

2.2 STRATEGIC PLANNING SYSTEM

An essential condition for successful development of Leningrad Oblast lies in the requirement that regional authorities and civil society should be keenly and clearly aware of the goals of socioeconomic development and the means of their achievement. This awareness was made explicit by drawing up The Conception of Socioeconomic and Urban-Planning Development based on the system of strategic planning and task management. The Conception was launched in 1998, becoming one of the first statements of such kind in Russia.

The approach being adopted suggests that the State should initiate and organize strategic process, and be willing to address the needs of the public and business community as well.

The main gear of the Conception implementation is medium-term programs of socioeconomic development of Leningrad Oblast which include a range of regional task programs (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Socioeconomic planning in Leningrad Oblast

	Long-term planning	Medium-term planning
Leningrad Oblast	The Conception of Socioeconomic and Urban-Planning Development	Medium-term programs of socioeconomic development Regional task programs
Municipalities	Strategic plans	Medium-term programs of socioeconomic development Municipal task programs

Together with Moscow, Leningrad Oblast has come out on top in a competition that was held in the framework of international project OST-EURO CEMAT and involved devising a strategic plan of regional development until 2010. The work was carried out in a close co-operation with municipal authorities. Strategic plans of socioeconomic development of municipal areas were formulated in 2001.

The Conception of Socioeconomic and Urban-Planning Development identifies key strategic goals and objectives, essential issues of almost every economic or social sector development, as well as the main targets of regional, spatial and budget planning. The following initiatives were developed on the basis the Conception:

- Year 2000: integrated program of socioeconomic development of Leningrad Oblast until 2003;
- Year 2003: medium-term program of socioeconomic development of Leningrad Oblast until 2006.

The connection between long-range and medium-range planning is realized through policies permeating both the Conception and medium-term plans of socioeconomic development and cascading downwards to be translated into task programs (see Fig. 2.10).

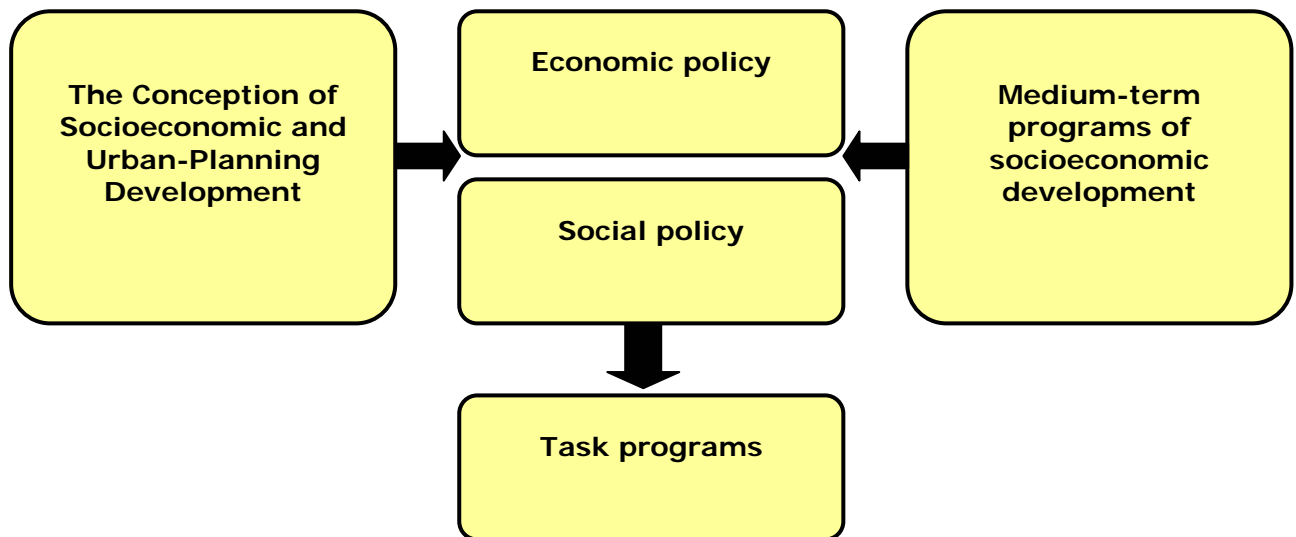


Fig. 2.10 Connection between different kinds of planning

Strategic planning of socioeconomic development builds upon the principles of consistency, continuity and efficiency of state policy, publicity and broad community involvement, and agrees with the foundations of existing political system, fiscal arrangements, and budgetary process. Together with executive powers, municipal authorities implement strategic planning programs in both industry-divisional and geographic aspects. Such an approach contributes to co-ordination and consolidation of interests and actions of civil society, business community and officials, and makes it possible to avoid conflicting, unnecessary or redundant operations and expenses. This enables civil society to control government actions, evaluate its decisions, and demand accountability for their implementation.

The Leningrad Oblast government has issued a resolution No. 317 "On the formulation of Leningrad Oblast socioeconomic development program to 2020". According to the document, key responsibility to administer the preparation of the project entitled "Programme-2020" is laid upon the Economic Development Committee, while Grigory Dvas, the committee chairman and the regions' vice-governor, is personally in charge of monitoring the ruling implementation process. The Program will set out measurable objectives to be achieved in a specified time - social, economic, demographic, etc. - and define arrangements for obtaining desired results. The main goal of the program is to increase living standards of the region's population. The program will set specific targets of economic growth, enabling officials to monitor the progress towards achieving formulated objectives and evaluate results on every successive stage.