



From a Greenhorn to an Anticipatory Precursor

Policy Impacts by 15 Years of ERDF Funding in Austria

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ERDF Funding in Austria
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With its accession to the European Union in 1995 Austria gained access to ERDF-funding.

What kind of added policy value of these 15 years of ERDF funding in Austria can be assessed?

And what kind of lessons learnt can help to formulate prospective propositions for 2014+?



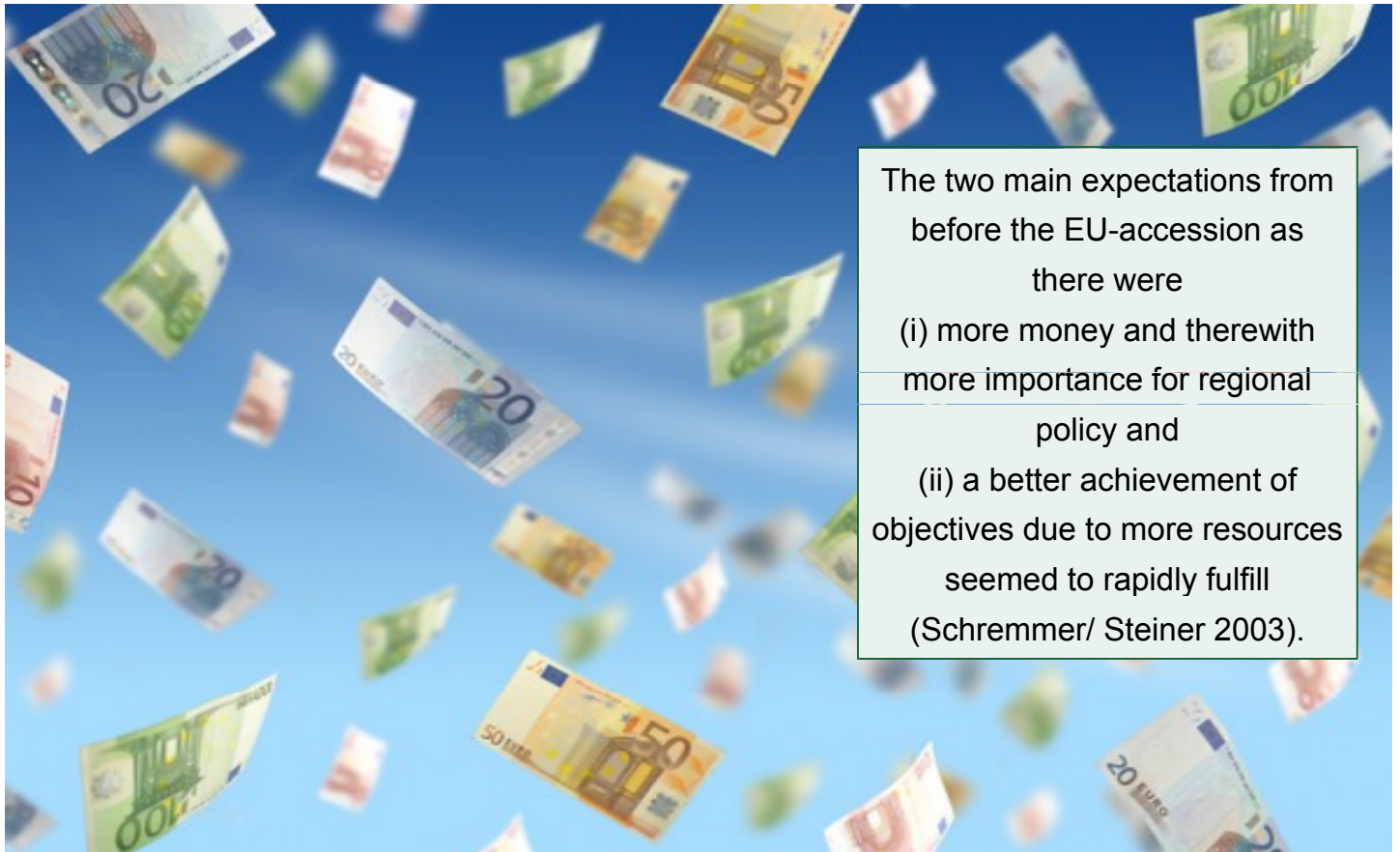
1. 15 Diverse Years of ERDF-Funding in Austria
2. Experiences of the last 2 ERDF-funding periods 1995-2006
 1. Concerning Regional Policy and the Regions themselves
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3. Reflections on the Current ERDF-Funding Period in Austria
4. Austria's Experiences as Input for the Ongoing Discussions for 2014+

