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Dear readers,

Global competition leads to more rapid decisions that are made by economically active parties and do not depend on location. The speed of the economic system on the one hand and that of the political system on the other hand are more and more diverging. The national state is in danger of losing weight in the face of an efficiently organised economy. Supranational organisations such as WTO and EU which form a new institutional framework are attempts to confront these dangers.

That is why the national development planning policy is faced with new challenges which require answers.

The "basic development plan for Switzerland" (GRO-CH) can be considered an answer given by the Swiss. It is a strategy paper and serves the national council as a spatial frame of orientation. Political practice stands, however, in contradiction to the comprehensive alignment of its goals as the former is looking for answers mainly within deregulation and the reduction of bureaucratic hindrances in favour of a more flexible economic development.

Together with this strategy paper the development planning policy of Switzerland is under discussion as well, because the national dimension (still) plays a significant part in a globally linked and functioning world. For this reason coherent and modern ideas about the spatial development of Switzerland are urgently needed. But they can come into effect only provided that they may become part of the official development planning policy which in turn becomes integral part of politics. And only like this can Switzerland contribute to the maturation of an emerging European development plan (development planning concept EUREK).

Bruno Widmer, editor

Lucas Schloeth

New challenges to the development planning for Switzerland

In the decades after the Second World War Switzerland went through a highly successful development. Economic performances steadily increased constituting the requirements for impressive prosperity. The factors contributing to success find their reflection in the spatial structure of today's Switzerland. Settling areas of relatively limited size are embedded in a landscape that is segmentalised into small parts. The federal structure of the state is coined by this segmentalization and also contributes to its perpetuance. Furthermore, the general wealth supports the decentralised pattern of settlement by financing an extensive supply of infrastructural services over a whole network of spatial and social compensatory mechanisms.

With respect to the future, however, new external as well as internal challenges can be made out which question the competitiveness of today's spatial structure.

H. Ringli

The "City Network Switzerland" A response to national and international challenges

The backbone of the national strategy

is the "city network for Switzerland". The cities belonging to the network are connected by the existing basic structure of Railway 2000. Like this a renaissance of towns is arising while the pressure to develop on peripheral and rural areas is reduced. In case of a bigger impulse to growth the pressure to develop is shared out between the release centres nearby which, on their part, are linked to the main centre by the local public transport system.

Furthermore, the city network offers the opportunity of entering into alliances in place of ruinous competition and can hold up against the European competition between locations without facing the disadvantages of conurbation. The strategy strives for optimising between a pro-economic and ecologically harmless way.

The motto of the national strategy is not just "small is beautiful" but "networks are powerful".

Andreas Schneider

An appropriate strategy within the competition for economic agents?

The Swiss government must have a good look at the global economic competition. That there is (among others) a need for a development planning strategy is indisputable. There is also a large degree of agreement on the essential content

of the "basic development plan for Switzerland": the creation of a macro-structure that is pro-economic combined with a micro-structure favourable for the population.

It would not be a Swiss contribution, was there not somebody to take care of the clockwork. The concept of this clock called "basic development plan for Switzerland" is one matter, its precision another. A few thoughts about the realisation of the Swiss strategy are therefore the subject of this article. Only the two aspects directly connected with the competition between locations for economic enterprises are, however, highlighted here: the influence of the traffic system and the significance of quality factors of location.

Barbara Zibell

Important guidelines for an open discourse

Whenever a nation such as Switzerland puts on paper and publishes its basic development plan for the country this happens out of necessity. Since model CK-73 there haven't been any comparable efforts on a national level to develop ideas for an environmental development of the country as a whole.

Although the state takes an important position within its coordinative competence in respect to the nationally significant planning of tasks, thus also influencing environmental plans and the development of the country and its different parts, it is not entitled to work out a comprehensive environmental plan. This only happens on a level of cantonal guiding plans. Is the state now going beyond its competences with the "basic development plan for Switzerland"?

Irene Hupfer

A strategy only for the mobile ones?

With the "basic development plan for Switzerland" we finally have a vision of the whole of Switzerland. I welcome the fact that this approach to a model has come into being at all. The strategy is one theme, the realisation is another. Here changes can and have to be made. Tendencies have come into existence, diametrically opposing the new strategy and pointing in a direction I would, if possible, not go. To avoid this, this paper will have to be made known and brought closer to the population by means of an extensive campaign

similar to the AIDS campaign. In addition, aspects such as ground preparation, realisation, and social wholeness, which I would label "female" fields of activity, are missing. These will have to be brought into the realisation by means of a broad discussion.

Alain Thierstein
Environmental development without visions?

Is there in the era of pragmatism and primacy of return on capital still a need for models and visions? Are the grand discourses not "dead" and used up? It might be true that the optimistic, mobilising ideas can by now only be found on the waste dump of history. But as always in the history of civilisation: the layer of varnish is thin and breaks easily. "Relapses" are pre-programmed; recycling and further development of ideas is therefore required.

Kurt Burkhard
A chance for cities and agglomerations

The federal government's concept of a city network for Switzerland addresses agglomerations and their central cities. It is generally considered an opportunity that the government whose policies primarily refer to the cantons now postulates the strengthening of cities and agglomerations. The cities now want to grasp the occasion and, together with the city association, play an active role in the realisation of the city network.

