

Coherent spatial development at a regional level



What is the best way to promote coherent spatial development at a regional level? EBP analyzed the challenges and success factors before drafting a set of recommendations for the relevant federal, cantonal and municipal agencies, as well as for the members of the Tripartite Conference.

The Swiss government recently introduced its Coherent Spatial Development Plan to promote forms of holistic, coherent, and well-coordinated spatial development that are in conformity with the basic principles of sustainable development. But what is the plan's likely impact on development in the various distinct regions in Switzerland? And what would be the best way to promote coherent development at a regional level? In order to answer these questions, EBP took a closer look at three regions, including Upper Valais, Bern-Mittelland and the Lausanne-Morges Agglomeration. The project team convened meetings of regional, municipal, cantonal and federal representatives at various regional events to discuss development-related regional concerns.

Sandwiched regions

The regions play a special role when it comes to spatial coherence. Many regional tasks can only be managed today when stakeholders cooperate across municipal and cantonal borders. The key success factors include common goals and strategies, clear and binding provisions for joint development endeavors, and efficient work processes. However, what might sound easy is actually rather difficult to achieve. This is because regions are often limited in their ability to make and implement

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development plans. Indeed, they find themselves sandwiched between federal and cantonal agencies that insist that certain conditions be met, and municipalities that are determined to defend their autonomy.

Securing coherence by tripartite cooperation

Coherent spatial development at a regional level is only possible when the relevant state levels are willing to make a contribution in keeping with their authority. EBP completed its assignment by submitting recommendations for promoting coherent regional development to each of the relevant federal, cantonal and municipal agencies, as well as to the members of the Tripartite Conference.