15 Diverse Years of ERDF Funding in Austria

<i>Agenda 2000</i>		<i>„Lisbon“</i>
1995 - 1999	2000 - 2006	2007 - 2013
reduction of regional disparities in the EU (cohesion) sustainable economic development, high competitiveness, innovation capacities, high employment, protection of the environment and gender mainstreaming		
▪ Obj-1, Obj-2, Obj-5b ▪ Community initiatives: Interreg II, Leader II, Urban, KMU, Resider II, Rechar II, Retex II ▪ Art. 10-EFRE: RIS, RISI	▪ Obj-1 and Obj-2 ▪ Community initiatives: Interreg III, Urban II ▪ Innovative Actions	▪ Convergence ▪ Regional Competitiveness and Employment ▪ European Territorial Cooperation
450 Mio. EUR ERDF	1.080 Mio. EUR ERDF	936 Mio. € EFRE-Mittel

Euphoria ⇒ *Satisfaction* ⇒ *Disillusion/Realism* ⇒ *Custom* ⇒ *Skepticism /Cautiouness*

Main Expectations before the EU-Accession



The two main expectations from before the EU-accession as there were

- (i) more money and therewith more importance for regional policy and
- (ii) a better achievement of objectives due to more resources seemed to rapidly fulfill (Schremmer/ Steiner 2003).

Experiences of the last 2 Periods

Regional Policy gained Importance

Valorization of Regional Policy and Regional Development in Austria:

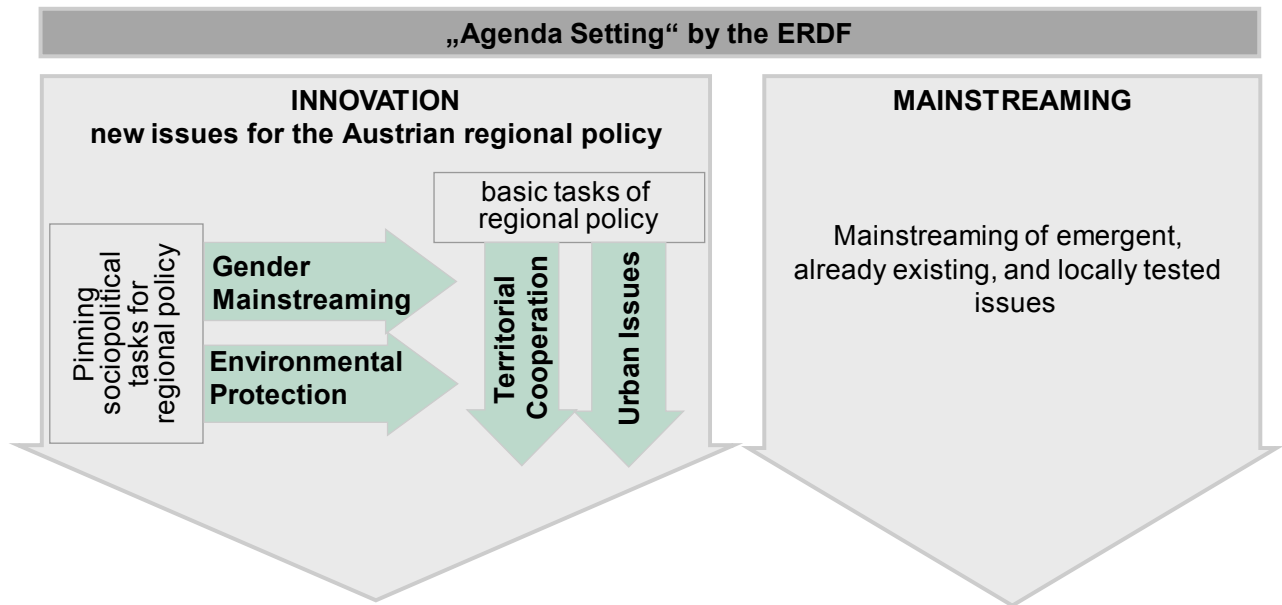
- "enabling-effect" of the ERDF (more budget, greater attention, more actors interested, strengthened regional orientation of public activities);