Alain Cudet and Daniel Marco
The basic development plan - a conservative project

Our criticism is directed to the main points of the project, not to the details. The goals stated in the "basic development plan for Switzerland" mainly demonstrate which parts of the current development plan should be retained, and they are not a concept geared towards the future. The starting position from which the existing settlement structure originated and the economic situation have changed. The document at issue cannot be the basis for a broad discussion because it is not a forward-looking outline but the expression of a conservative agreement.

Christian Schmid
The fiction of a city network

The main suggestion of the "basic development plan for Switzerland" is to create a well-connected and functional city network Switzerland, a decentralised "three million town", a kind of "federal metropolis". This suggestion, however, not being more than a new edition of earlier concepts for development planning, misjudges the fundamental economic and social changes that have occurred during the last few years. Today's Switzerland is an urbanised country with a distinctive hierarchy of centres. A development planning that intends to influence the future must take this fact and the consequences and conflicts resulting from it into account.

Peter Güller
Multiple alliances within city networks

The "basic development plan for Switzerland" puts emphasis on the formation of a city network. Together the Swiss cities are to offer the population and the economy a multitude of services, contact and occupation possibilities - the opposite, unwanted for different reasons, would be the formation of centres. Provided that Switzerland has a general attractiveness, also foreign investors should benefit from this range of locations. Furthermore the city network is expected to supply the peripheral parts of the country sufficiently.

Sophie Lin and Bruno Beurret
The outline for a new development plan for the Canton of Geneva.
An instrument to strengthen the Canton within the supracentral competition?

The Canton of Geneva is revising its development plan authorised in 1989. The concept contains new political guidelines which are going to influence the development plan: the cantonal development plans of the eighties are based on a flourishing economy of which the effects on space - especially the negative ones - needed to be controlled. In an economically difficult period the project 2015 is about controlling future developments in such a fashion that good conditions for economic development can be granted.

The most important elements of the concept are:
- an overall concept for the agglomeration
- for the border region "franco-val-

do-genevois" a structure with various centres linked by public transport
- establishing connections between this region and the city network Switzerland as well as the region Rhone-Alpes.

Rudolf Burkhalter/Stefan Maissen
A strategy to strengthen the competitiveness?

The competition between locations within the European system of cities has reached, over the last couple of years, a hitherto unforeseen dynamism which leads to a strong pressure on the locations. The increasing mobility of influential factors then leads to a selective concentration of strategic business activities. The competition between housing locations and tourism centres gets steadily more intensified as well. Today more and more is demanded from the quality of housing locations while at the same time our tourism centres face strong competition from new destinations and therefore have to develop new innovative products. That is why the essential of the "basic development plan for Switzerland" should also contain the question of where we stand within this competition. Starting from a strength-weakness-profile the concept would have to aim at the promotion of strengths and, based on these, define development strategies for the spatial development of Switzerland.

Luuk Boelens
A planner's dream - a planner's nightmare - From Chiasso to Rodeschool

There was a time when we thought that the most beautiful allegory for planning was the cartographer's fable by Jorge Luis Borges. In this fable the authorities of the empire draw a map in so detailed a manner that it at last becomes the territory itself, or, even better, the society that lives on it. But when the empire becomes frail the map begins to fall apart as well. In the end only a few scraps of the former map can be recognised. There certainly is a metaphysical beauty to be seen in this decline. For us (post)modern planners, however, this means that the paradigm of Borges' fable is definitely over. All that remains is the discrete charm of a hope that has faded away.

Thomas Held
"Sustainable Development" - the great opportunity for the development planning?

Environment planning and research should have a much closer look at the concept of a lasting development just because their effect and status are constantly declining. The turning towards this change of paradigm, however, requires a turning away from the reductionistic-sectorial way of thinking and acting to a systemic-integral one. That is how orientation and decision might change towards a "dynamic, self-adjusting balance system". The understanding of planning would thus be shaken in its foundations and key words such as "network perspective", "thinking in dynamic processes with open goals", "integrative approaches", "orientation of needs and problems" and "deterministic chaos" would push themselves to the forefront. A translation of the plans of this change can be seen on three levels in particular: with regard to method (working with lasting systems), to norm (revision of the development plan law) and to operation (development planning). Interdisciplinary and participatory research and practice are indispensable requirements to do this. This might also lead urban planners to include other highly influential policies such as tax and energy policies.

Jürg Sulzer
"Economic Ecology-Town" - for a forward-looking city planning

Development planning, urban development and environment are today no longer highest on the political agenda. Deregulation and the dismantling of bureaucratic hindrances in favour of a more flexible development of the economy have priority in the political discussion. Canton and city of Bern have - in spite of this contrary tendency - worked out the community planning for development targets. The main goals of the development planning of the city of Bern are the preservation and improvement of the quality of life. With the city development concept the district council of Bern turned out a development strategy pertaining to housing, work, traffic, environment and city structuring for the municipal area. The city of Bern succeeded in communicating the necessity for a long term examination of the goals and measures of the city planning beyond the political boundaries.