

Rural development in Europe
Strategic approaches and implementation tools from the Alpine region strategy to
land consolidation
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Rural development and land consolidation have become key instruments for designing rural areas and for implementing regional strategies. Although originally mainly oriented to agricultural claims and interests of land use planning today they represent an essential prerequisite for the implementation of many political and social objectives in rural areas. Modern land consolidation projects prepare the land in order to coordinate and balance economic, environmental, infrastructural interests, however, also interests of public services and social interests in rural development. This way they actually create the prerequisite for numerous projects, which can then unfold their impacts on the new tailor-made areas, for example, innovative economic structures, local recreational offers for tourists, flood prevention, nature conservation to LEADER projects. At the same time land development and land consolidation enable new land use concepts, which help to curb and minimise the use of areas for public purposes.

The territorial approaches of the European regional policies such as, for example, the Alpine region strategy illustrate that rural development concepts and the design of rural areas can also reach far beyond political and administrative borders. Seven states and 48 regions in the Alpine regions are mobilising themselves to develop collaborative objectives and projects in the fields of growth and innovation, mobility as well as environment and energy for a future-proof regional and rural development. Integral land development tools are required to implement these projects.

In this event, the current measures being taken for land development and land consolidation in Europe are to be analysed together with experts from various regions of Europe, the federations and institutions of the European Union. It also concerns their important role in the implementation of territorial concepts of regional policies. It will be demonstrated which contributions land development and land consolidation make for the integration of economic, environmental and social objectives and which future challenges are to be taken into consideration with their further development. In addition, we will discuss which need for improvement and support may exist both in the member states as well as on the part of the EU, in particular with regard to the further development of the regional policies and the policies for rural areas.