Capacity building and decentralized activation structures:

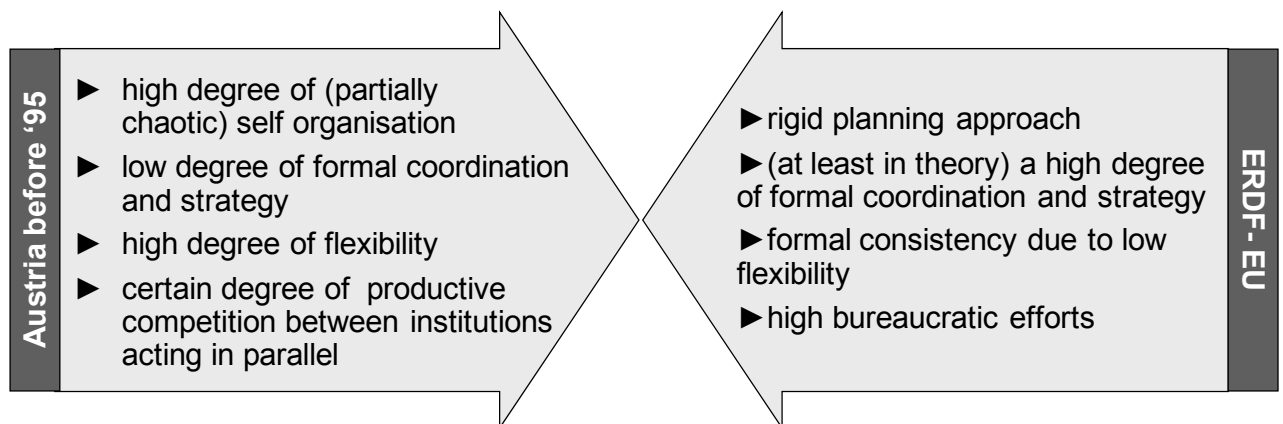


- higher density and diversity of regional initiatives, growing self-confidence, clearer profile of the regions;
- capacity building: integrative, strategic, systematic, multi-annual approaches;
- foundation of regional intermediate bodies and a series of decentralized activation and support structures with ERDF-funding (regional managements, regional technology centers, regional start-up centers, etc.);

