

The use of informal instruments in German spatial planning

Presentation to the conference

**„Ordenación del Territorio en España frente al reto demográfico,
el cambio climático y la transición energética’**

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Rise of informal planning approaches since the 1980s

- Background: Rise in the number of conflicts occurring over the use of land and the increasing complexity of planning procedures
- Effect: A steady growth in interest in the use of informal approaches to planning; as far as possible, they aim to eliminate or resolve conflicts consensually and on a co-operative basis prior to the initiation of formal and legally binding planning procedures
- processes and instruments of spatial planning that are not legally formalised, standardised or directly legally binding
- characterised by a high degree of flexibility, adaptability, transparency and a focus on achieving a consensus.

Informal instruments in spatial planning

- Anchored in § 14 of the Spatial Planning Act; stand alongside the formal instruments, but are also linked to them
- can prepare the development of formal instruments (plans) (e.g. regional vision processes)
- can support the implementation of formal instruments (plans)
- strengthen the persuasive power of spatial planning ("persuasive instruments")
- can promote creativity (competitions)
- can deal with or resolve conflicts (moderation function)
- communicate spatial planning issues and objectives

Examples of informal instruments (esp. on the regional level)

- Regional conferences on spatial development; supra-regional, regional and inter-municipal networks and cooperation structures, regional forums
- Regional development concepts (non-binding)
- contractual agreements, in particular for the coordination or implementation of spatial development concepts and for the preparation or implementation of formal spatial development plans
- regional action programmes on current action requirements
- spatial monitoring and making the results available
- advising municipalities, other public bodies and agencies

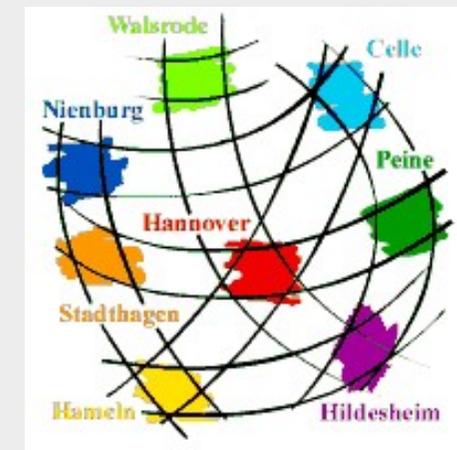
Example: Regional development concepts (non-binding)

- Very wide range of examples
- planning regions, parts thereof or cross-border
- Cross-cutting or with different focal points
- partly complementary to formal programmes, partly stand-alone
- partly in connection with EU funding (e.g. LEADER regions)



Example: Co-operating centres, city networks and city alliances

- Not every centre (especially in periphery areas can offer everything),
- synergies of networks (avoiding public parallel investments in sports, culture, hospitals, etc.)
- Voluntary agreements between neighbouring municipalities (complementary profiles instead of competition)
- city networks (in Germany, promotion of model projects by the federal government in the 1990s)



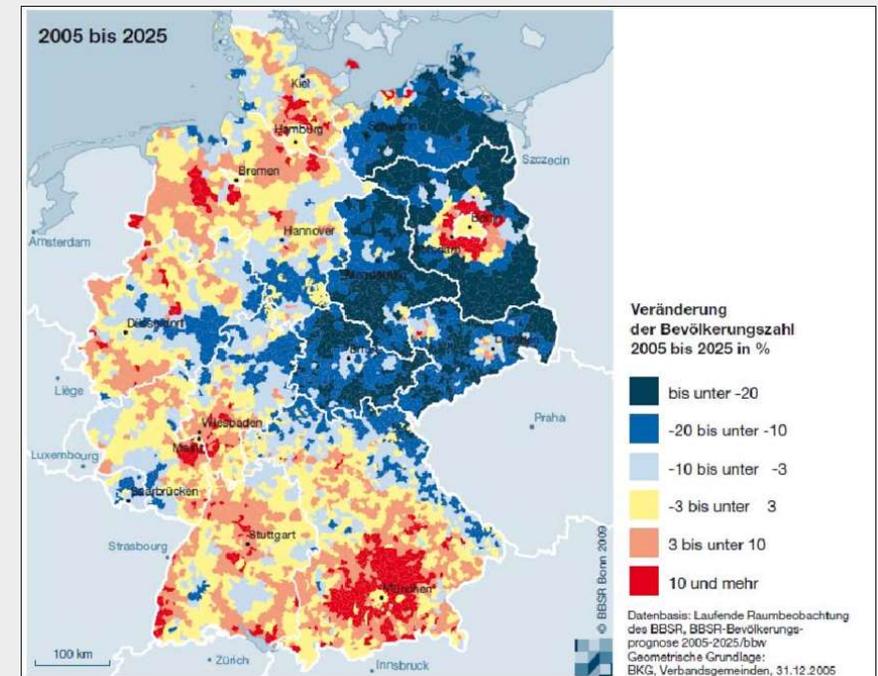
Example: Conflict moderation in large-scale retail trade

- In recent decades, there has been strong competition between municipalities for the establishment of large-scale retail businesses.
- Danger to spatial structure and development
- Informal coordination between planning authorities and municipalities on regional retail development goals
- Regional retail trade concepts (e. g. for the Greater Hanover Area)
- Agreements to resolve conflicts



Example: Spatial observation

- Early warning system
- Preparation of figures and data, e.g. with graphics and short reports
- Possibility of "agenda setting"
- Can arouse political interest, preparation of further activities



Thank you for your attention!

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