



Exploring

As of 10.2010 (edit 29.8.2011, Florian Stellmacher; translation: 11.2016, Lars Kaiser)

Term

In spatial planning, exploring is an important activity to comprehend and recognise relevant developments, conflicts, perspectives and opportunities. Exploring is the basis for gaining overviews and creating situation assessments.

General access of explorations

Exploring is the empirical examination of a territory on defined (geoscientific) characteristics (such as type of terrain, tectonics or climate) and thereby creating and presenting relevant data.

Exploring is a kind of small-scale discovery because it processes present facts as information (...).

Historically the term comes from military reconnaissance (...).

In a more general sense, exploring is used scientifically or for gathering and processing data and knowledge:

In politics and science exploring is used as a term for probing chances of successful activities or projects (...).

(according to: <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erkundung>, Access September 2010, translated)

Exploring in spatial planning

In spatial planning exploring, like in the military sense, is an important activity to comprehend and recognise the *relevant*

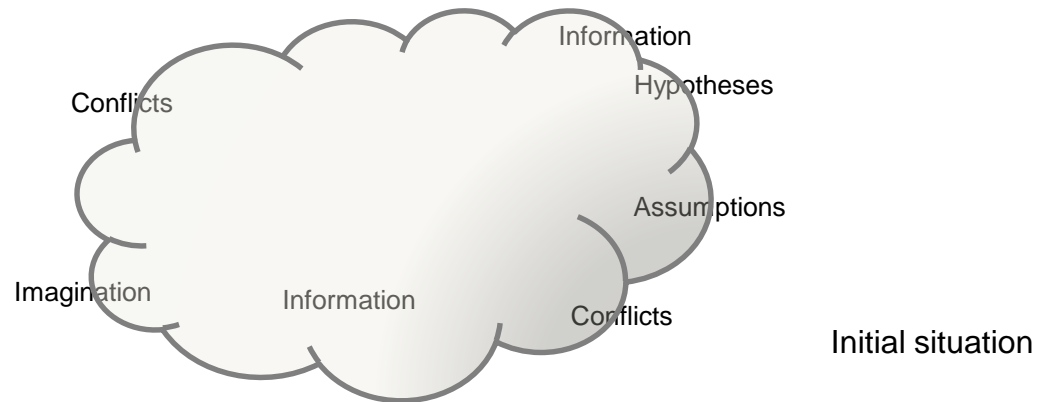
- developments,
- conflicts,
- perspectives and
- opportunities.

For simplification, all these aspects of spatial development are summarised as conflicts.

Exploring is the basis for gaining **overviews** and creating **situation assessments**.

Initial situation

Often conflicts of spatial relevance are very vague in the beginning – comparable to a cloud consisting of different information, hypotheses and imaginations. This is the initial situation for many undertakings in spatial planning.



Source R. Signer

Exploring conflicts of spatial relevance I

Each spatial situation has its peculiarities and thereby its own special conflicts.

In order to recognise relationships between two conflicts, a thorough exploration of the vicinities of known and/or supposed conflicts (hypotheses) has to be conducted.

Relevant spatial conflicts have to be explored as soon as possible:

- Exploring means asking;
- Exploring means diving into foreign areas of expertise;
- Exploring means creating overviews of conflicts.

Exploring conflicts of spatial relevance II

In order to gain clarity on known (and unknown) conflicts it is required to further gather and describe them.

The following checklist is helpful

- Relevant actors for the conflict,
- spatial focus of the conflict,
- Countable, measurable or observable circumstances of the conflict as well as
- Evaluation of indicators that may help assessing a conflict.



ARL Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (Hrsg.) (2011): Grundriss der Raumordnung und Raumentwicklung. Kapitel 4. Methoden der Raumplanung. Hannover

Scholl, B. (1995): Aktionsplanung. Zürich