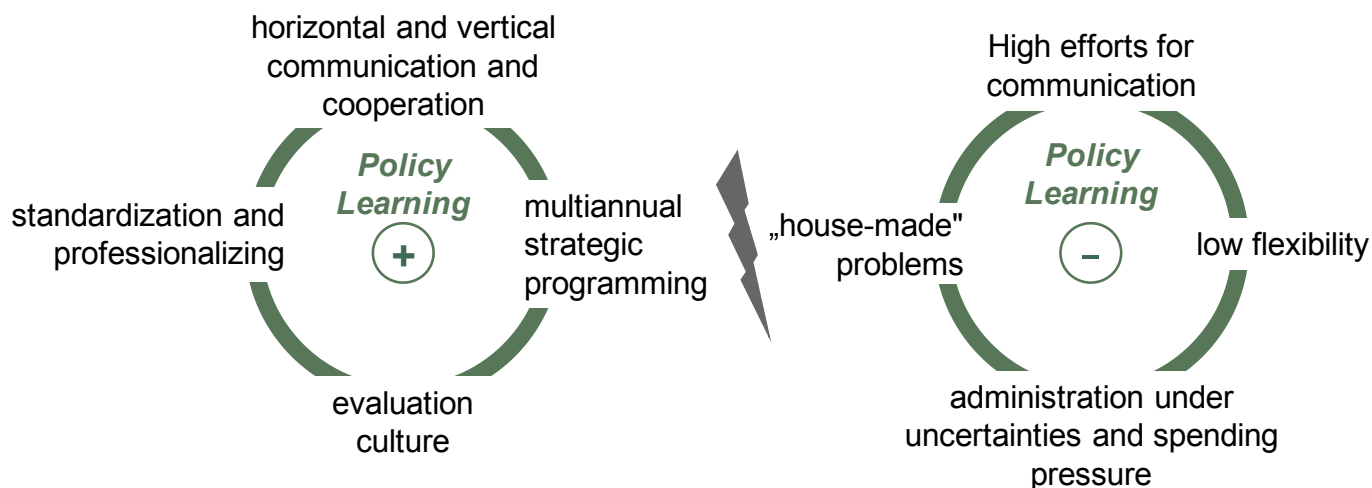
Experiences of the last 2 Periods Concerning the Policy Objectives



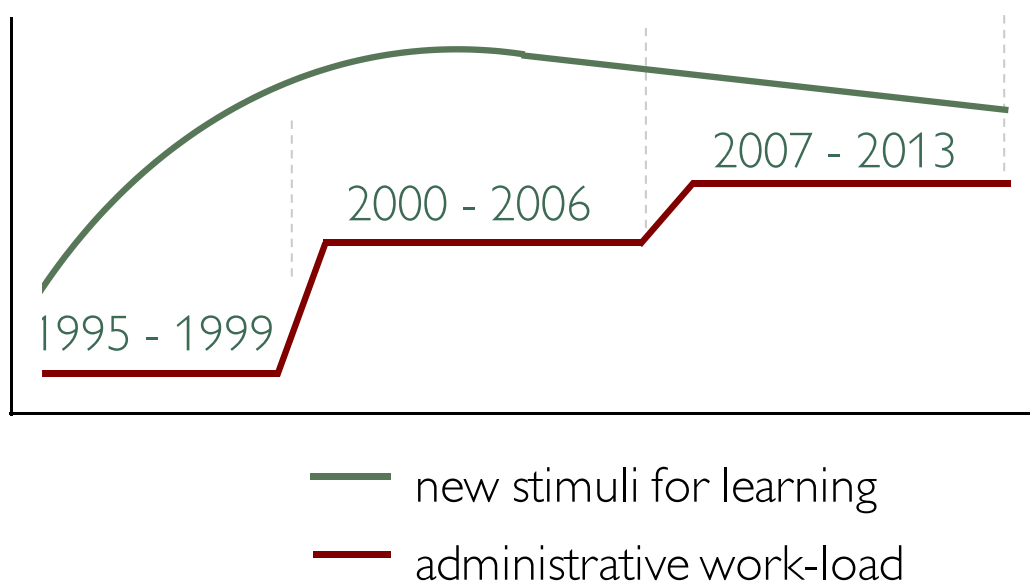
Experiences of the last 2 Periods Concerning the Policy Cycle



