects, specific recommendations are elaborated in relation to several fields of (EU policy) activities.

The described necessities will especially support the endogenous development of Hinterland regions, by reflecting the needs of external support.

Recommendations in general

Central mission for future activities is to raise awareness for the problems of shrinking villages and regions (by information policy). Reflecting the challenges of peripheral regions in all political and administrative activities is a basic need. This includes the redesign of all regional development activities for:

- support of learning and qualification processes,
- building networks,
- enforcing competitiveness.

Changes at European, national, regional and local policy level are necessary for

- strengthening regional and local civil society and public authorities,
- developing local capacities for change,
- mobilizing local and regional potentials, and
- creating / supporting innovation in organisational and institutional processes.

Specific recommendations for spatial planning and spatial development

Ways of solving Hinterland problems are to be integrated into spatial development activities by developing new visions, targets and measures. Main aspects are:

- revise of spatial development plans and programs for reflecting and integrating decline issues (all levels),
- reorientation in regional development visions (all levels),
- elaborating endogenous development options in combination with Vorderland-Hinterland-linkages and external support,
- initiating regional management activities (including cross-border-development).

Specific recommendations for regional (economic) policy

Up to now Hinterland challenges are reflected sparsely in regional policy activities. In future new ways of discussion and implementation have to be realized:

- reconsidering the unsatisfiable political targets of 'minimizing regional disparities',
- strengthening regional economy by fostering regional economic chains and supporting intraregional cooperation,
- focussing on SME and their innovation potential and necessities (coaching etc.),

Regionale Planungsgemeinschaft Havelland-Fläming – Hinterland Task Secretariat
Oderstraße 65, D-14513 Teltow (Germany)
Tel.: ++49 3328 3354-0, Fax: ++49 3328 3354-20,
E-Mail: info@havelland-flaeming.de, Internet: www.hinterland-info.net

- establishing educational networks for guaranteeing support and transparency of local jobmarkets,
- stabilisation and improvement of industrial and service activities in small and medium sized local centres; assuring basic services for business and public transport opportunities,
- using and supporting the high potential of renewable energies (wind, water, solar, biomass, tides, urban waste recycling),
- coordination between regional policy and agricultural policy.

Specific recommendations for national infrastructure policy

National infrastructure policy needs new orientation. Central targets could be:

- Securing nationwide basic local minimum standards in infrastructures (health care, security, water, energy etc.),
- Using potentials of information technologies and services based on telecommunication, including improvement of education regarding technological knowledge.

Further specifications should be realized on regional level.

Specific recommendations for regional infrastructure policy

In addition to national infrastructure policy regional aspects are to be added. Main elements are:

- ensuring regional access to infrastructure and knowledge (network management, mobility management),
- supporting enterprise networks and cooperation between education, science/research and enterprises (innovation agencies, platforms etc.),
- concentration of specific infrastructure and high quality workplaces in well equipped centres,
- supporting interconnectivity between urban areas and the countryside (infrastructure networks with new organisational models),
- redefining administrative regulations for facilitating flexible organisational solutions (e.g. establishing / sustaining small village schools).

Specific recommendations for regional fiscal policy

Elements of regional fiscal policy will support regional development activities by:

- providing external (also financial) support for encouraging endogenous development,
- adapting financial support on local/ regional conditions, supporting sustainable and successful initiatives and branches.

Specific recommendations for environmental policy

Environmental policy is one of the key elements of spatial development. Supporting Hinterland regions could include:

- preservation of cultural and natural heritage (as a basis for economic and social development - e.g. on the basis of sustainable tourism and recreation),
- developing cultural landscapes,
- better coordination between policy for protected areas and policy of investments.

Specific recommendations for agriculture policy

Nowadays Hinterlands only look like agrarian economies. In future new non-agricultural activities are to be supported. This recommends:

- support of non-agricultural sources of income: crafts, services, trade;
- supporting rural-urban projects focussed on economy, culture, tourism, human capital;
- support of sustainable forms of tourism (sustainable destination management),

- fostering sustainable land use management,
- conservation of characteristic settlement structures,
- discussing new rural functions (CO₂-partnerships).

Specific recommendations for local activities (in villages)

Activities in villages are basic elements of bottom-up activities. Key activities for successful development processes are:

- strengthening the power of actors on regional level; local actors need support to be motivated and prepared to fulfil their tasks (qualification, education, organisational structures, starting projects)
- strengthening participation in peripheral areas as a key element for capacity building
- training of local administrations as key actors in mobilising processes
- mobilizing and capacity building processes for establishing and using local potential needs
time: about 10 years and more!

In conclusion: successful regional and local development processes in Hinterland regions will need all activities mentioned above. Central element is bridging the gap between peripheral and metropolitan areas by networking to enable endogenous capacity as well as to organize external support if necessary.