Experiences of the last 2 Periods Concerning the Policy Cycle



Experiences of the last 2 Periods Conclusions



Reflections on the Current Funding Period Conditions

- Reform of 2005 "Lisbonising" the ERDF:
 - necessity of a stronger concentration of allocation on the Lisbon issues and herewith on R&D and innovation;
 - specification of strategic multilevel-governance processes;
 - abolishment of the micro-zoning.
- For the years 2007-2013 all in all 936 mio. EUR of ERDF resources are going into 21 different ERDF programs in Austria .
- STRAT.AT as the National Strategic Reference Framework:
 - clearly focused on the required innovation,
 - broad participative formulation process,
 - revision and adaptation in 2009,
 - implementation is strategically accompanied by participative STRAT.ATplus workshops to clarify some issues /challenges in more detail.



STRAT.ATplus*-Arbeitsprogramm 2010 "Perspektiven für die Zukunft"

(Stand: 15. Februar 2010)

Termin	Veranstaltung	Ort
Mittwoch, 24. Februar 2010	"Regionalentwicklung braucht Beschäftigungspolitik!?" (Reihe: STRAT.AT-Forum)	Wien (Urania)
Donnerstag, 15. April 2010	"Regional Governance" (Reihe: STRAT.AT-Synergie)	Salzburg (Hotel Heffterhof)
Dienstag, 8. Juni 2010	"Europa 2020" (Reihe: STRAT.AT-Forum)	Krems (Donauuniversität)
Mittwoch, 9. Juni 2010	terminlich gekoppelt mit Begleitausschuss Sitzung RWB/EFRE	
Geplant: Ende September 2010	"Beyond GDP" (Reihe: STRAT.AT-Synergie)	Wien (ÖROK-Geschäftsstelle)
Montag, 15. November 2010	"Energieautarke Regionen" (Reihe: STRAT.AT-Synergie)	Bregenz (Festspielhaus)
Geplant: Herbst/Winter 2010 (Termin abhängig von Vorlage des 3. Kohäsionsberichts durch EK)	"Shaping the Future" (Reihe: STRAT.AT-Forum)	Wien (EU-Haus)

*STRAT.AT = Nationaler Strategischer Rahmenplan Österreichs 2007-2013

*STRAT.ATplus = im Rahmen der ÖROK organisierter, partnerschaftlich angelegter strategischer Begleitprozess für die Strukturfondsperiode 2007-2013

Reflections on the Current Funding Period Challenges

ALLOCATION PROBLEM:

- New challenge for Austria: from an absorption problem to an allocation problem;

LISBON-ORIENTATION:

- One of the strongest Lisbon orientations in international comparison (91 % of the ERDF resources are Lisbon earmarked, EU-15 average 81 %);
- High concentration on RTDI-related interventions but herewith especially on investments in companies and less on highly innovative R&D projects;

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK-LOAD:

- Increase in flexibility at the program-level - counteracted by administrative rules (partially caused by factors within Austria);
- This results in an increasingly negative attitude towards EU funds, and risk-averse funding behavior.

IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Lessons Learnt as Input for 2014+? EU-Level

TWO POSSIBILITIES

→ Simplification, simplification, simplification...

- A new balance between flexibility in implementation and the required controls/documentation must be established;
- Significant simplification of cooperation across funds;

→ New Mode of Governance

- Compliance with "good governance" principles is required (-putting more time into the negotiations and then withdraw);
- Contractual relationships (e.g. Barca report)
- Setting learning and innovative impulses (pilot programs for innovation, formats for the management of learning processes, etc.);

Lessons Learnt as Input for 2014+?

National level in Austria

- Strengthened focus on functional perspectives;
- Developing a national and regional framework strategy with a clear strategic focus, within which structural fund interventions are defined;
- Focus on central challenges / priorities (e.g. globalization processes and associated innovation pressures, resources and energy scarcity, etc.);
- Rethinking intra-Austrian delivery-conditions in order to increase the level of innovation (strategic character, more proactive project development);
- Bodies involved in the ERDF should be equipped with sufficient and critical resources (cost – benefit);

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